

Revitalised Intersections, VOL. 1

By YP Mudaly

*Architectural
Design
Approach*

06.

Formalistic generative
strategies and heritage
analysis according to Henri
Lefebvre (1991)

6.1. Formalistic generative strategies

6.1.1. Character of Heritage Ruins

The potential idea of restructuring is exemplified by the heritage ruins which are the perimeter of the site. There are, however, limitations within the restructuring and implementation of interventions in the city space especially when neoliberal strategies are utilised as there is a required state-led agenda which should align with economic

progress. The idea is to recognise the site as a historical significant fabric which requires intervention to strengthen its position in the landscape in order to contribute to its industrial past and commercial future (Diedrich, Dahl and Babette 2020: 2).

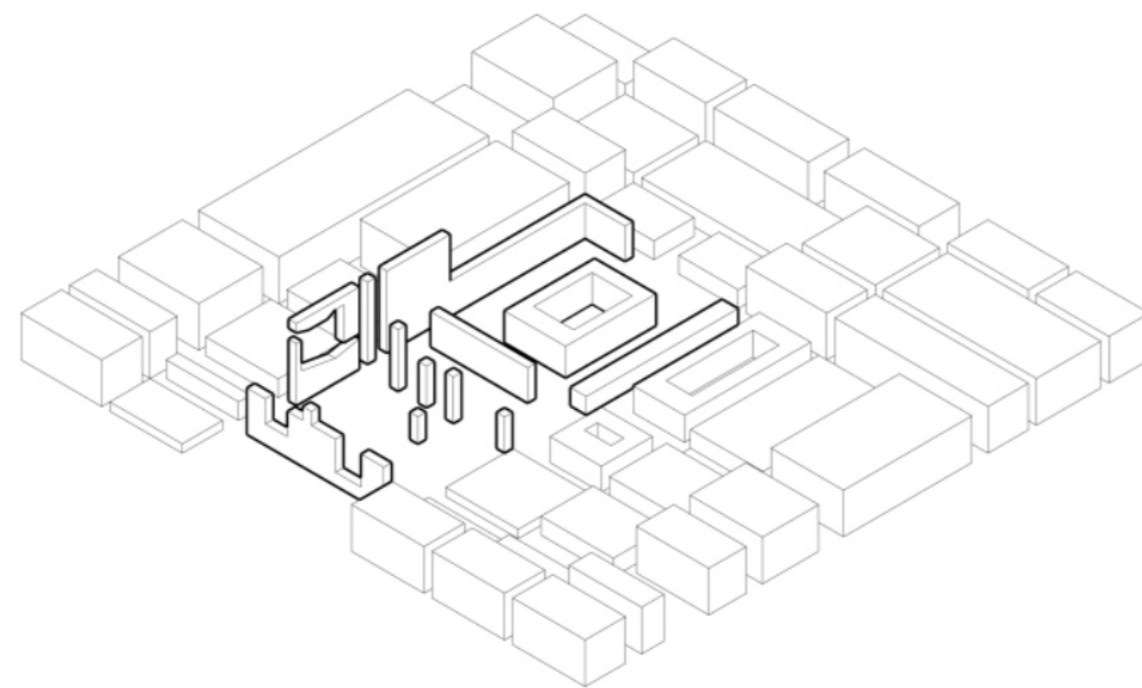
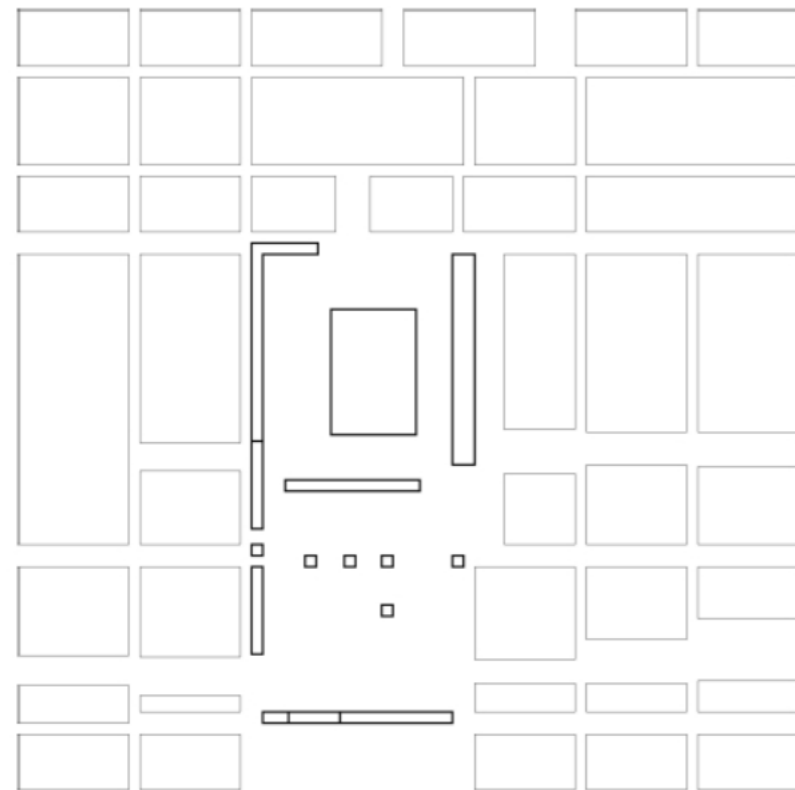
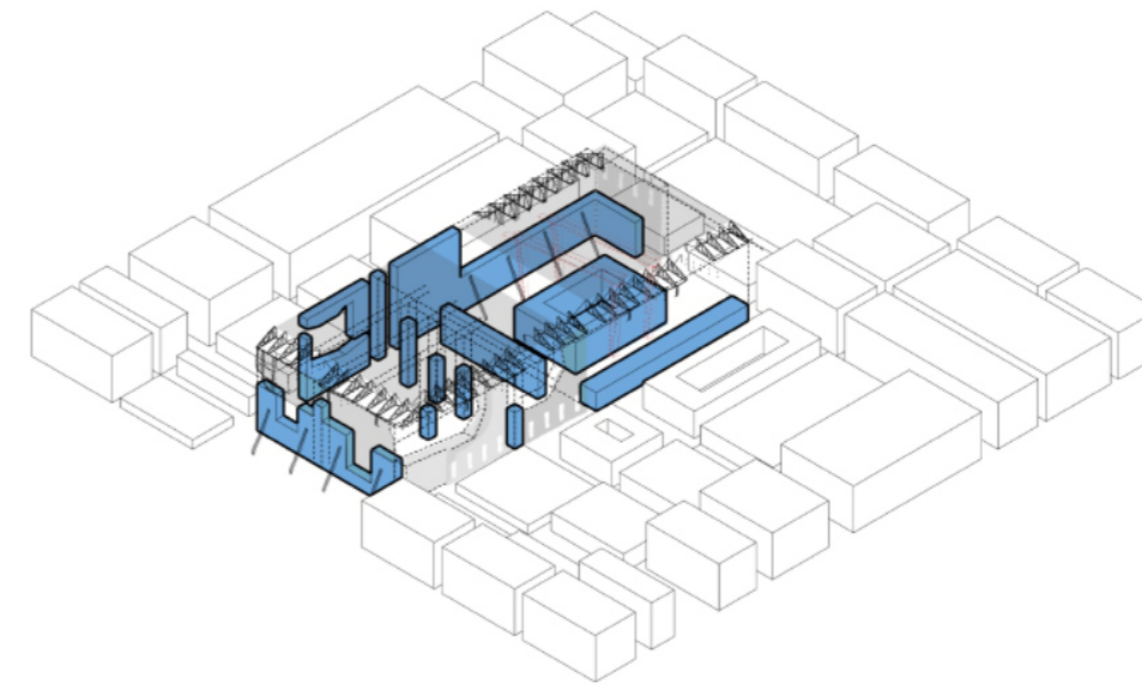
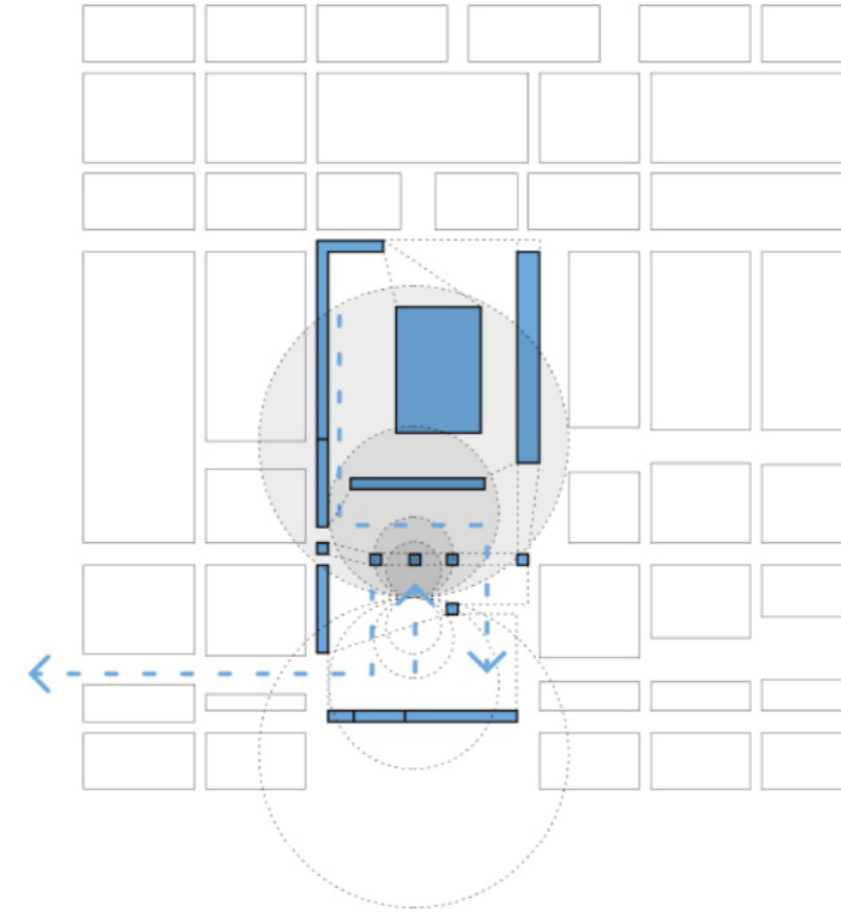


