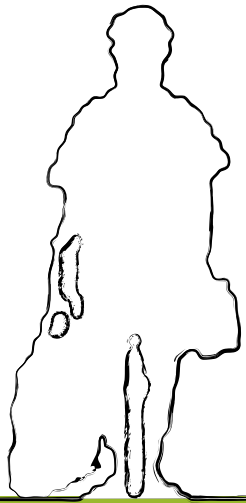


[re]writing^{new} layers

inscribing refugee communities into the city



Nicolette Garrett 0506710a

internal courtyard facade
of the Marshall Street
Barracks. Left derelict and
abandoned after a fire



for mom and dad...

I would like to thank my parents, John and Sharon, for all their endless support, infinite encouragement and unwavering love. To my brother, Michael, for his patience and calming nature. My sincere thanks goes to Hannah le Roux for all her input, advice and direction during the past year. And finally to Dale for your love and support, for keeping me sane and always reminding me of what is really important.

acknowledgements

declaration

I, Nicolette Garrett 0506710A, am a student registered for the course Master of Architecture [Professional] in the year 2011. I hereby declare the following:

I am aware that plagiarism [the use of someone else’s work without permission and/or without acknowledging the original sources] is wrong. I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have stated explicitly otherwise. I have followed the required conventions in referencing thoughts, ideas, and visual materials of others. For this purpose, I have referred to the Graduate School of Engineering and the Built Environment style guide. I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my own work.

Nicolette Garrett
28 October 2011

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 2011.



document structure

01 essay

02 design

definitions

Refugee

A person who is forced to flee his or her country due to a well-founded fear of persecution or disasters of human origin such as armed conflicts, civil upheavals and general violence.

Asylum seeker

A person who has lodged an asylum application with the Department of Home Affairs and who is waiting for a decision on refugee status.

Voluntary repatriation

Voluntary return of refugee from country of asylum to country of origin.

UNHCR

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Is an organisation mandated to provide international protection to refugees and to promote long-term durable solutions to their problems



01 e s s a y

[re]writing new layers

c o n t e n t s

12

abstract

15

introduction

the city written and read

21

solitary refuge

the city of the refugee

26

migration and the need to belong

28

the stranger in a constant state of transit

humanitarian interventions

33

the camp vs. the city

38

south african context

how architecture expresses meaning

41

the recollection of identity through memory

46

the fluid nature of identity

what architecture may mean

51

perceptions of space

55

perceptions of time

58

case study the u.s holocaust memorial museum

conclusion

61

fusing refugee and city writing a new layer

abstract

image 1
old mine shaft
(www.blog.travelpod.com)

image 2
mine dump on the outskirts of
Johannesburg



In an era where the concepts of globalization and cosmopolitanism have come to the forefront, society is transforming into an amalgamation of cultures and identities. Around the world we are seeing a new global culture emerge, a culture based on globalized icons, symbols and products. However there is a universal complaint about the loss of identity, which is being felt by so many. This feeling of loss has resulted in people all around the world trying to reassert their culture and identity. The importance of culture and identity is being expressed and affirmed by societies all around the world, looking for a means for relocating their history, their understanding of the world and their place within it. In many instances the surrounding landscape, the urban and the natural, are used as mechanisms for remembering histories and reinterpreting meanings within cultures. Understanding the importance of the memory and identity that is, and can be, attached to the urban landscape has become an integral issue in the creation of space and architecture. The idea that architecture acts as means of recalling memory and the concept that the urban fabric is inscribed with meaning is not new. However, when it comes to the context of Johannesburg the concept of creating meaning and identity through the urban landscape becomes difficult. This is because Johannesburg has become a region of hybrid traditions and social interactions. A diversity that is greatly caused by people from various countries and continents migrating into the city. The result has been an ever increasing population, within the city, that has no memory of and no meaning in the city. The city of Johannesburg is a place that is intrinsically imbued with history and significance; from the architecture of neoclassicism to modernism, the reminisce of old mine shafts and the yellow sheer edges of mine dumps to historical sites of conflict and remembrance. There is thus a need to understand how new significance can be created in a city that is occupied by a population that is devoid of identity and meaning within the spaces they inhabit. The question that now needs to be answered is, whether the history of the city that already exists can allow for new memory and meaning to be created, for those without it?

introduction

the city written and read

‘As archaeologists know well, the practices of urbanism, whereby cities as arranged according to what passes for reason, have a story to tell as illuminating as any text about the way in which humans have encountered nature and each other, or turned away from them, in the course of daily life’ (Waterhouse 1993:xx)

As you arrive in the city you travel through the endless grids of streets and pavements, walls of concrete and glass tower above you, bordering you on both sides, creating an envelope that contains you, trapping you into the confines of the urban fabric. As you look forward the expanse of concrete and glass appears to endure forever, you look back and the same continues in the opposite direction. It appears never ending and unceasing. There is no interruption in the concrete monoliths of the city, no pause to catch your breath. The only disruption in the ageing urban fabric of Johannesburg is the one above you, the blueness of the sky. The aging concrete facades appear blank and closed off, revealing nothing of the activity happening within their grey shells.

However, when one chooses to stop and take a closer look, the city is filled with discontinuity and interruptions in the closed off concrete structures. There are spaces, buildings, whole areas where there is emptiness. At first glance these buildings and spaces reveal nothing of their hollowness. They appear as all the other buildings within the city, closed off and blank. However, these spaces are abandoned, left over, left behind, and forgotten. Only their broken glass allowing you a glimpse into their inner secrets, ajar doors revealing a sight into the secluded world they contain.

'We think of cities as dense places, characterised by their fullness in built form and functions. We think of cities as places filled with life and urbanity; an artificial world, a contrast to the openness of the surrounding nature' (Fragmented City 2006). The emptiness that can be seen in all corners of Johannesburg is harshly contrasted by the impression of fullness which is described above. The empty buildings and vacant spaces lie like vacuums within the fullness of the city. The contrast between the empty and the full, the built and the void is what characterises the fragmented nature of the city (Fragmented City 2006). Spaces of emptiness and bareness clearly illustrate the fragmented nature of Johannesburg. The gradual withdrawal of purpose and meaning has left parts of the city in a state of abandonment and disregard, voids draining the city of activity and meaning.

Throughout architectural history buildings have been depicted as living organisms, objects that are animated by everyday occurrences and activity. If architecture is viewed as living then are we to say that they must then eventually die? Chaplin and Strata (2009:58) describe how 'Human life is inscribed in architecture, architecture is 'enlivened' when it is being used.' They go on to illustrate how the 'deadest' city or 'deadest' architecture one could imagine would therefore be places that are deserted, and in which nature outweighs the signs of human activity (2009:157). It thus appears, from this argument, that when human life and activity is withdrawn from a building it loses life and thus dies. If architecture is abandoned or forgotten,

devoid of human traces and filled with inactivity, does this really mean it is 'dead'?

The empty spaces that are scattered around the city act as a void filled with history and memories and lie as a reminder, telling the story of the city with its emptiness, around which activity occurs. Places always contain the traces of stories which are connected both with each other and with places elsewhere. The traces that are left are usually subtle and discrete; these traces are not always seen but are always visible. They are the inscription on a monolithic wall which whispers how it once upon a time had a neighbour. Rusty tram tracks embedded in new tar roads. Crushed and flattened grass becoming an inscription of a path signifying the people walking it.

abandoned buildings of the
Johannesburg CBD





tram tracks etched into the
streets of newtown. visible
but forgotten

“Johannesburg’s complexity is about the layers of histories, identities and cultures that have, in different epochs, appropriated and imprinted themselves in the city” (Kihato 2006:206).

As people move in and out of the centre of Johannesburg, their stories are told and created within the urban fabric. As they leave their stories remain, left behind and etched in the city, inscribed within the concrete monoliths. As new people arrive their stories are written within and through the urban landscape. The city has become a place of constant overwriting. There is an on-going writing and rewriting, there is a continuing translation of narratives within the city and of the city. As we move through spaces and places, we leave behind signs of our presence. Our routes, our feeling, our social interaction, our events and stories. They all leave behind residues. These residues exist in our memories. The city acts as a means of provoking these memories, as everything happens somewhere. Provokers of memory act as markers, markers which we leave behind as we move through the city. These markers act as essential tools in giving us indications to how we read and remember that which we’ve experienced.

Johannesburg has been transformed through the temporal limitlessness of which events have unfolded, allowing for the fabric to be comparable to a palimpsest, “a written surface that has been erased and used for a new text” (Robert 1989:6). Through the reading of the city, it is possible to see the city as a layered parchment with numerous fragments of conceivable, imaginable and possible stories. These stories and histories can be read along the facades of buildings, through the movement of people and the inscription of past events. Though the intersections of old and new, aged and rejuvenated, the inhabited and the forgotten, the city’s story is being told, erased and retold. Spaces are unseen and forgotten, memory hidden and etched into the urban surrounds. Memories revealed but disremembered and sites of importance appearing as inscriptions on the face of this monolithic landscape. Many of these stories, around the city, have been partly erased, subdued, vague and hidden, waiting to be rewritten and retold. Thus, can it not be argued that these spaces are not ‘dead’, lost forever, but merely waiting for new use to be inscribed and new stories to be told within their margins.

solitary

r e f u g e

the distant skyline of the
Johannesbrug CBD

the city of the refugee

“Johannesburg is a world of difference that has been through a whirlwind of change in its shape and structure but yet is still a place filled with vitality that rivals all other cities.” (Sudjic 2007:200).

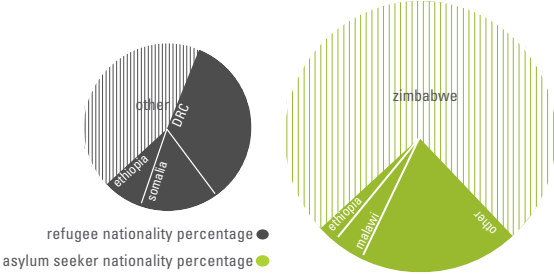
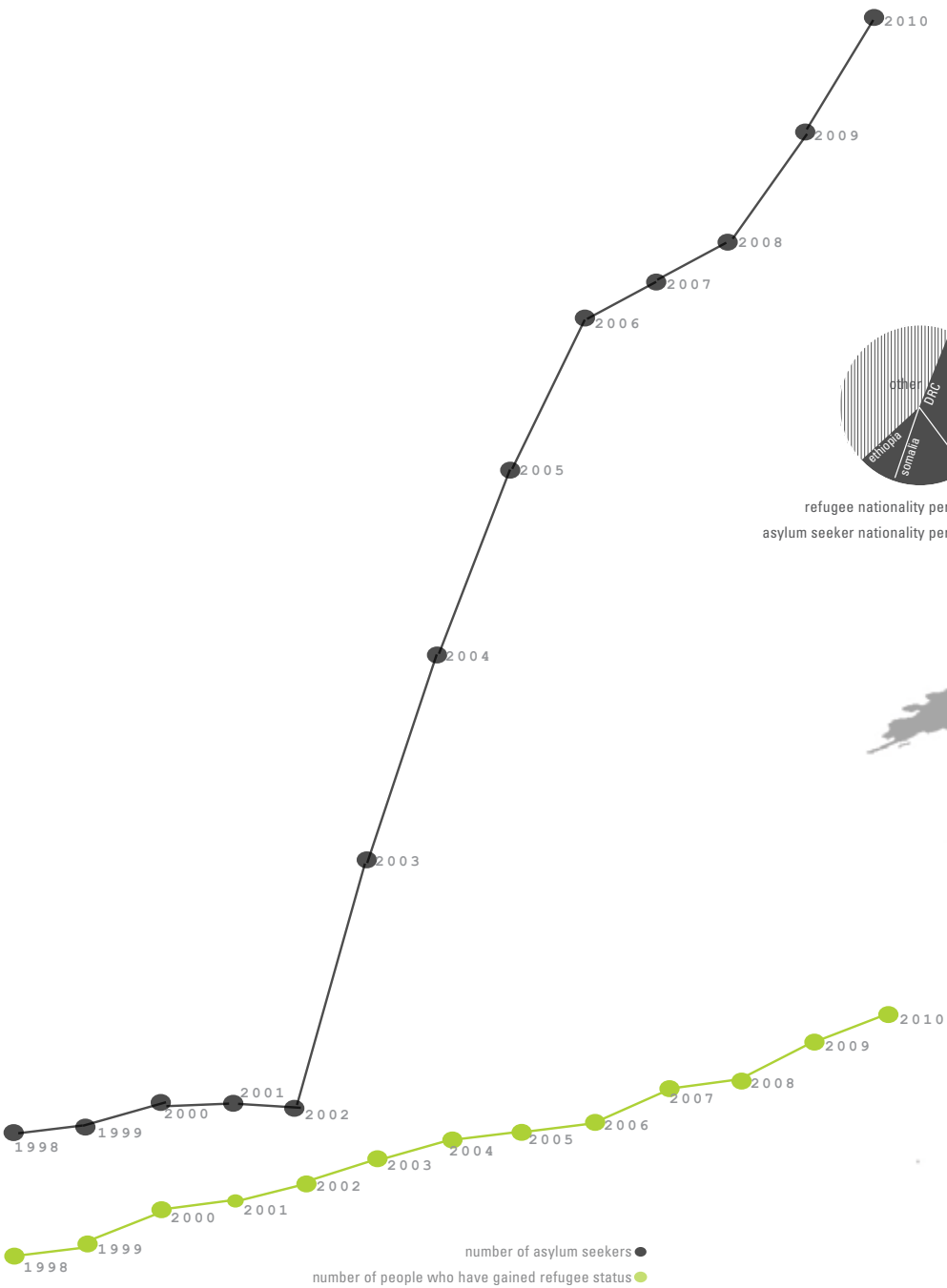
Over the last decade the city centre of Johannesburg has become a place of forgotten space to many. The city has been faced with a mass exodus, of people and business, as a result of decentralisation and economic decline. Becoming a place forgotten and abandoned by many but filled with memory, familiarity and meaning. The city is a place which is built upon layers. These are the layers of ideas, meaning, imaginings, accidents, catastrophe, success, history and memory.

Landau (2006: 6) describes how Johannesburg has long served as a gateway into South Africa for immigrants. He goes on to suggest that the city's current dynamism and fluidity, however, exaggerates a process of mobility that began in the late nineteenth century when gold was discovered. The city has always been in a constant state of change, transformed over decades. From mining town, to economic hub, to a detached memory, experienced to many as only a distant skyline. The city of Johannesburg is, and always has been, a place of migration and journey. Johannesburg is a place where people arrive from all over South Africa, Africa and other parts of the world. The city is a point of transition, a place of arrival and subsequent departure.

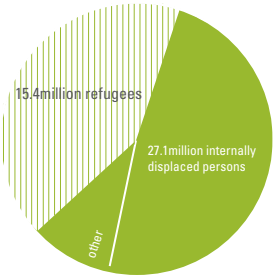
*“Migration is a one way trip. There is no ‘home’ to go back to.”
(Chambers, I. 1994:9)*

The city of Johannesburg is a place where refugees, from all over Africa, gather and settle. Refugees have been forced to leave their place of origin and move across countries and continents seeking refuge and sanctuary.

Africa is today the biggest producer of refugees in the world (Maiodina 2001:10). Since the ratification of the Basic Agreement and international refugee conventions, South Africa has become a preferred option for many fleeing persecution in their countries of origin. The UNHCR estimates that South Africa receives over 220 000 people each year, people who are seeking asylum and refuge (UNHCR 2010). Johannesburg represents the centre of South Africa’s trade and transport networks and thus attracts the majority of refugees that flee to South Africa. Boano states that “In a sense, the lived experience of displacement, intended both as movement from one’s place of residence to another as well as to be without a place of one’s own, is to be almost non-existent” (2011:38). Leaving the place that they call ‘home’ is the only option that many refugees have to free themselves from persecution, from oppression, from poverty, from destruction, from chaos. An Angolan refugee described his experience, an experience which he depicts as carnage which they had to escape, “...they hunted people in the bush. Those who were caught were brought to the village and killed. Some were



494 thousand refugees and asylum seekers currently living in South Africa



43.3 million forcibly displaced people worldwide



diagram 1
the increase in the number of refugees over the last 13 years

diagram 2
refugee stats

diagram 3
map of conflicts around the world

shot. Some old people...were locked up in houses which were set on fire.” Refugees arrive in the city, entrenched with trauma and suffering, only to find that the persecution and oppression are to continue. They must navigate the treacherous urban landscape of Johannesburg, with no knowledge or memory of their surroundings, no support and no refuge. Refugees are the people that no one wants, they are the people that are discarded, they are the people that are disremembered. Herz (2008) describes refugees as often representing one of the weakest and most vulnerable members of society.

Within the city there are buildings that have been abandoned and forgotten, devoid of life and use. They have been left in their bare form. However within the city there are numerous refugees, which have been abandoned and forgotten. They have been stripped of their possessions, stripped of human rights, stripped of their sense of belonging, stripped even of the feeling of existence. Left in their bare form. How can these two bare forms, the building and the human body be used together to create new life within a ‘dead’ space, used in juxtaposition to revive one another, building a sense of belonging, constructing new existence and new memory? Creating a new layer, mingled with the old, creating a new story inscribed into the existing urban fabric. The refugee has no place in the city; they are strangers, appearing as if in a constant state of motion. If the city is layered with history and meaning but the refugee is devoid of any memory of the city, how can this be dealt with? If the refugee is a stranger in the city, and the city

is the embodiment of meaning and memory, then how can the meaning already attached to the city create new meaning for the stranger? Refugees will always be present within the city and thus it needs to be determined how refugees can be dealt with in the context of the city, allowing for them to create a sense of place and allowing for a sense of refuge.

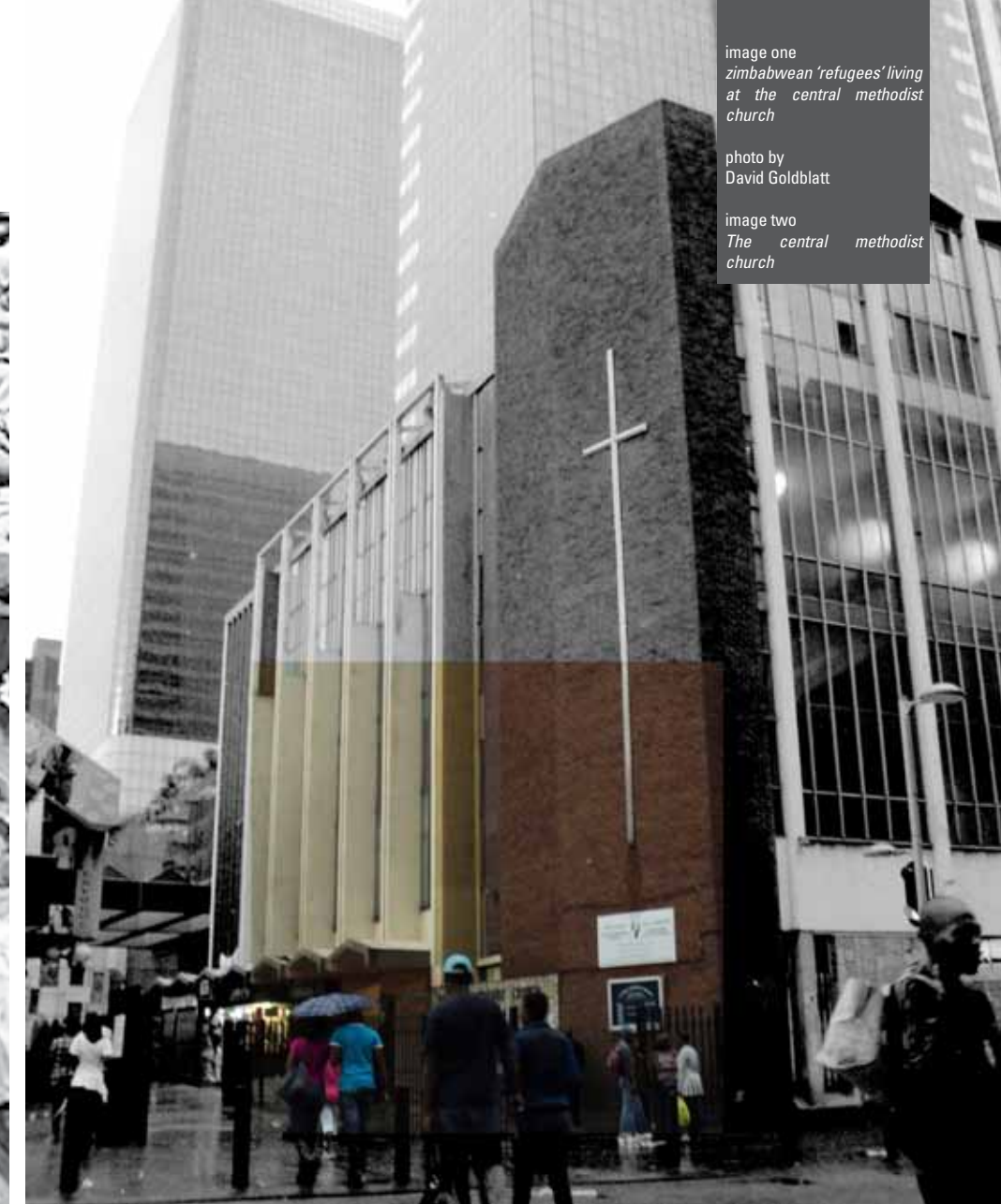


image one
zimbabwean ‘refugees’ living
at the central methodist
church

photo by
David Goldblatt

image two
The central methodist
church

migration and the need to belong

“Homeless and placeless are intrinsic by definition” (Cernea and McDowell 200:25)

As people from various countries migrate into the city of Johannesburg they often experience feelings of detachment and uncertainty. These feelings draw them to people and places that are familiar and comparable to the place of their origin. “The world was transformed utterly by the breakup of the feudal system and the massive movement of individuals... People were no longer quite sure where they belonged, what their futures held for them, or who their neighbours were... The pleasures and possibilities of social mobility coincided with feelings of alienation and meaninglessness.” (Lindholm 2008:3)

It is a natural occurrence for people to try and attempt to reduce uncertainty in their world and their place within it. One of the strategies that individuals use to reduce uncertainty is to find groups of people, similar to themselves, to which they can belong. “Self-categorisation provides us with an identity that regulates our interaction with others... It tells us what to expect of ourselves and others, and thus renders the social world and our place within it relatively predictable. Uncertainty is reduced.” (Brown 2006:37). The belonging to a group allows for the individual to create and attach meaning in their context, it enables the individual to experience the same experiences with people of similar origins. It allows for them to know that there are people, like themselves, facing the same struggles and uncertainties. Living within groups has allowed for the survival of the human species throughout time. This phenomenon has not changed; individuals are inherently inclined to live in collectives, fearing that singularity leads to exclusion and isolation. Identity is the sense of belonging which is produced out of each person’s memories.

