

# PUBLIC/PRIVATE INTERFACES IN THE INNER CITY

Types, Adaptations, Assemblages

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## ABSTRACT

This paper, part of a larger project on urban design and planning dimensions of creative clustering, analyses the micro-spatial morphology of public/private interfaces in the inner city of three Australian cities. What difference does an interface make—shop windows, front gardens, blank walls, car parks, garage doors—and what is the relation of such micro-spatial assemblages to the sociality and economics of the inner city? We begin with a simple typology of such interfaces with eight primary types classified according to permeability, setback, transparency and car versus pedestrian access. We then explore some of the complexities of such interface conditions as the setback from public space extends to become the quasi-public space of the mall, arcade and housing project. These interface types are explored within a framework of assemblage theory—each socio-spatial assemblage comprises a pattern of connectivity that enables the creation, production and reproduction of ideas, goods, services and identities. The paper explores the way in which some morphologies enable adaptations and transformations from one interface type to another (as mediated by planning law). Interface types intersect with each other in complex ways and mapping the mix of different types is a key to understanding emergent urban effects. The paper raises questions about the importance of micro-spatial analysis in urban research generally and the relations of socio-spatial flows and connections to urban creativity and productivity.

## INTRODUCTION

The urban interface between public and private space has long been an issue of great concern in urban design, planning and architectural theory - the myriad of ways in which the transition from public to private space is framed, formed, negotiated and governed. It has been of particular concern to social critiques of built form because this is a primary site where we transition from private to public selves and vice versa; where friends and customers are greeted and farewelled; where identities are constructed (the entry foyer, front door, front garden); where goods are displayed and exchanged; where social activity often occurs (the front porch, alfresco dining); where safety is established both with boundaries and with 'eyes on the street'. Many parts of cities are strongly identified with particular types of public/private interface. The public shopping strip is largely formed of a repetition of transparent shopfronts, just as the suburb is formed of a repetition of garden setbacks and commercial districts with glassy foyers and showrooms. Yet many parts of the city are not uniform or easily categorised. Furthermore the issue has become complexified through the large-scale production of quasi-private space over the past 50 years - the private shopping mall, housing project, industrial estate. In this paper we seek to develop an understanding of a range of public/private interfaces based on a study of the Australian inner city. Our concern is first to understand the morphology of the private/public interface and to develop a simple typology that can be used to map such interface types. We then seek to understand the ways in which such interfaces are geared to different forms of production and reproduction with a particular focus on creative industries and the cultural economy.

This paper is based on a study of creative clusters in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Such clusters are identified in a range of ways, primarily through the locations of performing arts, fashion, design firms, galleries, new media and so on. While there is a range of such clusters in these cities the primary clusters identified are Fitzroy/Collingwood in Melbourne, Surrey Hills/Redfern in Sydney and Fortitude Valley in Brisbane. Our primary questions for this part of the study are several: why might such activities cluster in these districts and not others? What is the importance of urban morphology? What are the processes of mobility, change and adaptation? The larger study involves multi-scale mapping and analysis of the urban morphologies of these districts, including grain size, density, building age, functions and modes of production, amongst others; in this paper we focus on but one of these variables, the public/private interface.

Our interest in this issue was piqued in part by the difficulties of mapping. We have long regarded mapping as much more than simply documenting data; maps are a means to an understanding of how cities work (Corner 1999). The multi-layered database becomes a research tool for investigating relations between layers. While the public/private interface of a modern suburb is generally consistent and enforced by planning codes, in the inner city locations we are studying they are thoroughly mixed. There is no standard typology nor agreed method for categorizing or mapping such interface morphologies, and we found that most category systems we developed tended to be unstable. The more difficulty we found in mapping interfaces the more interesting the problem became, because the slippages between types became relevant

to the creative practices that are the main subject of the project. In other words the hypothesis emerged that the rich mix of interface types and the slippages between them are linked to creative clustering.

Two key goals have guided our investigation of this issue. The first has been to construct a typology that might be useful for purposes of both mapping and theorizing. The public/private interface has long been regarded as a key dimension of urban design, central to commercial and social exchange, and reflected in slogans such as 'eyes on the street' and 'active edges' (Jacobs 1961). While Jacobs' work remains current and there are recent typologies of public space wherein interface types become subsets of public space (Carmona 2010), the interface morphology remains under-theorised. Gehl has long classified such interfaces along a continuum of 'soft' (social, permeable) versus 'hard' (anti-social, impermeable) based on social attraction (Gehl 1987, 1996). He incorporates such factors as speed (pedestrian versus car), transparency, activity, diversity, design quality and grain-size to produce a 5-part façade typology that ranges from A (active, small-grain, good details) to E (passive, large-grain, no details) (Gehl et al 2006). Such a typology is geared primarily to attractiveness and social outcomes such as street-life vitality and safety; constructed in order to diagnose and eliminate blank, passive, anti-social facades. While the social importance of the interface has long been clear (Goffman 1959) and many linkages of built form to streetlife are well-established (Mehta 2007; Ford 2000), we seek a more fine-grained typology. Our concern is not only to identify the range of possible interface types, but also to understand what capacities different types have to affect - and to be affected by - different circuits of social and economic exchange? How do the formal logics embodied in different interface types become entangled in other social and economic logics?

