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JARATENG:

Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

Jarateng

Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

Katlego Bogatsu 0608593D





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_____

Katlego Bogatsu

9th day of December 2013

This document is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree:

Master of Architecture [Professional]

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

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

Acknowledgements

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

A B S T R A C T

JARATENG: Making Social-Ends Meet by Embracing Public Living

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

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

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Overview

Project type
Public space

Site
Mofolo central, Soweto (residential area)



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

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

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

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

JARATENG: an overflow of social activity



Fig.1

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

Prelude

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

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

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

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



Social space can be created anywhere

INTRODUCTION

Social Space

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

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

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



Fig. 2

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

JARATENG: An overflow of social activities

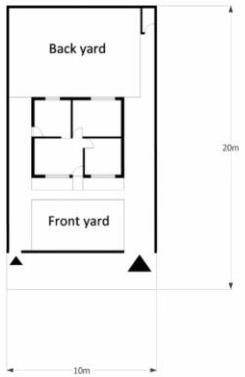
The jarata is a very distinct kind of a yard in the townships especially in Soweto. This space is one which is highly activated by social activities which are significant to the social patterns of the residents of Soweto. The Jarata is a result of community-held beliefs and customs from different vernacular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

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

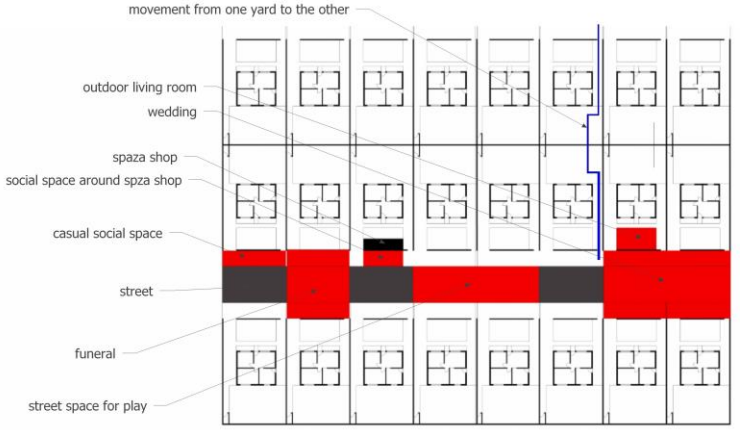
"The Suburban open space can be characterized by the configurations of the three basic environments of yard, the private area of each household; street; and park, the collective open environment. Their patterns of use and meaning are complex and open-ended, subject to personal, regional, and cultural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

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

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



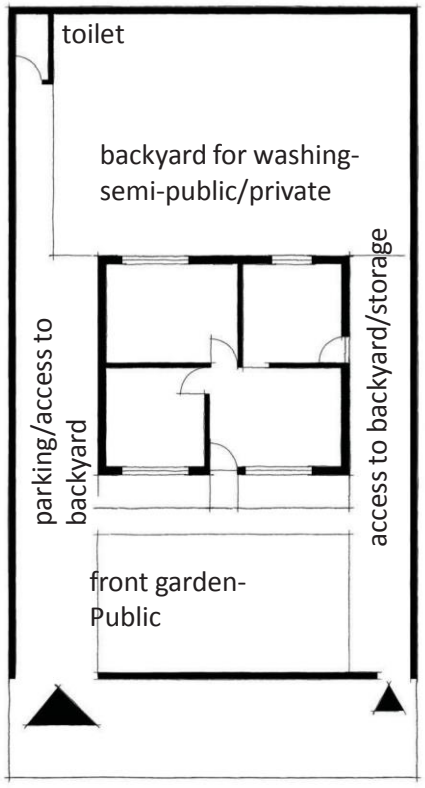
Yard dimensions



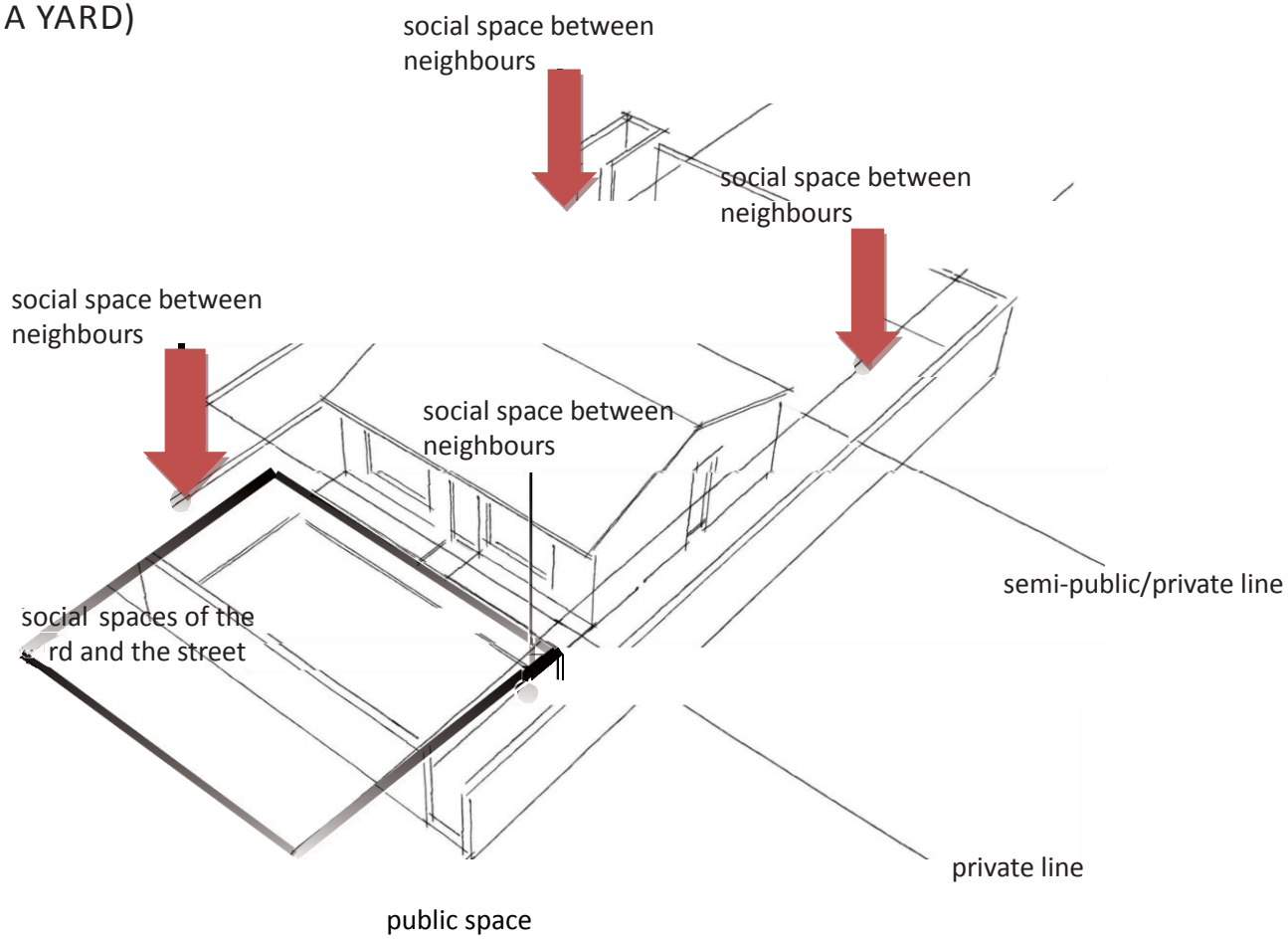
Yards adjacent to each other

THE PHYSICAL YARD (PHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF A YARD)

1. THE BASIC PHYSICAL YARD

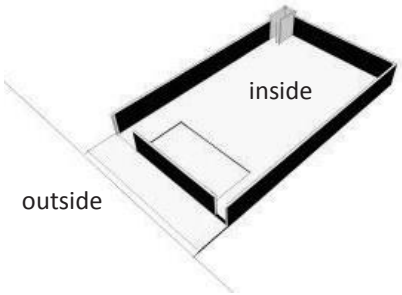


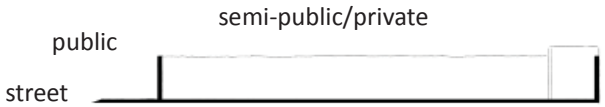
(Authors own)



2. THE PHYSICAL WALL

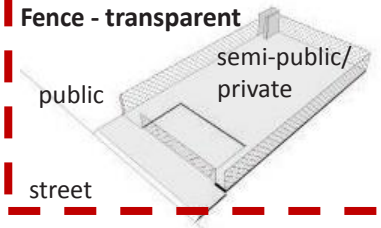
Basic function- to separate inside and outside space

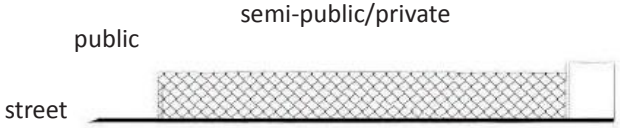




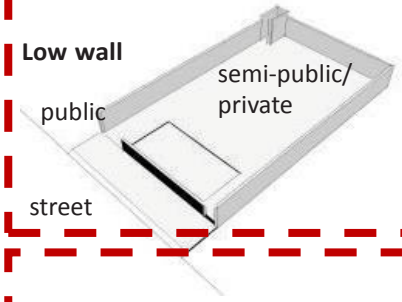
wall types

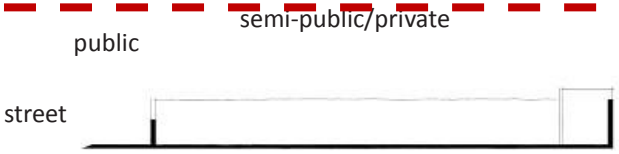
Fence - transparent



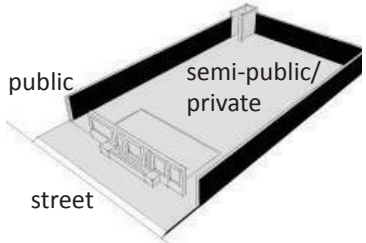


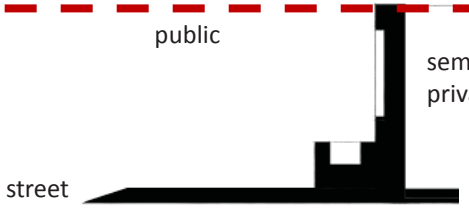
Low wall





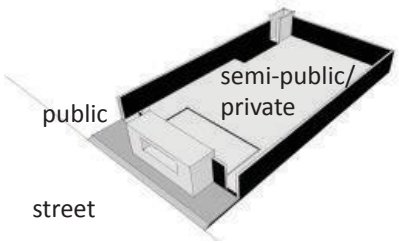
Decorative and functional

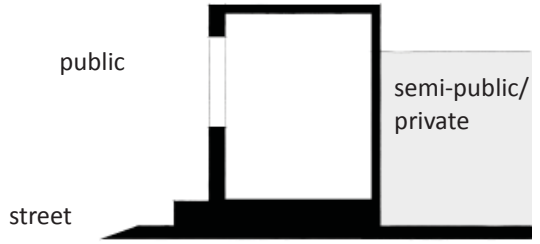




wall as planter and bench

Commercial use







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



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



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

The fence = TRANSPARENCY

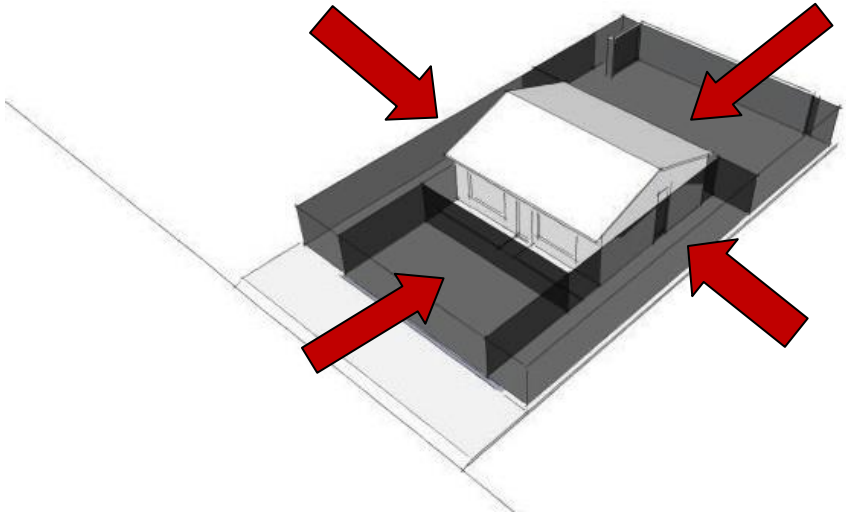
The low wall = PERMEABILITY

The decorative and functional wall = IDENTITY

The commercial wall = ECONOMIC

Dwelling/House

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

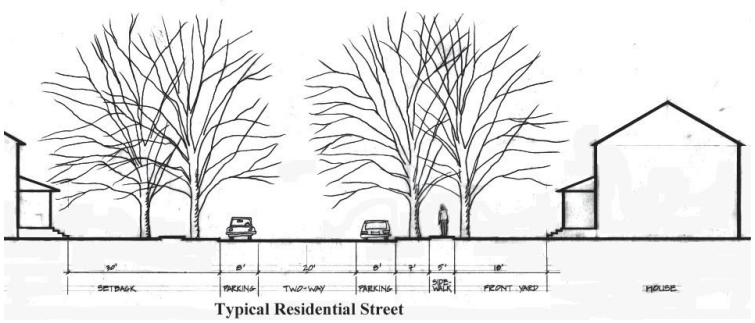




Outdoor living (http//www.Southafrica.net)

3. THE PHYSICAL STREET

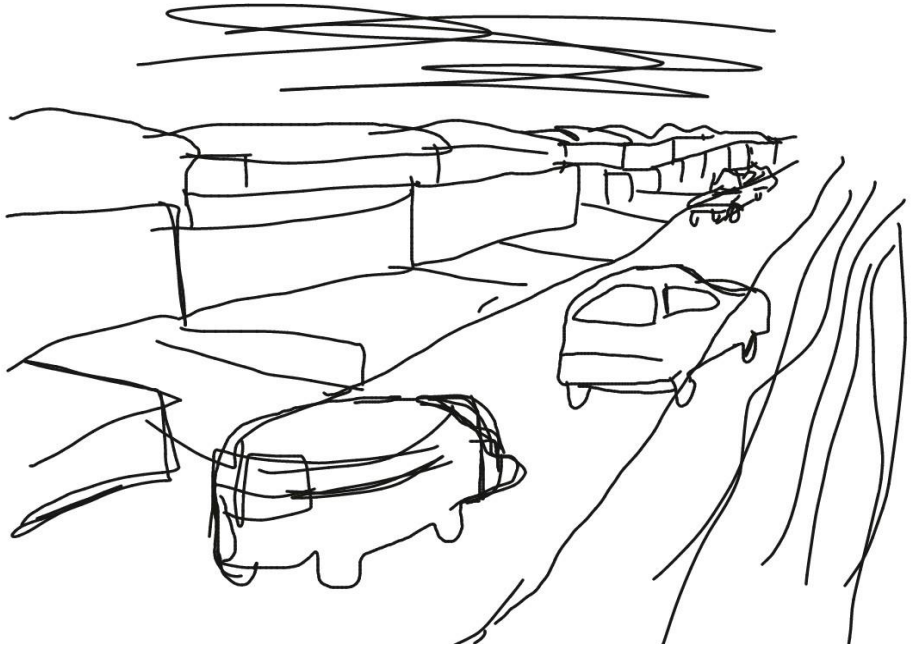
The street in its physical form and function facilitates movement of people and more specifically cars. As a social space the street can be used for different functions and it is transformed by the event or use. In his essay titled “The Spatial Structure of Streets” William C. Ellis quotes from the dictionary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



Typical Residential Street

Fig. 4

Much more space provided for vehicular movement than pedestrian use



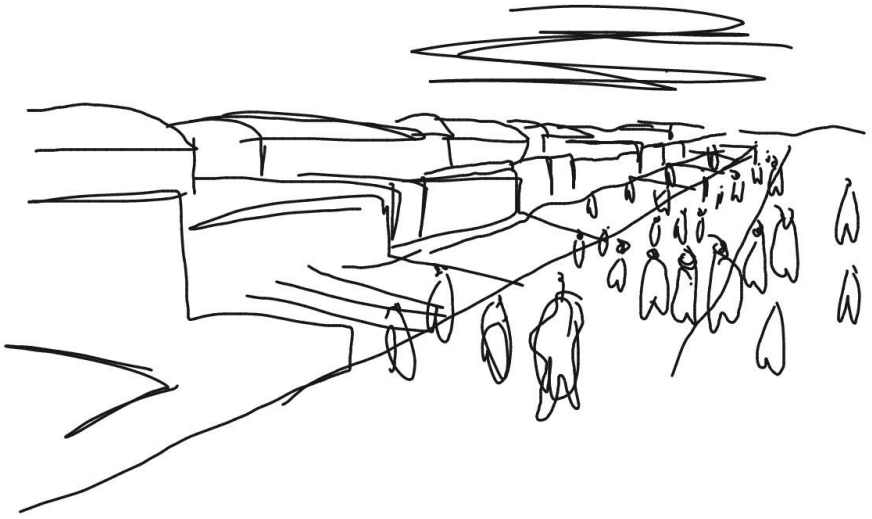
Same street with cars

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

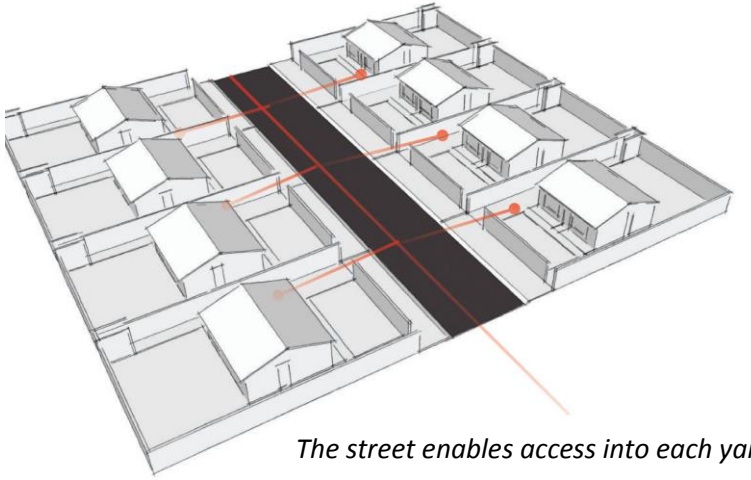


Fig. 5

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



Same street with people and activity



The street enables access into each yard

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

Types of street threshold

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



Street edge with single step

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

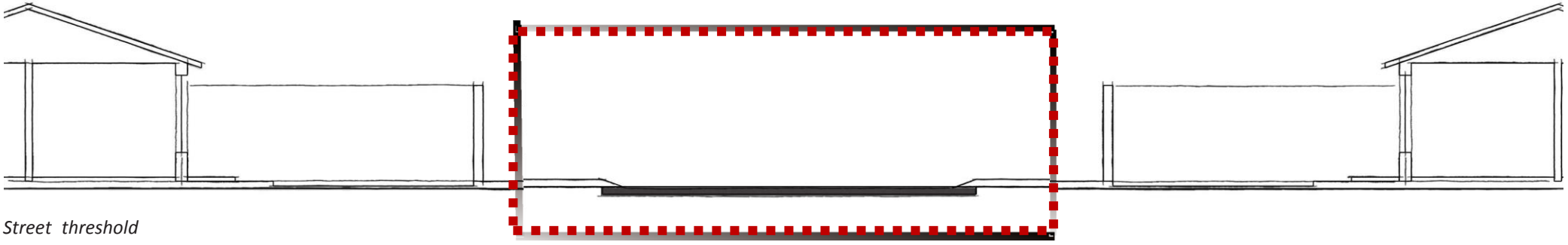


Street edge with more than one step

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



Street edge with slope



Street threshold

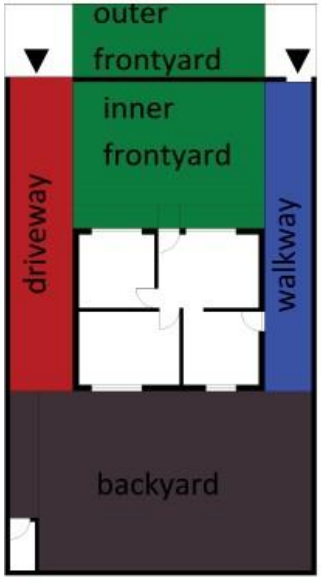
The use and configurations of the township yard

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

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

The “match box” house

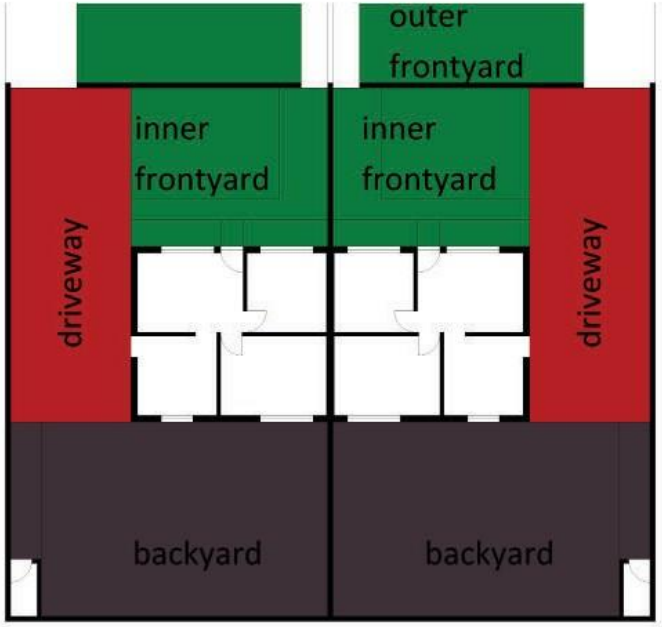
The matchbox house is found in areas like Dobsonville and Mapetla, Soweto. The matchbox house is a four room house, typical of what is termed `apartheid `architecture`. This house sits almost in the center of the site. The front yard is smaller than the back yard and the driveway is wider than the opposite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





The semi-detached house:

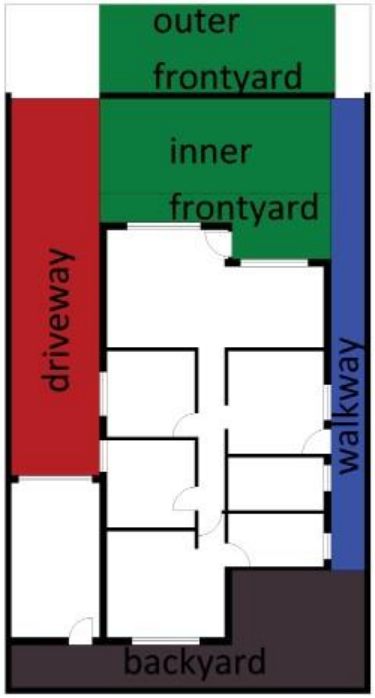
The semi-detached house is found in areas like White City. In this configuration the yard is divided into three spaces: the front yard; the driveway; and the backyard.



The modern three bedroom house:

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

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



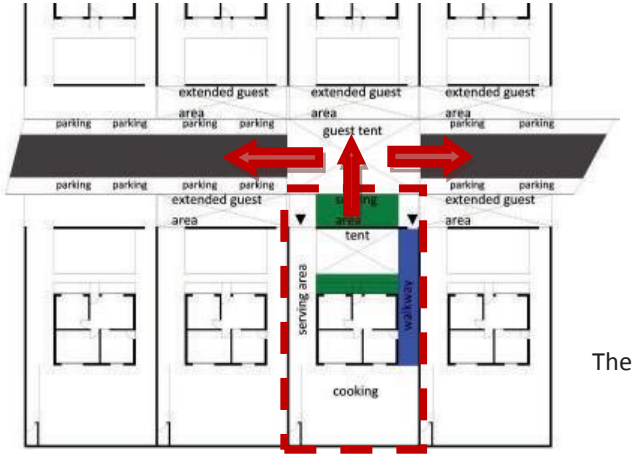
The Social yard (activities` scenarios)

Wedding celebrations:

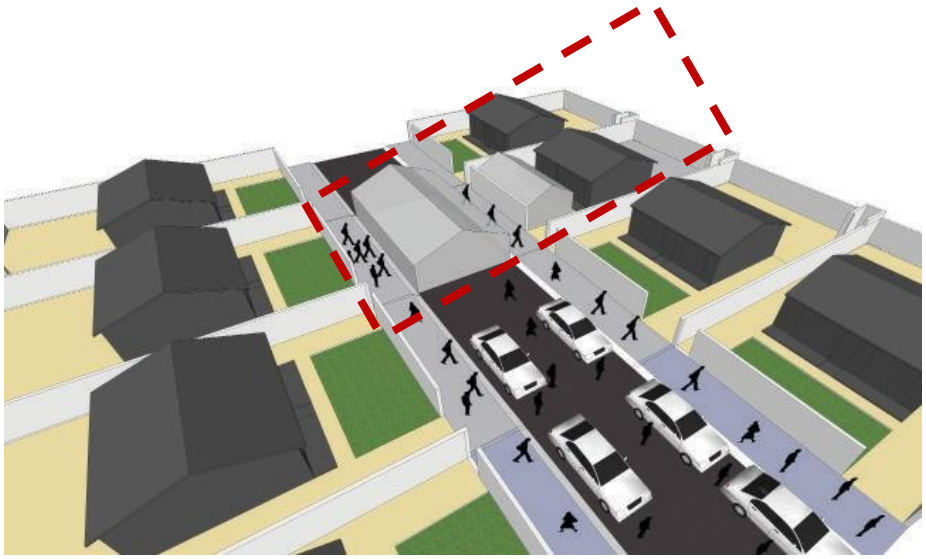
When there is a wedding in Soweto, it is an event which involves the whole community. Surrounding neighbours are invited to the wedding and they share in the celebration. Similar patterns happen when it is a ceremonial event like a funeral. The part of the wedding ceremony which happens at the yard is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

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

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



The overflow system



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



A wedding celebration moving from the yard into the street

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

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



Fig. 7

(http://www.caparkinson.com)



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

(http://www.africasounds.com)



Fig. 10

(http://www.africasounds.com)

Funeral ceremonies

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

Birthday celebrations and graduation ceremonies

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

Playing

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

Living

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

Other uses

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

Cottage rooms

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

Spaza shops shabeens and salons

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

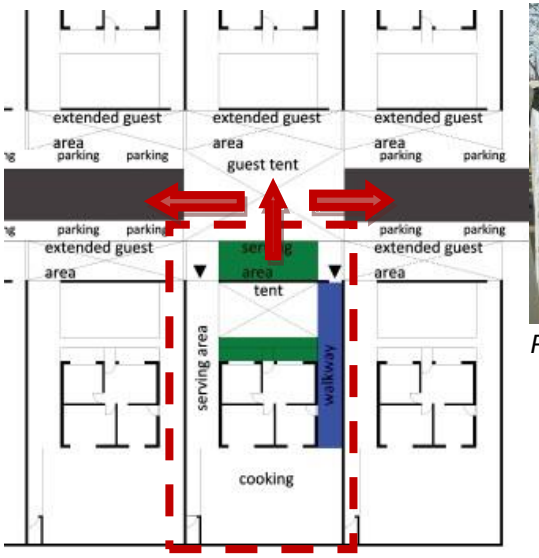
The spaza is a meeting space where people hang out to meet and have conversations. Salons and shabeens also occupy the garage area.

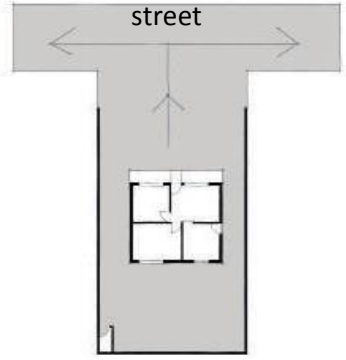
Crèches

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

Spatial analysis

Funeral ceremony







Funeral procession in the yard

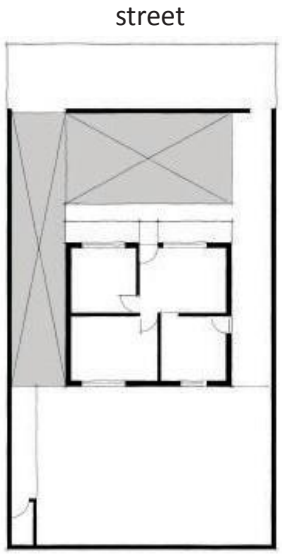
(http://www.enca.com)



Tent pitched in the yard

(http://www.enca.com)

Birthday parties and graduation ceremonies

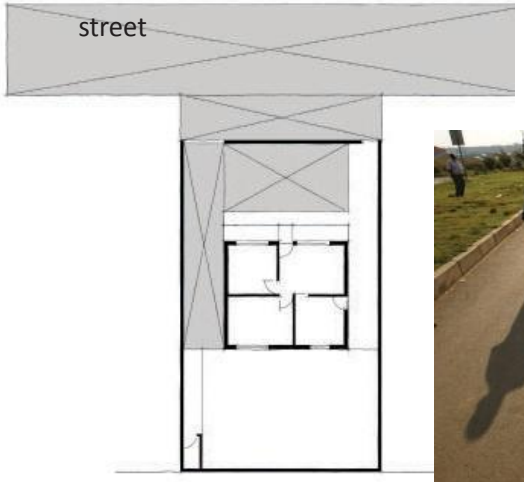




Birthday party

(http://www.jeanetteversters.com)

Playing

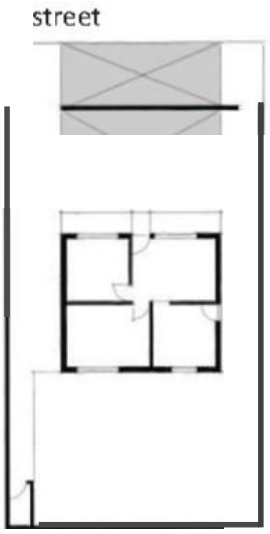




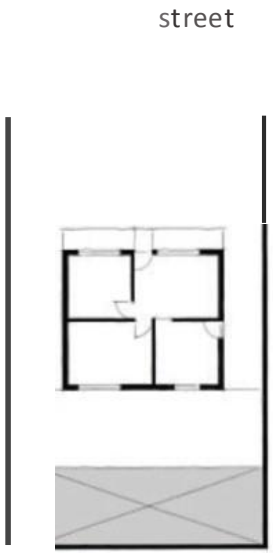
Children playing in the street

(http://www.jeanetteversters.com)

living



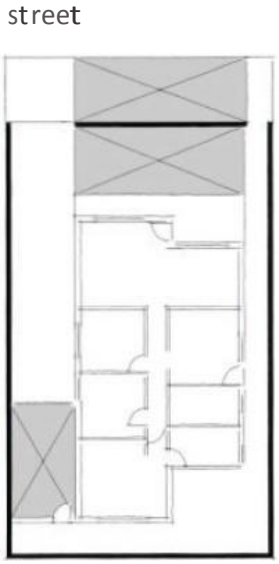
Back rooms





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

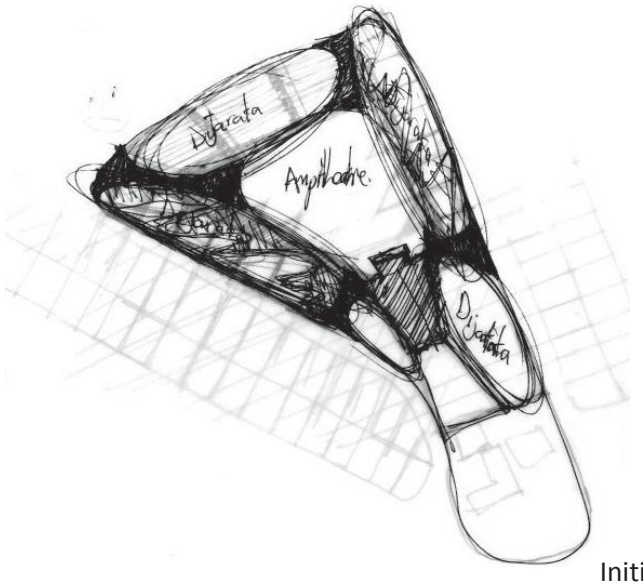
Retail (spaza shop)



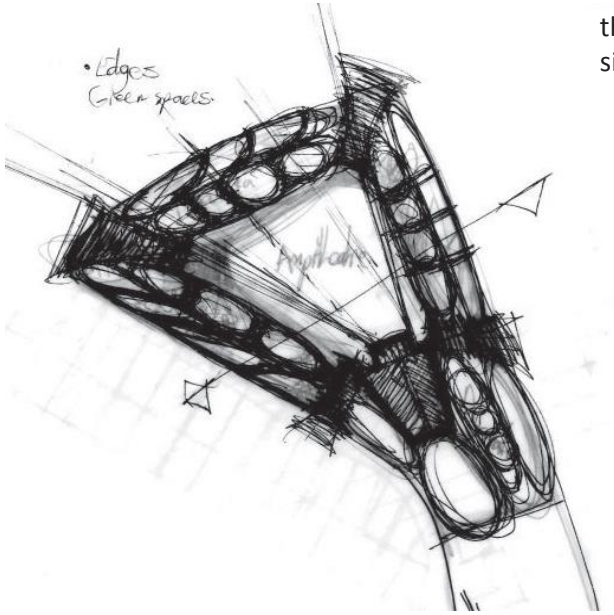


Spaza shop attached to the front yard
(Bieber (2010) Soweto)

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

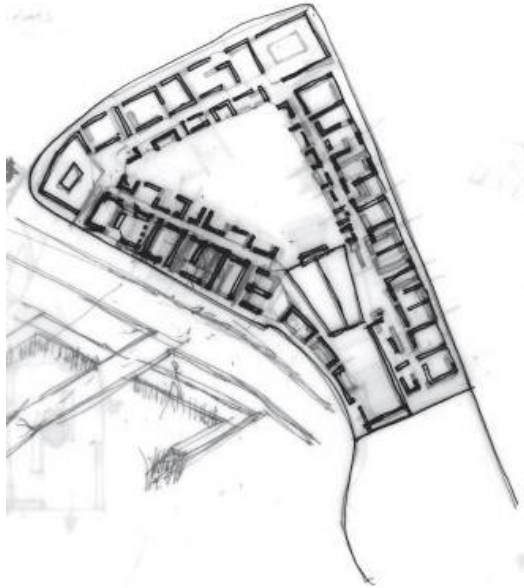


Initial concept was to organise the yards around the edge of the site.





Placing the yards around some sort of a grid pattern.



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

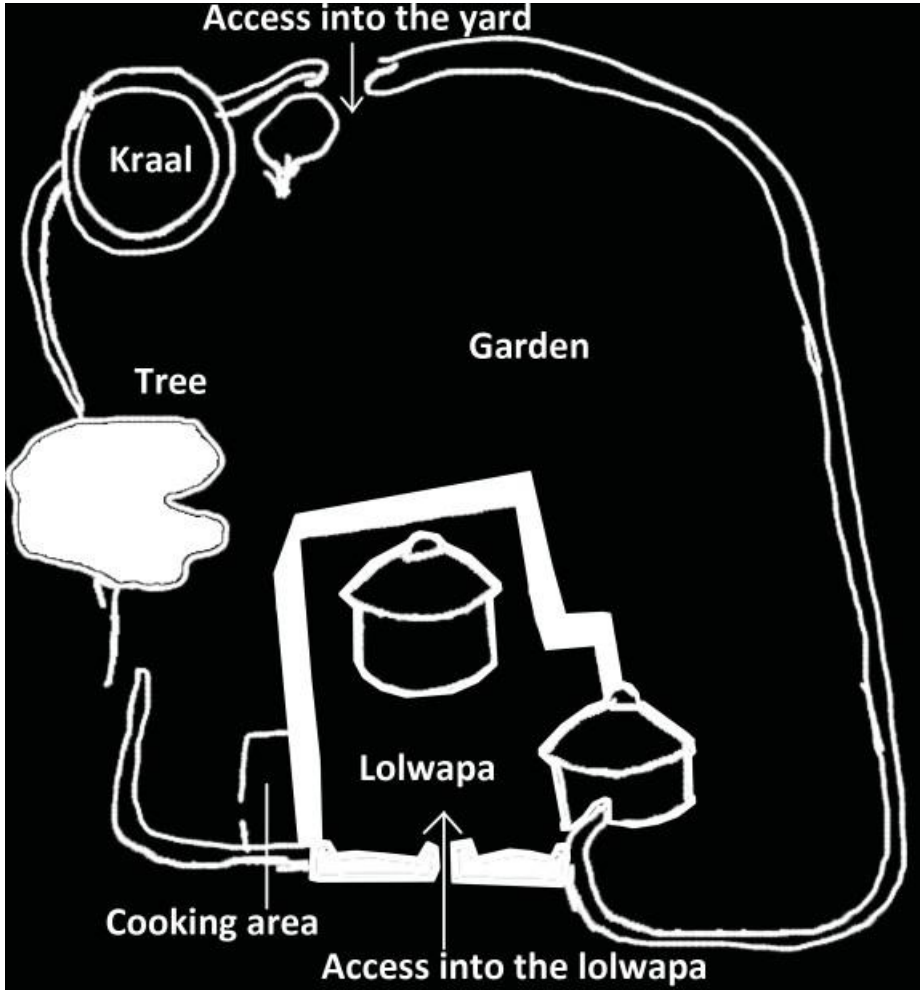
Similar social patterns and spatial use between Lolwapa and the Jarata

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

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

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

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



The lolwapa





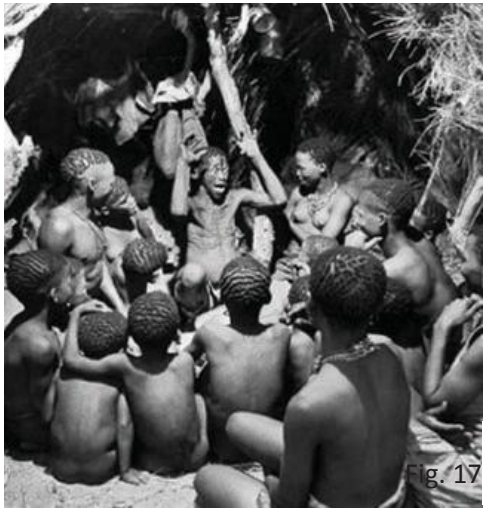
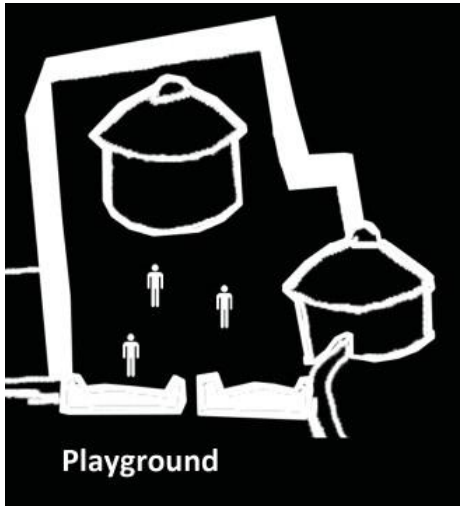


Fig. 17

Storytelling

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)





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


Fig 18

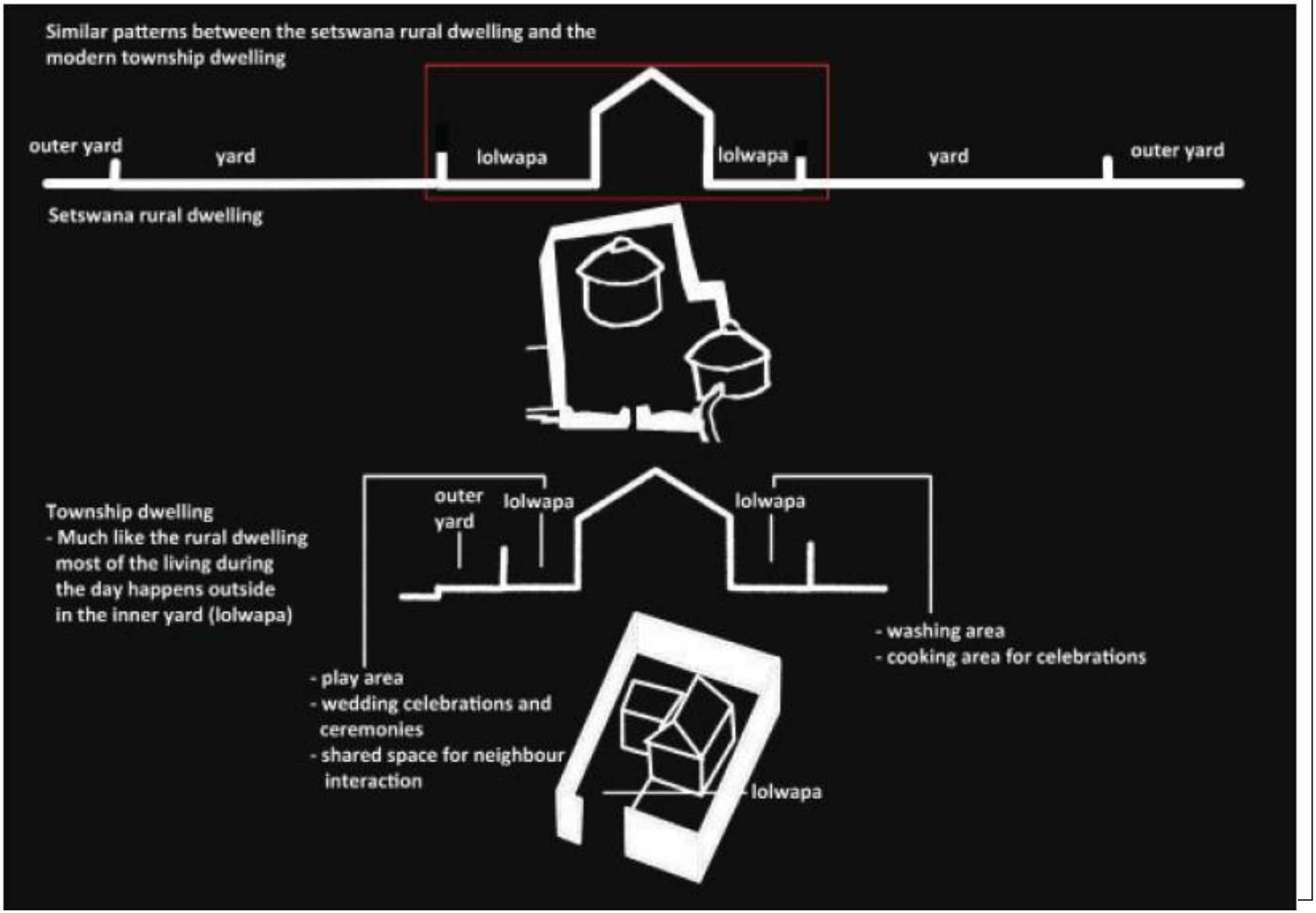
Living

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)


