SRD761 Designing Urban Environments
Project 1a: Hot and Cold – perceptions of place

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Task A: *Known Places*

Where:
Werribee, Victoria, Australia

I chose Werribee as my location because it is where I have spent most of my life. I am very familiar with its urban environment, strengths and weaknesses.

When:
Sunday 30th of March 20:00 – 21:30 & Monday 31st of March 11:00 – 12:30

I chose this weekend as it included Easter Sunday and Easter Monday. I thought that these days would bring central Werribee out to be looked at in and urban design light.
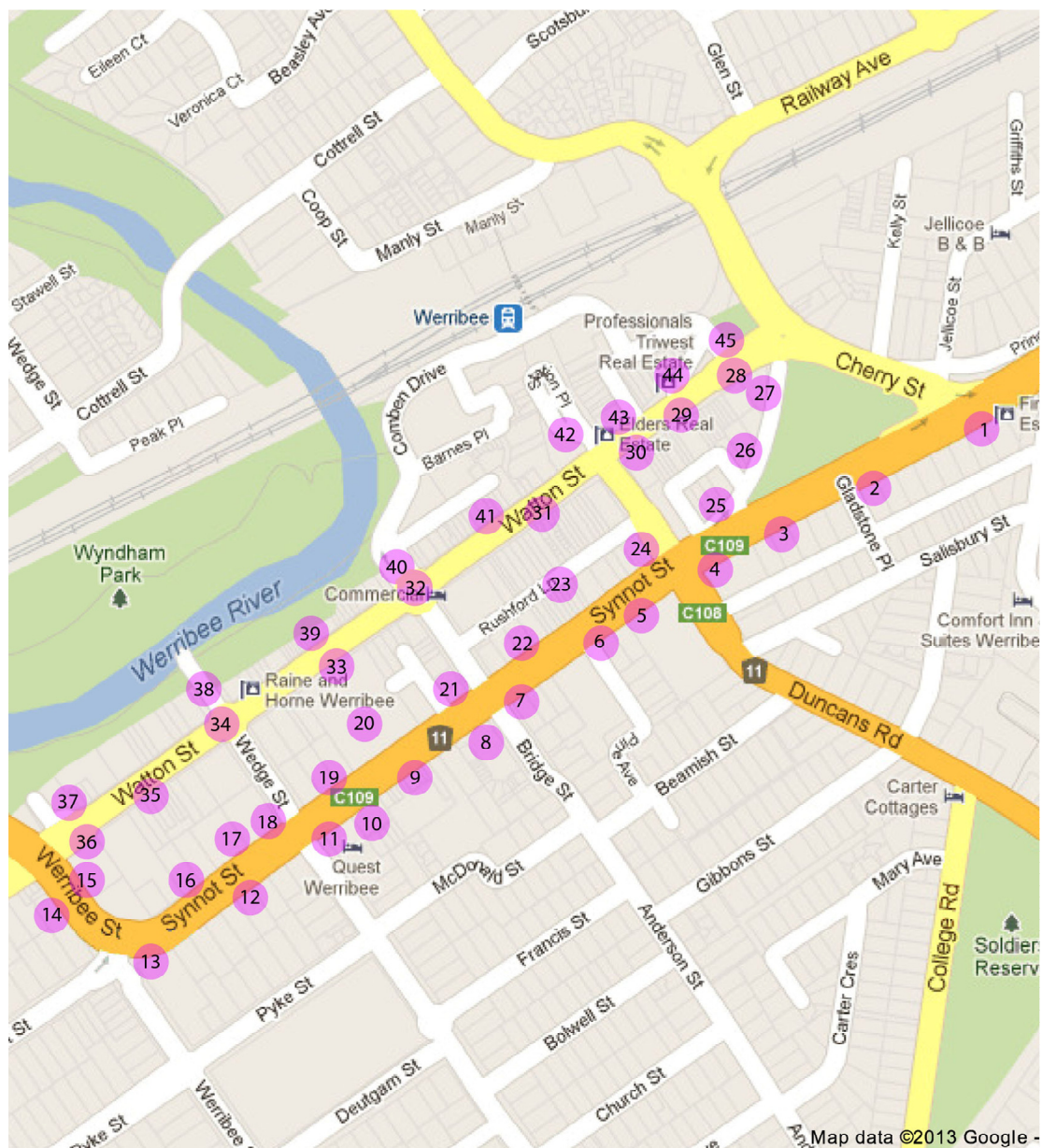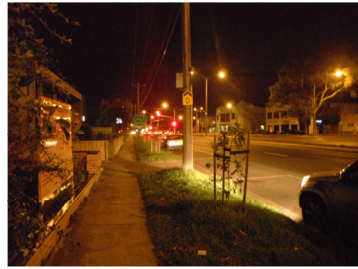
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The images above are prime examples of the usual streetscape in the outer fringes of Werribee's central business districts. They consist of thin and poorly maintained footpaths with small nature strips separating pedestrians from vehicular traffic.
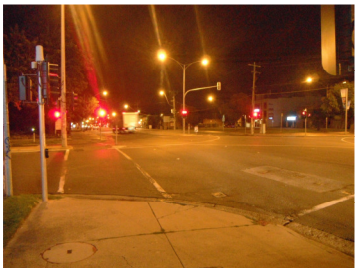
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As we move closer to central Werribee, the foot paths become more attractive as the are now wider and more tree lined.