This leads to our second and more theoretical goal: we begin from the view that interfaces are not 'things' but connections, relations and flows that are geared to productive practices. Such a view resonates with assemblage theory — a term used to designate the ways that productive self-organised wholes emerge from dynamic interactions between parts including people and things, subjects and objects (Deleuze & Guattari 1987; DeLanda 2006; Anderson & McFarlane 2011, Farias & Bender 2010). As a verb assemblage focuses attention on processes of connecting - connecting people or firms to each other, producers to consumers, people to buildings. As a noun the assemblage is a cluster of interconnections rather than a 'thing'. It is akin to a 'place' in the sense that it is a socio-spatial territory with some identity, however fluid (Dovey 2010: Ch.2). Assemblage is fundamentally dynamic and productive, a dynamism based primarily in horizontal networks of connectivity (pedestrian networks) yet also stabilised by hierarchical structures (policies, planning codes, laws). Assemblage theory cuts across any separation of subject and object; it is fundamentally socio-spatial with the spatial and social parts mutually constituting each other. Like the term 'place' assemblage is multi-scalar - assemblages at scales of building, street, neighbourhood, city and globe are interconnected and analysis at a single scale can be inherently blind. Yet assemblage thinking opposes the idea that the large scale is more important than the small, or that local conditions can be reduced to higher level controls. Agency and power flow not only top down but are distributed across networks. In Actor Network Theory variations of assemblage thinking (Latour 1987) agency is distributed across the non-human spatial and material world. Thick empirical description and micro-scale urban analysis become important not just to illustrate the big picture but to reveal the detailed assemblage. Assemblage theory is emerging as an important form of critical urbanism with key links to urban political economy (McFarlane 2011). To study only the larger assemblage of the city or neighbourhood and its planning framework is to ignore the ways that conceptions of place, urban character and creative clustering are emergent effects of a multitude of small-scale adaptations. This study of the ways buildings interface with public street networks focuses on the intersection of two levels of assemblage – the architectural and the urban. This incorporates the ways in which various agents—people, families, firms, shops—interface with their neighbourhood.

## URBAN INTERFACE TYPES

While the meanings of 'public' and 'private' space are ultimately contestable, we begin with the legal cadastral boundary and by identifying a series of five variables that we suggest are keys to understanding the public private interface. Each of these is as a twofold conception that varies between poles as follows:

Accessible/Inaccessible: Is this a primary public entry to private property or not? This variable describes the degree to which the public/private interface is permeable or porous as a public interface to private property.

Direct/Setback: Is the primary entry into private space directly on the legal boundary or setback from it behind a semi-private space of private ownership? Is there one boundary or two? This variable is important because a setback creates an interstitial space between public and private, and because it establishes a distance for the two way gaze across the interface.

Opaque/Transparent: Can one see clearly into private space from public space? This is key because it mediates the public gaze, enabling commercial and social exchange at one extreme, and privacy at the other.

Single/Multiple Occupancy: Does the entry express single or multiple identities? Is the private space beyond the initial threshold shared by more than one household or organisation? The significance of this lies in representations of identity at the interface and the degree to which practices of semi-public behaviour penetrate.

Car/Pedestrian: Is the primary mode of access by car or foot? This variable is significant in understanding the ways in which public/private interfaces are transformed by the car-based city.

While each of these variables may be construed as binary — permeable/impermeable; direct/setback; opaque/transparent, single/multiple; and pedestrians/cars — they are not essentially binary categories - there are many degrees of permeability, setback and opacity; pedestrians and cars mix; and identities blur. Rather than discrete oppositions, the variables describe a series of continua that intersect to generate a potentially infinite number of interface types. The ‘types’ developed below are not fixed or immutable, our goal is not one of defining essential interface but rather to construct a framework through which to analyse the complexities of this interface- the forces and spatial practices that shape it, and the adaptations that transform it.

