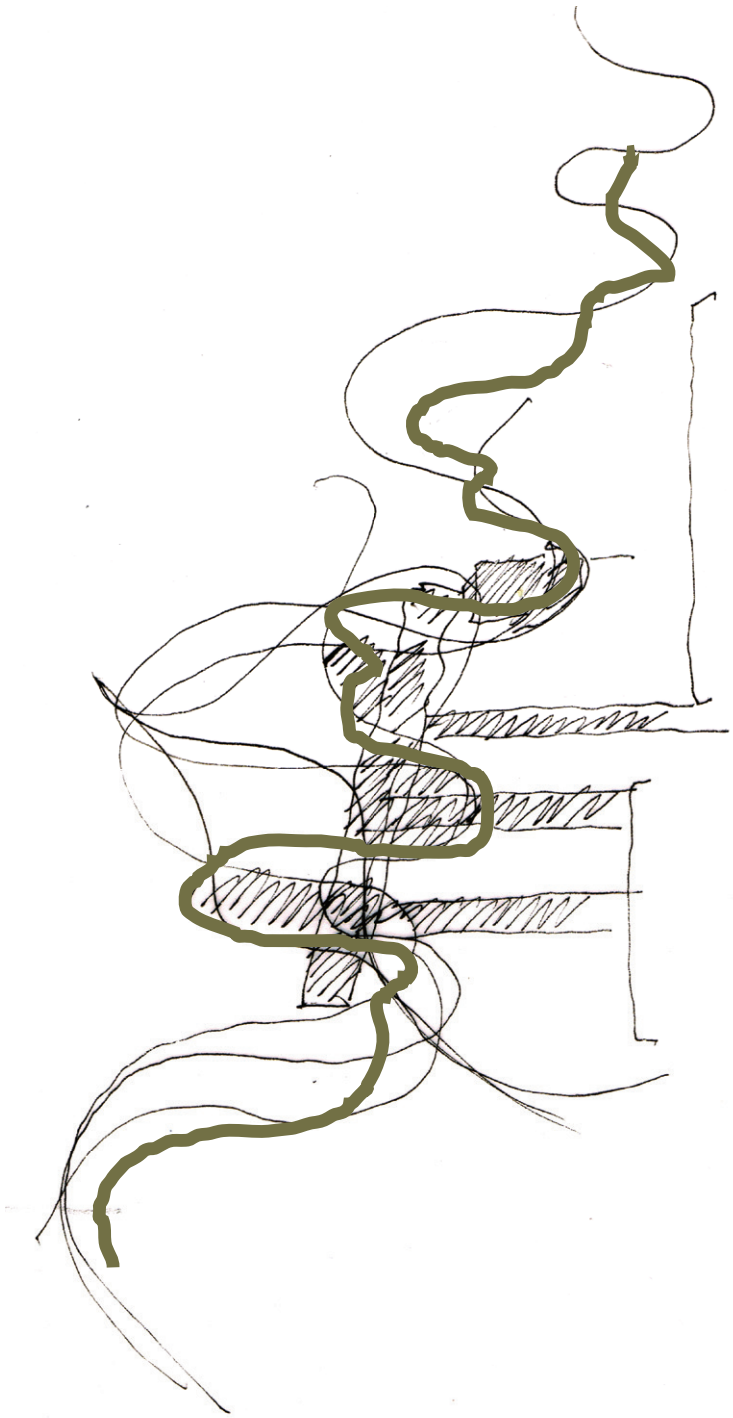


Figure 6.1: Parti of concept on site (Author 2019)

Concept 06

Hierarchy of design informants

Fractured city - *cite'* and *ville*

Over the years, Pretoria's development framework has been very functionally driven. This positivist development has favoured the *ville* [built environment] and has had a negative spatial and cultural consequences on the *cite*' [lived experiences] of the city. By prioritising infrastructural development, the cultural and social health of the city's people has been neglected.

A physical result of this fracture between *cite*' and *ville* is the 'lost' or 'fragmented' urban public space that has becomes hard to interact with as it is either inaccessible or dangerous. In order to mend this fracture between *cite*' and *ville*, a place-making architecture is needed that is sensitive to its past, present and future context.

Cultural significance of the Apies river

The Apies river use to play an important role in the daily lives of its people, being not only a physical source for freshwater and productive food systems but also a place for social and spiritual fulfilment, but as Pretoria developed the Apies river's initial sense of place had been lost as the river had been modified to such an extent that it is unrecognisable as a natural river that once had such strong spiritual and productive affinity.

