



DESIGN

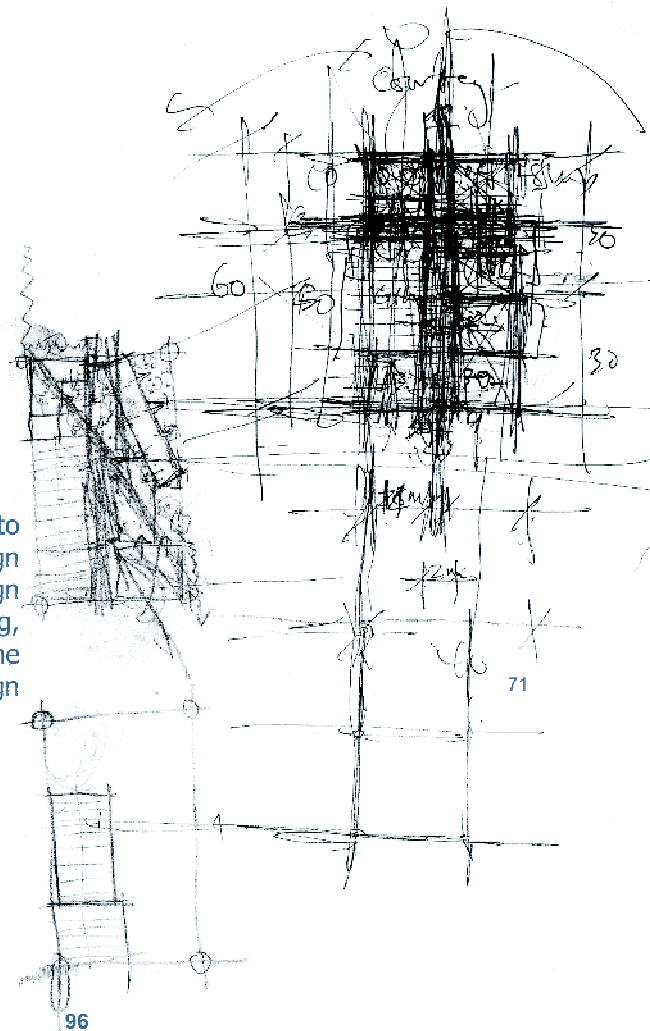
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THE DESIGN FORMULATION

INTRODUCTION

In the following pages the author will attempt to communicate the design process, from design inception and conceptual work to the final design product. The process of design is one of drawing, redrawing, model building and redrawing. With the utilization of text and graphics the process of design will be communicated.



Design Method

Architectural theory, if it is to be of any use, should be composed of a set of what Cedric Price (1934-2003) terms working concepts. A working concept is a theoretical tool which allows the designer to make a series of consistent reasoned decisions. Good concepts are those that have the potential to shape the strategies that solve a stated design problem. Decisions regarding massing, program layout, materials and finishing can thus be brought in line and given coherence. Taken in this light it is clear that there is no inherent separation between theory and practice.

The working concept for this discourse is **accessibility**.

Physically: This refers to being able to be reached, or entered (English dictionary)

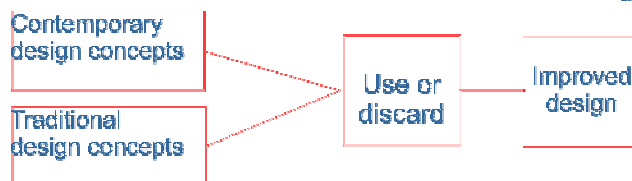
Abstract: On an abstract level accessibility refers to, being able to be understood or influenced. (English dictionary)

The process that was followed allowed the designer to learn from what has been done previously and to combine that, with her own ideas to create a design that is thought through.

“The nature of the design process and the contribution that it can make to the economy is greatly misunderstood and under-rated by the business sector. We (DAC) hope to change this misperception so we can begin to address the social and economic imbalances. We (DAC) have reached a point in our development where we have to look into our culture and history to define our identity and determine the future route.” Deputy Minister, Department of Arts and Culture, N. Botha

The importance of the community and the role that they will play, is very important for the design proposed. The involvement of the community results in a rich design which will be appropriate and rational.

