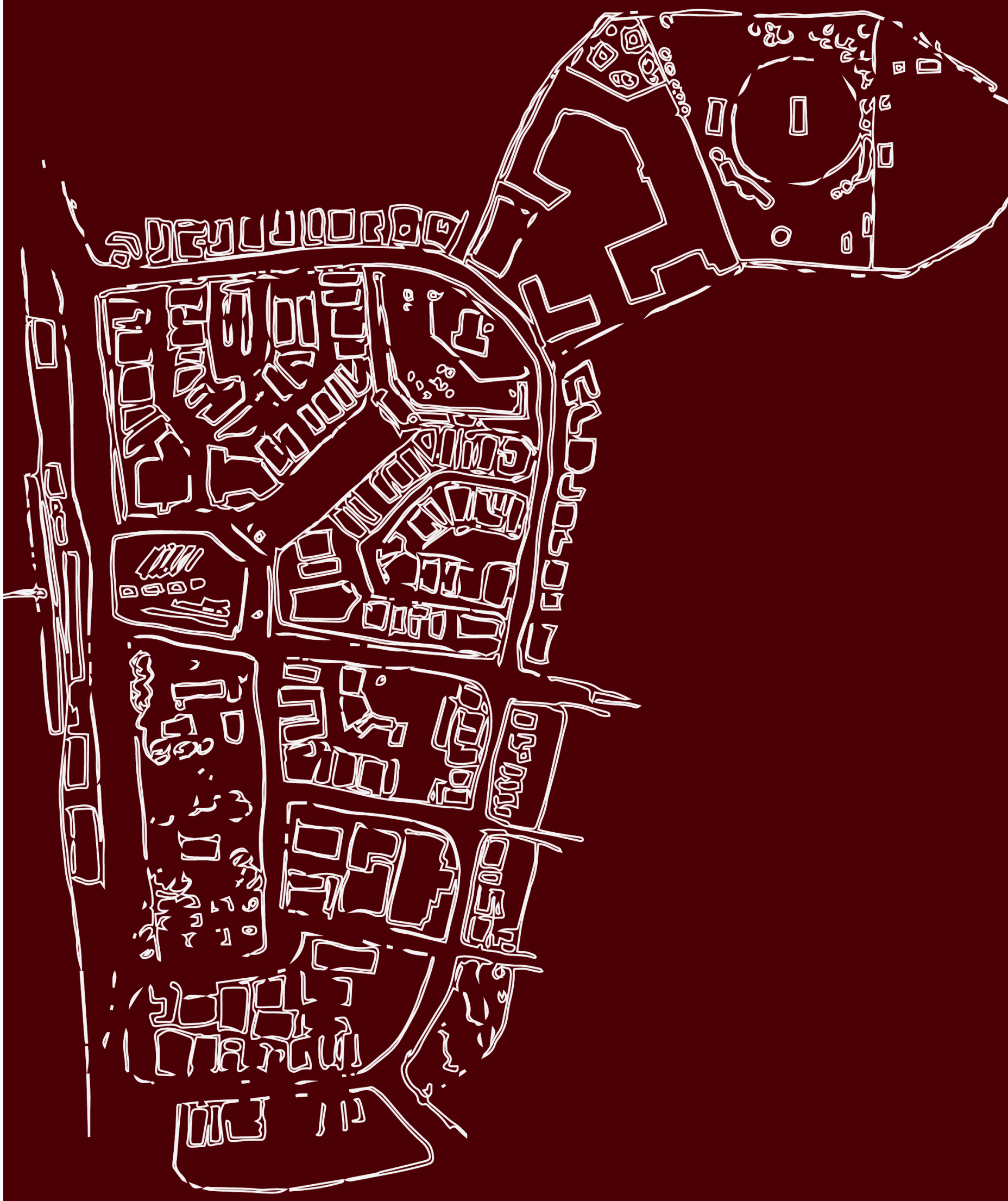
LOOKING THROUGH THE ACTIVATION LENS

Exploring urban renewal in Lenasia through an activism centre.



School of Architecture and Planning
University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa

Date: 14/03/2024

Name - Mariam
Surname - Bawa
Student Number - 1610998

Supervisor: Liale Francis

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Student Number - 1610998

Supervisor: Liale Francis

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Architecture (Professional).

Declaration

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Abstract

South Africa's history of trauma has created traumatic spaces. As we search for a post-apartheid identity, South Africa finds itself in a healing place. This research project looks at addressing traumas of the past while understanding the healing of the present. Lenasia has undergone traumas of segregation and forced removals of diasporic groups.

What is trauma? How does it affect people and places? Life comes with a lot of challenges, some greater than others. Exposure to events beyond our everyday human experience can create trauma within us. It is beyond human experience to have one's home bulldozed and torn down by an oppressive government. Being segregated is not an ordinary human experience. Being dislocated from a community, jobs, and so much more are all traits that cause trauma. All of these factors have deeply affected communities in South Africa, especially those that are marginalised. Poverty, inequality, healthcare, unemployment, racism, and childcare create layers of extraordinary experiences resulting in trauma. The increase in unemployment and decay of government-provided amenities continue to affect us today.

My thesis addresses these traumas through understanding the history of Lenasia and activism around the apartheid system. It also addresses urban decay using urban theory, phenomenology, placemaking, identity, and activism theories of change. The research will lead to an architectural intervention that addresses trauma and provides a platform for people to voice their stories. The intervention will take the form of a Youth Activist Centre that enriches the community by mobilising youth to participate in the community while allowing for a space of leisure.

Dedications

A tribute to the brave people who fought for our freedom and to the dedicated individuals who spend each day working to improve our country.

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my gratitude to:

My family, especially my parents, who were always there to assist with model-making,

My supervisor, Liale, whose critiques and feed were always insightful and thought-provoking, and a big thanks to Ariane for the guidance.

And to all the people who have assisted me with information for my research.

Preface

Growing up in Lenasia, I always felt dislocated from the rest of Johannesburg. It seemed as if I were living in a bubble. I wanted out!

Studying architecture and having the opportunity to map Newtown and Roodepoort for Lemon Pebble created a shift in my mentality towards Lenasia. One day, when my mother and I walked to the craft store, we decided to go through Lenasia Square instead of walking along Gemsbok. A building caught my attention and made me realise there was a moment of opportunity for resilience. It was the first time I saw the CBD through the lens of an architect.

After I graduated from undergrad, I was determined to make a change in my home town. My friend Sumaiya and I joined forces and mapped parts of Extension 2, as we both live in Extension 2, and walked around the CBD as well.

That year, we looked at making micro-improvements. We had the opportunity to host a placemaking workshop with learners from Greyville Primary School (the primary school I attended).

We also began art classes, which resulted in a series of exhibitions that we had in hopes of broadening the art community within Lenasia. We exhibited the work of local artists and, most importantly, our students.

Teaching art has made me realise how much potential the youth of Lenasia have. All they need is encouragement and a platform to express their voices. The thesis project addresses this through a Youth Activist Centre.

This project revolves around shifting the narratives of marginalised communities to something that allows us to heal from past traumas. As well as to be proud of what we have developed from a township that people were forced to once live in.

A story of a quilt

The image of the quilt below tells the story of the changes my home went through over time. It began with a ‘Greyville House’ purchased by my grandfather in the 1960s for R1300. Last year, we had a project for history around narrative. The quilt my grandmother made for me when I was a baby served as my inspiration. Documenting the changes in our house was my way of archiving memories in a creative and tangible way. I am showing this quilt as it tells the tale of my family’s relationship with Lenasia. It all started with this house. It also becomes an interesting way to archive, in which all types of workshops can be held by the Activist Centre relating to making archives.

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Glossary

Activism - lies on a very broad spectrum; it may speak to a specific context, it may be a global issue, and it can revolve around cultural, social and political aspects.

Apartheid - Apartheid is a system that segregates people according to racial classifications.

Black Consciousness - Is an Anti apartheid movement that promoted equality.

Diaspora - dispersion of people away from their homeland.

Dustbowl - A term people associated with Lenasia as there were no roads paving infrastructure at the time.

Extension - subdivided area within a suburb or town

Gentrification - The process of regeneration of poorer areas within an area that creates increases in the cost of living that existing residents may not be able to afford. This leads to displacement of those residents who can no longer afford to live there.

Greyville House - Matchbox style two room house present in area known as Greyville within Lenasia extension two.

Lenasian - A person who lives in Lenasia

Lenz - Nickname for Lenasia

Madressah - school for learning about Islam

Marginalised - Groups of people treated dfferently due to race, gender, and more.

Phenomenology - is the philosophical study of the structures of consciousness from a first-person perspective. In architecture and design, phenomenology is the study and exploration of the physical experience of buildings, building materials, and their sensory properties. (Future, 2019)

Superblock - urban design strategy that allows for amenities to be central within a 400-metre radius

Urban Renewal/Regeneration - Redeveloping areas that are in decay.

List of Acronyms

ANC - African National Congress
BRT - Bus Rapid Transit
CBD - Central Business District
COSAS - Congress of South African Students
FRA- Federation of Residents
IDP - Integrated Development
JDA - Johannesburg Development Agency
JRA - Johannesburg Road Agency
LBD - Lenasia Business District
LESCO - Lenasia Students Congress
LYL - Lenasia Youth League
PTL - Progressive Teachers League
SAIC - South African Indian Council
SDF - Spatial Development Plan
SRC - Student Representative Council
SAYCO - South African Youth Congress
TIC - Traansvaal Indian Congress
UDF - United Democratic Front

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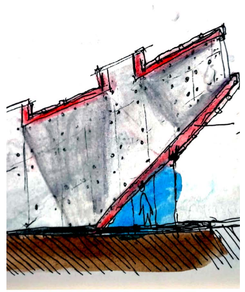

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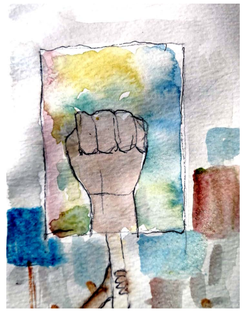

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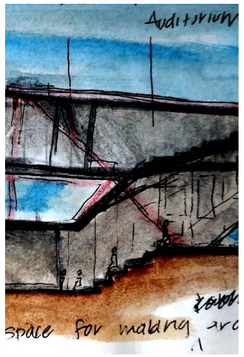

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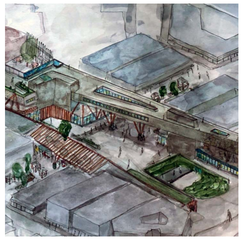

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Introduction

Johannesburg, the city of gold! A city that was once seen as a land of opportunity due to its natural resource of precious metal. The trauma and segregation built upon the extraction of gold, the exploitation of marginalised groups, and the damage to the landscape contribute to the suffering and trauma of many people of colour. Johannesburg is a fragmented city for several reasons.

An oppressive government (the apartheid government) imposed segregation through mine dumps (the result of the extraction of gold), hierarchy within the landscapes, and distance. The highlighting and grouping through blanket racial classifications in the past is another driver of the fragmentation of the city. (Group Areas Act, Act No. 41 of 1950–1991) The city is broken up into regions, which get further broken down into wards, adding to the layers of fragmentation and segregation in Jo'burg. The regions comprising previously marginalised groups tend to be dislocated from the city through distance and physical barriers, such as mine dumps. The history of these marginalised spaces speaks of forced removal and diaspora.

Region G consists of several wards in which townships were erected for people of colour as per the Group Areas Act. (Group Areas Act, Act No. 41 of 1950–1991) Lenasia is one of those wards that is part of the broader area. While the government was allocating areas for people grouped under racial classifications, people grouped as 'Indians' were the last to be placed. The Indian associations representing the communities fought against being assigned, and the initial area for 'Indians' was to be where Robertsham currently resides. (Interview,2023) However, disagreements and talk of sending 'Indians' back to India led to their finally settling in Lenasia. The name Lenasia (Lenz-Asia) combines the name of the previous owner of the land, Captain Lenz, and the people who were grouped as Asian. Most residents refer to Lenasia as Lenz or Lens to shorten the name and link it to the origin of the first half.

Looking through the activation lens is about unravelling and understanding the workings of Lenasia through the lens of activation. Since most locals refer to Lenasia as Lenz, there is also a pun on the word lens. It is also a play on the title of the second part of the Alice in Wonderland book, Through the Looking Glass. Alice travels through a world that seems more exciting than hers. She goes through a series of challenges within the realm and then wakes up to find it all a dream. Looking through the lens is perhaps about self-reflection and understanding how to get through challenges. Alice dreaming her way out of the dullness of her day may speak to Lenasian's creating goals out of the dreams they have for Lenasia to start the healing process.

The township developed into 13 extensions with a central business district (CBD). The lifting of the Group Areas Act in 1991 caused several people to move out of Lenasia, causing an influx of immigrants to move in. For an extended period, there has been neglect within the CBD, as many landlords do not even live in Lenasia and renters do not show any respect or care for the built environment, thus leading to its decay.

In recent years, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) has declared Lenasia and many other areas in Region G as priority nodes for urban development, which is to be further explored in Chapter 3. ("City of Johannesburg Land Use Scheme: Final 2018.pdf," n.d.)

The urban theory of Jane Jacob and other philosophies around placemaking and identity are examined to understand problems and successes within the existing framework.

The Lenasia CBD resulted from a series of private developments developed by several people with minimal planning around how the entire CBD works together. Most of these developments are family-owned, leaving the next generation to care for and maintain the buildings. The initial success of the CBD could have been that it began to provide amenities, shops, and the culture of recreation needed to progress as a community. The period and reliance on physically going to shops, window shopping, or

walking as a form of amusement also encouraged people to use the spaces. A deeper understanding of the political aspects was limitation for people of colour. The lack of variety in choosing where one would have liked to go and the fact that not everyone has the resources to travel out of Lenasia for recreation create a political understanding of why the CBD was seen as a success.

The problem statement of this project revolves around how spaces of trauma, segregation, and fragmentation affect an area. A secondary issue that is a product of traumatic spaces is how poor urban planning creates decay. The root of the problem concerning Lenasia and other marginalised areas in South Africa is the trauma of segregation, forced removal, and inequality. This study will look at how we may address these issues in the form of an architectural intervention and how people dealt with struggles in the past. South Africa has suffered from post-traumatic stress for such a long time. With the rise of people taking accountability, one could argue it is now in liminality. Reaching a country that has healed from its traumas and can provide for its citizens might take time. Making micro-movements that address issues within communities, developing communities one at a time, begins to address issues that contribute to larger problems within the country.

The project will begin to address the politics of space, bringing up the topic of how people responded to these regimes set by the government. The country had a cause to fight for by standing up against the apartheid government. Lenasia has a rich history of contributions to anti-apartheid activism. Thus, this research begins to explore the themes of activism within Lenasia and why there is a need for continuing activism to act as a driver for issues of the present.

The project is to develop an architectural intervention that responds to issues around ownership, pride, stigmas, and anxieties while addressing the history of Lenasia and the history of activism and politics within Lenasia. Something that may positively shape the community led to the idea of the design intervention being a youth activism centre. The intervention will consist of a space that acts as a centre of knowledge around activism. An activism centre can shift over time as issues change; addressing the issues around stagnancy within the CBD is an initial concern. It provides a platform for marginalised groups within the community to include their identities, address stigmas, and bridge divides. Designing a building that may act as a space for youth to voice their concerns and opinions may contribute to bettering the community and addressing urban stagnancy.

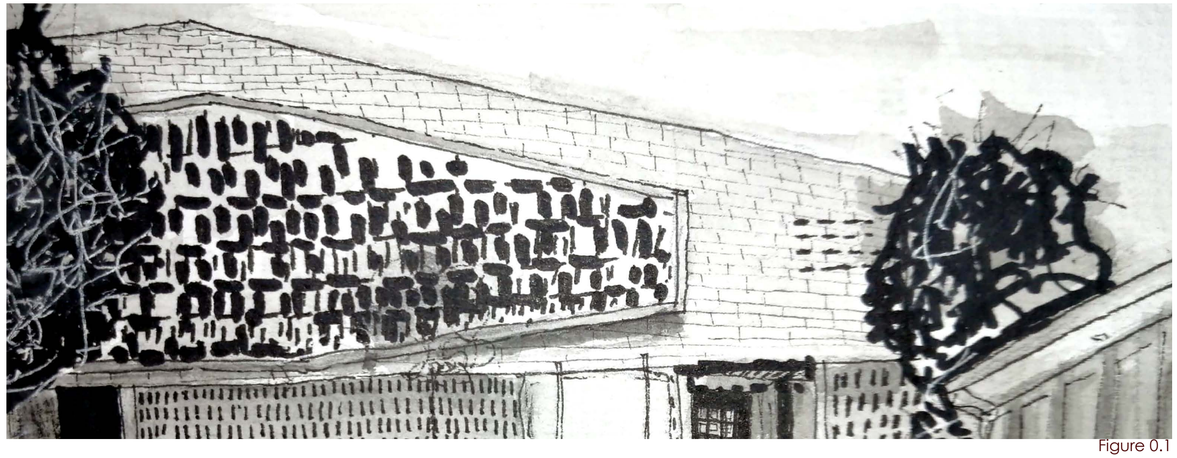


Figure 0.1
(Author)

Figure 0.2
(Author)

Methodology

As mentioned above, the problem statement of this project revolves around the politics of spaces and how trauma and poor urban planning allow for places to decay.

The project's approach is to research and create an understanding of the needs of the community through the lens of urban design and the political aspects through which the Suburb of Lenasia was formed. The outcomes, or goals, are a research-influenced architectural intervention that enables community resilience.

Creative research through design combines inductive reasoning, interpretation, and imagination linked to various themes, constraints (such as technological considerations, building sites, clients, and user groups), and precedents (urban and architectural). In discourse and design, creative research takes on an iterative (inductive-deductive), nonlinear, cumulative, cyclical, and open-ended exploration to achieve innovative outcomes. The study combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to knowledge and argumentation, while the creative component translates the same into a defensible architectural proposition. (Course outline,2023)

Methods of collecting The data will consist of desktop research by analysing existing literature in the context of Lenasia and theoretical publications that link to the project. Literature reviews of published works will be used to collect information through contextual analysis through mapping, photographing, and drawing from site observations. Additional information will be collected through semi-structured interviews with community leaders and urban, architectural, and activist experts and contextual analysis through observational mapping following ethics guidelines.

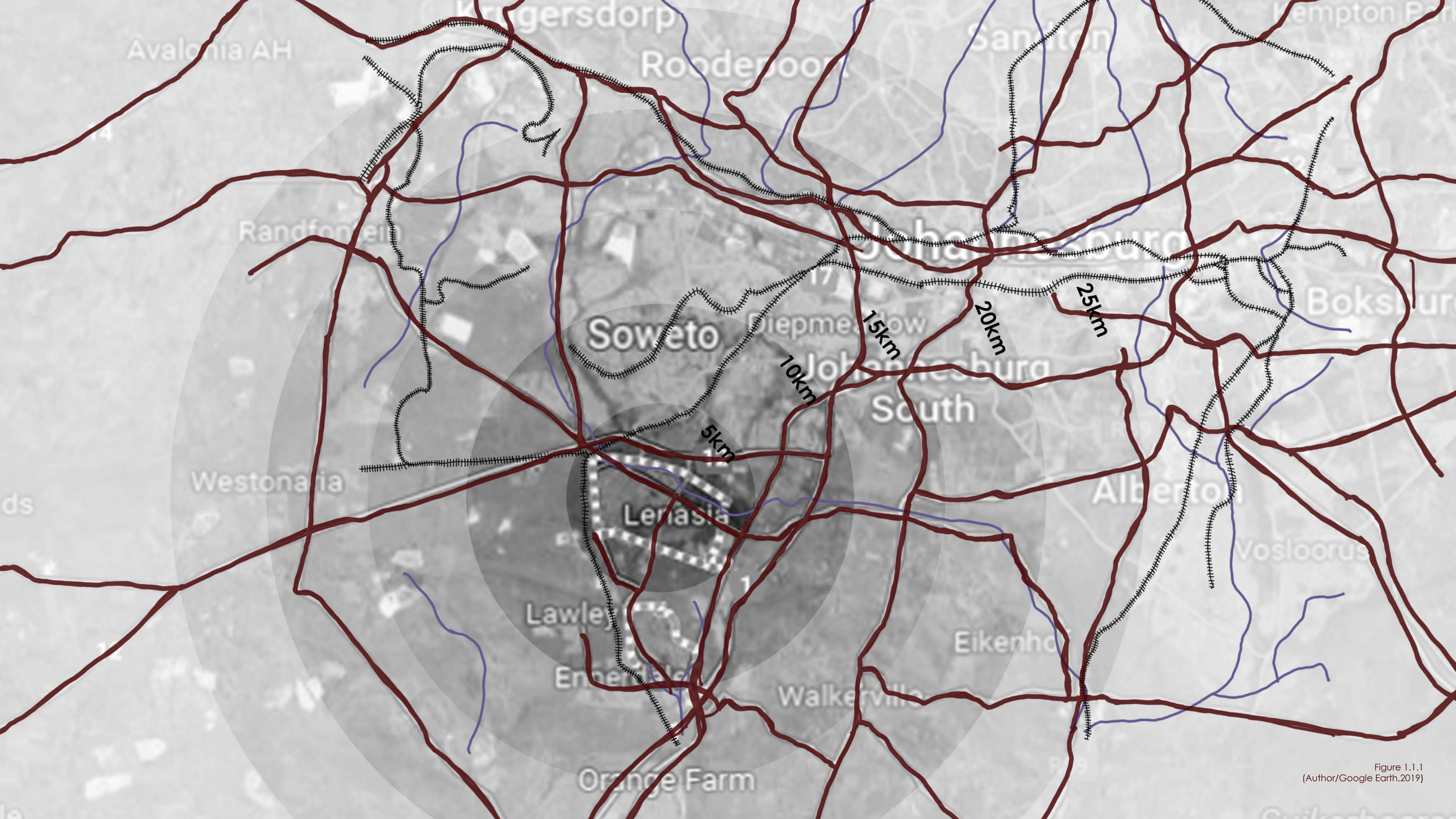


Figure 1.1.1
(Author/Google Earth,2019)

LENZ-ASIA
CHAPTER 1

1.1 Context - Locating Lenasia

Lenasia is a suburb southwest of Soweto; other surrounding areas include Ennerdale, Zakaariyah Park, Lenasia South, and Lehae. This vicinity makes up Region G, falling under the City of Johannesburg. The population is 89,917 as per the 2011 census, and there is a possibility that the population has increased since then.

It comprises multiple extensions, with a CBD falling in extensions 1 and 2, located at the west end of Lenasia. The railway line west of Lenasia lies within the Lenasia CBD, which acts as a barrier to the military base. Further south of the Lenasia CBD is Anchorville. This industrial area forms part of the suburb and links back to extension ten, which comprises residential and industrial areas. The suburb's rapid growth has allowed for mixed uses of commercial, residential, and retail to develop along the main roads. The CBD and Trade Route Mall are economic bookends on either end of Lenasia.

Figure 1.1.2
(Author/Google Earth,2019)

A timeline of the developmental history

FIRST MOVES

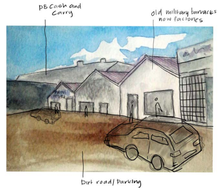


Figure 1.2.1 (Author)

EARL 1950's

Groups of people began to move into to the **military barracks** as it was affordable. (SAHO, n.d)

FIRST SCHOOL

Figure 1.2.2 (Lenz Info, n.d)

1955

Lenasia High Schools established to cater for Indians living in Fordsburg. (SAHO, n.d)

EXTENSION ONE DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1.2.3 (Author)

EARL 1950's

Portions of extension one was developed.(SAHO, n.d)

PROCLAIMING OF LENASIA

1958

Lenasia **proclaimed** as an Indian Township. (SAHO, n.d)

EXTENSION TWO DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1.2.4 (Lenasia Times, 1976)

1962

Extension two was developed around 1960-61 and residents from Fordsburg, Kliptown, and other areas began to occupy the area (SAHO, n.d)

REST OF THE EXTENSION

Figure 1.2.5 (Lenasia Times, 1976)

1970's -1990's

Massive migrations increase allowed for extensions three to six to be developed. Ranging from small affordable homes to more 'modern' bigger homes. Two more schools were developed along with nurseries and sites accomodated for industrial activity. Lenasia eventually grew to be thirteen extensions. (SAHO, n.d)

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

2000's -now

Signet Terrace strip mall was developed.

Trade Route Mall opened around 2008 and has recently developed a residential block as the need. **Mixed use** on main streets such as Rose Avenue, Flamingo and Protea are being developed rapidly. (SAHO, n.d)

1.2 The Dustbowl - The history of a dusty valley

Lenz was formed as a result of removals from Fietas and Sophiatown and the ideology of the National Party government around dedicating areas according to racial classification. (Group Areas Act, Act No. 41 of 1950–1991) . It was a place where people who were grouped as Indians were forced to live and go to school. The first moves in the 1950s consisted of people who worked in hotels and servers who sought refuge in make-shift housing units in the military barracks as it was the only area with affordable rent. The actual location of Lenasia began to develop after land owned by Captain Lenz was sold to the government for housing developments. The development of Extension One alongside swamps and wetlands began. Extension One was one of the first areas where people moved from Fietas and Fordsburg. Land within the area was granted to several large families, on which they built homes. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

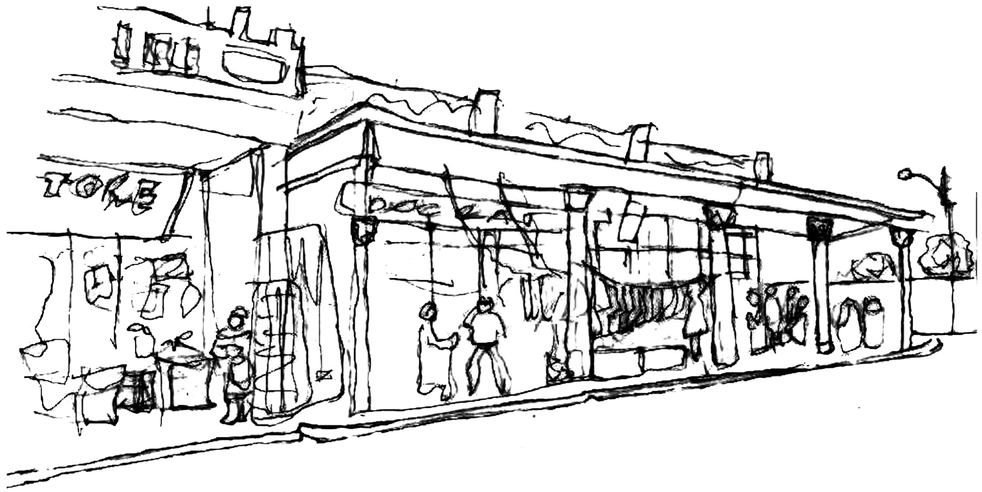


Figure 1.2.6
Drawing of a shop in Fietas by Author
based on Manfred Herman Sketch

Extension 2 was a result of a large number of people not meeting the requirements for the housing mortgage scheme. Greyville, Thomsville, and Rainbow were developed. Greyville was made up of Matchbox houses, also known as Greyville houses. Thomsville units were smaller than the matchbox house, which made up a strip and was divided into six units of two rooms. It housed up to six families at a time, with a shared toilet outside. Rainbow had larger houses for bigger families, with houses painted in different colours, thus the name Rainbow. Thomsville housed poorer people, whose majority were descendants of indentured labourers. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

Soon after, Lenasia began to develop eleven extensions and a sub-township called Lenasia South. Lenasia currently has twelve extensions: one to eleven, A and B, and thirteen. Infrastructure such as electricity and sewage were implemented before Rainbow Houses were complete. Sporting facilities opened in the 1960s and 1970s, including the Civic Centre, drive-in cinema, and pools. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

Figure 1.2.7 (Lenasia Times, 1976)

Figure 1.2.8 (Lenasia Times, 1976)

Figure 1.2.9
Image of Greyville home on Rose Avenue
(Dawood Bawa, Circa 1967)

ROSE AVENUE IN THE 60'S

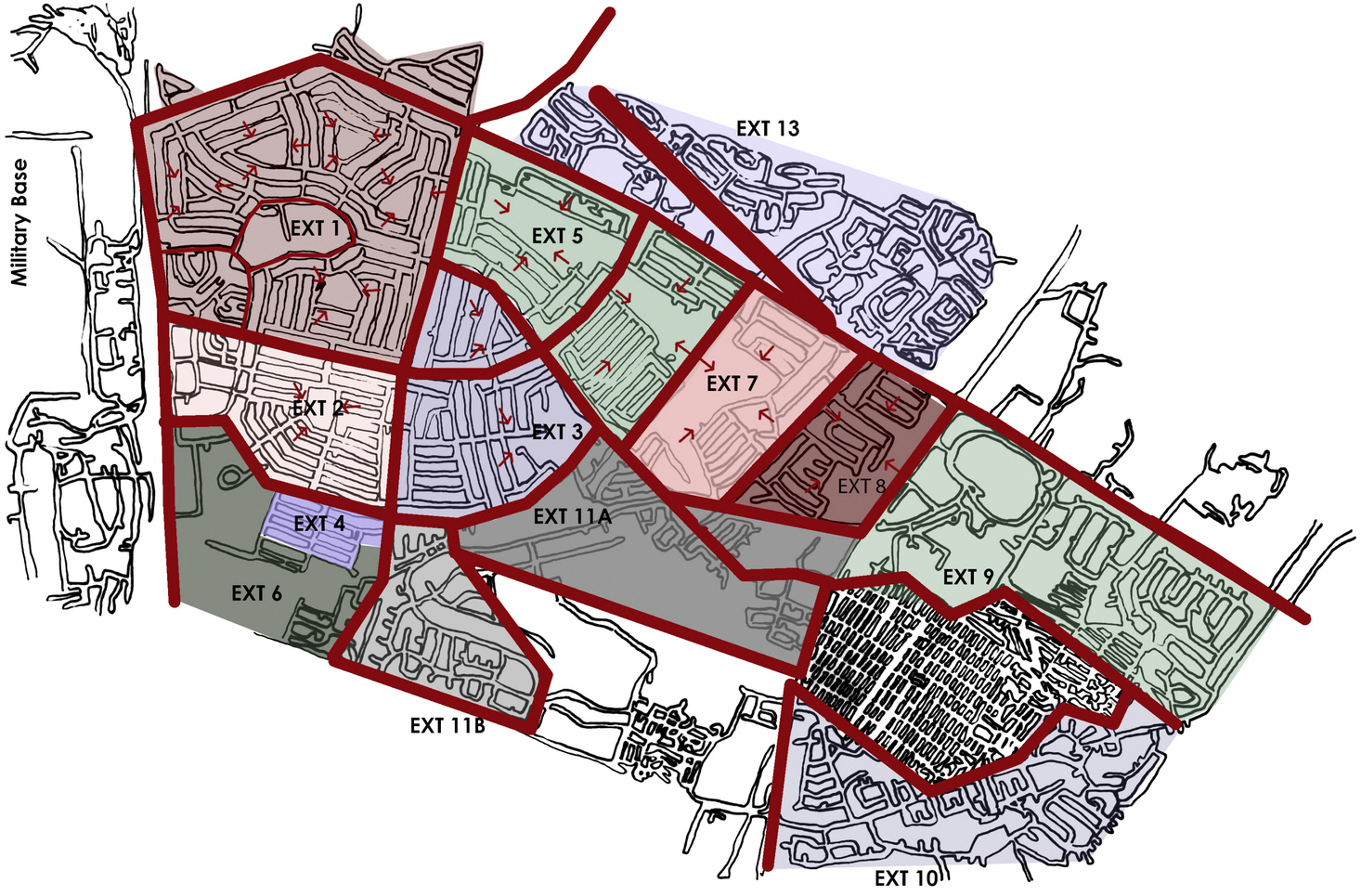
The image shows Rose Avenue before infrastructure was put in place.

