

# *Programme & Client*

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*-Proposed Programme*

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*-Burial Space and Park*

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Client

Spatial Funerary Ritual Mapping

## Architectural Response - *Proposed Programme*

The proposed programme not only forms part of the development of the site but also of the framework for the development of the Highlands North-Yeoville-Observatory ridge. It also includes the expansion and upgrading of burial grounds by Johannesburg Parks and Cemeteries in the future. By inserting a programme that allows the ridge to be accessed by the general public, on a route structure that provides isolation and spiritual meditation spaces, one allows for the ridge to become part of the cultural landscape of Johannesburg, similar to the Melville Koppies nature reserve.

The creation of a burial space that forms part of the intrinsic spirituality of the ridge landscape speaks towards the existing spiritual nature of the ridge. By proposing a crematorium and cemetery as a park, the ridge is allowed to become more accessible, again relating to its existing spiritual nature. The cemetery and park follow an all-encompassing view of being below religion, at a more humanist level, thus allowing all walks of life to experience the space at a human level.

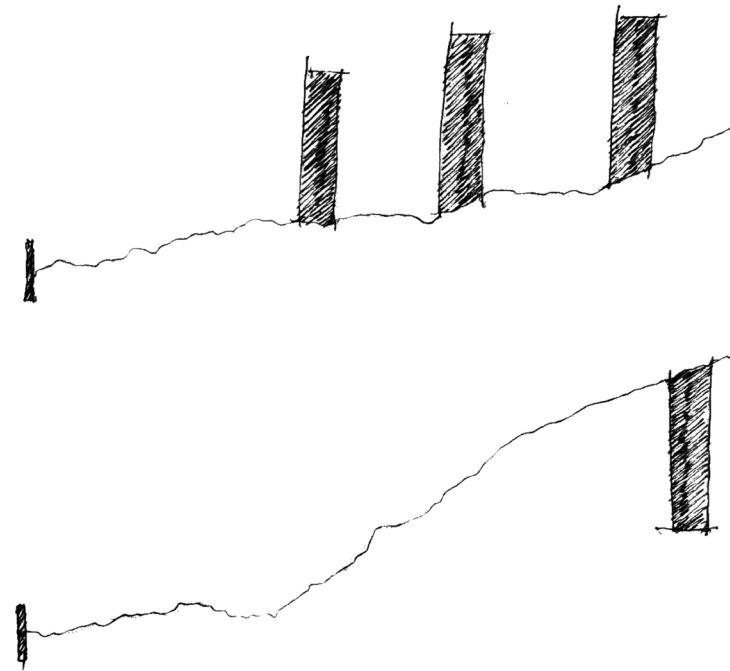
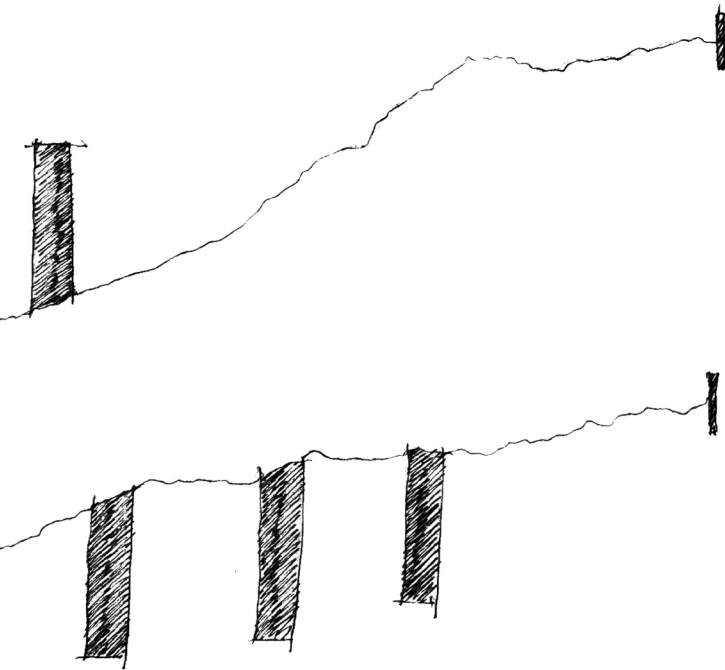


fig 6.1. Conceptual diagram illustrating Ponte City and its monumental presence relating to subterranean architecture with a similar monumentality. (by Author, 2015)

## Programme Processes



The programmatic processes would have the opportunity to start at three different conditions. The first condition would be that of the mourner and the deceased; the second the condition experienced by the spiritual wanderer; and the third, that of the park-goer.

The site being well situated between various spiritual institutions, residential housing blocks and at a gateway to Johannesburg's CBD would ideally act as an amalgamation of these conditions into a single programmatic response that equally and sensitively enhances the character of the ridge as part of the greater Witwatersrand. The ritual process that the mourner goes through in parallel with that of the deceased would take place in the form of a route that descends into the landscape with the aim of granting a greater understanding of the character of isolation, by concealing the urbanised surroundings and exposing the natural conditions of the ridge. Throughout the procession the mourner is presented with opportunities where views and changes in natural condition – be it roof, floor or wall – can be used as methods of orientation in relation to the urban context. The mourner's journey also intersects with that of the deceased by means of the programmatic process relating to the ritual of interment. This is achieved by means of stimulating the senses of the mourner through view, touch, smell and orientation with relation to that of the deceased. The mourner has the opportunity to take part in the funerary processes through washing, viewing and encircling the deceased throughout the journey. The mourner also has the opportunity to meditate on, contemplate and internalise the situation by being provided with spaces of pause, isolation, meditation and gathering. This aids in the personal journey of each individual mourner when taking part in the funerary process.

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The spiritual wanderer has the opportunity to access the structure from its main entrance, as a mourner would, but also as the park-goer would at smaller, more discreet entrance points throughout the ridge. Spaces for individual isolation as well as larger group gatherings are provided throughout the structure and park in the form of excavated, more isolated follies and pavilions within the park landscape itself to expose the conditions of the ridge.

The journey of the park-goer fits more loosely into the structure of the programme as journey, thus allowing for greater freedom when entering or exiting the ridge. Access to the park routes and spiritual spaces or to the crematorium and cemetery can be gained throughout the structure at various levels of interaction. The park-goer can access the ridge from any point and exit from any point, similar to the journey taken by the spiritual wanderer, but by bypassing the various follies and pavilions can use the site as a pure route to experience the natural conditions of the ridge as well as the views of the city.

Thus the programme involves a route that connects the various conditions experienced within the funerary procession, along with pavilions and follies that allow for an experiential understanding of site characteristics such as isolation, and provide exposure to the natural conditions on the ridge.

## Movement Diagrams - *Park User*

The following diagrams illustrate the movement and circulation routes taken by the park user. These routes illustrate the diversity of the planning in order to accommodate both funerary process and park user.

