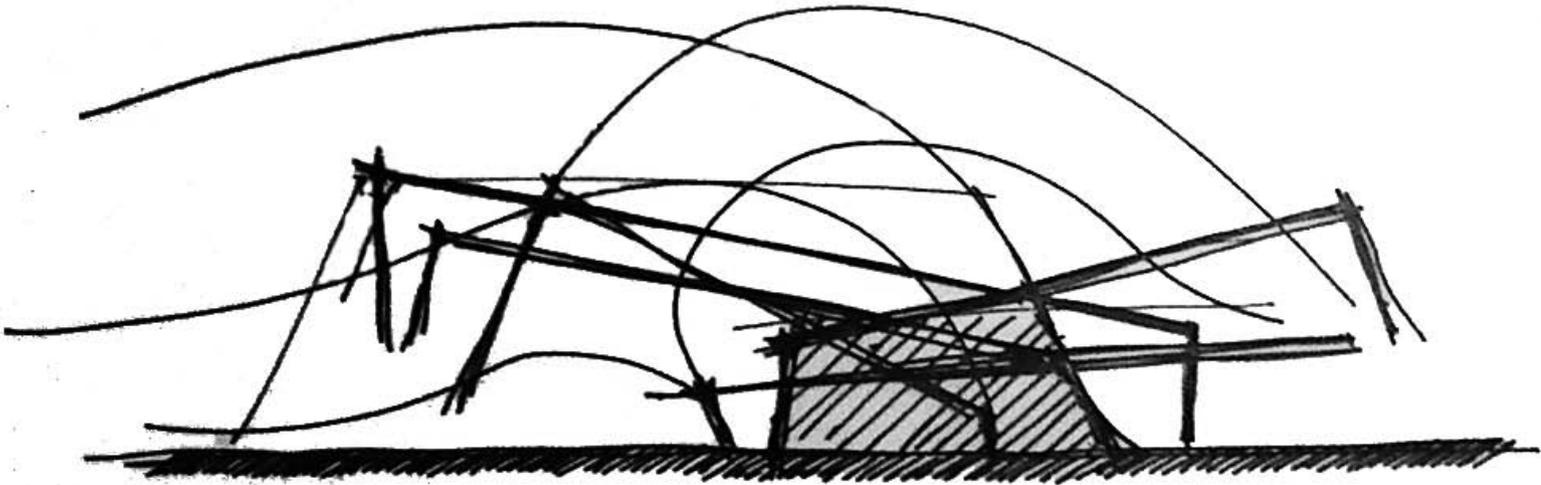
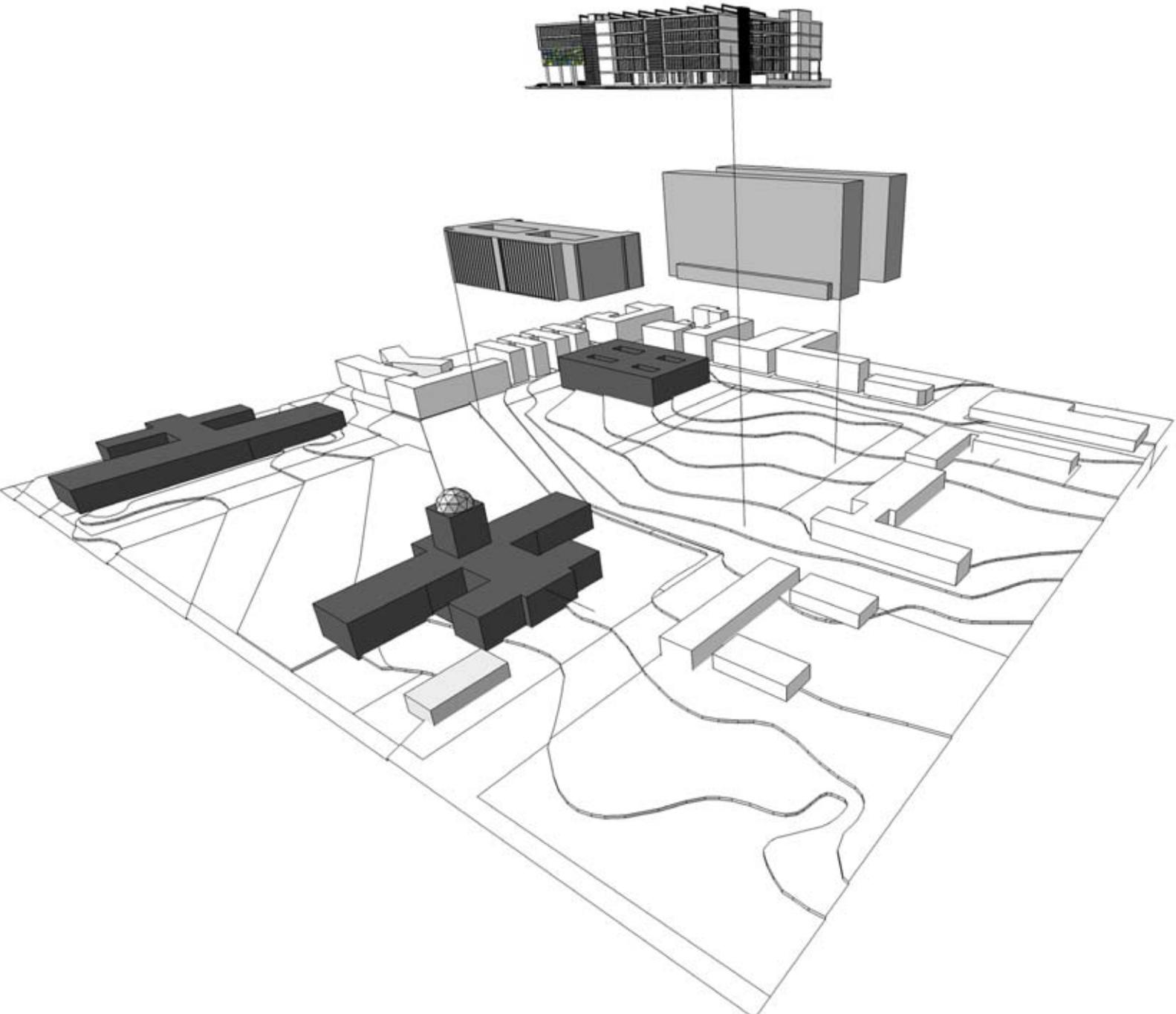


Chapter 7. Design Development





1. Introduction

The intention of this project is to reiterate the role of government buildings to capture meaning, and to explore the expression of the concept of a ‘democratic African identity’ within the context of a capital city.

The project is firstly based on the consolidation of the Department of Home Affairs on an existing urban block. It explores how Government should present itself to current and future generations, both on an urban and an architectural scale. In this sense the project considers the question of accessibility, inclusivity and layering on an urban scale, whilst reacting to the expression of domination of government buildings related to previous ideologies.

It is the intention that the project should add a layer of symbolism and memory to the square, and on a broader level to the capital city. The aim is to underline the importance of adding new layers of symbolic significance and memories to the capital city, whilst

maintaining the old, in order to remember where we come from and celebrate how much we have achieved.

2. Urban concept

i. Symbolic public space

The project starts on a larger scale with the consolidation of the Department of Home Affairs on a city block. At the city block level the intervention has to deal with the relation of the intervention (and symbolically of the Government) to the city, and more specifically to the public urban space, Pretorius Square.

As stated earlier in this document there is a history of a more subtle approach regarding the relation between Government and people, or government buildings and city. The fact that the Union buildings do not dominate one of the main axes of the city attests to this approach.

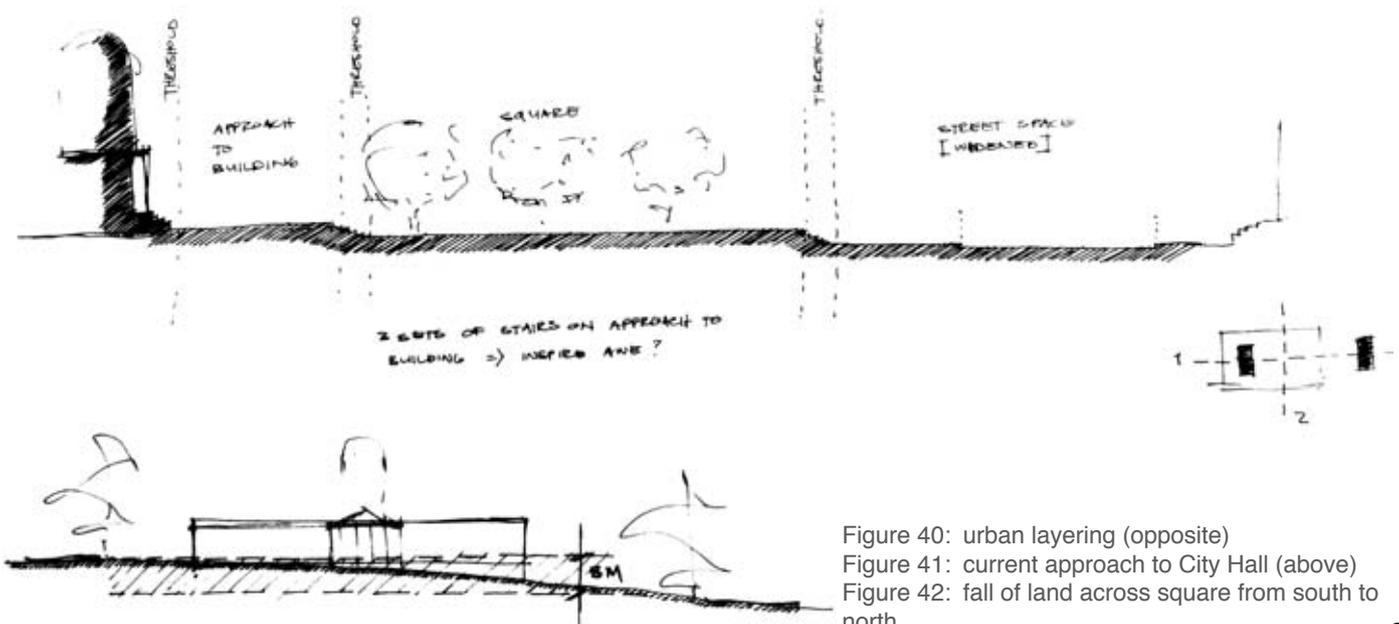


Figure 40: urban layering (opposite)

Figure 41: current approach to City Hall (above)

Figure 42: fall of land across square from south to north

In a similar way the new headquarters building does not dominate the public square, but rather aims to complete the definition of the square and add a layer of meaning and function to this symbolic space.

Making use of the contours of the square, an urban stairway is created, subtly redirecting the orientation of the square and forming an approach towards the main entrance of the consolidated department.

The main elements of the current main axis (pedestrian approach to the City Hall with ponds and statues of Andries Pretorius and Chief Tshwane) are retained in order to maintain the memory of the past. The formality of the approach is however disrupted by stepping the elements in order to integrate it with the levels of the new stairway, thereby further weakening their dominance over the space.

On the southern edge of the square, along Jacob Mare Street, a market space should be provided that leads to the entrance of the proposed campus. Public parking facilities are provided along Jacob Mare Street and under the square.

ii. Urban campus

The question of what it means to establish a 'campus' to a government department was explored. It is essential for such a campus space, being that of a democratic government, to be perceived as being accessible, and secondly to be incorporated into the urban fabric.

