

In the Space

Creating a Vibrant Community through Architecture in Levuka, Ovalau Island, Fiji



John Rajesh Murgan

1436136

Principal Supervisor: Min Hall

Associate Supervisor: Chris Murphy

Explanatory Document

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AUTHENTICITY

This explanatory document has been prepared by myself as partial fulfilment for the requirements of the degree in Master of Architecture (Professional)

I declare that all the works are of my own and unless stated otherwise have been referenced in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition).

John Rajesh Murgan
Student ID 1436136
October 2019

ABSTRACT

Levuka town is located on the Island of Ovalau, Fiji. It possesses a small but culturally diverse population made up of indigenous Fijians, descendants of indentured labourers from India brought by the British in the 19th Century, and settlers from around the world. Levuka was the first capital of Fiji during the colonial period in the late 19th century. This lasted for six years before Suva became Fiji's capital in 1877. The administration moved from Levuka to Suva in 1882. Levuka town was established by the British and Americans in the early 19th century and the traces of this history are evident in the architectural fabric of the town. In 2013, Levuka was recognised by the United Nations Education and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a World Heritage cultural site and given the title 'Levuka Historical Port Town.'

Despite its colonial history and the recognition by UNESCO of Levuka as an important cultural site of world heritage, there has been minimal work done to preserve its rich architectural and cultural history. The recent cyclone, Winston, in early 2016 destroyed major heritage buildings leaving the town in an irreparable state and contributing to the decline of its tangible heritage.

Moreover, many of the cultural artefacts that used to be housed in a small section of a community building have been taken to Suva for better preservation and

safekeeping as the current facility in Levuka has deteriorated. These items range from early Fijian warriors' weapons such as carved wooden war clubs, spears, and cooking utensils, clay pots, to mention but a few. There were also cannon guns that were used on British ships, soldiers' uniforms and paintings. The removal of most of these artefacts from Levuka has in some way removed the cultural identity from its original birthplace.

Through the review of relevant literature about the history of Fiji, the cultural identity of the multi-ethnicities, and the analysis of several key precedents including cultural and community buildings in the South Pacific and the Oceania Regions, an architectural design process was undertaken which has led to the design of a Community and Cultural Centre which closely responds to the multi-ethnic community in Levuka, Ovalau Island, Fiji.

Reclaiming Levuka's cultural heritage and identity has been realised through this research project with an architectural proposition which responds by fusing the past and present cultural values into a contemporary complex, preserving them where current and future generations can visit and be proud of their history, cultural heritage and identity which was the focus of this architectural research study.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Fiji is a multi-cultural country with people of many ethnicities mostly living together in sub-urban and urban centres. The iTaukei (indigenous Fijians) are the majority ethnic group in the country as well as those that are residing in the outer islands. They continue to live in village settings in the rural areas abiding by local traditions and customs.

The second largest ethnic group are the Indians with the majority living in urban settings. They are descendants of the early Indians who were brought from India during the colonial period by the British in the late 19th century and early 20th century.

The other remaining ethnicities are Chinese, Europeans, Rotumans and other Pacific Islanders.¹ These groups are generally found living and working in urban centres. They bring with them their own traditional cultures, customs and values and continue to practice them while living amongst others. They continue to gather in their own ethnic groups to celebrate birthdays, marriages and deaths of family members. This helps them to exercise their customs and traditions and continue with retaining their cultural identity.

Having to live together with other ethnicities, they have learnt to appreciate each other's cultures and have worked together to fuse a new identity to suit their current multi-cultural community.

Levuka town exhibits a multi-cultural community with a mixture of the major and minor ethnic groups of Fiji, living together in peace and harmony. These people continue to maintain their customs and traditions within their ethnic groups and pass down that knowledge to their children. These people of different ethnic groups find no trouble to live with each other as they have created bonds of unity which is always led by the parents in the community. Through globalisation, everyone is affected by the western cultures that penetrate the existing community beginning with the adults who influence their children.

It is unavoidable, due to media technology penetrating homes through radio and television, but a certain balance must be achieved to keep one's cultural identity. It is therefore important that the elders in the community work together to support each other in educating and maintaining their customs and traditions so that the younger generation will learn to appreciate their cultural identity. A community and cultural centre would be an ideal place where the community can meet and share ideas on community issues in Levuka.

¹ "Fijian Constitution." n.d. Fiji Government Online Portal - The Fijian Government's Official Website. Accessed July 12, 2019.

1.2 PROJECT OUTLINE

This research project explores multi-cultural approaches in architecture with particular reference to the context of the multi-cultural community in Levuka Town. It will include historical, theoretical and contemporary examples from Fiji and the Oceanic Region.

The research will involve exploring the history of Levuka and the cultural identity of its multi-ethnic community and look at how architecture can be used to promote and support the different multi-ethnic cultures through an architectural intervention.

This project will propose a design for a cultural & community centre based on a multi-cultural approach within the existing community in the town of Levuka, Ovalau Island, Fiji.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

“How can the history and cultural identity of the community inform an architectural proposition for a contemporary community and cultural centre in Levuka, Fiji”

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this project is to provide a contemporary architectural building that will help to inform and restore Levuka's multi-ethnic communities' cultural heritage and identity.

The objectives of this research is to raise awareness of the history of the town and cultural identity of its various inhabitants so that the multi-ethnic community will learn to appreciate and accept each other's customs, traditions and cultures. This will help create a better community where people can get information to questions that they may have about other ethnic cultural identities. It will also provide a place where the present and future generations can visit and experience the important significance of the unique cultural heritage of Levuka.

Furthermore, the proposed facility should make connections with the existing fabric of the colonial heritage of the existing town.

1.5 SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

This architectural research project will be limited to the cultural revival in Levuka town. The research will investigate the history of architecture that has evolved in Levuka from the arrival of the first settlers until the modern era today. The new design will work with the current context and use contemporary tectonic structural features that will be best appropriate for the selected site within Levuka Town.

1.6 Key Literature Sources

In this section a brief overview of key literature informing the project is provided through the investigation into the history of Levuka and of the different ethnic cultural identities that make the multi-ethnic community with the investigation of contemporary methods in creating a community centre.

This discussion is included to outline the most important theoretical knowledge for the study to establish its relevance for the architectural intervention. This knowledge is discussed in more detail in the literature review

1.7 METHODS

This research project was carried out through various methods beginning with reading of various literature about the history of Fiji and then narrowing it down into Levuka, and further reading into various ethnic groups and finding out more about their cultural identity. Research into the existing public facilities in Levuka was carried out to identify what was lacking and therefore which new facilities could most effectively assist in creating a vibrant community that would acknowledge the history, heritage and cultural identity of the town and its resident.

A literature review followed to research into the existing knowledge by referring to relevant theories, literatures, precedents and other information to determine the most relevant architectural proposition.

The research helped identify some limits, constraints and challenges which was achieved by analysing existing written documents and exposing gaps through existing available research.

A site analysis was carried out to define a specific site which best suited the requirements of the research project. Further spatial, contextual, and programmatic analysis was carried out during visits to the site.

GLOSSARY

<i>adi</i>	female chiefly title, 'Lady'	<i>tanoa</i>	circular wood yaqona bowl with four or more legs
<i>bili ni koro</i>	outer zone of a village	<i>Tui</i>	King or sovereign
<i>bure</i>	traditional Fijian house	<i>vale</i>	house; <i>vale ni lotu</i> = church
<i>bure kalou</i>	pre-Christian temple; spirit house	<i>vanua</i>	land, chiefdom
<i>drua</i>	double hulled sailing canoe	<i>vesi</i>	hardwood tree
<i>ibe</i>	mat made from pandanus leaves	<i>vinaka</i>	good thank you
<i>iTaukei</i>	host, owner, ethnic Fijian	<i>voivoi</i>	pandanus, <i>pandanus caricosus</i>
<i>Iri</i>	fan made from pandanus leaves	<i>vuaka</i>	<i>pig</i>
<i>Koro</i>	village	<i>vulagi</i>	<i>guest, visitor, foreigner</i>
<i>Katuba levu</i>	main entrance into a bure	<i>waqa</i>	<i>canoe boat</i>
<i>Katuba lailai</i>	entrance into a bure by the head of the house or invited guest or a chief	<i>iwau</i>	<i>club, generic term</i>
<i>lali</i>	wooden gong drum, beaten with <i>iuava</i>	<i>yaqona</i>	<i>kava, drink prepared from the root of the pepper plant, Piper methysticum</i>
<i>liku</i>	skirt, shorts, formerly worn by women	<i>yavu</i>	foundation of a bure usually a mound
<i>lotu</i>	Christianity, to practice		
<i>loma ni koro</i>	inner zone of a village		
<i>loma ni vale</i>	centre of the house or bure		
<i>loqi</i>	private area in a bure		
<i>masi</i>	bark cloth with traditional markings		
<i>magitit</i>	offering food produce		
<i>marama</i>	lady, woman		
<i>magimagi</i>	rope made from coconut fibre		
<i>moto</i>	spear		
<i>ratu</i>	male chiefly title, 'Sir'		
<i>rara</i>	village green in the centre of the village		
<i>seru</i>	comb		
<i>sevusevu</i>	presentation of yaqona (kava)		
<i>turaga</i>	chief, gentleman		
<i>tabua</i>	whale's tooth for presentation		
<i>tanoa</i>	circular wood yaqona bowl with four or more legs		
<i>tavutavu</i>	raised high stone foundation wall for a bure		
<i>taukei ni koro</i>	original occupants of a village		
<i>tabua</i>	whale's tooth for presentation		

2.0 CONTEXT RESEARCH

2.1 THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI

Location

The Republic of Fiji is an island country that is in the South Pacific Ocean, located just below the Equator. It consists of an archipelago of more than 332 Islands, with 110 permanently inhabited and more than 500 islets.² Fiji is in the geographical region of Oceania in the subregion of Melanesia. It is located approximately 2000km from New Zealand's North Island. The other neighbouring islands are Vanuatu to the west, New Caledonia to the southwest, Tonga to the southeast with Samoa to the northeast and Tuvalu to the North.

There are two major large islands, Viti Levu (large Fiji) and Vanua Levu (large land). There are currently two cities (Suva and Lautoka) and 10 town centres all over Fiji which include Levuka where the site for this research project is located.³ Suva is the current capital of Fiji and is the largest urban centre found on the south eastern side of Viti Levu.

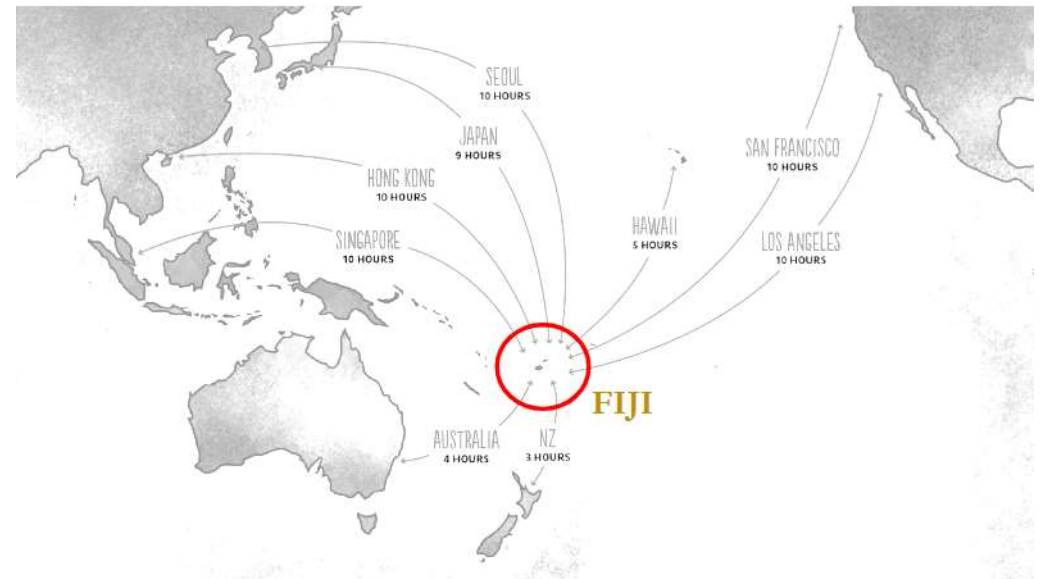


Figure 1 Location of Fiji

² Brij Lal, and Kate Fortune, *The Pacific Island, Encyclopaedia*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000) 566

³ User, Super. Town Planning Areas, accessed June 12, 2019. <http://www.townplanning.gov.fj/index.php/planning/planning-context/town-planning-areas>

People

Fiji has a population of 884,887 which was recorded in the latest census carried out in 2017, This is a 5.7% increase from the last census in 2007 with a population of 831,271.⁴ The population living in urban centres has increased from 50.7% in 2007 to 55.9% in 2017, partly due to extensions of urban boundaries and, more significantly, because large numbers of rural people have migrated to urban centres to make a living. The rural populations have continued to decrease. Fiji was ceded to the British on 10th October 1874 in Levuka, Ovalau Island by Cakobau and thirteen other chiefs from Fiji. Fiji later gained Independence on the 10th of October 1970 with an official ceremony in Albert Park, Suva.

Law in Fiji

Fiji's Supreme law, the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji was rewritten and made law in 2013. It recognises that the indigenous people of Fiji as the iTaukei (land owners of Fiji), the Rotumans as indigenous people of Rotuma, the descendants of indentured labourers from India and the Pacific Islands, descendants of settlers and immigrants to Fiji, are to be known as **Fijians** united by

⁴ "2017 Population and Housing Census - Release 1," CENSUS 2017 - Release 1 - Fiji Bureau of Statistics, accessed August 12, 2019. <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/index.php/census-2017/census-2017-release-1>

common and equal citizenry.⁵ The new constitution has removed the different ethnic Classifications - Fijians, Indians, Rotumans, Chinese, Europeans, Other Pacific Islanders - as a way forward towards breaking down the ethnically based divisions which have damaged Fiji, economically and politically in recent years after gaining Independence from the British.



Figure 2 Map of Fiji

⁵ "Fijian Constitution," Fiji Government Online Portal - The Fijian Government's Official Website, accessed July 12, 2019. <https://www.fiji.gov.fj/About-Fiji/Fijian-Constitution>

2.2 FIJI'S CLIMATE

Fiji's climate is warm and tropical all year round, even in the islands.⁶ The average temperature is 25 degrees Celsius and can climb to above 30 degrees in summer (December and January) and drop to 18 degrees in Winter (July and August).

Fiji is prone to tropical cyclones which usually occur between the months November to April. Tropical Cyclone Winston, which occurred on February 2016, was a category 5 cyclone with devastating wind speeds of up to 285km/h.⁷ In Levuka, a hillside settlement (Baba) experienced most of the destructive impact of the winds and many homes were destroyed. More importantly many of the town's heritage buildings were damaged, this will be discussed in Section 2.7.



Figure 3 - Tropical weather in Fiji (Plantation Island Resort)



Figure 4 - Levuka Town after Cyclone Winston 2016

⁶ Weather & Climate, accessed August 10, 2019: <https://www.tourismfiji.com/fiji-weather.html>

⁷ "Fiji Annual Climate Summary 2016," Year in Review, accessed July 20, 2019: <http://www.met.gov.fj/Summary2.pdf>

2.3 PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD IN FIJI

Arrival

The Fiji Islands was first settled about 3500 BC by Austronesians who had travelled long distances moving eastwards from south east Asia while exploring new lands.⁸ The discovery of Lapita pottery and ancient burial sites on various islands, as well as rock paintings in caves on Vatulele Island have assisted archaeologists and linguistics experts to establish that Fiji was settled by Austronesian people.⁹ These seafaring migrants later moved on to Tonga and Samoa and developed the social and cultural patterns now identified as Polynesian.



Figure 5 Lapita Pottery Shards

⁸ Lal and Fortune, *The Pacific Island, Encyclopaedia*, 567

A second wave of settlers, the ancestors of the indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) arrived about 1000 BC in Fiji. They travelled over the vast Pacific Ocean in well-crafted double hull canoes from western Melanesia.



Figure 6 Fijian Drua (double hull canoe)

They first settled along the coastlines and established village settlements before many of them migrated into the interior highlands of the main islands to create their

⁹ Rod Ewin, "2 Fijian Art," *Traditional Fijian artefacts*, (Nubeena, Tasmania: Just Pacific 2014), 7

own settlements which are still occupied by their descendants today.



Figure 7 - Levuka Village 1842

Fijian Traditional Architecture

Traditional Fijian houses, called Bure, are built on raised earth foundations, called the *yavu*. Some *yavu* are raised higher with a stone wall which is traditionally called *tavutavu*. Big bures with high foundations are usually built for people of high social standing in the community.¹⁰ Hence the physical height of the bure would inform the social status of the occupier of the bure. Also, bure with a high foundation and steep high

roof enhanced the prestige of the occupant, a chief for instance. Traditionally the access into these significant highly raised bures was usually by an inclined log of hardwood with humps carved at footstep intervals which provided a ladder or staircase. This is now replaced with modern materials where access is provided by a series of concrete steps.

The *yavu* is a sacred possession of the family which provides legitimacy for one's place in the locality or relationship to the *Koro* (village).¹¹ The *taukei ni koro* (original occupants of the village) must have evidence of a *yavu* dating back to when the village was first occupied by their ancestors, or they would be snubbed as *vulagi* meaning a visitor or foreigner. New houses can be built on existing *yavu* which normally belong to the first occupant of the site with prior permission of the family or the village elders. It is not permitted to build on old *yavu* without permission from the elders.

If there is no vacant family *yavu* available, then a new one can be built on a nearby vacant land after seeking approval from the village elders with the proffer of a *tabua* (whale's tooth), *yaqona* (kava) and *magiti* (local food produce).¹² The major stages of construction begins with the laying of the *yavu*, erection of the bure post, construction of the walls, lashing of rafters and

¹⁰ Asesela Ravuvu, & University of the South Pacific. *The Fijian way of life*. (Suva, Institute of Pacific Studies of the University of the South Pacific, 1983), 15.

¹¹ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15.

¹² Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15

finishes with thatching the roof. Depending on the traditional standing of the person wanting the new bure, and if they can afford it, they can mark every stage of the construction with a *tabua*, *yaqona* and *magiti* to the workers during construction. Otherwise they just need to do it at the start and at the completion of the construction, mainly to honour and mark their appreciation.



Figure 8 Yavu (Foundation of a Bure)

The bure is generally a large, high hipped roof, rectangular structure with no internal partitions.¹³ They are constructed from locally sourced materials from nearby forests. The posts are from local hardwood and during construction, they are raised to a height that is

¹³ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15

within reach of an average human. The rafters are either bamboo or straight hardwood poles, the beams are of strong but light timbers. Bamboo reeds or leaf thatching enclose the walls. Various bush vines, known for their durability and strength, are used to lash together the various structural members. Coconut husk fibres are used to make sinnet called *magimagi* which is generally used for lasting and elaborate lashing and for decorative interior design.¹⁴



Figure 9 Magimagi decoration

Roofing material varies depending on the region. Gasau (reeds), duruka (asparagus), sugar cane leaves, coconut and palm leaves (soga) or even grass are variously used. These materials are generally sourced locally and checked for durability before being used. Sometime the materials are limited in the locality of the

¹⁴ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15

site, so people must travel to neighbouring locations to source them.

The traditional bure has three entries, one at the lower end being the main entry, and one opening each on either side of the house, refer fig 10. Some bure have another entry at the upper end which would only be used by the head of the house. Next to the front entry would be located a fireplace for cooking, dish washing, and where yaqona or kava is prepared before it is infused and served.¹⁵ The smoke from the flames would help make the thatch roof hard and durable. During European contact, this traditional concept of the fireplace was encouraged to be located outside in a separate structure for health and hygiene reasons which was accepted, and a separate kitchen structure soon followed for every household. New bures before being occupied would be smoked for weeks to fumigate and kill off insects that may be in the thatching. Depending on craftsmanship and maintenance of the bure, they would generally last for ten years.

The three main entries into the bure has traditional significance. The main or service entry *Katuba levu* is accessible and adjacent to the cooking place which is situated at the socially low end of the house. This entry is used by the occupants and people of ordinary rank and

¹⁵ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 16

¹⁶ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15

for passing food, furniture and equipment in and out of the house.

The two side entries, *Katuba lailai* mark the division of the house into its two main social parts, the high or private and the low or public parts of the house. The side entry is only used by the head of the house or honoured visitors and chiefs.¹⁶ Sometimes the head of the house invites people to enter through the side entries, it is here the decorum and humility of the visitor is challenged and they must decide whether to accept. It is here that a humble and traditionally culture bound individual of ordinary rank will usually decide to enter from the main entry *Katuba levu*, from the low end of the house and sit themselves in the public section of the house.¹⁷

The large open space within the bure is zoned into two major sections, a private and a public section. These two sections are further divided into a less private and less public space which forms the centre of the house or *Loma ni vale*. The private zone is called the *Loqi* located at the higher/upper end in the building without external access. This area is only for the head of the house and other family members where they sleep and keep their few belongings.¹⁸ The less private zone is for honoured visitors and chiefs to sit and receive traditional and ceremonial honours accorded to them by custom. The head of the house sits together with his visitors while

¹⁷ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 16

¹⁸ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 16

facing towards the lower end of the building. Other family and village members sit at the lower end of the house facing the invited guest with a reasonable distance between them.