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Now, fairly central, there are areas off the foot path that can be accessed. Small enclaves of strip shops and convenience retailers.
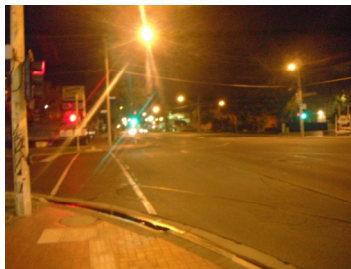
10.
11.
12

As we move to the out fringes the architecture becomes more sparse and foot traffic is overpowered by vehicular traffic.
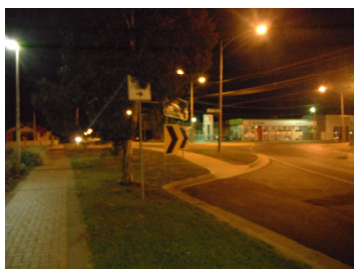
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Now in the fringes again, the architecture has become sheer and disengaging giving a feeling of isolation.

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Now, circling back toward the city centre we can see more low rise commercial buildings and well established and located car parks as well as minimal but attractive streetscapes.
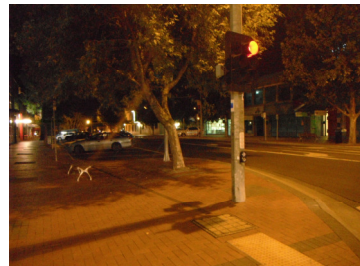
19.

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21.

Larger more prominent buildings now occupy our view and thought these are quite commercial looking they are convenient retailers (Coles, Video Ezy and Officeworks)

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24.

Moving out of the centre we can see a diminishing of attractiveness and a rising sense of isolation.
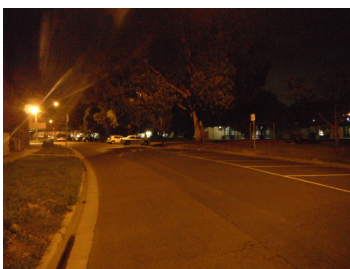
25.

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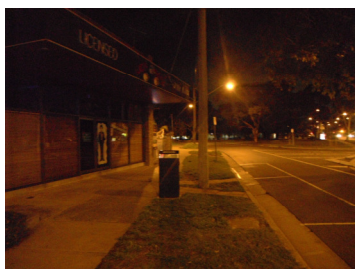
On the fringes now, the public is predominantly used during daylight hours as there is now artificial lighting. Though it is quite sparse, the area during the day is used quite regularly, but at night is ominous and menacing.

