

05 CONCEPT

Drawing the intention

The following chapter is dedicated to the design process which culminates as a building. Presented as a collection of thoughts, this journey is dynamic and does not conform to scale or dimension. Rather it is the refinement of an intention through its conception, development, testing phase and finally numerous iterations. This evolutionary process maintains the concept deep in its DNA and allows the building to grow freely into an architecture of place.

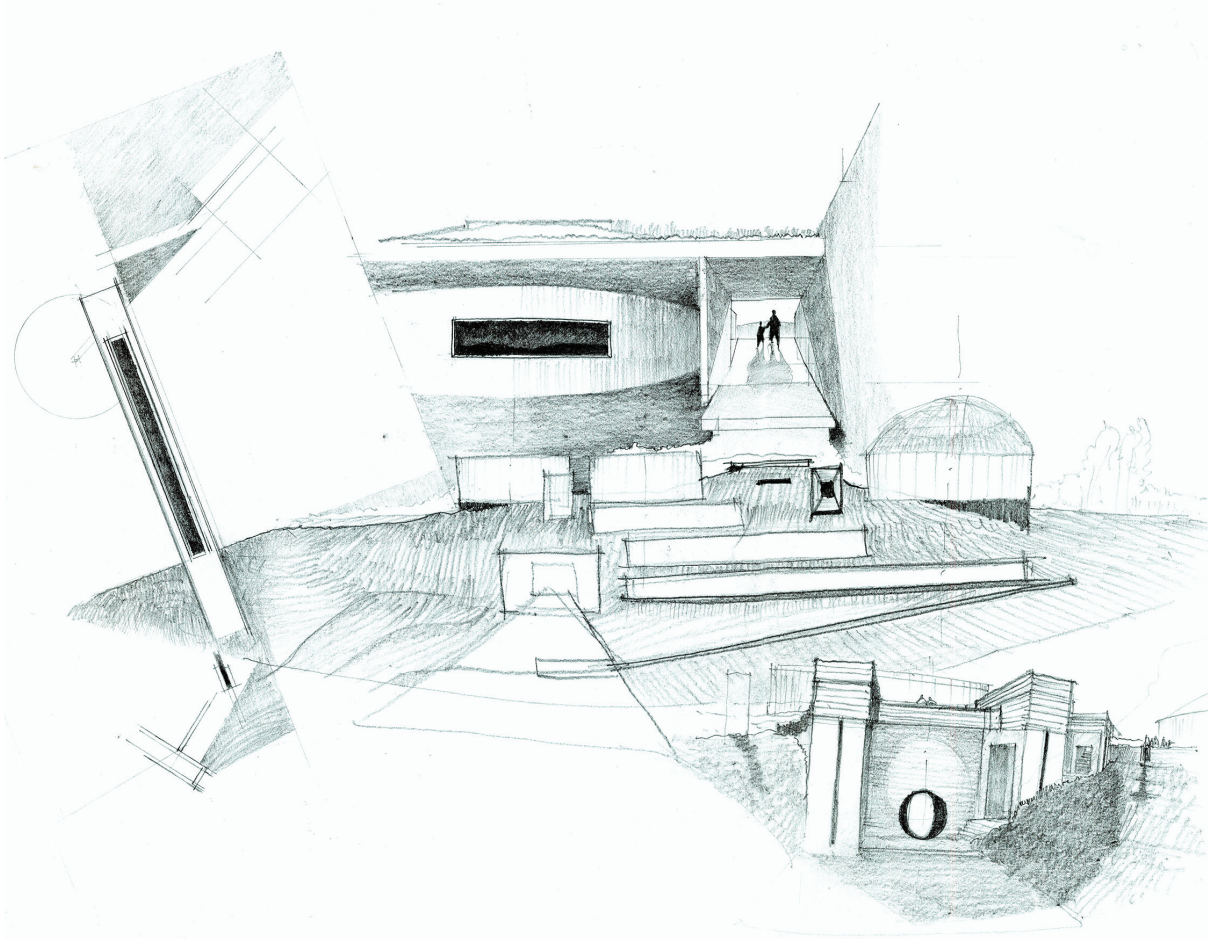
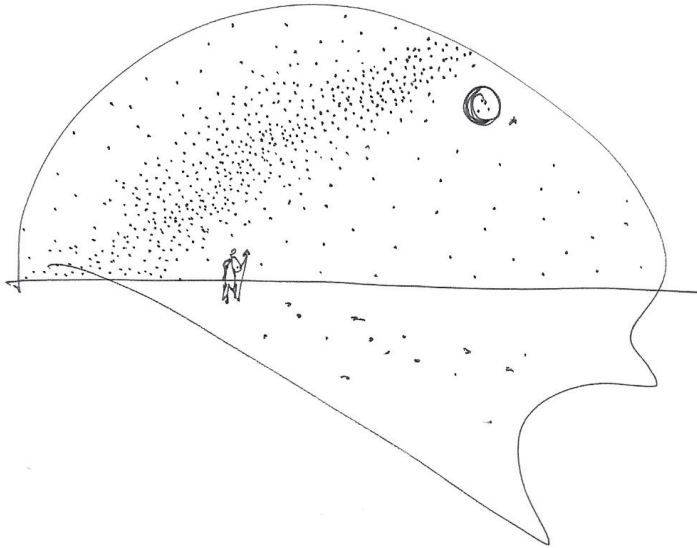


Fig.77. The environment gallery. Dedicated to the landscape, the outdoor rooms inspire curiosity and contemplation between the built forms. August, 2016.

