It’s not what you say, it’s where you sit

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ABSTRACT
On February 12th, 2018, the Tongan islands were devastated by Tropical Cyclone Gita. It was one of the worst to hit the kingdom, which resulted in significant damages. With numerous buildings destroyed, the destruction of Tonga’s Fale Alea (legislative house) was, in essence, a considerable loss. The building represents a series of significant events that for over more than 150 years contributed to forging the country’s history. Such events were the arrival of Christianity, the settlement of early Europeans, the first Constitution, and political changes, to name a few. At present, the legislative assembly sessions have temporarily moved to the country’s national centre.

History gives insight into the original vernacular Tongan architecture as observed by early navigators and missionaries. It also shows the influence of European settlements on the evolution of architecture in Tonga over time.

This research project aims to explore possible design approaches and typologies for a new parliament building for Tonga. By studying how people meet in culture will help conceptualise architectural notions that will be the primary driver of this project. The design outcome will be a landmark, a symbol of national identity that would reflect Tonga, concerning its history, context, values, and culture.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A Tongan proverb: “Koe koloa ‘a Tonga koe fakamālō” translates “The treasure of Tonga is gratitude” whereas mālō is generally saying “thank you” and fakamālō is the act of doing such as sincerely express praise (fakafeta‘i) and gratitude (fakahounga‘i). In that sense, and as a Tongan, it is my obligation to fakamālō to all who, with their free time and space (Tā and Vā), have made this work possible.

I am indebted to my ancestors, who are behind us in the past (kuohili/kuongamu’a), yet have walked this earth before us, thus forward in front into the past, for all their prayers, hard work in the upbringing of the families, their teachings, support, and being role models in which all those qualities have been passed down through genealogy to me; from the front (kuohili/kuongamu’a) to the back (lolotonga). I am particularly grateful to them for being present through this journey I have taken. Though I have not seen them, I have been with them through genealogy resemblance in parents, relatives and people. This is their voice I hear, through genealogy (hoko-hoko) to the present. I leave this work for those who are in front of us in the future (kuohili/kuongamu’a), researchers and keepers of the land and culture (pukepuke fonua, mamahi‘i fonua mo e tauhi fonua) that have yet to walk this earth, thus backwards and behind into the future. May you continue telling our story (tala fonua).

Also thank you to the my brothers, sisters and ancestors of same Moana descendants yet keepers of Aotearoa for allowing me to settle in Tāmāki for the duration of my studies.

To my principal supervisor, Kristyna Kato and Associate supervisor, Assoc Prof. Christoph Schnoor PhD. for their ongoing invaluable support, always having time, their advice and allowing myself to conduct this research freely, mālō ‘aupito.

To my “Go to” supervisor, Tavakefai’ana (Semisi F. Potauaine) for always having time to engage in endless critical discussions (fakataha and talanoa); there was never a time you would said you were not available, up to the nights before hand-in and presentation. Thank you for introducing me to the Tonga Research Association 2019 which I thoroughly enjoyed and I look forward to more participation in the future.

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To Savea, Kalia, Brian, Sinsa, Mei, Vakamole and Kasiou I thank you for providing me with a home away from home so that I can fulfill my education in NZ and realize this dream. To my colleagues, Rudy, David, Giu, Vaiku I Putaia-Kaukau Ernie Aroua, Ruben, Carl (CPS), Ben, Hanese, Kelo, Kiner, Epierek and Tu‘ijo, and to my friends Viliami, Siau, Tafatu, Telani, Naia, Talaini, Laura, Rose, Fungang, Kanghi and Taufa‘utea you have all made my journey as a student in a foreign space a bearable and memorable one – mālō ‘aupito.

Lastly, to my late father, Solomon ‘Alipate Sr, for always believing in me and the words of fatherly advice and encouragement towards a future in Architecture. To my family (fale & kainga) in Tonga eiki, my mother, Lope ‘Alipate, my family (fale & kainga) in the States (Tokelau mama‘o), my parents Siaosi Sr and Pedi. To all my siblings ‘Usipuka, Simoa, Ma‘u, Tivinia, Solomon Jr, Seini, Paini, Halaevi, Siaosi Jr and Lois, my in-laws, Samuela, Mekia, Esterlina and the rest of my nephews and nieces – I thank you all for your prayers, support, understanding and care.

Where I may have missed out someone, I hope you can forgive me. I thank you all for your time (Tā) and space (Vā).

‘Ofa ongo moe Manatu ma ‘afo, Walter T. Tialekula
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1.0 GLOSSARY
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<th>Papālangi</th>
<th>western</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tala-tukungutu</td>
<td>verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tala-tukusino</td>
<td>non-verbal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sino</td>
<td>body</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ngatu</td>
<td>metaphor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hielaki</td>
<td>poetry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tufunga fa’u ta’anga</td>
<td>meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fakataha</td>
<td>dialogue/ talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takairoa</td>
<td>act of doing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faka</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taha</td>
<td>to tell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tala</td>
<td>void/ absent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noa</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haka’okā</td>
<td>joyful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mālie</td>
<td>harmony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potupotu-tatau</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tā</td>
<td>Space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vā</td>
<td>unobstructed</td>
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GLOSSARY

| Ta’ā | connect |
| Fakafelavei | intersect |
| Fakafehokotaki | Time and space |
| Tauhi Vā | Social duties |
| Fatongia | obligations |
| Kavenga | |
2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

As a Tongan, raised and mostly living Tonga, going to New Zealand for my university education in the architecture field has made me want to contribute to something bigger on a national level. In the last 10 years of working in architecture in Tonga, I have gathered a deeper appreciation for traditions and culture. I assured myself that if one day that I could be part of something big in Tonga, I would make sure that I would look deep into the past to revive lost treasures. It was not until I was about to leave for studies in February 2018 that cyclone Gita hit my home island. That morning after the cyclone, driving around the Nuku'alofa CBD I noticed the old parliament house completely demolished. It was at this point that I knew that my research project would be a new parliament house.

My project, therefore is situated in Tonga, a group of islands in the South Pacific (2000km northeast of Auckland). Tonga is made up of six main islands with 170 smaller islands. Tonga has a population of approximately 100,000. The existing site of the old parliament house is located in the heart of Nuku’alofa, surrounded by government buildings and other developments. Tonga is one of the very few surviving monarchies in the world. It is the only nation in the South Pacific that was not colonized by foreign rule. Despite this, Tonga today shows very little evidence of contemporary innately Tongan architecture. The infrastructure is dominated by western architecture and lack the traditional. With the interest and the need for a new parliamentary building, I see this as an opportunity to use this research project to test out ideas and typologies for a new significant building that will reflect not only how people meet but also some of Tonga’s culture.
2.2 PROJECT OUTLINE
This project is going to be a parliament building as a response to the destruction of the former building. Part of this project is working with information that the parliament office has given. It is then up for a critical challenge of the current brief provided by the office to include what would be most suitable in response to history, climate, the natural surrounding and context so as the future. Because Tonga is a low island and the site is beside the ocean, the treatment of elevation will be very much considered.

2.3 AIMS/OBJECTIVES
This project aims to study human space occupation based on understanding how people meet and have discussions, with a particular focus on Tongan tradition. This will then be used to develop architectural concepts for the project. I believe that because ways of communication are different across culture, a close study would benefit the project in having a closer understanding of how Tongans meet. The different spatial concepts derived from this research and abstract ideas will be translated into physical building as an answer to my quest. I believe that this project not only answers the objectives mentioned, but also could become a precedent for any future designs in Tonga. I hope that in the future this design can be used by anyone as a stepping stone for further research in the hope of giving back to the country and culture. This project hopes to inspire readers to come to an understanding that there is richness within the culture waiting to be discovered.

2.4 RESEARCH QUESTION
How can the notion of ‘meeting’ in a Tongan context generate design notions/suggestions for a new parliament building in Tonga?

2.5 SCOPE & LIMITATIONS
This project aims to study human space occupation based on understanding how people meet and have discussions, with a particular focus on Tongan tradition. Will then be used to develop architectural concepts for the project. The different spatial concepts derived from this research will be tailored to suit each space within the new parliament building design. Moreover because this project is aiming at searching for architectural concepts based on human occupation of space from a Tongan meeting perspective. There are many possibilities that this can also be used to conceptualise

Figure 3 - Tonga parliament after TC Gita
further meeting halls, concert halls not only from a Tongan perspective but also a papālangi (western ways) so as interior designing of meeting rooms or any room that has to do with the meeting.

2.6 STATE OF KNOWLEDGE?
At this point, there is not much written about how people meet in Tongan society except for the fact that they sit on the floor for every meeting. It is interesting an island that has an oral history rather than of written history and yet have not been colonised. Which suggest that although that Tongans did things the total opposite way as western people, they have lived so long because of their ways of life worked. My final project is a parliament building in which I plan to look around nearby islands in the pacific what sort of architecture they have if it reflects their culture. Fijian parliament building from the outside looks like their traditional house but inside is a British layout inside which symbolises the colonisation. Samoa and Papua both have a cultural looking parlaments that will be looked into in this research.

