

5 PRECEDENT STUDY

5.1 ALEXANDRA INTERPRETATION CENTRE

Architect: Peter Rich Architects
Location: Alexandra, Johannesburg
Project Year: 2003

Precedent_ [Functional / material / technology]

The project is located in Alexandra, one of South Africa's poorest townships. The project aims to celebrate Nelson Mandela, in his first home when he moved to Johannesburg. The centre is a 3 story building that spans over a busy street.

The centres house training facilities, a jazz archive shops, gallery exhibition spaces, library and shops. The building further defines two urban squares which play host to the social interactions of the people around Alexandra.

The building learns from its surrounding context by creating a collage like façade of materials used in and around the immediate context. The juxtaposition of both tectonic and stereotomic infill sections creates a playful and light hearted presence in the context. The scale of the centre doesn't impose its self in the landscape but is able to mediate between its civic nature and the residential context. The building aims to give the people of Alexandra a place where

they can appreciate the past while embracing the opportunities of the future.

Principles learned:

- Materials and technology are learned from the context.
- The scale of the building is able to negotiate between its civic function and its residential setting.
- The public space is reclaimed and the street is a source of energy for these spaces.

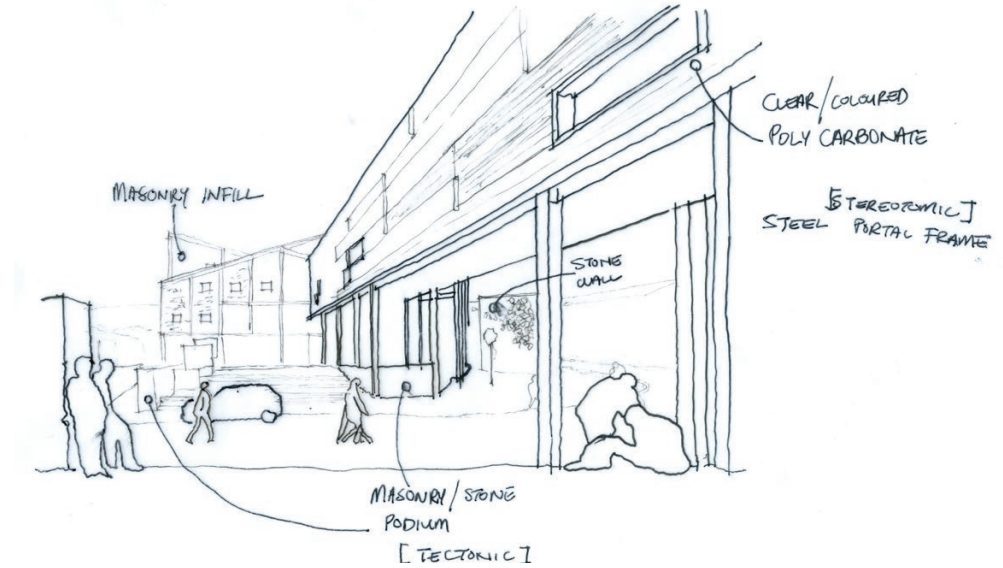


Figure 42: Material palette (Author 2016).