Within collectives there is a strong need for identity, attributes and characteristics that are specific to that group and unapparent in other social and cultural groups. These qualities allow for the group to create a sense of uniqueness and permits for the features that make their culture unique to become of more importance and thus more highly valued. “Uncertainty is reduced because the group prototypes are both descriptive and prescriptive; they absorb the attributes of the group and prescribe behaviours and attitudes.” (Brown 2006:5).

If the landscape of refugees is to be fully realised and understood then the aim should be to allow for a ‘cultural citizenship’ to be formulated within the social context of Johannesburg. We need to allow for refugees to become an integral part of the social fabric that already exists within Johannesburg. We need to allow for refugees to create an identity within the city. If this is to be achieved it will not be formed as a result of legal membership but rather out of a sense of cultural belonging. However, the question remains, how can a sense of identity, meaning and belonging be created for a group of people that has no meaning or identity within the city?

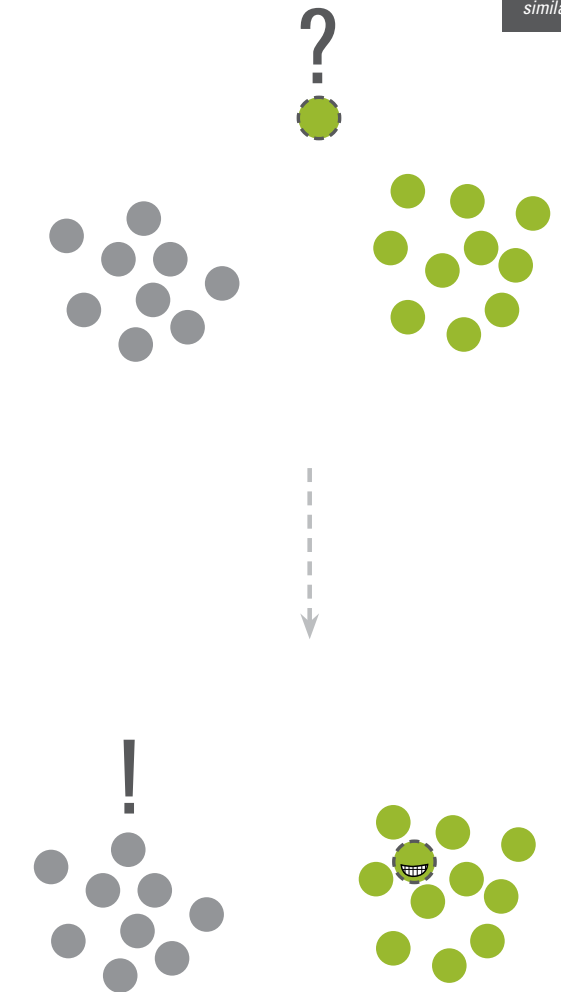


diagram
people will more often
than not choose to belong
to groups of people
similar to themselves

the stranger in a constant state of motion

“In today’s fluid world, more and more people pass through places as strangers, without long histories or memories of the spaces they inhabit.” (Bremner 2010:150)

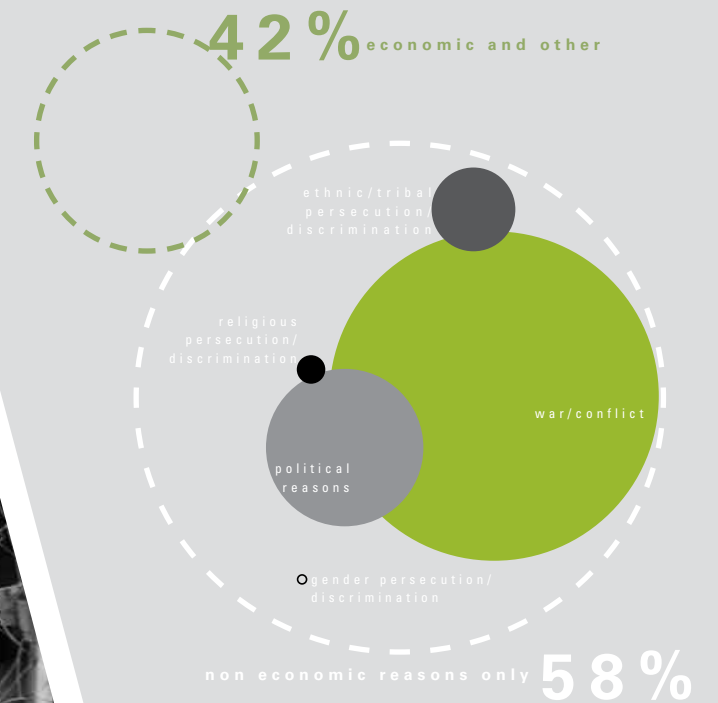
Johannesburg’s inner city is an environment in which areas and communities exchange their residences constantly, therefore the city has transformed into a place of constant strangers. The movement of people into, within, and through has resulted in the meaning of things and places not being shared and thus creating a conflicted landscape. “Johannesburg is a site of continuous contestations over who belongs in the city and to whom the city belongs, it has always been a city of ‘others’ with every group collaborating and opposing one or more of the others living in it, to insert itself and claim part of the city as its own” (Kihato 2006:206). The stranger has been inserted into the context of the city, resulting in conflict and hostility amongst different cultural structures that are striving to appropriate a shared space within a single urban context. In many instances the spaces which refugees are occupying, within the city, are temporary, transitory and ephemeral. Places and space within the city are becoming, as Kihato describes, ‘globalized nowherevilles’. Landau (2009:6) explains the condition ‘transit’, experienced by refugees, as being endless. Due to this state of constant and endless journey, the situation becomes an irreversible and permanent situation. A situation where refugees are frozen in an uninterrupted and unceasing state of temporariness.

The city has been shaped by the movements of people into and through it. Spatialised changes in the inner city can clearly be read, especially in the areas which have become primary destinations for refugees and asylum seekers. The movement of people is turning Johannesburg into a place of linkages and connections with home villages and communities spread across countries and continents. Landau explains this



image 1
JRS Refugee day
celebrations

diagram 1
reasons why
people migrate to
johannesburg



condition by describing how through ‘their movements into Johannesburg, people are incorporated into systems of ethics, social engagement, and the exercise of power and authority at local, national, and global levels. It is in this context that people find and forge novel strategies of inclusion, including religion.’ (Landau 2009:11). However these connections do not extend to communities within and around Johannesburg, refugees have created isolated communities within the urban fabric of the city, they are communities that are in the city but not integrated within the city. Caroline Kihato (2006:11) describes how there is a global recognition that the mobility of ideas, goods, and people presents new challenges to existing political and social configurations linking community, identity, and space.

In many instances refugees and asylum seekers come to Johannesburg, not only with the anticipation of a place to stay or work but, with the prospect of further opportunities of onward journeys, Johannesburg is not the place which many refugees wish to settle permanently, an asylum seeker from Zimbabwe said that “We all intend to go back to Zimbabwe once things gets back to normal, we don’t want to live in this country for ever.” Whether they realise these desires or not, Johannesburg is nonetheless a place where accessibility to trade and travel prospects is unlimited and unrestrained. Opportunities which would be unreachable in rural locations or even in the cities of other countries surrounding South Africa.

Loren Landau, in his writing *Living Within and Beyond Johannesburg: Exclusion, Religion and Emerging Forms of Being* (2009:9), creates a metaphor where he describes how ‘non-indigenous’ plants cannot survive for long without taking root or becoming an integral part of their ecosystem, Johannesburg is host to foreign inhabitants, inhabitants which are actively struggling against transplantation. Whatever its origins, many refugees and asylum seekers deny having a desire for integration or permanent settlement. Others claim they would refuse such opportunities were they available. So instead of transplantation to the society in which they live, many foreigners and strangers strive for a kind of usufruct rights, “a form of exclusion that is at least partially compatible with social and political marginalisation” (Landau 2009:5). Refugees thus become suspended in a constant state of the stranger, establishing themselves in the city while, at the same time, isolating themselves from it.

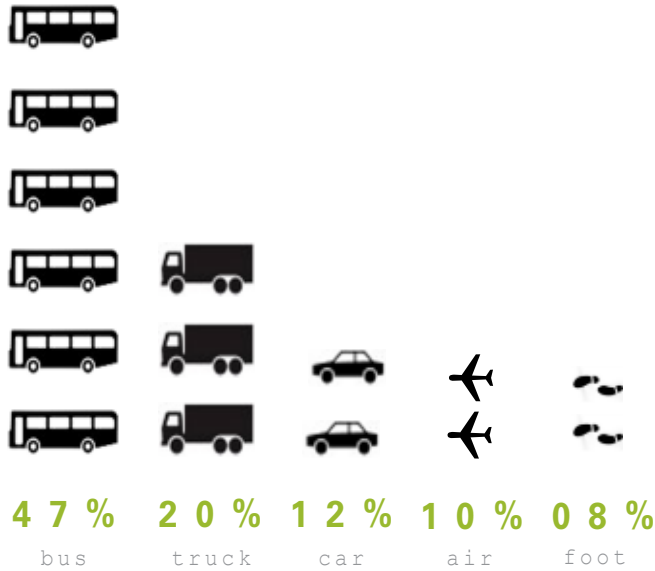
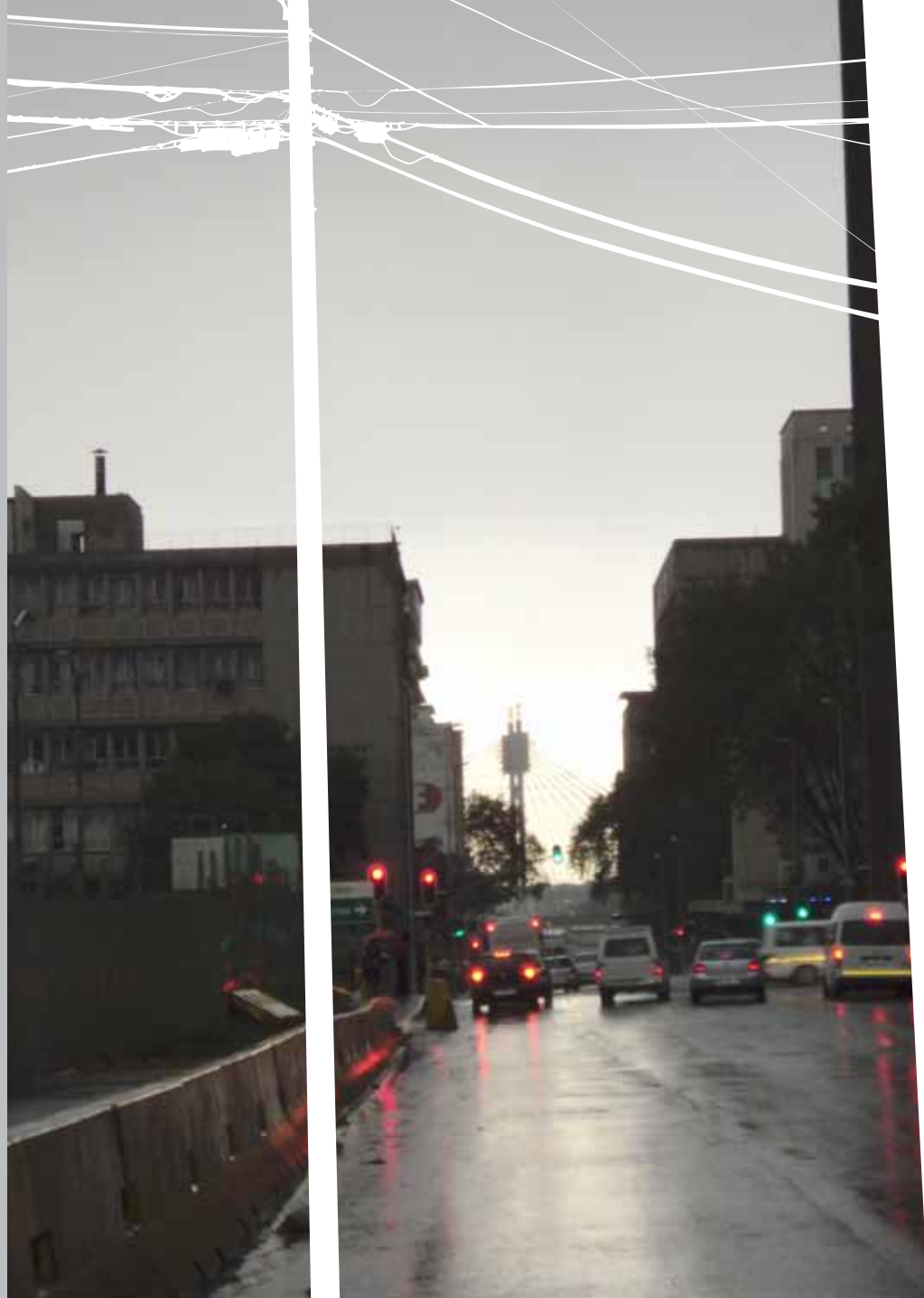


image 1
departing the CBD at dusk

photo by
Dale Swanepoel

diagram 1
modes of transport used
by refugees to enter
south africa

humanitarian

i n t e r v e n t i o n s

the camp vs the city

Humanitarian interventions, regarding refugees, have often been created as spatial forms. These interventions have taken the form of shelters and temporary camps, safe havens and resettlement sites. However, the interactions that exist between space, protection and humanitarian intervention remain poorly understood, both in conceptual and functional terms. When it comes to issues concerning refugees the main focus appears to lean towards legal questions of rights and responsibilities, however, there needs to be emphasis on difficulties related to physical, psychological and social protection that may depend on spatial relationships. A place where refugees can orientate themselves within the city.

In the past the spatial response to the plight of refugees was always that of the camp. The UNHCR has compiled a handbook which outlines the strategies and design drivers of how refugees should be dealt with in spatial terms. These strategies, however, are purely focused on the context of the camp. Refugee camps have been set up all over the world in innumerable countries. These camps have become refugee cities which exclude entire populations of people.

Giorgio Agamben (1998:121) argues that within refugee camps human beings can be deprived of their rights and prerogatives to such an extent that no act committed against them can appear as a crime, in this way they are transformed into a 'bare life'. In many ways refugees are stripped down to their 'bare' form, they are stripped of possessions, stripped of belonging, stripped of human rights, stripped even of the feeling of existence. The feeling of non-existence and abandonment can be seen through the words of a refugee from Cameroon, she says "I felt like someone going into space, I did not know what was going to happen to me." Refugees are restrained within camps and other humanitarian

interventions as they cannot, in many circumstances, be integrated into the nation-state due to anxieties over ‘national security’ Therefore they are confined to an area of indistinction, within the boundaries of the nation-state and yet outside its normal domain. In many instances refugees are excluded from political existence while on the other hand they are subjected to the act of inclusion into some type of organisation of humanitarian effort. Refugees become lost in a continuous state of in-betweenness. They become trapped in a void of the in-between and the temporary.

However in the last decade there has been a shift in the idea that refugees belong in camps to the idea of ‘permitting’ refugees their basic human right to freedom of movement. The result has been a new age of urban refugees. Within the urban context there is no ‘manual’ on how to deal with refugees, despite the fact that the number of urban refugees has increased dramatically. In many instances, if not all, there are no efforts being made to deal with the spatial and social implications of these urban refugees. In South Africa, apart from the relief camps set up in 2008 as a result of the xenophobia attacks, refugee camps have never been part of the agenda. This is partly due to the fact that refugees only became permitted to enter South Africa or recognised by the government, after 1994. At this point in South African history the constitution enabled all people, no matter ethnicity or race, their basic human rights. Thus many refugees and asylum seekers settle in urban areas. The UNHCR highlights that as a result of this

settlement pattern, of refugees and asylum seekers, in large urban areas “effective outreach is a challenge.”

Foucault (Boano 2011:40) suggests that architecture, ‘although an inherently political act, cannot by itself liberate or oppress. In his mind, liberation and oppression are practices, not objects, and neither practice can ever be guaranteed by artefacts functioning in the order of objects’. Thus it needs to be stated that the action of providing a piece of architecture for refugees is not in itself, as a physical object, going to resolve the issues of belonging and identity that need to be addressed. However, when a person is moved voluntary or involuntary from one environment to another they have to face many problems of adjusting to their new surroundings. Buildings should be welcoming and not be of an intimidating nature. The main objective of these spaces is to give both physical and psychological shelter. It is not the architecture itself but rather the ability of architecture to allow for people to participate and confront their situation and presence in the world. Pallasmaa (2005:146) elucidates this when he describes how “architecture is the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world”. Buildings do not contain any political essence in and of themselves;

rather they become meaningful due to the physical relationship that they have with social processes. The idea is that architecture involves satisfying material needs as well as resolving social needs through a process of active participation by the occupants and the facilitation of the inevitable construction of identities, communities and cities, through architecture.



diagram 1
the humanitarian
intervention inside the
boundary of the state but
outside the domain of
political existence

image 1
refugee women behind the
fence of a refugee camp
(<http://www.inshuti.org/allia.jpg>)

image 2
UN armoured vehicles
pass refugees fleeing a
camp near the east Con-
golese city of Goma
(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jan/14/chance-choice-britain-refugees-council-report>)

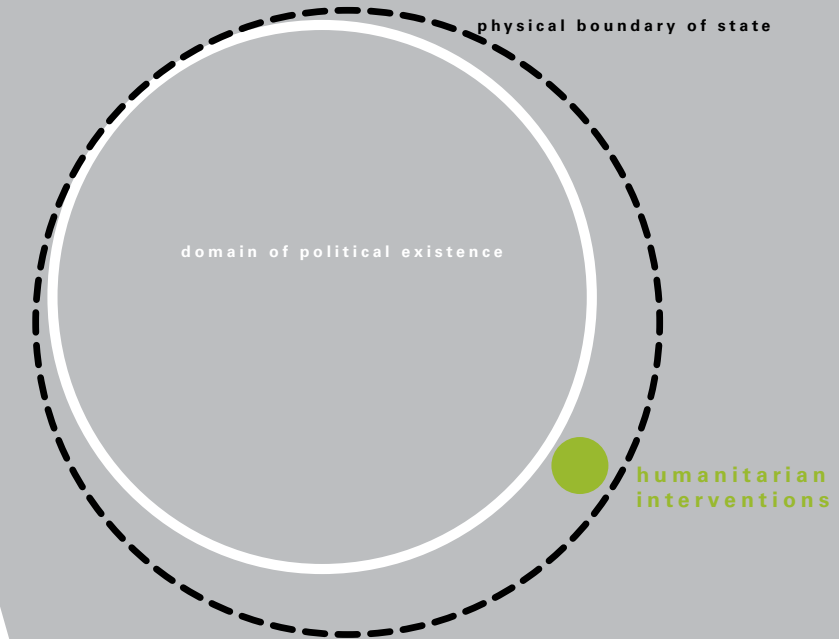


image 1
Israeli Separation Wall
Divides Shuafat Refugee
Camp
(<http://www.thirdage.com/news-photo/Israeli-Separation-Wall-Divides-Shuafat-Refugee-Camp-Pisgat-Zeev-Israeli-Settlement-In-West-Bank/1588625>)

image 2
refugee camp
(<http://www.thirdage.com>)





image 1
xenophobic attacks
(<http://english.ashahid.net/archives/8862>)

image 2
johannesburg mob
(<http://www.myspace.com/forums/t/4719083/p/67866756>)

image 3
south african loot a somali business
(http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/africa/features/article_1407230)

the south african context

Our society is composed of a wide range of cultures and ethnicities that are integral in making Johannesburg the place it is. The diversity and hybridity of cultures, traditions and ethnicities within Johannesburg is what makes the city a place of vibrancy and character.

In the wake of the mass exodus of people from the inner city, fragments of Johannesburg have become forgotten and abandoned space. The diversity, hybridity and vibrancy of the city is being lost in the empty voids. “Dispersal and fragmentation occurred hand in hand, spelling an end to the connectedness, walkability, and sense of place...” (Ellin 2006:18). However, the refugee has no memory or meaning in the city; they are strangers, appearing as if in a constant state of motion. It can clearly be seen that the physical and social mobility and displacement that is occurring, throughout the world, has resulted in new social constructions being fashioned and manufactured. Haupt and Landau (2007:4) argue that citizens of all backgrounds are forging a new nationalism through their engagements with each other and the state, they go further with this discussion by explaining that this reaction takes form through what they term, ‘tactical cosmopolitanism’. ‘Tactical cosmopolitanism’ is a mish-mash of rhetoric and organisational strategies which refugees use to attempt to negotiate spatial inclusion in South Africa’s transforming society without becoming bounded by it. The problem is that despite the ambitions, of the South African government, to overcome past events of exclusion based on social and ethnic classifications the fact remains that country’s commitment to tolerance and inclusion is not as it should be. The level at which refugee’s integration in social, economic and political environments within South Africa is marginal. Communities are resisting the integration of foreigners into their communities. And refugees are resisting integration for fear of discrimination and persecution.

