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Bogatsu, Katlego

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JARATENG:

Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

Jarateng

Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

Katlego Bogatsu 0608593D





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_____

Katlego Bogatsu

9th day of December 2013

This document is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree:

Master of Architecture [Professional]

at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in the year 2013

This book is dedicated to
My father, Julius Thebeitsile Bogatsu,
and my mother, Johanna Motlhagomang Bogatsu

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank God whom I believe in and trust. Thank you God for the strength you have given me. To my loving parents thank you for your support throughout my studies, more especially during my thesis year. Thank you for bearing with me through my stressful episodes and thank you for your financial support for all the resources I needed. To my Brother Thato I would like to thank you for your support as well and your prayers. To my Supervisor Mohammed, a special thank you for your enduring help with my complex topic. To all my friends and fellow brethren of Ebenezer Evangelical Church I would like to thank you for your encouragement and support and prayers. I would also like to thank my former youth leader and mentor Rantopo David “Uncle Deff” Boikanyo - one of the most creative architects I am privileged to know- for your advice and valuable crits. To the partners at MDS Architecture for their generous financial support and encouragement throughout my studies, I would like to say thank you. I would love to also thank the support from the staff at MDS Architecture for spurring me on and for your prayers.

A B S T R A C T

JARATENG: Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the importance of public space and to explore the concept of public living. The concept behind this thesis exploration is to look at the Soweto yard called a `jarata` and to look at various configurations of a Soweto yard. The reason behind choosing a Soweto yard is to conceptualise a public space which has the essence of the sociality of a Soweto yard. The investigation will begin by exploring the concept of social space and to gain an understanding of what a `social space` is in comparison to a physical place. Over the years people have defined and redefined spaces around them. In shared spaces people have used traditions and cultures to dictate the manner in which they use these spaces and have therefore created unwritten rules in these spaces. As people redefine these spaces from their designed or intended use, they essentially create social spaces. These social spaces are not the physical spaces but they happen in the physical spaces, and are driven by events which are part of people's social and cultural patterns. So therefore the architecture of a place is defined by the social spaces which are the events, activities and the happenings in the place, which are centred on social patterns.

Place is the visible space, and space is the hidden place. The architectural response is a public space where public living can be embraced more especially for the residents of Soweto and more specifically to the residents of Mofolo Central where my site is based. The space will be an enabling space which should allow the users the freedom to carry out their traditions and social patterns. The space is also an event space which allows for a variety of recreational activities from musical events, celebrations, ceremonies and play. The design of the space also incorporates an existing old cinema and seeks to revive the cinema and develop it as a cinema and theatre. The purpose of reviving the cinema is to bring back a cinema-going culture to the area of Mofolo and Soweto at large. The exterior space will be an extension of the cinema and will function as an open-air cinema among other uses mentioned above. In addition there will be office spaces, trade spaces both formal and informal and recreational facilities. The design plays on the social patterns of public life in Soweto.

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Overview

Project type
Public space

Site
Mofolo central, Soweto (residential area)



(http://www.maps.google.co.za/maps)

Terminology
Jarata: A yard or garden which surrounds a house or dwelling. It describes the physical place

Jarateng: From the word Jarata. It means being at the yard. It describes the social space, a gathering.

Leading Essay
The main essay (Jarateng) is broken up into sections. The main thing to understand about the leading essay is that I will be looking at the yard in the physical sense, and then I'll be looking at the yard in the social sense and alluding to my own design through sketches by implementing specific elements of the yard, both the physical and the social aspects.

JARATENG: an overflow of social activity



Fig.1

(http://www.ucindaphotos.co.za)

Prelude

In exploring the township yard or `jarata` I came to realise that there is the physical yard and there is the social yard. The social yard is the essence of the physical yard. It is the social yard which gives the physical yard its character. It is seeing the wood for the trees. The physical yard has a boundary and a threshold, and also private and public zones whereas in its social being the yard makes the above mentioned barriers virtually invisible.

I wish to reiterate the meaning of the word Jarata and Jarateng. Jarata is a yard which is the physical space and Jarateng means being at the yard which is the social space.

The word Jarata is taken from the Afrikaans word jaart. The yard in the township, more specifically in Soweto is more than just the outside space which surrounds the house, but it has particular social meaning to the residents and communities of Soweto. The Social patterns of the Jarata are similar across the diverse indigenous cultures in Soweto. The Jarata is a shared space, a meeting space, a social space, a space where visitors are received and a space where stories are shared. Collectively the jaratas have aided in unifying communities in Soweto even in tough apartheid conditions. Not only were people trying to make ends meet during those difficult times, but through these collective social spaces the residents of Soweto were able to make social-ends meet by embracing public living. The Jarata is where social activities are held such as ceremonies, celebrations, play and general public living.

Therefore I propose to design a space which the community of Mofolo can freely use to have ceremonial events, celebrations, where people can socialise, a space for play, a festive space and a space where public life can be embraced along with added social amenities. The proposed space must reflect the social patterns expressed in the yards of Soweto.



Social space can be created anywhere

INTRODUCTION

Social Space

There needs to be an understanding of what a social space is and what a physical place is in order to draw out the essence of the `jarata` or yard. A social space is a space which exists in a physical place. I believe that a social space cannot exist without at least two human beings (or animals) interacting or being in the same place. Social spaces are non-architectural spaces - in the physical sense - which people create in architectural spaces. Social spaces can occur anywhere and are therefore not restricted to a specific place. At the same time there are those places that are specifically designed for social spaces like parks and other recreational facilities which are enabling spaces for social interaction. Social spaces are created in a loose sense, meaning that they may occur in a specific place and at a specific time, and in a few moments they can completely disappear from the physical space. So the physical space may be fixed, while the social space is temporary, mobile and flexible. A social space therefore has the ability to exist in one place temporarily, disappear and reappear in a different place. Also the social space has the characteristic ability to change, whether it is in size or nature. Essentially two people may be interacting by having a casual conversation, then a third person joins the social space and it therefore increases. A fourth person then arrives and joins the social space and the four people may decide to change the activity from a conversation to playful banter. Because of the flexible nature of the social space, people are able to change the nature and size of the social space spontaneously.

Social spaces can be passive. People may share a space in a park without physically interacting with each other. A very subtle social space exists between the users of the park by the users simply acknowledging the presence of one another. Social spaces can also alter the physical place or alter how the physical place is perceived. The intended use of a physical place can totally be disregarded through peoples social patterns. The thing about a social space is that it is an attachment to a physical place. The two work hand in hand more especially if the quality of the physical place is at a level where the social space can occur in a rich and lively way.

The possibilities of social spaces are endless. In most township areas where most people rely on public transport, the taxi can become a mobile place in which social spaces exists. As a commuter enters into a taxi they will greet the other commuters who have already boarded. If you have ever been in a taxi you will agree that it is a space where conversations happen between strangers, it is a highly verbal environment, one which can be filled with laughter and at times frustrations.



Fig. 2

Social space in a taxi *(http://www.hedgehogswithoutboders.com)*

JARATENG: An overflow of social activities

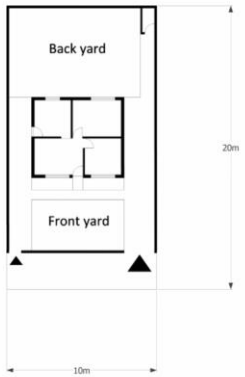
The jarata is a very distinct kind of a yard in the townships especially in Soweto. This space is one which is highly activated by social activities which are significant to the social patterns of the residents of Soweto. The Jarata is a result of community-held beliefs and customs from different vernacular cultures of South Africa, and about the traditional use of space and how it should function. The jarata is the outside space which surrounds the house. It is not an inner courtyard but it is a courtyard which is segmented by the house which typically sits in the center of the site. The yard is therefore divided into a maximum of four sections. There is the front yard which has a lawn. Then there is the driveway which covers most of the length of the site on the side of the house. The third space is on the opposite side of the driveway on the side of the house which is next to the kitchen. This space is narrower than the driveway space. The fourth is the backyard which obviously sits at the back of the yard. This is typical of an average yard found in many countries around the world and the basic functions of a yard are similar in different parts of the world and across vast cultures. But the jarata can be described as the architecture of temporality with varying levels of density in the kind of way in which it is used outside of the normal patterns.

The geometry of the jarata can remain the same rectangular shape but it is transformed through the different social activities that take place in the township cultural context. An overwhelming majority of the population of Soweto residents are black South Africans who come from indigenous backgrounds. They are proud of their heritage so much so that even in a modern setting they still have their social activities in their traditional way. Soweto is described as a melting pot of indigenous cultures from South Africa and including other countries on the African continent. So the way in which the jarata is used for various activities in different cultures is similar in terms of social use. There are three main uses of the jarata in a township: wedding celebrations; funerals and other traditional ceremonies; birthday celebrations and graduation celebrations. Other activities include living, playing, back room accommodation and trading in the form of spaza shops.

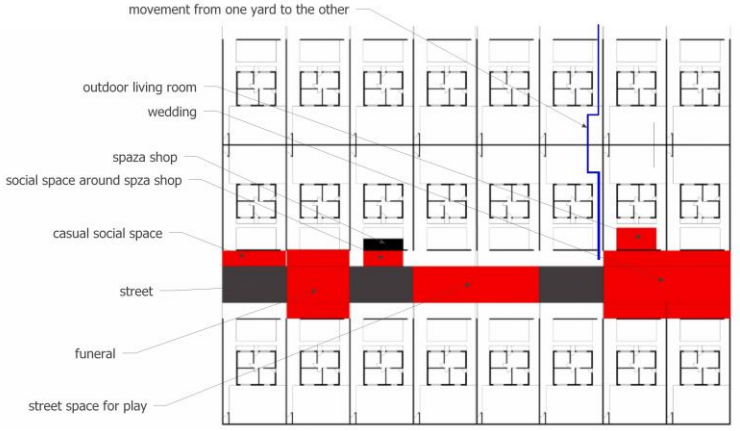
"The Suburban open space can be characterized by the configurations of the three basic environments of yard, the private area of each household; street; and park, the collective open environment. Their patterns of use and meaning are complex and open-ended, subject to personal, regional, and cultural variation." (Girling at al, 1994:22).

The front yards become collective yardscapes shared by the residents. Connections and linkages are part of the open space systems. Girling describes some of these open spaces as having no words in the vocabulary to describe them because they come about very informally (1994:22). The front yard is where all the public living happens.

The concept of the yard is the relationship between the yard space, the street and the community space. These spaces are connected. Girling describes the yard space as a reflection of a community's cultures, values and attitudes (1994:22). The yard represents an individual's public participation in the community which they live in.



