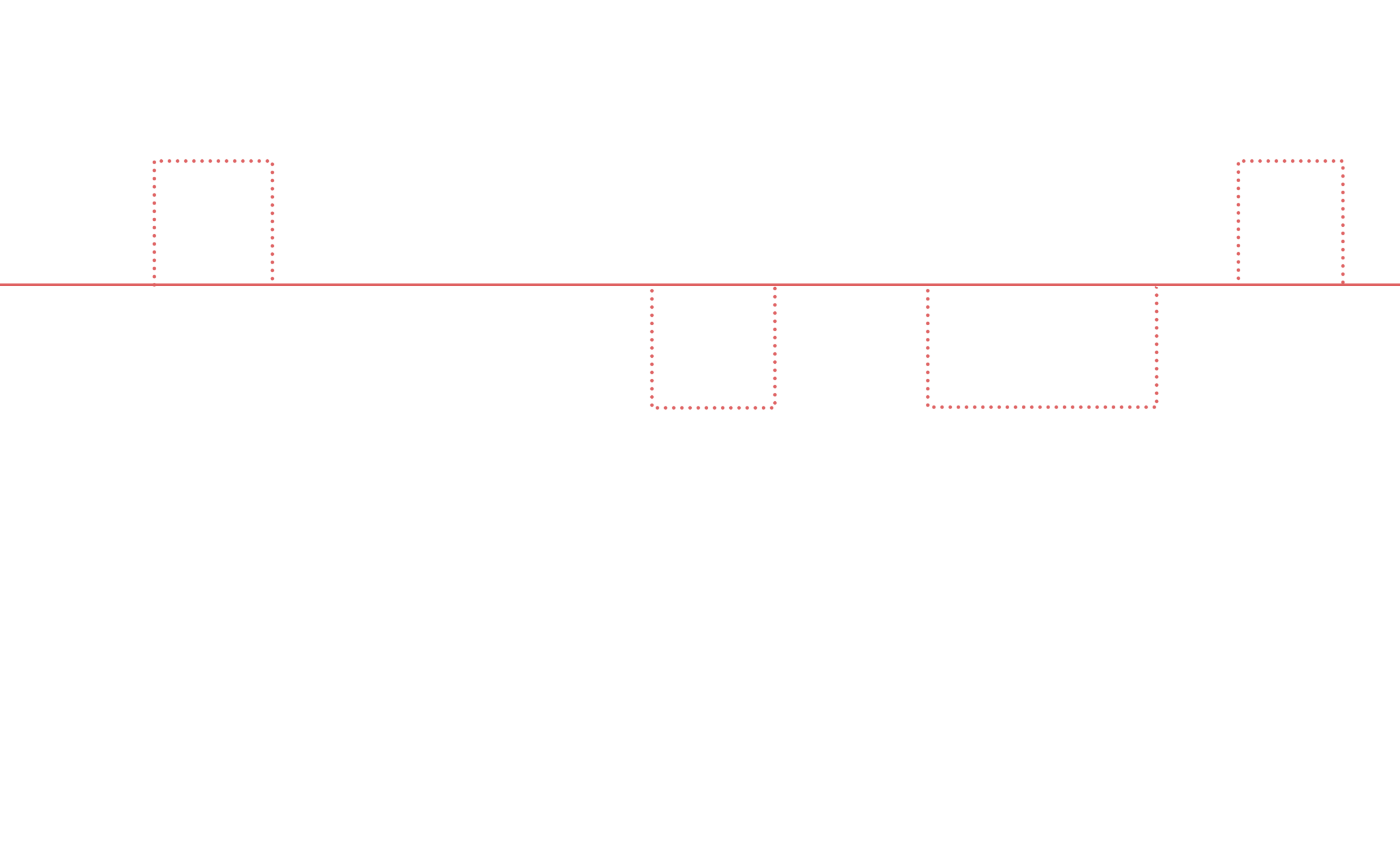


INVERT CITY:

designing for homeless women in hillbrow

by Julia Carew



DECLARATION

I, Julia Carew [student number 308470] am a student registered for the course Master of Architecture [Professional] in the year 2013. I hereby declare the following:

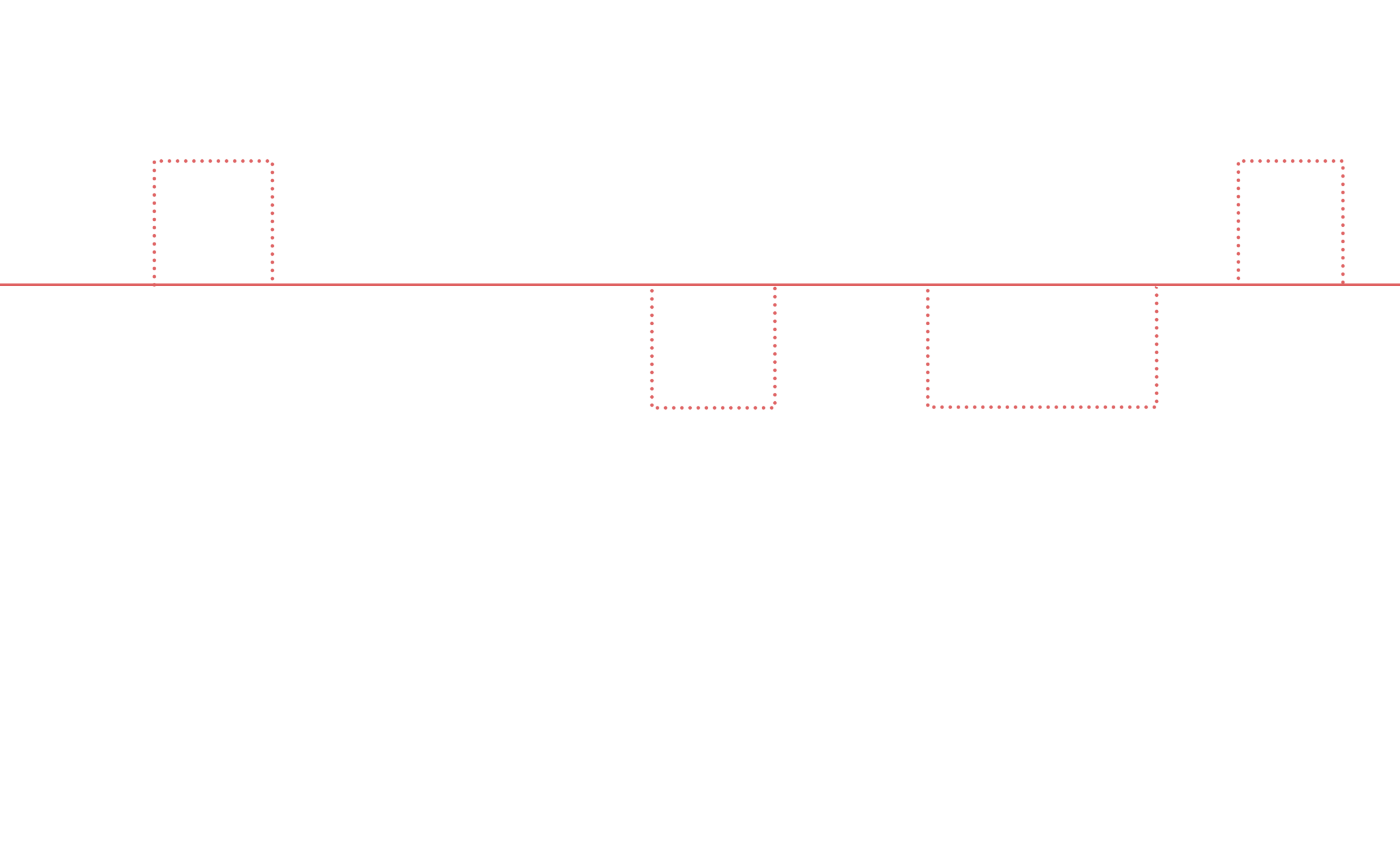
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This document is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree:

Master of Architecture [Professional] at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in the year 2013.



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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family – thank you for your unconditional love and patience. To my parents for making every sacrifice to ensure I achieve my dream – Dad, thank you for the all-nighters and painful model building, Mom for the countless cups of tea, motivation and invigorating discussions on the kitchen couch. Nina, for the laughs, the love and support throughout my years at Wits and to Liam for understanding and being compassionate when I needed it most. To Nana, thank you for the precise proof reading, love and daily prayers.

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To the city of Johannesburg, for always having a story to tell and enticing me to explore.



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“Johannesburg is a **fascinating city**, characterised by stark contrasts ”

(Beavon, 2004, p1)

i

i

PREFACE

The city of Johannesburg has battled with the condition of homelessness for years, identifying a problem even before our emancipation from the ruthless apartheid construct (Beavon, 2004). Political measures have subsequently been implemented in order to combat its harsh effects, introducing various short-term housing policies and theoretical solutions for the homeless in the city. The temporary housing institution as a body is therefore representative, for many people, of the first step in the process toward a legitimate and permanent housing solution. However, the institution as it exists today, does so in both a social and political vacuum. The great divide between the temporary solution and the initial rungs of the social housing ladder give the user little to no option for situational improvement (Olufemi, 1998). These collective spaces for the ostracised community, through their layered autonomous nature, divorce the user even further from the community aimed to be reunited with.

The institution as a typology requires investigation, interrogation and reintegration within existing and enforced political structures. The immediate accommodation answer needs to be seen both as an independent entity as well as only part of a greater strategy for a permanent, integrated and holistic housing solution. The contestation of the institution is not the argument, but rather a proposal for its deconstruction and ultimate innovative reconnection through a strategy of layered inversion. If we choose to view the city and many of its microcosmic constructs through a post-structuralist or deconstructivist lens, we begin to understand the prevalence of the disjointed other within the urban whole:

The homeless woman is the city's marginalised user.
The alleyway; the silent 'other' to the prominent street.
The vacant space is the forgotten site.

And if the physicality of structure is the prominent former, the network and connections existing between built forms must be the secondary within the realm of architecture.

If we connect the city's marginalised elements, through the vessel of temporary accommodation as the initial part of an integrated housing model, the role of the institution is inverted rather than its function or programme. Therefore, the 'exo-stution' is the folding out and reconnection of the existing 'in-stitution' is an answer to the city's detached collection of limited - where marginalised user, space and structure collectively connect street, suburb and city.



GLOSSARY

BRT

Bus Rapid Transit
Site Analysis Page 40

CoJ

City of Johannesburg
The metropolitan municipality that manages local governance for Johannesburg
Introduction Page 06

GJTMC

Greater Johannesburg Transitional
Metropolitan Council
Introduction Page 06

Group Areas Act

The Group Areas Act of 1950 enforced the segregation of different races to particular areas within the central and greater Johannesburg area. It also enforced that black ownership of land was forbidden.
Introduction Page 05
Stitched City Page 24

Macrophyte

An aquatic plant that grows in or near water and exists either above, below or floating on water.
Technological Exploration Page 155

The Native Land Act

The Native Land Act of 1913 was passed long before apartheid was legally implemented and allocated particular areas of land for both black and white ownership, with some 80% of land preserved for white ownership.
Introduction Page 05

Nitrification

The process of biological oxidation of ammonia with oxygen, continued until nitrates are formed
Technological Exploration Page 155

Pathogen

A general term for any disease causing organism
Technological Exploration Page 155

THP

Transitional Housing Policy
The Transitional Housing Policy is a body tasked with developing innovative housing strategies for the homeless of the inner city of Johannesburg.
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PLE



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INTRODUCTION

The introduction outlines the definition of homeless, its origins and the realities of its prevalence within the city of Johannesburg today.

Some of the attempted policies implemented in order to rectify decisions made during the harsh apartheid era are explored and interrogated.

“ According to **Section 26 of the Constitution** everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing. ”

(Report for the inner-city of Johannesburg, 2007, p18)

Defining ‘Homelessness’

Olufemi cites The European Observatory on Homelessness and discusses the four ‘categories’ or conditions of homelessness, specifically rooflessness (that is, sleeping rough); houselessness (that is, living in institutions or short-term guest accommodation); insecure accommodation; and inferior or sub-standard housing (1998, p227). With the context of this project, the homeless discussed in this discourse refers to rough sleepers (chronic or transient homeless (Olufemi, 1998, p227)); those living in temporary accommodation and those living in Johannesburg who have no permanent home in the city - ultimately referring to immigrants who may or may not have homes in others provinces or countries. It specifically refers to those with no access to safe water or sanitation (basic needs) (Olufemi, 1998). In her 1998 survey, Olufemi discovered that there were three distinct groups within that of street homeless, namely “pavement or street dwellers; those in temporary shelters and those living in identified city shelters” (1998, p229).

Background

The situation of homelessness within the inner city of Johannesburg has been aggravated largely by the apartheid regime, officially extending from 1948 to 1994. Housing policies such as the Natives Act of 1923 and the Group Areas Act formally divided the city along racial lines, incorporating a “ruthless programme of removals” (Olufemi, 1998, p225) in order to achieve the desired monochromatic city. The ‘white city’ of Johannesburg was in a relentless state of imbalance. There was a constant shortage of housing for the poor, black majority of the population, with lush, lavish and surplus accommodation for the white minority. The National Government wanted to maintain a utopic, divided city, with an inner-city working class living in secluded informal settlements, many kilometres from the CBD. “The rapid expansion of informal settlements in and around the city attested to the failure of the state and the private sector alike to provide adequate shelter for the African population” (Dladla et al, 2004, p5). Racial lines slowly began to blur with changes in both policies of work environments as well as legislative enforcements. “Residential patterns in the city came to reflect the decline of apartheid and even began to hasten it” (Olufemi, 1998, p225) after the events of 1976 in combination with the effects of the volatile economic climate. More and more coloured faces were becoming a non-event in the segregated streets and “by 1990, [Johannesburg] was probably the most racially integrated city in South Africa” (Olufemi, 1998, p225). With government on the back foot given political and international resistance, things escalated into the 1980s, turning much of the inner-city residential areas, specifically Hillbrow and Joubert Park, into an “overcrowded, crime-ridden black ghetto” (Olufemi, 1998; p225).

“ **violence against women
is a feature of life**
*for women respondents across the various
homeless communities* ”

City of Johannesburg Housing Strategy

The shortage of housing in Johannesburg has been the Achilles Heel of the city for decades. Olufemi describes South African inner cities as “both a creation of apartheid and a phenomenon of the post-apartheid era” (1998, p228). The city has and is gradually being occupied by the homeless who, “because of the lack of affordable housing, overcrowding, social and racial tension, and economic factors, among others, have resorted to sleeping on the streets and in any available open space” (Olufemi, 1998, p228), presenting a threat to the viability and success of inner city investment, success and profit. The City of Johannesburg (CoJ) developed both the Inner City Housing Action Plan and the Transitional Housing Programme (THP); which was a result of “an initiative by the Inner City Shelter Forum of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTM) to develop strategies for dealing with homelessness” (Poulsen, 2000, p2). The THP plays a pivotal role in the transition between the street and affordable housing for the homeless of the city, to ultimately “ensure that transitional housing residents would eventually be capacitated to acquire access to permanent accommodation. The proposal was aimed at removing destitute homeless people from parks and the streets by providing them with temporary accommodation for a period of six months, after which they could be moved into more permanent housing, such as social housing” (Dladla et al, 2004, p8). However, the financial gap between transitional housing and social housing “is too big a leap” (Dladla et al, 2004, p9), therefore a further step to finding a sustainable solution is yet to be developed or implemented.

Understanding Experience

In order to begin to develop a long-term, ground-up community solution to a massive problem faced by the city, an understanding of the conditions and existence of the homeless condition, needs to be, attempted at least, understood. Olufemi discovered that 78% of homeless in the inner-city of Johannesburg were black, a direct reflection of the racial segregation accommodation policies of the apartheid period, and that 36% of those surveyed were women (Olufemi, 1998, pp8-9). Continuously, from the inception of the city of Johannesburg to the current situation, “black women have been forced to occupy marginal spaces” (Dladla et al, 2004, p3); the “most marginalized population sector in South Africa’s largest city [are] poor black homeless women” (2004, p2). As part of their report,

Dladla et al. conducted surveys within various homeless communities, interviewing women to uncover the reality of the day to day struggle of the homeless condition. 65% of the respondents reported domestic abuse, including physical, sexual, economic and emotional abuse, and seemingly “violence against women is a feature of life for women respondents across the various homeless communities” (Dladla et al, 2004, p25). Evidently in communities where there are extremes of economic and social dysfunction relationships between members of opposite sex “may be more dysfunctional than in communities of people that enjoy more socio-economic stability” (Dladla et al, 2004, p25). The issue of violence against women cannot only be assumed to be a result of the experience with a partner within an isolated space. Safety, on a greater scale, within the shelter / transitional housing / social housing arena is as big a concern. In the same survey, 59% of the respondents reported feeling unsafe in their community or place of residence (Dladla et al, 2004) and most of the respondents cited inadequate security as the reason. These spaces are supposed to represent safety, shelter, protection and a helping hand to break the cycle of the homeless condition. So many of the spaces provided and supported by government in an attempt to solve homelessness “amount to no more than cosmetic treatment of a problem” (Olufemi, 1998, p233). Clearly a new, all-encompassing, integrated and holistic model needs to be both developed and implemented to begin real and long-term healing in a violent and perpetuating cycle.



★ FIGURE 00

The background image shows a weathered, light-colored wall with various graffiti tags in blue, black, and red. A window with a metal grid is visible on the left. To the right, a portion of a red-tiled roof is visible. The overall scene suggests an urban, possibly tenement-like environment.

01

DECONSTRUCTING THE OTHER

Deconstructing the Other is a theoretical study into deconstructivist theory, with a focus on Derrida and the notion of the 'Other'.

The subsequent development of the theory of 'other spaces', particularly Foucault's utopia and heterotopia as well as an in-depth look into the marginalised user within the city is unpacked.

01

Introduction

Post-structuralism was developed as an ideology deeply rejecting the established hierarchies and limitations of the preceding Structuralist epoch (Leach, 1997). Through various theorists and critics of the movement, the notion of the 'Other' was developed, where the secondary element within prescribed structuralist relationships is highlighted as not only powerful enough to undermine these imbalanced connections, but invert them too. The notion of this strengthening 'Other' informed the theory of 'Other' spaces, produced by progressive post-structuralist Jacques Derrida, as well as Michel Foucault, with particular reference to his ideas of utopia and heterotopia. However, the notion of this powerful 'Other' is discovered to be rather flawed in its representation, as the definition within this group of recognised marginalisation is absent. The question then is: is there a place where the idea of the 'Other' and 'other' spaces can overlap; where the undermined relationships and disassociated place result in a fresh and exciting reconnection of foreign architectural elements? Perhaps a space where these constructs bleed into one another; creating an[other] space for the 'Other' in the city of the marginalised; a culmination of existing ideas reconstructed.

01

Understanding Post-Structuralism

Structuralism, according to Leach, is the “attempt to establish between elements that may have been split over the course of time, a set of relationships that juxtapose them, set them in opposition or link them together” (1997, p330). Understanding this as the essence of the structuralist construct, post-structuralism is therefore a movement that resists these static and universal models of structuralism, introducing notions of both time and difference (Leach, 1997, p268). More specifically, post-structuralists challenge the “binary oppositions such as form and content or structure and decoration” (McLeod, 1996, p183) which exist within prescribed and rigid hierarchies established by the earlier structuralist era. They aim to prove that the elements within these existing relationships do not in fact exist in harmonious balance but that “one term is invariably privileged over another” (Leach, 1997, p268). McLeod elaborates, discussing how the primary elements in these arrangements can be undermined by the subordinate or secondary – the ‘other’ – within the same restricted structure (1996, p183); they can be deconstructed from within their impenetrable constructs; reversed by themselves. Culler summarises this notion, explaining that “‘to deconstruct the opposition is above all, at a particular moment, to reverse the hierarchy’” (1982, p85). As a result of this decay of the traditional opposition and its hierarchical connections, McLeod explains that the “second term is then seen as a condition of possibility for the whole system” (1996, p183), both within the philosophical world of language as well as the physical realm of architecture.

One of the pioneering theorists in post-structuralism, specifically relating philosophical theory to the tangible realm of architecture, was Jacques Derrida. Through his strong relationship with the post-structuralist movement, he coined the term ‘deconstruction’, which can be described, according to Culler, as “a philosophical position, a political or intellectual strategy and a mode of reading” (1982, p85). Derrida’s philosophical investigations within post-structuralism or deconstructivism, originated through analysis of constructs within timeless language and writing. Richard Coyne discusses Derrida’s general philosophy, explaining that he “is sceptical about foundations, absolutes and certainties to knowledge, be they the laws of nature, moral principles, standards of beauty, ideals, transcendence, or even common

sense” (2011, xvii); he continues, expressing that his ideas create a “host of new vocabularies, terms, approaches to reading and writing and methods of achieving understanding” (2011, xviii). These excerpts enable an insight into both the depth of his discourse and the foundation of his polemic within post-structuralism, and his translations thereof to other arenas. He related these concepts and philosophies to the sphere of architecture specifically, which he views as a form of writing – a global language imbued with power and conflict.

“To deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies” (Culler, 1982, p86), which may appear as a double negative within the world of architecture. However, Derrida explains that deconstruction is not simply a technique of reversed construction (Leach, 1997, p300), but rather that “the concept of deconstruction itself resembles an architectural metaphor” (Leach, 1997, p302). The interpretation of deconstruction within architecture would thus be about meaning, emphasised or removed; inversion and subsequently other ways of seeing. Deconstructivist practitioners argue that their work “subverts the status quo through formal disruptions and inversions within the object” (McLeod, 1996, p183), reinforcing Derrida’s statement regarding the architectural metaphor. His emphasis on the link between notions of deconstruction within the ethereal world of text and that of the material world of architecture has to do with difference as a metaphor and strategy; an inversion of the relationship between the subversive secondary and the always powerful former; calling for an inventive “faculty of ‘architectural difference’” (Leach, 1997, p300) and not necessarily a coup of the well-established architectural value system.

“To deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it asserts, or the hierarchical oppositions on which it relies”

★ (Culler, 1982, p86)

Defining the ‘Other’

Derrida explores our understanding of difference in architecture through the metaphor and interpretation of language, discussing that it is “manifested in the establishment of oppositions” (Coyne, 2011, p18); this manifestation creates and enables hierarchy, immediately generating contrasting roles of dominance and subversion. These radical ideas of the deconstructivists and post-structuralists resulted in developing the concept of the ‘Other’, a consequence of these established roles. The ‘Other’ has come to be understood, both theoretically and physically, as “an outsider who does not belong” (Gundara, 1990, p101); “the secondary” (McLeod, 1996, p183) to the fierce local. The concept of the ‘Other’ is, however, deeply rooted in a hostile history, long before its uncovering in the post-structuralist epoch. Gundara discusses the origins of the preconceived notion of the ‘Other’, by highlighting contributing factors resulting from modern nation states. National identities, narrow ones at that, exacerbate distinction and discrimination among communities and entire nations (Gundara, 1990, p101). Throughout history, language, culture, religion and race have all been contributing factors to difference and identity, ultimately resulting in the concept of the physical ‘Other’ to the familiar, the understood and anticipated (Gundara, 1990, pp102-104). The initial ideas in post-structuralist philosophical study of the subordinate ‘Other’ echo this loaded historical paradigm, within constructs of language, sound and pronunciation; and translate physically, as the manifestation of the visible and experiential oppositions we experience on a day to day basis; be they homed / homeless; white / black; heterosexual / homosexual; male / female.

The developed deconstructivist notion of the ‘Other’ is paralleled and appreciated within feminist theories, particularly through their mutual rejection of a universal subject, which is (usually) the white Western male (McLeod, 1996, p183). The ideas embedded in feminist theory identify strongly with the notion of the ‘Other’, in the way that the feminine is, first and foremost, recognised and secondly recognised as being treated as the weak secondary or subordinate to the stereotypical solid male. In particular, feminist theory applauds the post-structuralist “reassertion, indeed celebration, of the secondary or marginal that had previously been

repressed” (McLeod, 1996, p185). If we take this fusion of ideas a step further and explore the ideas of Queer theory, we begin to understand the far-reaching effects of the concept and celebration of the ‘Other’. “The word ‘queer’ has connotations of ideas of difference, transgression and subversion” (Wray, 2001, p69), which mirror the model grown by the post-structuralists. However, as we explore the extent to which the post-structuralist or deconstructivist model spans, we begin to understand the fragility of its foundation. Within the conception of the ‘Other’ lies a vast blend of characteristics, all of which fall under this blanket term - a blanket term celebrating difference but ignoring the distinction between those it envelops. Mary McLeod elaborates, acknowledging that the value in awareness of distinction is not just recognising ‘difference’, but all kinds of difference (1996, p186). The ‘Other’ with reference to the white successful Western male, could then be the African homeless woman, emerging from this dark continent of difference. This version of the ‘Other’ requires not only the integrity of distinction within this general construct, but moreover a space wherein the “celebration of the secondary or marginal that had previously been repressed” (McLeod, 1996, p185) can occur; a space specifically and exclusively for this clearly defined ‘Other’ – an ‘other’ space.

01

Other Spaces

A successful space for the 'Other', an 'other' space, requires strict parameters and definition of the particular 'Other' it aims to represent. As considered earlier by McLeod, noting and acknowledging distinction from the white Western male is the first radical step according to feminists, but being able to distinguish and celebrate the multi-layered difference within this division is the next, and seriously lacking in deconstructivist dialogue (1996, p186). If the primary is, in fact, the white Western male and the reflecting architecture enforces and acclaims this notion, "it would appear that an architecture that seeks to represent 'the presence of absence', an 'other' architecture, might be about women" (McLeod, 1996, p185). This architecture is one of appropriate celebration, responsibility and care for the 'Other' it emphatically represents, shifting focus and formidably restructuring weathered oppositions. Coyne discusses some of these traditional oppositions, particularly exposed through the discourse of 'other spaces'; namely "immaterial and material, intelligible and sensible, the whole and the parts, utopia and dystopia, real and virtual" (2011, p64). It is interesting to imagine the way in which these oppositions could, ironically, work together in their undoing of one another, to create a fresh architecture that is not simply inverted and fragmented but which is creatively connected through the strength of deconstructing the familiar. If we understand the way in which the 'Other' is hierarchically positioned, as well as the stance of the deconstructivists, we begin to understand the prevalence of inversion and fragmentation within this movement and a tangible translation of the metaphor into the sphere of architecture.

Derrida had the strongest philosophical to physical translation, bringing deconstruction from semantics to architecture. He worked with both Peter Eisenman and Bernard Tschumi, interestingly on the same project, namely Parc de la Villette (Leach, 1997, p300). This was a competition held for the cultural urban space in Paris in 1982-83 (Curtis, 1982, p665) with numerous entries; of which Tschumi emerged the victor. In his Parc de la Villette entry, Tschumi was "interested in destabilising simplistic assumptions about the relationship between form, function and meaning" (Curtis, 1996, pp665-666) of which inversion and fragmentation are intrinsic conceptual informants in his scheme. He discusses, as quoted by McLeod, that Parc

de la Villette "“aims at an architecture that means nothing, an architecture of the signifier rather than the signified”" (1996, p183). Tschumi's design includes an array of red follies, placed in particular areas and unique formations throughout the urban space. Jacques Derrida, who was involved with Tschumi through his work on the project, describes in 'Point de Folie-maintenant l'architecture' the follies as a representation of the play of meaning, that they give architecture a chance (Leach, 1997, p300). Derrida's work with and influence on both theory and practice in architecture is clearly formidable, bridging the divide between theory and practice. Derridean ideas formally disrupt the status quo, originally speaking of philosophy as well as and within language, before trickling into the realm of architecture. The ideas of Michel Foucault and the believers of heterotopia have many similarities with Derridean concepts but focus rather on form and formal strategy (McLeod, 1996, p184) and present another strong precedent, specifically for our understanding of experience and meaning within architectural typologies and constructs.

Michel Foucault was a French philosopher who asked many questions of the characteristics space and chose to view space as an "institutionalised demarcation of structures of power" (Leach, 1997, p329), indicating the strong relevance of his ideas to theory within architecture. Foucault moved away from the "simple, structured classification of space" (Leach, 1997, p268) acclaimed in structuralism, and rather emphasised the intersection between power and knowledge. Foucault also discusses and refers to the concept of the 'Other', but here his "notion of 'other' refers to that which is both formally and socially 'other'" understanding difference to be "a function of different locations and distributions of power, as well as formal or textual inversion" (McLeod, 1996, p184). Foucault's ideas parallel with the Derridean continuation of the concept 'other spaces', through his paradoxical constructs of utopia and heterotopia - heterotopia literally meaning 'other places' (McLeod, 1996, p184). Utopias, as interpreted by Leach, are arrangements that have no real space; represent society, or its reverse; and are fundamentally unreal (1997, p332). Heterotopia, on the other hand, is "...a sort of place that lies outside all places and yet is actually localizable. In

“it would appear that an architecture that seeks to represent ‘the presence of absence’, an ‘other’ architecture, might be about women”

★ (McLeod, 1996, p185)

contrast to the utopias these places which are absolutely other with respect to all the arrangements that they reflect and of which they speak might be described as heterotopias” (Leach, 1997, p332). Foucault discusses that heterotopias assume a wide variety of forms, but that they can be loosely categorised under two umbrellas - heterotopias of crisis and those of deviance (Leach, 1997, pp332-333). The example of the cemetery as a heterotopic environment is given, and is explained as “certainly an ‘other’ place with respect to ordinary cultural spaces, and yet it is connected with all the locations of the city” (Leach, 1997, p333). Foucault clearly identifies the interchange of relationships between heterotopias and the everyday on a multiplicity of scales. His analysis of this example of an ‘Other’ space reveals the depth of intertwined connections and disconnections housed in seemingly ordinary spatial arrangements. The cemetery is disconnected from users as an everyday space, but is connected to the city purely through its typology and representation. The disjunction expressed by both the notions of ‘otherness’ / ‘Other’ and other spaces, particularly heterotopias, expose an incredible tension and interplay between fragmentation and inversion on a multi-faceted spectrum. These spaces aim to expose the tensions that exist within the physical, architectural hierarchies as well as our emotional and sentimental relationships. Most importantly, it bares the deeply embedded friction between the two.

01

The undeniable tension surrounding spaces identified by Foucault as heterotopias enable and illicit a rich lens through which to study a plethora of spatial constructs. McLeod speaks of these characterised spaces, and uncovers the fact that Foucault omits, among others in the identified areas of investigation, the residence (McLeod, 1996, p184). The space of the home is viewed to be neither a heterotopia of crisis nor of deviance, as it is seen, by Foucault, as a place of rest, therefore highlighting the confusion in the definitions of the 'Other' and a space for the 'Other' held within post-structuralist theory. We can define the 'Other' as (and not limited to) homeless, African, homosexual, woman – in contrast to the traditional former. However, here seems to be a deep restriction in Foucault's definition of heterotopia that excludes the very real, everyday spaces experienced by these 'Others' that are, in actual fact, heterotopias (McLeod, 1996, p184).

If we choose to investigate the home, as well as its various connected branches, with particular reference to the temporary home or shelter, through Foucault's perspective, we begin to understand the everyday space as the most vivid example of heterotopia. The concept of 'home' is interpreted and has been experienced differently, uniquely for every individual, purely as a result of history and circumstance. A home is traditionally both local and permanent, whereas a shelter or transient accommodation, although fulfils both of these criteria in its physical capacity, is heterotopic as a result of the temporality of the user and her experience. The shelter is therefore representational of a home, but due to the short-term nature of the space, it can be defined as a heterotopia as it is absolutely bound by time (Leach, 1997, pp334-335). Leach elaborates, announcing that "the heterotopia has the power of juxtaposing in a single real place different spaces and locations that are incompatible with each other" (Leach, 1997, p334). The heterotopia can physically be one element while concurrently representing another; a contradictory location. Foucault uses the example of the garden, which is entrenched with profound superimposed and layered meanings, particularly in the Orient. He discusses the example of the Persian garden, explaining that its rectangular shape is representational of uniting four parts of the world and at its centre, a more sacred space; representational of the centre of the

world; “the garden is the smallest fragment of the world, and, at the same time, represents its totality” (Leach, 1997, p334). The home, and all of its linked derivatives, thus has the possibility of representing a real space of comfort, safety, trauma or pain; all at the same time.

The ‘home’ is a space that infinitely is and isn’t; its continuous modification of meaning is dependent on the user and her engrained definitions of space and typological experience. Heterotopias have a “function that takes place between two opposite poles. On one hand they perform the task of creating a space of illusion that reveals how all of real space is more illusory, all the locations within which life is fragmented. On the other, they have the function of forming another space, another real space, as perfect, meticulous and well-arranged as ours is disordered, ill-conceived and in a sketchy state” (Leach, 1997, p335). Foucault explains that heterotopias “provide our most acute perceptions of the social order” (McLeod, 1996, p184), as they expose times and spaces of extremity and difficulty that occur every day, yet are not described or experienced as ‘everyday’ spaces. The power of an everyday space, such as a home or shelter, is that it can be representational of many other spaces, in other places, from different perspectives as a result of its varied users. It is a heterotopia, an ‘other’ place. However, it goes one step further, creating deeper connections within its disjunction as it is, in fact, an ‘other’ space, that can be specifically and exclusively moulded for the ‘Other’.

“ The heterotopia has the power of juxtaposing **in a single real place** different spaces and locations that are **incompatible with each other** ”

★ (Leach, 1997, p334)

01

City of the Other

The city is the macrocosm of an 'other' space, for the 'Other'. If we begin to unpack the vast history boasted by the global city, we understand its evolution from a distinctly gendered and divided space into a body, reclaimed after the violation of the suburb, that exemplifies difference, subculture and supports surprising community (Wilson, 2000). This new city, often of contrasting extremes and difference represents and celebrates, while concealing and obscuring in a way that represents all and no one, all at the same time - it is the most significant example of heterotopia. The urban environment is imbued with oppositions, stark contrast and invites in all the 'Others' under the unbiased blanket of Derrida's definition of difference. This universal city is understood as a space that represents freedom and choice and is the epitome of a space of emancipation. The city, as a result, has become a space where "marginal groups can exist more autonomously than elsewhere" (Wilson, 1991, p120). The city is the unparalleled heterotopic environment as it celebrates difference and salutes those brave enough to embrace it. However, in the midst of this acclamation, the city subconsciously sets up another dangerous contradiction, specifically for the 'other'. The city, although a place of acceptance and reception, also embodies the converse of this celebration of difference; namely anonymity. The fascinating thing about the city of extremity is that it presents both the ideas of visibility and anonymity simultaneously, a deconstructivist juxtaposition bursting with potential. The city houses and holds a broad spectrum between violent extremes and concurrently has its liberal arms open for all. However severed these disjunctions make the city appear, it is through the connections embodied within these layered comparisons that crafts the city into a vehicle for choice.

The city celebrates difference as well as veiling it – it is a space offering choice to the 'Other'. The choice is thus to join the celebration of distinction or to become anonymous within a space so willing to oblige – there is seemingly no grey area. Marginalised groups, understood to have been exposed and vitiated as a result of their difference, in any location excluding the city, may experience the city as an escape; a space to disappear to from a culture of discrimination. The difficulty associated with anonymity is that it is "not equally available to everyone

who might want it, visible and otherwise obvious identities may impede the quest for anonymity" (Garber, 2000, p31). Marginalised 'others' such as homosexual white men may experience the anonymity offered by the city much more freely than African homeless women, based purely on the physical nature of the difference in question; anonymity is therefore imbalanced, it is "nonneutral and imbued with power" (Garber, 2000, pp31-32). The power held by the element of facelessness influences more than the simple concept of the survival strategy; the 'other' may be threatened by disappearance; "for the extremely marginalised and vulnerable the city is evidently too anonymous" (Garber, 2000, p33). Garber extends these ideas when she describes anonymity as a paradoxical construct "that allows some people to stay out of harm's way yet that condemns others" (2000, p32-33). It is here that 'other' spaces, spaces for the specific 'Other', come in, to mediate for the city, allowing it to maintain its tolerant and permeable manner while supporting and nurturing those it celebrates.

The city as a result, has become a space where “marginal groups can exist more autonomously than anywhere else”

★ (Wilson, 1991, p120)

The global city was accepted as a body of continuous inversion: embracing escape and refuge; celebration and exposure. The choice it encompassed allowed for festival and exposure of difference but at the same time, the possible loss of the 'other'. These post-structuralist relationships present immense possibility, even at a macro scale. The city as both a space for the 'Other' and holding 'other' spaces has the power to create permanent connection for these separated sisters. The way to permanently reunite the 'other' with the city of difference and all it represents is through the 'Other' space. If we invert the relationship of anonymity with the city by creating a new tension in the post-structuralist city of extremes, we can use the heterotopia as an adhesive that protects through exposure and creates anonymity through visibility.

Conclusion

The understanding of the 'Other', 'other' spaces and the macrocosmic unifier of these constructs - the city, enables us to understand the value of the deconstructivist concepts within the architectural realm. If we draw inspiration from the ideas of inversion and fragmentation and use their result in a way that rebuilds and reforms the architectural model rather than destroying it, we could reconnect the site, the suburb and ultimately the city. McLeod reiterates that there is, of course, no universal 'other' (1996, p194), but if we delve deeper than the deconstructivists did, and interrogate the all-encompassing term of the 'Other', we could create specific spaces, within the metropolis, that allow for the structured safety of both anonymity and celebration of the marginalised secondary. These 'Other' spaces “suspend, neutralize, or invert a set of relationships” (McLeod, 1996, p184), presenting us with a redefined, recognised and revered space for the ostracised, with the potential to ripple out, to penetrate and extend into the vibrant city of the 'Other'.



02

STITCHED CITY

This chapter provides insight into the history of the global city grid and its implementation within the city of Johannesburg over 100 years ago.

Included is a focused discussion on the suburb of Hillbrow and the evolution of its' milieu from inception to present day.

02

Introduction

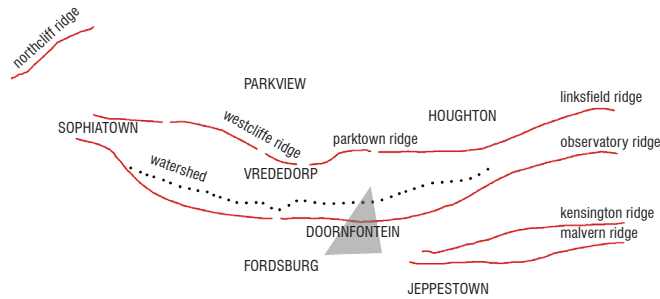
The gridded city has been a part of planning and development for millennia (Stanislawski, 1946). It represents equality, order and often the desire for omnipotence, but also enables connection and effortless functionality. The city of Johannesburg began as a seam of gold, a reef spanning from east to west across an undulating landscape. The development of the city was concentrated along this ridge of prosperity for the early years, and only began to expand into the northern and southern regions from the 1930s. The grid pattern was implemented into this growing metropolis and proved its strength as it enabled uninterrupted extension into the many developing areas of the rising city. The young grid was imbued with service spaces, aiding the growing numbers of settlers to the new town. The city was strictly racially divided after implementation of apartheid in 1948, only seeing a glimmer of change in the late 1970s, but the shadow of the grid was the common thread, and silently held the divided city as a constant underlay to political activity.

