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# Evaluation and Recommendations for Preservation Practices in Historic Districts in China: The Case of Dashilan Area, Beijing

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# Evaluation and Recommendations for Preservation Practices in Historic Districts in China: The Case of Dashilan Area, Beijing

## **Abstract**

Driven by economic and social pressures, large-scale urban renewal movements have taken place in China since 1970s. Many of these projects were carried out in a radical way, ignorant of history, culture and existing physical fabric. Dashilan Area in Beijing is a typical example. In the name of historic preservation, renewal projects occurred in 2003. Although there were two historic districts designated in the area and the master plan required different levels of tolerance of change, the reality demonstrated its failure to accomplish the scheme. Random demolition and pseudo-historic reconstructions occurred, which not only eliminated some of the character-defining elements but also partially destroyed the historic fabric of the area.

The thesis focuses on the renewal practices completed in a sub-area, namely Block C, within the Dashilan Historic District. The Advantages and disadvantages of these practices are analyzed and urban design guidelines are established for this Block. Historic elements of these jade shops and Baroque-style buildings draw out physical features and urban qualities that should be maintained in Block C, which formed the philosophy to create design guidelines at the end. The overall approach can be applied to the whole Dashilan Area as well as other historic areas in China.

## **Keywords**

urban renewal, historic district, pseudo-classic, demolition, design guidelines

## **Disciplines**

Historic Preservation and Conservation

## **Comments**

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EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRESERVATION PRACTICES IN  
HISTORIC DISTRICTS IN CHINA:  
THE CASE OF DASHILAN AREA, BEIJING

Xiaojuan Zhu

A THESIS

In

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2013

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Frank G. Matero

Professor of Architecture

To my parents,  
who taught me to learn from the past and work for the future.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 BACKGROUND.....	1
1.2 STUDY AREA.....	3
1.2.1 History of Dashilan .....	6
1.2.2 Site Problems.....	13
1.3 METHODOLOGY .....	17
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1 HISTORIC SITES, DISTRICTS, AND CITIES IN CHINA .....	19
2.2 HISTORIC DISTRICTS DESIGNATION WORLDWIDE .....	20
2.3 THREE-LEVEL ZONING FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS IN CHINA .....	22
2.3.1 Possible Origins.....	22
2.3.2 Appearance and Development in Chinese Laws.....	22
3.1 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT OF DASHILAN AREA .....	25
3.2 PLANNING VISIONS.....	28
3.3 PROJECT PROGRESS .....	34
<b>4 PRESERVATION PRACTICES ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>46</b>
4.1 MEISHI STREET .....	46
4.1.1 Benefits.....	46

4.1.2	Disadvantages.....	50
4.2	BLOCK C.....	55
4.2.1	Benefits.....	55
4.2.2	Disadvantages.....	59
4.3	BUILDING TREATMENTS .....	65
4.3.1	Achievements .....	65
4.3.2	Challenges.....	65
<b>5</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>68</b>
5.1	PHILOSOPHY.....	68
5.2	ELEMENTS, CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES.....	72
5.2.1	Elements to be Preserved.....	73
5.2.2	Physical characteristics to be Preserved.....	77
5.2.3	Qualities to be Preserved .....	80
5.3	DESIGN GUIDELINES.....	82
5.3.1	Design Guidelines for Zone C1.....	84
5.3.2	Design Guidelines for Zone C2.....	90
5.3.3	Design Guidelines for Zone C3.....	92
	<b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>95</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>97</b>
	INDEX .....	99

# LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1-1: THE LOCATION OF DASHILAN AREA .....	4
FIGURE 1-2: DASHILAN AREA ALONG WITH THE MAIN AXIS GOING THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN CITY .....	5
FIGURE 1-3: THE LANE TEXTURE WITHIN DASHILAN (MAP OF 2005) .....	6
FIGURE 1-4: THE SITE’S PROXIMITY TO CAPITALS IN DYNASTIES .....	8
FIGURE 1-5: THE STREET LIFE IN DASHILAN AREA DEPICTED IN LATE QING DYNASTY (1909) .....	10
FIGURE 1-6: THE DISASTROUS SCENE BY THE EIGHT POWER ALLIED FORCES (LOOKING SOUTH) .....	10
FIGURE 1-7: THE BAROQUE STYLE OF RUIFUXIANG STORE REBUILT IN 1901.....	11
FIGURE 1-8: THE RAILROAD STATION (1901) .....	11
FIGURE 1-9: THE CLOSENESS OF XIDAN, WANGFUJING AND DASHILAN AREA AS COMMERCIAL PLACES.....	12
FIGURE 1-10: THE CROWDED SPACE OF INNER COURTYARD HOUSE .....	14
FIGURE 1-11: BUILDINGS CAN BE REPAIRED, REUSED, RATHER THAN DIRECT REMOVAL.....	14
FIGURE 1-12: JUXTAPOSITION OF INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS .....	16
FIGURE 1-13: IS THIS FAÇADE ORIGINALLY THERE? .....	16
FIGURE 1-14: THE STARTING AREA ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF MEISHI STREET AS SUB-AREA TO FOCUS .....	18
FIGURE 2-1: THE 25 HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF BEIJING DESIGNATED IN 1990.....	20
FIGURE 2-2: SPHERES OF THREE-LEVEL ZONING .....	24
FIGURE 2-3: HEIGHT LIMITS IN DIFFERENT ZONES IN RITTENHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT .....	24

FIGURE 3-1: NEW CONSTRUCTION NEAR LANGFANG 2 <sup>ND</sup> STREET AFTER THE FIRES (CA. 1900s) .....	26
FIGURE 3-2: THREE-LEVEL ZONING IN DASHILAN AREA .....	27
FIGURE 3-3: ROAD SYSTEM BEFORE DEVELOPMENT .....	29
FIGURE 3-4: ROAD PLANNING.....	30
FIGURE 3-5: THE STARTING SECTION IN EASTERN SIDE OF FUTURE NEW MEISHI STREET.....	31
FIGURE 3-6: PLANNED FIVE ZONES IN EASTERN SIDE OF FUTURE NEW MEISHI STREET.....	32
FIGURE 3-7: OVERLAP BETWEEN THE FIVE ZONES AND THREE-LEVEL ZONING .....	33
FIGURE 3-8: TIMELINE OF PROJECTS .....	35
FIGURE 3-9: EXISTING STREET IN DASHILAN AREA (GOOGLE MAP OF 2003) .....	36
FIGURE 3-10: MEISHI STREET AND QIANMEN EAST ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION (2006).....	37
FIGURE 3-11: NEW TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA (GOOGLE MAP OF 2009).....	38
FIGURE 3-12: BLOCK C AND H AS RELATED TO THE PLANNED FIVE ZONES AND THREE-LEVEL ZONING .....	40
FIGURE 3-13: RENDERING OF NEW BUILDINGS IN BLOCK C AREA.....	41
FIGURE 3-14: CLEARANCE IN BLOCK C INCLUDING DESIGNATED BUILDING .....	42
FIGURE 3-15: DASHILAN WEST STREET PROVIDES LOCAL SNACK AND FOOD .....	44
FIGURE 3-16: SCHEME TO SHOW THE BEFORE AND AFTER OF THE CONTINUOUS WALL IN THE ALLEY.....	45
FIGURE 4-1: EMPEROR KANGXI’S TOUR ON QIANMEN STREET IN QING DYNASTY .....	47
FIGURE 4-2: FULL OF AWNINGS AND STALLS ON QIANMEN STREET .....	47
FIGURE 4-3: CARRIAGES ON QIANMEN STREET CA. 1900 (LOOKING SOUTH) .....	48

FIGURE 4-4: TROLLEY LINES ON QIANMEN STREET, CA. 1930S (LOOKING SOUTH) .....	48
FIGURE 4-5: QIANMEN AS A CITY ROAD BEFORE TRANSFORMATION .....	49
FIGURE 4-6: MEISHI STREET .....	50
FIGURE 4-7: BEFORE AND AFTER SCENE OF A CORNER ON MEISHI STREET .....	52
FIGURE 4-8: THREE HISTORIC BUILDINGS WERE SAVED DURING ON MEISHI STREET .....	53
FIGURE 4-9: NEW PSEUDO-CLASSIC BUILDINGS ON MEISHI STREET.....	54
FIGURE 4-10: THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG BLOCK C (WHITE DASHED LINE), THE CORE AREA AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AREA.....	56
FIGURE 4-11: QUANYECHANG BEFORE RENOVATION .....	57
FIGURE 4-12: RENDERING OF BEIJING QUANYECHANG AS ART CENTER.....	57
FIGURE 4-13: PLAN OF BLOCK C (ORANGE LINES REPRESENTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS) .....	58
FIGURE 4-14: FORM AND MASS OF NEW BUILDINGS .....	58
FIGURE 4-15: BRICK DETAILS ON A DEMOLISHED EXQUISITE BUILDING .....	60
FIGURE 4-16: THE LOCATION OF QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE IN BLOCK C AND DASHILAN AREA .....	62
FIGURE 4-17: QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE .....	63
FIGURE 4-18: BUILDING CONDITION OF FORMER QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE .....	64
FIGURE 4-19: UNIFIED APPEARANCE ON NEW DASHILAN STREET .....	65
FIGURE 4-20: BIG ROOF ARCHITECTURE ON DASHILAN STREET .....	66
FIGURE 4-21: URBAN RENEWAL NEEDS IN THOSE SUB-STREETS AND ALLEYS.....	67



FIGURE 5-1: BASE MAP TO SHOW BLOCK C PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION .....	69
FIGURE 5-2: DEMOLITION ON FROM LANGFANG 1 <sup>ST</sup> TO 2 <sup>ND</sup> (LOOKING TO QIANMEN STREET) .....	69
FIGURE 5-3: THE ENCLOSURE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION (LANGFANG 1 <sup>ST</sup> ALLEY WITH QUANYECHANG AND SEVERAL LARGE-SCALE BUILDINGS IN THE BACKGROUND) .....	70
FIGURE 5-4: DESIGNATED BUILDINGS AND ALLEY IN DOCUMENT .....	70
FIGURE 5-5: REMAINING DESIGNATED BUILDINGS .....	71
FIGURE 5-6: CHRONOLOGY OF REMAINED BUILDINGS IN BLOCK C .....	72
FIGURE 5-7: TYPICAL JADE SHOP HOUSES ON LANGFANG 2 <sup>ND</sup> ALLEY.....	74
FIGURE 5-8: NON-IDENTICAL HOUSES CONNECTED.....	74
FIGURE 5-9: ONE GABLE TYPE OF SHOP HOUSE .....	75
FIGURE 5-10: OBVIOUS BAROQUE FEATURES ON QUANYECHANG.....	76
FIGURE 5-11: ABSTRACT REFERENCE OF BAROQUE FEATURES .....	77
FIGURE 5-12: THE CURVED SLOPING ROOF (COMPARING TO THE REGULAR ONE ON THE LEFT) .....	78
FIGURE 5-13: RECESSED FAÇADE, DECORATIVE BOARD IN THE MIDDLE.....	78
FIGURE 5-14: THE SIMILARITY OF ROWHOUSE TO THE LOWER PART OF JADE SHOPS.....	79
FIGURE 5-15: GREY STONE BUILDINGS ALONG LANGFANG 2 <sup>ND</sup> ALLEY.....	80
FIGURE 5-16: COMFORTABLE SCALE OF STREET OF LANGFANG 2 <sup>ND</sup> ALLEY .....	81
FIGURE 5-17: DIVISION OF C1, C2 AND C3.....	83
FIGURE 5-18: MASTER PLAN OF 2012 SHOWING HISTORIC BUILDING IN ORANGE .....	83

FIGURE 5-19: A BASIC STREET LINE FOR NEW BUILDINGS TO FOLLOW ON LANGFANG 1 <sup>ST</sup> ALLEY .....	86
FIGURE 5-20: STYLE DISTRIBUTION IN C1, C2 AND C3. ....	87
FIGURE 5-21: AN EXAMPLE OF MODERN BUILDING WITH FEATURES OF BAROQUE (LEFT).....	87
FIGURE 5-22: LOTS NEAR XIHE STREET RESPONDING TO THE OPENNESS AND SCALE OF ITS NORTH.....	88
FIGURE 5-23: PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND SQUARES.....	89
FIGURE 5-24: CURVED ROOF, FRIEZE BOARD, AND RECESSED FAÇADE FOR REFERENCE .....	94
FIGURE 5-25: FOUR BLOCKS BEING DEVELOPED IN THE STARTING SECTION OF DASHILAN AREA.....	96

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Humans constantly define their settlements. After moving from scattered rural areas to agglomerate in towns and cities, urban renewal became an ongoing process. Especially after the World War II, a large-scale urban renewal movement swept the European continent to make efforts regenerating urban blocks that were partly destroyed in the fire. The physical design, represented by architect Le Corbusier's new order of "fast road, green and skyscraper" became a dominant direction in forming modern urban planning theory<sup>1</sup>. The destruction of urban slums and creation of "verdant areas" in their place, denied any potential heritage value of such areas.<sup>2</sup> A new comprehensive perspective to face troubled urban areas is needed before decision-making to transform it.

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

Unlike the motivation to recover from destruction by war in the European countries, China has been going through the urban renewal movement since 1970s mainly under two drivers. The first one comes out of the economic pressure. Located within a city's center, these low density and mixed use residential and commercial districts are advantageous places in the market to make good investments. A city needs land to

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<sup>1</sup> Zhiqiang Lu, Jiabin Lin and Weifu Yang, "The Protection and Renewal of the Old City: Experience and Enlightenment," *China Development Observation*, no. 2 (2009):55.

<sup>2</sup> Le Corbusier, *La Charte d'Athènes*, Document from IV International Congress of Modern Architecture, 1933. Translated by Jacqueline Tyrwhitt as *The Athens Charter* (Boston: The Library of the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University), 1946.

develop and these communities have the most potential capacity to rebuild. Another factor is the social pressure. Low standard of living in antiquated housing triggers a desire for residents to reject the old things and replaced them with new appearances and modern amenities.

These two pressures have resulted in Chinese urban renewal projects carried in a radical way, ignorant of history, heritage and existing environment. The result is that more and more Chinese cities look the same. The special building style, public space organizations embedded in the original context of those old districts have been replaced with the same wide roads and modern box buildings. No matter how gratifying those modern buildings look, these styles have irreversibly changed the original characteristics of that city.

Currently, people in China have gradually understood the above as problems and are trying to find new solutions to face the needs of urban renewal. This thesis is focused on historic districts where the conflict of development and preservation is simultaneously taking place. It also poses the questions of whether the current practices guided by the Chinese government used the right approach and how we should treat these areas. The objectives of this thesis are:

- To understand general Chinese preservation practices that exist in a historic area;

- To evaluate current preservation approaches;
- To create design guidelines at the planning level to manage change over time in a chosen area which can be used as a basis for as future architectural design guidelines in the chosen area, as well as design guidelines in other historic areas.

## 1.2 STUDY AREA

Dashilan Area was chosen as the study site, based upon its desirable location, pressures to change and current conflicts that are typical of Chinese historic areas.

Located in the downtown of Beijing, Dashilan Area is one of the most important blocks reflecting the traditional style of alley and architecture in Beijing. It is situated southwest to the Tian'anmen Square (Figure 1-1), along with the main axis going through the Forbidden City (Figure 1-2). This advantageous position made Dashilan Area a unique and flourishing place during its evolving history of 590 years.

The giant city block covers an area of 1.27 km<sup>2</sup> (314 acres), bordered by city main roads. The intact lane texture is an important feature of this area (Figure 1-3). The whole area is composed of 105 alleys, among which 60 alleys were included in the “Dashilan Historic District” and 15 alleys in the “East Glaze Factory Historic District”<sup>3</sup>, both of which were designated in 1990.

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<sup>3</sup> Weimin Que, Tingting Deng, “Perspective of Urban Heritage of Protection on Dazhalan Block, Beijing City”, *Urban Planning International* 27, no.1 (2012): 106.

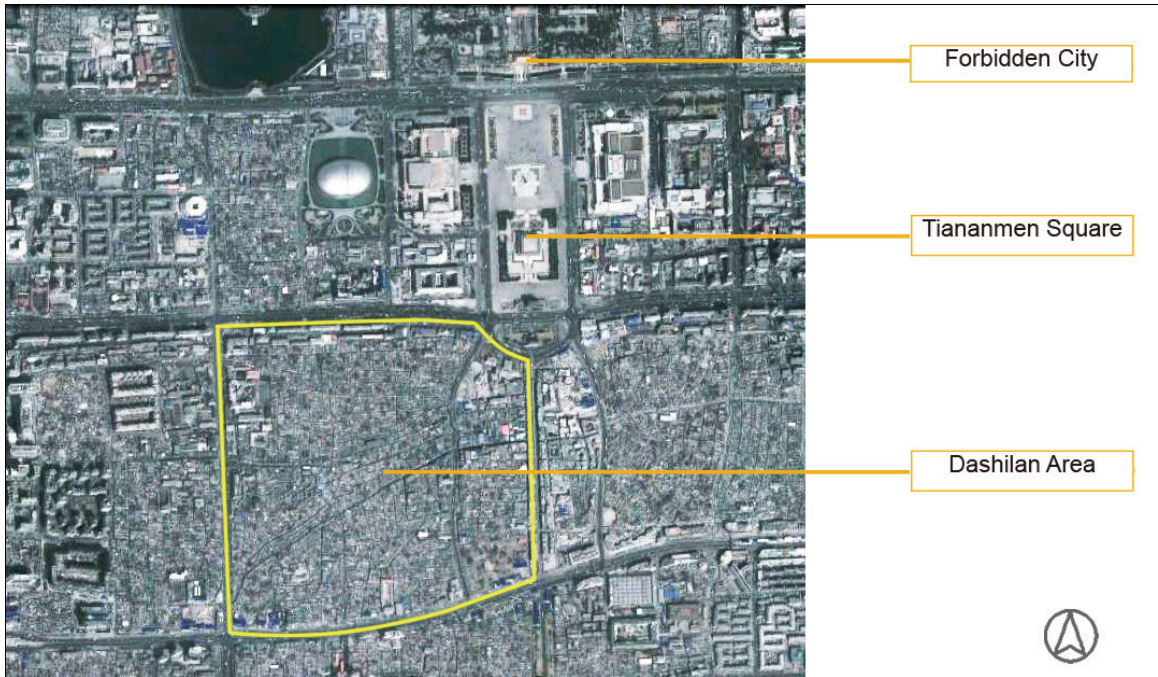


FIGURE 1-1: THE LOCATION OF DASHILAN AREA

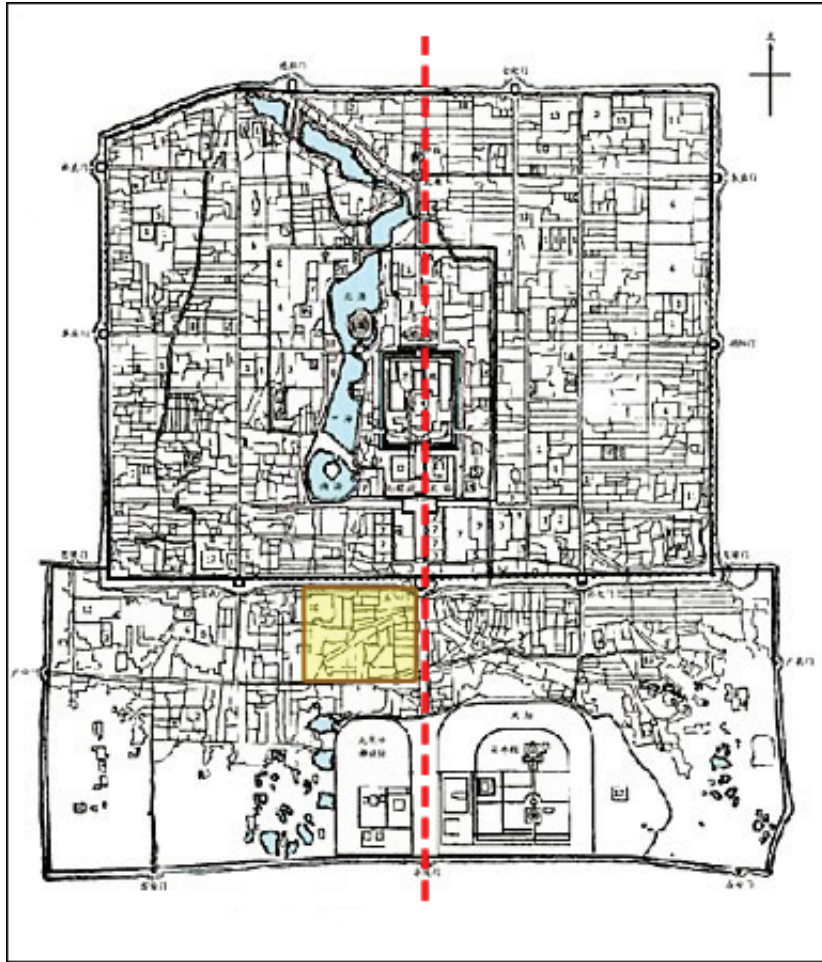


FIGURE 1-2: DASHILAN AREA ALONG WITH THE MAIN AXIS GOING THROUGH THE FORBIDDEN CITY



FIGURE 1-3: THE LANE TEXTURE WITHIN DASHILAN (MAP OF 2005)