5.1.1 PREMISE

Myth

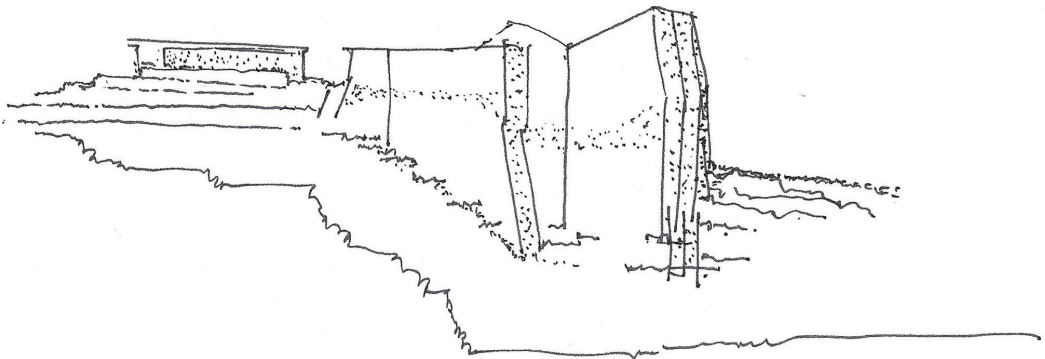


Inspired by Thebe Medupe's *Cosmic Africa*, the concept derives its intentions from an understanding of the relationship between two opposites. His exploration of myth and science reflects the overarching concept, *Borderland*, which ties the three volumes together.

Fig.78. Conceptual sketch. The fascination with the sky and landscape in which I exist. March, 2016.

5.1.2 CONCEPT

Reason



Attempting to reconcile the building and programme with the surrounding landscape, the architectural concept deals with an upward focused programme in an underground enclosure. Contesting the accepted norm in planetarium construction, the concept attempts to encourage curiosity in children by allowing them to engage with these borderlands.

Fig.79. The architectural translation of concept. Between the sky and landscape, the conceptual sketch imagines the building emerging from the ground like a rocky outcrop. August, 2016.

5.1.3 BORDERLANDS

Overlap

A disconnected site cannot be revived with an individual building alone, hence the purpose of this scheme is to facilitate the necessary activity to draw local and foreign energy. In doing so the challenges identified in the form of

social and physical dichotomies can be addressed. The site acts as a platform for overlap between the below mentioned dichotomies; the building becomes the borderland.

Rural and urban
Township and suburb
Artificial and natural
Mundane and extraordinary
History and narrative
Reason and myth
Sky and earth

