

The Sacred and the Everyday

Exploring the relationship between religious space and public

Shafeea Chogle | Space of Good Hope | 2017

University of Cape Town

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The Sacred and the Everyday

Exploring the relationship between religious space and public

Shafeea Chogle | Space of Good Hope | 2017

Supervisors: Melinda Silverman & Fadly Isaacs

This dissertation is presented as part fulfillment of the degree of Master of Architecture (Professional) in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town

The Sacred and the Everyday:

Exploring the relationship between religious space and public

- Shafeea Chogle

Dissertation report | 06 November 2017

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation began with an interest in the relationship between religious space and the public realm, and a curiosity into the capacity of religious spaces to participate in and construct public. This interest, while conscious of global ideas surrounding the role of religion in the global south, is strongly rooted in the emerging urban conditions of the Delft settlement in Cape Town.

Where historically the secular and the sacred have been separated along the same lines as the physical and spiritual, rational and irrational, modern and traditional, public and private (Gravelling, 2010: 198); this dissertation maintains to move beyond these separations and instead explore the overlaps, connections, and mediations, in a context where religious entities are actively taking hold of the spaces the secular has failed to fill.

In this context, characterised by poor quality environments, high densities, and weak institutional presence, religious space has emerged into the public realm, thus becoming the intersection of public and private, of visible and invisible worlds. The project therefore departs from the position that religious space is a material asset capable of advancing social capital, facilitating networks, offering refuge, and providing a platform for the social and public life of a community.

While the project begins with an interest in religious space, the particular design process is one of uncovering and un-layering and thus lands in a place of intersections. These intersections, between public and private, religious and secular, community and institution, and sacred and everyday, lead to a close reading of site, place, community, and agency. The process of uncovering is then also one of harnessing these layers to bring about an architectural outcome which reinforces the ordinary existence of a site.

RELIGION AND PUBLIC SPACE: *Contextualising the issue*

Historically, religion has played an essential role in many cultures and civilisations, and at times was largely representative of the *'life of a society'*. However, through the processes of secularisation and modernity, religion has largely been viewed as an obstacle to progress and one that would gradually retreat from the public realm (Bompani & Frahm-Arp, 2010). It is evident however, that within the transformations of modernity, the religious and sacred have not disappeared but rather emerged in new and different forms that are negotiated within urban settings (Gomez & Van Herck, 2012). Thus, after years of exclusion, a shift has taken place with a renewed interest in the role of religion in public life and its embedded position in the everyday life of millions of people across the globe.

Within these global south contexts, high levels of inequalities are still prevalent in the majority of low-income neighbourhoods, typically located on the urban periphery and isolated from resources and urban opportunities (Southworth, 2002). The public realm in these low-income neighbourhoods is often the product of abandoned space left over between the city's residential, institutional, and commercial fabric. Furthermore, as efforts by government are often concentrated on addressing more immediate needs, particularly the delivery of housing, public space in underprivileged environments is regarded as non-essential and unaffordable (Low, 2012). In the context of limited public funds, public spaces are considered expensive to provide and maintain, and

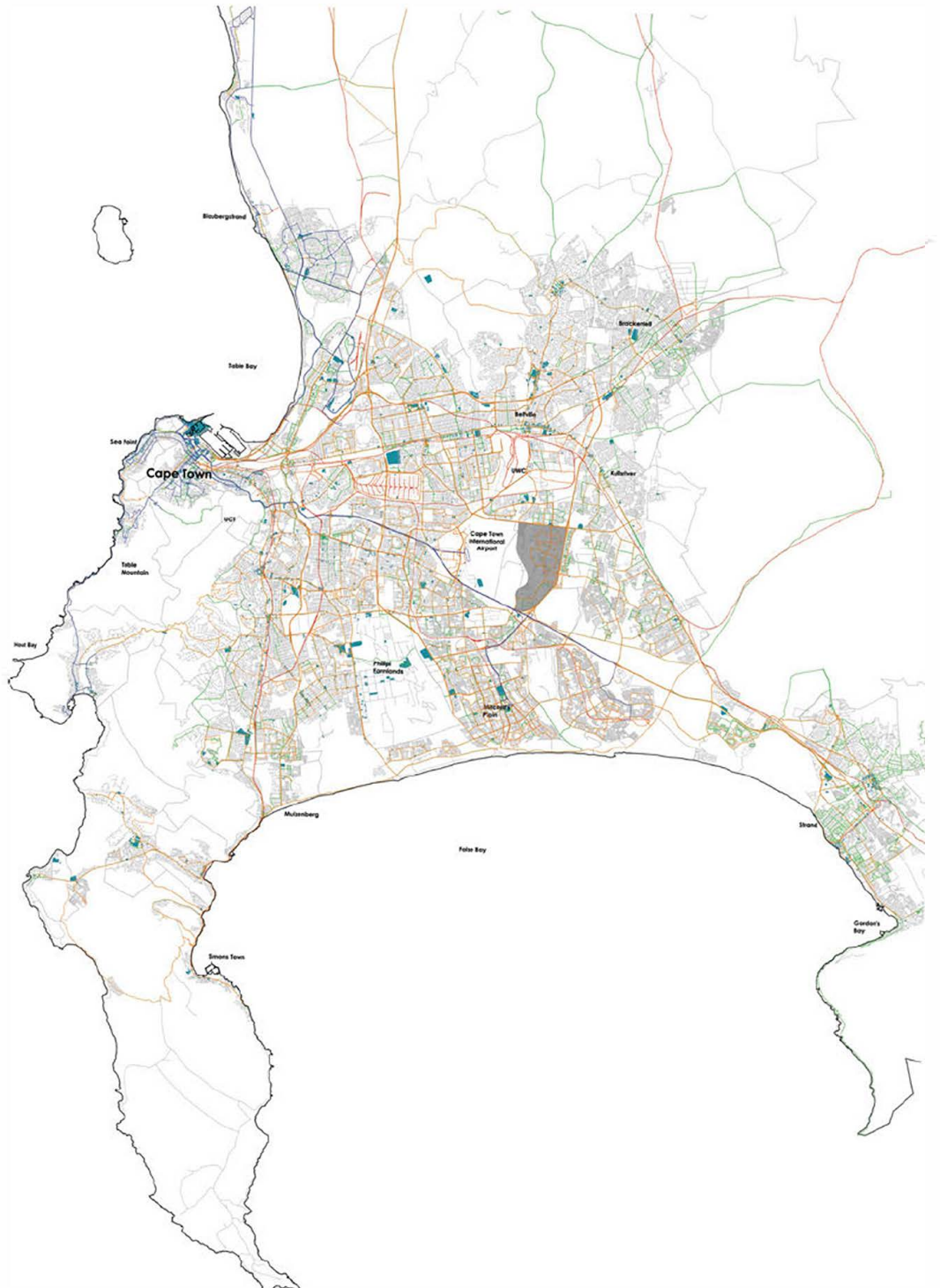
cannot compete with the high demand for basic services, such as access to sanitation, clean potable water, sewage services, and housing. As a result, little attention has been given to the public environment and vast areas of the city are developed without this essential resource (Southworth, 2002). However, in these contexts characterised by poor quality environments, high population densities, and poverty; publicly accessible social spaces are necessary not only because they improve the quality of the local environment, but because residents are often forced to live a large portion of their lives outside the private realm (Southworth, 2010).

Asef Bayat, who writes extensively on the African state, its emerging urbanities and social processes, highlights that one of the major consequences in the development of these environments is the large-scale social exclusion and informalisation, which “has led to the erosion of much of the social contract, collective responsibility, and welfare state structures. Thus, millions of people of the global south, who previously depended on state provisions, must now rely on themselves to survive.” (Bayat, 2010: 43). Thus, one of the forms of this type of self-reliance, is the emergence of religious space in the public realm and its potential to advance social capital, facilitate networks, offer refuge, and provide a platform the social and public life of a society.

THE DELFT CONDITION: *Delft as an emergent urban condition*

Situated approximately 34km from Cape Town's city centre next to the Cape Town International Airport, Delft was established in 1989 as one of the city's first 'mixed race' settlements. Bounded by the R300 on the east and the N2 on the south, the area is divided into two main sections namely Delft North and Delft South; both of which are spatially organised along a Main Road which acts as a spine, off which Loop Roads are connected to form neighbourhood cells. Typical of low-income neighbourhoods in Cape Town, Delft functions as an enclave removed from the city centre, with a built form largely characterised by government delivered housing, inadequate public infrastructure, and a lack of social amenities.

Despite the crime and inequality that plagues the area, the settlement boasts various forms of individual initiative and is home to an active community which recognises the economic potential and various opportunities to generate income. This is most evident in the intense building of informal dwellings and additions to the original houses, resulting in a highly densified ground plane and an active and vibrant trade economy along the Main Road. In addition to this trade economy, other forms of civic activity and initiative are visible, manifesting in various social organisations such as the Community Policing Forum, Neighbourhood Watch, and self-motivated community and religious leaders.



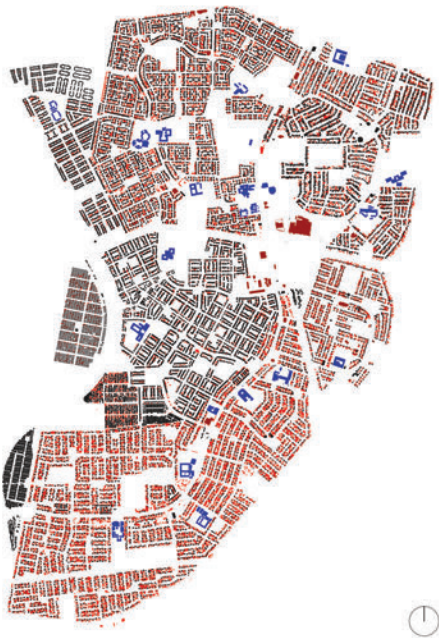


Figure 1:
Metropolitan locality map

Metropolitan map of Cape Town locating Delft in relation to the city centre, public transport, and areas of economic activity.



Figures 2 and 3:
Public provision vs private initiative

Map of Delft showing its built fabric in terms of residential and public buildings. Where the black and blue, represent government provision, the red represents private initiative.

The public realm in Delft can be conceived as an amalgamation of three main components: firstly, the active Main Road and Loop Roads which are anchored by diversity in housing and economic activity; secondly, the higher order institutions which are scattered throughout the area and do little to engage with the social life of the community; and lastly, the vast provision of open space, which generally takes the form of abandoned parks and neglected undefined open space of which the majority is unused. The majority of government investment in Delft, aside from housing provision, is mainly accounted for through the delivery of schools with limited investment in any other type of social infrastructure, thus presenting a lack of meaningful public space for social and cultural interaction.



Figure 4:
Public network diagram

Diagram showing Delft's envisioned public network of main roads, public institutions, open space, and sites zoned for community use.



Figure 5:
Public space network

Map showing Delft's public network, comprising of main roads, existing public institutions, open space, and sites provided and zoned for community use.

The public realm in Delft thus shows a strong disjuncture between an envisaged condition and a more complex reality, highlighting a lack of understanding in the planning of public and social space in a township context, and as a result the existing provided public spaces do not positively contribute to community life. In this context, where there is limited government investment and public institutional presence is weak, ‘institutions’ that have begun to actively contribute to the social life of the community have developed in the form of churches, mosques, madrassas and crèches. In this sense, religious space has emerged into the public realm and has become the intersection of the public and the private. These spaces, largely as a result of individual or collective initiative, have developed both formally and informally, thus participating across social and spatial scales.

The most visible forms of religious practice in Delft are those of Christianity and Islam, evident in the building of mosques and churches in Delft’s built fabric. These social organisations, which operate on land designated or zoned for community use, on left-over vacant bits of land in the area, or within the residential fabric, are representative of social action promoted by religious ideas and religious people, and foreground the transformative potential of religion and its capacity to affect social change. Although these sites appear discreet and insignificant in comparison to the large school sites and government delivered public institutions, when viewed as a network, these religious sites form a secondary layer within Delft’s institutional fabric which is taking hold of the spaces that the secular has failed to fill.



Figure 6:
Existing public network

Map representing the proportion of developed public sites in comparison to the total provision of sites zoned for community use and as open public space.

SACRED SPACE AND SOCIAL PLACE

To pursue the interest relating to the intersections between religious and public, the subsequent research makes use of a selection of religious sites in Delft to prompt the programmatic and architectural spatialities of the dissertation project. While the studies are essential in uncovering how religious sites currently operate in the local context, and how they interact with the different forms of public, the programmatic outcomes in particular, become central to the development of the dissertation scheme. The studies take a close reading of four religious spaces and unpack these sites both as sacred places and social places, which ultimately seeks to engage their capacity to anchor public space, generate social capital, encourage collaboration, and provide social amenities for their local communities.

The four studies are situated across social and spatial scales and thus produce diverse outcomes relating to architectural and programmatic devices. While smaller sites, such as the *Addawatul Islamia Jamaah Khana* and the *2nd circle tent-church* offer a limited set of programmes very strongly related to the central activity of worship, bigger religious buildings such as the *New Apostolic Church* and *Pinkster Gemeente Church*, offer a wide range of activities all facilitated within the religious site.

Spatial devices

Common across all types of religious space in Delft is the value of productive space as a vital resource in the institution's capacity to offer and facilitate collective social needs, and the consequent requirement of spaces to be multi-functional and adaptable. In all cases, a congregational space is at the heart of the religious site, and is one that facilitates the various programmes offered by the religious institution.