### 1.2.1 HISTORY OF DASHILAN

The site has a long history tracing back to the origin of Beijing city, which was inhabited since 1045 BC on the southwest section of current Beijing City where Dashilan Area belongs to. The site started as a fringe of Liao Dynasty’s secondary capital between 938 AD to 1123 AD, and its geographical proximity to dynasties’ capitals made it finally



enclosed in the capital area (Figure 1-4) in Ming Dynasty.<sup>4</sup> The tipping point occurred when Yuan Dynasty began to construct its capital in the northeast of the Jin Dynasty from 1267 AD. Located between the old (Jin) and new (Yuan) capital sites, the former place of Dashilan Area began to be functioned as the shortcut for people traversing between the capitals. The twill-direction lane texture left today may have been formed based on that transportation flow.<sup>5</sup>

In 1420, the Emperor Di in the Ming Dynasty made an influential decision to move from Nanjing in the south of China to Beijing. Not only did he created the Forbidden City (upper lines of the yellow boundary in Figure 1-4), but also he dictated to build a special type of shop house called “Langfang” to attract people to live and sell.<sup>6</sup> In total there are four alleys of Langfang built by government within the site called Langfang 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Alley. These four alleys are considered to be the birth place of commerce for Dashilan Area, and even today those names are still in use. Emperor Di’s initiatives promoted this area and it became a popular market during Ming Dynasty.

---

<sup>4</sup> *The Regulatory Detailed Plan in the Starting Section of Beijing Dashilan Area*, Beijing Xuanwu District Government Document (July 2004), 5-6.

<sup>5</sup> *The Regulatory Detailed Plan in the Starting Section of Beijing Dashilan Area*, Beijing Xuanwu District Government Document (July 2004), 6.

<sup>6</sup> *The Regulatory Detailed Plan in the Starting Section of Beijing Dashilan Area*, Beijing Xuanwu District Government Document (July 2004), 6.

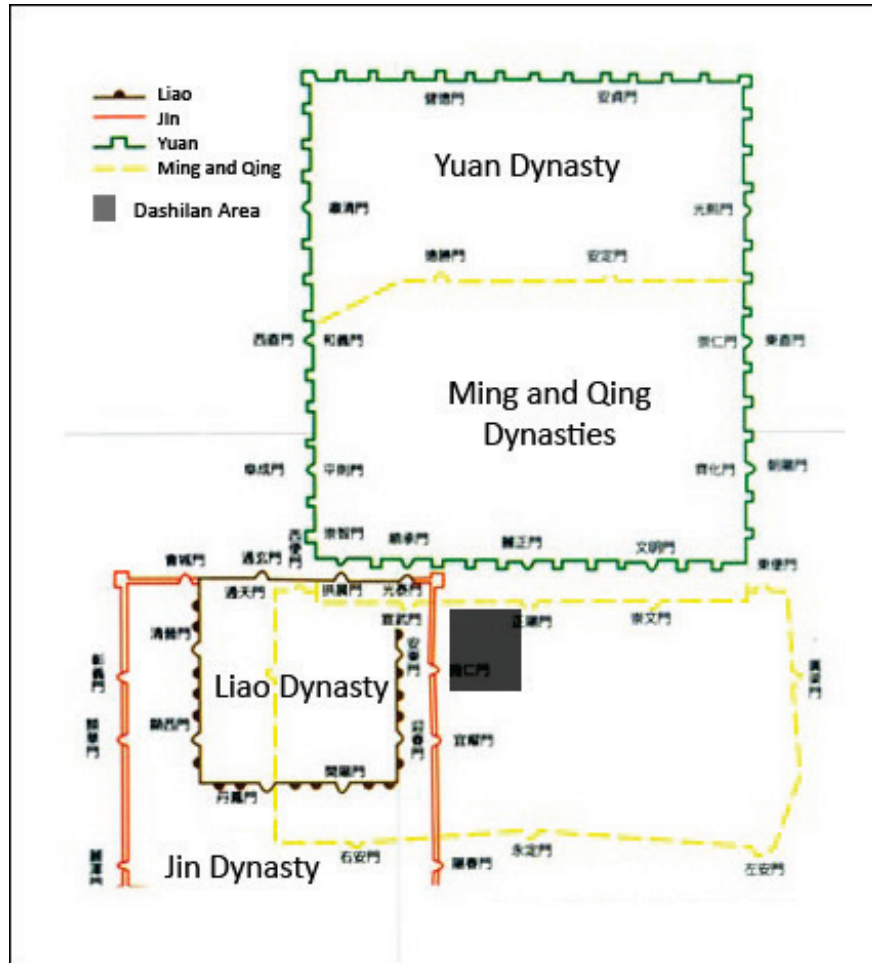


FIGURE 1-4: THE SITE'S PROXIMITY TO CAPITALS IN DYNASTIES

“Dashilan” was the name of the original Langfang 4<sup>th</sup> Alley. In consideration of the safety issue at night, Ming government requested local residents to build wooden fences at the corner of streets since 1488. The fence of the original Langfang 4<sup>th</sup> alley was large and decorated, since most wealthy merchants gathered there. Locals began to call the original Langfang 4<sup>th</sup> alley “Dashilan”, meaning big fence. The date of the name change is not clear, but in the Capital Geographical Map of 1750 in Qing Dynasty, that alley had already been officially marked “Dashilan Street”.

“Dashilan” became the name of the whole area during Qing Dynasty (1616-1912), when more diverse businesses opened and it became a most attracting place in Beijing. It had shops— they were old and famous brands for high-classes. It had money—several domestic banks were born here. It had shows— theaters and operas excluded from the inner city found their places here. It had strong academic atmosphere— famous scholars lived and young men gathered in halls to prepare for the imperial examinations. It had pleasure— the “Eight Alleys” in the southern part was a long-term red-light district. In summary, during its peak development in Qing Dynasty, it was a place that catered to all levels of classes (Figure 1-5).

The period of 1900s was a turning point. In May of 1900, still in the Qing Dynasty, patriots set a fire on a pharmacy store selling western medicine on the Dashilan Street. The fire spread to the surroundings and destroyed thousands of wooden shop houses. The whole area was devastated again in July at that same year by the Eight Power Allied Forces (Figure 1-6). Many stores were reopened after a large-scale renovation and reconstruction work. New buildings added western style (Figure 1-7), which brought a new appearance in streetscape remaining at present day. The Jingfeng railroad station (Figure 1-8) built in 1901 near the Dashilan Area created new business opportunity. The area quickly developed and became the commercial center of Beijing again.



FIGURE 1-5: THE STREET LIFE IN DASHILAN AREA DEPICTED IN LATE QING DYNASTY (1909)



FIGURE 1-6: THE DISASTROUS SCENE BY THE EIGHT POWER ALLIED FORCES (LOOKING SOUTH)





FIGURE 1-7: THE BAROQUE STYLE OF RUIFUXIANG STORE REBUILT IN 1901



FIGURE 1-8: THE RAILROAD STATION (1901)

After the foundation of the P. R. China in 1949, several adjustments and renovations were completed in this area by the new government. New national shopping malls were established in the 1950s. The city government the first time officially set up the Dashilan Municipal Office to administrate this area in 1958, which means “Dashilan” turned into a regional name. Since 1980s, the whole area began declining in its profit compared to the newly built popular commercial streets like Xidan and Wangfujing Streets (Figure 9). It was no longer the commercial core in Beijing as it was once before.



FIGURE 1-9: THE CLOSENESS OF XIDAN, WANGFUJING AND DASHILAN AREA AS COMMERCIAL PLACES

Fortunately, this area hasn't been neglected for its unique legacies. A new strategic plan has been raised to brand this area as “the quintessence of commercial district” since 2003. Projects have been carried out at different stages in several sections in Dashilan

Area during ten years. After these development projects, today it is a new tourist destination in Beijing and it is estimated that it has daily tourists of 150,000-160,000<sup>7</sup>.

### **1.2.2 SITE PROBLEMS**

Even though Dashilan Area has a rich history and owns many historic resources now, it still has a large part of ordinary residential courtyard houses. Many of them have been added new small rooms by residents so it became more and more crowded (Figure 1-10). Lack of toilets and other modern amenities made life in that courtyard house uncomfortable. Dense population in the area and lack of public service, green space also aggravated poor living conditions. All these conditions triggered residents' strong wish to demolish old houses and live in new buildings.

Demolition with replacement was also a result of social pressure. New was perceived as a progress thus better than the old. When the miserable memories left by the history are connected to the feudal dynasties in the past, it was preferred to erase old physical remains. That social pressure motivated large-scale demolitions in this area. Thousands of ordinary buildings have been and are going to be removed without consideration of reuse, repair; even though a large portion of them have the potentials to be renovated (Figure 1-11).

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<sup>7</sup> "Beijing Dashilan Area," on China Culture website, accessed January 20, 2013, [http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/cn\\_zgwh/2005-06/28/content\\_70192.htm](http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/cn_zgwh/2005-06/28/content_70192.htm).





FIGURE 1-10: THE CROWDED SPACE OF INNER COURTYARD HOUSE



FIGURE 1-11: BUILDINGS CAN BE REPAIRED, REUSED, RATHER THAN DIRECT REMOVAL

Additionally, Dashilan Area's proximity to the Forbidden City brings great development pressure. Being low-density and located so close to the city center, it is



considered a great place to invest and make money. The government's branding to define this area as "the quintessence of commercial district" indeed illustrated its intention to attract the outsiders. Luckily, today we can still see the vitalized civic life behind the commercial streets (Figure 1-12). But how should we move beyond these potential conflicting interests? How should we reconcile conflicts between the commercial life on the streets and residential life inside the block, while managing the pressure for development at the same time?

The historic resources in this area didn't survive well under the social and economic pressures. Even though the atmosphere of old, traditional commercial district has been brought back, it is made partly by pseudo-classic building replacing the originals. Walking down the street, it is hard to recognize what was once there and what is new (Figure 1-13). This fakeness confuses the sense of history to the public. Is that the best outcome of historic area like Dashilan after several preservation projects?



FIGURE 1-12: JUXTAPOSITION OF INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS



FIGURE 1-13: IS THIS FAÇADE ORIGINALLY THERE?

## **1.3 METHODOLOGY**

To evaluate the preservation practices made in the area and provide recommendations, this thesis project will take three steps.

First, the planning and preservation practices history for the whole Dashilan Area will be reviewed. Second, the preservation methods in a chosen sub-area (Figure 1-14) will be analyzed. In the whole spectrum from preservation, restoration, façade renovation, rehabilitation, to new design, not all the projects on buildings are executed in good shape so some buildings will be picked to illustrate the problem. Both advantages and disadvantages of the preservation practices on the street-level and building-level will be summarized. Third, a recommendation of how to approach a historic district similar to Dashilan Area will be provided. Design guidelines will be created for controlling the alterations and maintaining the features over time.



FIGURE 1-14: THE STARTING AREA ON THE EASTERN SIDE OF MEISHI STREET AS SUB-AREA TO FOCUS

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 HISTORIC SITES, DISTRICTS, AND CITIES IN CHINA

Preservation work in China began in 1949 by the new government to save the relics left by the revolutionary war. Beijing as the capital initiated the survey project of historic buildings since 1953 and 36 historic sites were first designated in Beijing Register in 1957. The National Register was not created until 1961 when 180 historic sites were listed. Up to now, China has a mature protection system to ensure all the immovable cultural units to be listed in the register, from national level to local level.

The designation of historic resources of a whole city started in 1982 when Chinese State Council firstly announced 24 historic cities. The criterion is to have a rich amount of historic sites and great historic value to be memorialized<sup>8</sup>. When the State Council published the second round of historic cities in 1986, it declares that some sections in city contained old buildings presenting a unifying traditional appearance should be preserved as historic blocks or districts. This was the first time that the concept of historic district was officially proposed. Stated in the middle of the whole spectrum from single historic site to a city, the idea of historic district designation in 1986 made a great movement in the preservation history of China.

Following that movement, Beijing announced the first 25 historic districts in 1990,

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<sup>8</sup> *Protection Law of Cultural Relics* (revised at the 30th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Ninth National People's Congress, October 28, 2002).



including the “Dashilan Historic District” and “East Glaze Factory Historic District” within this area (Figure 2-1).

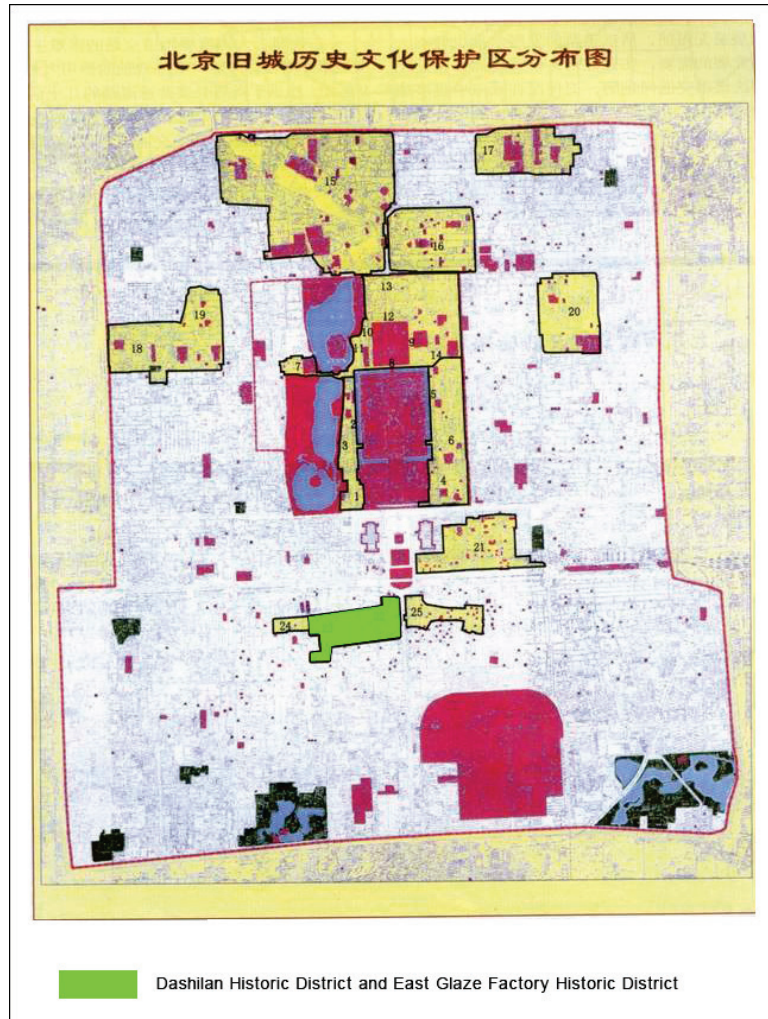


FIGURE 2-1: THE 25 HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF BEIJING DESIGNATED IN 1990

## 2.2 HISTORIC DISTRICTS DESIGNATION WORLDWIDE

Multiple methods of defining historic districts existed worldwide. France is the first country to publish the law to protect a district in the world. In 1962 an ordinance called the Malraux Act proposed to designate a "protected area" in which buildings cannot be demolished randomly and any renovation work should be under the guidance of an

authorized architect and approved renovation project can get financial assistance from the government, with tax deduction.<sup>9</sup>

The U.S. federal government designates historic districts since the creation of the National Register of Historic Places in 1966. However, local historic district designation predated that—Charleston enacted an ordinance in 1931 which designated an "Old and Historic District". Because many land-use decisions are made at the local level,<sup>10</sup> local historic district has the greatest level of protection under the law. Take the City of Philadelphia as example, a permit is required if a property owner want to make changes to his building within a historic district. Many local commissions have adopted specific design guidelines for controlling changes to the properties included in the district, while some others rely on the US Secretary of Interior Standards. To summarize, tangible restrictions make it hard to alter buildings and prevent demolition in the local historic districts in the US.

In summary, it is most probably that Chinese designation system was derived from Europe, but the mechanism learns from US as well. Both America and China share the similarity of designation from national to local level under separate supervision.

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<sup>9</sup> Zhiqiang Lu, Jiabin Lin and Weifu Yang, "The Protection and Renewal of the Old City: Experience and Enlightenment," *China Development Observation*, no. 2 (2009): 55.

<sup>10</sup> "Federal, State and Local Historic Districts", National Park Service Toolbox, Accessed January 21, 2013, <http://www.nps.gov/tps/education/workingonthepast/toolbox1.htm>.

## **2.3 THREE-LEVEL ZONING FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS IN CHINA**

### **2.3.1 POSSIBLE ORIGINS**

Historic districts in China are based on three levels of zoning. This may be derived from the UNESCO World Heritage system. One influential idea is the “buffer zone” of historic site, which has been included as the criteria for UNESCO World Heritage nomination since 1977. “When setting the boundary of property to be nominated in the List of World Heritage Site, the concept of a buffer zone around the property may be applied where appropriate and feasible.”<sup>11</sup> Later it is realized that not only for single properties, historic areas and their surroundings should also be considered in their totality as a whole.<sup>12</sup> This buffer zone idea as “protective” and “transitional” function for historic sites urges people to think about historic districts and even protect an area’s immediate environment to better adapt it to the modern city.

### **2.3.2 APPEARANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN CHINESE LAWS**

The division of three controlling boundaries for a historic district appeared formally in the law of *Management of City Purple Line* published in 2003. According to this document, every historic site and district should have a clear purple line—a boundary of protection area, including both the Core Area and the Development Control Area.

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<sup>11</sup> UNESCO, *The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (Records of the World Heritage Convention at First Session, Paris, France, June 27 to July 1, 1977): 10.

<sup>12</sup> UNESCO, *Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Area* (Records of the General Conference at Nineteenth Session, Nairobi, Kenya, October 26 to November 30, 1976): 136-140.



Three-level zoning has become a standard for preservation work in China. It includes three spheres: Core Area, Development Control Area and Coordination Area (Figure 2-2). The Core Area has the strictest restrictions which do not allow exterior additions or new construction, except for necessary infrastructure.<sup>13</sup> The role of Development Control Area is mainly to control the renovation, rehabilitation, new construction in a way that they fit the scale, height, style, color, form, function of the buildings in the Core Area. The Coordination Area is most flexible where demolition and new design occurs frequently.

