COURSE CODE: APG 5058S

COVER SHEET

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PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own
2. I have used the Harvard convention for citation and referencing. Each contribution to and quotation in, this essay/report/project/paper REPORT from the work(s) of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.
3. This essay/report/project/paper REPORT is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work

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Date 17.10.2012

ESSAY WRITING REQUIREMENTS

This sheet is an overview of the minimum requirements for any essay or written work you submit for all courses in the School. As this is only a brief summary, use the recommended resources for further direction.

Essay Structure

Thesis: No matter the purpose of the essay, you must have a thesis and build your paper so to explicate that thesis.
Outline: Your essay must have a clear and organized structure. Start by developing an outline. Break the essay down into the following categories:

Introduction: At least one paragraph which introduces the essay topic. It includes the thesis statement, usually as the last sentence in the first paragraph.
Body: Develop the themes and points that explicate your thesis in the body of the essay.
Conclusion: A final paragraph(s) that re-states your thesis and contextualizes or summarizes the body of the essay. Never add a new topic or point of explication in your conclusion.

Paragraphs: It is very important that you develop well-structured paragraphs. The rule-of-thumb is that each topic or theme is developed in a single paragraph. However, that rule may be modified if a paragraph becomes too long (which can be tiresome to read) or you have too many brief paragraphs (which are also tiresome). Include transitions at the end and beginning of paragraphs so that they flow together well.
Writing style: Your essay must be clear, concise, and flow smoothly. Academic essays require a certain degree of formality, but do not complicate the writing style or word choice unnecessarily. Utilize punctuation correctly! Check your grammar (pay particular attention that subject and verbs, pronouns and antecedent nouns agree)! Read your essay out loud to yourself to check for flow and clarity! **Proof-read and spell check!**
For further reading or assistance, see:
http://startup.curtin.edu.au/study_skills/writing.html, or http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/infolit/report.htm, or The Humanities Library at UCT has a large collection of writing skills reference books, or visit The UCT Writing Centre (http://www.ched.uct.ac.za/adp/writing/), which offers writing assistance to all students.

Referencing

All academic writing requires you to cite all the sources that you have read and consulted in the preparation of your work. Not citing all of your sources is an act of plagiarism: essentially the stealing of others' words, thoughts and ideas, and is treated as fraud. Students found guilty could at best fail their course, at worst face expulsion. Every single instance of using phrases and ideas that are not your own must be acknowledged.
Quoting: When you quote someone's words directly, you *have to place these words in quotation marks.* Longer quotations, which you should use sparingly, should be "blocked" to make them stand out clearly. This means indenting and single-spacing the entire quotation, also possibly using a smaller typeface.
Referencing: You must choose one method of referencing (or citation) and use it consistently throughout your essay: either the Harvard system or the footnote (Chicago or Oxford) system. No matter which system you choose to use, the information you must ascertain and include is:

- **Name** of the originator(s) of the document or the part of a document you are using as a source.
- **Date** of publication (some citation styles give the date immediately after the author; otherwise after the name of the publisher). For an electronic resource, look for the date on which the document was produced or updated.
- **Title** of the publication (and, if it is part of a larger work, e.g. an article in a journal, or one paper in an edited collection, also the **title of the whole** publication).
- For an electronic resource only, the **medium**, which may be given as "Online" or "CD-Rom" in square brackets, or you may use "Electronic" if you are not sure whether the source is online or networked CD-Rom.
- **Publication details**: Place of publication and Publisher if the item is a book; Volume and/or issue number if the item is a journal. For an electronic resource give **the uniform resource locator** (URL) which may sometimes be given between angle brackets (< >). If the URL is very long, it may be written on two lines, but try to break a line only where a punctuation mark occurs and do not *add* a hyphen, as this will alter the URL.
- Inclusive **page numbers** if the reference is to an item smaller than a whole book.
- For an electronic resource, the **date** on which the document was last **accessed**, often in square brackets.

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In the Harvard system, referencing is done by inserting the author surname and publication date in parenthesis within the main body of the text. For a complete guide to the Harvard system, see http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/infolit/bibharvard.htm.

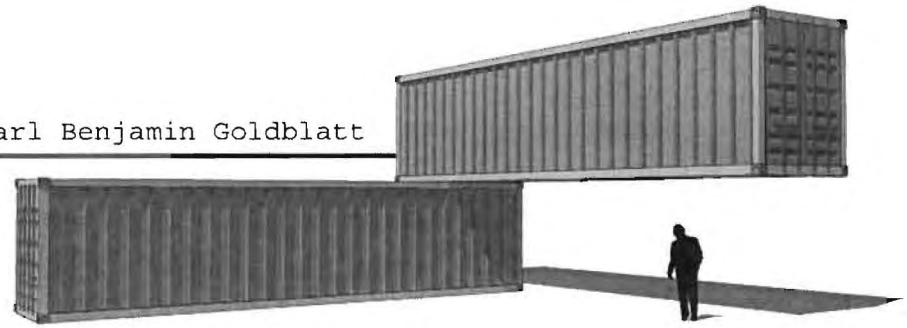
Footnote System

In the footnote system, a reference in the text to another source is signalled by a numeral giving the number of the citation. This numeral corresponds to a numbered note at the bottom of the page (a footnote), or at the end of the paper. For a complete list and discussion of footnoting, see http://www.lib.uct.ac.za/infolit/bibchicago.htm or Turabian, K. 1996. *A manual for writers of research papers, theses and dissertations*. 6th ed. Revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennet. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

STEEL BOXES OF THE EVERYDAY

by Charl Benjamin Goldblatt

IN SEARCH OF THE (EXTRA)ORDINARY



STEEL BOXES OF THE EVERYDAY

IN SEARCH OF THE (EXTRA)ORDINARY

Design Research Project APG5058S

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Architecture (Professional)

by

Charl Benjamin Goldblatt

October 2012

Thesis supervisors: Prof. Jo Noero (convenor), Nic Coetzer and Alta Steenkamp

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Preface

the everyday and the (extra)ordinary

Photography has been a sideline passion of mine for the last few years, albeit purely as a hobby, but my camera goes with me wherever I go and whenever I see the opportunity for a great shot, I take it.

This initial interest for photography was sparked when I was in High School where I eventually discovered the work of the internationally renowned South African photographer, David Goldblatt.

I say *eventually* because throughout my school career, often when a teacher (or other adult) learned of my surname, Goldblatt, they would ask if I was related to the photographer David Goldblatt. As a young child I never really took much interest in all the Goldblatt questions as I was more interested in doing things that young boys do. Initially, I would reply saying *"no... I don't think so."* However, my father's brothers' name is David Goldblatt – albeit an entirely different David Goldblatt and after a while I started saying *"yes, I am related to David Goldblatt... but not to the David Goldblatt you are referring to."*

Then, near the end of my high schooling, by chance or fate, I eventually came across the work of David Goldblatt. We were tasked with a project where we needed to write a brief essay on *Apartheid* in South Africa. During my research and investigations I looked at photographs captured during the course of the struggle years. Most of the images I came across depicted the violence of the era, the riots in the townships and brutal police assaults. I eventually came across some images of a more ordinary, domestic nature, which depicted not the violence of the era but that of the ordinary people in their everyday environments. Yet within these ordinary, everyday scenes, there was a stirring sense of emotion which was conveyed through the images. I was drawn to these images of the ordinary nature...there was something about them that captured me but I wasn't sure what it was. It was only a few years later at the entry into my architectural thesis where I began to question what it was that gave these ordinary, everyday images this (extra)ordinary appeal...

With this in mind, the underlying notion of my thesis is that of the everyday and the extraordinary, and how within the ordinary, the (extra)ordinary may be revealed.
A part of my personal everyday experience and one that is shared by many Capetonians traveling to and from the Cape Town CBD on a daily basis is the image and presence of the Cape Town Harbour which has become an everyday backdrop and like our majestic Table Mountain, often goes unnoticed. In particular, an aspect of my everyday harbour experience which stands out is the image of the shipping containers at the container terminal. When seen as individual objects, the shipping containers appear quite ordinary – a corrugated steel box. However, when combined and stacked vertically and positioned side by side, the multitude of colours and configurations of the seemingly ordinary steel boxes begin to reveal intriguing forms and spatial qualities and I often found myself envisioning the spaces which may be revealed within and around the containers.

With the notion of the shipping container as a spatial object of an ordinary, everyday nature, my architectural proposal intends to explore the making of an extraordinary space utilising these ordinary steel boxes of the everyday. As the shipping containers are standardised and modular, and therefore the space within the box is essentially a given, the focus of my thesis is not constrained to the space within the box, but instead it is more an investigation into the spatial qualities which can be created between and around the boxes and how one deals with the making of these (extra)ordinary spaces.

Figure 1. Steel boxes of the everyday. Image by author

Introduction

overview of the process

"Instead, he chose to focus on the world of ordinary people, the details of everyday life that reveal the deep structure of injustice and the essence of the people who imposed and defied it." [1]

The work of South African photographer, David Goldblatt and his ability to capture the ordinary, everyday experiences in an extraordinary manner was the starting point for my thesis investigations and where I began to question what it was that could make the ordinary (extra)ordinary.

At first glance, his images appear quite ordinary, the people and places he photographs depict scenes of an everyday ordinary nature, nothing which immediately stands out as striking and breathtaking. However, upon deeper inspection into the photographs, a heavier, more powerful sense behind these everyday scenes of South African life begins to reveal itself.

I was intrigued by this quality which appeared in his work – his ability to capture the everyday and ordinary scenes of South African life during the apartheid era, yet within these everyday scenes he was able to reveal an extraordinary quality in an extremely powerful and weighted manner.

In trying to understand what it was which gave his photography this element of extraordinariness which these ordinary, everyday scenes carry, it lead me to believe that it was the engagement, awareness and understanding of context, both the era (apartheid) and the physical (site, landscape, people and place) which contributed to this powerful notion of revealing the (extra)ordinary within the ordinary.

The next step in my process was to try and discover what the architectural and spatial representation of the (extra)ordinary is in Cape Town. An area of Cape Town which for me stands out as a place of exceptional everydayness is Woodstock, with a particular focus on Albert Road. In my opinion there is a special feeling one gets when moving through Woodstock and in particular, Albert Road– the experience of the place, in terms of its spatial qualities and architecture is fairly ordinary at first, but something about the place grabs you in an (extra)ordinary way. The majority of the architecture is not that of main stream contemporary masterpieces as seen in the more affluent areas and in the city. The buildings which line the Street and the side streets are a mix of residential, commercial and industrial with most of the architecture being that of the Victorian period as well as the many fairly ordinary buildings of early modern commercial and industrial development.

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1 Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 4

In most cases, these fairly ordinary buildings which line Albert Road, have been treated to a fresh coat of (colourful) paint and the street-fronts and sidewalks are lined with the wares of the stores. Over the past few years, the area has seen some rejuvenation with the re-development of the Old Biscuit Mill into a trendy hot-spot for food lovers and as a platform where the various creative arts and crafts industries can showcase their creations. As a result, Albert Road is becoming an ever more popular location for the creative and craft industries - second hand furniture and photo frames, either refurbished or left as is have become popular consumer items and many of the stores along Albert Road are thriving in this market. In addition to these stores of the everyday are the emergence of more and more boutique type coffee shops and restaurants, art galleries and creative spaces which attract tourists and locals alike. There is an extraordinary richness and sense of place which is revealed within these seemingly ordinary spaces and places along Albert Road – the architecture of the Everyday.

After identifying Albert Road as a place of exceptional everydayness in Cape Town, the process continued with a look at the ordinary building technologies of Woodstock. Among the various ordinary materials and technologies looked at, the material which for me had the most profound impact was the corrugated sheeting. Used in many applications throughout Woodstock in roof construction in both the residential and commercial/industrial sector, the ordinary corrugated steel sheeting, for me a symbol of industry, made me think about the industrial and creative aspect of the area and how it has had a profound impact on what the place has become today – (extra)ordinary. When looking at the possibilities of the corrugated sheeting and how it may be used in creative ways to enhance the ordinary, I began to think about my personal everyday experience of traveling past the Table Bay Harbour and the sight of the corrugated shipping containers at the container terminal. Ordinary corrugated steel boxes, a symbol of global trade yet at the same time representative of the origin of Cape Town as a port of trade and industry, when seen as individual boxes they appear quite ordinary and ugly but when combined and stacked vertically and side-by-side in their multitude of colours they begin to reveal certain spatial qualities which with a little imagination could potentially result in an (extra)ordinary space.

We need to think 'out the box'.

01-David Goldblatt

the Images

The following pages show some of what I consider Goldblatt's most powerful images. Reasons why I consider these and his other images to be of an (extra)ordinary nature will be discussed in the section following the photos.
For the sake of this report, I have decided to show only 6 images which I feel encompass his intentions and aspirations regarding his acknowledgement of sense of place and which reveal the unique and (extra)ordinary qualities which the ordinary, everyday setting has to offer.

Fig. 2 – *The Farmer's Wife*, 1965

"Her husband was not home, but the farmer's wife agreed to be photographed on condition that she could change. She returned in white, perfumed and immaculate, and posed shyly and yet with frank pleasure. She could not have realised that Goldblatt was as interested in the geometry of the light and the play of texture between her frothy skirt and the crumbling façade of the ancient farmhouse as he was in her." [2]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title - *Some Afrikaaners Photographed*.