Fig. 19

Wedding celebration

(http:www.knowbotswana.com)



Comparing the 'jarata' to the 'lolwapa'

A Lela village in Ghana

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

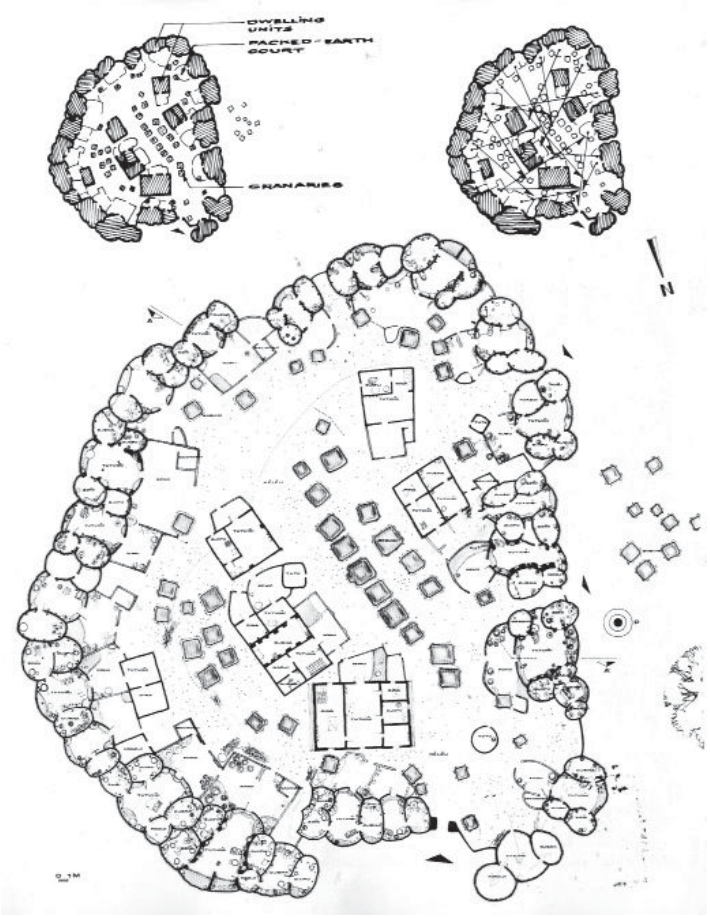


Fig. 22

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

Nuna village in Ghana - A semi dispersed Settlement

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

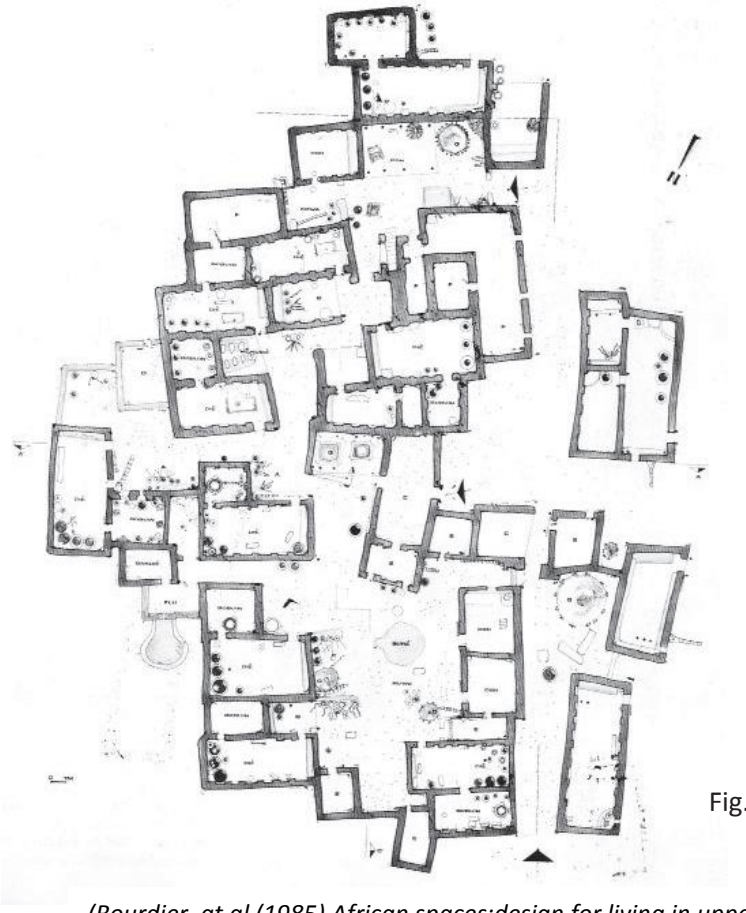
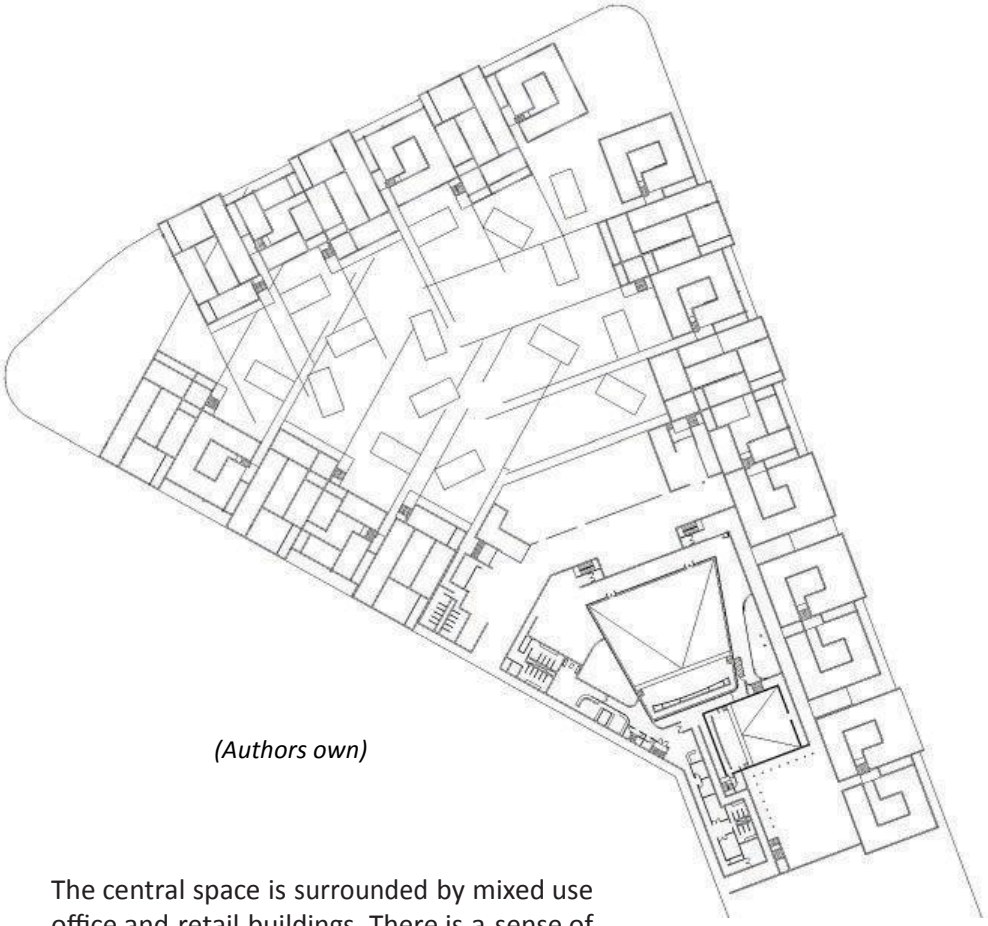


Fig. 23

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



(Authors own)

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



Conceptual sketch

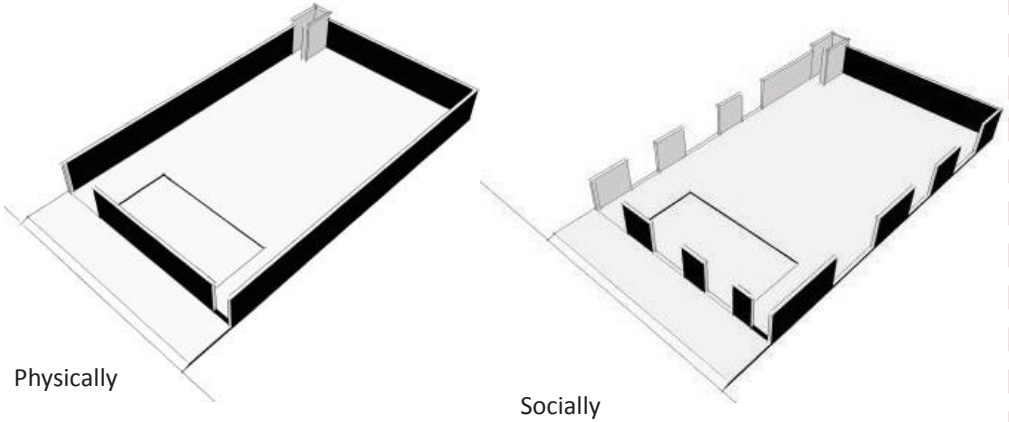
The Social Yard

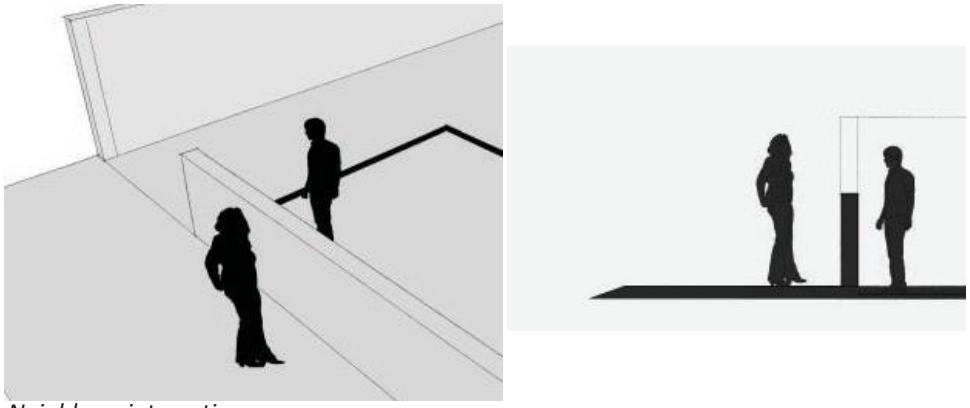
In terms of the space of the yard, the yard has the physical element and the social element. The physical element is the space demarcated by boundaries. The social element describes the place of which the architectural elements are the social elements and activities which happen in the yard. It is place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

Jarata = physical space
Jarateng = social space

1. Wall (socially permeable)

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





Neighbour interaction

Architectural translation of permeability in larger urban Buildings

1. Foro Bario housing, Lelli and Associati Architettura

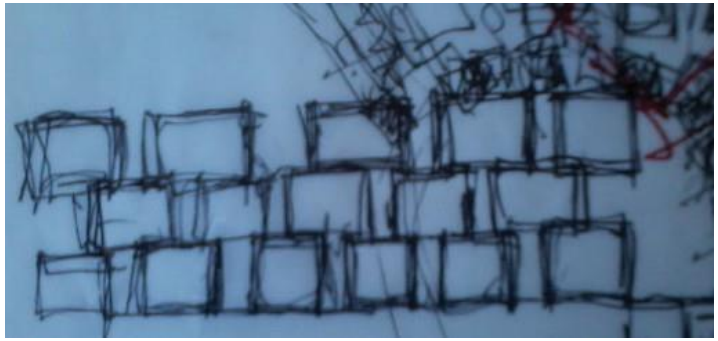


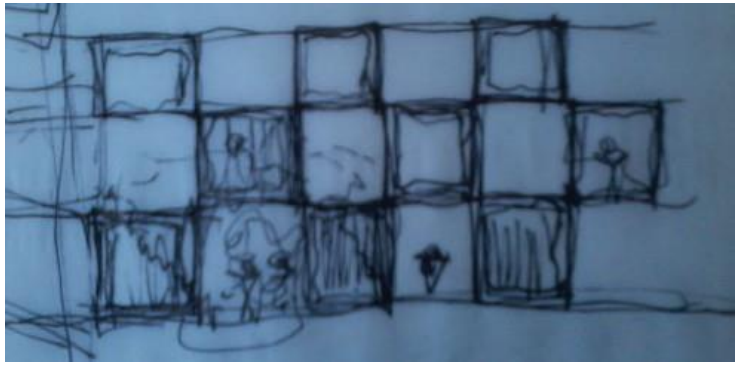
(http://www.archello.com/en/project/foro-boaria-housing)



Fig. 25

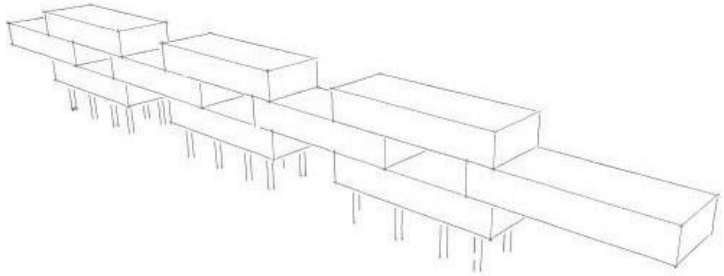
(http://www.archello.com/en/project/foro-boaria-housing)



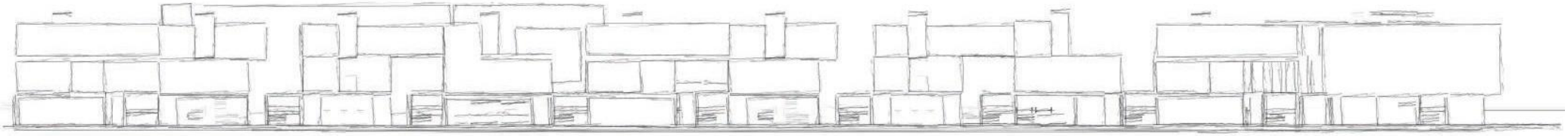


In my own design having an idea of stacking buildings one on top of the other with gaps in between.

[Own design]



[Own design]



conceptual drawing of elevation

Conceptualizing around the idea of a permeable facade

2. Mikola adamus quarter cultural centre for Gdansk



Fig. 26

http://www.archdaily.com



Fig. 27

http://www.archdaily.com

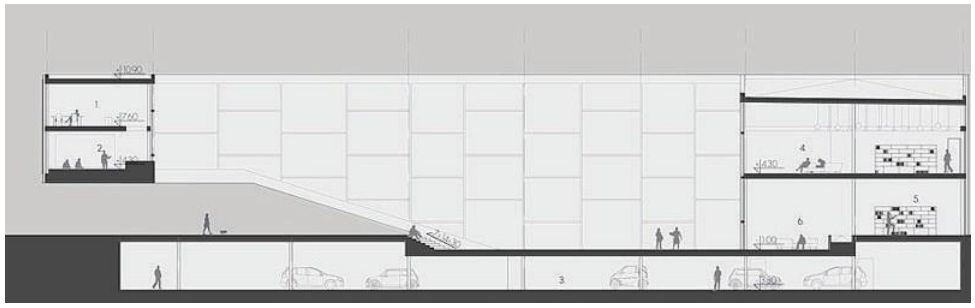
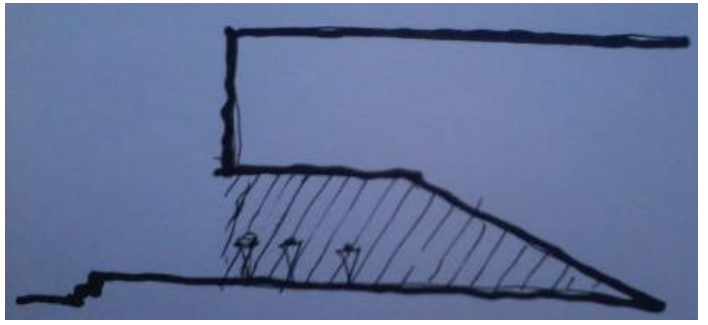
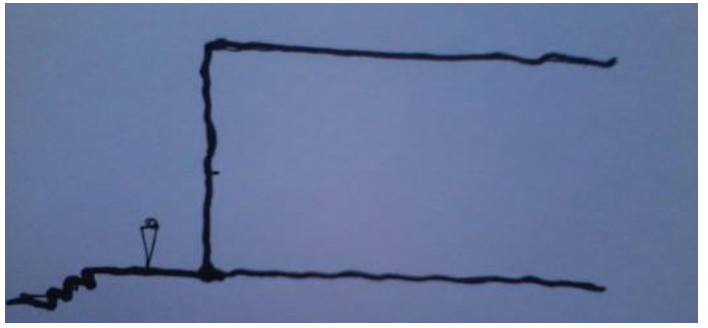


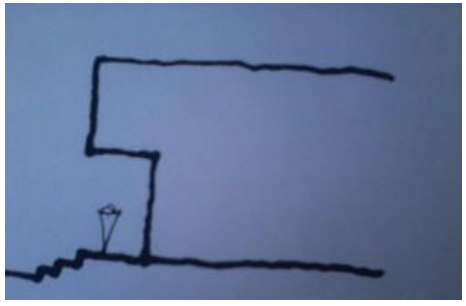
Fig. 28



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



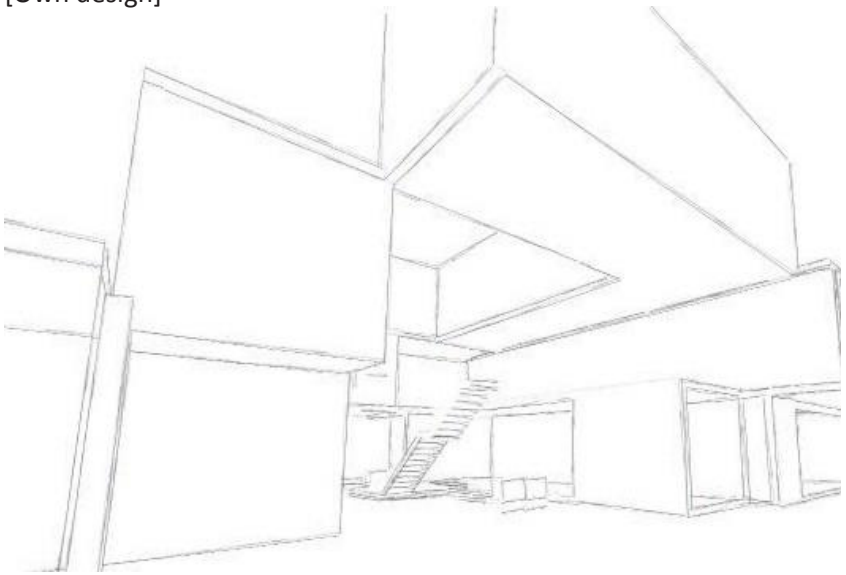
As compared to a harsh edge creating a hard edge



[Own design]

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

[Own design]



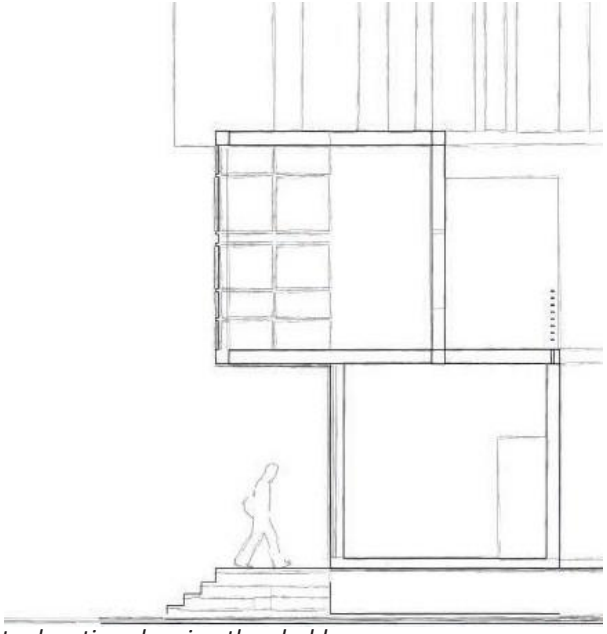
Conceptual perspective of permeability - opening up a section of the building from the bottom thereby increasing the volume of the space underneath.

[Own design]



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

[Own design]



Conceptual section showing threshold.

2. The street space



Fig 29

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

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

The Use of streets

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



Fig 31

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



Fig. 32

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



Fig. 33

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



Fig 34

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



Wedding celebration in the street

(http://www.sowetogospelfans.com)



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



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



Fig. 38

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

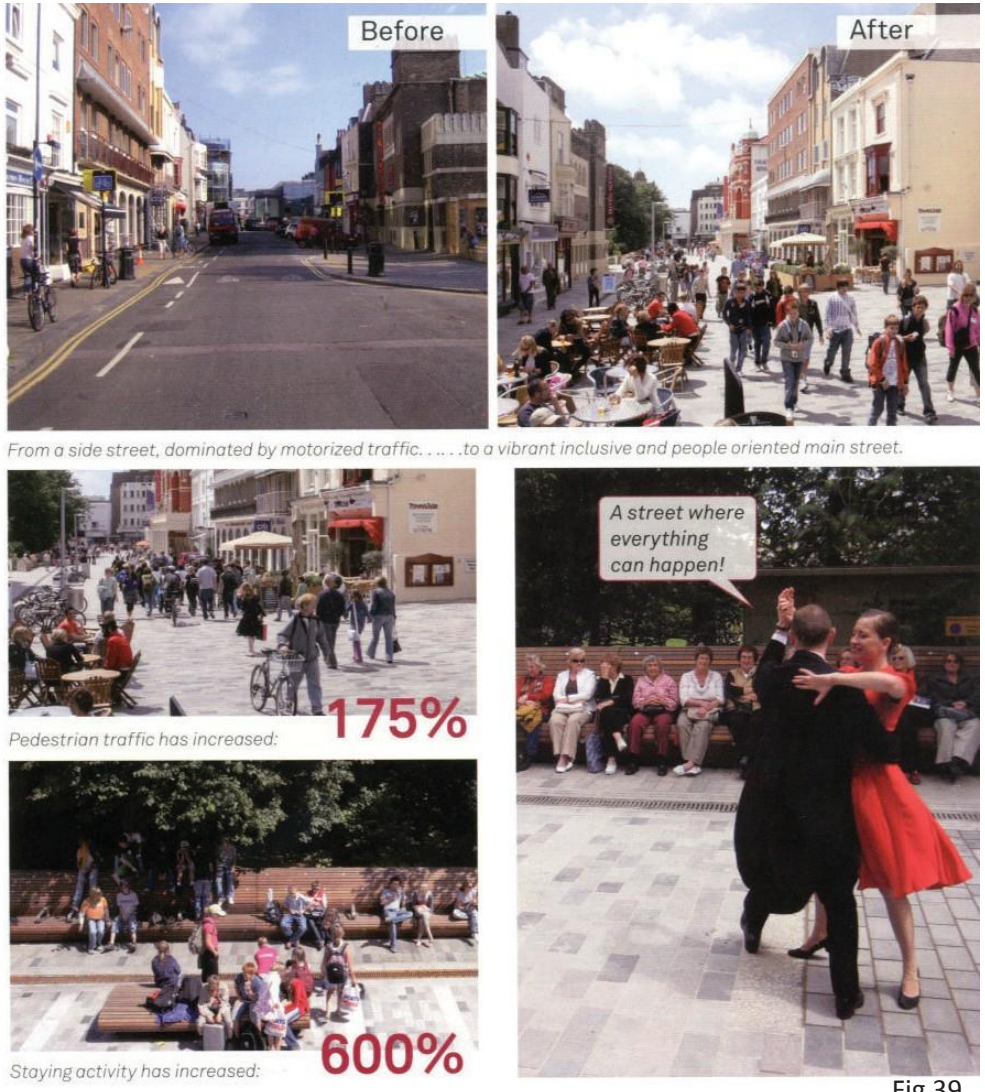


Fig 39

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

3. The Park- The big yard (community)

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

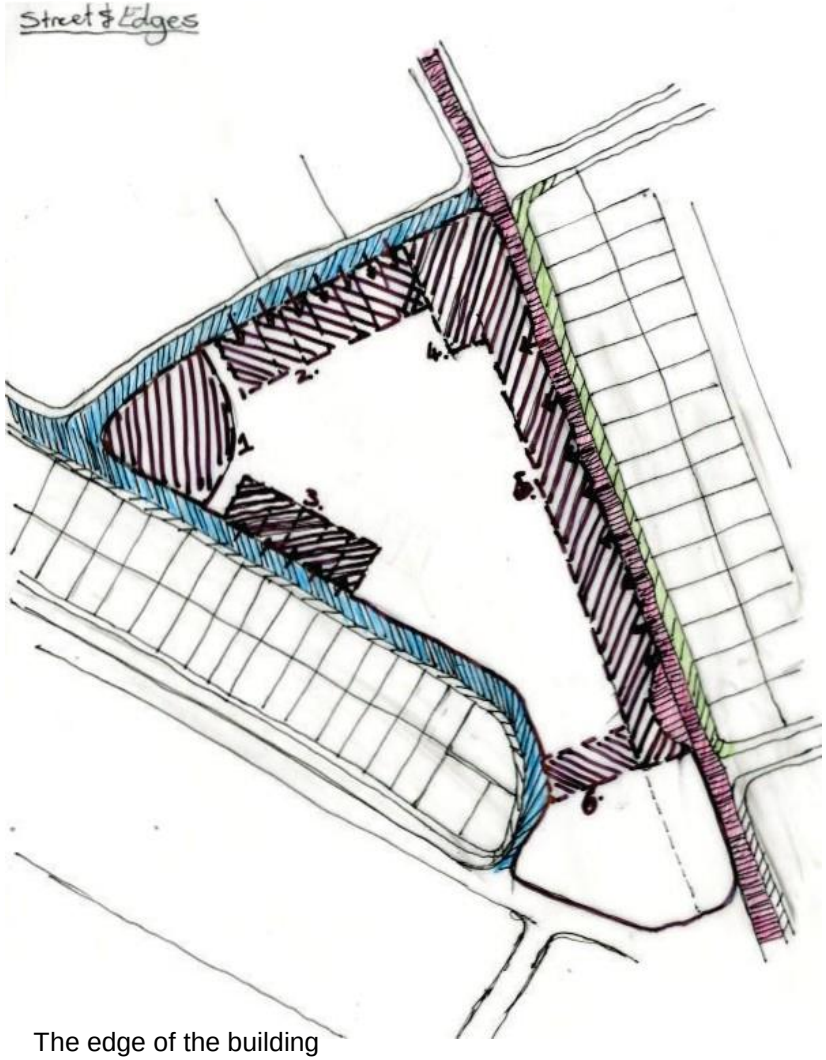
“The public park, a product of the nineteenth-century urbanization and industrialization, was intended as a piece of country in the city. The park was to act as a palliative space to the urban landscape: soothing, healing, and allowing breathing space in the crowded, growing metropolis - thus parks were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

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

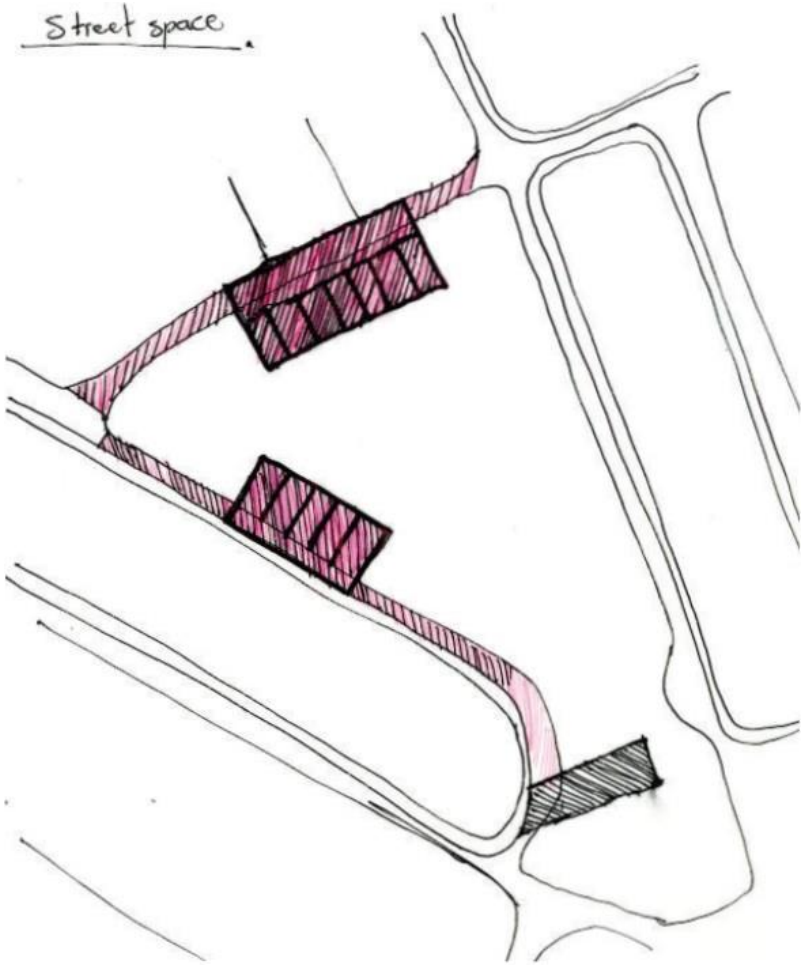
The park is not only a response to the confined township space but it is also a common area which enhances community life. It is a non-teritorial space. Girling states that parks can act more than integrated systems of green spaces; they can also function as frameworks for community development.

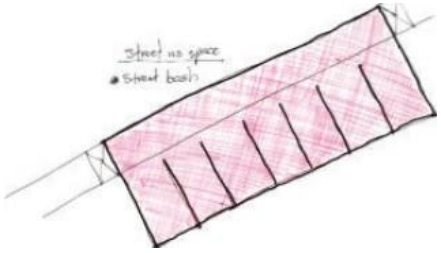
[Own design]

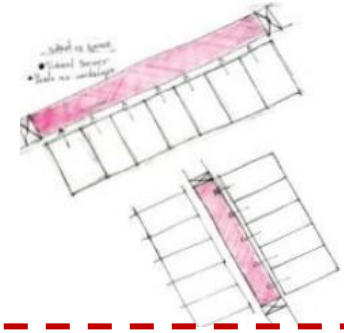
Interpreting the potential of the relationship of the yard and the street in terms of function on the site



The edge of the building and street feeding off each other







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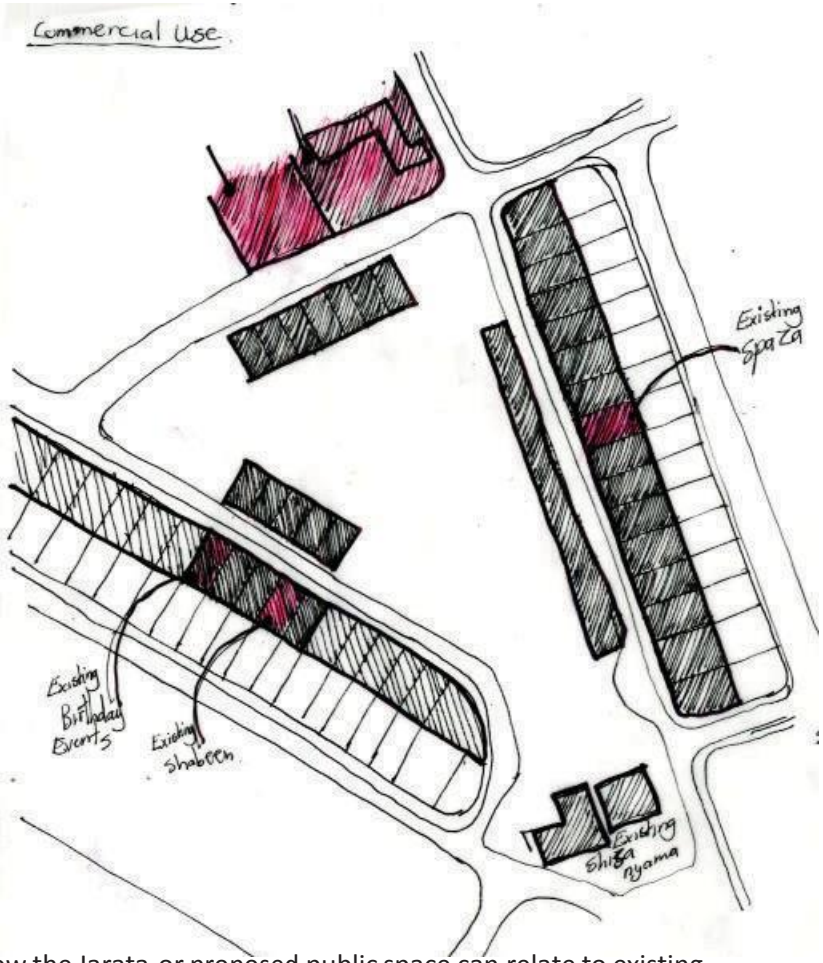
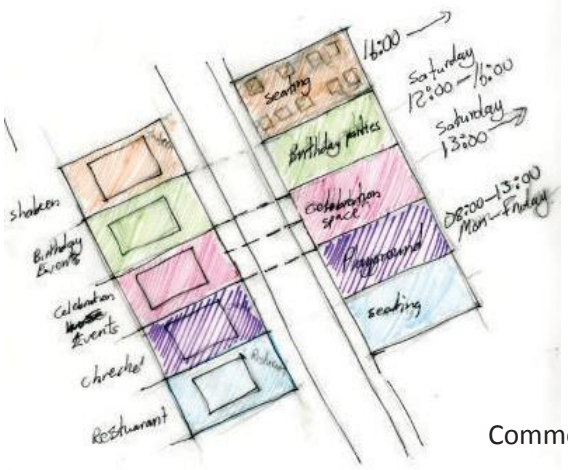
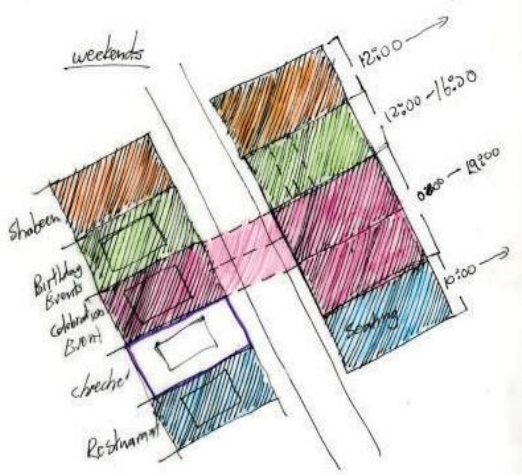


How the Jarata or proposed public space can relate to existing buildings



Commercial opportunity

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



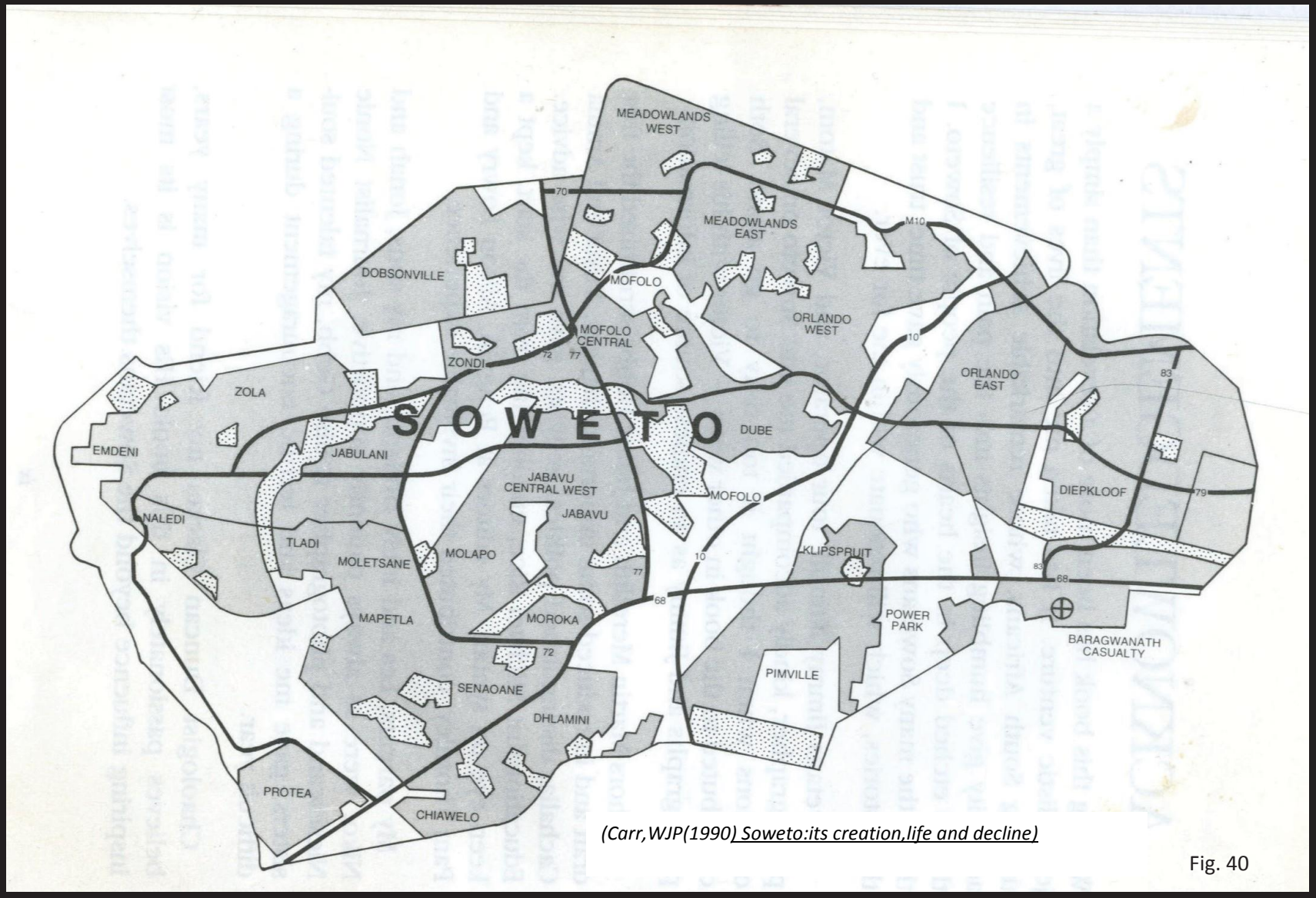
Conclusion

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

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

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

2. SOWETO: an African village



(Carr,WJP(1990) Soweto:its creation,life and decline)

Fig. 40

“We were living under the harsh yoke of apartheid so we had to find ways to make sense of our lives. And we did, we lived life with a vengeance. We had parties, weddings, baptisms, traditional and religious ceremonies. There were rituals to mark births and deaths, childhood and adulthood” - Ruth Bhengu (2004:44)

“As we ran we saw how Soweto relies on its kerb. They might be useless ground elsewhere but in the crowded township they are the seat for business empires with unbounded potential” - Tim Butcher (2004:65)

Soweto: an African community

Soweto is an African community because it is rich in diverse cultures from around South Africa and some parts of Africa. Soweto owes its rich status to the fact that it is made up of a mixture of different cultures. In the beginnings of Soweto black people were drawn towards Johannesburg in search of riches and opportunities for wealth and a better life. They left their rural homes and their home countries to come to Johannesburg. The apartheid government was forced to deal with the influx of black people coming into the city and they put measures in place to control the everyday movements of black people in the city. Thus the apartheid government began to drive black people out of the suburbs and the city, and segregated them to live in their own separate area. This area called Soweto started out small and then began to expand as the black population grew rapidly. Soweto developed as a poor area lacking in basic services and amenities, characterized by small confined houses and yards. But a combination of unity, pride, and sense of community, the people of Soweto were able to perceive their spaces differently through the given circumstances and make it their own.

Apartheid created Soweto but the residents of Soweto made Soweto. Apartheid created the physical place but Sowetans created the social space.

Apartheid Township

In creating Soweto, the apartheid government did not realize that they were actually creating a tight-knit African community driven by unity. In striving to overcome adversity and trying to make ends meet amidst very poor and depressing conditions, Sowetans were able to make social ends meet. It is the social aspects of Soweto and Sowetans that made this "Apartheid Township" the Soweto that we know today. Philip Bonner states, "In the struggle to make ends meet, the people of Soweto began to develop or modify social institutions and networks of mutual sharing and support. In particular areas, this helped to create an extremely powerful community spirit" (1998:45).

Between 1928 and 1929 a special committee was formed which was responsible for handling solely the administration on African affairs (1990:21). The removal of Africans from white-designated areas in Johannesburg was regarded as priority for this committee, and so the council pushed forward with the proclamation of many suburbs according to the Urban Areas Act (Carr, 1990:21). By 1929 the need for large-scale housing was clear (Carr, 1990:21). The Non-European Affairs Department (NEAD) estimated that housing would have to be provided for 45000 people (Carr, 1990:21). The council decided to negotiate to purchase of about 3000 acres of the farm Klipsruit on which a properly planned and modern township would be built, which was then called Orlando Township (Carr, 1990:21).

Stands measuring 3500 square feet were planned for in the proposed new township, and a serious attempt was made to break away from the conventional rectangular block layout (Carr, 1990:21). To try and achieve this, the streets were staggered and inclined at intervals to break up the monotony (Carr, 1990:21). The overall scheme resulted in squares and open spaces, with neighbourhood areas grouped around them (Carr, 1990:21). In addition ample space was made for trading sites, schools, churches, football fields and public halls, as well as for a post office, police station and clinic (Carr, 1990:21).

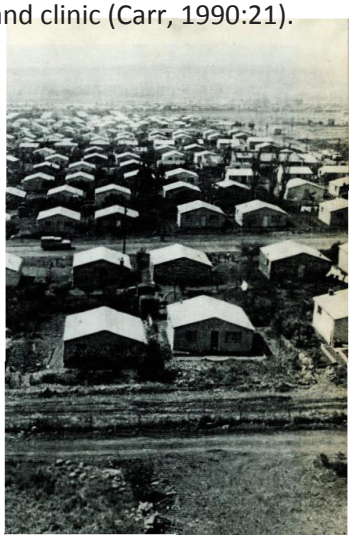




Fig. 41

Early housing development in Soweto

(Carr, (1990) Soweto: its creation, life and decline)

Over the decade of 1936 to 1946 the African population had increased by 72% compared to other population groups with an increase of only 17% according to an analysis made at that time (Carr, 1990:41). In 1944 about 45000 Africans moved to Johannesburg to work in the city and so an acute housing shortage arose (Carr, 1990:41). In an attempt to confront this problem, the council created the Jabavu emergency camp which had plots measuring 2500 square feet and had services to go with it; water, electric street lighting and latrines (Carr,1990:43). By 1946 it was clear that the township of Orlando would not be large enough to house the increasing number of Africans needing to be housed (Carr, 1990:47). "It was recognized that Johannesburg`s African population was not only increasing all the time but that it was an integral part of the city`s commercial and industrial life" (Carr, 1990:47). Thus the city identified vacant land to the West of Orlando which would then be called Orlando West, and new townships began to be planned from there and thus Soweto began to expand (Carr, 1990:47).

