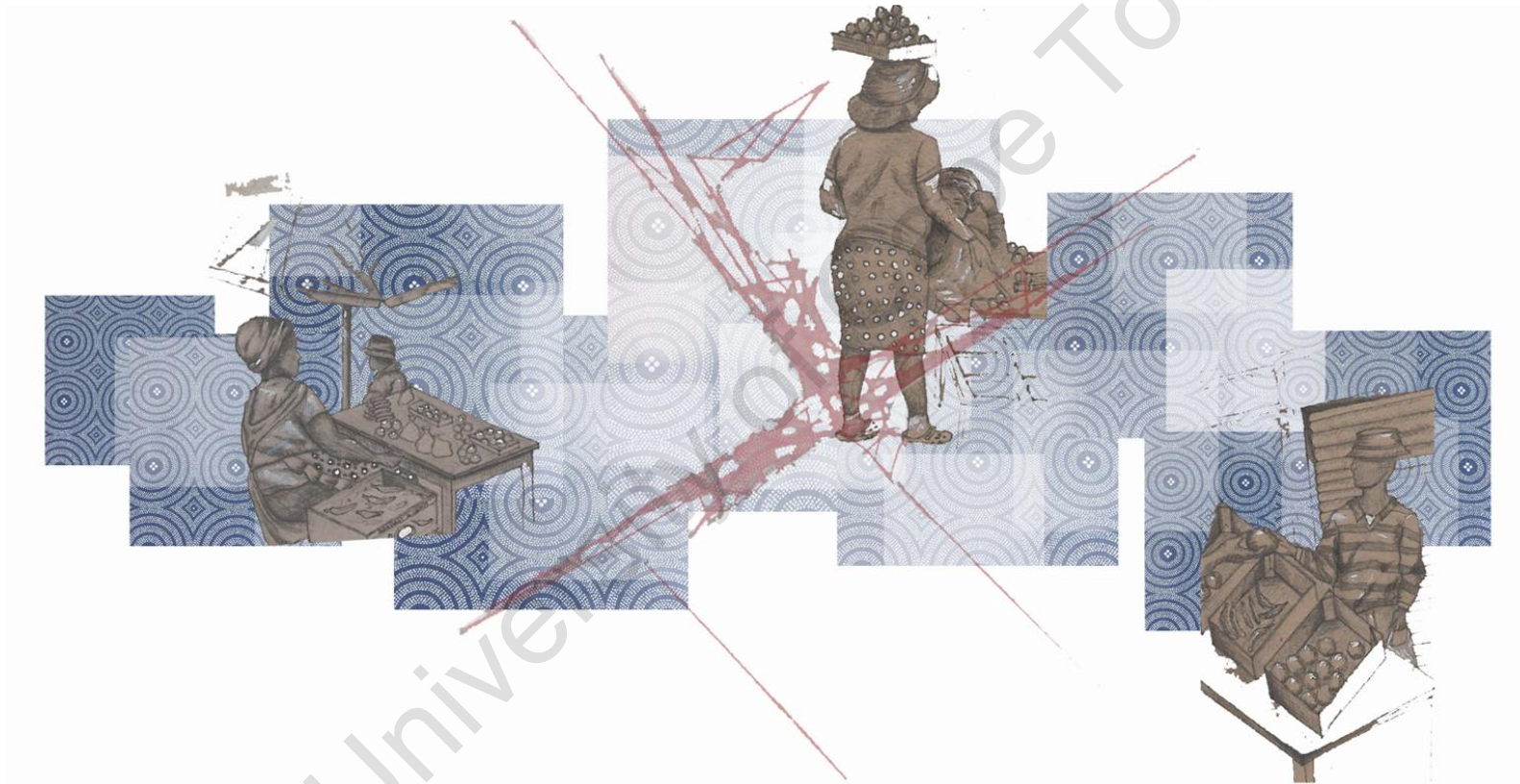


# THE URBAN WEAVE

INTERLACING INTANGIBLE THREADS TO FORM A  
COHESIVE AND HYBRIDIZED URBAN FABRIC

By Nosipho Ndawonde



Master of Architecture (Professional)

UCT Dissertation

Supervisor: Scott Johnston

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2023/09/14

Dear Nosipho Ndawonde,

Your Ethics pre-screening questionnaire (PSQ) has been evaluated by your departmental ethics representative. Based on the information supplied in your PSQ, it has been determined that you do not need to make a full ethics application for the research project in question.

You may proceed with your research project titled:

The urban weave: Interlacing intangible threads to form a cohesive hybridized urban fabric.

Please note that should aspect(s) of your current project change, you should submit a new PSQ in order to determine whether the changed aspects increase the ethical risks of your project. It may be the case that project changes could require a full ethics application and review process.

Regards,

Faculty Research Ethics Committee

## Acknowledgements

---

For uMa, uGogo and uMkhulu.

The people my heart calls home.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Bovine Head:** Warwick Junction is well known for this meat that is considered a delicacy.

**Paradigm Shift:** The way we view our reality is a paradigm. Shifting paradigm means to transform and reshape the fundamental perception of a certain concept, belief or knowledge; all which are a part of our realities.

**Urbanscape:** The physical characteristic of a city, derived from urban landscape.

**Multiplex:** A reality consisting of multiple paradigms harmoniously existing together

**Umkhulu:** A Zulu word for grandpa

**Uma:** A Zulu word for mom.

**Ugogo:** A Zulu word for Grandma

## PREFACE

Let me paint a picture of a moment in my neighbourhood in the township:

Under the late afternoon sun, the kids have been let out of school. Some are walking home, and others are already playing and running around on the streets. The road temporarily transforms into an animated playground with children screaming in laughter. Now and again, cars pass by, and the drivers scold the children for playing on the street. People stand on the pavements sharing conversation, others are coming back from work but raise their heads to greet as they walk past. There is hint of jazz music playing in the distance, down the road a neighbour is washing his car, a cream white Toyota Cressida. All four doors are open as he cleans it's inside, the bucket of water next to his feet. The music is coming from his car. I have known this car ever since I could remember, it is and has been a permanent part of the neighbourhood. There's a worn-out pair of sneakers that hangs above the street on the power lines tied together with its shoelaces and directly under this there is a young group of men that sit on the strip of grass that parallels the street. They are a loud group, laughing, talking and greeting a neighbour as he walks past from across the street. A different sound starts to fill the street and continues to get louder with each second. A taxi is approaching, and the children scatter to the sides of the road, a time out is called on the game. The taxi stops and lady climbs off. From inside people are passing her, her packets and bags, it is quite a load she has brought back from town. From across the street, the children immediately run across the street as the taxi leaves and its music starts to fade. One by one each child takes a bag and runs ahead of the lady to safely deliver the bags to her home. They know where she lives and none of them are her children. This happens twice more. The taxi comes, the passenger gets off with all their bags, the children stop playing, run across the road and take a bag each to safely deliver it to the person's home. There is a deep sense of community in townships and it is ingrained from an early age. In this moment, the street is alive.



Fig 1.1: *Home* An afternoon in my neighbourhood.

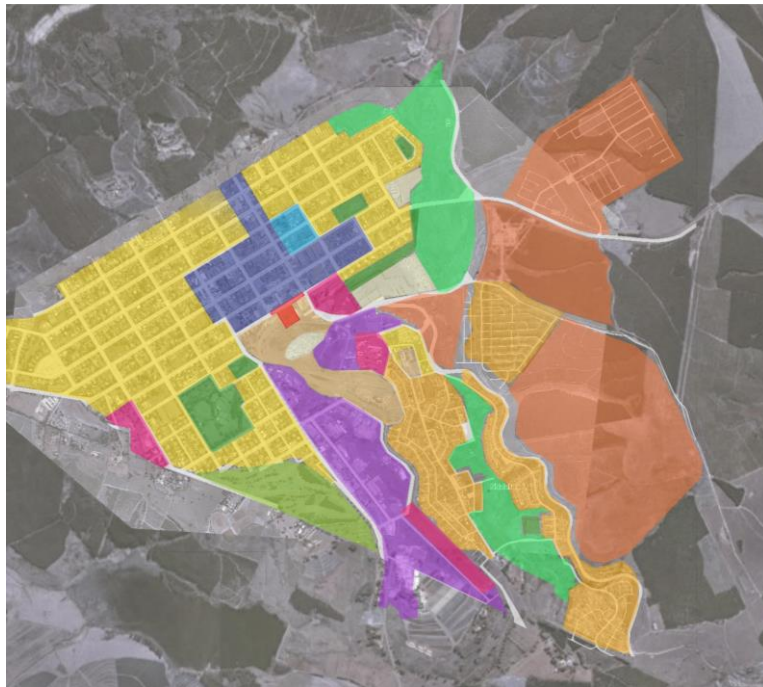
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# SITE INTRODUCTION

## GREYTOWN

Greytown is a small agricultural town in KwaZulu Natal that I was born and raised in. I lived in Greytown for twelve years before I moved to further my studies at a tertiary level. When you live in a place for a long period of time you get the opportunity to experience its many phases of change. These changes felt gradual when I still lived there, however, now that I don't live there full time, the changes no longer feel gradual, because I am not physically present to experience the small changes as they that lead up to the next development phase. Greytown is split into four main quadrants; urban residential, the CBD (Central Business District), low cost residential and industrial development. The urban residential and CBD are split through the placement of the old railway line, from the low cost residential and industrial development area. The focus of this paper looks at African urban areas and the informality that exist within them, specifically Greytown's urban area and its informal trading activities that make up the socio economy. Greytown is a primary node in the district. People from surrounding towns come to Greytown for work, shopping and visiting. There are different dynamics within this small town, some have transformed over time, and others stay the same. Greytown is a lot of places to different people and provides different experiences everyone. I have lived my own experiences in this place. Greytown is my hometown. Greytown is my home.



### Legend

- Urban residential
- Industrial development
- Core CBD
- Low cost residential

Fig 1.2: **Greytown** A map of Greytown showing zoning.

# INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a very diverse country where we find different races, languages and cultures. Upon closer investigation of the threads that make up the urban fabric, we see how different people are affected and accommodated for in an urban context. Cities all over the world demonstrate a hegemonic influence in the way they are planned and designed, because the Global North has become a template for how we design our cities. This results in places losing their individual identity because certain demographics are not catered for in the masterplan, culminating in marginalization, further separating people. The passing down of knowledge is interrupted because the new way of doing things no longer accommodates or has use for traditional and cultural techniques and methods. A large part of our identities as individuals, as well as a collective, comes from our past, from our experiences and memories. It can be argued that losing that flow of passed down knowledge, in essence, means losing a part of an identity.

Greytown was originally thought to be named after Earl Grey a renowned British politician but later it was discovered that it was in fact named after Sir George Grey. He was the governor of the Cape from 1854 until 1861. Throughout the years Greytown has retained its sense of place, to a certain extent, through its architecture. The historic buildings of British influence still stand in the CBD of Greytown.

There is, however, very little expression of African tectonics and architecture in the CBD. We do have to acknowledge that through the passage of time, cultures, traditions and the way of life evolves which ultimately means that things will continuously change, some pieces will be lost while others remain or transform and adapt with the times. So how then, do we keep from operating from the two extremes of the spectrum? How do we balance between the local and the global technologies? How do we develop in our architecture in South Africa while not losing a sense of place?

In this paper I will be using a few theories and concepts to guide the exploration of this topic. The structuring vehicle for this paper will be through the concept of *weaving*. The weave consists of three different elements. Each element of the 'weave', as will be explained in the following paragraph, will help in navigating and structuring each of theories in this paper. The 'weave' is an abstract idea that grounds the enquiry within one intricately crafted concept that acts as the spine of the paper. The theories that will be discussed in this paper will firstly be, development through small changes which first defines development and how it can be executed in a way that preserves the sense of place by introducing simple interventions and encouraging community participation.

The definition of development is explored with the aim of shifting its perception to being seen as an ongoing process rather than one final, end product. Secondly, will be taking a closer look at African identity and architecture and how it is perceived. Furthermore, I will be defining how the idea of an African 'urbanscape' looks, feels and functions. I will be discussing what an African city should be and how informality can be integrated within a formal urban design regime. Ultimately this theory speaks of creating a paradigm shift on how we currently think of cities and how we think of informality in our cities. Lastly, I will be discussing place theory and phenomenology through human existence. This segment, essentially, speaks of the human experience and the different elements that affect these experiences. The second section of this paper is focused on the case studies that demonstrate the theories and ideas discussed throughout the paper. It will be an analysis of the structure, design, spatial experience, etc.

# INTRODUCING CONCEPT

The concept of 'weaving' is the main vehicle that will synthesize the structure of this paper. It is the navigation tool that will guide the exploration of different the ideas and theories in this paper. This approach allows one to take on an abstract viewpoint of exploration before introducing pragmatic methodologies in the future phases . Weaving has been a big part of our lives as human beings and, through the concept of weaving as both object and action, it will be used as a guide to navigate 'African urbanism' in Greytown. The definition of weaving is the, "craft or action of forming fabric by interlacing threads" (*Weaving* 2023) and this can be broken up into three components: "craft or action", "forming fabric" and "interlacing threads". Firstly, the "craft or action", can be seen as the paradigm shift and the development of urban spaces in a way that also benefits the marginalised which in most cases, are the black communities. Secondly, "forming fabric", the tangible product of the hybridization and integration of an urban design regime. Where the local and global, informal and formal, first economy and second economy, Global South and Global North are all seen as essential and significant constituents of an African urban fabric. Lastly, what if we thought of people as infrastructure?

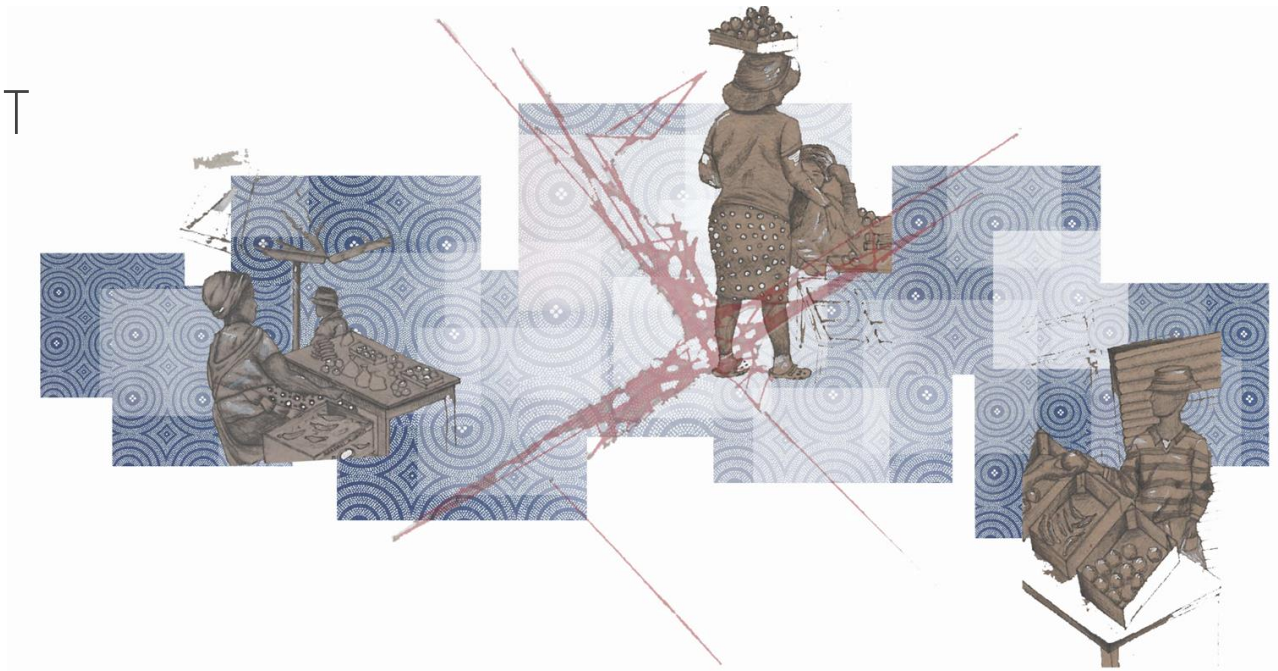
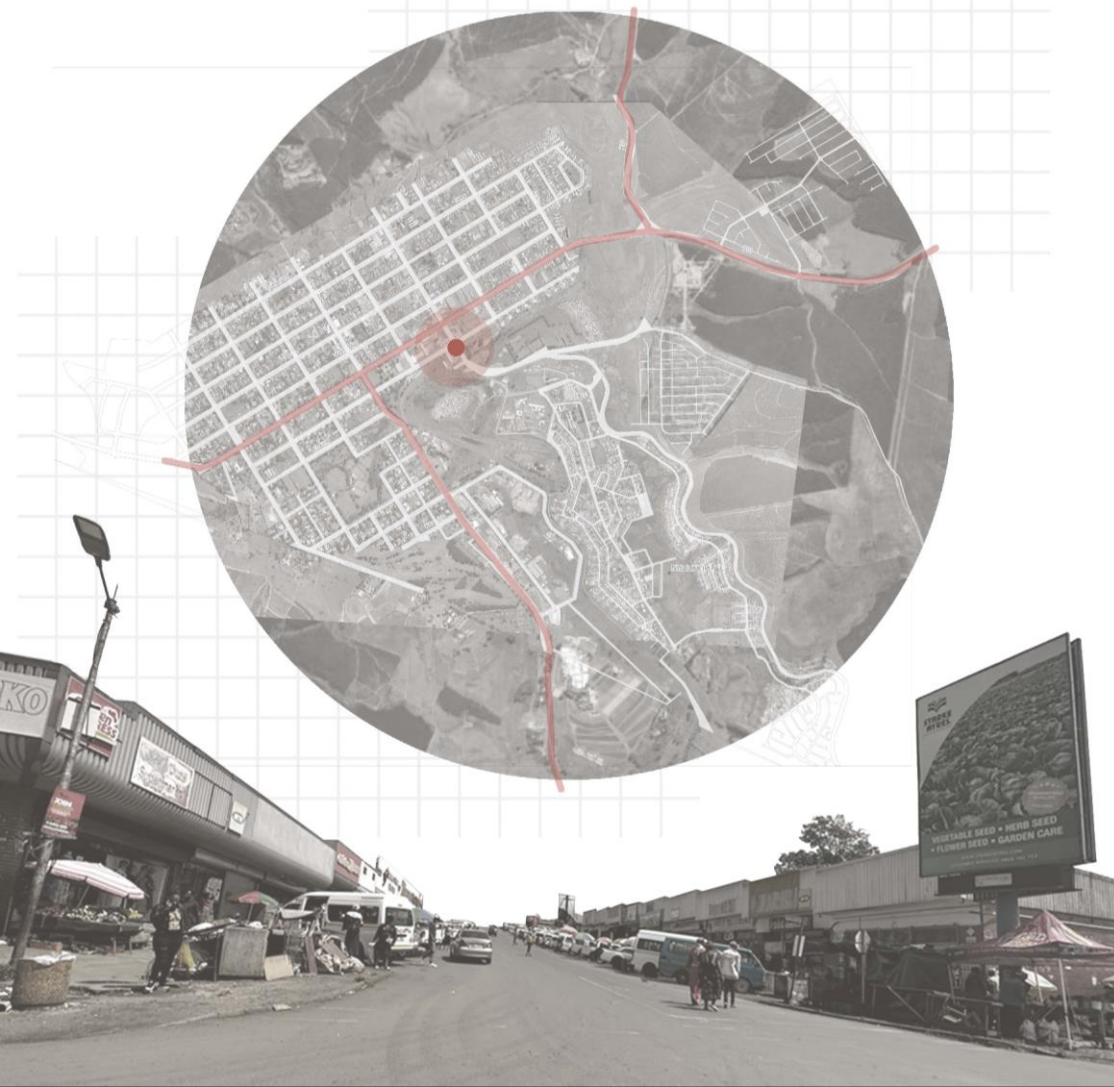


Fig 1.3: *The weave* A conceptual illustration of the weave concept.

This leads us to the final component, "interlacing threads". The role of a thread is to stitch together one or more pieces of fabric to form one whole secure and durable tie. Threads come in many different materials, textures and colours, but their use is not only in function but in aesthetic and style. People, much in the same way, are different races, genders, ages , etc. People are the linkages between different spaces as they move from one to another, they thread the urban fabric because movement and activity determines the connections between spaces. Human activity becomes the infrastructure because it is fundamental element of an operational city. Movement and activity is the human element, it is the thread.

## DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SMALL CHANGE

### ‘CRAFT OR ACTION’



In our cities there are different people that belong to different demographics, economic statuses and cultures. It is important to explore how these different identities can exist in a harmonious way to create a seamless fabric. Where the marginalized are seen as a vital constituent of the urban fabric and not just an unpleasant, unwanted consequence of urban planning. The goal is to work towards preserving and creating a strong African identity in our cities that portrays the journey and narratives of those who belong to it. An African city is one where informality is respected and seen as a significant part of the urban fabric. The objective is not to over romanticize informality, but rather to explore in depth, beyond a superficial level, the intricacies of these systems to find a solution other than eradication or relocation to improve them.