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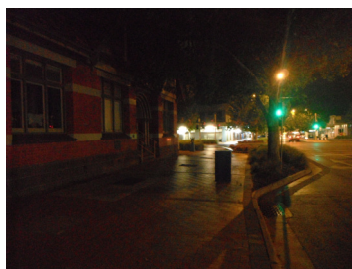
Turning the corner and heading up the main street of Werribee we can see it open up and become quite attractive.

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Still on the main street there is a large amount of healthy foliage which comes to a head at each intersection become the focal point in the form of a round about.

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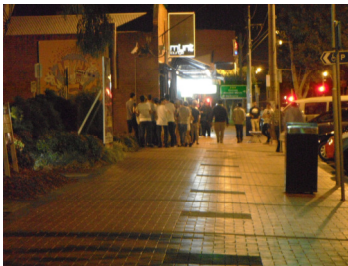
The use of street art on some of the round abouts creates much debate over the attractiveness of the piece, which in itself, has achieved its outcome.

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Moving back from where we came from, there is a low amount of occupied buildings apart from the fast food outlet on the corner. However as we move further back into the centre there is an abundance of restaurants and a public piazza.

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42.
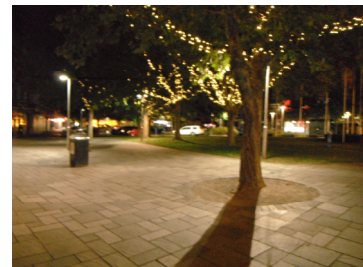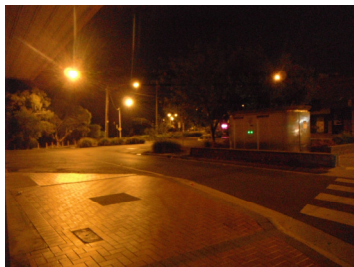
Now moving out of the centre, again we can see a lessening amount of retailer and restaurants. However the CBD ends, in this instance, with a well maintained and well used 'urban' park.

43.

44.

45.

Much like the other areas at Werribee's fringe the areas above become dark and uninviting at night.

Data sheet: experience oriented route/precinct study **(11:00 – 12:30)**
Location: Werribee central business district

| Image	Positive	Negative	Ambivalent	Characteristic/ trait
1.			(A)	(A) Isolated location, but great foliage
2.		(N)		(N) Poor footpath, still isolated
3.			(A)	(A) Across from park, but poor foot path
4.		(N)		(N) Vulnerable to elements
5.	(P)			(P) Good foliage, wide foot path
6.	(P)			(P) unobstructed view of traffic
7.			(A)	(A) wide and open, yet vulnerable
8.	(P)			(P) Strip shops with a lot of variety
9.	(P)			(P) wide and protected from element
10.		(N)		(N) Blocked on 3 sides with sheer walls.
11.			(A)	(A) Open but with tall healthy foliage
12.			(A)	(A) a little sparse, good footpath
13.		(N)		(N) Foot path ends and not ped crossing
14.		(N)		(N) Large sheer wall, very close to traffic
15.		(N)		(N) Spiked fence, very close to traffic
16.			(A)	(A) Dumped good near salvation army
17.	(P)			(P) great car park, easily accessed
18.	(P)			(P) visually attractive street linings
19.		(N)		(N) sheer wall, no protection from elements
20.	(P)			(P) Very good located car park, allowing access to various retailers.
21.	(P)			(P) Great foliage lining street
22.			(A)	(A) Awning stops, but good variety of restaurants.
23.		(N)		(N) Large car park, with no real need
24.	(P)			(P) Great foliage lining street
25.			(A)	(A) Pool hall but isolated
26.	(P)			(P) Public park with great car parking
27.			(A)	(A) Shop fronts close to public park
28.	(P)			(P) Well lined street, wide foot path
29.			(A)	(A) well lined street, waste collection point out front
30.	(P)			(P) historic building with well maintained foliage
31.	(P)			(P) wide foot path and street, various retailers
32.	(P)			(P) foliage lining street and acting as focal point
33.	(P)			(P) wide foot path and street, various retailers
34.	(P)			(P) public art as focal point, large healthy foliage
35.	(P)			(P) bar on outskirts of CBD as to not effect restaurants within CBD
36.	(P)			(P) historic pub on the last corner of CBD
37.		(N)		(N) Fast food chain in plain view becomes focal point on entering CBD.
38.	(P)			(P) access to riverside park lands through piazza
39.	(P)			(P) wide foot path and street, various retailers
40.			(A)	(A) Public utilities, unhidden
41.	(P)			(P) Well lined street, wide foot path
42.	(P)			(P) Well maintained urban park
43.			(A)	(A) isolated car park, but healthy foliage
44.	(P)			(P) open park, unobstructed views
45.		(N)		(N) foot path unofficially starts and ends
Total:	**23**	**10**	**12**	Overall consensus: Positive

