



Constructing the interface

Crossings between the public and the private

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This dissertation is presented as part fulfilment of the degree of Master of Architecture (Professional) in the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics, University of Cape Town

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I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Alta Steenkamp, for encouraging and supporting me throughout this year. Your insight has been invaluable to this dissertation.

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To my family, thank you for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to pursue my dreams.

Abstract

The built fabric of the city of Cape Town reflects the social and economic inequalities within its citizenship. Contemporary practices of inner city living tend to cater to the wealthy while social housing on the periphery continues to exclude the poor from basic services and access to opportunities.

Salt River is one of the areas identified by the city, for the provision of inner-city affordable housing. The area is prone to spatial acts of violence that lead to a loss of culture and heritage through gentrification and displacement.

This project aims to re-think the density of housing precincts as not only spaces of residence but also spaces that facilitate better socio-spatial experiences for its residents that may assist in the prevention of the deterioration and destruction of existing neighbourhoods. The research aims to seek methods that explore crossing the boundary between public and private while challenging the relationship between the two, creating a more accessible city. By looking at the construction of the interface the project aims to create a space where the everyday social practices of the private extend into the public, shaping safer more socially interactive neighbourhoods that continue to develop shared cultural practices.

The project locates itself on the Salt River Market site, one of the proposed sites earmarked for affordable housing by the city. The Dissertation explores an inner-city housing project that focuses on re-imagining the public life of the market and unifying it with housing across the parcel of land. The design focus is on a transitional housing block that provides a space for residents to temporarily stay as they move from current living conditions on the market to the new proposed housing.

Through the process of design, the project presents opportunities for better integrating affordable housing into the public life of the city.

Introduction

As a female designer from The Cape Flats, I was not exposed to good works of Architecture from a young age. Instead, I grew up in neighbourhoods built up of mundane buildings uncared for by the city with a deficit of communal public spaces. The spirit and atmosphere created by the unconventional gathering of people in these spaces are what have contributed to its spatial success. I have fond memories of having a meal on my Aunty's stoep or finding a bench to join in on the conversation in the corner of an already overcrowded kitchen. These daily rituals of the coloured home still greatly inform my work today.

Counter-narratives explore alternative narratives that arise from those who have been previously marginalized, challenging dominant spatial structures. The contemporary ideals of privatized living within the spatial patterns of South Africa do not accommodate the true representation of the diverse array of cultures within it, much like it does not my own. My time spent gaining work experience outside of university exposed me to the many disparities in living conditions, so evident within peripheral areas of Cape Town. Environments emulate spatial inequality strategies of apartheid, making them uncondusive to possibilities of social cohesion. I believe that the nurturing social practices of the private domestic home, through its everyday practices of care, greatly influence the public life of the city. The private extends into the public through the watchful eye on the street, interactions with our neighbours and the overflow of prayer outside of our religious institutions creating safer more socially interactive neighbourhoods.

I see value in working from a space of care and nurture, integrating everyday rituals and lessons from the home into the shaping of the city, through carefully conceived architectural spatial design that encourages, dialogue, the regeneration of cultural practices and better access to resources.



Figure 1: Two tiles made at the beginning of my inquiry questioning the juxtaposition of living conditions in the public realm of the city.

The tiles were made of plaster of paris cast with everyday materials such as beads, fabric newspaper and scraps of plastic. The artefact serves as a reference for understanding how two opposites can exist so close to one another yet never seem to merge.

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Problem statement

The inquiry of this research paper arises from a noticeable lack in facilities in poorer communities in the city of Cape Town. The city represents a place of major inequities visible through its divided spatial arrangement. This stark contrast has come about through the slow progress of the built environment to create more welcoming spaces that address spatial inequalities since the end of Apartheid. Such strong socio-economic divides are emphasised and strengthened through architectural space-making elements that seek to exclude. Borders, boundaries and rooms are all familiar words signifying zoning and exclusion. The city requires the careful nurturing of zones between boundaries that allow integration between communities.

Research question

The purpose of this dissertation is to seek methods of making that explore breaking down divides between privatised and public realms of living. What does an architecture that crosses boundaries look like? What occurs at the meeting point of the private and the public and what happens when we challenge the relationship between the two? What is an architecture that challenges ideals of privatised living? Over time there has been a clear lack of care being put into homemaking in new residential developments in the city and the lack of development in poorer areas. How can the rituals of the domesticated private realm influence the making of a more accessible city?

Methodology

The research will be undertaken through the use of literature reviews as well as fieldwork in the city. Through the literature of Henri Lefebvre, Giancarlo De Carlo and Teddy Cruz I aim to articulate an understanding of the existence of the division of spaces and the opportunities that exist to connect them. Their writings favour being conscious of people's everyday lives and lived experiences and how this can be used as a force for social change. Through the investigation of the field of the city, I aim to draw from my personal

experience of the divides evident in the city and the architectural lessons that can be learnt from them. Moving away from that which alienates us the dissertation aims to challenge the division between public and private spatial design patterns.

Space, Place and Memory

Through the many uprootings of Apartheid, numerous communities experienced a loss of home place. Families were removed from their homes to places unfamiliar to them forcing them into conditions that moved them further away from their daily cultural practices. This chapter will look at the socio-spatial history of displacement, exploring how historically people used to live better together in community and due to external forces this has changed over time in the South African context.

Our cities have begun to reflect true disparities among those of various backgrounds so evident within peripheral areas of Cape Town. It is within the materiality of spatial design that the differences between socio-political interests are made evident.

As stated by Lefebvre,

"Spatial contradictions 'express' conflicts between socio-political interests and forces; it is only *in* space that such conflicts come effectively into play, and in so doing they become contradictions of space" (1991, p.365).

Displacement in the city

The stories about the exile of the people of District Six have created a personal connection with my understanding of how people have become attached to a place. Oral interviews found in the University of Cape Town's archives with ex-residents provide real accounts of people's experiences of the place soon after their removal. The interviews provide insight into the challenge of adjusting to new living conditions in unfamiliar territories. One interviewee recalls having her entire livelihood, from the school she attended to the place she first worked at, existing entirely within the boundaries of District Six (Hendrickse, 2002). Most ex-residents speak to the loss of community they once felt living in the centre of the city and the lack of access they have to resources.

The attempts to bring displaced people back to their original homes have caused many ruptures amongst residents of the city, new and

old. Issues that arise in the newer dwellings stem from the loss of connection to residents, as most ex-residents have passed, and those that have claimed new homes are no longer familiar faces. The architectural language of District six was reflective of the time and cannot be replicated with today's newer regulations of building construction. The change in form of the place could result in a disconnect for the residents returning as it is not reflective of the place they once knew and were hoping to return to one day.



Figure 2: Author's own collage representing the displacement and the loss of homeplace. Original image: MacLennan, B. (1982) *Forced Removals, Kammaskraal* [Photograph]. Available at: <https://digitalcollections.lib.uct.ac.za/collection/islandora-5758> (Accessed: 9 March 2022).

The displacement that occurred in District Six was not the only form of uprooting that occurred in the country. District Six serves as an example of a community that challenged living in isolation from other cultures, from outsiders and the life of the street. This unique quality of the place is what ultimately led to its destruction and its public life culture still struggles to get replicated in newer developments. Up to today displacement still occurs and continues to remove people further from their homes, communities and traditions. How can we learn about the making of place from those that have experienced violence instead of disregarding their narrative?

Homelessness in the city



Figure 3: Homeless people in the city of Cape Town (News 24, 2022)

<https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/peoples-post/this-is-inhumane-20220321>

An increased amount of 'tent Architecture' has arisen in the centre of the city of Cape Town. The structures that are propped up all over the city stand as a strong physical reminder of the challenges most citizens are facing. The government's inability to keep up with housing demands results in residents having to find their own solutions to being homeless. Structures are often set up in the centre of the city to get as close as possible to the resources of the city. This results in construction in an open field or the smallest piece of pavement available under a bridge. This clear lack of basic human rights makes one question what living conditions for others we have become accepting of. These public spaces now occupied with 'homes' offer unusual opportunities to challenge divides between public and private living.

Working from a space of care and nurture, integrating everyday rituals and lessons from the home the project will aim to find a balance between the public and the private realms. The images depicted throughout this chapter presents us directly with the harsh conditions those that have been excluded from the city have to deal with. By looking at displacement, homelessness and the making of a home through its spatial and social challenges, this chapter aimed to create knowledge that contributes towards the creation of more inclusive environments that facilitate better social connections across boundaries.

Section one.

Locating the project

Salt River

Character

Historical development

Urban issues

City of Cape Town proposed housing sites

Site: Salt River Market site

Salt River

The following section of this paper will be looking at the Salt River Market site within its surrounding context in Salt River. Working from the macro to the micro development of the area the study will begin with the historical physical development of the area through to the current existing conditions. It will attempt to map the realities of the site and its people.

Salt River is historically an industrial area known once to have the largest working-class community in the city. The area remains a diverse community as the Group Areas act that racially segregated citizens by forcibly removing residents from their homes was not implemented in the area. The built fabric reflects its history as many buildings have managed to be preserved over the years.

Figure 5: Author's own, The Locomotive hotel.

Figure 4: Author's own. Junction hotel.

Figure 7: Author's own. Art Deco in Salt River.

Figure 6: Author's own. Ackermans building.



Figure 11: Salt River Webster, A. (2018) Back Cover (Photograph) Available at: <https://www.dag.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/dag-re-imagining-woodstock-and-salt-river-publication.pdf> (Accessed 31 May 2022).



Figure 10: Advert. The Argus (27 February 1975)



Figure 8: Advert. The Argus (27 February 1975)



Figure 9: Advert. The Argus (27 February 1975)

Historical development

The physical development of the area is mapped through the diagrams in figures 12-19. The structural geometry of the area is informed mainly through transport routes that developed over time. Main roads were formed from the cape flats to the interior as these were the routes that required the least amount of effort to travel through the sandy downs at the time (Todeschini & Japha, 1986, p. 22). As settlement activity increased inland, economic activity became greater which resulted in the development of the railway to the city centre as well as to the South towards the Wynberg suburb. Urban development began to develop along the major travelled routes and these ultimately informed Salt River's structure. A finer grain grid developed within the larger geometry with commercial activity and larger industrial blocks (railway workshops and factories) along the main routes and residential development within the internal geometries. The major transport routes connected people closer to the city centre and continue to be the first step in connecting people across the city. Balancing the scale of the existing context with the scale of the new high-rise architecture of the place is constantly questioned through the design process in this dissertation.

- ROADS
- RIVERS
- RAILWAYS
- URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Early 1800s

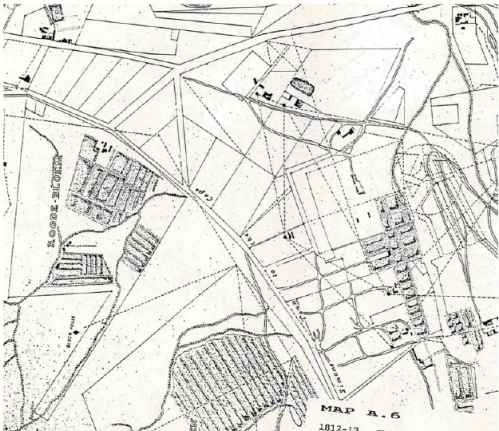


Figure 12: Todeschini, F. & Japha, V. (1986) Map A6 (1812-13). (Drawing) Conservation study Salt River, 1986. Page number 42.

Mid 1800s

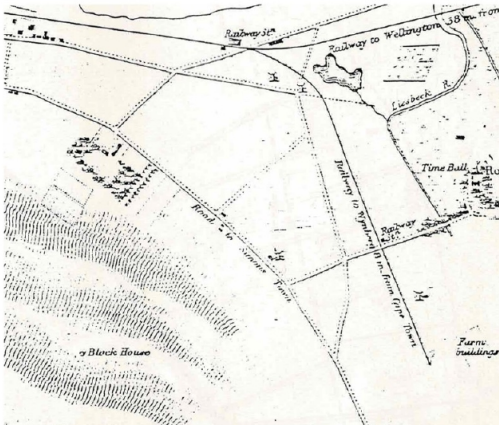


Figure 13: Todeschini, F. & Japha, V. (1986) Map A8 (1858-60). (Drawing) Conservation study Salt River, 1986. Page number 44.

Late 1800s



Figure 14: Todeschini, F. & Japha, V. (1986) Map A13 (1897). (Drawing) Conservation study Salt River, 1986. Page number 49.

Early 1900s

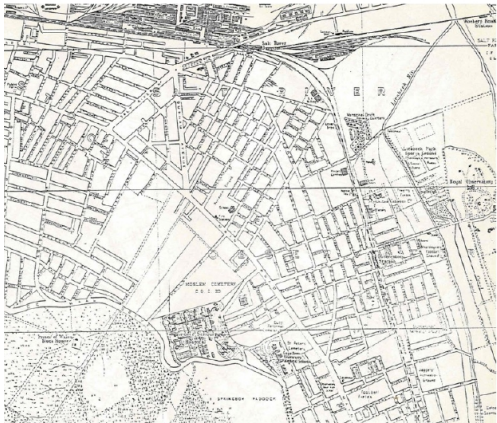


Figure 15: Todeschini, F. & Japha, V. (1986) Map A23 (1930). (Drawing) Conservation study Salt River, 1986. Page number 59.

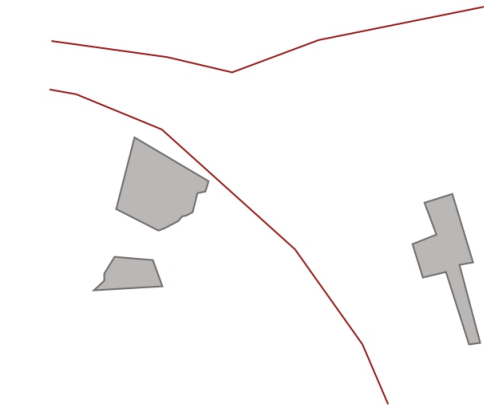


Figure 16: Author's own diagram.

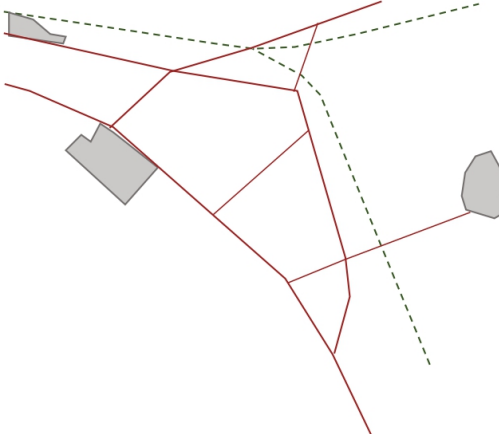


Figure 17: Author's own diagram.



Figure 18: Author's own diagram.



Figure 19: Author's own diagram.

Dynamics of change

Woodstock and Salt River remain culturally diverse from a history of protesting against the Group Areas Act which forcibly removed black people from well-developed areas to the periphery of the city (City of Cape Town, 2017, p.6). This meant the areas were never fully segregated and many of the original diverse inhabitants were able to remain in the area (Ibid.,p.6). But in the late 1990s, a bout of white flight of white residents moving out of the area meant that many of Woodstock-Salt River's once buzzing industrial spaces and charming rowhouses were victims of abandonment and neglect (DAG, 2018, p.4).

The Woodstock and Salt River suburbs in Cape Town have seen an increase in newer mixed-use developments due to their accessibility to the city centre and is facing constant threats such as gentrification, deterioration of older buildings and a rise in property costs causing existing residents to have to leave the area. As depicted in figures 20-23, residents in an informal settlement face evictions as the land they have made a home on is prepared for new housing developments, newer developments are much greater in density than the existing scale on the street, older properties face deterioration due to neglect and older buildings are reconstructed to house new activities and structure. Newer developments often increase privatised living needs-which take away from the public life of the street. Evictions force residents to move away from their familiar routines and connections. Deteriorating buildings fall prey to the development of newly built work and the demolition of existing physical heritage. These ultimately cause destruction to existing livelihoods and cultural traditions.



Evictions

Figure 23: Webster, A. (2018) Quintin Moos (seated) and his wife Janine (in the doorway) outside their home, discuss their upcoming move to transitional housing with fellow Pine Rd residents. Available at: <https://www.dag.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/dag-re--imagining-woodstock-and-salt-river-publication.pdf> (Accessed 31 May 2022).



Gentrification

Figure 22: New residential developments sit next to old homes in Salt river Road. Author's own photograph.



Adaptive re-use

Figure 21: New developments being constructed in Albert Road. Author's own photograph.



Deterioration

Figure 20: Run down empty building in Salt River. Author's own photograph.

Inner-city housing

The prospectus of inner-city affordable housing by the city of Cape Town and the Transport and urban development authority from 2017 put forward eleven sites which have been made available for affordable housing as indicated in figure 24. The city has committed to providing affordable and inclusionary housing in the urban core that is easily accessible to public transport as a means to rectify spatial inequalities (City of Cape Town, 2017, p.1). Placing affordable housing in the centre of the city allows previously marginalised and disadvantaged people access to resources that they have been excluded from by being forced to live in peripheral areas. The inner city project is breaking boundaries that have not been pushed before but have yet to be realised.

Most of the sites which have been allocated fall within the Woodstock and Salt river, areas rich in cultural diversity and heritage. With threats to a loss of culture due to the physical deterioration of the area and the increase in land value as the area sits closer to the cities resources the project locates itself within this discourse as it attempts to understand the connections that can be made through architecture to bridge the divide between the private home and the public life of Salt River.

The chosen site is the Salt river Market along Voortrekker Road and Bromwell street. The site poses some interesting challenges as there is an existing market on the site which is to be removed for the development of the mixed housing project. This causes a loss of livelihood for those currently earning from trading at the market as well as for those who have occupied the empty stalls of the market to live in. How can the public culture of the existing market be retained and integrated with a new residential development? The project poses interesting questions about the relationship between the two programmes and the cultural integration of newer residents. Inner-city affordable housing is a new development typology, current proposals do not seem to propose anything different from the existing mixed-use developments.

The following page shows a map (figure 24) from the City of Cape Town showing the eleven sites that have been earmarked for inner city affordable housing. The sites have been divided into different groups indicated by the various colours. Pink indicates the sites that have been made available for affordable housing, blue indicates sites that will be developed in the future, green are sites already allocated to social housing institutions and orange indicates sites to be developed for transitional housing.

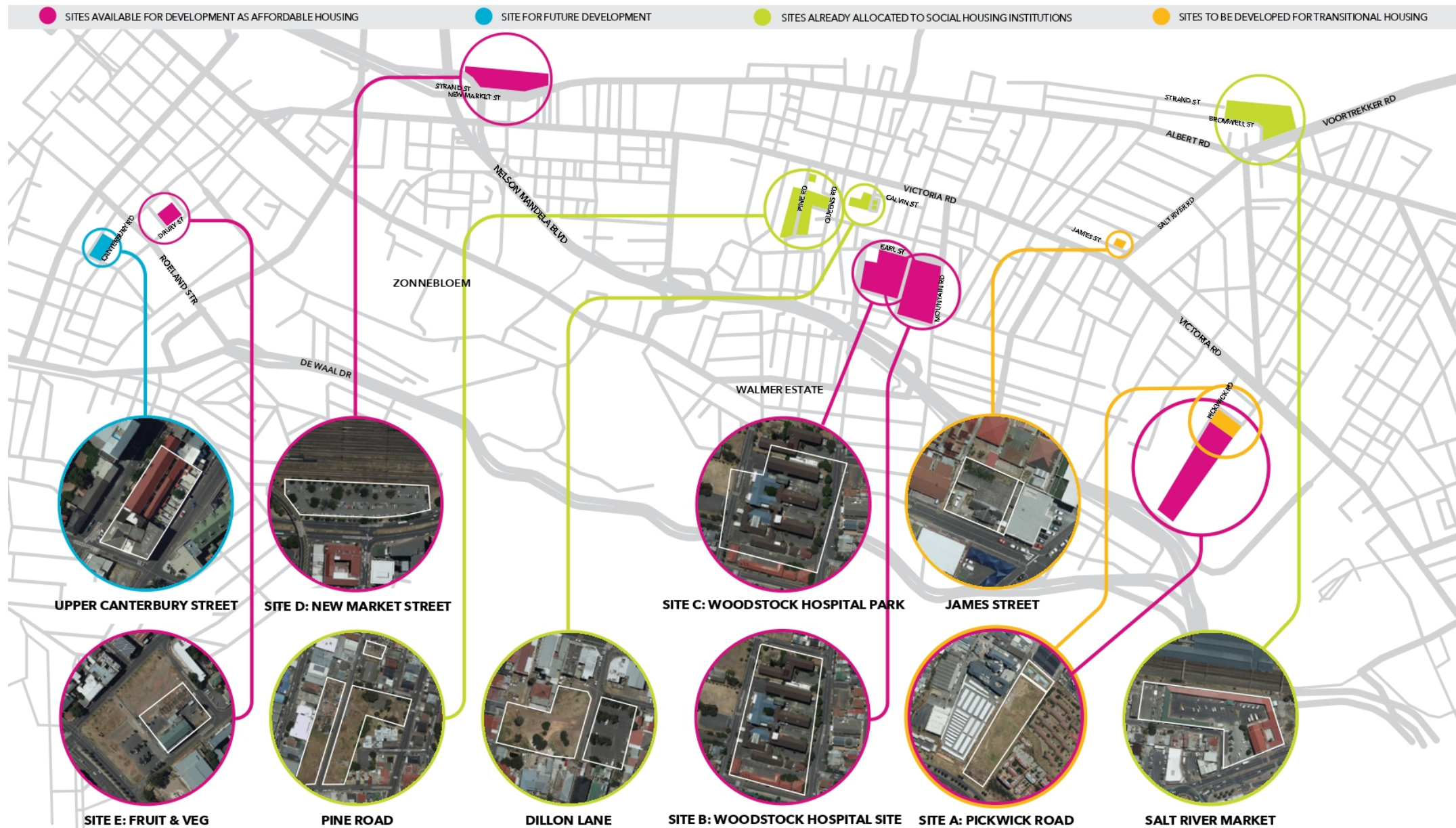


Figure 24: (2017). 11 Sites for inner city affordable housing. (Digital image) Woodstock, Salt River and inner city precinct Affordable Housing Prospectus. Page 26.

Figure 25 is taken from the affordable inner city housing prospectus and indicates the demographics of Salt River and Woodstock at the time.

This can be used to project the current demographics keeping in mind the rate of population growth. Using the existing demographics a programme can be developed that responds to not only the potential future users of the site but also the current existing ones so that the project can benefit all residents. The average household size has 3.7 people, the average age of residents is between 25- 64 years and over 60% of the population participate in the labour force. Households are therefore most likely made up of small families which could potentially benefit from programme that should cater to both adults and children.

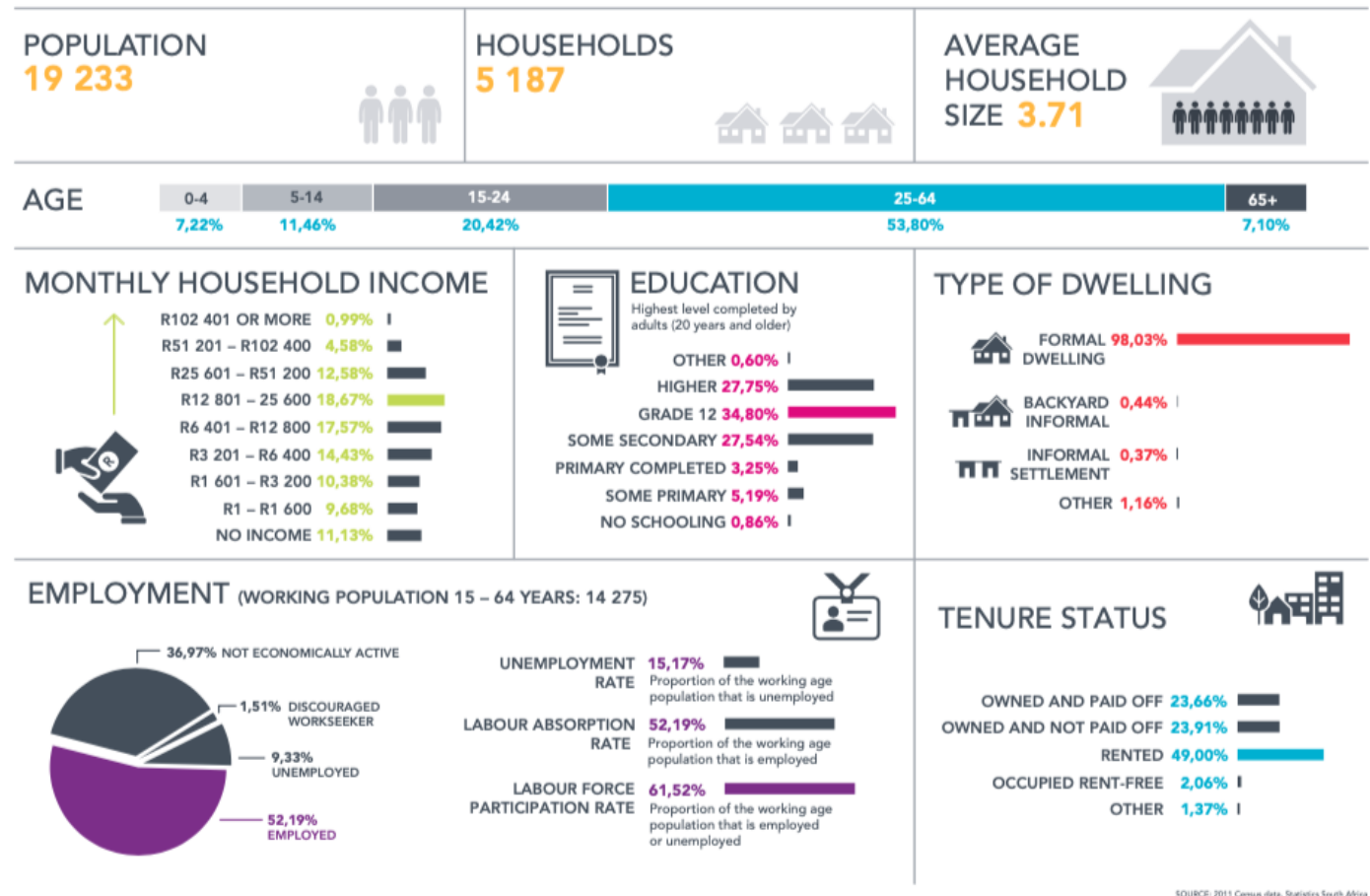


Figure 25: (2017). Demographic data based off of the 2011 Census. (Digital image) Woodstock, Salt River and inner city precinct Affordable Housing Prospectus. Page 8.