Of the vast array of theoretically possible interface types, based on empirical observations in our case studies we suggest three classes of interface (impermeable, direct and setback) that in turn divide into the eight primary types that are diagrammed in Figure 1. Here these types are named and diagrammed in terms of the ways private properties are accessed (or not) from the primary pedestrian flows of the street (the vertical arrow). In order to show connections of both transparency and access Figure 2 presents the same typology in section showing both access (red arrows) and transparency (blue arrows) across the interface. Each interface sets up different relations of access, visibility and mode of access across the interface.

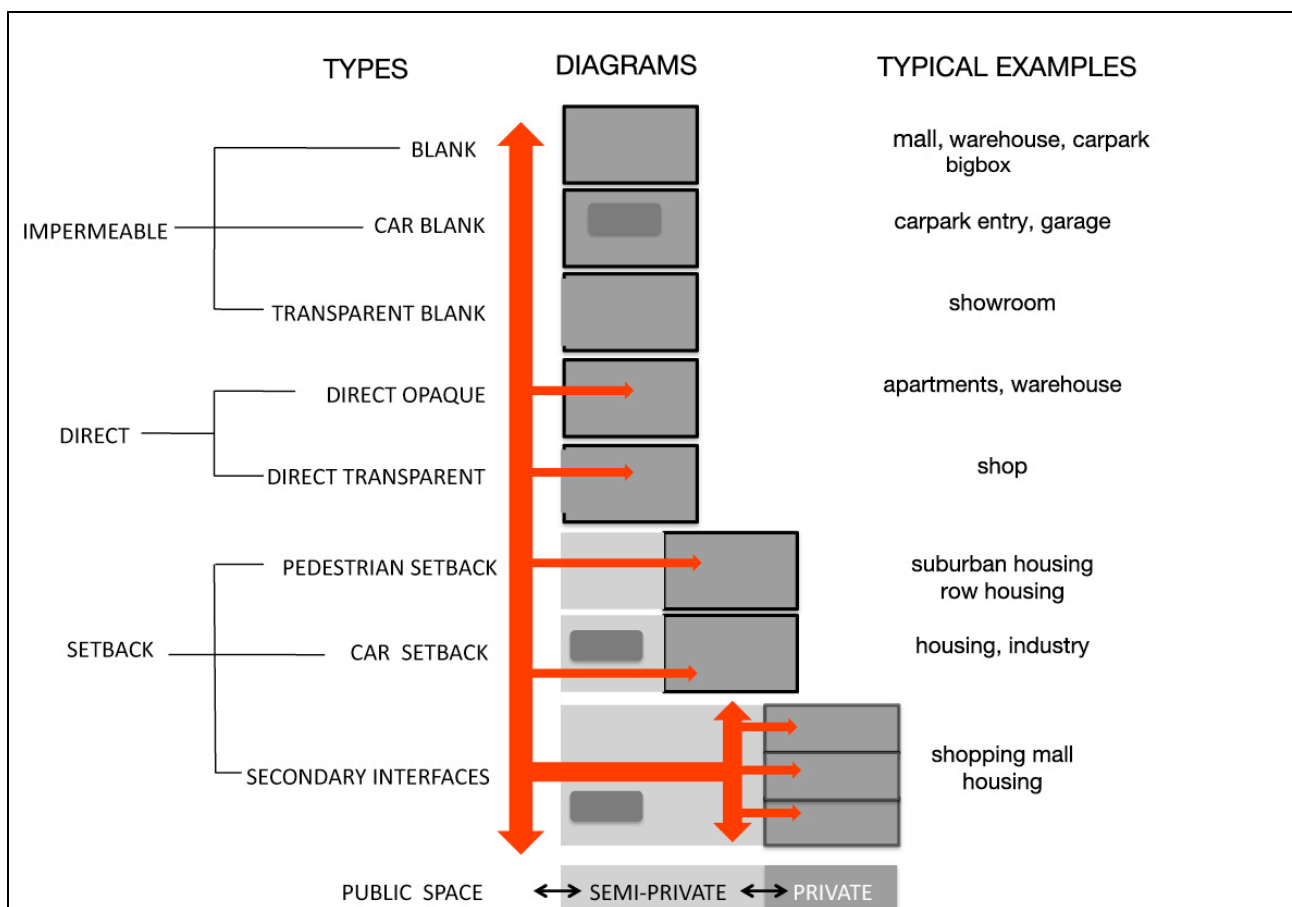


Figure 1: Interface Types (plan view)