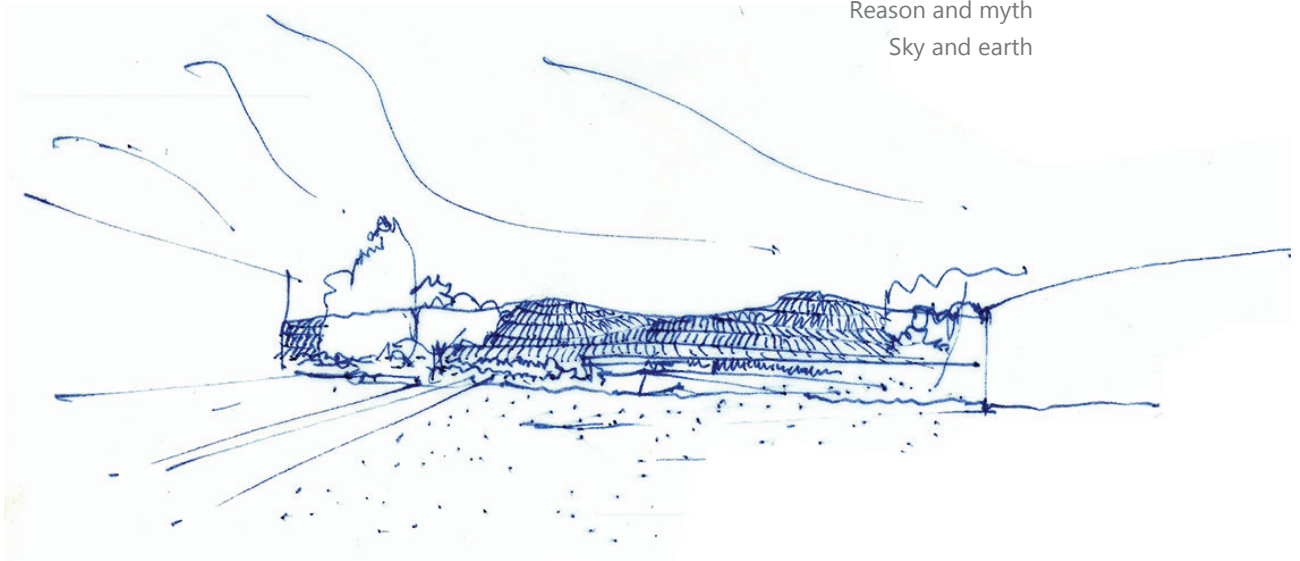


Fig.80. Definition of the outdoor room, emphasising the visual route. August, 2016.

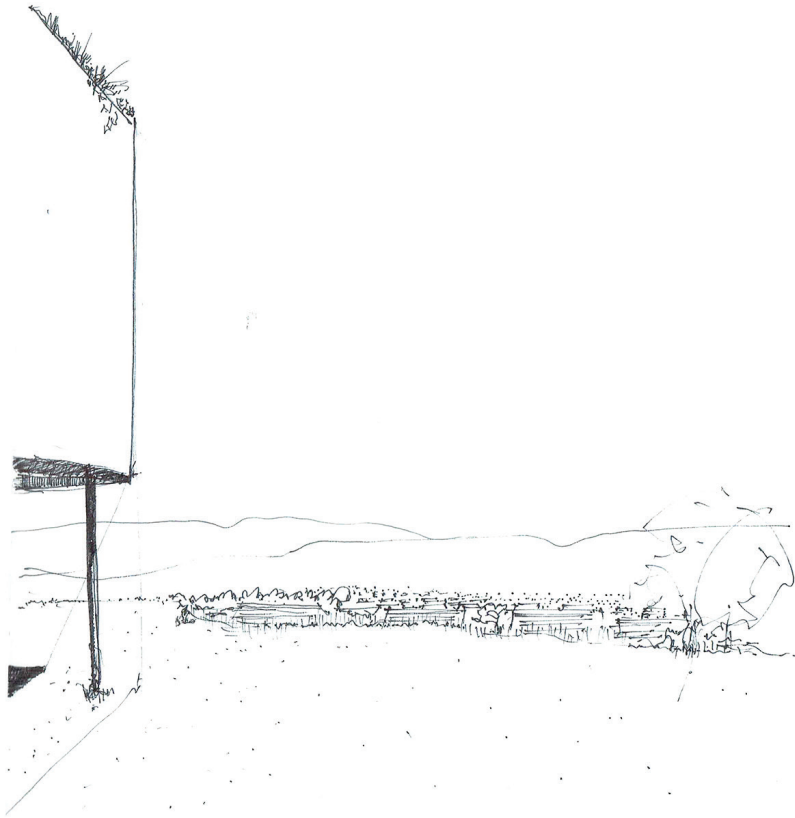


Fig.81. Responding to the landscape. Attempt to sensitise the architecture to not obstruct the view or interrupt the connection to the beyond. July, 2016.

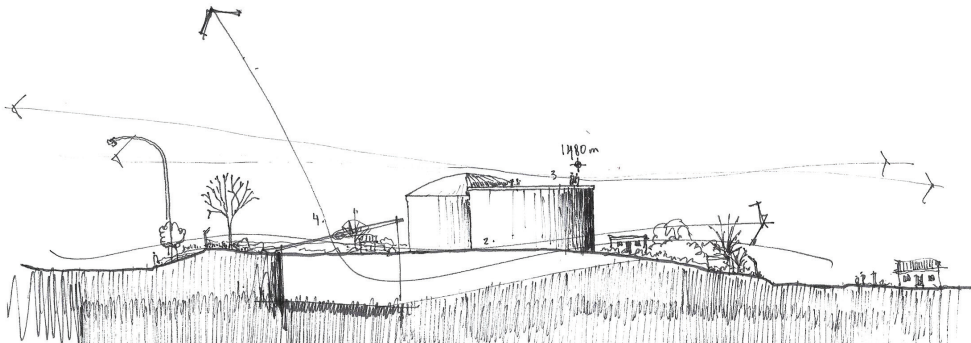


Fig.82. Disconnect. Removing the user from the surroundings in order to purposefully reveal them. April, 2016.