Housing typologies

Figure 26 on the following page indicates the various housing typologies. Housing types as outlined by the affordable housing prospectus are defined as affordable and transitional. Affordable housing refers to housing for those with household income brackets of R3501 – R18000 per month and is inclusive of social, GAP, and inclusionary housing (City of Cape Town, 2017, p.12). Social housing involves the rental of units for those that fall within the monthly income bracket (Ibid, p.12). Those who qualify for GAP housing have the certainty of also qualifying for granted loans, bonds, or mortgages by banks and other financial institutions (Ibid, p.12). Inclusionary housing is for those in the higher income bracket and can be owned or rented by tenants (Ibid, p.12). Transitional housing involves the movement from one secure living situation, through a temporary housing solution to a more permanent housing solution (Hendler & McCarthy, 2021, p. 3). It is valuable to understand the different types of housing proposed by the city in order to locate the project in its context. The differences in the liveability of these housing types are not made evident by the document, the differences are purely focused on changes in the income groups of the user. The idea of transitional housing at the Salt River Market seems apt as a temporary home for the residents currently occupying the market that are to be removed, while the new residential development is being built as a means to mitigate the complete loss of livelihood through movement to an entirely different site. This project aims to navigate the tensions of making a home with the limitations of space through design.

Housing typologies

Affordable housing prospectus

Affordable
housing



Household income brackets
of R3501-R18000 per
month

Transitional
housing



Families that have been
relocated or temporarily
moved.

Social
housing



Subsidised rentals for
households with a monthly
income between R3501 –
R15 000.

GAP
housing



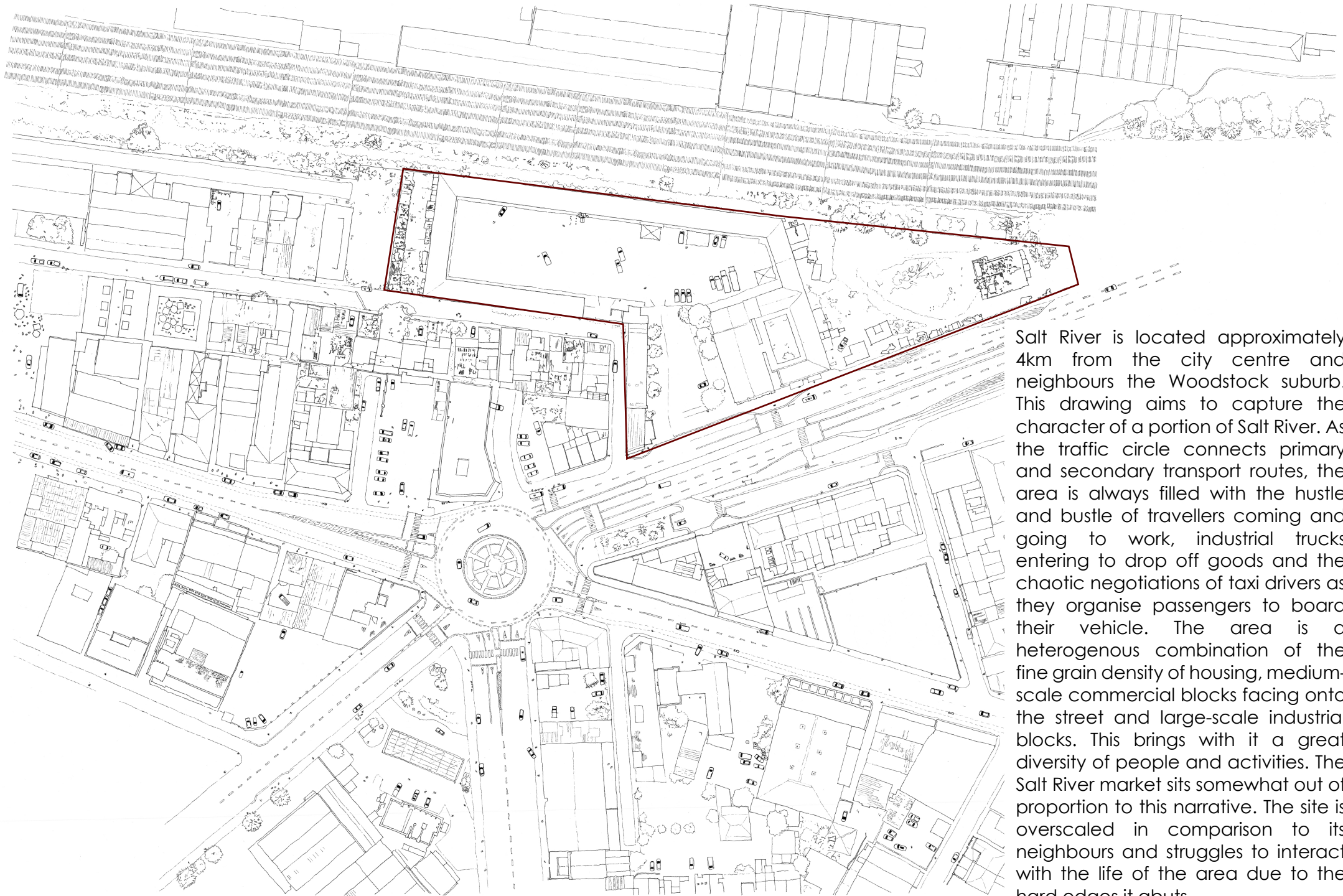
In partnership with the
private sector for people
earning a monthly income of
up to R15000.

Inclusionary
housing



Owned or rented. For
households earning
between R3 501- R18000.

Figure 26: Author's own diagrams adapted from (2017) Woodstock, Salt River and inner city precinct Affordable Housing Prospectus.



Salt River is located approximately 4km from the city centre and neighbours the Woodstock suburb. This drawing aims to capture the character of a portion of Salt River. As the traffic circle connects primary and secondary transport routes, the area is always filled with the hustle and bustle of travellers coming and going to work, industrial trucks entering to drop off goods and the chaotic negotiations of taxi drivers as they organise passengers to board their vehicle. The area is a heterogeneous combination of the fine grain density of housing, medium-scale commercial blocks facing onto the street and large-scale industrial blocks. This brings with it a great diversity of people and activities. The Salt River market sits somewhat out of proportion to this narrative. The site is overscaled in comparison to its neighbours and struggles to interact with the life of the area due to the hard edges it abuts.

Figure 27: Author's own drawing of an Ariel view of Salt River.

Salt River Market edge conditions



Figure 31: Bromwell Street



Figure 32: Bromwell Street



Figure 30: Salt River hall entrance along Voortrekker road



Figure 29: Voortrekker road fruit and vegetable stall at the market.



Figure 28: Voortrekker road dead end to the East of the site.

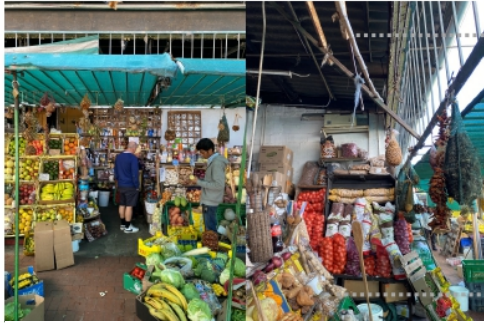


Figure 35

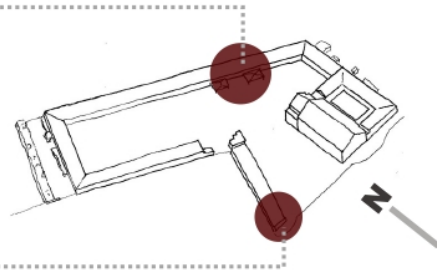


Figure 36

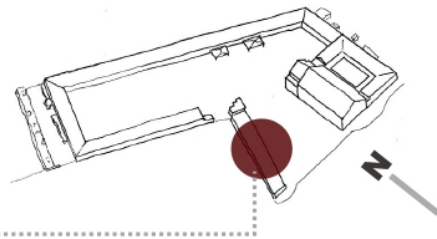


Figure 34

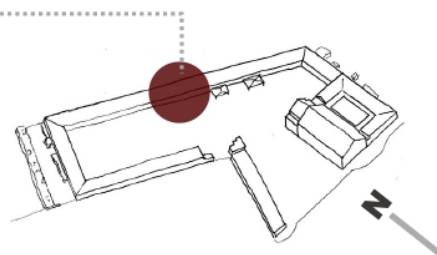
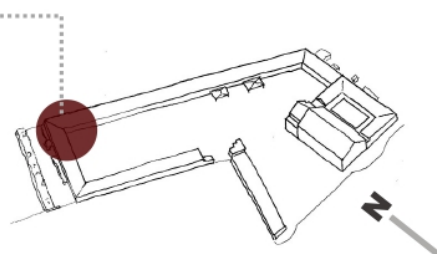


Figure 33



According to the prospectus the site has been planned to house over 820 housing units, 216 of those being for social housing catering for households earning between R1,500 and R15,000 per month. The site will also allocate space for business premises and informal trading.

The market is approximately 9082,8 square meters. It hosts the Salt River town hall used for community meetings and which was previously host to weddings and live events.

Figures 33-36 indicates some of the current traders at the market. There is currently only a fresh fish market, antique shop, a mechanic and two fruit and vegetable stalls.

City maps

Figures 37-40 on the following page depict various layers of the site taken from the *inner-city affordable housing prospectus*. The site is currently zoned for both transport and mixed-use usage. There is evidently a large amount of mixed-use zonings around the site as well as commercial and residential usage. There are various grades of heritage significance across the site. The market master office and the Salt River hall are highlighted as having some high degrees of heritage significance, meaning they would require preservation. The site is located close to multiple transportation routes and is just a few meters off of the main convergence of these routes at the Salt River circle. The railway line runs past the site on the northern edge and Voortrekker road, a primary transport road, runs along the southern edge of the site. This road is travelled by everyday car commuters, busses, taxis and even cyclists daily. Taxis frequently pick up passengers on the corner of the site, at the start of Voortrekker road, and buses stop at the bus stops Infront of the site. These layers provided by the city do not express the character that truly exists on the ground and the specificities of the land use across the site.

ZONING



Figure 40: Author's own.

- Transport
- Mixed Use

LAND USE



Figure 39: Author's own.

- Unknown

HERITAGE

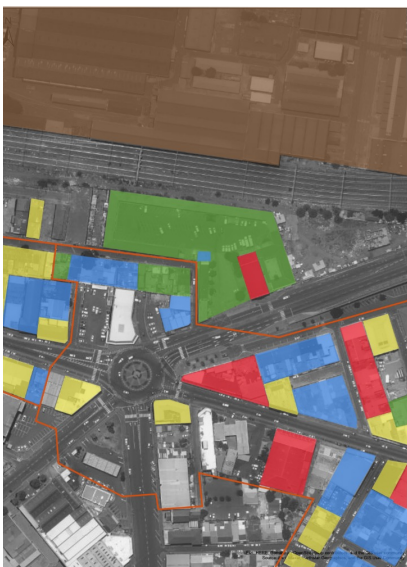


Figure 38: Author's own.

- Grade IIIA
- Grade IIIC
- Potential grade III: Some significance

TRANSPORTATION



Figure 37: Author's own.

- Railway
- Bus Stop
- Bus Routes
- Taxi Routes
- IRT Bus Routes

Figures 37-40: Author's own adaptations of Woodstock, Salt River and inner city precinct Affordable Housing Prospectus information.

Section two.

A critical analysis of contemporary street making in Salt River/
Woodstock

Albert Road, Woodstock

Kent Street, Salt River

Sir Lowry Road

Street studies- New Residential developments



Figure 41: Author's own image of Albert Road.

The image depicted above is a street view of Albert Road in Cape Town. Like many streets in the city, it faces issues of gentrification as older residents move out of their homes to accommodate new developments. The street is bordered by mixed-use buildings of commercial practices and residential spaces as well as religious institutional buildings. The street edges create interesting layers between old and new intersections between public and private. Three contemporary case studies of mixed-use buildings that have a relation to the street it sits on are studied. Their public to private relationship is unpacked through its material systems and spatial connections that compose the interface.



Figure 42: Section through Albert Road. Author's own.

From Public to Private at Albert Road

The gradations between public and private at Albert Road have set the scene for a satisfactory public streetscape. Moving from the left of the section at The Wex 1 building, the ground floor is almost entirely dedicated to public life while all floors above have been blocked off for residents of the building. There are no connections or moments for interaction between the residents and the public. The ground floor is made up of restaurants and shops along an internal pedestrian street that allows for ease of movement between the inside and the outside. Once outside large overhangs shield the height of the building from the human perspective, but when one gets a glance at its magnitude, one immediately feels overwhelmed by the uncertainty of what happens above.

What was once an industrial building, Woodstock Exchange now hosts new commercial developments within the shell of the existing building. There is a slow transgression from the street to the centre of the building which allows one to never truly feel as though they have left the street life and the public realm. The centre manages to create connections vertically and horizontally through openings across levels internally that lead from the highest floor to the public walkway on the ground floor. Structural steel additions of balustrades and staircases have been attached throughout circulation routes, which do not impede visual access between floors. The building feels accessible and open for social exchange.

The connections between private and public activities are more successful in the Woodstock Exchange than in The Wex 1 building, as The Exchange center accommodates more visual and audible connections between floors and functions. The Wex accommodates good spatial flows for public pedestrians, however, there are no connections between the private residents and the general public denying the public any sort of

access to the rest of the building. The two buildings speak well to each other across the street creating intimacy at the street edges between the two built forms and inevitably contributing to a more comfortable living space for pedestrians. Beyond the hold of the buildings, one feels isolated again on the street edge.

Materiality of the interface

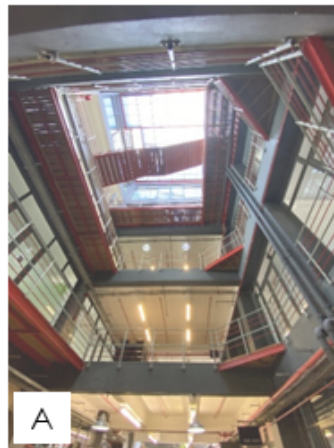
The boundary between the public life of the street and the semi-public internal walkway of the Woodstock exchange is softened with the placement of a courtyard right at the threshold of the building. One moves from an external timber slatted ground finishing to a tiled ground covering that is robust enough to carry continual pedestrian traffic. What is evident in figure 43, is a strong line at this change from the inside face of the concrete beam above, to the edge of floor materials on the ground. This subtle movement from outside to enclosure is what allows the user to always feel the atmosphere of the street life while still having access to the commercial amenities.

Woodstock Exchange

Albert Road, Cape Town

Year of completion: 2011

Programme: Mixed use commercial development



Reinforced concrete beam forming part of concrete frame structure, spans the width of external to internal public walkway.

Galvanised steel sections with steel grating infill supported by galvanised steel bracing, bolted to concrete frame.

Exposed concrete floor structure painted for external conditions.

Laminated safety glazed shopfront windows and door in aluminium frame fitted from finished floor to underside of beam.

1000mm high galvanised mild steel handrail at change of floor level.

Timber slats fixed to support structure, sloped to external pavement. 10mm gaps between timber accommodate water run off.

External tiles laid on concrete slab form part of external public walkway. Able to withstand daily foot traffic.

A- Openings from upper floors down to ground floor, B- Front elevation, C- Entrance courtyard connecting to public walkway.

Figure 43: Material studies of the interface at Woodstock exchange. Author's own.

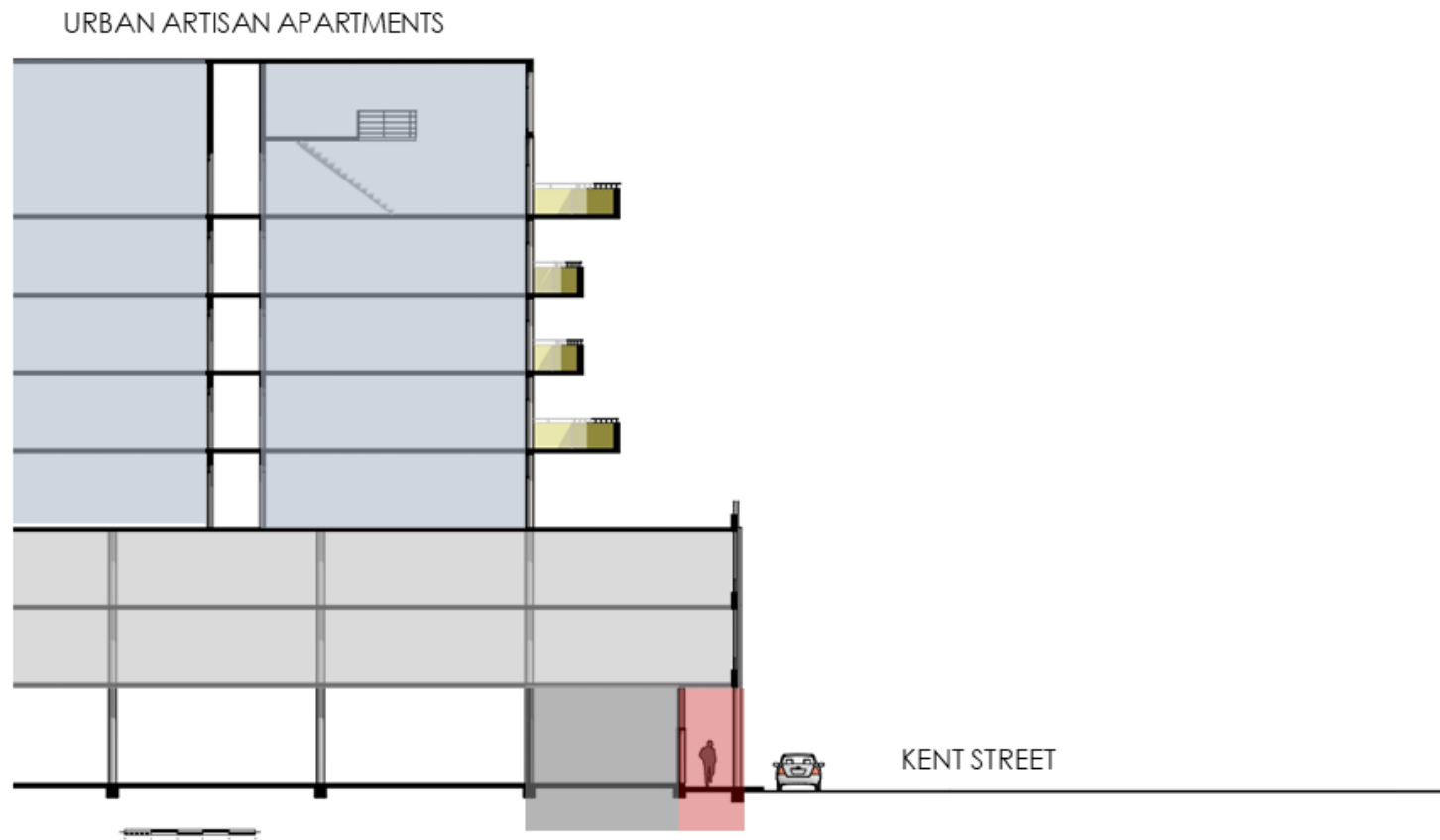


Figure 44: Sectional study through Kent street. Author's own.



URBAN ARTISAN
APARTMENTS

N

- PUBLIC INTERFACE
- COMMERCIAL SPACE
- PARKING
- RESIDENTIAL UNITS

The newly developed mixed-use Urban Artisan Apartment building is home to residential functions, as well as small commercial practices. The building steps back in different rhythms, welcoming pedestrian traffic under the overhang on the ground floor. Currently, there is only one room on the ground floor being occupied by a commercial practice, meaning the public life on the ground floor has not yet been realised. Floor to ceiling glazing has accommodated a clear visibility strategy that might in the future allow the public access into the happenings of the building. The second and third floor of the building are zoned for parking therefore one only gets a glimpse of the activities of the private residential life of the building by stepping back and looking up.

Architecture does not stand alone in its context without the socioeconomic influences of the city. Without proper programming of the built form with appropriate social intent, interacting with buildings as an outsider is not possible and in the case of this study, leaves one isolated on the street. The spatial design should draw from the flow of movement from its neighbours in order to create a more welcoming atmosphere that facilitates better interaction between not only the public users of the street but the entrepreneurs relying on interaction with the public to sustain their businesses within the development.

Materiality of the interface

The interface between the public and the private at Salt River Road undoubtedly lies within the composition of the entire façade. This structure boasts a language of play through its concrete curved elements, encouraging interaction with the public through its unconventional construction in comparison to its neighbours. Cylindrical columns hold up a curved floor slab along the ground floor that curves in at the corner of the street and golden yellow curved balconies wave along the face of the private residential floors of the building. This softening of the rigid concrete construction is what invites the public to interact with the private.

Urban Artisan Apartments

Salt River Road, Cape Town

Year of completion: 2019

Architect: SVA International

Programme: Residential and commercial building



Curved prefabricated concrete curved balconies. 1000mm high painted concrete balustrade with galvanised mild steel handrail attached on top.

Plastered and painted double skin brick wall. Single skin runs past concrete slab to join wall from floor above and below.

Galvanised mild steel handrail.

Concrete slab with upstand beam.

First floor curved concrete floor slab overhang at the corner of the street.

Reinforced concrete column.

280mm brick cavity walls, plastered and painted.

Laminated glazed shopfront windows and doors with extruded aluminium framed sections.

A- Public walkway on street level, B- Corner detail, C- Façade composition

Figure 45: Material study of the interface at Urban Artisan apartments. Author's own.