History of the Gridded City

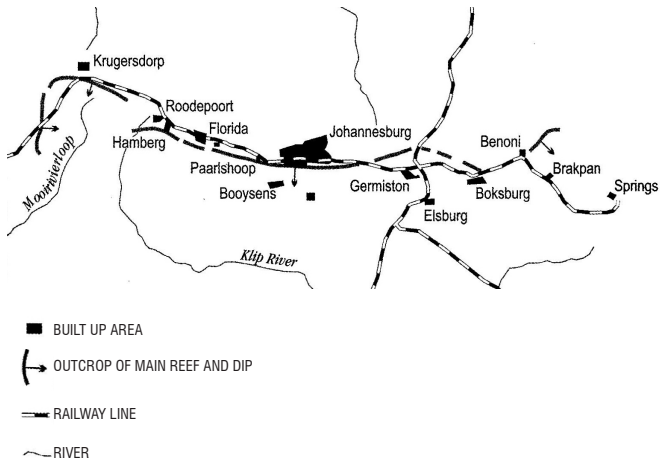
The gridded city has been described as a pattern with straight streets (parallel or normal to one another) and rectangular blocks, with first record of the grid city pattern dating back to the first half of the third millennium before Christ (Stanislawski, 1946, p108). This particular street arrangement was used all over the world, from what we today know as Pakistan, India to Greece, Rome; including their colonies in Italy, and later to France and England in northern Europe. There are many theories as to the origin of the grid; however Stanislawski dissects and analyses each possibility to supply us with a refined collection of plausible sources, initially explaining that the grid would only be utilised if planners had been previously exposed to it from travels to the Orient (1946, p115). A second possibility to its establishment is that the grid is only “conceivable as an organic whole” (1946, p108), therefore emphasis on individual buildings or single functions will result only in irregularity. Thirdly, for cities that have adopted the grid layout, it comes to represent and boast advantages of “centralized control, political, religious or military” (Stanislawski, 1946, p108), and would therefore be desirable for any nation state

seeking dominance and affluence. The grid particularly offers measured apportionment of land, reinforcing the potential origin - the maintenance of fair trade.

The grid pattern presents streets and land portions that were eminently serviceable and presented as the easiest to lay out with crude instruments of measurement, ultimately resulting in efficient use of space (Stanislawski, 1946, p105). One of the most significant advantages offered by the grid pattern was that of military control, and was adopted by powerful nations Rome and Greece, among others. Stanislawski continues, explaining that a convoluted and twisting street facilitates defense by individuals whereas a “straight street lends itself to control” (1946, pp106-107). The Roman development of the unit of surveying added to the magnetism of the global construct. Stanislawski explains that the “town block was clearly rooted in history, linked with the distribution of agricultural plots” (1946, p117) reiterating the value of the grid for purposes of equal land distribution throughout. Additionally and notably, the grid can be “extended indefinitely without altering the fundamental pattern or the organic unity of the city” (Stanislawski, 1946, p105). The fresh city of Johannesburg, presumed to be nothing more than a “temporary but organised mining camp with narrow streets and lots of small blocks of stands” (Beavon, 2004, p43), doubtfully adopted the grid pattern for ease of expansion. More realistically, the grid was selected in order to capture maximum revenue from sale, reflecting the city’s motive for inception – the “unbridled desire for material wealth” (Beavon, 2004, p23).



* FIGURE 02
Diagram of the main east-west ridges of the Witwatersrand in the Johannesburg area. Included is the original triangular site of the mining camp.



* FIGURE 03
The emerging urban region of the southern Transvaal, 1896

Planning Johannesburg

Johannesburg began humbly in the 1880s as a small, dusty mining camp in what we know today as Doornfontein, and was believed to be nothing more than “a proverbial nine-day wonder” (Beavon, 2004, p23). The initial discovery of gold and particularly the flush gold reef, thrust both the development and attraction to the small town into overdrive. The reef extends from east to west, a deep fissure in the dry Highveld landscape, and has come to represent the timeline of both growth and transformation of the rushed city. Johannesburg’s establishment was simply the “creation of an industrial city, an instant city” (Beavon, 2004, p23), where gaining wealth and power were the only directives. “The city had no former history, was not deliberately established on a site that was attractive, or chosen for good supplies of water or desirable drainage” (Beavon, 2004, p23), and this lack would, in later years and at various times, cause great affliction for the city of gold. The difficulty with water in particular soon proved to be the most taxing, as bodies of water for consumption and waste removal were located quite some distance away. As the soil conditions in many of the areas south of the fresh city were unsuitable for French drains, there was no choice but to manually collect waste and refuse, usually in “tarred buckets (sanitary pails)” (Carruthers, 2000) which were put out onto the street for midnight collection.

Through the development of the inner-city residential areas and suburbs to the north of the CBD, sanitary lanes were included in the design of residences which cut through the centre of gridded blocks in order to more discreetly collect used buckets “in the dead of night” (Carruthers, 2000). Mules and horses were used to draw carts or lorries down these lanes to collect used buckets that had been passed through hatches in outhouses backing onto the sanitary spaces (Carruthers, 2000). As a result of the function of these alleyways, houses and buildings turned their backs to them, facing the activated street, creating a one dimensional and stigmatised space that, although essentially represented cleanliness and sanitation, simultaneously signified disease and impurity. The space was viewed as a purely functional service space that was not to be engaged with under any other circumstances other than what was absolutely necessary. If we consider the alley through the lens of deconstructivist

02

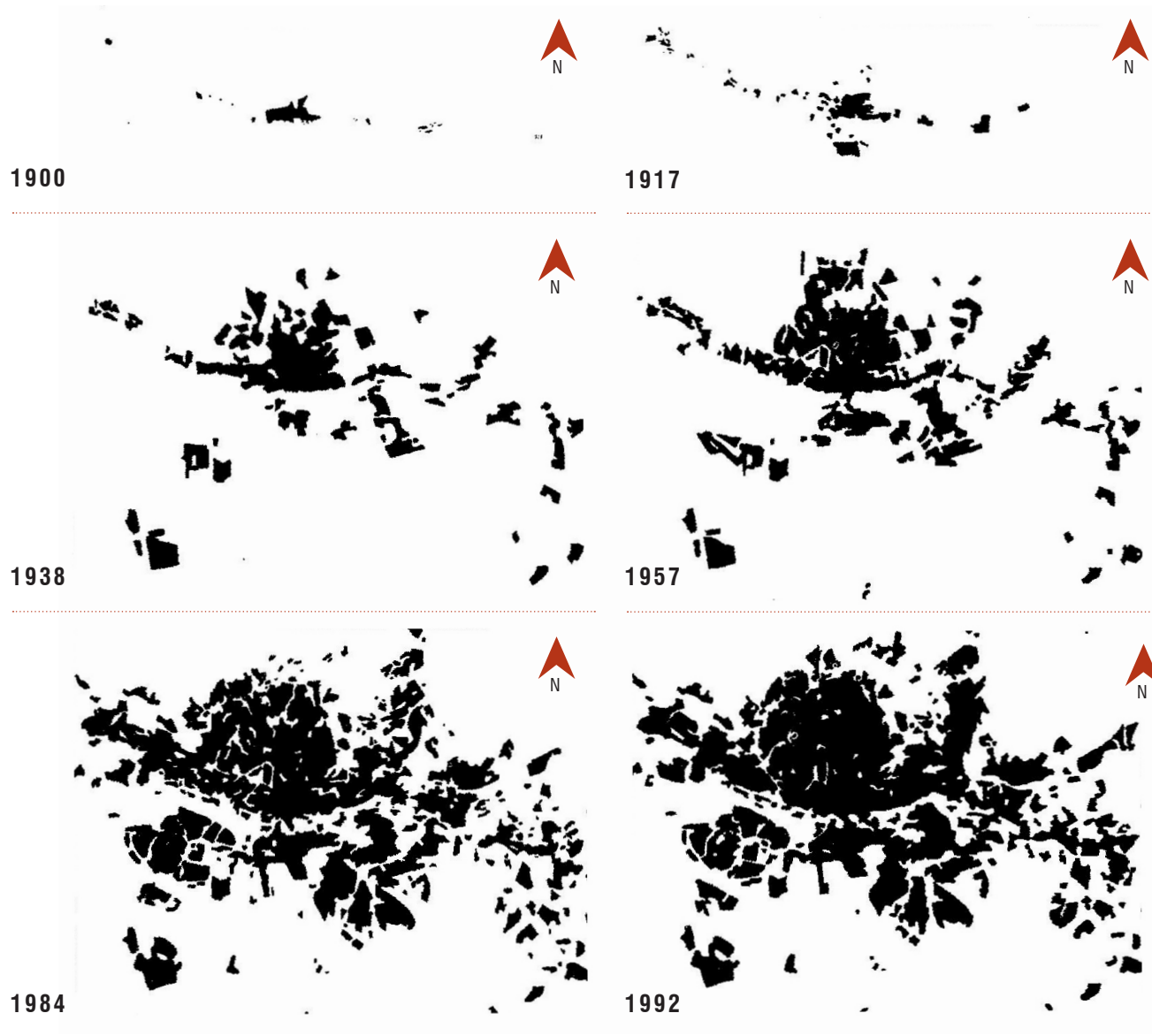
theory, the alley becomes the secluded and forgotten 'Other' to the bustling public-ness of the street.

With the rapid growth of the city pressurising the existing rudimentary sanitary system, consideration was given to a more advanced waste removal system, despite the difficult economic climate facing the country at the time (Carruthers, 2000). After an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1904, the development of a waterborne sewage system was fast-tracked for the central and southern regions of Johannesburg (Carruthers, 2000). For those north of the Witwatersrand watershed, however, the culture of manual retrieval, septic tanks and French drains (where suitable) continued (Carruthers, 2000). The implementation of such a system proved invaluable, particularly with the explosion of development the city was soon to encounter.

Hillbrow Evolution

In the period between 1933 and 1939, Johannesburg experienced a rapid building boom, which occurred mainly on the north-eastern edge of the CBD. The in-obtrusive residentially designated area of Hillbrow underwent radical modification, and was transformed from a laid-back, discreet middle-class area of single storey homes (Beavon, 2004, p155) to one of affluence and high-rise, high-density apartment blocks, that were now classified under the skyscraper category. Hillbrow held great potential for the fresh scholars of architecture at the time and international sway was distinctly evident at the time of exciting development. Johannesburg danced between being described as 'little New York' and 'little Brazil' (Beavon, 2004, p154); however a distinctly South African style was what resulted from the interpretations of international architectural ideas. Hillbrow quickly became known as the frontrunner of the "innermost fashionable high-density residential areas of the city" (Beavon, 2004, p153).

If we look at the street pattern of the emerging high-rise area, it was "simply an extension of the short-sighted mining-camp grid of small street blocks that had been laid out in 1886" (Beavon, 2004, p155). The



narrow streets that had been so hastily ‘designed’, combined with the now eleven to sometimes sixteen storey buildings, created tunnel-like spaces that could simply not be justified to be lined with apartment blocks (Beavon, 2004, p155). The street configuration seemed to work with the original low-rise homes and smaller densities, but once added to towering structures, this concoction proved to be perilous. Beavon discusses the point of view of planners at the time and highlights their strong feeling that Hillbrow, socially and visually, was a disastrous failure (2004, p155). In 1948 apartheid was legally enforced, and brought with it a variety of discriminatory ‘Acts’, one of the most damaging being the Group Areas Act enforced in the 1950s. In essence this Act proclaimed that specific races could reside only in specific areas designated to them by the state (Beavon, 2004, p98). Hillbrow was designated as a white area, the majority of which were middle-class. As a result of the thriving development Hillbrow went through in the 1930s, and the resultant increase in available tenancy, the area became known as “one of the most densely populated areas of the Southern Hemisphere” (Beavon, 2004, p156). Buildings continued to climb through the ‘70s, extending skywards, and ultimately culminated in the 54-storey Ponte Tower in utopic Hillbrow (Beavon, 2004, p156). By the 1970s, the unsustainability of the dream was beginning to come to the fore. The ever-increasing densities, inadequacies of the street grid as well as the initialisation of the demographic change during the 1980s, all contributed to the predetermined ruin predicted by planners some fifty years prior (Beavon, 2004, p156).

Political changes in the early 1970s allowed for a tiny sliver of light into the darkness of apartheid experience as the job market in strictly white areas, mainly the CBD, was opened up for the first time to coloured and Indian people; mainly women (Beavon, 2004, p213). The difficulty that resulted from this incredible metaphor of hope was the difficulty in finding accommodation close to the city within their particular group area.

★ FIGURE 04
Areal growth of Johannesburg and the central Witwatersrand 1900 - 1992

02

Overcrowding was on the increase in the Indian area of Fordsburg and similarly in coloured suburbs in the Western areas. Ultimately, people were not only in need of accommodation, but accommodation within reasonable distance of their working environments. The events of 1976 would come to represent a shift in the housing demographic of the city - it represented opportunity and new hope for fresh coloured faces in the 'white city'.

The events of the 1976 Soweto Uprising were seen by many, particularly in the inner-city residential areas, as a wake-up call. The dynamic within the inner city saw rapid and radical change in the period after the student revolt, resultant of more than just that event. The country was in a state of serious economic slump (Beavon, 2004, p215), not aided by the student revolt, and consequently children of white families, who normally would move into glistening residences of the vogue area of Hillbrow now, after completing school, continued to stay at home with their parents. After June of 1976, "many of the foreigners who lived in Hillbrow upped anchor and left the country" (Beavon, 2004, p216). As a result of these factors, a vacancy in accommodation, mostly in Hillbrow, developed in the once thriving inner-city residential node into the late 70s (Beavon, 2004, p216). Rent control was lifted by government on specific buildings and this resulted in many established white families moving out, into the northern suburbs. In the years post foreign and 'yuppie' drainage, landlords and building owners developed various underhanded strategies in order to maintain tenancy, and 'white' at that, in their skyscraping apartments. One way was to rent to Indian and coloured families under the pseudonym of a signing white 'tenant', charging exorbitant rental to the 'lucky' families, who willingly paid out of desperation for accommodation. The result of charging essentially illegal residents surplus rentals understandably gave rise to subletting, literally to keep a place to call home (Beavon, 2004, p216-218). One would have thought that the State would have intervened at the first sight of infringement on racial zoning within the city centre. However, given the volatile political climate, government were on the back foot and chose to turn a blind eye to changes occurring in the central residential areas, largely as a result of "resistance by a small group of influential and concerned citizens" (Beavon, 2004, p217).

"By early 1983 there were 8000 to 12 000 'illegal' residents in the inner-city residential areas of the city with the majority in the Hillbrow area" (Beavon, 2004, p220), and unfortunately racial blending in the inner city and Hillbrow particularly "took a different and less orderly path" (Beavon, 2004, p220) after 1986. As a result of the massive development in the Hillbrow area during the 1930s, tenancy densities were much higher than other older, lower-rise suburbs. The developed culture of advantage and exploitation by landlords continued and escalated into the 1980s, to the point where landlords had gone as far as to outsource rent collection and maintenance responsibility to a third party that lay somewhere in between (Beavon, 2004). In 1986, the country as a whole was plunged first into a "limited and then a general state of emergency" (Beavon, 2004, p221). The housing shortage for African people was at an all-time high, and it was not long "before numbers of black people felt they had no choice but move into the relative calm and 'better' accommodation to be had in the inner city" (Beavon, 2004, p221). People pursued the cheapest available housing, some finding it in already deteriorating apartment houses, others in vacant office space and more in empty factory buildings. Buildings became dilapidated at an alarming rate, with electricity and water being cut off as a result of refusal of poor residents to pay high tariffs, and maintenance became nothing more than a term of the past (Beavon, 2004, p222). Neglect, ignorance and disregard had "transformed [Hillbrow] into a giant new slum" (Beavon, 2004, p222).

Hillbrow was caught in a downward spiral, comprised of dilapidation, disarray and disease. In the early 1990s, it was discovered that "some 35 per cent of the population in the area were living in overcrowded slum conditions" (Beavon, 2004, p222). Beavon continues, and investigates the absolute indifference of local authority to the progressive situation in Hillbrow, discovering that their excuse for turning a blind eye to the squalor of the city was that "black tenants were 'illegal residents' and could not be assisted" (2004, p223). Responsibility, from the microcosm of the building to the macrocosm of the city was nowhere to be seen. In 1990, the positive notions of democracy and freedom were in the air, and the city endured a massive influx of those most disadvantaged by apartheid.

“ *Neglect, ignorance and disregard had transformed [Hillbrow] into a giant new slum* ”
★ (Beavon, 2004, p222)

Government was essentially in limbo and a “strong and clearly enunciated housing policy for the inner-city” (Beavon, 2004, p244) was a laughable thought at the time. Many of these new poor settlers found cheap but sub-standard accommodation in some of the worst of the high-rise apartment buildings. Hillbrow subsequently, and rapidly, developed into a suburb characterised by a “high incidence of petty crime and, later, more serious criminal acts. Drug trafficking, along with prostitution also increased” (Beavon, 2004, p223).

Crime in Hillbrow was aggravated by the number of narrow, hidden spaces planners of the 1930s had implemented as a service to the juvenile city. As a result of the more sophisticated waterborne solution to the needs of the city, the earlier designed sanitary lanes became completely functionless; null and void. With the changes and neglect Johannesburg witnessed in the inner-city, the previous, rationally designed sanitary lanes, or alleyways, developed into cesspools of opportunity for criminals, predominantly in deeply threatened Hillbrow. The initial idea behind the design of the service spaces was practical, but through the metamorphosis of Hillbrow, from single storey homes to being classified as part of the skyscraper category, they became narrow, tight and claustrophobic spaces bound by thick, rigid walls offering little choice for movement. Evidently, through the rapid and progressive abandonment of the suburb, the alleyways came to represent unlimited underhanded opportunity and quickly generated a reputation of being dank, dark and dangerous.

The alley initially began as a space facilitating sanitation and cleanliness but has suffered role reversal through politically-charged circumstance and has transformed into a space that now represents fear, filth and felony. The grid pattern adopted by the city of Johannesburg at its inception didn't consider the demand the city would place on it or future planning possibilities, particularly the early addition of service spaces like bucket lanes. Initially, incorporating such spaces made sense, particularly when considering the spatial proportions of a cart between subtle single-storey homes; however, a change in building proportion and function resulted in a deterioration of alleyway perception. If we understand the city as the

macrocosmic ‘Other’ space, we need to recognise that this metropolis is comprised of a plethora of eclectic array of oppositional relationships. When we choose to view the city through the traditional ‘figure – ground’ plan diagram, we understand the alleyway as the private foil to the protagonist of the public street. Perhaps we invert this, a ‘ground – figure’ diagram, in an attempt to emancipate the potent potential of the minimal space. The alley will always be the secondary to the bustling, urban ‘public-ness’ held by the street, but if we can begin to deconstruct the reputation and connotation of the alley, we could use it in a way that connects, rather than disrupts within a divided community, and that creates choice for the user, rather than dictates decisions.

Conclusion

The city of gold originated as a seam, connecting east and west along a path of wealth. The gold reef, lying silently below the surface of the contrasting city of Johannesburg, is a metaphor for both the grid and the forgotten alleyway. The reef was a connector, it was the common thread stitching disconnected pieces of what was to become the city of Johannesburg together. The grid became the microcosmic element of the reef, subtly sewing racially-divided suburbs and areas together, and now the alleyway, quietly back stage while the street performs, holds the power to tie disconnected spaces and communities together, all through the metaphor of reinterpretation and choice.





03

SITE CONTEXT

Site Context explores the reasons for the selection of my immediate area, as well as important design informants within the surrounding suburbs.

An understanding of the development of the Hillbrow vernacular through a constantly evolving international architectural language is also explored.

03



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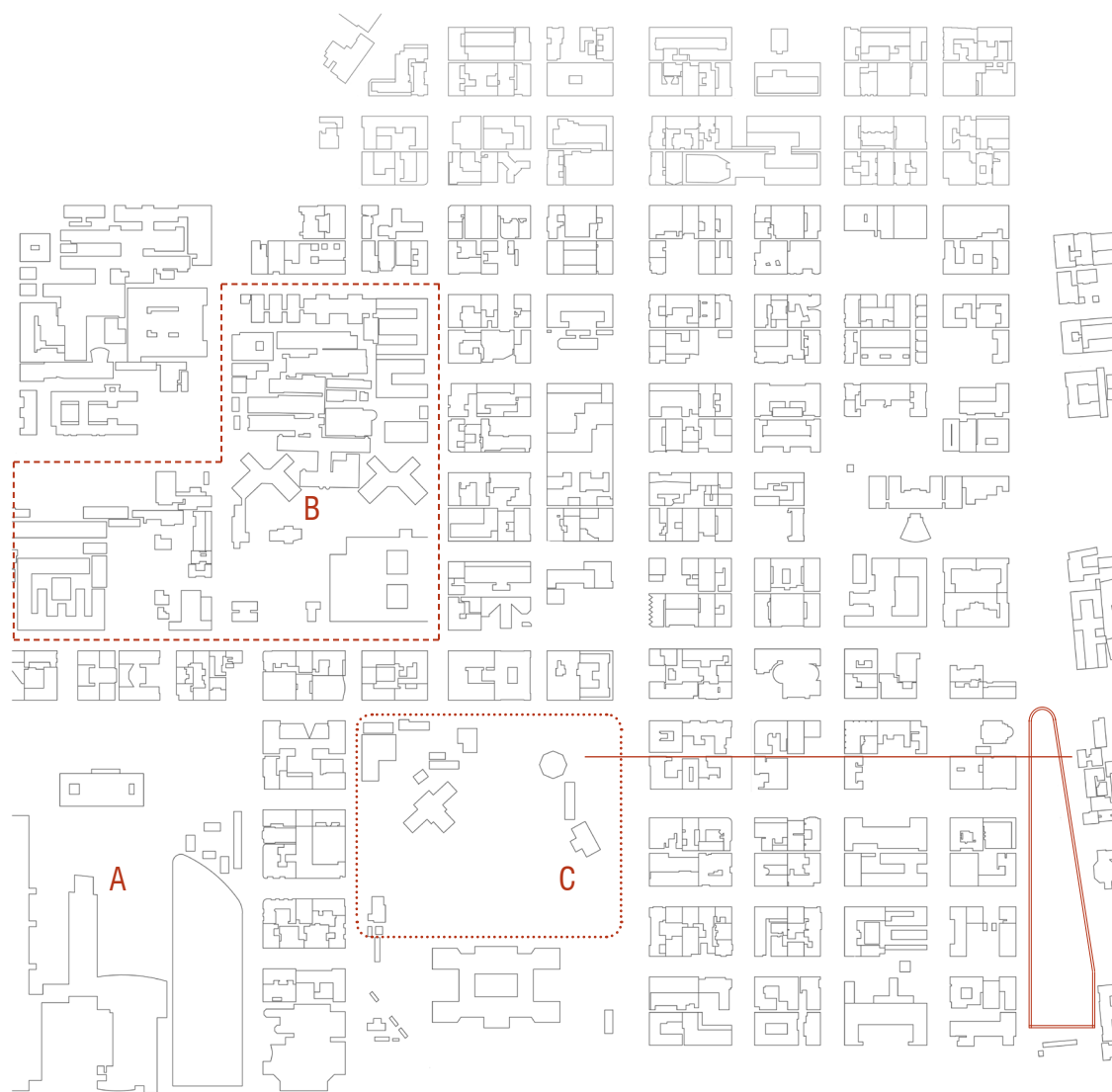
- * FIGURE 06 Gauteng map
- * FIGURE 07 Map of Johannesburg
- * FIGURE 08 Google Earth image of selected sites

Contextual

The selection of my site was initiated by mapping sleeping spaces chosen by homeless; men, women and children, throughout the inner-city region. Spaces include legitimate shelters, transportation facilities as well as religious institutions offering support and care. Through this investigation, the thread of marginalised space for the marginalised community presented itself over and over again, as well as the disconnect and disjunction between all of these outreach community facilities. This observation culminated in discovering a spatial condition that exemplifies the homeless situation and concept of the 'other' – that of vacancy. The investigation into spaces chosen by the homeless, women in particular, to spend a night, highlighted Park Station, individual formal shelters and Joubert Park as prevalent and unsafe spaces, all in close proximity to one another. This discovery as well as the notion of forgotten space ultimately led me to choosing to work in the lower end of the suburb of Hillbrow.

The largest green breathing space boasted by original Johannesburg inner-city framework is Joubert Park and is the most obvious locator for my collection of sites, the first of which lies adjacent to the north-eastern corner.

03



- HILLBROW HEALTH PRECINCT
- JOUBERT PARK
- ===== SITE
- ===== END STREET PARK

- A PARK STATION
- B HOSPITAL MAIN BLOCK
- C JOUBERT PARK CLINIC

Site Area

The prevalence of homeless people in Joubert Park during the day, and Park Station illuminated Hillbrow as a prime location in which to intervene. Four individual sites each sit on one of four consecutive city blocks and are bound, as a complex, by Wolmarans and Leyds Streets to the north and south respectively, with Twist Street to the west and Nugget Street to the east. The sites are connected, not only by their varied conditions of vacancy, but also by an alleyway that runs through each city block and terminates, at each end, in a green breathing spaces. The sites are nestled in between two public places, namely Joubert Park to the west and End Street Park to the east. These particular sites are in close proximity to pre-existing, often dangerous, sleeping spaces chosen by women and therefore represent an on-foot accessible, available, safe alternative to uncertain spaces in the city.

The Hillbrow Hospital complex is to the north-west of the site collection, with the remainder of the suburb extending up and over 'hospital hill'. The small Joubert Park Clinic is in the immediate public vicinity, catering to many women and young children during the day. Park Station lies further to the west, separated from the park by numerous residential apartment buildings, with the railway tracks directing movement into the transport portal due south.

03

FROM LEFT:
★ FIGURE 09 Hillbrow Vernacular
★ FIGURE 10





Hillbrow Vernacular

The structures surrounding the agglomeration of my selected sites exhibits the infamous language boasted by the architecture of the exciting Hillbrow building epoch. Prior to the 1930s, Hillbrow was a quiet, serene, low-rise residential area that underwent radical change as a result of massive financial influx. At the time of the aforementioned building boom, influences from abroad prevailed and young graduates were eager to apply foreign techniques to local architecture (Beavon, 2004). Pre-war design, influenced by Le Corbusier is visible through the use of the piloti, as well as the inclusion of rounded roof forms and accessible roof space (Chipkin, 1993). The impact of the local Marteinssen home proved one of the most influential foreign inspired but home-made structures, and is evident through the reinterpretation of elements in the high-reaching apartments of Hillbrow.

In the post-war years Hillbrow became a space for experiment, although a consistent modern vernacular was always upheld, largely as a result of local building regulations and parameters. The surge of high-rise construction in the Johannesburg and Hillbrow area during the 1930s, particularly around Joubert Park echoed, on a smaller scale, the constructs of New York living around Central Park. The later influence of Brazilian design, including the brise-soleil, marked Johannesburg's consistent maintenance of international modern trends, although always executed through South African translation and application (Beavon, 2004).

The ever-changing milieu of Johannesburg and spaces in Hillbrow, resulted in the city as part of the skyscraper profile during the 1930s being dubbed 'little New York' to being called 'little Brazil' in the 1950s. The Hillbrow vernacular was therefore, as described by Chipkin an "architecture-on-the-make" (1993, p229), with a plethora of far reaching identities encapsulated within a South African context.

PART TWO DESIGN

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00

SITE ANALYSIS

This chapter interrogates the immediate site surrounds, conditions and influences as well as exploring and understanding each of the five separate sites as parts within a cohesive network.

* INVERTED GRAIN

The inverted grain exposes the amount of connected, networked and open space available in the over-crowded city, and how a situation of vacancy can ultimately mean common connection.

00

Sleeping Spaces

In the initial stages of investigation and research I mapped out common sleeping spaces chosen by the homeless, some spaces more appealing to women. Park Station is a very popular choice, where homeless users can utilise ablution facilities and sleep in a covered area. Other spaces connected to the train tracks, particularly the bridges near Joubert Park, offer some refuge for those with nowhere else to go. Other spaces included were formal shelters, for both men and women in the inner city, as well as religious institutions, with particular reference to the Central Methodist Church which offers a place for many men, women and children to rest their heads. Joubert Park is a popular space for people to spend their time during the day, but due to problems in the past, gates are now locked and the homeless asked to sleep elsewhere at night.

Grain

The grain analysis exhibits the gridded city and the constant rhythm it provides the city with. It clearly exposes the undulation of loose and tight streets, exposing early planners attempt to capitalise on stand sales in the city, the reason for the myriad of one way streets in the city today. The grain exposes the density of structure on small, urban blocks, versus the vast space of our largest green space, Joubert Park as well as the area allocated for the Park Station development.

Transport

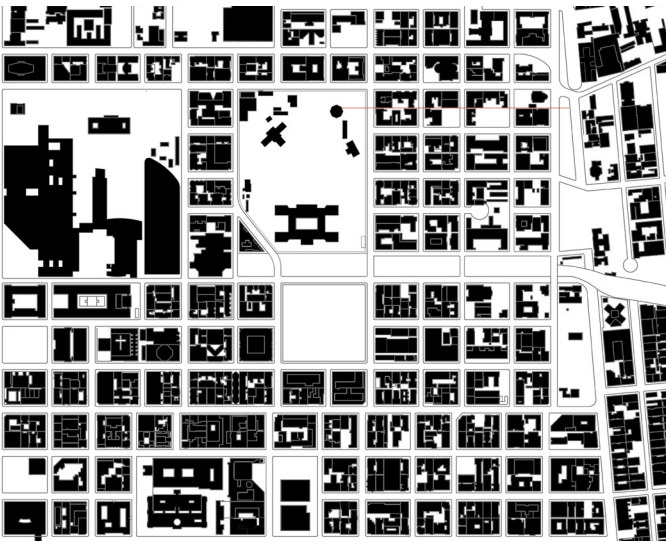
Joubert Park is in close proximity to Park Station, the city's largest train and taxi hub, connecting much of Johannesburg's working class from far away homes. The BRT routes, both inner city ring from Braamfontein and connecting to the eastern and western regions of the greater Johannesburg area, run through and parallel to the Hillbrow area. Both Noord Street and MTN taxi ranks are in close proximity to Joubert Park - a draw card for leisure, shopping and healthcare. The BRT Station situated on Twist Street, parallel to one entrance to Joubert Park, is a very busy pedestrian route. The path cutting through the centre of the Park on its east-west axis acts as a scenic short cut towards Park Station and Noord Street taxi rank.

Sleeping Spaces



- transport spaces
- public spaces
- formalised institutions
- religious

Grain



Transport



- PEDESTRIAN
- BRT
- TRAIN
- A PARK STATION
- B NOORD TAXI RANK
- C MTN RAXI RANK

00

Building Use

The predominant building use in the Hillbrow area is, resulting from early planning, residential, with my specific site area zoned residential 4, translating into dwellings units and residential buildings. Retail is prevalent to the bustling Joubert Park edge with some smaller educational, religious and supportive functions, as we move into the quieter core.

Religious

This area of Hillbrow is home to many of the headquarters of religion, as a result of its rich history as vibrant community. The small area encompasses the original Great Synagogue (which is now occupied by a Christian church), the Catholic Cathedral and the Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The buildings are now simply the relics of an ephemeral time of connection, community and cohesion.

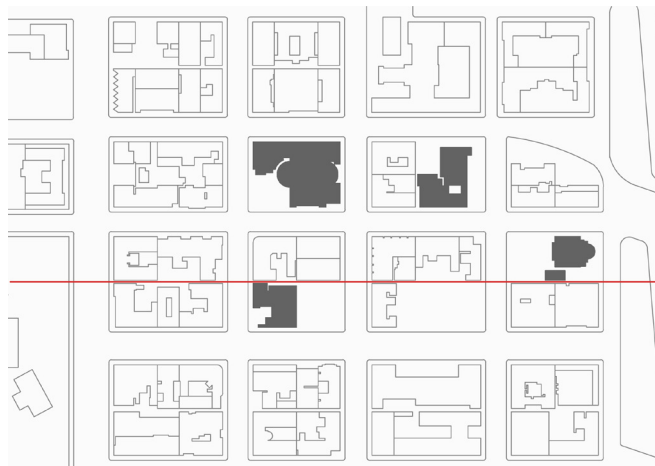
Building Heights

Building heights in this lower part of Hillbrow are explicitly representative of the boom years, with some smaller, lower rise structures, reminding us of its quiet beginnings. In my immediate site area buildings heights vary, with many apartment blocks closer to the Joubert Park boundary, reaching, with the highest building at 14 storeys. Street width varies, undoubtedly influencing the experience for the pedestrian, with Twist and Claim streets both busy one ways alternated with some quiet, shaded protected vehicular routes.

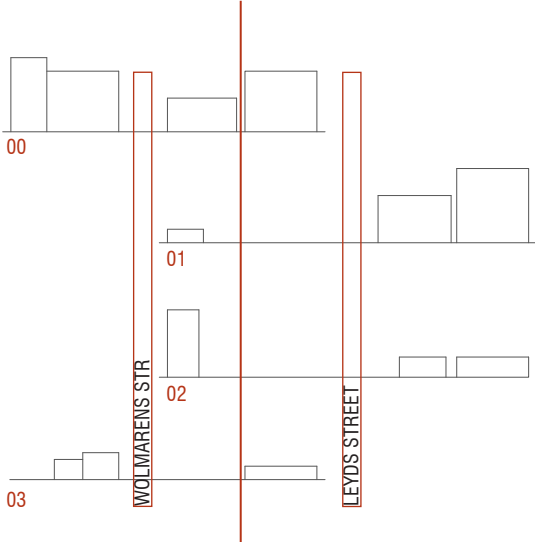
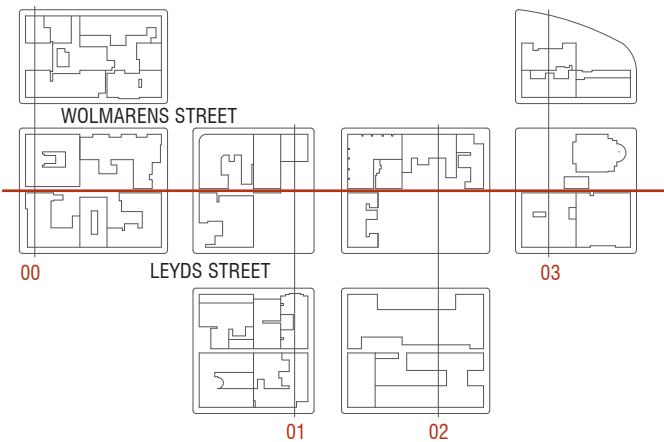
Building Use



Building Use - Religious



Building Heights



00

The alleyway is the vacant connector not only between all four, seemingly disconnected sites, but on a larger scale between two public urban spaces – Joubert Park and End Street Park. The alleyway therefore experiences a scalar transition between public and private – through both programmatic choices for the buildings as well as the juxtaposition between the ‘public-ness’ of the parks and the private temperament of the alley.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

- * FIGURE 11 Alleyway looking west toward End Street Park
- * FIGURE 12 Alleyway looking east toward Joubert Park
- * FIGURE 13





00

The first of the city block sites is Lorna Court, a celebrated art deco heritage building completed in 1932 by architects John Russel Boulton and J. G. Carmichael (Paine, H and Bruwer, J, 2007). It sits on the prolific corner of the major intersection between Wolmarans and Twist streets, described by Paine Bruwer and as “one of the most important corner sites in this part of Johannesburg”, representing a gateway into historical Hillbrow. The building is adjacent to the north-eastern corner of Joubert Park and acts as one of the landmarks to the largest green space offered by the inner city of Johannesburg.

The building was occupied until 2006 when a fire broke out and significantly damaged the tiled roof and internal finishes, leaving only a skeleton of the once vibrant residential body. The building has stood vacant ever since, presenting another threat to the struggling streets of the vulnerable suburb. A heritage assessment conducted in 2007 outlined the building as appearing to be structurally intact and particularly valuable as

a result of its Art Deco and Edwardian architectural influences as well as its prime position over-looking Joubert Park. The building was classified under Section 34 of National Heritage Resources Act, common practice for buildings over 60 years of age. This section indicates that compulsory permission be attained prior to any demolition or renovation of such classified buildings. Through my design process, all structural elements and iconic façade details have remained untouched, with a focus to reuniting the structure with its seasoned neighbours.

The portion of alleyway lying to the south of Lorna Court is solidly divorced from the street at both entrances as a result of previous criminal activity.



- FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
- ★ FIGURE 14 Lorna Court northern facade
 - ★ FIGURE 15 Intersection of Wolmarens and Claim streets



00

The second site, in an easterly direction, is a fenced off, paved external recreational space owned by the Fellowship Community Centre (FCC). It has been designed as a flexible sports arena, with lines demarcating both soccer fields and basketball courts, with a climbing wall included as part of its hoped activities. These spaces are not used – neither by the pre-primary school running from within the Community Centre, nor by those attending church services and other community activities on the weekends. The space of potential breath and release within dense streets lies dry and dormant, desperate for interaction and activity.

The alley way runs to the north of the site, and is only penetrable through a small gate behind the community centre. The portion of the alley directly behind the sports courts has been taken over by the adjacent site to supplement their parking requirements and the remainder, behind the FCC has been sealed by 'Bad Boyz' security in an attempt to secure their rejuvenated building.



The third vacant space in my series of intervention is a combination of an existing parking lot and derelict basketball courts. Together their functional vacancy is occupied by few cars, many being washed, glass collection and some small scale subsistence cooking. On discussion with a security guard, I am told that it is the parking lot for the old Royal Hotel, which has subsequently received a facelift.

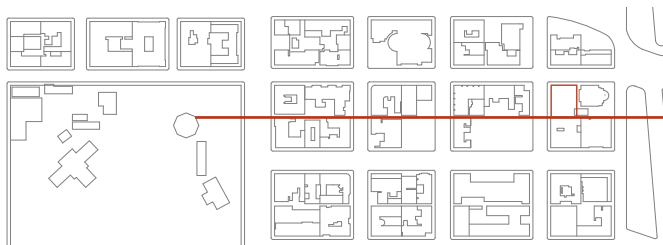
This site has the only active, tangible and honest relationship with the alley, where spray painting and panel beating of cars is performed and deliveries are made to buildings on the north eastern corner. Here, the alleyway

exemplifies the stereotype - it is dark, dank and dirty and is home to grunge graffiti, rotund rats and steaming sewage. This site is surrounded by classic residential Hillbrow skyscrapers that give rise to shelter and accommodation for many, as well as the opportunity for surveillance onto the alley. Each of these buildings exacerbates the alley condition – their height, density and attitude toward the forgotten lane heighten the experience of discomfort and claustrophobia.

