

5 design development

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

Counter-point, the integration: of the MINE related activities into the community of Saulspoort through the translation of the socio-cultural dynamics.

COUNTERPOINT: (from Lat. *contrapunctus*, from *contrapunctum* 'against note'; Fr. *Contrepoint*; Ger. *Kontra-punkt*; It. *contrapunto*)

A term first used in the 14th century, to describe the combination of simultaneously, different sounding musical lines according to a system of rules.² The difference in quality between the two groups particularly shown in their directions referring to important sections in its composition or to the parallelism:

A composition that though made up of two different and opposing pieces of melody, the horizontal bar: creates a harmony, the vertical point at which two notes are played at the same time. The harmony in this instance being the factor that then brings the piece or rather composition together.

In the same way this thesis attempts to create a point of joining, a harmony between the two contradictory melodies played out by the MINE on the hand and the community of Saulspoort on the other.

A point at which though recognizing the vast and parallel differences exhibited by both, a point of harmony a place where the two meet in a reconciliatory cohesive and sustainable manner. This thesis attempts through the process of integration of MINE into an already existing community, the community of Saulspoort to allow for the two forces and influences a platform on which the various activities can then be played out. The creation of a point of harmony that is then identifiable by both the MINE and the community of Saulspoort.

Tradition: tradition though a seemingly rigid age-old custom is actually a dynamic process by which knowledge and values passed on from generation to generation³. Tradition, like history, rituals and culture, is something that is continually being recreated and remodeled in the present. Although represented as fixed and unchanging, a case in point is the spatial organization of the Tswana settlements (which is traditional) not geometrically organized according to physical elements. For instance, the forms are rather derived from the conceptual model of the social structure of the society.

Rituals and tradition govern the movement and interaction of people with each other. The spaces that they interacted within

and the interaction of the various spaces with each therefore playing a significant role in not just the socio-cultural dynamics of the area but also in the built forms and the spaces that surround them.

An important ritual in Tswana culture is gathering and this offers itself up for analysis. The Tswana gathered for various reasons both political and social. Traditional Tswana settlements were set out and built up following the various gathering activities. These gathering spaces served as thresholds from one function to another.

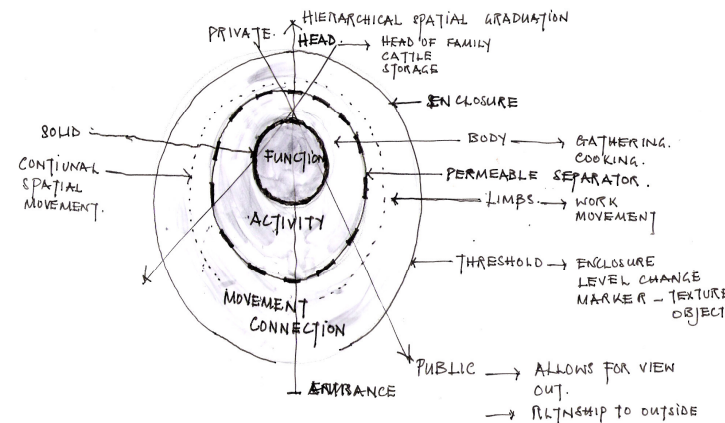


Fig 39: Traditional Tswana spatial hierarchy⁴

The culture of gathering translated into the built environment by the use of transitional spaces. Emphasizing the function of meeting outside, though a result of the physical environment adapted into their culture.

In this instance the use of void as the creator of the building rather than the other way around has been translated to emphasize the importance of the outside rather than the inside.

For example in the layout of a lolwapa that is probably the most intimate spatial layout in this culture. Within the lolwapa exist varying degrees of privacy can be pointed out in the various gathering spaces. After greeting, one can then venture further into the lolwapa, the threshold into the hut or dwelling place. The first threshold crossed at the compound enclosure, a place usually signified by a tree or natural feature. The second is the lolwapa that gives access to the hut and the third the entrance into the hut. The lolwapa is built upon a step to differentiate it from the outer parts of the compound. The raising of this gives it importance in the entire compound. Where the family would gather for meals around a fire, gathering places were oral tradition myths and stories got told⁵

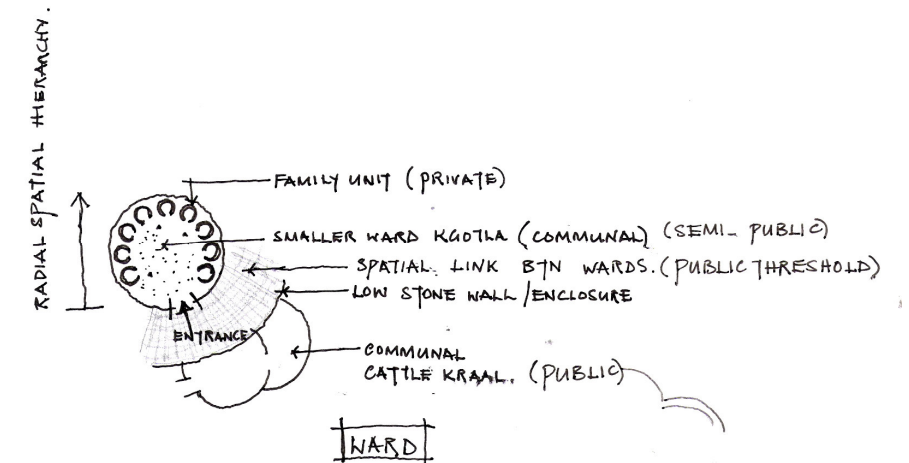


Fig 40 Spatial organization of the traditional people⁶

The lolwapa was an intimate part of the compound entered and used by only family and those close to it. To enter one's hut one-steps down. In itself a symbolic gesture, sensitizing the user to the fact that dwellings are built from the earth and are inherently a part of it and not dominating over it.

