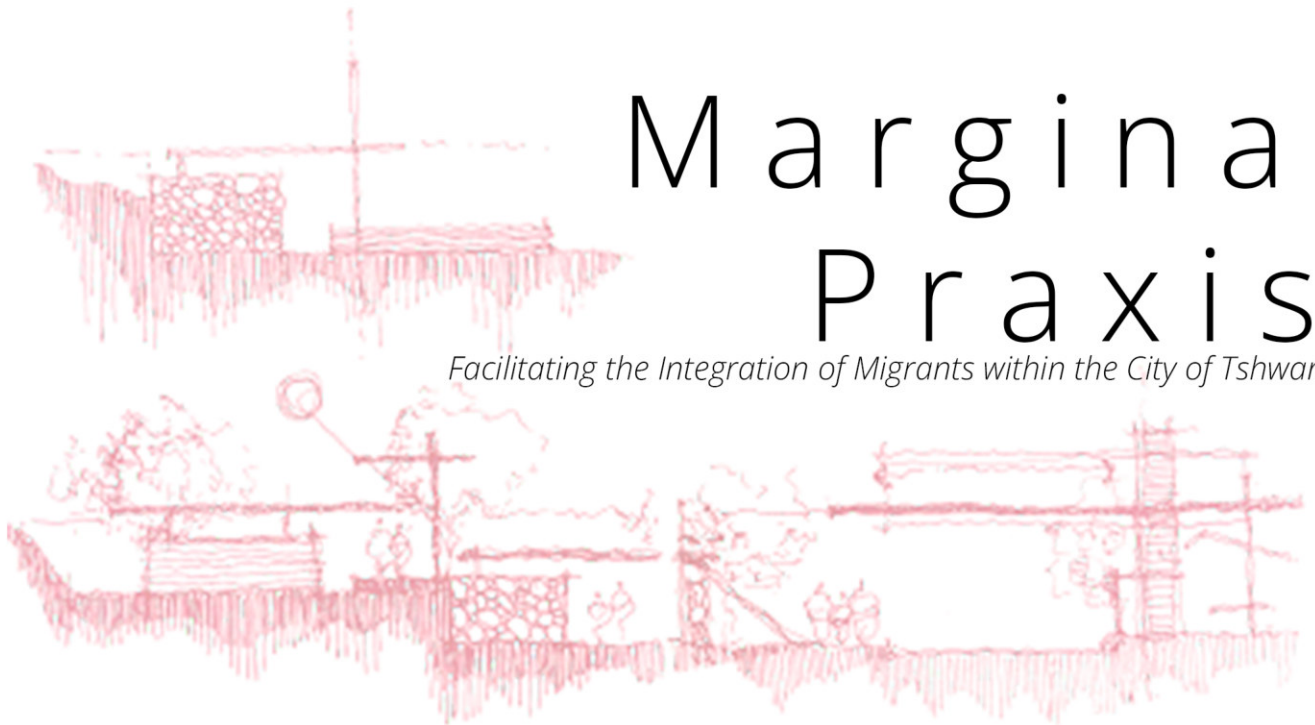




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Marginal Praxis:

Facilitating the Integration of Migrants within the City of Tshwane.



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DPD801_Design Report

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ABSTRACT

The title "Marginal Praxis" in the context of facilitating refugee integration in The City of Tshwane implies a focus on an **unconventional, innovative approach** and actions to address the challenges and opportunities related to **refugee integration within Southern Africa**. It suggests a departure from traditional or mainstream practices to a nuanced approach in **supporting marginalised groups**, such as refugees, in the urban environment.

The term "**marginal**" is aimed at those on the fringes of society or facing social, economic, or cultural marginalisation. "**Praxis**" implies an active, practical approach that combines theory and action to create positive change. Therefore, "Marginal Praxis" signifies an approach that seeks to empower refugees through practical, hands-on initiatives and policies that address their unique needs and challenges.

The title "**Marginal Praxis: Integrating refugees into the urban fabric of the city of Tshwane**" focuses on providing a **culture of welcome** as a first point of contact for refugees regardless of their status, in the context of The City of Tshwane.

Public interest design becomes the foundational research to this project which informs the architectural approach. The project aims to **see** refugees and cultivate an architecture of welcome through investigating the potential of a **distributed network of welcome centres** in The City of Tshwane.

Situated in the diplomatic rich suburbs of Brooklyn, the project strives to offer **tailored migrant services** to **refugee parents with children**, encompassing rights and protections in **humanitarian** and development settings, to showcase and **broaden understanding** among Member States and partners about how migration interventions apply to national development across society.

Architecture manifests as a **sequence of interconnected spaces** the user explores on their journey in a new reality, following a guided path encouraging interaction. Materiality contributes to fostering a **sense of safety** amongst users, where excavated soil from site is used to create thick, stereotomic vertical planes, embracing the open, inbetween spaces.

Key Words:

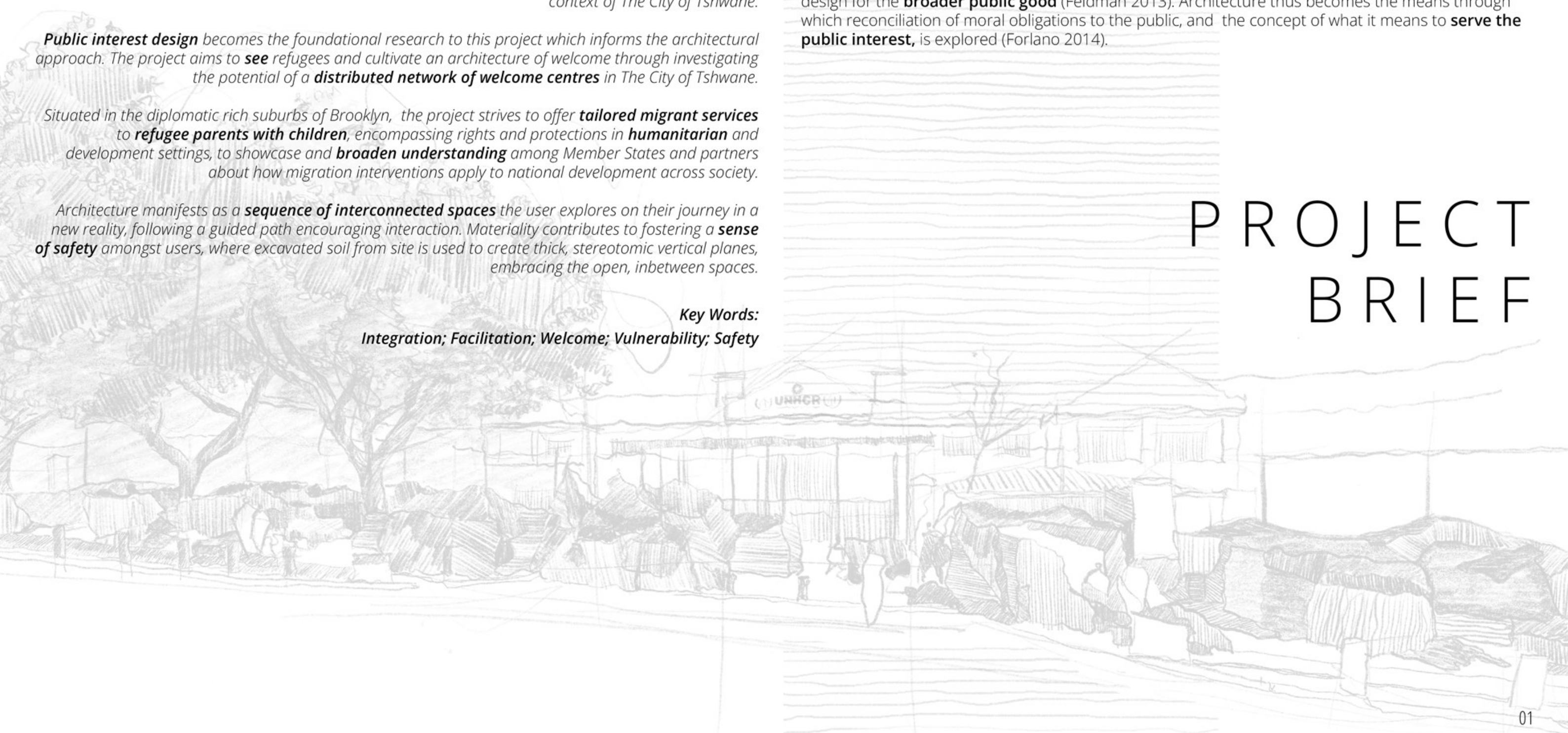
Integration; Facilitation; Welcome; Vulnerability; Safety

The project focuses on providing a culture of welcome as a first point of contact for refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants, focused specifically in the context of the City of Tshwane. This term refers to a **culture that fosters an appreciation of, and empathy** for the conditions and situations of asylum seekers and refugees within a foreign context (United Nations University 2021).

The project sheds light on the **current refugee crisis** in South Africa, where refugees face **dehumanising** conditions in their daily lives, because of undocumented status and poor service delivery (Kavuro 2022). The aim of this project is to explore if and how a **decentralised refugee welcome center network**, across The City of Tshwane, can facilitate more humanising perspectives of the current refugee crisis through the lens of **public interest design**. This is explored through an architectural proposal of one such center in Brooklyn, Pretoria.

The project in itself becomes an explorative case study, shedding light on new thoughts and ways of design for the **broader public good** (Feldman 2013). Architecture thus becomes the means through which reconciliation of moral obligations to the public, and the concept of what it means to **serve the public interest**, is explored (Forlano 2014).

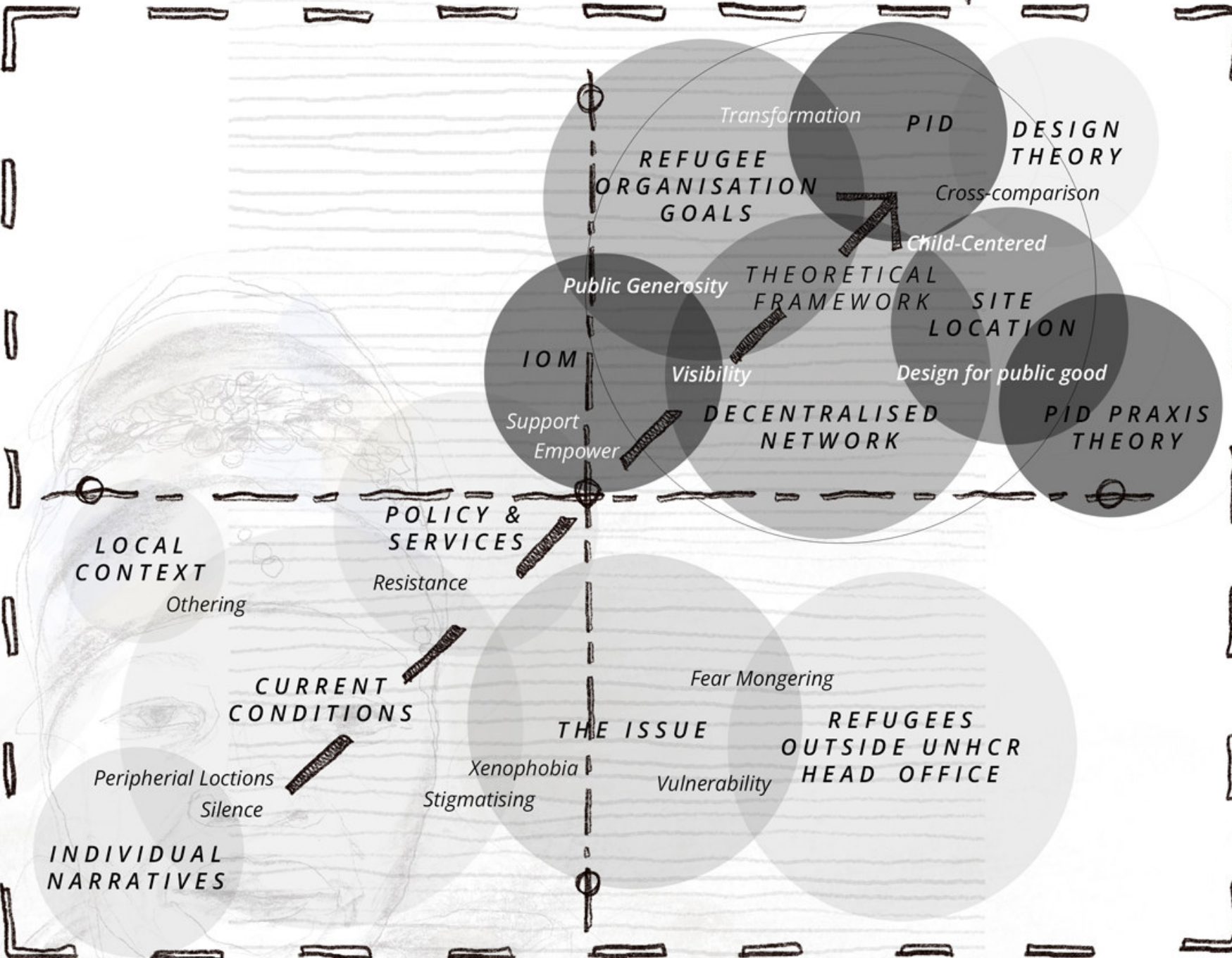
PROJECT BRIEF



HUMANISING

INVISIBLE

VISIBLE



INVISIBLE to **VISIBLE**
DEHUMANISING to **HUMANISING**

The proposed project stems from a concept developed in the Design provocation - Mini Project, where the invisible, dehumanising daily lives of refugees within our city, was explored.