Figure 1.2.10
(Dawood Bawa, Circa 1967)

1.3 Black Consciousness and Active-sm - Politics and Activism within Lenz

The historical trauma of separation in South Africa embeds itself within urban frameworks. The city of Johannesburg's palimpsest of disconnection still haunts us today. Region G's dislocation with means of distance and physical barriers such as the mine dumps emphasises how apartheid spatial planning still plays a role in how people view certain marginalised areas (instead, areas that have been pushed beyond the margins of the city), thus leading to its decay or rather lack of care to maintain and uplift these areas. The city's segregation was developed through the Group Areas Act when the National Party won the elections. (Group Areas Act, Act No. 41 of 1950–1991) They began by locating areas for groups, which they divided into racial classifications. Placing marginalised groups further south of the city with further barriers of distance and mine dumps is what emphasises the dislocation. There is also a topographical hierarchy in the City of Jo'burg in relation to the placement of marginalised groups. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

Figure 1.3.1
(Vadi,2022)



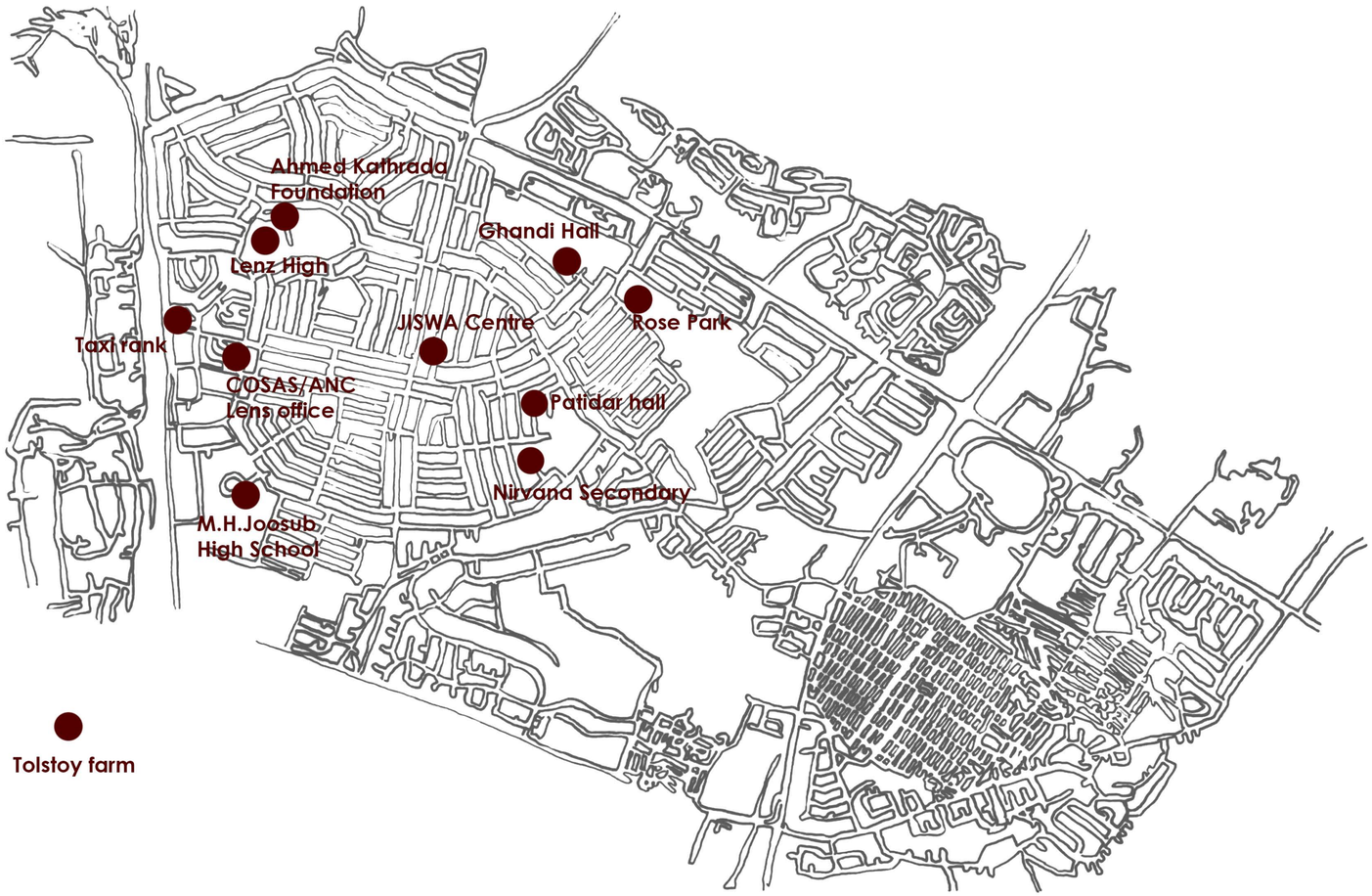
Map indicating segregation, marginalisation, and barrier.
Figure 1.3.2
(Author)

The birth of Lenasia and many other townships was a political agenda that pushed for segregation. People were forcefully removed from their homes and dislocated away from the city. There is a rich connection between the political power of the past, the urban fabric, and the people of Lenasia. The township is broken up into extensions, each designed to face inward, lacking a sense of connection and reinforcing the idea of segregation. The CBD needs a better connection to the surrounding residential areas because the entire CBD comprises multiple
private developments. The urban framework will be explored in detail in the following paragraphs.
The history of activism within Lenasia was sourced from South African History Online, a book by Dr. Ismail Vadi that revolves around the perspectives of a number of activists that were involved in fighting the struggle and interviews with activists of the past and present.

The South African Indian Council, established by the state, was an advisory body without decision-making power. The Lenasia India Consultative Committee was fed out of that; it was established in 1964 as a local government, and the committee carried out functions under the Transvaal board. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.) Once Lenasia became part of the Johannesburg municipality, jurisdiction shifted to the council, which carried out its functions. The term of office expired in 1970, and a new committee was put in place. The Minister of Community Development was to appoint some members, while the council would elect others. Dr. Ram Saloojee was elected councillor and served about a term when he realised the committee did not benefit the community and began to boycott all government institutions. He aligned himself with congress-based organisations, which remained active while the African National Congress (ANC) and Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) were banned. The death of Ahmed Timol, an ANC operative, called upon many Lenasians to have a meeting in his honour. In the late 1960s, Black consciousness became the dominant anti-apartheid ideology in schools. In many ethnic schools and universities, and had several adherents in Lenasia. The Lenasia student movement and People's Experimental Theatre staged various theatre productions in the township. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

The death of Steve Biko sparked a wave of revulsion across the country. Lenasia's political activity was disrupted as many Black Conscious leaders were locked up. Students stepped up by organising a meeting and distributing flyers in school. The venue was sealed off, and the students were taken in. During the 1980s, school boycotts at Nirvana High first began protesting, followed by Lenasia High and MH Joosub. Students were briefed by Youth Activist Leaders from the Black Conciousness movement, new congress activists, and many more. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

The school boycotts of the 1980s sparked consciousness in many learners. People became politically aware, allowing boycotts to fight for rights beyond education. The youth began aligning themselves with anti-SAIC campaigns, anti-Tricameral campaigns, and so much more happening in South Africa. The boycotts and political issues gave birth to the Lenasia Youth League (LYL), active from 1982 to 1991. The LYL produced core activists that served the TIC , United Democratic Front (UDF), Federation of Residents (FRA), Lenasia Women's Congress, Progressive Teachers League (PTL), Lenasia Students Congress (LESCO), Lenasia Education Community, and a few joined the ANC underground. A handful joined the secret structure of the South African Communist Party. After the 1994 elections, many joined the government; some are running for or working for organisations working to improve our country. (Vadi, 2023) The former is to express the Lenasia Youth League's impact on its members and how it encouraged them to serve their country. (Vadi, 2023) The question of the role of youth in making a difference in their communities and voicing their opinions becomes an important aspect of the architectural intervention of my thesis project.



Map showing moments of activism.
Figure 1.3.3
(Author)

The LYL will be discussed as it sets an important precedent for the Activism Centre that will be developed in the architectural intervention. The Lenasia Youth League, formed by Ismail Vadi, a teacher at the time, was used as a driver to address youth idleness. The league started off by introducing social aspects through sports, art, and humanitarian work while tackling
politics. It allowed youth to participate in making a difference. While many activists were exiled, the youth and teachers continued to spread the word of Black Conciousness and fight against racial inequalities through boycotts, protests, consciousness, driving around core activists, and so much more.

An equally important group that contributed to developing and fighting anti-apartheid causes was the LESCO. The congress was set up as a means of students mediating the needs of learners and students in schools and universities. LESCO brought about Student Representative Councils (SRC) in the schools of Lenasia. This allowed students to voice their opinions on matters within the school sector. An example of this was when students at MH Joosub fought for better toilets.

The map shows moments of activism within space, starting at Tolstoy Farm. Ghandi led a march, and one of the stopping points was Tolstoy Farm. The COSAS/ANC Head Office was a space for people to voice their issues. The taxi rank was previously a parking lot used as a space of protest for the House of Delegates elections. Lenz High, M.H. Joosub, and Nirvana were schools that participated in the boycotts. JISWA was used as a meeting spot for the Lenasia Youth League members. Rose Park is the beginning and end point for the Palestine walk. The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation fights for non-racialism and works on improving communities. Ghandi hall was where the LYL held the youth festival and more. Patidar hall was also a space used for meetings, perfomance and a June 16th rally. (Vadi, 2023)

A timeline of the activism history

The timeline below captures the historical political events of Lenasia that link Lenasia's involvement in the stride for an anti-apartheid South Africa. It also highlights youth participation and how much of an impact these events had leading up to the 1994 elections. The majority of the events on the timeline link to the LYL and LESCO, which act as precedents for mobilising youth in the community. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.) The timeline follows a sequence of events that began with the school boycotts. The boycotts allowed students to see the importance of fighting against the struggle. Many of the youth went through traumatic experiences of inequality, being allowed and even being detained. Activists being released from prison marked progress in the country. When Mandela was released and negotiating, it was seen as a moment of rest as something was finally happening. The 1994 elections were something that people fought for and marked a great moment in history.

1980 — BOYCOTTS

-The school boycotts spurred throughout South Africa. The boycotts against racist and inferior education. (Vadi,2022)

1981 — COSAS LENASIA BRANCH

-The first COSAS branch opened up in Lenasia. (Vadi,2022)

1982 — LAUNCH OF LYL

- On the 5th June 1982 the Lenasia Youth League was formerly established. June was chosen to pay tribute to the Soweto uprising of June 16th.

-A youth festival was held, it revolved around performance, sports, arts and much more. The festival accomodated for people of all colour despite the apartheid law.

-The release of activist Laloo Chiba. (Vadi,2022)

1983 — UDF AND TIC

- Revival of the Transvaal Indian Committee

-Establishing of the United Democratic Front. (Vadi,2022)

1984 — RENEWAL OF BOYCOTTS

- Renewal of boycotts by ANC aligned congress, Congress of South African Students.

-Protest against the House of Delegates elections reduced votes. (Vadi,2022)

1985 — INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

-Lenasia Youth League celebrated international youth ear, using it to spread the message of the unjust system of aparthied. With a focus on youth of colour. It highlighted the lack of sporting facilities, poor education and oppososition of military conscription.

-Nelson Manddela release request was rejected.

-LYL called for the immediate release of political prisoner, shifting their dynamic within politics. (Vadi,2022)

1986 — LESCO MOBILISING STUDENTS

- Lenasia Students Congress (LESCO) was established.

- LESCO Mobilising Student Representative Councils in schools to fight for the needs of students.

-SRC organised trips to the Market theatre to view performances.

- National Educational Crisis Committee held a meeting to give political direction to the wider educational movement. (Vadi,2022)

1987 — FORMATION OF SAYCO

- Formation of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO).

-LYL affiliated to SAYCO. (Vadi,2022)

1988 — STUDENTS DETAINED

- Several scholars were detained under state emergency regulations

- LYL activist involved in helping detainees escape. (Vadi,2022)

1989 — ANC BANNED

- ANC was banned. This gave rise to alot of activist working for underground units of the ANC. Many who were from Lenasia. (Vadi,2022)

1990 — ANC UNBANNED AND RELEASE OF NELSON MANDELA

- ANC unbanned.

-Release of Nelson Mandela (Vadi,2022)

1994 — LESCO MOBILISING STUDENTS

- ANC wins elections, many core activists leaving lenz post 1994 to work in governent. (Vadi,2022)

Figure 1.3.4 (Vadi,2022)

1.4 Demographic - Understanding social and cultural backgrounds

According to the Group Areas Act, the apartheid government classified Lenasia as an 'Indian' township. Residents were brown people who were grouped as Indian. The term 'Indian' was initially used for people who came to South Africa from India. It is now used very loosely, and many brown people fall under this blanket statement. Since many people came from various regions of India, each of which had its own cultures, identities, and religions, identifying them by their country of origin served as a general statement of their identities even back then. Hindus were divided into Tamil and Gujarati Hindus. Muslims were grouped with or associated with the ghaam (village) they or their ancestors came from in India. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

The segregation through extensions has also influenced social perceptions and stigmas in certain areas. The poorer areas are often viewed as unsafe and associated with drug use.

The demographic has become more diverse over the years, as there are no restrictions on the Group Areas Act. The 2011 census states that the percentages are as follows:

55.90% ' - Indian' or 'Asian'
36.228% - 'Black'
2.55% - 'Coloured'
0.21% - 'White'

It is crucial to keep in mind that these classifications are based solely on appearance or claim to fit a category, which ignores the presence of immigrants and other factors. It is also outdated, as the population and demographics are constantly shifting.

As we explore ways to encourage more residents to use the CBD, it's essential to understand the demographics and how spaces are perceived. For example, the presence of the masjid draws Muslims to the area, and other group-specific sites can branch out to become secular public spaces that allow people from all groups to engage with the place. The demographic study can lead to conversations about ownership and identity and how we can adopt a new identity incorporating all cultures to use the space effectively. Ultimately, this addresses the issue of how spaces of trauma and inequalities can contribute to urban decay and issues around safety.

The past of forced removals had created a shift in how people viewed their identities; being removed from one's home and having one's lively hood stripped away from an established identity is a traumatic event. Trauma has a tendency to shift people's worldviews, which in turn creates a sort of disasociation of one's identity before the trauma occurs.

Classifications and identity are important aspects of how one views community and community participation. If identifying as being part of a community allows one to have a sense of belonging, the successes and failures of the community will in turn represent being apart of them, which creates a sense of pride.

Lenasia, being home to the diaspora, has links to identity and demographics. While the newer generations have developed a new identity that has adapted into a culture around being 'Lenasian'. Blanket classifications of being 'Indian' do not work in Lenasia, as a lot of the newer generation do not identify as 'Indian' as they have such a minimal link or relation to India. Religious and cultural practises are the main aspects that tie people to India. It is important to mention that the newer generations tend to be third cultures, which in turn do not speak to a singular cultural or ethnic identity. The idea of racial classification has been embedded in the ideologies of South Africa for so long that one needs to ask the question of why racial classifications still exist.

1.5 Beyond Curriculum - Oppotunities for resilience within the education sector

Schools in Lenasia are a vital part of its development. Especially after apartheid, as it opened up for children from surrounding areas and informal settlements, in the past, teachers risked their jobs and defied the government by teaching learners about their rights, promoting Black Consciousness and addressing issues around the education system for marginalised groups.

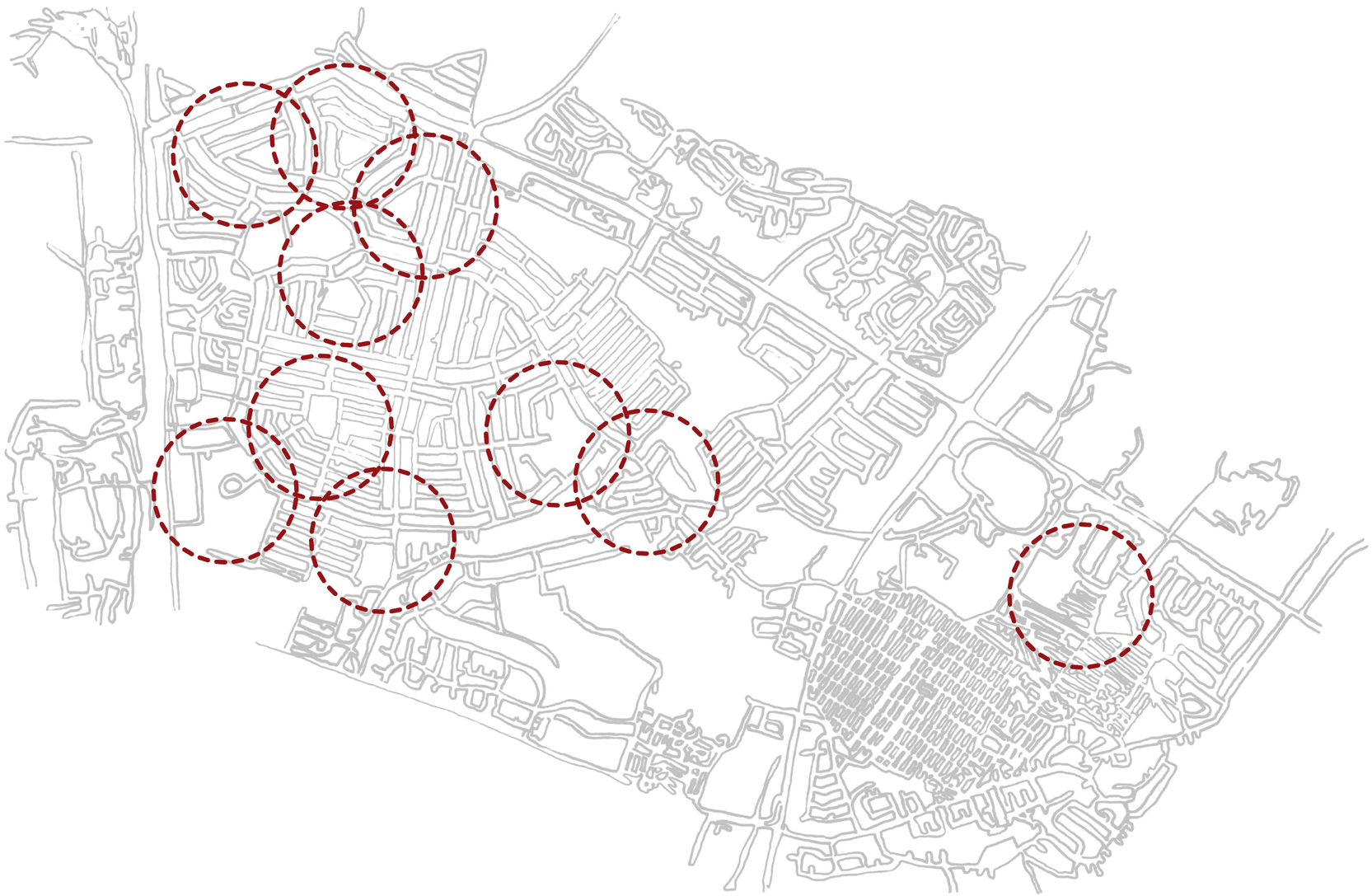
Lenasia High School, the first school in Lenz, was established in 1955 and catered for 'Indians' from Forsdsburg and surrounding areas. As the population grew, a primary school was established in the early 1960s, and Model Primary School followed. High schools such as Nirvana High, followed by Trinity, M. H. Joosub Technical School, and many other primary schools. ("Indian Community in Lenasia | South African History Online," n.d.)

The Lenasia Muslim School was established as a secular school for everyone while meeting the needs of the Muslim students' Friday prayer times and adding a madrassah (Islamic School) component. It was also a response to the lack of resources in government schools. Today, all schools in Lenasia are released at 12 o'clock on Fridays. There has also always been this acceptance of religious holidays, and nearly all students would not come to school despite their religion. (Our Past & Present, 2021)

The Shri Bharat Sharda Mandir is a Hindu school that began as a way to carry through culture and language in South Africa. The Partidar society and school started in Fordsburg, and the majority of people were moving there, so to cater to them, they moved to Lenasia. ("About Us: Shree Bharat Sharda Mandir," n.d.) The school has a theatre that forms an integral part of the community and is used by many other schools in Lenasia for concerts, awards, and so much more.

Schools were a central part of activism during the apartheid era. The Soweto uprising and school boycotts created a force among youth in marginalised communities to fight against the injustices of the apartheid system.

Linking schools to the Activist centre, the centre has the ability to connect to schools and mobilise youth like the activist clubs of the past. It is also about creating spaces of leisure for youth. Strengthening the culture of youth within the space allows for a sense of belonging and community. Drawing youth to centre activates the CBD and connects them to the community rather than shifting to places like Rosebank and Sandton.



This figure shows the schools in relation to the superblock design that will be discussed in depth in Focusing on the context.

1.6 Business - Economic factors with potential to become activators

CBD/LBD

The CBD is located west of Lenasia and is beside the railway. It is a mixed-use area comprising retail, commercial, residential, and industrial. The CBD also houses a taxi rank, magistrate court, civic centre, library, and clinic.

The poor connection to the rest of the extensions and lack of dedicated public space is something essential to highlight, as it may be a key factor as to why it remains stagnant.

Also known as the top shops, they began when a single man started a tuckshop and sold coal beside the railway. In the 1960s, businesses began to move in with the arrival of Apsara and much more. The CBD also houses a library, civic centre, and clinic.

Many businesses have been open for a long time and have loyal customers. Laxmi, also known as Nagins, was a business that moved from Fietas to Lenasia. Bhamjees shoes, Bhamjees stationers, DB Sweets Cash and Carry, Honey Bee, Pay and Save, Tahiti Pharmacy, and so much more are examples of long-standing businesses within the area.

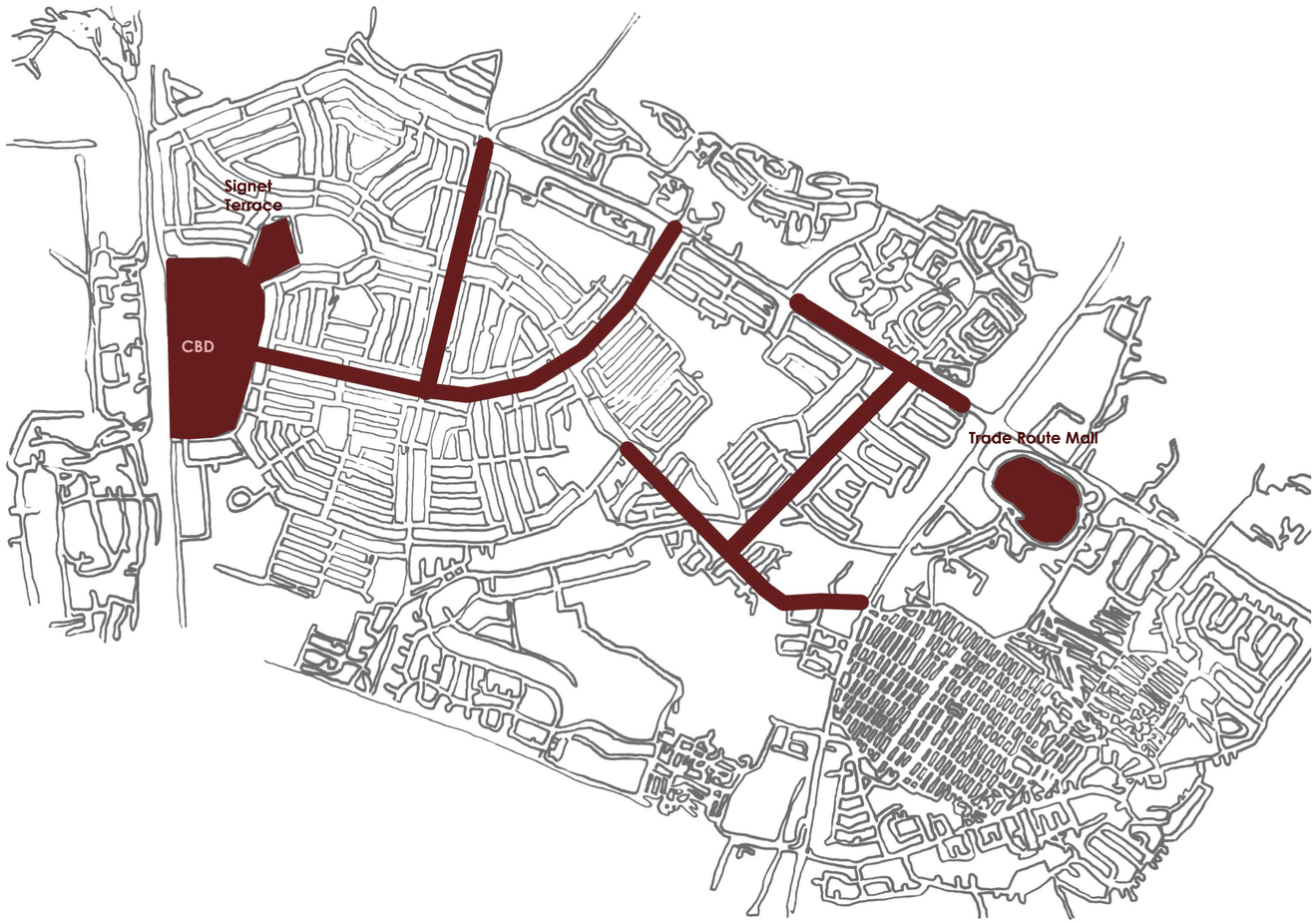
Window shopping was trendy during that period, almost up until the 1990s and 2000s. I remember walking to the Top Shops for leisure when I was younger. My mother often told us stories of how my sister would sit in the stroller and I would walk beside her. Memories of Eid shopping and always going to Bhamjees Shoe, which had one of the most prominent displays, always come to mind. The owners have downsized the store but still take pride in window dressing.

Understanding the layers of CBD becomes an integral part of reviving it, going through what was successful and the reasons for it. The sense of nostalgia can encourage residents to visit specific spaces, which is why it would act as an essential design driver.

The idea of the CBD, from an urban and economic perspective, stems from zoning. How cities are planned centres around a core, the inner city, which arises around centralising spaces by making them more accessible. The idea of having it all in one place is convenient for both buyers and sellers. It is essential to state that the introduction of malls has adjusted the use of CBD. What drives enterprise owners to choose between the CBD and the mall? It could depend on the demographics they are catering to, the cost of the rent, and whether the security of the enclosed mall would benefit them.

The primary function of a CBD is to be a 'central' business district; for it to act as a centralised space, it would have to be placed in decent proximity to all areas. This does not apply to the LBD, as it is placed at the very end of the Lenasia. ("CBD - Internet Geography," n.d.)

Generally, CBDs follow the idea of being central. However, the placement of the LBD contradicts this concept. Lenasia uses a superblock system, which was designed in a way that feels fragmented rather than incorporated. The Garden City is a prime example of a centralised business district. It consists of the CBD being the core and everything else revolving around it. Garden City's design emphasises a centralised approach to urban planning, highlighting the importance of the CBD and its influence on the surrounding areas. Extensions were developed in response to geographical barriers like wetlands rather than with integration in mind. Thus, the CBD tends to work only for the surrounding extensions at a distance. Another vital aspect to highlight is that it is a private development and was perhaps designed around integrating with the railway. The question is: how can the further extensions experience trips to the CBD without the use of a vehicle? Designing for bicycles or a mix of buses and walking will come up quite a bit in the project.



Mapping showing core areas of business this including the CBD, Signet terrace, mixed use main roads and Trade Route Mall.
Figure 1.6.1
(Author)

Signet Terrace Strip Mall

The mall is part of the CBD and is in close proximity to the soccer and cricket stadiums. It consists of many small and chain stores such as Mica, Jet, Ackermans, Clicks, and Shoprite. It also has restaurants and takeaways spread throughout the strip. The mall works well, especially at night, because the Astroturf restaurants and Shoprite are open until eight. There are seasonal night markets that encourage large crowds and activity.

The relationship between the CBD and the mall needs improvement, as the strip mall's blank walls create an unpleasant street edge. The vehicular entrance being prioritised over a pedestrian is also something that needs to be improved, especially since there is such a distinct pedestrian path from the taxi rank and there is an Eldo Coaches bus service stop and office within Signet.

Figure 1.6.2
(Author)

Trade Route Mall

Trade Route Mall officially opened in 2008. It was a big deal to have an actual mall in Lenasia the majority of the time, and if one had to go to a mall to go to chain stores, it would mean going out of Lenasia. The mall is situated in Extension nine, further east of Lenasia.

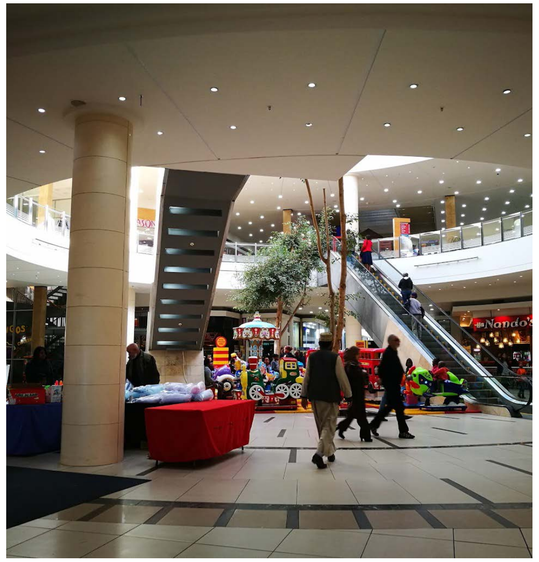
The mall has constantly been shifting, with stores opening and closing. The leading chain stores in the mall are Game, Pick and Pay, Woolworths, Clicks, Edgars Ackermans, Foschini, Jet, Crazy Store, Truworths, and Markhams. There are also banks, several restaurants, and takeout.

Around the mall's exterior are restaurants, a Food Lovers Market, a car dealership, and a Cash Build.

The mall has also recently developed a residential portion. It consists of flats and acts as a gated community, which is common in Extension nine.

Like most malls, the mall does not connect well to its surroundings and prioritises vehicular over pedestrian access.

Figure 1.6.3
(Author)



Retail in residential spaces

The retail pockets within residential spaces mainly consist of butchers, bakeries, produce places, or convenience stores. There has been a rapid development of ground-floor retail on main roads such as Rose Avenue, Flamingo, and Protea.

While it is encouraging mixed-use and creating connections between extensions as these wide roads that are also four-lane roads act as buffers, parking right now is posing a big issue.

As someone who lives on a main road in close proximity to the CBD, it is easy for me to reap the benefits of a bakery, a plant nursery, convenience stores, multiple optometrists, hairdressers, a pet shop, a pharmacist, and a Postnet, and this is still just on my road; I have yet to explore the CBD. Walkability is easy; however, people coming from inside the extensions generally come by car, so the question of accommodation for parking and/or how to encourage more people to walk is something that needs to be dealt with in design.

Retail along the streets can become an opportunity to draw people into the CBD; the more mixed-use, the more it creates connections and allows the extensions to face out rather than in.

Linking and concluding

The three significant forms of business within Lenasia have the ability to work together due to the population. The mall accommodates people close to Extension Nine, and the CBD is a prominent source of daily and weekly shopping for people living in Extensions one to six.

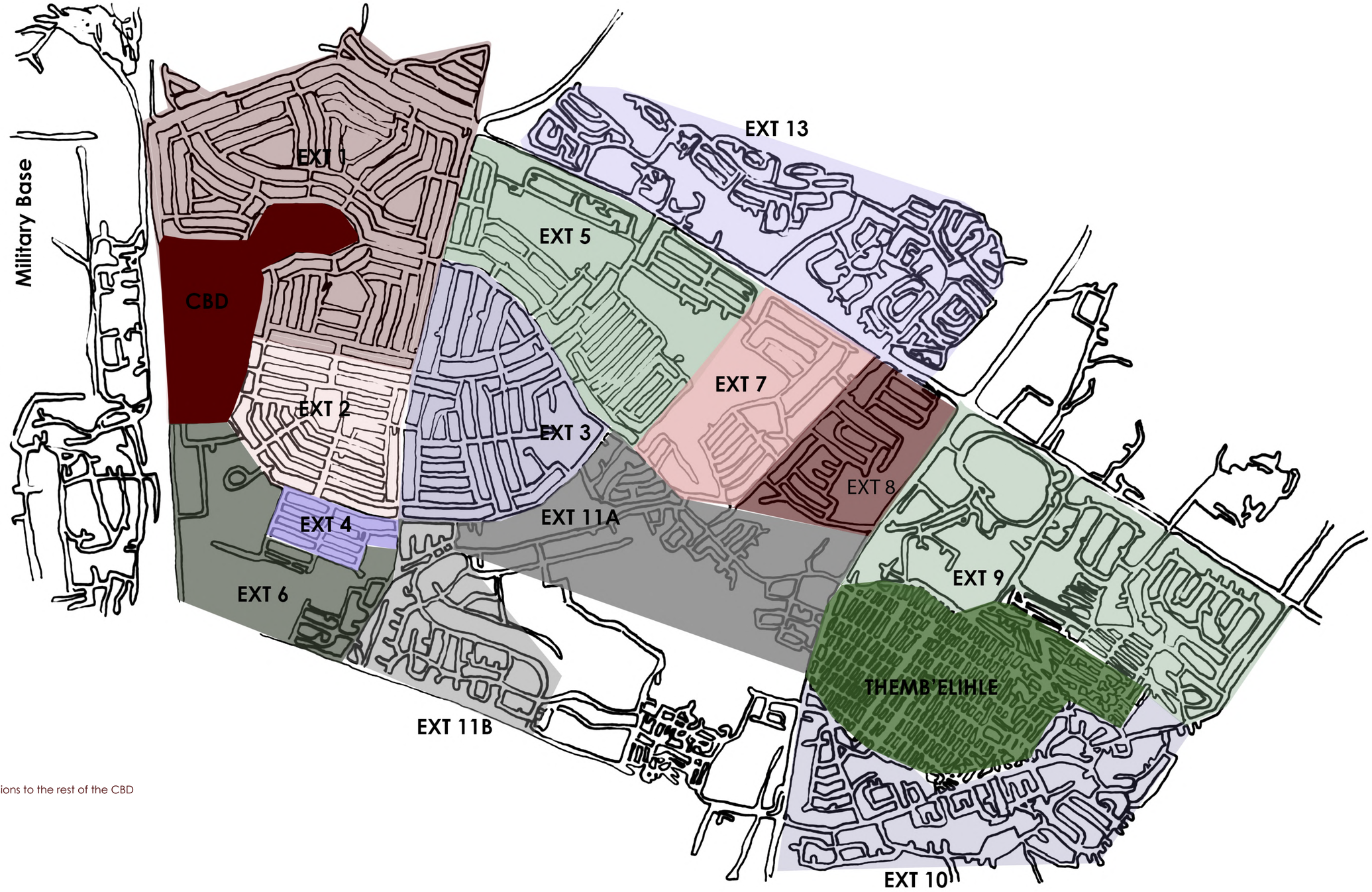
In a way, these two places act as anchors or bookends on either end of Lenasia, with the businesses in residential areas accommodating groups in the middle.

The respective retail becomes necessary for daily access or weekly access. Monthly buying is when people go out of those respective zones for things they do not have access to. The majority of residents would do their monthly grocery shopping at Laxmi, which is in the CBD.

Understanding the number of economic spaces within Lenasia and how it affects the activity of the CBD is crucial in understanding particular successes and failures compared to Trade Route Mall and the economic spaces within residential spaces. As mentioned before, the areas within the residential space become more convenient for people living closer to those shops than in the CBD. Most of the time, the CBD is about going to specific shops.

While my urban intervention focuses on addressing the CBD, it is important to highlight other major business spots as they have the potential to feed into the CBD. An example is how mixed-use streets encourage walkability. The top of Rose Avenue almost feels like an extension of the CBD, as it is filled with a diverse range of enterprises. While still giving room for enterprises in the CBD to operate.

