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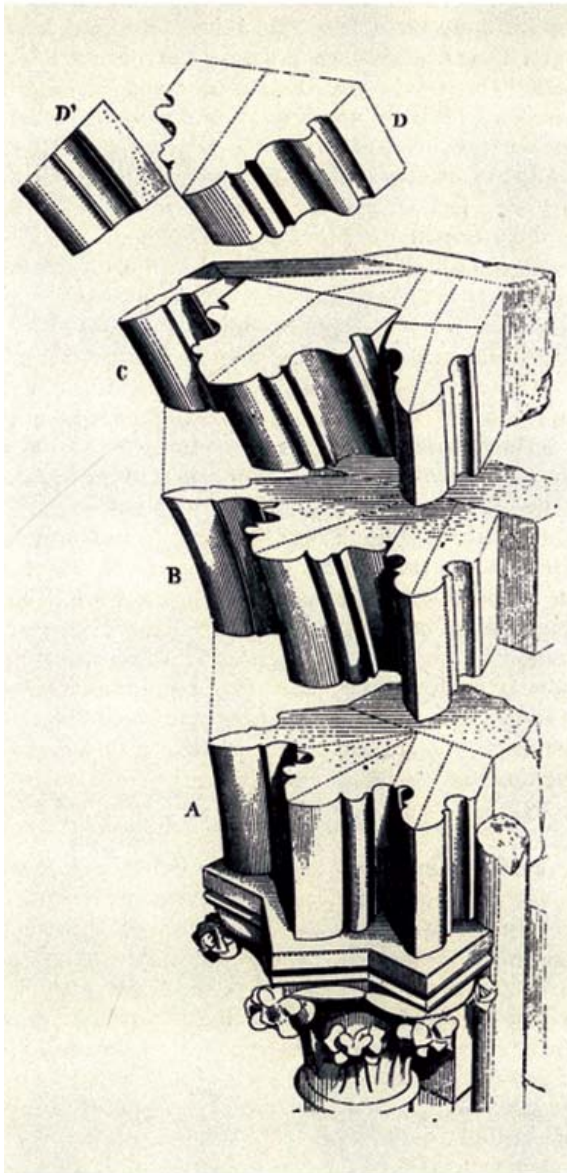
precedents

120



“As an architect, I try to be guided not by habit but by a conscious sense of the past-by precedent, thoughtfully considered...”(Venturi 1966:13).

EXPLICATING THE IMPLICIT



Over the last century a massive increase in the production of buildings has taken place. Design development has reached a largely repetitive state where innovation occurs on rare occasions (van den Toorn and Guney 2011:4). In order to focus on innovative investigation, more routine design knowledge is required to truly advance the “profession” of design towards a “discipline”. van den Toorn and Guney (2011:5) argue that this design knowledge becomes the core of the design discipline, by providing specific ways in producing form to the forthcoming advancement of objects, products, and environments. Often concealed in the minds of designers or their realised projects, this implicit design knowledge can be made explicit through appropriate precedent studies, thus allowing one to learn from earlier experiences. The study will therefore make use of programmatic, heritage, design and technological precedents to gain these insights.

Figure 7.1: Exploded architectural drawing by Viollet-le-Duc in his *Dictionnaire raisonné* around 1870 (Source: Barry Bergdoll, ed., 1990, *Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. The foundations of architecture. Selections from the Dictionnaire raisonné*, New York viewed online 7 June 2016 from <http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2013/galleries-2013/images-falser-riha-journal-0071/fig7>)

Programmatic Precedent

Project:	Chicoco Media Centre
Client:	Collaborative Media Advocacy Platform (CMAP)
Architect:	NLÉ Works (Kunlé Adeyemi)
Location:	Port Hartcourt, Nigeria
Programme:	Radio station & cinema space
Area:	560m ²
Status:	Conceptual Development - 2014

Threatened by government plans to demolish settlements along the waterfront that fringes the city, a community of 480,000 members required a platform for their voices to be heard. The design development was thoughtfully regulated by community involvement and participation to provide a linear progression of public spaces from the waterfront to the bank. Viewed as a “bridge to transformation”, the building houses a community radio station, recording studios, computer centre, meeting rooms, amphitheatre and cinema. Attentive to the challenges faced by the community, the structure portrays their collective aspirations in a community media centre that will be built, owned, maintained and operated by those it aims to uplift (NLÉ 2014).