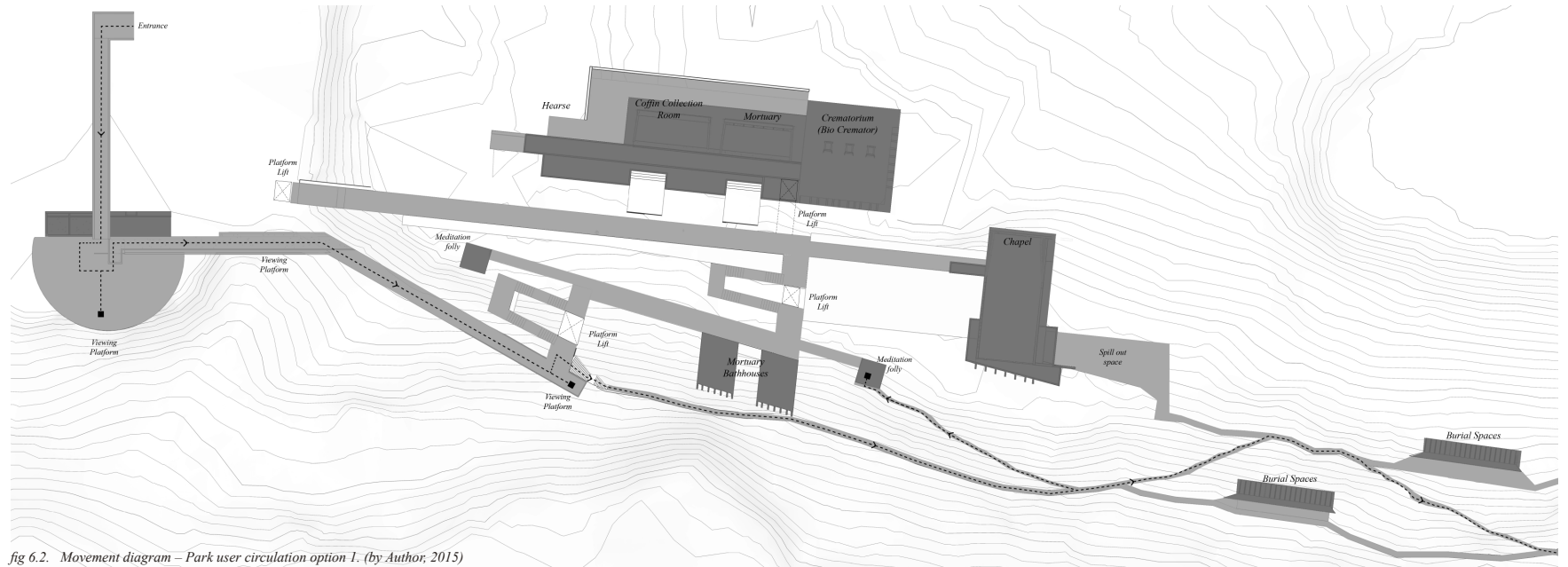


fig 6.2. Movement diagram – Park user circulation option 1. (by Author, 2015)

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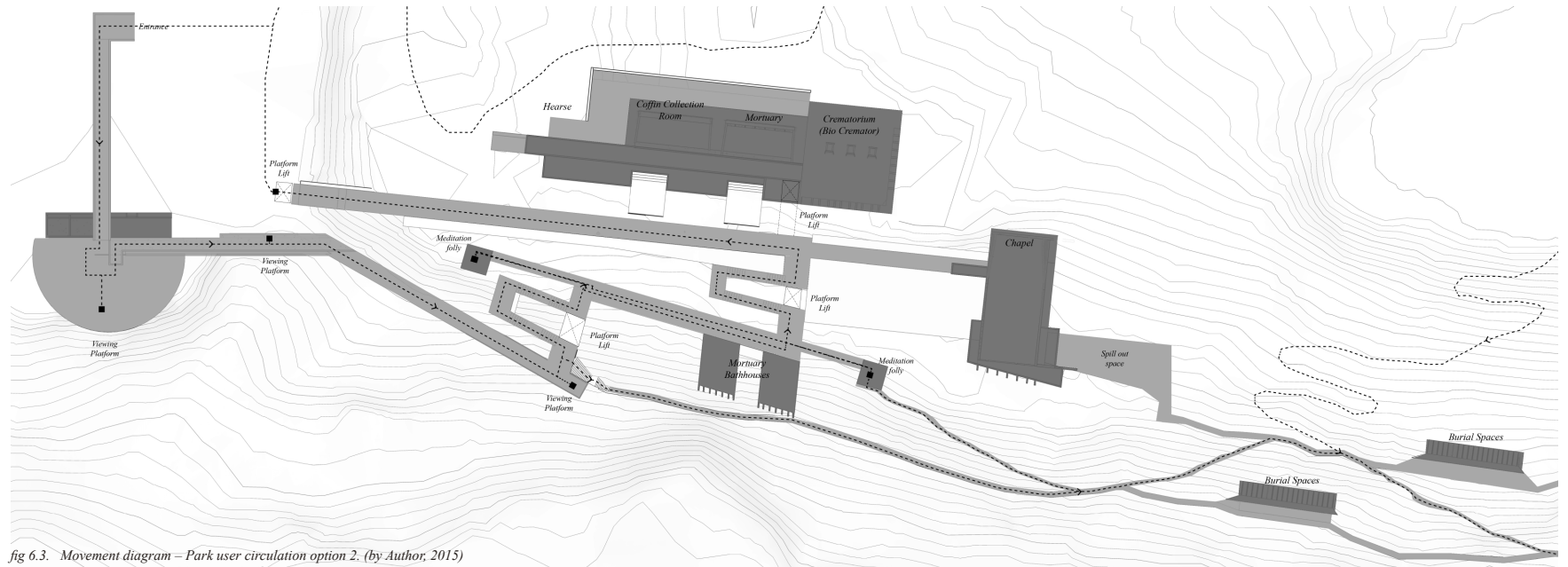


fig 6.3. Movement diagram – Park user circulation option 2. (by Author, 2015)

## Movement Diagrams - Mourner

The following diagrams illustrate the movement and circulation routes taken by the mourner. These routes are dependent on the physical ability of the mourner. Mourners are able to move through the entire journey or have the option to use the platform lift to gain direct level access to the chapel and burial route. Family and close relatives are able to move through the mortuary and crematorium and then down onto the circulation routes by means of an elevator.

