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Urban continuum: a third typology in Fordsburg

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ORIENTAL PLAZA

01

INTRODUCTION

ISSUE

The thesis is interested in the complexity of the overlayed urban fabric of the city and in unpacking of some of the major factors that have shaped its forms and spaces, and ultimately the lives of those who inhabit them.

Due to the prevalent political ideologies of the last century urban communities in South Africa have often been uprooted and, sometimes, consolidated through the politicisation of space and the built environment. The post-94 era of democracy has seen great political transformations, coining the term of “a new South Africa.” The unity of the meta-narrative has become contested by a multiplicity of narratives and constitutional ideals of democracy, justice, and equality both have direct implications on the built environment. The thesis is concerned with reflecting these values and those of the relevant communities through the quality and coherence of collective spaces and institutions, and the public realm.

Urbanity and the said socio-political forces are, significantly, understood in the thesis through what Christian de Portzamparc’s has termed as “La Troisieme Ville” or “The Third City” (KRIGE 2002: 29). In his view the first city is pre-modernist and traditional, with terraces and blocks, streets and squares. The second is the modernist city adopted widely by early-modernist architects. ‘The Third City’ however is not polarized or reactive. It is between the first and second city and combines the victories of both, forming a hybrid city. It monopolizes the meaningful public realm of streets and boulevards of the traditional model, yet has all the abundance of fresh air and light of the modernist one. It is non-ideological and is set apart from both traditionalism and modernism. This ‘Neo-Traditional’ movement concerns the functional and sustainable restoration of communities. (Arnot: 2007)

In light of the above concerns the objective of the thesis is the facilitation of urban continuum.

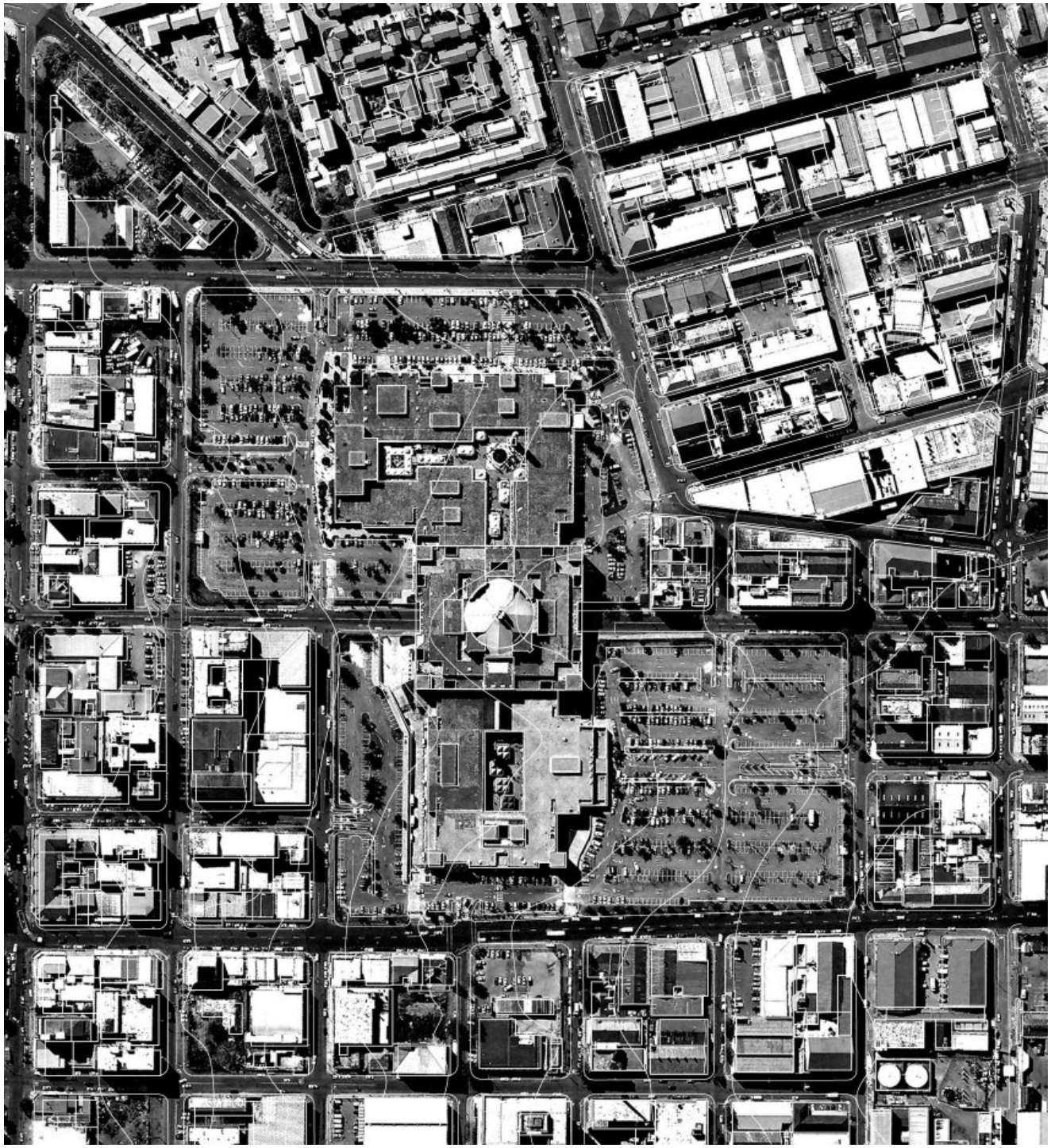


Fig 1.1 Fordsburg and the Oriental Plaza aerial photo
(After City of Johannesburg GIS)


PLAZA
PLAZA

SITE

Few of the early urban communities are still extant in South African cities today. Identity and community life, often the result of specific cultural forces, that manifest themselves into positive urban environments are often distinct features of such communities. Fordsburg, one of the oldest urban residential areas in Johannesburg and one with rich cultural identity, was selected in order to facilitate the investigation of this issue.

The Oriental Plaza Shopping Centre in Fordsburg has been selected as the site of intervention for several significant reasons. The Plaza today represents one of the few democratic shopping centres in Johannesburg, being owned by its tenants who collectively decide its future.

The popularity of the Plaza is another factor as it attracts one million shoppers a month, a quarter of whom are estimated to come from the rest of Africa (Pather 2004), the remainder are a mixture of local residents and clientèle from broader suburban areas. The Plaza has also become synonymous with bargains, especially in the textile and fashion sector. As a result it is very much a destination point for visitors from greater Johannesburg, becoming the only means that many people engage with the city. The Plaza has retained its popularity since its positive turnaround in the late 1980's.

Fig1.2 West Entrance to the Oriental Plaza

An average of 700 000 shoppers visit the Plaza every month. It is described as one of the most cosmopolitan retail centres in the country as it draws shoppers across many socio-economic divides.

The customer base of the Plaza is a significant factor that motivated the site selection as it extends beyond Johannesburg and Gauteng, since approximately a quarter of shoppers are from other southern African countries. The Oriental Plaza owes much of its success to the variety and speciality of goods available in its over 360 shops. Another contributing factor is the location of the Plaza close to the CBD and to other complimentary wholesale and retail activities in the surrounding areas of Fordsburg, Mayfair and Newtown. The management of the Plaza also attribute the safety of the centre, through their continued investment of security into the centre, as part of its success. (Davie: 2002)

The historical forces which shaped the character and identity of Fordsburg similarly shaped those of the Oriental Plaza shopping mall within it. The Plaza symbolically represents the changes that have taken place in Fordsburg over the past several decades –in the socio-political forces, between new & traditional typologies, between established residients and the new immigrant community, and in the

grain of the urban fabric. The socio-economic dynamics of the Plaza have undergone significant changes following South Africa's transition into a democratic country, yet the physicality of the Plaza has failed to adapt to these changes. As an architectural piece whose history is directly drawn from the Apartheid regime this thesis proposes an interface which can reflect the positive transformation that it has undergone.

Together with the above factors one of the key opportunities of the Plaza is its location, embedded in the city fabric, but on the edges of Fordsburg. Topically the site offers several significant opportunities.

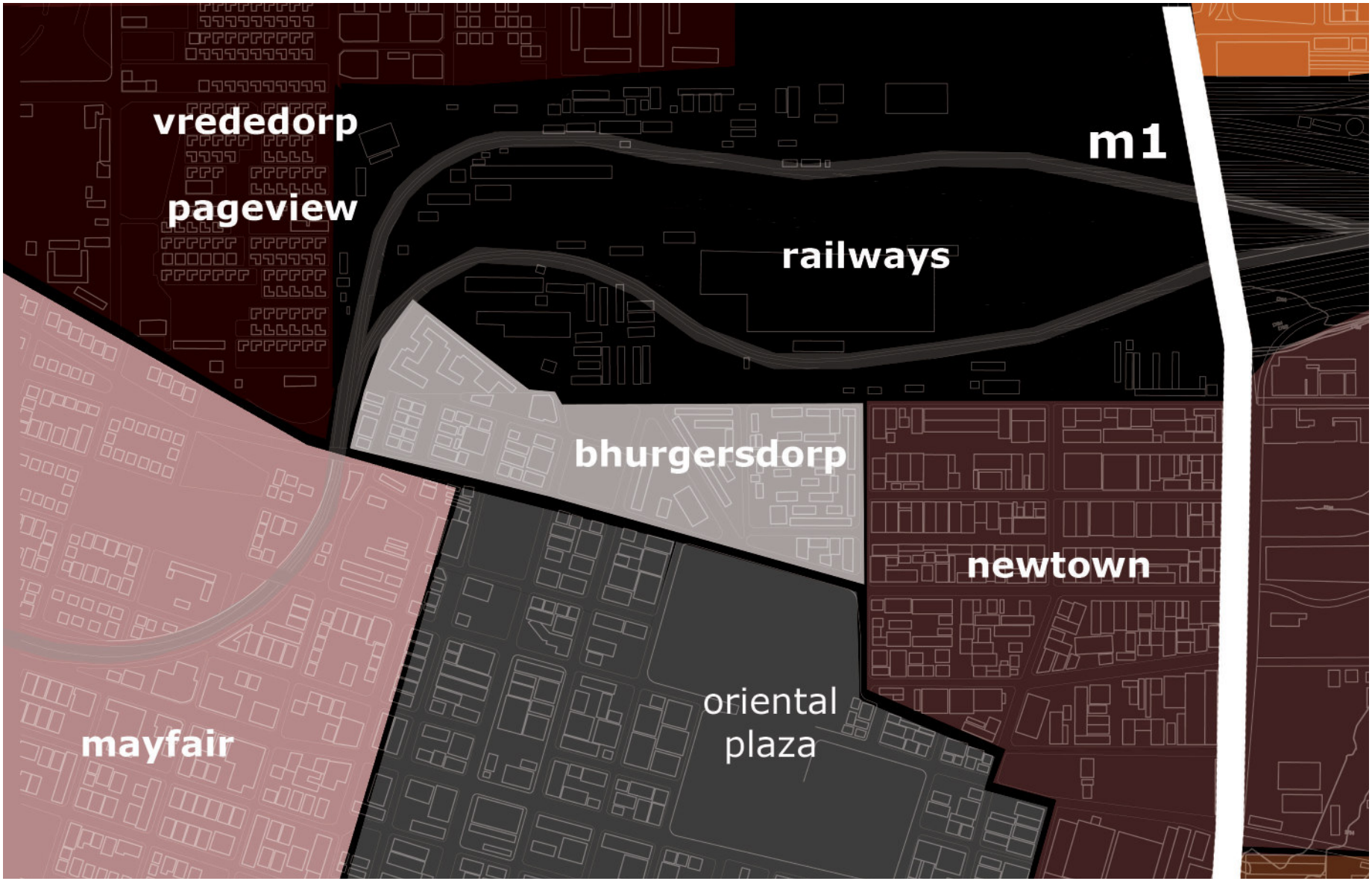
Although inner city users and residents are fairly well integrated into urban life, the physical relationship between Fordsburg and its surrounds such as Newtown is more disjointed. The Plaza and its siting allows for a transition between the two through the creation of a positive threshold or gateway. Thus on a macro urban scale this thesis aims to integrate the physical landscape through creating an urban threshold space between the previously integrated fabrics of Fordsburg and Newtown and on a micro urban scale to [re]connect the urban fabric of Fordsburg and the site of the Plaza, a fifteen and a half city block sized mass that was inserted within it. At the same time a number of key urban issues which have been identified in Fordsburg in the course this thesis investigation are able to be addressed.

Beyond the physical landscape the location of the Plaza is also a key factor in a social landscape because it allows itself to be accessed across the socio-economic divide of inner city and suburban dwellers, which carries great valency within the notion of a ''new'' South Africa. In the fourteenth year of democracy this thesis builds upon this project, by building and consolidating urban and social thresholds and the public realm. In Fordburg community heart and uniqueness is therefore given space & opportunity to be expressed, drawing from an understanding of the collective culture and identity that binds Fordsburg beyond its seemingly fragmented physicality. An intervention that is able to respond to the specific identity of Fordsburg while not being exclusive in nature is proposed. One that can facilitate the interaction and dialoguing of Fordsburg and the greater city in a threshold space that is legible but open & accessible, particular but impartial, and identifiable but not exclusive.

The success and attraction of the Plaza, its siting, as well as the vast tract of open parking space which surround it provide the ideal platform for urban continuum.

Fig1.3 View over Fordsburg looking North towards the Plaza


A+R AGENCIES cc
ANEES


vrededorp
pageview
m1
railways
bhurgersdorp
newtown
oriental
plaza
mayfair

THESIS STRUCTURE

In **Chapters 1 and 2** This document begins by introducing the historical underpinnings of the development of Fordsburg and surrounding areas and the subsequent imposition of The Plaza onto the urban fabric. Fordsburg is one of the oldest suburbs in Johannesburg and has undergone a number of social and physical transformations. It is therefore significant in terms of this thesis to understand its physical and social history as it is a key informant of its character and identity and the subsequent identity of The Plaza. The methodology undertaken was a variety of mappings of the site supported by various interviews with residents of Fordsburg and shop owners in the Plaza, many of whom grew up in Pageview and Sophiatown and were victims of the forced removals under the Apartheid regime.

Chapter 3 introduces the first typology, Fordsburg, and is an analysis of the site through a number of qualitative measures. The key streets and spaces which define Fordsburg on a physical level are introduced and described. This chapter begins to define the theoretical position of this thesis investigation and introduces the concepts of culture and hybridity as means through which to analyse and understand Fordsburg as an urban environment with a particular identity.

Chapter 4 is a study of what has been defined as the second urban typology, the mall. The reader is introduced briefly to the concept of the mall and its development in the context of Johannesburg. A number of local and international case studies are analysed in order to understand and deconstruct trends in shopping mall design and as means through which to inform the design of the urban framework.

Fig1.4 Contextualising Fordsburg

Chapter 5 is an investigation of the Plaza and used various quantative and qualitative measures in order to understand the social and economic dynamics which define the building. The research was aimed at answering the question: is the Plaza really a mall?

Chapter 6 is a series of site mappings and analysis which were used in order to identify certain urban issues which exist in Fordsburg.

Chapter 7 analyzes is an analysis of urban and architectural precedentstudies relevant to this thesis investigation.

Chapter 8 defines these urban issues and they are used as the key informants of the rationale and approach to develop an urban framework. A key piece of this framework was then selected and developed on an architectural level.

Fig 2.1 The orginal fabric of Fordsburg on which the Oriental Plaza now sits (Rhodes-Harrison 1968: 22)

02

FORDSBURG: HISTORY

MEMORY

Fordsburg reveals itself as a palimpsest in a field of memory.

There are silent memories, those places which are still extant but whose great historical value has been largely forgotten.

There are memories whose voices can still be heard. They speak of the disembodiment of the Fordsburg fabric and other areas and their re-manifestation into the Oriental Plaza.

Then there are lost memories, urban fabric and everyday life destroyed by systems of demolition and separation.

In all of this is celebrated memory, held together by a collective culture, which permeates beyond socio-political and spatial polarities.

CITY OF GOLD: WORKHOUSE TO MIXED USE

At the time of the discovery of gold on the Reef, houses existed on the farms Doornfontein, Langlaagte, Turffontein, Braamfontein and Luipaardsvlei. No houses were found on the piece of land known as Randjeslaagte as it was government-owned. Langlaagte was the farm where the auriferous conglomerate, the Main Reef, was first found (Leyds: 1964). Later on, the areas of Fordsburg, Mayfair, Industria, Crown Mines, Consolidated Main Reef Mines, Newclare and Sophiatown would be found on the original Langlaagte farm. (Leyds: 1964)

Johannesburg's development during the early years fell within certain periods and the first period is considered to be its first four years from 1886 to 1890. Jeppestown and Fordsburg are amongst the oldest suburbs of Johannesburg as the Ford and Jeppe Estate Company laid them out during this period. Fordsburg itself was established in 1888. (Leyds: 1964)

The name Fordsburg is derived from the name Lewis Peter Ford and the suffix '-burg' which means a fortified place or a town. Ford was the Transvaal Attorney-General under the Shepstone administration and was involved in gold-mining transactions from the earliest days of the Witwatersrand. Various publications dated from 1887 to 1906 make reference to the establishment of Fordsburg by Ford as well as Carl Jeppe, and Lewis Jeppe, Senior and Junior. Other publications also note that the names Veldschoendorp and Biccardsburg were previously used when referring to this area. (Smith: 1971)



Fig2.2 The location of Fordsburg in relation to the historical inner city fabric

It is believed that in its earliest days the stands at Fordsburg could not be sold or even given away as potential buyers feared that they would be drowned in the Fordsburg Dip. This dip is still evident today in the contour levels that converge on the South eastern edge of Fordsburg in the region of what was the Fordsburg Spruit. In the early days of Johannesburg the biggest camps soon congregated in 'The Dip' which was referred to as a 'dangerous swamp' (Smith: 1971) at that time.

Fordsburg, like many other Johannesburg suburbs at the time, housed mineworkers employed at the surrounding mines that were developing rapidly in the nearby area of Langlaagte. Many South African mineworkers settled in the area but due to the lack of local manpower, other workers were imported from England, Ireland and Australia. The predominantly male society of Fordsburg and Johannesburg at the time resulted in pubs and hotels springing up all around the suburb to serve a boisterous nightlife. (Norwich: 1986)

By 1893 Fordsburg was part of the Johannesburg municipal area and many stands were being sold and rented as both dwelling and business sites. At the time there were no restrictions as to whether the buyer used a plot for residential or business purposes and shopkeepers often lived in rooms behind the shop.



Fig2.3



Fig2.4

Fig 2.3 Historical Central Road, Fordsburg (Norwich 1986: 132)
Fig2.4 Historical Market Buildings, Fordsburg (Norwich 1986: 132)

PEOPLE, PLACE, POLITICS:
ROOTING AND UPROOTING IN JOHANNESBURG

In 1885 a law was introduced which prohibited Indians from owning any property except in locations that were set aside for them (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2000). The non-white population of Johannesburg were therefore mainly concentrated in three ‘locations’ at the turn of the century. These were the ‘Coolie Location’, the ‘Kafir Location’ and the ‘Malay Location’ (Carrim: 1990).



Fig 2.5

When the ‘Coolie Location’ was established for Indians in 1887, there was nothing to compel them to reside or trade there and it was also easy for the wealthy to avoid the ‘locations’. The ‘Coolie Location’ was situated in present-day Newtown. The area was in a distressing condition, it lacked proper roads, lighting or sanitation and although the population increased intensively the physical fabric did not grow simultaneously resulting in overcrowding. This overcapacity and squalor led to a severe outbreak of bubonic plague in 1904. Reacting to the crisis, the Town Council burnt the Indian Location to the ground at the end of March 1904. The entire population was moved to an emergency camp near the sewerage works at Klipspruit, 30km south of Johannesburg. (Carrim: 1990)

The location was redeveloped as a commercial zone and named ‘Newtown’. By July 1904 many of the people who were evacuated from the Indian Location started moving back into the urban centre. Most people moved to the ‘Malay Location’, where Pageview exists today. This was to become an important area associated with the Indian community after the burning of the Indian Location, as it was one of the very few areas available for legal ‘non-white’ occupation in Johannesburg. (Carrim: 1990)

Fig 2.5 Indian traders in early Newtown
(Norwich 1986: 74)
Fig2.6 Map of Johannesburg 1893
(Courtesy of MuseumafricA)

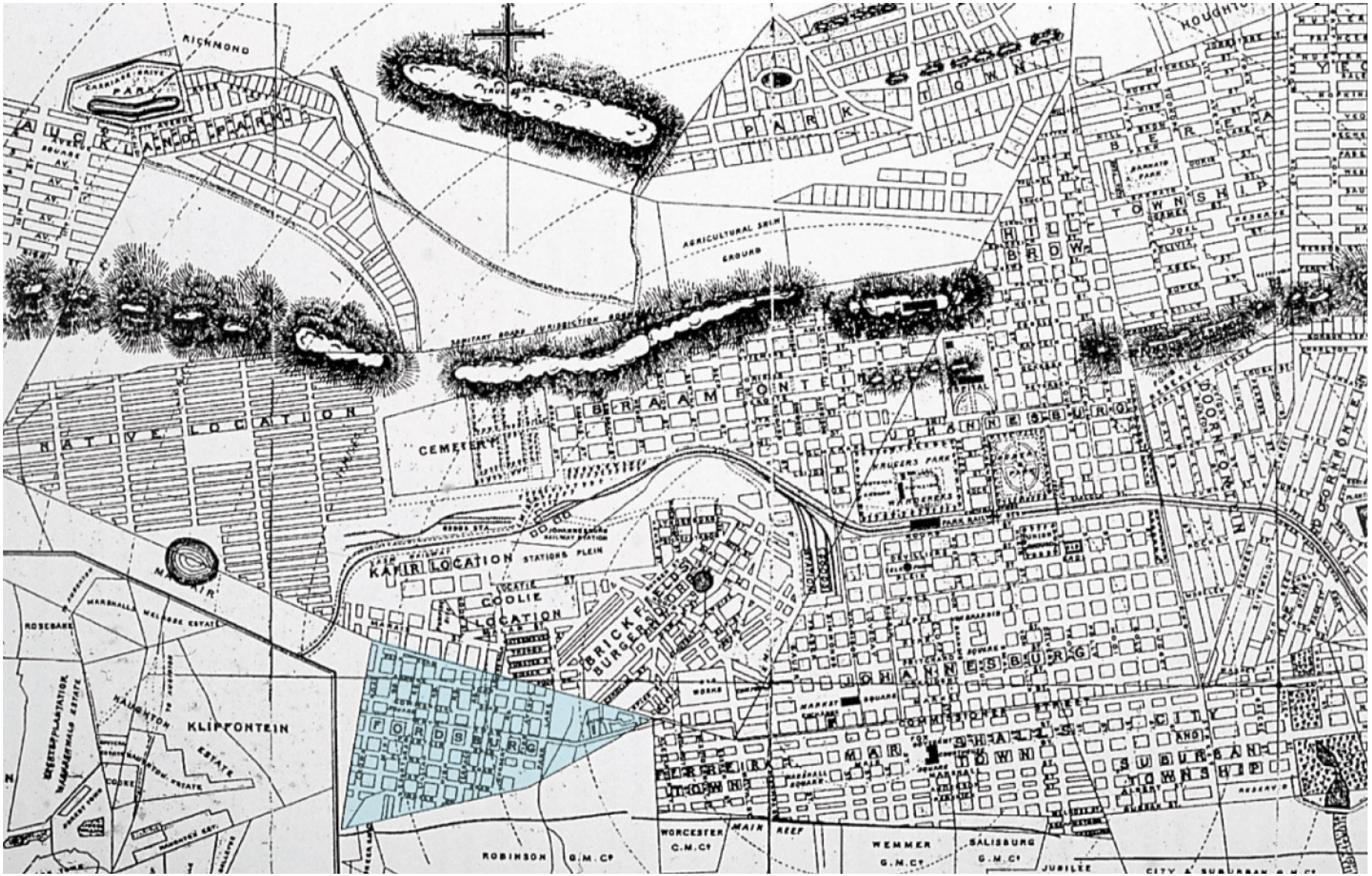

RICHMOND
PARK
AUCKLAND PARK
NATIVE LOCATION
CEMETERY
AGRICULTURAL SHOW GROUND
PARK
TOWNSHIP
BEREA
HILLBROW
BRAAMFONTEIN
JOHANNESBURG
KAFIR LOCATION
STATIONS PLEIN
COOLIE LOCATION
BRICKFIELDS
BURGERSDORP
MARKET SQUARE
CITY & SUBURBAN TOWNSHIP
MAINDRIFT
ROSEBANK
KLIPFONTEIN
ESTATE
ROBINSON G.M.Co
WORCESTER C.M.Co
MAIN REEF
WEMMER G.M.Co
SALISBURG G.M.Co
JUBILEE

Fig 2.6

The Asiatic Land Tenure Act was introduced in 1932 and had serious implications for non-whites. Provisions of the Act meant that all non-white owned business enterprises that existed outside of designated areas were to be closed and sold to whites. A commission was appointed by the government to inquire into the distribution of Indians on the Rand and to compile a register of all Indians in illegal occupation of white areas. Pressure and intervention was applied from community leaders and members of the Transvaal Indian Congress, resulting in the commission recommending that certain areas such as Denver, Fordsburg and Jeppe for exemption in terms of the Act. (Essop: 2002)

The exemption of these areas was further influenced by the fact that Indians in Fordsburg were beginning to firmly establish themselves and identify with the area. The existence of amenities such as schools, social halls, prayer facilities, cinemas and Indian trading and living spaces were evidence thereof. One of Johannesburg's first Indian schools still exists in Fordsburg today. The Johannesburg Indian Government School, also known as the Bree Street Indian Government School ('BIGS'), was built in 1914. It is located on the corner of Bree and Malherbe Streets, opposite the northern edge of the Oriental Plaza. It presently houses the junior section of the Johannesburg Muslim School. (Carrim: 1990)

The amenities available in Fordsburg also served the Indian community of nearby Pageview or 'Fietas' as it known to locals. A strong relationship had existed between Fordsburg and Pageview. A majority of the primary and secondary schooling of children from Fietas took place in Fordsburg, predominantly at the Johannesburg Secondary School.

Since moving into the 'Malay Location', after the burning of the 'Coolie Location' in 1904, Indians increasingly became stand-holders in Pageview. Although by the 1960s Pageview was predominantly Indian, it was still one of the more diverse areas in Johannesburg.

The implementation of the Group Areas legislation in the 1970s was a means by which the Nationalist government intended for stricter separation of all race groups. The implementation of this Act resulted in the demolition and forced removals of all non-white residents from Pageview. The Johannesburg City Council proposed that Burghersdorp, except the area west of Crown Road, should be set aside for Indians. It was also proposed that part of Fordsburg and Newtown should be given to the Indian community, along with the township of Lenasia on the southwest edge of the municipal boundary. Lenasia was established as early as 1955 and was about 32 kilometres south of Johannesburg (South African History Online (b), www.sahistory.org.za).



Fig 2.7 The Plaza 1975
(van Rensberg 1975: 12)

THE ORIENTAL PLAZA : WHITE ELEPHANT/ASIAN CITADEL

The Oriental Plaza shopping centre was established as a segregated commercial shopping centre by the apartheid government in 1974, a direct consequence of the forced removals. Some interpret it as a means by which Indian trading could be more strictly controlled, but most agree that it was a political tool built to satisfy the needs of a middle class white consumer market and create a tourist attraction at the same time. Some accounts from local shop owners include the notion that the intention was ultimately for the eradication of the threat of Indian trading.

The Plaza had two very different meanings when it was first conceived of and built, evident in the two very different writings of it at the time. The extract below is from Architect and Builder, February 1975, Vol 25 No 2 pg 8:

“Symbolically, the centre was seen as an Asian Citadel - an Indian Oasis surrounded by the White business areas - within which there existed, for the Asian trader, a world offering him economic security.”

The article in the Architect and Builder goes on to further justify the complete introversion of the Plaza by saying that “care was taken to prevent perforating the external wall, by introducing cross ventilation and daylight to shops through clerestory windows, dropped slabs and skylights.”

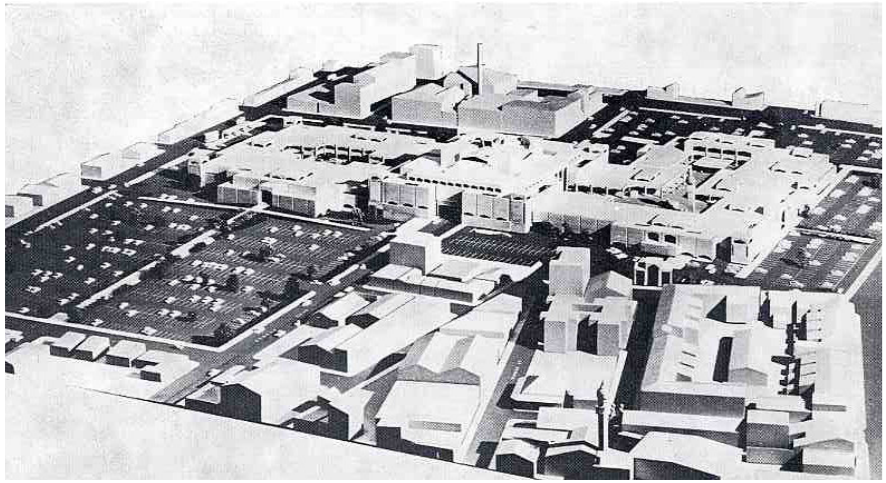


Fig 2.8

Fig 2.8 Model of the proposed Oriental Plaza, looking West over Fordsburg
(van Rensberg 1975: 10)
Fig 2.9 14th Street Pageview 1960s
(Rhodes-Harrison 1968: 36)
Fig 2.10 The vibrant street conditions in Pageview prior to the forced removals
(Rhodes-Harrison 1968: 37)

Service lifts and stairs are arranged at corners of the complex and are expressed as towers. A large concrete shell roof over the Grand Bazaar's central space finishes off the centres allusion to a grand Islamic architecture. Once through the entrances, it was hoped that the open and planted trading malls, fountains, domed kiosks, coloured awnings, fruit barrows, flower market and the clock tower minaret would provide a basis from which the traders themselves could develop Oriental Plaza into an unusual and interesting trading centre with its own unique character. (Van Rensburg : 1975)

The entire article has a similar air to the political thinking of the time. The Oriental Plaza is described as a salvation to the traders, that their economic well-being was being taken care of when the reality of the matter was that their economic well being would not have been needing care if they were not being forcibly removed to the outskirts of the city - removed from the homes and shops that had sustained their families for generations.

Contrasted with the writings of Carrim in his book Fietas: a social history of Pageview: 1948-1988, the Plaza is described as the "White Elephant" that trods through 14th Street:

"The Oriental Plaza was dubbed 'The White Elephant' by the shop-owners of the Pageview. The connotations of the "White Elephant" are many: The 'White' in the 'White Elephant' captures the 'white' supremacist nature of Apartheid, and the fact that the Oriental Plaza was a result of the machinations of the 'white' rulers of Apartheid.



Fig 2.9



Fig 2.10

The ‘Elephant’ denoted firstly, the magnitude of the Oriental Plaza complex, in comparison to the ‘little’ stores people were used to in Pageview. Secondly, it also denoted the distinct ‘Indian’ emphasis that the Oriental Plaza was designed to promote. In this regard, the “Elephant” was conceived of as a deliberate attempt by the Apartheid government to promote the ‘Indianness’ of the Pageview people, in order to materialise the logic of Apartheid, which subjectified the traders of Pageview in the context of being ‘Indian’.

As the Oriental Plaza reached completion, the thudding of the “White Elephant’s” bestial stomping and trodding echoed through the minds of Pageview traders; signaling the end of their trading days on the streets of Pageview. Through 14th Street, the ‘White Elephant’s’ thud resounded the loudest.”

03

FORDSBURG: IDENTITY

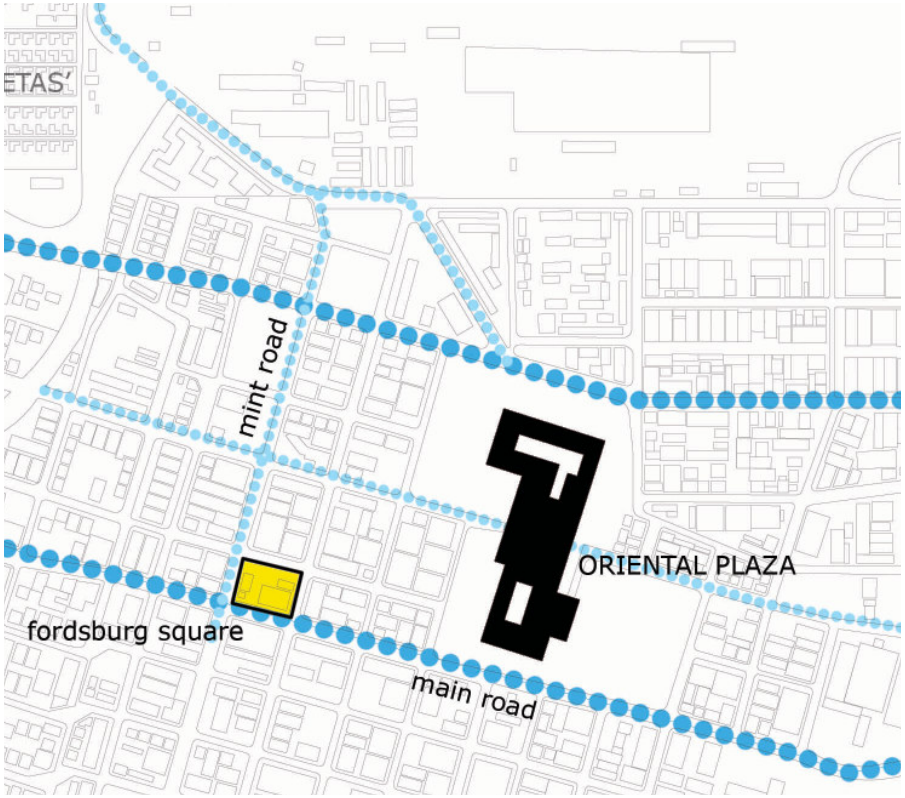


Fig 3.1 Map of Fordsburg indicating key roads and public places

Main Road and Mint Street are the predominant external hives of activity in Fordsburg. Street level activity is a diverse range of commercial, formal and informal retail trade, all spilling onto the pavements. The strips comprise popular retail stores, restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream parlours, and various CD and DVD stalls promoting Indian cinema and entertainment. Much of the retail in Fordsburg serves the community who lives in and around the area, but there are specialty shops that draw customers from the broader city fabric. The Mint Road strip is synonymous with Indian and Pakistani restaurants which also attract a diverse clientèle.

The Fordsburg Square, 'The Square' as it referred to by local residents, is one of the few places in Johannesburg where a diversity of people engage in the public life of the city after hours. Together with the restaurants and shops, the market can attract up to 2000 people on a Saturday evening enjoying the sights, sounds and aroma of the square. Its vibrant energy is the result of the mix of activities such as eating, sleeping, and working, praying and playing occur simultaneously and in close proximity to each other. (Hassan: 2003)


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COMMERCIALIZATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

As was customary with most townships planned before the South African War, Fordsburg was laid out with an open space known as the Market Square, as an open-air market was commonly associated with such a square. As with many other squares, a daily morning market was held on the Market Square.

Due to the high number of mine workers living in and around Fordsburg at the time the Market Square played an important role in the 1922 workers strike on the Witwatersrand. This three month long strike was also known as the Red Revolt because of the many workers communist principles. (Norwich: 1986). A battle between government units and strikers focused around Fordsburg's market square where strikers dug themselves in around the square, which also at one stage served as the headquarters for the strikers. The police station in Central Road, which presently houses the post office, was reduced to a shell after the battle around the square. Some of the historic buildings that adjoin the square still bare the evidence of being shelled during this uprising. (Smith: 1971)

The first buildings that appeared on the square were market buildings and in the 1960s were revamped for commercial use. The Market Square at this time was still an open public square, but not necessarily maintained or used to its full potential. The 1990s saw the square leased on a 99-year term to a prominent Fordsburg resident who slowly began to develop the square. The train restaurant was first brought it and an open-air market established. The building from the 1960s was developed into high-end apartments and recently roofs have been built over the market space. The last piece of public open land in Fordsburg is no more. (Sader: 2007)

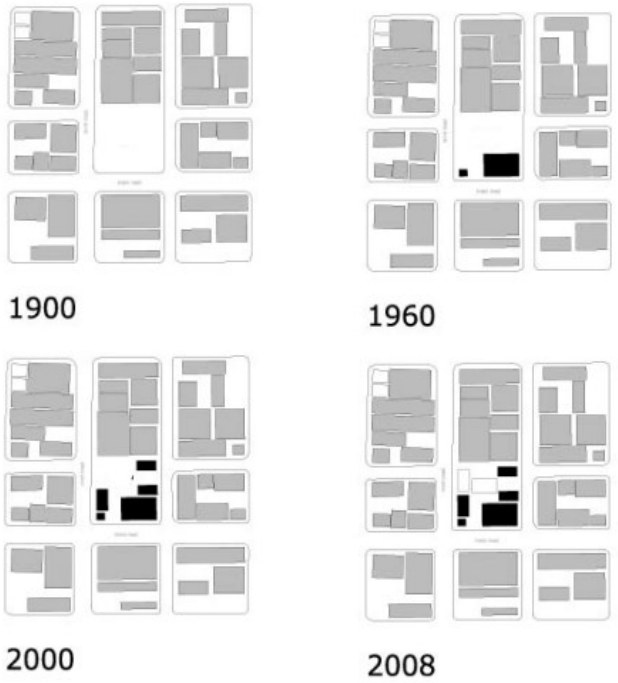


Fig 3.2

Fig 3.2 The growth of Fordsburg Square
Fig 3.3 Fordsburg Square 1922 (After MuseumAfrica)



Fig 3.3

CULTURAL IDENTITY

The understanding of culture is broad and often ambiguous. This thesis focuses on the term through the lens of cultural identity as manifested in the architecture and urban fabric of Fordsburg, whose identity is not determined by its form alone. A common understanding of culture is that it refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Different definitions of “culture” reflect different theoretical bases for the understanding, or criteria for evaluating, human activity. Cultural Anthropologists most commonly use the term “culture” to refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences symbolically. It is thought that symbols make culture possible, reproducible and readable. They give regularity, and unity to the practices of a group. (King: 2004)

Leach describes Architecture as a ‘type of objectivated cultural capital’ (Leach: 2006 p283). Its value lies dormant and in permanent potential, it has to be reactivated by social practices that will revive it. There is a need for praxis to unlock the meaning of objects, just as words can be understood in the manner in which they are used, buildings can be grasped by the manner in which they are perceived and by the narratives of use in which they are inscribed. (Leach: 2006)













Leach analyzes the human urge to conform and to blend in with our surroundings, the human capacity to grow into our built environment and eventually to find ourselves at home there. This stems from the desire to feel connected, the desire for camouflage. Leach argues that design of the built environment can aid in the process of assimilation that we ultimately go through when we adapt to our surroundings. Design can forge a sense of belonging and establish an identity, a means of mediation between man and his environment. (Leach: 2006)

Fordsburg would not be as rich an urban environment if it wasn't for the architecture and physical fabric supporting it. The density of the buildings, the mixed use nature and the street scale are all factors which support the way in which this area is inhabited and used every day. The colonial and modern buildings and spaces were not designed to specifically express the particular culture that defines Fordsburg today. It is more in the manner in which they have been adapted and used in everyday rituals, in signs and certain typologies.

A significant culturally based variable in urban design is the attitude towards individualism and cooperation. The impact of this is a contrast between environments which are an integrated whole and others which comprise a number of individual, often self serving entities. The urban composition of Fordsburg up until the development of the Plaza exemplified this notion of an integrated whole. The urban form of the areas that surround the Plaza, those that weren't demolished, have allowed for this to continue today. As much as they are able to integrate with each other, their relationship with the Plaza does not follow suit. (Lang: 2005)

HYBRID URBANISM

The notion of hybridity has been discussed intensively in recent cultural studies, often in abstract ways. According to AlSayyad (2001), it is only in the context of real life experiences and everyday practices that it becomes possible to unravel this complex notion. In most significant urban centres, such as in Fordsburg, manifestations of hybridity are self evident. Dualities in Fordsburg manifest both in the physical and social structures resulting in a 'hybrid place' that seems to have been in a constant state of flux since is establishment.

Hybridity is one of the most widely used and often the most disputed terms in post-colonial theory. It commonly refers to the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. In horticulture, the term refers to the cross-breeding of two species by grafting or cross-pollination to form a third 'hybrid' species. Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political, racial etc. (Ashcroft: 2007)

The term hybridity has more recently been associated with the work of Homi K. Bhabha, who developed his concept of hybridity from literary and cultural theory to describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity. (Bhabha 1994)

For Bhabha, hybridity is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonised, 'the Other' within a singular universal framework, but then fails producing something familiar but new. (Papastergiadis: 1997)

AlSayyad (2001: 13) discusses hybridity under the context of the current preoccupation with globalization and the idea that the history of the world demonstrates a movement toward cultural differentiation, and not homogenization. He speaks of a global context in which 'each individual claims allegiance to more than one culture and invokes different identities at different times and in different places'. (AlSayyad 2001: 13).

Hybridity, according to AlSayyad, can also be interpreted in a very literal sense to involve either a minority subculture that has had to accept the dictates of a dominant culture to either ensure its own survival or participate in a negotiated subculturalism. (AlSayyad: 2001)

It is through this interpretation that Fordsburg as a hybrid urban environment will be investigated. Certain similarities can be drawn between the development and subsequent identities of California Chinatowns and Fordsburg and this provides a useful lens through which to interpret the site.

LEARNING FROM CHINATOWNS

The California Chinatowns of the late nineteenth and early twentieth cen¬turies expressed the need for Chinese immigrants to North America to create built environments that could serve both their cultural and social needs. The desire to satisfy these needs come from a number of reasons which include the radically different nature of North American urban environments from those in China and the need for the immigrants to fit into a relatively hostile society at large. This process did not involve a simple transplantation of traditional Chinese buildings and vernacular settings, instead the Chinatowns of California embodied communities in which common North American building types and environments were transformed to meet a new set of needs. (Yip: 2001)

The San Francisco Chinatown was also the first place in which Chinese conceptions of place-making ran into North American patterns of urbanization. The hybridized strategies of adaptation of social institutions and strategies for adapting North American building types to Chinese-American uses, developed in San Francisco and tended to diffuse out to the other Chinese communities across North America. The need to adapt to the California context and develop strategies for the shaping of places was made necessary by the weak socio-economic and political status of immigrant Chinese.

Similarly Indians in the context of Johannesburg were a highly discriminated against minority and their chances of imposing their architecture and concepts of place-making on the new environment were largely limited. Hybrid solutions that adapted to the Californian and Johannesburg context posed the only reasonable approach. (Yip: 2001)

California Chinatowns were hybrid physical environments that were a response to social prejudice, political disenfranchise¬ment and exclusion, as was Fordsburg and other non-white areas in South Africa in the early 1900s. The political and social acts of discrimination formed the external forces that encouraged internal cohesion within the Chinese-American as well as non–white communities both in the American and South African context. (Yip: 2001)

The structure and location of Chinatowns in America and non-white areas in Johannesburg were related first and foremost to the impact of political, social and economic discrimination, and secondly to cultural factors. Similar limitations that were placed on non-white South Africans, in terms of purchasing property in the city, were placed on the Chinese Americans. (Yip: 2001)

In the same way that the central business district (CBD) of Johannesburg in its early years of development diversely combined commercial, industrial and transportation facilities, so did most American cities. But as these cities grew, these elements tended to separate out into more homogeneous zones. Residential hotels and other forms of low-cost housing interspersed with other uses to form a ring of suburbs, one such being Fordsburg, around the CBD that offered inexpensive housing to workers who needed to be near sources of employment. (Yip: 2001)

Fordsburg was considered to be a diverse and bustling area during its early days. Indian traders, Chinese merchants, livery stables and Johannesburg's first swimming bath, as well as a large number of mine workers, were to be found in Fordsburg (Leyds: 1964, 153). In 1915, Fordsburg could have been described as a mixed working class suburb with an English, Afrikaans, Jewish, Lebanese, Indian, Chinese, Coloured and African community, housed in overcrowded shanties and tenements.

In the same way that Fordsburg serves as a metropole to Muslim immigrants from Pakistan, Indian and North Africa, San Francisco's Chinatown was the first stop for many Chinese immigrants. The social position of Chinese immigrants in North America, similar to that of Indian immigrants to Johannesburg, was an important factor that led to the creation of such hybrid physical environments. A process of adaptation was forced upon them by their status as cheap, imported labour at the bottom of the social order. The Chinese and Indians were not landed members of the societies to which they immigrated, and were forced to turn to trade and commerce. Chinese arriving in America and Indians to South Africa were quickly relegated to low-paying, low-status jobs, both through general practices of racial discrimination and laws specifically enacted against them. (Yip: 2001)

A rather limited range of architectural forms tended to dominate the typical California Chinatown in its early days, the most common being the multiuse commercial structure of the late nineteenth-century city. In the same way that buildings are today adapted in Fordsburg to represent a certain semiotic language of cultural appropriation, so were buildings hybridized on what appeared to be a surface level with signage in California Chinatowns. (Yip: 2001)



Fig 3.4 Fordsburg



Fig 3.5 Chinatown, Cyrildene

Fig 4.1 Eastgate Shopping Centre, 1980
(Norwich 1986: 76)

04

THE MALL

This thesis investigates a mall typology imposed onto an urban fabric and ultimately the reintegration of the isolated mall into its context. It is therefore a significant aspect of this thesis investigation to understand what factors sparked the trend towards this particular building type and why it continues to be such a prominent typology in the South African context.

The Oriental Plaza not only fits into a specific local political context but also into a global context of the mall-building boom. South Africa was not immune to this phenomenon and the growth of the suburbs further from the city centre was one of the key factors behind the move towards this building typology.

The retailing function of the city has traditionally offered the most concentrated expression of informal public life. More than any other single use in the city, it has been instrumental in the creation, definition and enclosure of public space. Whether encrusting the frontages of its main streets or filling market squares, or condensed along enclosed thoroughfares, the significance of retail and trade in the historical development of cities is self evident. (Maitland: 1985)

Today's designers face an inherently antiurban society. Fewer choices in urban routines signify a lack in community cohesion and urbanity in most cities today. For example shopping is now a strictly functional act of purchasing that involves a simple trip from home to mall. Urban shopping was once also a social ritual that included meeting friends informally, chance encounters and promenading. These traditionally urban social rituals have been removed from the street and contained in a built form. The degradation of certain social structures is paralleled with the decline of city life.

Fordsburg is one of the few urban areas in our city that urban community and street life still exists. This is strongly contrasted with the mall form of the Oriental Plaza. The Plaza as a mall typology is essentially a suburban product, suburbia being ultimately where segregation and homogeneity originate. Interestingly enough these same principals were behind the design and development of The Plaza.

Through a number of case and precedent studies this chapter will unpack typical mall trends in South Africa at the time the Plaza was built as well as current local and global trends in the design of this retail typology.