To preserve the social and cultural significance of the Apies river, it needs to be rehabilitated to a state where new spiritual and productive relationships between the city and river can be established through meaningful lived experiences.

Regenerative Framework

The City of Tshwane's Regenerative framework focuses on inner-city regeneration and has identified place-making opportunities in areas where the city and natural landscape come together in an attempt to redefine Pretoria's lost sense of place. Kopanong or "the gathering space" becomes an important node regeneration as it has te most potential for social, economic and environmental enablement and growth.

The regeneration of the Apies river plays an important role in achieving the city's vision where all of Pretoria's citizens have access to social and economic opportunities through a network of interconnected ecologies that facilitate social, economic and environmental upliftment. These new connections between city and river provide infrastructure for socio-economic and environmental place-making opportunities that not only have the potential to redefine the city's lost sense of place, but also to create a more resource efficient and resilient city, grow an inclusive economy and foster social cohesion.

Place-making theory

Place-making is defined as the creation of environments with a sense of place that reveals the unique nature of its cultural and natural context. Within Pretoria, place-making is specifically important as it has the potential to reveals the city's lost character. To recreate place as stated in the CoT's Regenerative vision, three sequential strategies have been identified that will aid in the process.

The first strategy is celebrating the everyday rituals taking place in public space as they have the ability to generate meaning. These activities encourage social exchanges and interactions but the meaning ascribed to a place through these rituals are only temporary and can be seen as 'weak'. In order to establish 'stronger' places, deeper experiences are necessary.

The second strategy focuses on phenomenological experiences and how its can provide a way to reveal emotions and translate them into experiences. When designing for people, their senses should be taken into account as their experiences are strongest when the different senses integrate. When we interact our bodies are living centres of our experiences and that is why it is important to be fully immersed in a space rather than just observing it from the outside.

The final strategy is to reestablish an intimate relationship with the natural landscape instead of just merely viewing in from afar. By being immersed in the landscape, deeper experiences are made possible, we become more in-tune with a natures rhythms and in the process awakening the spirit of place.

Current conditions on site

Channelised Apies river:

Rather than integrating into the surrounding context functionally, the river has become a scar which divides the landscape and denies interaction with city and its people.

Fragmented public realm:
Due to the expropriation of public space and demolition of buildings for road-building purposes the public realm has become fragmented which resulted in lost space that is difficult to interact with.

Mono-functional development and privatisation of public space:

As an effect of private developments, not only the existing buildings' function have become private but the public space surrounding the buildings. This restricted access of the DTI also contributes towards the lost space adjacent the Apies river.

Programme as informant

Appropriate programmes were selected that reinforce a spiritual or productive connection with the river whilst promoting an economic, social and environmental resilient city.

Economic resilience:
To foster an inclusive economy and support the community, a public market will provide quality infrastructure needed to run a business, where a business incubator provides entrepreneurial support by equipping entrepreneurs with business development skill as well as to offering them financial support.

Social resilience:
The Apies river's recreational historical significance lends itself as a driver for a suitable programme that will be a catalyst for social interactions. The recreational programmes, Cafe', event space and public swimming pool aim to encourage social interactions between different people as well as to promote a better relationship between the city and the Apies river.

Environmental resilience:
To insure that the Apies river will continue to be relevant on an urban level as both a spiritual and productive source, its water as an important resource need to be respected. By addressing the Apies river's past water condition [flooding], its current water condition [polluted and weak flow] as well as postulate a future prospect where water is scarce, a suitable function for the architecture would be to harvest, filter and provide water to the surrounding community.

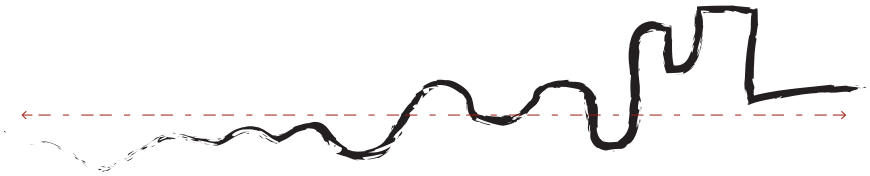
Locational driver

Creating a place that established new productive and spiritual connection with the Apies river, it has the potential to support the city's in becoming social, economic and environmental resilient.

Trevenna is perfectly situated between Pretoria's Central Business District and the residential area of Sunnyside and acts as a thoroughfare for pedestrian traveling to and from work. Due to the site's location, the potential for social, economic and environmental links are enhanced.