Before the parliament concept, Tongans would have meetings called fono on a community scale or the taumafa kava at a national level. As there are many types of meetings in Tongan culture to look at, the taumafa kava is the closest to a national level of a meeting which involves everyone in rank, from nobles and talking chiefs to commoners (watching). Interestingly, the kava ceremony seating is named after navigation vocabulary. Also a more in-depth look into this might have a connection of the kava to the ancient navigation. Also to add to this, a study of how the body defines space depending on how people orientate themselves amongst one another will help me better understand the kava ceremony.
3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW
3.1 Geographic location & history

Tonga is located in the South Moana (Pacific) waters about 1250 miles to the North East of Tāmāki Makaurau, Aotearoa. Tonga is made up of 6 main islands together with other smaller islands that make up a total of 170 islands approximately. There are six main islands; 'Eua, Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niuatoputapu and Niutao. These islands are a mix of volcanic islands and low lying coral islands. These are mainly inhabited islands with an overall combined population of approximately 100,000. Most of the population is made up of Tongans and the rest of foreigners.

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Foreign aid of supplies and starting up of business continued to push more colonial buildings in the capital, Nuku'alofa. A lot of prefabricated buildings were shipped over from Australia and New Zealand. The first buildings to be erected were the Royal Palace from 1865-1867, and the original parliament building in 1894. Other notable buildings at the time were the Free Wesleyan church president's residence, which was built in 1871. Up to the 20th century, much of the architecture was dominated by timber colonial buildings. Nowadays Tonga shows very little of any reflection of the traditional fale in residential and commercial buildings. Only one thing that seems to still be evident, is the large open idea is seen in large verandas and living rooms or carports where Tongans hang out most of the time.


By 1845, Taufa‘āhau Tupou I accepted Christianity under a new name George Tupou I. It was at the same time he united all of Tonga after years of tribal battles. Tonga is one of the very few surviving monarchies in the world. It is the only nation in the South Pacific that was not colonised by foreign rule. A "treaty of friendship" between the British and Tonga was signed in 1900 to allow the British to look after Tonga after European settlers and some of the chiefs tried to overthrow the king at the time (George Tupou II) and also to discourage German advances. It was not until 1970 when Tonga had their total independence from being a protected state under the British. Tonga then continued on to join the United Nations.

An approximate number of 216,000 of the Tongan population is living overseas.

Unlike western cultures, there was not a written history because Tongans did not write. However, historians and anthropologists estimated that it was around the 1500-1000BC when Tonga was first inhabited by the Lapita people from Southeast Asia. Other explorers such as Abel Tasman were amongst the first to discover Tonga from the western world, but it was when Captain James Cook arrived in 1774 that Tonga was explored and made visible to the outside world.


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3.2 Tā me Vā: A Time-Space Theory of Reality

The tā-vā theory of reality is based on the Tongan concepts and practices “time” and “space” (Ka’ili 2007; Māhina 2002, 2004, 2005; Māhina, Dudding, & Māhina-Tuai 2010; Māhina & Potauaine 2010, 2010; Māhina-Tuai 2010; Polautane 2010). Amongst a number of both its general and specific ontological and epistemological tenets are the following:

- that tā time and vā space as ontological entities are the common medium in which all things exist in reality;
- that tā time and vā space as epistemological entities are socially organised in different ways across cultures;
- that tā time and vā space are the abstract dimensions of fuo form and uho content of things in reality;
- that fuo form and uho content of things, are the concrete dimensions of tā time and vā space;
- that reality is conveniently divided into nature, mind and society, with both mind and society in nature;
- that tā time and vā space, like fuo form and uho content, of things are inseparable in reality, as in nature, mind and society;
- that reality, tā-vā time-space, fuo-uho form-content, is four-dimensional rather than three-dimensional;
- that all things in reality, tā-vā time-space, stand in eternal relations of exchange, giving rise to conflict or order; and conflict and order are of the same logical status, in that order is itself a form of conflict;
- the tā-vā theory of reality is so general and formal that it enters all types of disciplines and forms of social activity, with house-building / architecture as a disciplinary practice, on the one hand, and a human activity, on the other, is no exception, linking nature, mind and society (Māhina 2004; Potauaine 2010; also see Hawking 1998; Harvey 1990). 9

3.3 Verbal and nonverbal communication arrangements in cross-cultural situations

It is worth exploring to differentiate and contrast how two cultures, namely papālangi (western) is different from that of a Tongan in terms of communicating. Because each and everyone has their own culture that goes together with their way of communicating, culture and way of doing/understanding have a significant influence in the way message is conveyed and perceived within same cultures and across two or more different cultures. Joan Metge, a professor of anthropology at the University of Victoria, Wellington, stated that:

“...a good deal of miscommunication occurs between members of these groups because...”
the parties interpret each other’s words and actions in terms of their own understandings, assuming that these are shared when in fact they are not” “because of cultural difference that are not recognized because we all take our own culture very largely for granted and do not question its general applicability”.

Generally, papālangi culture, the emphasis of tala-tukungutu (verbal) in communication is often stronger than that of tala-tukusino (actions/ body movements). In Tonga, it is the direct opposite. Tongans, like many Pacific islands, would emphasize actions, tala-tukusino. Tala-tukungutu translates tala (to tell), tuku (to leave or give) ngutu (mouth/ tongue/ verbal) and similarly to tala-tukusino as sino (body movements). Both are the act of passing, leaving or giving message/ knowledge via ngutu (words) and sino (body movements). An example a papālangi would say something like yes followed with a gesture of nodding the head (optional) to bring stronger effect on the verbal message or in some case a high tone to add or to replace the gesture. A Tongan would nod and not say yes. However, many cases, a papālangi do not fully understand this and perceives it based on its cultural understanding without taking into account that the Tongan may not understand the culture. The Tongan’s head nod is then perceived by papālangi as being rude/senseless or in some cases think that Tongans do not understand.

Similarly, the other way around when papālangi speaks with many words, many situations Tongans get bored and become unresponsive because they are stronger in visual absorption/ digestion of messages.

In other words, Tongans listens with their eyes and speaks with their bodies which from a papālangi point of view is all under nonverbal communication. Not to say that Tongans do not talk much, but in some way to acknowledge that in most situation the visual and body movement is stronger and emphasised more as to be seen in how Tongans learn the art of building a traditional fale (house), nima-mea’a (fine arts) and other types of art/ work.
poetry as a line being a or part of a curve but not straight as an analogy. Tongan language is often referred to have lack of words which I can only agree to a certain extent because newer inventions and discoveries have a Tongan word for it yet. However, in saying that, I believe that Tongans had a more simplified way of looking at things especially at the time when there were not any European influences. Tongan artist and architecture lecturer Sēmisi F. Potauaine discusses how in Tonga there is one word for placenta, land and cemetery being all fonua.

It seems reasonable that how nature looked at things were all simplified in same Tongans simplified things with less word being used multiple times. Tongan language is often referred to have lack of words which I can only agree to a certain extent because newer inventions and discoveries have a Tongan word for it yet. However, in saying that, I believe that Tongans had a more simplified way of looking at things especially at the time when there were not any European influences. Tongan artist and architecture lecturer Sēmisi F. Potauaine discusses how in Tonga there is one word for placenta, land and cemetery being all fonua.

Furthermore, a tale in history that tells a story about climbing up a tree to the heavens, which means the tree the canoe was being carved out of this tree to sail to a place far away. Speaking metaphorically evokes humour, and it is also appealing than direct conversation. Humour and especially kava clubs people talk all the time metaphorically so do in poetry art or tufunga fa’u ta’anga. In an occasion, even talking chiefs or speeches are done with metaphor, and the response from the audience shows that they understand. Tongan, reverend Dr Tēvita Mohenona Puloka refers to Tongan heliaki in poetry as a line being a or part of a curve but not straight as an analogy.

Nowadays we create and divide things such as race and religion ethnicity, but in the true nature it will rain on everyone despite how we characterise things. In other cases where I look into other words being used for many things show that Tongans simplified things and not divided such as time and space are not divided or characterized like papālangi ways. It is also important to remember although Tongan is a small country, they have one of the highest literacy rates in the world being 99.4% in 2015 for adults age 15 and over as reported by UNESCO12 and also one of the highest number of PhDs per capita in the world13.

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3.4. Time and space arrangements in cross-culture

In papālangi ways of life, time is arranged quite differently from a Tongan. The papālangi would have time divided into specified purposes. Moreover, whatever the purpose of that time will be if not all the time, then most of the time, be purely used for that purpose and nothing more. The time for work will only be for work. Joan Metge states, “They order much if not all their work and domestic life by clock and calendar”14. Time for Tongans is quite different from the clock or calendar is less important than the actual event. The time accommodates to suit the event and not like a papālangi where it is opposite.14


From experience, that in family occasions, the time to start is defined by when the guest of honour arrives. Most of the time, the question asked on events/occasion is “kuo he ni ‘e faifekau?” meaning “is the reverend here?” So that the occasion can commence. Another example is when Tongans are at the airport, instead of asking when the flight departs (in time) it is common to hear “kuo to mai e Vaka?” meaning has the plane arrived? Another example being Tongan saying “kuo ha’a e tahi te toe fofar” meaning “it is high tide? Let us set sail.” So in this way, this paper concludes that Tongans use material things such as people, nature other objects or material things as a time marker. It is different from a papālangi that they use a system of measurement to count time as in a clock and a calendar. Papālangi confines and restricts time to a specified and defined event. In Tonga events will run until everything is said and done, time does not constrain the event. The human body then is also a time marker — two different cultures with different ways of ordering time.