5.2 UNLOCKING THE SITE

Uncovering myth

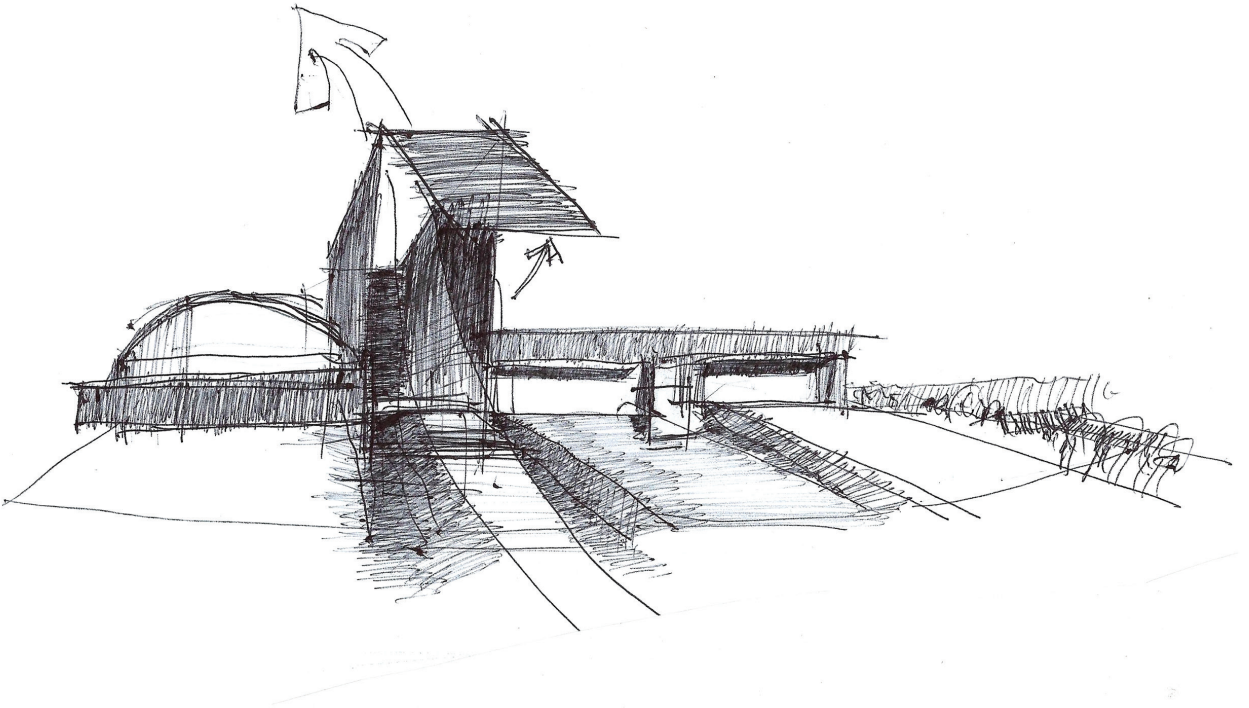


Fig.83. Unlocking the front door. Inviting residents of Tshwane to uncover the spirit of Atteridgeville.

A » *Suburban disconnect*

Inspired by *Tschumi's Parc de la Villette*, the idea of follies dispersed in the landscape was explored to complement the nature of surrounding context. This exploration was overlooked because it drew on the negative qualities of the suburban condition and proposes no resolution to the problem.

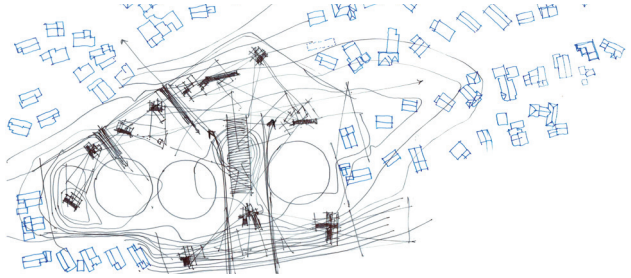


Fig.84. Decentralised follies. NTS. April, 2016.

B » *Boundaries + private property*

This exploration drew inspiration from the space contained within private property, using this notion to define space on site that would need to be contained by specific built forms. This configuration becomes problematic as the decentralisation of function requires each building to have its own service space, this would compromise the experiential quality of the site.

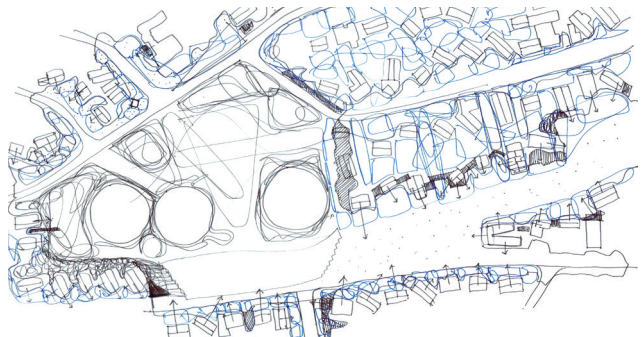


Fig.85. Spatial containers. NTS. April, 2016.

C » *First interaction*

A qualitative representation of possible collection areas. The north portion handles larger gatherings while the contemplative south shows useful pockets of space between the tanks and where trees provide shelter. Note how the east-west axis does not support collection due to the slope.