Becoming Soweto: from the physical space to the social space

"Incidentally, the name Soweto was officially endorsed by the municipal authorities only in 1963 after a special committee had sat for a long time, considering various names, including apartheid Townships and Verwoerdstad" (Gorodnov, 1998:58). From the onset the Apartheid government purposed Soweto to house the bulk of the labour force which was needed by Johannesburg (1998:58). Africans used to live in areas surrounding the city, so the authorities felt it would be more expedient to concentrate black workers in one district that could be easily controlled (1998:58).

"The site for the new complex had to meet certain requirements: it had to be as far away from the city as possible and there should be total control by the Johannesburg City Council. The fact that Soweto sprang out to the southwest of Johannesburg and not anywhere else was not accidental. In the first place, there already were several locations such as Pimville and Orlando. It was assumed that these scattered townships would merge into a single large complex and, at the same time, that there would be qualitative changes in them compatible with the requirements of apartheid. Secondly, southwest of Johannesburg was bounded by industrial districts and, consequently, no new suburbs for whites would be built there" (Gorodnov, 1998:58).

Transport would also be provided in the form of two railroads and an automobile highway which would run across the southwest area, so that the inhabitants could be able to get to work (1998:59). Each house built would be a standard single-story three-roomed house with a kitchen and a floor space of 43 square meters on a single lot (1998:61).Valentin Gorodnov states, "subsequently, these standard houses amounted to 98 per cent of the dwellings built in Soweto" (Gorodnov, 1998:61). A delegation from the inhabitants inspected the houses and was unhappy, so they protested that the yards were too small among other issues (Gorodnov, 1998:61).

"During the initial years of the Soweto project most of the building was in the townships of Meadowlands and Diepkloof situated on either side of Orlando which had expanded by that time. Unlike the other townships, Meadowlands and Diepkloof were at first formally not part of Soweto because they were administered not by the Johannesburg City Council but by the Bantu Resettlement Board. Spread over 1800 hectares, these two townships were built specially for Africans evicted from Sophiatown and other western areas of Johannesburg and also from Alexandra township" (Gorodnov, 1998:62).

Social patterns

Degrading the African population psychologically was a central objective of the plans of the Apartheid government (1998:63). "They were not merely resettled from old to new townships-they ceased to feel themselves masters of their own homes in both the literal and figurative senses" (Gorodnov, 1998:63). There were several ways in which the Apartheid government tried to achieve this objective:

The first was segregating the African population from the rest of the developing Johannesburg. This was done using buffer zones. These buffer zones were formed by an industrial district, mines and wastelands which separated the white neighbourhoods of Johannesburg and the black locations (1998:59). The following is a description by Father Trevor Huddleston: "No one of either race may linger on that strip of land, for in that way it might become a meeting place" (Gorodnov, 1998:60). Little did Father Trevor Huddleston know that Sowetans would create their own meeting places or

spaces through their social structures.

The second is the control of life in the townships. “The white masters control all aspects of life in the locations. They determine who may or may not live in them, what houses people may occupy, who may teach children in the schools – in fact everything up to where the inhabitants may or may not brew their traditional beer” (Gorodnov, 1998:65). The following is a statement by the white authorities: Manager of the Non-European Affairs: “We are going to do you good, whether you like it or not; for we alone know what is good for you!” (Gorodnov, 1998:65).

The third-which is connected to control of life and which became a central part of the Soweto lifestyle-is Leisure time. “Apart from church services or a football match there is practically nowhere to spend leisure time. The shabeens play a dual role in the life of the Sowetans: on the one hand they are a source of evil (of alcoholism and its social and spiritual consequence) but, on the other, they give township inhabitants their fairly rare opportunity for social life, for meeting each other” (Gorodnov, 1998:85). Meeting one another was very important to the inhabitants of Soweto while at the same time it was a threat to the apartheid government.

“Their (Apartheid government) main objective was most likely to keep the blacks in a state of constant tension and even fear, to deny them the possibility of having their own, even if not the best, places where they could gather and have some semblance of social life” (Gorodnov, 1998:86).

Not only did leisure time encourage people to socialize but it was an essential instrument that would break down tribalism in the multi-cultural townships of Soweto. This would see Soweto to be a melting-pot of cultural and social mixes.

There were ways in which the oppressed inhabitants countered the attempts of the apartheid government to degrade them. These were mostly on a social level:

The first was the cultural mixes. This happened in what is called the Marabi era which dated back to the 1920s. “Marabi was the name given to the exuberant new urban culture created by the slum-dwellers in the 1920s” (Bonner, et al, 1998:14). Marabi was destined to influence the cultural world of Sowetans, and its most distinct feature was its racial mix. The driving force was the sharing and borrowing of the slum-dwellers of each other’s cultures. “In the slums Africans, Indians, coloureds, Chinese and whites of many diverse origins lived side by side and borrowed many elements from one another`s social lives and cultures” (Bonner, et al, 1998:14).

This mixing and sharing of each other’s cultures resulted in a slum yard dialect called flaaitaal, which combined elements of Afrikaans, English and African languages – known today a tsotsi taal - while Marabi developed into a music style blending African, Afrikaans, coloured and black American musical forms into a melodic mix. Sowetans began to take on this social attitude of sharing and mixing in the townships.

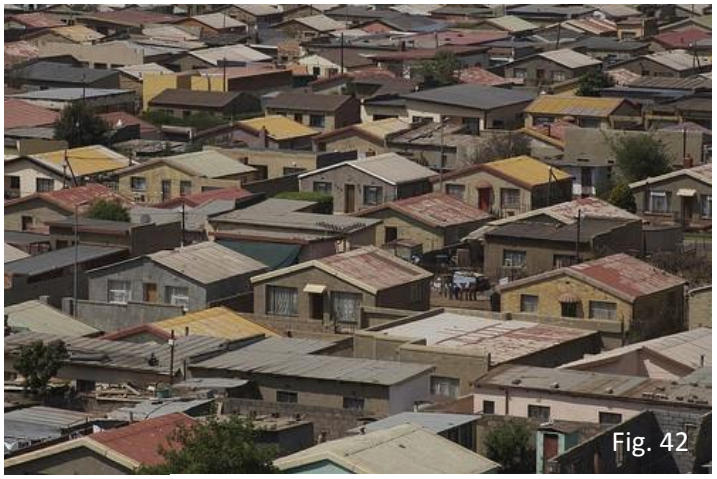
Besides overcoming adversity, Soweto would not be Soweto without diversity. Chasing gold, work and a better life in Johannesburg lead to a diversity of cultures in Soweto. This was a combination of migrant workers from other provinces and African countries. This created a single African community.

By learning to live together as different cultures, Sowetans developed Ubuntu. Ubuntu is the spirit of living together while respecting one another and helping one another. It is about respect for your neighbours and gave an urban identity to inhabitants living in Soweto.

In trying to make ends meet through sharing and caring for one another, Sowetans were able to make social ends meet. “In the struggle to make ends meet, the people of Soweto began to develop or modify social institutions and networks of mutual sharing and support. In particular areas, this helped to create an extremely powerful community spirit” (Bonner, et al, 1998:45).

Much of the social interaction took place outside the confined spaces of the matchbox houses. “The confined space of Soweto`s houses contributed considerably to this sense of camaraderie, as much of the social life and social interaction took place when friends, couples, families abandoned their cramped matchboxes and took to the streets. By co-operating and sharing in neighbourhood groups, Sowetans were able to soften some of the harshness of life and develop a civic culture which would

help block government strategies of control and division" (Bonner, et al, 1998:45).

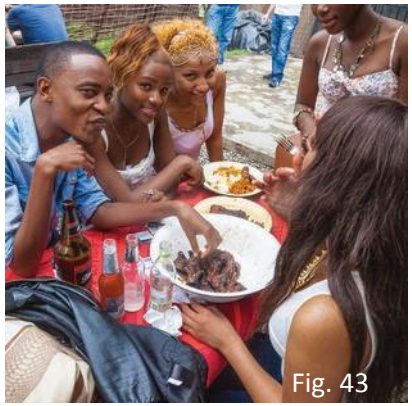


Typical match-box houses *(http://www.anotherworldishappening.wordpress.com)*

Music and film played a big role in the social life of Sowetans. Before any cinema was ever built in Soweto, people used to gather at that one special house which had a television to watch their favourite shows or a soccer match. At times the owner of that house would charge a certain fee if one wanted to watch a movie or favourite series. Niq Mhlongo states that for him what stands out in Soweto is the life that happens on a social level (2010:11). "Watching movies was one of the most exiting social activities in Soweto. People used to watch predominantly Chinese movies and this happened mostly on Saturdays. The movies were screened during the day and at night" (Mhlongo, 2010:11).

Niq Mhlongo states, "In my street, the few families that were considered `rich` were the ones that owned a television set. There were only two houses out of about twenty that had a TV set. I used to pay ten cents to watch the A team TV series starring Mr T at the Mthombeni family house at the corner of our street" (Mhlongo, 2010:11).

Mhlongo states that before shisanyamas (braais/barbecue places) became popular, braais used to happen inside the yards of the residents` matchbox houses on the occasion of stokvel social gatherings. These gatherings involved a lot of music and dancing. "Our house in Chiawelo hosted those interesting stokvel gigs on a monthly basis, and my brother`s friends would come and drink beer and listen to the jazz music of Miles Davis or John Coltrane, or the Soul Brothers on his Tempest Hi-Fi" (Mhlongo, 2010:11).



Shisanyamas (braai) in the yard



(http://www.afar.com)

A melting pot of African cultures

Soweto is a melting pot of diverse African cultures. These cultures can be traces as far up northwards from countries like Zimbabwe. From these countries the cultures then moved to the provinces where particular languages and cultures would be predominant. In Kwazulu Natal the predominant culture and language is Zulu, in The Eastern Cape the predominant culture and language is Xhosa, in the North West province the predominant culture is Setswana etc. All the diverse cultures in South Africa converge to Gauteng and are mostly concentrated in Johannesburg. Soweto is where these cultures are mostly embraced and are mixed creating a new urban culture with a set of unwritten rules and invisible spaces around social spaces. The mixing and borrowing of the different cultures condensed in the Soweto townships gives the social yard its character. The social township yard is one which allows visitors in and projects itself outward socially onto the street space and into the community.

"Soweto is also the center of South African culture, and has developed its own sub-culture. Come on a weekend, and you`ll concur that the township is a trendsetter in language, fashion, music, dance and general social discourse." (Mhlongo, 2010:15)

Embracing public living



Fig. 45

As much as Soweto is now integrated into the framework of the city of Johannesburg as far as segregations and the oppressions of the past are concerned, it is an area which operates according to its own distinct traditions and rules carried through over the years. Jodi Bieber states that Soweto operates in a completely different way to the suburbs of Johannesburg (2010:9). This statement is true, and you will notice it whether you live, or spend a day in Soweto. Things just operate in a weird yet normal way. It is an organized chaos, an ordered disorder. The most distinct difference between Soweto and the suburbs of Johannesburg is the fact that Sowetans embrace public living and also how they embrace it. Bieber (2010:9) expresses that children play on the pavements, soccer matches are being refereed in the streets, and adults are chatting or gossiping or flirting with neighbours, friends or lovers. Bieber goes on to state that music systems can be found on the stoeps of two homes next to each other pelting out different sounds (2010:9). This happens without one neighbour disturbing the other. This shows the complex matrix of social overflows in the physical place by the social space. After having grown up and lived in Soweto for 14 years, these scenes are all true and familiar. The levels of social interaction run high from the yards to the pavements overflowing into the streets.


Fig. 46

Children utilizing the street as a soccer pitch *(http://www.jeanetteverster.com)*


Fig. 47

Socializing in the street

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)



Fig. 48

A public display of social activities.

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)



Fig. 49

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)

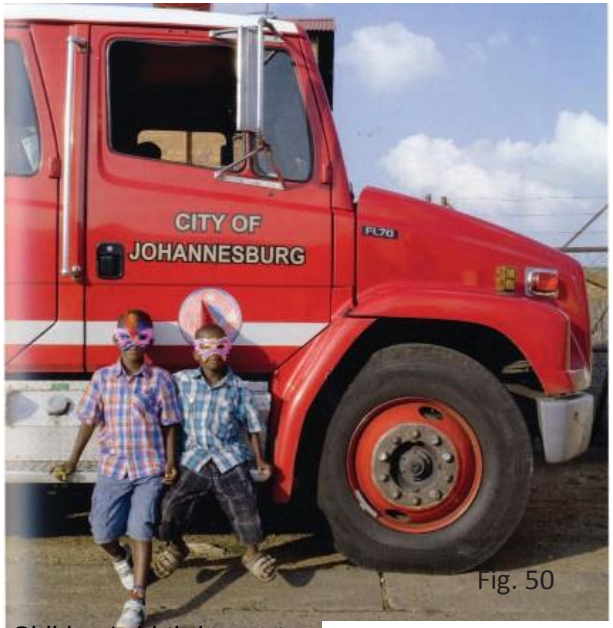


Fig. 50

Children's birthday party *(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)*



Fig. 51

Large open spaces are an opportunities for large social gatherings such as music festivals

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)

The social interactions or activities exist as spaces, but not spaces in the physical sense. These social spaces happen in a physical space or context. The social spaces are seen for their context and geometric spaces and can therefore be [mis]interpreted as physical spaces. These spaces can best be described as mental spaces, emotional spaces, spiritual spaces etc. This means that these spaces can occur in any physical context. The geometric space can remain the same but the social space disappears and can reappear at any given time and place and its scale can vary.

The way in which these spaces happen in the context of the townships in Soweto is unique. They are unique for the fact that they are embraced and how they are embraced. Bieber states that one of the beautiful features of Soweto, which differs from the Johannesburg suburbs, is that when there is a wedding, funeral, or the birthday party of a one year old, it is okay to place a tent in the middle of the street as all your neighbours would be invited and everyone will be fed (2010:8). The physical environment is transformed by the social spaces which soon disappear and reappear when there is another ceremony or celebration.

In her written piece called "Loose space", Caroline Chen describes that "loose space" is what results when residents liberate designed public space such as parks, plazas and parking lots from the limits of the original, intended program and piggyback new and unforeseen functions of their own choosing on the space (2010:22). The social activities in the Soweto townships are not new or unique to Soweto but the residents have certainly liberated the limits of the confines and original intended program of the physical yard by turning it into a rich, meaningful social yard. The physical yard is a loose space where the physical space does not predetermine the variety of social activities which happen in the yard including the street space. The barriers of the physical yard are disregarded as the social yard space flows beyond these barriers.

Bieber states that Sowetans are incredibly friendly and it takes only a greeting – which is customary and almost compulsory - to get invited into someone`s house. Their back doors generally stand wide open when someone is at home. Social spaces are always open and vary in scale and hierarchy. Even if the physical environment of the Town

ship of Soweto has not improved entirely, the residents of Soweto take pride in their physical environment. The yards are neat and the houses and walls are decorated and painted to make a statement. These gestures give identity to the individual house, the street and the community.



Fig. 52

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)



Fig. 53

Identity

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)



Front yards *(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)* Fig. 54

Soweto as a live theatre



Identity also reflects in the way people dress in Soweto Fig. 55

(Bieber, (2010) Soweto)

The social experience in Soweto is a live theatre which the residents are a part of and are the audience and performers all at the same time.


Fig. 56


Fig. 57

(http://entertainment.howzit.msn.com)


Fig. 58

Street performances are common in the township

(http://www.the-xworld.com)

Enclaves

The manner in which public living is embraced and the levels of social interaction which exists in the townships of Soweto, this township can be seen as a sort of an enclave but with penetrable boundaries. The sense in which Soweto is an enclave is that Soweto operates on its own set of rules. “A trend that is developing strongly in Soweto is that of wanting to be self-sufficient in the township and not having to go and find it in the suburbs” (Bieber, 2010:8). This is one of the characteristics of an enclave.

The Mai-Mai market



Fig. 59

(https:www.joburg.org.za)


Fig. 60


Fig. 61


Fig. 62

(http:www.joburg.org.za)

David Varady states that according to Peter Marcuse, “an enclave is an area of spatial concentration in which members of a particular population group, self-defined by ethnicity or religion or otherwise, congregate as a means of protecting and enhancing their economic, social, political and/or cultural development” (2005:17). Varady further indicates that according to Ceri Peach, “the central theory in the study of the spatial patterns of ethnic residential segregation is that there is a direct relationship between the social process of assimilation and the spatial pattern of dispersal” (2005:31). The social spaces are established resulting in the physical spaces being ‘broken’. That means that the social spaces reach over beyond the physical barriers and these barriers become virtually invisible because there are no barriers in a single social space. Social assimilation requires spatial diffusion. Varady states that assimilation leads to the dissolution of socio-economic and spatial markers of identity over time (2005:31). Varady further states that social assimilation leads to the melting pot of dissolution. (2005:31)

Thresholds and spatial analysis

Liveable urban spaces foster a sense of belonging by the design of the threshold experience and by a sense of visual enclosure (Lennard et al, 1987). As Camillo Sitte emphasized - "The essential thing of both room and square is the quality of enclosed space". A public urban space gains much of its sense of "place" from its enclosed character (Lennard at el, 1987:17). This quality of visual enclosure focuses attention on the people and events within the space (Lennard at el 1987:17). In order to maintain this sense of enclosure, streets or passages providing access are small, or angled in such a way that there is no direct view out of the space (Lennard at el, 1987:17).
There is a clear sense of enclosure when one approaches the Mai Mai market. The market has a physical boundary surrounding it in the form of a wall. Furthermore it is surrounded by buildings, vegetation and has an overhead highway above it. Before entering the market space one can start to feel the sense of the Zulu culture through the spoken language. In the Mai-Mai market one crosses a threshold which is the obvious separation between the inside and the outside. As one continues walking through the long entrance there is nothing yet that strikes you about the dull entrance. This dull entrance is effective as it does heighten ones anticipation of what lies ahead. Once one crosses the threshold the space dramatically opens up to a vibrant cultural space. Just as one thinks that they have crossed the threshold into this space, there is another threshold that one needs to cross, that being the cultural or ethnic threshold, particularly the Zulu cultural threshold.

The threshold is due to the fact that the Market is a predominantly Zulu speaking community. Therefore the Zulu culture dominates throughout the market and the experience of the visitor. There are narrow internal streets which enable circulation around the market area. The dwellings are small hostel type buildings each about the size of a small bedroom, with people ranging from families with children to bachelors living in these tight spaces. The dwellings open up directly onto the internal street creating a more direct relation between the visitors and the residence and among the residence themselves. The market is divided into zones, much like a city. There are zones for living and working, and heavier production zones where there are mechanics fixing cars and carpenters building coffins. There is also a crèche which can also function as a community hall or a space where important meetings are held.

Similar social patterns in the Latino culture in America

The social patterns between the urban Soweto culture and the urban Latino culture are very similar. Much like Soweto "one will know when one has arrived at a Latino neighbourhood because of the large numbers of people outdoors. Streets are an integral part of the community fabric because they bring people together by allowing for mobility and social exchange" (James Rojas, 2010:36).

The yard and more especially the street space are perceived as spaces which can support human social activities by integrating the physical space into the social space and not letting the physical space limit the potential of the social space. Rojas indicated that Latinos blur the line between commercial and residential activities. This is similar to Sowetans with a number of spaza shops and shabeens among other commercial activities which happen in the yard.

Latino homes

Rojas indicates that Latino homes create a new language that uses syntax from both Latin America and US forms (2010:40). Rogers further states that the front porch becomes one of the main focal points of Latino homes. "In Latino homes the front porch has gained a new importance with residents enlarging and expanding them for their heavy use" (Rojas, 2010:40). Similarly to the residents of Soweto, residents sit on the porch to escape the summer heat or just be outside with family, friends, and neighbours as Rojas indicates (2010:40. The driveway can serve as a party or work space (2010:40).

Rojas states that waist-high fences are ubiquitous throughout the residential landscape of Latino neighbourhoods. The fences function as a place to keep things out or in, hang wet laundry, sell items, or beyond that just to chat with a neighbour according to Rojas (2010:40). Fences are a useful threshold between the household and the

public domain. That is only a physical function but interestingly enough, socially, as Rojas states, the boundaries bring people together, and the fences in Latino neighbourhoods redefine boundaries between public and private spaces by blurring those boundaries. Rojas goes on to say that here the fences break down the social and physical barriers by creating a place where people can congregate (2010:38).

"Latinos bring the party, workspace, and conversation to the front yard, creating activity in the public space. The Latino front yards reflect the Latino cultural values applied to the American suburb form. The Latino household extends graciously to the street" (James Rojas, 2010:41).

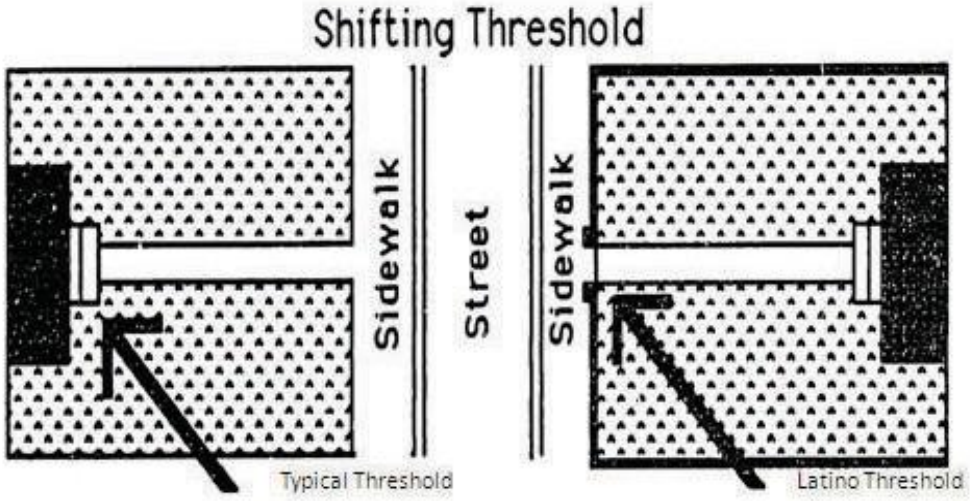
Public life

Latinos bring new innovative uses of the suburban built environment to meet their open space needs for socialization and celebration. The Latinos have a full social calendar of activities ranging from birthday parties to quinceaneras, celebration of a girl`s fifteenth birthday, that are expressed publicly in parks, front yards, and driveways. (Rojas, 2010:41)

Recreational and open space

Rojas states (2010:42) that many Latinos live in dense, park-poor Los Angeles neighbourhoods. The lack of recreational facilities in Latino neighbourhoods causes children and teenagers to play on the streets or vacant lots as well as look for other opportunity sites for exercise.

"Little is understood about Latinos as this group includes people of different races, ethnicities, and religions that identify, through birth, ancestry, or social imagination, with Latin American countries of origin" (Rojas, 2010:42)



(http//www:buildipedia.com)

Fig. 63



Fig. 64

Front yards are important social spaces in the Latino culture

(http//www:buildipedia.com)

Conclusion

The Residents of Soweto overcame adversity and the harsh effect of oppression through the social spaces which they created themselves. Soweto as a whole is a festive place where anything is possible. The streets are always filled with people and activities which make Soweto as unique as it is. Soweto also has complex social networks which are fully and clearly understood by its residents, and it is these networks which aid in bringing this large community together through a shared and common ground.



(Authors own)



3.
Public Spaces: human [re]action

Fig. 65

Human [re]action

"Design for public spaces are too constrained, not providing for basic human needs such a comfort, relaxation and discovery" (Carr, 1992:17). "They may allow only for passive engagement with others or be structured only for predetermined actions, making them rigid and unchallenging" (Carr, 1992:17). This leaves little to the imagination of the user of the space according to Carr (1992:17). A public space cannot determine how people should behave or interact socially but instead people`s freedom of social interaction and behaviour should determine the nature of the space.

"Public spaces can be changed by public action" (Carr, 1992:20), therefore a public space may be suggestive and there should be allowance in its design for it to organically develop through human behaviour. As this is a space that appeals to different people, there should be many social opportunities and a variety of activities such as reading a book, listening to music and exercising. Such spaces can benefit from the support of informal performances such as musical and dance performances.



Fig. 66



Fig. 67

(Carr, at al (1992) Public Space: Environment and behaviour)

I decided to do a visual analysis of public spaces in the inner city of Johannesburg by going through an exercise of analysing and observing human behaviour in these specific public spaces.

Human behaviour in public space: a visual analysis

Case study 1: Wits University library lawns



(Author`s own)



(Author`s own)

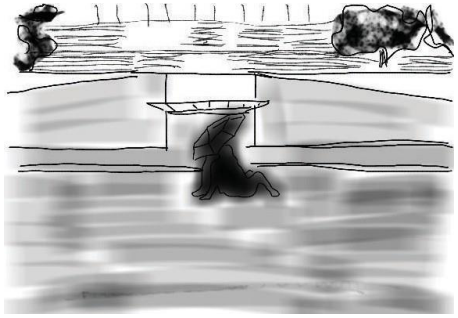


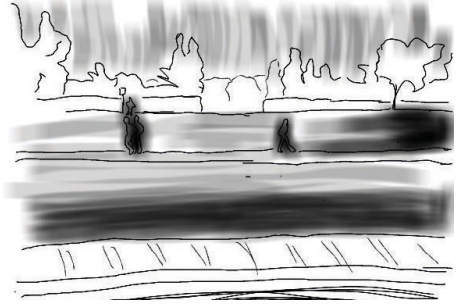
(Author`s own)

Case study 1: Wits University library lawns









At the Wits library lawns the space is used to cross over to other spaces and places like the library. Students use the benches to read books or newspapers, to surf the net on their laptops or listen to music. Students also tend to utilise stairs nearby as seating as apposed to seating on the grass.

Case study 2: Joubert Park, Hillbrow



(Author`s own)



(Author`s own)

Case study 2: Joubert Park, Hillbrow



(Author`s own)

As early as 7am people are already walking through the space. Men congregate to gamble. Some people use the benches as stalls to conduct business. The homeless use the park as a home where they sleep and wake up to.
Others choose to sit somewhere either than on the benches for more comfort.

Case study 3: Ghandi Square, Jo`burg CBD



Fig. 68

Ghandi Square *(http://www.joburg.org.za)*

At Ghandi square the space is also used to cross over to other spaces. Some people use the bus shelters as places to sit and have conversations, some cycle through the space while others use the provided seating to have a quick lunch or just rest.

Case study 3: Gandhi Square, Jo`burg CBD





(Author`s own)



Case study 4: Mary Fitsgerald Square



Fig. 69

(http://www.joburg.org.za)



Fig. 70

The square as a market place *(http://www.joburg.org.za)*

The Public Space

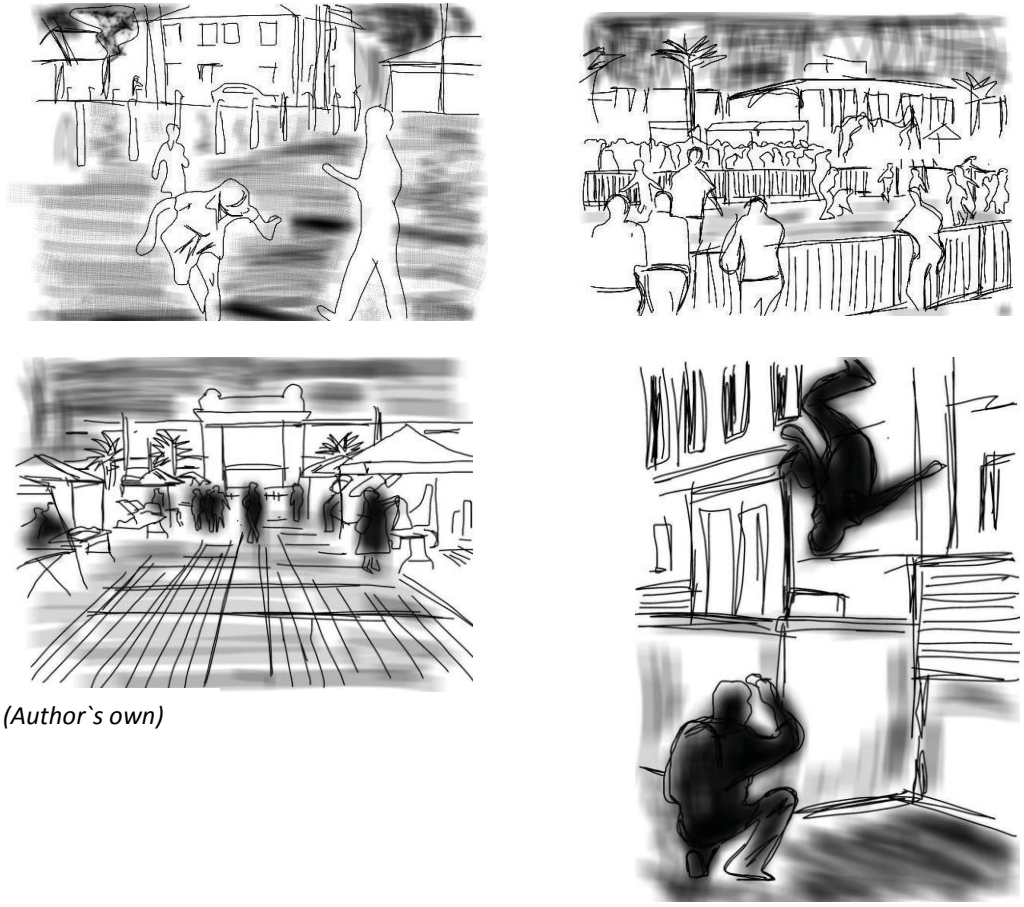
"Public places are a stage for our public lives" (2000:14). Carr describes it as public space being the stage upon which the drama of communal life unfolds (1992:3). "They are the parks where celebrations are held, where marathons end, where children learn the skills of sport, where the seasons are marked and where cultures mix" (2000:14). "They are the places where social exchanges are made" (2000:14). Public spaces foster a sense of community where there is a lack or enhances the richness of it where there is. It is also important for a space to give identity to its particular context.

"Social spaces are fundamental to our sense of existence and belonging" (Shaftoe 2008:11). A sense of being part of others is important to human development. Health and wellbeing is another projection as a result of this environment. Henry Shaftoe (2008:11) states that as a result of our evolutionary heritage, humans seem to need both social contact with others and some access to greenery in order to maintain psychological balance. The developing of a community and solidarity in gaining an identity is an important social projection. Often the main recreational facility which boosts an image of a neighbourhood or urban area is a public open space. At the same time a public space can also be the deteriorating factor in an urban area, because if a public space does not fulfil its social function and does not project any social aspects then it starts dilapidating, and when it does it affects the physical state of an area. So the economic social projection is vital. If a public space fulfils its social obligations then that means people will be encouraged to use that space and in so doing, people take pride in that space. Therefor the physical state of that space is preserved and attracts people from the tourists and other locals.

The Traditional uses of public space

Traditionally public spaces have functioned as meeting places, market spaces and traffic spaces where traffic would dominate over the years. Jan Gehl states that the city has always been a place for people to meet and greet each other, a place to exchange

Case study 4: Mary Fitsgerald Square



(Author`s own)

People use the Maryfitsgerald Square as a play area, a market area, and the space is also transformed to an ice rink for example.

information about the city and society, a place where important events would be staged such as coronations, processions, feasts and festivals and town meetings, to mention a few(2006:10). Gehl continues to state that the city was also a marketplace, a place where goods and services were offered and exchanged, and in addition to that the city was a thoroughfare providing access to and connecting the various uses of the city (2006:13). Public spaces are therefore spaces with an overflow of a variety of activities which sometimes happen simultaneously in an intense chaotic way.

Gehl states that however the conditions of the uses of public space were altered in the 20th century, particularly in the industrialised nations, as new patterns of traffic, trade and communication were so radical that they interrupted centuries of tradition as to how people used the city and its public spaces (2006:13). The three main uses of public space being for meeting, trading and traffic began to be in conflict and the balance between these uses were lost.

Gehl states that the public or city as a marketplace also underwent dramatic changes in the 20th century (2000:13). “Trade from open booths was gradually moved to small shops along streets and squares, then to increasingly larger shops and supermarkets, and finally to giant shopping malls, usually far from the heart of the city. In those cases where shopping centres were established within the city, they closed in on themselves and were no longer part of the public arena” (Gehl at al, 2006:13). The public life of the market space began to loose its essence as its public condition became too controlled. The market activity was moved from the public arena into a closed private environment.

Amidst the physical changes of our urban environments, it is people`s attitudes towards public living and public space which can reshape our public spaces to what they should be - human friendly.

The path to improving public spaces is by creating spaces in which people can embrace public life. It is about appropriating more space for humans than for cars. In European countries there is a high level of public life. Gehl states that many European cities continue to carry on a lively tradition of using public spaces for social and recreational activities (2006:18). Gehl states the during the 1960s and 1970s, more and more pedestrian streets, areas and peaceful squares were established in European cities (2006:18). In many cities the pavement spaces were widened which allowed for furniture to be placed there and also for the space to be livened with trees. Gehl states that in Barcelona starting in about 1980, a broader concept of public space was formulated in a co-ordinated public space policy and the city was fighting back both physically and culturally (2006:18). Gehl continues to state that what happened in Barcelona in terms of the concept of public space was the starting point for a new, intense period in the last 20 years of the 20th century, in which increasingly more urban spaces were created or renewed, in order to ensure good public spaces for new types of public life (2006:18).

Case Studies (Types of spaces)

Combined square and building type

I chose to look at the following case studies because they combine a public square and a building which is similar to my design.

Broadgate Arena,

London, England. 1985-90
Architects: Arup Associates

Location: City Centre
Type: Recreational Square in private office complex

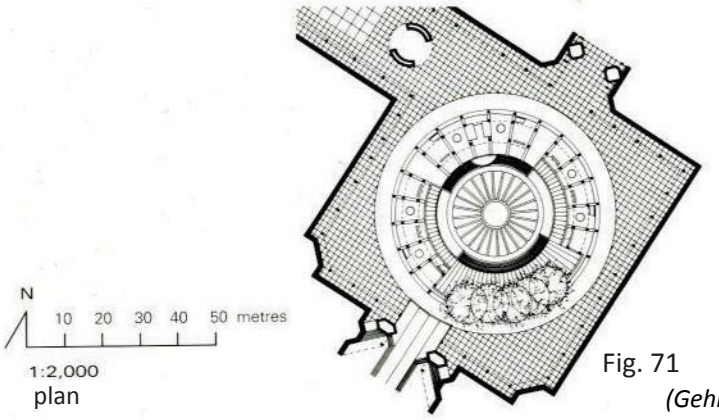


Fig. 71
(Gehl, at al (2006)New city spaces)

Broadgate Arena was created in conjunction with a large private office complex in central London. What makes this city space special is its design with a circular stage as the focal point. The stage is ringed by a cylindrical space edged by balconies and is used for various activities both in summer and winter (2006:112).



(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)
Fig. 72

Broadgate Arena was built as an integral part of a new office complex near Liverpool fine the internal rectangular courtyard space that connects to the surrounding streets and the station through a shopping arcade. Broadgate Arena is the core space in the complex and, particularly in the summer, serves as a large open canteen for the many employees who work in the surrounding offices (2006:114).
The space was intended and designed as a site for performances and happenings, a public theatre, an arena. The design is reminiscent of the circular stage and cylindrical balconies of Shakespear`s Globe Theatre. The summer features changing entertainment with musical and theatre performances as well as cafe` life. In the winter the arena is converted into an ice skating rink (2006:114).

The arena itself is a precision-cut circle surrounded by a planted cylindrical “screen” a round space inside the square formed by the facades of the office buildings. The main activities are collected within the “screen” and the arena, as they unfold with shops on the lower floor and terraced cafes with panoramic views on several levels up against the screen. The spaces between the screen and the office buildings serve as circulation areas for many office people going to and from work, but they are rather empty at other times of the day (2006:114).
Not too many passers-by frequent the place, which livens up during the hours that of-

fice personnel fill the space or in conjunction with special arrangements in the arena. The screen also effectively discourages people on the outside from entering and livening up the space once the 25,000 employees from the office complex have gone home (2006:115).

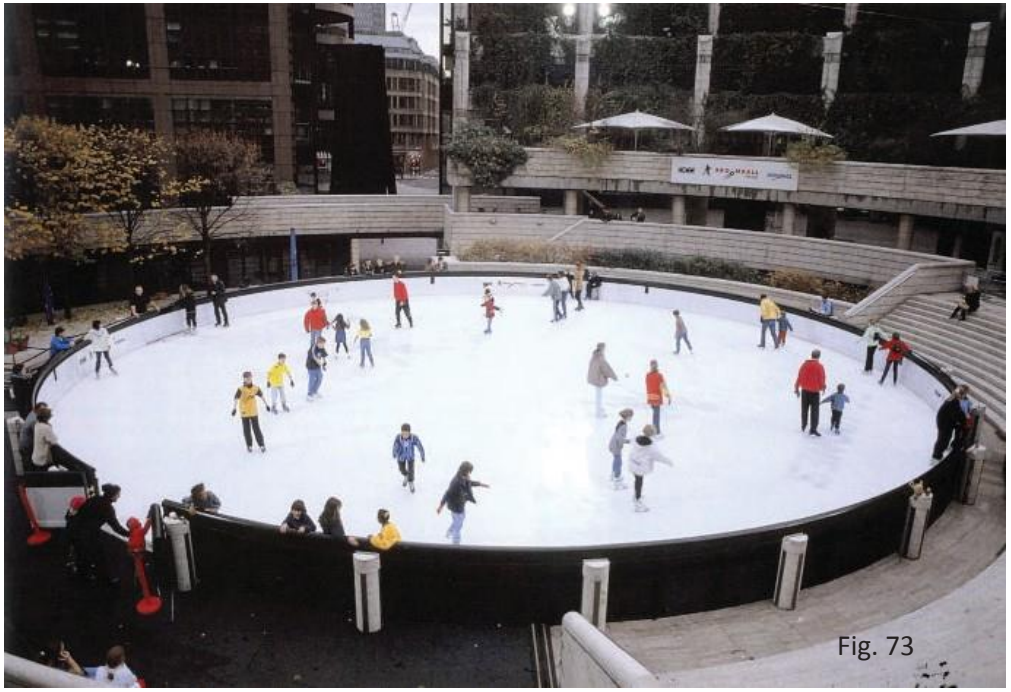


Fig. 73

The central courtyard transforms into an ice skating rink

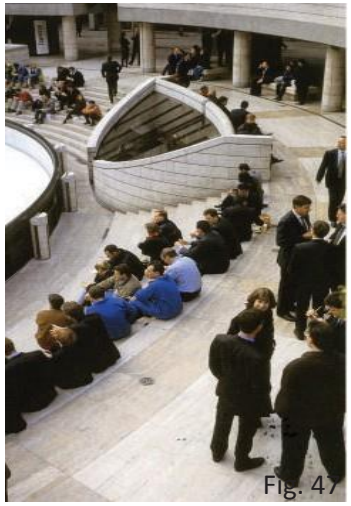
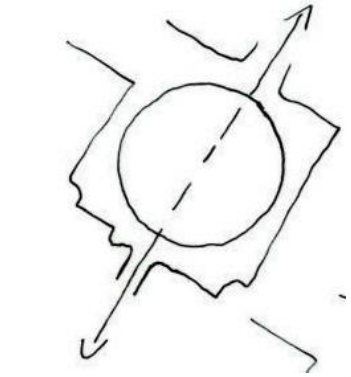


Fig. 47

(Gehl,at al (2006) New city spaces)

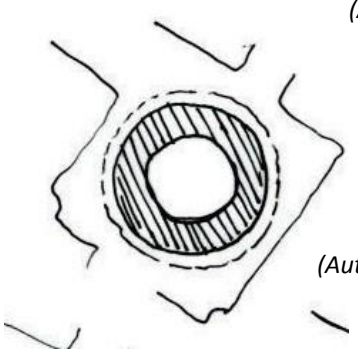


Fig. 74



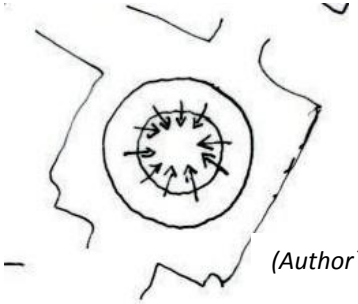
Axis making the space symmetrical

(Author's own)



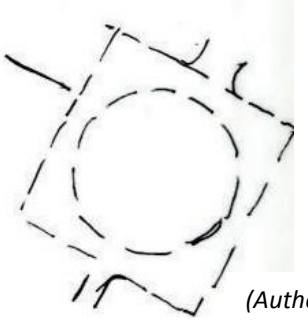
The office building as a hard edge and the centre as soft space

(Author`s own)



The office building looks onto the space

(Author`s own)



Geometry: The centre is inscribed in the square edge

(Author`s own)

Public Spaces in Montpellier

Montpellier, France. 1984
Architect: Ricardo Bofill

Location: New urban quarter close to historic city centre
Type: Monumental square/recreational square

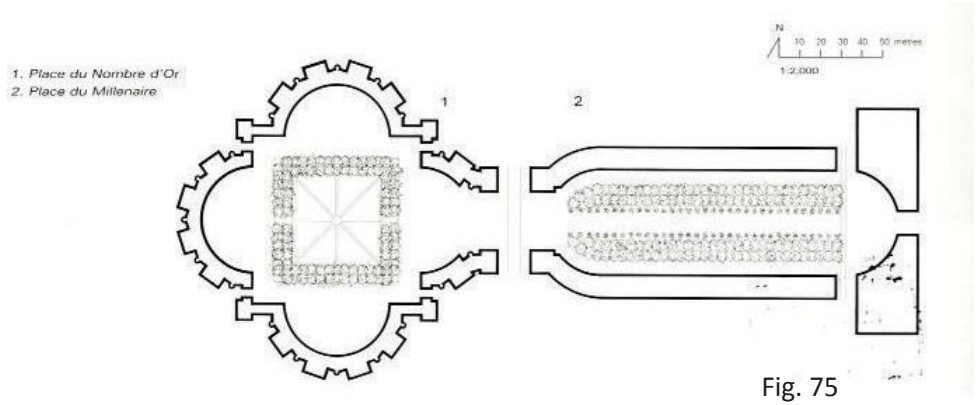


Fig. 75

Plan

(Gehl,at al (2006) New city spaces)

The new quarter, called Antigone, is not only interesting due to its distinctive architectural expression. Because of the unusually large number of ground-floor functions in the buildings collected along the spatial sequence this new part of town becomes a far livelier character than most corresponding new urban projects" (2006:174).