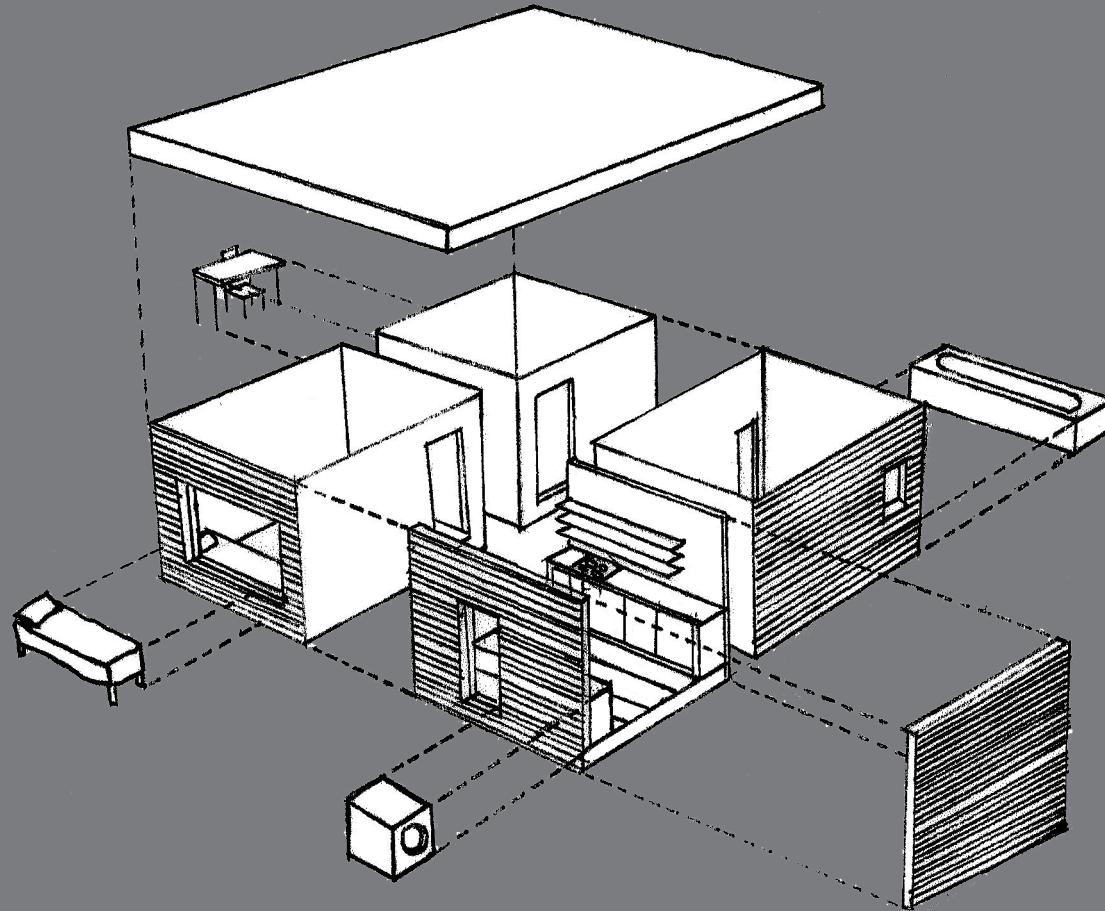


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The fourth site is an open courtyard in front of the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St's Constantine and Helen, built in 1912. The Cathedral is only visited on a Sunday for church services and is otherwise locked and vacant. The alley way forms part of the site as the whole block incorporates the church complex - the building to the south of the Cathedral is the Hellenic Cultural centre. This site is adjacent to End Street Park and is a pivotal interface between Hillbrow and Berea.







01

PROGRAMME / BRIEF

In Programme, conducted interviews are summarised to provide a succinct overview of invaluable input into the functional decisions for my scheme.

Specific programmatic analysis and its impact on the development of my brief explore programmatic concept.

01

The process of establishing a brief and programme for my project was predominantly influenced by interviews conducted with a social worker and a resident at a homeless shelter in the inner-city Johannesburg area. The first shelter I visited was housed in an old church hall, the second in an inner-city office building; both accommodating men and women. The spaces occupied for the shelters had not been designed for their function, and many South African examples echo this situation. Evidently, the institution exists, but the typology appears yet to be defined.

Lindiwe* is a single mother who moved to Johannesburg in order to find work to support her young family who live in another province. She found work at an affluent hotel but subsequently lost her job and therefore could not afford her rent. She sought out a homeless shelter in order to have a safe place of rest while looking for other employment opportunities. She is still unemployed.

* name has been changed. Verbal consent was received from both participants for the interview process.

I ask Lindiwe about the first thing she needed from the shelter, she replies saying:

“ Just a place to sleep, to be honest, just a safe place to sleep ”

She tells me she walks to the park where she often spends the afternoons she isn't looking for work. Public transport is too expensive so she stays within close proximity to the shelter. She tells me that if she has had piece work and been paid, she'll catch a taxi to the northern parts of Jo'burg in order to pursue more permanent job opportunities.

Angie* is a social worker and has been working with the homeless community for many years. Previously, she worked in children's homes, as a childcare worker.

On discussing services offered by the shelter Angie highlighted these as sleeping facilities, two meals a day, ablution and laundry facilities. The daily fee paid by residents covers everything except the laundry - that is at an additional, very small cost per item. She speaks of the philosophy of the shelter, saying “we want to encourage an attitude of not getting things for free”. The sleeping arrangement is a dormitory style for men and women, whereas Lindiwe explains that the shelter where she stays adopts a dormitory style for men but many smaller rooms for women. There are between 2 and 6 women in each room, as well as a locker for each individual for storage of valuables. I ask Angie about her ideas of dormitory or ‘mass sleeping’ versus individual spaces, given the context of my proposal; her reply is simply “I think it's only human to want privacy”. She works with residents in helping them to acquire legal documentation, particularly identity documents – both for finding work but also for the elderly community in order to qualify for government subsidised pension benefits. The shelters, both where Angie and Lindiwe are based, offer skills development, specifically computer skills, baking and sewing. Angie explains that many women find shelters in the inner city of great value as the accessibility of jobs and opportunity for piece-work is more readily available than in other regions. I ask about the importance of spiritual

development and the encouragement thereof; both ladies explained that space is made available for reflection and is supported. Following this, an enquiry about psychological support and counselling is made; Lindiwe explains that assistance is offered where she is based, whereas Angie refers residents to external professionals.

Angie and Lindiwe both speak of informal spaces women choose to sleep in, highlighting the Central Methodist Church, illegally squatted nearby buildings, under bridges on the train tracks and both mention Park Station. Angie fears that staying there

“may give them [the women] a false sense of security”

and explains that people often get chased by security guards, and many times women sleeping there are raped or sexually abused. Lindiwe tells me that “people bath in Park Station, they shower there” and that they are charged to use ‘public’ bathrooms. Clearly safety is of paramount importance for women seeking out a place to spend the night and abuse is something of the everyday for women on the streets. Angie continues, explaining that a lot of these women have a difficulty with substance abuse, most particularly alcohol. Lindiwe discusses me that acts of violence are not uncommon within shelters either; she has witnessed incidents of drug-induced violence involving men at her previous shelter, but has had no negative experience where she is now. I then ask about feelings towards single sex, or women-only shelters; the response is that they are “safer, more nurturing” as, according to Lindiwe, “most of the men there [unisex shelters] smoke dagga and things like that; there is no

order”.

My final questions are geared around unfulfilled needs within the experienced shelters, what they need or what they would add to improve the spaces. Both women answered within the realm of healthcare, with Angie saying:

“We would have preferred if there was a mobile clinic even if it's once a month for the chronics”

Lindiwe also tells me that if residents fall ill where she is, an ambulance needs to be called in order to receive help and care; no provision is made within the shelter.

The discussions with both of these women and my investigation into needs met by various institutions, led me to develop an extensive yet specific brief, encompassing many everyday activities and experiences and answering the needs of existing functional spaces.

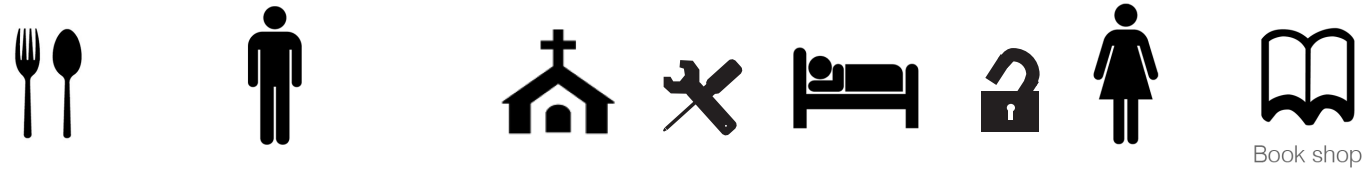
01

This analysis diagram is a comparison between five, inner-city outreach facilities and the services they offer to marginalised communities. The comparison expressed the most fundamental needs of the user as well as exposing the lack of building typology for the collective spaces. Most of the mapped facilities were located in buildings where their function needed to be adapted due to the limiting spatial constructs – a book shop, church or office building. The spaces were not designed for the current purpose and thus disrupted the intended spatial experience – there is no typology for temporary accommodation, its function is always the secondary to the primary space it finds itself in.

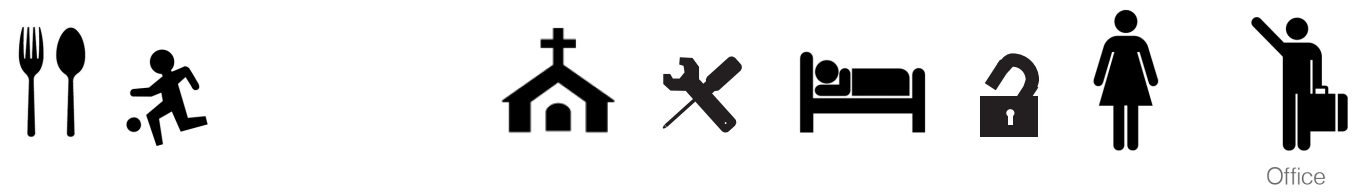
IKHAYA LETHEMBA



STRABANE SHELTER



USINDISO MINISTRIES



HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH



CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH



01

Bath House Typology

Public bathing is in an ancient ritual, celebrating the everyday act of cleansing. The spaces exemplify the spiritual metaphor of the physical act of cleansing the body ultimately resulting in a cleansing of the spirit. Sites of public baths were typically associated with a natural hot spring, supplying fresh water to daily users. Public baths were also believed to help wash away illnesses of the sick and more often than not have a spiritual origin and connection. The bath house is the strongest metaphorical element included in my scheme and represents the holistic process of emancipation from a vicious cycle.

Thermae

The Roman thermae is one of the oldest examples of public bathing. The diagram exhibits the spatial constructs and the options for the user within the space. During Roman times, baths were taken on a regular basis and doing so was believed to be linked to good health. There was a 'rule' that all bathers need to have met in the dressing room prior to bathing as an initiate to social encounter and maintenance of relaxed composure.

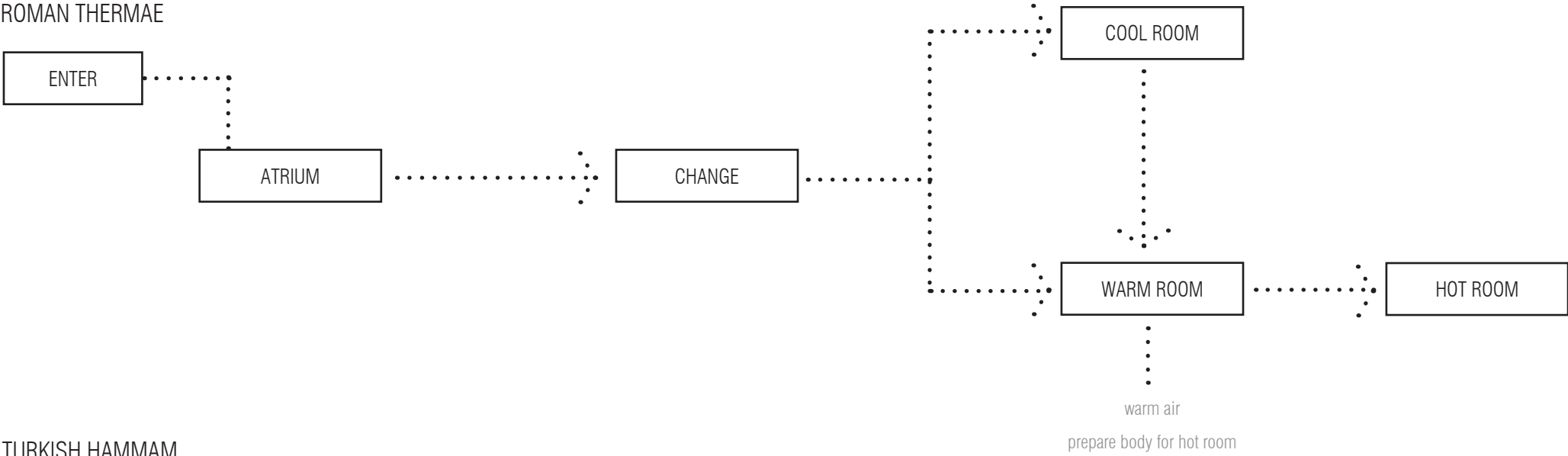
The Thermae was understood as a social space where poetry was read, meals were shared, invitations were extended and business was discussed both during and after the cleansing ceremony. The ritual of cleansing brought people together, it represented a space of networking, communication and connection.

Hammam

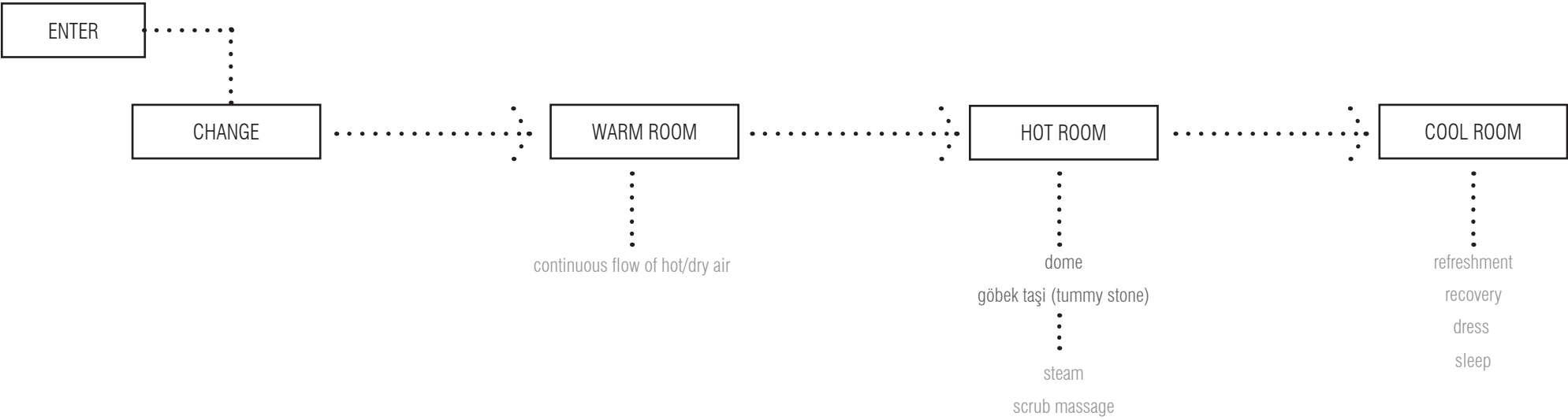
The Hammam is the Turkish equivalent of the Roman Thermae but has an emphasis on cleansing through the use of steam rather than water in liquid form. The most significant difference in spatial sequence between a Roman Thermae and Turkish Hammam is the 'cool room', which is incorporated here at the end of the cleansing act and represents recovery and rejuvenation. The Hammam, like the Thermae, has been understood as a space of social connection and networking.

The Turkish bathing process is linked to Islam as the process of cleansing encapsulates the idea of physical purification prior to entering the mosque for daily prayer, and many hammams were built as annexures to these spaces of prayer as a result.

ROMAN THERMAE



TURKISH HAMMAM

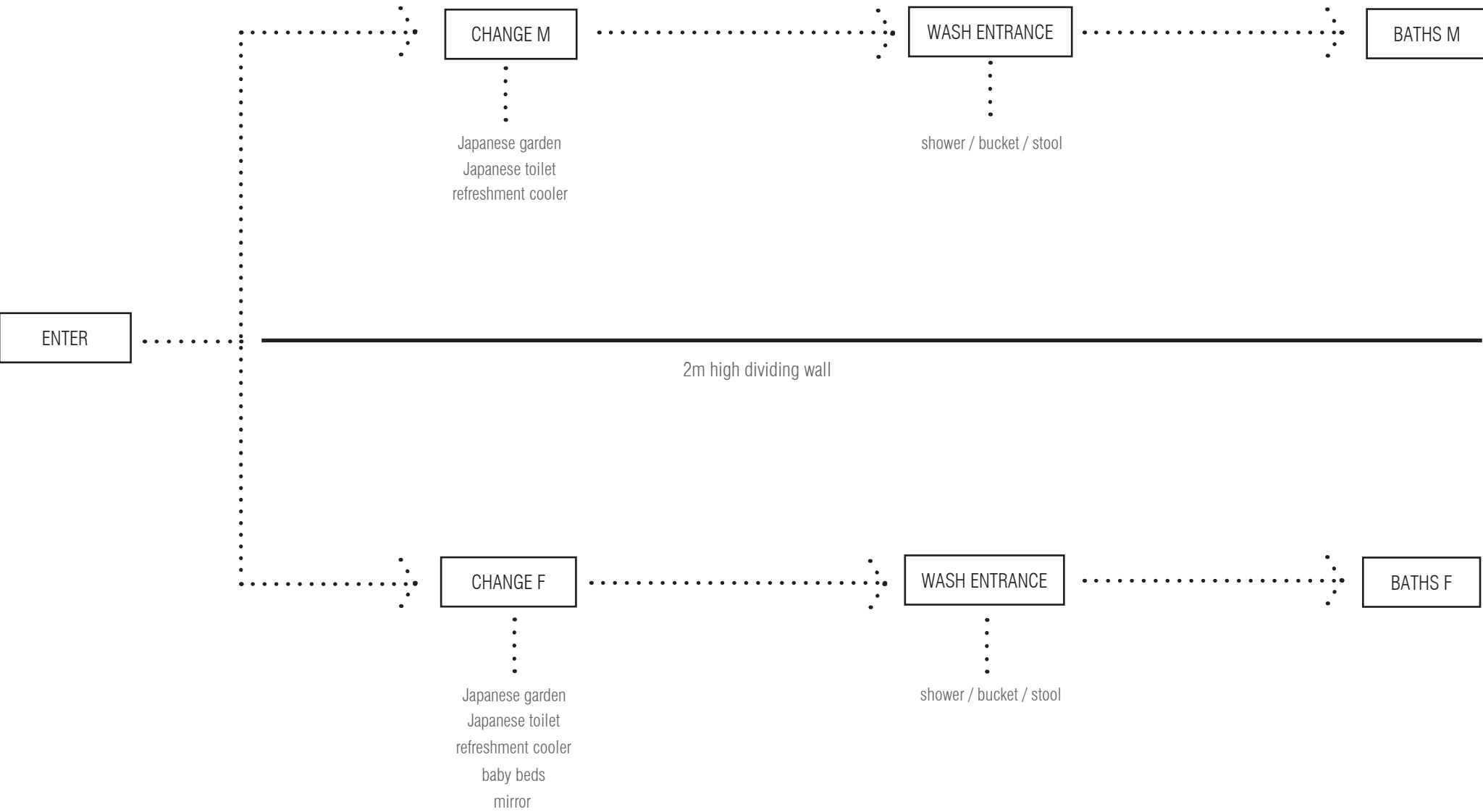


01

The Sento is the Japanese bath house derivative and is deeply embedded in the foundations of Buddhism, with a similar connotation of cleansing as part of spiritual ritual. In ancient Japanese culture, it was understood that emotional intimacy was achieved only through physical intimacy, particularly of sharing a private space with other users.

The bath house was popular in Japan as many people lived in homes without bathing facilities and thus the Sento was the only source of hygiene. The Sento differs from the traditional Onsen, as it does not necessarily make use of water from a natural hot spring.

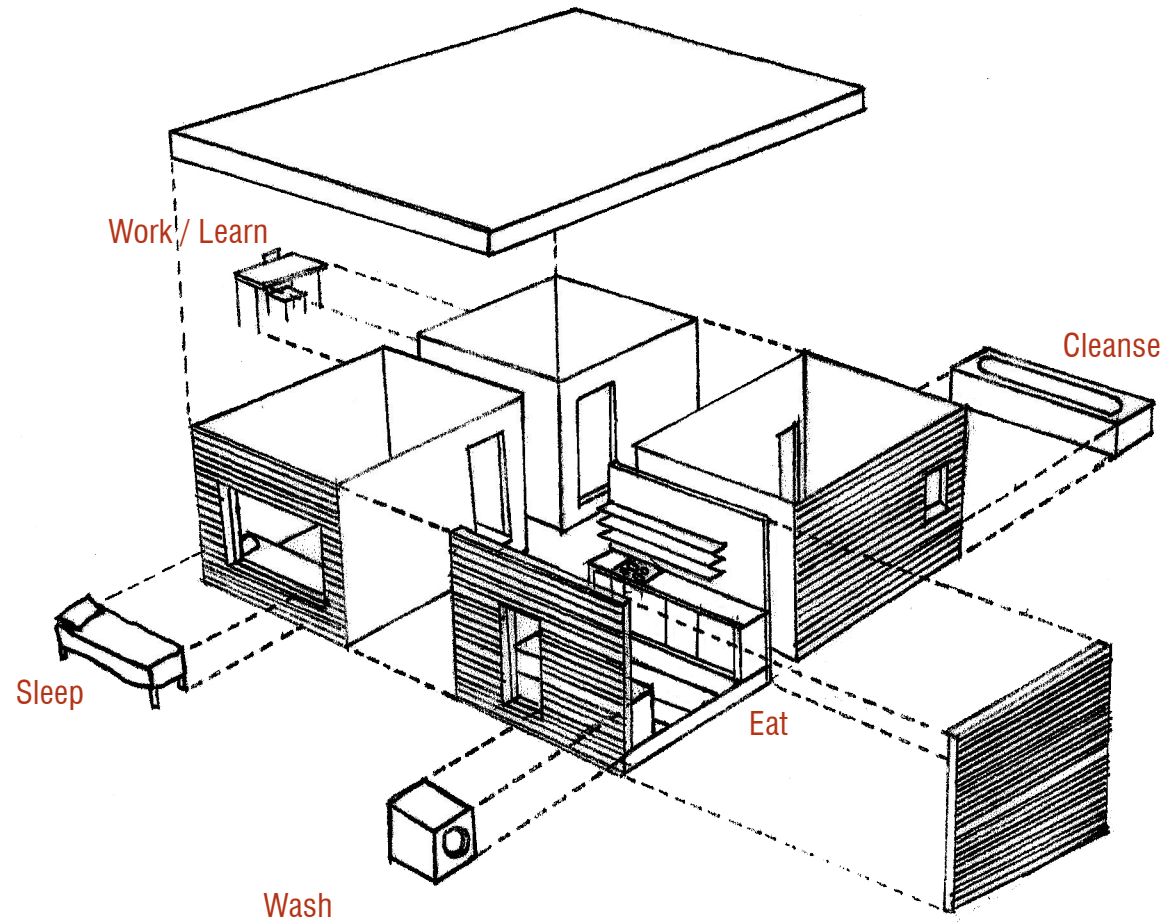
JAPANESE SENTO



01

The conducted interviews provided invaluable insight into the needs of shelters as well as the success of already incorporated functions. The ideas of the Parc de la Villette entry from OMA closely parallel with the site construct, particularly the alleyway as a horizontal connector between four physically detached sites, as a skyscraper with a central movement core connects floors on various vertical planes. It represents an inversion and deconstruction of a classic typology. Thus the four sites are four distinct spaces, with individual functions connected by the activity 'core' of the alley. The composition of the five sites (the alleyway included) in conjunction with these notions gave rise to the idea of treating the project, as a whole as an 'exploded house' – with everyday functions situated on an individual site, connected by the alleyway 'passage'.

The position of four vacant spaces held between two public spaces created an interesting construct of a spectrum of 'public-ness' moving from both parks inwards, culminating with the more cushioned sites on the two inside blocks. The bare sites on the periphery of these four blocks, closer to the exposed public parks, represent the semi-public daily experience of the home, while the two inner-most vacant sites are nestled under the protection of central high rise defenders and the focus shifts to more intimate every day environments.



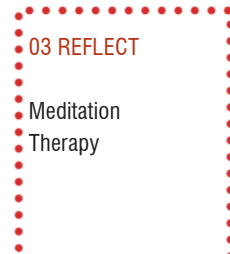
01

00 HEAL

- Retail - linked to Skills
- Documentation
- Clinic
- Skills Development

01 SLEEP

- Sleep
- Eat
- Store





02

PRECEDENT

Precedent explores a variety of local and international case studies influencing and informing site, design strategy and programmatic implementation.

02

The idea of inversion as a continuous and robust concept for the embedded architectural ideas expressed in this project was inspired by the work of Rachel Whiteread. She was born in the 1960s to a middle-class English family and chose to study at The Slade School of Art, hesitantly following in her mothers' footsteps (Zelevansky, 1994, p26). Whiteread's work looks at the negative space, the inversion of the essentially primarily defined space and focuses on the 'other' secondary space, the quiet void of the loud solid. Initially, her work was particularly autobiographical, exploring elements and spaces influential in her own life, "fossil-like, they are, quite literally, traces of the past" (Zelevansky, 1994, p26). In later oeuvre, her projects begin to bleed into the more abstract and neutral, less nostalgic realm and explore the "less seemly side of human existence, their subjects – bed, bath, dining table – calling to mind intimate, physical aspects of daily life" (Zelevansky, 1994, p26).

Whiteread not only inverts her subjects, but the innate connotations of the materials she uses to cast them as well. Working primarily with plaster, she consciously exploits its entrenched "associations with death masks and injury" (Zelevansky, 1994, p26), deconstructing the undertones and reconnecting pieces thought never to be associated. Her work has been described as "a photographic negative, the reverse of the original. The relationship is indexical, the original protruding where the mold recedes and vice versa" (Zelevansky, 1994, p28). With specific reference to her 1993 work, *House*, Whiteread cast the entire internal volume of a building in concrete expressing the inversion of the neutral structure that became a home loaded with meaning, before sadly succumbing to vacancy. The value of the way in which she works, is that the inversion "remained tied

to the original, and defined by it" (Zelevansky, 1994, p29), and although is a distinct segment of a connected whole, her work comes to express, celebrate and reveal different layers, relationships and connotations buried within the subject.

The ideas embedded in much of Whiteread's work with the 'home', links directly to the function and programme of the 'Invert City' arrangement, as the focus is shifted to the everyday experience of the everyday action in the everyday space. The celebration of these events becomes the focus for the user who may encounter little or none of the daily experiences those fortunate enough may take for granted, and expresses the proposed narrative as ritual. Whiteread's investigation and close relationship with architecture and its infused hierarchies and connections, has particularly inspired the way I chose to observe and interact with site, suburb and city.

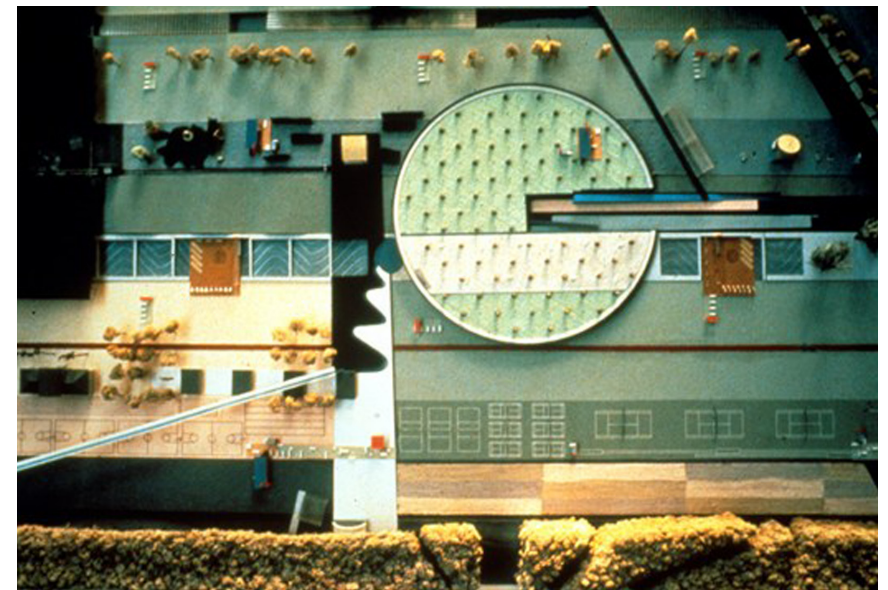
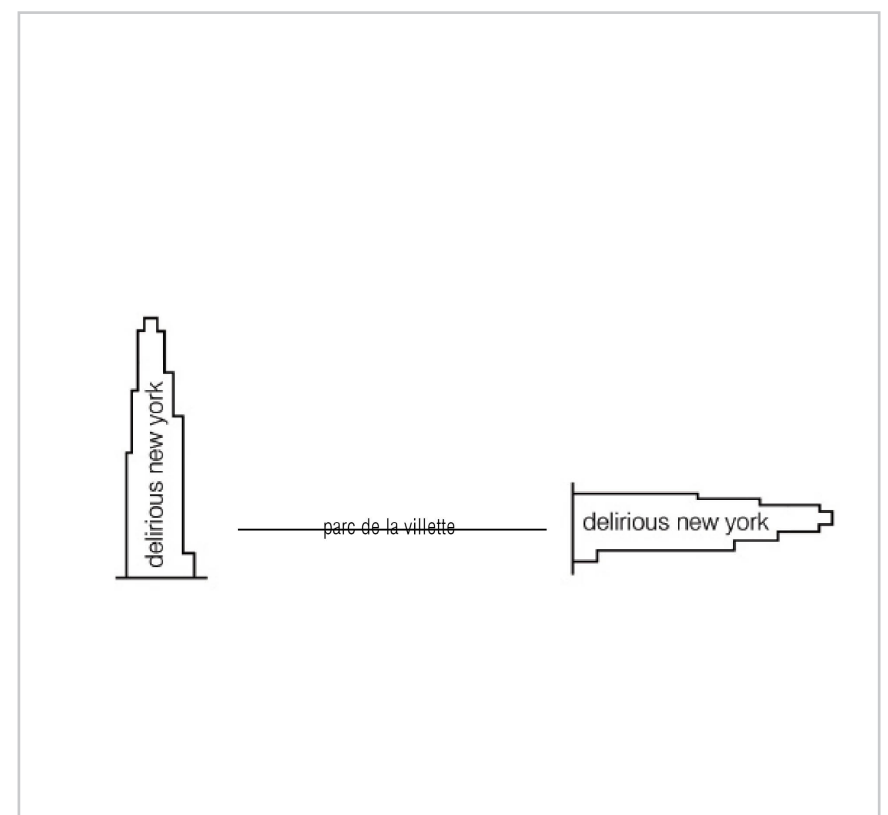


★ FIGURES 017 - 019 (FROM TOP)
Holocaust Memorial, 2000
Untitled (Pink Torso), 1991
House, 1993

02

Rem Koolhaas is a Dutch architect, theorist and urbanist, and founding partner of architectural firm OMA operating from Rotterdam in The Netherlands. Koolhaas has a variety of published works, including his most acclaimed 'Delirious New York' and 'S,M,L,XL'. In 'Delirious New York', Koolhaas argues that the skyscraper in the city of Manhattan is the epitome of congestion. He was fascinated with this idea of pressure and translated these ideas in the Parc de la Villette submission; however as a deconstructed version. Koolhaas adopted the dense skyscraper section as the outline for the master plan of the Parc, essentially turning the skyscraper on its side (Hejduk). The most important element pertaining to circulation for Koolhaas was that it be an extension of the street – “fully accessible and public” (Hejduk).

The proposal for Parc de la Villette from OMA represents the core idea my intervention was inspired by – the horizontal connector. The four, disconnected horizontal sites are representative of four vertical floors in a whole building. These floors are connected by a central circulation core, moving up and down, north and south on a three-dimensional axis. The four disconnected sites, all connected by their common vacancy, are stitched together by the alleyway, acting as a circulation core on a horizontal plane – as if we turned the building on its side, inverted its relationship with the ground on which it sits.



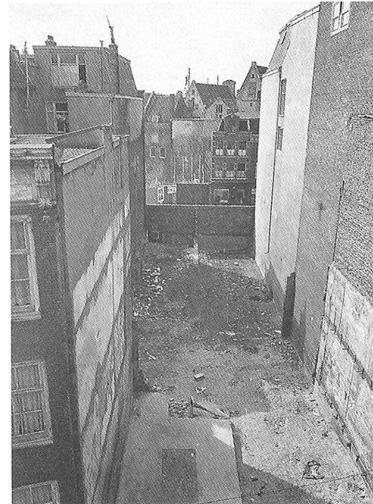
* FIGURE 20 Parc de la Villette Masterplan,
1982

02

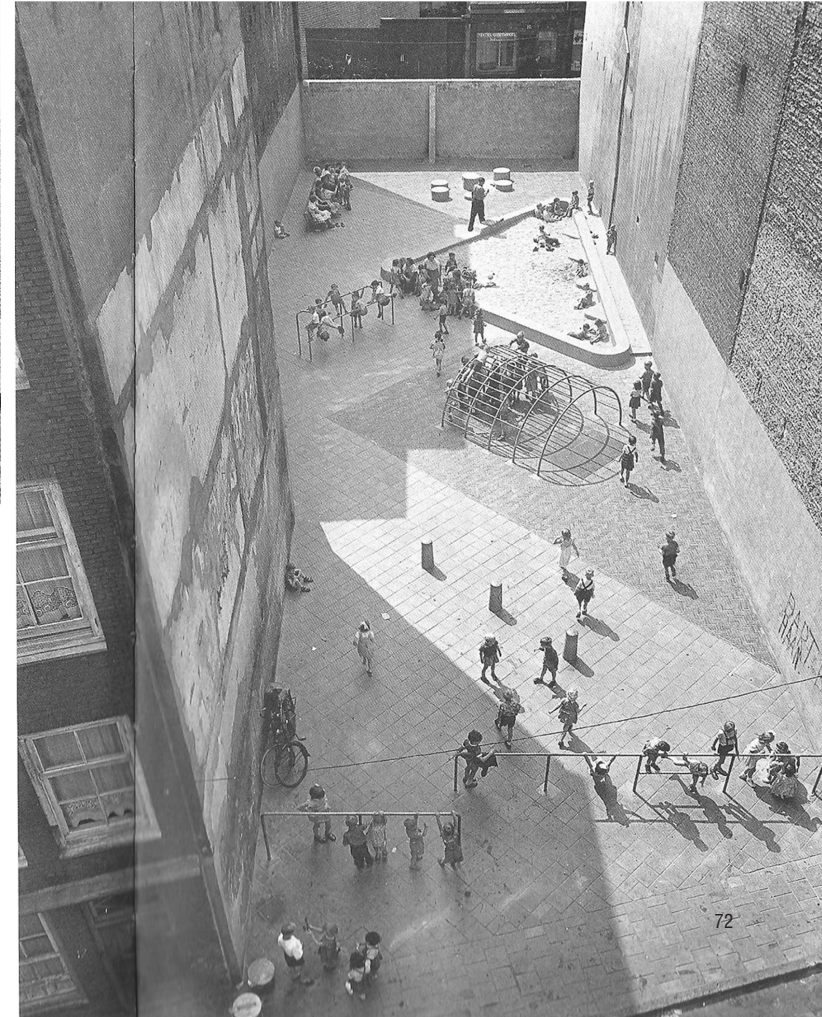
Aldo Van Eyck (1918-1999) was a Dutch architect who was a founding member of Team X, an architectural body during the 1950s rejecting the ideas of preceding CIAM, of which he was a member. Team X wanted to work with the developing automobile and industrial society in a way that still maintained a sense of identity (Curtis, 1996, p446). He supported and promoted a shift in architecture from rational order to the deep notion of 'place' (Curtis, 1996, p446). Van Eyck rejected the functional separation of the post-war planners, discussing that "architecture has to facilitate human activity and promote social intervention" (**). He felt that post-war rebuilding of cities required the "re-creation of basic qualities of shelter" without ignoring modern development (Curtis, 1996, p446).

During the late 1940s, there were very few playgrounds in Amsterdam and only children who were members of the trusts owning them were permitted to play there. While Van Eyck worked for the Department of City Development for Amsterdam Public works, the suggestion of providing every neighbourhood in the city with a space to play was discussed. Van Eyck was commissioned to design the first playground, as an experiment, and it was a great success. Over a thirty-one year time span, he worked with vacant sites in the city of Amsterdam and designed over 700 children's playgrounds for spaces throughout the Netherlands. After 1955 he designed many playgrounds in districts that survived the Second World War, in spaces rendered vacant by senseless bombings. Van Eyck used the playgrounds to test his architectural ideas, particularly those of relativity and imagination (Bergen, 2001). He believed that "connections between elements were determined by their mutual relationships, rather than by a central hierarchical ordering principal" (Bergen, 2001).

The playground as a functional element is not as important as the network and integration it facilitates through the child as user. Families, members young and old, were drawn to the space to care for children playing, and as a result of sharing a common space and interest, would connect with one another. The playgrounds created a network throughout the city, and ultimately reconnected the severed community in its entirety.



★ FIGURE 21 Dijkstraat Playground Before
★ FIGURE 22 After

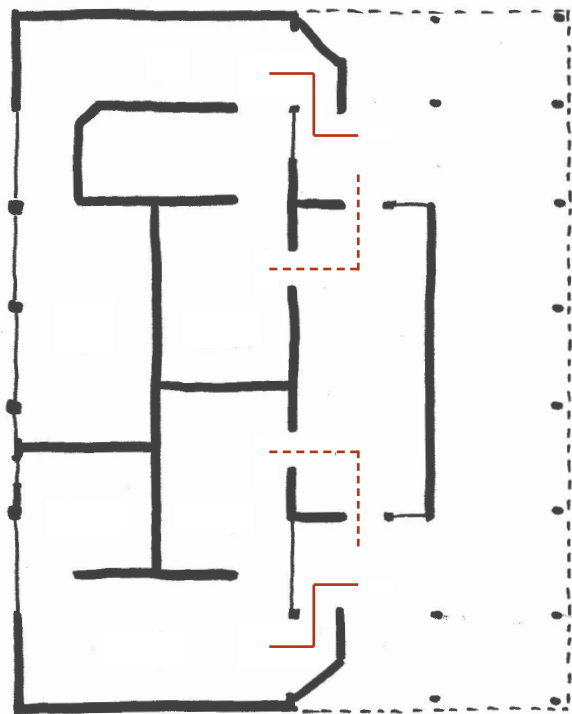
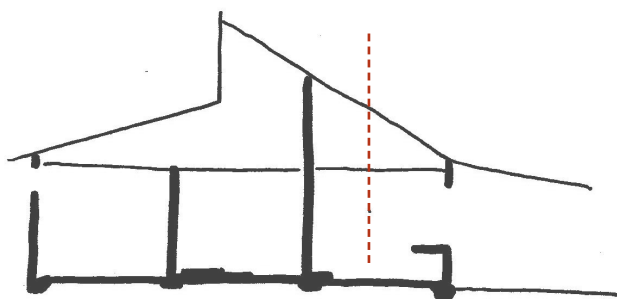


02

The Mangel Road precinct in central Durban is home to the Mangel Road Night Market as well as Strollers temporary accommodation. The precinct holds a difficult history, with origins in the 1980s forced removals of women to Block AK - the site as we know it today (Kitchin and Ovens, 2008, p7). In 1997 there were 148 women and children living in the area with no recreational facilities, poor ablutions and limited access to healthcare. Block AK subsequently developed into an informal settlement and only expanded with traders as a result of the closing of the beachfront night market. This decision prompted development of the area, and the proposed programme included parking spaces, trading areas, ablutions and overnight accommodation to name but a few elements (Kitchin and Ovens, 2008, p7).