Image	Positive	Negative	Ambivalent	Characteristic/ trait
Data sheet: experience oriented route/precinct study **(20:00-21:30)**				
Location: Werribee central business district				
1.			■	(A) Isolated but well lit
2.		■		(N) Car park ill lit
3.	■			(P) Close to private residences and well lit
4.	■			(P) Well lit intersection
5.			■	(A) Dark areas further away from road
6.	■			(P) Well lit area, central location
7.	■			(P) Well lit intersection
8.			■	(A) Well lit, but lack of foot traffic
9.	■			(P) well lit protected from elements
10.			■	(A) well lit, but surrounded on 3 side by walls
11.	■			(P) Well lit intersection
12.		■		(N) Well lit, but secluded
13.		■		(N) Light and foot path stop
14.		■		(N) Ill lit and secluded
15.		■		(N) Ill lit and secluded
16.			■	(A) Large security light
17.	■			(P) Well lit car park
18.			■	(A) Well lit on both ends but not in centre
19.	■			(P) Well lit and large amount of foot traffic
20.	■			(P) Well lit, security cameras and foot traffic
21.		■		(N) Almost no lighting in within the centre of street
22.	■			(P) Well lit, protected from elements large amount of foot traffic
23.			■	(A) Well lit car park but large amount of alleys and dark corners
24.	■			(P) Light carries from intersection into street
25.		■		(N) Ill lit, quite secluded
26.		■		(N) Very secluded, no lighting in public park
27.		■		(N) Waste disposal on street, narrow view around corner
28.	■			(P) Well lit, security camera and foot traffic
29.			■	(A) Well lit but waste disposal on street.
30.		■		(N) Almost no light penetration
31.	■			(P) Well lit area
32.	■			(P) Well lit area
33.	■			(P) Well lit area and foot traffic
34.	■			(P) Well lit area
35.		■		(N) Bar goers in close proximity to general public
36.		■		(N) Well lit but still close to bar goers
37.	■			(P) Well lit, security cameras
38.			■	(A) Well lit in the centre but with dark corners
39.	■			(P) Well lit with foot traffic
40.			■	(A) Public facilities but poorly lit
41.	■			(P) Well lit with foot traffic
42.	■			(P) Well lit public park
43.	■			(P) Well lit street
44.		■		(N) Ill lit
45.		■		(N) almost no light penetration
Total:	**20**	**15**	**10**	Overall consensus: Positive

Map overlays:

Day (11:00-12:30)
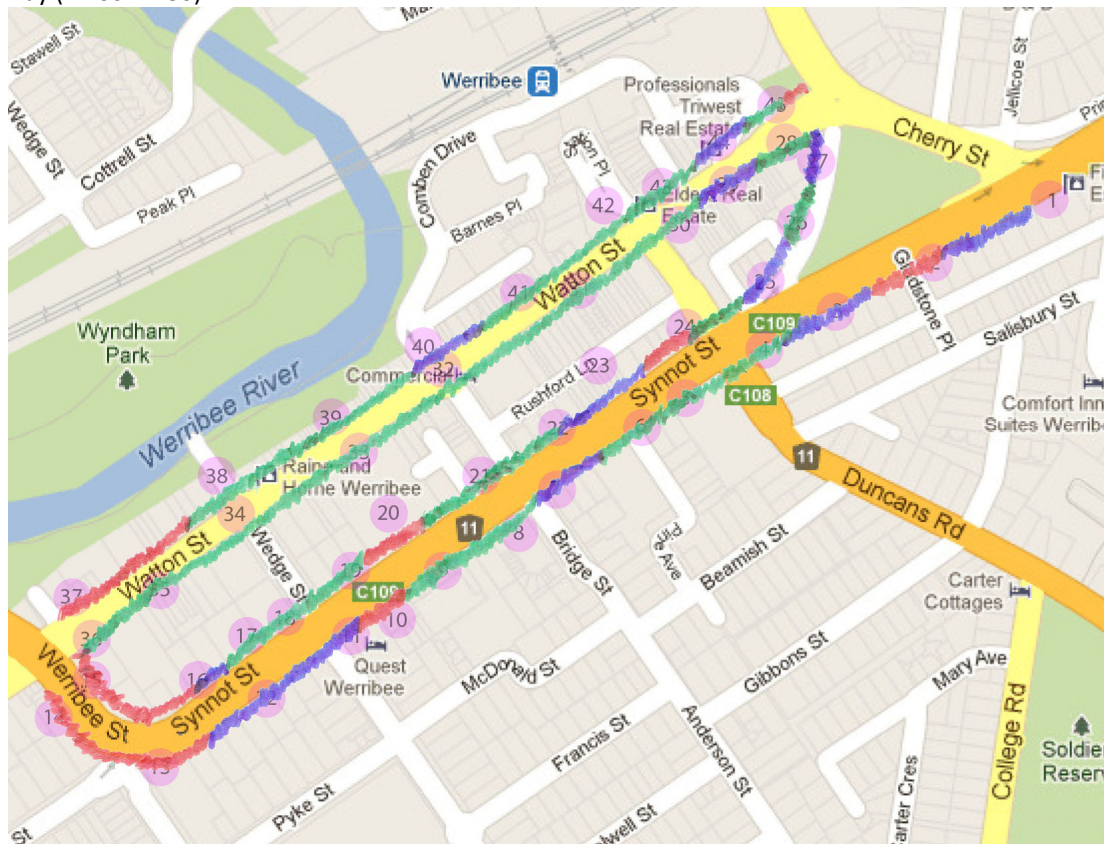
Night (20:00-21:30)
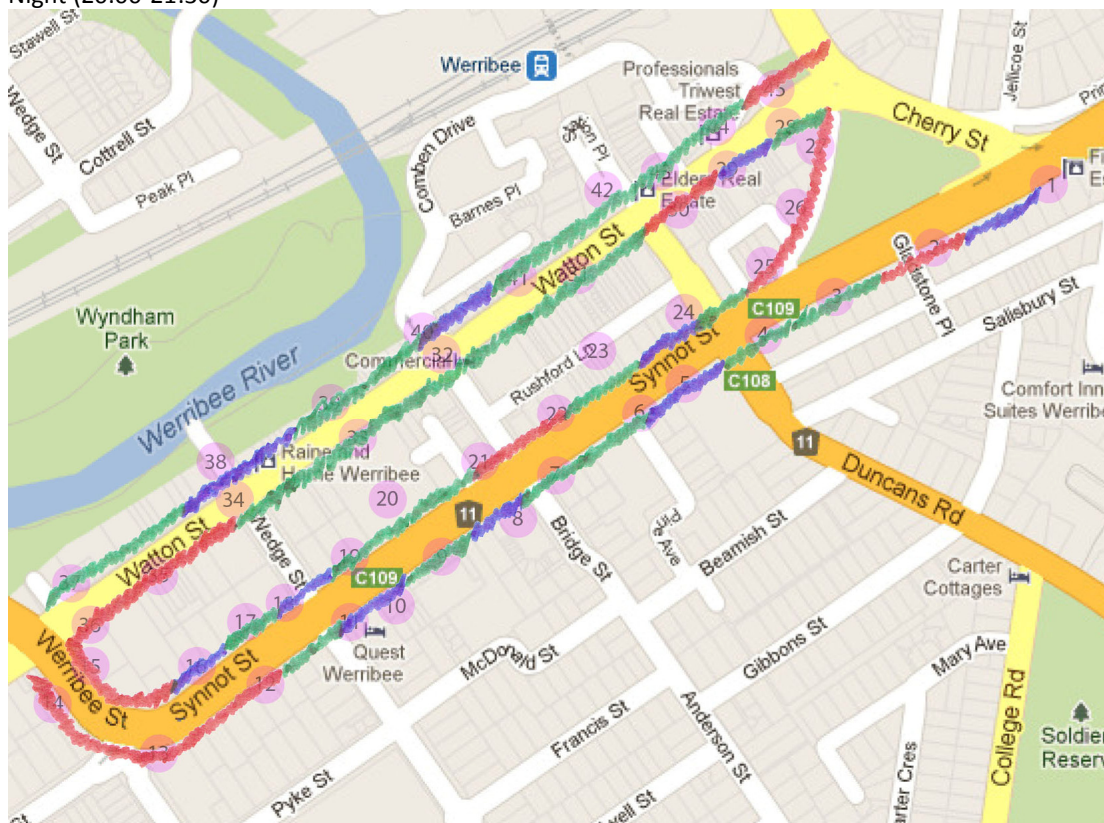
Task B: *Challenging ones comfort criteria*