Figure 1.6.4
(Author)



Map showing relation of extensions to the rest of the CBD
Figure 1.7.1
(Author)

1.7 Context - Understanding the existing infrastrusture and everyday operations.

Figure 1.7.2 (Author)

Figure 1.7.3(Author)

Extensions Explained
As mentioned in the history of Lenasia, the formation was based on additions as per extension. Different extensions were established for a multitude of income groups. While there are some similarities, there are also differences, and these differences are a result of the history, social structure, and built environment in these areas.
The following paragraph will explore the extensions' urban fabric and the built environment.

Urban Fabric and Built Environment within the Extensions

The majority of the extensions were designed as inward-looking superblocks separated by wide roads or natural buffer strips like wetlands and dolomitic soil. The wide main roads have already begun to create connections through activity, and the i ntroduction of mixed-use with retail and flats allows the extensions to begin to look out. This encourages more residents to walk as the streets become busier. This links back to Jane Jacobs's theory around sidewalks and public spaces, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Extension one
Extension one is mainly a residential area with four public schools and one s emi-private school. The school blocks are very distinct, and some have connected parks. The public schools are Park Primary, Model Primary, Alpha Primary, and Lenz High. There is a private school, Al Aqsa Primary. A retail block is present near Park Primary and Lenz High. Extension one is a well-developed area with well-maintained public schools. Lenasia Drive, Nirvana Drive, Flamingo Avenue, and Rose Avenue are the four main roads that surround parts of LBD, which falls under extension one. These main roads are mixed-use spaces and continue developing in real-time as the need for housing increases.

The urban layout is based on a superblock design (Floyd, 1951), which describes basic amenities and the school within 400m walking distance. The architecture of extension one is quite old yet well-kept. Many homes seem as if they were designed following the architectural trends of that time. There are many modernist, art deco, and post-modernist houses.

Extension two
Extension two resulted from not all applicants meeting the requirements for extension one. As mentioned in history, the area was divided into three housing developments: Greyville, Thomsville, and Rainbow. The area is still quite a low- to middle-income area. Greyville Primary School lies within the heart of Extension two. There is a retail block and many house shops within extension two. Most of the time, these house shops become a form of reference for explaining directions. An example is the Koesister Aunty on Anemone, which almost everyone knows. A few streets away from the park is the school park, which also has nearby community pools used for summertime recreation and swimming galas.

Extension two Pools has a park, which is not very successful as it is in a quiet area. There is no distinct architectural style to the area, as a lot of homes have made alterations over time to fit their families. A large number of houses are still government matchbox houses.Part of the CBD lies within extension two, which consists of industry, wholesale, retail, the post office and civic centre, police station, and civic centre. Rose Avenue, the buffer between
extensions one and two, is becoming a diverse mixed-use space that feeds into the CBD. It is starting to feel like Gemsbok. Flamingo, Rose, and Lenasia Drive are the three main roads that enclose Extension two.

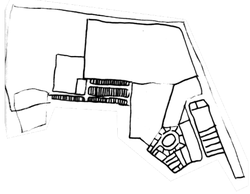
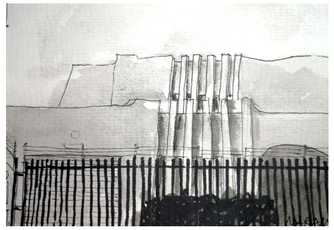


Figure 1.7.4 (Author)

Extension six
Extension six is south of Extension Two and wraps around Extension Four. It merges with the industrial spaces of the CBD and has two schools, one lying in extensions four and six. There is a high school and a primary school. The high school usually hosts additional government classes on Saturdays for matric learners from all schools. A large portion of land remains unbuilt due to dolomitic soil conditions, which are used as the technical grounds for school sports weekends or seasonal markets.

Total Garage on Rose Avenue

Figure 1.7.7 (Author)



House in Extension 5
Figure 1.7.5 (Author)

Understanding the rest of the extensions
The same urban planner who designed extensions one and two also created extension three, which is based on the superblock design. There are three schools, and the urban fabric is mainly designed around the two public schools placed on the same block. Extension three is enclosed by three main roads: Protea Street, Rose Avenue, and Flamingo Street.

Extension four is predominantly residential and feels as if it is a part of Extensions two and six.

Due to the park's location on a main road and its high usage, Extension five's division of the park and the soccer fields has the potential to create such a vibrant area. However, the fencing around the park makes it feel unpleasant. There is also a social division, with a particular part of Extension five not being in the best condition and being labelled as the 'dirty fives' by residents of Lenasia.

Extension seven is impacted by dolomitic soil, and a plan for a cemetery was not implemented; instead, it was turned into a sports field.

Extension eight's wetlands are a key design driver for the extension. However, it is closed off, and there is no integration with the community.

As mentioned before, Extension nine houses the mall, has three schools, and is close to two exits of Lenasia.

Extension ten is a mixture of residential and industrial. There is also a road that links to the Anchorville industrial area.

The dolomitic soil conditions divide Extension eleven into A and B. Extension eleven A is made up of industrial and residential areas. Extension eleven B is mainly residential and connects to Extension six.

Extension thirteen was the last extension in which RDP houses were developed, and people only started moving in after apartheid. It is accessible from Nirvana Drive, which is a primary road. It often feels segregated from the rest of Lenasia due to its placement. The surrounding wetlands influence its shape. There is a spur of gated communities rising within Extension thirteen.

Conclusion

Understanding the extensions allows an understanding of the overall Lenasia. It also creates awareness around the relationships between extensions in terms of amenities within them and to the CBD in terms of distance. The typologies give insight into understanding the identities of the extensions, as they may act as design drivers for the Activist Centre.

It will also help to understand how public transport and cycling may be integrated and ways to encourage more walkable spaces. Suppose more people are walking, cycling, or using public transportation like bus rapid transit. In that case, this will decrease the need for parking and allow for more engaging public spaces that integrate with enterprises to be developed.

Caltex Garage on Nirvana Drive
Figure 1.7.6 (Author)

Central Business District / Top shops

The north portion of the CBD consists of U-shaped blocks that fit into each other. The Square is placed in the centre and is a pedestrian space that allows pedestrians access to the surrounding shops and u-shaped parking lots. The south portion of the CBD consists of square and L-shaped blocks in response to the curved road, Gemsbok.

The architecture consists of styles ranging from Art Deco to industrial. Several buildings are modernist and post-modernist-like. Motifs of Islamic architecture are used for the mosque and some flat buildings.

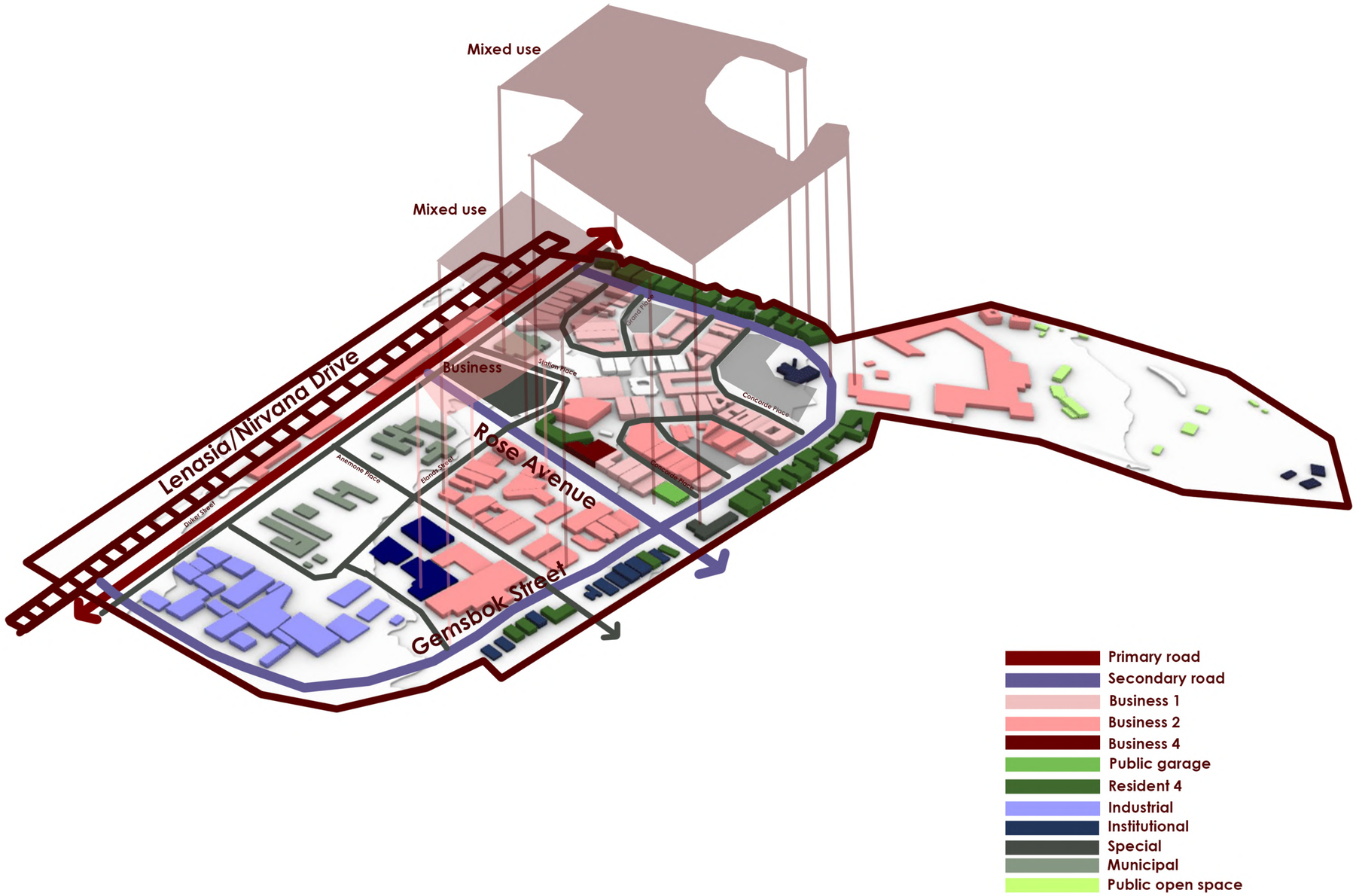


Figure 1.7.8
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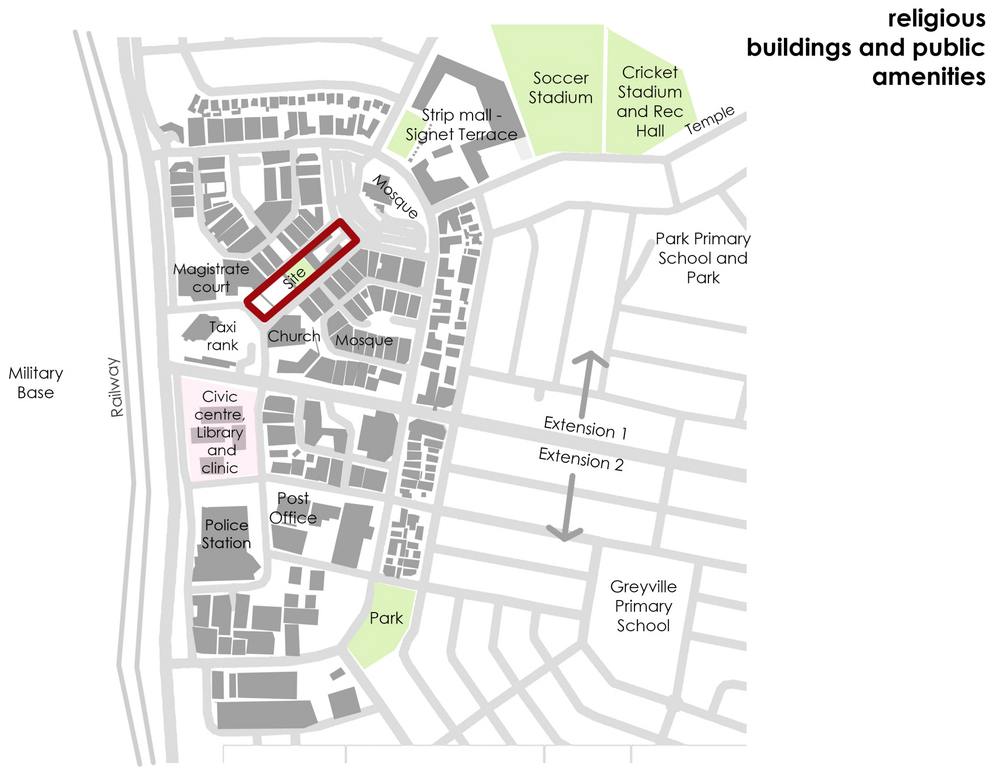

Figure 1.7.9
Mapping showing basic ammenities in the CBD

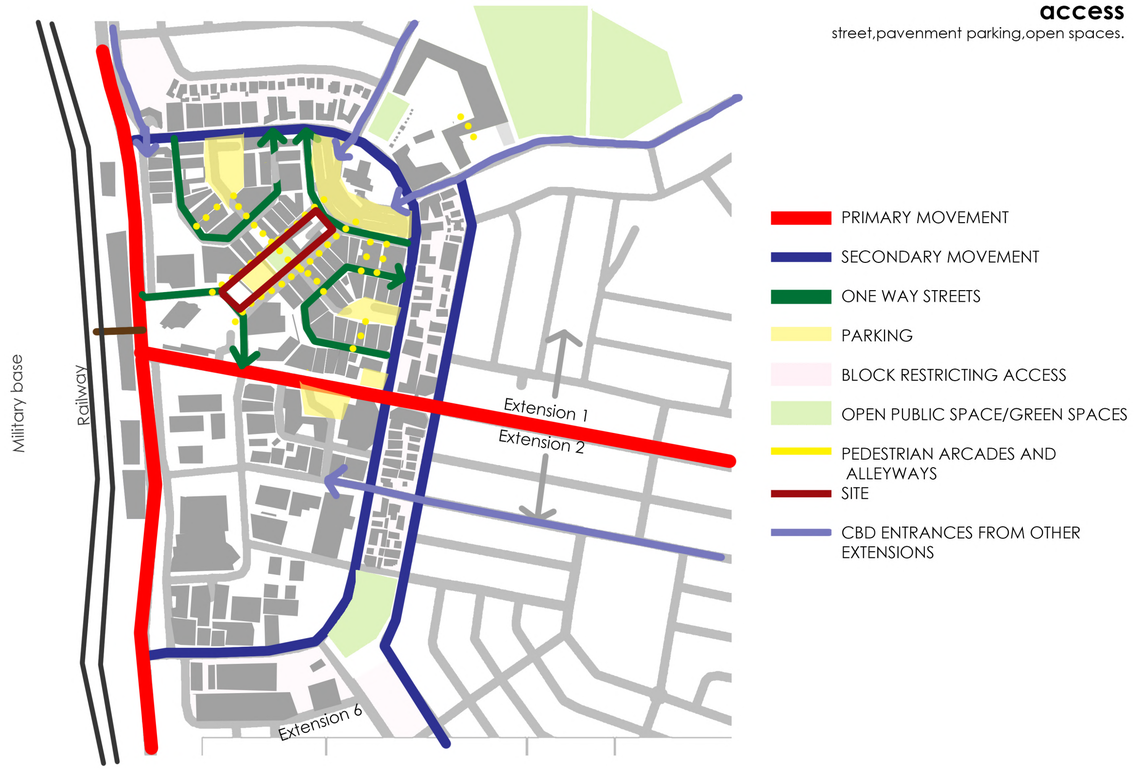

Figure 1.7.10
Mapping of accessibility in the CBD

THROUGH THE PUBLIC REALM

CHAPTER 2

The urban regeneration aspects allow the project to explore good public space design. Chapter 2 focuses on observational theory, with a brief portion introducing empirical data through an experiment conducted by members of urban planning units from two universities in Seoul.

Jane Jacobs explored several public sectors in her book The Life and Death of the Great American Cities, and it is interesting in the sense that a lot of her theories revolve around observation and her questioning orthodox architecture and urban planning.

The function of public space is to shape urban life. ("Getting public space right," 2022) It is a space that is provided to the public to interact with each other. It may act as a space to wait when commuting or even just to rest for a change of scenery. It is a space accessible to people regardless of income, gender, physical disabilities, mental disabilities, race, and more. Maintenance of public spaces is crucial, as visual perception plays an important role in the vibrancy of the space. Additional amenities within spaces allow people to have a reason to use the space. Sidewalks and the square in Lenasia are often used to walk through, and many people do not necessarily use them as spaces to socialise. The quieter streets often have children playing on the streets as the vehicular traffic is minimal; however, the main roads are often used as a means of travel rather than socialising. The lack of street furniture like seating spaces or planters to activate the space is the main reason people do not use the sidewalks as a means of loitering or socialising. The square does not have amenities or enterprises that encourage one to sit around; the shops consist of furniture stores, cleaning supplies, and other stores that people have a direct reason to visit. The square used to have a Wimpy back when it was first developed, and the sit-down restaurant was something that allowed for social interactions. The raised portion with seating around it is covered by hawkers who are set up on the edge, which creates a barrier. The link back to anxiety around safety is also a reason that the public spaces in Lenasia are not well used.

The history around segregation in South Africa is to the extent that there were separate public spaces for people of colour and 'white' people. The segregation has embedded a deep sense of inequality and stigma, which link to anxiety within the public realm. Especially when it comes to marginalised areas, which have become spaces that have a series of traumas embedded within them. Lenasia is often looked down upon, especially now that people see it as a space that is in constant decay. A lot of people who move out will question why people still choose to live in Lenasia. This trauma comes from a lack of pride for space; it is viewed as a place with no future. Designing resilient spaces for the public has the ability to open doors and allow for community engagement. Community engagement has the ability to introduce a sense of ownership and pride among community members.

The image shows the amphitheatre of the Lenasia square. Despite it being a Saturday, the square filled with people walking through the amphitheatre remained unused. Figure 2.0.1(Author)

Figure 2.0.1
(Author)

2.1 Sidewalks - Understanding the importance of sidewalk design

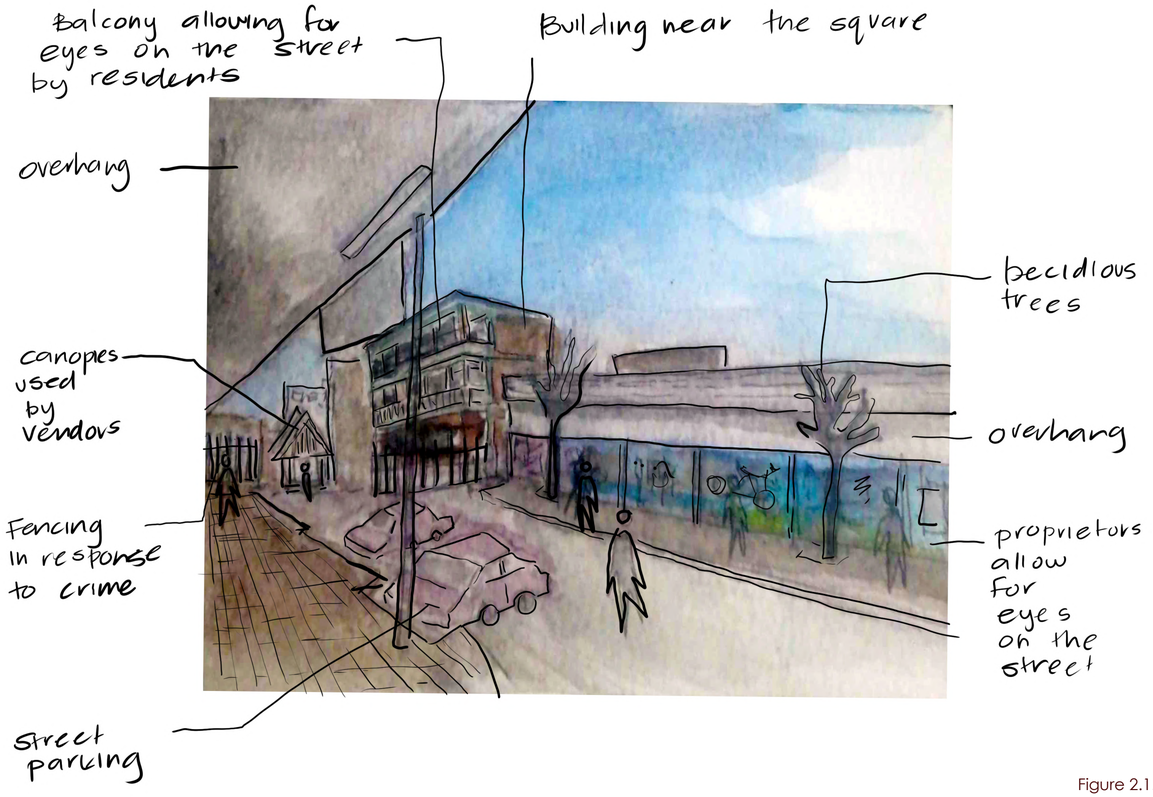

Figure 2.1.1
(Author)

The watercolour sketch above is an expression of the sidewalks leading towards the Grand Place entrance of the square, there is quite a bit to unpack in terms of theory. The entrance to the square is fenced off as a result of anxiety around crime within the area. The enterprise offer eyes on the street. The overhang of the building allows for shading and shelter from rain. The parking along the edge are used often, this creates a barrier, creating unpleasant experiences for pedestrians. The gazebos in the back are used by hawkers which provides activity in the space.

One could argue that sidewalks make up most of the public space in any city, suburb, or township, and it is vital to highlight how little attention is paid to the sidewalks in the Lenasia CBD. Was it designed poorly initially, or has the increasing lack of care and use of vehicles led to its failure?

This portion will look at sidewalks in the city from a theoretical and observational perspective. The theory will directly link it to the failures and successes of the Lenasia CBD sidewalks and their relation to the surrounding context. A lot of information about sidewalks will be linked back to Jane Jacob's urban theory. (Jacobs,1961) Jane Jacobs looks at sidewalk safety. What about sidewalks that draw people towards them and make contact with a diverse range of people?

Jane Jacob begins by explaining how the streets are vital organs of the city, and their relation to everything else is important. Streets are the gateway to safety. The importance of feeling safe around strangers is looked at; this applies to the Lenasia CBD, even though it is not as big as a city. The constant flow of migrant workers, learners, shoppers, and immigrants has reduced the permanent sense of familiarity within the CBD, thus creating a space for strangers.

It takes very little violence for people to fear using a street; thinning out streets does not reduce crime. Jacobs uses the example of a single form of violence like a robbery to instill fear in people about not using certain spaces. The streets becoming quiet leave them with no eyes, thus creating unsafe spaces. This is reinforced in the CBD, as there is a lot of anxiety around crime, and one incident may divert large groups of people away from the space. The anxiety around Lenasia Square is a combination of stories of crimes and prejudice towards certain groups.

A city equipped for strangers needs three main qualities. These consist of clear demarcations of private and public spaces and eyes on the street that include enterprise proprietors and residents, as they play a vital role in looking out for things that stand out. Lastly, sidewalks with fairly continuous users and people in the buildings along the sidewalks (Jacobs, 1961) Surveillance through eyes on the street is a theory that Jane Jacobs applies to how the city manages safety, as well as the argument that she has made based on observations in some cities of people wanting to be around people. Looking from a post-COVID point of view is interesting, as one could argue that after a year of isolation, there is a desire for humans to want to be around other humans. How does one encourage a fair number of users along the sidewalk?

Activating the space through enterprises such as stores, restaurants, public spaces, and enterprises open at night along these sidewalks encourages diverse groups of people to use the spaces. An assortment of groups use spaces at different times, thus having a good number of users all the time. As mentioned before, residents and enterprise proprietors within enterprises are helpful, and street watchers are equally as important as users. They play an important role in intervening if things seem off. An example of this based on Jane Jacob's experience was that while waiting for a bus, a resident yelled from the window of her apartment, stating that the bus does not operate on Saturdays, and gave directions on where to go. (Jacobs, 1961) I have encountered a lot of helpful people when mapping Newtown and Fordsburg. The dynamics are so different, as Fordsburg has so many eyes on the street compared to Newtown. This is due to the shopfronts, the school and housing developments, and the variety of people walking through the space. In the case of South Africa, beggars and carguards are helpful, as people often develop a sense of trust around the carguards and beggars whom they see every day. I was waiting for a bus one day, and a beggar to whom I would give coins told me that the bus had already passed by.

While the Lenasia CBD has diverse users, the sidewalk conditions are poor. Very few enterprises open on Sunday, and almost none open at night. Promoting more programmes open for long periods and accommodating people at different times Redesigning sidewalks and public spaces can encourage more sidewalk users and create more watchers. Incorporating good lighting becomes vital for night walkers. (Jacobs, 1961) What do sidewalks offer that organised public spaces do not? Why do informal sidewalks perform better than formal gathering spaces?

There are a series of activators that allow for continuous use of sidewalks that contribute to safety:

1.Continuous eyes on the street through
  -Balconies
  -Enterprises with glazed facades
2.Diversity of use
  -Diverse range of enterprises
  -Mixed zoning
3.Urban Furniture
  -Placement of seating spaces,
  -Bins
  -Lighting
  -Shading devices
4.Vegetation
5.Thresholds
6.Accessibility

Figure 2.1.2
(Author)

The watercolour sketch shows the street leading to the Grand Place entrance to the square, this portion has an interesting relation with the rest of street as it is what woould draw people into street which will lead to the square. Adequate shading device and urban furniture is needed to draw people to it.

2.2 Open public space - Exploring dedicated public space theory

This portion of the chapter explores several principles that revolve around the design of successful open public spaces such as squares, parks, and more. The same basic ideas of what makes a good sidewalk can apply to open public spaces. There must be a good distinction between private and public; there should be consistent use. Lastly, there should be the eyes of proprietors and even residents. (Jacobs, 1961) An empirical study of enclosed squares will also be looked at to understand the ratios.

Squares or dedicated public space

The study tests the urban theorist principles of their given depth/height (d/h) ratios, which all differ. The study refers to the optimum depth or width of the public space compared to the height of the building. The paper notes that, most of the time, theories are based on intuition. The study looked at using VR as a way to control the experiment. The outcomes were based on participants choosing how the space feels. The categories are openness, magnificence, cosy, daunting, and good. Calculations revealed that the ratio based on the research was greater than that of the theorists. The theorist ratios ranged from 2/1 to 3/1, and the results were 4/1 to 6/1. The study suggests that people feel the optimal d/h is shorter than claimed by theorists. However, taking facades, atmosphere, and so much more into consideration may allow for buildings to be taller.

Lenasia Square consists of single-story, double-story, and triple-story buildings. According to the study, the ratios work well for buildings that are 12 metres high.

The d/h ratio works within the square; the problem is a change in levels of the green space area and the amphitheatre. How people occupy a space is crucial. An important aspect that needs to be accommodated in Lenasia Square is the vendors, as currently they are set up around the raised portion of the square, blocking the seating. Can they be better accommodated while accommodating seating areas?

Beyond depth and height ratios, a series of other drivers contribute to the success and failure of a space. The analysis of public space takes into account land use, levels, surfacing, urban furniture, diversity, visibility, architecture, and amenities.

A watercolour sketch of Lenasia Square shows how the hawkers set up the seating. Monday through Saturday, the seating areas are blocked by hawkers set up. The sketch is based on a site visit on a Sunday. The square is often quiet on a Sunday, like the rest as the the CBD, as majority of shops are closed.

Figure 2.2.1
(Author)

Parks

Addressing parks to understand the theory and how it may be applied to more types of public spaces A lot of public space has the ability to be an urban playground that follows the principles of a park.

The definition of a park has a broad spectrum, as per the Cambridge ("park," 2023) dictionary:

1. A large area of land, usually with grass and trees, usually surrounded by fences or walls, and specially arranged for people to walk and children to play.
2. An area or land used for a specific purpose
3. An area of land for playing sports on
4. An area of land around a large house

This portion will look at forms of public parks and how they contribute to neighbourhoods. Do parks have the ability to uplift the community, or is it a misconception? Jane Jacobs expresses how there is a common misconception that parks or open park-like spaces are places for conventionally deprived neighbourhoods; it should be that parks are places that need the boon of life and appreciation. (Jacobs, 1961) This very much applies to Lenasia, as many parks are not successful and are considered unsafe due to Lenasia, which will be discussed. The users of the park determine its success and have the ability to be a delightful feature and an economic asset to the city. The same may be said for any public space design. The Lenasia square design is received quite poorly, but it does have the potential to be an asset if the needs and wants of the users are accommodated.

Parks tend to be very popular or unpopular. (Jacobs, 1961) The behaviour of a park is far from simple; parks are affected by the type of neighbourhood. One must understand the users, and the placement of the park becomes crucial in creating a successful neighbourhood park. The planning of the neighbourhood and zoning play an integral role. Unused parks have the same problem as streets without eyes: vandalism occurs to equipment. (Jacobs, 1961) As mentioned before, neighbourhood parks are drastically affected by the neighbourhood, and in no way can a park alone be used to uplift a community. The placement of parks is vital to its success. Sites where people may pass are more likely to work. It should not look deserted by outsiders. Observations of existing open spaces are crucial in designing parks. Just like sidewalks, successful parks have a diverse range of users that are present at different times. Parks should not feel like jails. (Jacobs, 1961) Factors in the park design: intricacy, centring, sun, and closure. This very much applies to public square design, as the lighting, placement of components, and enclosure are factors that contribute to the atmosphere.

The study of parks allows one to understand how they work in different spaces. Does having a dedicated green space in the CBD benefit it, or does it just become another space that needs to be maintained? The existing square has a green space in the centre, but despite the entire square being filled with vendors, the green space is not used well. Do the surrounding enterprises impact whether people choose to use the space?

Precedents

People's Square Park

People's Square Park in Singapore is an example of a well-designed, active public space. The movement routes of people were a driver of the design, thus the success of pedestrian activity. People's Square Park accommodates several users and does not segregate tourist and residential spaces. The plaza is intended to group the buildings to complement movement from one building to another. Climate conditions in Singapore allow for a higher depth/height ratio to allow for cool, shaded spaces. Engagement on the ground floor is crucial to the success of the plaza.