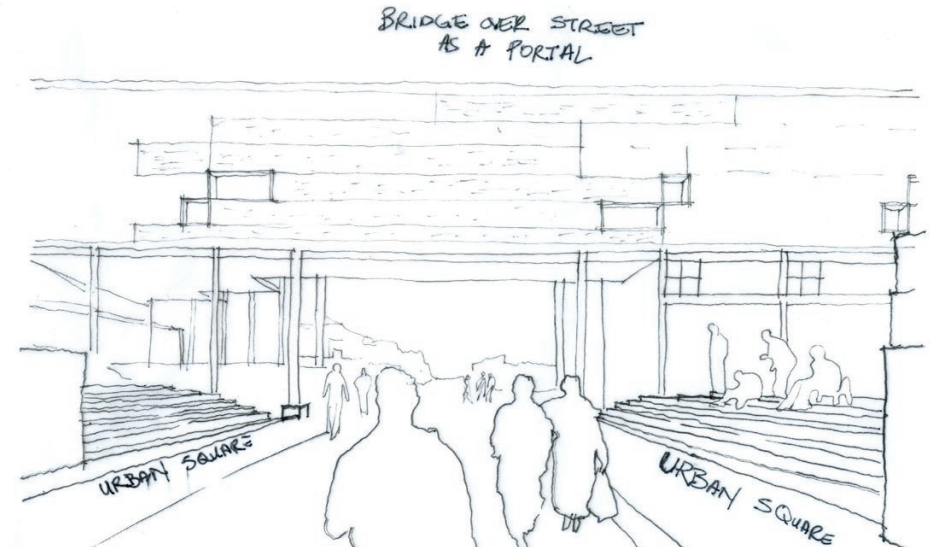


Figure 43: Definition of public space (Author 2016).



Figure 44: The building blends well with the context of Alexandra (Baan 2010).

5.2 OUTREACH FOUNDATION COMMUNITY CENTRE

Architect: Local Studio
Location: Hillbrow, Johannesburg
Project year: 2015

Precedent_ [Material, Technology]

The Outreach Foundation Community Centre is one of the first social infrastructure projects to be built in Hillbrow since the 1970. The building is situated on the roof top of a previously unfinished community centre. The three primary functions of the building are:

- Computer centre on the ground floor
- Dance studio on the first floor
- Office and meeting rooms on the second floor

The building uses materials that are rarely explored in the South African context. The form of the building is defined by its structure of light gauge steel clad with corrugated steel and poly carbonate sheeting. It gives homage to the industrial past of Johannesburg while still creating a new language within the built environment of the Hillbrow. The centre embodies the ideas of transparency, honesty, where materials are or dressed up or hidden but are exposed, displaying the intentions of the architecture.

Principles learned:

- Materials and technology are learned from the context.
- The architecture is able to negotiate with the aspiration of the community by honouring the past but also adding to the identity of Hillbrow. The current aesthetic of the city is not copied but is rather juxtaposed by the light steel structure against the concrete and masonry buildings.

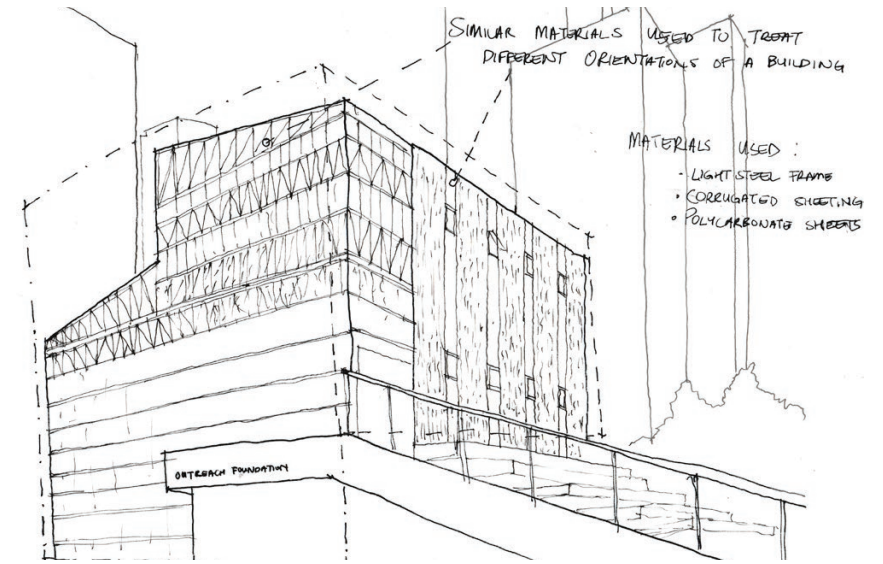


Figure 45: The skin of the building is different depending on the orientation of the wall and the function within the building (Author 2016).