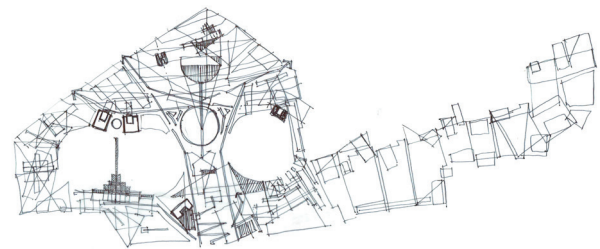


Fig.86. Collection space. NTS. April, 2016.

D » *Response to topography*

Drawing on the conclusions above, the final large scale exploration looked at creating an unfolded approach that positions itself around the existing tanks. In a manner to contain the site, welcome the street and provide passive surveillance along the east-west movement route.

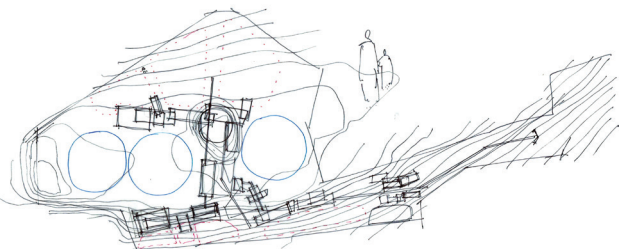


Fig.87. Plan without programme. NTS. April, 2016.

5.3 PROSPECT

Curiosity and observation

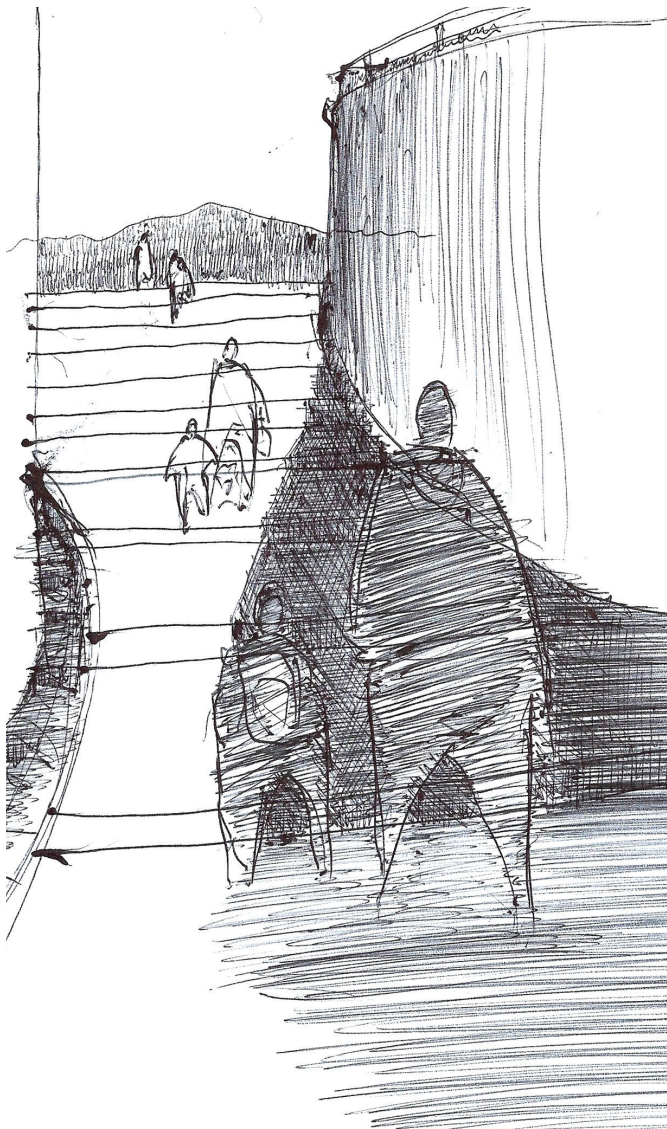


Fig.88. Gravititas. Accentuating the scale of the tanks through landscape manipulation.

The idea of prospect begins with the child spotting the large water tank on the hill upon approaching Atteridgeville. The destination on the hilltop creates anticipation and the child's mind can begin to wonder.

On arrival, the child can wander and explore the landscape, discovering the Lucas Moripe Stadium on the west, Pretoria CBD on the east and contemplate the number of houses in between.

Once the environment has been studied, the child begins to wonder: "*Where is the planetarium?*" The search for the planetarium takes the child down a series of ramps to a secret entrance. The speed and route explored by the child are determined by his/her own choice. The ramps offer another opportunity to interact whilst the stairs offer an alternative route. The reception and lobby provide the child with a chance to settle down before entering the planetarium.