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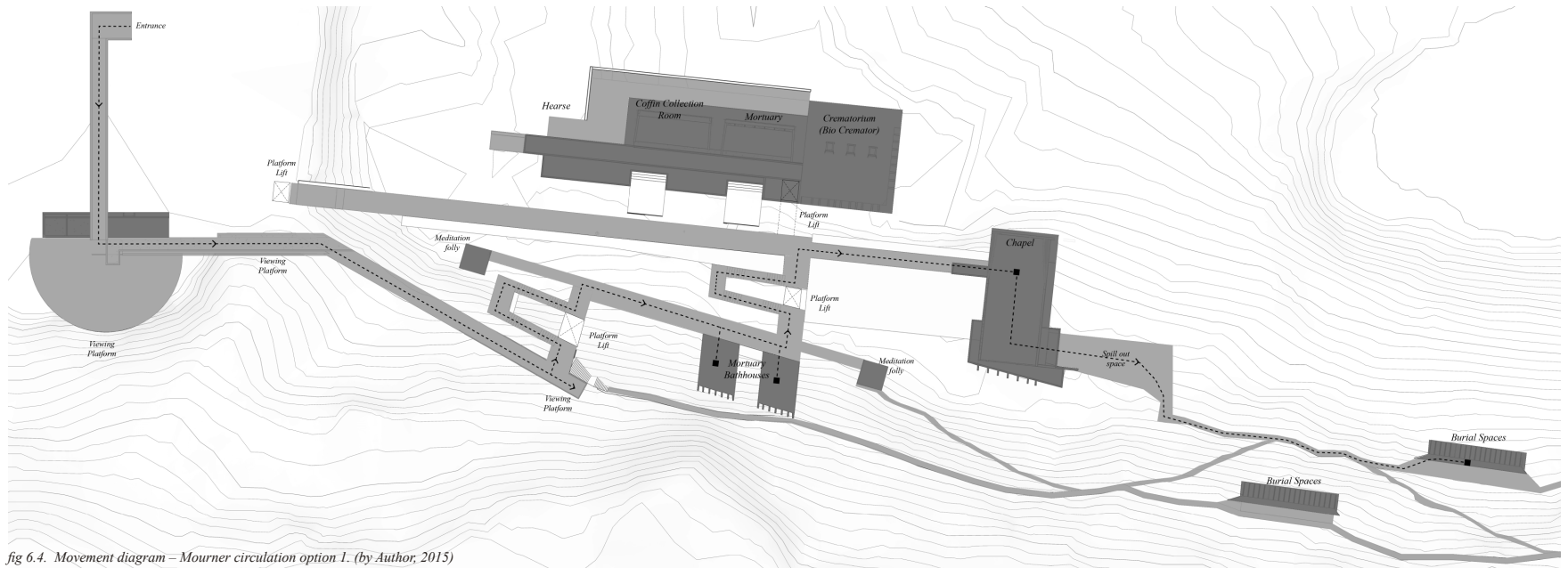


fig 6.4. Movement diagram – Mourner circulation option 1. (by Author, 2015)

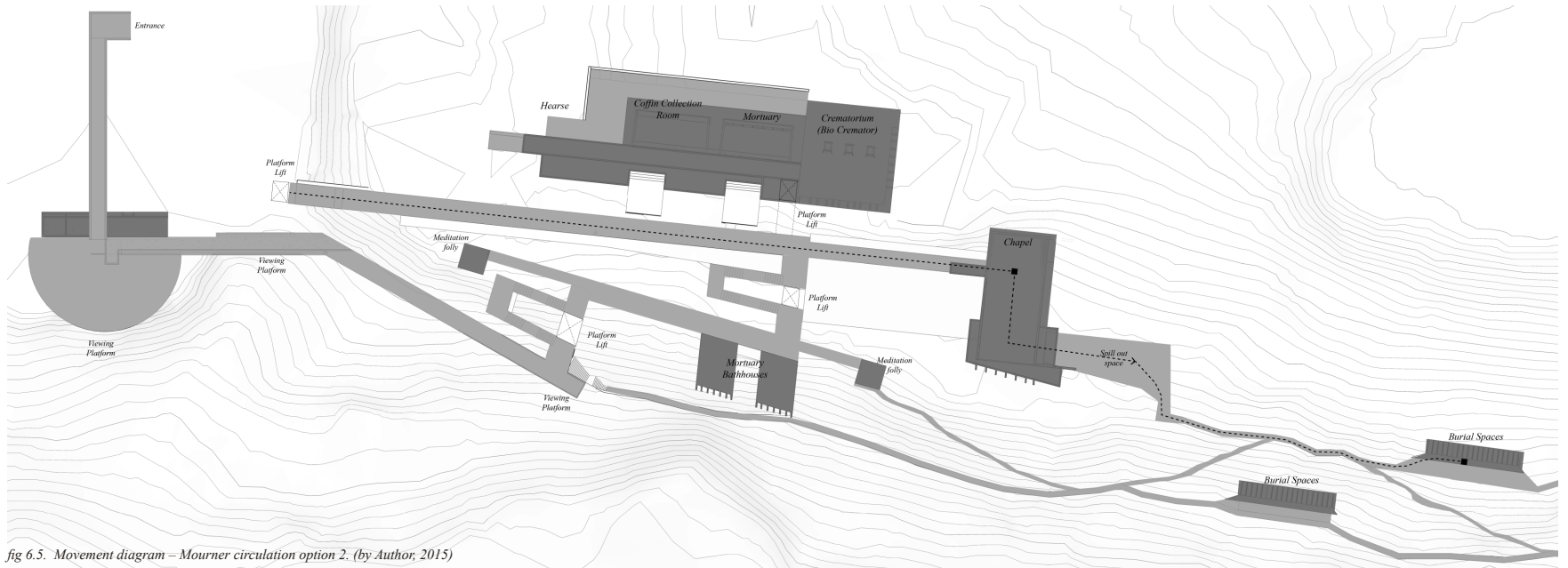


fig 6.5. Movement diagram – Mourners circulation option 2. (by Author, 2015)