During the design process a stage was reached where an accommodation list could be developed. The list was generated through the researching of art centres, requirements of the users, site challenges and the design development.



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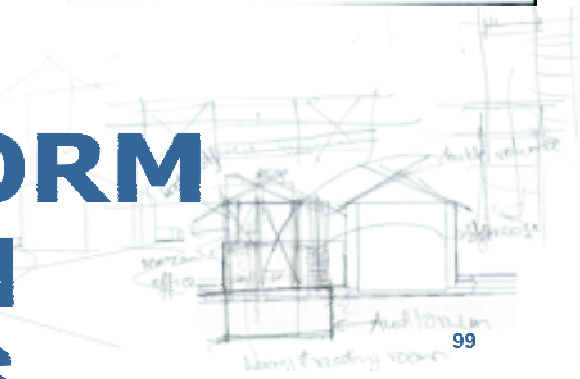
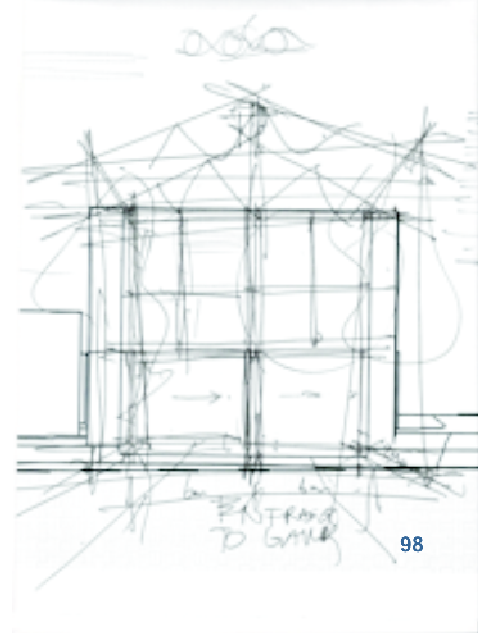
This project for a Community Art Centre, envisions construction of a three storey building housing studios, a gallery, a cafe, a subject specific library, a multi functional hall, a computer lab, offices, a workshop and seminar rooms.

The plan's organisation is dictated by the site. The entrance to the building is enhanced by the gallery on the west and a cafe on the east which both have strong forms. The programme is organised around a central tripple volume lobby area which responds to all the spaces in the building.

To the west of the lobby is the gallery, to the east are the cafe, ablutions, a reception area vertical circulation and a multi functional hall.

On the second floor is the subject specific library, a reading room, a computer lab, and offices. On the third floor is an open loft-like flexible studio spaces which are placed above the reading room and the computer lab. A roof terrace on the mezzanine level offers external leisure and workspaces overlooking significant views.