People's Square Park is easily accessible and hosts food stalls, which act as a driver of activation. The openness of the ground through the use of high ceilings and the integration of the food court and access to the mall being open rather than closed off with glazing makes it visually and physically permeable. While there is a slight raise to the threshold of inside and outside, ramps are provided. A series of seating arrangements around the planter and tables and chairs are provided. The shape is a T shape, which acts as large corridors for the food kiosks and court that go into the Chinatown complex. (Heng and Chan, 2000)

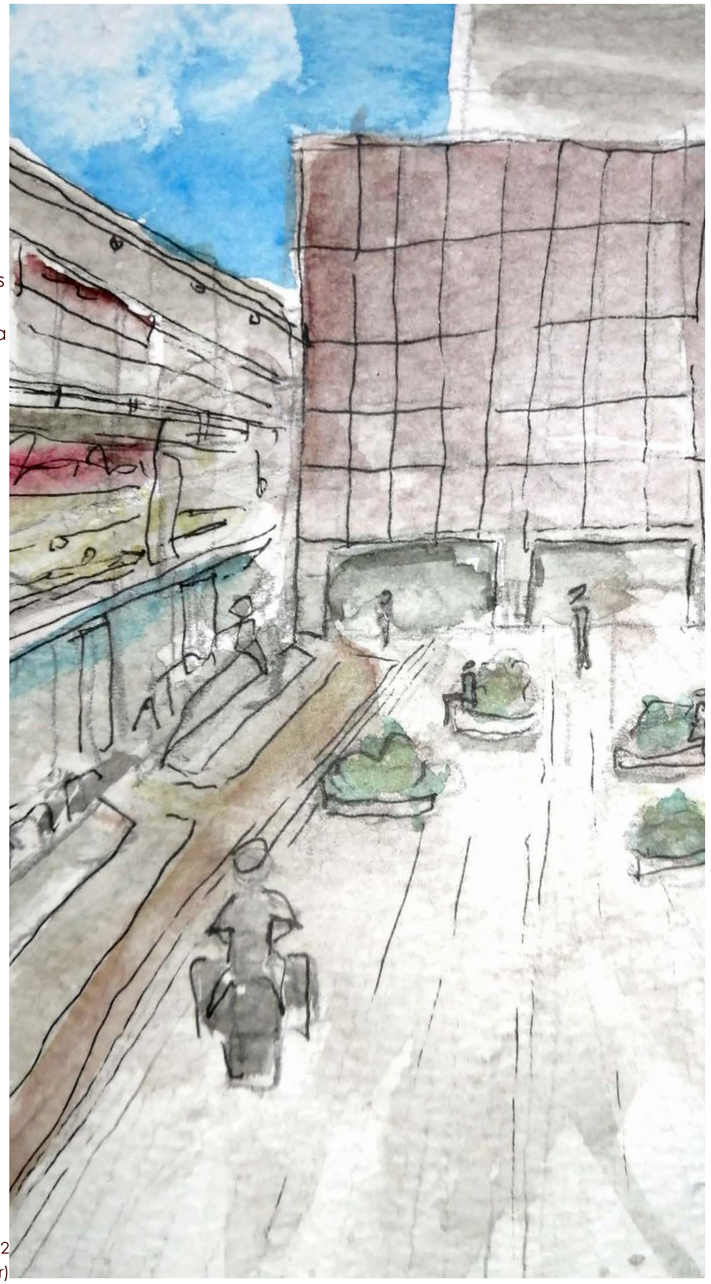

Figure 2.2.2
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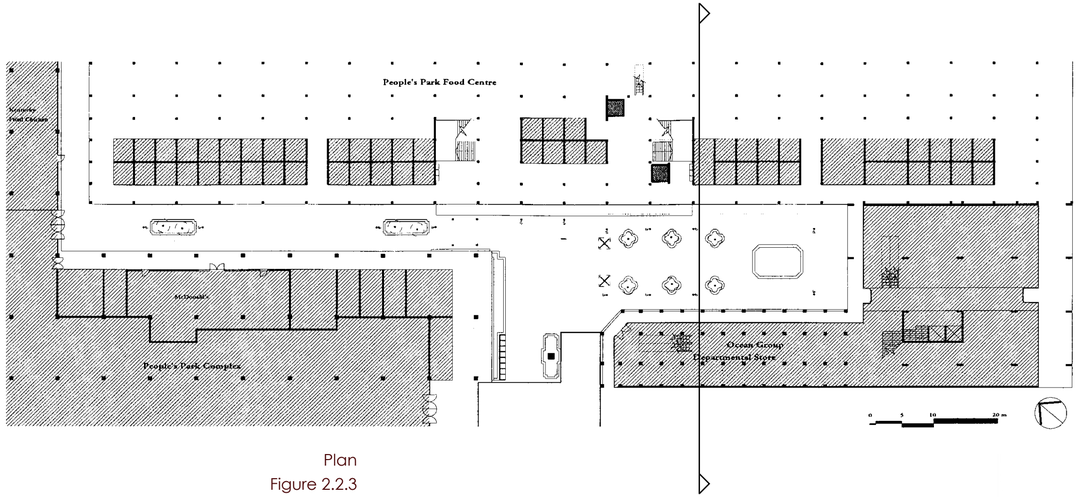
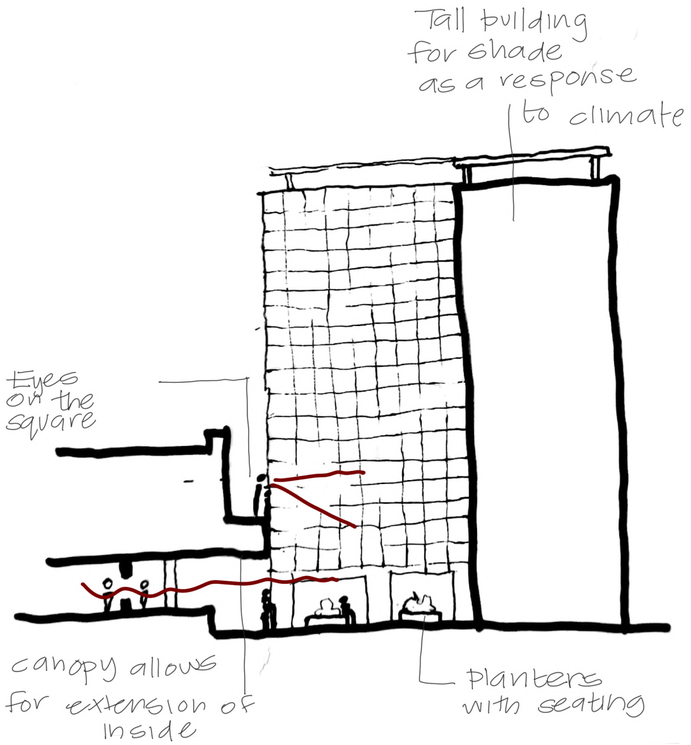


Plan
Figure 2.2.3
(Heng and Chan, 2000)



Section
Figure 2.2.4
(Author)

Israel's Plads

Denmark's capital, Copenhagen, is known for its groundbreaking moves towards sustainability. The cutting-edge public space and bicycle culture allow for a more thoughtful urbanscape. Israels Plads is part of a strategy to create more urban life and less traffic. The designers refer to the project as an urban playground for all ages. The plaza is an open space with an oval that has a sitting space on its circumference. The seating space slopes gently into a basketball court. The seating is designed around a tree and is repeated throughout the public space. Stepped seating was placed on diagonal corners of the plaza to allow for people-watching. The images and drawings below analyse the plaza on a series of scales.("Learning from Copenhagen," 2021)

The easily accessible space is highly focused on activation through turning parking lots into spaces that celebrate urban life. A ramp leads to basement parking. The levels go with the shallow slope of the natural ground, with a combination of steps and ramped spaces. Basketball courts are integrated into the design, as is space for skaters. These amenities work well for activating the space. The space has a variety of urban furniture, from steps to seating around trees to dedicated floor seating by manipulating the levels around the court. The water feature was designed to deal with storm water.
("Cobe - Israels Plads," n.d.)

The surrounding buildings are filled with a diverse range of uses. There are schools, clothing stores, restaurants, an ENT, a yoga studio, a cafe, a hotel, and a park. This allows for a diverse range of users throughout the day. There is no differentiation between the tourist or traveller and the local, as the mixed use allows for it to be used by everyone.

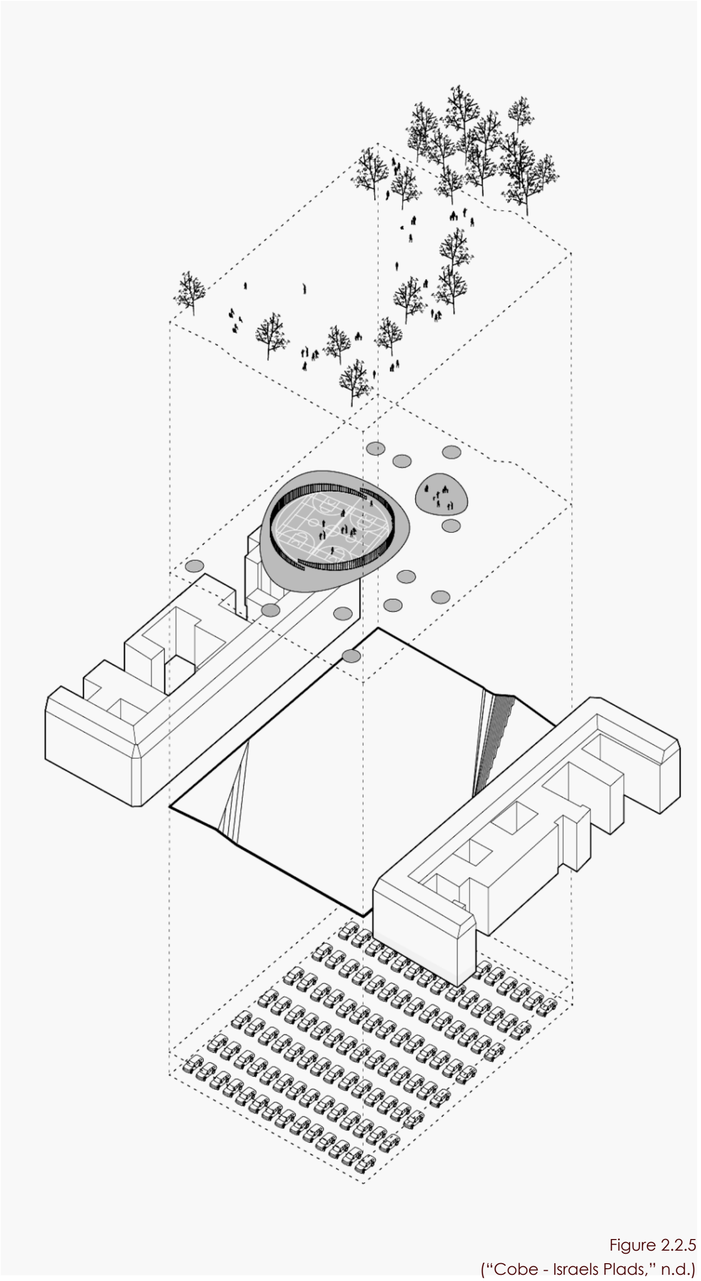


Figure 2.2.5
("Cobe - Israels Plads," n.d.)

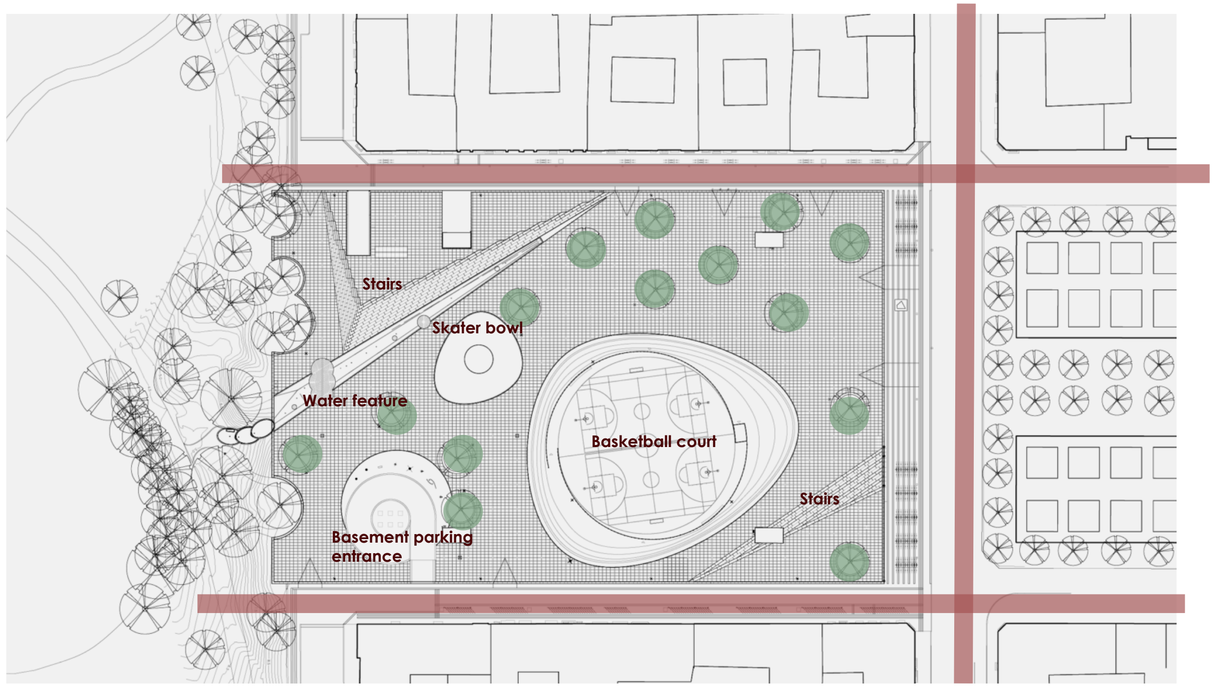


Figure 2.2.6
("Cobe - Israels Plads," n.d.)

Figure 2.2.7
(Author)

Figure 2.2.8
("Cobe - Israels Plads," n.d.)

Greenmarket Square

Greenmarket Square serves as an informal market site. The square is 4200 square metres. Buildings range from 2–9 stories, with most closer to 7 and 8. The calculations of the depth/height ratio used account for all four elevations. The nine-storey elevation has a ratio of 1,66/1. The eight storey is 1.8/1, the two storey is 8.75/1, and the last has a five- and eight storey building. The depth/height ratios are all over the place, yet it does not feel too open or daunting with the higher buildings present. The architecture present is a mix of Edwardian and Art Deco buildings; the maintenance and look of the buildings allow it to feel like a standard European square. The stalls in the centre of the square break away from that. Adding a layer of cosiness makes the ratios feel less daunting. The drawing below will show how the square works at several scales.

The main function of the space is to host tourists. There are hotels, a café, a church, an African artefact store, and a market. Perhaps the café will introduce locals to the space. The space in terms of visibility works well, as there aren't long, narrow avenues that lead into the square; it is directly accessible from several streets. The irregular heights among buildings create a balance of openness and closeness. The market stall set-ups create an intimate ground-floor programme. The level of the square is flat, with the surfacing being a mixture of pebbles and pavement.
The trees create interesting moments within the market space and are used to attach strings to hang textiles. The edges differ for each street elevation; the café edge works quite well with the square. The space does not have much urban furniture; there are no seating or shading devices for people to wait around.

The constant eyes on the street and the openness of the square allow for a level of safety. The space being well maintained is another factor that allows it to feel safe. It is important to note that this is a tourist spot, which may contribute to the success of the space. Tourists do not have the same anxiety around public spaces.

Figure 2.2.9
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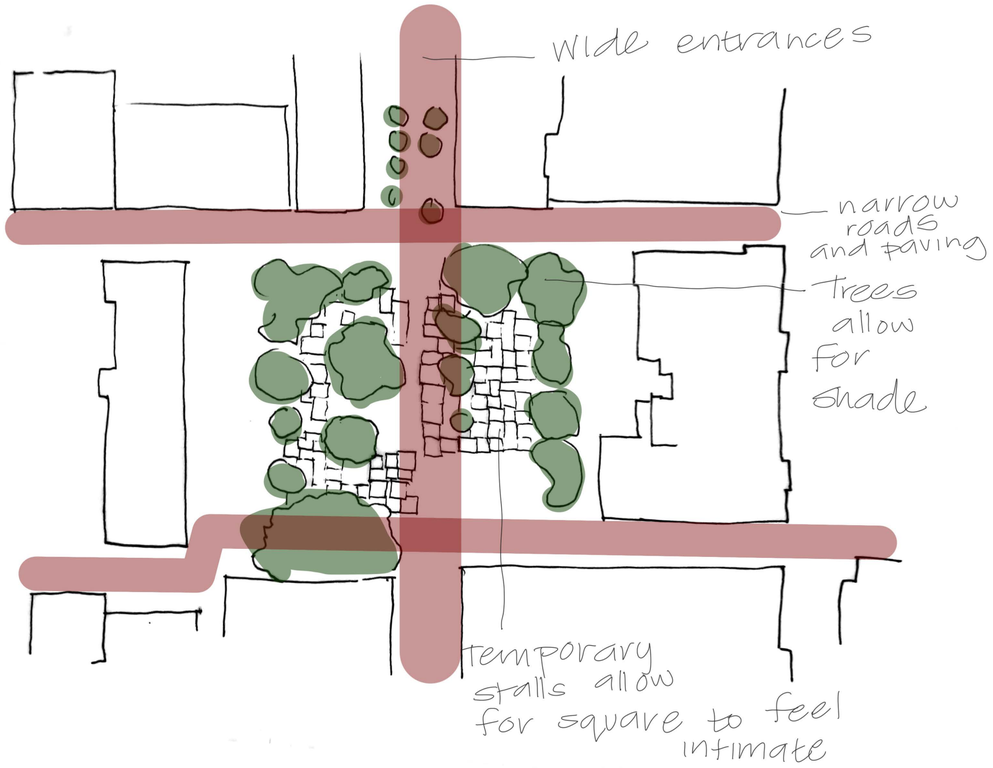

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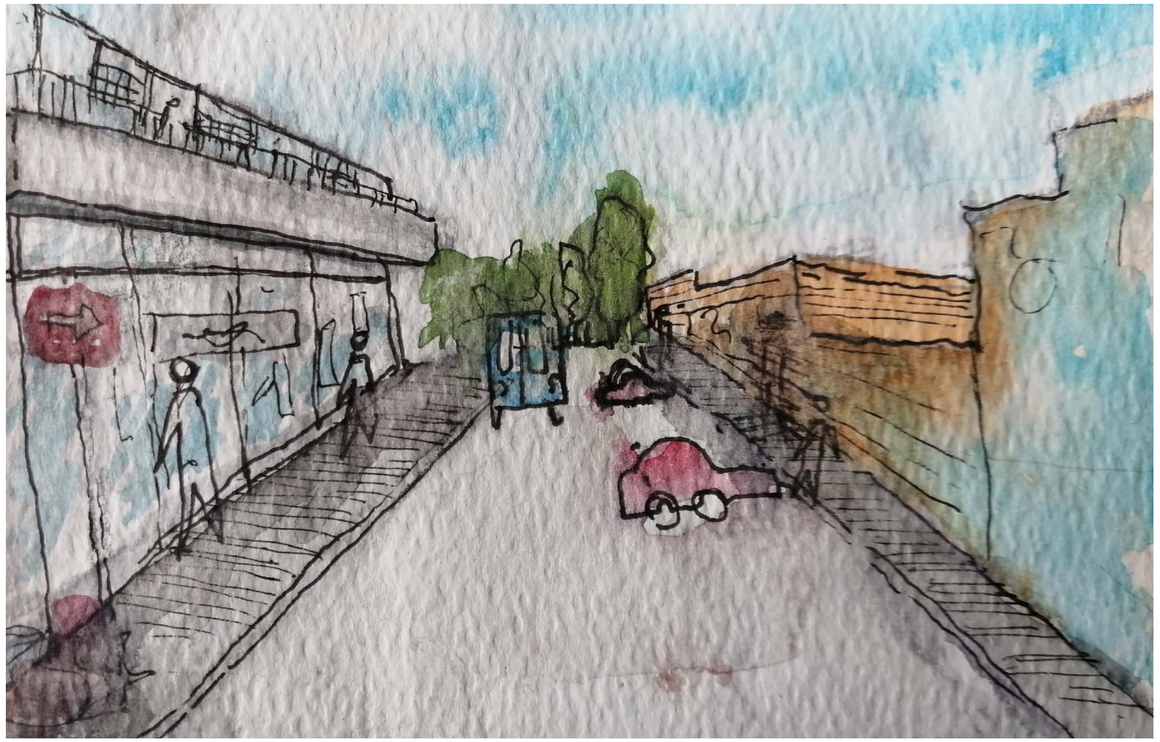

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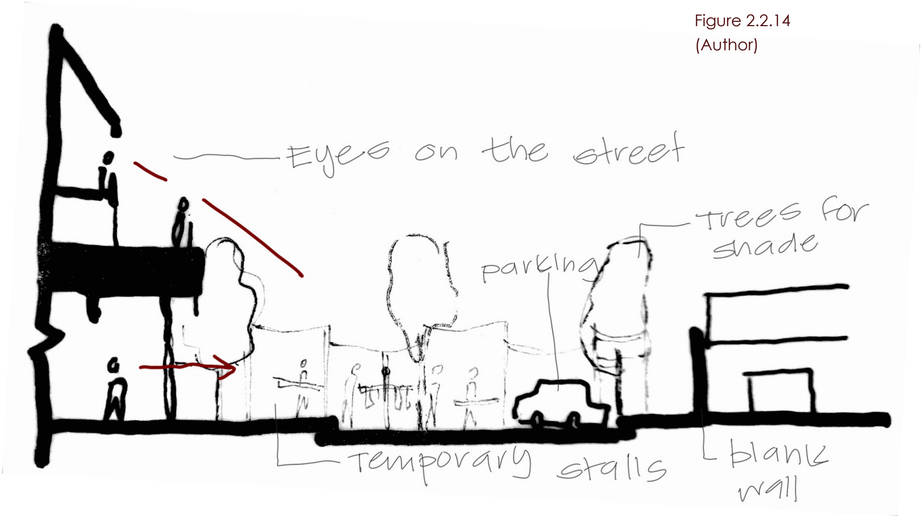
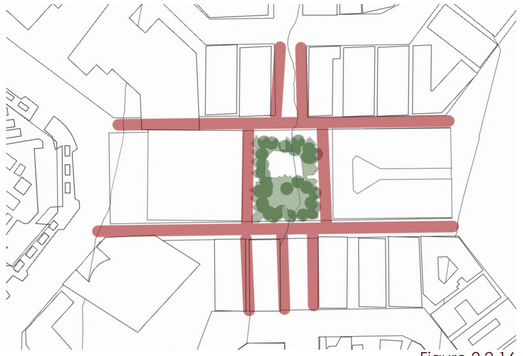


Figure 2.2.15
(Author)

The square entrances are not celebrated, the buildings have canopies which allow for shade, the retail on ground floor allows for eyes on the street. The issue around the square is that there needs to be activity or amenities to encourage people to stay and use the space. The lack of seating and accommodations for the hawkers is something that would need to be addressed in the design intervention.



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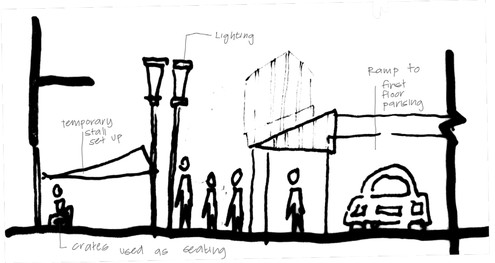

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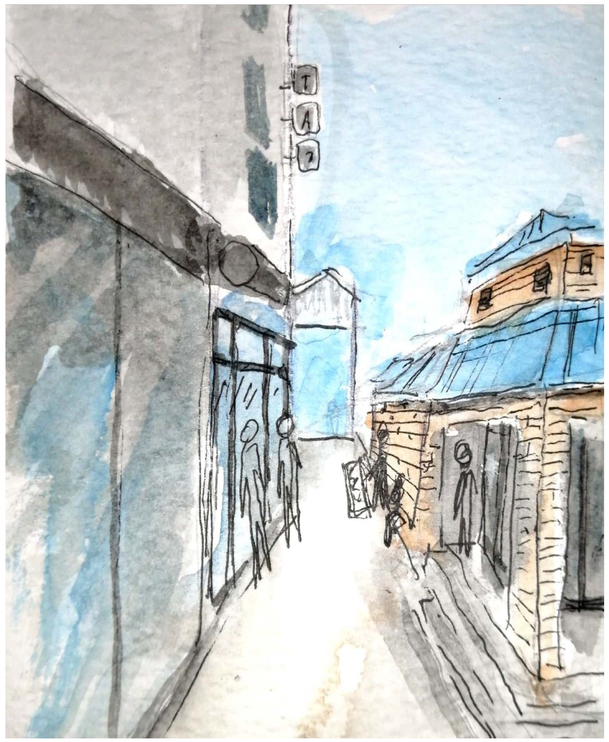

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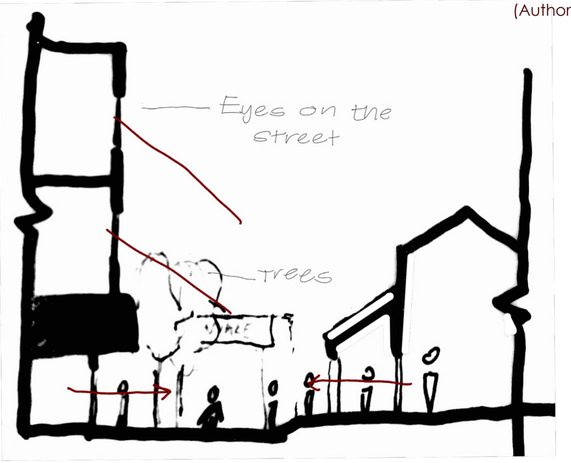

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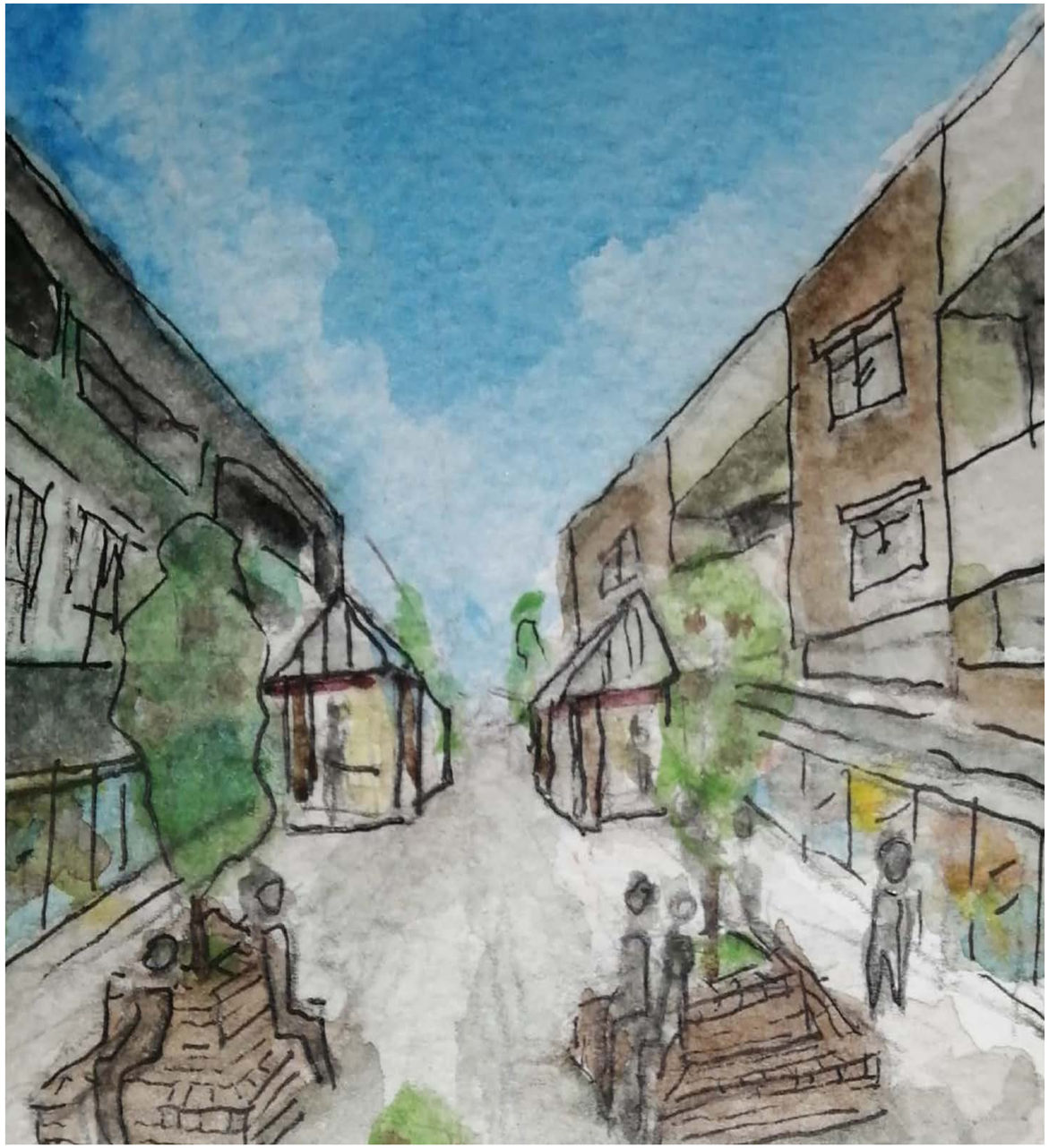

Figure 2.2.20
(Author)

The drawing on the left was done for a community meeting; the brief was to inspire the community and promote community building. It is a sketch of the entrance of Lenasia Square, contrasting its current state with minor adjustments such as adding vegetation and grass. Beginning to promote vibrant and maintained public spaces to highlight the importance of public space. The meeting was interesting as everyone set in a circle and got to voice their ideas and opinions, and a lot of people agreed that part of addressing these traumas and anxiety is to break the cycle by walking and taking the initiative to create vibrant spaces through micro-changes. This very much links to the idea of placemaking, by developing spaces through community engagement.

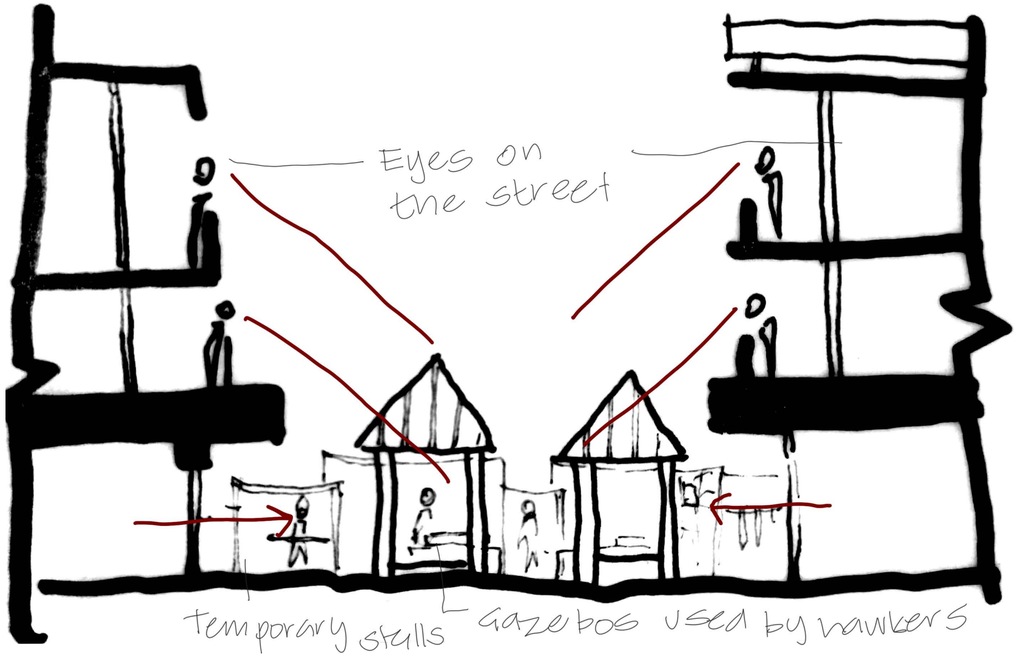

Figure 2.2.21
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2.3 Anxious Lenasia - Anxiety around Public Space in South Africa

The rise of anxiety around crime has caused people to fence off spaces. South Africans are enclosing themselves as the news of crimes increasing is spreading like a plague. While applying design principles is vital, it is also crucial to understand the deep-rooted anxiety around crime in open public spaces in South Africa.

These anxieties tend to be greater in marginalised areas in South Africa (this might be a global issue). Nicky Falkof, author of Worrier States, looks at the deep-rooted anxieties and fears of South African residents and how they exist. Grounded in social, cultural, political, racial, and historical components. She also explains, based on her research, that mass media consumption plays a role in the larger global anxiety that South Africa is heavily influenced by. (Falkof, 2022)

Stories of crimes spread, and people started warning each other through WhatsApp groups and by word. A lady who spoke of the dangers of the CBD repeated the same story of one person getting their earrings stolen. She also spoke of how her domestic worker had warned her not to go into certain areas of the CBD, specifically near the taxi rank. Residents are more anxious about going anywhere in the taxi rank because they perceive the business there to be chaotic. A response from someone I interviewed stated that maintenance and community security would allow people to feel safe.

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the history of trauma has embedded a deep inequality that feeds into anxieties about space. During a community meeting held by a new political party on the First of September 2023, a lady from Themb'elihle (an informal settlement in Lenasia) stated how people from Themb'elihle are often overlooked and stigmatised. Addressing stories of inequalities becomes part of the healing process. The dialogue that occurred during that meeting was between Lenasia, Lehae, and Themb'elihle residents as an initiative of the party to provoke ideas of micro-changes within the community that tackle products of inequality such as unemployment and education. Overcoming traumas by healing through dialogue and organisation becomes crucial to creating vibrant public spaces.

URBAN RENEWAL
CHAPTER 3

Urban renewal is the process of redeveloping an area in decay to enhance the living quality of its residents and visitors. This chapter will discuss the principles and consequences of urban renewal. A lot of the principles in terms of city design will be based on the Jane Jacobs theories discussed in Chapter 2.

Figure 3.0.1(Author)

3.1 Regeneration-Principles and Considerations of Urban Renewal

Urban regeneration revolves around understanding the successes and failures of the city to create a city with spaces that encourage a diverse range of users. Additional principles aside from the ones mentioned in the chapter are ("Publications – Best practice principles for urban renewal," 2016):

1.Creating shared value for the long-term public interest.
2.Developing the plan with stakeholders.
3.Take a long-term view.
4.Agree on the non-negotiable, including design standards.
5.Reasonable financial profile.
6.Establish clear development objectives.
7.Establish clear development programmes to meet objectives.
8.Embody localness and reintegrate with the surroundings.
9.Evaluate from a holistic perspective to maximise net community benefits.
10.Align the procurement model with the planning vision.

Several considerations arise when participating in urban development programmes, several of which derive from social, economic, and political considerations.

Among many areas of South Africa, Lenasia has social, political, and cultural considerations to take into consideration as the redevelopment links to designing spaces of segregation and traumatic histories. Lenasia had been formed as an 'Indian' township, leaving certain cultural and social aspects to shape the everyday lives of residents. The shift in demographics calls for a regeneration that is inclusive of old and new social and cultural aspects.

Political history around urban regeneration brings about the question of how architects can use regeneration to commemorate and create an identity around the past, as it is important for marginalised communities to show their identities rather than have

generic-looking cities, townships, or CBD's.

It is also important to understand the types of implications that accompany urban regeneration and not go in the direction of any negative result. Gentrification and displacement of residents are two negative implications that may put residents in a difficult situation, which is against urban development ideologies.

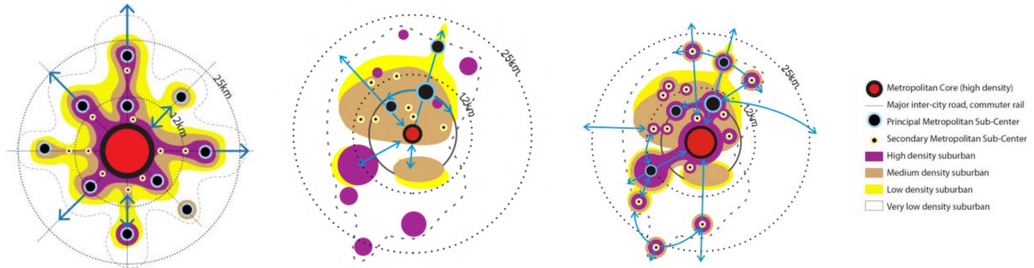
Positive implications may include improved infrastructure and increased value in property if dealt with correctly.

3.2 IDP and SDF - Analysing development frameworks

The JDA has a set of goals for the future of the city. Lenasia is one of the areas among many that is a priority node. The integrated development plan is a requirement for every municipality in South Africa. Its contents contain spatial planning and disaster management.

There are a number of growth and development outcomes set up by the JDA for the city. The outcomes are as follows: improved quality of life and development-driven resilience for all. Secondly, provide a sustainable, resilient urban environment. Thirdly, a smart economy that harnesses the potential of citizens, and lastly, a government that proactively contributes to that, contributes to an inclusive and sustainable city region. ("Draft Spatial Development Framework 2040 (2021/22 update)," n.d.)

The city's main goal, as per the Spatial development framework, is to create a polycentric city. A city with multiple transit nodes in various suburbs is what the city is building towards.