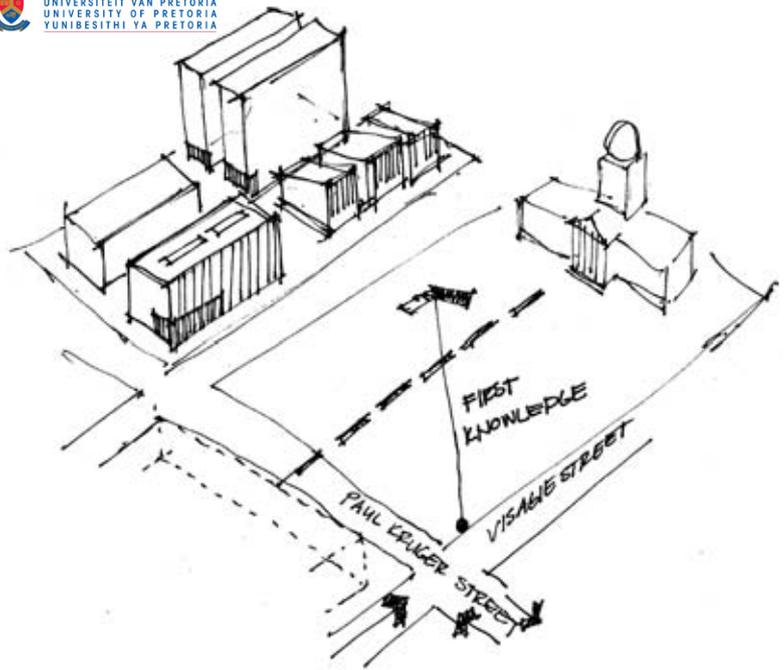


Figure 43: Sketch - campus viewed from northeast

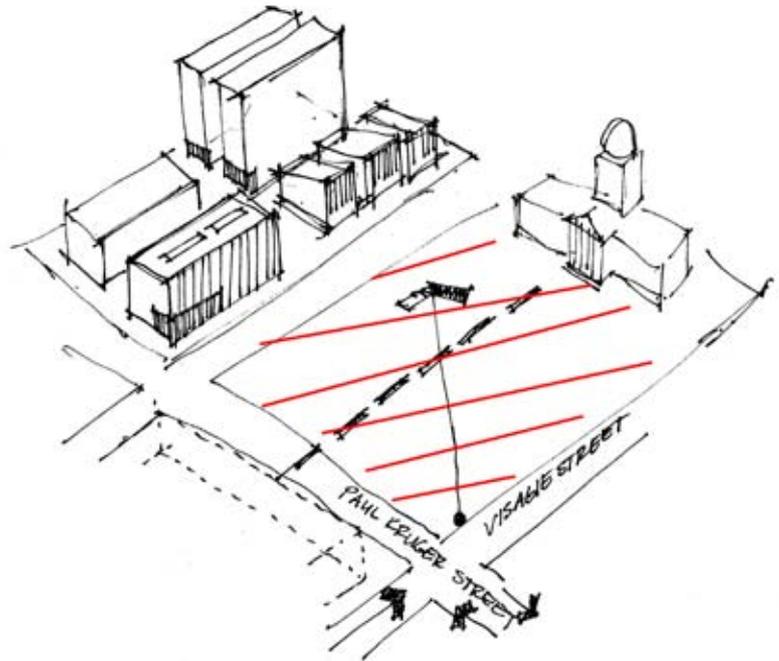


Figure 44: Sketch - campus viewed from southwest

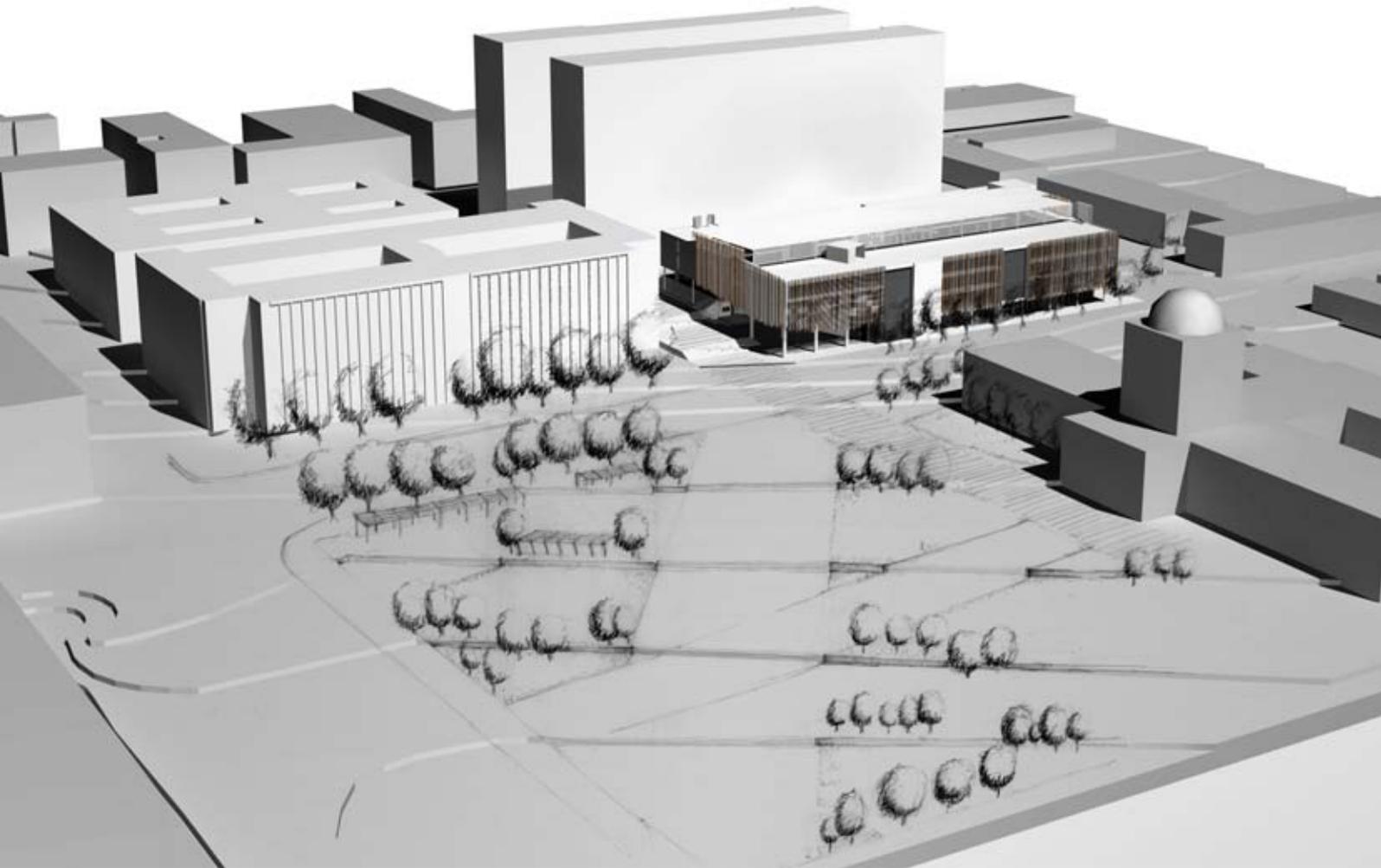


Figure 45: Urban stair

The department does, however, have a high security program. For this reason the public is guided through the site by a controlled, safe space. Entrances to the various buildings are created at the heart of this public walkway to increase internal accessibility and to ensure an overlap of public and departmental movement. The overlap of movement leads to the policing of space whilst underlining the accessibility of Government. High security courtyards are then created, which are accessed separately from this public function.

Further, publicly oriented functions (restaurant, small business retail space, creche) are cut into the buildings at the street edge and where possible along the public walkway, ensuring a public threshold between campus and the public space of the city, thereby integrating the department into the daily operation of the city.

The campus further incorporates the existing buildings, representative of architectural styles associated with previous ideologies, including neo-classical which is related to colonial government, as well as modern and late-modern buildings associated with the apartheid era, thereby symbolically building on what has been established and pointing to the inclusivity of the democratic government.

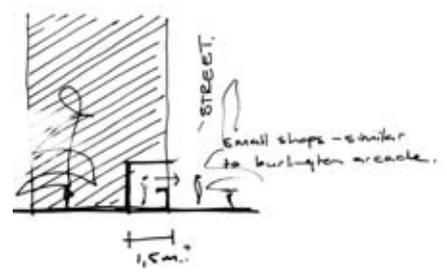
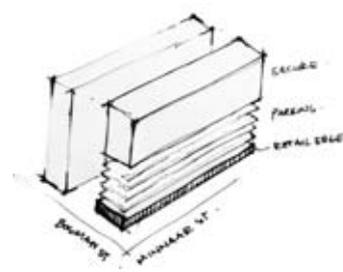
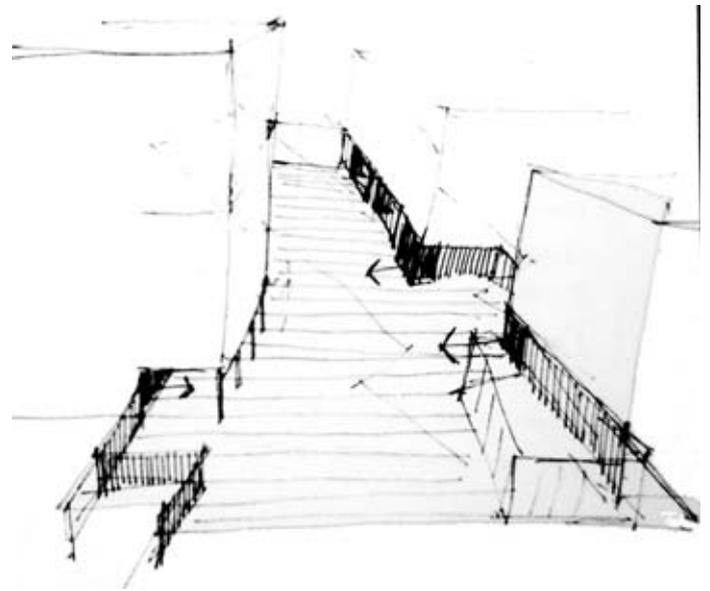
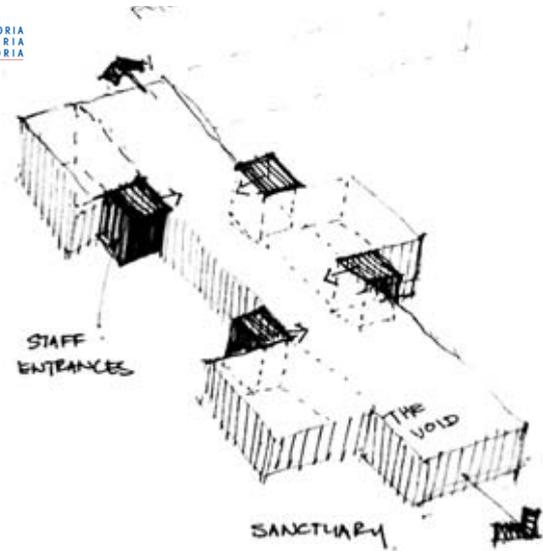


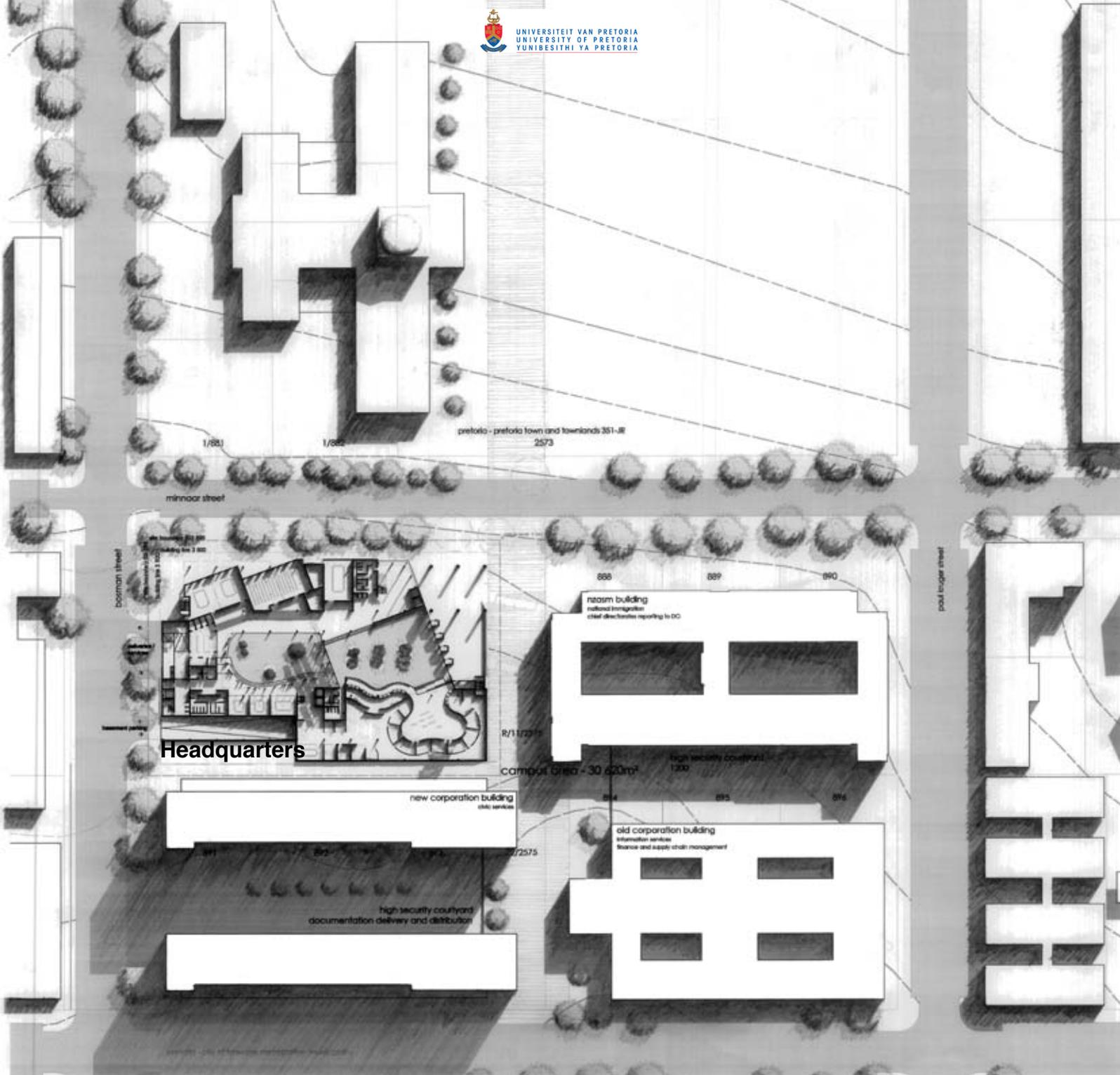
Figure 46: (Opposite) Urban campus for consolidated Department of Home Affairs