THE ARRIVAL OF MALLS TO JOHANNESBURG

The South African economic boom of the 1960s produced buildings of unprecedented height in Johannesburg including that of the Carlton Centre, aimed at revitalising the centre of the city for shoppers. As much as the city was growing vertically it was also growing horizontally, with new middle class suburbs spreading rapidly in a wide arc to the north of Johannesburg. The only initial commercial responses to this fast expanding population were supermarkets. When it came to purchasing larger more luxurious items most consumers still shopped in large departmental or the new discount stores in the city centre. It didn't take long for property developers to see the financial opportunity in commercial development in the suburbs. (Norwich: 1986)

The planning of South Africa's first 'regional' shopping centre, Sandton City, was well underway by 1967 and opened it doors in 1973. This centre would be catalyst for the ultimate decentralization of the city centre. Sandton City was surrounded by some of Johannesburg's most affluent suburbs and was an immediate success as it offered easy parking, a wide range of shops, banks and a range of other commercial operations under the same roof within a controlled environment. The expansion of the city's road network into highways supported the centre and soon the additional office accommodation in the tower building adjacent to the centre was also fully let. (Norwich: 1986)



Fig 4.2 Sandton City Fountain Court, 1982
(Norwich 1986: 78)

The development of similar shopping centre on the eastern border of Johannesburg was soon underway. Eastgate shopping centre opened in 1979, offered over 200 stores and 6000 free parking bays and was also a huge success. Another development group soon followed with Westgate in 1985, situated between Main Reef Road and Ontdekkers Road on the West Rand. (Norwich: 1986)

Smaller centres such as Hyde Park opened in 1969 and Rosebank Mall in 1976, were developed with the aim of satisfying the more affluent tastes of some northern suburbs housewives had for imported perfume and clothes available at inner city department stores. The centres offered the notion of a diffused department store, which were the different departments one would find in such a store, but built and functioning as separate shops under one roof. These centres have both been revamped and expanded into more conventional notions of shopping malls in the last decade. (Norwich: 1986)

CASE STUDY: KILLARNEY MALL - THE TYPICAL MALL TRANSFORMATION

The Killarney Mall, which is owned by a single financial conglomerate, Killarney Mall Properties, makes an interesting comparison to the Plaza, which is owned under sectional title. The changes that Killarney Mall has undergone is a prime example that can be used to begin to understand the physical evolution that most regional malls, especially those in Johannesburg, have undergone in the past few decades. The Killarney Mall has undergone three major transformations since its inception in the 1960s, and perhaps a similar transformation would have been in store for the Oriental Plaza had it not been sold under sectional title to the shop owners.



Fig 4.3 Killarney Mall
(www.googlearth.com, 2008)

Killarney was typically a veld and koppie area to the north of Johannesburg city centre. The area began to be developed in by insurance magnate I.W. Schlesinger, whose African Realty Trust owned most of Killarney. Schlesinger set up Johannesburg's pioneering film studio in 1915 and built a large imposing block of luxury flats called Whitehall Court nearby. The 1950s saw Killarney being developed into what was thought to be a superior Hillbrow and the Schlesinger real estate empire aimed to compliment the upper crust area with a upmarket shopping centre. (Benjamin: 1979)

The centre began as a small largely open-air development and its ambience was often described as 'the most charming of all such precincts of the city' (Benjamin: 1979). It had a very intimate, village-like atmosphere that kept with the affluent lifestyle of the Killarney flat dwellers and attempted to exploit our cities major natural asset of sunshine and open space. Initially due to unease amongst the Killarney flat dwellers over such a development, the architects aimed at creating as unobtrusive a building as possible. The aim was for the shopping in its appearance to blend in with its surroundings and preserve some sense of the outdoors. (Benjamin: 1979)

The small shops, all designed on a single level, included a baker, a butcher and an open-air coffee shop. A branch library and a small post office were also added to contribute to the neighbourhood atmosphere. The complex's central feature, similar to that of the Oriental plaza, was a light glass framed lift tower topped by a clock. The inside of the centre comprised open malls and piazzas with an abundance of shrubs and flower beds, outdoor sculpture and shopping walkways shaded with coloured awnings. (Benjamin: 1979)



Fig 4.4

Fig 4.4 Killarney Mall 1966
(Courtesy Killarney mall Management)
Fig 4.5 Killarney Mall 1972
(Courtesy Killarney mall Management)
Fig 4.6 Killarney Mall 2008

As the surrounding suburbs expanded, the profit potential of the site began to outweigh the village atmosphere of the shopping centre. The mid 1970s saw the trend towards giant, highly competitive enclosed malls and the owners of the Killarney centre succumbed to the plans of redeveloping it into a major northern suburbs shopping and office attraction. The R12 million investment saw the shopping space doubles, the office space increased twenty fold, parking trebled to accommodate 1100 cars and a giant supermarket became the anchor tenant. Many of the original traders wanted the open-air quality retained, but the planners followed the advice of an American shopping specialist who advocated its enclosure. (Benjamin: 1979)



Fig 4.5



Fig 4.6

The Killarney Mall was again refurbished in 2005. The R90 million enlargement and modernization of the mall includes almost 90% of its existing shops upgraded and refurbished and a 5,500 square meter extension of the retail space and 430 additional parking bays have been accommodated on two new parking decks. The developers provided rent-free premises for the two community services in the original centre, the Killarney Library and Post Office, that were relocated to more visible premises. They have undergone a complete upgrade to improve the services they offer to the community. (www.eprop.co.za)

CASE STUDY: THE ZONE ROSEBANK - A SHOPPING PRECINCT

The Rosebank Mall and the Zone is an excellent example of an architectural intervention that has moved from the generic internal mall typology towards a model that makes positive urban connections and begins to engage the shopper with the street and surrounding context.

The approach by the developers, Old Mutual - who claim to be on the forefront of retail development, is to employ ‘cutting edge’ archi¬tects from the United States of America to conceive of the master plan for the retail centre and then to employ local architects to realize the vision. The design team for the Zone comprised the Development Design Group Inc of Baltimore and the local office of Louis Karol Architects. There has been much outspoken critique of such collaborations, as it is often the case that the foreign offices employed have a very basic background to the realities of the South Africa context. (de Beer: 2000)

The Zone claims to be the first South African shop¬ping centre to have embraced the concept of ‘shoppertainment’ as a core element in its overall design. As the name implies shoppertainment places heavy emphasis on entertainment as a defining element that compliments

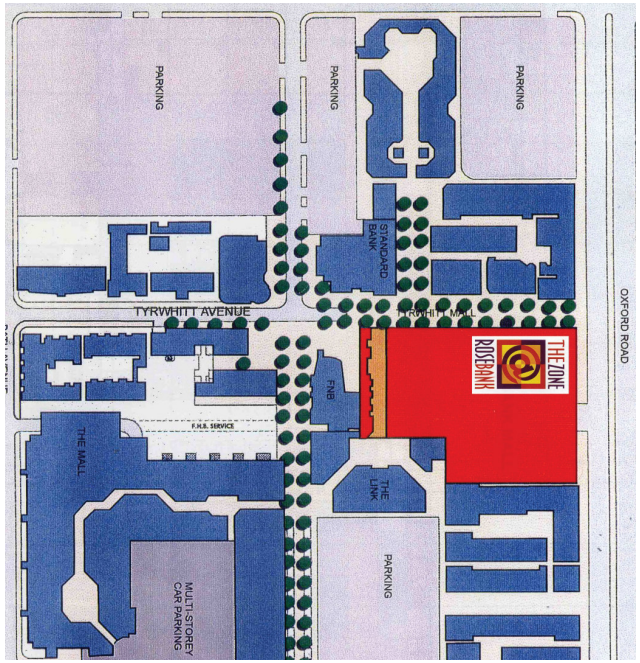


Fig 4.7



Fig 4.8

Fig 4.7 The Rosebank Shopping precinct (Courtesy LK Architects)
Fig 4.8 The Rosebank Shopping precinct (www.googlearth.com: 2008)

the retail program. Shoppertainment is not necessarily, a new revolutionary retail concept, but has been around for decades and has always been called comparative shopping. Shoppertainment can be defined as comparative shopping with more glitz and even more gimmicks. (de Beer: 2000) One could go into an extensive, most likely negative, study of the glitzy interiors and conventional internal mall planning but it is the exterior environment of the Zone, which this investigation is concerned with.

The Zone is situated in the heart of Rosebank, bounded by Oxford Road, Tyrwhitt Mall, the Link Arcade and Regents Place. Rosebank is an ideal position for retail to begin to break out of the mould of completely internalised shopping malls. The factors supporting this is its urban framework and the fact that it is located in one of Johannesburg's established urban centres. (de Beer: 2000)

The existing developments in the surrounding area such as Regents Place and The Firs have all begun to take advantage of the context and the new boost from the Gautrain station currently being built on Oxford Road. Most retail developments are either being completely gutted or revamped, with the general trend being towards mixed use developments that activate the street frontages and create positive urban connections between what could have been isolated internalised buildings.



Fig 4.9

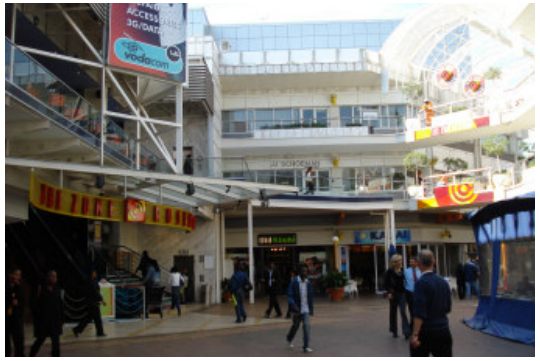


Fig 4.10



Fig 4.11

Fig 4.9 The Link to the Zone from the Rosebank Mall
Fig 4.10 The pedestrian entrance of the Zone of the Link
Fig 4.11 Vibrant pedestrian spaces in and around the Rosebank shopping areas



Fig 4.14

Some further investigation began to reveal that most of the urban connections that the Zone makes emerge from responses that the original buildings on the site made. An arcade connects the pedestrianised section of Tyrwhitt Avenue through the Zone and into a pedestrian link lined with shops. These all existed before and were drawn from as the photos below reveal. The Link is a small set of shops which line the route that connects the Zone to the Mall, was an existing block which was refurbished. It is the point where the first floor entertainment level of the Zone descends into a collective outside space. This external passageway connects the shopper to the pedestrianised portion of Cradock Avenue that makes strong connections with main entrance of Rosebank Mall.

The developers of the Zone have not suffered financially by providing these external connections as all routes, even those on the car park, are all lined with small shops and restaurants that are successful and popular.

Many lessons can be learnt from the design of the Zone and the way in which it creates transitions from the internal mall environments to the outside. The Rosebank shopping precinct is a good example of an urban development that has not compromised the quality of the experience because of security aspects. Certain design aspects can be drawn from its design for this thesis, such as the positive connections of existing buildings to each other, the way in which the urban environment is enhanced naturally defined entrances to the Zone and the combination of external and internal mall environments.

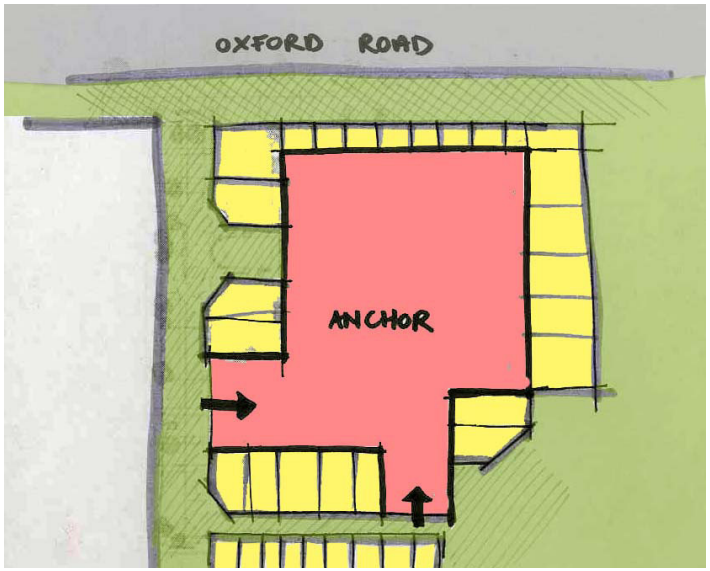


Fig 4.12



Fig 4.13

The design of the Zone does complement and understand what makes Rosebank unique by reinforcing and extending these positive qualities. This is achieved through the design acknowledging the two ordering systems in the area, the street grid and the malls, making for an urbane space of quality within a human scaled urban network. (de Beer: 2000)

The initial intention of the architects was not to design a mall that challenged the conventional notions of the internalised mall typology, the major design considerations were all the usual aspects of retail design on such a scale, sufficient parking and easy access into the mall from the parking etc. It could be said that the urban context swayed the design towards what it is today with Oxford Road's more pedestrian edge and the Rosebank Mall a link between it and the new Zone development.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of shopping in Rosebank, as opposed to other malls, is the external circulation, which connects the shopper to street and into Rosebank Mall. These concepts of urban connections are carried into the design through the use different types of retail responses, such as conventional internal mall-type shops to covered arcades and open lines of shops with light roof structures, that respond to the various edges and conditions they activate.

Fig 4.12 The anchor store and line shops of the ground floor of The Zone open onto the pedestrian routes
Fig 4.13 The Zone @ Rosebank
(Courtesy LK Architects)
Fig 4.14 The pedestrianised Tyrwhitt Avenue prior to the development of the Zone
(Courtesy LK Architects)

CONTEMPORARY MALL BUILDING TRENDS

Shopping trends both globally and in South Africa are rejecting the routine conception of enclosed worlds of consumption isolated from their surroundings. Two contemporary malls convey these current trends of the reversion back to open-air centres and the exploration of typologies that acknowledge retail centres as important civic buildings that serve a function within the public realm.

CASE STUDY: WILLOWBRIDGE

Willowbridge Shopping Centre, in Tygervalley Cape Town, was conceived of as a new-concept retail centre that would not only reflect the uniqueness of the site and respond sensitively to its context. It was also the clients' aspiration to challenge traditional retail models of other major regional shopping malls. The architects, Vivid Architects, and client shared similar design philosophies in the realization that shopping centres not only entice customers to shop, they need to reflect the growing desire to experience environment s that both supports and encourages the human need to socialise and gather within a safe and stimulating place enhanced by natural light, fresh air and open skies above. (Low: 2006)



Fig 4.15



Fig 4.16

Fig 4.15 Willowbridge Shopping Centre (www.googlearth.com: 2008)
Fig 4.16 View of the open-air shopping spaces (Low 2006: 156)



Fig 4.17

The site sits on a greenbelt and was the key informant of the main conceptual aspects of the design. A contemporary version of the retail 'high street' was influenced by the linear nature of the site and the centre also acts as a interface between the urban edge of the Tygervalley business district and the natural beauty of the greenbelt and rehabilitated Elsieskraal River that it borders. (Low: 2006)

Major tenants anchor the centre on either end and the overall length of the open street is articulated by three 'Village Squares' and a series of pedestrian bridges that cross the street at first floor level. The squares are the focus of the restaurants and are enhanced by specially designed landscape elements. (Low: 2006)

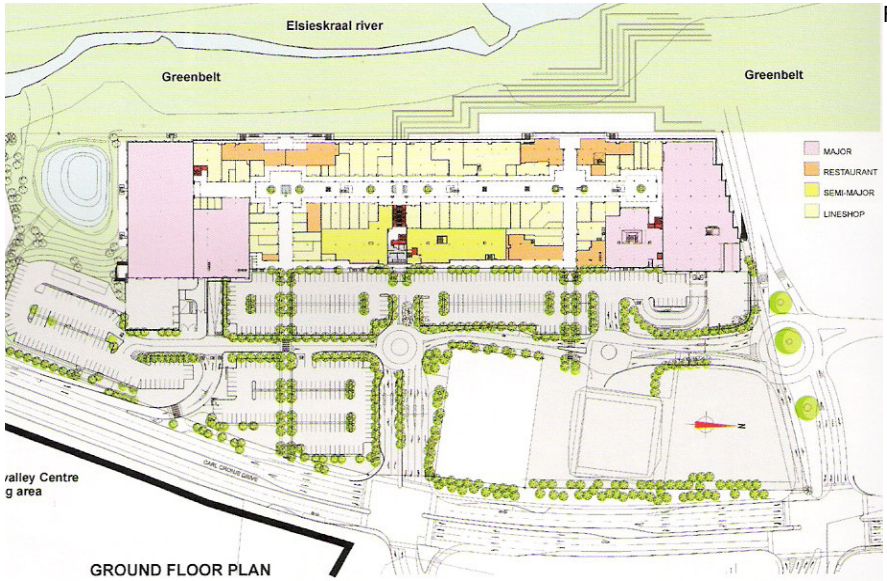


Fig 4.18

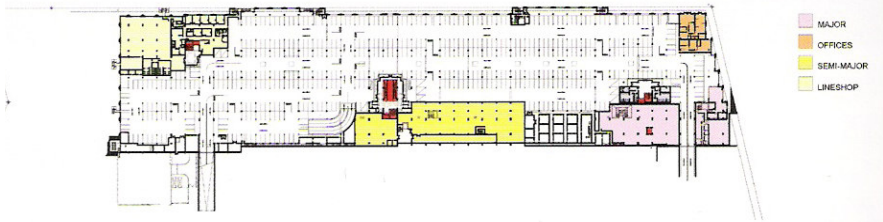


Fig 4.19



Fig 4.20

Fig 4.17 View of one of the 'village squares' (Low 2006: 158)
Fig4.18 Site Plan (Low 2006: 158)
Fig 4.19 Basement Plan (Low 2006: 158)
Fig 4.20 Section (Low 2006: 158)

MEYDAN SQUARE

Meydan Square retail development, by Foreign Office Architects, redefines the usual function of a mall and was intended not only to be a proficient retail complex but also a true urban centre. The mall is located in a suburb of Istanbul, Turkey, on the verge of becoming a dense urban fabric. The design responds to a number of issues faced in this, one of the fastest growing areas in the city. The key issue being the limited amount of public squares and green areas for socialising and therefore the centre was designed with the intention of creating a public square.

The architects' anticipated the subsequent integration of the mall into a dense inner city context and trough it geometry and circulation strategy. A substantial amount of ground floor space to be used for landscaped areas and a new urban square in the centre of the scheme, was liberated by the provision of underground car parking. A series of new pedestrian routes activate the central square, linking the underground car park to the ground level.

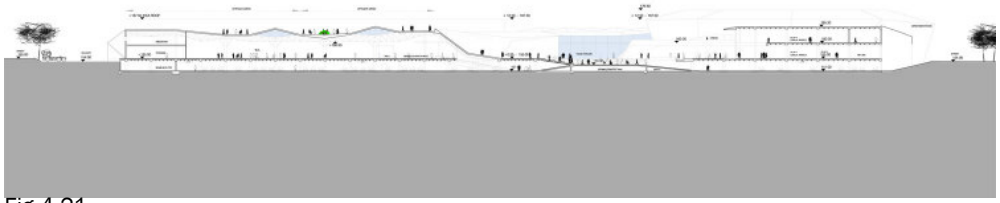


Fig 4.21

Fig 4.22

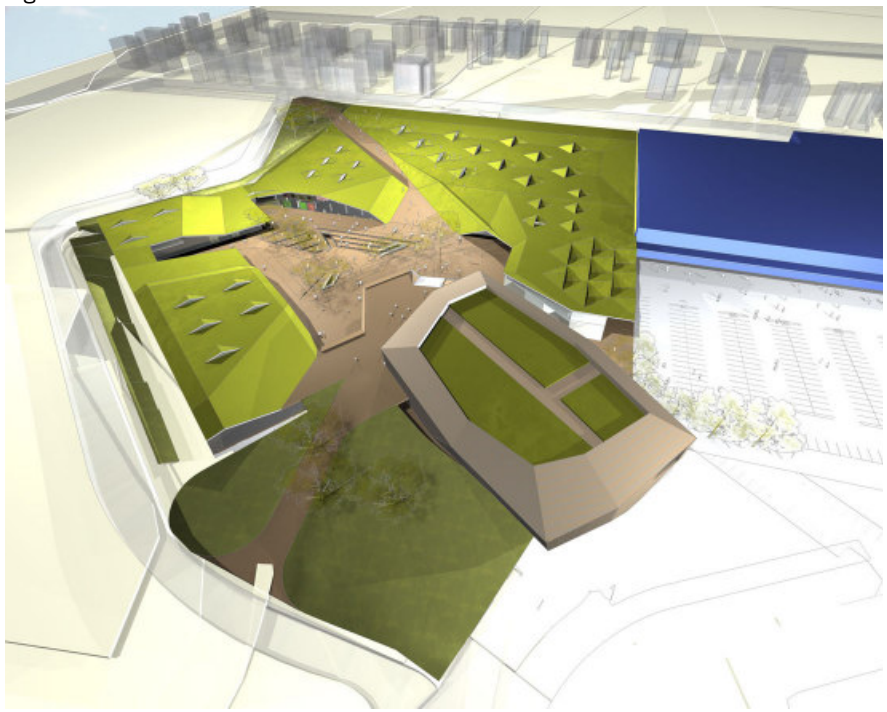


Fig 4.21 Section, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)
Fig 4.22 Site Plan, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)



Fig 4



Fig 4.23

Most of the roofs are planted and connected to the surrounding topography at several points. Daylight and ventilation to the inner spaces are provided by a number of rooflights. The surfaces that are not planted, both elevations and floor surfaces, are clad or paved with an earth-coloured ceramic tile that incorporate various degrees of perforation depending on functions and uses behind.

This project offers interesting solutions to both the generic issue of the mall and to the specific issues which faced the site. Although the scheme is successful in breaking out of the mould of conventional retail design, the open air public spaces provided don't seem to be designed in a way in which they could be inhabited comfortably.



4.24



Fig 4.25



Fig 4.26

Fig 4.23 Entrance, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)
Fig 4.24 Public Square, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)
Fig 4.25 Supermarket, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)
Fig 4.26 Public Square, Meydan Square, Istanbul, FOA (www.dezeen.com/meydansquare/2007)

CONCLUSION

Due to the fact that the Plaza is owned under sectional title it is very difficult for any refurbishments or extensions to take place. Unlike most shopping centres and malls which are owned by one conglomerate that makes financial and developmental decisions, the Body Corporate of the Plaza requires a 99% ‘yes vote’ out of the 360 owners in order for any changes to the building to be made. Various architectural proposals to expand the Plaza have been designed but have failed to be approved by all owners and have therefore never been implemented. The main concern with the proposals is that that all have been to extend the North Mall and the owners of shops in the South Mall and Grand Bazaar have not agreed with the designs as they feel that they would not benefit them as much as they would the shop owners in North Mall. It is only in the last five years that entrances, some toilet blocks and the floors in the communal spaces in the North mall have been refurbished.

It could be said that the hindrance of the development and expansion of the Plaza by the above factors, has perhaps protected it from becoming one of the internalised, parking decked malls we see all over Johannesburg today.



Fig 4.27 View of The Plaza Courtyard
(van Rensberg 1975: 16)
Fig 4.28 Artist’s impression of the KillarneyMall 1966
(Courtesy of Killarney Mall Management)
Fig 4.29 Killarney Mall Street Entrance and Parking decked street edge



Fig 4.27



Fig 4.29

Fig 5.1 An early proposal for the Oriental Pl
(Rhodes-Harrison 1968:

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IS THE PLAZA REALLY A MALL?

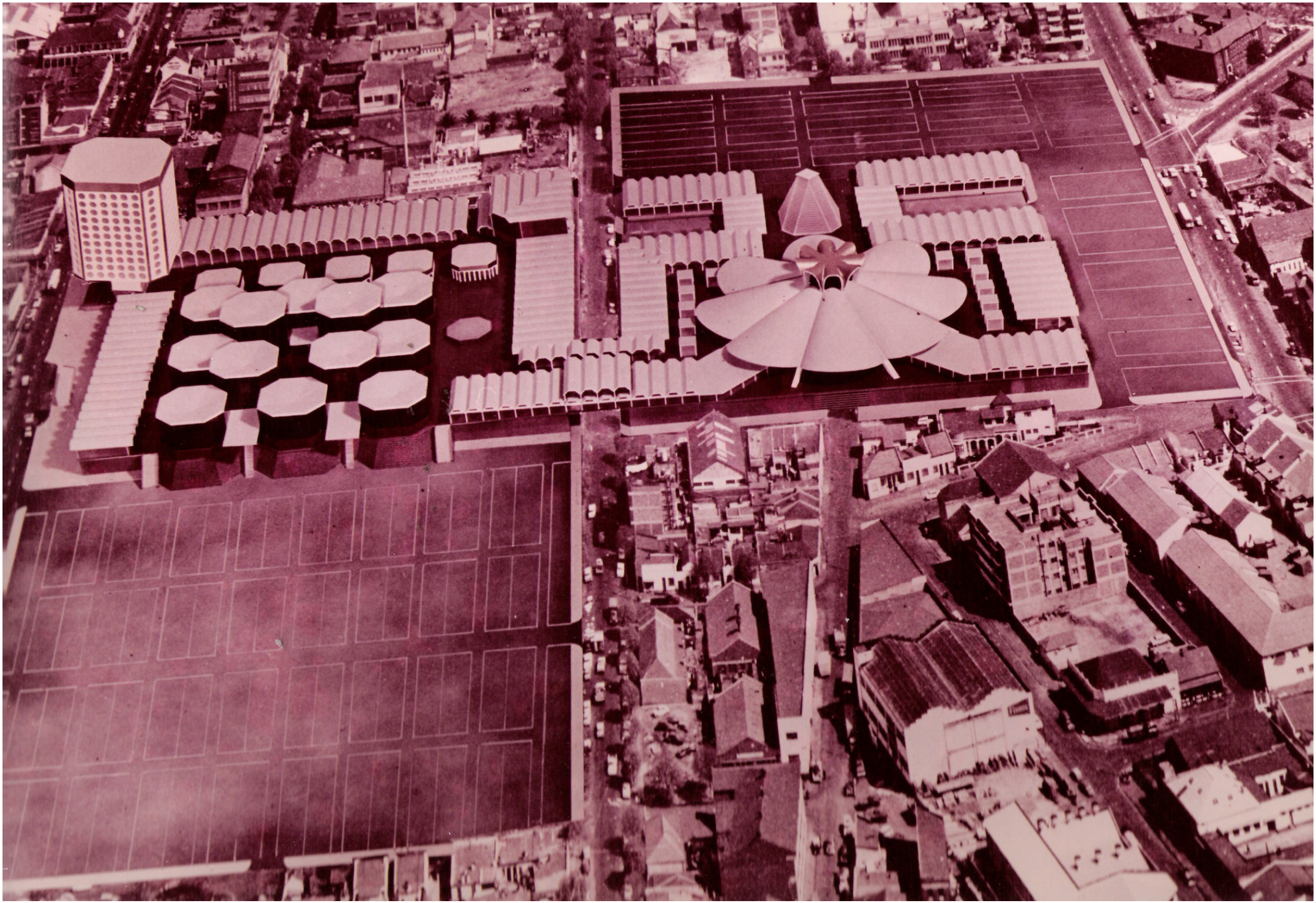
FROM COLLECTIVE TO PUBLIC, FROM JOZI TO AFRICA: THE PLAZA AS THRESHOLD SPACE

The original design proposed for the centre draws directly its inspiration from the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar, formed from interlocking octagonal pavilions and a covered market. (de Souza 2007). The Plaza is based on contemporary shopping centre design principles and Modernist principles. It fails to integrate with the surrounding fabric, even through its scale alone. The centre comprises fifteen and a half city blocks, consolidating two large blocks of land on either side of Avenue Road (de Souza 2007). Its mono-functional nature and its restrictive trading hours are also reasons that set it apart from its surrounding fabric.

The Modernist approach to design was based on the notion of reducing the built environment down to a number of universal paradigms. Le Corbusier observed, 'All people have the same needs.' The ordering of needs may be universal but the way in which we strive to meet them varies considerably. Activity patterns, from those of everyday life to the ceremonial, are varied according to factors such as age, gender or our social roles, within specific cultural contexts. Meaning based on learnt associations is carried through into patterns of the city both on an urban and architectural scale. (Lang: 2005)

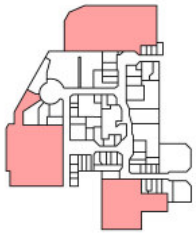
The Plaza in its physicality is a mall, but is not the quintessential mall that offers suburban values of predictability and control. This chapter is investigations into the aspects, both quantitative and qualitative, that defines or do not define the Plaza as a mall typology. The Plaza is a successful financial model and the same reasons that give it its unique character and ultimately define what separates it from other malls in Johannesburg. These qualitative and quantitative measures and their interpretations from politically different viewpoints are outlined in this chapter.

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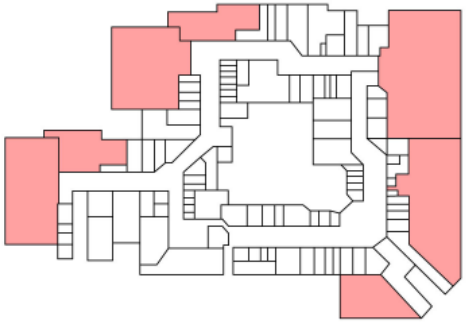


	SANDTON CITY	NELSON MANDELA SQUARE	EASTGATE	ORIENTAL PLAZA
LOCATION	CBD, Sandton	CBD, Sandton	Bedfordview, Johannesburg	Fordsburg, Johannesburg
DATE COMPLETED	1974	1994	*1980*	1974
Gross Lettable Area RETAIL	127 380m²	16 000m²	108 700.05 m²	80 616 m²
OWNER	Liberty Group Ltd	Liberty Group Ltd	*Liberty Life*	Oriental Plaza Trust
NUMBER OF STORES	290	94	250	365
CLASSIFICATION	Part of Super Regional Centre	Part of Super Regional Centre	*Super Regional Shopping Centre*	Speciality Centre
KEY ATTRACTIONS	Connection to Nelson Mandela Square Largest Retail centre in Gauteng	Nelson Mandela Square Sandton Library	free parking	Bargains Speciality goods
AVERAGE FOOTFALL/ month	2 000 000	1 000 000	1 800 000	900 000
ANCHOR TENANTS	Edgars, Stuttafords, Woolworths, Checkers Hyper	International Speciality Stores	Checkers Hyper, Game, Stuttafords, Woolworths, Edgars and Ster Kinekor	Speciality Stores
LAST REFURBISHMENT	2002	2002	2003	2005
COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL	45 000 m² of commercial space		4569.21 m² of office space (Eastgate Office Tower	Office space in Grand Bazaar
PARKING FACILITIES TYPES AND NUMBER OF BAYS	7540 Covered bays 2460 open bays total 10 000	2030 covered bays	5379 parking bays, including 1108 covered and 4271 open bays.	Covered parking 300 bays Open parking 2400 bays Total parking 2700 bays
TRADING HOURS	9am - 6pm daily Mondays to Saturdays 10am - 4pm daily Sundays and public holidays Cinemas & Restaurants trade later.	9am – 6pm Daily incl Public Holidays Restaurants trade later	Monday - Thursday 9am - 6pm Friday 9am - 9pm Saturday 9am - 5pm Sunday 9am - 5pm	Monday to Fridays 08H00 TO 17H00 SATURDAYS 08H30 TO 14H30

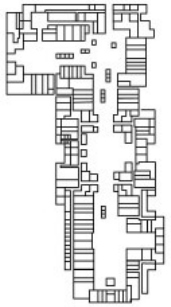
	CARLTON CENTRE	KILLARNEY	THE MALL OF ROSEBANK	THE ZONE @ ROSEBANK
LOCATION	CBD, Johannesburg	Killarney, Johannesburg	Rosebank, Sandton	Rosebank, Sandton
DATE COMPLETED	1971	1966	1977	1998
Gross Lettable Area RETAIL	53 832 m²	38 550 m²	35 000 m²	22 619 m²
OWNER	Transnet Ltd	Killareny Mall Properties	Hyprop Investments Limited.	Old Mutual Investment Group Property Investments
NUMBER OF STORES	124	101	125	51
CLASSIFICATION	Minor Regional Centre	Minor Regional Centre	Minor Regional Centre	Community Centre
KEY ATTRACTIONS	CBD		• Rooftop market • Street connection • Pedestrian environment	• 'shoppertainment' • Street connection • Pedestrian environment
AVERAGE FOOTFALL/ month	1 000 000	Unavailable	891 000	1 000 000
ANCHOR TENANTS	Pick 'n Pay, Mc Donalds, SARS, Ackermans, Clicks, Jet, Truworths, Ster-Kinekor, Spitz, Soviet	Woolworths, Pick 'n Pay Super, Clicks, CNA, Truworths, Nu Metro	Pick n Pay Super, Stuttafords, Truworths, Foschini	Ster-Kinekor, Woolworths, Exclusive Books, CD Warehouse
LAST REFURBISHMENT	1994	2005	2002	
COMMERCIAL/ RESIDENTIAL		Office space and medical suites	17 662 m2 of Office space	
PARKING FACILITIES TYPES AND NUMBER OF BAYS	Covered parking 2200 bays Open parking 0 bays Total parking 2200 bays	Covered parking 953 bays Open parking 543 bays Total parking 1496 bays	Covered parking 3000 bays Open parking 500 bays Total parking 3500 bays	Covered parking 808 bays Open parking 278 bays Total parking 1086 bays
TRADING HOURS	Monday- Friday 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday 9-2pm floyd 011 208 2161	Mon – Fri 9am-6pm Saturday 9am-5pm Sunday 10am-2pm	Monday to Saturday 9am – 6pm Sundays 10am – 4pm Public Holidays 10am – 4pm	Monday – Thursday 09:00 - 18:00 Friday 09:00 - 19:00 Saturday 09:00 - 19:00 Sunday 10:00 - 17:00 Public Holidays 10:00 - 17:00



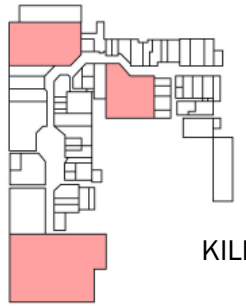
SANDTON CITY



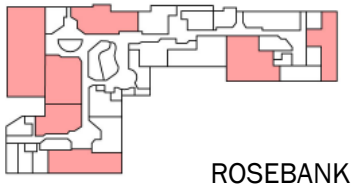
EASTGATE



ORIENTAL PLAZA



KILLARNEY MALL



ROSEBANK MALL

- red denotes anchor stores
- all mall plans to the same scale

MALL DEFINITION

Most malls are described as either regional centres or as community centres, which indicates their tendency to draw shoppers from specific areas relative to their location, in terms of shopping centre classification the Plaza is defined as a speciality destination shopping centre (www.mallguide.co.za). From this classification and from various interviews conducted it has been clearly established that the Plaza is not a conventional shopping centre in the sense that it does not cater for the general day-to-day needs of the consumers within a certain radius of its location as other regional or community centres would. It was designed to attract a particular clientele for specialised products. The Plaza is not frequented as much by locals as by shoppers from other parts of the city and even a vast number from other parts of Southern Africa.

ORIGINS

The reason for the Plaza's establishment wasn't financial or developer driven. It was first and foremost conceived of as a tourist attraction for a white middle class consumer market. It was also a political tool used to 'resettle Asian traders from depressed areas designated for urban renewal and development' (Wale: 1975 p 8). Another perspective is that the Plaza was designed as a means to protect the 'white volk' from the threat of the emerging 'non-white' bourgeoisie and was not to aid the development of the 'non-white, Indian' trader, and neither was it out of concern for their welfare. (Carrim: 1990) The shops, at the time the Plaza was built, could only be leased to Indian traders from the removed areas and the compliance with this stipulation almost guaranteed 100 percent tenant occupancy. The location of the centre was fixed and no prior location study had been carried out. Fordsburg was earmarked from the onset as a convenient business area with a suitable trading potential. (Wale: 1975)

Fig 5.2 Map indicating the removal of traders from 14th Street Pageview to The Plaza
Fig 5.3 The Oriental Plaza typical entrance facade

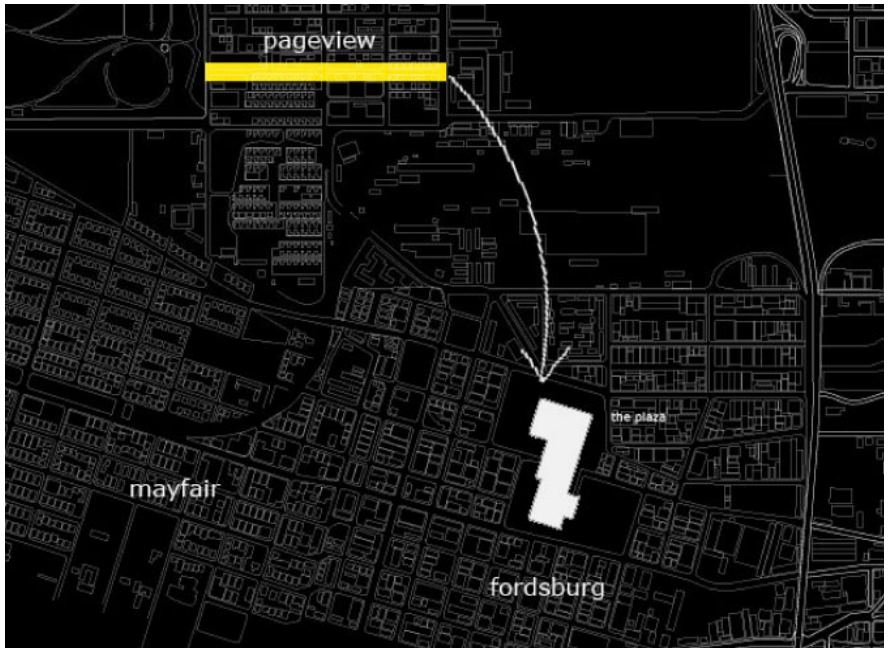


Fig 5.2

FEASABILITY AS DETERMINANT OF TYPOLOGY

The scale of the centre was determined by conventional feasibility studies used for shopping centres at the time. The number of traders and the total gross lettable area that could be economically sustained in this location was studied against an economic survey of the areas retail potential. This also required the definition of trade areas, assessment of household income and expenditure patterns and taking into account competitive centres active at the time.

The feasibility study called for a retail centre of approximately 31 000 sq. m and if the trading was correctly balanced with a suitable anchor department store and sufficient parking space for shoppers provided the centre was supposed to turn a profit within a few short years. (Wale: 1975).



Fig 5.3

DEMOCRATIC OWNERSHIP

One of the significant aspects unique to the Plaza is its ownership, both from its inception as well its current ownership. Two authorities developed the centre; The Department of Community Development acquired the site and provided the capital at economic interest rates to the City of Johannesburg, who would construct, own and operate the centre. The Plaza was not a profitable investment and in 1986 the Department of Community Development advised the Oriental Plaza Merchants Association that they intended to sell the Plaza and were in negotiations developers from Pretoria. The Association did not take to this decision well and after months of negotiations and even high-level political interventions, the Oriental Plaza was sold to the traders on a sectional title basis. The total purchase price was R21 million, less than half the original asking price of R45 million. It is now the one of the only shopping centres in South Africa owned by its tenants and each pays a monthly levy to the body corporate that manages and maintains the buildings. (Fraser: 2003)

UNREALIZED MALL CONFIGURATION

The Mall is a generic type that can be found globally in a multitude of different themes and variations. The proverbial architectural configuration of the Mall is comprised of a series of internalised corridors of a specific width, usually six to seven meters, which radiate out in various configurations but are always linked to facilitate movement. Larger anchor tenants are strategically planned at the end of a run of small-scale shops that line the corridors on either side. (Noble: 2000)

Crawford appropriately explains certain tactics employed by mall designers:

'All the familiar tricks of mall design - limited entrances, escalators placed only at the end of corridors, fountains and benches carefully positioned to entice shoppers into stores - control the flow of consumers through the numbingly repetitive corridors of shops. (Sorkin, 1992: 14 - 15)'

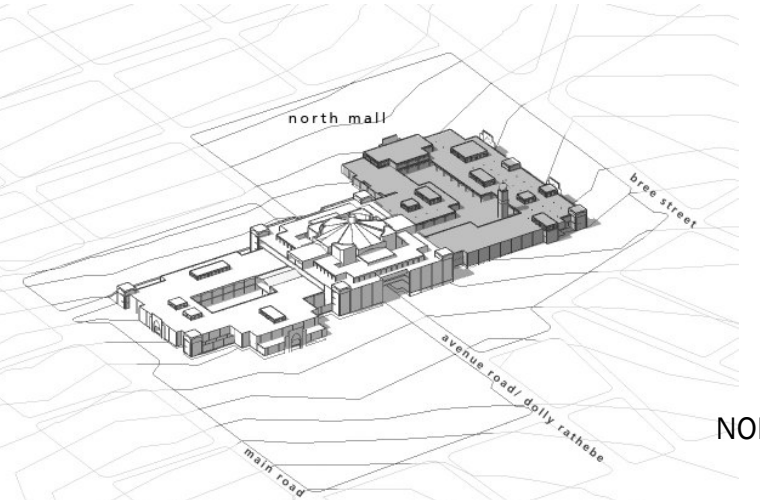




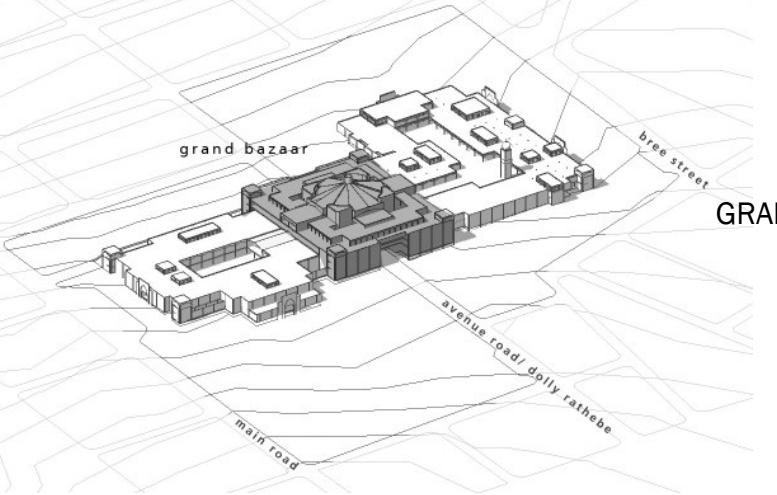
As much as the Plaza was an instrument of control in its socio-political conception, in its design strategic tactics of consumer control were implemented to entice the shoppers. The anchor store or one magnet centre of the Plaza was conceptually conceived of as the Grand Bazaar, which stretched over Avenue Road with line shops between it and the North and South entrances. Avenue Road was lowered to allow the upper shopping level of the North Mall to be carried over into the Grand Bazaar. The centre is in effect two levels of shopping with the lower level entered from the South Entrance. A number of the traders would be contained as individual departments in the anchor, which was conceived of as a leased department store. The logic was similar to that of Hyde Park and Rosebank Mall at the time, which offered the notion of a diffused department store under one roof. (Wale: 1975)

However, the strategic anchor store was never realized. The center has been left underutilised, ambiguous and open to imaginative possibilities. In effect the proposed anchor space has been given over and appropriated by the public. It is the inversion of the typical 'anchor store'.

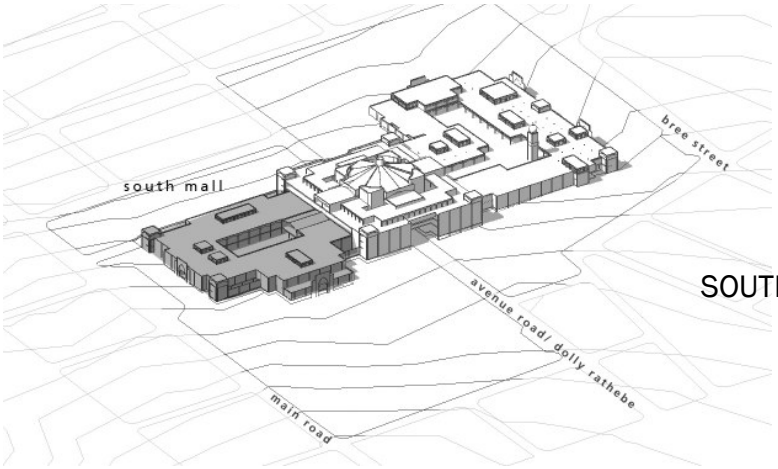
The following diagrams explain the different components of The Plaza and they function over the various levels. They are also key to understanding both the urban and archietctural proposals which follow.