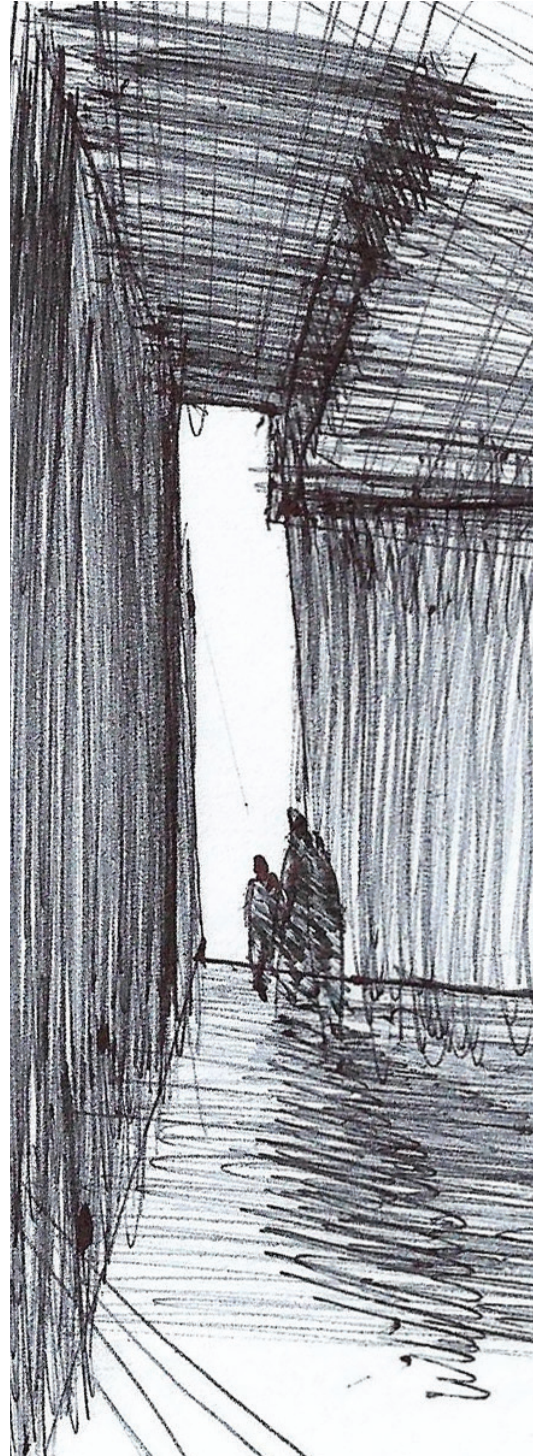
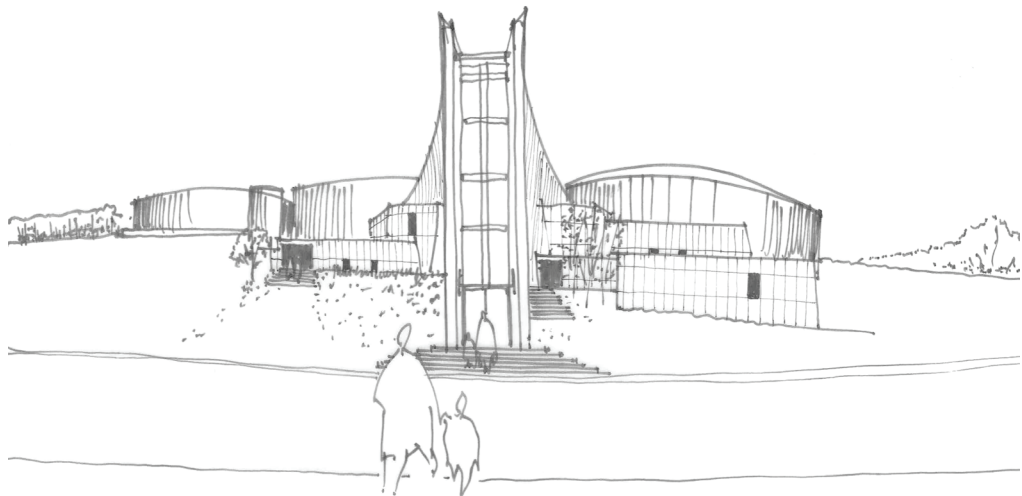
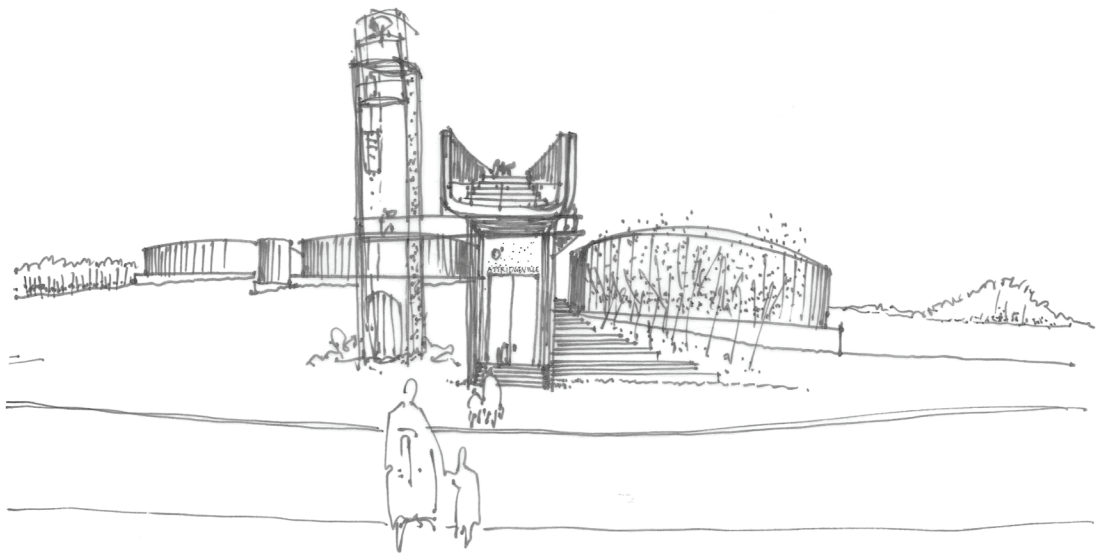
