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Exploring the uses of urban streets as a stage for social disobedience: A study on the spatial dimensions in Australian and Asian contexts.

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Abstract

Urban streets are public spaces primarily designed for both vehicular and pedestrian movement. They also accommodate informal activities such as street vending, urban trucks, political expression, and artistic intervention. Beyond these everyday activities, urban streets are often used for civil disobedience, where the public refuses to obey government rules and regulations. Though urban streets are not consciously designed for protest, they become powerful arenas for collective action. The main objective of this paper is to find out why and how the streets are used for protest by the public. This study employs a qualitative research approach, which includes a literature review, case study analysis, and visual representation through sketches. It illustrates how ordinary circulation spaces are temporarily utilised as a stage for social change. During the analysis, it highlights the differences and similarities between the planned wide streets of Australia and the narrow, dense streets of Asian cities, represented visually through sketches. The study suggests that urban designers, planners, and policymakers should consider street flexibility as an explicit design objective. While supporting the everyday 'link' function of streets, planners should design them as 'places' for collective assembly, rather than treating protest as an unplanned disruption to be accommodated later.

Keywords: Urban street, Civil disobedience, Social movements, Spatial design, Urban design

Introduction

Urban streets are the public spaces in a city or town designed to address the activities of people and vehicles. The streets consist of sidewalks, paved surfaces, lighting, and plantations. It is also the harmonisation of buildings and businesses that encourages pedestrian activity, social interaction, and vibrant public life, along with the movement of vehicles and public transportation. Streets are the core functional elements of a city. If the tangible and intangible aspects of the street are focused on design, this will shape the quality of the urban environment(Wendt, 2016, p. 269).

This paper explores how urban streets are used as stages for social disobedience, comparing the spatial dimensions of protest across Australian and Asian urban contexts. It also explains why streets end up being the preferred setting for protest, and how different street forms shape the experience of collective action, paying particular attention to width, density, accessibility, visibility, connectivity, symbolism, and the relationship between public and private space. Australian cities have comparatively wide streets, lower density, planned road networks, and large civic spaces, while many Asian cities are dense, with narrower streets, heavy pedestrian activity, informal uses, and a much more jumbled relationship between public and private space. Despite the spatial differences, both cases show the same fundamental role of the street. It is a space where ordinary circulation infrastructure transforms into a space for political expression.

Urban streets are the most common and extensively used public spaces in cities. They are the main channel for the movement of people and goods. The layout of streets in urban design was prioritised in the late 1950s and early 1960s across many parts of Western Europe. This was started to balance the increasing motor vehicle requirements and retain traditional street activities (Jones et al., 2008).

Initially, streets were used as movement corridors for public and private vehicles and goods. Nowadays, streets are used for social activities like gatherings, meetings, trade, and political expression. Due to the development of physical infrastructure, streets have become the public arena for social, cultural, and political life. In the 20th century, due to the rapid growth of private automobiles, the use of urban streets was transformed. In developed countries, the mixed-use pattern is more common. At the same time, due to the growth of small businesses and public movements, the planning approach to streets is changing (von Schönfeld & Bertolini, 2017). The pavement in urban streets was initially introduced to improve the mobility of cyclists and horse-drawn vehicles. Nowadays, the paved road network is considered an indicator of the level of development of the country (World Bank, 2010). And these paved spaces are used as a stage for social activities. It is the place where the voice of the public is gathered and is easy to transfer to the government and easy to get attention from everywhere.

As per Bedau (1991), civil disobedience is defined as a public, nonviolent, principled political act that violates the government rules and regulations to bring about change in government. The event or activity is normally shown in a public space to make themselves visible to authorities and the broader public. The urban street is a significant stage for the protest because it is highly visible and connected to the everyday

functioning of the city. When citizens gather, block, and march through the street, they challenge the day-to-day function of the space. The street temporarily becomes the place of assembly. The roads are used to display banners, speeches, and performances. So, the protest not only changes the social meaning of the streets but also changes the spatial function of the streets.

As per Skoulding (2010), the right to the city is the freedom of the public to participate in each urban environment. So, every person has the right to engage in and do activities in the public spaces of the city. The use of streets for protest can be understood through the concept of the "right to the city. This right prioritises how we use urban spaces over their economic value. It is the opposite of property rights over urban space (King, 2019). Henri Lefebvre argues that urban inhabitants should have the right to participate in the production and use of urban space (Lefebvre, 1968). From this perspective, streets are not spaces controlled by governments, transport systems, or private vehicles. They are also collective spaces belonging to the public. When people occupy streets for protest, they temporarily claim their right to participate in the meaning and use of the city. The right is linked to disobedience as a tool to claim a space in public spaces. This study explores how the similarities and differences influence the function of the streets based on the following research questions and objectives:

Research question
When street design is a planned activity, and protests are spontaneous, how does the public utilise these streets during protest?

Objectives

- To analyse the spatial dimensions and configurations of urban streets that enable or restrict collective action.
- To compare the wide, planned streets of Australian cities with the dense, narrow streets of Asian cities during protest and related non-violent activity.
- To explore how these implications apply to contemporary urban design and planning practice.