Poor documentation services, xenophobic attacks and parent- and child separation, became apparent in the exploration, and prompted the main project investigation.

The main project exploration thus focuses on the current refugee crisis in South Africa, and how refugees are - or are not facilitated in their journey to a new reality.

Key themes which were explored during the intervention are plotted on a concept map (left) as a starting point, to understand how the undertaken theoretical framework and knowledge from fieldwork can contribute to a more visible, humanised experience for the refugee.

The current climate is based on literature, and qualitative fieldwork knowledge, and experiences. These conditions are situated in the bottom left quadrant of the matrix, indicating an attitude of invisibility and dehumanisation toward current issues, where as, theory, indicates an attitude toward inclusion, and visibility of marginalised groups.

The project thus aims to access the top right quadrant of the diagram, from theory to practical architectural implementation, to design for the individual, and the broader public good.

This concept mapping becomes a useful tool to refer back to during the design exploration, to situate the architectural intervention with an overlap of humanising, visible contributions to the user, and the discourse.

Figure 01: Concept Map exploring how architecture and theory can convey a sense of humanity and visibility to the user. (Author 2023)

CONCEPT MAPPING

"ARCHITECTURE AS CHANGE AGENT"
(ANDERSON 2014)

P · I · D

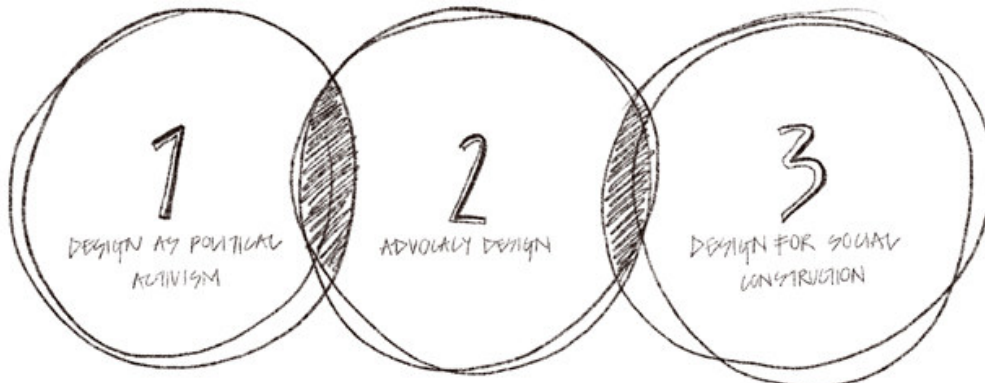
"COMMUNITY DESIGN"
(SMITH 2007, 2011)

"URBAN GENEROSITY"
(ANGELVALL 2014)

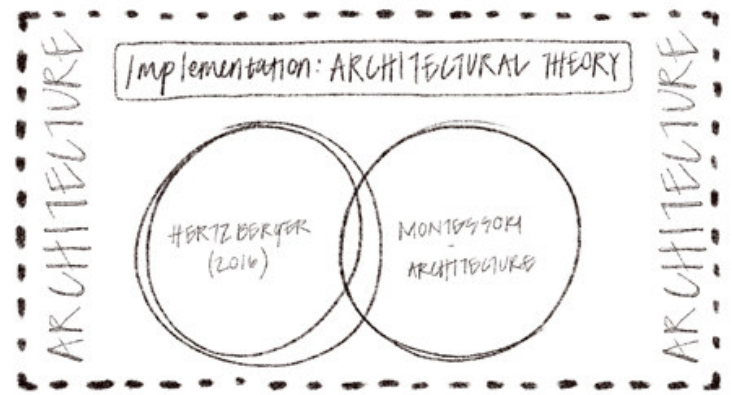
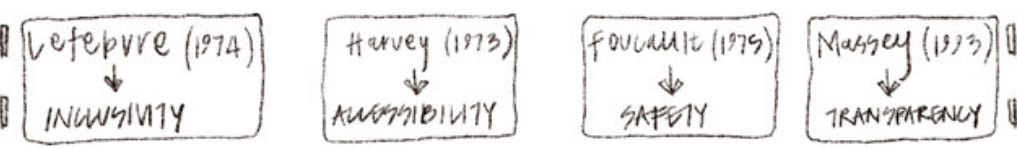
(theoretical framework)

Scaffolding for Inclusion

(KIM 2018)



PID PRAXIS: SPATIAL THEORY



The nine broadly defined types in aggregate are used as scaffolding to map design practices for the **broader public good**, to **benefit more diverse constituencies**. Alstyne (2007) builds on Anderson's idea, suggesting **overlapping** the different models.

Building on their ideas, one can suggest that PID typologies and their applicability to various stages in the design process likely make architecture **more responsive to increasingly diversifying social conditions** (Kim 2018).

The theoretical premise of this intervention is based in Public Interest design (PID), and is understood through considering a scaffolding set out by Kim (2018).

From the 9 typologies within Kim's (2018) scaffolding for inclusion, three were selected for overlapping within the intervention. Kim suggests that PID typologies and their applicability to various stages in the design process likely make architecture more responsive to increasingly diversifying social conditions.

From the three overlapping PID typologies, supporting spatial theory is derived within the premise of PID. These spatial theories then create a nuanced understanding for choosing architectural theory to be implemented through design. Montessori-Architecture is specifically considered because of its vision to create environments that support the holistic development and well-being of individuals with a focus on child centred design (Montessori-Architecture 2023). This way of designing can become valuable to consider in exploring design solutions within an alternative programme.

The chosen architectural theory thus is informed by the spatial theory, and provides practical architectural tools for designing within the realm of PID.

See figure 02

Figure 02: Diagrammatic representation of theoretical framework (Author 2023)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Design for Broader Public Good"
(Feldman 2013)

"Design serving the disadvantaged"
(Smith 2007, 2011)



Public Interest design (PID) is understood as a means to serve the underprivileged and strive to provide architectural and related services to those who cannot afford them, with the aim of benefiting the broader public good (Abendroth & Bell 2016). Exploring architecture from a PID perspective is a crucial aspect of the broader discussion on migrant integration in South Africa. This intervention seeks to challenge the existing refugee documentation approach by employing PID principles as its underlying theoretical framework. The Desmond Tutu refugee centre, and Lindela Repatriation Centre are typologies under question, and unfold as poorly maintained, inhumane attempts at addressing refugee integration.

The PID taxonomy by Kim (2018) offers a framework for integrating PID into mainstream architecture, allowing contemporary practitioners to map and understand where these practices fit within the broader context of architectural practice (Anderson 2014). This mapping approach identifies how the nine PID models set out by Kim (2018) can contribute to various stages of the design process, ultimately benefiting diverse communities. The intention is to synergise different PID approaches and methods during design, and aligning them with different stages in the process, to create a more responsive and innovative architectural solution to the current refugee crisis experienced in the City of Tshwane (Alstyne 2007; Edwards & Holden 2019).

PID becomes the foundational research to this project which informs the approach to this design intervention. The PID taxonomy becomes the initial criteria to assess whether this architectural investigation could be considered within the realm of PID, and engage in deliberative practices to advance a culture of welcome for vulnerable communities. Three of the nine PID models are investigated, and synergised, as an attempt to contribute to the current discourse.

Design as Political Activism is explored to respond to calls for social justice, environmental justice, inequality, racism, access to the public good, the right to the city, urbanisation of injustice and social movement (Thorpe 2014; Brillembourg et al. 2011; Harvey 2009, 2008; Kingwell and Turmel 2009; Low and Smith 2006; Mitchell 2003; Merrifield and Swyngedouw 1997).

Advocacy Design focuses on humanitarian crises around the world and on helping meet the urgent daily needs of people in unfortunate circumstances, such as war, earthquakes, or hurricanes.

Social Construction to build opportunities for social encounters and promotes it as a way to actively involve people in community development, as socially meaningful projects and evaluating them in a democratic, interactive manner, through which social values are upheld.

The three overlapping typologies within the realm of PID become the informants to chosen spatial theory, and are tested during the design iteration, analysis and reflection for effective implementation of PID principles.

Overlapping "Scaffolding" for Inclusion
(Kim 2018)

Figure 03: PID taxonomy as scaffolding framework for theory based approach to architecture. (Author 2023)

PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN

In 2019, the Southern African region witnessed an influx of more than 7.87 million documented migrants, with the majority concentrated in South Africa, accounting for 4.2 million (IOM 2019). This region continues to grapple with a notable increase in diverse migration patterns, originating from the Horn of Africa, predominantly Ethiopia and Somalia, involving refugees, asylum seekers, labour migrants, and trafficking victims, including women and children (UNHCR 2022).

The majority of migrants seek to reach their destinations by relying on well-established smuggling and trafficking networks. It is estimated that a minimum of 20,000 migrants embark on journeys through the Great Lakes and SADC regions each year, with the primary goal of reaching South Africa. Unfortunately, these migrants often face grave human rights violations and a lack of protection, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation, abandonment, and enduring physical and sexual violence (IOM 2019).

Notably, intraregional mobility characterises migration in Southern Africa, which hosts some of the largest bilateral migration routes in Africa. Key examples include the Zimbabwe–South Africa corridor, involving approximately 1.3 million migrants, and the Mozambique–South Africa corridor, with around 1.2 million migrants (IOM 2019), where Southern Africa is home to some of the most important trade and transport corridors in the continent that facilitate cross-border mobility, including for small-scale traders.

The 1951 Refugee Convention (189 UNTS 137) is a key legal document and defines a refugee as: someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

Both national and international organisations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), encouraged these laws as the most progressive globally. Nevertheless, these legal provisions displayed flaws, gaps, and inadequacies, as previous studies and research initiatives have revealed (Khan & Lee 2018). While South Africa has robust legislative measures, a sense of humanity has been lost in their implementation.

Zimbabwe–South Africa corridor

1.3 Million

4.2 Million undocumented migrants in SA



The South African government has altered its policies and stance, emphasising exclusion over acceptance of refugees with a trend towards restricting refugees to the nation's borders, and poor facilitation of documentation processes (Khan, Mbatani & Marais 2021). These changes have led to a growing population of concealed and unregistered refugees and asylum seekers within South Africa.

Discrimination against foreign nationals in South Africa has been institutionalised both in government policy and broader South African society (Nyamwanza & Dzingirai 2017). This had led to violations of the right to life and physical integrity and rights to an adequate standard of living and to the highest attainable standard of health, as well as elevated risks of arbitrary detention, torture and refoulement, risks of evictions, police harassment, as well as difficulties opening or maintaining bank accounts, accessing basic services, and enrolling their children in school, due to widespread corruption in the South African asylum and migration systems, which compound these dangerous issues (UN 2022).

Within this context, this intervention investigates, and aims to address the reduction in refugee protection that South Africa has pledged to provide to those seeking asylum from oppressive regimes, political turmoil and civil conflict causing disruptions to public order (Kavuro 2022), through proposing an alternative approach to welcoming and processing refugees in the City of Tshwane.

"While South Africa has robust legislative measures, a sense of humanity has been lost in their implementation"

Mozambique–South Africa corridor

1.2 Million

Figure 04: Representation of the current refugee crisis in South Africa through collage (Author 2023)

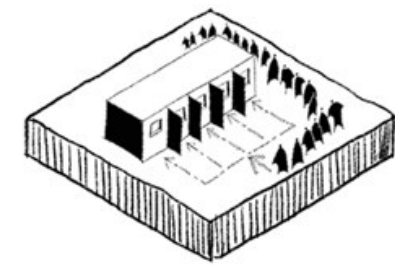
Investigating existing facilities is essential to understand the present conditions of processing neighbours and fostering integration. This investigation considers the absence of refugee camps, aligning with the principles outlined in the Refugee Act of 1998, and highlights the often unseen, inhumane aspects of these facilities.

Against this background, refugees & asylum seekers camped outside of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), since October 7, 2019 to gain visibility for their challenging livelihoods experienced when arriving in South Africa (Khan, Mbatani, & Marais 2021).

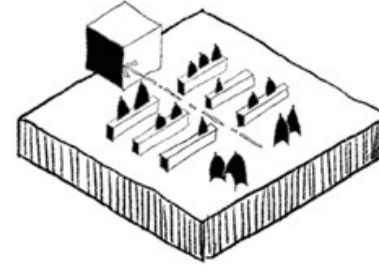
The community was forcibly removed on April 23, 2023. Some agreed upon being taken back to the Lindela Repatriation centre, while others fled the scene, and with assistance from local volunteers, have been displaced to a dilapidated building on the outskirts of the city (de Beer 2023).

This carries the significance of addressing the current, flawed facilitation of refugees in our city, and to encourage a visible process of welcome, and assistance, to vulnerable communities.

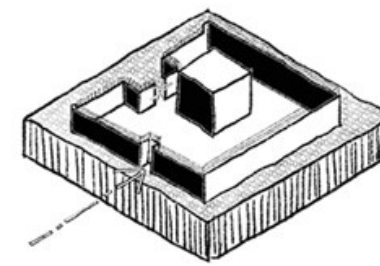
The two primary, current refugee facilities, the Desmond Tutu Refugee Centre, and Lindela Repatriation Centre is explored to gain understanding of the daily challenges refugees face with regards to documentation and status determination in South Africa.