Fig. lix. Below: Heritage ruins diagram (Author 2021)

Fig. lx. Right: Production of space diagram (Author 2021)



6.1.2. Production of Space

Thomas Flynn (1991), in his critique of Foucault, explains the requirement of temporal continuity in open space and this takes a turn on the evaluation of the Durban Point Waterfront site. The existing ruins have been stagnant for a period of time and the palimpsestic layering of a new narrative within the space is crucial for the revitalisation of context. Being respectful of existing ruins and not demolishing it was important, however integration of a new language of materiality with stylistic instances were drawn from existing spaces. The end goal is to amplify the buildings existing character and express its evolution in space and time.

Furthermore, the intention was to fracture the nature of the ground plan then introducing very recognisable (facade-ical) elements in the elevation. As contributed by Lefebvre's dialect in *The Production of Space* (Lefebvre 1991), the facade is a monumental component of built structure which dissipates. One could understand how ruinosation could cement a structure as strong metaphysically but backwards in narratives and evolution. The fracturing of elements through identity restructuring adds the new layering of Durban's palimpsest through revitalisation strategies. The site, in its relativity to other spaces, cannot go backwards to relive its past but needs to emphasise its adaptation of change.

6.1.3. Historical Materialism

Backed by this stance, Lefebvre, speaks of a 'historical materialism' (Lefebvre 1991: 181) which asserts that monuments - which bear no productive nature nor work in time - are categorised as 'raw material' fig. 18 in space. Therefore, this backs the design intent to use the existing ruins (as seen in the first diagram in figure 18) but reinvent it through new structure through a dialect of materialism where it has a tolerance of

transformation. New functions and programme are introduced through celebrating the hospitality industry and creating a building which not only contains a range of retail offerings but institutions which facilitate operations of the working port and spaces in the city as well as facilities which show the adaptable nature of the framework such as an open air market near the existing hotel.

6.2. Architectural strategy

The architectural strategy involves pushing the envelope of the building outwards towards the street edge to respect the linear threshold of the ruins. This allows for the creation of new connections towards the canal as the building is constructed in its new urban context through spatial fractures. The benefit of this fracture is that it is a literal palimpsest of architecture which allows the building to continue to change and adapt

over time but the existing ruins remain. The new building not only exemplifies the change in rhetoric in the urban fabric but is able to draw synergies from the spaces around it similar to the urban context and create a space which focuses on complementing and creating the resilience of the new site. The main goal of the architecture is to combine all layers of continuity into a space which celebrates

Fig. Ixi. Below: Material strategy diagram (Author 2021)

Fig. Ixii. Right: Architectural intention diagram (Author 2021)

innovation and progression through a discourse of identity. This architecture then becomes resilient because the ruin doesn't only survive, but it adapts for new use, activity and relationships with people and the landscape. The canal amplifies the urban quality of space thus, the building is able to hold cultural value and appreciation.