Methodology

This study uses a descriptive and qualitative research approach comprising three stages. First, a literature review establishes the conceptual framing of the urban street and civil disobedience. Second, a comparative case study analysis examines one Australian and one Asian protest, identifying similarities and differences in their spatial dimensions. Third, the analysis identifies the spatial characteristics of each case, including street width, geometry, density, and access. These parameters are shown through street sections and hand sketches, allowing the two contexts to be compared at a consistent and comparable scale.

The 2025 Sydney Harbour Bridge “March for Humanity” was selected to represent the Australian context, and the 2025 Nepalese “Gen Z” protests around Maitighar Mandala and Federal Parliament House in New Baneshwor, Nepal were selected to represent the

Asian context. The two events are different in political systems, triggering issues and outcomes. Although the cases are different in their political and cultural contexts, they are comparable in terms of scale, timing, and spatial planning. They are used to explore how streets with different spatial forms can be designed and organised to support similar functions, particularly as spaces for collective action and protest. Three criteria support the selection of these case studies. First, both events occurred in 2025, allowing comparison between current spatial practices rather than protests separated by decades of urban change. Second, comparable scale and format; both have around ten thousand participants and used a linear corridor. A linear bridge in Sydney, Australia, and an arterial road in Kathmandu, Nepal. In both cases, movement infrastructures are used as the stage for assembly rather than a plaza or square. Third, different historical urban planning developments. Sydney was regulated and well planned with infrastructure, while Kathmandu was gradually formed by mixed-use settlement growth.

Therefore, the comparison examines how differences in street form and spatial characteristics influence the organisation of protests. The analysis does not suggest that the two protests were equivalent in their political causes, social contexts, or outcomes; rather, it focuses on how different urban street environments can accommodate and shape similar forms of collective action.

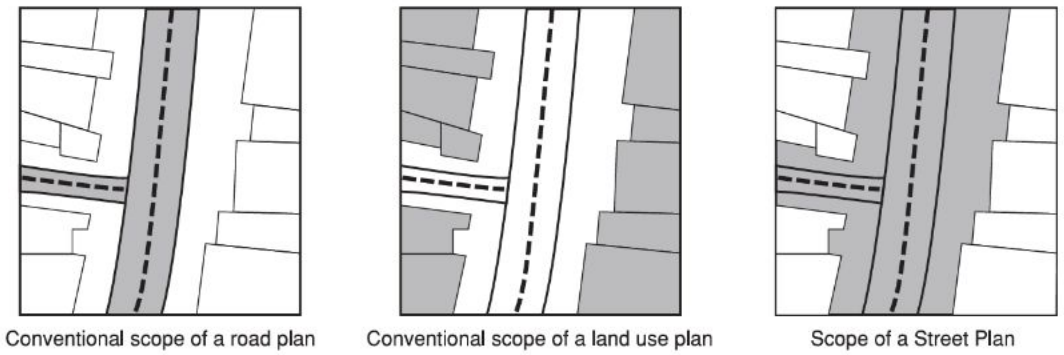
Literature review

Streets are public spaces that are used for the public expression of political views. Sometimes street demonstrations can be framed as disruptive, violent, or dangerous to public order. Urban spatial planning is connected to public protests and the activities of the public. Protest is an act of resistance against policies, where citizens challenge planning decisions, housing strategies, and spatial design. Historically, urban planning has been used as a means of control and restriction. For example, Paris was redesigned in the mid-18th century to provide it with air and open space, which connected the different parts of the city into a built environment, and to make it more pleasant and functional (Kowalewski & Ostrowski, 2024).

Gehl (2011) describes how the public uses streets for necessary, optional, and social activities. Necessary activities are those which people must do, like walking to work or school, waiting for a bus, running errands, and delivering goods. They happen in almost any environment, good or bad, because participation is not optional. Optional activities only happen if people want to, and critically, only if the environmental setting invites them, like sitting on a bench, staying over a coffee, taking a longer route because it is pleasant, letting kids play. These are highly sensitive to environmental quality: good weather, good design, safety, comfort. The resultant (social) activities depend on the presence of people in the same space, such as conversations, communal play, events, collective gathering, and demonstration. The “link and place” framework is the complementary, design-oriented function of the street. A street functions as a *link* when it is optimised for the efficient movement of people and vehicles, and as a *place* where it accommodates human interaction (Jones et al., 2008, p. 134).

This relationship between movement and social activity can also be understood through the historical development of the Sydney and Kathmandu Valley. Kathmandu Valley initially developed as an important trade route between India and Tibet, which contributed to the growth of settlements and everyday activities along movement routes. The urban form of the valley developed gradually over several hundred years rather than through a single planned process. The development of early settlements and the growth of towns during different political and cultural periods gradually shaped the streets and public spaces of the valley(Chitrakar, 2020). Similarly, Sydney was established as a British settlement in 1788 after Arthur Phillip arrived with the First Fleet and selected Port Jackson as the location for the new settlement. In this sense, streets were not only routes for movement and trade but also became spaces for everyday social and community activities(Karskens, 2013). This historical development helps explain the relationship between streets as a link and as a place, where movement, trade, social interaction, and collective activities occur within the same urban environment.