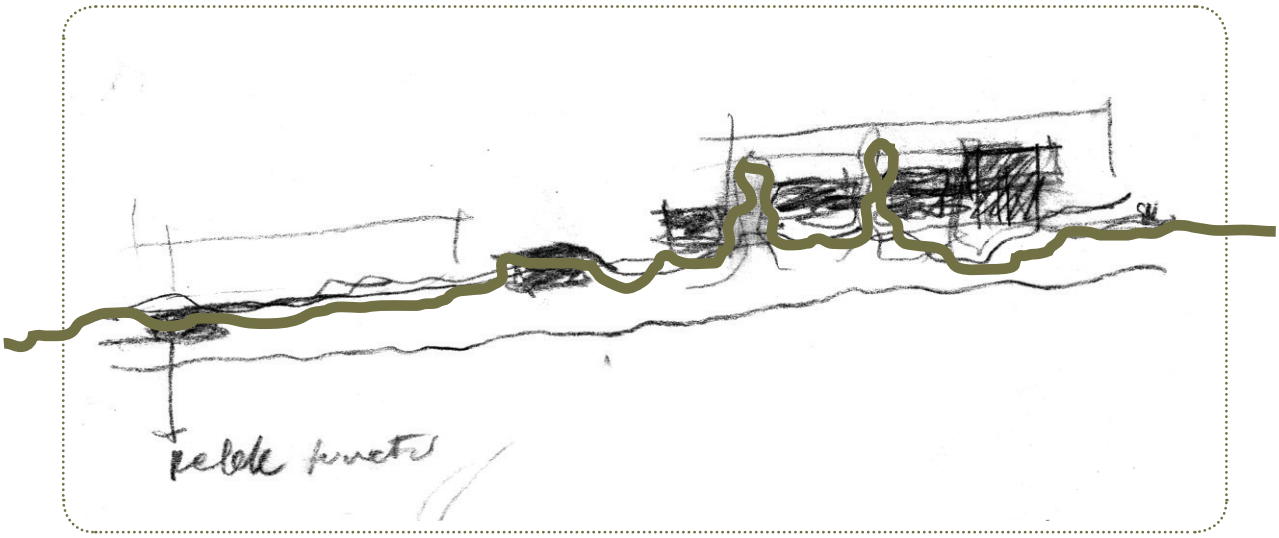
Thus by situating the architecture within this urban liminal space, new and better relationship potentials between the parties involved is made possible.
It connects, and integrates seemingly different people without eliminating their differences.

Configure built environment to allow for better lived experiences



Natural lived experiences

Built lived experiences



Natural cite'

Built cite'

Figure 6.2: Top: Design concept - Transconfiguration (Author 2019)

Figure 6.3: Bottom: Transconfiguration layered onto site (Author 2019)

Trans-configuration

Design concept

Synthesising the design informants led to the identification of the concept of trans-configuration. Applying the concept of trans-configuration the architecture will attempt to foster transitions between the man-made city and the natural environment/landscape. From artificial to natural – man-made to natural. The architecture becomes part of the natural environment around it.

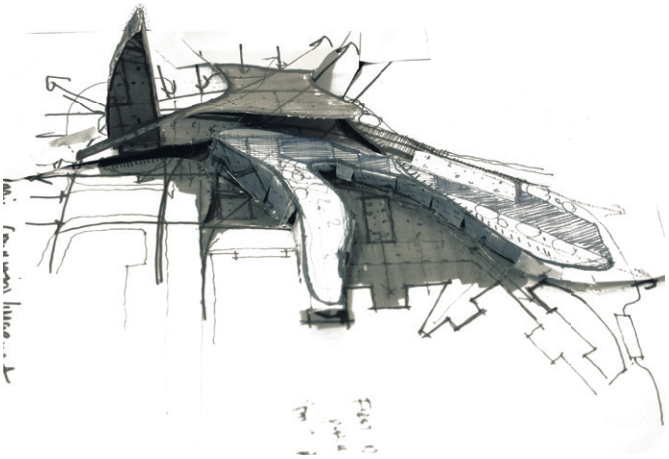
The concept of trans-configuration is a combination of two concept namely, trans and configuration. In chemistry, trans refers to a molecular structure where atoms are on the opposite ends of a molecule or bond (Cambridge dictionary 2019) much like our city's current condition where its lived experiences (*cite'*) and built environment (*ville*) are on opposite sides.