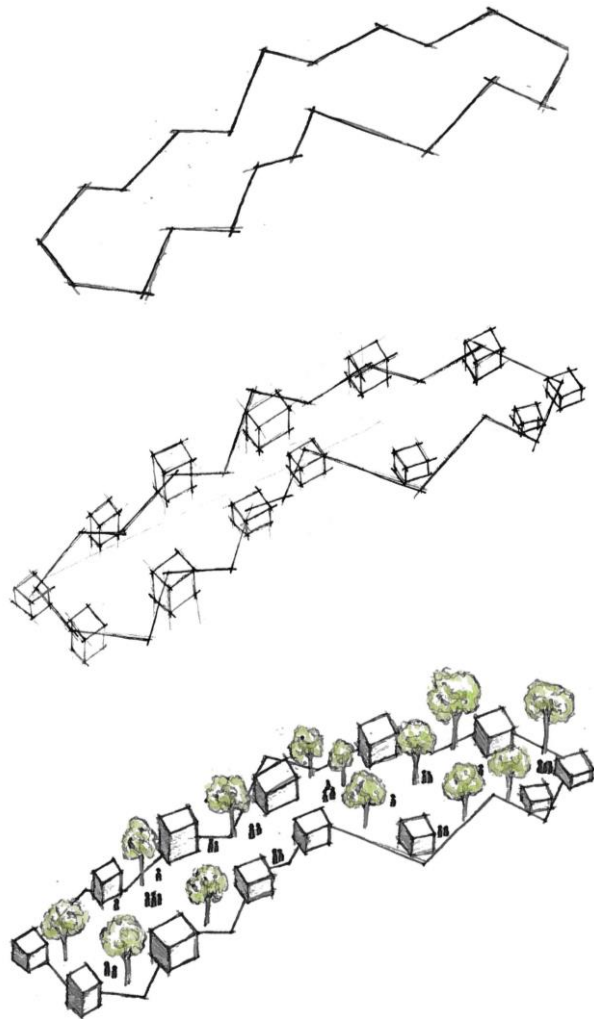


Fig 2.2: **Emergence** This diagram shows the process of emergence. The introduction of a simple intervention that people are able to take ownership of and make their own.

Development, *the 'craft or action'*, is the place where a paradigm shift can be conceived. The place where people can realize that there is diversity in development. Generally when one thinks of development, it conjures up images of high-end buildings and spaces. Development can be informality. Developing any kind of informal settlements requires small and simple interventions that facilitate the creativity of emergence of the community. In *hamdi's Small Change* emergence is described as the, "ability to organize and become sophisticated, to move from one kind of order to another higher level of order." (Hamdi. 2009) Emergence is the ability and freedom of allowing people to transform and adapt their spaces alongside their needs. Informal systems do not always have to be thought of as something that is broken, that needs to be fixed by people that are professionally qualified in relevant degrees. Finding solutions in a top-down approach may not be effective in understanding the intricate and complicated system that people have created to survive. This level of understanding requires a bottom-up method. Finding a balance between, "the creativity of emergence and the stability of design," (Hamdi. 2009) is the key to successful interventions that enhance existing systems. This implies a dual strategy, where the professional provides stability of being the guiding voice while the residents of the place are free to become the imagination and intuition of the project.



*Fig 2.3: Concrete blocks  
The concrete blocks that are used by the traders as stalls and storage.*

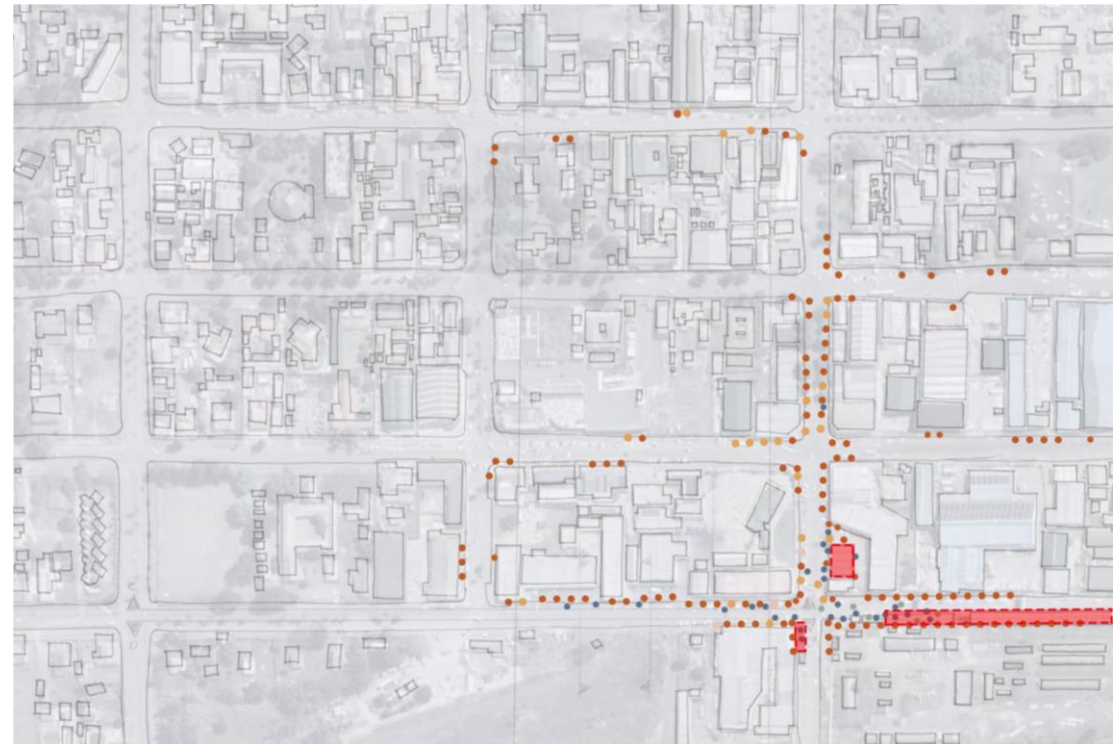
An example of a simple intervention in an informal space that improved an existing system, are the concrete blocks on Sergeant Street that were provided for the street vendors. Sergeant Street forms part of the busiest intersection in the Greytown.



*Fig 2.4: Concrete blocks  
social dynamic* An image showing the how people use the space. Even though pedestrian movement occurs on the inner channel of the pavement, the traders sit facing towards the street. There is a flexible dynamic in the circulation around the concrete stalls where the traders will move to where the customer is, whether that is on the pavement side or the street side.











An example of a simple intervention in an informal space that improved an existing system, are the concrete blocks on Sergeant Street that were provided for the street vendors. Sergeant Street forms part of the busiest intersection in the Greytown.

This streets has the largest concentration of informal trading in the CBD and this is due to it's proximity to the taxi ranks. This area is the transport hub of Greytown where all the taxi ranks are located. The placement of the informal vendors is influenced by the high number of pedestrian activity in the area who become customers. The city recognized that people were using the street edge as trading spaces and built concrete blocks for the traders. These concrete blocks provided a surface for traders to display their goods as well as shelves where they could store and lock their inventory overnight. A simple observation leading to a simple intervention and solution. There was a problem, and the occupants of the place created a solution of survival. The city saw this and further accommodated their efforts. The socio economy alleviates the effects of unemployment for many families in South Africa. This is a relationship of interdependence where the individual offers value to the community and the community is able to offer value in return. The traders can make a living even though they are unemployed, in the formal sense. In return they are able to provide affordable goods for the customer who might otherwise not survive in the current economy. Small and simple interventions are not always the appropriate solution. Sometimes drastic actions are needed to create a drastic impact which may cause disruptions. Disruptions can be a good thing and people can adapt. The acceptance of interventions of a large magnitude requires the input of the community.



*Fig 2.5: **The intersection** A map illustrating the types of informal trading activity that's occurs within the CBD of Greytown. The highest concentration of informal trading is found at the intersection, closer to the taxi ranks.*

**LEGEND**

-  Taxi Ranks
-   Walking
-   Trolley
-   Car
-   Table
-   Mat

People must want to take ownership of the space and sense place needs to be preserved, for the intervention to be successful and for this to happen, the residents of that space need to have a say in the decision-making processes. However, careful and meticulous assessments need to be done before a solution is implemented.

The goal, moving forward, is to look at the methods and techniques of designing cities that have a strong African identity even with the influences of modern technology. The idea of hybridity facilitates the identification of different elements and finding a balance between people and modern technology. The idea of process and becoming need to be prevalent themes in designing new spaces. It is challenging to design an end production because people change which simultaneously means their needs change, and with it, the city itself becomes a perpetually evolving organism. If people's needs are constantly changing, the spaces we design should be designed to adapt to these transformations. Ultimately the urban landscape needs to be receptive to the people and their needs which entails an ongoing process and continuous communication. The rural exists alongside the urban, the local exists alongside the global and the informal exists alongside the formal. It is, therefore, essential to figure out ways where the one isn't neglected but works in a symbiotic order. Keeping a sense of place while moving towards contemporary, urban development is essential to building African cities.



## AFRICAN IDENTITY AND ARCHITECTURE

### ‘FORMING FABRIC’

It is difficult to comprehend and envision what an African city is, when many African cities are built from a western urban planning model. However, to understand African cities means understanding its complexities and dynamics, and how they can't and don't operate like a Western city. South Africa has a wide variety of people, this creates places that *fabricate* different experiences, atmosphere and dynamic. Due to South Africa's history with its people, it impossible for it to be painted with just one brush. In the book *African Perspectives* by Gerhar Bruyns and Arie Graaflan what is discussed is the perplexity of the 'African Perspect' when they talk about "implying vision or viewpoints in a double sense – both inward and outward, looking from African towards the rest of the world and of course the world looking back at it. At us." (Bruyns & Graafland, 2012) One is a narrative from within the place by the people who live in it, the other, is discourse from people on the outside looking in.

Understanding that informality is a large and important part of our cities as African countries, is the beginning of a paradigm shift. The objective is to "provide a theoretical basis for promoting a sense of the "multiplex" in African urban development ... the ability to negotiate among locally and externally generated urban development knowledge and to enhance the impact of African experiences and contributions to the consolidation of urban knowledge in general." (Myers, 2011) From this we can start to re-envision what a cohesive and hybridized African, urban fabric could be. Acknowledging and embracing the diversity that lives in our African cities is just one of the ways to design for cities with African identities.

A large percentage of the marginalized is the black community who experience peripheral urbanism, a residual effect of apartheid. They live in the peripheries of the CBD whether it be the townships, RDP housing or informal settlements. These areas are usually located in the margins of cities putting people further away from the city centre and necessary resources. Moving forward, development should aim to, “bring the ‘periphery’ back into ‘our considerations of urban life’”. (Myers, 2011) This to speaks to threading informality back into the urban fabric to create one intricately woven ‘fabric’. Being in the periphery is not only limited to locality. It also addresses matters that are kept in the shadows and not given sufficient attention and consideration. An example of this, is the way the city views informal trading and that way that the informal traders are treated. Some are forcefully removed while others experience being treated like they are of lower importance. Periphery is more than just placement; it is the treatment and behaviour towards something.

Informality, in most cities forms the main income for many people who would otherwise be unemployed and homeless. Questions such as, “What to do with a country where the ‘informal sector’ is the main form of income, and thus bypassing government tax regulations?” (Myers, 2011). Informality is a part of our cities, and this may never change and maybe it doesn’t need to however, again, this does not mean that certain aspects of it don’t need to be improved. Informal trading in cities, is the result of people taking initiative and creating opportunities for themselves. This spirit of entrepreneurship is something that should be acknowledged and commended. For a person on the outside. What may look messy, chaotic and disorganized, can also be seen as organic vibrancy. Many may never see it that way because it is meant to be felt.

“That leads him to redefine the ‘right to the city’ in part as the ‘right to be messy and inconsistent, or to look disordered’” (Myers, 2011) The idea behind shifting the paradigm and the way we think of our ‘urbanscapes’ is to form a diverse, unified urban fabric. The hybridized urban fabric is made up of different materials with different textures and colours, meaning that our cities can be vibrant places that embraces diversity.

## PLACE THEORY AND PHENOMENOLOGY

### ‘INTERLACING THREADS’

Place theory and phenomenology centre on the human experience. These theories tie into the idea of ‘interlacing threads’, which explores the notion of thinking of people as infrastructure, an element that is essential for a city to operate. I am often asked where I am from. There is a lexicon of images that come to mind when I think of my hometown and one of them is the colour green. The green of the fields that wrap around the town, extending as far as the eye can see, beyond the horizon. The green from the avenue of the trees that stand in a line on either side of Hutchinson Street, providing a canopy that changes colours with the seasons. It was green the last time I saw it. And lastly, the green of the large electrical box on the street that I live on, that has become one of the many places of gathering for the neighbourhood. Experience is purely subjective; it is shaped by an individual’s own unique perceptions. It continues to unfold through space and time, constructed by our own personal context and interpretations.



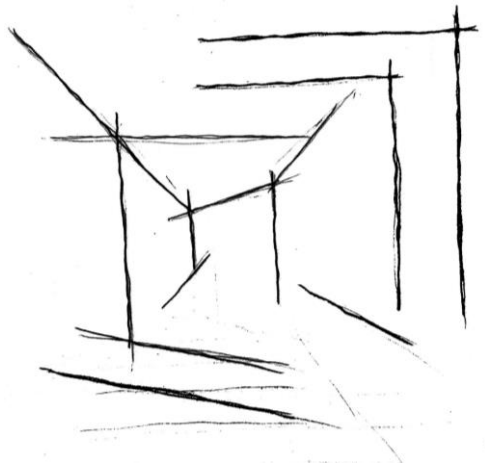


Fig 4.2: **Space** An abstract illustration of space void of social or personal connection.



Fig 4.3: **Place** An abstract illustration of place showing how the introduction of just a few, different elements start to create a familiar feeling of human experience.

Place refers to a personal connection with the surrounding context. It is the identity of a place. It refers to the “repetitive events of everyday life” that “construct a sense of home through familiarity and order” (Dovey, 2010). Sometimes people use place and space interchangeably even though they are not the same. Understanding human experience is an essential part of understanding the difference between space and place. Space has many different meanings depending on the discipline and context in which it is used, and the same applies to place. Space is objective while place is subjective. Place is created from space; a place can be created in space or around a space. Place is, fundamentally, created through human experience “A large part of what distinguishes place from space is that place has an intensity that connects sociality to spatiality in everyday life” (Dovey, 2010). Space has a physical, dimensional element, while place has an intensity of primacy and potency. Space can be quantified; a person can ask if there is enough space or too much of it. However, the same cannot be done to place, it is unquantifiable. It is difficult to question whether there is too much or too little place. The primary understanding of place theory is, “that place makes sense in everyday life” (Dovey, 2010). These everyday life events influence our experiences and that in turn influences our behaviours that become a part of our identities. In this way, we define ourselves by where we come from, our families, our homes, etc. We define ourselves by places and spaces we experience.

## A MOMENT IN TIME..

As I walk up the red steps that lead to the kitchen door of my home, a cool winter breeze brushes against my neck and my face. I lift my hand to open the door. The bronze door handle is cold to the touch. I pull down the handle and push the top half of the stable door open. Reaching down I unhook the latch of the bottom half of the door and swing it open. A high-pitched sound comes from the door as it slides across the tiled floor. This is a sound I hear every time I arrive or leave home. It is one of the many sounds that belong to the place I call home. Behind me I close the door and am immediately enveloped in the warmth of being indoors, I know the heater is on. I can hear indistinguishable noises of chatter further in the house and another constant muffled sound of voices. I know my family is home and they are watching their evening television shows. There on the kitchen counter by the sink are freshly baked scones that have been left out on a tray to cool. I can see the steam, like delicate tendrils of fog rising from the golden surface of the scones. The sweet, buttery scent fills the air. The kitchen is a cozy place filled with memories; my families and my own. If I close my eyes, I can see *umkhulu* (my grandpa) sitting on a chair eating dinner at the table. I can see *uma* (my mom) by the stove stirring the pots while *ugogo* (my gran) stands across from her leaning against the counter, laughing while they all share in conversation. Every part of this kitchen holds shared moments and memories. I walk towards the passage door, further into the house..



Fig 4.4: *Moment in time* An experience of walking into home.



*Fig 4.5: Walk of life* The collage is a visual representation of first-hand phenomenology. It serves to portray the walk of life and all its different, ever-changing perceptions. The memories we hang on the walls and thoughts we keep behind closed doors. It is life as we experience it.

Phenomenology addresses the consciousness through which we experience our environment. Phenomenology can be defined as the “interpretive study of human experience” and “the way people exist in relation to their world” (Seamon. 2000). In this section I will be discussing three specific phenomenological methodologies; first-person, existential, and hermeneutic phenomenological research methods. These research methods give a wider spectrum of understanding phenomenology. The previous passage demonstrates the first-person phenomenology method which requires one to use first-hand experiences to understand their context. Phenomenology is more than observing and understanding the surrounding environment through physical senses. It is about the way we interpret, process and react to these observations. The previous passage is a brief narrative of a memory that demonstrates first-person phenomenology. Other examples are, the feeling of safety and warmth one feels at home. The feeling of unease and discomfort one experiences in a dark isolated alley. The feeling of happiness and freedom, sitting on the sand by the ocean. These are different encounters of different places that induce different emotions and behaviours. Our environment not only influences our behaviours but influences our perceptions of, and interactions with a place.



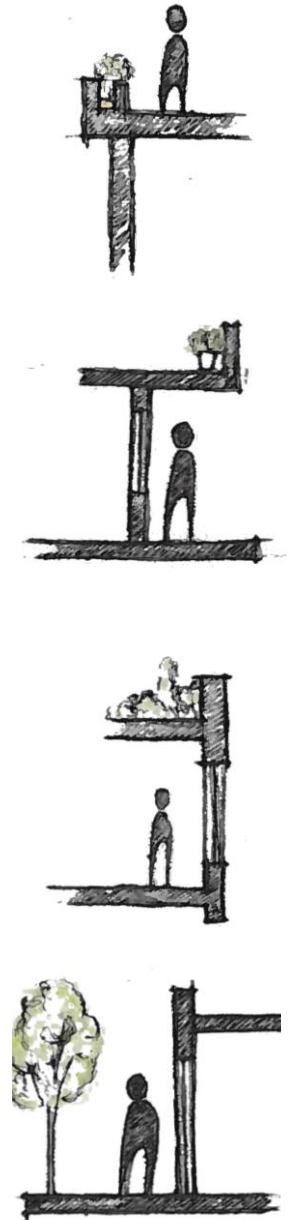
*Fig 4.6: Collective experience* This is a depiction of existential phenomenology. A group of people who experience together share a similar viewpoint.

The existential phenomenology method, “makes one important assumption in its claim for generating generalization.” (Seamon. 2000). This type of method is focused on a group of people. It can be hypothesized that, “people in a shared cultural and linguistic community name and identify their experience in a consistence and shared manner” (von Eckartsberg, 1998a, p. 15). An example can be seen in two different neighbourhoods. In the township, people sit outside and interact with each other frequently. The front of the house becomes social spaces. The kids play on the streets because the playgrounds may be further away and the backyard, not big enough. However, in a gated estate, these kinds of interactions might happen less frequently because there are spaces in the backyard for children to play and people are not seen on the street as often because there is a different social dynamic. Neither is good nor bad, it is just a difference in lifestyle dynamics. The environment influences the behaviour of communities because people that share an environment share similar experiences. Shared experiences create relatability and connections amongst people.

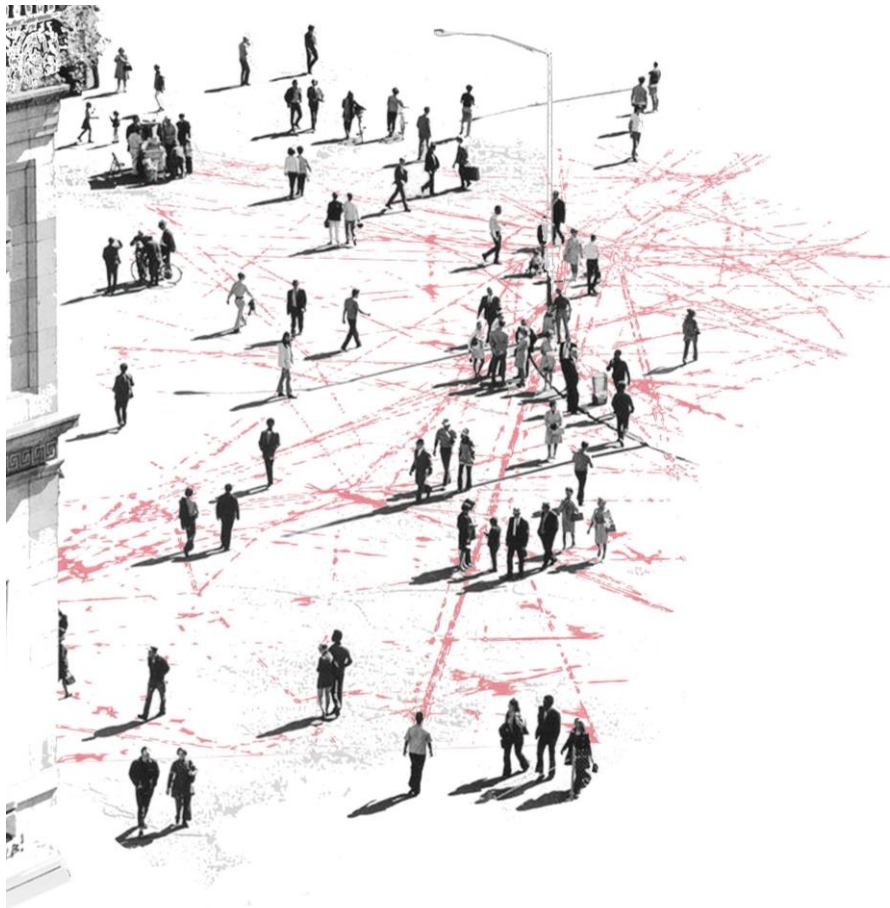
Lastly, hermeneutic phenomenology, in very basic terms refers to the interpretation of text and how it can be used to understand both first-person phenomenology and existential phenomenology. To create a clear understanding of this we can look at three basic elements in architecture; the floor, wall and roof. This creates an interpretational element in relation to the human body. A person can either be under or on top of a roof, they can either be next to the wall or around it and, they can either be above or beneath the floor. This positions the body in relation to its context and is another phenomenological tool we use to understand ourselves within our context. The different elements used together can start to create inside and outside spaces, to which there are degrees and layers of, depending on depth. This interpretation of spaces is part of the two previous phenomenology typologies. The previous methods address the physical experience in an emotive manner. It expresses the link between the physical elements of our environment and how we interpret them to create an experience. The hermeneutic phenomenology focuses more on those physical elements in relation to the human body. It puts words and terminology to the relationship between an object or body and space.



*Fig 4.7: Basic elements* The three basic elements of architecture that form different spaces, creating different experiences.



*Fig 4.8: Body positions* The human body in relation to context



*Fig 4.9: Intangible threads* An exploration of human activity as the thread that weaves the city together, connecting spaces and people.