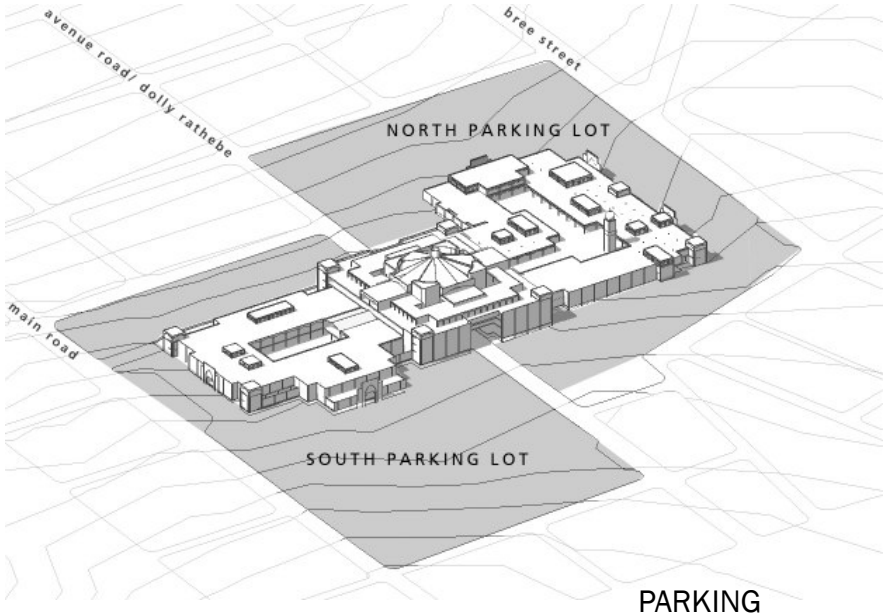
NORTH MALL



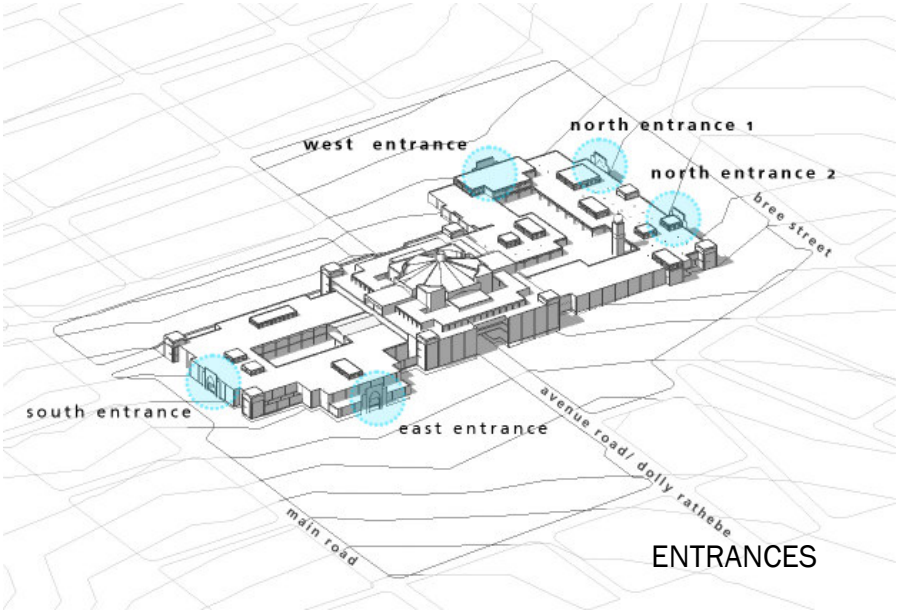
GRAND BAZAAR



SOUTH MALL



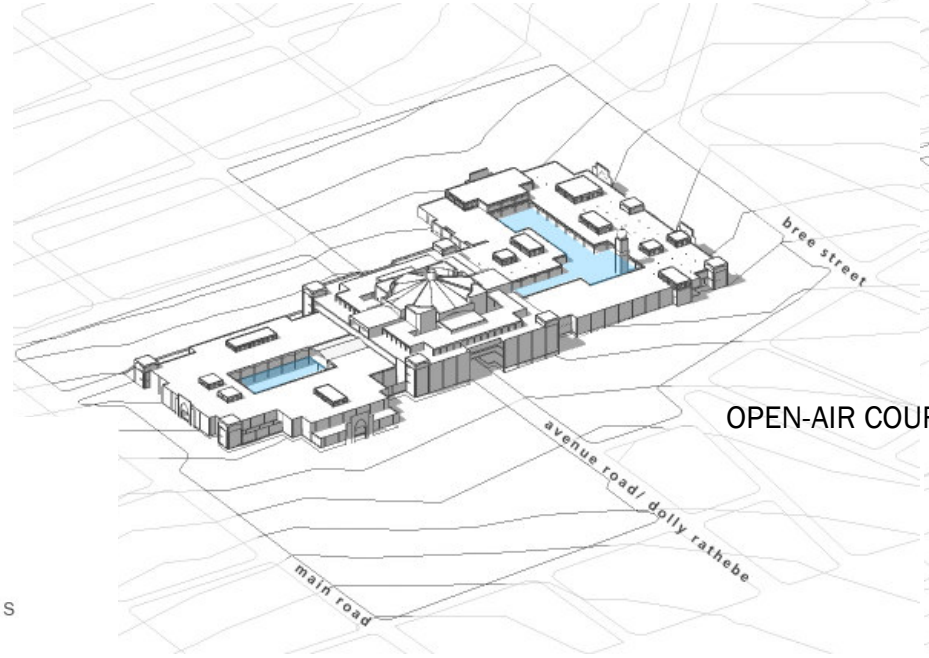
PARKING



ENTRANCES

KEY

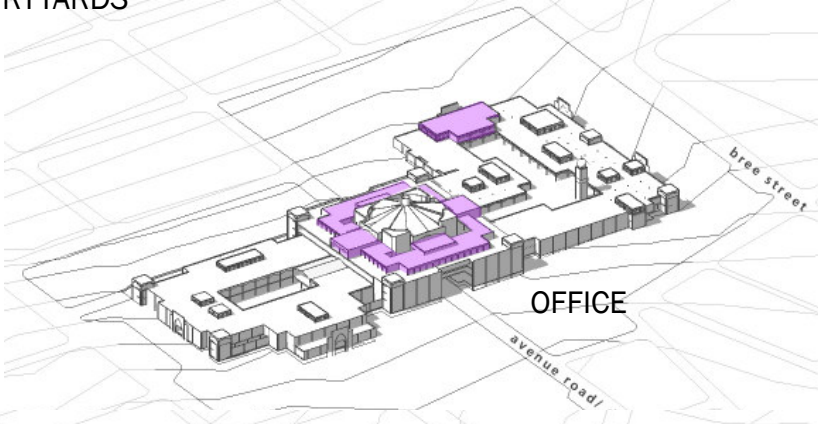
- RETAIL
- OFFICE
- STORAGE
- OPEN AIR COURTYARDS
- CLOCK TOWER
- PUBLIC CIRCULATION CORES
- SERVICE CIRCULTION CORES
- ROOF STORAGE
- ROOFLIGHTS
- BASEMENT PARKING



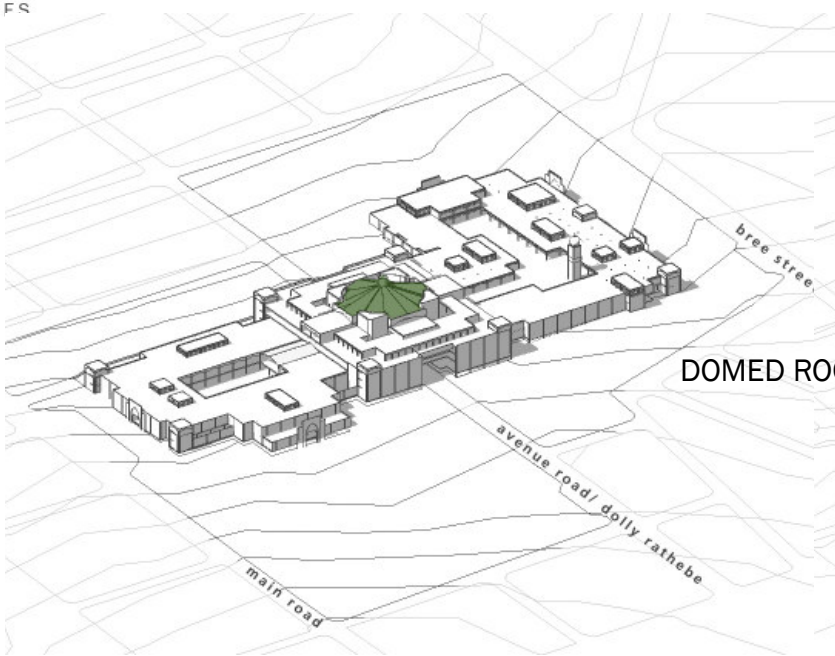
OPEN-AIR COURTYARDS



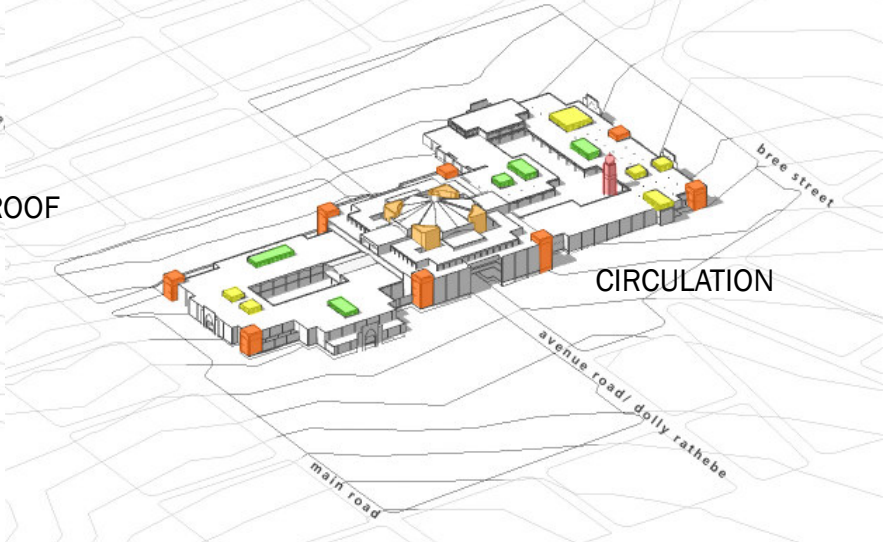
RETAIL



OFFICE



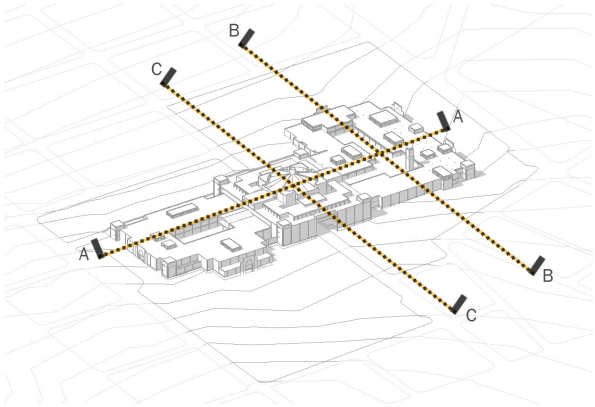
DOMED ROOF

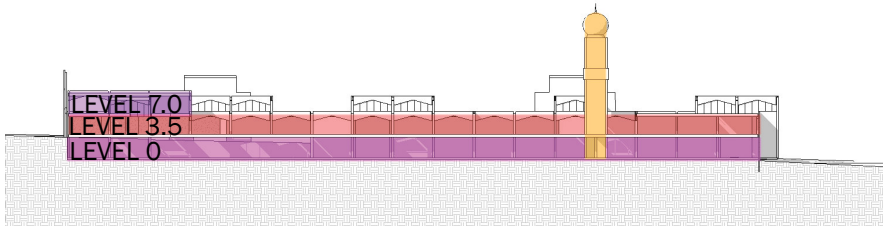


CIRCULATION



Fig 5.4 Aerial view of The Plaza (Mcclenaghan: 2008)

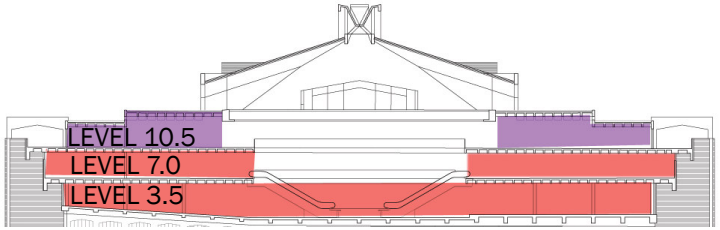




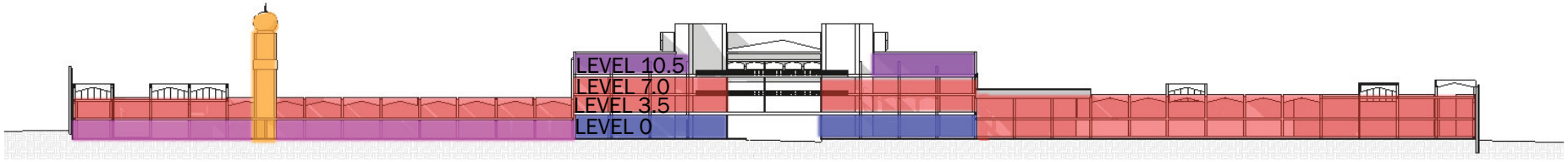
SECTION B-B

KEY

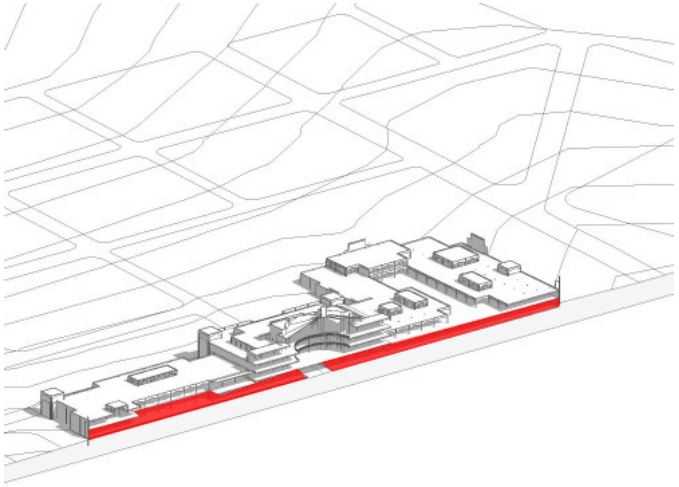
- RETAIL
- OFFICE
- STORAGE
- OPEN AIR COURTYARDS
- CLOCK TOWER
- PUBLIC CIRCULATION CORES
- SERVICE CIRCULTION CORES
- ROOF STORAGE
- ROOFLIGHTS
- BASEMENT PARKING



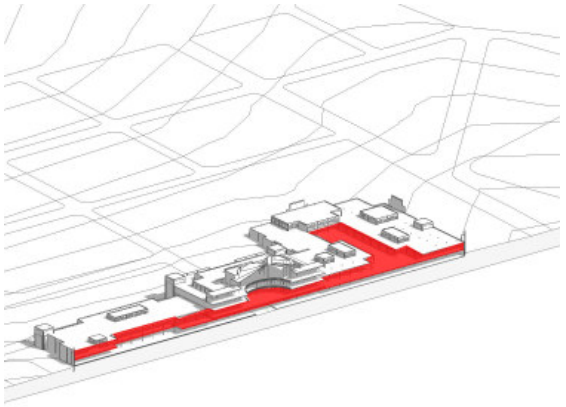
SECTION C-C



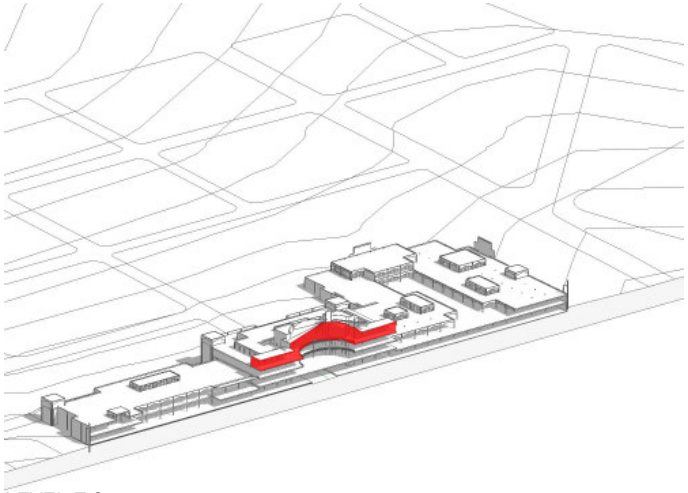
SECTION A-A



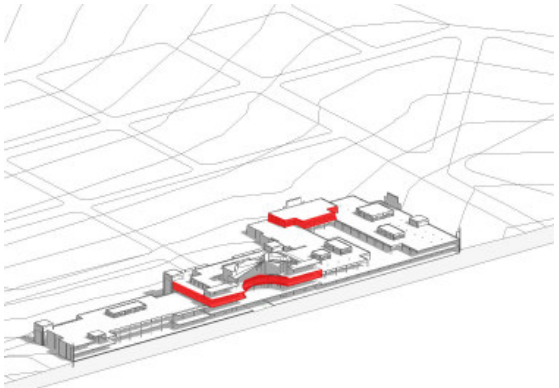
LEVEL 0
Tenant Parking, storage and South Mall ground floor retail



LEVEL 3.5
North Mall ground floor retail, Grand Bazaar ground floor retail,
North Mall first floor retail



LEVEL 7.0
Grand Bazaar first floor retail



LEVEL 10.5
Office, storage

RENTALS AND RETURNS

The economics of Malls today are carefully calculated financial systems of rentals that aim to ensure financial success. Typically an anchor tenant would pay only 12,5 – 15 percent of the monthly rental per square meter that other smaller shops would be paying. The justification given for this is that the small shops feed of the presence of the larger anchor stores, and 'thus buying into the Mall concept ensures success for the small retailer' (Noble: 2000). In an attempt to eliminate financial risk in the Mall development option, at least 40% of the Mall's retail space is reserved for the anchor tenants, with the remaining 60% or less being given over to the smaller scale shops. Offering very low rentals to anchor tenants is a technique used to ensure that these large anchor tenants come on board as they are substantial financial enterprises they could easily develop their own retail outlets. The small tenants are charged high rentals to ensure the overall profitability for the investors, as the low rentals offered to the anchor tenants are not economically sustainable. This clearly defines the mall as a typology that works in the best interests of large, established corporate capital. (Noble: 2000).

The economic feasibility calculations for the Plaza were somewhat different to that of conventional malls at the time of its conception. In the eyes of the developers the Plaza was intended to be viable only to the



Fig 5.5

extent that interest and repayment of the loan over an agreed period and operating and maintenance costs were met. It was hoped that the rental of shops could be kept at a level similar to, or approaching those paid by most traders from areas such as Vrededorp and Sophiatown.

An article published in the journal Architect and Builder in 1975 describes the shops that the traders occupied before the removals and the establishment of the Plaza as 'generally old and poorly maintained buildings, often doubling as dwelling units' (Wale: 1975 p 9). From various interviews of shopkeepers and the Oriental Plaza Trust, the general consensus is that the rent initially paid by traders was far higher than what they could afford and had paid when they had traded



Fig 5.6

Fig 5.6 Vibrant street shopping on 14th Street pageview, mid 1970s (Carrim 1990: 28)
Fig 5.5 Internal shopping Arcade The Plaza 1975

outside of the Plaza. Many of the traders who were moved to the Plaza owned and lived above the shops they traded from. Their income was obviously much higher than what it would have been after paying rent at the Plaza. Another financial implication on the traders was that many were forced to move to designated Indian and coloured areas outside of the city such as Lenasia, which also impeded further on their incomes. (Carrim: 1990)

In traditional urban settings, main streets and public spaces were most lucrative. The absence of the anchor store in the Plaza model allows for the hybridization of the city model with that of the mall. The public occupies the centre and it isn't privatised, but the shops are still able to benefit from it.

TENANT MIX

The establishment of an effective tenant mix is critical to the economic success of a Mall. This composure of tenant mix translates into a system of Mall management that actively and continuously takes control over the rental system. (Noble: 2000).

The Plaza was internally as well as externally an imposition on the traders of Pageview. Not only were the forced removals detrimental to their well being, the stifling trade regulations were a further means of altering the very material basis of their lives. In the eyes of the Pageview traders the allocation of shops in the Oriental Plaza was a controversial matter. Most of the prime site shops were already given to those who co-operated with the authorities in moving to the Oriental Plaza. The controversy also lay in the fact that the allocation of shops was also a specification of the kind of merchandise the traders could sell. (Carrim: 1990)

The architects and planners who designed the Plaza developed a merchandising plan, complete with convenience and comparative shopping zones that would develop the centre as a one-stop retail shopping centre containing approximately 360 traders including kiosk traders, flower sellers and shopkeepers. (Wale: 1975) The proposed tenant mix was a problem for the traders from the onset. From various interviews conducted the general complaint was that the traders offered a variety of goods from each of their stores when they traded outside of the Plaza and often sold goods which they were familiar with or could acquire for a bargain price and therefore sell at a good price. When they were forced to move to The Plaza many of them only had the option of selling a specific product, which suited the particular shopping zone they were allocated to.

The imposed notion of a balanced tenant mix was further aggravated by the regular inspections the traders in the Oriental Plaza were subjected to. Authorities regularly inspected the shops and the merchandise, asking the shop owners what they thought were irrelevant questions. Most traders perceived these inspections to be a form of policing their activities and to further maintain control over them.
(Carrim: 1990)

Fig 5.7 Trading at the Plaza is similar to that of the historical trading on 14th Ave Pageview
Fig 5.8 Trading in the Plaza is not confined to the internal shop spaces



Fig 5.7

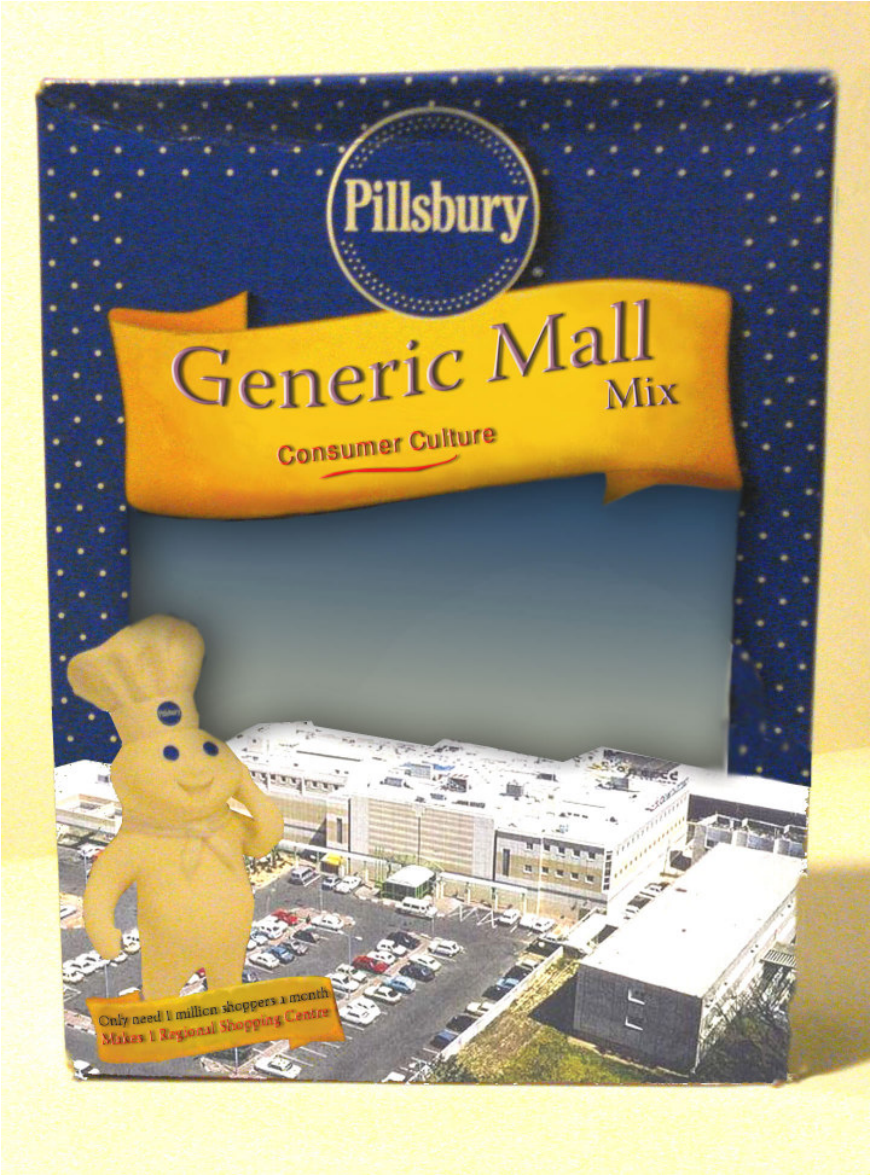
After the traders bought the Plaza, the strictly regulated tenant mix soon fell away and shop owners began trading in a variety of goods that they were familiar with. The Plaza traders can now trade in goods they are able to acquire at good prices and also the fact that many of them don’t pay rent as they have paid off the shops they own, mean


Fig 5.8

that they can sell goods at prices that are approximately 40 percent cheaper than what they can be bought for in other malls. (Patel: 2008) As much as the current non-restrictive tenant mix adds to the unique character of the Plaza, it is beginning to cause some new problems. The financial success of the shop owners at the Plaza and South Africa's move towards democracy has culminated in many of the trader's children becoming educated and not wanting to be involved in the retail sector as their families did for generations. The shop owners are often forced to rent their shops out to an emerging immigrant population and currently the Plaza is experiencing a 52 percent absentee landlord ratio. The management is currently in the process of redefining the rules and regulations in the centre to prevent certain destructive trends such as the vast number of leather jacket and cell phones shops invading the centre. (Patel: 2008)

REGULATED TRADING ACTIVITIES

Forcing the Pageview traders into the Plaza to sell specific products meant a complete reorientation of their traditional trading styles. Today the idea of shopping within a defined shopping complex or mall is often taken for granted, but at the time that the Pageview traders were forced to move to the Oriental Plaza, the very idea of a 'shopping complex' was unknown to most of them. The Pageview traders traded in a unique style, stocking all kinds of goods, half their merchandise arranged on the pavements and many had their shops as an extension of their homes. It was on the simple basis that the Pageview trader's shops were street facing that they developed their trading expertise and attracted their clientele. In contrast, the traders were prevented from displaying their merchandise as they liked in the Plaza and they were limited to they kinds of items they were allowed to stock. (Carrim: 1990)


Pillsbury
Generic Mall
Mix
Consumer Culture
Only need 1 million shoppers a month
Makes 1 Regional Shopping Centre


IT'S SO EASY!
Pillsbury
1
COMBINE
The box of controlled environment with the sea of parking
2
ADD
Limited entrances
3
ENHANCE
The results with forced circulation, escalators at end of corridors, dramatic atriums and multiple levels
4
USE
One to two anchors and a flexible number of line shops
5
MIX
For best results allow for a variable tenant mix
6
ENJOY
For best enjoyment add about 1 million shoppers of suitable demographic per month
Look out for our new Tuscan and other themed malls!
Malls can be modified by adding a parking deck in front.
Revamp every 5 years

One of the most unique aspects of the Plaza today are the trading activities which take place in the communal areas. After the Plaza was bought by the traders, the opportunity opened up for them to return to a familiar method of trade. The seemingly uncontrolled and chaotic methods in which goods are sold and displayed in the Plaza courtyards is almost reminiscent of the retail activities which took place in 14th street Pageview.

PARKING

The centre provided approximately 1600 parking bays for shoppers and 300 tenant bays beneath the North Mall. The circulation of tenants cars and service vehicles is separated from shoppers parking. Off loading bays are beneath the building with goods distributed vertically by service lifts and horizontally through a maze of access corridors to the rear of the shops. (Wale: 1975)

Although the designers took the right steps in terms of typical mall design by providing an adequate sea of parking around the Plaza, the fragmented lots are now a headache to the management and shoppers alike. Before the parking was enclosed it was not such a problem to move in and out of a lot and into another if the parking was full. But since the management wanted to prevent the free use of the parking lots by other users of Fordsburg and Newtown and also as a default security measure, they fenced in the entire periphery of the centre and introduced a conventional pay per hour parking system. The design of the four fragmented parking lots meant that eight different entry and exit points needed to be provided and the management of the lots once each one was full is quite a labour intensive activity especially at the peak shopping times on a Saturday morning.

PLAZA NOW

The Oriental Plaza is now a “gold mine”, a profitable investment in spite of its controversial origins. The once Pageview trader, who was just a simple retailer, has now capitalized and has grown into a fully-fledged entrepreneurial businessman. The Oriental Plaza today has become a sought after investment and each shop has more than trebled its original worth. The financial success of the Plaza is also telling of the fact that a calculated tenant mix and strict trading regulations aren’t necessarily the only means for a mall typology to be financially viable. It proves that it is also not unfeasible for small traders and the public to be prioritised over large corporate capital.

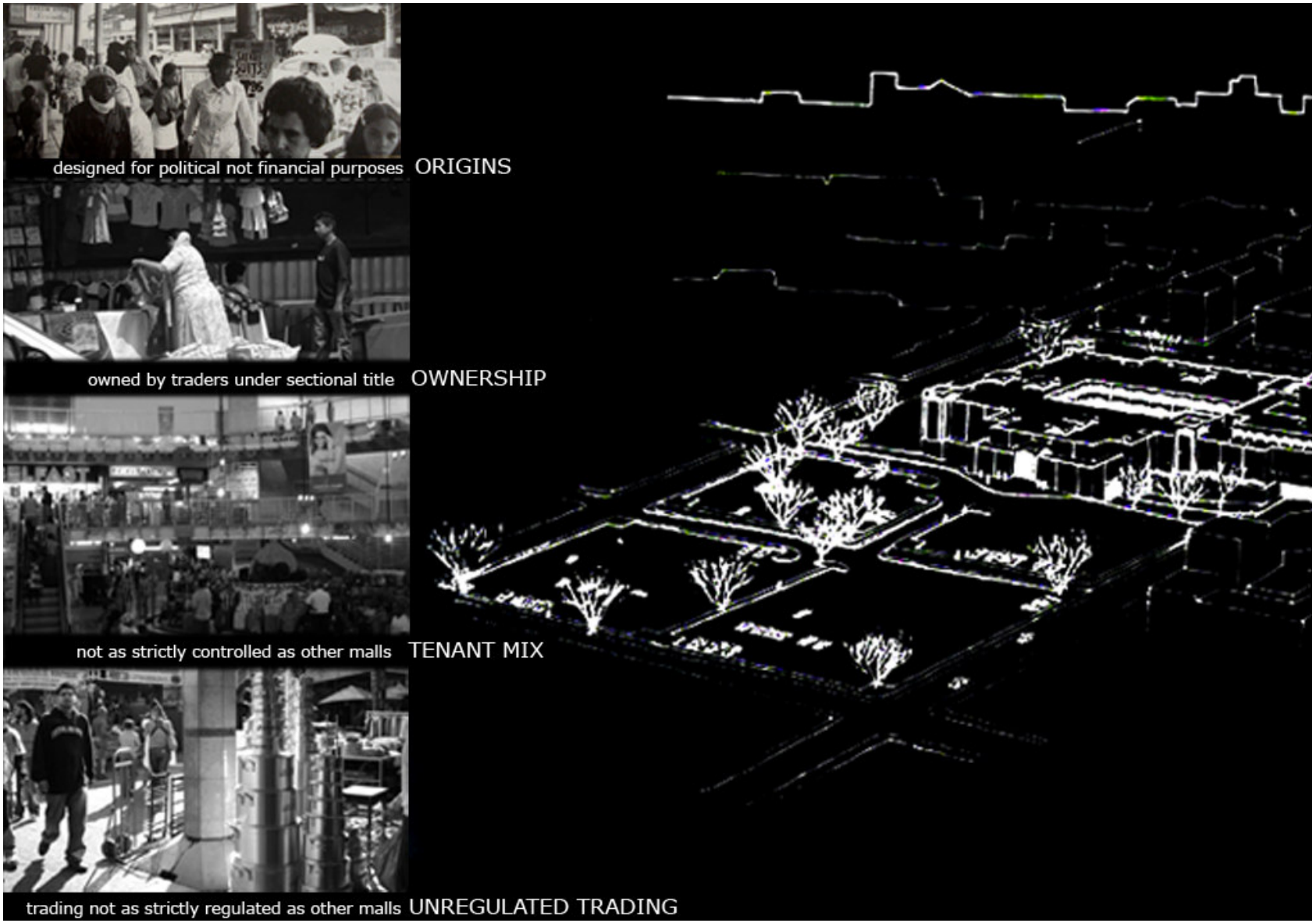
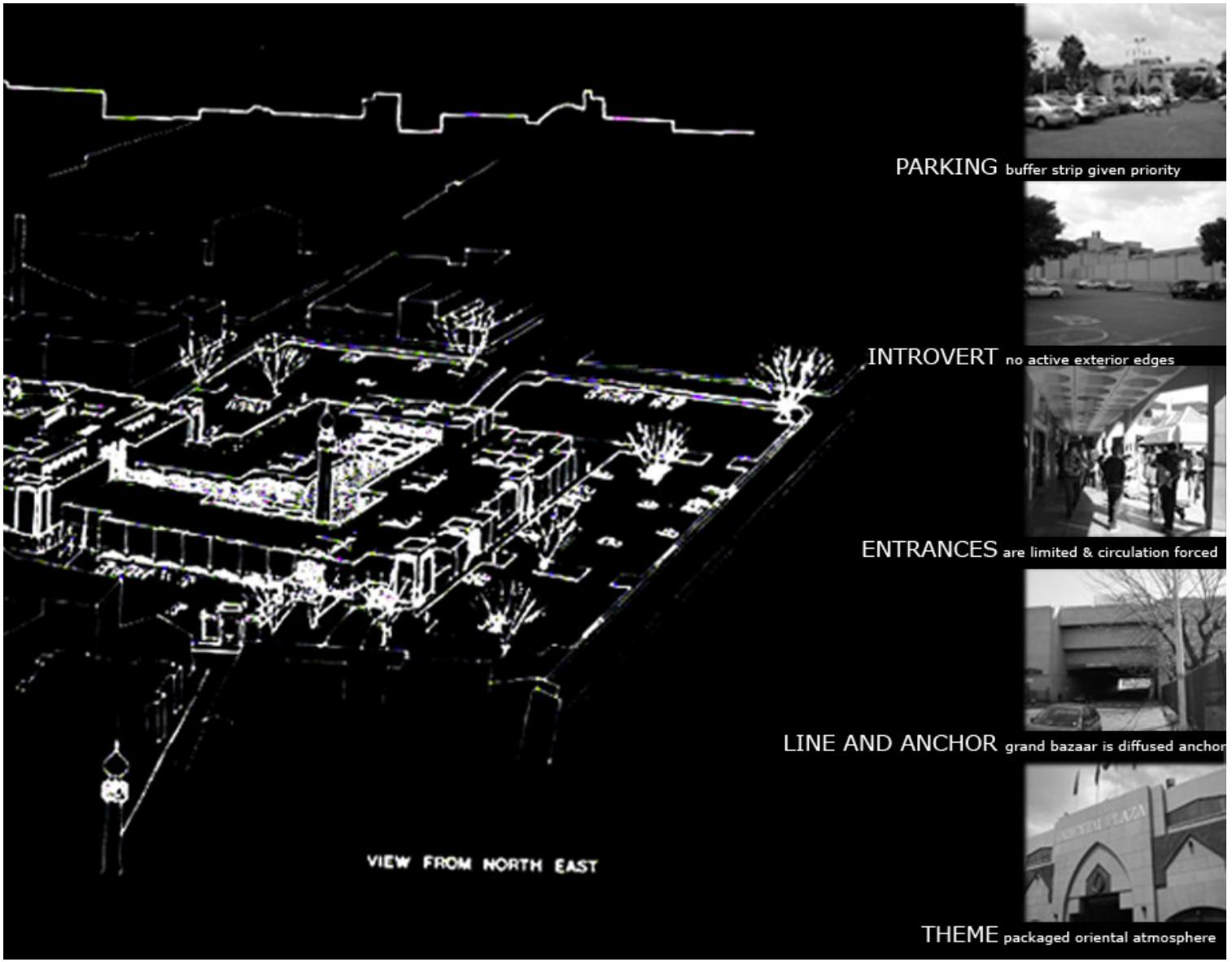


Fig 5.9 Analysis of mall and non-mall characteristics of the Plaza
(after van Rensberg: 1975)



PARKING buffer strip given priority

INTROVERT no active exterior edges

ENTRANCES are limited & circulation forced

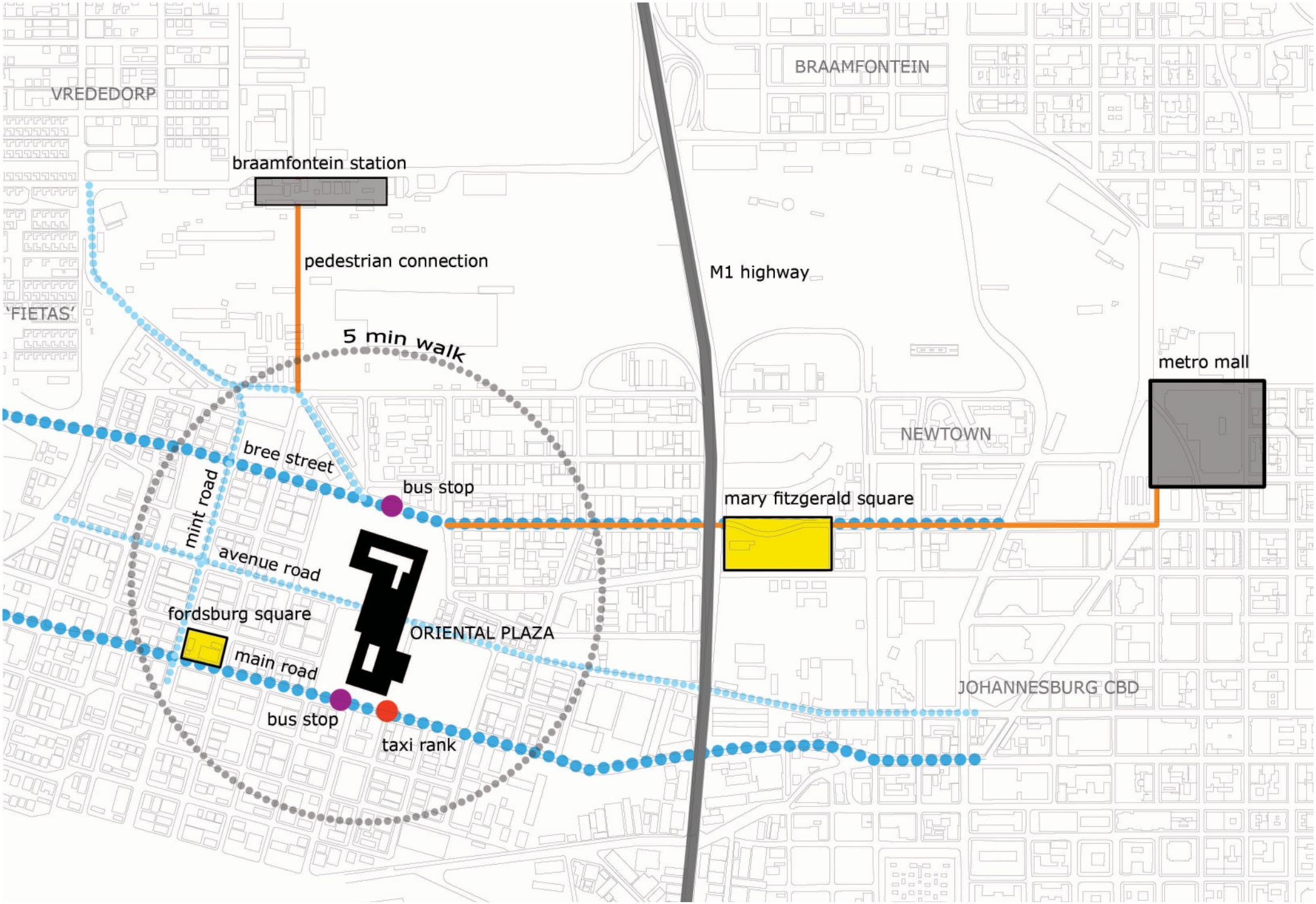
LINE AND ANCHOR grand bazaar is diffused anchor

THEME packaged oriental atmosphere

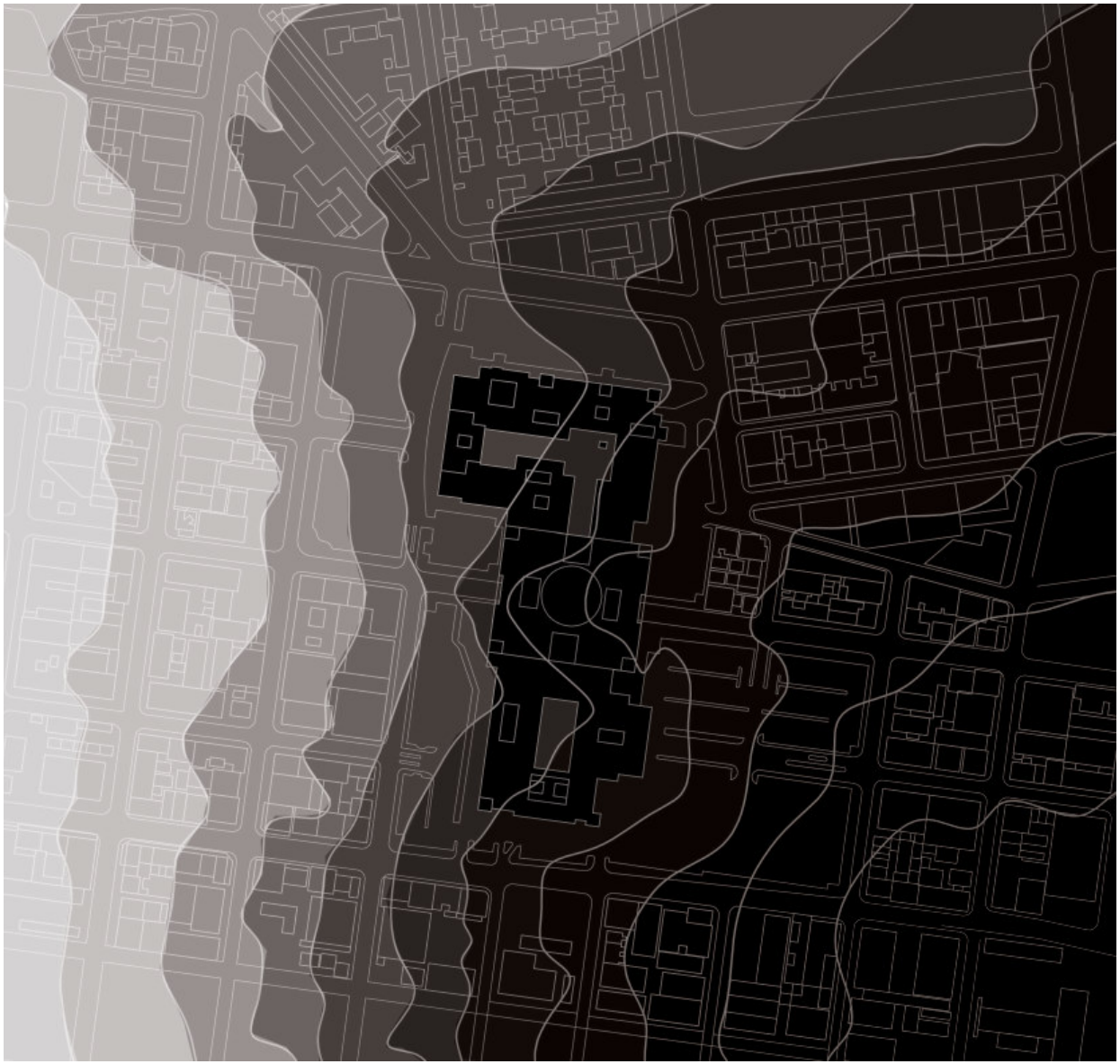
06

SITE ANALYSIS

The Plaza is well connected to the Johannesburg CBD and western suburbs in a East-West direction, especially by two major arterials Bree Street and Main Road. The North-South connections are poor. Various proposals have been made by the city enhance the North-South connections. These include linking Solomon Road to Central and Lilian Streets and the extension of Yale Road over the railway lines.


VREDEDORP
BRAAMFONTEIN
braamfontein station
pedestrian connection
M1 highway
'FIETAS'
5 min walk
metro mall
NEWTOWN
bree street
mint road
bus stop
mary fitzgerald square
avenue road
fordsburg square
ORIENTAL PLAZA
main road
JOHANNESBURG CBD
bus stop
taxi rank

Natural factors: the climate is typically a Highveld climate with hot sunny summers interspersed with sudden thunderstorms. The summer winds blow in a North-South direction and South-North direction in winter. The land slopes gently from in a North to South direction.



Physical factors: the site is bounded by Lilian Street to the North, Bree Street to the East, Main Road on the West and Pine Street on the South.