[2] Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 30

Fig.3 – *Grandmother and Child*, Transkei, 1975

"In Particulars, Goldblatt reveled in the cutting quality of the Highveld light, which enabled him to reveal every pore and detail of his subjects and their surroundings. Without shame, he reveals the pores, the folds of flesh, the bulging thighs of humanity, reflecting his view that the ordinary is remarkable." [3]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title – *Particulars.*

[3] Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 64

Fig.4 – *Café-de-Move-On*, Braamfontein, Johannesburg. 1964

"Mobile coffee carts were positioned near railways and factory gates and their (usually female) proprietors cooked and sold simple meals for African Workers. However, they were anathema to Johannesburg council officials, who by 1965 succeeded in clearing them from the city streets. This early photograph is an example of Goldblatt's fascination with the tales told by the structures that we build. Most of the carts, like this one, were built from the cast-off materials of white Johannesburg – old sheets of corrugated iron, pressed metal ceilings used in late Victorian houses, the wheel borrowed from some ancient barrow." [4]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title – *South Africa*: *The Structure of Things Then*

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[4] Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 18

Fig.5 – *Sunday Afternoon: Margaret Mcingana at home*, Zola, Soweto, Johannesburg. 1970

"For Goldblatt, this photograph is symbolic of many aspects of Soweto life and is one of the few that hangs in his own home. It encapsulates what he sees as the astonishing ability of Sowetans to achieve a sense of ease and normality in the harshest of environments. Mcingana, who later became well known as the singer Margaret Singana, relaxes in obvious enjoyment of her own sensuality, while above her looms a wall that seems to bear the scars of violent assault." [5]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title – *South Africa*: *The Structure of Things Then*

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5 Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 46

Fig.6 – *Dutch Reformed Church*, Quellerina, Johannesburg. 1986

"In the course of photographing South African structures, Goldblatt arrived at the notion that shifts in the architectural style of Dutch Reformed churches were closely related to changes in the political beliefs and fortunes of the Afrikaner people. He believes that the Quellerina church, which was completed in 1984, exemplifies churches built in the period when the apartheid dream began to fail. In this phase, the church became a blind thing – a fortress. Without windows, the word of God no longer went out into the world, but was reserved for the converted, the elect." [6]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title – *South Africa*: *The Structure of Things Then*

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[6] Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 100

Fig.7 – *A man building his house on his own plot of ground*, Marselle Township, Kenton-on-Sea, Cape. 1990

"This is the final photograph in the Structures book. 'It was a climatic moment and photograph,' said Goldblatt. In all the shittiness of matchbox houses and the tall masts of high security lighting, here was a man building his own house on apiece of ground to which he had legal title. This could not have happened in black townships since 1913, when Africans were denied urban property rights and hence the ability to raise mortgages and build their own homes. There was something in his body language – something about the way he thrust his body – which spoke of strength and good hope." [7]

Image taken from a series of Goldblatt's work published under the title – *South Africa*: *The Structure of Things Then*

[7] Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 110

Understanding and Interpretation

For the majority of his career, Goldblatt chose to represent his photographs in black and white – he believed that the medium of black and white would depict the world he saw in an unbiased, neutral manner. It was only in the early 90's, after the first democratic elections in South Africa where he began to use colour in his images as he felt that the new South Africa needed to be seen a different light. [8]

A key moment in his photographic career came when he was photographing places of worship – during that time he had come to the realisation that the intensity of the Highveld light was a crucial influence in his awareness and understanding of his sense of place. He became aware of the sharp, knife-like effect the strong, cutting Highveld light had on his subjects - the people and the buildings he photographed. His awareness of this local condition, the harsh light, as a means to convey a deeper sense of understanding within his photography played a key role in his development as a photographer of the everyday.

"The savage, cutting light creates blinding highlights and sharp slabs of deep shade. Hostile to those who are unaccustomed to its ferocity, it can be tamed to reveal the sweetest secrets." [9]

I believe he was deeply aware of the context which surrounded him during the apartheid era and he was able to engage with and acknowledge this context and the people within it in a subtle, yet powerful manner - in doing so he was able to reveal that the ordinary scenes of everyday life can have more meaning that the moments of high drama and intensity - the extraordinary within the ordinary everyday.

Although the images in the previous section represent only a minute portion of Goldblatt's work, I feel they are representative of his body of work as a whole and reveal the powerful, overarching notion behind his photography – that of the (extra)ordinary contained within the ordinary scenes of everyday life. This underlying idea or notion was something which at the time, I didn't quite realise or understand when I was initially drawn to his images in High School. I knew that there was something special to these images but I wasn't quite sure what it was. It was only on re-visiting his work at the beginning of my thesis investigations where I realised that on deeper inspection into these ordinary scenes, that it was the small details of ordinary life and the engagement and awareness of the qualities of the place and its context, that the (extra)ordinary within the ordinary everyday is revealed.

Like the old English idioms, '*Don't judge a book by its cover.*' And '*All that glitters is not gold.*' What we see as face-value is not necessarily what is contained within – the ordinary can be (extra)ordinary.

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8 Goldblatt, D. 1998. *South Africa:The Structure of Things Then*. Oxford University Press.

9 Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 4

everyday *adj*. 1. happening each day. 2. commonplace or usual. 3. suitable for or used on ordinary days.

- Excerpt: *The Collins English Dictionary*. pg 291

02-Deconstructing images of the Everyday

A photo-essay on Albert Road, Woodstock

In continuing with my investigations of uncovering the everyday in Cape Town, I decided to use my camera as a tool for 'capturing the everyday'. To see, like in Goldblatt's photos, if the extraordinary could be revealed within the ordinary, everyday scenes of daily life in Cape Town.
As previously mentioned, the place which for me stood out as a place of exceptional everydayness was Woodstck, and in particular, Albert Road.

Over the last few years Woodstock has seen some urban rejuvenation, where the old, derelict and often abandoned industrial and commercial buildings are being re-developed to suit new functions. A case in point was the redevelopment of the Old Biscuit Mill on Albert Road into a trendy hotspot, establishing a 'little village' for food-lovers, creatives and designers alike. The Mill is host to many day and night markets and other social events but possibly the most popular, the 'Neighbourgoods Market', open every Saturday, brings together people from all walks of life, sharing a common interest in fine taste, be it in the selling of local organic and fine taste produce, vintage and collectables stalls and the creative stalls where innovative designers, artists and photographers can showcase their work. [10] The redevelopment of the Old Biscuit Mill into a little village of creativity and innovation has become a catalyst for the emergence of other 'creative' type studios, workshops, and furniture design and refurbishment shops which have become a common sight along the Albert Road strip mall. This culture of creativeness has become one of the main themes of contemporary Woodstock and has seen the development of Woodstock and in particular, Albert Road into one of the main 'creative hubs' of the city.

I decided to shoot the photo essay on a regular mid-week morning with the intention of trying to capture the true everyday spatial and experiential nature of Albert Road. People at work, cars traveling through, random encounters on the street, eating and relaxing are some of the attributes of everyday life carried out along Albert Road. The photographs on the following pages indicate what I experienced as the everyday. I will attempt to analyse and deconstruct these images of ordinary, everyday scenes in order to uncover the spatial and experiential qualities which contribute to the richness of these ordinary, everyday spaces and places along this bustling, creative artery, Albert Road.

10 source: www.theoldbiscuitmill.co.za

Everyday Image 1. ***Learning From the Man on the Street***

Figure 8. *Learning from the man on the street.* Image by author

Deconstruction and interpretation

What initially caught my eye with regard to this image and its everyday qualities was the long 'flat' wall of the Baltic Timber factory building which fronts Albert Road. At first glance there was nothing remarkable about this plain wall other than the fact that it seemed to give very little back to the urban quality of the street.

However, something about this ordinary wall made me take a closer look. A strip of 'maroon-coloured' paint, about 1.5m high off the pavement level runs horizontally along the entire edge of the building and is the only noticeable 'feature' – albeit ordinary and bland. However, upon a 2nd glance and deeper inspection into the 2 tone street-facing wall, an ordinary and simple quality which begins to address that of everyday urban qualities becomes apparent - The use of paint as a means to accentuate and 'bring to life' flat, ordinary surfaces.

In this instance, the quite plain painted strip running the length of the building begins to break the scale of the tall, unfriendly wall and brings it back to an urban pedestrian scale.

Although in this case, I don't believe the full potential of this has been realised. However, the notion and idea of paint to accentuate ordinary flat surfaces starts to reveal ideas in which a simple and ordinary mechanism for surface treatment can start to inform ideas for the representation and making of an architecture of exceptional everydayness.

In addition, another aspect of this seemingly ordinary, flat wall is the incorporation of a small ledge at a comfortable sitting height. The ledge has been incorporated into the construction of the wall in the form of protruding brickwork and plaster, masked by the strip of paint running the length of the building.

These seemingly ordinary and simple everyday urban qualities can start to inform spatial and tectonic ideas for developing an architectural language appropriate to an architecture of the everyday.

Everyday Image 2. ***Richness in Complexity and Diversity***

Figure 9. *Richness in complexity and diversity*. Image by author

Deconstruction and interpretation

What caught my eye with regard to this image was the almost chaotic nature of the scene, where the masses of old 'rustic' furniture seem to want to spill out from the store onto the street. When looking deeper into the spaces of the store, one can see that the interior spaces (particularly of the store to the left) are 'packed to the rafters' with their goods to the extent that there is almost no space to move around inside.
For me, there is an intriguing quality in this chaotic, complex scene in which almost every piece is different from the next and has its own unique characteristics and qualities- one-off artifacts, bought back to life by the hand of the ordinary man as opposed to the 'high end', everyday production-line items we have become accustomed to in our daily lives.
The old 'rustic' furniture, refurbished and white-washed has become increasingly popular. It is not a taste which everyone shares but it has become an almost niche market that many have capitalized on, where the Albert Road Strip Mall seems to be thriving and able to sustain this market of everyday arts and crafts for people form all walks of life.

There is richness in the complexity and diversity of the unique- both the old and the new -A quality which I feel can influence the way in which spatial ideas for an everyday architecture can emerge.

Everyday Image 3. ***Light and Texture***

Figure 10. *Light and Texture*. Image by author

Deconstruction and interpretation

What caught my eye with regard to this image was once again the use of colour and paint to accentuate the flat surfaces of the ordinary buildings along the Albert Road strip. It may come across as almost kitsch but at the same time, the contrast between the newly refurbished white-washed furniture, pure and clean set against the backdrop of vibrant colour and texture, was also striking.

Upon deeper inspection into the scene, I realised that what was remarkable here was the way in which the late morning sunlight hit the surface of the buildings and the furniture on the street – bringing to life these seemingly ordinary spaces and revealing their qualities through the play between texture and shadow. In contrast to the bright light hitting the street facing facades was the wall of the side street to the right, cast in shadow - dark and mysterious. The play between the light here - brightly coloured street facades and the darker more mysterious side street wall cast in shadow begins to reveal ideas in which the simple notion of light can enhance the quality of an ordinary everyday space.

Everyday Image 4. ***Richness in the Multiple Layers of the Everyday***

Figure 11. *Richness in the multiple layers of the everyday*.
Image by author

Deconstruction and interpretation

For me, this image encompasses all of the spatial, urban and experiential qualities and layers discussed in the 'deconstruction' of the previous images.

It was by chance that I came across this extremely rich setting, just off the main Albert Road Strip on one of the side streets. I began to take a few snap shots and out of the corner of my eye I saw a man walking down the road. I wanted to have the human scale represented in the shot as I thought it crucial in depicting the true nature and scale of the scene, so I waited and prepared for the moment that the man would enter the frame. I consciously opened up the shutter of the camera to expose the image for slightly longer than normal, in doing so a hint of movement can be picked up by the slight 'motion blur' of the man in the frame. I wanted to convey the notion of movement through the everyday. In addition, the bright, vibrant, and complex artwork by Street Artist, *Freddy Sam* and the large scale at which it is presented reveals clues as to the way in which flat, ordinary surfaces can be treated to respond to urban scale. The seemingly derelict and discarded space at the center of this image, with its cracked and broken up plaster revealing the layers of the ordinary materials used in its construction, also offers up clues to the way in which the layers of qualities of everyday life can be influential in creating a vibrant rich place – revealing the (extra) ordinary within the ordinary.

making *vb*. 1. to bring into being by shaping, changing, or combining materials, ideas, etc: form or fashion.

- Excerpt: *The Collins English Dictionary*. Pg 510

03 – Technology of the Everyday

simple and ordinary

After the deconstruction and interpretation of the everyday images along Albert Road, the next part of my process was to identify the simple and ordinary building technologies which give rise to the (extra)ordinary spaces of the everyday along the Albert Road strip.

The characteristic spatial and material qualities of Woodstock and its surrounds are of a complex and diverse nature yet still fairly ordinary. As previously mentioned the built fabric of the area is mixed and diverse in its architectural aesthetic and building typology – Albert Road and Victoria (Main) Road contain the majority of the commercial and industrial buildings which facilitate the activities of the everyday. Nestled between these Strip Malls is the tight-knit residential fabric, mostly architecture of the Victorian period with the introduction of a few contemporary residential apartment blocks into the fabric over the last few years.

The following are some of the more apparent architectural characteristics and technologies which can be associated with the built fabric of Woodstock:

- **Exposed facebrick** - More common in the construction of the older industrial typologies – The Old Biscuit Mill, the old Castle Brewery Buildings etc.
- **Load-bearing plastered Walls** – A conventional, traditional building method, which facilitated the use of casement windows.
- **Brightly coloured and painted surfaces** – In the form of Street Art and traditional painting methods. The majority of this phenomenon is seen along the commercial and industrial strips but is also emerging within the residential fabric nestled in between.
- **Plastered Mouldings** as decoration – Typical among the older industrial and commercial fabric of the Victorian period, where the gables and parapets are treated to an array of various plaster mouldings etc.
- **Wrought-Iron trimmings** as decoration - Also typical of the Victorian period residential architecture.
- **First Floor balcony overhangs** – Typical of most of the Victorian period and early Modern commercial buildings. Seen in many instances along the Strip Malls where the first floor extends out over the pavement below, creating an arcade which shelters one from the natural elements, which presents the opportunity for activity or social hot spots below.
- **Corrugated Sheeting** – Used as the primary roof covering of the residential fabric as well as in the Industrial (and some commercial) typologies where the roofs and entry doors are made using the corrugated sheeting and corrugated roll-up doors respectively.

The following 3 images were taken during my investigative journey into the everyday of Woodstock. For me, they represent some of the architectural characteristics typical to Woodstock and in particular, Albert Road - Brightly painted buildings donning graffiti by the local artists of the area, first floor overhangs creating a colonnade and a shaded area to relax at street level, and corrugated sheeting representative of the industrial aesthetic typical to the area.