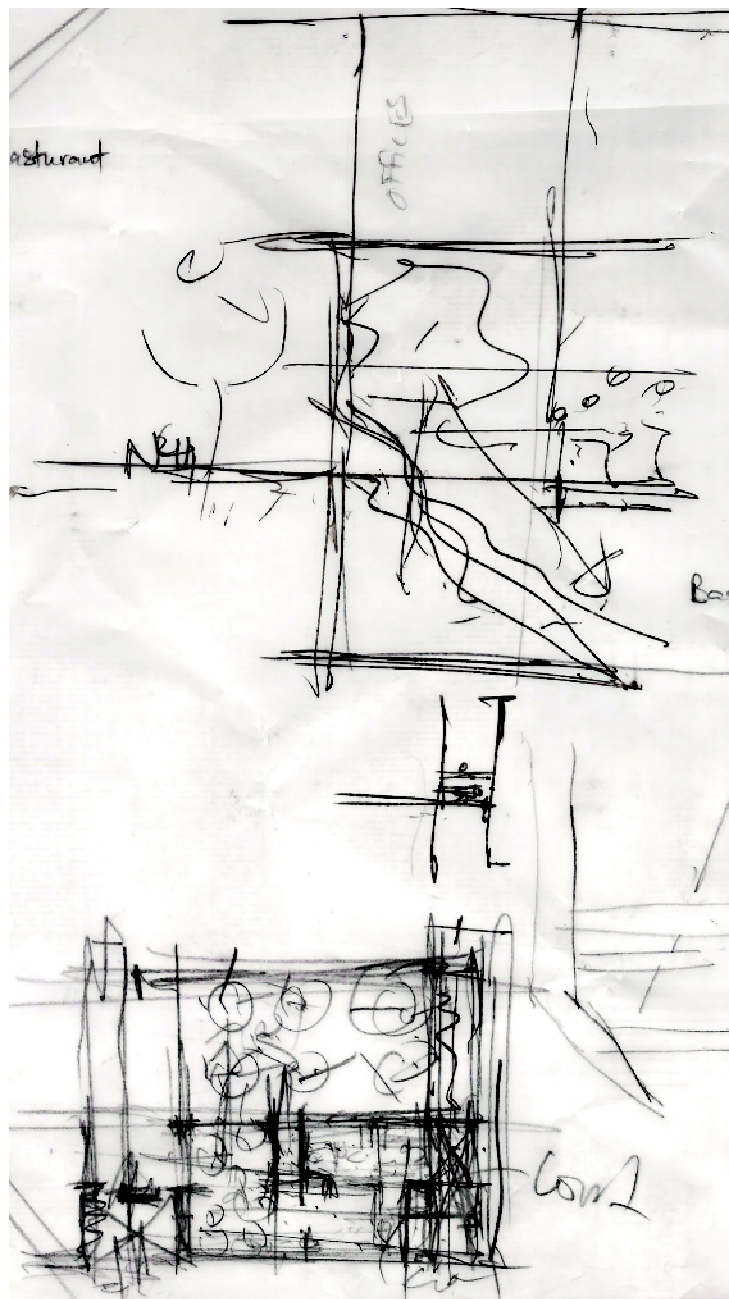
SECTIONS

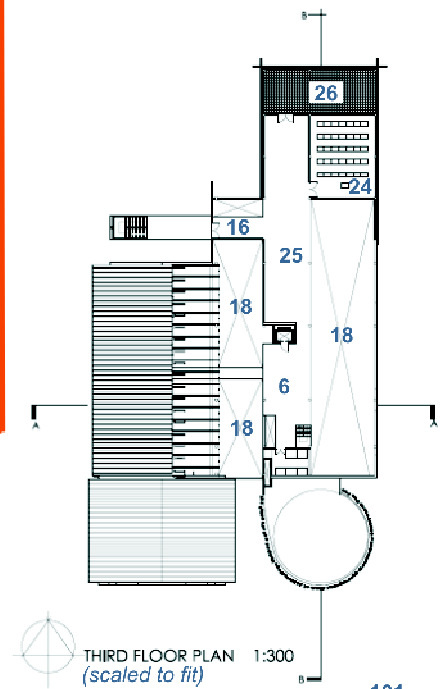
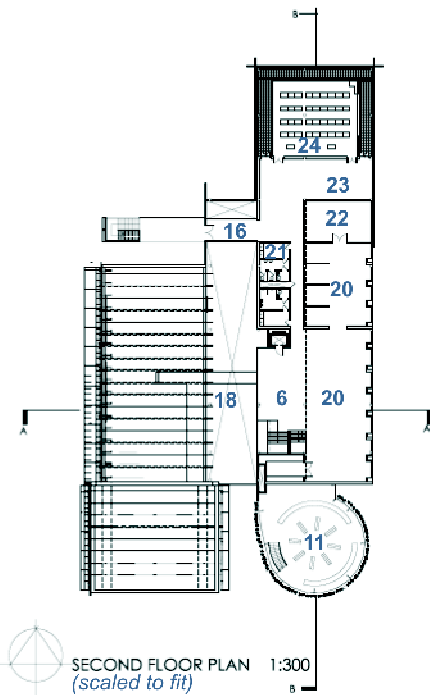
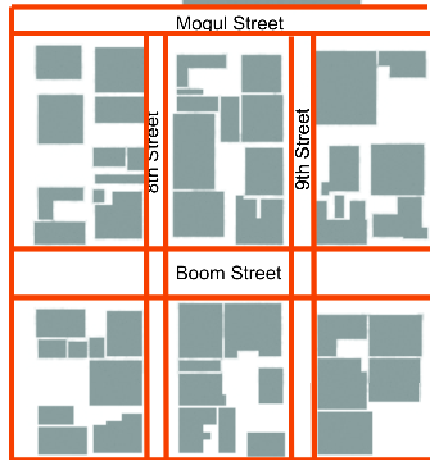
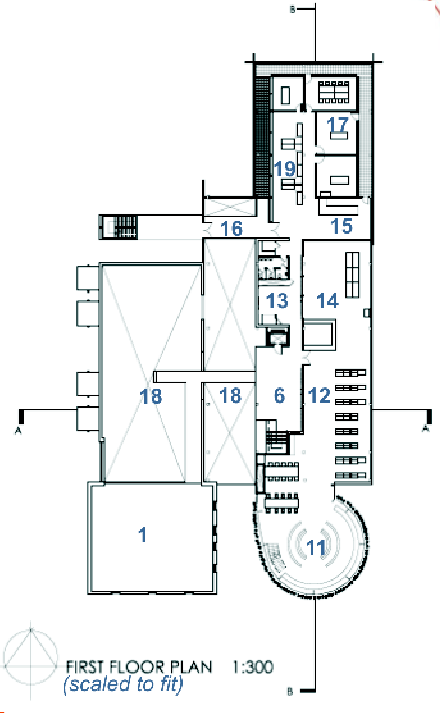
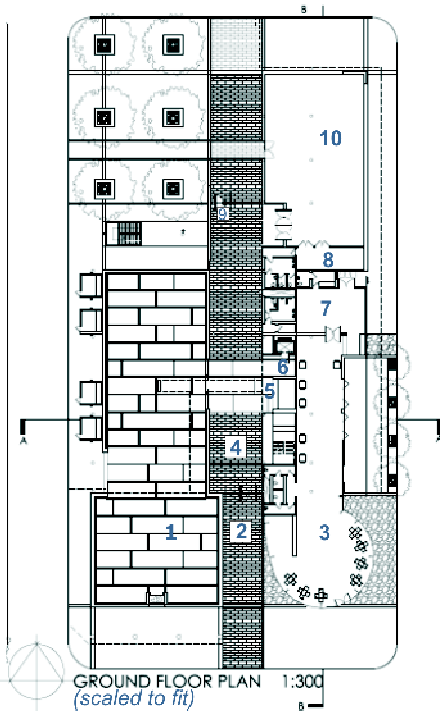


Programming

In the previous chapters the design strategies and concept were discussed, and the context was analysed. The