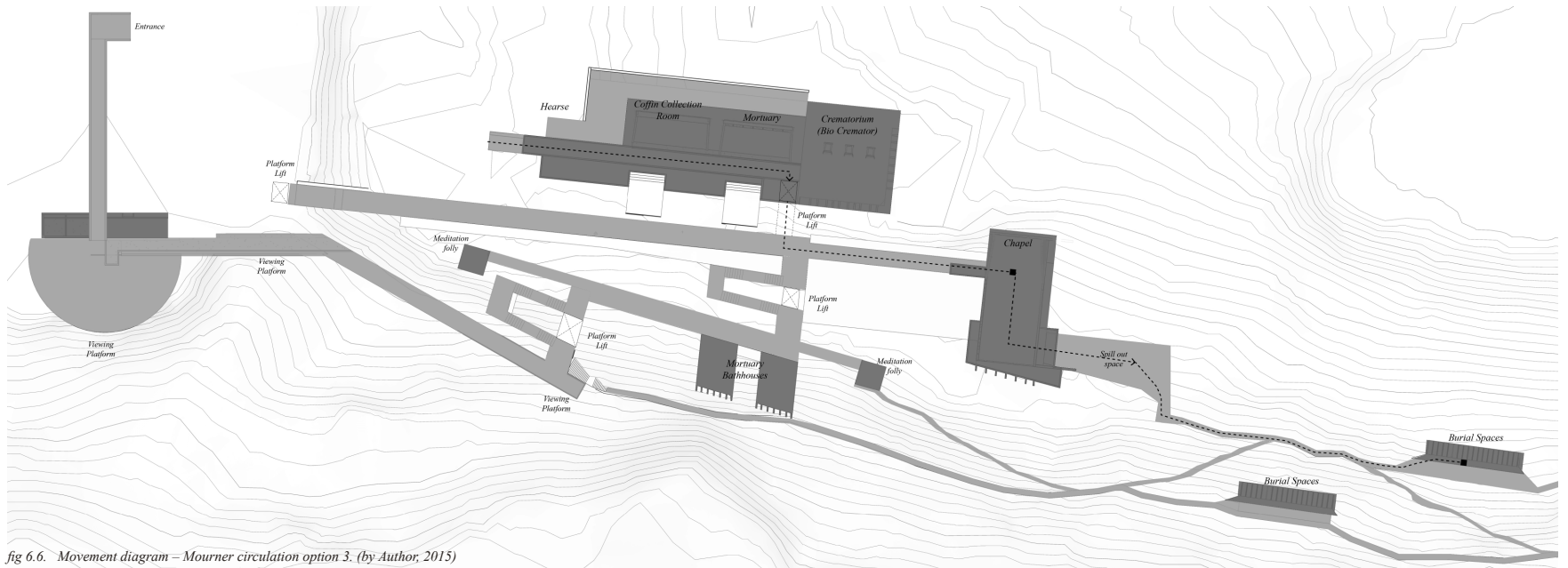


fig 6.6. Movement diagram – Mourners circulation option 3. (by Author, 2015)

## Movement Diagrams - *Traditional Burial*

The following diagrams illustrate the movement and circulation routes taken during traditional burials. The family has the option to pay respects to the deceased by washing it. This movement makes use of the platform lifts on which the coffin is circulated vertically throughout the structure. Family members also have the option to have the body washed by a third part allowing for a quicker more streamline process.



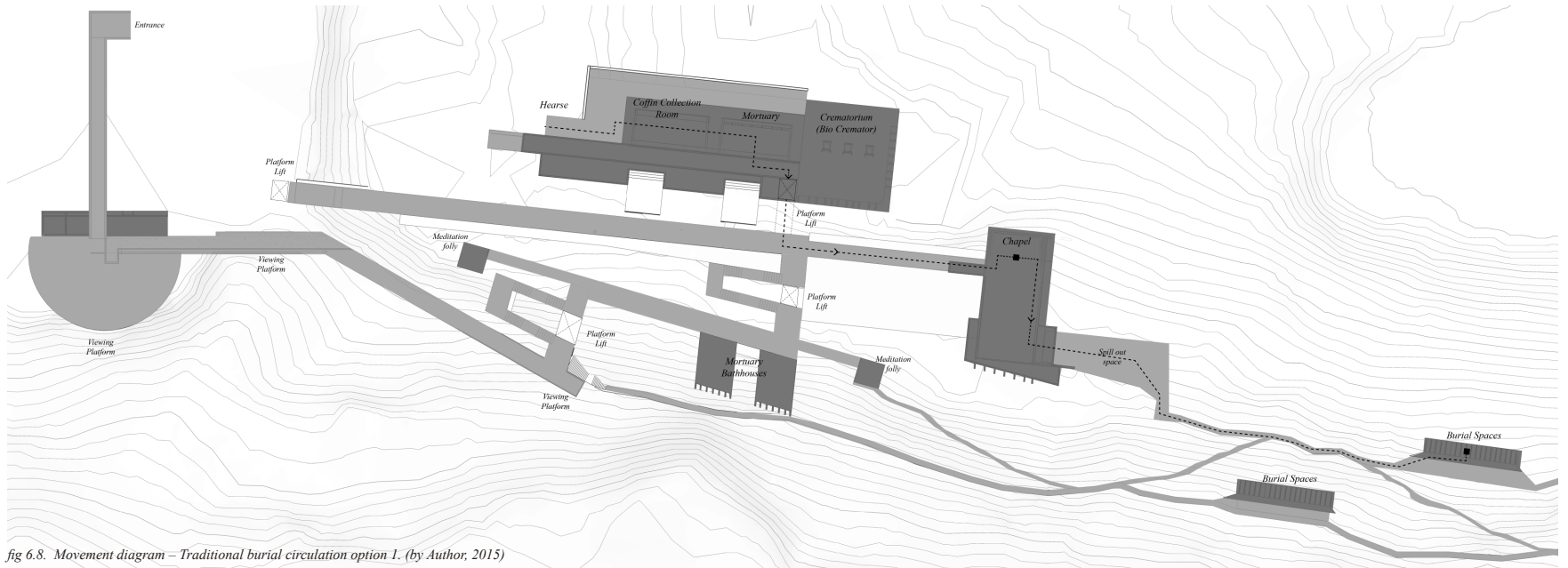


fig 6.8. Movement diagram – Traditional burial circulation option 1. (by Author, 2015)

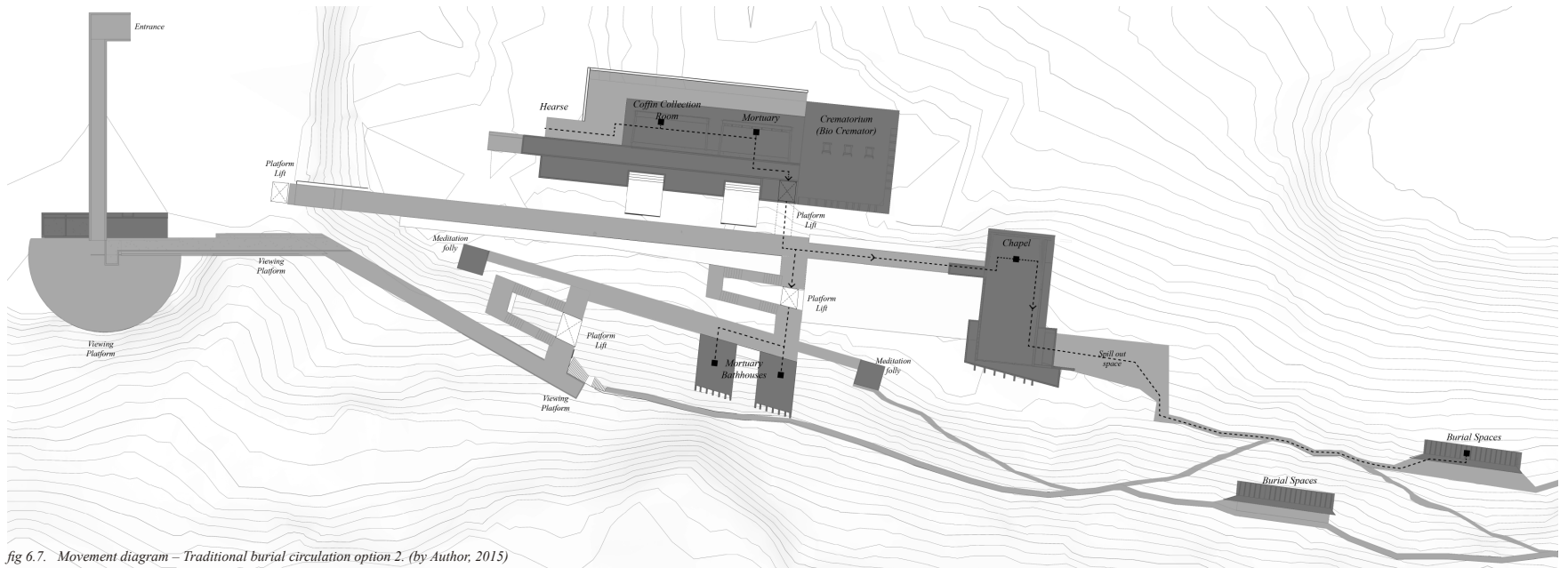


fig 6.7. Movement diagram – Traditional burial circulation option 2. (by Author, 2015)

## Movement Diagrams - *Cremation*

The following diagrams illustrate the movement and circulation routes taken during Cremation. They illustrate the many options that can be taken to ensure a personal experience during a time of bereavement.