As for the order of space, papālangi also divides their spaces into specific functions. Such space caters for public, semi-private or private, meaning living room, veranda, dining and any other space in a building. Because hard lines define space, occupants without knowing are directed to move into places purposely by the design of space allocation. In this way, people can only eat, sleep, bath in the designated space. There is no freedom of choice. Tongans version of space ordering is like time; it is not divided. Functions and space allocation and division is done so by the orientation of human bodies inside the open fale. There are no walls inside a fale, but only an open space. In this way it is also fluidity in the sense of how space is defined is by how people sit and orientate themselves around each other. A sure sitting for eating, sleeping, weaving and so on. If there is a real need for a separate space, that itself would be just a separate fale yet still open on the inside. An example is a feleoko (shed). Tongans also use few words but multiple applications is seen as words are simplified not every word for everything as papālangi would. Which may also link to how social connections are very strong in Tonga, which I will further explore in the coming chapters. Division and characterisation are then seen in most but not all, ways of living in Tonga. It seems that the idea of openness, fluid and inclusiveness are emphasized more.

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In papālangi ways of life, time is arranged quite differently from a Tongan. The papālangi would have time divided into specified purposes. Moreover, whatever the purpose of that time will be if not all the time, then most of the time, be purely used for that purpose and nothing more. The time for work will only be for work. Joan Metge states, “They order much if not all their work and domestic life by clock and calendar”14. Time for Tongans is quite different from the clock or calendar is less important than the actual event. The time accommodates to suit the event and not like a papālangi where it is opposite.14


From experience, that in family occasions, the time to start is defined by when the guest of honour arrives. Most of the time, the question asked on events/occasion is “kuo he ni ‘e faifekau?” meaning “is the reverend here?” So that the occasion can commence. Another example is when Tongans are at the airport, instead of asking when the flight departs (in time) it is common to hear “kuo to mai e Vaka?” meaning has the plane arrived? Another example being Tongan saying “kuo ha’a e tahi te toe fofar” meaning “it is high tide? Let us set sail.” So in this way, this paper concludes that Tongans use material things such as people, nature other objects or material things as a time marker. It is different from a papālangi that they use a system of measurement to count time as in a clock and a calendar. Papālangi confines and restricts time to a specified and defined event. In Tonga events will run until everything is said and done, time does not constrain the event. The human body then is also a time marker — two different cultures with different ways of ordering time.

As for the order of space, papālangi also divides their spaces into specific functions. Such space caters for public, semi-private or private, meaning living room, veranda, dining and any other space in a building. Because hard lines define space, occupants without knowing are directed to move into places purposely by the design of space allocation. In this way, people can only eat, sleep, bath in the designated space. There is no freedom of choice. Tongans version of space ordering is like time; it is not divided. Functions and space allocation and division is done so by the orientation of human bodies inside the open fale. There are no walls inside a fale, but only an open space. In this way it is also fluidity in the sense of how space is defined is by how people sit and orientate themselves around each other. A sure sitting for eating, sleeping, weaving and so on. If there is a real need for a separate space, that itself would be just a separate fale yet still open on the inside. An example is a feleoko (shed). Tongans also use few words but multiple applications is seen as words are simplified not every word for everything as papālangi would. Which may also link to how social connections are very strong in Tonga, which I will further explore in the coming chapters. Division and characterisation are then seen in most but not all, ways of living in Tonga. It seems that the idea of openness, fluid and inclusiveness are emphasized more.
3.5 Tongan architecture

As years pass by, lesser and lesser traces of the traditional Tongan architecture is found or in any way reflected in the modern architectural design approaches. Although the country has never been colonised, the influence of papālangi on architecture is strongly evident. The image of Tonga has become somewhat unjustified, not being able to keep up with the fast (ta) moving currents of the ever-changing global economic space (vā).

An increasing number of commercial buildings plus new buildings in the CBD continues affecting the whole image of Tonga, a denial and no link or reflection of the traditional architecture. Perhaps to an extent, suit a new way of living and also to suit climate change as better resilient.

figure 10 - Sia‘atoutai Chapel
By use of new technology and materials, the right composition together with design could see benefit. However, in saying that the aesthetics do not show any connection. As explained before in this chapter, spaces for Tongans were never divided like how papālangi divides space to specific functions. Tongan architecture is all about open spaces where all functions are decided by body placement and orientation with no physical wall partitions. The quality of the Tongan architecture is the openness experience and the ability of the fale to keep it warm in cold seasons and cool during summer seasons. Because Tongan architecture did not have any dividing walls within, there are different typologies of separate fale types that cater to each function rather than one large building with divided spaces.

Traditional Tongan Houses

Falehanga – A working house for women, mainly weaving.
Falela’i’a – where the deceased’s funeral is held or where chiefs and kings are laid to rest or await death.
Falesia – for fishermen to perform their rituals before they thread out to the ocean.
Favale – bathroom
Faletu – a clinic or hospital-like facility

Fale Alofasau – boat shed and where fishing equipment is stored.
Falehaau – a meeting house
Faletufunga – a house of refuge for people seeking shelter and needs
Faletu – Parliament house

The structures of the fale as said by Professor Toluta’u from the University of Hawaii: “The impact of the word is the backbone and foundation of the Tongan tradition.” “These very words help to really understand the significance of the Tongan architecture weaving together with the culture.”

Figure 11 - Meeting circle in a Falehau

References:
To further understand the standard Tongan fale or the “fale fakamanuka”. The pou (post) sits freely on itself that supports the rest of the central platform the fale cladding attached. It was made of kava, toi or toa for its strength and durability. Lalango is the beam that runs from the top of pou to another. Toka connects from beam to the other on top to keep a steady structure thus running from one top of the beam to a beam parallel from another side. The to’ofufuloto then again, runs along the perpendicular to the toka for supporting the roof structure. The teke then goes out of the to’ofufuloto to create the primary support of the roof form. It rests on the to’ofufuloto. The teke then is like a web pushing out the rafter/batten like member that then takes or shape of the roof is connected. The top ridge board like member of the roof is called a tau’olunga. It is said in the oral history that when early people arrived they overturned the canoe and took shelter. In such way the roof of the fale looks like a downside up Vaka. The main concept is the open spaces which although western designs are starting to overtake the face of the country. The need for open space is what most people ask for because that is where everyone is used to hanging out. The open verandas, big living room and kitchen so as carpents are signs that Tongans still live every day in the open because that is just how the mind for them feel. It is in the blood not to be a divide.

3.5 Natural Disaster & Sustainability
Tonga has always been vulnerable to natural disasters such as cyclones, tsunamis, and earthquakes. The great Muuna (pacific) rim of fire approximately holds 4 out of 5 of all earthquake in a year. Most which cannot be felt but there are aftershocks, of minor underground plate movements. It is always the concern; the likeness of a tsunami is to occur. Tsunamis are caused by the movement of plates under the seabed. In 2009 Tonga was hit by a tsunami that also affected Samoa. The death was reported about 10. Because the waves travelled far, it was only seen on its furthest island Tonga, Niu to the (North) and very less felt or seen. Lastly is the tropical cyclones, Tonga is well known for its ongoing tropical cyclone seasons. In Feb 2018, Tonga was hit by powerful CAT 6 cyclone Gita. It damaged most trees and roof of properties. Gita took down also the old parliament house, which lead to why I wanted to do that project.

I was in Tonga at the time of cyclone Gita when it happened at night. The loud noise of things being shattered and the noise on top of the roof as I can almost hear the roof cladding about to be blown away. We were in our kitchen sitting with our feet up, as water started to flood into the house. The next morning I found out that the roof of our neighbour house was laying in our backyard. I later drove around the village and then left in Tongatapu. It was measured at 8.1 with total death of 192 in total (other countries that were affected). Lastly is the tropical cyclones, Tonga is well known for its ongoing tropical cyclone seasons. In Feb 2018, Tonga was hit by powerful CAT 6 cyclone Gita. It damaged most trees and roof of properties. Gita took down also the old parliament house, which lead to why I wanted to do that project.
After Gita, the Parliament temporarily relocated to the former Cultural Centre at Tofoa. This temporary move was outside of the Nuku’alofa CBD boundary, and parliament had to stretch the legal district boundaries to include the new location. It is essential to bring to light that the parliament has now been into two locations and will relocate back to hopefully a new location.

A study of the likely extent of a tsunami in terms of water height was helpful to aid design in terms of elevations and levels. The lesson from Gita is that the parliament needs to be still operating in times of natural disaster to make sure the government is functioning.