Spatial devices then become essential means by which to configure the generic hall into a space for social and cultural activities, and rely on being able to manipulate the space in different ways. These devices manifest in the form of long-spanning structures, which allows for uninterrupted and large volume space; elements which allow spaces to be divide or closed, such as a line of columns, or moveable doors and screens; or moveable furniture, whereby furniture arrangements configure the space and dictate the nature of the activity. In addition to spatial devices, the religious institutions are reliant on ancillary spaces, which enable the multi-purpose nature of the central hall, and provide support for the diverse set of programmes. These ancillary spaces, in the form of ablutions, restrooms, service kitchens, office areas, and most importantly storage, are spatially organised into a service strip and confined to a single spatial zone flanking the central space. Where ancillary spaces are absent, the religious spaces make use of their social infrastructure and networks to acquire these services from neighbouring and surrounding residences.

Figure 7:
Sacred space as social places

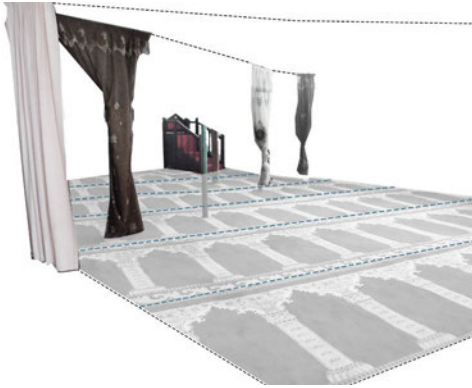
Drawings representing the multi-purpose hall at the New Apostolic Church (top left), a central church hall at the Pinkster Gemeente Church (top right), a small prayer space at Addawatul Islamia Jamaah Khana (bottom left), and the single interior space of the 2nd circle tent-church (bottom right) | nts



Programmatic devices

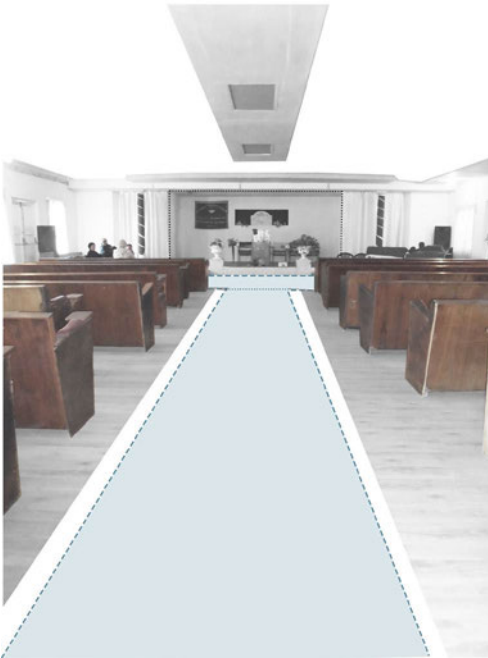
Worship

Across all four studies the central programme is one that facilitates a place for worship, in the form of either congregational services in the case of the churches, and both congregational and individual prayers in the case of the mosques. This activity is facilitated through the provision of a significant central interior space, with the primary purpose to provide accommodation for a congregation at worship times, and which functions as the prayer hall. Closely connected to the act of worship, is facilitation of religious classes, in the form of the madrassah, bible study and Sunday school, where youth from the surrounding area attend daily and weekly classes in the interest of religious education.



Figures 8, 9, 10:
Congregational space

Photographs showing the spaces for worship at the Addawatul Islamia Jamaah Khana, the Pinkster Gemeente Church, and the 2nd circle tent-church.



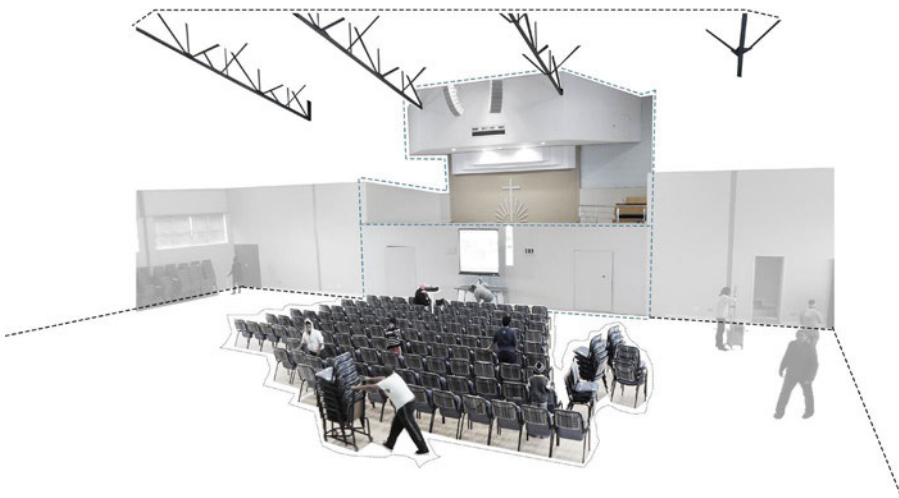
Youth and outreach

A defining characteristic for all religious sites is their specific orientation towards youth outreach and welfare, in the effort to create alternative spaces for the youth of Delft to interact, socialise, and engage in productive activities. These programmes are largely focussed on providing the after-school or extra-curricular activities severely lacking in the public school system, and accommodates educational, cultural, sport and recreational activities. The educational activities take the form of homework programmes which operate on weekday afternoons, and facilitates sessions whereby students can complete their school assignments while receiving help from their peers and available volunteers; while recreational activities take place on weekends and during school holidays in the form of sports games and matches, and choir and band practice.

Accompanying and supporting this outreach, is most commonly a feeding scheme, which relies primarily on volunteer support and donations, and provides meals which caters to underprivileged families in the area. These programmes are heavily reliant on the social networks and relationships between community members who attend and belong to the religious institutions, whereby the services offered are facilitated by volunteers belonging to the congregation.

Figures 11 and 12:
Activity space

Photographs showing the duality of worship
spaces as places for social activities



Gathering and event

The social spaces created by the religious institutions, are firstly connected to their use as places of worship, and secondly defined by the gathering of people for social and cultural interaction. It is common for the larger churches to be used as event space for birthday celebrations, funeral services and youth socials, in which case the significant hall space at the *New Apostolic Church*, and both the church hall and surrounding garden at the *Pinkster Gemeente Church* function as assets that enable social gathering at a communal scale. The majority of these social events are held by members of the church, and in this way the church functions similarly to a community hall. In the case of the *2nd circle tent-church*, social space is temporal and revolves around the days and times of church services, where the open site surrounding the tent is used as an outdoor meeting place for church members to interact before and after church services. Similarly, the social spaces at the *Addawatul Islamia Jamaah Khana* are more defined by the occurrence of congregational prayers, where the stoep and partially covered forecourt area act as spill-out space when the interior is at capacity, most often during Friday prayers. Accordingly, the space is used after Friday prayers and on religious holidays as a gathering place for community members to interact before leaving the mosque.

In all cases, central to the activity of gathering, whether connected to worship or secondary activities, is the importance of generous interior and exterior space which lends itself to be used in many different ways, and provides a platform for the social and public life of the community.

Figures 13 and 14:
Gathering space

*Photographs showing the forecourt and stoep area at Addawatul
Islamia Jamaah Khana (top), and outdoor garden area at the
Pinkster Gemeente Church (bottom)*



SITE AND SITING

Network of religious space

The architectural investigation, concerned with an interrogation into the relationship between religious and public, relies on a site with an existing religious space. The siting strategy therefore departs from the mapping out of existing religious sites in Delft, and identifying spatial precincts comprising of religious space, open space, and proximity to public institution. These precincts, driven by the spatial conditions which characterise Delft, namely the conditions of Main Road, Loop Road, node, and embedded; offer a selection of possible sites for the architectural intervention.

It is evident that the spatial conditions which define the precincts, also define the types of religious spaces which operate within them. Formal and conventional religious spaces, such as the dedicated church and mosque buildings, operate on the Main Road and at nodes of activity on the Loop Roads, on larger sites that are supported by public transport and accessibility, and benefit from the resources provided by their larger religious networks. Contrastingly, the more informal and smaller scale religious spaces, such as the tent-churches, corrugated-structure churches, prayer buildings and house mosques, operate on sites scattered and embedded within the Loop neighbourhoods, and rely on individual and collective initiative, and established social networks and relationships to survive.



Figure 15:
Sites of religious activity

Map representing sites of religious activity within Delft, which occur within the provided public network of community and open space zones.

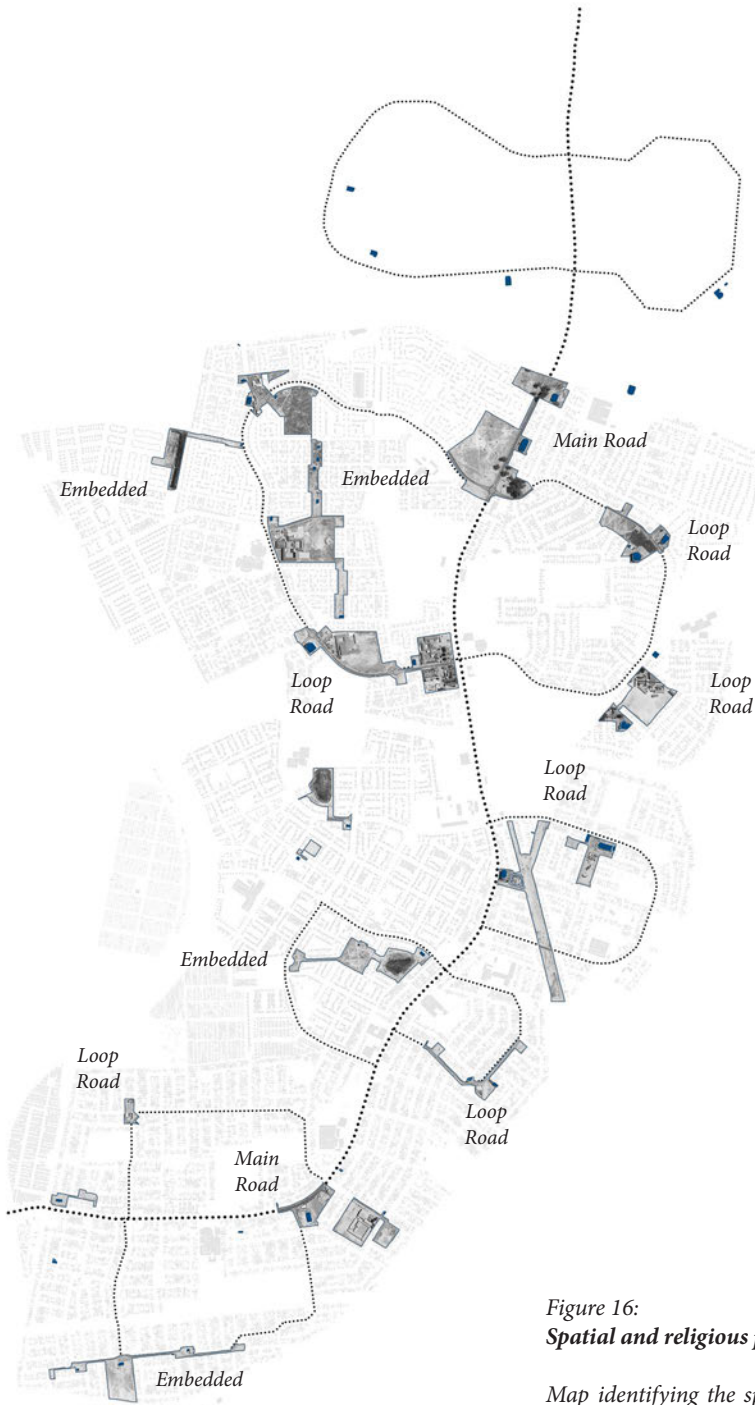


Figure 16:
Spatial and religious precincts

Map identifying the spatial precincts in which the religious sites in Delft occur.

Furthermore, in a context where vast amounts of public space have been provided but neither developed nor maintained, these informal religious spaces, through appropriating open sites for their own use, have begun to respond to the public and social needs of their communities.

Perhaps the most interesting and complex of these embedded sites is the green strip site within the West Loop's residential neighbourhood. Within the context of open space in Delft, where these green strips were planned to act as green spaces which contribute to public good, due to their scale and lack of ownership they have had the opposite effect. Rather than functioning as assets for the residents that live at high densities in small residences, these vast open tracts have had negative impacts on their immediate surroundings often turning into dumping or litter sites, and are often dangerous areas to traverse or use. While the site shares some of the typical characteristics of open space in Delft, such as a degree of abandonment, lack of defined ownership, and vast scales; it is also a site where religious spaces in the form of the informal churches have begun to actively take ownership and responsibility for otherwise neglected public space.

The chosen site sits within a larger vertical network which runs on a north-south axis within the West Loop. This vertical system is comprised of three large school sites, which puncture the network at its north and south ends as well as at its midpoint. In-between these school sites are smaller open sites which form the two green strips within the West Loop, envisioned as community parks and public open space for recreational use.

