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# Public Space Design

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Study Tour

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13 Sept – 21 Sep 2017

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Design Cell TGCPA & BHUCORE,  
Taba, Bhutan

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## Introduction:

Architects and designers are creative beings but once the transition from school studio to a firm starts, we realize that most of our time is spent solving problems that are sometime incredibly uninspiring. Because we need to feed our creative and passionate side for design, we simply just need to leave behind our trace papers and laptops and just travel. Looking at pictures is not the same thing as experiencing the beauty of the world in person. Getting out of your comfort zone and experiencing different cultures has so many benefits. One of the main benefits from traveling is getting to see how life is lived outside of our own little bubbles. Every country is unique and having the opportunity to travel always can give one new insight.

Thus a study tour was conducted by Design Cell TGCPA, Nagpur (MH) India and Bhutan Consultants and Research organization, Taba, Bhutan. This was intended to give an international working exposure of Public projects.

### Objective of Tour

- To understand the working pattern in New Country.
- To understand legal implications on Architectural Design.
- To understand life style and cultural pattern of settlement.
- To understand structure of public space through visual survey.
- Conceptual design of public spaces.
- Conceptual modelling

### Schedule of Tour

- Study rules and regulations for Architectural implications in Bhutan.
- Study Settlement through secondary data. (Structure plan)
- Primary Visual Survey.
- Public Space Design and Presentation
- Final Report and Estimation



