

LA501R Advanced Design Studio I Syllabus

Country/ Taiwan

School/ Chung-Yuan Christian University

Department/ Landscape Architecture

Course/ LA501R Advanced design studio I, post-graduate programme

Length/ 11 weeks

Instructors/ Jia-Ling Chao; Michael Lin

Number of students/ 6

Theme/ The problems of the conservation for the super-structures of WWII Japanese Naval aviation fuel factories and the redevelopment of a Taiwanese post-war military housing site

Introduction

1. An area accumulated with multi-layer historic fabrics in a short period of 70 years

The area is located three and a half kilometers south-east to the historic centre of Hsin-Chu city. Its remote locality and poor geological contents, as its native name- Red Dirt Slope, had made it remained undeveloped till the later stage of WWII when waging a desperate struggle for the Imperial survival under the Allied force, the Japanese started building a fuel factory intended to supply substitute aviation fuel for their Naval air base in the beginning of 1944. But many of the factory buildings were soon destroyed under the Allied air-raid in 1945.

After the Japanese surrender, the Chinese Nationalist took control over Taiwan. Various types of machinery in those factory buildings which survived the Allied bombardment were removed and shipped to China. Hence, the empty factory buildings became redundant and stayed in unoccupied condition.

In 1949, along with the Chinese Nationalists retreat, over one million populations of soldiers and their families flooded into Taiwan. Due to its legal status as state-owned property, a part of the former Japanese Naval fuel factory became a proprietary site to build budget military housing to accommodate some of the soldiers and families. Because a huge amount of housing unit was required, in addition to the new-built ones, the unoccupied factory buildings were re-used as housing as well. These military housing have been named Royalty Village since.

In the Cold War era, at the other side of the former Japanese fuel factories, a few blocks away from the Royalty Village, sat a US military consultant compound which now has been redeveloped into luxury condominiums. And among the buyers, many are from high-tech industries working at the near by Hsin-Chu Science Park, an American Silicon Valley equivalent. In short, this small area has a short development history that started merely in late WWII, yet it bears rich historical layers tied to the contemporary global activities.

2. Both slum-like communities and the profit-gain from intense urban land-use contribute to the built-up of development pressure

Seventy years on, the gated community Royalty Village had homed to many military families for generations. Yet its slum-like conditions when compared to of those high-rise development in adjacent neighborhoods, have become a burden to the urban development of Hsin-Chu city and lead to the built-up of development pressure. In 2013, the local authority launched military housing renewal at the Royalty Village. Residents have been relocated in nearby high-rise apartments, so the slum is cleared awaiting the redevelopment.

3. The local authority shows a neglect of collective memory and low degree of conservation awareness

What will the area look like after the redevelopment? What will they do about those industrial heritage buildings in the site? According to a draft version of plan-change for the military housing renewal, a new road system will be inserted to replace the original circulation networks of the Royalty Village. All houses of the Royalty Village will be demolished. For those industrial heritages, although their historic importance has been recognized to a certain degree, some buildings will still have to be either demolished or relocated. It appears that the local authority shows a neglect of collective memory and low degree of conservation awareness.

4. A more sophisticated plan which can make urban renewal and urban conservation complementary is needed

Base on the understanding of the local context of the area and the morphological development of the site, this design project expects the students to explore the possibilities that allow the economic efficiency of the redevelopment and the conservation of historic fabrics to co-exist, hence to delineate a more deliberate plan-adjustment that makes achieving complementation between urban renewal and urban conservation possible.

Course Objectives

1. The ability of understanding the local context- discussions of the relationship between the changes of land form of the area and changes in socio-economic and socio-political conditions of Hsin-Chu city over the last century
2. The ability of ensuring the quality of a good place- inclusions of permeability, diversity, legibility, robustness, richness and visual appropriateness of a place
3. The ability of converting the historic urban fabrics into the character of open space of the new housing communities.

4. The ability of using the urban form of the new housing blocks of the redevelopment as a base to provoke the quality of integrity, legibility and local identity within the juxtaposition of those new and old landscape elements

5. The ability of detailed-plan making- conceptual development arguments, writing-up the contents of programme and delineate the drawings

Outputs

1. Planning dimension: a master plan which can balance the concerns of historic and ecological conservation and the efficiency of land-use of the redevelopment

2. Design dimension: a public open space with good sense of place which can uplift local identity and promote vital community social networks

3. Guidelines for design control over urban form and architectural languages of the new development

Design issues

Include but not limited to the issues of:

1. The relationship between urban redevelopment and the integration of historic fabrics, eg. historic buildings, old trees, historic alleys and so on

2. The interaction among public open spaces, urban functions and multi-users

3. Formulating positive open space by the way of buildings layout in a site plan

4. What role that the revitalization of ruined heritage can play in urban landscape as a whole

Methodologies

1. Understanding the context

2. Morphological analysis

3. Investigation to the colours and elements of façade of historic buildings

4. Urban design analysis of the site and its surrounding areas

5. Critical review to the current local authority's drafted plan