information gathered will now be used to influence the design of the final product.

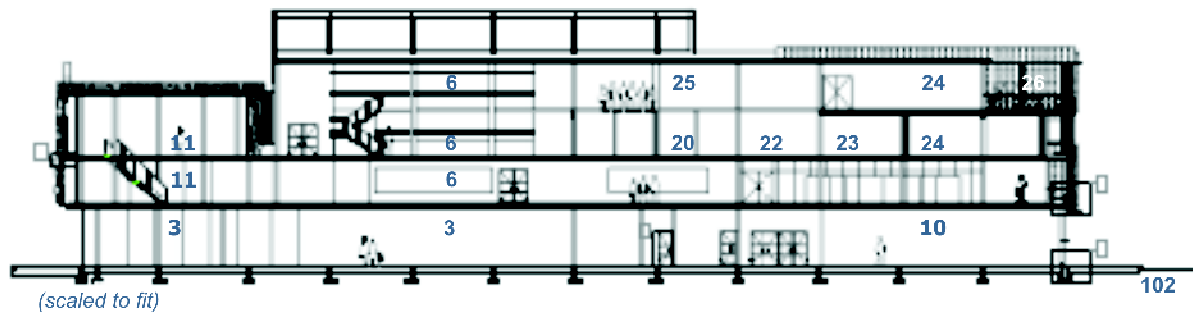
The process that will be followed from now on, will be to illustrate the graphic evolution of the design on a conceptual level, then the layout of the building will be illustrated, and each space within the building will be illustrated and discussed.





