



Theory



Illus 3 Cultural Products: Digital Collage (Author, 2011)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will elaborate on the theoretical framework through which the design project will occur. The legislative and international guidelines influence on the design will be identified and explained.

Thereafter, the theory of cultural production and its relevance to the design will be expanded upon.

Means of building alteration will be explored and also expressed diagrammatically. The stripping back method will be explained and interpreted. The roles of legislation, guidelines, theory and modes of alteration will be identified in the stages of stripping back with design outcomes identified.

The chapter will then be concluded.

3.2 LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

3.2.1 National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA)

The act is concerned with the conservation of heritage resources for the benefit of present and future generations, acknowledgment of the past and its significance as an inherited identity which is not renewable (South Africa, 1999: 3).

The NHRA is of significance to the project since it is South African legislation and is therefore relevant to the geographical and historical context. It deals with the management and attitudes to heritage resources as opposed to any design approach regarding these.

The following principles form a basis for the design project:

- Protect historical structures for present and future generations (South Africa, 1999: 17).
- Promote the use of and access to heritage resources (South Africa, 1999: 17).
- Use existing historical structures for social and economic contribution. (South Africa, 1999: 17)
- Research, document and record historical resources (South Africa, 1999: 17).

The NHRA classifies heritage resources within three grades:

Grade I - Heritage resources of exceptional qualities that are of national significance (South Africa, 1999: 18) example, Union Buildings, Freedom Park.

Grade II - Heritage resources of a national state that have provincial and regional significance (South Africa, 1999: 18) example, Cradle of Humankind.

Grade III - Any other heritage resources worthy of conservation (South Africa, 1999: 18).

The 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP building is classified as a grade II resource. It is of provincial importance, in its role as a building which serviced the historical railway development in Pretoria.

The NHRA states that no structure older than 60 years may be demolished or altered without a permit from the provincial heritage resources authority (South Africa, 1999: 58). This implies that any alteration intended on the 1909 CEO building (102 years old) would require permission and therefore motivation.

The NHRA's encouragement to share heritage resources for use and enjoyment (South Africa, 1999: 17) and to promote social and economic development (South Africa, 1999: 17) should be addressed by the programme of a skills training centre for the disadvantaged.

3.2.2 The Burra Charter - The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance

This charter, which is to be utilised as a guideline to the design process, has the goal of conserving places of cultural significance, as a form of "tangible expressions of identity" for the benefit of present and future generations (Australia, 1999: 1).

The following guidelines will be adopted in the design process:

- Conserve places of cultural significance (Australia, 1999: 1).
- Document understand and interpret cultural significance (Australia, 1999: 1).
- Write a statement of significance (Australia, 1999: 10).
- In creation of new work, do not imitate the existing, new work must be identifiable (Australia, 1999: 7).

The charter advocates changing as much as possible to enable occupation, while changing as little as possible to retain the cultural significance of the place (Australia, 1999: 1). This approach is appropriate to the study which strives to address new occupation while maintaining the historical character of the building and its context.

3.3 CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE

Cultural production may be defined as the process whereby cultural products are created, diffused and absorbed (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006: 1). This theory is relevant to the study since it addresses the role of cultural products in the life of its consumer or user. Interior design is a cultural product (Königk, 2010: 51). The designer is the producer of such product, the media, internet and advertising diffuse the product and the consumer or user absorbs this product, extracts meaning through perception and uses the product as part of their own identity construction (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006: 4).

Cultural products are acknowledged as being highly relevant and specific to its market of consumers or users (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006: 12) and are therefore temporal: product relevance expires after a time. Cultural products thereby become a form of evidence, providing insight and understanding of cultures of a time, and is of heritage significance to future generations.

Similarly, historical architecture, as a cultural product of its time, is evidence of cultural meaning to its consumers or users and becomes evidence of this. It is in this way that historical architecture is significant, in that it provides insight into the preferences, behaviour and tendencies of its users before.

Change in occupation (time, users and typology) poses a threat to the visions of historical architecture. Alteration considered from a functional perspective has led to the disregard of meaning created through the design of cultural products and subsequently, to a loss of value to the historical integrity of the building (Feilden, 1994: 8).

Similarly, through addressing change in occupation purely through functional alteration, the needs, habits and behaviour of the new user group is inadequately addressed due to the “make-do” approach to the existing historical structure.

This is the case in the 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP building, as with many others in Pretoria. The result is a threat to both the historical host building and the new occupation (Feilden, 1994: 8), which are both irrelevantly considered through intervention.

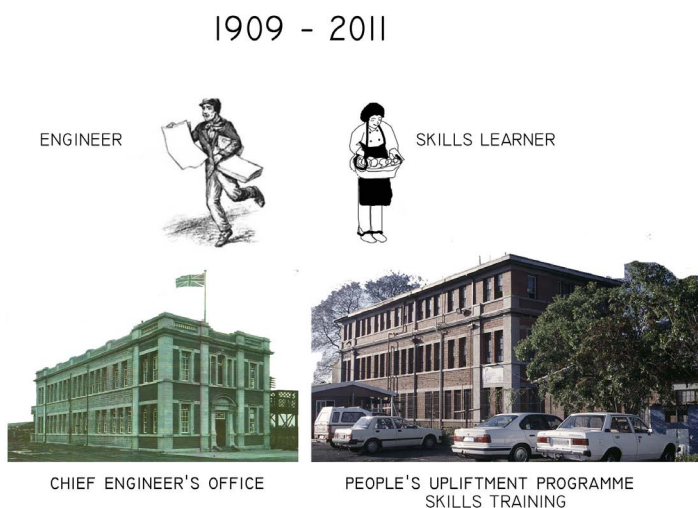
Cultural production theory, therefore, becomes a relevant tool through which design can act in a means that addresses the explicit nature of changed occupation (time, consumer or user and typology) ensuring the survival of inhabitation in a building.