The chosen site (original site) has full access to sunlight, ventilation and views. The design attempts to maximise upon these site benefits. Sustainability here does not refer to the use of technologies such as solar panels but instead have less of these technologies in it. Sustainability, in this project, is having architecture make it maintainable. This design will investigate different ways that components and elements of the building can achieve more than just being what itself is; thus have a contribution to sustainability solutions, e.g. multi-level floors cantilevered as shading devices also. Unlike developed countries, Tonga does not have public services such as wastewater and sewage. A design, allocation and provision for services as such are looked at in a general approach but considered in general.

figure 14 - Tsunami damage in Niuafou
4.0 RESEARCH ANALYSIS
4.1 What is fakataha? (Meeting) and what is talanoa? (Discussion)

We, in general, often perceive fakataha (meeting) as individuals having conversations. Definition by the online oxford dictionary is “an assembly of people for a particular purpose, especially for formal discussion”[21]. Clear distinction between fakataha (meeting) and talanoa (conversation) should be emphasized enough so that one is not mistaken for the other. Therefore in this paper, a meeting is two or more individuals coming together for conversation/discussion (talanoa).

In Tonga, a meeting is referred to as fakataha and conversation is talanoa. Unlike the English definition for a meeting, fakataha is not limited to only individuals but can also mean other things, objects, living or non-living things. The word fakataha can be broken down into two words, faka and taha. Faka is to cause or allow to, and taha, on the other hand, means one. Thus, fakataha is two or more things being gathered/combined or come together into one entity for a particular purpose, and such use is to talanoa (talk).

Talanoa can also be broken down into two words, tala (to tell) and noa (zero or mute). Put together, tala-noa then means a critical yet harmonious conversation/discussion (tala) that aims at resulting at a point of equilibrium/zero (noa).[22]

The notion of noa as mute in a sense can also mean not having anything to say, although it means not being able to speak. Thus conversation/discussion arrives at a point of having nothing else to talk about. Such an outcome is mālie (satisfactory) and results in potupotu-tatau (harmony).

From a Tā-Vā (Time and Space) Philosophy of Reality “(see to Tā-Vā section) perspective. An attempt to bring an in-depth understanding of this discussion. Faka is a Tā (time) component, a verb; the act of doing as explained above. Taha, on the other hand, is Vā (space) component, a noun stating the space between participants or things. Similarly, tala is a Tā (time) component a verb; the act of storytelling as explained above. Noa, on the other hand, is Vā (space) component, a noun stating the space between thoughts or things. “Time (tā) is definer of space (vā) & space is composer of time, as form (fuo) is definer of content (uho) & content is composer of form.”[23]

Faka-taha (meeting) and tala-noa (conversation/discussion) therefore can be seen as two different/asymmetrical things, that when they intersect with each other, one becomes symmetrical/mirror (‘ata) of the other and can be seen as one entity. Because fakataha is about gathering many things into one entity, talanoa also does the same in the sense that it is about gathering many thoughts and opinions into one idea. It is a transition from lahi (plural/multiple) to taha (singular/mirror).
single) or merely the act of simplifying. Simplifying physical entity as in meeting is called fakafaiangofua (to conduct with nothing to oppose) and non-physical entity (thoughts in this case) is fakamahinongofua (cause to understand with nothing to oppose). Fakataha deals with a physical entity (in this case, individuals) whereas talanoa is about thoughts/intangible. Together they reduce from many to one.

Why do people meet?
Humans meet each other for various reasons such as to be loved, to belong to a group or for safety. Other claims that human connection with other human beings is essential for releasing hormones that are imperative for human growth. In a Tongan context, a meeting/social connection is a big part of life and called Tauhi vā; literally keeping space, in other words, keeping good relationships with each other. Tauhi vā is very fundamental for balance and harmony, such as in the nature world.

American psychologist Abraham Maslow stated in his famous pyramid of needs. A theory of the hierarchy of human needs that is divided into 3 types. Below the pyramid is the basic needs, meaning food, warmth, water etc. Second on above is the psychological needs, the need of being loved or belongingness. On top of the pyramid is self-fulfilment which is about individual accomplishment. In a Tongan context as they do not quite work in the same way In Tonga, everything is oriented around social connections, thus tauhi vā. All needs evolve around tauhi vā. In that sense, tauhi vā is where all needs fakafelavei/fakafehokotaki (intersect). In order to achieve one’s needs, one must nurture his her vā with others.

Dr Pamela Rutledge, director of research at Fielding graduate University says: “Needs are not hierarchical. Life is messier than that. Needs are, like most other things in nature, an interactive, dynamic system, but they are anchored in our ability to make social connections. Belonging to a community provides a sense of security and agency that makes our brains happy and helps keep us safe.”

A Tā-Vā (Time and Space) Philosophy of Reality perspective is an attempt to bring in-depth understanding of this discussion, Tongan Architect Charmaine ‘Ilaiu explains that if space (vā) is nurtured between the time marker, such as people and things then the results are beauty and harmony. To nurture one’s vā, each person has a social duty (fatongia) to perform. “In performing fatongia, one reaps from the reciprocal or cyclical benefits of ma’uma’uluta, mālie, or beauty, ongoongo, or recognition, lāngilangi, or honour.”

‘Ilaiu also continues to say that: “Māhina describes society as the horizontal vā to lips, or immediate family, and kin. Simultaneously, as Māhina explains, society also maintains vertical relationship to ‘eiki. The divine representations of ‘eiki were once the high chiefs, and now at national level they are represented by Tongan royalty and aristocrats. Also, ‘eiki at a local level is the extended elders of one’s immediate family; including fo’ou (female) or ‘ulumotu’a (male) (Māhina 1992).”

How and who do people meet?
How people meet will depend on the specific needs of each social grouping according to social clusters at different proximity scales; fousa (country), kolo (village), the ‘api (church) and ‘api fale (home/family) Tongans are people-oriented in society. It is still common to see friends, relatives, co-workers that one may know randomly/informally run into each other. Perhaps it is because Tonga is a small island with a population that is still growing. There is a saying in Tonga that “everyone knows everyone”. A Tongan can quickly tell which village someone is from based on their...
[kava ceremony] is where “cultural and historical conflicts in the social process are symmetrically mediated transforming them from a condition of felekeu crisis to a state of maau stasis to produce harmony.”

This meeting is made up of the tu' i (king), nōpele/hou'eiki (Chiefs), matāpule (talking chiefs) and tu'a (commoners). There is 'ilo kava (chief kava) and there is informal kava and other forms of the kava ceremony. Taumafa kava is the highest ranked kava ceremony because the king is the ‘olovaha or the highest ranked and it is primary for a national purpose. Taumafa kava is the main focus of this project in terms of meeting typology.

Whereas back in the villages, fono or sometimes called fakataha fakakolo (community meeting), is held within a kolo (village) or a vahefonua (district) or a group of villages that is under a chief. Such a meeting is made up of the chief, talking chief and the people (see diagram). In this circle is where people are told about national and communal duties purpose. For example, if a king passes away, a chief will gather its people to discuss fatongia (social duties) for the funeral ceremony and so forth.

Finally, are the smallest meeting, the family meeting or fakataha fakafāmili? A family meeting can be the elders discussing duties for a function such as a birthday, funeral, or for any other purpose to keep the family together. Every matter is discussed to find solutions. A similar meeting type could also be a meeting between a couple and their children, an ongoing nurturing or falefale of the young to better cope with life as they grow up, their chores and duties.

On a national level, the taumafa kava (kava ceremony) is where “cultural and historical conflicts in the social process are symmetrically mediated transforming them from a condition of felekeu crisis to a state of maau stasis to produce harmony.”

This meeting is made up of the tu’i (king), nōpele/hou’eiki (Chiefs), matāpule (talking chiefs) and tu’a (commoners). There is ‘ilo kava (chief kava) and there is informal kava and other forms of the kava ceremony. Taumafa kava is the highest ranked kava ceremony because the king is the ‘olovaha or the highest ranked and it is primary for a national purpose. Taumafa kava is the main focus of this project in terms of meeting typology.

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When do people meet?

People meet at specific times, now and then, if there is an occasion coming up that requires attention for fatongia (social duties) to be carried out between members of a family, between villages and between people and king or chief. This is in two way as the other does the same in return to the other. This is all part of the tauhi vā to keep everything in harmony. A public meeting such as the fono fakakolo (community meeting) and taumafa kava (national meeting) is traditionally held out in an open space called an ‘atā or sometimes referred to as mala’e. People come together and sit down in the field to take part in the meeting.
Nowadays, church halls are the venue, but historically, a Tongan falehau (meeting house) was where older men went to discuss with the chief or chiefs and talk chief have meetings with the king. Fono (community meeting) was not limited to actual meeting houses or buildings back in the days, but they were also held out in the open field called the ‘atā. Although halls have taken over these meeting venues, the tapu (sacred) kava ceremony is still performed in the ‘atā despite the changes of time.

Sitting on the floor or the ground is something that is very common in Tonga and is still well-practised at different levels of meeting especially in fakafale (family meeting, derived from families being called fale as in house of a family) and large gatherings that are in open fields, such as in Tongan secondary schools. Sitting is still seen as a prominent way of respect.18 Tongans sit on the floor like most maoris and maoris when entering a house but in a western concept, people are expected to stand up when people of high ranked walks in.19 In old images of Tonga when missionaries and Europeans arrived show that Tongans sat on the ground or floor in was not until the European arrived that chairs started to be part of the meetings. Hierarchy before was not about the elevation of seating but was about how people oriented themselves. It is considered a sign of respect to say tulou (excuse me) if one walks in front of the other.