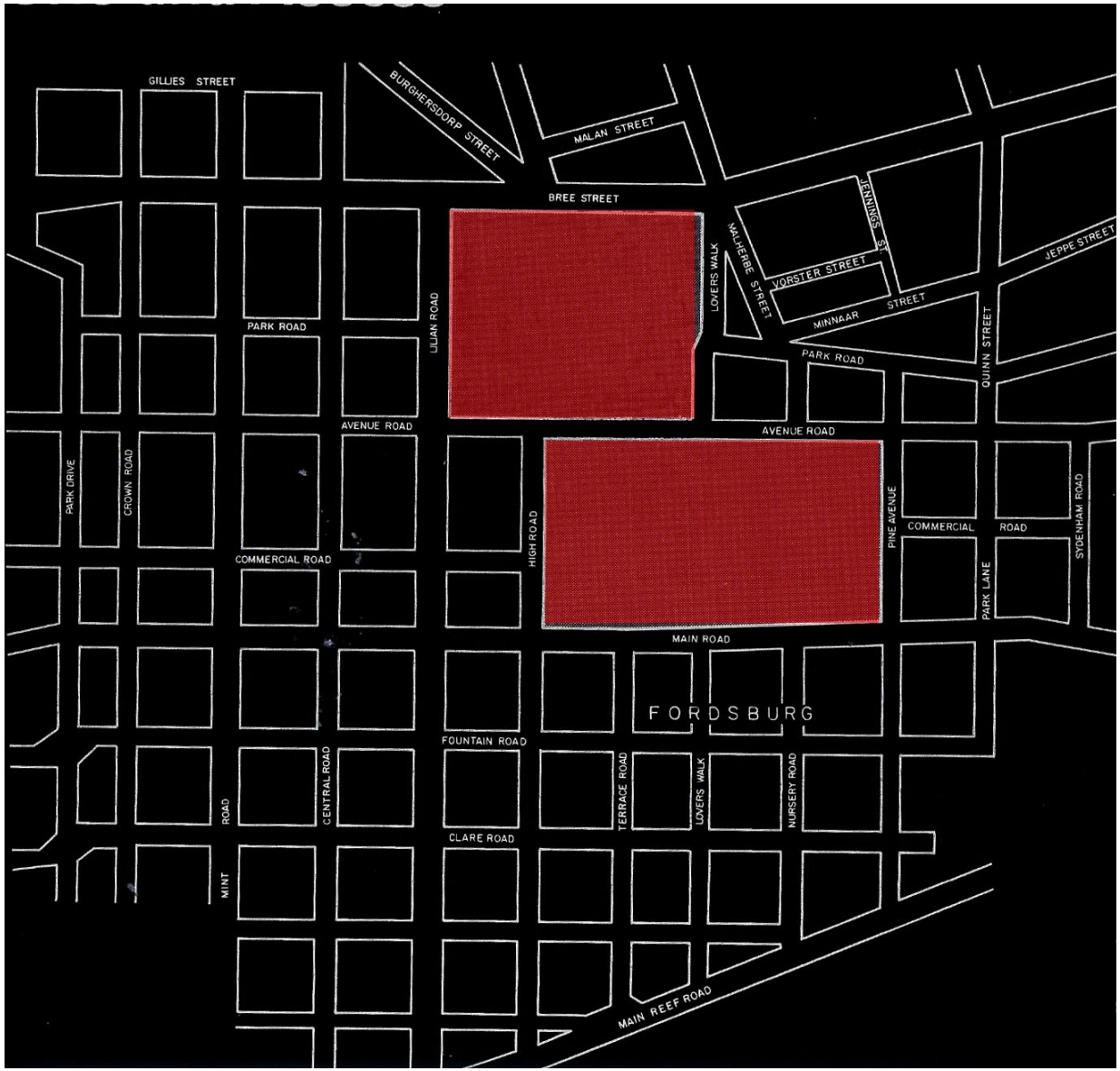
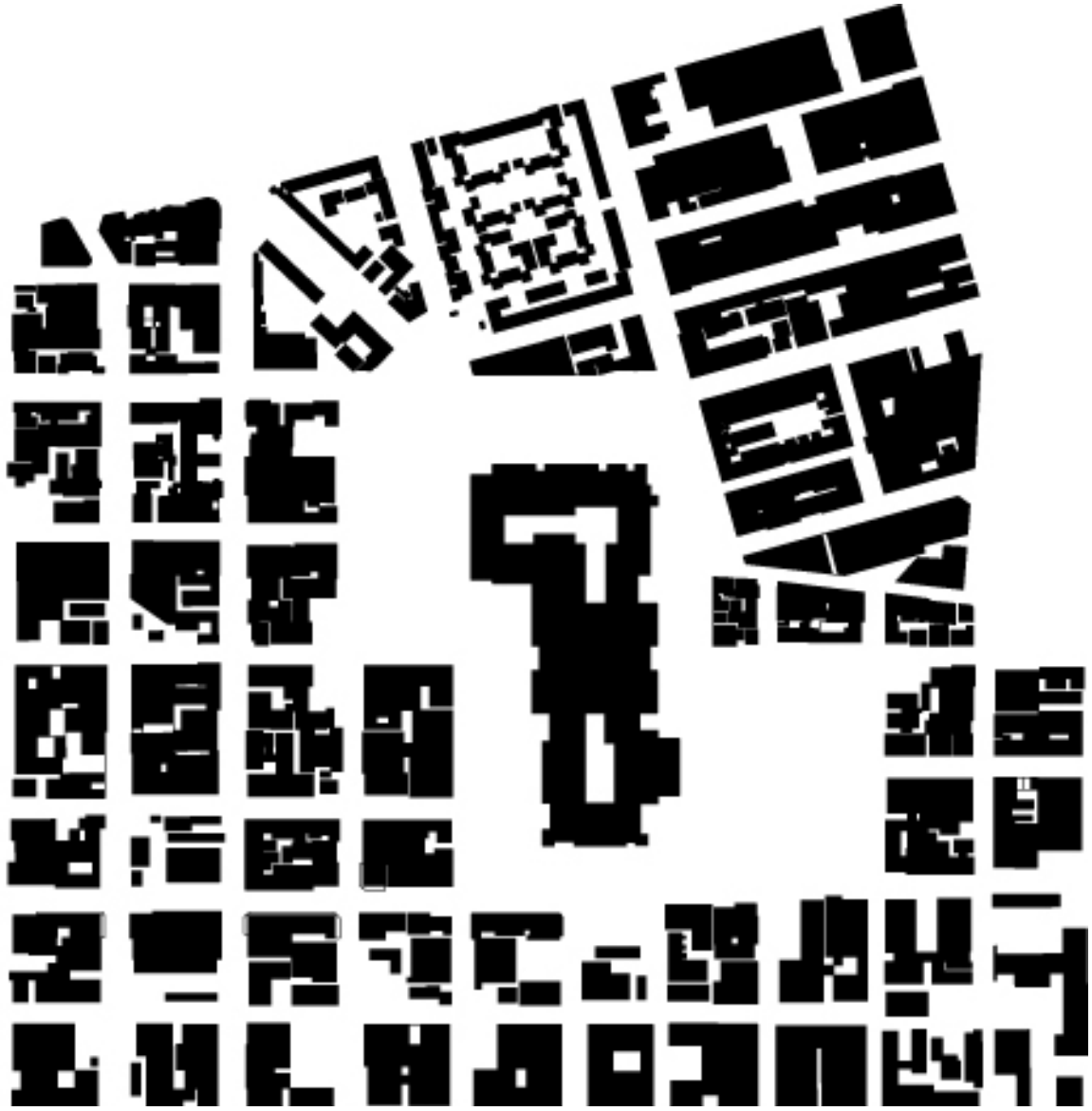
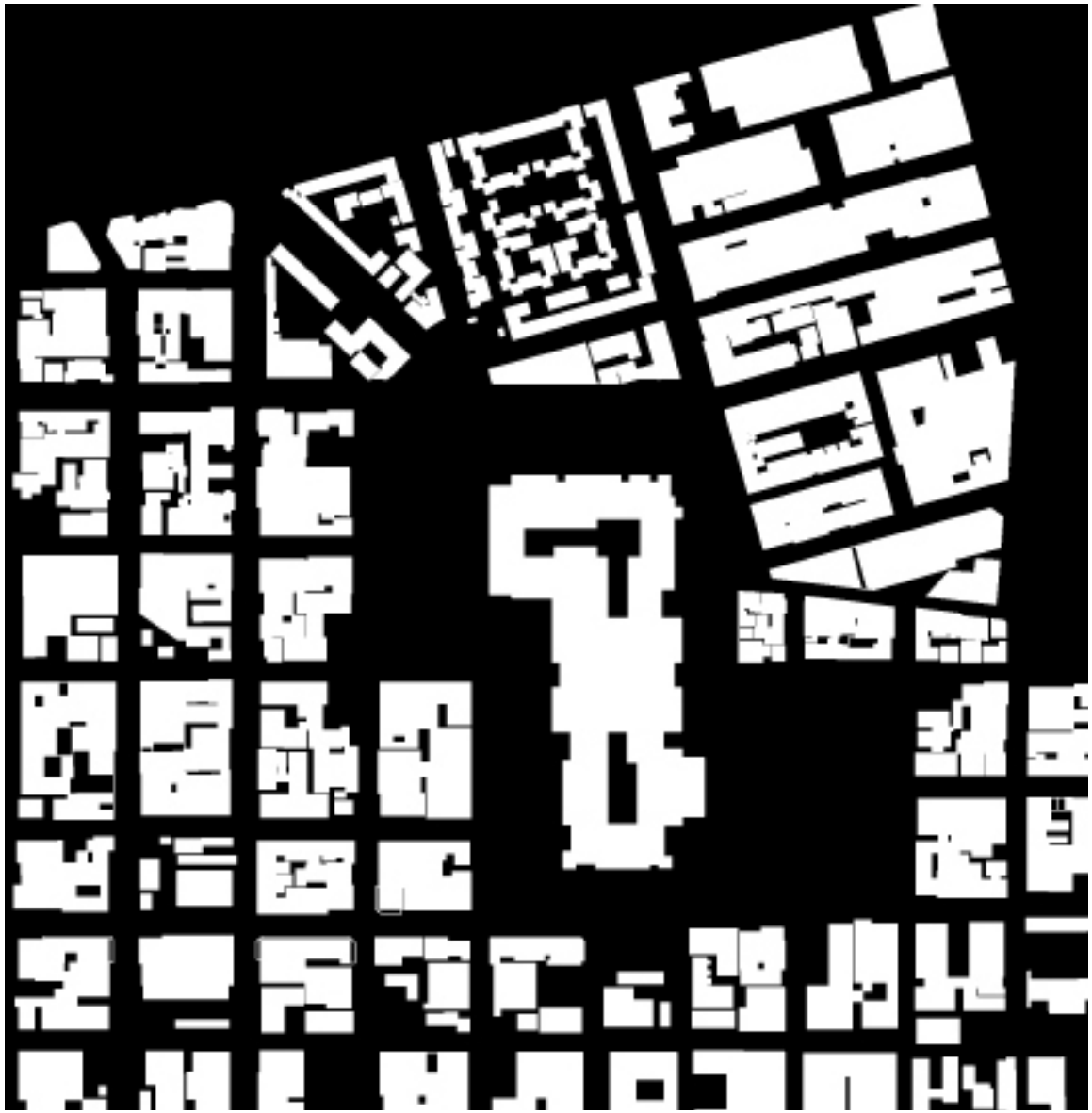


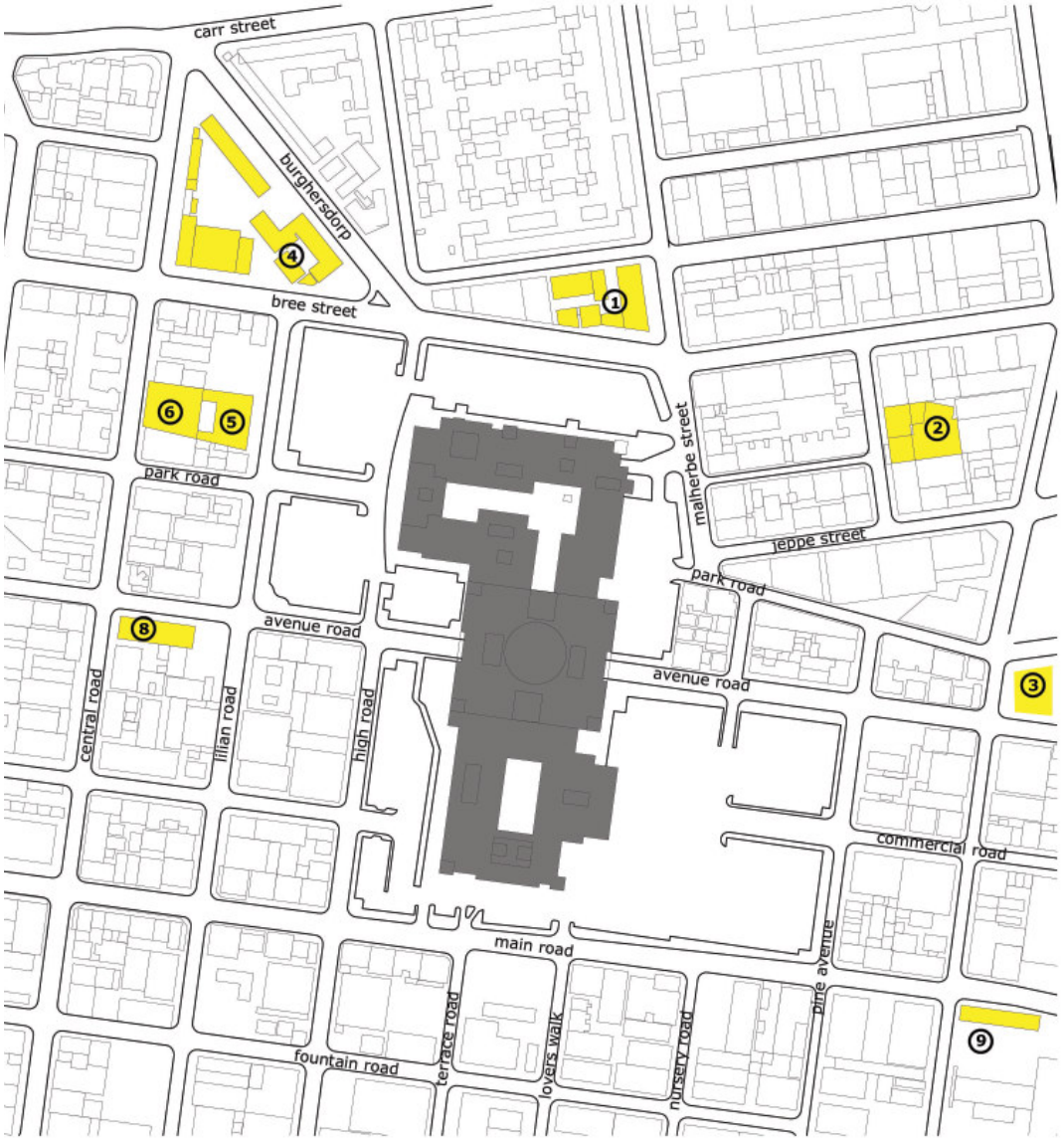
Figure ground study of Fordsburg



Open space vs built space study of Fordsburg



Key public buildings



KEY PUBLIC BUILDINGS

1. Jhb Muslim School
2. Fordsburg Mosque
3. Metro bus depot
4. School
5. Creche
6. Majestic Movies
7. Catholic Church
8. Fordsburg Post Office
9. Jhb Road Agency

Land use study Fordsburg



PRECEDENT STUDIES

URBAN PRECEDENT STUDIES

ISFAHAN

The Iranian city of Isfahan is one of the greatest examples of “harmonic” urban form (Ardalan 1973: 8). This is the result of planned civic or sovereign spaces in the form of the Maidan (the main public square) and various other geometric courtyards of the palace precincts; the religious form and orientation of the mosque; the organic complexity of the bazaar street; and the peripheral surrounding infill of small-scale residential structures. (Ardalan: 1973)

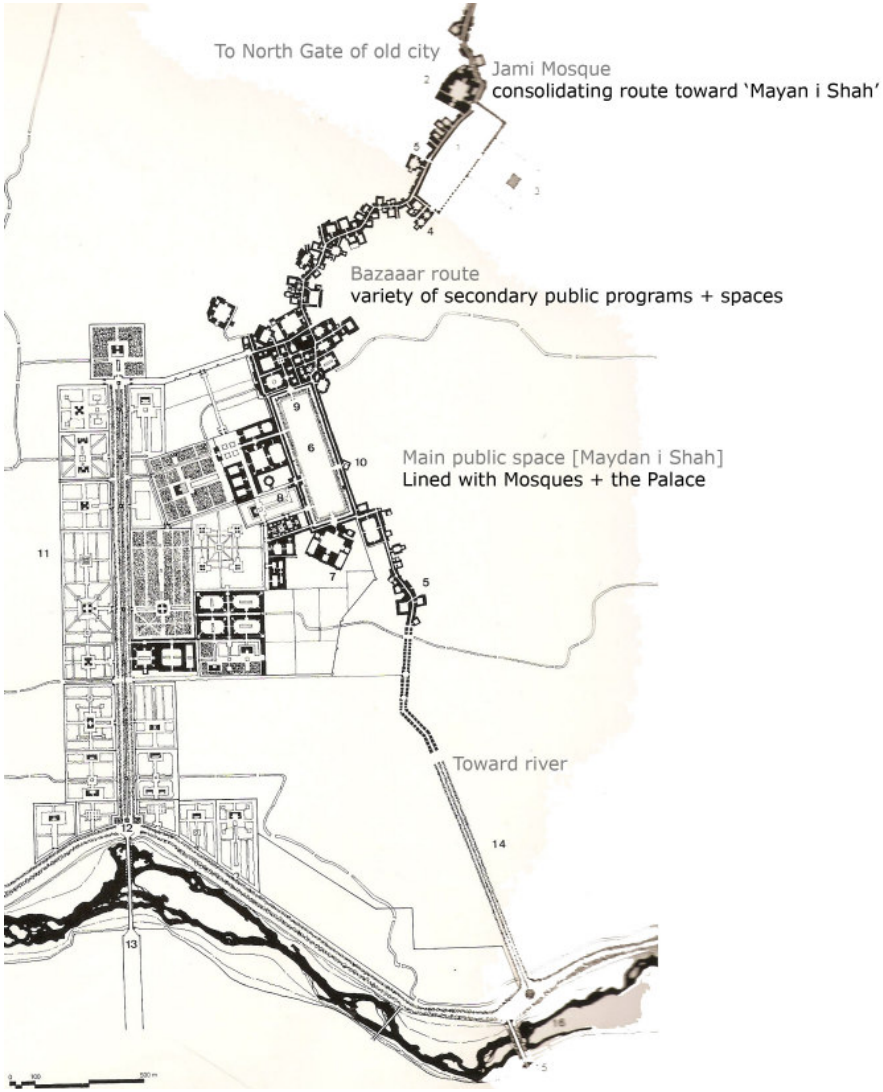


Fig 7.1 Isfahan historical urban plan
(Ardalan 1973: 32)

PRECEDENT STUDIES

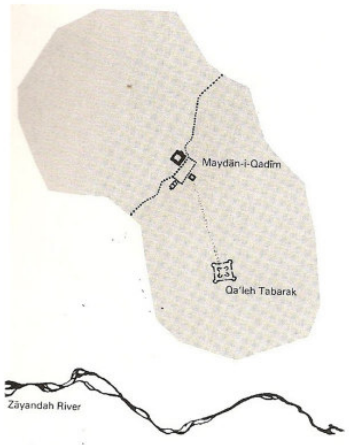


Fig 7.2 (Ardalan 1973: 32)

Geometric and harmonic orders were considered to be contrasting forms of architectonic expression. Geometric order was always based on a single static point around which an abstract geometric form was constructed; this was considered to symbolize cosmic perfection. Harmonic order extends the notion of a single static point to a single but moving central point which traces a living, constantly evolving path into the fabric of the city. The cosmic geometry becomes a complex, living collection of forms over time. This path becomes the route of the bazaar street. (Ardalan: 1973)

The bazaar street is the amorphous functional component of the city and allows the complexity and procedural forms of commerce and agglomeration to structure around a spine which is firmly anchored by the geometric legibility of the Maidan. The logic and clarity of the arrangement is clearly recognizable by the pedestrian users of the space. (Ardalan: 1973)

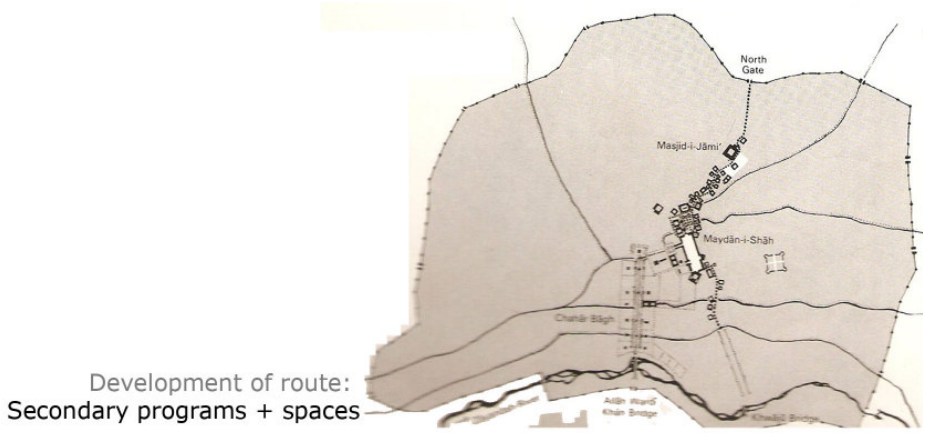


Fig 7.3 (Ardalan 1973: 32)



Fig 7.4 View of the Maidan, Isfahan
(Blair 2004: 213

FREE BERLIN UNIVERSITY

Architects: Candilis, Josic and Woods
Location: Berlin, Germany

The Free Berlin University campus is a seminal work by the firm Candilis, Josic, Woods, Schiedhelm. The design of Free University was begun in 1963 and the first phase completed in 1973. The firm were members of the group of architects known as Team 10 and the design embodied many of the group's ideas of architecture and urban design. (Woods :1978)



Fig 7.5 Free Berlin University, Candilis-Josic-Woods
(www.googlearth.co.za: 2008)

The buildings were designed to function as a piece of the city, adapting to the needs of its users while generating opportunities for social interaction. The design was envisioned as a grid of courtyards and connector buildings. The conceptual thinking was that the buildings would be a system of urbanism that would expand and change as required, allowing for flexible growth. Entire blocks of the campus could be dismantled and put up somewhere else. (Woods :1978)

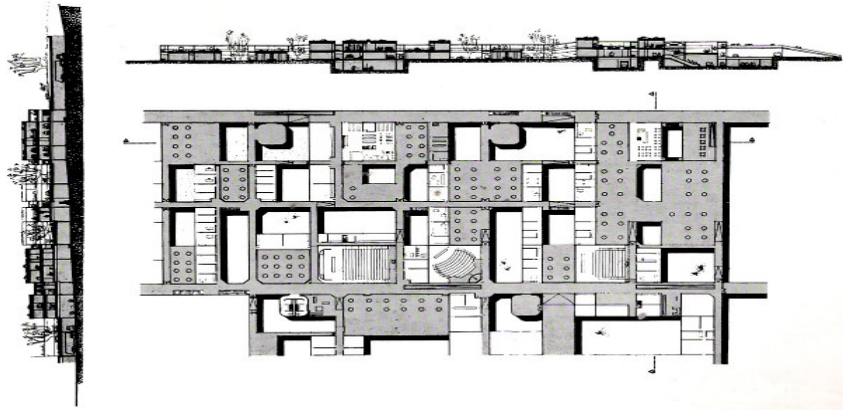
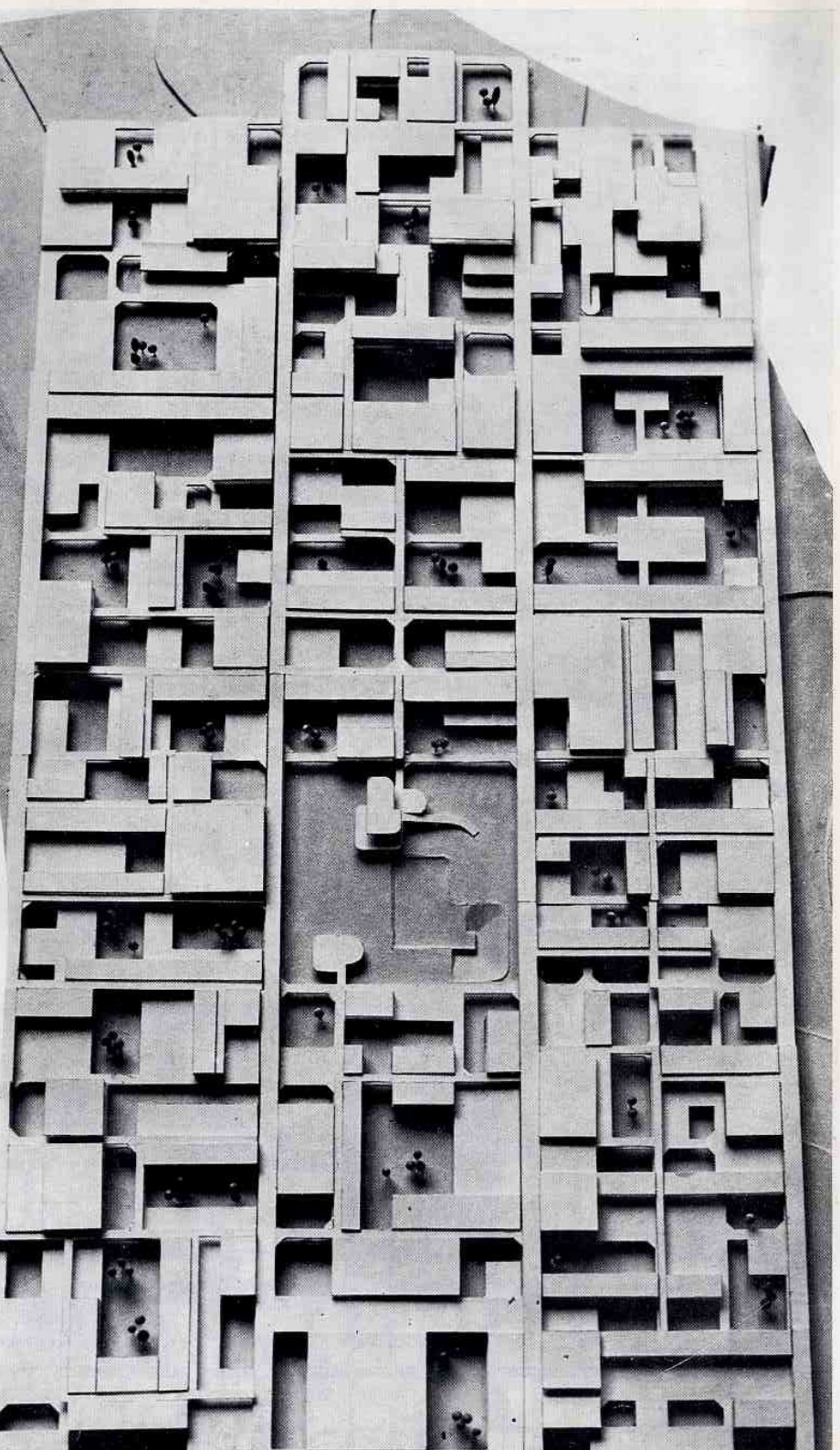


Fig 7.6 Free Berlin University, Candilis-Josic-Woods, Organic Chemistry - plan and sections
(Woods 1978: 92)



The concept for the campus was also derived from the notion that a university is an environment of exchange which takes place amongst groups and individuals. The firm was contesting the notion that typically university buildings contribute to the isolation of specific disciplines and intended that through the urban form a more positive exchange of ideas and interaction would take place. (Woods :1978)

The conceptual thinking behind the design of the Free Berlin University was siginificant in the search for an appropriate urban form to mediate between the fabric of Fordsburg and the mass of the Plaza. The articulation of private and public space in built form and courtyard space offered an appropriate solution for some of the urban issues that this thesis has identified in Fordsburg. The translation of this precedent study into the design is evident in the following chapters.

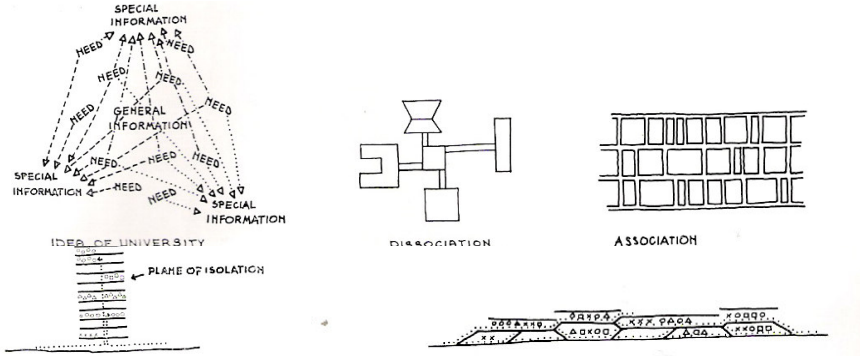


Fig 7.7 Free Berlin University, Candilis-Josic-Woods, Concept Model
(Woods 1978: 92)
Fig 7.8 Free Berlin University, Candilis-Josic-Woods, Concept sketches
(Woods 1978: 92)

ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENT STUDIES

THE ARK BUILDING

The Ark Building dates back to the early 1900s and is relevant to this thesis as a successful urban model from which basic urban principles can be learnt. The building, found on the corner of Ntemi Piliso Street and Becker Street in Newtown, occupies an entire block. It stands in stark contrast, both in form and scale, to the blue diamond building that towers above it from across the street.

It is assumed that The Ark Building, a typical courtyard building of the time, was not designed with the intention of being an urban masterpiece but rather comes from the response to certain needs that people living in Johannesburg had at the time. The significant factors being to combine residential and retail components for maximum gain, while still allowing enough open space for collective activities, and that it was designed to respond to pedestrian as opposed to car.



Fig 7.9 The Ark Building, Newtown (www.googlearth.com: 2008)









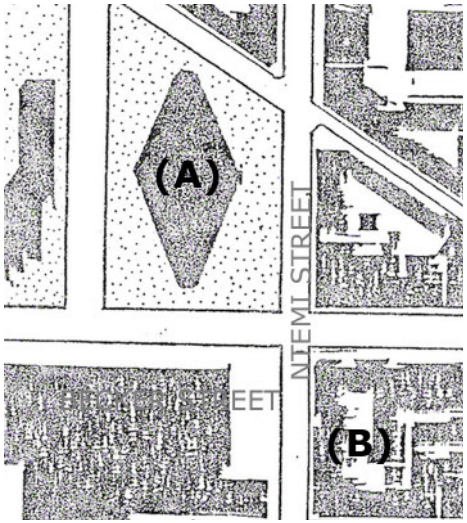


Fig 7.10 The Ark Building, Newtown
Indicating the contrast between the Diamond building and the courtyard space
Fig 7.11 The Ark Building, Newtown - urban site plan

When viewed from the exterior, the building has very much a hard urban edge that is only penetrated by one access point off Becker Street. This nondescript gateway leads you through a passage that reveals a hidden world surrounding a communal courtyard. The transition from the bustle of the urban environment to the sharply contrasted quiet courtyard is what signifies the ultimate success of the building as an urban typology.

The successful transition across these thresholds of public to more private spaces is further enhanced on the first floor. The apartments are all accessed off the communal courtyard and the passageways which link the apartments widen near the doorways to create pockets of semi-private spaces. The courtyard, which is used for a number of activities such as laundry and play space, is kept active by the constant movement of residents in and out of the apartments and the main circulation that bounds the courtyard on the upper level.

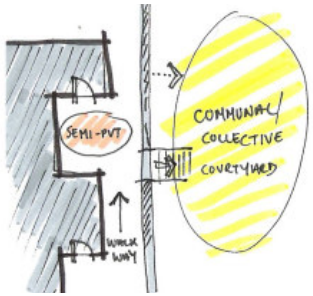
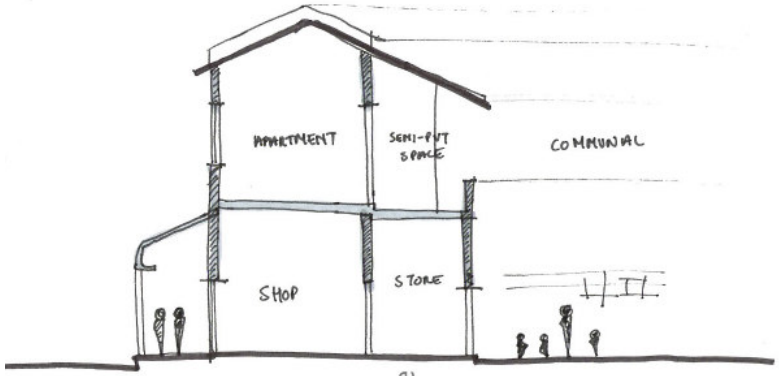


Fig 7.12 The Ark Building, Newtown
Part plan
Fig 7.13 The Ark Building, Newtown
Sreet section



THE CAIXA FORUM

Architects: Herzog and de Meuron
Location: Madrid, Spain

The Caixa Forum is located in the heart of Madrid's cultural district. The new building will house expanded programming that includes music, literature, film, and social and educational programs, similar to that at its sister centre in Barcelona. The program comprises galleries, restaurant, administrative offices and an auditorium below ground level. (Salgado: 2008)



Fig 7.14 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
(www.googlearth.com: 2008)
Fig 7.15 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
The demolished power station building
(Image @ Christian Richters, www.arcspace.com/arcitects)
Fig 7.16 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
The demolished power station building
(Image @ Christian Richters, www.arcspace.com/arcitects)



Fig 7.17 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
New public plaza in front of the building
(Image @ Christian Richters, www.arcspace.com/arcitects)

The site was previously occupied by what were considered insignificant urban structures of the Central Eléctrica Power Station and a gas station. Herzog and de Meuron's intervention included the demolition of the gas station in order to create a small plaza between the Paseo del Prado and the new Caixa Forum. The selective removal of the gas station solved a number of urban issues which the architects were faced with in such a densely developed part of the city. The single urban gesture solved the problems of the narrow surrounding streets, the placement of the main entrance, and the architectural identity of this contemporary building. (Salgado: 2008)

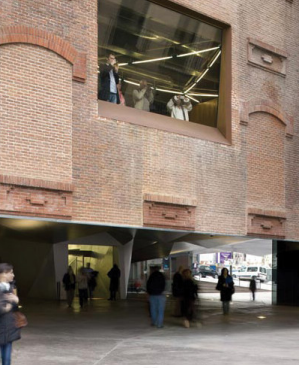




Fig 7.18 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
entrance detail
(Image @ Christian Richters, www.arcspace.com/arcitects)

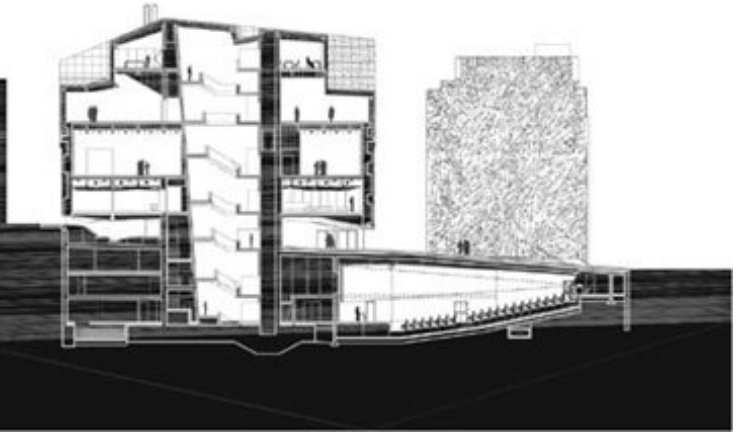


Fig 7.19 The Caixa Forum, Herzog and de Meuron Architects, 2008
section through plaza
(Image @ Christian Richters, www.arcspace.com/arcitects)

The key architectural concept was to separate and remove the base and parts of the building no longer needed, leaving only the brick shell of the old power station. The removal of the base of the building left a covered plaza beneath. This space is both a sheltered public space as well as serves as the entrance to the Forum itself. This separation created the opportunity for public program both on ground level as well as beneath the topographically landscaped plaza. The space below comprises a theatre/auditorium space, service areas and some parking spaces. (Salgado: 2008)

The reuse of the old structure and the new addition create an interesting contrast between the exhibition spaces and the spatial complexity of the top floor with its restaurant and the forum offices. The exhibition spaces take advantage of the spaces behind the brick shell with carefully selected glazed openings. The Corten steel clad addition to the top adds to this contrast in both the interior spatial quality and the outward aesthetic representation of new and old. (Salgado: 2008)

Herzog & de Meuron have successful transformed a stocky industrial brick building into a public architectural piece. The way in which the heavy mass is detached from the ground, drawing visitors inside, is a design aspect which would significantly benefit the existing blank edges of the Plaza.

The aesthetic treatment of the brick facades is another important aspect which was considered in the transformation of the box like nature of the Grand Bazaar. Both the infill of the existing window openings and the insertion of large glazed planes offer an ideal aesthetic precedent for the transformation of the Plaza.

REHABILITATION OF SANTA CATERINA MARKET

Architects: Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue (EMBT)
Location: Barcelona, Spain

The Rehabilitation of Santa Caterina market by EMBT is the transformation of a Neoclassical fresh-food market dating from 1845. Inside the market, 60 vendors' stalls are combined with shops, cafés, a supermarket, community services and an underground parking basement. (Cohn: 2006)

The proposal by EMBT included an urban renewal plan for Barcelona's Gothic Quarter which was long considered a slum, notorious for its crowding, poverty, crime, and lack of open space and services. The European Union had financed a number of historic city centre interventions in Barcelona that weren't massive slum clearances but



Fig 7.20 Santa Caterina Market, Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue, 2005 (www.googlearth.com: 2008)



Fig 7.21 Santa Caterina Market, Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue, 2005, entrance detail (Cohn 2006: 98)



Fig 7.22 Santa Caterina Market, Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue, 2005, roof detail (Cohn 2006: 101)

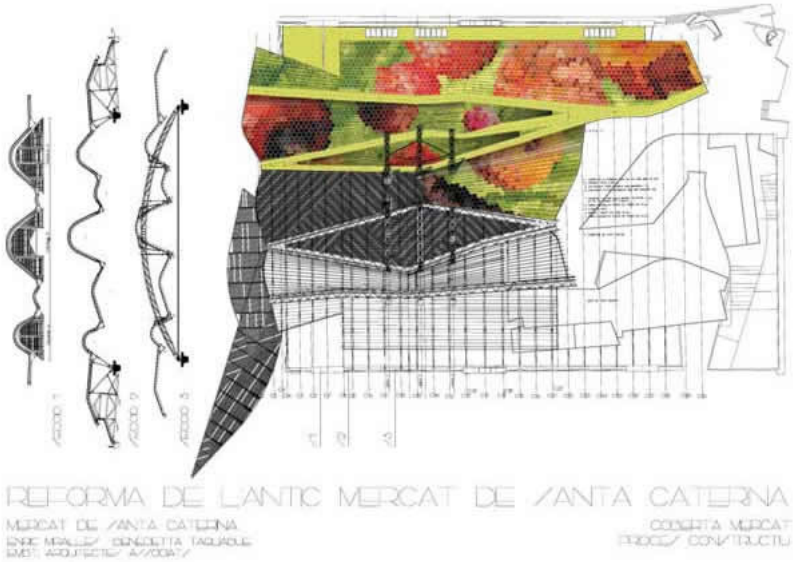


Fig 7.23 Santa Caterina Market, Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue, 2005, drawings
(Cohn 2006: 101)

did involve large-scale demolition. (Cohn: 2006)
The design of the market stems from the architect's apathy for the city's planning methods that were in place at the time which they felt weren't capable of addressing the complexity of this historic part of the city. EMBT's design vision was to break away from the systematic demolitions and rebuilding. The new interventions were felt to be unrefined and failed to respond to the historic architecture of the city core. (Cohn: 2006)

The overall design was achieved by strategically introducing new buildings as well as hybridizing and modifying the volumes of existing ones. Adjacent to the market are two new buildings which provide public housing flats for senior citizens who won a lottery to live there. (Cohn: 2006)

EMBT chose not to follow the prescribed path of urban-scale order imposed over the winding maze of medieval streets. They chose rather to selectively edit what existed and thereby consolidated what had been the broken, irregular path of an unrealized avenue. The area's organic growth over the centuries therefore remained legible. (Cohn: 2006)

The most notable design aspect of the building is the curvaceous, colourful roof which appears to float over the white building. The roof is made of specially made hexagonal ceramic tiles. When viewed from the top the colours of the roof produce images of colourful fruit. . The roof is supported by steel arches, forming sophisticate amorphous curves and hand-cut wood panels. (Cohn: 2006)

The architects retained the white-painted masonry walls of the existing neoclassical market building. The walls edge the building on three sides and are detailed with arched openings permeable to the surrounding streets. Another interesting aspect is the floor surface of the market which used paved in the same granite used on the surrounding streets, defining the market as a significant public space in the city. (Cohn: 2006)

Warwick Junction Market Precinct

Architects: OMM Design Workshop
Location: Durban

The Warwick Junction/ Triangle, is a vibrant transport interchange in the heart of Durban's CBD, fed by a railway station, taxi rank and bus station. Being one of the main interchanges in the city it provided an abundant source of passing traders for informal traders, whose commodities included fruit, vegetables and traditional herbal medicines (muti). The precinct had been bursting at its seams for a number of years and desperately needed further overhead paths to connect the various transport facilities as well as additional space for informal trade. (Peters: 2001)







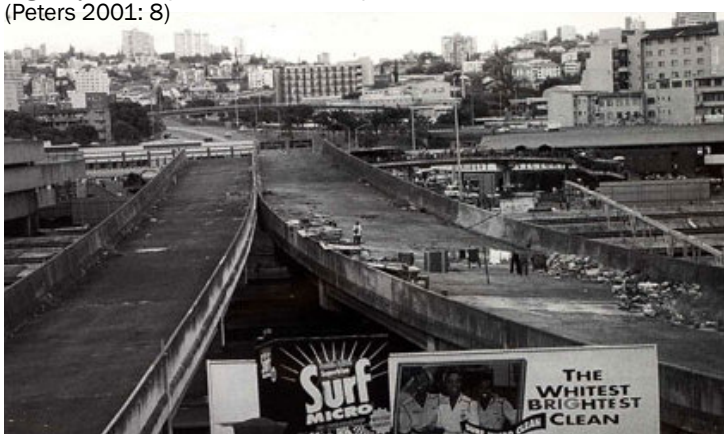
Fig 7.24 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)
Fig 7.25 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)
Fig 7.26 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)





Fig 7.27 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Courtesy of OMM Design Workshop)
Fig 7.28 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (www.googlearth.com: 2008))

Fig 7.29 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
Highway off-ramp before market completion
(Peters 2001: 8)
Fig 7.30 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
Highway off-ramp after market completion
(Peters 2001: 8)





There are two market facilities that were designded by OMM design Workshop. The Market road bridge and muti trader's stalls were conceived of as an urban gateway that would connect the Victoria Street Bus Terminus and two incomplete highway off-ramps. The new muti market stalls occupy the incomplete highway off-ramps and are far more organised than the unsheltered spaces previously occupied by the enormous number of traders. (Peters: 2001)





Fig 7.31 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
market road bridge roof detail
(Courtesy OMM Design Workshop)
Fig 7.32 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
market road bridge
(Courtesy OMM Design Workshop)

The market road bridge, which provides space for a variety of traders, is laid out over a one kilometre bridge and connects the muti market stalls to the transport facilities. The bridge is a simple pedestrian bridge with swirling overhead pergolas, made of steel and wattle branches, that define the route and traders spaces. (Peters: 2001)

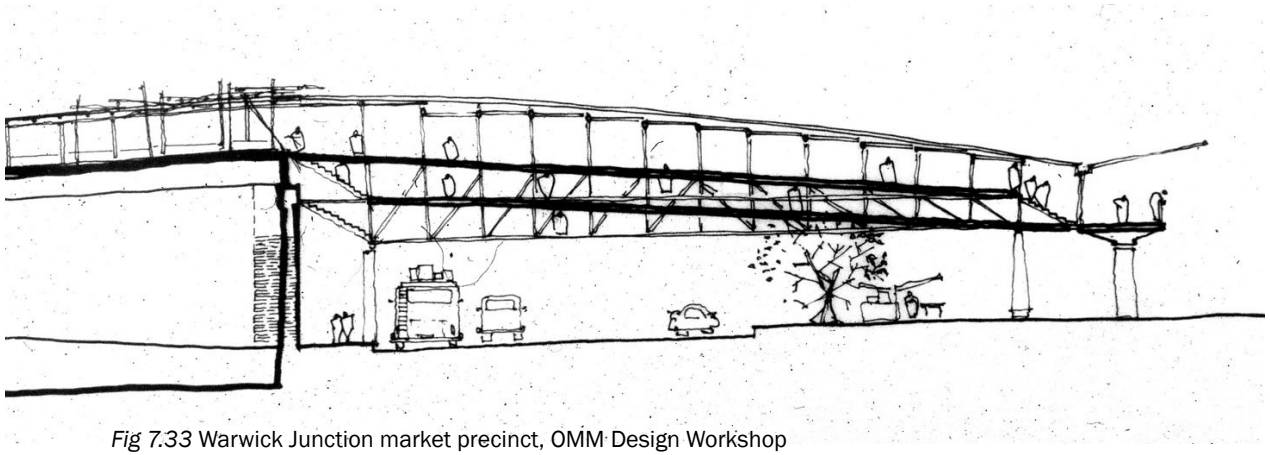
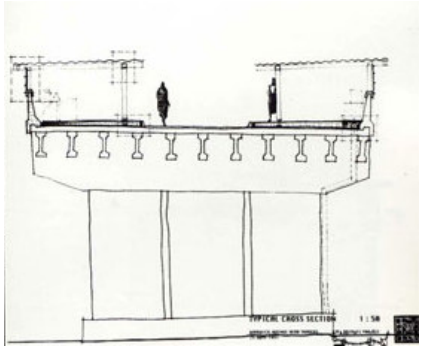


Fig 7.33 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
market road bridge elevation
(Courtesy OMM Design Workshop)
Fig 7.34 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop
new muti market stalls section
(Courtesy OMM Design Workshop)



The total area is demarcated into 233 trading units and traders pay monthly rentals of R35 for covered space and R10 for open air sites. Additional facilities provided were ablution blocks, access to running water for each section which comprises five stalls and two ‘canteen’ stalls where traders have access to cooking facilities. (Peters: 2001)







Fig 7.35 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)
Fig 7.36 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)
Fig 7.37 Warwick Junction market precinct, OMM Design Workshop (Noble 2008)

The design of this market precinct is relevant to this thesis both in terms of its programme and its urban resolution. The architectural piece of the urban proposal which is being developed in this thesis deals with similar issues such as the combination and transition between open air market facilities and more formalised trader's facilities. Another similar aspect is the transition of the market route into the transport buildings and the interesting junctions that are made between a pedestrian/ trader's bridge and hard edged building.

08

URBAN DESIGN

ISSUES

Through the investigation of Fordsburg and the site the following were identified as key urban issues and will be explained further into the chapter:

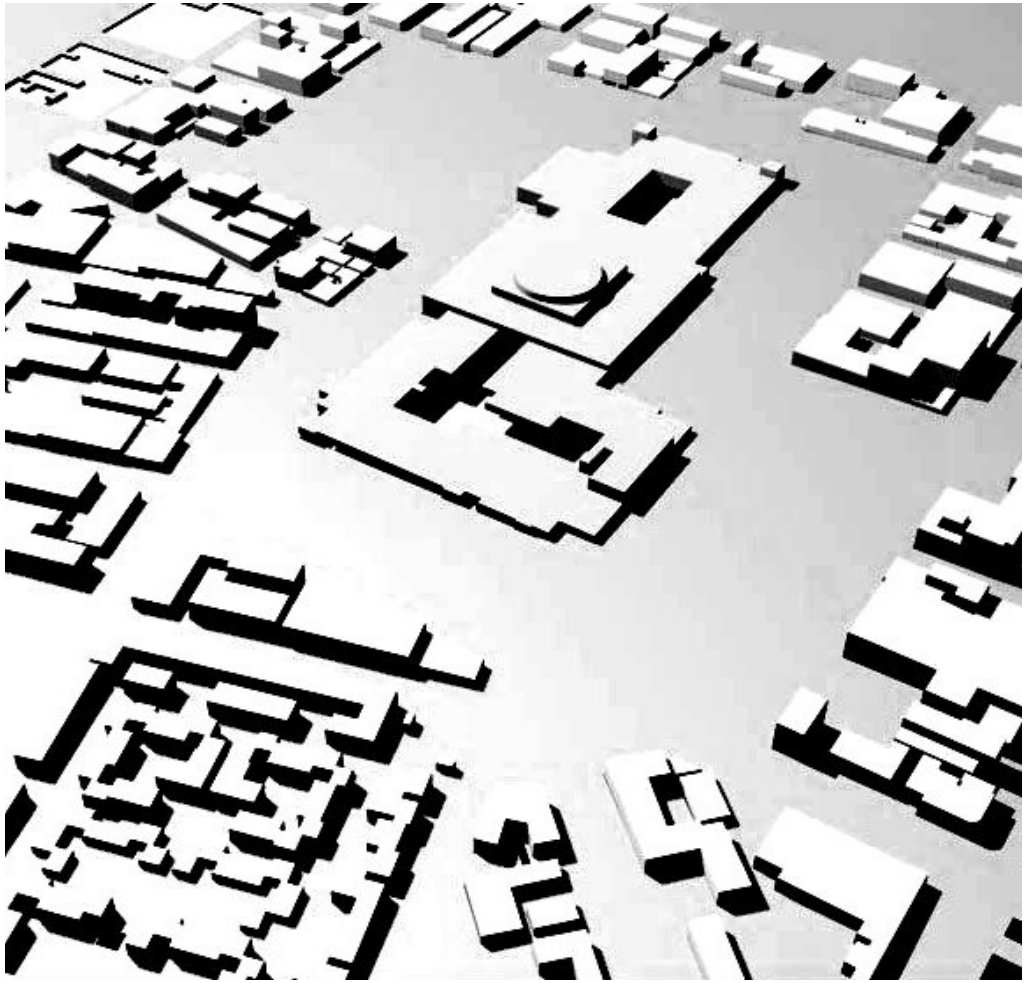
1- The Plaza as object.

2- Lack of open space.

3- Homogeneity of Plaza vs diversity of Fordsburg.

4- Diversity of users.

5- Parking.