This introduction of tradition and rituals into the most mundane part(s) of the Tswana culture becomes the basis on which one can then remind and allow their memory to translate itself into an activity that becomes relevant in the present context and function.

Through this allowing for the various layers that over time made what the community of Saulspoort what it is. A platform on which derived activities played out relived appropriated acknowledged reflect the various tensions that these layers represent.

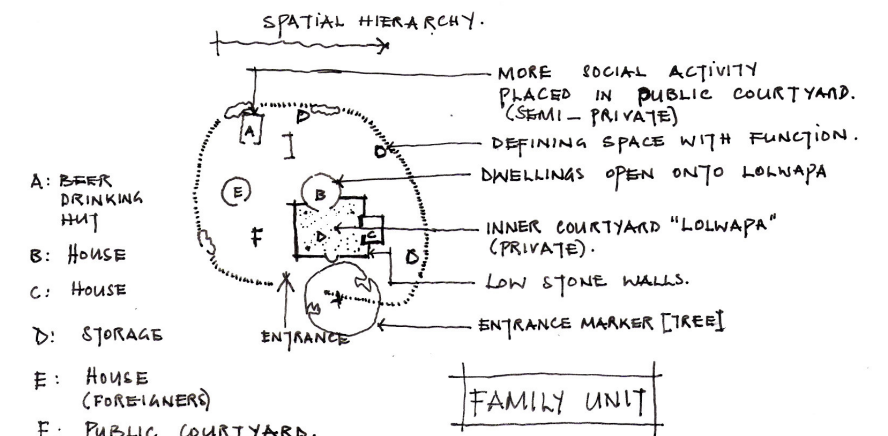


Fig 41 Spatial organization of the Lolwapa⁷

² The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2001:551

³ Guidoni, Primitive Architecture, 1975:7

⁴ Tumubwainee, 2006

⁵ Tau, The Place of Culture in Architecture, 2001: pg 13

⁶ Tumubwainee, 2006

⁷ Pistorius, Molokwane An Iron Age Bakwena Village, 1992: pg33

An architectural history that translated into local history represents a combination of local materials and building methods, cultures and settings, clients and builders to create a built environment that cannot be reduced to generalisations. Rather a translation of culture rituals and traditions into a built form, an environment that allows for these to be repeated relived and remembering through the various activities encouraged and or stimulated by the transition from one space into another.

An architecture whose function and significance in relation to the society furnishes its own interpretation, attitude, associations, and explanations of why it is and what was. A multi-lateral approach, to space making. As the function happens with void/space and not the building. This also allows for flexibility and change in the proposed design.

Allowing for stage on which the political, socio-cultural, economic and urban implications, give anchor to the stage on which multiple activities can play out. Gamut activities that transform space place and the interpretation within a particular society considered in relation to the traditions rituals that are characteristic of its context. This translation has been physically applied through the use of the following elements within the design:

- Thresholds
- Spatial graduation on the site
- Definition of change in spaces
- Level changes
- The hierarchy with which the buildings have been laid out
- The combination of building materials and methods