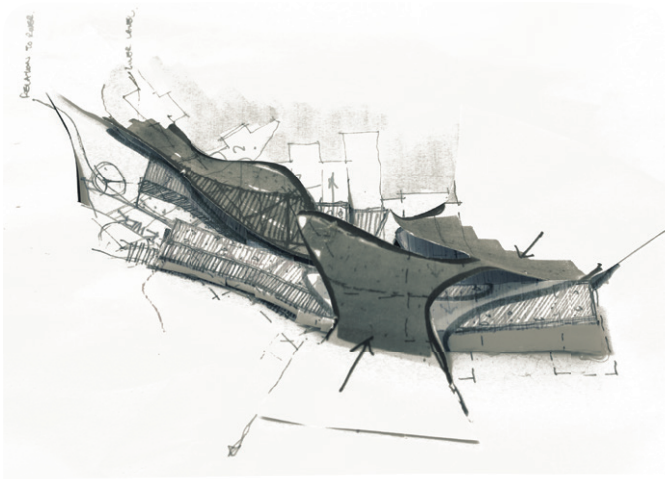
The second concept is configuration. According to the Cambridge dictionary (2019), it is to arrange parts of something in a particular form, in order for it to be used for a particular task. This concept suggest that for the city to generate new and improved lived experiences, the way in which the built environment is configured needs to be addressed.

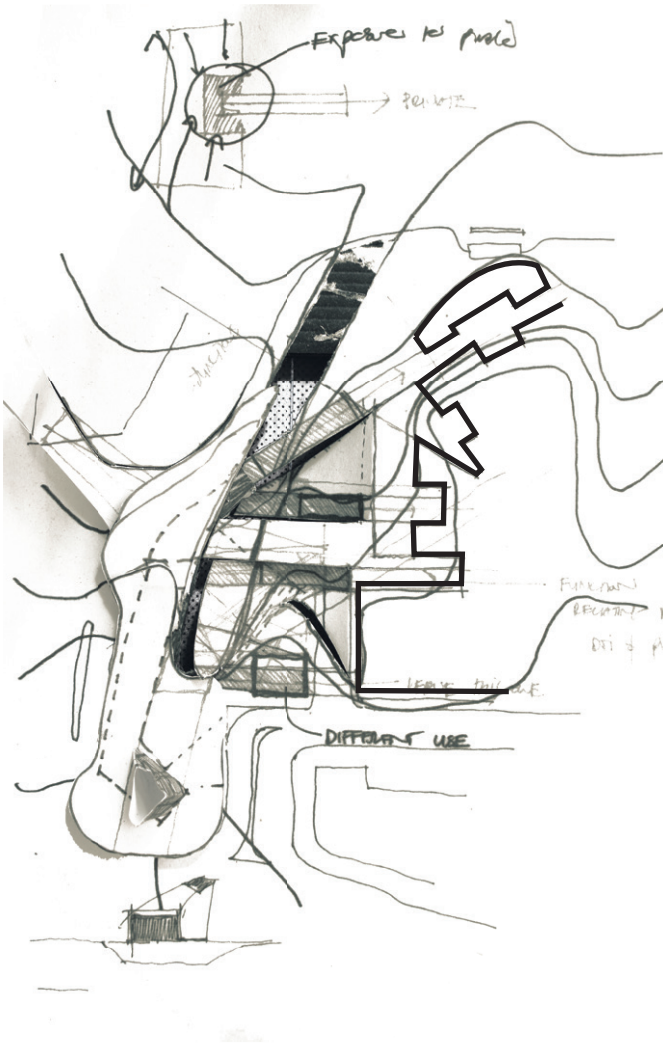
Due the positivist city development (how the built environment was configured) the sense of place of the city of Pretoria was lost as the importance of its lived experiences have been disregarded.

