The study was inspired by the alarming demographics, which have highlighted that the percentage of elderly would be 26% of the total population by the year 2030. Getting old is a process which most people would have to experience, given the longer life expectancy of the population. With the future elderly being more educated, assertive, healthier and having increased awareness for modern technology with higher standards of living, this would imply that this new generation of elderly have many more good years to enjoy.

The dissertation studies the design of outdoor spaces surrounding planned housing developments for relatively independent older people, and addresses aspects that are important for older people – like perceptual, functional, and social changes associated with the ageing process. The study is based on relatively independent older people – like those living in HDB flats or those that require minimum assistance with daily living as more intensive-care facilities may require additional environmental supports for special needs.

The dissertation is organised as follows: -
Chapter 1 deals with the demographics related to the emerging ageing population in Singapore. It defines the elderly and attempts to address perceptions the society has on the elderly. Chapter 2 examines the ageing process and its implications on the way elderly perceive and negotiate space. Chapter 3 analyses the importance of the neighbourhood as a place for ageing and its impact on the elderly. And Chapters 4 and 5 conclude with an analysis of an upgraded HDB precinct project and its implications on the elderly population.