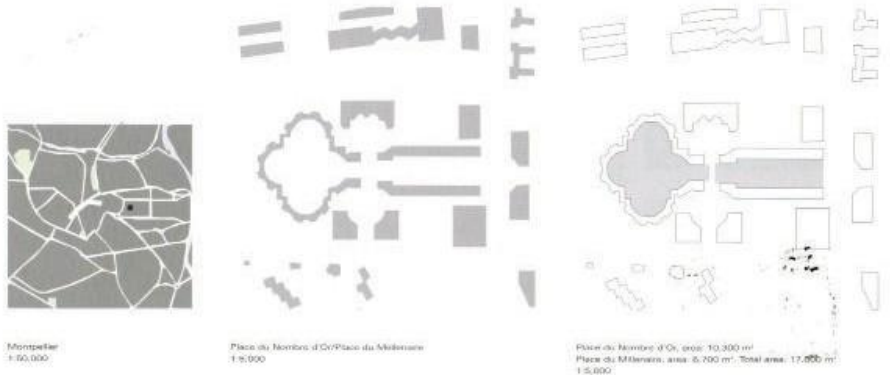


Fig. 76

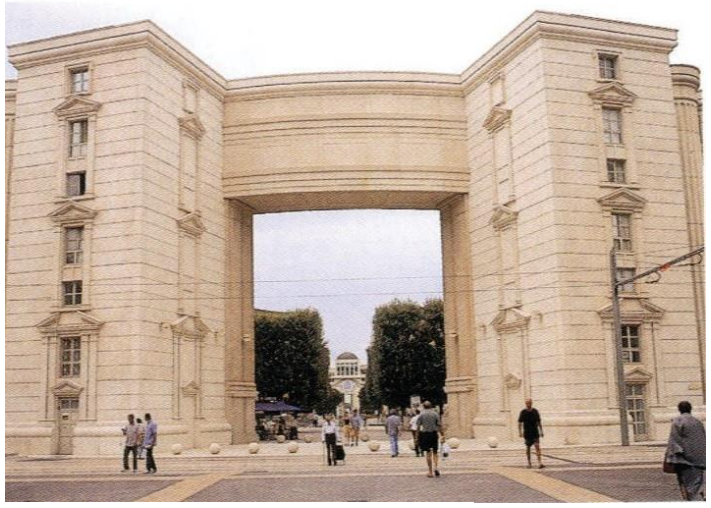
(Gehl,at al (2006) New city spaces)

Place du Nombre d`Or and Place du Millenaire are the beginning of the central course of space in the new city district. Place de Thessalie and Esplanade de l`Europe are among other squares in this large expanse, which forms a fixed neo-Baroque pedestrian axis as an outdoor extension of the inside walkway of the shopping centre. The axis is also seen as an inversion or negation of the indoor centre`s type of space. The space is lined by buildings seven-storeys high, and the axis constitutes the most important public area that unites the new quarter in its entirety. In addition to residences, shops and cafes, the axis also houses a large indoor swimming pool, as well as more regional functions such a Maison des Syndicats which is a trade union building (2006:176).
The gravel surfaces of Place du Millenaire are used for activities such as play and also serve as the platform for outdoor service from a couple of cafes, as well as providing room for relaxation on the benches along the edge of the space (2006:177).



(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)

Fig. 77



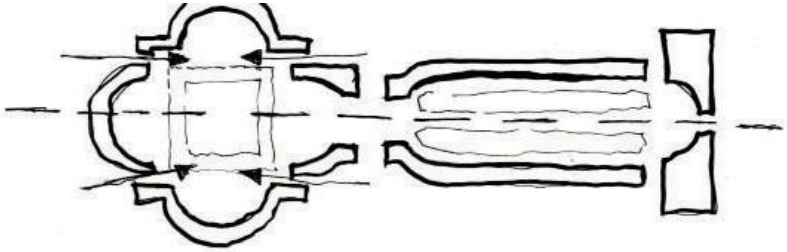
(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)

Fig. 78

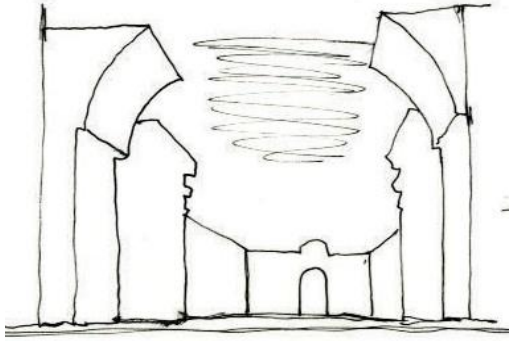


(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)

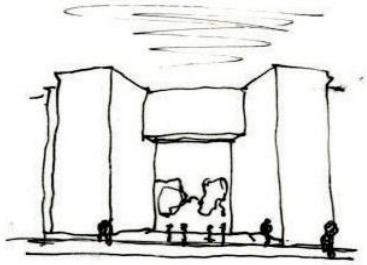
Fig. 79



A very strong axis which connects the two squares and there is a clear symmetry



The building marks an entry point



The building frames the view to the other end of the space

Recreational Square type

Sankt Hans Torv

Copenhagen, Denmark. 1993
Landscape architect: Sven-Ingvar Andersson

Location: District outside the city centre
Type: Recreational Square

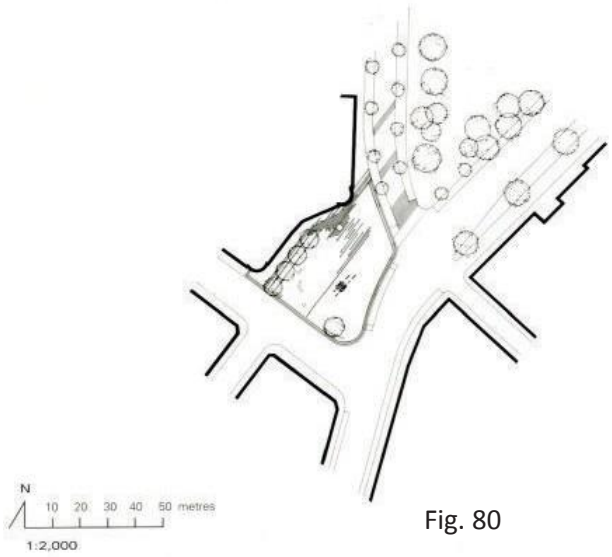


Fig. 80

Plan

(Gehl, (2006) New city spaces)



Fig. 81

Despite the open character of the site and many traffic arteries, it is simple tools which turned Sankt Hans Torv into a lively and well-functioning urban square (2006:96). The slightly convex granite floor gives a soft landscape-like quality to the square (2006:96).

Sank Hans Torv is a square in one of the most dense urban quarters, Norrebro, built outside the old city centre after the city walls were torn down towards the end of the 19th century. Three of the sides of the square are surrounded by four-and five-storey buildings containing local shops, restaurants and cafes on ground floor level. The fourth side of the square opens towards a church, which stands free on a triangle that has the character of a park (2006:98).

In converting Sankt Hans Torv from its old function as a busy intersection to its new function as a square for recreational activity, much of the surface traffic was diverted (2006:98). This created a new city space with its back against the buildings on the northeast side of the square (2006:98). The space still has heavy traffic along its southeast side, but a lively city has grown up around the cafes and fountain on the sunny car-free side of the square. The surface of the space buckles slightly. There is a large granite sculpture which marks the point of gravity for the square (2006:98). The edges of the surface along the streets have also been softened and almost levels with the street. The cafes spread along one side of the square, where a row of linden trees soften the edge of the square from their position in a rectangular field of gravel (2006:98).

The renovation of the Sankt Hans Torv is an interesting example of how a well designed public space can act as a catalyst for the renovation of a whole district. The design of the square marks a change in the status of the neighbourhood and symbolises the rebirth of the quarter through its lively use as a local recreational square and meeting place (2006:99).



(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)

Fig. 82



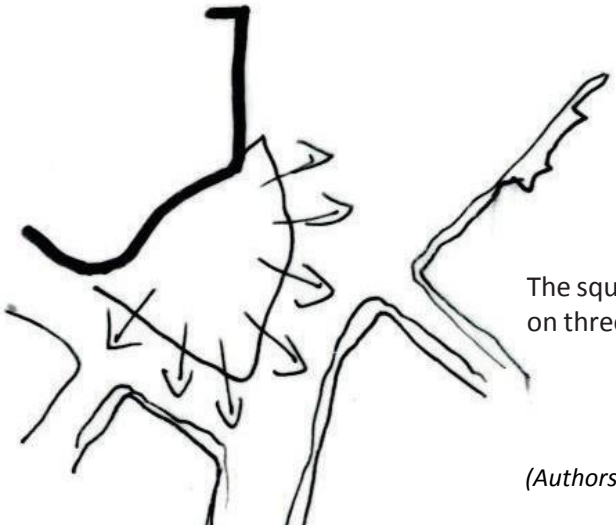


Fig 83



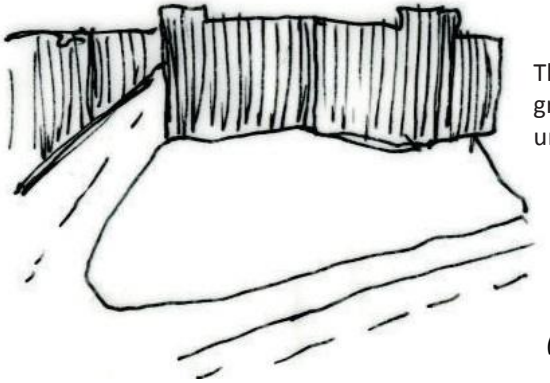
Fig 84

(Gehl, at al (2006) New city spaces)



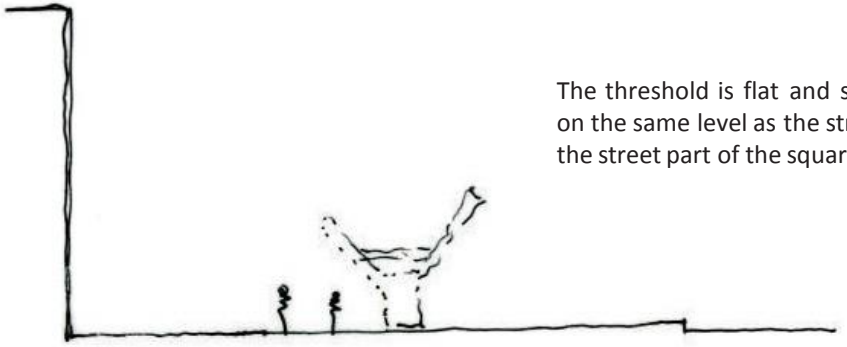
The square opens on to the street on three sides

(Authors own)



The building behind the space grounds the space and adds volume to the space

(Authors own)



The threshold is flat and seems to be on the same level as the street making the street part of the square

(Authors own)

Local Example

Ghandi Square

Johannesburg, South Africa
Architects;

Location: Johannesburg CBD
Type: traffic square, office and retail



Fig. 85

(http://www.joburg.org.za)

Gandhi square was originally known as Van der Bijl Square. This central bus terminus lies adjacent to Johannesburg's Eloff Street, situated close to Carlton Centre (http://wikimapia.org/669642/Ghandi-Square).

This square was renamed in honour of Indian patriarch Mahatma Gandhi, who was a a civil rights activist (http://wikimapia.org/669642/Ghandi-Square).

In the late 1990s property developer Gerald Olitzki was appointed to revamp the terminus as part of Johannesburg's inner-city renewal project, which aimed to restore the CBD into the city's business hub. The refurbishment of the square was completed in 2002. It now has a new look and visitors can enjoy a quick meal at one of the

restaurants and cafes that line the square while waiting for a bus (http://wikimapia.org/669642/Ghandi-Square). The square is also used as a space to cross over to the other side of the city and therefor connects two sides of the city. The space is formed by the surrounding buildings which form two tall vertical walls sitting opposite each other. Two of the four sides are completely free of buildings and mark the entry and exit points into the square. Apart from the restaurants on ground floor, there are also offices which sit above the restaurant and a few residential apartments. There is always activity throughout the day as people hurry to catch buses to and from work.

The square is also used for a variety of public exhibitions and awareness campaigns (http://wikimapia.org/669642/Ghandi-Square). It is a lively space which could be even livelier with the introduction of more evening entertainment.



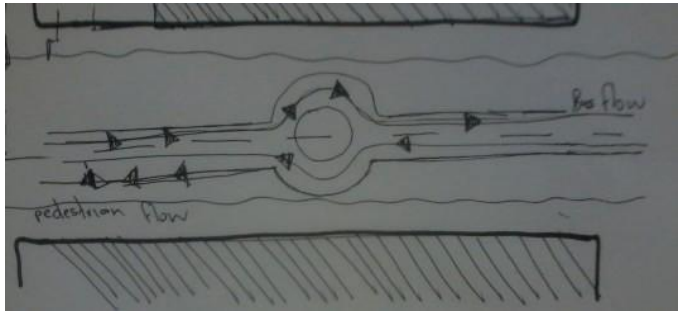
Fig. 86

A view of the square and the pedestrian walk *(http://www.joburg.org.za)*



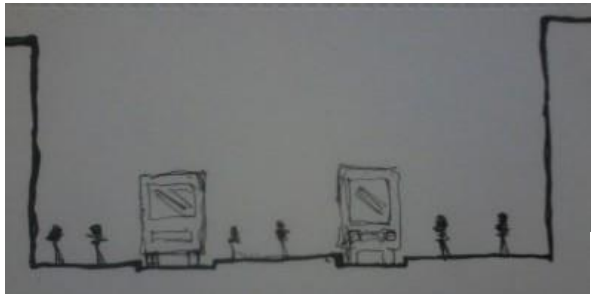
Fig. 87

(http://www.joburg.org.za)



(Author`s own)

Plan showing pedestrian flow



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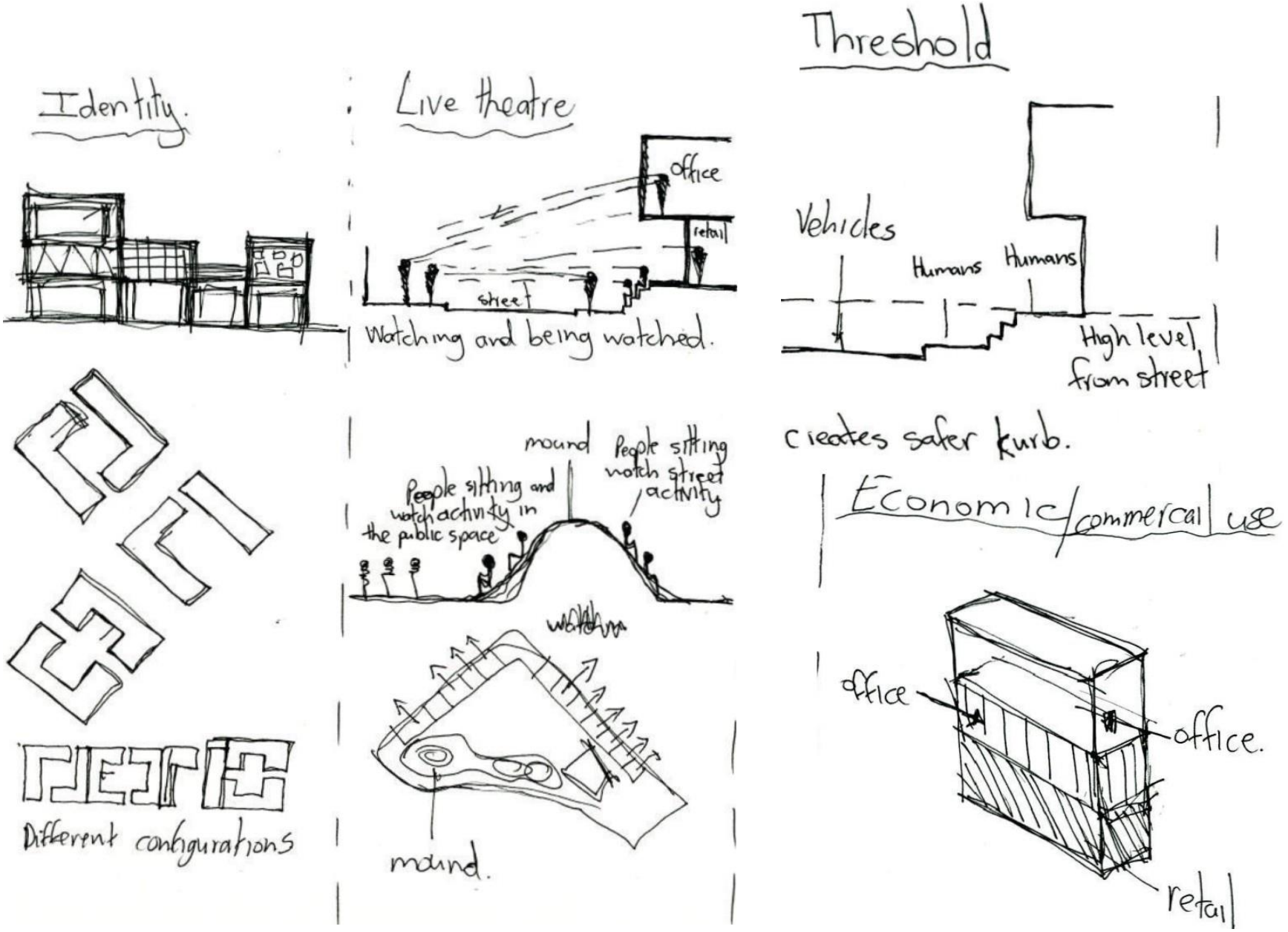
Section showing threshold and relation of square to surrounding buildings

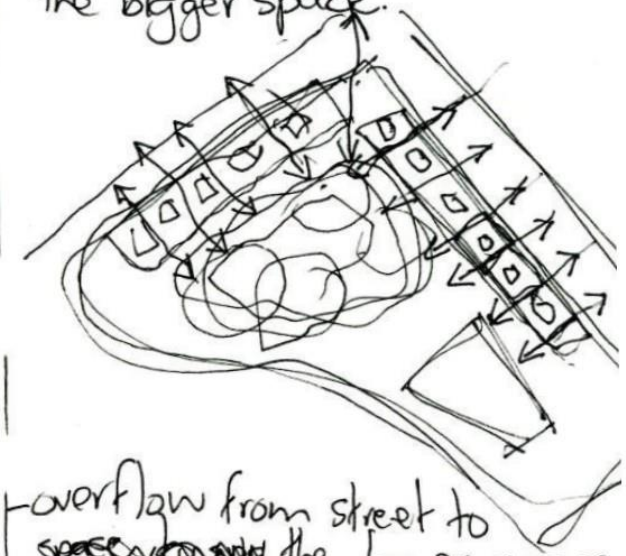
Applying key aspects of my theory to my design



Overflow



From small courtyard flowing the bigger space.



-overflow from street to ~~space~~ the bigger space
from the bigger space to the
-Possible overflow of social in the centre.

Temporality



① market fair



open-air cinema.



Ceremonial activity

Loose space.



Hard edge, soft center.



4.
SITE ANALYSIS



Fig. 88

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

The site I have chosen is the Eyethu Cinema which is located in Mofolo Central in Soweto. The Eyethu cinema is an old cinema which functioned as a black cinema during the apartheid era. The Eyethu cinema has not been used for nearly twenty years. At around the late nineties the cinema closed its doors. The Cinema lost its popularity when the city became integrated and black people were allowed to watch movies in the city.

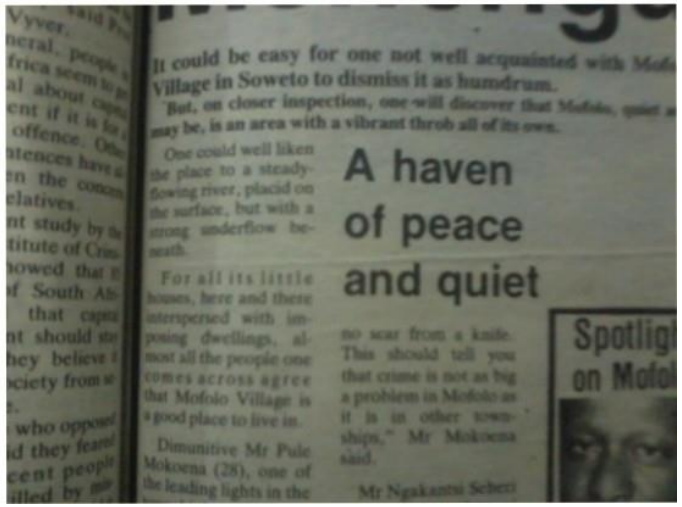
Because of the Eyethu cinema, the area of Mofolo became the central cultural area which saw people from other townships areas of Soweto congregating there. I chose this site because of its attachment to cinema which is one of my passions. In addition to this I saw the potential of the site in terms of my design intervention to revive the building and to bring the cinema going culture back to Mofolo central. The site is also very central and accessible and therefore has great potential of becoming a public shared space.






I found the site to be ideal because it addresses the need to develop these kinds of historic or heritage sites in South Africa. The site is surrounded by residential and if developed will boost the image of the surrounding houses. The site also presents a great opportunity for commercial viability in the area. The site has the potential to uplift the community and improve the surrounding environment. My design is all about public life of a community and the site is ideal as a meeting place for people.

Pieces of the history of Mofolo and the Eyethu cinema from the newspaper archives of the Johannesburg library.













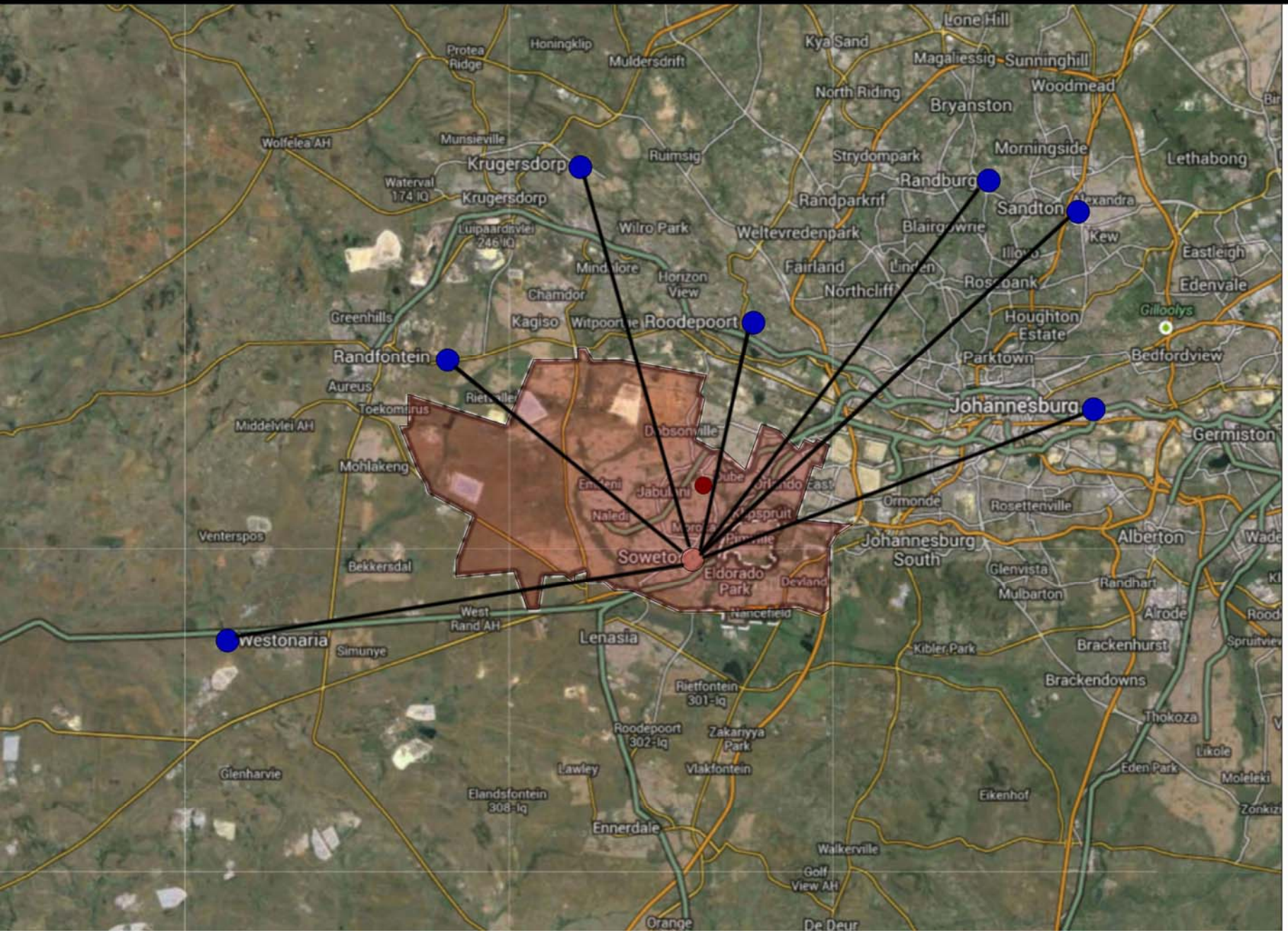




(Taken from a South African newspaper article of 1982- source newspaper publication unknown- from the archives of the Johannesburg library. Snap shots taken by author)

Site Analysis

Locality map

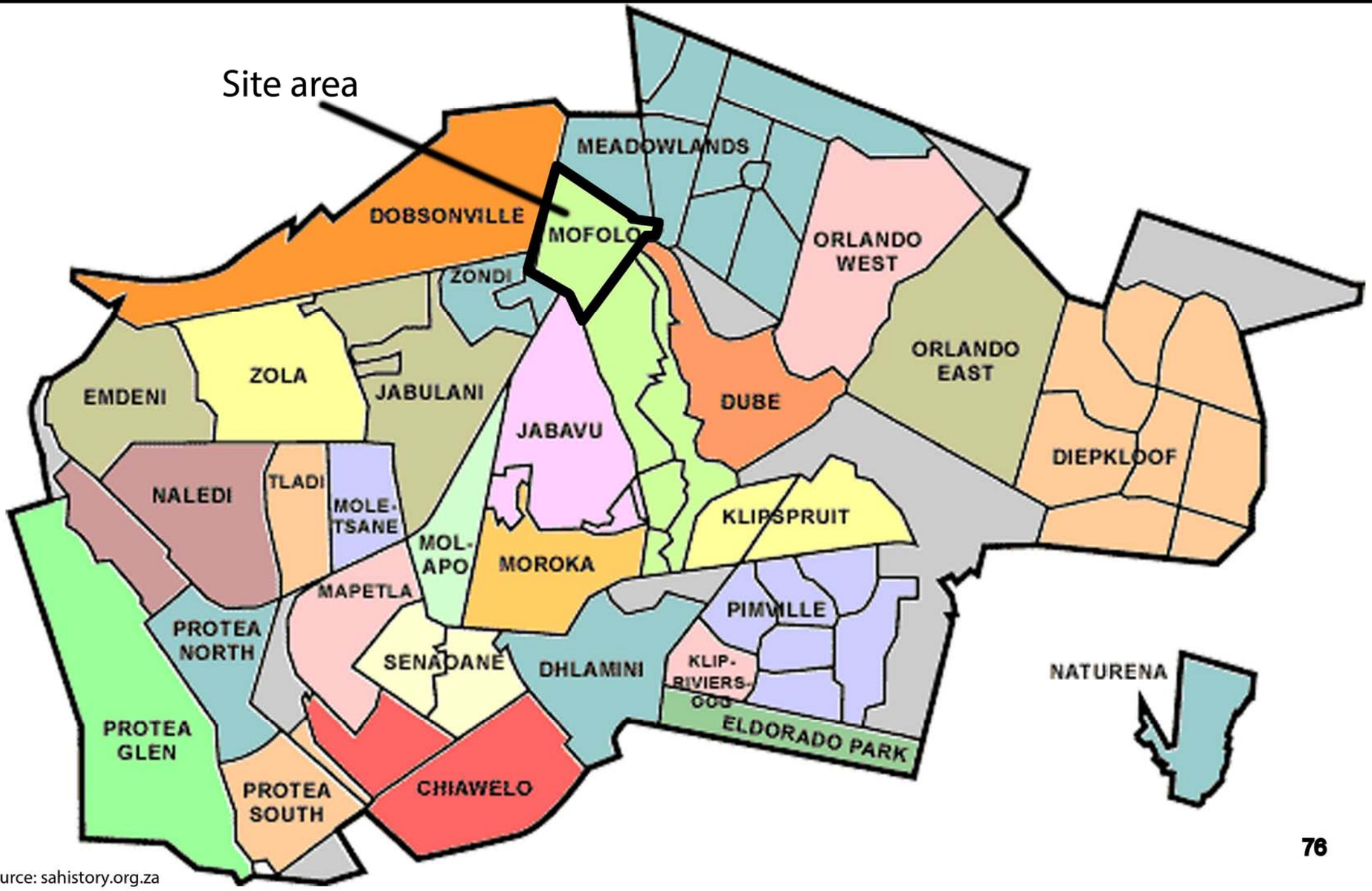


KEY

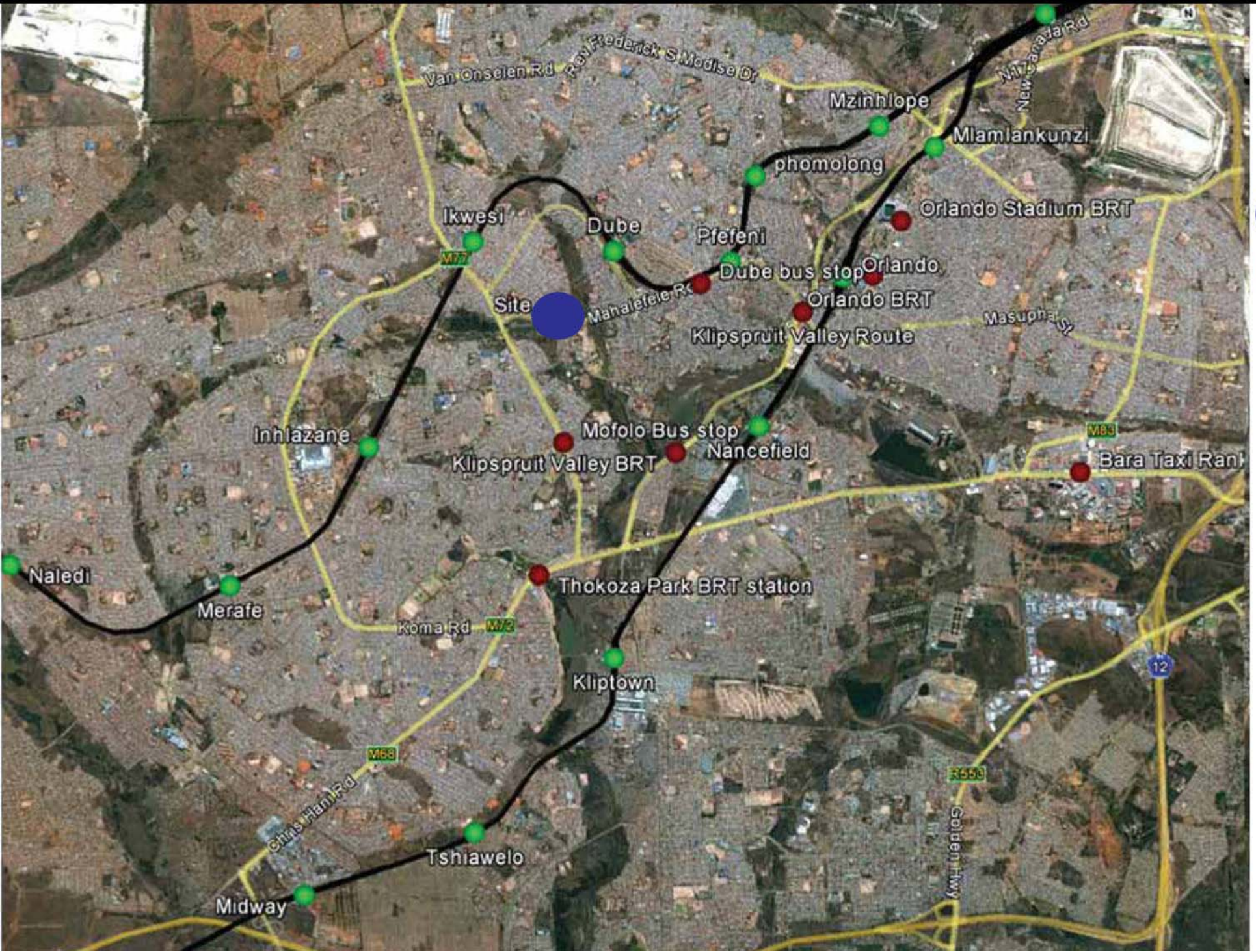
- Site
- Soweto
- Surrounding cities

Site Analysis

Locality (map of Soweto)



Source: sahistory.org.za

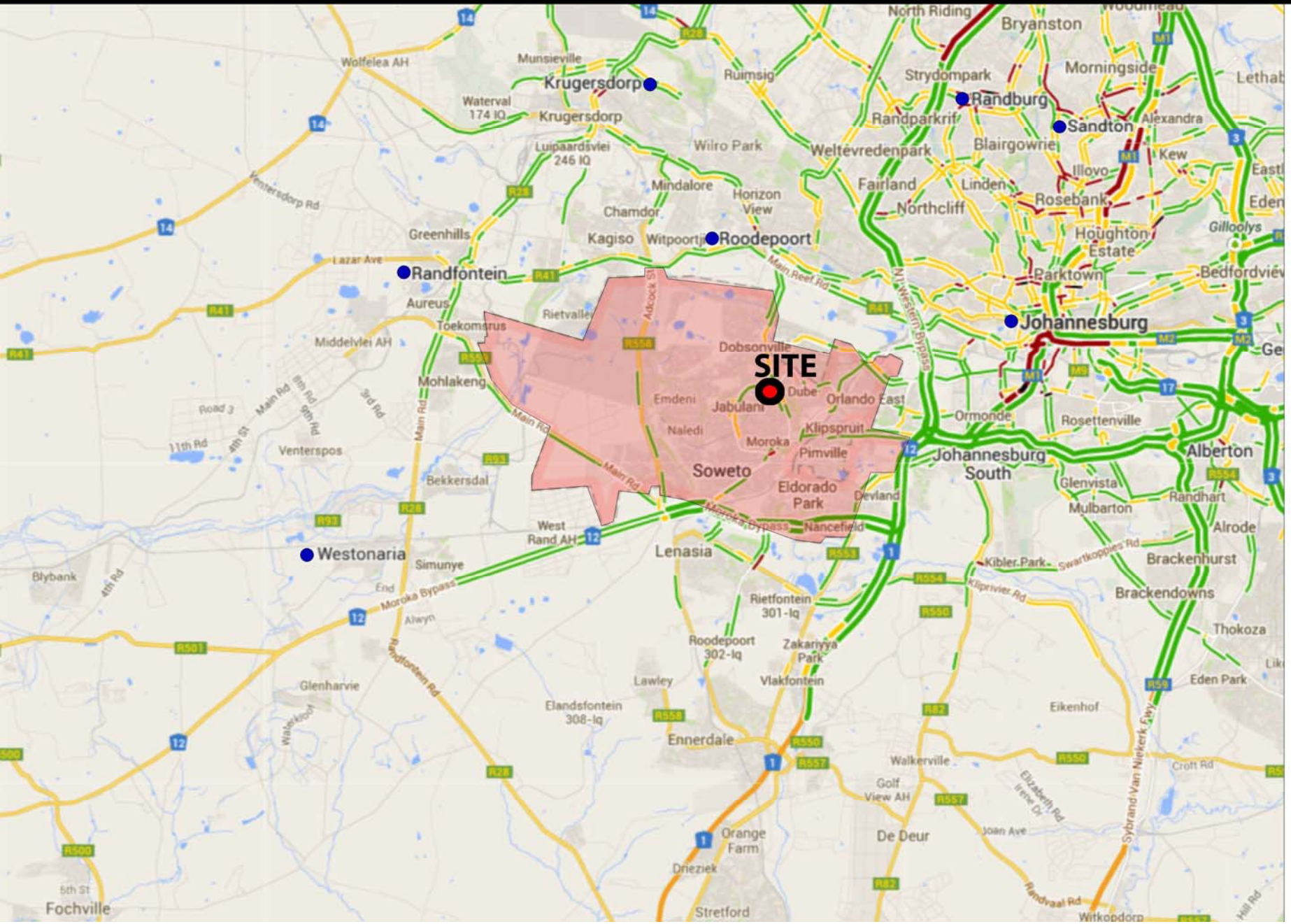


Key

- Site
- BRT bus stops and routes
- Railway transit stations
- Railway
- Main roads