Applicability

The Chicoco Media Centre is the physical expression of connectivity. Through the combination of mixed media outlets and sources the building strengthens the affected community by offering access to and an outlet for information. The careful arrangement and manipulation of typically introverted programmatic elements begin to create an accessible public platform of engagement.



Figure 7.3: Montage indicating spatial and material character of the Chicoco Media Centre
 (Source: NLÉ Works, n.d., adapted by Author).

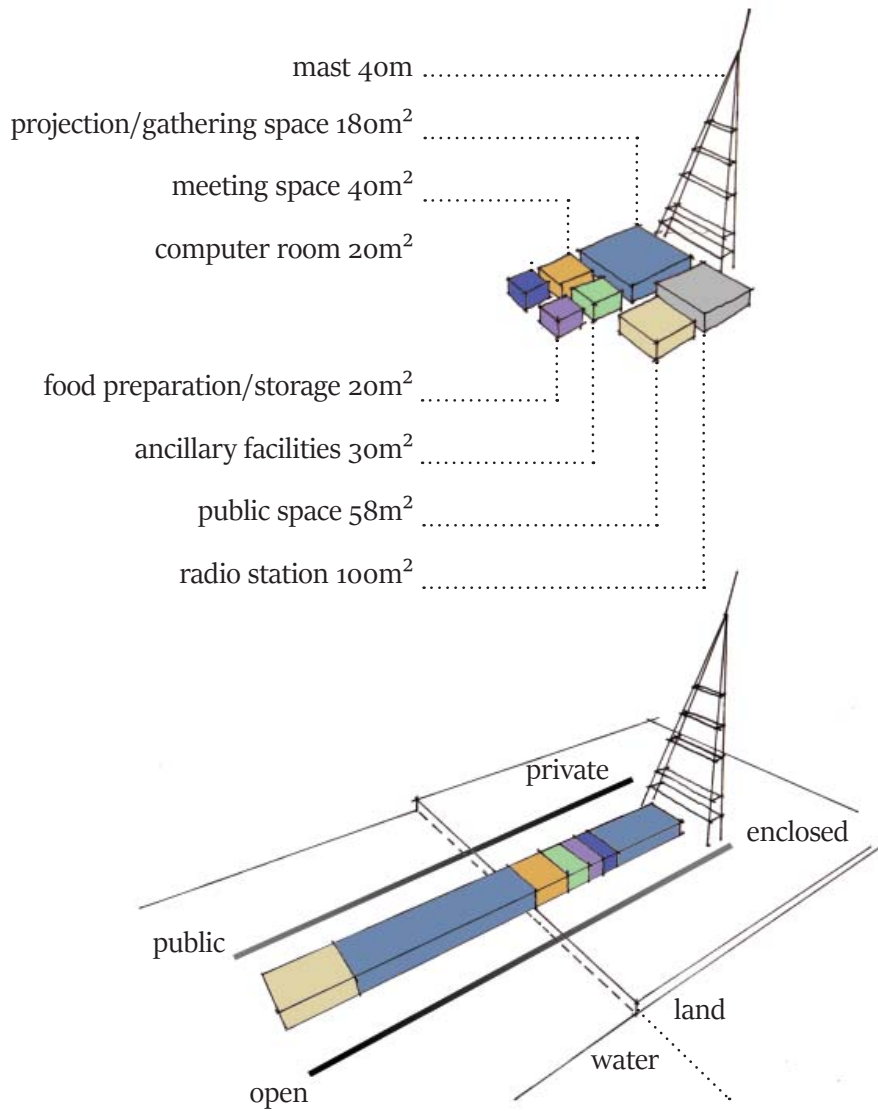


Figure 7.4 (top): Diagram of the programme specific spaces and areas of the Chicoco Media Centre (Source: NLÉ Works, n.d., adapted by Author),

Figure 7.5 (bottom): Diagram indicating the spatial arrangement in relation to water and land, public and private, and open and enclosed gradients.