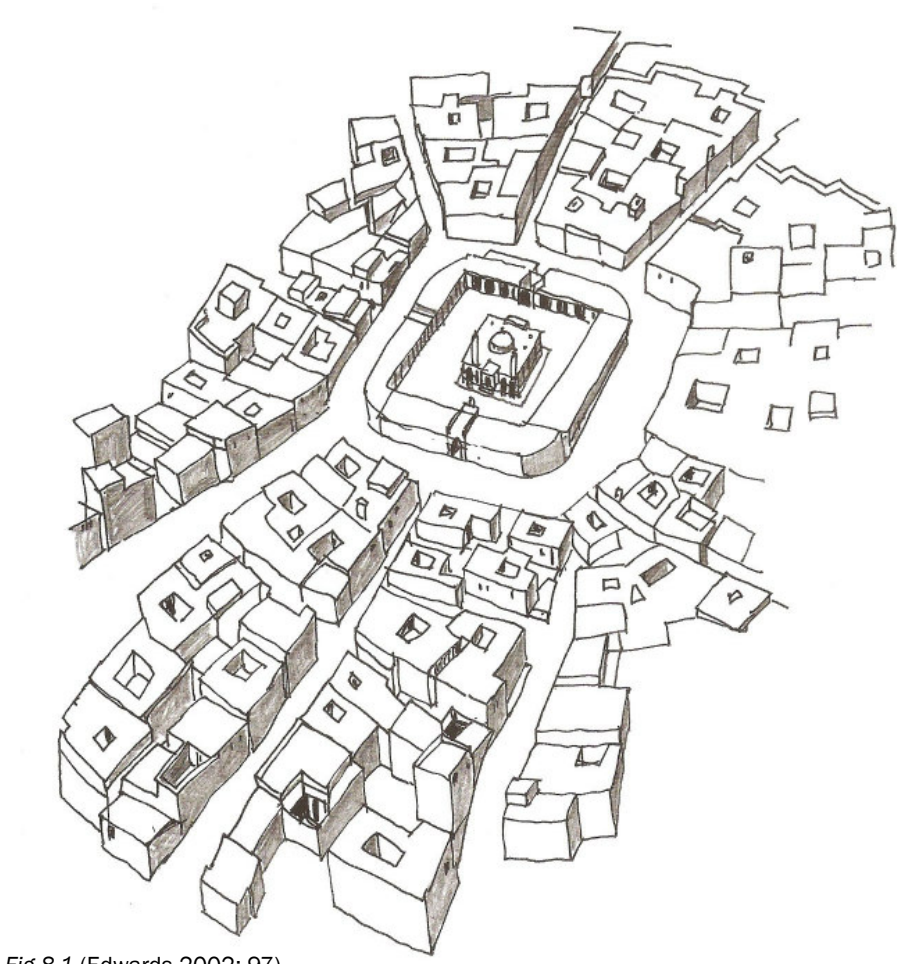


Fig 8.1 (Edwards 2002: 97)

1 - THE PLAZA AS OBJECT

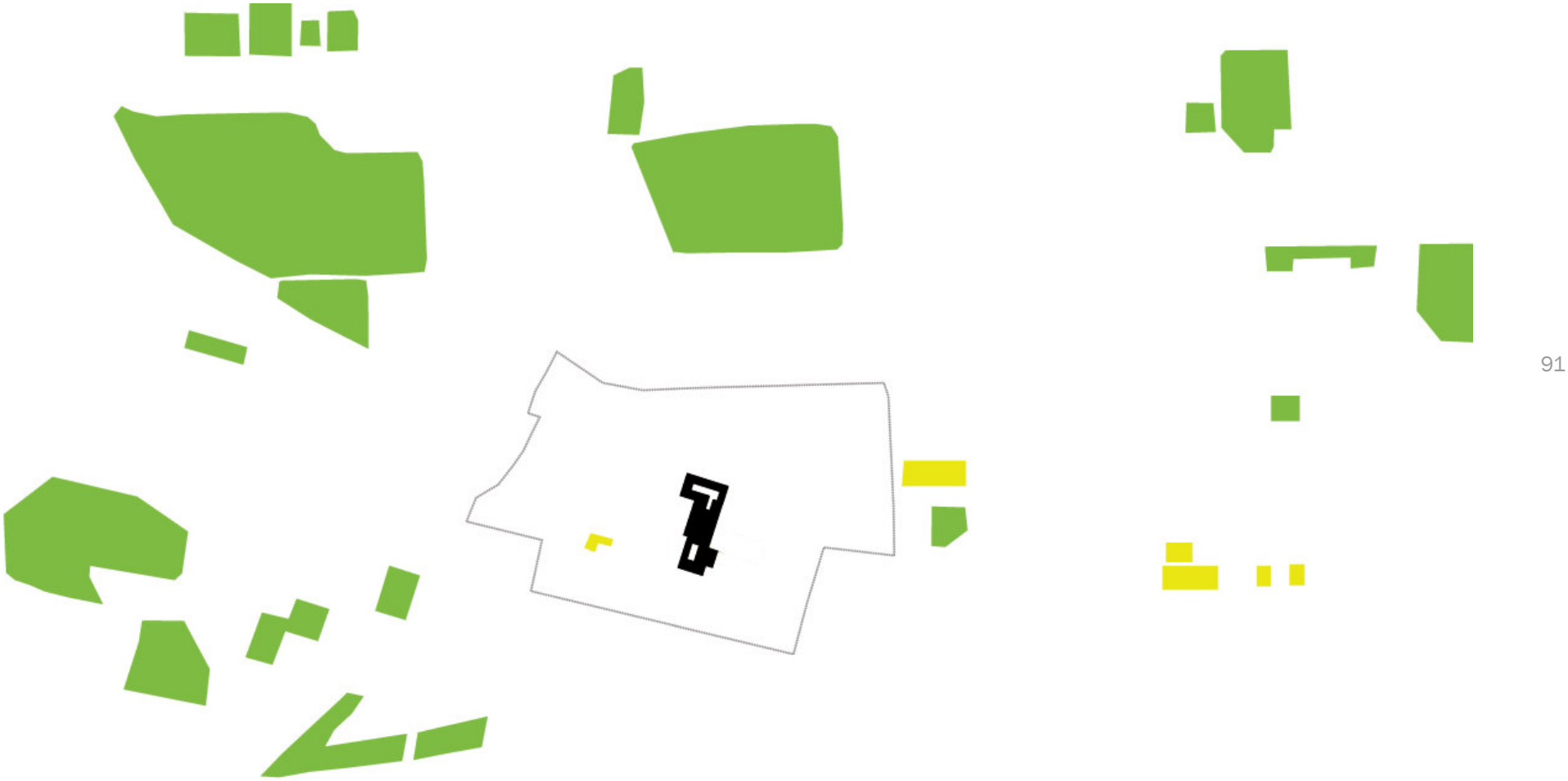
Whereas traditional cities tended to have a market or place of worship as a central component around which the fabric grew organically, Fordsburg is a mixture of conditions. Although the Plaza occupies a central site it physically repels the existing fabric on all sides, fenced in and surrounded with vast open spaces.



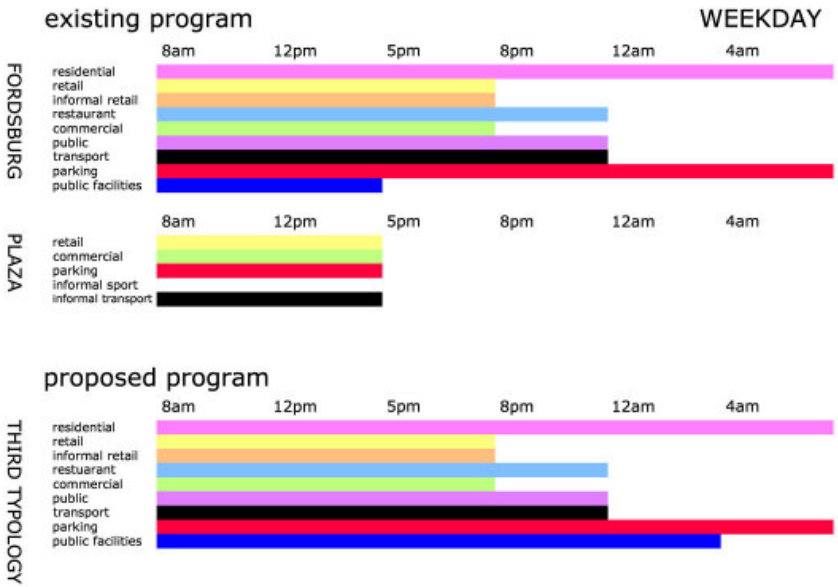


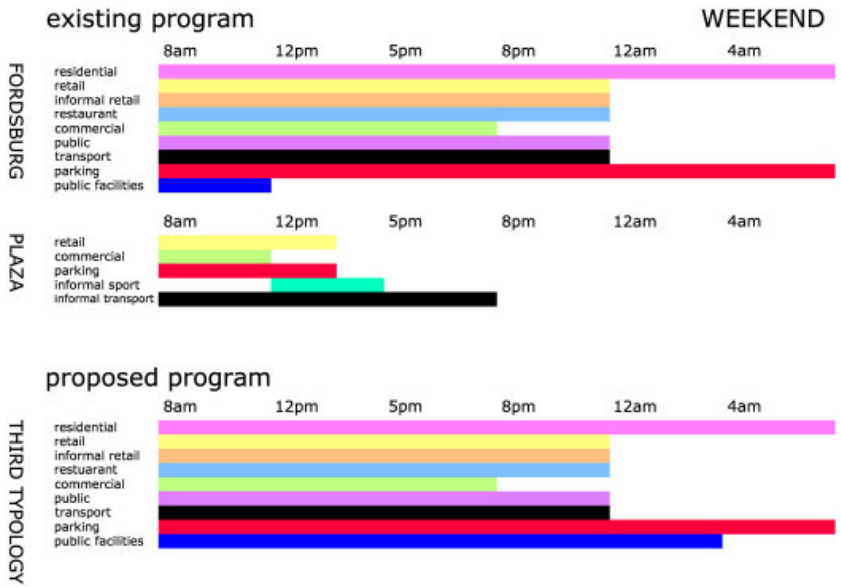
2- LACK OF OPEN SPACE

There exists an increasing lack of public and communal open spaces in Fordsburg. Commercial encroachment in the last decade of the prime public open space, Fordsburg Square, is the most apparent example of this trend. The lack of gardens and courtyards has also resulted in concrete roofs of apartment buildings being used as make-shift social spaces - amongst other uses. Before the Plaza parking lots were fenced in, they were often used as spaces for socializing and informal sport. Now the only time they are used in such a way is between 3-5pm on a Saturday afternoon when the Plaza is closed but the one gate is left open for deliveries. Consequently many families are choosing to leave Fordsburg for the suburbs in pursuit an appropriate cohesive environment in which to raise their families.



Mapping of accessible public green and hard space within proximity of Fordsburg





3 - HOMOGENEITY OF PLAZA VS DIVERSITY OF FORDSBURG

Fordsburg consistently supports a diverse range activities throughout the week, throughout the day, and well into the night. Due to its strict times of operation and fixed commercial programming the Plaza supports approximately one quarter of the range of activities and its operation times in comparison to its surrounds.





3 - DIVERSITY OF USERS

Interviews and profiling of Fordsburg users were conducted which highlighted the economic diversity of Fordsburg where rich & poor live side by side. It also highlighted the fact that the Plaza is big draw card, drawing from near and far people who do not live in the inner city (from JHB surrounds, small towns, and southern Africa). The design should therefore consolidate the Plaza as a threshold space to the city and support greater user diversity. Following is a select number of the inteviews conducted.



MARY-ANNE CLARKE

Mary-Anne Clarke lives together with her two daughters, Claudia & Whitney, aged 16 and 19 in Linden and visits Fordsburg weekly. She likes the health shop on Avenue Rd & the fabric shops in the area. She also visits the upholstorers on Minnaar Rd. She shops at the Plaza often for luxury items such as fabric, bedding, clothes and kitchenware. Claudia & Whitney also shop at the Plaza for clothes and shoes. They enjoy the bargain prices and choice, however, Whitney doesn't enjoy the crowds, she sometimes suffers panic attacks and has to go sit in the car. This puts a strain on the enjoyment of the Plaza experience for the rest of the family. Mary-Anne wouldn't consider living in Fordsburg at the moment, because Whitney's school would be too far away, but perhaps in the future.



FAMILY



OWN CAR



ZUBAIR SADER

Zubair lives in Fordsburg with his mom and uncle. They have lived in Fordsburg all their lives. His grandfather lived in Sophiatown before they were forceably removed and had to move to Fordsburg. Zubair is studying Architecture at UJ and helps his brother run their family owned clothing shop in Newtown. Zubair would like to see some transformations in Fordsburg especially in the public realm. He remembers the parking lot of the Plaza being his play space when he was younger. He hand his friends used to play soccer and cricket there on the weekends. Him and his mom feel that Fordsburg has changed quite alot in the last few years, especially with the influx of immigrants. Although there is still a very stroNg sense of community in the area it is slowly dissolving.



FAMILY



OWN CAR & WALKS



ASMAL HUSSAIN

Asmal Hussain is from Pakistan, he has lived in South Africa for two years. He owns a paan kiosk on on Dolly Ratebe st. He lives in a flat in Guilles st in Fordsburd with 8 other Indian and Pakistani immigrants. They all live in a two bedroom flat in order to save costs. The conditions can sometimes be cramped. He would prefere his own privacy in terms of where he lives, but at the moment his main priority is to send as much money home as possible.



9 IMMIGRANTS



WALKS



SAMANTHA CLARKE & RICHARD LOUBSER

Samantha and Richard live together in Randburg. They visit Fordsburg and the Plaza frequently. Richard has a catering company and buys his meat on a weekly basis from Forsmay Butchery on Crown Road which is three blocks away from the Plaza. Samantha visits the Plaza once every month or two, mainly for luxury like shoes. She likes the variety and bargain prices at the Plaza. When Richard and Samantha feel like a good curry they go to Bismillah on Mint Road. They wouldn't really consider living in the city or Fordsburg



COUPLE



OWN CAR

approach from the north

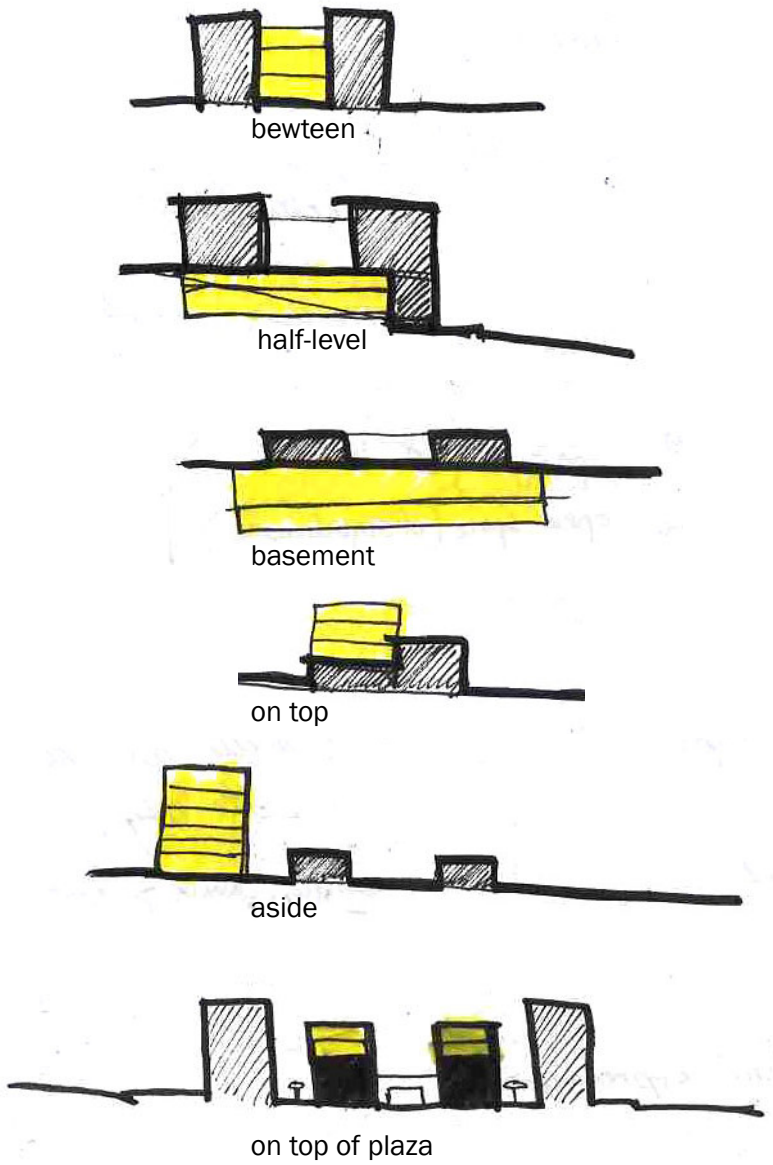


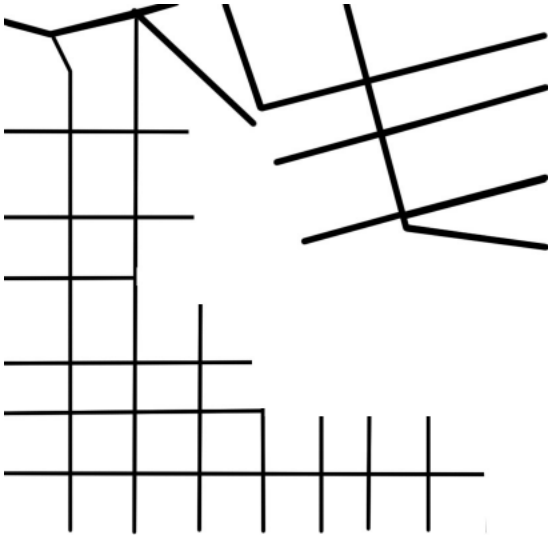


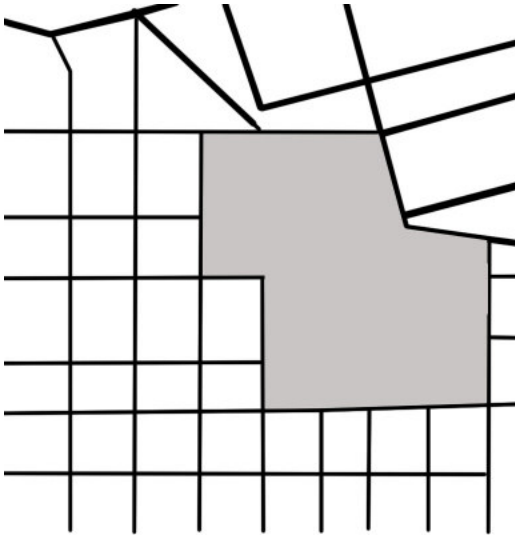


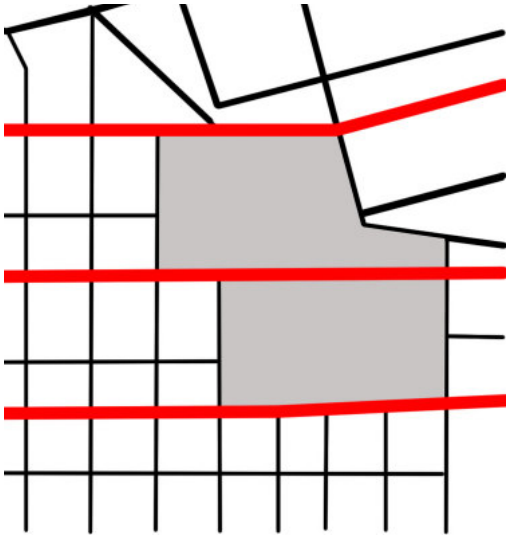
5 - PARKING

The original Fordsburg town planning scheme did not specify on site parking. There is therefore limited parking within the historical fabric. In contrast the Plaza site provides 1200 bays of surface parking at the expense of the urban fabric. The thesis has explored a range of architectural solutions to parking provision which does not conversely effect the historical fabric.









CONCEPTS

1 - Between Newtown and Fordsburg

There existed strong historical urban linkages between Fordsburg and Newtown. The Plaza site is located at the important juncture of the two grid systems but has disrupted continuity. The thesis reinstates the disrupted east-west linkages between Fordsburg and Newtown.



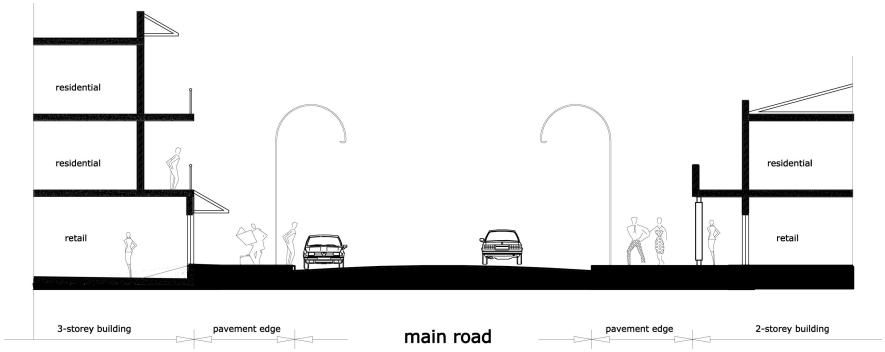
Fig 8.2 Historical street edges of Main Road, Fordsburg (MuseumAfrica)

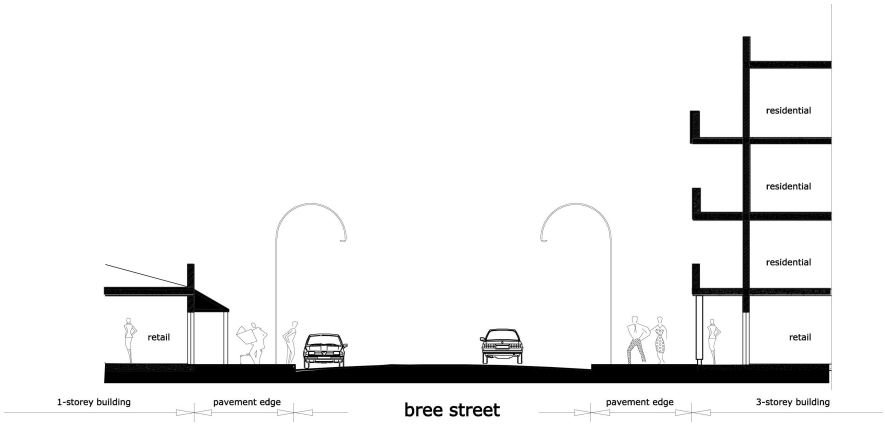


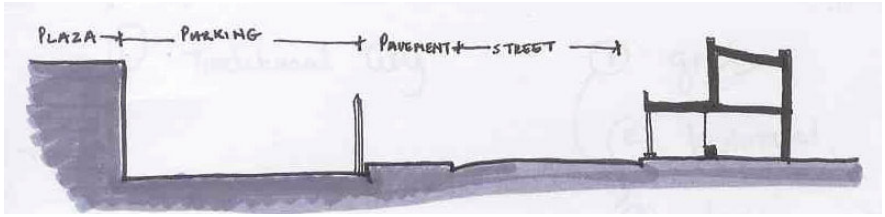
Fig 8.3 Main Road, Fordsburg 2008 (MuseumAfrica)

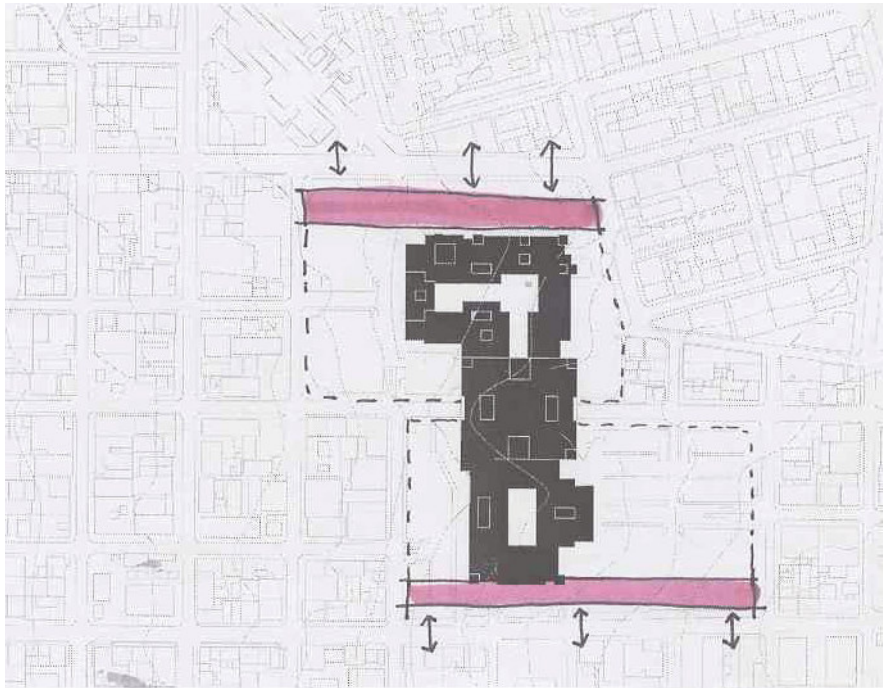
2 - EDGES

The thesis addresses the disrupted continuity of the Bree Street and Main Road corridors between Fordsburg and Newtown by bringing the Plaza closer to the street and reinstating the edges in built form and street activity.







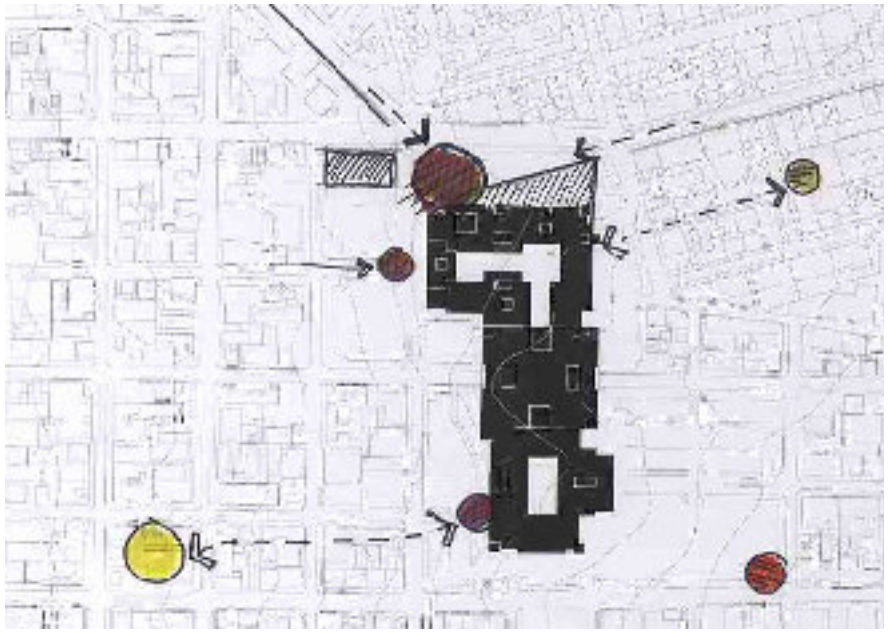


Reinstating the street edge



3 - KEY MOMENTS

Key moments along Bree Street and Main Road have been optimized, creating pedestrian activity and further consolidating the historical east-west linkages. On Main Road an informal taxi rank in front of the Plaza has been consolidated. On Bree Street a ‘gateway’ public space has been created at the intersection of the Newtown and Fordsburg grids. These are both also the places where the Plaza is closest to street, creating a strong edge to these public places.

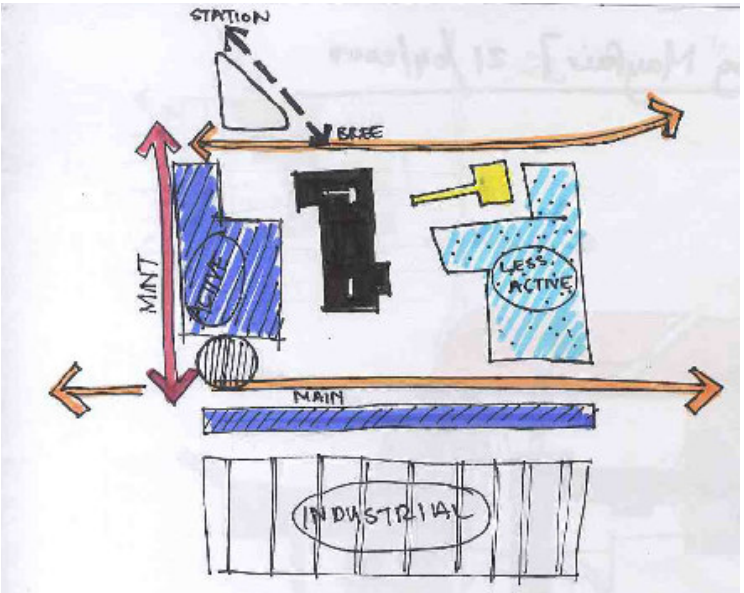


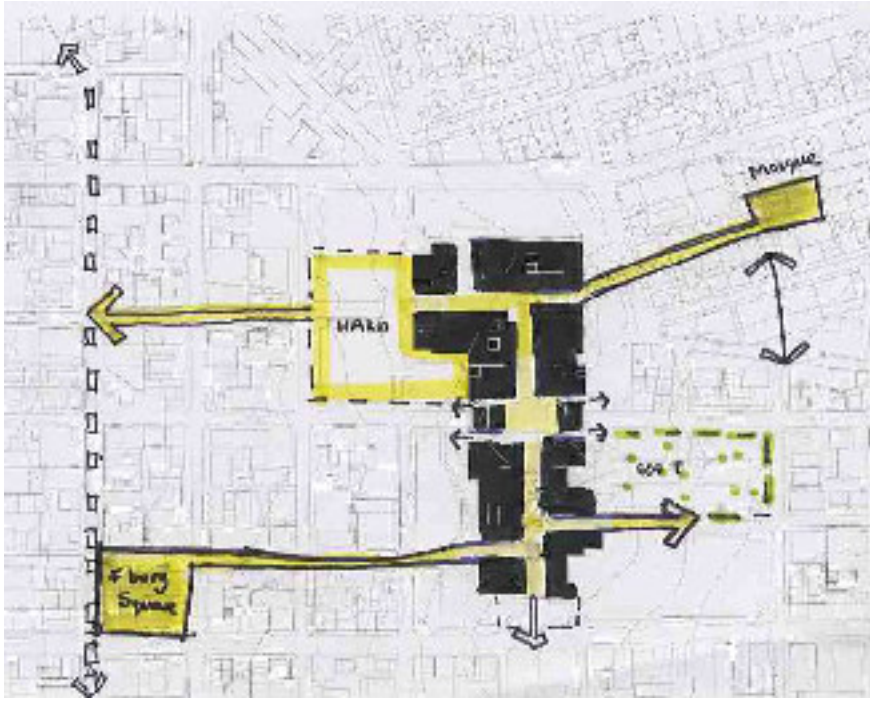
4 - ROUTES AND CONNECTIONS

Further to reinstating historical east-west linkages the thesis also consolidates new connections that have developed between the Plaza and and key public spaces - Fordsburg Square, Mint Road, and the Newtown mosque.



Conceptual exploration of routes though Fordsburg using the traditional city fabric of Tunisia as precedent



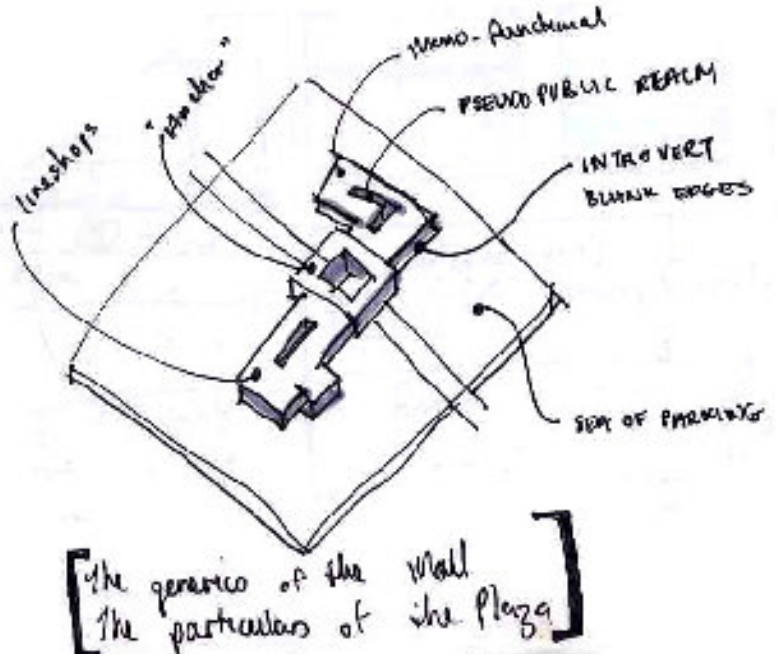


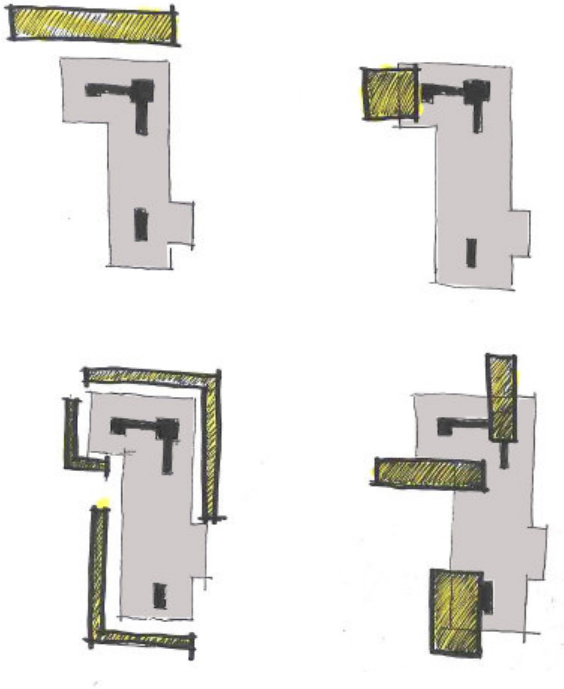
5 - PUBLIC SPACES

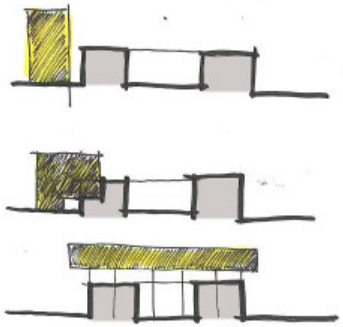
The fabric east of the Plaza is predominantly industrial in nature (Newtown) and that west of the Plaza is predominantly retail or mixed use (Fordsburg). Intervention is appropriate whereby a hard public space with open space and market stalls is created on the active east edge. A softer space with greenery, housing and a multi-use community hall and a creche is created on the quieter edge.

BRINGING THE PLAZA TO THE PUBLIC.

Visitors to the Plaza filter through either Fordsburg from the west or Newtown from the east. A public space is created at each point, which simultaneously functions as a forecourt.





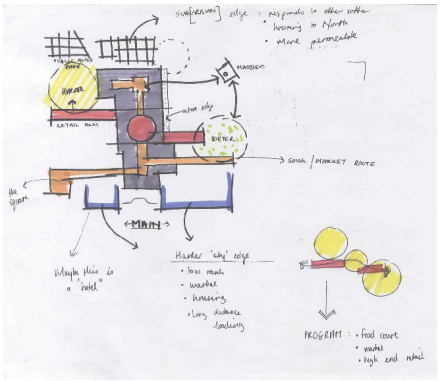


6 - ATTITUDE TO THE PLAZA

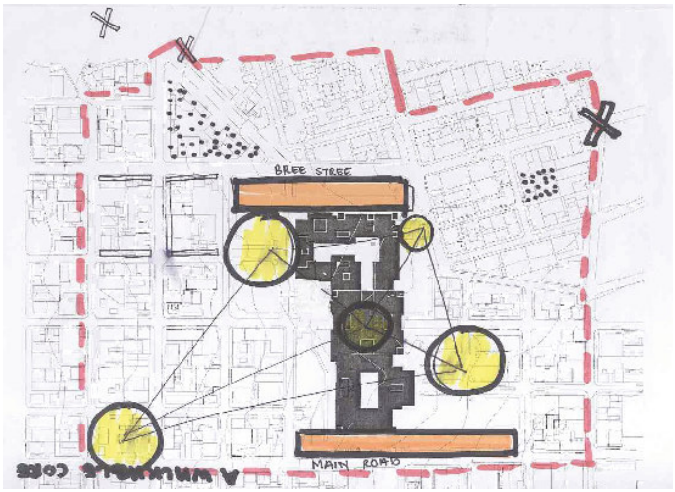
The previous five concepts explore various strategies of tackiling certain key issues which define the Plaza physically as a mall. Such as the buffer zone of parking which disconnects it from the surrounding fabric and its introvert nature. A number of further concepts were explored to begin to disaggregate the isloated form and blank edges of the building. The main concern in this exploration being the relationship between ‘old’ and ‘new’.

URBAN DESIGN PROCESS

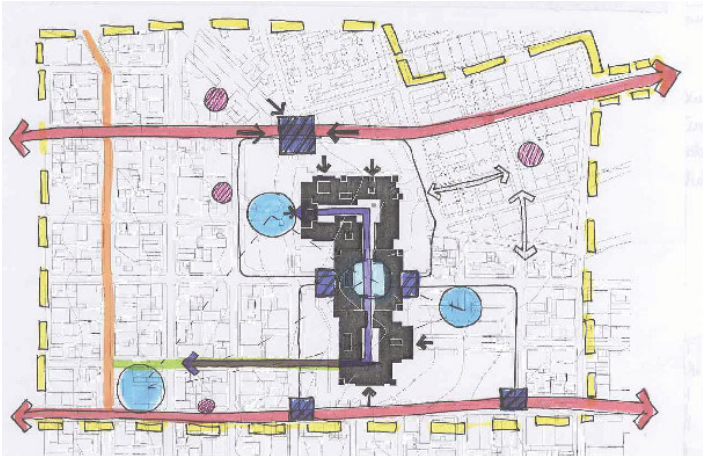
A number of key urban issues were identified and from these certain concepts began to develop. The following process sktches being to explore and analyze these concepts in order to find an appropriate urban design framework for the site.



This diagram is one of the initial explorations of the urban issues and concepts as discussed previously. It begins to define the edge development and the insertion of a harder public space and a softer public space. It is also the exploration of the urban routes which begin to connect the Plaza into the surrounding fabric.



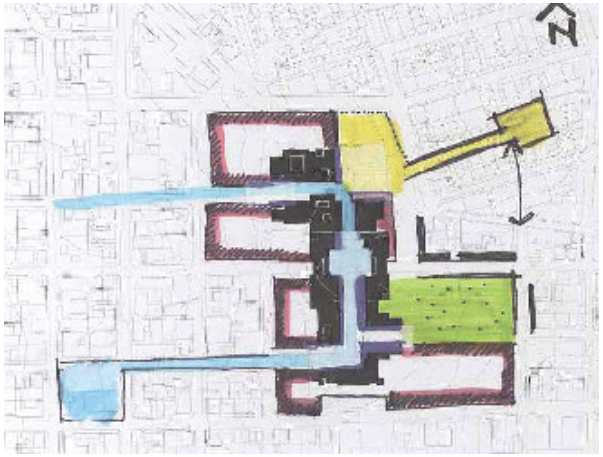
An exploration of the notion of a walkable core for Fordsburg and the concentration of pedestrian activated street edges and routes. This sketch identifies key public spaces and oppurtunities for connections with the site.



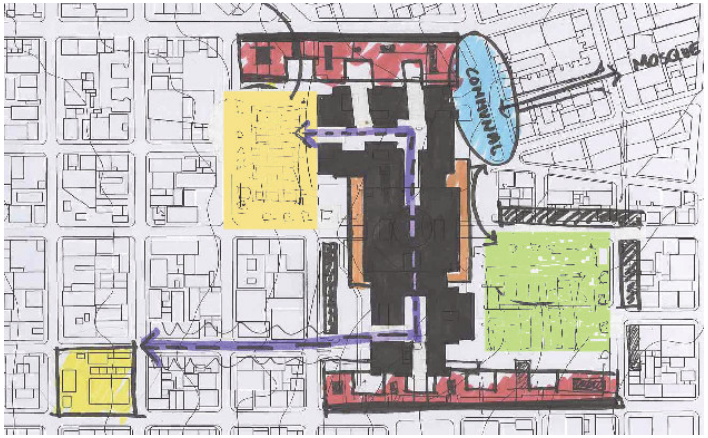
This diagram is a further exploration of the urban routes and their relationship to existing public spaces and places such as the Newtown Mosque and Fordsburg Market Square. It also identifies key gateways and vista points around the site.



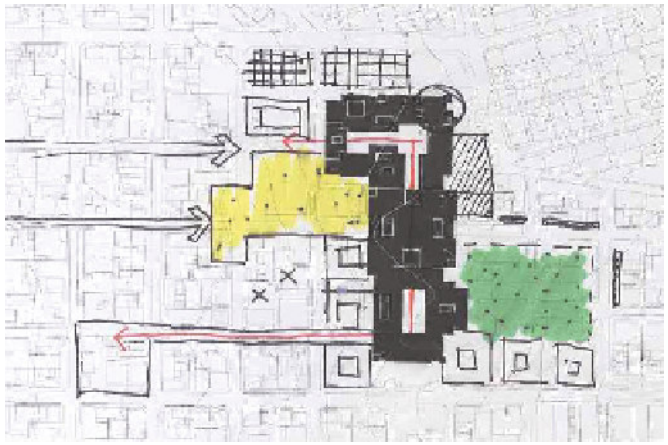
This sketch identifies Mint rd as a key active node to which the Plaza needs to make stronger connections. Also an exploration of the harder public space (yellow) wrapping around the eastern edge of the Plaza connecting to the green space



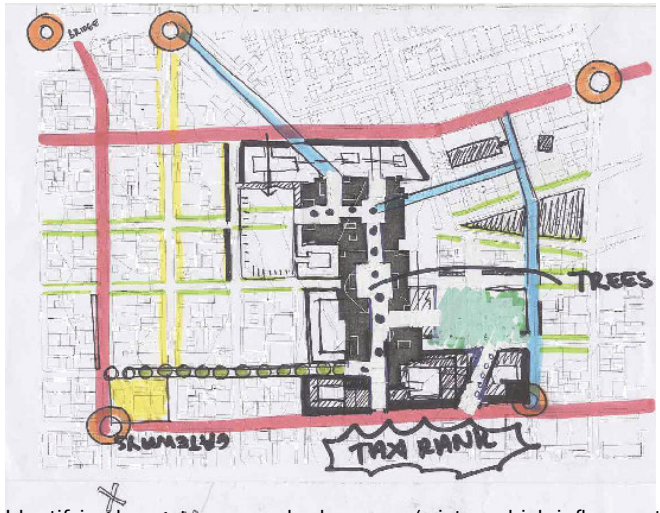
This sketch explores the possibility of a harder public space on the Bree street edge and rather building of the western edge of the Plaza with mixed use buildings. The harder public space cuts into the Plaza reinforcing the connection with the Mosque.



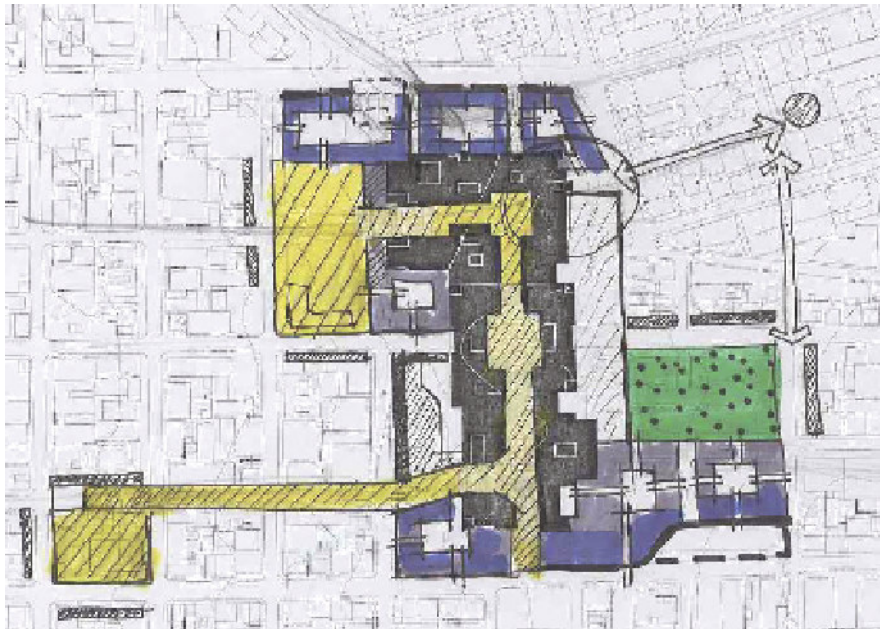
This sketch confirms the initial concept to insert the harder public space ontt the western edge of the Plaza and to reinforce the links between this space other hubs of activity in the area such as Mint Road. It also begins to explore the built form of the Bree and Main rd edges.



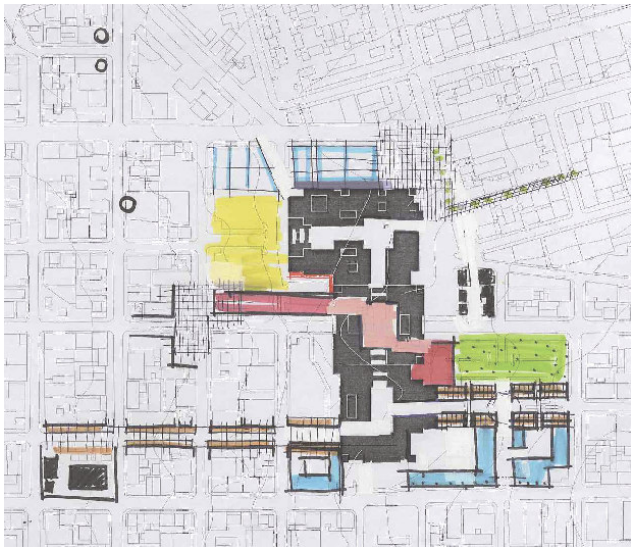
Reinforcing the connection with public space and Mint Road through routes and edge definition. the routes connect to existing entrances of the Plaza. The exploration of the perimter block as a means to allow for a variety open spaces , public, communal, semi-public.



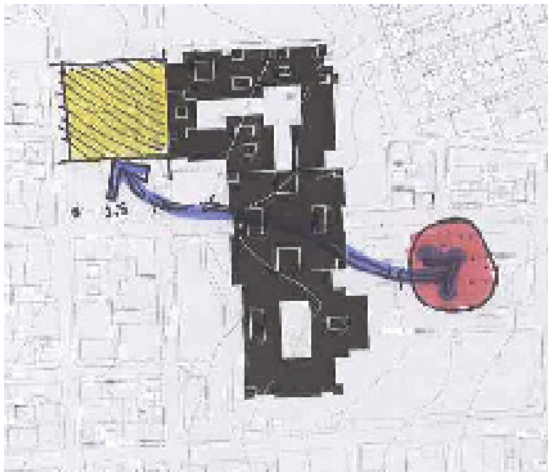
Identifying key gateways and urban axes/ vistas which influence the congiguration of the built edges. A pedestrianised route between the Plaza and Market Square. A taxi rank/ drop off on the Main edge (existing informal taxi rank exists).
Finalization of certain principles:

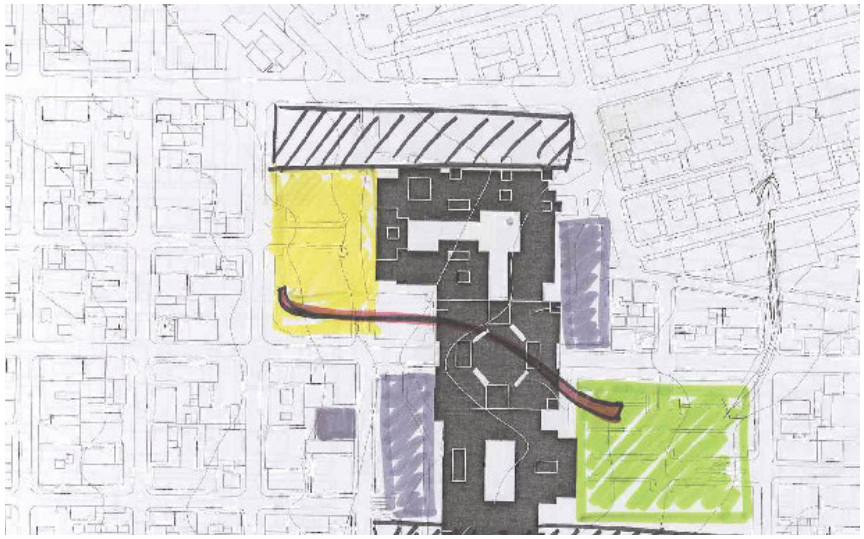


Hard public space on western edge that reinforces an urban connection between the enclosed courtyards and the Market square = possible market route developed.
Green space defined by existing tall residential buidings on its edges.
Strong connection between green/ soft space and mosque.
The disaggregation of the perimter block to allow for stronger inter-urban connections between spaces/ plaza.