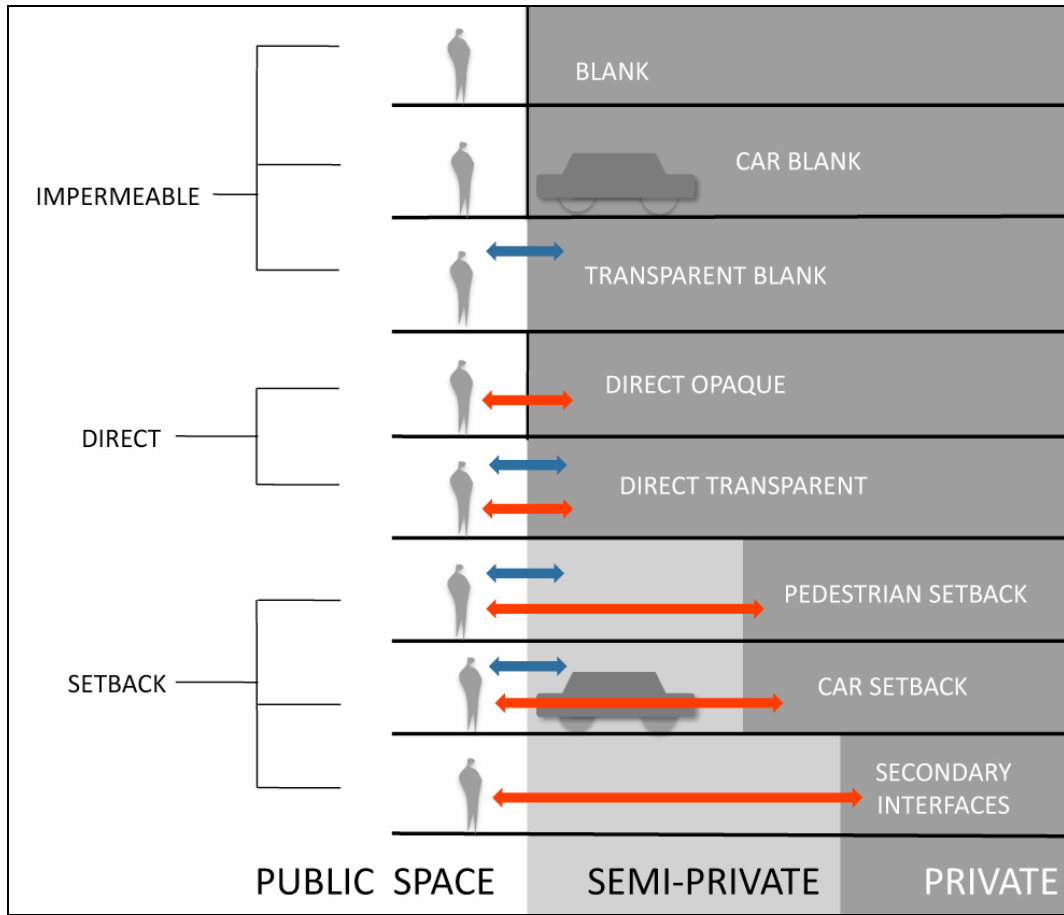


Figure 2: Interface Types (section view) – Visibility (blue) and Access (red)

The first class of interfaces involves those that are impermeable to primary pedestrian access. Within this class we suggest three types: blank, car blank and transparent blank. This is the kind of interface that is widely regarded as inactive, not contributing to street-life and in some locations as a threat to public safety.

1. BLANK: This is a blank wall, fence or landscaping on public/private boundary without transparency or a major entry point (Figure 3). This is the kind of interface produced by large lot development and on the sides and rear interfaces of many properties. It is common for industrial and commercial functions. Rear pedestrian entries are incorporated into this category unless they are identified with street numbers or signs.



Figure 3: Blank interfaces

2. CAR BLANK: This category refers to garage doors or car entries directly on the street where only vehicles enter the private space (Figure 4). While this may be a gate or void it is not a public entry and is socially blank.



*Figure 4: Car blank interfaces*

3. **TRANSPARENT BLANK:** This involves an interface where there is no pedestrian access but private space is clearly visible from public space (Figure 5). There may be either social or commercial relations established through such transparency.