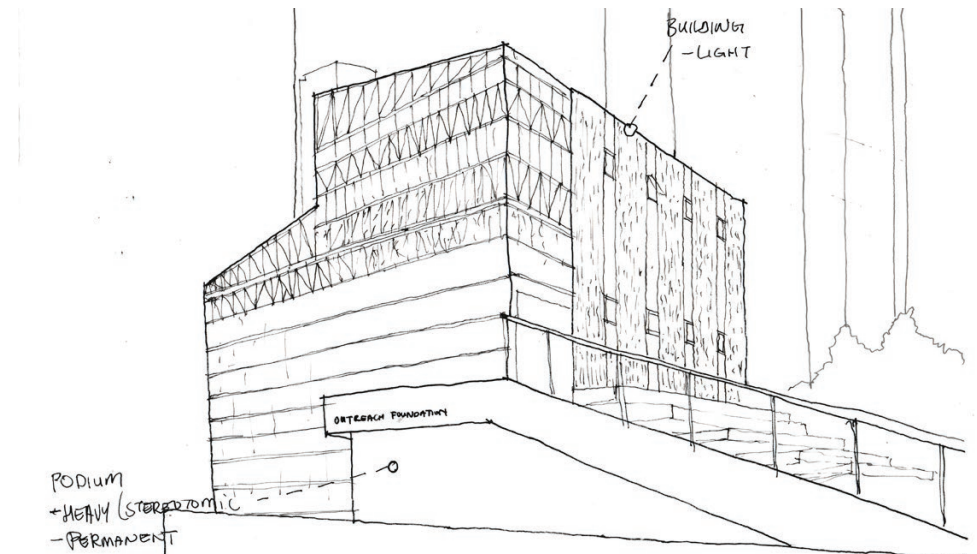


Figure 46: The Building is a light mass placed over the roof of an existing community hall. The community hall becomes the podium for the building (Author 2016).