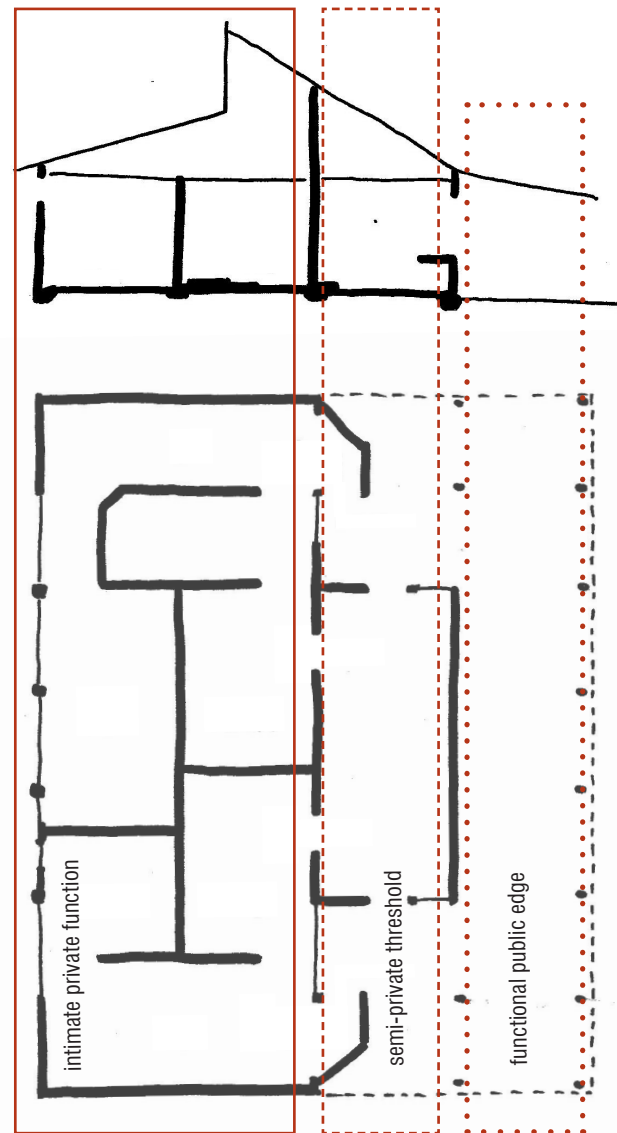
Strollers is a South African example of an overnight, temporary housing solution that successfully links with other urban functions that it both serves and is supported by. The facility provides shelter for both consumers and traders of the night market and offers ablution facilities as well as pay laundry, locker and shower options. The Strollers initiative was the first time temporary housing was incorporated into a housing scheme for the city and resulted in the effective development of the transitional housing policy (Kitchin and Ovens, 2008, p7).

The most valuable lesson offered by the Mangel Road precinct is the way in which the architecture is “empowering marginalised people and providing viable inner city housing for poor families” (Low, 2005, p5). The re-use of vacant land has culminated into a catalyst for both dwelling and trade in an initiative supported by the community. It is a successful attempt to reconnect separated community through industry and safe sleeping.



* FIGURE 23 Access diagram (left)

* FIGURE 24 Public / Private diagram

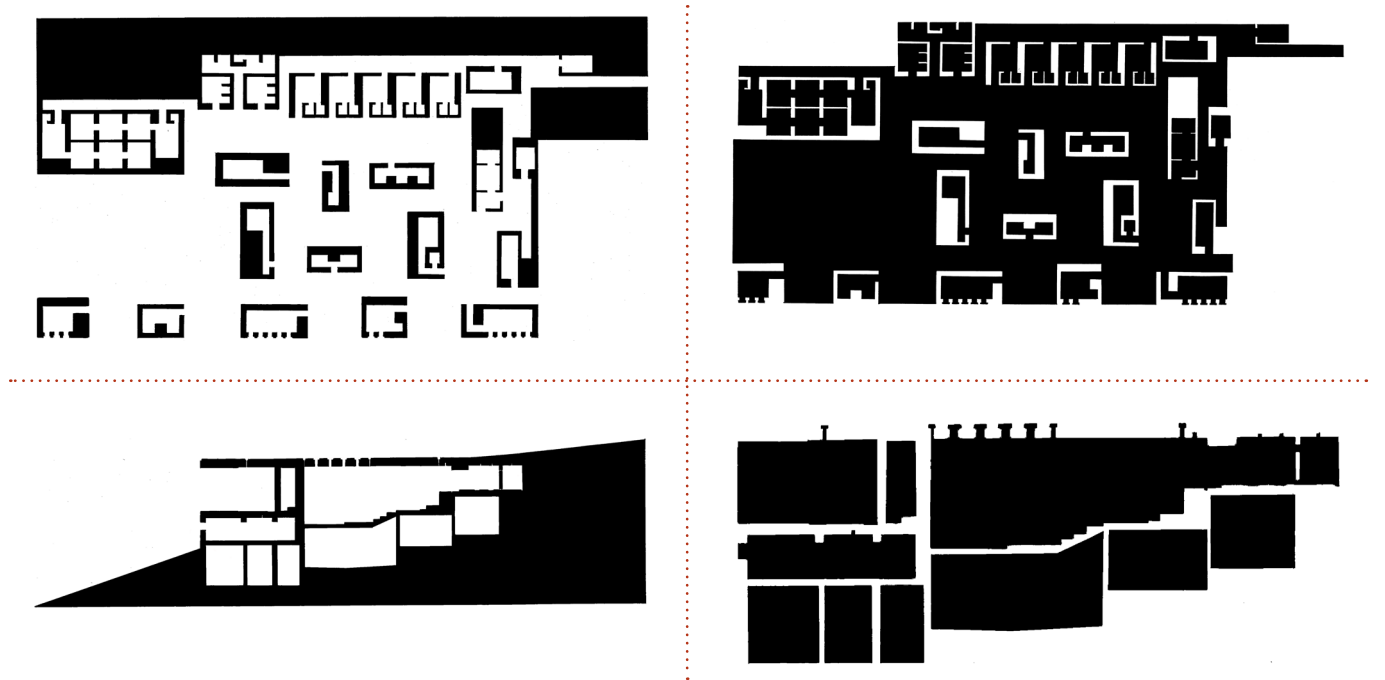


02

Peter Zumthor designed the Baths at Vals in Switzerland as a poetic gesture to the ancient ritual of public cleansing. Zumthor worked in “intense contact with the project and its site” (Ryan, 2011, p42) using natural stone quarried from the surrounding area. He created a specific focus on the act of bathing by using a simple palette of texture, light and the connection of each physical element with the most powerful medium – water.

The project exudes a sense of austerity, silent strength and embodies an almost spiritual experience. Ryan describes Zumthor’s approach as ceremonial “in a ritual of shifting geometries” (2011, p42). The most interesting aspect of the project with respect to my intervention is Zumthor’s “almost labyrinth world of solid and void” (Ryan, 2011, p44). The building asserts its strength through thick stone walls but subtly divides the space through individual disconnected solid segments. The strength of material and texture illuminates the space between the verticality, highlighting and intensifying the emotional experience of the bathing ceremony – the vigour of architecture ultimately enforces the space between, silently stepping back allowing the sacrament of cleansing centre stage.

Understanding cleansing as a ritual deepens the metaphor of cleansing throughout my design project as a whole. Stripping off battles of the homeless condition involves not only a physical cleansing, but that of mind and soul too. If we begin to understand the site as a journey, a move toward freedom from a claustrophobic and unyielding circumstance, cleansing, in the most symbolic way, is part and parcel of claiming liberty, change and choice.



* FIGURE 25 Solid / Void Analysis
Plan and Section



★ FIGURE 26 Rachel Whiteread, 2001.
Untitled (Basement)

03

INVERSION

In Inversion, I uncover the design strategy adopted for the completion of my proposal, with particular reference to inspirational female artist, Rachel Whiteread.

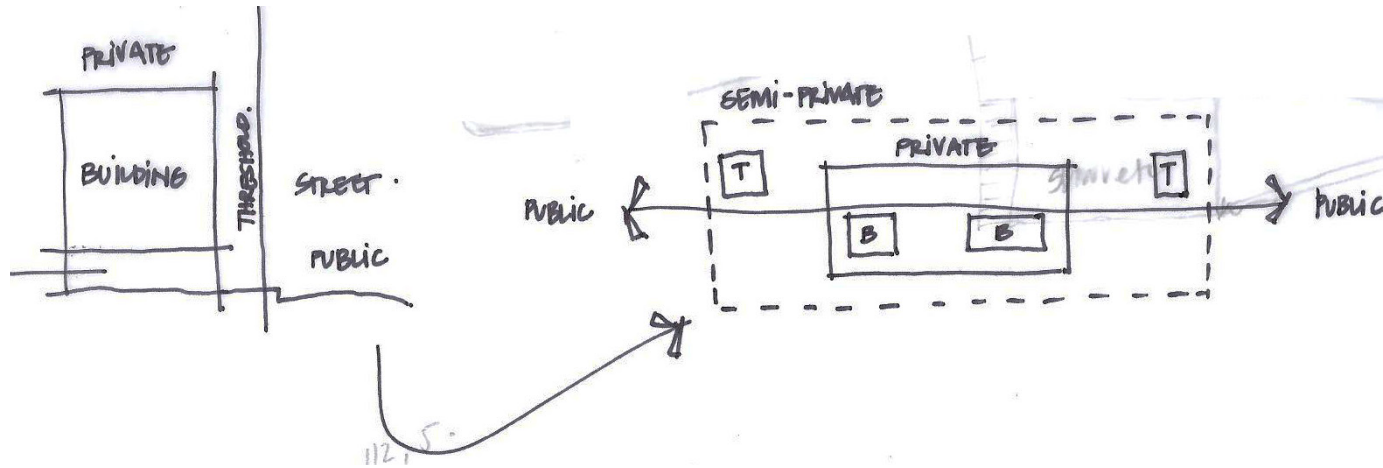
03

The deconstructivist notion of the 'Other' exposes the disjunction within the city as macrocosmic representative. Spaces for marginalised 'others' are more often than not, marginal spaces themselves, divorced from the city within a solid architecture. Many of the mapped spaces offering refuge to the homeless community, exist within structures other to their specific function, namely office spaces, bookshops and church halls to name but a few. The embodied space for the user is therefore completely secondary and as a result of this severance, in conjunction with the removal of the user from the city, the ostracised 'other' becomes further detached from the community hoped to be reintegrated with. The disjunction is therefore dealing with an excluded user and marginalised space, but protruding architecture – the 'other' to the physicality of architecture is the missing link. If the built form of architecture is the strength within the hierarchy, then network and connection between solidity must be the quiet negative. The homeless woman is the other to the successful white male, the alleyway is the marginalised versus the bustling street, vacant sites are the secondary to full, towering skyscrapers - all desperate for the network relief of architecture to intervene.

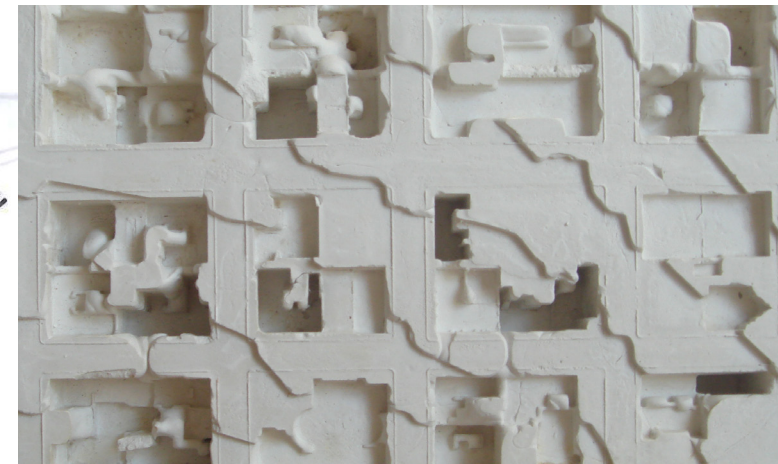
The relationship of my selected sites with one another may seemingly exist only in their common situation of vacancy, but when the inversion or negative of the city comes into focus, we see that the forgotten vacant alleyway as an integral connector - not only between all four spaces, but between two prevalent public spaces as well. Their vacancy, their void of structure, their state of inversion is ultimately what connects them. Through the lens of inversion, we can physically witness the continuity of connection lying quietly below the surface of the busy city; it highlights

the potential to create new spatial relationships by developing new associations through the disruption of the pre-existing discourse. The only way to design using the primary tool of solid construct within the juxtapositions existing within architecture is to understand the network as the overriding design informant. If we design with the strategy of inversion, through alternate ways of seeing, and understand the homeless user, the vacant site and street as well as the network connecting them as a united whole, suddenly they become the primary in a plethora of layered relationships. The network exists not only as a connector between structural elements, but between women of the community and forgotten space throughout the city; it extends across scale, structure and sects exposing the network as the marginalised connector holding the city together.

Vacant spaces, open spaces, are all connected by street, alley and bursting potential. When we choose to shift our perspective to view the embedded and accepted architectural discourse through a newly established means of connection, a catalyst for change within site, suburb and city appears inevitable.



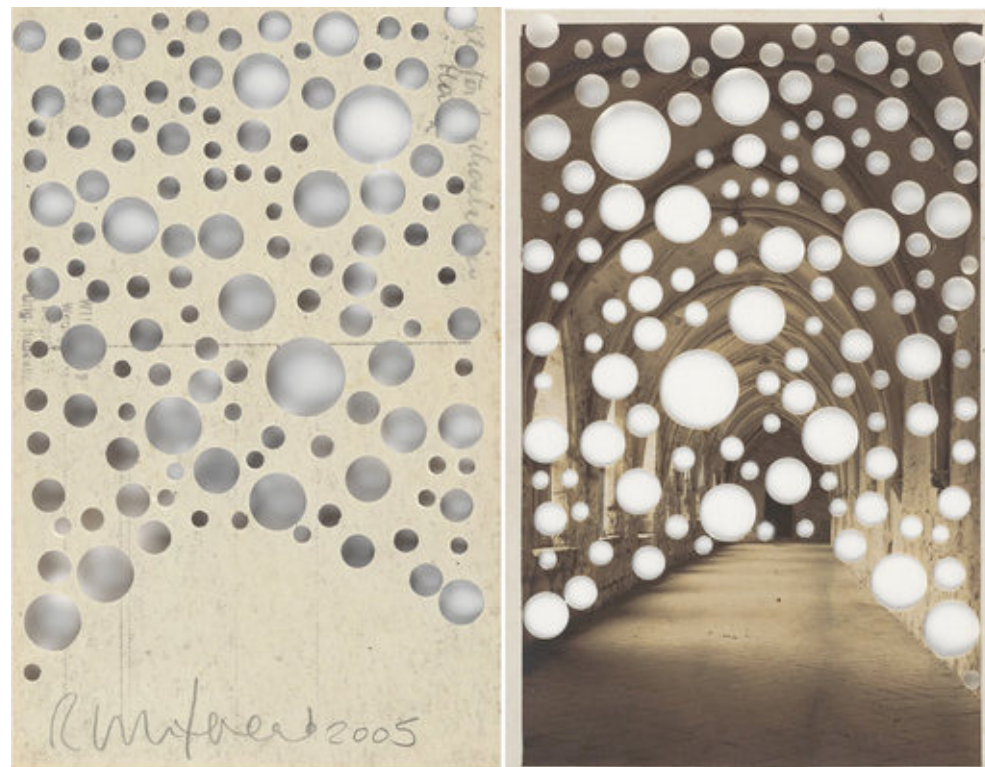
* FIGURE 27 Decentralised diagram expressing the approach to site on a deconstructed horizontal axis



* FIGURE 28 Inverted model of my sites in Hillbrow

03

* FIGURE 29 Rachel Whitered, 2005.
Untitled (Verso and Recto)



“ Le Corbusier, to design from the plan up, that is, **to sculpt space itself**. In this thinking the walls are merely **the tools that allow space itself to be sculpted** ”

Rachel Whiteread

* (Lawson, 2004, p74)



FIGURE 30



04

PHOTO ESSAY

In this independent chapter, I immerse myself into the site and alleyway context, and through a series of photographic exercises within the vacant space, gain incredible insight into the driving connector in my scheme.

04

At the beginning of this journey, I was fortunate enough to receive a bursary from the National Research Fund (NRF) through the University of the Witwatersrand. I used the funds to conduct a photo essay within the alleyway portion of my site, to immerse myself in the space, to soak up the experience - both of the alley itself as well as its influence on me as user in the space. Ultimately I used the opportunity to document the possibility and potential this space holds through temporary and minor intervention incorporated into my design proposal. Very careful consideration was given to the participants within the study, as alleyways in general are notorious for criminal acts and underhanded transactions.

I chose to record the effect the alleyway had on me as a user in order to understand the way in which solid architecture either assists or thwarts the spatial experience as well as what I could implement within my design strategy to enhance the space of potential rather than repress it. I and Madoda, the photographer aiding my study, visited my sites prior to conducting the photo shoot. The night before our site visit, I was exceptionally nervous and battled to sleep. In my first journal entry I discussed that:

"The stereotype of an alley way is fully at play here and the effect it is having on me is exactly what I want to invert, reverse and change"

★ Both verbal and written consent was received from and on behalf of all participants within the photographic process.

The site visit included our movement through the alleyway in order to familiarise ourselves with the spatial conditions and any possible conflict we might meet. The most vivid observation I made while being in the alleyway was the hard, stoic edge every building approaches it with. The nature of the buildings – all turning their backs to the alley – literally makes you feel alone and isolated.

"You have nowhere to go if feeling threatened and the choice made in having all the buildings divorced from the space, disengaging and coldly turning away successfully makes one feel trapped and claustrophobic"

The experience left me feeling both frustrated and inspired - the space has to be opened up, has to connect to parallel streets through the buildings, and not simply around them. The alley ways needs the element of choice, options and availability as do the women being designed for - the homeless woman is the metaphor for the alley and vice versa.

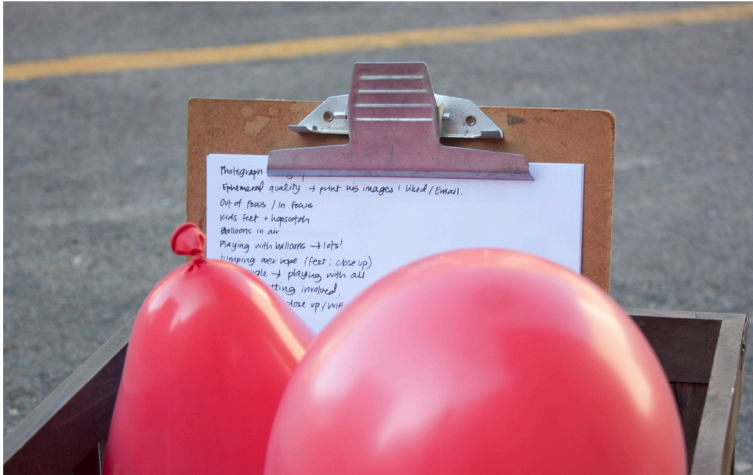
Before the day of the photographic exploration I was again feeling nervous given the reputation of the nature of the site as well as suburb. It reiterated to me that they alleyway and community is desperate for considered intervention, in a way that realistically and strategically creates an integrated and informed solution.

TOP ROW FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

★ FIGURES 31 - 32

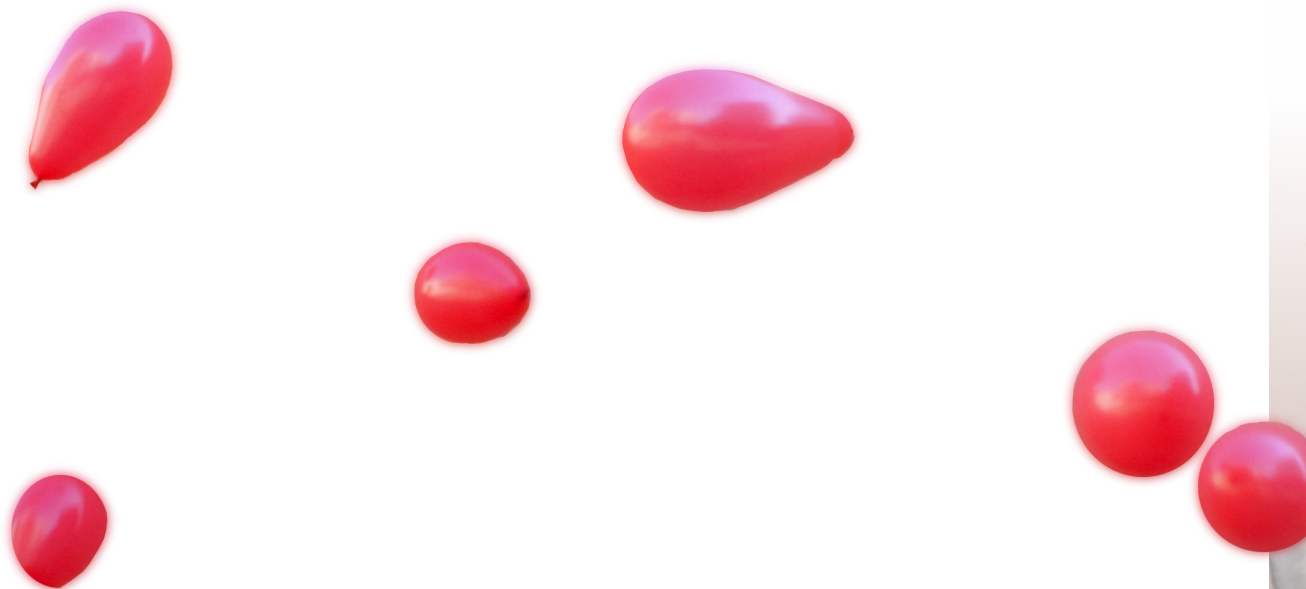
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

★ FIGURES 33 - 37



04

The shoot involved female children and women who live in the immediate site area and who agreed to participate in the study. Every ethical consideration was taken in order maintain privacy and choice throughout the study. The process involved moving through as much of the accessible space of the alleyway as possible in order to gain a first-hand experience of the most important connector of my site. The first of the interventions I hoped to document was a space of safe, supervised play for children, which occurs off the street but not hidden from view.



* FIGURE 38



04



LEFT FROM TOP:
★ FIGURES 39-41
RIGHT:
★ FIGURE 42



04

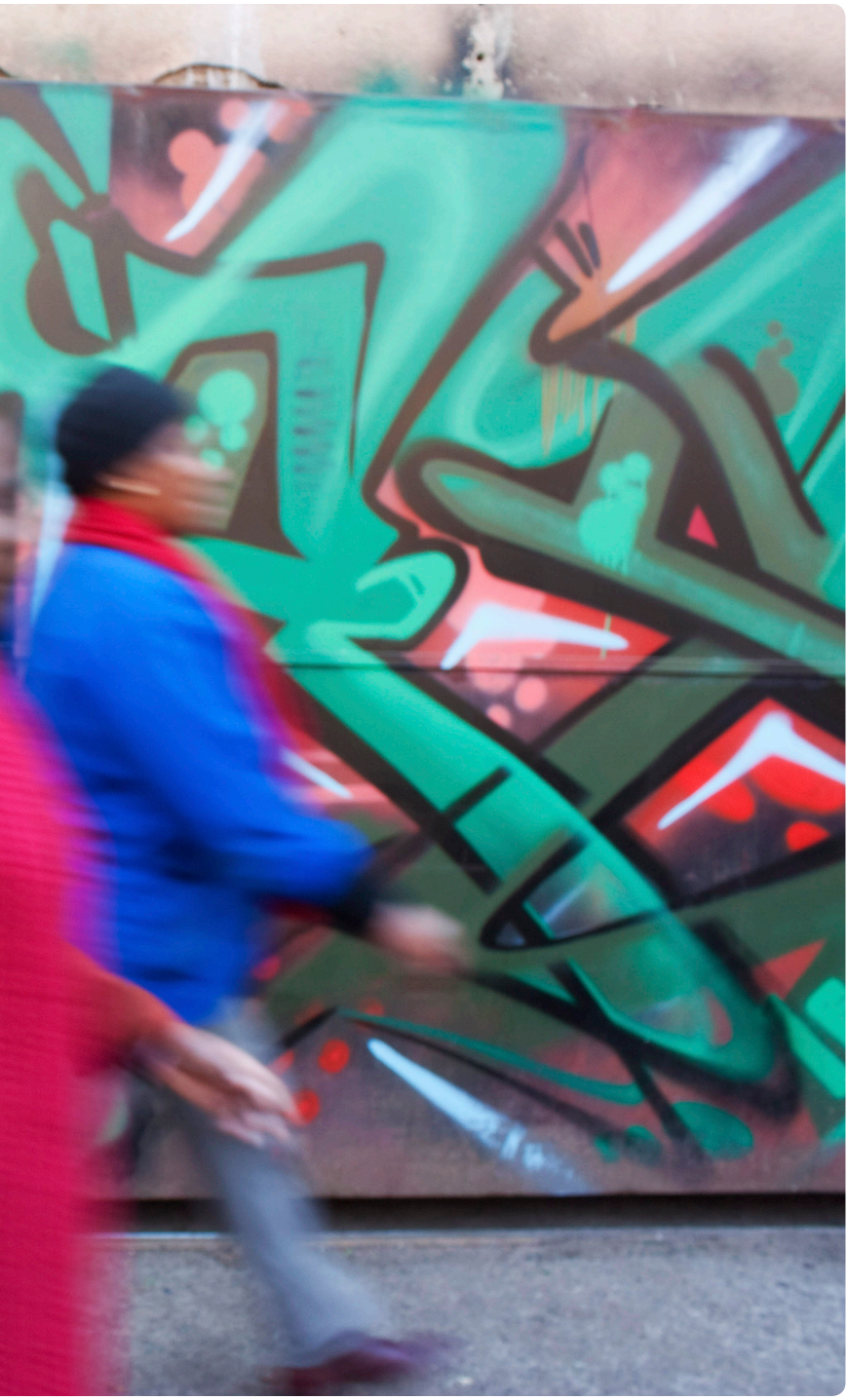
Secondly, simple movement throughout the length of the space, to understand the passageway as a safe movement space for women, as well as understanding the alleyway as a space offering social atmosphere. The alleyway is a space of pause from the chaotic street offering the opportunity for networking and community integration and involvement. Safe movement and breathing space within the alleyway cannot exist without providing maintained and sufficient lighting for the space, surveillance and safe spaces cannot exist without illumination.



04

* FIGURES 46 - 48





04

The photo essay was an inspiring exercise that showed me that the alley has the undeniable potential to no longer be the menacing place of the criminal slinking in the shadows, or of steaming, rotting, stinking refuse. Rather it is seen as the 'Other' to the street and celebrated because of it. It exemplifies a space for women to feel safe, to choose to be away from the dangers lurking in the city and safely sheltered through a connected, integrated community.



* FIGURES 49 - 52

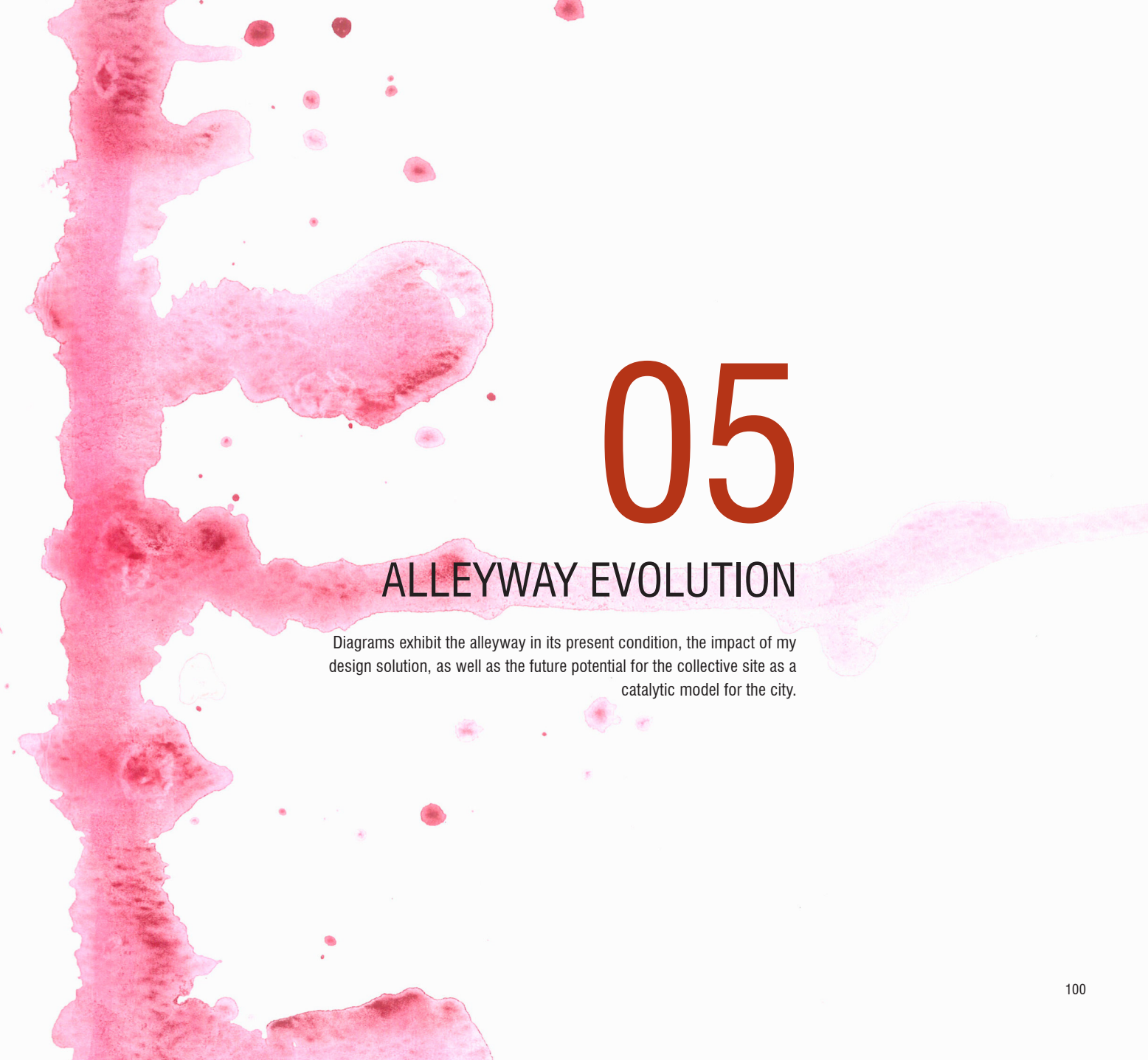


04



* FIGURES 53 - 55



A large, abstract pink watercolor splash or stain that originates from the left side of the page and spreads across the middle and right. It has various shades of pink and red, with some darker, more saturated areas and lighter, more diffused edges. The shape is irregular and organic, resembling a large, stylized letter or a natural form like a flower or a cloud.

05

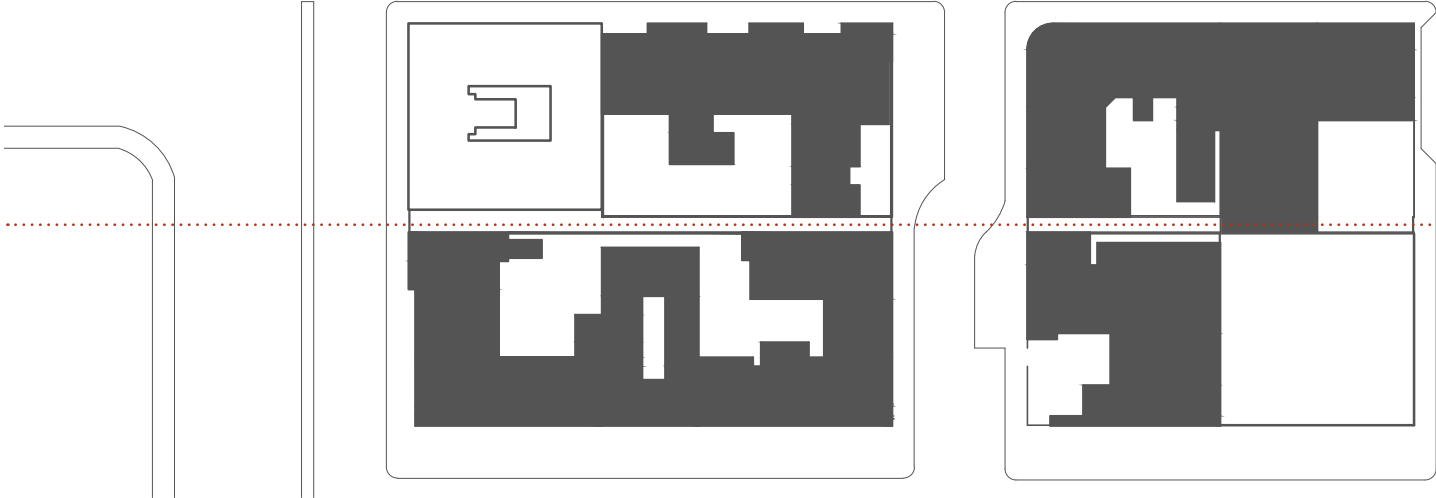
ALLEYWAY EVOLUTION

Diagrams exhibit the alleyway in its present condition, the impact of my design solution, as well as the future potential for the collective site as a catalytic model for the city.

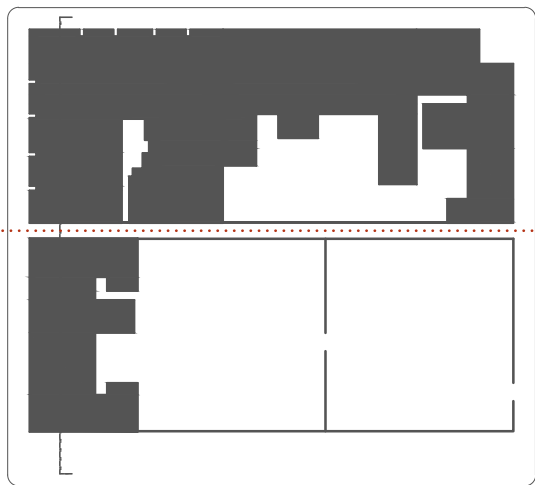
05

The alleyway as it stands now is disconnected, vacant and essentially forgotten. The space is cordoned off and separated from the streets and buildings through which it slices, with the exception of the portion running through block C. Here, the uninterrupted form of the passageway conforms to the global stereotype: invading, rancid and filthy. The space houses service entrances to peering buildings and a handful of small informal businesses, including spray painting and panel-beating of vehicles.

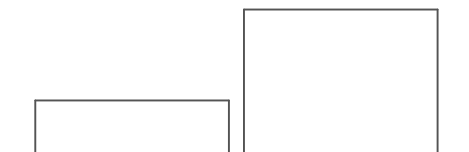
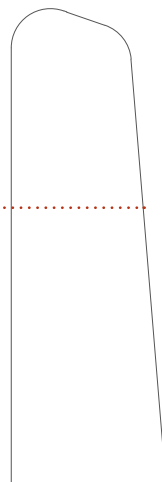
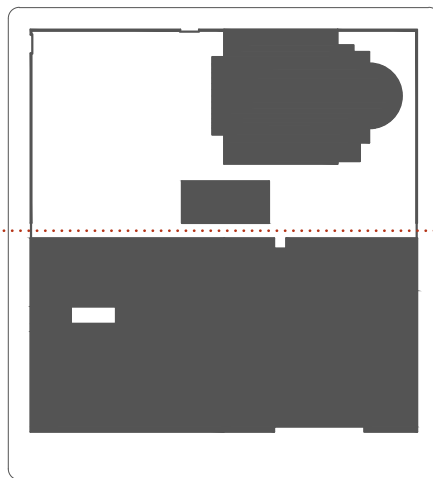
The alleyway, in its entirety, is strictly horizontal, rendering the user restricted in choice and therefore immobilised. This lack of choice and powerlessness associated with the alley becomes a macrocosm for the homeless condition. The surrounding architecture exacerbates and stimulates the alleyway condition, therefore an architecture attempting to penetrate the rigidity of the site needs to encompass and promote choice, fluidity and visibility.



C



00



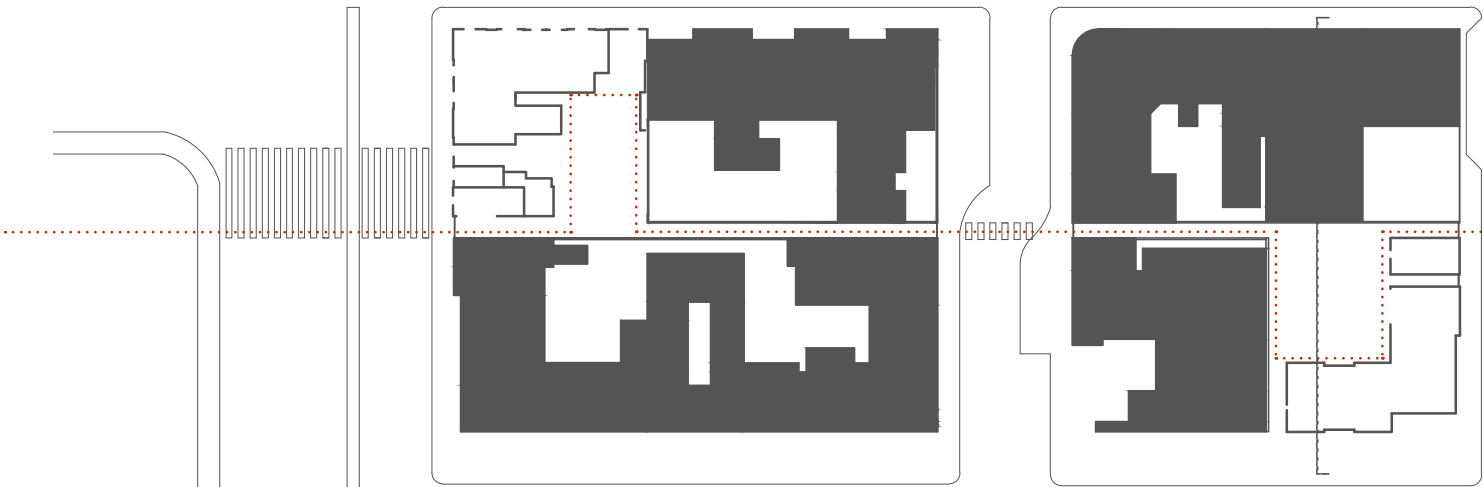
00

05

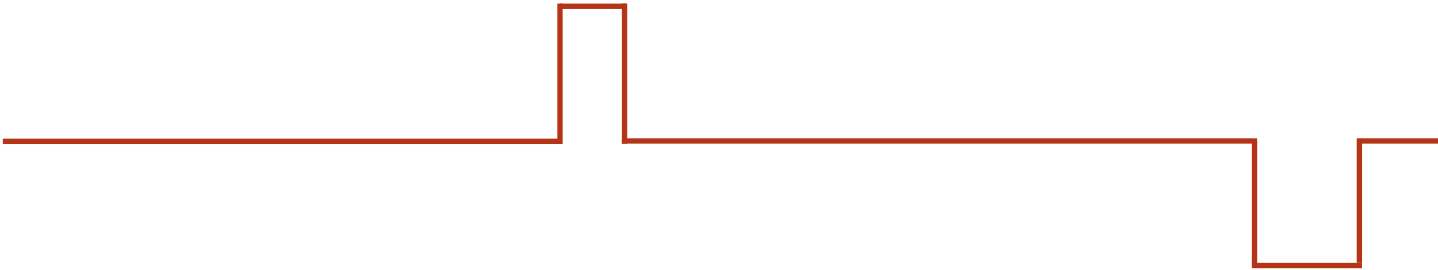
The immersion into the alleyway and integral nature of the connected sites, through the photo essay exercise, drew many exciting and valuable conclusions. The stifling environment of the alley is a direct result of design decisions made decades ago, aggravated by the high rise development of apartment buildings in Hillbrow, and their influence on the proportions of the space. The alleyway needs space to breathe; to penetrate, connect and overlap with the street, suburb and city. The most glaring observation made of the site is the restriction the alley enforces – there is absolutely no choice in terms of one’s direction of movement; the alleyway therefore echoes the homeless condition - both are metaphor for imprisonment within a set of circumstances. Being fully absorbed by my site proved the most invaluable design informant and showed me that the architecture, like the programme, needs to enable and represent choice for both users in and around my proposed intervention.