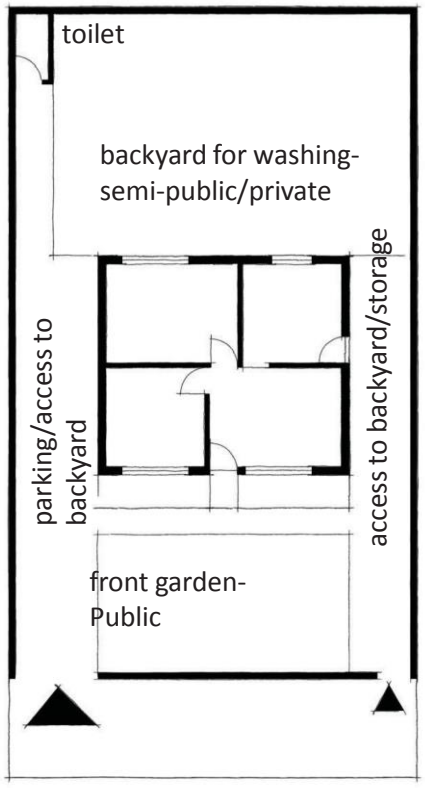
Yard dimensions



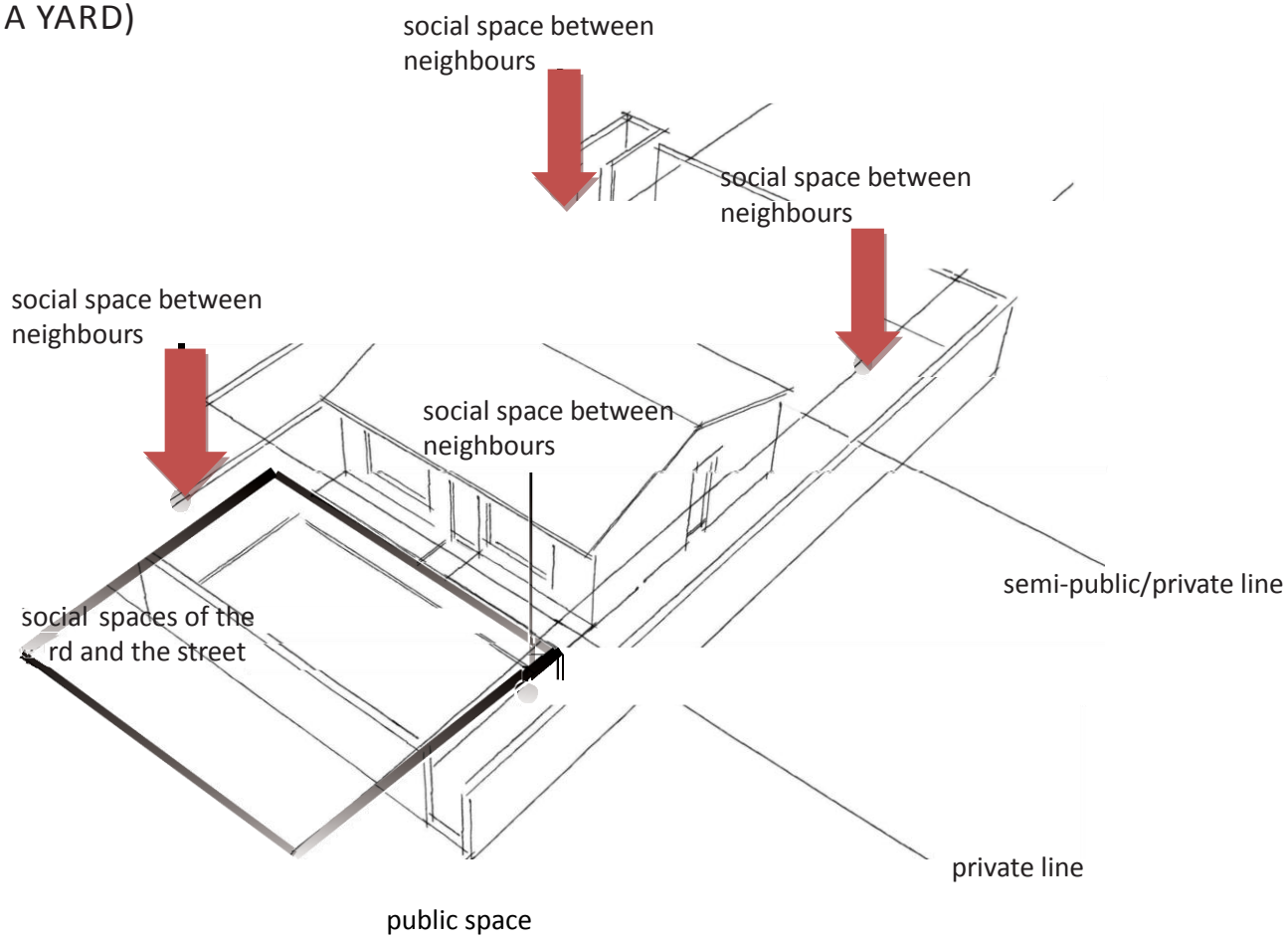
Yards adjacent to each other

THE PHYSICAL YARD (PHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF A YARD)

1. THE BASIC PHYSICAL YARD

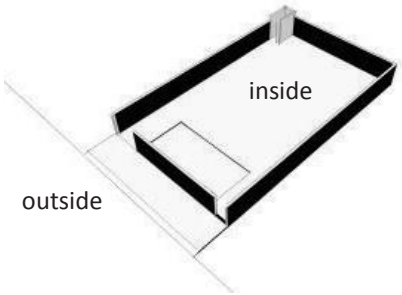


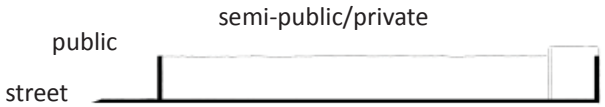
(Authors own)



2. THE PHYSICAL WALL

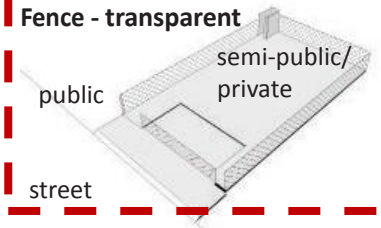
Basic function- to separate inside and outside space

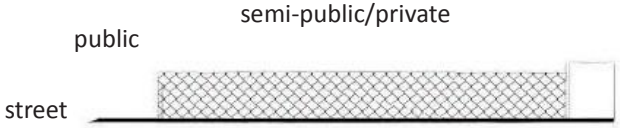




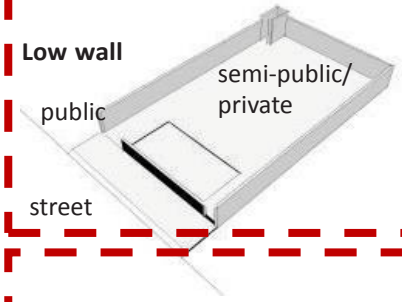
wall types

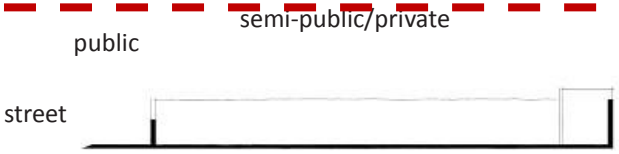
Fence - transparent



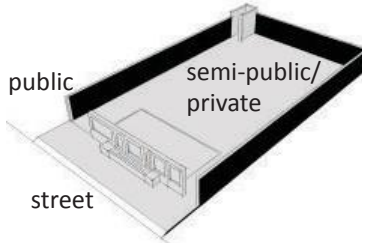


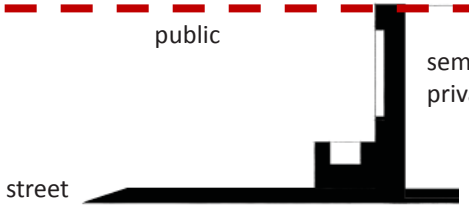
Low wall





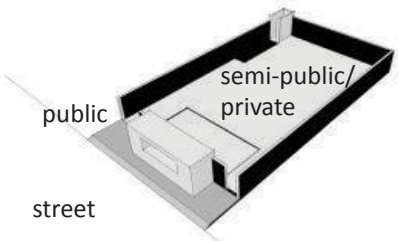
Decorative and functional

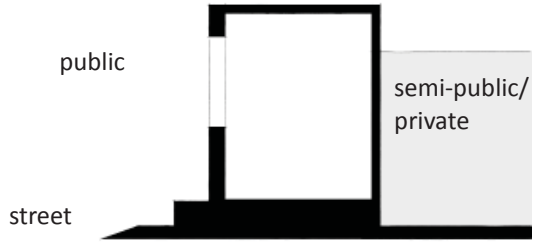




wall as planter and bench

Commercial use







Types of walls in terms of height and transparency (Mofolo Central, Soweto) *(Author`s own)*



Wall for decorative use and functional use (Mofolo central, Soweto) *(Author`s own)*



Wall for commercial use (spaza shop, Mofolo Central, Soweto) *(Author`s own)*

The fence = TRANSPARENCY

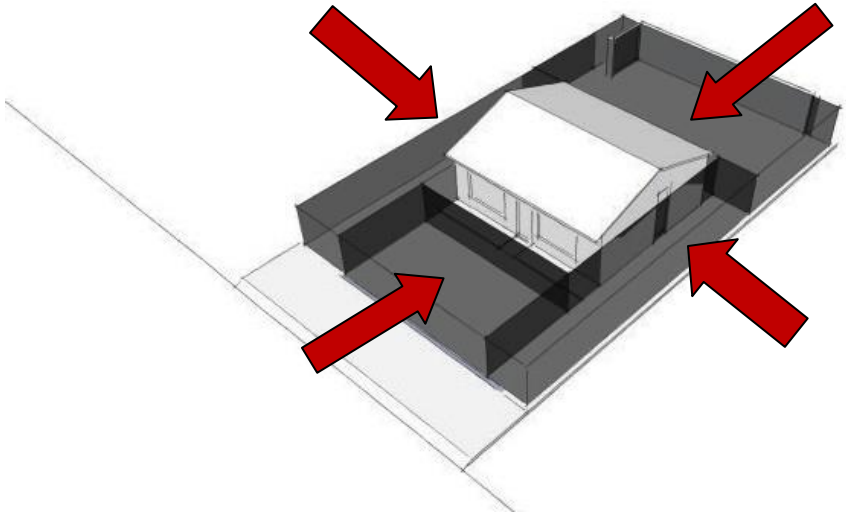
The low wall = PERMEABILITY

The decorative and functional wall = IDENTITY

The commercial wall = ECONOMIC

Dwelling/House

The house is about the attachment of social spaces of which social functions can be attached to and it is about the contrast between indoor living and outdoor living, private and public.

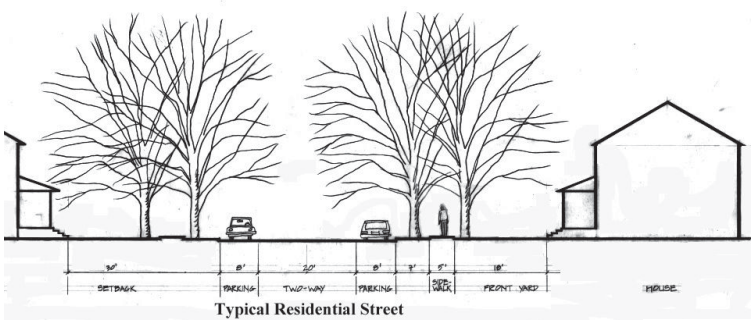




Outdoor living (http//www.Southafrica.net)

3. THE PHYSICAL STREET

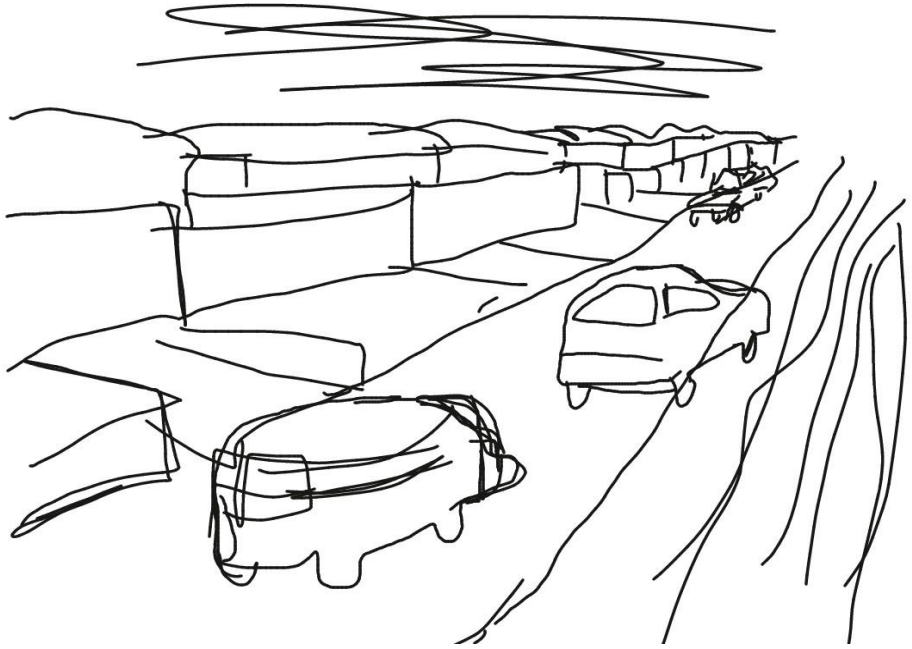
The street in its physical form and function facilitates movement of people and more specifically cars. As a social space the street can be used for different functions and it is transformed by the event or use. In his essay titled “The Spatial Structure of Streets” William C. Ellis quotes from the dictionary meaning of the word street, “a road in a town or village running between two lines of houses; usually including the sidewalks as well as the carriage way. Also the road together with the houses” (1986:115)



Typical Residential Street

Fig. 4

Much more space provided for vehicular movement than pedestrian use



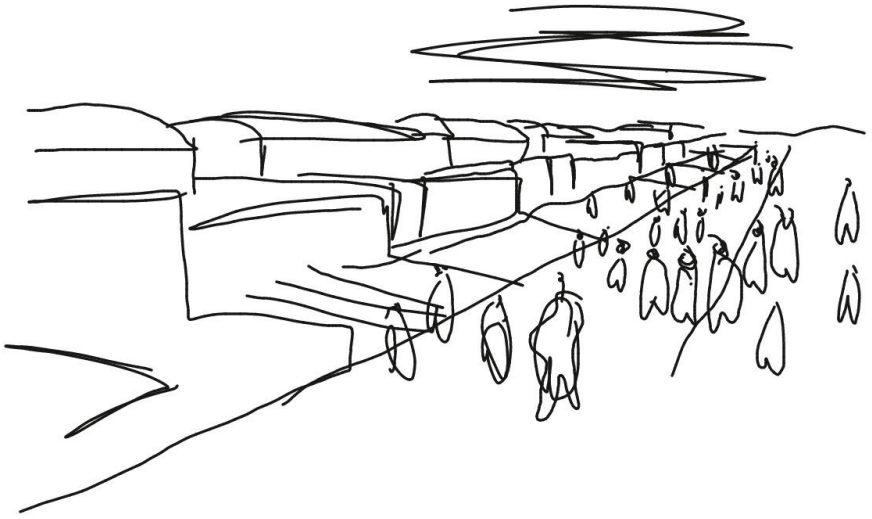
Same street with cars

(http://www2.iath.virginia.edu)