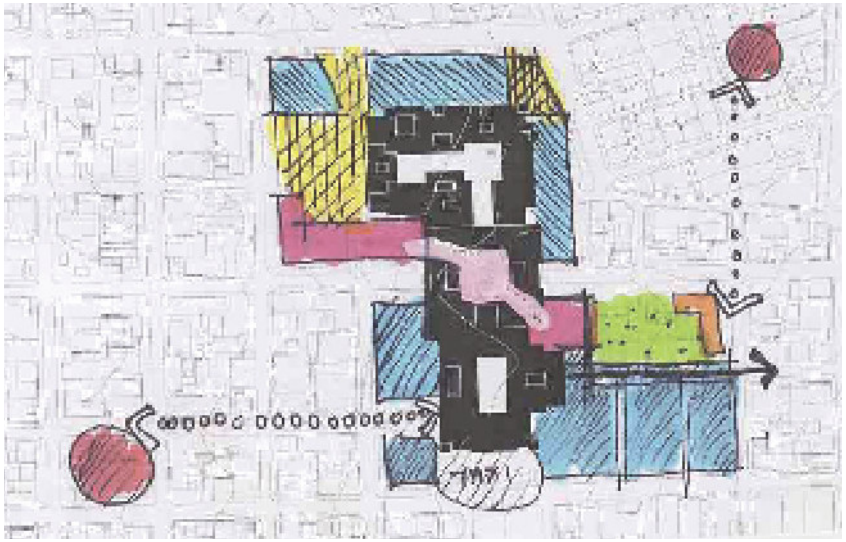


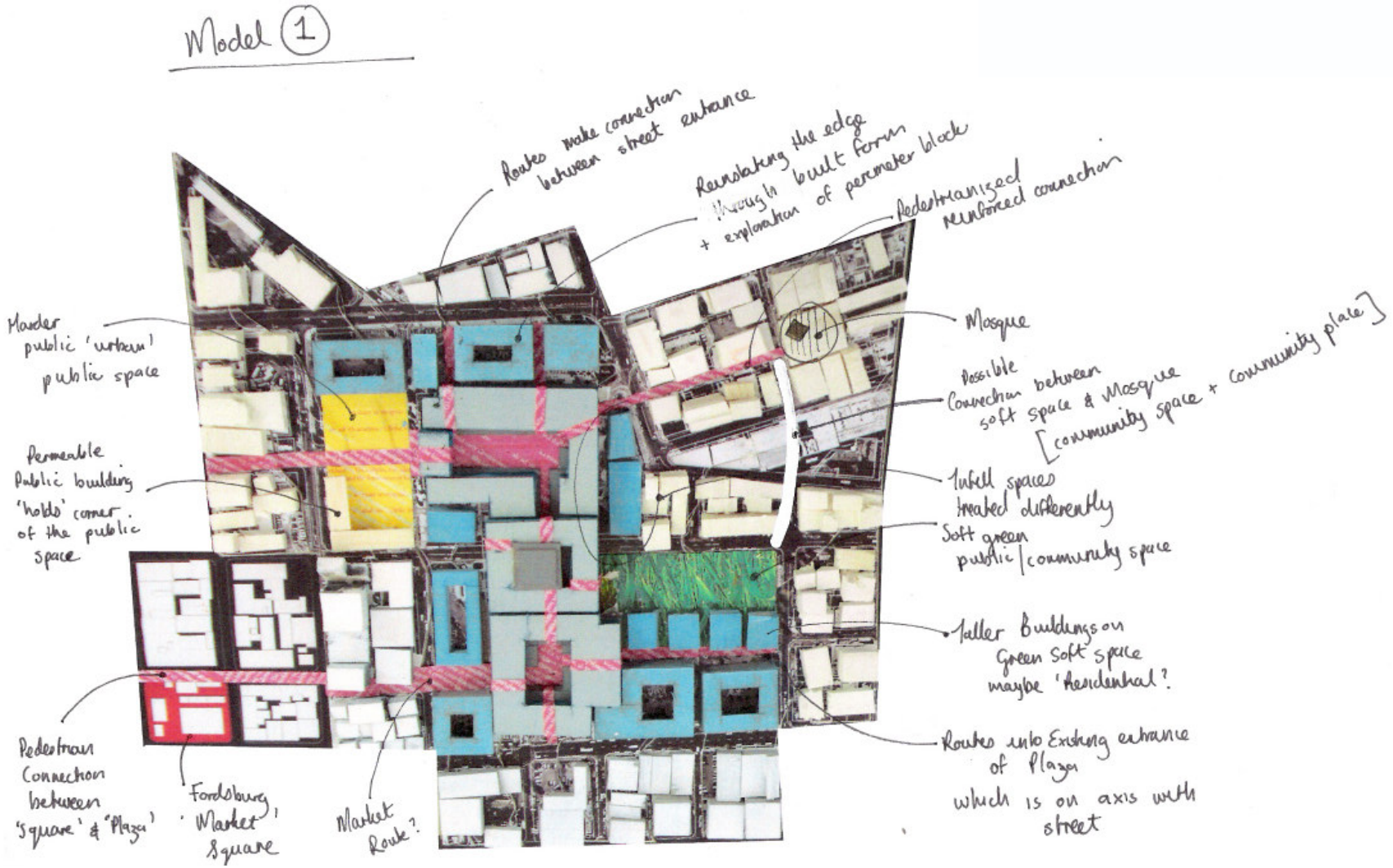
Market route (orange) pulled from Fordsburg Square into Plaza - punctures through and connects with a proposed retail link out to the east - with ‘souk-like’ qualities. The grand bazaar as public space = a third space - possible conncetion between all 3 ‘public’ spaces.

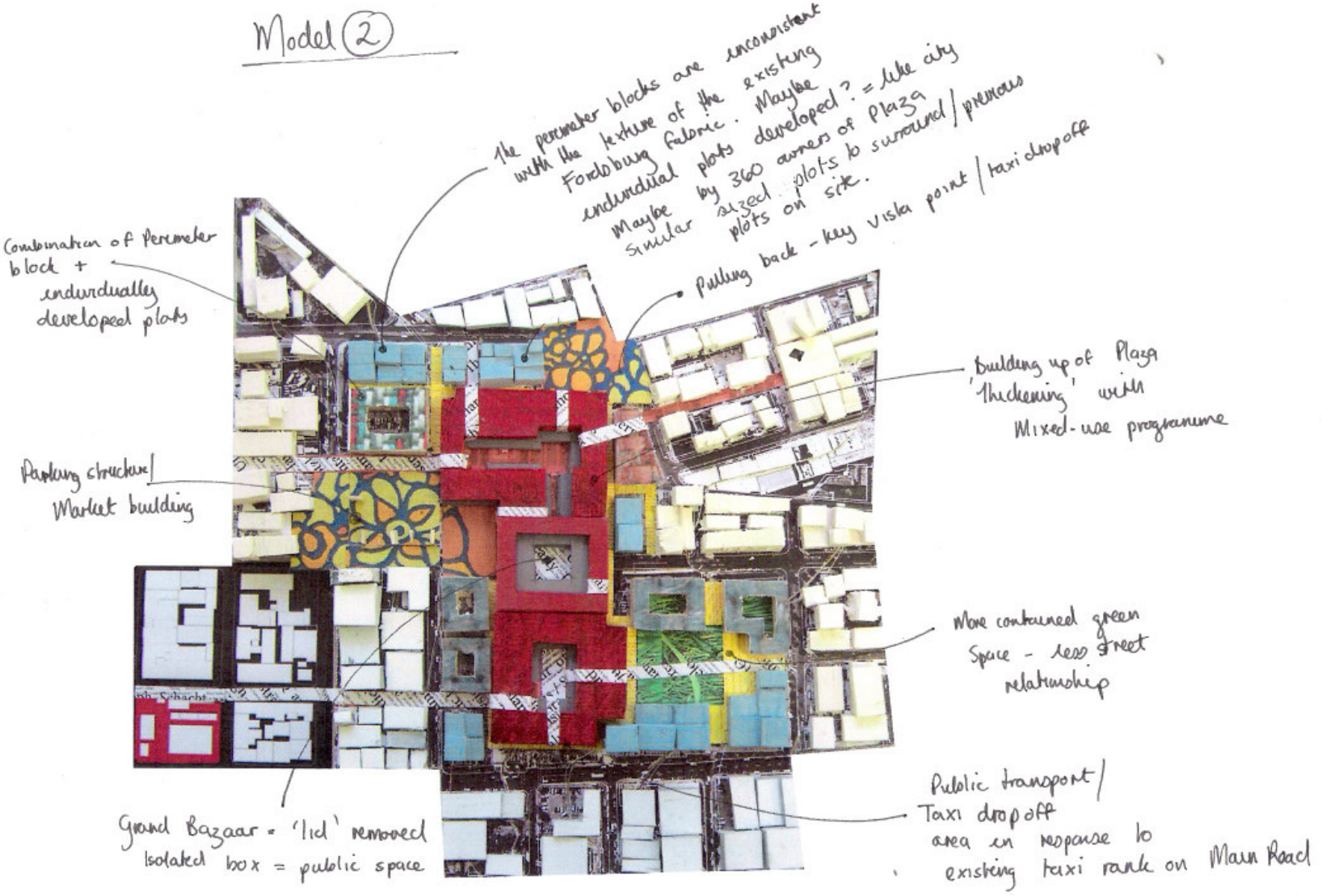




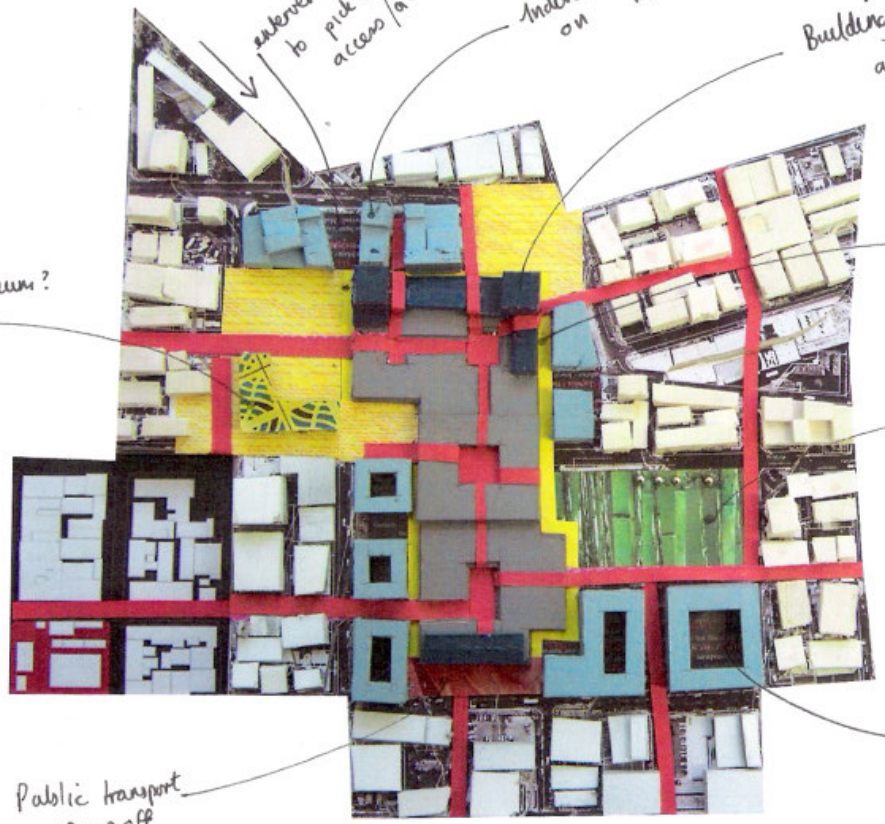
The exploration of a building or route (pink) that connects the 3 public spaces = architectural intervention!




Model (1)
Routes make connection between street entrance
Reinstating the edge through built form + exploration of perimeter block
Redestrianised reinforced connection
Mosque
Possible Connection between soft space & Mosque [community space + community place]
Infill spaced treated differently
Soft green public/community space
Taller Buildings on Green Soft space maybe 'Residential?
Routes into Existing entrance of Plaza which is on axis with street
Market Route?
Fordsburg Market Square
Pedestrian Connection between 'Square' & 'Plaza'
Permeable Public building 'holds' corner of the public space
Harder public 'urban' public space


Model (2)
The perimeter blocks are inconsistent with the texture of the existing Fordsburg fabric. Maybe individual plots developed? = like city
Maybe by 360 owners of Plaza similar sized plots to surround / previous plots on site.
Pulling back - key visla point / taxi drop off
Combination of Perimeter block + individually developed plots
Building up of Plaza 'thickening' with Mixed-use programme
Parking structure / Market building
More contained green Space - less street relationship
Grand Bazaar - 'lid' removed Isolated box = public space
Public transport / Taxi drop off area in response to existing taxi rank on Main Road

Model (3)



intervention pulls back to pick up on significant access/axis

Individually developed plots on Bree St edge

Building up of Plaza only at key points, not entire footprint built on

'New development' pulls away from edge of Plaza = opportunity

Fordsburg Museum?

green space with Street edge

Perimeter blocks on Main Rd edge

Public transport Drop-off

Model (4)



Exploration of the urban form
= Articulation of public | communal | private
open space
Reference to traditional city model
eg. Tunisia

New urban form
begins to 'dissolve'
Plaza form
City + Plaza

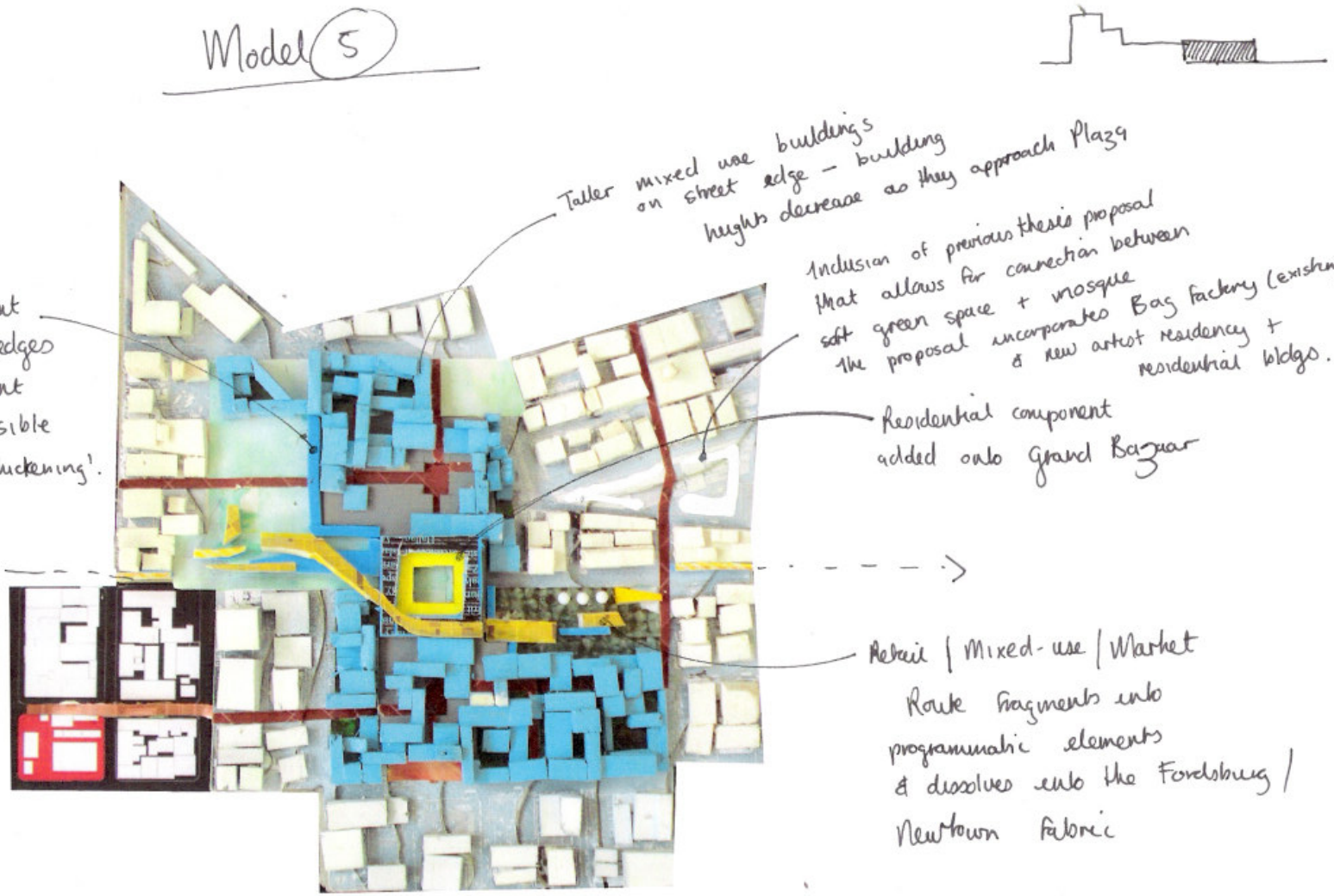
Retail Route | Mixed-use
that connects 3 public
spaces =
hard public space
+
grand bazaar
+
soft space

↓

architectural intervention

Community | Multipurpose
hall + creche = makes
connections to & mixed
in conjunction with Mosque

Model 5


Taller mixed use buildings on street edge – building heights decrease as they approach Plaza
Inclusion of previous thesis proposal that allows for connection between soft green space + mosque
The proposal incorporates Bag factory (existing) & new artist residency + residential bldgs.
The treatment of the edges in different ways. Possible retail 'thickening'.
Residential component added onto Grand Bazaar
Retail | Mixed-use | Market
Route fragments into programmatic elements & dissolves into the Fordsburg / Newtown fabric



URBAN SCALE PROGRAMME

Mixed use element of Plaza

By diversifying the program of the plaza it becomes a heart which gives life to its surroundings around the clock.

Public spaces

The fabric east of the Plaza is predominantly industrial in nature (Newtown) and that west of the Plaza is predominantly retail or mixed use (Fordsburg). Intervention is appropriate whereby a hard public space with open space and market stalls is created on the active east edge. A softer space with greenery, housing and a multi-use community hall and a creche is created on the quieter edge.

In Red Square retail will be pushed to the edges of the space and will be devoted to foods. The empty center will be left open and un-programmed as a public space for sitting, meeting, and general uses.

Retail and mixed use buildings

The open spaces of the plaza site that will be built up such as the edges along Bree Street and Main Road have been divided into independent plots the size of those found throughout Fordsburg for developers. The ground floor is programmed as retail while the upper floors will not be specified but left to general mixed-use programming. This is consistent with the manner in which Fordsburg has grown in the past.

Public buildings

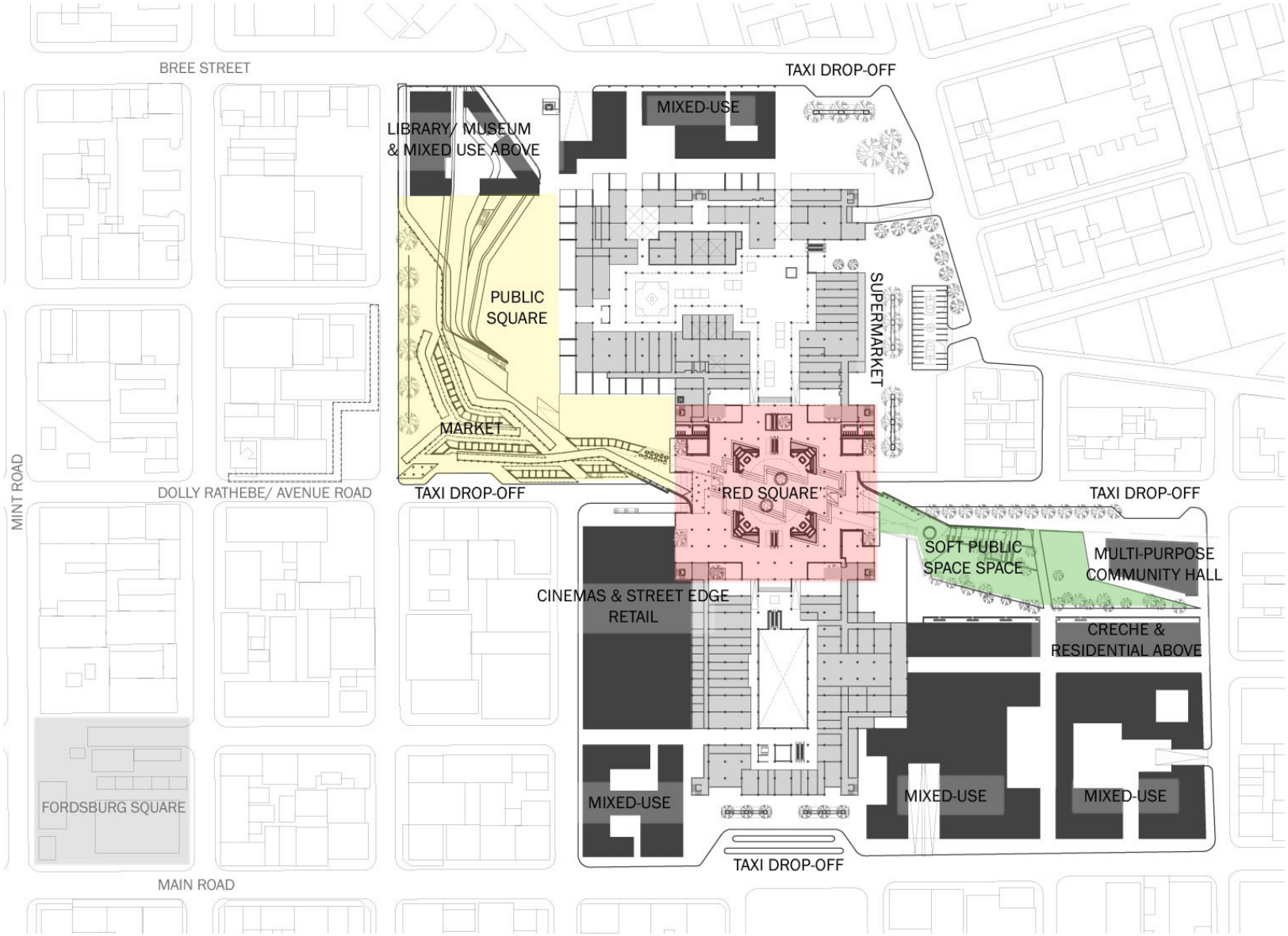
Some strategic spaces on the ground floor have been specified as public components - a library and the Fordsburg Museum on the west square, and a multi-purpose community hall and crèche on the east square with links to the Newtown mosque. A group of developers who develop various plots will be required to pay for and maintain a public building or a public space.

Cinema

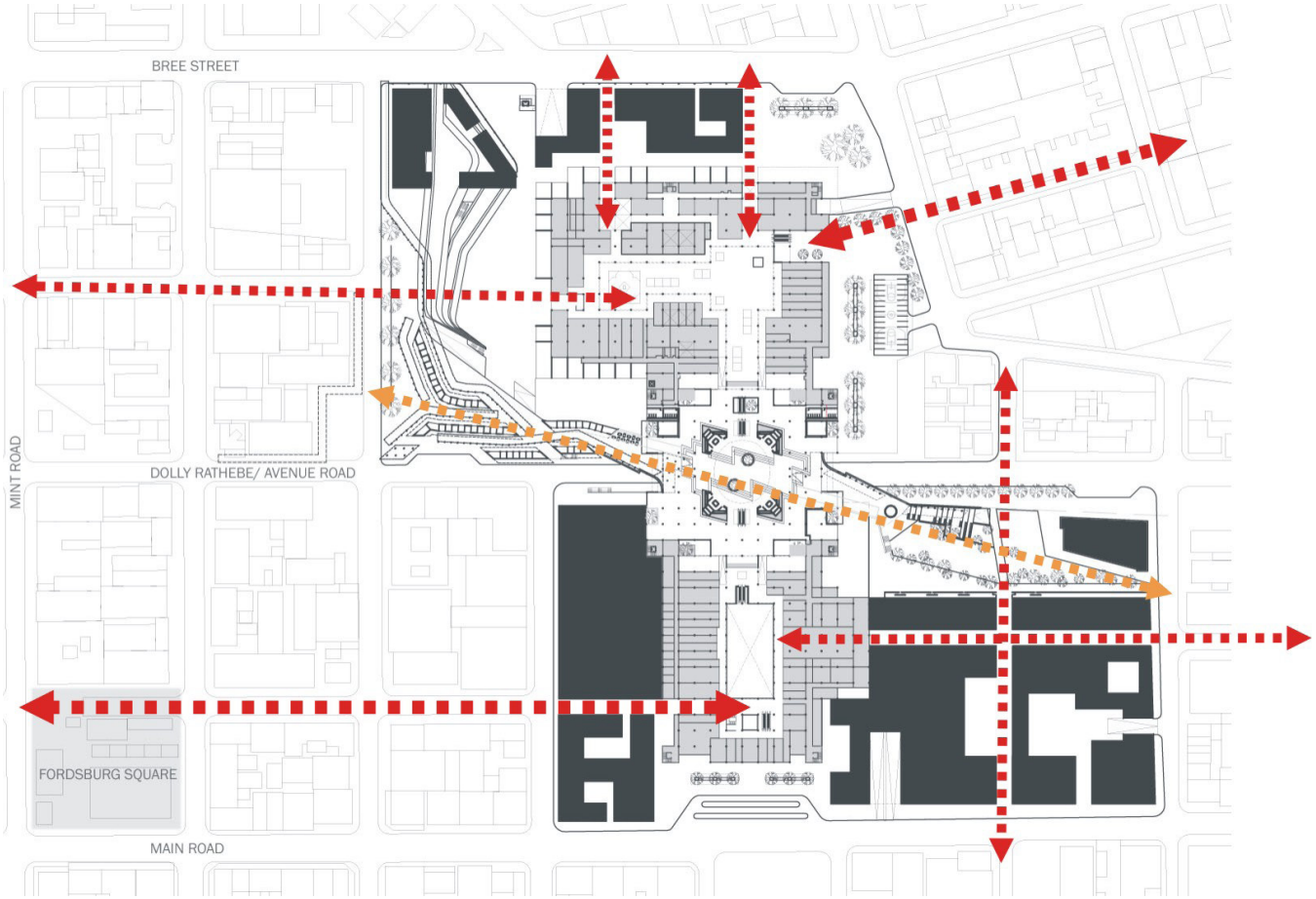
Fordsburg contained cinemas that were urban and accessed directly off the street but have fallen away over the years. Fordsburg residents today travel to the cinemas in the various suburban malls. A small cinema complex is created that is accessed off the street and from Red Square.

Supermarket

There is only one supermarket in Fordsburg and most residents choose to leave the area to do the shopping. By introducing a supermarket on the lower level of the North mall the Plaza is given an everyday programme which would attract local residents on a more regular basis. At the moment the Plaza mainly specializes in luxury or specialty goods. The placement of the supermarket takes advantage of the undeutilised blank edge on the eastern side of the Plaza, opening it up and making positive connections with both Bree Street and Avenue Road.

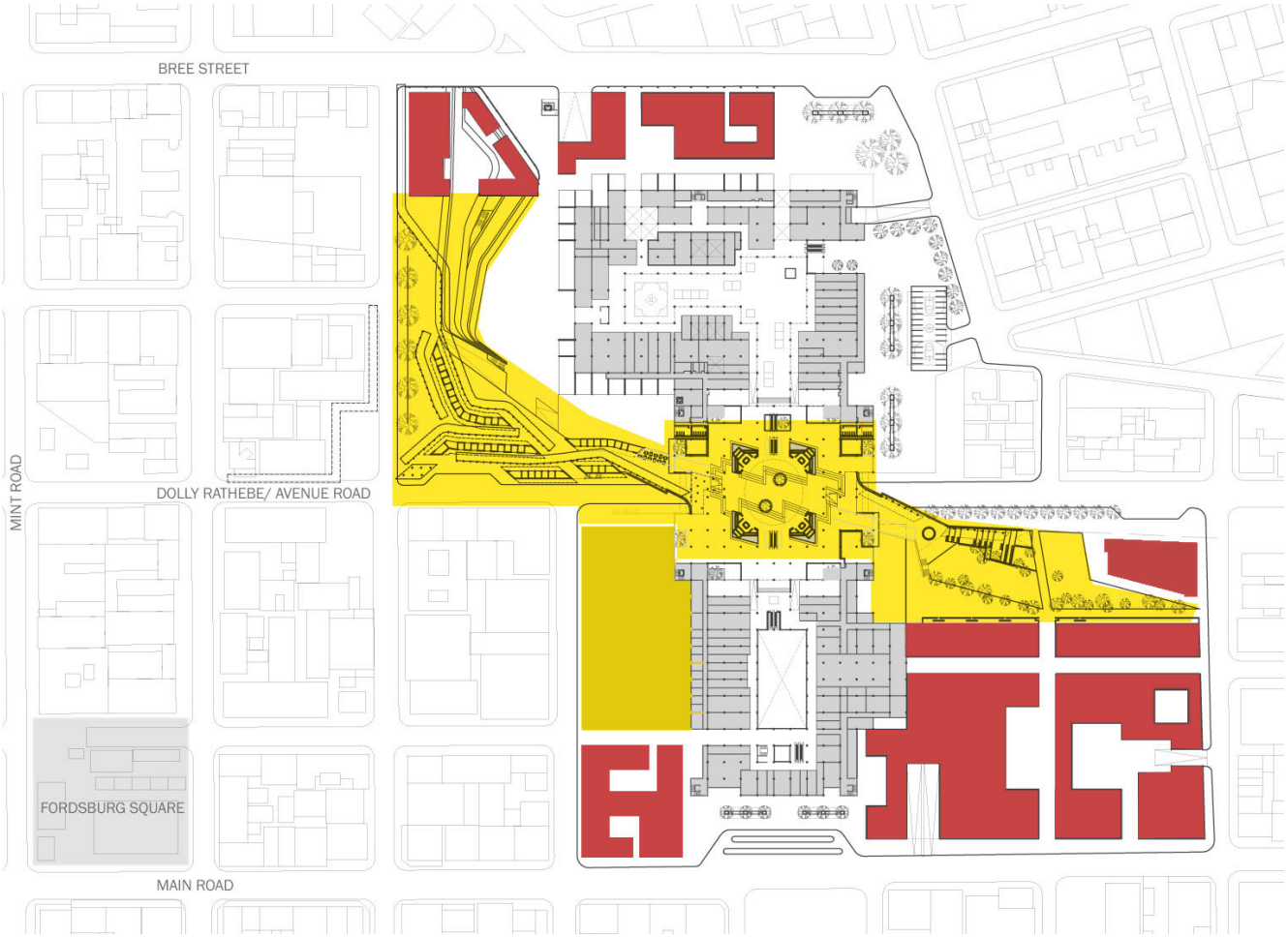

BREE STREET
TAXI DROP-OFF
MIXED-USE
LIBRARY/ MUSEUM
& MIXED USE ABOVE
PUBLIC
SQUARE
SUPERMARKET
MARKET
MINT ROAD
DOLLY RATHEBE/ AVENUE ROAD
TAXI DROP-OFF
RED SQUARE''
TAXI DROP-OFF
SOFT PUBLIC
SPACE SPACE
MULTI-PURPOSE
COMMUNITY HALL
CINEMAS & STREET EDGE
RETAIL
CRECHE &
RESIDENTIAL ABOVE
FORDSBURG SQUARE
MIXED-USE
MIXED-USE
MIXED-USE
TAXI DROP-OFF
MAIN ROAD

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES



CONNECTING FORDSBURG AND THE PLAZA

Existing routes that connect key public spaces and buildings with existing entrances of the Plaza are consolidated and pedestrianised. Two such routes to/from the Plaza are those between Newtown Mosque and the Plaza from the east and between Fordsburg Square and the Plaza from the west. Also new pedestrian routes are created from Bree Street from the north and from Main Road from the south.

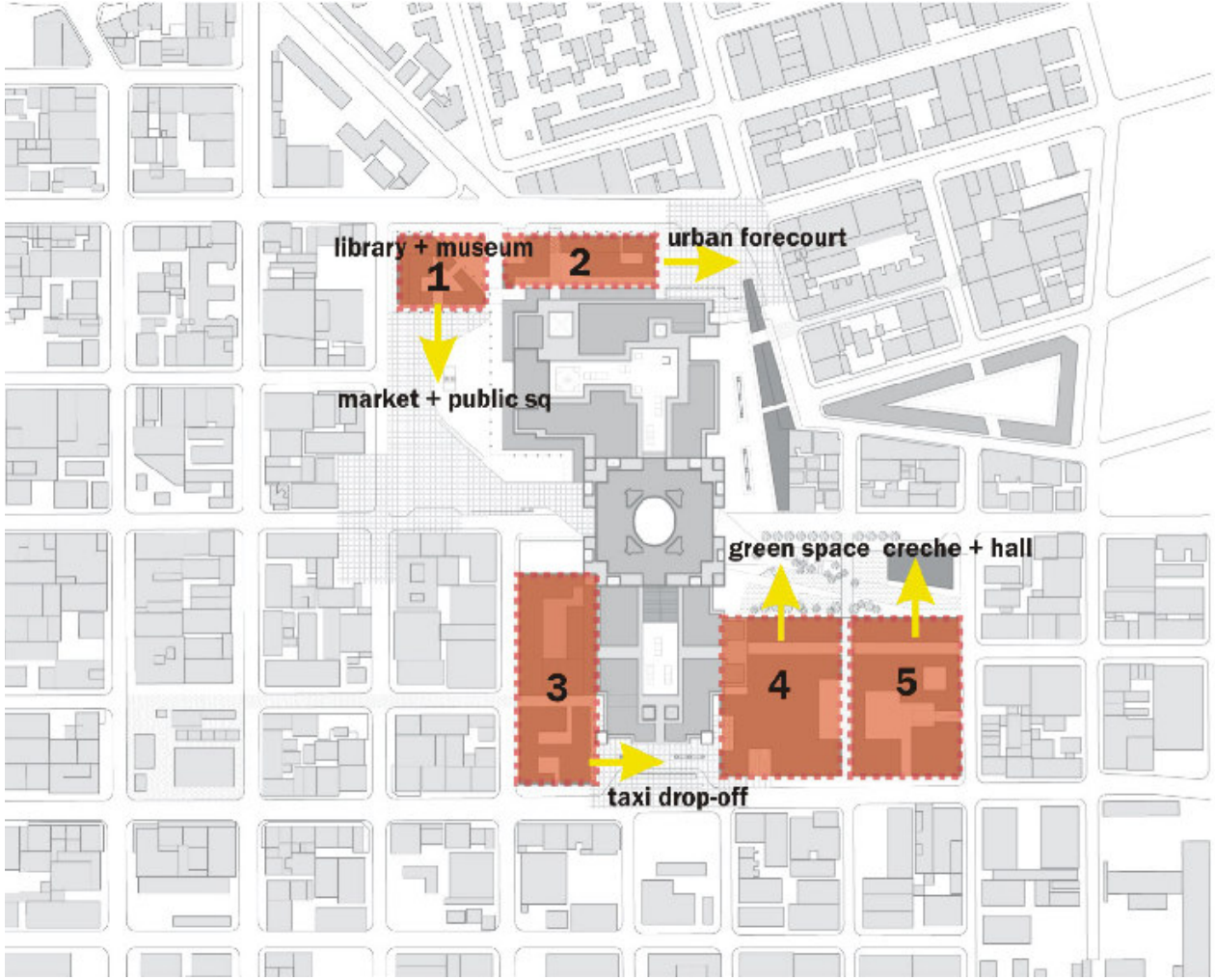


DEVELOPED BY PLAZA

EXTERNALLY DEVELOPED

DEVELOPER - ORIENTAL PLAZA TRUST PARTNERSHIP

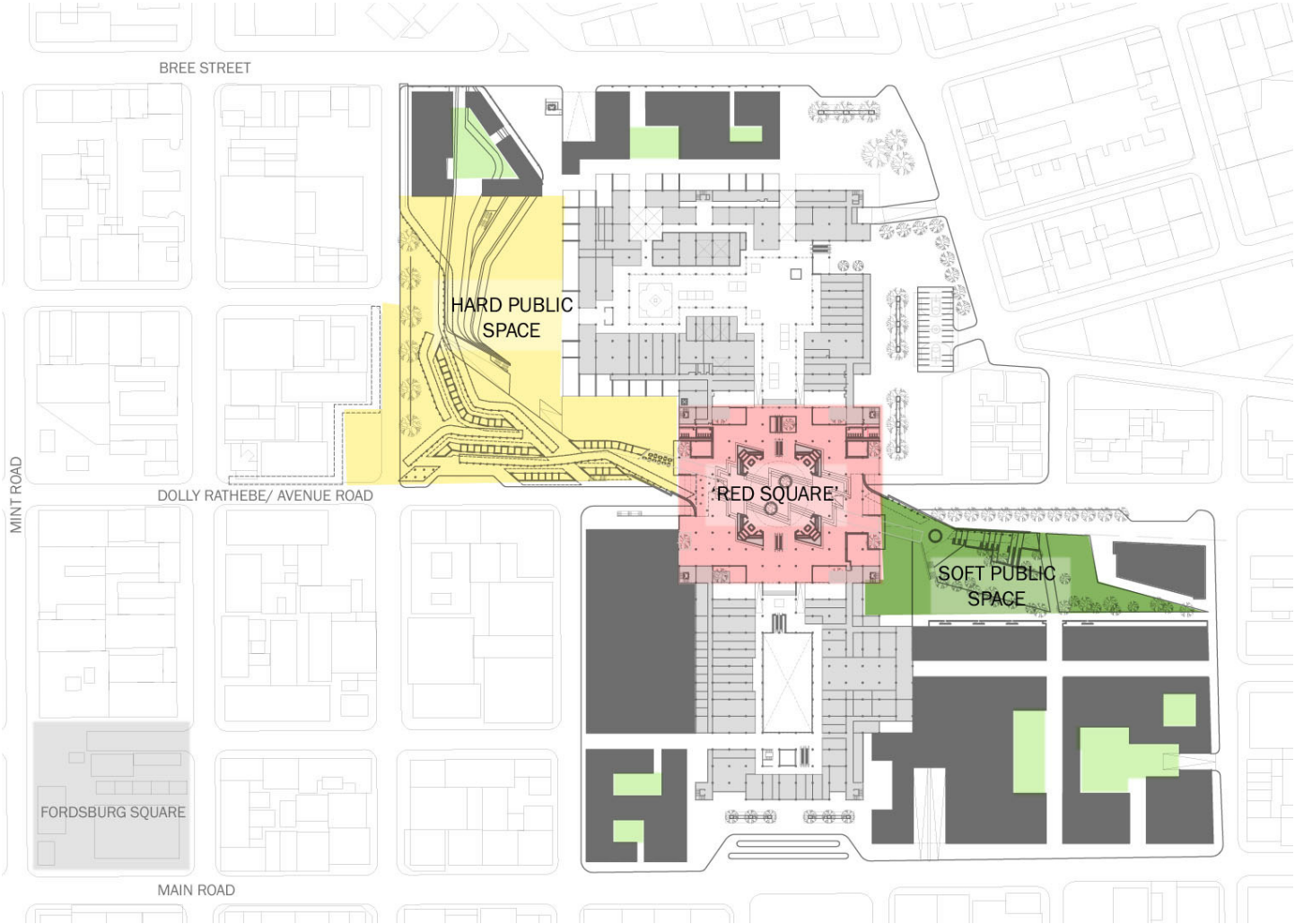
The Plaza site was owned by the City but was bought back and is still owned by the Oriental Plaza Trust. Due to the historical aspects of forced removals with the Plaza as a form of compensation the Trust today would be unwilling to sell the land to developers. However the Plaza is sectional titled land, not owned by a large conglomerate, which means that the Trust do not have the financial means to develop the Plaza on the scale proposed by the thesis. Funding would be required by outside developers who would be allowed to develop the buildings without owning the land.



PROVISION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SPACES

Each group of buildings would be required to provide & maintain a public building or pubic space. The following programs are specified on strategic sites: library & museum; green space; crèche & multi-use community building; taxi drop-off areas; supermarket on a pedestrian avenue.

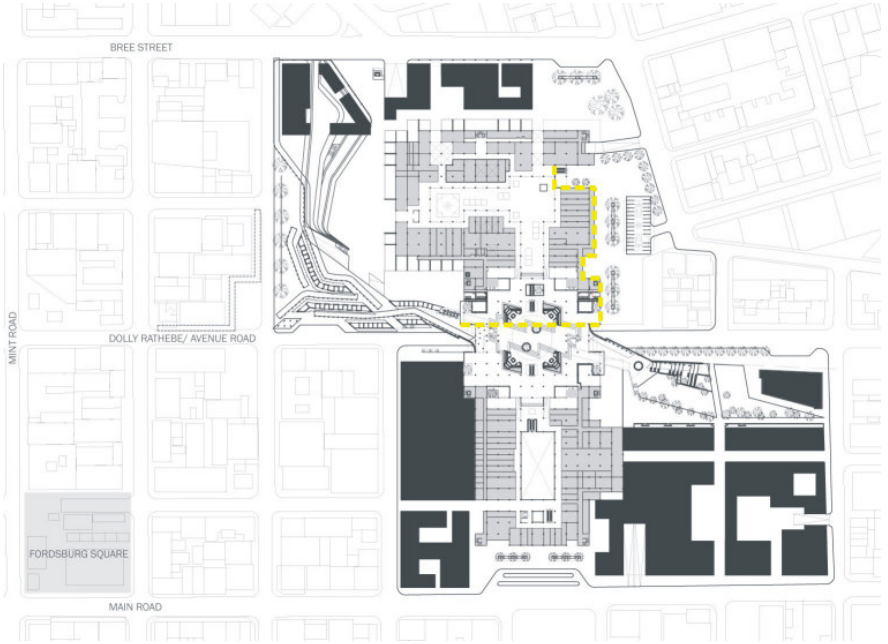
The sites designed at an architectural scale in this thesis would be financed by the Oriental Plaza Trust.



ARTICULATION OF PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC SPACES



CUT IN = street retail



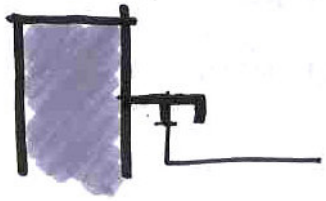
ATTITUDE TO EDGES OF PLAZA

The Plaza is an iconic and integral focal point in Fordsburg, which necessitates a considered approach to intervention. The edges of the Plaza are treated in three ways that maintains the integrity of the original structure:

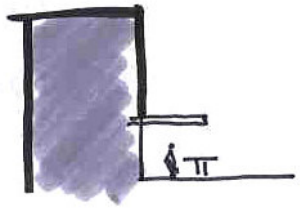
1 clip-on roof arcade;

2 thickening of the edge with retail on public space or street edge;

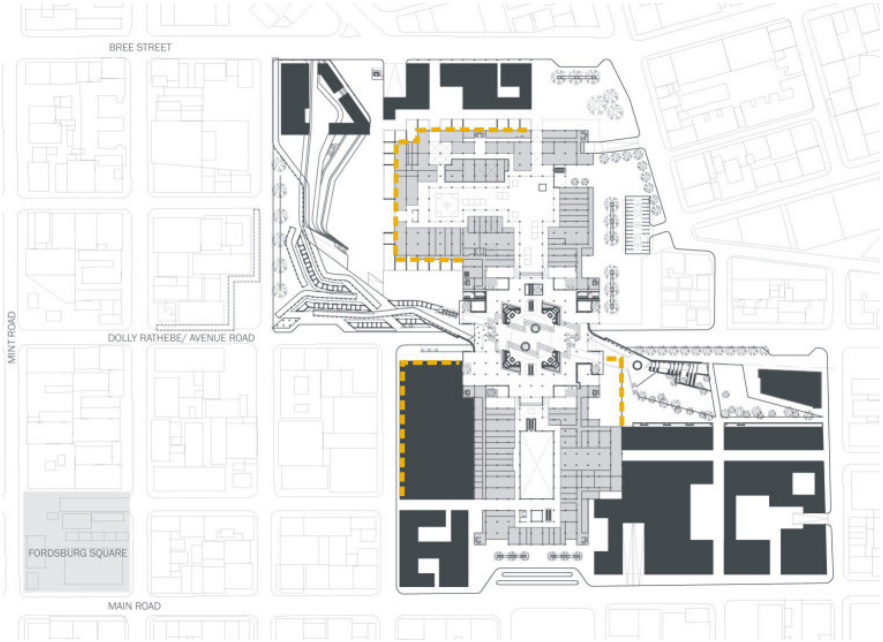
3 new program inserted into the existing form to create an active edge.

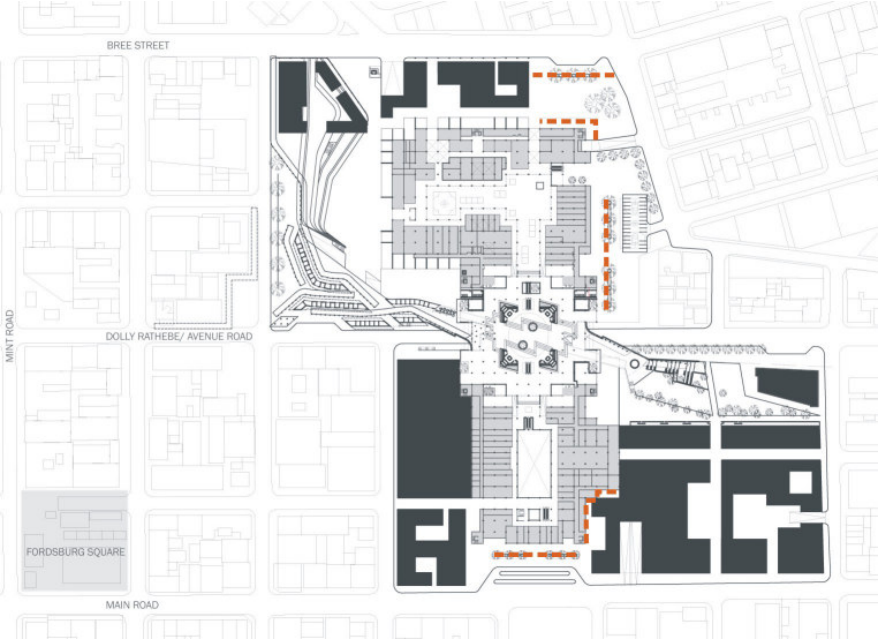


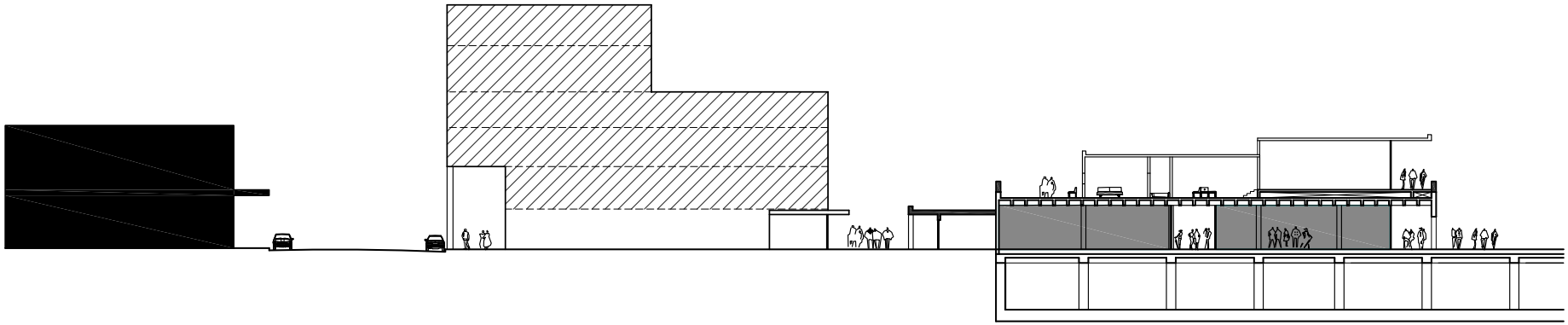
THICKEN EDGE = retail

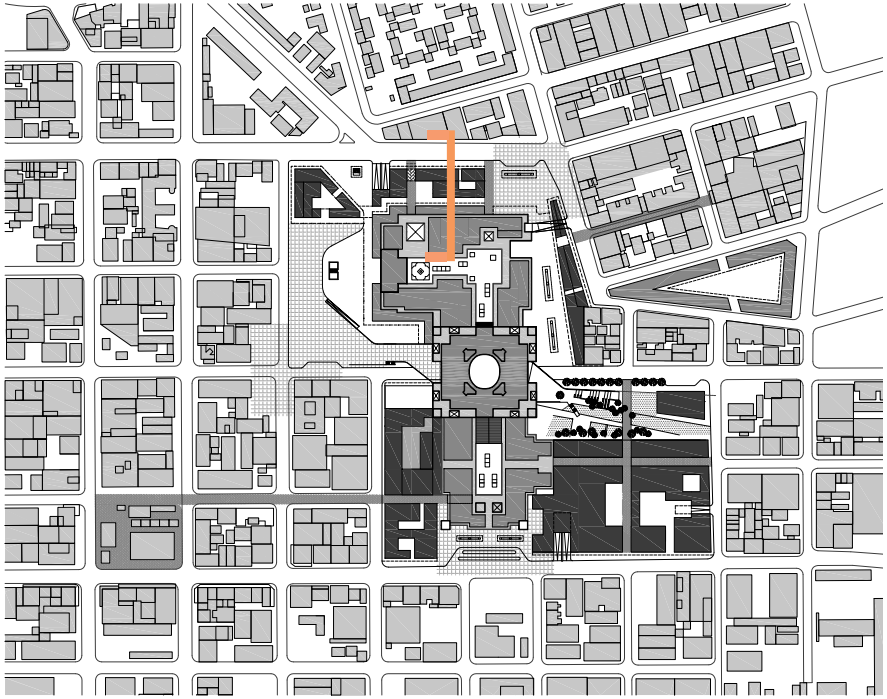


CLIP ON ROOFS = trade









BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

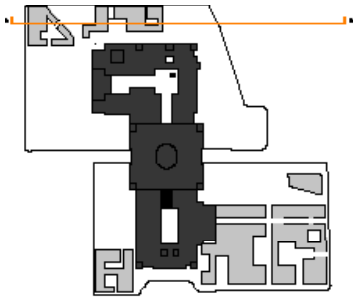
Open space of the Plaza site identified for development by developers are divided into plots of similar size to the existing Fordsburg fabric.
Design guidelines include the following:
Demarcating built & open space to protect collective and public open spaces;
Building height restrictions to ensure differentiation & for roof spaces to become habitable;
All Ground Floor edges on public spaces or street edge will be active with retail or a public facility.
Built to lines & arcades on hard public spaces and streets.