The traditional ceremony begins with the *cobo* (clapping of the hand) three times signifying a formal ceremony is in process. Everyone stops chatting immediately to listen to the exchange of speeches and gifts of *tabua* or *yaqona* between the two parties. The first *bilo* (coconut shell cup) kava is presented to the visiting chief or guest before anyone else. This formal event ends with the clapping of hands three times by everyone present. Then the atmosphere in the bure becomes informal and everyone starts chatting again with the kava being passed around for everyone to drink.

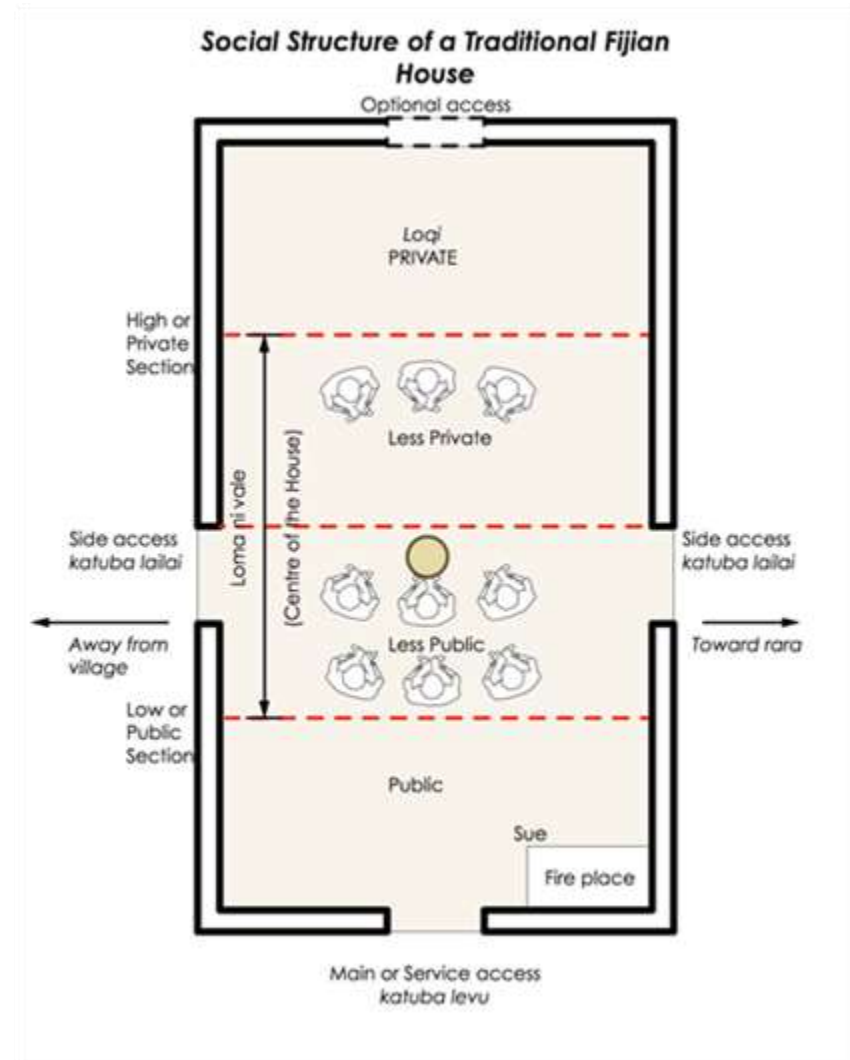


Figure 10 – Social Structure of a Fijian House

iTaukei Village Layout

The Chief's bure would be located at the forefront of the *rara* (village green space). The bure for his people would be arranged along either side of the *rara* which serves as the common place for social gatherings and formal customary events. Directly opposite the chief's bure and across the *rara*, would be the 'Bure Kalou'. The village priest worshiped ancestral gods in this building. The Bure Kalou was square in shape and raised high above the ground. The roof was usually steeper than the other roofs in the village. Inside, the building would have traditional tapa cloth hanging full height from the highest point of the ceiling to the floor. It was believed that this would allow the gods a passage for travel during special ritual activities carried out by the village *bete* (priest). This bure would be decorated with traditional artefacts that would bear certain significance only known to the iTaukei.

Bure Structure Types

The structure of buildings along the coast differed from those inland. The bures along the coastline were rectangular in plan with hip roof. The bures in the highlands were oval in plan with an unusual rounded hip roof supported by a central post, see Figure 12.

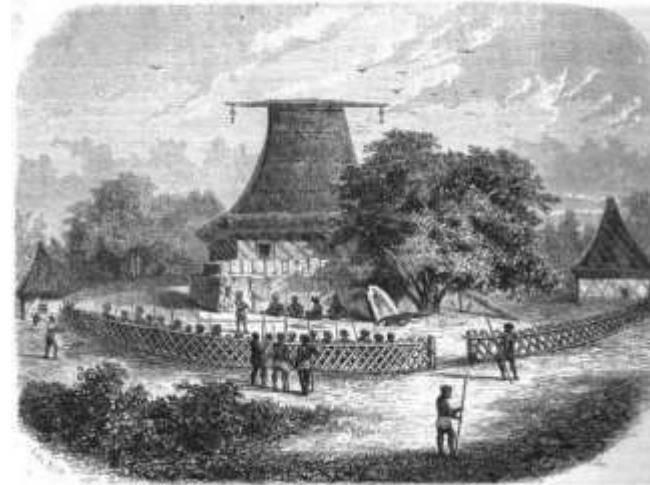


Figure 11 - Bure in coastal areas



Figure 12 - Bure in the interior of the highlands

Furniture

Traditional houses were very simply furnished apart from raised floors to be used for sleeping, a few shelves of bush material to hold eating utensils, cooked food and extra mats for the house. Most activities in the house such as sitting, eating and sleeping is traditionally done on the floor. The floor is generally built up from the earth with coconut leaves which help to provide cushioning. Locally crafted mats made from *voivoi* (pandanus leaves) are laid over the floor and are a common commodity in almost all iTaukei homes and often coexist with modern furniture.¹⁹

Houses in the urban centres have adopted the western lifestyle of providing rooms for each different function in the house such as a kitchen, bedrooms, living room and bathrooms. They are filled with modern furniture such as beds in the bedroom, tables for dining, sofa's in the living room and many more.



Figure 13 Fijian mat

The introduction of modern furniture into households has greatly changed the lifestyle and old traditions of the iTaukei people. For instance, sitting on a chair higher than those sitting on the floor, is considered disrespectful, arrogant and a show of ignorance of traditional customs and expectations. It is only people of higher status who may do this, the rest are expected to be humble and comply with the traditional protocol of sitting on the floor.

¹⁹ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 20

The traditional craft of making mats continues to be practiced in rural village communities throughout Fiji. It demands lots of time and patience and is usually carried out together with a group of women. They are made to various sizes depending on their use. Small mats with a fine weave are for bed or as a sleeping mat, and large mats with a coarse weave are for covering the floor for sitting or for cushioning the sleeping place over which fine mats are then placed.

New mats are kept away for special occasions such as the arrival of prominent people or visitors, wedding presentations and for use at various traditional ceremonies such as marriages, birth, initiations and funerals. In earlier days, women were expected to know how to make mats before they were eligible marriage partners.²⁰

iTaukei Social Structure

The iTaukei lived in societies that were led by chiefs, elders and notable warriors. Spiritual leaders called *Bete* were important cultural figures who would consult with the spirits. The use of *yaqona* (kava) was part of their ceremonial and community rites. There was warfare amongst the different tribes and the victims were usually

cooked and eaten, before the Pre-European contact era.

The iTaukei people produced many cultural artefacts from warfare clubs to household items like mats, *masi* (bark clothes), *tabua* (whale tooth), *iri* (hand fans), *tanoa* (large kava bowl), eating bowls, sleeping head rest, eating utensils and many hunting and fishing tools. These artefacts were used as a marker of the group's identity during the exchange of gifts in traditional ceremonies.²¹

Vanua means land, also refer to the social and cultural aspects of the physical environment identified with the social group. On the social plane, it refers to people and how they are socially structured and related to one another. On the cultural plane, it embodies the values, beliefs and common ways of doing things. The Vanua is the largest grouping of kinsmen who are structured into several social units related to one another.

In order for the Vanua (land) to be recognised, it must have people living on it, supporting and defending its rights and interest.²² A land without people is likened to a person without a soul, hence, the people are the souls of the physical environment. Land is a source of life; it provides nourishment, shelter, protection, source of security and provides the material basis for identity and

²⁰ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 21

²¹ Ewins, *Traditional Fijian artefacts*, 9

²² Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 76

belonging.²³ People are the extension of the land. It becomes lifeless and useless without the people, and the people are helpless and insecure without land.

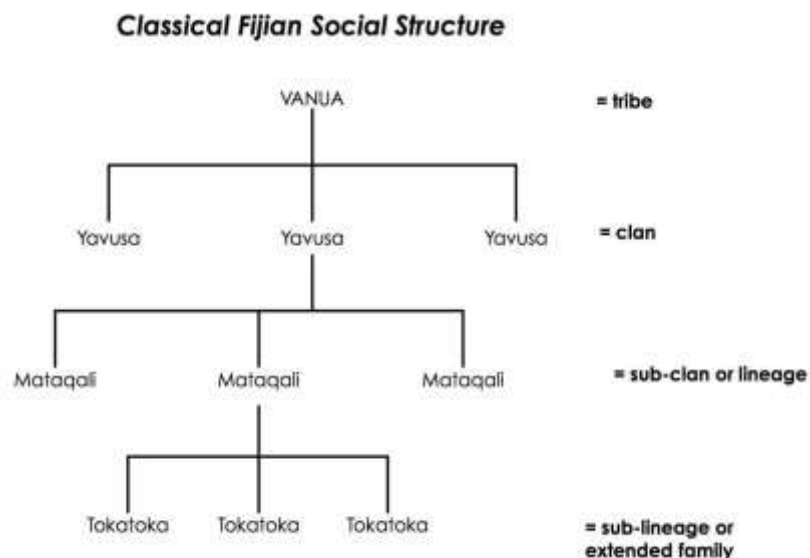


Figure 14 - Fijian Social Structure

The next social unit is the *Yavusa* made up of a group of people living in a *Koro* (village), a major sub-group of the *vanua* with physical and social entity. The area where the *vale ni moce* or *bure* (sleeping houses) are normally established is called the *loma ni koro* (inside the village) and the stretch just outside is the *bili ni koro* (outskirts).

²³ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 76

The focus of the village is the *rara* as previously discussed. This is the traditional area on where large ceremonies functions are held within a village with the exchange of gifts.²⁴

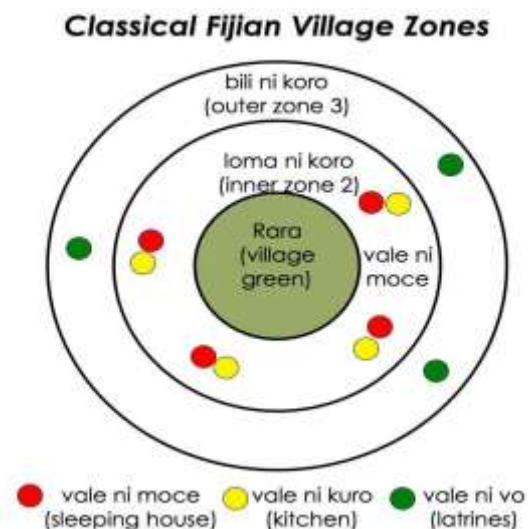


Figure 15 Fijian Village Zone

The arrangement of houses within the *loma ni koro*, also reflects the social hierarchy within the *koro*. The closer a person's house is to the *rara*, the higher their status in the village. The chiefs' houses are normally situated close around the *rara*, and their supporting groups are often

²⁴ Ravuvu, *The Fijian way of life*, 15

next behind them away from the socially prestigious part of the village.

Lali (Fijian drum)

Every iTaukei village has a *lali* (large wooden drum) which is used to notify people of time before a community activity is about to start. People are aware of the significance of the different times when the drums are struck with wooden handles and they prepare themselves and quickly make their way to the village hall where people usually congregate.



Figure 16 Fijian Lali

2.4 EUROPEAN IN FIJI

Early Explorers

In 1643, the Dutch explorer Able Janszoon Tasman is the first known European to have sighted the northern islands of Fiji such as Vanua Levu and Taveuni while looking for the great southern continent.²⁵ Then in 1774, Captain James Cook, a British navigator visited one of the southern Lau islands. William Bligh passed through Fiji's two main islands in 1789 and again in 1792. During his voyages he charted and plotted the islands as he passed them. The passage between the two main islands which he plotted is named after him, the Bligh Waters.

European Contact

The first European contact with the iTaukei was in the late 18th century by explorers, sailors, whalers and missionaries. They sought valuable resources from the islands such as sandalwood, trepang (sea cucumber), copra and whales and offered islanders guns, iron tools, cloth, tobacco and alcohol in exchange.²⁶

²⁵ Lal and Fortune. *The Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 567

²⁶ Victoria Lockwood, "Colonialism and its legacy," *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands (Upper Saddle River, Pearson Education Print, 2004.)*, 11

The sailors were able to replenish their water and food supplies but they brought with them exotic diseases such as whooping cough, measles, influenza and dengue which resulted in the depopulation of the indigenous people.²⁷ In the 19th and early 20th century, Pacific Islanders were victims of slavery (Blackbirding) by being coerced through deception and kidnapping.²⁸ They were taken to work on cotton and sugar plantations in Queensland, Australia as well as in Fiji and Samoa. People from the Solomon Islands were brought into Fiji through this slave trade and some of their descendants continue to live in a village settlement on the hills of Levuka called Baba.

In 1820, Levuka was established as the first European style port town in Fiji. It was a late colonial town that was modelled to remind early European settlers of their hometown back in Britain. Buildings in Levuka were constructed of timber with metal roofing. Typical features were the parapet street elevation and verandah.

²⁷ Lal and Fortune. *The Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 567

²⁸ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. n.d. "Blackbirding." Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed August 8, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/blackbirding>.

Missionaries in Fiji

Missionaries penetrated the villages in the Pacific more deeply and more effectively than did the colonial states.²⁹ They were from various denominations, including Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Lutherans and others. The missionaries competed to establish missions and convert indigenous people. They were often first to establish schools and provide health services for the locals and protected them from the worst forms of colonial exploitation such as the slave trade.

In 1835 a new 'Lotu' religion was brought into Fiji by the Wesleyan missionaries William Cargill and David Cross.³⁰ They travelled from Tonga to the Lau group of islands and later to the main island of Viti Levu and other islands converting the indigenous people from their cannibalistic practices into Christian ways of living. The politics and processes of converting indigenous Fijians had important implications for internal political struggles within Fijian society.³¹

The internal struggle for supremacy among rival kingdoms led by local leaders such as Ma'afu and Seru Cakobau was compounded by early fortune seeking foreign nations, seeking a stable government under European administration so that they could have access to land and other valuable resources within Fiji.³²



Figure 17 North End of Levuka Town (Traditional and modern buildings)

²⁹ Lockwood, *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, 11

³⁰ Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 567

³¹ Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 567

³² Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 567

2.5 COLONIAL PERIOD IN FIJI

Kingdom of Fiji

The town of Levuka, on the island of Ovalau, just off the eastern coast of Viti Levu, was a popular stop-over for the British and American sailors from 1820 and remained lawless until 1871 when a local chief, Ratu Epenesa Cakobau, was inaugurated as King and the Kingdom of Fiji was established. King Cakobau and twelve other Chiefs ceded Fiji to the British on 10th October 1874.



Figure 18 Deed of Cession Nasova, Levuka 10th October 1874

³³ Paul Younger, *New Homelands Hindu Communities in Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, South Africa, Fiji and East Africa*, (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Web), 169

British Rule

The British administrator J.B Thurston, a chief advisor to the chief of Bau, tried to stop the selling of land and preserve some respect for the council of chiefs and at the same time develop economic potential for the country through a plantation economy.³³ Sir Arthur Gordon was appointed the first governor for the new British Colony. Gordon had already served as governor in the colonial islands of Mauritius and Trinidad where he had prior experience with the indenture system working with Indians and Africans. His policy and vision laid the foundations for Fiji which included forbidding the sale of Fijian land. He introduced an indirect system of indigenous administration involving Fijians to manage their own affairs. A chiefly council was set up to advise the government on Fijian matters.

Colonial Economy

The British colonial administration was set up in Levuka. They explored options to make economic revenue for the country and so they followed other colonial countries by adopting an Indentured System. This system operated by bringing cheap labourers from India to

work on farms in Fiji. The administration led by Governor Gordon saw the first group of Indians arrive in Levuka on the 25th of May 1879 before being taken to allocated farms in various locations in Fiji.



Figure 19 - Beach Street Levuka

Ethnicities

During the British rule in the early 20th century, there were three principal ethnic groups, Fijians, Indians and Europeans. There were smaller numbers of Chinese who came and opened retail stores, and other Pacific Islanders whose forefathers were brought as slaves during the slave trade period in the mid-19th and early 20th century.

³⁴ Younger, *New Homelands*, 170

³⁵ Younger, *New Homelands*, 170

Indenture System & Social Problems

A total of 60,000 Indians was brought from India during the Indentured system in Fiji. The Colonial government led by Gordon used the method of segregation amongst the ethnic groups with the intent of playing the role of an impartial mediator among them. The first group brought were a majority of Northern Indians. Starting from 1903, a significant number of them came from South India from the port of Calcutta.³⁴

Barracks were provided for Indians to live in as they were delegated to early plantations which were established by European planters in the eastern part of Viti Levu, generally located around the first sugar refinery at Nausori.³⁵ Since coming from the same area in India, and being kept segregated from the iTaukei people, these Indians were able to keep their native language. Living in this condition gave them a misleading sense that they had not lost the culture of their homeland.³⁶ The need to reinvent their religious traditions had never seemed an urgent matter for the first two generations.

Indians hated the living conditions that they were confined to which seemed like a prison. Indian children were intentionally denied education for two generations under the British government's segregation policy, which

³⁶ Younger, *New Homelands*, 170

the missionaries decided to honour as well.³⁷ There was a big gender ratio difference between male and female which led to young men going through depression to the extreme of taking their own lives. Domestic problems eventuated within families and the wives were always blamed.

Despite the domestic problems, they started getting together and forming communities. This allowed them to practice the customs and religion from their homeland which helped them to establish their new identity while trying to adapt to a new lifestyle in Fiji.

After the completion of their initial five-year contract, they were “free men”, but it would require another five more years to earn a free trip back to India. The sugar refinery, eager for more sugar production, sought help from the government and together they made arrangements with indigenous land-owners to offer individual Indian farmers long term leases of small plots (approximately ten acres).³⁸ Leases were for 99 years and after that the land was to be returned. This system allowed the “free” Indians to live freely on their farms, yet they were bound to sell their cane at fixed prices. The new rental agreements meant that Indian people had to live in a scattered pattern in the countryside, rather than in a village cluster as they had in India.³⁹ This made the creation of social networks difficult.

³⁷ Younger, *New Homelands*, 173

³⁸ Younger, *New Homelands* 171

Indians did not bring any architectural traditions with them, rather they borrowed the Fijian construction technique and materials to build their own homes. Some were lucky to get cottages made from timber weatherboard cladding, same materials used for the barracks which were built by the British people in Fiji.



Figure 20 Indian Farmers Cottage

³⁹ Younger, *New Homelands*, 171

2.6 POST COLONIAL PERIOD IN FIJI

Fiji Independence

Fiji gained complete political Independence from Britain in 1970, some 96 years after being under British rule.⁴⁰ This was after a series of difficult and often contentious constitutional negotiations in Fiji and in London. It was marked with a national celebration in Albert Park, Suva, officiated by Prince Charles representing the Queen to officiate the ceremony.

Fiji's Politics & Coup

Post-colonial politics was based on racial lines. Social and economic changes caused by external forces, including policies of the World Bank, challenged the race based political order.⁴¹ New political groups were formed and a coalition with the Indian based party won the elections in 1987.

Political leadership by another ethnicity was not welcomed by the indigenous people. This led to the first coup on the 14th of May 1987 where the winning

democratically elected non-indigenous political party was overthrown by the indigenous leaders. After months of turmoil and negotiations, Fiji was returned to civilian rule in December 1987. Indians became targets for acts of violence which motivated many to leave their new homeland for other countries such as Australia and New Zealand. The constitution was changed favouring indigenous dominance in the political system and in favour for the indigenous people to lead their country which saw the chief-backed Fijian Party assume political power in 1992.