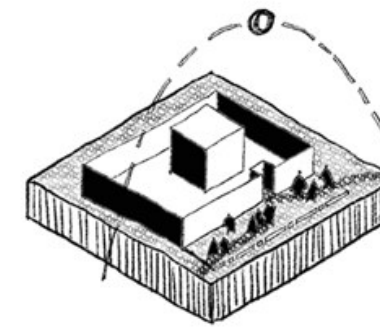
Overcrowded & Full Capacity



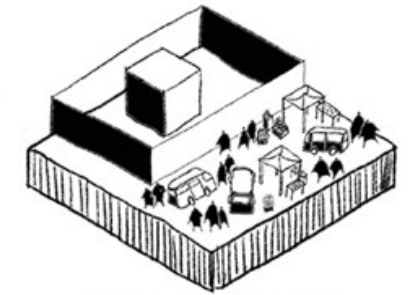
Long wait times



Fenced in & Hostile



Harsh Climatic Conditions



Invisible to Public



LINDELA REPATRIATION CENTRE

The Lindela Repatriation Centre is perceived as a place of distress and uncertainty (Kaziboni 2018), feeling prison-like with restricted movement and limited access to information. From qualitative research findings, refugees describe the centre as a place where dignity is compromised and their rights are not fully respected, left feeling vulnerable and exposed to potential abuses, including overcrowding, poor living conditions, and inadequate access to legal representation (SIHMA 2017).

While the government's intention behind the centre is to manage immigration and asylum processes, it is a place perceived as othering, encouraging fear, rather than a sense of welcoming or supportive environment.

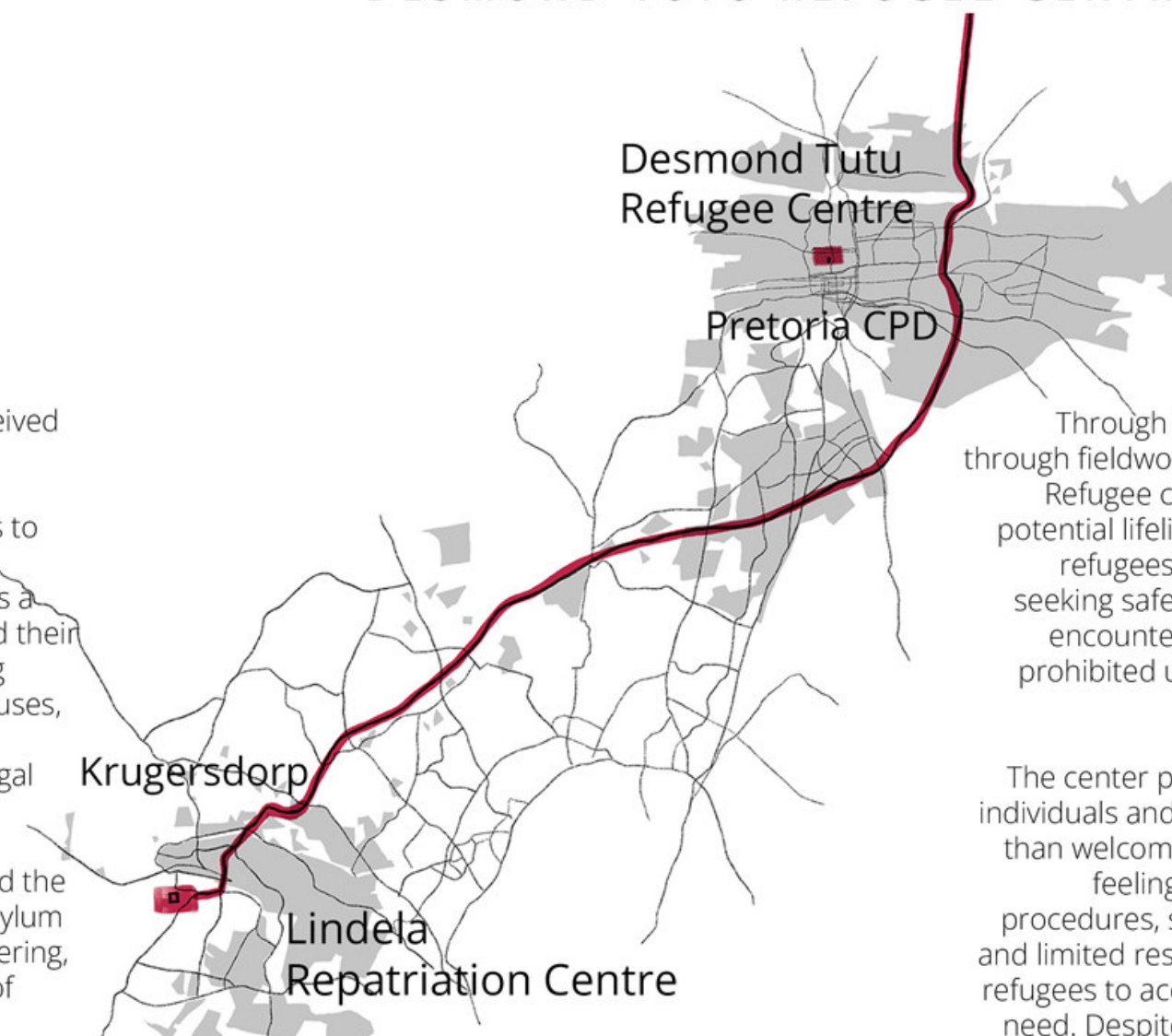


Figure 05: Map of current centres (Author 2023)

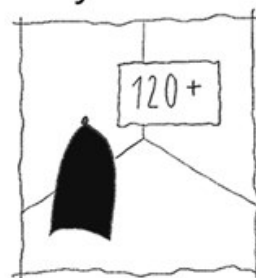


DESMOND TUTU REFUGEE CENTRE

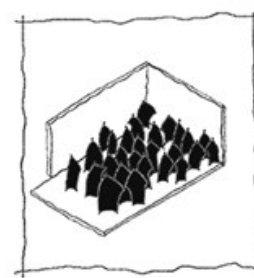
Through the investigation of the centre through fieldwork analysis, the Desmond Tutu Refugee centre might be seen as both a potential lifeline and a place of hardship for refugees. Refugees arrive at the centre seeking safety and support, but they often encounter overcrowded conditions, the prohibited use of phones, long wait times, and a lack of privacy.

The center presents itself as a place where individuals and families are processed rather than welcomed, conveying a dehumanising feeling to the user. The bureaucratic procedures, sometimes unresponsive staff, and limited resources make it challenging for refugees to access the help they desperately need. Despite the centre's good intentions, the experience of a refugee may be one of uncertainty, vulnerability, and frustration.

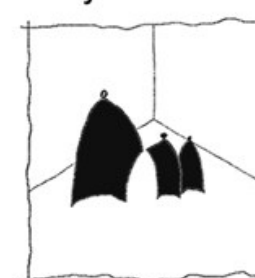
Duration of Stay Uncertain



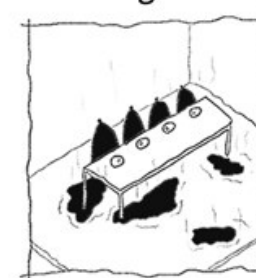
Overcrowded



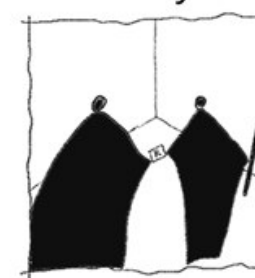
Unlawful detention of Children



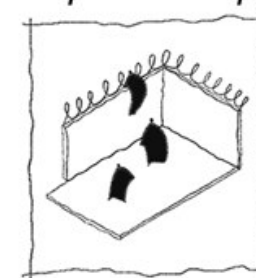
Poor Living Conditions



Bribery



Desperate Escape



LINDELA REPATRIATION CENTRE

FACILITATION

STAKE-HOLDERS

Literature identifies several characteristics of cities that may impede integration, such as governance inefficiency; discord with other levels of government; and limited governance capacity relative to needs for services (such as welfare, education, and healthcare services), particularly in developing cities (Jacobsen, Simpson, Lazetić, Wolff, Chapman, Cumming 2017). Without the correct short term implementation and collective efforts from government and communities, long term integration poses a difficult path (Nyamwanza & Dzingirai 2017).

The UNHCR, the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are international organisations involved in refugee assistance worldwide, including Southern Africa. These organisations focus on providing protection, support, and assistance to refugees, whilst ensuring the individual's rights are upheld during the process of integration within local communities. These organisations become stakeholders to the project, where the IOM acts as primary stakeholder, implementing strategies for integration, framed within the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda, on the ground within the centre.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (UN 2018):

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global initiative by the United Nations, aimed at addressing pressing global challenges and promoting sustainability (UN 2018). A successful sustainable development agenda in South Africa requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society and are built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that **place people and the planet at the centre**, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level. This framework carries significance when addressing the refugee crisis within The City of Tshwane, through a humanitarian lense, where the user sits within its centre. This agenda can potentially be further spread throughout the city, and adopted by other public sectors, for further PID implementation of serving the public, and designing for the public good.

IOM Strategic Vision (UN 2018):

As recognized in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and promoted in the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development (UN 2018), human mobility is inextricably linked with sustainable development. The IOM Strategic Vision outlines the organisation's development plan for the next five years, with a specific focus on Southern Africa.

It aims to address complex challenges and leverage opportunities presented by migration, in collaboration with UN agencies and partners. Recognizing the significance of youth in migration (32% of international migrants are under 30, with 60% in developing countries), the strategy also aligns with the United Nations Youth Strategy to emphasise the need for child and youth-focused programs (IOM 2019), preserving the rights, and needs of children.

This strategy forms part of the main argument for user groups on site, encouraging refugee parents with children, to be welcomed and facilitated on their journey, in a visible, humane way. IOM, UNHCR, and UNICEF, will work in synergy within the proposed intervention, for increased visibility among member states and the community of migration needs and contributions. This potentially allows for a practically improved, and socially cultivated journey for the user.

Primary Stakeholder



International Organization for Migration

Agency
Migration Logistics

Mandate
Migration Management
Humanitarian Aid
Data Collection

Role
Migration Services
Logistics & Support
Data Analysis
Coordination
Advocacy
(IOM 2019)



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Agency
Refugee Assistance
Protection
Legal Aid
Advocacy

Mandate
Protect Refugees
Find Solutions
Advocate

Role
Refugee Protection
Legal Support
Human Rights
Advocacy
(UNHCR 2022)



United Nations Children's Fund

Agency
Child-Centered
Protection
Health & Education

Mandate
Child Rights
Survival
Development

Role
Child Protection
Education
Health Care
Nutrition
Child Welfare
(UNICEF 2018)

Shared Principles and Vision among Proposed Stakeholders:



The current IOM Regional Office in Brooklyn, Pretoria covers 15 countries in Southern Africa. Its strategic location in a major diplomatic capital provides access to numerous partners (IOM 2019). This enables a comprehensive approach for engaging with national governments to build a strong regional partnership on migration. Migration can drive sustainable development for migrants and their communities across countries (IOM 2019). However, without policies considering migrants' needs and migration's effects, risks increase, communities strain, and development potential diminishes. The offices currently have little direct interaction with the surrounding community, and deploy volunteer groups to communities, for on the ground assistance and integration.

The IOM Continental Strategy for Africa anticipates shifts in the migration landscape, driven by agreements like the Free Movement of Persons protocols and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (IOM 2019). IOM plays a crucial role in strengthening African countries' capacities to adapt to future migration trends, fostering safe, orderly, and regular mobility schemes on the continent. With expanding activities in the region, there's a growing need for improved communication and visibility mechanisms for effective integration in terms of complex urbanism. Coordinated, evaluated development and migration-focused interventions are needed to maximise the benefits of migration.

The **visibility** of the IOM within the regions they operate becomes vital in fostering awareness among host communities of the strategies being implemented by the IOM for complex urban integration of migrants. The intervention proposes the current IOM Headquarters for Southern Africa to serve as a data storage centre and administrative hub, while the new welcome centre becomes a place of facilitation, working with refugees, international business partners, and locals to potentially better the integration systems within the city.



Current IOM Regional Office for Southern Africa
 Embassies

IOM + VISIBILITY

Figure 06: Embassy rich context of Brooklyn, Pretoria (Author 2023)



Explored Refugee Narratives from a visit to an informal settlement, Plastic View....

Figure 07: Seeing the individual in a collective group (Author 2023)

*"I am Serrvious, I am from Zim
I have been living here for 10 years
It is too expensive to travel home and see my daughter
I am your brother"*

*"I am Nomsa, I am from Congo
This is my second year here
I still have no papers
I have tried so many times
I can't get a job
I am pregnant"*

"I am pregnant"

HUMANISING

*"My name is Blessing, I am from Moz
I want to go back to my children
I have no money for transport
My husband was arrested for no papers
I am alone
I am scared"*

"I am scared"

*"My name is Faith, I am from Zim
I left my children behind last week to find a better life for them here
I have no job
My husband has no job
I am your neighbour"*

*"I am Barbera, I am from Zimbabwe
I have two small boys
They sleep cold at night
Our papers are invalid
My husband has no job
We are stuck
We need help
We need hope"*

*"We need help
We need hope"*

Figure 08: A woman cries after being evicted from living outside the UNHCR offices in Pretoria on 21 April 2023. (Jacques Nelles/Eyewitness News 2023)

The project aims to address the lost sense of humanity in the implementation of South Africa's robust legislative measures, by looking at the refugee crisis through a humanitarian lens and seeing the individual, in this global narrative. The proposal encourages a network of refugee welcome centres spread across to distribute the overwhelming amount of processing currently taking place at one centralised point in the city (Desmond Tutu Refugee Centre). This decentralised model explores an intimate and humanised welcome experience for the users and staff within the centres.