Similar systems to “Three-level Zoning” were used in other countries. For example, the Rittenhouse Fidler Neighborhood in Philadelphia includes the Rittenhouse Fidler Historic District, as well as all or part of several National Register Districts. Its plan in 2007 divided the whole neighborhood into different development zones (Figure 2-3), reflecting the differences in existing patterns, use, and scale of development, which is quite similar to the three-level zoning in China.

Dashilan Area, which has two historic districts designated in 1990, now has specific principles for its Core Area and the Development Control Area to follow indicated by the *General Management of 25 Beijing Historic Districts* of 2000. Next chapters will evaluate to what extent the development has been consistent with that principles.

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<sup>13</sup> *Regulations on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Village, Town and City* (The People's Republic of China State Council Order No. 524, April 2008).

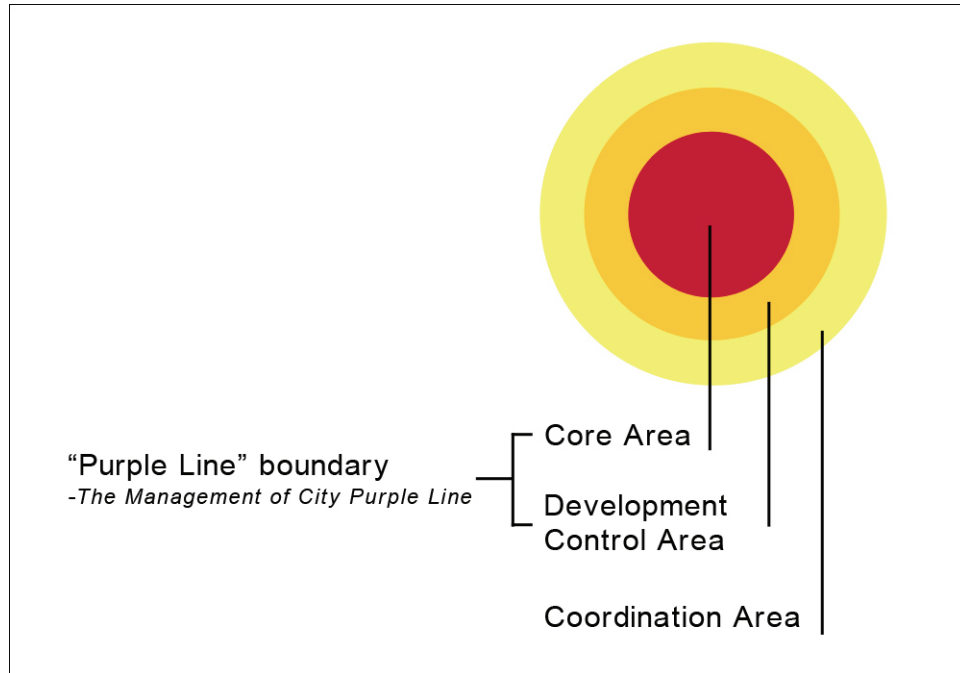


FIGURE 2-2: SPHERES OF THREE-LEVEL ZONING

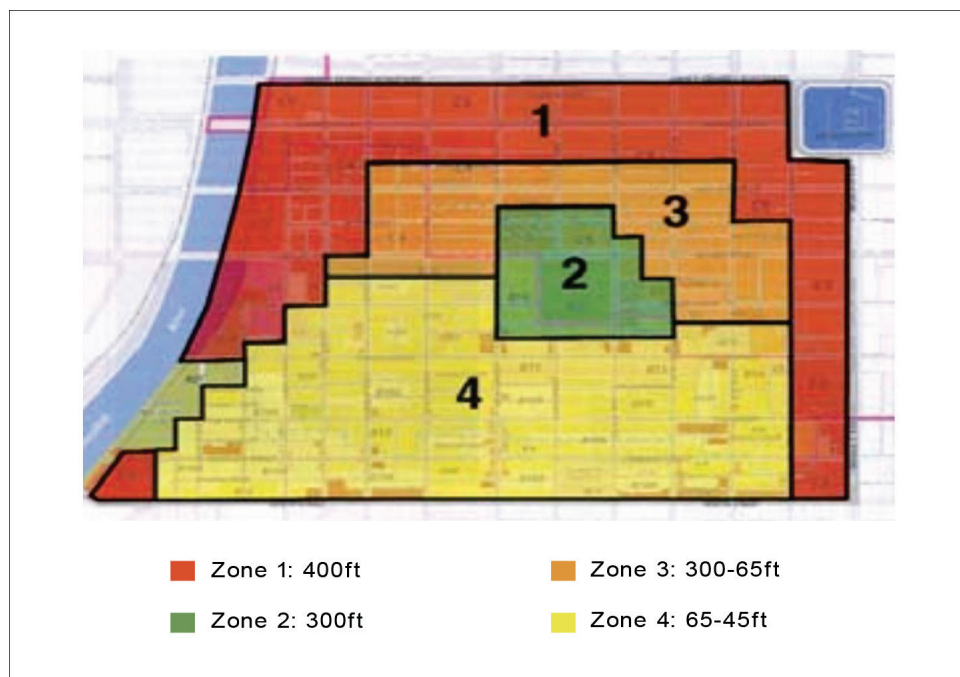


FIGURE 2-3: HEIGHT LIMITS IN DIFFERENT ZONES IN RITTENHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

## **3 PRESERVATION PRACTICES REVIEW**

### **3.1 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT OF DASHILAN AREA**

There have been four major periods of renovation and reconstruction projects completed in the Dashilan Area. The first occurred after two fires at 1900. As mentioned in the site history chapter, the fires destroyed the main commercial area including twenty alleys with thousands of houses (Figure 3-1). Rather than strict restoration of previous wood-framed shop houses, new construction began to integrate western styles. These buildings and the ones followed in the next decades all showed some combinations of Chinese and western architecture features. They are called “Republic style”, which is named after the period of the “Republic of China” during 1912 to 1949.

The second major period of development took place in 1960s, just a decade after the new government (Communist Party) took in charge of China. The first asphalt road in Beijing appeared here. The area became trendy and congested.

Dashilan Area declined in its popularity since 1980s. Motivated by competition for the best pedestrian street in 1990s, roads in this area were repaired and the overall public space was cleaned—with some greenery improvements. However, since pseudo commodities dominated Dashilan Area, it degraded itself from a noble commercial place that it used to be.

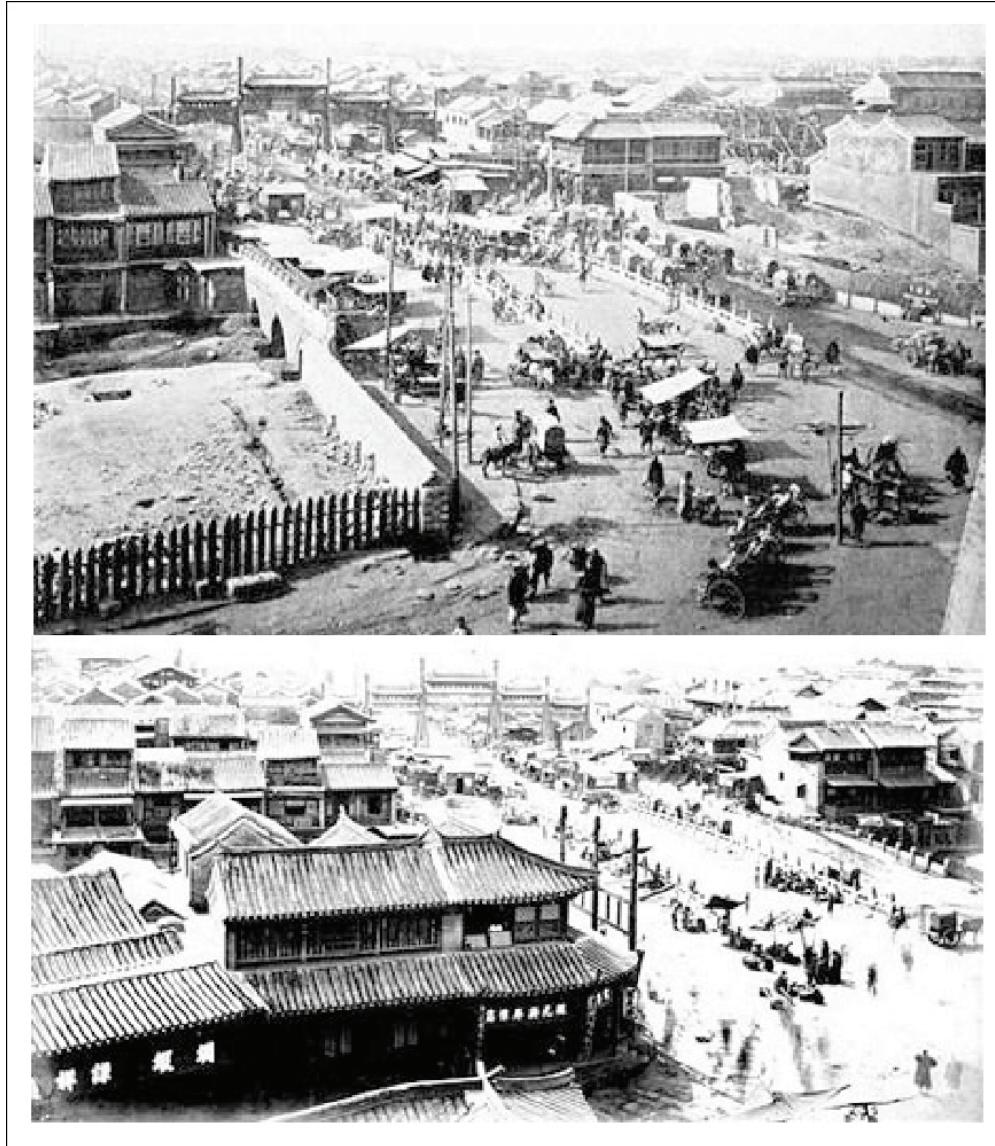


FIGURE 3-1: NEW CONSTRUCTION NEAR LANGFANG 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET AFTER THE FIRES (CA. 1900s)

The last and most recent development of the area occurred in 2003 when the preservation idea was firstly included in the plan. It is the most systematic scheme comparing to previous ones. It is also the first time that three-level zoning (Figure 3-2) was used to define different sub-areas with recommendations of building treatments. These treatment types included: preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and

reconstruction, based on the building's significance and condition. The whole development project is still in progress but big changes have already taken place.

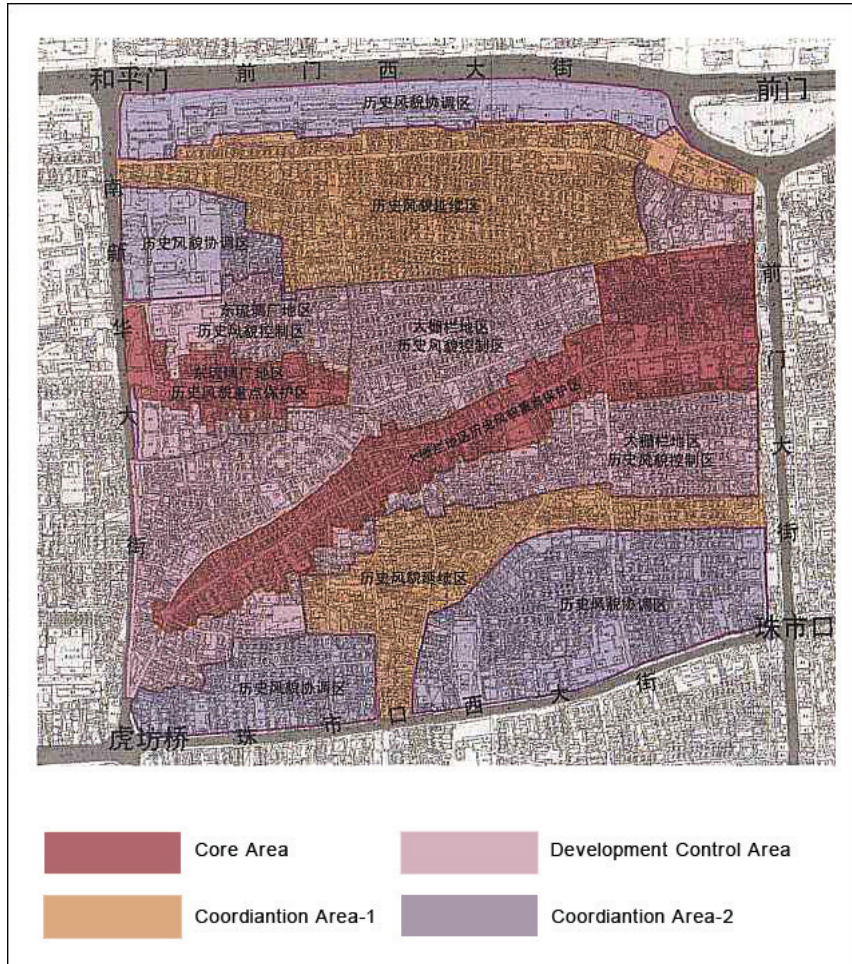


FIGURE 3-2: THREE-LEVEL ZONING IN DASHILAN AREA



## 3.2 PLANNING VISIONS

The most influential planning document has been issued in 2003 by the government as the master plan for whole Dashilan Area. Not only did it divide the whole area into three zones (Figure 3-2), but also it stated the general principles in each zone:

Core Area—“Dashilan” and “East Glaze Factor” Historic Districts. The buildings’ exteriors should be maintained by repair, restore or rehabilitation. No demolition or new construction.

Development Control Area—the immediate area of the two historic districts. The buildings’ exteriors should be maintained by repair, restore or rehabilitation. Pseudo-historic style is recommended in case of new construction.

Coordination Area 1—the area between the Development Control Area and Coordination Area 2. It should be compatible with and continue the style of buildings in the Core and Development Control Area.

Coordination Area 2—the area next to the outer four city roads. New construction should follow the scale, color, style of the Core and Development Control Area.

Even though this zoning showed its intention to protect the historic districts while controlling its surroundings to make a compatible environment, it is irony that the planned road system didn’t follow that idea. On the contrary, it is a huge change if the plan was fully executed. From the comparison (Figure 3-3 and 3-4) we can see “three

north-south plus four east-west main streets” will be opened up cutting through the whole area. This approach is meant to increase the density of urban streets which will make the inside area easier to get to, but it will definitely destroy the organic twill-direction pattern which is a characteristic of this area.



FIGURE 3-3: ROAD SYSTEM BEFORE DEVELOPMENT

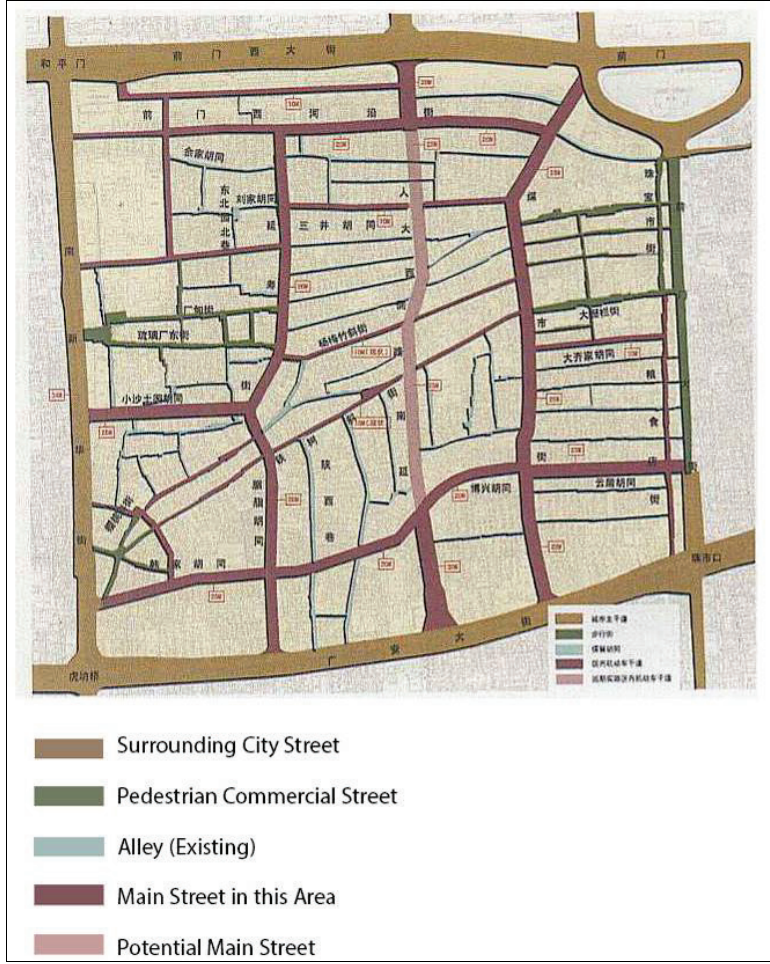


FIGURE 3-4: ROAD PLANNING

Following the 2013 master plan, the government decided to develop the eastern portion of the area starting from Meishi Street to Jewelry Street (Figure 3-5). This section excluded the buildings from Jewelry Street to Qianmen Street which are supposed to be renovated together with the Qianmen Street transformation project. A detailed plan was released in 2004 for this starting section. The plan sub-divided the eastern part into five zones (Figure 3-6). It didn't mention the three-level zoning as in the previous plan but the boundaries showed a direct connection (Figure 3-7). Each zone has different goals in



accordance with the principles in the three-level zoning. The Core Area was called Traditional Commercial Zone and its Development Control Area became Traditional Courtyard Zone. The Green Zone and Cultural Exhibition Zone are mostly far from the Core Area thus has the most tolerance of change.

Another progress in this detail plan is the clear idea to renew the area building by building. Four categories of treatments were suggested which will be applied to them based on the building's condition and significance. The implementation was meant to be carried in a microcirculation way, thus can prevent a large scale demolition. However, the reality as discussed in the next chapter will reveal a different side.