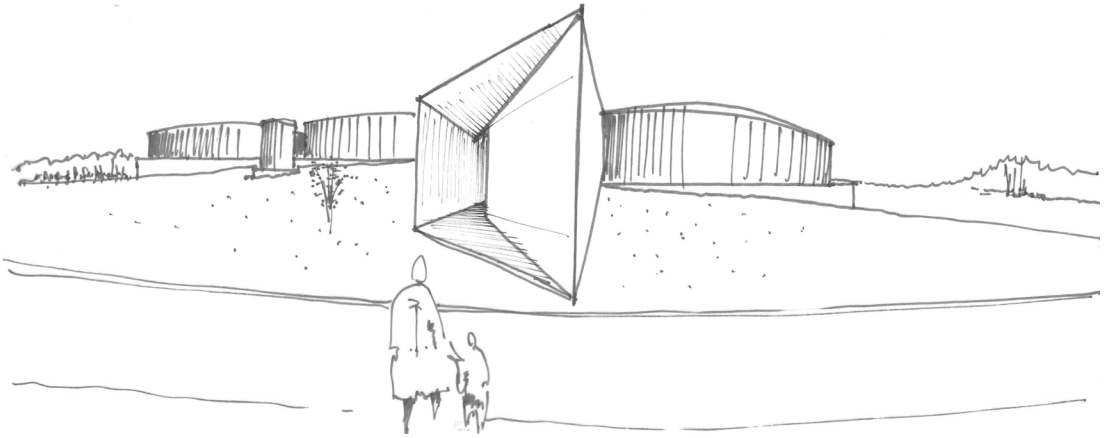
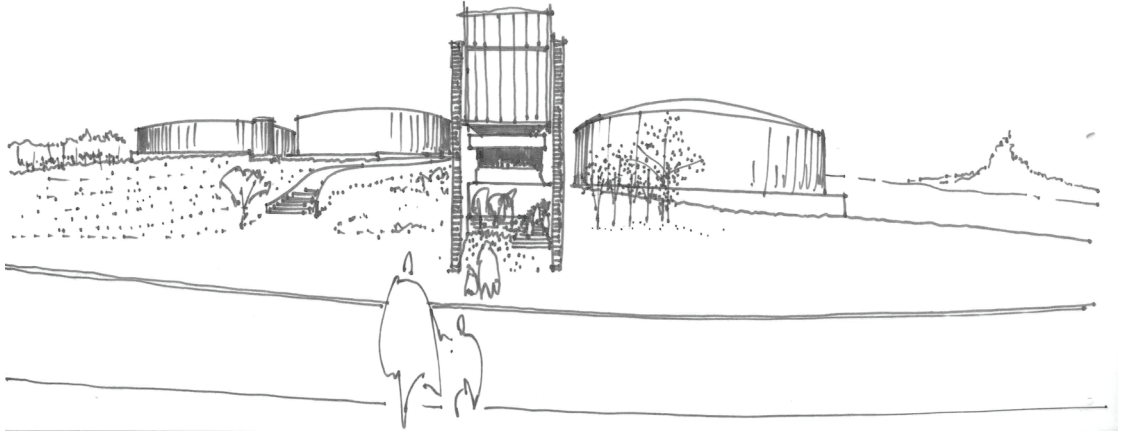