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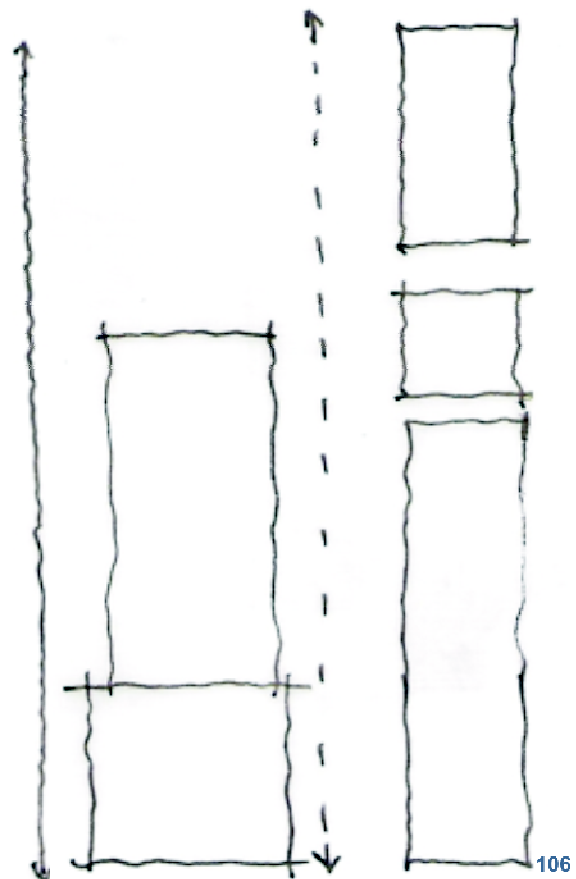
Legend: 1) Gallery, 2) South entrance, 3) Café, 4) Lobby, 5) Reception area, 6) Lift lobby, 7) Kitchen, 8) Storage, 9) Northern entrance, 10) Multi functional hall, 11) Subject specific library, 12) Reading room, 13) wet core, 14) Computer lab., 15) Office waiting area, 16) Fire escape exit, 17) Offices, 18) Open to below, 19) Open plan offices, 20) Studios, 21) Kitchennette, 22) Workshop, 23) Lounge, 24) Seminar rooms, 25) Exhibition area, 26) Roof terrace