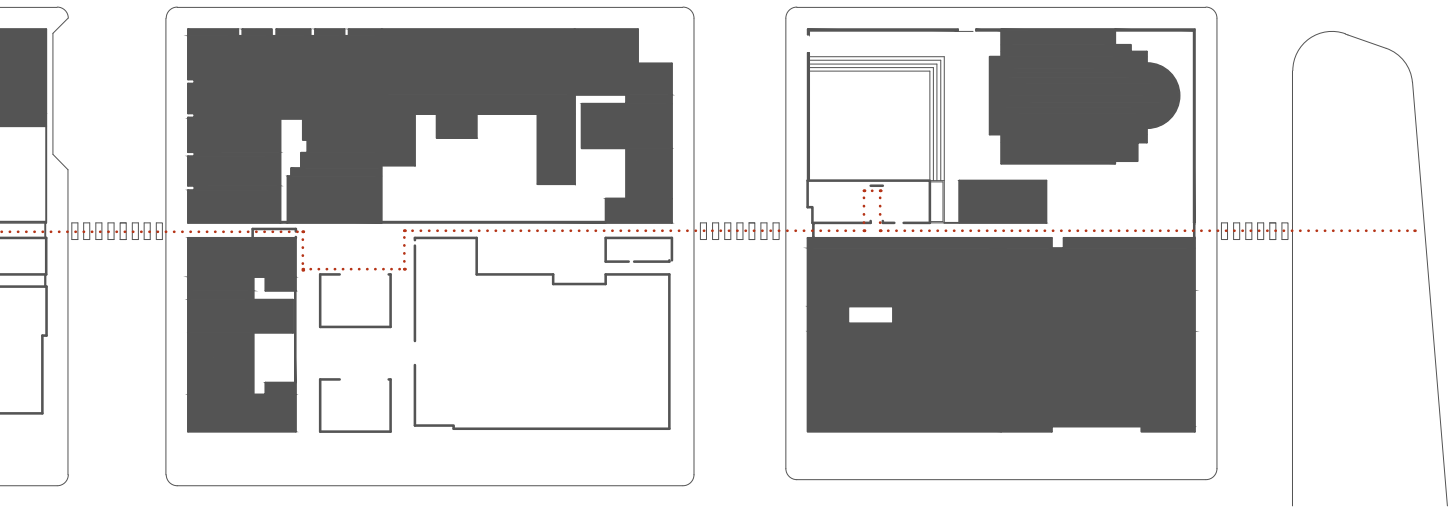
The most important design decisions, informed by the alley, are the stepping back of the building from, and subsequent perforation of, the alley that invites the vacant space not only into the building but into the network surrounding it. In the initial stages of the re-integration of the alleyway, there will be safety measures taken as part of the sensitive process. Each portion of the alley way will be closed off at sunset and penetrable during the day, with the exception of the Cleanse space which, equipped with additional security, will close slightly later in order to accommodate women using the space in the evenings.

The interventions begin to bleed the opportunity boasted by the alley into the vacancy of the four connected spaces, becoming a catalyst for the community and model for the city.



01





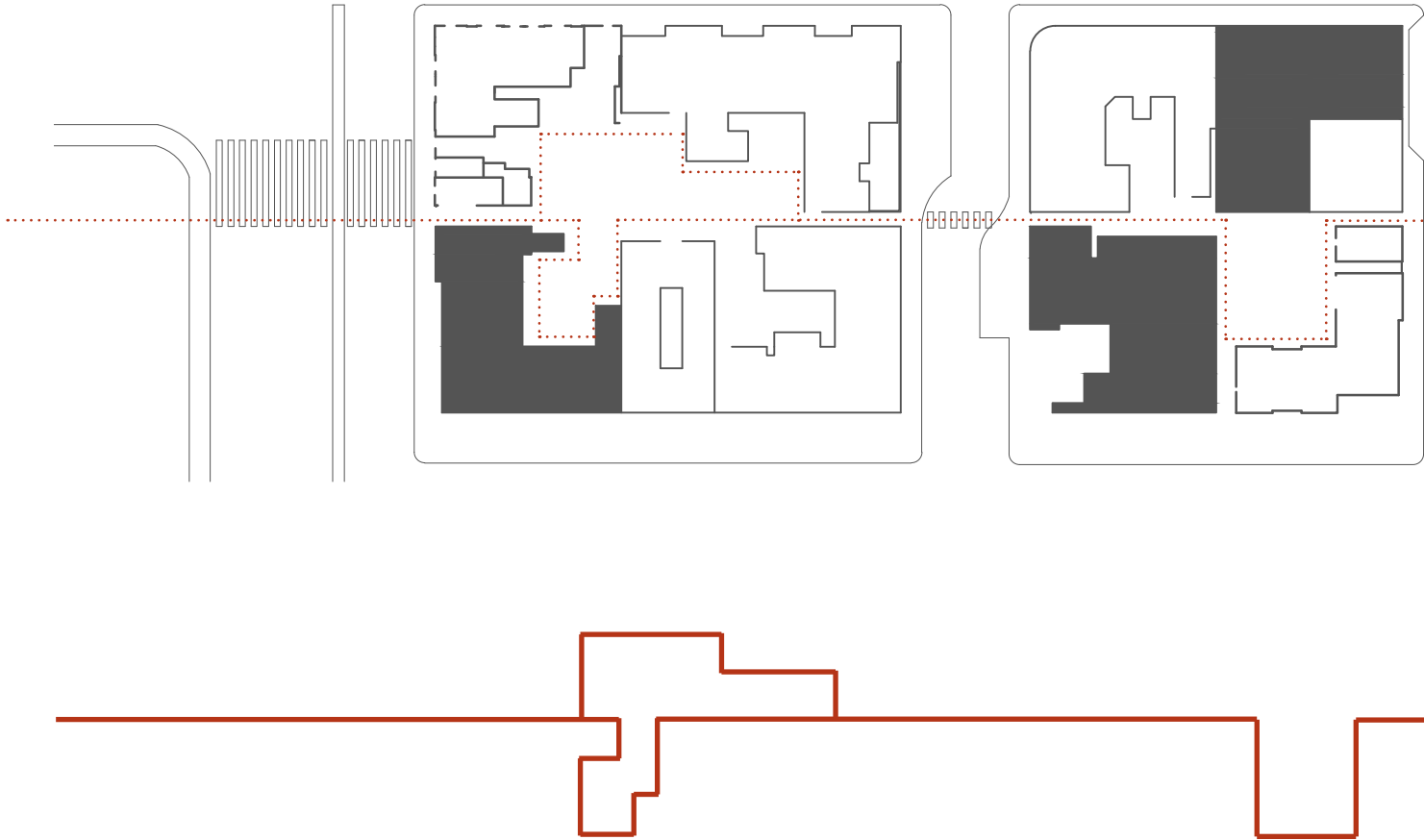
01

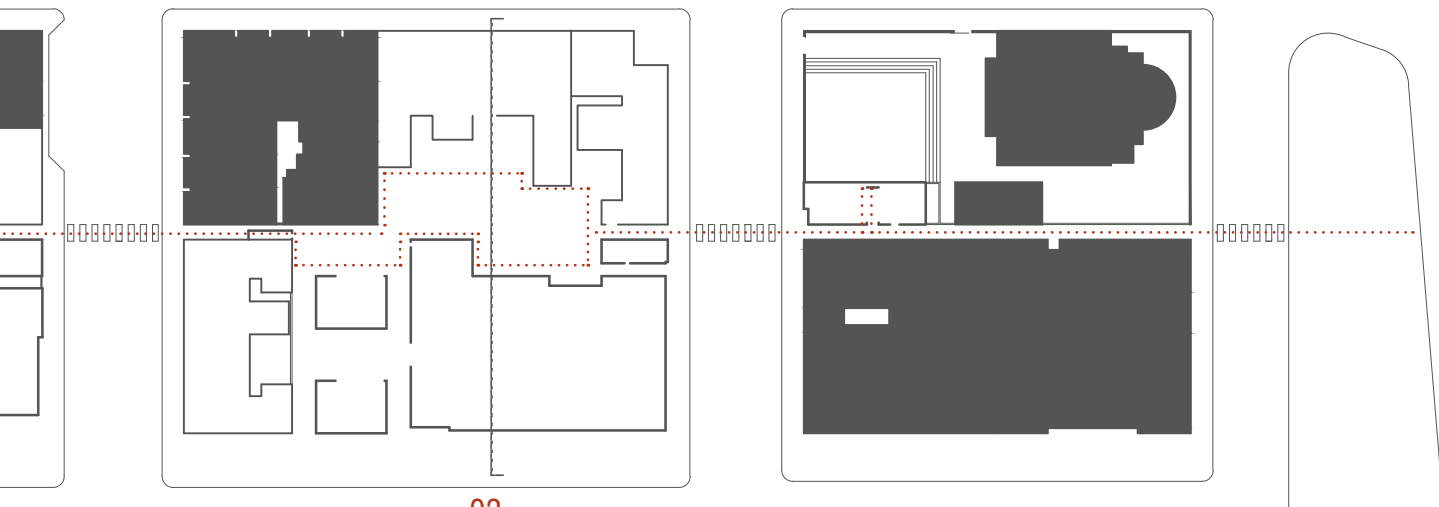


05

The full extent of the alleyway, through time, is hoped to echo the design decisions made, and begin to filter into other spaces facing the forgotten passageway, breaking down walls, to create and enable an activated, safe connector between parts of the community, their functions and public space.

The massive potential boasted by the strip of city blocks through which the alleyway carves, supports and promotes the longevity of a holistic and integrated solution for the homeless condition. The zoning for much of the Hillbrow area, as a result of early city planning, is residential. The potential for a full process of rehabilitation simply begins with the scheme I have proposed – the remainder of the journey needs to be, and can be, advocated through working with and nurturing the community within which it stands. The prevalence and density of housing which Hillbrow asserts, sets the stage for full integration from overnight, temporary accommodation into the beginnings of slow integration into an affordable housing programme. The potential for further reintegration of women into a community which they will already have become a part of, through the simple placement into the next level of housing will permanently reconnect women with community and ultimately reconnect the city, simply through the creation of choice.





02

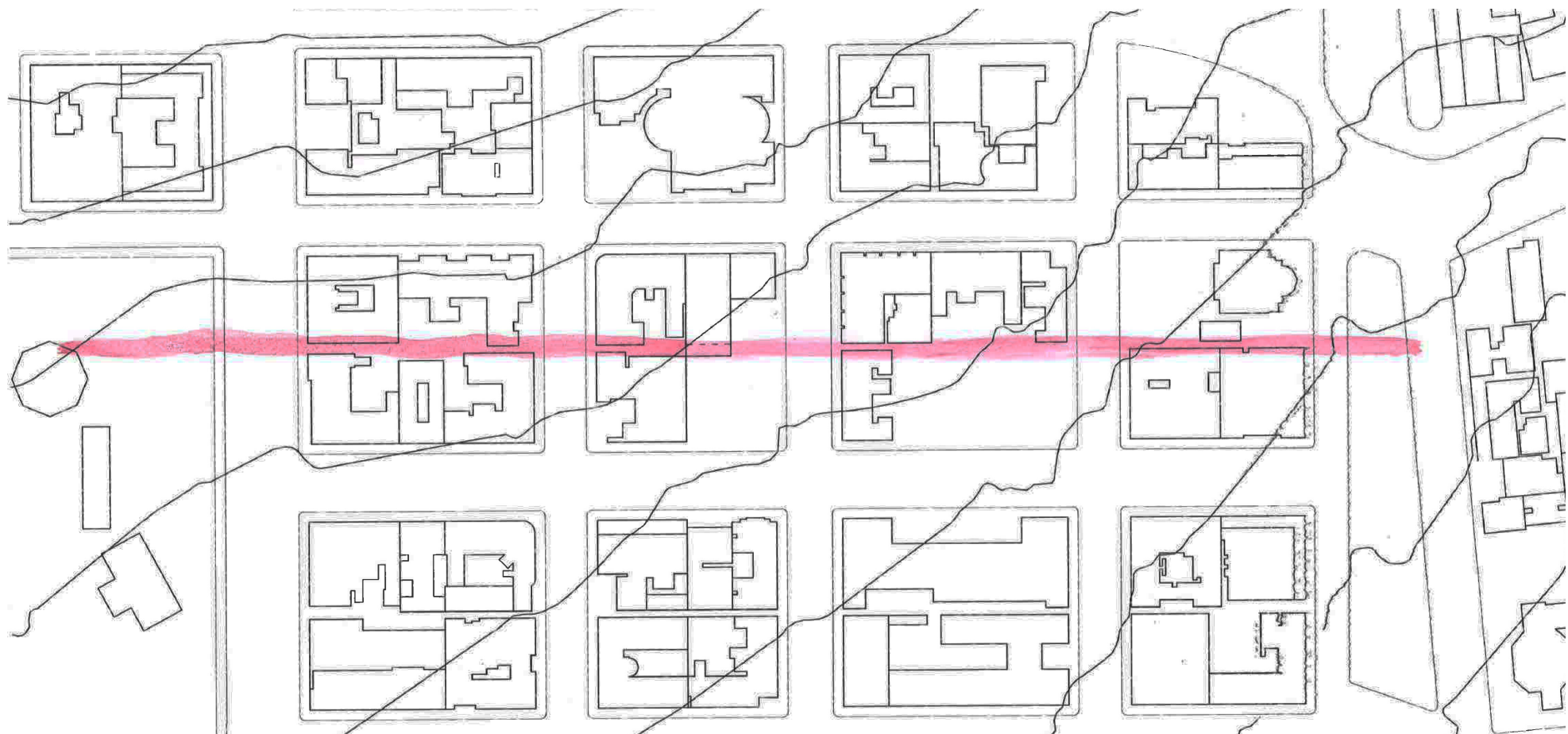


02



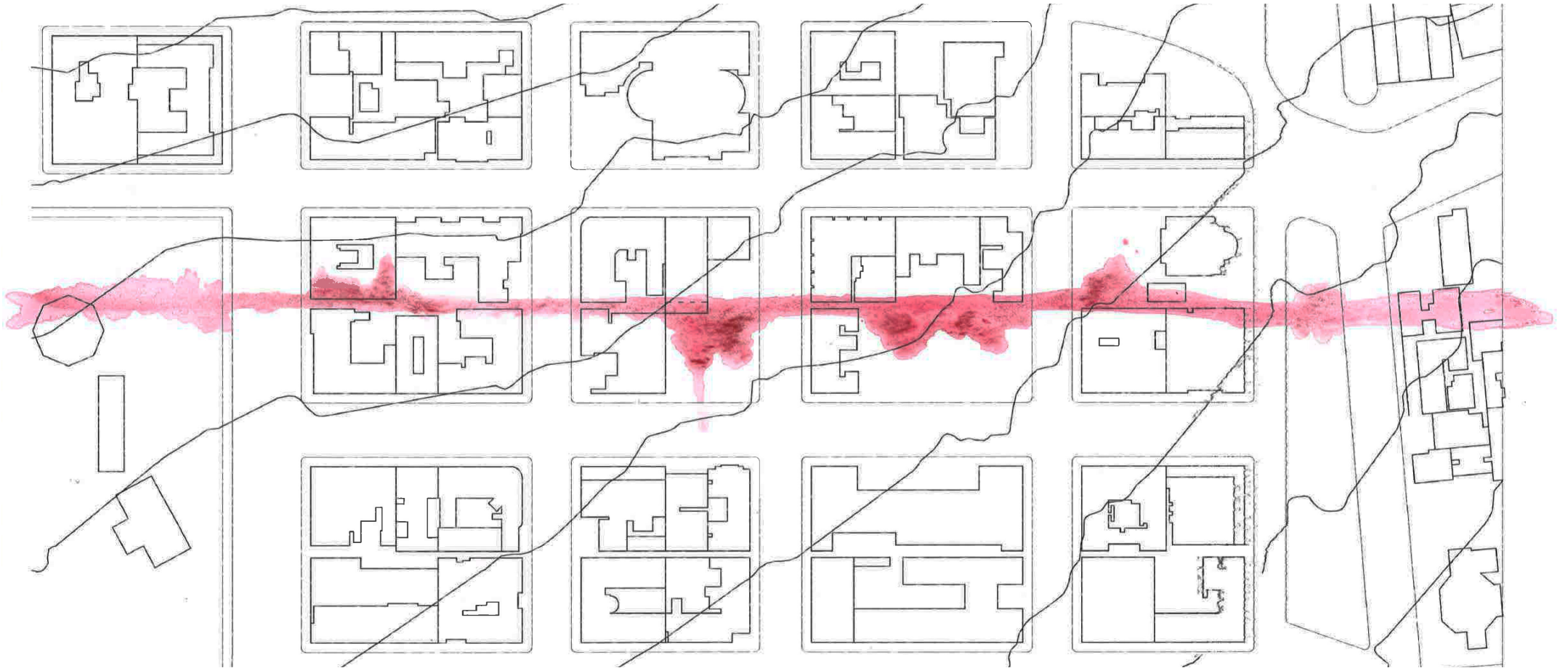
05

*vacant, empty lane
narrow neglected tight
need to get out*



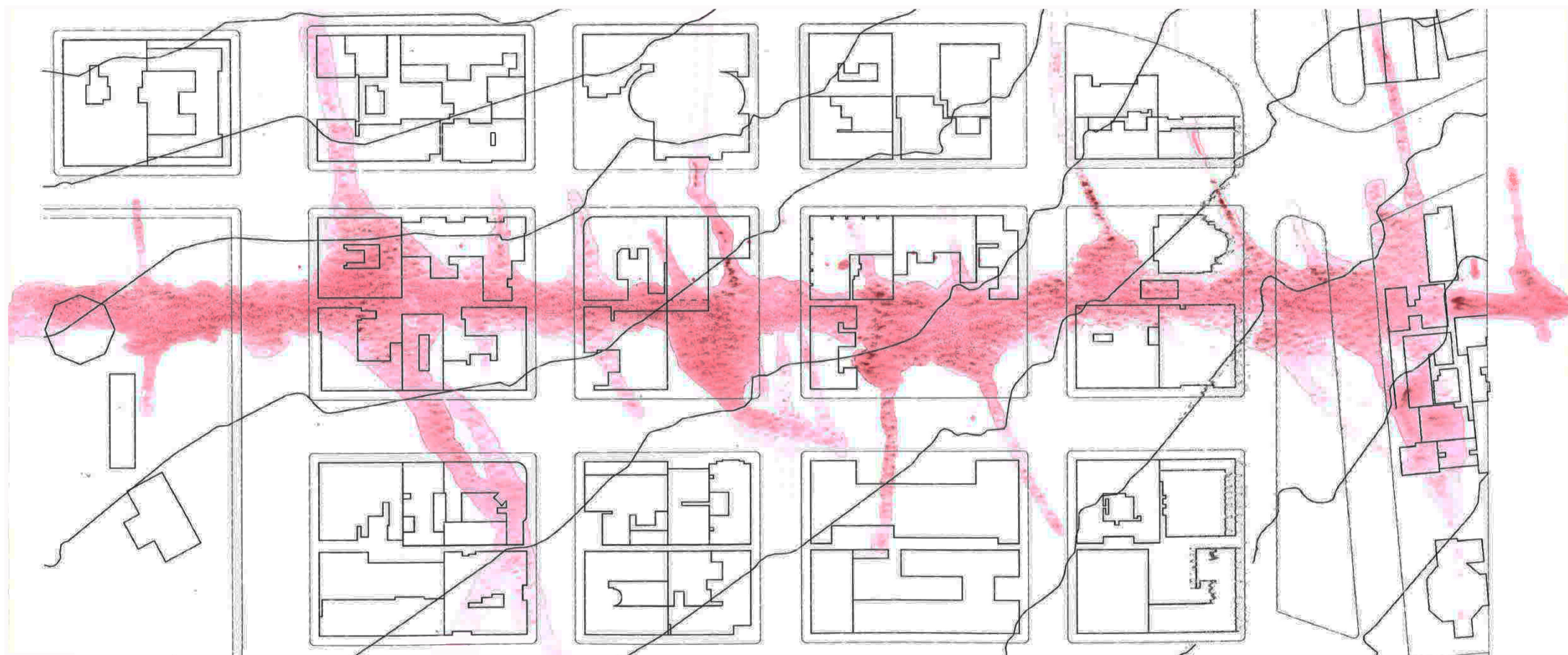
05

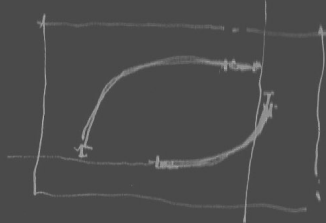
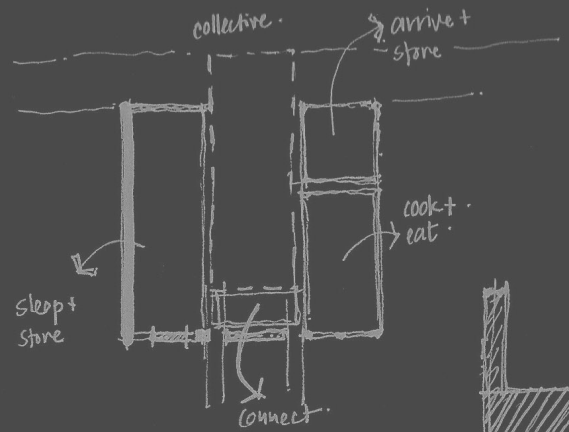
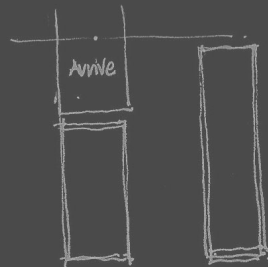
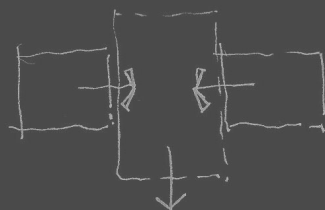
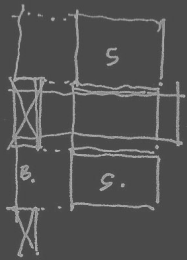
*illuminated
movement, play and conversation
new safe space*



05

*through change and
choice the 'other' city
is reconnected*



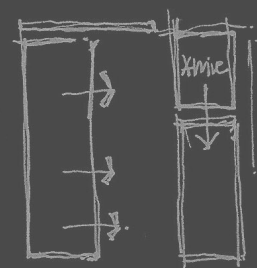


• connection
blown light
water.

$$\begin{array}{r} 32 \\ -15 \\ \hline 17 \end{array}$$

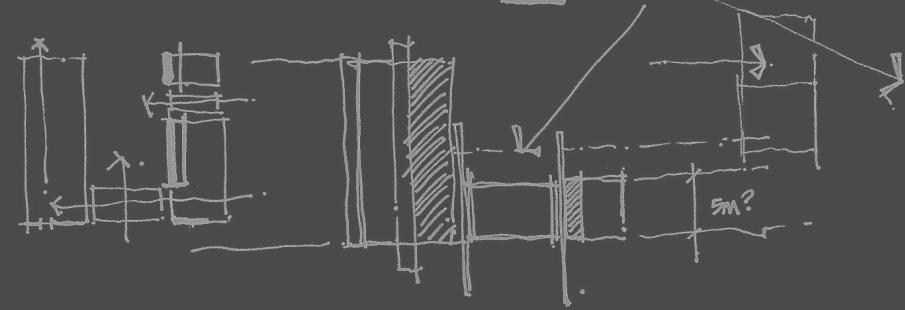
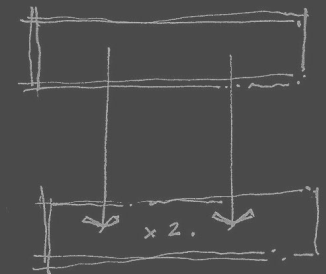
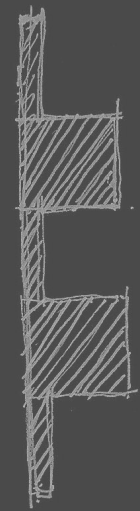
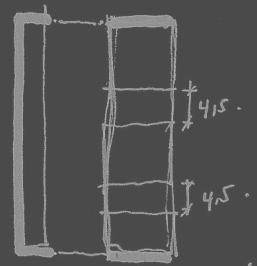
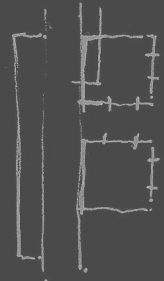
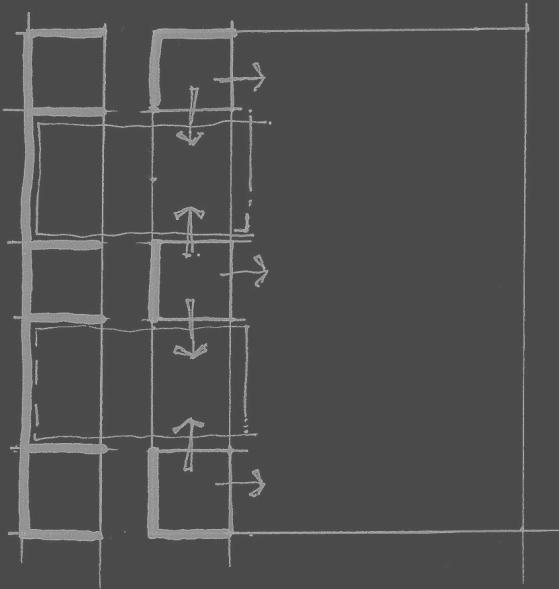
$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ \times 3 \\ \hline 48 \end{array}$$

collective
domain as
connector.



expresses 'publicness'
of programme.

± 25m²
room of 5.



5m?

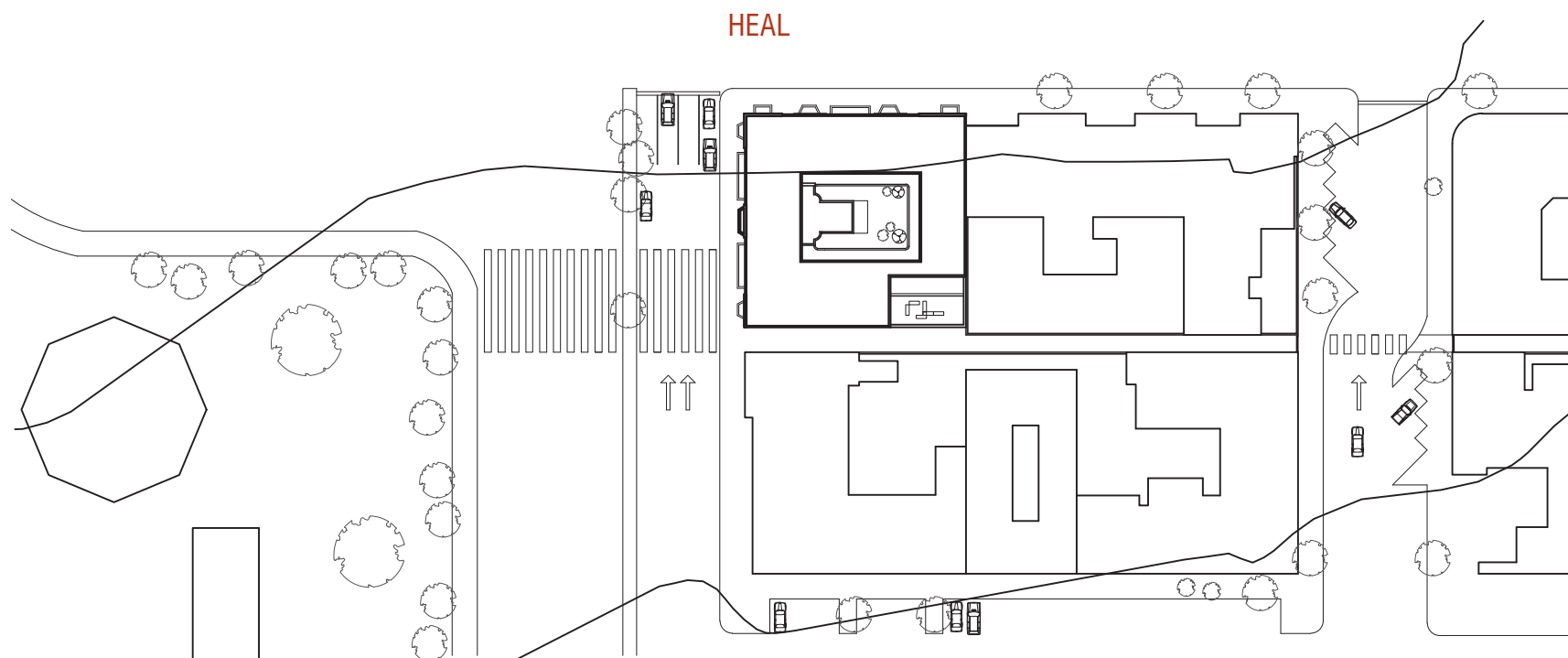
11m.

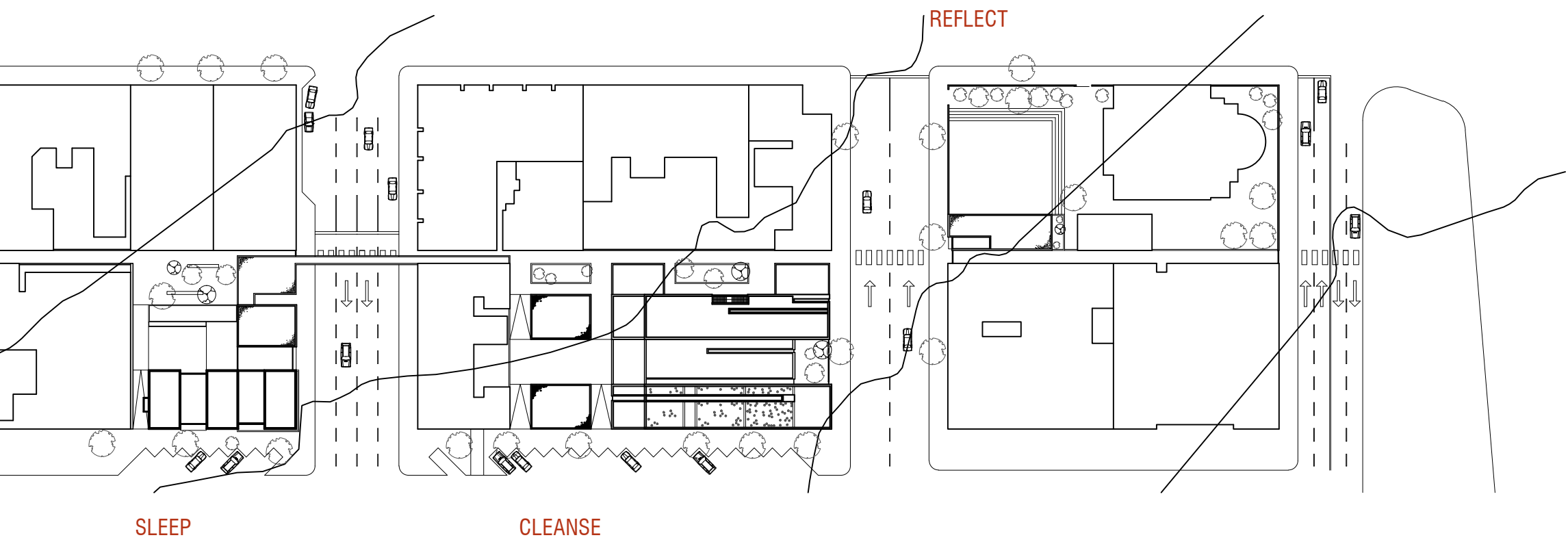
06

DESIGN

Design drawings express in detail the individual yet connected interventions proposed for 'Invert City'.

06





06

00 HEAL

- Retail - Skills link
- Documentation
- Clinic
- Skills Development

- Linked to learnt skills
- 7 Offices
- 4 Consult rooms + Pharmacy
- Baking / sewing / computers