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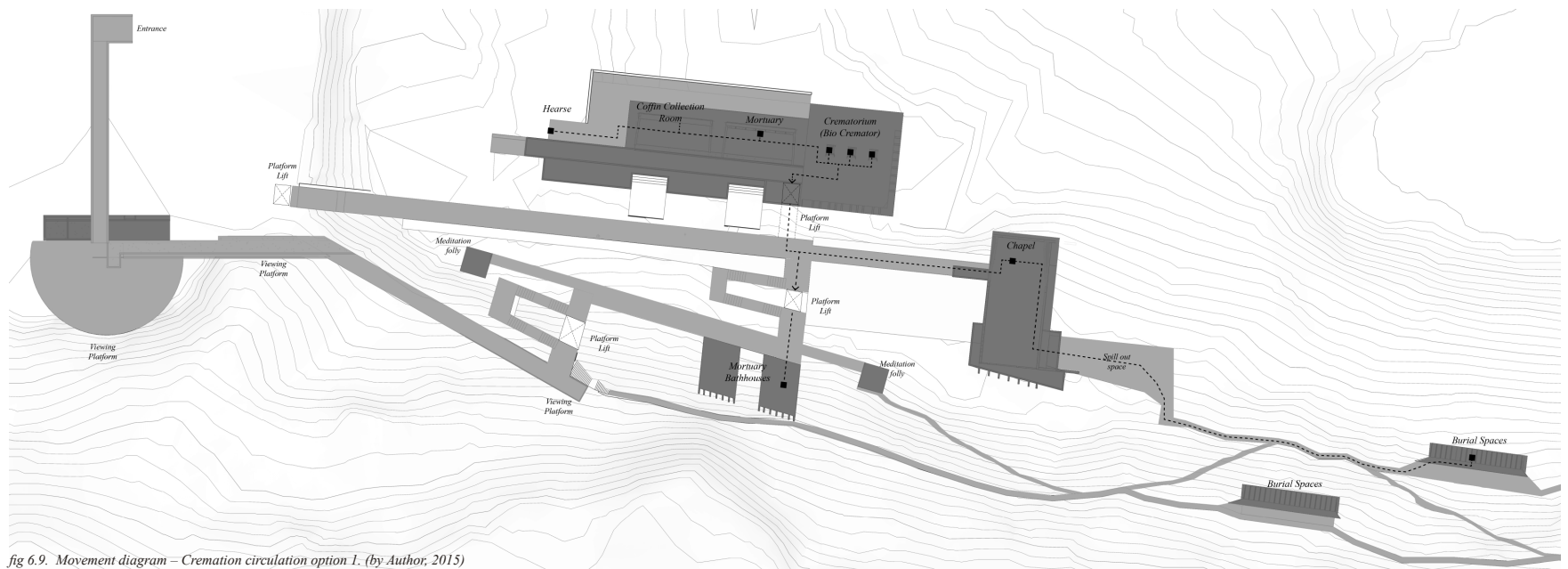


fig 6.9. Movement diagram – Cremation circulation option 1. (by Author, 2015)

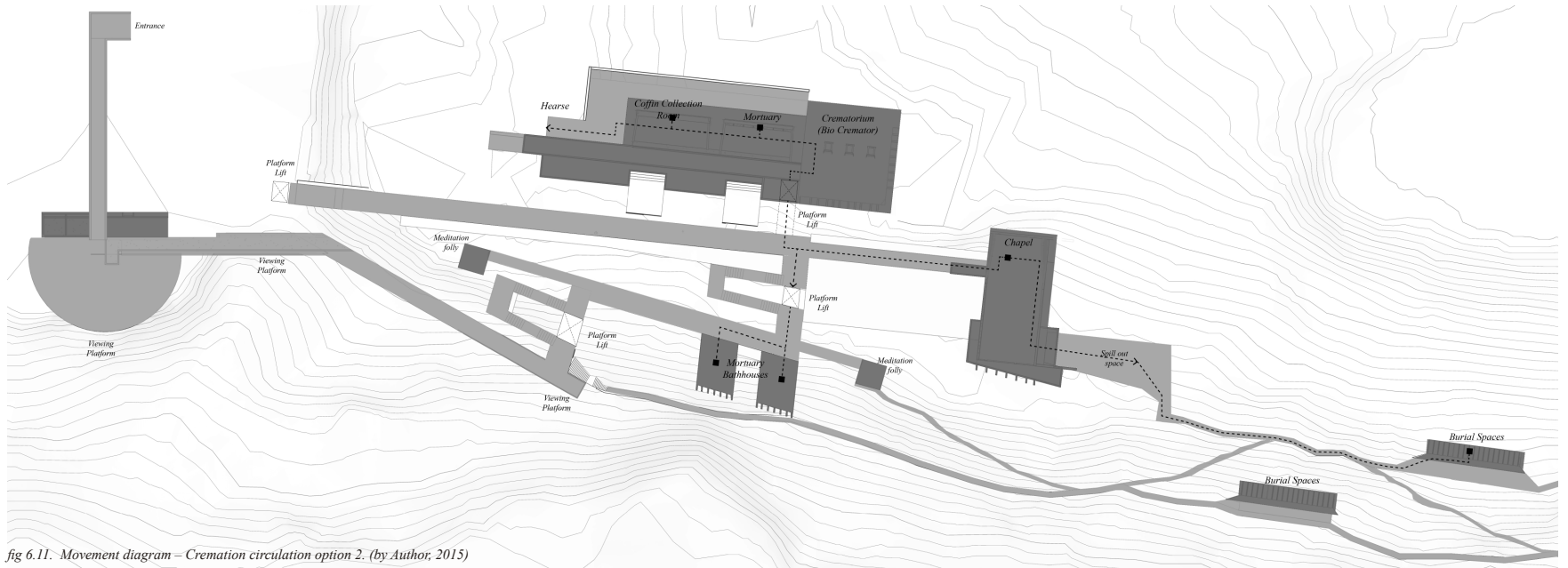


fig 6.11. Movement diagram – Cremation circulation option 2. (by Author, 2015)