*Altered States***:**

The world as a child

While moving around my two storey family home on my knees I noticed that many things became augmented and distorted but after a while I had adjusted to my diminished height. I found that there where a few everyday action and areas whose augmentation was especially noticeable.

Door became barriers and hard to use. They seemed to be designed to be ergonomic only for adults as the handle was now at my eye level, above my shoulder, making it a conscious effort.

Another noticeable augmented state was that staircases became unnavigable. I found that my only option was to crawl up them on all fours much like a cat or dog. Again the lack of ergonomic design for children appears.

Outside in the backyard, everything became bigger, I understand that this is a cliché, but I understand it now. The yakka plants that line the fence where easily navigated, where as an adult they can be quite treacherous (yakka plants are a type of cactus with very shape tipped leaves). Even the already vast concreted area of the backyard became larger and harder took longer to cross due to my lessen stride length.

The kitchen was probably the most noticeable. Things that were easy as an adult became difficult and somewhat dangerous. Cooking for instance involved more skill than I had anticipated. The flame from the gas stove was now basically at my eye level and so was the heat. Additionally, to pick up a hot fry pan became impossible as I couldn't get the leverage to lift it high enough to clear the cook top.

Additionally, the most interesting augmented state was going to the toilet. This everyday action was actually quite funny and interesting as I found that I had to sit down to do any 'business' as I was to short to kneel and relieve myself with any accuracy.

The world with arthritis

Wearing thick rubber gloves my hands felt less dextrous and sluggish almost instantly. Firstly I tried washing the dishes. This seemed to be the easiest of tasks but was hindered by the fact that I couldn't use the dish brush as effectively as I usually could. Also holding and moving a plate was precarious at best.