01 SLEEP

- Sleep
- Eat
- Store

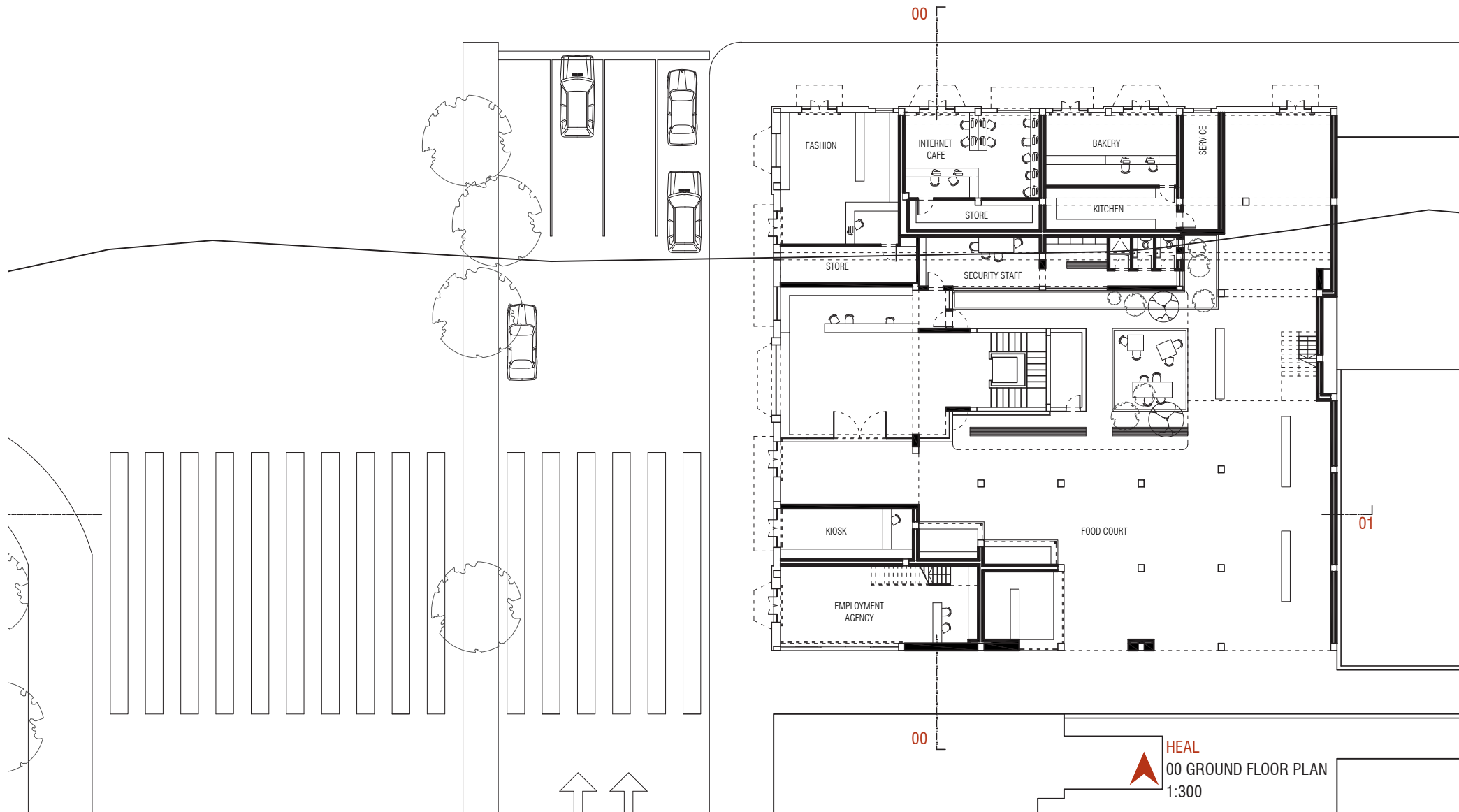
- 66 beds

02 CLEANSE

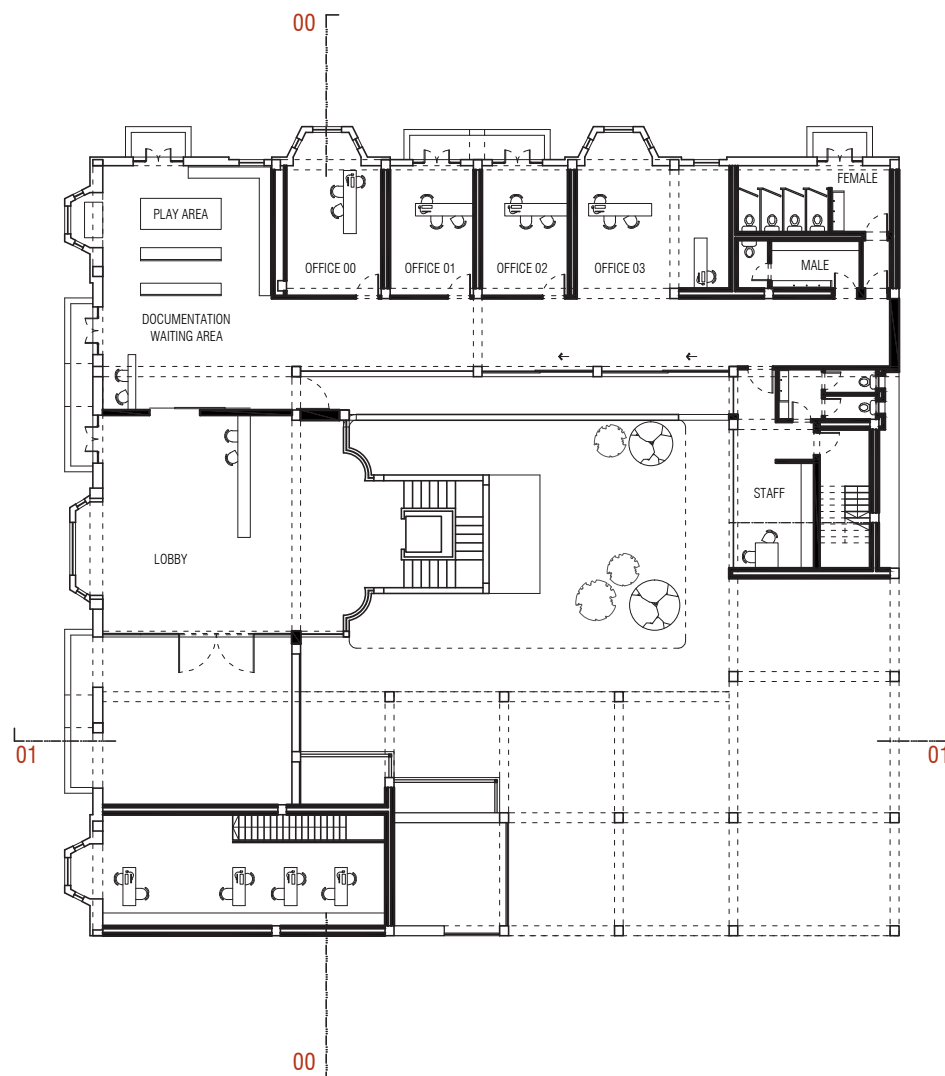
- Bathe
- Laundry
- Drying

03 REFLECT

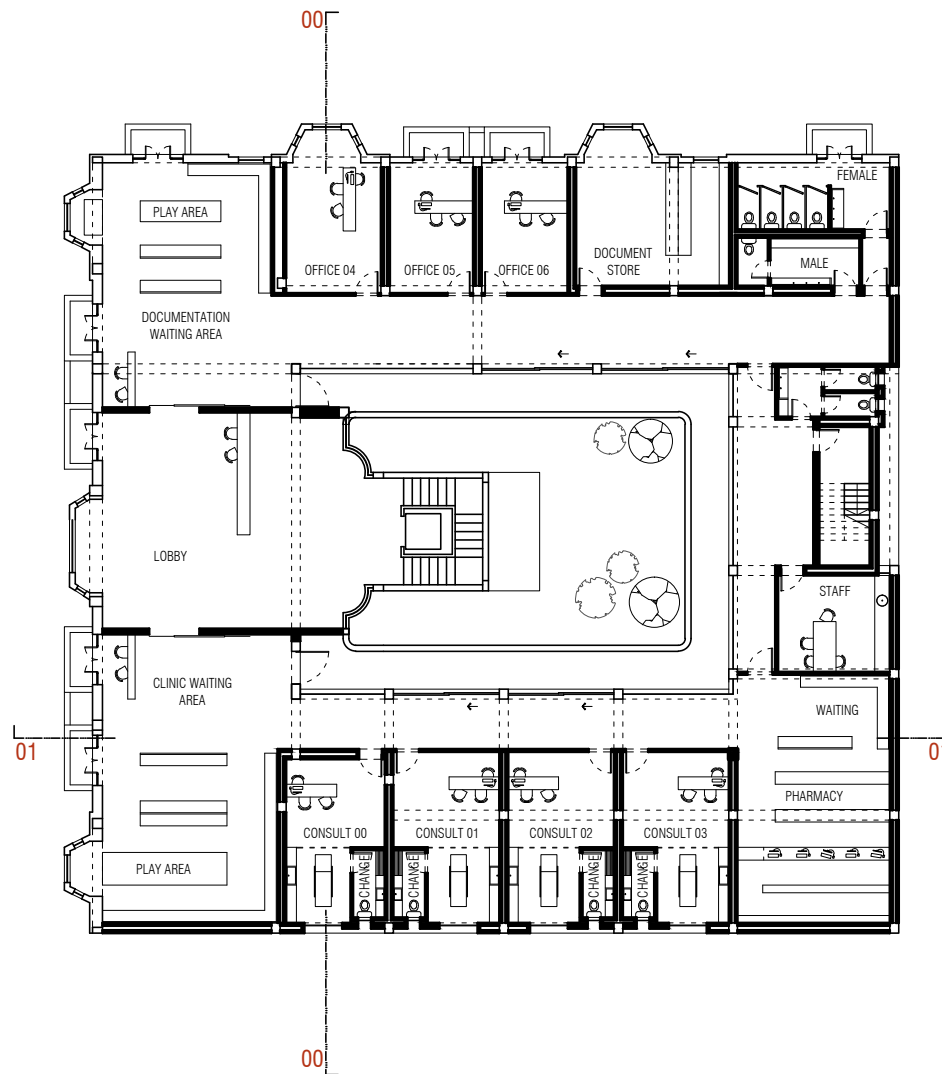
- Meditation
- Therapy



06

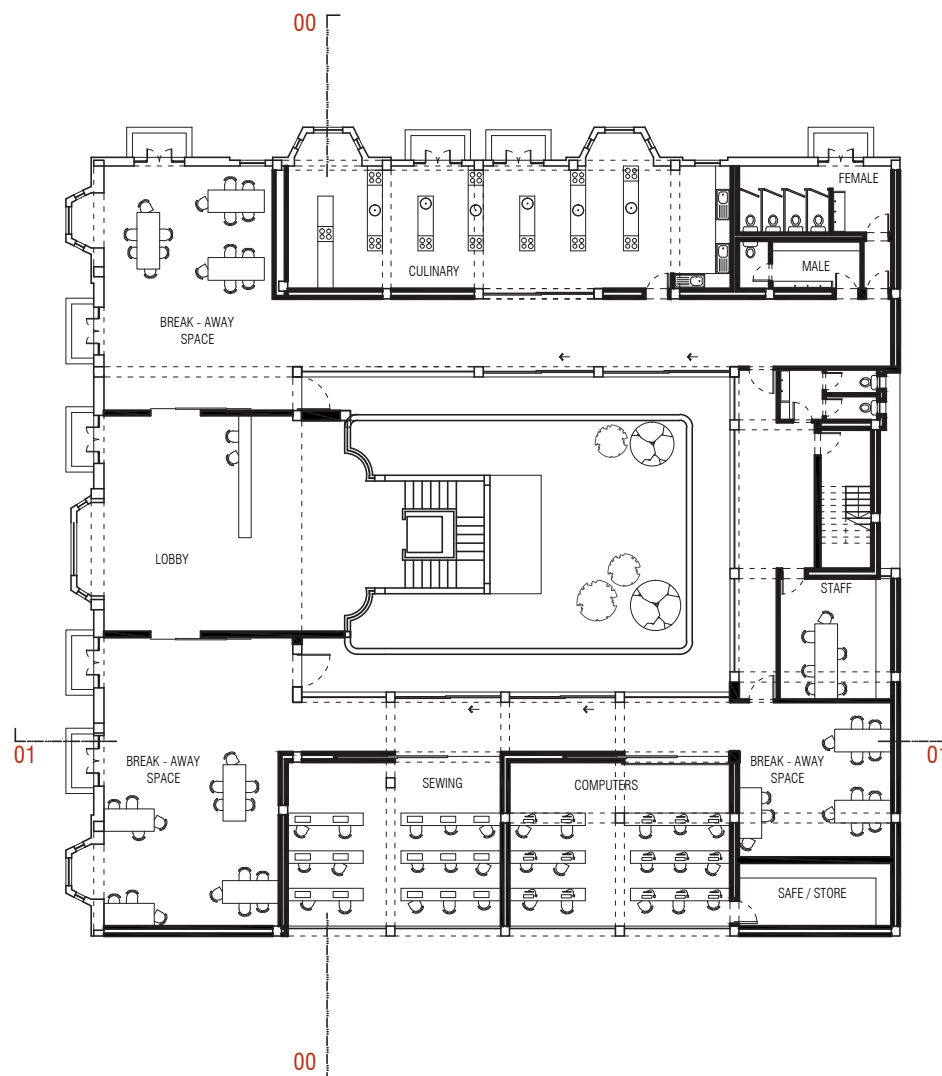


HEAL
01 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1:300

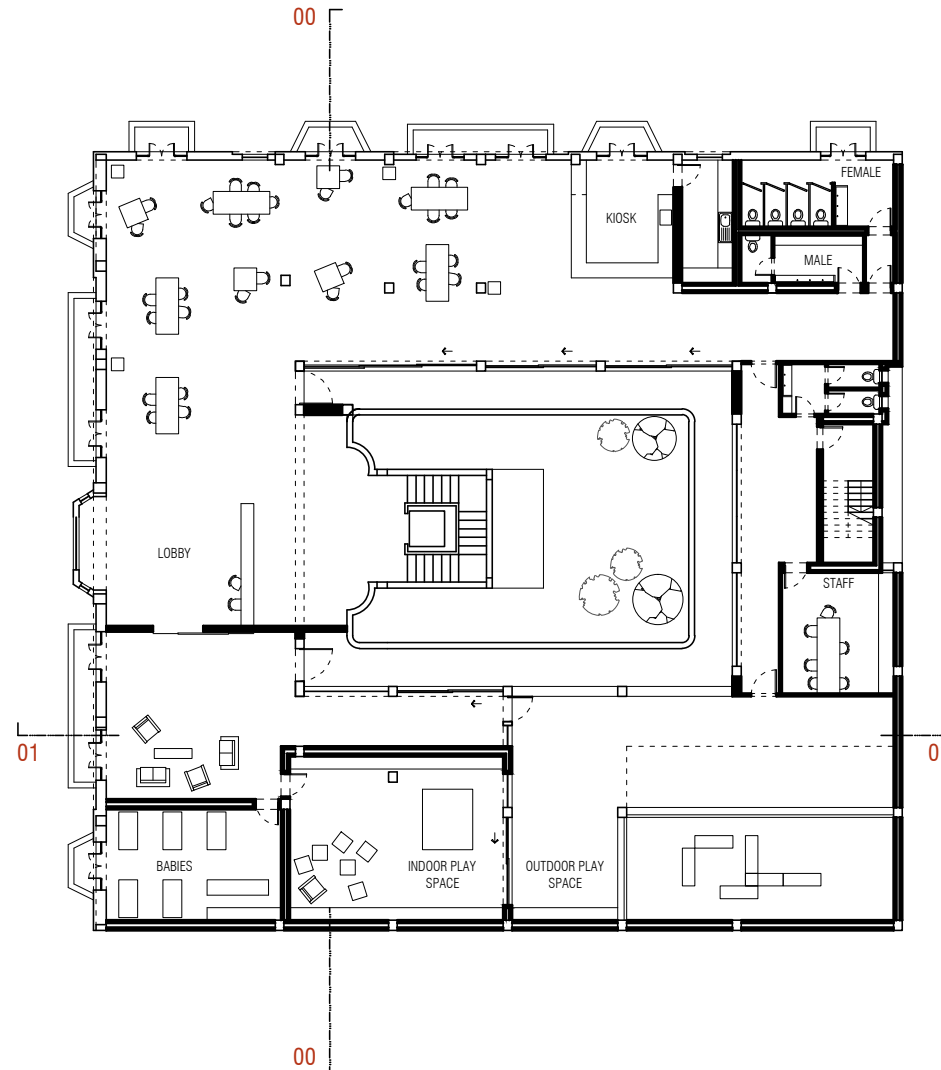


HEAL
 02 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
 1:300

06



HEAL
03 THIRD FLOOR PLAN
1:300

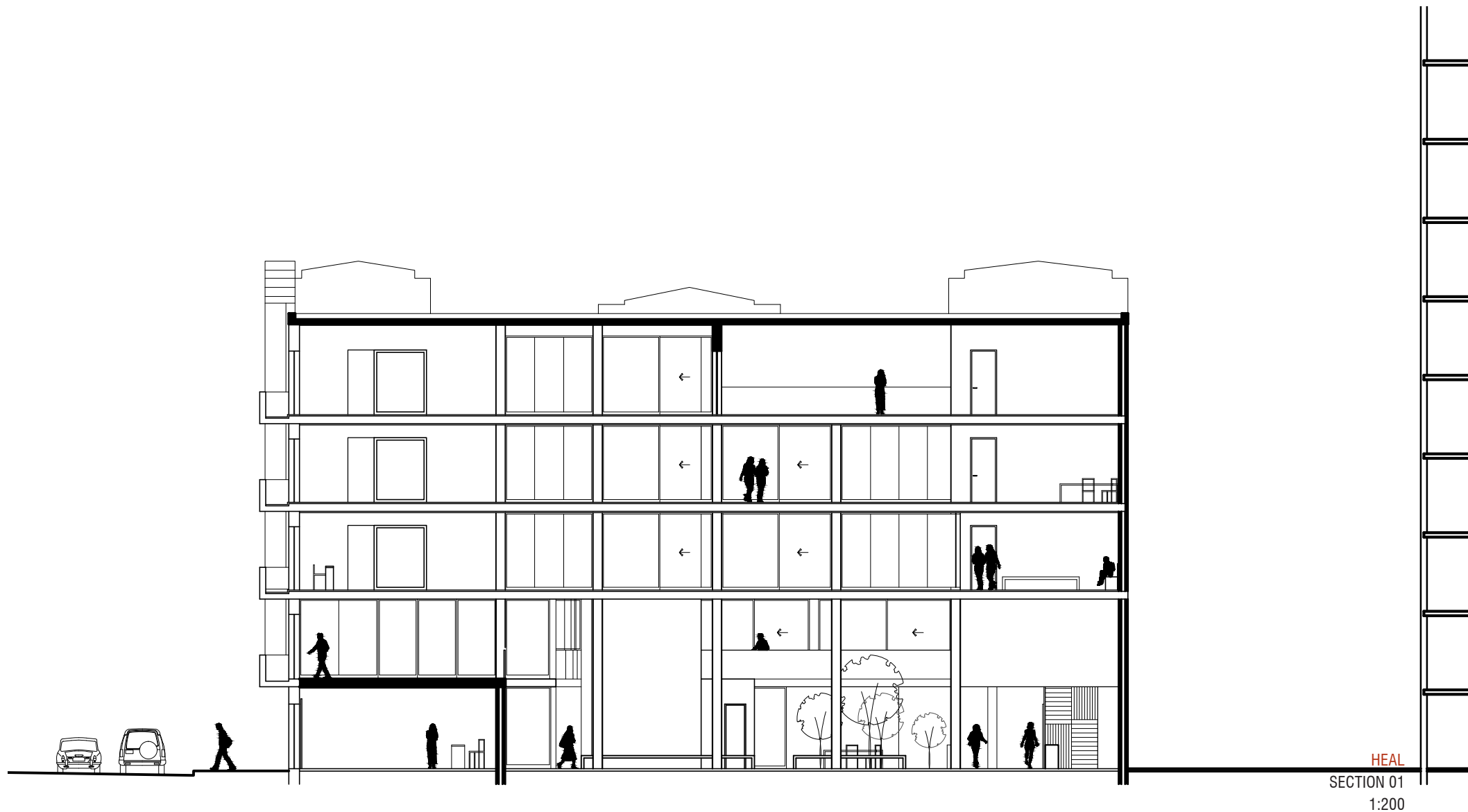


HEAL
04 FOURTH FLOOR PLAN
1:300

06

HEAL
SECTION 00
1:200





06

HEAL
NORTH ELEVATION
1:200

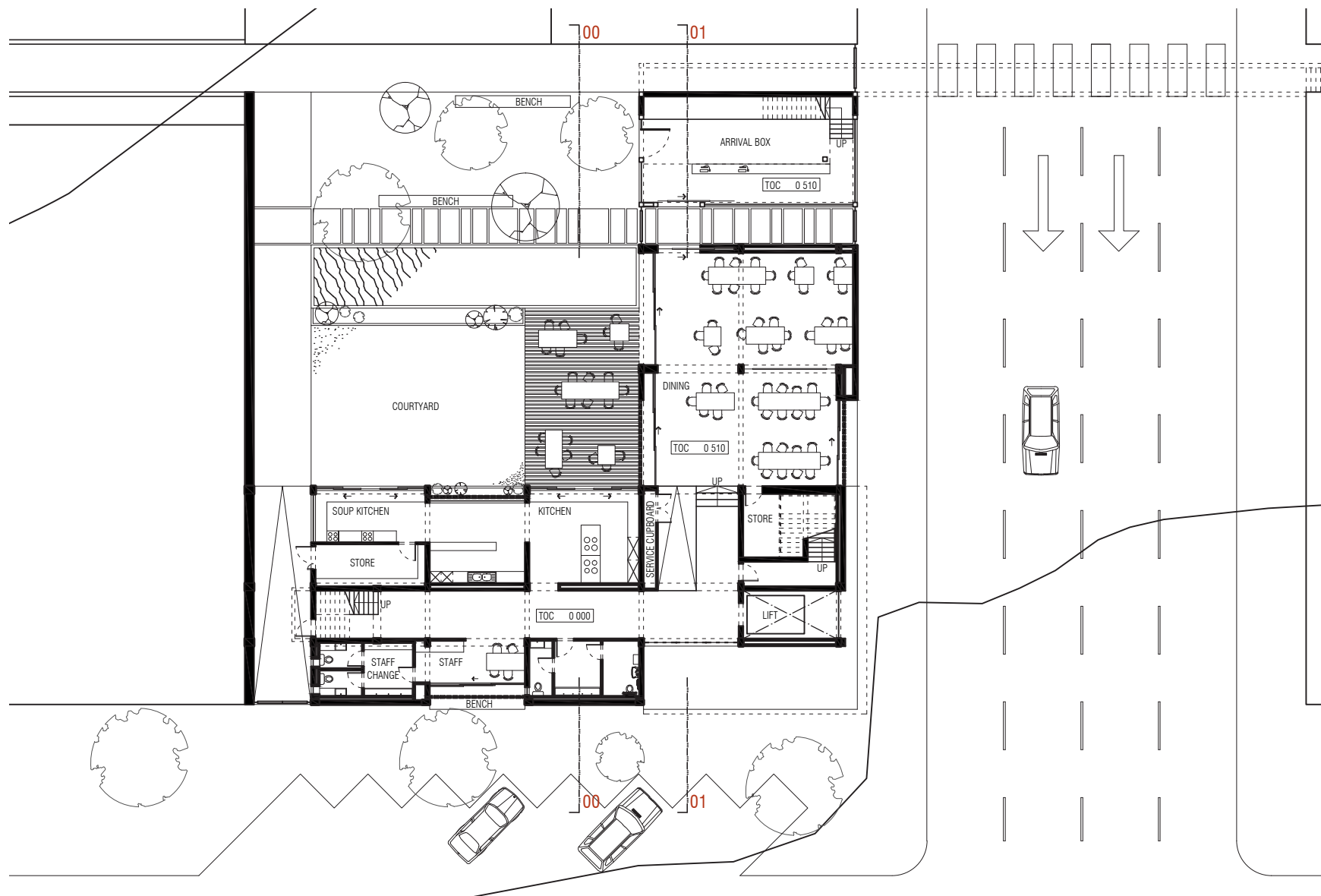


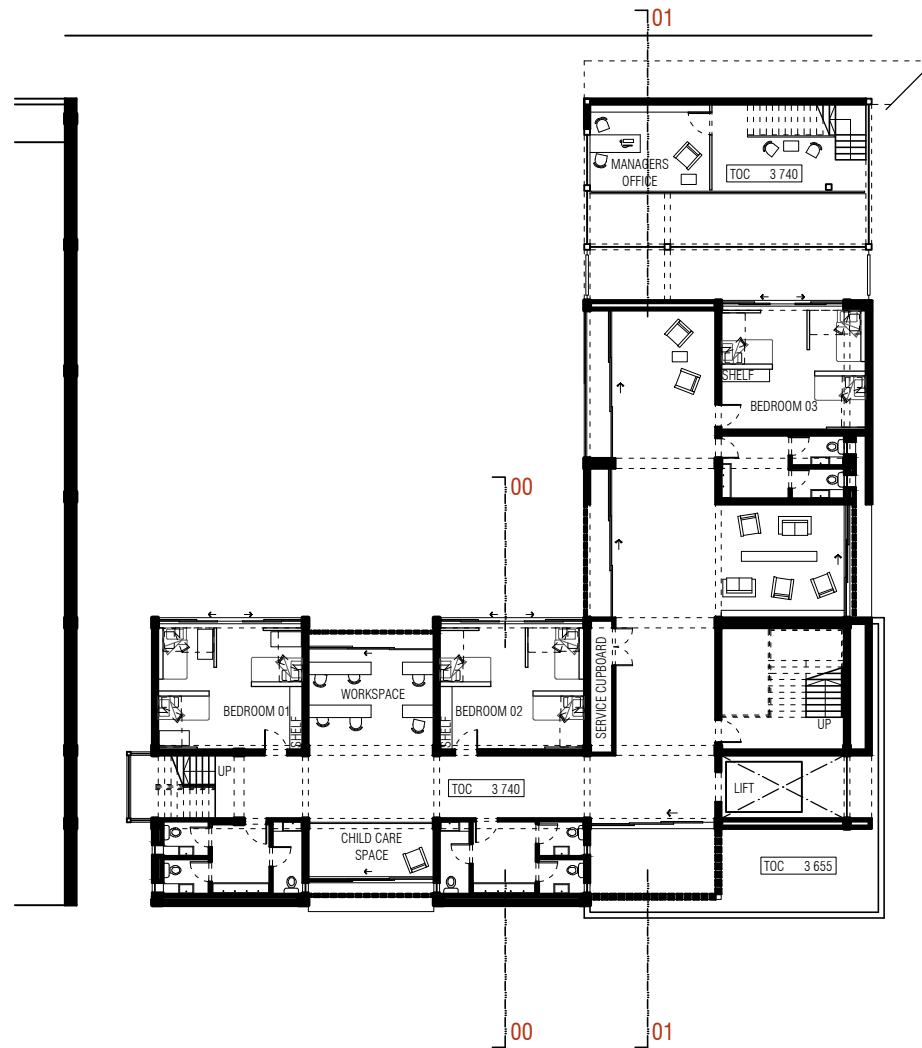


HEAL
WEST ELEVATION
1:200

06

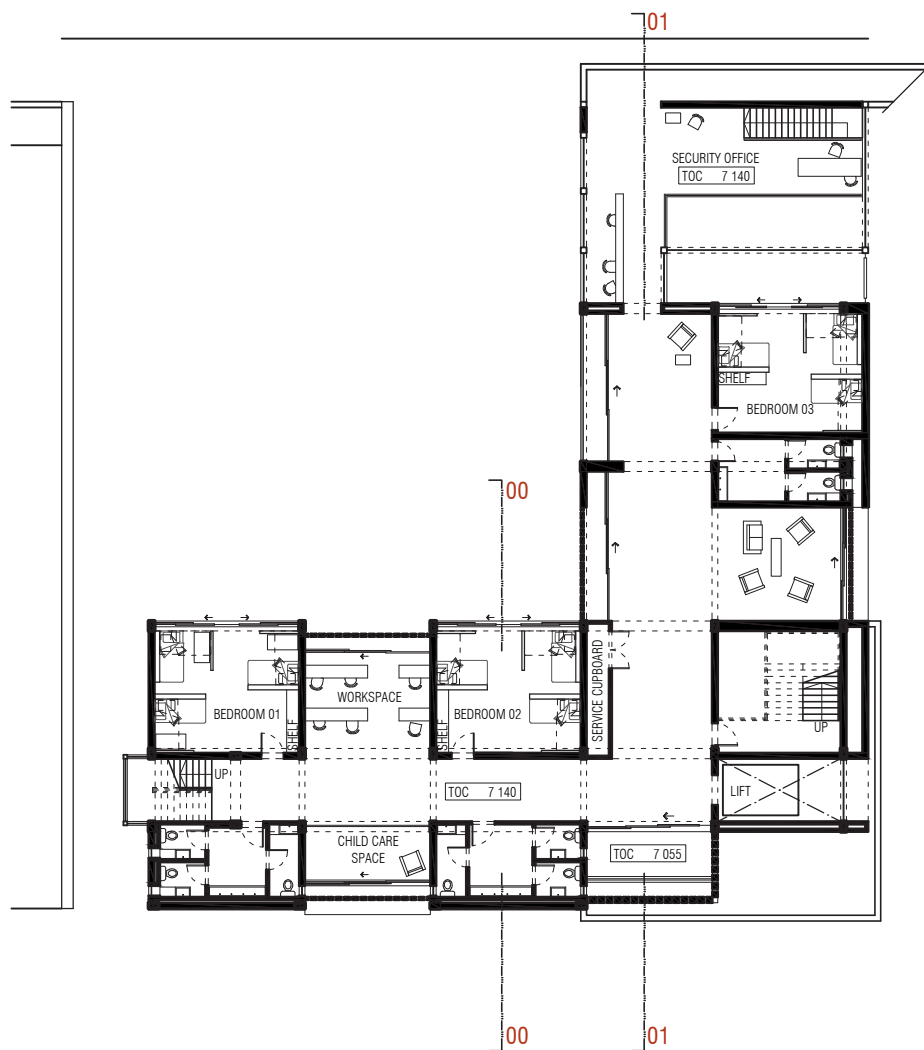
SLEEP
00 GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1:300