Figure 12. Brightly painted buildings donning the street art (graffiti) by local artist in the area, some of which have studio's and gallery space in the Woodstock Industrial Center. Image by author

Figure 13. First floor balcony overhangs are a common sight along Albert Road and were typical of the Victorian period architecture. Image by author

Figure 14. The use of corrugated sheeting is also a typical sight along Albert Road, both in the older residential and industrial fabric as well as in the newer developments. The industrial aesthetic of the area is prominent and has played an important role in the development of Woodstock as we know it today. Image by author

For me, one of the more prominent conditions of Woodstock's built aesthetic is that of the industrial fabric and with particular reference to the corrugated steel sheeting used in roofing and door opening applications. A series of images I came across from photographer *Jose Romeu* (Figure. 15 and 16) confirmed this notion for me, that the aesthetic of the industrial is a prominent one on Woodstock.

While the industrial sector's influence in Woodstock permanently changed its original 'seaside-village' character, if it wasn't for the industrial influence then perhaps Woodstock would not be the thriving creative hub it is today. This industrial aesthetic and in particular the aesthetic of the corrugated sheeting speaks of the area's new-found cultural spirit as a place of (innovation) making - particularly along the Albert Road strip where as previously mentioned the creative industry is thriving.

Another contextual condition that I personally feel is a prominent one is that of Woodstock's historical connection to the sea. Before the land reclamations for the development of the foreshore in the early 1950's, Woodstock was home to one of the most popular beaches in Cape Town and was seen as a remarkable 'seaside village'. Its physical connection to the sea was destroyed and lost during the land reclamation for the construction of the national highways leading to and from the CBD. The result is a permanent barrier between Woodstock and its once characteristic seaside relationship.

I suppose I might be somewhat bias to this notion of the "lost connection to the sea" in that as a born and raised Capetoninan, my personal experience and sense of place of Cape Town as a whole is heavily influenced by my love for and awareness of the sea. Adding to and reinforcing my sense of place with regard to the sea is the everyday image of the Port of Cape Town which I travel past almost everyday on my commute to and from university. The development and history of the Port runs parallel with that of Cape Town itself and is therefore an indirect influence to my personal sense of place.

The built fabric of the Port is also that of the industrial aesthetic. An image which for me sums up the industrial aesthetic of the Port is that of the brightly coloured, corrugated steel cargo-containers at the container terminal (figure 17). Although the image of the cargo containers is synonymous with that of international trade, it has also become an everyday sight to many Capetonians, especially to those traveling along the N1 to and from the city where the container terminal is clearly visible. They are hard to miss, especially when stacked in multiple levels and in their various bright and vibrant colours.

The (brief) contextual analysis of Woodstock and its surrounds with regard to its cultural context, its historical connection to the sea, and the everyday image of the corrugated cargo containers within close proximity to the area, has offered up clues which can begin to inform decisions with regard to the making of a place-specific, everyday architecture in Woodstock. I saw the image of the cargo-containers as an opportunity to investigate the idea of using these ordinary, everyday objects as an alternative approach to the notion of a simple and ordinary building technology. Like that of Lego-blocks, they are modular except a lot bigger and they already have a spatial quality – all of which can be engaged with in critical and creative ways. The containers as stand-alone objects are quite ordinary and ugly in appearance. The corrugated steel sheeting making up the walls of the containers has a cold feel about it and is nothing which stands out as (extra)ordinary. However, my architectural eye sees the other side of these ordinary, everyday objects. When stacked up and positioned side by side in their multitude of bright colours I often think of conventional mixed-use diagrams in which the dedication of a certain colour is indicative of a different use (figure 18). In addition, the cubic forms created when the containers are stacked and pulled apart start to reveal certain spatial qualities contained within these ordinary, everyday objects. The notion is simple, yet full of promise and potential. The fact that Woodstock is thriving in the market of 'creativeness', of 'making' and of 'innovation', leads me to believe that the innovative (re) use of shipping containers as an alternative 'building block' technology can add to and sustain the richness of this already vibrant and creative culture.

We need to think 'out the box'.

Figure 15. *A typical residential street in Woodstock.*
A common sight of the residential fabric of Woodstock. The rusted corrugated sheeting draws reference to an industrial and harbour shed aesthetic. Also, notice the pink wall of the house in the center – the (extra)ordinary.
(Image by Jose Romeu).

Figure 16. *The residential and the industrial – the Everyday.*
This image was taken in the same street as the image above. The 'unique' built fabric is evident here – the residential and the industrial. The image speaks of the various material and architectural characteristics of the area, the ordinary, everyday material palette of Woodstock. The exposed brick work typical to the industrial typology of the area; the 'modern' influence with the use of the horizontal strip-window; the vibrancy created by the colourful Graffiti; The covered residential *stoep* area; the use of corrugated steel sheeting in the residential and industrial. Within these images, there are hints of an extraordinary quality within the hard, grittiness of ordinary, everyday life in Woodstock. This aesthetic and architectural language is one of the qualities which give Woodstock its unique character and should be acknowledged if a true extraordinary sense of place is to be achieved with new architectural development in the everyday.
(Image by Jose Romeu).

Figure 17. ***ISO Cargo Containers at the Port of Cape Town***
Brightly coloured ISO steel cargo-containers at the Port of Cape Town - an everyday sight for many Capetonians. The aesthetic of the containers typical to that of an industrial language and can be seen in the built fabric throughout the Port. The modular, Lego-like quality of these steel boxes begins to reveal ideas in relation to an alternative use for these readily available resources. They can be structural as well as spatial - seen as thickened walls, carved out to accommodate daily activities of the everyday.
(Image by author)

Figure 18. *A scene typical to the coastline of Table Bay.*
Only fifty years ago, the shoreline of Table Bay was on the doorstep of Woodstock - Now an almost forgotten connection to this rich cultural characteristic of greater Cape Town.
In addition, the image also brings to mind the conventional method of portraying *'mixed-use'* in conceptual diagrams – where the dedication of a certain colour in the horizontal and vertical layers is indicative of a different, alternative use.

04 - Makings of the Everyday

shipping containers as an (extra)ordinary technology

The use of cargo-containers as an alternative approach to modular construction and technology can be seen as a simple and ordinary one. With regard to this notion of the simple and ordinary, architects all over the world have begun to show that when these items of our everyday experience are engaged with in creative and innovative ways, the result can be (extra)ordinary. As will be discussed further on, the standard sizes of the shipping containers, as well as their inherent structural strength, waterproof nature and availability, result in them being an ideal modular component, either as an individual unit for accommodation or as a modular structural component. [11] In its simplest sense, these ready-to-go units can be stacked, positioned side-by-side or used as an individual component in building construction. Because of the modular nature of the units, little additional resources or specialised agencies need be employed on the construction site – that is if the construction is to involve only the use of the containers as the primary building component. This could mean a drastic reduction in construction time and it turn a saving on construction cost - which is an issue most architects deal with everyday, particularly in our current economy.

So why is it then that this readily available, sustainable and efficient resource is not used more regularly in architectural practice in South Africa? Perhaps it is a question of aesthetic appearance? The idea of a corrugated steel box may not be as appealing compared to the aesthetic of other more traditional construction materials – timber and brickwork etc. However, the aesthetic can be adapted to suit its site and place if need be. The potential for this simple and ordinary technology is there - for the (extra)ordinary to be revealed, we need to 'think out of the box'.

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[11] Smith, J.D. 2006. *Shipping Containers as Building Components*. Unpublished Thesis Dissertation. Department of the Built Environment, University of New Brighton.

Materiality and Structure

The cargo-containers have a simple and straight forward purpose: to safely store and contain goods (cargo) for the purpose of intermodal transportation. Intermodal transportation means the containers can be easily moved from one transportation system to another without having to be unpacked or modified etc. The transportation systems associated with cargo-containers include transportation by sea on the deck of a cargo-ship, by road on the deck of a flat-bed truck and by railway on the trailers of freight trains. As a result they are in constant exposure to harsh and extreme environmental conditions. What this then means is that the containers have to be designed and built to withstand these extreme environmental conditions in order to safely store and contain its cargo. The primary material used in the construction of the containers is as previously mentioned, steel. However, normal mild steel would be susceptible to corrosion and structure compromising rust when exposed to harsh weather conditions for extended periods of time. Because the containers have to withstand extreme conditions during their long and often rough journeys the steel used in the construction of the containers is of a different nature to that of the steel in conventional building construction.

The steel used to construct the containers is a weathering or weather resistant, anti-corrosion steel also known as Cor-Ten steel. Cor-Ten steel belongs to a group of steel alloys developed to eliminate the need for painting and forms a stable rust-like appearance if exposed to extreme weather for a few years. [12] With the case of the cargo-containers, they are usually primed and painted in a multitude of various colours. As mentioned above, COR-TEN was developed to eliminate the need for painting; however, the painting of the containers does not compromise the weather resistant quality of the COR-TEN steel. Painted Cor-Ten steel has both the protection of the paint and the protective quality of the steel itself. This leaves the containers being an ideal weatherproof unit, able to withstand harsh weather conditions without incurring the harsh side-effects of structure compromising corrosion which regular mild steel would otherwise incur if left untreated and exposed to harsh environmental conditions.

With regard to the actual construction and structure of the containers, the method is quite simple and ordinary. A box-like frame structure is constructed from Cor-Ten sections welded together and then the corrugated wall, roof and floor panels are all welded to the frame, sealed with a primer and then painted. Once all the panels have been tack-welded in place, the entire seam where the sheeting meets the steel frame is welded to ensure a watertight interface. The welds are then coated with a rust inhibiting primer as this forms the only weak point of the construction as the point of welding is susceptible to rust and corrosion. The corrugated side wall panels increase the overall strength and durability of the structure. The result is an extremely strong, durable and weatherproof unit which can be stacked in multiple levels without compromising its structural integrity and able to withstand just about anything that Mother Nature can throw at it.

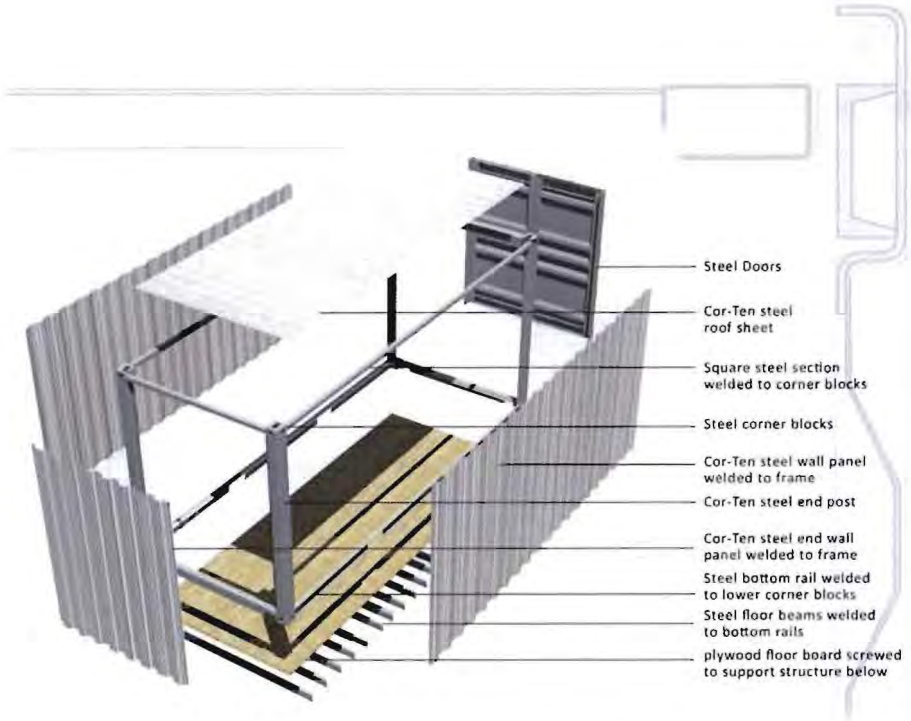

Figure 19. Anatomy of the container. Image by author.

12 source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weathering_steel

Dimensions and Modular Design

Figure 20. Height comparison between the standard 40' ISO container and 40' Hi-Cube ISO container. Image by author.

For reasons concerning intermodal transportation and efficiency of use, the containers are designed and sized according to strict ISO (International Standards Organisation) regulations and specifications. The containers are available in a number of different lengths and sizes (although not all of them conform to ISO regulations) but the most commonly used containers come in 2 standard sizes:

- The 20' ISO container: equivalent to 6.05m in outer length.
- The 40' ISO container: equivalent to 12.1m in outer length.

Each of the above containers has a standard external width of 2.5m and an external height of 2.6m. Internal lengths, widths and heights tend to differ slightly as the wall thickness and construction might differ depending on the manufacturer. However, the general consensus here is that internal dimensions of the 20' and the 40' are equal to about 5.71m and 12.03m in length respectively, 2.35m in width and 2.38m in height. The minimal internal floor to ceiling height of these standard containers poses a few issues with regard to using the container as a 'habitable' unit.

There is however, a variation to the 40' (12.1m) standard container: Known as the HI-CUBE container. The 40' or 12.1m High-Cube container is the more popular option among architects as it has an internal height of 2.65m – a much more comfortable floor to ceiling height for residential and or commercial applications where the consensus is that a floor to ceiling height of around 2.4m is generally acceptable. [13] The fact that these containers are designed according to strict ISO specifications and sizes means that they are an ideal modular component in that they can be stacked and staggered in multiple levels and connected easily to each other via a twist- lock mechanism which is inserted into the corner post blocks. The twist-lock mechanisms are crucial for securing the containers when being transported either, by sea, by road or by rail. The cast steel post blocks situated in the corners of the containers, allow for the containers to be connected both vertically and horizontally using the twist-lock mechanisms. For architectural applications it seems that the containers are either bolted or welded to each other in favour of the conventional twist-lock mechanism.

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[13] Smith, J.D. 2006. *Shipping Containers as Building Components*. Unpublished Thesis Dissertation. Department of the Built Environment, University of New Brighton.