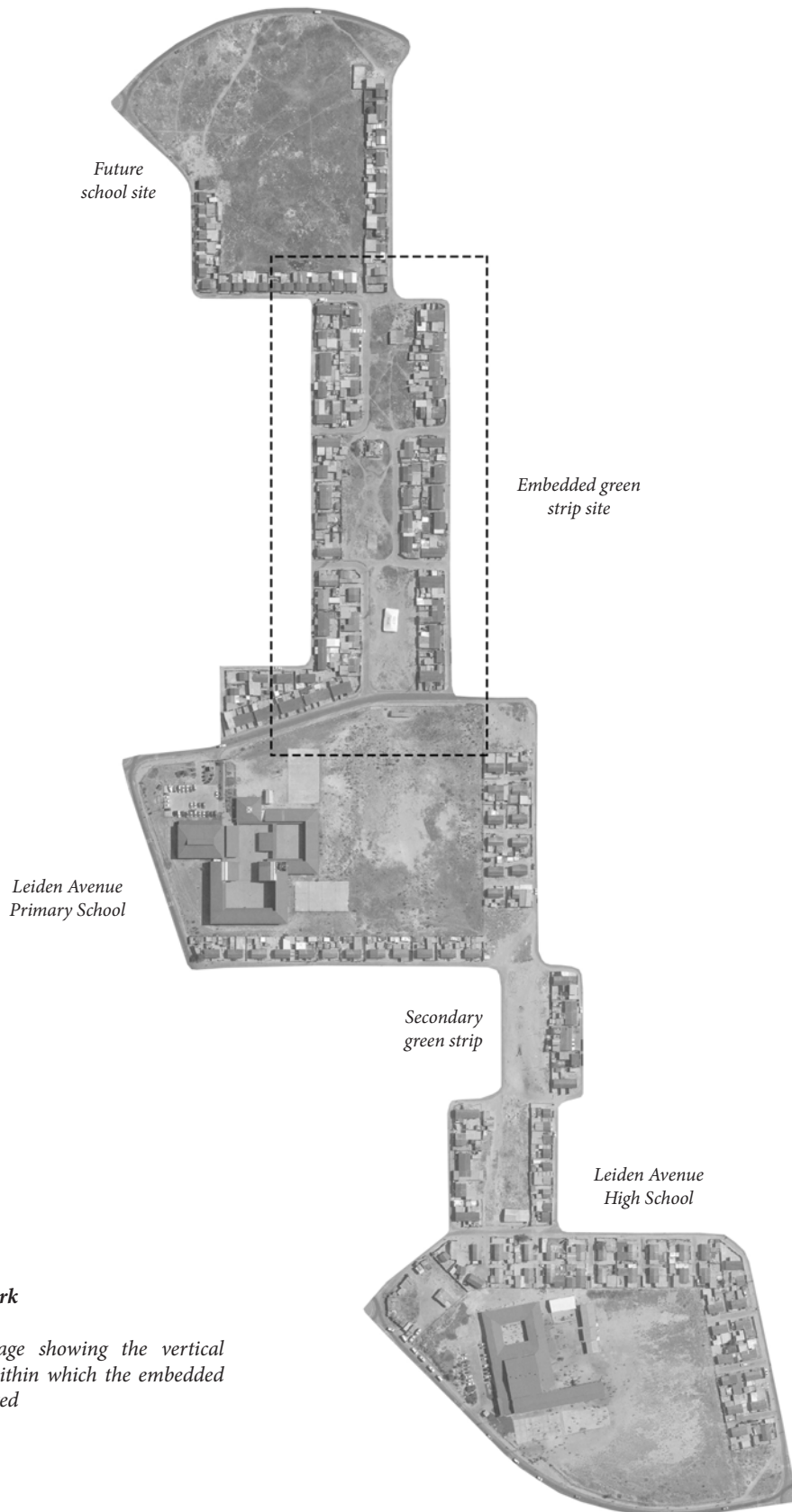


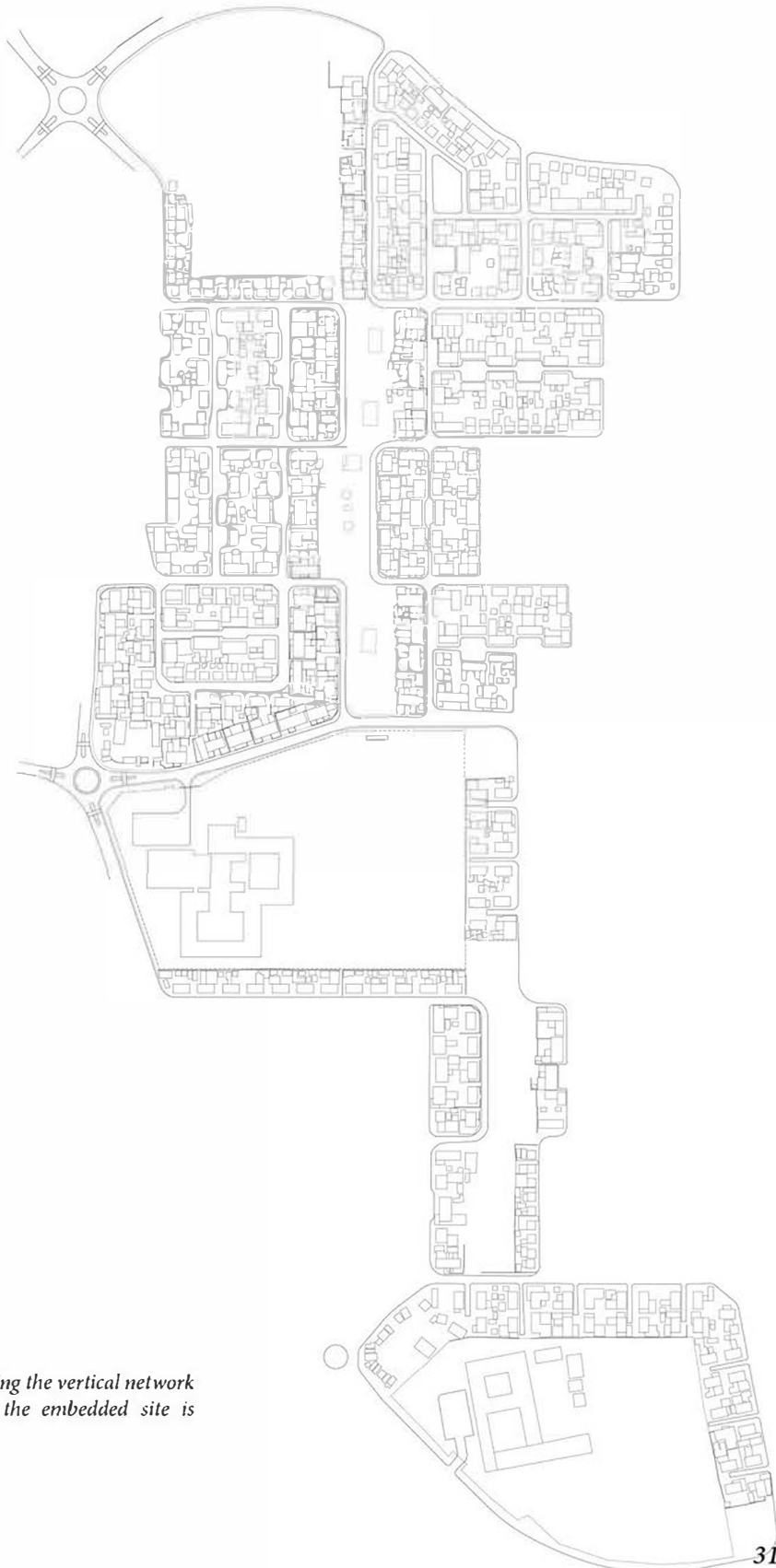
Figure 17:
Site network

Aerial image showing the vertical network within which the embedded site is located

The embedded site

The chosen green strip is anchored by Leiden Avenue Primary on its south and a large open site on its north, which due to its size and location on the loop road can be presumed as a future school site. The green strip itself is made up of three open sites, separated by small through roads and edged by dense residential fabric, comprised of government delivered housing and informal single storey additions. Each of the three sites, while connected and sharing some similar features, each have their own distinctive character defined by the existing buildings, activities, and layers of the individual site.

The three sites are of similar size and scale, and each share similar edge conditions. One end of each site is edged by a public road which allows houses to front onto the site, creating an active zone with eyes on the street. Contrastingly, the opposite end of each site is bordered by the backs of houses and a line of service infrastructure, creating an inactive and dead zone. In terms of the spatial relationship between open space and the dense but low-rise residential fabric the sites are over scaled, where the size of a single open site is comparable to that of an entire residential block. The size of these sites and the planning of the surrounding houses which has resulted in only a single active edge, makes the sites difficult to develop, manage, and maintain by the surrounding community. While the green strip currently plays a significant role, in part by the presence the churches, the site is underutilised and too big in scale for the interest of the community.



*Figure 18:
Site network*

*Drawing showing the vertical network
within which the embedded site is
located*



Detailed site plan | 1:1000



Existing religious presence

The site as a whole is layered with existing buildings and structures, activities, social networks and connections. In contrast to the dense surrounding residential fabric, the four existing structures on the site are scattered across the three open spaces in the form of informal churches, accounting for the religious activity present on the site. These informal churches take the form of the tent-church type, the corrugated-structure church type, and an informal residence which is sometimes used as a church space. The activities and social connections on the site are therefore strongly linked to the presence of these churches, which have begun to alleviate the common and negative characteristics associated with un-programmed open space in Delft, through their presence and frequent use.

The on-site churches have been set-up by the local community and following the patterns uncovered through the mapping of different religious types, operate in conjunction with residences in close proximity and thus rely on social networks in order to function. All three churches make use of caretakers who stay close by and are responsible for the maintenance and security of the churches. These caretakers, in conjunction with other residences, provide essential services necessary for the functioning of the churches in the form of storage space for church furniture and sound equipment, and the provision of electricity by means of an extension cable which is run across the road.

Figures 19, 20, 21:
Existing religious presence

Photographs of the existing religious spaces scattered across the embedded site



Corrugated structure shack 1
 Chari Cres, Delft North



Corrugated structure shack 2
 Chari Cres, Delft North



Tent church
 Pungue Street, Delft North



The churches primarily provide places of worship for small congregations from the surrounding neighbourhood, but consequently act as communal gathering places. Here, there is an interaction between sacred space and social space, both which are created through the gathering of people for worship. Consequently, the activation of the site is temporal and revolves around church service days and times, which in the case of the tent-church occurs on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings, and in the case of the corrugated-structure churches on Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings. These service times mark weekly rituals whereby the churches are set-up and prepared for services, by means of caretakers and community volunteers.

Existing spatial order

The three-dimensional strip collages explore the textures and built materiality of the site in a representation that attempts to approximate real and lived experiences. These strip views offer a stitched but continuous view across all three sites and uncover the subtle but definitive ways space-making is achieved. These architectural actions by non-architects configure the site with a spatial order which defines discreet territories, through surface, boundary, and edge. These are acts of mediation and participation, which lay temporary claims in attempt to carve out small places in the vast openness.



The existing territories on the site are defined by the built materiality of the existing structures and the means by which they have demarcated space. The corrugated-structure churches make use of surface in the form of carpets laid out as an entrance to the church, and a line of car tyres to demarcate parking space. Similarly, the existing residence uses car tyres to form a low residential boundary surrounding the residence and a small planted garden to exert domestic presence. The space-making on site, through limited means, results in a non-cartesian order of spaces and speaks to notions of spillage.

Figure 20:
Existing spatial order

*Stitched strip view of the site exploring
the built materiality and space
making on the site*

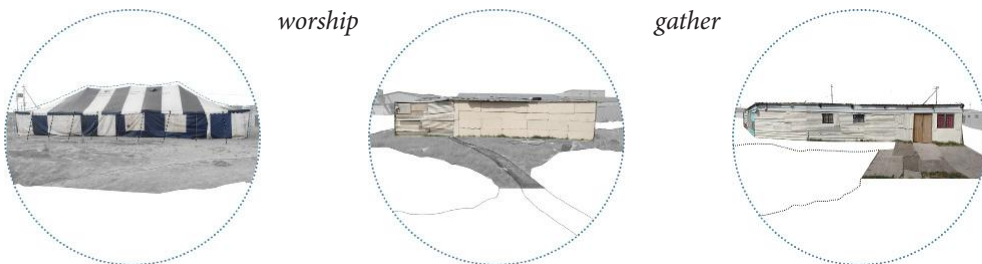


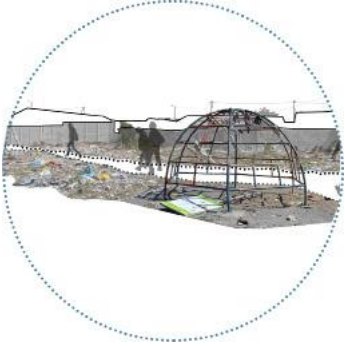
Existing social activities

The photo collages uncover the layers of everyday activities, which in addition to the religious activities associated with and promoted by the presence of the churches, contribute to the daily rhythms of the site. These activities capture significant social practices which further ground the site in its embedded and domestic condition. Evident in the mapping are activities relating to worship and gathering, and the related site preparation required for church services; the activities of play, both on provided park equipment and on the make-shift tyre boundaries across the sites; the activity of living and gardening, where informal structures on site are used as permeant residences and small planted areas are maintained; and the activities of washing and drying laundry where existing service poles and fences are used as infrastructure.

Figure 21:
Existing social activities

Photo collages exploring the existing activities which occur on the site





play

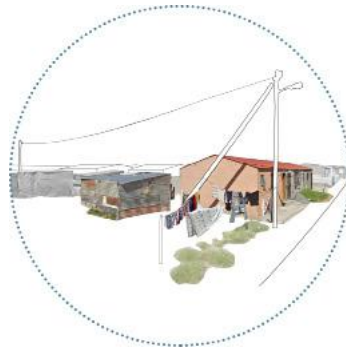


living

gardening



laundry



INTERVENTION

The design proposition for the dissertation constitutes a series of interventions dispersed across the three open sites which constitute the embedded green strip. Each of the interventions in the scheme respond to different social and spatial conditions which emerged from the research, but at the same time work together to create one cohesive urban intervention. At an urban scale, the scheme is comprised of community buildings, a variety of housing types, and landscape.

