This paper will look at the application of the ‘Design Thinking’ that takes place within an Architecture Atelier over three vertically aligned academic years (BA3, MArch1 and MArch 2), and how this can be used to solve real world problems. In the academic year 2019-2020, and informed by earlier work in selected Northern Towns of England - Bollington (2016), Bakewell (2017) and Rochdale (2019), the Atelier, Continuity in Architecture at the Manchester School of Architecture, was invited to collaborate with Shrewsbury Town Council on ‘The Big Town Plan’. This project addressed real challenges being undertaken by the Local Authority in the synthesis of ideas for the ‘Shrewsbury Test’. This unique legislation asks whether a development is uniquely ‘Shrewsbury’ in its character, whether it strengthens the identity of the town and thus supports the wider vision to make life better for people who live there (The Big Town Plan, 2016). The project produced design proposals with a broad range or themes including a new urban code, creative uses for a vacant prison and two redundant shopping centres, responses to recurring flooding, and additions to the distinctive skyline.

Continuity in Architecture is grounded in the theories of Contextualism. This is an approach to the design of the urban environment that uses the process of analysis and understanding of the nature and qualities of place to develop new elements (Schumacher, 1971). The use and re-use of a constructed site creates a direct connection with the past - it is a strategy that establishes an explicit relationship not just...
with the site, the building and its immediate surroundings, but also with the society that constructed it. The architect or designer can uncover the meaning within a place which can be used to activate, liberate and instigate a new future for the already built.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):
  
  **Sally Stone** is the Master of Architecture Programme Leader and Director of the Continuity in Architecture Atelier; a studio for research, practice and teaching, at the Manchester School of Architecture. The atelier seeks to find ways of deriving delightful, rigorous, and measured responses to small settlements and historically sensitive contexts. Sally lectures on installation art, connections between art and architecture and building re-use and as such has a wide knowledge of art practice especially in the context of the built environment. Sally is an internationally recognised expert on the subject of the interior and the interpretation and remodelling of the existing situation. She has written extensively about the subject, and her research profile includes a number of published books, inclusion in edited books and journals, invitations to keynote or speak at international conferences, and requests to direct European workshops. Her forthcoming monograph, ‘UnDoing Buildings’ will be published in the summer of 2019, followed by ‘Remember Reveal Construct: Reflections upon the Contingency, Usefulness and Emotional Resonance of Architecture, Buildings and Context’ (with Sanderson, L. 2020). Sally is the co-recipient of the UK Government sponsored 2014 Heritage Heroes Award in recognition of her work to save the Preston Bus Station.

  **John Lee** studied Architecture at the Bartlett School and UCL concluding with a Masters in Advanced Architectural Studies, working with what is now the Space Syntax Laboratory. This experience led to a concern for the link between building technology, texture and materiality, and spatial configuration - in short, the physical expression of architectural form. Having spent nine years with Grimshaw, he subsequently established his own practice in Manchester, Arca. The company is a vehicle for testing theoretical ideas through a diverse range of project types. John has taught with the Continuity in Architecture unit since 2004, developing his interest in design techniques which regard cities and buildings as artefacts of socio-spatial activity. Working to investigate all aspects of context in a rigorous, inquisitive manner, the intention is to learn from traditional architectural means for achieving urban continuity. Research interests are explored through the Continuity Small Settlements Group, working with towns, villages and small settlements to characterise and synthesise distinctive places to live and work. This is achieved through Design Guides and research activities delivered in part through the postgraduate studio. Other personal interests include the role of ornament in architectural design, as it relates to the craft and technology of building.

  **Laura Sanderson** is a Senior Lecturer at Manchester School of Architecture and a qualified architect. Her work is underpinned by the principals of Continuity in
Architecture. The atelier focuses upon the process of analysis and understanding the nature and the qualities of place in order to develop new buildings and other elements within the urban environment. Over the last few years, the atelier has discussed Small Settlements, especially those surrounding the city of Manchester; producing research outputs in Bollington (2016), Bakewell (2017) and Rochdale (2019) including exhibitions, articles, book chapters and built interventions. This year the atelier is studying Shrewsbury, working in collaboration with Shrewsbury Town Council on sites in the Historic Town Centre. Alongside her work in Small Settlements, Laura recently co-curated UnDoing (2019), an exhibition at Castlefield Gallery (with Stone, S.), featuring the work of a number of international artists and architects, exploring how buildings, places and artefacts are re-used, reinterpreted and remembered. These themes will be further explored in ‘Remember, Reveal, Construct’ to be published in 2020 (with Stone, S.). Projects on the drawing board include a collaborative project with the Institute of Place Management, Simone Riddyard and Dr Luca Csepely-Knorr using a Serial Vision approach to the UK High Street. Laura has published a number of reflections on her pedagogic approach including her work in Continuity in Architecture, the 2014 Atelier [Zero] installation and the MSA Events Programme which has produced over 200 diverse live projects over the past decade.