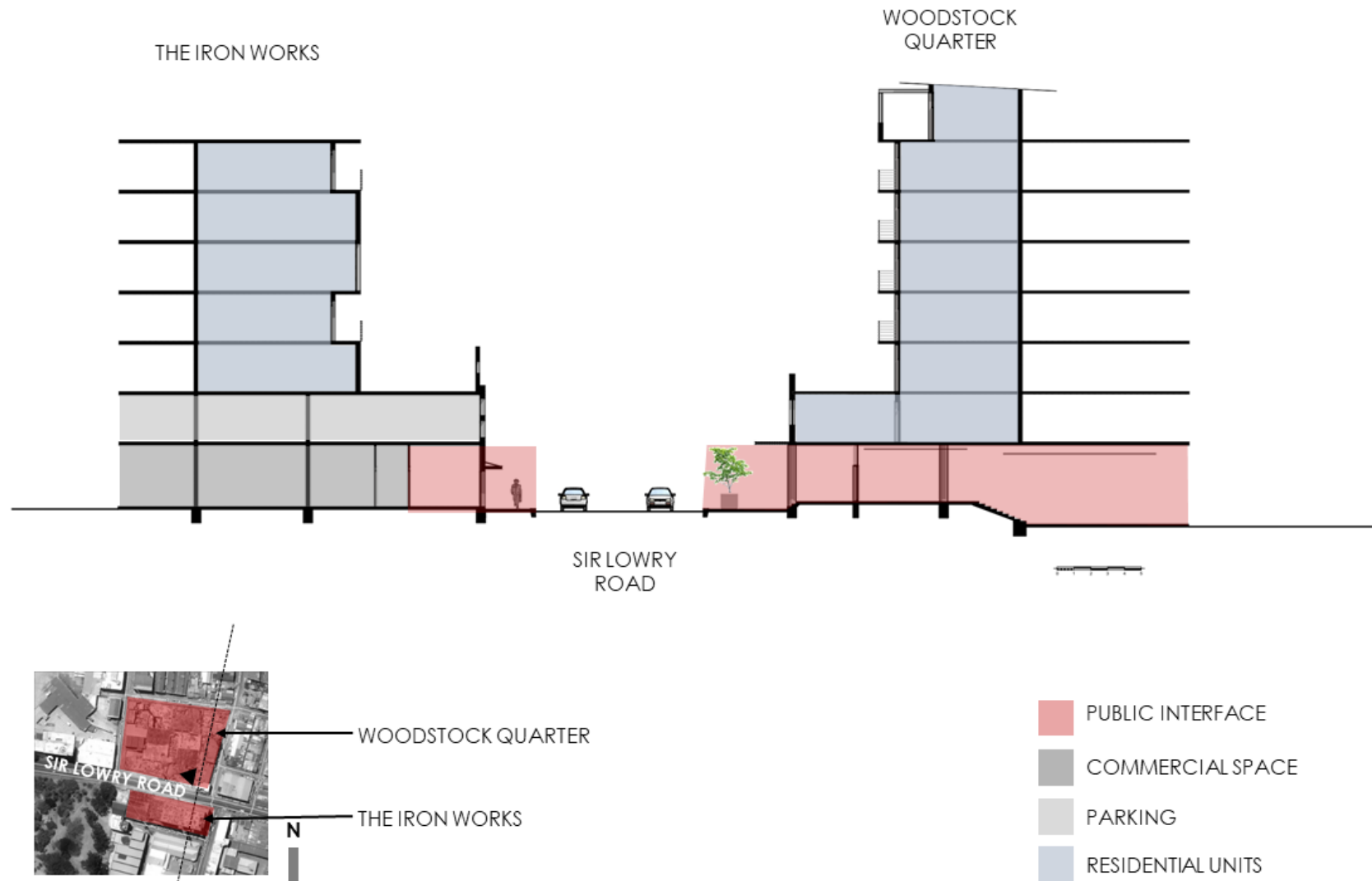


Figure 46: Sectional study at Sir Lowry Road. Author's own.

Woodstock Quarter

Victoria Road, Cape Town

Year of completion: 2019

Architect: Design lab

Programme: Residential and commercial building



Concrete floor slab supports remaining facades that have been preserved from pre-existing houses.

Treated timber slats framed by galvanised mild steel sections, fixed to concrete floor slab.

Extruded aluminium framed laminated safety glazed shopfront windows sit between finished floor to underside of concrete slab.

Brick pier helps carry load of concrete floor slab above.

Reinforced concrete column forms part of concrete building structural support system.

Paved sidewalk steps down to meet height of pavement.

Concrete colonnade column from pre-existing buildings supporting remaining facades that have been preserved.

Brick paved sidewalk. Sloped to fall.

A- Internal layering of floor levels, B- Public entrance, C- Large public arena at entrance

Figure 47: Material study at the interface of Woodstock Quarter. Author's own.

Observations at Sir Lowry road

Woodstock Quarter and The Iron works are two grand mixed residential and commercial buildings that flank Sir Lowry road. Both buildings were developed within original developments that existed on the street and therefore have very distinctive interfaces with the public.

The Woodstock Quarter opens up to pedestrians through its large public arena that extends out onto the street. The ground floor transitions from public to semi-public through a variation in floor levels, textures and differences in ceiling levels. The multi layered entryway opens to a series of smaller commercial practices deeper into the building that is accessible to both the residents and the public. A large overhang holds the pre-existing facades of the small homes that used to line the street above the pedestrian entrance, shielding the building from the street. The large public threshold invites a diverse array of people to contribute to the space and a successful public meeting point.

The Iron works' public spaces of interaction were not operating at the time of my visit however the building's intentions were clear through its use of architectural devices on its facade. The entire pre-existing face of the building that once occupied the space was retained which adds a unique character to the streetscape. A soft façade is further composed through layers of textures, punctures, greenery and overhangs which bring the building down to a human scale, making the building more approachable and safe along its edges.

Materiality of the interface

The public arena (figure 47) created by the Woodstock Quarter through its materials and composition defines a threshold that is welcoming and accessible. This language is created through its collage of materials and construction systems. What is evident here is the merging of the new and the old buildings. Concrete columns and heavy floor slabs supporting the old facades that existed on the site merge with the concrete, and brick construction of the newer development. Resembling the colonnades of its neighbours the

columns stand prominently in the landscape. Large panes of glazing are what allow visibility into the building and timber and steel additions create an atmosphere around the heavier concrete structure. While slightly confusing in its compositional logic, one can't help but wonder how the newer interface will age in comparison to the delicate and characterful façade of the Iron Works.

Conclusion to the studies

From these studies it is evident that there is overall a disconnect between the public life of the street and the private life beyond these buildings. A slow and careful gradation from the business of the street to the quietness of a living space is required to create a better transition from the public into the private. Layering of architectural elements that are easy for the everyday user to read and understand allow more public citizens opportunity to interact with the architecture as it has a sense of familiarity and accessibility. A softening of the structural façade may invite the public to interact with the building if it allows them to see into the life inside and brings interest to the surrounding fabric. Overly large overhangs and strong closures on the street level isolate users on the street while multiple glazed openings bring them in. The construction of the interface between the public and the private determines who gets allowed in and who gets excluded and therefore careful attention must be paid to its composition.

Section three.

Investigating the public-private interface

The public city expands into the space of the home

Crossing boundaries

Land parcel study

Domestic reproductive activities that usually occur inside the home are undervalued in today's society and do not have a place in the built environment. We have increasingly over time, acquired other people to clean our homes, and look after our garden and our children, for little to no wages. Those that carry out this nurturing work are bound to live on the outskirts of the city in living conditions that are often not as great as the homes that they care for, forced to sacrifice their livelihoods to better others.

The built environment continues to regulate the appearance of reproductive work, concealing it from the public, an example being the banning of drying your laundry on balconies, a common restriction in newer developments (Tellisi, 2021). The project seeks to counter the narrative that the house is the neutral container for domestic activity as it is invisible to the public eye. The domestic sphere is no longer separated from the world of capital (Morton, 1997). Everyday domestic activities require a place in the city to overcome binary divisions of social relations and space.

Social space contains two sets of relations, production and reproduction and is interconnected yet continues to be rigidly bounded in architectural built work. The separation of productive and reproductive work dates back to the Industrial Revolution in which 'masculine' work was waged and 'feminine' work was the unpaid work of the home, therefore reproductive work of the nuclear family was to be hidden from public view (Tellisi, 2021).

Henri Lefebvre, a philosopher and sociologist, is concerned with the three aspects of space: the mental, the physical and the social. He points to the relations of social space, stating that all space is social and therefore social space is the representative of the very experience of social life, crossing the divide between public and private space. Lefebvre identifies that many social spaces are intertwined even though visible boundaries are suggestive of their separation. Words such as room, corner and marketplace are typically used to describe social spaces and serve to distinguish, but not to isolate, particular spaces (Lefebvre, p.16). Lefebvre recognises the disparities between the life of the private realm and the life of the

public, stating that the sphere of private life is typically to be enclosed while public space should open outwards but that currently the opposite is occurring (Lefebvre, 1991, p.147). Before industrialisation facilities such as laundries and bath houses had a physical presence in the city and were shared amongst community members (Tellisi, 2021). These spaces provided opportunities for social activity and made reproductive work public. There is an opportunity to bring reproductive work back into the city as a tool for social regeneration.

The unfortunate reality of the climate crisis may result in positive opportunities for the sharing of labour and care making reproductive work more visible. When electricity is scarce, we will once again gather around shared services and facilities which use less precious natural resources (Tellisi, 2021). These infrastructures may be supported by the city creating new modes of living with refined ideas of privacy. What harm is there in already making space for the sharing of communal facilities, prompting the ritual of coming together through everyday activities?

The 2019 Coronavirus Pandemic brought to light the importance of the home as the central space of regeneration and the importance of sharing within a community. Out of fear the city was shut down into quarantine allowing nobody the opportunity to go outside into public spaces. This decreased social interaction and made us aware of the issue of insufficiently designed homes. According to Alcocer, and Martella this new form of living invited an additional digital layer to intersect with our homes inviting the public in. The public environment becomes omnipresent through digital devices that allow us to access multiple realities without physically moving (Alcocer, & Martella, 2020). Video calls allowed others to see into our homes and we could attend virtual public activities such as group gym classes via our devices meaning the house became progressively public and the city became increasingly domesticated (Ibid., 2020).

The pandemic further increased the divide between the poor and wealthy by uncovering the unequal living conditions many of the underprivileged have been forced into. Without access to digital

devices they would have been excluded from accessing the city and its digital public. Those who already do not have access to safe, and accessible public spaces continue to be left behind, amplifying the importance of the public sphere in avoiding social isolation.

Everyday practices opening up to the public realm, made possible by living conditions of the past may not be possible to emulate today through contemporary ways of living. Traditionally the stoep served as a greeting space and an opportunity to sit outside the home and interact with your neighbour. Balconies and roof gardens are re-imagined as the modern stoep but this does not always lend itself to the same interaction. When homes were smaller and tighter it was normal to hear the sounds of your neighbours and be a part of their lives. People will always find a way to create new public dimensions transforming architectural elements into new opportunities to interact with others while simultaneously harsh bordering walls and fencing used to enclose homes prohibit this interaction.

It is within human nature to classify and define relationships between people and space. The very creation of communities requires the inclusion of some and the exclusion of others. In such doing, subdivisions of space are created determining which spaces are open and accessible for all and which spaces are restricted. Why can't the nurturing and caring work of the home contribute more to the production of a sociable city? The coronavirus pandemic brought to light issues of badly structured living spaces and the importance of integrating public life into the private. In constructing living conditions that traverse boundaries and facilitate better communal living it is important to recognise that architectural terminology of boundaries can be redefined in the material and spatial creation of the term. Social life intercepts the physical and influences it continually and therefore our defined ideas of zoned spaces should become adaptable for change.

Crossing boundaries

The public and private zones of the city merge and overlap one another. Though spaces may be defined by intended physical boundaries, how they are occupied is determined by the user. It is necessary to begin to question boundaries that define the spatial compositions of our cities and reconstruct spaces that hold citizens with little power back from accessing their basic human rights. Crossing boundaries involves the transformation of architectural practice, crossing into unfamiliar territories of making.

Re-thinking density as an opportunity for exchange

Recognition of the unequal living standards in South Africa calls for alternative methods of making. Current spatial planning strategies for the poor do not create space for socio-economic growth and progress. Fear of the unknown has shown itself in the increase in privatisation of public culture driven by our top-down authoritative planning processes founded on privatization, segregation, and homogeneity.

Teddy Cruz is an Architect working on the border of the United States and Latin America. In his piece of writing titled, *Latin American Meander: In search of a new civic imagination*, Cruz engages with new models of urban development, researching the impact of Latin American immigrants in the transformation of US neighbourhoods, that aims to address the challenges of social injustice in the region through housing infrastructure (Cruz, p.112). Cruz highlights progressive projects across Latin America that challenge privatization and seek an urbanism of inclusion, specifically by explaining the processes that they follow in order to achieve this. Projects such as the TransMilenio bus rapid transit system in Bogota and Library-Parks in Medellin, involve the exchanges and negotiations between institutions, generating new socioeconomic protocols that would in turn produce a new public domain (Cruz, p. 111). He places an emphasis on changing who participates in urban pedagogy to assist in closing the gap between privatized institutions and publics, stating

that "communities themselves can, in fact, be participants in the shaping of the city" (Cruz, p. 112).

With the destruction of neighbourhoods, shared cultural practices disappeared, which was so valuable in the making of community. These practices may not be recognised as knowledge in the space of institutional knowledge but the lack of practice and ritual is recognised as absent in the lives of those that have experienced displacement. In the making of new communities, a restructuring of systems is required that allow future community members the opportunity to contribute to knowledge exchange.

In his process of developing a neighbourhood, Cruz acquires 'social infrastructure' as the support for housing. Planning the social programmes as support for the residential programme of a project. This is constructed through a well-developed program and the physical architectural element of a concrete frame that can facilitate flexible development. He recognises that to face the most pressing problems of a neighbourhood, requires the creative intelligence of communities and activists (Cruz, p.112). In the making of a neighbourhood, Cruz sees housing as a system of economic and cultural interactions and re-defines density not as an increase in the number of people that live in an area per square meter but by the number of social interactions possible per square meter (Cruz, p. 115). In doing so he recognises the power of bottom-up agency and the value that designing the process of small plot densities adds beyond solely designing the architectural elements and their programme.

To overcome exclusionary spatial planning strategies, boundaries of power need to be collapsed through the agency of the public and the architect. New procedures need to develop that allow for sharing of knowledge, culture, and tradition in space. In the South African context, newer residential developments prioritise providing as many living units as possible within a specific site over providing any cultural or commercial services, resulting in multiple blocks of residential units with little to no additional amenities that can benefit the growth of its residents. As these projects are usually located on the outskirts of cities

due to spatial demands, its residents are left stranded from the basic means that contribute to a better quality of life beyond the home. Ideally, residents should be able to co-produce their living blocks, informed by their socioeconomic needs, creating housing projects that become a system of economic and cultural interactions (Cruz, p.117). In doing so the spatial composition of a place leverages more exchanges of resources and the continuation of everyday practices that may have been lost in today's privatised urbanism. Is spatial design able to regenerate lost cultural practices and facilitate knowledge exchange across boundaries? By blurring the boundaries between thresholds, spatial design knowledge becomes a strategy to foster better community involvement in the making of place and home.



Figure 49: Collage indicating the ability for the life of the private realm to extend into the public.

The influence of the people

To assist in the making of spaces that are inclusionary to the public, it is necessary to transform the architectural process that currently favours those in authority over the actual users of a project. Everyday rituals of citizens of the city already contribute to the creation of space but their narratives are often left absent in architectural discourse. Divides evident in our cities can be strengthened or diminished through the architectural process of representing those in power or rather those excluded from it.

In *The Architecture's public*, the architect, Giancarlo De Carlo, reflects on the importance of participation in architecture to ensure democracy in design. In his writing, he is critical of the social ideals of the modern movement that have been long forgotten and the role of the architect in contemporary society. De Carlo is enthusiastic about the transformation of the architectural discipline in order to transform it from a top-down practice in which those with little power are unable to contribute to the making of space into a bottom-up process in which the architecture being made is made by those that will use it and responds to its contextual conditions.

Giancarlo De Carlo questions what is Architecture's public by reflecting on the Modern Movement as the reasoning behind architectures often lack of engagement with the social. He states that the movement was developed in an environment of the elites, which had a tendency to exclude everything in economic, social, cultural and aesthetic terms that was not shared by the class in power (De Carlo, 2005, p.7). The movement distanced itself from the side of the people which he goes on to explain was evident at The CIAM Frankfurt Congress of 1929 devoted to 'Minimum Housing'. The event focused on coming up with a solution to housing that would result in the most cheapest building expenses and the smallest liveable square meters of living spaces for people (Ibid., p.9). This conjures the question of why the making of architecture for the disadvantaged has been predominantly focused on its affordability to construction and

not on the potential of making resistant, well-insulated, comfortable living spaces. The result of this modernist project is still evident in our city's fabric today.

De Carlo questions the role of the architect in today's society stating that architecture has wide and ambiguous meanings which in turn has stifled architecture's progression in engaging in social transformation (De Carlo, 2005, p.5). According to De Carlo, the architect has always been seen to hold a high position of power which ultimately leads to the crafting of architecture of great dominance and counteractive influence. He suggests the role of the architect is to side with those that have been excluded by power by changing the whole range of objects and subjects which participates in the architectural process at present (Ibid., p.14). This would ideally be carried out through 'process planning' which centres on the importance of planning 'with' over planning 'for' people (Ibid., p.15, p. 19). By including the voices of the users in the architectural proposal we will be able to form environments that are better able to respond to its specific contextual conditions. Fundamentally a participative process will generate an open and self-generating form, rejecting privatised and exclusive living.

Spatially occupying events that arise in the City of Cape Town continue to reflect the absence of proper spatial planning that benefits and reflects the needs of its citizens. The Walking Bus Project is an everyday occurrence in the streets of under-cared-for communities. Initiated by mothers in gang-ridden communities, volunteers accompany children while walking to and from school (Ntseku, 2022). What is witnessed here is the recognition of communities, together with city governance, of an issue of safety on the streets often travelled by children. The solution to the problem comes about through an intuitive response of caring for others, a ritual often taught and practised in the home. This ritual gets implemented in the public through the human creation of an imagined bus. Projects such as these all rightly take up space and contribute to the spatial production.

De Carlo and Cruz's writings call for a dialectical architectural process, breaking barriers between architects and users of buildings so as to create more accessible spaces. The South African built environment will benefit greatly by changing who participates in the architectural process, in order to overcome physical barriers past spatial planning strategies imposed on those with little power. Many social housing projects continue to use the ideologies of the modernist movement in the making of poor, sombre, living spaces for the underprivileged. Often the deterioration of neighbourhoods is a result of the residents' powerlessness in contributing to its planning and therefore having no reason to uphold them. What form does the architectural design process take on that allows the public users of the city the opportunity to contribute to its urban structure? Moving away from exclusionary practices of making, effort should be made to acknowledging the distinct realities of the specific on-the-ground user's needs and the potential they have in contributing to the transformation of the city.

Constructing the interface

The material construction of boundaries, defining the division between spaces, determines whether the boundary becomes porous or impenetrable. The wall has become the modern-day weapon to divide countries and remove people further away from resources that benefit their living conditions. Contemporary architectural projects tend to be designed with haste, without consideration of who gets let in and who gets left out of the built environment.

The study is framed around the inquiry of what it means to physically construct a boundary. At the boundary between the public and the private, what systems compose the interface signifying the division of space? The aim is to find cues that signal how to better inform the design of spaces that are more fluid, challenging defined spatial zoning.

Methodology

The study will be conducted through the case study of Estudio Cruz as an example of the relationships between public and private across an entire land parcel. The case study project is analysed in section as a means to understand both vertical and horizontal measures of connection. Paying particular attention to the systematic organisation of the project the sections may provide key principles of connecting and exchanging between the social and the spatial.

It was important to choose a project that showed a relation between the making of a home as a private space and its relationship to the public shared spaces. Individuals develop a sense of place through face-to-face interactions that occur in communal spaces and therefore this method serves as a strategy to represent the relationship between the human experience and the materiality of a building at the intersection of the public and private spheres (Qiang Fu, 2018, p. 2).

Precedent analysis

Land parcel study – Casa Familiar: Living Rooms at The Border

Year: 2019

Architect: Estudio Teddy Cruz

Located in San Ysidro, Living Rooms at The Border is an affordable housing project with additional small infrastructures that accommodate economic and cultural programming (Cruz, p. 119). The organisational structure of this project challenges divisive narratives and creates new interfaces with the public across a single parcel of land.



Figure 50: Cruz, T. (2011), *Living Rooms at the Border model* (Photograph), *Latin America Meander: In search of a new civic imagination*, *Architectural Design: Latin America at the Crossroads*. 81(3): 110-117.



Figure 51: Cruz, T. (2011), *Living Rooms at the Border model* (Photograph), *Latin America Meander: In search of a new civic imagination*, *Architectural Design: Latin America at the Crossroads*. 81(3): 110-117

The development of the site begins at the centre with the refurbishment of the existing church. (Cruz, p.116)

Housing type 1: Young couples, single mothers with children, (Cruz, p.116).

Housing type 3: Large families with grandmothers. Houses are equipped to accommodate extensions. (Cruz, p.116)

Housing type 4: accommodates the extension of small families (Cruz, p.116).

Technical systems of the border community

The gradation of housing units with social infrastructure creates diversity across the site. The site is broken up into smaller parcels by developing multiple systems of housing units that respond to the various needs of users. A church sits at the centre and is retrofitted as an incubator of cultural production. The entire site has been programmed, from the ground plane to built enclosure. As the programming accommodates the movement of everyday residents the small buildings and in-between spaces therefore all activate the plot with increased economic and social interactions (Cruz, p.116).

Systematically each housing unit takes on its own construction logic creating the multi-faceted living block. The most prominent structural logic however is that of the concrete frame designed to adapt to users' needs over time. Comprised of various concrete legs and a flat top, the spaces beneath the frames are programmed as communal kitchens allowing families to extend their homes as needed and the spaces in-between are reserved for economic and social programming.

The section (figure 52) evidently reflects a craft of building construction that resembles that of a collage of forms and materials. Steel, brick, timber and concrete have all been used in relation to the requirements of the specific unit within the whole. There is no need to follow one singular structural system as the purpose of the structures is to express individuality and truly reflect the diversity of the living rituals present within a community.

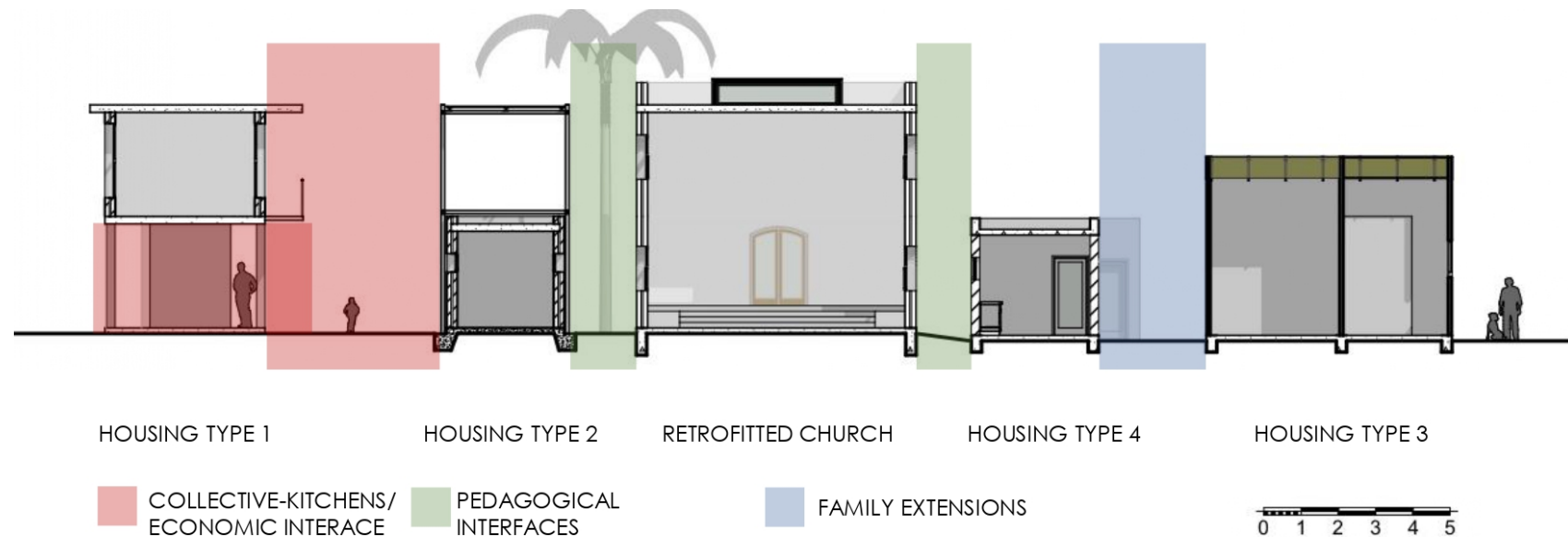


Figure 52: Author's own. Sectional study between interfaces across the site.

Sharing of culture, resources and knowledge

Living Rooms at The Border provide a great example of architectural design that allows for the easy exchange of resources and social interaction, blurring the boundaries between public and private. Firstly the finer grain of property and circulation paths create more interfaces of interaction, plugging resources back to the community through engagement with the variety of programmes of the site. This benefits the community as it opens up opportunities for social entrepreneurship accessing resources they may usually be economically cut off from in the system of the larger city. The plot becomes self-sustaining into the future. Secondly, the adaptable concrete frame structure acts as social service infrastructure, the material realisation of abstract intentions to bridge divides between knowledge and cultures, plugged with social programming for the community (Cruz, p. 116). The architectural elements realise the vision of bettering living conditions for those living on the outskirts of the city's resources while the residents become participants in co-managing the socioeconomic programmes (Ibid, 116).

Cruz's work at the border uses spatial design that aims to educate by way of being a tool that fosters better community involvement in the spaces built. This project acknowledges that urban justice requires the redistribution of resources and knowledge to include the voice of those in the periphery and ensure resources are equally distributed across physical boundaries (University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2021).