Site Analysis

Traffic flow patterns



Site Analysis

Transit routes



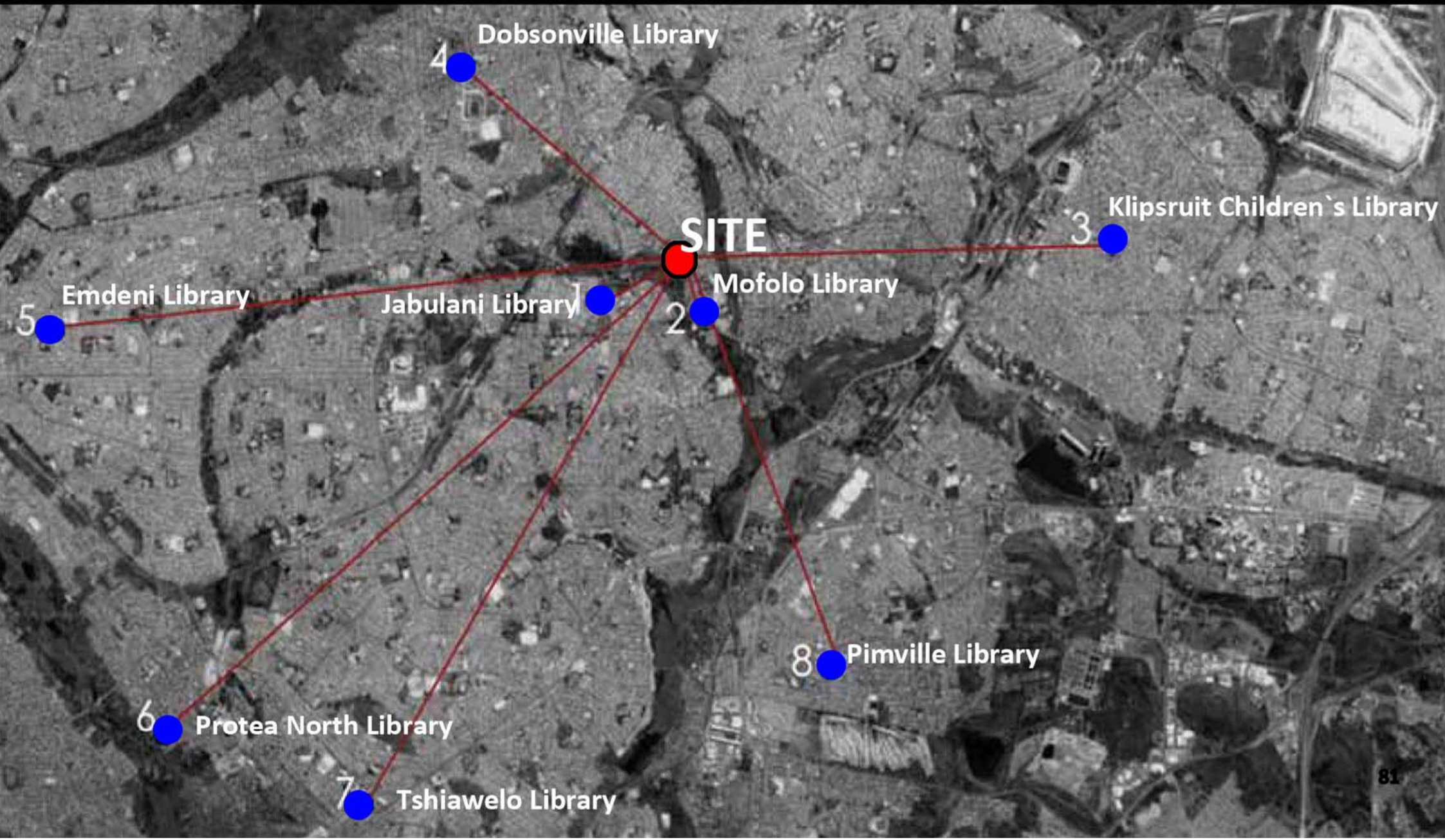
Site Analysis

Historical Sites and Landmarks



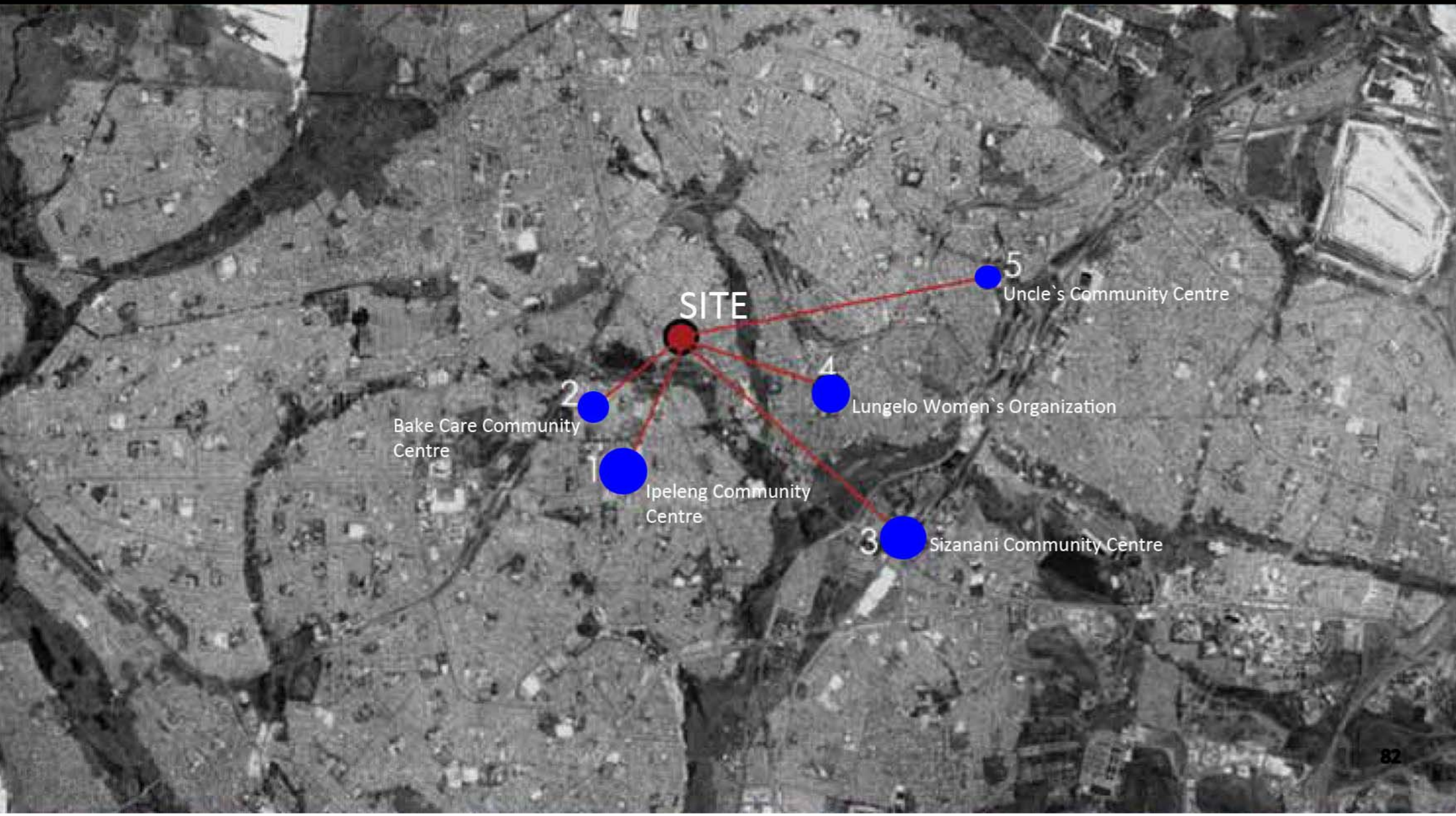
Site Analysis

Public Institutions



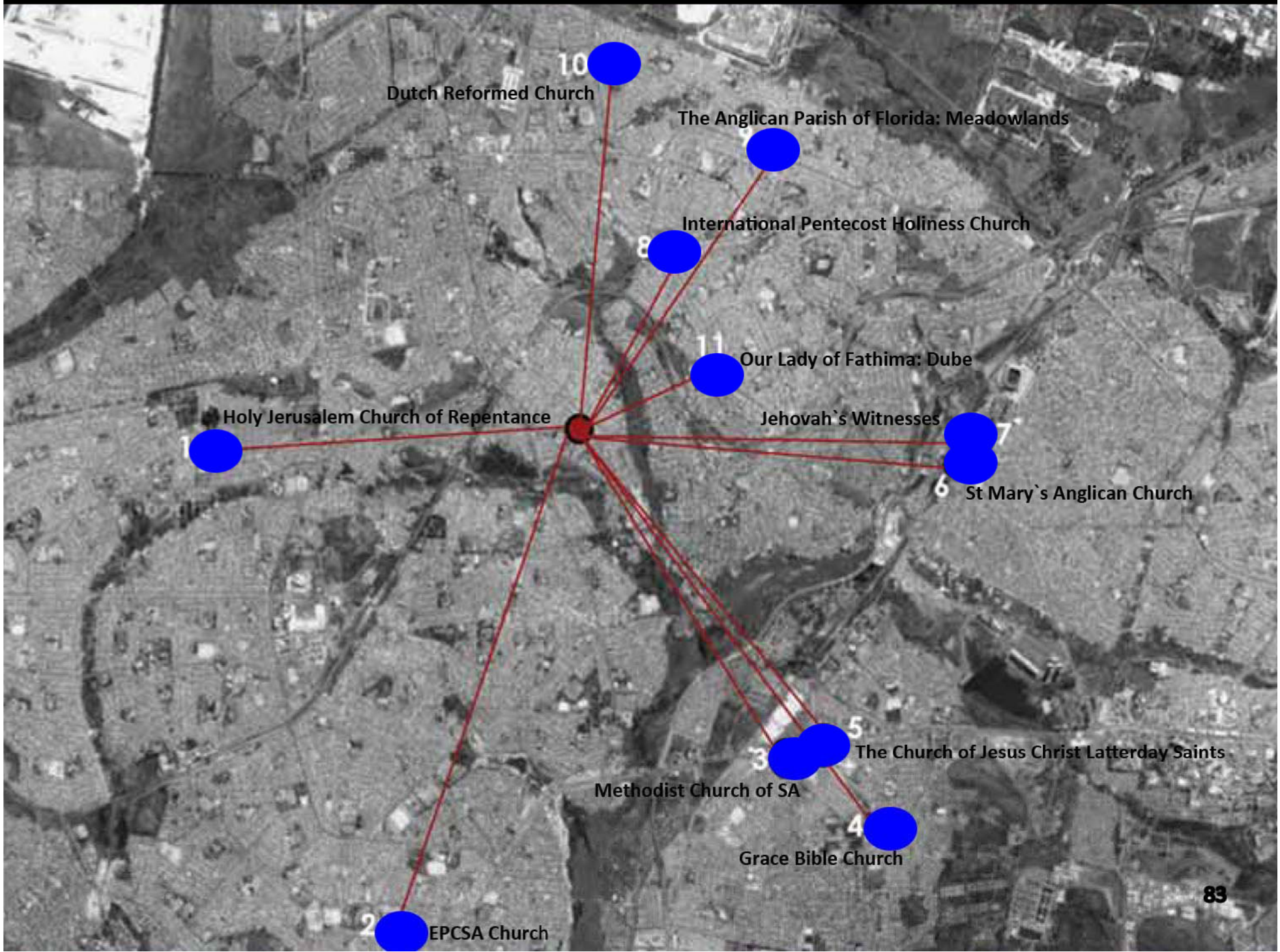
Site Analysis

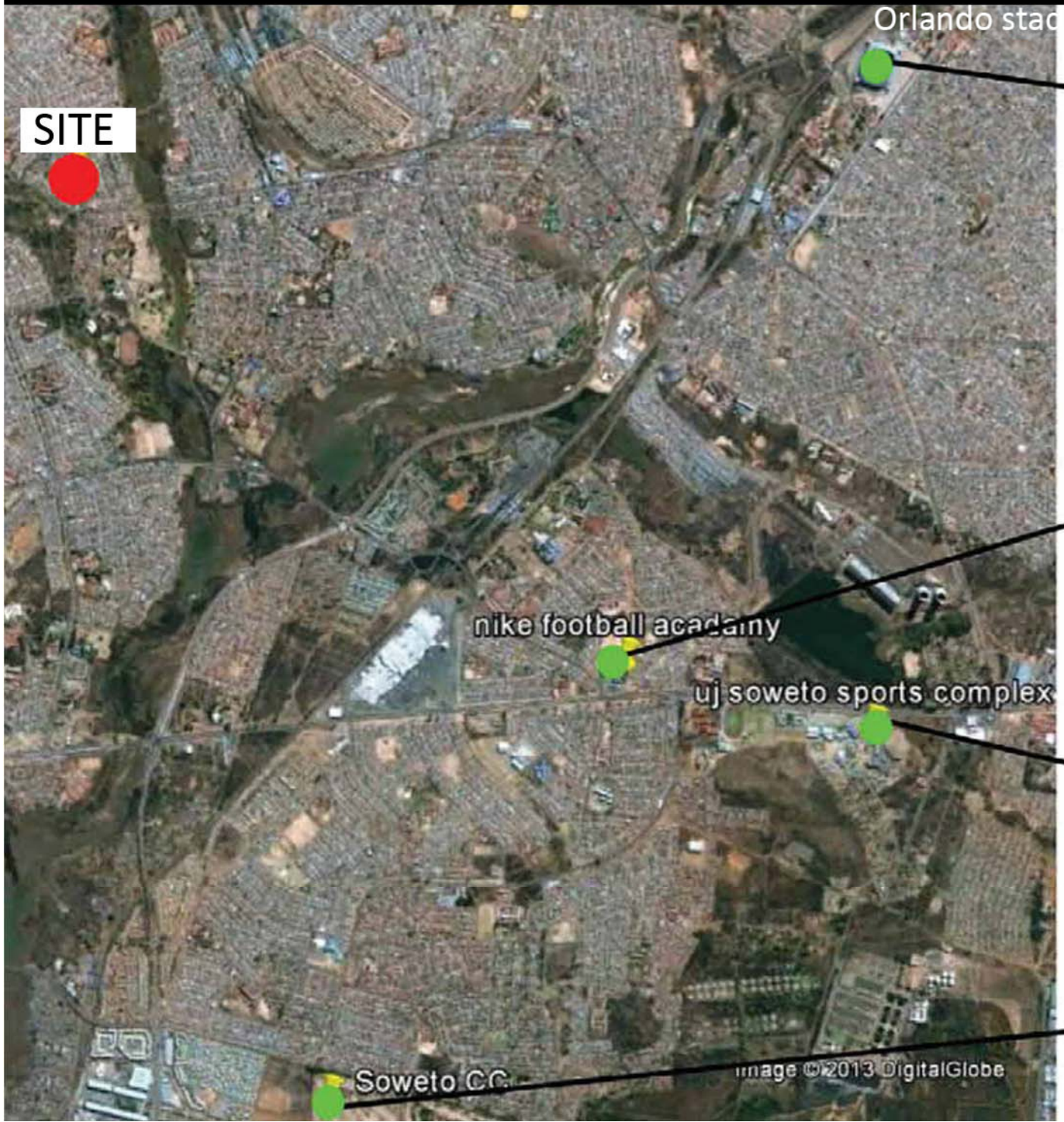
Public institutions. (community centres)



Site Analysis

Religious institutions






Orlando stadium







Site Analysis

Existing structures and land use



Site Analysis

Immediate surrounding Green spaces



Site Analysis

Timeline (Active functions around site between 12pm - 4pm)



Site Analysis

Timeline (Active functions around site between 4pm - 6pm)



Site Analysis

Timeline (Active functions around site on the weekend)



Site Analysis



Active and inactive buildings on site

Inactive

Active

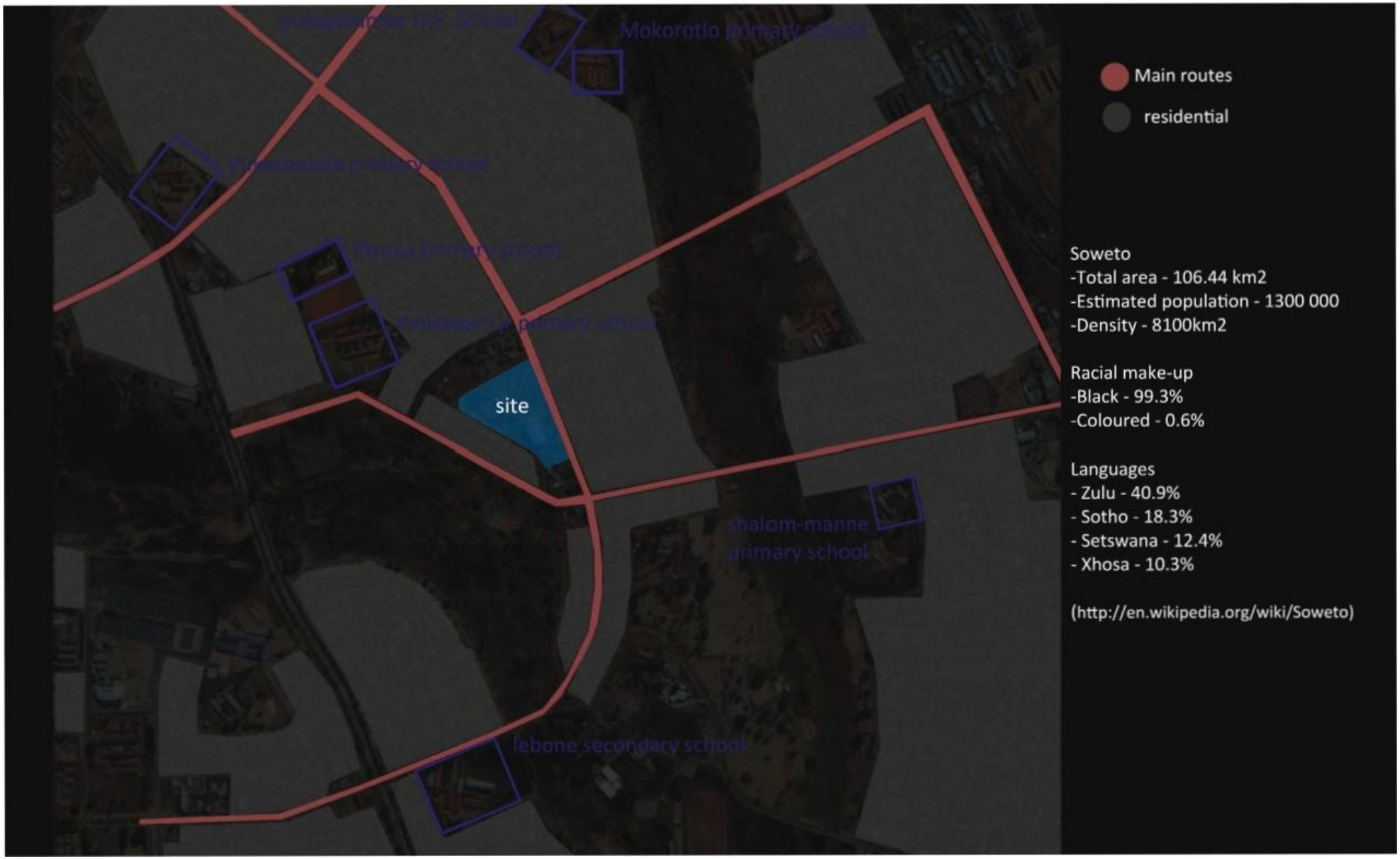


Pedestrian movement

Footpaths

Sidewalk

Residential



Surrounding streets



Commercial use




Spa and shisanyama (braai place)


Spaza shop


Old filling station
into a shisanyama


Shabeen and creche

SURROUNDING OPEN SPACES AND PARKS





Mfolo cultural bowl



Mfolo park



Play ground



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Open spaces link neighbourhoods. these open spaces also divide neighbourhoods and they are used to cross from one neighbourhood to the other.

The red thin lines indicate foot-paths as a result of people using open spaces as crossing points to other areas. In the township the word `dublap` is used to describe this action which means shortcut.

For a long time little pockets of open spaces were used as dump-ing sites and some were used as playgrounds for kids.
Some of these pockets of open spaces doubled up as soccer pitches where local teams would play.


Zola Eco Park


Dorothy Nyembe Park


Thokoza Park


Mfolo Park


Orlando West Regional Park


CULTURAL SITES AND LANDMARKS
TO HONOUR
Hector Pieterson Musem
Credo Mutwa Cultural Village
Vilakazi street
Soweto theatre
Maponya Mall
Power Park
Nike football academy
UJ Campus
Orlando stadium

THE EYETHU CINEMA



(author`s own)

The Eyethu cinema

There is a mystery behind the Eyethu Cinema in Mfolo Central in Soweto. The mystery behind this cinema is what are its current use and what happened to it for it to be left abandoned and no longer in use. The Eyethu cinema seems to have a hidden history, hidden in the memories of those who experienced the cinema in its former glory days. It seems that not much is documented on this cinema which was the center of cultural entertainment for the inhabitants of Soweto. Those people who experienced the cinema when it was in full operation talk about it with a great sense of nostalgia and excitement, and even sadness as they can only wonder why the cinema died.

The Eyethu Cinema stopped operating in 1996. The cinema lost its popularity when the black population - of which the majority came from Soweto - were allowed to watch film at cinemas in the city of Johannesburg. The idea of watching films in the city was seen as more prestigious than watching a film in the township. The Cinema has not been in operation for almost twenty years and yet it still stands as it had last been used, almost untouched accept for broken windows and graffiti on its exterior facades.

The cinema sits central surrounded by residential houses. It is a building with a massive scale and hard architecture. The concrete and brick face are dominant. It is clear from its appearance that it was a very significant building. The architecture speaks of modernity and was contemporary for its time. The cinema stands at about three storeys in height. It has a dark brown face brick appearance which can be described as an apartheid style aesthetic. The front face of the building has a large plastered block form sitting above the entrance which is the foyer space of the gallery and the control room.



(author`s own)



(author`s own)

The building along with all its elements is still intact. The interior is untouched and everything is as it was when it was last used. The foyer consists of the ticket booth and ablutions. There are also stairs which lead up to the gallery space. The main hall still has all its furniture which is all intact. Rows of steel framed chairs sit on a floor that slopes towards the stage. The space in the main hall is dark with the only source of natural light coming in from the slivers of the wooden doors. The stage is large enough for musical performance, theatre and the area high enough for a large screen. One can almost image what once was, what once happened and the atmosphere in the cinema of the past. One can also imagine the sounds of people cheering, the anticipation in the foyer and a large crowd of people gathered outside by the front entrance.



Foyer space



(author`s own)



Cinema auditorium *(author`s own)*



Gallery space *(author`s own)*

The story of Eyethu begins with a man called Ephraim Tshabalala. Tshabalala was a prominent business man in Soweto who was reputed to be Soweto`s only millionaire. He was also the mayor around the early 1960`s. It was around that time that he used his power and money to build the Eyethu cinema. The word 'Eyethu' means 'ours' or 'our own'. To the residence of Soweto this building was the first of its kind to be built in Soweto, a building that symbolized the pride of Sowetans. Finally Soweto had a building of its own of this kind which they can call their own - eyethu.



The man responsible for building the Eyethu cinema Mr Tshiabalala on Stage when the Cinema was fully operational (https://www.cargocollective.com)

According to people who had the privilege of having experienced the cinema when it was fully operational, this cinema was the central social meeting place for the residents of Soweto. People would travel from Dube, Dobsonville, Pimville, Diepkloof etc.- some by foot- to go and watch a film at the Eyethu cinema in Mofolo. The cinema was most frequented on the weekends starting from Friday afternoon through to Sunday evening. During the week the cinema would screen movies in the evening. The Eyethu cinema was also the place to be where big musical names among black people would perform. Big names like Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse would perform to thousands. Some international acts such as Gospel legend Andrew Crouch would also perform there. Even theatre performances would be held. In addition choir performances would be

held from school level upwards. It was a multi-purpose venue which catered for the social needs of the residents of Soweto. The cinema was also a venue used to hold funeral services of prominent people among the black people of Soweto. In an old newspaper article, the Eyethu cinema was described as being popular with the youth of that time.

According to one source, Eyethu was not the first cinema house to be built in Soweto, but it was the biggest and most successful of all the cinemas in Soweto. When I asked this particular source if musical performances would be held outside he expressed that every activity relating to the building happened inside because firstly there was no decent 'jarata' or yard to hold performances outside and secondly Sowetans wanted to feel a certain level of prestige and importance, and they wanted to have the same experience as the white South Africans of enjoying film, music and theatre in a formal environment, something they had been deprived of.

There was a desperate need for cinemas in the townships but the apartheid government still controlled what would be appropriate to screen in the black cinemas. They had to be careful not to provoke the black people of Soweto in the films that they were screening and at the same time they had to make sure that they promote apartheid and make it to be an acceptable thing among the black Sowetans. Movies that were popular were the western cowboy movies and kung-Fu movies. The subject and story lines of these movies were popular with the black movie goers because these movies had a hero who would triumph at the end. So it talked more of hope than revenge or vengeance - as far as the apartheid government was concerned.

Before any cinema was ever built in Soweto, people used to gather at a certain house which had a television to watch their favorite shows or a soccer match. At times the owner of that house would charge a certain fee. Niq Mhlongo states that for him what stands out in Soweto is the life that happens on a social level (2010:11). "Watching movies was one of the most exiting social activities in Soweto. People used to watch predominantly Chinese movies and this happened mostly on Saturdays. The movies were screened during the day and at night" (Mhlongo, 2010:11).

"In my street, the few families that were considered `rich` were the ones that owned a television set. There were only two houses out of about twenty that had a TV set. I used to pay ten cents to watch the A team TV series starring Mr T at the Mthombeni family house at the corner of our street" (Mhlongo, 2010:11).



(author`s own)



Surrounding residential *(author`s own)*



Restaurant which sits behind the cinema *(author`s own)*



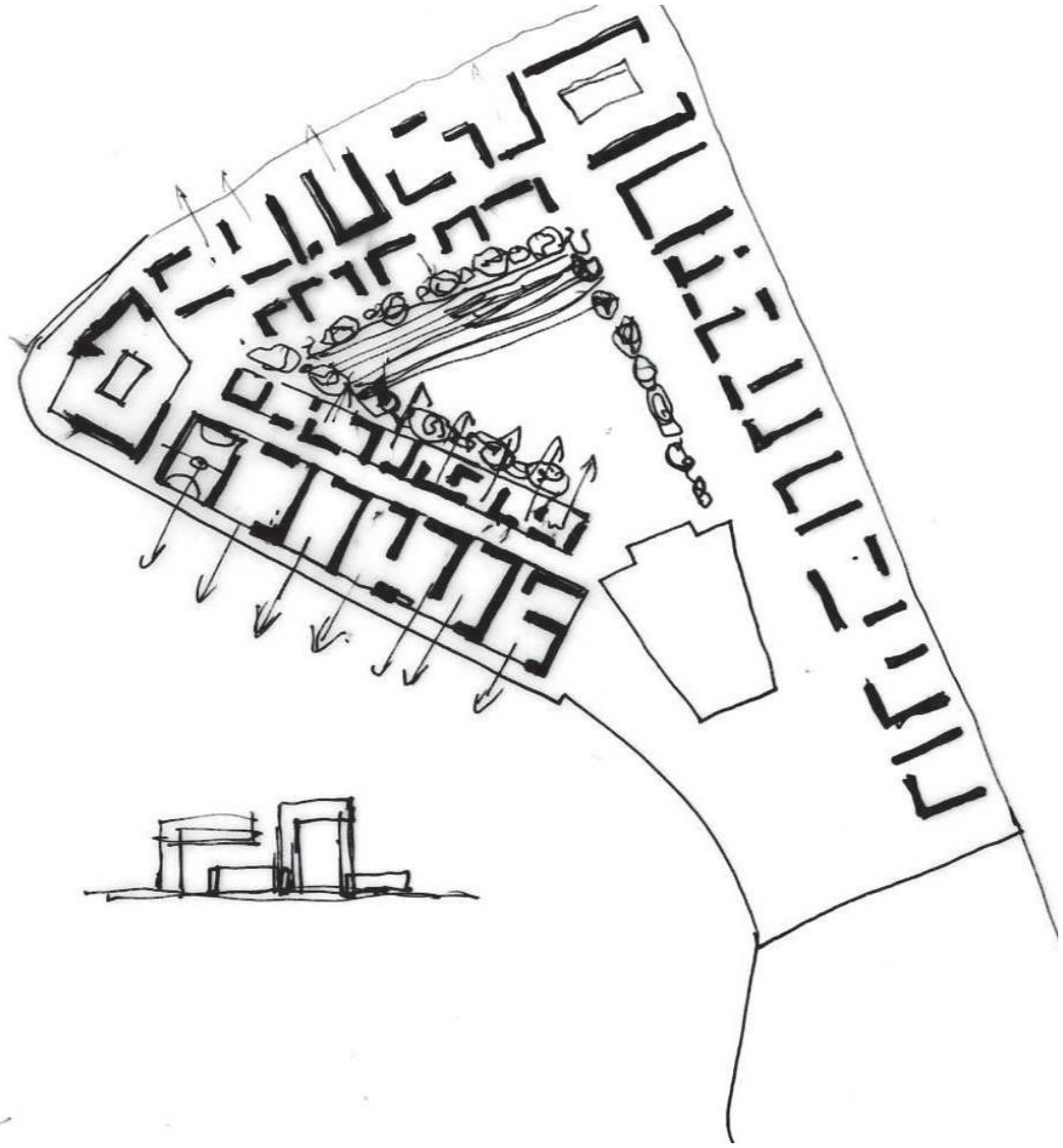
Spa and restaurant *(author`s own)*



Restaurant seating area *(author`s own)*



(author`s own)



5.

Design

Design

The concept behind the design is the notion of the jarata or township yard. The program and function of my building is centred on social spaces. The building should be an enabling space which allows the residents of Mofolo central and the surrounding townships to be able to embrace public living. The spaces in the proposed design are imagined spaces. These spaces are spaces that happen in and around physical spaces and are therefore spaces of temporality. The design takes the notion of public living as a social space. The social spaces are not constant. These spaces are ever changing and vary in scale or proportion and hierarchy. The design of the proposed public space seeks to explore the phenomenon of social space as expressed in the townships of Soweto. The phenomenon is centred on social interactions between neighbours, the social events and celebrations that happen and the social invisible spaces which results from these interactions and events. The architecture of the proposed public space is also the architecture of the event where the architecture is the events that happen rather than the physical built form.

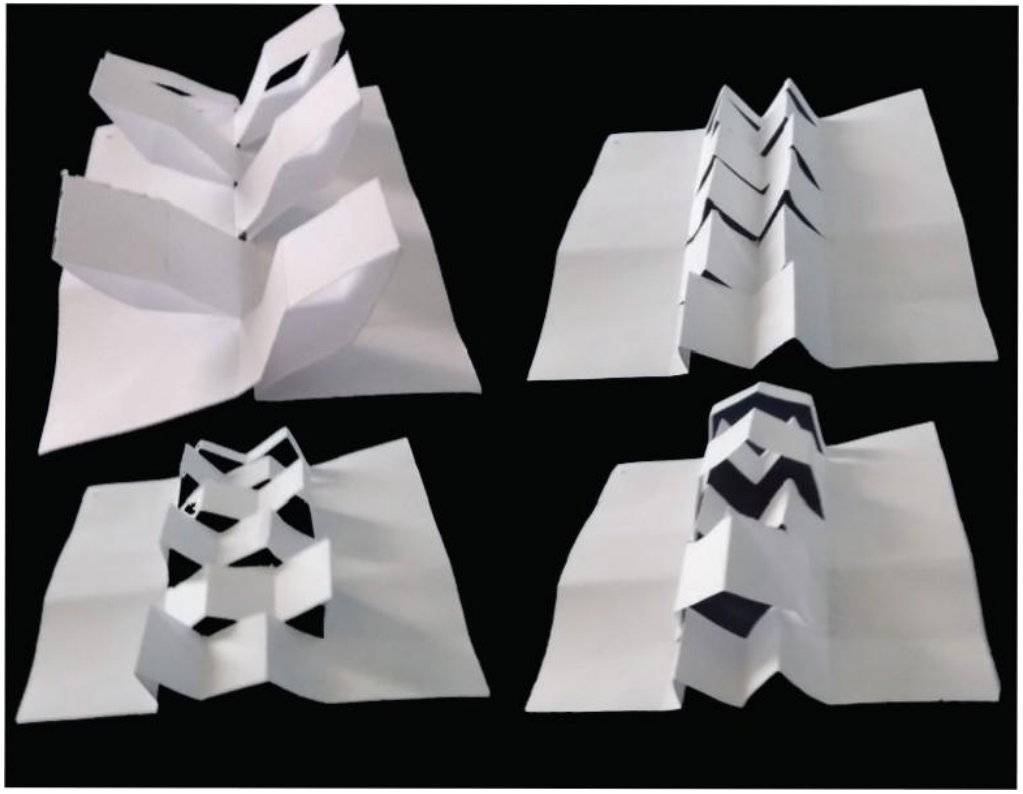
From the point when two neighbours meet a social space begins to form from a simple greeting. The social space can move to a different place of their choosing. Whether they choose to remain on their own side of the fence or one neighbour moves in to another neighbour's physical space, the social space has already been established. The social space exists in the abstract feelings when the two neighbours interact and begin to exchange on a social level. The social space can grow as another neighbour joins that social circle. There are overflows of social spaces happening in the physical space. One social space flows into another social space breaking down physical barriers. Therefore the spaces in my design should enable those overflows and connections to happen and to allow for these social spaces to organically develop.

"Architecture has always been as much about the event that takes place in a space as about the space itself" (Tschumi, 2001: 25). There is no architecture without event essentially. The architecture of the event can suggest that there is a juxtaposition of events that take place behind the facades of the physical spaces. Tschumi states that without action, without the activities and the functions, architecture was to be seen as the combination of spaces, events and movement, without any hierarchy or precedence among these concepts. The spaces of the event can result in chance combinations and casual relationships between spaces.

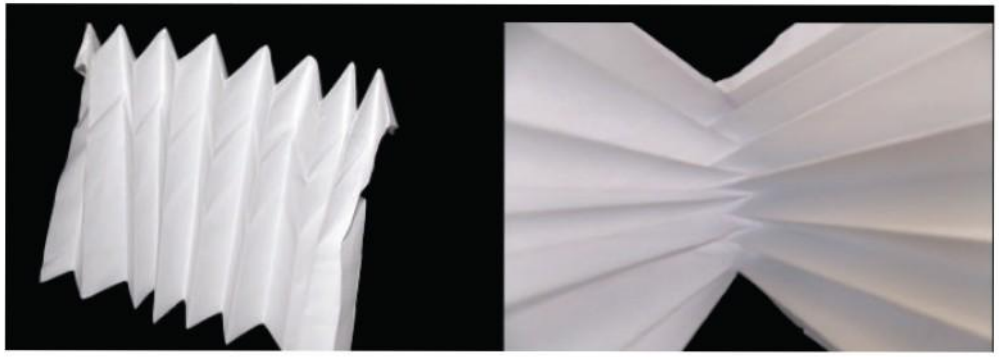
The social spaces are centred on event that people construct themselves to inhabit: heterotopia. One may be able to design conditions for these social spaces to happen. Once a designer does that then the designer will begin to understand that architecture is not about the conditions of design but rather about the design of conditions. The objective then is not to fulfil the objectives of the architecture but it is to construct our own conditions within an architectural space. There should a combination of space, place and movement so that events which take place are not fixed to one position but there is a spontaneous movement of spaces within a place. It is about experiencing the same place differently each time. Therefor design of the proposed building attempt to look for a rich mix or collision that happens between space (event) and place. Bernard Tschumi states that the event is the shock or should present a shock in a space (2001:27). This means that the interaction between form and function may result in an unexpected event.

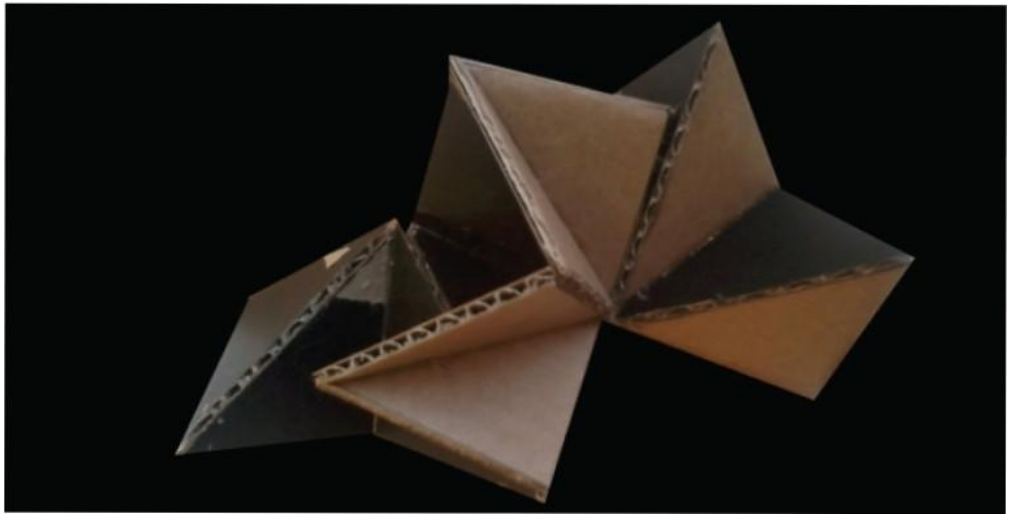
Initial Design

Modelling- experimenting with surfaces

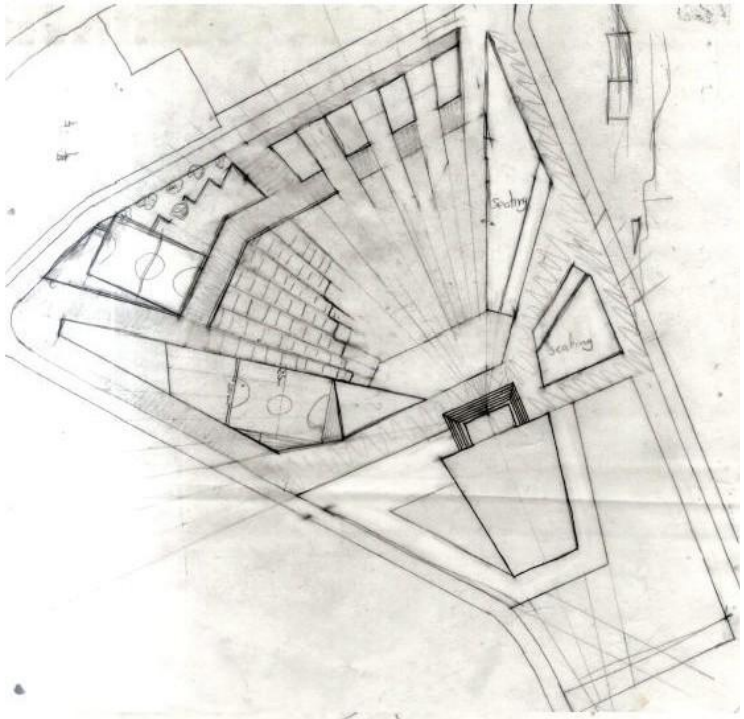


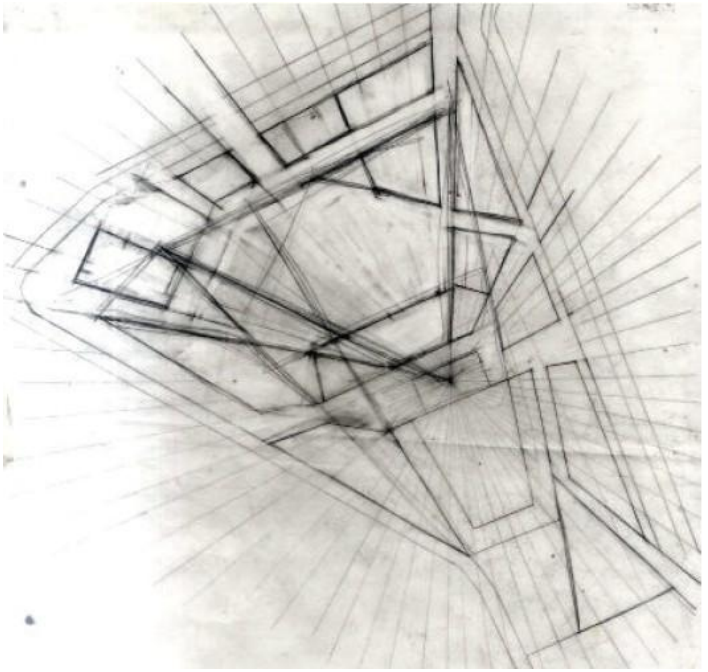


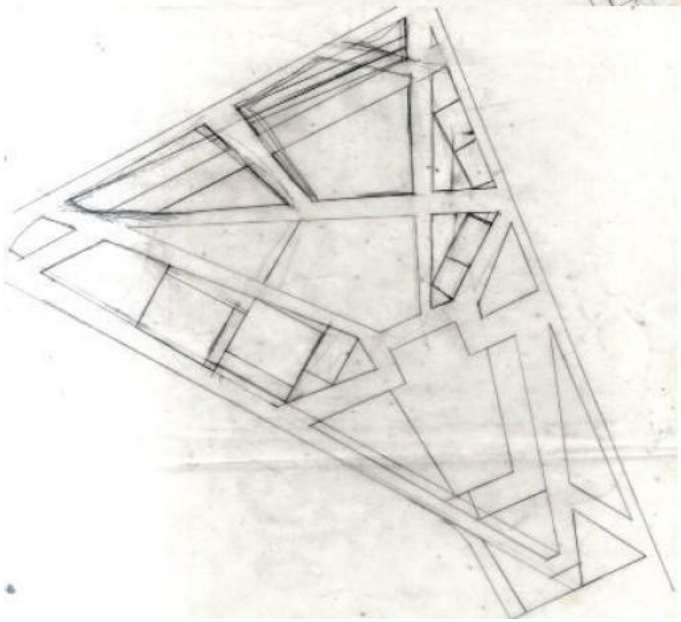


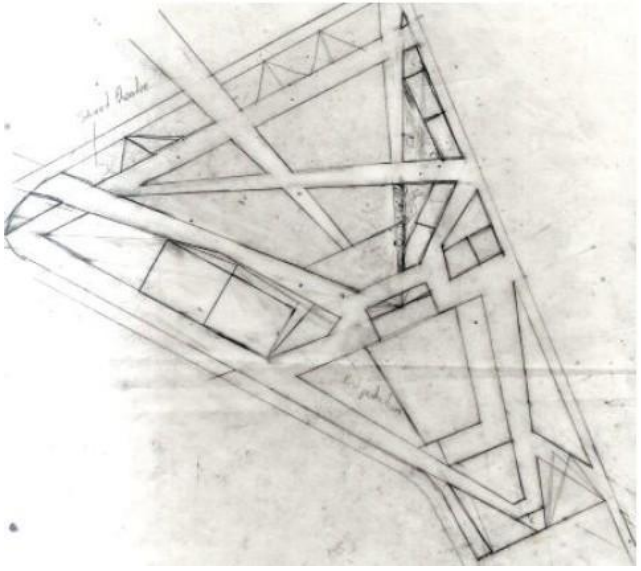


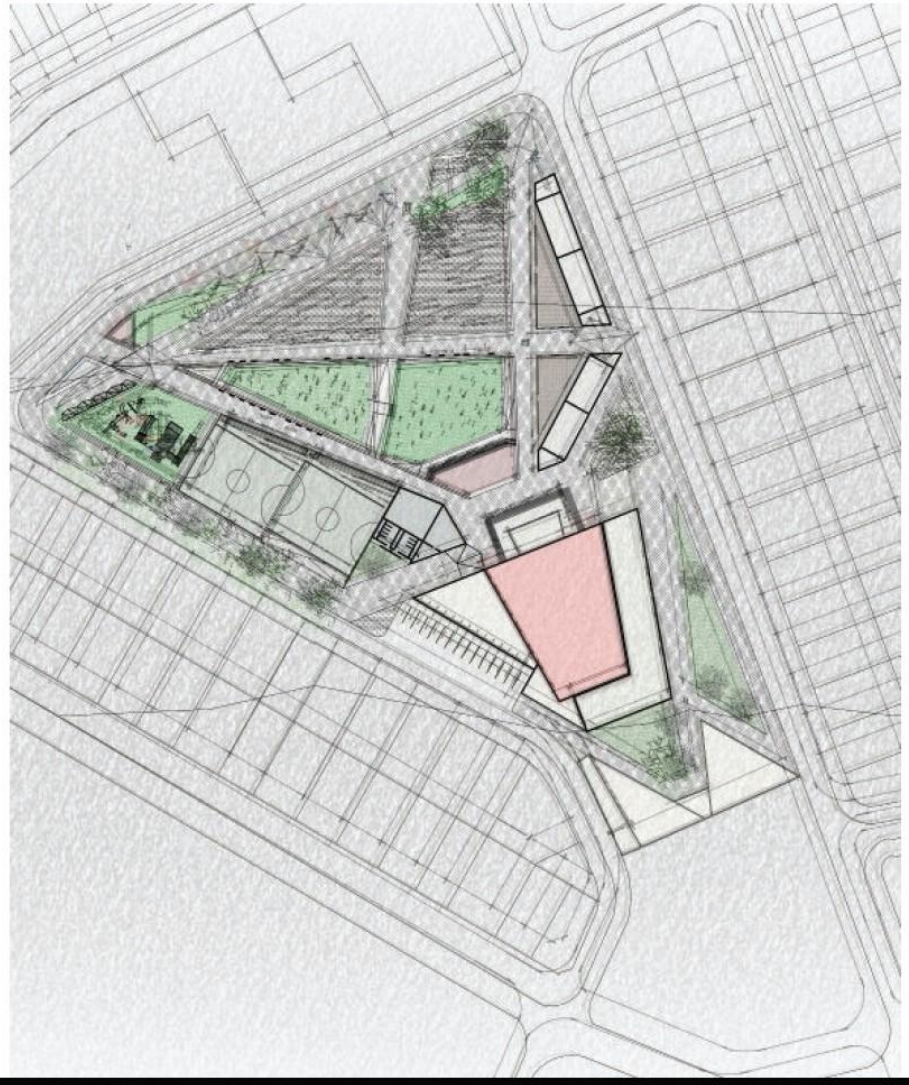
Conceptual sketches

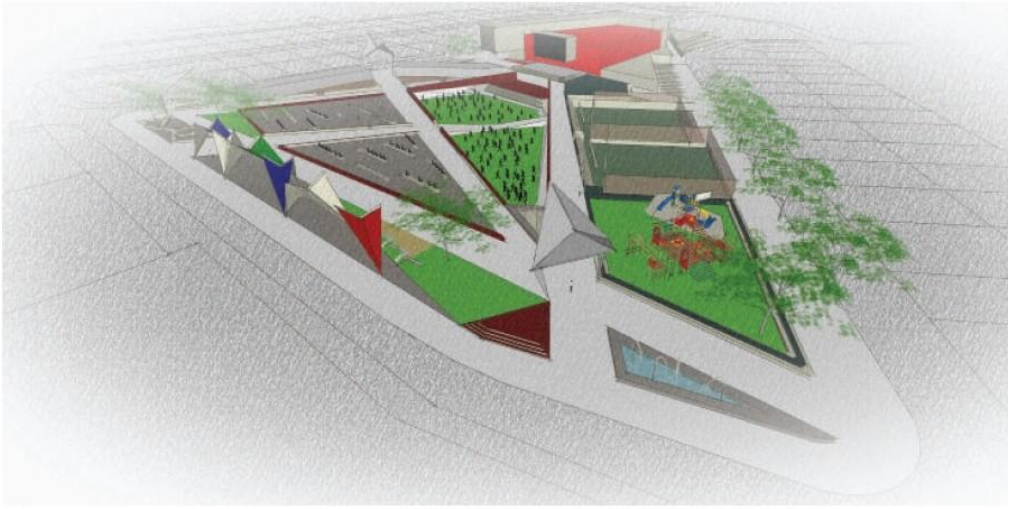


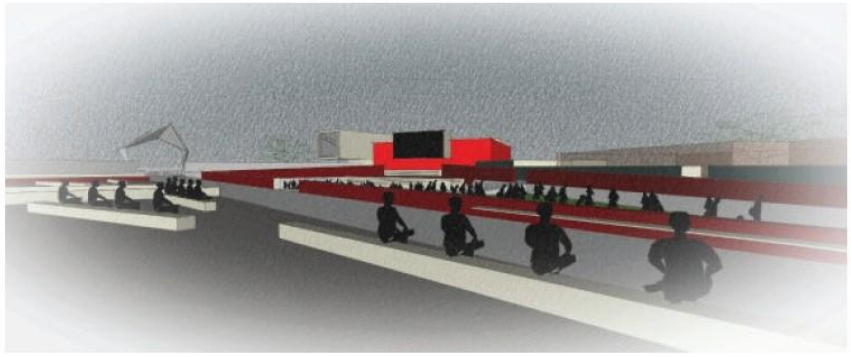


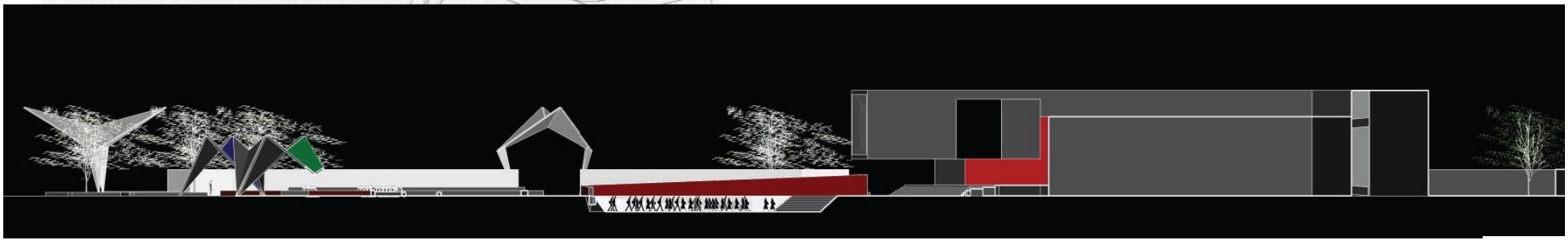






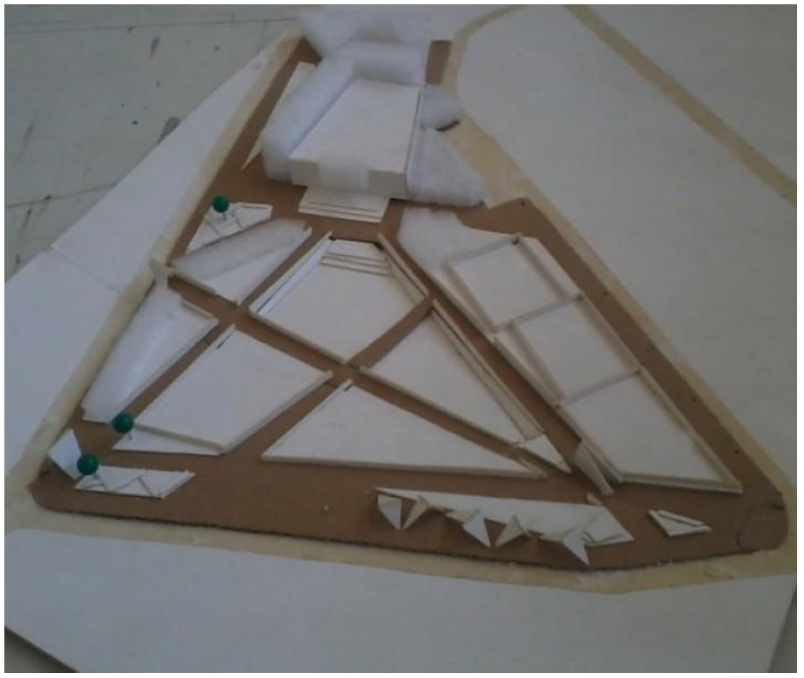






Conceptual model



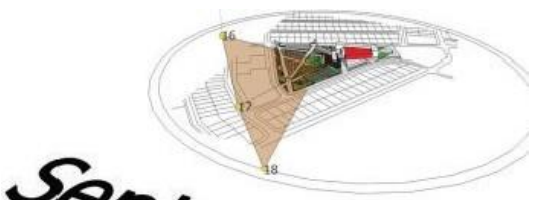


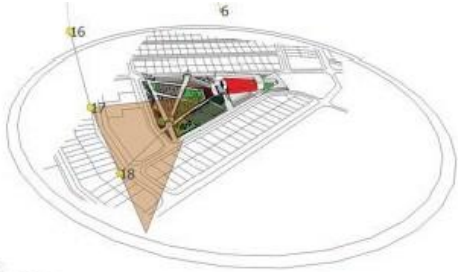


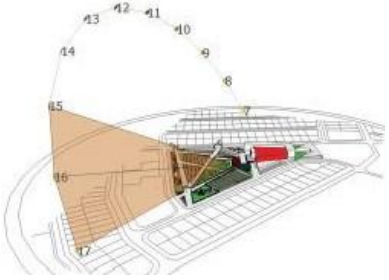


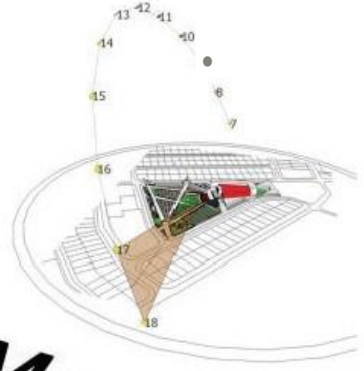
Solar study

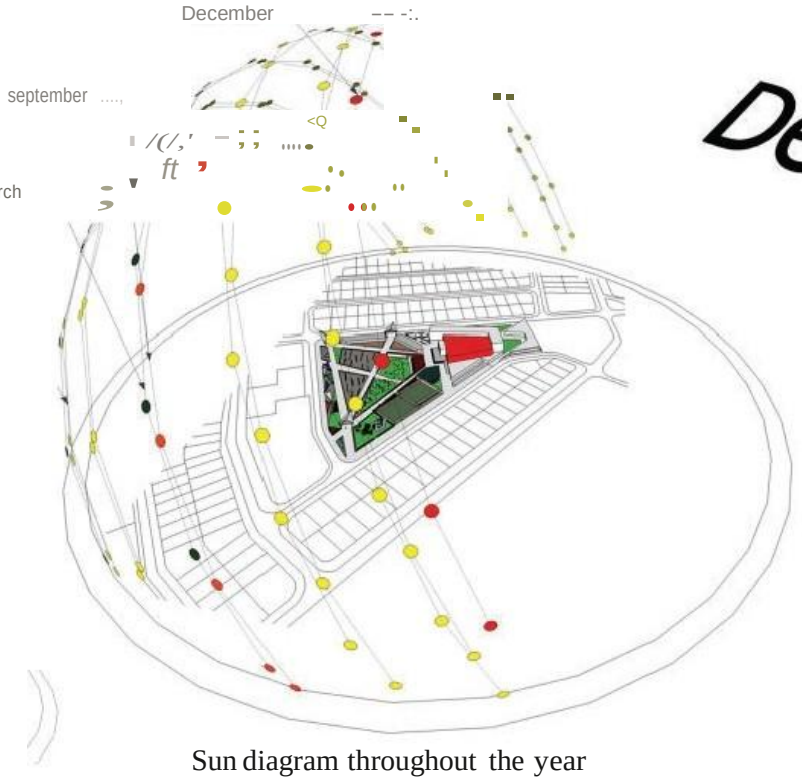
General operating starting time of the open-air cinema in the warm seasons would be between 16:00 and 18:00. The warm months are between September through to March of the following year. A solar analysis will be done for these hours.