*Figure 5: Transparent blank interfaces*

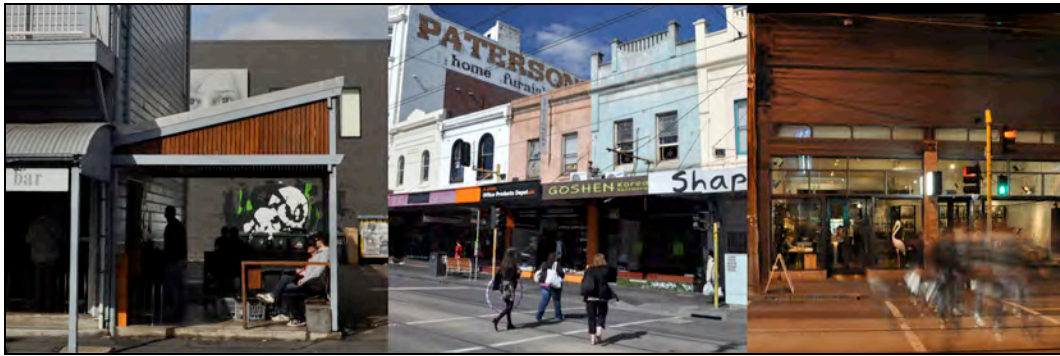
The second class of interfaces that we have called 'direct' incorporates those where pedestrians enter directly into private space from the street without an interstitial zone of semi-private space. These are the interface types identified with higher densities of shops and apartment buildings.

4. **DIRECT OPAQUE:** Where entry is directly from public space into private property (single or multiple) without visual link or interstitial zone (Figure 6). This interface is common for industry, residential (e.g. shop-top housing) and commercial but not retail.



*Figure 6: Direct opaque interfaces*

5. DIRECT TRANSPARENT: Where entry is directly from public space with a direct visual link into private space (such as a shop or display) whether single or multiple (Figure 7). This type tends to dominate shopping strips which rely on both a direct relationship and a transparent display for passing trade. Such an interface may or may not be used for commercial functions and is rare for industry and residential.



*Figure 7: Direct transparent interfaces*

The third class of interfaces we term 'setbacks' to indicate that access to private space first entails negotiating a zone of semi-private space before crossing a deeper interface into fully private space.

6. PEDESTRIAN SETBACK: Where the entry (single or multiple) is setback behind a mediating pedestrian space (other than a carpark) (Figure 8). This is the category that prevails in suburbia where the interstitial zone mediates social encounter and represents social identities.



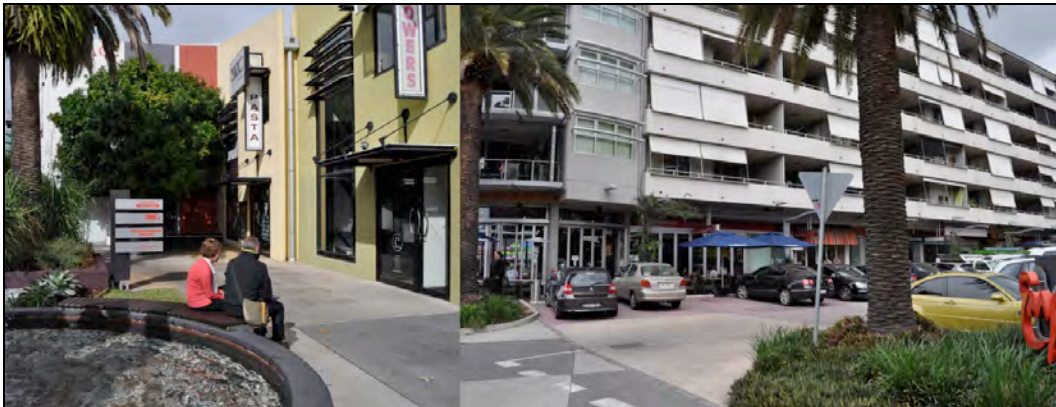
*Figure 8: Pedestrian setback interfaces*

7. CAR SETBACK: Where the primary entry into private space is setback behind what is primarily parking space (Figure 9).



*Figure 9: Car setback interfaces*

8. SECONDARY INTERFACES: This is where the setback becomes deep enough that a secondary set of interfaces is set up that then replicates one of the interface types above, as in a housing project or shopping mall (Figure 10). This new interface type will depend on function - in the case of retail it is generally transparent while for commercial and residential it is more likely to be a direct or pedestrian setback.



*Figure 10: Secondary interface systems*

This typology is highly problematic since there could be an almost infinite number of interface types. If we were to extend the typological categories to about 12-15 we would have a more nuanced system but any mapping of such categories would become progressively less readable and slippages between types would multiply. Again, it should be stressed that there are many variations that lie between the categories diagrammed here, particularly those that involve semi-transparency (the high but somewhat open picket fence), semi-setbacks (too small for social exchange) and the mixing of cars and pedestrians (garden/carpark). To diagram and map them would produce an unmanageable complexity. Further, we have not included the distinction between single and multiple occupancy here because this distinction applies across all of the categories with the exception of secondary interfaces which are multiple by definition. In other words this distinction is often significant but it can be applied without changing the set of types.