(Source: NLÉ Works, n.d., adapted by Author).

Heritage Precedent

- Project:** Civic Centre - Rehabilitation of Old Prison
- Client:** Ministry of Development & City of Palencia
- Architect:** Exit Architects & Eduardo Delgado Orusco
- Location:** Palencia, Spain
- Programme:** Library, art and music classrooms
- Area:** 5,077m²
- Status:** Completed - 2011

Designed as the Palencia Provincial Prison complex during the 19th century this heritage asset has been carefully reinterpreted to accommodate the new function of a civic centre, including an auditorium, library, multi-function rooms and classrooms for art and music. The existing complex, comprised of four separate double-storey, load-bearing brickwork pavilions, is unified through a new central hall area. The constricted, insular nature of the existing building has been liberated through the insertion of new translucent and semi-opaque glass and zinc sheeting to create a contemporary cultural landscape that is more responsive to the city and its inhabitants (Frearson 2012).



Figure 7.6: Central courtyard of Palencia Civic Centre
(Source: Dezeen, n.d., adapted by Author). http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2012/04/Dezeen_Civic-Centre-in-Palencia-by-Exit-Architects_2.jpg.

Applicability

The isolating and insular nature of the existing prison building, once a symbol of control, is subverted through the insertion of new architectural fabric. These new elements, contrasting in both materiality and construction assist in unifying the heritage building. The introduction of light through the use of varying levels of opacity create a new language that is respectful towards the old yet easily identifiable as new.



Figure 7.7: Photographic montage indicating the contrast between the old insular building and the new translucent elements of the Palencia Civic Centre
(Source: Dezeen, n.d., adapted by Author). http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2012/04/Dezeen_Civic-Centre-in-Palencia-by-Exit-Architects_2.jpg.