19 Joan Metge, Talking Past, 13-14.
In Tonga, as well as in churches, there are mats where people sit during gatherings. Not only is it a temporary definer of space, it is a symbol of where people show respect in the act of sitting down and becoming in touch with the ground as the foremost way of showing respect. Similar to how space in nature or the fale is temporarily defined by human orientation and arrangement, thus so is the mat. (See other chapter for further discussion on space)

4.2 Proxemics & psychology of sitting position

Proxemics, as defined by the online oxford dictionary as “The branch of knowledge that deals with the amount of space that people feel is necessary to set between themselves and others.” Edward T. Hall, a cultural anthropologist, defined proxemics as “The interrelated observations and theories of human’s use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture.”

In Tonga, there is no real one word to best describe proxemics as one, but commonly vā is used as space. The two words used when discussing proxemics are extensions of vā, as in vāofi and vāmāma’o are used to describe proximity between two things. When vāofi is broken down into two words, vā (space) and ofi (close). Vāofi refers to how close something is or the nearness person sitting down and at times is said at the start of a speech as a sign of respect by someone who is talking to an audience that is sitting. In most households in Tonga, as well as in churches, there are mats where people sit during gatherings. Not only it is a temporary definer of space, it is a symbol of where people show respect in the act of sitting down and becoming in touch with the ground as the foremost way of showing respect. Similar to how space in nature or the fale is temporarily defined by human orientation and arrangement, thus so is the mat. (See other chapter for further discussion on space) of the duration of the funeral. The saying “*faka e fele ke fele telemo*” means to unroll the mat so that participants can sit and start the conversations/ discussions. During a funeral the mat will move from the home, to the church, to the cemetery, wherever it is placed because a type of home. This is not only true in funerals. In most households in Tonga, as well as in churches, there are mats where people sit during gatherings. Not only it is a temporary definer of space, it is a symbol of where people show respect in the act of sitting down and becoming in touch with the ground as the foremost way of showing respect. Similar to how space in nature or the fale is temporarily defined by human orientation and arrangement, thus so is the mat. (See other chapter for further discussion on space)
between one thing and another, which is then furthered to the word vāvāofi when it is between many things. In the same sense, vāmama’o is broken down into two words, vā (space) and mama’o (far). Vāmama’o refers to how distant one between one thing and another, which is then furthered to the word vāvāmama’o when it is between many things. In the context of this discussion, proxemics is about the space between people.

Horizontal
According to Hall, human’s use of space directly impacts social communication. It is vital to understand proxemics to better help architects organise spaces not only within a building but also in a broader context such as urban planning. Proxemics is a hidden part of social communication that can only be found through observation but yet undeniably impacted by culture. Everyone’s personal space is something that if entered without being permitted, can make one feel uncomfortable. That can be true in a bus or train but can be different in a crowd of many people in a concert standing. In such a case eye contact and hand touch becomes a concern likely to cause the same uncomfortable feeling. While that is true, Hall emphasised that it can also be different across other cultures and he did not do research in the Pacific Tongans are very family and community-oriented, and in that sense, proximity is expected. An example of this mentioned in one of the chapters is that most homes have a little gate to allow moving from one neighbour to another. In this way a community can be seen as almost an extended family as everyone is connected. Ways of life such as asking the neighbour for salt and sugar is still seen today, which adds to this.

4.3.0 Nofo’anga (position),anga tangutu (posture) & nga’unu fakasino (body movement/language)

4.3.1 Nofo’anga (position)
Either in an enclosed or open space, where one positions itself to others dramatically influences how an individual in the gathering is perceived within them and from the outside. We usually do so without knowing the psychological side of it. Unlike proxemics that deals with space and distance between individuals, this psychological side of the discussion deals with position and arrangement. Although the seating arrangement is not part of the actual conversation/discussion, it is a non-verbal language which links many other things such as facial
expression and eye contact, to name a few. An early contribution to studies of seating positions by Professor Mark Knapp suggested that also the context of meeting/seating position & orientation affects how we judge others. For example, intimate couples prefer to sit side by side whenever possible, but in a crowded restaurant where the tables are close together this is not possible and the couples are forced to sit opposite each other in what is normally a defensive position\textsuperscript{34}. According to Knapp, the following are different ways to look at meetings in terms of where people sit.

\textbf{Corner Position}

This position is where both parties sit perpendicular to each other at perpendicular sides of the table. A power/opposite end position with an ally position. It is a suitable position for casual conversation, allows good eye contact and exchange of gestures. Unlike sitting on each opposite sides that suggest a defensive impression but has a blurred sense to it as a partial barrier. This set up is a platform where two people can talk without a significant separation yet a partial barrier.

\textbf{Co-operative Position}

When two or more people work together on a task they often sit at this position. When going into a co-operative mode, people usually sit this way naturally.

\textbf{Competitive, defensive, opposing position}

When two parties sits opposite each other like gunslingers. There is a sense of boundary between them psychologically. It naturally can lead to creating negative energy between them.

\textbf{Power Position}

The usual rectangular seating around a table has either ends as the power seat. The reason is that everyone can see this seat and similarly, the person in this seat can see everyone else. Because this is the most clearly defined position and focused, it is naturally easier to lead from this position.

\textbf{Independent}

The best way is to sit on any of the flanks but opposite should be an empty seat.

\textbf{Three or more people}

\textbf{Power Position}

The usual rectangular seating around a table has either ends as the power seat. The reason is that everyone can see this seat and similarly, the person in this seat can see everyone else. Because this is the most clearly defined position and focused, it is naturally easier to lead from this position.

\textbf{Independent}

The best way is to sit on any of the flanks but opposite should be an empty seat.

\textbf{Figure 13 - Children going to church}

\begin{itemize}
Parliament seating

Opposite End
A model of seating that based on a old non-democratic system, days of the Clergy and Noblemen in Britain. It is often confused nowadays as a democratic model. This seating originated from the first meeting that was held in a nave of a chapel. The seating started to elevate after Magna Carta formalised a division of power in 1215AD. The typology is just as it is named, opposing. A typology found in many British colonies.

Semicircle
A typology adopted from the Greek and roman theatre style that Europe started to become popular in the 19th century. This typology is one entity combined all together, opposite to the opposition layout.

Horseshoe
A mix of both the semicircle and the semicircle. The opposing layout bent into a semicircle at one end. This type is commonly used by British colonies. Opposite to the opposition layout.

Circle
One of the youngest typology, was popularized by German architect Gunther Behnisch when he introduced to the West Germany parliament chamber. A symbol of democratic equality, used by only a few numbers of parliaments but does include Samoa.

Classroom
The classroom seating is very common in non-democratic countries. Everyone sits on one side; behind each other like a row. It is very common in communist countries such as Russia, Korea and China.

In all seating positions/arrangements mentioned above, all confined to both furnishing layout and space design. People are forced to sit at a defined position based on the material things we design and place in space. For example, a standard rectangular table immediately when chairs are placed around it automatically has some sense of hierarchy to it. It is different from square tables and circular tables. A regular rectangle table will have a powerful

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15 XML, Parliament (Kiev, 2016), 6-21.
16 XML, Parliament, 12.
17 XML, Parliament, 11.
18 XML, Parliament, 14.
19 XML, Parliament, 16.
20 XML, Parliament, 16.
Images and drawings from history show that Tongans, despite their ability to construct large canoes and houses, still sat on the ground with no chair or anything to sit on. Unlike today when architecture generally defines spaces and its functions, Tongans defined space and functions according to how they oriented themselves around each other in a house or outside in the open, and there was not a table but the ground/floor. In this sense, the definition of space was fluid and temporary. Such sitting arrangements can still be found mainly at school assemblies and kava clubs in large halls.

In addition to this, most office meeting room arrangements in the parliamentary seating, for example, hold duties, and hierarchy. This contrast to the context of a Tongan meeting out in an open field or an open house, similar hierarchy does not have a fixed location but yet can just as easily be defined once people start to sit in the meeting. A similar analogy is a brick arch and where the strongest focused point is somewhere in the air, where all forces are focused. Similarly, power is floating in space. To know where to sit is to know which duties and roles each carry.

XML, TheMuseum (Amsterdam: XML, 2016), 42.
4.3.2 Posture (anga tangutu)
Nowadays in Tonga in certain situations we meet people by sitting down on a chair, a bench or anything but hardly on the floor. Whether it is at a café, office, school or even church, since chairs started to show, people have been sitting mainly on chairs. However sitting on the floor or on the ground is something that is very common in Tonga and still practised at different levels of meeting to an extent, especially in fakafāmili/ fakafale (family meetings) and large gathering that is in open fields such as school assemblies and national meetings notably the kava ceremony.
Sitting is seen as an ultimate way of respect in Tonga, an act of respect and humbling one’s self. Men sit on the floor/ground fakata’ane (with legs crossed) and women fāite (with legs bent and folded to the side). Old images of Tonga show that Tongans sat on the ground. It was not until chairs were brought over to Tonga by early Europeans then it started to be part of the everyday living in Tonga. It is also considered a sign of respect to say tulou (excuse) if one walks in front of the other person sitting down. When saying tulou, usually it is followed with a slight bending of the head as a sign of respect also. At times it is said at the start of a speech by someone who is talking to an audience that is sitting as a sign of respect. (See Kava chapter)

4.3.3 Ngā’unu fakasino (Body Movement/language)
A typical scenario of the meeting is that people move into a building, through corridors and doors to arrive at a meeting room or a café, for example. Because meetings in a Tongan context is in ‘atā/ nature (open field) or the fale/ falehau (open house; not partition) body movement in the journey to arrive at the open field or a house is organic, as no hard straight lines were evident in the houses or even in nature. So in that sense, there is a contrast between a linear journey and a more organic journey. When people sit on the floor in a meeting, and people decide to walk out, in or within the gathering, they usually walk by bending their heads/neck. Depending on how close one person is to another and
where he/she is walking to, there is crawling, moving around with the knees, walking with back bent over and walking with neck bent. It is considered a way of respect to others. Such movements are evident in if not all, most forms of meeting that is on the ground or the floor. Outside of these human body-defined spaces, people can walk normally. It is only within the meeting that this sense of sacredness makes people offer respect without being told to do so.