Spatial configuration of the embedded site

The spatial configuration of the scheme is one that acknowledges the existing spatial order of the embedded strip, most notably defined by the presence of the churches and the various ways space-making, activities, and social practices currently occur on the site. The spatial configuration attempts to mediate these existing conditions in an effort to respond to the site's fragmented nature and series of disjointed territories.

Religious presence

The scheme departs from the position that the churches are valuable in maintaining the existing religious presence on the site, and acknowledges their locations as being strategic in terms of the social connections and social infrastructure they rely on to operate. For this reason, the intervention at an urban scale, leaves these religious spaces in their current forms and locations, while making provisions for them to grow and expand over time. The dissertation position views these churches as actively contributing to the surrounding public space, but limited in their capacity to do so, leaving large parts of the site still unclaimed, undefined, and neglected. The scheme therefore does not aim to redesign the religious spaces, but rather interact with the churches in a way that both supports and catalyses their presence in order to facilitate programmes which directly respond to the embedded public space and surrounding community.

Figure 22:
Spatial configuration diagram 1

Diagram representing the urban strategy to maintain existing religious space



Intensity

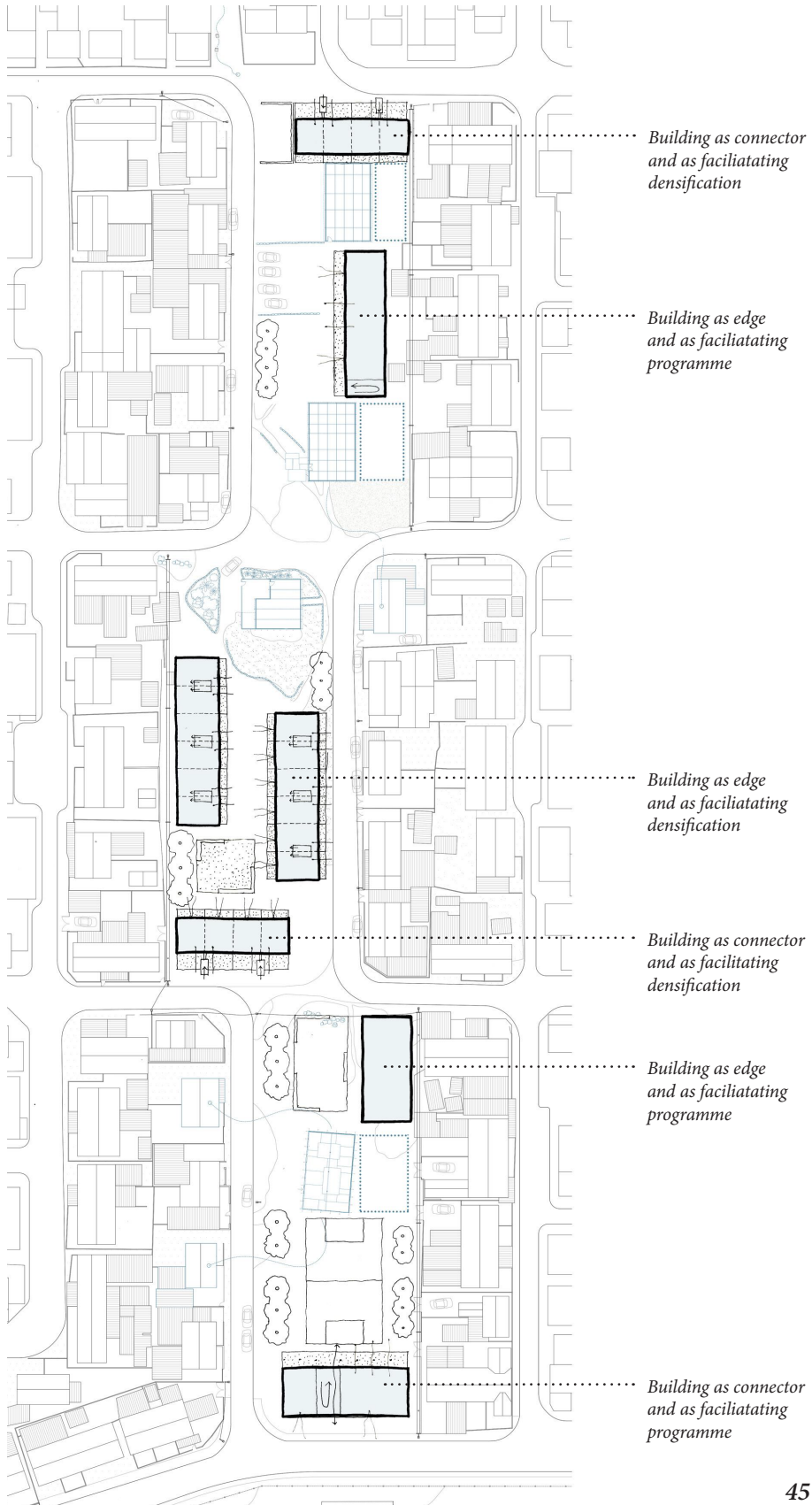
In order to respond to the neglected and undefined open space, the scheme proposes a series of infill buildings in an effort to intensify the site through both programme and densification.

This achieved by using the infill buildings as a spatial ordering device in two ways: firstly, through building as edge, and secondly, through building as connector. The first series of buildings respond to the “back ends” of each individual site with the purpose of creating new active edges which decrease the vast scale, and provide active frontage onto the open space. The second series of buildings offer anchorage at the through-road intersections, in an effort to provide street presence and act as connectors between the three sites.

These infill buildings aim to intensify the site in two different ways: firstly, through buildings which facilitate a variety of community programmes surfaced through the research and site exploration; and secondly, through buildings which facilitate densification through the introduction of a variety of housing components.

Figure 23:
Spatial configuration diagram 2

Diagram representing the urban strategy of edge and connection

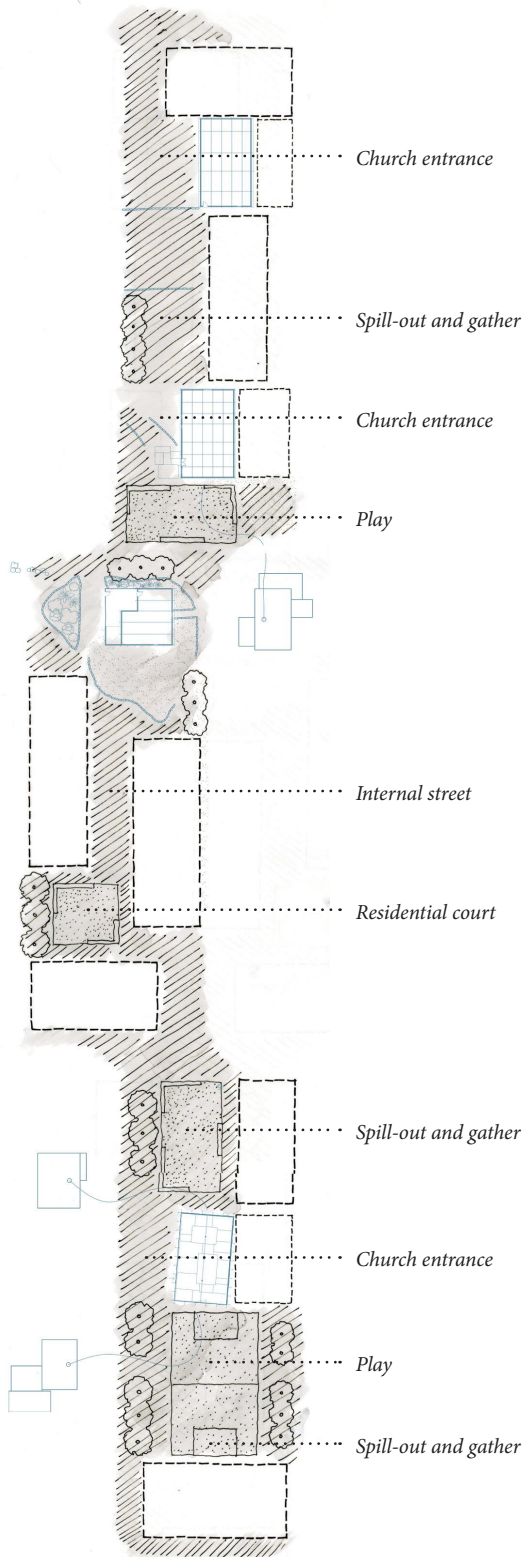
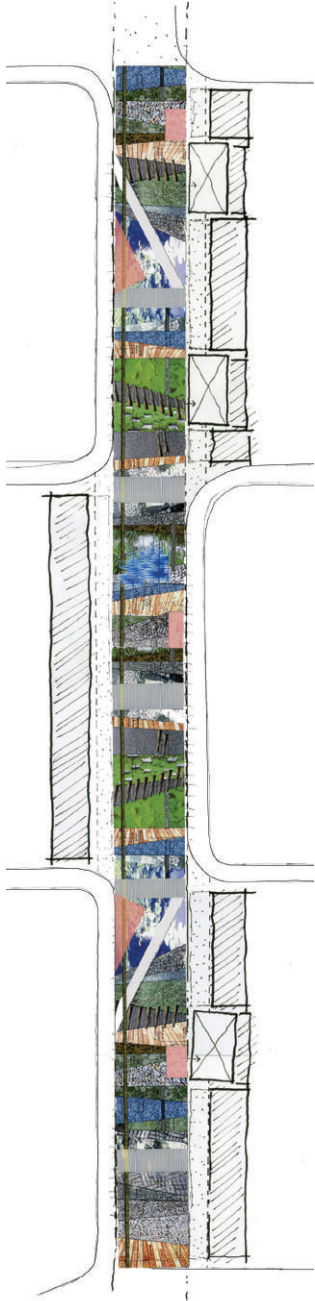


Continuity and connection

Evident in the mapping out and reading of the site, is the need for an urban spatial ordering device which deals directly with the open space and acts as a mechanism for continuity across the embedded site. This idea conceptually manifests as a linear strip or band, which locates itself across the existing active edges of the site, with the existing churches as moments along the continuous band. Manifested in the scheme, this conceptual band transforms into a landscape of hard and soft elements which interweaves between the existing and the new, where its function is determined by the buildings which edge onto it. The strip is therefore no longer a single band, but expands and contracts along the site as is required, and thus acts as a connecting element. Along the site, the strip acts as gathering space for the community buildings in the form of significant stoeps and raised platforms which spill out from the building edge; as play and park space in the form of grassed and planted areas populated with urban furniture; as a paved residential court and internal street for the proposed housing; and lastly, as defined entrances to the existing churches.

Figure 24 and 25:
Spatial configuration diagram 3

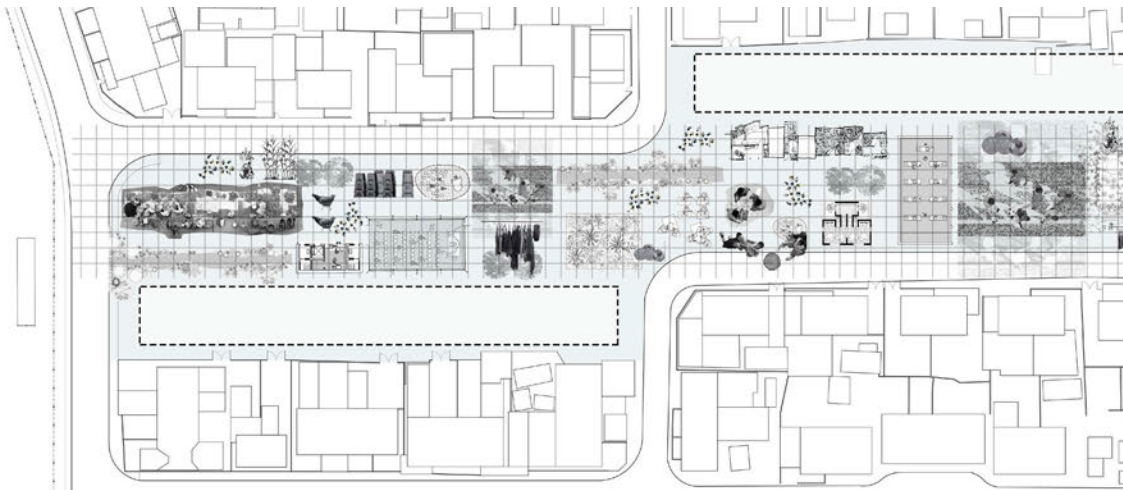
Diagrams representing the urban strategy of landscape as a spatial connector



Programmatic configuration of the embedded site

The programming of the scheme aims to support religious practice while catalysing their presence in order to reinforce collective social practices in a way that foregrounds the relationship between the sacred and the everyday.

The programming of the scheme is therefore largely informed by the programmes facilitated by the religious institutions in Delft, uncovered through the mapping and case studies, and the way in which they support social and public programme, and collective practices. Secondary programmatic informants are those which respond to the needs of the existing churches, with the intention of providing support in a way that is also beneficial to the surrounding community, and through incorporating and intensifying the existing activities on the site.