The linkage between spaces is determined by the occurrence of human activity. People are the 'interlacing threads'. Through movement, we weave and interlace places together. Envision the many paths a person takes in a single day. Now imagine this person has a thread connected to them and everywhere they go, they leave a trail behind. The thread exists but the thread is intangible. These threads intersect and layer over each other everyday, forming connections not only between spaces but also between people. Each intersection signifies a shared experience to a certain extent. One of the things we do all share as people, is existence and experience. To exist is to experience and we experience because we exist.

# TECHNOLOGY

INTERLACING INTANGIBLE THREADS TO FORM A COHESIVE AND HYBRIDIZED URBAN FABRIC



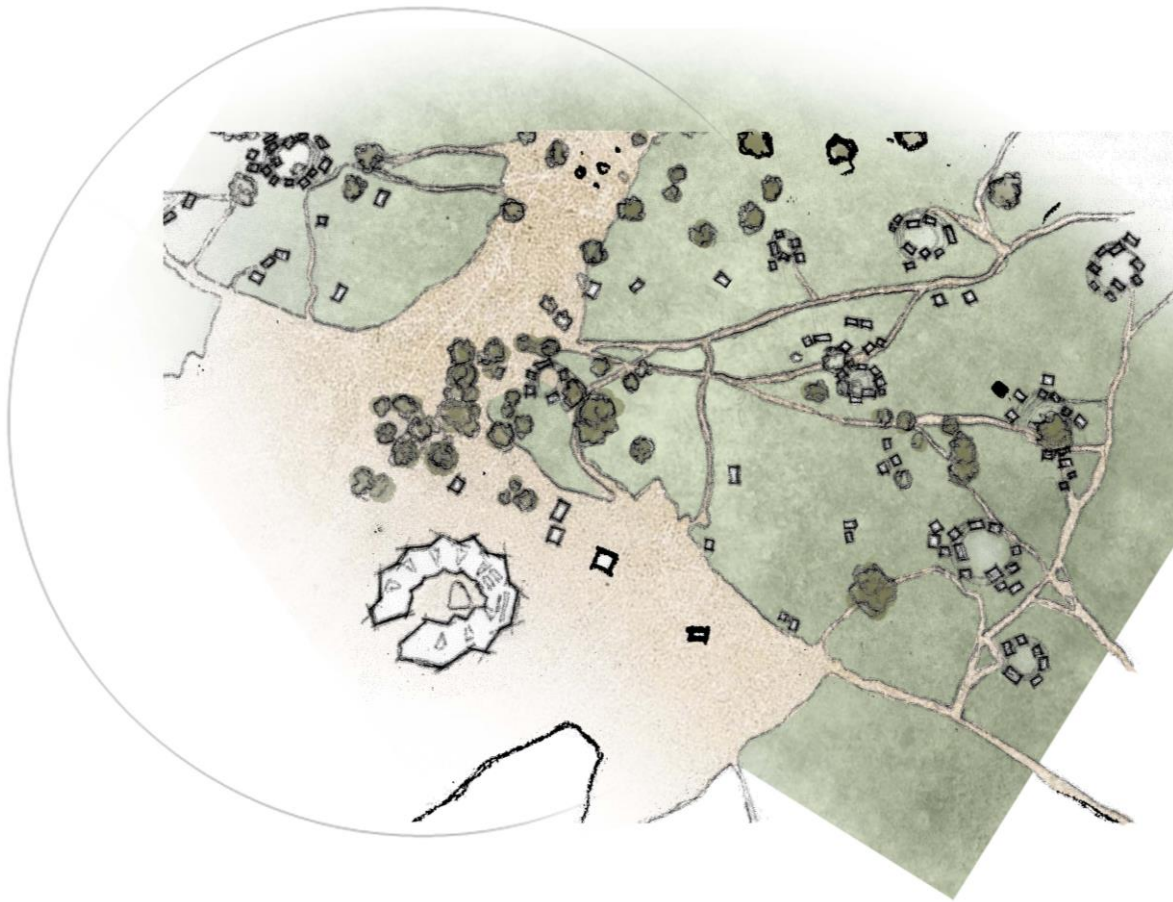
The perception of development, is associated with globalization because, “during the period of colonialism, when the main source of understanding of African reality, an orality (linked to race, sex, religion and phobias) was assigned the negative value” (Hamdi. 2009). It created a lasting impression of what is seen as advancement and quality in African cities. There seems to be “this strange absence of ‘Africaness,’” (Coetzer. 2016) in our built environment and it is partly due to what we consider advancement. We generally don’t see our own African construction methods and cultural practices as advancements. Due the Western influences we as Africans started to disregard our own practices and methodologies. “Through the law and administrative regulations during the apartheid period informality was equated with illegality and opposed to formality – both: spatial and legal (Abdoul, 2005,ILO 1972; Tokman 2001; Castells and Portes 1989).” Informality is seen as a consequence of a poor economy and poor urban design and that may be the case. But, informality can alternatively be seen as an interconnected system that’s is densely formulated by people. Informality can be seen as a creative solution to a problem.

In this following section, case studies will be used to demonstrate the key theories and ideas through actualized architecture. The main concept will be present in the analysis of these case studies but, will now only serve as a reminder to echo the main ideas that were previously discussed using the similar structure.



## LYCEE SCHORGE SECONDARY SCHOOL AFRICAN IDENTITY AND ARCHITECTURE ‘FORMING FABRIC’

Lycee Schorge Secondary School is a project in Koudougou, Burkina Faso by Francis Kere. This school sets a high standard for education as well as showcasing how the use of local material and craft can produce advanced architecture with a strong sense of place and African identity. The sensitive manner in which the construction of this building is designed shows a respect and an embracing of the existing culture and local craft. The building has a strong African identity that is conveyed through the local materials and the integration of local construction techniques as well as the involvement of the community. This kind of architecture embraces Afrocentrism and shows how it can be integrated with a contemporary style. This architecture demonstrates a collaborative relationship between the traditional and cultural practices with the modern approach of technology and mindset.



*Fig 6.2: Burkina Faso Map* A site map of Burkina Faso showing the surrounding context of the school.

African ideologies consists of intricately connected systems. The sense of community is a foundational elements of African architecture and construction. This is seen in the radial organization of the surrounding dwellings; the formation encourages and creates a sense of community and shelter. The design of the school follows a similar language where the individual modules are designed and placed in a radial form. This holds and shelters the central courtyard space which becomes an informal and formal meeting space for the school as well as for the community. Francis Kere designed architecture that assimilates with the surrounding architecture. The surrounding settlements consist of rectangular buildings that are grouped in a circular layout, creating sheltered communal spaces. The school's design, justifiably and ethically appropriates the language of the existing architecture.



*Fig 6.3: Circular form and influence* The design of the school shown as a response to the language of the context

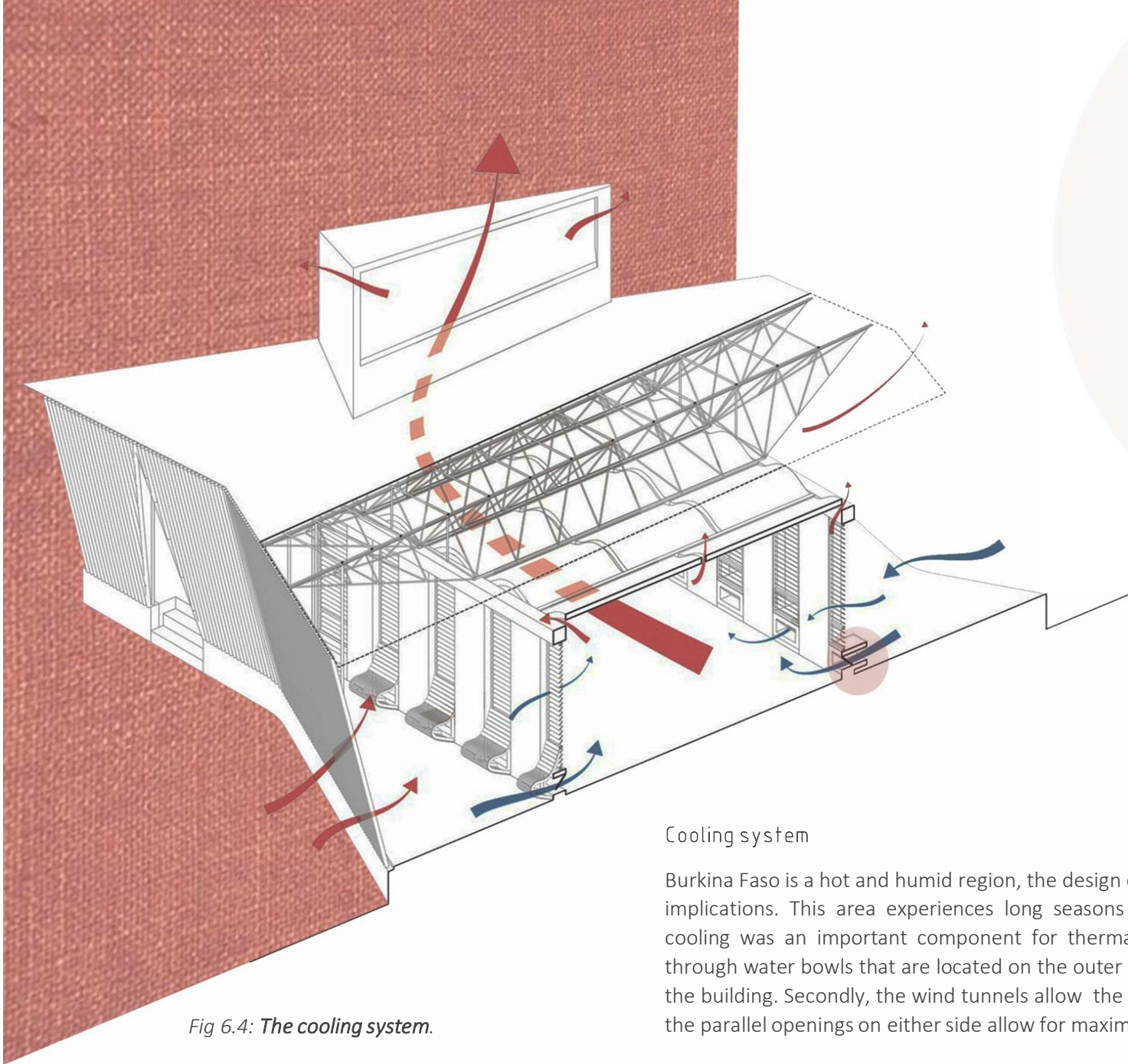


Fig 6.4: The cooling system.

#### Cooling system

Burkina Faso is a hot and humid region, the design of building had to respond to the environmental implications. This area experiences long seasons of dry heat and short rainy seasons. Passive cooling was an important component for thermal comfort. The three ways this is achieved is through water bowls that are located on the outer edges of the building, cooling the air as it enters the building. Secondly, the wind tunnels allow the warm air to escape because hot air rises. Lastly, the parallel openings on either side allow for maximum cross ventilation.

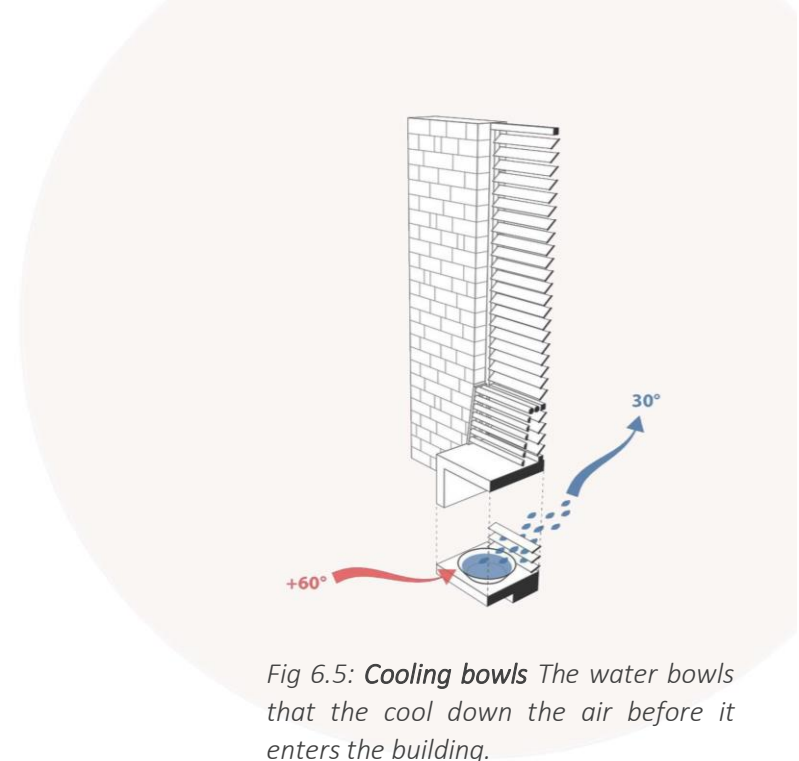


Fig 6.5: **Cooling bowls** The water bowls that the cool down the air before it enters the building.

## Structural components



Fig 6.6: *School aerial* Aerial view of Lycee Schorge Secondary School.

### Metal Roof

The roof of the structure is made of metal sheeting and steel structures that support it. The plaster has a curved 'wavy' form that is slightly offset where the wall joins the roof, to allow hot air from inside the building to escape. The ceiling is an off- white colour that diffuses light to spread the indirect sunlight inside the space. This creates plenty of light for the room during the day because artificial lighting is preserved for night time.

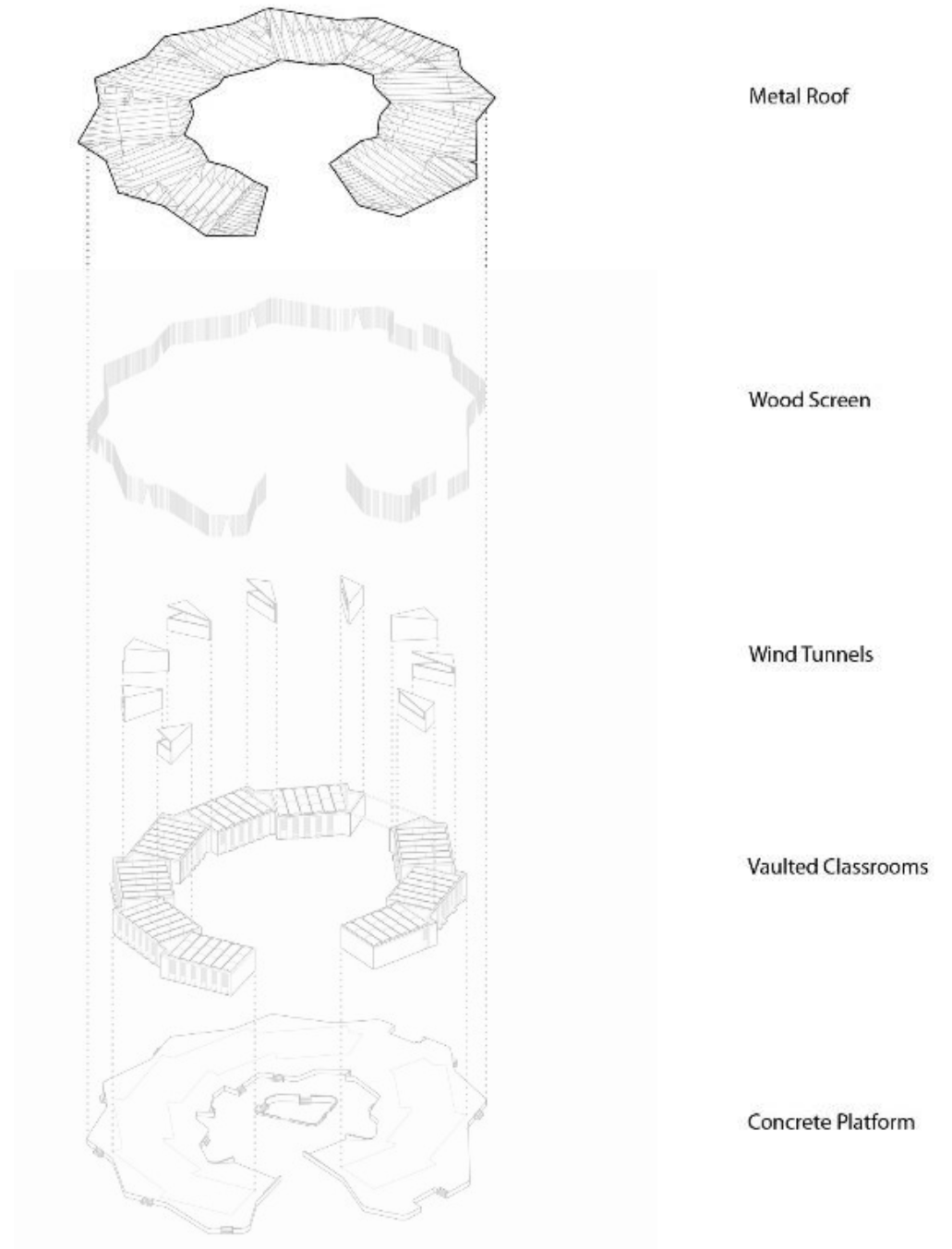


Fig 6.7: *School axo* The metal roof axonometric view

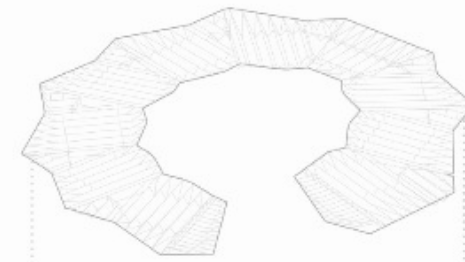
## Structural components

### Wooden screen

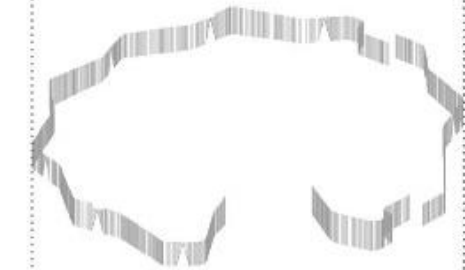
The outer perimeter of the building is wrapped with a timber screen that shelters the building from wind, sun and dust. The timber screen acts as a secondary façade that creates informal gathering spaces where students can wait for their next classes. Consideration for human comfort is constantly shown to be the top priority of the design. The screen is made from a sustainable local wood in the area. The wind screens also protect the brick wall from rain during the rainy seasons.



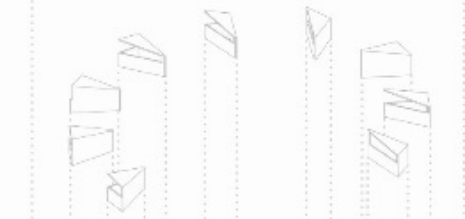
Fig 6.8: **Timber screens** The timber screen protect the passage from the natural elements.



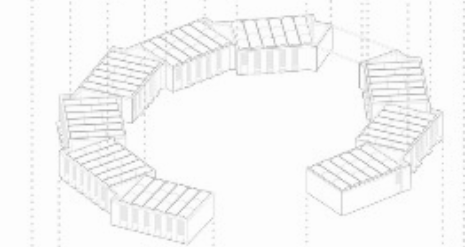
Metal Roof



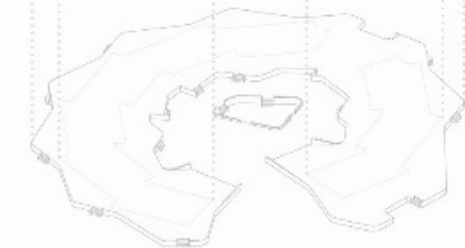
Wood Screen



Wind Tunnels



Vaulted Classrooms



Concrete Platform

Fig 6.9: **School axo** Wooden screen axonometric view.

## Structural components



Fig 6.10: **Roof tunnels** The wind tunnels on the roof

### Wind Tunnels

The wind tunnels on the roof catch the warm air that enters the classrooms and releases it back outside. Hot air rises, so it moves up and out the rooms. Not only does it act as a hot air expellant, but it also provides constant airflow through the space, creating a well-ventilated room.

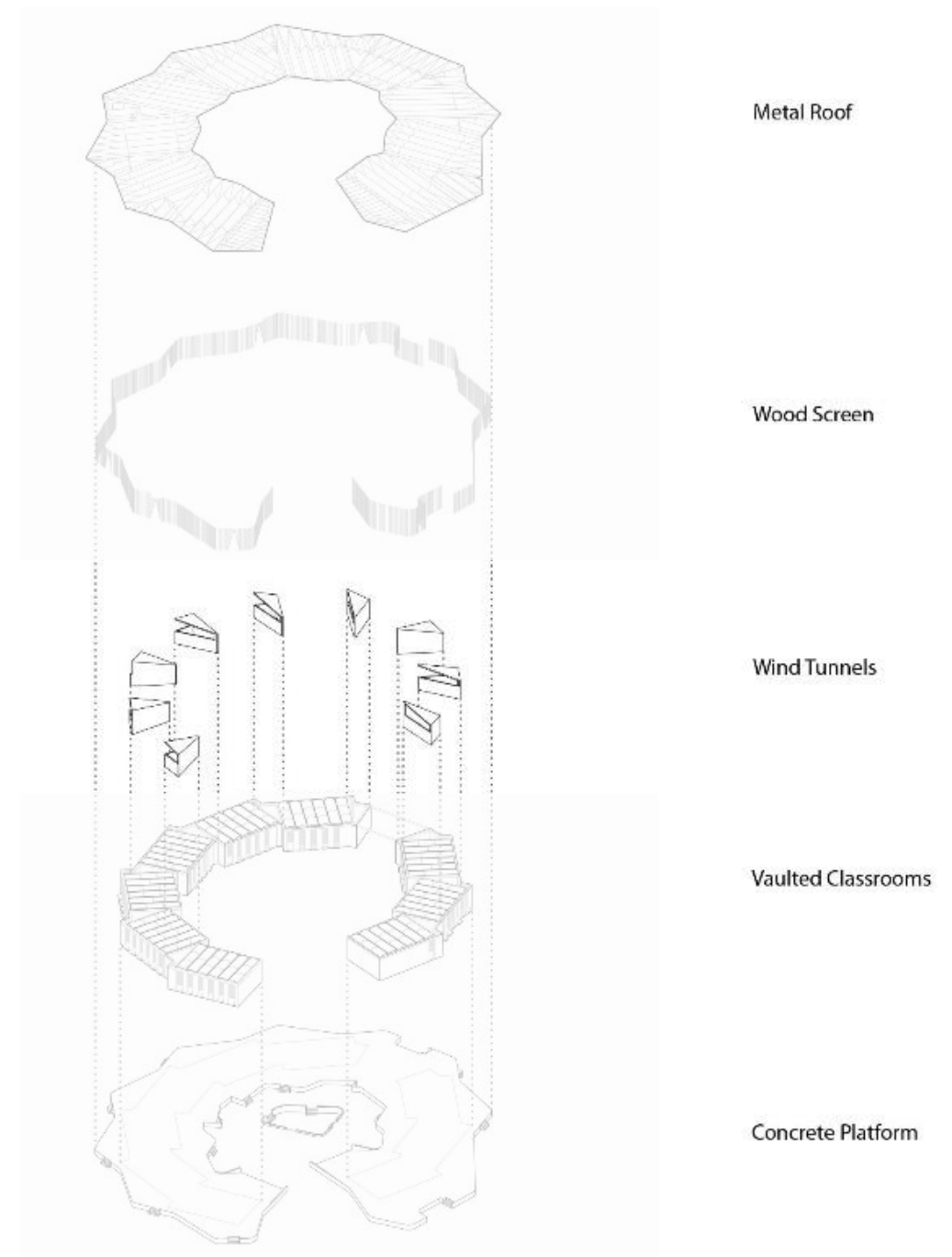


Fig 6.11: **School axo** Wind tunnels axonometric view.