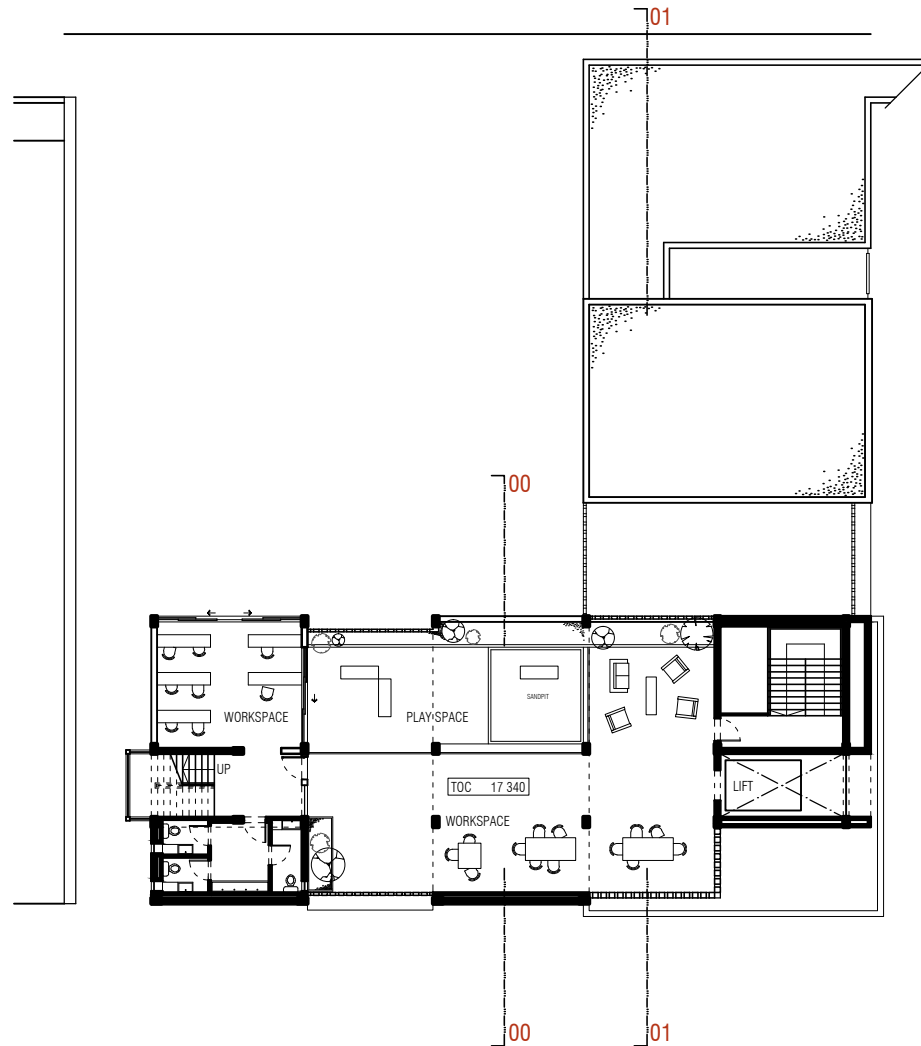


SLEEP
01 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 1:300

06



SLEEP
02 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1:300

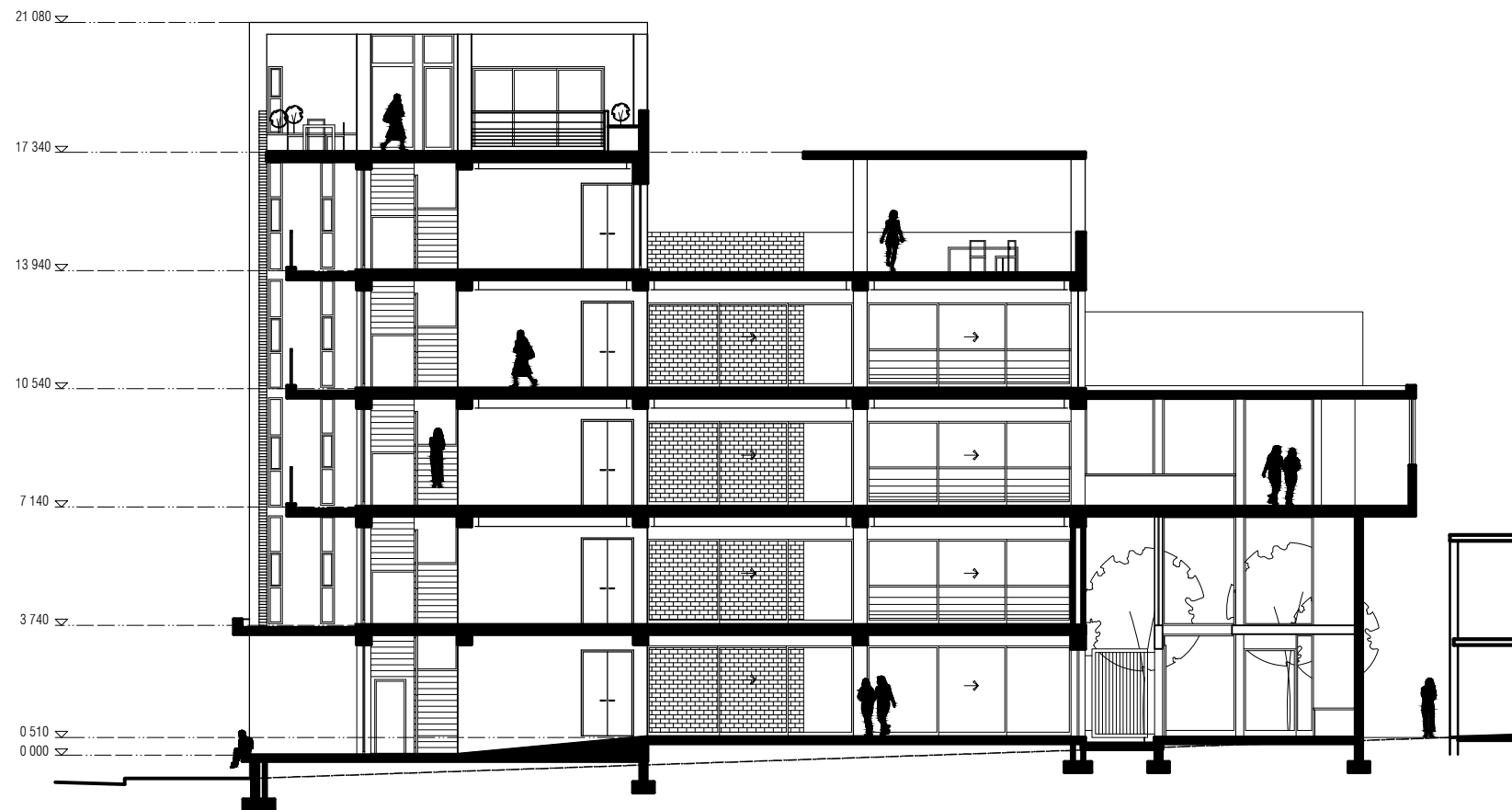


SLEEP
 05 FIFTH FLOOR PLAN
 1:300

06

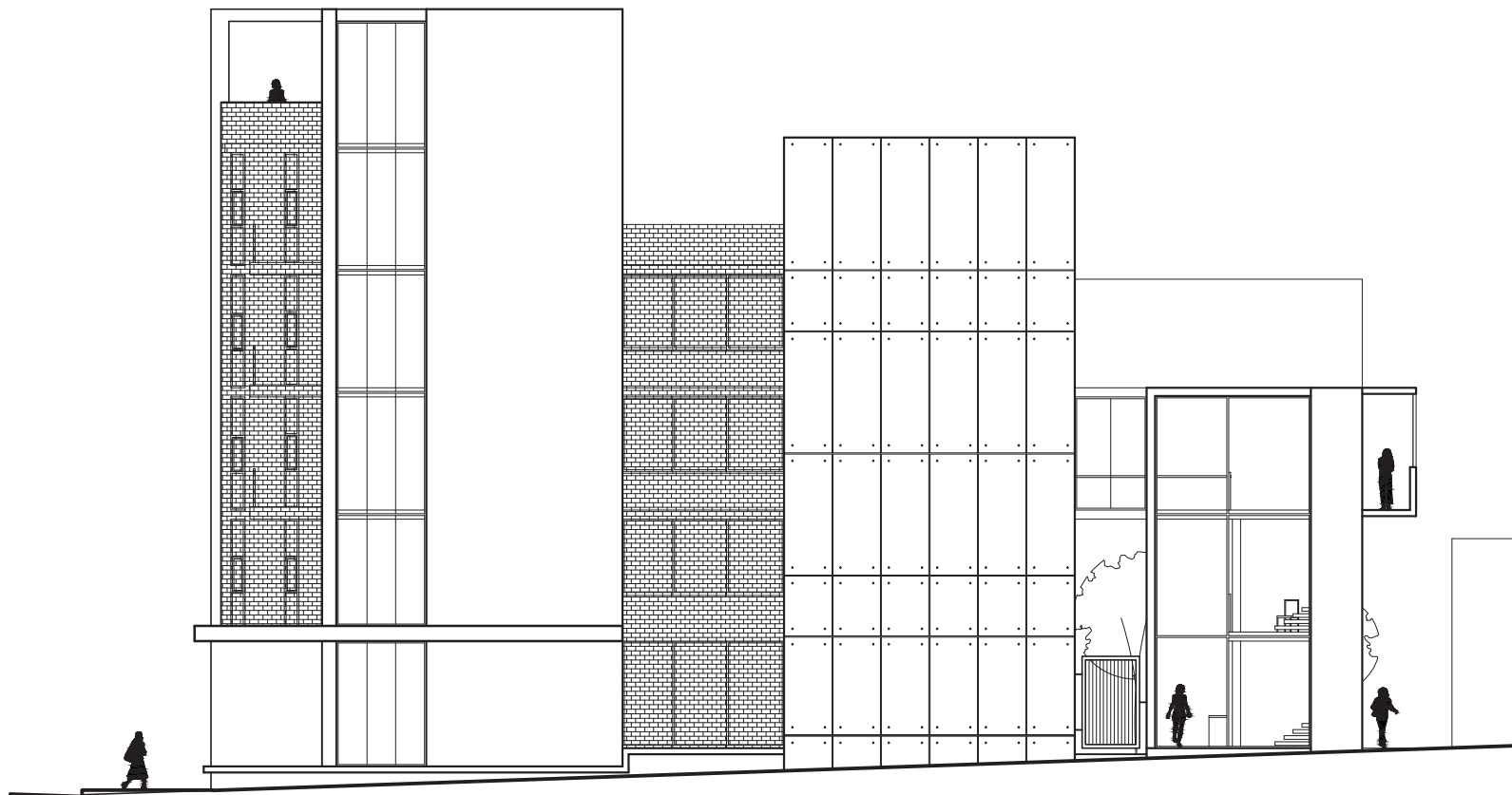


SLEEP
SECTION 00
1:200

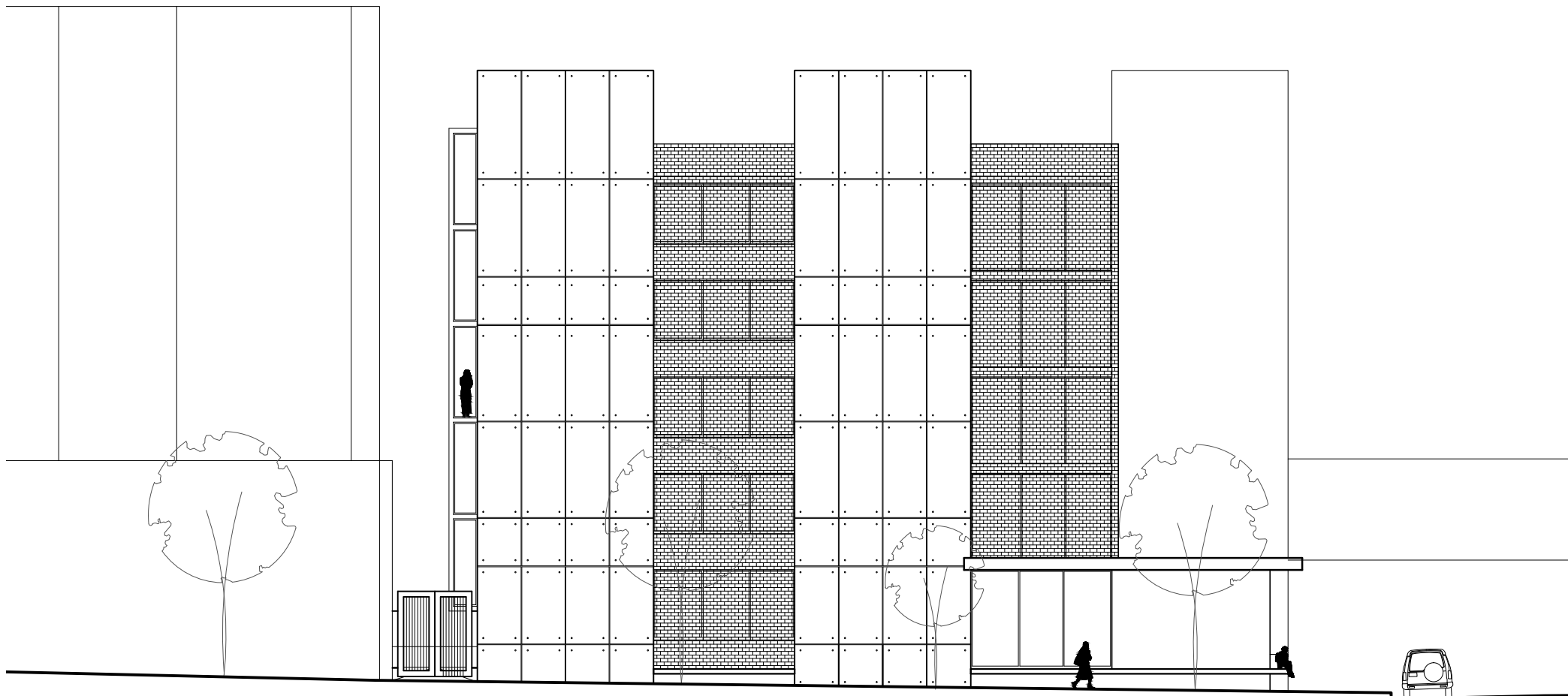


SLEEP
SECTION 01
1:200

06



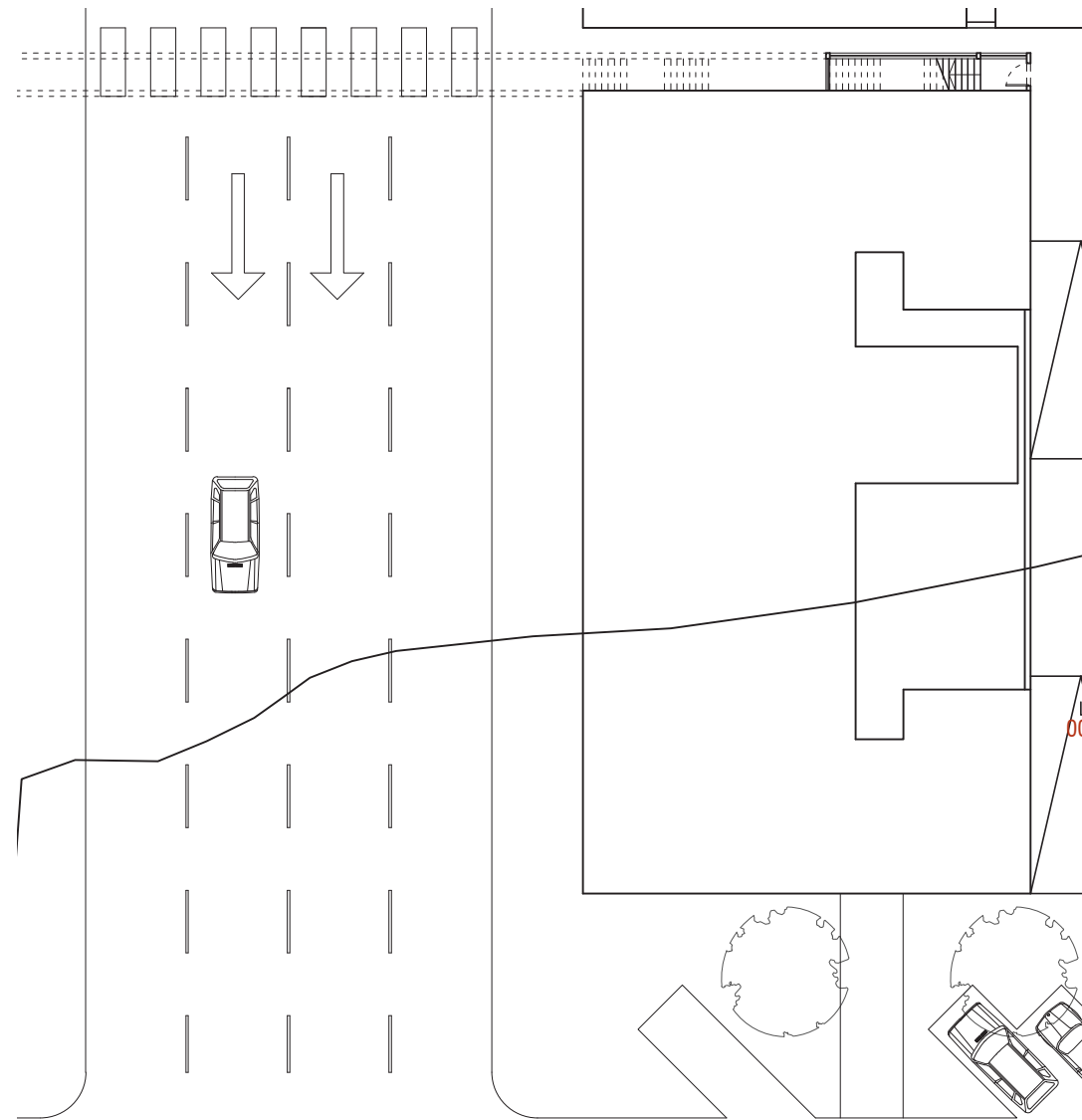
SLEEP
EAST ELEVATION
1:200

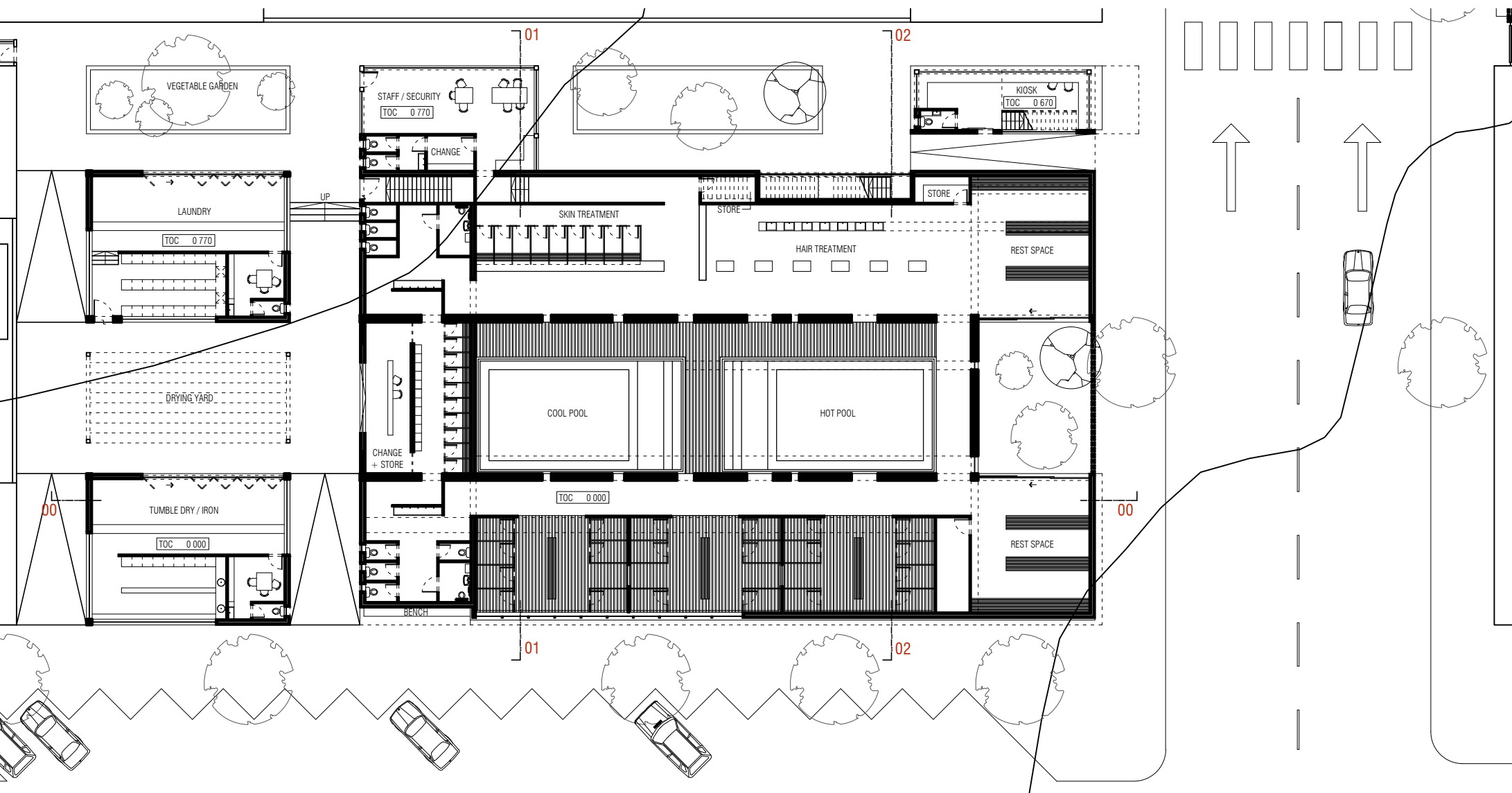


SLEEP
SOUTH ELEVATION
1:200

06

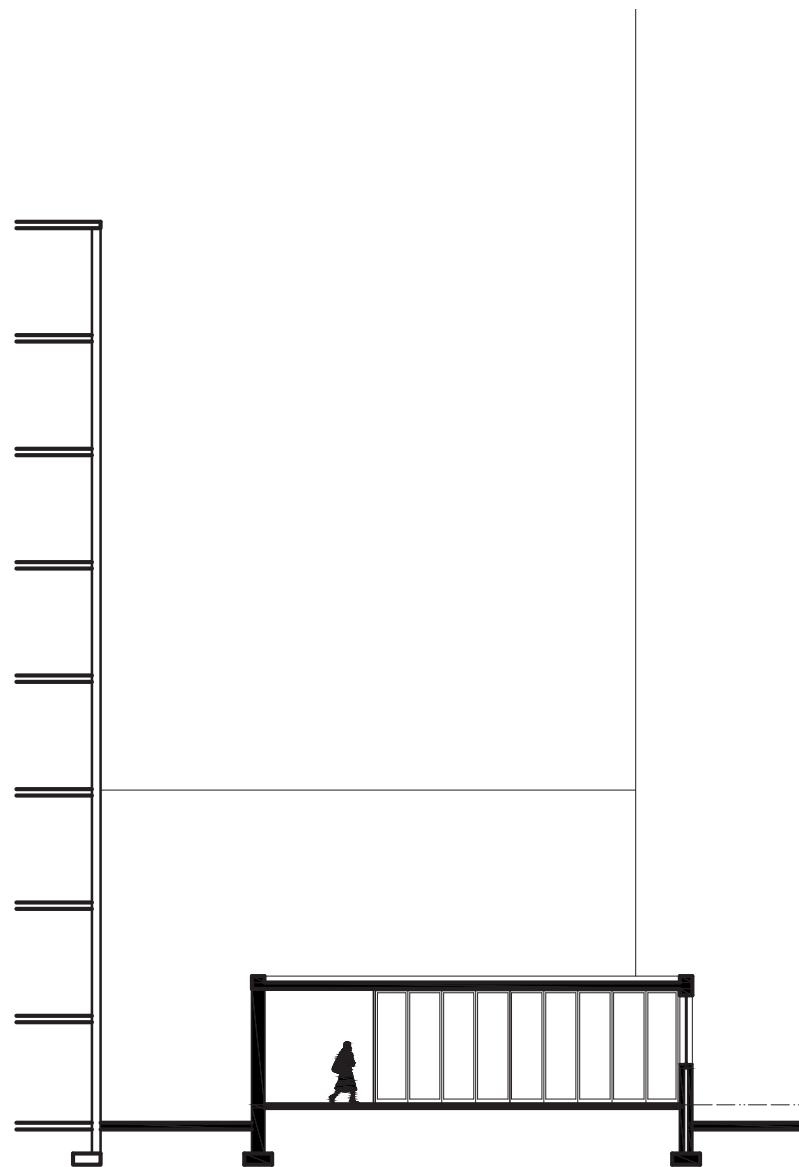
 CLEANSE
00 GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1:300

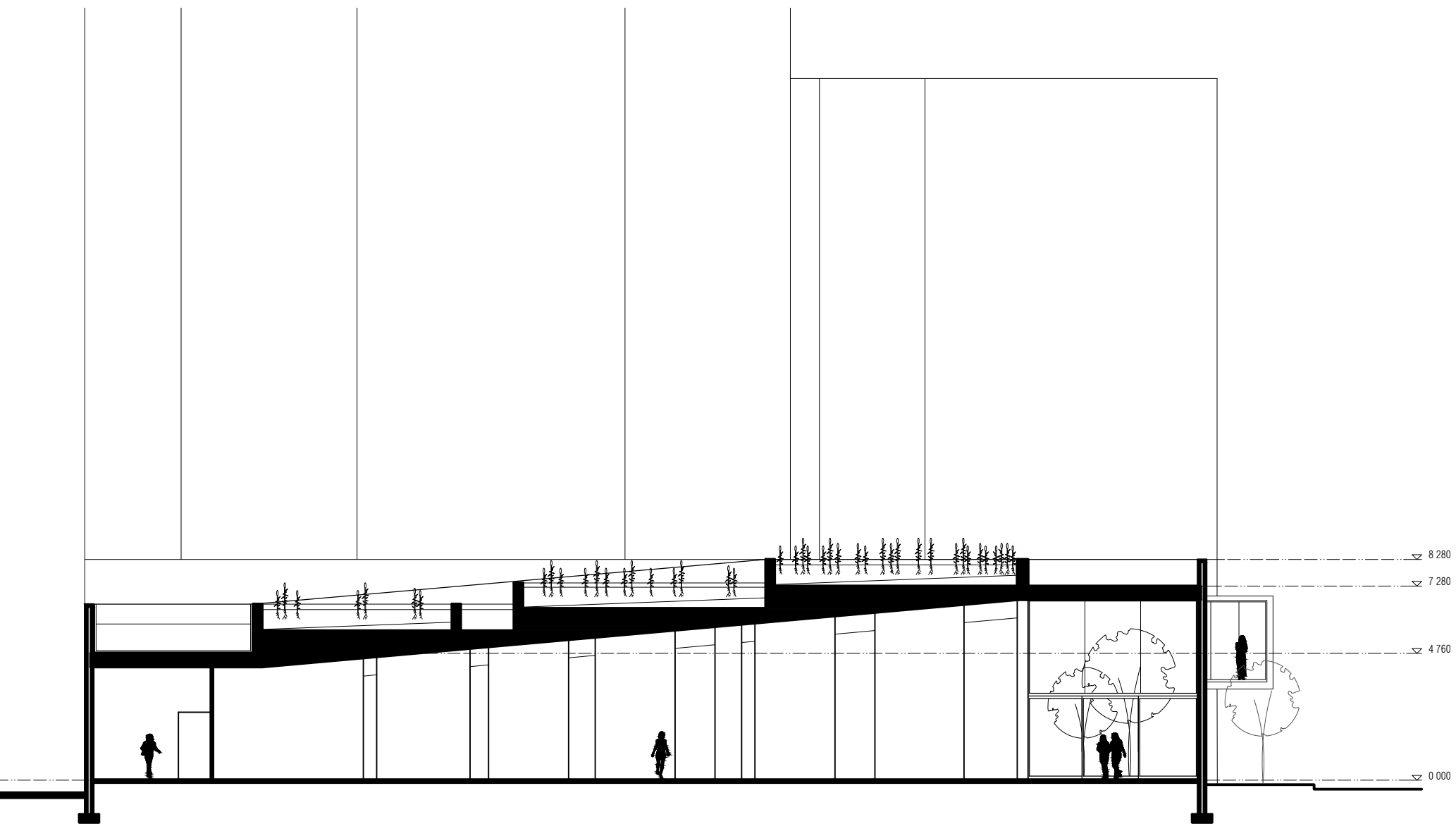




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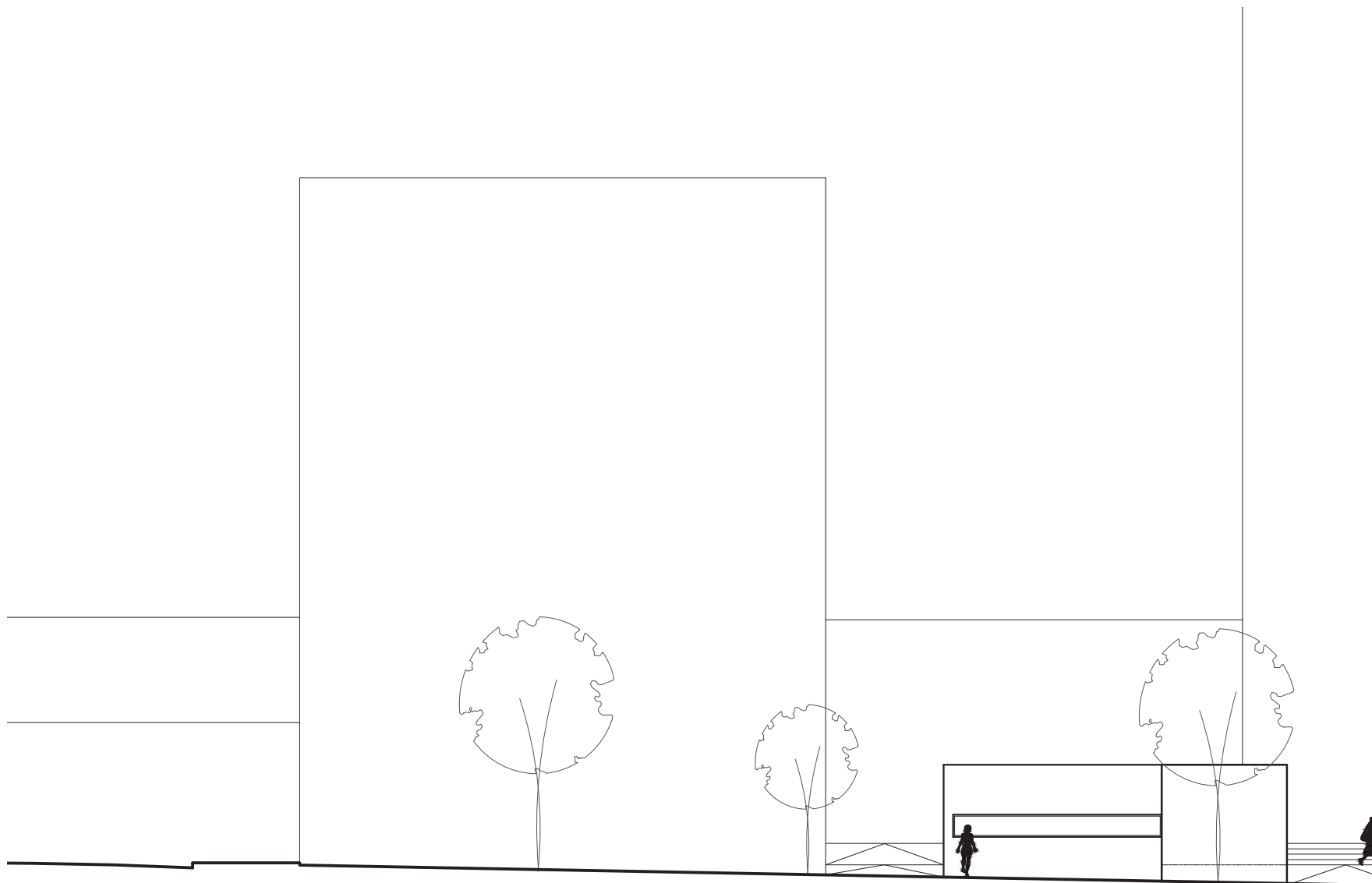
CLEANSE
SECTION 00
1:200



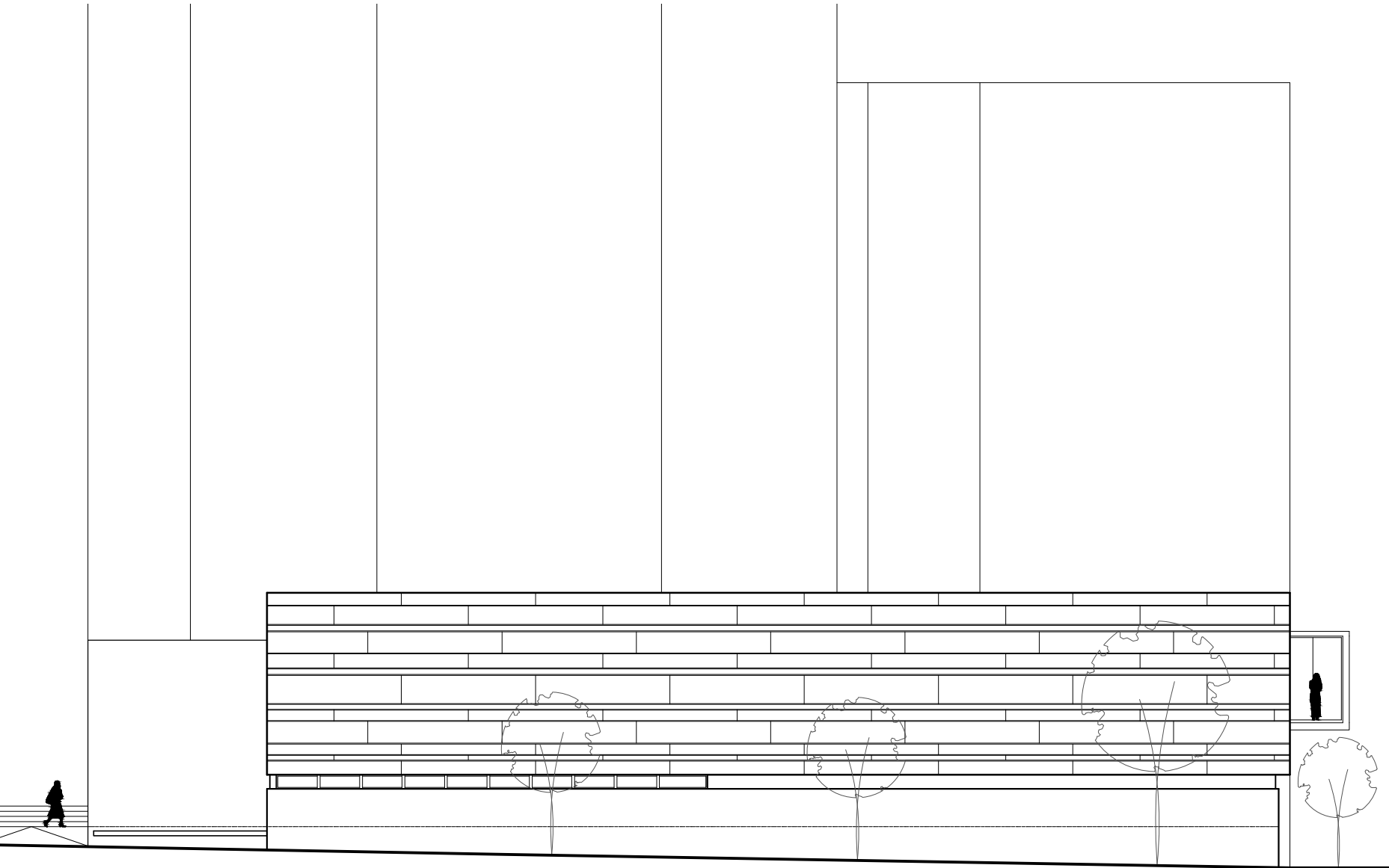


06

CLEANSE
SOUTH ELEVATION
1:200

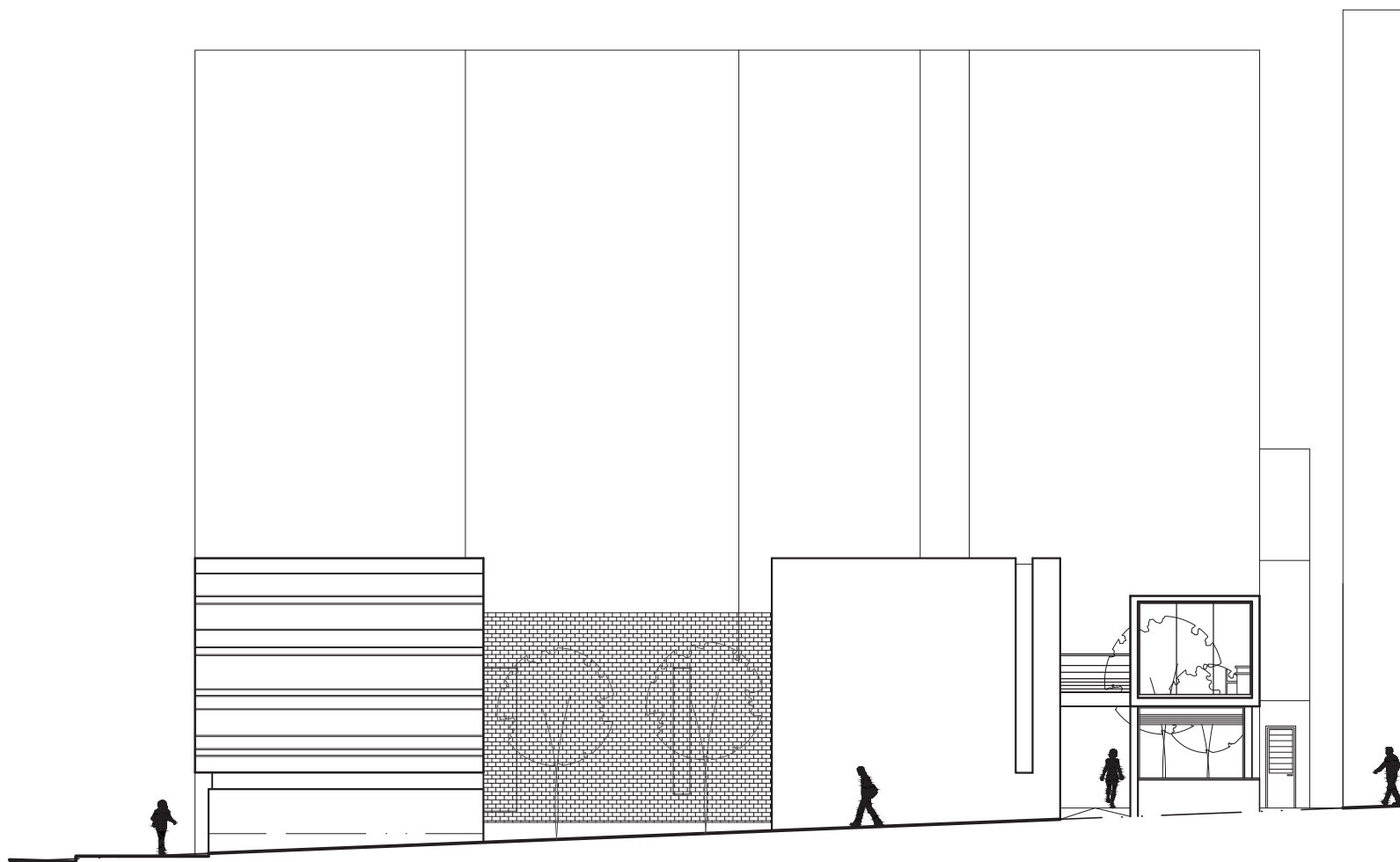


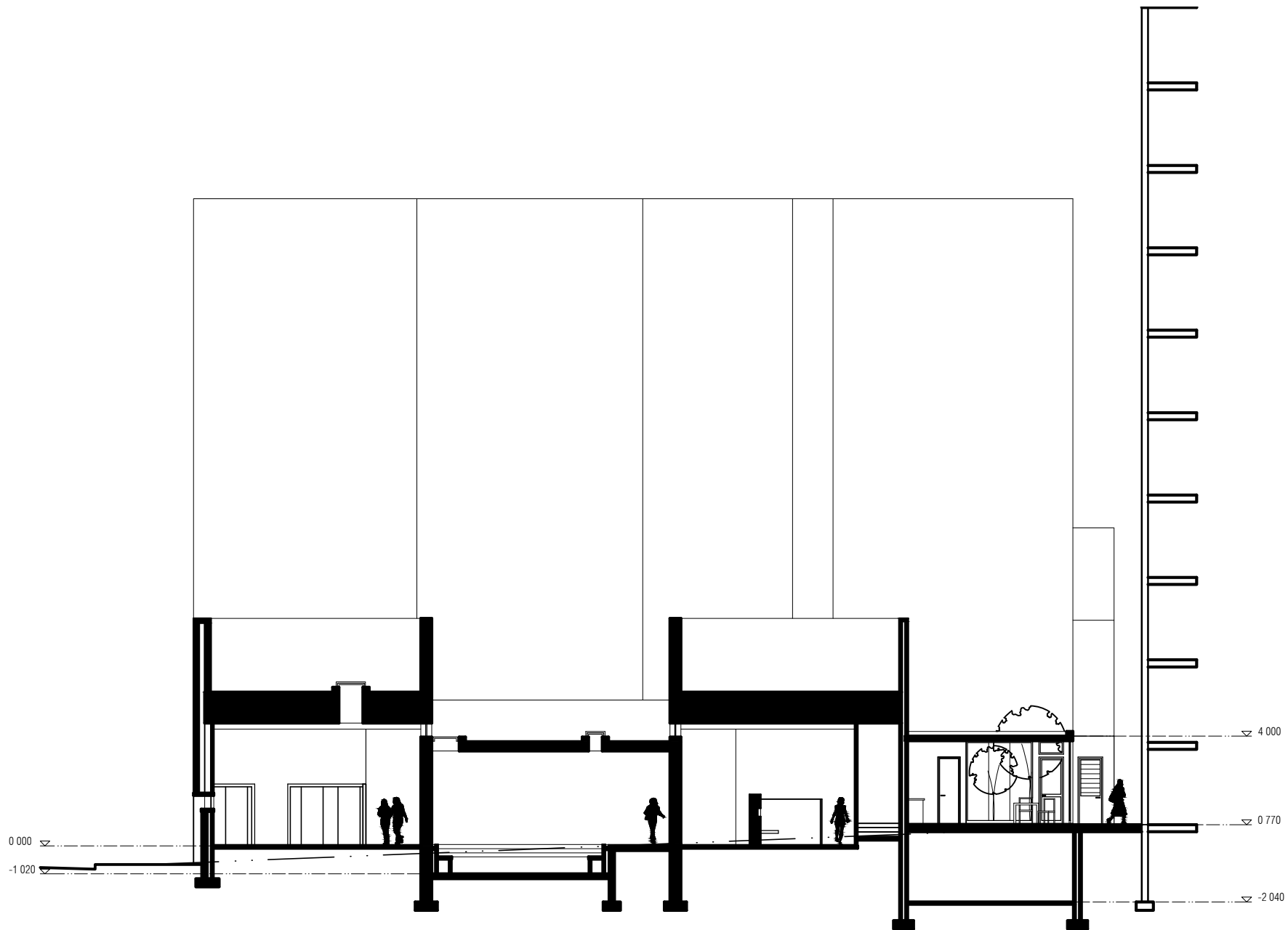
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06

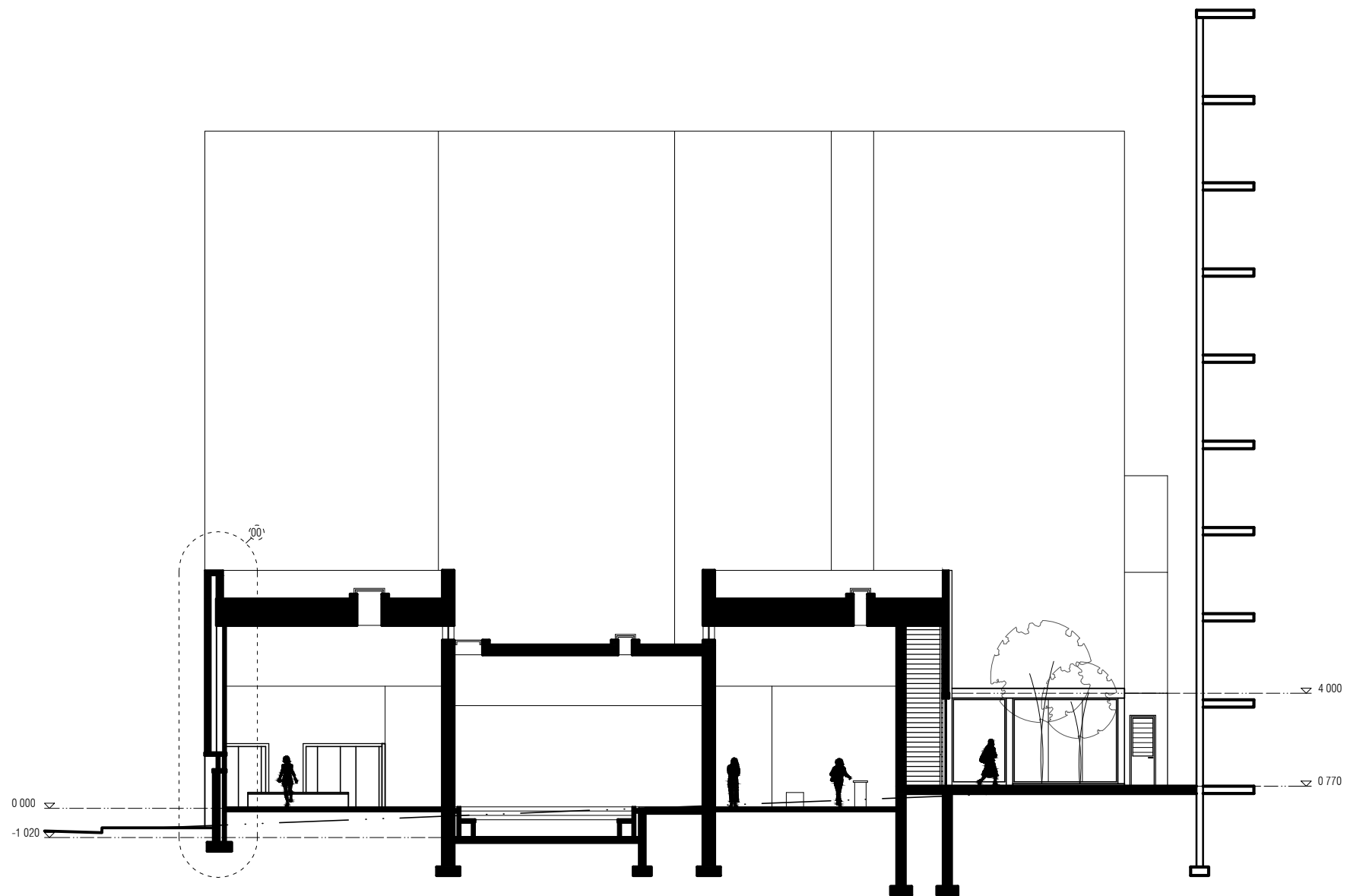
CLEANSE
EAST ELEVATION
1:200





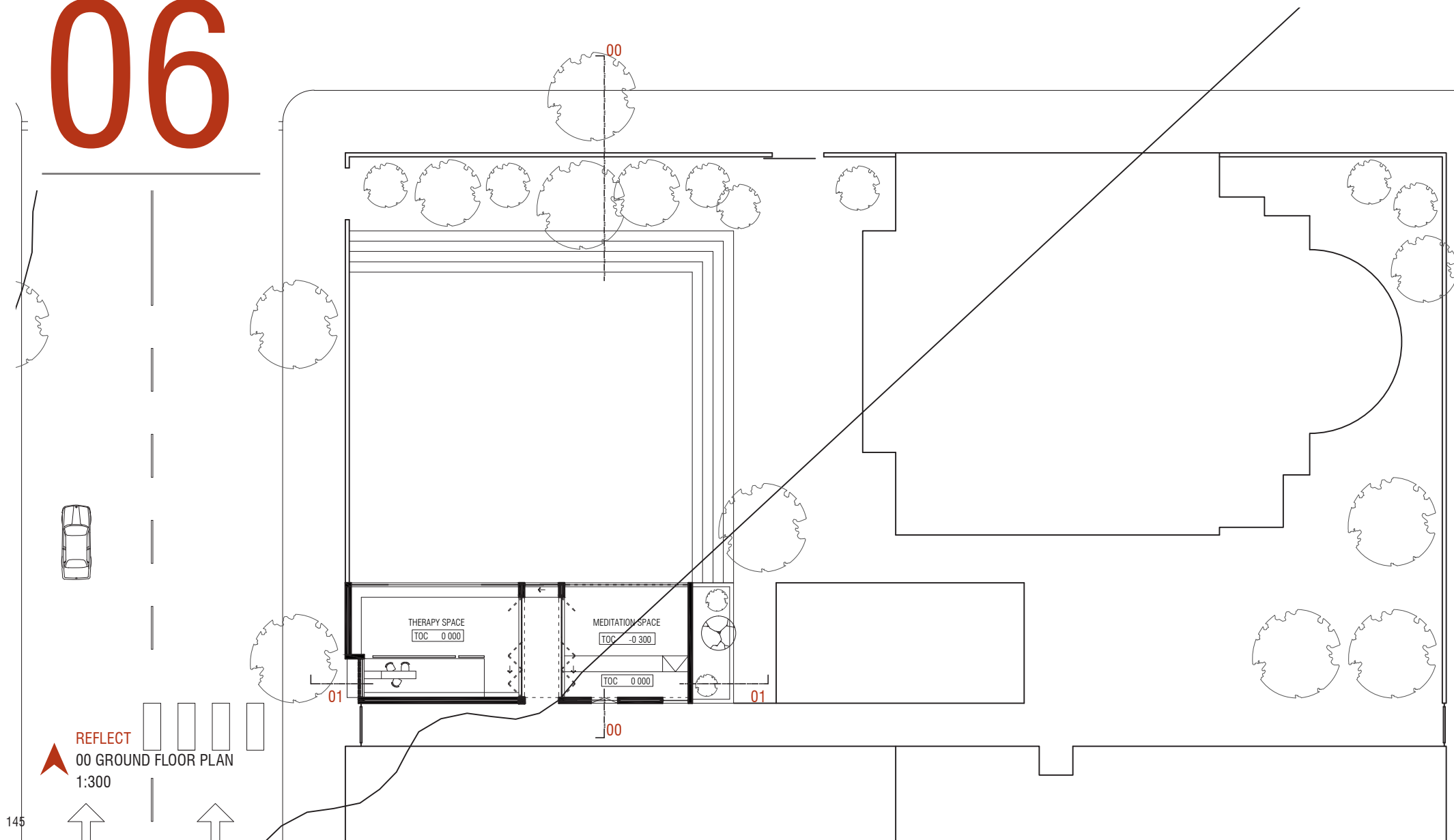
CLEANSE
SECTION 01
1:200

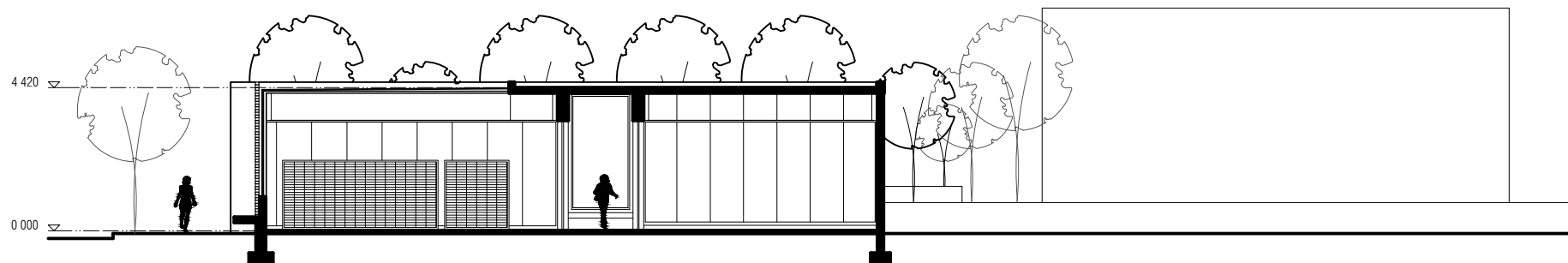
06



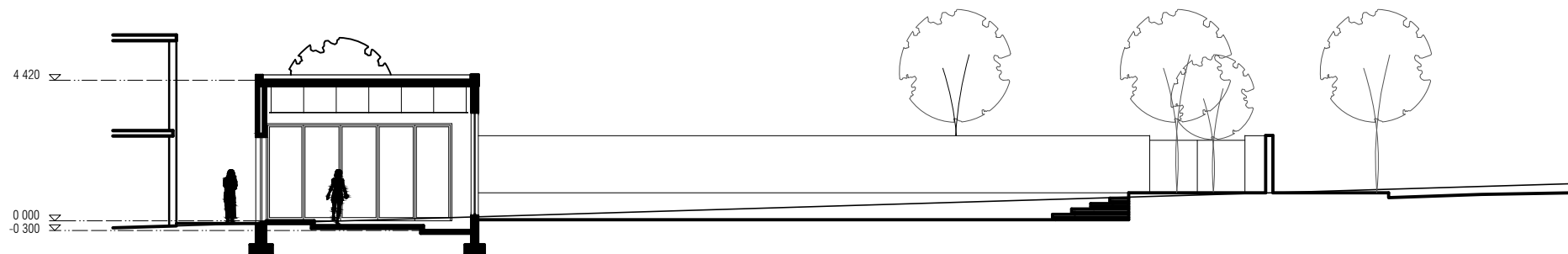
CLEANSE
SECTION 02
1:200

06

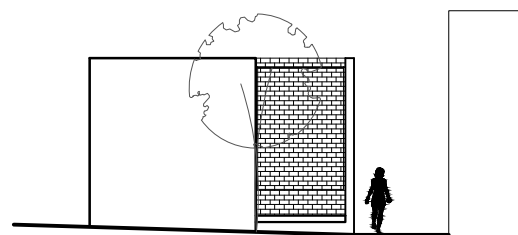




REFLECT
SECTION 00
1:200

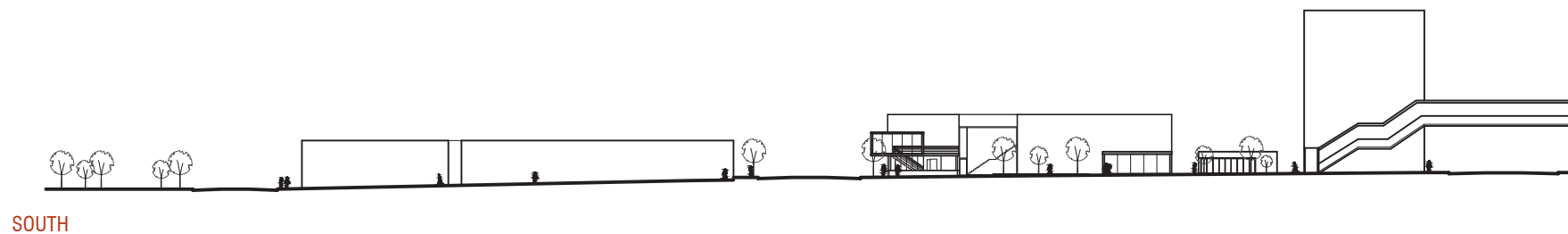
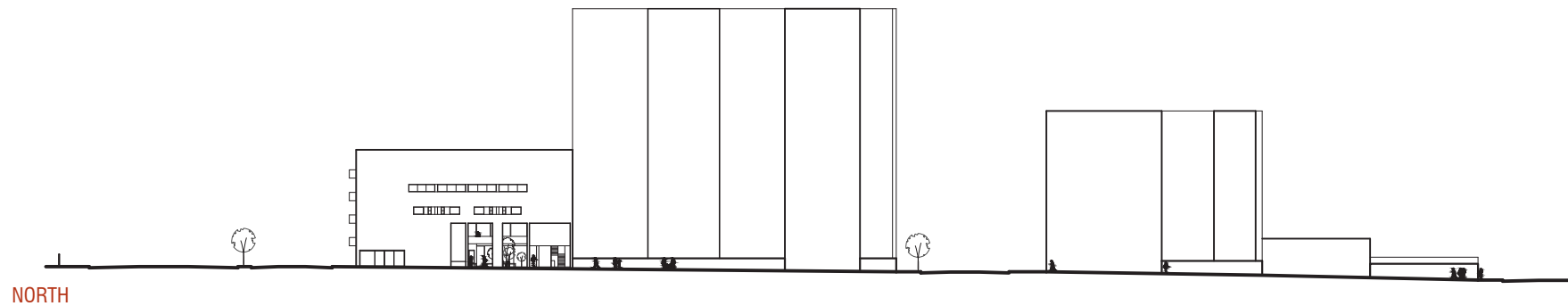