The configuration of the scheme thus results in a range of programmes dispersed across the site and comprising a series of community and housing interventions. The programme of the community buildings comprise of a creche or daycare centre, homework rooms and study areas, a sports field and park area supported by public ablutions and restrooms, service kitchens and storage, caretaker living units, and indoor and outdoor gathering space. The housing interventions take the form of single living units, duplex family units, and living units incorporated into the community buildings. The series of buildings and varying programme is tied together with the introduction of a landscaping intervention, which acts as a spatial device to link the interventions and promote continuity across the scheme.

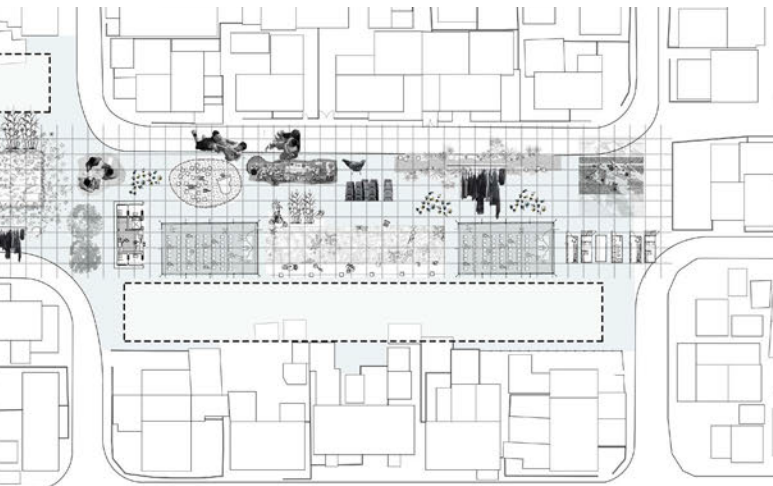


Figure 26:
Programmatic concept diagram

Concept diagram exploring the possible activities that could occur within an envisioned activity band created by the scheme



Scheme plan | 1:1000



Configuration of the interventions

Creche intervention

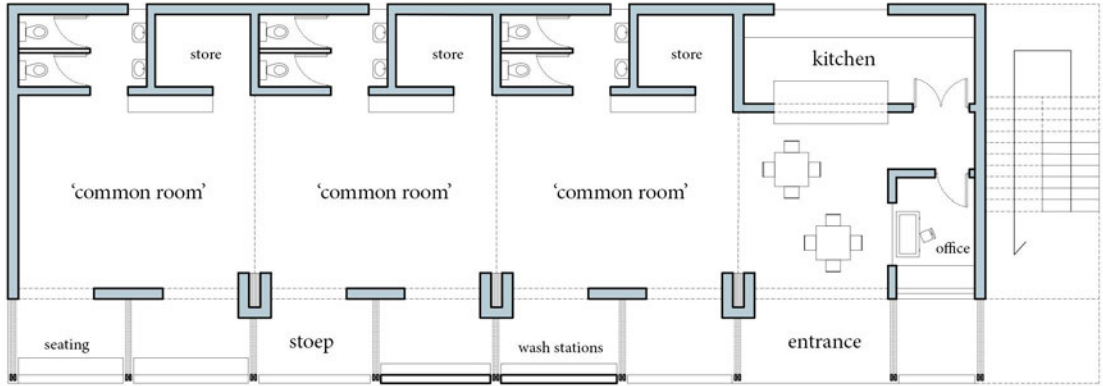
The creche intervention is located on the north site and sits in-between the two existing corrugated-structure churches. The incorporation of this programme into the scheme and its consequent siting is based on the observation of the close relationship between religious spaces and day-care, prominent throughout Delft in the form of the after-school and weekend activities offered by the various religious entities. The creche programmatically responds to the number of young children present in the immediate surroundings, and who play on the site during the day.

The building is strategically located between the two existing churches as a way to support the church, through the provision of services, as well as to sponsor a social programme which provides an amenity for the surrounding community. On the ground floor, the creche comprises of classrooms which have been designed as flexible spaces able to function as one large space or be divided up into smaller spaces. Services, such as the ablutions, storage, kitchen area, and small office, are located in a strip along the side and back of the building. This allows the classrooms or common spaces to open onto the covered stoep area and public space, which functions as an outdoor play area for the creche and as gathering space for the community.



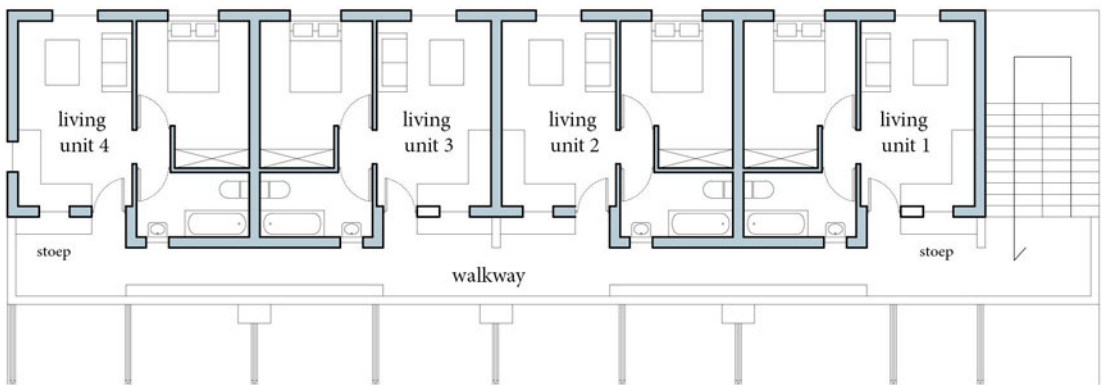
Creche intervention scheme | 1:500

On the first floor, four single-bedroom living units are proposed as a way to integrate the programme with a constant social presence. These living units are proposed for a caretaker, responsible for the maintenance and security of the building, and for employees of the creche.



Creche intervention:

Ground floor plan | 1:200



Creche intervention:

First floor plan | 1:200

Support intervention

The support intervention is located along the public road edge of the south site, and provides public and recreational facilities in response to the location of Leiden Avenue Primary School situated across the road. The incorporation of these programmes into the scheme and the consequent siting, is based on the spill-over of educational and recreational related activities sponsored by the religious institutions, and severely lacking in the current public institutions.

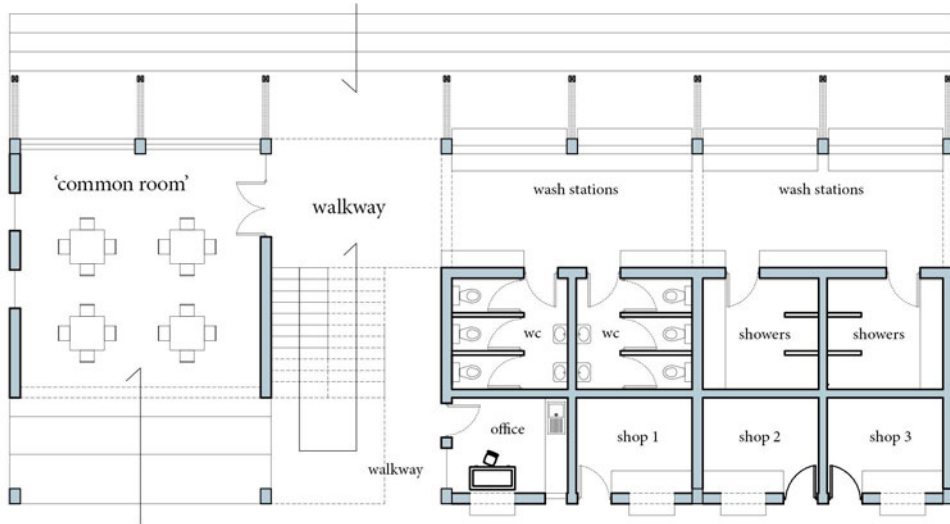
The defining feature of the building is a three-storey vertical element which accommodates a public stair and two levels of homework rooms and work spaces, with a living unit proposed for a caretaker on the top floor. Similarly to the classroom spaces in the creche, the homework rooms are conceptualised as ‘common rooms’, envisioned to function as the study space, the classroom space, and the meeting space. The vertical tower locates itself on the corner of the site, and thus acts as a visual marker and a point of intensity.

The remaining ground floor of the building responds to the street edge with the provision of a caretaker’s office and small shop spaces; while the public edge incorporates public ablutions and restrooms to support the proposed sports and playing field, relating to existing activities of play occurring across the site. These public services open onto a generous covered stoep area, along which seating and a series of wash-stations are incorporated into the building structure, to engage with the everyday social practices existing on the site.



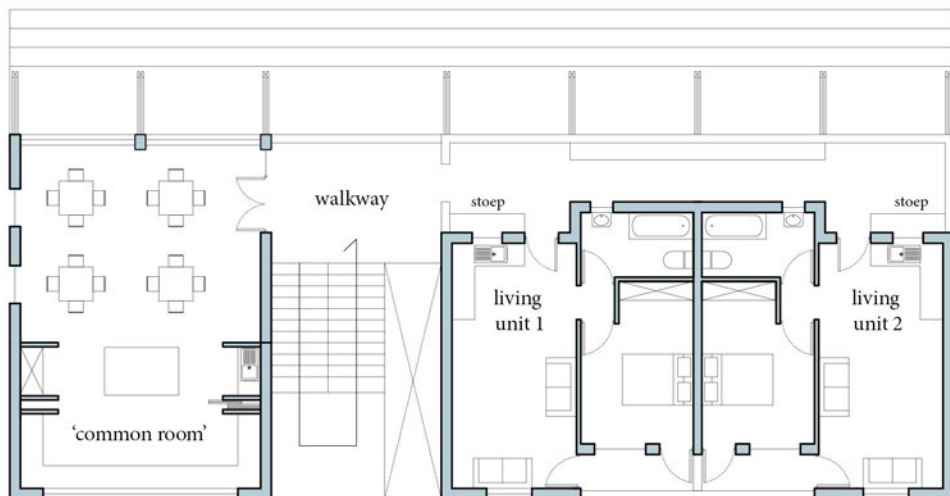
Support intervention scheme | 1:500

On the first floor, single-bedroom living units are accessed via the public stair and are conceptualised as integrated housing for both the people who facilitate the homework rooms, and own the shops on the ground floor. These living units have a direct relationship with the street in the form of small overhanging balconies, and with the public space in the form of small stoep spaces part of the shared circulation.



Support intervention:

Ground floor plan | 1:200



Support intervention:

First floor plan | 1:200

Housing components

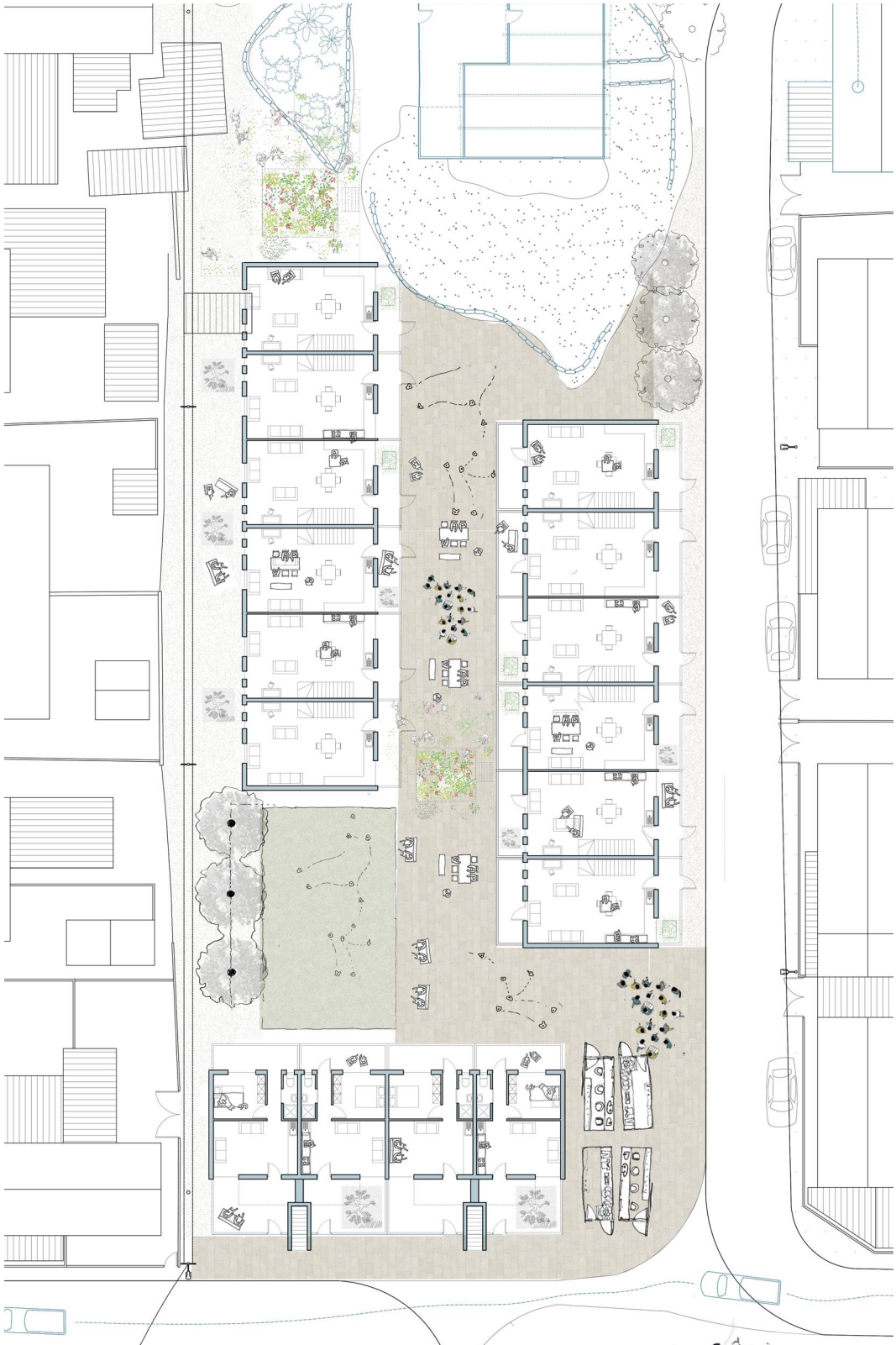
The housing interventions proposed within the scheme spill across all three sites in an effort to intensify the site through densification. While housing is proposed across the scheme, it is most concentrated on the middle site in response to the existing living occurring on the site, and a lack of any other agency currently utilising or activating the open space. A variety of housing types are conceptualised to provide variety and diversity within the scheme, and in order to respond to different spatial conditions.