## Structural components



Fig 6.12: **Gathering spaces** Furniture is integrated into the walls of the buildings, creating comfortable places to sit shaded from the sun.

### Vaulted Classrooms

The classrooms consist of nine modules which are built from a local material that is locally harvested, it is called the laterite stone. This stone is easy to cut into bricks when it is initially extracted from the ground. When left exposed to the natural elements of the environment, it begins to harden. Its thermal mass properties make it a suitable material to use for walls. Laterite stone has cooling properties, this means it can keep interior spaces from overheating. This makes it compatible to hot regions such as Koudougou. It is not suited to wet climates because the stone is prone to absorbing water. Koudougou has a dry tropical climate that experiences long dry seasons and short rainy seasons, making this stone suitable for this region. The bricks are cut in-situ which allows for minimal to no greenhouse gas emissions. The use of this stone in this way is a good example of hybrid tectonics. The use of local materials, such as this, that considered to be 'outdated' in a way that utilizes modern technology is the tie that is needed in African architecture to push the bounds of development.

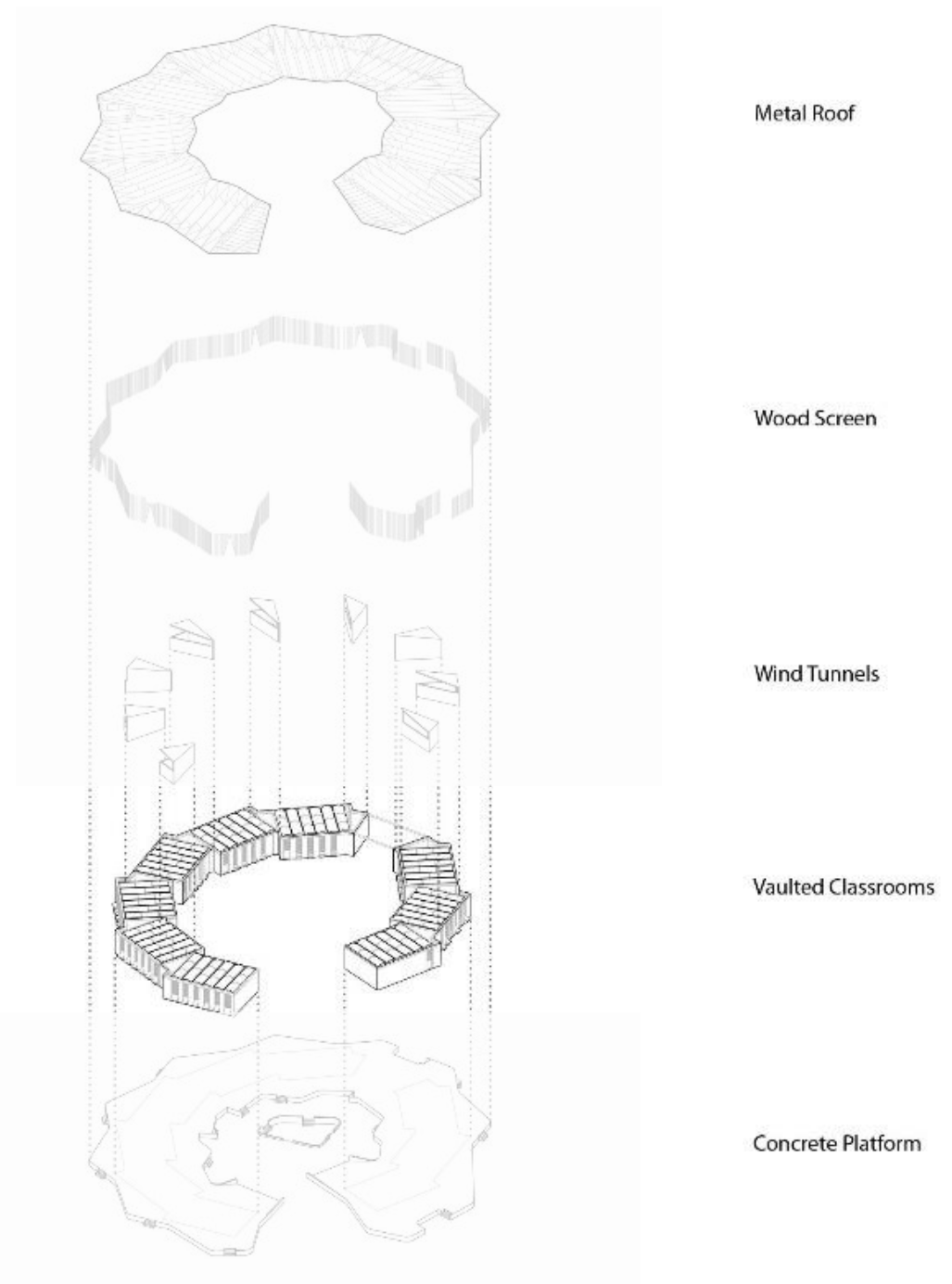


Fig 6.13: **School axo** Vaulted classrooms axonometric view.

## Structural components

### Concrete Platform

The concrete platform forms the base structure of the building. It also forms part of the corridor area, as well as the second entrance into the courtyard space. In the middle of the courtyard there is a separated extension of the concrete platform that sits central to the classrooms. Connected to it are ledges that function as seats on the perimeter of the concrete slab. The 'wavy' design of the slab on the inner perimeter of the main platform creates holding spaces that encourage people to sit and interact. This space both accommodates informal and formal social gatherings. It accommodates both smaller groups as well as a large group of people for school events and community gatherings.



Fig 6.14: **School courtyard** A courtyard space for formal and informal social gatherings.

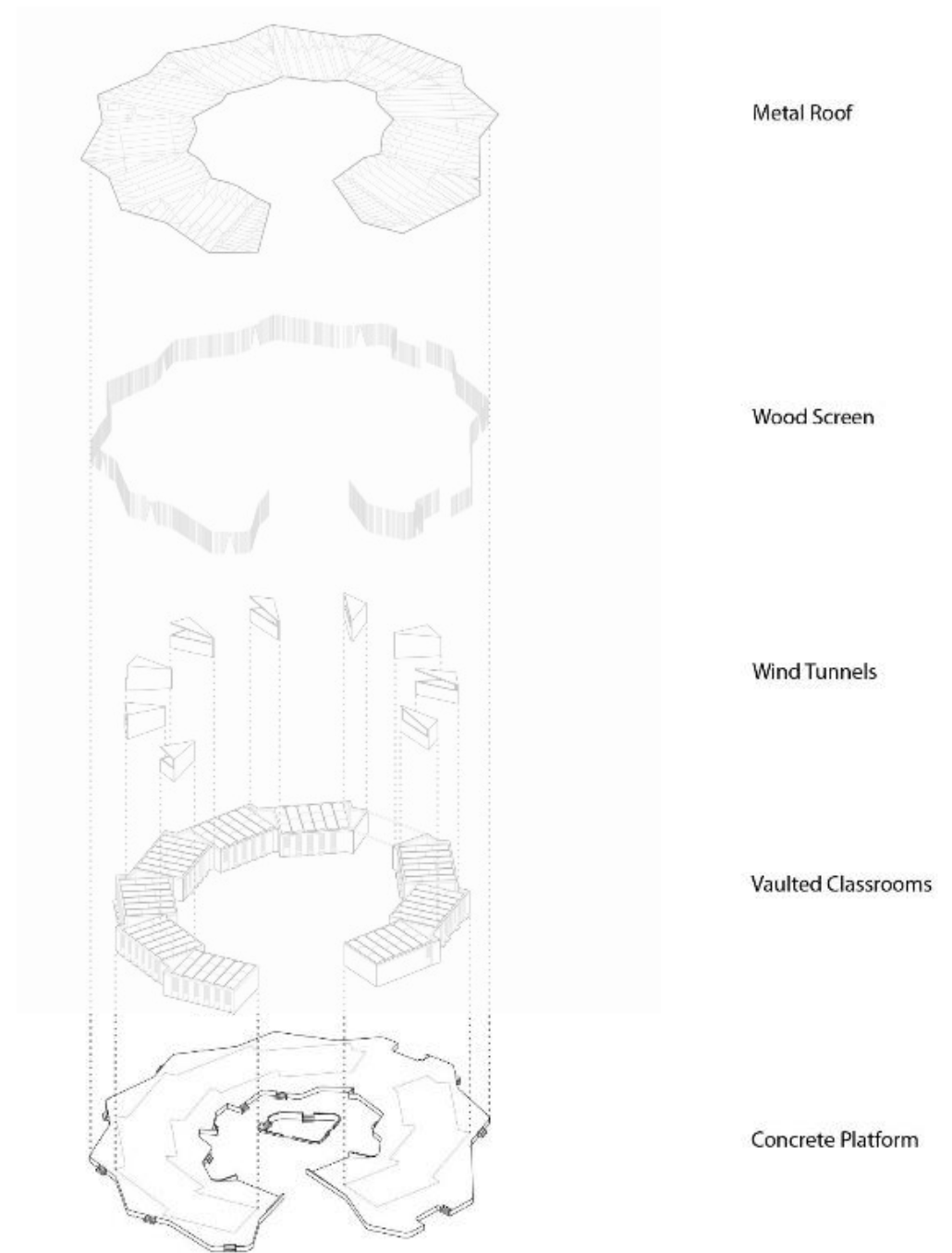


Fig 6.15: **School axo** Concrete platform axonometric view



## WARWICK JUNCTION PROJECT

### DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SMALL CHANGE

#### ‘CRAFT OR ACTION’

#### Background

Warwick junction is a large market and transport hub located in the CBD of Durban, KwaZulu Natal. In the mid 1990's, there was close to 4000 traders working in there. It is located by the Victoria bus rank, Berea Train and minibus taxi rank, resulting in high pedestrian traffic movement. This area was underserved and neglected by the city. The junction holds the highest density of vendors in the city because it is in a prime location that provides more opportunities for engagement and accessibility to customers. The market provides a wide variety of products, accommodating for a wide customer base.

Throughout the recent years, this area has undergone an urban renewal initiative. The focus of the project was aimed on the safety, cleanliness, trading, employment opportunities and the efficiency of public transport. This was an ongoing process between the city and the community. A process of trial and error where the researchers were able to work together with the traders to develop solutions. One of these cases involved the traders that utilized cooking for their trade. The researchers had suggested using gas as an alternative to open fires and the traders told them it wouldn't work. This was experimented and proved that the traders were right, together, they formulated another solution. This is just one example of how community participation can offer a deeper understanding of the workings of a place.



*Fig 7.2: Market renewal initiative Bringing informal trading out of the peripheries and creating meaningful connections to the city.*

### Intention

The initiative of the project was to preserve the African identity within the city through the urban renewal initiative and, to strengthen the connection between trade and transport. Community engagement and participation was essential in achieving a more efficient system that works for the different types of traders individually as well as collective.

### Intervention

The development of Warwick Junction was the beginning of the city seeing informal trading as a significant part of everyday life in the city. The interventions had to ensure that the market was protected from the road and vehicles. Provisions for water and sanitation had to be made, improving and providing the vendors with the relevant facilities. And lastly, the informal economy policy was reviewed and amended to accommodate the informal sector.

## Market Analysis and Diagrams:

*This shows how the structuring and organization of stalls controls the circulation through the market.*

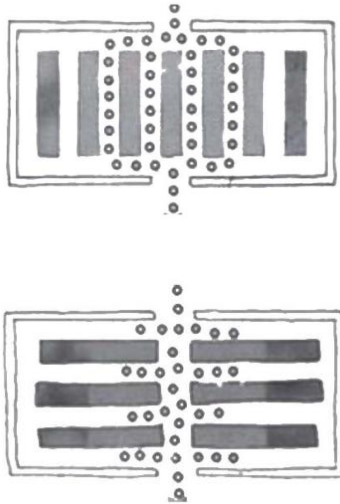


Fig 7.3: **Market entrance** Entrance placement in relation to stall placement can result in inefficient stall exposure

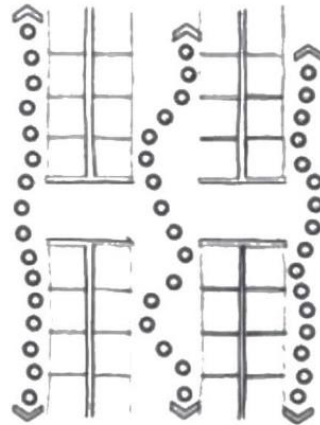


Fig 7.4: **End walls** End walls create dead space because there is no opportunity for engagement and interaction

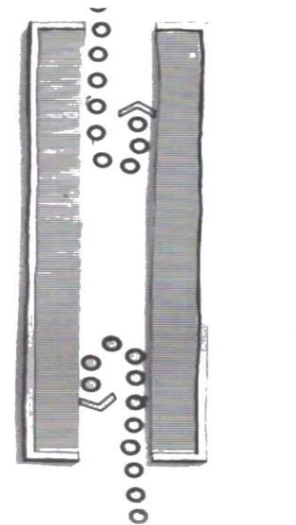


Fig 7.5: **Long passage** A long passage of stalls creates ineffective customer penetration.

## Program analysis

### Market spaces

Markets introduce an economic and social dynamic in an urban space. “Public space produces some of the most vibrant, complex, and most locally identifiable spaces experienced in urban Africa”. (Ganter, 2009:1) The market allows opportunities for a constantly changing market that accommodates for the constantly changing demand, through the changing and adapting of spaces.

Large markets structures usually have an anchoring group of vendors that function similar to the anchoring tenants in a mall. They are usually placed away from the street in a more central position. This forces customers to walk through the market and the other vendors, increasing the foot traffic to the other vendors. This increases accessibility and engagement, ultimately increasing chances for sales.

Market Analysis and Diagrams

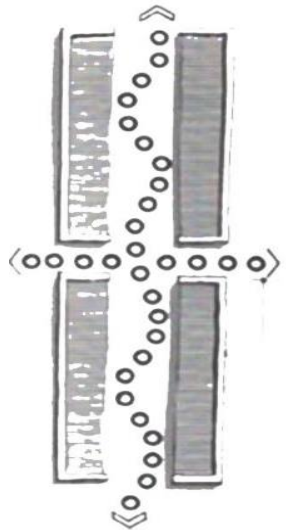


Fig 7.6: **Multiple access point**  
Multiple entrances allow for cross movement and stall exposure

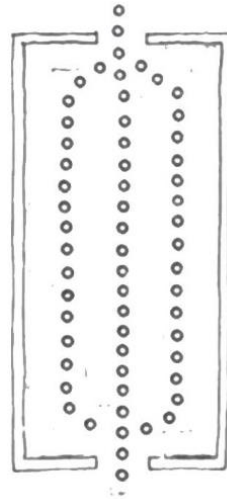


Fig 7.7: **Entrance placement**  
Entrance positioning allows for stall exposure and efficient customer penetration

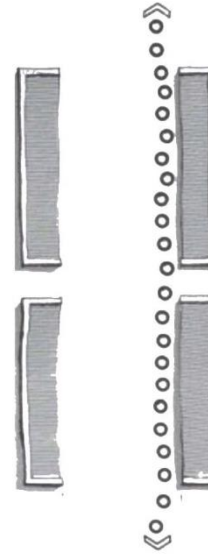


Fig 7.8: **Wide spacing**  
Circulation that is too wide, +6m, causes biased movement where the customers favour one side causing disengagement from the other side.

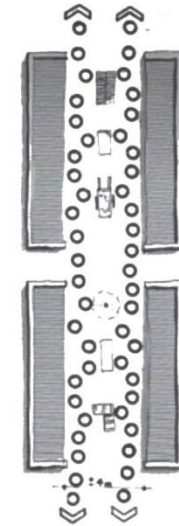


Fig 7.9: **Island stalls** Loose island stalls in between fixed stalls creates cross movement. The circulation space must be 4m or wider.

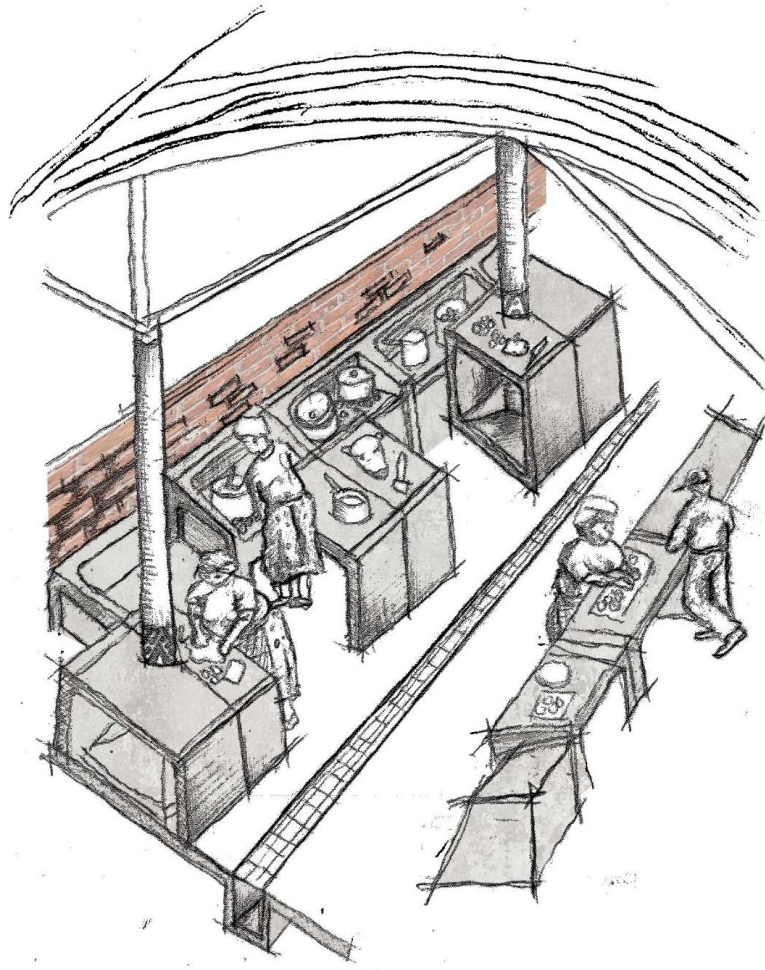


Fig 7.10: **Bovine head station** The bovine head section of the market.

#### *Bovine Head (specific)*

The bovine head is an African delicacy that is cooked and sold in Warwick Junction. Traditionally it is the men that slaughter and cook this part of the animal, however women started to partake in this activity as the economic opportunity arose. The vendors faced some issues with this trade because they used open fire which was a safety hazard. The oils from cooking would run onto the pavements and into the drains causing blockages. The lack of solid waste disposal resulted in rotting causing discomfort. All these factors created a health hazards for the food preparation process.

#### *Interventions*

The bovine cooks were relocated to the existing roof covered portion of the market. This area is where most of the traders who cook and sell food were placed, forming a food court. To address the problem of the oil and drain blockages, pre-treatment buckets were designed to separate oils and fats from the liquid waste for each stall. In this area, the floors were graded towards the centra drain which made it easier to clean. Water sources were introduced at two convenient points. This in itself became a business where water is sold to the cooks by a “bailiff”



Fig 7.11: Dual function bridge The market on the bridge above a wide, busy road.

### Dual function Bridge

The market operates on different levels that accommodates different types of trade activity. The different levels are from the pavement down to the enclosed market space. One of those levels includes a bridge that is above the road.

A street acts a break in a path for a pedestrian because it is an obstacle to get from one side to the other side. The larger the street is the bigger the obstacle. The addition of the bridge creates a link between the two separated areas. This bridge also functions as a market space. Along the bridge is a line of stalls that people have access to as they walk across. An example of hybridity, where the existing system of trade meets modern technology.

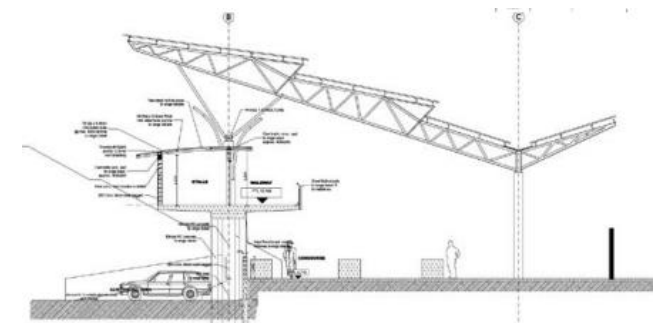


Fig 7.12: Market Section



## REVITALIZATION OF PRAGUE'S RIVERFRONT PLACE THEORY AND PHENOMENLOGY 'INTERLACING THREADS'

### Background

The riverfront area in Prague is a place of City-wide significance. It is the connection between the city and the Vltava River and acts the spinal cord from which the city is formed. Each 'vertebrae' acts a skeletal structure from by which the city is systematized. The revitalization of the of the riverfront focused on reconstructing twenty vaults in the riverside wall. The first phase was completed along three Prague embankments, Rašín, Hořejší, and Dvořák. It had a large sociocultural impact on the city.