Figure 47: (Top) Proposed public walkway

Figure 48: (Middle) Proposed public walkway

Figure 49: (Bottom left) Proposed parking levels in New Corporation building

Figure 50: (Bottom right) Threshold treatment



Headquarters

campus area - 30 620m²

new corporation building
city services

naam building
national immigration
chief directorate reporting to DC

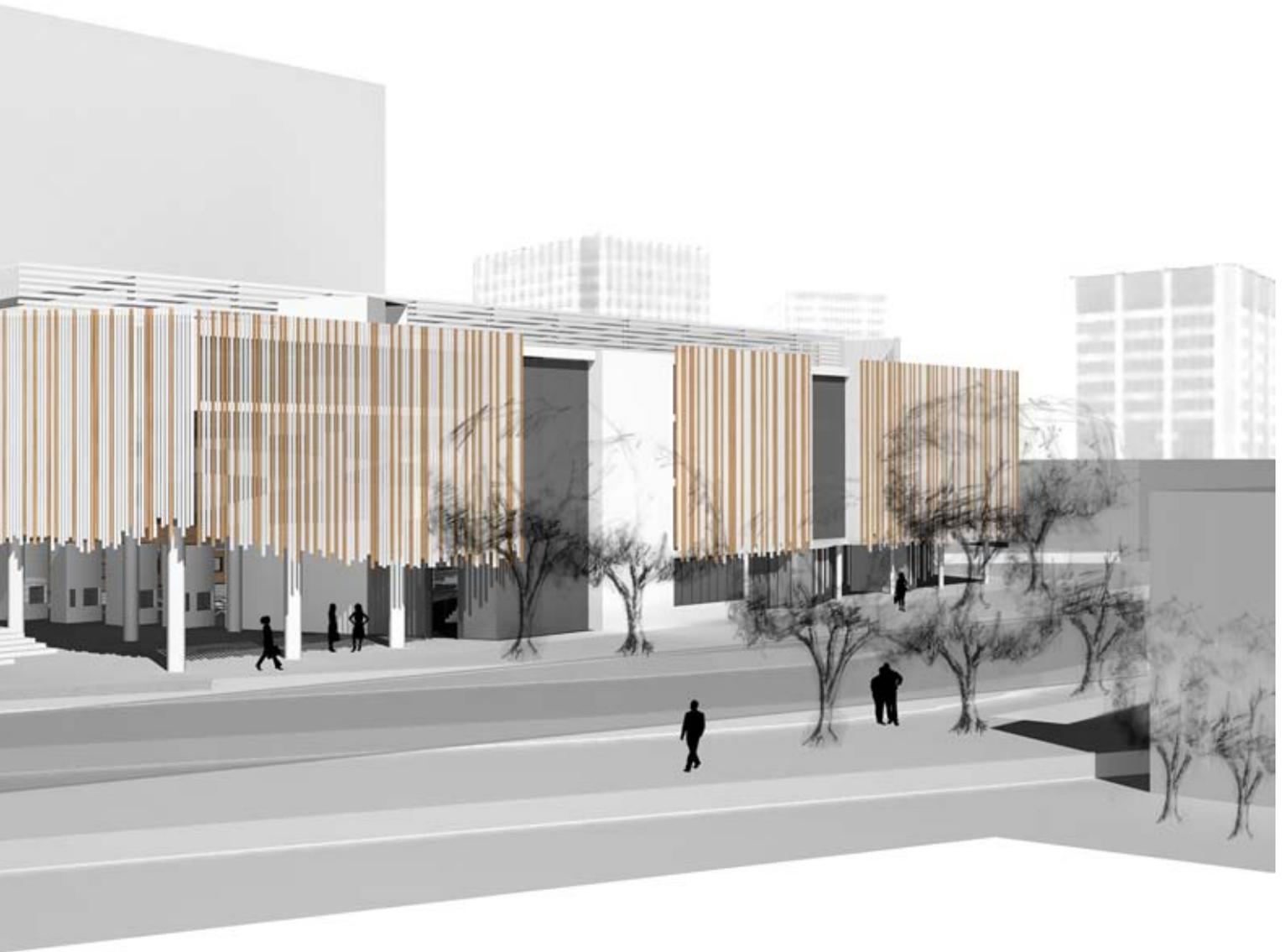
old corporation building
information services
finance and supply chain management

high security courtyard
documentation delivery and distribution

high security courtyard
1200



Figure 51: Northeastern view of headquarters



3. Architectural concept

As stated earlier in this chapter the purpose of this project is the consolidation of the Department of Home Affairs in Pretoria. The space requirements for the department (see Chapter 3) determined the need for an additional building on the site. The analysis of existing buildings and requirements lead to the concept of the creation of a headquarters building on the northwestern corner of the city block.

This project is not about the creation of an architectural language which will perpetuate the dominance of government or western ideologies. Rather, it explores the concept of African democracy. In an attempt to simplify such an elusive question the problem is divided into the concepts of 'African space', democracy, and the function of the Department of Home Affairs.

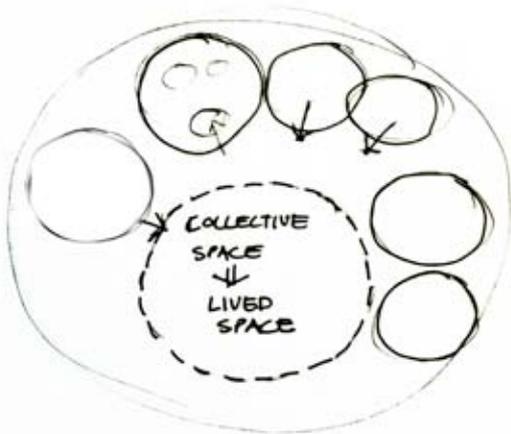


Figure 52: Collective central space

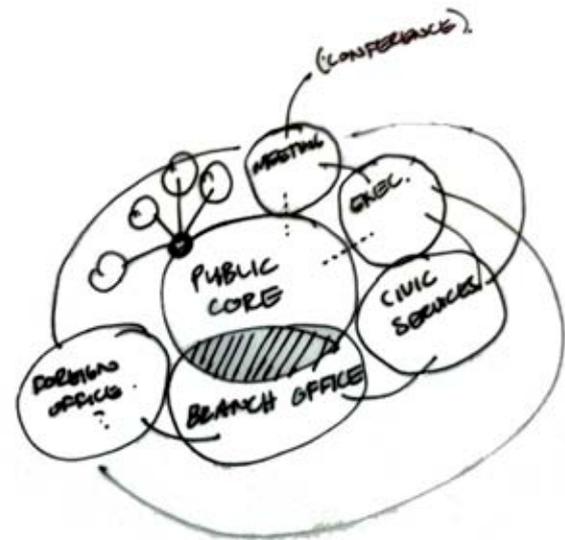


Figure 53: Organisation of department around collective space

i. African space

Making use of the literature study and precedent study as a point of departure, the dissertation poses that 'African space' is not defined by style, form or architectural language, but rather by the use and organisation of space. In an African setting the boundary between inside and outside becomes blurred, the outside space, courtyard or collective space becomes

the lived space, the focal point of the settlement pattern. In the context of a public building the use of this concept becomes central to the design. In the urban context of the capital city, there are, however, limitations to the use of horizontal space, causing buildings to grow vertically. The central void space needs to grow vertically with this organisation of functions. Further the centrality of this space is often lost in contemporary buildings.

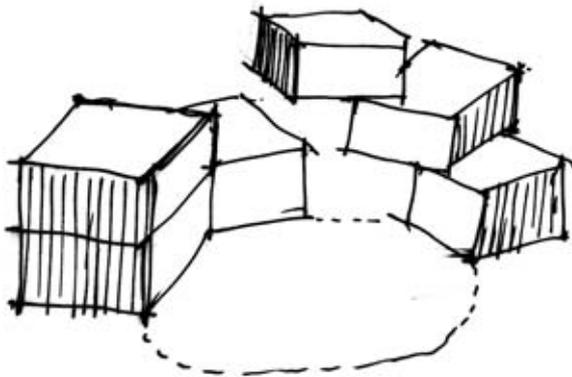


Figure 54: Vertical collective central space in urban context

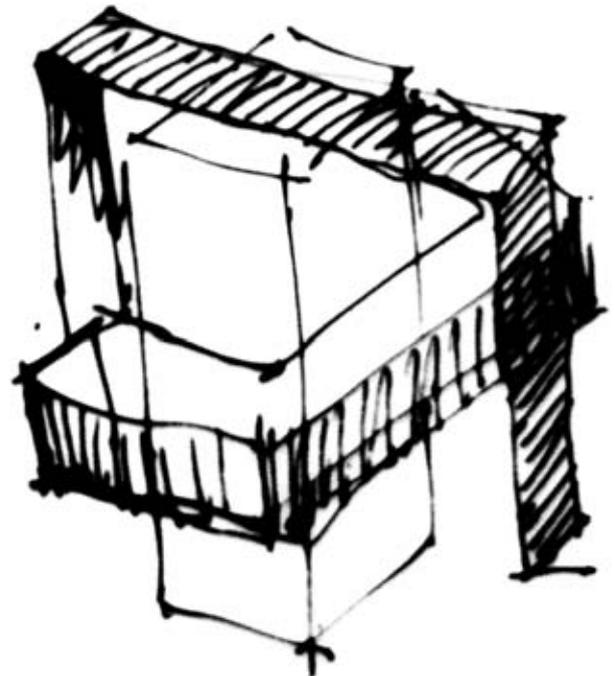


Figure 55: Three-dimensional central space

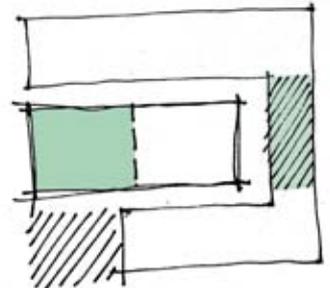
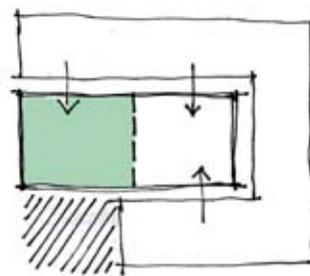
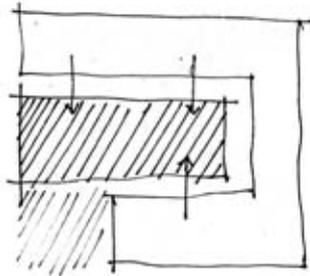
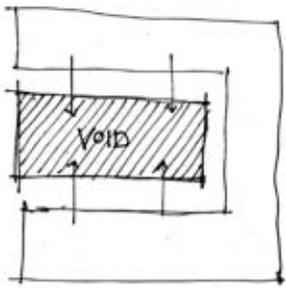
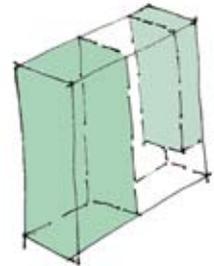
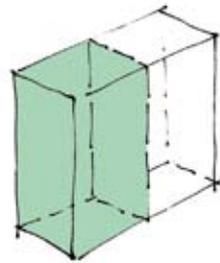
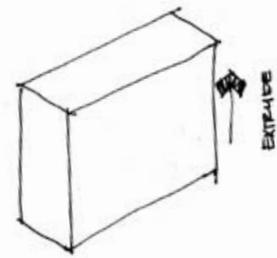
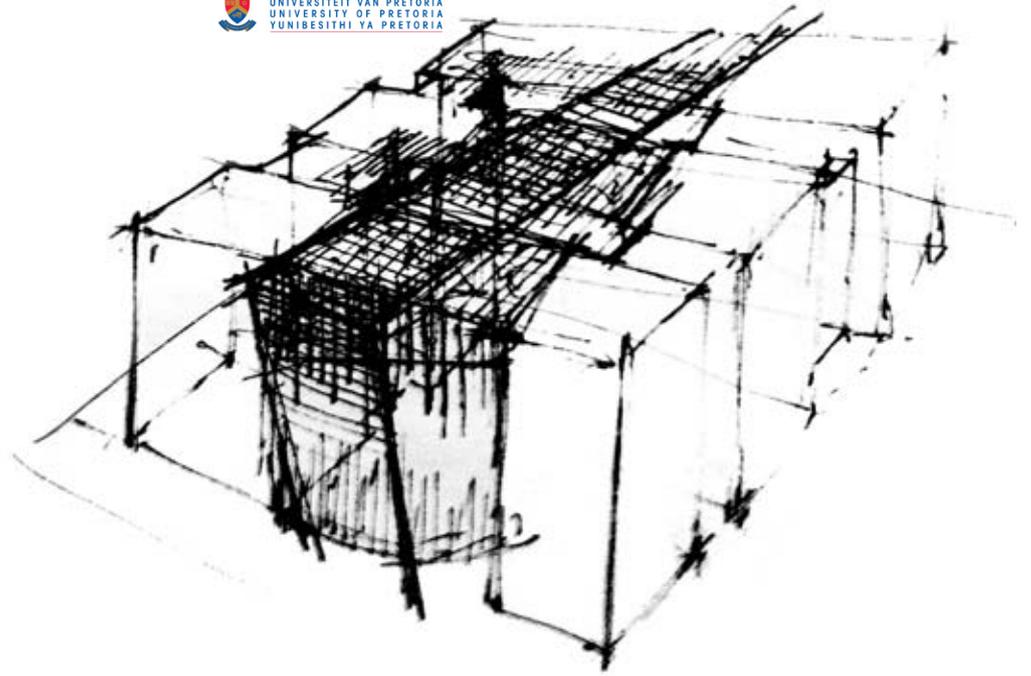