Housing type 1: Duplex living units

The first housing type comprises of two storey duplex units comprising of two bedroom apartments which cater to families as opposed to individuals. Two rows the duplex housing are proposed on the middle site, creating an internal residential street and court area, onto which the entrances and gardens of the duplex units front onto.

Housing type 2: Single living units

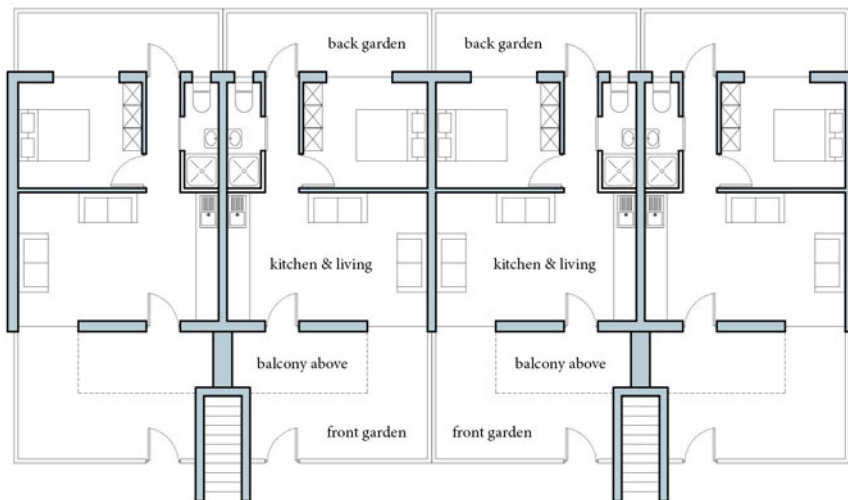
The second housing type comprises of two levels of single living units, with the ground floor conceptualised as one-bedroom apartments, and the first floor as studio loft apartments. This housing component is proposed along the top edge of the north site as well as along the bottom edge of the middle site, and makes use of external staircases accessed directly from the street as a means to activate the respective street edges and promote social interaction between residents.



Duplex housing scheme | 1:500

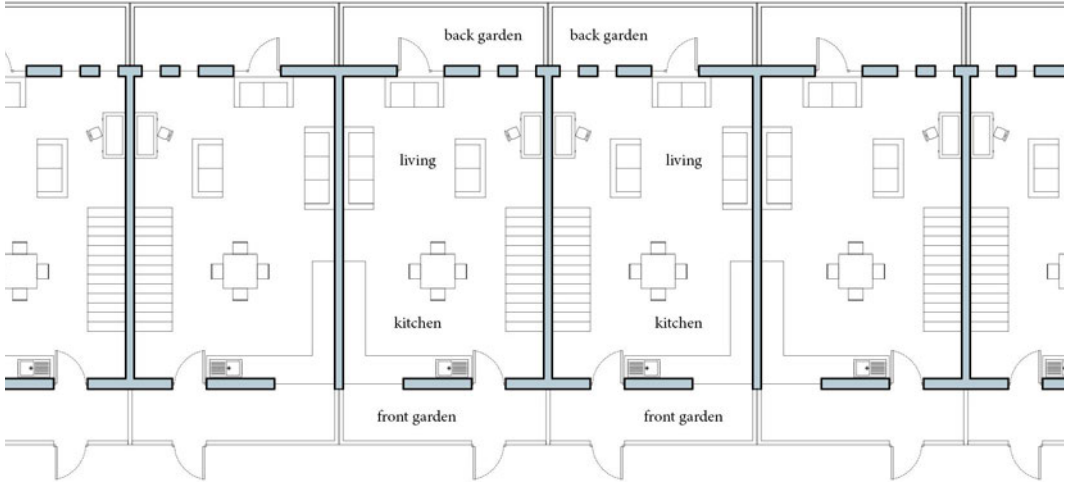
Housing type 3: Incorporated living units

The third housing component manifests in the living units incorporated in the community interventions as a way to support social programme and collective space with a constant presence and 24-hour activity. These living units take the form of single-bedroom apartments proposed for the caretakers and employees of the respective buildings.



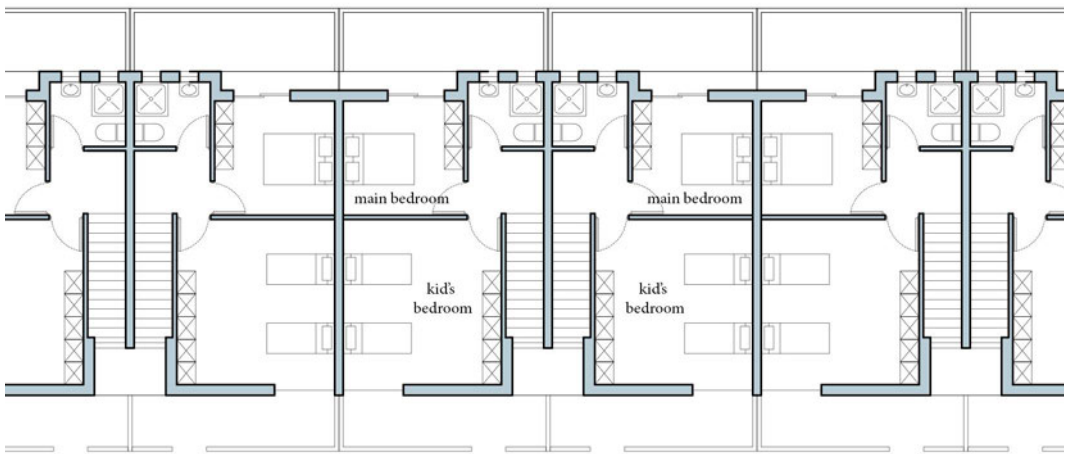
Single-unit housing component:

Ground floor plan | 1:200



Duplex housing component:

Ground floor plan | 1:200



Duplex housing component:

First floor plan | 1:200

SCHEME DRAWINGS

The embedded site

Existing site drawing and activities

Intervention strategies

Spatial and programmatic configuration

Intervention scheme

Ground floor plan

Sectional moments

Community hall cross section

Spill-over cross section

Creche cross section

Intervention scheme

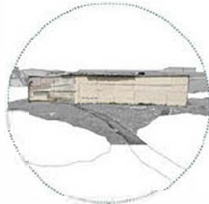
Aerial view

The embedded site:

Existing site and activities



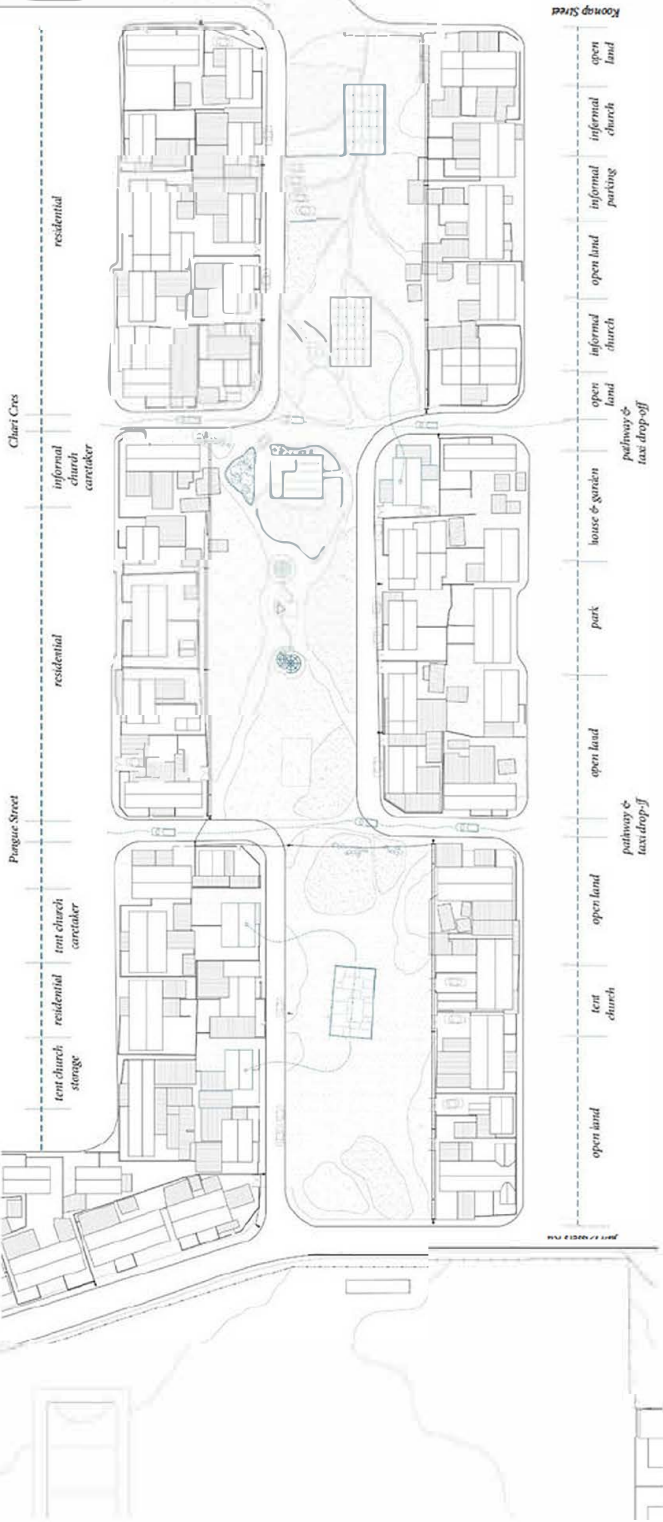
activity gardening



activity worship



activity living



activity laundry



activity site preparation



activity play

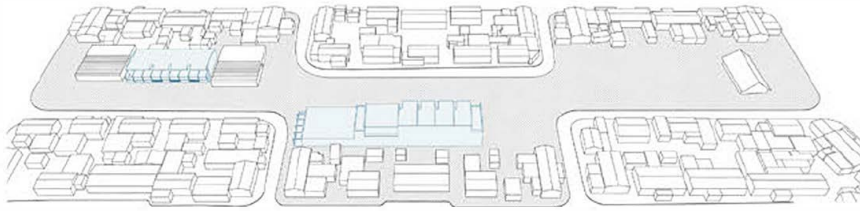


activity gathering

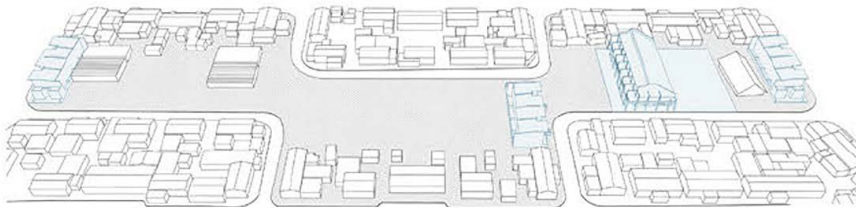
Intervention strategies:

Spatial and programmatic configuration

Building as edge



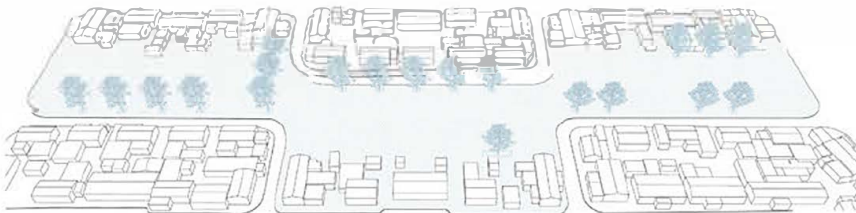
Building as connector



Intensifying the site thorough programme and densification

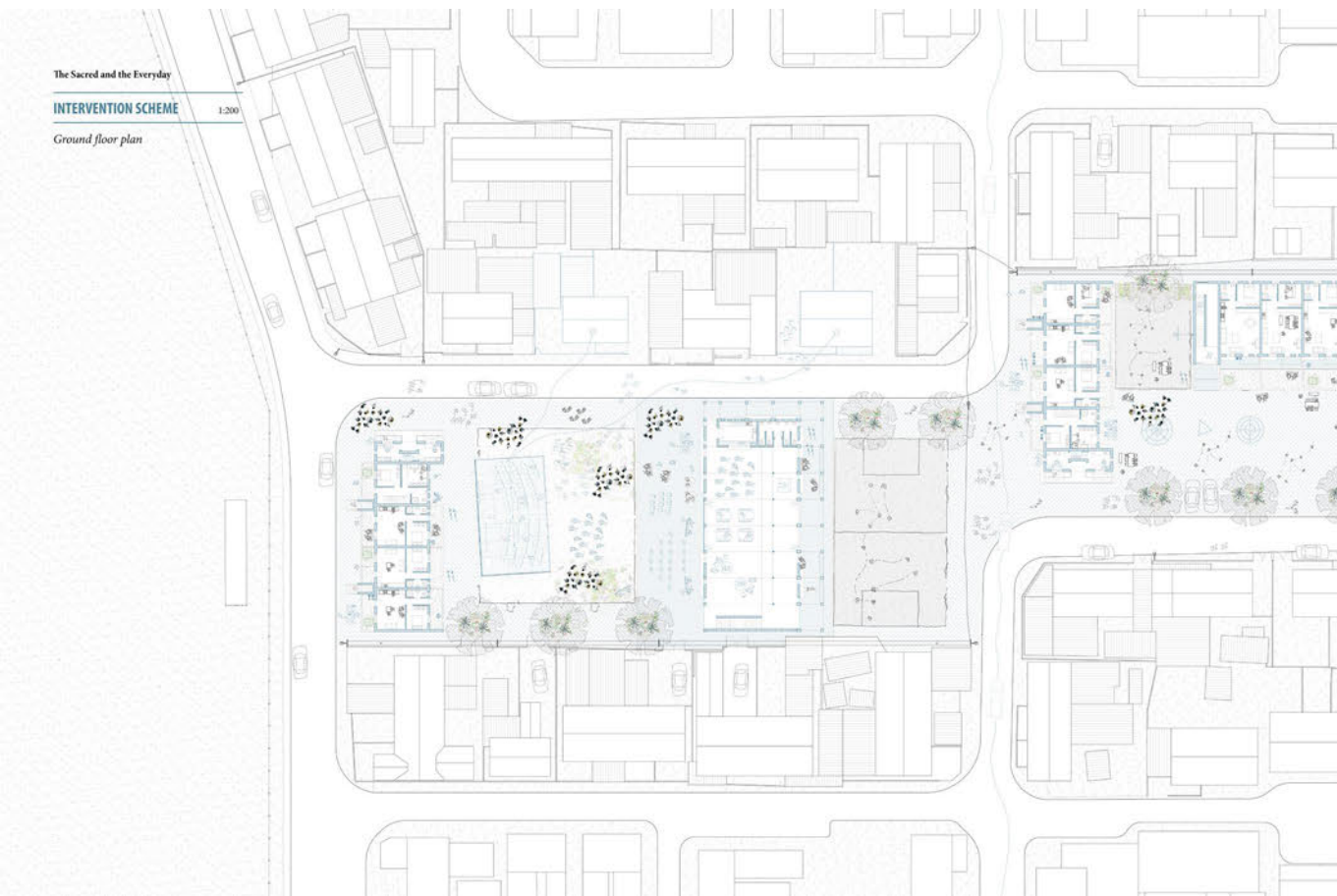


Landscape and surface as continuity



Intervention scheme:

Ground floor plan





Sectional moment:

Community hall cross-section

SECTIONAL MOMENT

1:50

Wedding at the community hall



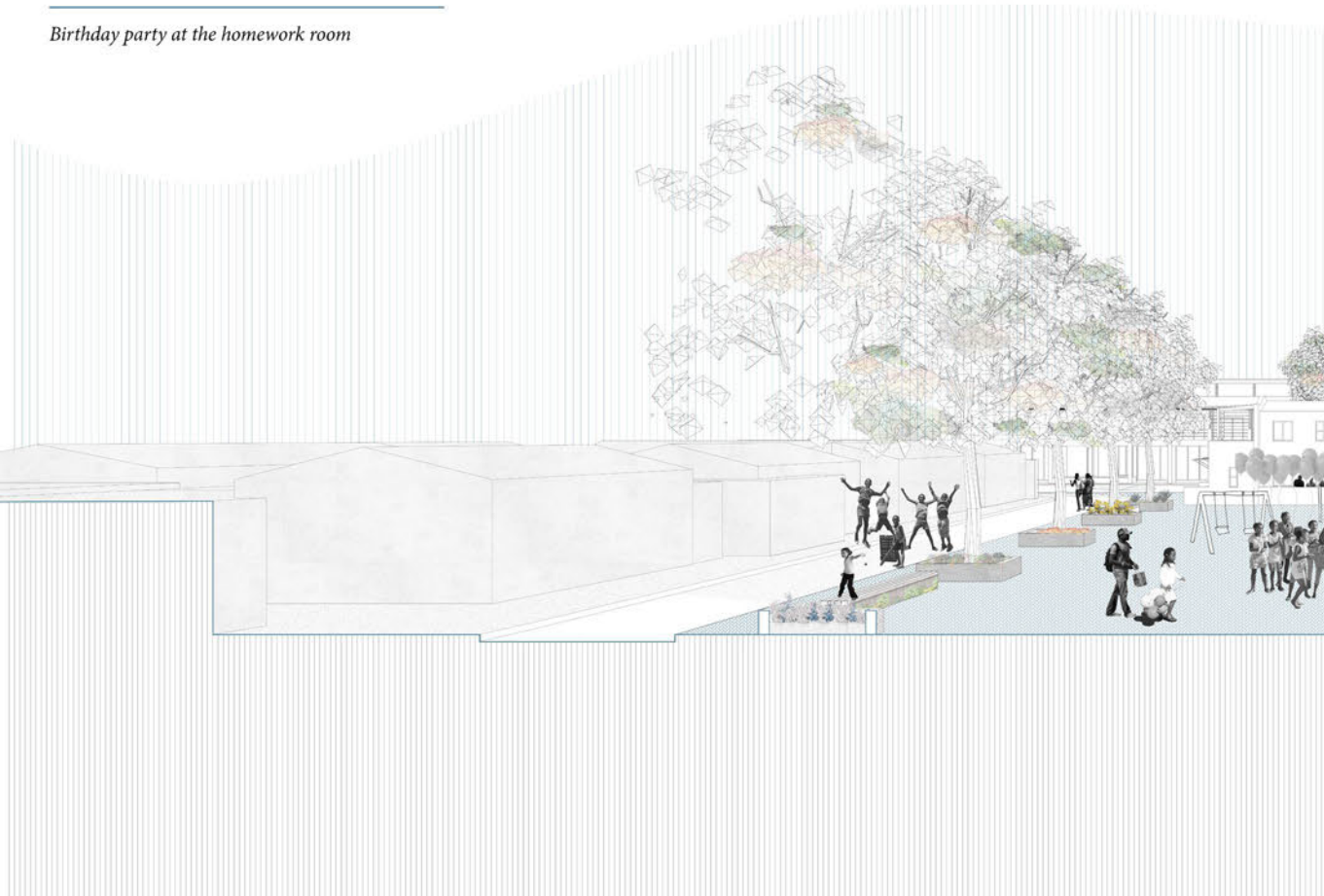


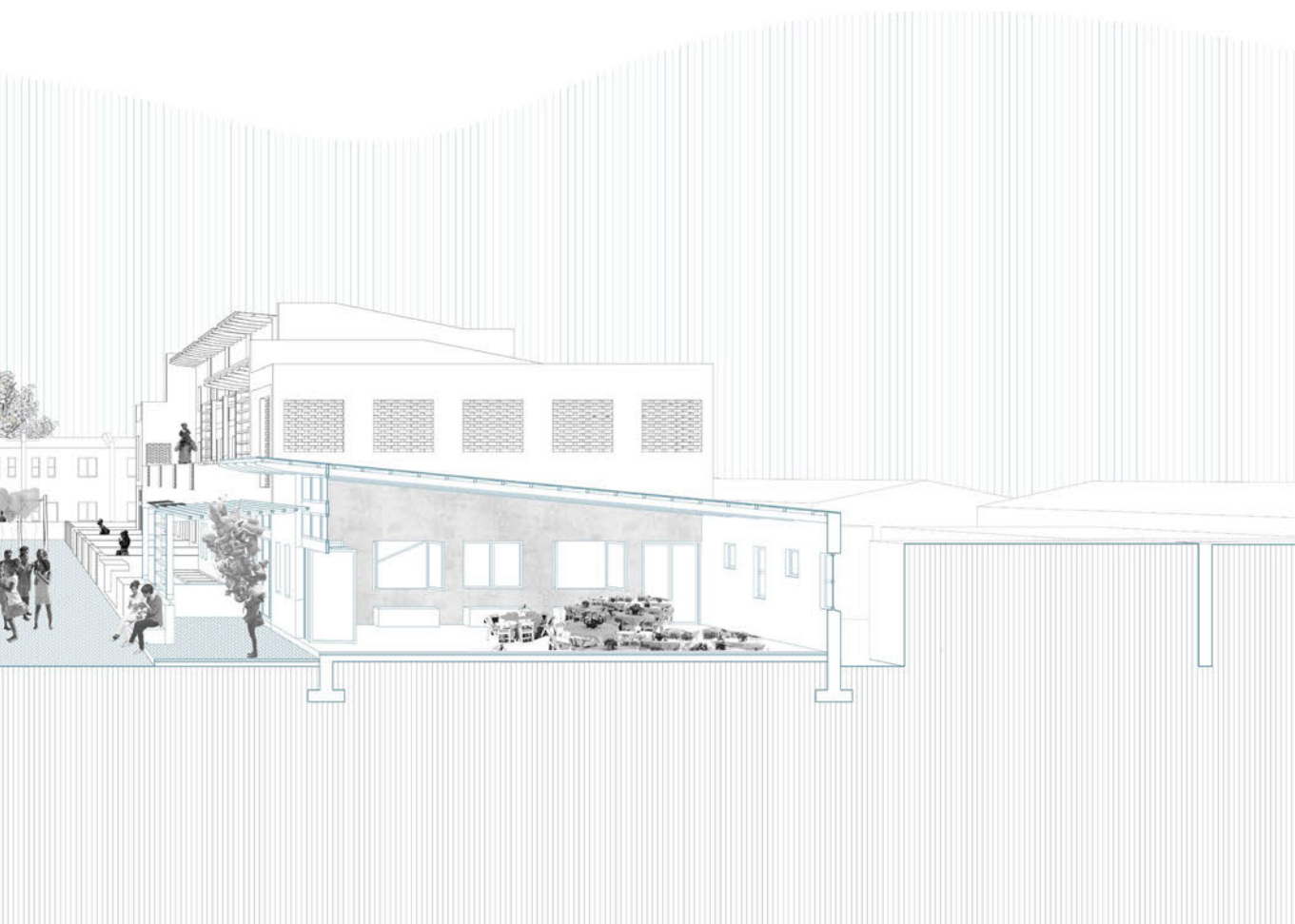
Sectional moment:
Spill-over cross-section