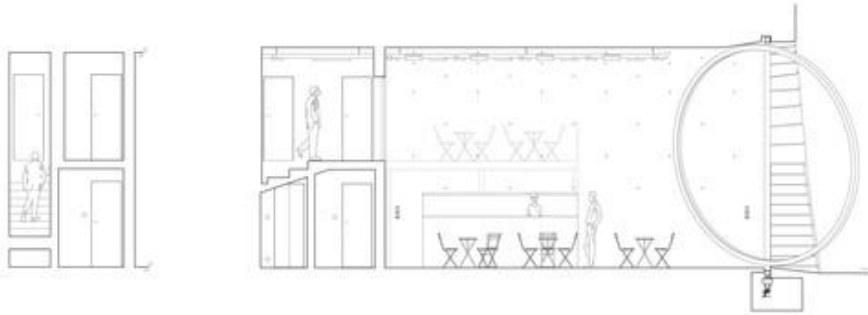


Fig 8.2: **Vault section** Restaurant spatial layout

### Program & Spatial Experience

Since the project consists of multiple vaults, each of them have different functions, such as bars, cafes, galleries, etc. The location of the vaults along the riverside wall causes a contrast that heightens the spatial experience of walking through the threshold. From walking on the wide pavement of the river front next to the water, to walking into a confined space that is built into the existing wall

One example of the vaults is a restaurant. The spatial planning of this design enables maximum use of the room while allowing the space to feel open. The door opens at an angle creating flexible circulation but also provides protection from the wind in the event that the door is left open.

The contrast between the solid walls and the full panel glass doors creates a view box experience. It enhances the focus on the views outside. Similarly, a cinema has dark walls and a central screen at the front. The Glass panel, or rather the view beyond it becomes the focal point.

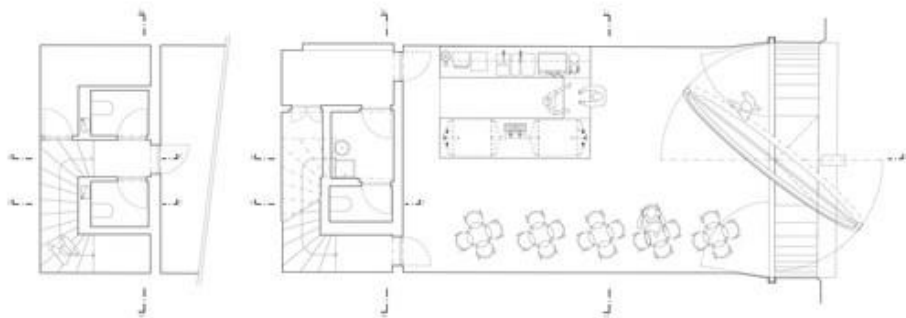


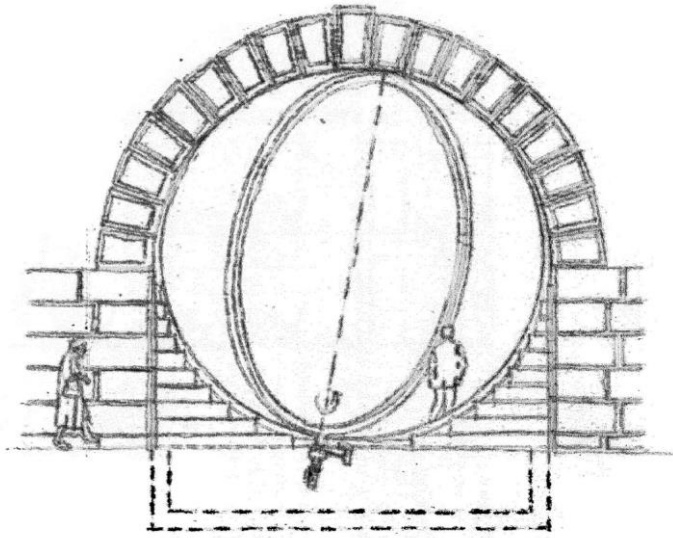
Fig 8.3: **Vault floor plan** Restaurant spatial layout.



Fig 8.4: **Riverfront evening** Prague's Riverfront in the evening. Lined with multiple vault openings that will become cafes, restaurant, galleries, etc..



Fig 8.5: **Riverfront night** The Riverfront at night time. Some of the vaults may be used for night clubs and similar activities to promote the night life of the area.



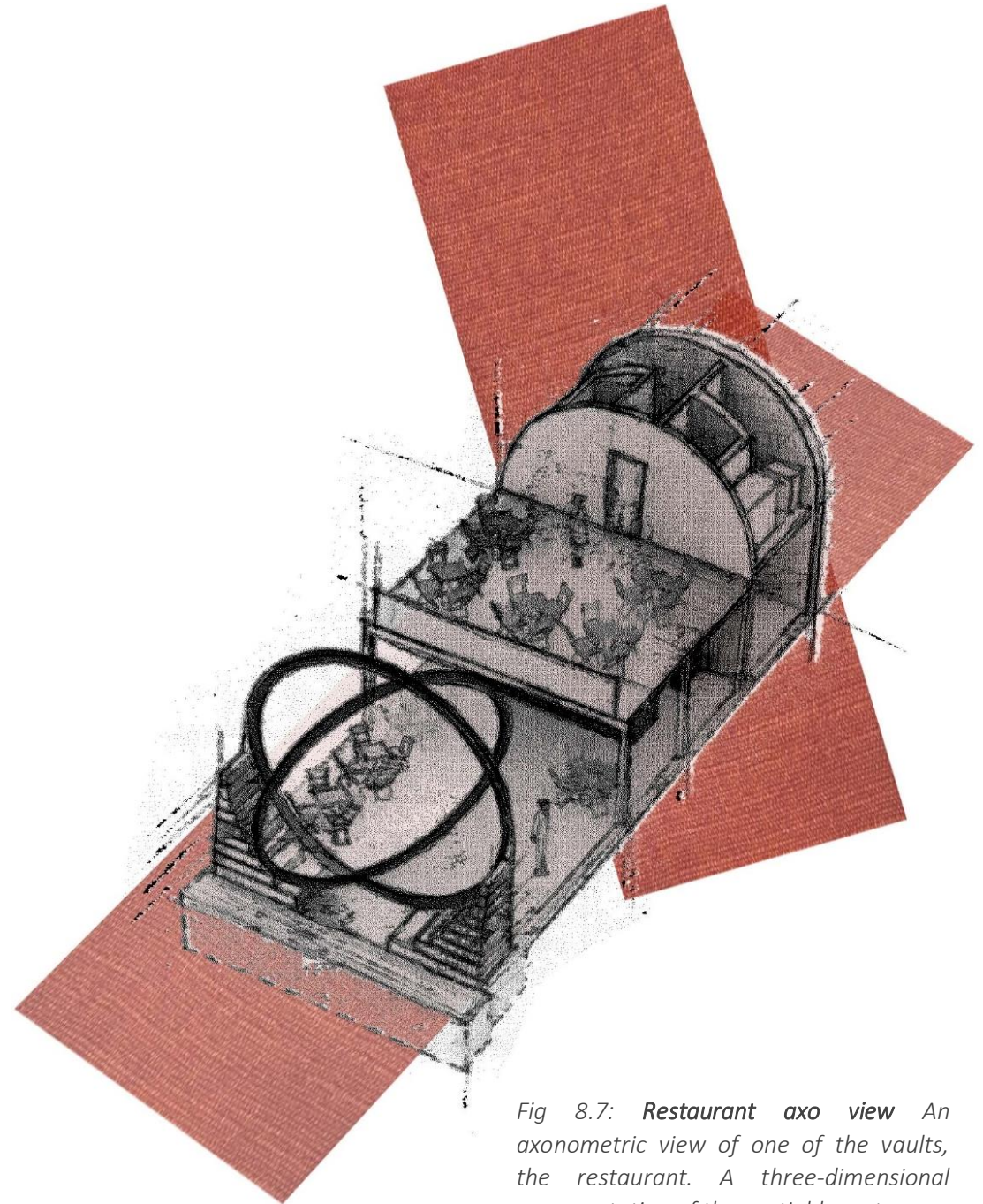
*Fig 8.6. Door hinge* An illustration of how the door is connected to the existing structure.

#### Door/Window

The large glazed pivot door is attached to the riverside wall at an angle that allows the door to open diagonally. The concept of acupuncture was utilized in a way that produces little to no disturbance to the existing structure of the riverside wall. The drastic changes and transformations were made to the inside of the vault. This also allowed for greater contact with the riverfront area. The way the door open creates asymmetry that enhances the spatial experience of into another realm. Since the door is a full glass panel, it provides a visual linkage on either side and allows light into the space as it is the only natural light source.

#### Double Volume

The double volume creates an openness in the space. This is important in a space that has one opening connected to the exterior of the building, as well as one source of natural light. It opens the space and prevents the space from feeling dark and confined.



*Fig 8.7: Restaurant axo view* An axonometric view of one of the vaults, the restaurant. A three-dimensional representation of the spatial layout.

## CONCLUSION

We live in a country of diversity where we all belong to different cultures, with different narratives. It is, therefore, imperative that we design our cities in a way that feels like home to us all. Realizing that development does not have to mean westernization in our spaces is the start of growth in the right direction because this is the way that we keep the genius loci of our spaces whilst keeping up with modern day development. Identity is not only lost in the discontinuation of cultural practices but it is also in the way we design our spaces.

Greytown has a lot of opportunity for the creation of a hybridized urban fabric. Since it is a town that has different economic classes and cultural variations. This project aims to introduce South African tectonics in a contemporary manner as way of including multiples sides, the local and the global.

The theories and concepts in this paper guided the design of the street and the urban precinct. Firstly, *Hamdi's Small Changes* became the guiding vehicle for the design of the street. It was vital that the dynamic and life of the street be preserved and continued. It is a place of its own ecosystem that does not need significant interference, however, there are ways of making it a more comfortable space for the vendors as well as other people who use the street.

Secondly, the theory of African identity and architecture came into play as a way of bringing in the Zulu culture into the design of the architecture. Where people can feel like they belong to a space. Lastly, place theory and phenomenology was a fundamental element of understanding how experience influences identity. Therefore, assisting in understanding how to utilize elements of vernacular architecture to create effective spaces.

The concept of weaving becomes an idea that brings these ideas together but also expresses similar to its name that it is all part of a process and not necessarily meant to be a finished product. People are always changing and with that, their spaces. Spatial development is an ongoing process and sometimes one of trial and error but in that we should not shy away from taking past knowledge and applying it to our current technologies. There is a lot of wisdom and intuition in passed down knowledge which we can still use today. Our South African cities do not need to use Western cities as template because there is uniqueness in the way that we live.

Throughout the process of this research paper there are prominent themes that are repeatedly echoed. These are; identity, personal experience and social interaction. These elements have a strong connection to place. People change place and place changes people; it is therefore evident that the one cannot be without the other.

The paper( as the weave concept) can be interpreted in different ways. It can be seen as the 'craft or action', the piece of information that begins to light the way forward, introducing the beginning steps for execution and implementation of solutions. It can be seen as part of the 'formed fabric' or as the 'interlacing threads'

The vision is to create a place of gathering and social interaction on Sergeant Street where informality is integrated and seen as a significant constituent of the urban design regime.



Fig 13.2: Collage exploration of form

# DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

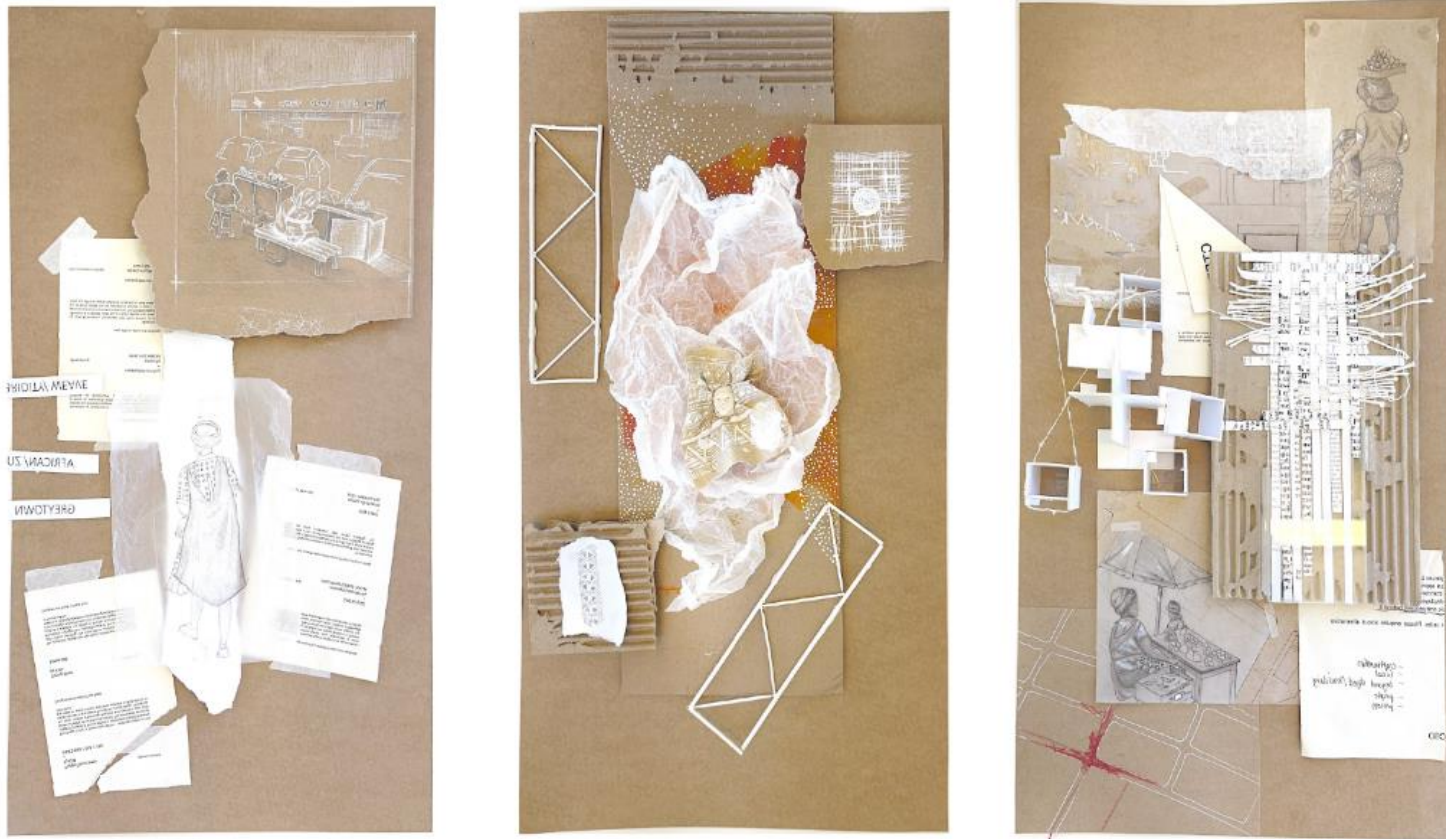


Fig 9.1: Concept exploration boards

## SITE SELECTION

Through the concept of hybridization and the urban weave, the selection of the CBD seemed to be the most fitting choice. This is where people from the townships, farms and urban residences come together. This is where opportunity for integration is strongest and could be built upon.

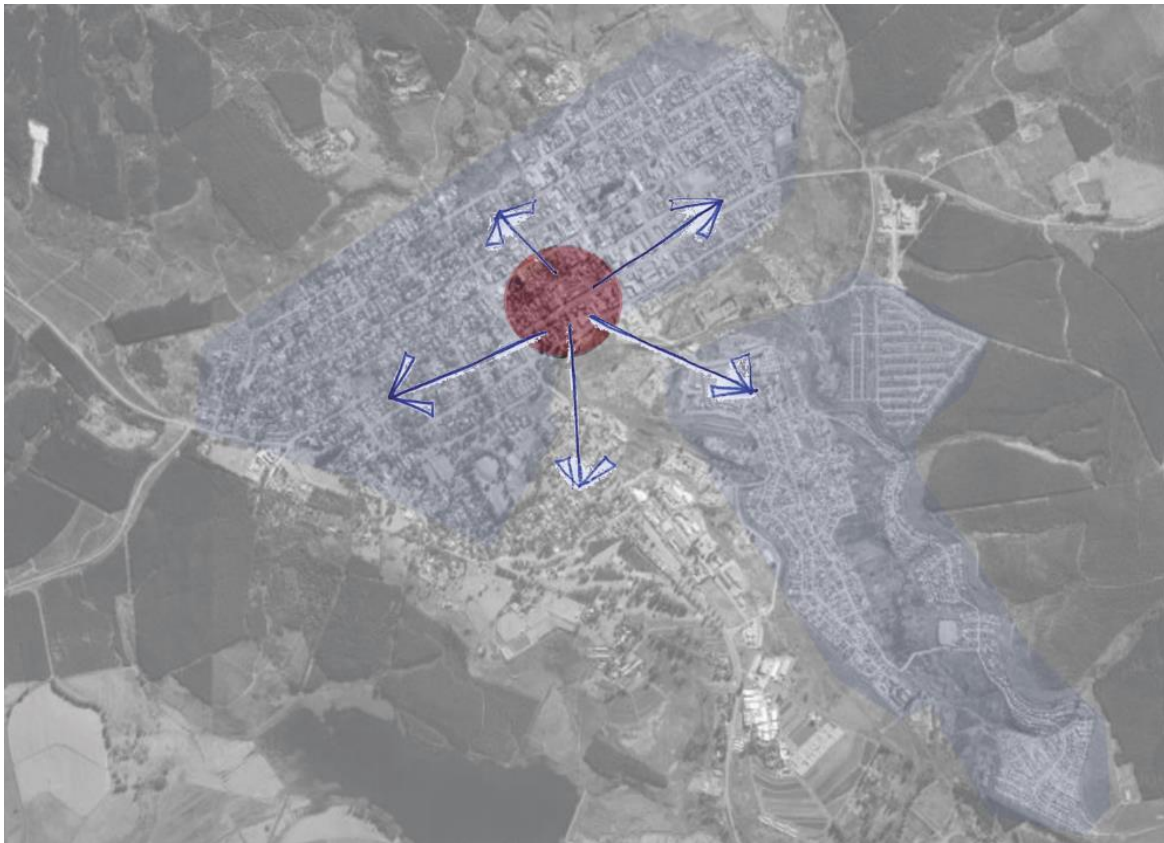


Fig 9.2: Aerial view of Greytown



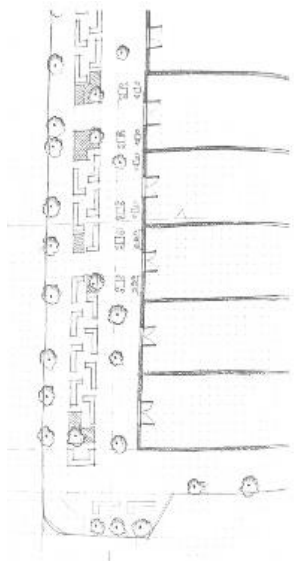


Fig 9.3: **Conceptual street plan**  
The initial design of the pavement with the introduction of greenery and redesigned stall spaces.

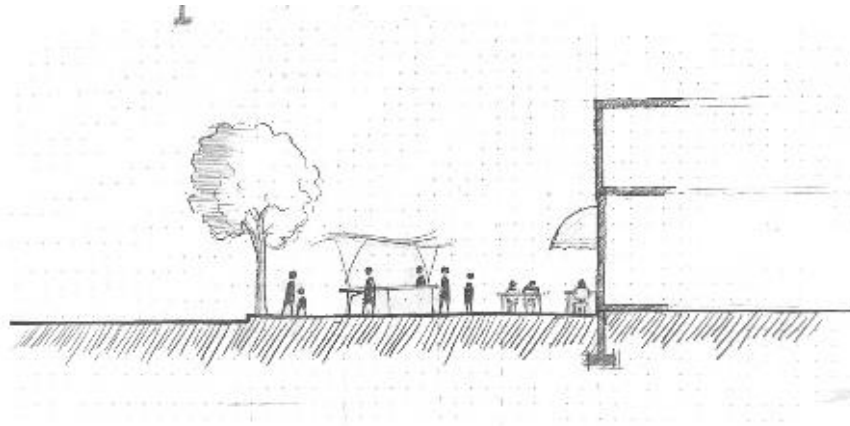


Fig 9.4: **Conceptual Street section** The initial sectional design showing the spatial experience.

## SITE SELECTION

A closer look into the CBD shows an area that is concentrated in pedestrian and informal trading activity. The selected area of enquiry is influenced by the transport hub located in the area. Most of the taxi ranks are in this area which is a large influencer of the informal trading activity on the street. Initially the project included the street as well as the main site as seen in Fig 9.3, Fig 9.4 and Fig 9.5. However, as the project developed it became clear that the existing dynamic of the street should not be interfered with, but rather the design proposal of the main site becomes part of the existing ecosystem.