Further complexity is introduced by the multiplicity of types that are here subsumed under secondary interfaces that involve differences of depth, transparency and access from the street. Our focus here is not on their internal workings (Dovey 2008: Ch 9) but the ways they are plugged into the larger urban assemblage. This typology also reflects a bias towards the particular kind of urban fabric we have studied - the Australian inner city. However, it is a very diverse fabric with a much larger range of interfaces than is likely to be found in most urban districts.

## **ADAPTATIONS**

Thus far we have mapped interfaces as morphological characteristics of the public/private boundary in a manner that veils a latent dynamism, their potential for change and adaptation. For instance, if an interface is opaque glass then it would be classed as blank or direct in the preceding typology, even when a different glass could render it transparent. A high front fence produces a direct frontage even when it could be demolished to create a pedestrian or car setback. It is this range of possible morphological transformations, from one type to another, which we now wish to foreground. This account of adaptation takes us back to the five primary variables with which we began: access, setback, transparency, identity and mode of access:

Changes to Access: This changes when pedestrian access is created or blocked: new enterprises or houses may open through blank frontages as large grain functions devolve into smaller. Existing entries may be moved or premises closed down.

Changes to Setback: This is when the effective boundary between public and private is moved. When a pedestrian setback becomes direct with a high front fence, the semi-public space is eliminated. When a direct or transparent entry appropriates the zone immediately adjacent in public space this effectively moves the boundary to privatize public space.

Changes to Transparency: This relates to control of the public gaze across a public/private boundary. Changes of transparency are designed to mediate different forms of production, reproduction, exchange and consumption. In general transparency is necessary for exchange (social and commercial) and consumption but can be a problem for production and domestic space.

Changes to Occupancy: This is when the occupancy of a property moves from single to multiple or *vice versa*. This may or may not require a physical transformation but a multiple entry entails a greater penetration of publicness.

Changes to Mode of Access: This is when there is a shift between wheels and feet as the primary mode of entry across the legal public/private boundary; from drive-in/drive-out to pedestrian interface or *vice versa*.

While there are many possible adaptations from one type to another, our fieldwork shows evidence of ten of these adaptive transformations occurring within these morphologies as follows:



*Figure 11: CAR SETBACK ↔ PEDESTRIAN SETBACK:*  
A car setback is converted to a pedestrian space, an adaptation that can also be reversed with a front garden adapted for parking.



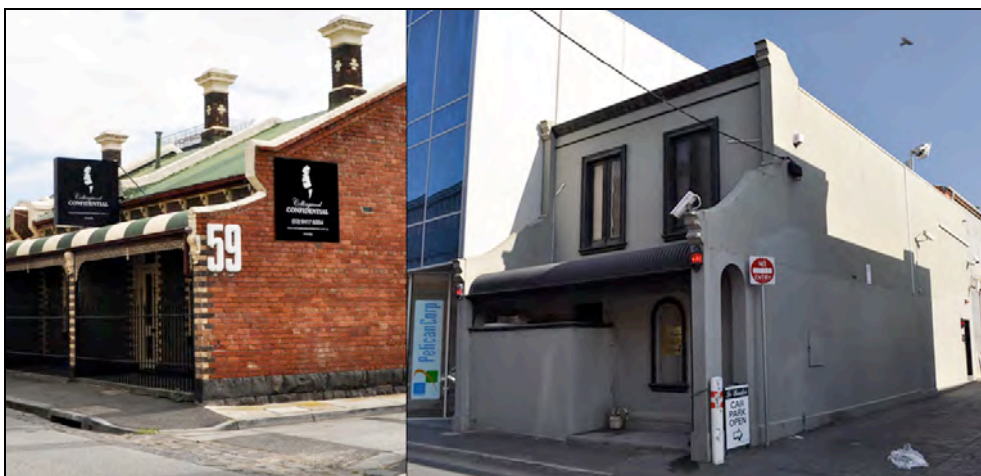
*Figure 12: CAR BLANK ↔ TRANSPARENT DIRECT:*  
The garage doors of a blank interface are adapted to become transparent 'shopfronts' and revert to garage doors after hours.



*Figure 13: PEDESTRIAN SETBACK ↔ TRANSPARENT DIRECT*  
 Here a shop is constructed within the setback; the reverse is illustrated where a retail frontage appropriates public space (moving the interface forward).



*Figure 14: PEDESTRIAN SETBACK ↔ OPAQUE DIRECT*  
 Construction of a high front fence or addition can transform a setback into a direct interface. The reverse is illustrated here with a direct entry converted to a pedestrian setback by appropriating part of a public laneway (again moving the public/private boundary forwards).



*Figure 15: PEDESTRIAN SETBACK → IMPERMEABLE*  
 Here a front entry is closed and moved to the rear; the illustrated cases are brothels where a domestic building type is preferred, but with privacy of access.



