



CHAPTER 5: DESIGN CONCEPTS

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FIG. 115: 1:10 000 PRECINCT MODEL (AUTHOR, 2006).

1. INTRODUCTION

The design concepts are assimilations and derivations of the context, theoretical, and precedent studies.

They are the following:

- Infill buildings and optimization of in-between spaces
- Integration of nature into the project
- 'Wrapping' concept, as mentioned in CHAPTER 2.4.a.
- Stereotomics, as mentioned in CHAPTER 2.4.b.
- Circulation space as the project's 'spine'
- Spatial flexibility

2. INFILL BUILDINGS AND OPTIMIZATION OF IN-BETWEEN SPACES

Because part of the site is an unbuilt property that joins unstructured pedestrian corridors, the concept adopted is an infill building one, whereby, on the larger scale, interventions are based upon built and landscaped ones.

The built interventions (see Fig. 115, yellow pins) consist of the vertical urban movement patterns that link the upper and lower quarters. Such interventions are physically translated as staircases, ramps, and buildings. These latter represent the urban circulation devices. More specifically, the buildings are represented by the proposed empowerment centre.

The landscaped interventions (see Fig. 115, green pins), however, take place along the horizontal urban movement places, which are the pedestrian corridors and streets. Landscaping involves planting, urban furniture, surface treatment along the walkways, signage, etc. The idea is to create a pedestrian street mall enhancing the existing urban patterns of activities.





3. INTEGRATION OF NATURE INTO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Nature integrated into the proposed empowerment centre consists of the treatment of the built and natural environments on equal terms in relation to functionality and spatial organization.

Therefore, courtyards (see Fig. 116) as large as roofed floors are placed around the buildings, interlinking the different components of the empowerment centre. The courtyards are then planted with tree canopies - assimilated as roofs, indigenous bushes and shrubs - assimilated as privacy screens. Areas are grassed and/or surface treated to enable movement and/or more static activities - assimilated as floors.

The water feature is also another device to convey the integration of nature into the proposed centre (see Fig. 117 & 118). Its main function is to catch and organically filter storm water from the roofs and the terraces before it is rejected into the sea.

4. 'WRAPPING' CONCEPT - as mentioned in CHAPTER 2.4.a. (see Fig. 78: 38)

This concept involves the wrapping of the main activity space with service spaces, in other words storage, wet or mechanical core spaces, on two opposite sides to allow cross ventilation to happen, with open circulation space to make the activity rooms easily accessible; and finally one side open with a deep overhang for lighting and views. In maximising cross-ventilation, the rooms must be shallow enough and not exceed ten metres.

5. STEREOTOMICS - as mentioned in CHAPTER 2.4.b. (see Fig. 79: 39)

According to the Spanish architect Alberto Campo Baeza, Stereotomics consists of, on one hand, providing a masonry base to a dwelling as a ground connector, as well as a frame for the outside views. On the other hand, the upper floor becomes a light frame