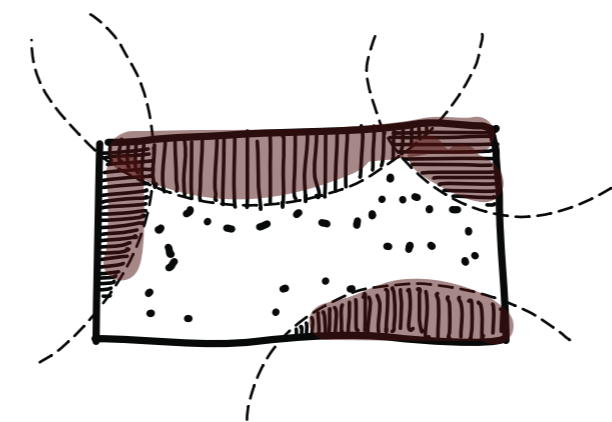
6.3. Critique of design explorations and intentions

6.3.1. Urban intentions

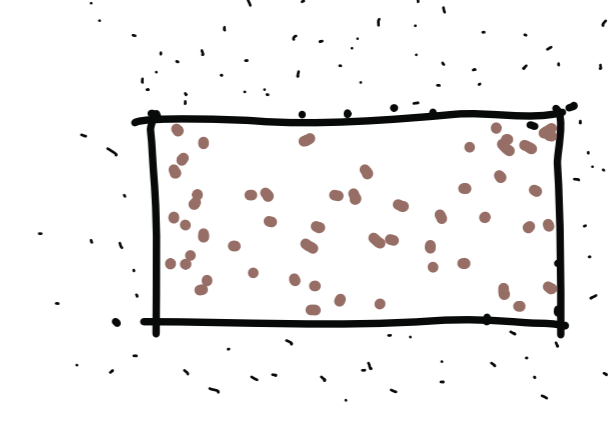
- 1. Connection
- 2. Historical grain restored
- 3. Activation of lantern node
- 4. Green fabric
- 5. Mixed use neighbourhood
- 6. Threshold

6.3.1. Architectural intentions

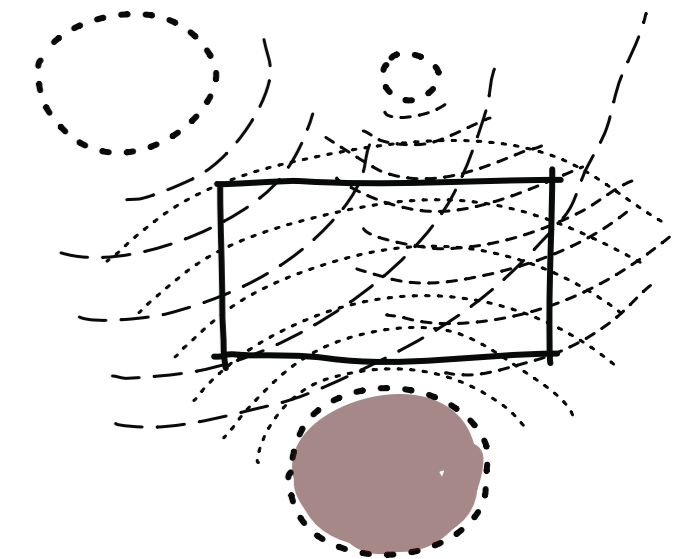
Create space out of edges



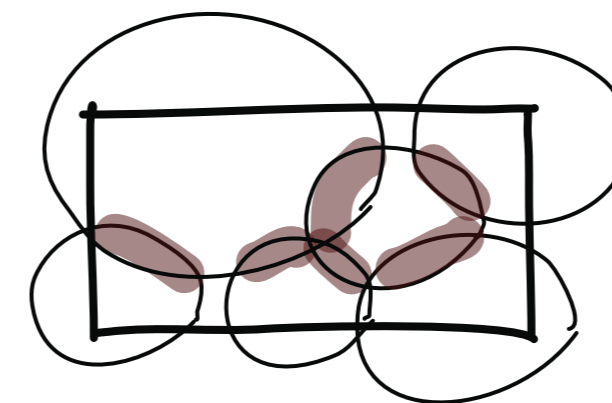
Enable new 'civic' typology



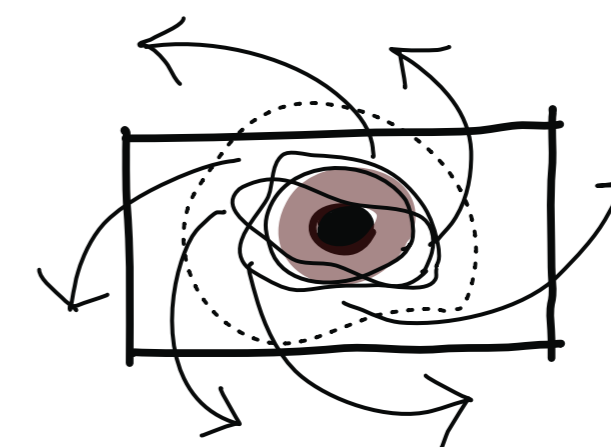
Connection from drawing in synergies



Create synthesis within space



Volume as central catalyst for programmes



Site extends from boundaries