It is something planners can consciously design by shaping the physical qualities of a street (its width, furnishing, shade, edges, and permeability). Planners play a significant role in determining the everyday life of a city: the same street can be designed just to move people through, or to encourage them to stay and gather collectively for any event or function. Later, a holistic approach to urban streets has been increasing in the UK, which has developed the concept from two different directions. First, from traffic planners, encouraging more sustainable transport modes, and second, from urban designers and developers, who are concerned about the public realm and the low quality of facilities for social and economic activities. This has resulted in the use of the street as a place for people rather than just for vehicles. The basic concept of street design is 'link' and 'place'. Like links, streets enable efficient movement for users such as drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians, whose main goal is minimal disruption along a route. Like places, streets serve as destinations for activities like shopping, talking, resting, or waiting, emphasising human interaction and engagement (Jones et al., 2008, p. 134). The development of conventional street design to the current street plan is shown in Figure 1 below.



The street is defined by the boundary, clearly showing the physical edges. The horizontal space created by building mass provides the definition of an urban street. The streets can be explained in two ways: vertically, which mainly deals with the height of the walls or trees, and horizontally, which consists of the length of the spacing. Figure 1 shows how the shape and size of physical elements shape the street from one another (Jacobs, 1961). Great streets are those where the public spends more time on optional activities

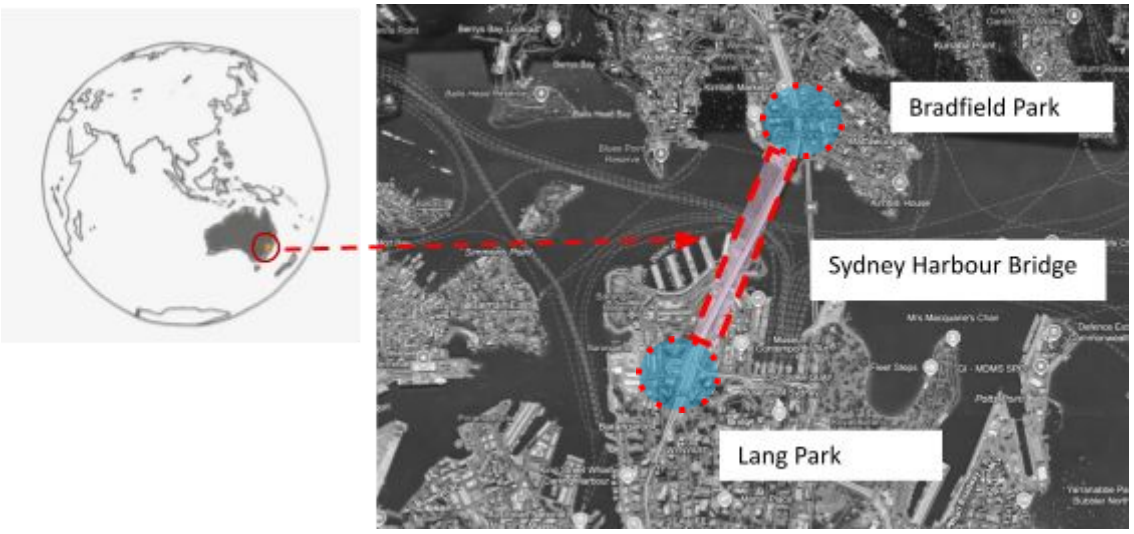
in the street. If the environment is pleasant, people tend to spend time outdoors, which results in a good quality of the street (Ab Rahman et al., 2017). This shows that the physical quality of streets can influence not only movement but also how people use and interact with public space.The quality and functions of streets are also influenced by government planning and decisions. However, planning needs flexibility rather than rigid rules, illustrated by San Francisco's parklets as experiments in reclaiming space. Further research and natural experiments are needed during the design of urban streets, which will guide the policy-making framework (von Schönfeld & Bertolini, 2017).Flexibility of public space is important when considering social movements. Susser and Tonnelat (2014) explain that social movements can transform cities through the relationship between everyday urban life, public space, and creative urban expression. This relationship suggests that urban spaces are not only designed for daily movements but can also become spaces for political and social expression.

Disruption is a common process of protest in social movements. The voice of the public is expressed in different levels of action that break laws or norms, either nonviolently or by engaging in violent behaviour. There are three levels of destructive processes: one with peaceful action that is law-abiding marches, the second one is non-violent civil disobedience, which includes street blocking, and the third one is violent action, in which property and people are severely disrupted. The paper will be more focused on events related to street disruption and its relation to the urban design principles (Barkela et al., 2025).

Case studies

To understand the details of how streets play an important role in social disobedience, two case studies from developed and non-developed countries are selected. The 2025 Sydney Harbour Bridge "March for Humanity" was selected to represent the Australian context, and the 2025 Nepalese "Gen Z" protests around Maitighar Mandala and Federal Parliament House in New Baneshwor, Nepal, were selected to represent the Asian context.