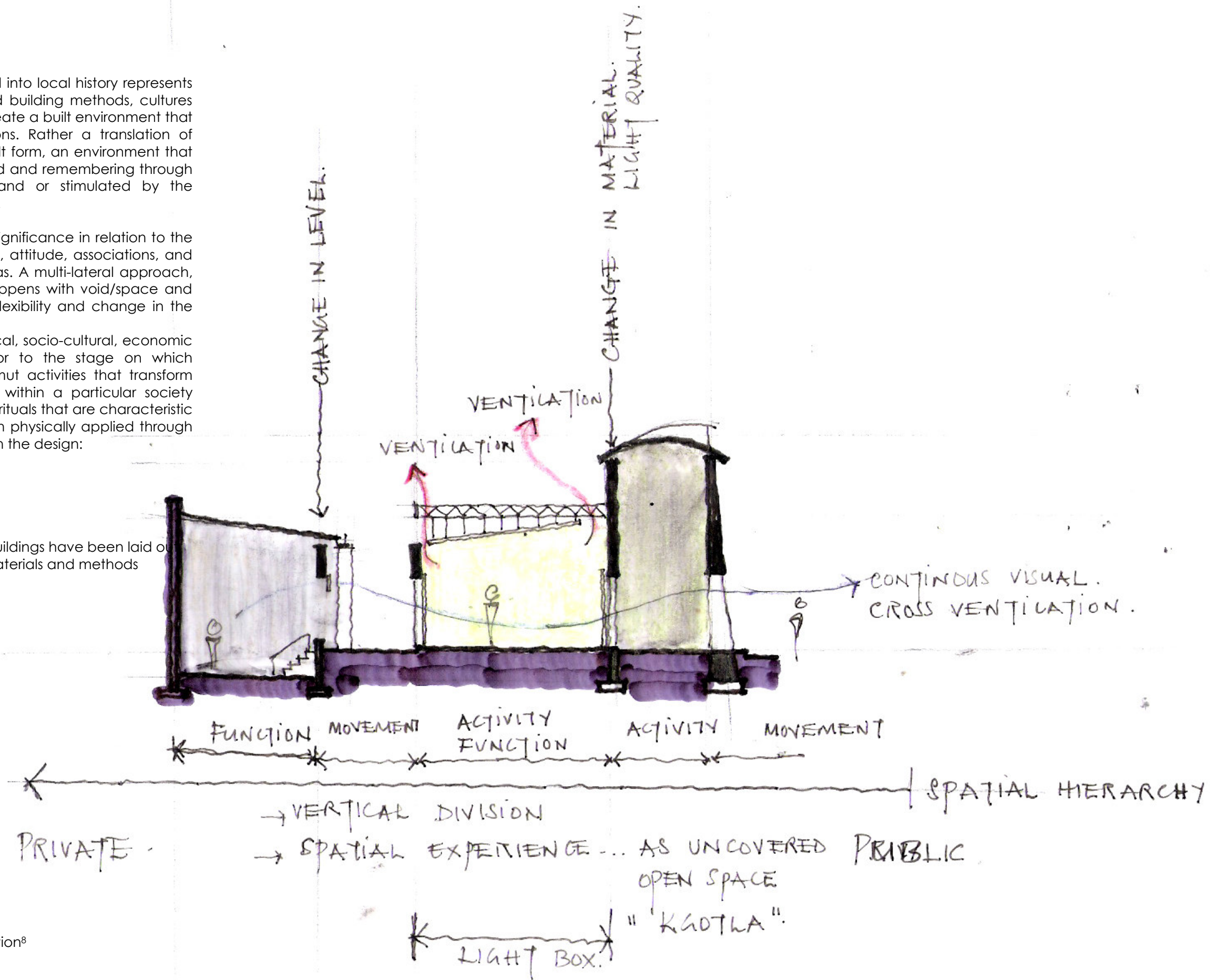


Fig 42 Sketch showing spatial organization⁸

⁸ Tumubweinee, 2006

Thresholds:

Allowing for these to function as hierarchical points at which the functions of the various interlinking spaces are separated. In the use of light, height and depth of the space, a subtle division can be accommodated within design. Decentralization of space function and form: with decentralization it is implied that there should be a break down from large spaces to more intimate communities that can then start to function independently, with only the necessary relations to those around it. This would then encourage the use of smaller scale technology that would in turn have a less devastating and negative effect on the whole "mother nature".

The shift of traditional building values in architecture using modern materials a way in which the culture and heritage has been maintained. In decentralizing the spaces and allowing for a more flexible spatial graduation the idea of counter-point.

As indicated in Fig 41 and 42, this continual movement of space within a "modern" functional building such as an office reinforces the idea of integration and connection between the MINE and the community of Saulspoor. Allowing for later appropriation of the MINE by the community, into the community post closure.