Two more coups followed in 2000 and again in 2006 respectively motivated on racial grounds and power for leadership. In both occasions, the country was restored back to civil rule with the constitution rewritten. The current constitution re-written in 2013 has removed previous racial categorisation and recognises indigenous Fijians as the iTaukei and all other ethnicities as Fijians united by common and equal citizenry.⁴²

⁴⁰ Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 568

⁴¹ Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 568

⁴² "Fijian Constitution." n.d. Fiji Government Online Portal - The Fijian Government's Official Website. Accessed June 12, 2019. <http://www.fiji.gov.fj/About-Fiji/Fijian-Constitution>

Fiji Central Location

Fiji's central location in the South Pacific makes it an important base for airline, shipping and telecommunications. It is home to the headquarters of regional and international bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the University of the South Pacific, both based in Suva.

Other Ethnicities

The iTaukei and Indians have been the majority population in Fiji. Other ethnicities, though minority, have continued to increase in population numbers such as the Rotumans, Europeans, Chinese and Other Pacific Islanders.

The Rotumans

The nation of Rotuma which is located north of Fiji ceded themselves to the British in 1881.⁴³ Rotuman's then began to migrate to Fiji in order to find employment and education. The population in Rotuma was 2,002 in 2007 and 1594 in 2017, a decrease of 20.4%, mostly due to the migration into urban areas in Suva.⁴⁴ Rotumans in Fiji are recognised as a distinct group because they are

⁴³ Lal and Fortune, *Pacific Islands Encyclopaedia*, 569

⁴⁴ "Fiji Statistics at a Glance," Fiji Bureau of Statistics - Fiji Bureau of Statistics, accessed August 30, 2019, <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/>.

substantially different from the iTaukei physically and culturally, and have a unique language.⁴⁵ The current president of Fiji is of Rotuman descent, His Excellency Major General Jioji Konusi Konrote.



Figure 21 President of Fiji Jioji Konrote

The Chinese

The first Chinese person, Moy Bak Ling, arrived in Levuka in 1855 after having travelled on a sailboat from Australia at the age of 20. A carpenter by trade, he opened the first Chinese shop for business in Levuka.⁴⁶ He later returned to China to bring his family along with many

⁴⁵ Meiji, Van Toon, and Jelle Miedema, *Shifting Images of Identity in the Pacific*, "Rotuman Identity in the Electronic Age" (Leiden: KITLV Press 2004), 220

⁴⁶ The Fiji Museum - Virtual Museum, accessed August 7, 2019. <http://virtual.fijimuseum.org.fj>.

others in connection with the gold rush in Fiji. Since their arrival, generations of Chinese immigrants have established themselves through hard work and have actively been engaging in public welfare, making important contributions to the local economy and the social development of the local community.⁴⁷



Figure 22 Moy Bak Ling and family

The Chinese community were only temporary short-term visitors, however, due to Chinese revolution in 1911 and the Japanese invasion of China in 1937, many Chinese in Fiji were prevented from returning to China and hence established themselves permanently as part of Fiji's community.

⁴⁷ "Fiji's Chinese Community Celebrates 163 Years Here." Fiji Sun, accessed September 15, 2019. <https://fijisun.com.fj/2018/09/24/fijis-chinese-community-celebrates-163-years-here/>.

The Chinese culture involves group activity of drumming with two bamboo sticks, which is associated with prosperity and celebration. The red paint for the drums is the colour associated with power and luck which symbolises strength.⁴⁸



Figure 23 Chinese Red Drum

⁴⁸ The Fiji Museum - Virtual Museum, accessed August 7, 2019. <http://virtual.fijimuseum.org.fj>.

2.7 Levuka, PAST and PRESENT



Figure 24 - Levuka Town

Location, Population and Geography

In the Province of Lomaiviti, on the eastern side of Ovalau Island lies the town of Levuka. This province comprises seven main and five small islands with a total population of 15,657 recorded in the 2017 census.⁴⁹

Ovalau has 24 rural villages and a town which have been established along the coastal perimeter of. It recorded a population of 9,606 of which 4,250 people lived in Levuka which is the main urban centre in the province with the main government administration. The geographical terrain did not allow the town to expand further and it was for this reason that Suva was made the capital in 1877, with the administration following suite in 1882. The coastline is built with a seawall that protects the townscape. A strip of land beside the main road follows the coastline and the seawall all along the perimeter of the town boundary. Across the road begins the covered veranda stretch of the main shops in town with residential properties behind.

⁴⁹ "Fiji Statistics at a Glance." n.d. Fiji Bureau of Statistics - Fiji Bureau of Statistics, accessed August 15, 2019. <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj>.

Economy

The main industries on the island are fish processing and farming, including subsistence farming. A tuna cannery factory, Pacific Fishing Company (PAFCO) was established after the colonial period, importantly to use the port and to provide the island with economic revenue. This helps cash flow on the island. Facilities on the island generally include retail and grocery stores, banks, government administration, religious churches and various schools in Levuka.

There have been times when the operations at the factory has been affected due to management issues. During the disruptive times, the local people have had to resort back to the land to make ends meet for their families. A recent hike in the price of kava has meant that farmers are able to earn more money compared to being employed full time at PAFCO.



Figure 25 Local Ladies employed in Pafco, Levuka

Colonial Town – Levuka

During the colonial period, Levuka had about 50 hotels and motels, a port for ships to dock and nearby sheds to store goods. It was the capital of Fiji from 1871 until 1877 when Suva became the new capital as it provided more room for expansion. The government administration moved to Suva in 1882. During the period when Levuka was the capital, it had approximately 3000 European settlers but only 500 remained after Suva was made Capital.

The early European settlers established many retail stores, accommodation facilities, clubs, churches and government administration buildings in Levuka. The town had the first printing press in Fiji and an electricity powerhouse to provide the town with electricity.



Figure 26 Bank of New Zealand in Levuka 19th century

Historical Values and Buildings

The town reflects the important interchange of human values and cultural contact during European maritime expansion over the 19th century. It is a rare example of a late colonial port town which illustrates the cultural hybridity of a non-settler community in the Pacific with urban planning that merged the local settlement with colonial standards. The town exhibits the process of the late industrialised stage of colonisation based on maritime extractions and export processes.⁵⁰



Figure 27 Levuka Town Aerial View

⁵⁰ Centre, UNESCO World Heritage. n.d. "Levuka Historical Port Town." UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed September 15, 2019. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1399/>.

The establishment of the first town of Fiji in the late years of the 19th century saw many firsts being established in Levuka: Fiji's first bank, post office, churches, schools, a private members club, hospitals, town hall and municipal government. The first newspaper company, the Fiji Times, was founded in Levuka in 1869 before it was moved to Suva and is still in operation today. Levuka's Royal Hotel is known as the oldest hotel in the South Pacific.

Cultural World Heritage (UNESCO)

Levuka town was declared a World Heritage Site in April 2013, by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.⁵¹ Levuka is now officially named as the 'Historical Port Town of Levuka' under the Heritage category and classified as a Cultural Site.

Levuka Town represents an important aspect of the Cultural Heritage of Fiji because of the major historical events that took place during the colonial period which paved the future path of the country.

It was earlier founded by the European and American settlers in 1820. These settlers developed the town as a centre for commercial activity by building warehouses,

⁵¹ UNESCO World Heritage Centre, "Levuka Historical Port Town," UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed August 24, 2018. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1399/>.

stores, port facilities, residences, churches, schools and social institutions. They also set up the first Fiji government with a colonial administration.

In Levuka many of the heritage buildings were seriously damaged including two of particular significance. One was a retail store and the other was the Port Authority warehouse building where half of the walls collapsed. The remaining half is still being used as an office space for the Ports Authority administration.



Figure 28 Damaged Fiji Ports Building

A public building that contained a gym, squash centre and kindergarten was also affected, the roofs were blown away. Due to financial constraints, these spaces have been left open to the weather and they are deteriorating with no hope for restoration in sight. A management plan is desperately needed for the maintenance and preservation of the old buildings in Levuka

Port

Levuka's port played an important role after Suva was made the capital, with continued economic development for the town as it was a stopover port for vessels crossing the Pacific Ocean. This came to an end in the 1950s which threatened the town with economic extinction until the cannery factory was built and became the main source of income for the people of Ovalau.

Unfortunately, the top half of the port was severely damaged during cyclone Winston in 2016. Currently, the damaged area of wharf is condoned off and cannot be used. Fortunately, the other half which is undamaged can still be used by local passenger ships.



Figure 29 Queen's Wharf Levuka

Fijian Villages

There is a traditional Fijian village at the northern end of the town called Levuka Vakaviti (Fijian village of Levuka). The chief of the village, Tui Levuka, (Chief of Levuka) is a direct descendant of the chief that welcomed the first European settlers. In memory of his ancestors he is known as 'Tamana na vavalangi' (Father of the Europeans). To the southern end of the town is the village of Nasova where Fiji was officially ceded to the British by Cakobau.

People and Culture

Levuka has a multi-cultural community comprised of the ITaukei, Indians, Rotumans, Chinese, Europeans and other Pacific Islanders. The interaction between the different ethnicities of people fosters a sense of place for the residents. It is a small community, where everyone knows each other. Due to the multi-cultural living style, there have been marriages occurring between different ethnicities, which help to create a cohesive community.

Holidays and Celebration

In the Fiji calendar, there are ten days observed as public holidays, some are specifically for the different major ethnic groups. Diwali for the Indians, Eid for the Muslims, and everyone in Fiji get to celebrate Easter and Christmas as well as Fiji Day commemorating the date that Fiji was ceded and regained independence from the British. An annual re-enactment of the ceding is

performed by the residents of Levuka in Nasova, followed with a march past through town.

Religion

The majority of residents in Levuka are Christians who regularly attend church services on Sundays in churches built by earlier generations. The Indian and Muslim community have their religious temple and mosque buildings which are located outside the town boundary, approximately ten minutes travel by vehicle. The minority Asian community do not have a place for their religious activities, and they observe their religion in their home.



Figure 30 Interior Catholic Church in Levuka

SPORTS IN LEVUKA

People in Levuka and on Ovalau love to play sport during their recreational time. The various schools offer sports in their physical curriculum where students get to play volleyball, cricket, grass hockey, rugby and basketball. The male adults generally play rugby or soccer within their group of friends and organise regular tournaments for themselves. The women often take part in social volleyball. The majority of iTaukei men love rugby and have regular games amongst the villages on the island played in Nasau park in Levuka. Regional games are played at home or away, the home ones are played in Nasau park and families come out in numbers to support their home team. This sense of pride amongst the people of Ovalau creates a strong community spirit which can be overwhelming when the home team wins the match.

The Indian and other ethnic community members come together to play soccer, usually on Sunday when they are free from work commitments. Until recently there was a team that represented Levuka in regional games and it often brought the tournament trophy home to Levuka. On these occasions a march through town would take place to acknowledge the team's performance accompanied by a formal presentation of gifts.

One sport that has made the people of Ovalau recognised in the National and International level is

weightlifting. Young men and women have successfully represented Fiji in the South Pacific Games, as well as the Commonwealth and Olympic Games. Their coaches, former weightlifters themselves, are local residents who take pride in mentoring young people to help them become be high achievers.

Levuka has one public gym, but during the Cyclone Winston in 2016, it was badly damaged and can no longer be used. The young weightlifters have built themselves a temporary tin shed and despite this very basic gym facility, they continue to win medals in international competitions.



Figure 31 Temporary Gym in Baba Settlement, Levuka

3.0 LITERATURE STUDY

3.1 SOCIAL IMPACTS OF GLOBALISATION IN FIJI

Globalisation has impacted Fiji's political, economic, social and cultural values. Lisa Lockwood explains that this has been caused by manufacturing and service-related industries from wealthy industrialized countries relocating to developing countries where labour and production is cheaper.⁵² She explains that this encourages the process of international integration with other countries in the world.

Ronald Robertson, a sociologist, states *“globalization as a concept, refers both to the compression, and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole, both concrete global inter-dependence and consciousness of the globe as a whole.”* Hence, globalisation interconnects different countries through the exchange of goods, services and capital.

The economic impacts of globalisation in Fiji has seen more employment opportunities created in the two main city centres of Suva and Lautoka. This also has trickled to most of the town centres on the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The impact of

having more employment in the cities and towns has created an increase in the number of people migrating from rural and outer island villages into the urban centres. People also move to urban centres to gain access to better health, education and social services.⁵³ The 2017 census recorded 55.9% of Fiji's population living in urban centres, the remaining are in rural areas.⁵⁴

Lockwood writes of the debate concerning the loss of cultural diversity and the increasing western cultures in the world through globalisation.⁵⁵ She states that prior to the colonial era there were more than several thousand cultures in the world, and that today there are only about 200. The expansion of capitalism since the colonial era has resulted in the movement of western culture - economic rationality, individualism, competition and consumerism - in one direction, from the First Worlds (west) to the Third World.

In Levuka, the impact of globalisation is experienced indirectly through the migration of the younger generation who pursue tertiary qualification in Suva, since there is none provided in the town. These young people must temporarily migrate to Suva for the duration of their studies, and only return home during the holidays. This temporary migration eventually becomes

⁵² Lockwood, *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, 20

⁵³ Lockwood, *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, 25

⁵⁴ “Fiji Statistics at a Glance.” n.d. Fiji Bureau of Statistics - Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Accessed August 24, 2019. <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/>.

⁵⁵ Lockwood, *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, 5

permanent as they are quickly absorbed into Fiji's capitalist economy in Suva after attaining tertiary qualifications. They often continue to migrate overseas where capitalist economies offer better living opportunities. Hence the parents of these emigrants remain in Levuka and maintain the daily economy of the town. Those remaining, continue to work and live together in harmony and create a community that is considerate of each other's ethnic culture and customs.

The iTaukei people on Ovalau Island generally live in village settlements in various locations that have been established by their ancestors. They make up the majority of the residents on the island and provide most of the work force required at the tuna cannery factory, PAFCO in Levuka. The income they get helps them to replenish consumer goods at home and to pay for services such as transport from their villages to town and back. They also have abundant land in the villages which they cultivate for daily food and for economic gains from selling their produce.

The economic, cultural and social impact of globalisation has trickled into these villages, improving the lives of the villagers through government infrastructure projects giving people access to water, electricity and roads. The economic benefits allow them to cover the educational expenses for their children such as school fees, uniforms and lunches and buying building

materials for their houses. However, these improvements have brought dependency on western technology and materials and the loss of the creative skills and traditional methods of construction of traditional bures and making cultural artefacts such as tapa cloth, mats, clay pots, and everyday ceremonial objects. A cultural revival program needs to be in place to help the younger generation be educated and maintain traditional and cultural knowledge of construction and making artefacts which are crucial elements of cultural identity.

3.2 CRITICAL REGIONALISM

The term critical regionalism as mentioned by Kenneth Frampton, an architectural historian is the approach to architecture that strives to counter the place-lessness and lack of identity of the international style, and the rejection of ornamentation of post-modern architecture. Critical regionalism seeks to mediate between the global and the local language of architecture. Kenneth states that critical regionalism should adopt modern architecture critically, for its universal progressive qualities but at the same time value should be placed on the geographical context of the building, emphasis should be on topography, climate, light, on tectonic form rather than on scenography and should be on the sense of touch rather than visual sense.⁵⁶

Modern technology and building materials have now replaced traditional materials and construction methods of bures and houses in Levuka and in the surrounding villages on Ovalau. The advantages are that modern and robust homes are built that can withstand the severe cyclones that Fiji is prone to during the cyclone period.

Levuka Town was built by early American and British settlers who brought European styles of architecture with them using timber for walls and corrugated metal roofs. The town was built to create a European setting that would remind the settlers of their homelands and hence establishing a sense of a place and architectural identity for them.

However, since the relocation of the capital from Levuka to Suva, most of the European settlers relocated as well, leaving behind their colonial buildings. They are now occupied by business owners who are descendants of Indians and Asians. Since Levuka was declared a World Heritage Colonial Town in 2013, restrictions have been placed on alterations to existing facades of the old building. Repairs and maintenance are allowed but the façade must not be altered from the original state.

The community of Levuka and the people of Ovalau, therefore, must live with this colonial town setting which reminds them of both the good and bad events of the colonial history. There are positive and negative impacts of this status on Levuka Town. The negative impact

⁵⁶ Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance", in *The Anti-Aesthetic. Essays on Postmodern Culture* (1983) edited by Hal Foster, Bay Press, Seattle.

associated with this restriction on existing buildings is that new architecturally innovative and modern buildings cannot be introduced which the current occupants would desire. It seems that this restriction has stalled or framed Levuka in time, while the rest of Fiji continues to move ahead with new architectural innovation and design. Clearly, there is no architectural identity within the buildings that the multi-ethnic people living on Ovalau can relate to, apart from it forming part of their shared history.

Renzo Piano describes that in the design of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, in Noumea, New Caledonia, it was not feasible to offer a standard product of western architecture. He emphasised that it would have been a mistake to apply universal concepts of progress to the context. He rejected any form of colonialism and gave respect to the culture, context and local materials to inform his architectural design. He brought his skills to create space and construct buildings.⁵⁷

Critical regionalism is a useful concept when designing a new community and cultural centre for Levuka. A new community facility needs to reflect both Levuka's place in the global environment and its regional customs and traditions, history, context, climate, and local materials

that will help connect the building with the local people to create a sense of place and identity.

⁵⁷ Frampton, Kenneth, and Roberto Brignolo. *The Renzo Piano Logbook*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1997. 174

3.3 MULTICULTURALISM AND ARCHITECTURE

iTaukei Identity Shift

Indigenous Fijians' identity has continued to shift and adapt to the current time that people live in. These transformations can be identified in three phases: Pre-European contact and Christianity, colonisation, and post colonisation.

According to Ronald Gatty Derick, author of *A History of Fiji*, pre-European period of the Indigenous Fijians had lived a warfare culture, in which hostility and cannibalism was associated with their daily lives.⁵⁸ He added that the "dwelling-houses were small and poorly built" in comparison to the canoe houses which were spacious and well-constructed. It can be argued that these were due to the nature of the Pacific Island people who were sea voyagers. Architects and writers, James Conner and the late Jennifer Taylor, also argued that architecture played an important role in the layout of the village life. In their book, *Architecture in the South Pacific*, they highlighted the various arrangements of dwellings which was organized in a hierarchy order; "Regional materials and tried ways and means of planning and spatial enclosure make for a kinship between individual

buildings in the village, with building skills, functional use and importance given rise to differing expressions. Structures of social and religious hierarchies determine locations for special-use buildings".⁵⁹

The first phase of change in the cultural identity shift of iTaukei people was during Pre-European contact and Christianity. Otto and Thomas argued "Christian missions penetrated the villages of the Pacific earlier, more deeply, and more effectively than did the colonial states".⁶⁰ Derick further states that Christianity had reduced religious practises of the past and had brought about an understanding amongst the iTaukei people. These changes may have brought new and improved ways of living with changes in their social and cultural lifestyle, turning away from warfare, cannibalism and converting them to Christianity that taught new religious morale and behaviours to interact with different clans and the Europeans.

The second phase of change was experienced during the colonisation of Fiji to Great Britain. Lockwood discussed and highlighted that industrial revolution had driven Europeans in search of raw materials which led to their dominance in distant cultures and people. She further claims that this was a forced introduction of westernisation and Christianity within these cultures. Paul

⁵⁸ Derrick, R. A. 2001. *A History of Fiji*. Suva, Fiji: Government Press.

⁵⁹ Taylor, Jennifer, and James Conner. 2014. *Architecture in the South Pacific: The Ocean of Islands*. Singapore: Editions Didier Millet.p17

⁶⁰ Lockwood, *Globalization and Culture Change in the Pacific Islands*, 11

Younger in his book *New Homelands* mentioned that Christianity provided some of the powerful chiefs on the eastern island of Fiji a means to which they could use to unify the society and modernise with civil order.⁶¹ The threat for wars between different tribe in Fiji lead the eastern province chief of Bau to bring together allied chief's and themselves into a council and successfully offered to cede the whole country to the British in 1874.

To this relatively major indigenous chief's, their primary interest was to keep their people under control within relatively small communally held territories.⁶² They did not see land as commercially valuable in itself as they were only thinking in military terms and were happy to allow unused land to colonial entrepreneurs to be cleared up. In their view, this provided a buffer and protection from inland mountain warriors. Younger also further states that land in Fiji was generally looked on as a communal resource and not for personal use or for sale.⁶³

The British administration helped the indigenous people by not allowing the selling off the best land, preserve some respect for the Council of chief's who ceded Fiji, and helped to develop the economic potential of the country. This was to be achieved by planting sugar cane on available land with the production and export of sugar overseas. The indigenous people were not

considered to work on these farms due to the respect given to the Council of Chief's to use traditional ways to control their people.⁶⁴ The British authorities had also made agreement with the Fijian chief's by never employing Fijians on the plantation.⁶⁵

The post-colonial period saw the British hand over authority back to the people of Fiji. During this time the population consisted of iTaukei, Indentured Indians, Europeans, Asian and other Pacific Islanders. The immediate attempt was to establish a multi-cultural society which respected each other's customs and traditions.

Paul Younger in his book *New Homelands* wrote about Indian being brought to Fiji by the British and were segregated from the Indigenous people. This was intentionally done so that the British authorities could control the indigenous and the Indians. He further argued that during the colonial period that both Indians and non-Indian communities were dislocated and searching for identity.⁶⁶ It was in these settings that both Indians and non-Indians considered themselves part of a post-colonial society that needed to find their new identity.