FIGURE 3-5: THE STARTING SECTION IN EASTERN SIDE OF FUTURE NEW MEISHI STREET



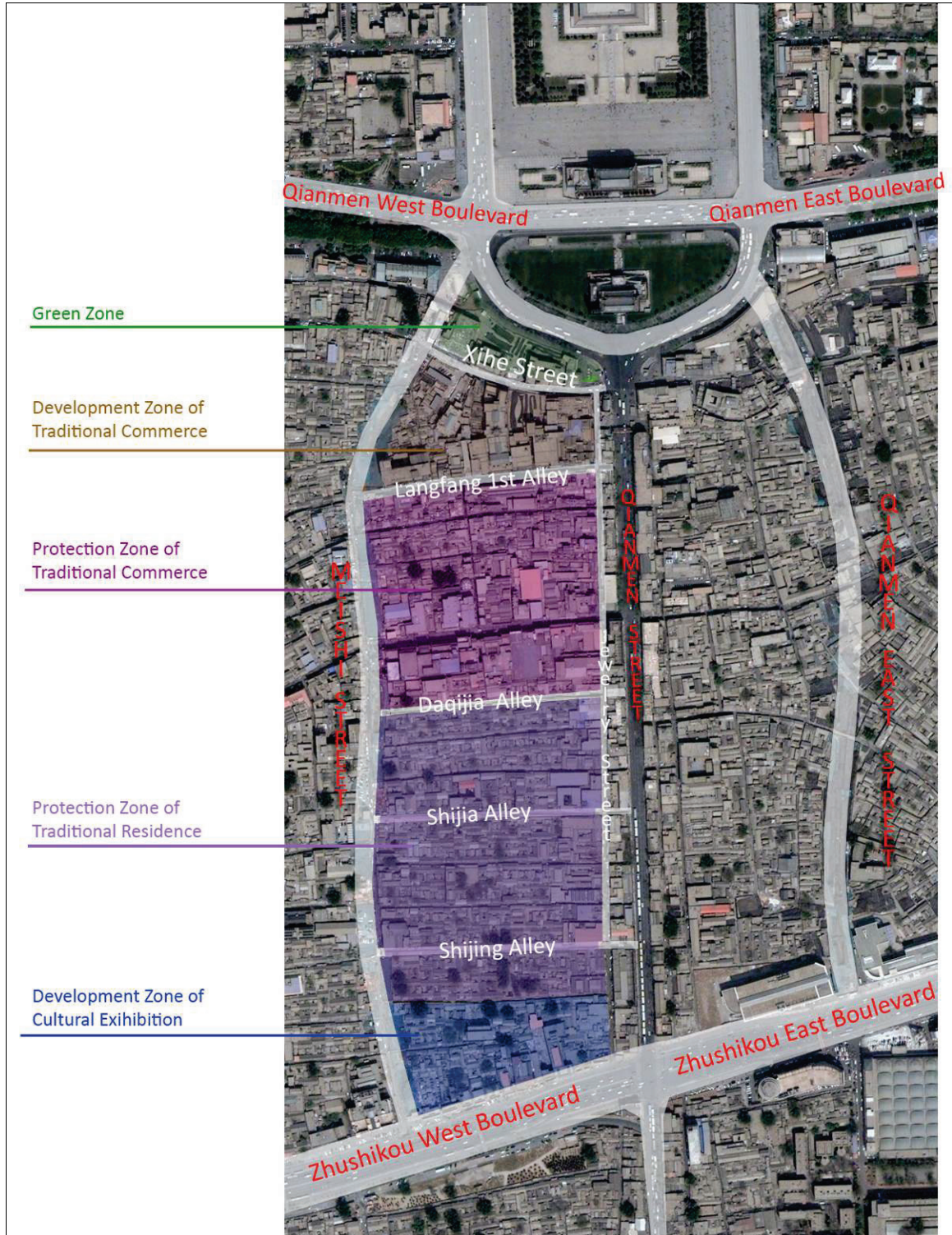


FIGURE 3-6: PLANNED FIVE ZONES IN EASTERN SIDE OF FUTURE NEW MEISHI STREET

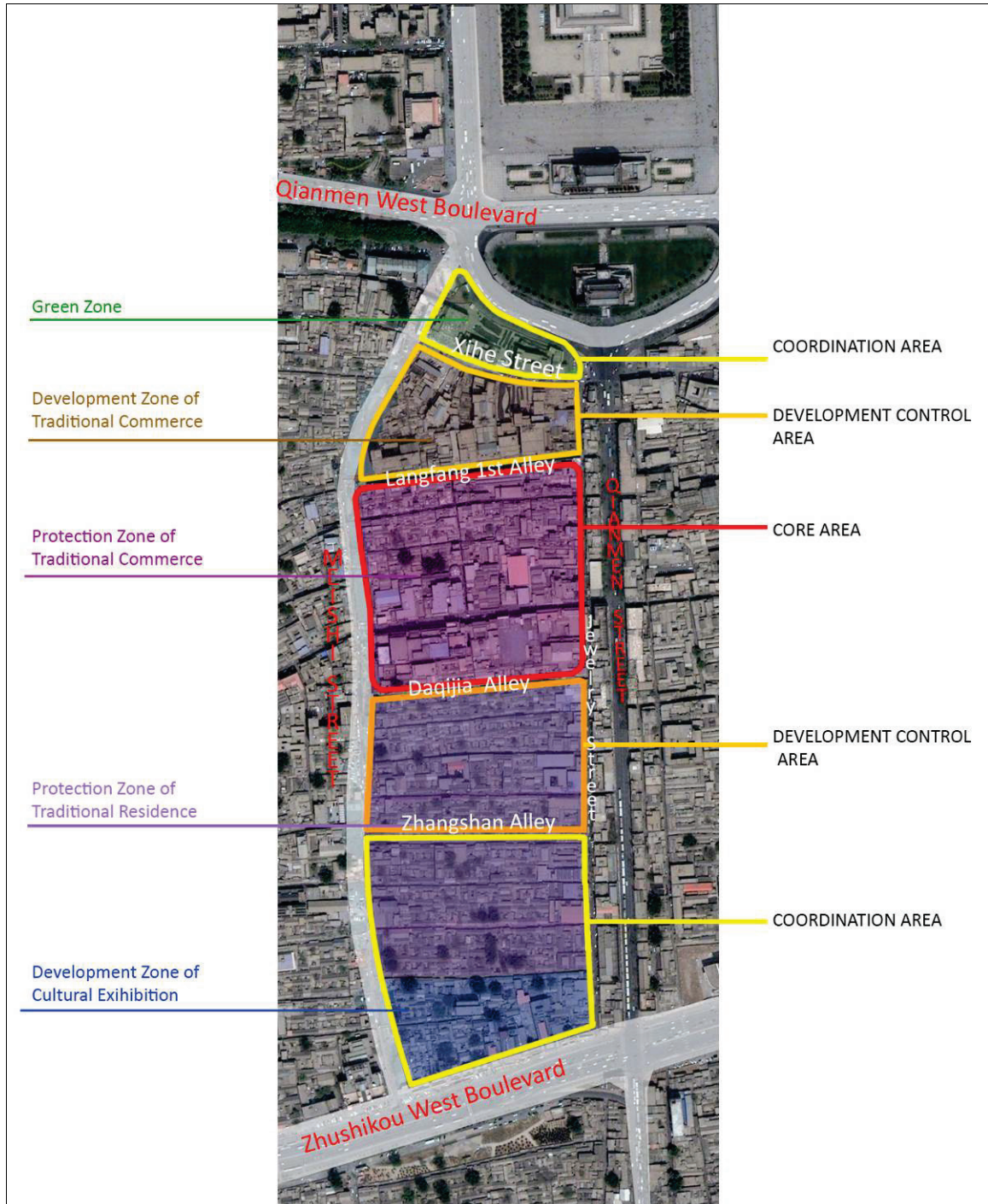


FIGURE 3-7: OVERLAP BETWEEN THE FIVE ZONES AND THREE-LEVEL ZONING



### **3.3 PROJECT PROGRESS**

The whole development project in Dashilan Area was carried on several stages (Figure 3-8) and built on a public-private partnership. As previously mentioned, the Xuanwu District government issued the 2003 master plan and 2004 detailed plan to direct the general objectives. Individual investors collaborated with the government and jointly established Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property Lt. Co. The company is responsible to clear of the land in the Green Zone and Cultural Exhibition Zone to attract interested parties. These parties, which sometimes include original owners, make their own strategies to protect, renovate or rebuilt in their lands, which can be leased to following tenants.

The government launched the first project on Meishi Street in the December of 2004. It lasted for two years making interventions included: broadening the road surface from 9 meters to 25 meters, with municipal pipelines buried together, and the extension of its northern part to the Qianmen West Boulevard (Figure 3-9). It was the first time that municipal pipelines were inserted in the Dashilan Area so it laid the foundation for following projects.

The new Meishi Street is designed for one way pass so it can make a circulation to undertake the north-south traffic flow together with the Qianmen East Street broadened later (Figure 3-10). In this way, it ensured that the Qianmen Street can be transformed

from a city artery to a 50-meter wide pedestrian street (Figure 3-11).



FIGURE 3-8: TIMELINE OF PROJECTS





FIGURE 3-9: EXISTING STREET IN DASHILAN AREA (GOOGLE MAP OF 2003)



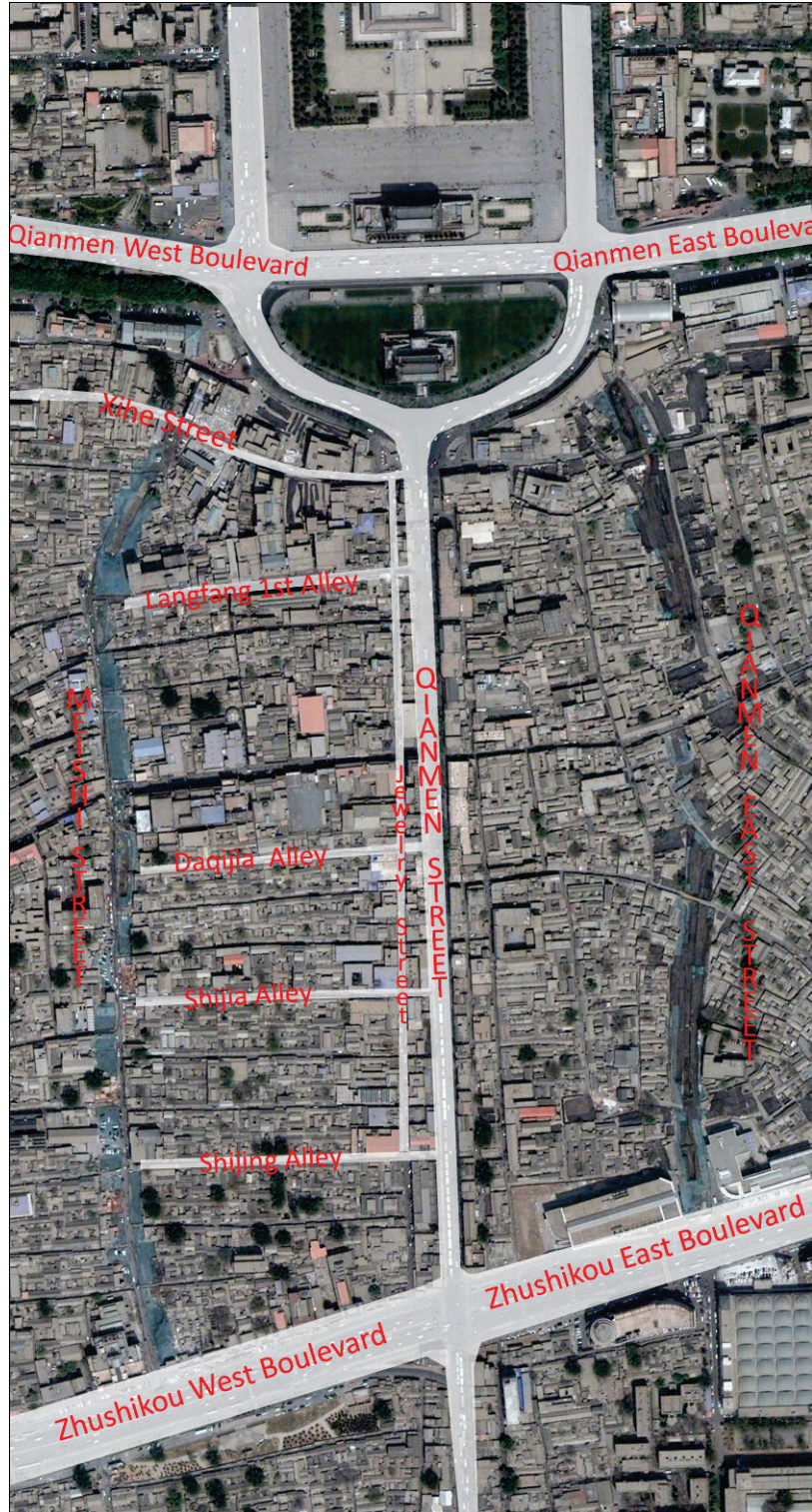


FIGURE 3-10: MEISHI STREET AND QIANMEN EAST ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION (2006)



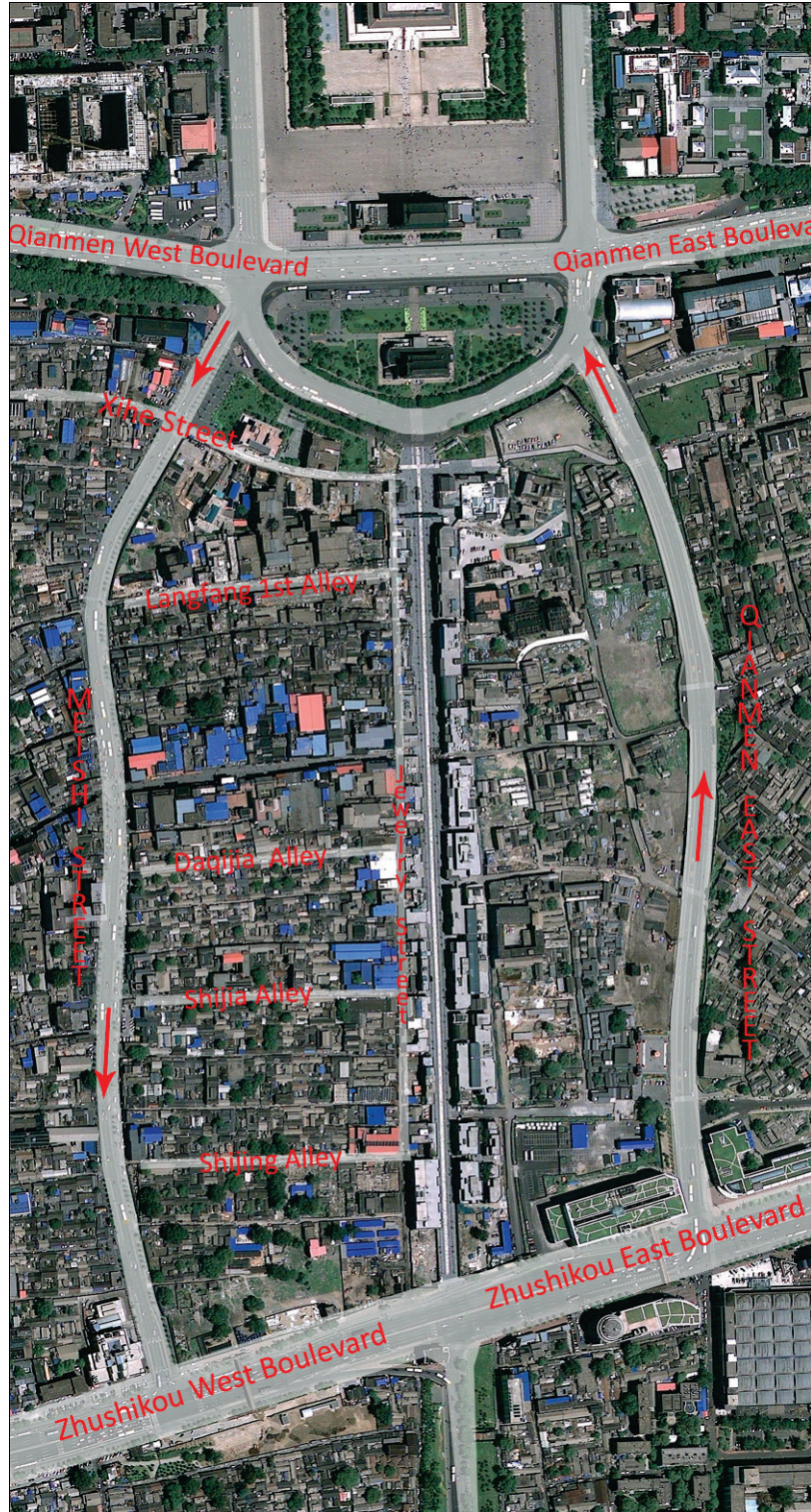


FIGURE 3-11: NEW TRAFFIC FLOW IN THE AREA (GOOGLE MAP OF 2009)



However, widening street surface of Meishi Street resulted in the demolition of buildings along both sides of the road. Residents were forced to move out to clear the way. New pseudo-historic buildings were built to replace the old along the new Meishi Street<sup>14</sup>. From my point of view, the project of Meishi Street is a good idea, considering of re-guiding the traffic flow, but the demolition and pseudo reconstruction make the project unsuccessful. As the interface entering to the Dashilan Historic District, it should reveal and correspond to the different building styles extending from north to the south along Meishi Street, rather than pseudo-classic ones.

Then the project moved to the eastern section. According to the detail plan in 2004, there are five zones (Figure 3-6), but in reality, three parts took steps individually. The demolition in Block C and H began in March, 2006. The Block C and H are the planned Green Zone and Development Zone of Cultural Exhibition but have slight differences in boundary (Figure 3-12). Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property Lt. Co. used an overall “replacement” scheme. All the people were forced to move to allow some alleys to be broadened as planned and new infrastructure to be added. The right of using the land was transferred to interested parties through public bidding, auction, and other types of transfers. Because of this, original residents may find it hard to move back.

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<sup>14</sup> Weimin Que, Tingting Deng, “Perspective of Urban Heritage Protection on Dashilan Block, Beijing,” *Urban Planning International* 27, no.1 (2002): 108.

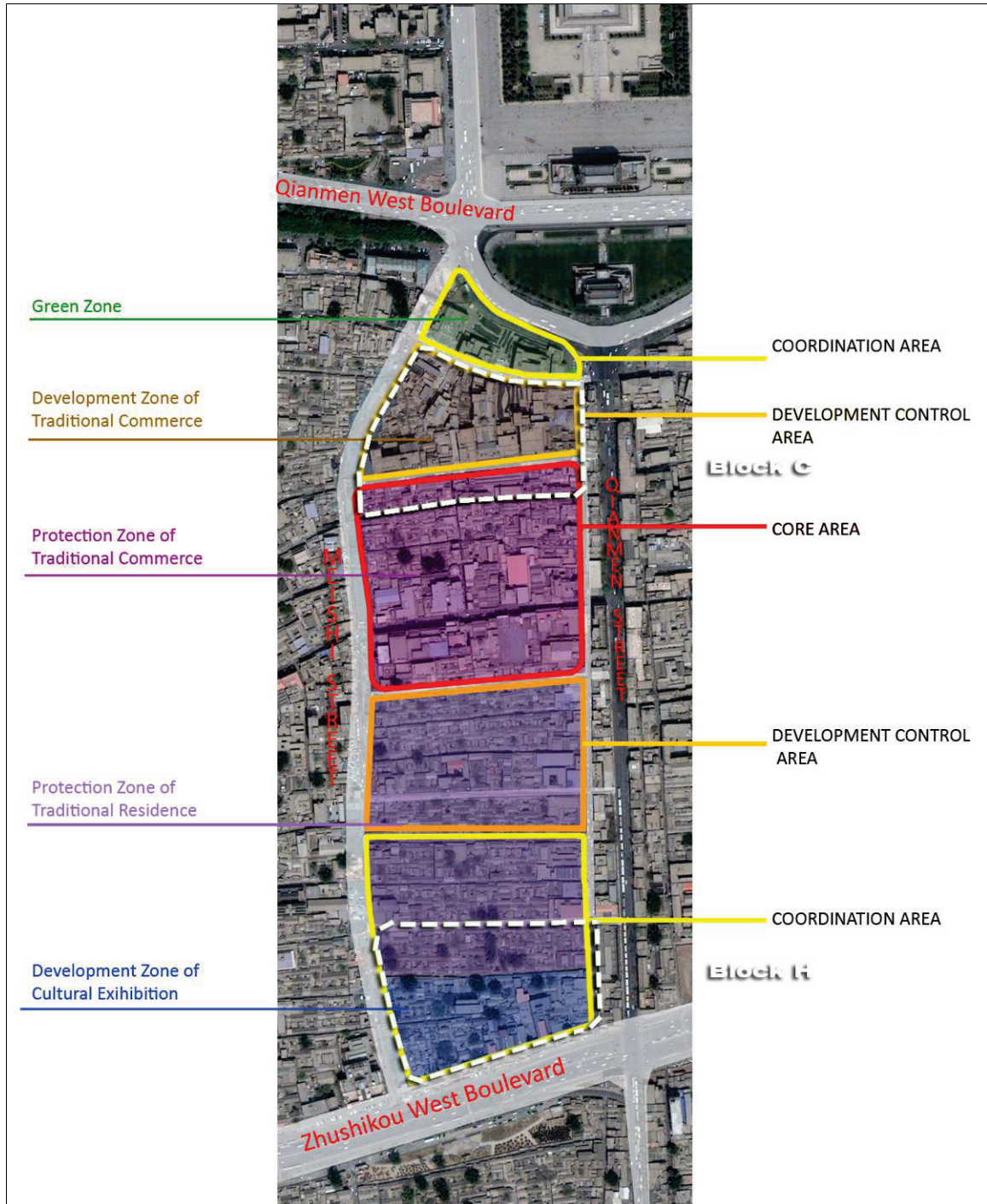


FIGURE 3-12: BLOCK C AND H AS RELATED TO THE PLANNED FIVE ZONES AND THREE-LEVEL ZONING

Block C included the Development Control Area and part of the Core Area planned in 2003, which means the original appearance should be kept by preservation and restoration, allowing small amount of pseudo-historic buildings. However, it demolished a lot of area for new design (Figure 3-13), which demonstrated investors' wish and power, rather than following previous principle for Development Control Area that Block C is supposed to do.