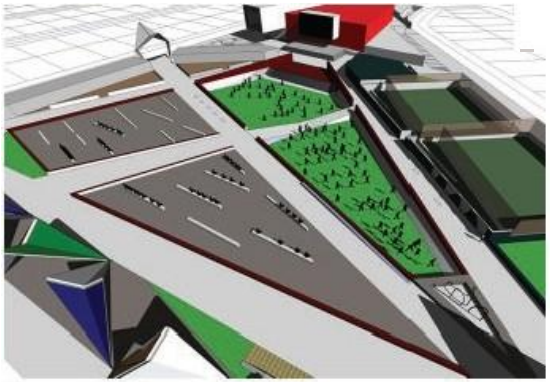




Sun diagram throughout the year

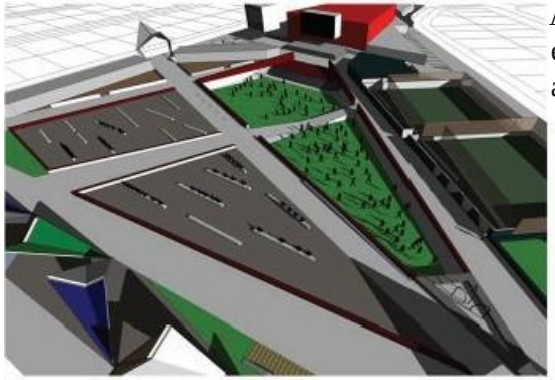
General operating starting times of the open-air cinema in the cold season would be between 15:00 and 17:00. The sun sets earlier in the cold seasons than the warm seasons. A solar study will be done for these hours.

Summer solar analysis



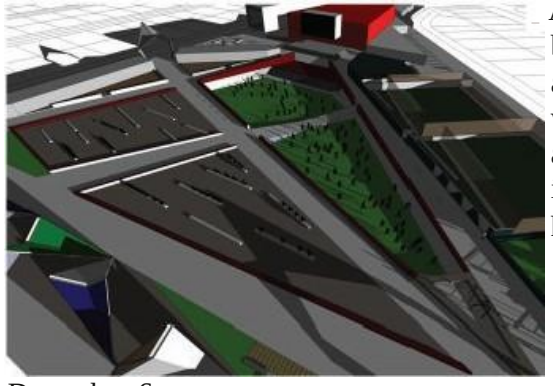
December 4pm

At 4pm there is little shade and a lager percentage of sunlight in the central area being the open-air cinema which could cause uncomfortable conditions in terms of high temperatures and direct sunlight.



December 5pm

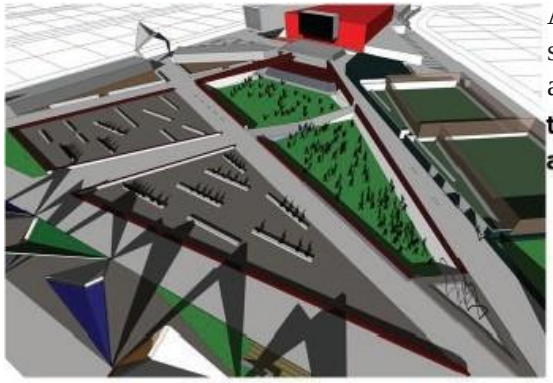
At 5pm there is no visable difference to the percentage of shade and sunlight.



December 6pm

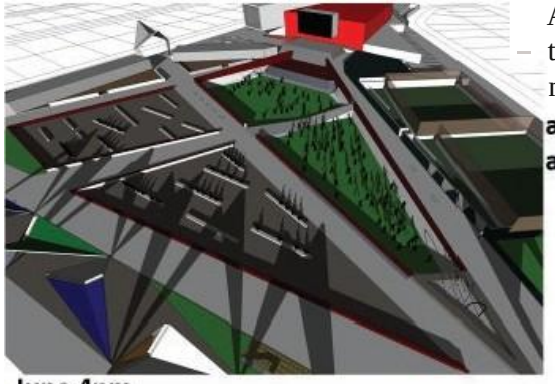
At 6pm there is a slight difference but by this time the conditions are so uncomfortable that people would have already vacated the area and would come back when it is much cooler in the later hours of the evening.

Winter solar analysis



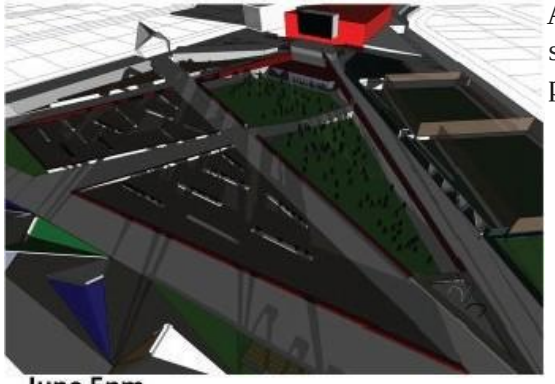
June 3pm

At 3pm there is a larger area of sunlight which may be comfortable conditions in winter because the area is warm but not unbearably hot.



June 4pm

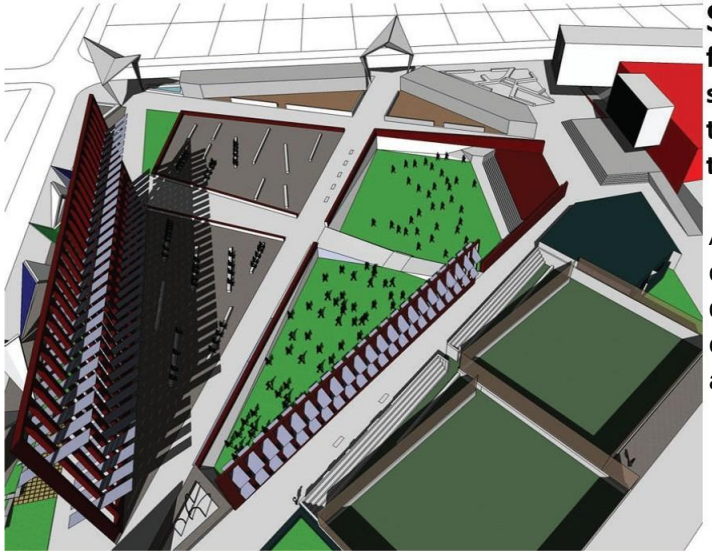
At 4pm the shaded areas begins to increase significantly which may cause temperatures to drop and may be slightly uncomfortable for the users of the space.



June 5pm

At 5pm almost the entire area Is shaded which will decrease temperatures.

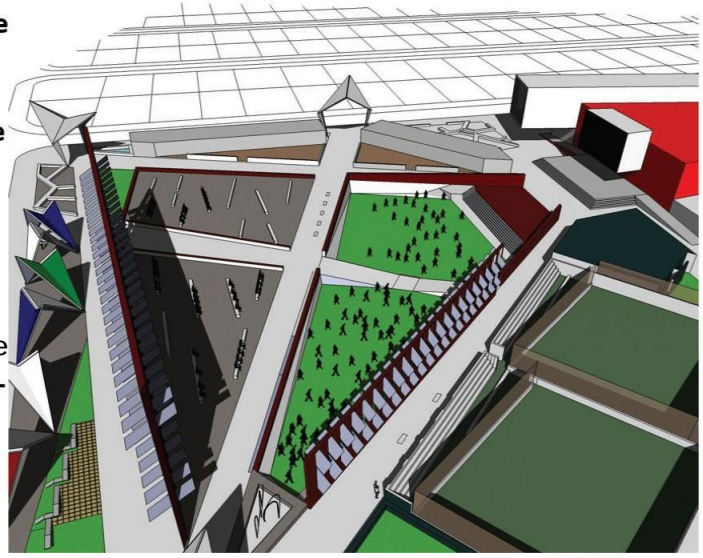
Design intervention - Shading device



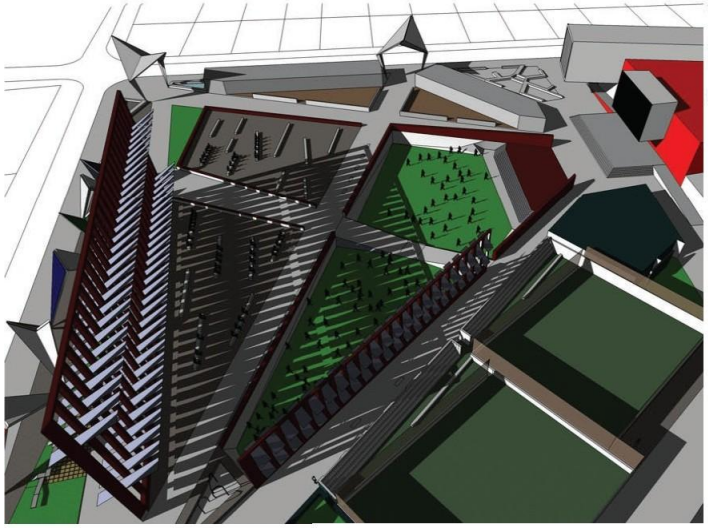
December 4pm

Summer: puting up a shading device in the form of a louvered screen which adds some shading whilst still providing visability into the space and visabiltiy from inside the space to the outside.

An unjustment is made to the louvers by decreasing the size of each louver to accomodate the winter conditions.this means that a covering will be needed in order to shade the area in summer while still providing some sunlight in winter

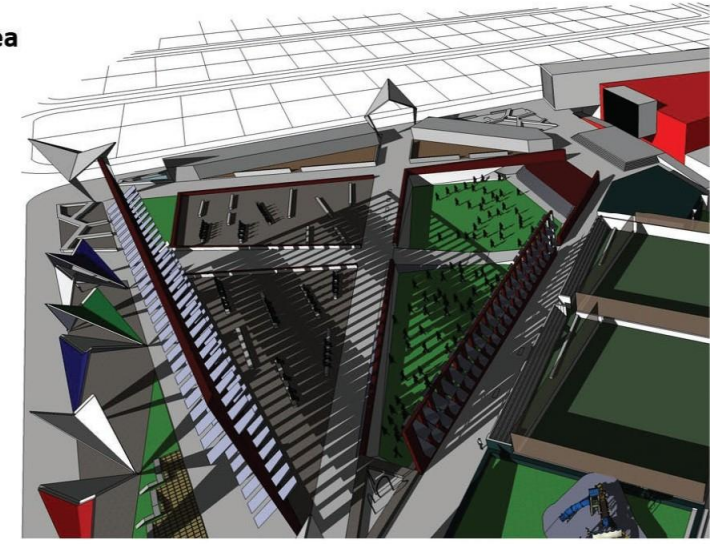


December 4pm



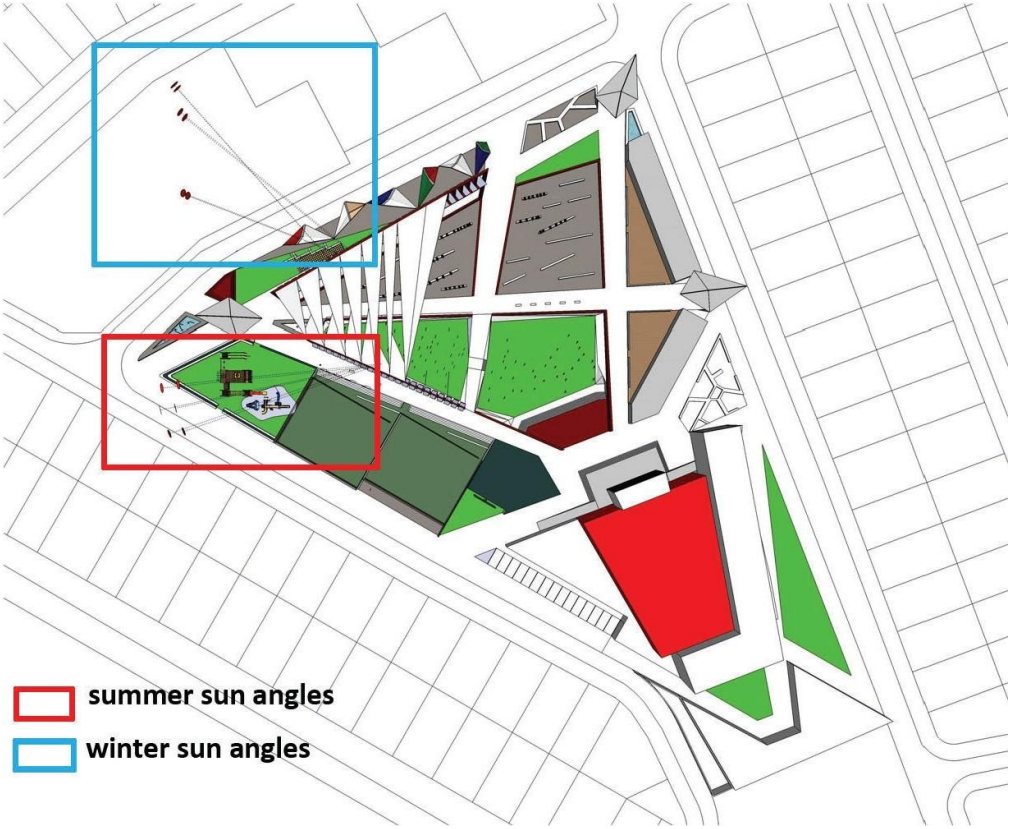
June 3pm

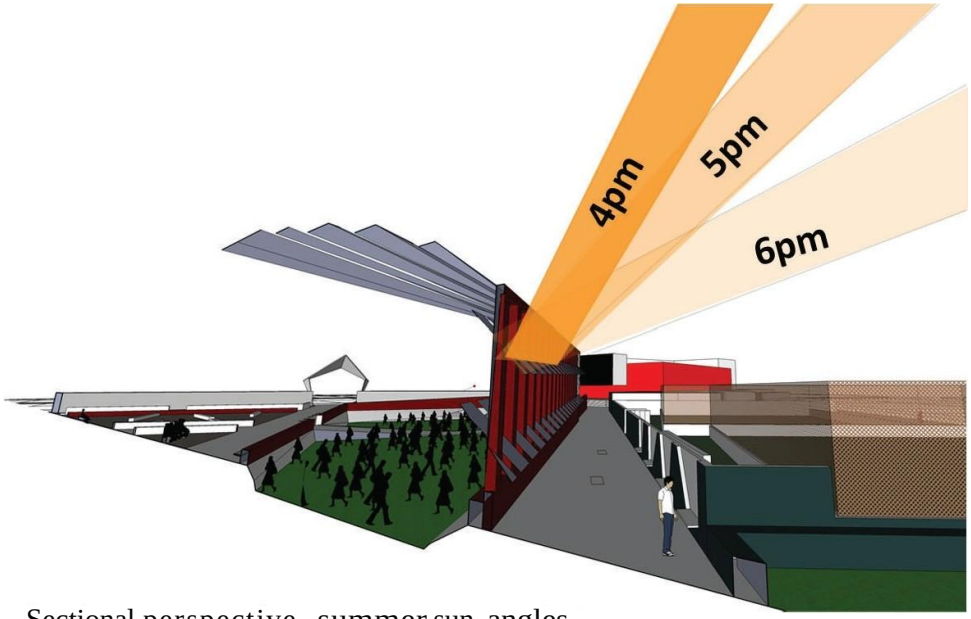
Winter: Some sunlight penetrates the area but after adjusting the louver sizes more sunlight penetrates the area.



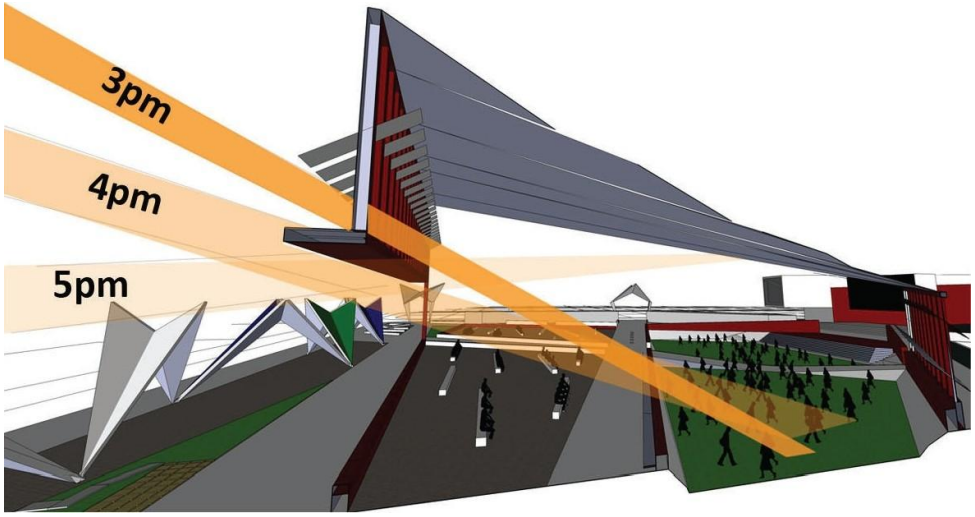
June 3pm

Sun angles





Sectional perspective- summer sun angles

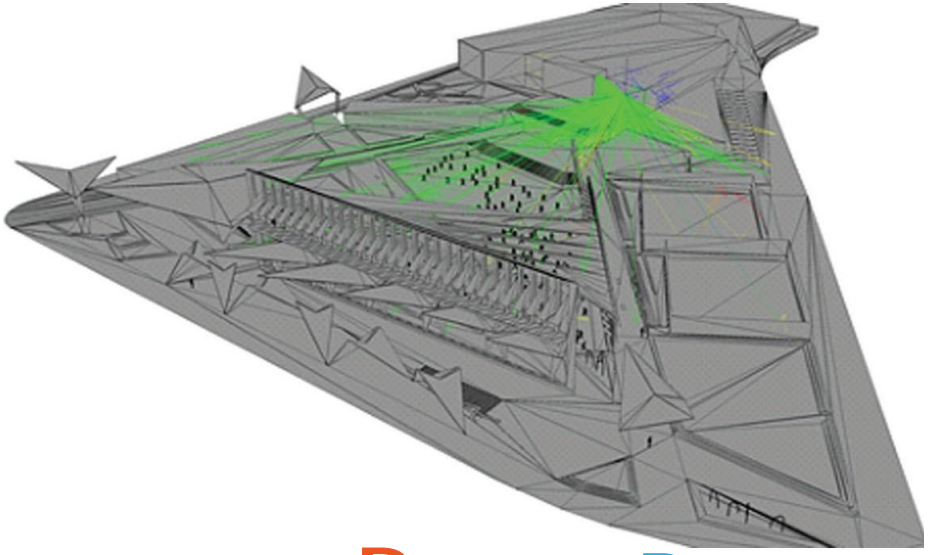


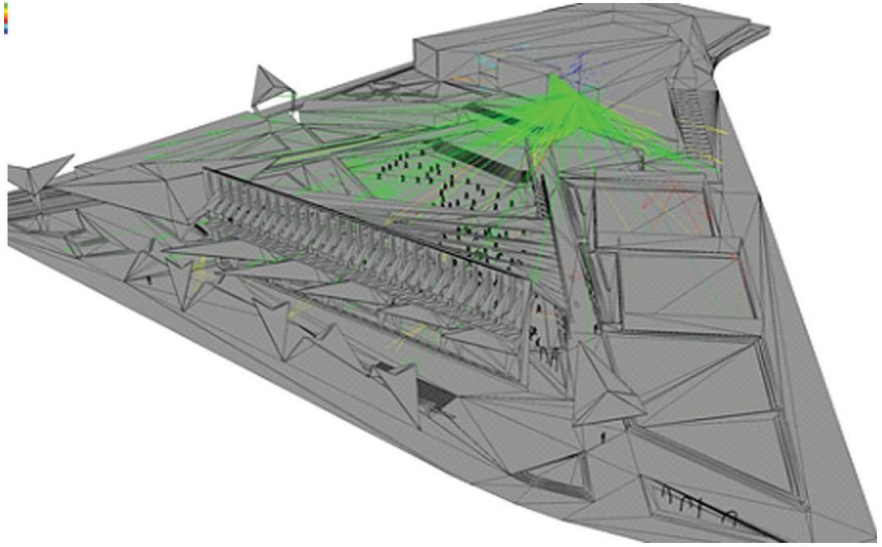
Sectional perspective - Winter sun angles

Findings

Soweto average maximum summer temperature is 25 degrees celcuis and the average maximum winter tempersture is 18 dgrees celcius. Therefore in summer the aim is to get as much shading as possible to lower the temperatures in the space and in winter the aim is to get as much sunlight as possible. It is also important that direct sunlight should be controlled so that it does not cause any obstruction to people's line of vision of the big screen. Direct sunlight should be controlled to create cool comfortable conditions in summer but at the same time be allowed to penetrate the space to create warm comfortable conditions in winter.

Acoustic analysis





KEY:

D direct

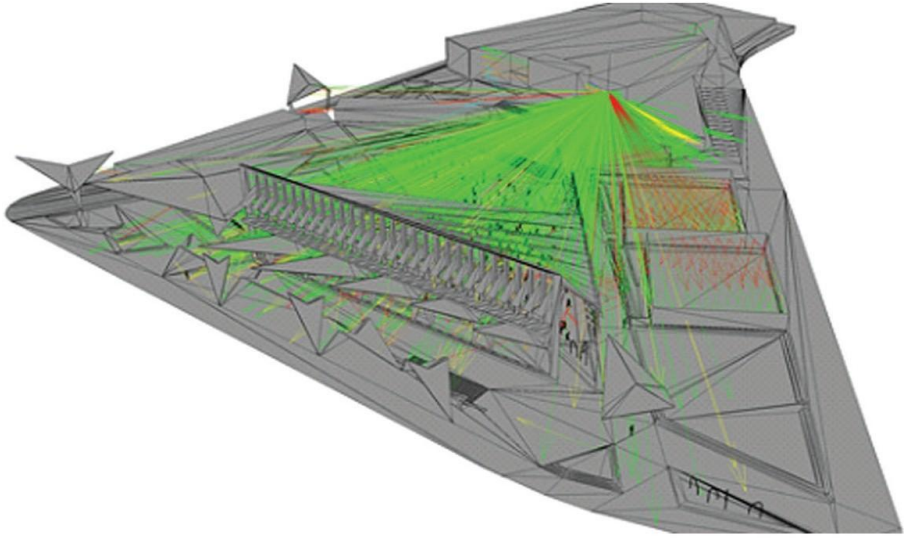
O useful

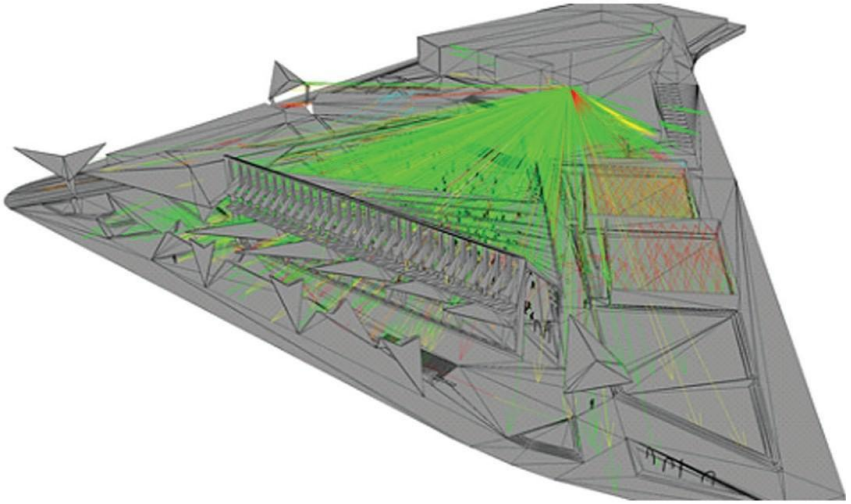
D border

O echo

D reverb

D masked

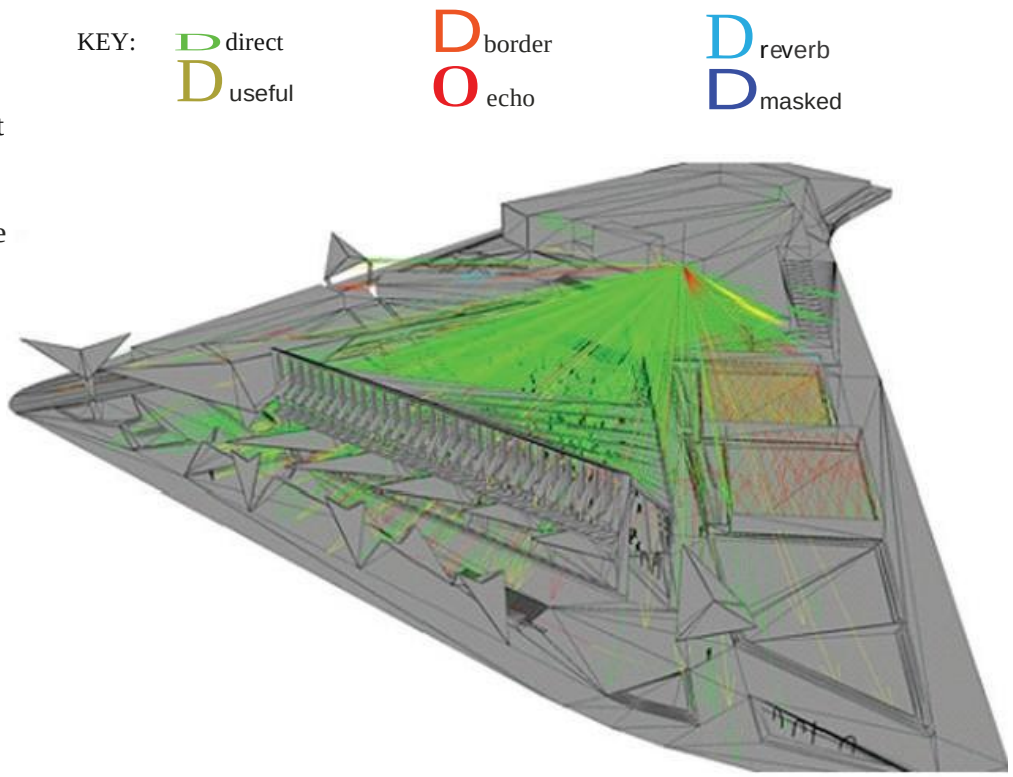




Accoustic analysis

Analysis:

In observing the path rays of sound onto the open-air cinema space there are different kinds of sounds which flow through the space. There is direct sound which dominates the space. The direct sound does not reflect on any surface before it can be heard, so it is a good thing that in the central space, direct sound dominates as there are no obstructions. There is some useful sound on the outer edges of the main open-air cinema space. The echoed sound can mostly be found where there are structures but this is well away from the open-air cinema space. There is little reverb because the space is not enclosed.



Design consideration:

One has to consider how the sound will affect the surrounding areas. The site Is very central and it is surrounded by houses. certain design considerations must be done in oder to make sure that the sound does not reach far out to the surrounding houses. The sun shading devices can aid in defusing the sound. In addition, there are concrete structures in the form of roof structures on the outer edges of the entire site which will help to contain the sound to the space.

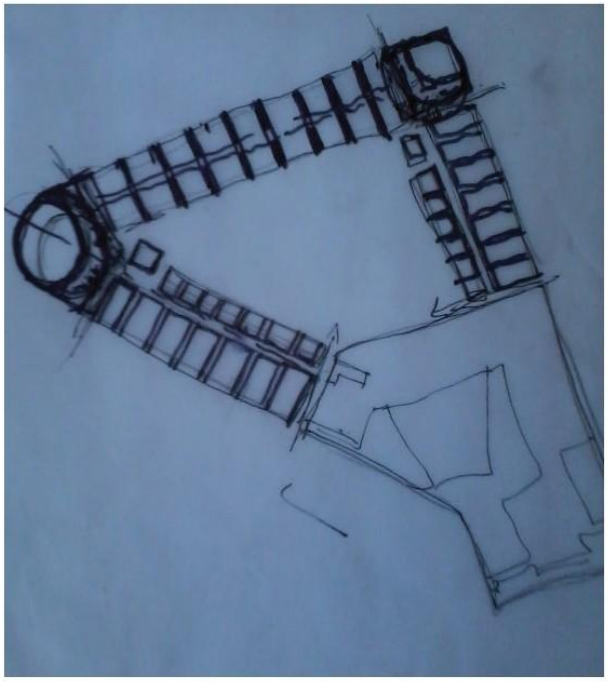
Materiality:
Concrete provides the mass required to effectively reduce the transmission of sound.
Grass can also be affective in reducing transmission of sound.

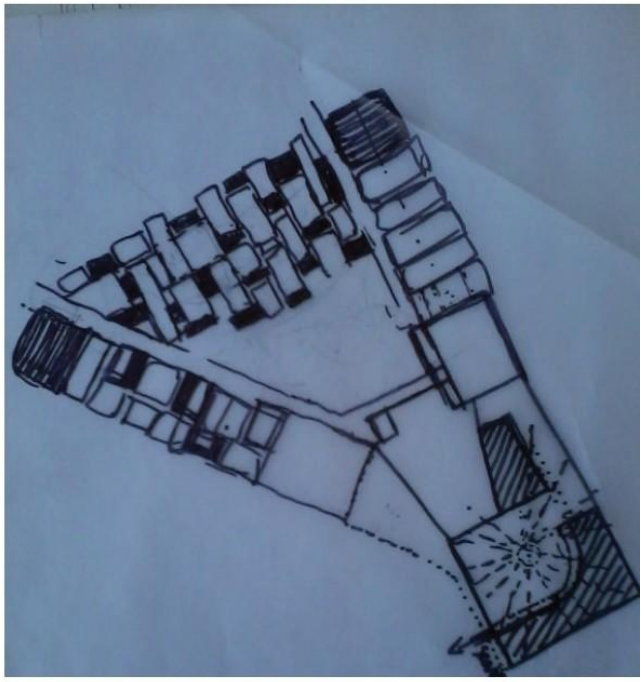
Geometry:
Choosing the appropriate geometry will result in a good, balanced quality sound effect in the space.

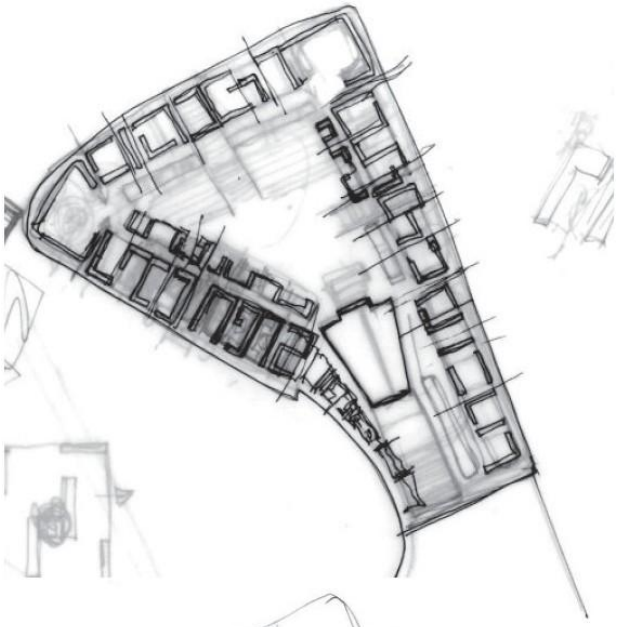
Conclusion:

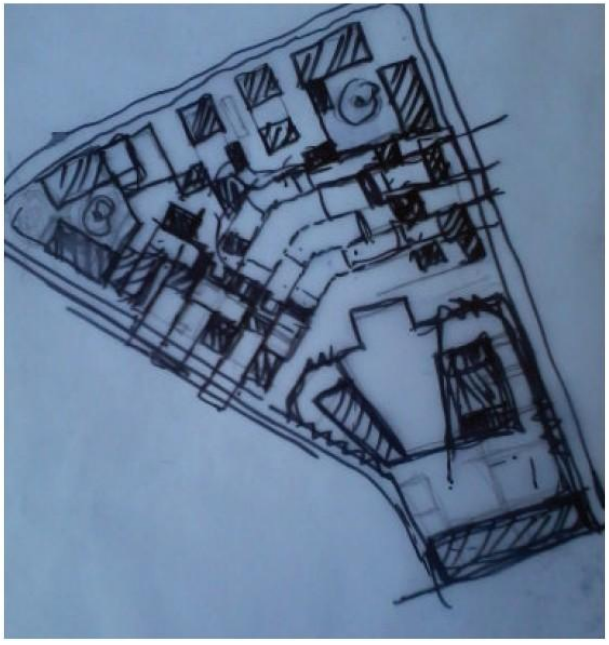
The right kind of balance must be found between geometry, materiality and sound defusing devices. The appropriate sound effect must be accomodated for such as reverb sound effects. Reverb is different from echo. A reverb effect can help in the consistant balance of sound in a space and prevents volumes from being raised to damaging levels. It is important to consider how one will contain the sound in an open-air environment.