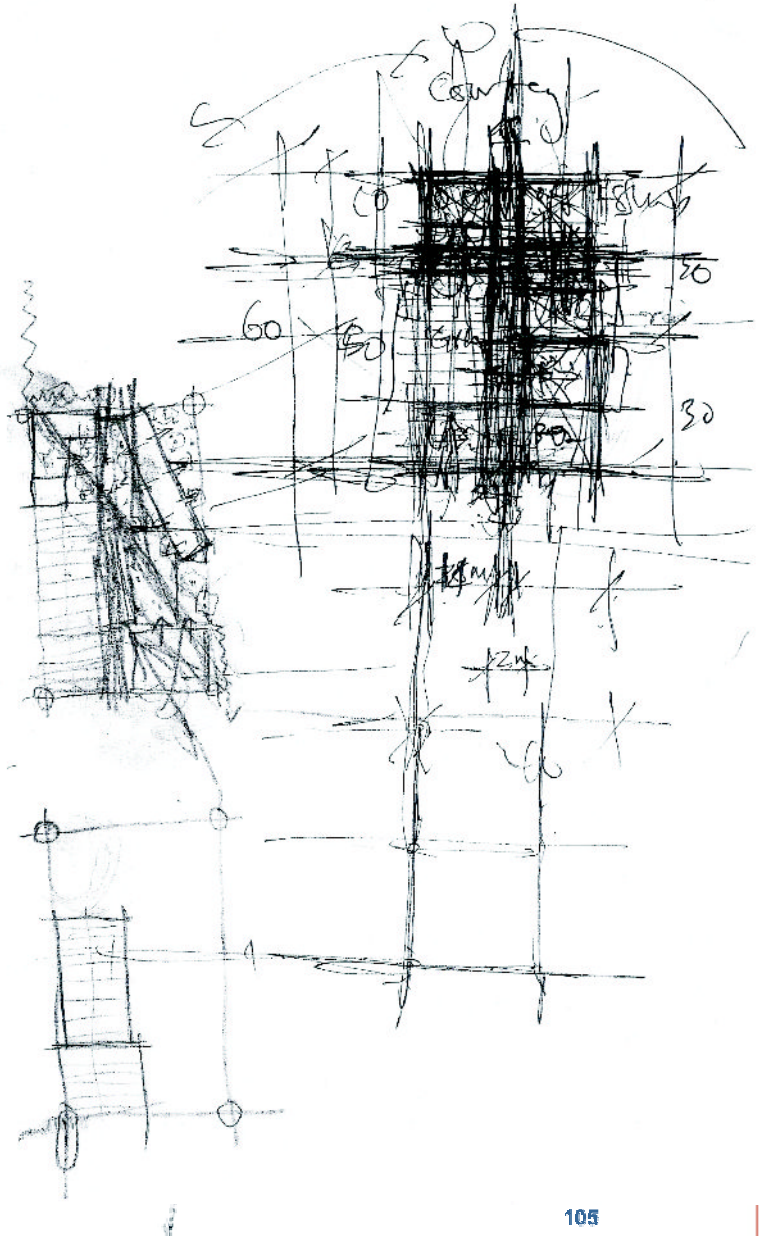
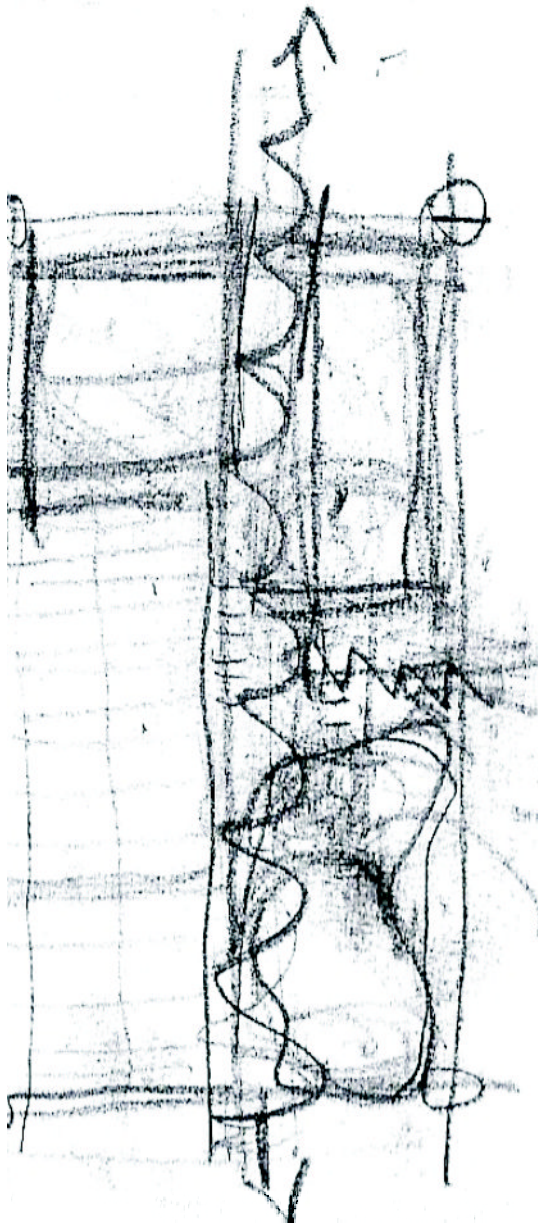
Spatial ordering