Haupt and Landau (2007:7) outline how the anti-foreign attitude of South African Nationals is not a spontaneous response to street-level tensions, but have been shaped and legitimised by politicians and officials. They describe how former Minister of Home Affairs (1994-2004), Mangosuthu Buthelezi addressed a meeting discussing migration in the region, Buthelezi outlined a series of crises facing the country and then argued that, ‘South Africa is faced with another threat, and that is the ideology of free movement of people, free trade and freedom to choose where you live or work. Free movement of persons spells disaster for our country.’ In addition to this Johannesburg’s Executive Mayor reflected a widely held sentiment in the ‘State of the City 2004’ speech when he stated that, ‘While migrancy contributes to the rich tapestry of the cosmopolitan city, it also places a severe strain on employment levels, housing, and public services.’ These sentiments have helped produce and appropriate practices that have successfully prevented non-nationals, living in the inner-city, from becoming integrated members of the urban community.

The UNHCR would ultimately hope for the eventual repatriation of all refugees. However in many instances this

is not possible. Many refugees and asylum seekers cannot return to their countries of origin due to prolonged conflict and on-going tensions. Thus integration is the next option. During an interview with Tina Gellhi, of the UNHCR South Africa, she highlighted that local integration has become the main objective of the UNHCR. Local integration has a largely unrecognised potential to resolve the plight of refugee populations across the globe, many of whom have been living in exile for years on end.

The UNHCR has stated that “the international community has always rejected the notion that refugees should not be expected to abandon their own culture and way of life, so as to become indistinguishable from nationals of the host community.” The UNHCR thus promotes local integration, as opposed to assimilation, as one of three ‘durable solutions’ available to refugees.

expressing

meaning through architecture

the recollection of identity through memory

“The experience of place within architecture, landscape, and cities is in some sense made of memory.” (Treib 2009:63)

In the book *The Anthropology of Space and Place*, Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga explain how we seem to experience the world as a thing fashioned, as a matter of fiction, while on the other hand we also experience the world around us as a thing given, as a matter of fact (2003:116). The interactions of culture, meanings and social structures are carried out through urban means and the built form. It can be said that the built form is the ‘thing given, as a matter of fact’ while cultural meaning and identity are the ‘things fashioned, as a matter of fiction’. Cultural meaning and identity are a social construct, they are occurrences which allow for society to experience the world in a way that can be understood and significant, the built form seems to become a concretisation of this meaning and identity. Societies control their memories and the transmission of their histories; they invent traditions, imagine communities, and construct their sites of memory and identity. Whatever their status, class, or ethnicity, people have become aware of the necessity of defending, and sometimes manufacturing, their own local culture and identity. In many instances identity is imagined and constructed in the modern era, especially through the built form.

All buildings are essentially products of social and cultural conditions; they are created as a result of basic human needs. The need for shelter, the need for sites of interaction, the need for symbolism, the need for identity. In many instances architecture becomes the means through which the social constructs and meaning, of culture and identity, can seemingly be physically reproduced, architecture allows for the fiction of meaning



and identity to become a physical fact. However should we not consider how architecture expresses meaning before we are able to address the issue of what the architecture may mean?

Adrian Forty, in his writing *The Art of Forgetting*, suggests that memories formed in the mind can be transferred to solid material however he rejects the idea that architecture is capable of embodying memories (Bevan 2006:15). The argument is that memory is unable to mysteriously attach itself to buildings and places, imprinted like ghosts onto their physical fabric. The memories and meaning, which belong to the inhabitants of the city, are a product of the human psyche and it can be argued that these products remain within our psyche. The urban fabric and the built environment are prompts, a means of provoking and recalling the memories and meanings that are a product of the psyche and remain there.

Memory is abstracted within our consciousness. It is a vague and absent presence within the mind. Our personal and individual memory is thus much the same as the memory and history of the city, layers partly removed, vague and

hidden. However when memory of the individual and the memory of the city are fused together the remembrance that is initiated is vivid and intense, "...settings have an especially evocative and emotional power; they force us to reminisce and imagine" (Treib 2009:21). Our memories are attached to specific places and events. Objects, pictures, images, smells and places act as the means through which our memories are recalled. These objects become significant as they initiate and activate the processes of remembering, objects allow for the expansion and emphasis of memories, the occurrences of our life, our history's and ultimately reinforce our very sense of self. Due to the fact that the urban landscape allows for the stimulation of memory it becomes an important element in the construction of our meaning and sense of belonging in the world. Despite the importance of this, the use of memory stimulation is under utilised in the creation of architecture and urban spaces. Architecture has always had the ability and embodied the task of preserving the past. The city of Johannesburg is filled with layers of memory that are hidden and subdued and those that are expressed and unrestrained. In many ways architecture becomes the means through which memory is invoked and summoned. The fabric of the city allows for space to be transformed into significance, allowing remembrances from fragments of memory to gradually arise, bit by bit.

It is clearly evident that meaning and memory can be read and symbolised through the physical built form of architecture. The meaning and memory

that is attached to a space is inscribed through the activities, people and contents that the building contains. The urban landscape is a warehouse of meaning and memory. The streets, buildings, routes and spaces that make up the urban fabric, frame the lives of all those that inhabit them. Many of these spaces outlast the lifetimes of the people that they frame and they thus become the reminders of those that once were and the happenings that once occurred. The material object of the building becomes a physical concretisation in which meaning is attached, the concept of identity is created and culture is maintained.



*abandoned building in
the johannesburg cbd*

children at world refugee day

the fluid nature of identity

Meanings that are read are constantly in ever changing motion, they are fluid, changing through personal experience and perceptions. Each person's own personal experience will allow for them to attach and perceive meaning differently to the person next to them, people have diverse memories, they produce stories with different meaning out of signs, symbols and spaces. Likewise, as that individuals life experiences change the meaning that they attach to that space will also change. Culture, identity, meaning, they are all fluid and always changing. Identity is the product of meaning and memories. Identities can be, and in many instances must be, newly invented and reconstructed, they are 'fashioned'. Carolynne Baker, in her essay *The Uluru Kata-Tjuta Cultural Centre, Centring Aboriginality or a Site of Resistance*; explains that recent shifts in the way cultural identity is understood as something not monolithic and fixed, but fluid, reflexive, and always contested... (Herrle 2008:414). Culture, identity, meaning, they are all fluid and always changing. Architecture needs to allow for the ever changing fluid nature that is identity.

Identity and culture has become a thing that needs to be maintained and retained. There becomes a need for the construction of identity and the production of customary practices. The fluid nature of cultural identity, as explained above, allows for this construction and production to occur.

The exchanges of culture and identity occur on an everyday basis. However there is a universal complaint about the loss of identity, which is being felt by so many. It can be argued, that this loss of identity and culture has been a direct consequence of the technological world we have created. Societies are no longer bound by their local cultures and practises. In the last decade the sense of identity has been seemingly

lost as the culture and identity that is experienced in societies, all around the world, is a culture of the world and no longer a culture of the local. However, the search for identity cannot simply be surrendered. The fact is that the idea of identity, and thus a sense of self, is what establishes our meaning and sense of belonging in the world. Alberto Perez-Gomez (Holl 1994:9) insists that the promotion and perpetuation of this quest, to identify what constitutes a meaningful order for human life, is in fact the inveterate concern of architecture.

The task of architecture, throughout time, has been to create 'embodied existential metaphors' (Holl 1994:37) these metaphors allow for the concretisation of man's place and meaning in the world. The physical nature of architecture allows for our memories and thoughts to be revealed and externalised, architecture materialises our identities. Cities and buildings enable us to structure, understand, and remember the formless flow of reality and time. Architecture allows for us to remember moments in time and thus recognise who we are, enabling us to place ourselves in the continuum of culture.

Juhani Pallasmaa describes lived space as something differing from physical space, this idea of lived space is often described as "existential space". Lived existential space is created and produced on the understanding of meanings, intentions, and beliefs reflected upon it by an individual. The understanding

of lived existential space is a unique feature interpreted through the memory and experience of the individual. Treib (2009:26) elaborates on the idea of existential space; he explains how every lived experience takes place at the intersection of “recollection and intention, perception and fantasy, memory and desire”. The idea of existential space is based on the principle that space is transformed into place. The way in which space is transformed into place, or existential space, is done through the process of understanding space through meaning and memory. Dolores Hayden (1995:46) uses the term ‘place memory’ to describe the process by which memory allows for spaces to become meaningful. Place memory encapsulates the human ability to connect with both the built and natural environments that are entwined in the cultural landscape. She further argues that it is this ‘place memory’ that is the key to the power of historic places to help citizens define their public pasts: places trigger memories for insiders, who have a shared common past, and at the same time places can often represent shared pasts to outsiders.

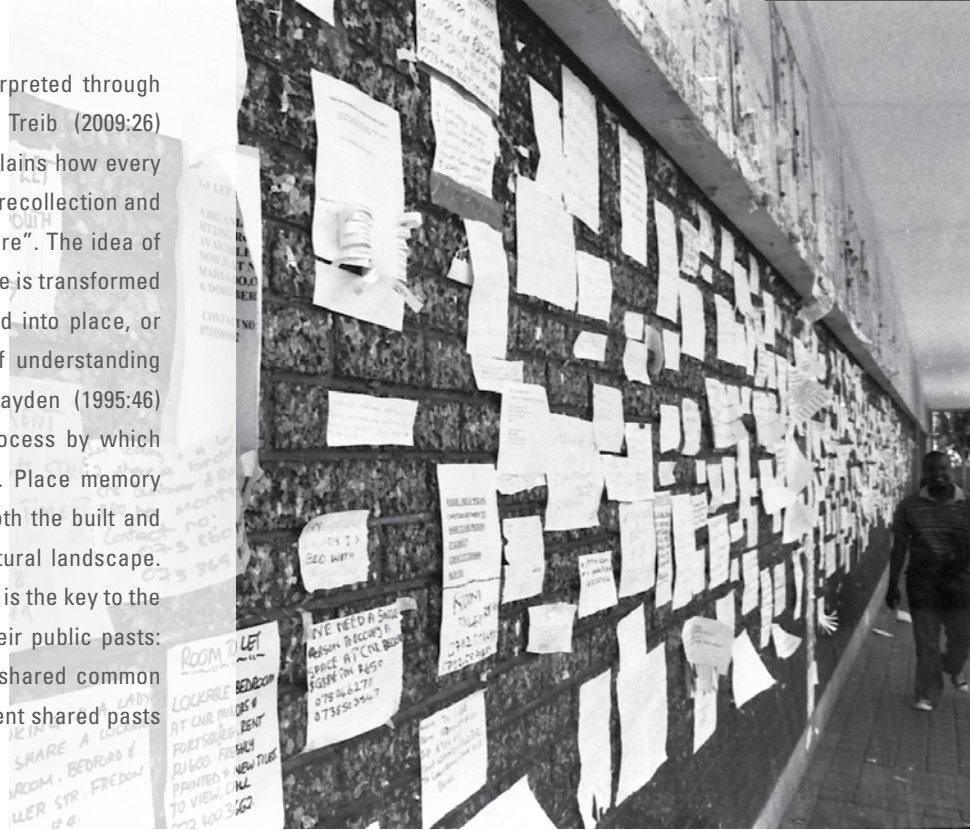


image 1
a wall in yeoville becomes
a lived use through the use
of the community

image 2
refugee womens livelihood



what architecture may mean

perceptions of space

‘All these sensations combine within one complex experience, which becomes articulate and specific, though wordless. The building speaks through the silence of perceptual phenomenon.’ (Holl 1994:41)

Perception is the process through which we acquire knowledge of an objective world. Perception is the act of capturing an understanding of the world by means of the senses or of the mind. When one looks at the way in which architecture may express meaning the notion of perception is an essential issue that needs to be addressed. Architecture is not simply a series of spaces that are moved through, nor is it a series of views and images. Architecture is encountered, approached and confronted. Architecture is connected and associated to the human body. Every experience of architecture is multisensory. Every experience we have within the world is defined and measured by eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue. Our perceived experience of architectural space is a sensory experience which is created through movement, as one moves from one space through to another a mixture of transitions from one experience to another occurs. Each transition between experiences affects the composed functioning of our senses. The skin registers the modification in temperature. The eye alters to the varying levels of light. The nose distinguishes the smells of materials. The ear picks up sounds and resonances which bounce off surfaces. Tom Porter (1997:29), in his book *The Architect’s Eye*, he describes how the combination of these varied sensory inputs reinforces, elaborates and may even alter our perception of the environment to give us a complete image which , in turn, can be modified by our own personality and motivation.



*abandoned building in
the johannesburg cbd*

Kent Bloomer and Charles Moore have suggested (Porter 1997:30) that the incorporation of a body-centred view of space in architectural design has been virtually eradicated this century in favour of a singularly visual approach they state 'the historic overemphasis on seeing as the primary sensual activity in architecture necessarily leads us away from our bodies. This results in an architectural model which is not only experientially imbalanced but in danger of being restrictive and exclusive.'

The perception of a space is created through the numerous sensory experiences which the space creates. The perceptions which we have created, no matter how consciously or unconsciously, enables or alters the way in which we allow for meaning to be attached to the space in question. Tom Porter (1997:35) explains the concept of how perceptions can alter our meaning and awareness in the world when he makes the statement that our bodily contact with the edges of space is central to our awareness of ourselves and our spatial location. Pallasmaa (2005:145) elaborates on this idea saying that 'we have the innate capacity for remembering and imagining places. Perception, memory, and imagination are in constant interaction; the

domain of our present is merged with images of our memory and fantasy.' If perception plays such an important role in the way in which architecture allows for the creation of meaning, then the challenge is to allow for architecture to provoke both internal and external perception. Architecture needs to allow for the external perception of sensory experience of space while simultaneously allowing for the internal perceptions of expressing meaning and significance.

The skin reads the texture, weight, density and temperature. The surface of an old object, tarnished by the attentive hands of its users. To press a door handle shining from the thousand hands that have entered the door before us; the clean shimmer of ageless wear has turned into an image of welcome and hospitality. The tactile sense connects us with time and tradition; through marks of touch we shake the hands of countless generations.

perceptions of time

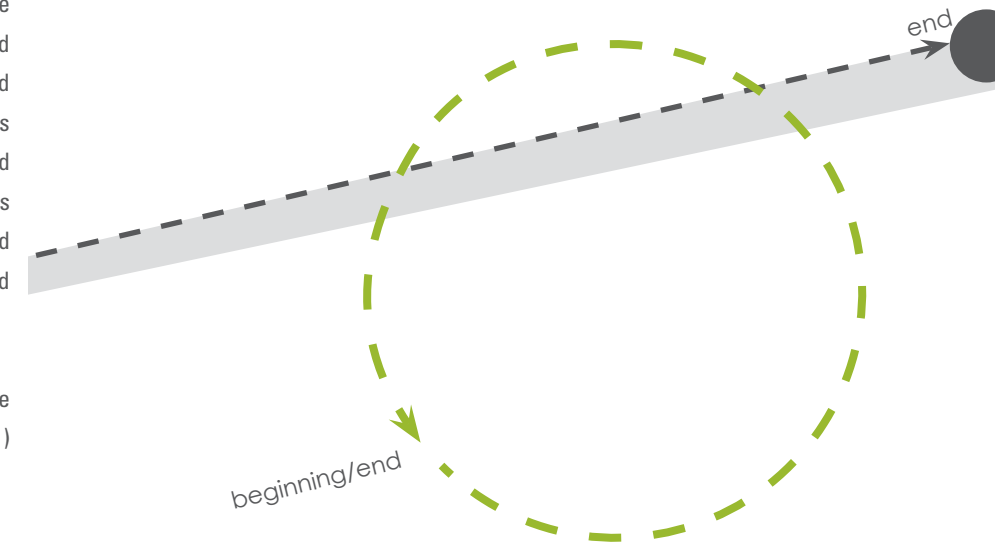
‘We do not live in an objective material world: we live in mental worlds in which the experienced, remembered, and dreamed, as well as the present, past and future, constantly fuse into each other.’ (Pallasmaa 2005:308)

The human body has the capacity to move through space and the environment, however, through the introduction of time spatial experience is different from merely occupying space. We do not merely exist in space; we inhabit and exist within time. We have a psychological need to know that we are embedded in the continuity of time. Time becomes the means through which spatial experience is formed, time is the flow which activates a space. Movement through space thus has to be designed, together with movement through time, creating an architecture of ‘dynamism and flexibility’ (Ellin 2006: 2).

However in the modern era it can be seen that we have developed what is known as khronophobia, or the fear of time. Pallasmaa (2005:312) argues, in his writing *Melancholy and Time*, that ‘The incredible acceleration of speed in our time, however, is collapsing time into the flat screen of the present, upon which the simultaneous kaleidoscope of the world is projected. Buildings as well as objects lose their temporal essence and turn into commodities, objects of fashionable image and desire.’ We have become obscured to the idea of aging. In every aspect of life we resist time and struggle to make it standstill. The age of people is altered through cosmetic intervention. Objects are replaced before they have attained any hint of use. This fear of time has been the direct result of the understanding of time being fundamentally transformed. In all ancient

and many current cultures and religions; from Plato to Aristotle, Hinduism and Buddhism, time has been understood as having a cyclical nature. The cyclical characteristics of time can be seen in all aspects of nature from the cycles of the seasons, the cycles of animal and plant life, the cycles of day and night. In his writing, *The Sociology of Time: Histories and Historians in the Cultures of the West and China*, Peter Young argues that even empires rise and fall (1976:205). However in modern day society we have adopted a lineal view of time. This view has been developed out of the Christian philosophies that the world was created in one day and will come to an end. This idea that time has an irrevocable beginning and will have an irrevocable end has force for us to feel helpless in the relation to time, as Pallasmaa explains (2005:312) ‘we can shape matter and structure space, but we cannot throw time off its predestined course.’

Architecture has always had the ability and embodied the task of preserving the past or as Perez-Gomez (Holl 1994:31)



argues 'The time of architecture is a denied time, in the greatest of buildings time stands still. Time... has petrified into a timeless present.' Architecture allows for time to be concretised as well as transcended. The legendary columns of the Pantheon have concretised thousands of years of time and simultaneously had the ability, for generations, to carry us back to the time of the Roman Empire and permit us to imagine the distant lives of those who once were. Great works of architecture, such as this, have the ability to make time stand still. They have the power to allow us to feel embedded in the continuity of time. They have the power to unite time, space, and matter into a single sensory, psychological and physical understanding.

However, the need of society to resist time and reject its effect has resulted in architecture being designed for the 'timeless present'. Architecture has become the product of styles and fashions. Pallasmaa (2005:313) theorises that the acceleration of speed is obvious also in the current circulation of architectural imagery; new stylistic fashions travel across the globe in a matter of weeks. Whereas the construction of the human habitat used to be a slow local accumulation, it has become a global mosaic, and architecture has lost its role as the prime source of permanence, stability, and security of existential experience. Architecture provided the frame of identity in previous eras, but identity is now sought through momentary consumption.



image 1
the Pantheon Rome

image 2
*ruins outside the
Colosseum Rome*

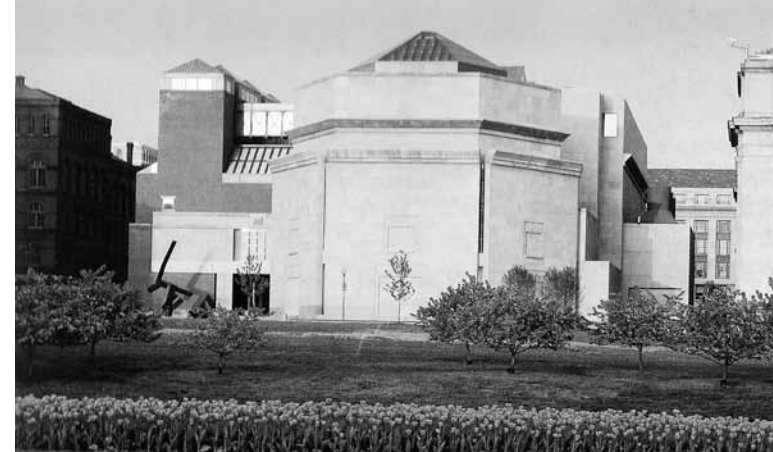


image 1
central hall at the
Holocaust Museum
showing the use of brick
and steel reminiscent of
the camp ovens

image 2
circulation ramps disrupt
your perception of the
space

image 3 & 4
the hall of remembrance

Dannatt, A. 1995. United States
Holocaust Museum: James Ingo
Freed. Phaidon Press Limited.
London.

the united states holocaust memorial museum

Washington, 1989-1993, James Ingo Freed

The United States Holocaust Museum was the initiative of President Carter. The concept was to create ‘a permanent living memorial museum to the victims of the Holocaust’ (Dannatt 1995:5). The original design for the building was described as ‘almost brutal. You could not escape identifying it with the architecture favoured by Hitler. It seemed more of a memorial to the perpetrators of the crime, not the victims’. Due to this view James Ingo Freed was invited to modify the scheme.

Dannatt (1995:5) describes how museums and monuments to the Holocaust are no longer rare, however, when it come to the architecture of these museums and monuments the question always remains the same: how to elucidate and give form to the act of memory. He goes further in arguing that ‘architecture is about time as well as space, temporal as well as spatial duration and transformation. How a building maintains its intention through time, then, is all the more relevant to a museum with the purpose of preventing an event’s repetition.’ This argument is related to the United States Holocaust Museum as the building can be read as a history of the Holocaust, with the details forming a grammar of history, a visibly and literal organisation of memory.