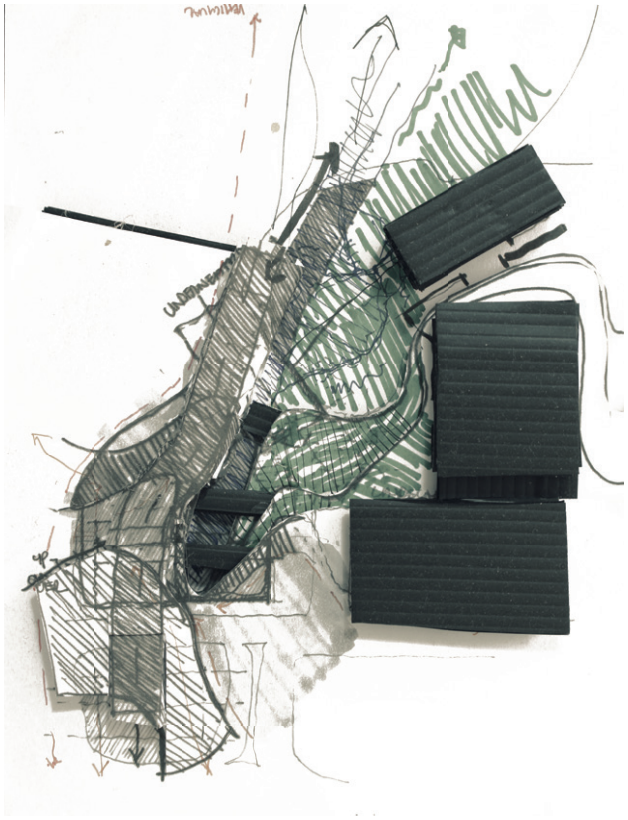
To re-establish the sense of place as a city that has a productive and spiritual connection with the landscape, new lived experiences will have to be created that transcend the current conditions. Place-making strategies will be used to reconfigure the built environment and create new lived experiences by celebrating the rituals of the everyday, enhancing sensory experiences as well as reconnecting with nature.

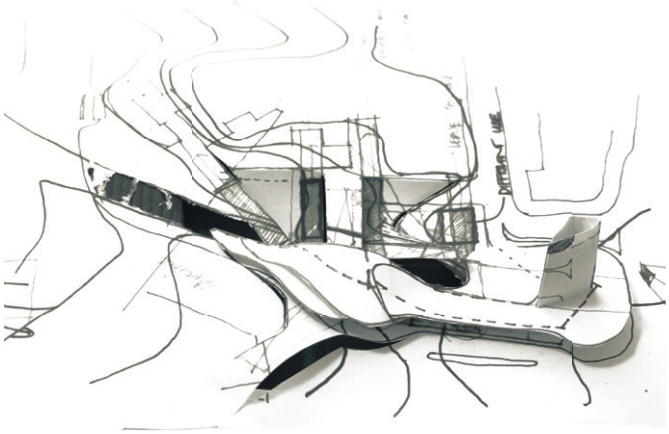
The architecture should therefor act as a transition between the artificial built environment (*ville)* and the natural landscape, creating better lived experiences (*cite')* through the new spiritual and productive relationships between man and nature.