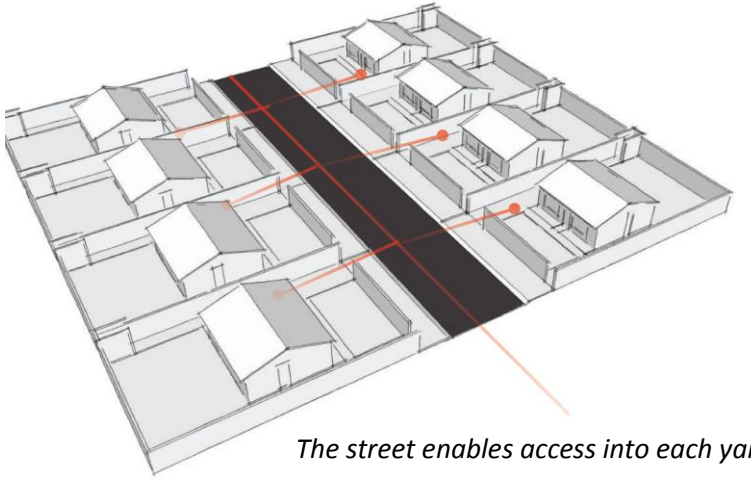


Fig. 5

Street without cars or human activity. (http://www.gauteng.net)



Same street with people and activity



The street enables access into each yard

Michael Southworth and Eran Ben-Joseph (1997:4) indicate that cumulative figures have shown that, worldwide, at least one third of all developed urban land is devoted to roads, parking lots, and other motor vehicle infrastructure. They continue to state that the extensive allocation of land for circulation purposes in residential areas has resulted in the depletion of land and an increase in the economic burden for many with social consequences (1997:6).Therefore the street as is perceived in the physical sense of its primary purpose is not as a liveable space. Beyond its primary function, the street is a meeting place for neighbours and a playground among other uses.

Types of street threshold

The single step threshold offers limited use and little social possibilities, it only facilitates access.



Street edge with single step

In the social sense the street can provide seating where people can gather to socialise.

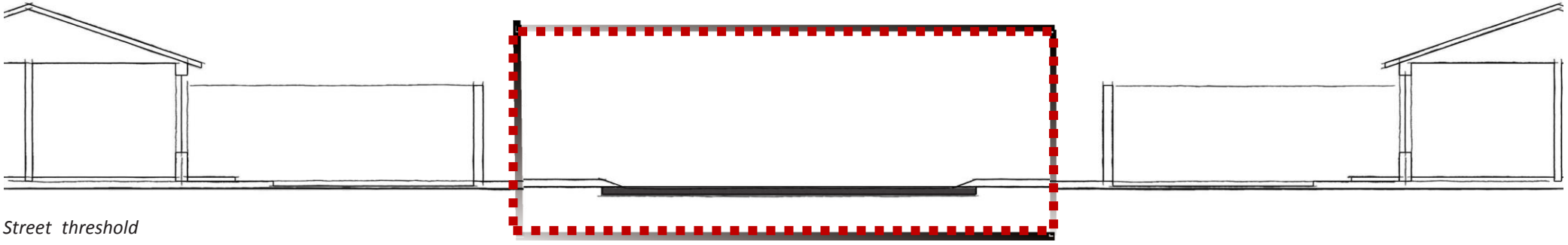


Street edge with more than one step

Socially here the street threshold can provide an exiting play area for children.



Street edge with slope



Street threshold

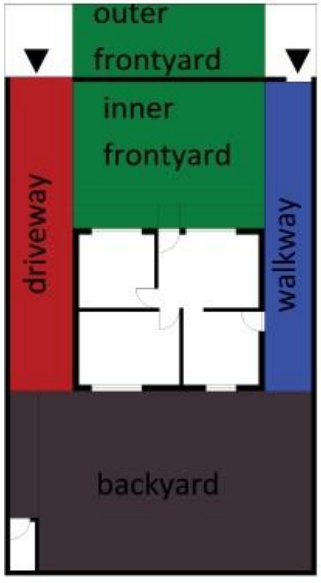
The use and configurations of the township yard

The front yard or garden is used as a space where visitors are received. It functions the foyer of the house. The driveway is basically used as a parking space. The space on the opposite side which is closest to the kitchen is used as an access point to the back of the house and the backyard is used to wash clothes and to dry clothes. So as a yard without any major activities is typical of most yards found in other places in different cultures.

There are a few yard configurations found in the township yard:

The “match box” house

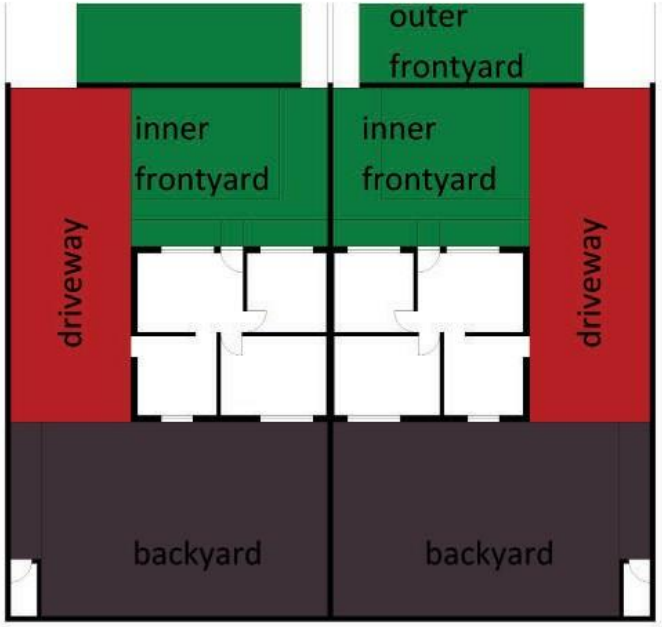
The matchbox house is found in areas like Dobsonville and Mapetla, Soweto. The matchbox house is a four room house, typical of what is termed `apartheid `architecture`. This house sits almost in the center of the site. The front yard is smaller than the back yard and the driveway is wider than the opposite end.





The semi-detached house:

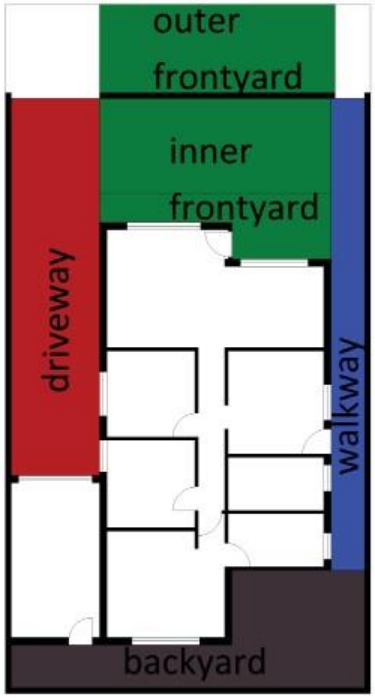
The semi-detached house is found in areas like White City. In this configuration the yard is divided into three spaces: the front yard; the driveway; and the backyard.



The modern three bedroom house:

This house type is found in the township areas like Protea North. There are three types of configurations with this house type where the only difference is the positioning of the garage. In both types the front garden and backyard are almost the same size due to the fact that these houses are bigger than the match-box houses and the semi-detached houses. In the first type the yard is divided into four with a garage sitting at the end of the driveway attached to the house. The second type is the same configuration but the garage sits at the front of the driveway also attached to the house. The third configuration of this type has the garage attached to the front of the

house which creates a square front yard instead of a rectangular one.



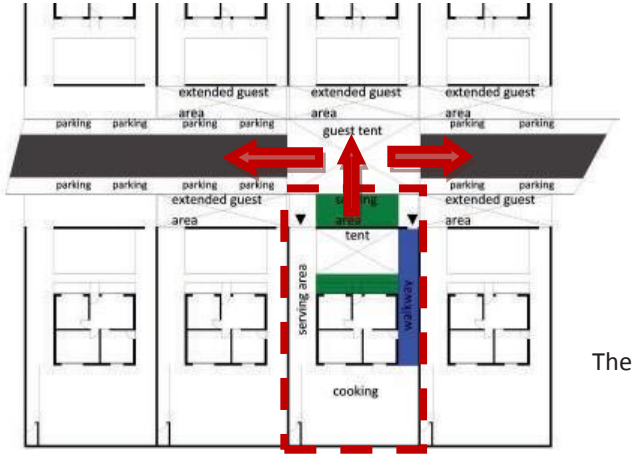
The Social yard (activities` scenarios)

Wedding celebrations:

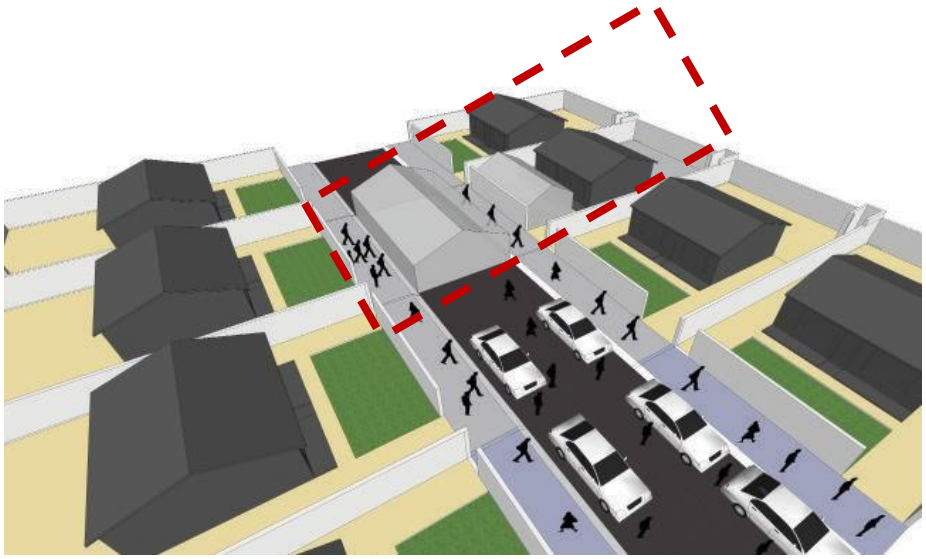
When there is a wedding in Soweto, it is an event which involves the whole community. Surrounding neighbours are invited to the wedding and they share in the celebration. Similar patterns happen when it is a ceremonial event like a funeral. The part of the wedding ceremony which happens at the yard is the part of the celebration which happens after the nuptial ceremony. This is the reception. The reception celebration happens at the home of the bride. This is significant of the fact that the bride is leaving home. A tent will be pitched in the front yard for the bride and groom and family members and special guests. Another tent will be pitched either on the other side of the front yard by the street edge or in the street directly facing the yard. The driveway can also be used as an additional space to house guests or a serving area. The backyard is designated for cooking.

Whenever it is necessary to pitch a tent in the street, arrangements are made before the day of the wedding with the local authorities in order to get permission to do so. Neighbours are informed as well that the street will be closed off. Everyone in the community is well aware that there is a wedding as the wedding procession moves through the street before reaching the yard, and people join the procession from neighbouring houses singing and dancing. It is a community event.

If the yard space is not sufficient to house all the guests, one can ask the adjacent neighbours and the ones across the street to open up their yards in order to accommodate the guests. So not only is the street an overflow space, but the yards of neighbours become overflow spaces. The yards become one shared social space. Because of the social levels, neighbours are able to make social-ends meet by accommodating one another. Your neighbour's yard temporarily becomes your yard easily accessible socially more than physically. The wedding celebration plays itself out as a live theatre for people to enjoy. Celebration can go well into the night.



The overflow system



A wedding celebration overflowing onto the street. (Authors own)



A wedding celebration moving from the yard into the street

(http://www.sowetolive.co.za)

Taking over the street space in celebration (weddings in Soweto)



Fig. 7

(http://www.caparkinson.com)



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

(http://www.africasounds.com)



Fig. 10

(http://www.africasounds.com)

Funeral ceremonies

Funeral ceremonies happen in similar patterns to weddings spatially. After the ceremony has moved from the church and the cemetery, the guests are then invited to the house or home of the deceased. A tent is pitched in the front yard or the street if necessary and the cooking happens at the backyard. Guests usually queue in the street in order to get served. The street is temporarily closed in order for the guests to be accommodated. People will line up against the walls of the neighbouring houses, and neighbours will allow guests to utilize the space in front of their yards to eat, socialize and park their cars. Church services can also be held in the yard.