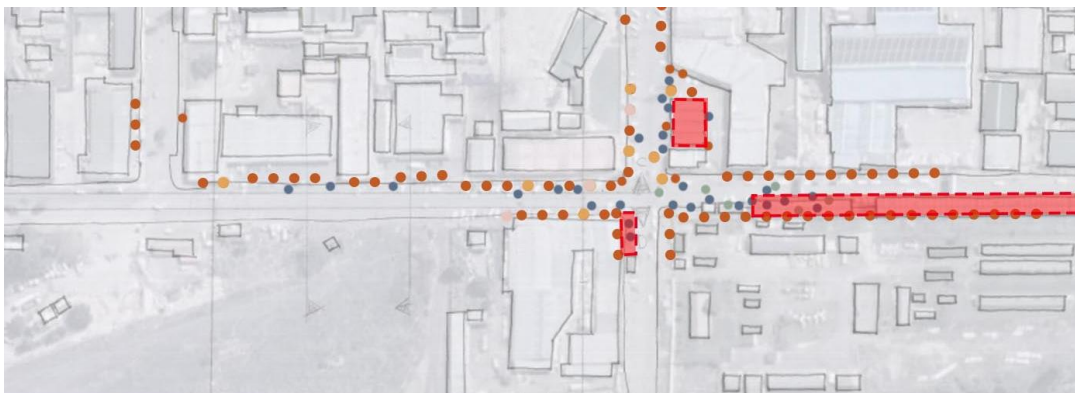


Fig 2.5: **The intersection** A map illustrating the types of informal trading activity that occurs within the CBD of Greytown. The highest concentration of informal trading is found at the intersection, closer to the taxi ranks.



Fig 9.5: **Conceptual street perspective exploration**



Fig 9.6: **Existing street perspective sketch** The activity of the street showing the formal and the informal trading activity.

## SERGEANT STREET

Sergeant Street is just one example of hybridity in Greytown. Where the formal and informal economy meet. It is the hybridized urban weave where the first and second economy work symbiotically in the space. Previously it used to be the place where the train station was built. The railway way tracks are still in place, but that part of the street stands abandoned and unused. This part of the street is fully activated (Fig 9.8) however, on the side where the railway is located is the least amount of activity (Fig 9.9).

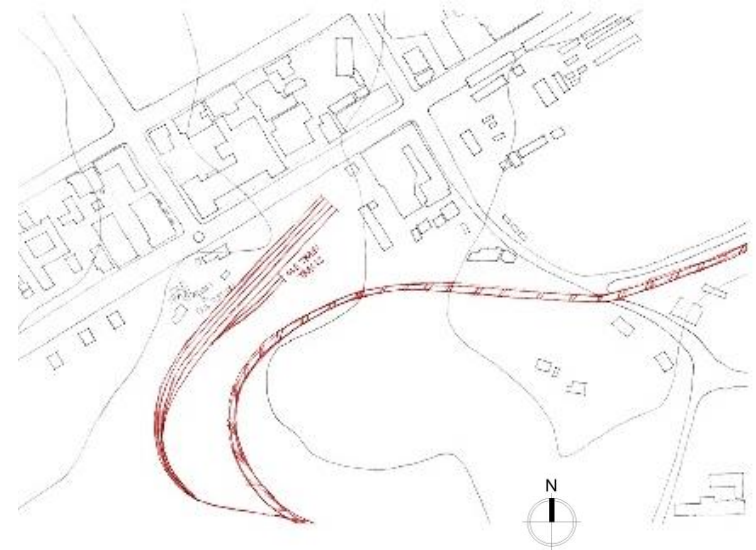


Fig 9.7: **Sergeant Street plan** The existing railway track.

SUMMARY: ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTIO  
SITE: EXISTING

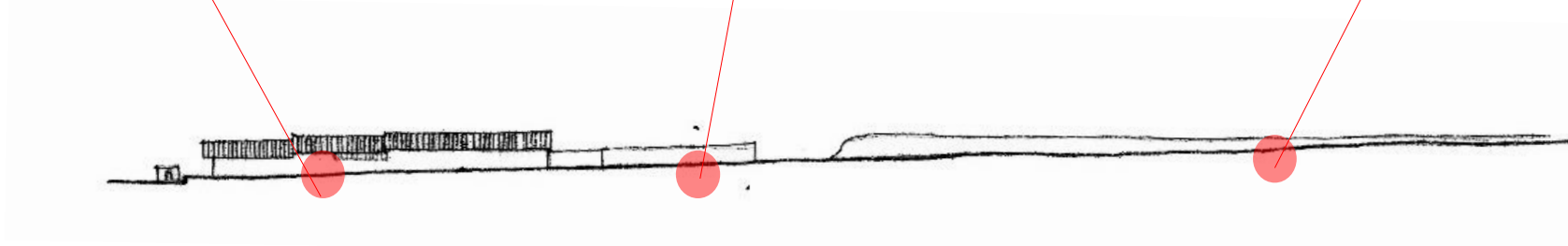
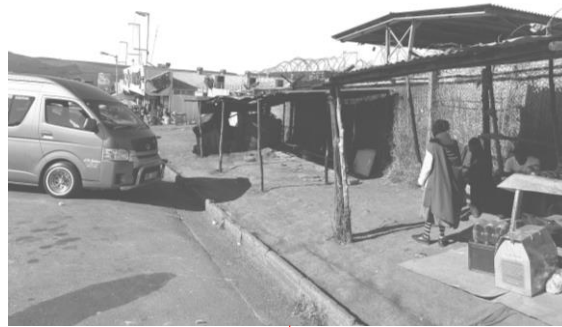


Fig 9.8: South Street Elevation: Activity along the street edge

SUMMARY: ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTIO

SITE: EXISTING

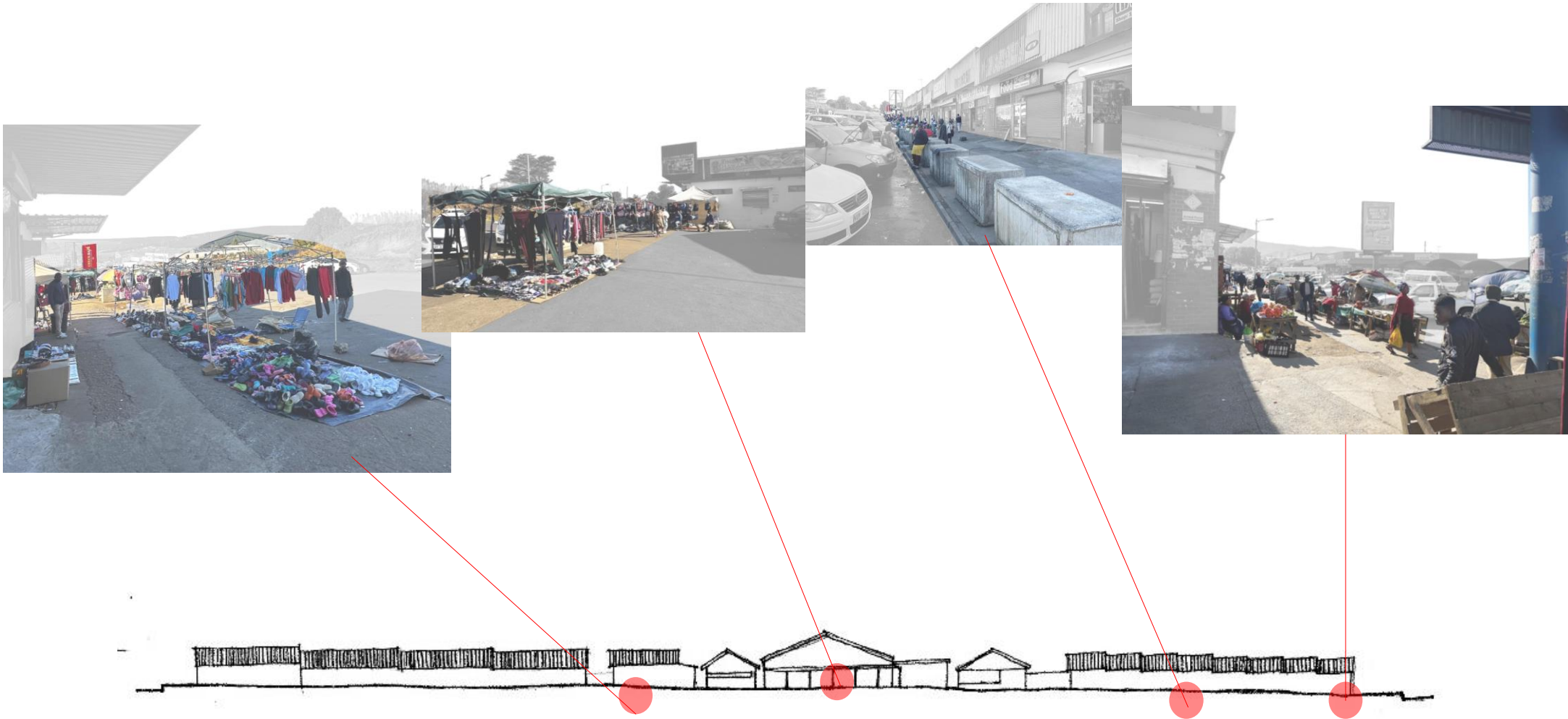


Fig 9.9: North Street Elevation: Activity along the street edge

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

The intention is to create a moment of pause within this street. A place that encourages deeper engagement with the street amongst people. Currently it is a space that people come to do shopping and leave. This design proposal aims to invite people onto the street and give them opportunity to stay. The urban precinct becomes a place that embraces hybridity where the informal activity and formal activity find a way to work together to create a space that offers different types of people the opportunity to engage and interact. It also becomes a place where different types of people from different cultures feel at home in their town, together. The urban precinct becomes a part of the hybridized urban weave.

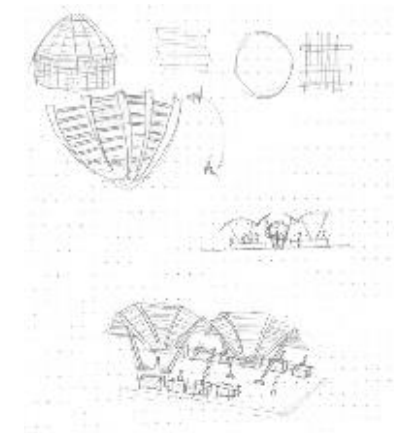


Fig 10.2: **Vernacular architecture** The exploration of vernacular architecture and how it can be translated into modern day, contemporary architecture.

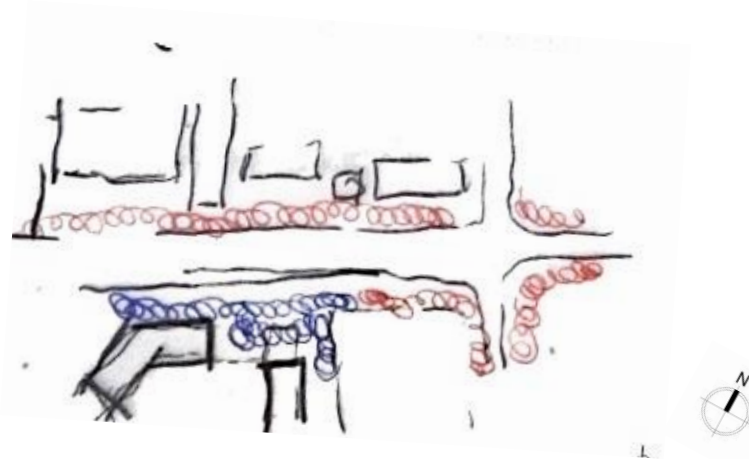
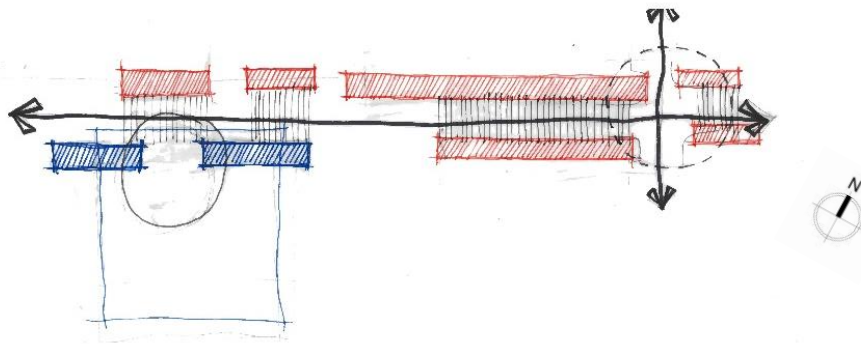


Fig 10.1: **Informal trading activity along the street edge**  
The Red represents the existing informal trading activity along the street while the blue represents how the design proposes to continue the activity along the street.

Existing

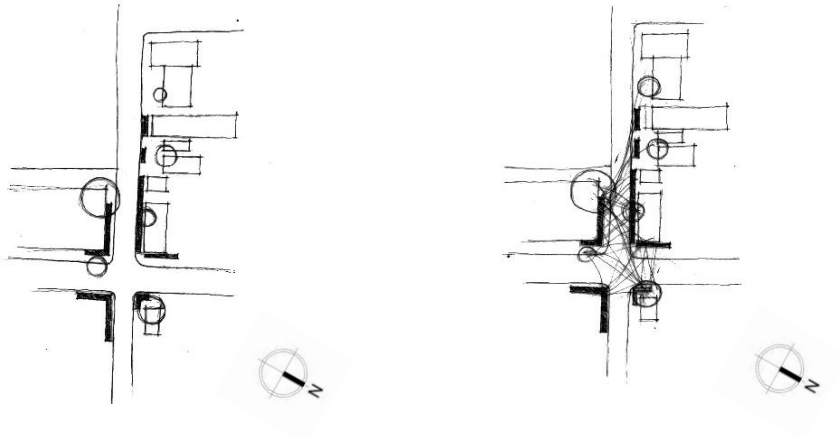


Fig 10.3: Existing street perspective sketch The activity of the street showing the formal and the informal trading activity.

## PLACE AND ACTIVITY ON STREET

This investigation on the street shows the link between different places, informal trading and the movement within this. Fig 10.3 clearly shows the activity through the lines of movement and how it favours one side of the street further up. The design proposal distributes this activity and movement equally on both sides of the street as seen in Fig 10.4 .

Proposed

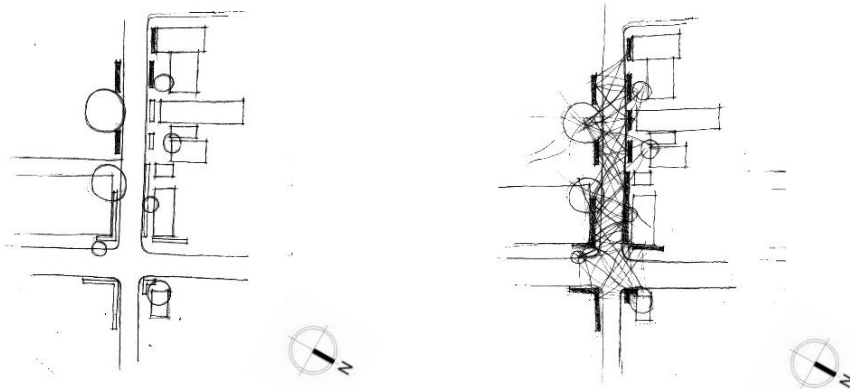


Fig 10.4: Existing street perspective sketch The activity of the street showing the formal and the informal trading activity.

## STREET LANGUAGE

The architecture of the street plays a big role in the dynamic of the flow of the street. To keep the sense of place it important that the design proposal continue this language. The push and pull effect created by the edges of the buildings creates pocket of spaces but also creates a flow of movement. Hence, why the urban precinct introduces similar elements on the street edge.

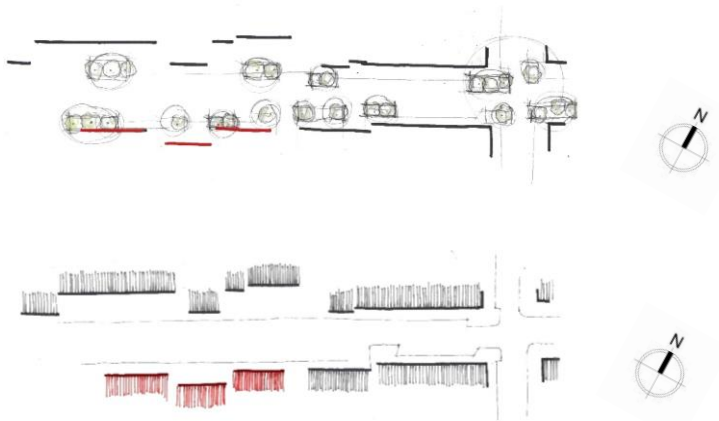


Fig 10.5: **Building edge depths**

The buildings along the street create hard edges. They stand at different depths creating variations of spatial experiences along the street. The design of the precinct mirrors this pattern.

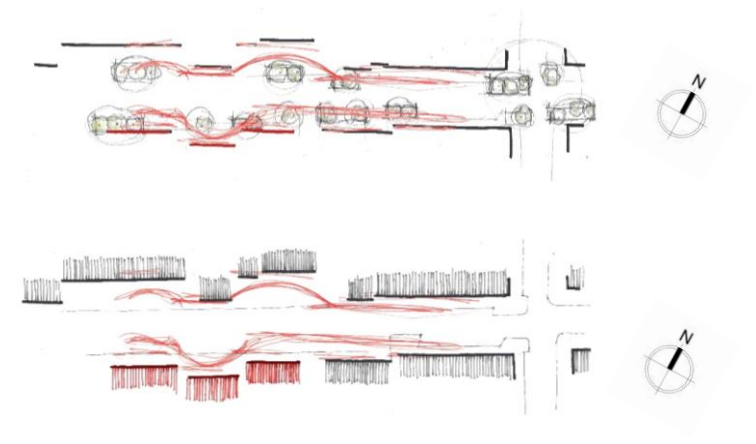


Fig 10.6: **Flow and pockets of space** The variation in depth of the buildings creates a flow of movement and pockets of spaces that the proposed design aims to continue. The proposed greenery softens the street edge and could potentially encourage increased social interactions because the trees can act as gathering spaces.

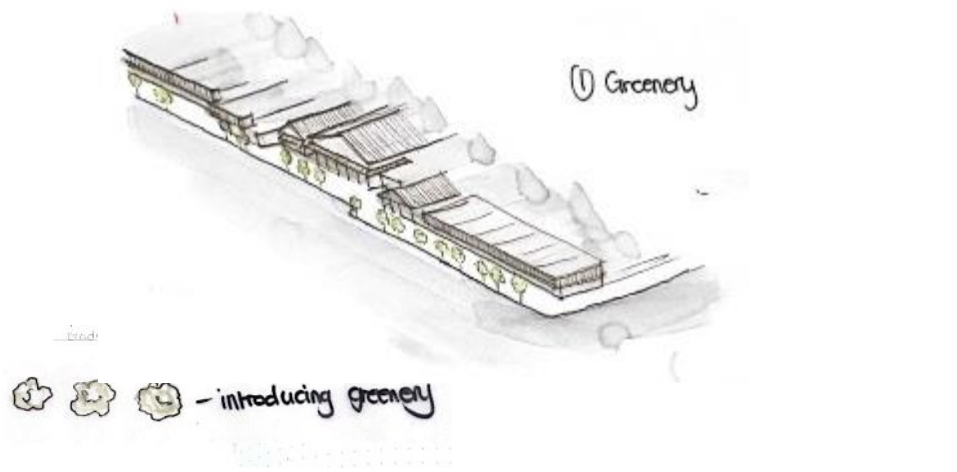


Fig 10.7: **Introducing greenery** Minimal intervention through the introduction of greenery to soften the street architecture

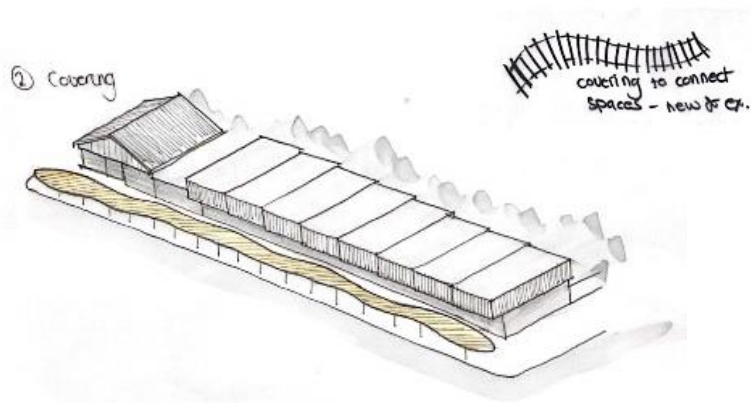


Fig 10.8: **Introducing covering** Providing comfortable spaces for vendors on the existing street edge

## STREET ARCHITECTURE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SMALL CHANGES

Limitations have been identified in the street architecture and the way that the development of the street will be addressed will be in a very sensitive and minimal manner. This will be done through small changes which is a previously mentioned theory by Hamdi. This speaks of small interventions that allow the people who utilize or inhabit a space, a sense of ownership. Where the development of a place is done in a minimal manner that does not completely impose on the inhabitants the way it is used. The first of these interventions include providing permanent covering for the vendors as they currently do not have. The second, is introducing greenery onto the street, because currently on this part of the street there isn't any. This will create more comfortable spaces to be in and creates a street that feels more wholesome.

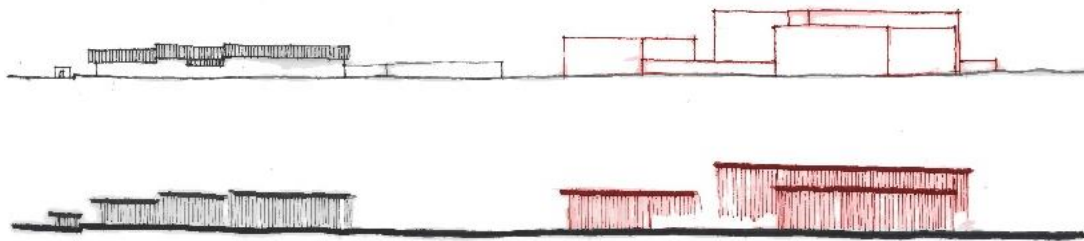


Fig 10.9: Sensitivity to height gradient

## THE URBAN PRECINCT: STREET

The main building sits on the upper ground. Its program schedule is hybridized. The precinct as a whole aims to be a place where multiple different people can come together to do multiple different things in one space. A place where people can shop, eat, interact and socialize. The programming of the building is important in ensuring that it does not become a space where people shop and then leave, but rather a place where people go past to get breakfast or lunch on their way to work but also a place where families come to, to spend time with each other.

# AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE AND ZULU CULTURE EXPLORATION



Fig 11.1: Zulu indlu floor plan and elevation The structural elements of the Zulu hut and the plan showing the lack of internal walls that encourage social interaction

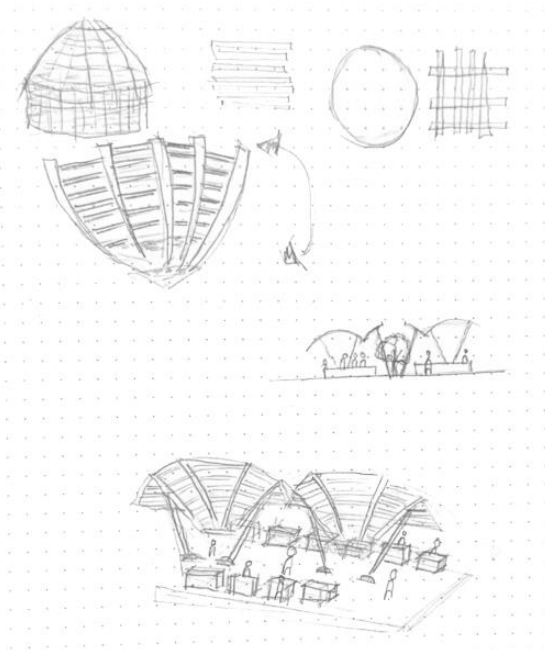


Fig 11.2: Translation exploration Exploring ways vernacular architecture can be translated into a contemporary design.

Finding ways of bringing the Zulu culture was an important aspect of the design. A way of keeping sense of place but also a way of demonstrating that development does not only have to mean westernization of a city. Bringing Zulu vernacular architecture into the CBD of Greytown is not meant to be done in a literal way but rather using elements and interpretation of that architecture to be translated in a contemporary manner. In this way hybridity is achieved.

I used the Zulu indlu and its circular form as the base idea for starting to think about the design of the certain structures of the urban precinct. The circular form encourages social engagement and interaction. Within the structure there little to no boundaries which further encourages community.

The placement of these huts is also circular, creating a safe pockets of space, hierarchy and connection. These elements of Zulu architecture are essential to the design of this project; to feel as though Greytown is developing but also keeping a sense home. The use of timber emulates the structure of the Zulu hut but also become a material that allows for the expression of culture.

# AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE AND ZULU CULTURE EXPLORATION

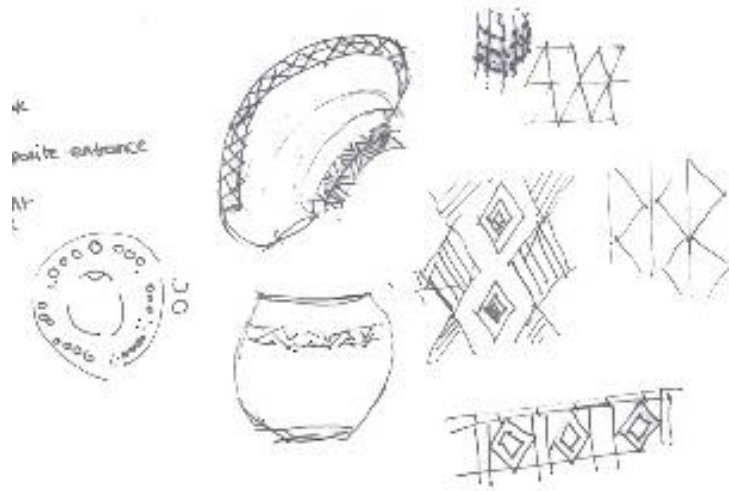


Fig 11.3: Zulu cultural elements

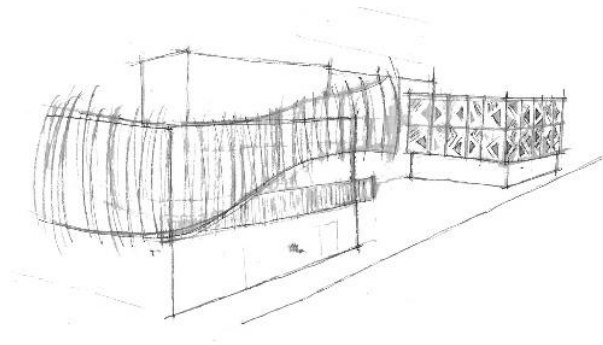


Fig 11.4: **Cultural expression** Exploring different ways of bringing the Zulu culture into tangible architecture expressions

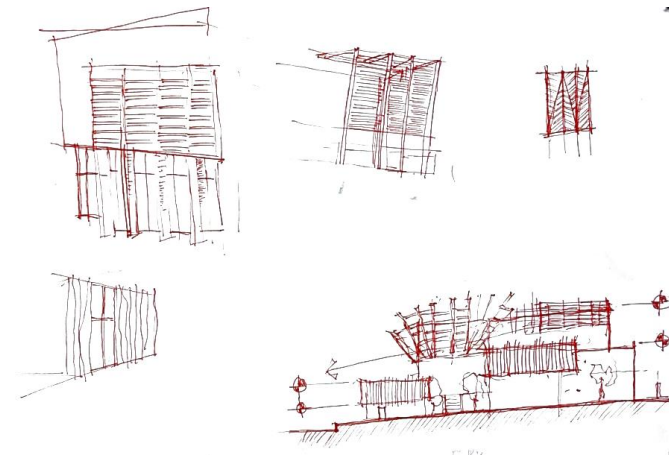


Fig 11.5: **Cultural expression**



Fig 11.6: **Introducing greenery** Minimal intervention through the introduction of greenery to soften the street architecture

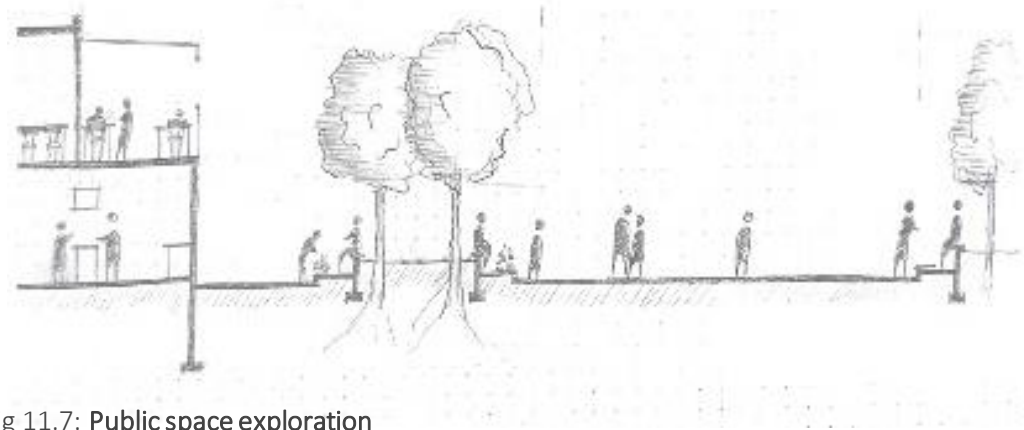


Fig 11.7: **Public space exploration**

## THE URBAN PRECINCT: SITE

The urban precinct becomes a place of pause within the street. Along the street it allows for the continuation of the existing informal trading activity. Within the site there are thresholds that hold different degrees of informality and formality. The site becomes different levels of street markets that come off the street since the site sits on a slope.



Fig 11.8: **Urban precinct**

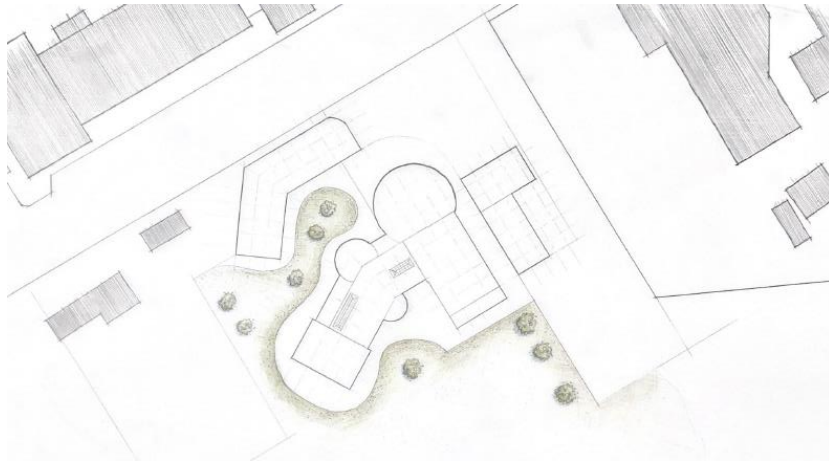


Fig 12.1: **Site plan** Process work



Fig 12.2: **Form exploration** Exploring connections between the indoor and outdoor spaces

## THE URBAN PRECINCT: PROGRAM

The main building sits on the upper ground level. Its program schedule is hybridized. The precinct aims to be a place where multiple different people can come together to do multiple different things in one space. A place where people can shop, eat, interact and socialize. The programming of the building is important in ensuring that it does not become a space where people shop and then leave, but rather a place where people go past on the way to way to grab a quick breakfast or lunch but also a place where families come to, to spend time with each other.

The elements of Zulu vernacular architecture are prevalent in the form of the building. The circular forms are an influence of the Zulu architecture, but it is not only about using the form but about the elements that the form represents and what it means for the space.

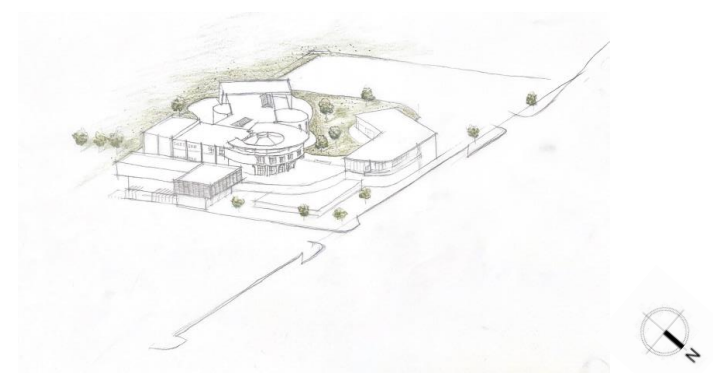


Fig 12.3: **Urban precinct axonometric view** Process work

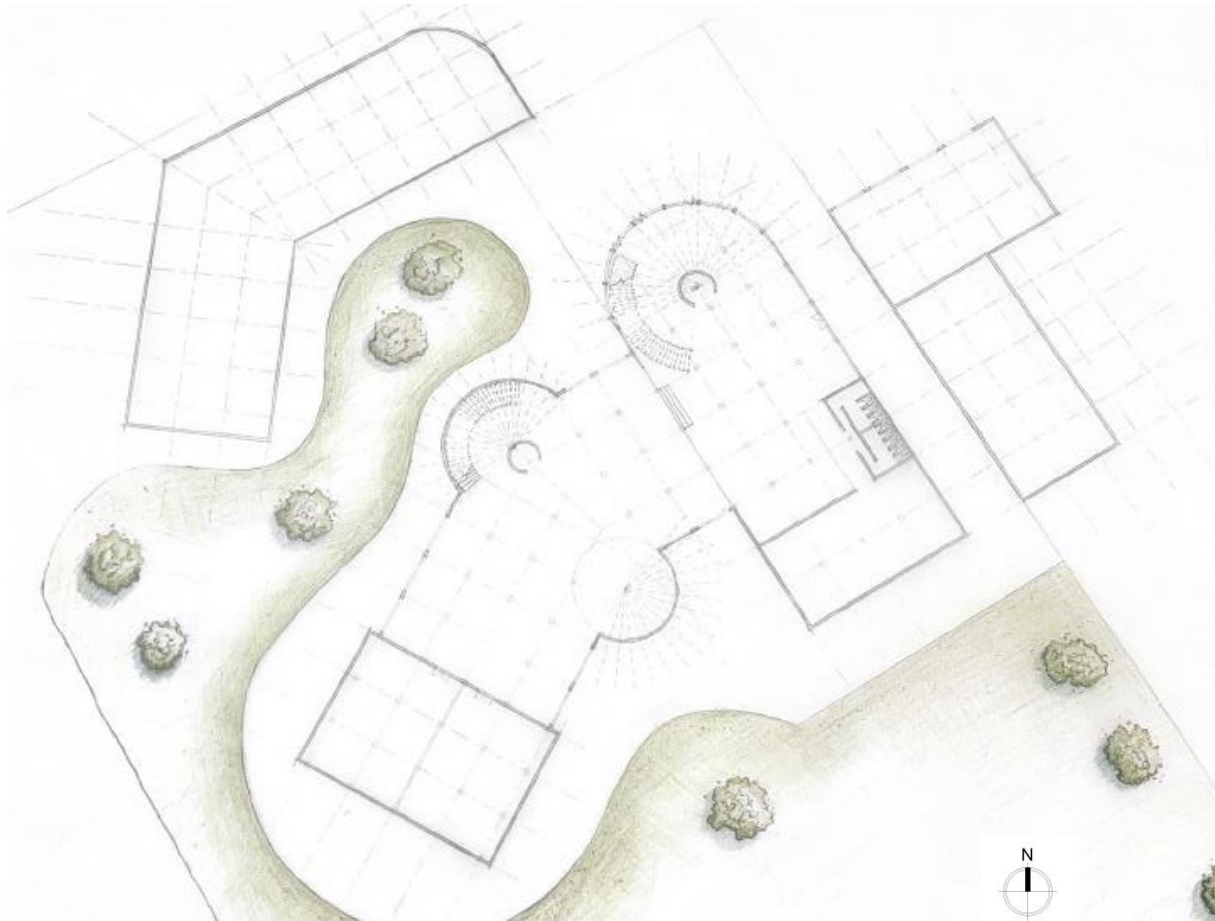


Fig 12.4: **Upper ground floor** (Process work) This floor of the main building becomes an indoor market space that connect the outdoor spaces through its permeable spatial organization. The outdoor spaces become gathering spaces, outdoor food courts and playing spaces for children. It's a place that accommodates the entire family.

## THE URBAN PRECINCT: LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN

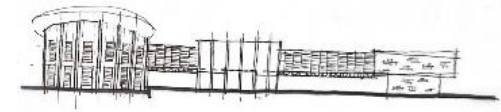


Fig 12.5: **Facade exploration**

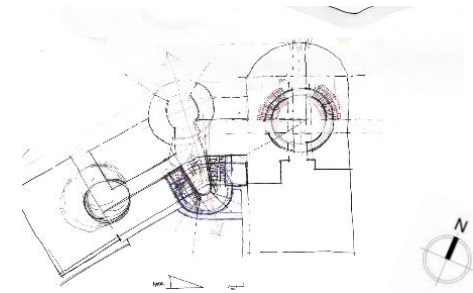


Fig 12.6: **Spatial exploration**

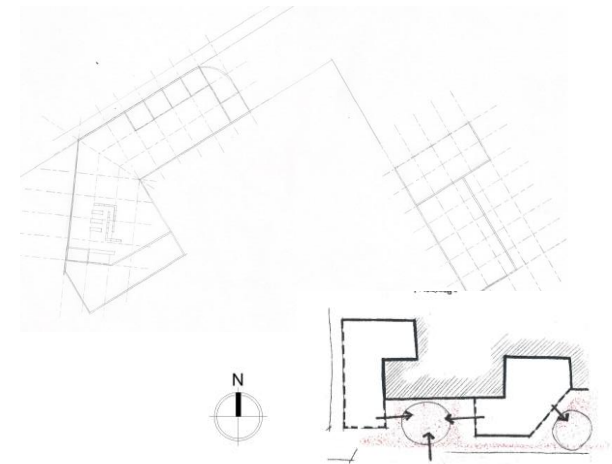


Fig 12.7: **Conceptual lower ground floor plan**

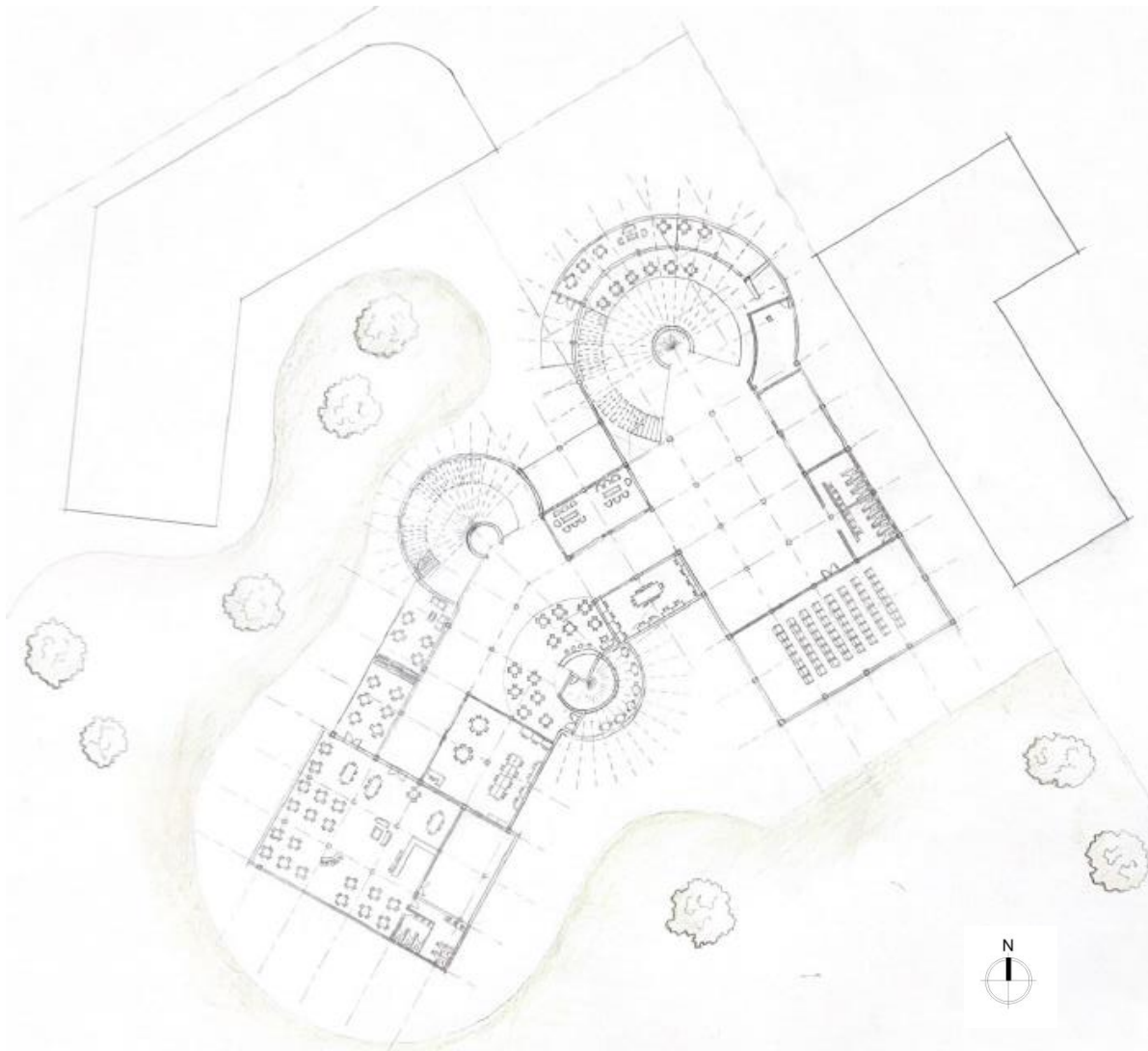


Fig 12.8: **First floor plan** (Process work) This level becomes a continuation of the market space. The rest of the space becomes a spaces that accommodates activities that bring people in to stay for some time: shared work spaces, cafes, restaurants and a cinema.

## THE URBAN PRECINCT: LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN

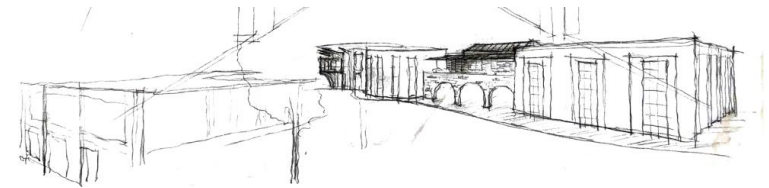


Fig 12.9: **Urban precinct perspective**

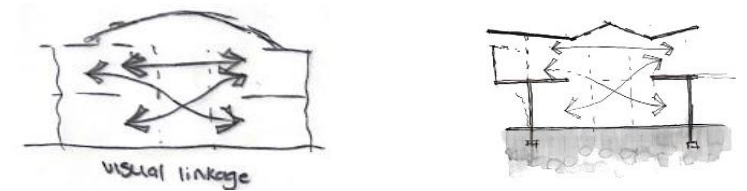


Fig 12.10: **Linkage through double volume** Emulation of Zulu vernacular architecture for its minimal walls to create a visual linkage between the different levels and spaces.