**Figure 16: TRANSPARENT DIRECT ↔ OPAQUE DIRECT**  
 This is an easily reversible adaptation based on the replacement of transparency with opacity and *vice versa*. The illustrated examples include low-rent shops, a nightclub and shopfronts converted to residential.



**Figure 17: TRANSPARENT DIRECT ↔ BLANK**  
 Here former shopfronts become blank due to either dereliction or conversion; the reverse adaptation can produce active edges through the conversion of blank frontages.



**Figure 18: BLANK ↔ OPAQUE DIRECT**  
 Here a blank interface is either penetrated with a new direct entry or a subsidiary entry is adapted as a main entry.



Figure 19: CAR BLANK ↔ CAR SETBACK  
A primarily car-blank interface is opened during business hours to become a car-setback.



Figure 20: OPAQUE DIRECT → SECONDARY  
The direct interface of an industrial property has been converted to the Secondary interface of an informal market.

Some of these transformations are effected on a daily rhythm as screens, gates, doors and blinds are opened and closed, furniture and loose parts are rearranged. There may also be seasonal rhythms as sidewalk dining comes and goes. Other adaptations require construction and become more permanent. Some adaptations require formal planning approval while other do not; some may involve informal changes of function that are not strictly legal - such as living in shops or operating shops from warehouses.

## PRODUCTION, CONNECTION, CREATIVITY

Thus far we have identified and mapped a set of interface types and then explored the ways in which some of these types are adapted to become others; we have progressed from a seemingly static typology to a set of more dynamic transformations. But what is at stake in all this, why might it matter? The answer to this is complex; initial clues are provided by inspecting the types more closely again, by asking what they 'do', and by unravelling a further latent level of dynamism. Figures 1 and 2 diagram the key attributes of each type: access, directness, transparency. These diagrams are partly communicational - they help us to illustrate the difference between the different interface types. However, in their most abstract form we suggest they also have a theoretical dimension where they embody the immanent and productive forces of connection that animate interface assemblages. If we are to take the spatial turn in social theory seriously then we need to understand that the spatial is not just illustrative of the social but also productive of it. Microspatial assemblages work to produce wealth, ideas, identities and subjectivities.

At their most abstract, the diagrams map a series of connections or modes of potential connection; they embody a primary spatial means by which connections are forged and constrained in cities. The diagrams also embody a social logic of ambivalence; they are at once about relationship and distance - perhaps illustrated most clearly in the pedestrian setback type which generates a space that is about 'retreat' from the public realm, even as it presents opportunities for expression of identity and engagement with the public realm. In this, interfaces resonate with the ambivalence Simmel (1978, 1950) associates with 'the stranger', becoming a key means by which individuals negotiate the ineluctable presence in urban milieus of people who are "socially distant yet physically close" (Bauman 1993: 153): the simultaneous desires to engage with and to retreat from an urban life of strangers. While we began with a focus on the legal boundary between public and private space, we move to focus on the public/private interface as means for the social negotiation of publicity/privacy: 'publicity' as exposure to the public gaze and 'privacy' as a retreat from that gaze. If we return, one last time, to the five twofold variables used to generate our diagrams, we find that each is characterised by a logic of moving between poles of continua:

Accessible/Inaccessible: This is the zero-degree variable and it is largely polar, either there is or isn't public access. The accessible pole of this variable expresses an immediacy of connection: one may pass through an entrance, a door may be opened, a bell may be rung. Where there is no door on which to knock nor bell to press there is a form of social blankness that we have suggested incorporates three of our eight types: blank, car blank and transparent blank. While such interfaces may express the privacy of the territories beyond, they are often available for the publicity of billboards, showrooms, caryards, graffiti or street art. Such blank interfaces have long been derided in urban design theory as those that lack vitality, identity and safety. We would not contest such views, yet the adaptations above suggest that within the morphologies we

have studied such blank interfaces often embody a latent capacity for adaptation that is potentially productive of new enterprises, practices and identities.

Direct/Setback: The setback pole of this variable creates an entrance transition where privacy is achieved through a doubling of interfaces; the semi-private space created is initiatory in nature. Crossing a suburban garden setback, one is initiated into the private realm (typically via displays of one kind or another) without necessarily feeling that one is *in* the private realm. The extended carpark setback of the shopping mall also functions as an initiatory space into a phantasmic world of consumption where the public city is excluded. By contrast, the Direct pole is one where connections are forged abruptly through absorption or expulsion, without ceremony.