Birthday celebrations and graduation ceremonies

Birthday celebrations and graduation ceremonies occupy the driveway area and the front yard and the cooking happens at the backyard. These ceremonies are smaller than wedding celebrations and funeral ceremonies so the event seldom needs to overflow to the street of the neighbours` yards. Even though these events are smaller as compared to wedding and funerals they are still very significant and very important in communities in Soweto. These events represent growth not only of the person who`s birthday or graduation it is but also the growth of a community. It also is significant of an education achievement which is seen as something almost unattainable in the township. The whole community comes together in celebration and are part of the celebration. For a younger child`s birthday celebration a jumping castle is hired and placed in the front yard and all the children from the surrounding houses flock to come and have a good time, while the adults overlook on the side lines chatting away.

Playing

Playing takes place in the front yard and drive-way. If the drive way is large enough, the space becomes a mini soccer field and is a protected and controlled playing environment the younger children. The older children utilize the street and take up both lanes. The front yard can be a space which doubles up as a theatre where little children imitate their favourite movie heroes. They argue over which character they would each like to be and they re-enact their favourite scenes from a movie they have just watched.

Living

General living happens outside. Residents of Soweto move outside from the confines of their houses and the front of the yard becomes a living room. They simply grab stools and sit on the stoep or the front lawn. Sometimes this living room moves to the outer front yard on the street edge. This is an opportunity for neighbours to socialize gossip and pass time. This is a space of exchange where conversations happen and stories are shared.

Other uses

The township yard can also be used for commercial purposes. This includes building additional cottage rooms in the backyard area to rent them out, a spaza shop which is a small convenience shop for the basic bread and milk kind of items, a salon or a crèche.

Cottage rooms

Cottage rooms, known as “backrooms” are usually situated at the back of the yard. These rooms are rented out at a price which the owner and tenant agree upon. This concept dates back to the apartheid era where people who lacked houses would ask to build a temporary structure at the back of the yards. In more modern houses with equipped with garages, the garage space would be rented out.

Spaza shops shabeens and salons

Spaza shops occupy the front yard or the garage. The spaza often faces on to the street and the space between the street and the spaza shop becomes a social space. In yards with garages the spaza shop occupies the garage space and the driveway – depending on the nature of the business whether it is a shisanyama etc. - can be used for sitting, braaing of meat or arcade computer games are spread along that space.

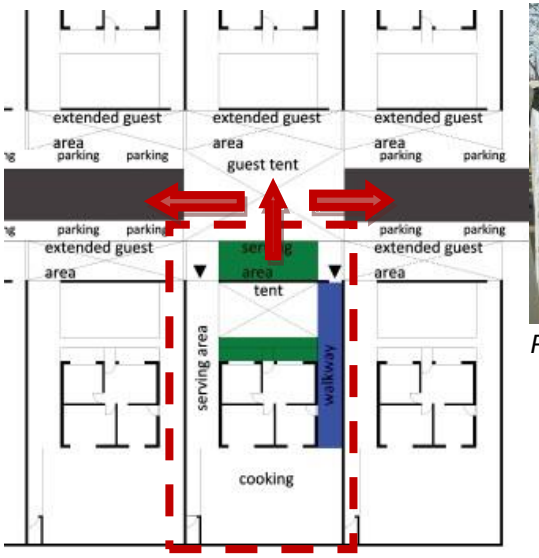
The spaza is a meeting space where people hang out to meet and have conversations. Salons and shabeens also occupy the garage area.

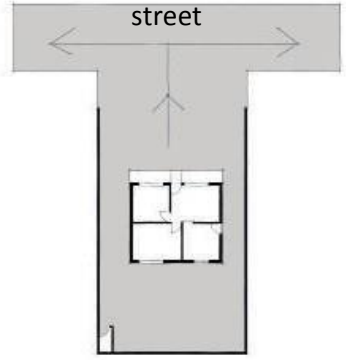
Crèches

Crèches occupy the garage area and the house can also function as an additional day care centre. Both the front yard and driveway becomes a playground.

Spatial analysis

Funeral ceremony







Funeral procession in the yard

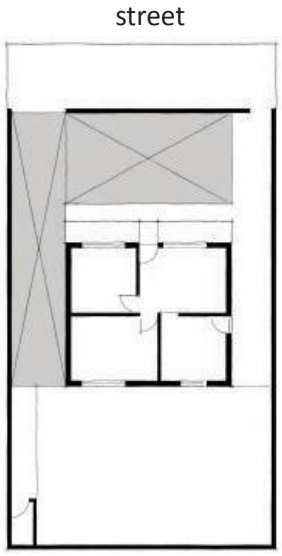
(http://www.enca.com)



Tent pitched in the yard

(http://www.enca.com)

Birthday parties and graduation ceremonies

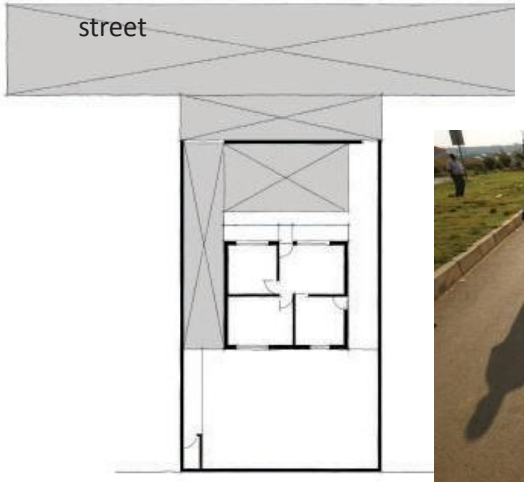




Birthday party

(http://www.jeanetteversters.com)

Playing

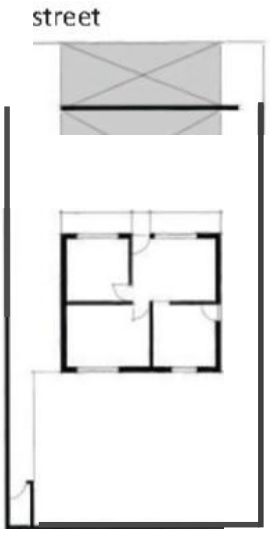




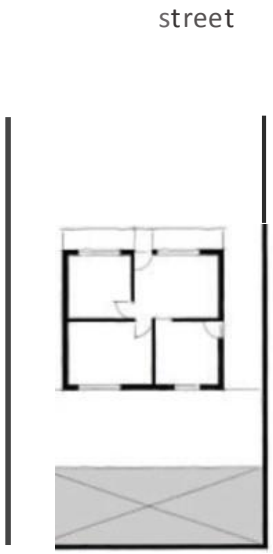
Children playing in the street

(http://www.jeanetteversters.com)

living



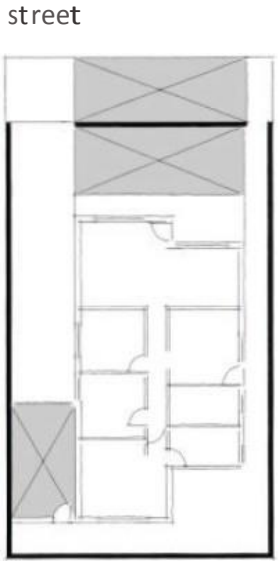
Back rooms





Backroom
(http://soweto.olx.co.za)

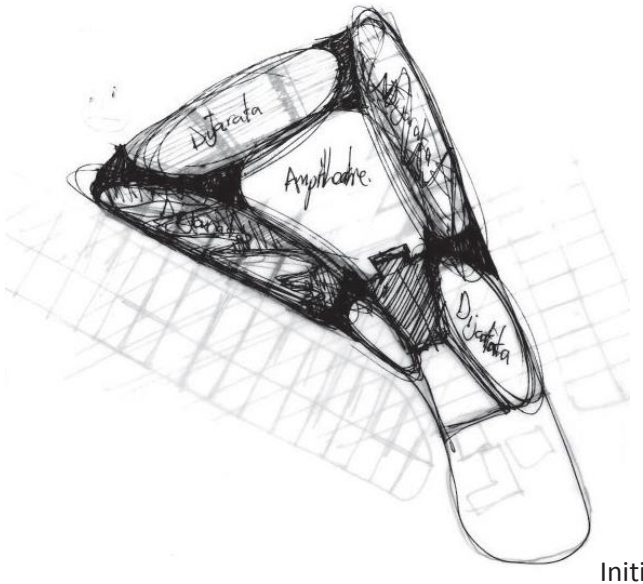
Retail (spaza shop)



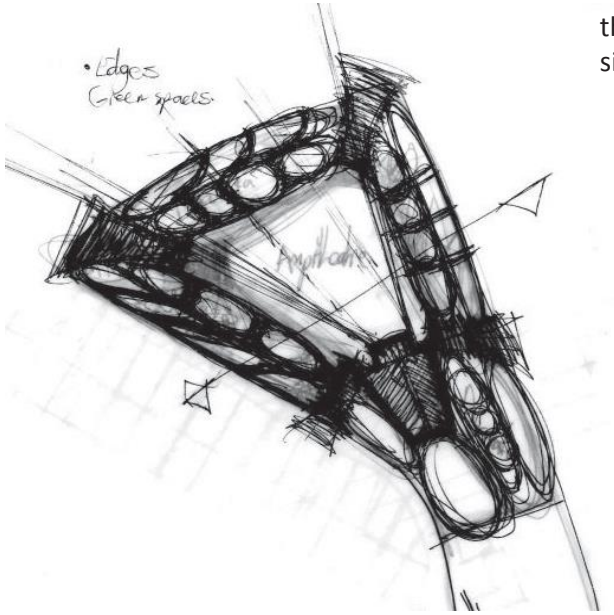


Spaza shop attached to the front yard
(Bieber (2010) Soweto)

Conceptual idea of how the concept of the yard can fit on the site

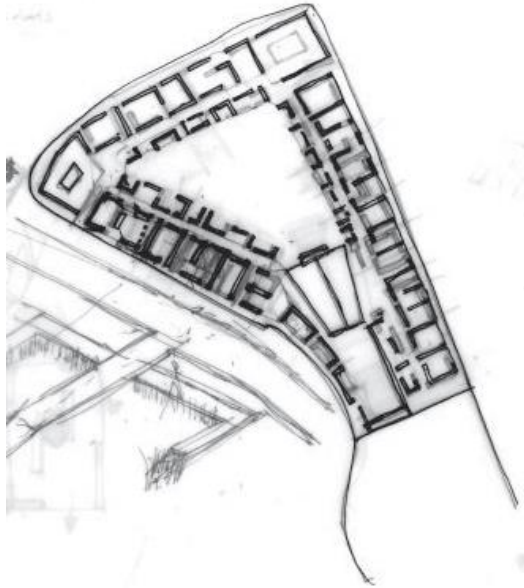


Initial concept was to organise the yards around the edge of the site.





Placing the yards around some sort of a grid pattern.



Giving the yards a loose feel making the edge to allow for circulation to filter through into.

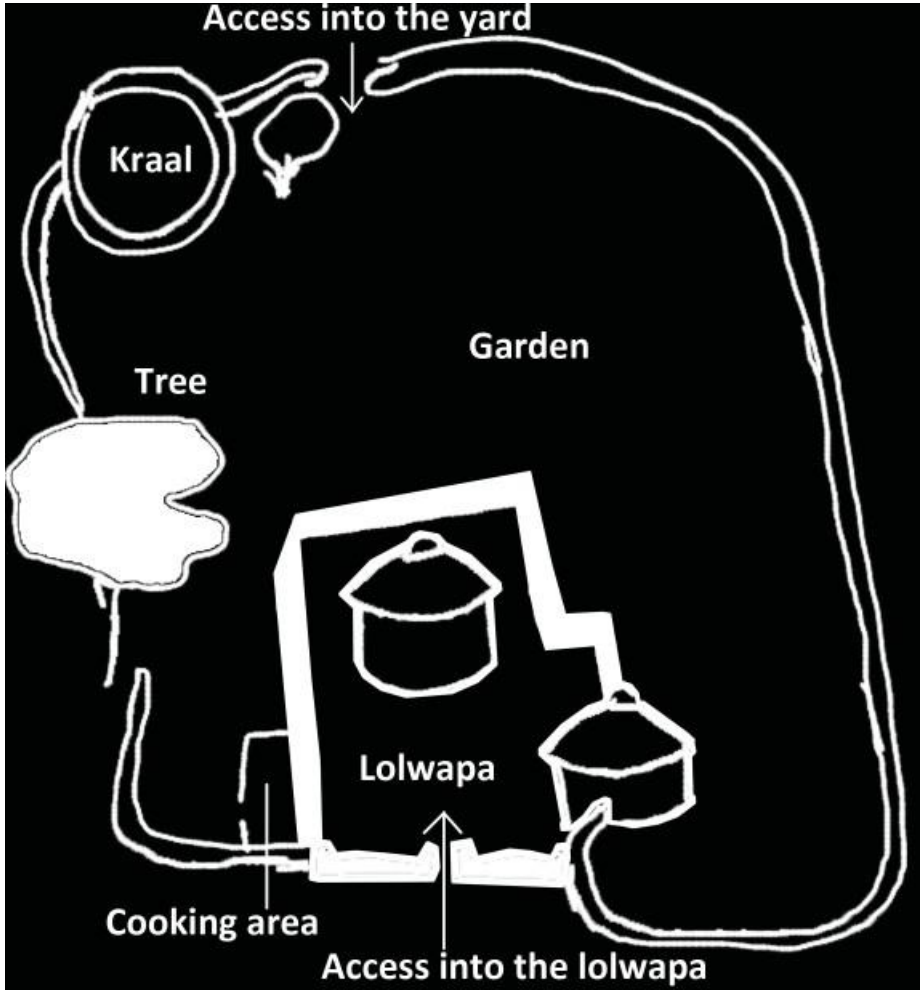
Similar social patterns and spatial use between Lolwapa and the Jarata

The Soweto township yard has similar social patterns and spatial uses to that of the lolwapa. The lolwapa is found in the Setswana vernacular culture. A typical Setswana dwelling consists of three components: the dwelling- which functions as a sleeping area and storage space; the inner court; and the greater yard which surrounds the entire dwelling. The inner court is called the `lolwapa` in Setswana and it is where the social activities take place. This is the area immediately outside of the dwelling. Anita Larsson states that the `lolwapa` consists of a mud floor and low lying walls which surround the area (1984:55). Larsson further states that the entire yard is considered as the `lolwapa` but is split according to its particular functions (1984:55). The inner court or `lolwapa` is the living room of the dwelling. It is where most of the activities happen, where children play and where visitors are received. It is a shared social space. It is also a practical space which functions both in the warm and cold seasons. Larsson states that the space also functions as a space where ceremonial events such as weddings and funerals happen (1984:57).