Conventional Stacking Method

Figure 21 and 22. Perspective view and side elevation of containers stacked one on top of the other. The more conventional method to stacking containers. Shipping containers are designed to carry load through their four corner posts only. From an architectural point of view this drastically limits the spatial possibilities of the containers. Images by author.

An Alternative Stacking Method

Figure 23 and 24. Perspective view and side elevation of containers stacked in a staggered formation. Once again this is the only other alternative to stacking containers without modifying them as the load is still being carried through the four corner posts. This approach to stacking is not a common or conventional stacking method but it begins to reveal ideas as to how the spatial experience and architectural aesthetic can be manipulated by engaging with the modular nature of the containers. Images by author.

There are many advantages to using the cargo-containers as a component in construction. With this being said there are also some disadvantages. The following is a brief list of some of the more general pros and cons associated with regard to the ISO cargo-containers as alternative building blocks.

PROS

- **Availability**: shipping containers are readily available, either new or 2nd use. As long as there is trade on the seas, there will be a need for containers.
- **Cost**: Research has shown that the cost of purchasing new or 2nd use containers is relatively cheap compared to conventional materials. Cost is a major concern with regard to our current economic situation.
- **Strength and Durability**: The containers have been designed according to strict ISO standards. They are designed to carry heavy loads and can be stacked fully loaded up to 9 levels high and up to 12 levels when empty. They are designed to function in harsh environments – the steel used is called Cor-Ten Steel and is a corrosion resistant material used in many industries where the steel is exposed to the environmental elements. These qualities therefore make the containers very durable and weatherproof.
- **Modular**: The containers are designed to specific international standards which make them an ideal modular unit which can be combined to form larger structures etc. They are also designed in a way that when stacked they can be locked together, increasing the structural capacity of the units.
- **Transport**: Transporting the units is relatively easy. Ships, trucks, cranes etc.
- **Efficiency**: Due to the standardised, modular nature of the containers, ease of installation on site can drastically speed-up construction time.
- **Sustainability**: Sustainability in architecture is of great concern these days and one which I feel should be acknowledged. The re-use of a container as a building component can therefore provide a 2nd use for it and in doing so may reduce the embodied energy of the 'new building'.

CONS

- **Thermal issues:** As previously mentioned, steel is a good conductor of heat and therefore a careful look at insulation materials will have to be employed if the container is to be inhabited. The implication of this is that the internal spaces and in particular, finished floor to ceiling height will be reduced. Creative and innovative ways of dealing with insulation will need to be employed.

- **Size of Containers:** As the containers are designed to international standards, as standard units, the sizes of the containers may not be appropriate for all building typologies. This opens the door for creative and innovative ways in which the containers can be used in construction – modification, cutting away of walls, floors and roof etc. This however may compromise the structural integrity of the unit and will have to be noted and considered.

- **Aesthetic appearance:** Not everyone will appreciate the aesthetic of a 'cold steel box'. This again allows for the investigation of innovative ways in which the aesthetic can be treated – to blend in with its context by cladding the units or if appropriate, treated in a way which still maintains the corrugated aesthetic but blends in subtly with its surrounding context.

05-Design Development

program

My thesis began with an idea or concept, the concept of the everyday and the (extra)ordinary and how that idea could be translated into spatial and architectural ideas. Through my research and investigation process I arrived at the idea of Woodstock as *a place of exceptional everydayness* and the shipping container as *an (extra)ordinary spatial object of the everyday*. At this point I had my mind set on finding a site in Woodstock, particularly along Albert Road if possible but I hadn't yet thought about an appropriate program and function.
When thinking about a program appropriate for Woodstock and something that would challenge the idea and notion of the steel box as a container of goods and nothing else, I wanted to be able to test the box in both a private application as well as a public application.

I decided on the program:

Boutique Hotel (private) **with Creative and Urban Space** (public)

A place made using re-purposed shipping containers to accommodate business people (or anyone for that matter) who are in town for a few days and looking for something different, something out of the ordinary, something (extra)ordinary. A place that would cater for the creative sector with studio's and workshops at street level as well as the public sector with the incorporation of an urban hangout zone where a restaurant, cafe, lounge, and potentially a night club can be catered for. Due to Albert Road already being known as a thriving creative hub of sorts, where *innovation* and *making* are the prevalent themes associated with the place, I believe that a Boutique Hotel made using shipping containers which offers something out of the ordinary can aid in sustaining and promoting Albert Road and Woodstock as a place of exceptional everydayness. Where the ordinary has the potential to be truly (extra)ordinary.

Schedule of Accommodation

Private application: *Boutique Hotel*

- 20 Boutique Hotel Rooms with toilet and bathroom
- Parking to cater for the hotel guests and staff
- Lobby/Reception area
- Restaurant/Lounge (shared with the public)
- Landscaped Recreational area
- - Swimming Pool
- - Tanning Deck
- - Cocktail lounge/Deck
- Seminar and meeting space
- Admin offices

Semi-Public application: *Creative Zone*

- Creative studio's and workshops (live/work units)

Public application: *Urban Hangout*

- Internet cafe
- Lounge/Bar/nightclub
- Outdoor relaxation space
- Exhibition space

Site

Once I had settled on a program appropriate to the creative boutique type theme of Woodstock and Albert Road, I proceeded to look for an appropriate site.

My initial site explorations were focused on open pieces of land along Albert Road, which to my discovery were few and far between. What little open space there is has generally been dedicated to public open space as recreational parks etc. Due to the fact that open land and public space is a scarce commodity in Woodstock and in particular along Albert Road, I shifted my focus to abandoned and derelict buildings.

I met with Elad Kirschenbaum, Chairman of the Woodstock Improvement District (W.I.D) to ask him if he knew of any potential sites where buildings were vacant and abandoned or earmarked for demolition. He informed me of one site along Albert Road which he knew that the buildings were abandoned as they had been standing vacant for the last few years and as far as he knew there was nothing planned for them anytime soon.

The site is located at the meeting point where New Market Street runs into Albert Road. It acts as an entry site to the 'creative zone" of Woodstock coming from the CBDThe railway tracks to the north of the site have determined its triangular shape and add to the site's industrial presence and character.

The current buildings on the site were once the premises of Andy's Boat Shop, and today it stands empty and derelict and serves as shelter to a few homeless people. My proposition is to demolish what is left of the existing buildings and proceed with a 'fresh site'.

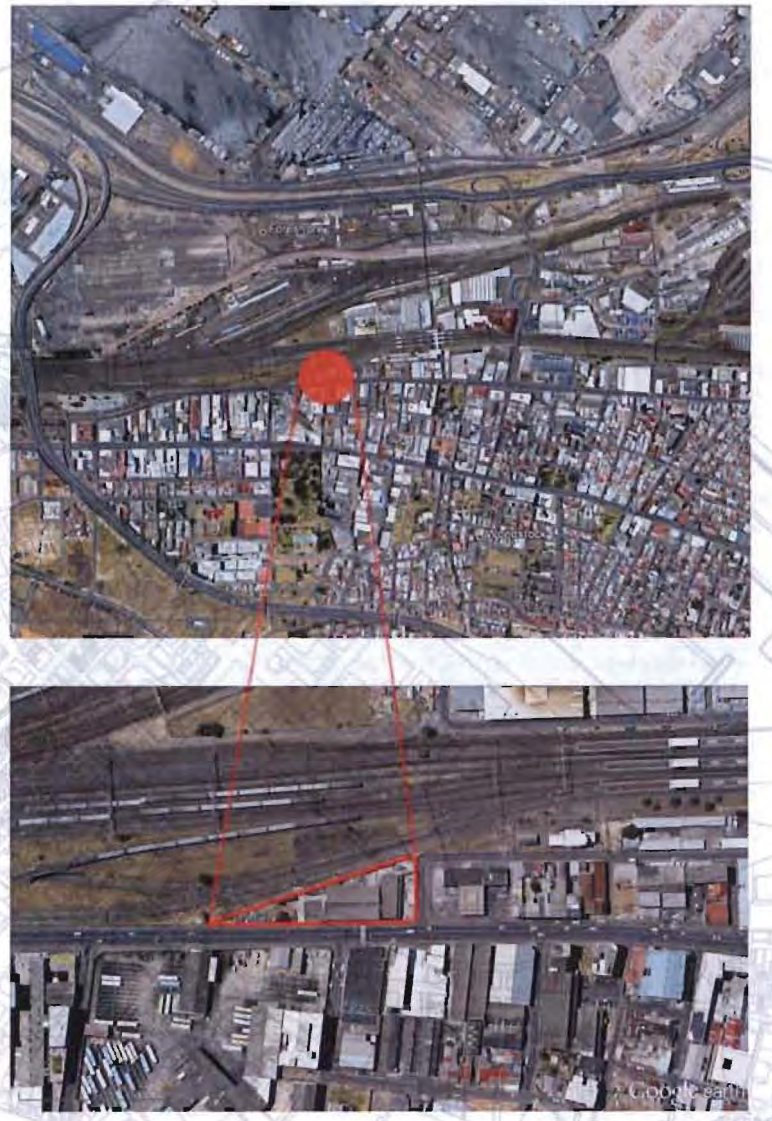


Figure 25. Site locality - Situated at the beginning of Albert Road within close proximity to the CBD and the Harbour. There is a strong industrial presence about the site due to its proximity to the railway tracks to the north and its connection as the entry site into the industrial (making) sector of Albert Road. Image by author.

Figure 26. View from Albert Road. Image by author.

Figure 27. View from Albert Road. Image by author

Figure 28. In a state of decay. Image by author

Figure 29. Abandoned and derelict. Image by author

Views from the Site

Figure 30. View of Table Mountain from west of the site. Image by author.

Figure 31. View of Table Mountain from east boundary. Image by author.

Figure 32. Train passing by the northern site boundary. Image by author.

Figure 33. Trains to the north of the site. Image by author.

The Module

understanding the rules

Shipping containers are designed according to strict ISO standards and as such are only able to carry load through each of the four corner posts. They are hence modular in nature, however as standard modules their stacking options are limited to two methods (figure 34 and 35) - the conventional approach where the containers are stacked one on top of the other, and the alternative approach where the containers are staggered and offset where they are still able to carry the load through the four corner posts.

The alternative approach begins to reveal ideas as to how the spatial experience and architectural aesthetic of the steel box can be manipulated by engaging with the predetermined modular nature of the containers. For small-scale or low-cost projects these methods of stacking may be appropriate however, in order to maximise the spatial experience of the box and create a truly (extra)ordinary space one would need to look at alternative ways of dealing with stacking.

standard container plan
Load is transferred through the four corner posts

Figure 34. Conventional stacking method. Image by author.

Figure 35. Alternative stacking method. Image by author.

The Module

establishing a new set of rules

As previously discussed, due to the modular nature of the containers their structure only allows for 2 types of stacking methods as they are only able to carry load through the four corner posts.

In my early model building investigations where I was experimenting with various ways of stacking and twisting the container boxes so that they weren't always stacked in their conventional manner, the spaces, cantilevers and thickened walls which were being created began to inspire me and started speaking of the spatial potential of these ordinary boxes. However, I soon realised that what I was doing was too irregular and random and for those spaces to actually be created all of the containers would need structural modification at different points due to the random positioning and stacking of the containers. When thinking about how I could deal with this issue I began to rethink the concept of the container as a module – in that the original container's main structural points are the four corners posts, and as a result it means only 2 different stacking options are possible which puts drastic limits on the spatial potential of these modules.

This was the next step in my process: To establish a set of rules to create a uniform order in which the containers could be modified in such a way that they retain their modular properties but with more stacking options. This would then determine the 'stacking options' and spatial possibilities.

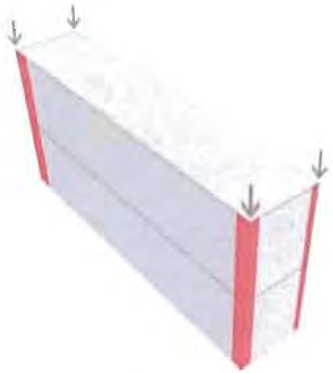
Figure 36 an 37. These are the spaces and effects (the cantilever) we want to be making with these modular units – unfortunately not possible without modification as the point loads of the containers are no longer being carried through the four corner posts. Image by author.

Figure 37. The Cantilever – possible only with structural modification. Image by author

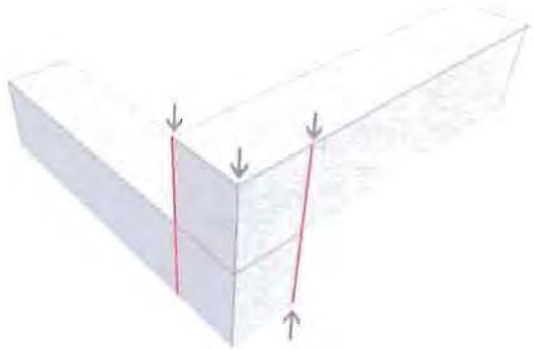
The Module

establishing a new set of rules

The single Module:
Indicating the load distribution through the four corner posts



Stacking the Module:
Indicating the load distribution through the four corner posts



Cantilevering the Module:
Indicating the point- load distribution at weak points in the module structure. This would compromise the container structure and cause it to fail.

Figure 38. Illustrates the load distribution of the containers (modules) through the four corner posts. When attempting to cantilever the container, the red lines in the 3rd diagram indicate where the point-loads are being distributed at non-structural points. This would compromise the modules structure and cause it to fail at those points. In order to achieve the cantilever and other spatial conditions, a new set of rules for working with the container would need to be established. Image by author.

The Module

establishing a new set of rules

The New Module Structure:
By inserting steel section columns at a spacing equal to the width of a container, it sets up a regular structural system within the module.

The New Module Structure:
The addition of the new structure enables the module to accept loads at any of the points.
This sets up the 'rules of engagment' and establishes an order for 'stacking'.

The New Module Structure:
With the new structure installed and working within the parameters of the structural order, it would now make it possible to achieve the cantilver and other (extra)ordinary spatial conditions.