⁶¹ Younger, *New Homelands*, 169

⁶² Younger, *New Homelands*, 170

⁶³ Younger, *New Homelands*, 170

⁶⁴ Younger, *New Homelands* 170

⁶⁵ Younger, *New Homelands* 172

⁶⁶ Younger, *New Homelands*, 169

Indian Identity Shift

The British brought labourers from India who were from the agricultural regions of Calcutta and Madras. They were indentured to work for five years before they could be 'freemen' in Fiji, in a country so foreign from their homeland. These Indians came from the same speaking region which made it easy to get along with each other. It was the British system of segregation in Fiji that challenged these Indians culture, customs and traditions which they were used to in their homeland. Paul Younger author of *New Homeland* explains that during the colonial period, both Indians and non-Indian communities were dislocated and searching for identities.

Indian cultural identity shifted during three occasions in the following ways. The first time was when they left their homeland in India, leaving behind their culture that was based on a caste system. Upon arrival into Fiji, the new land, the caste system was no longer in existence, but they were under the British rule which was based on a segregation policy. Younger mentions that the colonial authority defined their work within a predetermined social environment of segregation from other ethnicities. Gradually Indians recognised how fortunate they were to share social identity with other Indian workers and

created for themselves cultural groups which helped them define the new society under British rule. The third identity shift occurred when the British left Fiji. The barrier of segregation was taken away, so the Indians, and every other ethnicity in Fiji had to learn to live together and create their new identity together. Indians went through three transition from leaving their *homeland* going into a *new land*, which then became their *new homeland*.

3.3.3 Other Ethnic Identity Shift

The Rotuman population have continued to migrate in large numbers from Rotuma to Fiji for the purposes of work and tertiary education. They have also emigrated to countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii and the United States of America. Rotumans living in Fiji continue to be organised according to their district of origin in Rotuma, using their homeland locality as the basis for their group identification.⁶⁷ Their numbers are greatest in Suva, Lautoka and Nadi. They have continued to excel in education and taken up professional management, and supervisory roles. In one way this tends to strengthen Rotuman identity in the general community, however success can weaken group identity by providing individuals the opportunity to

⁶⁷Toon van Meijl, and Jelle Miedema, *Shifting Images of Identity in the Pacific*, (Leiden: KITLV Press 2004), 221

dissociate themselves from the Rotuman communities. Alan Howard and Jan Rensel, authors of the essay article *Rotuman Identity in the Electronic age*, argue that “extraordinary success of Rotumans in adapting to modern cosmopolitan culture and the world of capitalist economic system lies at the heart of their relatively weak sense of cultural identity”.⁶⁸ This is true for Rotumans living in the main urban centres such as in Suva and Lautoka. The Rotuman population in Levuka is relatively low and most women have inter-married into other ethnicities in Levuka. Their children are growing up learning more of their paternal parent’s cultures because of the relatively low number of Rotumans to sustain the Rotuman cultures and traditions in the community.

Most other Pacific Islanders living in Fiji are relatively small in numbers and have adopted the Fijian lifestyle, cultures and traditions and houses. Through inter-marriage they have adopted the ways of life of the indigenous Fijians by living in village settings.

⁶⁸ Meijl, and Miedema, *Shifting Images of Identity in the Pacific*, 221

3.4 Traditional Craftsmanship

The vernacular buildings across the Pacific Islands are very similar in nature. Taylor and Connor states that the defining element of these buildings are through the construction and development of the roofs.⁶⁹ They further explain how the Polynesian *fale* mimics the curvature of the canoes upturned and how the Fijian *bure* has a different and yet orthogonal high-pitched roof. It may seem that the cultures that surrounds these nations influence the tradition of building and its form.

Traditional building processes practised in the Pacific holds unique and meaningful importance to the culture and its people. Aspects of culture and history are embodied in the forms of traditional building construction. Anthropologists and academics Susanne Kuchler and Graeme discuss the deeper meaning behind the weaving or fastening of traditional building structures. In their book, *Pacific Pattern*, they argued that in traditional construction, fibre was used as a primary agent of anchoring light and life of the past and present.⁷⁰ Architect and anthropologist Paul Memmott, perceived these building processes differently. In his article, "Cultural change and tradition in the indigenous architecture of Oceania," he emphasizes the

importance of social engagement in traditional practices and how important this is regarding the revitalisation of culture.⁷¹

However, there is growing concern about the gradual loss of traditional craftsmanship in the Pacific. Architect and academic, Mike Austin argued that the transition and adaptation of western culture, experienced in the Pacific occurred rapidly and has led to the lack of cultural recognition in architecture. In his article, "Pacific Island architecture," he expresses disappointment in the difficulties of locating traditional buildings in the Pacific due to the overwhelming presence of colonial and modern architecture.⁷² Taylor and Connor, agree with Austin claiming that as a result of western influence, modern technology and materials, traditional building skills are lost. It may seem that the loss of traditional craftsmanship is the tip of the iceberg when thinking about the deterioration of culture in the Pacific.

⁶⁹ Taylor and Connor, *Architecture in the South Pacific*, 17

⁷⁰ S Kuchler, G Were, and G Jowitt, *Pacific Pattern*, ed. Graeme Ware and Glenn Jowitt (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 112.

⁷¹ Paul Memmott, "Cultural Change and Tradition in the Indigenous Architecture of Oceania," *Architectural Theory Review* 16, no. 1 (April 2011):

⁷² Mike Austin, "Pacific Island Architecture," *Fabrications* 11, no. 2 (September 6, 2012): 16,

3.5 COMMUNITY LIVING & FACILITY

Gordon Cullen states that towns and cities are more than the sum of their inhabitants. They have the power to generate a surplus of amenities for the benefit of all. This is one reason why people like to live in communities rather than in isolation.⁷³ He further states that bringing people together creates a surplus of enjoyment, and bringing buildings together collectively, give visual pleasure which none can give separately.

Dean Landy states that we are part of a community one way or the other, and that the communities we live in can have positive or negative influences; can be engaging or isolating, welcoming or segregating, enabling or limiting.⁷⁴ Landy outlines elements that shape our communities into two key groupings, '**Soft Elements**' and '**Hard Elements**'.

The Soft Elements refer to social and psychological outcomes that need to be felt and experienced. The Hard Elements are represented by the physical elements that form those environments.

Some key Soft and Hard Elements required for the Community Centre in this research project are as follows:

1. Soft Element of the **People**

Having a people focused planning and design approach for the community centre that will make them feel valued, have their differences respected and their basic needs met in order to achieve a greater level of social inclusion in the community.

The community centre will provide for **The Third Place** which is the social environment away from the first place – home, and the second place – work, where people can go to relax, socialise and connect with each other in a face to face environment. These places are neutral and accessible to everyone and should include formal and informal spaces such as a library and community centre. The complex will need to consider design for accessibility, catering for people with disability. This will ensure that the design of the project will not discriminate.

⁷³ Gordon, Cullen, and ProQuest. *The Concise Townscape*. Oxford, Boston: (Routledge/Architectural, 1971), 7

⁷⁴ Dean Landy, *Creating Vibrant Communities*, 2nd ed. (Mt Evelyn, VIC: Global Publishing Group Australia, 2017), 28

2. Soft Element of the **Place**

The community centre will need to focus on connecting people with a unique sense of place. The people in this context are the people on Ovalau and in Levuka, a multi-cultural community with unique cultures, customs, traditions, economic and social character. The design will need to provide an architectural response that will have elements representing each ethnicity so they can identify with the place.

The centre will need to provide for a bridge between the past and the present and represent the future for the community working in harmony. The sense of space is usually associated with the general way in which people feel about places, sense it, and assign concepts and values to it. The creation and preservation of the sense of place is important to maintain the quality of the environment as well as the integrity of human life within it. The definition of place expresses the strong bond between a person and a particular place. Place is mixed with human values and principles.

3. Soft Element of being **Connected**

The community and cultural centre will need to focus on connecting people between the elements, environment and transport, in order to achieve positive physical and

psychological impact on the residents. The location of the site will be crucial to connect the many various activities in Levuka. Having it located close to amenities and the towns retail areas will encourage walking and cycling which will have social benefits such as creating a feeling of inclusion which helps contribute to improved health and wellbeing.

Also, with the towns recognition as a cultural heritage site, the new contemporary community and cultural centre will need to connect with the existing heritage buildings by providing a bridge between the past, present and the future

4. Soft Element of **Sustainable**

This Research project will need to focus on creating an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable community. Creating this complex will require ongoing repair and maintenance, and one way of making some revenue will be to have some spaces rentable. The hall in particular could encourage social community groups to make traditional artefacts that could be sold and some of the profit be generated for the community centre. The gym is one area that can be marketed attractively to the youth so that they pay some membership fees that will help buy new equipment.

5. Hard Element of **Public Realm**

The community and cultural centre is to create a public place to enjoy. This can be done by having good connections with the natural environment, landscaping, squares and the built form for the public space to work effectively. When this is done successfully, the public realm acts as an outdoor living room. People will then proactively utilise the space for active and passive recreation during large and small public events. The public realm can have major impact on peoples' health and wellbeing by creating appealing places that encourage people to get outdoors and be more active and social. Cultures and climate may be different, people will gather in public if they are provided a good place to do it. In this research project, the main area of the public realm will be the rara.

6. Hard Element of **Community**

The community and cultural centre is to create a place where the public can connect and have social interaction within the third place as earlier discussed in the soft elements. This place can have the largest direct impact on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of a community. It is in this place where the social fabric is woven, individuals find support, and physical activity is promoted, and relationships are

made. The facilities provided should be able to support a strong social and cultural life, allow opportunities for people to get involved and most importantly support social interactions.

7. Hard Element of **Health and Wellbeing**

The community and cultural centre will provide a place to get fit and healthy. This will be provided by the gym that is part of the program. The gym will provide a better facility where locals can train and improve their fitness. The main hall could be used for community yoga activity which can involve the older generations where they can interact with other members of the community.

8. Hard Element of **Education**

The community and cultural centre is to provide a kindergarten where parents can meet. Also, the library to provide educational resources, both electronically and hard copy books.

SUMMARY

These soft and hard elements provide a useful structure for looking at the design of a community centre for Levuka.

4.0 PRECEDENT STUDIES

4.1 PRECEDENT ONE

Project: Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre

Architect: Renzo Piano Building Workshop

Location: Noumea, New Caledonia

Category: Cultural Centre

Completed: 1991

The Jean-Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre is devoted to the cultural origins and search for identity of the indigenous Kanak people of New Caledonia and the South Pacific.⁷⁵ It provides facilities to exhibit and celebrate the Kanak culture.

The International design competition for this project was won by prominent Italian architect Renzo Piano's architectural practice, Renzo Piano Building Workshop. The Cultural Centre was opened in June 1998 and was named after Jean-Marie-Tjibaou, the leader of the independence movement who was assassinated in 1989. The design of the Cultural Centre was modelled around the traditional Kanak building with consideration of the site context and the natural environment.

The approach to the complex is from the East with a series of stairs going upwards. The ten circular buildings are clustered into three villages which have one access point branching from the main circulation path which is along the spine of the huts and offices. A green space located on the west side, where local cultural performance can take place.

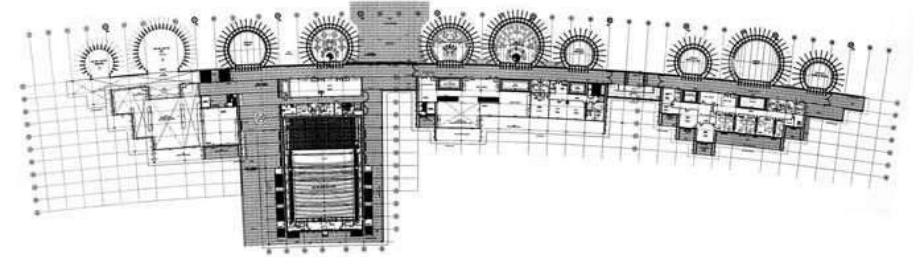


Figure 32 – Floor Plan

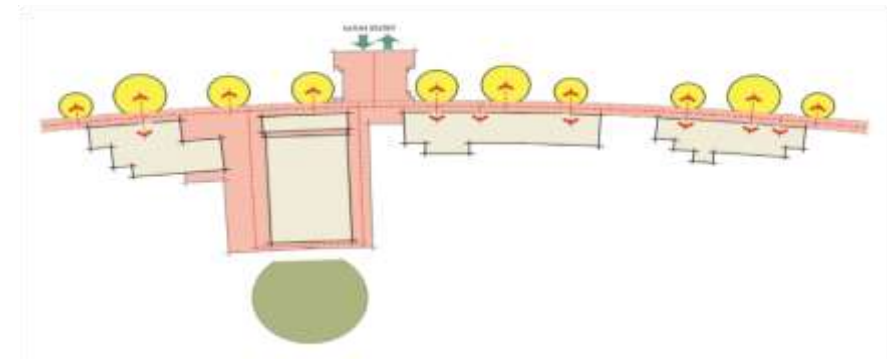


Figure 33 - Circulation and space analysis

⁷⁵ "Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center New Caledonia by Renzo Piano," accessed August 27, 2018, <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/tjibaou/>

The centre itself has been designed to be like that of the villages in which the Kanak tribes live; a series of huts which distinguish the different functions and hierarchies of the tribes with a central alley along which the huts are dispersed. The Cultural Centre is composed of three 'villages' made up of ten 'Great Houses' of varying sizes and functions (exhibition spaces, multimedia library, cafeteria, conference and lecture rooms). The 'Great Houses' are linked by a long, gently curving enclosed walkway, reminiscent of the ceremonial alley of the traditional Kanak village.⁷⁶

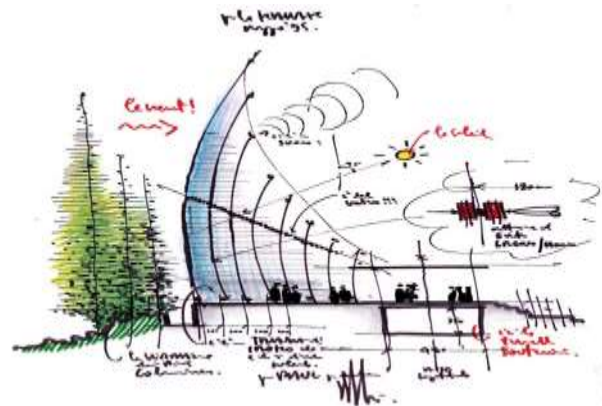


Figure 34 - Renzo Pianos Sketch Analysis

⁷⁶ "Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center New Caledonia by Renzo Piano," accessed August 27, 2018, <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/tjibaou/>



Figure 35 - Aerial View of the Cultural Centre

The identity of the Kanak is reinforced through the form of the building and through its relationship with the natural landscape. Located on a peninsula between the storm-tossed Pacific Ocean and a calm lagoon, Piano's design takes advantage of the prevailing winds from the ocean side through its system of natural ventilation. Horizontal wooden slats, composed of iroko wood (a type of wood that is impervious to rot and can withstand cyclone-force winds), on the outer façade on the ocean side filter the wind into a second layer of skin, an inner façade of glass louvers which open or close according to wind speed, allowing wind to flow through the building for passive ventilation. The double layer of skin also filters the warm air upward functioning similar to a chimney.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ "Marie Tjibaou Cultural Center New Caledonia by Renzo Piano," accessed August 27, 2018, <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/tjibaou/>

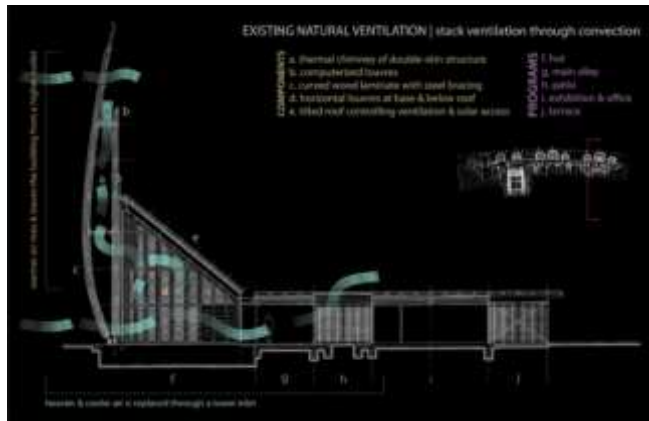


Figure 36 Passive Stack Diagram

The Cultural Centre is also composed of various exterior spaces which further explore the relationship of the Kanak culture to nature and the landscape; a Kanak pathway which winds through the dense natural vegetation, traditional ceremonial grounds of the Kanak with traditional huts, an outdoor auditorium and residences for visiting artists, lecturers, scholars and students. These spaces, as well as the main building,

integrate themselves and take advantage of the natural beauty of the site.

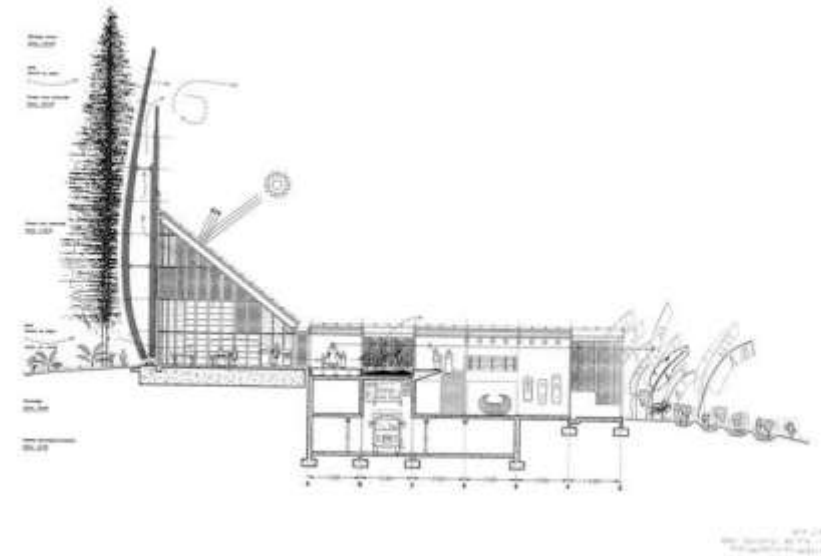


Figure 37 Final Section of Complex

SUMMARY

This centre imitates the traditional Kanak house structure, except the glulam members do not meet in the middle. This was intentional in order to achieve maximum passive ventilation. The use of timber glulam members where Iroko wood timber was sourced from Africa.

4.2 PRECEDENT TWO

Project: Te Kura Whare

Architect: Jasmax NZ

Location: Whakatane, New Zealand

Category: Culture & Civic

Completed: 2014

Website: <https://www.jasmax.com/projects/te-kura-whare/sectors/cultural-and-civic/>

This project is Tuhoe's new tribal development centre. It aims to encourage pride, unity and present the cultural values of the Tuhoe people in a way that maintains the truth of their past, present and future.

The architecture firm responsible were Jasmax and the project was completed in 2014.

The architectural design took into consideration the concerns of the environment and living in a way that is respectful of the land and waters. It was fundamental that the building complied with rigorous environmental performance standards.

Materials were to be locally sourced and built by local people.⁷⁸ Hence indigenous timber locally sourced from Te Urewera and pine from Kaingaroa dominate the whole building.

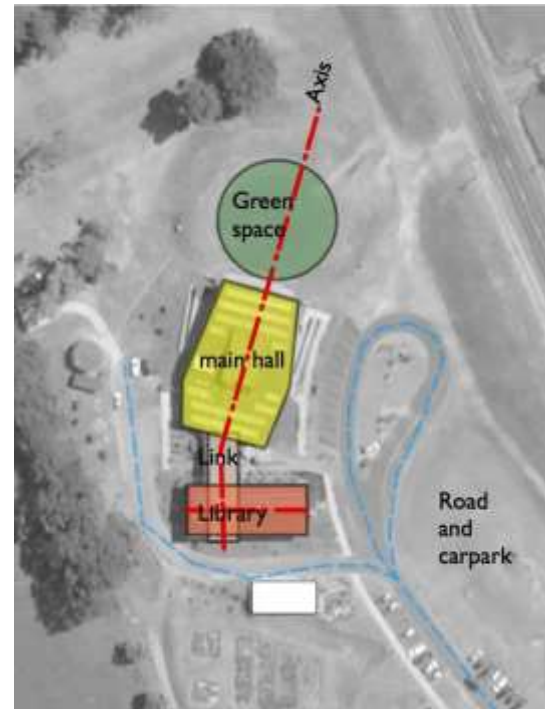


Figure 38 Kuru Whare Locality Plan

⁷⁸ "Constructing Te Uru Taumatua." n.d. Tuhoe. Accessed August 18, 2019. <https://www.ngaituhoe.iwi.nz/the-approach>.

The facilities in the project include a library, cafeteria, functions, events and conference facilities. The ceilings are high throughout the complex with a mono pitch slope. The interior is decorated using locally sourced timber materials.