Spatial Dimensions of Protest in the Australian Context: Protest at the 2025 Sydney Harbour Bridge

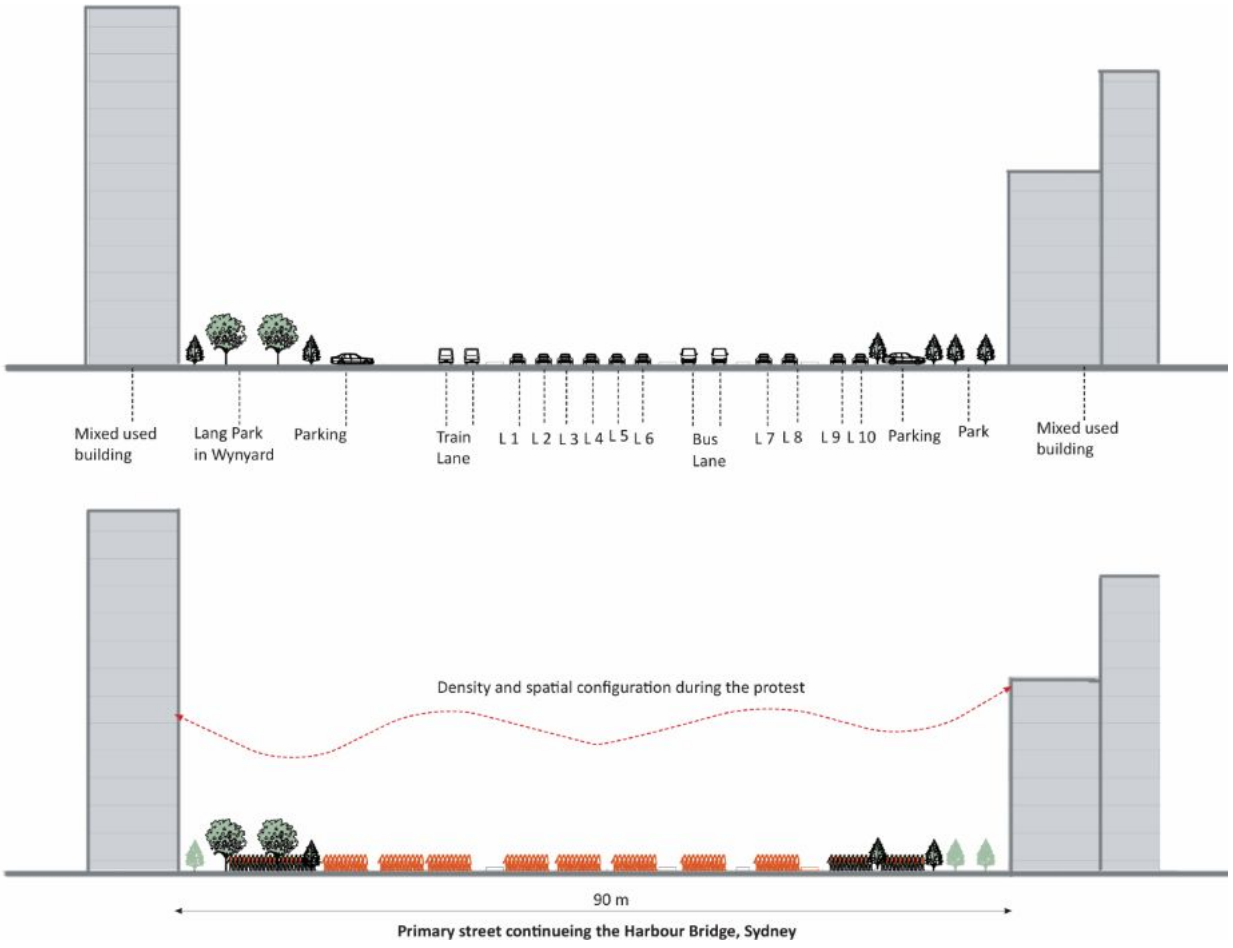


Sydney is Australia's largest city and the capital of New South Wales, located on the southeastern coast of the country. The Sydney Harbour Bridge is a steel arch bridge that spans Sydney Harbour, connecting the Sydney central business district (including Lang Park in Wynyard) to the North Shore (including Bradfield Park). It was completed in 1932 and is one of Australia's most recognisable pieces of civic infrastructure. It is one of the transportation links carrying vehicle, rail, and pedestrian traffic across the Harbor each day. Its scale, height, and iconic silhouette make it not only a functional crossing but also a highly visible symbol of the city. As a functional space, this could be an effective stage for the 2025 "March for Humanity" protest.