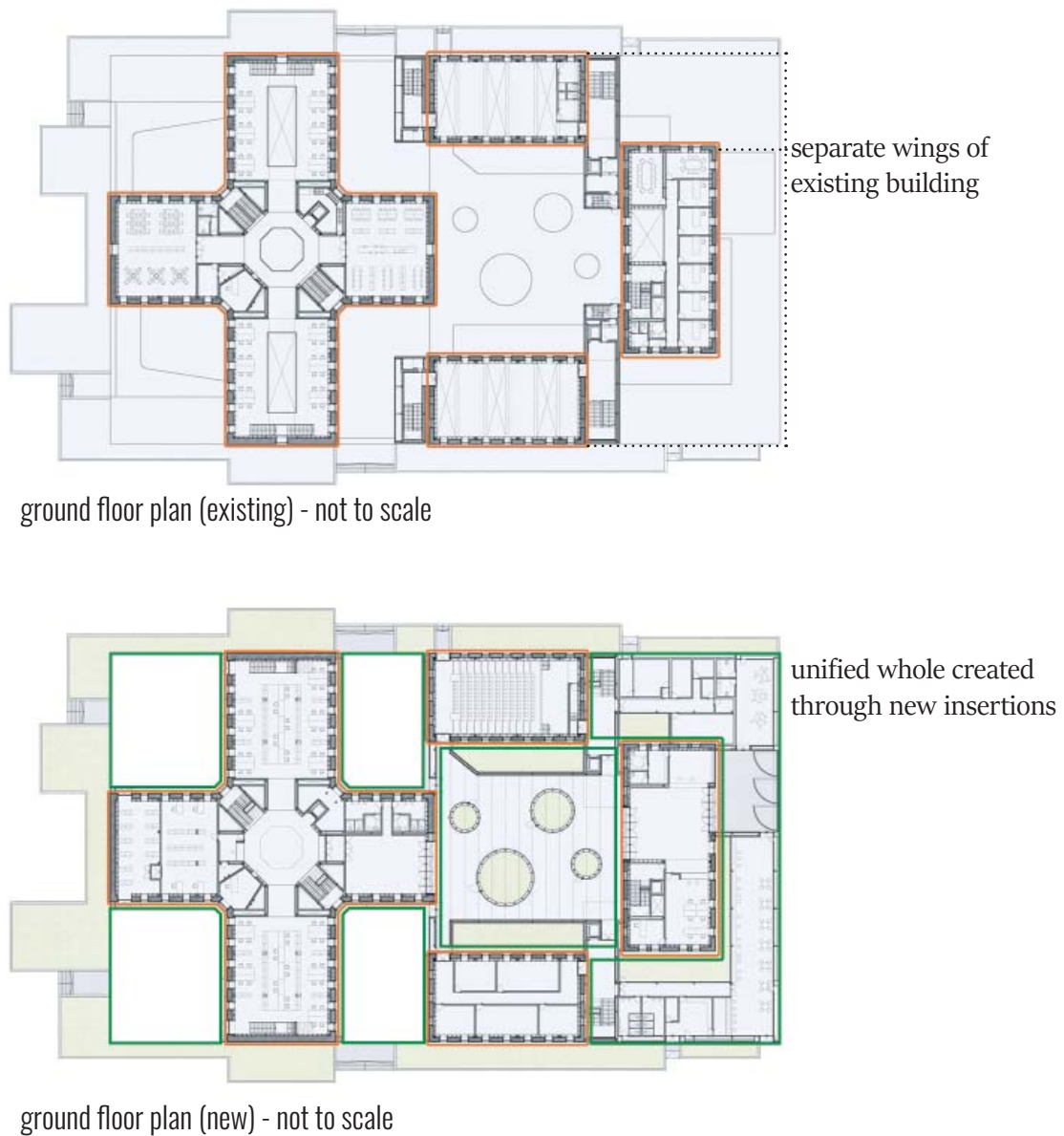


Figure 7.8: Diagrammatic floor plans indicating the unifying nature of the new interventions at the Palencia Civic Centre
(Source: Dezeen, n.d., adapted by Author). http://static.dezeen.com/uploads/2012/04/Dezeen_Civic-Centre-in-Palencia-by-Exit-Architects_2.jpg.

Design Precedent

Project:	Peckham Library
Client:	London Borough of Southwark
Architect:	Will Alsop
Location:	London, England
Programme:	Library and archive facilities
Area:	2,300m ²
Status:	Completed - 2000

Designed to bring international attention to a neglected and middle-income area of London, the Peckham Library utilises an inverted L-shape form to create a sense of drama and intimacy away from the noise of the city (Coleman, n.d), The five-storey building employs the transparent and permeable vertical block to accommodate the generic service and circulation areas. This organisation of space allows the cantilevered double volume reading room, situated on the fourth and fifth floors, to accommodate more specific, interactive spaces. Three ovoid 'pods' raised above the reading room create more specific containers of space and allow for the clustering of functions below them. The disparity of form and structure highlights their distinctness from the rectilinear and thus their importance to visitors.