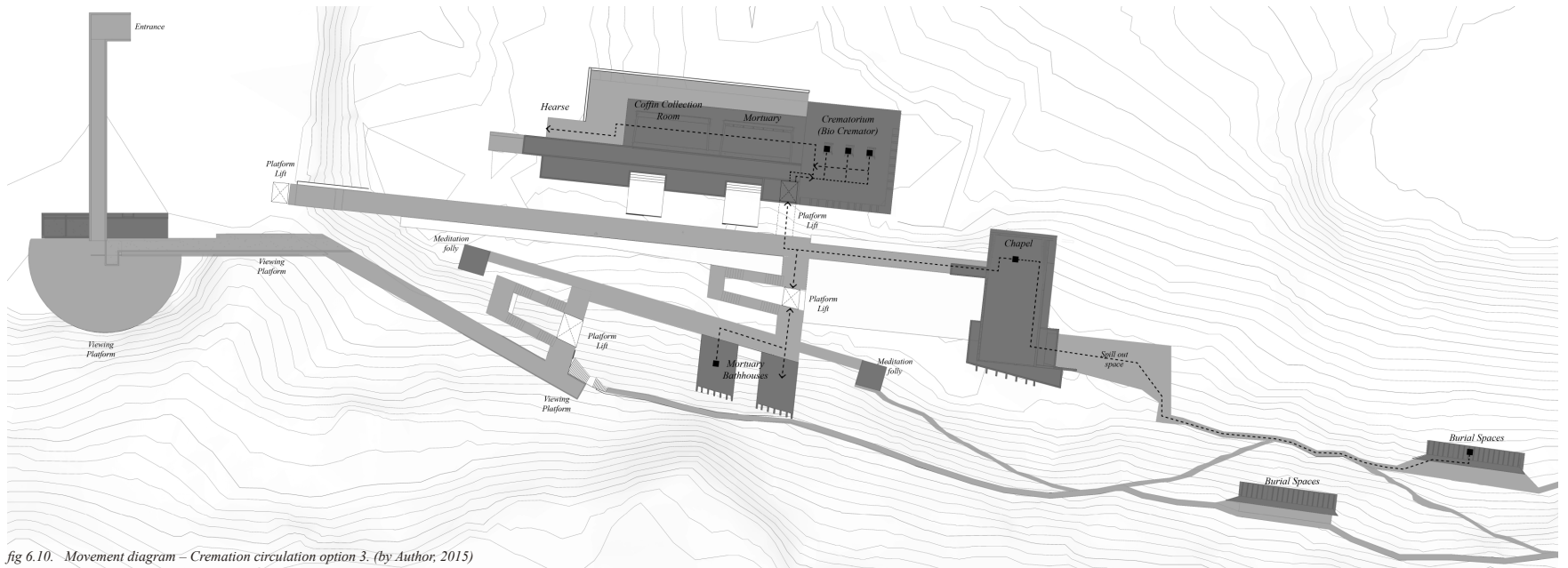


fig 6.10. Movement diagram – Cremation circulation option 3. (by Author, 2015)

## Spatial Requirements of Programme

The scale and size of the required spaces were determined through precedent studies of similar buildings in the Johannesburg context and internationally. Spatially the structure will respond to context as well as the theoretical premise.

### Precedent Studies:

- Woodlands Crematorium, Stockholm, Sweden

### Crematorium

- Viewing and washing space required for the preparation of the deceased
- Pavilions and follies situated within the route structure in order to create isolation and privacy for individual meditation
- Crematorium space for 3 Bio Cremators and viewing slabs
  - Viewing space for cremation process
  - Service room and corridor for the delivery and storage of potassium hydroxide
  - Underground water reservoir for water storage
- Male and female change rooms for staff members
- Administrative offices
- Relaxation spaces for staff members
  - Courtyards and tearoom
- Lobby area
- Coffin collection space
- Hearse drop-off area
- Mortuary cooling room

### Chapel

- Gathering space upon entering and exiting the chapel
- Pulpit
- Seating for the congregation
- Isolated prayer and meditation niches
- Spill-out space into the ridge landscape
- Change room for the speaker
- Male and female bathrooms
- Rock altar for viewing the body

### Burial space and Park

- Burial follies dug into the ridge geology
- Isolated meditation follies and pavilions
- Public routes screened off from burial spaces

## Practical Implications of Programme

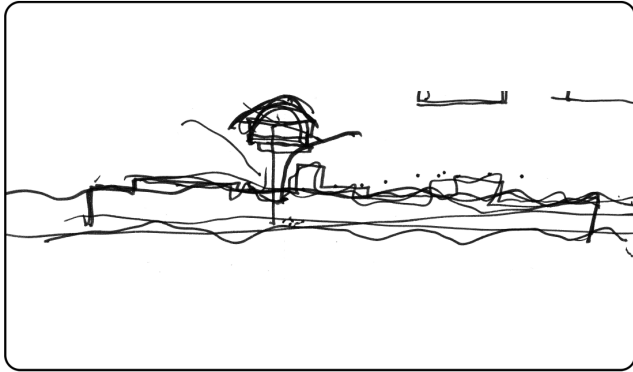


fig 6.12. Conceptual diagram showing ritual movement on plan. (by Author, 2015)

- The crematorium and cemetery falls under the control of Johannesburg Parks and Cemeteries.
- Observatory Ridge will be made accessible to the general public as a breathing space within the city.
- The idea of a ritualistic funerary procession will be re-established within South African burial practice in order to aid in the mourning process.
- The programme will make people more aware of the geological makeup of the ridge and its fauna and flora, thus acting as an educational landscape that allows users to learn through experiencing the abovementioned conditions.
- The ridge becomes a "memorial park" for the public and a landmark in Johannesburg's ongoing history.
- Green space would be given back to the city in the form of a rehabilitated ridge. City dwellers would have the opportunity to remove themselves from the chaos and noise of the city and immerse themselves in a natural, more thought inductive and contemplative environment.

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## Conceptual Implications of Programme

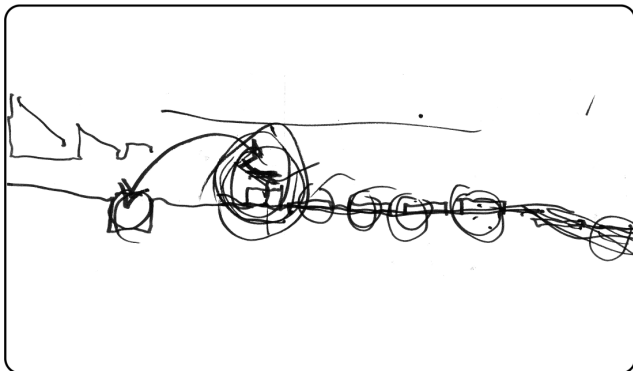


fig 6.13. Conceptual diagram showing ritual movement in section. (by Author, 2015)

- The cemetery park becomes a mediator between natural and built, between life and death.
- Mourners undergo a more physical process in taking leave of the deceased by washing, viewing and encircling the body throughout the constructed landscape.
- Alternative methods of interment within the South African context are addressed and related to processes currently taking place globally.
- The aim of the new programme is to enhance and support existing practices on the site and in the surrounding area, and to serve as an example of how cemeteries can be designed in parallel with parks in order to extend the programmatic relevance to context, as well as extend the lifespan of the constructed and natural landscapes.
- The natural condition of the ridge would be rehabilitated. Melville Koppies would be used as a precedent study in this regard.
- The metaphysical relationship between the living and the dead is established as the user descends into the structure, which resembles a necropolis or city of the dead. It becomes a place where the living and the dead interact; where mortal time unfolds spatially.