“All paths of movement, whether of people, cars, goods, or services, are linear in nature. And all paths have a starting point, from which we are taken through a sequence of spaces to our destination. The contour of a path depends on our mode of transportation. While we as pedestrians can turn, pause, stop, and rest at will, a bicycle has less freedom, and a car even less, in changing its pace and direction abruptly.” (Ching, 1996, p.252)

The ordering system that was used in the design is that of the principle of axis. The axis of the building will be the spine around which all the spatial ordering will follow.

The other principle that was followed is one of rhythm. Rhythm in the design of the building would on plan view, be significant in the fact that it will differentiate between the old and new, for e.g. in the existing building, the floor finish will have a rhythm.





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Urban spaces

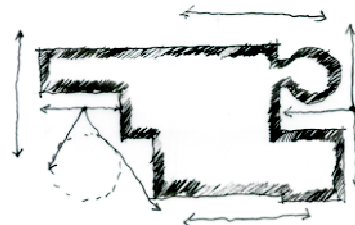
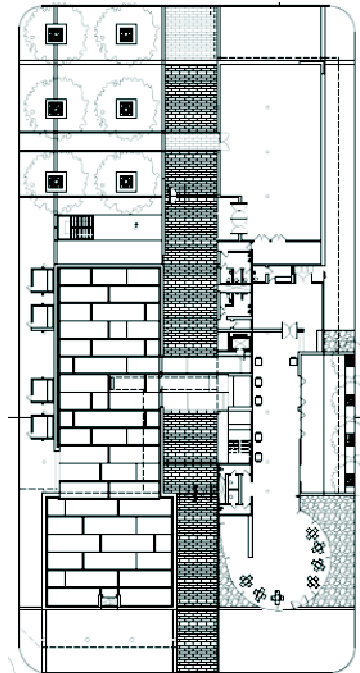
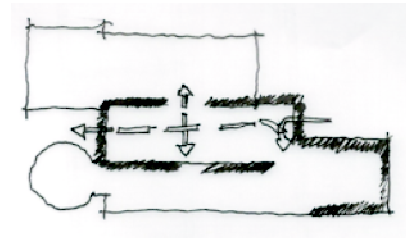
focus: entrances and exits

The transition from public to private spaces are important in spatial ordering as it can integrate the building with the user.

The nodes formed by the design are on the North west corner of the site and the node between the old and the new building (forming the Northern and Southern entrances). The proportion and the scale are measured relative to one another. The nodes should be able to be utilised by both users and passers by.

The North-West node will be an informal art market which will form a commercial node. At this node users will be able to pause. The floor treatment in front of the stalls will be textured so as to slow down the pedestrians and also to make it easier for the people to identify where the stall counters are.

This node was initially going to be closed off by a garden wall. This idea was not developed as it would have defeated the idea of the working concept of the whole design discourse- **accessibility**.