The Structure for the project uses timber post and beam. Timber props are provided from within to hold the top frames between the post and beams. Timber, glass and metal are the main exterior materials

The front has a covered deck with a huge arch made from laminated timber which is the main feature to the complex. A covered stage is provided which overlooks into a greenspace where formal activities can occur. The greenspace becomes a ceremonial stage when traditional functions are in process.



Figure 39 Kuru Whare looking into Green Space



Figure 40 Interior Space



Figure 41 Exterior View

4.3 PRECEDENT THREE

Project: Curra Community Hall

Architect: Bark Design Architects

Location: Curra, Gympie Region, Queensland, Australia

Category: Community Centre

Completed: 2018

Website: <https://www.archdaily.com/897506/curra-community-hall-bark-architects>

This modern multi-purpose venue can accommodate a diverse range of activities and events, providing a space to build community connections and wellbeing.

The open space layout allows for both small and large gathering, including fitness classes, playgroups, expos and more. The hall has a capacity for 200 people, with provisions for chairs and tables. It has a well-equipped kitchen. Wheelchair access is provided into the building and to other facilities in the complex.

This projects design aspiration was to be economical, flexible and rudimentary. It was conceived as a simple and honest construction with robust, natural and cost-

effective materials, that was appropriate to its place in regional Queensland.

The exposed timber frame structure celebrates the construction skills of the local carpenters that worked on the project. The locally sourced timbers help to connect the building with the local region. Light weight translucent cladding allows light into the building through the walls. This building is like a 'Lantern' as the walls for the hall light up in the day with sunlight and they glow at night as a beacon of the community spirit.⁷⁹ The Building is of a rectangular shape with a mono pitch roof which provides for a truncated box form which is orientated along East to West. The main entry is from the East while the West has all the services zones such as kitchen, store and toilets. The north facing wall has roller shutters doors that allow the building with a maximum opening. The East and North facing decks are sheltered by the large overhangs. The South wall only has opening windows that are approximately one third the height of the wall. The highest point of the roof provides shelter to an outdoor deck which the users can sit outside to carry out their work and enjoy the scenery to the Sports oval and beyond. There is open internal spaces in the Hall, which has timber floors.

⁷⁹ Caballero, Pilar. 2018. "Curra Community Hall / Bark Design Architects." ArchDaily. ArchDaily. July 5, 2018. <https://www.archdaily.com/897506/curra-community-hall-bark-architects>.

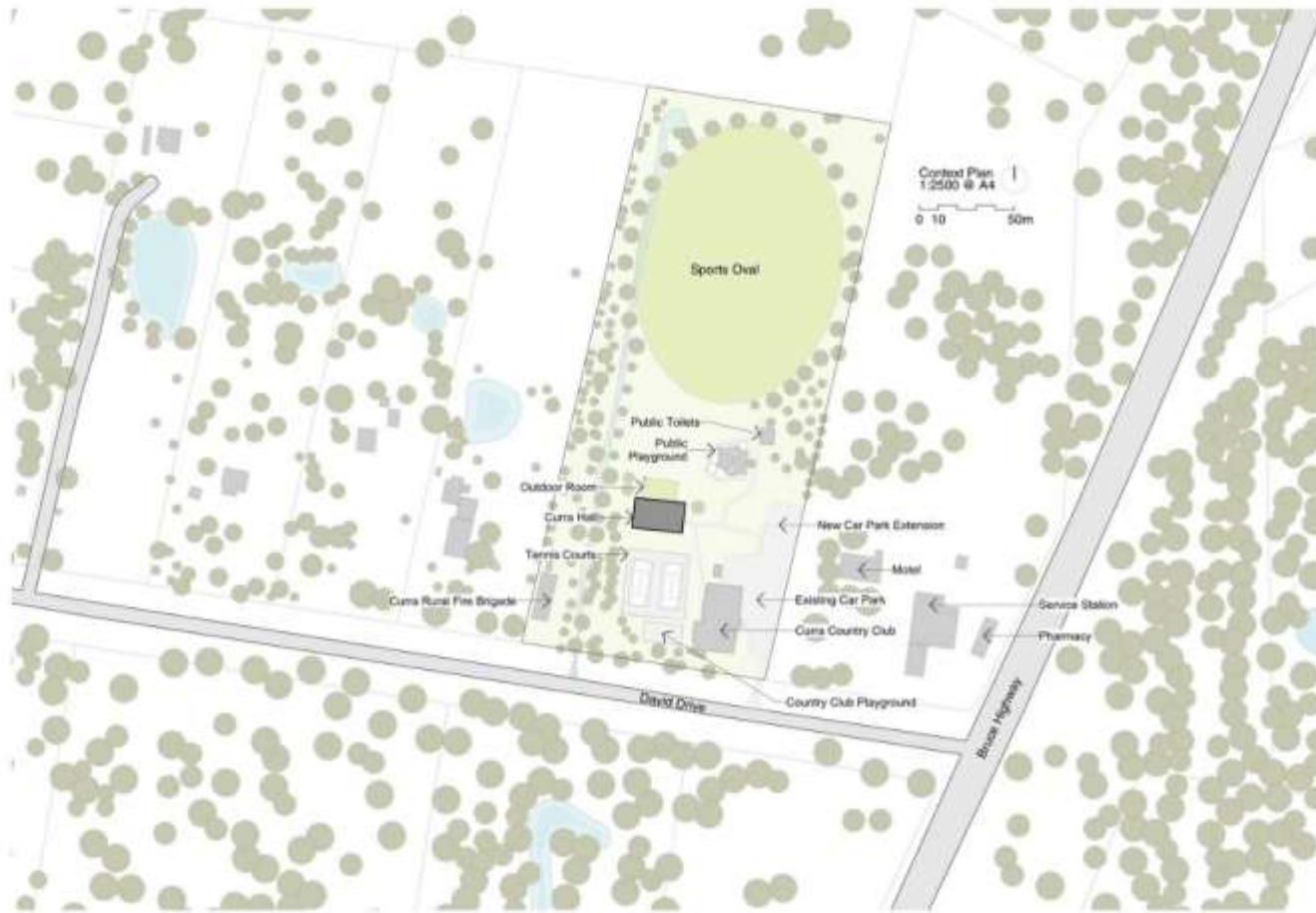


Figure 42 Site Plan

Site Analysis

The Curra Hall building is orientated facing north to maximise the daylight penetrating the building. The roof has a mono-pitch which has the highest point towards north and slopes away towards the south.

The building is located away from the roads and has a greenspace with views facing the sports oval.

There is sufficient car parking provided.

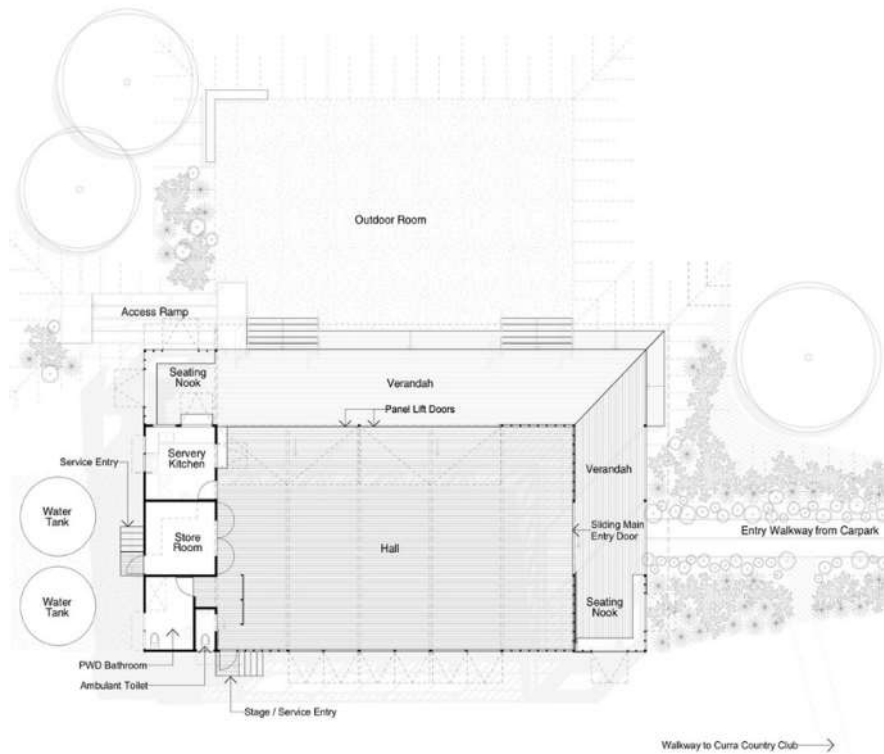


Figure 43 Floor Plan

The approach to the building is on a footpath from the carpark which connects to the East side of the building.

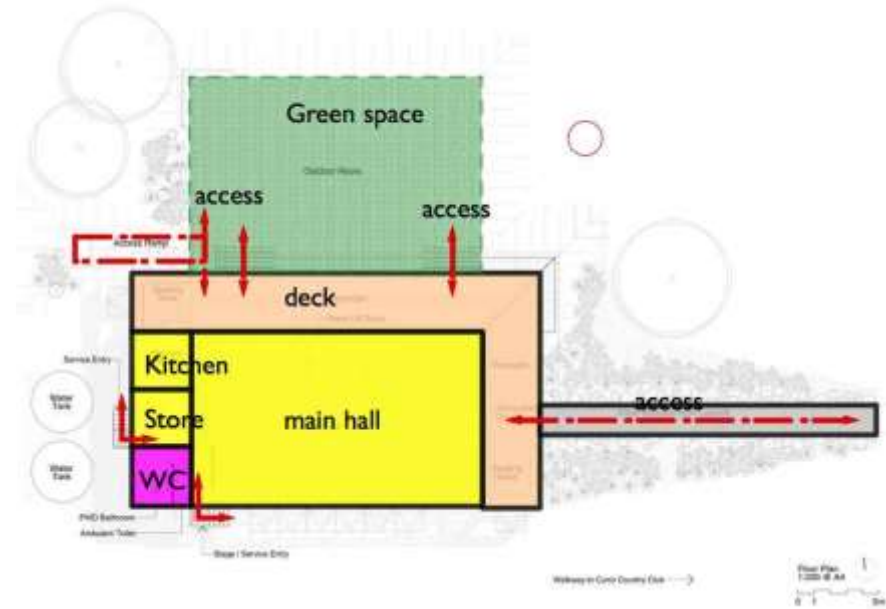


Figure 44 Analysis Plan

To the North is an Oval sports field and to the South are two tennis courts.



Figure 45 View from main entry

The exposed timber roof frames sail past the building walls providing large overhangs for sheltering the exterior timber deck below. Steel struts connected to the wall and timber rafters help to showcase the tectonics features of the building. The North side of the building is higher than the exterior ground with timber stairs to allow for a descending movement to the lower ground.

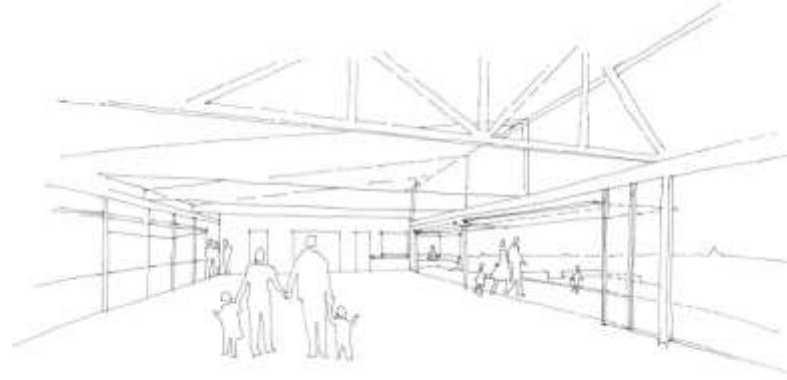


Figure 46 Sketch of interior

The Interior of the building is one big open space with large door opening on the North Wall connecting to the outside. The mono pitch roof helps to make the interior space feel larger. The translucent north walls allow sunlight into the building.



Figure 47 interior space looking towards South Wall



Figure 48 Inside to outdoor space

The large roof overhang provides for a sheltered deck along the edges of the building and the large door opening on the North helps the interior connect to the exterior. Exposed steel struts supporting the roof frame above celebrates the tectonics structure of the building.

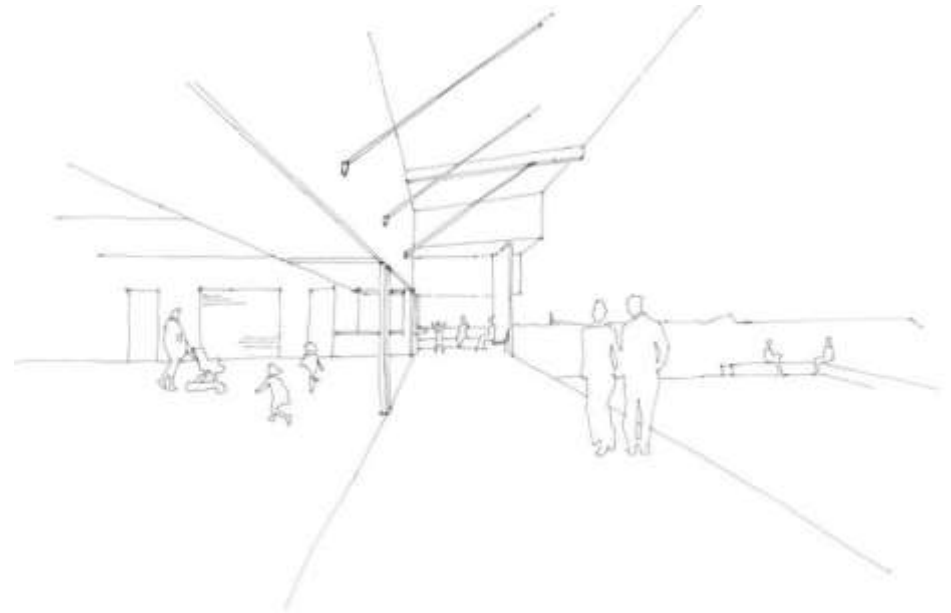


Figure 49 Sketch of exterior to interior space

5.0 DESIGN PROCESS

5.1 SITE SELECTION & PROCESS

To determine the best possible site for this research project, three locations within Levuka town were identified. These were analysed in terms of the features of the site, how to approach it, geographical terrain, and the distance to the commercial and residential activity of the town. This analysis determined the most suitable site to address the project's research intentions.



Figure 50 - SITE SELECTION

Site Selection Analysis

Site 1

This site had good level ground and was prominently located away from the town centre. It was previously occupied by the Levuka Club. Two sides of the site have sea views with a seawall, while another side faces a rocky hill that has a heritage monument at the crest. The main hospital is just around the corner, there is a school on the hills nearby and residential buildings on the other side of the road from the site. The South East winds blow into the site constantly, which would make external spaces unpleasant to use for much of the year and the sea spray would create maintenance problems for any structures. For these reasons the site was rejected.

Site 2

This site has a narrow strip of flat area which then rises steeply at the rear of the site. A design for the research project would be constrained to a linear layout with possibly a middle spine to connect the various functions required in the project. Front access is from the main road, with one side facing a fuel tank and the other to a storage facility for PAFCO. Directly opposite the site and the main road is PAFCO. This site is a distance away from the main commercial activities area of the town.

Site 3

This site is centrally located between PAFCO and the main commercial activity in town. The front boundary is along the main road, PAFCO and the local petrol station is on the right, with a retail store on the left side. The Post Office and the main port is directly opposite the front boundary. There is level ground for the majority of the site with slightly elevated ground towards the back near the petrol station. The site is sheltered along three sides and is located centrally to where many activities in the Town occurs. A second site is proposed on the opposite side of the road being part of the cleared area that housed half of the existing Port Authority building which collapsed during Cyclone Winston.

Final Site Selection:

From the analysis and evaluation done, Site 3 proved to provide the most opportunities for this Research Project. The site was located central to public and commercial activity, close to PAFCO where most of the people are employed and has good access to the main port which connects people of the province. Hence this site was chosen as it proved to be the ideal location to have a community and cultural centre which would capture and provide a hub for a thriving public activity for the multi-ethnic local community and the province.

5.2 LEVUKA CONTEXT STUDY

Levuka sits in a unique environment. The harbour is surrounded by a coral reef with a passage of entry, sufficient for large cruise ships, private yachts and inter island boats that bring local people and visitors from all walks of life to the town. The coral reef helps break large sea waves before they trickle towards the shore. The magnificent view from town looks towards the horizon where one can see Wakaya and Koro Islands in the distance. The geographical terrain from the shoreline leads through a narrow strip of flat land before it rises steeply towards the mountain and beyond.

Approaching the town from the south, one passes PAFCO, and at the end of the factory, begins the commercial activity of the town: retail and grocery stores, banks, restaurants, churches, and the hospital. The northern end of town is where a traditional Fijian Village is located and is called Levuka Vakaviti.

LEVUKA CONTEXT DIAGRAM

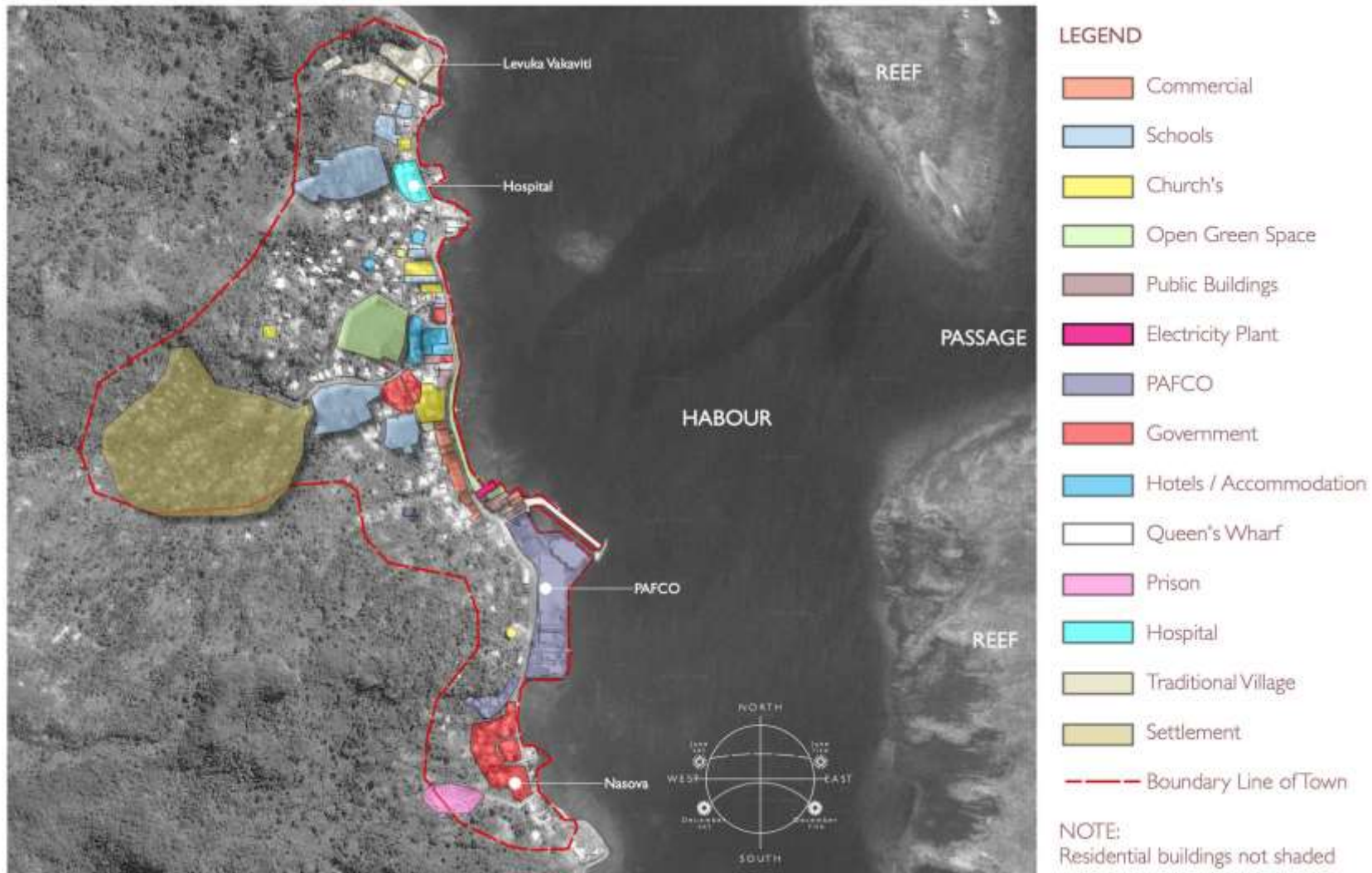


Figure 51 – Context Diagram – Levuka Town

LEVUKA CONTEXT IMAGES

Levuka - 1st Capital & Historical Port Town



Levuka Hospital



Anglican Church 1904



Royal Hotel 1904



Masonic Lodge - 1875



Methodist Church



Levuka Town - Enlarged image



Catholic Sacred Heart - 1889



Queen Victoria Hall-1898



PAFCO - 1987



Levuka Public School-1879



Deed of Cession Stone ,
Nasova- 1874

Figure 52 - LEVUKA CONTEXT IMAGE

LEVUKA CONTEXT IMAGES

Levuka Historical Port Town

(Declared UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site in 2013)



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



Image 4



Image 5



Image References

Figure 53 Town of Levuka Context

5.3 PROJECT SITE ANALYSIS

The proposed site is located at a major intersection between public activity, port arrival, workplace and the commercial activity of Levuka. The majority of the town's facilities of shops, post office, port, and main factory are within walking distance. The site is relatively flat at the entrance from Beach Road with a slight elevation towards the rear next to the petrol station. The side boundaries are sheltered with a retail store to one side and a petrol station to the other. The front boundary faces the main road with existing buildings further beyond towards the main port. The buildings on the sea side of the site provide much-needed shelter from tidal waves, flooding and winds that usually accompany tropical cyclones between the months from November to April.