## Client

Johannesburg Parks and Cemeteries state in their annual report that there is a huge shortage of land when it comes to burial within the city, mainly due to the fast-growing population and mortality rate of the city. Its current approach to burial space cannot be maintained in the future (Johannesburg City Parks 2008).

The proposed programme on Yeoville Ridge allows for the identification of two main clients. The first client, Johannesburg Parks and Cemeteries, will take charge of the entire ridge as part of the framework development and rehabilitation process of the ridge. They will work in close collaboration with surrounding spiritual groups in order to facilitate their weekly gatherings. The site as park and spiritual journey will allow for groups to gather in the follies and pavilions. Johannesburg Parks and Cemeteries would manage the landscape as a hybrid system of a burial ground and a nature reserve (Johannesburg City Parks 2008).

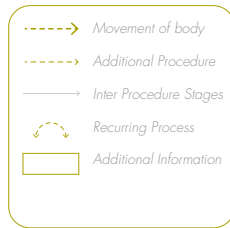
The second client would be the general public that could be divided further into various categories of public interaction and clientele. The site, being a burial ground, and the park will cater for both the mourner taking part in a funeral, the park-goer in search of isolation from the chaos of the city, and the spiritual being in search of a space to meditate or pray. These users will be able to use the park and burial grounds as well as the built structures leading to the park. The crematorium itself is situated in such a manner that it can be operated independently should the park not accommodate cremated burials anymore. This is highly unlikely as the City of Johannesburg's Parks and Cemeteries department recommends the future leasing of burial spaces at 10 year intervals (Moodley 2007:1-2).



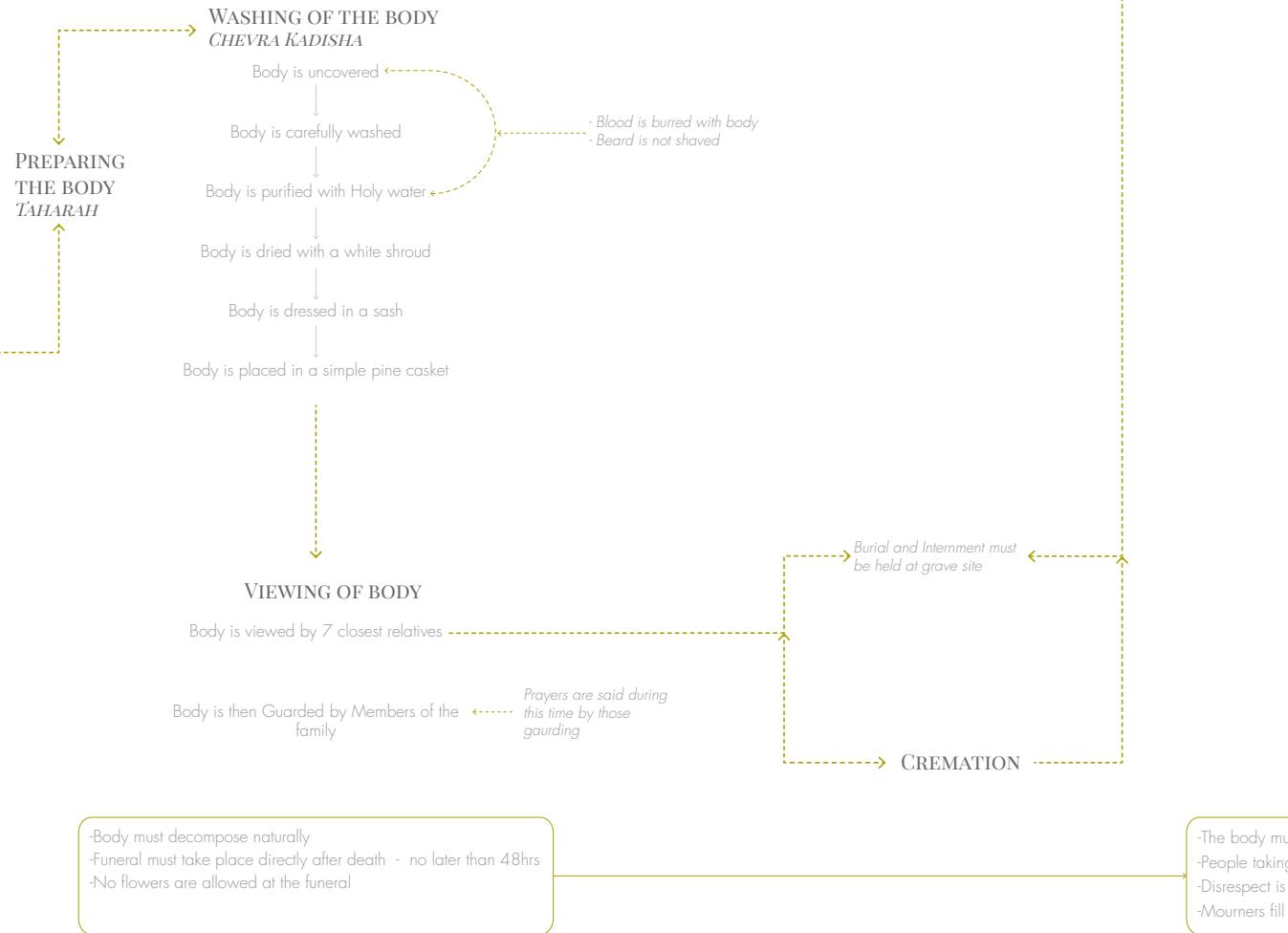
fig 6.14. Image of Pentecostals praying on site. (Mikhael Subotzky, edited by Author, 2015)

# Mapping of Jewish Funerary procession and rituals

## PREPARATION PROCESS



**NEWS RECEIVED**  
 Blessing is recited :  
*"Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, the one true Judge"*

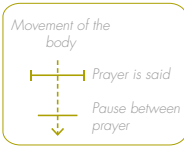




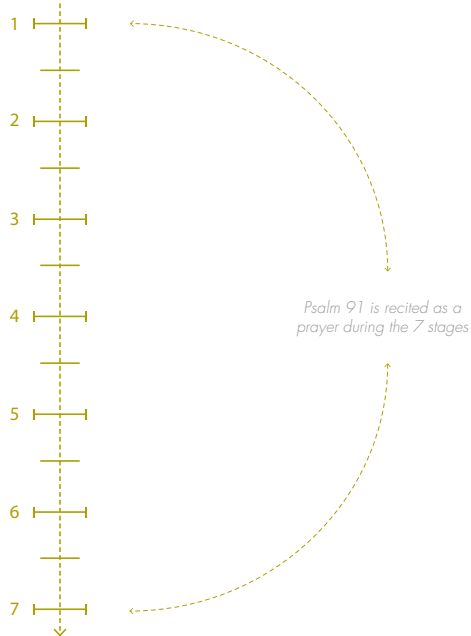
INTERMENT PROCESS

**CARRYING CASKET**

The casket is carried to the grave site from the washing.