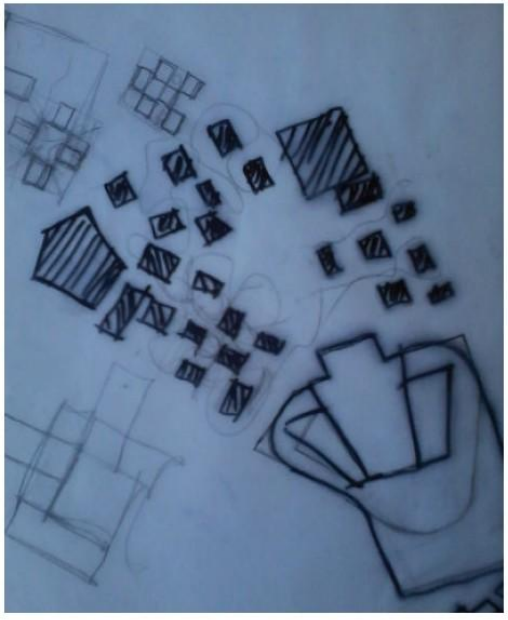
Review 2 Conceptual sketches

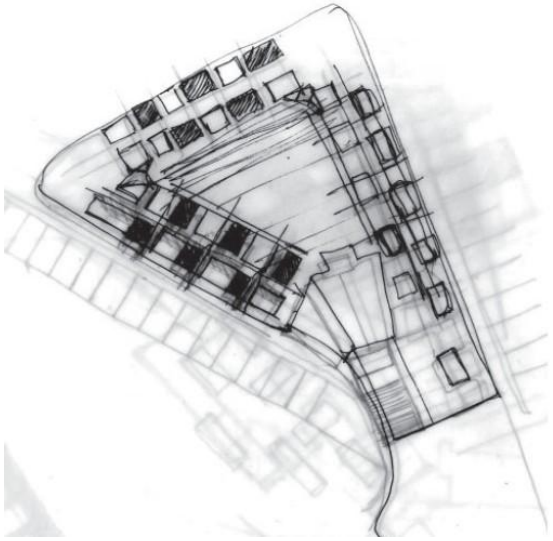


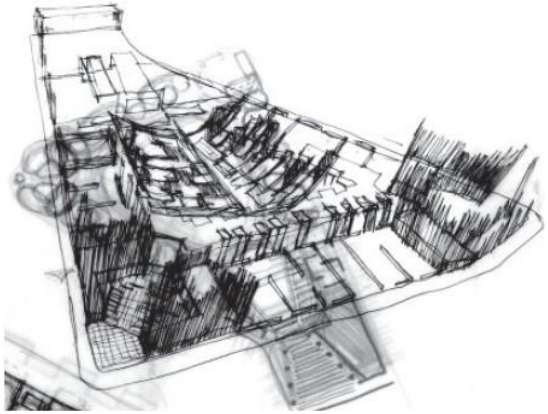


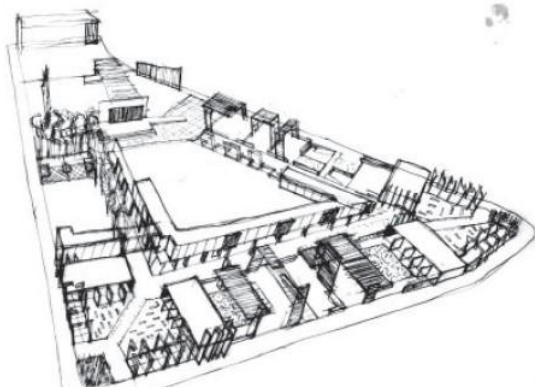


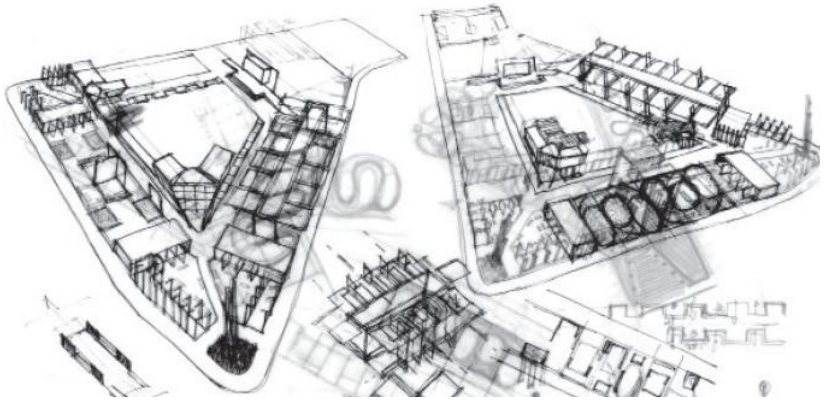


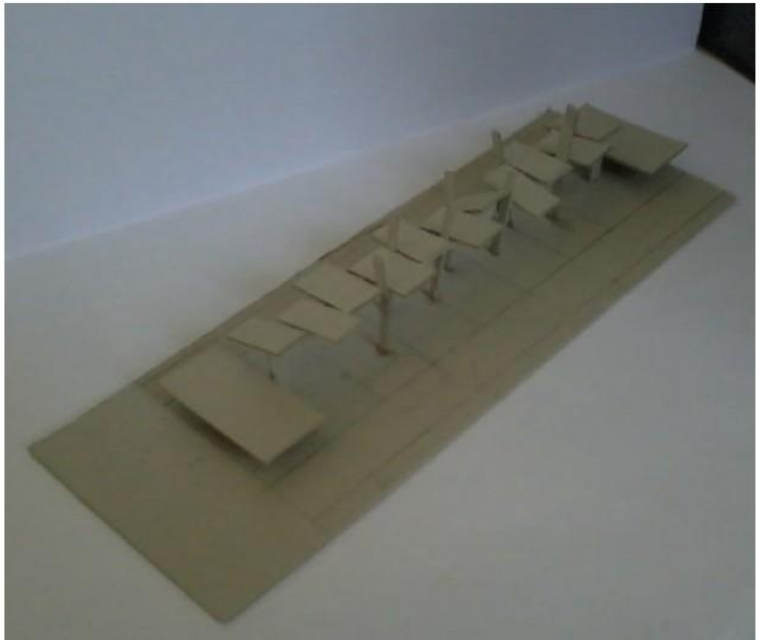




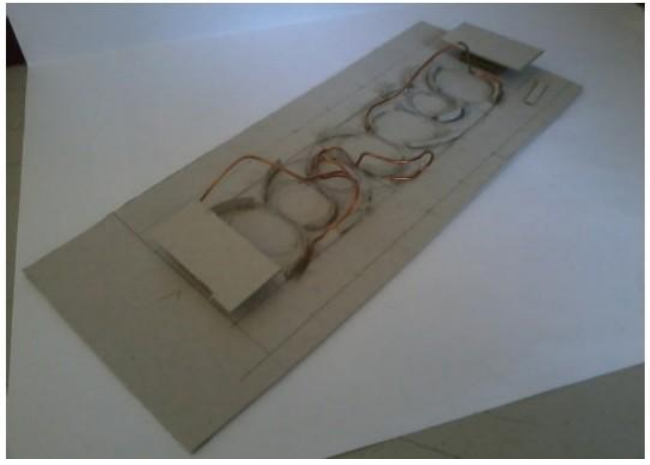


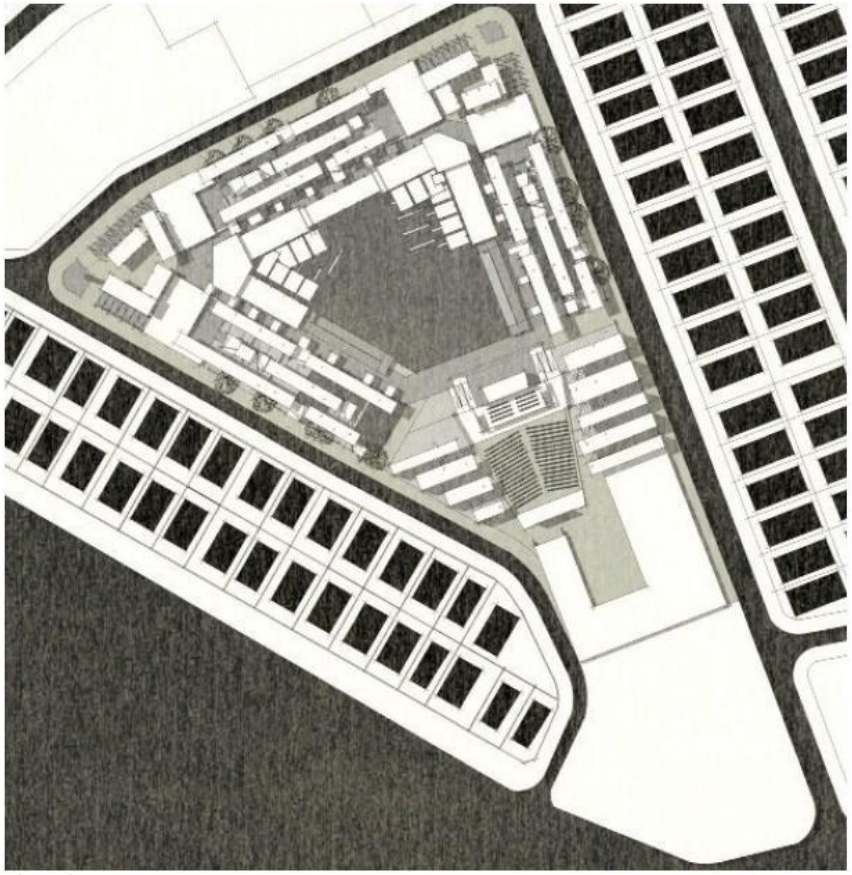




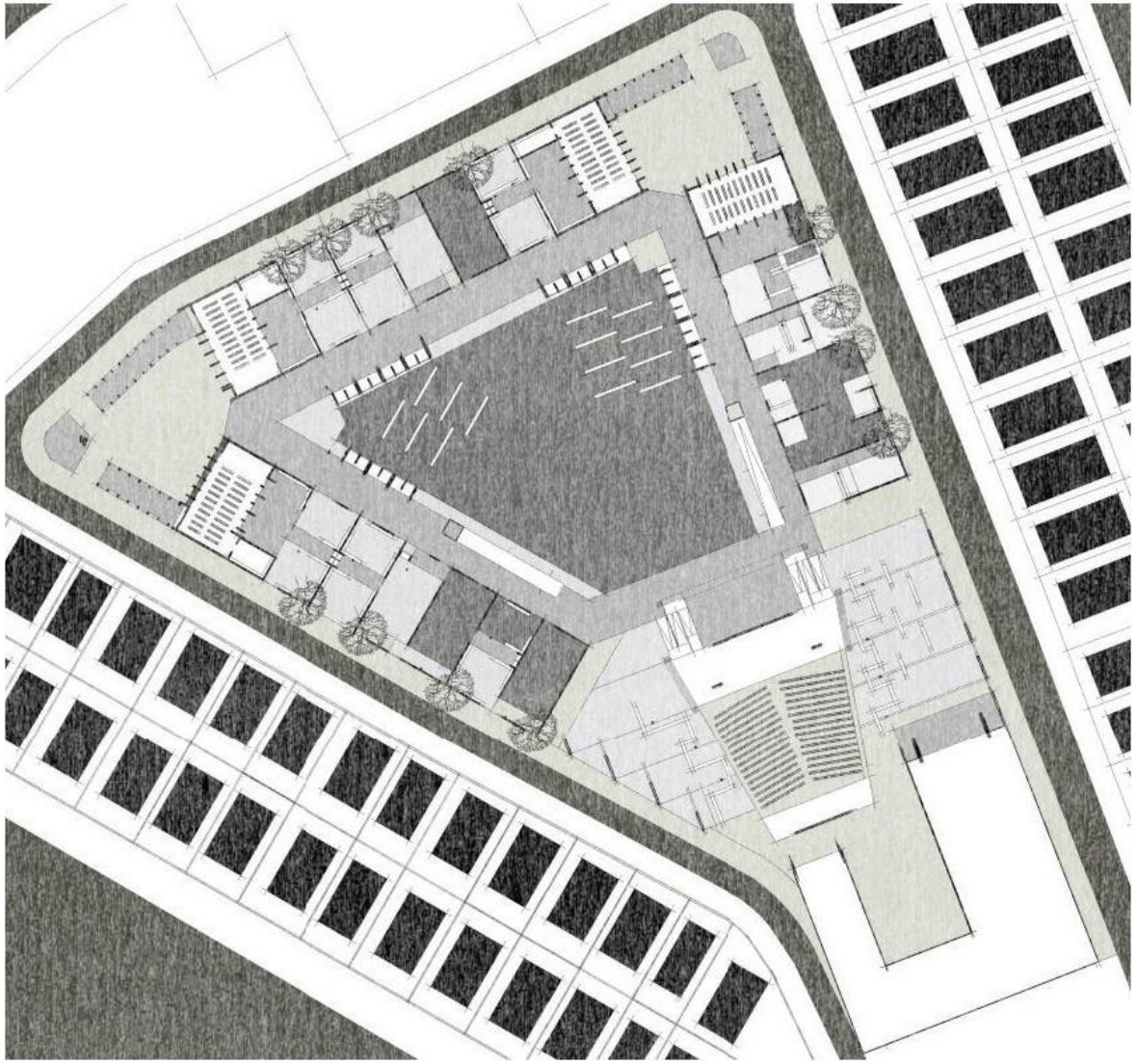




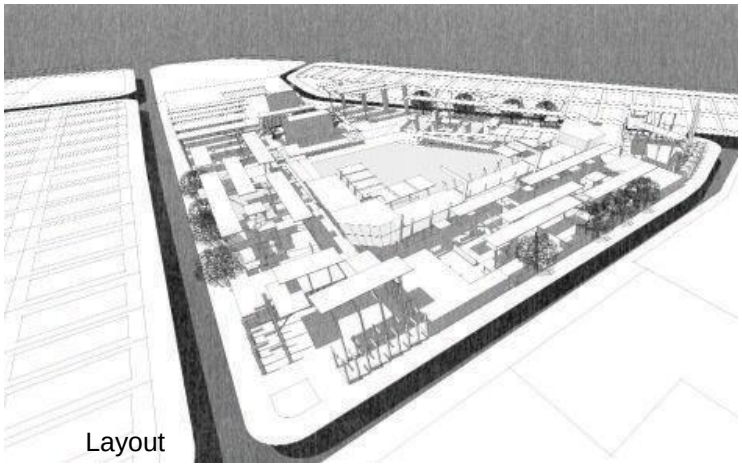




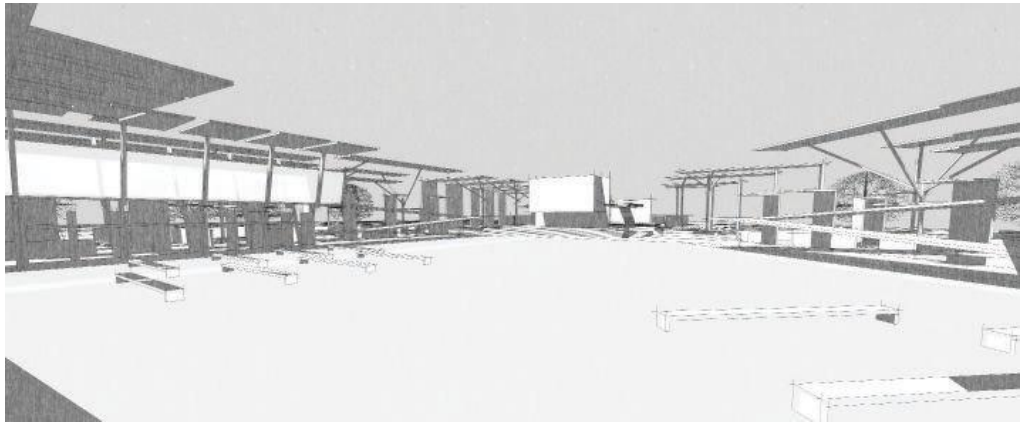
Site plan



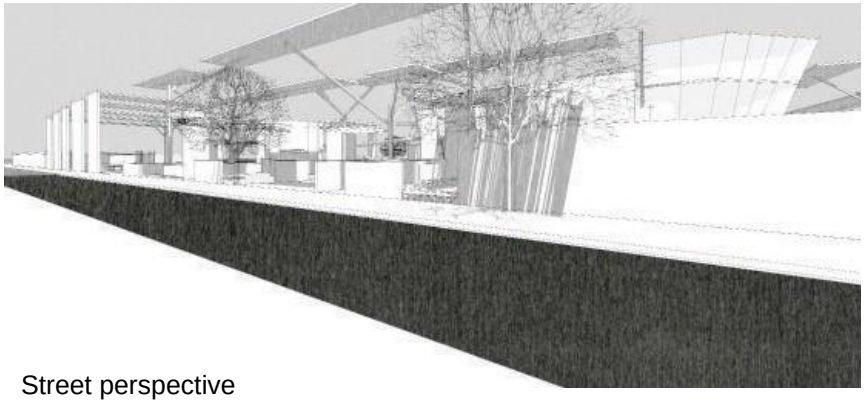
Ground floor plan



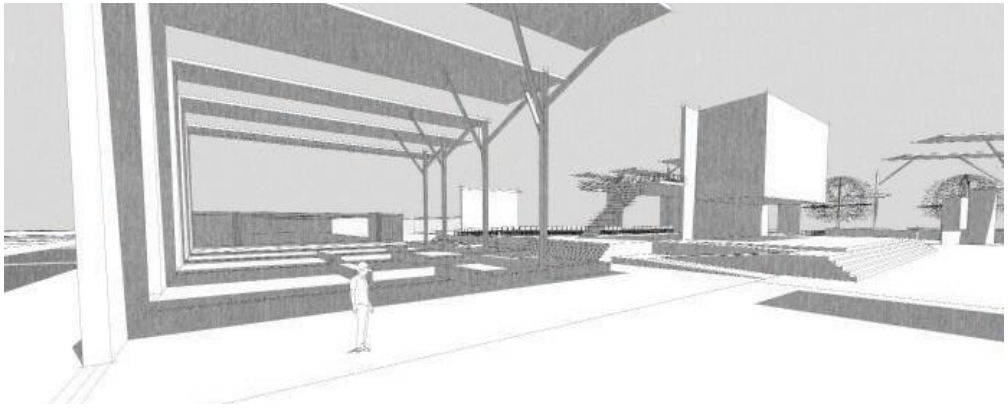
Layout

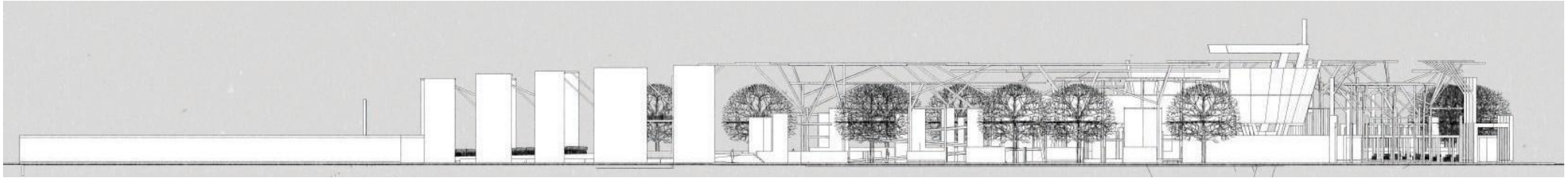


Central space

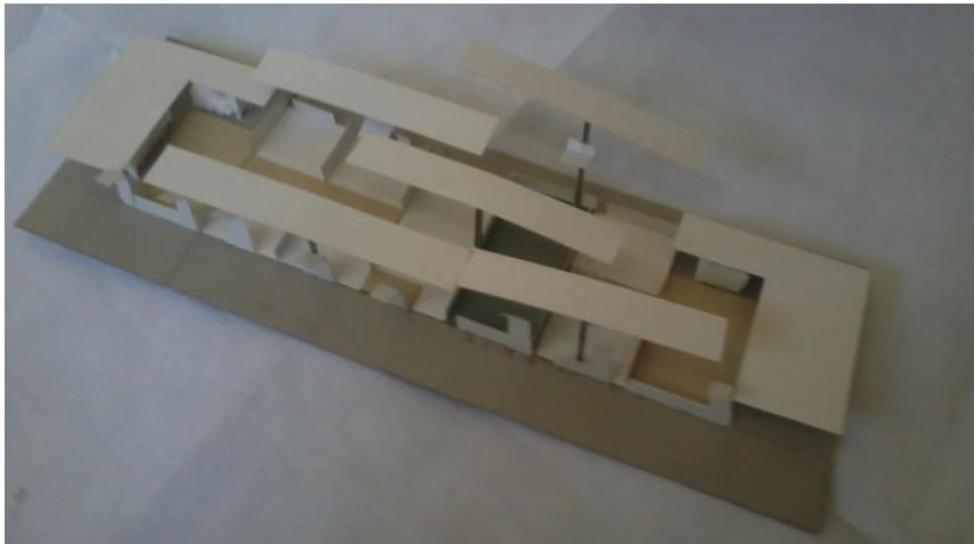


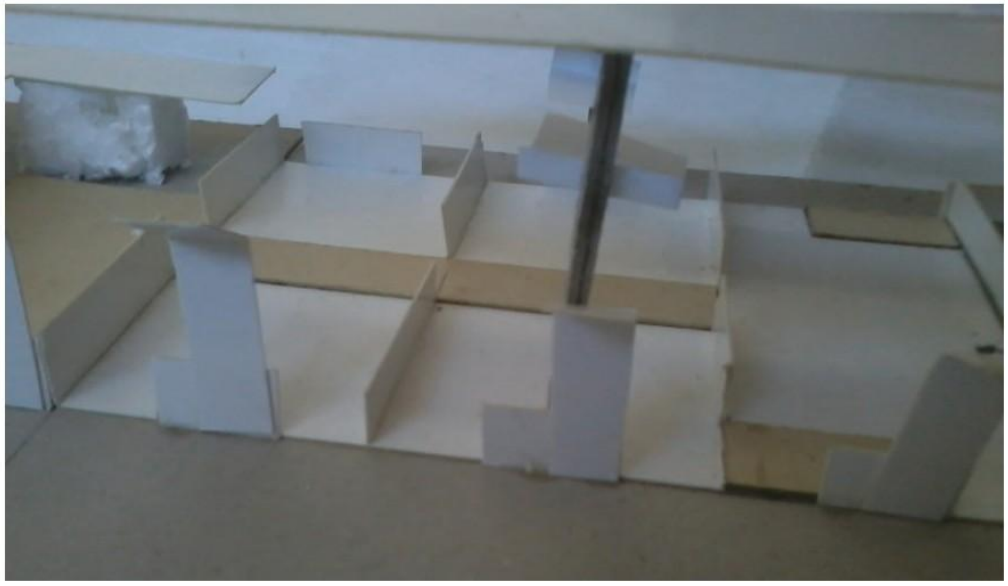
Street perspective

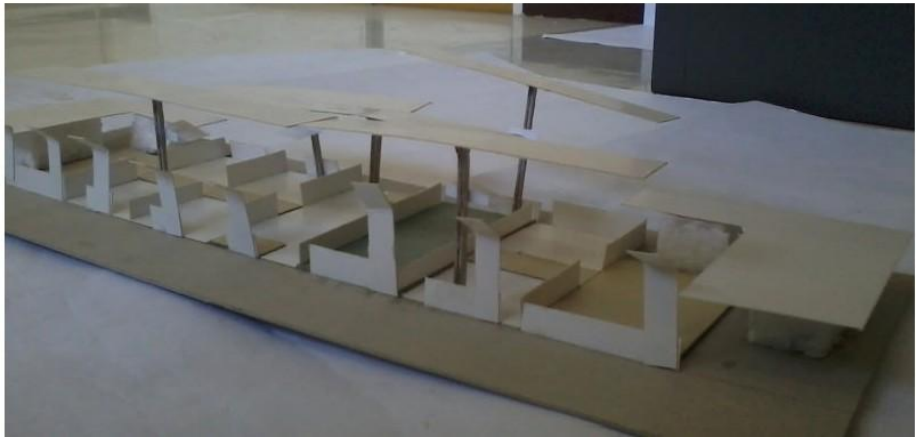




Elevation









Review three



Cinema/Theatre

diJarata (yards)

Amphitheatre

Open-air Cinema

Entrance square

Informal trading

Existing 'shisa nyama' restuarant

Ground floor

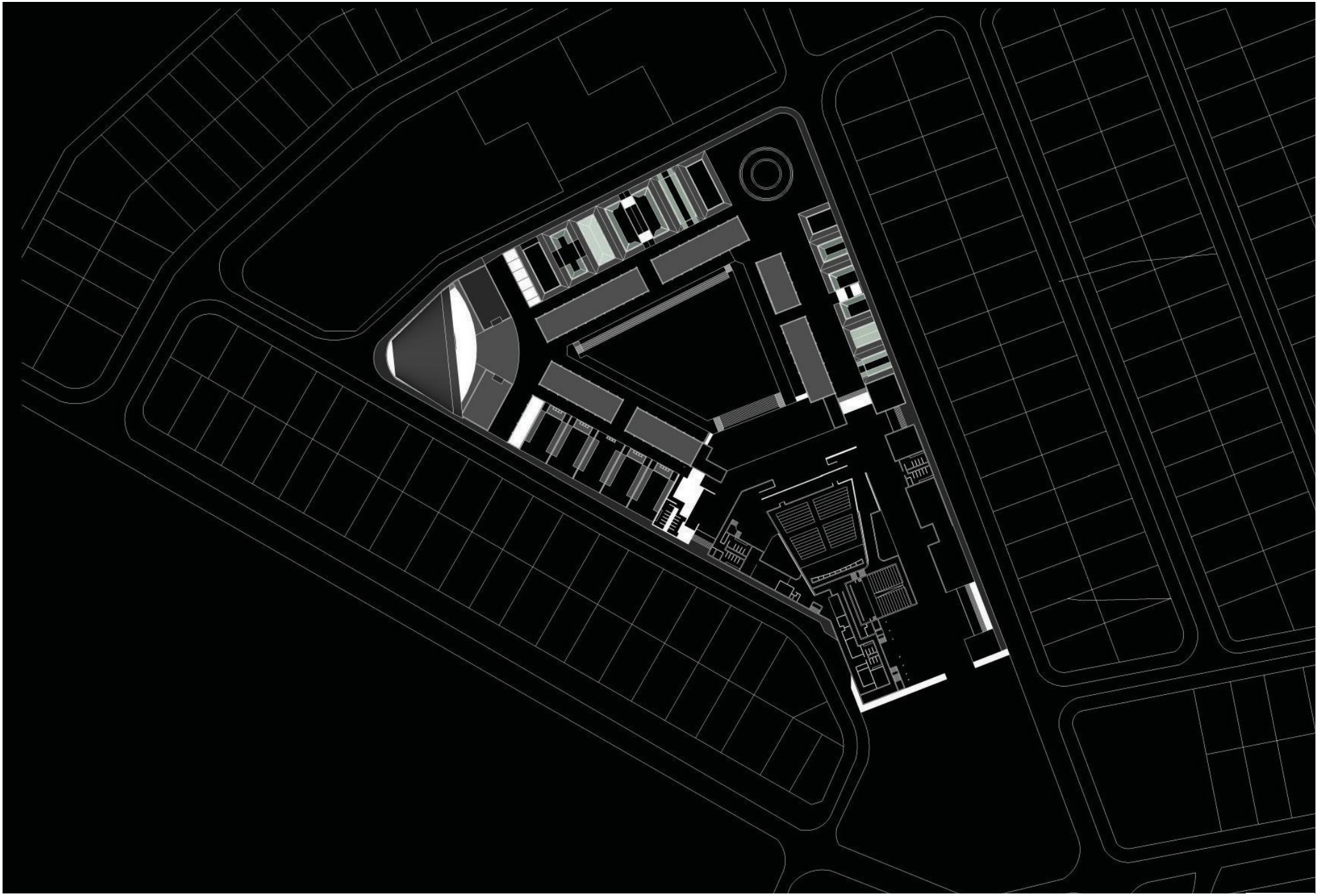
1. The main Cinema/theatre
    - Entrance foyer:
        - Ticketing area
        - Snack bar
    - Cinema foyer:
        - Ablutions
        - Courtyards
    - Backstage:
        - change rooms
        - Storage space
        - Ablutions
        - Entrance foyer
        - Lounge
        - Kitchen
        - Service area/deliveries
2. Gallery and exhibition space
3. Auditorium

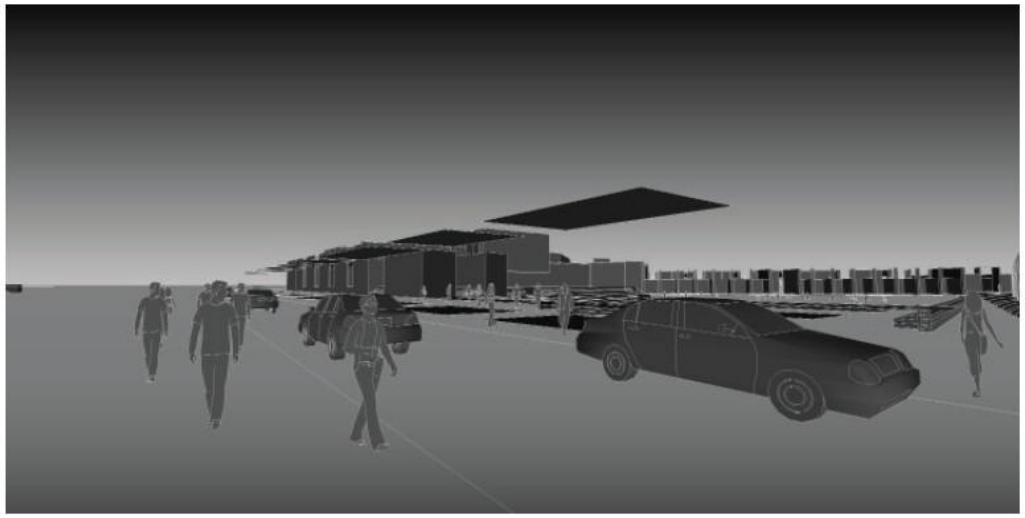
First floor

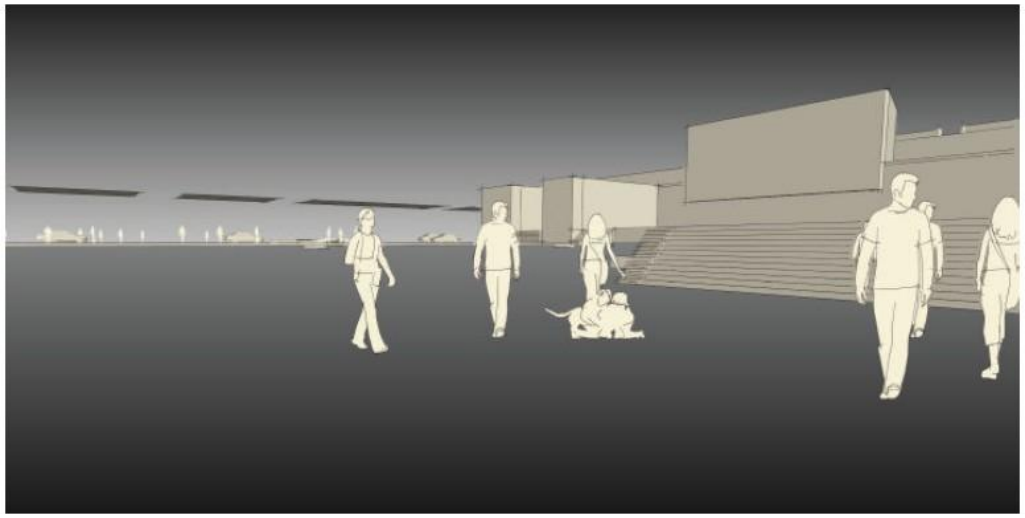
1. Restaurant
2. Auditorium
3. Film workshop area
    - Studios
    - Post production facilities
4. Management offices
5. VIP lounge with roof garden

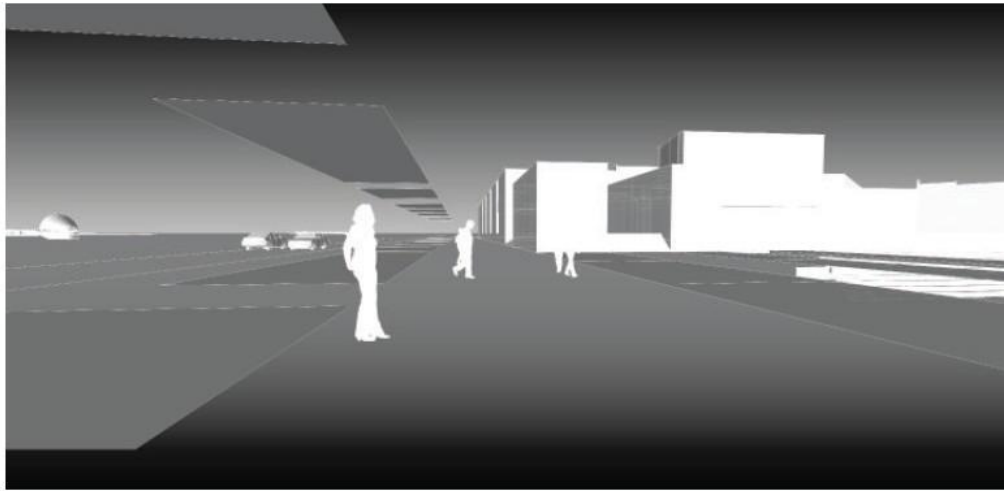
Exterior space

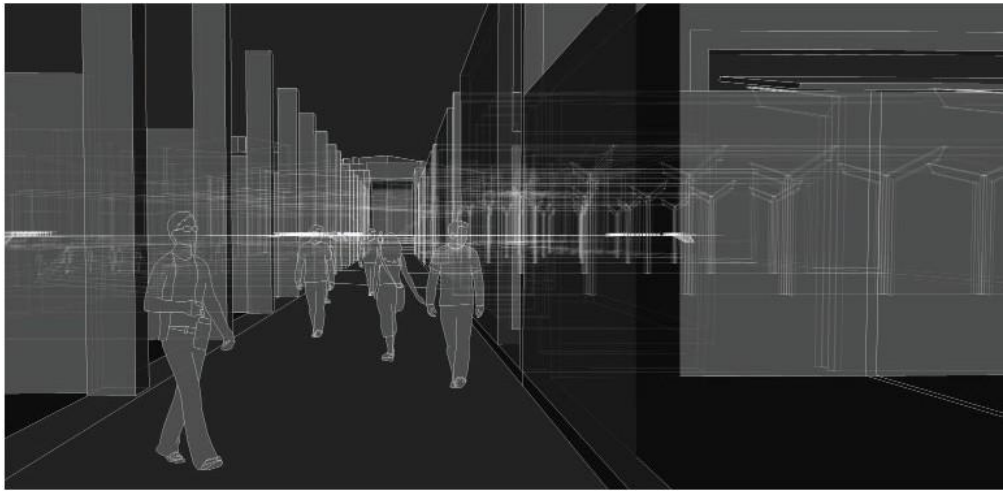
1. Jarata (open-air cinema)
2. Exterior foyer
3. Retail spaces
4. Office spaces
5. Workshop space
6. Informal trading space
7. Amphitheater
8. Entrance square
9. Drop off zone

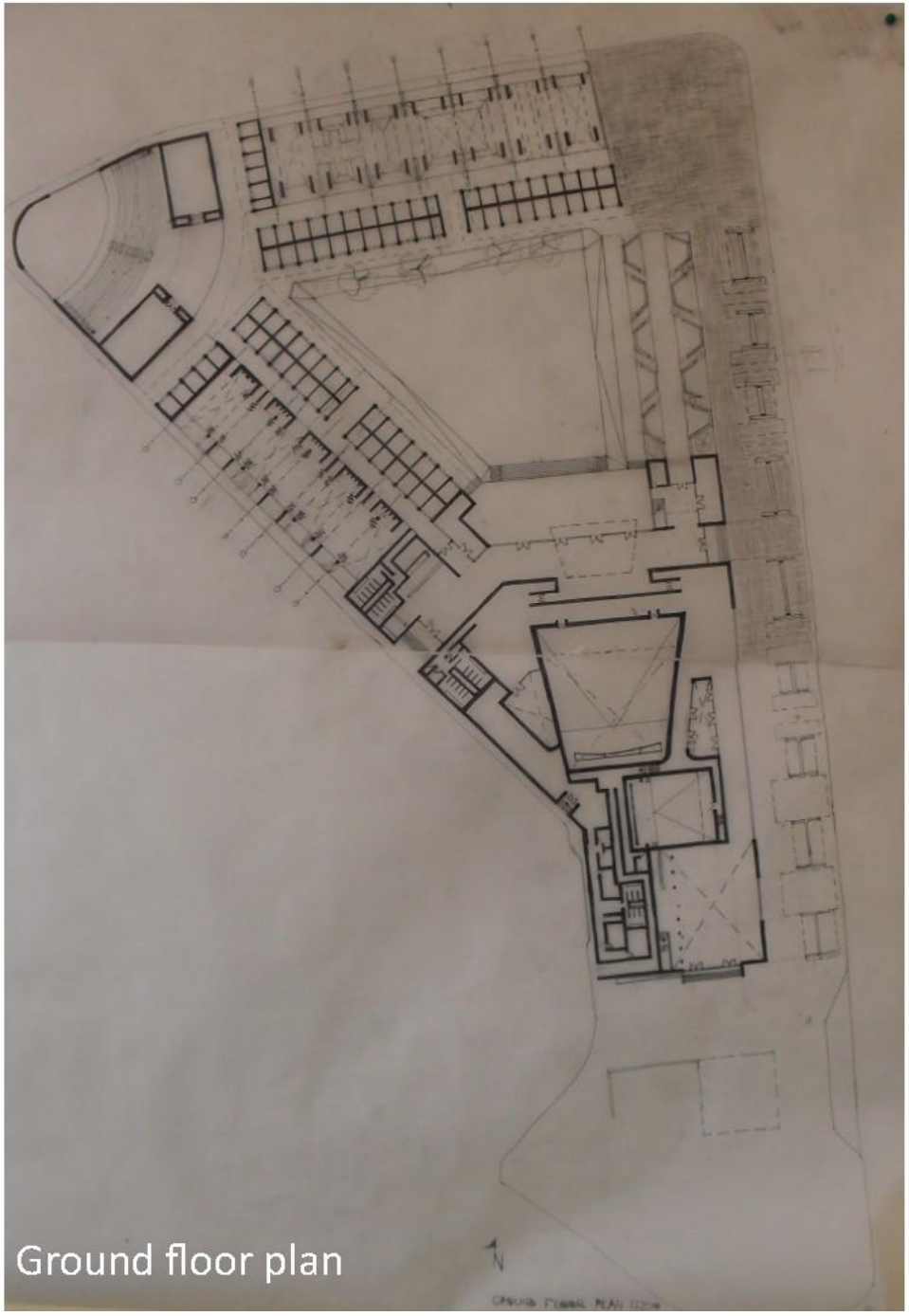




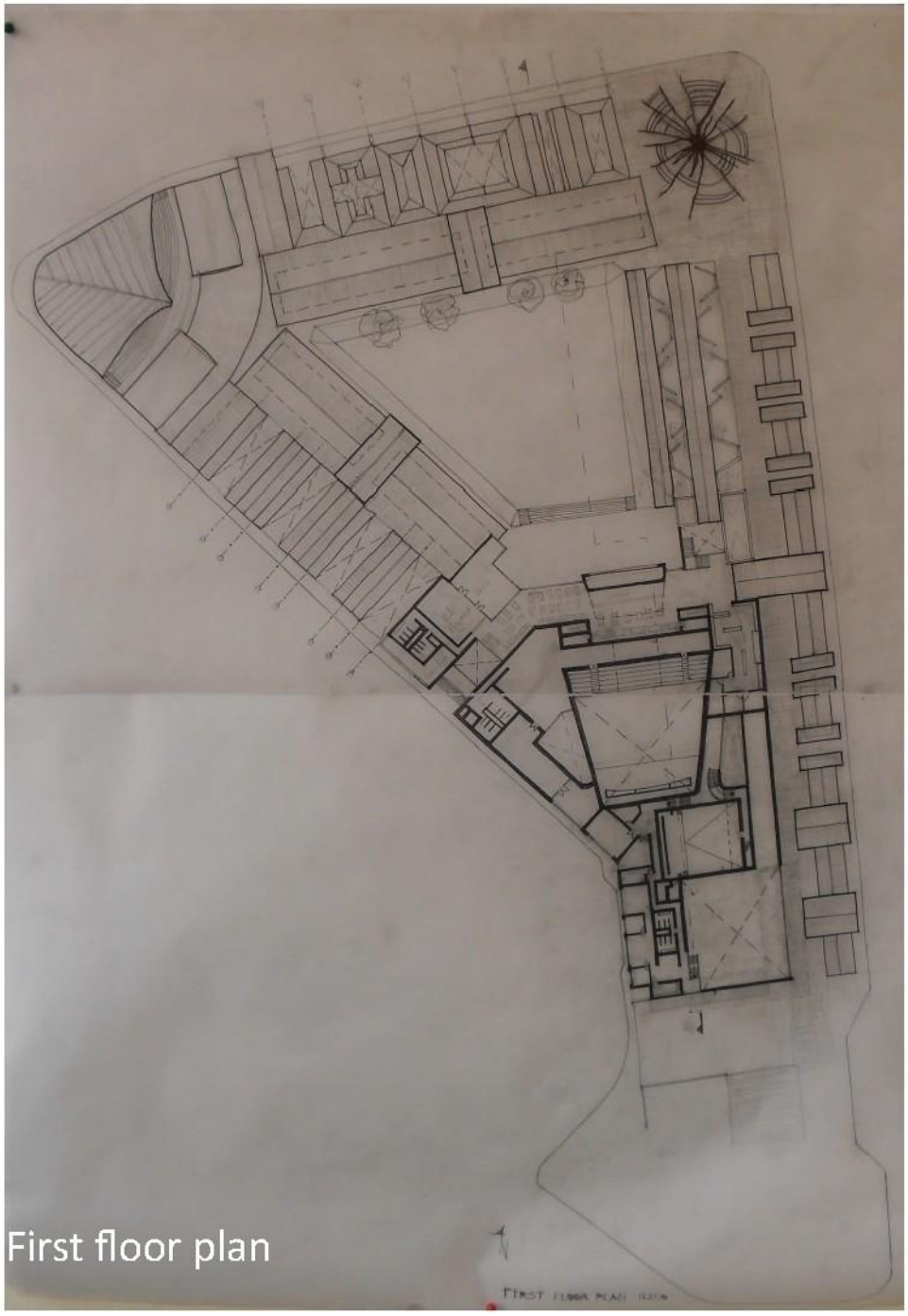




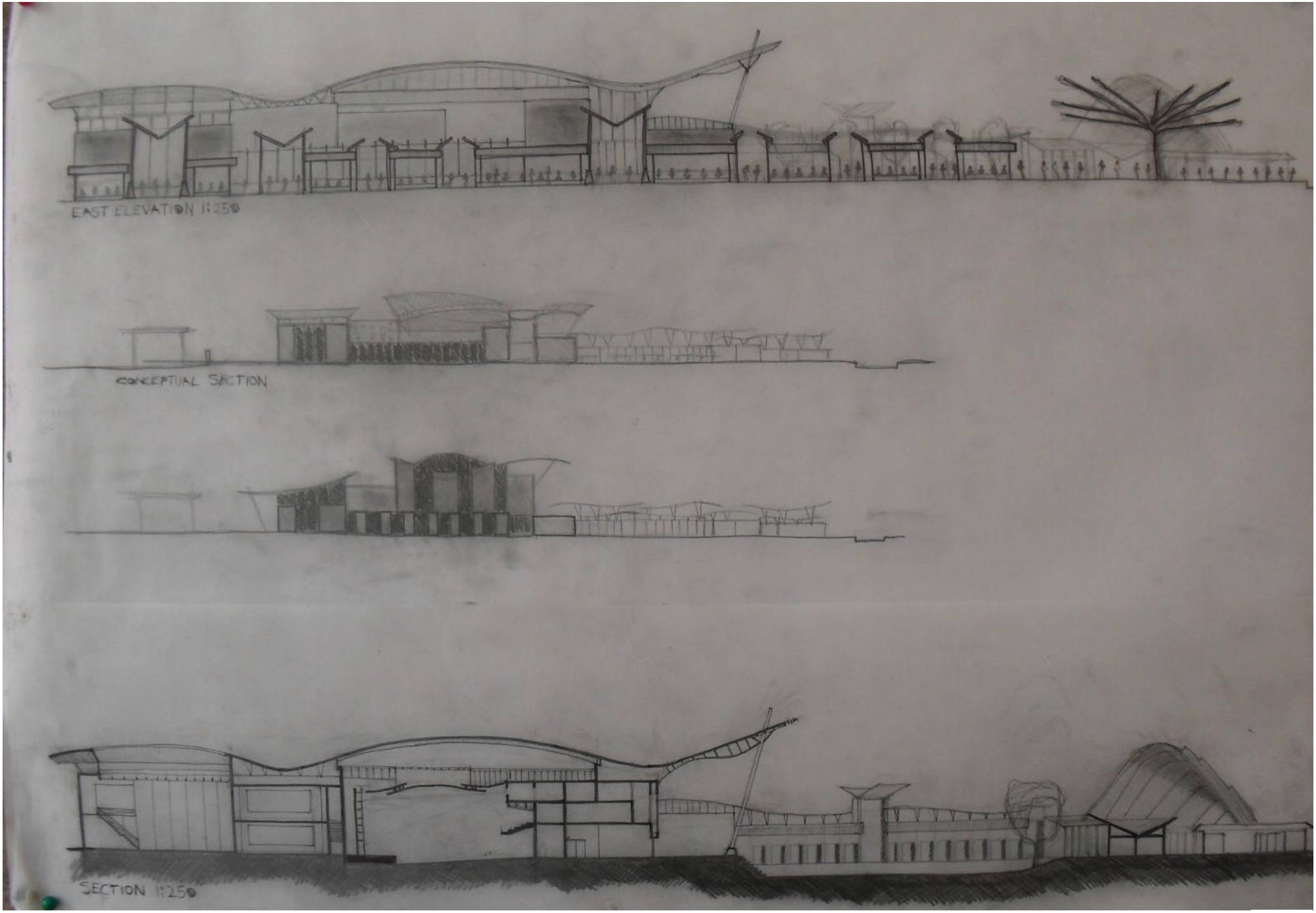




Ground floor plan



First floor plan


EAST ELEVATION 1:250
CONCEPTUAL SECTION
SECTION 1:250

Model





Re-thinking the design

The previous designs were too literally translated. I then decided to re-think the design and develop a building which followed a sort of program. This would deal with the edge better than having empty yards on the edge of the site. I decided to develop a building which could offer economic opportunities. Therefore the edge will consist of retail shops and offices. The edge also includes some recreational facilities. The design attempts to take the typology of the Jarata and draw out the essence of the yard and developing the space around a sealed urban fabric.