The materiality of the museum is intrinsically metaphorical. Freed has applied the tectonic elements, that can be found in the concentration

camps, and used them for no practical purpose other than that of remembrance. The red brick, which took a year to select, is warm and tactile, yet disturbing. The walls generate the ethereal image of the camp ovens; the steel elements bounded between the brick gives the metaphoric illusion of even the binding of the camps ovens. Each and every element and detail within the design has been eloquently considered to capture the memory and impression of the Holocaust. The complete building is innately metaphorical with the intention to provoke memories and meaning. Dannatt (1995:25) depicts the United States Holocaust Museum as being a building that is an alternate to our current architectural standstill, ‘a building unafraid of narrative yet never reliant on historicism, poetic whilst practical, operating through association rather than quotation, humble despite its scale and import.



image 1
refugee child and
refugee day 2011

photo by
Dale Swanepoel

fusing

refugee and city

writing a new layer

“Everyone who uses a space, changes its story a bit, every new building changes the story about the city a little. The city and its stories can never be completed, it is always retold and it keeps on changing with the narrators, the users, and with on-going processes and forces outside its realm. The role of the narrator is not necessarily to tell a finished story about a place, but to create conditions for the people who live in the city to develop new uses, leave new traces and signs and take part in telling the future stories of the city.” (City Story 2008)

By allowing for spontaneous and unanticipated occurrences within spaces, the meaning of the space will be created by the people that inhabit that space; thus allowing people, the strangers of the city, to initiate the writing of a new layer on the fabric of the city. Allowing the writing of a new narrative, the story of the stranger, a story etched alongside, over, within and between the existing stories and layers which have been partly removed, subdued, vague and hidden.

Rather than simply satisfying basic needs, places must become connected, interesting, integrated, meaningful, and significant. If the city is to become a place of renewed community, understanding, memory and meaning then the city needs to be produced by people for people. Interventions need to create and inspire new meaning for both people of the city as well as the strangers in the city.

02 design

through perceptions and memory

c o n t e n t s

65 **preservation and architecture**
68 case study neues museum

69 **project brief**

programme development
71 creating the programme
73 programme breakdown
74 programme arrangement
76 user analysis
78 refugee stories

urban perceptions
81 refugee distribution
82 refugee communities
84 refugee services
86 site selection
88 movement
90 surrounding uses
92 solar study

site perceptions
95 a brief history
99 current condition
104 what to keep?

concept development
107 theoretical concretisation

design development
110 site responses
112 preservation
116 social inclusion
118 perceptions
120

design analysis
124 preservation of structural logic
126 preservation through facade rhythms
130 social inclusion through programme
132 material perceptions
134

final design
138 bringing it all together
146 drawings

references

preservation

and architecture

‘A good mingling of old buildings must remain, and in remaining they will have become something more than mere decay...’ (Jacobs 1993:259)

The preservation of architecture and the built environment has been a response of society’s need to prevent the loss of the urban site of remembrance and memory. Architecture has always had the ability and embodied the task of preserving the past, and thus enables the mapping of time and space. There has thus been a movement to preserve what is view as culturally and socially significant within the urban environment. The preservation of public pasts and histories has become a contested terrain within the context of South Africa. Choices about what to remember and protect are a debate which is constantly positioned in the foreground when it comes to matters of conservation issues. The preservation and conservation of culture, identity, history and spaces of importance have all been highlighted as important public components that need to be preserved. The traces of time and memory that are contained by the urban landscape suggest opportunities for reconnecting fragments of public histories and urban stories.

Caldwell (2005:202)clearly outlines the relationship between the ideas of identity, history and memory, he states that identity and culture are the terrain through which the individual speaks as a member of the contemporary collectivity, but culture is also a mediation of history, the site through which the past returns and is remembered, however, fragmented, imperfect or disavowed. Through that remembering, new forms of the subjectivity and community are thought and signified.

Urban landscapes have an extraordinary ability to nurture the public memory of its inhabitants. The relationship between cultural history and place specific memory is undeniable. Urban setting and places allow for the remembrance of past histories and thus reinforces the recollection of cultures and identities. Dolores Hayden (1995:12), in her book *The Power of place, Urban Landscapes as Public History*, describes how a socially inclusive urban landscape history can become the basis for new approaches to public history and urban preservation. She goes on to argue that this new approach will be different from, but complementary to, the art-historical approach to architecture that has provided a basis for architectural preservation. People embed places with social and cultural meaning. Urban landscape history thus can allow for the linking of those meanings into contemporary urban life. The idea is that old buildings allow for the recollection of meaning and memory. They thus allow for a community identity to be attached to the space in question. The use of a work of architecture that has been altered by the effects of time heightens and intensifies our perceptions of a space.

Sites of social, cultural and community meaning need to be preserved. They are an indispensable means of creating a collective urban identity. Hayden (1995:78) suggests that while a single, preserved historic place may trigger potent memories, networks of such places begin to reconnect social memory on an urban scale. Networks of related places organised in a thematic way.

While it is evident that urban sites of history and meaning need to be conserved there is debate over how historical architecture should be used, interpreted and designed. In his writing, *The Architectural Intervention: The Limits of Imitation*, Ignasi de Sola Morales (1988:9) explains that the viewpoint of specialists in restoration is based on the presupposition that there is a difference between the past and the present. That difference represents the basic motivation for any scheme or intervention. Separating new buildings from old ones, explaining technological changes, making visible the insuperable gap between the Zeitgeist of another time and the present day. These are the presuppositions that have predominantly served as a basis for modern intervention. However he goes on to argue that the architecture of the past and that of the present are not opposed to one another but on a par, resembling each other in the fundamental conditions through which they have been produced. Ignasi describes how the architect ought to adopt a strategy of listening, a strategy of a detailed recognition of the critical aspects that have already been impressed on the architecture of the past.

Over the last hundred years the debate over how to deal with restoration of historical buildings has fluctuated between a number of varying views and opinions. From the mere delimitation of what is authentically historical. To carrying out interventions that are discreet, invisible and indiscernible. To interventions that are clearly different, highlighting past and present. However, no one argument can be the definite solution, each work of architecture is unique. Interventions need to be structured around the particularity of each specific circumstance. The rationality of technique, use and significance are the means around which preservation interventions must be organised. However according to Grassi (1988:15) one thing that cannot be over looked or dismissed is the awareness of memory.





image 1
central hall at the
Holocaust Museum
showing the use of brick
and still reminiscent of
the camp ovens

image 2
circulation ramps disrupt
your perception of the
space

image 3
the hall of remembrance

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the neues museum

Berlin, 1997-2009, David Chipperfield

The Neues Museum was originally designed by Friedrich August Stüler and built between 1841 and 1859. During World War II the building was left in ruins after extensive bombing. David Chipperfield, with Julian Harrap, won an international competition in 1997 for the rebuilding of the museum. The aim was to protect and make sense of a ruin without building a monument to destruction or a historic imitation. Chipperfield is stated as saying, of the Neues Museum, 'this concern led us to create a new building from the old, but once again, a new building that neither celebrates nor hides its history but includes it. A new building that was made of fragments or parts of the old, but once again, conspiring to completeness.' (Cortes 2010:43). There were four approaches that Chipperfield considered when it came to the preservation of the existing building. The first was that of the exact reconstruction of the building, the second was to monumentalise the ruin and preserve the building in its ruinous state as a physical evidence of history, the third approach considered was that of collaging the remaining structure with the new. These approaches were all dismissed, instead Chipperfield decided to, as described by Cortes (2010:43), restore a sense of place to the fragments and re-establish the meaning of the original building. The aim was to insert the fragments within a comprehensible structure, through amalgamation and repair, thereby reintegrating them into an architectural whole.

The objective was to recomplete the original building and repair and restore the parts that remained. The restoration allows for the original structure to be respected as a historical structure in different states of preservation. The new elements that were added allowed for the

gaps in the original building to be filled. However, these new element do not compete with the existing fabric, in terms of surface and brightness, allowing for the original building to be emphasised. 'The new reflects the lost without imitating it' (Cecilia 2010:46).

Chipperfield maintains continuity between the old and new parts through the use of simple forms and volumes. This continuity is further enhanced through the use of materials. Only two materials have been used, brickwork and prefab concrete consisting of white cement. Cortes(2010:43) states that 'the results of the work on the Neues Museum are, without a doubt, highly satisfactory in a project which, in spite of its incredibly complex initial conditions, has wisely intertwined operations involving conservation, consolidation, repair, restoration, reconstruction and new construction.'

project

b r i e f

UNHCR, refugee rights advocates, government and the refugees themselves, therefore need to ask the question , What is it that a refugee needs in an urban setting like South Africa to be able to lead a meaningful existence? Two things come to mind, firstly, the need to create an enabling environment and secondly, the need to create a welcoming society. Fatima Khan (2007:1)

If the landscape of refugees is to be fully realised and understood then the aim should be to allow for a ‘cultural citizenship’ to be formulated within the social context of Johannesburg. We need to allow for refugees to become an integral part of the social fabric that already exists within Johannesburg, allowing for refugees to create an identity within the city. If this is to be achieved it will not be formed as a result of legal membership but rather out of a sense of cultural belonging.

The building thus seeks to become a space which will allow for the refugee to form a sense of belonging and identity within the city. Through the use of diverse programme and spatial perceptions the project will aim to integrate refugee communities with the local communities of Johannesburg. This will be achieved by allowing for spaces that are used by diverse communities, ethnicities and cultures. Bringing all types of people, from various backgrounds, together in a single space. If social integration of refugees is to truly be successful there needs to be a place in which understanding, acceptance and empathy can be facilitated. Fatima Khan (2007:1) argues that local integration is a course of action which allows the refugee or the asylum seeker to lead a meaningful existence within the host community; this does not necessarily mean permanent residence or citizenship, it is a process which allows for the development of human potential. She goes on to discuss how It has been their experience, at the Refugee Rights Project, that then when South African communities understand the reasons why refugees were forced to flee and why refugee protection is a moral and legal obligation, the South African community have show a significant change in attitude. Thus the underpinning ideology of the project will be to facilitate connections, understanding and acceptance between people, through the use of space. The building will seek to become a prominent space within the city which allows for a diverse variety of groups to interact and connect. Through this facilitation the chance of integrating refugee communities will be enhanced, social belonging increased and identity reinforced.

programme

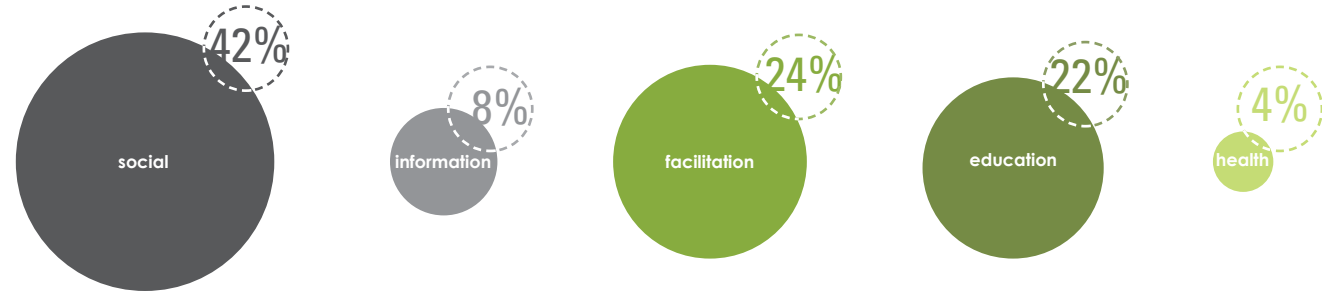
development

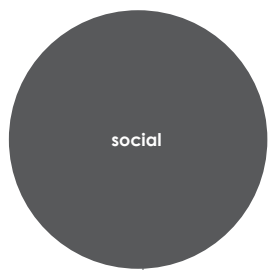
creating the programme

Refugees struggle to access the most basic services such as health care, the placement of unaccompanied minors, accessing education or finding employment all factors necessary for the successful integration of refugees. (Khan 2007:1)

When defining the programme it was essential to ensure that the building contained a number of various uses. Through a diverse number of uses and functions the project will allow for different people, of various backgrounds and cultures, to be brought to the centre. The intention is to allow for a wide variety of users and thus allowing for the interaction between the refugee community and the local community. The objective of this diverse and intense interaction will allow for the refugee community to become an integral part of the social fabric of Johannesburg. And thus create a sense of social belonging while still being able to maintain their cultural identity.

From an interview with, Tina Gellhi at the UNHCR, it was identified that there are five basic needs of refugees. These included facilitation, education, health, information and social interaction and integration. The programme thus revolved around these needs and five ‘centres’ were developed for the building. An information centre, a facilitation centre, an education centre, health centre and a social centre.





shops	144.1
food	103.9
workshop	46.3
exhibition	
gallery	178.2
entrances	301.7
social platforms	322.4
public square	694.3
total	1790.9



help desk	116.6
internet cafe	116.6
know your rights	82.6
total	315.8



job location	78.5
ngo offices	645.5
legal	137.2
meeting rooms	139.0
total	1000.2



it training	66.9
language classes	mu
skills workshop	293.2
creche	201.0
auditorium	91.7
lecture rooms	72.5
library	197.8
total	923.1



mobile clinic	mu
trauma counselling	166.4
total	166.4



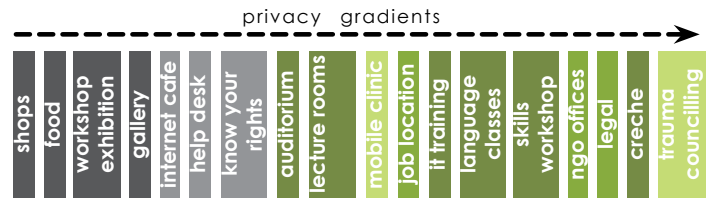
services	395.1
circulation	363.1
basement	1464.7
total	2222.9

4196.4 total area

programme break down

programme arrangement

Due to the fact that the feeling of vulnerability is a very prevalent issue, when it came to dealing with refugees, a series of hierarchies was established between the programme and functions. Allowing for a privacy gradient from the most public functions to the most private. This privacy gradient will be used to establish the locations of functions within the building. Allowing for refugees to feel a sense of safety and security, while still allowing for connections between spaces as well as providing access to the greater community.

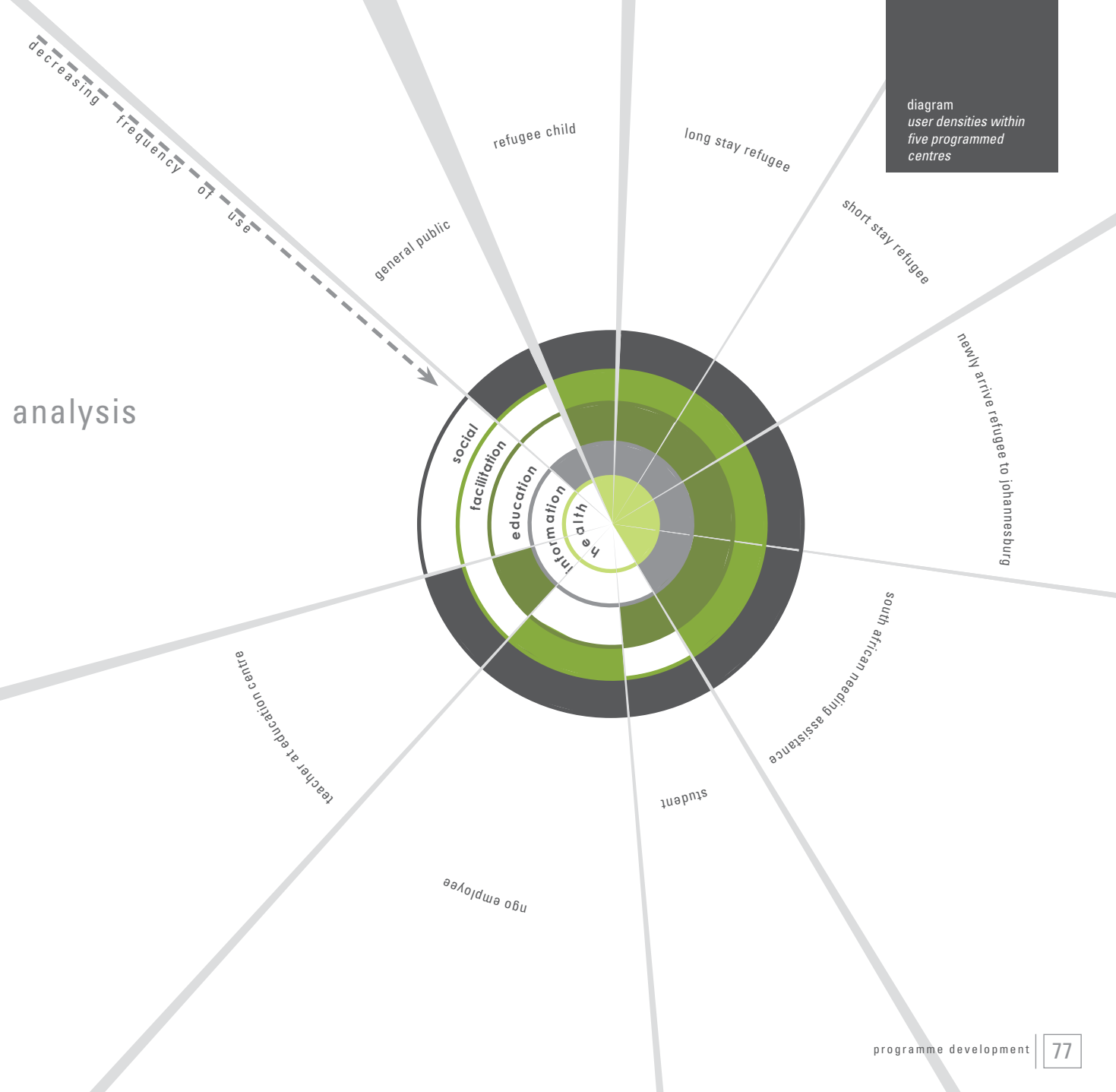


The main objective of the programme is to allow for people of various backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures to interact with each other. Interaction which will allow for the facilitation of social integration for refugee communities.

The diagram on the right indicates the various types of users which may use the building. The diagram illustrates which space various users will occupy and in which of the spaces different people might encounter each other. The filled in areas, of the concentric circles, show which spaces will be used by whom. The more the circle is filled the greater the possibility of diverse interaction between groups.

The diagram clearly indicates that the possibility of encounters is most likely in the social spaces, such as the shops, restaurant, public square ect. While the more private spaces, such as the trauma counselling, being used only by refugee groups. This diagram reinforces the privacy gradient graph on the previous page, highlighting the programme uses which can be more private and secluded. While stressing the importance of the social space for creating areas of interaction

user analysis



Joseph* is a refugee who has been living in South Africa for over seven years. He is currently volunteering at the JRS. He describes how tough it was to settle into South African life when he first arrived. His aim is to assist other refugees, in order to allow for the transission to be easier. Joseph* will be able to volunteer at the centre in any of the diverse facilities that will be provided.



Robert* made the journey to South Africa from Zimbabwe five months ago. He has been unable to find work and is struggling to survive within the harsh urban landscape. Robert* is in desprite need of help. The faciliatation centre of the proposed development would be a ray of light. Robert* would be assisted to find work, a place to live and be provided with any other support or aid needed to him to survive.



Rudi* and Andy* attend the Albert street school from monday to friday. They both say they enjoy school and learning new things. But after the end of the school day they have no place to study and no access to after school activities. They will be able to make use of the learning centre, a place where they will be able to study and do home work, as well as take part in other activities that occur in the workshop spaces and the public square



Micheal* is a Somalian refugee that has been living in Yeoville, Johannesbrug, for a couple of years. He currently has an informal stall on Rocky Street. How ever he wants to allow for his business to expand. Michael* could make use of the market which will run in the public square of the centre on weekends. Thus allowing him the opportunity of graving his business. Michael* could also make use of the workshops and seminars which will be held in the learning certre. This will allow for him to broaden his skills and diversify his existing buisness.



Tina* has travelled from Ethiopia with her husband to South Africa. A baby girl has recently entred their lives. Tina* goes to work everyday as a waitress and constantly worries about leaving her daughter. She would make use of the creche facility at the centre, dropping off her daughter everyday, feeling secure that she is leaving her in a safe environment.

*note all names have been changed and all photographs altered in order for privacy to be maintained.

urban

p e r c e p t i o n s

refugee distribution

Within South Africa there are no refugee camps, the constitution in the country permits all people, no matter their race or ethnicity, the right to freedom of movement. Thus refugees and asylum seekers are able to move and settle where they please. Due to the attraction of work, education and other infrastructure resources refugees are most likely to settle in urban areas.

The diagrams below indicate this exact phenomenon. Diagram one illustrates the concentration of refugees around the whole of South Africa, with the darkest areas showing the greatest concentration. The most predominant areas are those at the border and the region of Gauteng. Diagram Two shows a more focused picture of refugee distribution in Gauteng, the map demonstrates that the area around the Johannesburg CBD is the most dense concentration of refugees, in the region. Due to the dense concentration of refugees and asylum seekers in and around the Johannesburg CBD region, this area is the main focus for the project. The intervention that is proposed will be positioned within this area to allow for the greatest outreach to refugee communities .



most dense ● > ● > ○ least dense

diagram
map indicating where
predominant refugee
communities are
located around the
Johannesburg CBD

refugee communities

- 01 yeoville
- 02 hillbrow
- 03 central methodist church
- 04 Central Johannesburg
- 05 mayfair
- 06 fordsburg
- 07 rosettenville
- 08 johannesburg south

5

6

2

3

4

1

7

8



diagram
map indicating where
refugee services are
located around the
Johannesburg CBD

refugee services

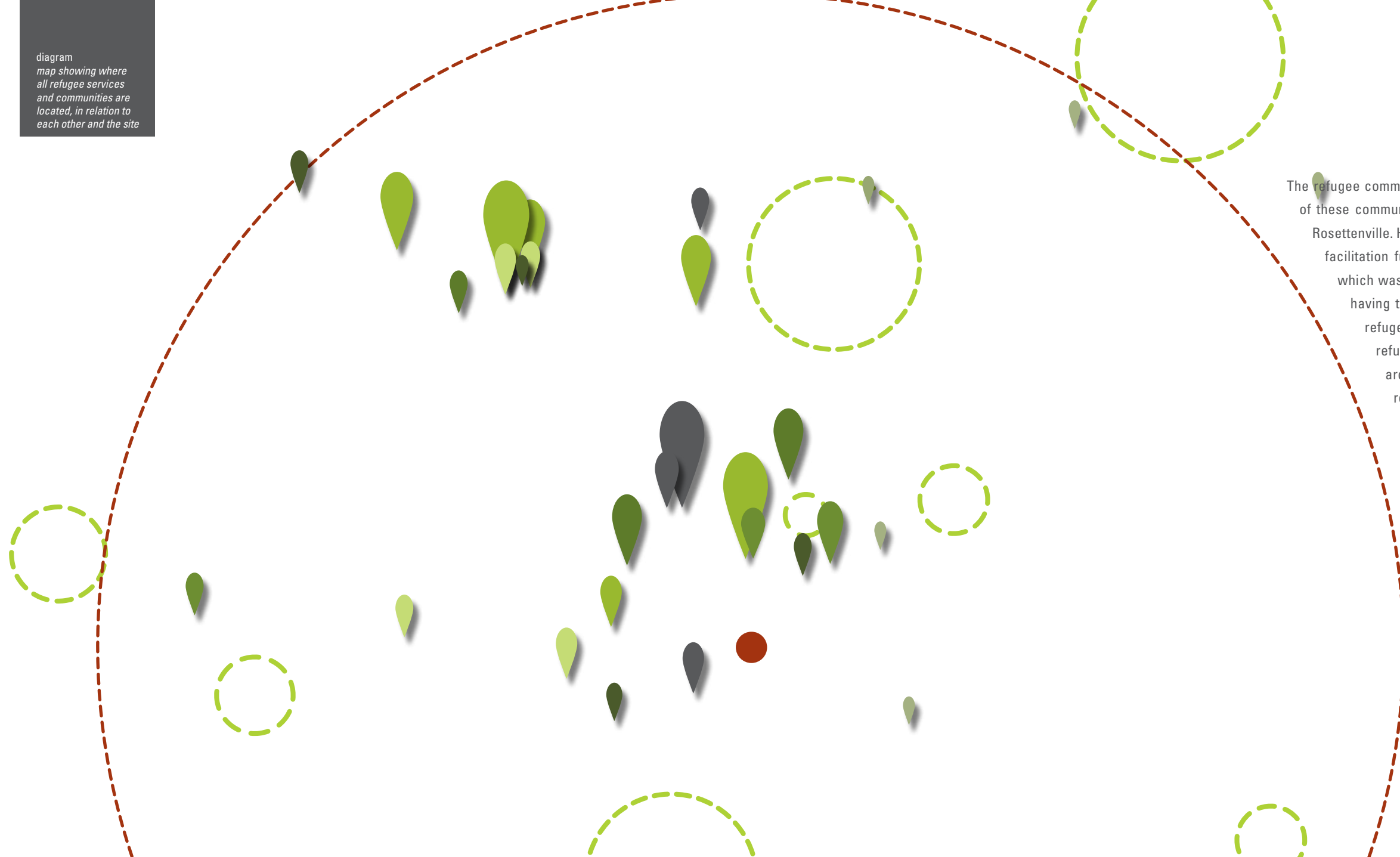
- 01 wits law clinic
- 02 forced migration studies programme
- 03 south african red cross society
- 04 cormsa
- 05 lawyers for human rights
- 06 south african centre for survivors of torture
- 07 amnesty international
- 08 trauma clinic
- 09 zimbabwe political victims association
- 10 gift of the givers
- 11 islamic careline
- 12 johannesburg child welfare
- 13 black sash
- 14 african diaspora forum
- 15 refugee childrens project
- 16 jesuit refugee services
- 17 coordinating body for refugee communities
- 18 probono.org
- 19 central methodist church
- 20 refugee ministries centre
- 21 usindiso sanctuary
- 22 strabane mercy centre
- 23 the house
- 24 commission for gender equality
- 25 ekhaya overnight shelter
- 26 department of home affairs
- 27 joburg city migrants help desk
- 28 council for conciliation
- 29 bienvenue shelter

- refugee organisations
- legal services
- basic needs service providers
- psyco-social counselling services
- shelters
- government service providers

refugee specific

diagram
map showing where
all refugee services
and communities are
located, in relation to
each other and the site

site selection



The refugee communities, which exist, are currently scattered all around Johannesburg. The locations of these communities are already established and functioning, from Yeoville to Hillbrow, Mayfair to Rosettenville. However the fact remains that there are few facilities within these areas which provide facilitation functions that refugees need. The last remaining reception office in Johannesburg, which was located in Crown Mines, was closed in May 2011 and the result has been Refugee's having to travel to Pretoria for the facilities that the Reception office once held. The other refugee services that do exist within Johannesburg; such as the Jesuit Refugee Services, refugee ministry centre, Africa diaspora forum, CORMSA, amongst others; are scattered around the Johannesburg CBD. The geographic situation of refugees and services has resulted in the constant state of motion, experienced by refugees, to be heightened. This group of people is seemingly always on the move; travelling to acquire services.

The underpinning concept for the choice of site was to allow for the constant state of motion, of people and services, to come to rest at one place. Even if that state of rest is experienced for only a brief moment in time. It cannot be suggested that all refugee communities or services need to be consolidated, the communities which have been set up have become a point of reference for many people. Thus the choice of site needed to be a place that was relatively central for all the refugee communities around Johannesburg.

The diagram on the left shows all the refugee communities and services which have been mapped. The site which has been chosen for the project, the old Marshall Street Barracks is at the centre. Allowing for central access for all those who might need to make use of the proposed intervention.

-  refugee services
-  refugee communities
-  site
-  encompassing radius

01

- BRT stations
- ghandi square transport interchange



02

- major taxi ranks



03

- ghandi square transport interchange



04

- 01 BRT routes
- 02 major taxi route
- 03 major car routes
- 04 pedestrian routes
- site
- 240m radius



The movement in and out of the johannesburg occurs predominantly through taxi, bus and car. However within the CBD there is a high amount of pedestrian movement. Once inside the boundary of the city centre people walk to where they need to be.

One block away from the site is Gandhi Square, a public transport interchange. Thus there is a high number of people moving within the vicinity of the site. As shown on the diagrams on the left, all types of transport are available from the site within walking distance. Thus no matter what type of transport is used people can easily gain access to the site. Choosing a site with movement in mind has been a predominant issue from the start of the project. As discussed in the theoretical essay, refugees appear to always be in a constant state of motion. Moving from one place to another, thus it is important that all people from all areas of the city are able to travel to the site, no matter what form of transport is used.



diagram
map indicating major
landmarks around the
Johannesburg CBD

- 01 park station
- 02 joubert park
- 03 jack mincer taxi rank
- 04 supreme court
- 05 ghandi square
- 06 carlton centre
- 07 small street mall
- site



surrounding uses



There are a large variety of uses that surround the site. It is essential that the proposed intervention does not detract from these. Existing commercial and retail business cannot be negatively affected by any new insertion into the context.

Thus a careful analysis was done of what existing uses surrounded the site. The intention is not to duplicate any services that are already being provided by the surrounding context. Any uses that are not evident in the immediate site surrounds are included into the programme of the building, such as retail.

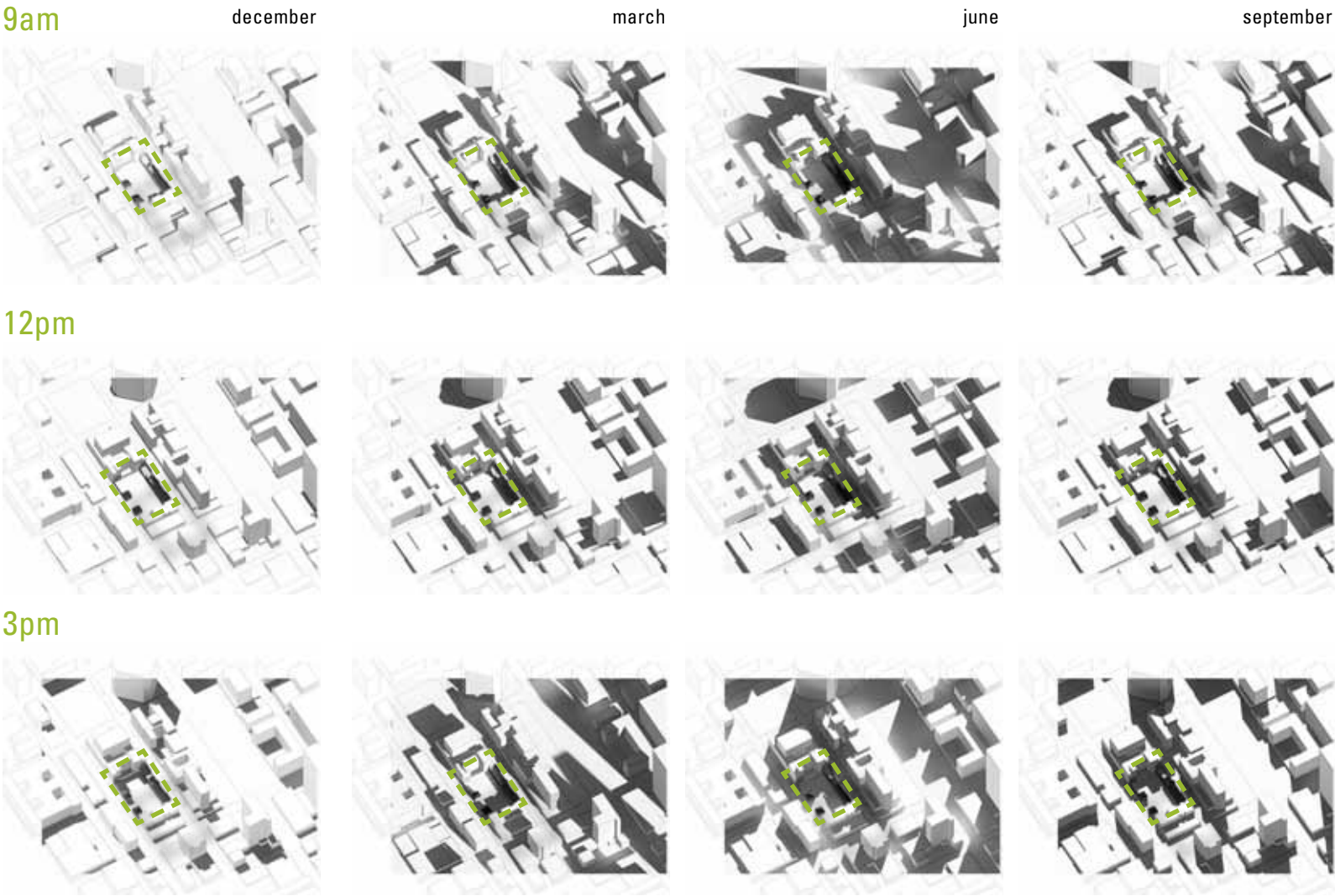
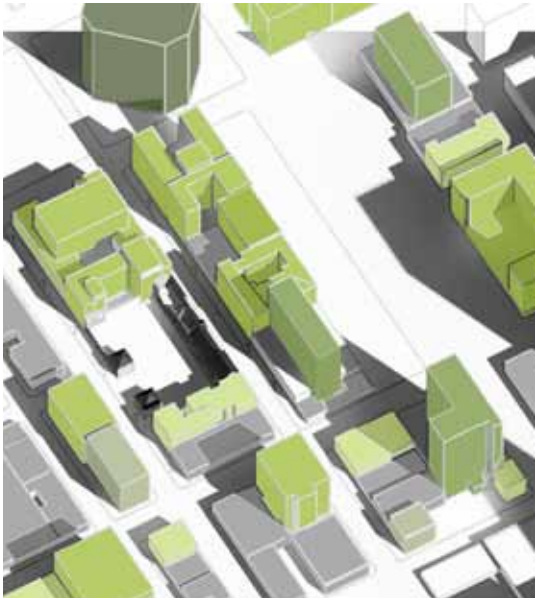
From analysis of the surrounding uses, as seen on the diagrams on the left, it is evident that offices, retail and banks are the predominant functions.



Due to the fact the proposed intervention is situated within a dense urban context it is essential to understand the condition of light on the site. The amount of light available to the site, around the year, is critical in ensuring spaces, such as the public square, are usable and comfortable.

Diagrams one and two indicate the heights of the buildings, the cause of the shadows, that surround the site. The buildings on the northern side of the site are reasonably high. These buildings inhibit the sun that the site could receive during the mornings and afternoons in winter, as seen by the diagrams on the opposite page. The site does still receive some sun during these periods, however the design of the building will have to take the limited winter sun into consideration.

During all other periods of the year the site receives ample sun and light.





site

p e r c e p t i o n s

a brief history

The Marshall Street Barracks were built in 1913 and was home to ‘the city’s first police station’ (Davie 2007 [0]). The police headquarters was then moved to what is now Johannesburg Central police station. After the relocation of the police the building was became the home of the Transvaal Light Horse regiment, and later the Scottish regiment. The military down-scaled its operations and moved out from most of its Johannesburg premises. By the mid 1990’s the building was vacated and left empty. Subsequently the site was occupied by squatters and hawkers. In 2002 the Marshall Street Barracks went up in flame. The timber and brick structure allowed for the fire to spread quickly, the result being that the buildings are vastly damaged.

The building is currently owned by the National Department of Public Works. Despite the efforts of many developers, including Gerald Olitzki, trying to buy the building the department has refused and the building still lies in ruins after a decade of neglect and abandonment.

OPPOSITE PAGE
images one & two
*views down Marshall street 1913
and 1921*
(museum africa photo archive)

image three
*the scottish regiment at the
marshall street barracks*
(museum africa photo archive)

image four
*the marshall street barracks on
fire 2002*
([http://www.joburgnews.co.za/oct_2002/
oct23_fire.stm](http://www.joburgnews.co.za/oct_2002/oct23_fire.stm))

THIS PAGE
images five
*fire fighter leaving the site after
the blaze*

image six
*the marshall street barracks left
in ruins*
([http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/fire-
partially-destroys-historic-building-1.](http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/fire-partially-destroys-historic-building-1.))

image seven
*the current condition of the
marshall street barracks*

*the interior courtyard
facade of the marshall
street barracks*



image one
*lone umbrella overturned
in a doorway*

image two
*a child's toy discarded on
a window ledge*



the current condition

Due to the fire, which occurred in 2002, parts the building were immensely damaged. Whole portions of the existing structure were completely destroyed, while others remain completely intact. On the site three buildings currently remain. The original 1913 structure, on the north side along Marshall Street, which remains largely intact. The western end of the structure was extensively damaged, as seen on the image on the previous page, and has subsequently been removed. The roof has been almost completely destroyed and the interior of the building burnt out. The Victorian façade, on Marshall Street, however remains undamaged and in its entirety. Despite the broken windows and scorch marks, the façade remains in its original grandeur.

Two smaller structures on the south of the site along Anderson Street also remain, as illustrated by the images on the next page. The suspended timber floors and roofs entirely vanished. Fragments of other structures remain, half broken down and crumbling. The tarred central courtyard has been taken over by nature, grass and weeds bursting through the cracks of its surface, a solitary tree butting up against the southern façade of the 1913 structure. Debris fills the main buildings' basement and trash is littered throughout the entire site. A lone umbrella is overturned in a doorway. A child's toy discarded on a windows ledge.

image top
current condition of
facade along Anderson
street

image bottom
interior courtyard



image one
northwest corner
demolished

image two
burnt out roof

image three
buildings burnt out



The fire damage to much of the existing buildings is extensive. All the roof structures are unsalvagable and any timber floors that once existed are gone, as seen in images two and three. Sections of the existing buildings have been demolished and removed. There are portions of the interior spaces which are blackened, windows are broken and plaster peels off the walls. The site is a place which tells its story, of use and destruction, from every angle.





image one
scar

image two
colonnade

image three
Anderson street facade

what to keep

One of the key concepts of the project is to enhance the sense of place and intensify the recollection of memory through the use of urban and architectural preservation. Thus the aim will be to keep almost all existing elements on the site that are remaining or those that are significant in enhancing the conceptual ideologies of the project.

The first predominant element that will be preserved are the facades, on both Marshall and Anderson Streets. Despite the significant fire damage the facades remain completely intact, it is thus a must to keep them. The second element is the arched colonnades along the interior courtyard. The plaster work of the colonnade has peeled away, leaving the rich red brickwork to be displayed. The result is that of the layering of time to be revealed and perceived. Lastly, the scars. On the walls of the adjacent buildings remain the impressions of where the existing buildings once touched their neighbour. The scars allow for the history and memory of the site to be heightened. Each of these keepsakes have been preserved for a number of diverse reasons, however each one allows for the conceptual intention of the intervention to be achieved.



concept

d e v e l o p m e n t

theoretical concretised

Through the theoretical exploration, that was done in part one, three predominant concepts have been determined. These are the ideas of perception, preservation and social inclusion. Each of these concepts has a significant application for the development and success of a refugee space. Rather than simply satisfying basic needs, places must be connected, interesting, integrated, meaningful, and significant. If this is to be achieved the intervention needs to become a place of community, understanding, memory and meaning. The intervention needs to create and inspire new meaning for both the people of the city as well as the strangers in the city. By concretising the concepts mentioned above, through design, into physicality the aim will be to facilitate and allow for refugee communities to become an integral part of the social urban fabric, through the use of architectural intervention.

In the theoretical essay it is argued that the action of providing a piece of architecture is not in itself, as a physical object, going to resolve the issues of belonging and identity that need to be addressed. Buildings do not contain the ability to resolve social, political and psychological concerns; rather buildings become significant through the physical relationship that they have with social processes. The idea is that architecture involves satisfying material needs as well as sustaining social processes through methods of active participation by the occupants and the provision of spaces for participation and social interaction. Thus allowing for the facilitation of the construction of identities and integration of communities.

i preservation

The concept of preservation is based in the idea of conserving the urban landscape through its history, meaning and memory. This preservation will be allowed for by using a site of historic memory and relevance. By allowing for conservation of the urban it will allow for the preservation of collective meaning and identity.

ii social inclusion

Within the current context of South Africa, ethnic and cultural groups remain isolated from each other. These specific ethnic and cultural groups congregate within communities that seldomly interact with other groups. This has resulted in the meaning of things and places not being shared and thus has resulted in an urban landscape of contestation.

With the concept of social inculsion in mind the building will aim at providing a social platform through which a variety of communities and users can interact and engage.

iii perception

Perceptions enables and enhances the way in which we allow for meaning to be attached to the space. The way in which our bodies come into contact with the edges of space is a fundamental to our awareness of ourselves and our spatial location. The architectural experience needs to allow for the external perception of sensory understanding of space while simultaneously allowing for the internal perceptions of expressing meaning and significance.

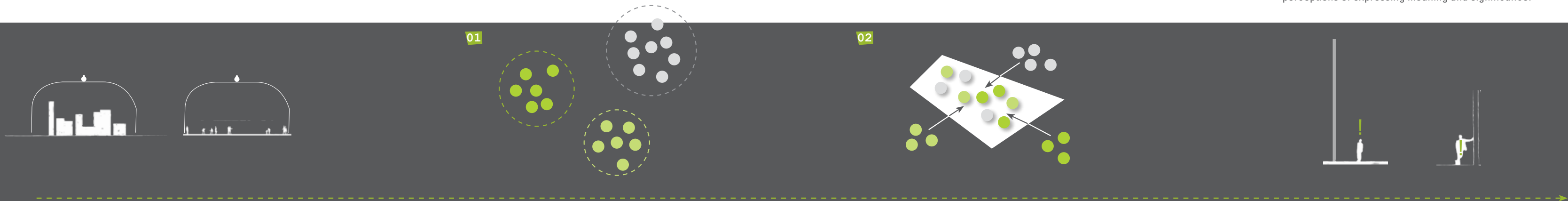
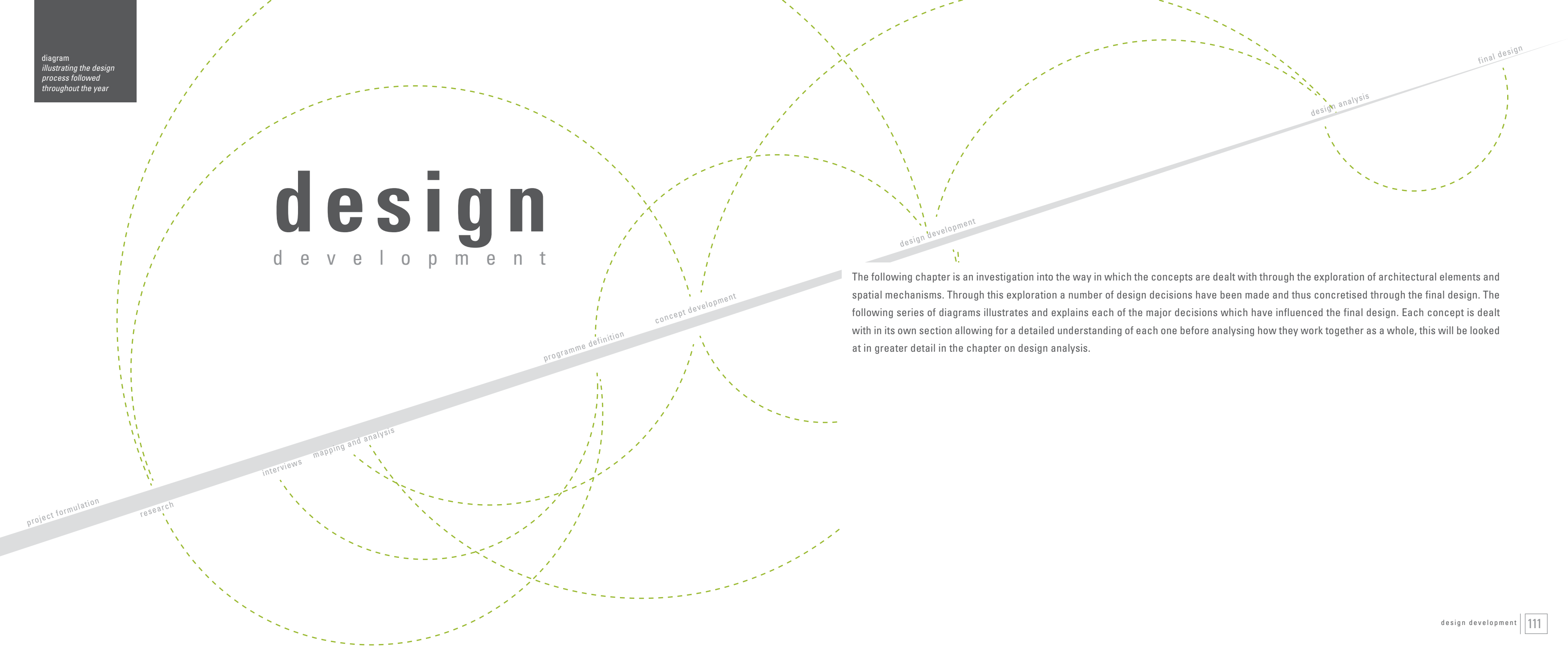


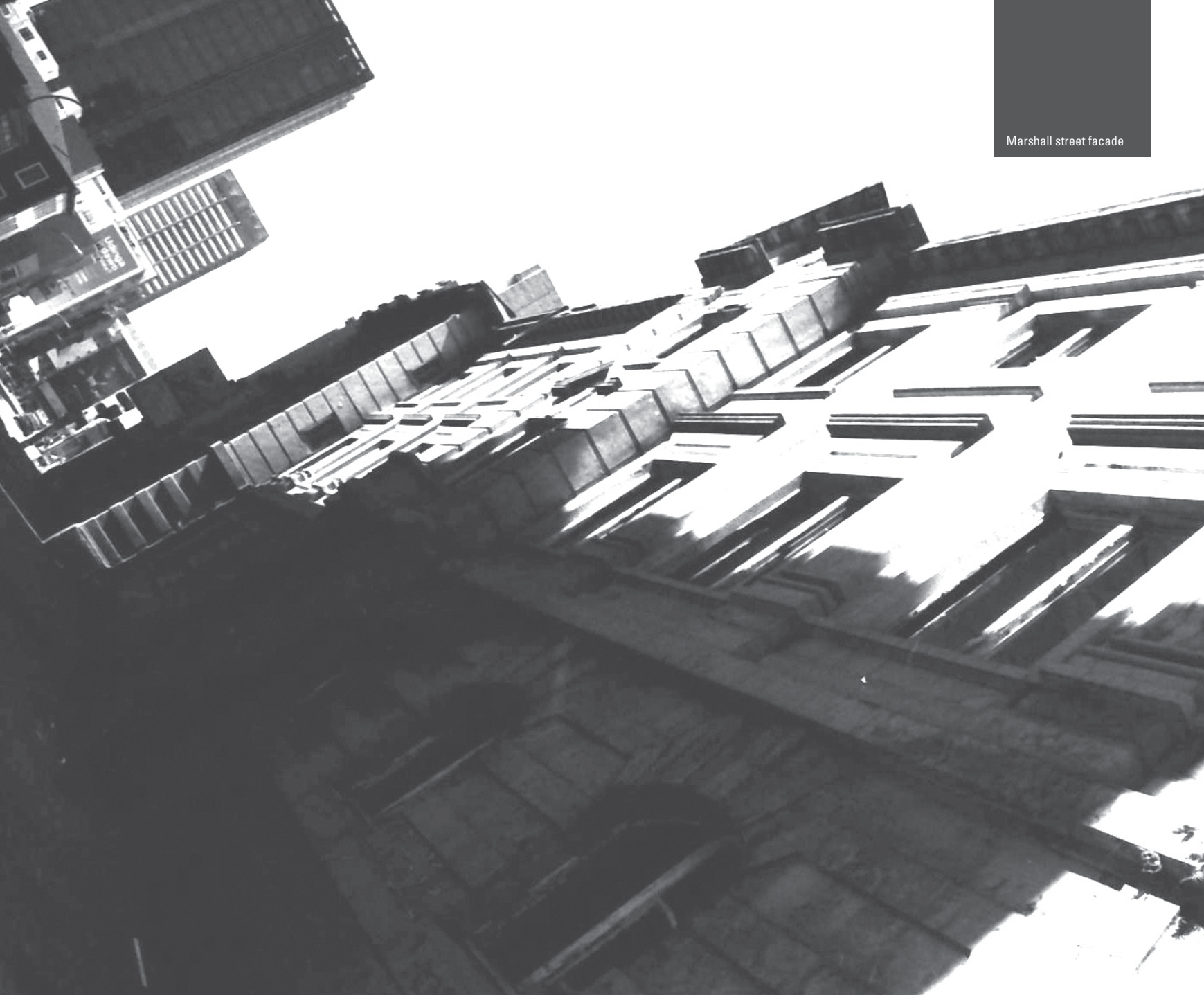
diagram
illustrating the design
process followed
throughout the year

design

d e v e l o p m e n t



The following chapter is an investigation into the way in which the concepts are dealt with through the exploration of architectural elements and spatial mechanisms. Through this exploration a number of design decisions have been made and thus concretised through the final design. The following series of diagrams illustrates and explains each of the major decisions which have influenced the final design. Each concept is dealt with in its own section allowing for a detailed understanding of each one before analysing how they work together as a whole, this will be looked at in greater detail in the chapter on design analysis.



Marshall street facade

01 Demolishing

On the site remains the walls of a number of buildings that once existing on the site. However the remains of these wall are in a complete state of disrepair. The there wall are to be removed from the site to make way for the new intervention.

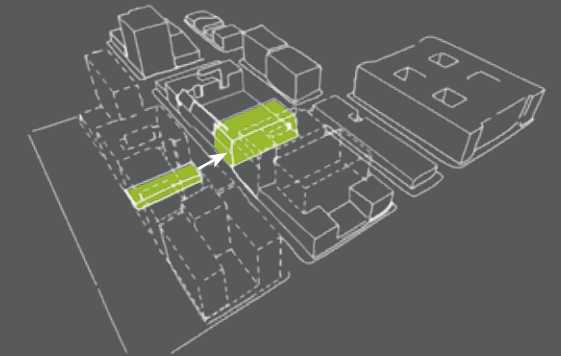
02 Positioning the public building

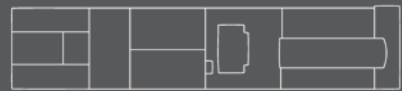
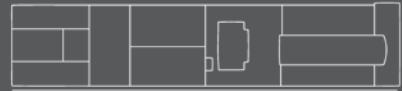
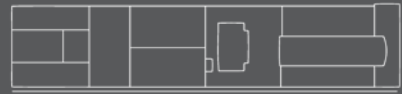
Ghandi square is located one block north of the site, the square is a place of vibrate activity and movement. The aim is to use the constant flow of people in and around Ghandi square to activate the site. Directly opposite the site is Ghandi Mall, the mall penetrates the block between the site and Ghandi Square. Thus the new public building will be positioned on the west side of the site, directly opposite the mall. Thus creating an axis directly to the square.

03 Entrances

The site currently has two access points, one on the south side of the site and one on the north, shown in green on the diagram on the right. As a result of the creation of an axis linking the site with Ghandi Square, through Ghandi Mall, a new main entrance will be developed along this axis, shown in red.

site responses





04 Connecting the buildings

The current state of the site has resulted in there being three buildings standing in complete isolation of each other. The new intervention will aim to connect these buildings, thus allowing for them to be utilised as one interconnected building.

05 Redefining space

A new building will be developed on part of the foot print of the demolished walls. This new building will redefine the courtyard at the centre of the site.

06 Public Square

Redefining the central courtyard will allow for a public square to be created at the heart of the intervention. The intention is to provide a place of gathering and meeting which can be used for a variety of events, by a variety of people. The redefining also allows for a smaller, more secluded, courtyard to be created. A space which can be used by the more private programme of the building.

07 Street activity

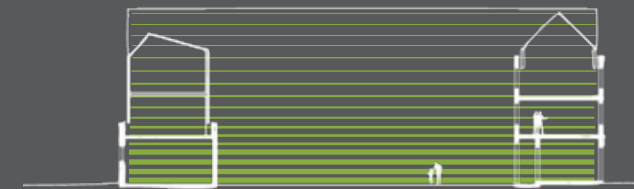
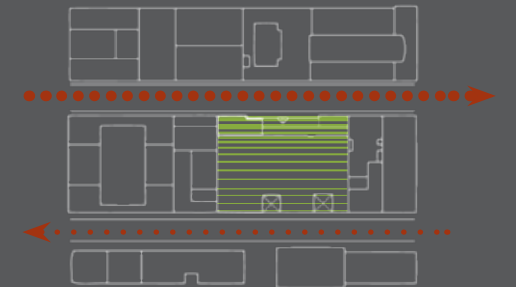
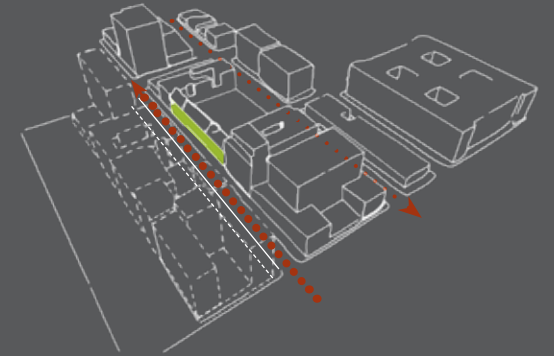
On the north side of the site Marshall Street runs from west to east. This street is a major vehicle and pedestrian route and the main source of activity on the north side of the site. Thus the main retail component, shown in green, of the building will be located on the north side of the site on ground floor along Marshall Street.

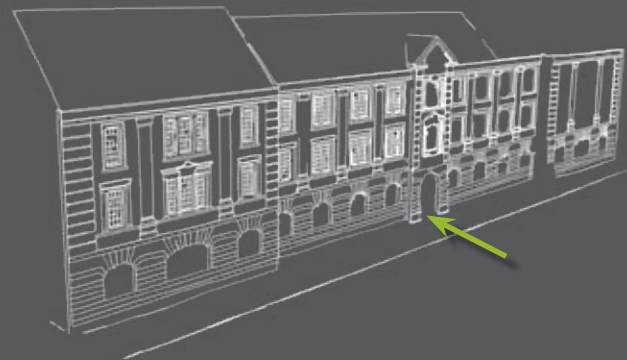
08 Hierarchies and Privacy Gradients 1

As discussed above Marshall Street is major route and fast moving. Along the south side of the site runs Anderson Street, which moves in an east -west direction, this street is extremely quiet. The privacy gradient, as discussed in the chapter on programme, will follow the natural conditions that surround the site. With the most public uses and programme being positioned on the north and the more private on the south.

09 Hierarchies and Privacy Gradients 2

The same privacy gradient can be used in the vertical direction on the site. With the most public uses and programme being positioned on the ground floor and more private uses on the upper floors.





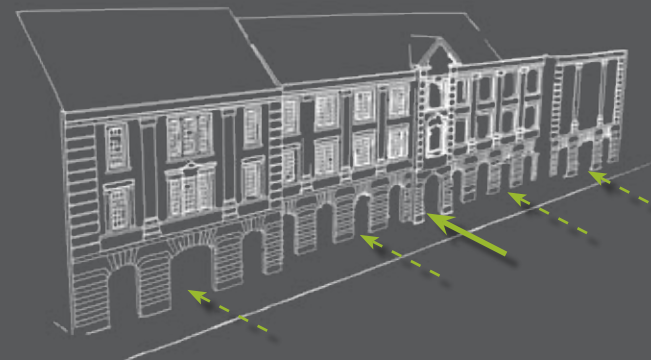
01 Entrance

Currently the existing building has only one entrance on the north, more busy, side along Marshall Street.



02 Porosity

The intention will be to create a boundary along the site which is permeable. The idea of a permeable boundary is to allow for flow and movement between two spaces. The boundary still needs to exist, the boundary allows for intersecting edge conditions. The boundary allows for a place to be defined, it allows for some things to be revealed while other are concealed. However the boundary needs to invite one to penetrate it, move through it and experience what is on the other side. By allowing for a boundary uniqueness and distinctiveness are maintained, but differences are allowed to flow through and engage. Creating an interesting and vibrant environment.



03 Creating porosity

To allow for the existing fabric of the site to become porous it is proposed that the existing arched windows, along the Marshall Street facade, be converted into arched doorways. This will allow for the original symmetry and feel of the facade to remain, while using a minimal intervention to allow new life to seep into the site. Reinvigorating the space.

04 Raising the roof

The roofs on all the existing structures have been damaged beyond repair. All the roofs will have to be removed.

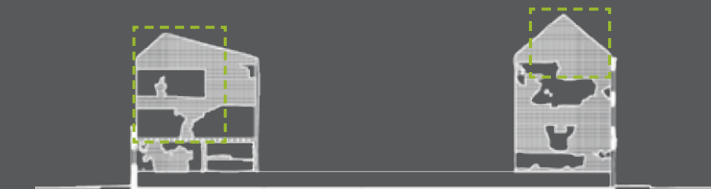
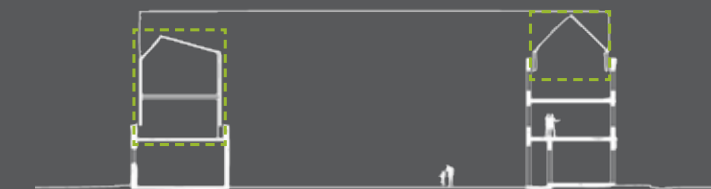
05 Reinterpreting the roof

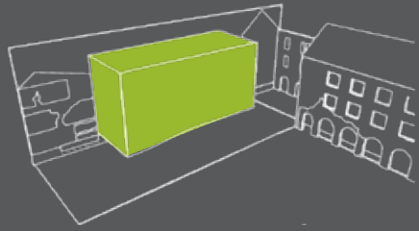
The new roof structure that will be used will mimic the original roof structures of the existing building. These new structures will not be an exact replication of the original, but will rather be a reinterpretation. Following the form height and rhythm of the original but this will be done through modern materials and technology.

06 Reflections

The new roof will end where the multi-volume spaces begin in the public building. The new roof will act as a reflection of the old. Reflected by the scars of the original building on the walls of the neighbouring building.

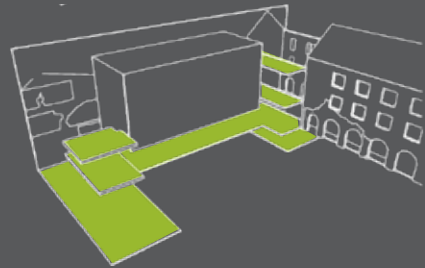
preservation





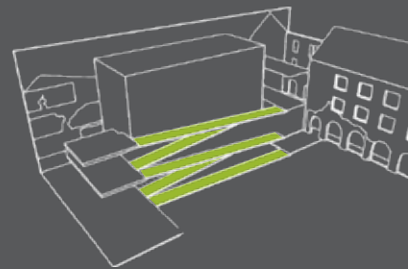
07 Containing the programme

The large programmed spaces of the building will be designed to be quite contained. This is to allow for a sense and security, as discussed previously.



08 Social pause areas

However open social pause areas will be positioned around the contained programme. These areas will allow for people to pause and take breaks and move around the contained programme, thus allowing for activation of social interactions and increasing the connections between diverse clusterings of people.



09 Connecting spaces

The social pause areas that are created are then connected through a series of ramps. The ramps act as the main circulation through the building, connecting the social pause areas and programmed spaces.

10 Meandering through

The use of ramps as the main means of circulation allows for meandering movement through the building, movement is slowed. The user is taken on a journey up and through the building, thus allowing for the entire building to be engaged with and experienced.

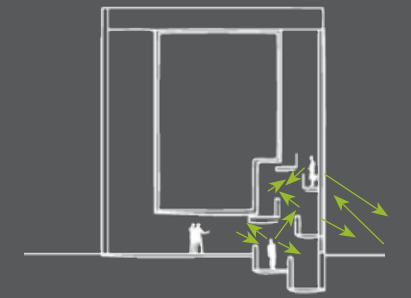
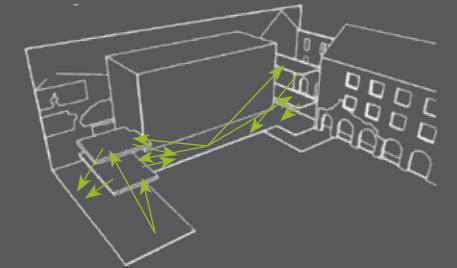
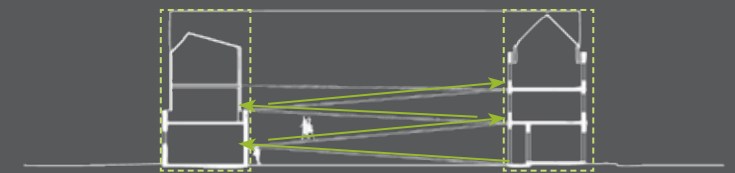
11 Visual connections 1

By allowing for the social pause areas to vary in size it allows for other platforms to be overlooked and thus further connecting all the social space on all levels. The varying platforms allow for the spaces within the building to become visually interesting and dynamic. The levels act as a boundary, dividing and defining spaces, however by allowing for visual connections to other spaces the boundaries become invisible, palpable but obscured.

12 Visual connections 2

The use of visual connections within and throughout the building is carried through to the ramps. The ramps are set slightly apart from each other thus allowing for spaces around the ramps to be observed along the meandering journey up the building.

social inclusion



01 Sense of security

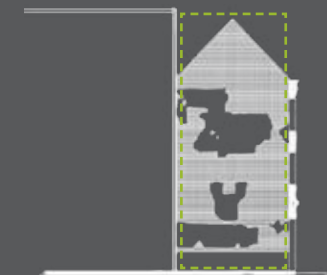
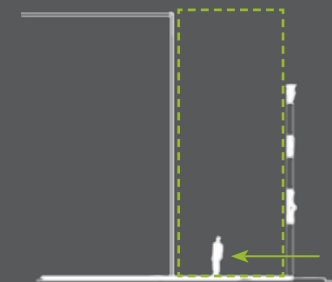
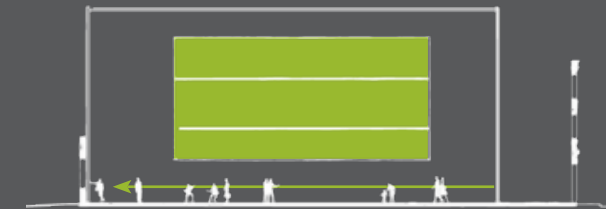
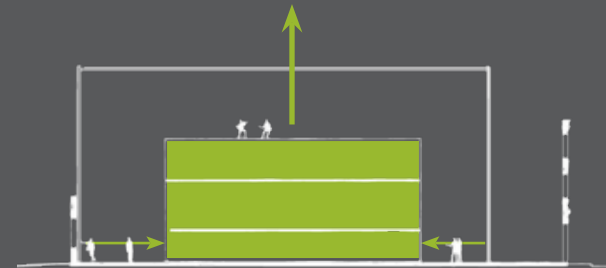
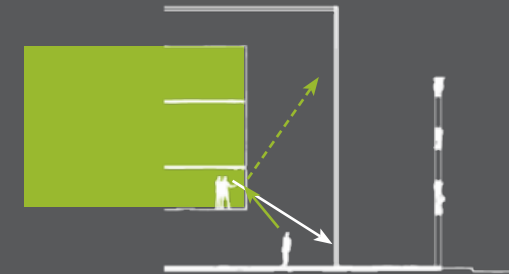
Due to the volatile conditions that revolve around refugees it is essential that a sense of security be created for the refugee communities using the building. The concept is to allow for a building that is completely accessible to the public, as illustrated in grey. While containing the refugee specific programme in a more, perceived, safe space, as illustrated in green.

02 Lifting the container

By placing the container within the public space the ground plane become segregated and fragmented. The container thus needs to be raised.

03 Threshold and entrance

The north west corner of the site is the most fire damages section of the building. This area is also the location of the new entrance from Marshall street. The concept is to create an entrance of perception and threshold. As one steps off the street you appear to enter into the building. However the envelope of the building is stepped back. This allows for a threshold entrance, a place of pause before the programmed space beyond.



04 Maintaining connections

Even although the refugee specific programme will be contained it is imperative to maintain connections between the various spaces. The intentions will be to allow for visual connections to the public space, as illustrated in white, when inside the container. While when the public space view will not be allowed into the container, as illustrated in green. This will allow for refugees to orientate themselves within the building while being able to maintain their privacy and sense of security

05 Public urban landscape

Through raising the container the ground plane is freed of obstacles and an open continuous public urban landscape is created within the building. This allows for heightened possibility for interactions between uses and users.

06 Framing

By allowing for an open multivolume threshold entrance, the scar of the original building that remains on the wall of the neighbouring building will be framed, preserved and appreciated.

07 Creviced pathway

The container is positioned in the space in such a way that a crevice is formed between it and the wall of the public building. Movement from a restricted space into a more open space enhances the experience of each of the spaces. The experience becomes more impressive and thus more memorable.



08 Opening the pathway

The purpose of such a devise is to alter the perception of the more open spaces on the other sides of the container.

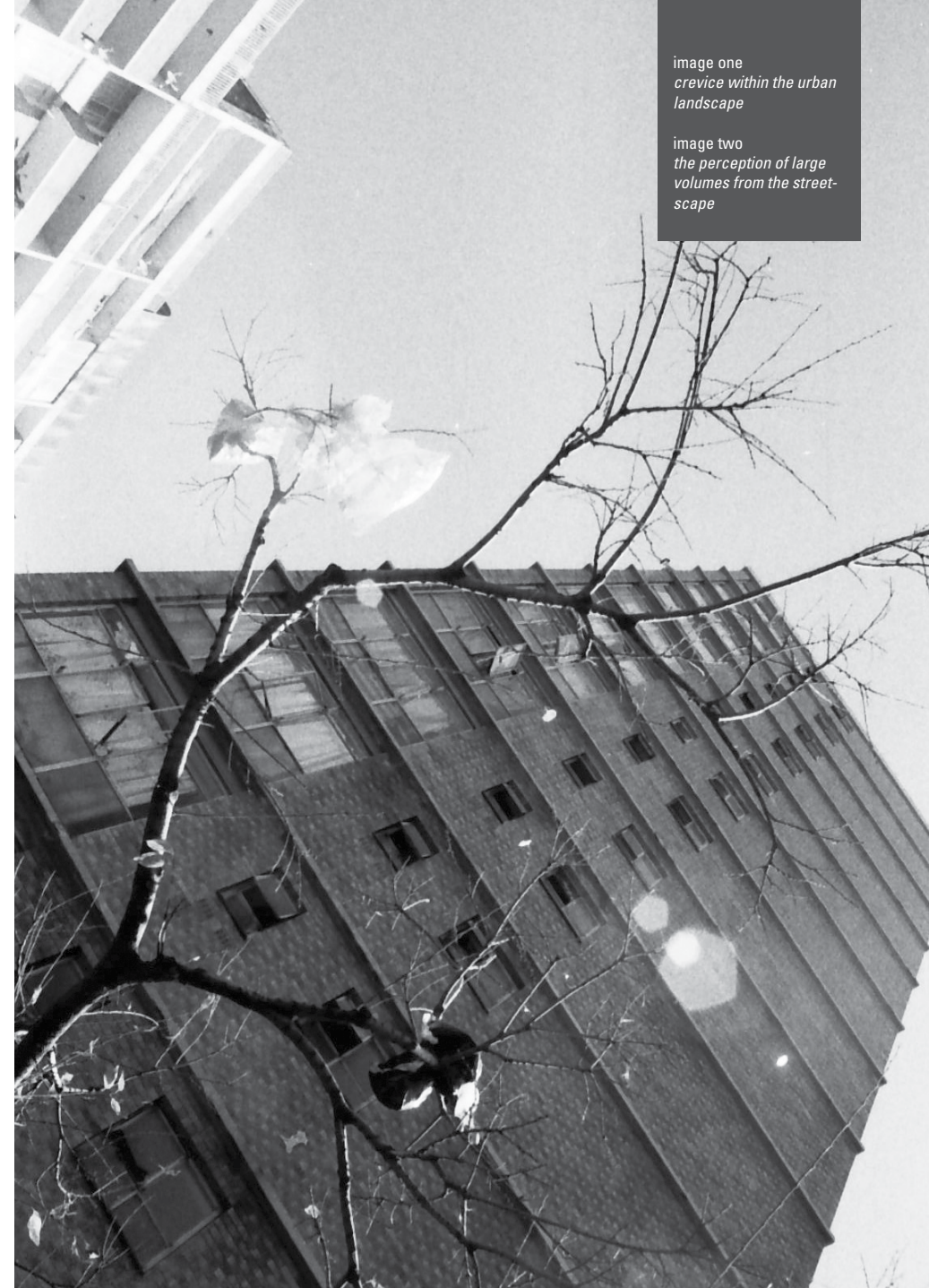
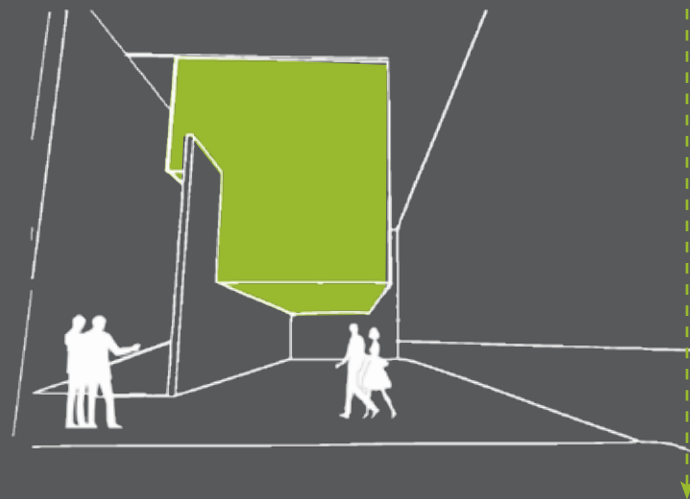


image one
crevice within the urban
landscape

image two
the perception of large
volumes from the street-
scape

design

and technical analysis

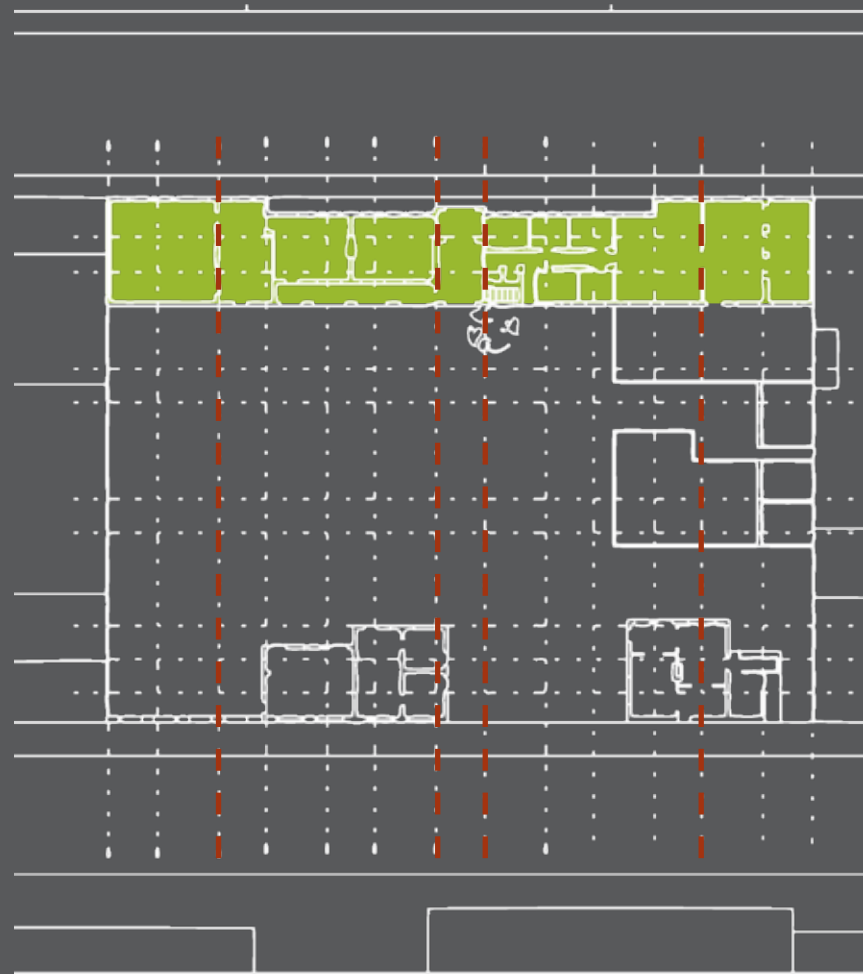
This next chapter will analyse the way in which the concepts and design development, discussed previously, are concretised in the physical development of the building and how each of these elements works together as a whole. The ambition is to fuse and unite the three concepts, of preservation, social integration and perception, into a connected and cohesive design.

As outlined earlier intervention needs to become a place of community, understanding, memory and meaning by creating spaces and places that are connected, interesting, integrated, meaningful, and significant. It is intended that through the use of the tree concepts the building will become a place that allows for all these elements to be visualised and generated.

The analysis will be organised around the three concepts of preservation, social integration and preservation, as done in the previous chapters. This will done as to allow for correlatin between the development of concept, to design development and finally analysis.

image
steel column of the
existing structure encased
in brickwork

diagram
the layout of the structural
grid of the existing
structure



existing structure analysed for grid



grid - - - -

line of columns - - - -



preservation of structural logic

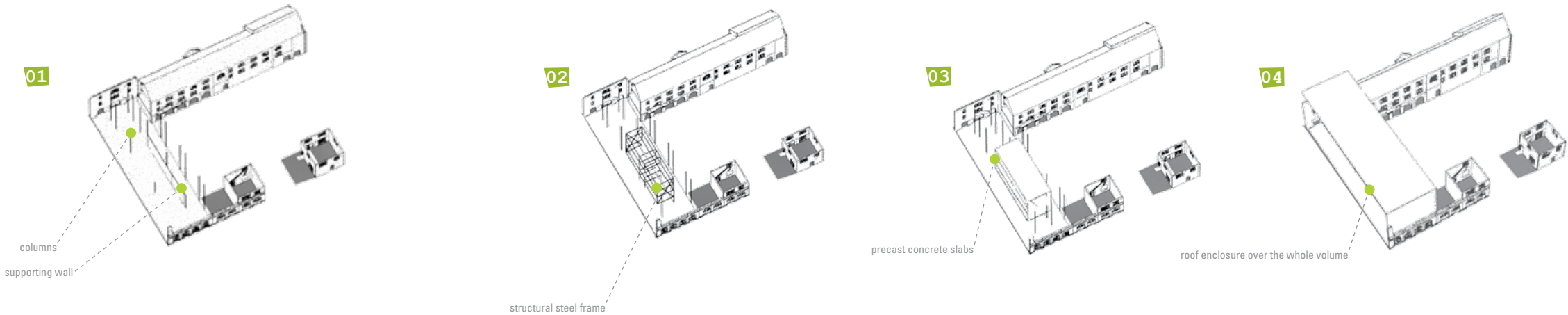
Through analysis of the existing building, a structural grid has been established. This grid is carried through to the new building, with the new structure continuing the rhythm of the old into the new. The structure of the existing building is comprised of steel columns, encased in brickwork, concrete slabs and brick walls. The new structure will mimic this model with the use of steel, brickwork and concrete. However, the columns that are used will not be encased with brickwork, rather the steel structure will be exposed and expressed.

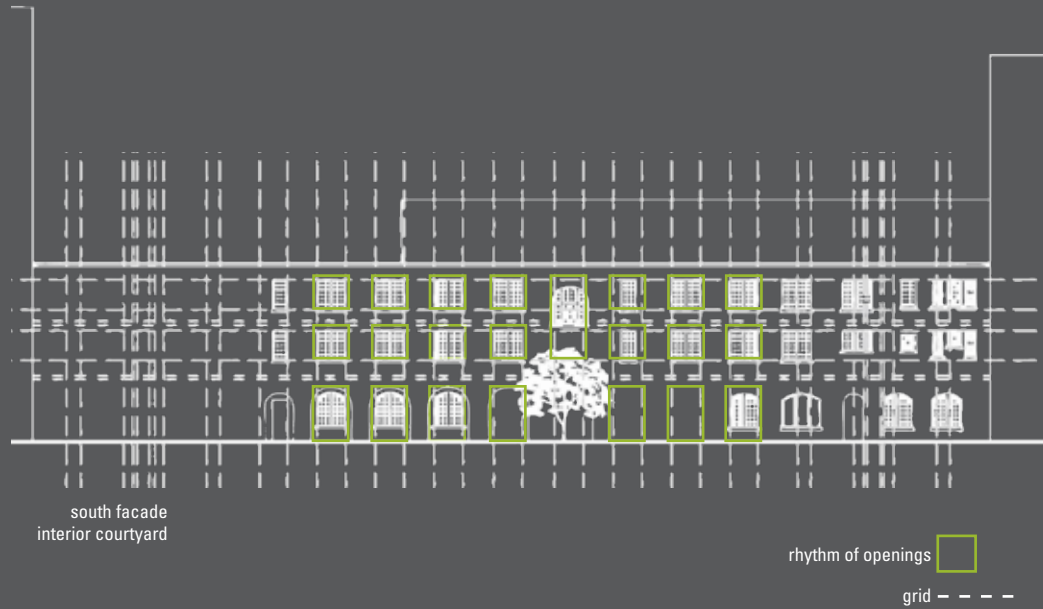
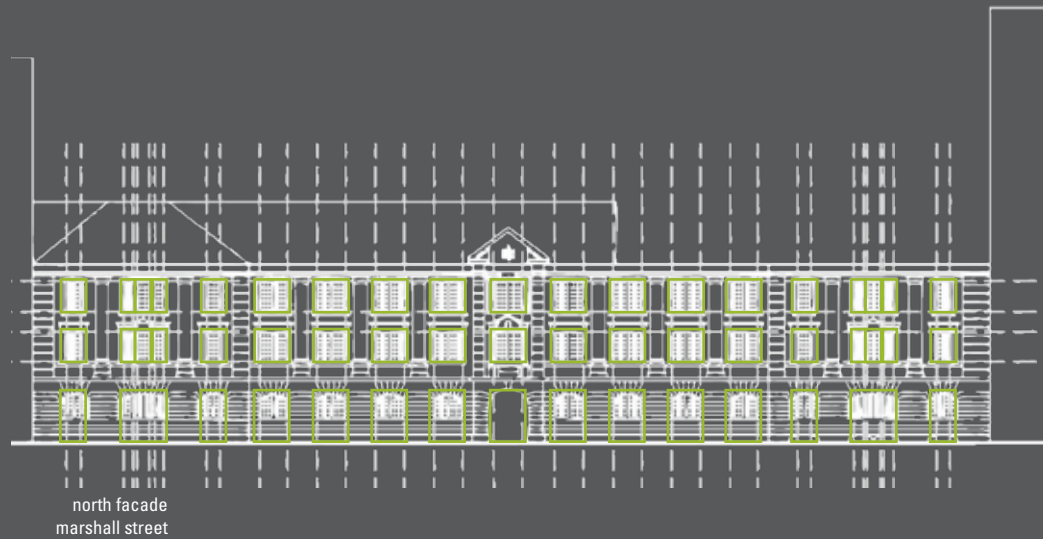
The container of the refugee programme has been raised in the building to allow for the creation of a public urban landscape. The intention is to allow for the public urban landscape to be one continuous connected space. The result is that the container is suspended within the space, 'floating' above the urban landscape, freeing the entire ground plane and maximising the connections within the space. The product of this design decision is the development and resolving of a structural system which allows for the creation of the container being perceived as 'floating'.

The container of the refugee programme has been raised in the building to allow for the creation of a public urban landscape. The intention is to allow for the public urban landscape to be one continuous connected space. The result is that the container is suspended within the space, 'floating' above the urban landscape, freeing the entire ground plane and maximising the connections within the space. The product of this design decision is the development and resolving of a structural system which allows for the creation of the container being perceived as 'floating'. This new structure will reinterpret the existing structural logic by making use of a framed steel structure.

The series of diagrams on the left illustrate the construction of the structure.

- 01 The first image depicts the column grid which follows the predetermined grid of the existing building.
- 02 The second diagram indicates the steel frame structure which is suspended from larger beams above.
- 03 Precast concrete floor are then added.
- 04 The last diagram illustrates the final enclosure of the space, being achieved by a single roof.





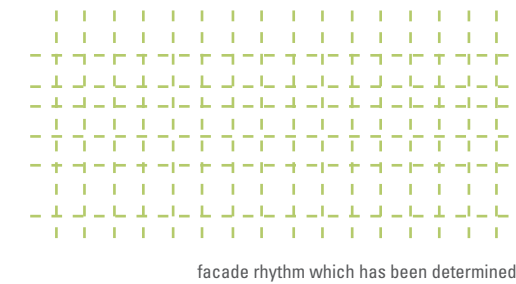
OPPOSITE PAGE
image 1
*facade of north elevation
on Marshall Street*

image 2
*facade of interior
courtyard*

preservation through facade rhythms

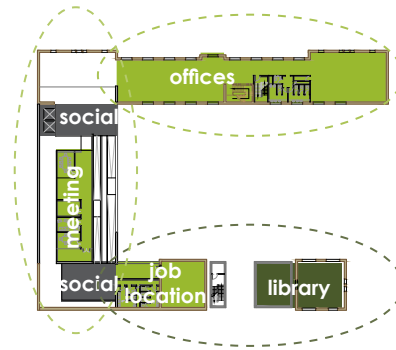
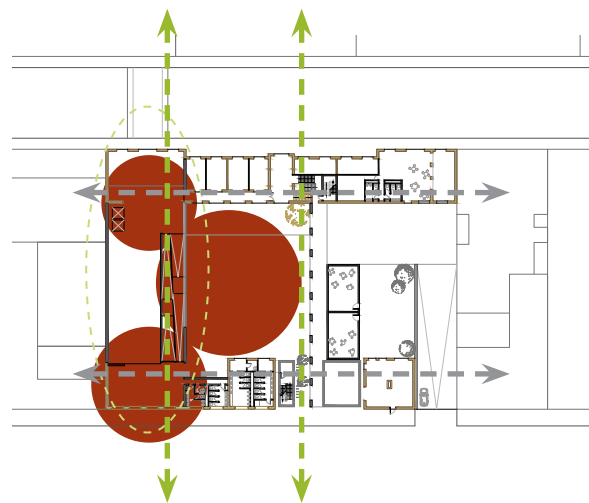
Through the analysis of the existing facades it has been determined that the facades, both north and south, follow the same rhythm for most of the elevation. Where this regularity in both facades occurs, it overlaps and allows for the openings to line up with each other when inside the building. The rhythm is only broken on the far ends of the facades, as shown in the diagram on the left.

It has been decided that the new facades of the intervention will follow the same rhythm of the overlapping facades. All the new facades in some form of interpretation, whether they be the panelled surfaces of the refugee container or the mullions of the glass curtain wall, will follow and mimic this rhythm.

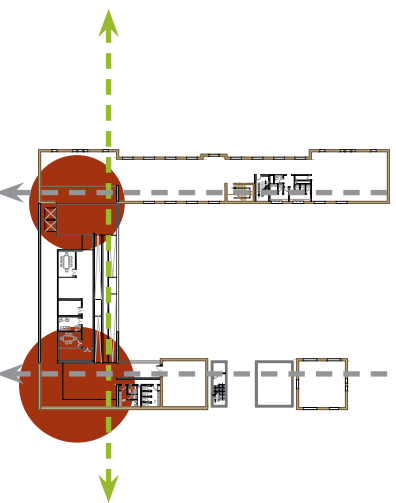




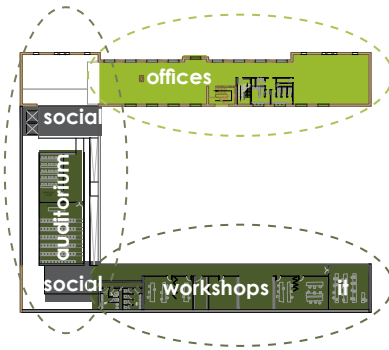
ground floor



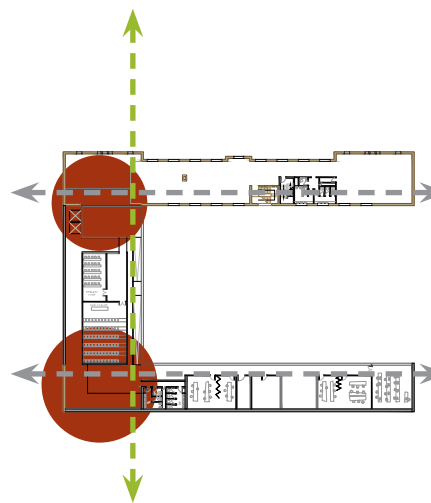
first floor



diagrammatic programme organisation



second floor



circulation and position of social platforms

social integration through programme

The programme has been arranged as a result of the mapping and analysis done in the previous sections. The various programmes and functions of the five centres, which have been developed, are arranged and organised within collectives. This allows for each of the specific function to be accessed in one area of the building. The intention of this organisation is simplicity. The straightforwardness of the programme organisation allows for the building to be clearly read and understood by the users. The individual centres are then connected through the use of the social platforms. These platforms allow for all the programme to be spatially connected and thus connecting the users of each of the centres and to each other.

The social platforms are positioned in the between spaces of the programmed areas. This allows for the users of differing programmes to come into contact with each other. The platforms are further accentuated by the organisation of circulation spaces. The circulation of the building is arranged on two distinctive directional paths. All the main public circulation occurs in the north-south direction. While the more private circulation run on the east-west direction. These paths have been positioned in such a way that the social platforms are situated at the points where they intersect. What this does is allow for incresed activity around the platforms, thus further allowing for and heightening areas in which social interaction and integration occur.



material perceptions

Architecture is connected and associated to the human body, with the experience of space being multi-sensory and multi-faceted. Every experience we have within the world is defined and measured by eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue. The perception of a space is created through the numerous sensory experiences which the space creates. The perceptions which we create, no matter how consciously or unconsciously, enables and alters the way in which we allow for meaning to be attached to the space in question.