This process has 7 steps that need to be fulfilled



**KEVARA**  
Casket is lowered into the Ground

Mourners fill grave with soil

...st decompose naturally  
...part in funeral must follow casket.  
...show if body decomposes before funeral  
...grave symbolic of closure

- Hands must be washed with holy water after funeral to cleanse Mourners of bad spirits.
- Family must pass through a row of mourners in order to exit cemetery.

POST BURIAL PROCESS

**EXIT PROCESSION OF MOURNERS AND FAMILY**

**WASHING OF HANDS**

Before exiting the graveyard, the mourners are allowed to wash hands with water in order to purify after the burial.

**MOURNERS LEAVE CEMETERY**

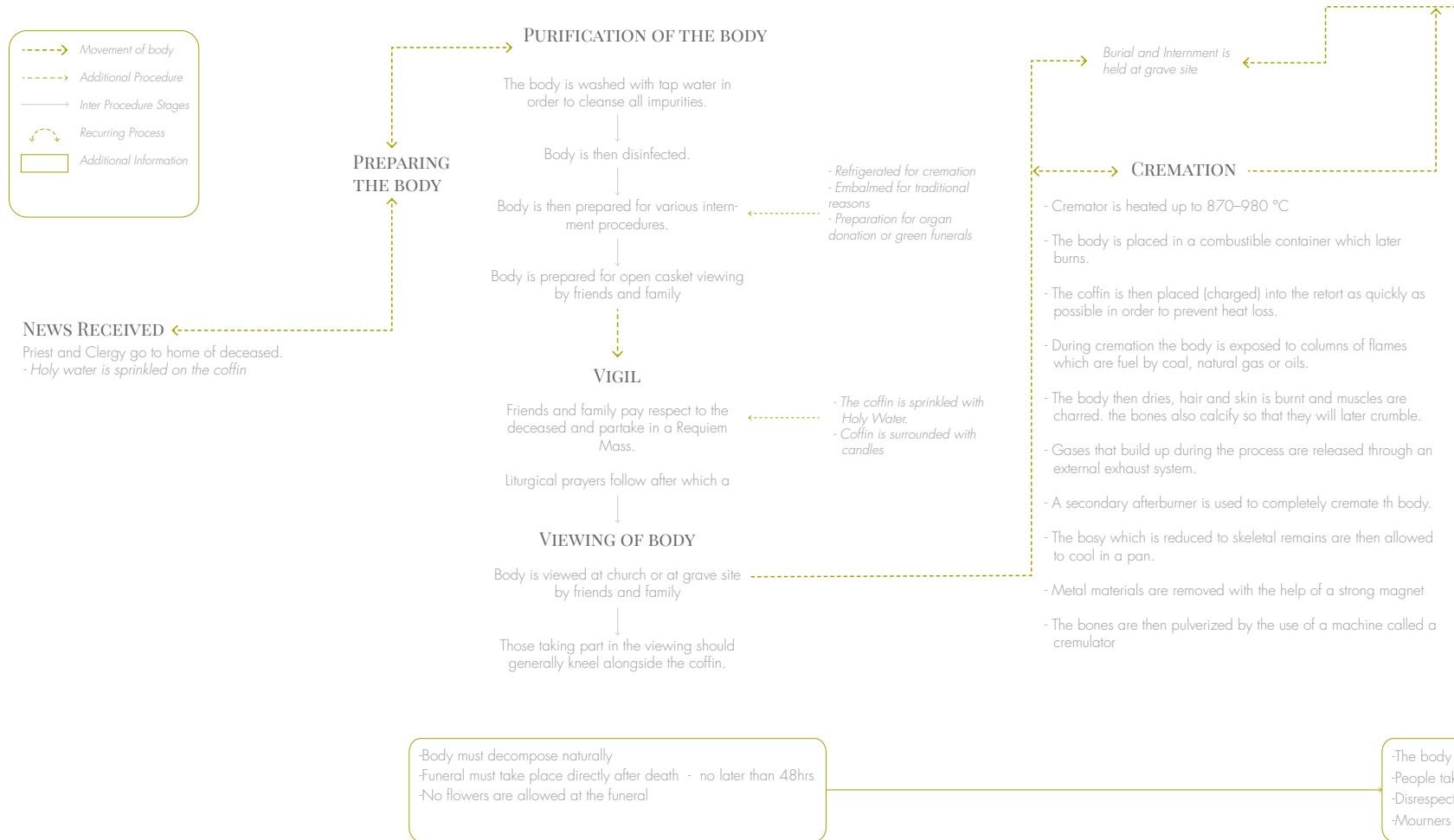
When leaving the cemetery the family is surrounded by two parallel rows of mourners to allow for closure.

**VISITING GRAVEYARDS**

When visiting Jewish graves a semi precious stone is placed on the grave with the left hand. This shows that the grave is being tended to, it also allows those who did not partake in the mitzvahs of burial to show respects

# Mapping of Christian Funerary procession and rituals

## PREPARATION PROCESS



INTERMENT PROCESS

➤ **BLESSING OF THE GRAVE**

The grave, if not already a catholic cemetery should be blessed by the priest by sprinkling water and reciting a specific prayer.

*"O God, by Your mercy rest is given to the souls of the faithful, be please to bless this grave. Appoint Your holy angels to guard it and set free from all the chains of sin and the soul of him (her) whose body is buried here, so that with all Thy saints he (she) may rejoice in Thee for ever. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."*

**BURIAL**

The coffin is carried from the church or viewing area to the grave site.

*This procession takes place with a cross-bearer and priest in front of the coffin with mourners following.*



The coffin is then lowered into the ground and filled with soil.

In the instance of cremation burial is also preferred. The scattering of ashes is not allowed.

Casket is lowered into the Ground

must decompose naturally  
ing part in funeral must follow casket.  
is show if body decomposes before funeral  
ill grave symbolic of closure

- Hands must be washed with holy water after funeral to cleanse Mourners of bad spirits.
- Family must pass through a row of mourners in order to exit cemetery.

POST BURIAL PROCESS

**EXIT PROCESSION  
OF  
MOURNERS AND FAMILY**



**MOURNERS LEAVE CEMETERY**

*The burial ritual is quick and the procession does not linger in the graveyard*

**VISITING GRAVEYARDS**

*There is no prescribed post burial memorization or remembrance that takes place at the graveyard.*

