designing for change
architecture as cognitive process
“Noka e tlatswa ke dinokana” – “a river swells from little streams”

(Sesotho Proverb)
ABSTRACT

Architecture is never complete.

The theoretical discourse of the thesis explored the need of a building to change. This change is unpredictable, though expected. The project proposal within the informal context of Phumolong, Mamelodi, aimed to address this unavoidable nature of architecture.

The focus of the project was to provide improved services within an informal settlement, whilst generating social upliftment. The thesis investigated the current and future requirements of the informal dweller. It explored the possibility of generating public space through the establishment of a catalyst. The connection of services and public amenities has been exploited to generate an environment where the building acts as generator and it supports social interaction. Inevitably the servant core provides implicit reasoning as renewed stimulus to public gathering.

The project proposal addressed the integration of the informal user with a building system through the architectural process. This is achieved through phased development, investigating assembly and use of civic programmes.

A quantitative approach towards the research was initially undertaken. However, the fluid nature of the informal settlement enthused a more qualitative approach. The need and right of the informal dweller to be served, and have access to public services and amenities justified the design proposal.

The changing fabric, user, programme and needs of the community contribute to the rate of change of a building. The changing context of Phumolong required a flexible and adaptable design intervention allowing for future interpretation. These variables influenced architecture as a cognitive process.

The design as a product within the realm of architecture represents the process of learning from the past, reacting to the present and preparing for the future.

Ultimately the design intervention exists as an ongoing process of progressive change.
With thanks to:

My beautiful Wilna for her love, understanding and support,
The FIRM,
The studio crowd,
Jaco
Jacques Laubscher for his commitment and effort, Gary White for his support and Gus Gernecke for his mentorship
Mom
Dad and Mali
[“...faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” Hebrews 11:1]

Finally I would like to dedicate this book to my grandparents Wolfgang and Judy Gottsmann

With Jesus all things are possible
PROPOSED NEW PUBLIC SERVANT CATALYST FOR THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENT OF PHUMOLONG, MAMELODI, TSHWANE, SOUTH AFRICA

Research field: Applied Technology

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