The `lolwapa` is a space where people can sit around the fire and share stories. During the day the grown-ups sit together and share stories while the children play and at night the space becomes a theatre for storytelling. Usually the children would gather around the fire in the `lolwapa` and the eldest mother – being the grandmother- would share African tales to much of the children's delight. The outer Yard is cleared of all bushes and grass and only big trees are left to provide shade where people can sit down to talk with neighbours, to eat or just rest during the middle of the day.

The space around the tree encourages informal interactions and conversations where neighbours share stories with each other. Once a person sits under a tree, soon a fellow neighbour joins that person. A passer-by spots the two neighbours and joins them and the pattern continues in that way. The` lolwapa` is a concept of an African theatre where the audience is the performer and the performer is the audience. It is a space where knowledge is exchanged.

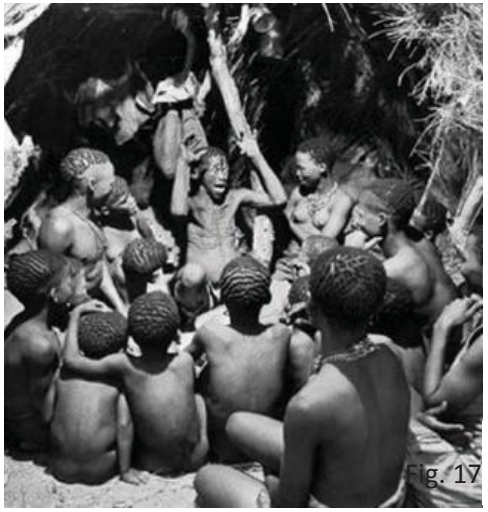
Each `lolwapa` serves as a public space shared by the members of the community. Each dwelling links the spaces together and brings the community together.



The lolwapa



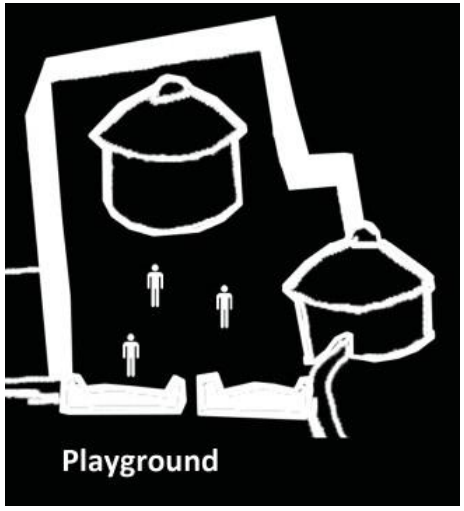



Fig. 17

Storytelling

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)





The Lolwapa is transformed by the specific social event which takes place in it.


Fig 18

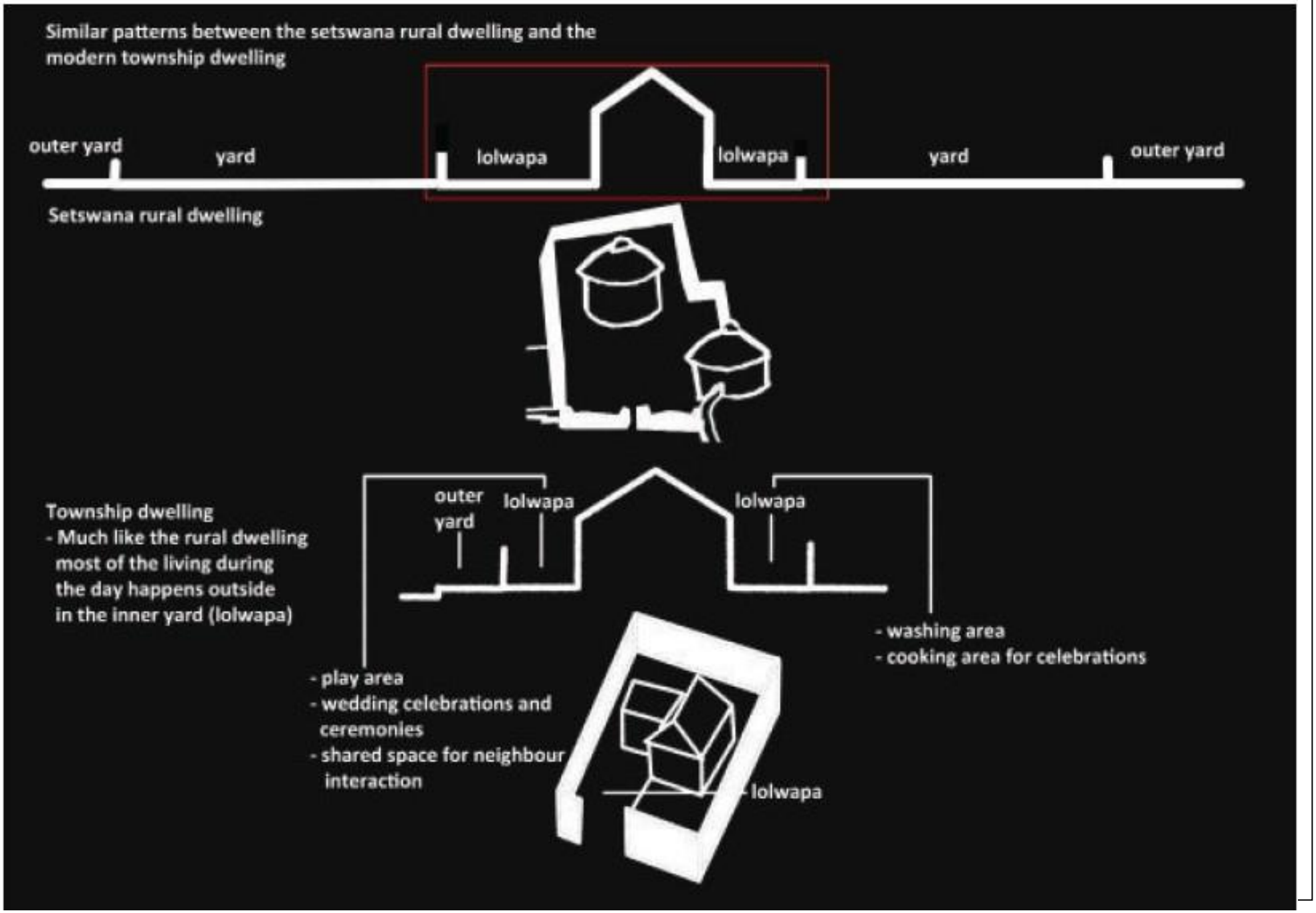
Living

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)


Fig. 19

Wedding celebration

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)



Comparing the 'jarata' to the 'lolwapa'

A Lela village in Ghana

This example caught my eye because it shows the arrangement of the central space as a loose space boarded by an edge in the form of individual dwellings sitting next to each other. The edge appears hard and the centre appears soft. The circulation is fluid while the edge is much more controlled. The spaces here are arranged according to social patterns of private and shared spaces.

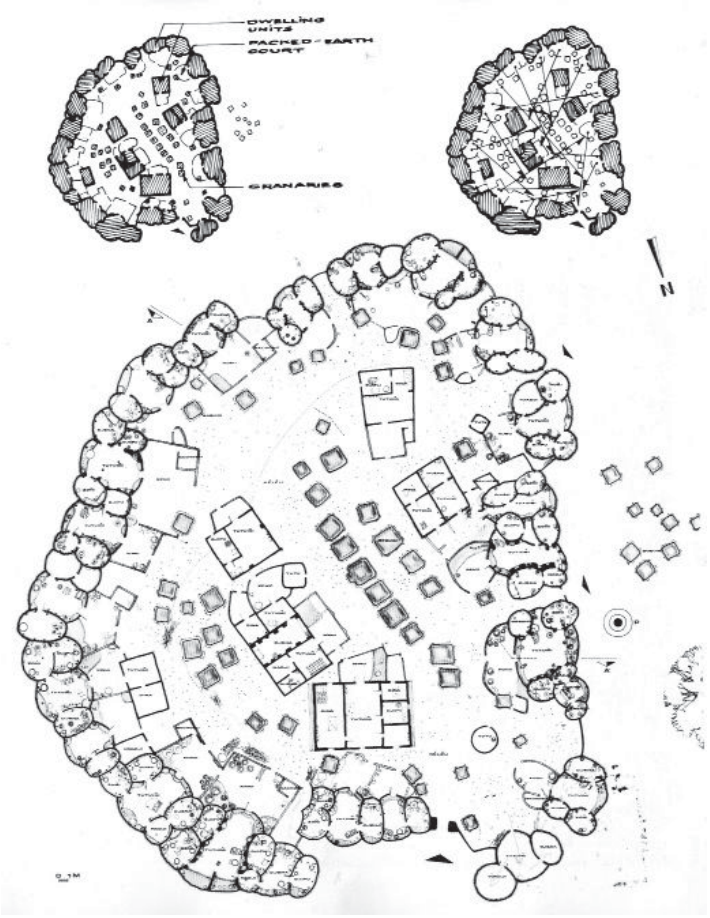


Fig. 22

(Bourdier, at al (1985) African spaces:design for living in upper volta)

Nuna village in Ghana - A semi dispersed Settlement

In this example the dwelling are scattered and clustered in groups forming courtyards as these pockets of shared spaces. It is in these spaces where the circulation happens.