FIGURE 3-13: RENDERING OF NEW BUILDINGS IN BLOCK C AREA

The public showed their opposition when the rendering was posted online for public review in 2012. They even mentioned investors' fault of demolishing several designated buildings by neglect (Figure 3-14) within Block C. These factors hindered the development of Block C and H, whose construction work has been delayed.



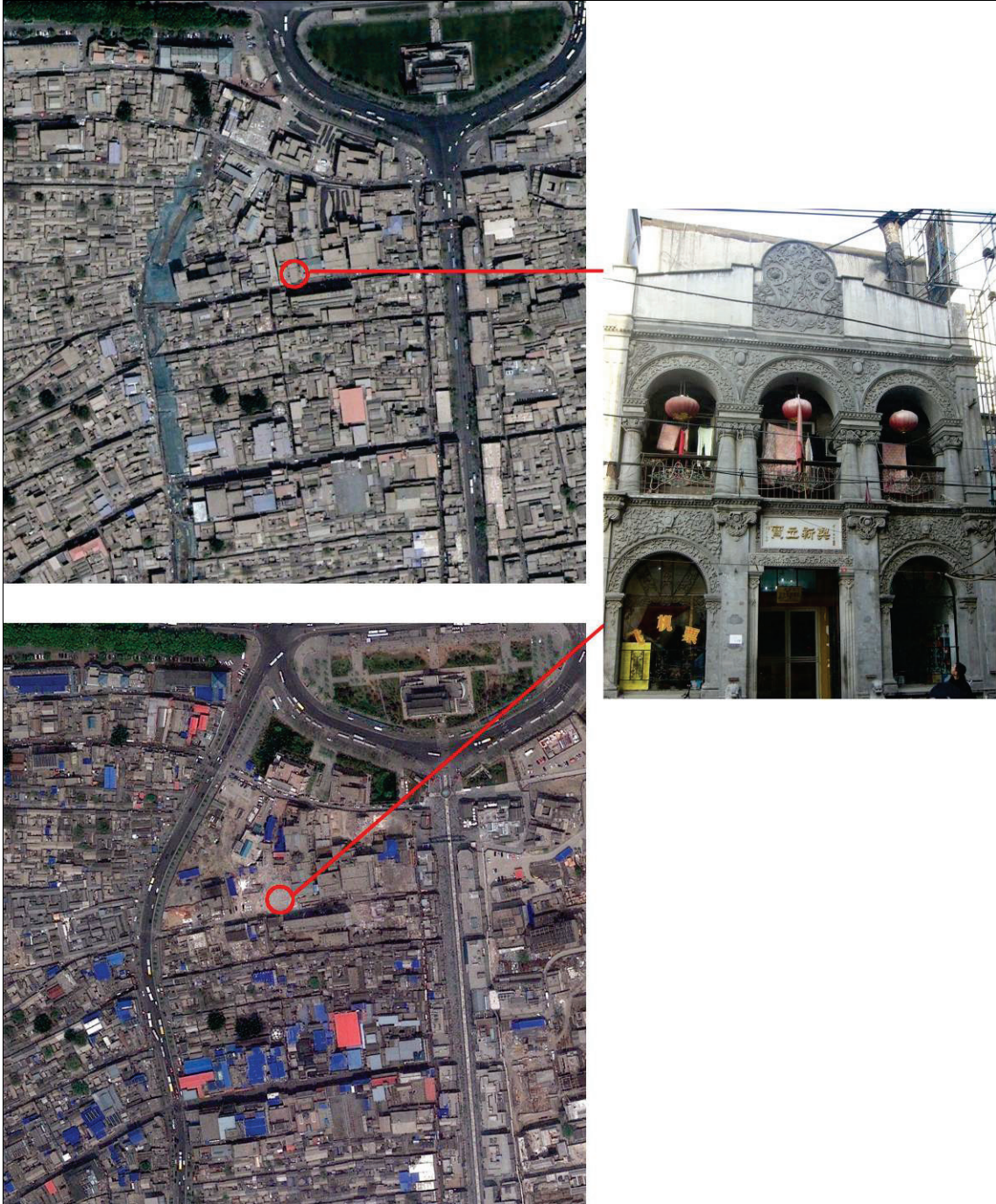


FIGURE 3-14: CLEARANCE IN BLOCK C INCLUDING DESIGNATED BUILDING

Apart from Block C and H, renovation work began on the Dashilan Street along with the new pedestrian Qianmen Street by the government since May of 2007. These two pedestrian streets are aimed at presenting the old and famous enterprises that once existed as the “quintessence of a nation”. These enterprises include pharmacy, tea, shoe, silk cloth, steamed stuffed-bun, scissors and etc. For the brands that are still in the area, buildings have been upgraded. Others are invited to move back to open a franchise here by renting a building repaired, rehabilitated, or renovated. Examples will show in Chapter 4 to evaluate these practices.

Except for building, these two streets have been closed for two months to beautify the scenery on the street. Telegraph poles on the ground were removed and new flashed bricks were laid. It was reopened in the summer of 2008, one month before the Olympic Games to welcome both the domestic and international visitors.

The project moving to the west took place officially in 2009 since the renovations along Dashilan Street and Qianmen Street turned out to be a great success. Similar approaches have been applied in Dashilan West Street where streetscape was beautified to promote a better commercial atmosphere. But it was the first time that the government collaborated with the residents to rehabilitate the buildings, since more buildings on this street are owned by individuals, rather than by the government as in the Dashilan Street. “Snack Street” is an important period in its history so the project was aimed at recovering

back to that time (Figure 3-15). Even though there are not so many visitors as in the Dashilan Street, it is still a popular place.



FIGURE 3-15: DASHILAN WEST STREET PROVIDES LOCAL SNACK AND FOOD

The project on more western section began in 2008, even before the Dashilan West Street project (Figure 3-8). Five alleys in the southwest of Dashilan Area have been chosen as experimental sites where advertisements, signage, posters that were incompatible with the historic atmosphere were removed. Private additions to previous houses were demolished. By using the same building materials and fenestration pattern, buildings' facades to the alleys have also been renovated for a unified appearance (Figure 3-16).



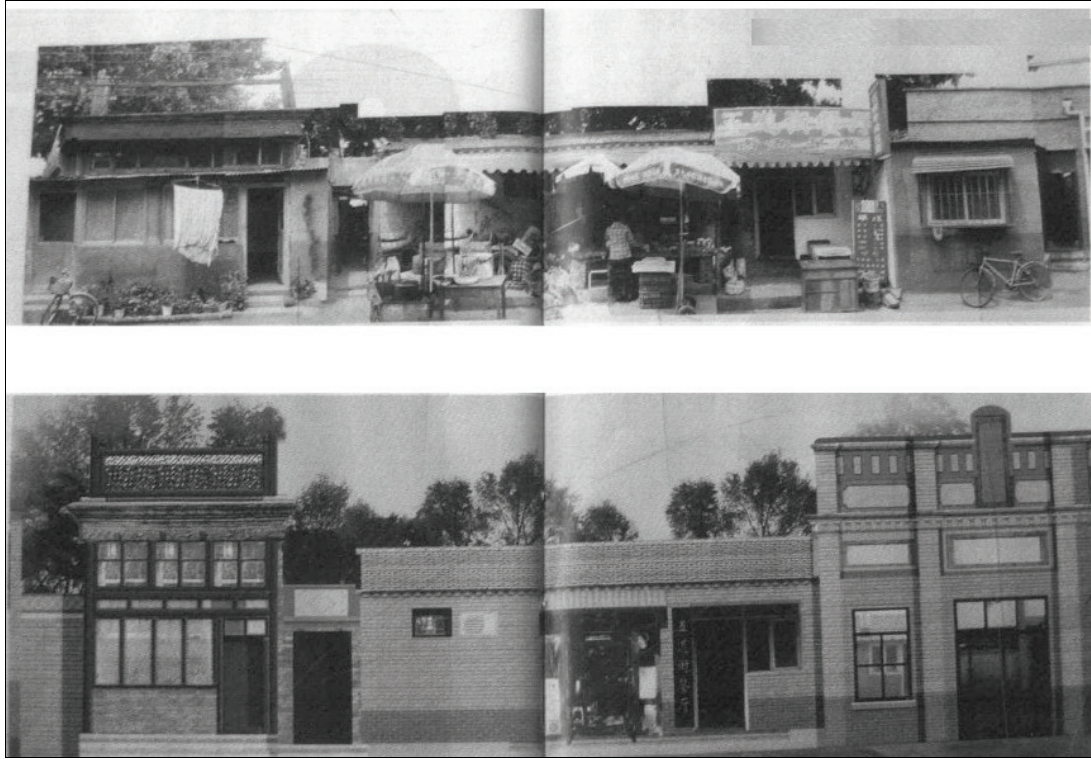


FIGURE 3-16: SCHEME TO SHOW THE BEFORE AND AFTER OF THE CONTINUOUS WALL IN THE ALLEY

Current attention is being paid on the East Glaze Factory Historic District, where a new pedestrian street will be created. When it is completed, it will be connected to the Dashilan Street thus become the longest pedestrian street in Beijing. In this way, the western and eastern sections will be related and function as the core to drive the development in the northern and southern Dashilan Area, where most residences live and their courtyard houses are in need of upgrading.



## **4 PRESERVATION PRACTICES ANALYSIS**

### **4.1 MEISHI STREET**

#### **4.1.1 BENEFITS**

The traffic situation was improved after the new Meishi Street was constructed. It now functions as a supplementary road for north-south traffic flow. Together with Qianmen East Street as another supplementary road, the work to transform Qianmen Street for pedestrians became feasible. Qianmen Street is appropriate as a pedestrian street because it once was a royal road for emperors traversing between Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven (Figure 4-1) since Ming Dynasty. In the site history when Langfang alleys conglomerated as a popular commercial district, shops also extended and accumulated along the Qianmen Street. A poet in early Qing Dynasty depicted Qianmen Street as “full of awnings and stalls” (Figure 4-2). It became a commercial corridor allowing for pedestrians and carriages during Qing Dynasty (Figure 4-3) and later trolley was introduced (Figure 4-4). Comparing to the city road with public transportations before the project (Figure 4-5), this transformation to a pedestrian street is both innovative and encouraging for improving urban life.

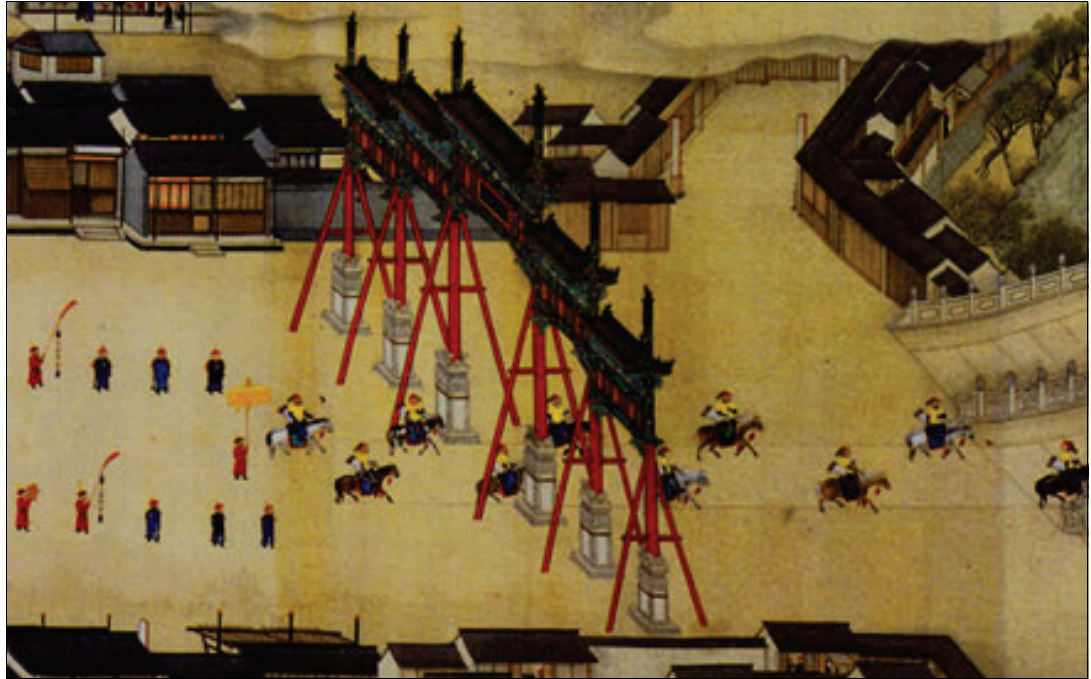


FIGURE 4-1: EMPEROR KANGXI'S TOUR ON QIANMEN STREET IN QING DYNASTY



FIGURE 4-2: FULL OF AWNINGS AND STALLS ON QIANMEN STREET





FIGURE 4-3: CARRIAGES ON QIANMEN STREET CA. 1900 (LOOKING SOUTH)



FIGURE 4-4: TROLLEY LINES ON QIANMEN STREET, CA. 1930S (LOOKING SOUTH)



FIGURE 4-5: QIANMEN AS A CITY ROAD BEFORE TRANSFORMATION

The scheme of broadening Meishi Street and Qianmen East Street not only laid the basis for Qianmen Street to be recovered to its previous popularity, but also shows economic advantage. If not as an active pedestrian street through this renovation, Qianmen Street itself was going to be broadened as a city artery in an alternative scheme. It would have resulted in large scale demolitions of historic buildings along the line, which means greater loss comparing to the current scheme. Cars on Qianmen Street will also negatively affect the accessibility to the Dashilan Area.

If we had adopted the alternative scheme to broaden Qianmen Street as a city artery, then Meishi Street and Qianmen East Street will be made into two pedestrian streets, to support the big commercial zone. It will take more money to do this. And the region will become more disconnected if city cars run in the middle. Currently the pedestrian street



in the middle can benefit both Dashilan Area and Xianyukou Area, which is another significant historic district in the eastside of Qianmen Street. Connected by Qianmen Street together, visitors have a broader sense of this area and can go through easily across one another.

#### **4.1.2 DISADVANTAGES**

The Dashilan Street became more discrete after the new Meishi Street was created. When visitors traverse Dashilan Street towards to the west, they have to cross a two-lane street (Figure 4-6). The Dashilan Street was meant to be a long commercial street but now the eastern and western sections are separated by the incontinuity resulted by broadened Meishi Street. The number of visitors in the western section has decreased comparing to the eastern section.



FIGURE 4-6: MEISHI STREET

Another unavoidable destruction is the demolition alongside the old Meishi Street during the broadening process (Figure 4-7). Even though it changed its course to protect three historic buildings (Figure 4-8), still most areas along the road were replaced with new buildings, in pseudo-historic style (Figure 4-9). If the scheme to create a city road supplemental for Qianmen Street is recognized as effective and successful, the development of it is definitely unsatisfactory. The government paid a huge amount of energy and money to force residents to remove from those areas, but constructed new pseudo-classic buildings confusing people's sense of history. These pseudo-classic buildings along the Meishi Street do not correspond to the inside of alleys, since the alleys are composed of ordinary courtyard houses. According to a field survey, there are 64 buildings in total along the Meishi Street, among which 79.69% are built in pseudo-classic style<sup>15</sup>. It is unreasonable to develop Meishi Street to have pseudo-classic buildings, which detracts from the historic character of the Dashilan Area.

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<sup>15</sup> Que, Weimin, and Tingting Deng. "Perspective of Urban Heritage Protection on Dashilan Area, Beijing." *International Urban Planning* 27, no.1 (2012): 108.



FIGURE 4-7: BEFORE AND AFTER SCENE OF A CORNER ON MEISHI STREET



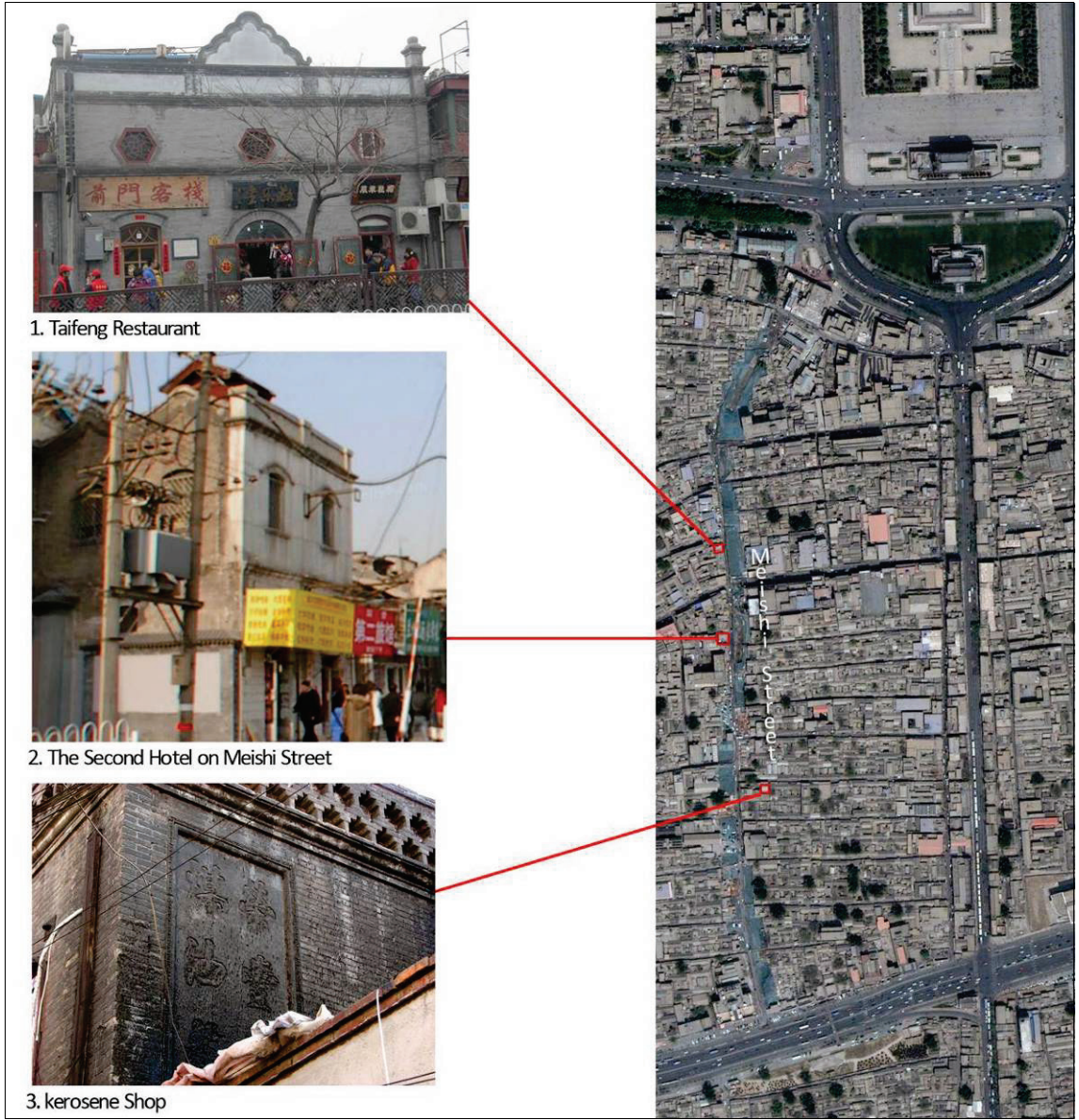


FIGURE 4-8: THREE HISTORIC BUILDINGS WERE SAVED DURING ON MEISHI STREET



FIGURE 4-9: NEW PSEUDO-CLASSIC BUILDINGS ON MEISHI STREET

## **4.2 BLOCK C**

Block C is chosen as a representative case within Dashilan Area. It underwent a thought out planning and developing process. The following section will concentrate on this Block to examine the effects of work completed and being constructed, which will give a basis of establishing design guidelines in the next chapter.