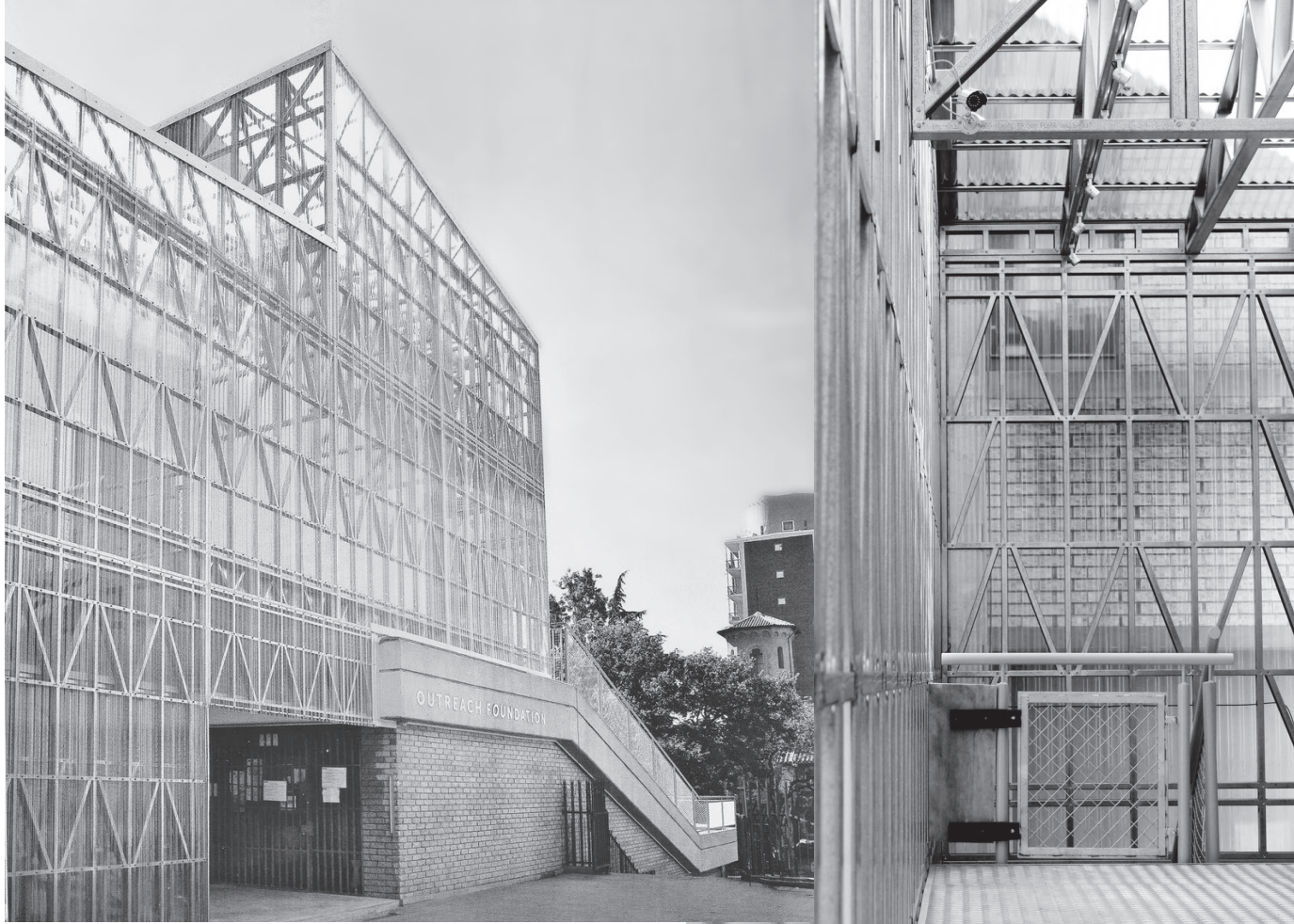


Figure 47:Material honesty as principle that embodies the characteristic of the material use of existing buildings in the immediate context (Local Studio 2015).

5.3 TAXI RANK NO.2

Architect: 26'10 South Architects
Location: Diepsloot, Johannesburg
Project year: 2012

Precedent_ [Design / materials]

Taxi Rank No.2 is located in Diepsloot, an apartheid township located on the outskirts of northern Johannesburg. It is a socially and economically volatile environment. The main taxi rank which connects it to the greater Johannesburg was in need of an upgrade and so, the project commenced. The project attempted to provide better public spaces within the township. The project aimed to improve the relationship between people and their public spaces but also provide a viable way of increasing the commercial viability of the rank and also the social standing of those that live and use the rank.

The rank's primary house

- The taxi rank.
- Administration offices
- Public ablutions
- Commercial spaces in the form of market stalls

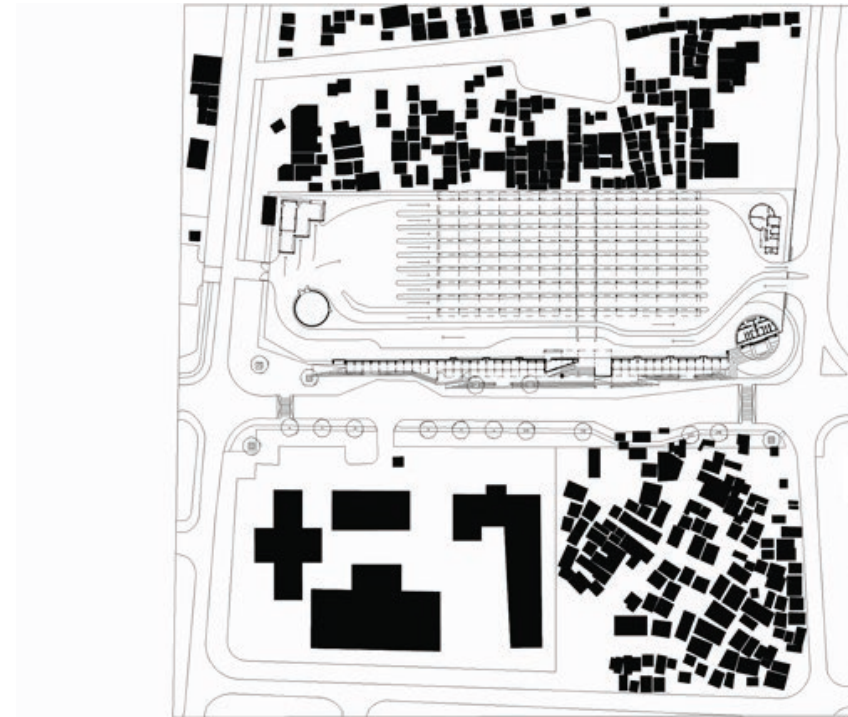
“The rank upgrade is one of many planned within the city’s Corridors of Freedom, in line with the Johannesburg Growth and

Development Strategy 2040 (GDS).” (Johannesburg Development Agency [JDA] 2014). The strategy aims to ensure Joburg residents live nearer to their places of work and are able to work, live and play in them without having to use private motorised transport (JDA 2014).