However in recent years the focus of many architectural interventions have been aimed as an experience for the eyes only. The appearance of buildings has become more significant than an overall sensory experience. The tactility and sensory experience of architectural space has become neglected. In his essay, *An Architecture of the Seven Senses*, Pallasmaa (1994:29) describes how our structures become repulsively flat and sharp-edged. Immaterial and unreal. The detachment of construction from the realities of matter and craft turns architecture into stage sets for the eye, devoid of authenticity of material and tectonic logic.

Within the design the use of materials has been carefully considered as a tool for enhancing the sensory experience of the space. Natural materials; such as brick, wood and metals; have been used as a means for allowing for surfaces enhance and alter the perceptions and experiences of spaces. Due to the fact the proposed project makes use of an existing building, the use of materials becomes an extremely important element of the design. The materiality will allow for the heightening of the experience of the existing building, as well as that of the new intervention. With much over the existing building being left in its current state many of the materials which have been used in its

wall in a state of ruin

construction have been left on display. The materials of the building are left to tell their story. The story of their construction, their life and their almost destruction. Pallasmaa (1994:29) describes how natural materials allow the gaze to penetrate their surfaces and they enable us to become convinced of the veracity of matter. The tarnishing and layering of wear on the surfaces adds the enriching experience of time allowing for the expressing of their age and history as well as the tale of their creation and human use.

It is argued by Pallasmaa (1994:29) that the authenticity of architectural experience is grounded in the tectonic language of building and the comprehensibility of the act of construction to the senses. The objective of the building is to stimulate both internal and external perceptions, to heighten phenomenal and sensory experience while simultaneously expressing meaning. The use of materials allows for all these objectives to be achieved. The materials allow for meaning and history to be read in the aging materials while tactile surfaces allow for the stimulation of all the senses.

The choice of materials was done with two concepts in mind. The idea first being that when viewing the building the difference between the old building and the new intervention must be distinguishable. The materials of the new intervention should differ but allow for the aging existing materials to be complemented and enhanced. The new materials should not over power or compete with the existing but rather work with them to enrich the experience of the space. The second concept is that of time and aging. The materials chosen are ones that are natural and allowed to age. Thus even although the materials of the new intervention contrast those of the existing, they are allowed to heighten the perceptions of aging and time with the space. The old and the new will thus be allowed to age together side by side.



final

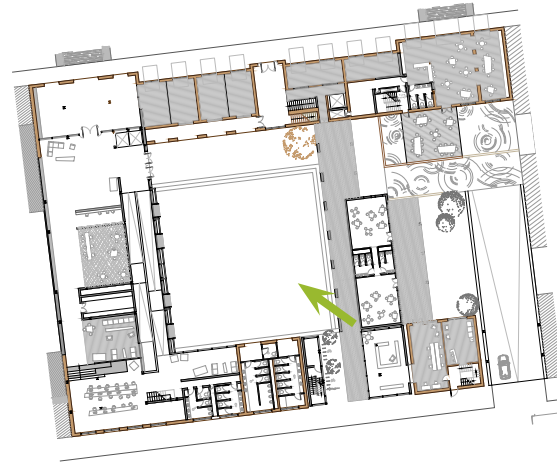
d e s i g n

bringing it all together

By bringing the concepts of presevation, social inclusion and perceptions together a memorable space is created. A space which allow for communities of different backgrounds and ethnicities to interact with one another. As a result refugee communities will be given a platform, with the city of Johannesburg, which facilitates social intergration. The building has been designed with the intention of creating space that are interesting, dynamic and memorable. This is achieved by allowing for the perceptions and experience of space to be hightened. If a space is memorable, then it must mean that memory is attached to the space. When memory is attached indetity and culture become reinforced. This is the intention. This is the result.....

The public square that has been positioned at the centre of the design is the heart of the building. The square is the space which will be frequented by the most number of diverse user groups and for the most number of functions. The intention of the square is to be a place of diversity, being used on one day as a mobile clinic, on another day a market, a gathering space or a means of finding a quiet corner to relax in the afternoon sun.

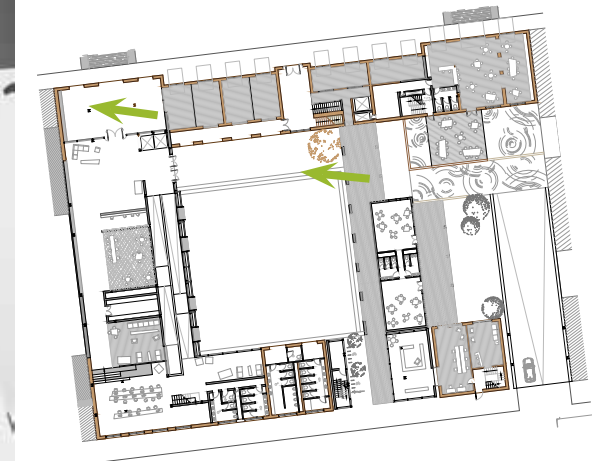
i social inclusion





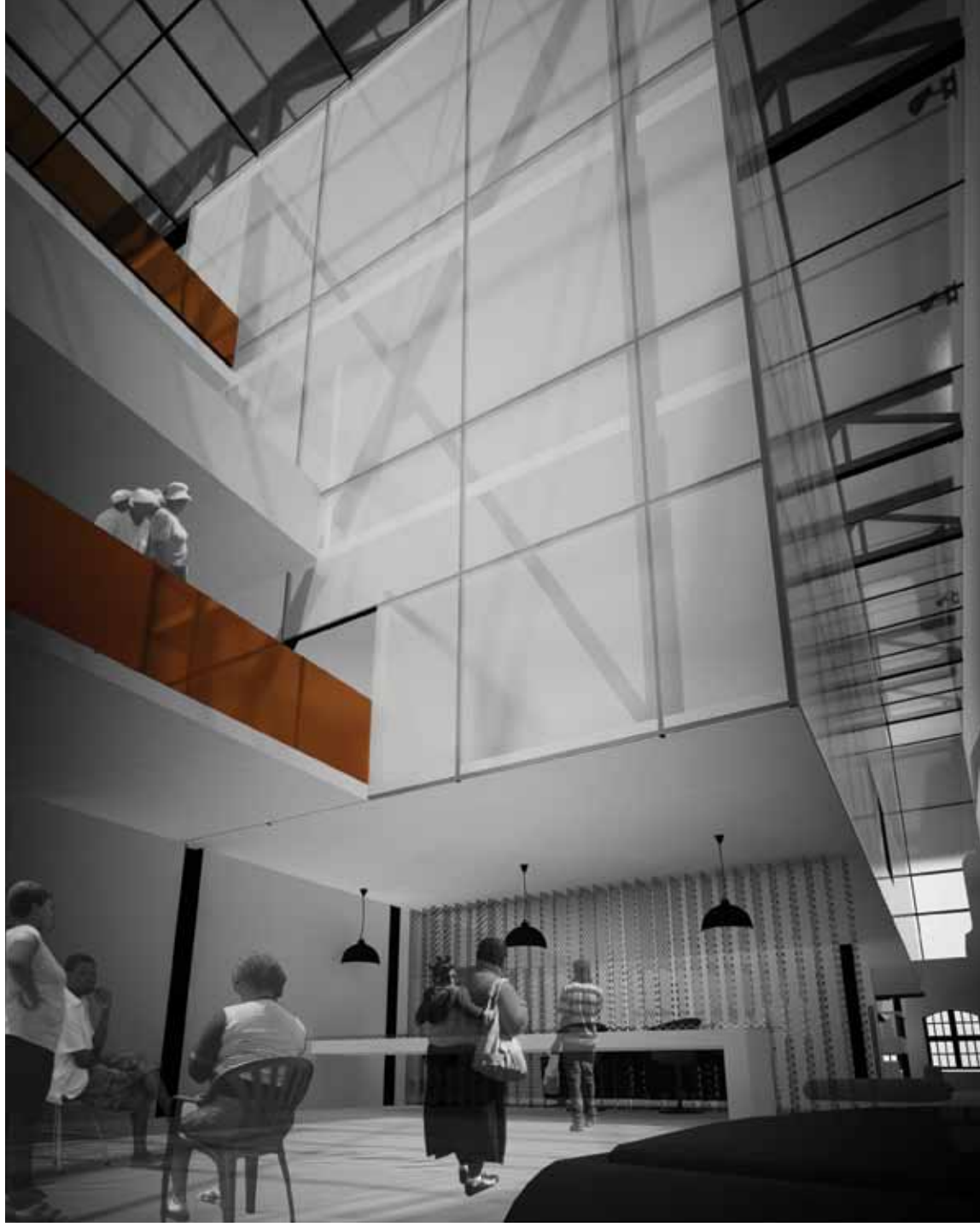
The entire intervention was designed with preservation in mind. The site, that the project is situated on, has much heritage and significance. The entrance to the building frames the scar where the existing building once lent against its neighbour. The impression is left in its current state, telling the story of the existing building. The new building wraps around the old asking for new stories and memories to be written into its surface.

ii preservation



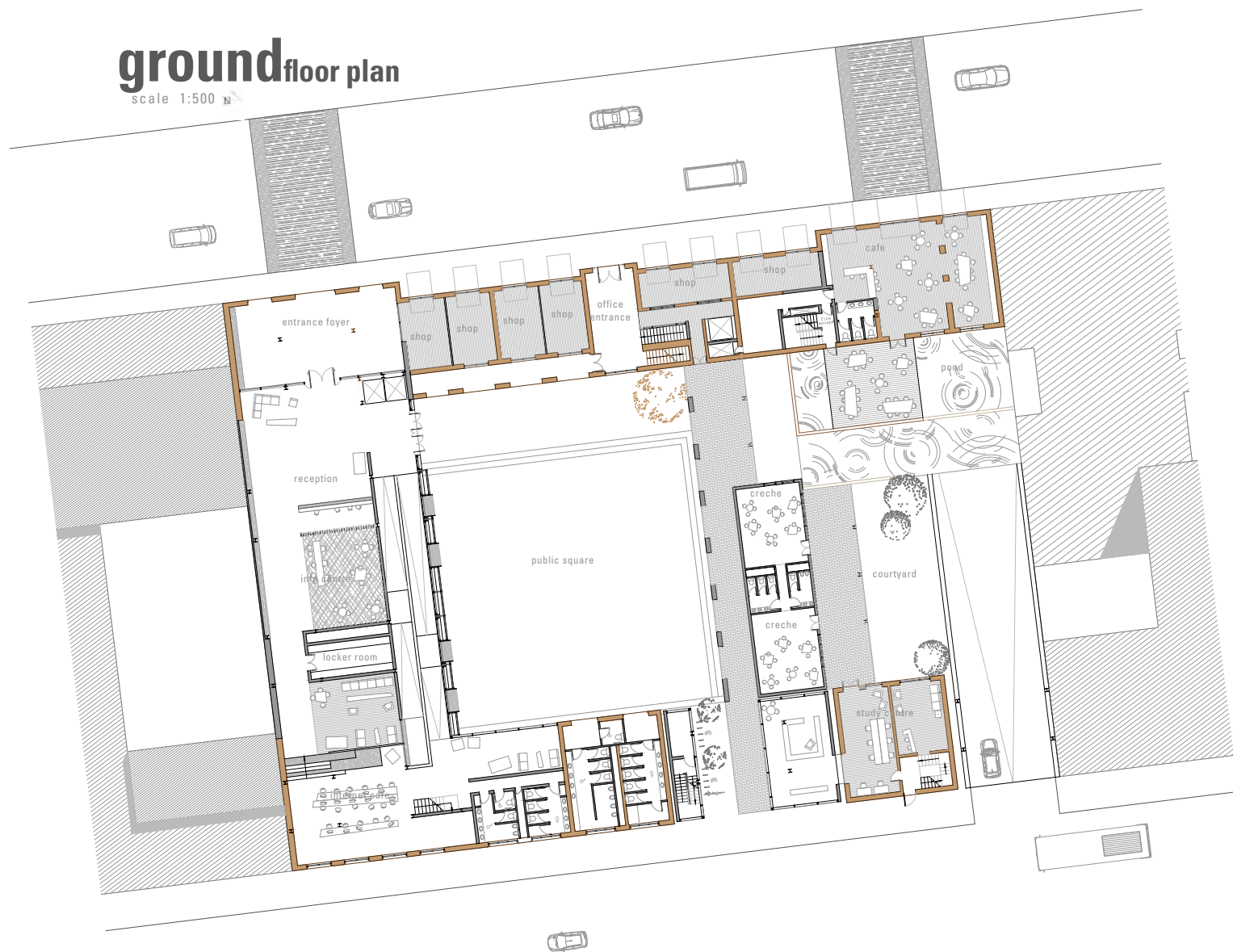
Once you have moved through the entrance lobby, past the scarred wall, you arrive on the public urban landscape. The landscape acts as the receiving device for all those entering the building. Within this space floats the refugee container. The surface of the container has been designed so that when you are walking through the urban landscape you cannot perceive what is within its confines. However when in the container you are able to see into, and experience, the urban landscape.

iii perception



ground floor plan

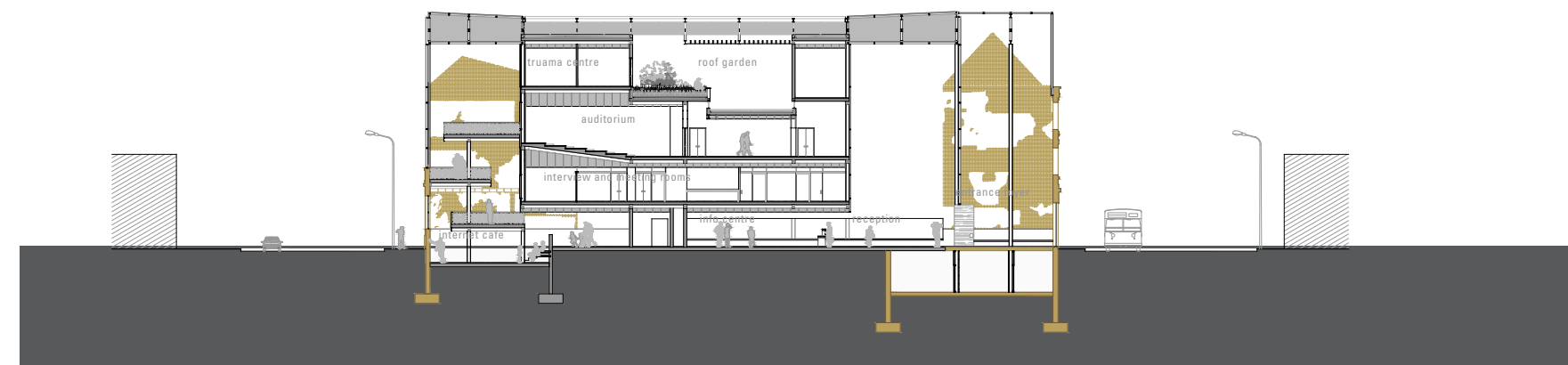
scale 1:500



d r a w i n g s

sectiona

scale 1:500



sectionb

scale 1:500



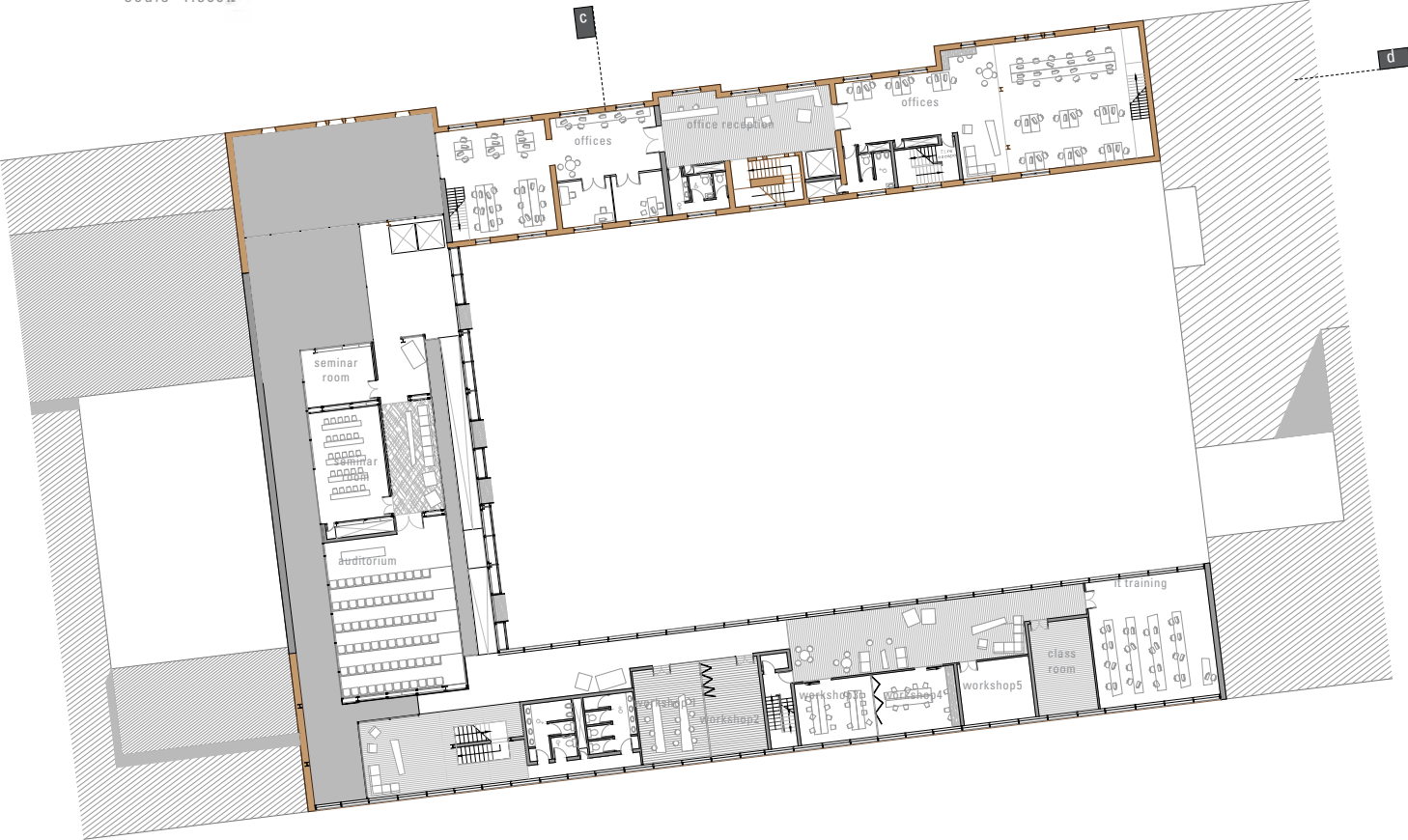
first floor plan

scale 1:500



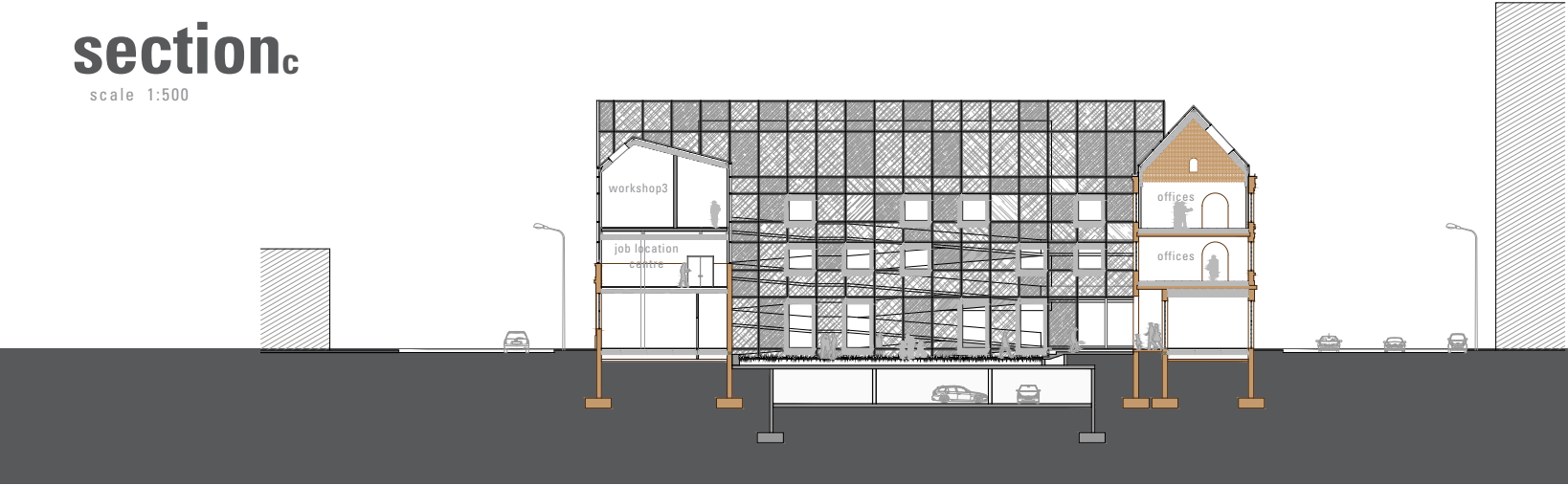
second floor plan

scale 1:500



section c

scale 1:500



section d

scale 1:500



third floor plan

scale 1:500



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[re]writing^{new} layers

inscribing refugee communities into the city



SCHOOL
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&
PLANNING