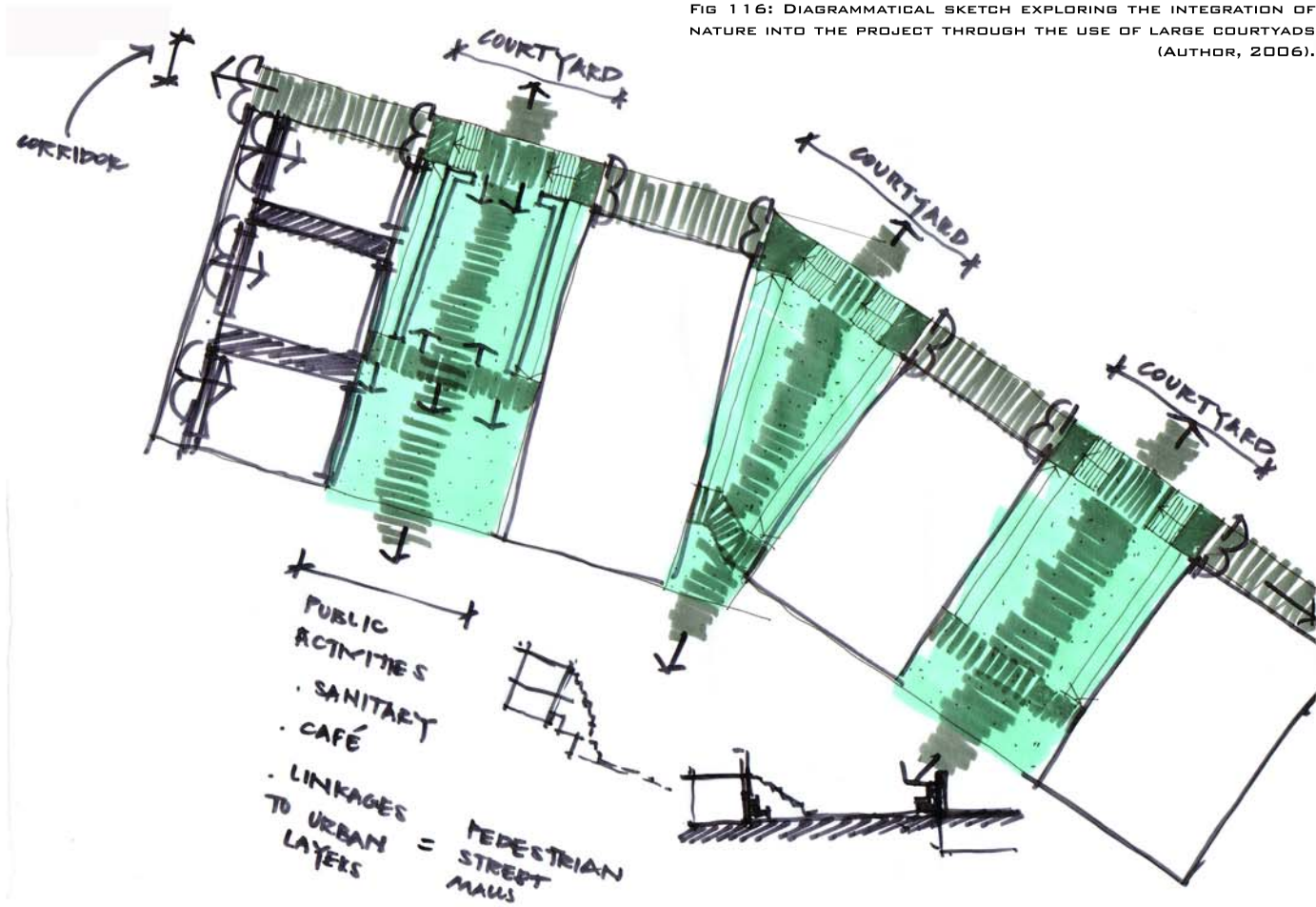


FIG 116: DIAGRAMMATICAL SKETCH EXPLORING THE INTEGRATION OF NATURE INTO THE PROJECT THROUGH THE USE OF LARGE COURTYARDS (AUTHOR, 2006).

component, as a sky connector, to underline the outside views.

Stereotomics allows for the proposed community centre to anchor into the ground. Therefore, its materiality gives the perception of strength and durability for the community members.