Figure 56: Conceptual development of central void space

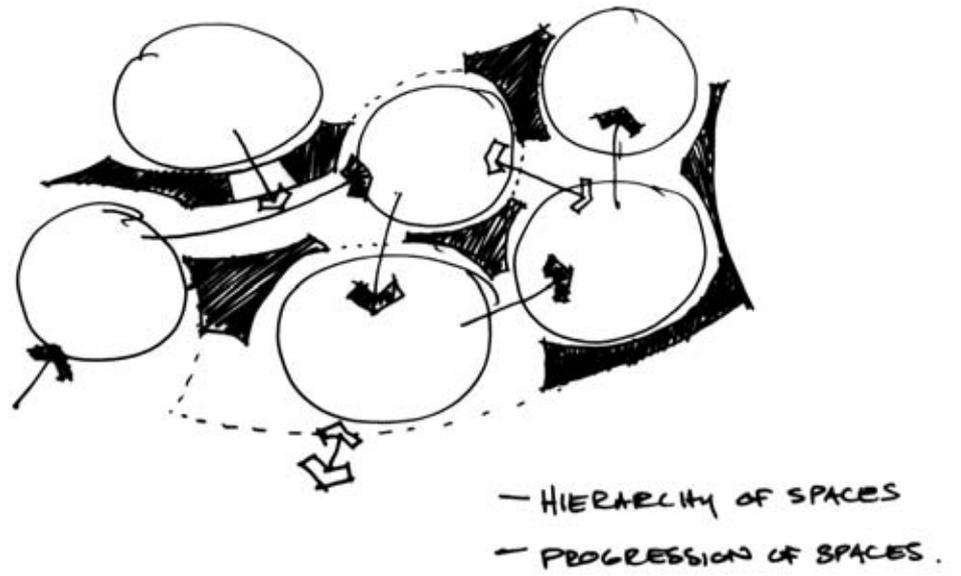


Figure 57: Progression of spaces

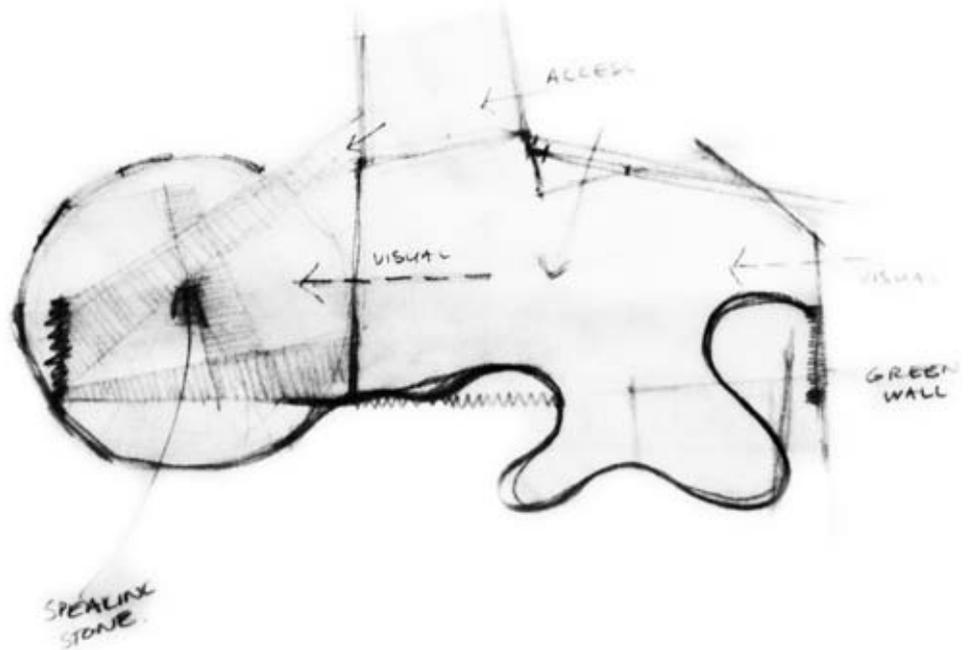


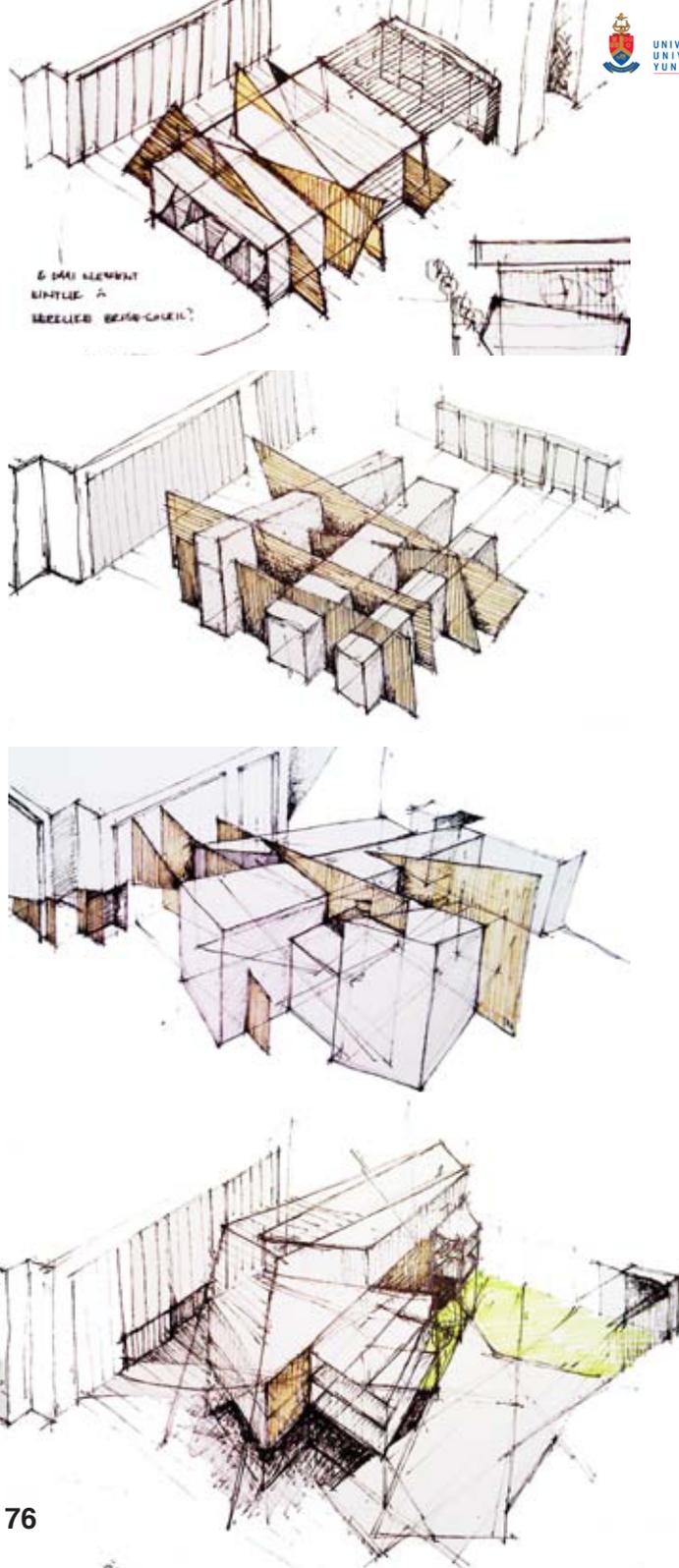
Figure 58: Organisation of void in hierarchy of spaces

The design therefore starts with the creation of the central 'void' space as a three-dimensional element around which all the functions of the building are organised.

Another characteristic of traditional settlement patterns is progression of spaces with increasing levels of privacy. This is translated into a progression related to security and access in the context of the public building. The building consists of a number of spaces with a variety of levels of access and function. The main public space is connected to the branch office and public interface of the department and is publicly accessible from the public square as well as the public walkway through the campus. That space is followed by the garden meeting-space, which is an 'outside' spill-over space for the meeting facilities of the department. This space is a semi-public space with controlled access. On a monthly basis it becomes a public meeting space, where the public may interact with officials in a democratic meeting where every voice may be heard. This space is followed by a private spill-out space linked to the Ministry on the first floor, overlooking the public meeting space.

These spaces form the central 'void' and focal point of the building, as mentioned before, and as such the surrounding functions link to these spaces through balconies and overlooking opening windows, which allow not only a visual connection but ensure an integration of space.

Figure 59: Initial massing development - related to surrounding buildings



ii. Democracy

In the political arena words like transparent government and accessibility are often used in relation to democracy. In architecture these terms have been directly adopted and visual accessibility and transparency are mostly achieved through the use of glass and curtain walling.

In the case of Pretoria (the core urban area of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality), buildings related to previous regimes and ideologies tend to appear solid and inaccessible. These buildings often have strong vertical elements to ensure domination of space, which is usually strengthened through the inclusion of a plinth. The facades are rigidly based on ordered systems and symmetry expressed through openings and shading elements.

In reaction to this, the proposed headquarters building mass is disrupted and broken into smaller elements with large sections of curtain walling to ensure visual integration between inside and outside.

Vertical elements are used in the facade, but are disrupted in order to undermine the dominance of that verticality. The arrangement of openings and vertical shading elements is further based on rhythm as opposed to the rigid ordered systems of the surrounding buildings. The articulation of the facade underlines both the disrupted massing of the building and the vertical elements. The main entrance strives to achieve a horizontal opening drawing the public space, at the street level, into the building and ensuring high accessibility.

Accessibility is increased by including the branch office, the main public interface of the department, into the headquarters building as the main function of the central 'void' space of the building. Hereby the public identity symbolically becomes the core focus of the

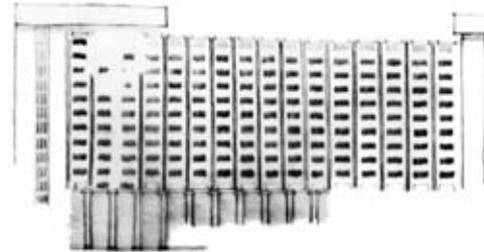
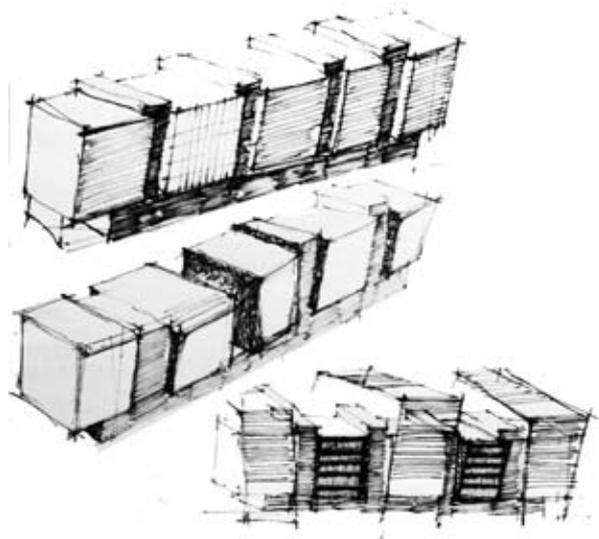


Figure 60: Sketches of verticality and solidity in surrounding government related buildings (above)

Figure 61: Disrupted massing of proposed building (below)