Traditional polycentric city model | Johannesburg's currents city model | Johannesburg's future city model

Figure 3.2.1
(SDF,2016)

3.3 Gapp Urban Renewal - Plans of Lenasia

The Lenasia CBD, being the central point for all surrounding areas such as Orange Farm, Lehae, Lenasia South, and much more, has been deemed a priority node as per the city nodal policy.

A tendering process had led to Gapp architects taking on the redevelopment of the existing taxi rank, which also included reworking sidewalks within the CBD area to enhance the pedestrian experience. (Gapp Architects/Urban Designers, 2019) The project requirements consisted of upgrading the Lenasia CBD with a focus on public identity and the creation of a high-quality public environment.

The Gapp project requirements were to upgrade the Lenasia CBD with a focus on place identity and the creation of a high-quality public environment. (Gapp Architects/Urban Designers, 2019). Their problem statement consisted of the Lenasia CBD being in a state of decline and a lack of distinction between taxis, pedestrians, and traders. Concerns about safety, the underperforming economy, and the lack of urban management were among the problems. The purpose was to create a safe, attractive, and liveable environment. Encouraging owners to upgrade their buildings and promote improved social cohesion. Another purpose was to encourage more investments to be put into the area.

The works included regenerating the taxi rank and sidewalks by including street furniture and bus shelters, repaving, and better lighting.

The goal of the Gapp urban design plan is to enhance pedestrian experience through vegetation and urban furniture. Allowing for vibrant sidewalks that integrate with the building edge.

Gapp Urban renewal plan
Figure 3.3.1
(Gapp,2019)

The Gapp urban plan works on public-environment upgrades of the taxi rank, which have already been done. The train station interface, sidewalks, and public square are included on the list of upgrades due. A lot of the design focuses on basic infrastructure upgrades. While those upgrades are really important, links to identity and addressing the impacts of apartheid on Lenasia are crucial in the redevelopment, as the urban fabric alone will not address issues around trauma, a sense of belonging, and pride.

While it does address sidewalks, there is a disconnect between highlighting the relationship between the building edge, the pavement, and the street.

The parking lots are not addressed; increasing walkability reduces the need for parking lots. The thesis addresses this by addressing public space design in Chapter 2 and lots. the design intervention of the Activism Centre that allows for addressing inequalities and anxieties within the space.

Gapp Urban renewal plan
Figure 3.3.2
(Gapp,2019)

3.4 Transport- Travelling in and out of Lenasia

The transport system around and out of Lenasia is primarily private or taxi-based. There are private buses that travel out but are limited to certain areas and are not easily accessible to people who do not know anyone travelling on the bus.

Lenasia needs to be included in an overall reliable transport system, and the IDP does not mention anything other than the train, which often is not operating, and when it does, it is not very liable.

A bus rapid transit(BRT) system needs to be put in place for residents to use within Lenasia and out, or it may link to a more reliable train system with the incorporation of taxis along the way.

Transport is a tool of healing. Having to wake up at 5 oclock in the morning to take a bus to campus when Fietas is just a walking distance away... That dislocation from the city is so intergral to trauma within Lenasia and many other areas in the south of Johannesburg. It is one of the reasons why people would move out of Lenasia. However, the use of efficient transport systems and easy access to travel to other areas may perhaps act as a driver to encourage people to stay. Having easy access may also have the ability to decentralise certain spaces.

Phenomenology, Placemaking and Identity
Chapter 4

This chapter will explore architectural theories that revolve around the embodiment of sense, culture, and the overall human experience of place. These theories may also be applied to urban design, as a lot of public space design needs to account for how people feel in spaces. Understanding the scale of the built environment in relation to bodies is crucial to designing a public place.

Phenomonology is embodying all senses; one could argue that this could be used in a good way and a bad way. Oppressive groups have used methods of embodying senses through dislocating, disorienting, dehumanising, and stripping marginalised groups of their identity. The way in which enslaved people were shipped away from their homes and given new identities to appeal to the colonisers. Space and how we perceive it have shifted to how colonisers made people see it. The apartheid planning is an example of how space was used to disorient and fragment people. Overcoming the planning through wholesome embodying of space to be able to heal from traumas of the past.

Phenomonology, placmaking, and reestablishing identity play an important role in the healing of space as they have the ability to tell stories of the past in sombre or celebratory ways.

4.1 **Phenomenology-** Emboding senses

Phenomenology in architecture is about understanding how people experience a space. (Pallasmaa, 2019) Juhani Pallasma argues for viewing architecture as a way of communicating the power and embodied experience of the built environment through multisensory experiences.

This experience covers more than just viewing; it considers little details and how these details contribute to the larger story. How people perceive their environment is so important; we are trained as architects to design for human scale, part of an overall human scale, which speaks to perception. Lenasia has a palimpsest of history, culture, religion, politics, and constant change. The narrative of place shows that designing public spaces to commemorate through embodying the human experience should be explored. Over the years, interests in ambiences and atmospheres have emerged and widened the scope of architectural experiences. The philosophy of Rudolf Steiner recognises twelve senses. These are touch, life, self-movement, balance, smell, taste, vision, temperature, hearing, language, conceptual, and ego. (Pallasmaa, 2019)

Architecture and urban design primarily revolve around visual components. However, it is an embodiment of all senses. Visual experiences tend to overpower other senses. At times, visuality can be used as a gateway to other senses. (Pallasmaa, 2019)

Sound in public spaces is often not designed for. Designing acoustics for auditoriums and concert halls is common. However, very little attention goes into embodying sound in public places. The function of sound in a public space is to create an ambience. (Pallasmaa, 2019)

Memories of Lenasia often look at nostalgic childhoods rather than the idea of forced removals and segregation. Perhaps the nostalgia of a community that, in a way, was a refuge community that was developing becomes a way of coping with the trauma. The dispersement of that community through people leaving may perhaps disrupt the idea of the community being there for each other or as it was in the past. Stories of the past often go back to walking to school, going to the shops, and celebrating. Celebrating the community becomes an important part of healing as it reflects back to a time when the idea of community was at its peak. An activist in Dr. Ismail Vadi's book expressed that it was a rewarding experience to live in Lenasia as the root of his activism and fighting the struggle of apartheid started within the area due to the groups that took initiative. Commemorating freedom fighters is integral to healing, as they played an important role in fighting the unusual events that have caused trauma within marginalised spaces.

Architectural design often overlooks smell and taste. Smell has the ability to trigger memory. My project relies heavily on memory and commemoration. Adding a layer of smell through materiality or vegetation can add to the experience of the space.

4.2 **Placemaking -** Community engagement

Placemaking is based on the principles of Jane Jacob's theory and aligns with the core principles of phenomenology. ("What is placemaking?" n.d.) Placemaking is about building communities around places. It allows people to reimagine and reinvent public spaces as their heart. ("What is placemaking?" n.d.) It is a collaborative process that facilitates creative usage patterns. Social, cultural, and identity factors that define place and support change are vital to placemaking. Taking ownership of streets is spoken about by Jane Jacobs and is a crucial aspect of the collaborative placemaking process. The main problem with the CBD is that it began as a private development. The lack of interest of stakeholders in maintaining spaces has led to their slow decay. Core principles around placemaking are about integrating diverse opinions to work cohesively and translating the vision into a plan and programme of uses. Lastly, to ensure that it is sustainable, ("What is Placemaking? n.d.)

Placemaking is an interesting theory, as it values the needs of people and looks at how community engagement may improve places. Many community members are willing to help make improvements. My project looks at creating a platform to allow citizens to be active. How do we get stakeholders involved as well?

Does placemaking have the ability to heal traumatic spaces? Placemaking is:
Community Driven
Visionary
Values function over form.
Adaptable
Inclusive
Focused on creating destinations
Context-specific
Dynamic
Trans-disciplinary
Flexible
Collaborative
Sociable

The organisation that practices placemaking in several communities highlights these points as defining placemaking. These points speak to healing and responding to rapid change. Words like collaborative, social, and community-driven allow the integration of communal needs. The CBD formed a series of private developments with almost no input from community members, as evidenced by the lack of inclusion of well-designed public space. The introduction of new demographics calls for the collaboration of old and new identities. Inclusion in design is possible through collaboration and community participation.

4.3 Identity - Re-establishing a post-apartheid identity

The questions around personal and group identity seem to be everywhere. The racial politics of our past are influencing identity questions in post-apartheid South Africa. The question of architecture and identity in post-apartheid South Africa focuses on mediating identity through architectural design. Social and political context is a crucial topic when addressing collective identities. We live through multiple identities at different scales. It slides from personal to collective and back again. (Noble, 2014)

When addressing the identities of nations, there are aspects of the global economy and the needs of local people that form the identity. Questions around what a democratic, post-apartheid identity will look like for South Africa. Art and architecture in the past years have been explored with projects like the Apartheid Museum, Hector Peterson Memorial, Freedom Park, Constitution Court, and much more. These speak to a new identity through memorialisation and embodiment through materiality. The projects take on identity through the importance of a journey through space and time. They align themselves with their embodied senses. The identity of Lenasia is one of trauma. When addressed, people tend to speak of nostalgic moments. How can I use nostalgia as a point of healing for traumatic spaces? The Youth Activist Centre should be a space that heals trauma and celebrates nostalgia. (Noble, 2014)

The identity Lenasia is viewed by outsiders as a result of enforced Apartheid law. For residents, identities come from extensions—where you were schooled, religion, and so much more. Understanding how and what the driver is for a Lenasia that is inclusive becomes crucial.

The Greenmarket Square is a sensitive space in South African history. It speaks to a history of people being stripped of their identities and dehumanised by colonisers. The slave trade on Greenmarket Square is a traumatic part of South African history. Using the square as an informal market to sell souvenirs of African cultures from different parts of the continent can be read as a way of reinforcing cultures and identities that have been stripped away in the past by colonisers. The architecture of the space speaks to its colonial past, while the breakaway of the market creates a new identity for the place.

The route of the traumas within marginalised groups is that people were stripped of their identities through the group areas act and racial classification. They were forced to move from places in which they had homes, established identities, jobs, and communities. Many people have to watch their homes destroyed by bulldozers. It was almost as if the government wanted to erase their presence from Fietas. Through commemoration, one has the ability to celebrate the old identities that have been stripped away, preventing them from being erased from history. The trauma of having something snatched away has the ability to make one feel a lack of ownership and pride of place. Addressing the past and establishing bridges to new identities can heal how people feel about ownership and pride. Allowing for community input and giving importance to the needs and wants of the community help establish pride in the place, as seeing their contributions will allow people to feel as if they are part of the place. This ties back into Chapter One's discussions around demographics and how understanding demographics allows for a sense of belonging within a place.

The freedom charter was based on a movement that the people shall govern; overcoming traumas is key to allowing people to do so. Providing tool kits that help people heal and establish themselves through the lens of a democratic South Africa is crucial. The function of the activist centre is to provide tool kits and resources for people to voice their opinions and create micro-changes. The aim of Rise Mzanzi, a new political party, is to do just that: understand the needs of people and help make it possible through community collaboration. Community meetings should be about workshopping solutions to the problems posed.

In 2021, I had the opportunity to do a placemaking workshop with an organisation called Play Africa. It consisted of a group of children who were asked to draw and make things that they thought were improvements to the community. Allowing a similar format of workshopping for adults will allow for community-driven solutions to common issues.

The activist centre being a public building and the space around it being a public space that produces valuable urban life becomes an important part of helping Lenasia establish a collective identity.

Watercolour sketch of Freedom Park
emboding sense and sense and materility
to create a new identity
Figure 4.3.1
(Author)

Activism
Chapter 5

Activism defined by Cambridge University is the use of direct and noticeable action to achieve a result, usually a political or social one. ("ACTIVISM | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary," n.d.) Activism lies on a very broad spectrum, it may speak to a specific context, it may be a global issue, and it can revolve around cultural, social and political aspects.

5.1 Activism in South Africa: A brief understanding of activism in South Africa

There is a substantial link between activism, architecture, identity, placemaking, and phenomenology within the context of South Africa. (Noble, 2014) The history of South African colonisation and apartheid responded to resistance to struggle. Marginalised groups fought through boycotts, protests, educational movements, theatre performances, art, and more. The activism in this chapter will focus on anti-apartheid movements and resistance to apartheid-related struggles. Chapter One addresses the struggles in Lenasia and how they are linked to the rest of South Africa's political events. The activism was about fighting the struggle whilst revolving around community building.

5.2 Activist Theory: Exploring and Linking Theory

The overarching theory around activism is the theory of change. This speaks to the idea of social movements, as the outcome of these movements is change. This theory addresses many sub-theories. When speaking specifically to the history of South Africa, it begins to fall under race theory and fighting for equality. (Dittmar and Entin, 2014) The theory of struggle was taught to young activists at the Lenasia Youth League, which aligns with the theory of change.

A paper looks at the theory of change concerning idealism, materialism, and effectiveness. The author remarks that each aspect is crucial in defining the theory around art activism. (Dittmar and Entin, 2014) Idealism revolves around change through ideas. Materialism refers to ideas generated as a response to material conditions. Affectivism relates to emotions. The theory derived from these studies combines emotion, ideas, and material conditions when addressing artistic activism.

Using art and architecture as mediums for activism speaks to creating a new identity for post-apartheid South Africa. Phenomenology, in a way, deals with the theory of change through materialsism, affectivism, and idealism.

5.3 Placemaking, Identity, and Phenomenology: Unfolding Connections to Activism

In the past, colonisers and the apartheid regime dislocated marginalised groups through place, stripping away their identities through blanket classifications. Why do we still have to fill in racial classifications that were given to us by an oppressive government? How can we positively use placemaking and phenomenology to reshape spaces of trauma? How do we create new identities and commemorate the ones that have been erased?

Art and architecture have the ability to provoke thought and embody sense, so using them as a tool to create change becomes affective. It helps address traumas by facing them. Bernie Searle's addresses this. She speaks to the traumas of the spice trade and slavery by shifting the narrative.

Storytelling through Materiality

The materiality of the building was chosen to tell a story. There are metaphors revolving around the material choices as well as how they are used in the design.

The storytelling component will also be explored through the use of programmes, like places for performances, the acticism archive, and exhibiting or displaying the archive. The process of collecting memories and exchanging stories is a form of activism, as it speaks to taking charge and shifting narratives.

Concrete

The idea of using concrete was developed in the charrette process as a material used in brutalist government buildings unconventionally. Deconstructing the brutalist building to make it more personal and approachable was important to creating a form of activism.

Wet concrete is a blank canvas that embeds memories for years. The building itself becomes an archive of identity. This idea came to me as it reminded me how when there are wet concrete floors or plastered walls, someone is bound to walk on them by mistake or engrave their names on them. In the yard of my home, we have footprints of my siblings and me on the concrete from when we were young, which can spark memories. We recently found a plastered wall on which my grandfather had scratched a date; these all become special parts of the built environment that add a humane touch. It becomes proof of people existing in the space and can provoke memories when people are no longer around.

Steel

The use of steel came to mind as a way of inverting the matchbox-style home with the steel roofs to express how people in Lenasia often made alterations to their matchbox homes to suit their family's needs.

The patina of the steel can also reflect the time that has passed.

Glass

Glass, depending on the type, can allow full transparency, which is something that can speak to trust and visibility. Stained glass can cast interesting shadows and may be used to evoke different emotions within a space.

Activism as a Response to Anxiety: Linking Activism to Overcome Anxiety in South Africa

Activism becomes a strong tool to fight against the crimes that people's anxieties root from. It also can address many issues within South Africa like Gender-based violence, kidnapping and so much more. A space that is dedicated to educating people to fight for what is right and something that drives people to make the country a better place. It is purely about being an active citizen that allows the changes to occur. It also has the ability to address the inequalitites that is one of the causes of anxiety. The anxiety stems from the traumas of the Apartheid regime.

Communication and respect for each other play an important role in activism. Only when we start understanding the world through more than just one lens can the country begin to develop.

Charrette
Chapter 6

The charrette process opened up a dialogue between activism, urban strategies embodying senses, identity, and placemaking. All of these components contribute to creating a space that should be able to tackle issues of anxiety, lack of ownership, and, most importantly, healing within the community.

6.1 Material and Model Explorations - Developing Design through massing and material
The material exploration spoke to fluidity, delineation, and creating something that goes against the grain of traditional design. This spoke to taking a stance and allowing the building to stand out as an activism centre.

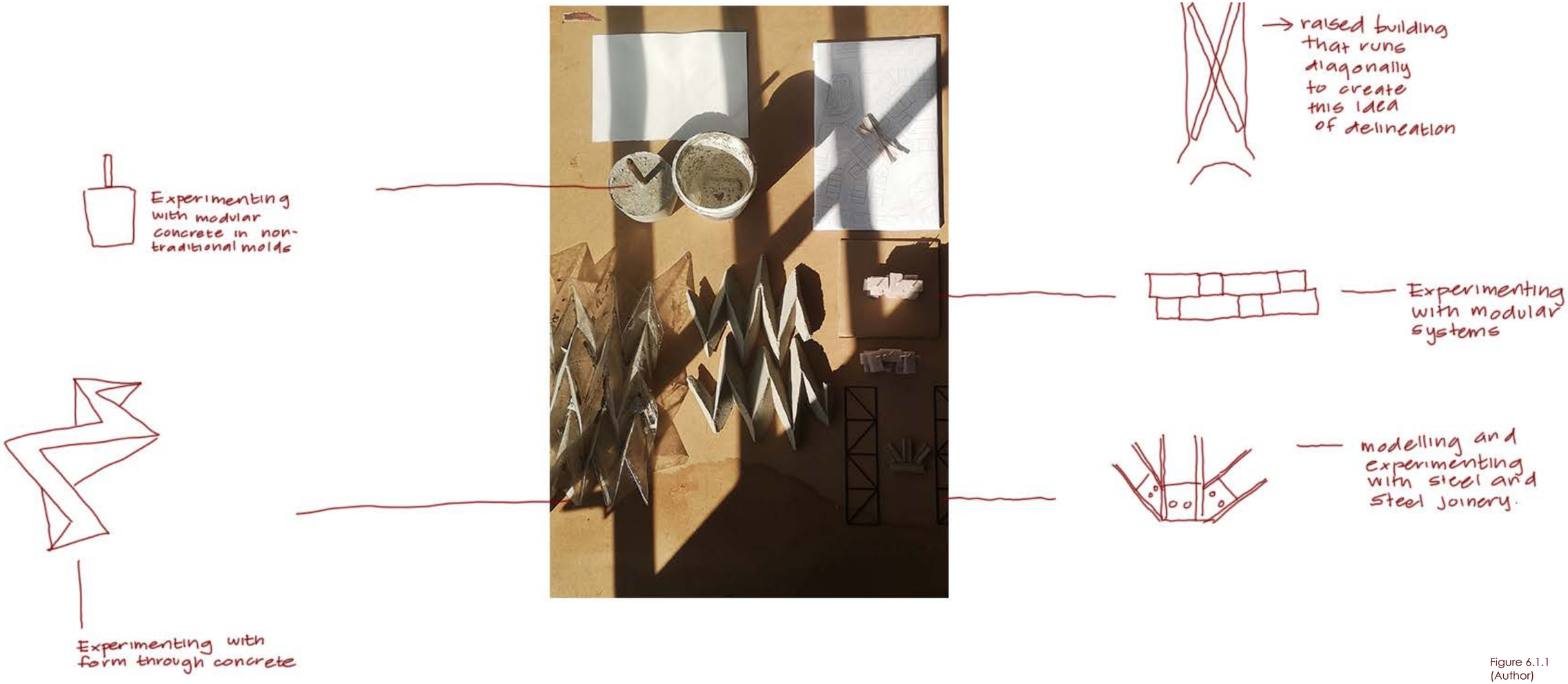


Figure 6.1.1
(Author)

Model 1

Figure 6.1.2
(Author)

Model One focused on creating a design that opened up the public space. Breaking up the existing buildings allowed for a direct opening of the square. However, the side entrances felt disconnected.

Model 2

Figure 6.1.3
(Author)

Model Two allowed for an open public space on the ground floor, while the building would hover above the ground like a canopy. This allowed the building to stand out as well as prioritise public space, which is a key aspect of this project.

Combining explorations

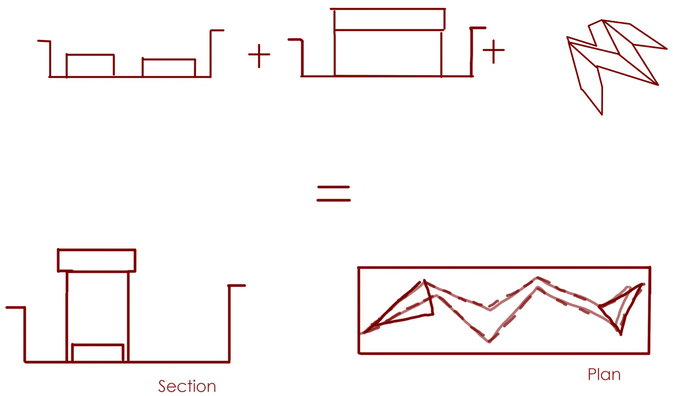


Figure 6.1.4
(Author)

Model Two allowed for an open public space on the ground floor, while the building would hover above the ground like a canopy. This allowed the building to stand out as well as prioritise public space, which is a key aspect of this project.

6.2 Playing with concrete - Explorative material influence on design process.

The architectural intervention is an Activism Centre that goes against the grain of the apartheid government and moves towards a democratic South African identity. As we discover that identity through healing past trauma's a new South Africa will emerge. It is interesting how materials can feel overwhelming and oppressive. Brutalist architecture used in Government building are often daunting and difficult to navigate. Deconstructing the Brutalist government building and allowing for it to be welcoming and easy to navigate. The use of concrete in a way that does not feel enclosed nut rather embeds memory. The heaviness of Brutalist building is something that was played with in my charrette process, how can the use of concrete in a different way allow the building to seem light as if it were hovering above. Inversing how steel and concrete is generally used to seem as if the concrete is floating on the steel structure to make it appear lighter.

As a case study, I looked at the Johannesburg Civic Centre. The building stands tall, and very little attention is paid to the public space around it. The building itself is a labyrinth with multiple wings, which is not very easy to move through. The watercolour sketch expresses the monotony of the brutalist building as well as its harshness. This analysis has allowed for the activist centre to be a deconstruction by using concrete in a way that feels like and reads like a canopy. The shape of the building also speaks to delineating away from designing a box. The zigzag shape influenced by the material exploration creates a dynamic shape that speaks to moving forward and creating new identities while rediscovering old ones through the archival portion of the project.

Figure 6.2
(Author)

Design Development
Chapter 7

7.1 Design intervention - Role of Activism

Lenasia has a strong history relating to activism. While the main form of activism revolved around anti-apartheid movements, the community members involved themselves in developing a sense of community through social and recreational developments such as sports clubs, concerts, performances, and even organising a youth festival. The activators became a way to build resilience within communities and create a drive to fight against the struggles of apartheid. Youth groups and other organisations involved themselves in humanitarian work by collecting blankets and clothes for those in need. (Vadi, 2023) Activism is a tool that helps fight against the traumas of the unjust society apartheid has created. Thus, commemorating it becomes part of the healing process. How can we use activism to address the issues of today? Providing communities with tool kits to assist in creating micro-changes will contribute to addressing trauma and urban decay in space. While addressing inequality through tackling unemployment and education. The project commemorates and celebrates the activism of the past while mobilising future activists. It is about forming a new identity through storytelling and celebrating.

The Lenasia CBD's poor planning has caused the urban fabric to remain stagnant. When the group areas act ended, a lot of residents moved out of Lenasia, with an influx of immigrants moving into the area. The lack of ownership and pride stems from a deep disconnection from the place.

In 2021, I had the opportunity to do a placemaking workshop with an organisation called Play Africa. It consisted of a group of children who were asked to draw and make things that they thought were improvements to the community. Allowing a similar format of workshopping for adults will allow for community-driven solutions to common issues.

The activist centre being a public building, and the space around it being a public space that produces valuable urban life, becomes an important part of helping Lenasia establish a collective identity.

My project looks at linking the past, present, and future through an information centre that hosts several events that respond to many issues. It should also have the ability to evolve as issues shift. The architectural intervention and urban master plan will consist of designing to create connections between amenities, transport nodes, and the surrounding neighbourhoods to break away from apartheid planning. In essence, the building itself will begin by going against the grain and forming a new identity. Acting as an anchor of knowledge for people with a cause to fight for or would like to respond to or help contribute with several programmes.

The programme will consist of three main interfaces, and each of these interfaces will be broken up into several programmes to help with everyday operations as well as events. These consist of a public interface, a volunteer interface, and a private interface, which will be for employees who will be running the facility, coordinating programmes, and hosting fundraisers that will sustain the space.

7.2 Programme - Exploration of interfaces

Public

The public interface is a core part of the architectural intervention as it promotes community engagement and adds value to urban life. The entire space around the building will be a public space that enhances connections with surrounding buildings and streets. Most of the building will be publicly accessible, with control measures taken into consideration through thoughtful planning. The ground floor will consist of a living archival exhibition. The café/restaurant, NGO offices, and bookstore will be used to activate the space and generate revenue. The outdoor amphitheatre will be designed in a way that is close to being

used for productions. It can be used for movie nights, which can create a nightlife in the space and raise funds for the Activist Centre. The idea of performance being a form of activism during the apartheid era.

The living archive will continue to be a semi-basement to create a sense of journey from a phenomenological point of view. The semi-basement will also consist of workshop space for community workshops, creating archives, and more.

The first floor will incorporate a recreation hall that may be used for events as well as hired out. The first floor will also host an auditorium and seminar rooms to be used for talks, seminars, or workshops.

Semi-private

The semi-private interface will accommodate things that would need a bit more control measures, as well as a volunteer space for people who would like to help with events or feeding schemes.

A roof-top garden that produces fruits and vegetables to help sustain the feeding scheme through traditional planting methods and aeroponic towers to maximise yield

The incorporation of recording booths and media rooms to digitise archives will be crucial to the archival portion of the centre.

Private

A space for everyday employees of the centre becomes important. Employees consist of programme managers, archival coordinators, administrator workers, and more. The space consists of offices that can be open-planned and single. Boardrooms for meetings and briefings A breakroom is to be included for employees.

The archive centre becomes an important space for the community as it will start to collect information from the past and present and continue to document in the future, as a lot of marginalised spaces lack such a programme.

Design Brief

Programme	Occupancy as per SANS 10400	Total amount of people	Amount	Area(sqm)	Total Area (sqm)
Public Interface					
Cafe/Restaurant	A1	100	1	150	150
Bookshop	F1	50	1	500	500
Computer lab	A3	50	5	100	250
Exhibition/Living Archive	C1	50	1	500	500
Performance space/ Theatre	A2	500	1	700	700
Banquet hall	A2	500	1	600	600
Public Restrooms			13	4	52
Outdoor public space					
Seminar Room	A2				
Lecture Auditorium	A2	200	1	250	250
		1300			
Mixed Interface					
Kitchen(Feeding scheme prep/event catering etc.		10	1	20	20
Work space	G1	50	1	750	750
Restrooms	To be calculated				
Storage	J3	1	1	2	2
Roof top garden and event space	To be based on area of roof				
Private Interface					
Reception	G1	10	1	150m2	150
Offices	G1	20	1	300m2	150
Boardrooms		20	1	200m2	200
Break room			1	50m2	50
Achive storage	J2		1	500m2	500
Archive viewing/reading room			1	50m2	50
Archive Reception			1	5m2	5
Restroom		50	6	4m2	24
Services					
Server room			1	5m2	5
Electrical, Water, HVAC			3	2m2	6
Storage			2	1m2	2
Cleaning storage			2	2m2	4
Total					4920

7.3 Site - Choice and Information

The site I have chosen for this project is Lenasia Square, the building on Concorde Place, and the building on Grand Place.

Site choice

The site was chosen as it plays an important role in the workings of the north portion of the CBD. It is the pedestrian spine in terms of access from the train to the taxi rank, with linear access to the mosque, strip mall, and the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation, which is an activism foundation within the community. The current state of the square is in decay and not well used. The square and entrance to the square are uncelebrated.

In the terms of the public space design analysis, the depth-to-height ratio works. The space, however, feels closed off from the street as the raised portion in the middle creates a barrier. Hawkers need to be better accommodated, and the introduction of sit-down restaurants or cafes will act as drivers around people using the space for longer periods of time. The surfaces are a combination of paving and lawn. The seating spaces are covered by the hawkers set up around the square.

The square is a central node for amenities all around the CBD; these include the civic centre, library, police station, general practitioner, dentists, optometrists, mosque, church, stadiums, and a series of retail stores.

The site connects directly to the taxi rank, which initially served as a parking lot. Being opposite the Civic Centre, it was a common place of protest. On the 28th of August 1984 a protest against the elections for the House of Delegates took place where the taxi rank currently resides. It connects to the strip mall, which was the location of the first high school in Lenasia. The high school participated in school boycotts, and core activists attended the school.

Public squares have the ability to connect the surrounding spaces and create an identity for the urban fabric. Allowing for a well-used urban space speaks to reclaiming space and creating a sense of pride and ownership around space. Phenomenologically, the site speaks to the journey of to and fro. There is a strong connection between arrival and departure due to the close proximity of the train, taxi rank, and parking lots around it. It is a core movement route through the CBD that embodies a sense of pedestrian life.

The design is to celebrate the site by highlighting the movement spine to emphasise connections to the existing amenities and introducing new programmes that allow for community engagement. The development should also make sense if a BRT to connect to the rest of the extensions is to be developed.

Figure 7.3.1 - Highlighting the site location

(Author after: Google Earth [WWW Document], n.d. URL https://earth.google.com/web/@-26.28119013,27.98774049,1731.51559723a,82036.33045815d,35y,-0h,0t,0r (accessed 9.10.23).)

Site information

Address: Lenasia Square, 14 Station, and Concorde Place
Area: 2400+ 3750 + 3250 = 9400 m2.
Erf numbers: 1/192, 14/192, 2-13/192
Zoning: Business 1
Coverage: 50%
FAR: 2.1
Zoning: Business 1
Height restrictions: 3 storeys
Building lines: 3 and 1.5
Parking: 3 bays per 100 m2.

All information above was acquired from the Land Use Scheme (City of Johannesburg Land Use Scheme - FINAL 2018.pdf," n.d.) and GIS JHB (GeoLIS," n.d.).

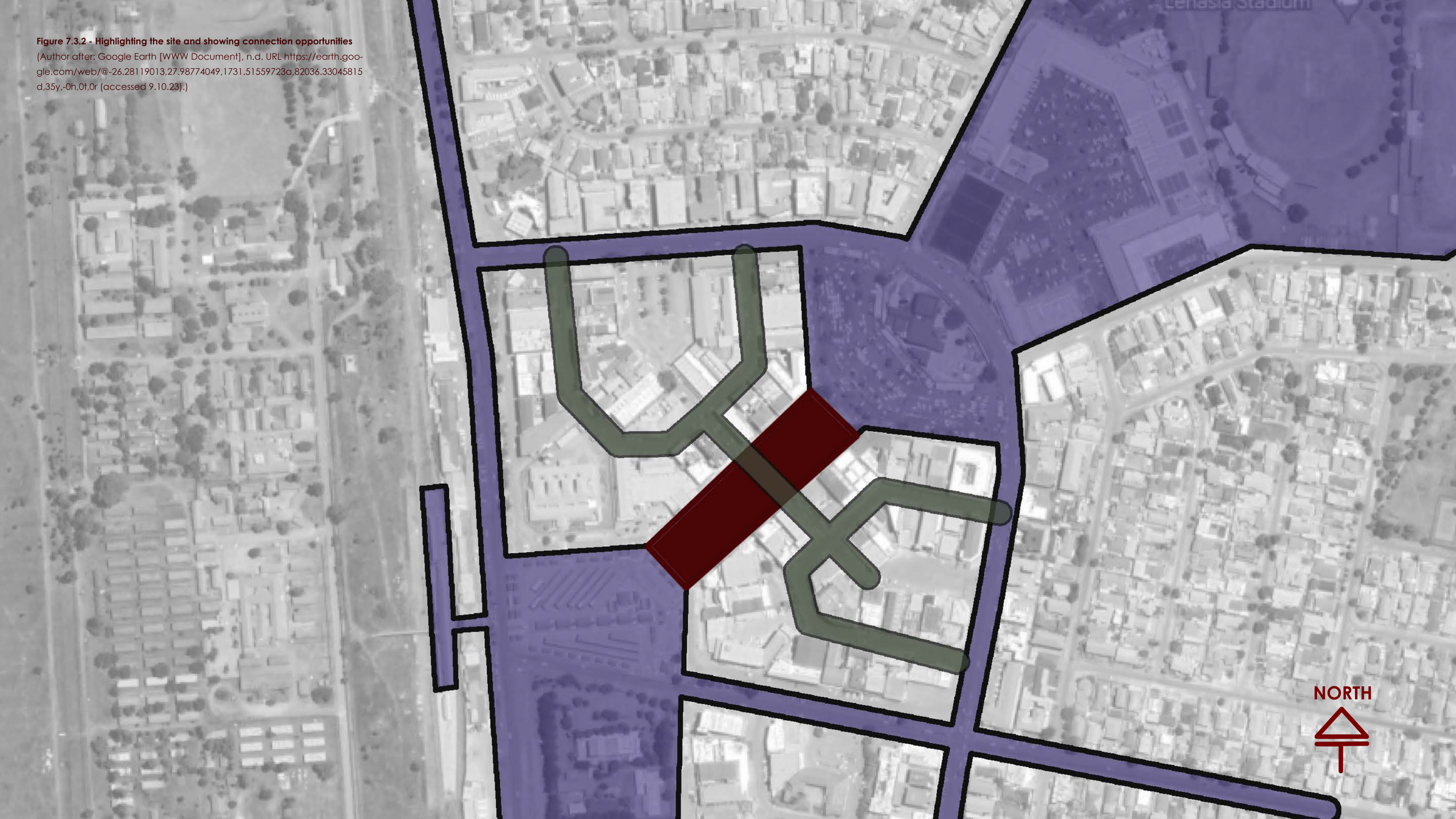


Figure 7.3.2 - Highlighting the site and showing connection opportunities
(Author after: Google Earth [WWW Document], n.d. URL https://earth.google.com/web/@-26.28119013,27.98774049,1731.51559723a,82036.33045815d,35y,-0h,0t,0r (accessed 9.10.23).)