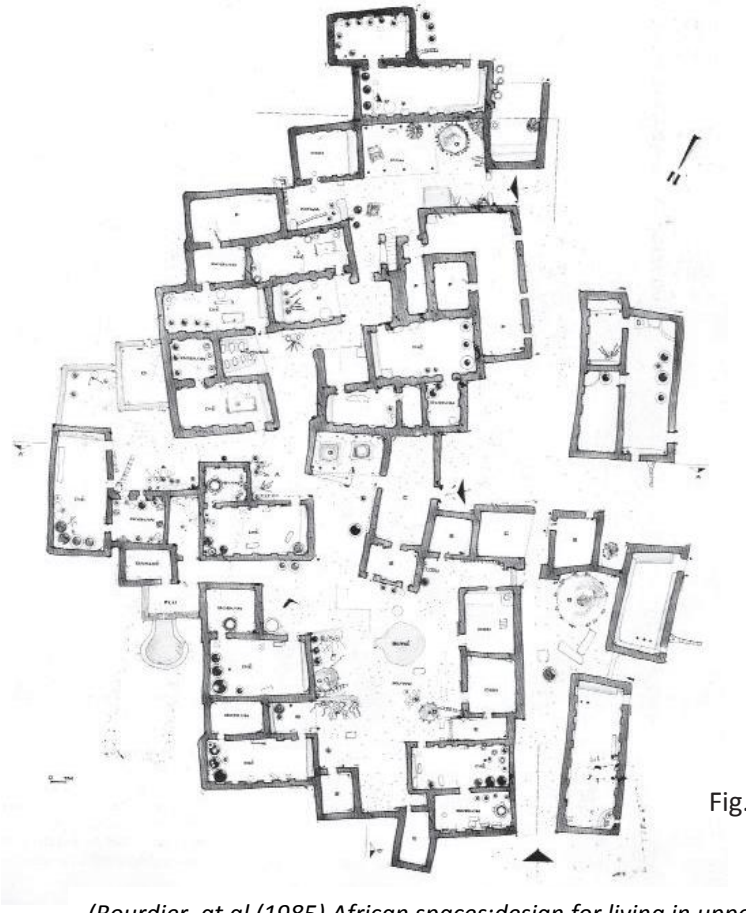
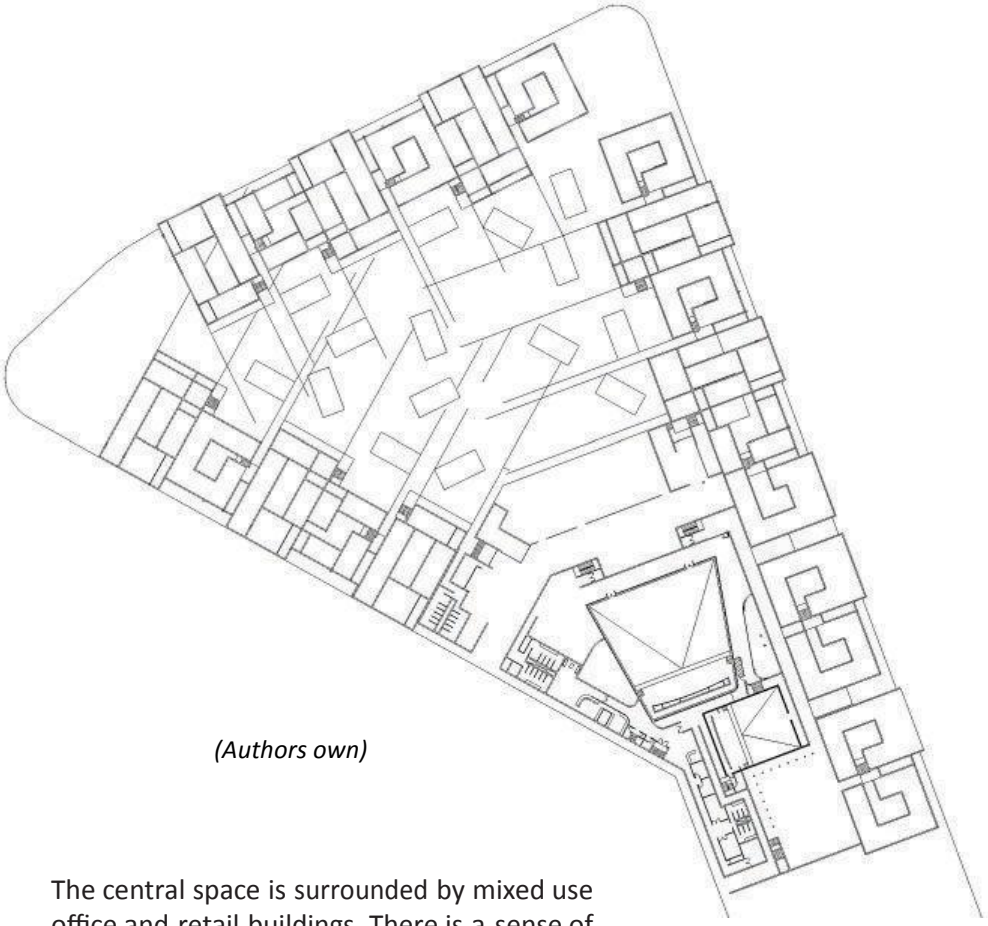


Fig. 23

(Bourdier, at al (1985) African spaces:design for living in upper volta)



(Authors own)

The central space is surrounded by mixed use office and retail buildings. There is a sense of dispersal and looseness in the centre.



Conceptual sketch

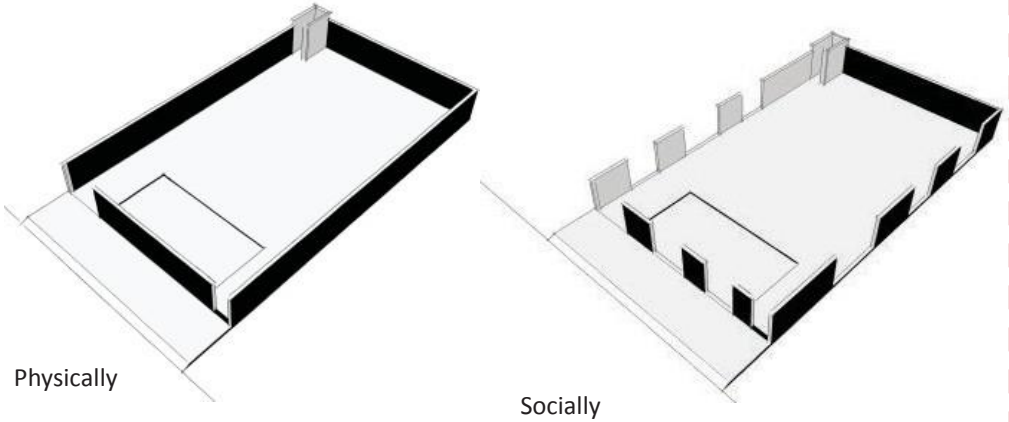
The Social Yard

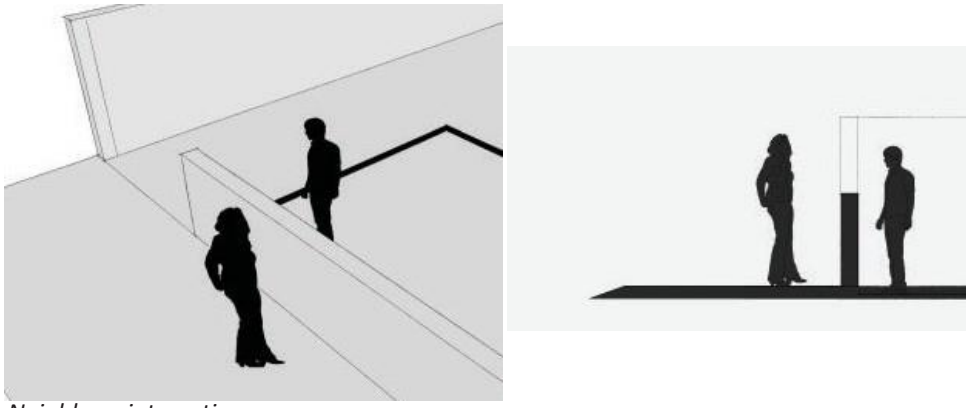
In terms of the space of the yard, the yard has the physical element and the social element. The physical element is the space demarcated by boundaries. The social element describes the place of which the architectural elements are the social elements and activities which happen in the yard. It is place versus space. The physical elements of the yard make the architecture of place and the people make the architecture of the social space.

Jarata = physical space
Jarateng = social space

1. Wall (socially permeable)

The physical wall separates the inside from the outside as expressed earlier but socially the wall is a permeable element which connects neighbours. The spaces around the wall are where conversations happen between neighbours and because of this social interaction the wall becomes permeable and ultimately invisible.





Neighbour interaction

Architectural translation of permeability in larger urban Buildings

1. Foro Bario housing, Lelli and Associati Architettura

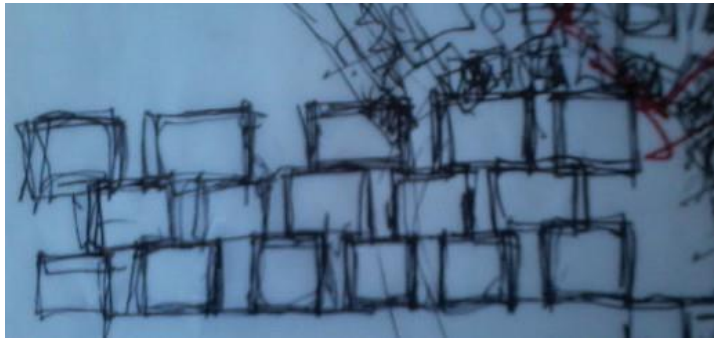


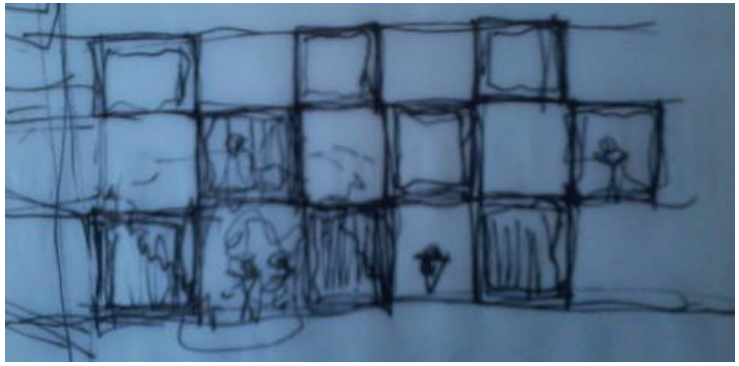
(http://www.archello.com/en/project/foro-boaria-housing)



Fig. 25

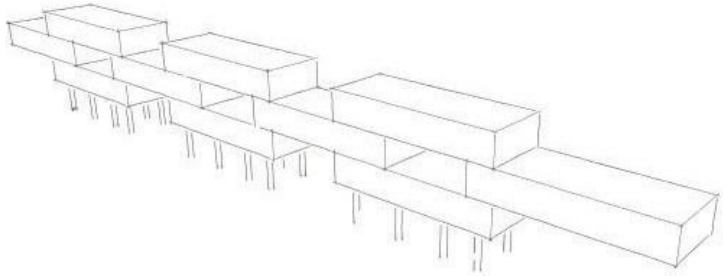
(http://www.archello.com/en/project/foro-boaria-housing)



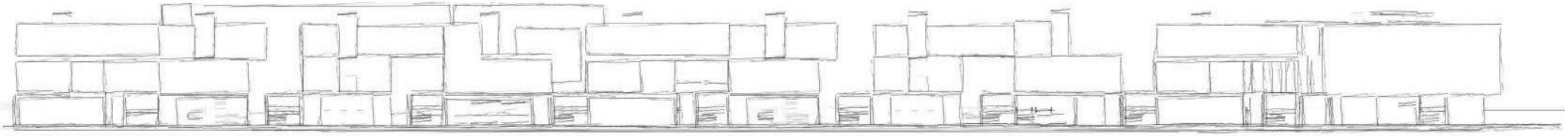


In my own design having an idea of stacking buildings one on top of the other with gaps in between.

[Own design]



[Own design]



conceptual drawing of elevation

Conceptualizing around the idea of a permeable facade

2. Mikola adamus quarter cultural centre for Gdansk



Fig. 26

http://www.archdaily.com



Fig. 27

http://www.archdaily.com

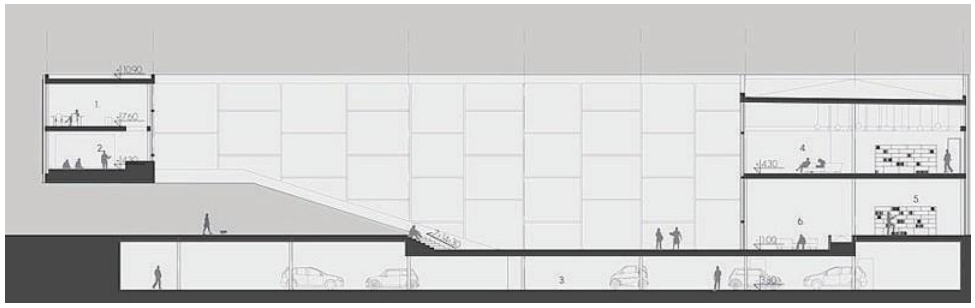
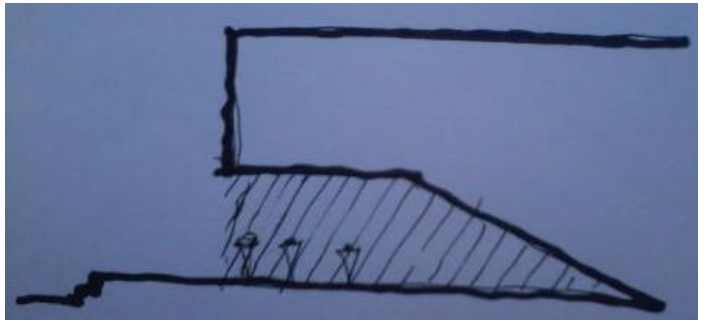
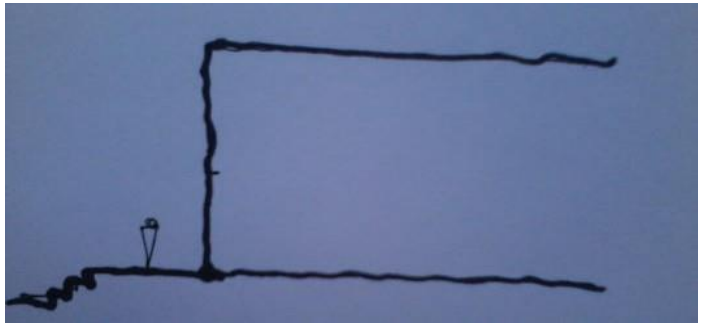