Section four.

Conceptualising urban interfaces and continuity

A spatial strategy for urban continuity

Design principles

Programme

Macro urban proposal

Typology studies



Figure 53: Archi Maki Model. Overlapping thresholds between the public and the private. Author's own.

The model above looks at the conceptual idea of blurring the boundaries between the public and the private in the physical form. Representing the thresholds of the institution and the home these conceptual walls are strung together so as to depict the intermingling of the two spaces and the ability of the one to influence the other.

A spatial strategy for urban continuity

An analysis by David Dewar and Roelof Uytenbogaardt titled *Housing: a comparative evaluation of Urbanism in Cape Town* looks into the built urban fabric of residential units across Cape Town. Although published in 1977 it continues to hold relevance as the Victorian-style built fabric referenced in the study still exists today, especially in the Salt River area. This section looks at this study to better understand the built characteristics of thresholds and interfaces of the neighbouring suburbs of Woodstock and Salt River, providing space-making clues for continuity.

Continuity along the commercial street edge

The colonnade is an architectural device that is used in the commercial strips of Salt river and Woodstock to create a framework that physically creates unity in the built fabric of the street edge. In the commercial strips of the areas, all commercial functions are grouped along the main travel routes creating a continuous and coherent space. Shops are differentiated through finer details within the continuous frame through entrances, individual advertising and windows making each part have a responsibility to the whole (Dewar & Uytenbogaardt, p. 186). The scale of the shop is also aligned with the scale of the residential fabric, should it need to be adapted into a house it can do so easily increasing increases the resilience of the environment as a whole (Ibid., p.186). On the contrary some parts of Woodstock and Salt River's large-scale industry contrast largely with the delicate residential fabric it is evident that a positive social space has been created by buildings being brought together in harmony through the colonnade as buildings reflect a responsibility to each other and the street. For the human that interacts with this interface, the colonnade provides shelter and comfort along the busy vehicular road and the scale of the shops are aligned with the scale of the residential units creating a sense of familiarity.

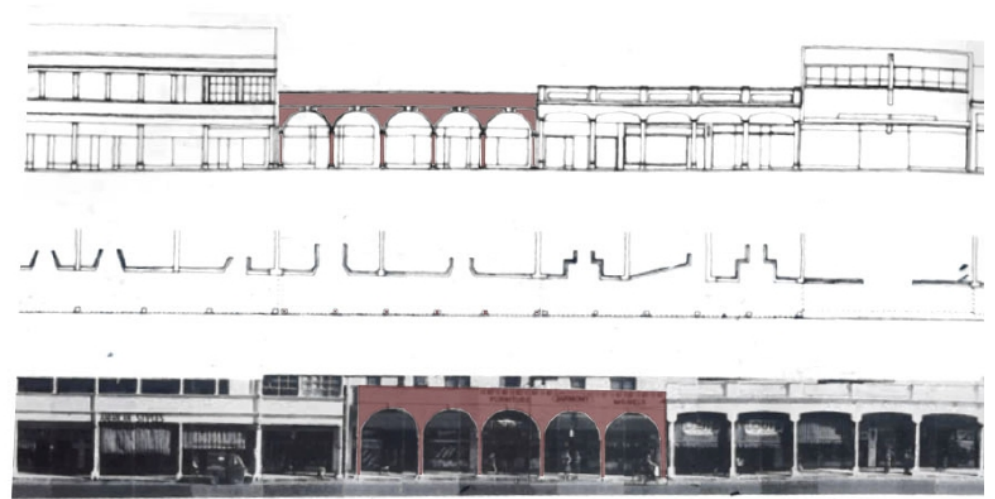


Figure 54: Image adapted by author. Dewar, D. (1977), (Digital image), *Housing : a comparative evaluation of urbanism in Cape Town*, page 186

Negotiating a public-to-private relationship through the family run

The layering of thresholds in the residential street provides privacy to the residents over public exposure (Dewar & Uytenbogaardt, p. 198). As seen in figure 55, the houses are set back from the street and layered through the pavement, the garden, the stoep and the alcove creating different degrees of privacy from public to private.

Within the interface of the residential street, the relation of the individual unit to the whole is evident again. A continuous public interface allows for private means to be masked as individual units are barely detectable - a small poorer family exhibits the same public front as the more wealthy larger family unit (Ibid., p. 196).

In the example in figure 56, anonymity is created in the residential interface through the use of a gable which creates an impression of one large unit when it is indeed two units that house two different families. Similarly, in the four family run, the first two units are disguised more subtly making it difficult to differentiate the unit from the whole. This interface design not only provides privacy physically but social privacy too for the families living on the residential street. The careful construction of an interface will allow for an easy transition from the street to the private home.

The study provides design knowledge on the making of interfaces within Salt Rivers urban fabric. The interface construction provided an identity for the residents and an intimate layering connected residents to the public life of the street making it more successful. Using these principles as a guide to design thresholds for urban spaces within the design proposal is of utmost importance to the project.

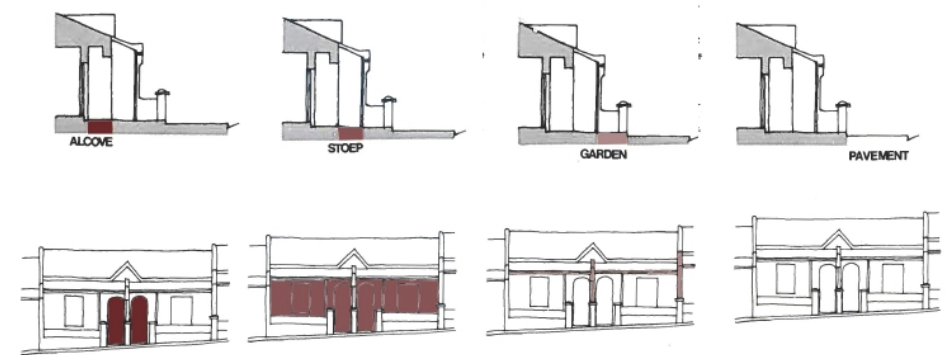


Figure 55: Image adapted by author. Original source: Dewar, D. (1977), (Digital image), *Housing : a comparative evaluation of urbanism in Cape Town*, page 198

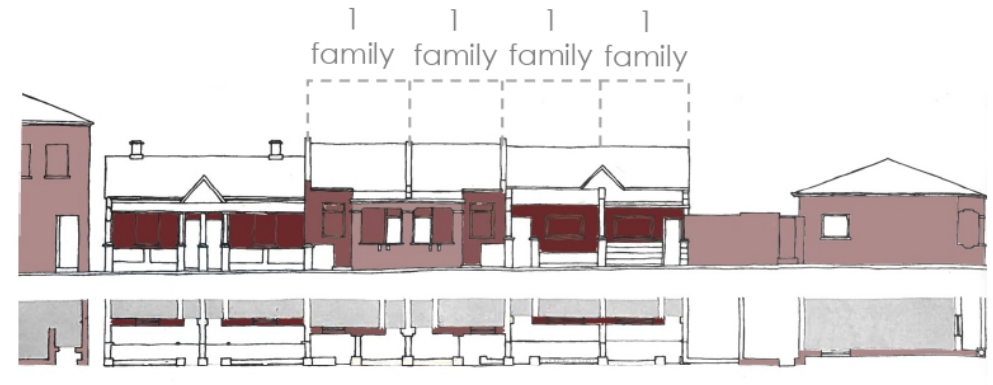


Figure 56: Image adapted by author. Original source: Dewar, D. (1977), (Digital image), *Housing : a comparative evaluation of urbanism in Cape Town*, page 196

Design principles

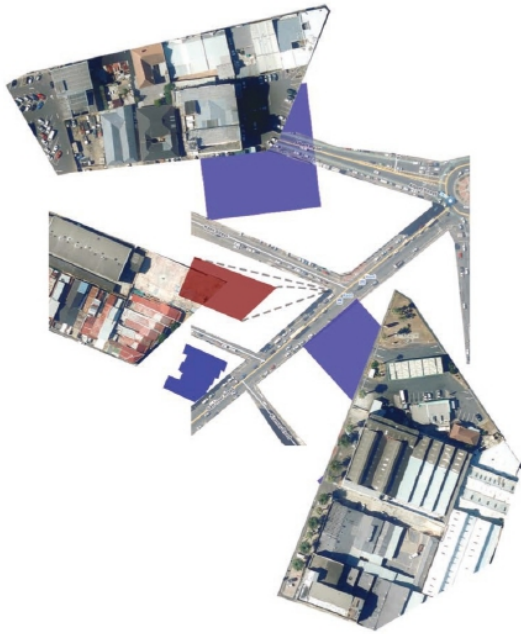


Figure 60: Author's own collage.

Mediate boundaries
between people and
places.



Figure 59: Author's own collage.

Create conditions that
allow for the reflection
of a community of a
place.

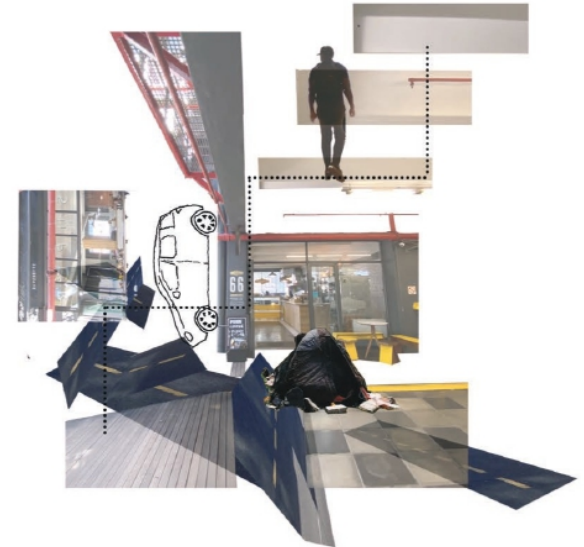


Figure 58: Author's own collage.

Invite the city in.

History of production in Salt River/Woodstock



Figure 68: Fresh fish market at the Salt River market today. Author's own photograph.



Figure 69: Image inside the old Salt River fish market. Cape Times, 11 December 1939.



Figure 66: Fruit and vegetables at the old Salt River market. Cape Times, 11 December 1939.



Figure 61: Opening of the Salt River Market. Shed like structures are seen which appear to have been closed up in today's market. Cape Times, 11 December 1939.



Figure 67: Sun-dried bakkems at the Fish Market. The Argus, 27 February 1975.



Figure 65: Three craftsmen in a furniture shop in Woodstock. The Argus, 27 February 1975.



Figure 64: Advert for Bakery in Woodstock. Cape Times, 11 December 1939.



Figure 63: Furniture store in Salt River. Furniture stores are still very prevalent in the area today and many of them manufacture the furniture in store. Author's own photograph.



Figure 62: Advert for joinery work in Woodstock. The Argus, 27 February 1975.

The Salt River market is host to various retailers such as a fruit and vegetable vendor, a fresh fish market, and a mechanic. The buildings have deteriorated and the market has died down significantly from the original active market. Retaining the physical structure of the current market will not benefit its future, however, the trading culture that exists within the market and the surrounding area is what is worth being preserved. The local businesses have removed the boundary between consumer and producer, where one directly interacts with the products being made or service being given – through old school trades such as butchers, carpenters, upholsterers. These trades are made evident from the images and newspaper clippings in the figures on the left.

Programme

The project will focus on a communal porch made up of the transitional housing block and the Salt River hall. The programme is centred around the integration of the public market with the more private residential programme, using the hall as an anchor of communal activity. The programme aims to find a balance of well integrating existing residents of the market and newer residents of the housing as well as the existing residents of Salt River that frequently use the hall facilities. The project acknowledges the loss that the residents of the market will experience by having to vacate the property to make space for the new development and therefore proposes transitional housing as a mediator of this process.

The programming of transitional housing includes providing housing that integrates Psychosocial and economic support for the residents while re-imagining the social and physical characteristics of the market.

A market incubator programme is imagined to help sustain the functions of the existing market and would provide space for the production of goods on site which can be traded, opportunities for mentorship and training allowing entrepreneurs to grow their small businesses and opportunities for outsiders to experience the production of goods on-site.

The transitional housing block will include bed and storage space for a period of twenty four months for each resident, and shared service areas such as bathrooms, living rooms and dining rooms. Residents moving into the transitional housing block will be able to participate in training as part of the economic support offered by its programme.

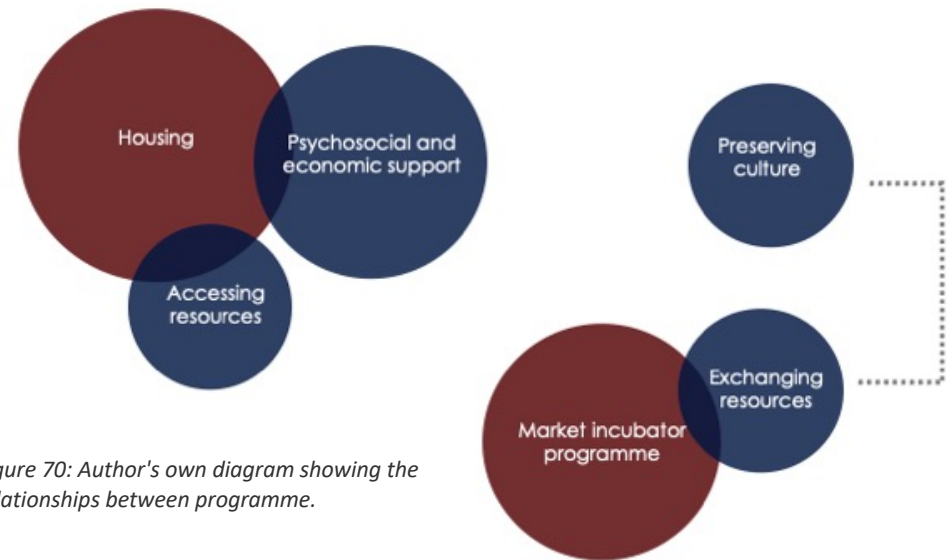


Figure 70: Author's own diagram showing the relationships between programme.



Figure 71: Author's own diagrams indicating programme,.



Collaged images of the external makeup of the surrounding fabric aim to animate the character of Salt River's density surrounding the site. Row house style homes are painted in varied colours, retailers are expressive through their visual advertising on windows and local artists have covered up old exhausted buildings with decorative, expressive art murals. This contributes greatly to a sense of playfulness on the street however underlying issues of drug abuse, crime and homelessness in the streets of Salt River cannot be overlooked.

Everyday landmark buildings are highlighted in red around the circle. These prominent buildings reflect the character of building styles of the past and host a variety of activities that allow people to interact with them daily. The site was chosen based on its potential to develop a precinct-size intervention that accommodates a good public-private relationship between housing and the market.

Figure 72: Author's own drawing.

N

0 0.01 0.03 0.06 km

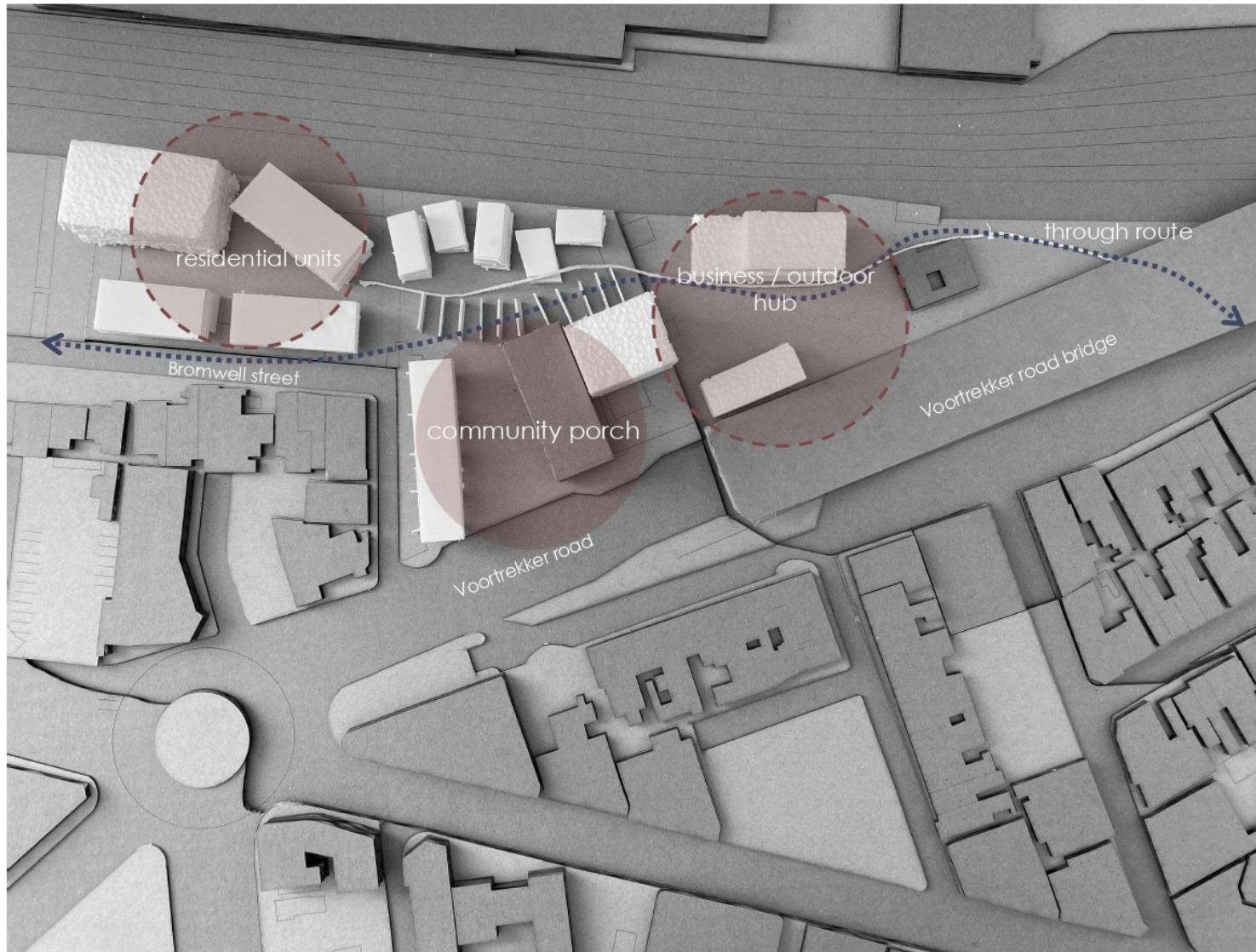


Figure 73: Model exploring massing and programme across site. Author's own.

Model exploration

This model explores a conceptual massing of the overall urban plan. The overlays on this model indicate breaking up the site into three parts. The first part on the left would primarily be a mixed-use residential area with commercial and small industrial practices in between. The part of the site closest to the street is seen as a communal porch which opens up to the public while simultaneously servicing the community within the project. The portion of the site closest to the eastern edge to the right would ideally be a business and public events hub which would house commercial offices and open space programmes. This idea is explored in further detail throughout the following design process.

Macro urban proposal

The macro urban intervention focuses on the connection of the design proposal within the larger community.

The site sits in close proximity to the Salt River train station towards the East. Foundry road that runs along the station will be connected to Bromwell street through the site, creating a direct connection to the existing neighbourhood and creating potential to improve conditions under the Voortrekker road bridge. This may connect the site more directly to existing transport route network making it feel less isolated from the suburb.

Also indicated here is the potential connections that can be made to the industrial activity in the area through programme, cultivating green spaces and better pedestrianised streets.

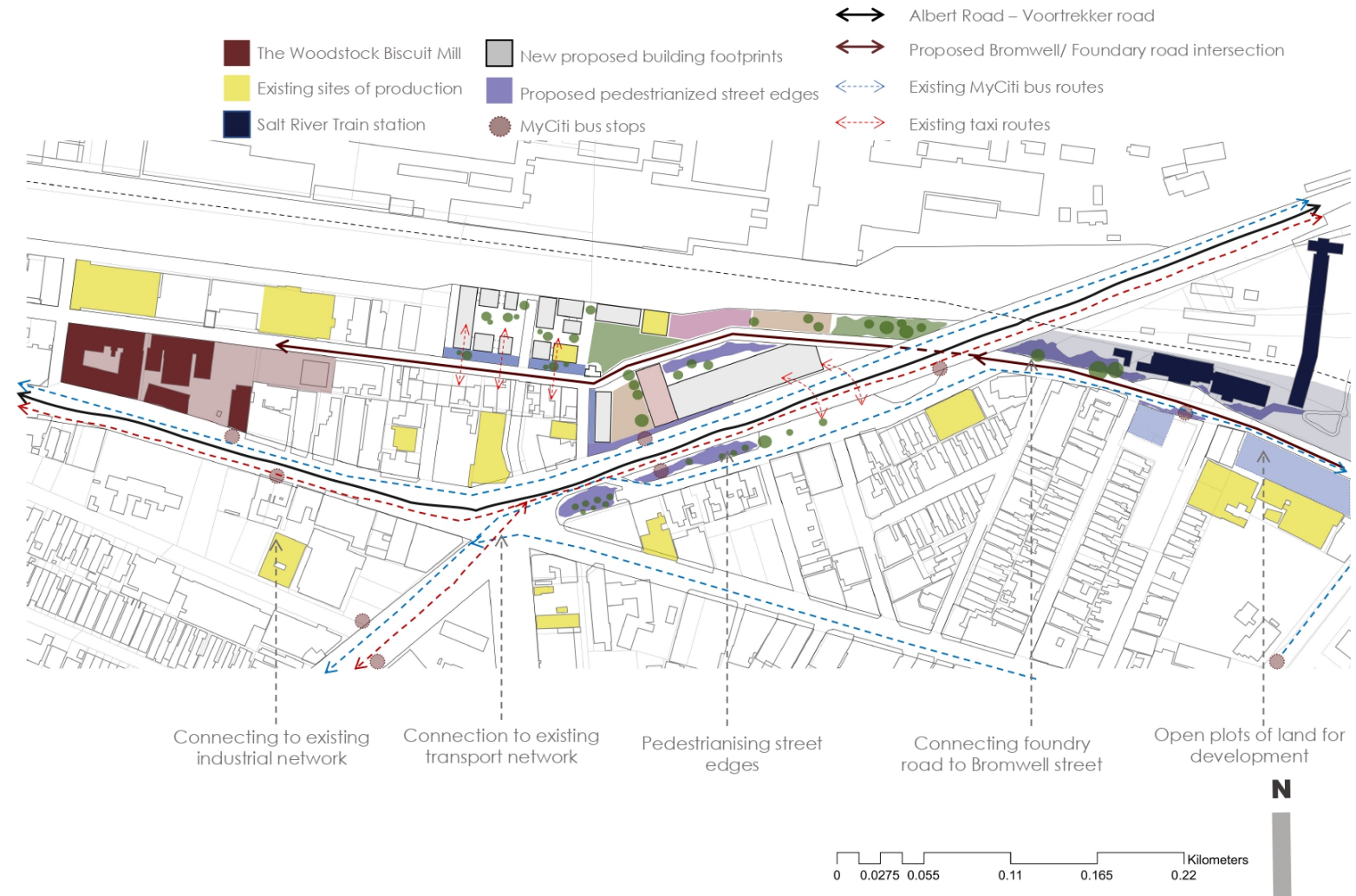


Figure 74: Author's own drawing of the larger urban proposal.

Site proposal

The programme across the site includes social housing that considers a mixture of family sizes, social public programmes, preserving the historic hall on the site and a new re-imagined market as well as workshops and warehouses that would assist in sustaining and developing the market.

The current urban development attempts to grapple with the fine scale of surrounding housing and the larger industrial scale found in the area. Bromwell street is extended through the site and continues under the Voortrekker road bridge. The development will pay careful attention to the treatment along the harsh edges around the site.



Figure 75: Site proposal. Author's own.

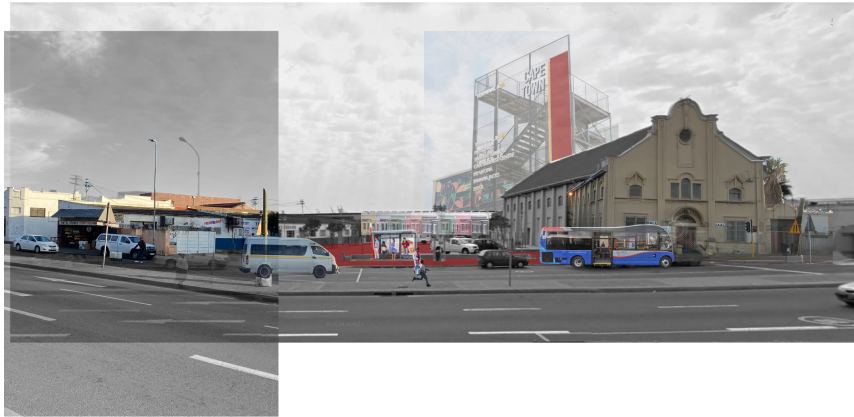


Figure 78: Collages exploring the potential scale of the site. Author's own.