Using a TV remote was another meaningless task that I had some difficulty with. The gloves finger tips, not perfectly matched to my own, pressed more buttons than I meant to. However, turning up and down the volume and switching channels using the up/down buttons was quite easy, which got me wondering if that is why those buttons exist. Are they designed for people who cannot press individual channel buttons?

Drinking from a glass with the gloves on was fairly rudimentary, but I found myself gripping with more of my hand than I would normally would. However, opening a can of drink was almost impossible as I couldn't get my fingers under the stay-tab opening mechanism.

Known Places different points of view
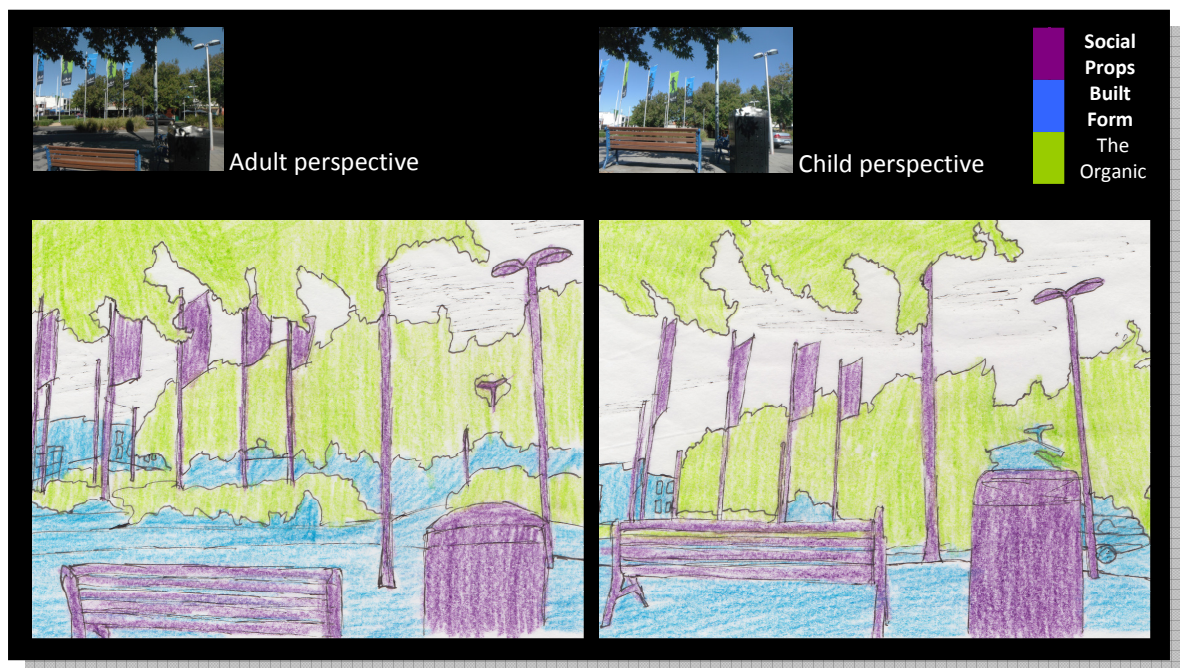
From the child perspective we can see that their visual world is made up of mainly sky, as they are looking up for most of the time. Social props impede their view making the world seem smaller.

In the case of the adult perspective there is much more going on. There also seems to be more of the surrounding built form visible.

An idea these images gave me was that of a metaphoric one, where children's minds are less complex and busy much like there world. But, in an adult mind there are complexities such as worrying thoughts that make navigation through a thought process longer, much like there world. If we look at both of the images, which one is more complex? Or more simply, which one has more stuff? The answer is simple; the adult mind lives in a world full of so many different stimuli, some brought about by simple thoughts (loss, pain, happiness, wealth ect.) and other by visual and physical means. Therefore, looking at these images in an urban design sense; the more cluttered and disorientating a design the less enjoyable and attractive it will become, as human lives are already complex.