4.4.0 KAVA, VAKA & FALE: Connect, Intersect and separate

Kava a symbol of Fonua (land): As fonua is a symbol of kava. Because this research project aims at studying how people meet in culture, kava ceremonies have been selected not only because they align with this parliament house project from a national scale of meeting, but because kava is a symbol of fonua. The story of the kava as told, that once upon a time an ancient Tu’i (King) Tonga from a voyage, arrived on an island named ‘Eueiki. This island only had a couple (the father was Fevanga and the mother was Fefafa) with their daughter named Kava who had leprosy. The king’s men went around the island to look for food while the king took shade under a kape (giant taro) plant. It was a time of drought. The king’s men in search of food met the couple and asked if they had food because his majesty was there. The couple said that they would prepare food for his majesty. The couple went to harvest the taro plant and noticed from far away that the king was taking shade under it. They ended up sacrificing their only child and baked her in an ‘umu (earth oven). They told the king that they had sacrificed their child, and it is in the earth oven. The king was moved by this and acknowledged the sacrifice and instructed that Kava remained unearthed and the king returned to Tonga. Days pass and the couple noticed two plants growing on the head side of Kava and the feet. They saw a mouse biting off the plant growing on the head side and ran sideways almost unable to run straight. The mouse then got to the plant that grew at the feet and was able to run normally again. The couple then knew that one was bitter and one was sweeter.

Lo’au, a sailor in Tongan myth, arrived in ‘Eueiki and, the couple explained to him the story of the unusual plants. Lo’au told the couple who to prepare the plants and

Figure 25 - Kava Plant
directed that they take the two plants Kava from the head and tō (sugarcane) from the feet to the king in Tonga. The couple did so, and when they arrived in Tonga they met the king and explained how Lo‘au directed the preparation of the kava. The kava was then prepared and was offered to the king’s talking chief to taste before the king drank it. The sugarcane was distributed to everyone participating in the kava ceremony after they have kava. The kava became known as a symbol of duties and obligations as the couple had sacrificed their only daughter in the process. It is also said that to maintain harmony in the fonua (land) one must do their social duties (tauhi vā) which are at times hard and bitter as Kava but reap the sweetness of sugarcane after. When a person is bestowed a title, before the kava is consumed, a talking chief would say “koe fonua ena” meaning here is the land (symbolised with the kava) and drinking it is sealing one’s covenant to uphold its obligations to the fonua (land) to the very best of its ability.

Figure 26 - Taumafai Kava Seating
Kava, vaka and fale are sacred material, social places and structures. Tongan anthropologist, Mahina explains that kava, vaka (canoe) and fale (house) are all connected to each other. A kava ceremony is performed in a fale, at a point where kava, fale (house) and vaka (canoe) all intersect. Mahina states that ‘As a tapu (sacred) social structure, kava is formed, performed and reformed at the point of intersection of vaka and fale as tapu (sacred) material structures’. It is a changing temporal-formal, spatial-substantial and functional relationship between kava, vaka and fale.

This is seen in how the kava ceremony is seated like a vaka and also the names of the seating uses a canoe/navigation vocabularies. It also represents sitting inside a fale, which Mahina states that within a kava ceremony a vaka and a fale intersects as sacred materials/structures within this sacred social structure of kava. Mahina states that ‘As a ceremony and an art form, kava functions chiefly as a vehicle through which cultural and historical conflicts in the social process are symmetrically mediated transforming them from a condition of felekeu crisis to a state of maau stasis to produce harmony.’

A kava ceremony is temporal because it is made up of people by people for the people. In such way people are always moving, always temporal and fluid; people connect to meet, intersect to share and separate again as they depart the ceremony. It is also at the same time formal because it is a sacred ceremony. When the kava ceremony is seated, they sit in a shape of a vaka.

A clear connection of how vaka is connected to the kava ceremony is with the naming of the seating positions with vaka or oceanic navigation terms. The midway front is called ‘olovaha (compass), seating along the sides is called ‘alofi (rowers) and the end where the kava bowl is situated, taula which means anchor.

The idea that in a kava ceremony
participants sit like a vaka connects it to a vaka but also with the kava ceremony being in a fale, the vaka (hull) itself is seen as the roof of the fale. Connection of vaka to fale is mentioned in oral history that Tongans arrived in their canoes and turned them upside up with supports as shading and shelter. So in summary; kava is performed in a vaka seating shape inside a fale that three connect intersect and separate as the artist, Sēmisi Potauaine explains.

My argument to the idea suggested by Māhina and Potauaine is that the fale part of their discussion is based on the actual physical fale but have not considered that royal taumafa kava ceremony is also done in an open field and that will defeat the idea of the fale being part of the reasoning. My position is that I add to this is that the body movement which defines the fale form just as the seating arrangement defines the vaka shape. In this way, the idea is more fluid, dynamic and non-reliant on fale (material) to define anything (seating and also the fale idea itself) nor used to derive another thing. When people move in to start forming the vaka circle, they immediately sit down when they see their seating location/ position. So moving from the outside to the circle is walking to sitting. Any other movement around or within the circle is done in a way which one lowers its elevation while moving as a sign of respect; crawling, walking on knees, walking with back bent forward and even walking up straight will still include a slight bend in the neck forward. Similar body movements are also seen in meetings in a house. It is a form of respect as hierarchy is not about elevation (vertical) but horizontal way people orientate themselves. In such way there is a sense of an invisible form, like a fale. Pictures show Tongan fale had a low entry point which connects with the idea of how people in the circle slightly bend their head and back when entering the meeting realm.

"The vaka is, therefore, a “downside-up” fale and the fale an “upside-down” vaka. The point of fakafelavai (intersection) between vaka and fale is defined by fakahoko (connection) and fakamāvae (separation), where one is the equal and opposite of the other." Māhina

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Similarly if one moves towards another in a fale, body movement is the same as seen in the open. This also makes sense why in old Tongan the word for family was fale (now the word family is used instead) in the sense that it's not just the fale that shelters that family but the congregation one belongs to, one shows similar body moments as respect in times of meetings. It is at this point that all kava, vaka and fale are defined by human orientation and movement. Such sacred material, social places and structures are considered within the people as they carry these parts of vaka, fale and kava with them only to be considered sacred in a spatial-substantial and functional relationship when they all connect, intersect and separate when kava is being formed, preformed and reformed. These many things are simplified in a way to the earthly body of individuals. This is a dynamic and complex yet simplified way to read it. It should also be taken into account that the fale is aerodynamic, vaka hydrodynamic and people moving into kava ceremony is geodynamic. Everything is fluid and dynamic; the open field with its functions, vaka formation as it sails through a free moving ocean, the cultural and historical conflicts and the fale as it portrays dynamics against sun, rain etc. and also adding to that the way it shows a tauhi vaka imagery that keeps harmony in society. As mentioned on previous chapter about how Tongans mark time with the body, so as in a meeting. A meeting does not start until everyone is present or in most cases the guest of honour or the person of highest rank. In this case of the taumafa kava, the king. Relating to Tāvā theory meeting and taumafa kava ceremony is tā in the sense the body marks time when present and also defines space in how participants sit. Kava or meeting is then both tā and vā, time and space.

To continue the comparison of kava, vaka and fale, each share common qualities that in such way one is a mirror reflection of the other as further explained below.

'Atā (Openness)
It is seen in the context of each, kava is performed in the open field so as vaka sailing in the open water and also fale as in oral history; downside-up vaka (hull) still in the open. The open layout of the fale is also 'atā. No constraint to a permanently defined space.

Fetafeaki (Fluidity)
A kava ceremony is fluid in a way that the seating size and orientation is not fixed. With the vaka, the idea is related back to
Figure 28 - KAVA VAKA AND FALL
the vast ocean and how the vaka is free moving. Potauaine states that a vaka can sail from one location with one end being the front and another one being the back of the vaka. When the front arrives at destination, the front faces the land and the rear faces the ocean. When set sails again the rear becomes the front and the front becomes the rear. A fale is also fluid in the way the space is just one big open area undivided. This way, the function of a fale is defined by humans and how they orientate themselves; to eat, sleep, to do weaving etc.

Tatau (Symmetrical)
The kava seating is symmetrical in plan as it is in the vaka and fale.