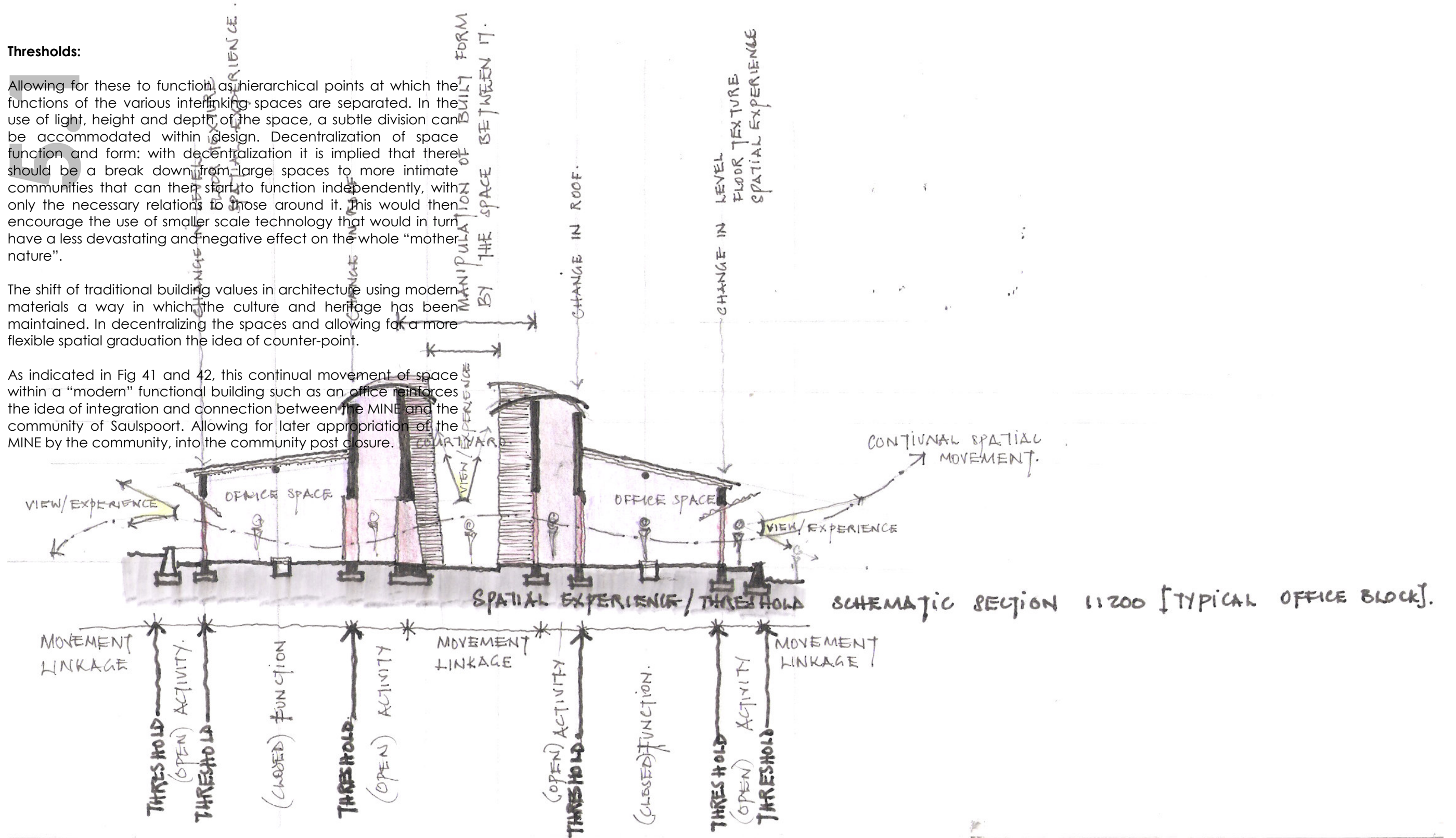


Fig 43 interpretation of thresholds into the proposed design⁹

⁹ Tumubweinee, 2006

CONCEPTUAL SITE LAYOUT

The site layout has been based on traditional Tswana spatial principles. The spaces are arranged around a main kgotla or kraal.

The idea of transitional multilateral functioning spaces has been carried through by emphasizing the space as opposed to the built form. Taking the idea of gathering into consideration the site has been laid out such that the spaces encase the buildings allowing for a free flowing interlocking spaces that give importance to the various elements within them.

The existing Tribal offices are left within a cleared void. This void allows for the Tribal offices, and hence the culture predominant in Saulspoor to have a prominence on site. From the Tribal offices various visual and authority lines have been followed. These further emphasize the hierarchical spatial arrangement in Tswana traditional culture.