Figure 77: Collages exploring the potential scale of the site. Author's own.



Figure 76: Collages exploring the potential scale of the site. Author's own.

Scale explorations

The scale of the Salt river Hall creates opportunities to mediate the scales between the grain of the residential area and the density required to accommodate the proposed population of the site. Figure 78 indicates this exploration.

Imagined in figure 77 is the integration of workshops at the market that may bring more foot traffic and value to the market.

The bridge underneath Voortrekker road is proposed as the connection joint between Foundry road and Bromwell street. Figure 76 invites ideas on what activity can bring life to the current dark, unsafe space.

On the right to housing workshop

Workshop instructors:

Professor Adèle Naudé Santos

Mohamad Nahleh

Simone Le Grange

In July of 2022, I participated in an affordable housing workshop in collaboration between postgraduate students of the University of Cape Town and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The workshop focused on the proposal and design of strategies that initiate better public-private partnerships within the city addressing issues of who has the right to participate in the city.

The project was located on Pickwick Road, Salt River, one of the eleven affordable inner city housing sites earmarked by the city of Cape town. Together as a team, we created a proposal for this site in line with the requirements and needs of the city and its users.

The diagrams on the right indicate two grid systems that were developed to define and adapt residential space and social space. The residential structure took on a 4m grid that accommodated adequately spaced living units while the social structure took on a 1x1m grid creating a more flexible structure for the social programme of the project. Together the structures contributed to the harmonious integration of both public and private functions.

This workshop prompted my entry into the design of the overall site proposal into the detail of the individual home and its role within the whole. The lessons learnt here are carried into the design process.

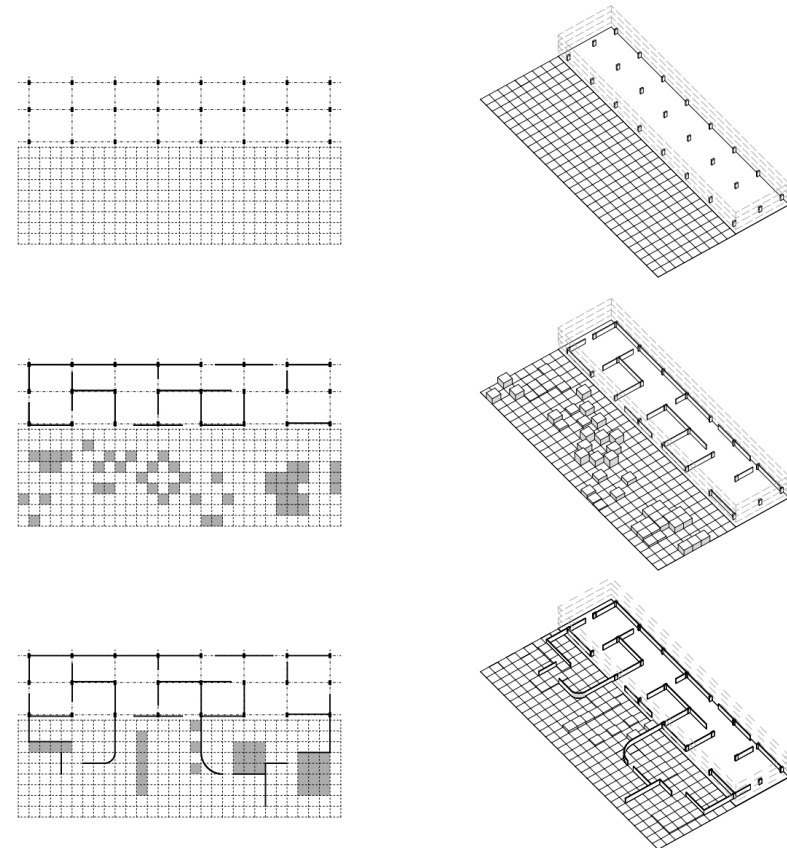
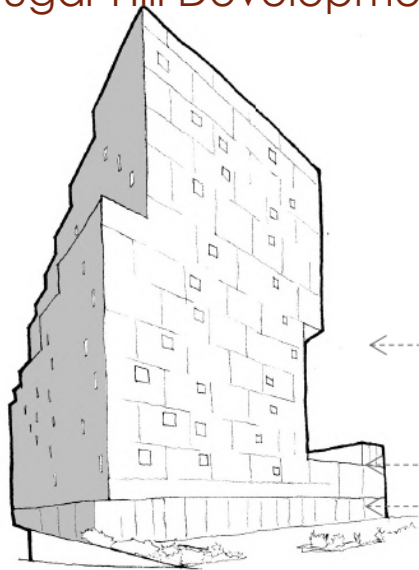


Figure 79: Social structure. Author's own diagrams indicating the formation of the residential and social infrastructure of the project.

Typology studies

Sugar Hill Development

Adjaye Associates
Harlem, New York - 2015
Mixed-use development



← Affordable housing

Childhood education centre
Children's museum of art

Figure 82: Sugar Hill Development 3D perspective. Author's own.

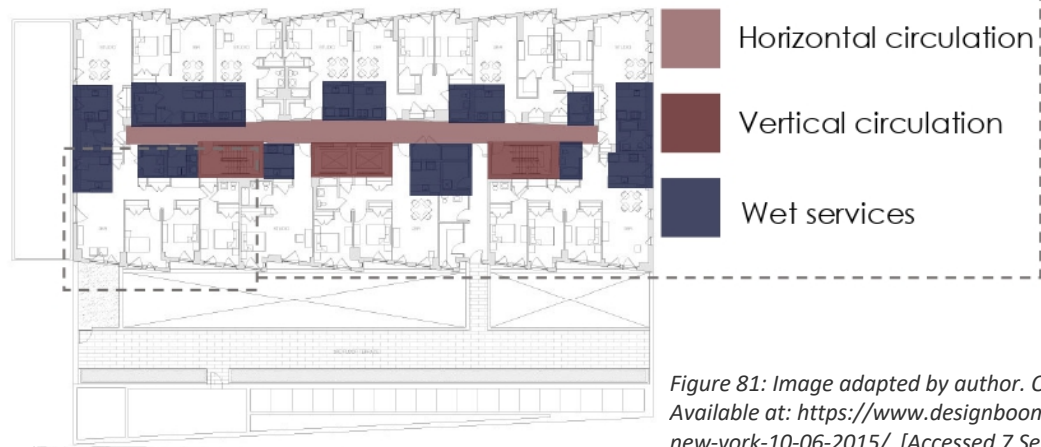
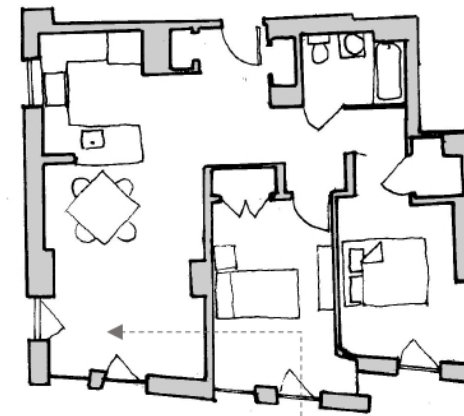


Figure 81: Image adapted by author. Original image: Stevens, P. (2015) 3rd floor plan. (Digital drawing)
Available at: <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/david-adjaye-sugar-hill-development-harlem-new-york-10-06-2015/> [Accessed 7 September 2022]



2 Bedroom apartment
7,4m x 6,1 m = 45,14 sqm

Bathroom
1,9m x 1,3m = 2,47 sqm

Kitchen
1,9m x 2,2m = 4,18 sqm

Living space
3,87m x 2,96m = 11,45 sqm



Bachelor apartment
3,8m x 6,1 m = 23,2 sqm

Bed/ Living space
3,8m x 3,34m = 12,7 sqm

Precast concrete cladded
Façade's form allows for
extra opportunities of light
from different directions.

0m 2,5m 5m

Figure 80: Plans of a two bedroom and bachelor unit. Author's own drawings.

Unite d' Habitation

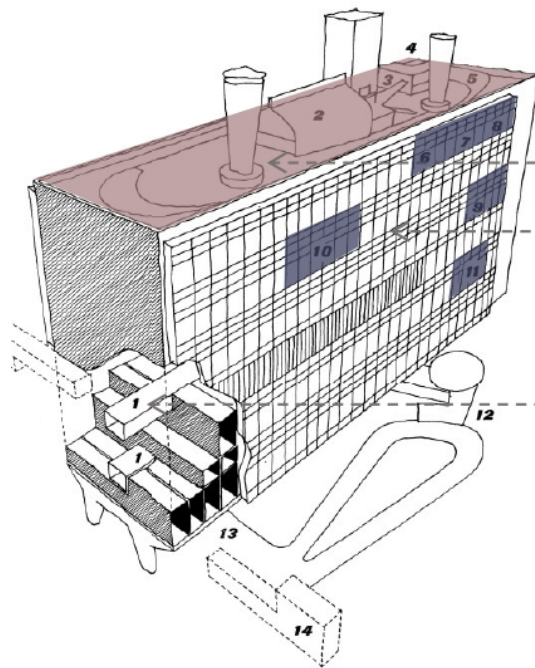
Le Corbusier
Marseille, France - 1952
Mixed-use development

Residential project for the people that were dislocated after World War 2 (Kroll, 2010). The conceptual focus was that of the Vertical Garden city that provided communal living for residents to shop, play and live outside of their private spaces (Ibid.,).

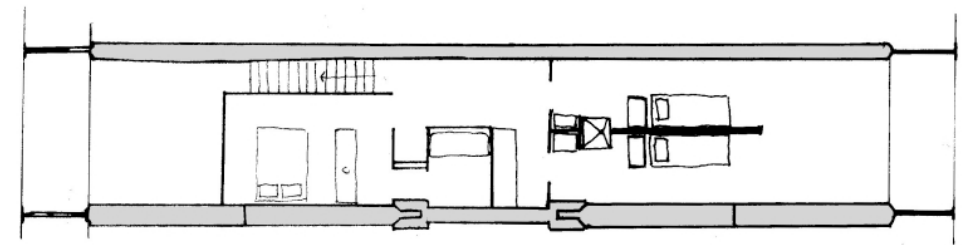
Majority of the communal spaces were housed on the roof.

Other communal activities

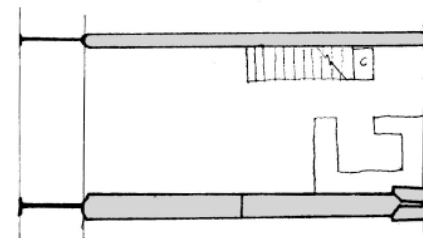
Internal thoroughfare



1,600 residents – 18 floors



Typical flat plan upper floor



Typical flat plan lower floor

0m 2,5m 5m

Figure 84: Typical floor plan. Author's own drawing.

Duplex apartment

Upper Floor
3,65m x 18,28m = 66,72 sqm

Bedroom
5,4m x 1,4m = 7,56sqm
2,2m x 3,36m = 7,39 sqm

Bathroom
1,9m x 1,4m = 2,66 sqm
1,27x 2,8m = 3,56sqm

Void
2,8m x 2,8m = 7,84sqm

Lower Floor
3,65m x 9,14m = 33,36 sqm

Total = 100 sqm

The units were designed to span from both ends of the building and have a double height living space (Kroll, 2010).

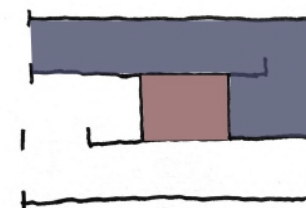
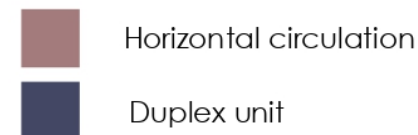


Figure 83: Author's own diagram.



Uxolo Apartments

255 Architects
Cape Town. South Africa –
2021
Mixed use development

Inner city living

Micro unit residential
development.

Small size affordable units.

Façade design takes
inspiration from traditional
patterns.

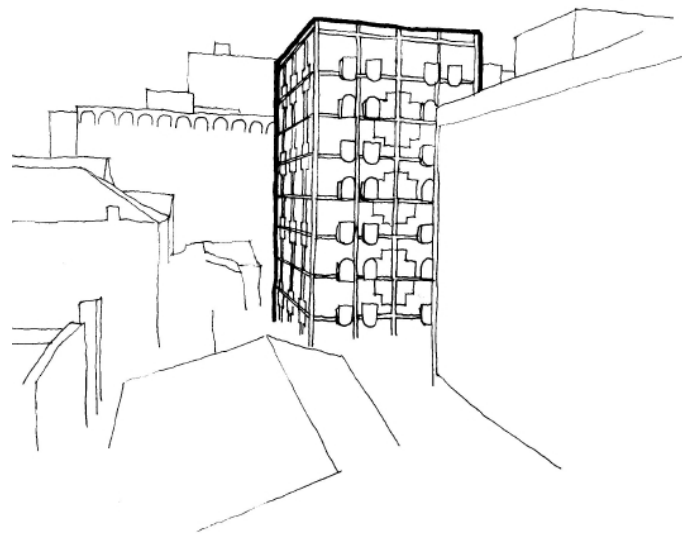


Figure 87: Perspective sketch. Author's own.

Typical unit A

Unit size: 3,2m x 9,9m =
31,68sqm

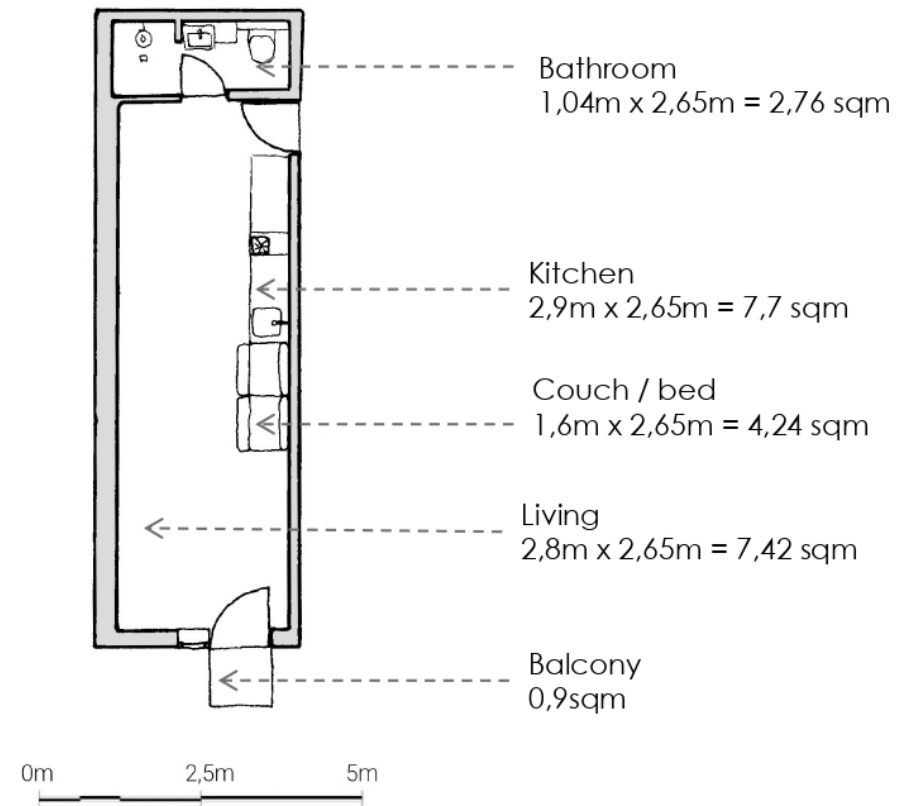
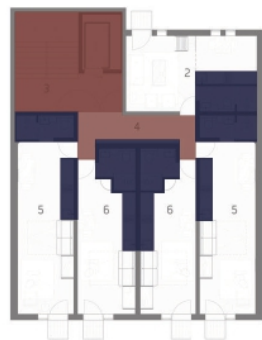


Figure 86: Typical floor plan. Author's own.



Typical floor plan

- Horizontal circulation
- Vertical circulation
- Wet services

Figure 88: Image adapted by author. Original image: Abdel, H. (2010) Typical floor plan. (Digital image) Available at: <https://www.archdaily.com/963098/uxolo-two-five-five-architects> [Accessed 7 September 2022]

Sugar Hill Development



Figure 90: Author's own drawing and diagram.

Unite d' Habitation

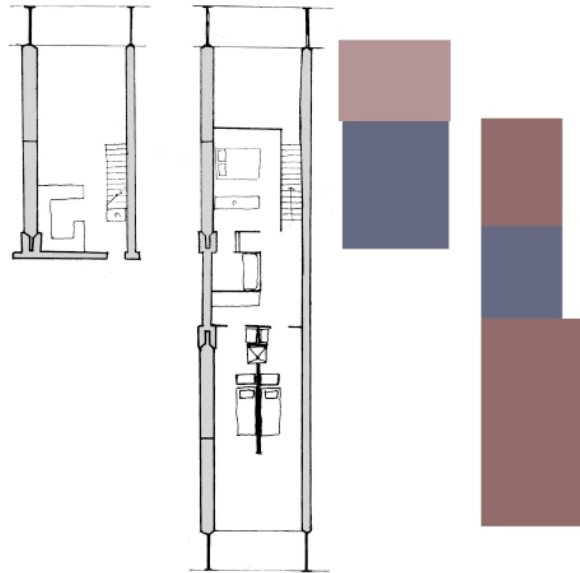


Figure 91: Author's own drawing and diagram.

Uxolo apartments

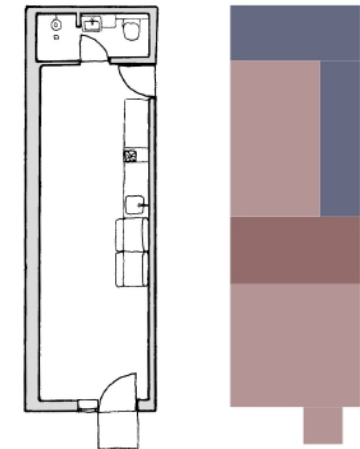


Figure 89: Author's own drawing and diagram.



1 : 4 : 2



1,4 : 1,3 : 1



2,5 : 1 : 2



The studies conducted above were done to assist in my understanding of scale and circulation within the apartment block. As the focus for creating affordable living is commonly centred around producing more small-scale units over producing comfortable living environments for residents it was important for me to understand what current models of development deem fundamental space for living. The above diagrams indicate the ratio of living space, private bedroom space and service spaces within the various units. While some units favoured living space over private bedroom space, others meshed the two into one creating shared space and some rely solely on public space outside of the unit itself to provide spaces of relaxation. It is imperative that some degree of privacy can be held within the unit while similarly access to outdoors and social space is equally valuable.

Overlapping thresholds

In an imaginary site condition, this model explores the interface between public and private through collage. It emphasizes the architectural elements in existence in an urban context that are suggestive of boundaries and thresholds. Stoeps, walls, the end of a room, a step, a change in floor level or even a change of floor material, are all indicators of access, exclusion or simply a change of space. In the second model, overlapping planes begin to suggest the levels and layers of the public arena finding the connections between enclosures and accentuating them.

Intuitively making the model relieved some of the rigid structure of an actual site and allowed me to explore overlaps that can exist across boundaries, socially and physically. This process initiated design ideas concerning the extension of the urban form allowing space for new connections to be made, carefully connecting social spheres with physical ones.

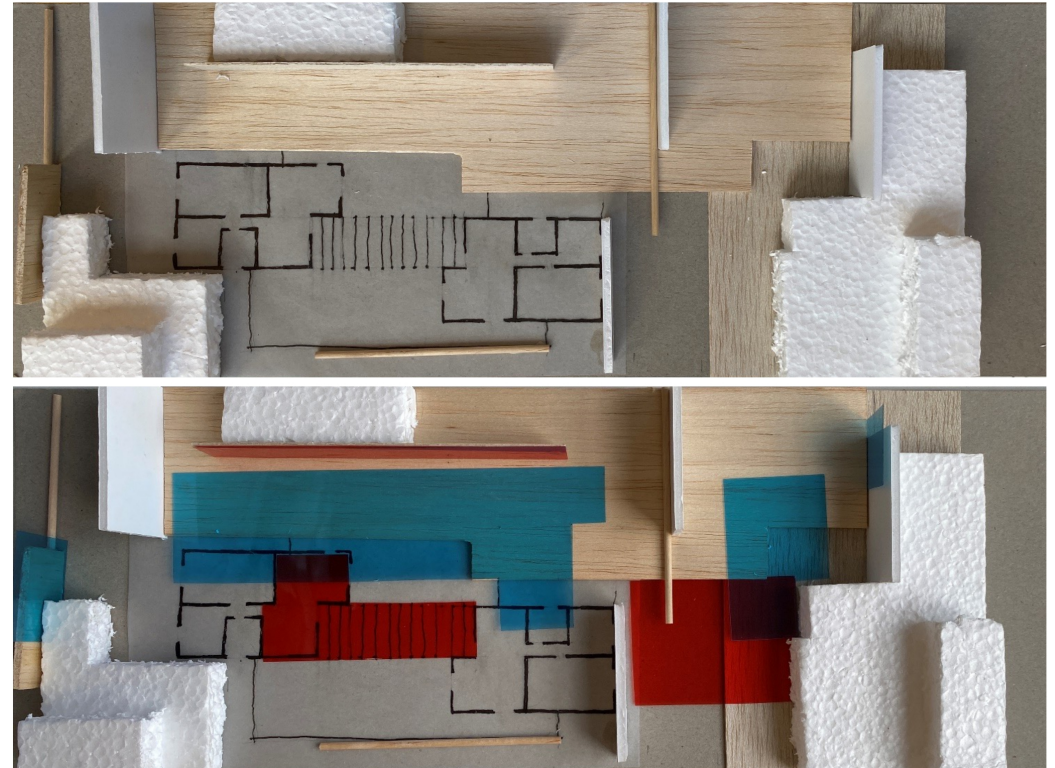


Figure 92: Model exploring thresholds. Author's own.

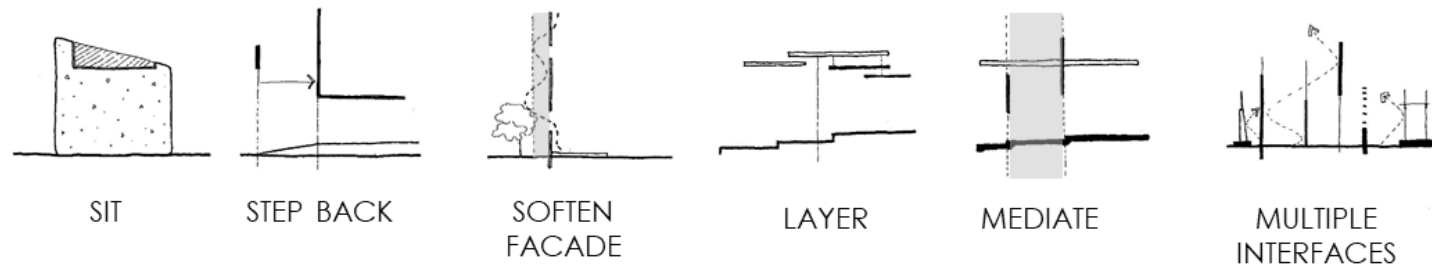


Figure 93: Author's own diagrams. Key spatial informants noted from the city that help soften the threshold between the public and the private.

Concept

Conceptually the project focuses on the construction of the interface between the public and the private life of the building. Seeing the structure of the interface as having the ability to reach between the two realms, this model explores the layering of threshold spaces along an imagined street, softening its edge. The concept considers gradations from public to private through multiple layers.

The first layer would be a layer of visibility and interaction, allowing the public to see into the life of the building as well as interact with it. The second layer is a layer of visibility and continuity, allowing the public the opportunity to see and understand the movement activity happening within the building without being able to access this. The third layer is that of reflection and anonymity which caters for community expression within the representation of the project but also cares for the privacy of the residents. These layers allow for a slow transition from public to private, from exclusivity to inclusivity allowing people and architecture to exist harmoniously. Using the social and psychosocial infrastructure as foundational leverage to integrate the public life into the private life of the dwelling, an interface will be developed that softens the transition.