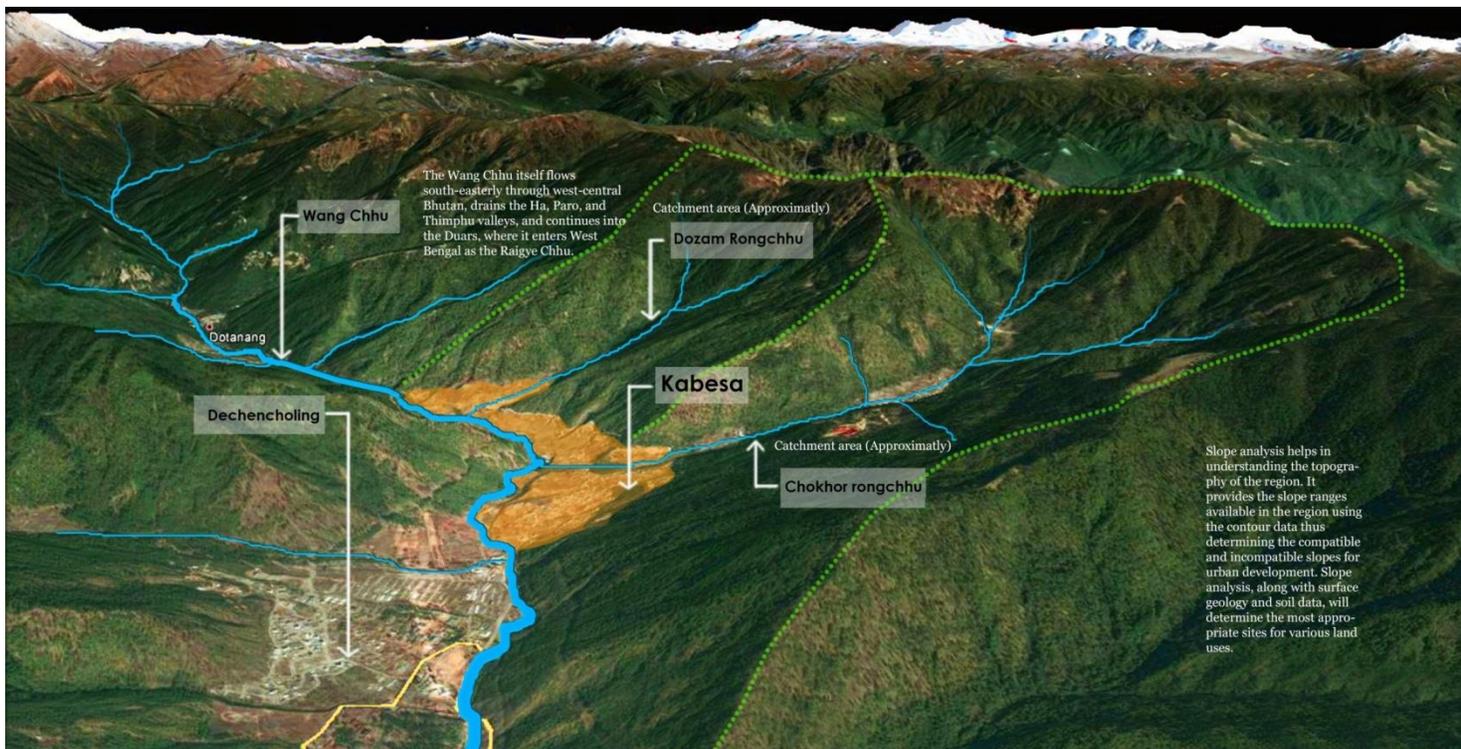
## About Town: Kabesa

The Kabesa Valley situated to the north of Thimphu Valley is fully similar to the Thimphu Valley in geology, soil characteristics, forest and vegetation except for the spatial configuration. The Thimphu Valley, at the main town section has developable slopes to the west of Wang Chhu, with steep slopes on the east. Kabesa valley reverses the configuration with developable slopes on the east and steep slopes on the west of Wang Chhu. Kabesa Valley is ringed by higher altitudes on the sides, east and west with Wang Chhu River flowing in between. The eastern hills however provide a respite with a valley in between. The valley floor, almost all in the eastern side has a gentle slope before the sudden advent of higher elevations. This gentle slope territory enables it to become a habitable area.

### River and Farming

The water flowing from the natural stream is channelized by the box drains built beside the roads. In the absence of the roads, the water is channelized through the dug-up drains. The water is utilized at Upper Kabesa level first, to irrigate the fields and then the over flowing water from the fields and the excessive water from the stream is led to the Lower Kabesa to irrigate the fields. The house drains also open into these main conduits of drains. The excessive water from the fields in Lower Kabesa is let into the River Wang chhu without any treatment.

Paddy wetlands are terraced and irrigated agriculture lands. Paddy terraces are found from 2300 meters to 2600 meters elevation within the Valley. It is concentrated mostly in the valley floor occupying the Lower and Higher River Terraces. The environmental significance of these paddy fields is that they protect and manage the fertile Lower River Terraces, which are potential ground water resources. Rice is the staple food for the people and Chhuzhing provides paddy and employment to many people. Thimphu Valley in general is second in paddy yield next to Paro Valley and thus the Chhuzhing is important asset for national food security.