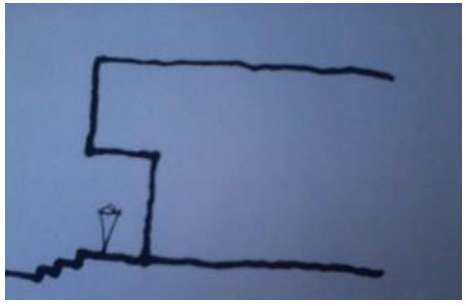
Fig. 28



Cantilever frees up the bottom creates a softer edge and usable space



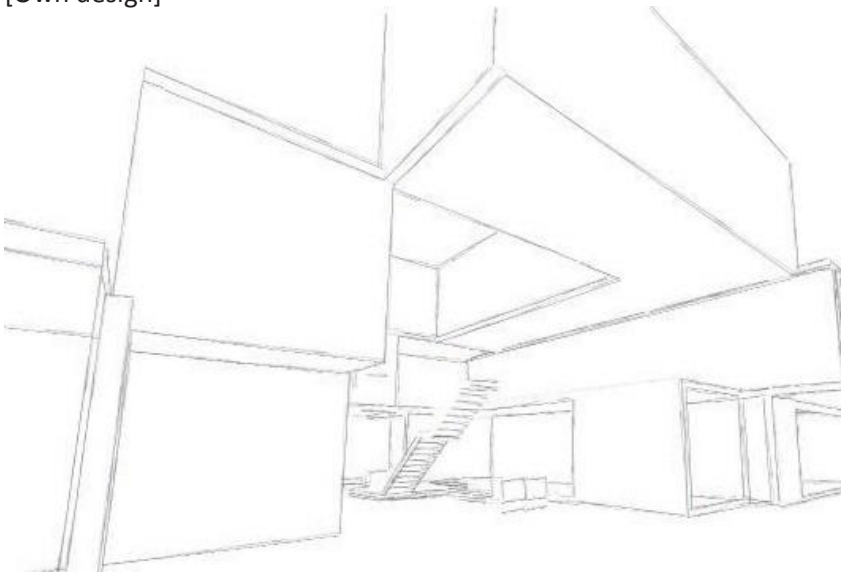
As compared to a harsh edge creating a hard edge



[Own design]

Implementing a cantilever in my own design to create a canopy which defines a walkway.

[Own design]



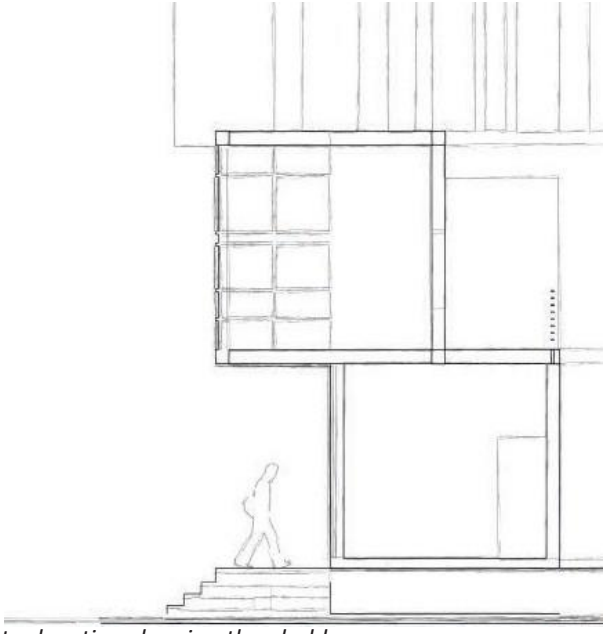
Conceptual perspective of permeability - opening up a section of the building from the bottom thereby increasing the volume of the space underneath.

[Own design]



Conceptual plan - permeability allows for free flow of movement through the building

[Own design]



Conceptual section showing threshold.

2. The street space



Fig 29

The street as a space for play
(http://www.jeanetteversters.com)

The street is an overflow space. It is where most of the social events which happen in the yard overflow to. So the street and its relation to the jarata becomes very important. The street transforms into a soccer field or a cricket pitch. Games are temporarily paused whenever a person or a car passes by and there after the game continues.

The Use of streets

Anne Vernez-Moudon and Pierre Laconte state "for any setting, the activities which occur in it are a function of culture, primarily of a set of rules which are part of the culture in question. These not only define a setting itself, but also define both the repertoire of activities available to members of that culture and that subset of activities appropriate in specific settings" (1983:4)

The use of the street in a particular context depends of its social and cultural context. The social patterns and cultures which exist in a particular context has an impact on

how the people who live in that particular context perceive the street. For example in the suburbs the street is perceived as a space for vehicles and a space which separates one row of houses from another. In the townships where spaces are denser, the street is perceived as an additional social space that is more for human use as opposed to vehicular use. The street space in the townships is a common area which functions as a shared space rather than a separator. Factors which have led to the street to be perceived as a social space for various activities are a lack of public spaces with public amenities for residents in the townships. In cases where these spaces existed, the quality of those spaces never quite matched that of the street.

The use of Streets is influenced by the attitudes that the residents of a particular context have to sociability or reserve. If residents are sociable with their neighbours then it has an influence on how they will utilise the spaces around them. Similarly this would reflect on residents who are reserved. Vernez states that in settings where reserve and anonymity are the accepted norms then the spaces which encourage sociability will be seen as inhibiting (1983:5). Vernez further states that in settings where sociability is accepted, those settings which are appropriate will further influence which activities occur in the street (1983:5). In the townships of Soweto sociability is an accepted and highly embraced aspect of community life. Sociability has to do with the sharing of spaces and therefore this has an influence on the activities which happen in the streets. Not only is the street a physical extension of the yard but it is also a social connector.

"At first, the street seems to provide a setting for a bewildering variety of activities and, as a result, there is an extraordinary variety of sounds, smells, sight, etc. Activities are extraordinarily varied and are found intermingled at an extraordinary fine grain and in close juxtaposition. The streets are full of people, a great variety of people in a variety of costumes, not only walking and riding but standing, sitting, squatting, and lying down; sleeping, cooking, eating, getting their hair cut or getting shaved; doing laundry, working, playing, chanting, arguing, bargaining - even praying" (Vernez, at al:1983).



Street life at night in Soweto *(Bieber (2010) Soweto)*

Vernez states that it is culture which structures behaviour and helps explain the use or non-use of streets and other urban spaces (1983:7). Vernez elaborates by stating that the use of streets therefore is primarily culturally based since physical environments do not determine behaviour (1983:7). The physical environments are the physical spaces and the cultural environments are the social spaces which occur in the physical environment. Physical environments are supportive of the social spaces - the events. The physical environments are liberated by the social spaces. Venez states that physical settings facilitate the social spaces but do not or should not inhibit them.

Standford Anderson states that "streets have a way of enriching our individual activities and our collective conception of the urban surroundings we share" (1986:115). The potential of streets to enrich in this way depends on people`s perception of the street space and their understanding or expression of shared space. Streets need social activities for it to be perceived as a social space.



Fig 31

A festive street *(http:www.whitehat.com.au)*



Fig. 32

A market in the middle of the street
(http:www.whitehat.com.au)

Ellis states that the street can act as an exterior room in an urban space (1986:117). He goes on to state that streets function as paces as well as links; they incorporate various social and operational activities into an integrated and somewhat unspecified mix (1986:117). The street and the yard space are both generated by buildings. The buildings merely frame these exterior spaces - which are often linked- and mark their spatial limits. But it is the variety of activities which can happen both in the street and yard space or public space which have no limits.

"One of the most intriguing design innovations of the last twenty years has been the shared street or integration concept for residential streets. That the street is properly a physical and social part of the living environment, and is used simultaneously for vehicular movement, social contact, and civic activities, has long been argued by many authors" (Southworth at al, 1997:109). Certainly vehicular access is needed but designers should find ways to make the street more socially accommodating. Southworth and Ben-Joseph (1997:109) indicate that in countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, England Israel, the integration of traffic and residential activity in the same space is a concept that stimulated new design thinking and configurations that increase social interaction and safety on the street and promote pedestrian movement.

The underlying concept of the shared street is overflow which leads to integration, with an emphasis on each resident and the community as a whole.



(http://www.tedchang.free.fr)

Girling describes the street space as a place to walk, a social space and a primary open space for recreation (1994:34). Girling goes on to state that a street is a space of identification; it is where you live. Street spaces in the township have their own identity. Either the street is described by a certain house which stands out in a particular street, or a popular spaza shop or just the business of that street. There is always movement in the township streets with a variety of activities happening simultaneously.

“Streets are public thoroughfares, yet they are also possessed by those who live alongside them. They form the primary web that physically structures and binds the community” (Girling at al, 1994:34).

Street life in the township is driven by people wanting to spend most of their time outdoors and wanting to interact with their neighbours. Girling states that the most common street activities are informal interactions and conversations along the sidewalk (1994:36). Street activities can range from these kinds of subtle social spaces to more festive activities. Girling expresses that some streets are more spirited than others, as their residents organise more formal events with annual or seasonal block parties (1994:36). Girling goes on to state that municipalities grant permits for temporary street closure, allowing the roadbed to become a large community patio for tables, food, music, and dancing (1994:36) Some of these activities are not as fixed like wed- dings but can still be accommodated in the street space because the street much like the yard is a loose space.

In the past due to many years of a lack of parks and recreational facilities in the Township areas of Soweto, children played in the street. In some instances they had to contest with vehicles and in other instances with pedestrians. “The street has stubbornly remained a place where games are played, with rules modified to fit the social and physical circumstances” (Girling at al, 1994:36). Therefore residents are able to adapt to their physical spaces and modify the rules in order to accommodate their social need.



Fig. 33

The street as a performance space *(Http://www.scene4.com)*



Fig 34

Salvador, Brazil.
(http://www.wanderingtrader.com)



Wedding celebration in the street

(http://www.sowetogospelfans.com)



(http:// www.greenfudge.org *The street for living*



A street festival in India
(http://en.wikipedia.com)



Fig. 38

Herald Square in New York from a space for cars to a space for people (Gehl Architects (2010) Our cities ourselves)

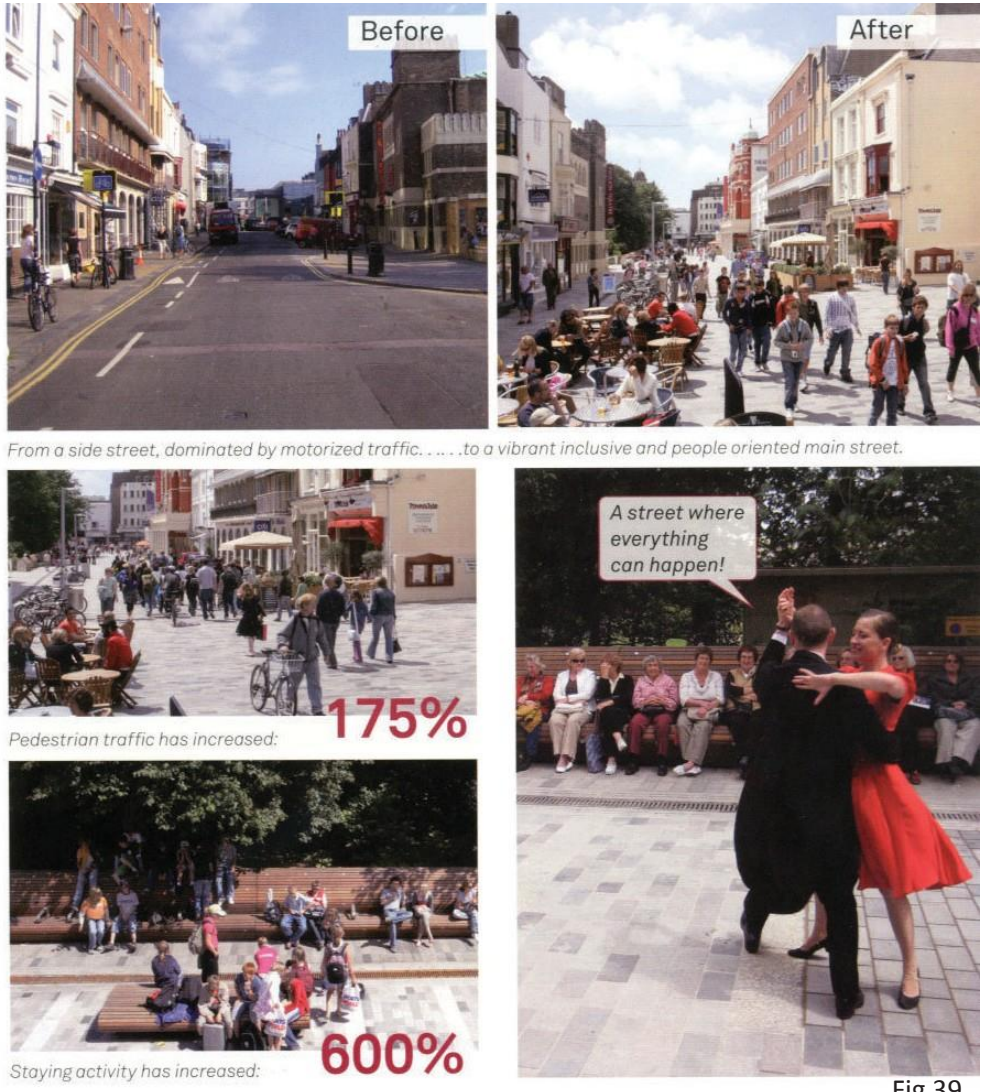


Fig 39

New Road, Brghton, UK (Gehl Architects (2010) Our cities ourselves)

3. The Park- The big yard (community)

Not only is the park a common place but it represents the community. The park is usually central surrounded by residential. Much like the yard, the parks relation to the street is fundamental. The transition and graduation from the street to the park is important.

