Social Condenser

Studio 6 | Year 3 Undergraduate | 2024 Location I 866 Bourke St, Waterloo, NSW 2017

Our project aims meaningfully to serve the city, community and country it is situated in. By engaging with the social condenser typology we aim to foster collectivism through material community engagement, and the creation of spaces that are publicly owned, accessible and promote civic good. Through this lens, we oppose the private urban precinct that focuses on commercial activities and consumption. Our project is a facility for sustainable DFMA (design for manufacturing and assembly) research, training and display. It will generate long term community growth by returning manufacturing to the site through a state owned facility. In doing so, we hope advance the Australian construction industry. The project responds to the Australian skilled workers shortage, and its impact upon housing and rental prices. We aim to help generate the 90,000 new skilled labourers needed for the national governments 2029 1.2 million housing target. Through psychogeographic engagement with the site, we propose that the top-down, prescriptively designed commercial spaces surrounding the site induce alienation and detachment in its users. Our project resists these design practices. We believe that for our social condenser to be culturally and socially sustainable, the creation of public spaces, and a facility which focuses on community engagement with the built environment to be critical.

Our project embraces a 'repair, retain, reinvest' ethos. By repurposing as much of the existing site as possible, we are able to retrofit the existing building into the demands of today. Disassembling and repurposing wherever possible. This life cycle is represented in colours throughout the drawing set. Black represents prior building, brown a recent intervention and red impermanence. Put simply, a gradient of how long something has existed. By avoiding prescriptively designed spaces, we account for the inevitability of future renovation.

Realising the life cycle of material, our building operates in threes. Teaching, learning and discussing, the most communal activity in the western building. Manufacturing, testing and making, in the southern building. And a final step in the northern building, the display of manufacturing methods and DFMA projects. Supported by the addition of a gantry system, this gallery space serves as the connection between the activity of students in the space, and the wider community interested in their work.

*The drawing set shown here is a spotlight mainly on the Makerspace of the site.