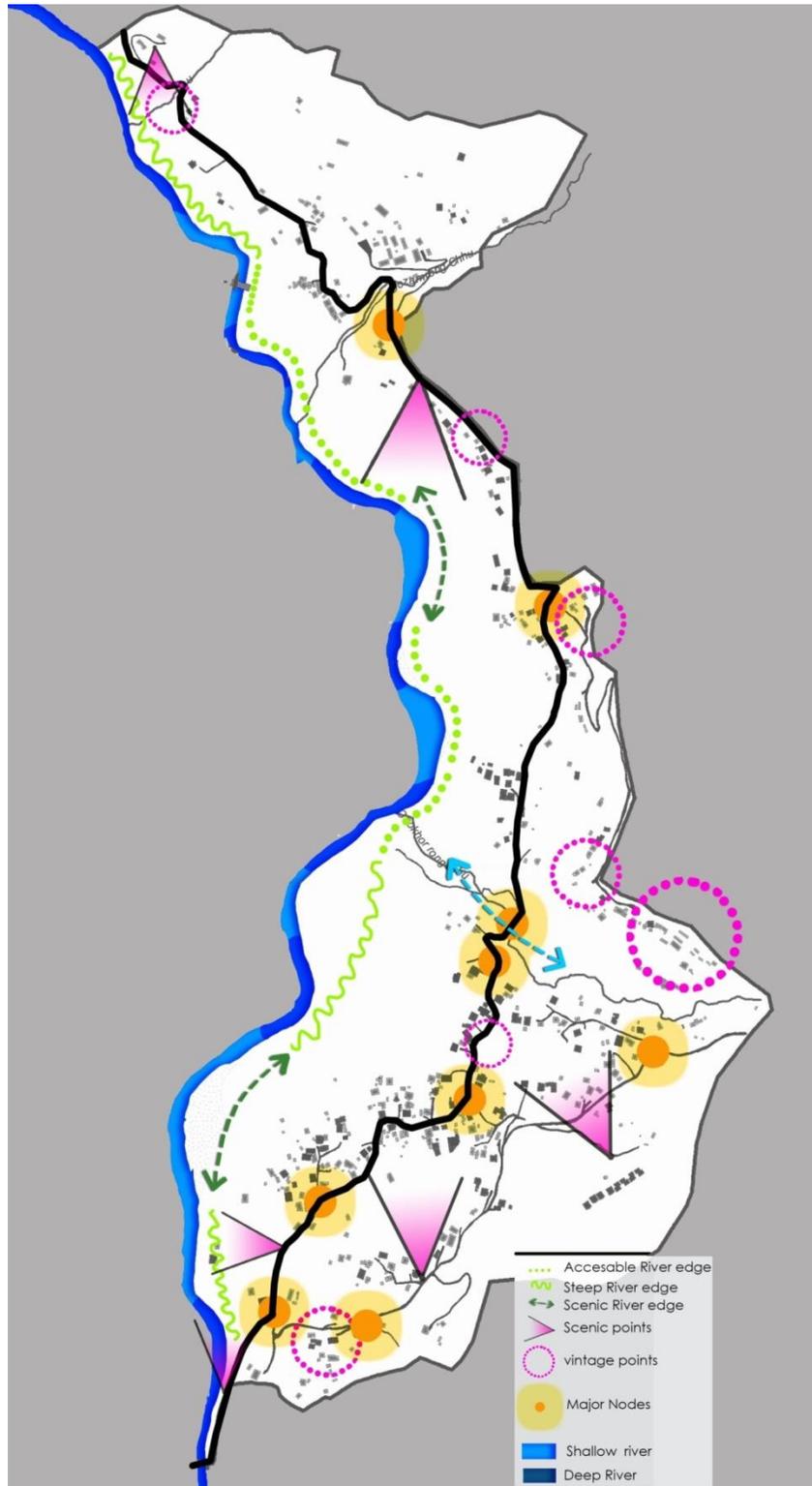
## Visual Survey

Some of the buildings and monuments represent character of Kabesa; they are the DrukRalung Monastery, Choki Traditional Art School, and SosoGoenpa. Temples, chortens and monasteries are very important links and they help improving socio-cultural bounding of society. Such vintage points, scenic points, visual corridors and important nodes are marked during field survey. All this things make Kabesa different from other settlements. Survey has been conducted to identify understand sense of place among local people.

As per the sample survey, about 52% of the population of Kabesa prefers to go on a picnic for recreation within the town and the rest 48% outside Kabesa. 69% of the population use recreational spaces which are reachable within 30 minutes of time whereas only a few travel for more than an hour for their recreation. There are no demarcated recreational spaces. The stream provides potential picnic spots which can be developed as dedicated recreational places.

The data also shows that the residents seeking recreation in Kabesa and within Thimphu are divided in almost equal proportion. The recreation places available within Kabesa are mostly accessible from 15 to 30 minutes travel time whereas for Thimphu it does take minimum 30 minutes by public transport to access recreation.

Apart from existing recreational spaces Kabesa has more to offer in terms of scenic beauty thus visually pleasant points are





## Art and Architecture

Art plays very important role in shaping up buildings in Bhutan. Thus buildings are guided by 2 major rules.

1. Building guidelines for Shape and size of Building
2. Architectural Building details for detail carving and articulations

Thus art schools plays very important role in Bhutanese Architecture.

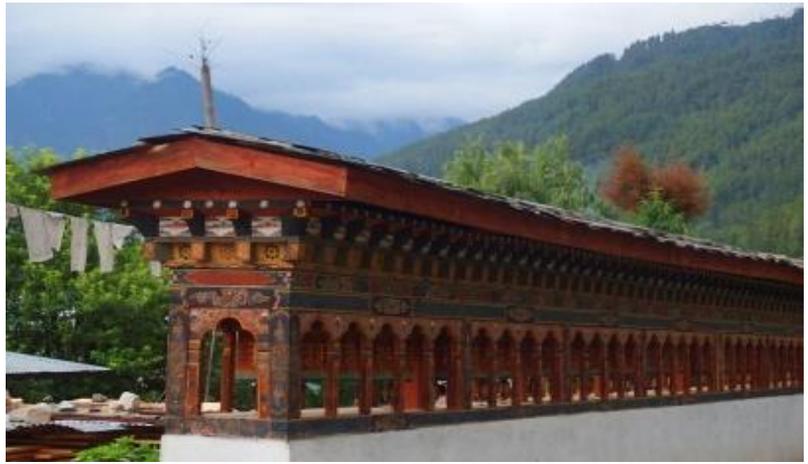
### Choki Traditional Art School

Choki Traditional Art School (CTAS) is a private traditional art school established in 1979 by DashoChokiDorji in commemoration of His Majesty's the fourth King's Silver Jubilee reign to help children of broken and economically disadvantaged families. Choki Traditional Art School is the only private institute providing training on traditional arts and crafts in Bhutan. The school provides free tuition, food and lodging facilities to the economically disadvantaged youth of Bhutan. The school started with 5 students in a small rented building in Kawangjansa, Thimphu. Choki Traditional Art School is now located at Kabesa 10 kilometres north of Thimphu city.



## ZorigChusum

Zorigchusum refers to the thirteen traditional visual arts and crafts that Bhutanese have practiced for generations. The zorigchusum arts are represented at the Festival through: painting, carving, sculpture, calligraphy, carpentry, gold- and



silversmithing, bamboo work, wood turning, weaving and embroidery, pottery, blacksmithing, masonry, and incense-stick making. Art serves secular and religious functions in Bhutan. But the creation of art is mainly a spiritual practice used to convey spiritual values. New art is constantly created to replace the old, reflecting the Bhutanese understanding of material impermanence. The National Institute for ZorigChusum in Thimphu (the capital city) and TrashiYangtse (in eastern Bhutan) was established by the Royal Government of Bhutan decades ago to promote traditional art in contemporary Bhutan. The Choki Traditional Art School (CTAS), a small, privately supported non-profit school located in the village of



Kabesa in the Thimphu Valley, offers training in traditional drawing, painting, sculpture and woodcarving to disadvantaged and underprivileged Bhutanese youth. The paintings and some of the carvings that adorn the interior of the lhakhang at the Festival were painted and crafted by students from CTAS.

The school has accommodation facilities for the students. The students also devote some of their time in

farming, extended with the school so that the school becomes self-sustaining.



## Proposal

### Land for Public Congregation Spaces

The absence of organized public interaction spaces has been observed in Kabesa. Public interaction spaces in a settlement make the settlement cohesive and interactive. Moreover, since Kabesa's present development and future development shall be in a linear format primarily based on the trunk road it was thought that in place of a single activity or interaction node there should be three nodes in the entire settlement. These three nodes shall be developed as public plazas.