The rank does not shy away from the street but converses with it by providing both a linear market which defines the street and an urban square where people can linger and congregate. “The intervention improves the environmental, social and commercial sustainability of the taxi rank and led to a layout which seeks to integrate the facility with the day-to-day life of Diepsloot” (JDA 2014).

Principles learned

- Celebrates the African street market as a public space
- Materials are derived from the material palette of the surrounding dwellings. Steel being the most predominant material used in shack construction.



Site plan (2610 South Architects 2016).



Figure 48: The taxi rank within its context (Baan n.d.).

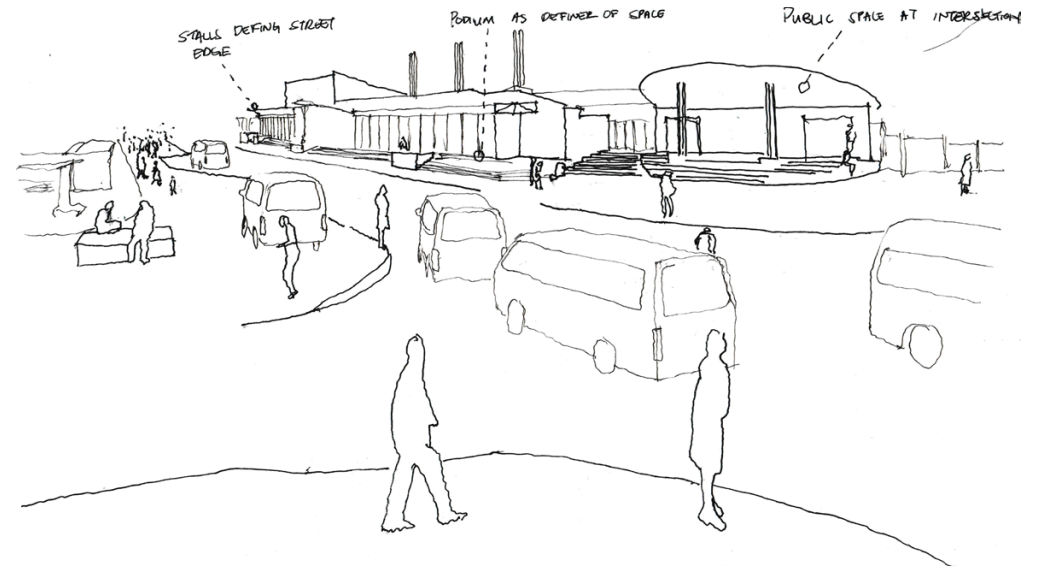


Figure 49: The linear market and public porch as the thresholds between the rank and the street (Author 2016).

5.4 VPUU – VIOLENCE PREVENTION THROUGH URBAN UPGRADING_ VPUU URBAN PARK AND ACTIVE BOX

Architect: Jonker & Barnes Architects / Tarna
Klitzner Landscape Architects

Location: Khayelitsha, Cape Town

Project year: 2011

Precedent_ [Urban]

The Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrading programmes aims to nurture sustainable and integrated communities. It does this by addressing issues and negative perceptions within the township. The programme integrates 5 components, namely:

- Community participation
- Social crime prevention
- Situational crime prevention
- Institutional crime prevention
- Knowledge management

The programme is invested in the active participation of the community, from the design inception phase all the way to the operation and management of the interventions. The first phase of the project proposed an urban park with a multi-purpose facility overlooking the park. This developed into the idea of 'balls on a string' (figure 32) concept where these multi-purpose

facilities, Active Boxes, are placed along a path that goes through the township. A previously dangerous route is redefined as a secure path for the residents starting from the train station, all the way through various neighbourhoods and undeveloped land parcels. These Active Boxes serve as landmarks within the context and serve as secure points for one to easily identify and go to in case and crime situation arises.