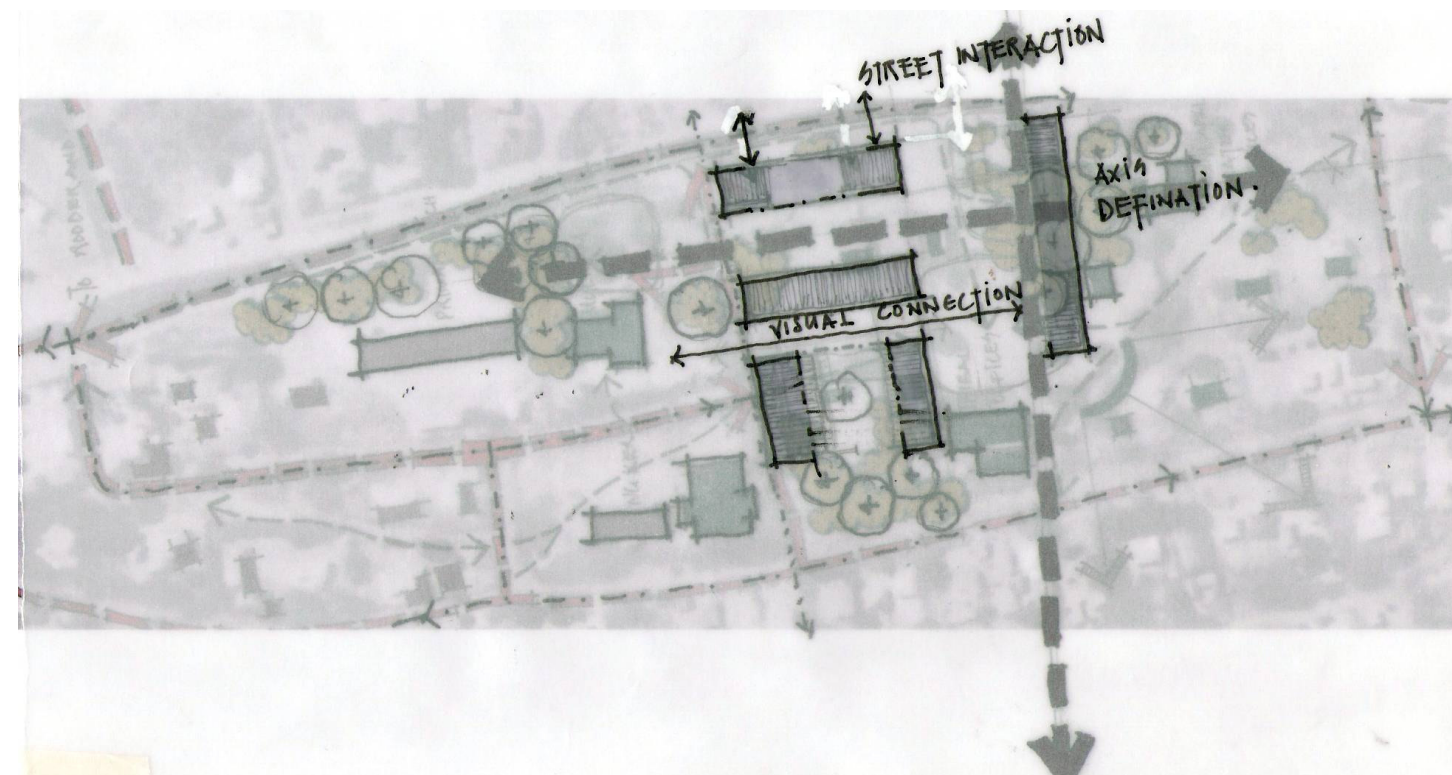
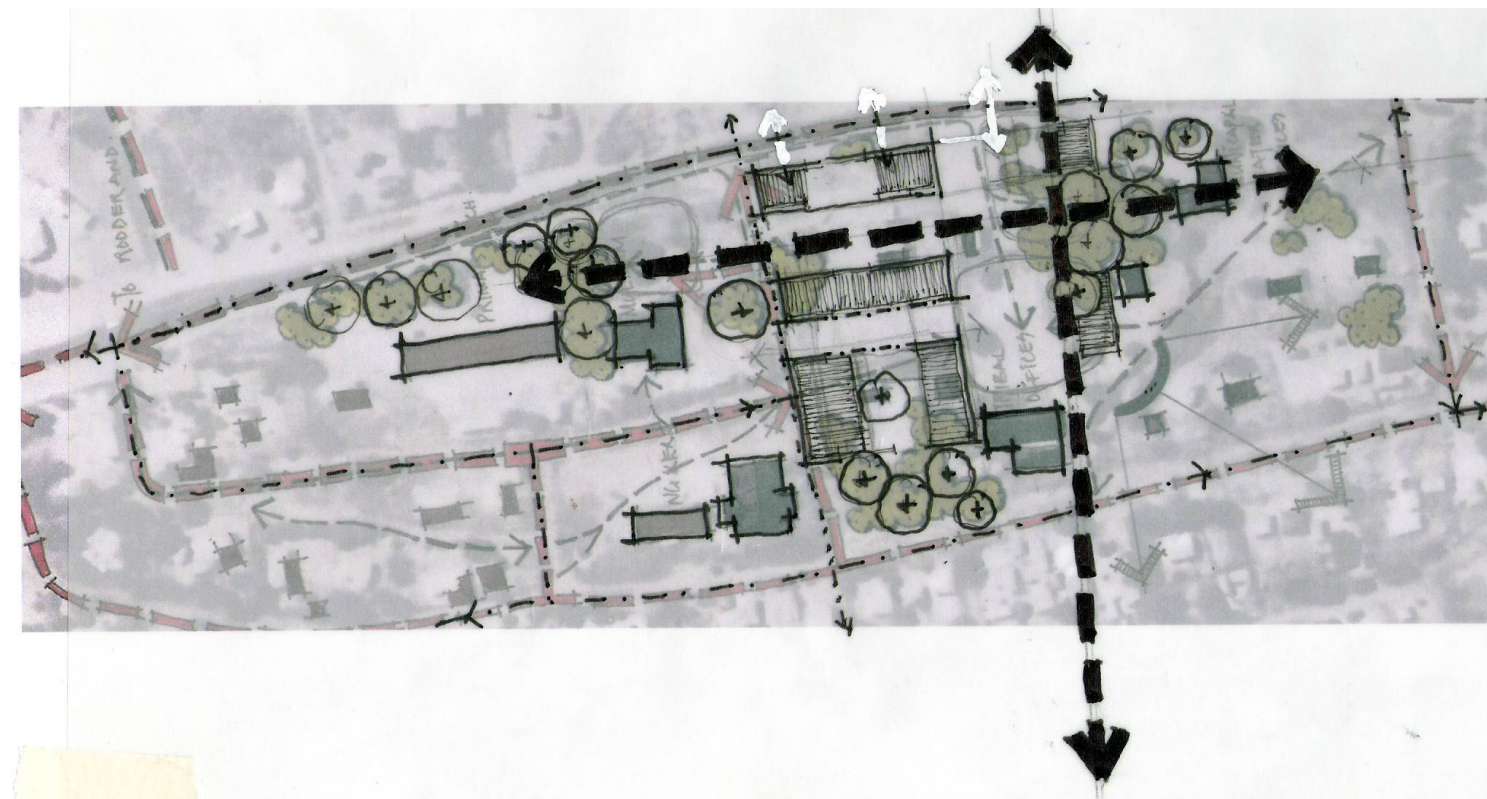
The buildings are encased within a void held together by the landscape. In this manner the emphasis is laid on the space, the communal as opposed to the built form, the closed the individual. The "gel" energy interconnecting the buildings proposed on site all lead to and come from the central authoritative body the Tribal offices.