Fig.89. Delayed gratification. Inspiring the beyond.

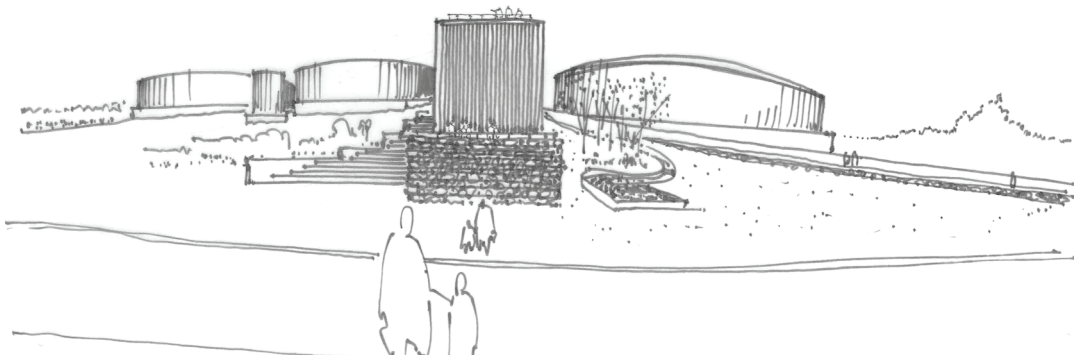




5.4 DEVELOPMENT

The front door

Layering intention onto a two dimensional drawing allows for the exploration of scale, reach, spread and approach. The exploration of the front door was specifically used to determine an appropriate architectural language for the site. The front door experiment enabled the designer to determine a movement axis and a visual route. Although this two dimensional exploration did not intend on addressing these issues, the outcome became a pleasant surprise, Figures 90 and 91.



5.5 THE DIAGRAM

Synthesis of exploration

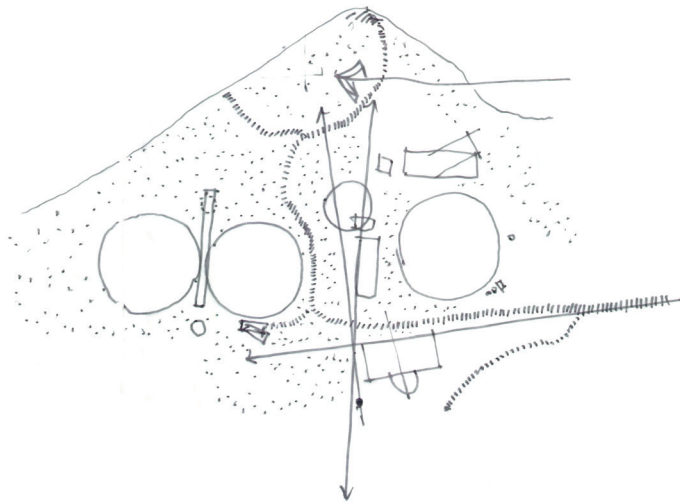


Fig.90. The movement route. July, 2016.
Understanding the movement route enables the design to unfold between the landscape and the water reservoirs. Highlighting destinations and promoting passive surveillance. These routes encourage the placement of buildings and organisation of the regroup spaces, allowing visitors to explore and gather at wish.

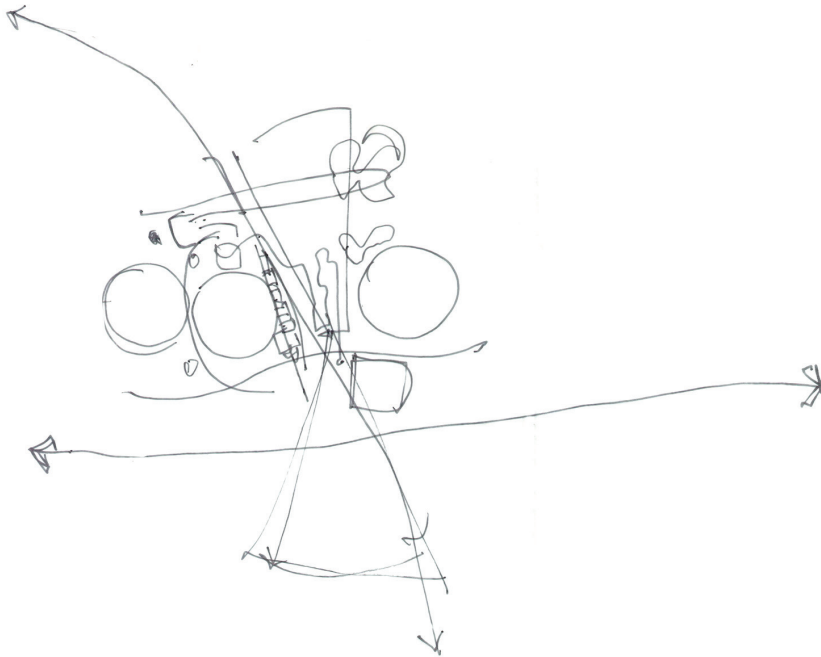


Fig.91. The visual route. July, 2016.
The visual route encourages contemplation and offers a scenic route for the local resident or a platform of observation for the visitor. The demarcation of these routes are fundamental to the design as they dictate the positioning of the buildings to prevent obstruction.