On 3 August 2025, approximately 90,000 to 100,000 people marched across the Sydney Harbour Bridge in a pro-Palestine demonstration organised by the Palestine Action Group under the banner “March for Humanity.” The aim was to show support for Palestinians, raise awareness of what was happening in Gaza, and push the Australian government to sanction Israel. Organisers from the Palestine Action Group wanted high visibility, using Australia's most iconic landmark to make a powerful statement. Protestors argued that the Harbour Bridge has a history of serving as a stage for community expressions, referencing previous events like the Walk for Reconciliation and World Pride(Australasian Palestinian Advocacy Network, 2025). The decision to close the bridge was a significant one. The bridge was closed to traffic from 11:30 a.m. so protesters could gather and march; the route ran from Lang Park in Wynyard, across the full span of the bridge, to Bradfield Park in North Sydney, and went ahead despite wet, windy weather (The Guardian, 2025). The protestors utilised the unique elevation of the bridge to display

massive union banners and thousands of waving Palestinian flags, creating dramatic visuals for global broadcast. The bridge as a global landmark amplified the protest's visibility (Werthmuller, 2025).

The given section shows the wide street near the Sydney Harbour Bridge, where the protest was held. It shows ten vehicle lanes (L1–L10), a dedicated train lane, a bus lane, and parking, all within a 90 m right-of-way between the two edges of mixed-use building frontage. This is an example of a street designed almost entirely for moving as many people and vehicles as efficiently as possible through multiple parallel modes (rail, bus, private car) rather than for social use.



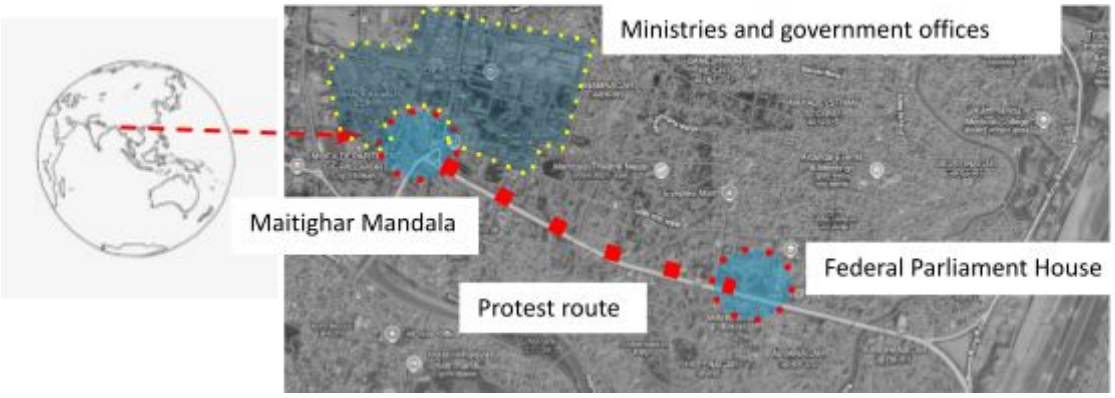
When the lanes, train corridor, and bus lanes are all used by the public during the protest, the combined density disrupts traffic flow. Wide streets absorb crowds the same way they absorb traffic: through sheer cross-sectional area. As the street is linear rather than a plaza or square, the crowd does not gather; it flows, the same way traffic does. This is a key urban design principle: linear public space encourages directional, processional movement, which is ideal for a march, whereas a plaza encourages static assembly. The Harbour Bridge march works as a march precisely because its host street is a link, not a place. The greenery, parkland, and mixed-use buildings at each end (Lang Park in Wynyard and the park near Bradfield) act as transition zones. These are the edges where the crowd can gather, disperse, and interface with adjoining public space, rather than hard, closed frontages. That matters both for practical crowd management and for how "civic" the space feels. The massive scale of the march created significant spatial and

safety challenges. Though 50,000 maximum capacity was anticipated by organisers, as the march crossed the halfway mark, the immense volume of people still pouring onto the bridge from the south created a severe risk of a crowd crush. The northern end became a major congestion point as the large crowd accumulated near the exits. (Watson & Wilson, 2025). To avert a disaster, police and organisers made a crucial, real-time decision to stop the march. Instead of proceeding to the planned endpoint, the crowd was instructed to turn around and walk back towards the city (Vidal & Royes, 2025). Police helicopters with loudspeakers flew overhead, and targeted text message alerts were shared across protesters' phones, instructing the crowd to halt and turn back toward the city.

The protest highlights the problem of one-way routes and exit bottlenecks. As the chosen route was relatively limited in terms of evacuation capacity compared to entry points, it created a "bottleneck". The protest also shows the lack of lateral escape routes or soft evacuation zones. This exposes the inherent spatial risk of hosting large-scale events on critical infrastructure. The event brought a dual role conflict of the Sydney Harbour Bridge—as an urban transport artery on one hand, and a stage for civic protest on the other. This requires acknowledgement of dual attributes of public space in their design. The event also highlights the need for adequate planning lead times, as the Supreme Court approved the march less than 24 hours before it took place, leaving police and organisers almost no time to conduct formal crowd flow analysis or risk assessments. This forced police to rely heavily on real-time decision-making.

There was also the case of misjudgment of crowd size and its composition. The actual number of participants (police estimated 90,000–100,000, while organisers put the figure even higher) far exceeded the organisers' initial expectations. Moreover, the participants included families with children, elderly people, and individuals in wheelchairs. This diversity necessitates more conservative safety estimates. Rainfall on the day caused increased spatial footprint per person and also reduced pedestrian flow rates. The rain also interfered with aerial observation by police. This necessitates that planners incorporate environmental variables into spatial and safety management plans.