SITE ANALYSIS

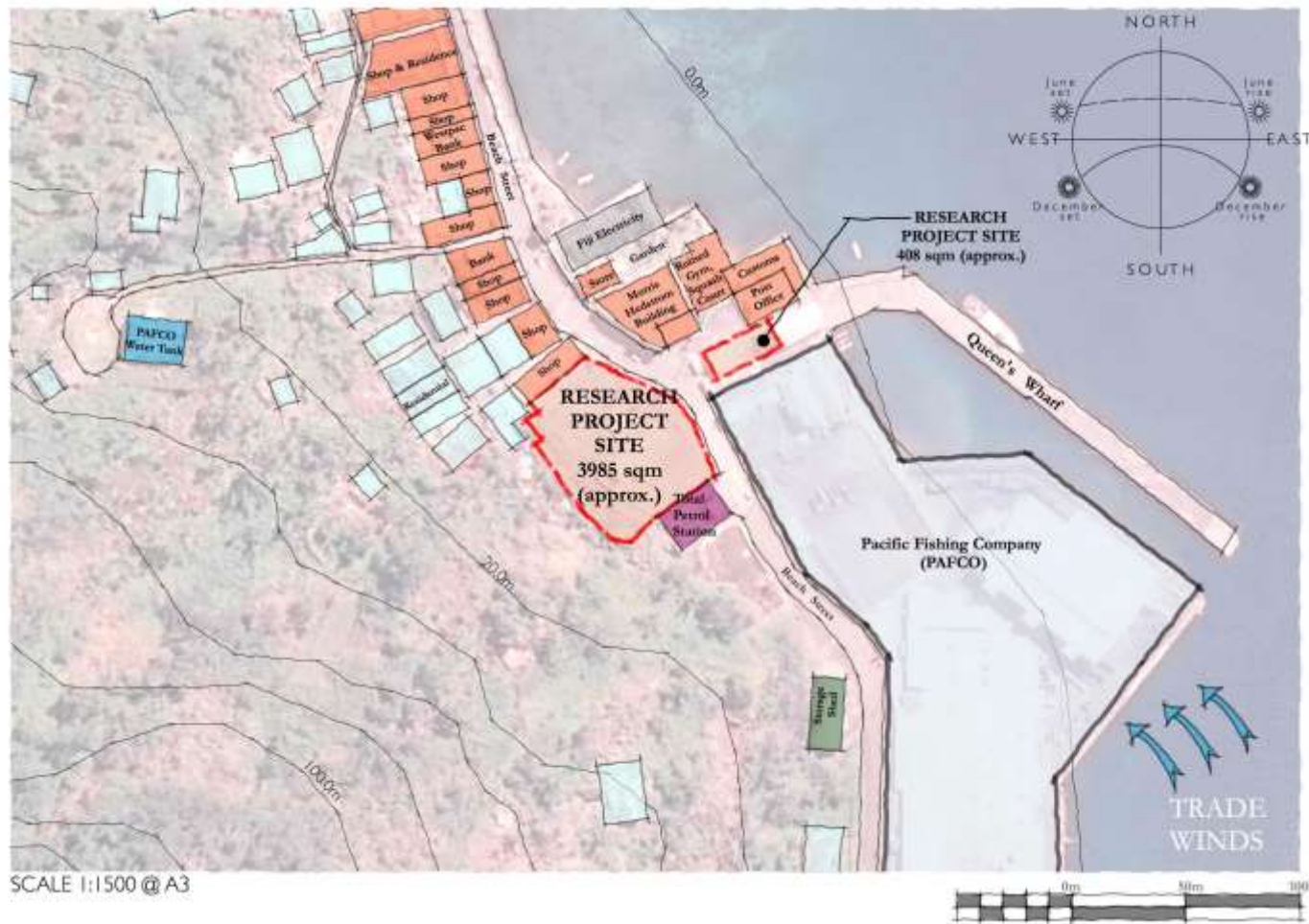


Figure 54 SITE ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

SITE ANALYSIS

Trade winds blow flow from the South East

The Front of the site faces East which will get sun into the site

The Site is sheltered from neighbouring buildings keeping the site less affected by sea spray from the ocean and severe strong winds

The site is located at the intersection of many activities in the town where the commercial zone begins, post office, Pafco and access to the main port which links outer islands from the province and to local and international arrivals.

SITE CONTEXT

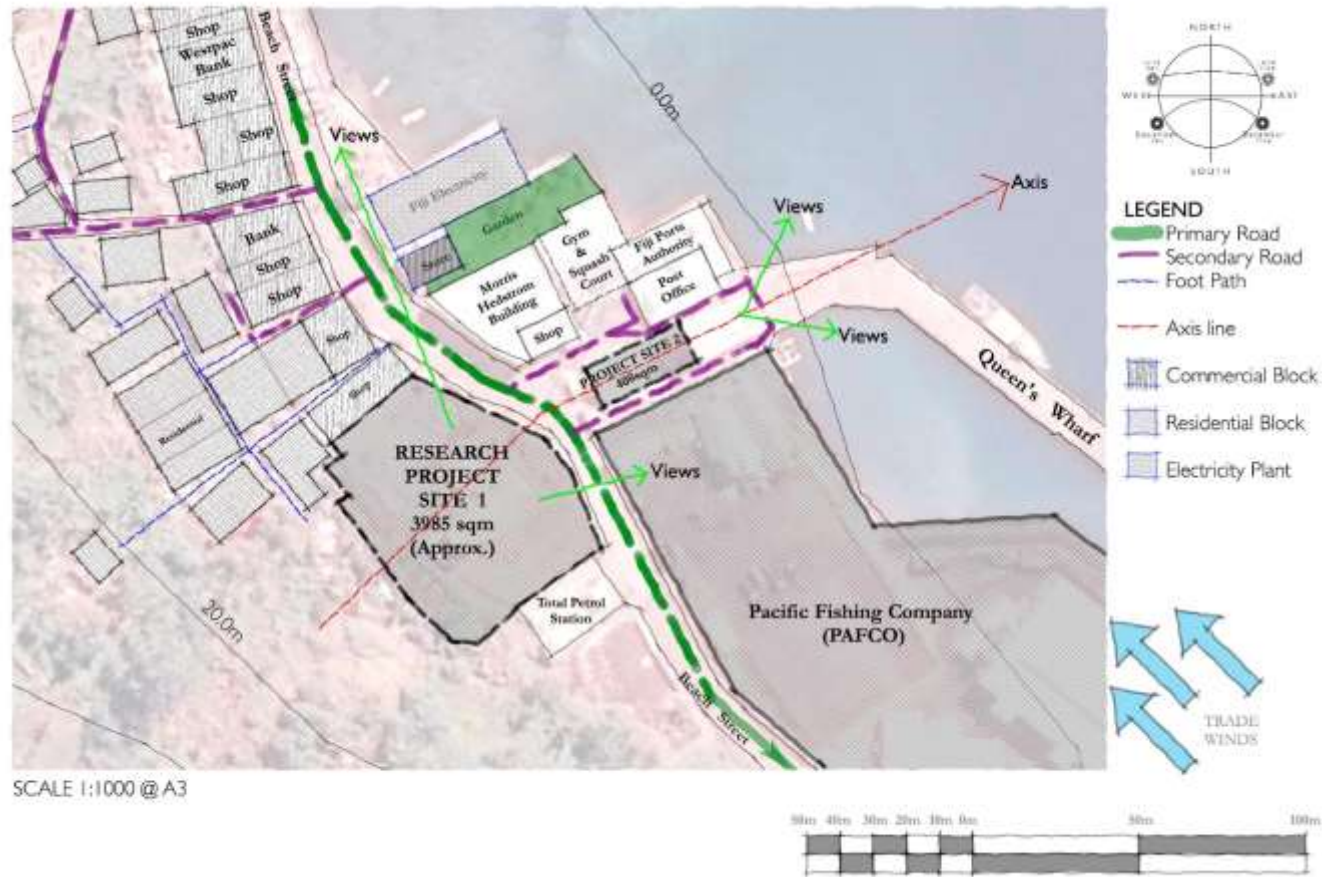


Figure 55 - SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

SITE CONTEXT

A site axis was located passing through the centre of the main site and extending across the road and out towards the Ocean which provide an entry passage that ships use to enter Levuka harbour

The main road was established passing along the front of the site, which would inform the design for access into the site

The site is sheltered from 3 sides with existing buildings, the back of the site gradually rising towards the rocky mountains beyond

There is a slight elevation in height at the back of the site next to the petrol station of approximately two meters

NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER



Figure 56 - VIEW TOWARDS PROJECT SITE



Figure 57 - VIEW OPPOSITE PROJECT SITE

SITE CONTEXT PHOTO



Figure 58 Site Context Photo

5.4 PROGRAMME

The architectural design proposition for this research project is to create a Community & Cultural Centre that will be used by the residents of Levuka and people of Ovalau. It is to be a contemporary public facility that would physically represent the cultural identity of the local multi-ethnic people and their place. A facility that will provide a sense of place that would forge the past with the present and be a pillar of unity and hope for future generations.

The Community and Cultural Centre has the following programme:

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTRE

Library Building

- Library
- Kindergarten
- Offices
- WC facilities

Main Central Building

- Community Information Centre

- Meeting rooms
- Kitchen space
- Offices
- Covered outdoor space

Gym

- Gym area
- Change rooms
- Storage rooms

Multi-function Hall

- Hall space
- WC facilities

Outdoor public space

- Rara – common green space for formal and informal activity

Timeline Monument (Second Site)

- Garden with footpath and steel pillars with engraved historical time events of Levuka

CONCEPT BUBBLE DIAGRAM

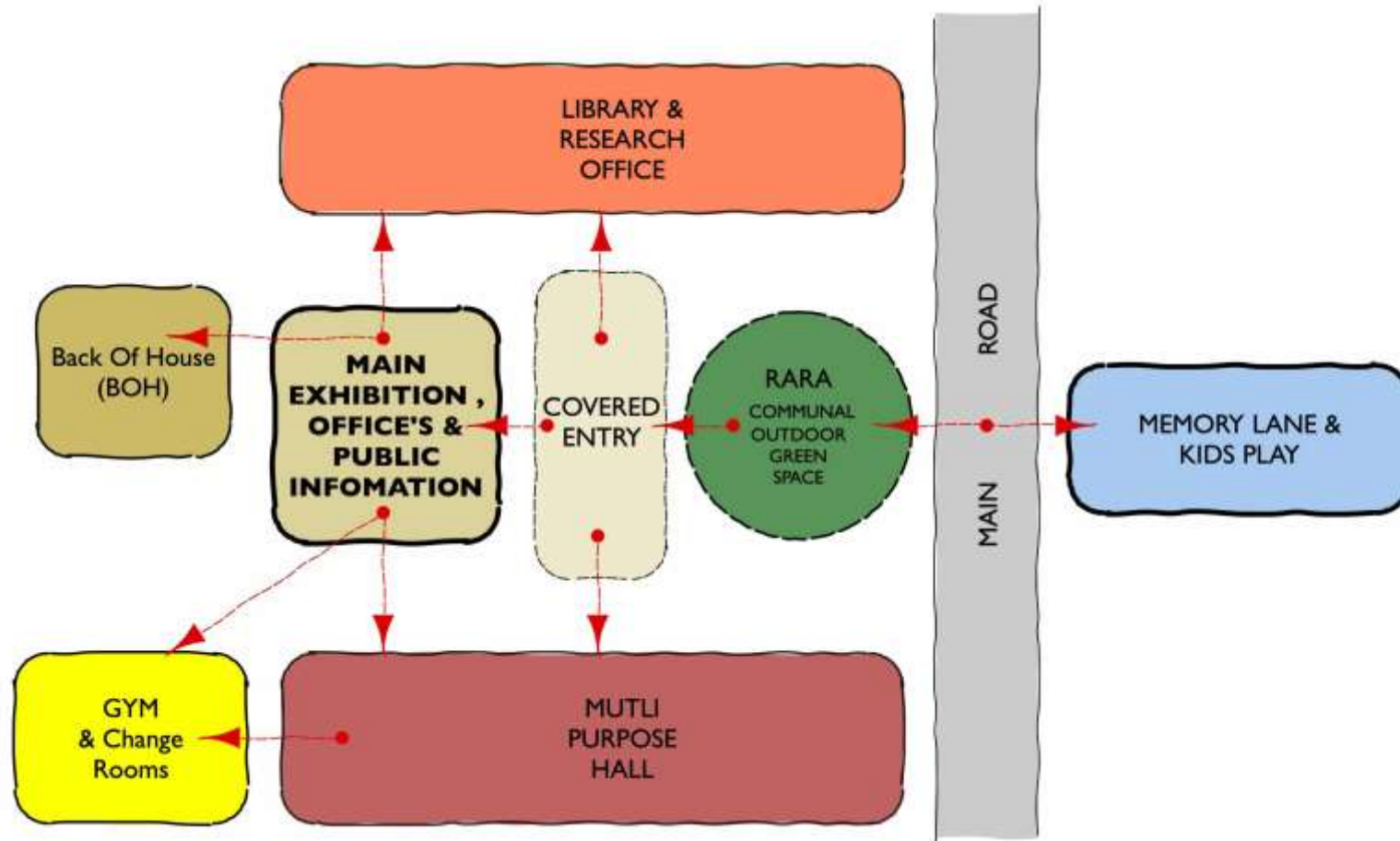


Figure 59 CONCEPT BUBBLE DIAGRAM

5.5 Initial Design Concepts

Firstly, the layout of buildings in a traditional iTaukei village was explored to inform the layout of different buildings for the proposed site.

Other local multi-ethnic cultural identities were explored to inform the design elements of the proposed buildings. This was important in order to create a multi-cultural community with a sense of place for the local people and to showcase their identity so that visitors can learn and appreciate the local community ethnicities living in Levuka.

A narrative on the arrival of the first inhabitants to Levuka on double hull canoes was used to inform the significance of the sea, land and the people living together in a village as a community who share common ideas and goals. The shelter on the double hull canoe was used to draw ideas which would inform the design of the primary Exhibition buildings in this research project.

The structure and form of the secondary buildings drew ideas from the waves in the ocean. The design for the foundation in this research project drew ideas from the traditional bure yavu (foundations) which have significance values to create a sense of place and identity.

The Design process had **three** stages.

Stage one included the facilitation of all the programs. After having placed all the buildings, it was noted that the multi-function hall only allowed for a sports arena but did not allow for spectator seating. This would require a minimum of 30-meter width and in stage one, there was only 20 meter width in this design.

Stage two began with exploring the multi-purpose hall with the inclusion of spectator seating. The hall orientation in stage one was not working so it was decided to orientate the hall building horizontally. Once a sketch plan was done, an analysis was made. It was found that the multi-purpose hall building dominated the whole site, and that the main focal zone in this design of a rara was reduced tremendously. This design was not favourable.

Stage three involved reverting to the earlier version with a more improved master planning. The multi-purpose hall now was without spectator sitting, the gym was to be on a level higher, with change rooms and toilet block below. A timeline monument zone to be located on site two. This design gave the best solution and was chosen to be the main design for this research project.

Research Design Outcome

A programme was outlined in response to the local community needs, to provide a facility that would have design elements that represents the local cultures of the multi-ethnic community and provide a sense of place in Levuka that would inform visitors and future generations.

The proposed program included the following: Library, Central Facility, Multi-purpose hall with a gym, rara and a historical square located on the second site.

Research on Materials

Since the research project will be a contemporary building, the following material choices have been explored

ROOF – corrugated metal roofing on timber frames with a sloping ceiling to follow the roof pitch

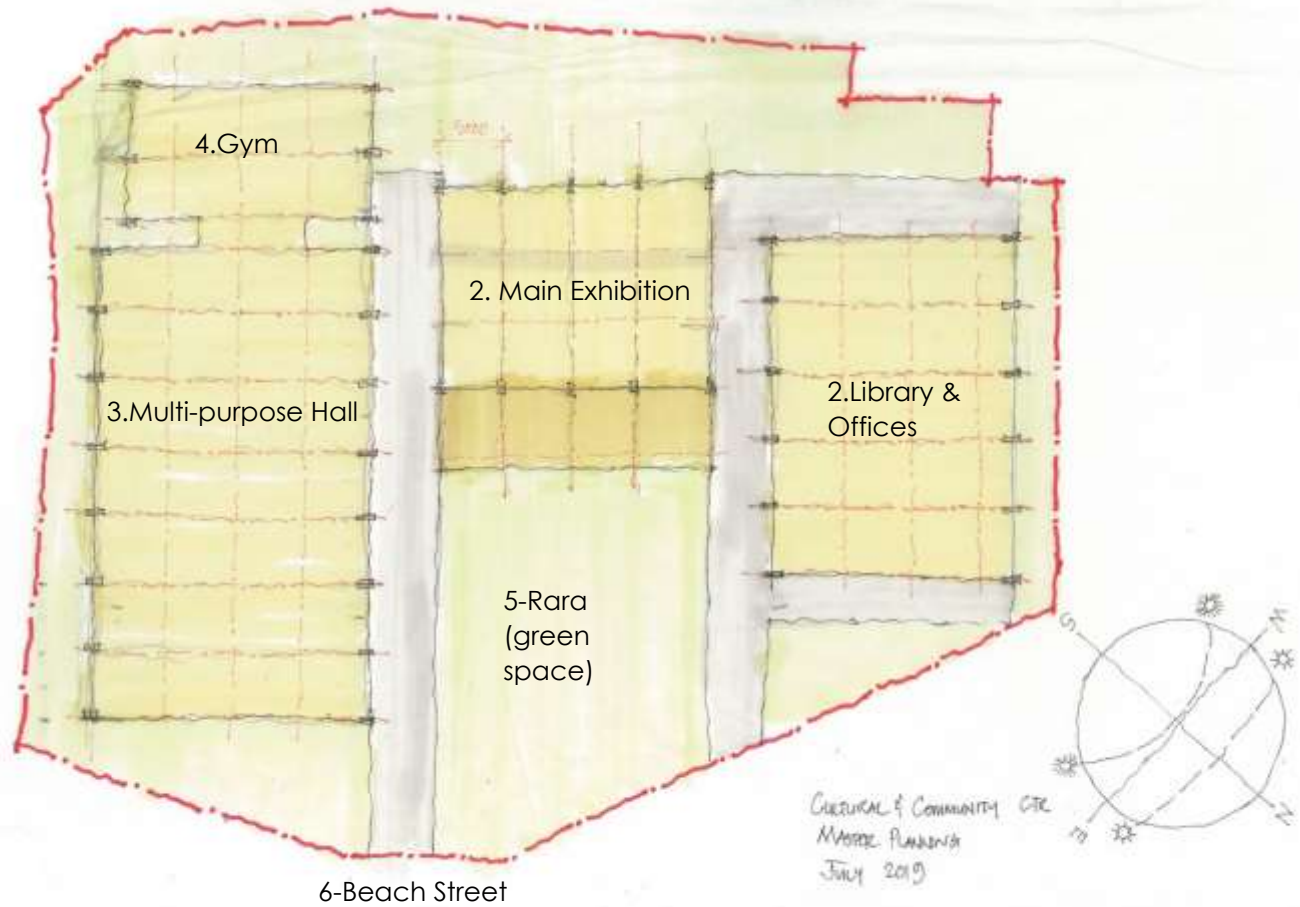
WALLS – a combination of concrete, pre-cast, timber weather board and aluminium joinery with glass infill. There is a local legend for the island and proposed inscribing the elements of the Legend onto the pre-cast panel so that it will create a connection with the place with the local people

FLOOR – All ground floor will be 100mm thick concrete slab, mezzanine floors to be timber flooring and framing

STRUCTURE – Laminated timber with a curved roof on concrete foundation pads.