3.4 ALTERATION

Change in occupancy may be defined as a change within a building in time, user or typology. The 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP building displays this situation of change in all three regards. This is demonstrated in Illus 3.1 below.

According to Scott (2008: 1), the fate of buildings, once completed, are either to remain unchanged, altered or demolished. If viewed from the perspective of the design project, the unchanging of 1909 CEO building would have resulted in a loss of occupation and thereby an empty building (Scott, 2008: 1). The building would remain unsuitable to the needs of a new time, user group or typology by remaining unchanged. The alteration of the building would result in inhabitation but does pose the risk of threatening the historical integrity of the building in its original vision (Scott, 2008: 1) as the 2011 POPUP building has done. Demolition would allow the opportunity for a new building as a cultural product particular to its occupation to be developed, but would serve to diminish the historical character of the area.

The social significance of POPUP and its location near the CBD motivates for its maintenance in occupation in Salvokop. It is known to users that the site is a point of social upliftment and health care. The building should therefore remain inhabited and not be restored to its intended historical vision without changing further if it is to maintain occupation. The 1909 CEO is historically significant in its role in the railway history of Pretoria. It is one of the few surviving buildings within the railway edge, and its demolition would result in a loss of historical character within Salvokop.

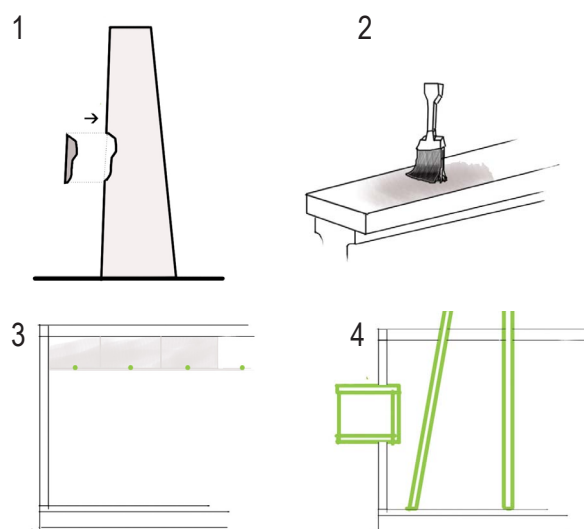


Illus 3.1 Change in Occupation (Bakker, 2002) & (Author, 2011)

The theory of alteration becomes a critical area of study in its relevance as the approach to historical architecture. Alteration will be conducted with the dual purpose of reinstating the historical integrity and character of the host building and addressing the new occupation (time, users, and typology) from the perspective of cultural production as an explicit representation of new occupation.

These four modes of alteration, adopted from the Burra Charter, will be interpreted and utilised to different degrees in the process of stripping back (Illus 3.2):

- 1 Reconstruction - returning a place to a known earlier state by introducing new material (Australia, 1999: 2).
- 2 Preservation - the maintenance of the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding further deterioration (Australia, 1999: 2).
- 3 Adaptation - modification of a place in order to enable occupation (Australia, 1999: 2).
- 4 New work - the introduction of new additions and structures to enable occupation (Australia, 1999: 7).



Illus 3.2 Alteration Processes (Author, 2011)

3.5 STRIPPING BACK

The stripping back method will be utilised as a means to guide the process of alteration to the 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP building. The method provides a framework for action which will be supplemented by the theories discussed in order to add substance to the approach.

The stripping back method, adopted from Scott (2008: 108) involves three stages of approach to the host building. The host building is defined as the existing architectural product which is to be altered.

Establishing the ideal is the first stage of stripping back (Scott, 2008: 108). This involves the understanding of the host building (Scott, 2008: 108). The interpretation of this stage involves the identification of previous alterations in the form of restoration, removals and additions in determining how the building would have appeared in its first built form. This has occurred through the means of analyses of historical photographic evidence and visits to the building, which have been expressed in Chapter 2. The ideal has since been defined as the building in its first built form prior to any alteration. This stage of stripping back will be represented by graphic documentation of the ideal.

The stripping back method works within the intention of the building to return to its ideal (Scott, 2008: 108). This will be facilitated by the second stage of “removing rotted fabric” and “replacement of damaged fabric” (Scott, 2008:108). Rotted fabric has been identified as decaying fabric within the built structure as well as construction additions to the building subsequent to its ideal. These are to be removed (in order to return the building to its ideal) and ideal fabric which had been removed or altered is to be restored. Any fragile fabric is to be repaired and preserved as a part of the ideal building fabric.

These stages will serve to reinstate the historical integrity and character to the building and its railway context through reconstruction and preservation.

The third stage, entitled “enabling works” involves the creation of new fabric to enable new occupation. The new occupation, identified as 2011- previously disadvantaged skills learners - of POPUP skills training centre, will represent the change in the building to ensure inhabitation (Scott, 2008: 1). This will occur through the theoretical vision of interior design as a cultural product with the purpose of explicit and temporal intervention representing the needs, interactions and behaviour of users (Königk, 2010: 12). This stage will involve alteration and new work. The approach to these will be expanded on in the conceptual approach to the design.

The final stage will serve to address new occupation (time users and typology) through explicit representation from the perspective of cultural production.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided the theoretical framework from which the design project will occur. The legislative and guidelines context of the treatment of historical architecture has been outlined and the influence of these identified. The relevance of the theory of cultural production to the process of alteration has been highlighted in terms of addressing change in occupation. Different modes of alteration and their implementation in the design process have been identified. The design method of stripping back has been elaborated upon and specific means of approaching its stages in the design process have been mentioned.