Opaque/Transparent: The transparent pole of this variable tends to express a confusion or fluidity of boundaries; limpidity. Consistent with the etymology of 'trans', it expresses 'movement between', it produces publicity through the gazes exchanged between the interior and exterior of cafes, or the wares projected into the public realm through retail window displays. By contrast, the Opaque pole removes any sense of ambiguity from boundary conditions, yet in so doing can bespeak the presence of a mystery or secret. Opacity produces a deferral and referral of access, the entry signs and portals suggest a private territory that is hidden.

Single/Multiple Occupancy: This variable is less polarized but refers to the ways singular identities of small grain properties contrast with multiple identities of large grain development, often accessed through a Secondary Interface system. Multiple-identity territories tend to be corporate and generic rather than specific, the enterprise or household surrenders singular identity to collective identity. Such properties also come under the collective private governance of an institution, shopping mall or body corporate. The scope for adaptability may also be surrendered since the identity of the shopping mall is less adaptable than the shop; the housing tower is less adaptable than the house.

Car/Pedestrian: The car/pedestrian variable aligns with the public/private axis to some degree in the sense that the car is a bubble of solitude, a means of achieving privacy within public space. Drivers are in traffic (rarely aware that they *are* traffic) while pedestrians are in the street or in the crowd. When the interface at either end of a trip is drive-out/drive-in then drivers remain sealed in private space. The car is a means to bypass the public/private interface.

We conclude this paper with a series of questions, hypotheses and directions for research. The typology that forms the first part of the paper is not the only kind possible yet we suggest that it is a productive framework from which to consider the social, economic and spatial importance of the public/private interface. These domains of interest are fundamentally interconnected. We choose to research this within a framework of assemblage theory that valorises these interconnections. Whatever the methods and methodologies it is crucially important that the interdisciplinarity of the issue not be lost in a quest for reduction to formal, social or economic factors.

While we have presented diagrams for each of these interface types, at the most abstract level this is a diagram of a flow of public life at a tangent to a private territory. This is a diagram of various flows of desire - for security and privacy from public space; for access to goods, services, friends and events via public space. This pattern prevails with various mediations of privacy and security because it is productive. Economically it enables production, exchange and consumption of goods and services. Socially it is productive of identity, sociality and subjectivity. The extensive privatizations of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, most evident in the quasi-public spaces of shopping malls and corporate environments have involved the invention of new types and diagrams. All of them, however, are variations or hybrids of the primary relationship in that they reproduce the range of primary interfaces within private space.

Public/private interfaces do not easily settle into categories, indeed the eight definitions we have articulated are inherently unstable. The typology is a conceptual structure that we find useful rather than a set of essential categories we have discovered. It is useful in part because it helps to expose a latent dynamism that is socially and economically important and productive. In the end the typology with which we began becomes the means to understand its collapse under the realization of complexity, dynamism and adaptation.

Our database is the Australian inner-city and specifically those parts that have been subject to creative clustering. Much of our interest lies in the role of such interface types in the mediation of creative production and the formation of creative clusters. Several hypotheses emerge as to why it is that creative clusters emerge more within some kinds of urban morphology than others. We tentatively suggest that this is related not to any particular morphology but to the degree and kinds of adaptability that are enabled. We do not

suggest that the adaptability of interfaces is the only or even the key characteristic of creative cluster morphologies - creative industries are also attracted to density, heritage, central locations, cheap rents, regulatory regimes and other things (Evans 2009; Bell & Jayne 2004; Brown & Meczynskivan 2009; van Heur 2009). Creative industries, particularly at the small-scale and down-market end of the industry are dynamic, adaptable and price sensitive.

If we compare these inner-city locations with other neighbourhood districts in Australian cities the most striking difference is one of diversity. The suburb, the shopping strip, the central city and the shopping mall generally have a much more homogenous interface type. It is also the case that in many such locations planning codes operate to prevent the adaptation of one type to another. There is little prospect of generating blank or direct entries in the mall, nor of eliminating setbacks in the suburbs. In this context, it is also worth noting that the secondary interface operates under a different (typically private) regime of governance to most of the other interfaces. We suggest that the interface adaptations are an important mode of innovation in urban design where an underlying potential becomes actualized; new connections are formed between production, exchange and consumption; new forms of urban intensification become possible with a greater utilization of urban space. It is interesting to find that blank interfaces that attract a good deal of denigration in urban design theory also appear to embody significant potential for adaptation and comprise an important part of the mix. We are by no means suggesting that all interface adaptations are good – many are linked to dereliction and to a more car dependent city. There is no scope to pursue these questions and hypotheses here, beyond a suggestion that the range of types and adaptations outlined above can begin to open an understanding of how the city works as a complex adaptive assemblage.

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