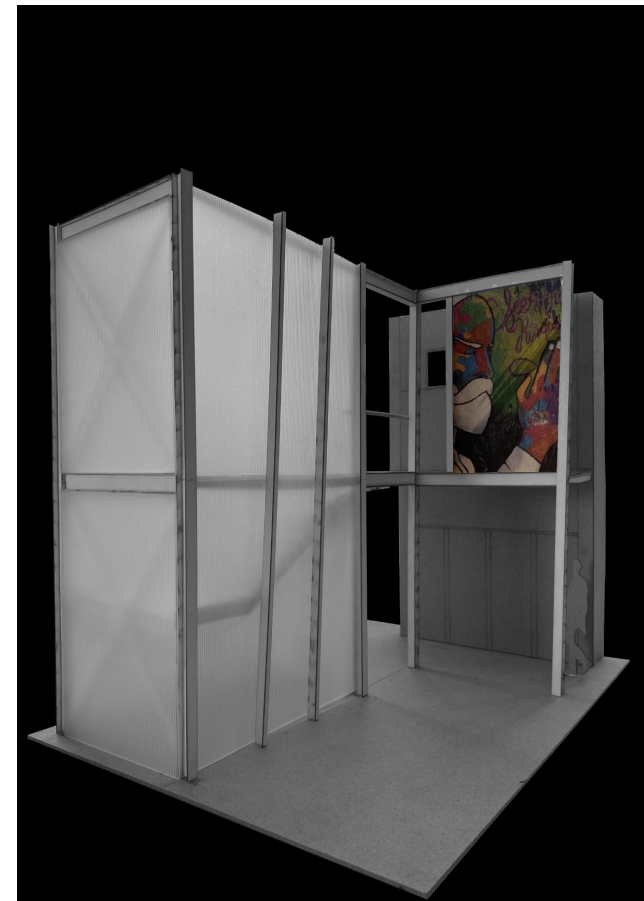


Figure 94: Technical conceptual model. Author's own.

Section five.

Conceptual design proposal

Imagined public life

Plans

Section

Material flows

Imagined public life

This perspective imagines the life of the building in relation to a bustling Salt River hall. The four storey building provides space for local artists to decorate the walls as commonly seen in the area. A lightweight box carries some of the social facilities and wraps around the building offering neighbours an opportunity to unobtrusively see the activity within the building.

The Eastern interface between the public life along Salt River hall and the life of the building provides opportunities for the public to see into the building while simultaneously providing privacy for the users. The communal stoep will hold public activity that can be used by the residents and the surrounding community.

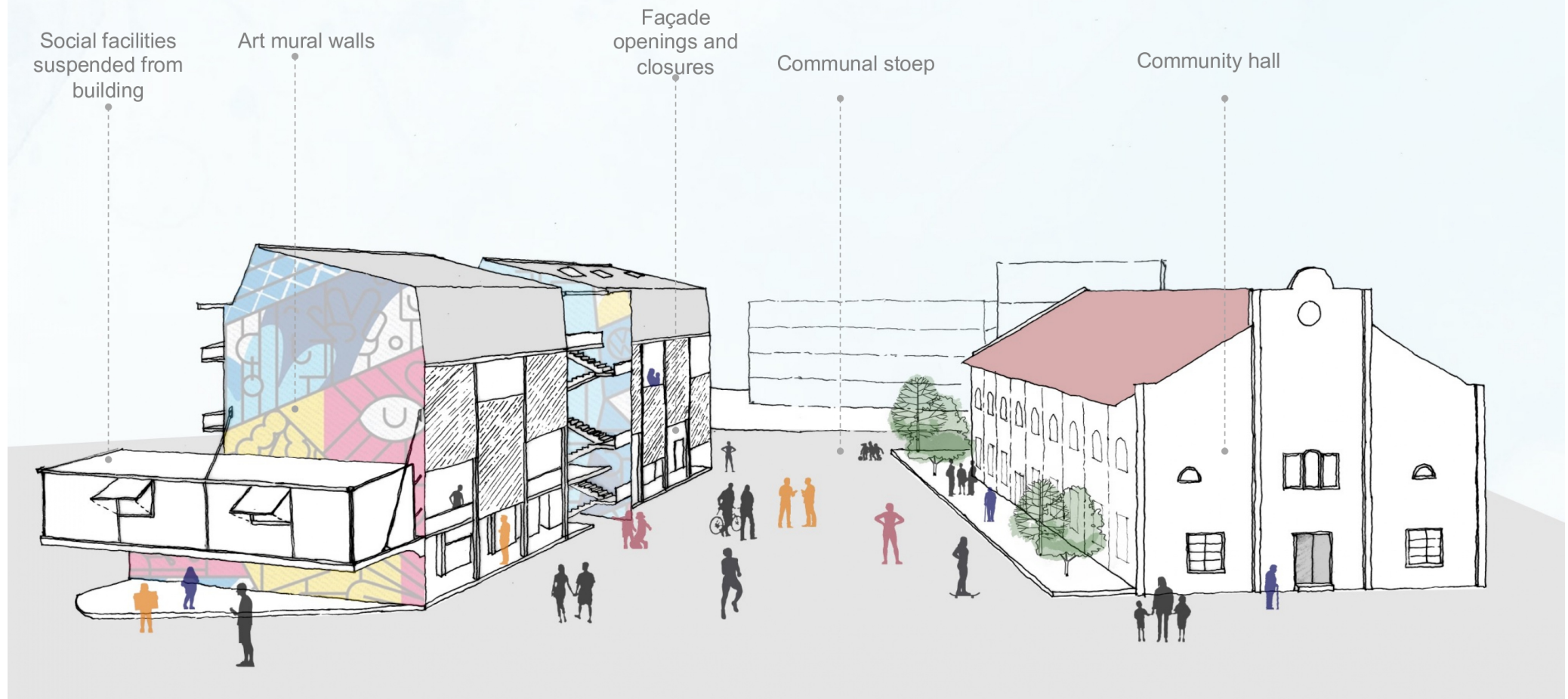


Figure 95: Perspective sketch of the proposed building and its public. Author's own.

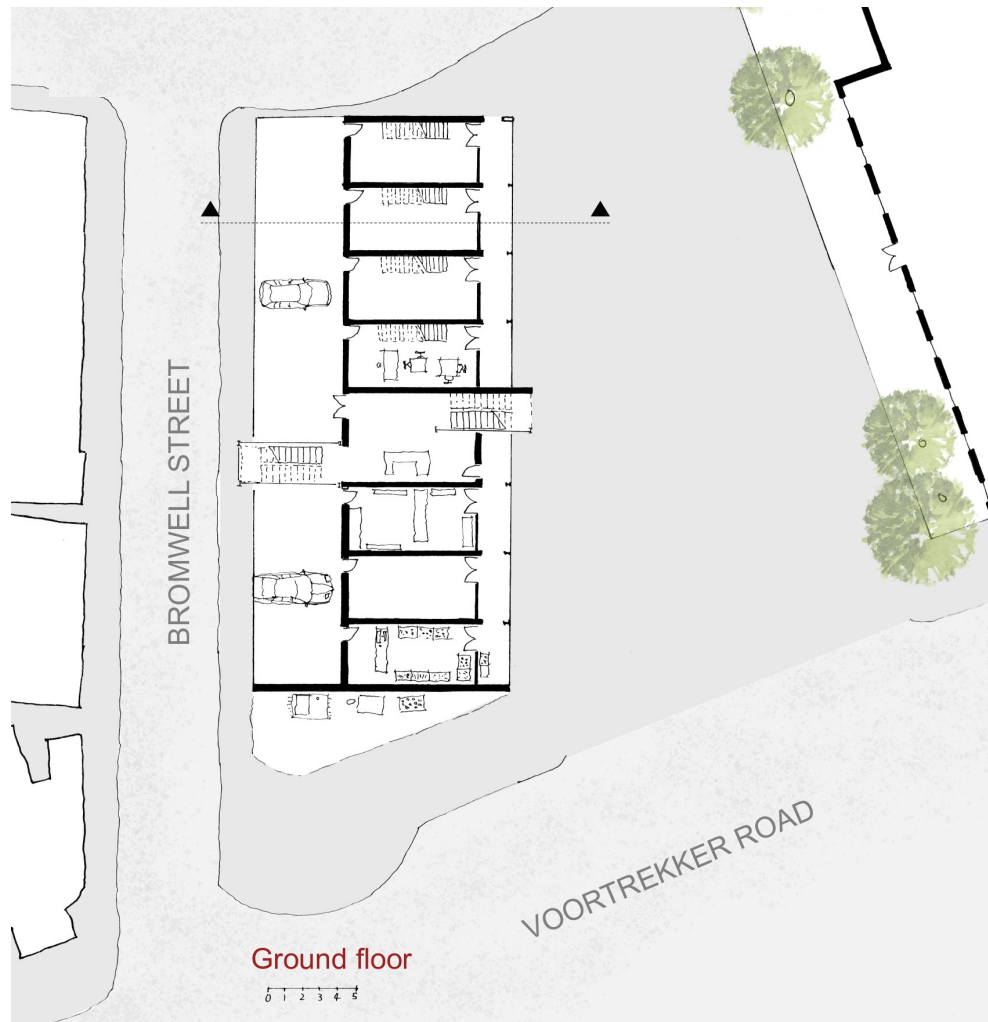


Figure 96: Ground floor plan of current proposal. Author's own

Plans

The spatial organisation is focused around having a central circulation point that branches off to varying floor levels along a linear form while social space is suspended from the air and attached to the facades of the building.

The ground storey holds space for an informal market along the Voortrekker street edge, the existing market functions as well as space for additional market stores along Bromwell road.

The storeys above are indicated in figure 97 on the next page. The First storey holds the administrative functions required to manage the building towards the south, workshops towards the north and psychosocial functions begin wrapping around the south and western façade. The second and third storeys become more privatised holding the private residential functions of the building.

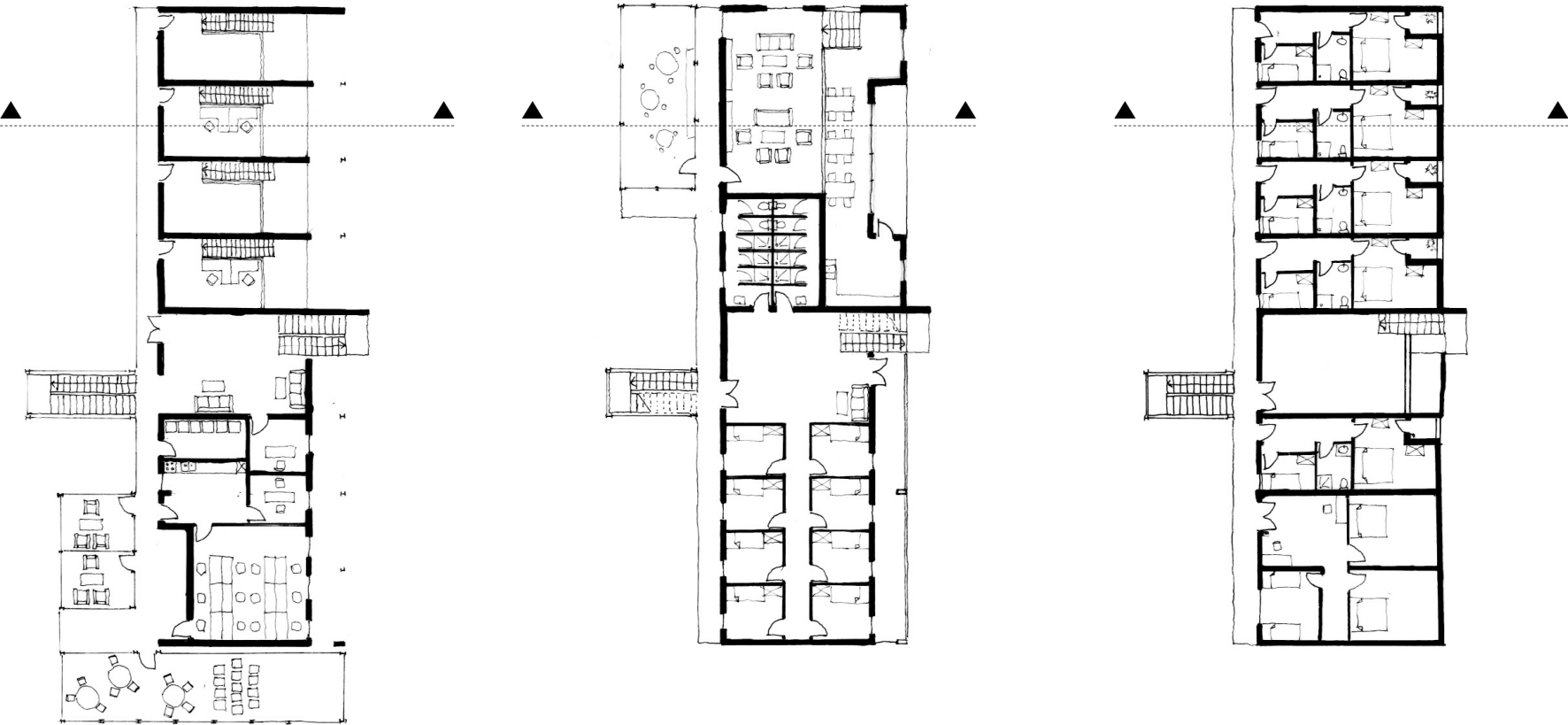


Figure 97: First, second and third storey of proposed building. Author's own.

0 1 2 3 4 5

Workshops
Psychosocial and economic support

First storey

Communal spaces
Child care
Single rooms

Second storey

Family units
Double bed rooms

Third storey



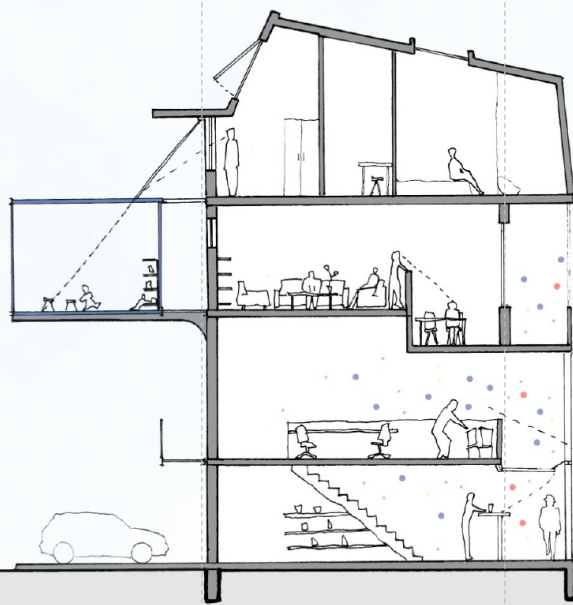
Section

Psychosocial
support interface

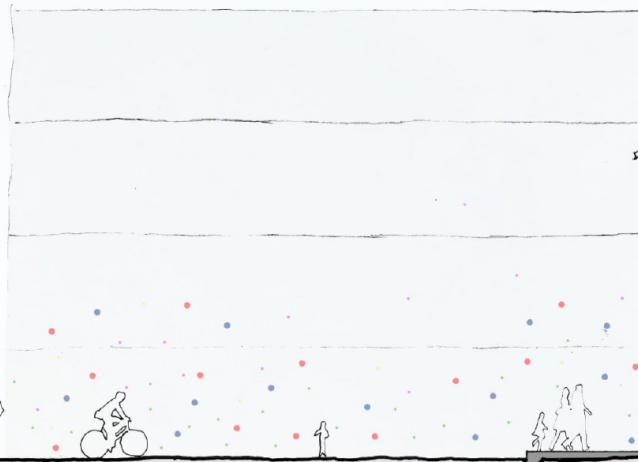
Market interface

Communal stoep

The narrow building allows for cross ventilation and natural sunlight to reach living spaces. The workshop and market spaces overlap into one becoming easily accessible by the public. The section indicates the shared living and dining spaces of the housing and how it begins to intertwine with each other. This creates opportunities for interesting visual connections to occur between residents as well as affording residents an opportunity to have privacy as required. The children's centre is suspended along the western façade of the building creating an active façade for those looking on from the street.



Transitional housing | market



Existing hall

Figure 98: Section across proposed building, public space and existing hall. Author's own

Material Flows

The drawings and photographs over the next two pages are the beginnings of an exploration of the structure and materiality of the building.

Figure 99 looks at the construction of the market's new interface, considering the elements that are necessary for functional market stalls that are also easily adaptable. What structure can set up a flexible framework to adapt to changes in the market for years to come?

Figures 100 – 103 indicate examples of materials that may respond to the layers of thresholds I would like to carry through the project conceptually. The materials should allow for visibility, continuity and reflection of the community. It should create opportunities for the users of the building to change and adapt the building as well as strength in structure making it resistant to contextual conditions. Some materials that have been explored include brick, steel, polycarbonate sheeting and timber elements.

It is important to the project to use materials that are available locally and that are commonly found in the area. The building should blend into its environment by drawing from the context.

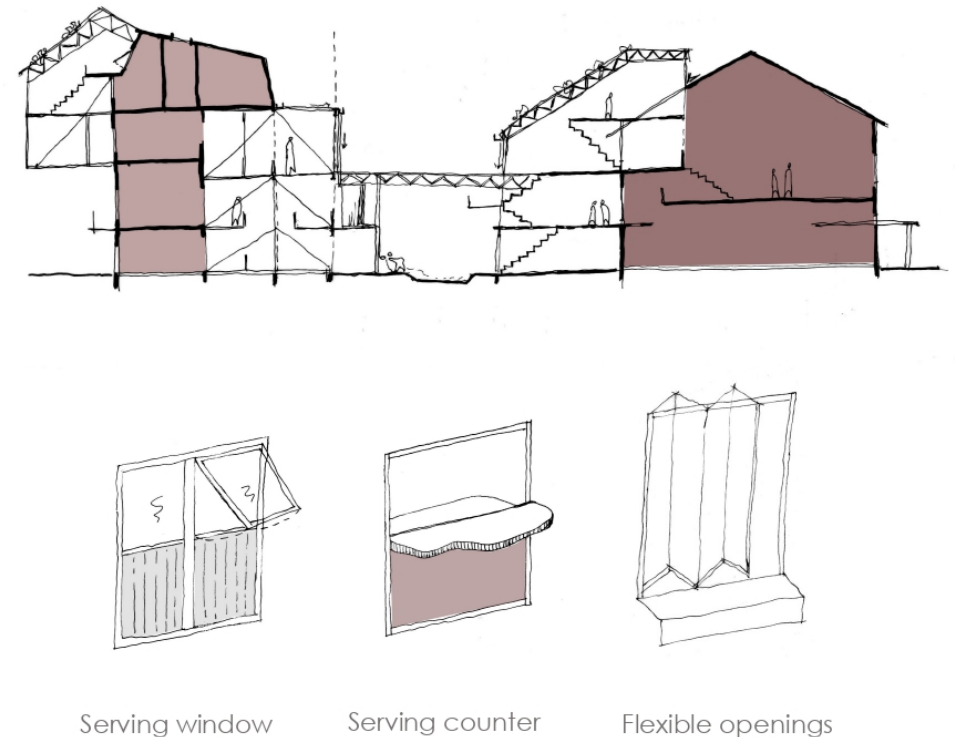


Figure 99: Explorative sketches. Author's own.

Reflection and anonymity <



Brick, concrete and steel
*Figure 102: Reflection and anonymity.
Author's own.*

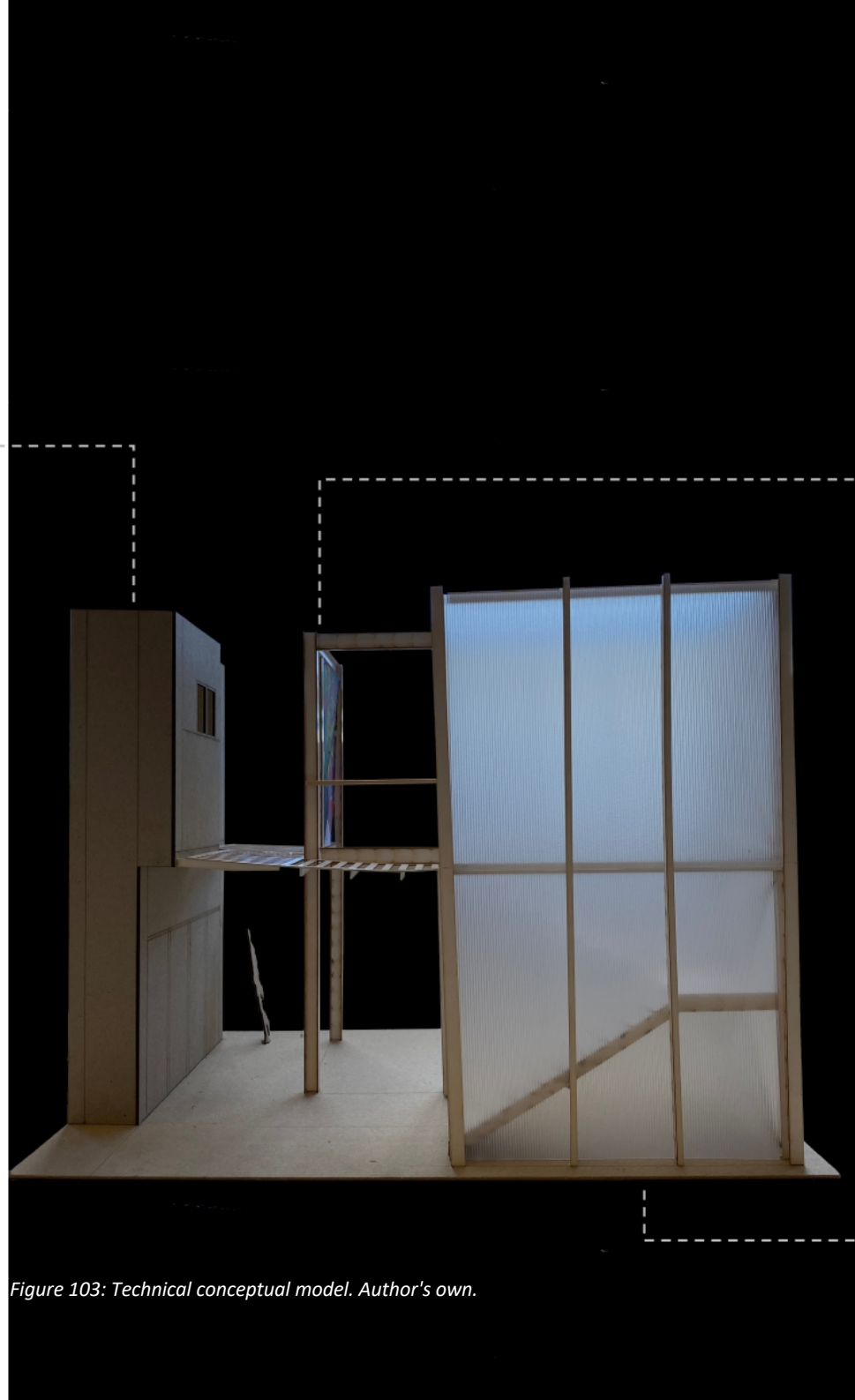
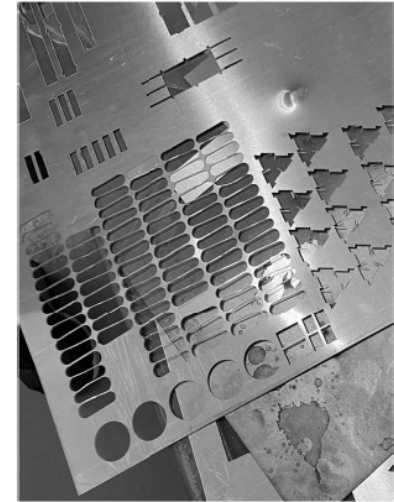


Figure 103: Technical conceptual model. Author's own.

Visibility and continuity



Steel cut panels
Figure 100: Author's own.

Visibility and interaction



Figure 101: Author's own.
Porous material – timber
slats, polycarbonate
sheeting and steel
structure

Section six.

Design proposal

Design diagrams

Process work

Urban proposal

Final design drawings

Models

Social support infrastructure

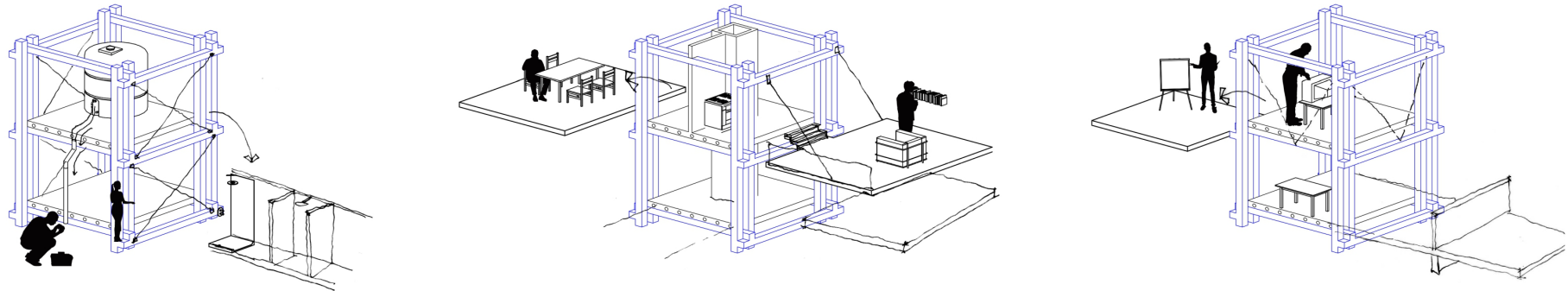


Figure 104: Social support infrastructure diagrams indicating the various services the building offers. Author's own.