Mata & Ava (Eye & open)
Potauaine explains that the eye is a direct mirror of the eye socket. Just as the point of a nail (fai) is the shape made by it in a piece of wood (ava/’ava’i)\(^5\). Therefore mata and ava are equal. The vaka has hull as the eye at the end of the crashing into the waves splitting it open and allowing the vaka to pass through. The similar idea is mirrored in the kava seating with mata at the end of a social structured meeting lead by the ‘olovaha (compass) to sail through the sea of social, cultural and historical conflicts. The fale has the similar mata on the roof as it crashes into atmospheric conditions of sunlight and rain.

4.5.0 ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE

Openness and fluidity

The idea of openness is referred to as nothing or empty, but when critically looked at, it actually means being complete or whole. An example of this is a person is naked with no clothes or other material things. We can then say that person has nothing, but when seen from the opposite side, that person has everything of nothingness (no material things). To further explain this in contrast, if that person has clothes on, then that person has clothes but not shoes, watch or a hat. In other words, the person has parts of the material things in the world, so materially speaking, one can only have something (partial) of everything (all). To be complete or whole is to be in the state of nothing, empty or open. Perhaps this is why there is a saying “you cannot have everything (material) in life”, and to reword, you can only have something but not everything.

The word openness in Tonga translates to ’ātā which also means free, liberty, empty, clear, unmixed, unaffected, and unobstructed. If it also means to be unmixed and to be unobstructed, then it is about something being the only one thing in its purest singular form of itself and not being with another. Similarly to previous discussion of fakataha, talanoa and tangutu as act of simplification, so as this idea about the open field or the open fale, where meetings are held; ’ātā is a simplified thing. With this reasoning ’ātā, both means two things which are directly opposite the other; nothing and everything or empty and full.
When presented in a Tongan sentence, e.g. Ko e atā ‘(open field)’ which means, He is in the open field. In another example, ‘Ko e vale atā’, translate to ‘He is a complete idiot’. Since ‘atā’ is an open field for multi-use, in such way both fluidity of functions it caters for and the meaning of the word. How people move around the open field, water and vai ‘(humid)’ and fluid. Whether it is moving into the open field, participating in what goes within the field and leaving the open field (form, perform and reform).

The concept of openness and fluidity that is now seen in modern architecture is something that has been a part of the Tongan way of living for a long time. It is clearly shown in historical images as proof. Renown German architect Mies Van de Rohe used the quote ‘Less is more’70 as a summary to what the modern architecture movement was about, to be minimal and less is more appealing. Picasso, the famous Spanish painter also says that “it’s the elimination of the unnecessary”71. This goes back to the earlier discussion on how meetings, such as the kava ceremony, are done out in the open field. It is complete in the sense that it has no house or any other structures (material things). It is a ceremony made up of people by people for the people. The open field has nothing else in it but is full of nothing, it is complete. So also in this way, there is a sacred feel in this open space.

The use of the openness and fluidity in architecture challenges our way of thinking. The idea of ‘atā relates directly to the parliament building in this case. It is an open field, so is navigation out on the sea open spaces courtyards or squares. It is instead transparency, exposure, organisation and also inside the fale were there are no interior walls. New Zealand architect and lecturer, Professor Michael Austin discusses how history of architecture revolves around the notion of closure. It is concerned with shelter, protection and differentiation. Open architecture is not concerned with closed rooms courtyards or squares. It is instead about platforms, decks, terraces, and beaches72. As discussed in previous chapters, many illustrations from history show that traditional houses had no walls inside but just complete openness. Austin concludes that the way pacific islands lived ‘contradicted traditional European architecture’73.

The use of the openness and fluidity idea in this project is not because it is a modern concept, but instead because it is a revival of what is in the history of the Tongan way of life. The enclosure seems to result in isolation in which creates opposing notions. The idea of ‘atā relates directly to the parliament building in this project, with ‘atā meaning accessibility, transparency, exposure, organisation and also inside the fale were there are no interior walls. New Zealand architect and lecturer, Professor Michael Austin discusses how history of architecture revolves around the notion of closure. It is concerned with shelter, protection and differentiation. Open architecture is not concerned with closed rooms courtyards or squares. It is instead about platforms, decks, terraces, and beaches72. As discussed in previous chapters, many illustrations from history show that traditional houses had no walls inside but just complete openness. Austin concludes that the way pacific islands lived ‘contradicted traditional European architecture’73.
clarity, illumination and inclusiveness. When ‘atā is broken down into two, ‘a means to take form, forming, in the process of taking shape in a sense it is a space-defining (temporary) the word. In the other had tā can be seen as time marker (temporary), a beat that marks. So if put in this way that is about taking shape in an endless stretch of time. So in this case like the theory of TaVt: Time-space theory of reality is where all reality comes into existence, so as the ‘atā or the open. In that sense the ‘ata is time space-based, it is where things come into existence in this case the taumafa kava meeting; temporal-formal, spatial-substantial and functional relationship between kava, vaka and fale. Because no material things define space in this discussion, it is the body itself that does all. As previous discussion chapter, the human body also is a time marker. As meetings do not start until certain people show up in that sense, the body is a time marker. So in a meeting, the body marks the time (when everyone or the highest-ranked is present) and also it defines space by orientation and body movement. To further on an earlier mentioned topic on how Tongans and papālangi are different in the way they divide time. It is the assumption now, which Tongans do not divide if not all, much of everything in its life. Tongans are people orientation that fencing and division of space is something that Tongans are not used to. People share if not all, most of what they have and so on. Tongans were known to be great navigators of the ocean; hence things discussed is all about openness and fluidity, about being geodynamic inland, hydrodynamic in the ocean and aerodynamic in the skies. So again, space is out there: it is not what you say is where you sit, it is not about the verbal but about the physical and it is not about listening with the ears to sounds of dialogues but paying attention to the physical body movements/ language.

5.0 ABSTRACT TO REAL
5.1 Brief

Please find the project brief in the appendix. This brief was drafted by the office of the parliament of Tonga. This was what I worked from although I further thought about what was best needed for the new building. I included all the required spaces as stated in the original, but didn’t let the brief restrict my design, as the building needs, in the end, to be operating at all times, even taking natural disasters, such as tsunamis into account. In the end, a multi-storey office building was deemed an appropriate outcome for the final design, as it caters to all the building requirements.

5.2 Design philosophy and design process

The basic design is based on folding and compressing the body down to its smallest form, like a baby inside a womb (to humble itself in a meeting) (to break bread with one another, to be equal, as inside a mother’s womb a sitting position)\(^{15}\); from free-moving to a stop, from many dimensions to no dimension, from dynamic to static, complexity to simplification, and many lines of motions into a static dot. The dot holds social connection energy within, yet temporarily simplified to a manageable form in the context of a meeting. A dot itself is through translation, what makes up a line. These human entity in the meeting are there, but they have social lines that connect them to others in the meeting. Two points can visually connect to form a sense of a line, and that line itself can also be somehow part of a long line. Points can define a threshold. When two or more people (or dots) sit in proximity to each other, an imaginative line is drawn to connect the two. Through being linked like this, that line can also become a part of a longer line. Not only there is a sense of relationship, but there is also an implied perpendicular plane which is not explicit but is apparent in the sense that it sees the two take ownership of everything around, up to the approximate halfway distance between them. The distance equally divides the distance in between into two. (In saying so, division and ownership generally relates to a papālangi perspective on things)
The ‘atā where the taumafa kava usually takes place, has nothing in it. People moving in do so in an organic and dynamic manner, as nature does not have straight roads and also in the sense that everyone stops what they are doing to attend the meeting. The movement is free-flowing and everyone has the choice to travel in any way, but they still arrive at the venue for taumafa kava. The delayed gratification makes the reward at the end very fulfilling.

The act of moving into this open ground for the meeting itself has momentum in it. Just as momentum is defined as the quality of movement in physics, I relate this as social momentum: not the physical momentum of moving, but the drive within one’s appreciation of its Tongan values. This means that how people move into the kava ceremony is about showing their full interest into the tauhi vā to keep peace and harmony within society through nurturing one’s relation and social duties to another. The sacredness of the place is also hugely influenced by how these participants arrive, as they walk along plantations with no proper tracks. The venue is not seen from afar, and the impact that is experienced is a surprise.

When participants start to sit, the once free-moving human entity starts to be temporarily simplified into a manageable dimension. Firstly by temporally marking tā (time) with their arrival but also taking part in forming a meeting shape. The sitting positioning and orientation is a vā (space) component. So, all of a sudden these moving entities start to take the form of shape. Because the field is open, it is a negative space and there is no enclosure to dwell in. Upon formation of the meeting circle, that area out in the ‘atā is seen to be a positive space (temporarily defined). This then pulls participants, not only because it is the reason they are there, but because when a positive space is implied, that is when people start to feel more comfortable.

People keep moving when they are within a negative/undefined place until space is seemingly defined, and until they can visually feel the positive area that is implied, providing a sense of place, a temporary but welcoming space that draws people in. Then, all of a sudden, the vast openness is present with a temporary notion of in and out.

