

13. DESIGN RESOLUTION

As per the development objectives, street wall related architecture is the overall form sought in the design process. There is maximum use of the street boundaries to reinforce the street pattern of the development area while at the same time creating a private internal courtyard for resident usage. Within the urban context this internal courtyard establishes a sense of retreat for urban dwellers from the workings of an urban environment.

The projected vehicular accommodation for the proposed facility was relatively high at an estimated 114 cars. In accordance with the site development guidelines accommodating so many vehicles at a visible position is aesthetically obtrusive. Considering this and maximizing potential economic space, the most feasible solution is the creation of basement parking. However this has associated lighting and ventilation problems. The solution allows for these on the north and south wing by a level change of one metre from the finished natural ground level. This does not totally sacrifice interaction between the ground floor functions and the public environment.

On the west wing however it is essential to maintain immediate ground floor interaction with the public environment as it is linked to the public square and any change in level would distort that interaction. Some lighting through the public walkway on this wing is provided to compensate for no level change. The future proposal with regards to the parking basement is to link it with a basement proposal for the neighbouring site to the east. This 'super basement' will form the basis for a unification of the two sites with a future combined internal private courtyard above. The integration of the proposed site will require the establishment of combined access controlled policies.

The proposed development is based on the assumption that the neighbouring development would eventually be integrated into the urban design structure. A time frame for this integration cannot be stipulated and this poses an aesthetic issue with regard to the treatment of the eastern facade. Due to the positioning of this facade to the Nelson Mandela Bridge high levels of public exposure can be assumed. It is proposed that for the interim period this facade be used as one of the inner city mural projects. This option is the most cost effective as it eliminates the need for expensive facade treatment.

Stemming from the micro analysis of the site the facades of the building could be regarded as fronting a variation in contextual situations. It is essential that the design response is appropriate both in terms of functionality and targeted aesthetic appeal yet at the same time achieving a sense of a cohesive architecture that is characteristic of urban environments. The proposed structural system is based in a concrete beam and slab construction with brick in-fill panels. The decision was based on the notion of the modular building system being effective in terms of financial feasibility, construction technique and responses to sustainability. The general increments of 7200mm between centre to centre of columns depicted on the facades are based on the parking grid layout and seek to add a sense of a cohesive architecture projected in the facade treatment.

The choice of external finished material is predominantly red brick, plaster and paint and off shutter concrete, with minor sections utilizing steel and glass construction. This is characteristic of other new developments in the vicinity of the site. Red brick also has historical significance to the Newtown Cultural Precinct as



Figure. 127. Internal courtyard

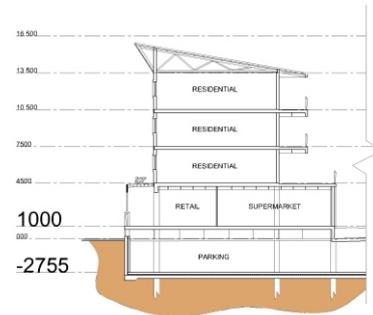


Figure. 128. South wing level change

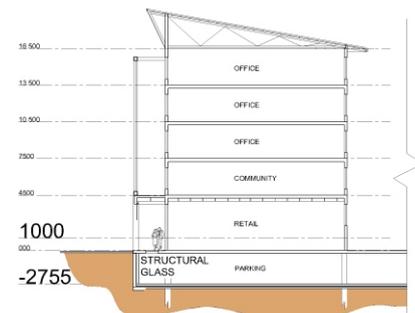


Figure. 129. West wing level change

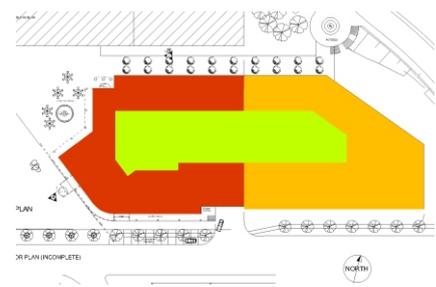


Figure. 130. Link with neighbouring building

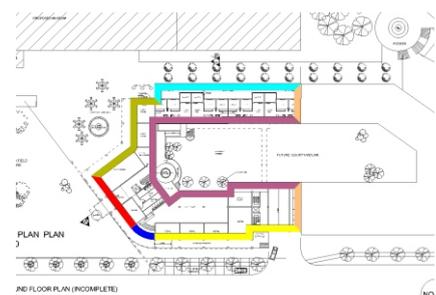


Figure. 131. Various facade treatments

described in the historical background analysis. While the design has considered this rich heritage influences, it also introduces new contemporary aesthetics. These are consistent with the aesthetic approach adopted in the other new developments in the area such as the Metro Mall development. The proposed new facility remains true to its nature in that it reflects qualities evident in today's construction techniques and typology. In addition the proposed design sits comfortably with the historically based facade of the adjacent Parktown Station (proposed here as a transport museum). This 'contrast' as described in the theory component projects qualities that enrich the experience of urban spaces.

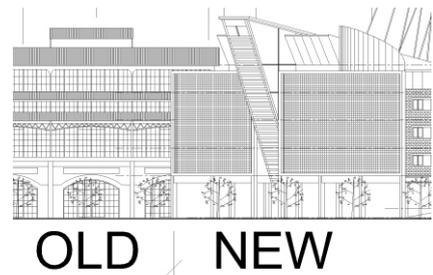


Figure. 132. Old and New facades

SOUTH WING

This facade of the building fronts directly on Carr Street. It is positioned opposite the high density residential development of four stories and it is characterized with high levels of pedestrian and vehicular movement. It was therefore imperative that this facade not overpower these elements in terms of scale, which relates directly to solar movement pattern. In this regard the height of the proposed design was also restricted to four stories. The façade treatment sought was one of an urban nature which responds to the urban context and acts as a 'skin' to the residential component on the upper floors.