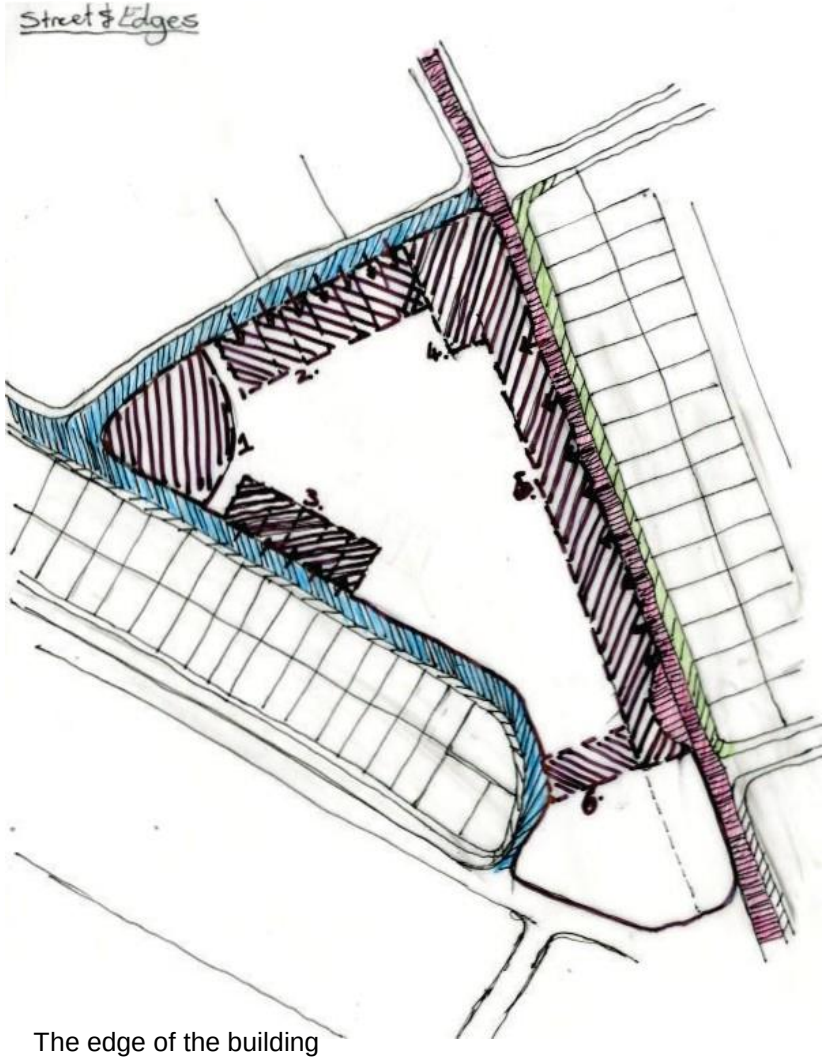
“The public park, a product of the nineteenth-century urbanization and industrialization, was intended as a piece of country in the city. The park was to act as a palliative space to the urban landscape: soothing, healing, and allowing breathing space in the crowded, growing metropolis - thus parks were known as ‘green lungs’ “(Girling at al, 1994:40).

Girling states that the role of parks were physical and social, built on an expectation of improving the environment, social conditions and the human spirit (1994:40). Girling continues to state that parks represented a social ideal of public open space as a meeting ground for persons of different social classes (1994:40). The park as a single common space is a vast and large space. It can be viewed as the bigger version of the yard. Parks present an opportunity for large community events, large scale recreational activities and a variety of these activities as well and civic celebrations. a number of a variety of events can happen simultaneously. The park has the characteristics of a yard with a vast space as its advantage. Both the yard and the park share similar social patterns and are connected as spaces as one space compliments the other.

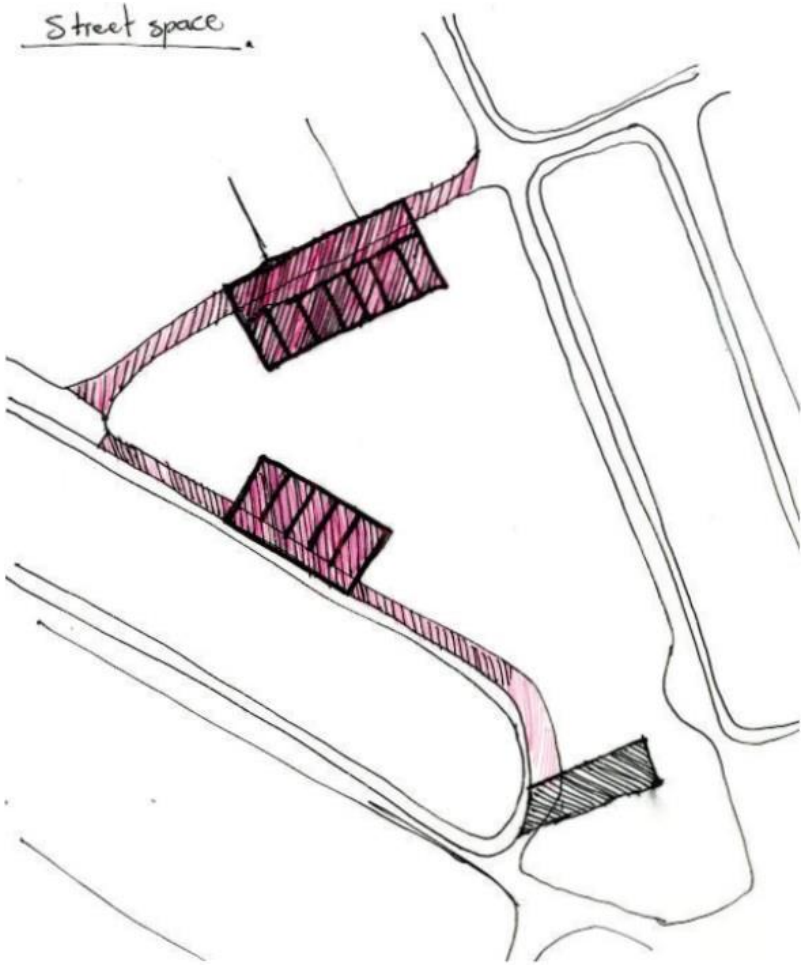
The park is not only a response to the confined township space but it is also a common area which enhances community life. It is a non-teritorial space. Girling states that parks can act more than integrated systems of green spaces; they can also function as frameworks for community development.

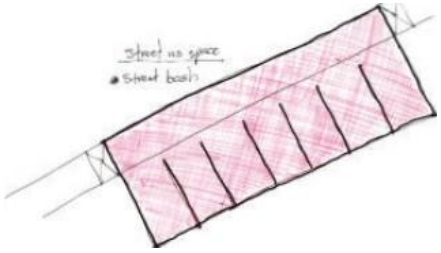
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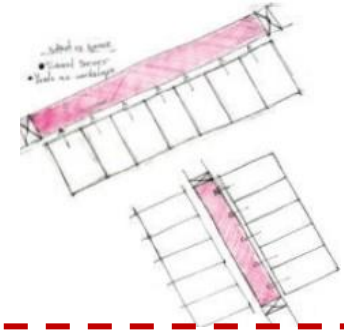
Interpreting the potential of the relationship of the yard and the street in terms of function on the site



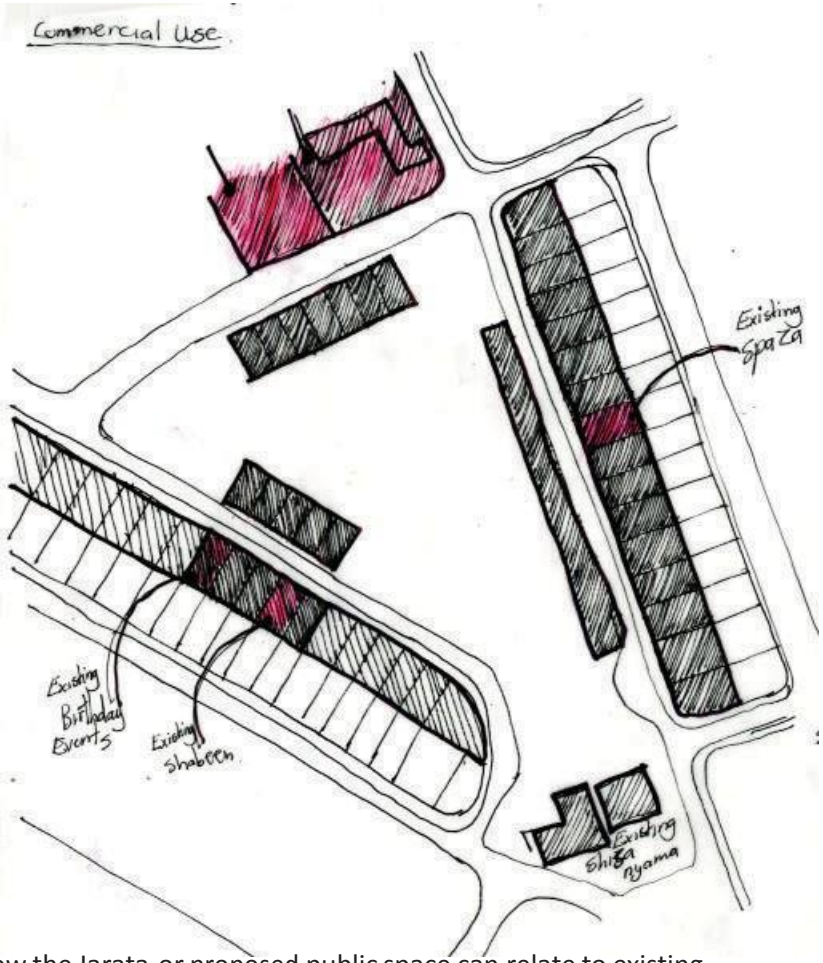
The edge of the building and street feeding off each other



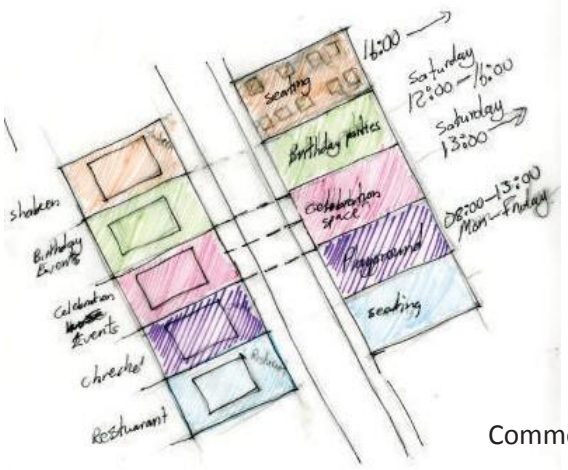




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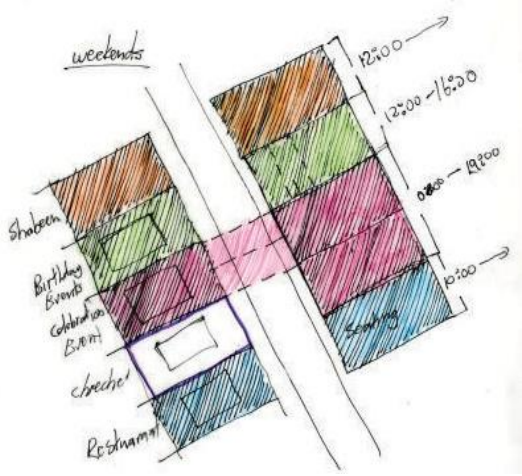


How the Jarata or proposed public space can relate to existing buildings



Commercial opportunity

The relationship between the existing residential yards and the public space and how they can feed off each other from a commercial aspect.



Conclusion

The Yard or Public space cannot have a rich character without the street space. If the yard does not interact with the street then it becomes exclusive and not inclusive. Whenever a public space is designed, the street must be taken into consideration because not only does the street mark the threshold separating the inside and the outside and not only is it the point of entry into a public space, but it is also the extension of that space.

In residential areas the inhabitants of those areas can really take advantage of their streets as most are not as busy as the inner city streets. This is evident in the streets of Soweto. A celebration or ceremony can cause a whole street to close. Children playing in the street can also take up part of it and the street space transforms into a different kind of atmosphere.

Yard spaces have the ability to connect a community. It takes simple customary gestures to foster a sense of public living. These gestures can be a simple greeting between neighbours or borrowing and sharing across fences and walls.