As discussed in the “kava, vaka and fale” section, people move in to form the taumafa kava ceremony. They sit like a vaka shape with positions being of vaka related names. Through the meeting, they are in a way sailing through the social and cultural
5.3 Site Feasibility

The site is located in the Nuku'alofa CBD on the old parliament’s original site location. Much of the existing building will be completely demolished, but there will be parts remaining which I have incorporated. I propose to elevate new ground, forming a plinth for the new building to sit on with parking underground. This will address the issue of tsunami and natural disaster, and it will provide parking for the building and the CBD.

Contentual Analysis

**Types of data:**
1. Hard Data: Physical & technical data
2. Soft Data: Experience & feeling
conflicts of the nation to work out how to keep the vaka moving with little to no friction. The way that people move into the outline of the kava circle and the way they move within the circle (crawling, bending) both portray a sense of fale presence. This is also linked to the participants moving with a sense of social momentum, a movement quality that is embedded in the tauhi vā (nurturing each one’s space and relations with one another), which is also evident in the respective movement of the kava ceremony.

5.4 Building Design
Included drawings show details of the process and the philosophy of the project. To summarise the whole process, all floor plan and circulation is derived from the notion of how people meet and move around meetings. The movement and circulation is organic, dynamic, fluid and in the open. The design does not confine people into spaces, but allows them to share them. Also, the body movement discussed affects the play of floor and ceiling to create the illusion of body movement. As a result, the form of the building itself is taken from the full body of the vaka and vertically oriented. Other qualities of the fale such as lashing and tectonics will be included as well in the final design.

5.5 Design Development

![Design Development](image-url)
Figure 37 - Design theory
6.0 CONCLUSION
Conclusion

What I have learnt in this is that there is more that can be learned from body movement and it is yet to discover. How the body marks time and space is really something that is not normal to think about but yet evokes a lot of thinking, something to consider looking into in the future. How space is just all empty but yet defined temporary by the body and marks time as well.
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KAVA BODY MOVEMENT

CIRCULATION – OPEN + FLOW + WELCOMING FORM PLAY WITH HOW PEOPLE MOVE IN TONGA TRADITIONAL MEETING AND KAVA.
This preliminary concept note was prepared to assist the joint scoping mission to Tonga from the Government of Australia and the Government of the New Zealand scheduled for the week of 30 July 2018. The purpose of the mission is to assess possible options, including site and building type considerations, delivery modalities, and professional services required.

This brief was compiled in consultation with the Lord Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga, Lord Fakafanua, the Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga, Lord Tu'akaka, Chief Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga and all heads of division of the Office of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga. There was also consultation with staff from other Pacific Parliaments as well as parliamentary services staff. It also drew heavily on lessons learnt during the Presiding Officers’ and Clerks’ Conference hosted by the House of Representatives of New Zealand, held in Wellington in July 2018, as well as past discussions through similar parliamentary forums and networks in the Pacific region. Most importantly, it has taken into account difficulties, obstacles and restrictions faced by the Tonga Parliament for decades due to the confinement of the building that was the parliament house for Tonga since the 1990s. While acknowledging with sadness the loss of such the historic parliament building in the centre of Nuku'alofa due to TC Gita in February 2018, it is at the same time important to recognise that the previous parliament building was constructed more than a century ago, and posed significant limitations in meeting the needs of a modern legislature.

With deepest gratitude to the respective Governments of Australia and New Zealand, and as we are in the early stages of exploring the options pertinent to a new complex for Tonga’s legislature, we cannot emphasise enough the need to focus on “functionality”. It must facilitate the proper functioning of parliament as a representative and legislative body. It should provide the facilities that are required for Members of Parliament and parliamentary support staff to undertake their duties and engage with, and be accessible to, the community that Parliament serves, and it should contain all the special attributes that are distinct within a parliamentary precinct.

The construction of a new parliament complex for Tonga presents an opportunity to develop a “fit for purpose” building that serves the interests of all participants in Tonga’s democracy, and a symbol and source of pride for the Tongan people, for decades to come.

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I. CONCEPTUAL OVERALL DESIGN OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT COMPLEX

In all democratic societies, the Houses of Parliament are a symbolic landmark of great importance to the citizens, deriving their significance from the values and aspirations the institution represents and the decisions that are made there. It will also be a symbol of the political power of citizen representation and it is very important that the scale, scope, location, grace, dignity and gravitas reflect the citizen’s national aspirations and values, particularly so as the parliament house is above all a civic space symbolising citizen participation in the political and governance process.

The new parliament complex should be the embodiment of Tonga’s sense of identity, cultural achievement and evolving democratic values. This can be achieved through:

- the shape of the building
- traditional themes used in the fabric of the building
- the use of artwork integrated into the design and construction
- spaces to tell the story of the Parliament and its history, connecting to the history of the nation.

Notably, this also provides an opportunity to combine modern and traditional architecture to revive and preserve cultural aspects for future generations.

II. REQUIREMENTS OF A MODERN PARLIAMENT

A clear understanding of how a modern legislature operates must be the commencement point for designing and building Tonga’s new Parliament House. Functional requirements must include provision to enable:

- Legislative function, including the operation of Chamber(s); Members of Parliament; parliamentary services; and committee and committee support functions
- Engagement functions supporting the symbolic and functional nature of the institution including provisions for accessibility to all citizens; education and community engagement; youth and under-represented groups engagement;
Ceremonial functions within a building context and within a parliamentary precinct context:

- **Enabling Support Infrastructure**: including provision for information technology and digitization of parliamentary processes; hardward; webcasting/broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings; library and research capability to support members and the parliamentary process; administration (including finance, human resources, risk management, planning, and related functions); catering functions to support parliamentary operations; visitor amenity and ceremonial or corporate events.
- A well-functioning parliamentary chamber, facilities that support the legislative, committee and constituency work of parliamentarians, the way support services are delivered by parliamentary staff and the opportunities to engage the community must all be taken into consideration.

In the centuries since the establishment of parliamentary democracy, Parliaments have continuously evolved to strengthen their procedures in response to changing practices and political developments in their own countries. Tonga has the opportunity to draw from these global experiences to strengthen and expand its own parliamentary practice and operations and provide a foundation for future generations and their own evolutionary changes.

### III. LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION

The parliamentary or legislative chamber is the focal point of a Parliament. It will be important in designing the chamber to consider the current and future needs of the Parliament and the way in which Members and support staff operate within it. Among the matters that will need to be addressed are:

- Adequate seating for all Members of Parliament with the opportunity for additional seating to be included should there be any future expansion in the number of MPs in Parliament.
- Flexibility in the seating arrangements that will allow for changes in the proportion of Members.
- Flexibility in the seating arrangements that will allow for participation by members with a disability.

- A Speaker’s Chair as a central feature of the chamber with seating in front for the Clerk and a central table around which the main business of Parliament is conducted.
- Honored and broadcasting facilities.
- Public galleries to encourage and enable citizen participation.
- Student participation facilities similar to a public gallery but with the ability to sound proof to enable teachers or parliamentary staff to teach and explain proceedings.
- Media facilities/gallery to observe and report proceedings.
- Facilities for House leaders to have access to advisors.
- The chamber design will need to take into account both the traditions of Parliament and how they affect the conduct of business, as well as the opportunities to modernize Parliament through the use of technology.

In essence, a parliament is a group of representatives “coming together in parliament”. Members of Parliament have a diverse range of roles inside and outside the Parliament. Facilities within the Parliament building for Members are required to ensure that they can undertake all of their duties in an efficient and effective manner. The main facilities required are:

- Meeting rooms for committee hearings and meetings.
- Office space to prepare for parliamentary sessions and meet with constituents.
- Information technology that supports the work of MPs undertake.
- Support facilities to encourage participation including family friendly facilities; disabled access.

Parliamentary staff support the work of MPs in the chamber and on committees. The requirements in relation to the Parliament building include:

- Office and meeting space.
- Records management.
- Facilities for printing and scanning.
- Information technology.
V. INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

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VI. THE NEW PARLIAMENT COMPLEX

- Flexibility to enable unified use of spaces at requirements change
- Accessibility by the public, including additional parking areas
- Resilience to adverse weather conditions and emergency exits

The new design of the Parliament complex includes advanced technology and sustainable features to enhance the overall experience for visitors and employees. 
The site for the new parliament complex is to be at the same location where the previous parliament building was. This location has been selected to maintain the historical significance of the site. The new complex will consist of several buildings, including a large parliament building, a government house, and administrative offices.

The site will accommodate the government and the Legislative Assembly, ensuring that all services are within walking distance. The complex will also include a visitor centre and facilities for public and media access.

The design of the new parliament complex is based on a combination of traditional and modern architectural styles. The buildings will be constructed using sustainable materials and energy-efficient technologies, ensuring environmental responsibility.

The project is expected to be completed within five years, with a budget of approximately $500 million. The construction will be managed by a team of experienced architects and engineers, ensuring the highest standards of quality and safety.

The new parliament complex will be a symbol of the Government's commitment to transparency, accountability, and good governance. It will provide a modern and functional environment for the Legislative Assembly and the government staff, enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of their work.

The project is a significant investment in the future of Tonga, providing a functional and modern parliament building that will serve the country for decades to come. It is hoped that the new complex will inspire future generations to be proud of their country and its governance.