The Block C covers 3.3 hectares from Xihe Street to the northern side of Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley, comprised of the Core Area and Development Control Area of Dashilan Historic District (Figure 4-10). It is a project planned for eight years since 2005.

### **4.2.1 BENEFITS**

In November of 2012, the publicity of the project in Block C showed a promising future for this area. It is branded as “Beijing Square”, a high-class commercial zone. The first department store in Beijing, Quanyechang, sits at the center of the construction area. It is a historic building being renovated to be an art center to show Beijing folk art (Figure 4-11 and 4-12). According this plan of 2012, eight other historic buildings will also be preserved (Figure 4-13), except for Quanyechang. Other lots will be occupied by new museums, galleries, art workshops, shops and an underground parking lot. There is an 18 meters (six stories) height limit for buildings in this area, which is good for controlling the skyline. All the new buildings were designed by reputable architects, who mastered the building form in a blended traditional and western style (Figure 4-14). They

are compatible with the existing historic settings.

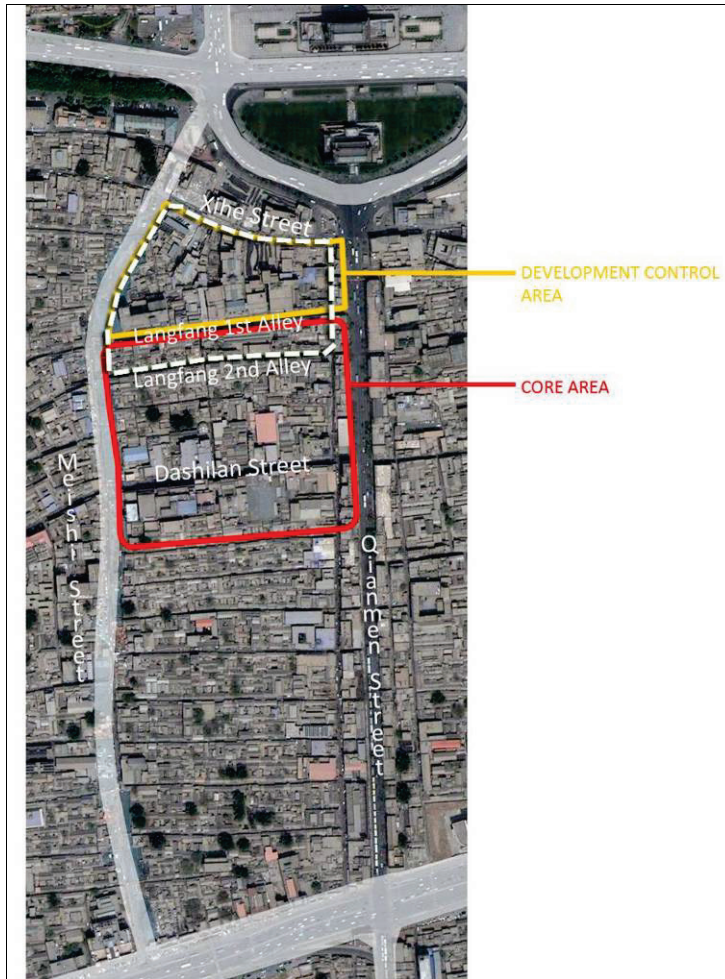


FIGURE 4-10: THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG BLOCK C (WHITE DASHED LINE), THE CORE AREA AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AREA





FIGURE 4-11: QUANYECHANG BEFORE RENOVATION



FIGURE 4-12: RENDERING OF BEIJING QUANYECHANG AS ART CENTER





FIGURE 4-13: PLAN OF BLOCK C (ORANGE LINES REPRESENTING HISTORIC BUILDINGS)



FIGURE 4-14: FORM AND MASS OF NEW BUILDINGS

## 4.2.2 DISADVANTAGES

From the plan (Figure 4-13) we can also see how large proportion of the area was demolished for new construction. As mentioned previously, all the people were forced to remove for a basic clearance by Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property Lt. Co., who was responsible for the area as the first-level developer. It is during this clearance process that most buildings were demolished for new construction. Let us not forget that buildings from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley to 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley belong to Core Area which does not allow any kind of new construction by law<sup>16</sup>. Even though the area from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley to Xihe Street was not included in the Core Area, controls should also have been in place to protect designated historic buildings that were removed during the process. An exquisite historic building on Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley (Figure 3-14), for example, disappeared and residents reported that they have seen valuable brick details (Figure 4-15) being sold by the developers.

To sum up, there is a serious paradox between the development mechanism and protection goal in Block C. It is not surprising that *Global Times* mentioned “heritage protection experts have alleged a new development project in the Qianmen area, which is merely another excuse to have a commercial zone instead of properly preserving the

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<sup>16</sup> *Regulations on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Village, Town and City* (The People's Republic of China State Council Order No. 524, April 2008).



area's historic landscape”<sup>17</sup>.



FIGURE 4-15: BRICK DETAILS ON A DEMOLISHED EXQUISITE BUILDING

The monopoly power of Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property Lt. Co. should also be examined. By forcing all people to move, it holds the absolute power to decide the fate of each building by the company. The residents and shop owners have no right in the decision-making process. That can be one reason why so many buildings were demolished. After the basic clearance, the land value became much higher, making it impossible for previous residents or shop owners to move back. The following example will demonstrate the powerlessness of old and famous shop brands in Dashilan Area.

Qian Xiang Yi, an old brand of silk store, was established in 1830 in Beijing. One

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<sup>17</sup> Yin Yeping, “Dashilan to be Qianmenized?” *Global Times*, last modified November 9, 2012, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/743341.shtml>.

branch store is located along Qianmen Street (Figure 4-16). It is two story wood buildings with exterior in western classical style (Figure 4-17). It was designated as a historic unit in Beijing city and has already been under regular maintenance in the decades. In 2005 the building owner paid 1 million RMB to repair the roof but the removal order by government the next year urged the owner to move, which was hard for him to accept. The owner consulted many departments and finally made an agreement with the developer: the owner moved outside during the clearance and paid the developer 1.8 million to move back two years later in 2008. “You really have no choice,” said the owner. But the reality is that this silk store didn’t move back as expected. A new pseudo-classic building was erected next to it as the new silk store. Today the building is in bad condition, and the façade acts only as a face (Figure 4-18). It is hard to predict what will be happen on this building, or if this tragedy on historic sites will happen to other buildings.

The irony of protection of a building in the paper, but demolition by another department has happened elsewhere. When the plan for Block C project was being opened up for public review from November to December in 2012, construction work had already taken place. Whether it was because of the lack of communication, or it was done on purpose, regulations should be established to prevent this phenomenon in the future.

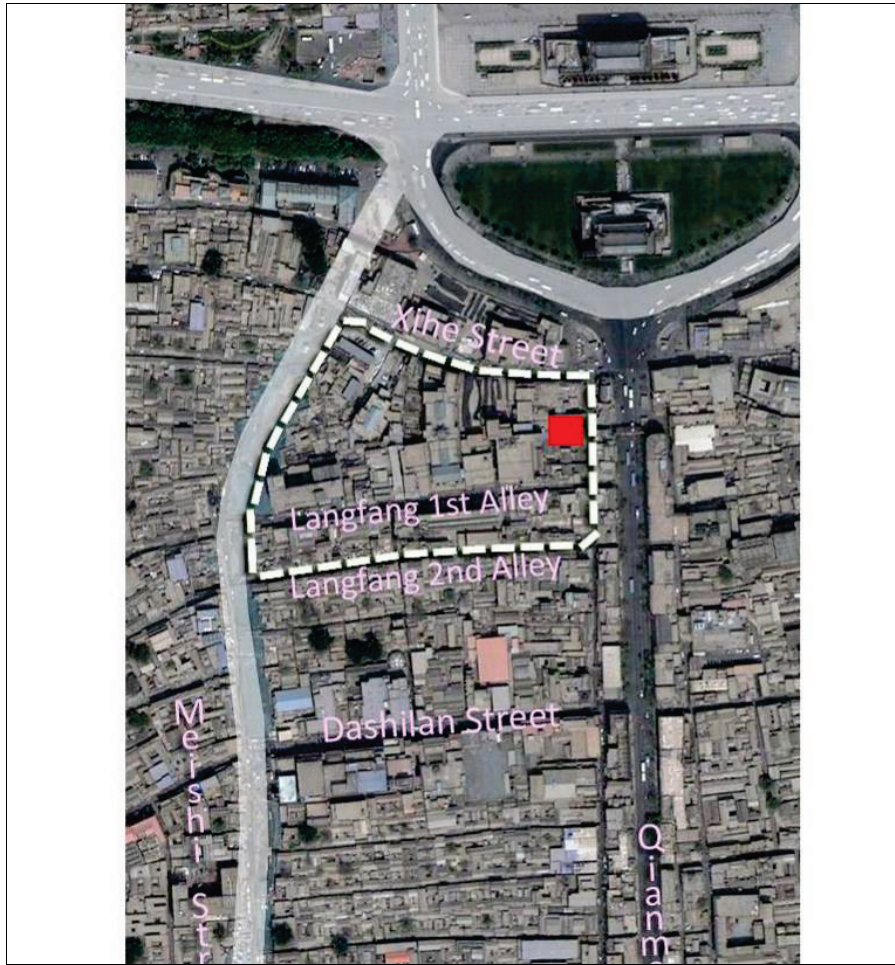


FIGURE 4-16: THE LOCATION OF QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE IN BLOCK C AND DASHILAN AREA



FIGURE 4-17: QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE





FIGURE 4-18: BUILDING CONDITION OF FORMER QIAN XIANG YI SILK STORE

## 4.3 BUILDING TREATMENTS

### 4.3.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

The project on Dashilan Street made the most treatments on the building level. It is reported that 43 shops have been treated in four categories: preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and façade repair. The unified appearance brings visitors thus an active life to this street (Figure 4-19).



FIGURE 4-19: UNIFIED APPEARANCE ON NEW DASHILAN STREET

### 4.3.2 CHALLENGES

From the above figure, we can also see the modern signage which looks incompatible with the historic environment. This occurs after the overall renovation by individuals. More detailed regulations should be in place to guide the shop owners or renters to make a unified streetscape. New buildings in a modern style but capped with a

tradition roof should also be avoided (Figure 4-20), since it is not authentic to its time and context.



FIGURE 4-20: BIG ROOF ARCHITECTURE ON DASHILAN STREET

Up to now most work has been done on the central street, but renovation work is also needed for those nearby sub-streets and private houses (Figure 4-21). They are still facing the public even though they do not sell goods to the visitors. The living condition mentioned before also motivated future projects. They are not like public buildings on Dashilan Street where you can close the street removing all residents temporarily for an overall renovation. More consideration should be given when the project takes place.

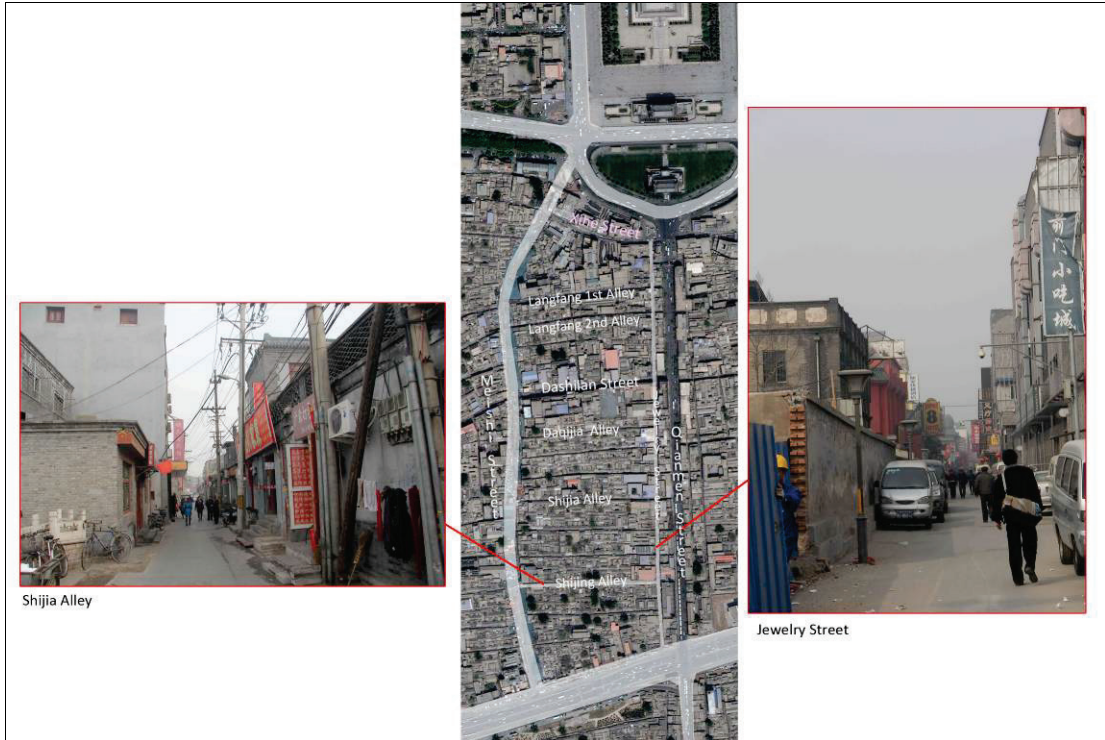


FIGURE 4-21: URBAN RENEWAL NEEDS IN THOSE SUB-STREETS AND ALLEYS



# 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 PHILOSOPHY

This chapter intends to create design guidelines for Block C which includes both historic buildings, remaining buildings and new construction. A brief summary of the current condition is provided, followed by recommendations and guidelines at the end.

The Google map of May 2011 (Figure 5-1) was chosen as the base map to show the situation just before the construction. From the map we can see how much area has already been demolished for new buildings. As mentioned before, the area from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley is the Core Area but the houses at two ends was almost gone (Figure 5-2). From Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley to Xihe Street, only four giant buildings were left including Quanyechang in the center (Figure 5-3). All these vacant land is ready for new construction.

Buildings remaining in Block C have different levels of historic significance and are in various conditions. As documented there are five buildings and the whole Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley designated as historic sites (Figure 5-4). These designated buildings' addresses are 19, 17, 15, 11 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley and 5 Jewelry Street. The 2011 base map showed the loss of 19 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley (Figure 3-14 and 5-5), even though the other four designated buildings were in a relatively good condition. The remaining buildings on the Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley were in a decaying status.



FIGURE 5-1: BASE MAP TO SHOW BLOCK C PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION



FIGURE 5-2: DEMOLITION ON FROM LANGFANG 1<sup>ST</sup> TO 2<sup>ND</sup> (LOOKING TO QIANMEN STREET)





FIGURE 5-3: THE ENCLOSURE FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION (LANGFANG 1<sup>ST</sup> ALLEY WITH QUANYECHANG AND SEVERAL LARGE-SCALE BUILDINGS IN THE BACKGROUND)