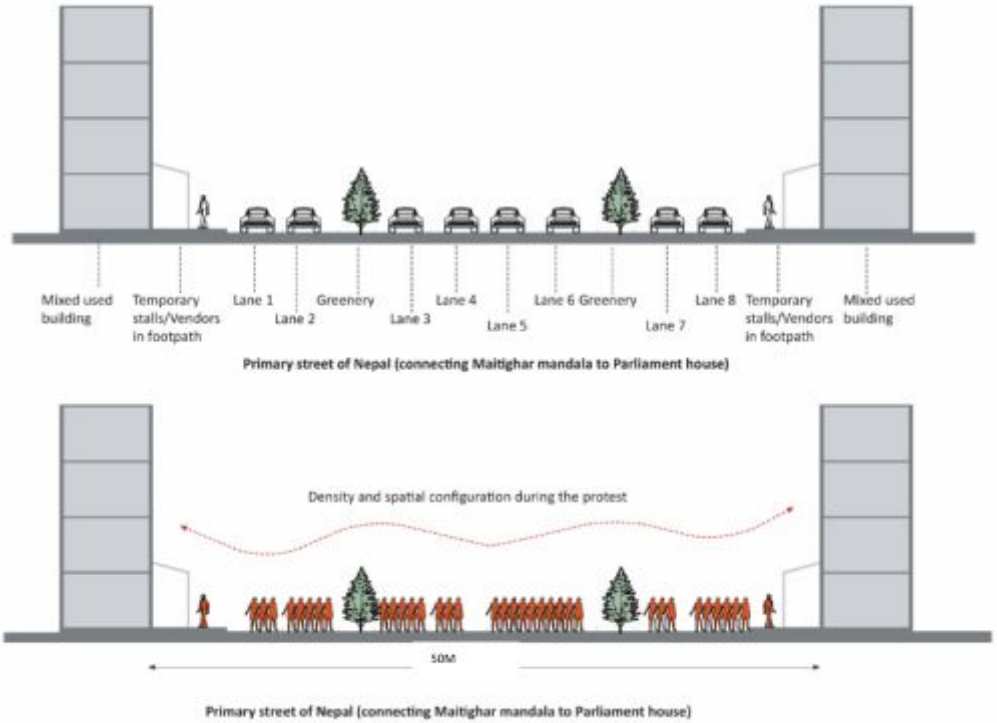
Spatial Dimensions of Protest in the Asian Context: 2025 Nepalese "Gen Z" protests around Maitighar Mandala and New Baneshwor, Nepal



Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, serves as the nation's administrative and political centre. Owing to this central role, the city also experiences frequent public demonstrations and protests. Demonstrations and rallies often start at Maitighar Mandala and march towards the federal parliament building area in New Baneshwor. The location has hosted various demonstrations, campaigns for victims of violence, conflict survivors, and professional strikes like those by teachers. Local authorities frequently declare the Maitighar to Baneshwor corridor a temporary " no-protest zone" during heightened political tension or overlapping rival demonstrations. Gen Z was granted permission to stage a protest at Maitighar by the District Administration Office (DAO) in Kathmandu a day before the protest, under the condition that demonstrators stay outside prohibited or restricted zones. However, the protestors breached the security barricades and entered restricted areas even after the authorities imposed an official curfew and prohibitory orders.

The historic youth-led Gen Z protests on September 8 and 9, 2025, served as a turning point in modern Nepalese history by effectively toppling the government. The immediate trigger was the government ban on social media, while the underlying causes were corruption, nepotism, youth unemployment, and weak governance, rather than a single issue (Gautam et al., 2025; Timalsina & Shrestha, 2025; Upreti, 2025). Maitighar Mandala, an open space that functions primarily as a central traffic roundabout and artistic landmark, also serves as a major hub for civic movements and public protests in Kathmandu. The Gen Z protests also started at Maitighar Mandala before extending all the way to the Federal Parliament building in New Baneshwor. While there is no official record of the exact number of participants, news agencies reported that thousands of protesters took part (Reuters, 2025; Amnesty International, 2025).

As protesters want to be taken seriously by the authorities and the public, they intentionally



choose locations associated with key institutional buildings and spaces. Maitighar has immense geographic significance due to its proximity to Singha Durbar, housing various ministries, the Supreme Court, and the New Baneshwor area, home to several government institutions as well as the Federal Parliament building. The protest staged in this location ensures that the protesters' message reaches the concerned authorities far more quickly than it would from other locations (Luitel, 2025). During the Gen Z protest, the crowd took a route to the east from Maitighar toward the federal Parliament building. This stretch is a segment of the Pushpalal Highway, locally known as Madan Bhandari Road. This corridor not only spans crucial government institutions and commercial areas but also serves as a vital transportation artery at the heart of the city. Thousands of people demonstrating along such heavily utilised main roads inevitably disrupt traffic flow, vehicular movement, and public transportation. This gridlock quickly ceases to be a localised issue and instead cripples mobility across the entire valley and beyond. This significantly amplifies the impact and visibility of the protest. Furthermore, it exerts direct pressure on the authorities, sending an implicit message that the underlying issues require urgent resolution.