SECTIONAL MOMENT

1:50

Birthday party at the homework room



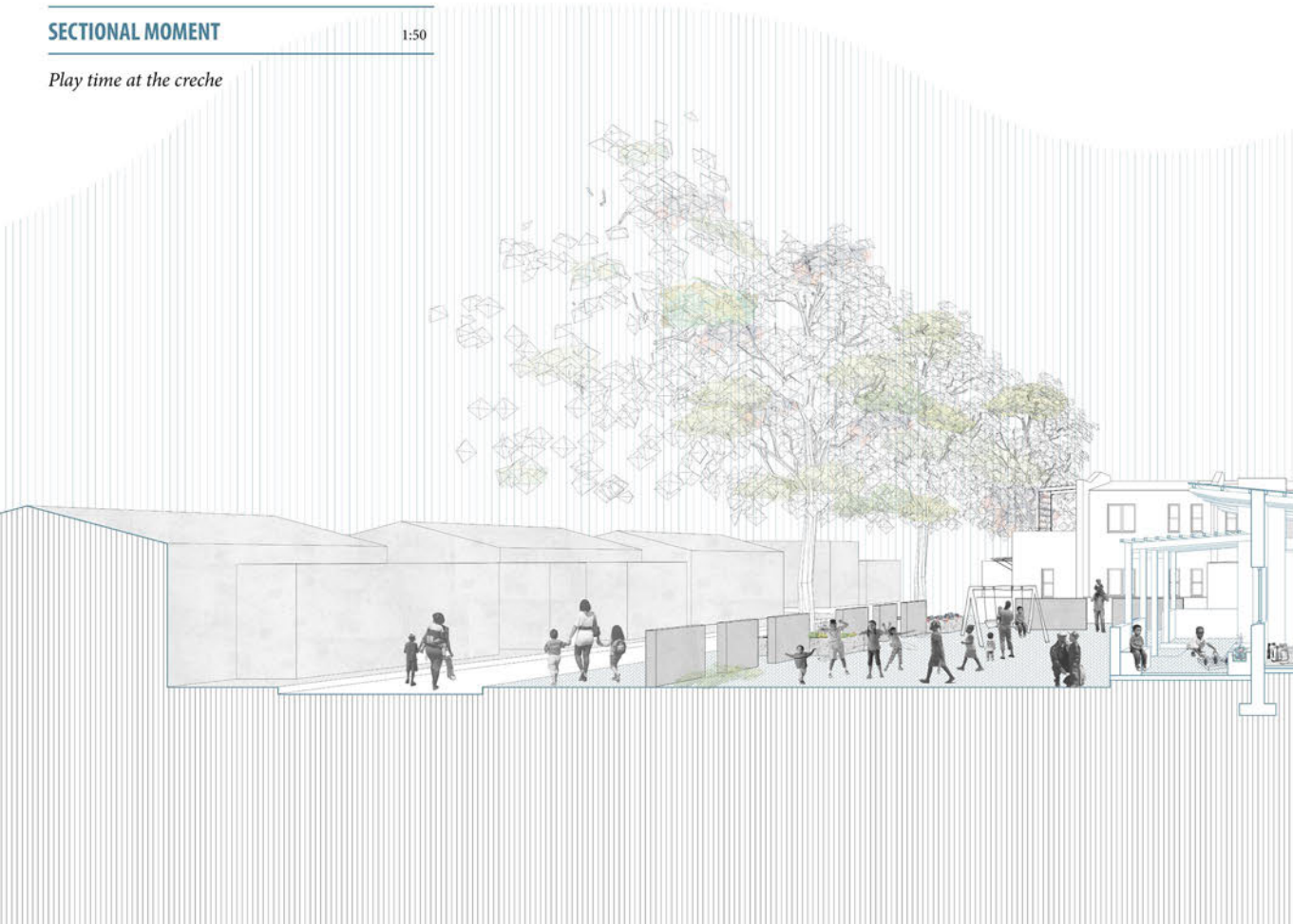


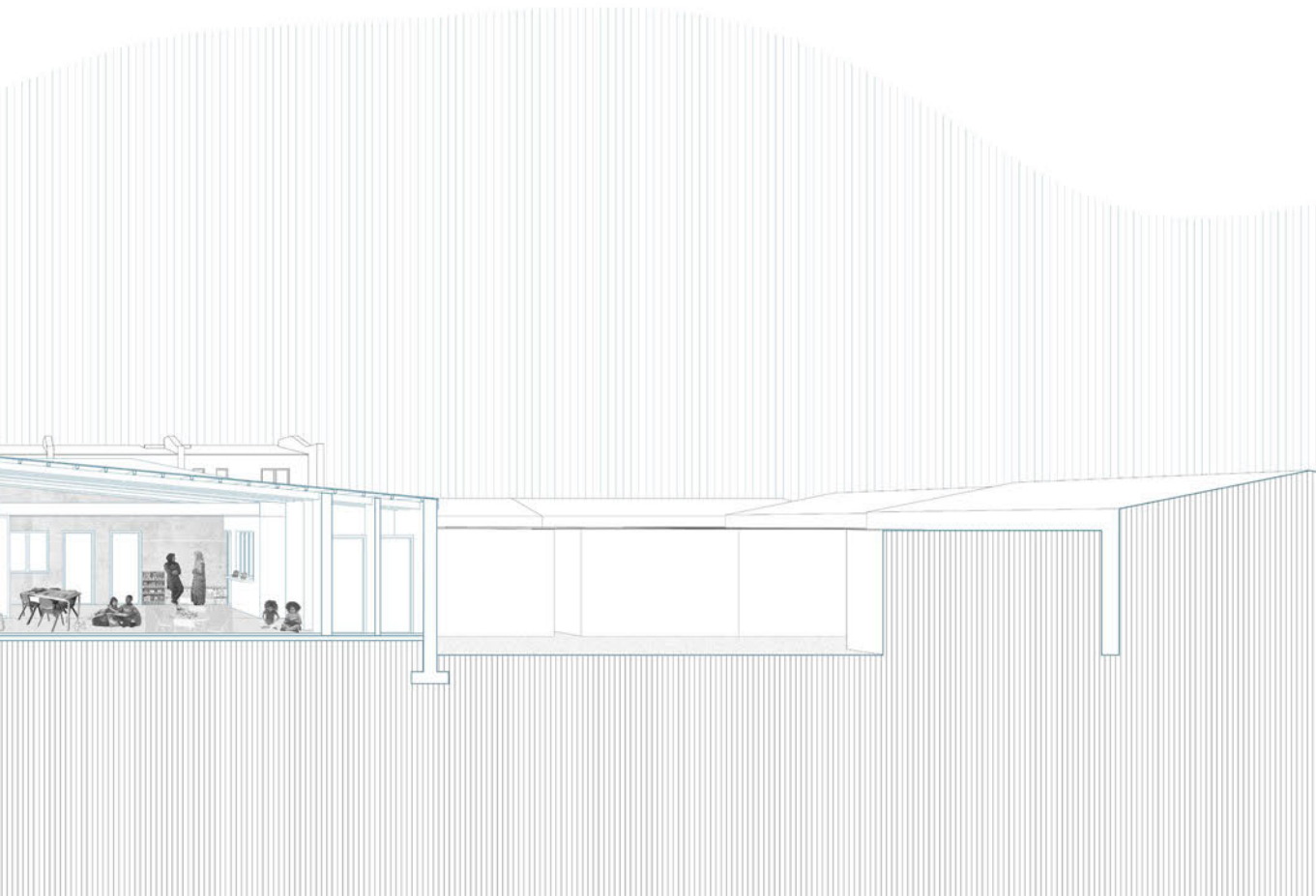
Sectional moment:
Creche cross-section

SECTIONAL MOMENT

1:50

Play time at the creche





Intervention scheme:

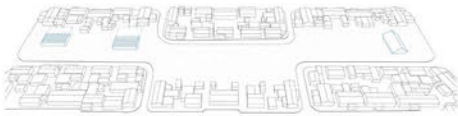
Aerial view

The Sacred and the Everyday

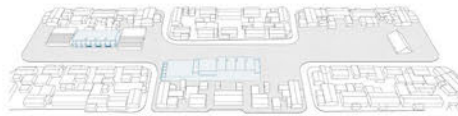
INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Spatial and programmatic configuration

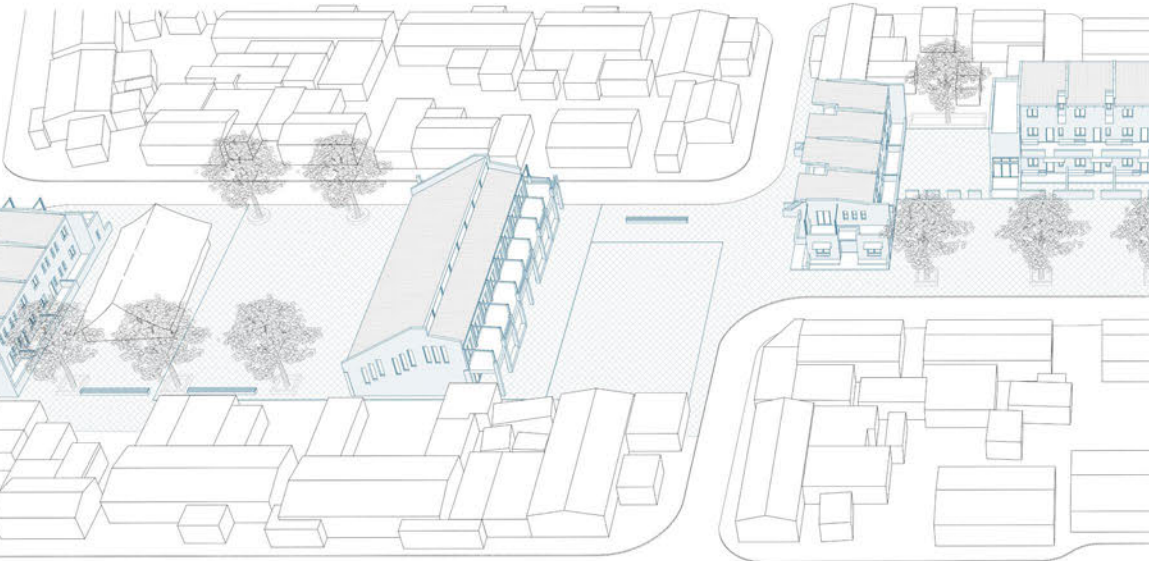
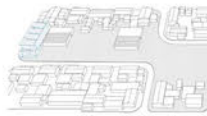
Maintaining existing religious presence



Building as edge



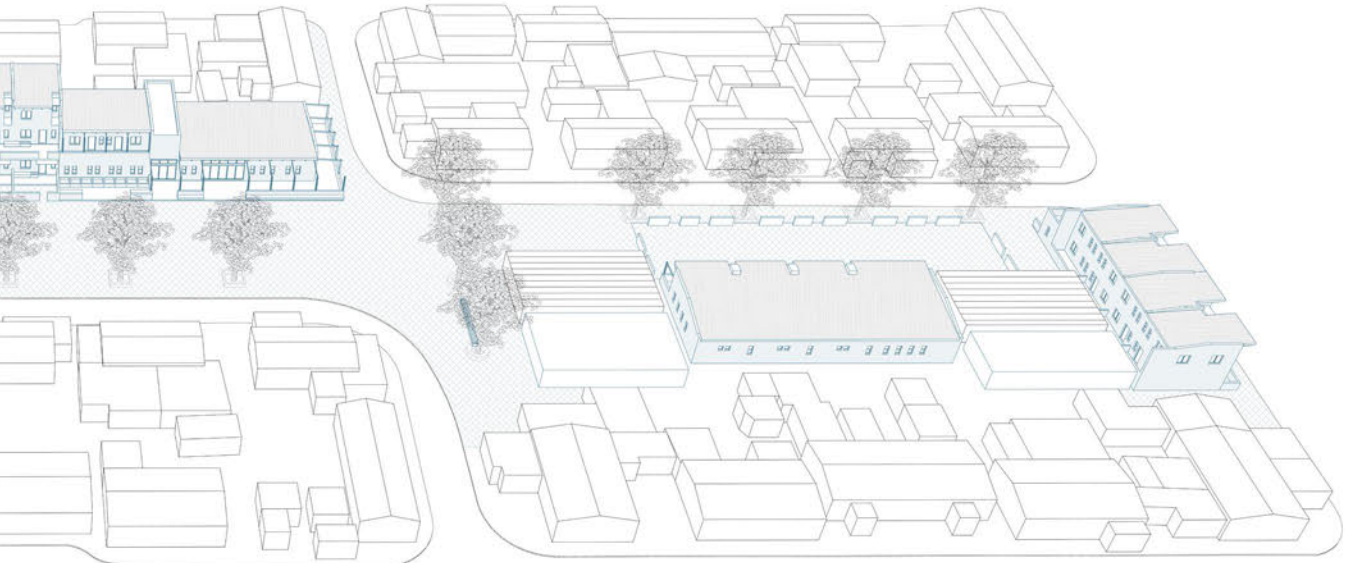
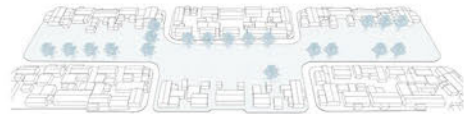
Building as connector



Intensifying the site through programme and densification



Landscape and surface as continuity



CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

As stated by Gomez and van Herck, in the book *Sacred in the City*, it is evident that within the transformations of modernity, the religious and sacred have not disappeared, but rather emerged in new and different forms that are negotiated in urban settings (Gomez & van Herck, 2012). The emergence of these religious sites in Delft, which operate across varying scales, exemplify these notions of negotiation, collaboration and determination.

Here, in a context where vast amounts of public space have been provided but neither developed nor maintained, these religious institutions, through appropriating sites for their own use, have begun to respond to the public and social needs of the community. Through their resourcefulness, use of social networks as infrastructure, significant outreach, and the creation of useable social spaces, these religious sites do not conform to typical historical ideals, but rather identify larger concepts of '*southern urbanism*' where ordinary people are able exercise their agency in order to survive and improve their lives.

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Application for Approval of Ethics in Research (EiR) Projects
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of Cape Town

APPLICATION FORM

Please Note:

Any person planning to undertake research in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (EBE) at the University of Cape Town is required to complete this form before collecting or analysing data. The objective of submitting this application prior to embarking on research is to ensure that the highest ethical standards in research, conducted under the auspices of the EBE Faculty, are met. Please ensure that you have read, and understood the EBE Ethics In Research Handbook (available from the UCT EBE, Research Ethics website) prior to completing this application form: <http://www.ebe.uct.ac.za/usr/be/research/ethics.pdf>

APPLICANT'S DETAILS		
Name of principal researcher, student or external applicant		Shafeea Choglé
Department		School of Architecture, Planning & Geomatics
Preferred email address of applicant		shafeea.c@gmail.com
If a Student	Your Degree e.g., MSc, PhD, etc.,	M.Arch (Professional)
	Name of Supervisor (if supervised)	Melinda Silverman & Fady Isaacs
If this is a research contract, indicate the source of funding/sponsorship		N/A
Project Title		The Sacred and the Everyday

I hereby undertake to carry out my research in such a way that:

- there is no apparent legal objection to the nature or the method of research; and
- the research will not compromise staff or students or the other responsibilities of the University;
- the stated objective will be achieved, and the findings will have a high degree of validity;
- limitations and alternative interpretations will be considered;
- the findings could be subject to peer review and publicly available; and
- I will comply with the conventions of copyright and avoid any practice that would constitute plagiarism.

SIGNED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Principal Researcher/ Student/External applicant	Shafeea Choglé	Signed by candidate	23 Jun 2017

APPLICATION APPROVED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Supervisor (where applicable)	Melinda Silverman	Signed by candidate	23 Jun 2017
HOD (or delegated nominee) Final authority for all applicants who have answered NO to all questions in Section 1, and for all Undergraduate research (including Honours)	JAIN LOW	Signed by candidate	23 Jun 2017
Chair: Faculty EIR Committee For applicants other than undergraduate students who have answered YES to any of the above questions	G SITHOLE	Signed by candidate	31 JULY 2017 23 Jun 2017