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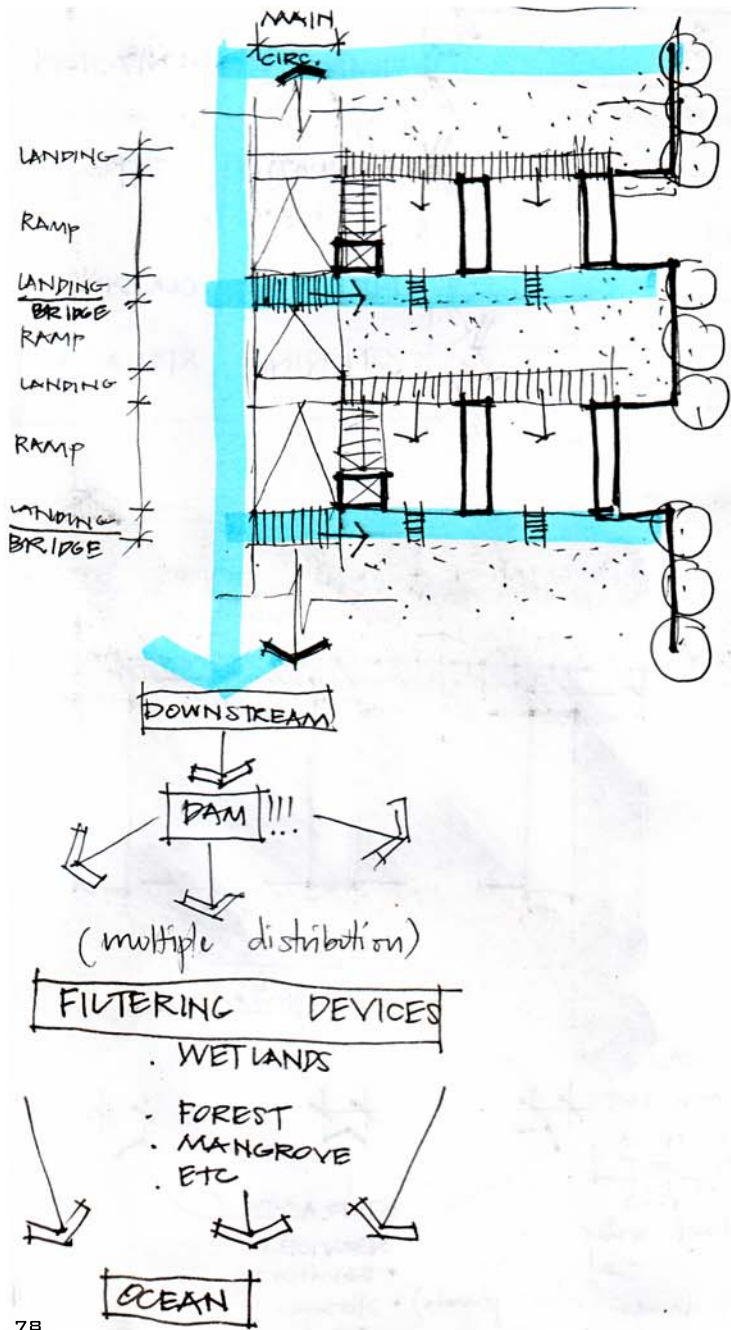


FIG. 117 (LEFT): DIAGRAMMATIC SKETCH EXPLORING STORM WATER DRAINAGE IN RELATION TO THE CENTRE'S CIRCULATION SPACE AND COURTYARDS (AUTHOR, 2006).