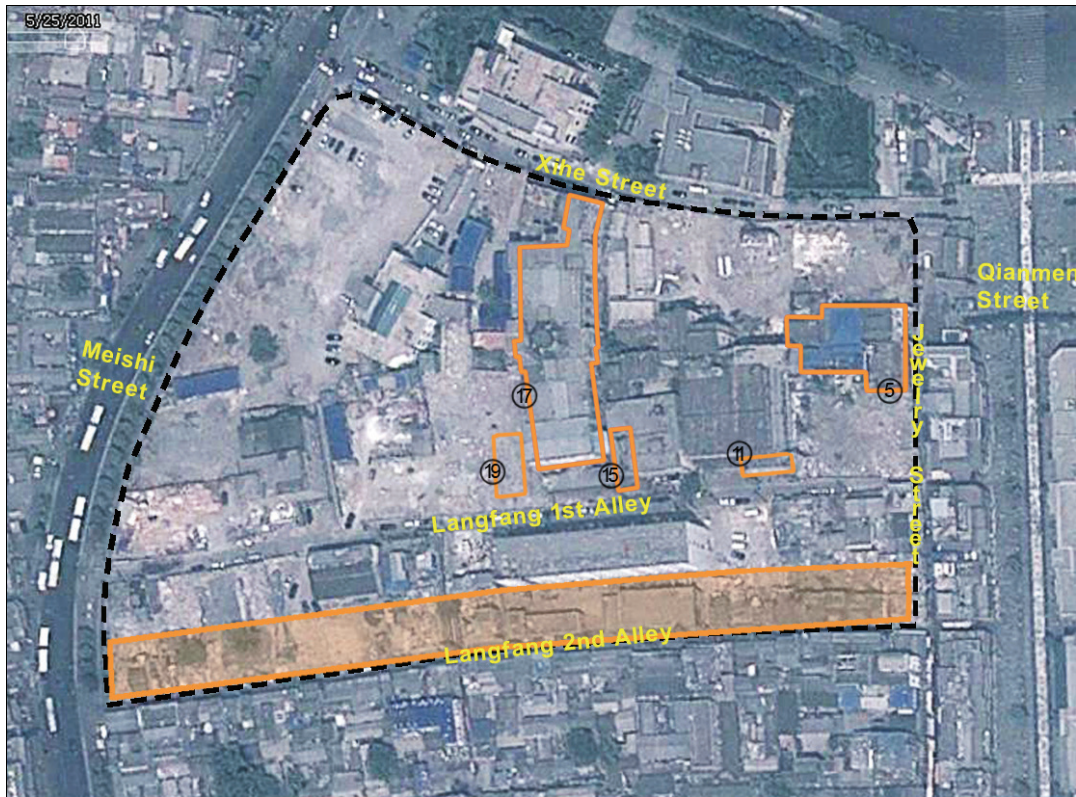


FIGURE 5-4: DESIGNATED BUILDINGS AND ALLEY IN DOCUMENT



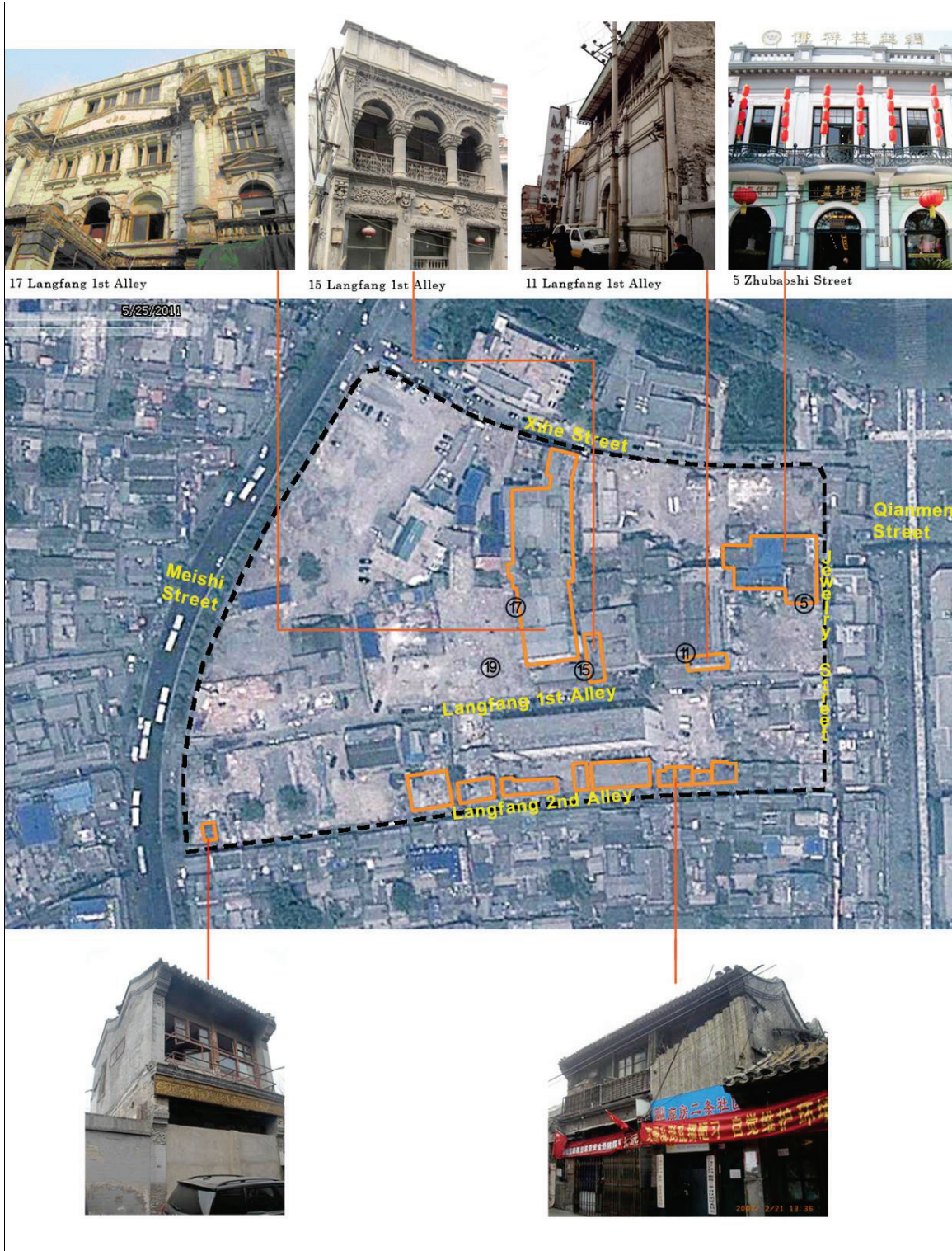


FIGURE 5-5: REMAINING DESIGNATED BUILDINGS



## 5.2 ELEMENTS, CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES

The site history and development chronology (Figure 5-6) in previous chapters represented the historic elements in Block C. The area from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley was populated as the jewelry streets (especially jade) since late Qing Dynasty in a traditional architectural style. The bigger buildings north of Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley are built in the following years strongly showed western classical style. The following paragraphs will summarize those historic elements, and then draws out physical characteristics and urban qualities that should be maintained in Block C. Most descriptions will be based on scenarios before the demolition setting the basis for future construction through design guidelines.

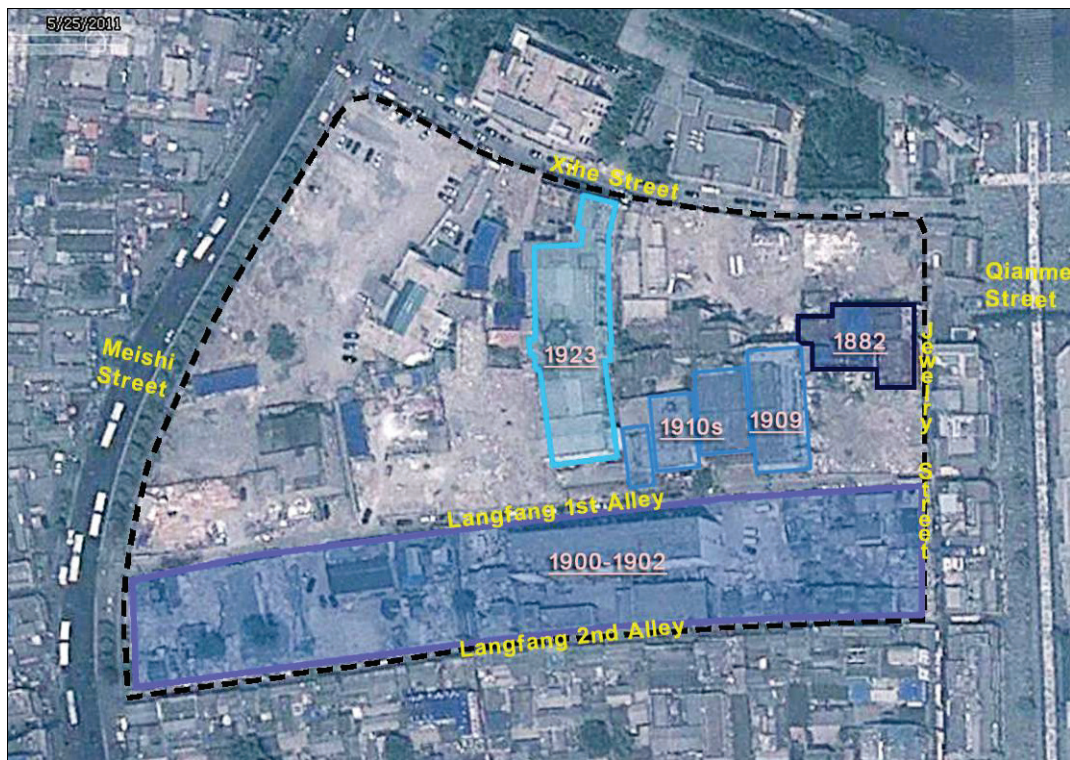


FIGURE 5-6: CHRONOLOGY OF REMAINED BUILDINGS IN BLOCK C

### **5.2.1 ELEMENTS TO BE PRESERVED**

#### 1. The jade shop building typology

Two gables connected together is the main feature of jade shops (Figure 5-7), which conglomerated along the Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley. It may originated from the Emperor Di's period when he encouraged a special shop house called "Langfang", but no documents existed to confirm that. During 1900s to 1930s those buildings appeared as jade stores. The business operated at the front and possibly living space occupied the rear of the building. This typology showed a unified composition of façade but varied in heights (two to three stories) and the layout are also flexible: two identical houses combined as twins, thinner front or even one gable with a face (Figure 5-8 and 5-9). In general this type is rare in other historic districts and probably appeared only in the Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley within Dashilan Area. It should be maintained as an example of jade shop houses in Dashilan Area.

#### 2. Republican architecture style

Buildings also embodied Baroque style at different levels. The bigger buildings in Figure 5-6 built after 1910s used new building materials, stone and concrete, to express classical architectural language. Some showed obvious Baroque features like the arched window, pediment, Ionic column (Figure 5-10) while others applied in abstract and subtle way (Figure 5-11).



FIGURE 5-7: TYPICAL JADE SHOP HOUSES ON LANGFANG 2<sup>ND</sup> ALLEY



FIGURE 5-8: NON-IDENTICAL HOUSES CONNECTED





FIGURE 5-9: ONE GABLE TYPE OF SHOP HOUSE





FIGURE 5-10: OBVIOUS BAROQUE FEATURES ON QUANYECHANG



FIGURE 5-11: ABSTRACT REFERENCE OF BAROQUE FEATURES

## 5.2.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS TO BE PRESERVED

1. Architecture features from those jade shops includes the curved sloping roof, recessed façade from party walls and frieze board with moldings in the middle (Figure 5-12 and 13). The curved sloping roof has no ridge when two slopes meets but using round tiles rolled as the transition surfaces from one sloping roof to another. It is a typical roof pattern for courtyard houses in Beijing and northern China. It shows softness and aesthetic value. The recessed façade and the frieze board with moldings is probably came from western style, since it is similar to the party wall and cornice of Philadelphia row-house (Figure 5-14).



FIGURE 5-12: THE CURVED SLOPING ROOF (COMPARING TO THE REGULAR ONE ON THE LEFT)



FIGURE 5-13: RECESSED FAÇADE, DECORATIVE BOARD IN THE MIDDLE





FIGURE 5-14: THE SIMILARITY OF ROWHOUSE TO THE LOWER PART OF JADE SHOPS

## 2. Unified building material and color

The jade shop houses were made with grey brick and wood decorations painted red. Few stone buildings remain standing in Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley, which are finished in grey stone (Figure 5-15). All these brought a unified combination of bright red within grey background. New insertions along Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley are recommended to follow this color scheme and avoid intrusive colors.





FIGURE 5-15: GREY STONE BUILDINGS ALONG LANGFANG 2<sup>ND</sup> ALLEY

### 5.2.3 QUALITIES TO BE PRESERVED

#### 1. Scales of buildings to street

On Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley, the buildings alongside are mostly in one story or two story. The alley itself was not broad. The shops made a continuous street wall. Together these factors provided a comfortable street scale (Figure 5-16).

#### 2. Street life

Rather than big public stores on Dashilan Street, commercial life in Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley are housed in private buildings, which are also the home of shopkeepers. Visitors favors this natural living atmosphere that evolved for years not created overnight. Native snacks sold on the street are very popular, for example, Baodu

Feng, which once stood in a humble house on 57 Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley. Hearing the news that the house was slated for demolition in the Spring of 2006, more people came to eat and even waited in one-hour long queue.



FIGURE 5-16: COMFORTABLE SCALE OF STREET OF LANGFANG 2<sup>ND</sup> ALLEY

## 5.3 DESIGN GUIDELINES

To fully illustrate the current distribution of historic buildings and buildings remaining from general demolition in Block C, a new base map (Figure 5-17) was created based upon the Google map of May 2011 and nomination documents. This map illustrated conflicting information compared to previous master plan of 2012 (Figure 5-18) especially on Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley. No individual buildings on Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley has been nominated but the whole Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley was listed as a historic district, from the detailed plan in 2004 released by the government. This nomination also conforms to the fact that Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley was within the Core Area of Dashilan Historic District. Therefore, I recommend that the remaining buildings on the northern section of Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley should all be considered designated buildings.

Three sub-zones are established based on the new map. This division is made according to the current texture and historic significance. This is also consistent with the division in the master plan of 2012 (Figure 5-18). From Xihe Street to Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley, all buildings are in modern material with Baroque style. With Quanyechang as the center dividing line, the west and east areas are labeled as Zone C1 and C2. Then the whole area from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley, which is also the Core Area in former documents, is defined as Zone C3.

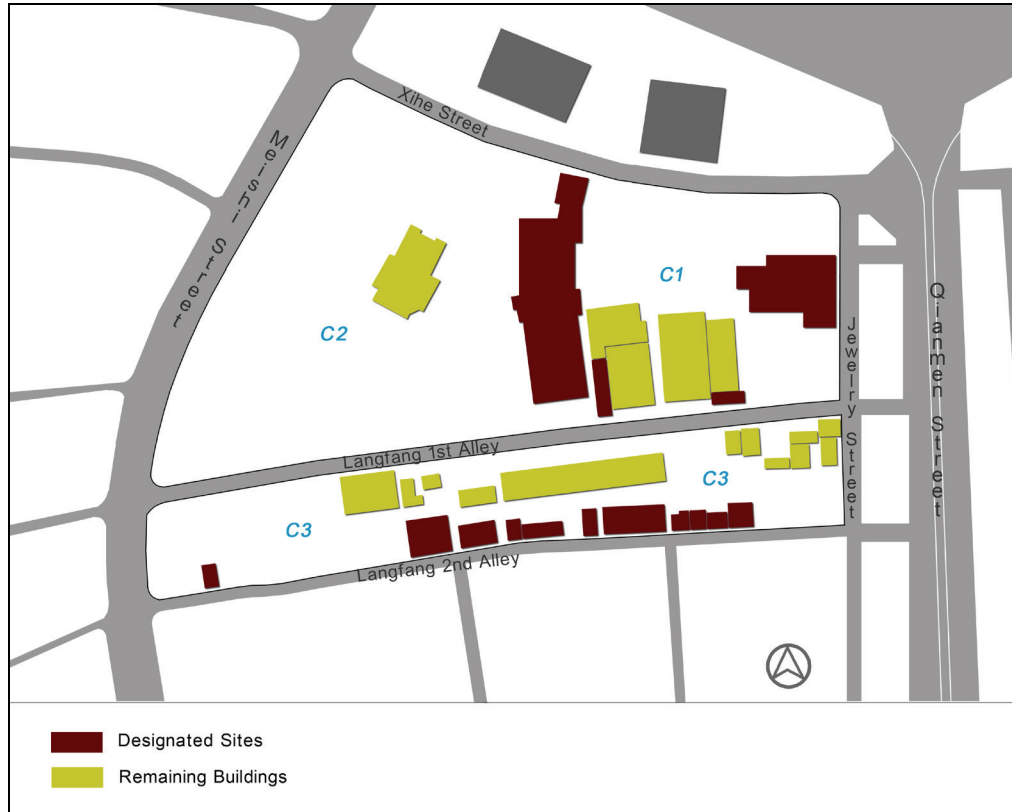


FIGURE 5-17: DIVISION OF C1, C2 AND C3

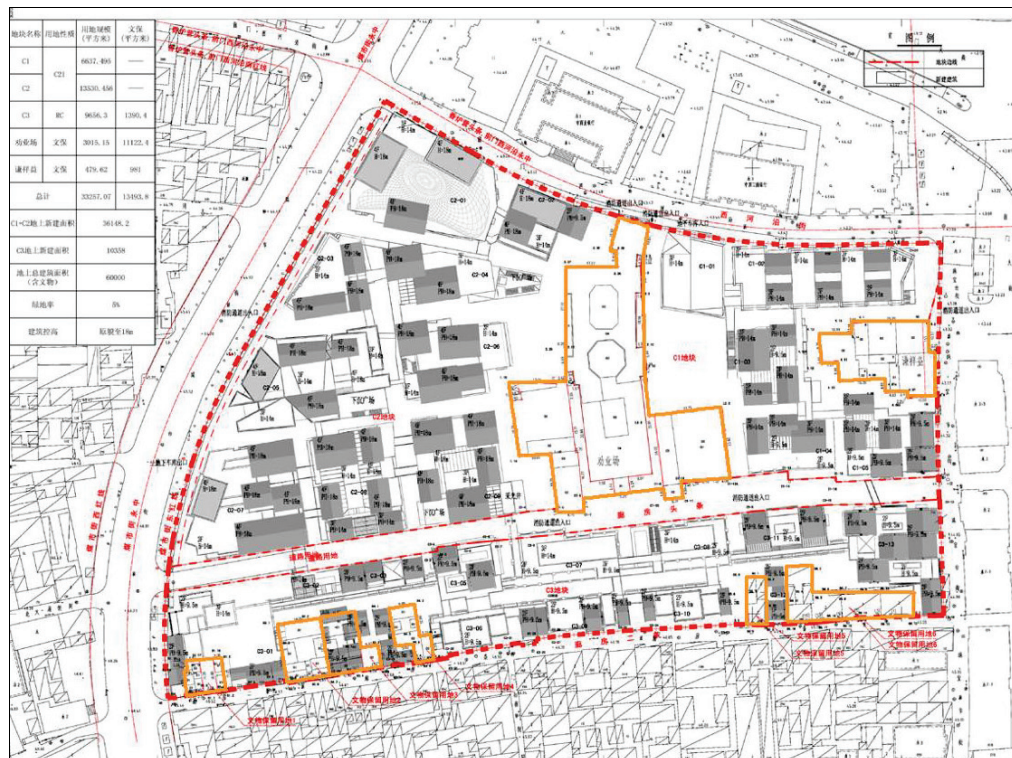


FIGURE 5-18: MASTER PLAN OF 2012 SHOWING HISTORIC BUILDING IN ORANGE



### **5.3.1 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ZONE C1**

#### 1. Designated Buildings

Designated buildings include 15, 11 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley and 5 Jewelry Street. They should be strictly preserved.

#### 2. Remaining Buildings

They are Yidefu Hotel and Wuliang Hotel. Yidefu Hotel (Figure 5-11) should be preserved allowing minor changes in building's exterior if required by future use. The future use of this building is flexible as long as the proposed function does not impair its current overall appearance. Wuliang Hotel should strictly preserve its façade (11 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley) which has been designated. Proposed use of the rear of the building should be compatible and protective to the facade.

#### 3. New Construction

3.1 Height limit of 18 meters (three-story) is recommended since it has been successfully implemented in the plan of 2012, and the height is also compatible to the existing historic fabric.

3.2 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley will be continued to use as a pedestrian street, so a uniformed street line is important to be maintained. Even though the current setback on northern Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley is not uniform due to part demolition, a basic street line should be established and new buildings should respect this

setback (Figure 5-19). Exterior additions, like a portico, is recommended to add onto Quanyechang to minimize the visual impact of its current setback inconsistent to street line.

3.3 The building style should draw from surrounding buildings. Therefore, modern buildings with reference to Baroque features are highly suggested in Zone C1 (Figure 5-20 and 5-21). In the lots near Jewelry Street, some combination of traditional Chinese and Baroque style can be taken into consideration, since it is near Qianmen Street, where traditional architecture conglomerate. In the lots near Xihe Street, it should respond to the openness and large-scale buildings in Moon Bay (Figure 5-22).

3.4 Clear pedestrian routes with squares are recommended to orient visitors in the site, promote connection and maintain pedestrian access from Xihe Street to Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley (Figure 5-23).