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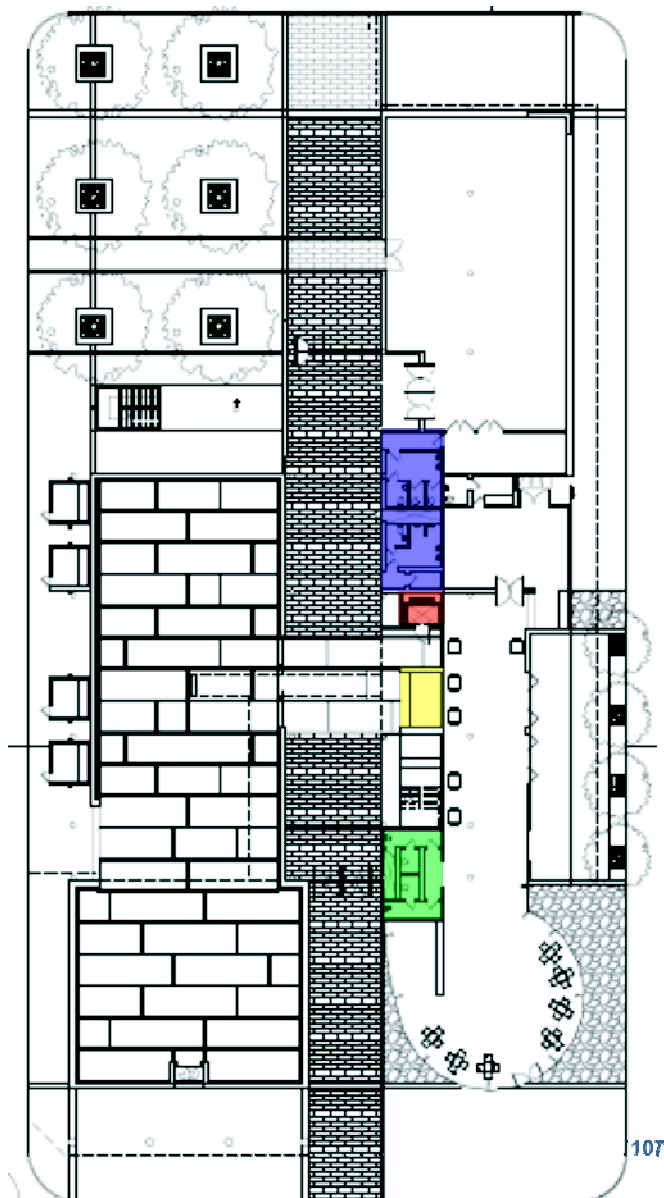
Access and Legibility

The building is to be provided with a clear circulation and service core, which can be clearly identified and will be legible for the users

Two aspects of legibility will be considered:

- Legibility of the building within Marabastad, and
- Legibility of the facilities within the building for ease of use. For example, when users enter the building from any of the two entrances they will be able to locate the reception area.

The lift and the staircase will be visible from the reception area and the lobby. The idea of creating a rhythm will be applied within the building's volumes. When a user enters the building they will see volumes in a form of blocks of different colours as illustrated on the ground floor plan.



IDENTITY

External facades, materials and finishes

The north and west facades will be finished with plaster and paint, and they will have a sheet metal sunscreen. The South façade of the new building will be of a glazed wall with a ceramic tile sunscreen. The eastern façade will have glazing and plaster and paint finishes.

On the ground floor level where there is a lot of pedestrian activity, attention will be given to the façade finish so as to ensure a more interactive and visually stimulating surface. Local artists will be involved in the design of these façade this will include artists painting murals.

The floor finish from the pavement to the inside of the building will be of robust natural materials. The material considered for the pavement is slate, because it is the current material used on site. The idea was abandoned, and clay bricks will be used instead. This is because clay bricks can be sourced from the area.

Fire escape stairs will be of metal.

Interior

The floors will be finished with bricks and concrete. The bricks will be used in what the author terms the 'low street' of the building (the lobby area). This will create continuity from the outside into the building. This is in support of the concept of **accessibility**.

Form exploration

The form initially was for the intervention to have the same typology as the existing building. Due to the fact that the new intervention was competing with the old heritage building, the idea was not developed.

Idea 2

The idea then was for the designer to come up with an intervention that would respect the old building and also have its own presence. The ideas that were explored at the time were to come up with a contemporary building that will enhance the site and create a new layer. The ideas created problems of how the new contemporary building was going to touch the old building in a sensitive manner. This idea was not discarded but it was developed further.

Idea 3

The idea here was to come up with solutions that would result in the new intervention respecting the old heritage building for it to embrace the new intervention. This was achieved through the use of the old building's roof 'embracing' the new intervention. Even though the new building is higher than the old building, it is not competing nor imposing. The idea seemed to work hence it was developed further.