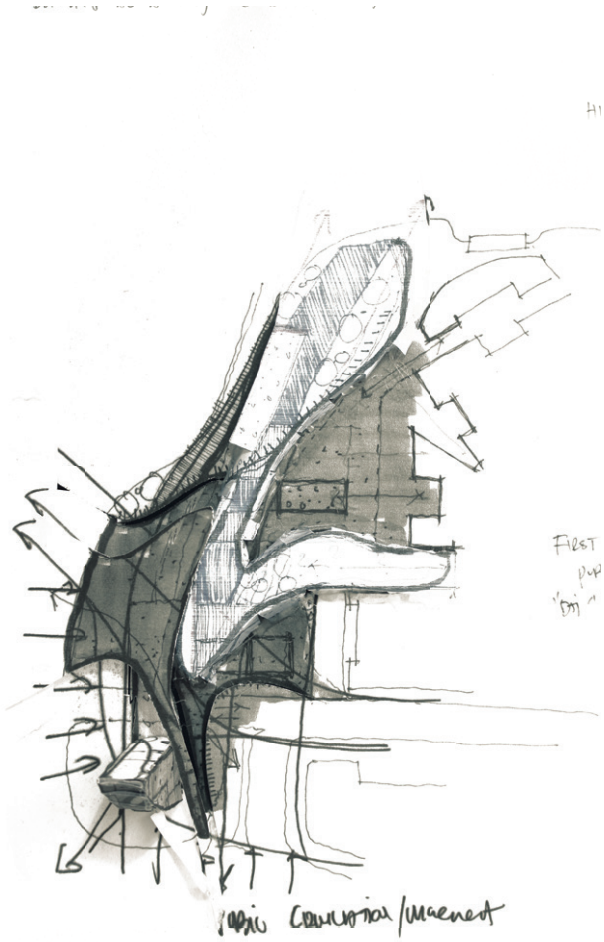








Conceptual spatial explorations



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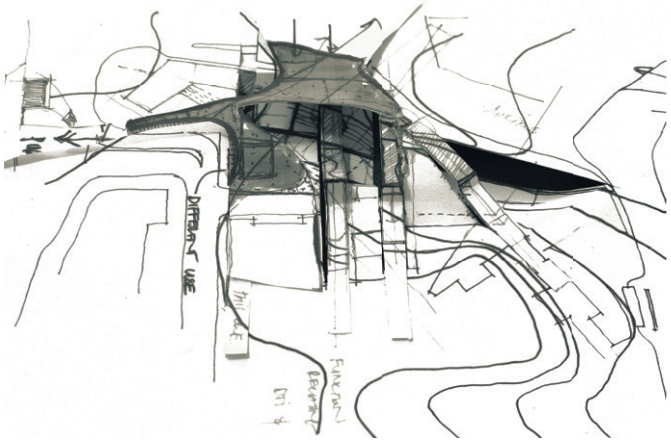
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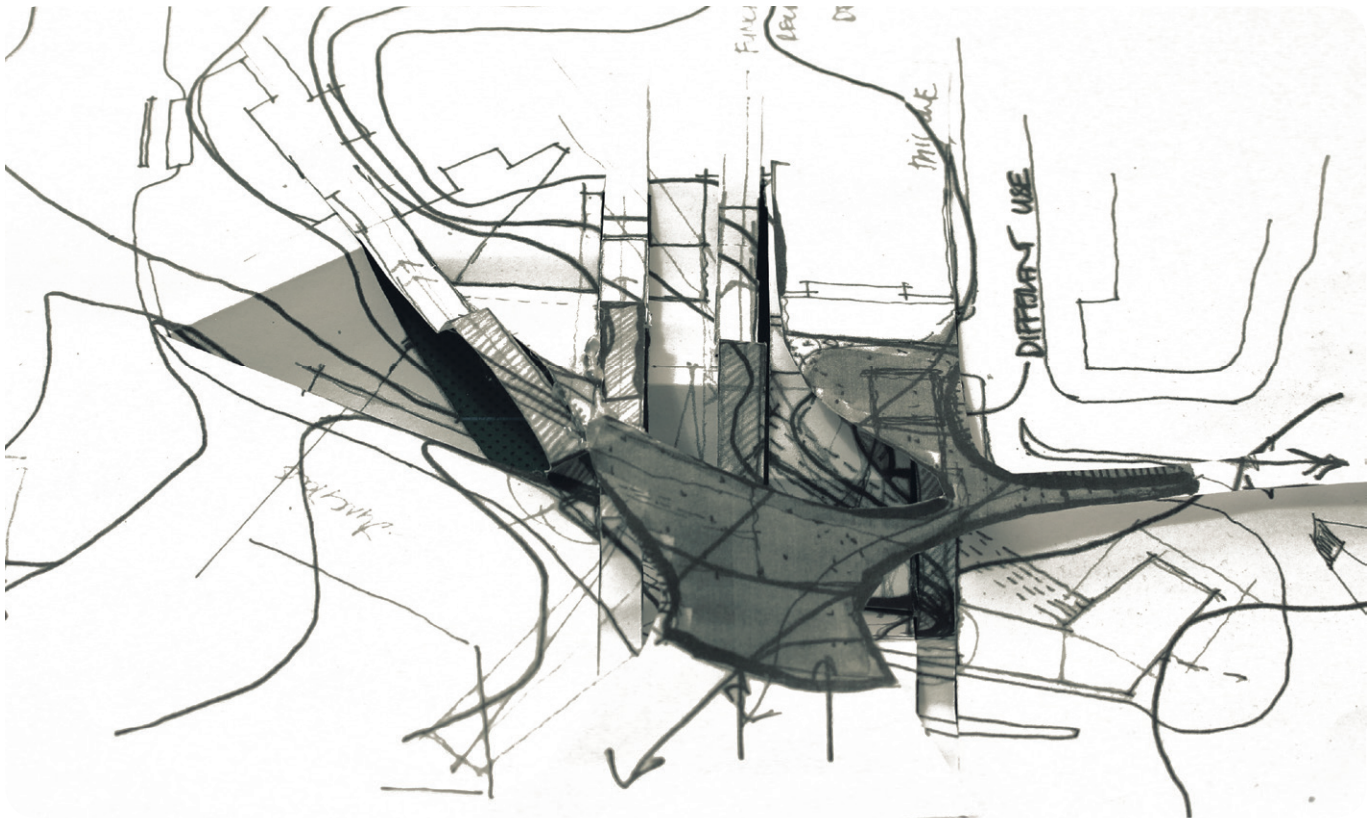
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