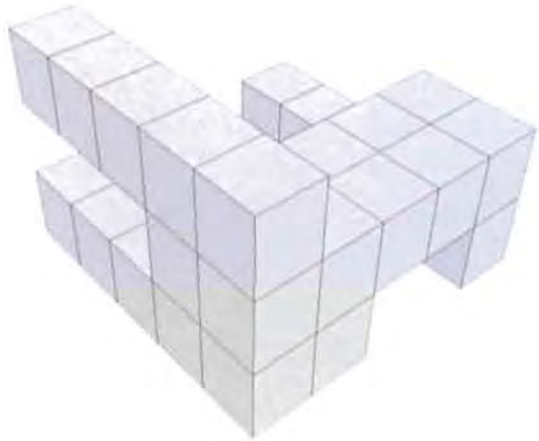


Figure 39. Illustrates the setting up of a new structural framework within the container. The framework is based on a spacing equal to the width of a shipping container. Image by author.

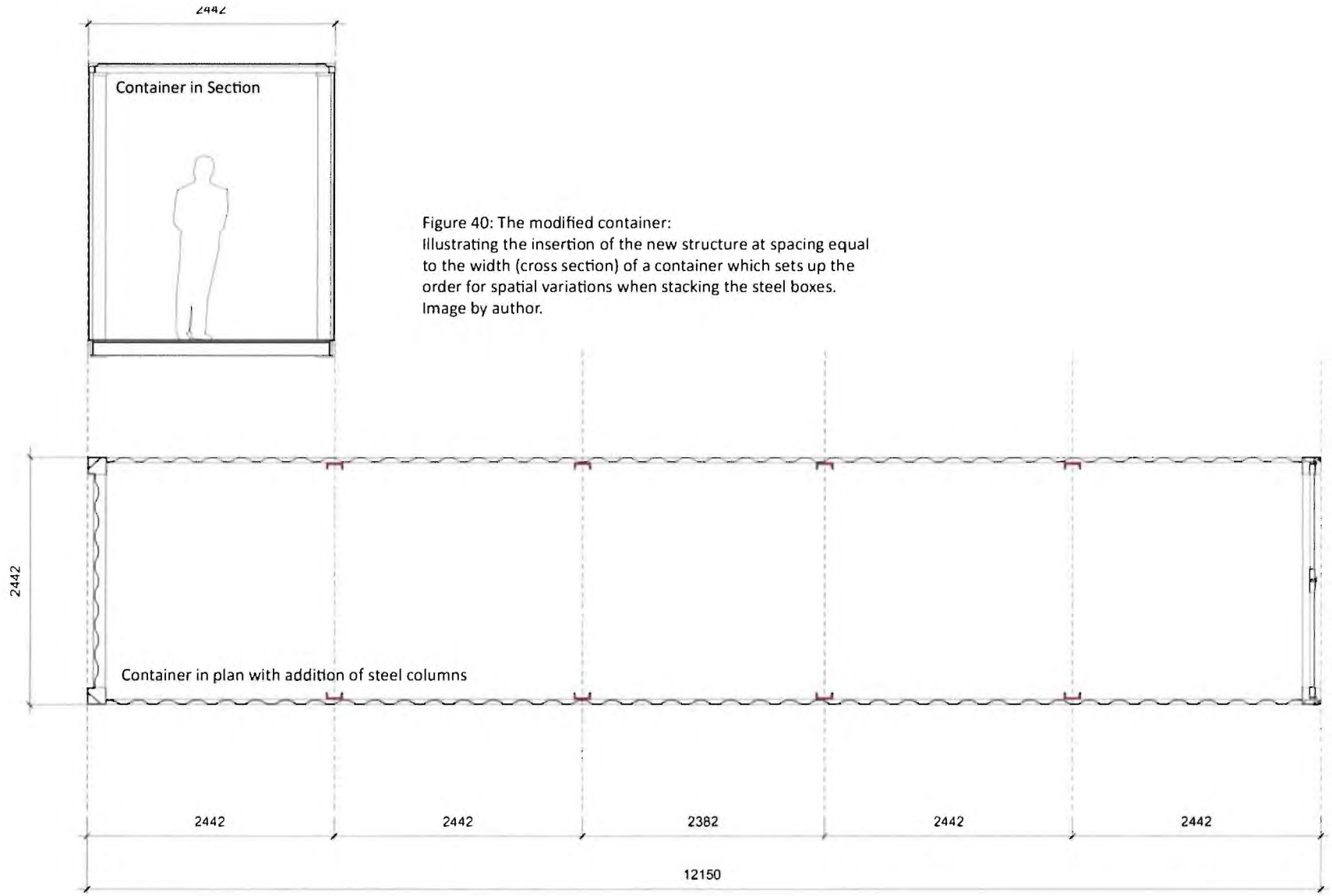


Figure 40: The modified container:
Illustrating the insertion of the new structure at spacing equal to the width (cross section) of a container which sets up the order for spatial variations when stacking the steel boxes.
Image by author.

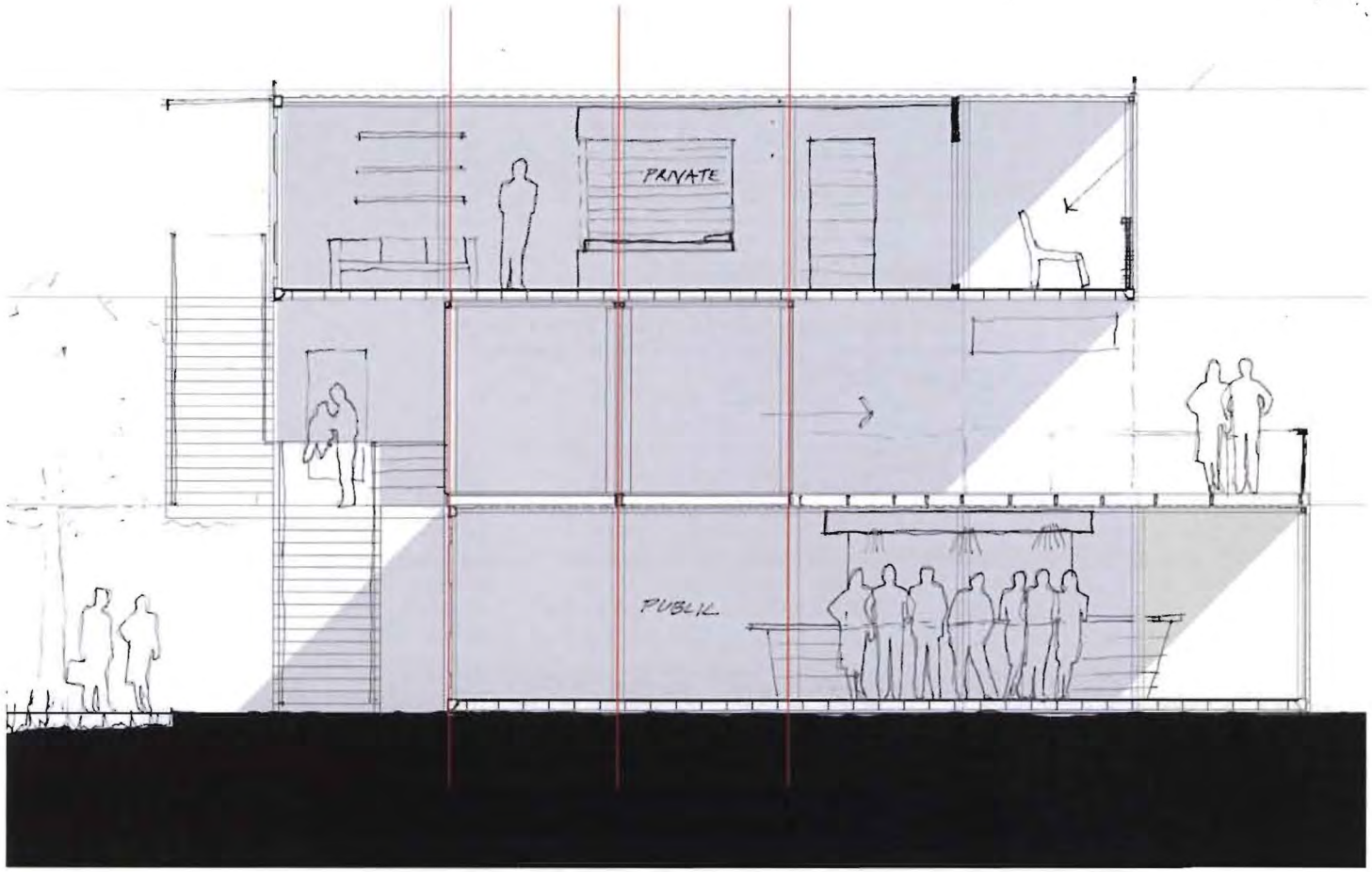


Figure 41. Diagrammatic section illustrating that with the introduction of the new structural order to the container, stacking possibilities such as the cantilever are now possible in varying degrees. The stacking options and hence the spatial variations are increased as a result. Image by author.

The Module

thermal and acoustic Insulation

As was previously mentioned in the Pros and Cons section, the corrugated steel boxes as standard modules are highly susceptible to thermal heating and cooling as steel is an excellent conductor of heat. For the containers to be made habitable in the case of the Boutique Hotel rooms as well as appropriated for the creative studio's and public facilities, this issue of insulation is of high importance and would have to be carefully considered.

The issue of having to insulate the containers poses other problems in that the internal dimensions of the container would be further decreased. Floor to ceiling height and wall to wall width will be most affected by the addition of an insulated drywall within the box.

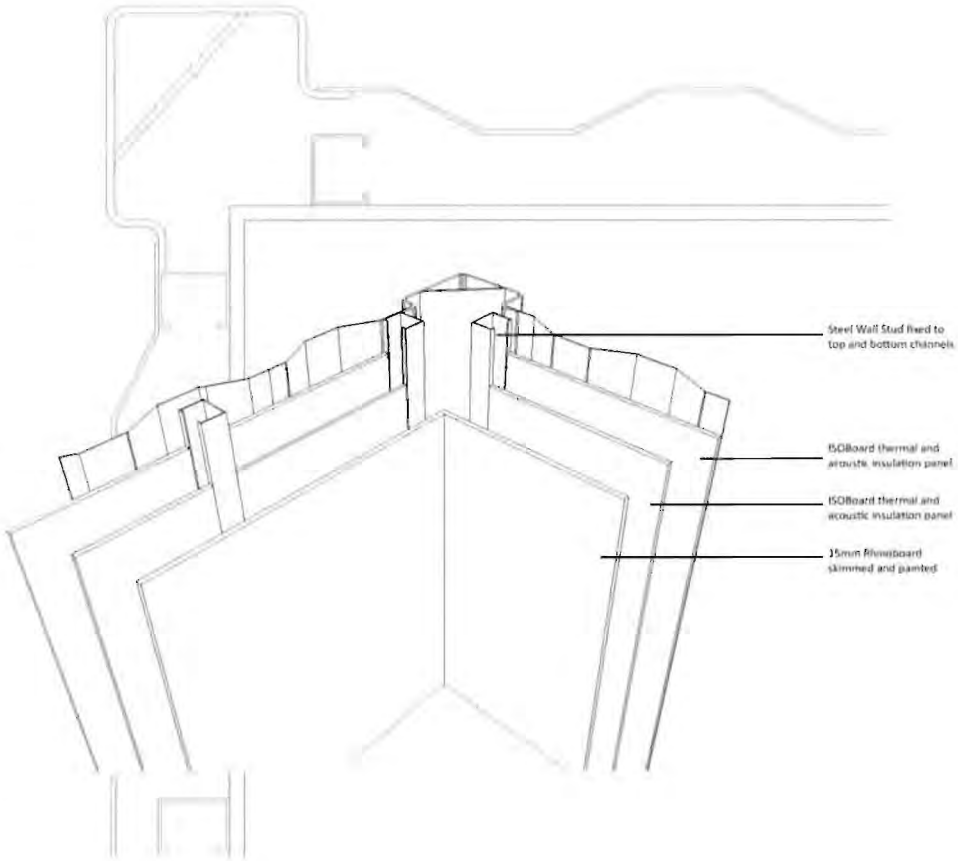


Figure 42. Diagram illustrating an approach to insulating the steel box. A 75mm think typical drywall construction with the addition of thermal and acoustic insulation panels in the drywall cavity. An additional thermal layer can be added in the cavity between the insulation panels if necessary. Image by author.

Site Strategy

responding to site geometry

Once these rules of engagement had been established I began to investigate a spatial strategy and concept for the site in which these steel boxes could be used.

The site itself posed a few challenges in that it is a triangular site. Responding to the geometry of the site was one of the more important factors when looking at a site strategy. Another challenge of the site are the railway tracks which run almost parallel to the north boundary of the site. The train tracks add to the site's industrial feel and character but presented the question of how to deal with the noise aspect of the trains going past.

Possibly *this* aspect of the site could be used as a mechanism to enhance the experience of the place?
The north facing hotel rooms would have views out over the railway lines and to the harbour. This and the sounds of the trains going past could enhance the users experience of 'staying in a container'. At ground level where the public spaces will be incorporated, it would make sense to shield the space more from the noise of the trains, however allow glimpses through the building which may show the train moving past in the background and allow some noise to permeate into the public space. This would also further enhance the experience of the place.

With this in mind I proceeded to look for an appropriate way in which to respond to these challenges.

The question I was faced with was: *How can architecture emerge from the site using these ordinary steel boxes of the everyday?*

As the container modules are linear in design, I began to explore the new buildings as a set of linear structures which could contain the spaces associated with the boutique hotel as well as the public spaces. The idea of the courtyard building seemed appropriate as it is a typical building typology among the industrial fabric in Woodstock and it would allow the public spaces to be contained and shielded from the noise of the trains passing by to the north.