The landscape that then holds these buildings together also plays a pivotal role in providing for a multilateral platform on which the interaction of the spaces through and with the buildings can be acted out.

Cells, through which the various tensions between the void, and the built form meet to create a harmony on the site. A counterpoint. This connection point like a pattern can be said to be representative of the connection from "traditional" into "modernity".



Fig 44 Conceptual Site Analysis¹⁰



¹⁰ Tumubweine, 2006

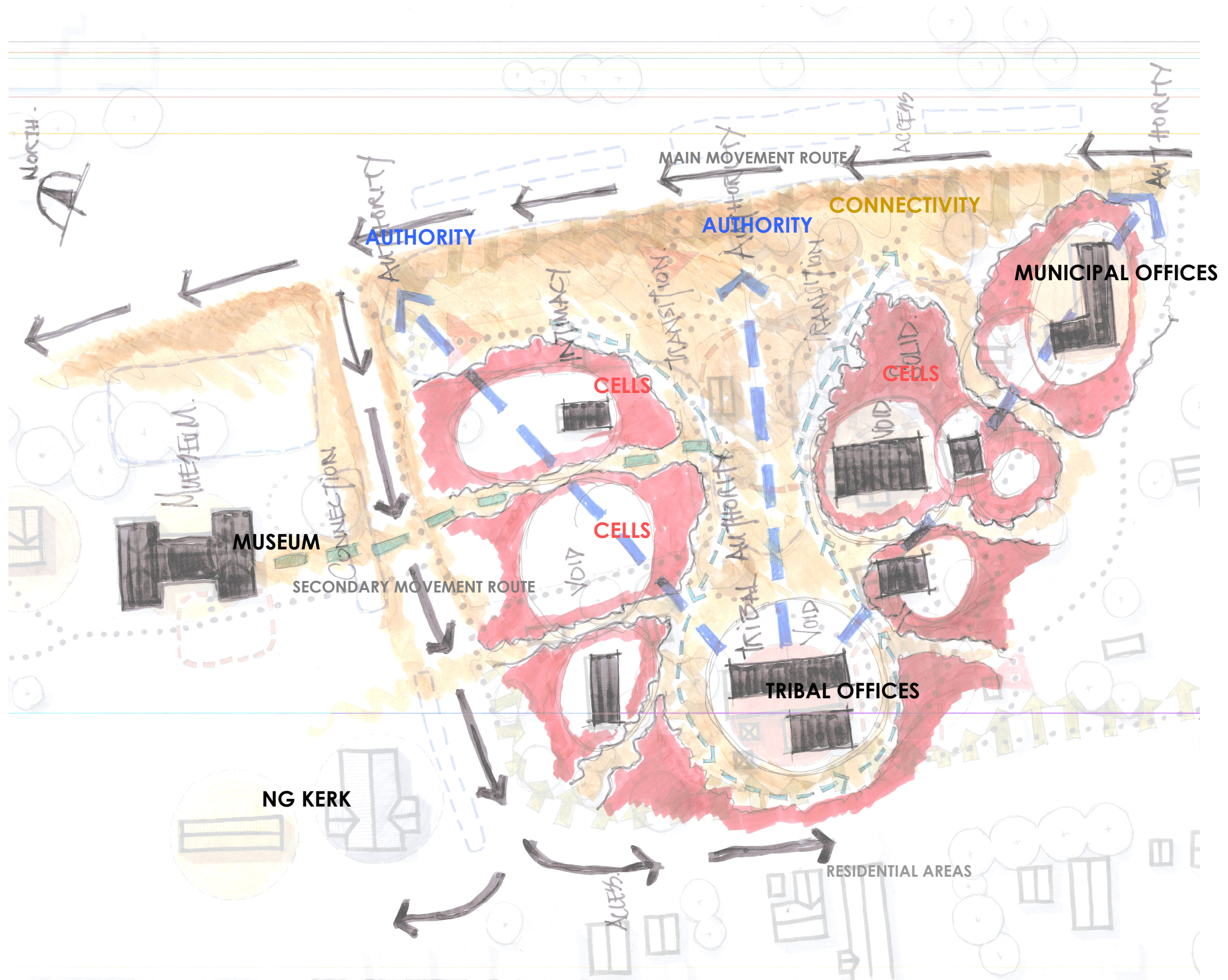


Fig 45: Conceptual site spatial organization.