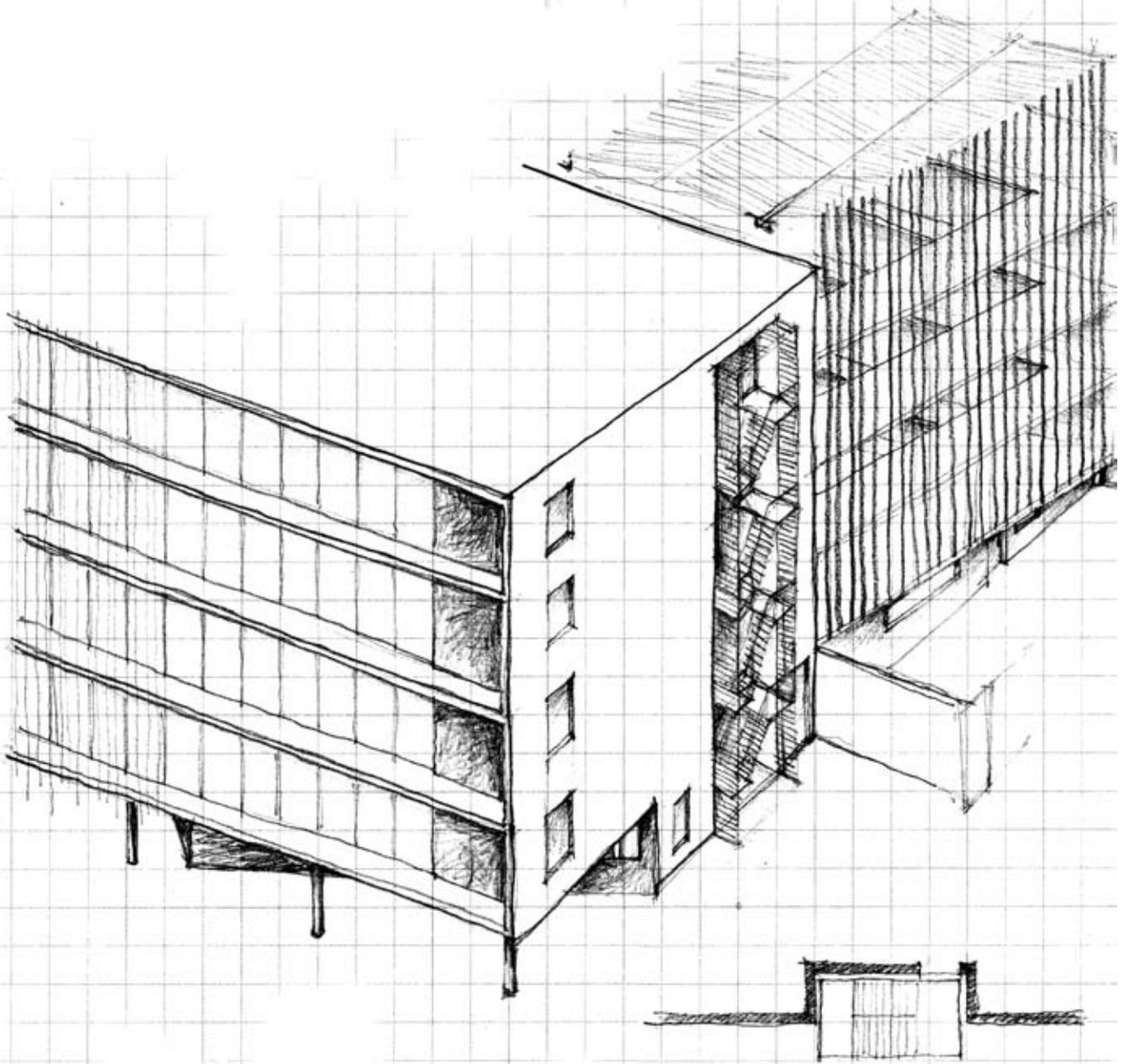


Figure 62: Cutting public space into building mass

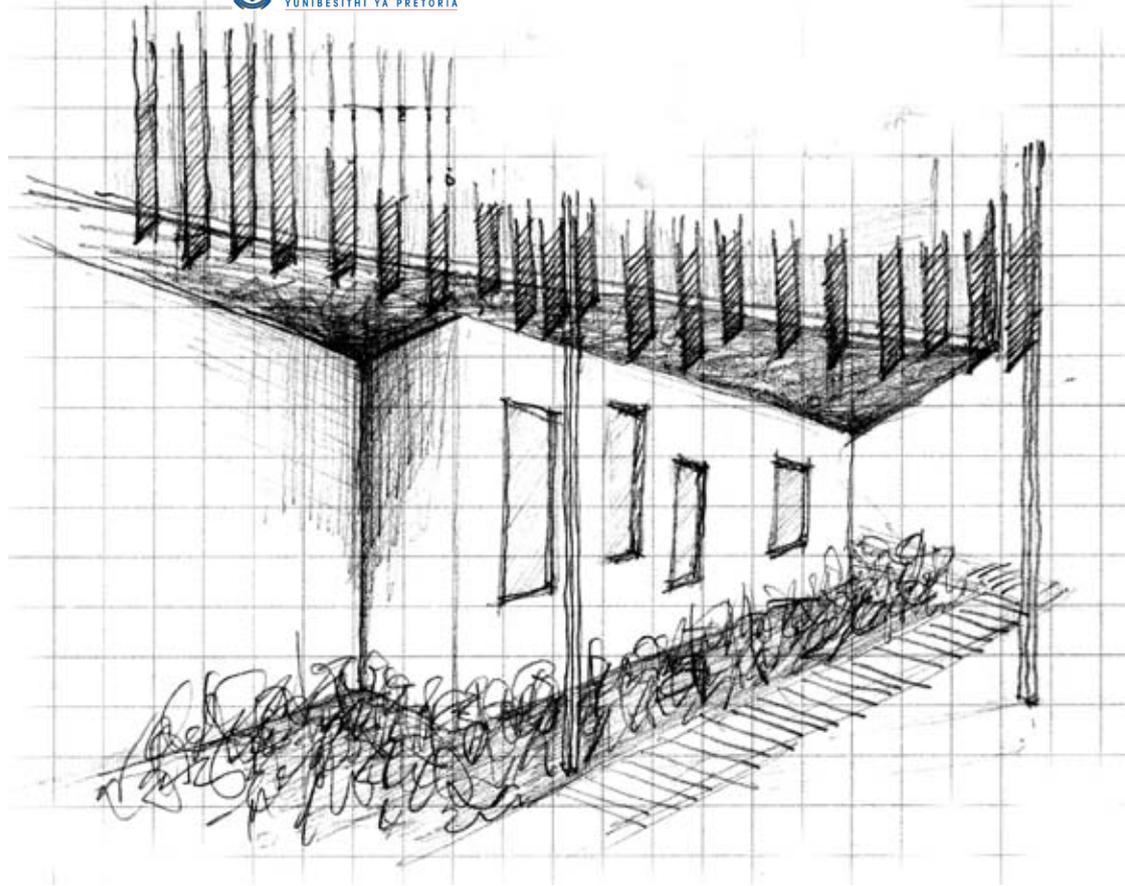


Figure 63: Vertical facade elements

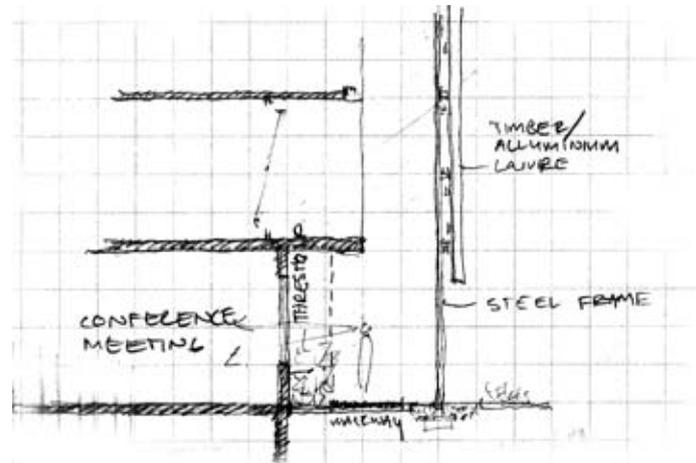


Figure 64: Increasing visual accessibility of conference facility

department. In addition the monthly public meeting in the semi-public space within the building further increases the accessibility of the building as well as the department.

iii. Department of Home Affairs

The Department of Home Affairs deals directly with the question of identity. Its main mandate may be divided into two missions: firstly to determine the status (identity) of individuals, and secondly 'to protect the national integrity'.

In this sense the department deals with the existential question of being. As indicated in the literature study Heidegger claims that the natural environment contains reminders of earth, sky, divinities and mortals around which we orient ourselves as beings and understand who we are. In an African context the relation to 'mortals' or the community within which we exist takes precedence over the other three elements that Heidegger mentions. It is, therefore, in our relation to and experience of those around us, that we understand who we are.

The project thus aims to introduce natural elements to the 'void' space, creating a garden sanctuary. The aim was to create a garden-like environment in which people are exposed to natural elements that contain reminders that help people to understand their place in the larger context and provide an opportunity to contemplate existential questions. Additionally, it is the intention that the sanctuary will provide a calm and restful waiting environment to negate negative emotions usually associated with queueing and waiting areas.

In order to ensure an awareness of the surroundings the project aims for the 'void' to be an experiential

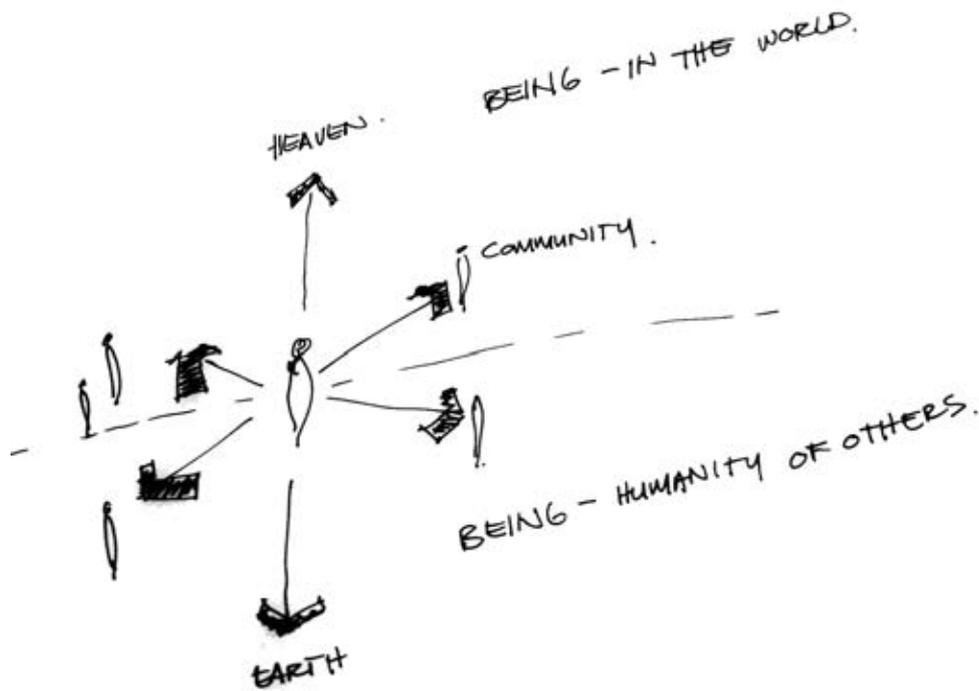
space. As mentioned in the literature study, Palasma states that the isolation of the eye and the suppression of the other senses restrict our experience of the world. The intention is, therefore, to restrict the dominance of the eye as the building is entered, in order to give other senses an equal importance and create a more sensual experience. This is achieved through muted lighting and the creation of a cave-like space where sound, specifically sound created by people in that space, echoes. As one enters the garden sanctuary this echo dissipates and one is surrounded by a textured sanctuary with dappled light. Sound and light qualities of the different gathering spaces differ due to materiality and enclosure.

The second mandate of the department is the role of protector of national identity, which is based on the identity of the people. The building therefore provides a secure space for the determination of identity, physically surrounding the public interface and drawing this public space into the protected courtyard of the building.

It is the intention that the new building should draw together the department and serve as the main focal point and public face of the campus. The building will functionally draw together the department through the creation of inter-departmental meeting spaces and conference facilities. These meeting spaces are organised around the central 'void' space, thus ensuring a close relation and awareness between the function of the department and the public identity.

A client services centre located on the eastern elevation, abounding the public walkway through the campus, ensures high accessibility to the building and a lively edge to the walkway, providing additional policing.

In the context of dealing with highly sensitive and secure information, the flow of information between



UMUNTU NGUMUNTU NGA BANTU
TO BE A HUMAN BEING IS TO AFFIRM ONE'S
HUMANITY BY RECOGNISING THE HUMANITY
OF OTHERS.

BATHO PELE

UBUNTU
"BEING-BECOMING"

HUMAN BEING

THE COMMUNITY IS THE ROOT OF GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL IDENTITY GROWS FROM THE PEOPLE.

"... THE SIMPLE FACT THAT HUMANS ARE."
"... THE WORLD IS ALWAYS ALREADY THERE..."



PWELING = PEACEFUL ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN
INDIVIDUALS AND THE WORLD.

THE WORLD ... SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD PRIMARILY
THROUGH HOW IT SEEMS TO US THROUGH
OUR EXPERIENCE.

Figure 65: Understanding identity

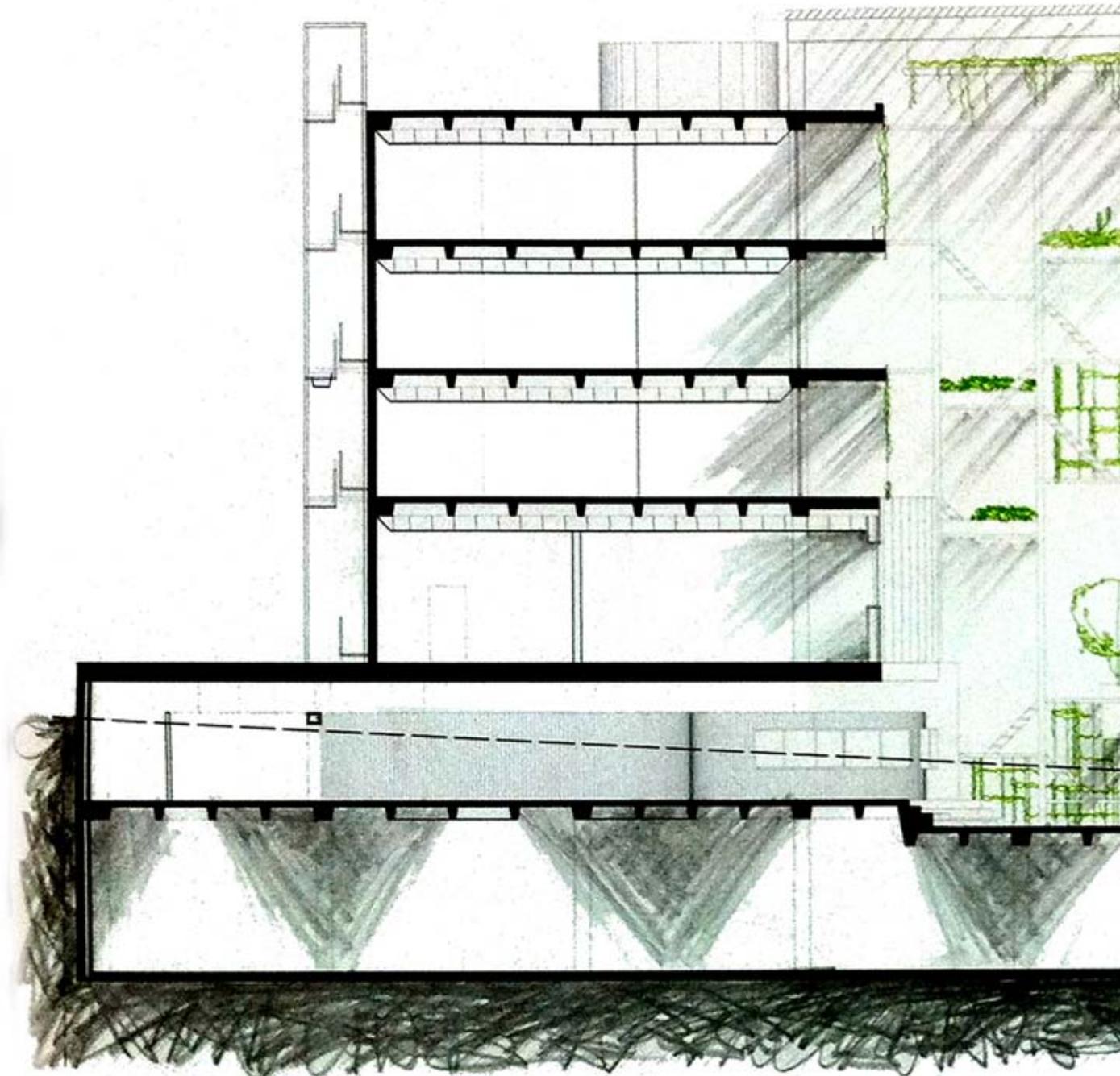
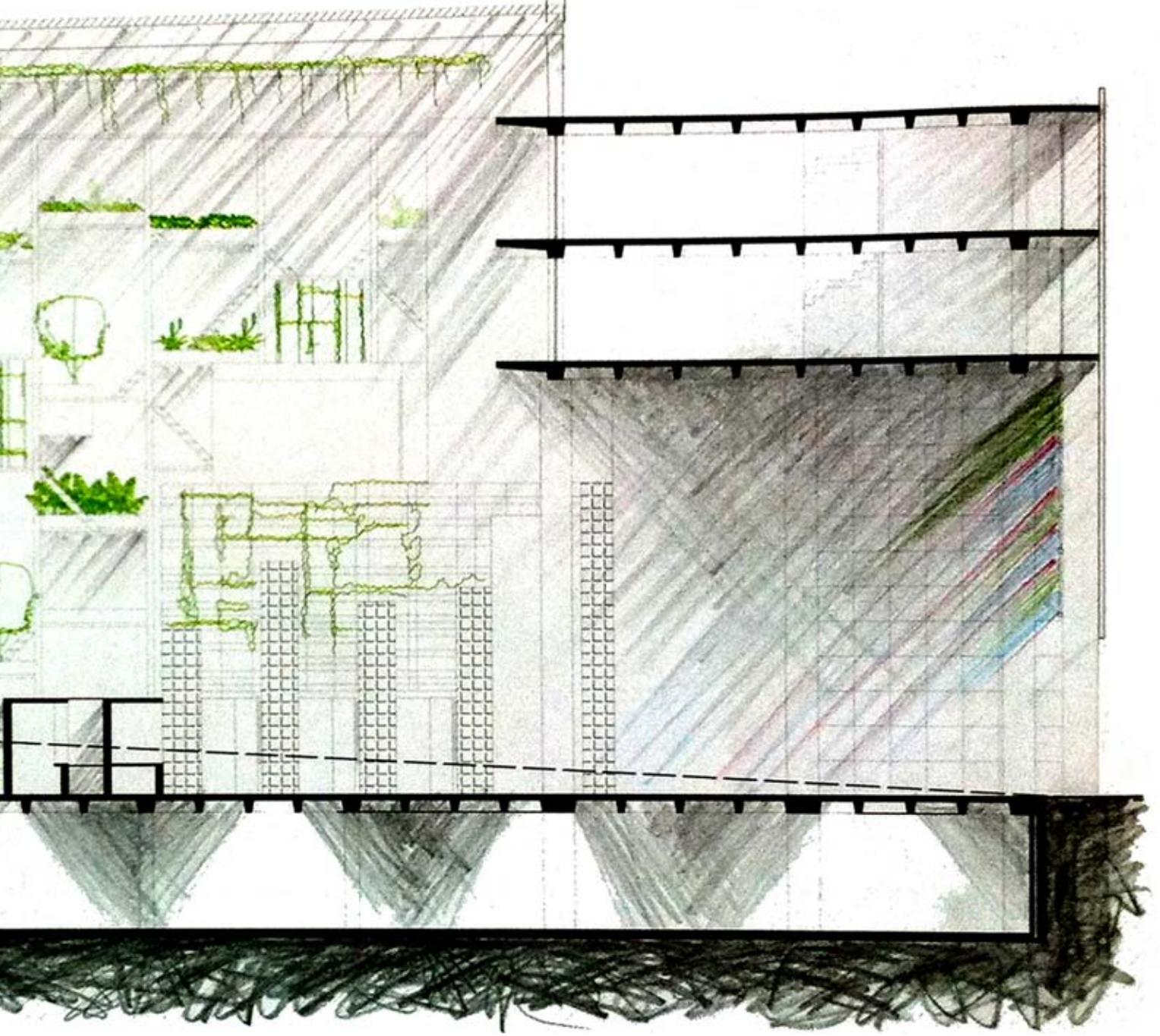