Site Strategy

01 - the courtyard

As previously mentioned, the courtyard building typology features quite prominently in Woodstock and was the starting point when looking at a way to deal with the triangular site. My response to the site's geometry was to position the 'linear building edges' parallel to the north and south boundary lines and in doing so setting up a triangular courtyard space in the center. The courtyard is then in a sense shielded from the noise from the passing trains to the north.

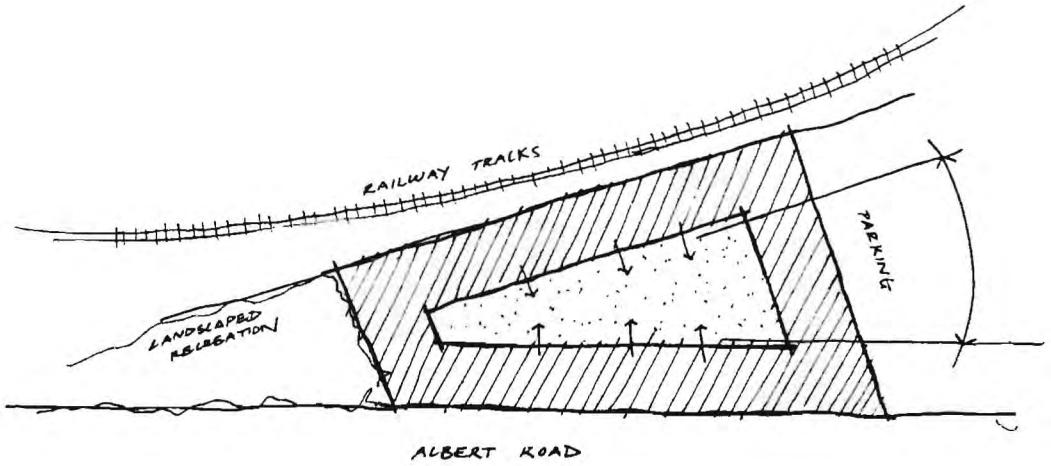


Figure 43. Conceptual site strategy 01: illustrating the creation of a typical courtyard building. The geometry was informed by the site's triangular geometry and as a result a triangular courtyard space is formed at the center.
Image by author.

Site Strategy

02 - deconstructing the courtyard

With the notion of the courtyard building established, I began to explore how the edges could be made more permeable so as to allow for the public realm to move through the interior courtyard space. By removing the corners of the perimeter block along the Albert Road edge, the building begins to open itself up to the street and sets up two entry and exit points which can be easily monitored.

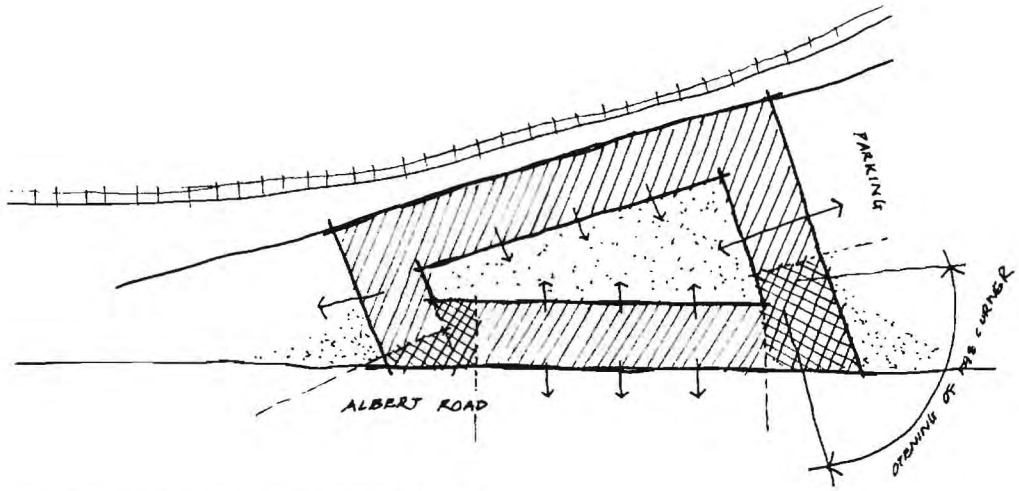


Figure 44. Conceptual site strategy 02: illustrating the deconstruction of the corners along Albert Road. In opening up the courtyard at these points it allows for easier access and flow into the central public space. Image by author.

Site Strategy

03 - the urban courtyard

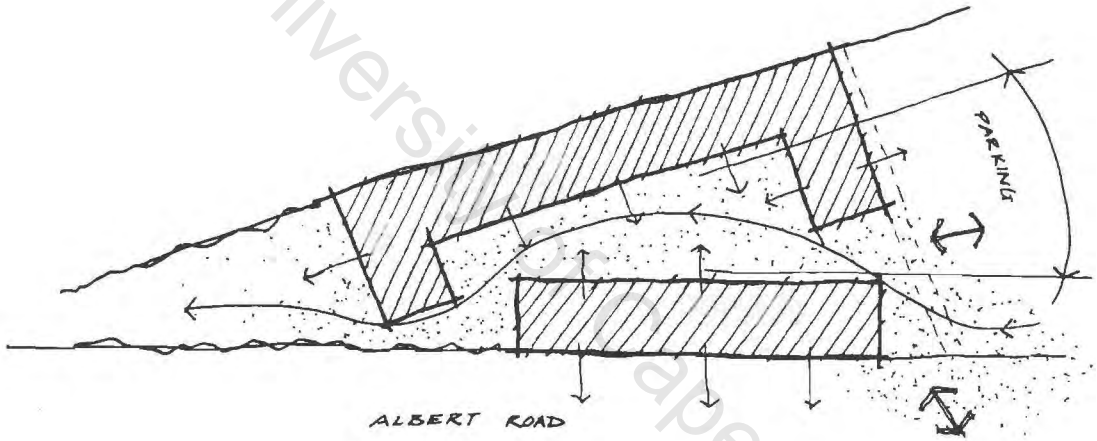


Figure 45. With the corners opened up along the Albert Road edge, the perimeter block is separated into two linear structures. The structure along the Albert Road edge forms the public interface with the courtyard behind and the structure along the northern boundary allows the courtyard space to to be contained and shielded from the noisy train tracks behind.
The result is the *Urban Courtyard*. Image by author

Site Strategy

04 - the urban courtyard

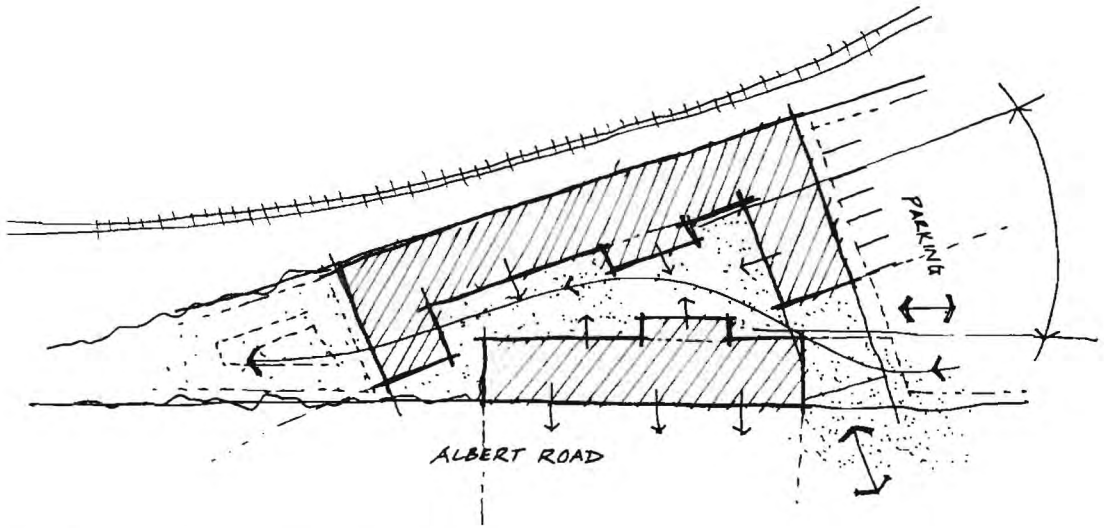
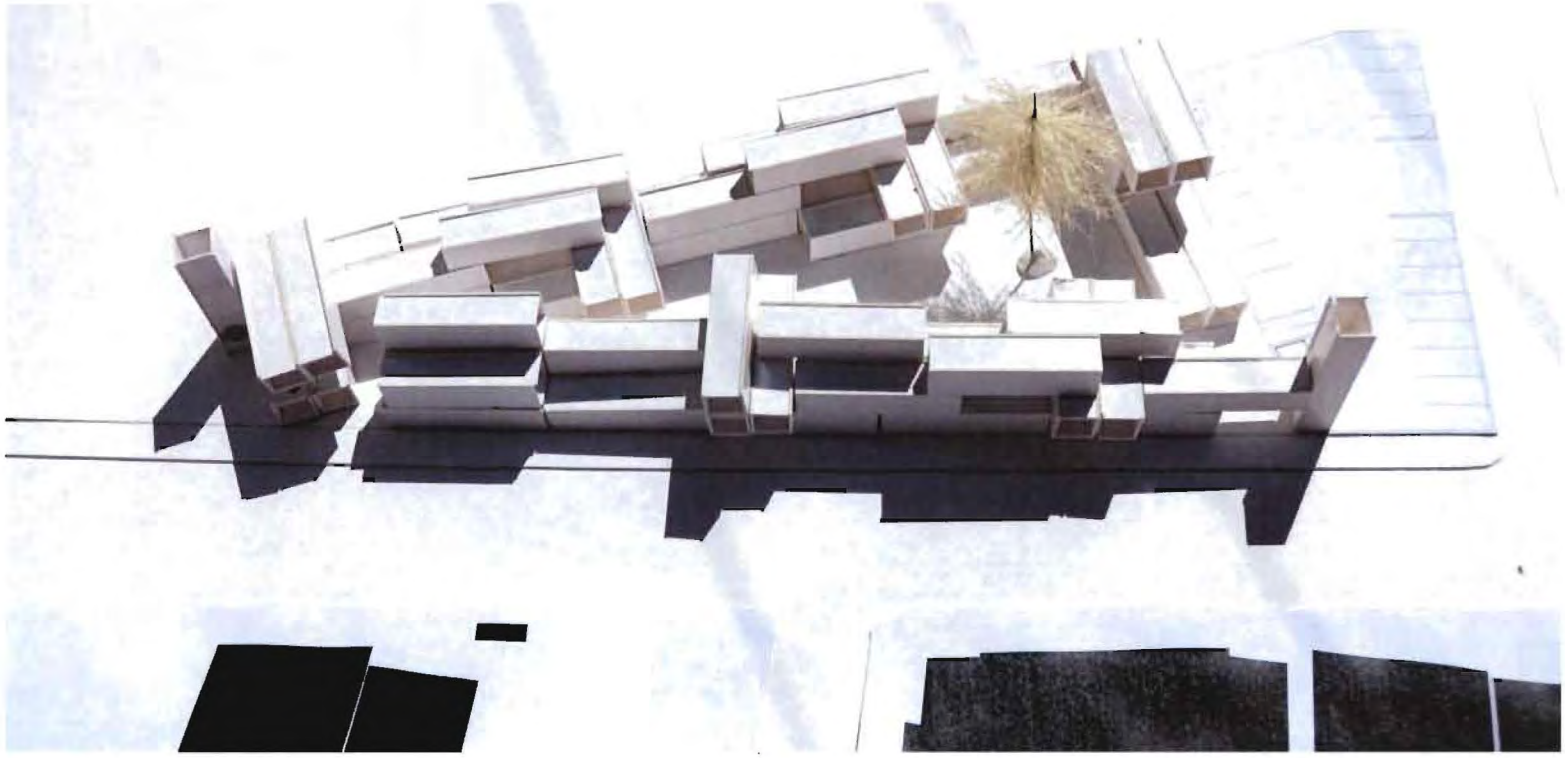


Figure 46. Conceptual site strategy 04: The introduction of nodes which protrude into the Urban Courtyard begins to establish a spatial hierarchy within the courtyard by setting up different zones within the public realm.
Image by author.

Site Strategy

the urban courtyard explored in 3D

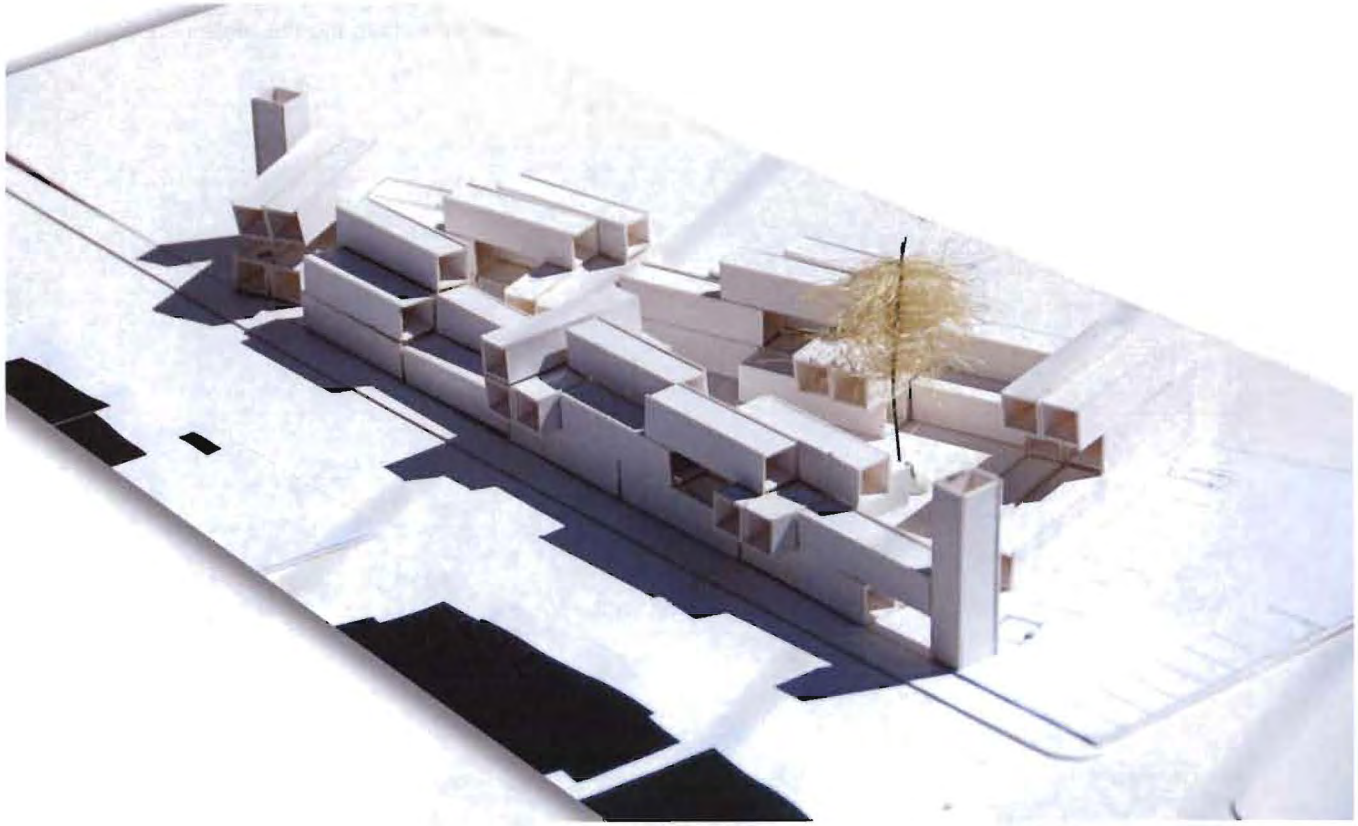
Figure 47. Model building exploration of the Urban Courtyard concept. The stacking of the containers has been determined by the installation of the new structural order and begins to describe the potential spatial qualities of the space contained within and around the containers. Image by author.