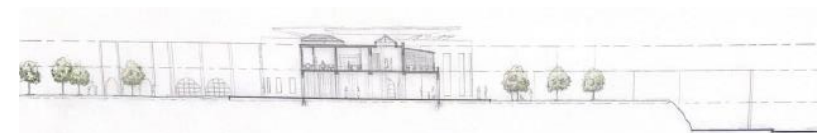


Fig 12.11: **Sectional spatial exploration** Process work

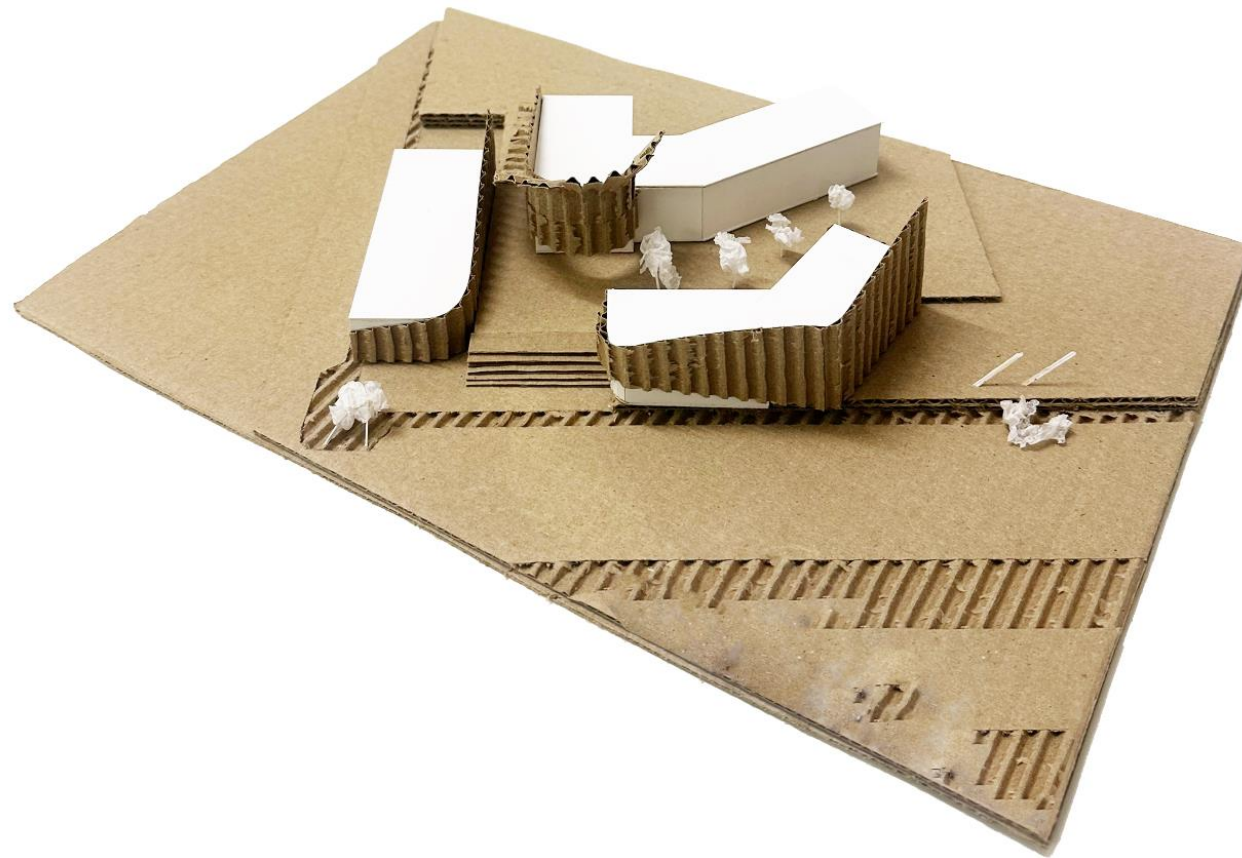
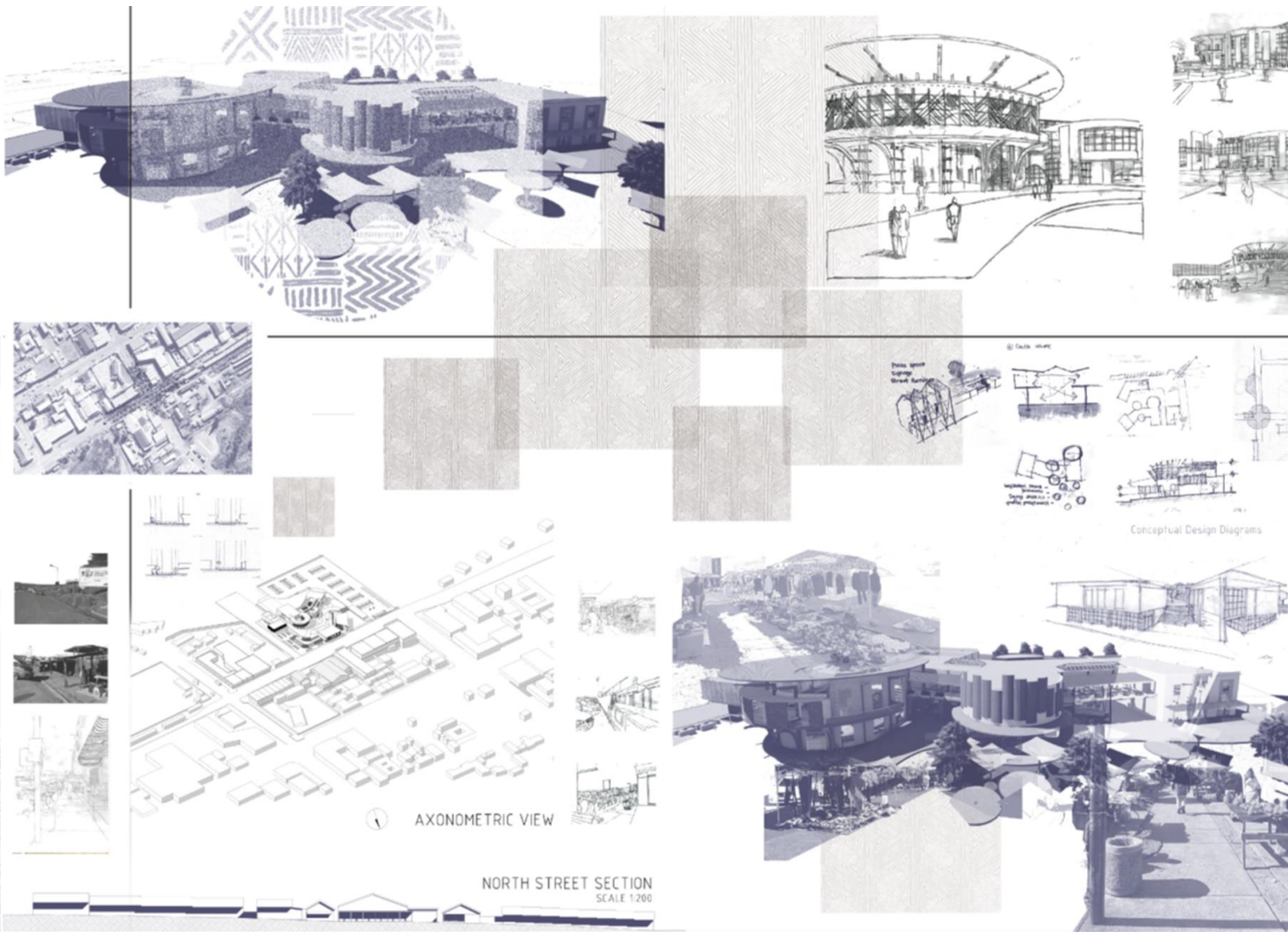


Fig 13.1: **Site model** This model was used to understand the slope and how it would work with the levels.



### The Urban Weave Interlacing Intangible Threads to form a Cohesive and Hybridized Fabric

South Africa is a very diverse country with different races, languages and cultures. Upon closer investigation of the threads that make up the urban fabric, we see how different people are affected and accommodated for in an urban context. However, cities all over the world demonstrate a hegemonic influence in the way they are planned and designed, because the Global North becomes a template for how we design our cities. This results in places being their individual identity because some demographics are not catered for in the masterplan. Catering to marginalized, further separating people. The passing down of knowledge and culture is interrupted because the modern way of doing things no longer accommodates or has any for traditional or cultural techniques and methods. A large part of our identities as individuals, as well as a collective, comes from our past, from our experiences and memories. It can be argued that losing that flow of culture, its essence, means losing a part of us. This project aims to utilize the concept of hybridity to coalesce different identities, cultures and communities. Hybridity is interlaced in the people this space is proposed to accommodate as well as in function and program of the buildings. Hybridity is the way we can turn The Urban Weave.



AXONOMETRIC VIEW

NORTH STREET SECTION  
SCALE 1:200

Conceptual Design Diagrams

Fig 14.2: Contextual and conceptual collage



Fig 14.1: The urban precinct in context

The urban precinct becomes an extension of the activity along the street. The market space is the threshold space that invites people in but also works in a symbiotic manner with the trading activity that occurs along the street. The buildings create different levels of engagement with the street to allow for different spatial experiences that integrate seamlessly into the existing street dynamic.



Fig 14.3: Site plan and street elevation



Fig 14.4: Main entrance perspective

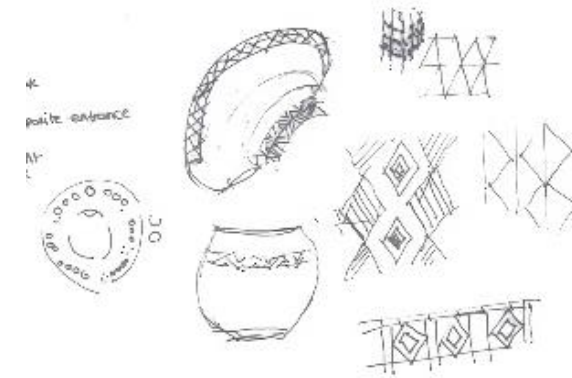


Fig 11.3: Zulu cultural elements

The influence of Zulu vernacular architecture can be seen in the form and positioning of the buildings in the urban precinct. This is intended to manifest a feeling of familiarity and a sense of place within Greytown.

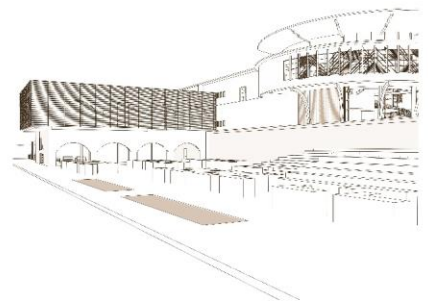
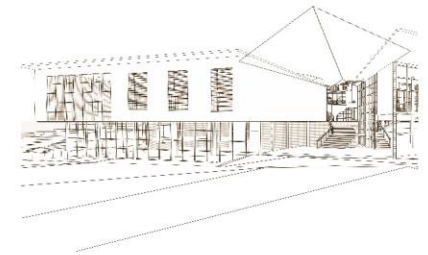
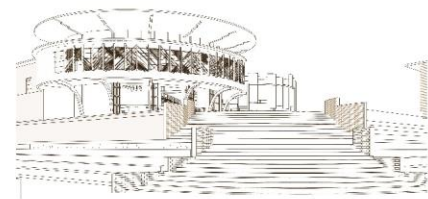
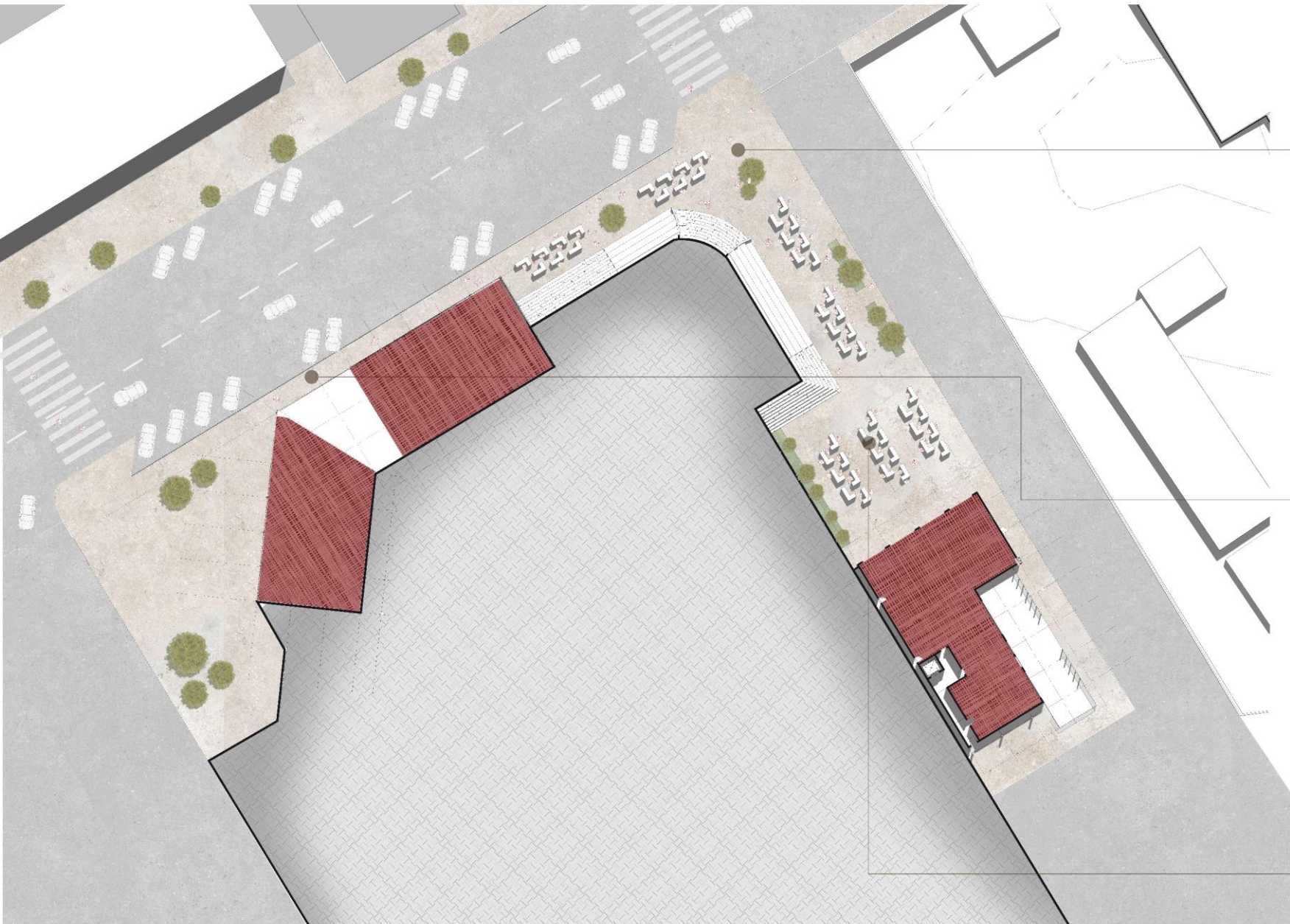


Fig 14.5: Floor plan and perspectives

LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200

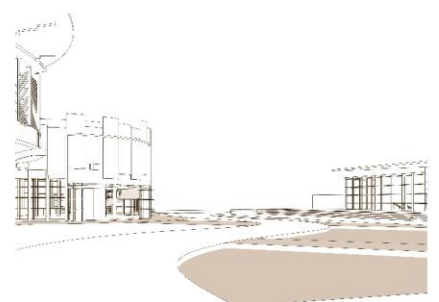


Fig 14.6: Floor plans and perspectives



UPPER GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200

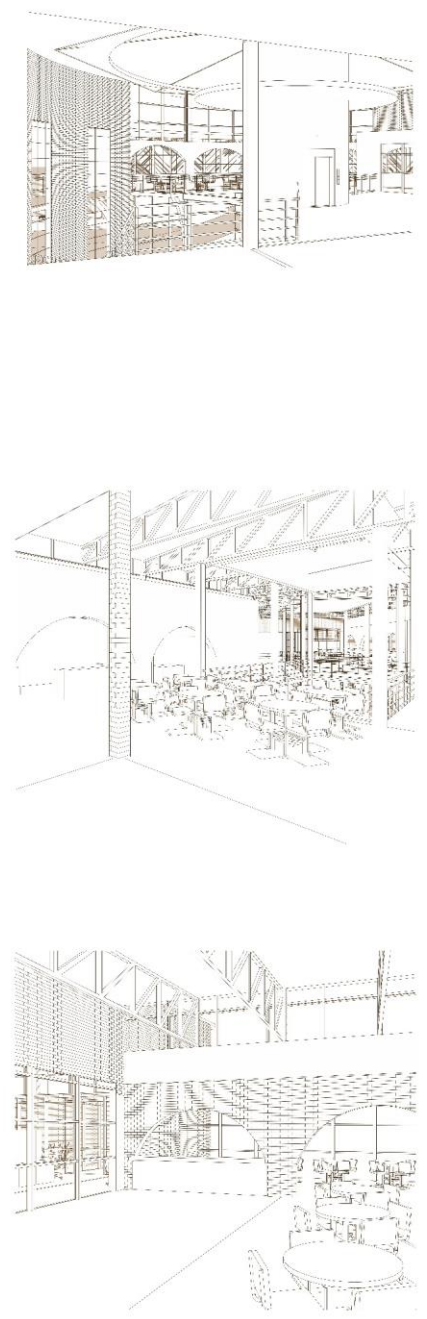


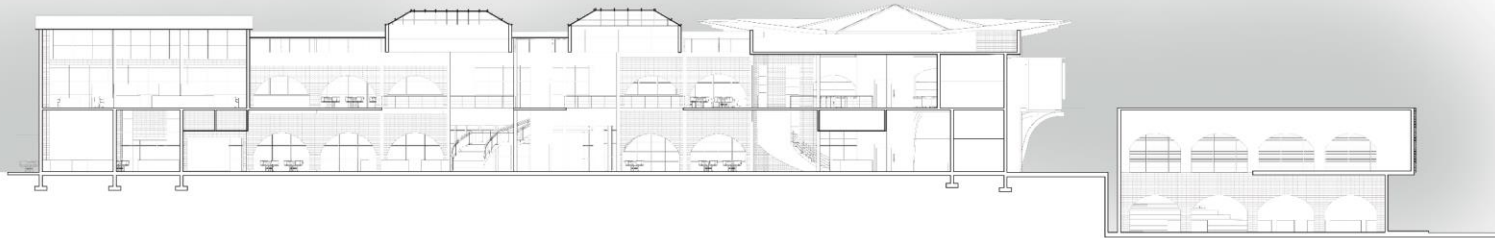
Fig 14.7: Floor plans and perspectives



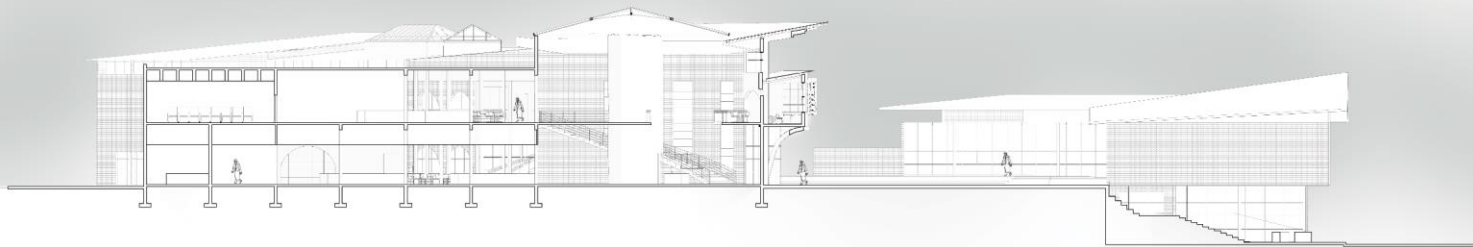
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1:200



SECTION A-A  
SCALE 1:100



SECTION B-B  
SCALE 1:100



SECTION C-C  
SCALE 1:100

Fig 14.8: Urban precinct sections





Fig 14.12 : Courtyard perspective



Fig 14.13 : Perspective from market space



Fig 14.14 : Interior perspective

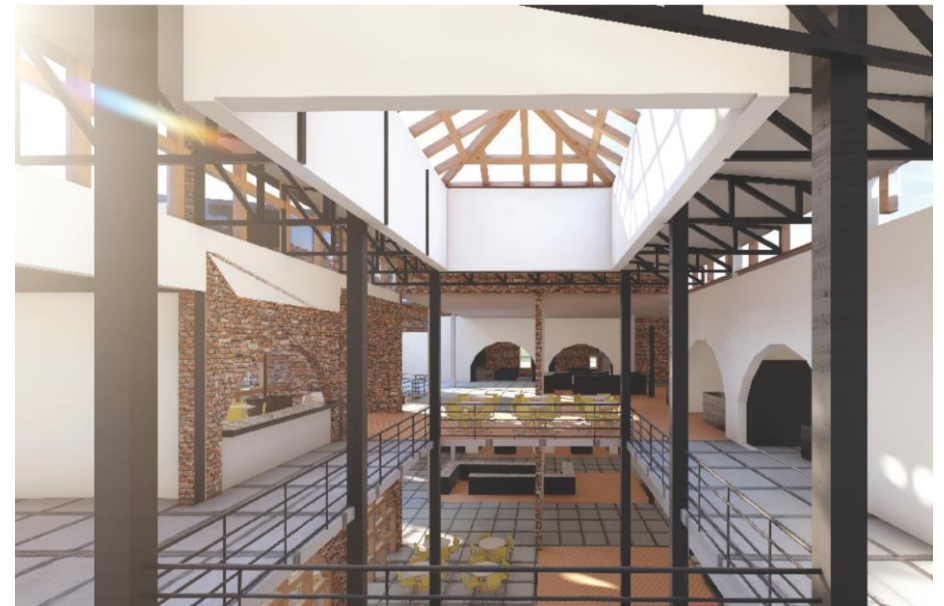


Fig 14.15 Interior perspective

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# Image References

Title page: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *The weave*. University of Cape Town

Fig 1.1: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Home*. University of Cape Town

Fig 1.2: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Greytown*. University of Cape Town

Fig 1.3: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *The weave*. University of Cape Town

Fig 2.1: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Small changes*. University of Cape Town (Cover image. Pg 16)

Fig 2.2: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Emergence*. University of Cape Town

Fig 2.3: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Concrete blocks*. University of Cape Town

Fig 2.4: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Concrete blocks social dynamic*. University of Cape Town

Fig 2.5: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *The intersection*. University of Cape Town

Fig 3.1: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *The informal city*. University of Cape Town (Cover image. Pg 14)

Fig 4.1: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *The face*. University of Cape Town (Cover image. Pg 16)

Fig 4.2: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Space*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.3: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Place*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.4: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Moment in time*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.5: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Walk of life*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.6: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Collective experience*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.7: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Basic elements*. University of Cape Town

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Fig 4.6: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Collective experience*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.7: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Basic elements*. University of Cape Town

## Image References

Fig 4.8: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Body positions*. University of Cape Town

Fig 4.9: Ndawonde, N. 2023. *Intangible threads*. University of Cape Town

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