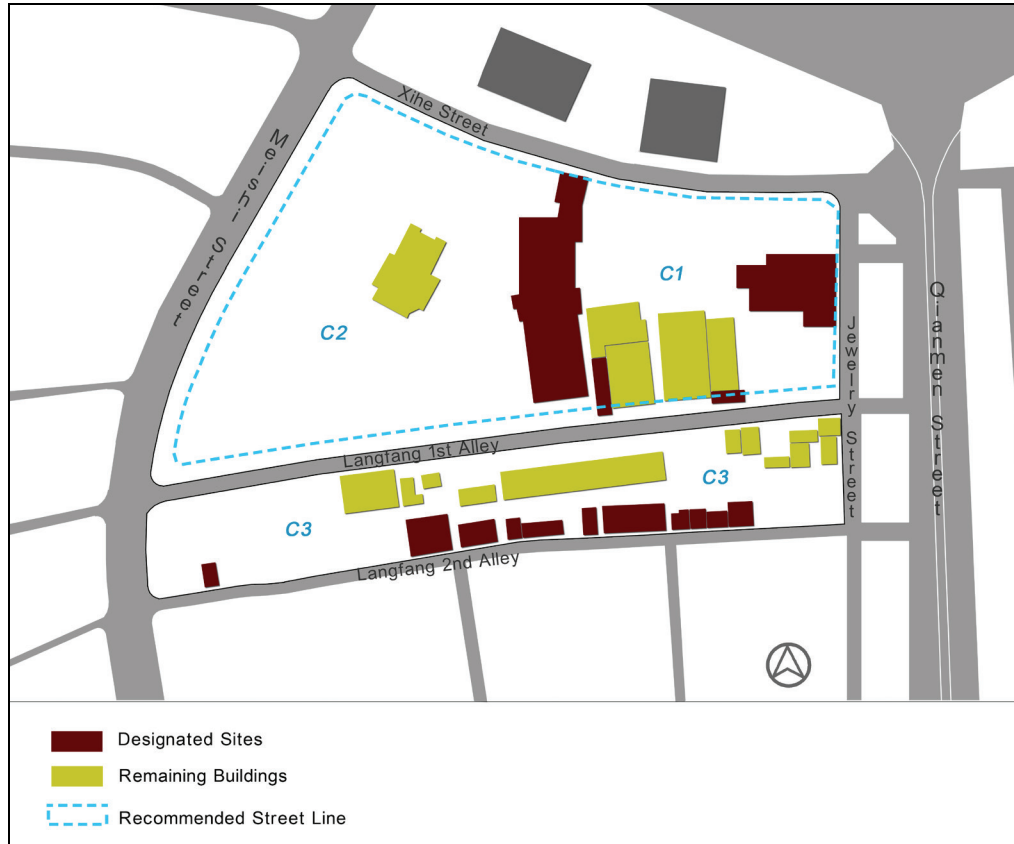


FIGURE 5-19: A BASIC STREET LINE FOR NEW BUILDINGS TO FOLLOW ON LANGFANG 1<sup>ST</sup> ALLEY

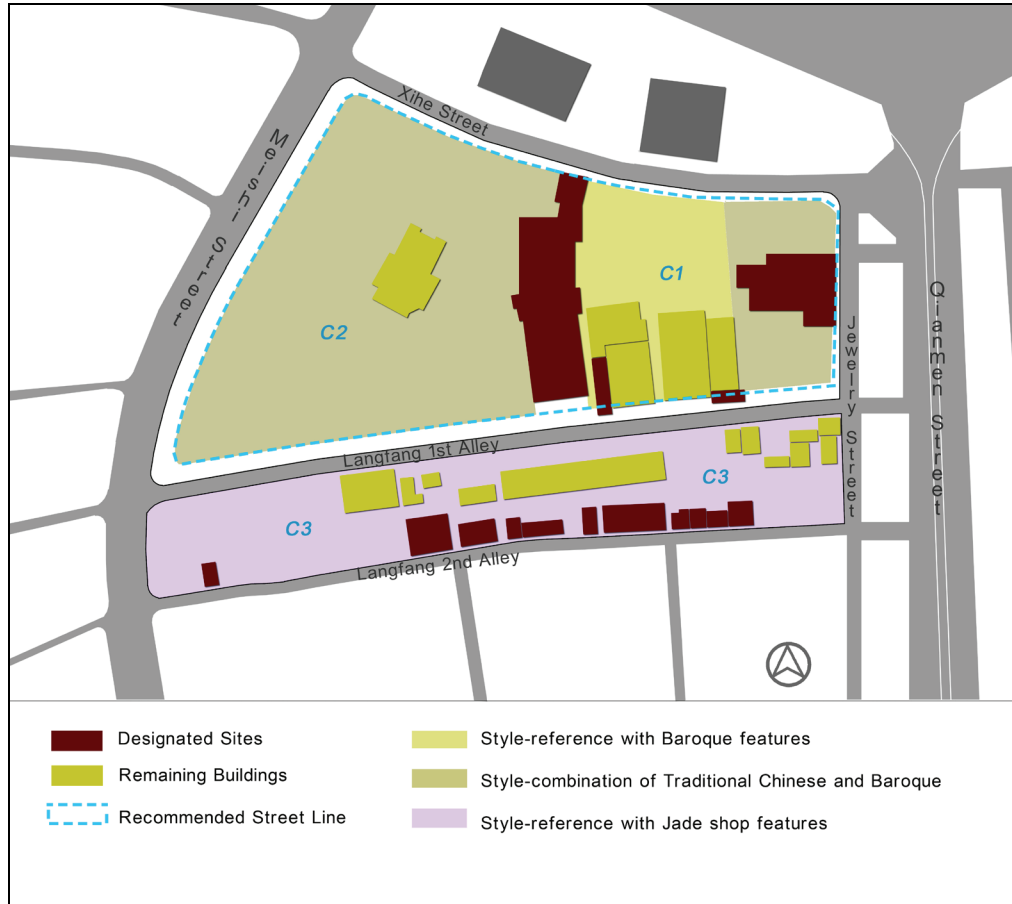


FIGURE 5-20: STYLE DISTRIBUTION IN C1, C2 AND C3.



FIGURE 5-21: AN EXAMPLE OF MODERN BUILDING WITH FEATURES OF BAROQUE (LEFT)



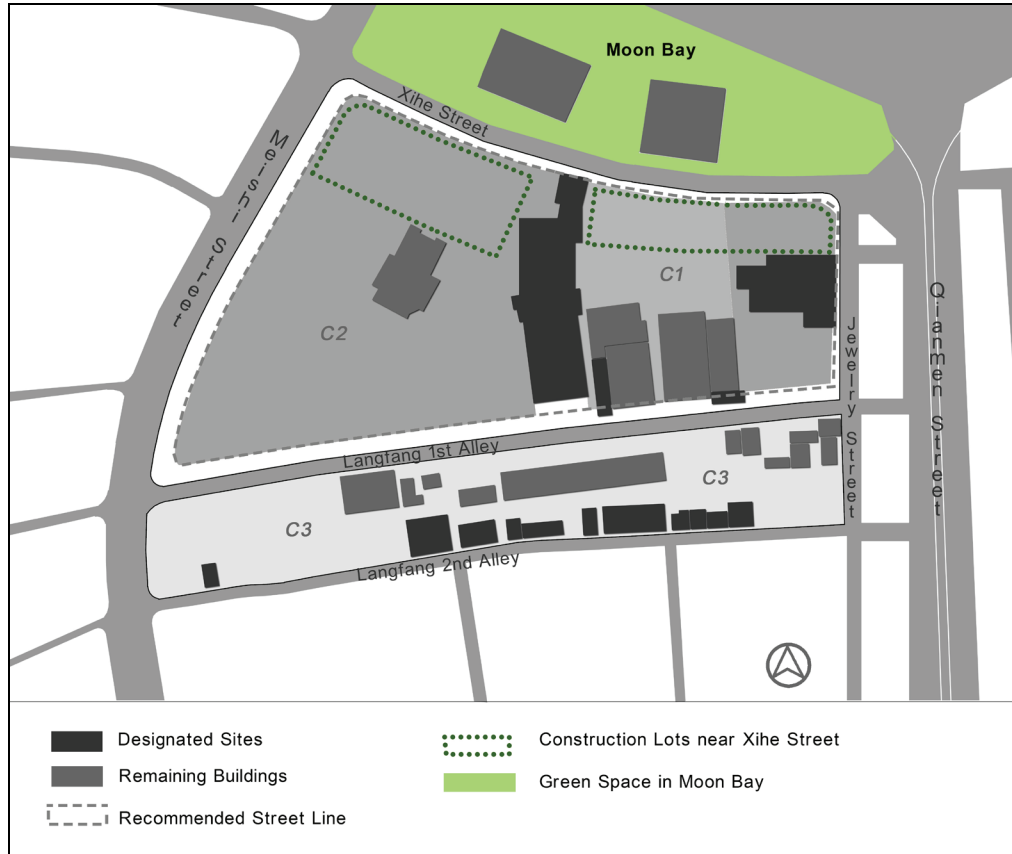


FIGURE 5-22: LOTS NEAR XIHE STREET RESPONDING TO THE OPENNESS AND SCALE OF ITS NORTH

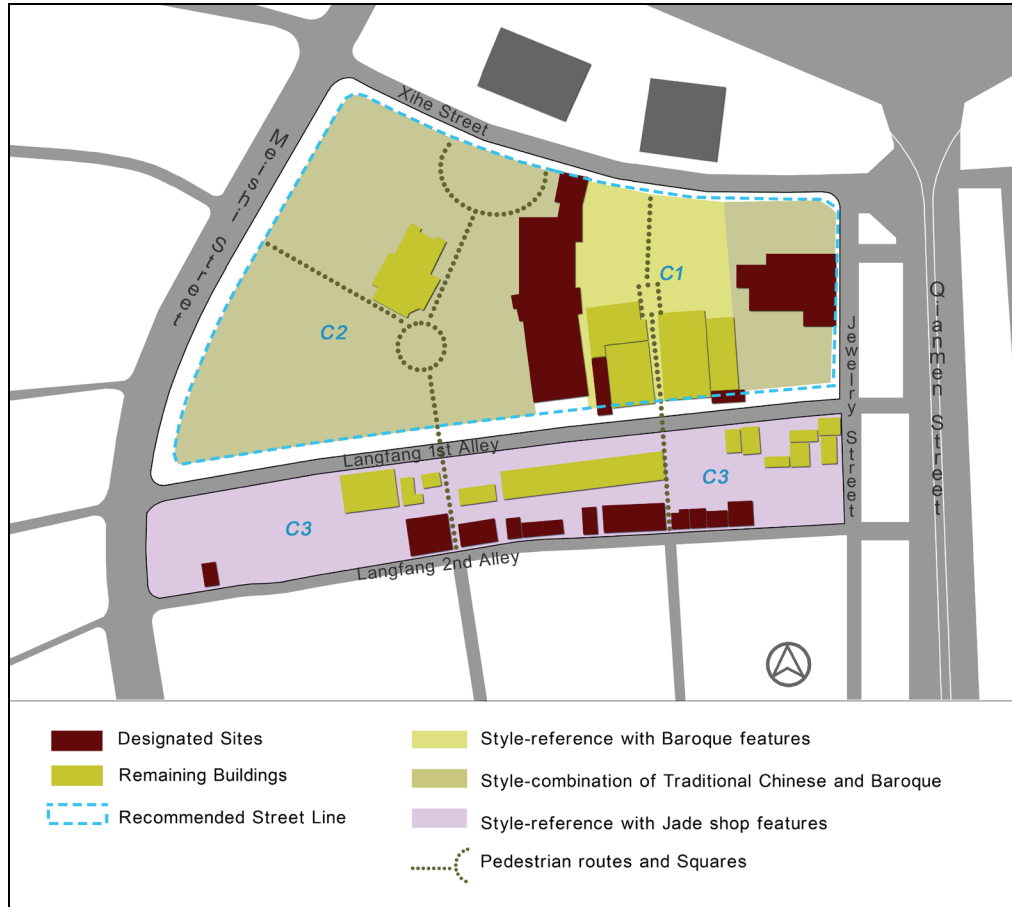


FIGURE 5-23: PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTES AND SQUARES

### **5.3.2 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ZONE C2**

#### **1. Remaining Building**

One building remains in zone C2. It should be preserved allowing minor changes in building's exterior if required by future use. The future use of this kind of building is flexible as long as the proposed function does not impair its current overall appearance.

#### **2. New Construction**

2.1 Height limit of 18 meters (three-story) is recommended since it has been successfully implemented in the plan of 2012, and the height is also compatible to the existing historic fabric.

2.2 Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley will be continued to use as a pedestrian street, so a uniformed street line is important to be maintained. Even though the current setback on northern Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley is not uniform due to part demolition, a basic street line should be established and new buildings should respect this setback (Figure 5-19).

2.3 Modern buildings with abstract reference of both traditional Chinese elements and Baroque style are encouraged. Construction in lots near Xihe Street should consider the large-scale in northern of Xihe Street (called Moon

Bay in Figure 5-22). The lots near Meishi Street should correspond to the building style, size, color and height across Meishi Street.

2.4 Clear pedestrian routes with squares are recommended to orient visitors in the site, promote connectivity and maintain pedestrian access from Xihe Street, Meishi Street to Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley (Figure 5-23).



### 5.3.3 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ZONE C3

#### 1. Designated Buildings

All buildings along the north side of Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley are designated buildings.

They should be strictly preserved.

#### 2. Remaining Buildings

They are buildings along the south side of Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley. They should be preserved allowing minor changes in building's exterior if required by future use.

The future use of this kind of building is flexible as long as the proposed function does not impair its current overall appearance.

#### 3. New Construction

Generally, all new construction should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the neighborhood. Taking cues from the surrounding is a good way to ensure sensitive new construction in the district.

3.1 New construction should respect the street line created by its neighbors. A uniform setback of buildings as they line the street creates the “street wall” and is essential to preserving the character of the district.

3.2 The architecture form of previous jade shop can be a primary source of new design. Abstract reference of its curved roof, frieze board, and recessed façade

from party walls (Figure 5-24) is highly encouraged. Pseudo-classic buildings should be forbidden (Figure 4-9 and Figure 4-20).

3.3 Brick is the most common building material found in C3. Brick with a grey tone, should be utilized as a primary material as it is one of the defining features in this area.

3.4 New buildings should not be higher than any existing buildings. The height of adjacent buildings will help dictate the height of new construction.

3.5 The lots near Meishi Street in Zone C3 should consider its consistency in height and style to Zone C2.

3.6 Two pedestrian routes are recommended to orient visitors in the site, promote connectivity and maintain pedestrian access from Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley to Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley (Figure 5-23).



FIGURE 5-24: CURVED ROOF, FRIEZE BOARD, AND RECESSED FAÇADE FOR REFERENCE

## CONCLUSIONS

The jade shop typology and Baroque style were the focus and basis of the design guidelines. These historic elements are specific to Block C but the overall methodology can be used in other similar areas, such as the Block D, E, and H in Dashilan Area (Figure 5-25). If we continue to use the former procedures as demonstrated in Block C and directed by Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property Lt. Co., the removal of all residents and demolition without thought to preservation will occur again. A careful study of each block should be taken before development, including the analysis of historic elements, physical characteristics and urban qualities, which will give future construction design guidelines to follow, in terms of scale, form, material, color and etc.

The design guidelines formulated at the planning level paid more attention to the overall fabric of a historic area, rather than focus on individual buildings. They are used for decision-making, by government, developers and also home owners, before actual building design. For example, future design guidelines at the planning level for the western section of Dashilan Area would recommend government work together with residents to renovate those dwellings, which will be a different approach to the eastern section, since most houses in the western section are owned by private residents.

Because the design guidelines provided in this thesis are more of the urban design guidelines, they can stimulate the creation for future architectural design guidelines.



More specific guidelines on building form, scale, and style with examples in the future architecture design guidelines should give a more direct control in the Core Area, and also direct illustrations for how to design modern buildings with reference to traditional style in the Development Control Area and Coordination Area.

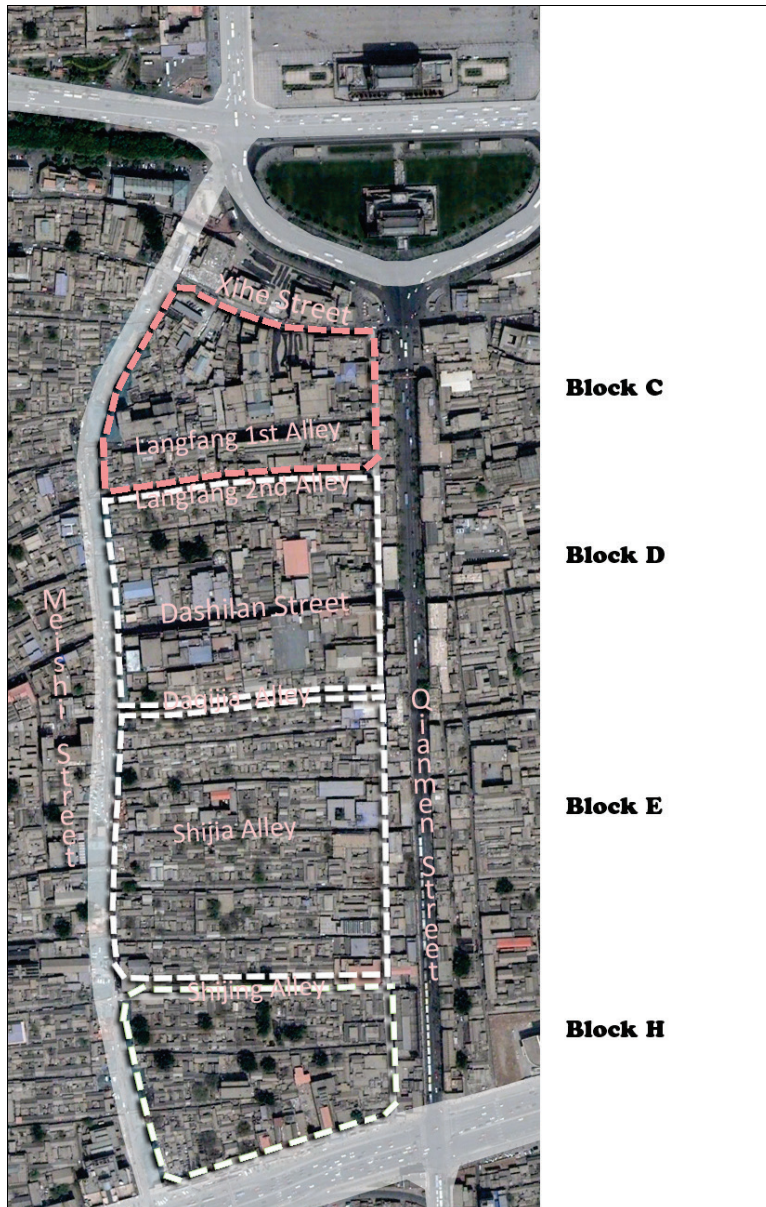


FIGURE 5-25: FOUR BLOCKS BEING DEVELOPED IN THE STARTING SECTION OF DASHILAN AREA

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## INDEX

Baroque, 11, 73, 76, 77, 82, 85, 87, 90, 95

Beijing Dashilan Yongxing Property

Lt. Co. 34, 39, 59, 60, 95

Block C, 39, 41, 42, 43, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62, 68, 69, 72, 82, 95

Block H, 39, 40, 43, 95

Core Area, 22, 23, 28, 31, 41, 55, 56, 59, 68, 82

Coordination Area, 23, 28

Dashilan Area, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 23, 25, 27, 28, 34, 36, 44, 45, 49, 50, 51, 55, 60, 62, 73, 95, 96

Development Control Area, 22, 23, 28, 31, 41, 55, 56

Forbidden City, 3, 5, 7, 14, 46

Dashilan Historic District, 3, 20, 39, 55, 82

Dashilan Street, 8, 9, 43, 44, 45, 50, 65, 66, 80

Dashilan West Street, 43, 44

East Glaze Factory Historic District, 3, 20, 45

Emperor Di, 7, 73

historic district, 2, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 28, 50, 73, 82

Jewelry Street, 30, 68, 72, 84, 85

Ming Dynasty, 7, 46

Meishi Street, 18, 30, 31, 32, 34, 37, 39, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 91, 93

Langfang 1<sup>st</sup> Alley, 7, 59, 68, 70, 72, 82, 84, 85, 86, 90, 91, 92, 93

Langfang 2<sup>nd</sup> Alley, 7, 55, 68, 73, 74, 79, 80, 81, 82, 92, 93

pseudo-classic, 15, 39, 51, 54, 61, 93

Qianmen Street, 30, 34, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 61, 69, 85

Qianmen East Street, 34, 46, 49

Qian Xiang Yi, 60, 62, 63, 63

Qing Dynasty, 8, 9, 10, 46, 47, 72

Quanyechang, 55, 57, 68, 70, 82, 85

three-level zoning, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31, 33, 40

Xihe Street, 55, 59, 68, 82, 85, 88, 90, 91