Basic infrastructural support

Electricity cores, water collection and distribution for the public.

Psychosocial support

Bettering social interaction through shared social spaces.

Economic support

The market and its support programmes as a tool for economic development.

Site Development

Diagrams

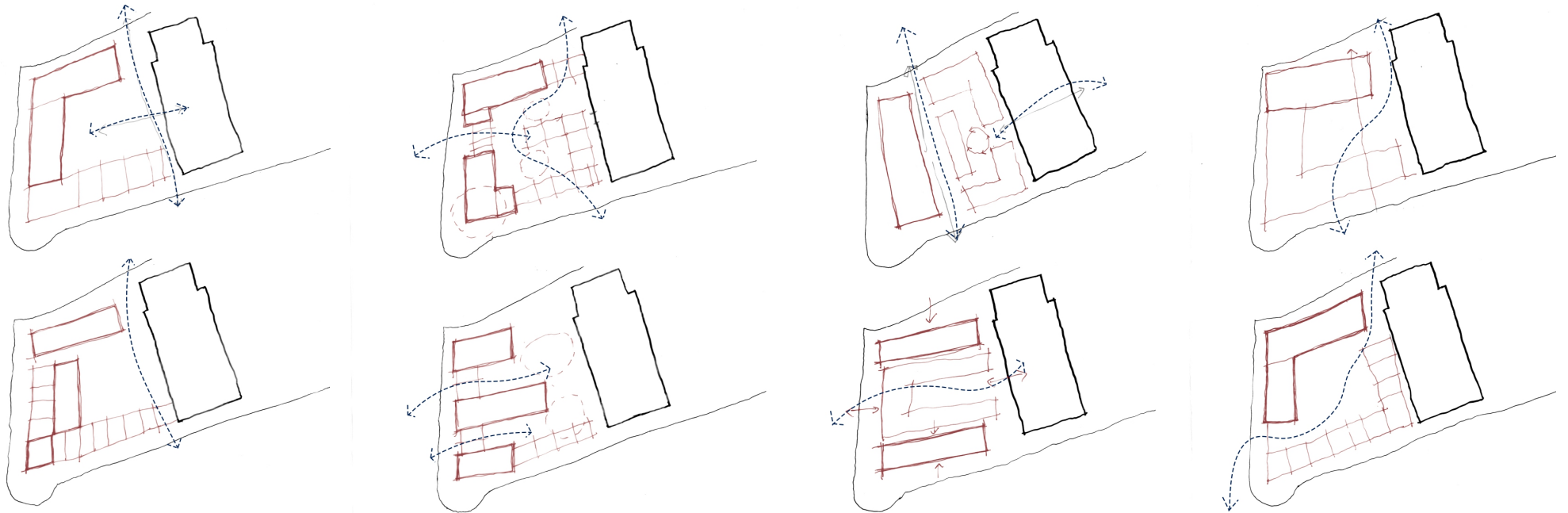
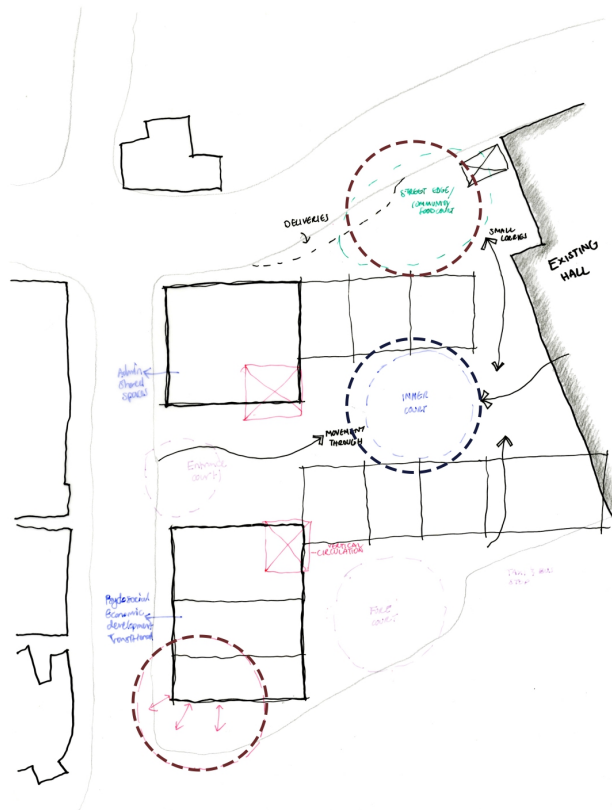


Figure 105: Exploring various ways in which the form of the building can respond to its context on site. Author's own.

Urban massing explorations

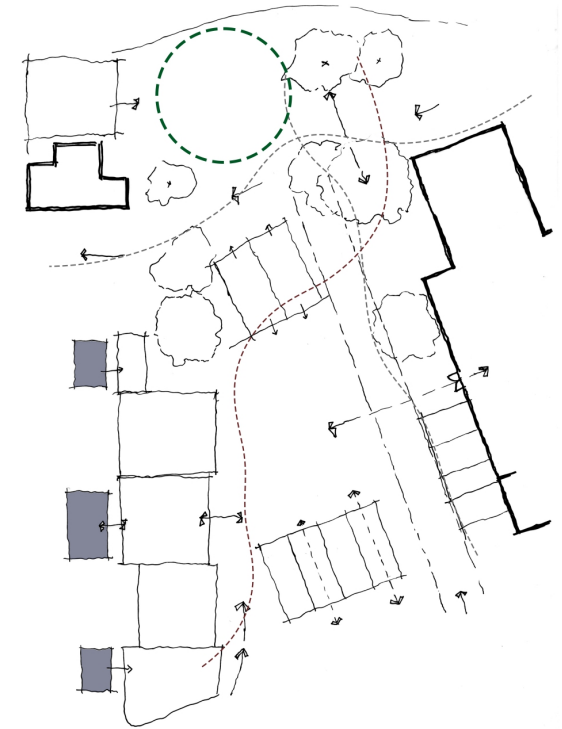
Market massing vs housing massing | public to private | opening to the street | extending the hall
opening to enclosure | public movement



Defining public nodes and movement routes on the site.



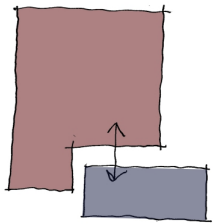
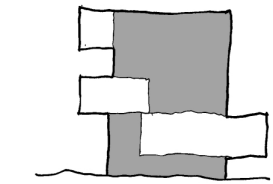
Responding to the street and the existing building edges.



Defining served
versus services areas.

Figure 106: Process drawings indicating the development of the site. Author's own.

Spatial organisation



Programme has been overlapped and linked throughout the building, integrating a diverse group of activities horizontally and vertically.

Ground floor

Service cores have been placed along a linear corridor and run through all floors of the building vertically.

Second floor

Accommodation is organised in an L shape and holds shared social space in its centre.

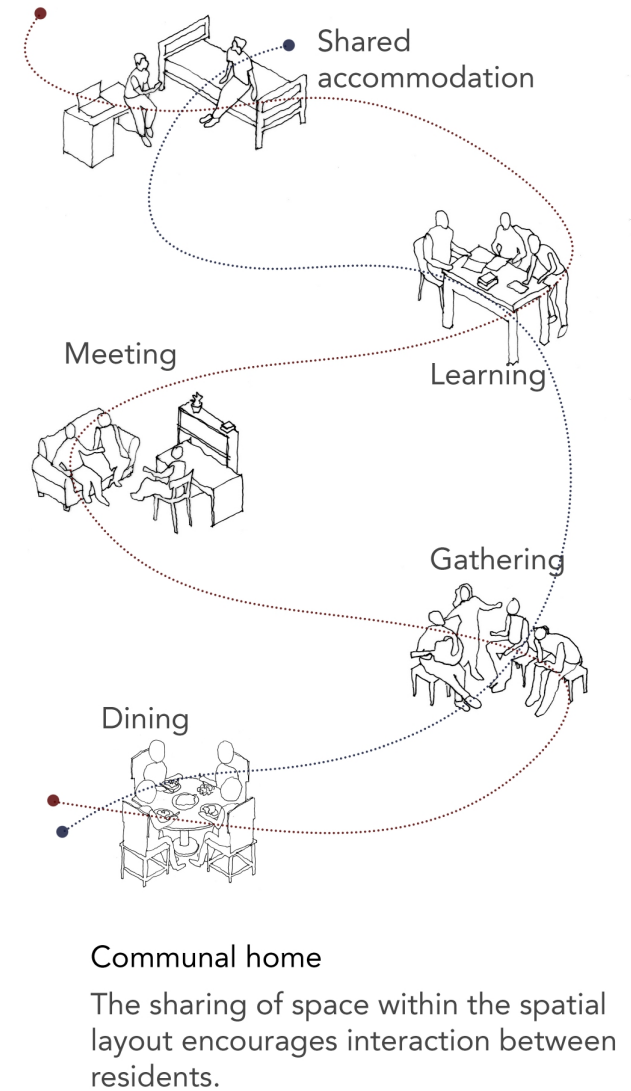
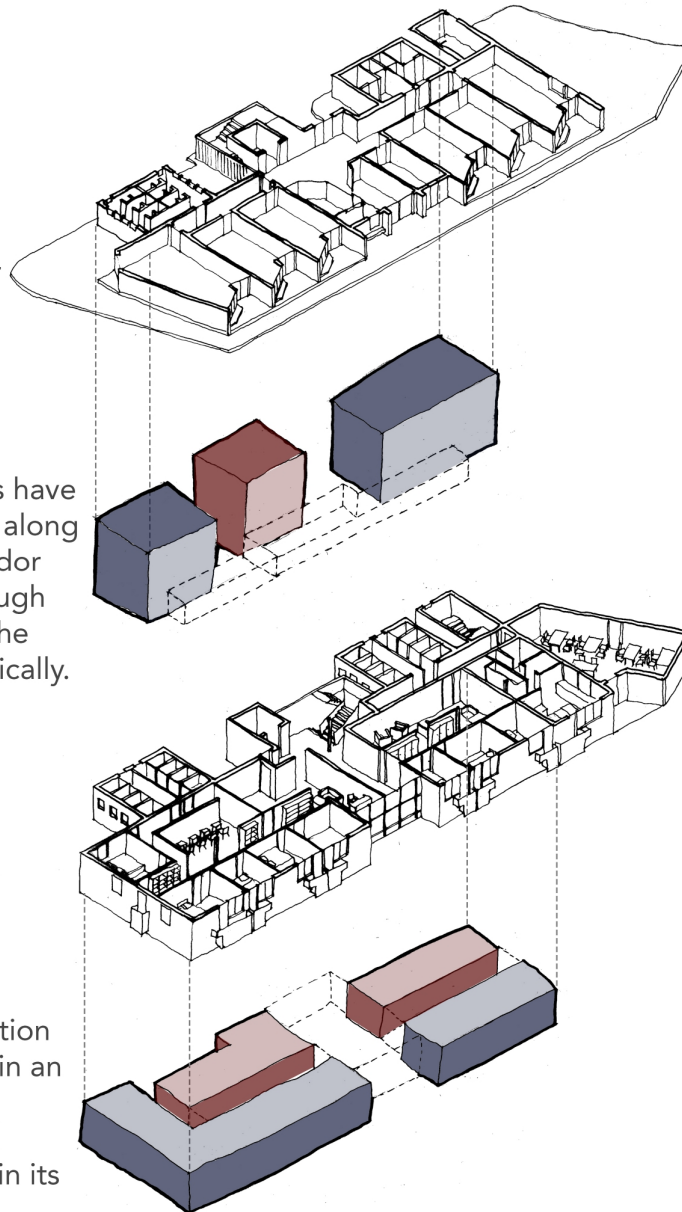


Figure 107: These diagrams indicate the spatial organisation of the plans and its relation to the programmes within the building. Author's own.

Salt River's public edges

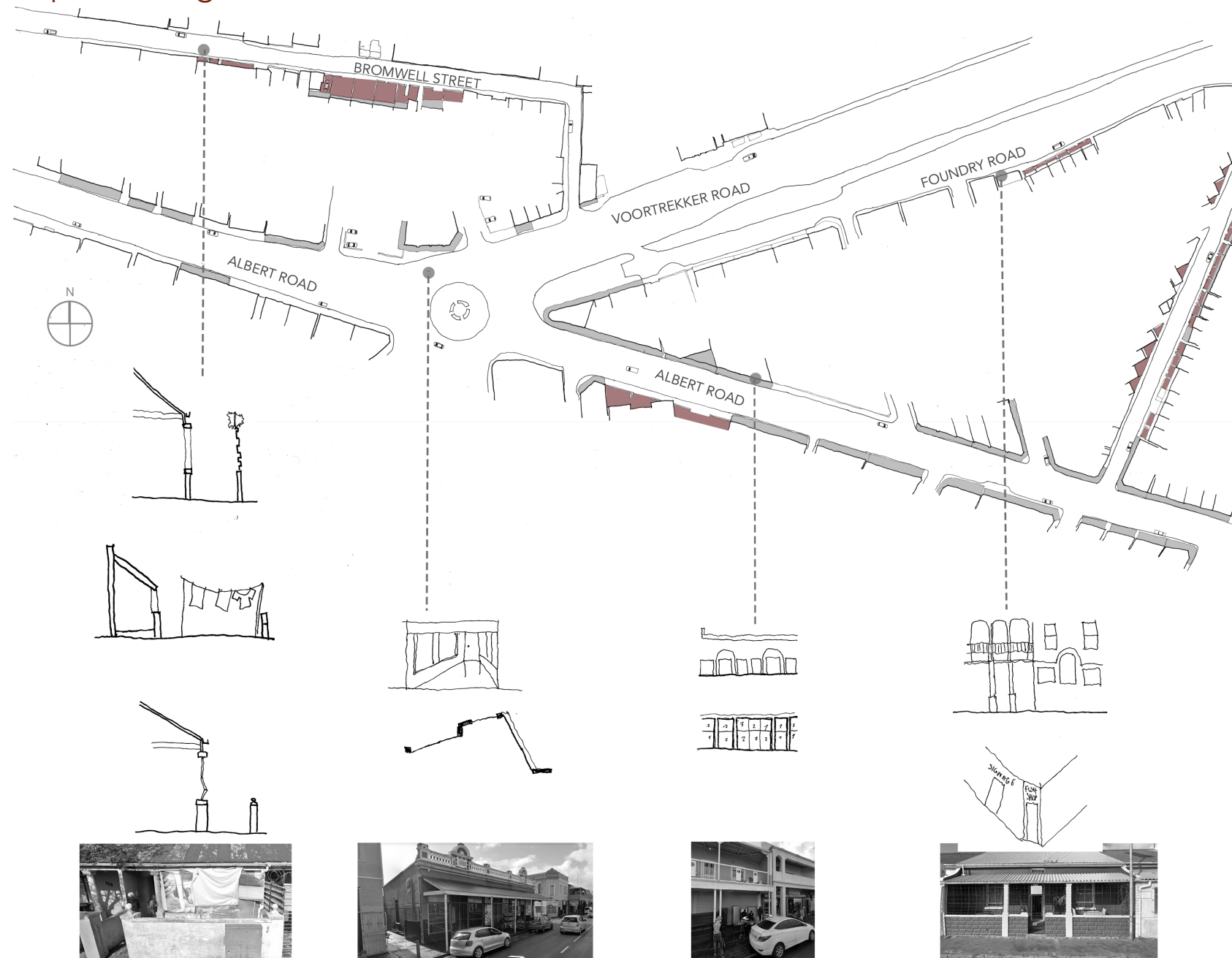


Figure 108: An analysis of the streetscapes of Salt River. Highlighted in grey and colour are the colonnades and gardens on the street edges. All drawings and images are the author's own.

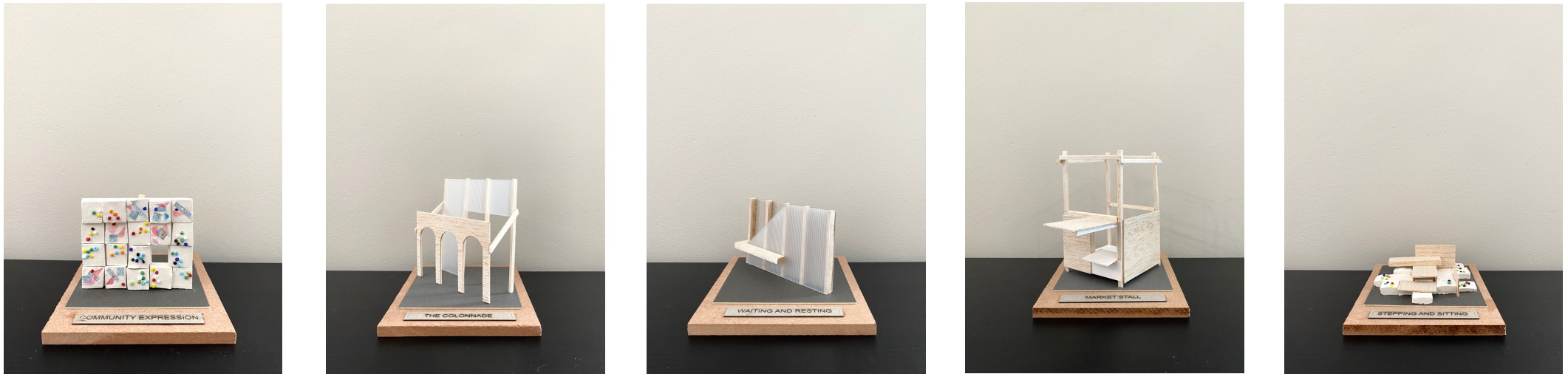
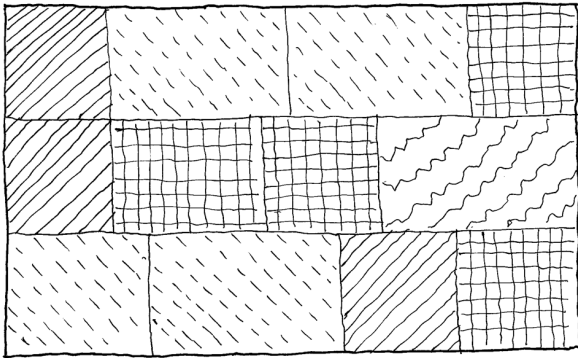


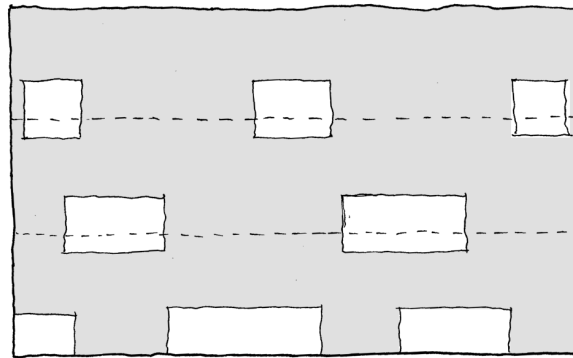
Figure 109: Models made taking inspiration from Salt River's public space making strategies. These models helped spark ideas for placemaking strategies within the design.

Constructing the façade

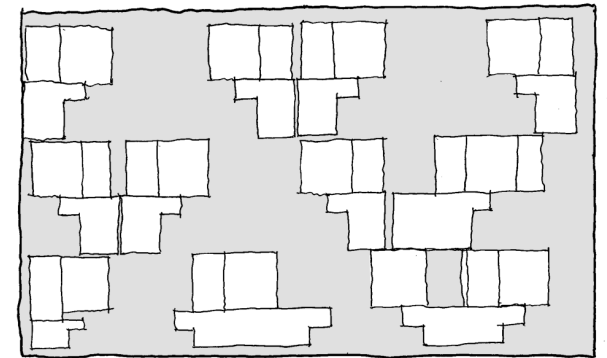
Transitional housing at the Salt River Market



CREATING A VARIETY OF ACCOMMODATION ROOM SIZES WITHIN THE INTERNAL SPATIAL LAYOUT.



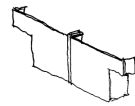
OVERLAPPING OF MATERIALS THROUGH BALCONY ADDITIONS AND OVERHANGS, DISGUISE FLOOR LEVELS AND BOUNDARIES BETWEEN ROOMS.



INDIVIDUAL ROOMS FORM PART OF A FAMILY OF UNITS, INTEGRATING THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE WHOLE.

Figure 110: Diagrammatic drawings of the process of constructing the façade of the transitional housing facility provided in the site programming. Author's own.

Layering the interface



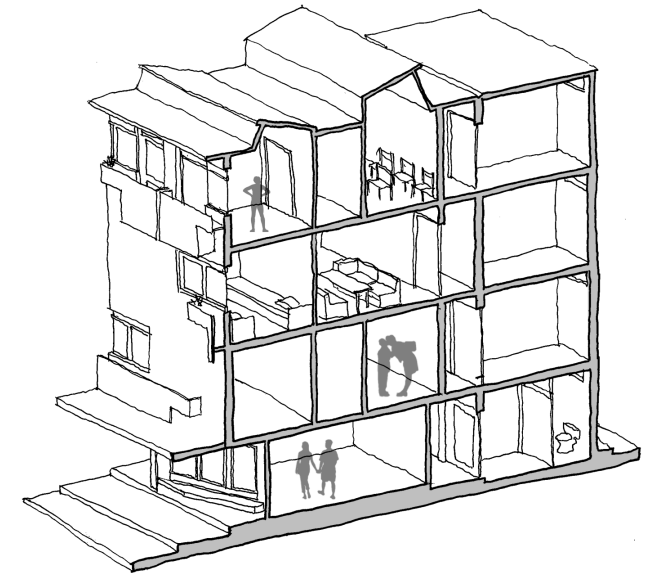
BALCONIES



WALL TILES



MURALS



WINDOWS

PLANTS

The people of a place contribute to the making of a façade, reflecting the community in its representation. Here, tiles act as an example of a small handmade object that can be crafted by the people and added to the façade.

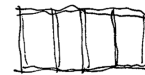
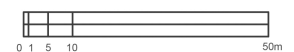


Figure 111: The various layers used in constructing the façade. Handmade tiles are used to express the potential materiality of the façade. Author's own.



Figure 112: Author's own.

SCALE 1:500



Plans

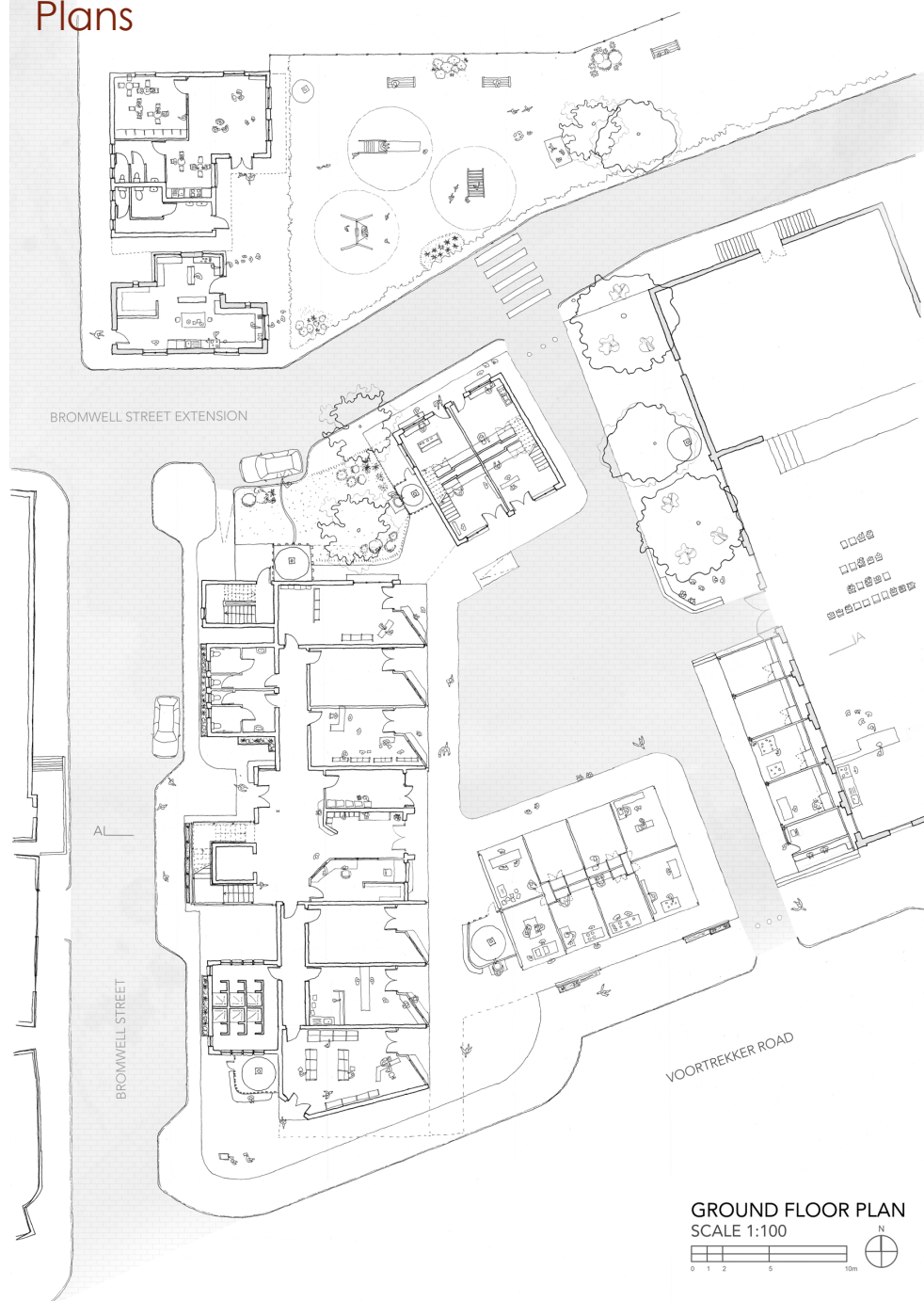


Figure 114: Author's own.

