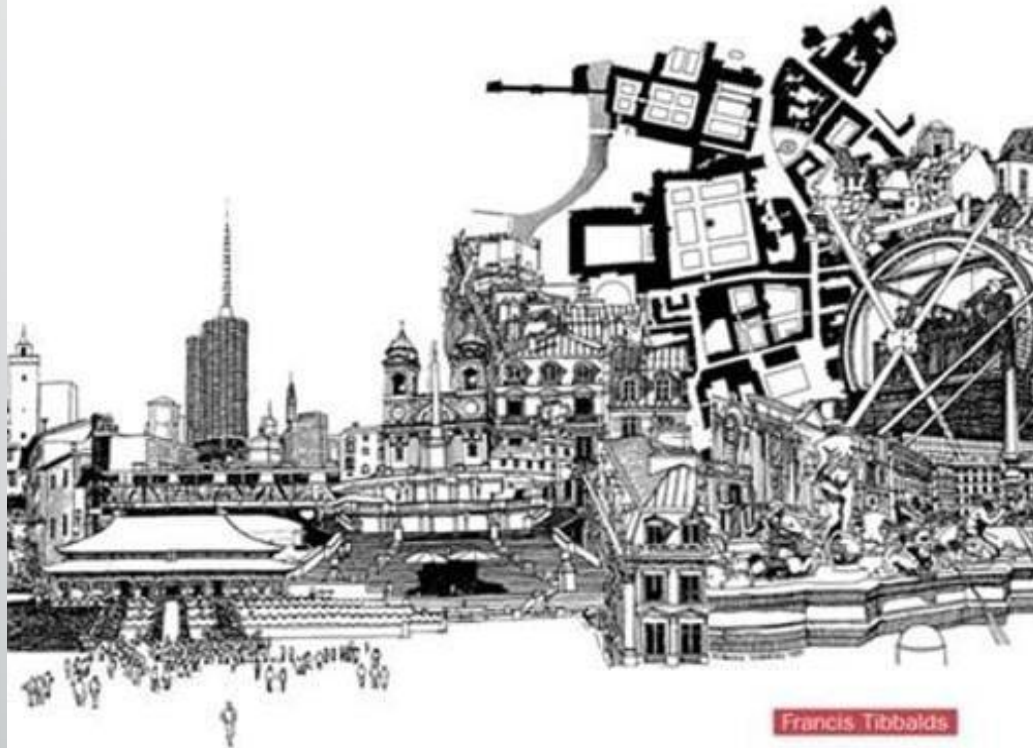# The Concept of Integration in Urban Design

Prepared by:

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Integration- *Concept and Definition*

- **As Frederick (2007) observes,**

- **integration is primarily about relationships**

- **and, furthermore, 'beauty' is usually due more to harmonious relationships among elements of a composition than to the elements themselves –**

- **thus it is the ensemble (group) that matters, both :**

- **1. within the individual building**

- **2. in terms of the building with its neighbors.**

- **Tibbalds (1992) argued that:**

- **in most cases, individual buildings should be subject to the needs and character of the place as a whole:**

Making People-Friendly Towns: Improving the Public Environment in Towns and Cities
Francis Tibbalds (editor)

101 Things I Learned in Architecture School
By Matthew Frederick

Integration

Royal Fine Art Commission (RFAC)

↓

good building Quality

➤

order *and unity*

Expression

Integrity

Plan and section

Detail

➤ the first five qualities are those of individual buildings

Integration

➤ 'what matters in urban design is how that building relates to the larger whole.
whether **a building harmonises with its surroundings** and the **qualities it needs to integrate** with those surroundings.

Piazza San Marco, Venice .

Intensely different materials and styles, but few would disagree the aesthetic harmony of the composition. Note, however, that each building defines space.
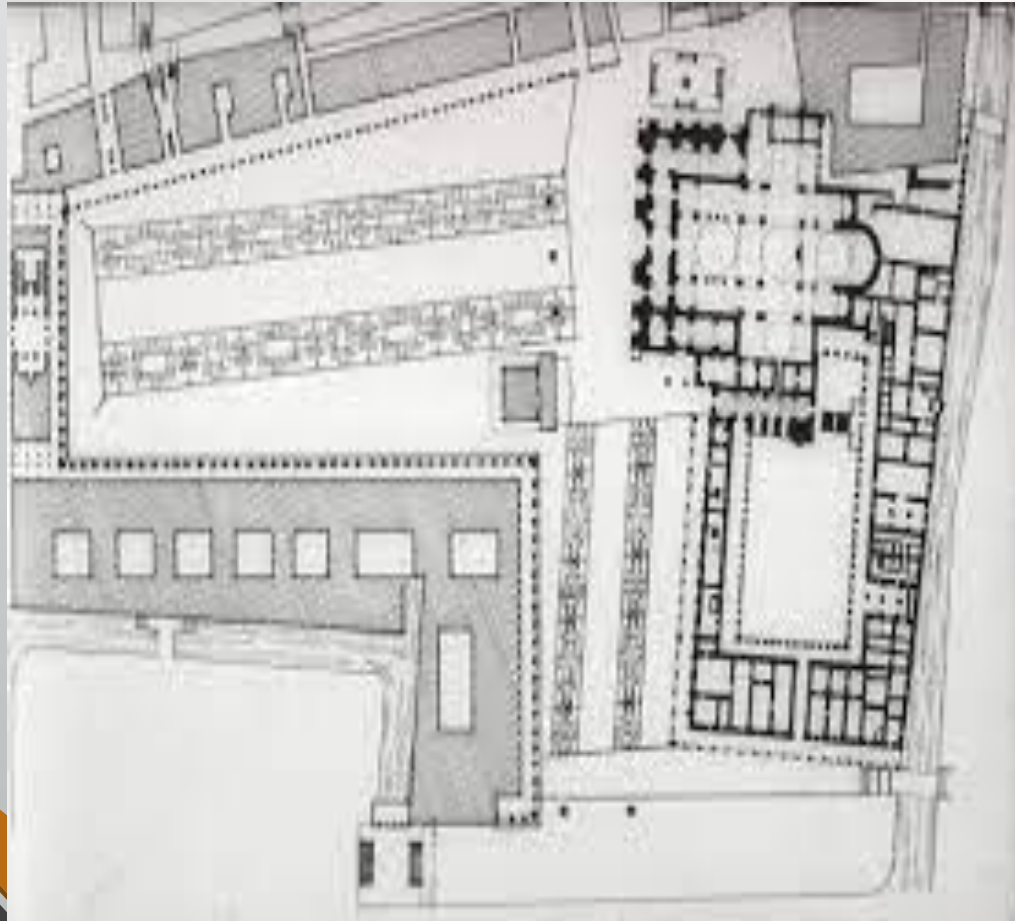
Integration – Volumetric (Spatial) Character

- **Volumetric/spatial integration relates to the new building's overall three-dimensional form and nature relative to its setting or context.**

  1. Street patterns and block and plot sizes aids harmonious integration.

- **Plot amalgamation, for example, alters the scale of city buildings and breaks down the traditional grain of urban areas.**

Complicated superblock designs implemented in Troieschyna neighborhood (Kyiv, Ukraine).
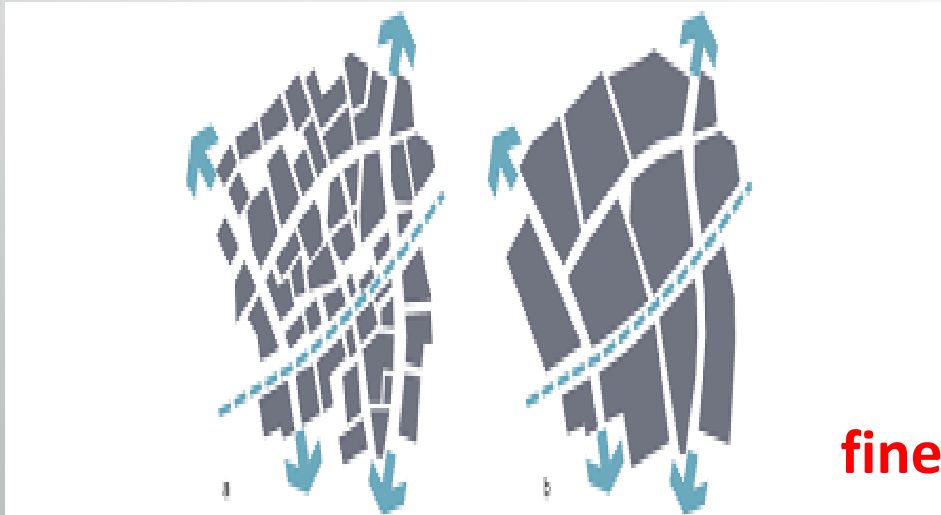
fine-grained block and . coarse-grained block

2. Siting

- **Siting concerns how a building sits on its site and how it relates to other buildings and to the street or other urban spaces.**

- **Respect for the established building line and street frontage is important in ensuring the continuity and definition of external space: breaks in the street line should be deliberate – rather than arbitrary or accidental – and should create positive space or incident.**

- **Highly sculptural buildings** – objects-in-space – should generally be exceptions and major incidents in the townscape, their impact being more significant for their relative scarcity.

- An urban rule-of-thumb when designing an infill building, suggested by Frederick (2007), is, there is a compelling reason to do otherwise, that its front should be placed at the prevailing building line of the street.

- Setting buildings **back from the street** makes them less accessible to passers-by, reduces the economic viability of ground floor businesses and weakens the street's spatial definition.

3. Size/massing

- Massing is the three-dimensional nature of the building volume.

- Although sometimes used to control the volume of development acceptable on a particular site,

- plot ratios (gross floor area divided by site area)

- floor area ratios (FARs) are a rather crude tool as the same volume of development can be organised in a variety of different ways
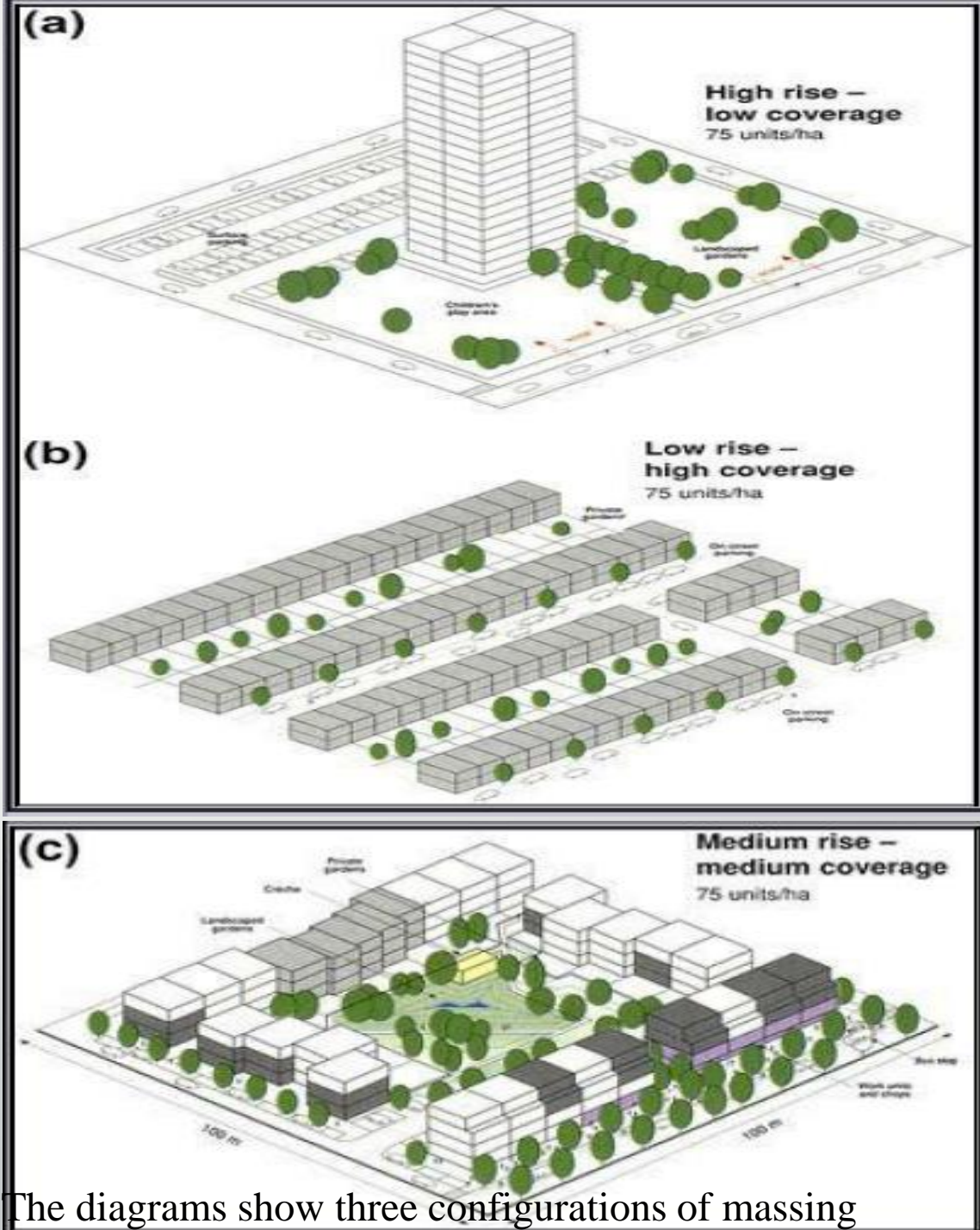
The diagrams show three configurations of massing

4.Building scale

- **Scale is different from size:**
- **Size:** represents the exact dimensions of an object;
- **Scale:** is the perception of that object relative to other objects around it and to our perception of those objects.
- **Scale concerns,**
1. **Human scale:** The building's dimensions and all its parts relative to the dimensions of a human being
2. **Generic scale** : Its dimensions relative to those of its setting (Figure Below).
- Hence, a building can be understood to be in or out of scale with its surroundings and, separately, to be of human scale or not.

- **It is difficult to read the scale of this building.**

- **It initially reads as a three-storey building, until the evidences given by the traffic signs and the cars are noted –**

- **it is realised that it is a much larger building than initially supposed,**

- **but also seems to be a small building trying to be large.**

Mansion House, London, UK

The Statue is out of scale with the base
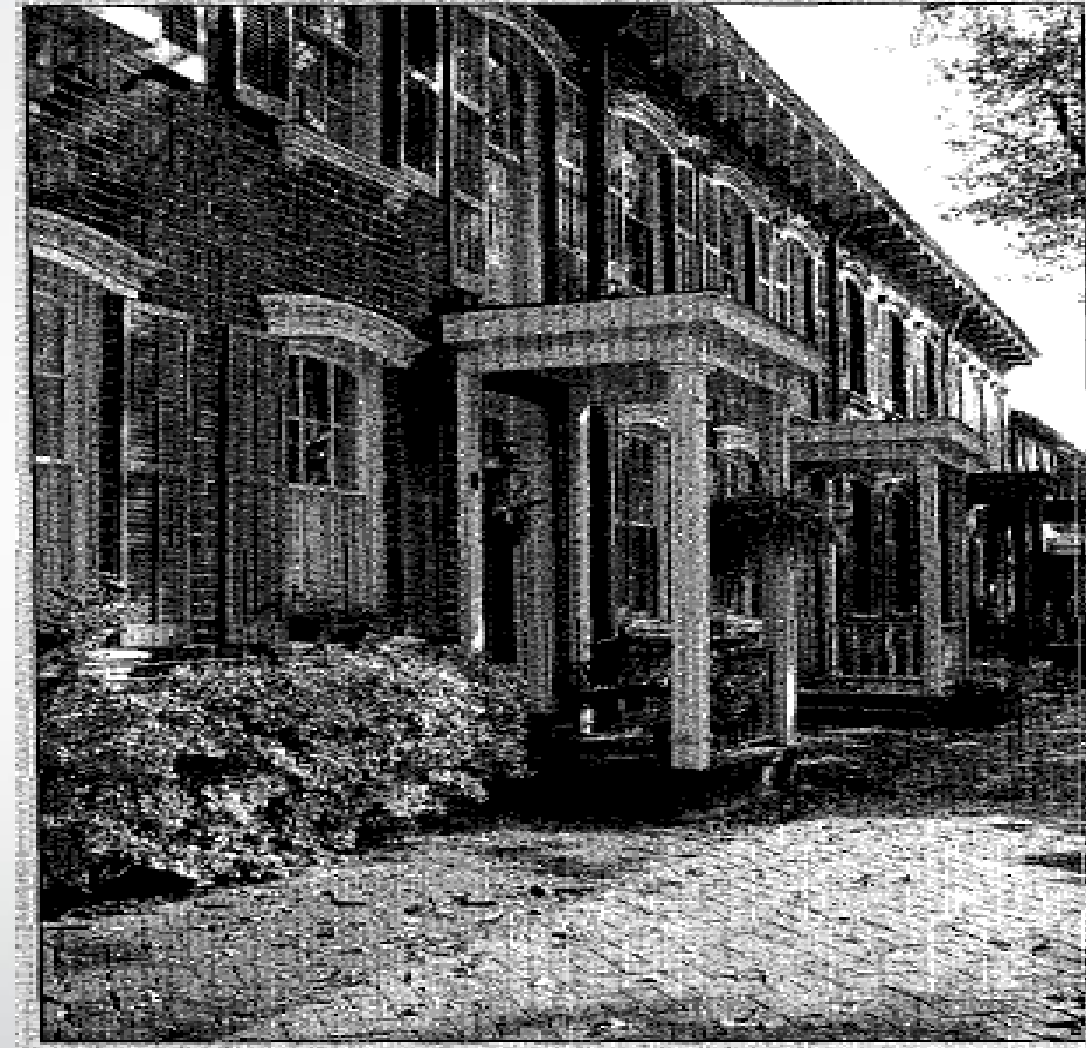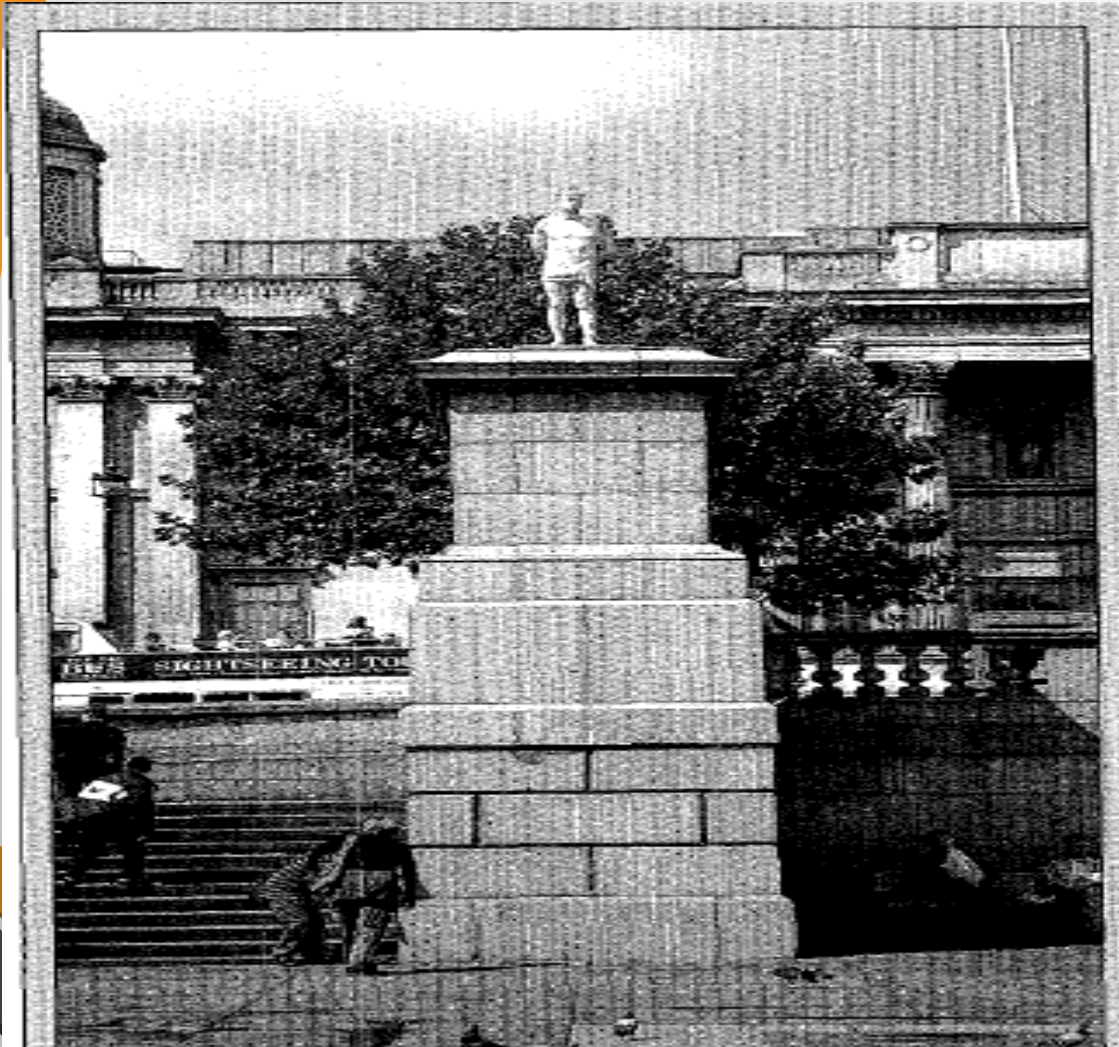
Sense of Human scale without human being present

Exercise

Write A Report
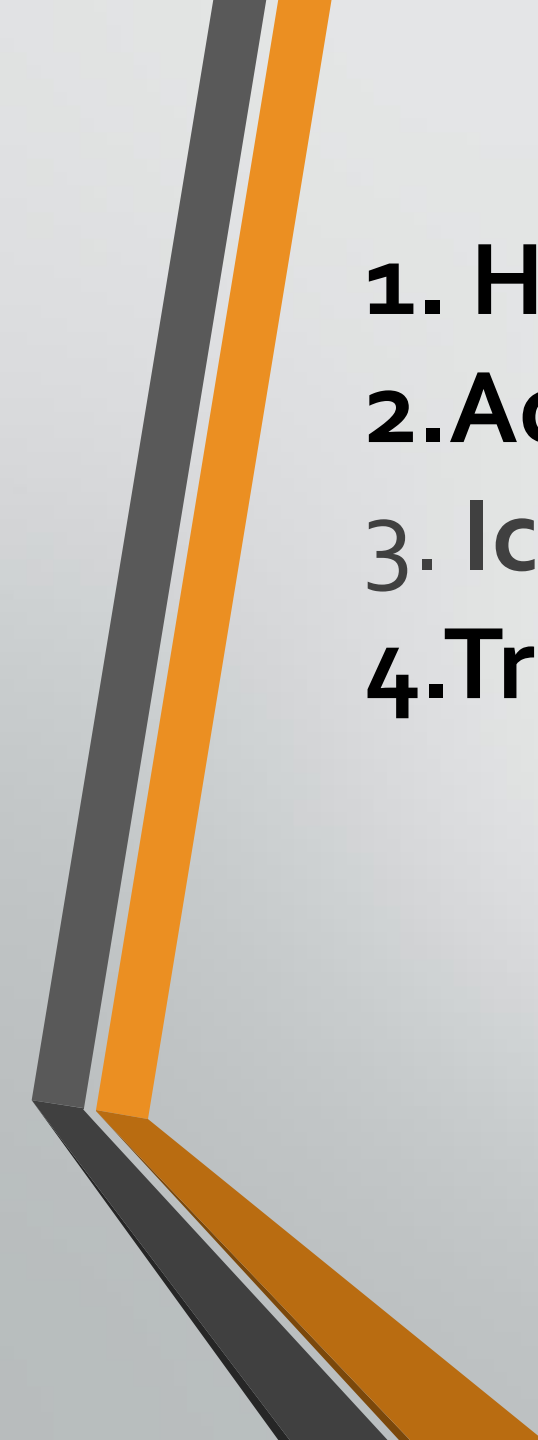
Integration – Visual Character

- **Visual integration relates mainly to the design of a building's facade(s).**

- (i) **Proportions and relationships**

- (ii) **Relative visual scale**

- (iii) **Articulation and richness**

- (iv) **Pattern and rhyme**

- (v) **Rhythm**

- **Horizontality and verticality**

Integration – Social and Functional Character

- **functional' and 'social' considerations are as much, and perhaps more, significant in successful integration .**

- **That is, how a building integrates with the social context and how it is designed to achieve its functional programme.**

- **It relates, for example, to how taxis arrive, queue and load at the entrance to a hotel.**

1. Human scale

2.Active frontages

3. **Iconography and visual cues to functionality**

4.Transition from public to private realm