7.4 Design Development - Exploring form within the urban realm

Linking programme choice to site and theory

The programmes chosen allow for versatility with space. The choice to make the building a public space is due to the lack of dedicated public spaces in Lenasia. Allowing for a space where public input and identities are embodied encourages people to feel a sense of pride and belonging.

The activism archival centre is about the commemoration and celebration of rich historical moments. Marginalised groups often have vague narratives told by others rather than through the lens of the community. The majority of the time, there isn't documented information about marginalised spaces. Choosing to document histories from within these communities allows for taking over the narratives. It speaks to restoring an old identity through memory and celebrating a new identity. Embodying spaces through the lens of people who went through the traumas and struggles of place becomes crucial to how the community heals.

The purpose of the NGO offices becomes activation, and they act as a driver for accountability.

The urban aspect of this project is important as it deals with reviving the CBD. In order to revive the CBD, the building and space around it should feed into the existing spaces. The design revolves around walkability, as it is the only movement route through the site of choice. Secondary notions include encouraging more people to walk, as people tend to notice more things when walking, tying into phenomenological experiences. Taking in the urban environment through sound, smell, touch, visually, and more It reduces the number of cars within the CBD, limiting traffic. Walking adds to the richness of the project and provokes memories for those who spent their childhoods walking through the Top Shops.

The building and ground-floor public space following placemaking principles become essential to the identity of the place and creating spaces for the community to convene for leisure, workshops, seminars, and more.

In order to activate the space, there needs to be a balance between a social and informative programme that engages with the surrounding retail, which consists of furniture stores, clothing, homewares, cleaning supplies, and tech repair stores.

Diagrammatic explorations

The following diagrams show adjustments that will help activate the square by opening it up. The forms are to be developed further to express the programme through design. The removal of the raised portion in the middle and reduced building footprint will allow for a larger public space. It also allows for viscous and physical permeability to the centre of the site. The additional space allows for hawker stalls to be taken into consideration. This acts as a market throughout the week, allowing people to interact with public space and the building. Giving more area to public space than parking highlights the intentions around walkable cities. The entire site is a pedestrian site, which encourages people to walk and embody the space. The second reason parking lots are not included on site is due to the four parking lots around the site.

Figure 7.4.1
(Author)

Existing building layout

Redlining

New circulation

7.5 Conceptual Design and theory - Linking conceptual design to site, history, and theory.

Historical and site influences on form development

Visiting the past has allowed me to understand the importance of documenting history and the question of how one can do this through architecture.

Understanding the formation of Lenasia played a crucial role in shaping the building, creating a design that is deeply connected to its surroundings. The design incorporates elements that pay homage to the area's rich cultural heritage and history. The emphasis is on public space design that is visually permeable and begins to tackle present anxieties while commemorating the past through thoughtful design choices and materials. The design choices reflect the historical struggles and forms of activism of the community.

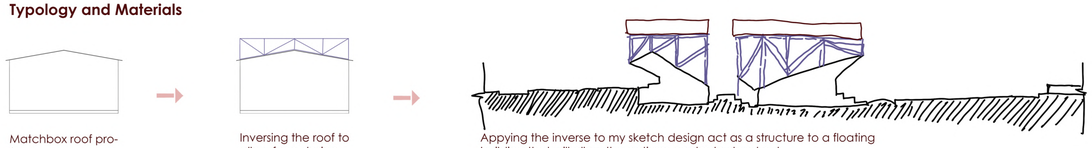
As mentioned in Chapter 6, the concept of a zigzag or irregular shaped building links to delineating and going against the grain of traditional structures, symbolising the defiance and resilience of the community. The form was further developed to create meaningful pathways that link to urban context and important historical sites. The link to the taxi rank is important, as in the past it was used as a place of protest due to it being directly opposite the Civic Centre. North west of the site leads to the strip mall, which was the first school in Lenasia. Behind it is the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation, which is based on the values of social justice, democracy, and non-racialism. The foundation is based on many youth leagues that were active in fighting against apartheid.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, window dressing was common in the past. The choice of the ground floor having glazed facades allows for window dressing to create a link to the past while creating a space that allows for eyes on the street. The ground floor also features open-air seating areas and landscaping elements that allow for space and moments of social interaction and relaxation.

The movement through the building is linked to the fact that Lenasia is a valley. It also speaks to how the apartheid regime used topography to segregate marginalised groups. Commemorating indentured miners who were forced to work in harsh conditions. Their stories are a reminder of the injustices faced by many during that time. The floating portion speaks to giving hope and creating a better future, while the ground floor speaks to the present, and the semi-basement commemorates a past of trauma and struggle. The ground floor, being a public space that allows for choice to travel between the past and the future, becomes a liminal space for reflection and introspection.

The placement of the steel columns plays with an inverted version of the roof of the 'Greyville House' and speaks to how families adjusted government housing to fit their own specific needs. The columns act as a visual representation of the blending of past, present, and future, creating a sense of continuity and connection in the space.

Typology and Materials



Matchbox roof profile
There is a rich history around matchbox houses in Lenasia, that started of as RDP houses in which many people made there own additions to adapt to their families and make it a home.

Inversing the roof to allow for a design that speaks to change.

Appying the inverse to my sketch design act as a structure to a floating building that will allow the activsm centre to stand out.

Figure 7.5.1 - Sketch showing column placement development

Urban theory influences on form development.
This portion will look at how the urban theories studied have assisted in the development of buildings and public spaces.

The site has access to two sidewalks that have access to streets. One northeast of the site and one southwest of the site. There are also two parallel pedestrian sidewalks running from the northeast to the southwest of the site, creating a pedestrian node in the centre of the north portion of the CBD.

The southwest sidewalk is across from the taxi rank; this sidewalk was designed to be integrated with the building by creating this idea of extending the'stoep' of the building. Allowing pedestrians to easily access the building entrance from the taxi rank and feel welcomed. To the side, there is a large walkway shaped to funnel people into the main public space. The walkway creates a connection between the existing shopfronts and the activism centre through the use of urban furniture such as seating, a caopy, and greenery.

The northwest sidewalk is across from a parking lot, which has the potential to become an extension of the square through the incorporation of greenery and urban furniture that would create a more cohesive space within the urban context. At the end of the parking lot is a mosque, which is accessible from Gemsbok Street. The mosque is directly across the strip mall, which is a prominent shopping node in the CBD. The design of the northeast sidewalk opens itself to the public through an organic amphitheatre.

The amphitheatre adds a green space to the CBD, which allows for a sense of healing and creates a vibrant space. Additionally, the amphitheatre becomes a space for community gatherings and outdoor events. Introducing a nightlife in the space through evening performances, night markets, and more. The events may spread to the floating portion of the building, which contains a recreation hall. This adds a unique experience to events. The columns extend onto the sidewalk, which incorporates seating. The cantilevered building creates a shading device and allows for a sense of continuity.

The vehicular ramp was designed in a way to accommodate seating around it, allowing for a more inclusive pedestrian experience.

Public space was a key priority when designing the building. Allowing the space to be visually permeable to create Jacob's narrative of having constant eyes on the street was crucial. The previous design of the square felt closed off and uncelebrated due to the building being given more priority over the public space. The decision to demolish two buildings on site was to allow for a more prominent and celebrated public space. The ground floor was designed to have minimal built-in space, giving priority to outdoor public space. Extending the size of the public space and angling the ground floor building to allow pedestrians to see through the public space creates a sense of knowing. This has the ability to create comfort and encourage pedestrians to use the space. The levels of comfort created on the ground floor opened opportunities to play with the depth-height ratio mentioned in Chapter 2. The choice to float the rest of the building allowed for a canopy. Higher than the surrounding building, it allowed it to stand out while allowing light to enter the public space. The columns with incorporated seating extend into the main public space as well.

The existing design on the northwest entrance is mirrored on the southwest entrance to allow for smaller public spaces that celebrate the entrance of the square. The planters are to be used for a communal garden or fruit bearing trees that create more community engagement.

The building shape was designed keeping visual permeability in mind, as mentioned above. This links back to Jacob's theory of eyes on the street, eyes from enterprises, and more.

Urban renewal influences on form development.
The overall project looks at urban regeneration, focusing on Lenasia Square. The building and public space were developed to promote the idea of shared value and long term public interest.

The variation in size of public spaces is accommodating for a variety of programmes. A dedicated market space for existing vendors allows for the integration of existing vendors and new programmes to arise, creating a variety of users. The addition of urban furniture, greenery, and visual permeability has the ability to encourage users to explore the spaces.

The building and public space become an extension of the Gapps Taxi rank renovation, as well as the design for sidewalk improvement through the addition of vegetation and urban furniture such as seating, bins, and more.

Phenomenology, placemaking, and identity link to form development.

The movement through the building was designed to embody the past, present, and future. The embodiments of sense and memory were carried through with movement, materiality, greenery, and light. The movement, as described in previous chapters, commemorates the past while introducing hope and healing for the future.

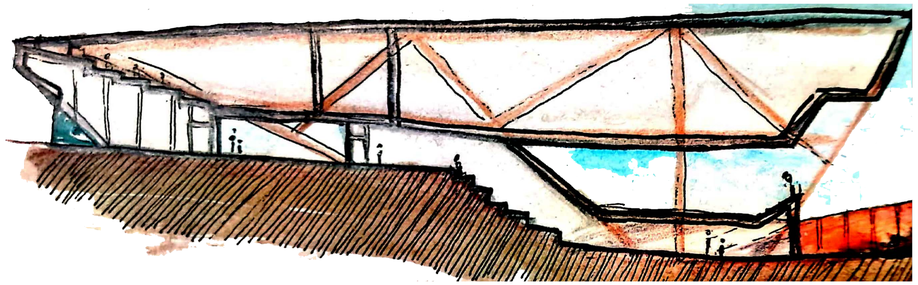


Figure 7.5.5
(Author)

Activism influencing form
Floating the main portion of the building spoke to the idea of pushing boundaries and allowing the nature of the building, which is an activism centre, to stand out as a beacon of progress and change within the community.

The layout of the columns was carried through to allow the building to become part of the urban fabric. The play on heavy and light through materiality was also key in going against traditional design norms. Creating the illusion of concrete being held up by steel, allowing it to feel like a floating canopy.

The ground floor design focused on creating a public space that is inclusive and welcoming to residents and visitors through the clarity and openness of the design.

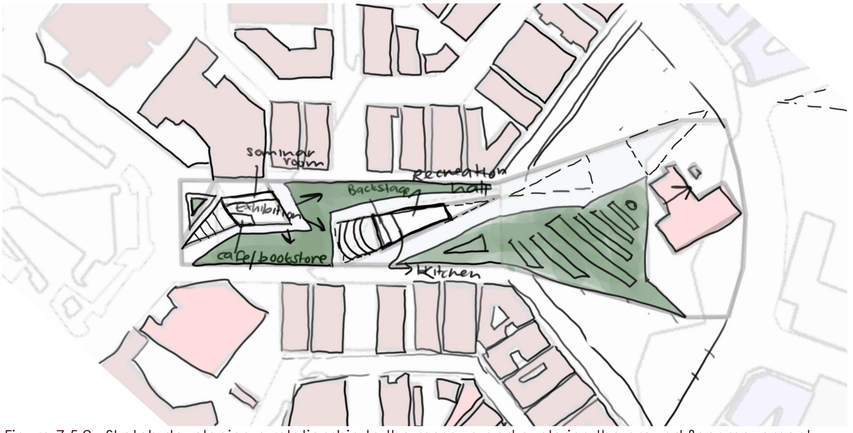


Figure 7.5.2 - Sketch developing a relationship to the mosque and exploring the ground floor movement. (Author)

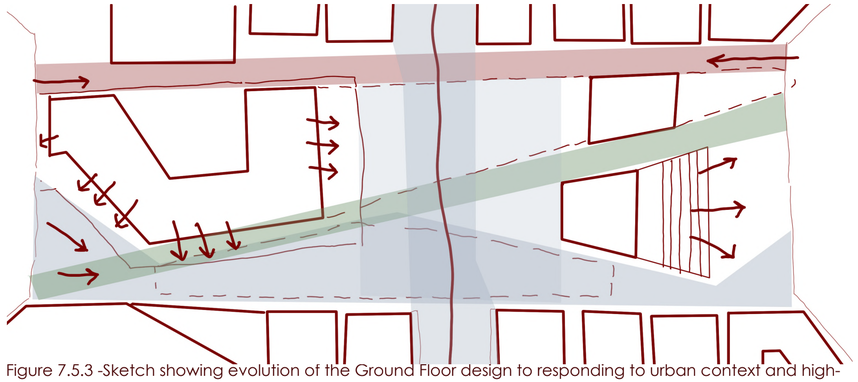


Figure 7.5.3 -Sketch showing evolution of the Ground Floor design to responding to urban context and high-lighting key movement routes. (Author)

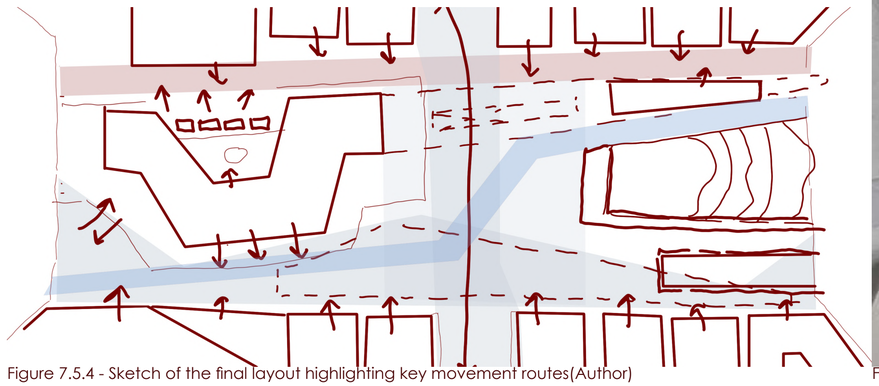


Figure 7.5.4 - Sketch of the final layout highlighting key movement routes(Author)

Figure 7.5.5 - Process model(Author)

7.6 Technical Exploration - Understanding structure through design

Designing the section had allowed me to understand the experience of the building, its materiality, and its connection to the structure. The Charrette process has already developed the base of the structure. The exploration of linking the expression of materiality to structure began to develop by drawing up details and 3D axonometric drawings that allowed the structure and envelope to be developed further. The technical exploration is to be adjusted according to the final design. The section above developed from the idea of connections and the cantilever of levels. It speaks to journey and movement through space and time.

The building consists of a steel frame structure with concrete and steel cladding. The steel structure will allow for large spans, and the top portion will appear as if it is hovering over the public space. Multiple iterations were explored in terms of column and core organisation as they impact the design of the public space. The envelope of the building for the top portion looks at using a mix of solid and translucent concrete panels with certain portions with set-back glazing to allow for balcony pockets. The bottom portion will use an oxidised steel cladding that aligns with my concept. Insulation and double-walling systems will be explored to deal with heat transfer.

The final building design comprises a steel structure that is made up of trusses and angles of steel columns that meet concrete columns on the ground floor. The concrete core assists with the structural integrity of the building. The cladding alternates between glazing and steel panels on the ground floor. On the first floor, the cladding consists of translucent concrete panels, solid panels, and glazing.

The composite slab spans in a short direction. The ground floor buildings are steel structures that connect with the first floor through the cores. There are lifts, stairs, and service ducts within the concrete cores.

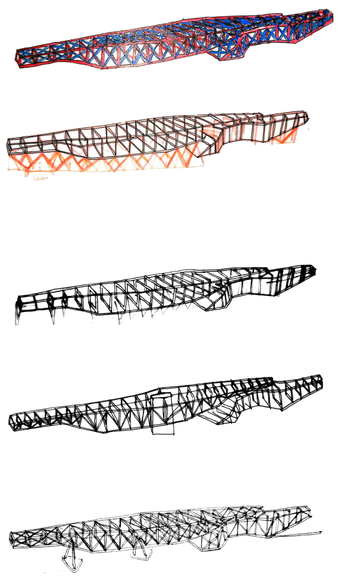


Figure 7.6.1
(Author)

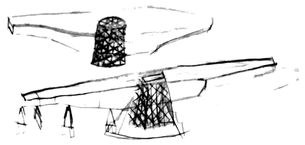


Figure 7.6.2
(Author)

Axonometric Explorations

Figure 7.6.3
(Archdaily, 2017)

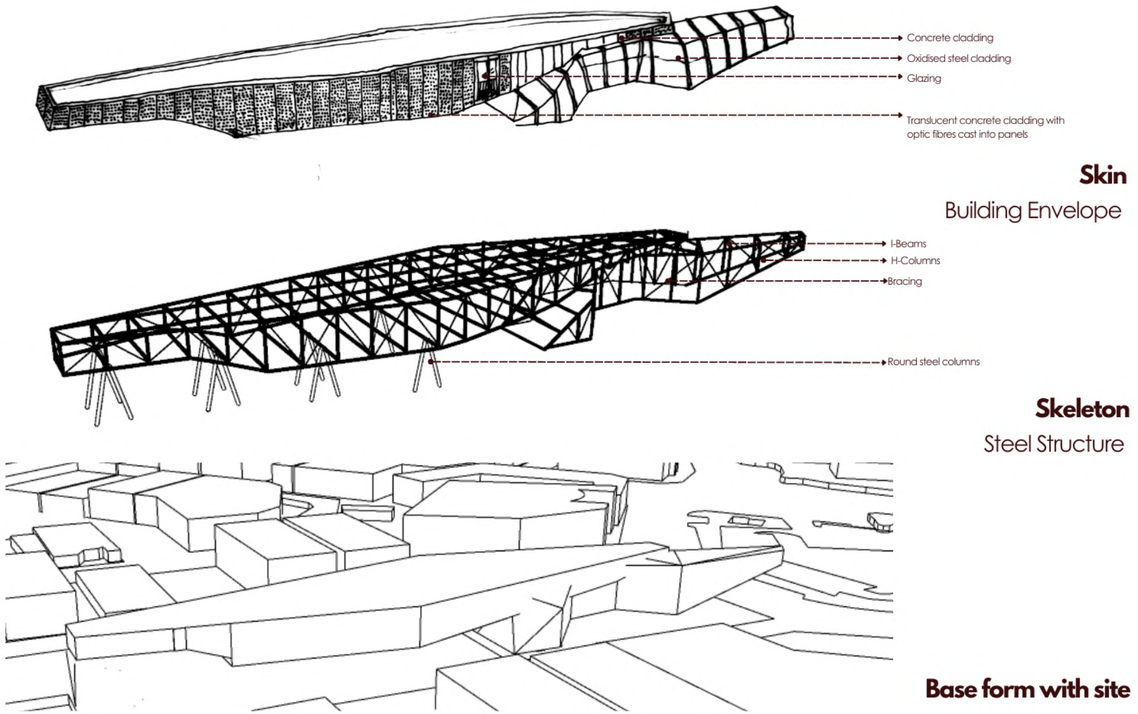
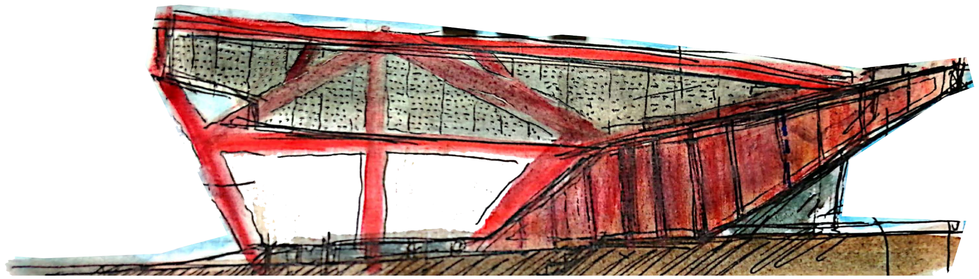


Figure 7.6.4
(Author)
The building form speaks to the cantilever that hovers over the public square, using steel to hold up a translucent concrete box to allow the building to stand out.



Design exploration
Figure 7.6.5
(Author)

Figure 7.6.6
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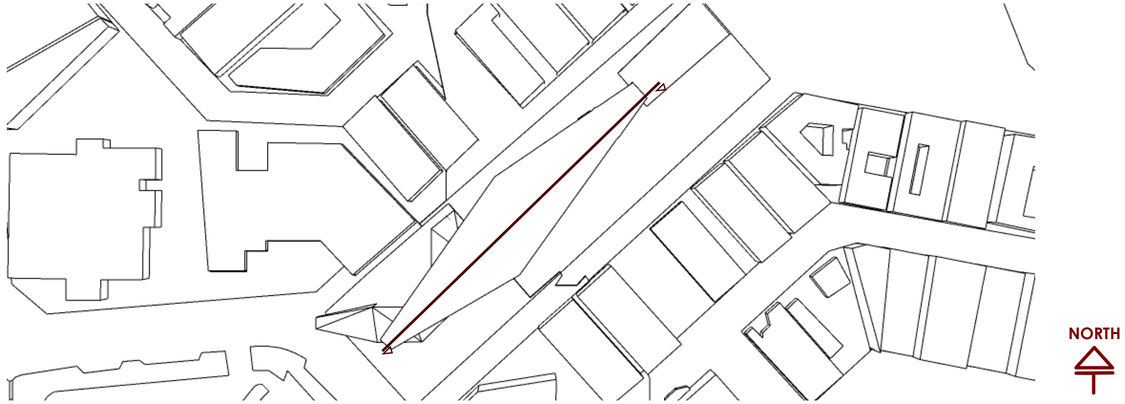
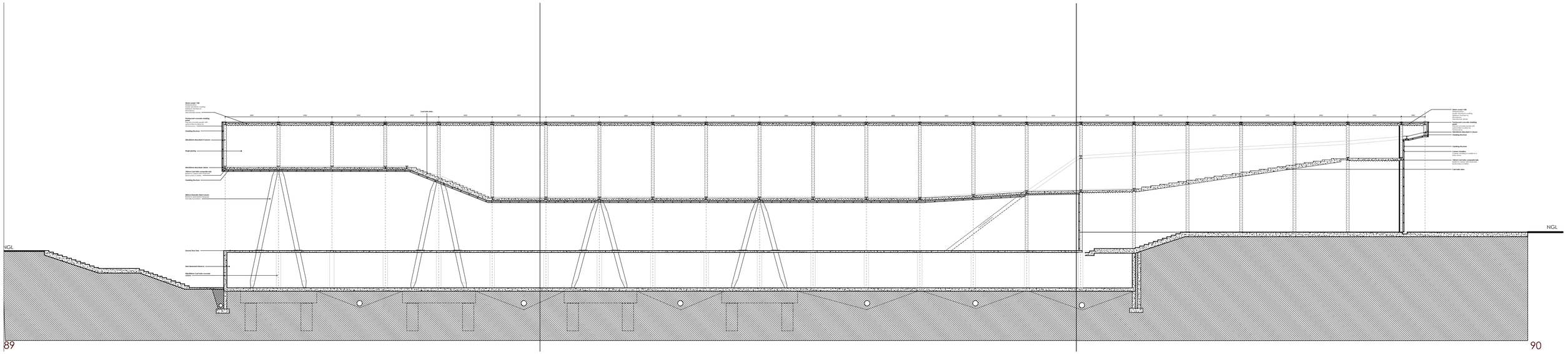
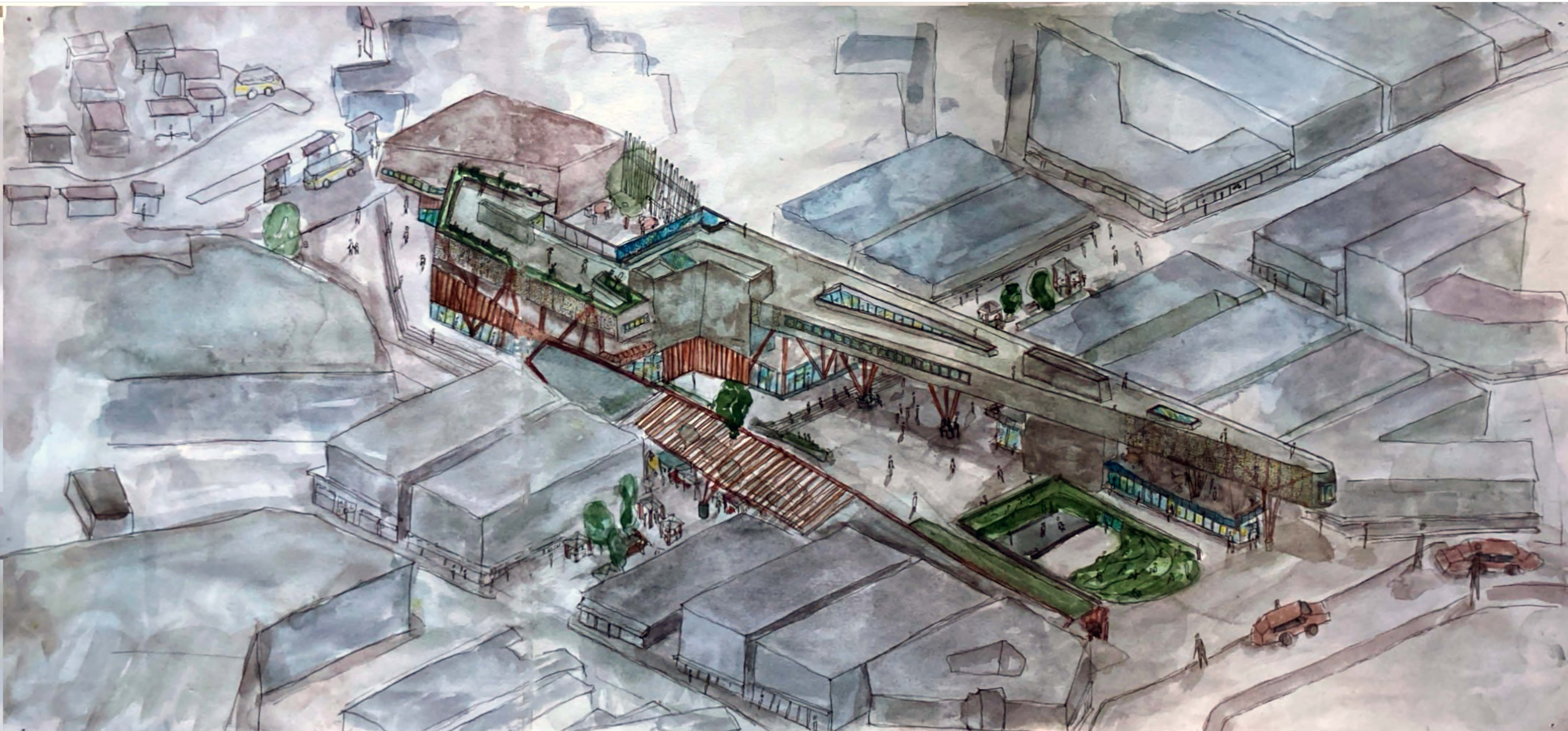




FINAL SHOT AND TECHNICAL DETAILS
Chapter 8

Figure 8.1 - Axonometric 1 showing the connections of building to it's context through.



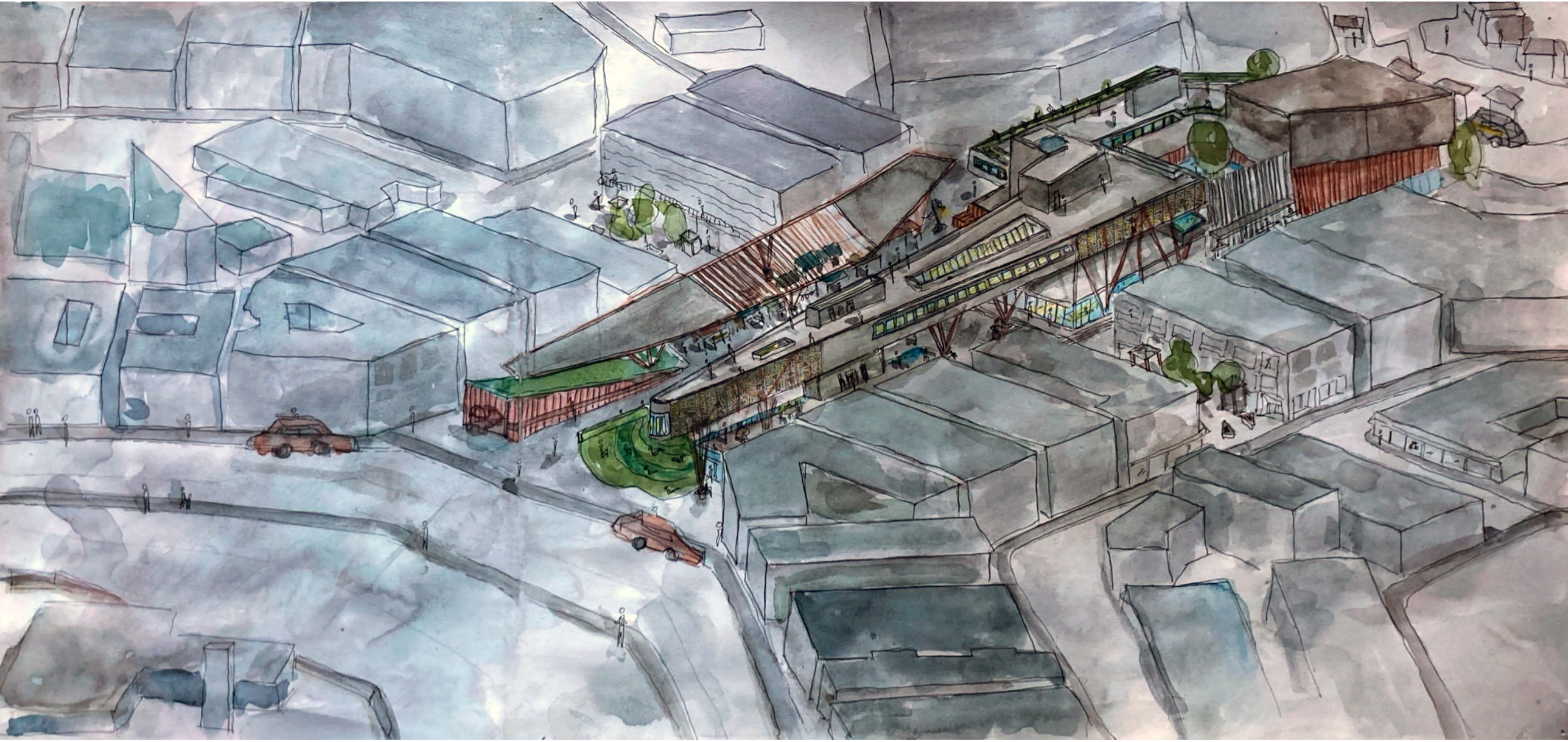
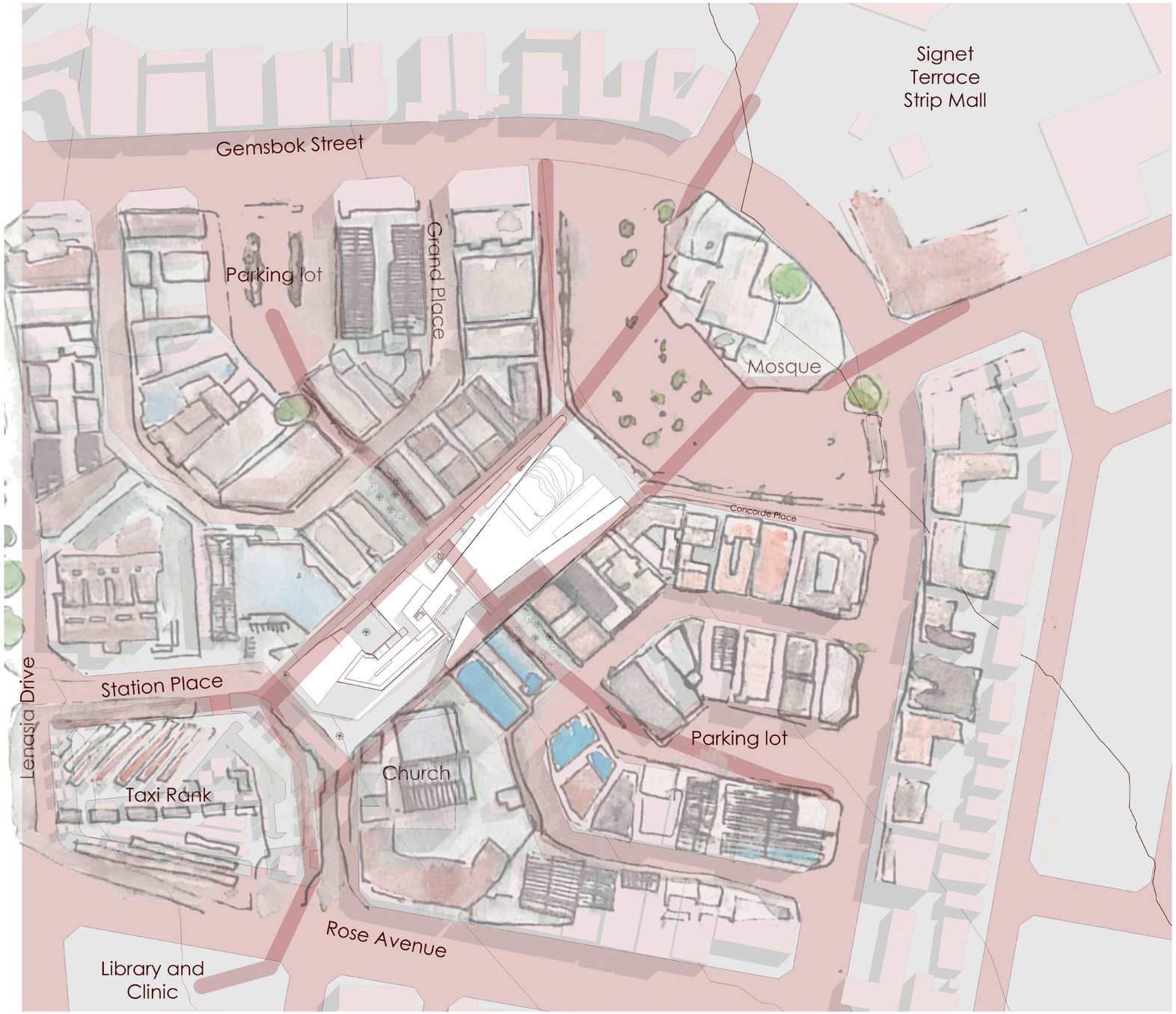


Figure 8.2 - Axonometric 2 showing the connections of building to it's context through.