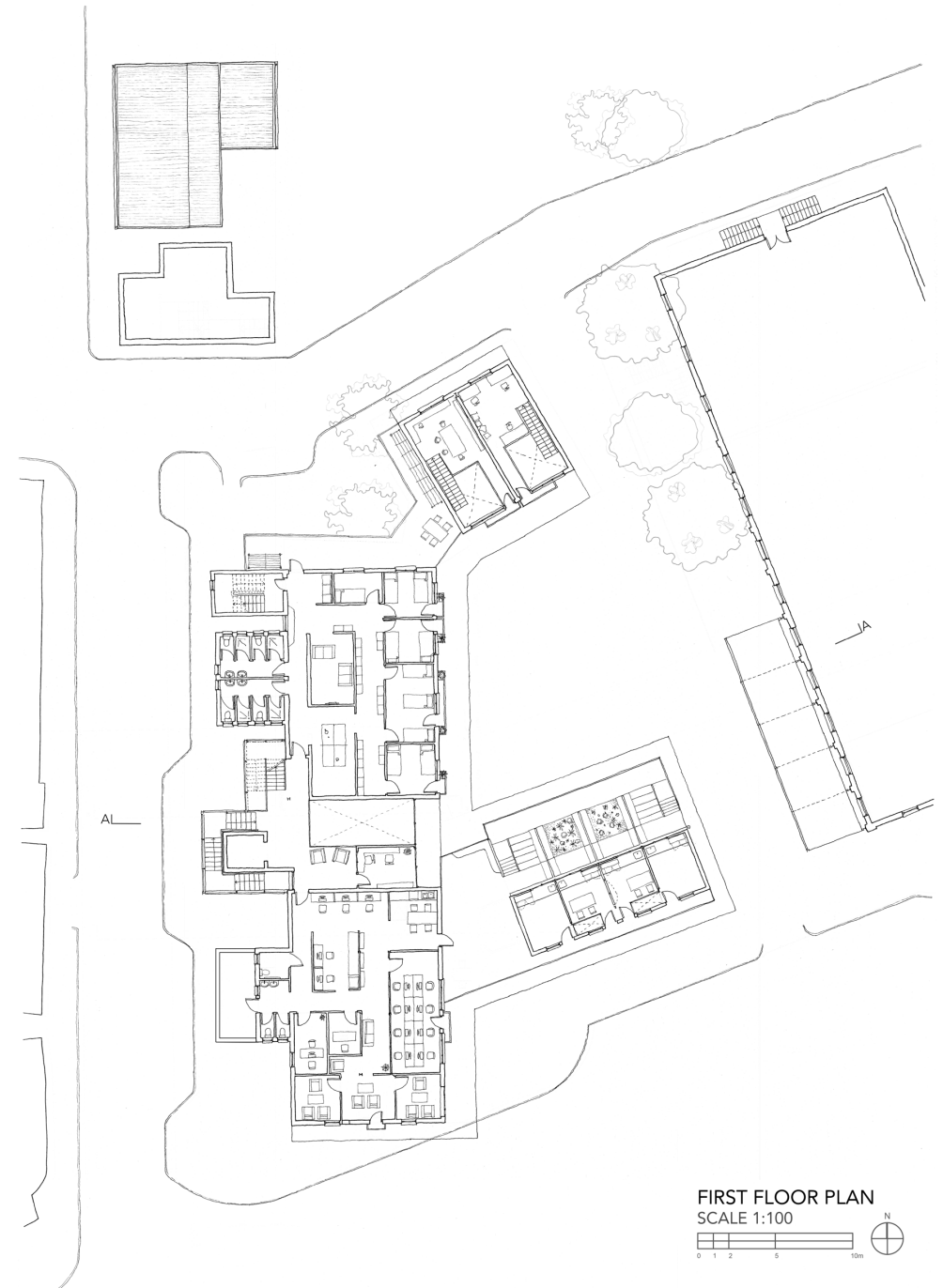


Figure 113: Author's own.

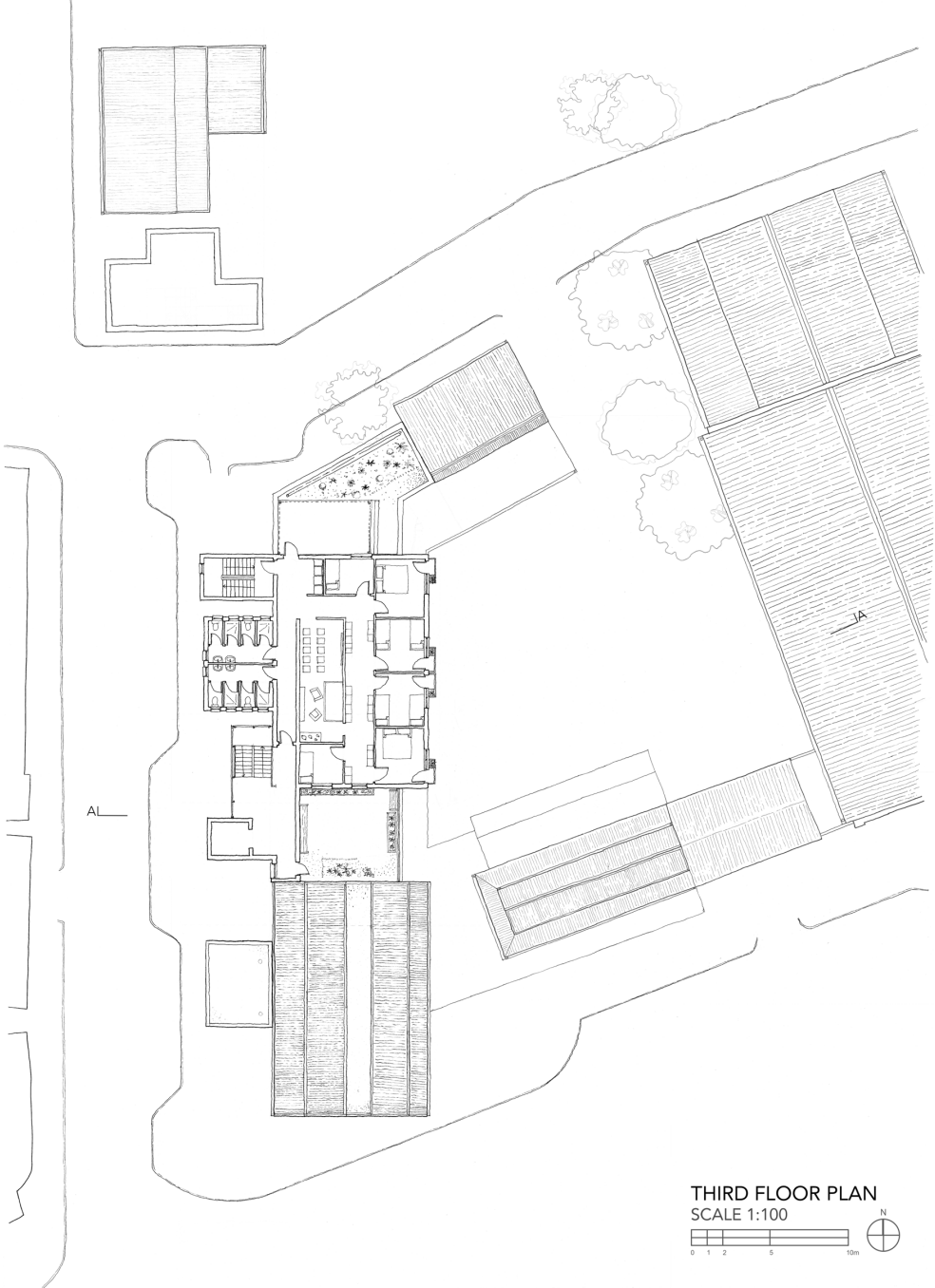
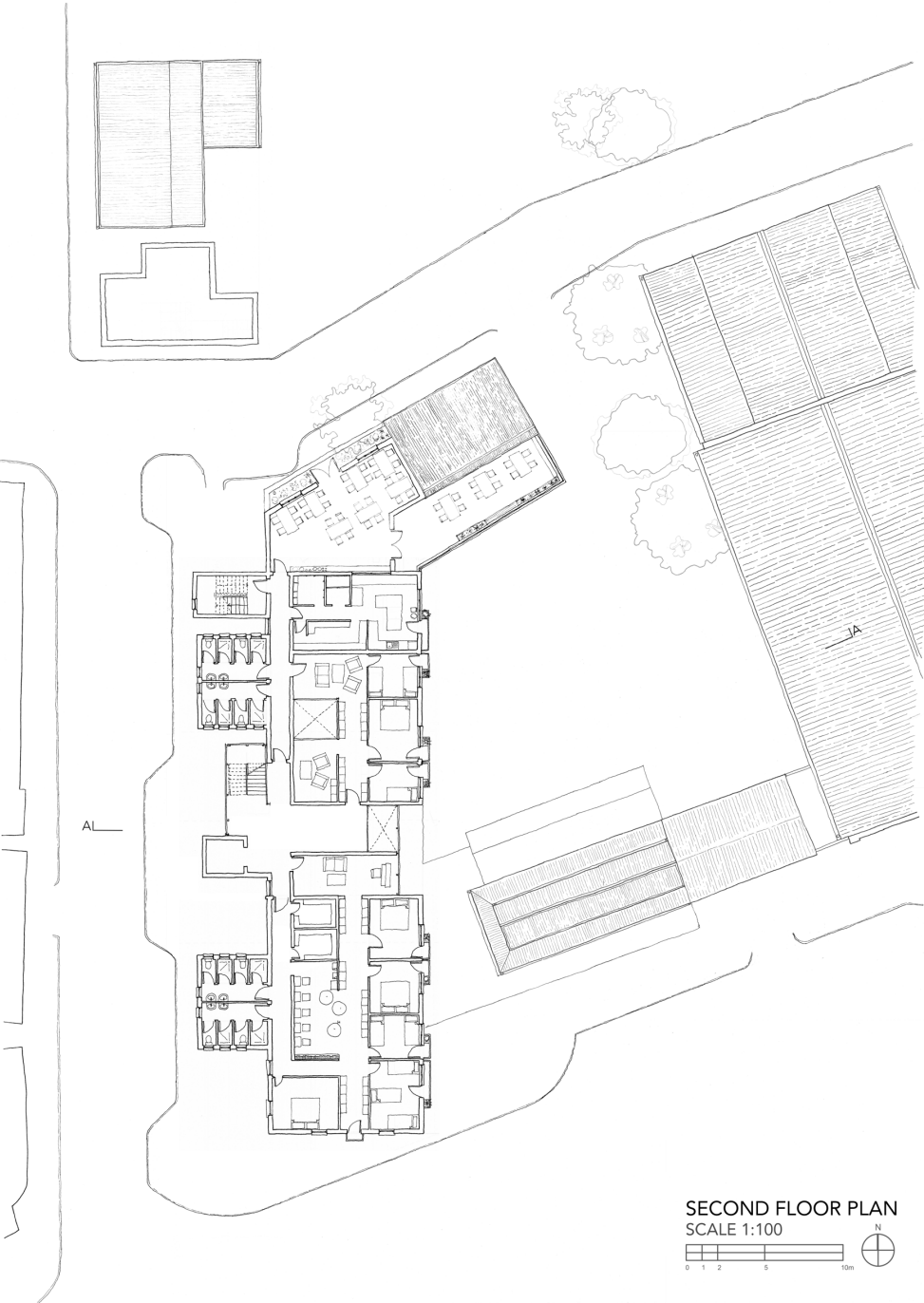


Figure 115: Author's own.

Figure 116: Author's own.

Section

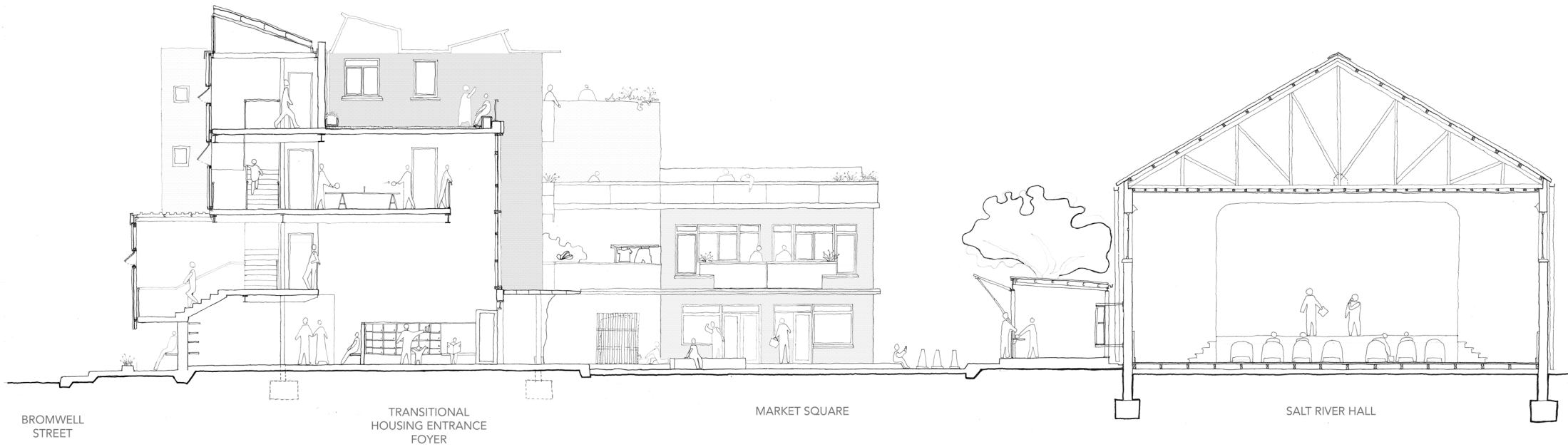
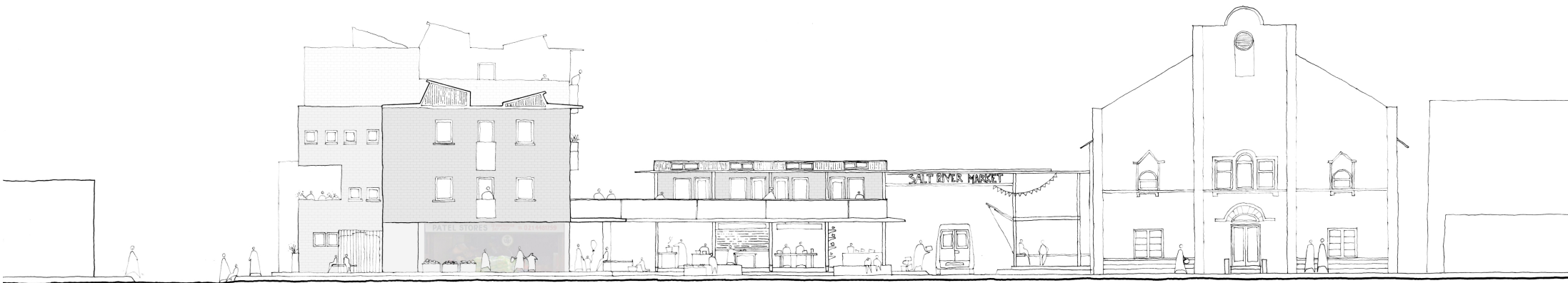


Figure 117: Section AA. Author's own.



EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

Figure 118: East and South elevation drawings. Author's own.

Technical section

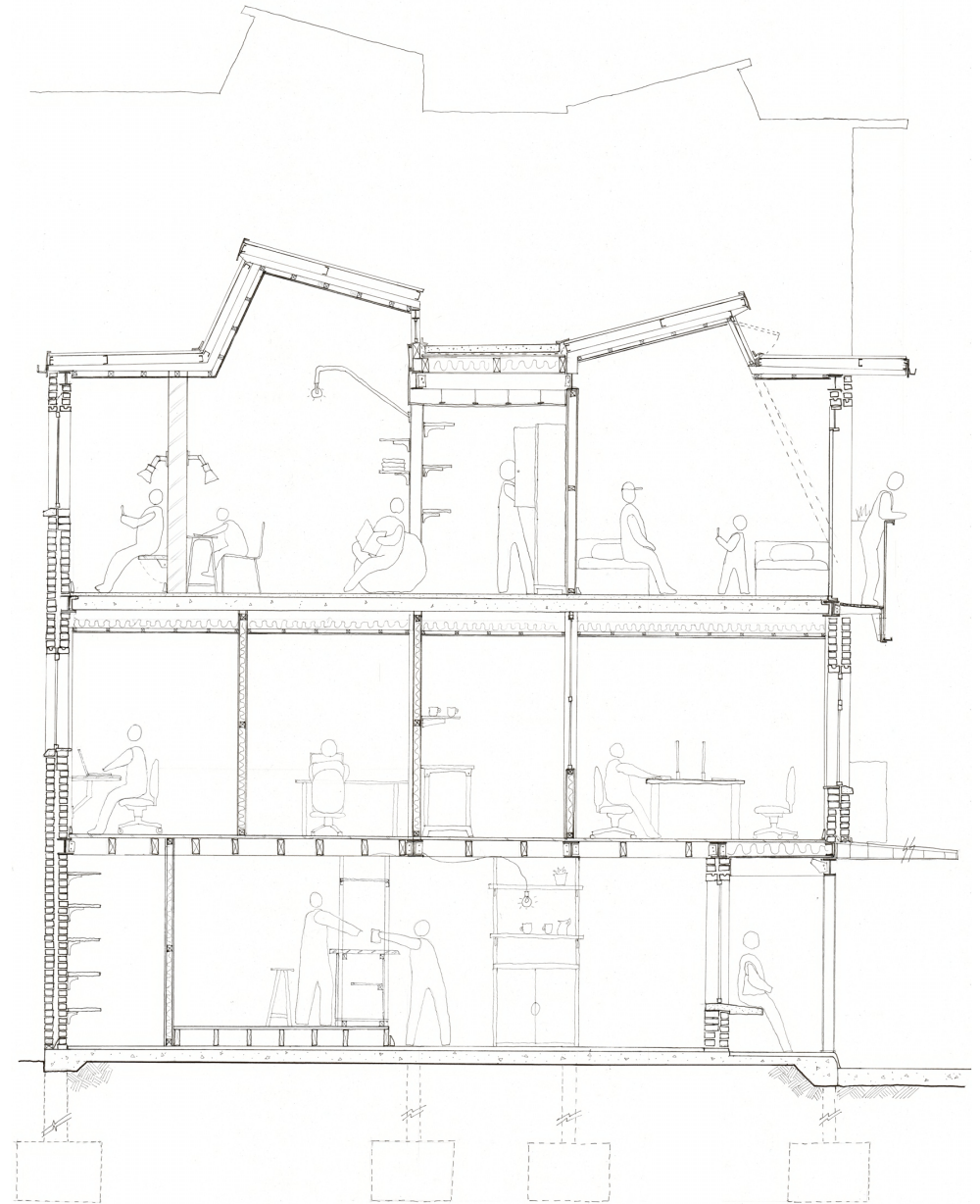
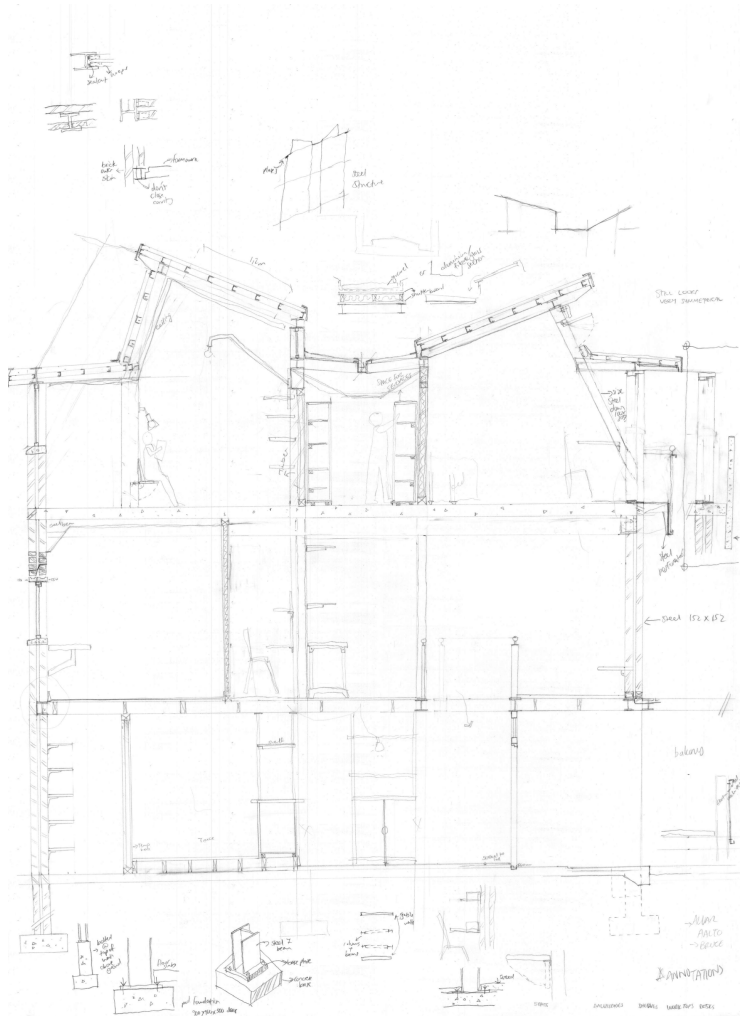


Figure 119: Process sketch and final 1:20 technical section. Author's own.

Contextual perspective



Figure 120: Street perspective from Voortrekker road looking towards Albert Road. Author's own.

Final model



Figure 121: Final model of the transitional housing and market proposal at Salt River Market. Model and images are author's own.

Conclusion

The division between people, places and things has become stronger through the use of architectural devices. This is evident in the socio-spatial device of displacement of people to the peripheries of cities. This dissertation reflected on the need to further gain an understanding of the realities of dividing the private and public realms, what causes their segregation and what effect this has on the experience of place and space.

The crossing of boundaries between segregated spaces may lie in the exchange of social interaction and knowledge which can be made possible through the communal making of space in a level understanding of shared spatial design knowledge.

Inner city affordable housing has been introduced by the City of Cape Town as a solution to better living conditions for those that have been marginalised to the peripheries of the city, but these new proposals use planning methods that continue to exclude people by not integrating economic and social programmes within the projects. My project located itself within this context in Salt River as a means to test how we can lessen the privatisation of space and live better together.

An investigation of street making in the Salt River and Woodstock area made evident that there are still strong divides between private users of spaces and everyday passers-by on the street, strengthened through impenetrable architectural structures that are not accessible by outsiders. A slow and careful gradation from public to private needs to be constructed through the layering of thresholds.

Working at the Salt River Market site, the project explores the construction of the interface as a means to connect across divides, integrating the public market with affordable housing. This dissertation serves as the beginning of an understanding of design knowledge that challenges privatised divisions between people and spaces.

The work presented in this dissertation is only suggestive of how to create better connections between the public and the private, leaving space for the rest of the project to be informed by its users. This project aimed to represent the potential of Architecture to bring life to the already existing character of the Salt River Market site that seems to have been forgotten over the years and the potential of well-integrated, inner city, affordable housing to better the quality of living for those most in need of it.



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PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE OUTCOME LETTER

STU-EBE-2022-PSQ000072

2022/09/19

Dear Amy-Leigh Goldman,

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:

Constructing the interface - Crossings between the public and the private

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