Through a humanitarian approach, emphasising design that prioritises the well-being, dignity, and safety of individuals (Awan, Schneider & Till 2011), and an understanding of PID, as a framework toward architecture and design that focuses on addressing social, environmental, and economic issues to serve the underprivileged and promote the public good (Abendroth & Bell, 2016), the network of welcoming Centers in The City of Tshwane promotes visibility of the needs of refugees, their importance in our social network, and delivers controlled safety and security to refugees and surrounding communities. Each centre aims to address local needs within its immediate context, fostering care amongst local communities toward refugees, and serving as welcoming gateways for refugees throughout the city.

Statistics supporting a distributed load for welcome centres, instead of a centralised model:

South Africa currently hosts 250,250 refugees and asylum-seekers, with the population undocumented migrants still undetermined. The department of home affairs is currently processing a backlog of 153,000 cases by 2024 (UNHCR). Approved Asylum documentation must be renewed every two years, whilst approved refugee documentation renewal is every 4 years (UNHCR 2022).

The United Nations Population Division estimated that in 2015, there were about 3.2 million foreign-born people in the country (or 5.8% of the total population). In 2019, this estimate had climbed to 4.2 million or 7.2% of the nation's total population, addressing the potential number for undocumented migrants in South Africa (IOM 2019).

The advantages of a decentralised model for refugee integration encourages close proximity to the access of services, reducing extensive travel, and transportation barriers. According to a study by Jacobsen et al. (2017), geographic proximity positively affects refugees' access to essential services.

As understood from the centralised models in our current typologies, centralised systems become overcrowded and overwhelmed, for both refugees, as well as those delivering the service, leading to longer waiting times and reduced quality of services. Decentralised networks distribute the load, reducing congestion and providing more efficient service delivery (IOM Regional Strategy, 2020-2024).

Decentralised networks offer services tailored to the specific needs of the local refugee population. This approach recognizes the heterogeneity of refugee communities and acknowledges that integration strategies should be context-specific.

A decentralised network also offers greater resilience in times of crisis. In case of increased refugee inflows or emergencies, these centres can adapt more easily to the changing needs of the population.

Through distribution of load, as effectively implemented by the COPC, testing a distributed health network aimed at facilitation within a specific community it serves (COPC 2017), local authorities and community organisations can play a more active role in supporting decentralised networks, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for the welfare of refugees, whilst reducing the stigmatisation often associated with centralised refugee facilities. This can positively impact public perceptions and attitudes towards refugees (Jacobsen et al., 2017).

By creating a network of decentralised refugee welcoming centres rooted in PID, the focus shifts from managing refugees in isolation, to facilitating integration into the broader community, enhances the refugees' well-being, and contributes to a more inclusive and welcoming society, and lays the foundation for long term integration.



Figure 09: Proposed network of Welcoming centres within the City of Tshwane (Author 2023).

DECENTRALISED NEXUS

Development and densification of the Brooklyn node is strongly supported on both a horizontal and a vertical scale, including mixed land-uses, and high density residential uses to support the public transport system of the area.

This development for densification ribbon encourages the preservation of the surrounding residential character of Waterkloof, Brooklyn, Muckleneuk and Groenkloof. Expansion of the node is contained by Florence Ribeiro Avenue to the west, the Austin Roberts Bird Sanctuary and Justice Mahomed Street to the north and residential suburbs to the west (Groenkloof), to the south (Waterkloof) and to the east (Brooklyn).

The TSDF recognises that the Brooklyn Node is developing into one of the financial nodes of Gauteng, a function traditionally fulfilled by the Inner City.

It also acknowledges the changing role and function differentiation between the Inner City and other metropolitan nodes, and it recognises the need for this to be managed more efficiently to ensure a complimentary symbiosis for the larger good of the metropolitan area. The node is sporadically introducing opportunities of informality, mixed with existing formal activity.



Figure 10: Mapping of mobility and access in the Brooklyn Developmental Node (Author 2023).



Figure 11: Mapping of public activity in the Brooklyn Developmental Node (Author 2023).



The Gauteng Spatial Development Framework (TSDF) is a crucial document guiding spatial restructuring in Gauteng province, with a focus on urban and non-urban distinctions. The city's continuous expansion, especially with significant developments in the east of Pretoria, blurs the traditional borders between the inner city and suburban areas, creating opportunities for exploration at these overlapping zones (Landman & Badenhorst 2015).

The significance of an emergent node, east from the CBD, poses opportunity for development in a safer, intimate urban environment.

Brooklyn, Pretoria is a mixed land-use node that has evolved into one of the city's most significant metropolitan nodes outside the CBD. The area is characterised by strong retail and office components. It also has certain unique elements such as a large number of diplomatic establishments and has a significant entertainment sector.

Apart from existing dwelling-houses and group-housing developments in and around the node, a variety of residential typologies have been approved in recent months, which are in support of the economic function the node serves.

The importance of the Brooklyn metropolitan node is emphasised by the Gautrain feeder route to and from the Hatfield Station that encircles the node.

This stresses the importance of this metropolitan node, linking it with the Pretoria Station (and the CBD), Johannesburg and O.R. Tambo International Airport. Bulk municipal infrastructure capacities, as well as the traffic capacity of the major routes running through the node, are to be improved and expanded on within the TSDF.

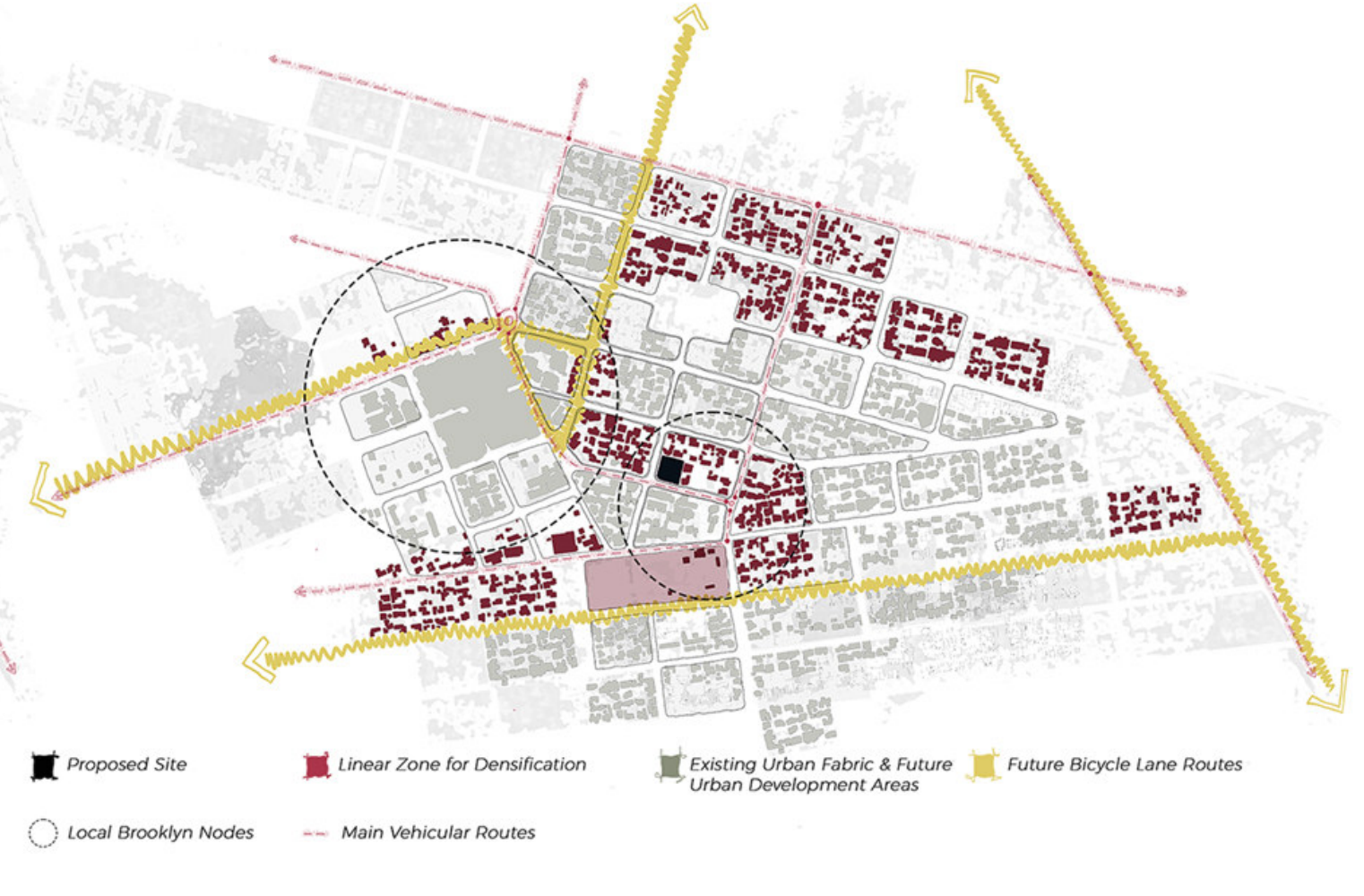
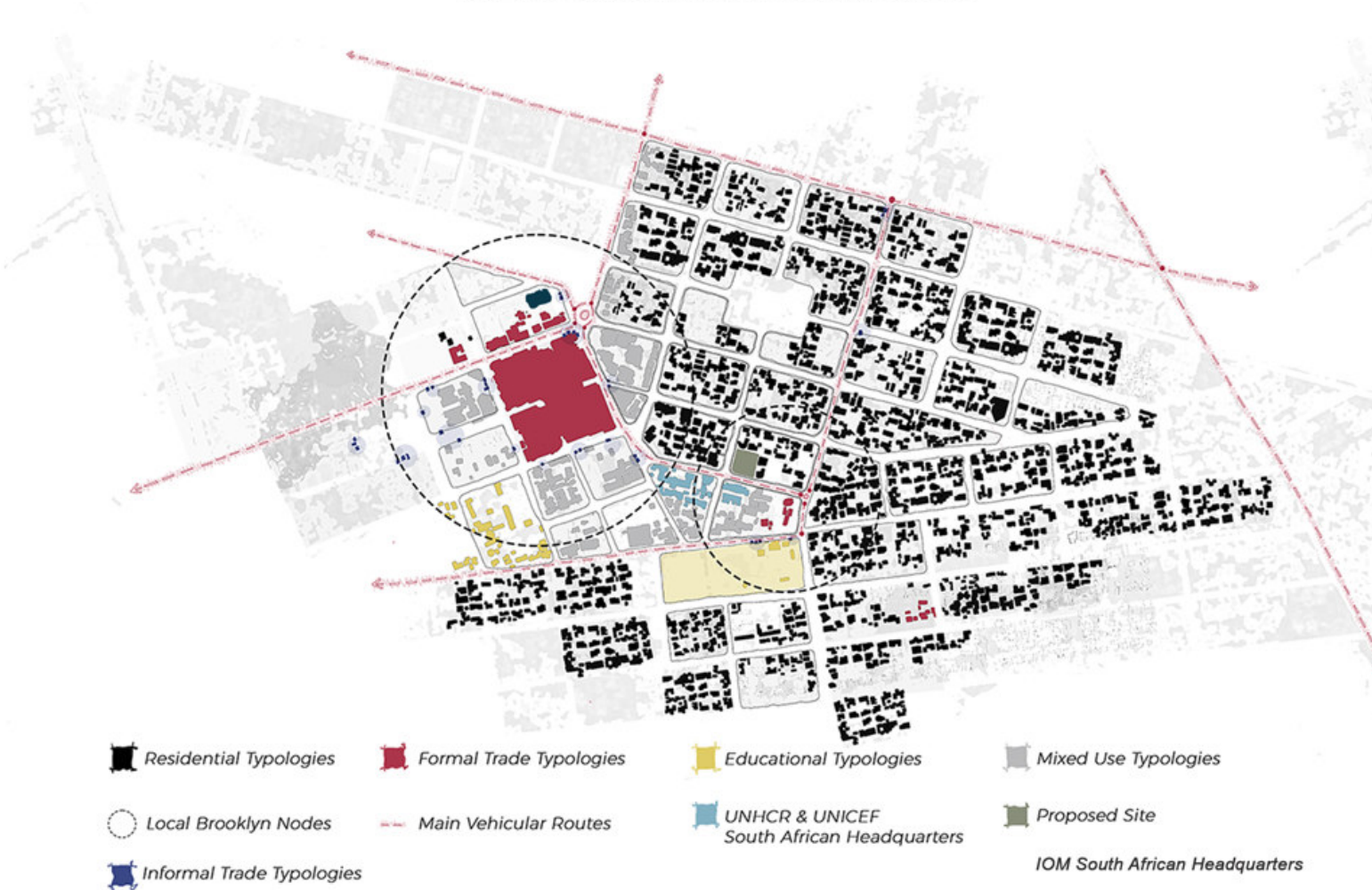


Figure 12: Mapping of land use in the Brooklyn Developmental Node (Author 2023).

Figure 13: Mapping derived from Tshwane Spatial Development Framework (Author 2023).



The network of centres identified throughout The City of Tshwane becomes the urban contribution to this project. The low density Brooklyn node, welcoming parents with children, becomes the project focus for design investigation and development, because of its unconventional scale, public interface, and needed visibility among Member States.

The site consists of 4 residential properties rezoned and approved for Business 2, by a private owner. The site sits on the corner of the busy main road, Waterkloof Street, and an enclosed road, Pienaar Street.

The UNHCR and UNICEF Southern Africa

Headquarters is situated across the road from the site and the IOM Headquarters, further down Waterkloof Street. The site promotes a connection to the international organisations administrative offices, where knowledge transfer between stakeholders take place on site.

Thus the chosen site constantly mediates between the three main organisations, the organisations with refugees, refugees with the public, and the public with the organisations.

Visibility of the city's refugee landscape is encouraged among member states within this diplomatic rich area, encouraging collaboration with the surrounding community of Brooklyn.

This centre facilitates the parent and child on a smaller scale, conveying an intimate welcoming experience, compared to the rest of the network.

This specific centre thus caters to the intensive needs of parents with children, for correct documentation processes, without suffering the risk of being arrested and deported, because of undocumented status (SIHMA 2017).

Although the building is situated in a low density area, future development planning is included in the TSDF for higher density developments.

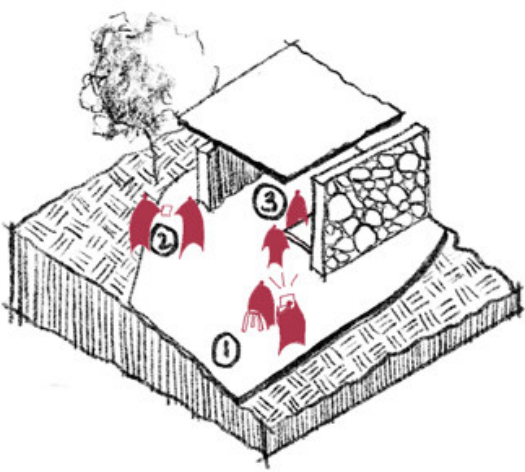
The scale of the building reacts as part of the proposed buffer zone in the TSDF for region 3, to retain the existing residential character of the surrounding areas, as a significantly higher density intervention in a planned, appropriate location to also achieve to support the optimal functioning of the node and the public transport feeder routes and access to the nearby Taxi rank at Brooklyn Mall.

The site also promotes access to the various informal typologies arising in the area, for economic support and community building.

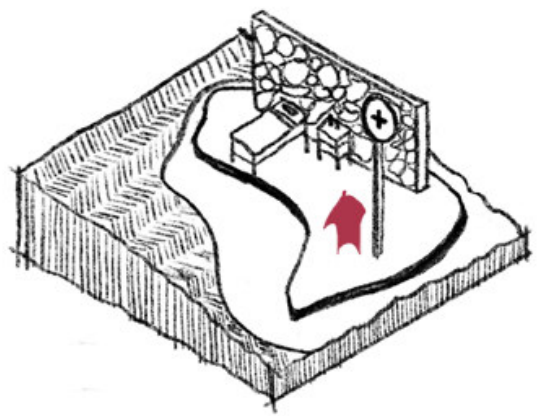


Figure 14: Proposed Location of Investigated Centre for Welcoming Parents with Children (Author 2023).

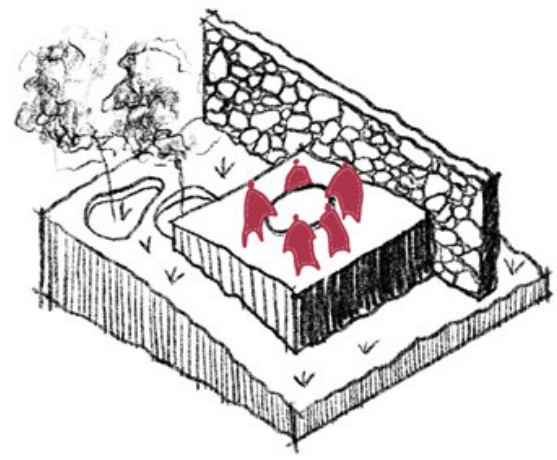
THE SITE



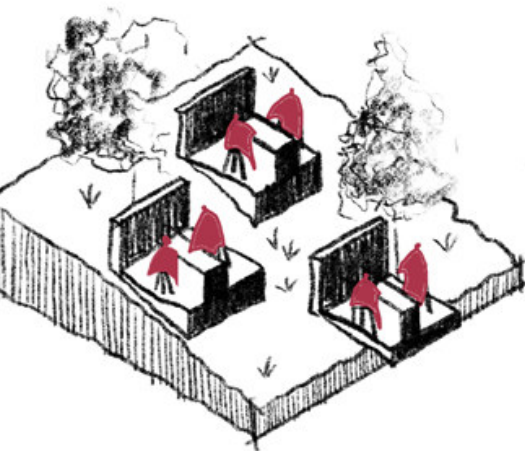
Documentation Facilities run by IOM in collaboration with government, assist refugees with needed registration, applications, legal frameworks, renewals, and status determination.



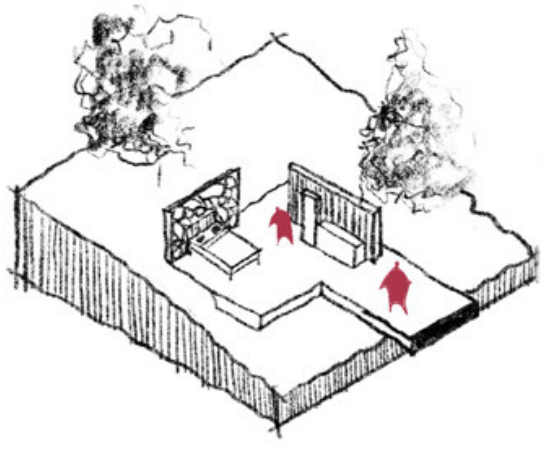
Care Facilities - Clinic and Dispensary run by the University of Pretoria COPC Research Unit (Community Oriented Primary Care), provides access for initial health screening and medication.



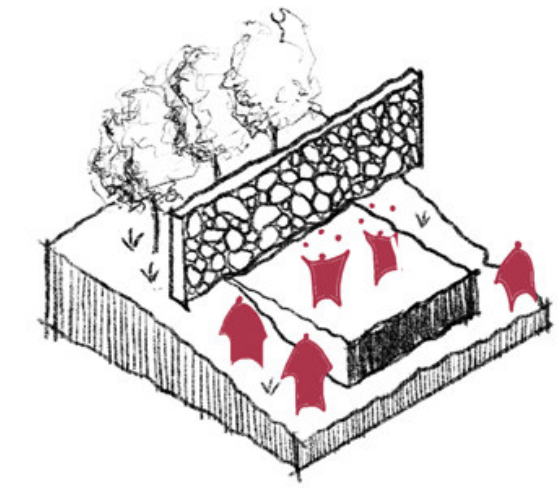
Formal Meeting Spaces (NGO's/IOM/UNHCR/ UNICEF/Member States) encourages discussions, contributions and solutions, strengthening refugee integration into society.



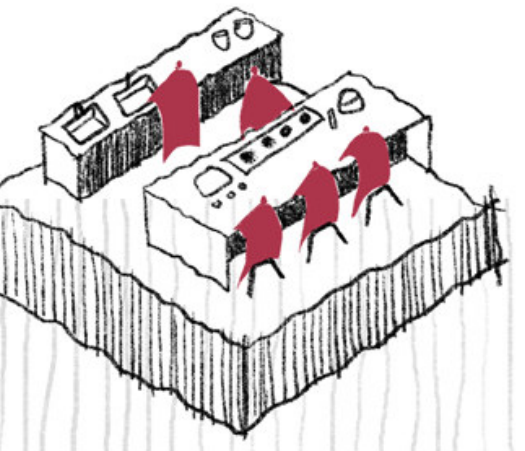
Private Consultation Areas/Offices run by IOM, to provide assistance on a humane & intimate scale, whilst remaining visually linked to other offices for a sense of accountability and safety.



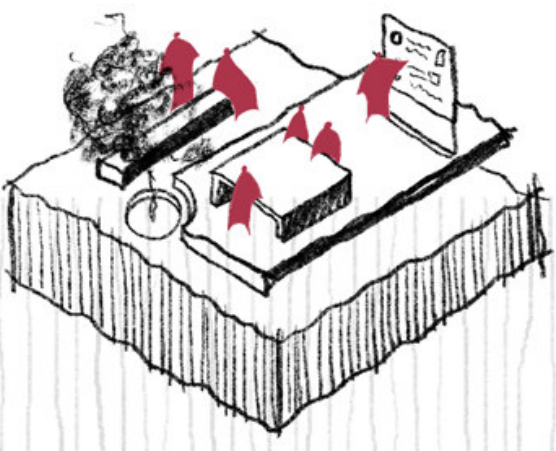
Emergency Care Stay Facilities run by the University of Pretoria COPC Research Unit (Community Oriented Primary Care), provide a safehouse for those who need chronic care. The duration of stay varies from one night to three, whilst the stakeholders assist in finding appropriate hospital/care placement.



Public Event Space providing opportunity for community gathering, fund raising events, political discussions, public performances, and private/public lectures facilitated by the IOM.



A Food Court provides nourishment to the user after a long journey of travelling, funded by the IOM and run by volunteers from the community.



Workshop Facilities hosted by the IOM/UNHCR/UNICEF provide needed information of outreach programs, housing hosts, and transport to placement facilities for further integration after being welcomed in the centre.



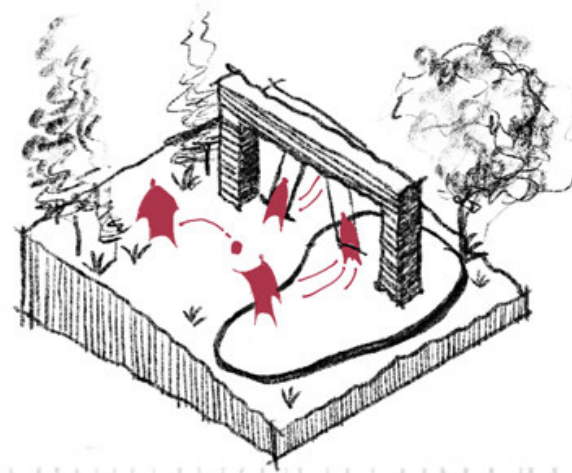
Gathering Spaces encourage networking and community building.

Figures : Animation of different programmes on site (Author 2023).

The programme was carefully considered by understanding the current refugee crisis within the City of Tshwane, through the lense of PID. The programme conveys the chosen three models of PID through their implementation on site, to design not only for refugees, but to also cater to the local community. The project strives to offer tailored migrant services, encompassing rights and protections in humanitarian and development settings, to showcase and broaden understanding among Member States, partners and the local community about how migration interventions apply to national development across society.

The title manifests in a welcome centre and supplementary programs that serve as an architectural tool toward public generosity (Kim 2018).

PROGRAMME



Play Areas encouraging spontaneous interaction among children and parents, building a network and community.

KEY SPATIAL THEORY

Deliberate spatial theories within the premise of PID are investigated and manifest in a set of four design principles which inform the architectural outcome. The four spatial principles are grounded within their respective spatial theory, as well as the three chosen PID models for synthesis (1) *Design as Political Activism*; (2) *Advocacy Design*; and (3) *Design for Social Construction* (kim 2018).

These spatial theories are to be manifest within the architectural outcome as a contribution to the PID discourse.

_01 Henri Lefebvre
 Three interconnected dimensions of space - perceived space, conceived space, and lived space - guides the architectural intervention as a framework for understanding the social and cultural aspects of space, to encourage a responsive intervention within its context & promote **democratic and inclusive** forms of spatial production.

Social Exclusion

These dimensions are produced within the project through **social practices and power relations** (Lefebvre 1974).



Design for *Inclusivity*

A language of *welcome*

_02 David Harvey
 Designing and building cities that are inclusive and accessible to all members of society, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background is realised through the "Right to the City" by working closely with communities to understand their needs and priorities, and by designing spaces and structures that reflect those needs and priorities.

Understanding Needs

By prioritising **social justice, democracy, and accessibility**, the project can facilitate an inclusive urban environment that benefits all members of society (Harvey 1973).



Accessible Public *Space*

_03 Michel Foucault
 Foucault explores how institutions are designed and operated to exert power and control over individuals, creating spaces that are highly disciplined and regulated, with strict rules and surveillance systems to ensure compliance. Architecture is thus a tool to reinforce power relationships and maintain social control, and the implications of these practices negate individual freedom and encourage autonomy (Foucault 1975).

Enforce Social Control

From this spatial theory, the project aims to use architecture as a tool for passive safety through a humanitarian lense, rather than forced control through rigid power relations.



Fostering a Sense of *Safety*

_04 Doreen Massey
 The way space is organised and structured can either reinforce or challenge existing power relations. Power relations are embedded in space not only through overt forms of control, but also through processes of exclusion and marginalisation (Massey 1993).
 Through a nuanced understanding of current power relations, the project aims to challenge these structures by providing transparency within programme, space, and interface.

Challenging Existing Stigmas



Design for *Transparency*

DESIGN INFORMANTS +

Clear Primary Indicator

Movement is clearly established through a single, accessible line where programme intersects movement for visibility.

Layered Transparency

Thresholds are transparent encouraging visibility, whilst layered for a sense of privacy to the user.

Human Centered

Scale attempts to convey a sense of intimacy and safety to the user through reducing the scale of interior spaces from the exterior.

Sense of Embrace

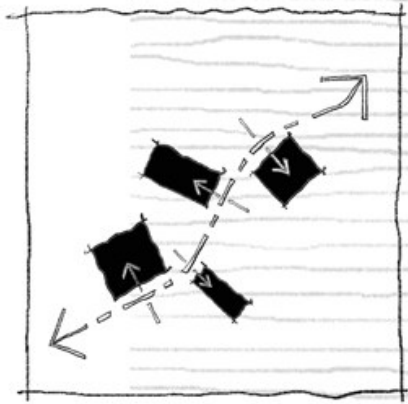
Natural light is controlled through one singular interface, leaving the other vertical planes to contrastingly embrace the user through stereotomic solid planes.

Textures for Warmth

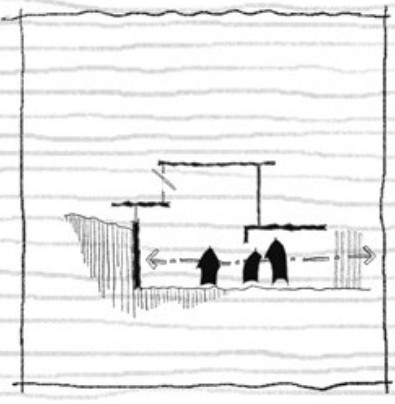
A single colour is used throughout the space for uniformity, applied to various textures for welcoming a sense of warmth into the space.

Agency

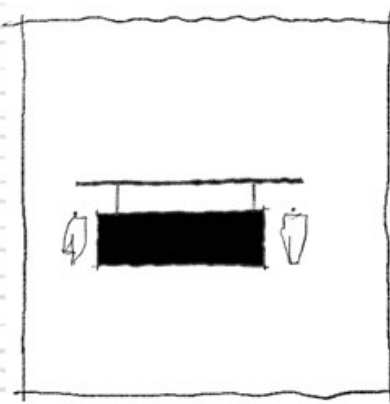
Moveable furniture and an open floor plan convey a sense of ownership and agency to the user, navigating through community in their own way.



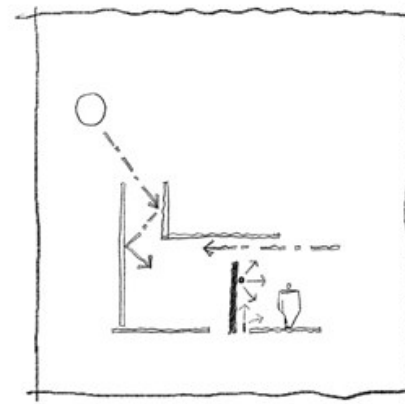
Movement



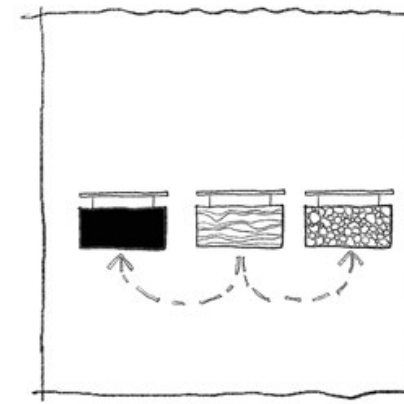
Threshold



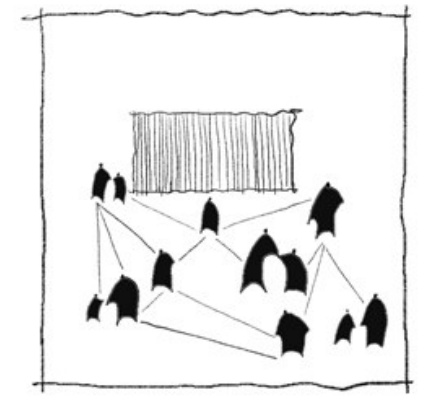
Scale



Light



Material



Community

CATALOGUE

Language of welcome

"A language of welcome" in the architectural realm is explored as a design approach that communicates hospitality, inclusivity, and a sense of belonging within the built environment. The Plato Coffee chain in Pretoria is investigated and catalogued, as a series of architectural nodes that create a network of welcoming spaces, promoting social interaction and intellectual engagement,

echoing the philosophical spirit of Plato in a contemporary coffeehouse setting. This welcoming language unfolds as the intentional use of architectural elements, spatial arrangements, and material choices to create a warm and inviting atmosphere for the user. This design language goes beyond the physical structure; it extends to the emotional and psychological experience of individuals entering the space.

"A language of welcome" becomes important for the architectural manifestation of this refugee welcome centre, as architecture can contribute to the emotional and psychological experience the refugee has within the space, making the user feel comfortable, visible, and respected. This language of welcome is thus rooted in PID, and its theoretical premise of socially responsible design (Kim 2018).

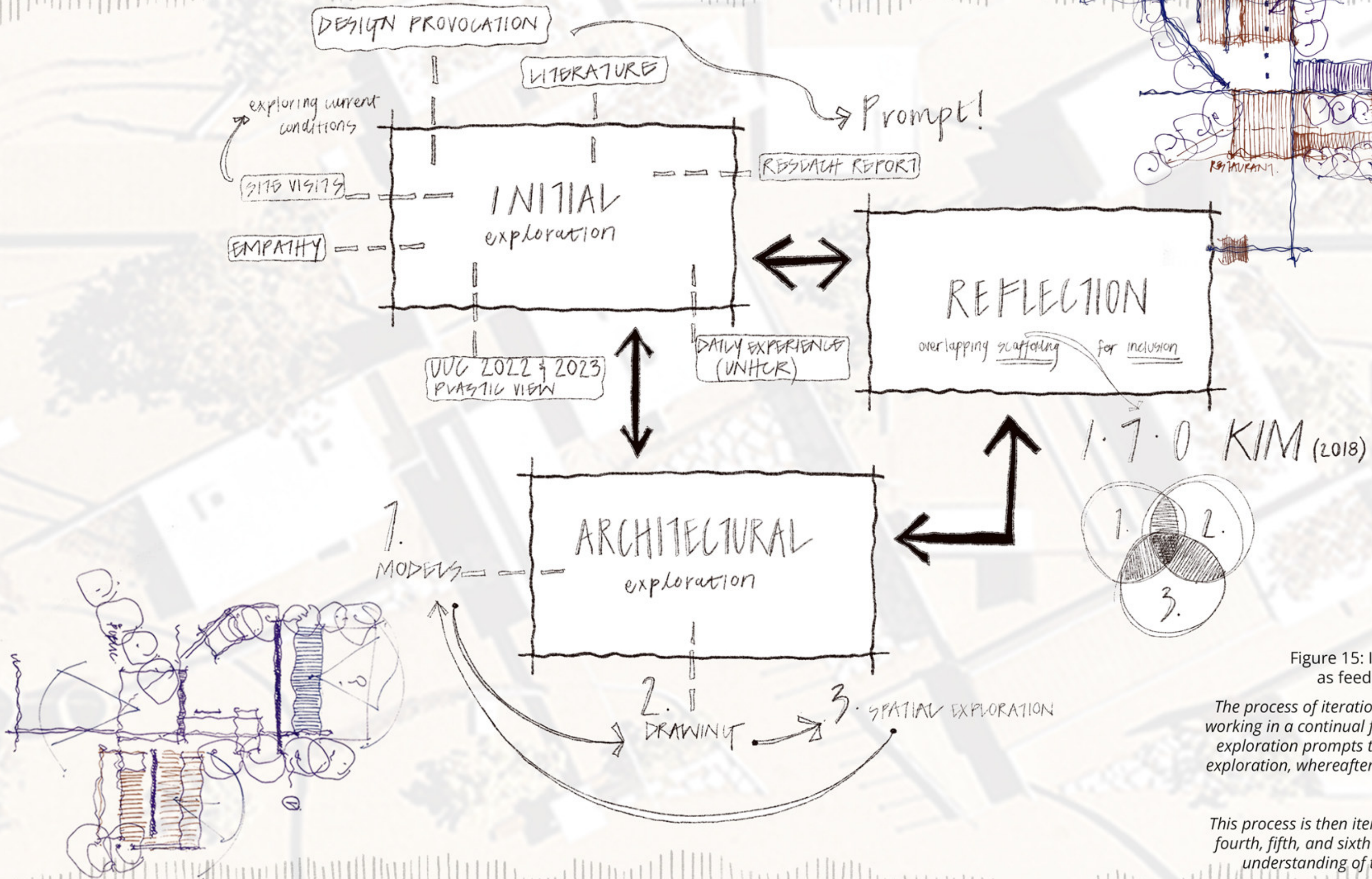
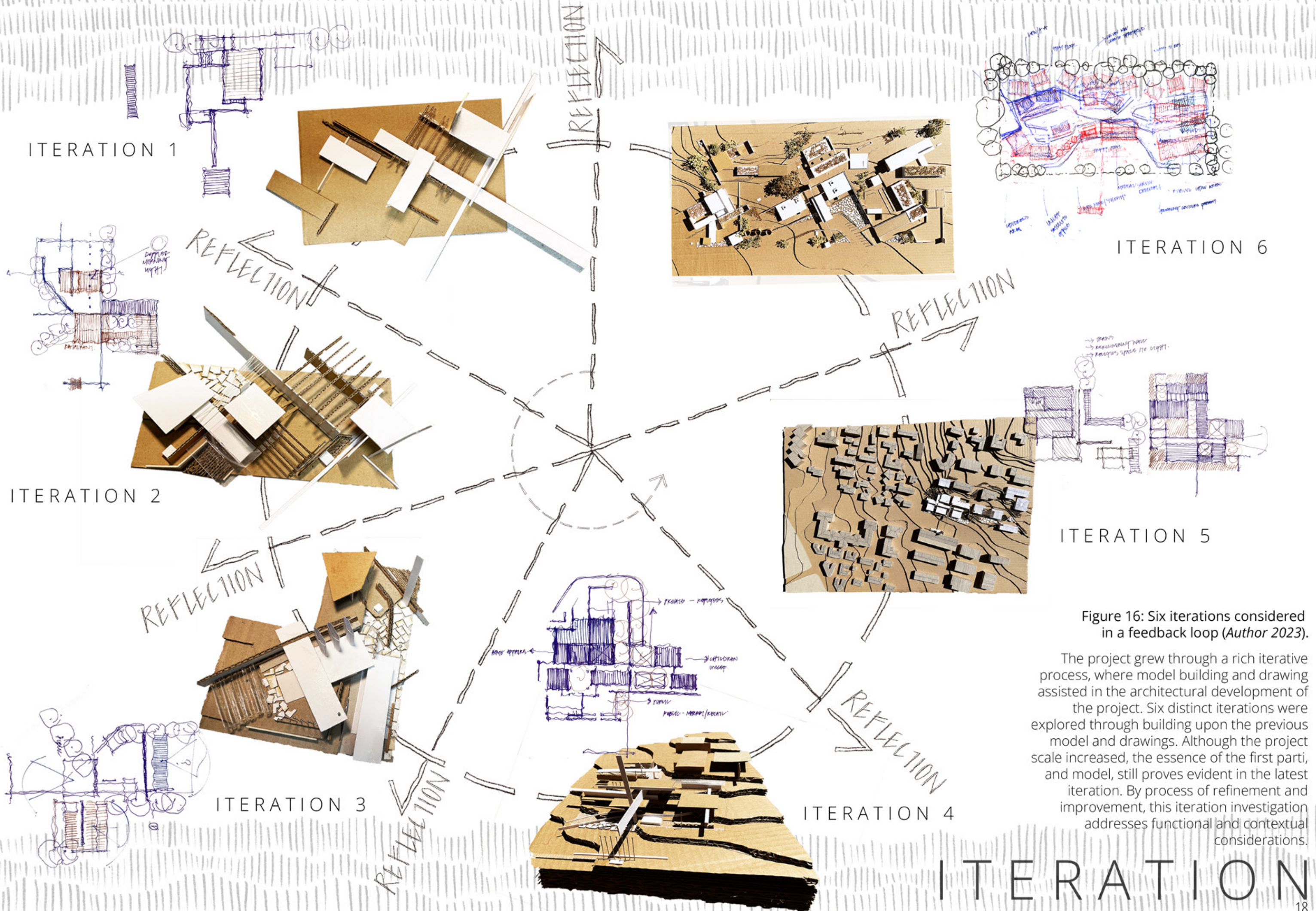


Figure 15: Iterative design process as feedback loop (Author 2023).

The process of iteration consists of three steps, working in a continual feedback loop. The initial exploration prompts the intuitive architectural exploration, whereafter the iteration is reflected on and reconsidered.

This process is then iterated for a second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth time, gaining a nuanced understanding of the architectural form as outcome.

ITERATION PROCESS



ITERATION 1

ITERATION 6

ITERATION 2

ITERATION 5

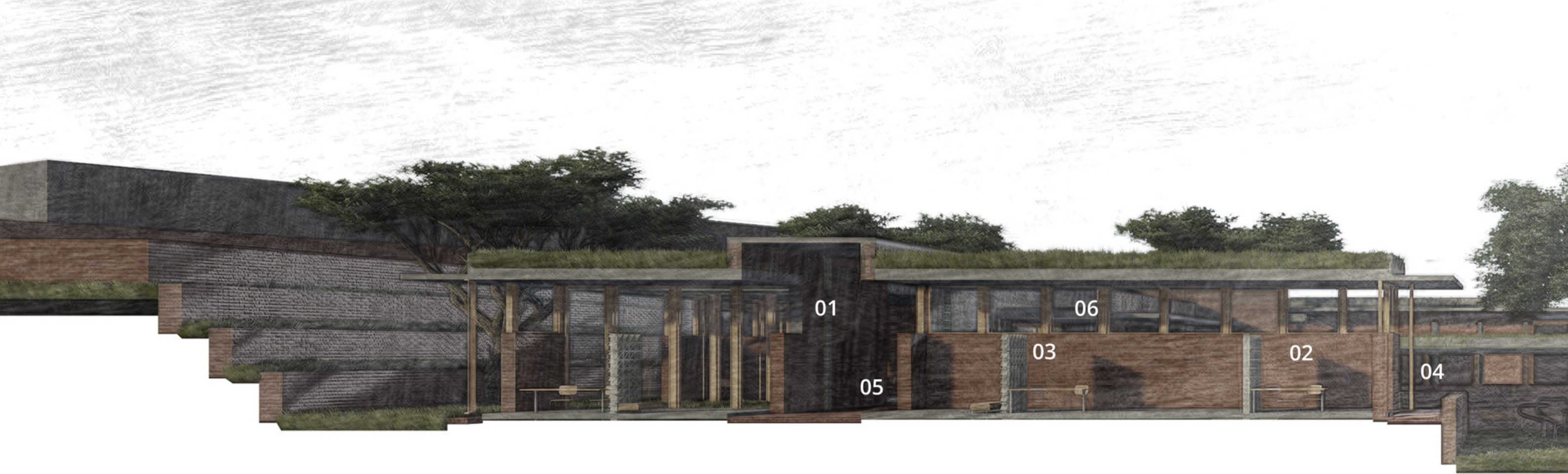
ITERATION 3

ITERATION 4

Figure 16: Six iterations considered in a feedback loop (Author 2023).

The project grew through a rich iterative process, where model building and drawing assisted in the architectural development of the project. Six distinct iterations were explored through building upon the previous model and drawings. Although the project scale increased, the essence of the first parti, and model, still proves evident in the latest iteration. By process of refinement and improvement, this iteration investigation addresses functional and contextual considerations.

ITERATION



01 Hierarchy of interconnected spaces

Sequential spaces are explored through pace and the elements which foster a sense of secure orientation within it (Mostafa 2022). Orientation for the user is explored through directional spaces on one central movement spine and differentiating between floor plane, and roof plane heights (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

02 Local materials

Natural materials of excavated soil from site, wood, stone, and textiles are explored to foster the feeling of comfort and warmth within the user experience. Materials conveying sensory comfort encourages the sense of safety for the user, in turn creating opportunity for interaction (Montessori-Architecture 2023). Children are highly attuned to the tactile quality of the building surfaces around them. There is inherent beauty in the roughness, simplicity, modesty and intimacy of natural substances such as wood or stone.

03 Articulation of space and form

Unstructured spaces animated by circumstance that can be transformed to suit any new situation are nestled by relatively structured, inclusive, containing elements. The unstructured communal areas become anchor points for users to settle down on their journey, through a presence of communal cohesion, embraced by the built fabric (Hertzberger 2016).

04 Transitional spaces between inside & outside

Threshold is explored through overlapping the public and private realms, inviting passers-by through a sense of duality and transparency. The threshold stands as its own platform, where two worlds overlap rather than a stark demarcation (Hertzberger 2016). This overlap in public and private realms contributes to the idea of sharing space, and forming part of a collective society.

05 Connecting function of circulation space & floorplane

Articulated circulation, through one primary movement route, orientates the user on site, without the need for signage, conveying legibility, and accessibility to users speaking different languages. This articulated route provides an inclusive, safe, efficient, and engaging user experience (Mostafa 2022). Open floor plans and transparent materials are explored, to create a sense of transparency, inclusivity and accessibility to the user, serving the public interest. Open floor plans convey a sense of accountability and communication among users, creating a trust-building environment. The free floor plan encourages new freedoms and potentials as a result of reconfigured social space, giving agency in one's own contexts. This realises Lefebvre's idea of the appropriation of space as an essential component of the right to the city as participants use their own everyday practices to produce space (Anderson 2014).

06 Openings

Light reaches interior spaces from clerestory ribbons, where the interior is enveloped in stereotomic vertical planes, embracing the user as a gesture to safety and security (Hertzberger 2016).

KEY DESIGN THEORY IMPLEMENTED *A language of welcome*



Figure: Sectional graphic representation of design principles which inform architectural outcome (Author 2023).

07 Accessibility for children

Stimulating the senses of the children using the site, is considered throughout interior and exterior spaces including water, sand, landscaping, and play structures. Sensory stimulation encourages engagement among children playing, building connections and fostering a sense of community among users (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

08 Observation without intrusion

The terraced landscape offers pockets of seclusion & safety, for users within the site, observing the street edge from above (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

09 Flexibility

Flexibility in space is explored, encouraging spaces that can easily be adapted for various purposes, such as meetings, workshops, or social gatherings. This flexibility encourages a range of activities to take place, for smaller intimate gatherings to larger public events, as well as different activities for different age groups of children (Anderson 2014).

10 Independent self-care

Scaled at Adult-and child ergonomics, to convey a sense of responsibility and ownership to the user (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

11 Grounds as a habitat

Indigenous landscaping is proposed to enhance the welcoming atmosphere, woven in between outdoor seating areas to provide a sense of calm and serenity for the user, whilst providing shade and reducing erosion. Playscapes run adjacent to the primary circulation route for continuous passive surveillance on children. Indigenous landscaping is a tool used to convey a narrative aimed at generating and balancing positive social, institutional, environmental and economic change (Anderson 2014).

12 Daylighting

Natural light is explored to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Where large overhangs protect the user from harsh climate factors. Interior lighting from above skylights is used as a tool to convey a sense of safety and security to the user, whilst nestled in their stereotomic surroundings. Lighting encourages inclusivity and accessibility for the user, making their journey effortless on site. Light is also drawn into interior spaces for warmth and comfort (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

KEY SPATIAL THEORY IMPLEMENTED A language of *welcome*

The urban edge becomes a habitable space between two architectural realms, encouraging conditions for informal lingering. The edge has a quality to contain, which invites the user to settle if only for a short time. The design is iterated to engage with the surrounding community through providing adjacent sidewalks, public transport facilities, public drinking fountains, and spaces that spill into the street for recreational purposes, to foster a sense of connection with the neighbourhood. This promotes interactions between the refugee and the local community through architectural features like outdoor seating areas or spaces that open up to the neighbourhood as the urban edge.

Earth Stewardship

Transitional Spaces Reacting to Climate

Passive Surveillance - Terraced Site

Human Centered Design - Scale

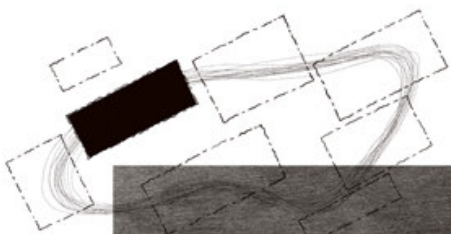
DESIGN + TECHNICAL

The Urban Edge

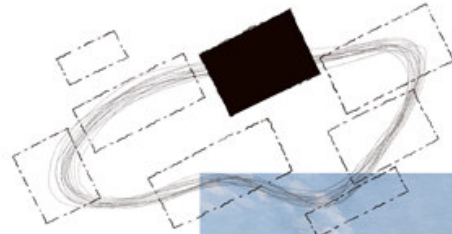
Meaningful Access to Water

Urban Generosity toward Street Edge

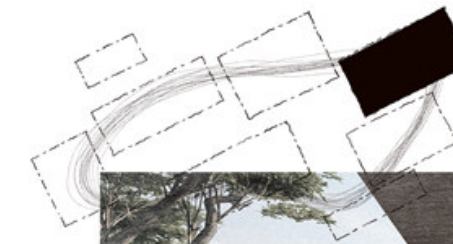
Accessibility through Sloping Surface



Documentation Facilities; **Approach**
Registration; Interviews; Documentation Screening;
Documentation Issuance; Biometrics



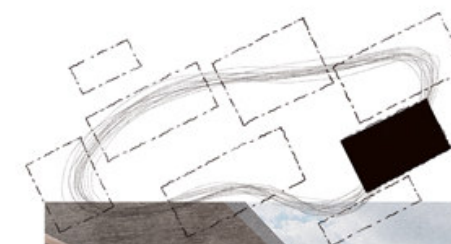
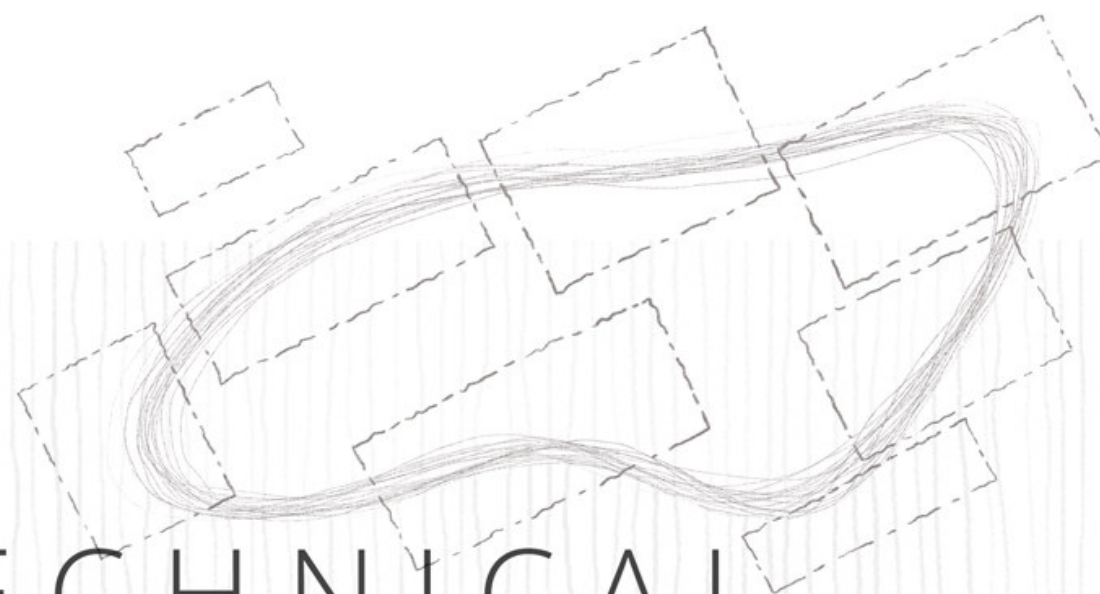
Clinic Facilities; **Link**
Health Screening; Dispensary; Prescriptions



Clinic Facilities; **Approach**
Emergency Care; Overnight Monitoring

The intervention manifests in built form, to facilitate basic needs for a refugee parent & child on point of arrival as a safe, orchestrated process.

The layout of the site is determined around a central movement line that manifests as a walkway joining interconnected spaces, set out intuitively along three axes to establish architectural order and procession.



Bag Collection; **Site Exit**
Bag Dropoff on Arrival; Safe Storage

DESIGN + TECHNICAL

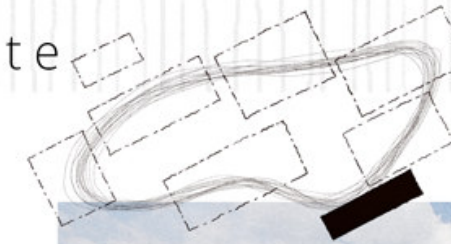
The Journey through site



Public Event Space; **Urban Edge**
Communal Gathering; Hosting; Lectures; Fund Raisers



Reception Facilities; **Entrance**
Bag Dropoff; Registration; Language Coordination

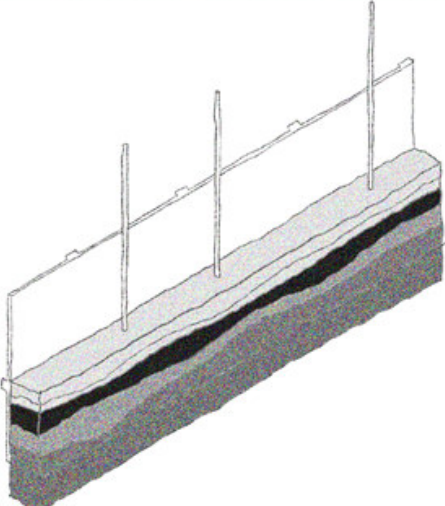


NGO Workshop Facilities; **Courtyard**
Collaborative Workshop; Offices; Communal Play

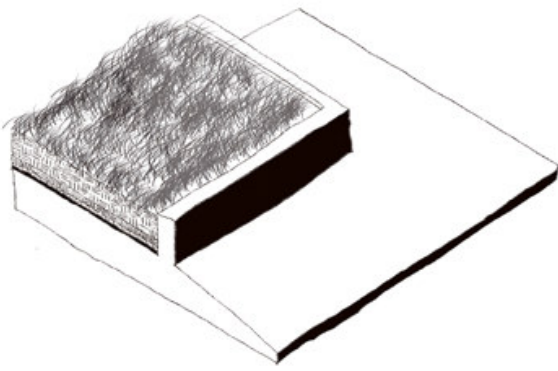


- Concrete
- Rammed Earth
- Timber
- Brick

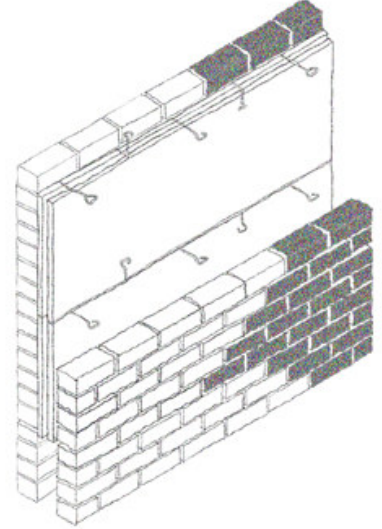
DESIGN + TECHNICAL Materiality



Rock and sand excavated on site, is reused as building material for rammed earth as well as stone walls, for earth stewardship and sustainable practice (Kim 2018). These solid elements act as vertical privacy devices, to convey a sense of stability and safety to the user (Montessori-Architecture 2023).