Figure. 133. 10 am sun on 21 June 2003
Five floors South wing

The association with the street and residential density above warranted the positioning of the main residential access point here. The residential unit's living spaces are orientated to maximize utilization of north lighting. In addition some form of interaction with the street is desirable. This is accommodated with the introduction of small resident balconies that remain consistent with the aesthetics of this urban façade. The small scale retail facility fronting the street is designed with built in adaptability in the form of dry wall partitioning. This allows for a variation in retail options and addresses the ever changing needs of the retail segment. Furthermore this façade is the only feasible vehicular access point to the facility and therefore encompasses vehicular access for all users to the facility. In this regard it is also proposed that the waste pick up point be discretely located here.

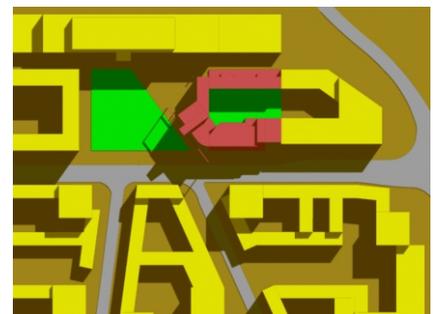


Figure. 134. 10 am sun on 21 June 2003
Four floors South wing

WEST WING

The proposed design accentuates this facade as it fronts the public environment. It therefore incorporates the highest number of floor levels in the facility of five floors, distinguishing it from the rest of the building. The scale of this is however overpowering from a pedestrian point of view and in response is downplayed to a more human scale by the introduction of the wire meshing layering which is primarily utilized as a sun shading device for the west wing.

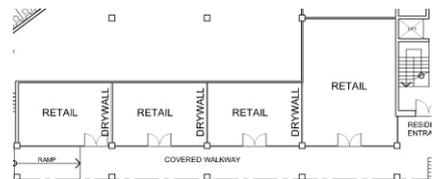


Figure. 135. Flexible Retail

Because of the envisaged high levels of pedestrian activity it is proposed that the main entrance to the facility be located here. The entrance to the facility is easily recognizable and provides for easy orientation from the adjacent square. It is an appropriate access point for all functions of the facility due to its central location. Security personnel here will ensure that the hierarchy of access to spaces is not breached. Linking with the public environment, a public toilet facility is located here on ground level. Beyond this point access control as discussed would be enforced.



Figure. 136. West facade

The HIV and community centre located here on the first floor is linked to the public environment of the square which in turn is linked to proposed public transportation modes. The public nature of this facility requires that this be isolated from access to other functions within the facility. The office function of this facade adds to the critical mass desired by the square and maintains visual

links with the square through the sun shading device. This strategic location maximizes the utilization of the public transport infrastructure linked to the square for businesses located within the office component. Staff for the community centre and the office component utilizing private vehicles would gain access directly from the basement. Visitors of these functions with private vehicles would gain access to the basement parking by electronic access control. Pedestrians would utilize the main entrance on the square. The restaurant and takeaway cluster are positioned on ground floor on the northern portion of this wing. This encourages interaction between users of the proposed museum and the eating facility although this function is not limited to them. The decision of not utilizing the extent of the site boundary for the eating facility was stimulated by predominant solar movement patterns. This layout allows desired sunlight access into the envisaged outdoor eating spaces at peak utilization times. It is envisaged that the restaurant function would further stimulate desired late night activity on Brickfield Square.

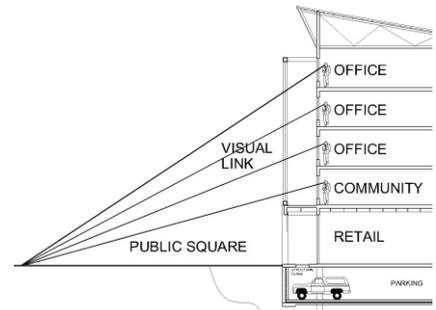


Figure. 137. Office Views



Figure. 138. 2 pm sun on 21 June 2003
Site boundary utilised



Figure. 139. 2 pm sun on 21 June 2003
Building recessed

NORTH WING

The facade is characterized with minimum pedestrian activity and semi private spaces. The nature of the semi private domain on this facade warrants the semi personalization of space. The proposed facade responds in this manner, encouraging personalisation.

Limiting the height of the north wing to three floors (lowest floor level in facility) was stimulated by the predominant solar movement patterns. The design allows for maximum solar penetration into the internal courtyard and functions located on the south wing of the facility.

This decision further stimulates a sense of human scale to this semi private space. This wing encompasses the clustering of three bedroom family orientated units which are considered longer term residential users of the facility. Residents here are given controlled access to the street and this enhances a feeling of security to this semi private domain. Ground floor units are provided with private gardens on the northern side so as to encourage guided personalization of spaces and the units above are given private north facing balconies for the same reason. In terms of functionality of spaces the residents are given the option of converting bedrooms into street-orientated spaces for home based economic activity at ground floor level.



Figure. 140. 10 am sun on 21 June 2003
Four floors on north wing



Figure. 141. 10 am sun on 21 June 2003
Three floors on north wing

[Click here for chapter 14. Design Drawings](#)

15. SOURCES

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