YAVU – Local stones from villages will be brought and used so that it will create a sense of place and connection with the local people

Concept Design – Option 1 - Mater Plan



LEGEND

- 1-Library
- 2-Main Exhibition
- 3-Multi-purpose Hall
- 4-Gym
- 5-Rara (Green space
- 6-Beach Street (main road))

NOTE:

Each grid is at five-meter interval

Figure 60 Option 1 - Master Plan

Concept Design – Option 1- Multi-Purpose Hall Section

LEGEND

1-Multi-purpose Hall

2-Footpath

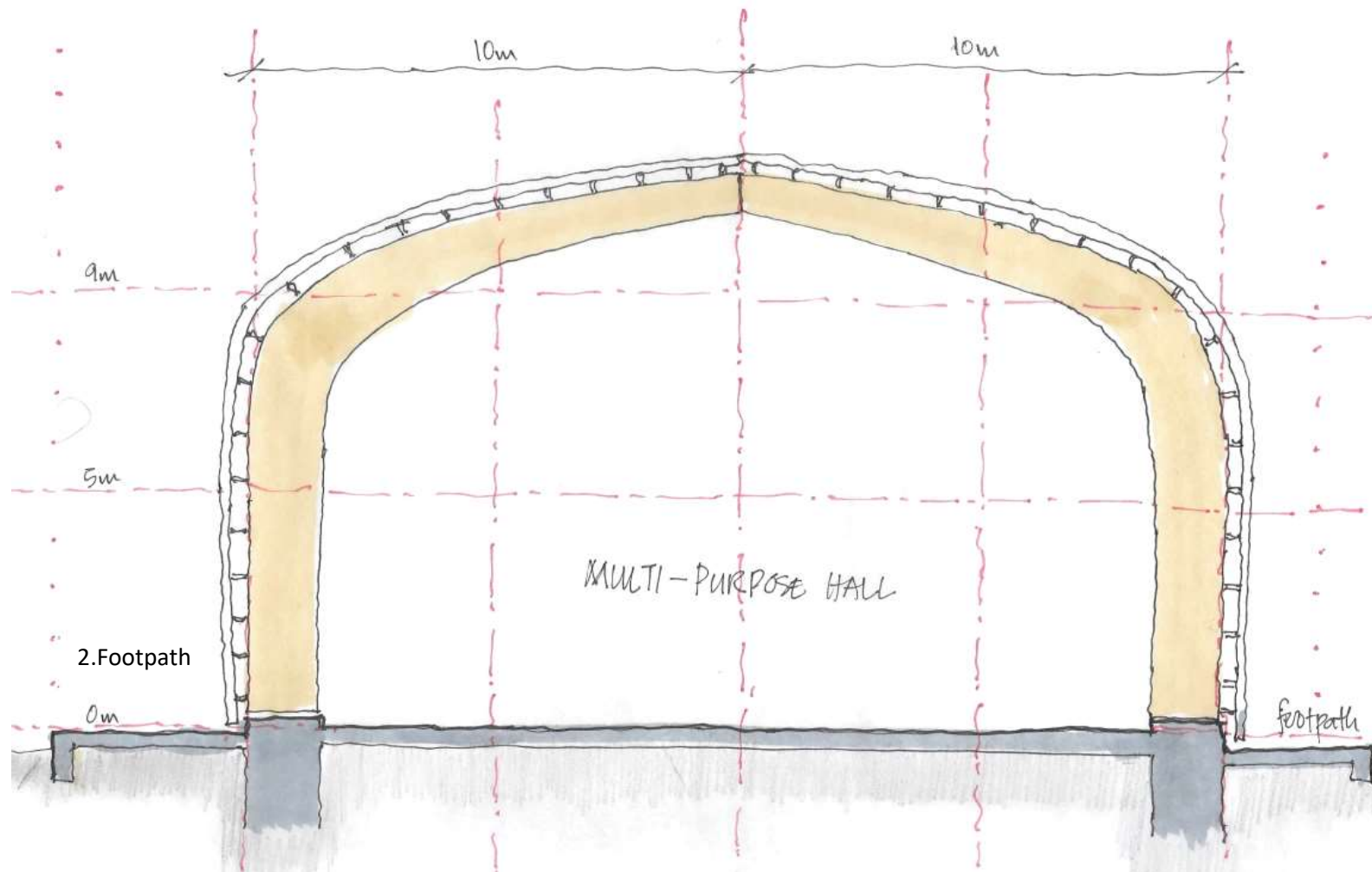
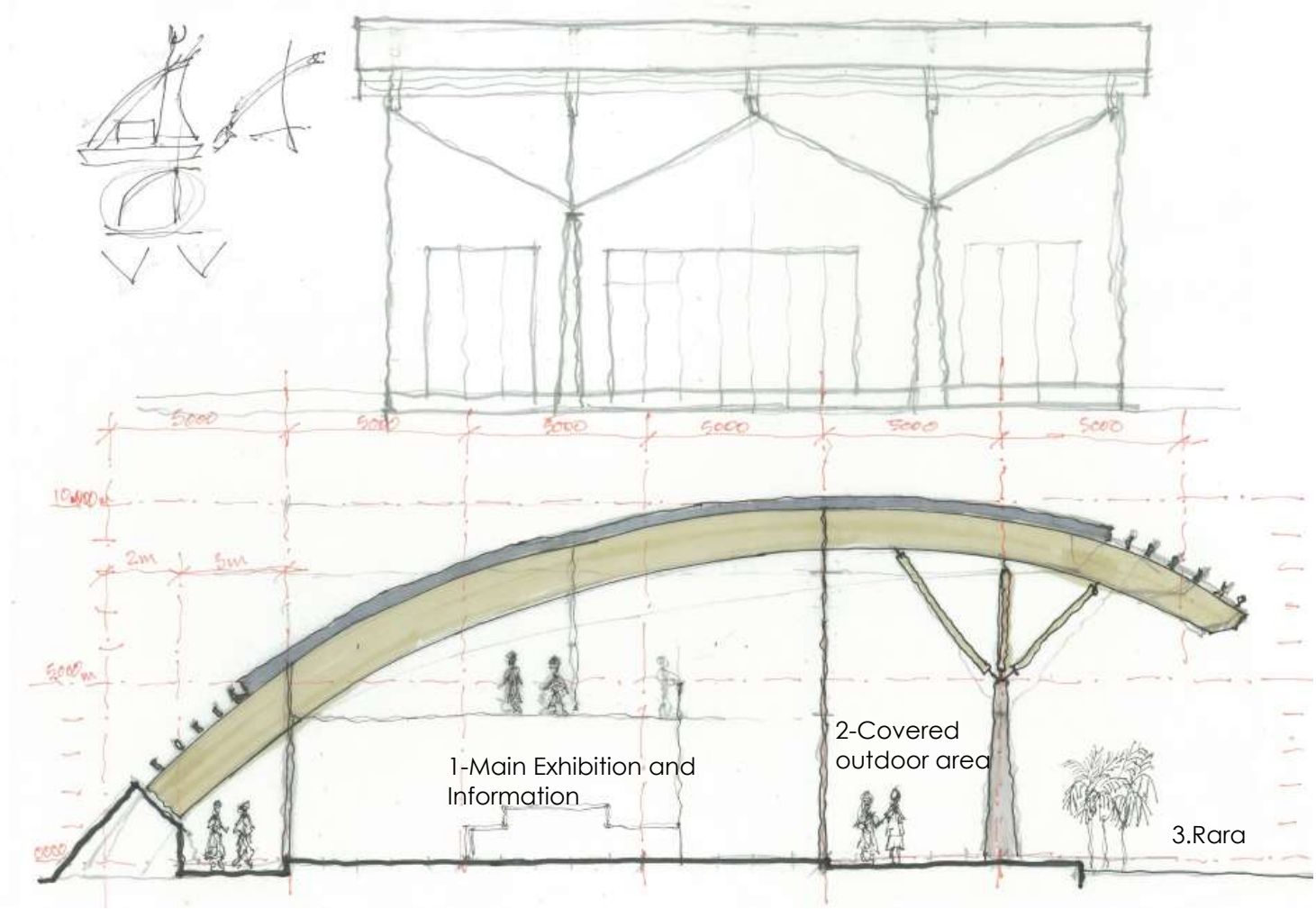


Figure 61 Option 1 - Multi Purpose Hall

Concept Design – Option 1– Exhibition Section



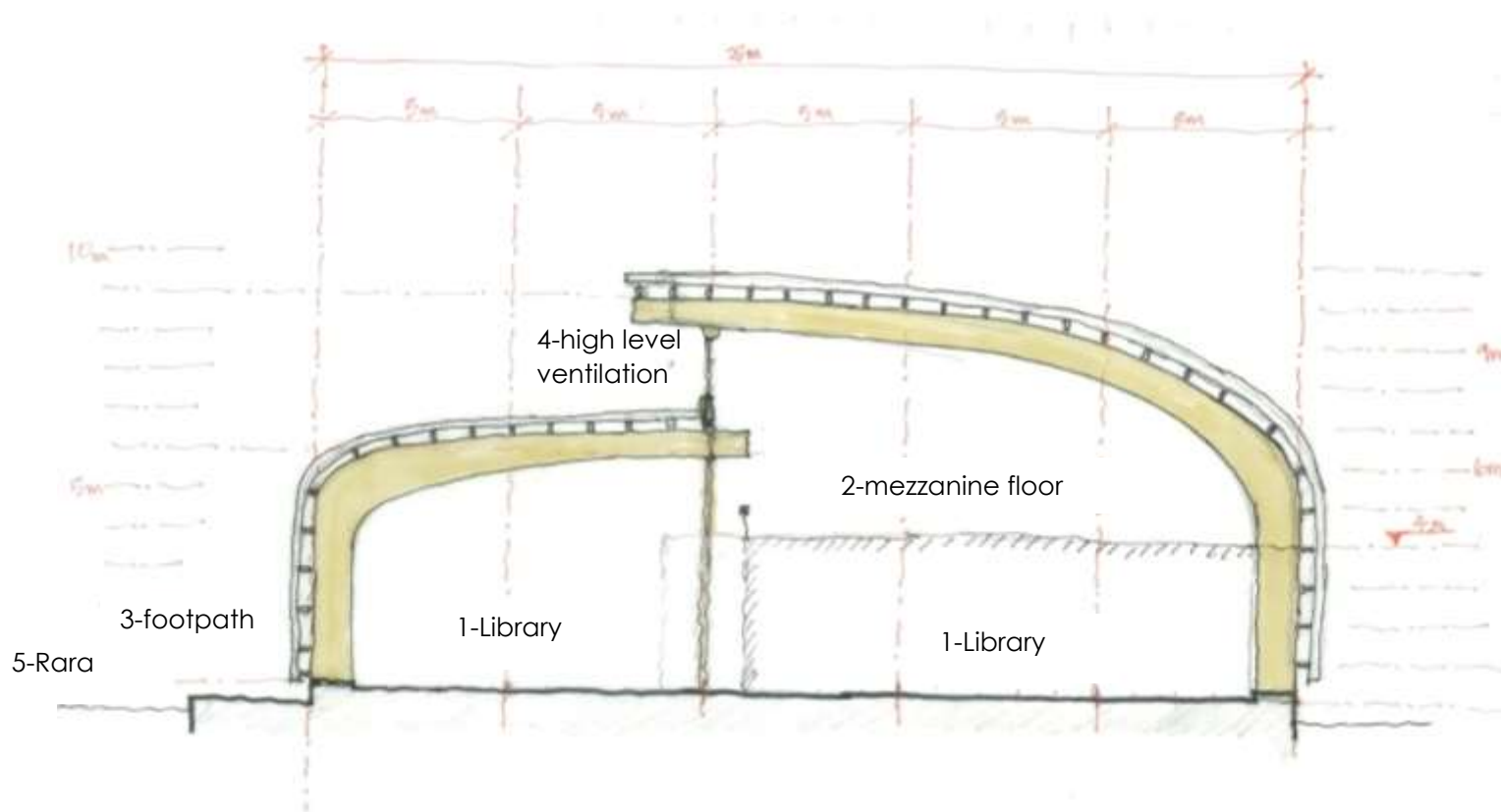
LEGEND

- 1-Main Exhibition
- 2-Covered Outdoor
- 3-Rara (green space)
- 4-Covered footpath

The form of this building drew ideas from the houses that was used on the double hull canoes when the iTaukei people travelled the Pacific Ocean

Figure 62 Option 1 Exhibition and Information - Elevation and Section

Concept Design – Option 1– Library Section



LEGEND

- 1-Library
- 2-Mezzanine Floor
- 3-Foot Path
- 4-High Level Ventilation
- 5-Rara

Figure 63, Option 1 - Library Section

Concept Design – Option 2 - Master Plan



LEGEND

1-Library & Kindergarten

2-Exhibition

3-Multi-purpose Hall

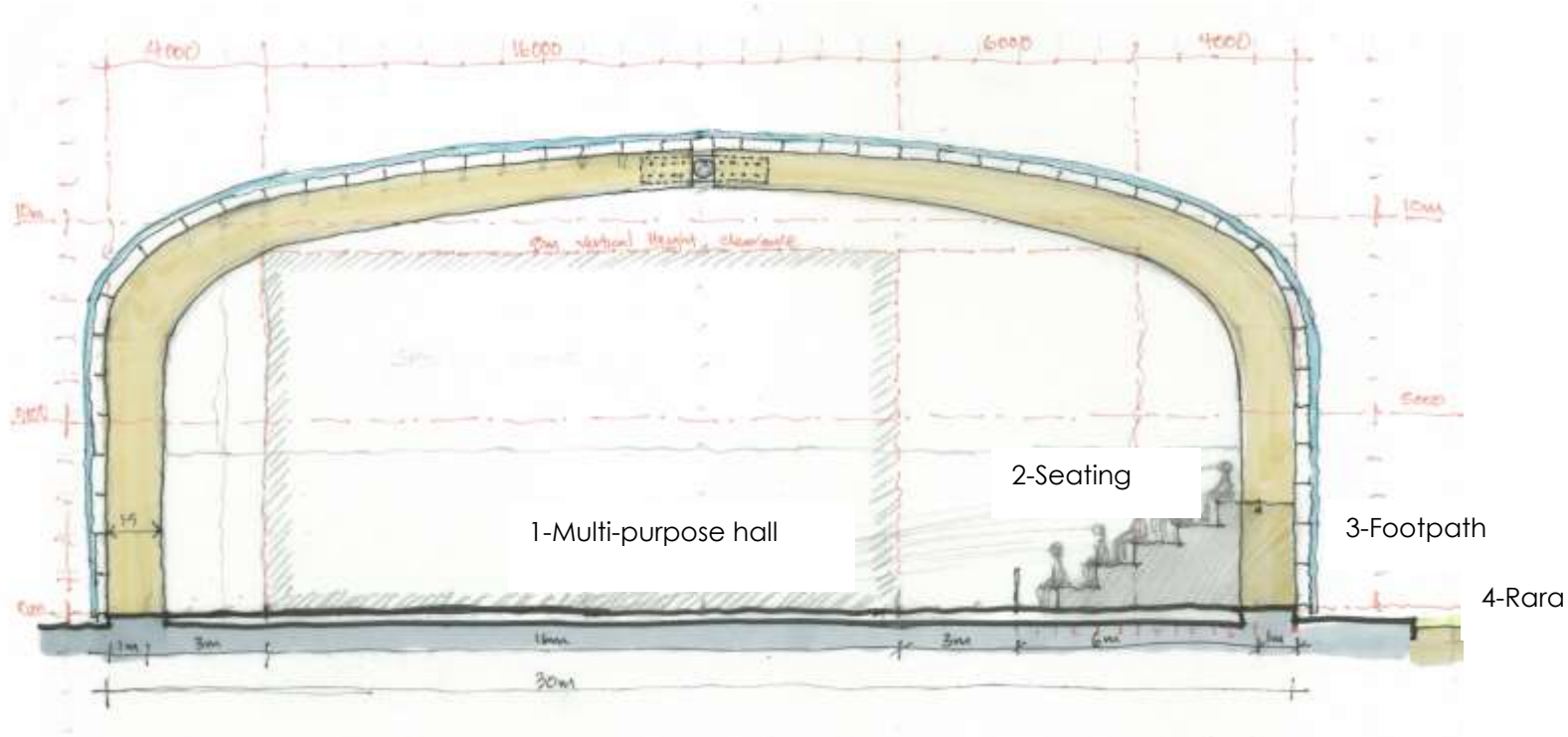
4-Gym Change Room with Gym Above

Option 2 explored the Multi-purpose hall with spectator seating. The building had to be orientated horizontally.

This option indicated that the hall was dominating the whole site and that the essence of the Rara as a main focal zone was not working well. It was concluded that this design was not suitable.

Figure 64, Option 2 - Master Plan

Concept Design – Option 2 – Multi-purpose Hall Section

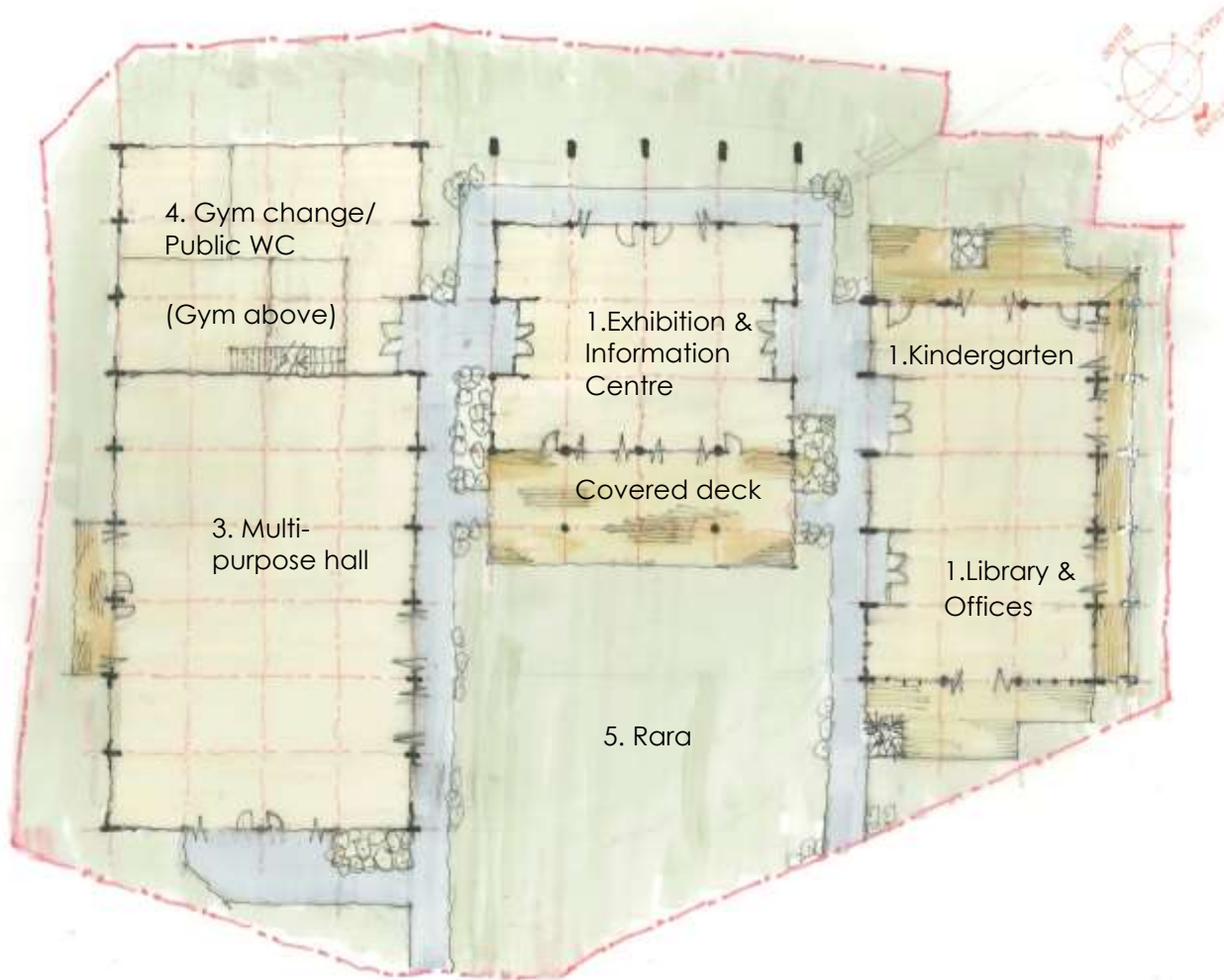


LEGEND

- 1-Multi-purpose Hall
- 2-Seating
- 3-Foot path
- 4-Rara

Figure 65, Option 2 - Multi-purpose Hall Section

Concept Design – Option 3 – Masterplan



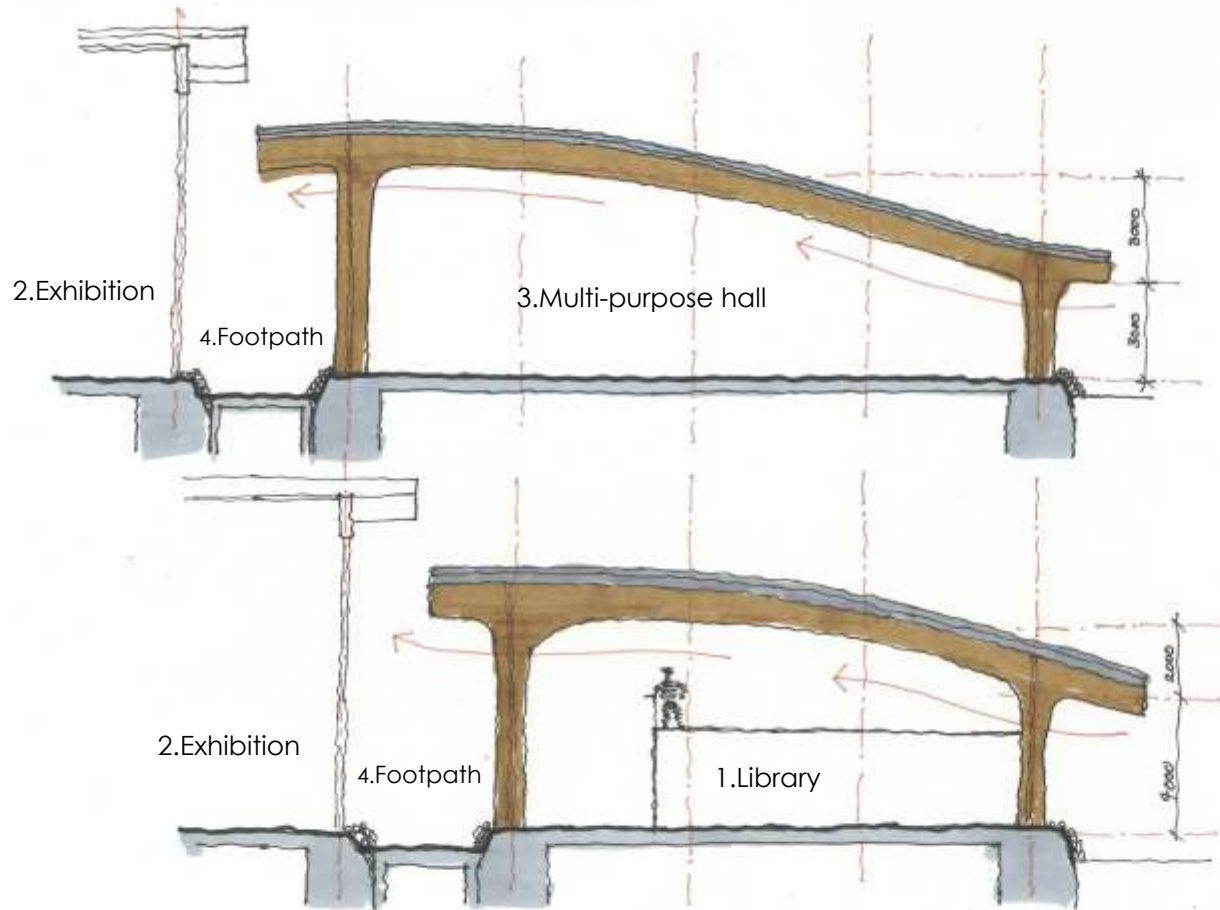
LEGEND

- 1-Library & Kindergarten
- 2-Exhibition
- 3-Multi-purpose Hall
- 4-Gym Change Room with Gym Above
- 5-Rara (green space)