SITE PLAN
1:1000

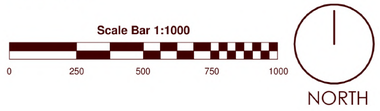
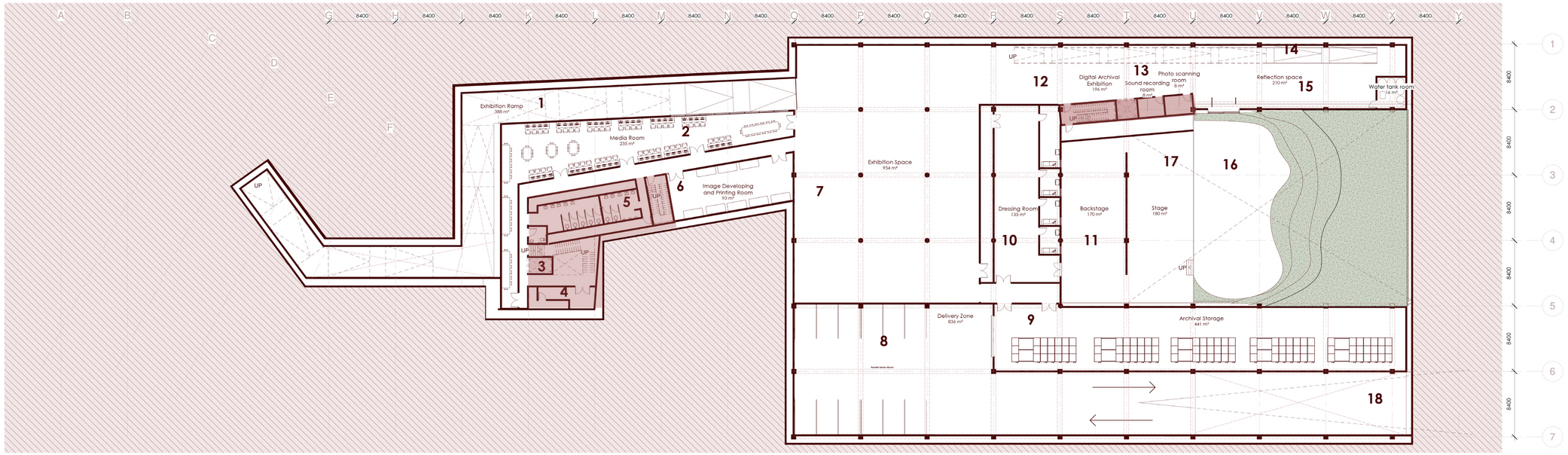


Figure 8.3 - Site Plan

The Site Plan shows the building connections to the urban environment.

Figure 8.4 - Semi-Basement Plan



1. Ramp - Ramp from the ground floor.

2. Media Room - Space that for research as well.

3. Service Lift - Lifts to allow for deliveries to the ground floor and second floor.

4. Storeroom - Additional storage space.

5. Restrooms - The restroom, lift, and fire escape stairs make up the core of the building.

6. Image developing and printing room - Archival making spaces.

7. Exhibition Space- Space for commemoration of the past.

8. Parking- Parking for performers and employers.

9. Archival Storage - Storage for archival items.

10. Dressing room - Rooms for performers.

11. Backstage

12. Digital Archival Exhibiton - Digital works and information are displayed in this space.

13. Sound recording and image scanning - Spaces for people to record their own archival material.

14. Ramp to Ground Floor - The ramp leads to a bookstore and cafe.

15. Reflective space - A space of reflection after travelling through the exhibition.

16. Amphitheartre - A green space as well as an extension of the reflective space.

17. Stage - Allows for outdoor performances.

18. Car ramp - Ramp leading to basement parking for deliveries, performers, and employees.

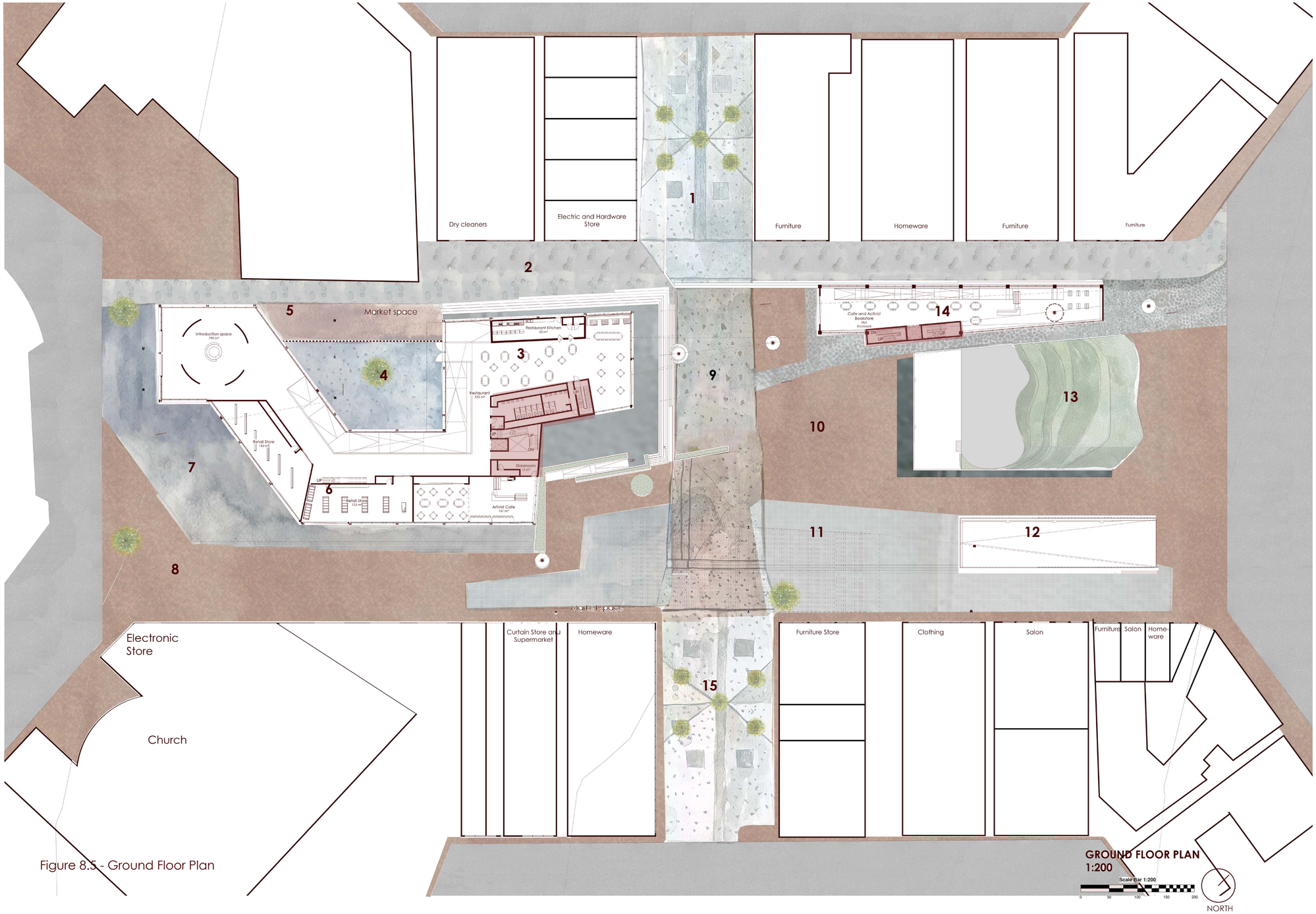


Figure 8.5 - Ground Floor Plan

1. North East Entrance - Existing design with improvements to the floor finish and reintroducing vegetation.

2. Walkway through site - The design of the walkway was to create a direct path to the strip mall. Designed with cast insitu contrete for people to walk across while it is still wet to embed the idea of memory, identity and community engagement.

3. Restaurant - Encourages long term users, allowing for eyes of the street.

4. Enclosed Public Space- A space dedicated to building users, mainly the Restaurant.

5. Market Space- A space dedicated to existing vendors. This allows for programme along the route, encouraging users to walk along the path.

6. Retail - Allowing for a mirror of surrounding retail, as well as creating enterprises like an Artivist cafe which combine art and coffee as a fun activity within the space.

7. Stoep Extension - The platform of the building allows for the building to extend towards the street.

8. Pathway towards the market and square - The building set back allowed for a wider pathway. This allows for visual permeability through the site.

9. Pathway - The pathway creates a link between two entrance.

10. Main public space - Large open public space that may be used for events.

11. Market space - Space for everyday vendors.

12. Ramp to Semi-Basement - The ramp allows for deliveries to the basement which may be transported through the building through a service lift.

13. Amphitheatre - Creates a green space that people may exit the basement from. Acting as a space of reflection after going throught the basement exhibition. It may also be used as an outdoor performance space.

14. Bookstore/Cafe - An introductory space that leads to the basement

15. Concorde Entrance - The design is mirrored from the North west entrance to allow for a more celebrated entrance.

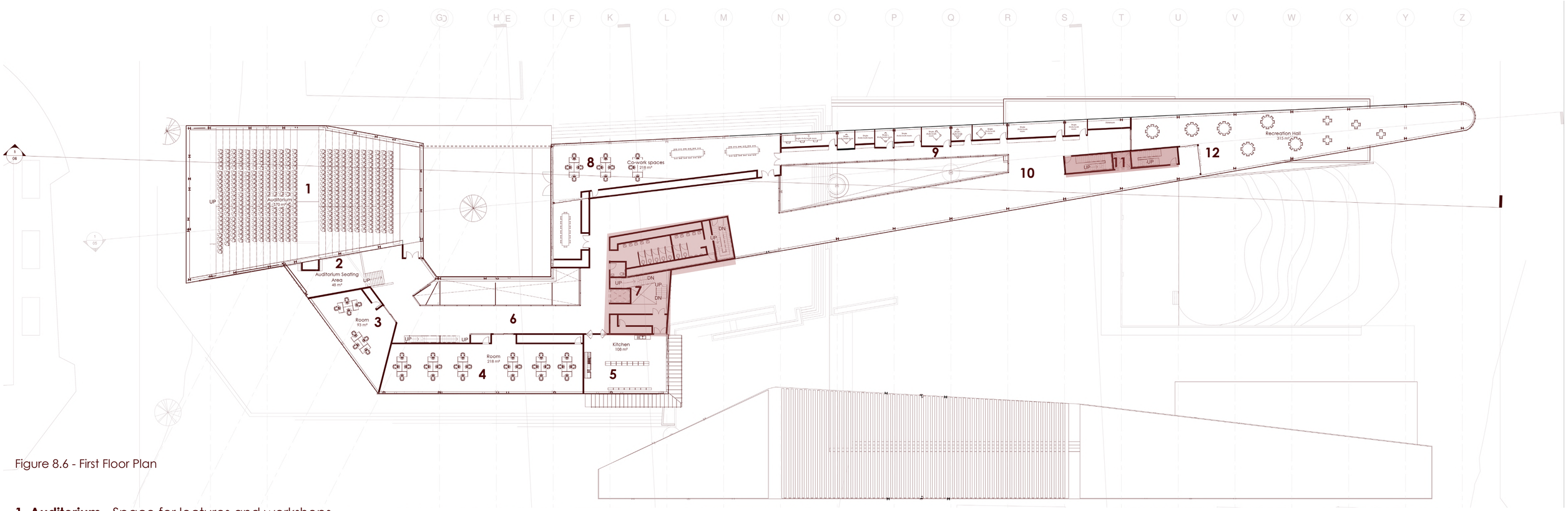


Figure 8.6 - First Floor Plan

1. Auditorium - Space for lectures and workshops.

2. Waiting space - A waiting space for people who are attending lectures or workshops.

3. NGO Offices - Space let out to NGOs.

4. NGO Offices - Space let out to NGOs.

5. Kitchen - A kitchen used for events at the recreation hall.

6. Hallway

7. Core - The core consists of restrooms, stairs, a lift, and service ducts.

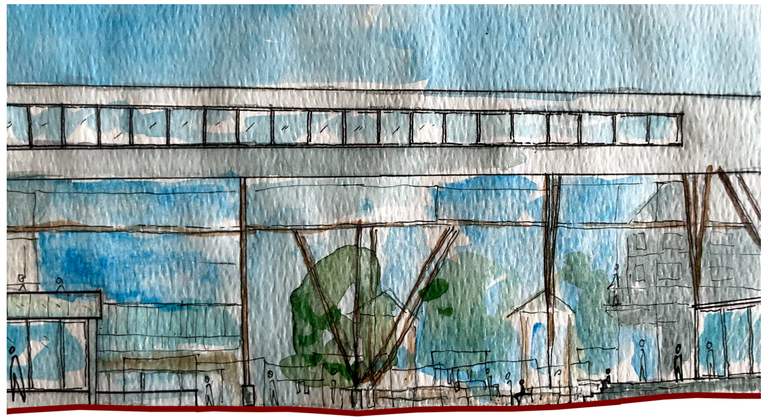
8. Co-work space - A space the public uses to work in groups.

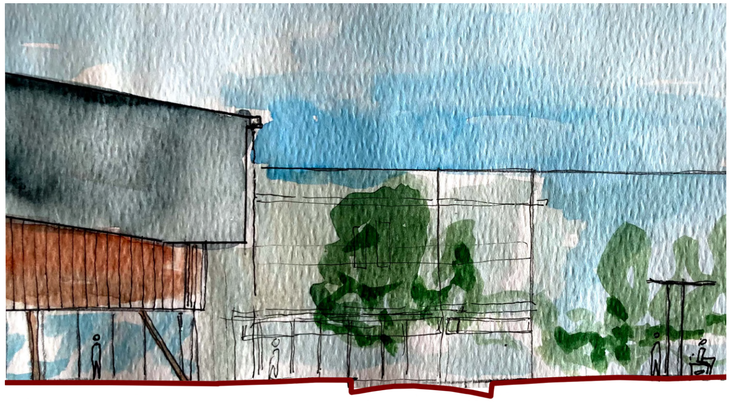
9. Private work spaces - A space for students, entrepreneurs, and others to use as a private work space.

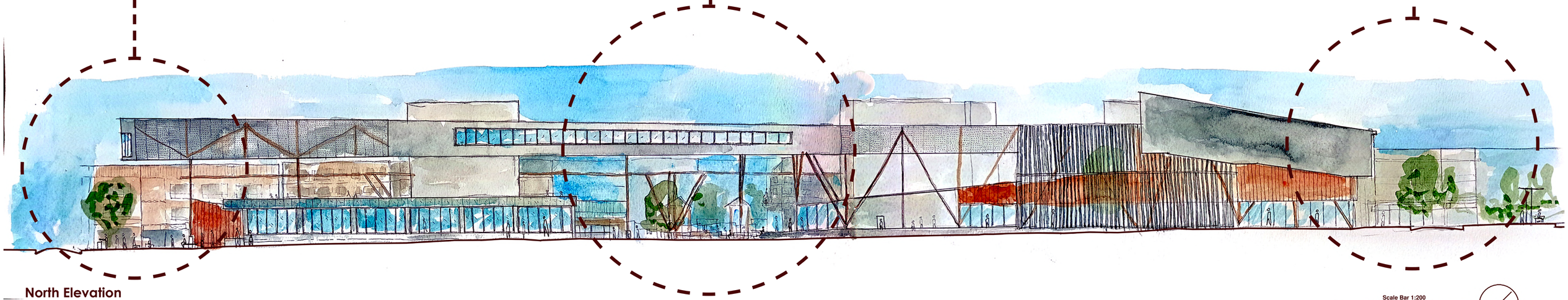
10. Foyer - A waiting space for the recreation hall.

11. Core - The core consists of stairs and a lift.

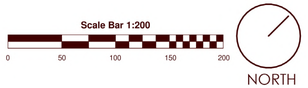
12. Recreation hall

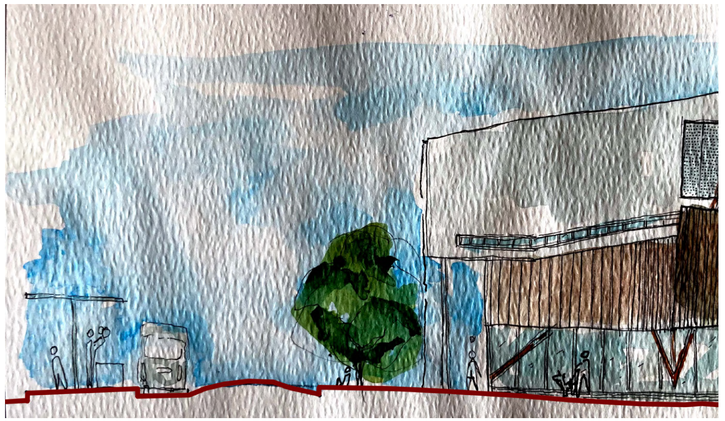


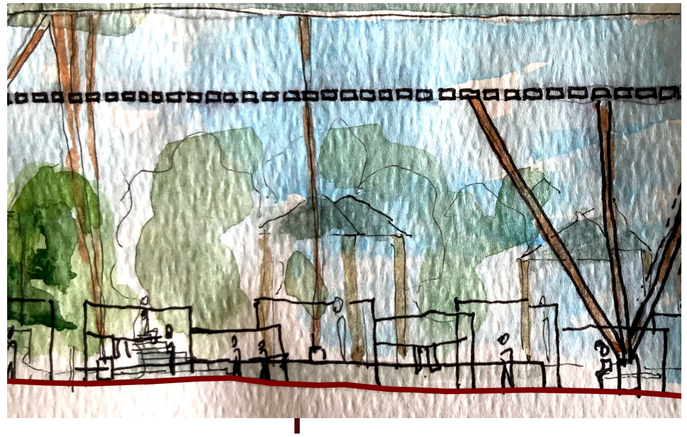


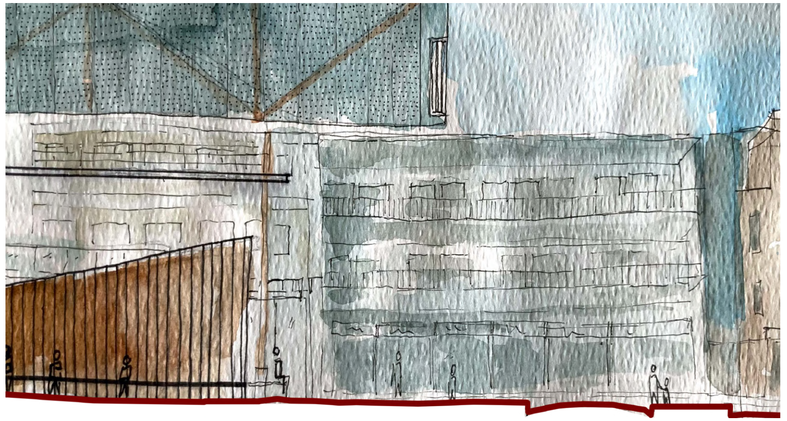


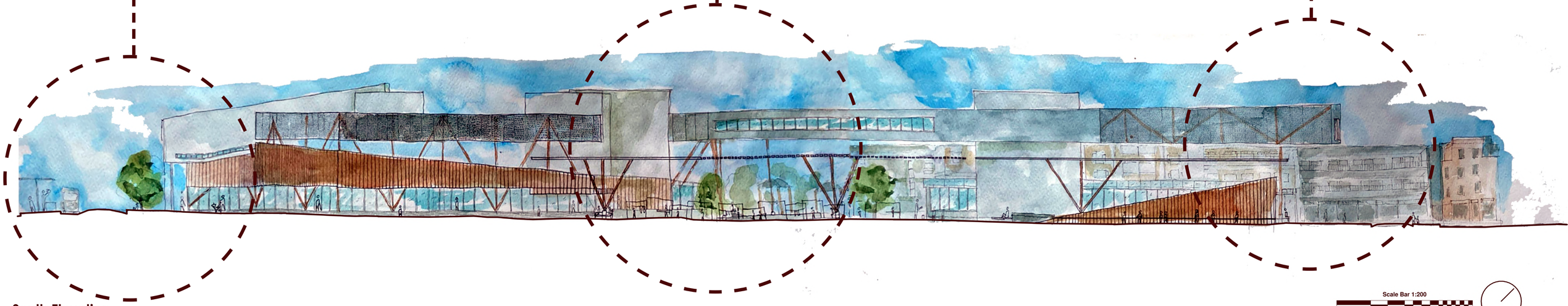
North Elevation
Figure 8.7



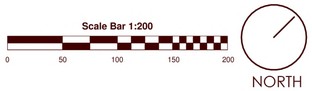


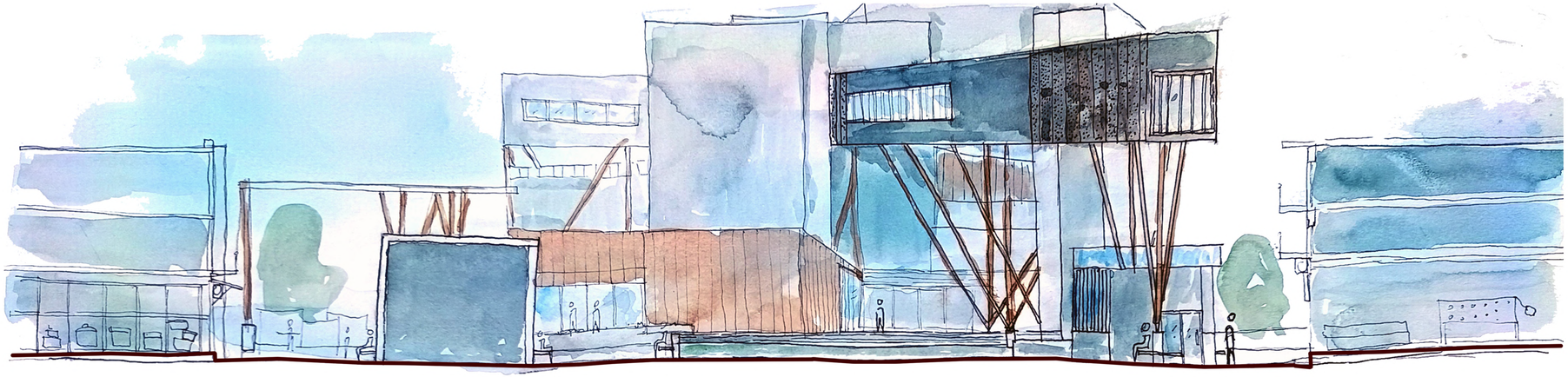




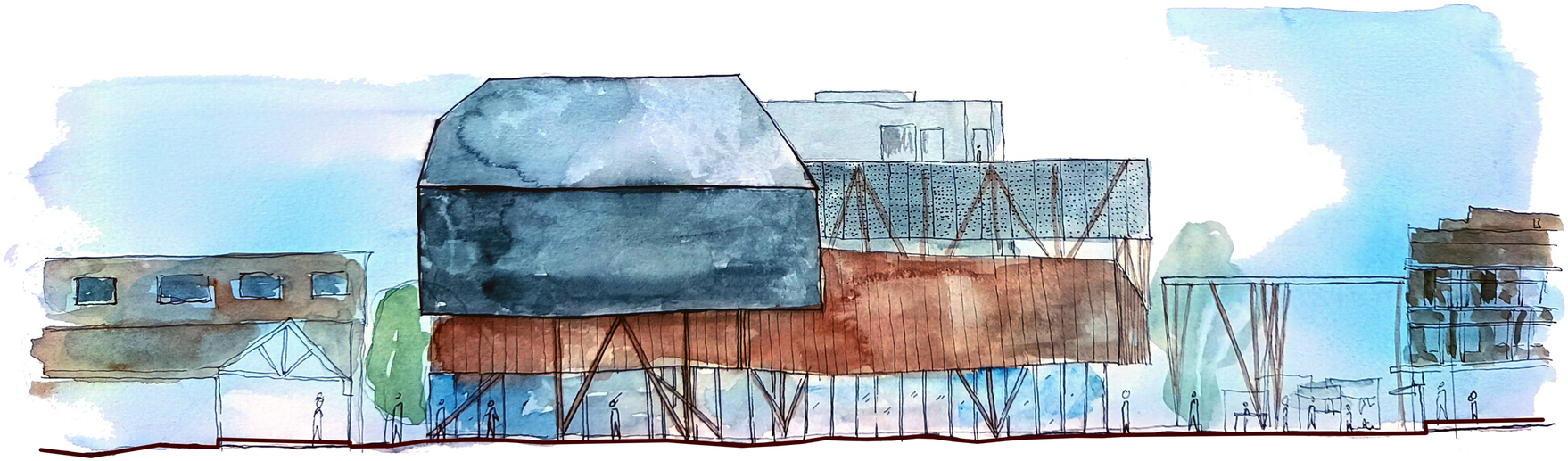


South Elevation
Figure 8.8

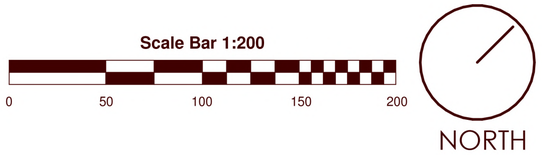


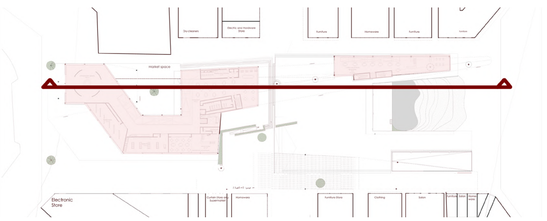


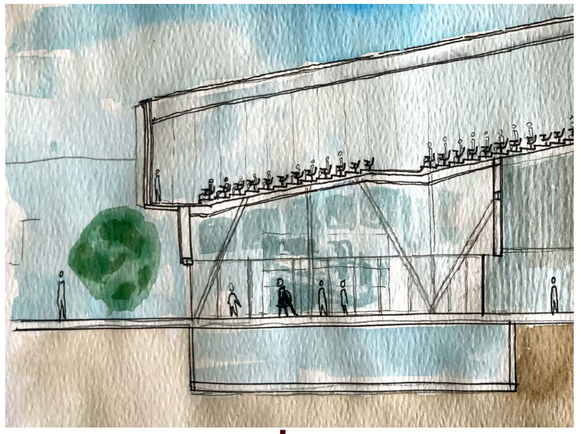
East Elevation
Figure 8.9

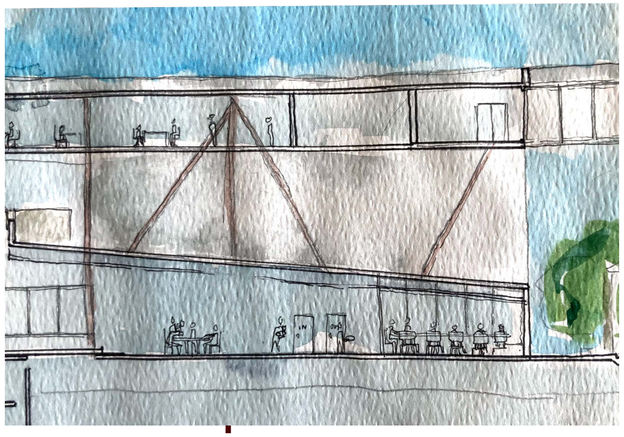


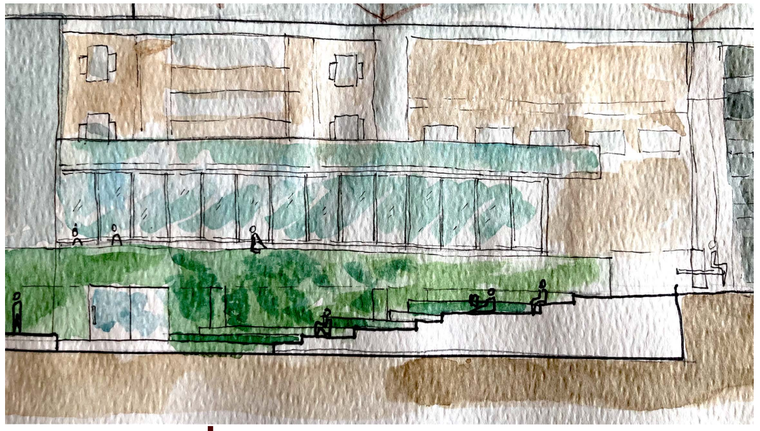
West Elevation
Figure 8.10

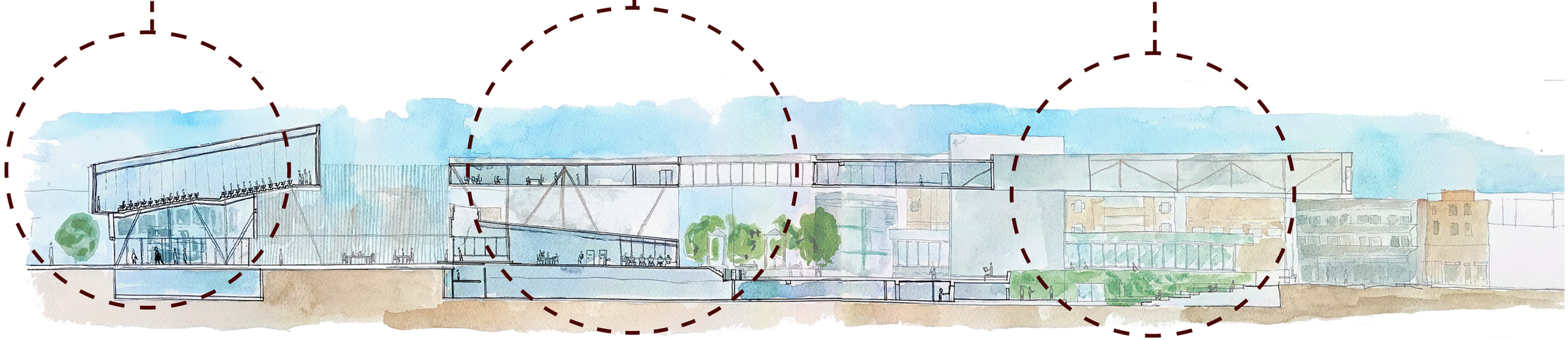












Section AA
Figure 8.11

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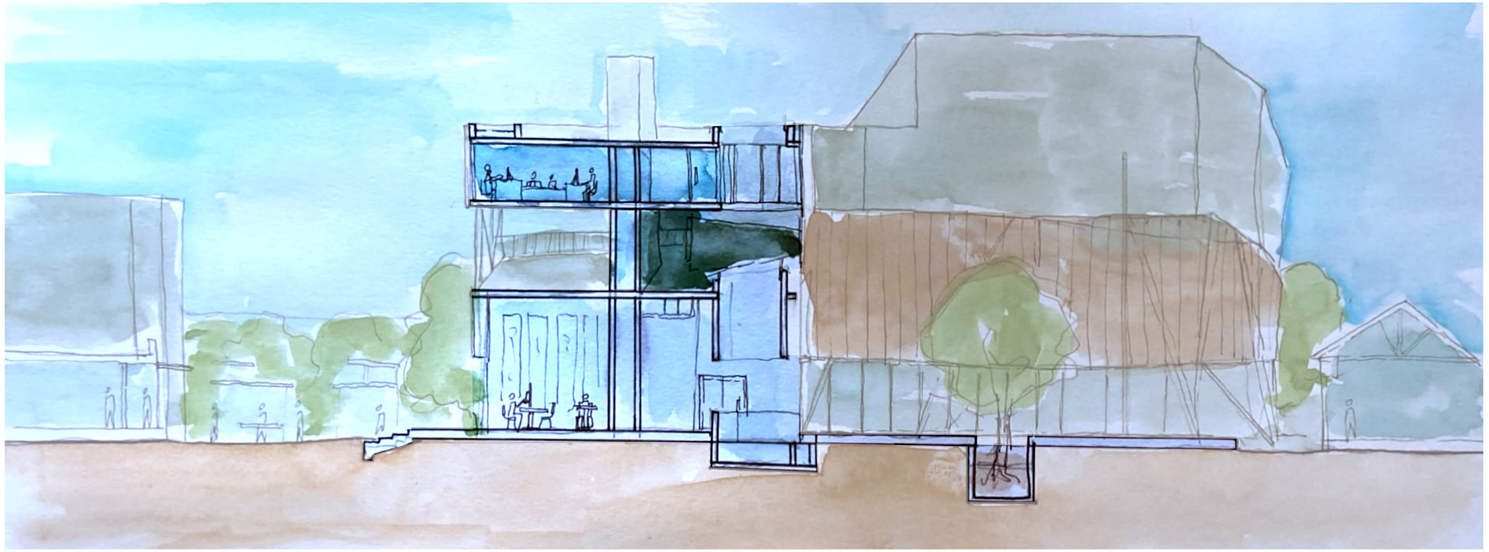
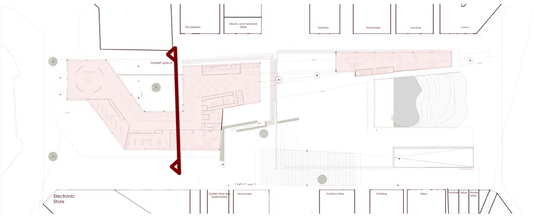
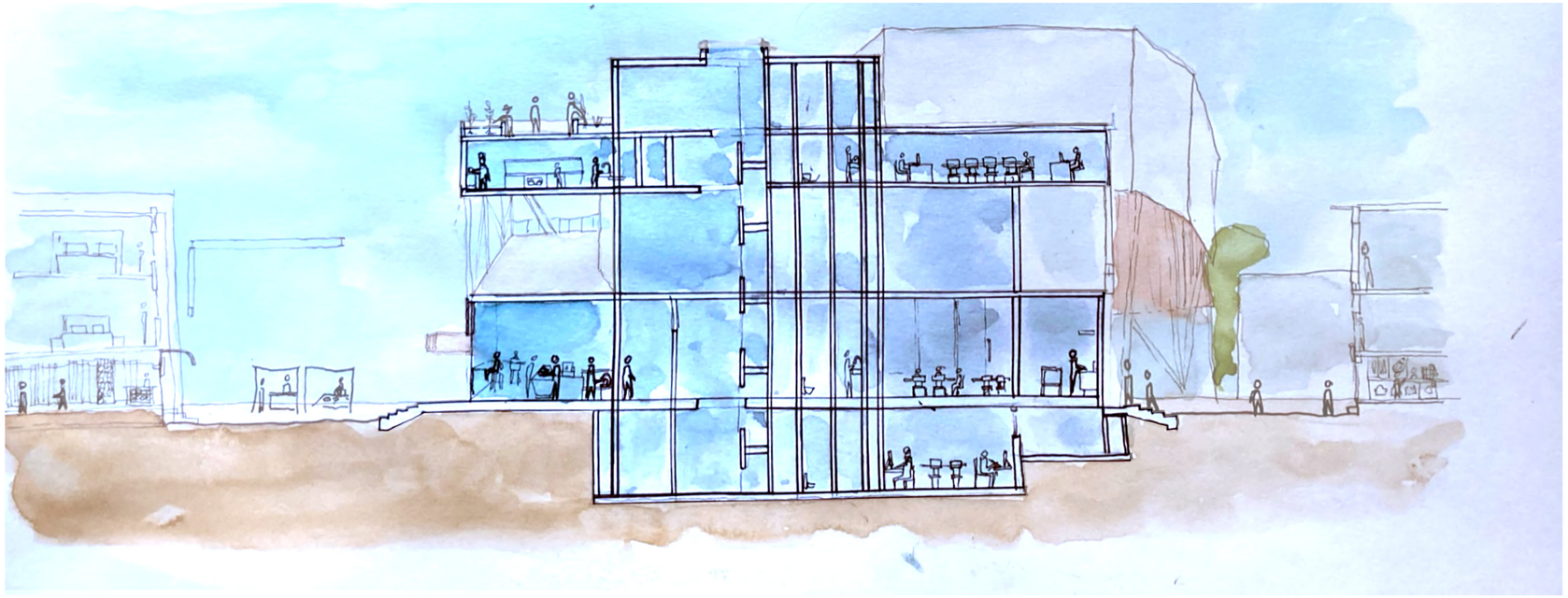
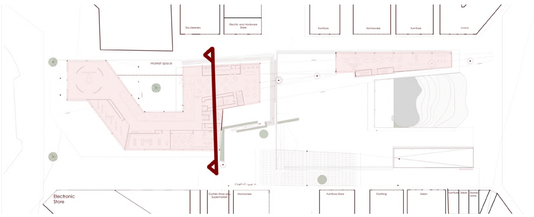
NORTH