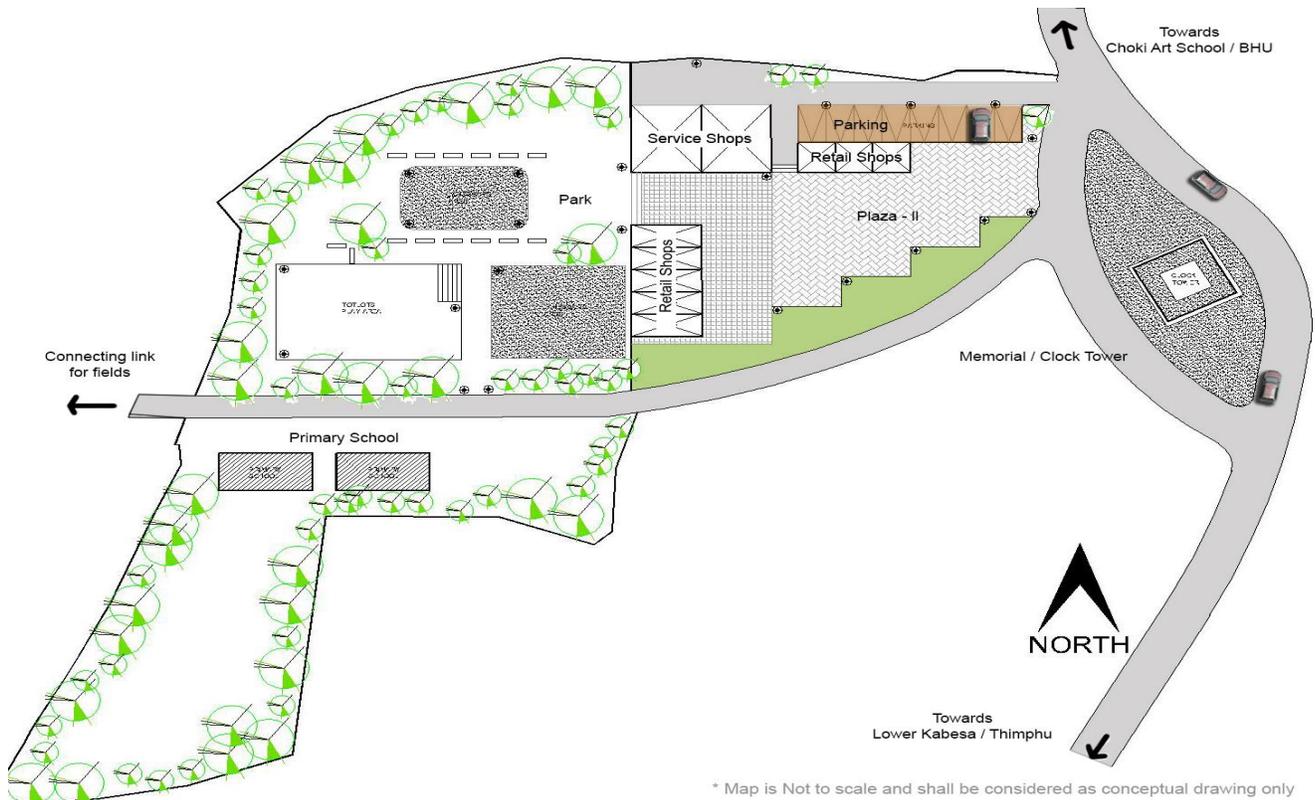
**Public Plaza– I:** The first of them is proposed near the existing vegetable market which would serve the southern part of Kabesa with a public plaza spread over an area of approximately 300sq meters. Apart from a public plaza, the existing vegetable market shall be rejuvenated with some shops and work centres for generating employment.

**Public Plaza – II:** A public plaza is to be developed near the mobile tower over an area of almost 450sq





meters. This area shall also involve the removal of the ruin for creating a turning point for the bus. Apart from the plaza service shops for automobiles and other mechanical works shall be provided. Separate entrance shall be provided for service shops This will ensure that the normal chaos created in a normal vehicle shop does not come to the fore and works unaffected.



**Public Plaza – III:** Since, both the earlier plazas proposed are in the southern half of Kabesa town a relief to the north could be provided by proposing a plaza just west of the football ground of the school. This

plaza could be primarily a public seating plaza with a couple of daily need shops/ milk parlour/ vegetable shop.

Though Kabesa has its inherent beauty and its proximity to nature, it is devoid of any organised recreational space.

- It is thus proposed that an organised park fully equipped with seating lounge and children's play area with equipment will be developed near public plaza – II ( near mobile tower). This would facilitate the elderly and the children.
- A similar park is proposed near plaza – III, below the football ground of the school. This would facilitate the residents of the northern half.

Kabesa has an invariable asset in terms of the Chokhorrongchhu stream and the forest surrounding it. Spaces near the bridge and the stream have an exquisite potential to be developed as an informal recreation space. Thus, it is proposed that a recreation zone in terms of a forest garden be developed in an informal manner in conjunction and collaboration of the forest department





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