This design was selected to be the main design for this research project

Figure 66, Option 3 - Master Plan

Concept Design – Option 3 - Building Sectional Sketches



LEGEND

- 1. Library
- 2.Exhibition
- 3.Multi-purpose Hall
- 4. Footpath

Glu-laminated timber main frames proposed.

Figure 67, Option 3 - Sections

Concept Design – Option 3 - Render Image 1



Figure 68, Option 3 CAD Renders

Concept Design – Option 3 - Render Image 2



Figure 69, Option 3 - CAD Renders

Concept Design – Option 3 - Render Image 3



Figure 70, Option 3 CAD Renders

Concept Design – Option 3 - Render Image 4



Figure 71, Option 3 - CAD Render

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.0 Conclusion

The history of Levuka and Ovalau Island, together with the cultural identity of the local people has been used to inform the design for a contemporary Community and Cultural Centre in Levuka. The town of Levuka is made of a multi-ethnic group of people. Apart from the indigenous people, the ancestors of the remaining ethnicities were once visitors to this foreign location, who decided to make it their new homeland. The current residents are descendants of these migrants who now identify Levuka as their homeland.

Levuka exhibits much of the colonial heritage and now has World recognition under UNESCO World Heritage as the 'Historical Port Town of Levuka'. The architectural fabric of the town displays European colonial architecture. This would have given the early Europeans a sense of place which they could identify with while working and residing in Levuka during the colonial period before it was moved to Suva.

The current residents of Levuka have a different cultural identity, the new hybrid community is very different from the one in the past. The existing architectural fabric of the town does not give them the same sense of place as it did to the colonial residents. This exposes a gap where the past architectural fabric of the town does not

provide a sense of place that responds to the cultural identities of the people of Levuka and Ovalau.

Firstly, the layout of the buildings in a traditional iTaukei village was explored to inform the layout of different buildings for the proposed site, with the inclusion of the *rara* acting as a main organising element that ties everything together. The entry approach into a iTaukei bure was used to inform the entry into the exhibition space and the connection to the *rara*. The covered front exterior deck provides a stage where important people or guests would be seated facing the *rara*, while the local people would sit in the *rara* facing the main stage to perform traditional and customary welcome ceremonies. The establishment of an axis helped to anchor the complex to the land mass behind and the point of arrival by sea. Every building has cultural significance and the Exhibition building is to have more dominance by being raised higher than the rest. This would provide the visual dominance that the local people would identify with as being the main building with the complex.

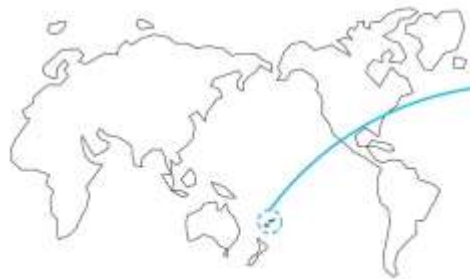
Locally sourced materials would be given first precedence to be used in the complex because this would give the complex a sense of place with the island and the people. The main structural frames will need to

be designed to withstand severe tropical cyclones that Fiji usually experiences. The use of locally sourced stones for the foundation will provide identity of the buildings to the island. Cladding materials of weatherboards, concrete block walls, aluminium joinery and glass windows to provide a connection between the inside and the outside. The building form depicting waves from the ocean, further connects the ocean and land that the local people depend on for their daily living.

Through the research and analysis of the history and cultural identity of the various ethnic groups living in Levuka, an architectural proposition for a community and cultural centre is proposed that would have cultural significance and create a sense of place for the community members. It would also provide a bridge between the past and present architectural fabric of the town that the people and visitors would be able to acknowledge. The intention of this project is to provide future generations with a place where they can learn from the past, acknowledge the present and have hope in the future for a better, peaceful and a vibrant community.

7.0 FINAL DESIGN RESPONSE

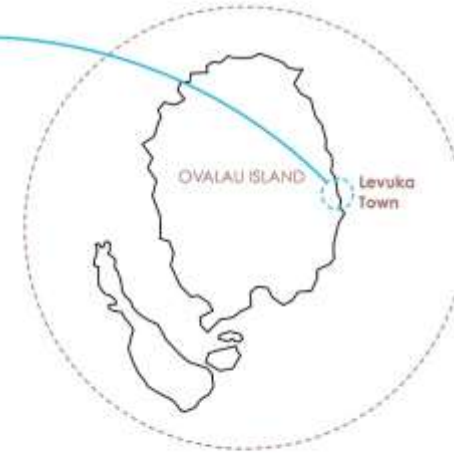
WORLD MAP



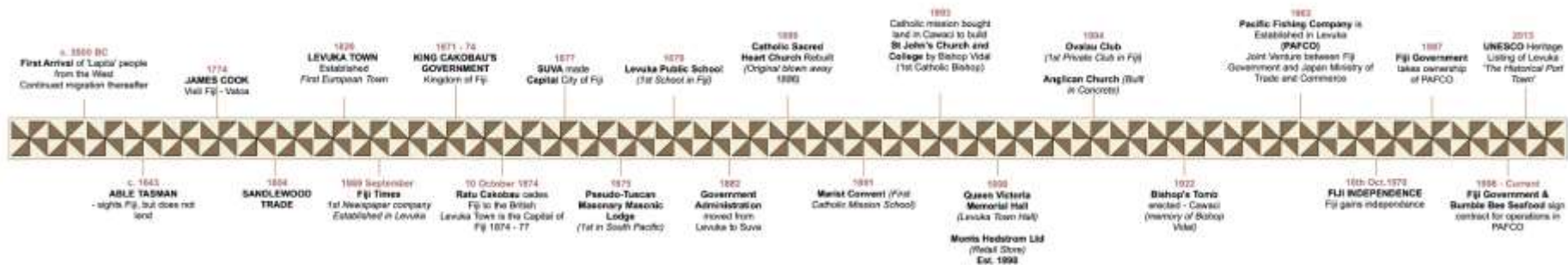
FIJI ISLANDS



OVALAU ISLAND

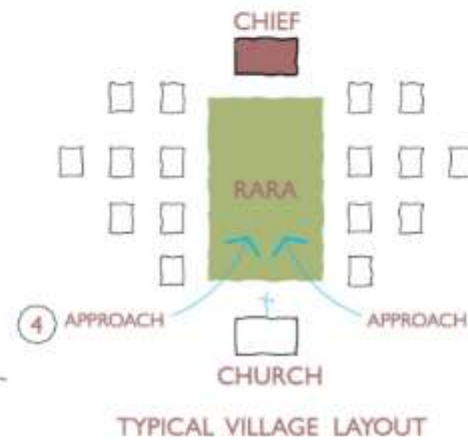
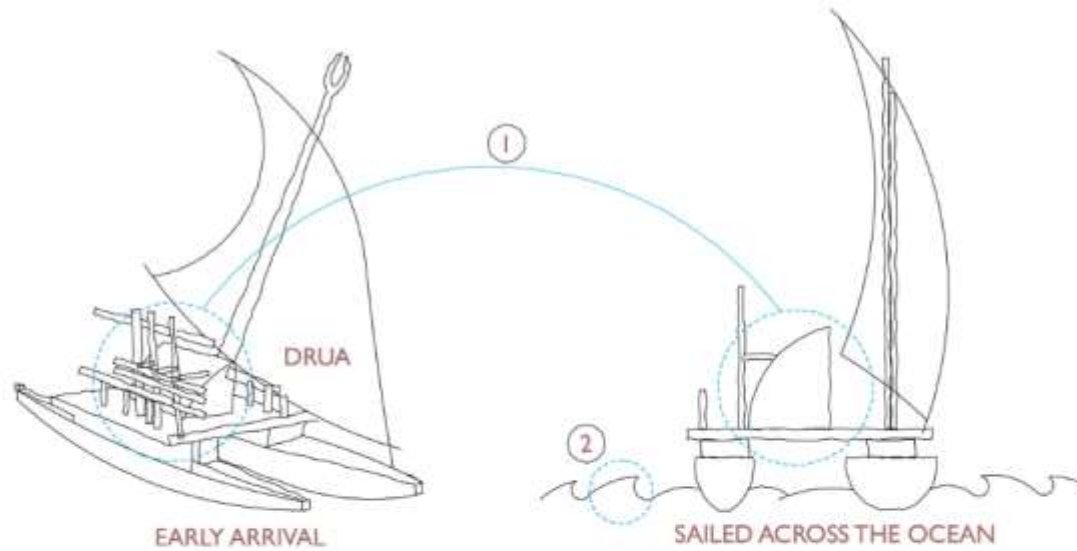


TIME LINE



DESIGN FORM & DRIVERS

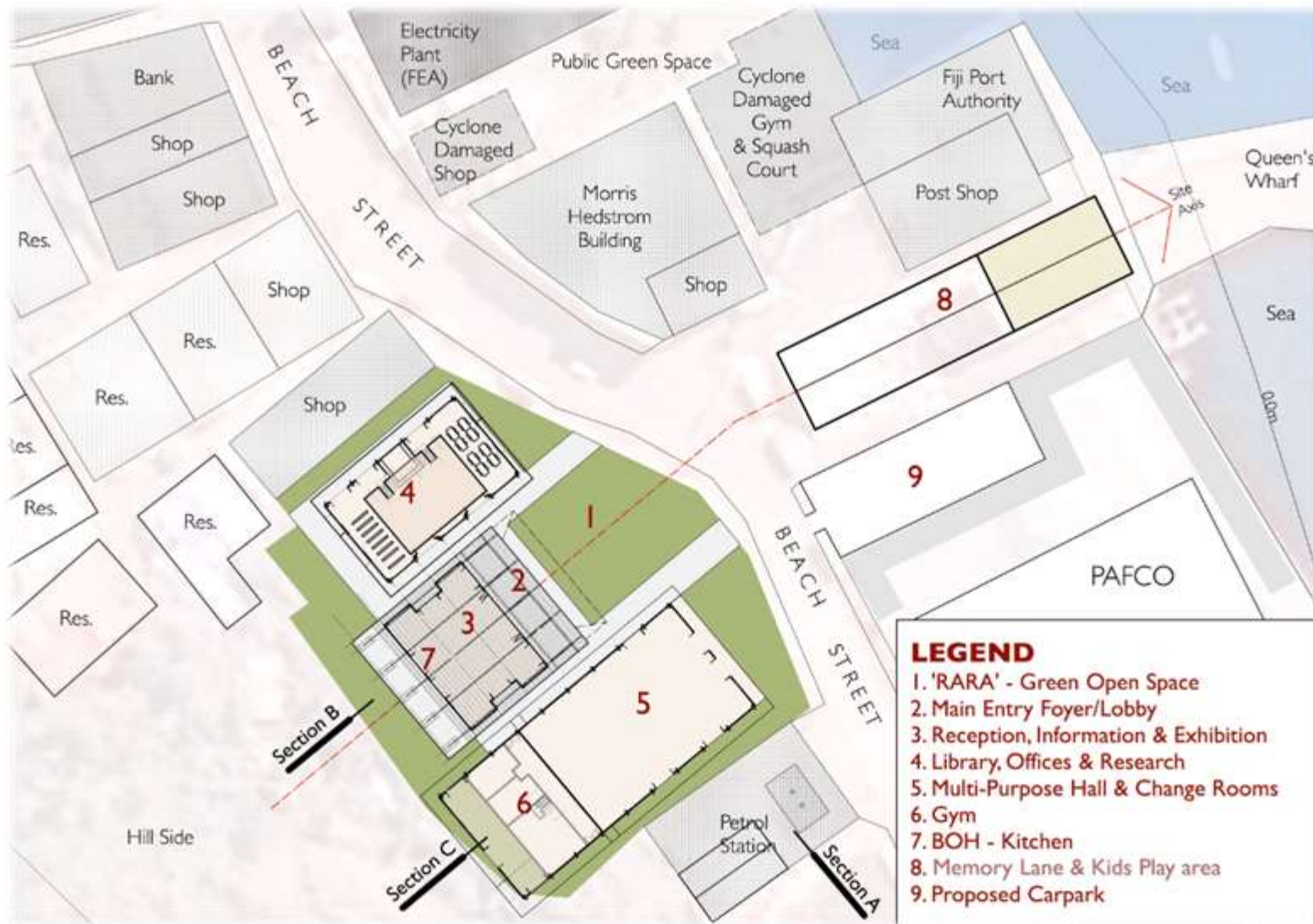
- ① SHELTER ON DRUA
- ② WAVES OF THE OCEAN
- ③ YAVU - STONE MOUND
- ④ RARA & THE VILLAGE APPROACH
- ⑤ OTHER ETHNIC CULTURAL ELEMENTS



OTHER ETHNIC CULTURAL ELEMENTS

- Chinese - Colour Red
- Indians - Colour Orange & Blue
- Muslims - Colour Green
- Rotumans - Artifacts From Palm Leaves
- Other Islanders - Artifacts

SITE PLAN



FLOOR PLANS



EXTERIOR IMAGES



EXTERIOR VIEW 1



EXTERIOR VIEW 3



EXTERIOR VIEW 2



EXTERIOR VIEW 4

INTERIOR IMAGES



EXHIBITION / INFORMATION



GYM



GYM



HALL

INTERIOR IMAGES



KINDERGARTEN



LIBRARY MEZZANINE FLOOR



LIBRARY ENTRY

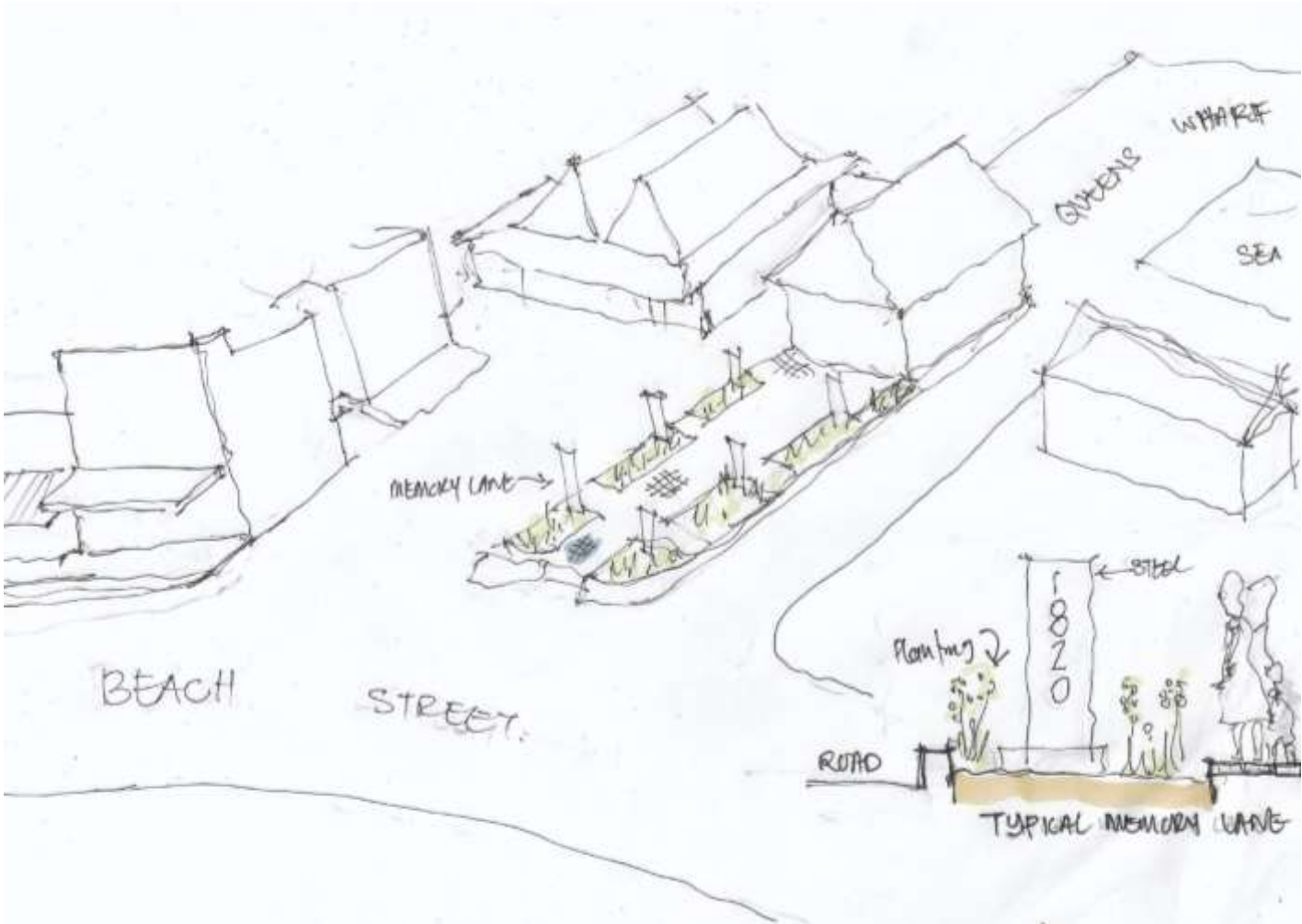


EXHIBITION / INFORMATION

Overall Project Perspective



Site 2 – Preliminary Design



Final Examination Physical Models



Final Examination Presentation



8.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Levuka - Cyclone Winston Damages (20th Feb, 2016)



Levuka - Cyclone Winston Damages (20th Feb, 2016)



Squash court roof damaged
- Lack of funding stalls
repair works causing
damage everyday



Public Gym - Damages from Cyclone



Retail Store with Top floor blown.
Concrete brace remains



Beach Street view towards Pafco- Cyclone damages

Local Design Inspirations



Typical Family Bure - Exterior View



Typical Bure Structure - Interior View



Fijian - Necklace made from wild boar teeth



Whales tooth an important Cultural item in Fijian



Tanoa and bilo - Traditional Kava drinking tools



Traditional mat weaving



Traditional Iri - fan

Local Design Inspirations - Other Ethnic Cultures



Indian Musical Drum Instrument



Chinese Fan



Rotuman Lady handicraft on display



Indian Musical Harmonium



Chinese Dragon Dance Costume



Gilbertese dance costume