Site Strategy

the urban courtyard explored in 3D

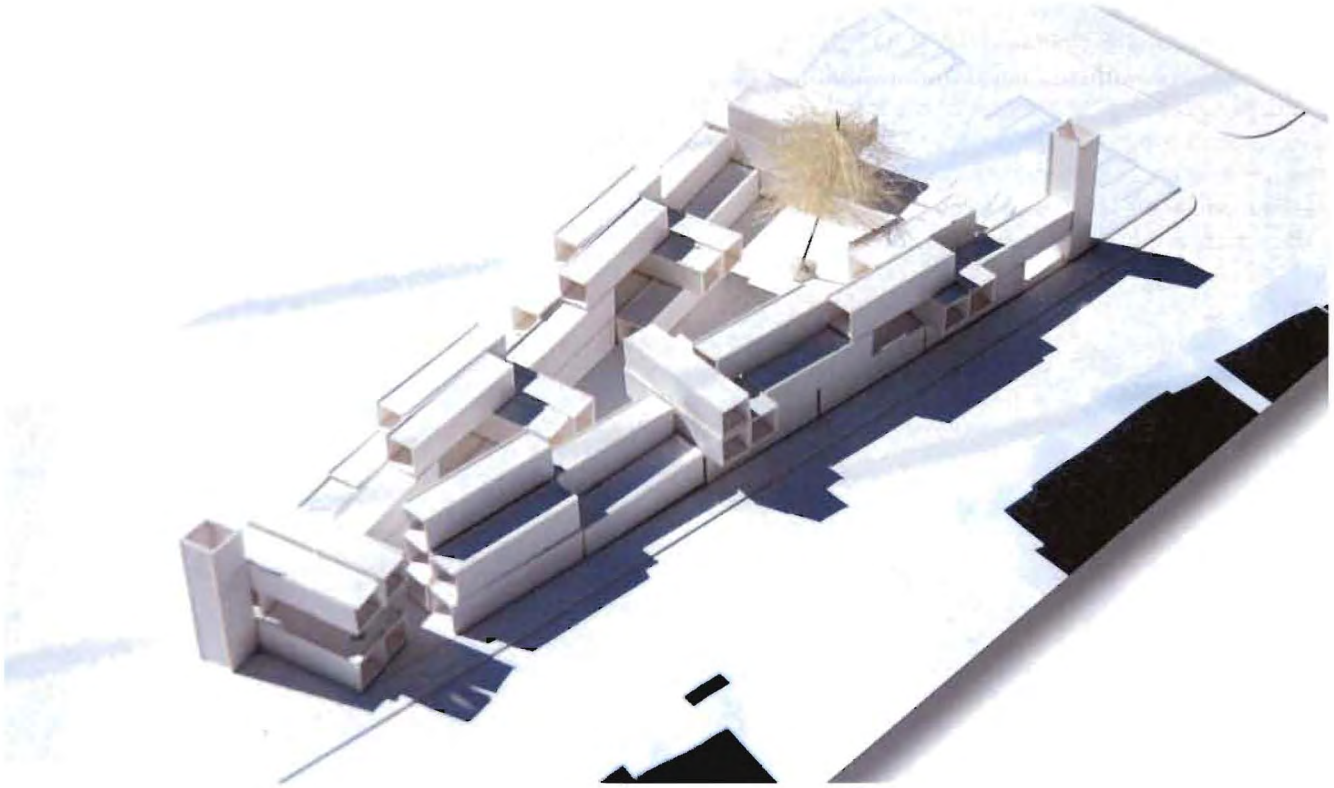
Figure 48. Model building exploration of the Urban Courtyard concept. Image by author.



Site Strategy

the urban courtyard explored in 3D

Figure 49. Model building exploration of the Urban Courtyard concept. Image by author.



The Boutique Module

the steel box as a container for living

When thinking about how to deal with the container for the purposes of inhabiting and in particular how to deal with the necessary services (water, toilets, showers, basins etc), I began exploring the concept of the *module within the module*. This idea revolves around a pre-fabricated 'service module' which would incorporate the bathroom and possibly thickened wall space to act as cupboard/storage space etc. The modular wall panels could be manufactured off-site and easily installed as a kit of parts within the container module.

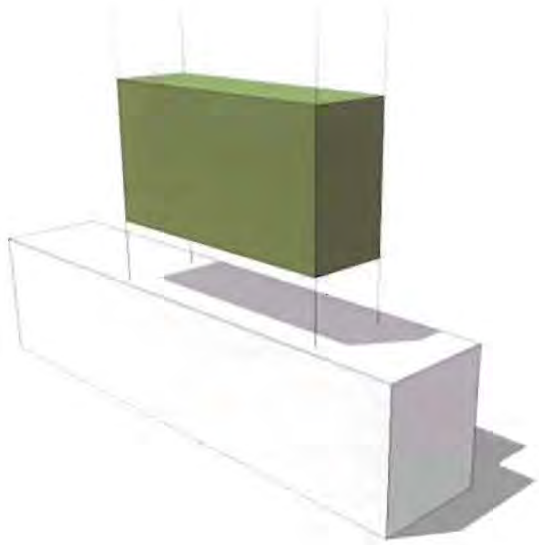


Figure 50. Conceptual diagram – the module within the module.
Image by author.

The Boutique Module 01

the steel box as a container for living

My first exploration with regard to the *service module* within the container module involved the incorporation of the bedroom and bathroom within the prefabricated module. The idea behind this was that the user would have the experience of sleeping within the module – enhancing the experience of staying in a container. By positioning the new module in the center of the container it formed a division where the spaces to the left and right of the module could be used as the lounge and outdoor balcony space. However, with the sleeping quarters installed within this module, the bed size was limited to a single bed. Not an ideal option for a Boutique Hotel room.

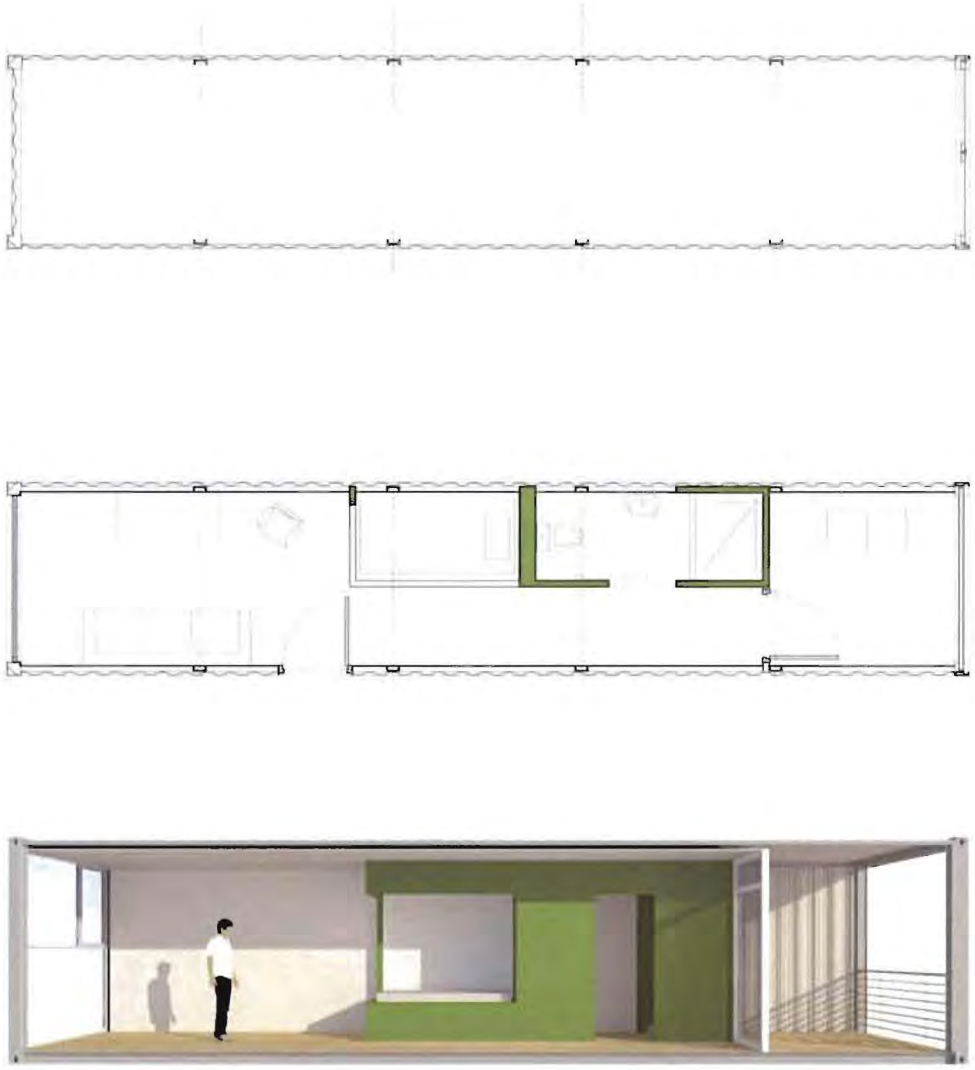


Figure 51. Boutique Room Exploration 01 – the module within the module. Image by author.

The Boutique Module 02

the steel box as a container for living

The next exploration kept a similar approach to the initial investigation where I looked at using the *service module* as a spatial separator – creating different spaces to either side of the unit. In this instance, I decided to position the module between the new structures installed in the container and allowed for circulation through the module as opposed to alongside it as was the case with the first investigation. By using the module now purely as a bathroom space it meant that a double bed could now be used.

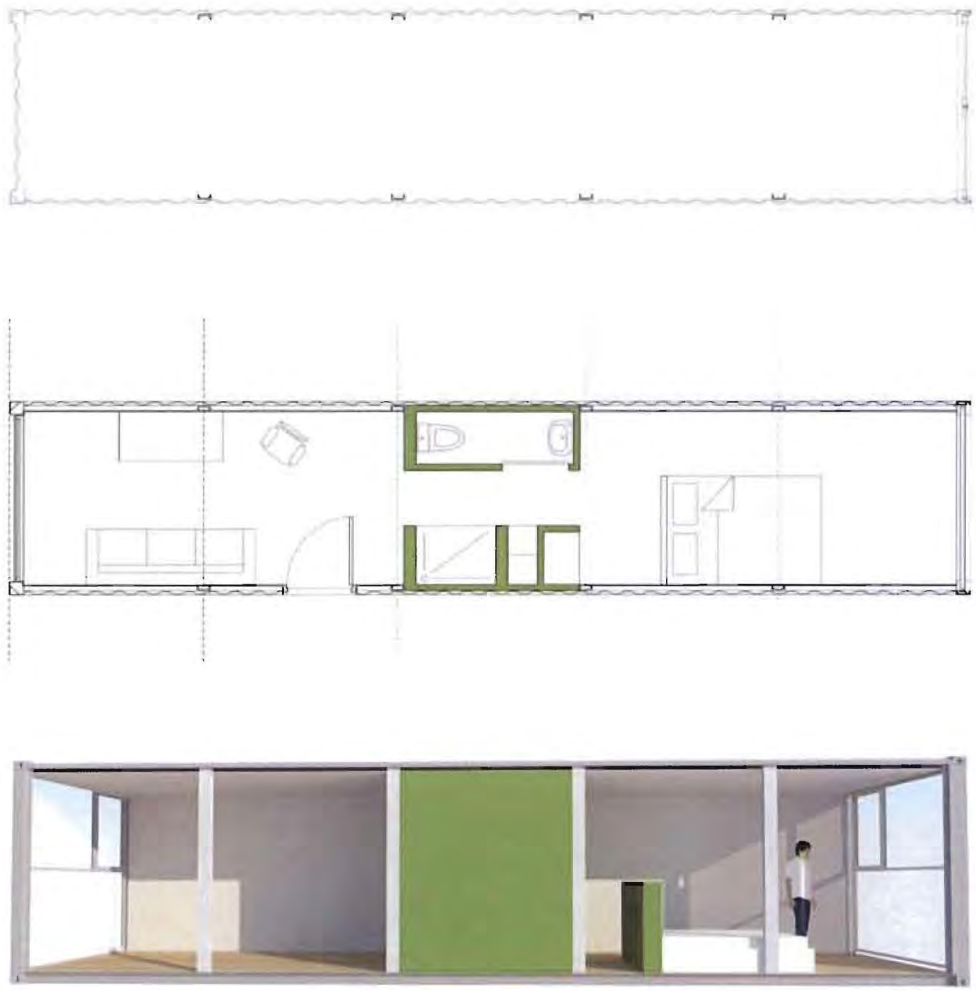


Figure 51. Boutique Room Exploration 02 – the module within the module. Image by author.

