Introduction
East Sydenham south of Moorhouse Ave reveals a remarkably consistent urban footprint albeit, single story panel beaters and industrial/commercial /retail tin sheds. It is an area ripe for some kind of investigation and proposition.
Outside the mooted Green Frame and the CBD (Central Business District) of Christchurch’s Blueprint, East Sydenham might easily fall outside the purview of the city planners and tend to the common retail condition of modern cities, i.e. the mall, the big
box, the ‘category killer’.\(^1\) Just north of Moorhouse Avenue, closer to the city centre, we see the incursion of big box retail with ‘The Warehouse’ at 555 Columbo Street. It is a condition that seems to occur largely without architects and is reliant on the car as the dominant mode of transport. One big box with a gigantic carpark and pulling power tends to attract similar scaled developments, which seek to take advantage of the traffic and the shoppers. Such developments inevitably shift the focus from traditional town centres to peripheral sites, dictating the movement patterns of cities, road design and even determining the location of motorway exit ramps. This so-called polycentric development of the city deserves the attention of architects. How might we re-think these environments? How do we increase residential density? What can we do to recuperate them or in the case of East Sydenham intervene at a crucial time in the future city’s development?

This studio will run in two stages. The first stage will be architectural in nature - with elements of landscape design. The second stage will be at the level of urban design, applying the outcomes of the first stage to a larger urban area, most likely an urban block between four streets.

**PART ONE (the first two weeks and first crit led by Jeanette Budgett)**
The studio will, in the first instance investigate the scale, material and programmatic condition of East Sydenham. Students will then select one or possibly more than one site anywhere between Moorhouse Ave, Colombo St, and Waltham and Brougham Sts… and propose an architectural intervention that explores the social, cultural, urban, economic and tectonic character of the area. The objective is to produce a CONCEPT DESIGN for the transformation of some kind of light industrial/commercial warehouse, or big box-retail store. Live-work programmes are encouraged. Projects need to be propositional and to envision the future of Christchurch.

JB 22 November

---

\(^1\) ‘Category Killers’ refer to big retail stores that sell everything from peanuts to camping equipment. They specifically threaten the high street specialty stores as they offer discount prices and quickly mop up the competition.
PART TWO
(the second two weeks, ending with Final Crit on 4 Feb, led by D. Bogunovich)

The objective is to produce a MASTER PLAN for a street block in the square designated above, referred to as “Sydenham East”. This will be a plan of the final landuse, configuration and ‘feel&look’ of a whole block, roughly the size of 250 x 150 m. The whole area is a major part of the present industrial-commercial belt of Christchurch south of the CBD. Sydenham East used to be a light industrial area but is now better described as ‘commercial’, reflecting the mix of light manufacturing and servicing, and retail, office and warehousing. It is reasonable to assume that, as the general trend towards more knowledge-based industries speeds up during the rebuilding of Christchurch, more and more businesses will view Sydenham as an excellent location. This will up the demand for office, exhibition and retail space, creating pressure to convert or replace the warehouses, workshops and factories. The more intellectually-intensive industries will then bring in large numbers of educated, creative, relatively younger labour force, who will generate demand for hospitality, accommodation and recreation space. In short, Sydenham East will become a 24/7 live-work-play suburb in its own right, with strong social activity and cultural identity. We can also assume that many of these businesses will be about eco-innovation and green technology, along with the already quite common ICT-based, or supported, commercial activity. Similar economic and physical transformation processes have already affected Addington, west of Sydenham, and may eventually also spread to Walton, east of Sydenham.

(DB, 20 Novem 2013)
Learning Outcomes

1. Generate and critically examine alternative design ideas, which respond creatively, formally and accountably to a project brief.
2. Evaluate and present effective solutions to functional, formal, structural and sustainability problems in a systematic way.
3. Define the structural system and environmental concept through diagrammatic analysis.
4. Respond strategically to urban context issues, such as circulation, land use, character, visibility, public health, wildlife, etc.
5. Display competence in visual, written and oral communication.

Programme

9th January

am  Studio Introductions, Studio Selection
pm  Site visit and data collection by video, zoom in on materials, people, cars, signs, attempt to capture the character sound files work in pairs.

10th January

am  process data
pm  present videos with analysis and general discussion:

What are the architectural questions generated by Sydenham’s warehouse district?
Where are the opportunities? constraints? What are the problems?
Work in pairs to select a multiple ownership site in the vicinity of Gasson Street and Brisbane Street. Decide what the site is? Does it include the footpath? the street? the stormwater gutters? the sky? From Google earth and photographic observation map the site in plan and section, street section, elevation, material, structural system, building type and use. Decide what you want to keep or discard on the site. Why?

Propose a live-work scenario that supports and sustains domestic life within a specifically commercial and urban context. In the process you will approximately double the floor area ratio that currently exists on the site.

Generate through pictorial collage techniques images that communicate a design strategy. Elaborate with site plans, sections, street elevations and perspectives.

17 January am-pm Interim Crit
20-23 January Developed design, Modelling and Presentation drawings
24 January am-pm CRIT

Reading

http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/business/the-rebuild/9423822/Housing-changes-to-raise-density


http://www.wynwoodmiami.com/about.php