The Active boxes belong to community members, ensuring that these community facilities are maintained by them and also gives them the opportunity to be active in the safety of their neighbourhoods. The Active boxes are markers of safe public spaces. These public spaces are in the form of urban parks of varied scales depending on the location. These parks are not only recreational spaces but also safe spaces where people can congregate. What this programme has been able to

achieve is to change the perception of previously dangerous spaces into positive spaces that improve the lives of the people who use these spaces.

Principles learned

- The relationship the public space and the public building. The relationship allowed for both spaces to be used by the public and the energy(people) could occupy either the spaces or the building or even both.
- Decentralising security as way of reaching more people in a more economical manner

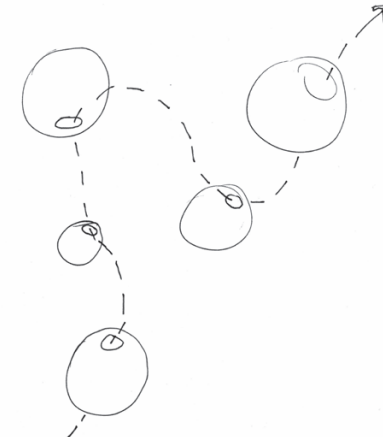


Figure 50: Active box along a route as balls on a string (Author 2016).



Figure 51: An Active box proximity to a recreational space (Dayton 2014).

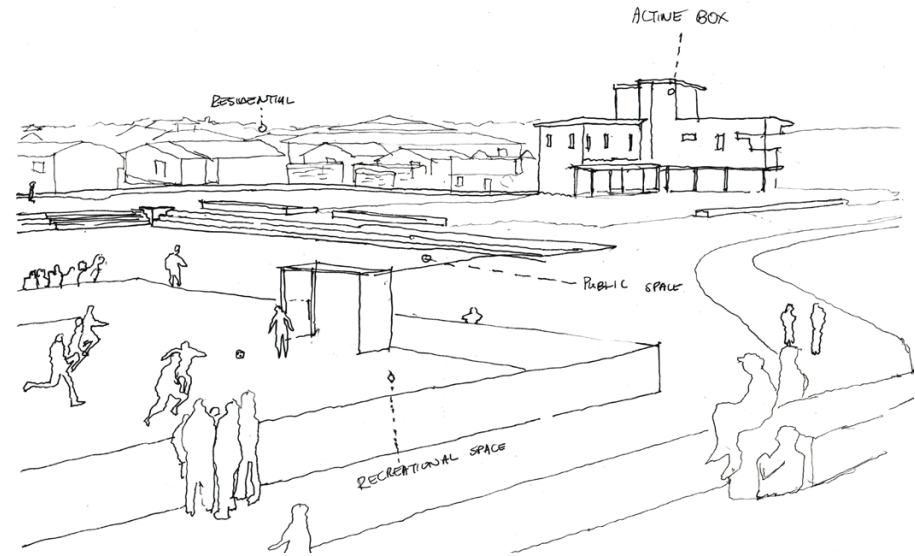


Figure 52: The Active Box is always placed close to a public space. It fosters a safe zone between the public space and residential zone (Author 2016).

5.5 KOBAN

Architect: Various

Location: Japan

Project year: Various

Precedent_ [Functional]

Koban or “police boxes” are scattered on the Japanese street scape. They are normally located near train stations, busy commercial streets and large public buildings. They act as community policing forums with the objective of deterring street crime.

They act as miniature police station where a member of the public may find one to ten police officers at a time who patrol their neighbourhood. The Koban are used by the public to seek directions, report petty crimes and as secure locations for people who are in need of security.

Principles learned

- Decentralised public service provision as way of reaching more people but also to provide a different perception to an otherwise highly institutionalised government entity. This allows for members of the public to be served in an efficient and manner.



Figure 53: Typical Koban (Thomas 2016).



Figure 54: Contemporary Koban within the city (Klein Dytham Architecture 2012).