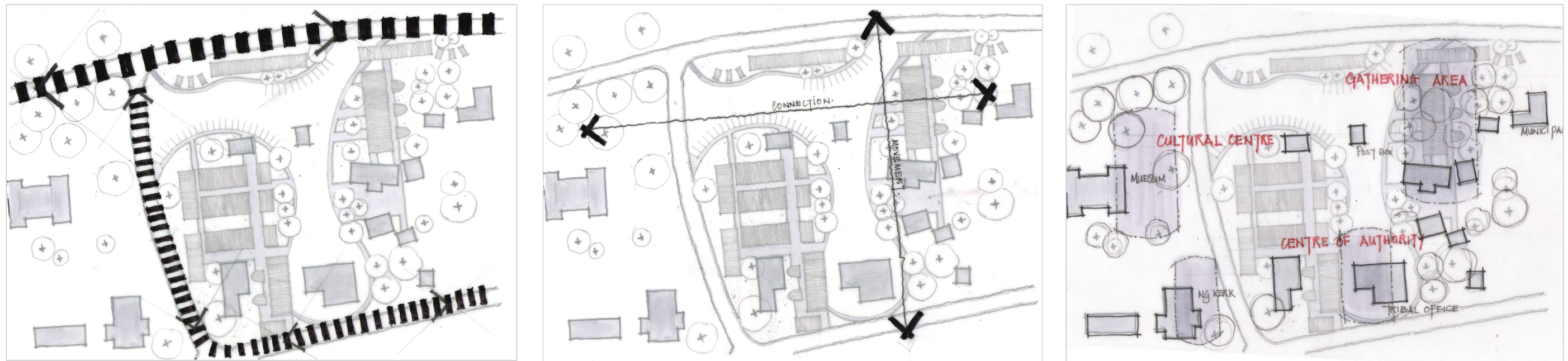


Fig 46: Conceptual site layout

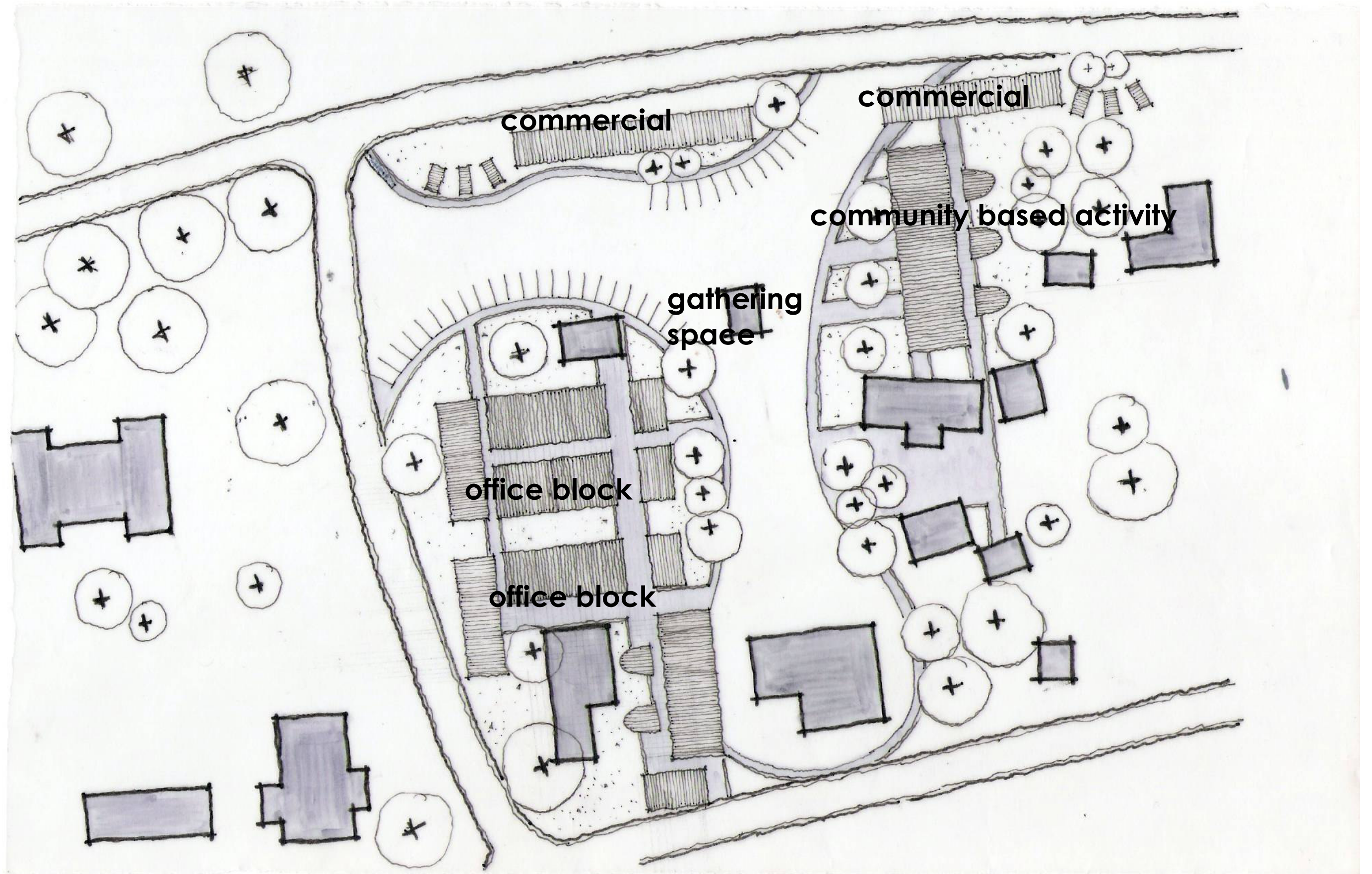


Fig 47: Conceptual site layout

ACCOMODATION SCHEDULE

[A] OFFICE BLOCK A

Ground floor:

1. reception area

Foyer/security
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Security ablutions

2. training area

Ablution area
Reception area
Administrations space
Office space:

Trainers
Clerk
Receptionist

3. offices

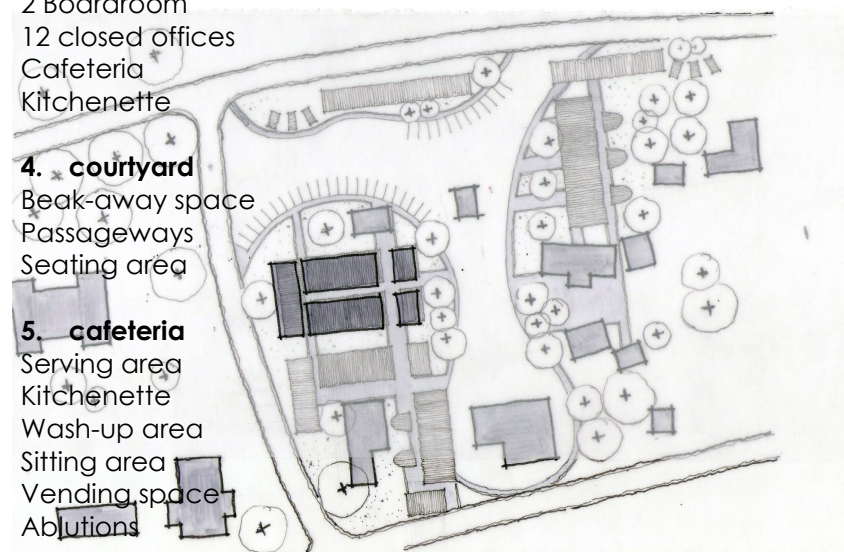
Ablution area
Break-away spaces
Passageways
2 Boardroom
12 closed offices
Cafeteria
Kitchenette

4. courtyard

Beak-away space
Passageways
Seating area

5. cafeteria

Serving area
Kitchenette
Wash-up area
Sitting area
Vending space
Ablutions



[B] OFFICE BLOCK B

Ground floor:

1. reception area

Foyer/security
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Security ablutions

2. training area

Ablution area
Reception area
Administrations space
Office space:

- Trainers
- Clerk
- Receptionist

3. offices

Ablution area
Break-away spaces
Passageways
1 Boardroom
6 closed offices
Cafeteria
Kitchenette

4. courtyard

Beak-away space
Passageways
Seating area

[C] CAFETREIA

Ground floor:

1. reception area

Vending area
Thoroughfare
Reception area
Ablutions

2. kitchen

Storage space
Counter
Wash up area

3. sitting area

Covered sitting space
Open sitting area

[D] GATHERING SPACE

Ground floor:

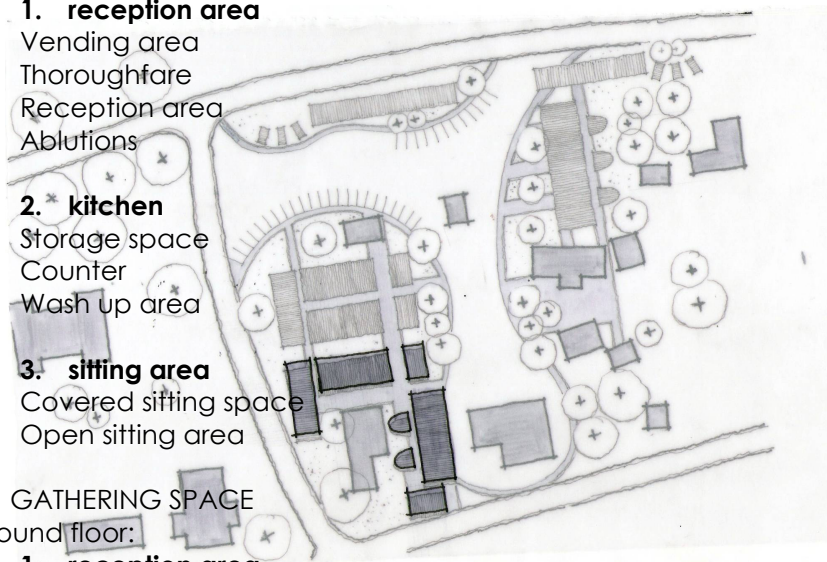
1. reception area

Foyer/security
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Security ablutions

2. meeting area

Ablution area
Reception area
Administrations space
Office space:

- Break-away spaces



[D] GATHERING SPACE

Ground floor:

1. reception area

Foyer/security
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Security ablutions

2. meeting area

Ablution area
Reception area
Administrations space
Office space:

- Break-away spaces

- Passageways

3. courtyard

Beak-away space
Passageways
Seating area

4. cafeteria

Serving area
Kitchenette
Wash-up area
Sitting area
Vending space
Ablutions

[E] EXHIBITION SPACE

Ground floor:

1. covered exhibition areas

Foyer
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Ablutions
Vending space

2. workshops

Storage area
Work space
Wash area
Ablutions
Display area

3. offices

Ablution area
Break-away spaces
Passageways
Boardroom
2 open offices

4. courtyard

Beak-away space
Passageways
Seating area

5. uncovered exhibition area

Foyer
Security control area
Information desk/kiosk
Thoroughfare
Ablutions
Vending space
Ablutions