Conceptual sketch

Revised program

The program is split into three elements:
1. The edge
2. The central space
3. The Eyethu Cinema

The Edge:

Ground floor:
1. Retail

First floor:
1. Oficces
2. Recreational facilities
   - Library
   - Post-production facilities
   - Dance and theatre studio

The central space: (loose space/festive space)

1. Braai spaces
3. Open-air cinema/ multi- functional space

The Eyethu Cinema

Ground floor:
1. Foyer/exhibition space
2. Ticketing area
3. Restaurants
4. Toilets
5. Main Auditorium
6. Backstage

1. Gallery seating area

Third floor:

1. Control room

2. Management offices

The Exterior space

The formal and informal trading space and office spaces are located on the edges of the site thus forming a commercial edge around the site which interfaces with the street edge. The office spaces and workshop spaces sit above the trading spaces. Some of the uses of the trading spaces include a salon, fast food restaurant, shisanyama, a small supermarket store and an internet café among other uses. The office spaces are to let to anyone needing office space. The street space is also considered as part of the space of the building as the commercial use activates the street edge. The street can be used for a variety of uses as intended by the residents. It can be a space to host events such as weddings and funerals or it can be a play area for street soccer. The street space is also a live theatre space. The open-air cinema is boarded by the commercial edge. This space opens up itself to a number of possible uses of which the users construct themselves according to their social needs and patterns. At one time this space can be used as an event space, a celebration space, an open-air cinema, a playground or just a space to socialize. This space is for those spontaneous shock events that appear and disappear or move around.

The two corners of the site form the main entrances to the site. On the eastern side of the site there is an entrance square and on the western site sits a mound which covers the length of western side.

The Interior space

The main cinema auditorium is another form of a jarata. The cinema speaks to the idea of the cinema experience. It explores how cinema can be experienced in a way that is unique to its context. The cinema has three main functions. It functions as a cinema, a theatre and a concert hall. Other uses include a conference venue for an indaba. Events that will take place which are popular in the context of Soweto are choir events, which used to take place when the cinema was still in operation.

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THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE EVENT



CENTRAL SPACE AS A CELEBRATION SPACE FOR A WEDDING



CENTRAL SPACE TRANSFORMS INTO A SPACE FOR MUSIC FESTIVALS

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AT NIGHT THE SPACE BECOMES AN OPEN-AIR CINEMA

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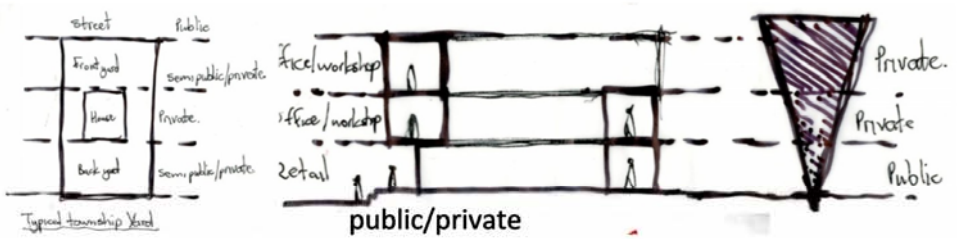
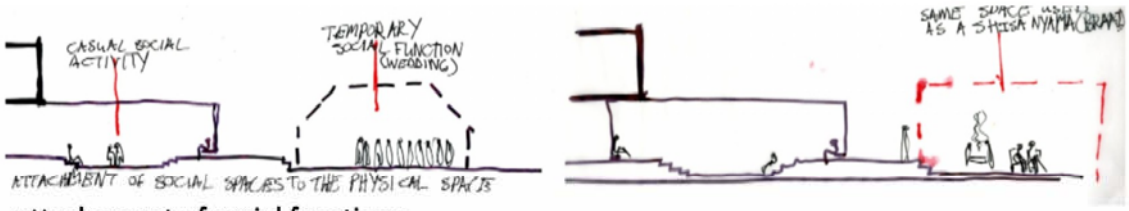
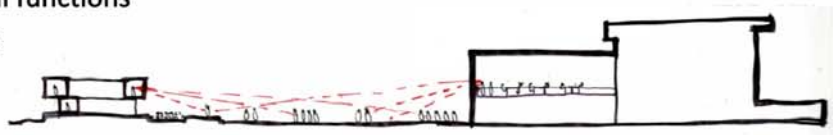
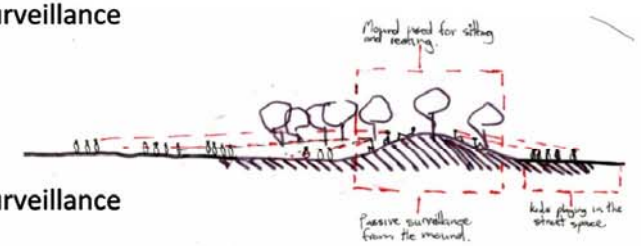


public/private

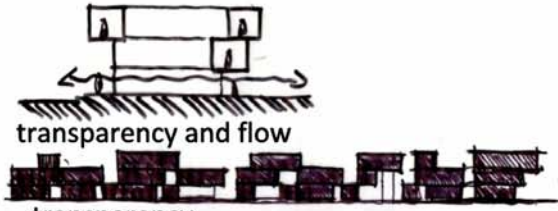


attachement of social functions
to the physical space

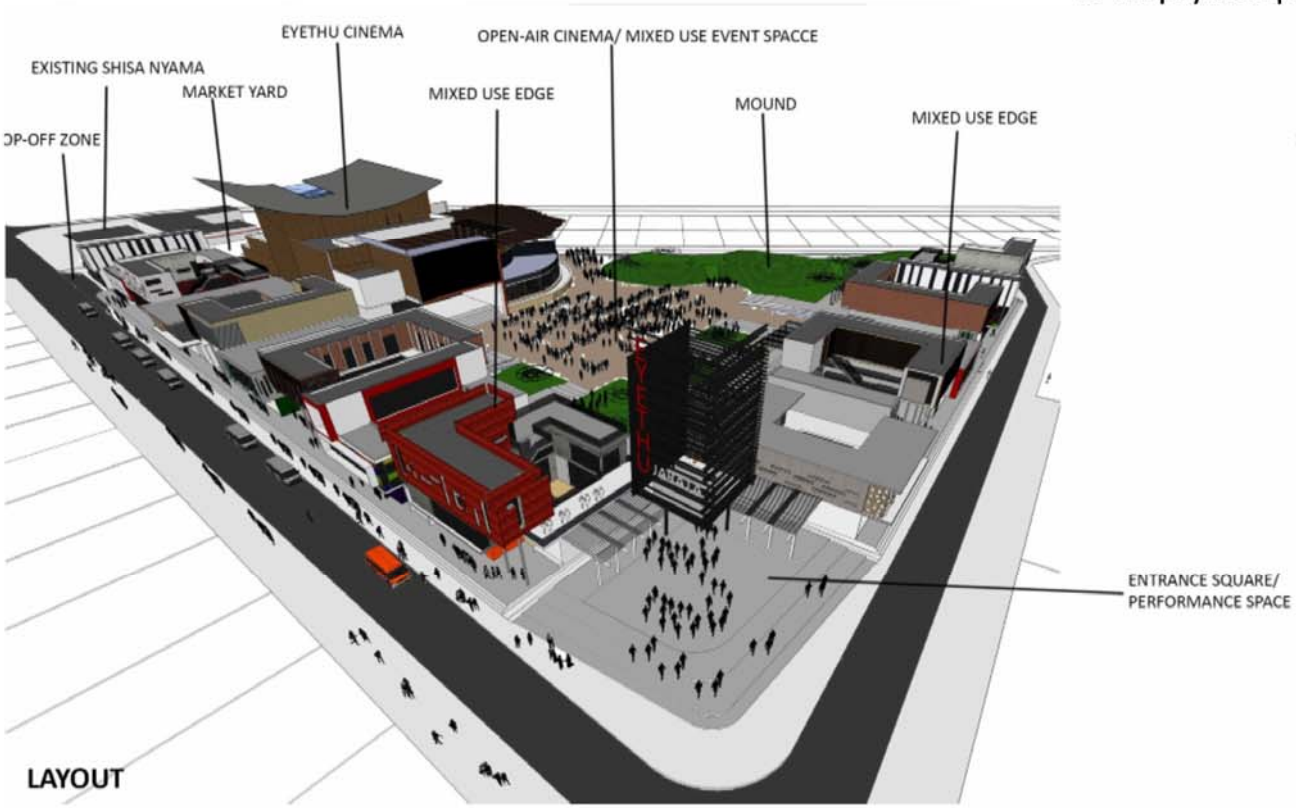

passive surveillance



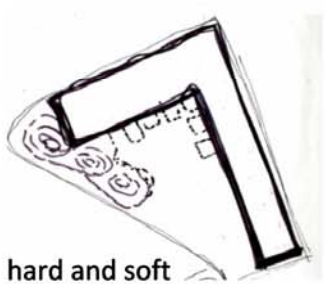
passive surveillance

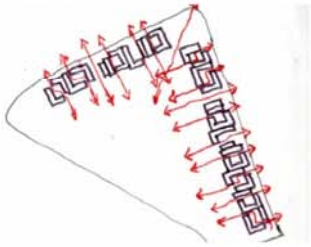

transparency and flow
transparency

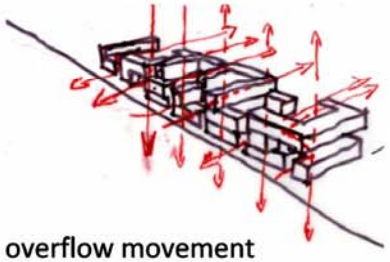

threshold

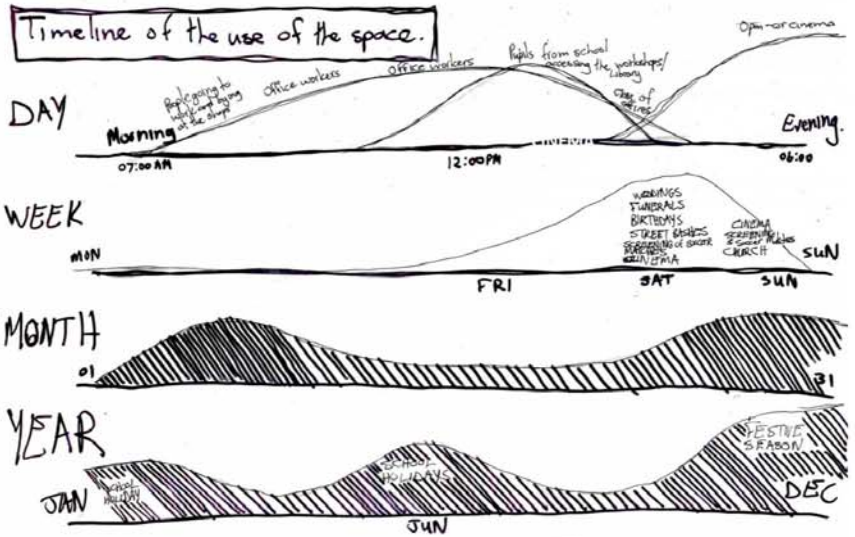


LAYOUT


hard and soft




overflow movement





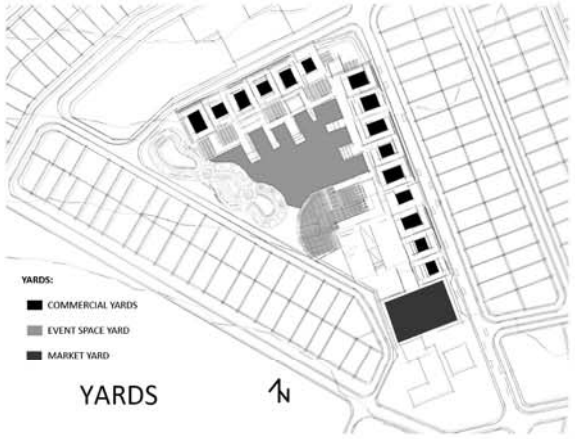
IDENTITY



TRAFFIC



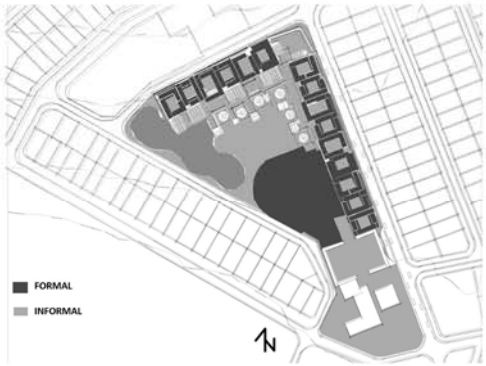
LAND USE



YARDS



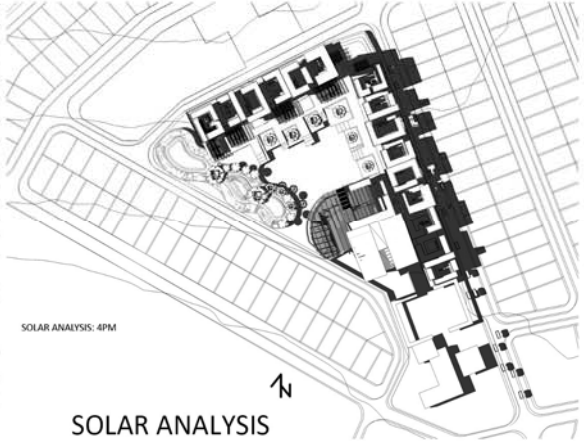
GREEN SPACES



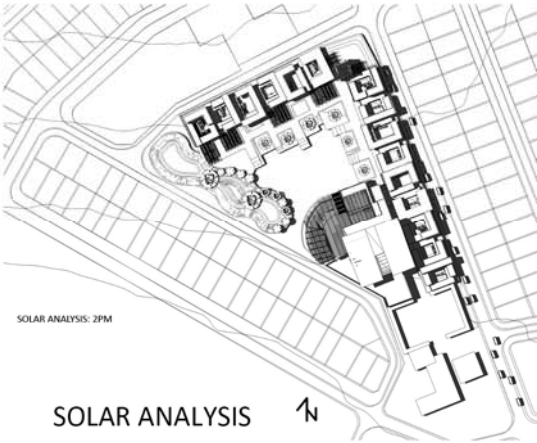
FORMAL/INFORMAL



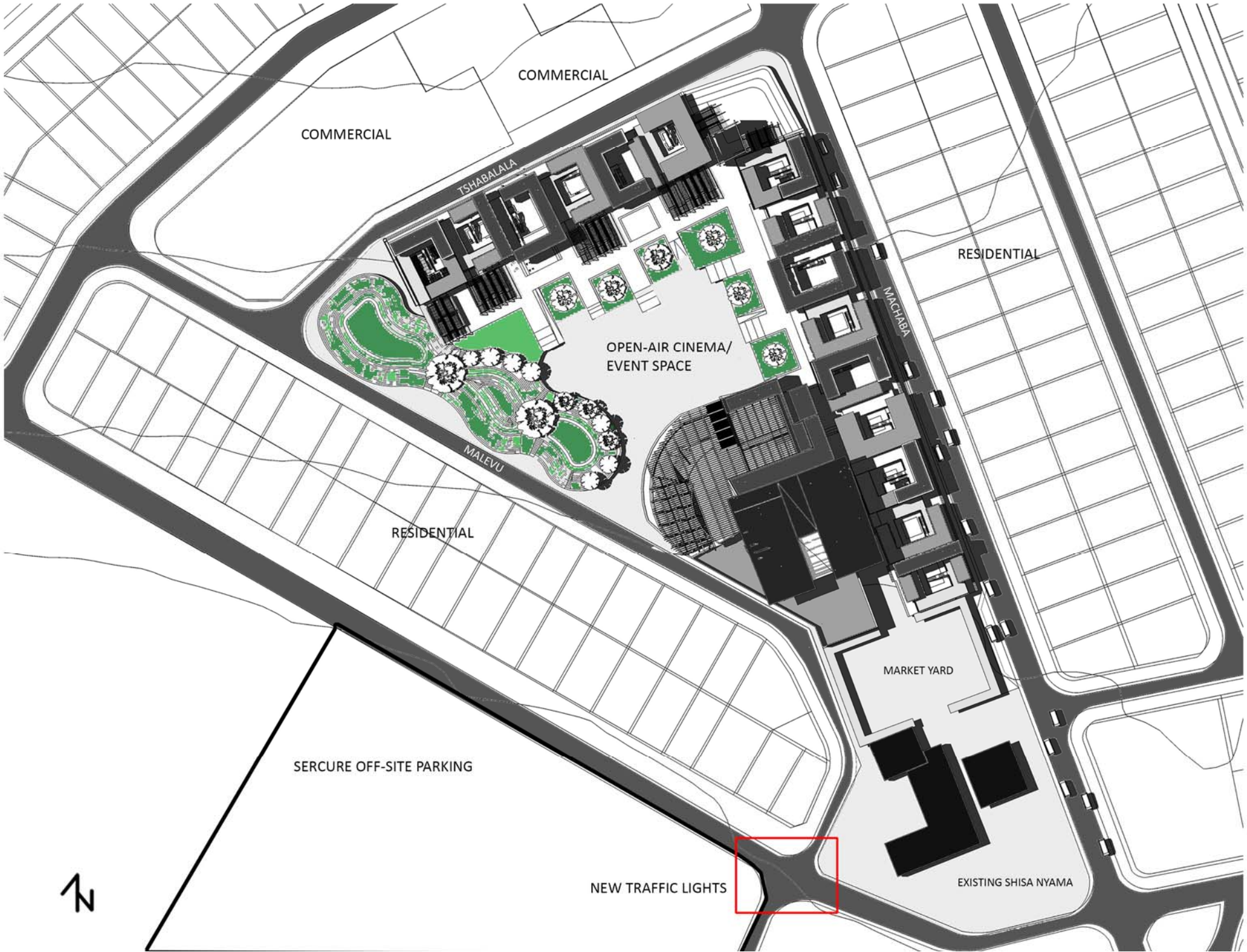
MOVEMENT



SOLAR ANALYSIS



SOLAR ANALYSIS


COMMERCIAL
COMMERCIAL
TSHABALALA
RESIDENTIAL
MACHABA
OPEN-AIR CINEMA/
EVENT SPACE
MALEVU
RESIDENTIAL
MARKET YARD
SERCURE OFF-SITE PARKING
NEW TRAFFIC LIGHTS
EXISTING SHISA NYAMA
N

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Ground floor plan



PROGRAM

COMMERCIAL USE (STREET EDGE):
- HAIR SALONS
- DRY CLEANERS
- INTERNET CAFE`S
- TAKEAWAY RESTUARANTS
- CLOTHING SHOPS ETC.

CENTRAL YARD (LOOSE SPACE):
- OPEN-AIR CINEMA
- OUTDOOR EXHIBITIONS
- CEREMONIAL SPACE
- MUSIC FESTIVAL
- OUTDOOR LIVING

EYETHU CINEMA:
1. FOYER
2. RESTUARANT
3. TICKETING AREA

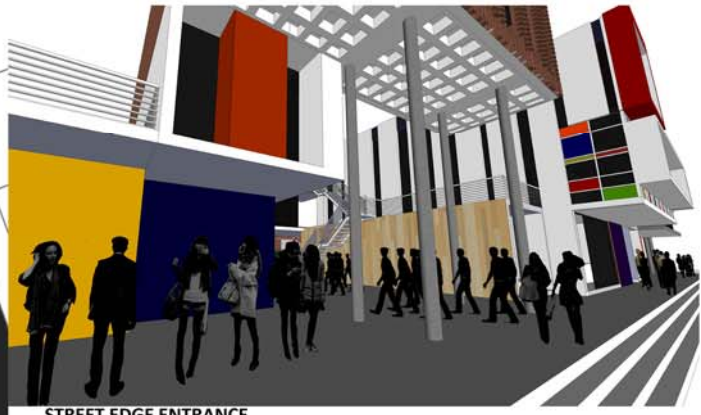
4. CINEMA AUDITORIUM
   - MOVIE SCREENINGS
   - THEATRE PERFOMANCES
   - MUSICAL PERFOMANCES
   - CONFERENCES ETC
5. BACKSTAGE
6. DELIVERY YARD

N

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



ENTRANCE SQUARE

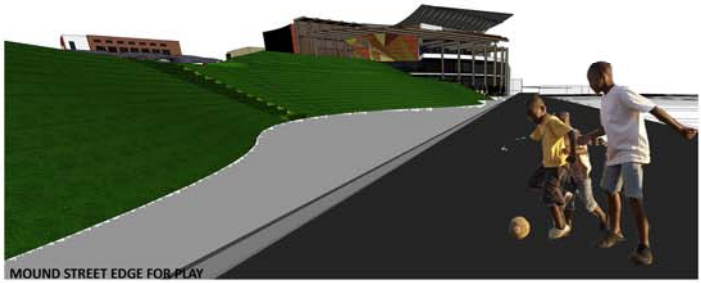


STREET EDGE ENTRANCE





CENTRAL LOOSE SPACE



MOUND STREET EDGE FOR PLAY

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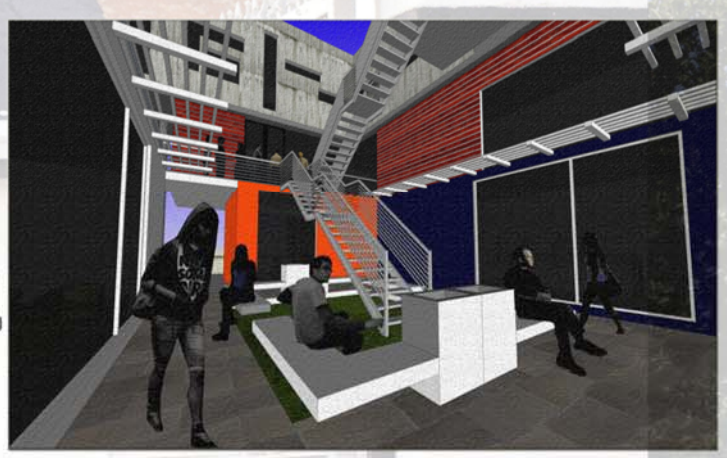
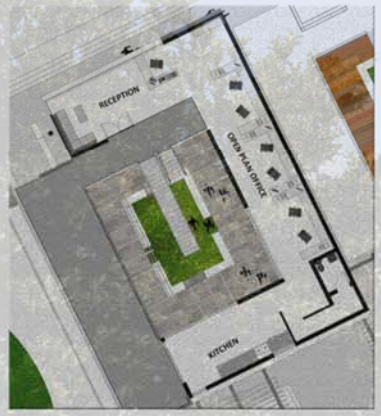
commercial/recreational edge



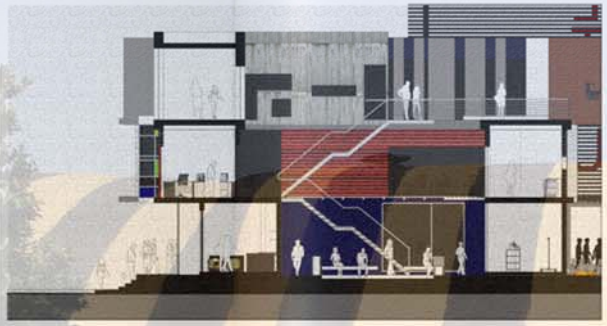
RETAIL AND OFFICE



COMMERCIAL YARD SPACE



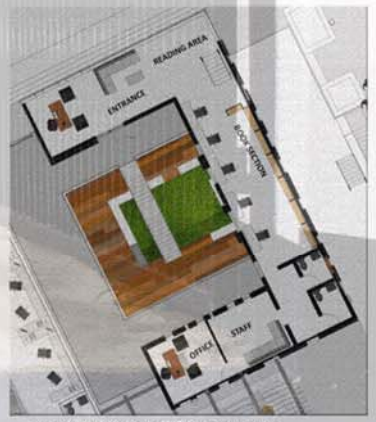
OFFICE LAYOUT, FIRST FLOOR LEVEL



SECTION



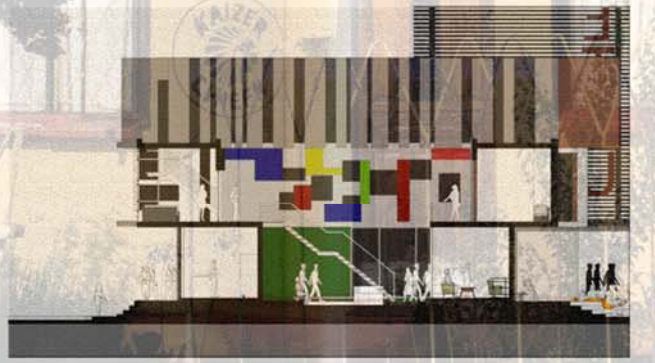
REATAIL AND LIBRARY



LIBRARY LAYOUT, FIRST FLOOR LEVEL



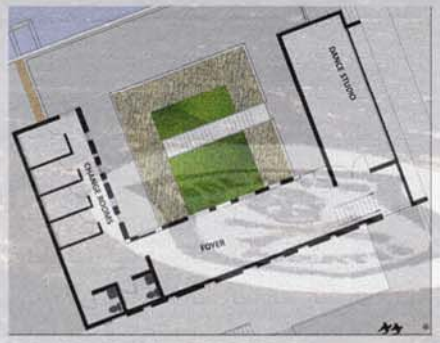
LIBRARY LAYOUT, SECOND FLOOR LEVEL



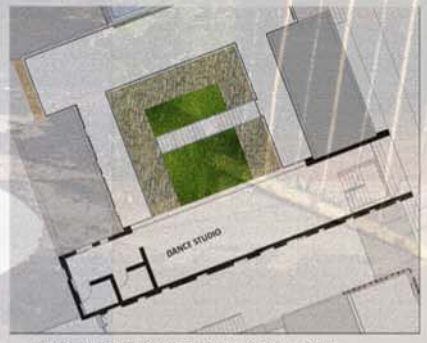
SECTION



RETAIL AND DANCE STUDIO



DANCE STUDIO LAYOUT, FIRST FLOOR LEVEL



DANCE STUDIO LAYOUT, SECOND FLOOR LEVEL



SECTION

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EAST ELEVATION



SECTION D-D

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SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B



SECTION C-C

ATTACHMENT OF A WEDDING CELEBRATION



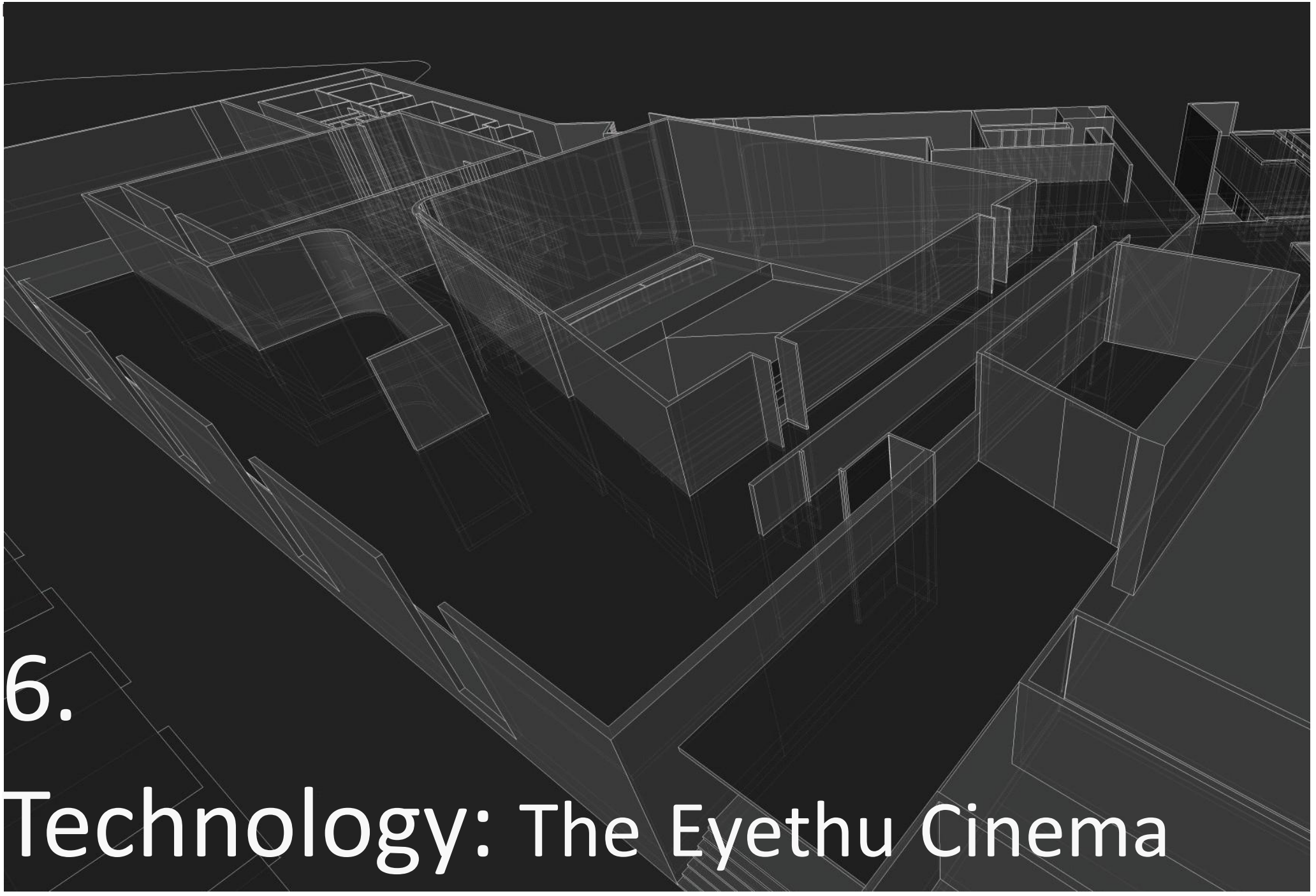
SECTION C-C

ATTACHMENT OF A SHISA NYAMA (BRAAI)

Model







6.

Technology: The Eyethu Cinema

For my technology aspect I chose to renovate and revive the existing Eyethu cinema. The aim is to take the building and open it up in the front entrance and to celebrate the entrance. I would also like to play with the roof of the main auditorium and to develop a roof which has good acoustic insulating properties.

Key areas.

- The entrance foyer
- The roof of the auditorium



(Author's own)



(Author's own)

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EXISTING CINEMA EXTERIOR



EXISTING ENTRANCE



EXISTING FOYER



EXISTING CINEMA AUDITORIUM



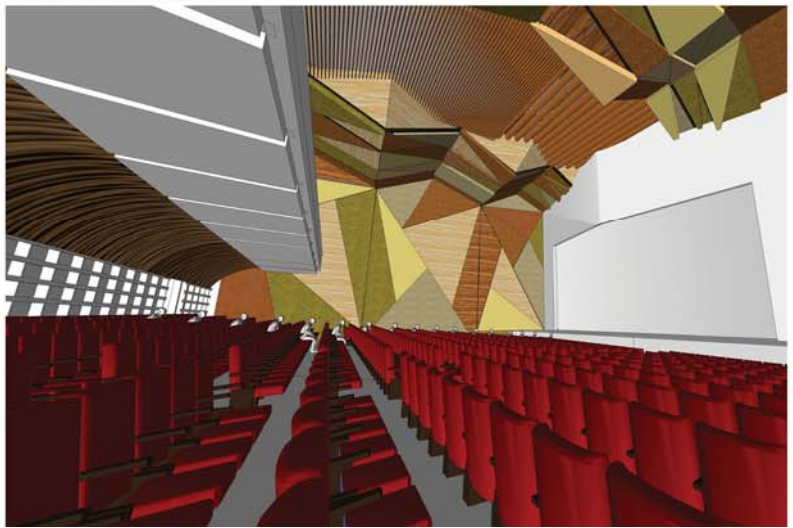
NEW CINEMA EXTERIOR



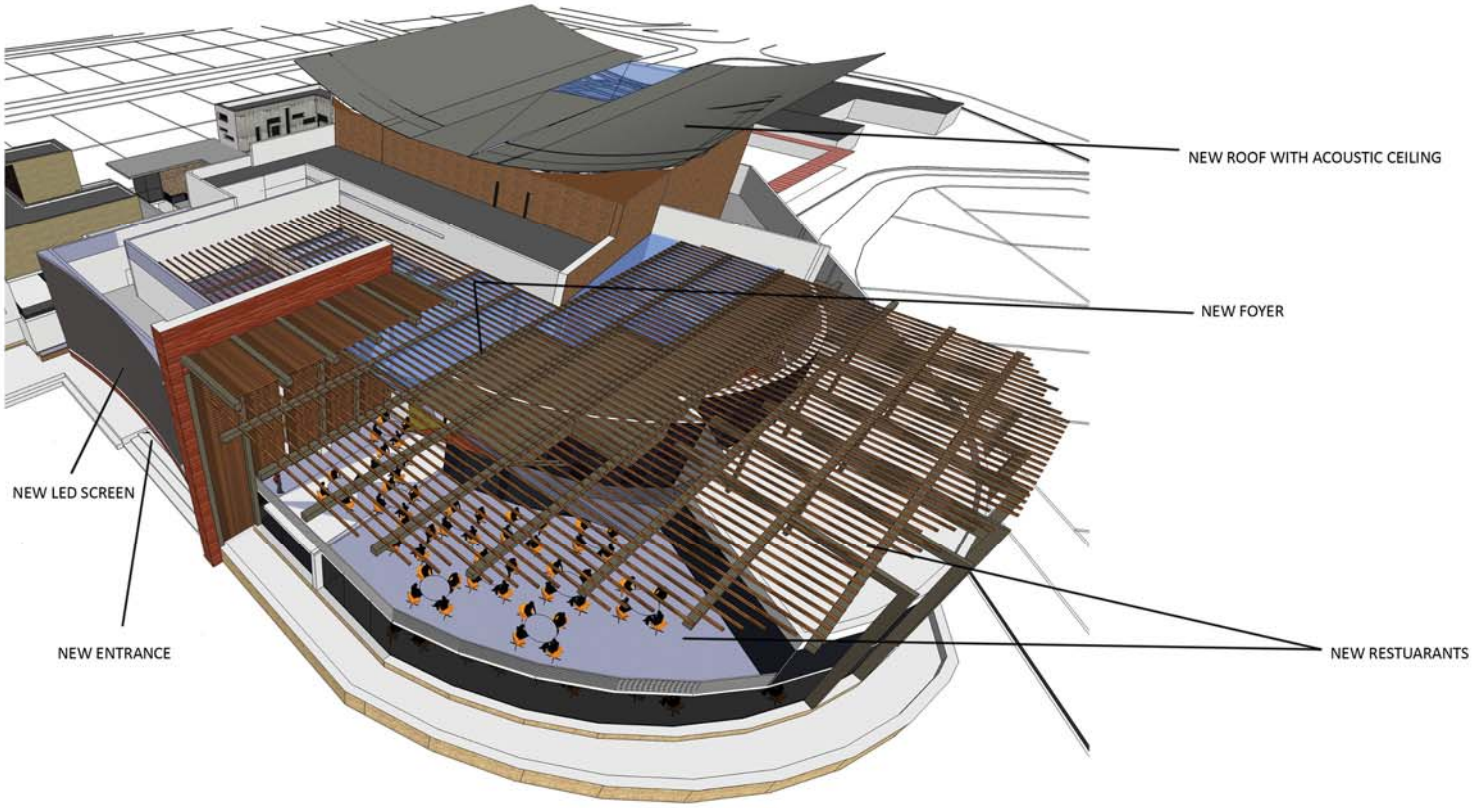
NEW ENTRANCE

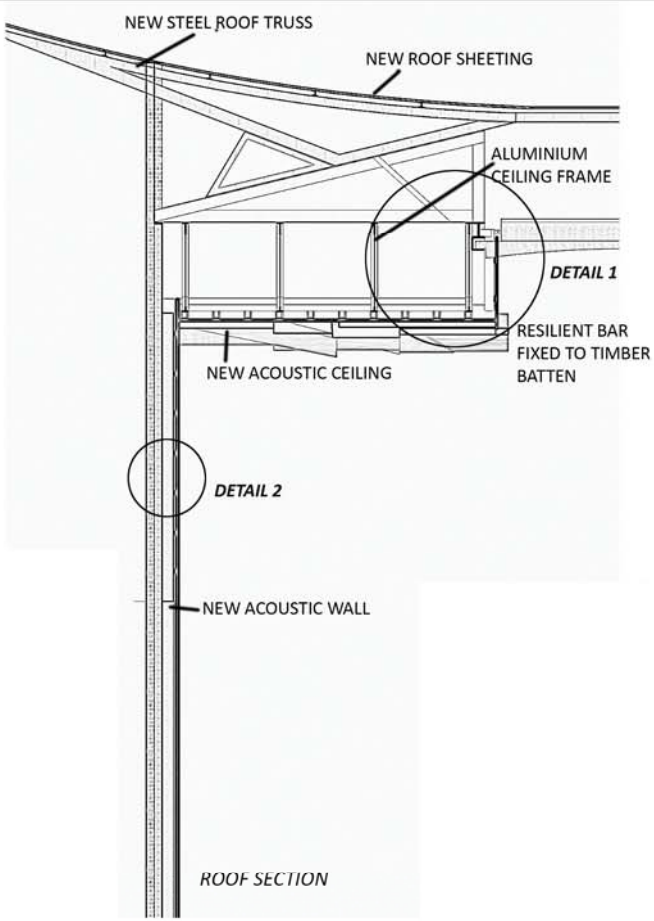


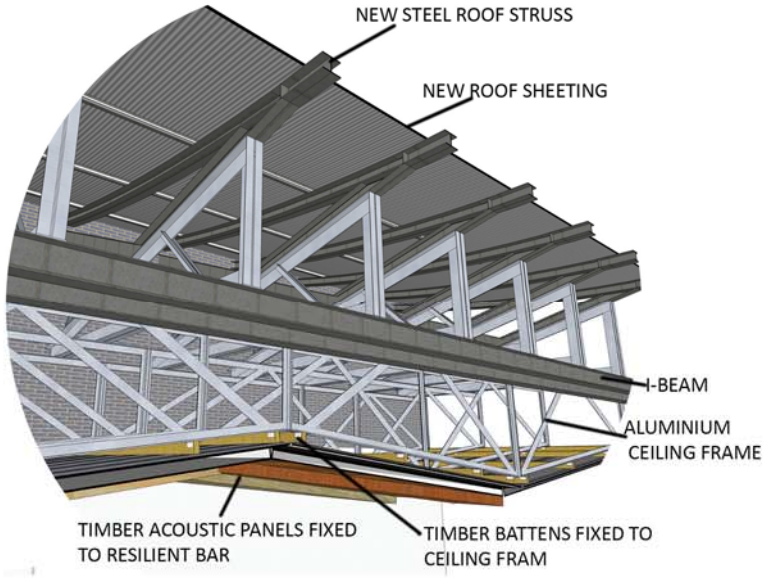
NEW FOYER

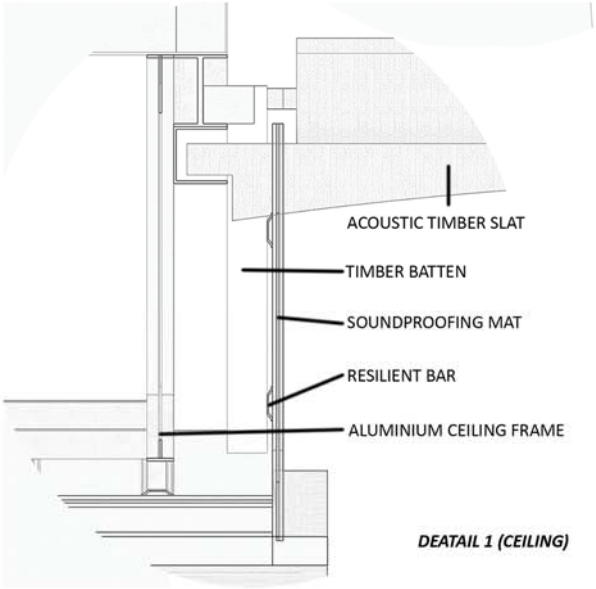


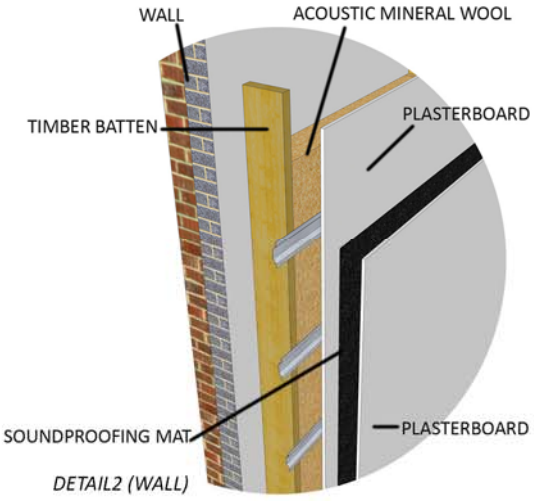
NEW CINEMA AUDITORIUM


NEW ROOF WITH ACOUSTIC CEILING
NEW FOYER
NEW LED SCREEN
NEW ENTRANCE
NEW RESTUARANTS


NEW STEEL ROOF TRUSS
NEW ROOF SHEETING
ALUMINIUM CEILING FRAME
DETAIL 1
RESILIENT BAR FIXED TO TIMBER BATTEN
NEW ACOUSTIC CEILING
DETAIL 2
NEW ACOUSTIC WALL
ROOF SECTION


NEW STEEL ROOF STRUSS
NEW ROOF SHEETING
I-BEAM
ALUMINIUM CEILING FRAME
TIMBER ACOUSTIC PANELS FIXED TO RESILIENT BAR
TIMBER BATTENS FIXED TO CEILING FRAM


ACOUSTIC TIMBER SLAT
TIMBER BATTEN
SOUNDPROOFING MAT
RESILIENT BAR
ALUMINIUM CEILING FRAME
DEATAIL 1 (CEILING)


WALL
ACOUSTIC MINERAL WOOL
TIMBER BATTEN
PLASTERBOARD
SOUNDPROOFING MAT
PLASTERBOARD
DETAIL2 (WALL)

Conclusion

The concept of the yard is not unique to South Africa. In fact one can find the concept of the yard in many other countries around the world and in many cultures. Although this concept may be found in other countries, how this concept is practiced in each place depends on the traditions and cultures which are practiced in different regions or countries. Certainly the yard is unique to township area in South Africa. The way in which the yard is perceived in the township areas is different to the suburbs. In the township areas the yard is an important social connector whereas in the suburbs the yard marks what is private and public in terms of space and ownership. The other reason for the way the yard is used in the township has to do with the socio-economic conditions in the township areas. Most of these areas are under developed where poverty still has its affect. Therefore the residents of township areas had to borrow and share with one another in order to survive. In some township areas where the residents have come out of poverty, the spirit of sharing has still been maintained. Another reason which makes the concept of the yard unique to the township areas is the mixing of different indigenous cultures which created a unique Soweto culture which moves from the yard to the street through to the community as a whole. The yard can best be described as a combination of inter-dependant spaces both physical and social; the yard, the street, the community space and most importantly social spaces.

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