The Boutique Module 03

the steel box as a container for living

My third exploration looked at moving the *service module* to one side of the container. Again in this exploration, the module is fitted between the new structure and its purpose is to contain the bathroom and related services. This strategy feels the best out of the 3 explorations as it opens up the space within the container and allows for flowing movement from the service module at one end to the enclosed balcony at the other.
As a side-thought, to add to the *boutique* experience of the container, the service module could be fitted with one way glazing on the end. The user could be showering 'in full view' of everyone with a view out to the mountain or harbor while knowing that they can't be seen.

That would be quite an (extra)ordinary experience I think?

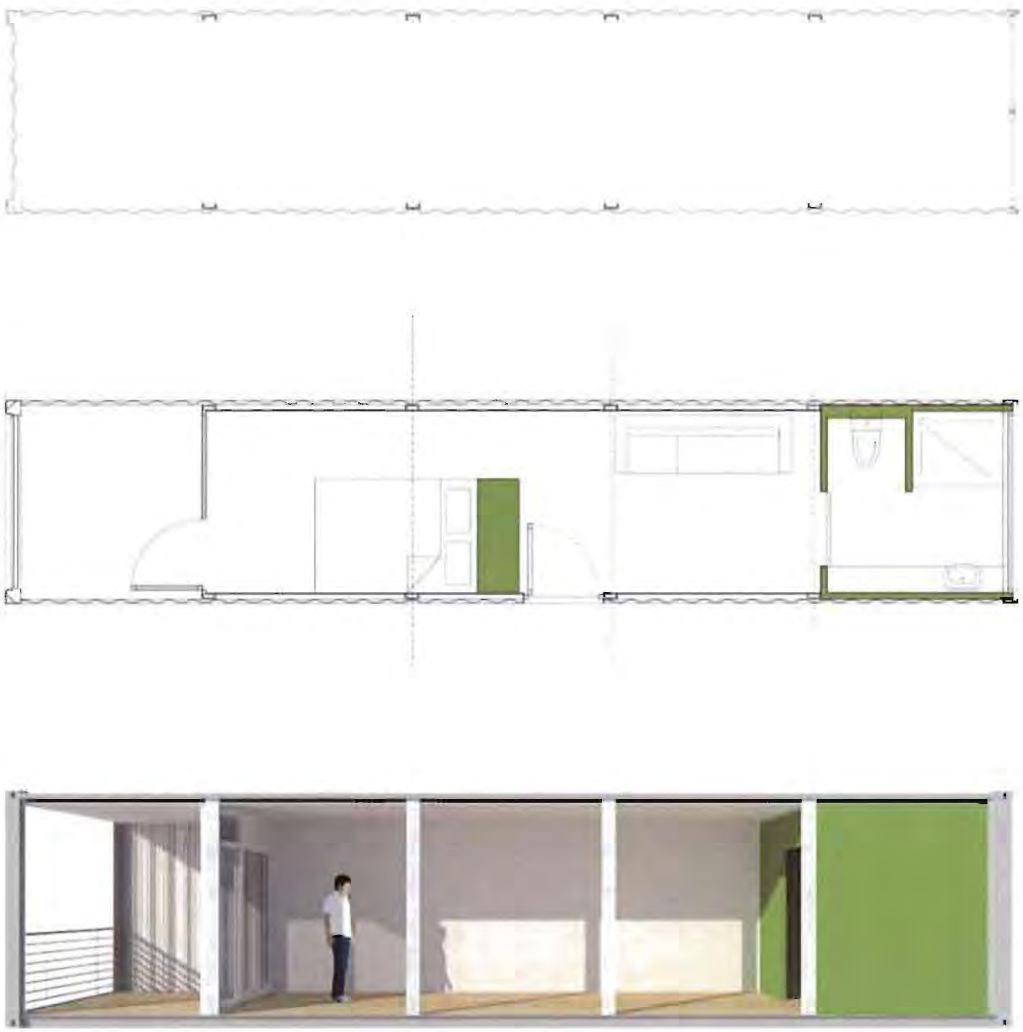
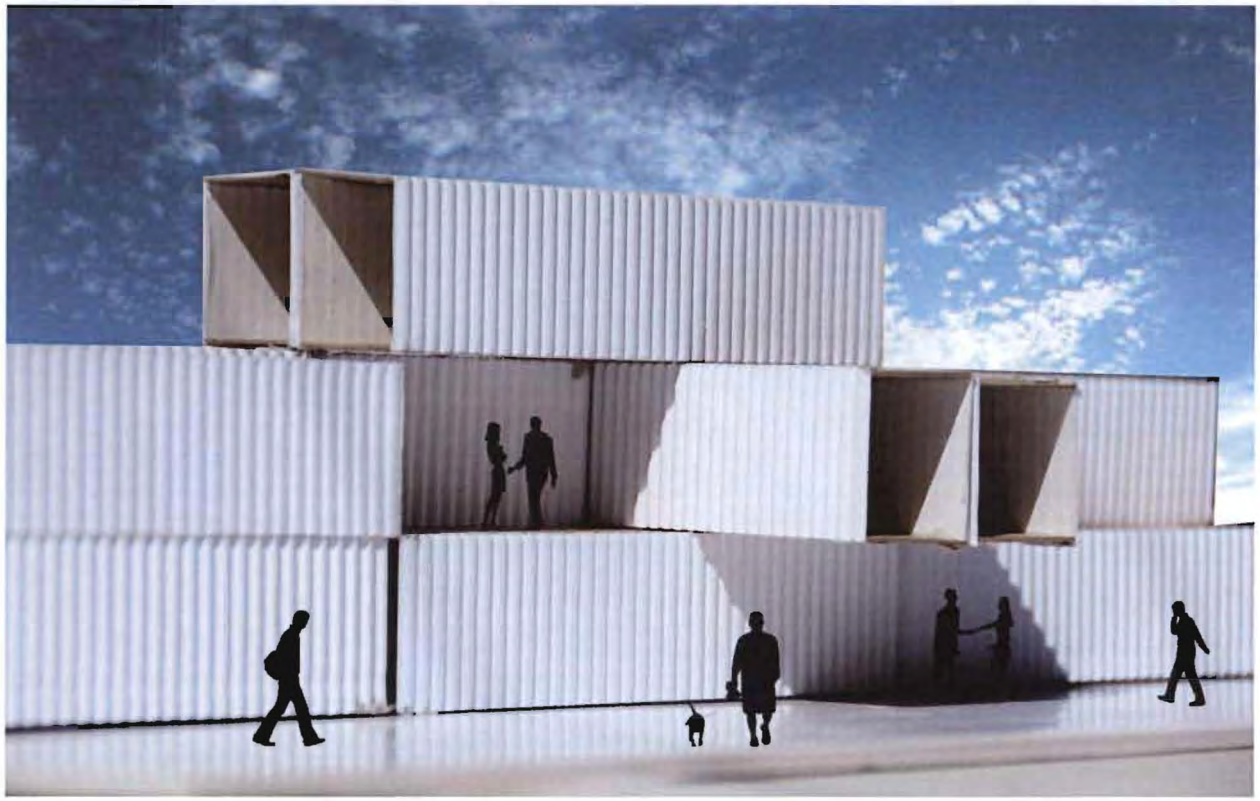


Figure 52. Boutique Room Exploration 03 – the module within the module.
Image by author.

3D Explorations

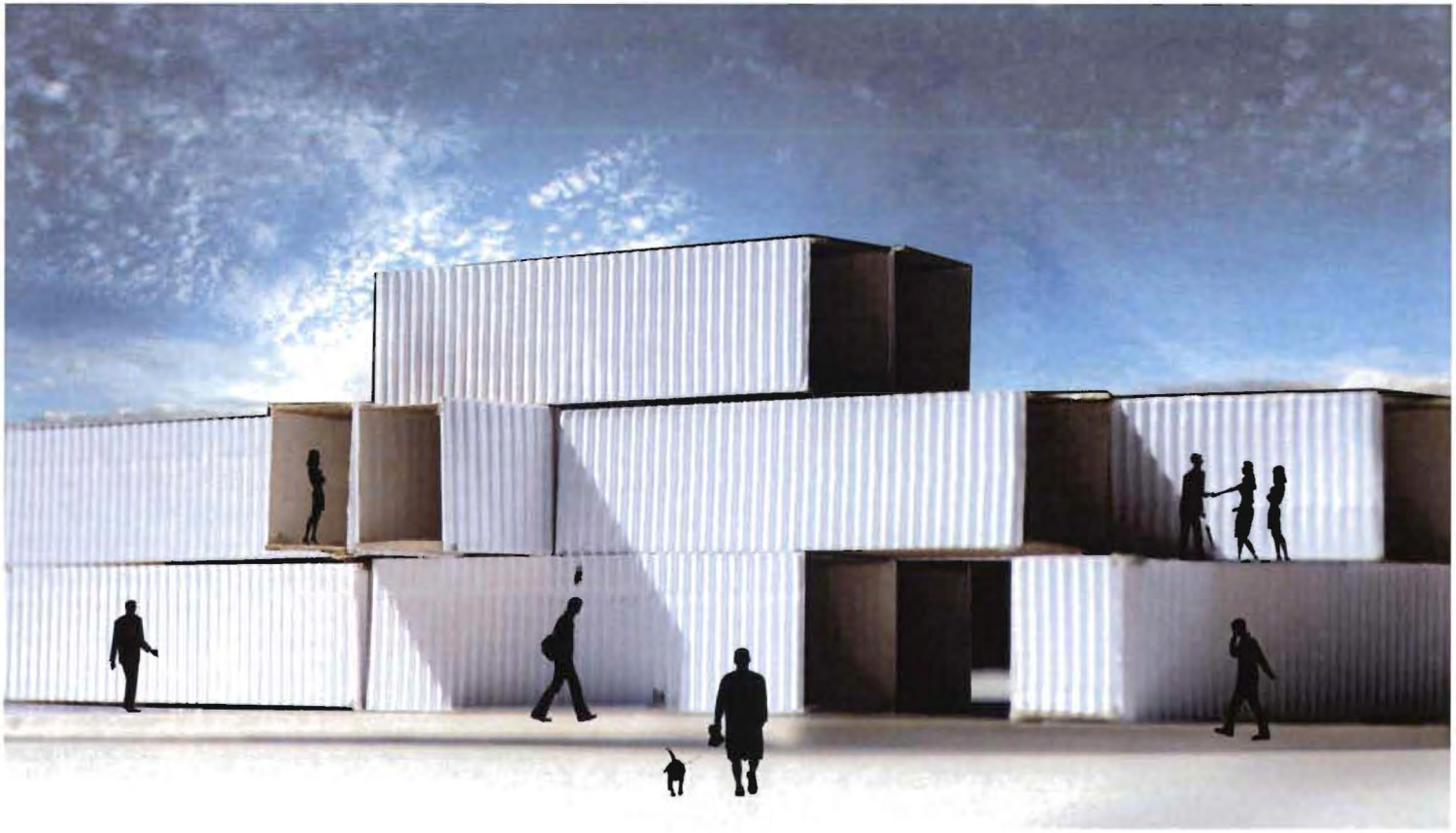
(extra)ordinary spaces

Figure 53. Model building and scale exploration. The image speaks of the materiality, scale and the potential of the containers to create (extra)ordinary spaces of the everyday. Image by author.



3D Explorations
(extra)ordinary spaces

Figure 54. Model building and scale exploration. The containers stacked according to the new set of rules established with the introduction of the new structural order. The image speaks of the materiality, scale and the potential of the containers to create (extra)ordinary spaces of the everyday. Image by author.



Conclusion

the everyday and the (extra)ordinary

This thesis has explored the concept of the everyday and the (extra)ordinary and how that idea can be translated into spatial and architectural ideas through the innovative use of shipping containers as alternative building components.

With the notion of the everyday being that which is simple and ordinary, a technology of a simple, ordinary nature, yet full of (extra)ordinary potential has been identified with the explorations of the shipping containers as an alternative construction technology. Although the use of these ISO shipping containers as a construction component poses a few technical and spatial challenges, I feel there is an opportunity to explore the use of these readily available resources as an alternative construction method for the making of architecture in a context where the economy is suffering and minimal construction budgets inevitably lead to a watered down attempt in the creation an extraordinary contemporary architecture. Woodstock and Albert Road have been identified as a 'creative hub' where everyday activities are carried out by ordinary people from all walks of life. The area is known for its arts and crafts studios and galleries, its small boutique restaurants and coffee shops, car workshops, industrial buildings, general small commercial buildings and nestled in between all of this, the characteristic residential fabric. The fact that the area is thriving in this market of 'creativeness', of 'making' and of 'innovation', leads me to believe that the innovative (re)use of shipping containers for the creation of a *Boutique Hotel and new urban realm* can add to and sustain the richness of this already vibrant and creative place. Through the engagement with context and reference to local knowledge, the creative and innovative use of these readily available ordinary objects of our everyday experience can enhance the richness of the built fabric in our city.

The potential for this simple and ordinary technology is there - for the (extra)ordinary to be revealed, we need to 'think out of the box'.

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Image References

All images within this report are the authors own unless otherwise referenced.

Figure 2. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 30

Figure 3. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 64

Figure 4. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 18

Figure 5. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 46

Figure 6. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 100

Figure 7. Lawson, L. 2001. *David Goldblatt 55 Series*. Phaidon Press Limited. pg 110

Figure 15. http://www.flickr.com/photos/ecoland/5699421672/

Figure 16. http://www.flickr.com/photos/ecoland/5699428262/

Figure 18. http://i53.tinypic.com/24zenia.jpg