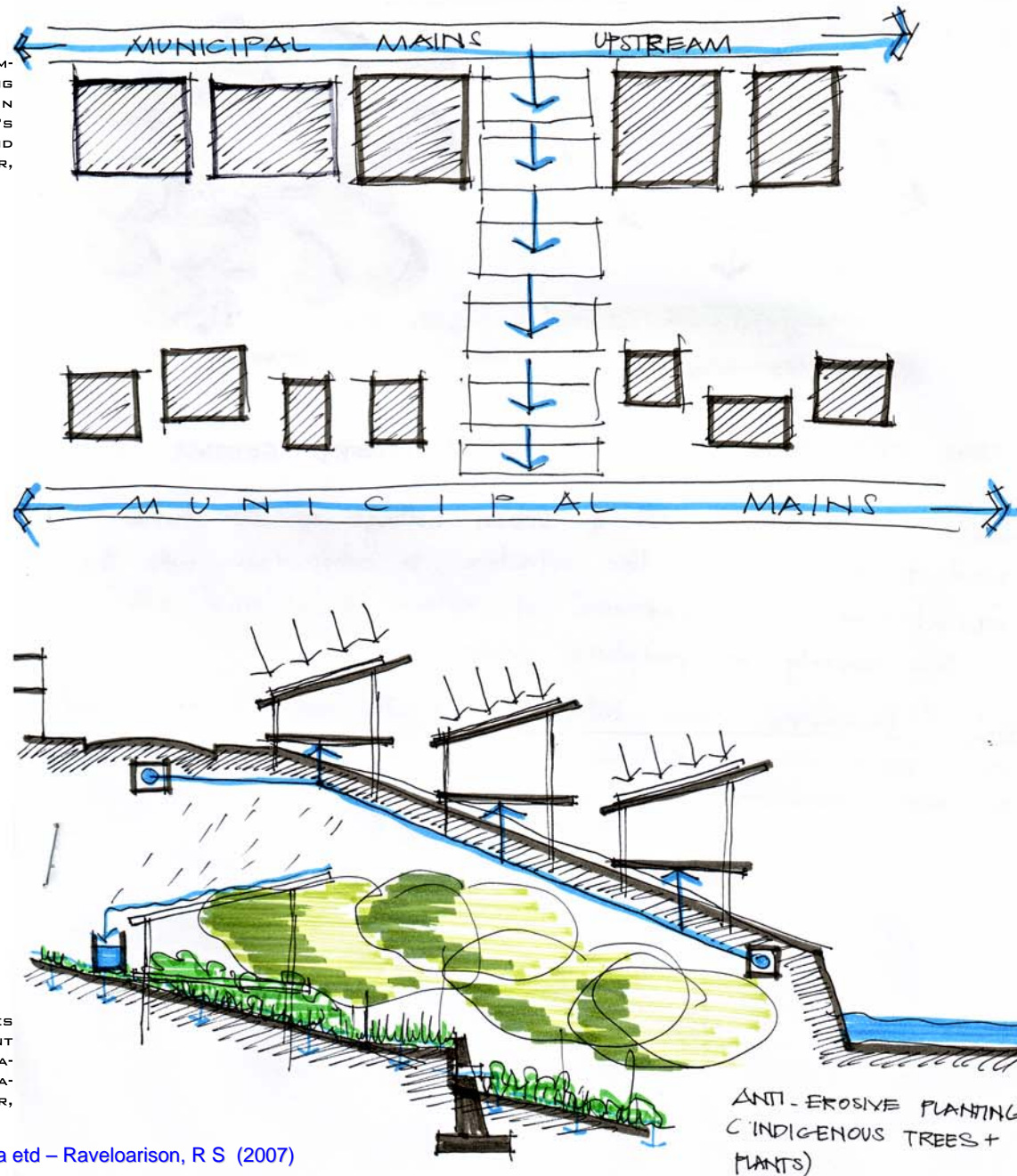


FIG. 118 (RIGHT): SKETCHES EXPLORING THE DIFFERENT MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN RELATION TO THE SITE'S TOPOGRAPHY AND LAYOUT (AUTHOR, 2006).



FIG. 119: SITE PLAN DEMONSTRATING THE 'SPINE' CONCEPT, ASSOCIATED WITH OPTIMIZED VIEWS, URBAN AND VISUAL LINKAGES, ACCESSIBILITY AND LEGIBILITY (AUTHOR, 2006).

6. CIRCULATION SPACE AS THE 'SPINE'

The circulation space being the most important element of the proposed centre acts as its spine that links all the organs - assimilated as the centre's outside and components, as well as the natural surroundings, the urban and domestic layers of Hell Ville.

Therefore, in order to emphasize the importance of the spinal movement space, views in and around the centre are optimized, the different linkages maximised through its high accessibility and legibility (see Fig. 119).



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7. SPATIAL FLEXIBILITY:

The proposed centre aims to be as open yet safe as possible for climatic and publicness reasons. Therefore, planning is organised around spatial flexibility so that one floor can be disposed as one space - analogical to a stage. Meanwhile, depending on the number of users and the type of activities, this same floor can be divided into smaller and more private spaces. Sliding folding screens permit such spatial flexibility allowing the community to use the centre for any type of sociocultural congregations besides the already allocated programmes.