Figure 66: Section through progression of spaces from right to left: foyer - sanctuary - branch office



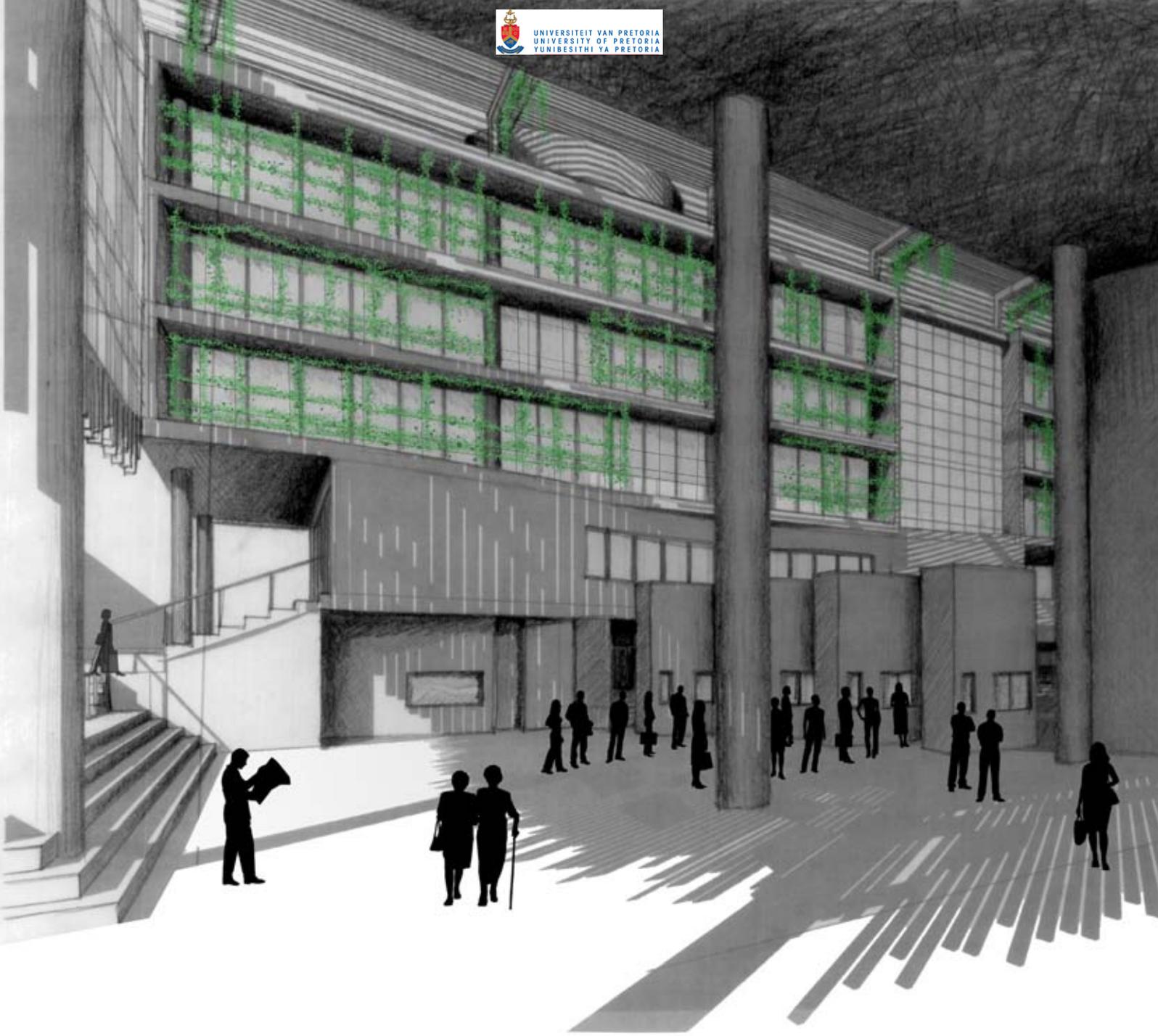


Figure 67: Foyer

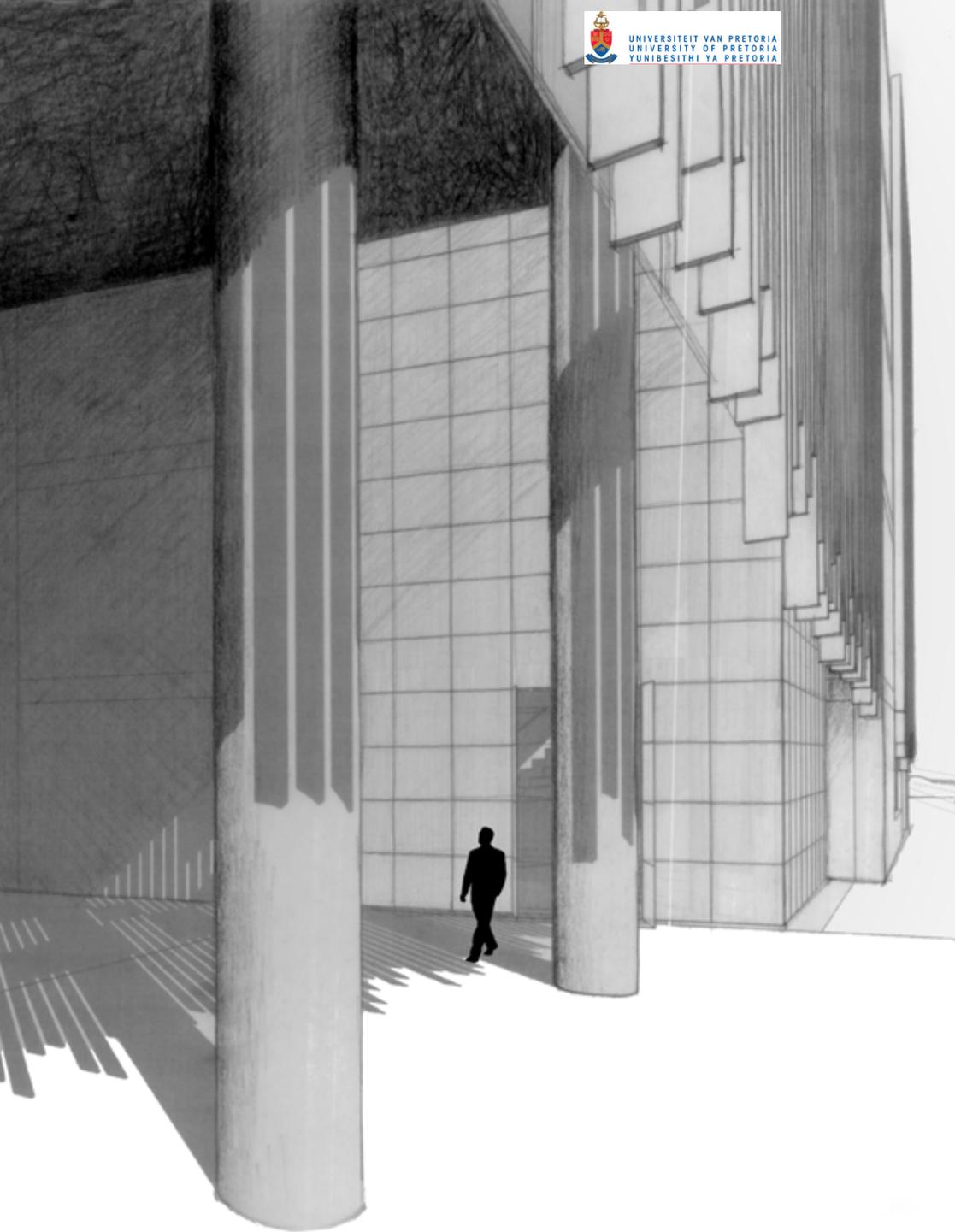




Figure 68: Sanctuary



departments is a crucial consideration. In the era of technology it is foreseen that this will become less of a spatially restrictive factor. At present, however, the department still makes use of a certain amount of physical documentation, including the issue of identity and travel documents. The flow of information pertaining to these processes occurs mainly between the branch office, located in the central 'void' space of the building, and the Department of Civic Services which is located in the New Corporation building to the south of the headquarters. In order to ensure secure movement of documentation, a physical connection is created between the two buildings, with high security measures.