The concrete overhead plane becomes a system within itself, where planted roofs act as rainwater catchment and filtration, for public use at water fountain points on the street edge as a gesture of generosity to the public (Kim 2018).



Masonry cavity walls provide a regulated interior climate for the user and echoes the built fabric of the surrounding context. The textured surface is used in its raw form, and conveys a sense of warmth, stability and permanence to the user. The scale of the humble brick speaks of humility and non intimidation establishing a welcoming and approachable atmosphere.



DESIGN + TECHNICAL

Built Form

The architectural form utilises the natural slope of the site as a design element, defining hierarchy, privacy, and safety on site through stepped terraces, transparency in balustrading, and visual connections to the street edge (Montessori-Architecture 2023).

The architectural language is aimed at being sensitive to the surrounding residential context regarding scale, through the use of single storey volumes and buffer areas between built form.



Waterkloof Street

Pienaar Street

UNHCR
Headquarters

UNICEF
Headquarters

Korean
Cultural Centre

Locality Plan

0 2 4 10 20 50



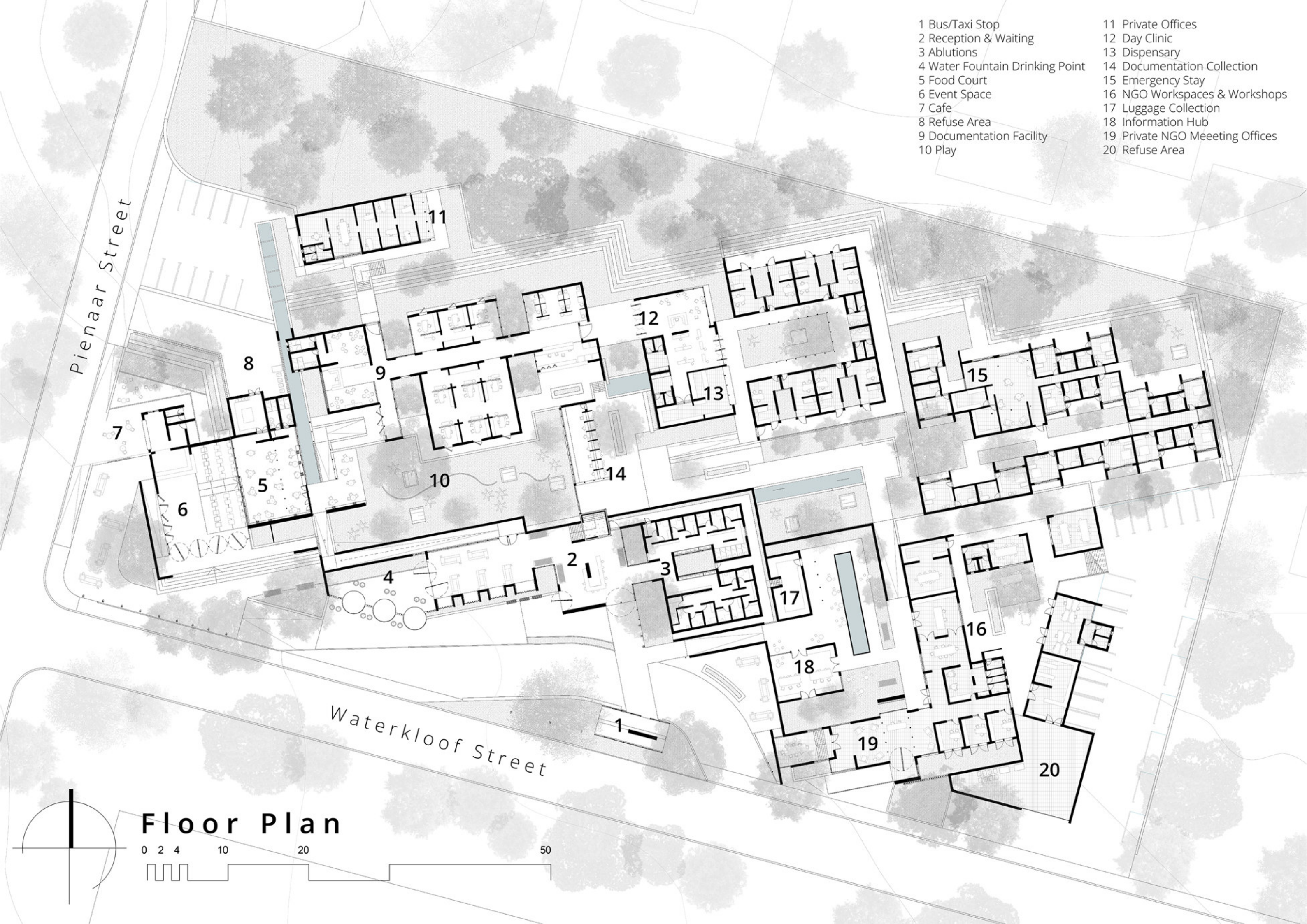
- 1 Bus/Taxi Stop
- 2 Reception & Waiting
- 3 Ablutions
- 4 Water Fountain Drinking Point
- 5 Food Court
- 6 Event Space
- 7 Cafe
- 8 Refuse Area
- 9 Documentation Facility
- 10 Play
- 11 Private Offices
- 12 Day Clinic
- 13 Dispensary
- 14 Documentation Collection
- 15 Emergency Stay
- 16 NGO Workspaces & Workshops
- 17 Luggage Collection
- 18 Information Hub
- 19 Private NGO Meeting Offices
- 20 Refuse Area

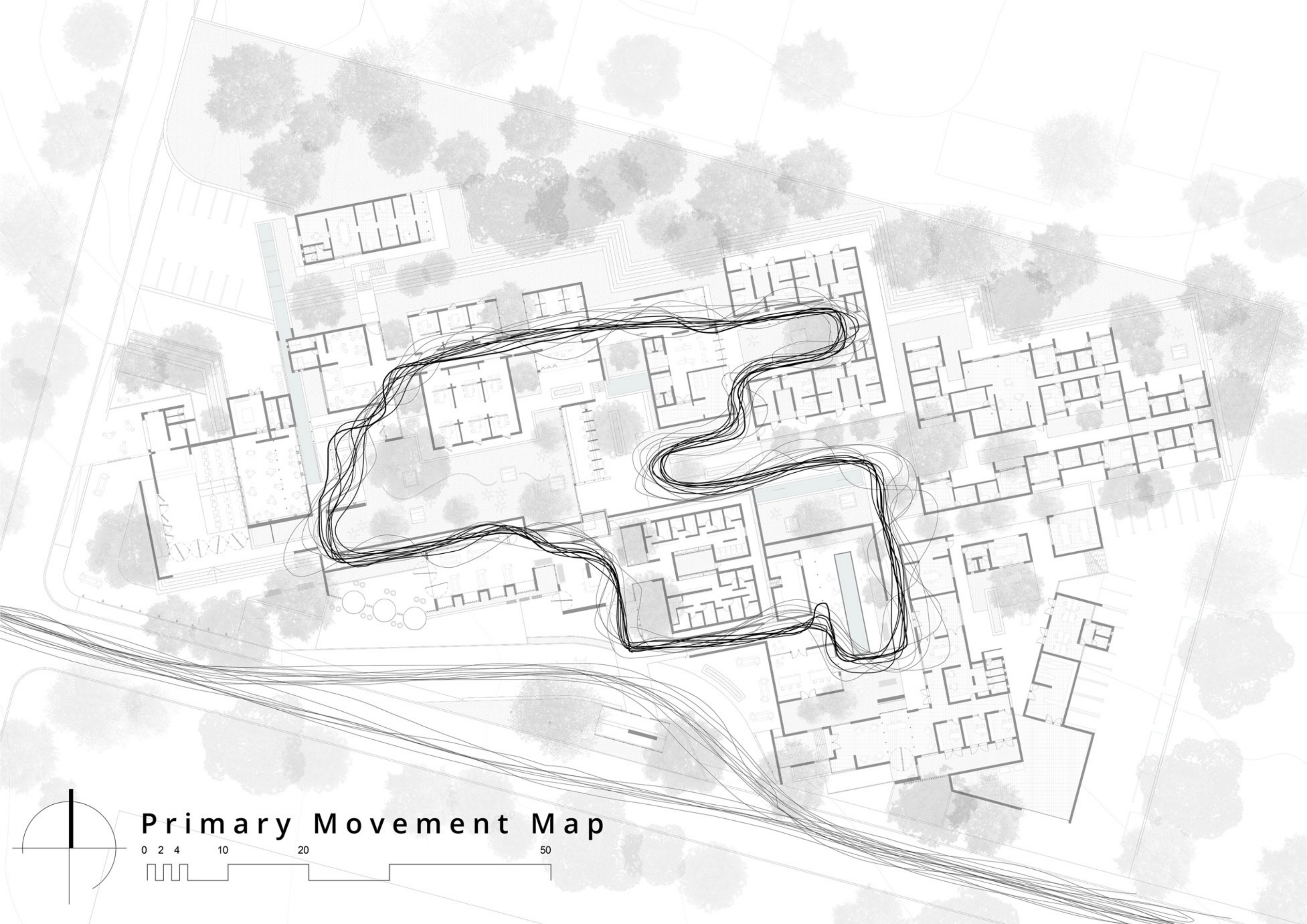
Pienaar Street

Waterkloof Street

Floor Plan

0 2 4 10 20 50





Primary Movement Map

0 2 4 10 20 50



Embarking on a mini project exploring the refugee crisis in South Africa was an eye-opening journey to the struggles faced by refugees within South Africa. Witnessing their invisibility in the eyes of both the public and the government, along with the dehumanising treatment they endure, sparked a profound sense of empathy within me. This experience became a catalyst for questioning the existing narrative and seeking alternatives.

The realisation that refugees are often overlooked and subjected to dehumanising conditions prompted a critical reflection on the root causes of this issue. I began questioning the societal and governmental mechanisms that contribute to their invisibility and the challenges they encounter. This reflective process ignited a passion for understanding and addressing the systemic issues at play.

Motivated by the empathy cultivated during the mini project, I transitioned into a major project with a clear mission—to facilitate the integration of refugees into the urban fabric. Rather than perpetuating the dehumanised and invisible processes they typically face, my focus shifted towards creating alternative, welcoming avenues for their needs. The major project became a platform for exploring innovative solutions, challenging the status quo, and advocating for a more compassionate and inclusive approach to refugee integration.

The mini project served as a moving introduction to the harsh realities of the refugee crisis, prompting a shift in perspective and a commitment to fostering positive change.

REFLECT

Mini - Project

Figure 17: Mini project explorative model on the refugee crisis in South Africa (Author 2023).





REFLECT

Major - Project

My architectural master's project, which focuses on the design of a welcome centre for refugee parents and children in the city of Tshwane, has been an incredibly enlightening and transformative experience. It allowed me to grapple with the intricate and multifaceted world of public interest design, with a specific emphasis on the integration of refugees into the urban fabric. This project was driven by the aspiration to create a tangible and impactful solution that addresses the challenges faced by displaced individuals and families while also fostering a sense of belonging and dignity.

The fundamental goal of this project was to recognize the vulnerability and the basic needs of refugee parents and children arriving in the city. The decision to focus on this specific demographic was rooted in the understanding that children, in particular, represent the hope and potential of any community. Providing them with a welcoming and nurturing environment was a priority.

The project aimed to be more than just a physical structure; it aspired to be a beacon of hope, resilience, and community in the face of adversity. The design incorporated elements that would make the integration process as smooth as possible, and found it was crucial to ensure that the architectural language reflected the principles of dignity, security, and inclusivity.

One of the most critical aspects of the project was the consideration of basic needs, where the project, therefore, sought to provide a safe and secure environment where refugee families could begin the process of rebuilding their lives.

Additionally, the documentation process, which is often complex and overwhelming for refugees, was addressed through dedicated spaces and support services within the welcome centre. Ensuring that individuals could navigate the bureaucracy while retaining their dignity was a primary concern.

This architectural master's project was an exploration of the power of design to impact lives positively. It was a journey that highlighted the importance of compassion, empathy, and social responsibility in architectural practice. As I reflect on this project, I am reminded that the built environment can either perpetuate division or serve as a catalyst for unity and healing.

This masters journey has equipped me with a unique set of skills and perspectives that, I think, are invaluable in the field of architecture. By integrating this new found empathy, critical thinking, social awareness, inclusivity, innovation, and a passion for positive change into my design ethos, I hope to be well-positioned to contribute meaningfully to the built environment and address societal challenges through my work.

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