For instance, in the design centre, workshops are allocated on the ground floor, transformable into exhibition space by just sliding and folding all the screens open (see Fig. 120 & 121).

FIG. 120: DESIGN CENTRE GROUND FLOOR SHOWING THE SMALL WORKSHOP SPACES (AUTHOR, 2006).

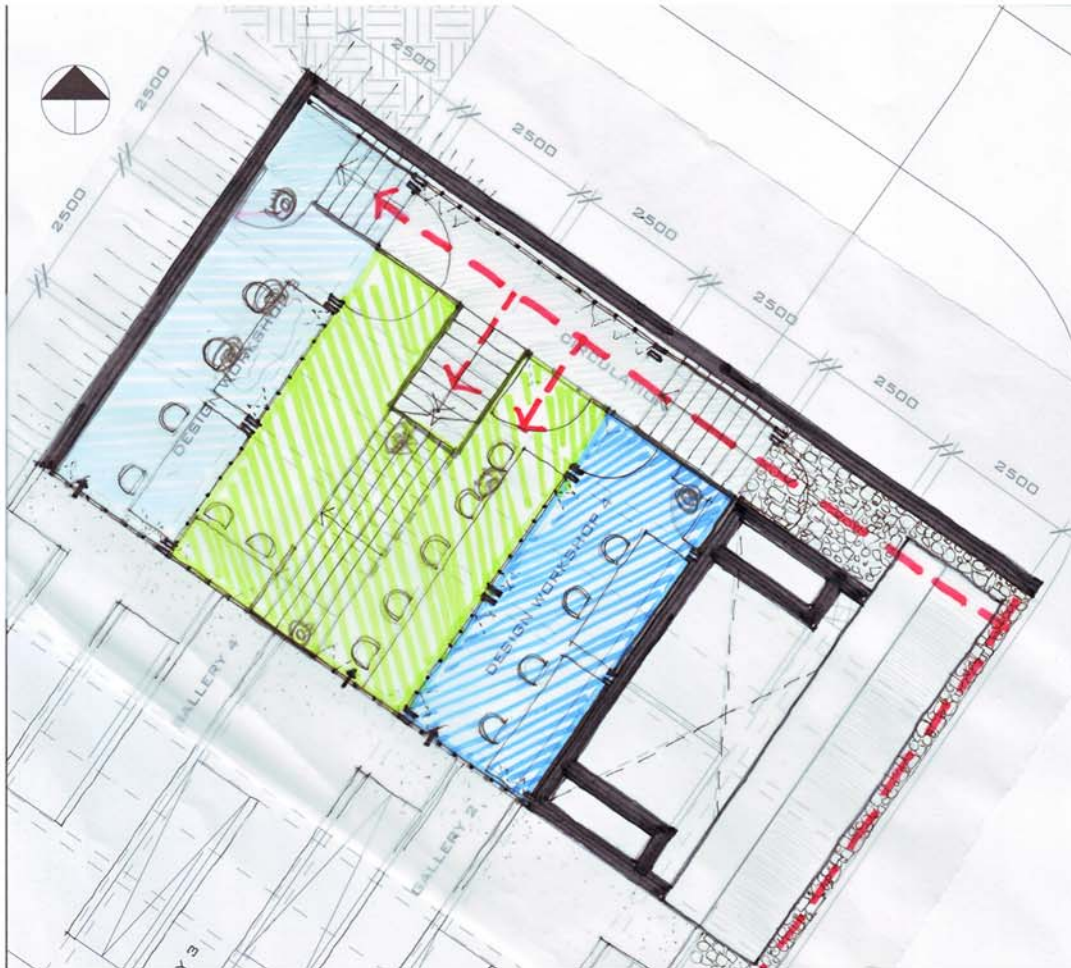


FIG. 121: DESIGN CENTRE GROUND FLOOR SHOWING THE TRANSFORMATION FROM SMALLER WORKSHOPS TO A LARGE EXHIBITION SPACE, ENABLED BY THE USE OF FULL HEIGHTS SLIDING AND FOLDING SCREENS (AUTHOR, 2006).