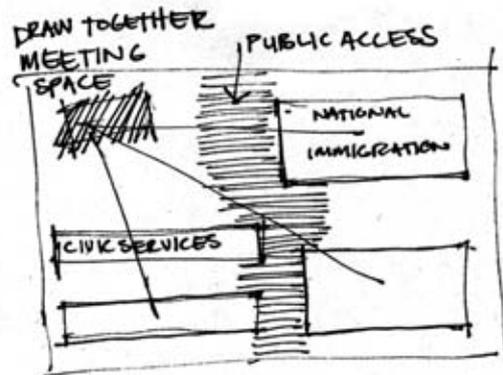


Figure 70: Drawing together the department

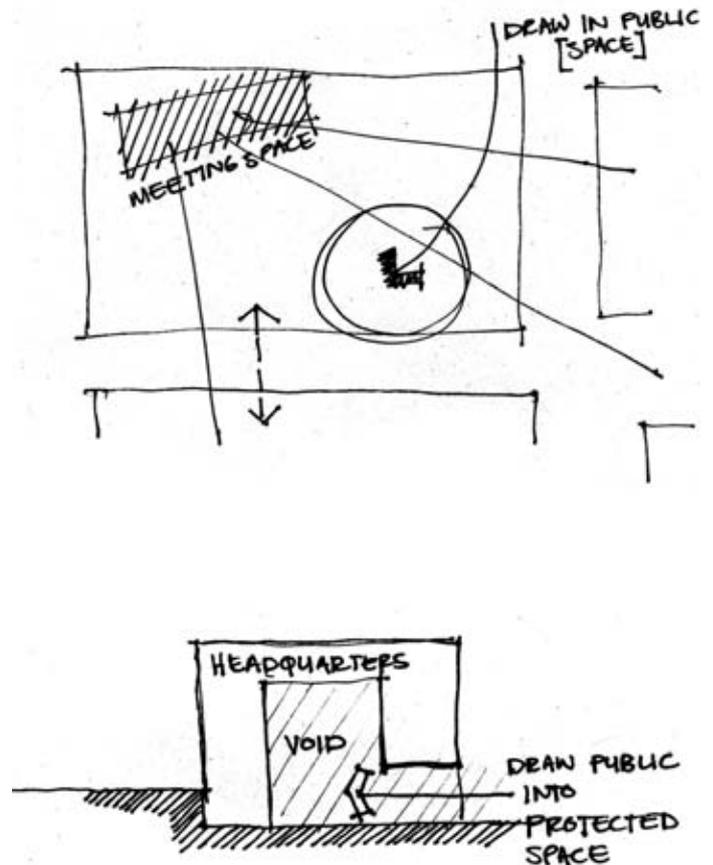
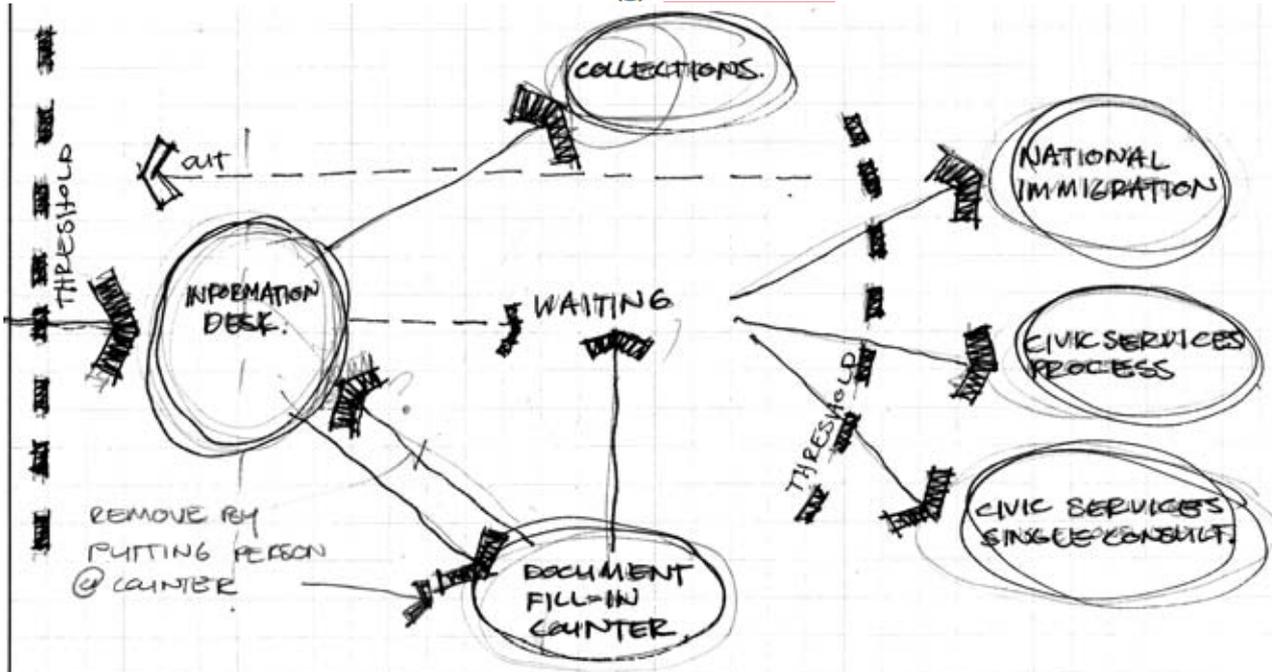


Figure 69: Building protecting void space



INFORMATION DESK:

- KNOWLEDGE OF ALL PROCESSES.
- HANDLE LARGE VOLUME OF PEOPLE
- QUEUING
- VISIBLE → MUST ATTRACT ATTENTION AT ENTRY.
- START OF TICKETING SYSTEM

COLLECTION:

- QUEUES
- SEPARATE FROM OTHER PROCESSES.

WAITING:

- SEATING / SHADE
- ALL COUNTERS VISIBLE
- GREEN = QUESTION IDENTITY.
- CALMING

- TWO-FOLD? - APPLICANT
- FAMILY MEMBERS

COUNTERS:

- FLEXIBLE / ROBUST
- VISIBLE FROM WAITING AREA.