The given section shows the narrow street from Maitighar *Mandala to Parliament House*, where the protest was held. It shows seven vehicle lanes (L1–L7), a footpath, and informal stalls all within a 40 m right-of-way between the two edges of mixed-use building frontage. This is an example of a street designed almost entirely for moving as many people and vehicles as efficiently as possible. During the protest, people block the way and pass from other connecting narrow streets.

An analysis of this specific protest route reveals numerous branching side roads and lanes, which create multiple entry and exit points along the main thoroughfare. Even though the main road itself is wide, people can join the march through these smaller branch roads. This layout made it incredibly difficult for the police to contain or disperse the crowd, as monitoring and controlling multiple access points simultaneously proved to be a major tactical challenge.This feature, while hindering law enforcement, provided ample entry/exit points for the protestors to gather rapidly or disperse and escape when necessary. Ultimately, hosting the protest at the heart of the city near key authorities, combined with a main transportation route characterised by multiple access points, resulted in a highly visible, urgent scenario featuring a hard-to-control crowd that disrupted the entire Kathmandu Valley and beyond.This modern tactical use of urban streets mirrors that of nearby traditional Newari towns. In the traditional towns of the Kathmandu Valley, roads and streets have historically functioned not just as transportation corridors, but as vital public places. This traditional hierarchy of roads directly mirrored a hierarchy of public spaces. For instance, primary ceremonial streets were used for Jatra (Chariot Processions), royal ceremonies, political gatherings, and markets. Meanwhile, secondary neighbourhood streets were used for daily interactions, local markets, and community meetings, with narrower lanes serving for children’s play and neighbourly bonding (Chitrakar, 2020).

By contrast, modern development in Kathmandu tends to plan roads primarily for transportation and more specifically for vehicular movement. They have minimal

provision for civic spaces like those found in nearby traditional settlements. Nevertheless, the contemporary usage of these roads still echoes traditions, ranging from festivals to staging public protests to turn down the government. This phenomenon can be read as a continuation of the same underlying cultural pattern: the use of the streets as primary civic and public spaces.