Section BB
Figure 8.12





Section CC
Figure 8.13

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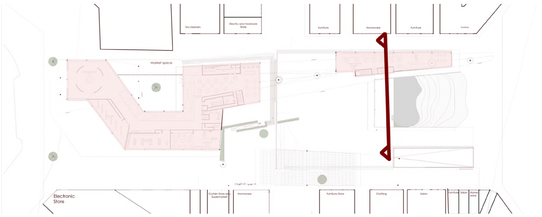
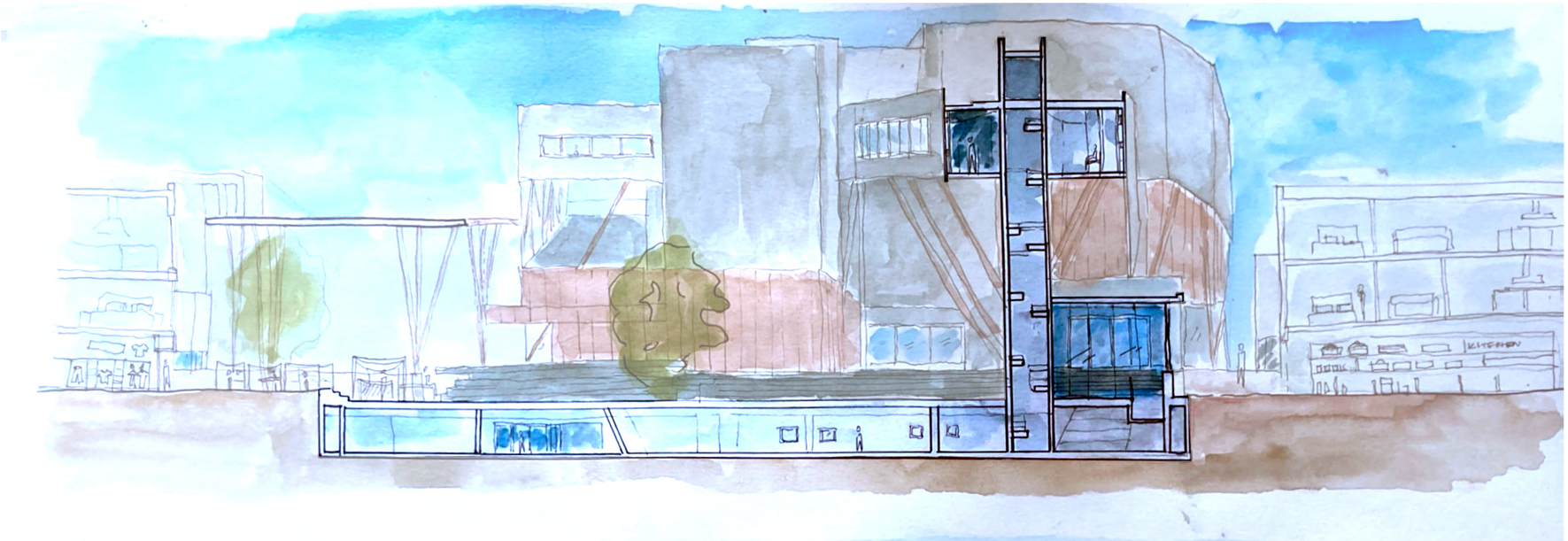
NORTH





Section DD
Figure 8.14

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Figure 8.15

Figure 8.16

Figure 8.17

Figure 8.18

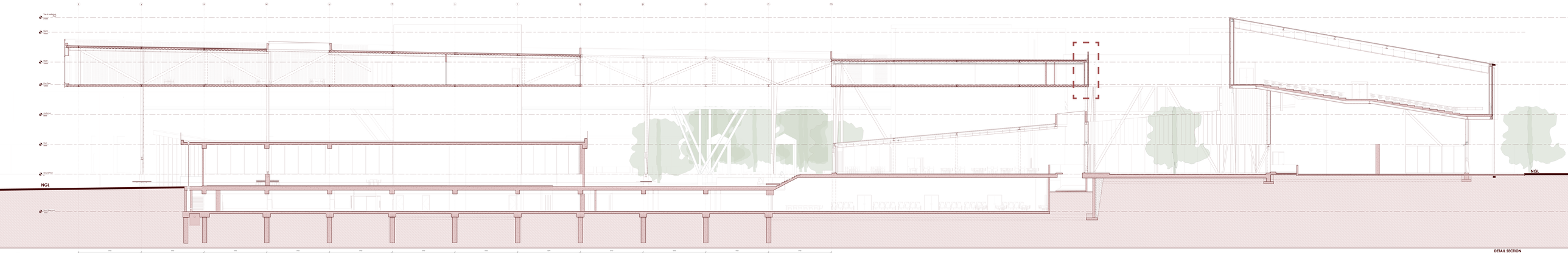

Figure 8.19

DETAIL SECTION
1:50

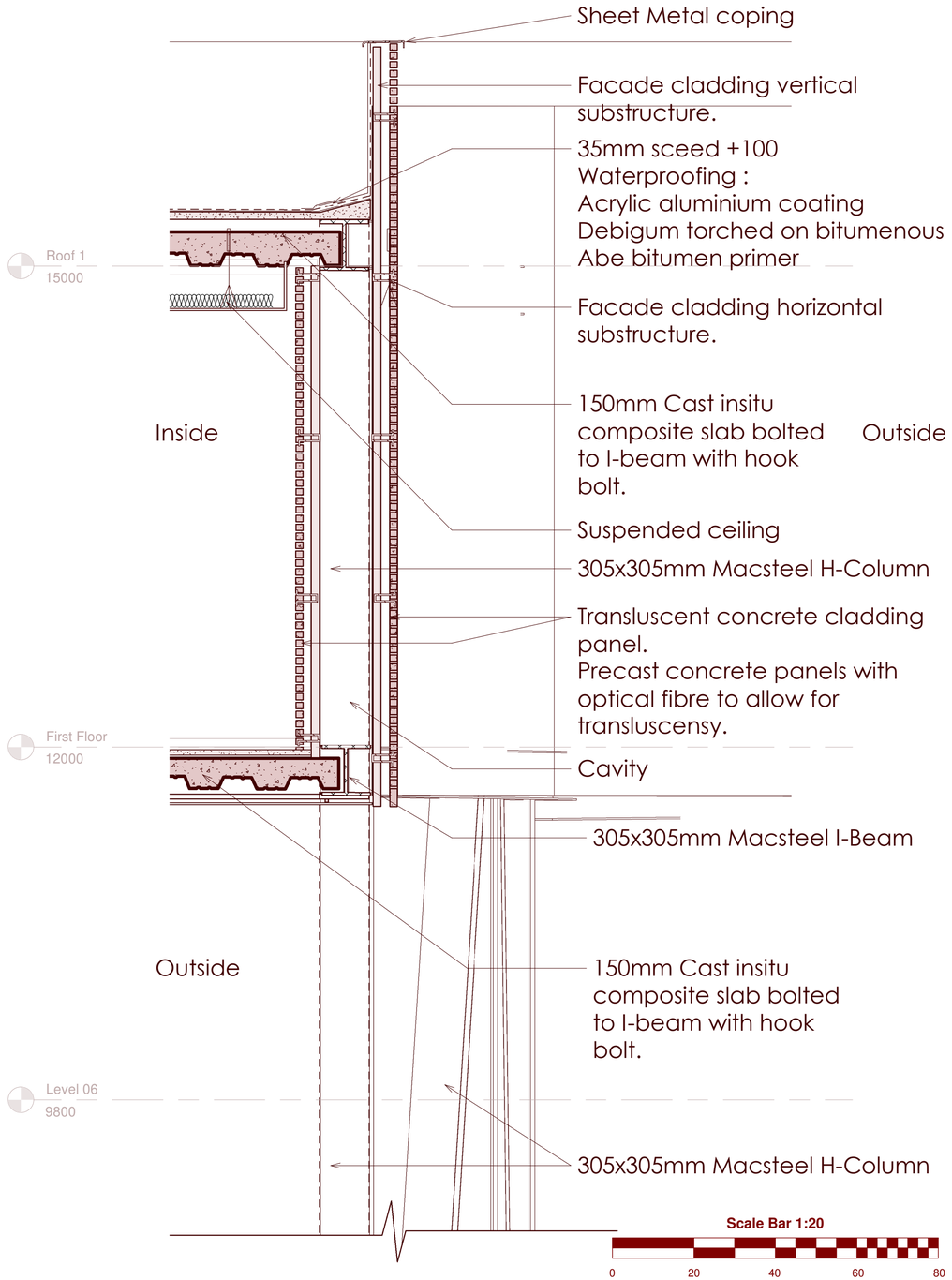
Sheet Metal coping
Facade cladding vertical substructure.
35mm sceed +100
Waterproofing :
Acrylic aluminium coating
Debigum torched on bitumenous
Abe bitumen primer
Facade cladding horizontal substructure.
150mm Cast insitu composite slab bolted to I-beam with hook bolt.
Suspended ceiling
305x305mm Macsteel H-Column
Transluscent concrete cladding panel.
Precast concrete panels with optical fibre to allow for transluscensy.
Cavity
305x305mm Macsteel I-Beam
150mm Cast insitu composite slab bolted to I-beam with hook bolt.
305x305mm Macsteel H-Column
Roof 1
15000
First Floor
12000
Level 06
9800
Inside
Outside
Outside
Scale Bar 1:20
0
20
40
60
80

Figure 8.20

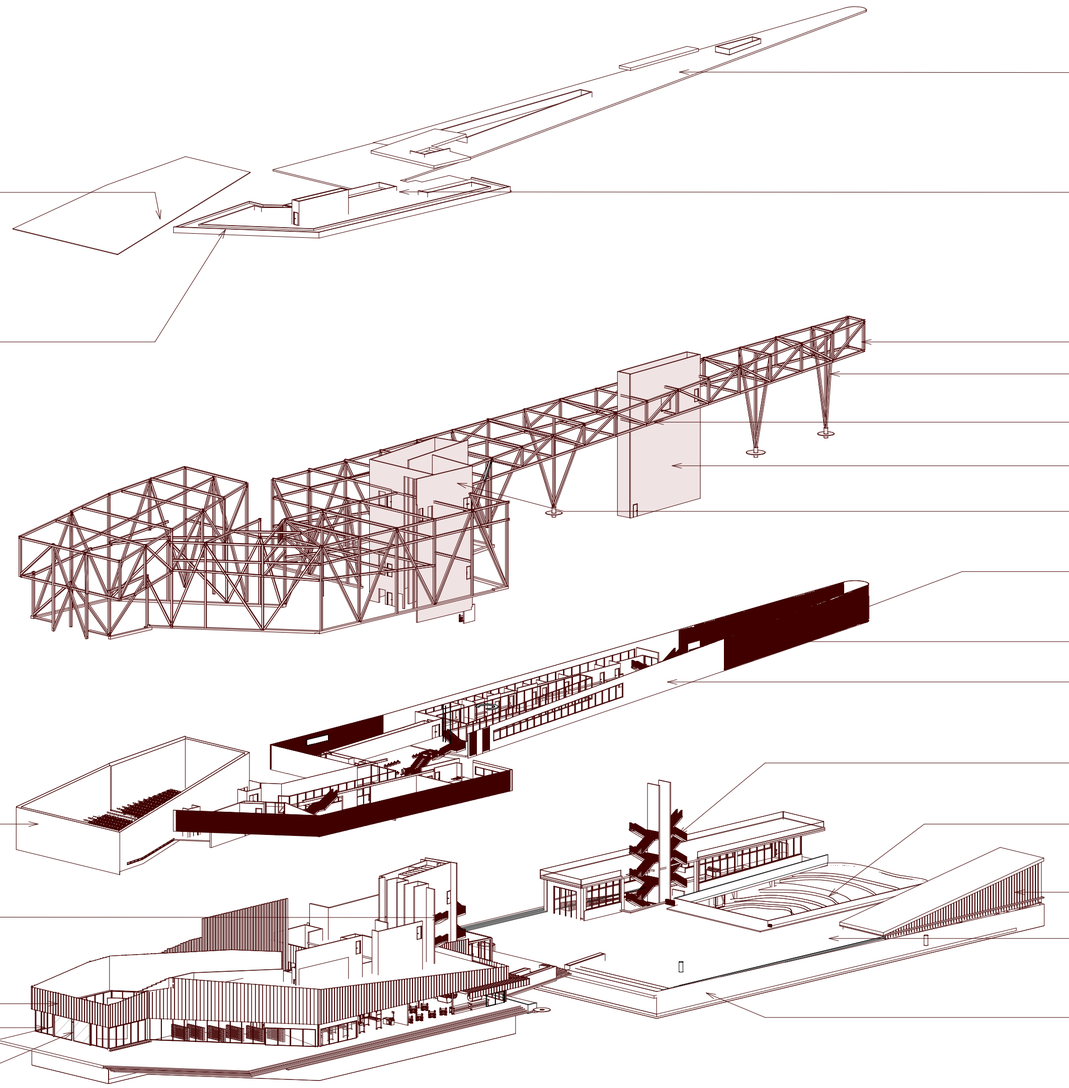
150mm Cast insitu composite slab
Bolted to I-beam with hook bolt.
Spans every 6 meters.
Kliplok roof sheeting with steel rafters and purlins.
150mm Cast insitu composite slab
Bolted to I-beam with hook bolt.
Spans every 6 meters.
Planters for roof garden.
305x305mm Macsteel H-Column
305x305mm Macsteel H-Columns leading to conc
foundation as specified by engineer.
305x305mm Macsteel I-Beam
Cast-insitu concrete core
Cast-insitu concrete core
First Floor
Precast transluscent concrete cladding panels.
Precast concrete cladding panels.
Fire stairs
Precast concrete cladding panels.
Amphitheatre
Semi basement parking/delivery entrance
Fire stairs
Ground Floor
Oxidised steel cladding
Curtain wall glazing
Semi Basement consisting of 8.4x8.4
concrete grid structure
Automated sliding door

Figure 8.21

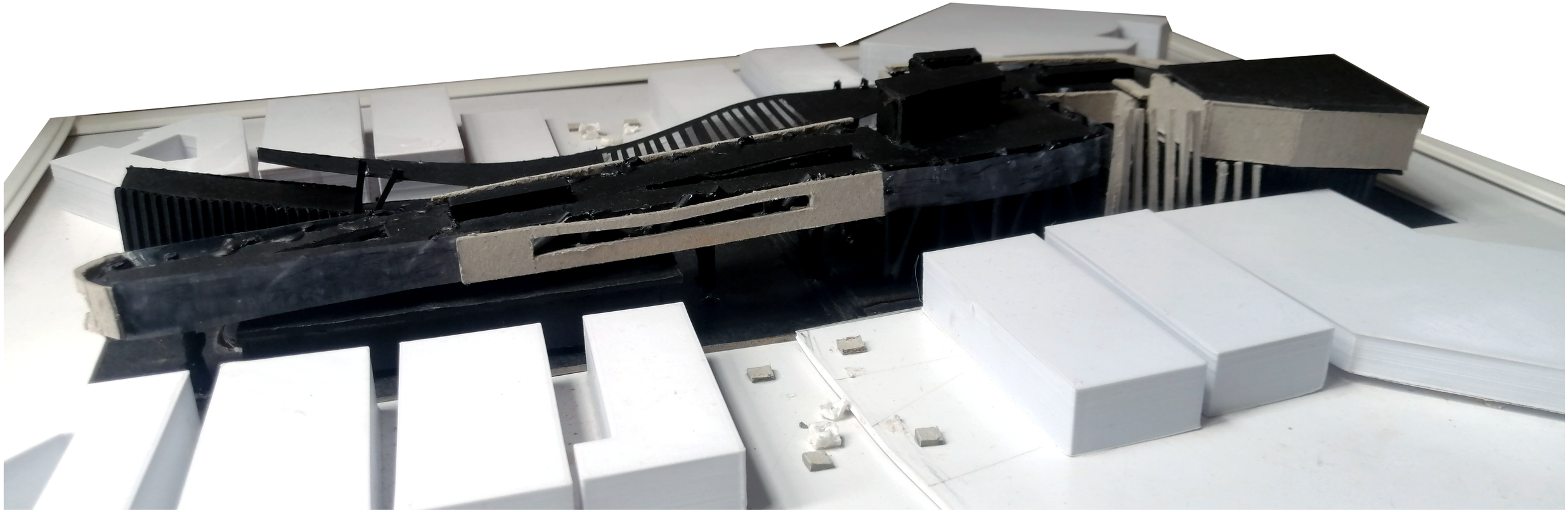

Figure 8.22

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-What is trauma? The author of "The Body Keeps the Score" explains | Bessel van der Kolk | Big Think, 2021.

Unpublished:

Dawood Bawa, unpublished

Appendix

Viability Report

ARPL7002
Mariam Bawa
1610998
Viability Report
Looking through the activation Lenz: Exploring urban renewal in Lenasia through the development of an activism centre.

All tables and figures are by the author unless stipulated.

Project Introduction
Understanding urban decay whilst addressing the apartheid spatial planning, traumas linked to segregation and issues of the present and future through an Informative Youth Activist Centre. The Youth Activist Centre is to be a building incorporated with a public space to help develop and activate the CBD of Lenasia.

Brief
The brief around the project is to activate the CBD with the use of a Youth Activist Centre that acts as a public amenity for commuters and residents of Lenasia.

Client
The client is to be a company that will register as a Joint Venture with a number of partners. The clients will consist of Non-profit organisations. The company itself will be A non-profit company as well as registered as a non-profit organisation to allow donations from public entities as the company will be hosting fundraisers. The company will also register as a public benefit organisation to be exempted from income tax and allow donations from corporate entities to be tax deductible.
The partners will consist of

1. The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation
   The AKF is an organisation that has Youth Activist Clubs all across Johannesburg. The objective of these clubs is to get young people actively involved in Social, Environmental and Political issues in their communities.

2. South African History Archive (SAHA)
   The South African History Archive (SAHA) is an independent human rights archive dedicated to documenting, supporting, and promoting around historical and contemporary struggles within South Africa which very much aligns with the function of my building. (“SAHA - South African History Archive - Exhibition Kits,” n.d.)

Context introduction and link to the project.
My project is based in the Lenasia CBD, which is a mixed-use area. The site I have chosen is in close proximity to a primary transport node, civic centre, library and a number of retails including a strip mall, and commercial and medical facilities. It is also central to what is happening around it thus allowing my architectural intervention to act as a liminal space for people walking from one point to another.

Site Information
Address: Lenasia Square, 14 Station and Concorde Place
Area: 2400+ 3750 + 3250 = 9400m2
Erf numbers: 1/192, 14/192, 2-13/192
All the following information applies to all erfs.
Zoning: Business 1
Coverage: 50%

FAR: 2.1
Height restrictions: 3 storeys
Building lines: 3 and 1.5
Parking: Differs for each programme.
All information above was acquired from the Land use scheme(“City of Johannesburg Land Use Scheme - FINAL 2018.pdf,” n.d.) and GIS JHB(“GeoLIS,” n.d.)

Land cost
An estimate of R11 000 000 based on existing real estate in the area was made for all erfs put together.

Figure shows the site in maroon and highlights the connections from the taxi rank on the Southwest to the main road and the mosque and strip mall north of the site. (Author)

Financial Aspects
Programme and Construction Costing
All area calculations were done as per the occupancy table in SANS 10400.

The project consists of a mixed-use building that is broken up into multiple interfaces to understand how private, semi-private and public spaces operate. Due to the nature of mixed-use in order to calculate the construction cost I used these interfaces as a guide to group the rates. However, it is one building.

The construction cost was calculated as per the AECOM 2021 guide to be R110 809 860.

Table showing Construction Calculations. (Author)

Programme	Total Area (sqm)	Cost(R/sqm)	Net Total	VAT	Gross Total
Public Space					
Cafe/Restaurant	150	10900	1635000	245250	1880250
Bookshop	500	10900	5450000	817500	6267500
Computer lab	500	16900	8450000	1267500	9717500
Exhibition	500	14600	7300000	1095000	8395000
Performance space/ Theatre	700	14600	10220000	1533000	11753000
Banquet hall	600	27000	16200000	2430000	18630000
Public Restrooms	52		0	0	0
Seminar room	50	10900	545000		
Lecture Audiitorium	250	14600	3650000		
Outdoor public space	6900	3002	20713800	3107070	23820870
Total	**10202**	**123402**	**74163800**	**11124570**	**85288370**
Volunteer Space					
Kitchen(Feeding scheme prep/event catering etc.	20	10900	218000	32700	250700
Work space	750	10900	8175000	1226250	9401250
Restrooms	24	10900	261600	39240	300840
Storage	2	10900	21800	3270	25070
Roof top garden	To be based on roof area				
Total	**796**	**10900**	**8676400**	**1301460**	**9977860**
Office Space					
Reception	50	16900	16950	2542.5	19492.5
Offices	150	16900	17050	2557.5	19607.5
Boardrooms	200	16900	17100	2565	19665
Break room	50	16900	16950	2542.5	19492.5
Achive storage	500	16900	17400	2610	20010
Archive viewing/reading room	50	16900	16950	2542.5	19492.5
Archive Reception	5	16900	16905	2535.75	19440.75
Restroom	24	16900	16924	2538.6	19462.6
Total	**1029**	**16900**	**17390100**	**2608515**	**19998615**
Services					
Server room	5	16900	16905	2535.75	19440.75
Electrical, Water, HVAC	6	16900	16906	2535.9	19441.9
Storage	8	16900	16908	2536.2	19444.2
Total	**19**	**16900**	**321100**	**48165**	**369265**
Total	**12046**	**168102**	**100551400**	**15082710**	**115634110**

Professional Fees
The architect's fees are calculated to cover all work stages using the Board Notice 307 of 2022 guideline formula for a project of medium complexity. Fees = Primary Fees + Secondary Fees, R12 645 330,47 + (R110 809 860- R130 000 001) x 8,94 % = 13 601 558,14. Other professional fees are to be calculated accordingly.

Table showing Professional Fees Calculations including VAT. (Author)

Consultants	Percentage	Amount
Architect	As per calculations	7224967.41
Quantity Surveyor	To be calculated	0
Engineers(all)	To be calculated	0
Net Total		7224967.41
VAT	15%	1083745.112
Gross Total		8308712.522

Development Costs
Land cost estimated based on real estate for sale in the area. (Author)

	Cost
Land	11000000
Construction	115634110
Professional fees	8308712.522
	134942822.5

Funding
The project is community-based and allows for public amenities within the CBD. Registering as a Non-Profit and Public Benefit Organisation will allow funding to come from donations, government grants and fundraising.

1. Donations from Private Companies
   Corporate entities using the Corporate Social Responsibility program model could donate funds towards the building of the project. The client/organisation registered as a PBO allows for company donations as tax deductions. The Johannesburg stock exchange is an example of a corporate company that follows this model and donates towards social development which is the essence of my project. (“Corporate Social Investment | Johannesburg Stock Exchange,” n.d.)
2. Fundraisers (Auctions, Banquets and more)
   The Client itself could host a number of events to raise funds for the construction phase.
3. Innovation Edge
   An organisation that funds youth development, will make the company eligible for funds as the main aspect of the project's building is A youth development centre. (“Home - Innovation Edge,” n.d.)
4. Johannesburg Development Agency
   The nature of the project aligns with Urban development in the area thus allowing for the JDA to fund aspects of the project.
5. National Lotteries Commission
   The NLC sets aside R6.3 Billion(Joseph, 2018) to donate to projects around arts, culture and national heritage which my project aligns with as it revolves around

preserving heritage within Lenasia. The grants range from R500 000 to R10 000 000 being the maximum amount. (“National Lotteries Commission | FAQs,” n.d.)

The direction of Funds

Funder	Land Cost	Professional Fees	Construction Cost	Total
National Lottery Commission			10000000	
JDA Funding	5500000	2040233.72	9200000	
Corporate Donations	5500000	10000000	64101030.6	
Innovation Edge			5000000	
Fundraisers		3601558.14	20000000	
	11000000	15641791.86	108301030.6	134942822.5

Table showing how funds will among all the developmental costs. (Author)

Income

The project has a number of income sources the main ones being the Bookshop, Cafe/Restaurant and Computer labs acting as primary income due to it being active on a daily basis. Other sources of income include workshops, venue hire and Productions in collaboration with local artists.

1. Cafe/Restaurant
   According to Famous Bean Cafe: A guide to opening your very own coffee shop the average cafe sells around 300 cups of coffee at an average of R25. The site I have chosen constantly has people walking through which will allow the coffee shop to do well. (“Famous-Bean-PTY-Ltd-Opening-a-Coffee-Cafe.pdf,” n.d.)
2. Bookshop
   An average price of second-hand books and multiplying it by an estimate of books sold a month to get an idea of income from the bookstore.
3. Computer Lab
   The cad labs are to have a minimum cost of R20 to encourage people to use the space, the space is to have around 50 computers. If 50 people have to use the computers, it is to work out to 1500 users a month.
4. Exhibition Entrance
   The exhibition space would have a minimum fee to help cover maintenance and cleaning.
5. Theatre and Banquet Hire
   The theatre will be available for hire for events, and school concerts. The pricing is based on venue hire prices within the area.
6. Plays, Comedy shows etc.
   Events hosted by the organisation will collect income from the tickets, in order to calculate the income, the number of seats available and the number of events per month are to be considered.
7. Workshops
   These are to be charged a minimum fee to help with supply costs. It is calculated by estimating the number of participants and workshops taking place within the month.
8. Fundraisers
   All event fundraisers might differ as an estimate of 10 000 was put in place as a provisional amount.
9. The roof top garden will save the food bank on buying fruit and vegetables.

Figure showing income calculations.

Programme	Price per unit	Qty per month	Total
Public Space			
Cafe/Restaurant	50	7500	375000
Bookshop	75	1000	75000
Computer lab	20	1500	30000
Exhibition Entrance	20	1000	20000
Theatre Hire	5000	20	100000
Plays. Comedy shows etc.	250	1000	250000
Banquet halls hire	5000	5	25000
Yearend Banquet	300	1000	300000
Workshops	20	1000	20000
Fundraisers	10000	3	30000
Total			**1225000**
Total income per month			**1205000**
Total income per annum			**14460000**

Expenses

Monthly expenses were estimated based on a basic understanding of the cost of stationery, and computer programmes. Adjusting the average household's electricity rate by considering additional appliances, machines such as computers, servers etc. The internet is an estimate based on Vodacom's business rate. The feeding scheme calculations are based on an existing scheme in the area. Working with R35 per person (this includes the cooking of the food) accommodating 10 000 people per month comes to R350 000.

Figure showing expense calculations.

Expense	Amount
Salaries	150000
Maintenance (Office, workshops, book store and cafe)	20000
Services	70000
Supplies (Office, workshops, book store and cafe)	20000
Computer programme license	100000
Marketing	5000
Monthly Groceries for Feeding Scheme	350000
Electricity	10000
Supplies	5000
Water	10000
Internet	3000
Roof top garden maintenance	5000
Archival Subscriptions	10000
Total expense per month	**758000**
Total expense per annum	**9096000**

Viability
The project has a number of income sources that will cover all the expenses while having surplus that can be used for free community workshops and to put in savings to host fundraisers and banquets. Thus, making it a viable project as it meets expenses whilst serving the community.

Technology and Sustainability
Using solar power as a way to light up outside lights and provide an alternate source of energy will assist with the current state of load shedding and help reduce electricity costs. The idea of ensuring outside lights is always lit is reinforced by Jane Jacobs around safety and lighting for people walking at night.(Jacobs, 1961)

According to a Cobenefits study, the typical 60kW (which produces 7000kWh of alternating current if exposed of 5 sun hours per day) commercial system will have an average annual saving of R20 000.

Material
Concrete will be used as a material in a sustainable way and is to be chosen due to it being a low-maintenance material. It will also reap social benefits as I will explore embedding identity through formwork and fingerprints, hand and footprint that add to the identity of the area.

Concrete or polished screed flooring will be used as it is low maintenance and concrete has a number of grades that account for foot traffic and other uses.

Implementation
Procurement
The procurement process will be undertaken using the Traditional design-led competitive tender. Since the JDA is to be involved, they are able to assist in the tender process.

Contracts for Procurement
PROCSA - Client architect agreement
JBCC - Principle building agreement.

Team
1. Architect
   The appointment of the architect will cover all stages from inception to close-out.
2. Attorney
   Assisting in documents for buying the site and transferring of property.
3. Town Planner
   The Planner is to lodge a consolidation application to the municipality and ensure the consolidation process is completed.
4. Landscape Architect
   The Landscape architect assists with public space design.
5. Quantity Surveyor
   To prepare the Bill of Quantities
6. Structural Engineer
   Prepare structural drawings and ensure the building is structurally sound.
7. Acoustic Engineer
   To work with the architect in designing the Theatre and Banquet Hall Sound.

Project Process and Site Management Considerations
The process will begin by purchasing the site and allowing for the property to be transferred to the established Non-Profit Company.

Once paperwork in terms of ownership is in place, The Town planner will come on board to begin the consolidation process. Alongside this process, the Architect will begin with the inception of the project and go into the design process whilst awaiting consolidation as the process takes up to 6 months.

Design Development may begin and lead to construction drawings and development. Time will also be accommodated for relevant tendering processes.

A project manager is to be appointed on-site to ensure everything runs smoothly and to set up the logistics behind the storage of materials, and places for contractors to have lunch and access to ablutions and much more.

Conclusion
The project's main goal is to benefit the community, to provide a space for youth to interact and share ideas around social, cultural, political, and even global issues. The project is something that will allow the community to grow rather than remain stagnant as it is constantly tackling issues. It is also proving amenities that are not readily available to people within the community making it viable in the long run.

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Ethics

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG | SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE PLANNING

24 May 2023

Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment:

Ethics clearance letter:

Dear Mariam Bawa

Student number (1610998), this letter confirms that your ethics application has been cleared. Your clearance/protocol number: SOAP006/04/2023

Yours sincerely

Lerato Nkosi

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Title change acceptance

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

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30 January 2024
Person No: 1610998
TAA

Ms M Bawa
61 Rose
Lenasia
Lenasia (1820)
1827
South Africa

Dear Ms Mariam Bawa

Master of Architecture (Professional): Change of title of research

I am pleased to inform you that the following change in the title of your Research Report for the degree of **Master of Architecture (Professional)** has been approved:

From:	**Looking through the activation lenz: Exploring urban renewal in Lenasia through the development of an activism centre**
To:	**Looking through the activation lens: Exploring urban renewal in Lenasia through an activism centre.**

Yours sincerely

Mr Yaseen Stoffberg
Faculty Registrar
Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment