

Theory

Introduction

'But officer, I haven't done anything wrong!'

Those were the words the author, found himself lamenting and pleading as the police threw him into the back of their truck with those thought to be hardened with crimes, for trying to do some sort of research without his passport in Hillbrow. While in the back of the truck and attempting not to make eye contact with anyone he looked through the window... saw a lot of people, young people... doing nothing, which got him thinking;

How can these youths be gainfully assisted? Should building of social centres be able to distract the profitable? Are the existing social centres actually being used by the most needed? Are the centres built for the youth specialised or should they be made more specialised than they are? Can Africa really afford to waste youths? Are there any governmental obligations and commitments to these youths? Or are they the sole responsibility of their families, churches, youth groups and perhaps parent staffed programs? What can really engage these youths and keep them constructive and productive in the society?

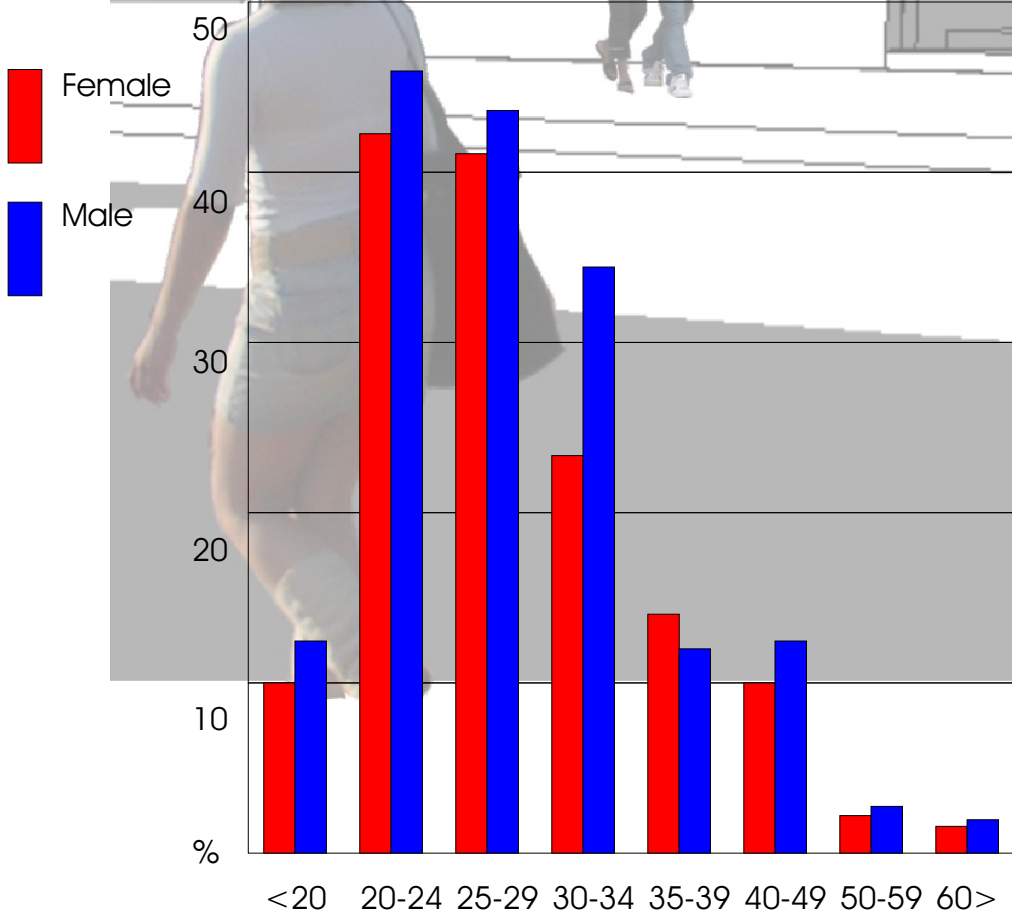
Youths in Hillbrow are the subject of this thesis concern. Hillbrow according to Leggett (2003) has one of the highest populations in the Southern Hemisphere with an estimated 50, 000 people in an area of 10.28 square kilometres. The actual count is believed to be much higher due to squatters and undocumented migrants left uncouneted in official census reports. Hillbrow is renowned for immigrants and crime. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the population of Hillbrow are youths between the ages of 15-35. This population justifies the choice of the recipients of this thesis proposed intervention.

Factor	Hillbrow
Population	49,608
Gender	M 27,002 F 22,606
Age [15 - 34]	33,374 [67%]
Area	0.76sqkm

The official demographic figures for Hillbrow as derived from the 2001 South African census, indicate a population of just under 50,000

However, from obvious observations, it is clear that the demographics are a serious undercount. This undercount is as a result of a number of factors, which include

- A large non South African population in the study area
- A large number of people living in flat units [often 10 or more people in flat units who did not wish to be counted
- Homeless people



Youths' needs

The needs of the youths project into the future and affect not only the families and youths but also the nations' all round development. It ranges from self identification to acceptance within the society and goes towards the physical environment to mould and shape the youths. Acknowledging these, Hertzberger (1991) says that everyone wants to be accepted, wants to belong, to have a place of his or her own. He further suggests that architecture has the potential to create such feelings of belonging and acceptance. He concludes that the design of 'human-spaces' can encourage feelings of acceptance and enhanced social interaction.

www.4hgroup.org reports that even when they are not assisted, all Youth will find ways to meet their basic needs, build skills and values, and use their skills, talents, energies and time in ways that make them feel good and powerful. According to this reports, these needs are identified as follows;

- To know they are cared about by others (Attachment & Belonging)
- To feel and believe they are capable and successful (Achievement/Mastery)
- To know they are able to influence people and events (Autonomy/Power)
- To practice helping others through their own generosity (Altruism/Purpose)
- Fun and Stimulation

Having established the evident needs of the youths with the concern that the youths in Hillbrow are regularly exposed to 'shebeens' (an open unrestricted drinking place), drugs, gambling, prostitution, rape, domestic violence, robbery, shootings as also documented by (Legget T 2003), the author proposes a comprehensive project for meeting these needs by providing a social youth centre. A centre will be a welcomed prospect, offering the youths a safe place in which they can not only take ownership but also interact. This way, they will be able to identify their talents and have a sense of belonging and freedom within the society they call theirs.

A centre that will not only provide a sense of identity and a spirit of self help, but also develop abilities that will allow for tackling community problems. This centre will primarily be a social hot spot, providing a place where interest and activity may arise spontaneously from the corporate life of the group.

Why is Meeting Youths' Needs so Important?

If youths' needs are met adequately, they develop characteristics that most of us would relate to character:

- Youth who experience 'belonging', tend to be trusting and friendly people.
- Youths with productive opportunities to experience 'mastery', tend to become problem-solvers who are motivated and achievement-oriented.
- Youths who experience opportunities to be Independent become confident and self-disciplined leaders, and youth who experience Generosity become caring and empathic people.

•If otherwise, unmet needs can become negatively defining factors in the lives of these youths as follows:

- Youths will seek to 'belong' through promiscuous or clinging behaviours.
- Youths attempt to feel 'mastery' by cheating or developing delinquent skills.
- Youths try to establish Independence by being bullies or through defiant behaviour.
- Youths are unable to establish their identity and lose themselves in constantly giving.

If youths needs consistently go unmet, some youths retreat or give up on getting needs met:

- Youths who have not bonded to adults do not bond to institutions. NOT broken families that cause youth violence and other problems but rather broken bonds between youth and adults.
- Youths with no productive opportunities for Mastery often give up easily and avoid risks because it's easier to not try than to try and fail.
- To be respected is to have power. Winning respect through aggressive techniques is immensely important when there is so little to be had.
- Youths with no opportunities to connect meaningfully with others become isolated in their own experience and often become selfish and even antisocial.

Justifying Social Hot Spot in Hillbrow

Having stated this, what this thesis hopes to accomplish for the youth of Hillbrow is the provision of resources that are able to build social sustainability. Resources such as 'human capacity' are described by Rick & Mario (2005) as the resources in which individuals contribute to their own well being and to the well being of the community as a whole. Catering for this resource, they also explained will provide

Opportunities to develop and upgrade skills. A variety of local employment opportunities throughout the region

- Opportunities to develop and make use of creativity and artistic expression
- Appropriate, affordable formal and informal life-long learning
- Appropriate, affordable recreation, leisure and cultural facilities and programs
- A range of opportunities for individuals to contribute to the health and well-being of the community.

In addition to the human capacity, this thesis will also provide for 'community capacity' which Rick & Mario (2005) explain as the relationships, networks and norms that facilitate collective action which are taken to improve the quality of life.

This community capacity will ensure

- Community economic development is encouraged
- That the youth are involved in public processes and their results.
- Opportunities and a place for social interaction in the community
- Opportunities, resources and a venue for a variety of arts, cultural and community activities
- Support and encouragement for community organizations and networks

In conclusion therefore, this thesis hopes to provide an environment in which the youths of Hillbrow;

- Have sufficient resources to participate fully in their community and have opportunities for personal development and advancement
- Possess both the right and the opportunity to enjoy all aspect of community life whilst interacting with other community members.
- Have the resiliency and ability to respond appropriately to change.

An analysis of Hillbrow uncovered that there are no public green spaces in the area, no designated play spaces and few learning facilities along the periphery. This coupled with the individual and community capacity discussed earlier and the examples studied in the case studies, the following program was developed under four main titles. They include;

- Social
- Physical
- Cultural and
- Educational facilities

Adding to the fact that the youth in Hillbrow are regularly exposed to shebeens, drugs, gambling, prostitution, rape, domestic violence, robbery, shootings etc, a voluntary counseling unit that will cater for issues such as abuse (sexual, alcohol, emotional and physical) and career counseling will also be provided for.

Site selection

Site 1

- Advantages**
- Located in the north of Hillbrow
 - It is in a clean area
 - It is safe- adjacent to the police station
 - Access - It has a main vehicular and pedestrian route (Twist Street) running next to it.
- Disadvantages**
- Its already existing structural system could be restrict the design



- Advantages**
- Located in the north of Hillbrow
 - It is in a clean area
 - It is safe- surrounded by residential buildings
 - Access - It has a main vehicular (Claim Street) and two main pedestrian routes (Claim and Quartz Streets) running next to it.



- Advantages**
- It is in a clean area
 - Located in the medical precinct
 - Access - It has a main vehicular route running next to it, (Smith Street)
- Disadvantages**
- There are only a few green spaces in the inner city



Site 3

Site 4

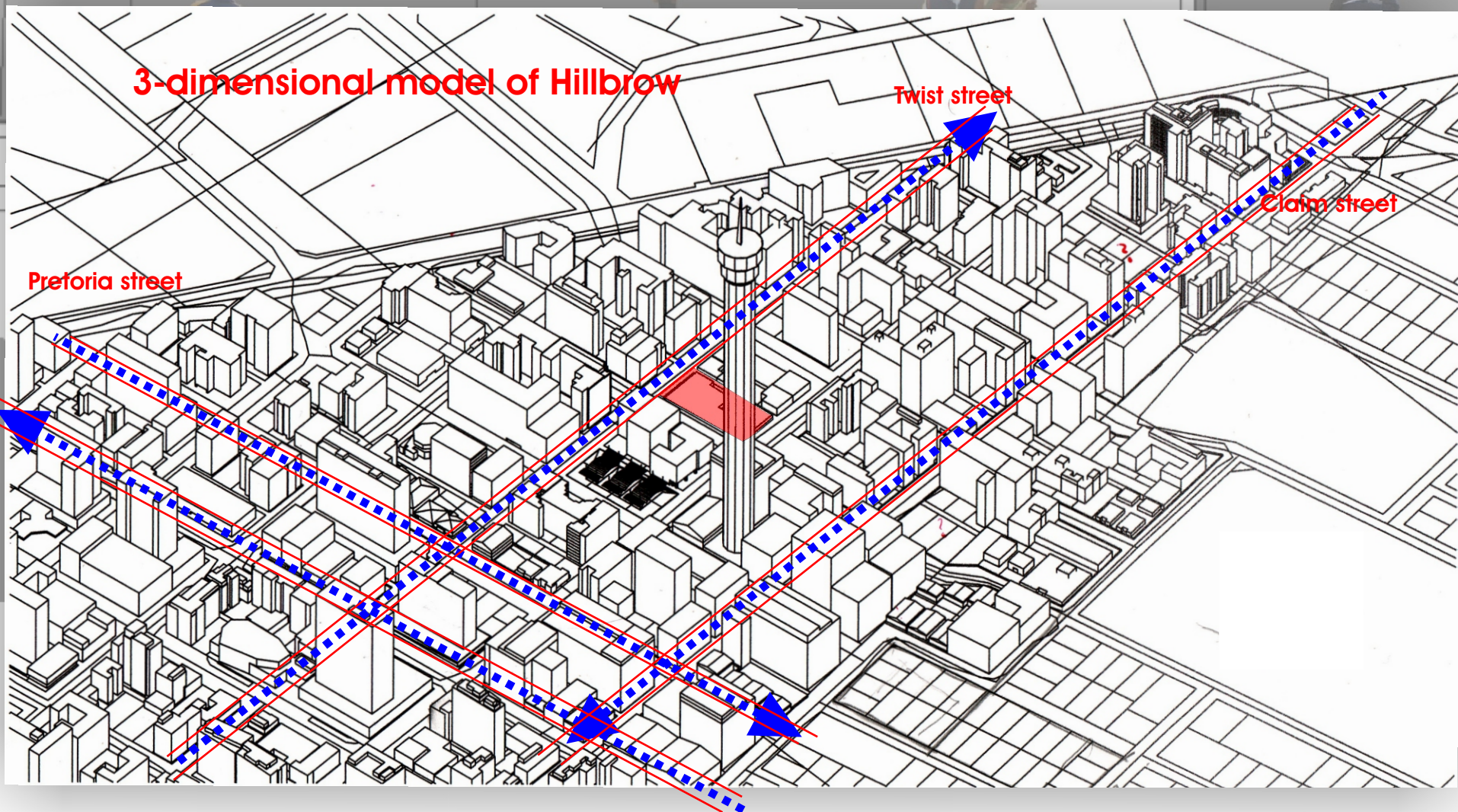


- Advantages**
- It's a park
 - It is in a clean area
 - Access - It has a main vehicular route running next to it.
- Disadvantages**
- It is just outside Hillbrow
 - There are only a few green spaces in the inner city



Site 5

- Advantages**
- Located in the commercial strip of Hillbrow
 - Good visibility
 - Access - It has two main vehicular and two main pedestrian routes (Claim and Pretoria Streets) running next to it.
- Disadvantages**
- Has three brothels as neighbors, one of which is the summit club
 - Its already existing structural system could be restrict the design

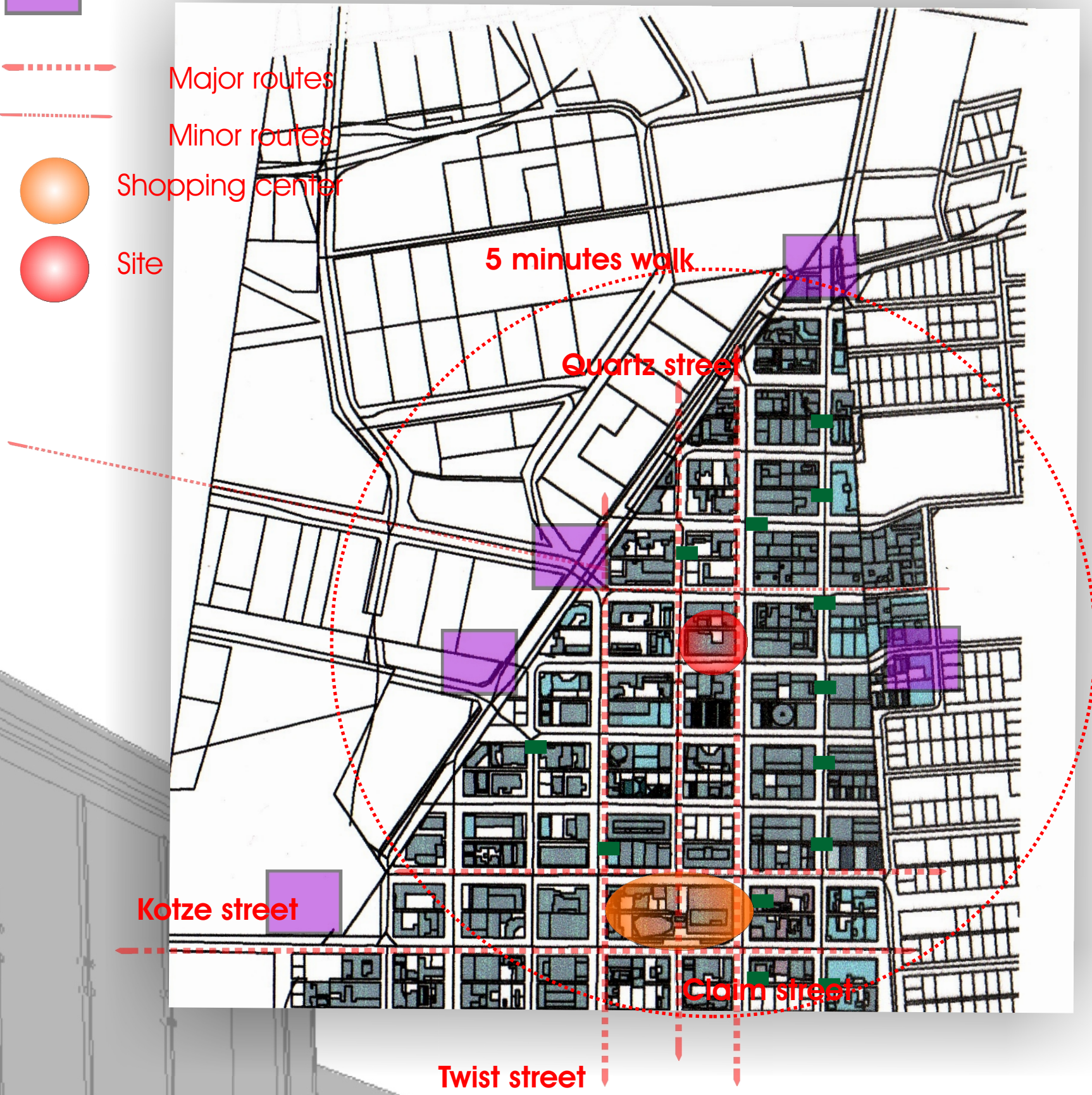


Vehicle routes
Pedestrian routes
Proposed site

The site chosen is located in Hillbrow north. It is bordered by Claim Street on the east, Quartz Street on the west and Caroline Street on the south. Chosen because it is located in an area that is perceived as safe by the residents of Hillbrow.

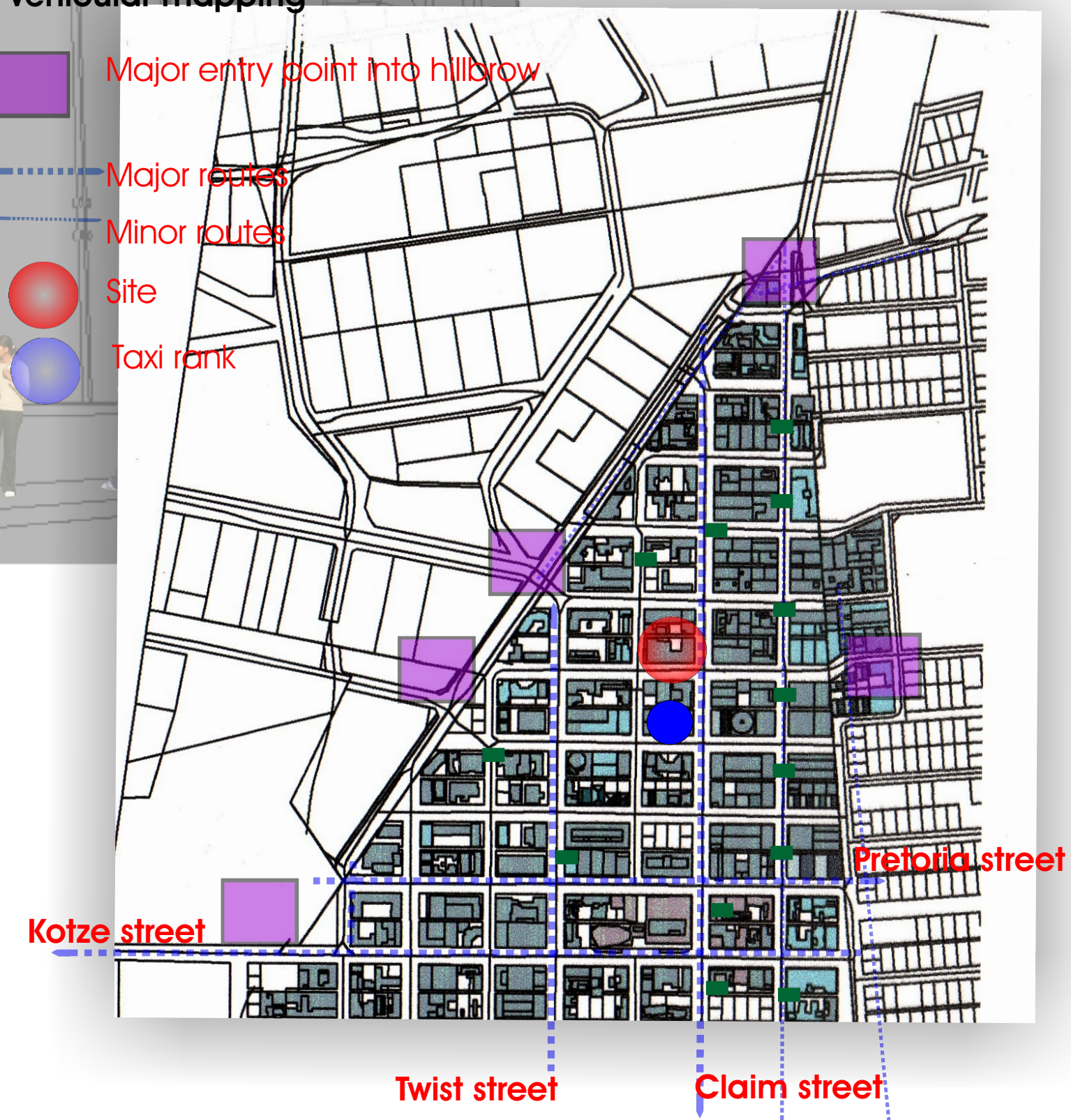
Pedestrian mapping

- Major entry point into hillbrow
- Major routes
- Minor routes
- Shopping center
- Site



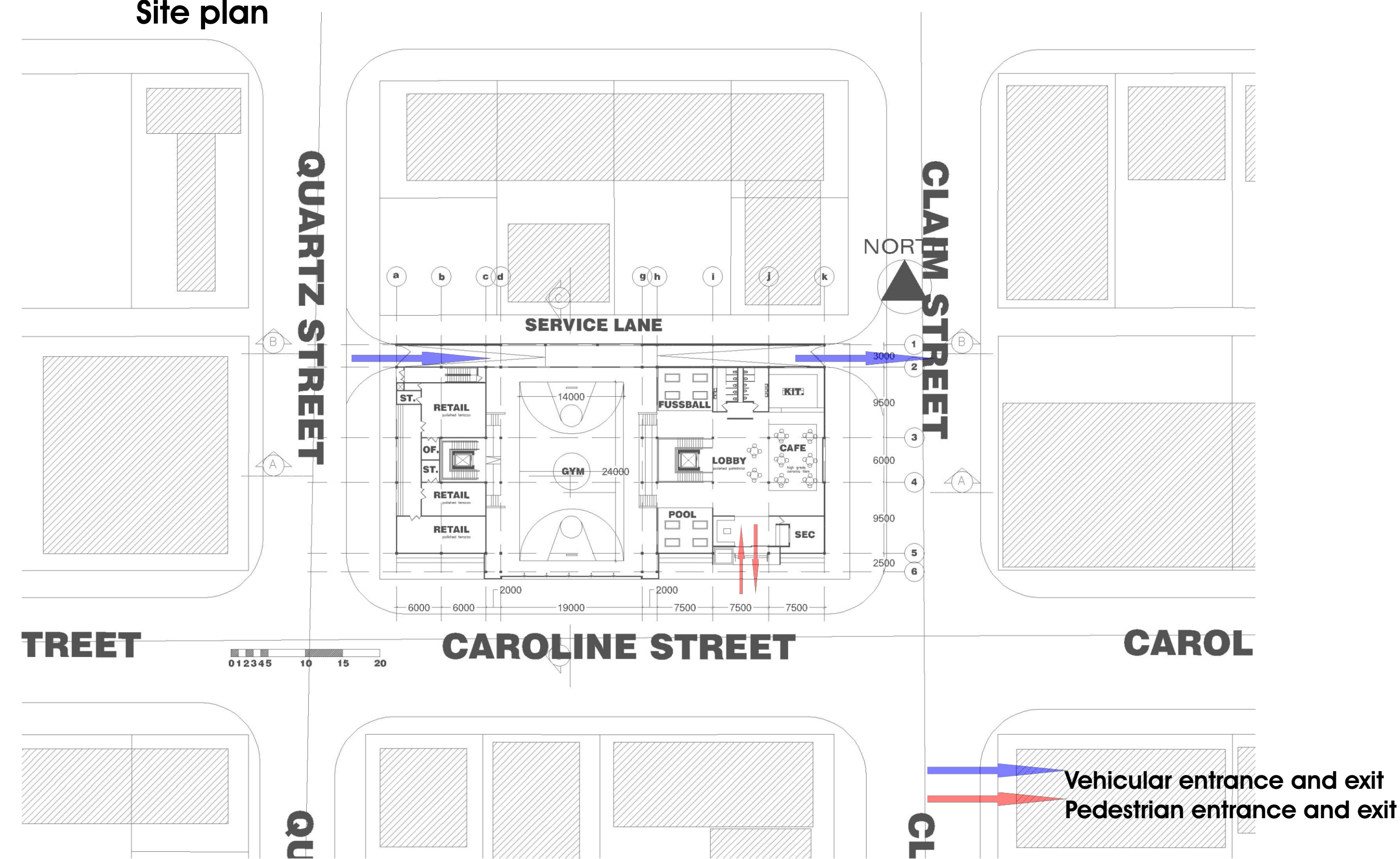
Vehicular mapping

- Major entry point into hillbrow
- Major routes
- Minor routes
- Site
- Taxi rank

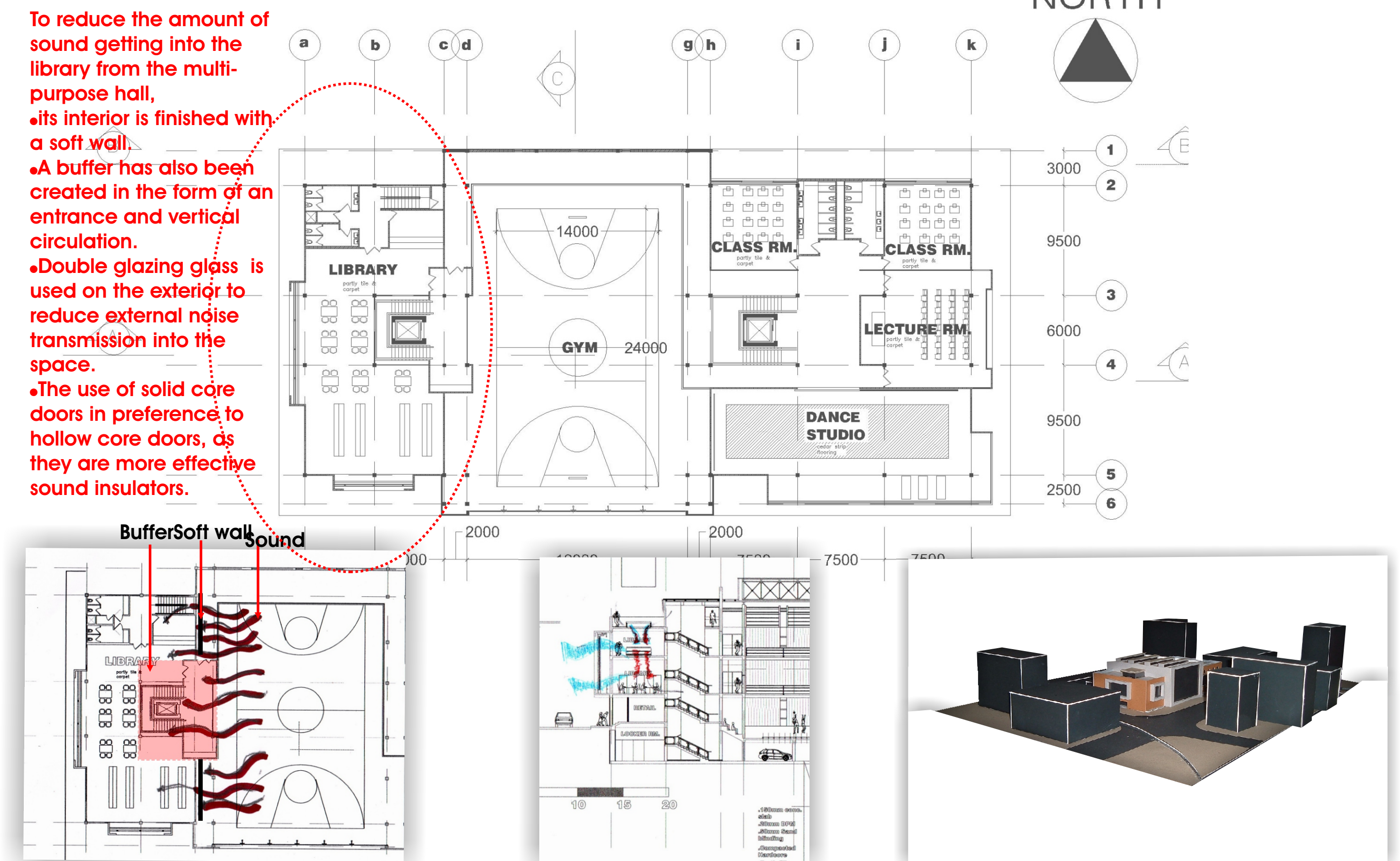


Plans

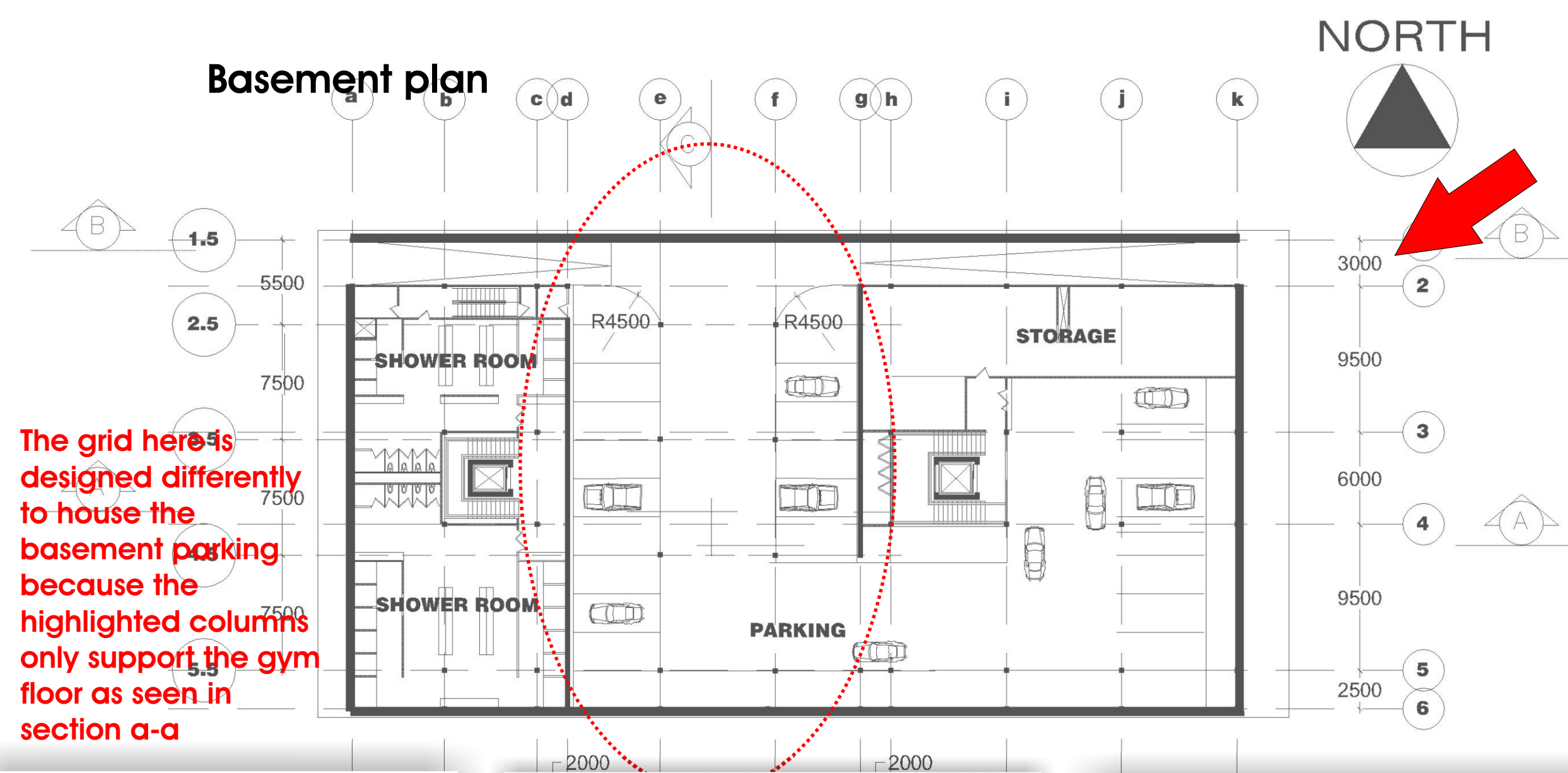
Site plan



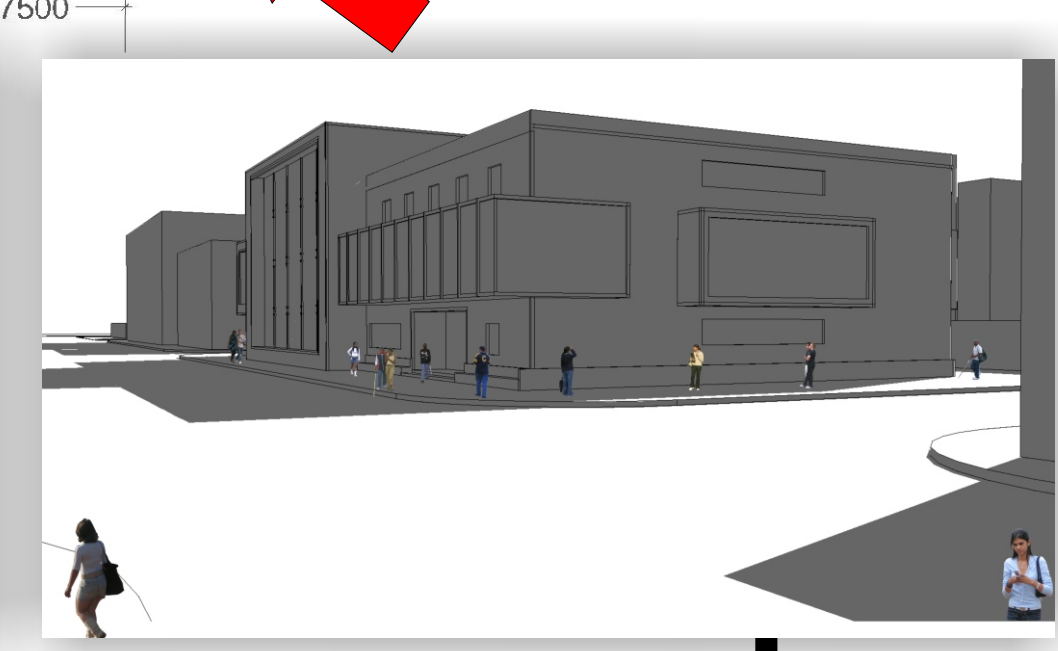
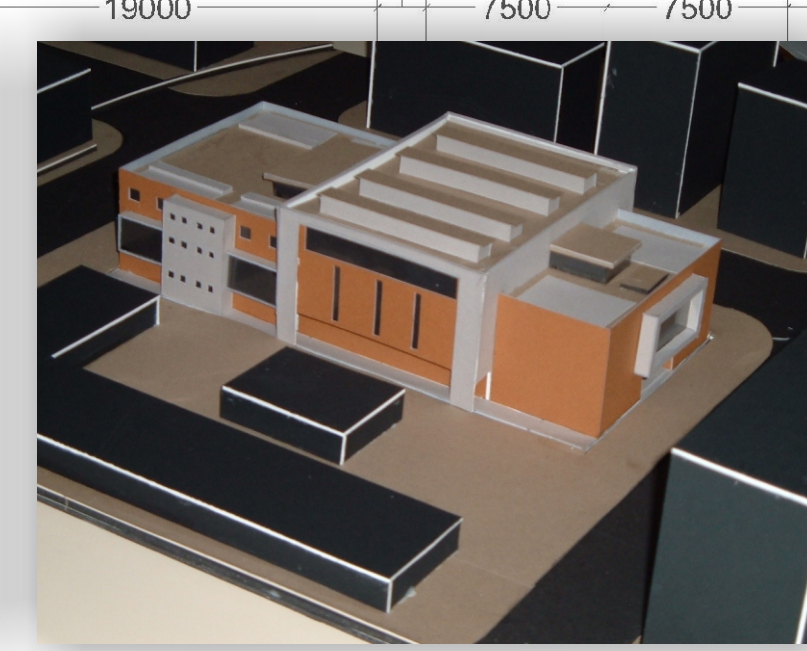
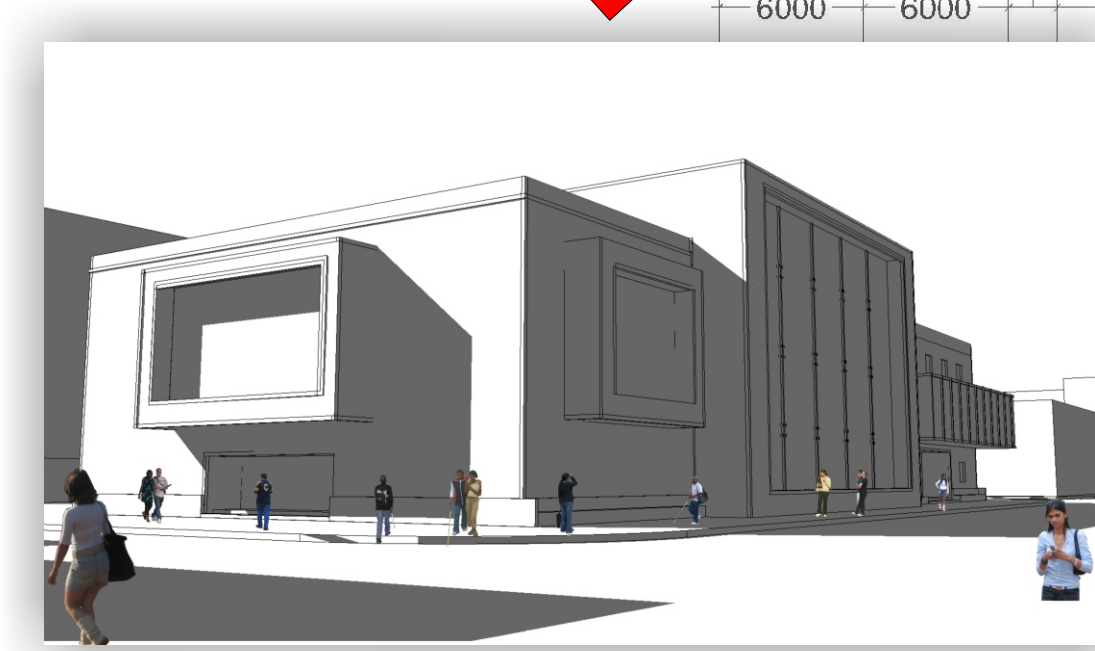
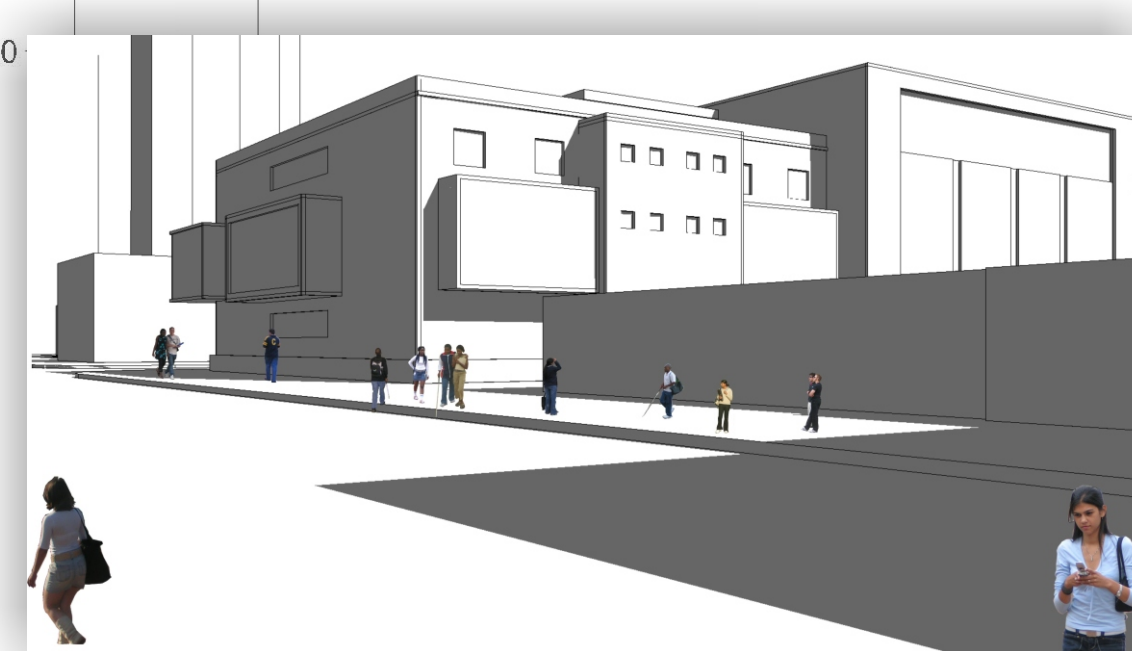
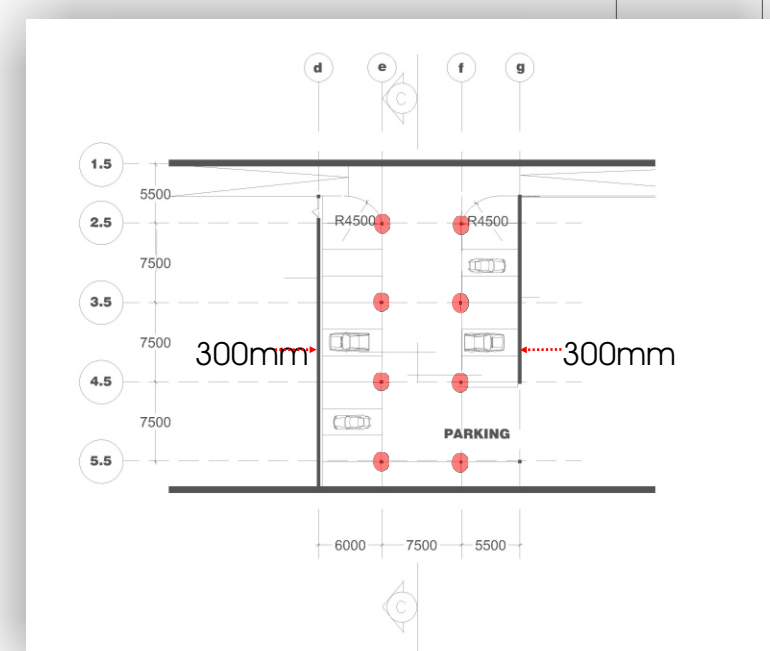
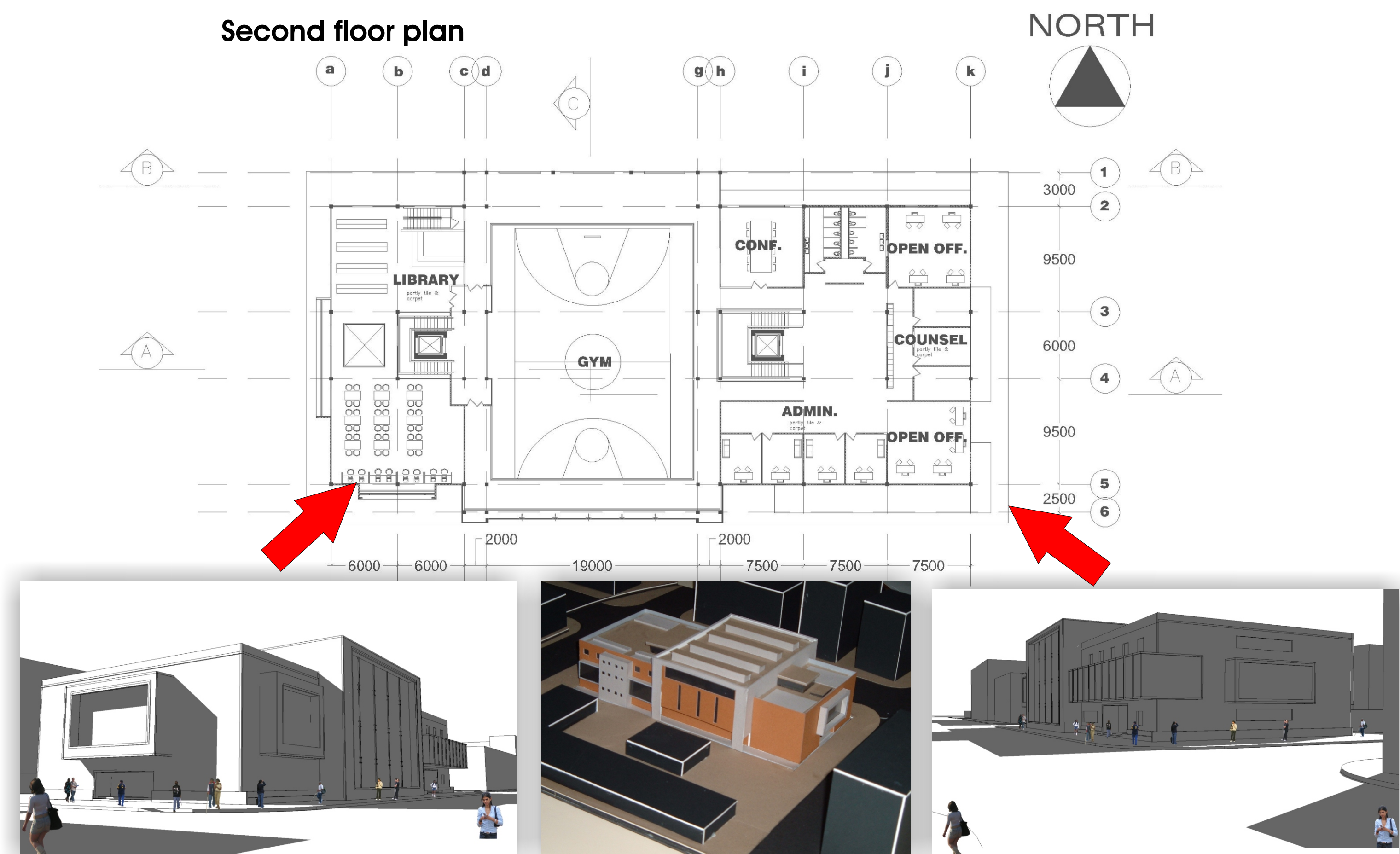
First floor plan



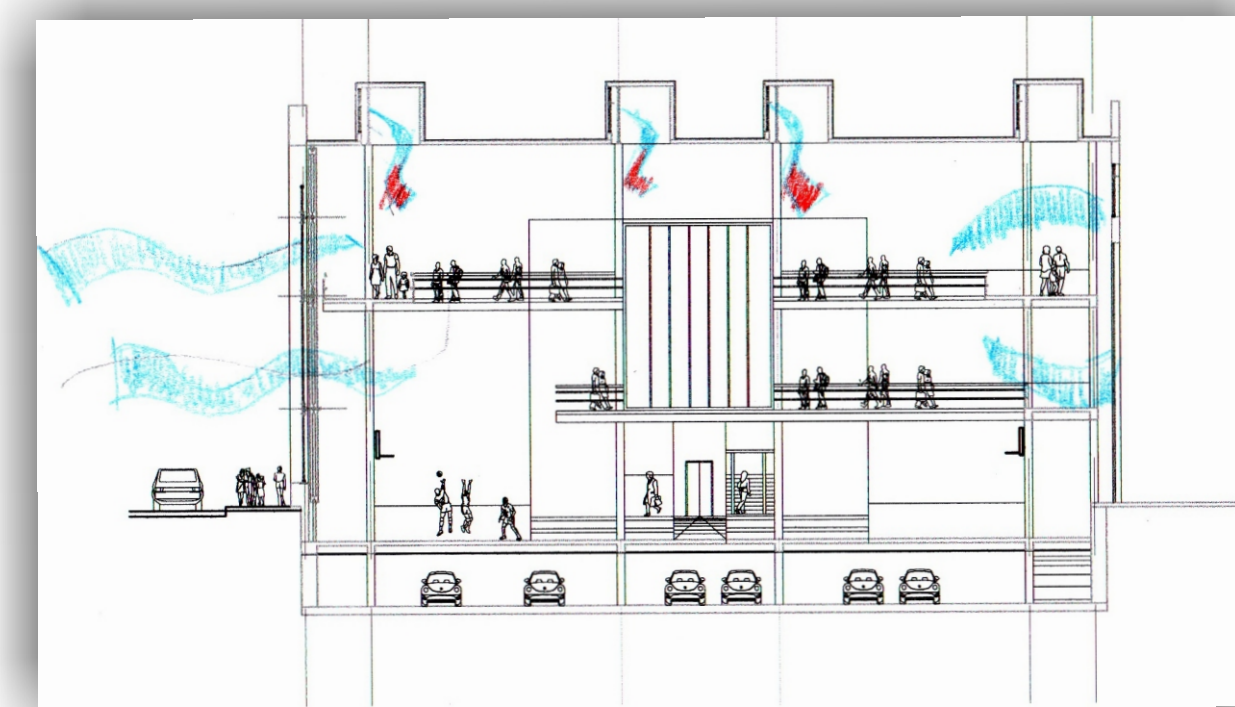
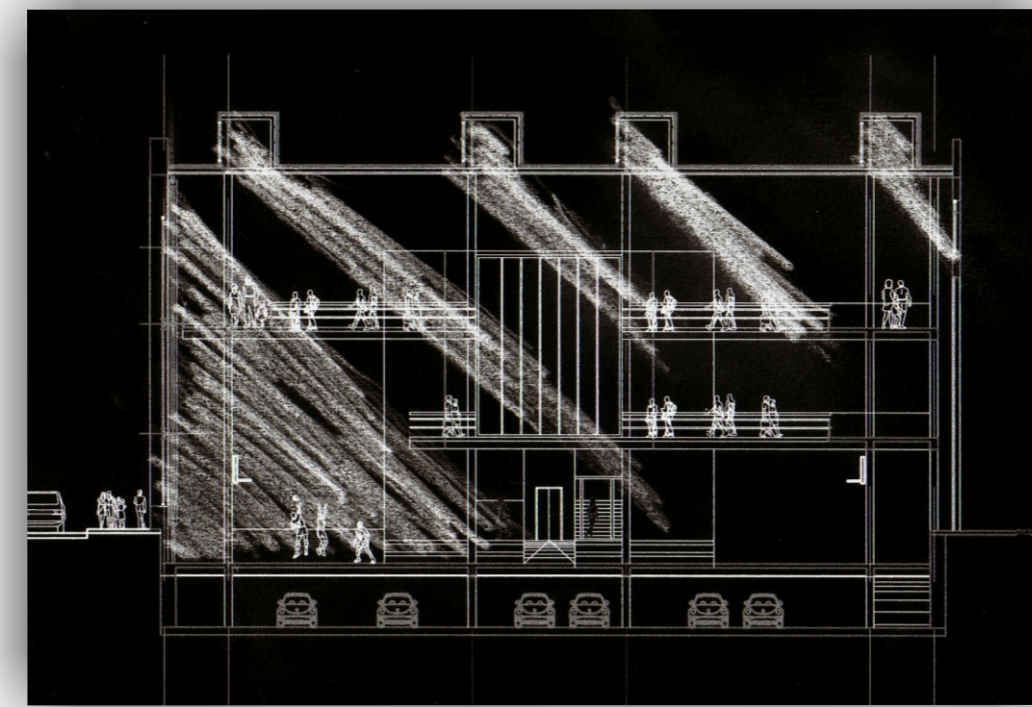
Basement plan



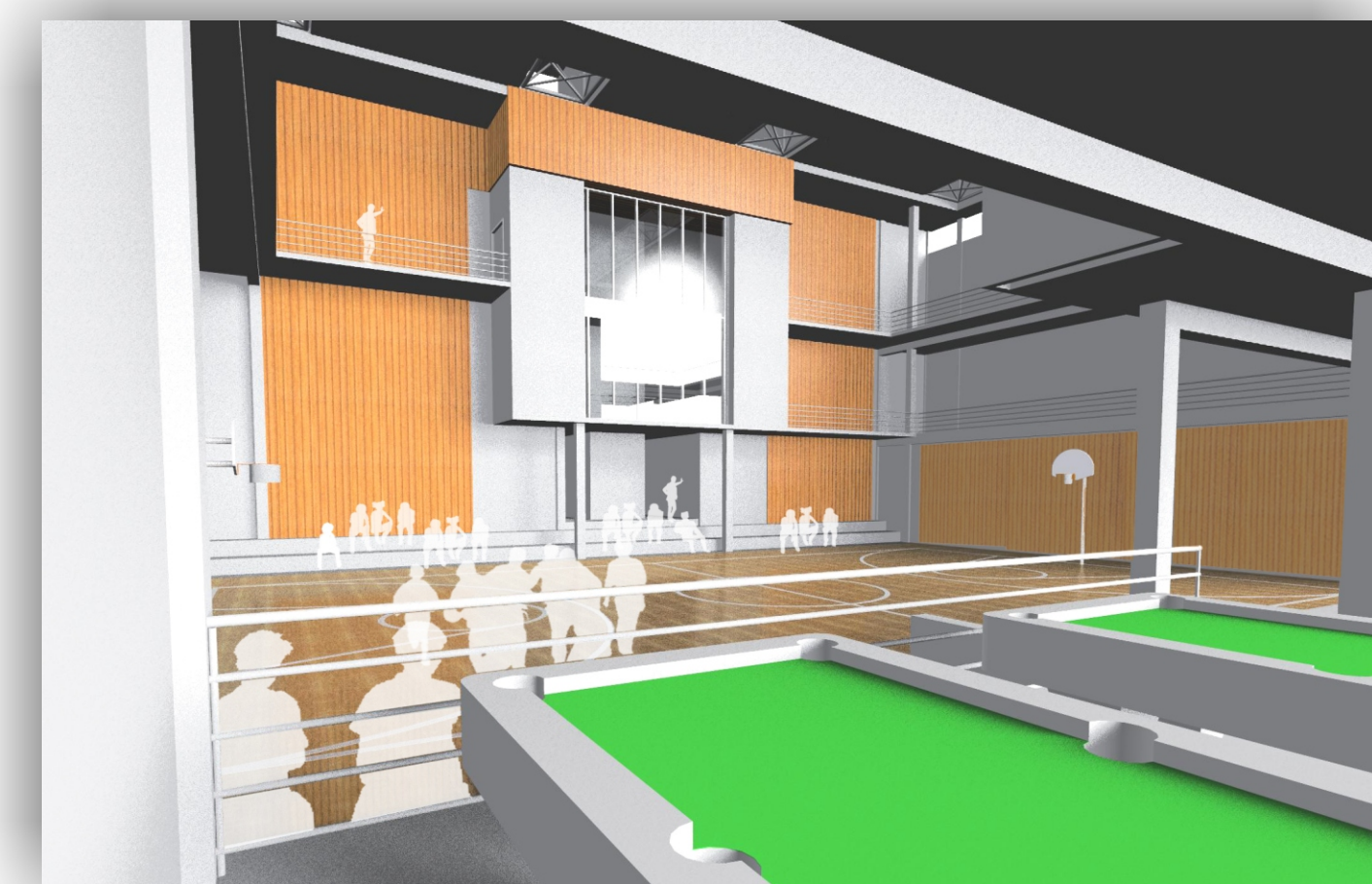
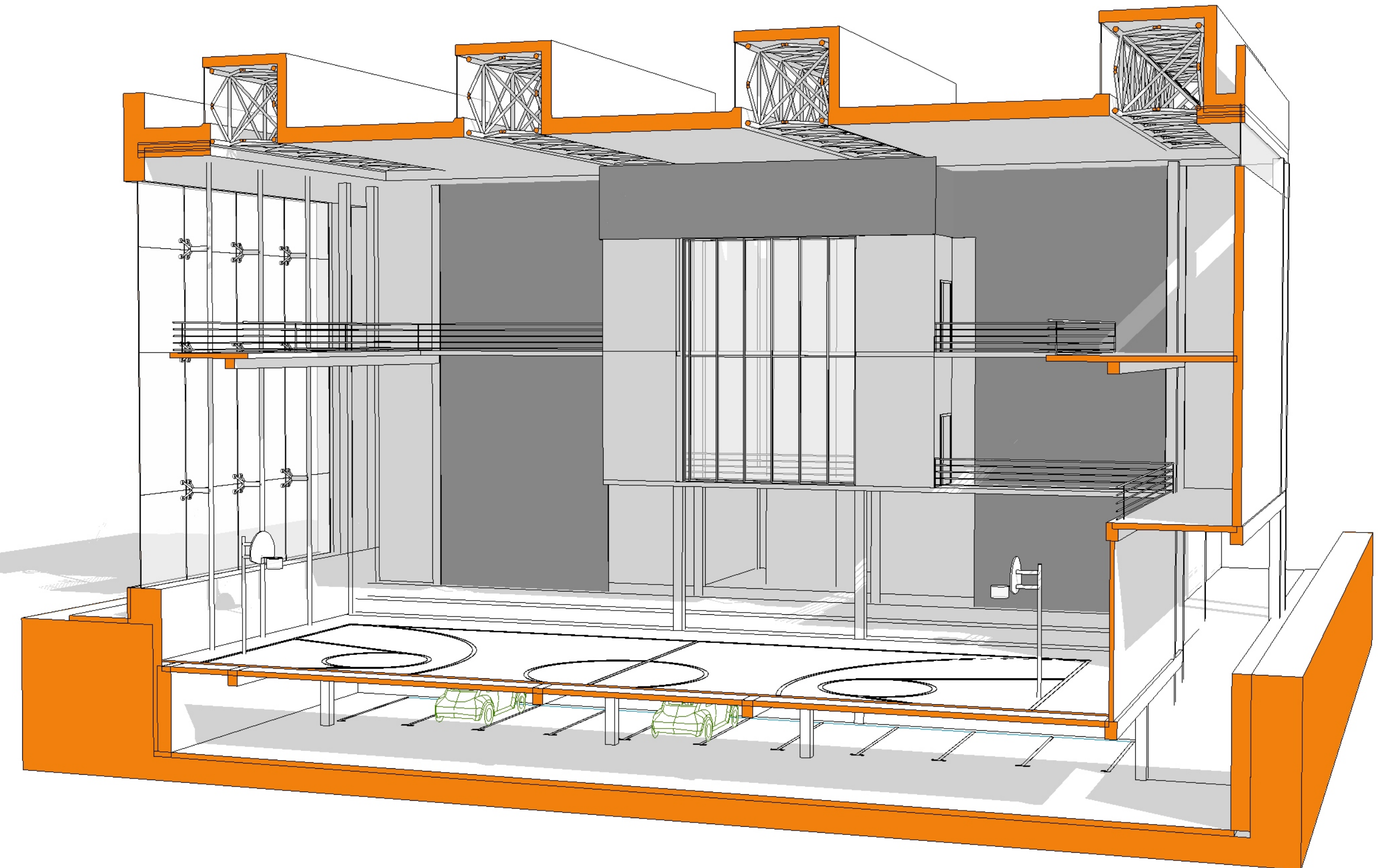
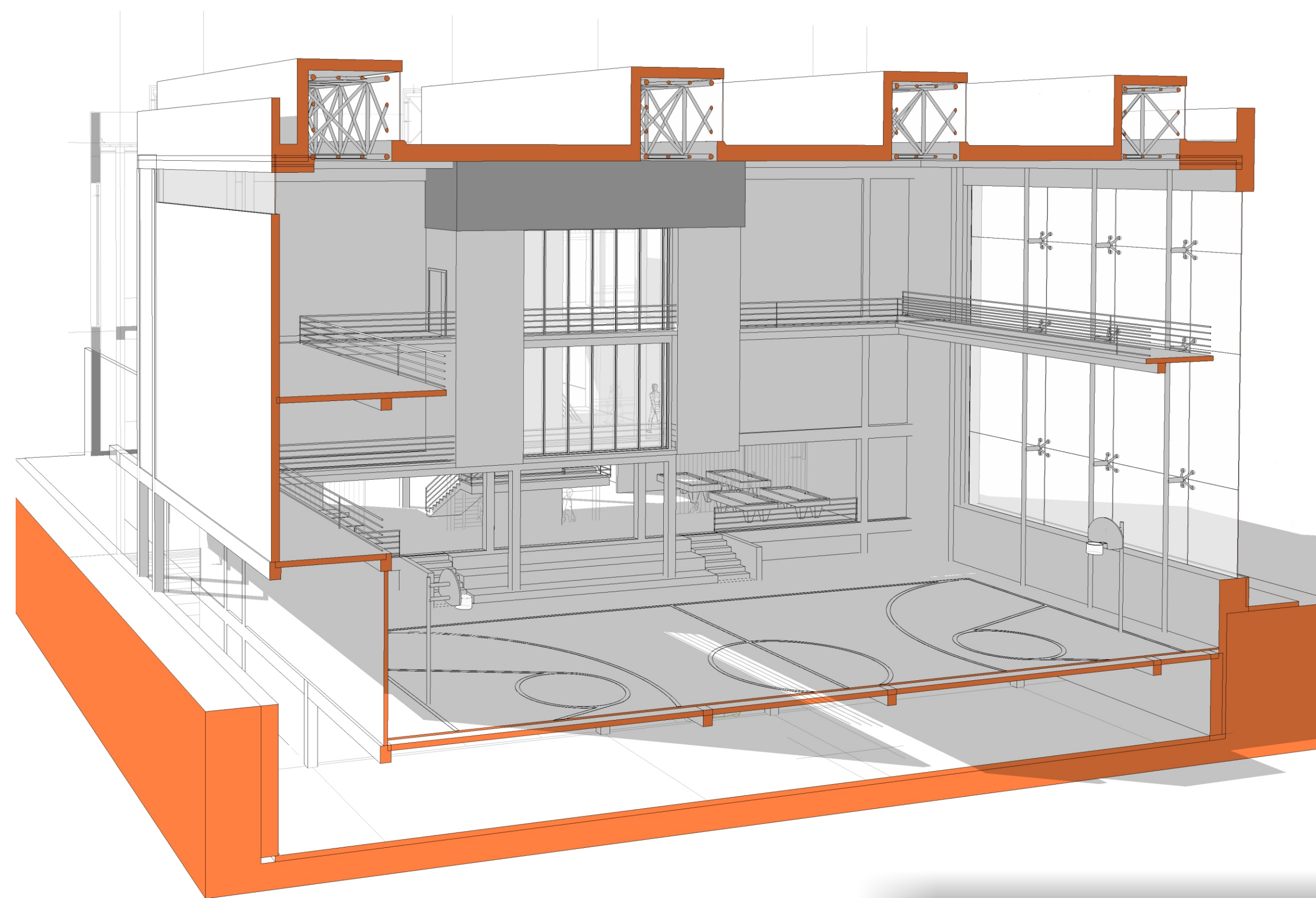
Second floor plan

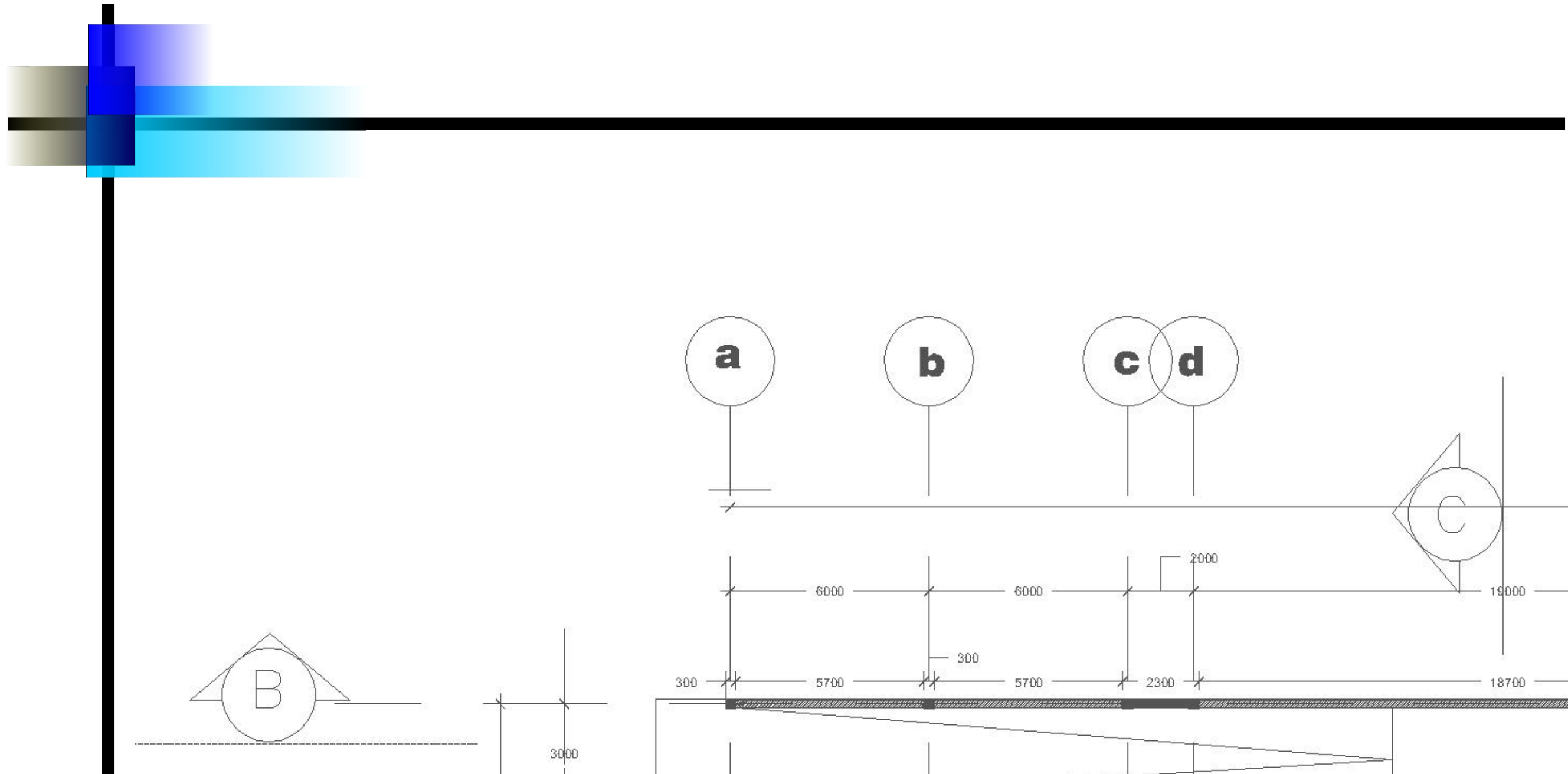


Perspectives



Drawings showing ventilation systems and natural light





NORTH