Figure 72: Department organisation / relation

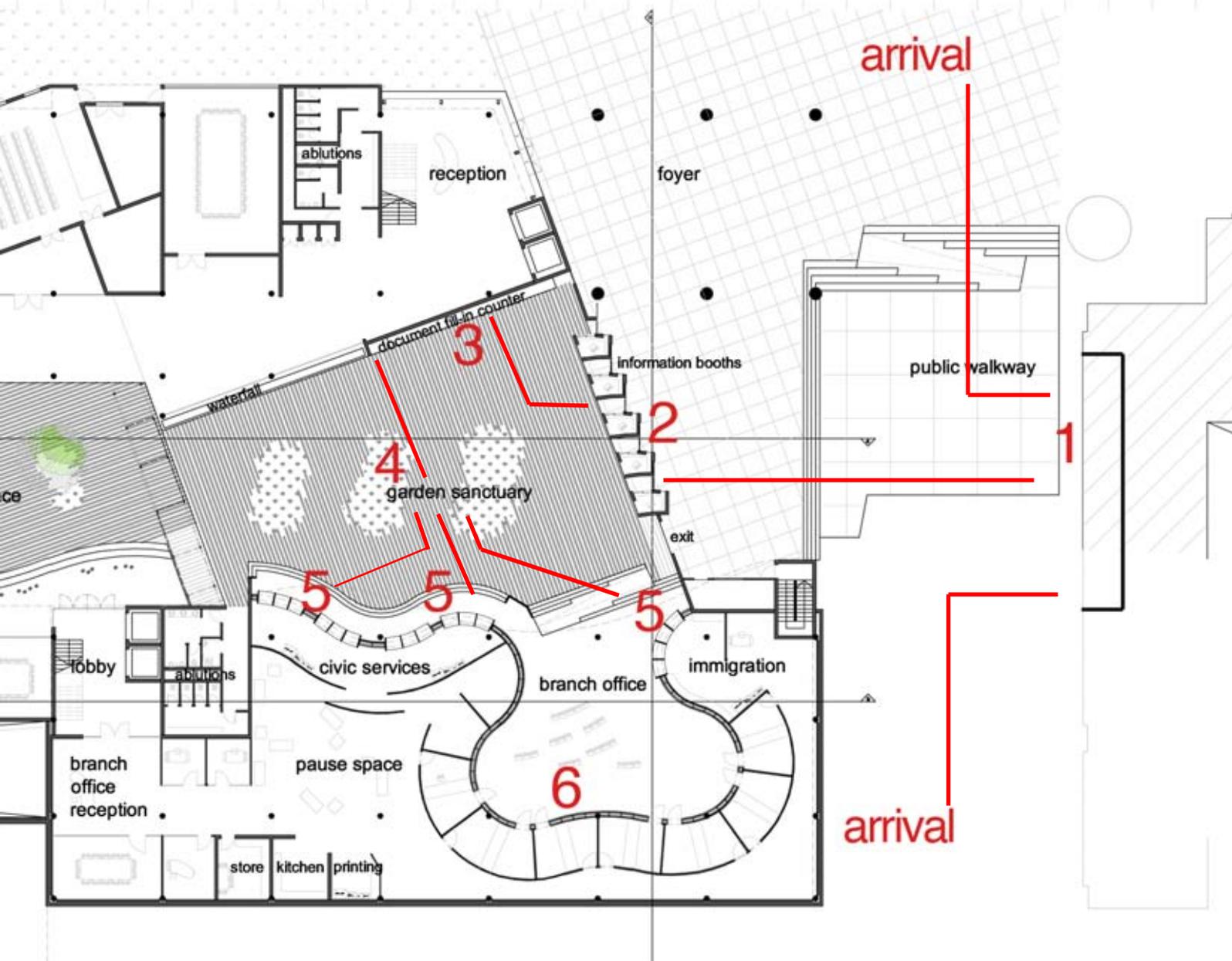


Figure 73: Public interface functions diagram

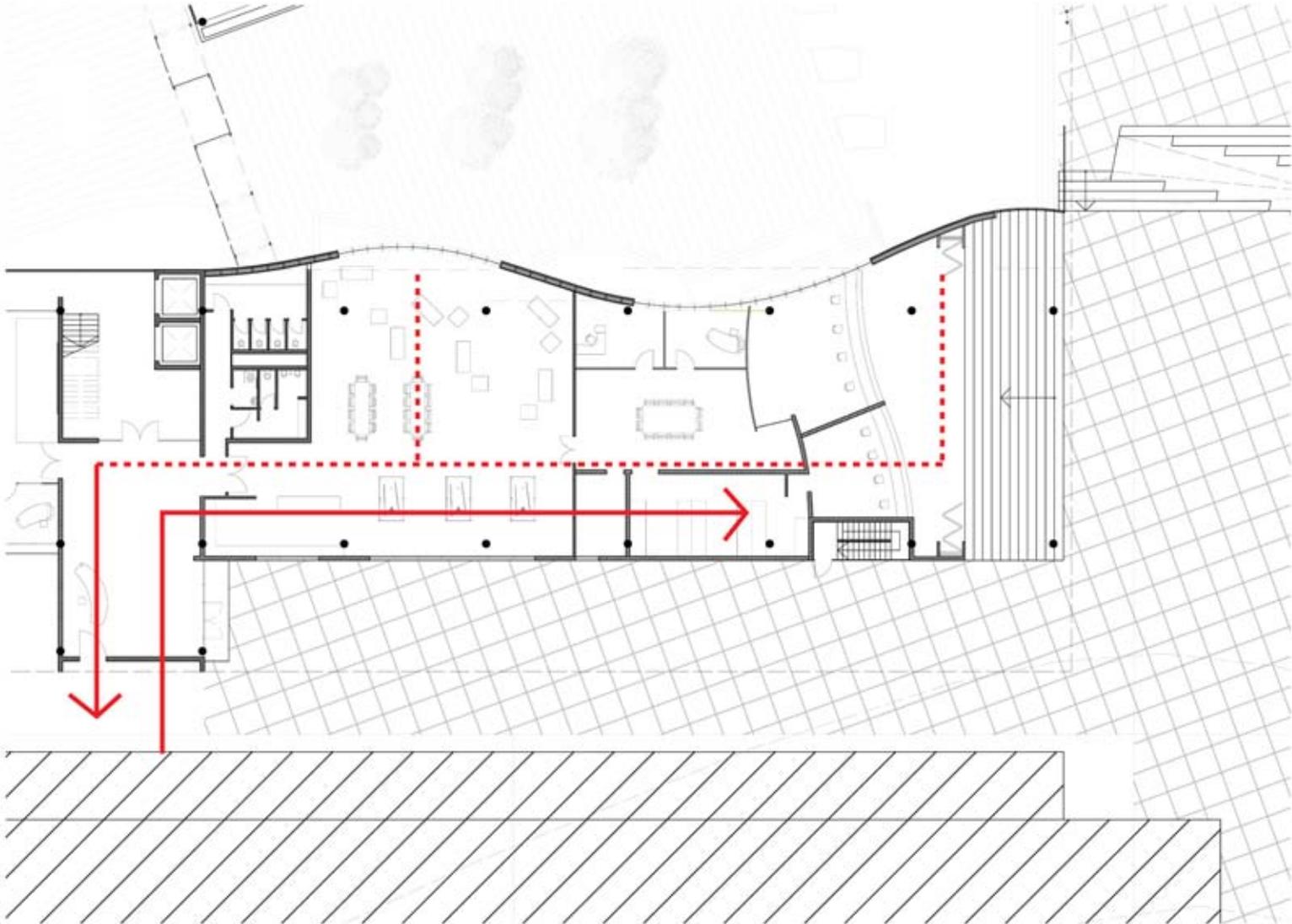


Figure 74: Flow of information

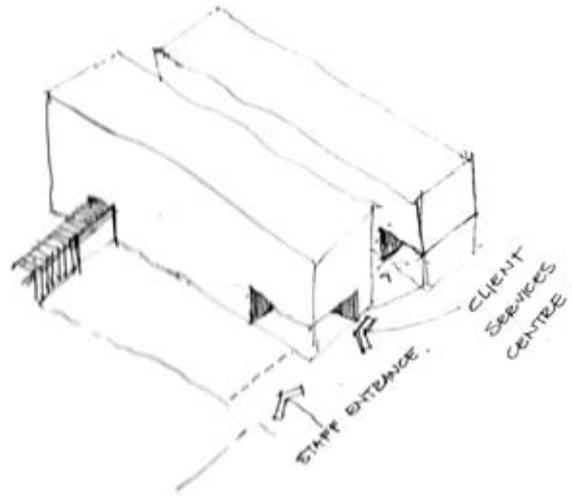


Figure 76: Relation to public walkway through campus

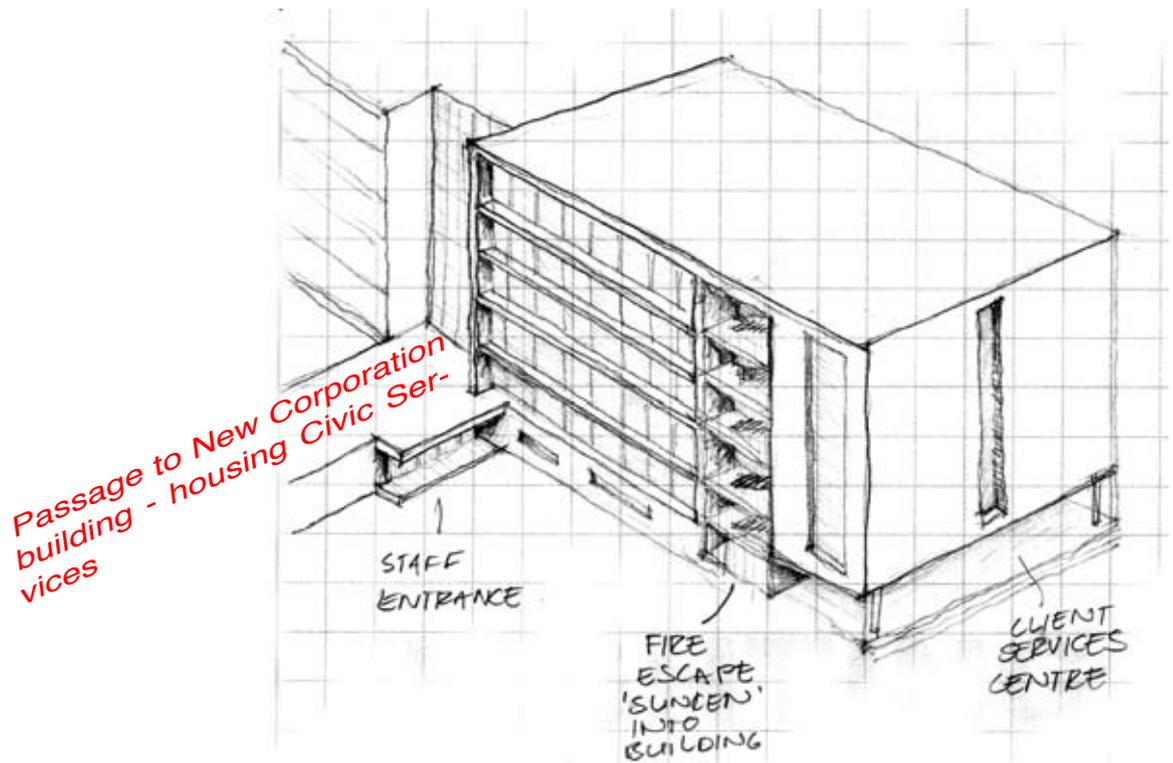
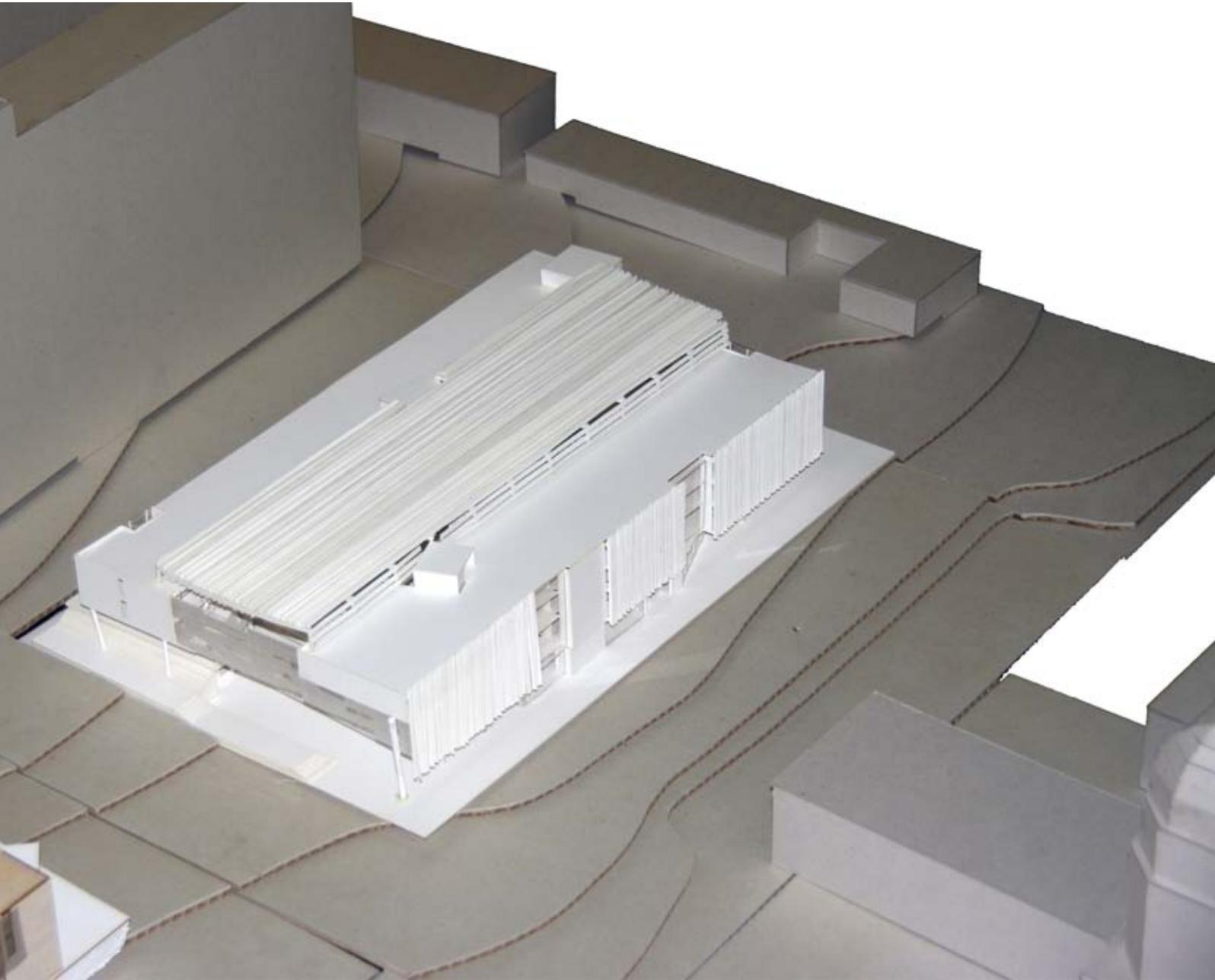


Figure 75: Connection to New Corporation Building



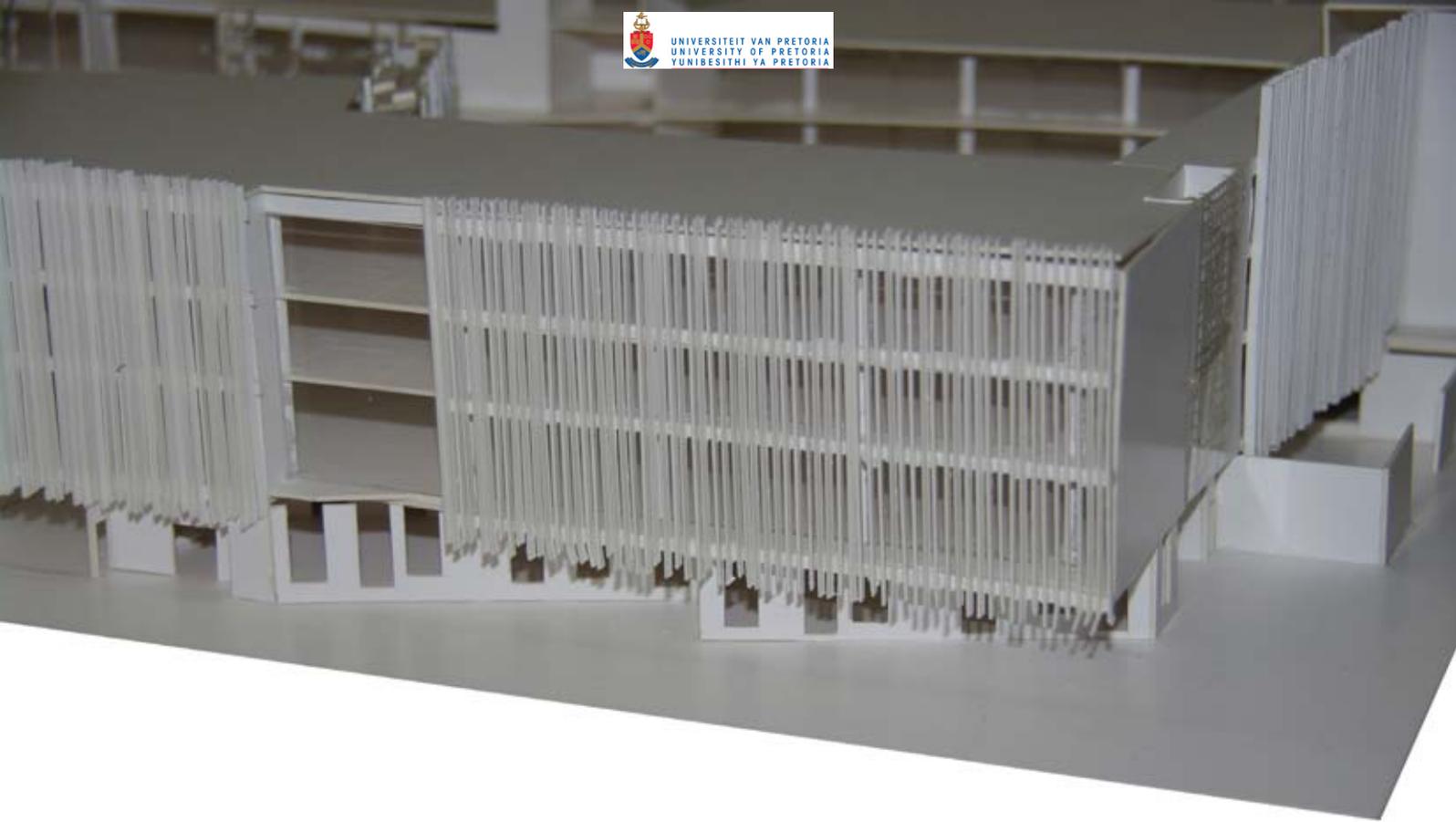


Figure 77: (left) birds eye view of model
Figure 78: view from northwest

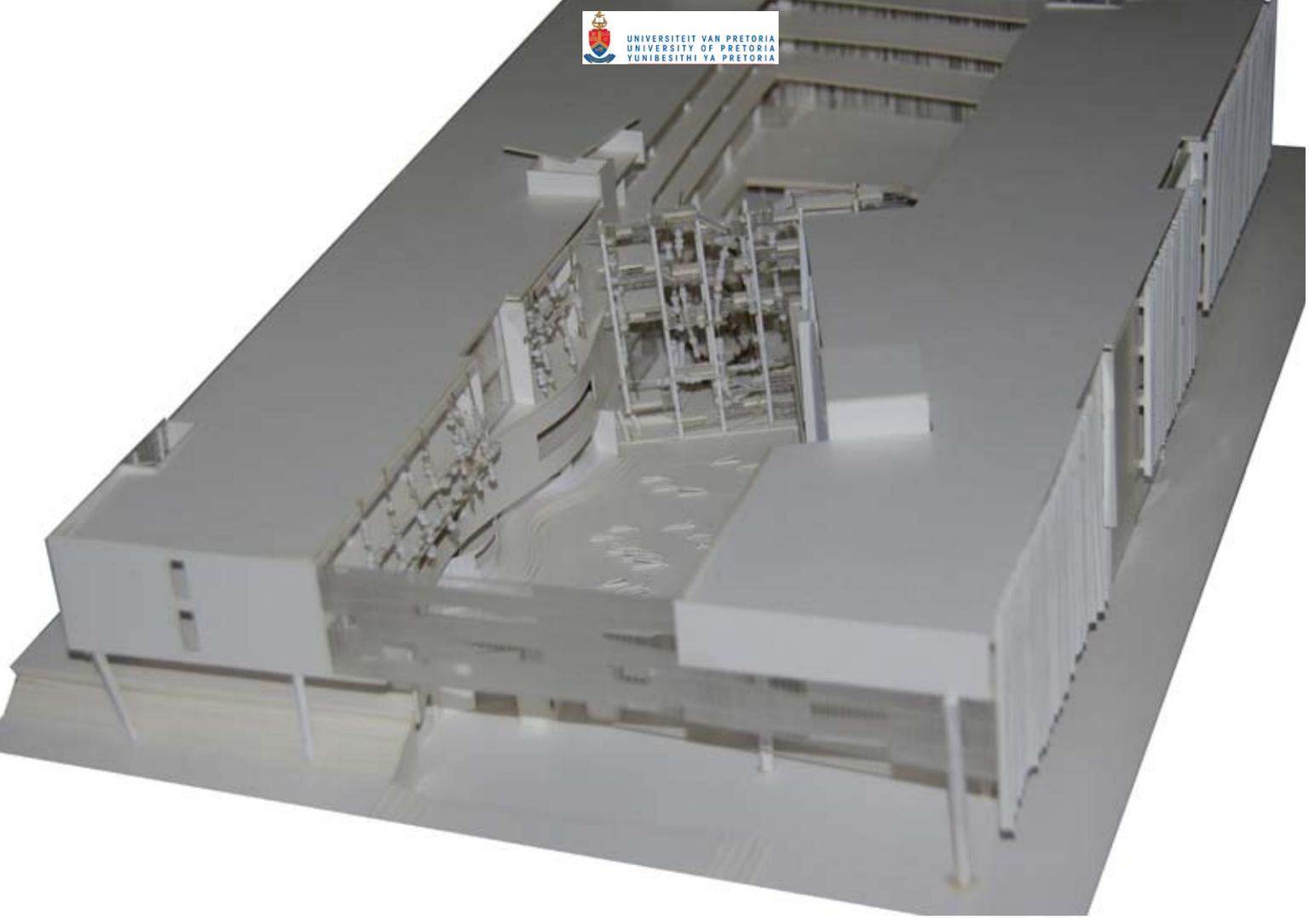


Figure 79: (above) view of sanctuary and green stair system
Figure 80: (top right) view of ground floor with green stair system separating sanctuary and public meeting space
Figure 81: (right) northern view of facade and central void