PARKING

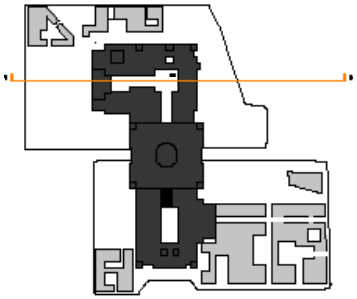
The Plaza currently provides 1,800 parking bays. However, lack of parking in Fordsburg means that a minimum of approximately 4,000 bays need to be provided to accommode the existing shortage as well as new development.

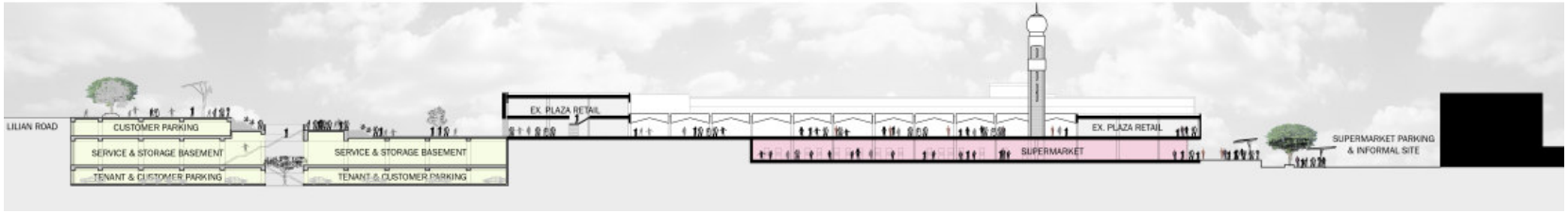
Following an exploration of parking solutions the thesis has provided basement parking to prioritise ground level public space. The 1st level of each basement height of basement is raised to accommodate service vehicles.



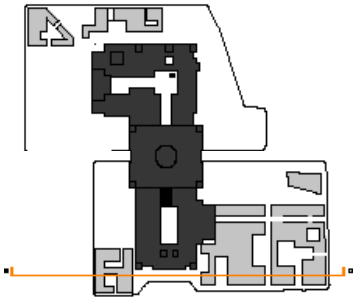


SECTION A-A
1:1000



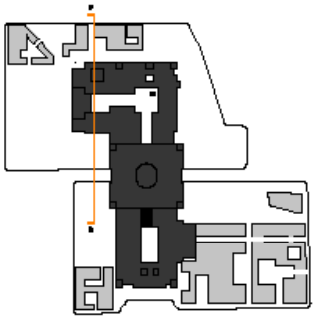


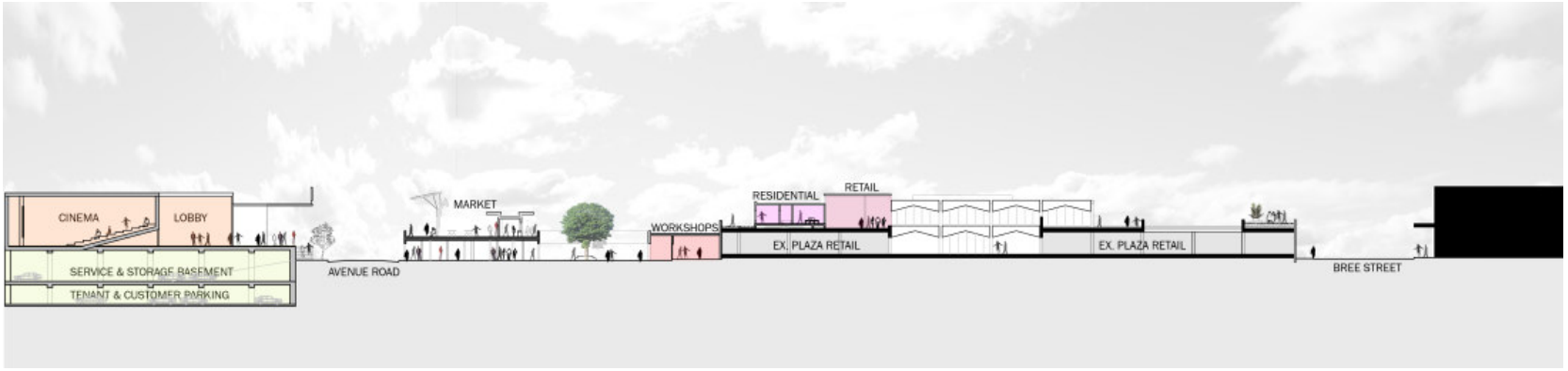
SECTION B-B
1:1000



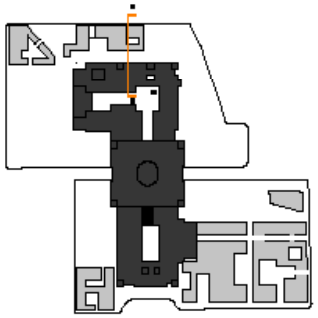


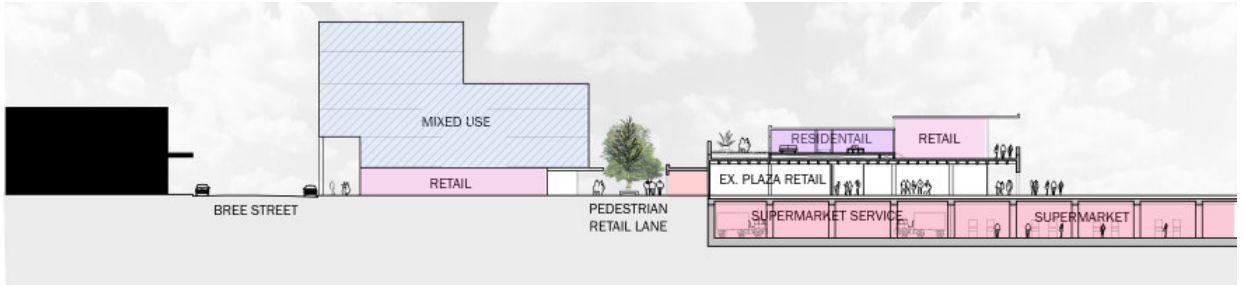
SECTION C-C
1:1000



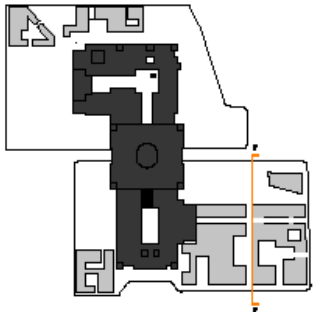


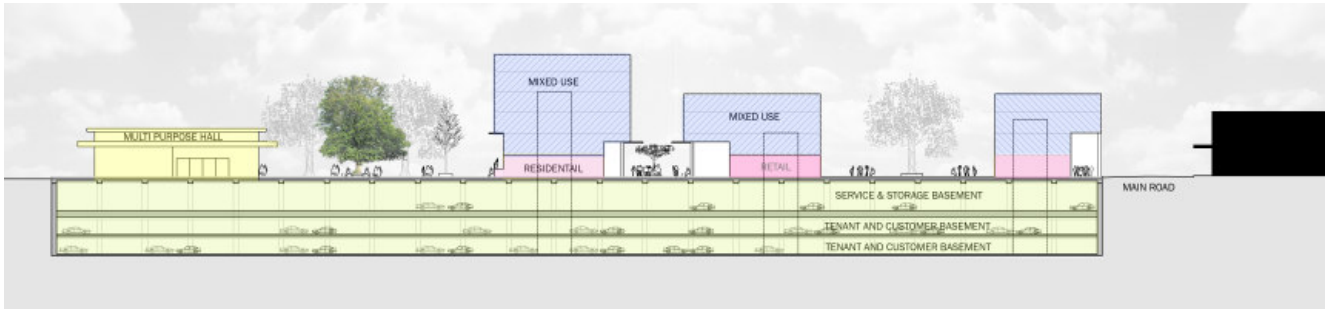
SECTION D-D
1:1000



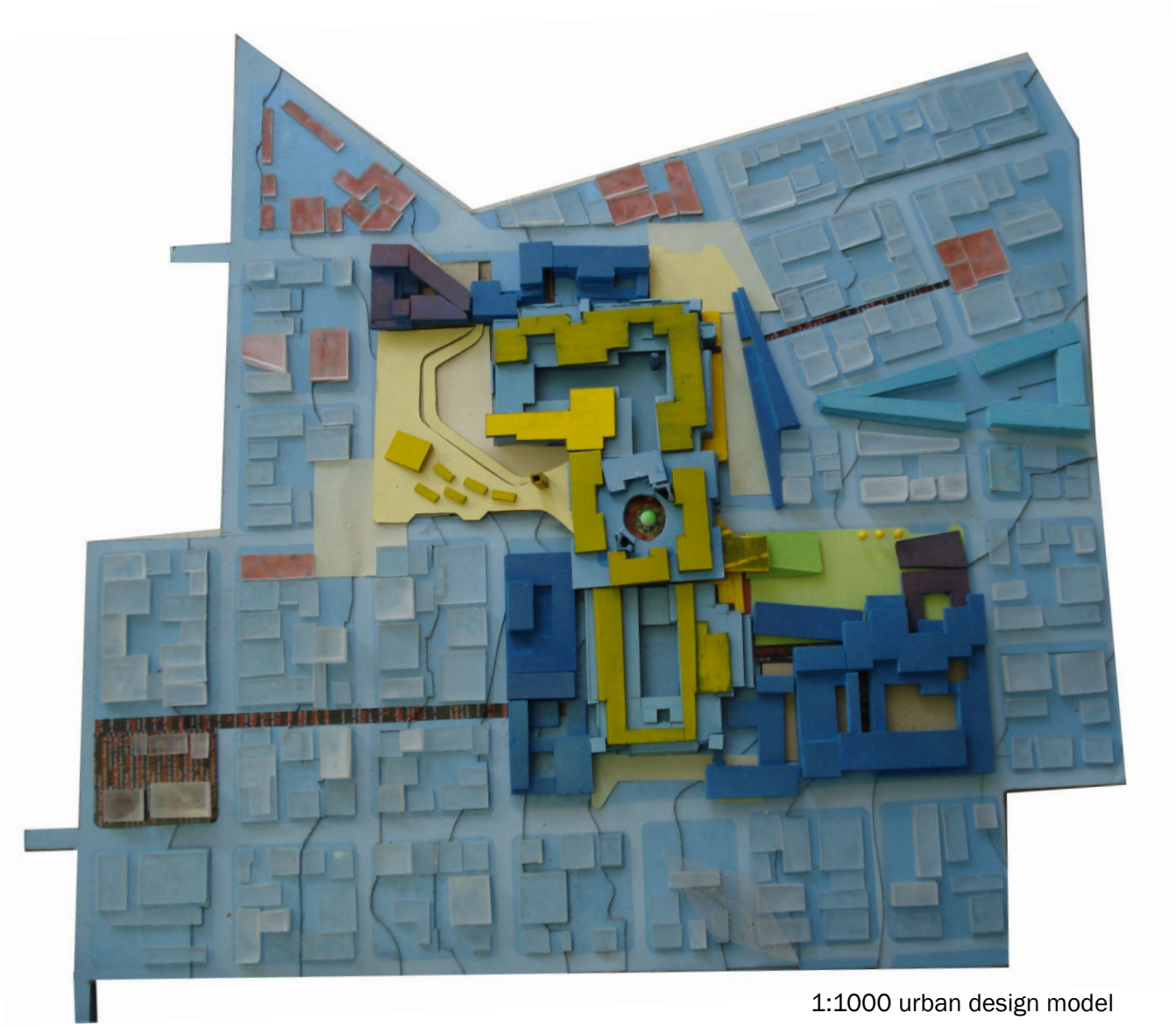


SECTION E-E
1:1000



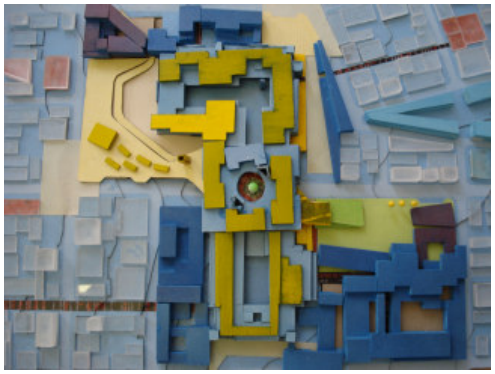


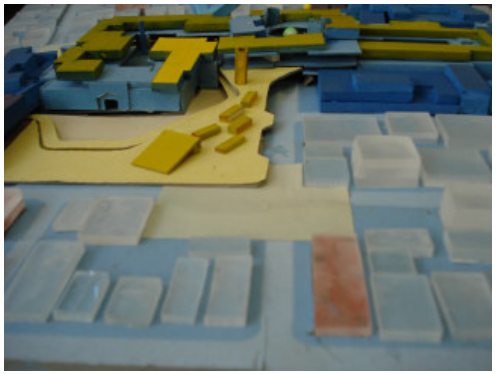
SECTION F-F
1:1000



1:1000 urban design model







existing figure ground

proposed built space/open space

proposed pedestrian networks [routes]

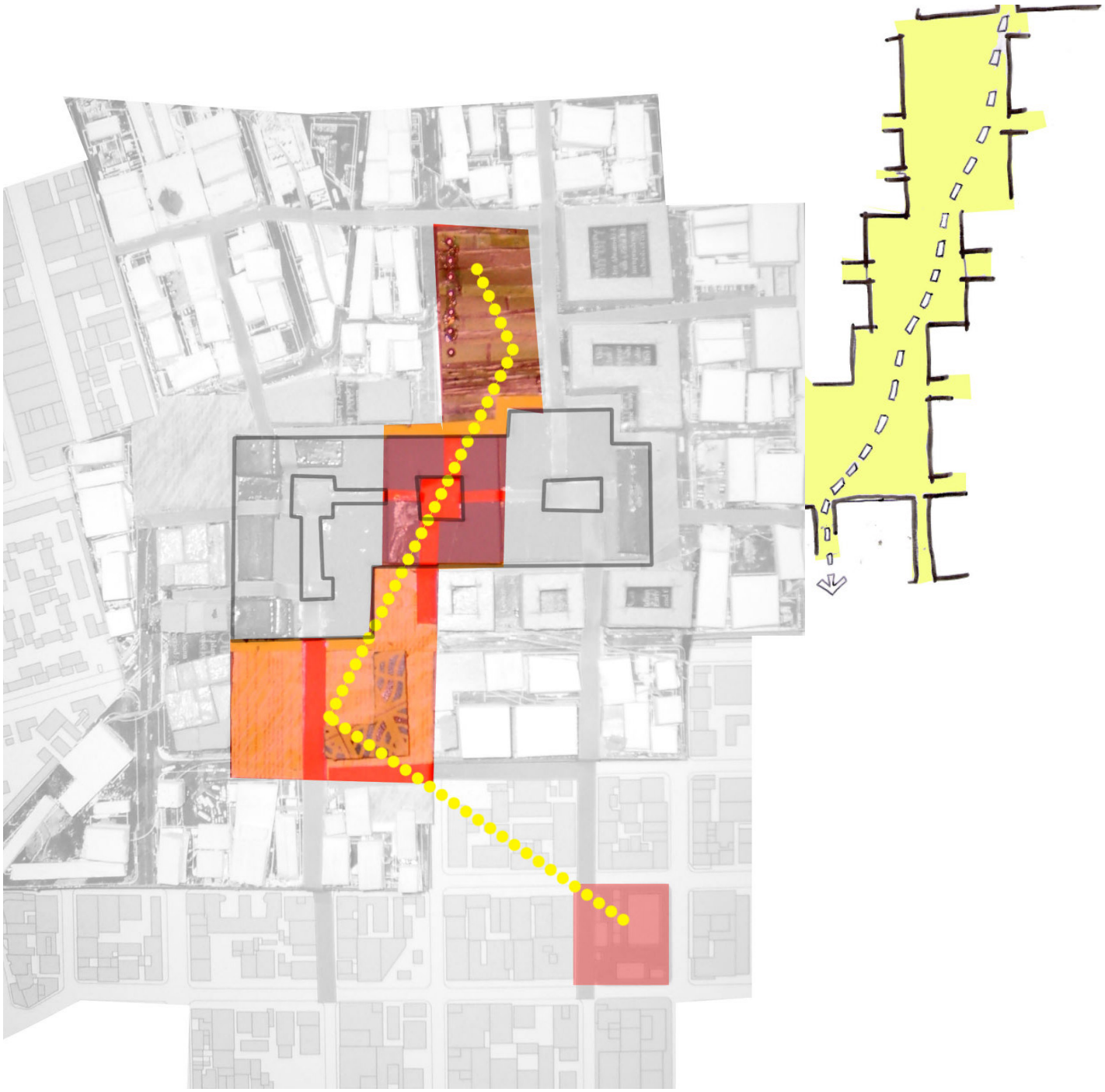
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

BUILDING THE PUBLIC REALM

The Plaza is divided between a North mall and a South Mall. Over Avenue Road they are connected by a large multi-level internalized shopping space known as the Grand Bazaar. The Grand Bazaar space was designed as the destination point, magnet, or the central anchor store. However this never materialised and is used mostly a large transit space as most shoppers move between the North and South Mall.

The Plaza created a buffer between Newtown and Fordsburg, while the Grand Bazaar in particular created a gradient dip and tunnel effect beneath it that severed the Avenue Road east-west corridor. Significantly it also erased an important public space as the Grand Bazaar occupies the site of an historic public place, Red Square as it was known by locals, which was a popular public space for political activism, hosting speakers such as Ghandi and Alan Patin.

The contemporary condition of Fordsburg in light of an understanding of its historical places and urban connections is key to (re-)building a coherent public realm. The thesis therefore reclaims the Grand Bazaar as a public space and renames it by its local name of Red Square. It will link not only the North and South Malls as it currently does, but also the public space created to its east and to its west, thereby creating and building an interconnected public realm. This re-establishes the historic east-west pedestrian connection and re-institutes the public space erased through commercialization.

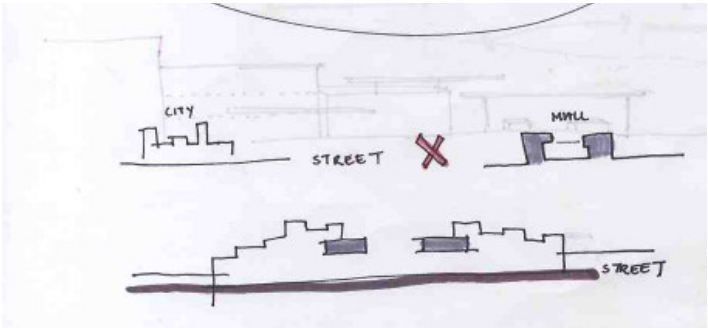




View down Avenue Rd looking East towards the Grand Bazaar



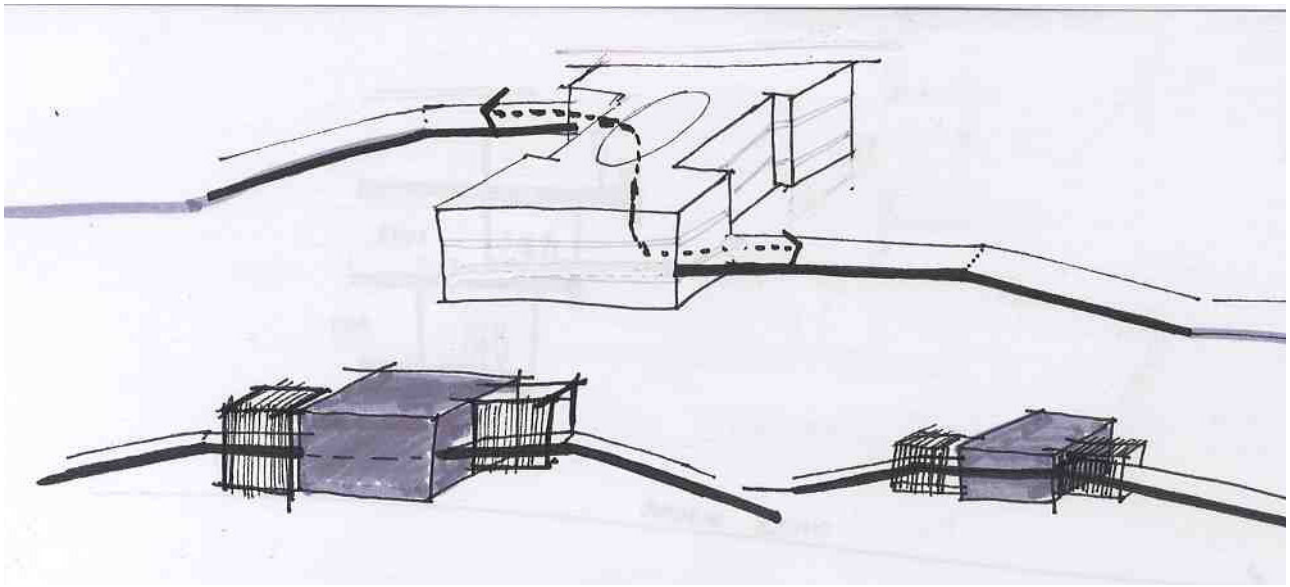
An early conceptual exploration sketch



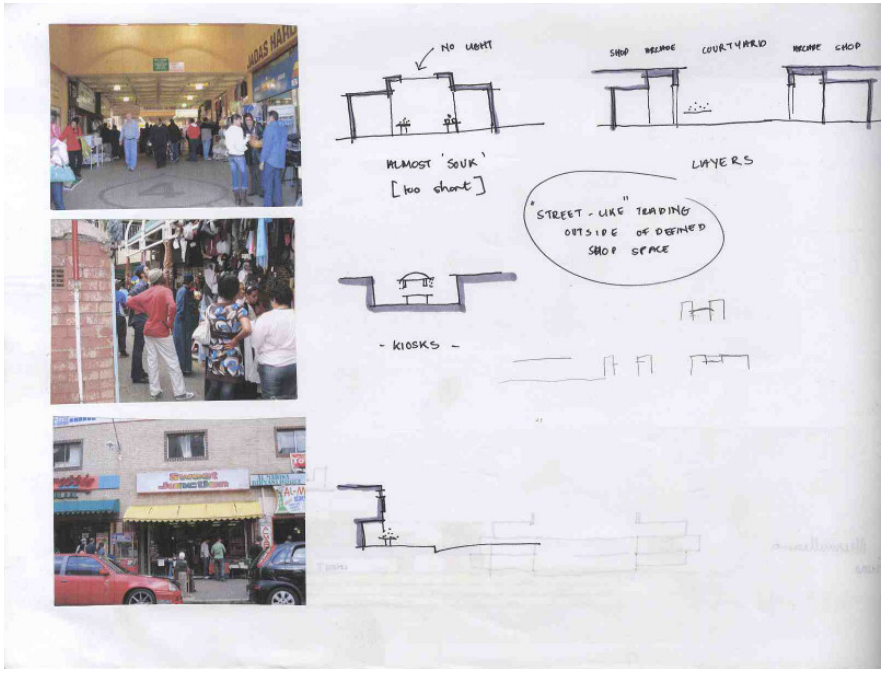
CONCEPTS

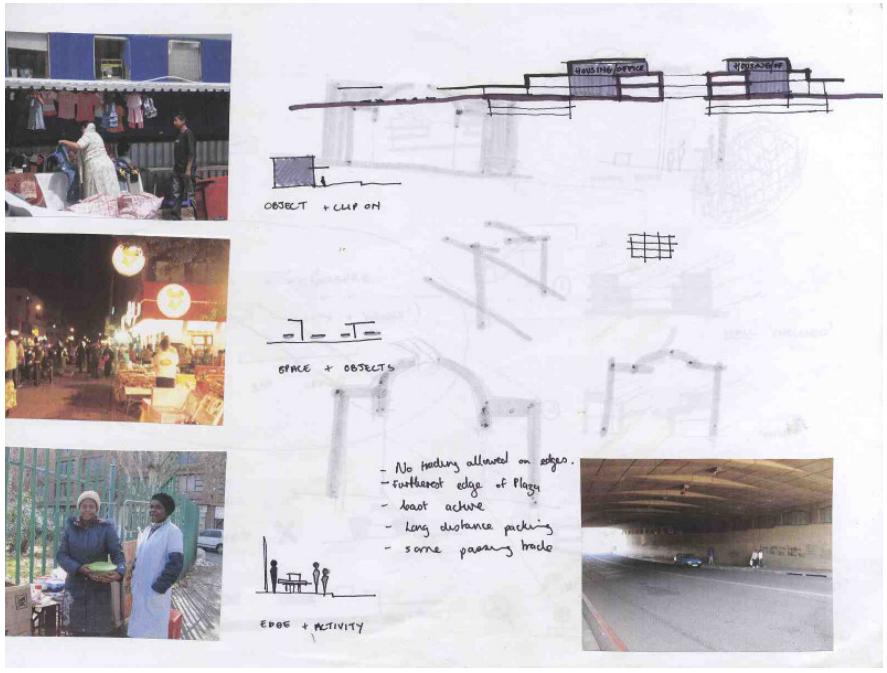
1.This disconnection of the mall and the city/ Plaza and Fordsburg

2.Using the metaphor of street to mediate between above two. Merging hard space, red square, & green space.



3. Hierarchy of retail space – from supermarket, larger stores, street lined smaller shops, formalized market space to trading furniture

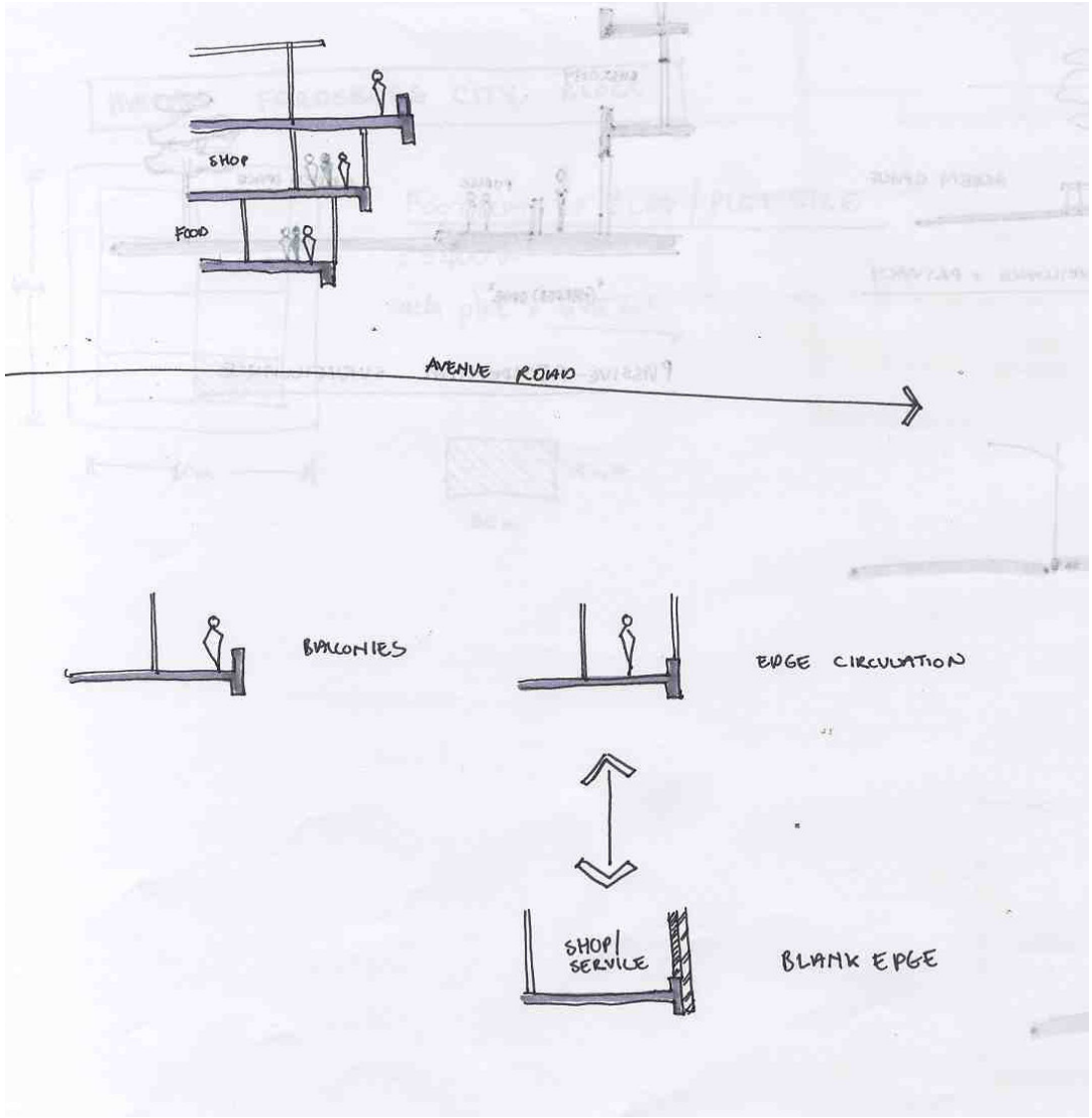






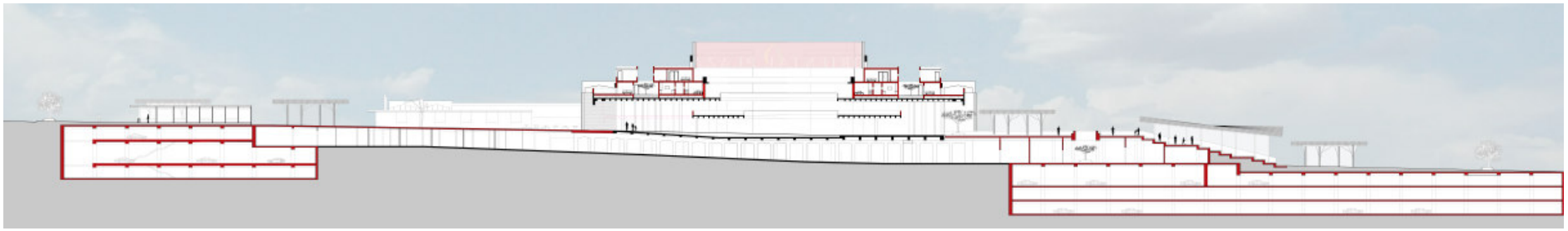
4. VIEWS

The Grand Bazaar because of its elevated psition has incredible views of the city which are not taken advantage of. This photo is of the top floor of the Grand Bazaar. Underutlized office/ residential space.

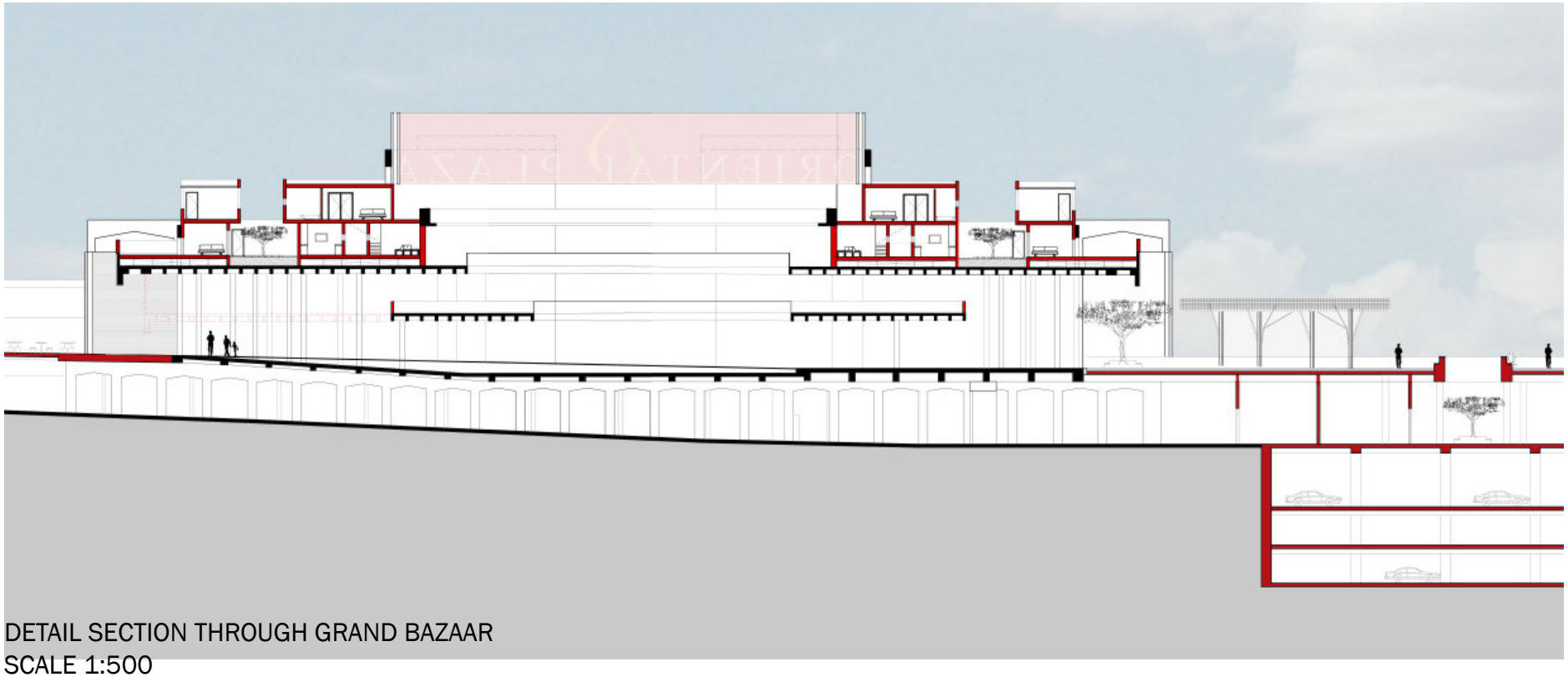

SHOP
FOOD
AVENUE ROAD
BALCONIES
EDGE CIRCULATION
SHOP/
SERVICE
BLANK EDGE


ORIENTAL PLAZA

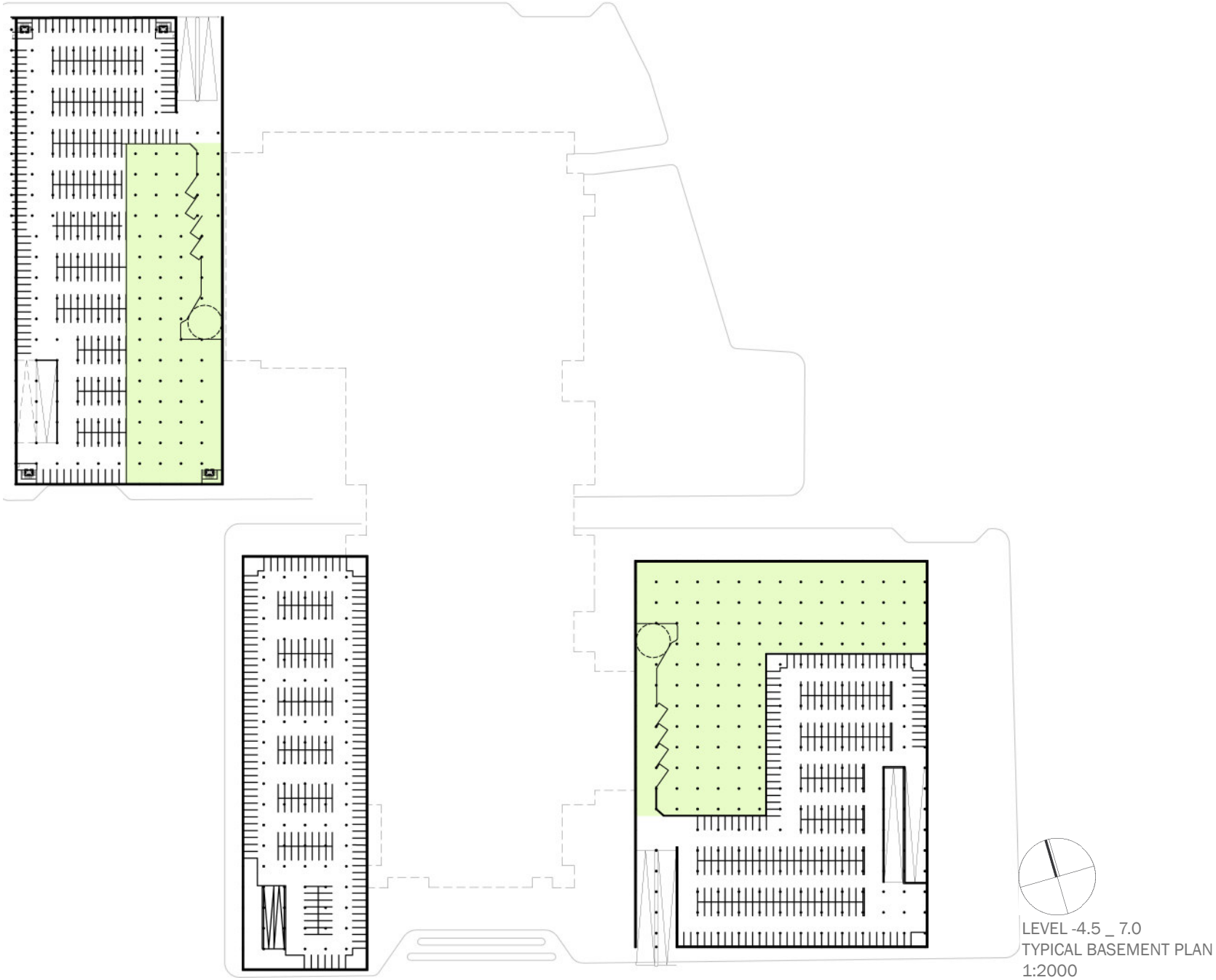




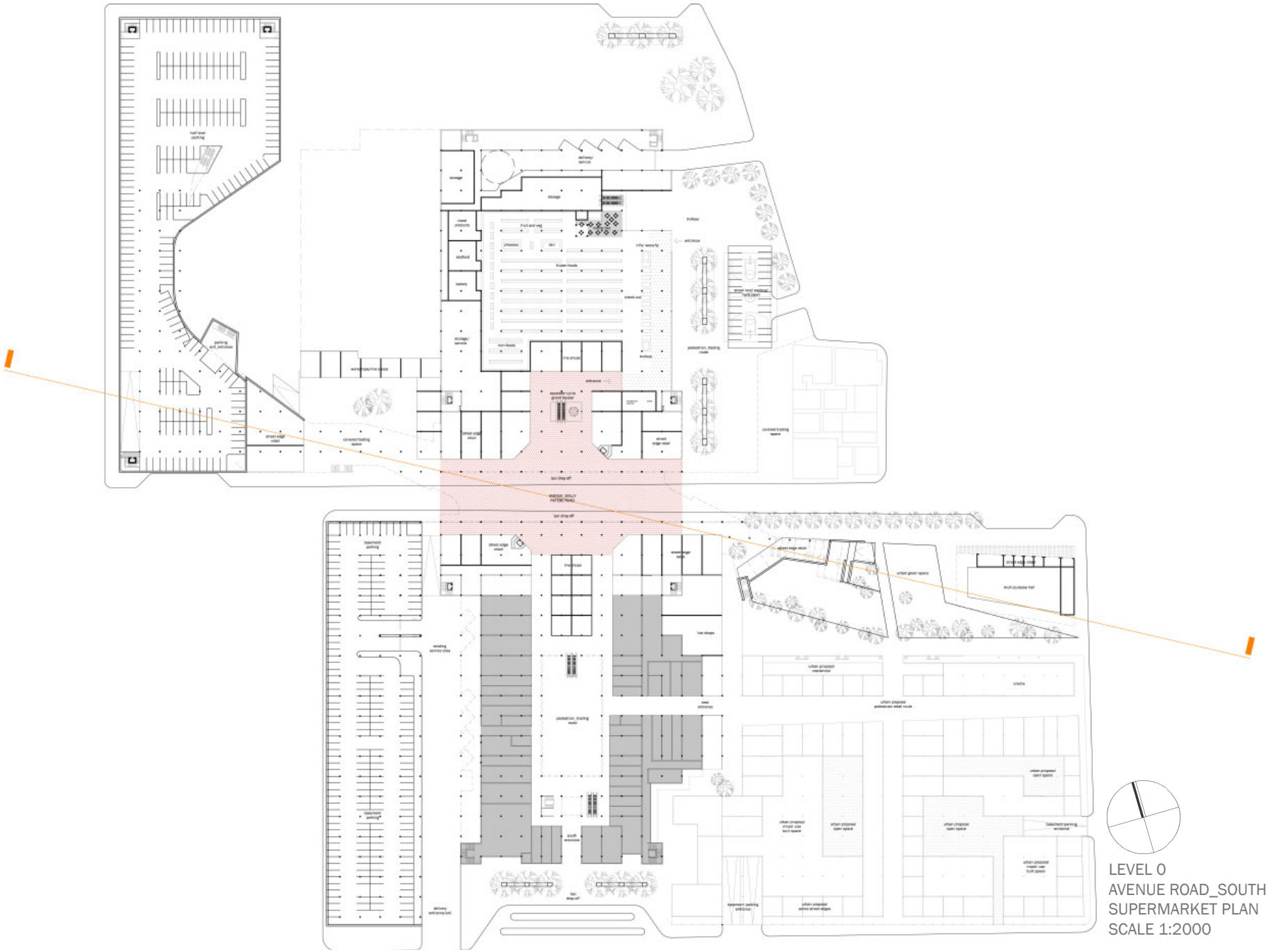
SECTION AA
SCALE 1:1000



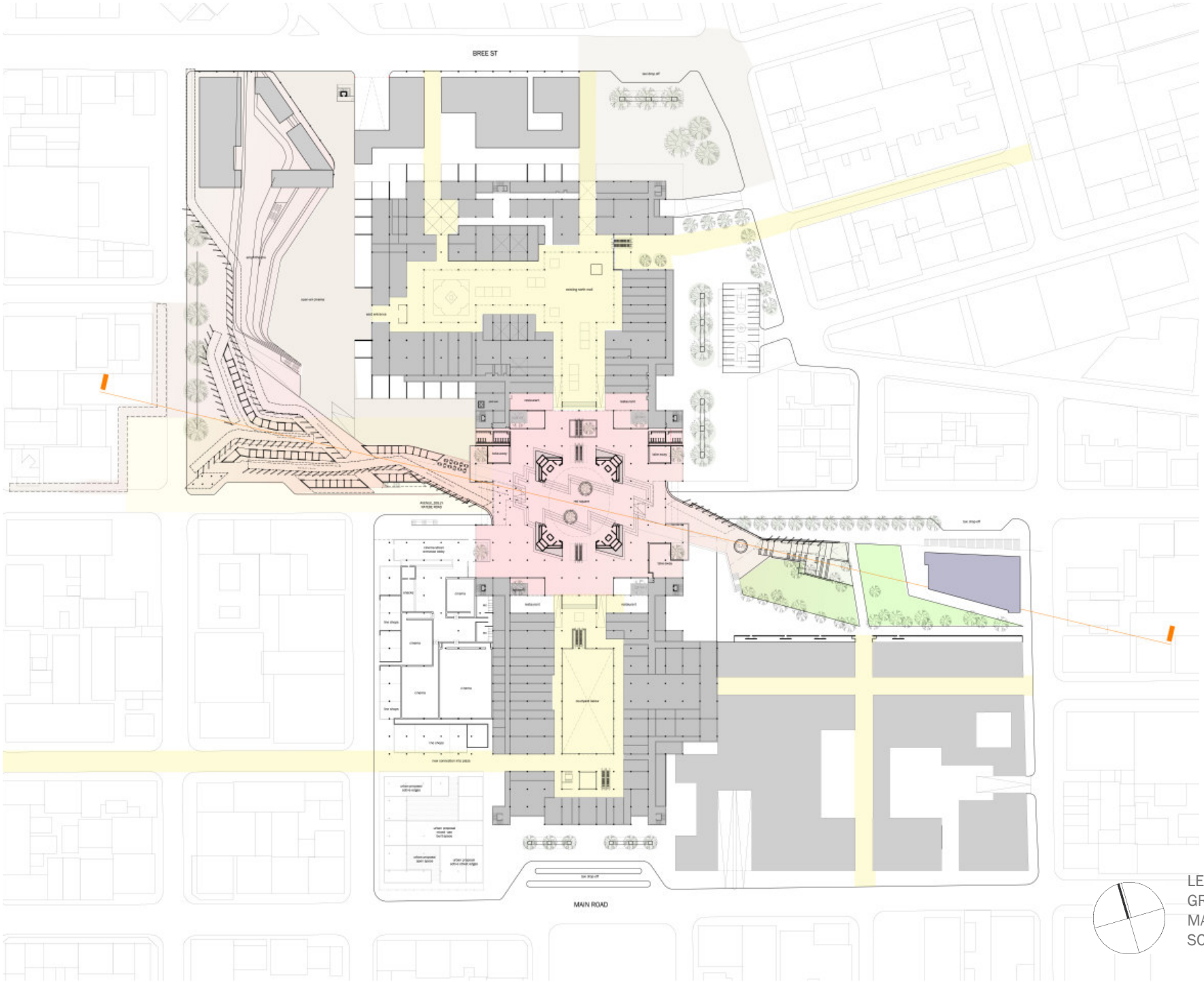
DETAIL SECTION THROUGH GRAND BAZAAR
SCALE 1:500



