

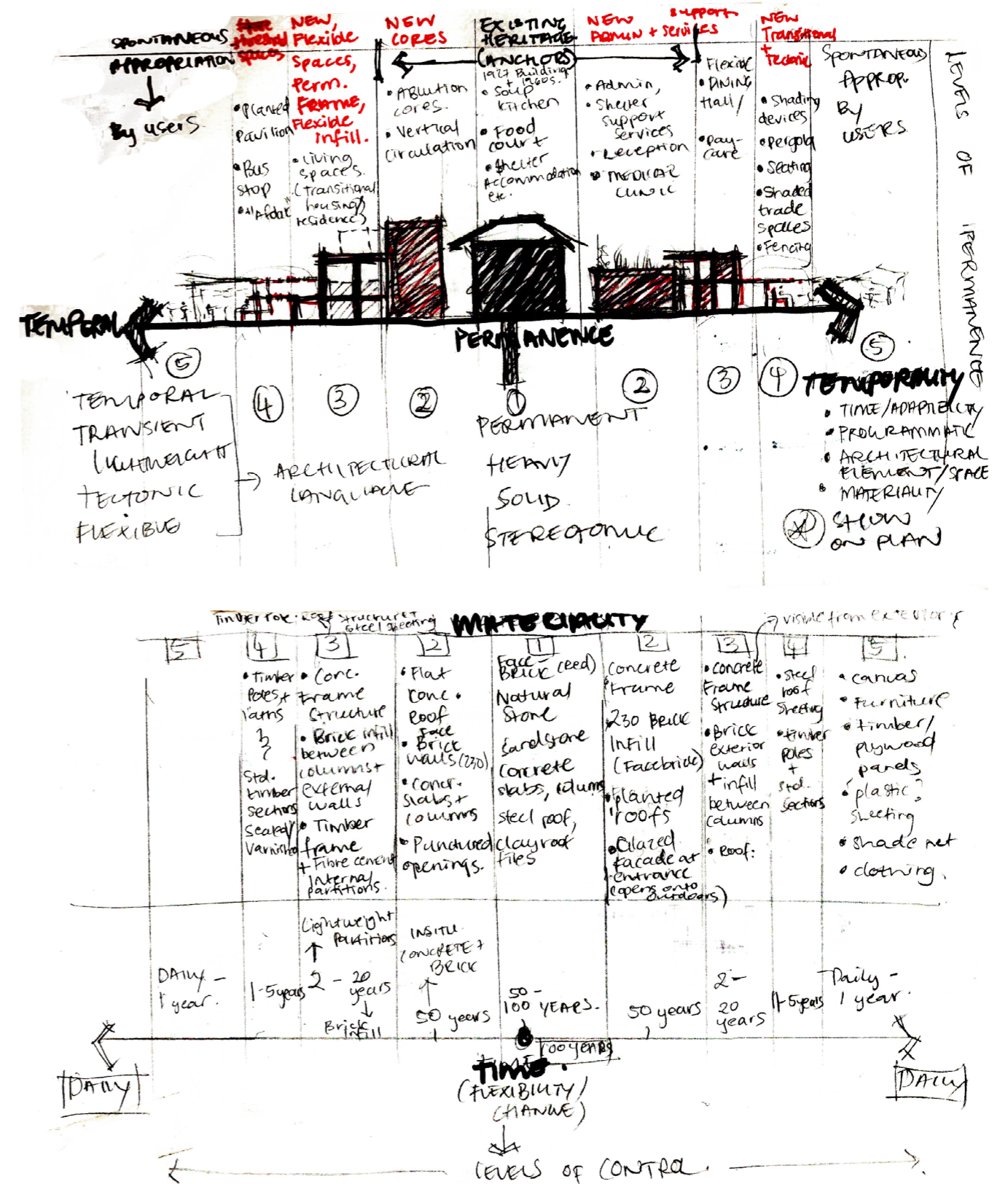
17 conclusion

Following Essay Two, this essay unpacks the design focus of the project – the transitional housing programme – in more detail. Various design and technical aspects are conceptualised in terms of the overarching conceptual strategy of the scale of permanence, which attempts to navigate the tensions between the existing and new; the historical condition and the social condition; heritage and user appropriation; permanence and transience; fixed elements and flexibility. The existing heritage buildings and historical condition represent the most permanent, stereotomic elements anchoring new programmes in support of the social welfare agenda (level 1); followed by the new anchoring vertical circulation and ablution cores and the admin/support service threshold (level 2). This then transitions to the more flexible spaces of the living unit wings, with their lightweight partitions and room for additions and alterations (level 3). The tectonic timber pergolas, screens and roof structure bind the spaces, demarcate transition and circulation spaces, and read as more temporal elements (level 4). Lastly, the spontaneous appropriation by the users is seen as the most transient/temporal layer (level 5), for which the other levels and elements of architecture provide a platform and structure.

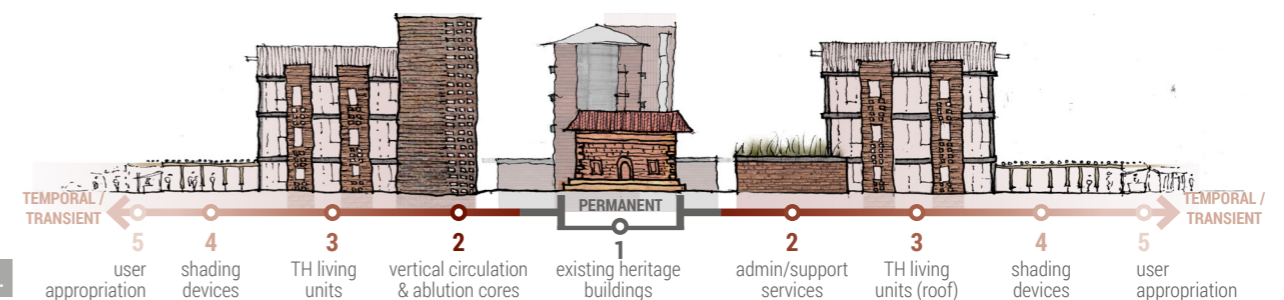
The programmatic and spatial requirements of this programme were explored through research and relevant typological precedents, which led to important design decisions in the development of the transitional housing plan, including the courtyard typology and the progression from public to private realms and communal to private spaces. The previously identified existing activities of “stay”, “wash”, “gather/linger” and “play” were concretised in the Social welfare pocket programme, and in the transitional housing spaces. This further legitimises these activities and provides a platform for new ones to emerge. The new additions also attempt to create a palimpsestic dialogue with the old, respecting the heritage buildings’ proportions, scale, organisation and axes.

An integral part of the plan development involved the development of the living units as flexible and adaptable modules that allow for various configurations, giving the users agency over their private spaces and setting the scene for future appropriation and alterations.

Thereafter, the material and technical intent was unpacked in relation to the scale of permanence and other relevant considerations regarding the construction of the design, whereby the material and technical explorations are seen as the physical manifestations of the various levels of permanence and transience. Lastly, the environmental considerations are examined through the exploration of the roof form and functions; climatic analysis; the grey water recycling system and constructed wetlands as an ever-changing manifestation of nature that creates a haven-like environment for the users of the transitional housing.



13.3. Process sketch of “Scale of permanence” (Author 2021).



14.4.