REFLECT
SECTION 01
1:200

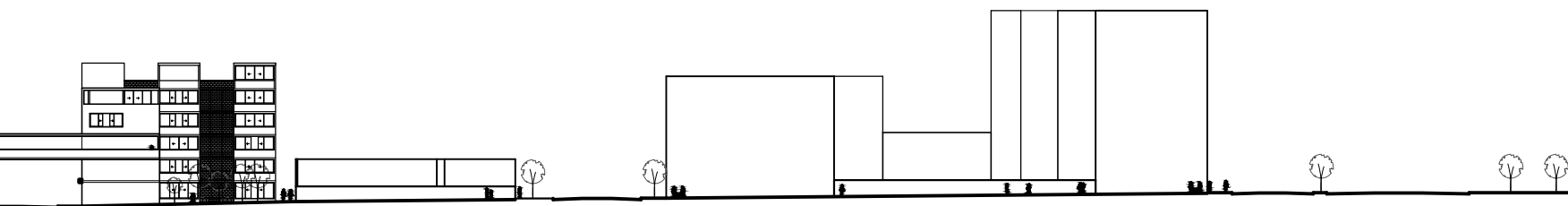
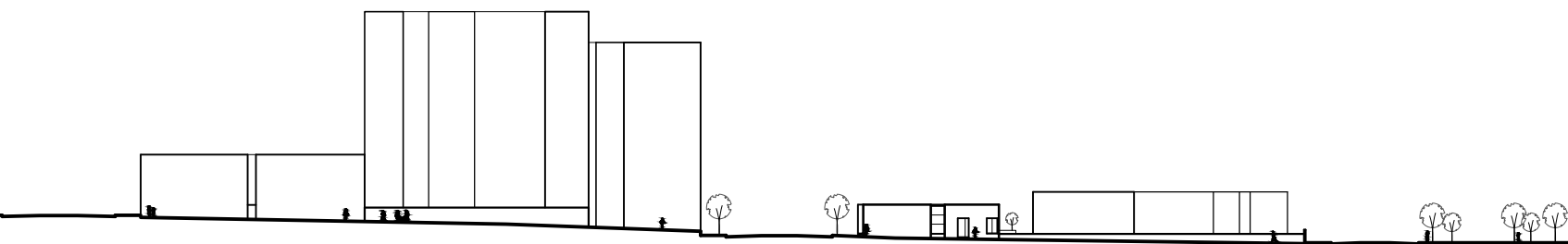


REFLECT
WEST ELEVATION
1:200

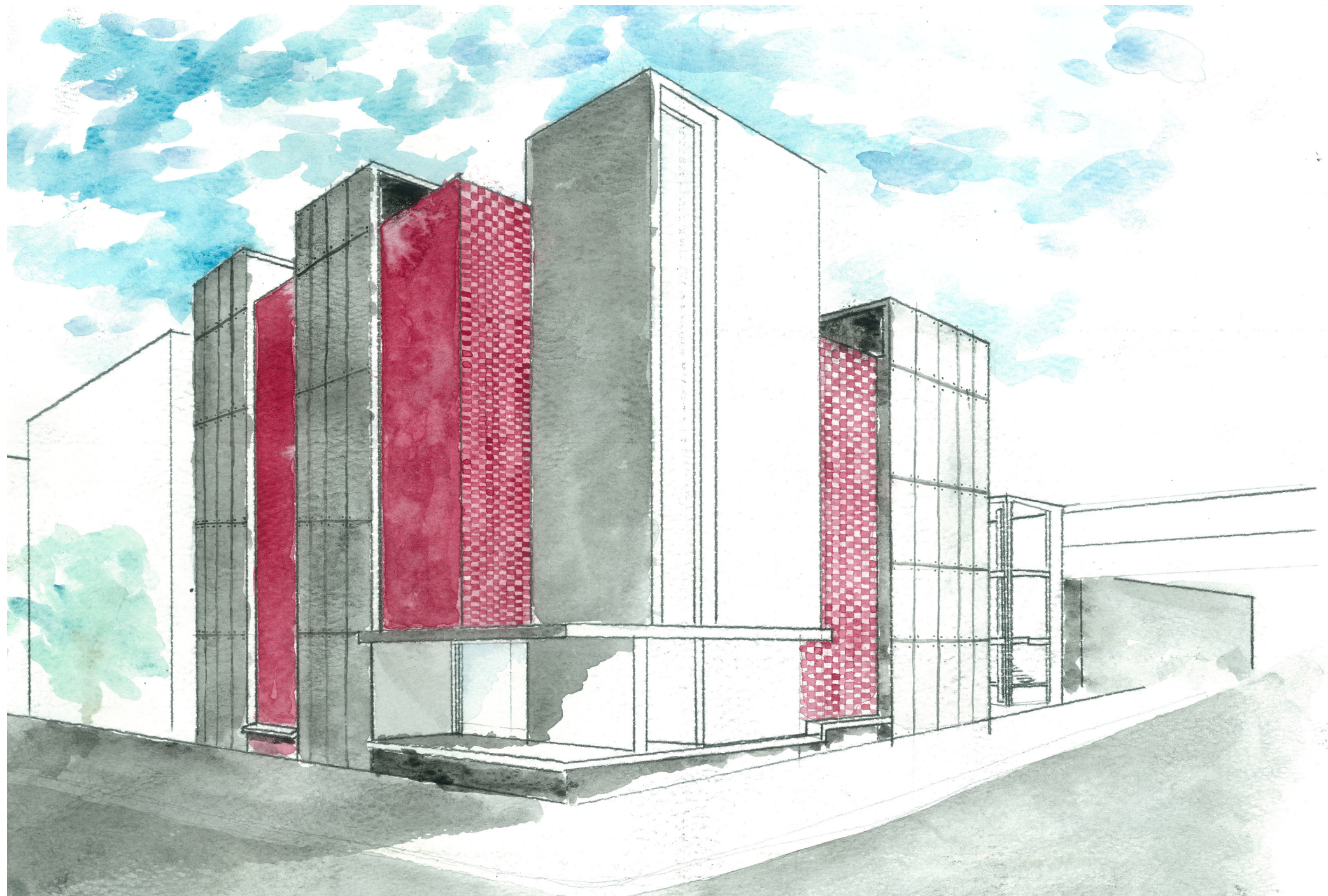
06



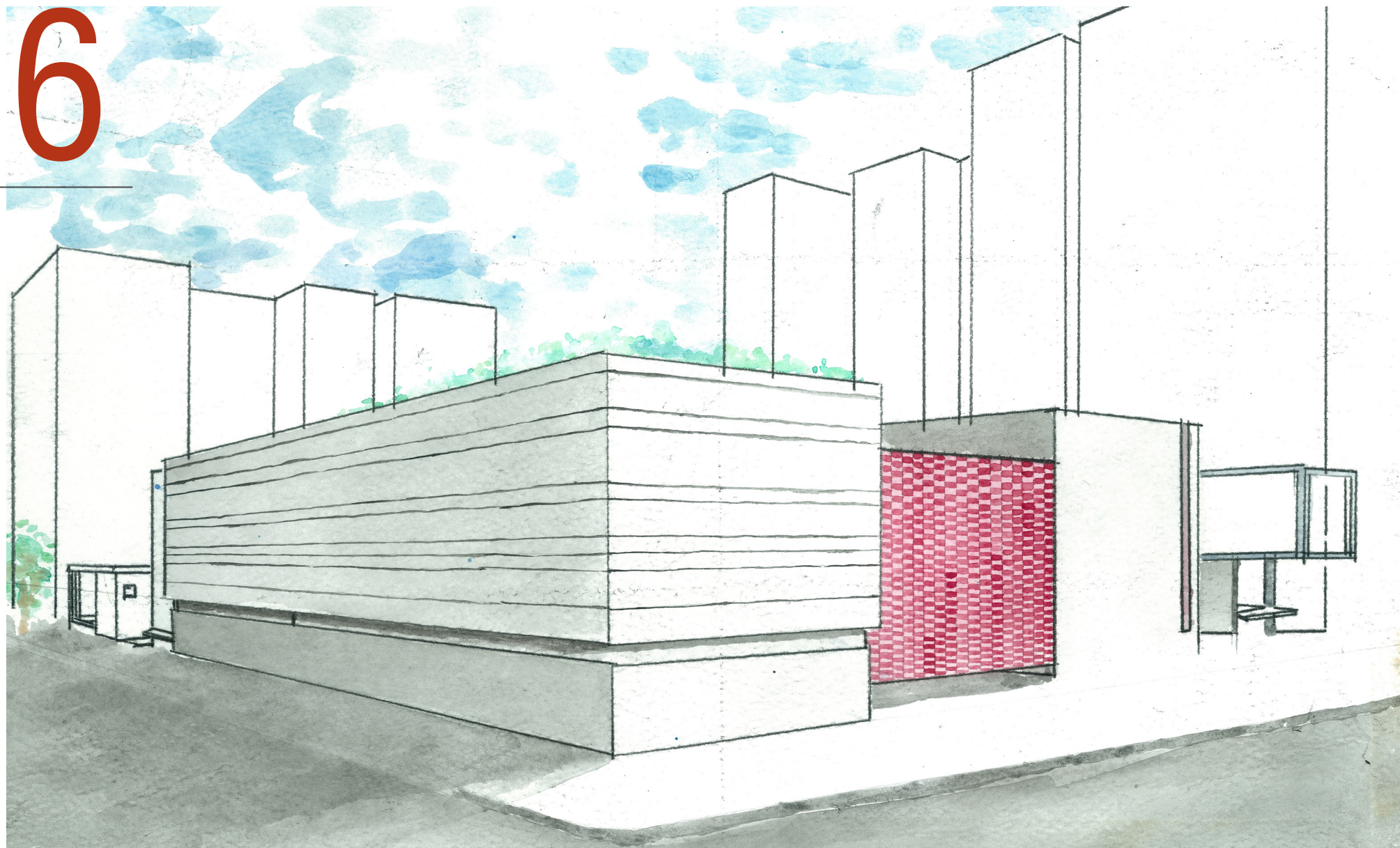
ALLEYWAY SECTIONS
1:1000

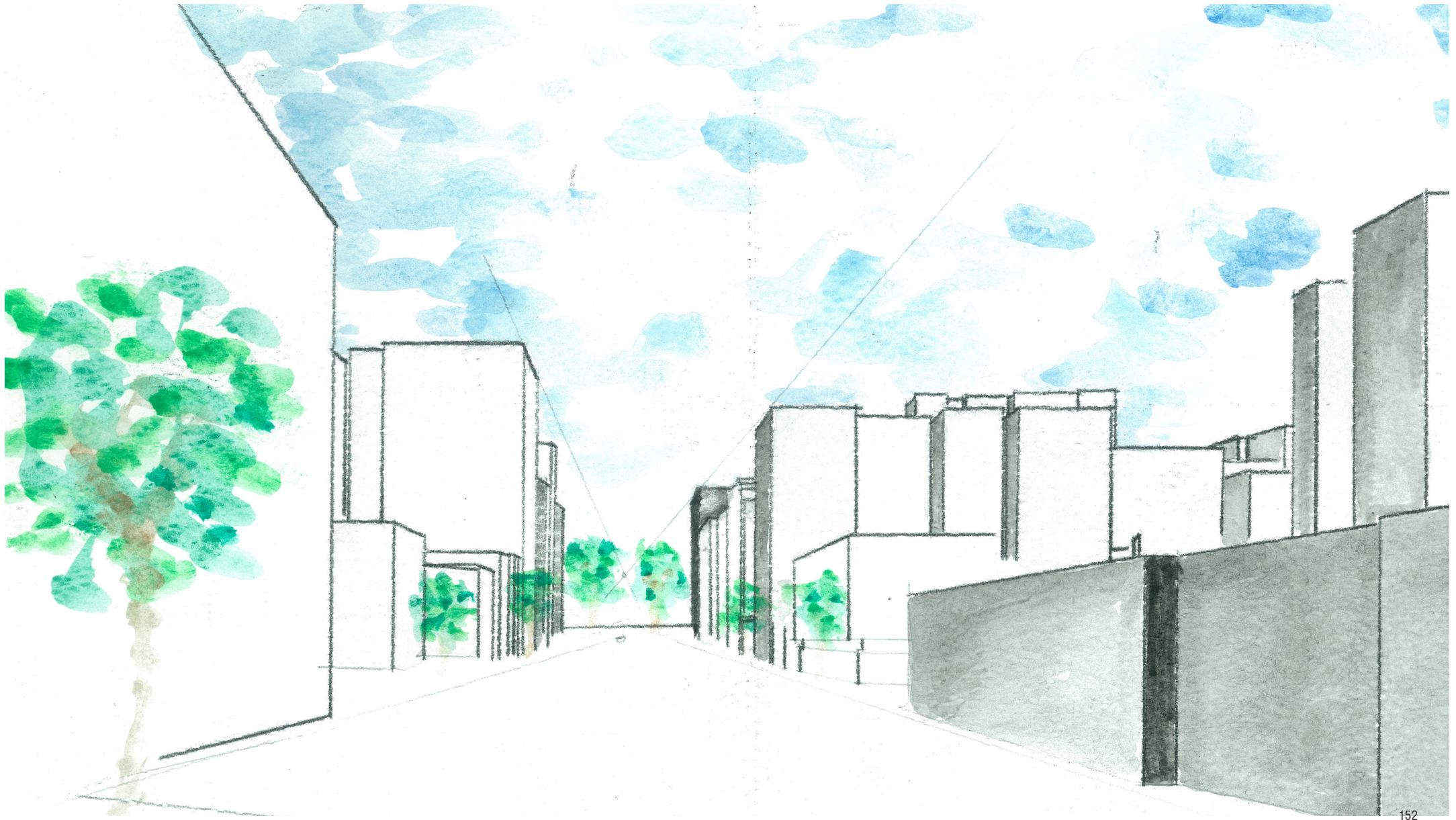


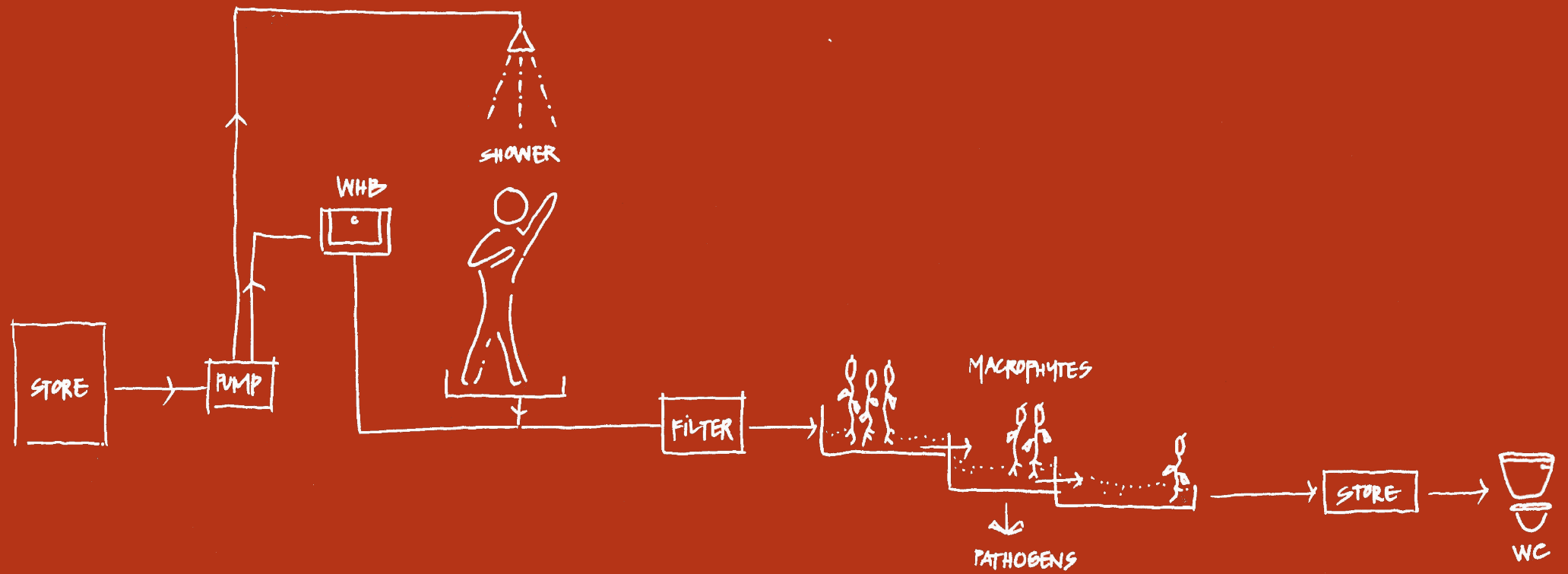
06



06







07

TECHNOLOGICAL EXPLORATION

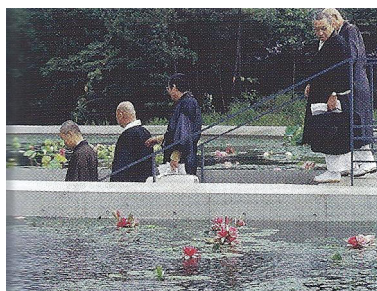
This chapter explores an element of the proposed development in detail and outlines case studies as valuable support.

* Diagram of reed bed filtration system

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Tadao Ando is a Japanese architect who works closely with pure geometries and brings architecture back to nature through influential elements of light, water and texture. The Water Temple Hōpuku-ji is a Buddhist Temple, located on Awaji island boasting stunning views of Osaka bay. The Temple embodies some fundamental Buddhist principles – with a focus on human beings, animals and nature harmoniously existing together as one, without hierarchy or distinction (Furuyama, 2006, p47). The roof of the Temple is the focal point – an oval lotus pond with a central circulation slit removed, guiding the user down into the blessed prayer sanctuary. The descending movement ‘through’ water represents the beginning of a spiritual journey, symbolising cleansing before participation in sacred ritual of silence and holistic connection. In the Temple, Ando attempts to “express in time and space the dramatic transition from the everyday world to realm of the sacred” (Furuyama, 2006, p48)

The roof pond of the Bath House element of the exploded house is expressed as the ‘fifth elevation’ as a result of the towering buildings overlooking the site. The element of water is obviously consistent throughout the bath house typology but is representational of cleansing on a much more figurative scale than a simple daily exercise. The notion of cleansing is a metaphor for initiating emancipation from the homeless cycle – through physical, spiritual and psychological cleansing; progress, difference and change are easily within reach. Therefore, the metaphor physically extends into the construction of the building; by processing, filtering, cleansing and reusing water from the Bath House, this physical element of the greater ritual of cleansing is maintained, sustained and continuously supported.



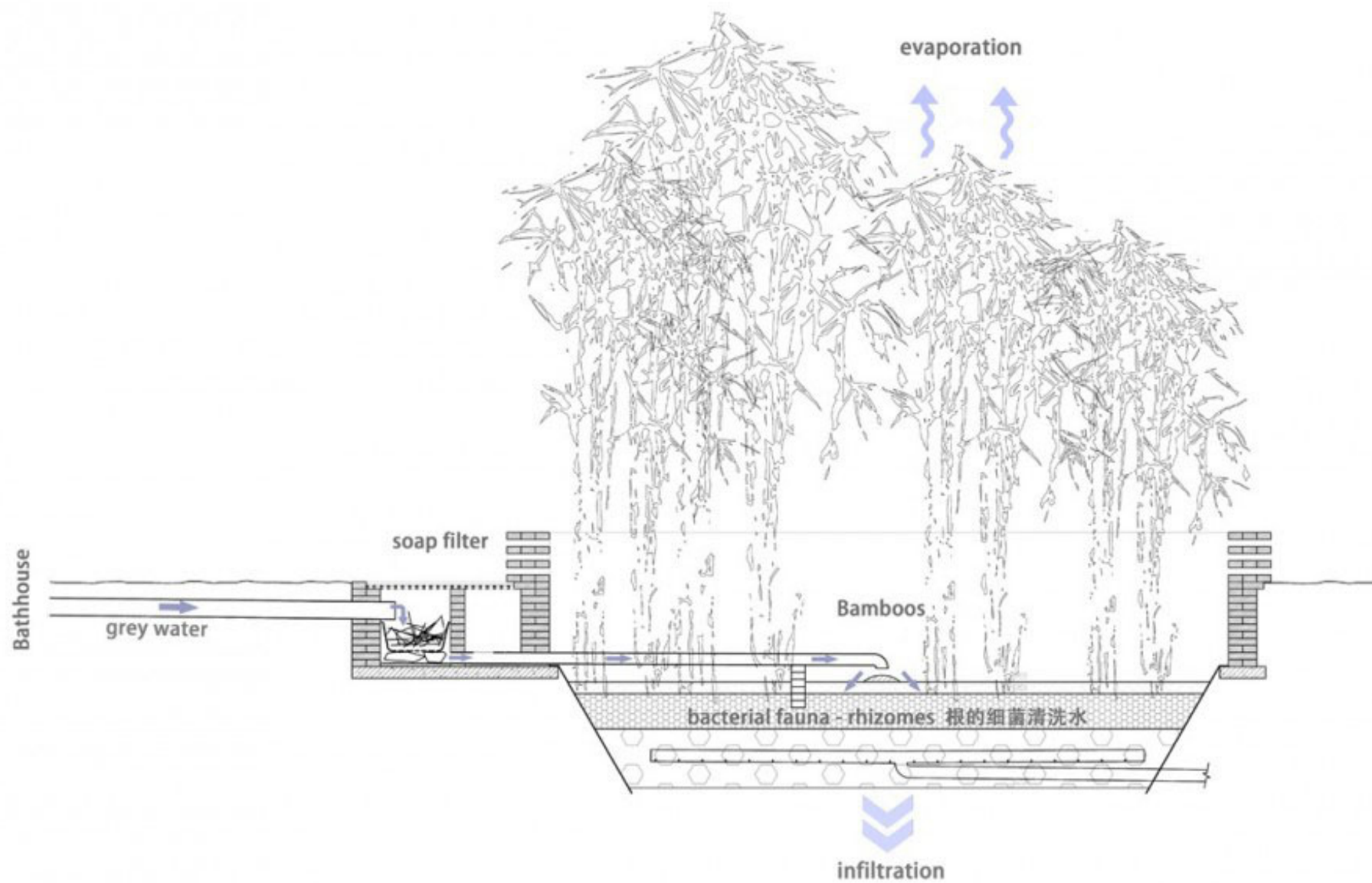
★ FIGURES 056 - 058
Images of the Water Temple Hompuku-ji



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BaO architects are a Beijing-based design firm who worked on an ablution facility in Gansu, China entitled 'Split Bathhouse'. There was no public water supply or drainage existing on the site and therefore required design as an autonomous entity (Anon., 2011). Water is pumped from a well and stored in tanks where it either moves through solar panels to be heated or directly to water points for cold water. Used water from basins and showers is treated through an adaptation of a reed bed filtration system.

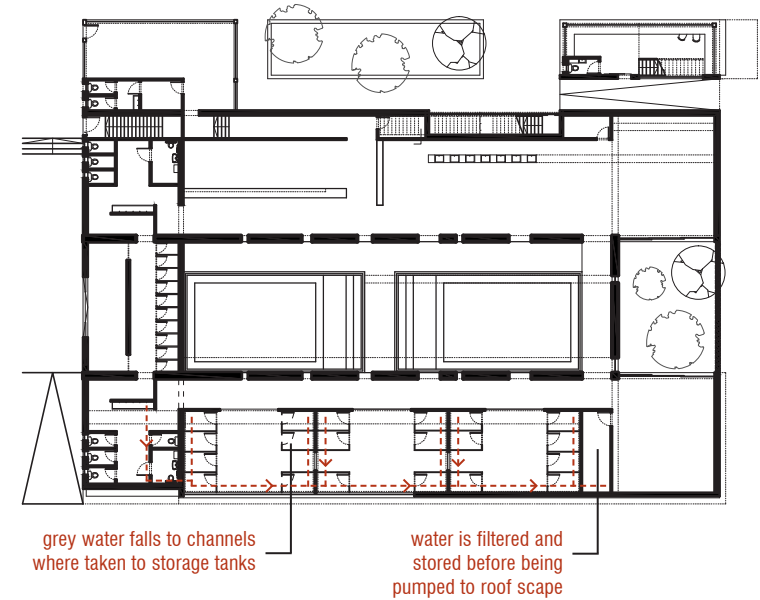
A reed bed filtration system essentially works with layers of impermeable membrane, varying strength of aggregate and macrophytes –reeds and rushes as some examples. Water, grey or black, is filtered before entering the system where it passes through layered aggregate to remove visible waste. Water usually remains in the system for 5-7 days in order to achieve maximum settlement and filtration, nitrification and sufficient breakdown for nutrient removal via micro-organisms supplied by reeds or rushes (Lismore City Council, n.d). The reed bed is able to remove pathogens from the used water as a result of the attack of micro-organisms existing on roots and gravel, an extended time period of exposure and aerobic and anaerobic zones existing within the system. All of these circumstances provide unfavourable conditions for disease-causing bacteria and the opportunity for recycling, reuse and sustainability (Lismore City Council, n.d).



* FIGURE 059
Section through reed bed filtration system

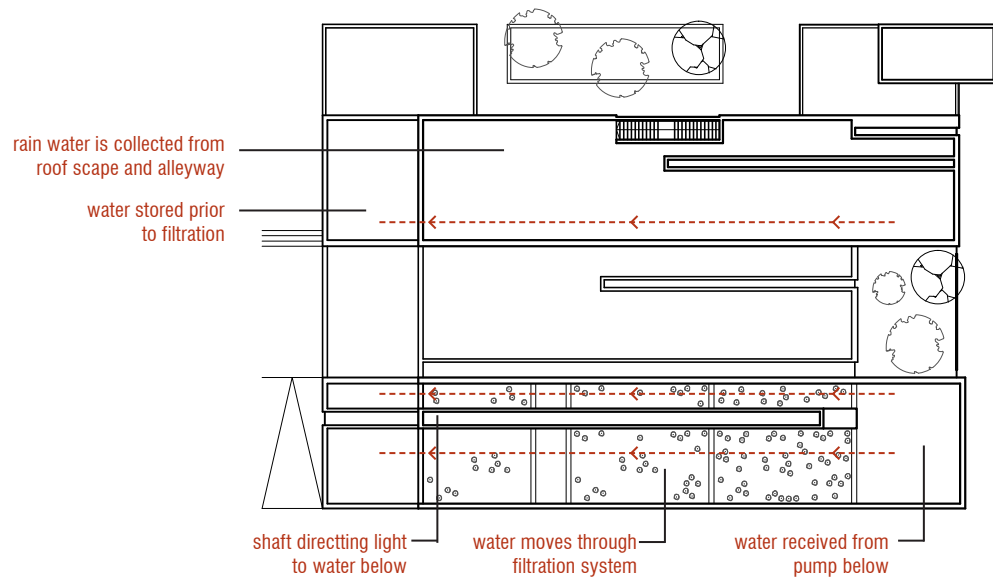
The metaphor of cleansing weaves through this project, from concept to narrative and here in physical detail, sewing each element together. The idea of 'Exploded House' as a programmatic concept exemplifies the notion of a 'fresh start', holistically enriching mind, body and spirit.

The following diagrams explore the Cleanse / Bath House element of the proposal. Water is integral to the processes housed within the structure, and would simply not be viable if an element of sensitive care regarding this limited resource was forgotten. The reuse and recycling of grey water is not only representative of sustainability, but more so of the idea of continued narrative, layered throughout the project. The use of 'waste'; the 'other' element, is a microcosm of the grand gesture.

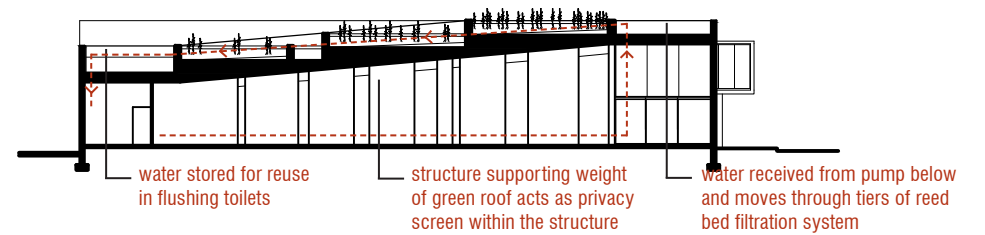


CLEANSE
GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1:500



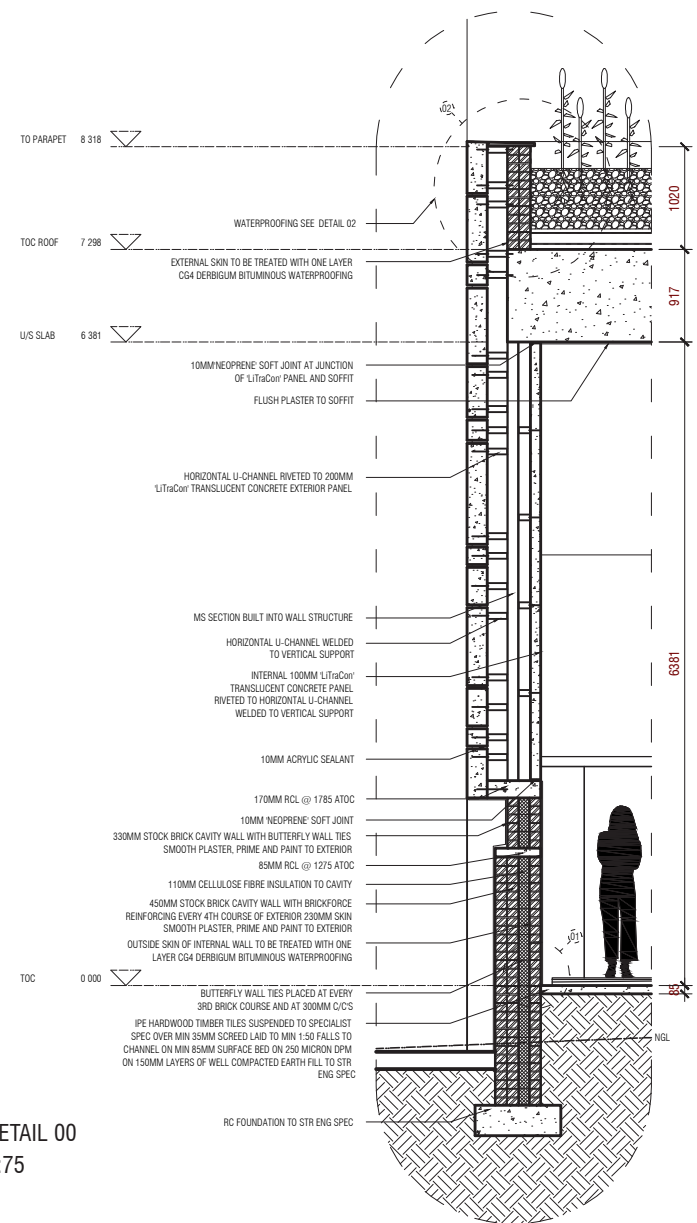


CLEANSE
ROOF PLAN
1:500

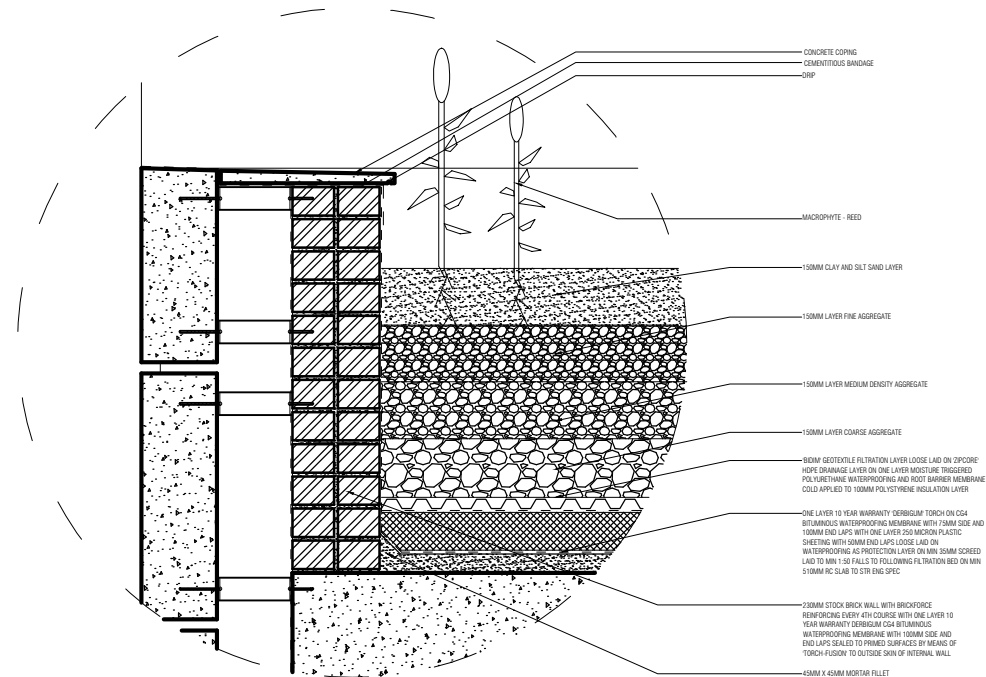


CLEANSE
SECTION 00
1:500

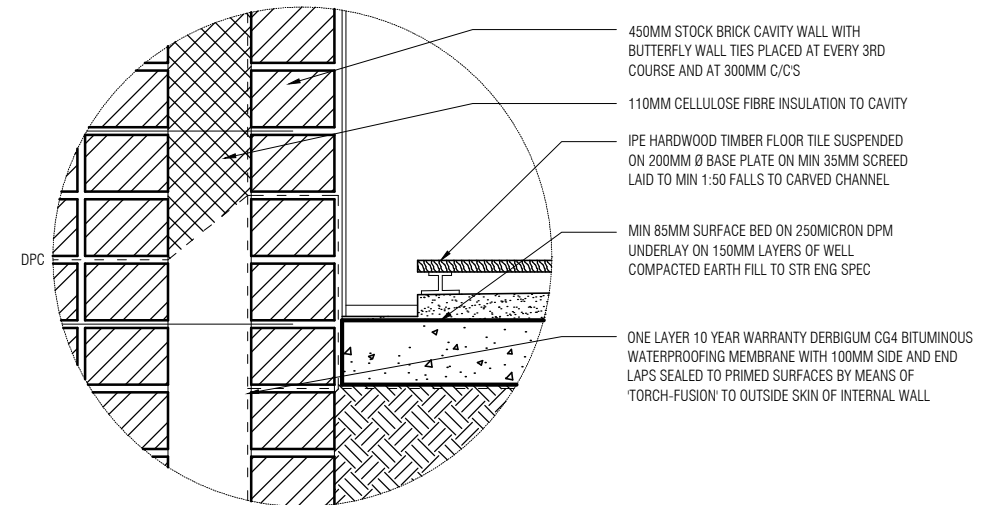




DETAIL 00
1:75



DETAIL 01
1:20



DETAIL 02
1:10

Conclusion

Invert City views the user, the site and the city as a photographic negative. The layered relationships winding through the city present potent potential for change, both in housing typology and approach, to achieve an integrated model for the city. The idea of an exploded house connects women to community, street and city through a deconstructed version of the common temporary accommodation. The institution itself is not contested; rather the traditional form is inverted and restructured, creating a typology where no such example exists. Invert City reconnects the marginalised user, through vacant and forgotten space with built networks of the city.

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01 Images

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“ You are a **child of the universe**, no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here ”

Max Ehrman, Desiderata