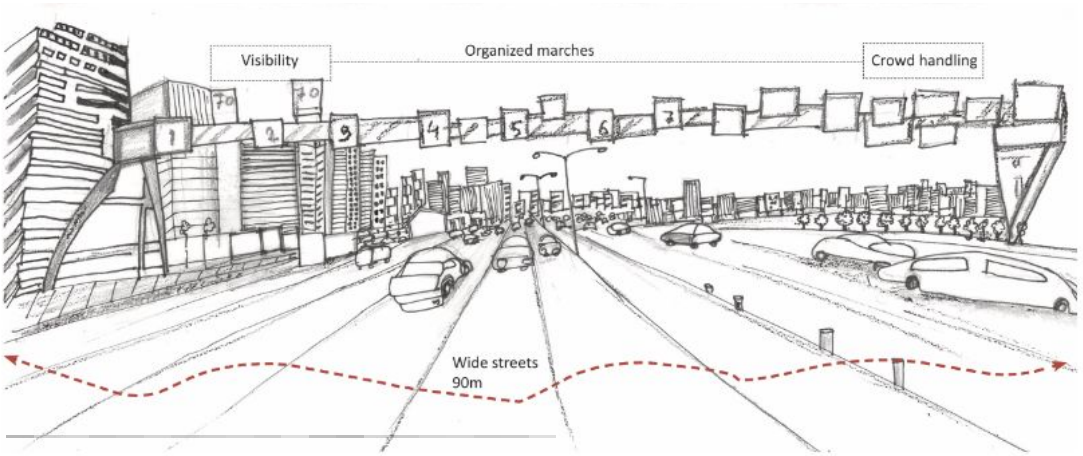
Findings and Discussion

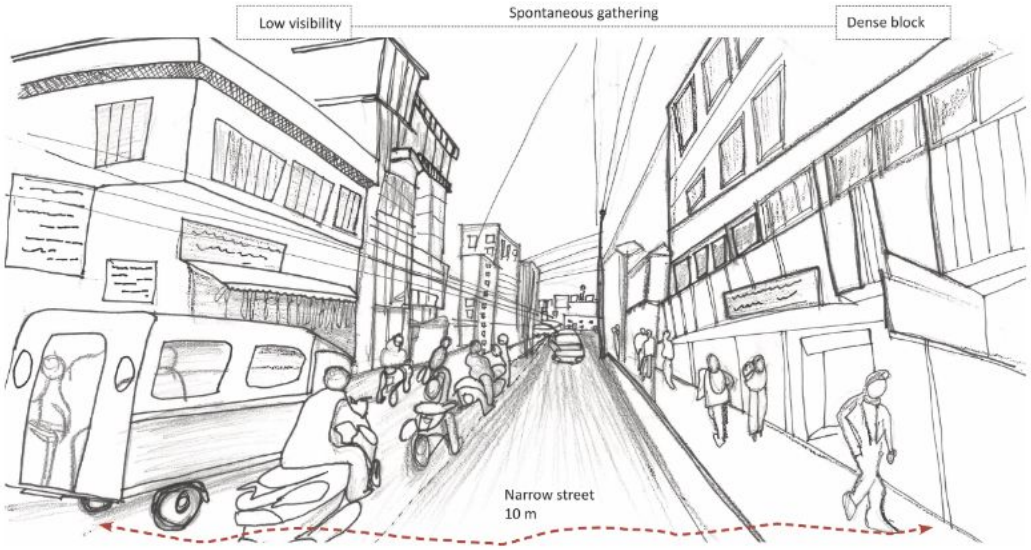
The two case studies are based on scale, geometry, and style. Table 1 summarises the principal differences between the two cases. Australian protest relies on a planned protest blocking an iconic national infrastructure. Kathmandu's Gen Z protests show the unpredictable density of local streets disrupting the everyday "link" function of the city.

Table 1 Comparative analysis of both cases

Element	Sydney (Australia)	Kathmandu (Nepal)
Street width	Wide boulevards, open plazas, bridge approaches (≈ 90 m)	Narrow lanes, dense blocks (≈ 50 m primary /10- 14 m secondary)
Planning style	Modern, regulated, vehicle-oriented	Organic, mixed-use, pedestrian-dominant
Protest style	Organised march, permitted rally	Permitted but spontaneous gathering, street blockade
Crowd handling	Managed via barriers, traffic control, police vehicles	Managed via foot patrols and choke points
Visibility	High media visibility	Intense local visibility
Symbolism	National infrastructure as protest stage	Everyday streets as a site of resistance

Despite these differences, the two case studies share some similarities. In both cases, the street becomes a stage for social movements, a barrier when it is deliberately blocked, a platform for negotiation between citizens and the state, a symbol of public power, and an expression of the "right to the city."





Both Figures 6 and 7 show a street where a large protest took place, but they have completely different mechanisms producing that protest, and there is a huge difference in scale and geometry. Three findings emerge from this comparison. First, street width and scale of the road where crowds gather for the protest. Roughly the same number of participants, around tens of thousands in both cases, produced a controlled, linear procession on the 90-metre-wide Harbour Bridge reserve, and a much denser, more fluid occupation of Kathmandu's 50-metre and 10-metre streets. Second, planning regime correlates with protest style. The wide, regulated streets of Sydney were compatible with a scheduled, permitted march managed through formal traffic control; the organically formed, mixed-use streets of Kathmandu were compatible with a spontaneous, escalating mobilisation that unfolded without equivalent administrative accommodation. Neither street was designed for protest, but each protest was shaped by the design logic: planned versus organic. Third, in both contexts the street functioned simultaneously as a stage, a barrier, a platform for negotiation, and a symbol of public power, regardless of whether it was wide or narrow, planned or organic. This supports Skoulding's (2010) and Lefebvre's argument that the right to the city is not contingent on any street typology: it is a claim

that can be enacted through very different spatial means. Collectively, these events also triggered deeper reflection on the relationship between protest and urban symbolism. Demonstrations choose important landmarks and areas for their symbolic meaning. By contrast, authorities often try to push protest to other places for various reasons, like safety, the regular functioning of the city, etc, reflecting a mindset of "depoliticised urban management".

The primary lesson for urban designers is that static, efficient design is insufficient for spaces that must also accommodate complex, unplanned human dynamics. There is a demonstrated need to design major urban infrastructure, landmarks, and confined public spaces to handle sudden, massive influxes. Urban design must acknowledge the dual nature of public space in facilitating both efficient function and enabling democratic expression. Urban planners must take proactive measures in integrating protest and mass gathering as a permanent, legitimate function of the urban system, respecting both safety and the right to assemble. For policymakers, the event reveals a profound governance gap between the legal right to protest and the logistical reality within compressed timeframes. This calls for a new collaborative framework with organisers to ensure safety without undermining democratic expression.

Conclusions

This paper examines how the public utilises streets during protests, comparing the 2025 "March for Humanity" on the Sydney Harbour Bridge with the 2025 Nepalese Gen Z protest in Kathmandu. In both cases, the streets were appropriated as civic spaces for collective expression and called for the "right to the city." Street width and cross-sectional geometry directly influence crowd behaviour and risk. Sydney's bridge width facilitated the controlled procession, but its bottlenecked exit created a risk of crowd crush, while Kathmandu's corridor with branching side lanes produced a denser and harder-to-control situation. For designers and policymakers, the lesson is to acknowledge public spaces, especially streets that attract mass gatherings and protests, as both infrastructure and democratic arenas. They should be planned, designed, and managed for safety without undermining democratic expression. The study is limited to two case studies and was analysed through a qualitative, sketch-based method. Future research can incorporate quantitative measures and examine street-level design interventions that might deliberately support the street as both everyday infrastructure and a flexible public space.

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