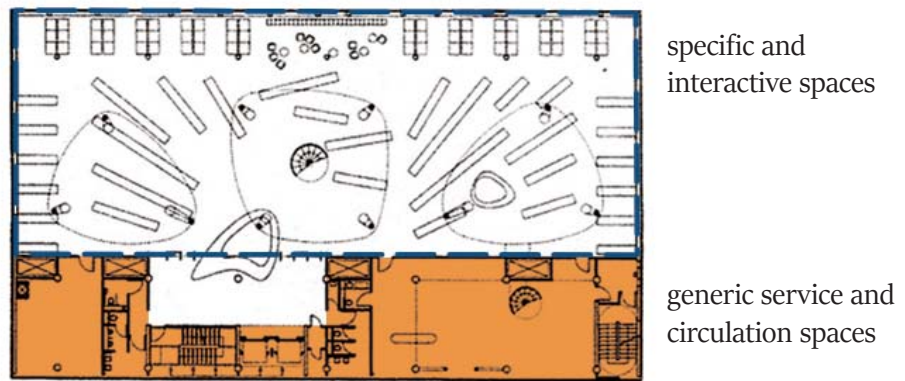


Applicability

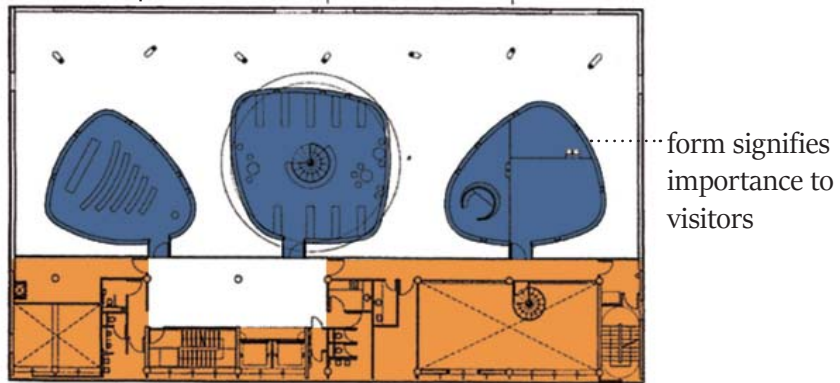
The relationship between contained spaces and containers of space within the Peckham Library offers the opportunity for a variety of public interactions on both an intimate and larger scale. The use of differing formal elements to establish importance and hierarchy enhance the internal and external qualities of space within the library building. The relationship created between general and specific spatial arrangements allows for a level of flexibility and possibility within the building, regardless of the programme requirements.



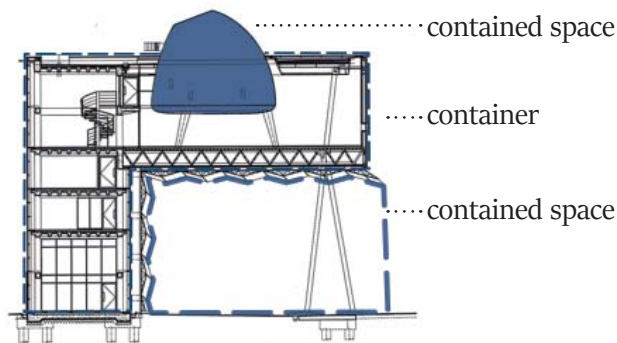
Figure 7.10: Photographic montage of the Peckham Library indicating the legibility of important and less important spaces experienced both internally and externally
(Source: aLL Design, n.d., adapted by Author). <http://www.all-worldwide.com/media/22542/0532-041-l-m.jpg>.



fourth level plan - not to scale



fifth level plan - not to scale



Technical Precedent

Project: I•Cat Offices and Warehouse
Client: I•Cat Environmental Solutions
Architect: Earthworld Architects and Interiors
Location: Pretoria, South Africa
Programme: Office and warehouse facilities
Area: 1,949m²
Status: Completed - 2015

Designed to encapsulate the client's attitude towards the natural environment, the building reflects a balance between the three interconnected mainstays of ecological, social and economical sustainability. A well-performing baseline building was created through the careful consideration of passive systems such as orientation, shading, natural lighting and ventilation. Active mechanical ventilation systems were implemented to enhance user comfort in exceptional weather conditions. Materials and finishes were selected to lower the need for maintenance by keeping them as natural as possible without any superficial coverings or finishes (Earthworld Architects & Interiors, n.d.).



Figure 7.12: View of Southern courtyard and pergola structure indicating the honesty and simplicity of materials expressed through detail connections

(Source: DOOK Photography, n.d., adapted by Author). http://images.adsttc.com/media/images/578d/8345/e58e/ce05/ed00/0058/large_jpg/I-Cat__AfriSam_Dook_24.jpg?1468891937

Applicability

The I•Cat Offices and Warehouse building demonstrates the potential in creating architecture that is capable of reducing the vulnerability of its occupants but also that of the environment. The employment of passive strategies result in a building that is robust, requiring little additional active methods of environmental control.

The combination of cost-effective yet durable materials is expressed through the detail connections further enhancing the level of honesty and simplicity implicit in the design.

Furthermore, the use of subterranean rainwater storage offers insight into how one might address the intangible heritage of groundwater sources in Marabastad.