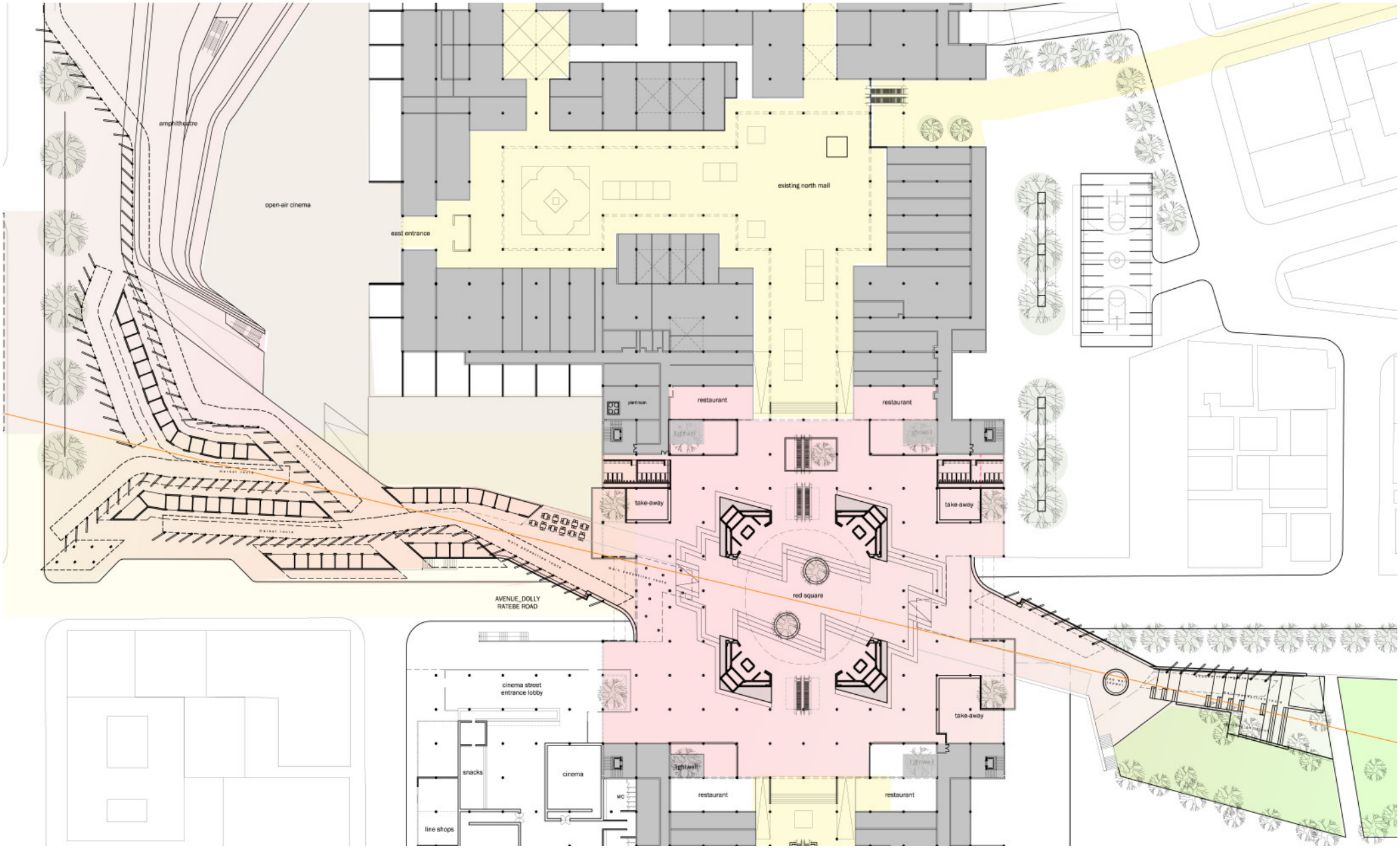
LEVEL -4.5 _ 7.0
TYPICAL BASEMENT PLAN
1:2000



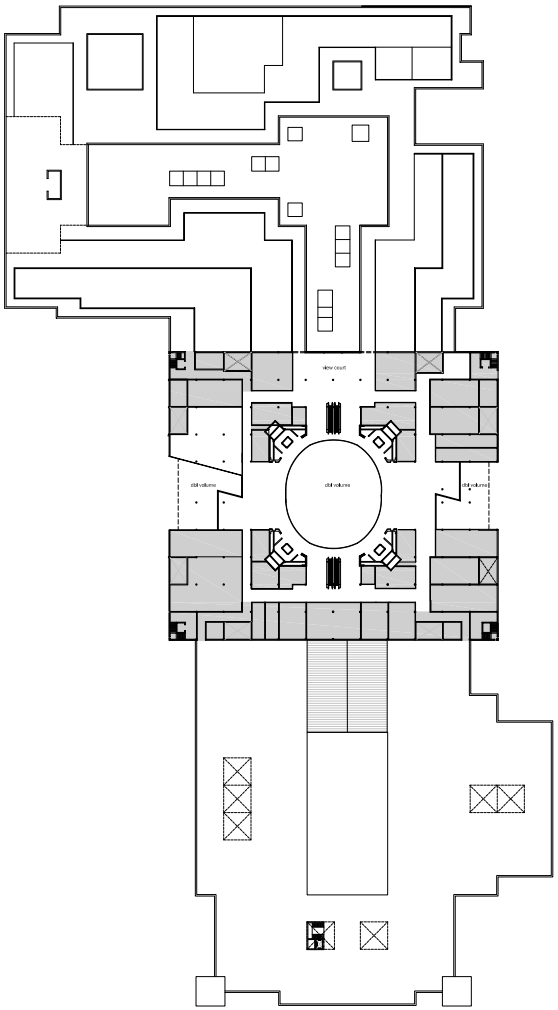
LEVEL 0
AVENUE ROAD_SOUTH MALL GROUND FLOOR /
SUPERMARKET PLAN
SCALE 1:2000

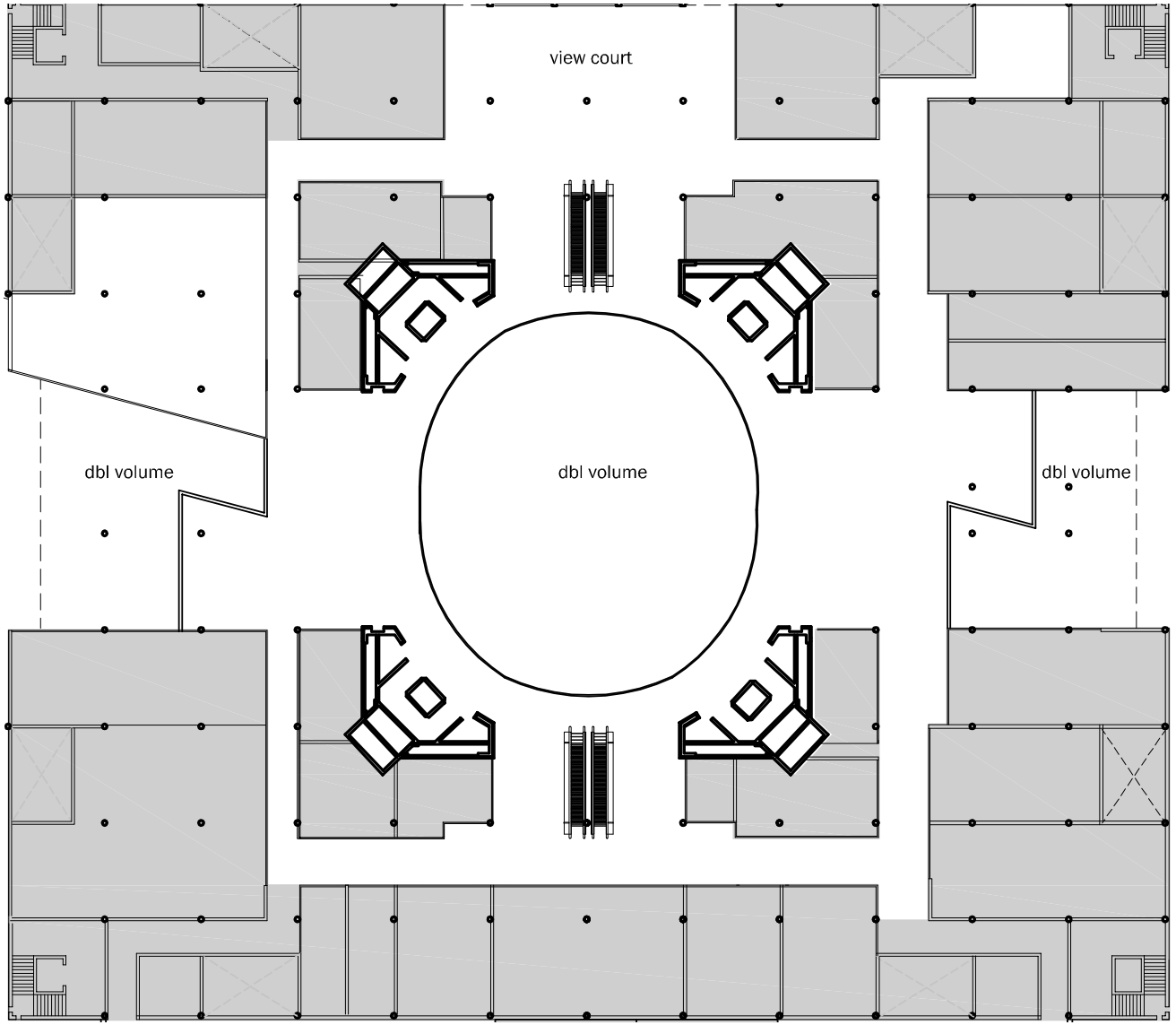


LEVEL 3.5 _ 7.0
GRAND BAZAAR GROUND FLOOR/
MARKET PLAN
SCALE 1:2000



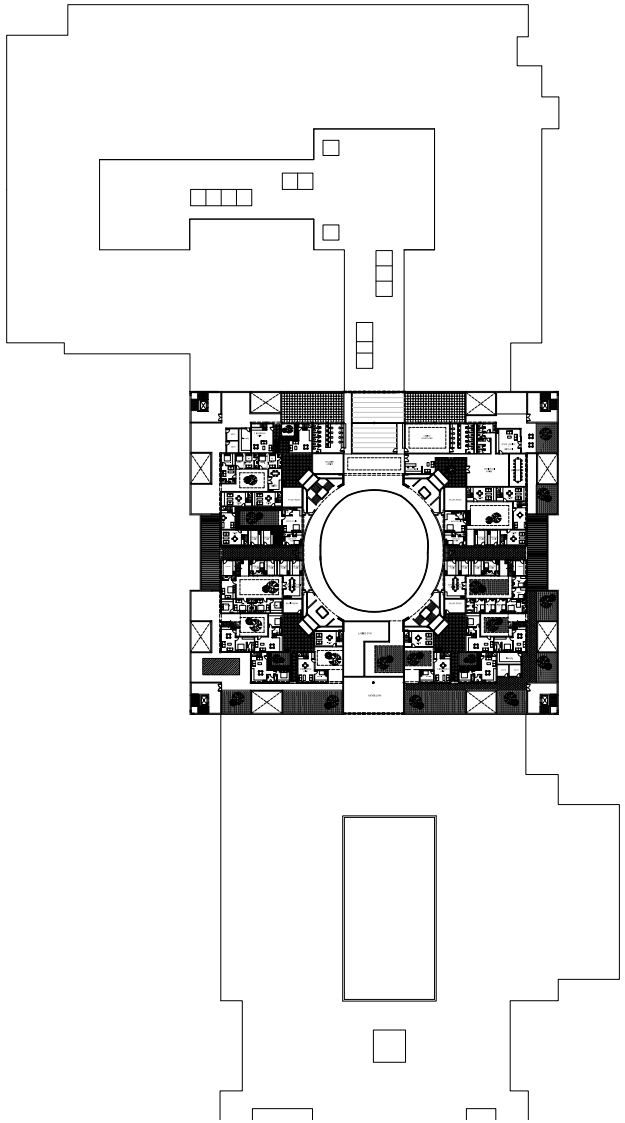
LEVEL 3.5 _ 7.0
GRAND BAZAAR GROUND FLOOR/
MARKET PART PLAN
SCALE 1:1000

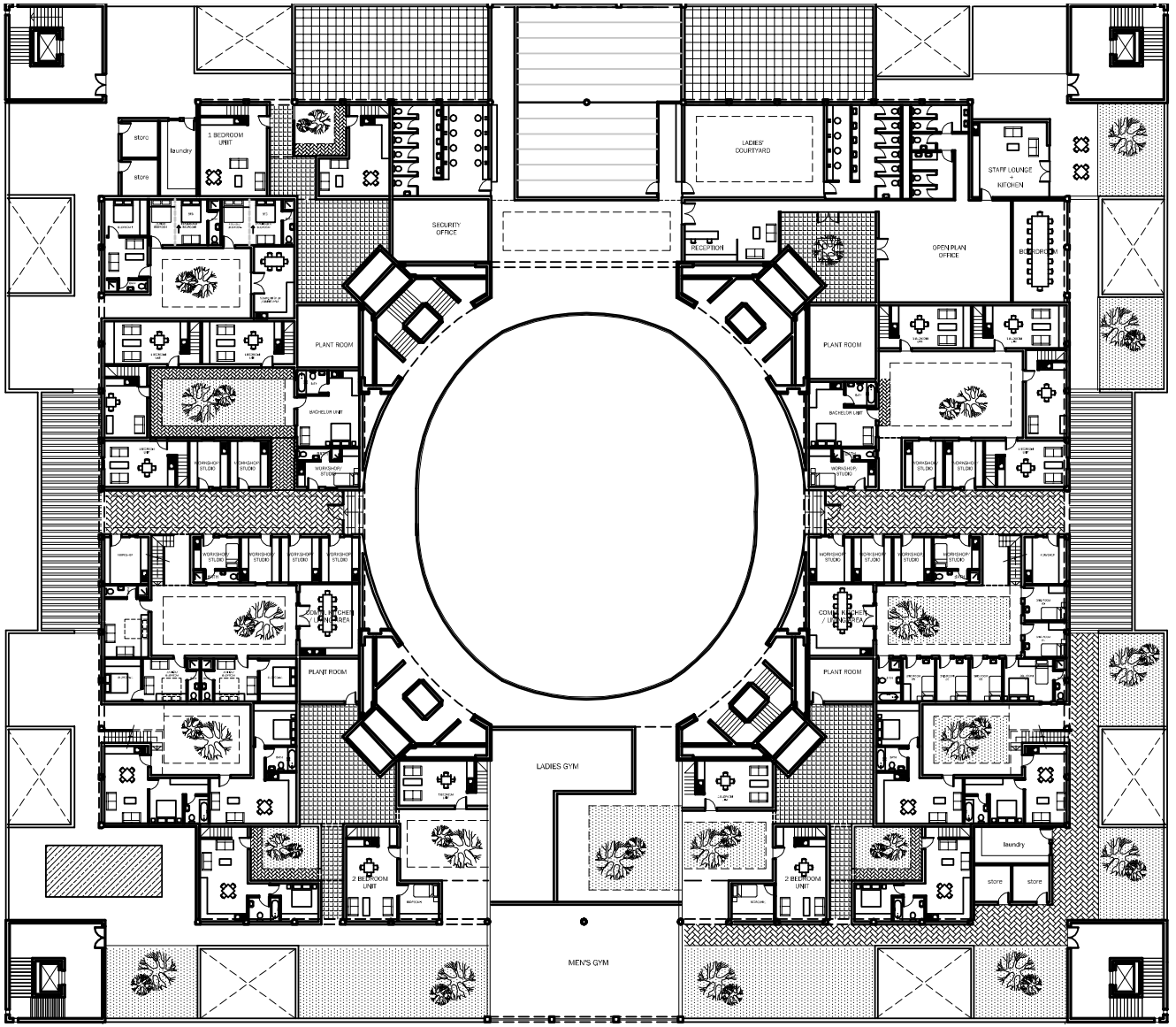




LEVEL 7.0
GRAND BAZAAR UPPER RETAIL PLAN
nts

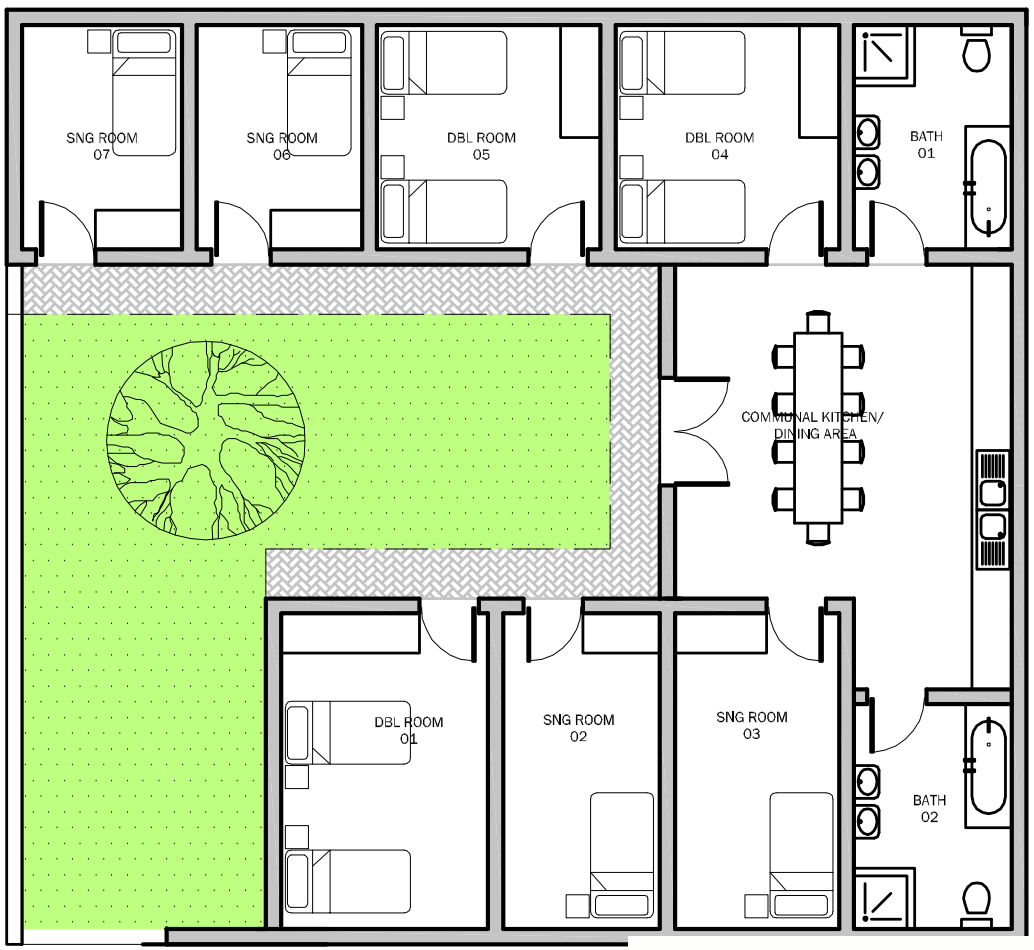
LEVEL 7.0
GRAND BAZAAR UPPER RETAIL PART PLAN
SCALE 1:500





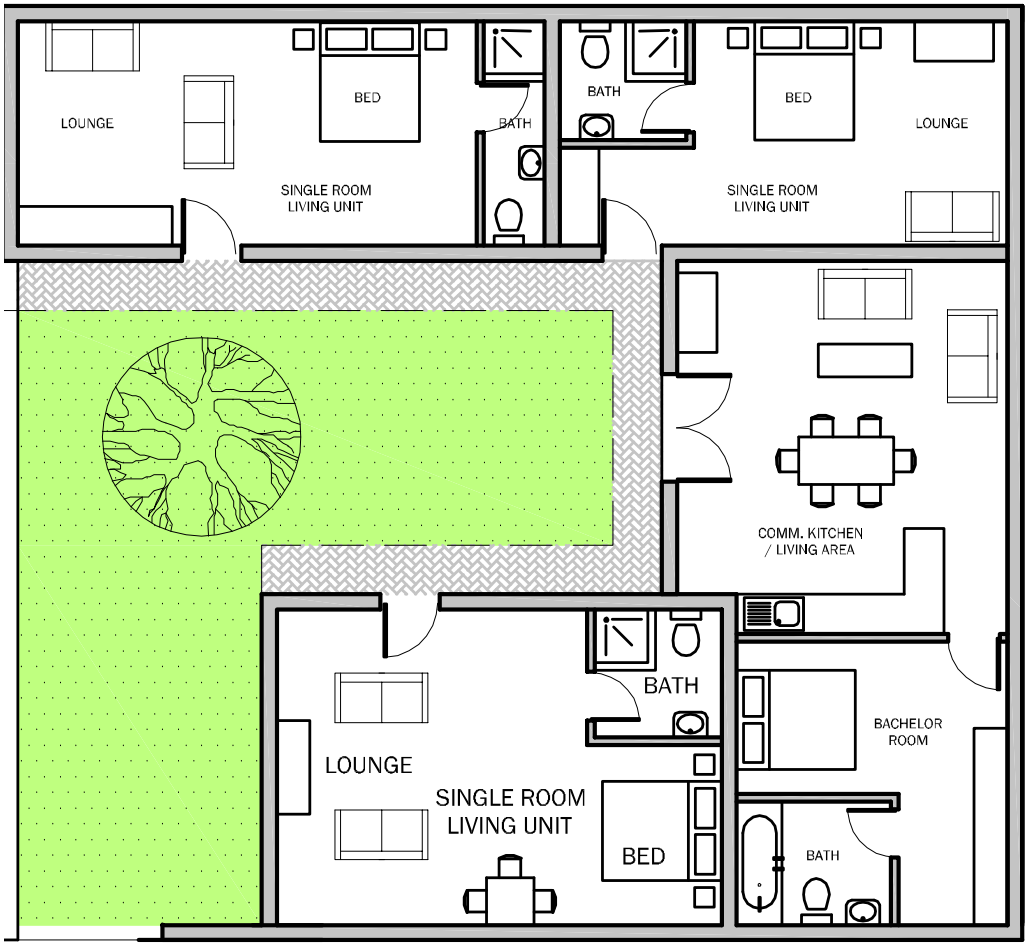
LEVEL 10.5
GRAND BAZAAR HOUSING _COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
nts

LEVEL 10.5
GRAND BAZAAR HOUSING _COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
SCALE 1:500



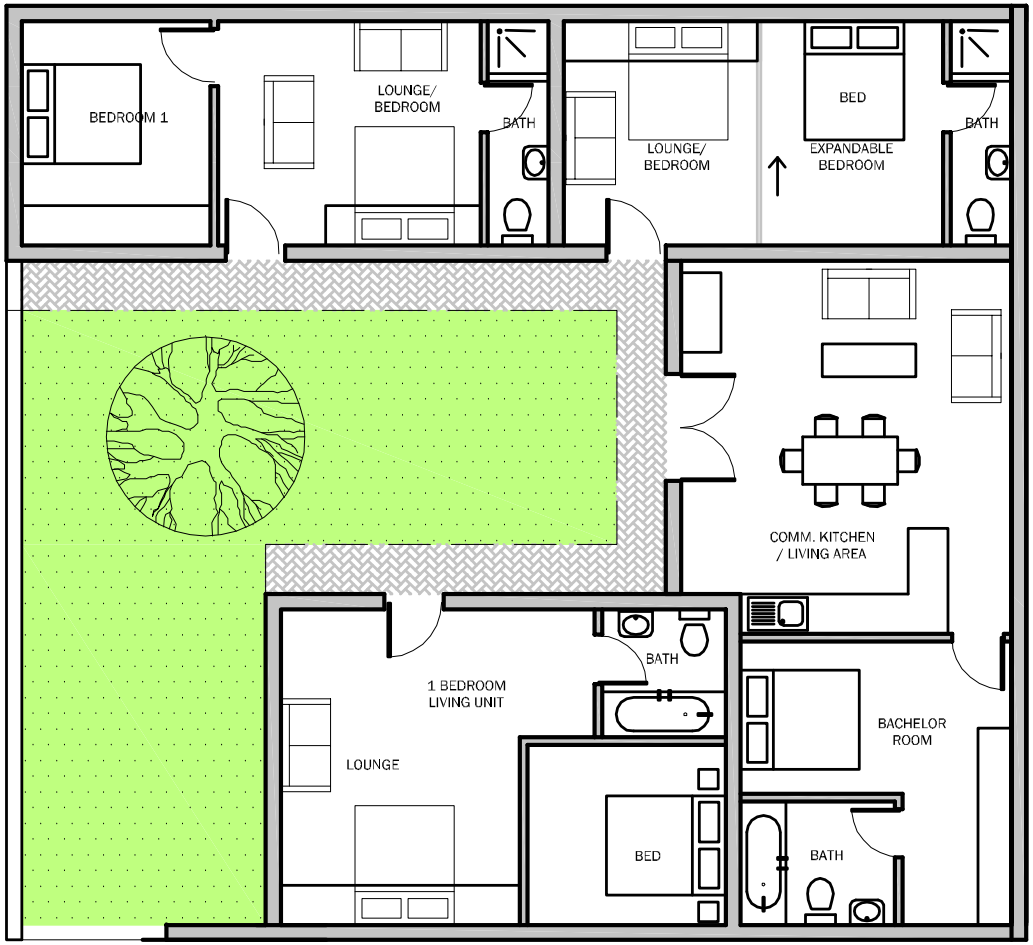
HOUSING FOR IMMIGRANTS
SCALE 1:100





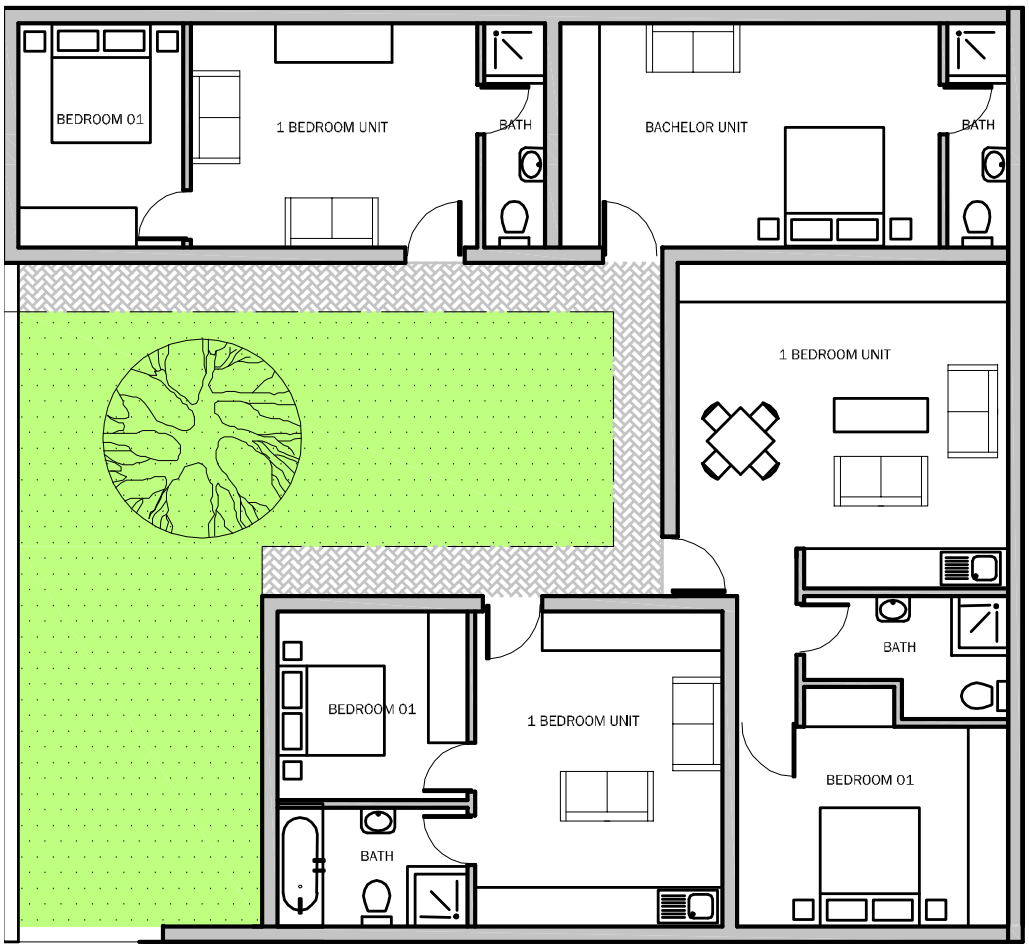
HOUSING FOR 3 FAMILIES
SCALE 1:100





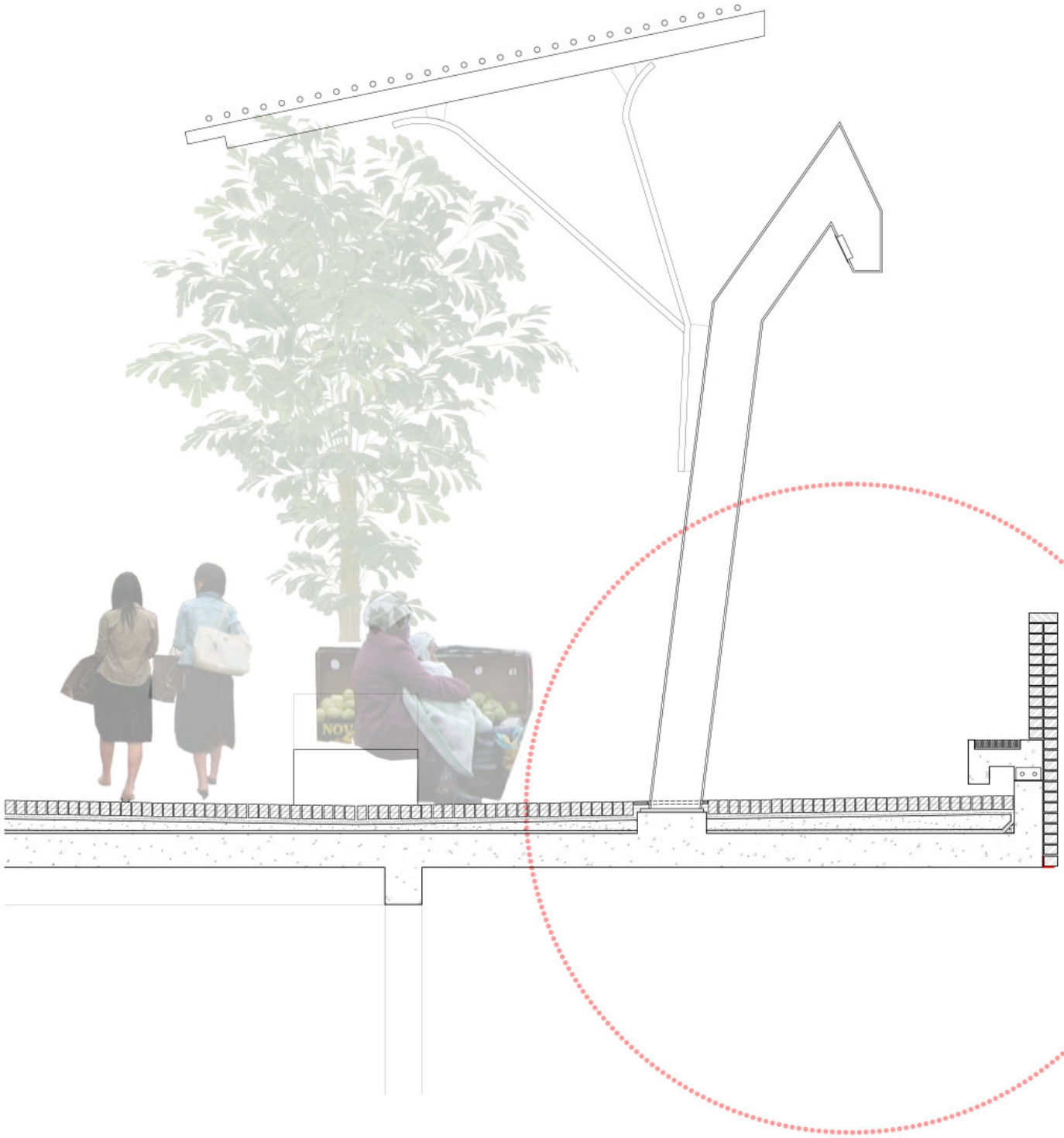
VARIATION ON HOUSING FOR 3 FAMILIES
SCALE 1:100



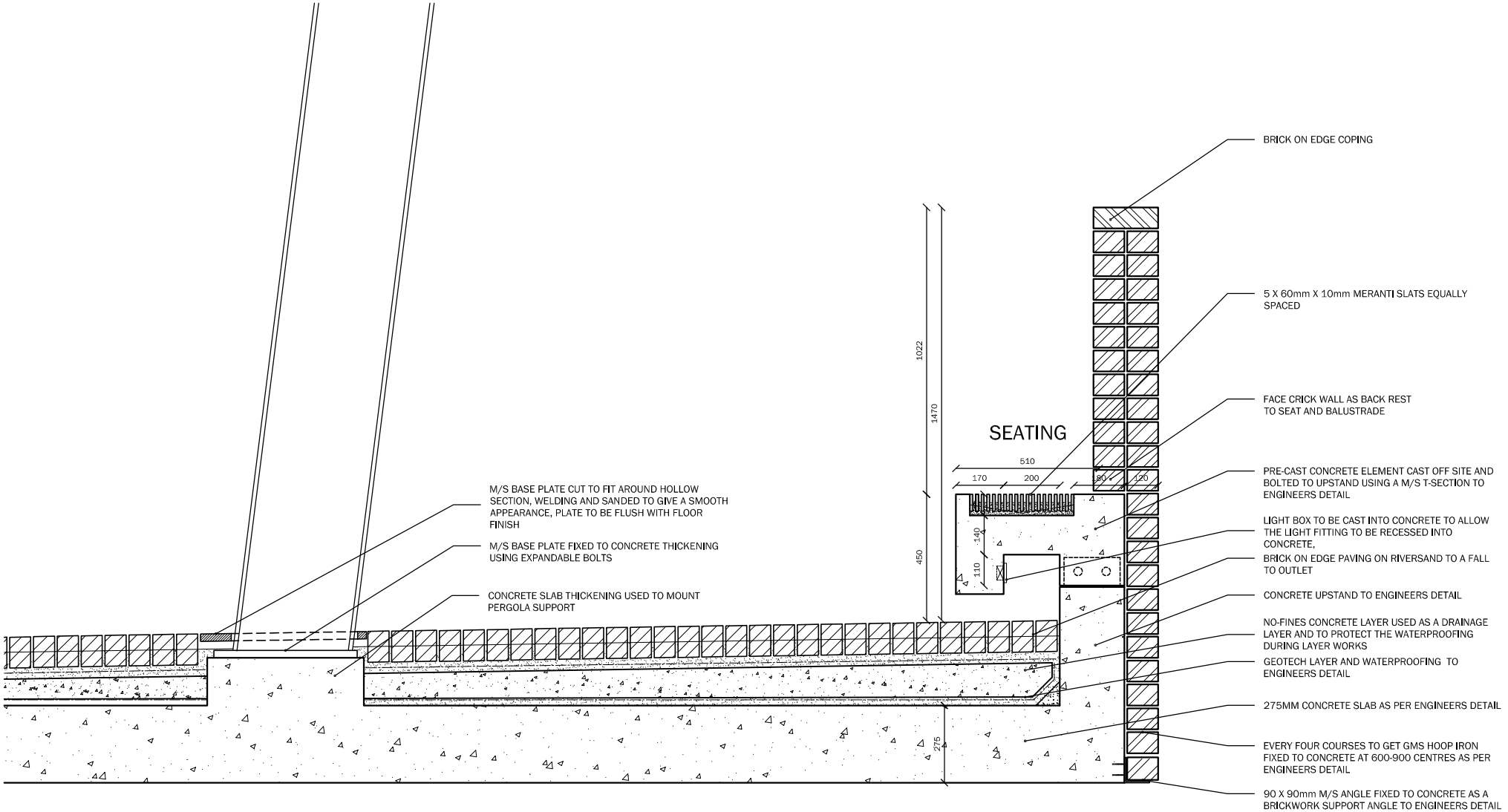


TYPICAL UNITS
SCALE 1:100

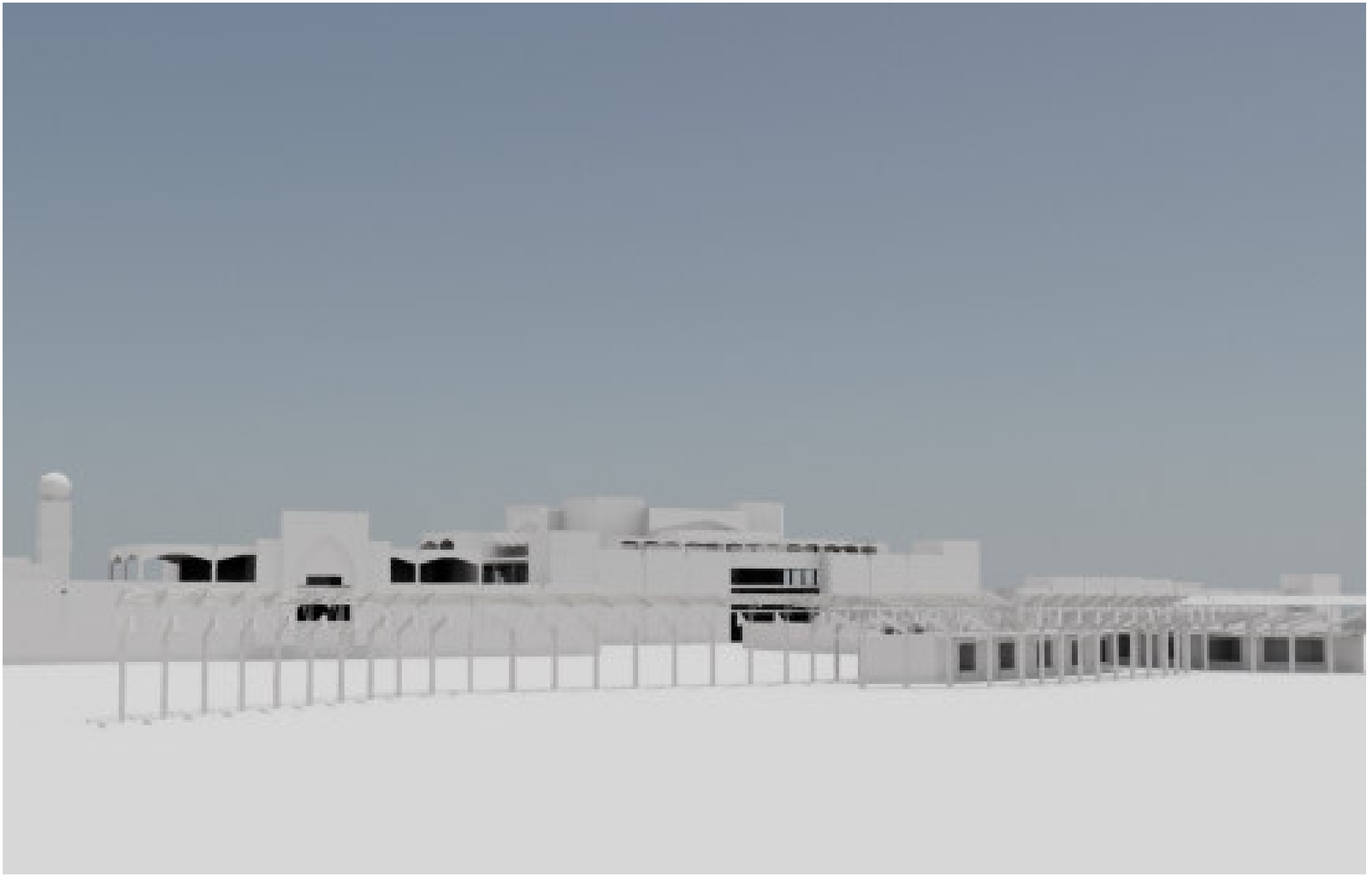




SECTION THROUGH TRADER'S ROOF
SCALE 1:50



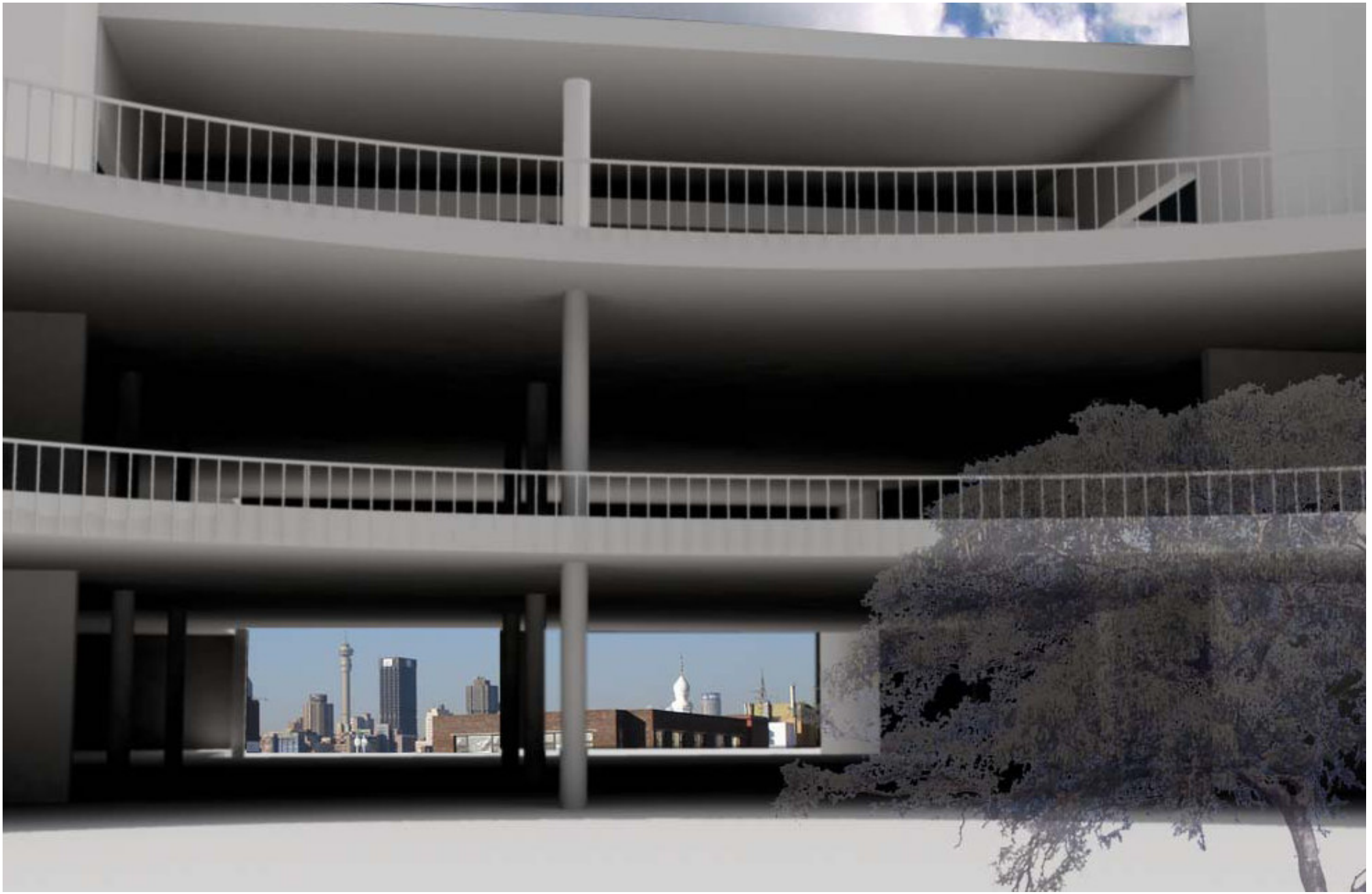
DETAIL SECTION
SCALE 1:20



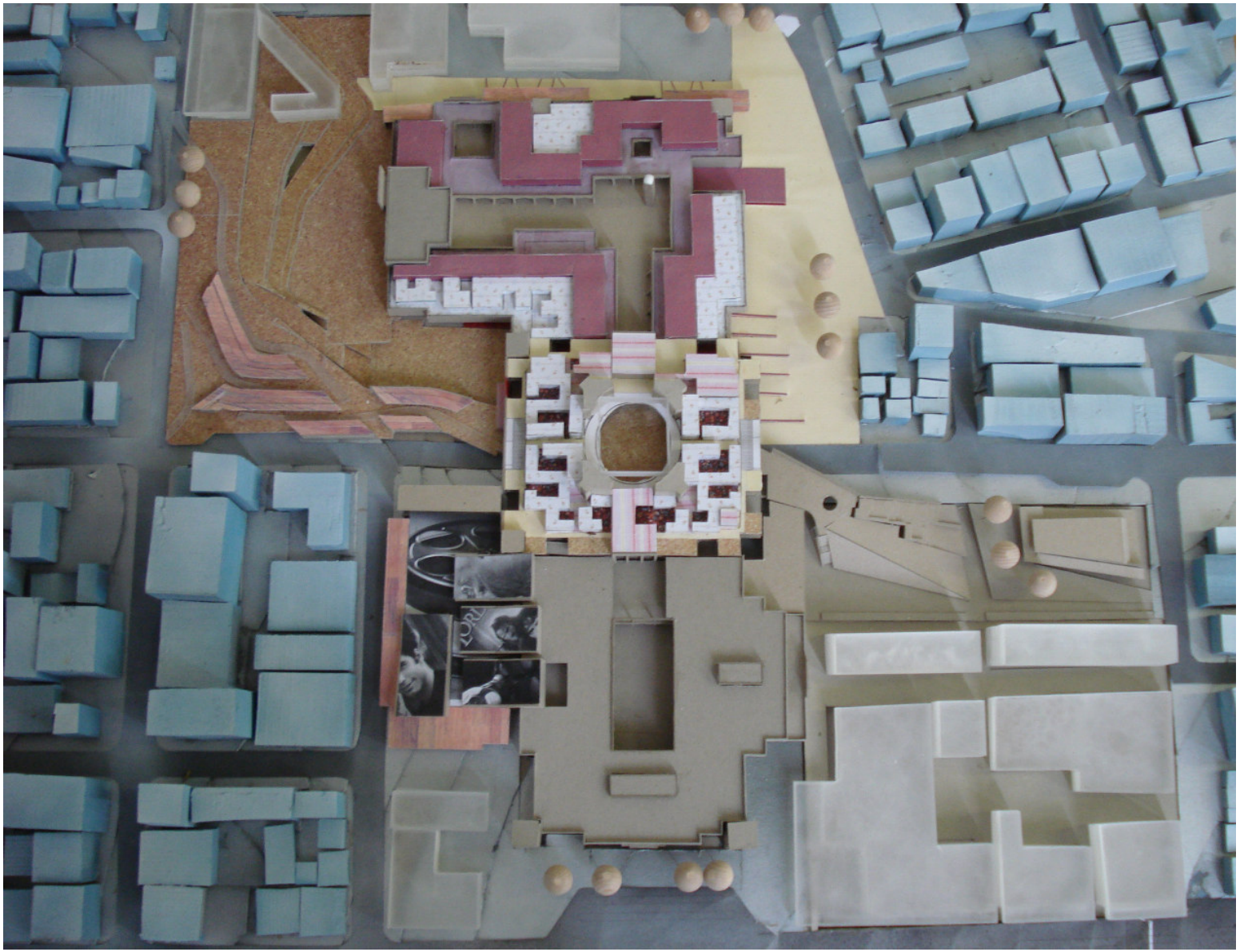
VIEW FROM MARKET LOOKING TOWARDS GRAND BAZAAR

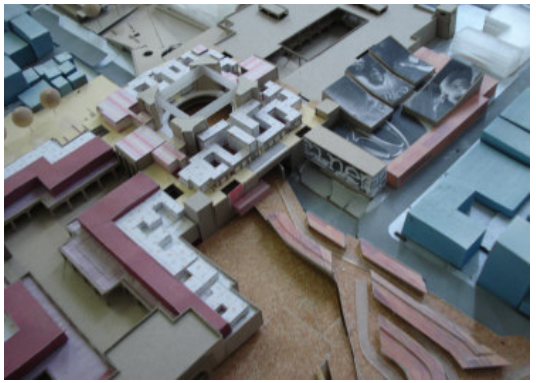


VIEW THROUGH MARKET



VIEW THROUGH GRAND BAZAAR LOOKING EAST TOWARDS CBD









FINAL MODEL

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