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DESIGN PROCESS

The dissertation started with the idea of cooperation in a community. The city was defined as a growing organism of cultural, economic, ecological and geopolitical intricacies within space and form. Existing dimensions and attributes along with key installations and linkages are dominated by high speed, connectivity, structures and control. However the primordial relationship between man and nature can not be negated within this artificial environment. The project theme establishes itself within these extremes. It's the author's opinion that design can contribute positively to the experience of the user. The implications are far reaching. Architects should not respond to a brief without taking responsibility for the eventual experience. The intention of this design is to encourage social contact and conversation possibly a 'playscape' that captures and provides.

Through a process of elimination the design developed into a Taxi Transit Park. The initial focus was on the necessity of a paradigm shift of current misconstrued views of taxis. Whilst defining a minibus taxi and its role within the South African road scope the necessity for creating a communal facility that acts as a service centre came to the fore.

FIG.86. TAXI FACILITY DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



APRIL

The case studies together with various discussions with Mister C. Van As (a Traffic Engineer in private practise) had a direct influence on the design process. The design presented here is based on the taxi circulation plan of Cosmo City Johannesburg. The circulation plan has organic geometries that incorporate holding and ranking areas for taxis. Designated pick-up and drop-off areas were developed. Potential conflict between pedestrian and vehicle movement are minimised by designating the pedestrian area in the centre of the plan, connection in addition to the public square, surrounded with vehicle movement falls within the ideals of the proposed framework.

Considerations taken into account that informed the design decisions:

- Connecting with the urban scope.
- Defining the edges of the street and public square.
- Reacting to the circulation plan.
- The legibility of the building for the users.
- The building acts as a transition space that connects surrounding areas.

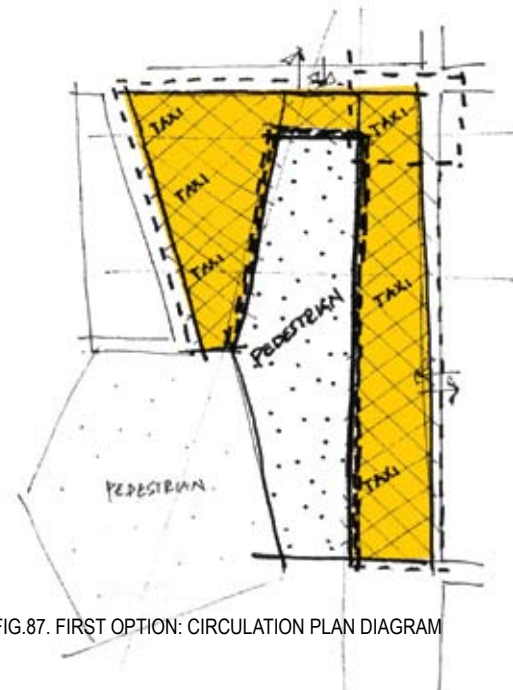


FIG.87. FIRST OPTION: CIRCULATION PLAN DIAGRAM

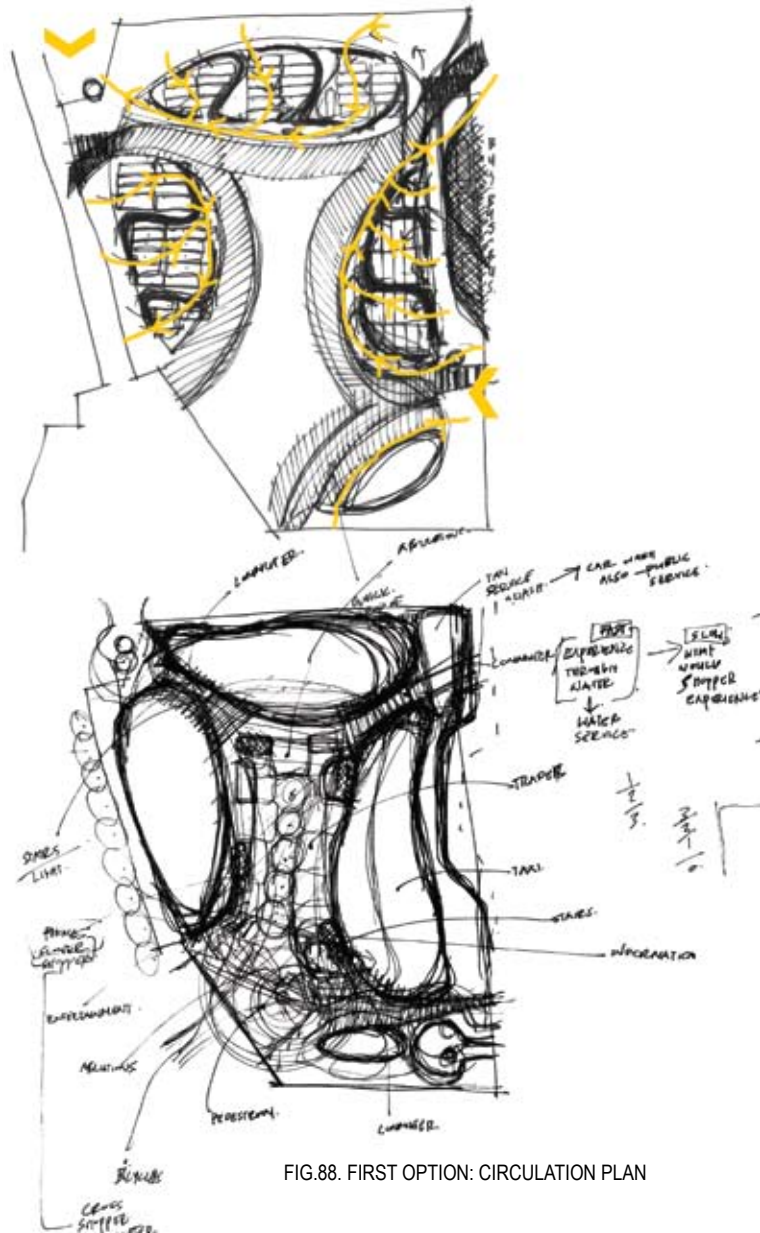


FIG.88. FIRST OPTION: CIRCULATION PLAN

MAY

The movement paths of the users were gaining importance. It was initiated on a pedestrian level focussing on the shopper and commuter. The time lapse of the typical route was investigated. How paths change according from slow lingering, to fast convenience to functional requirements. The experience of the taxi, pedestrian and trader was investigated. On Ground Floor level this proposal provided in the needs of all these users. First Floor level was defined as a holding area for taxis with offices above that.

CRITIQUE:

- Economical considerations:
 - Is it viable to have taxis on a First Floor level?
 - How will the building pay for itself?
- Do the building and its functions propose urban upliftment to the area and how is it achieved?
- Problems associated with the divorce between served and servant were explored.

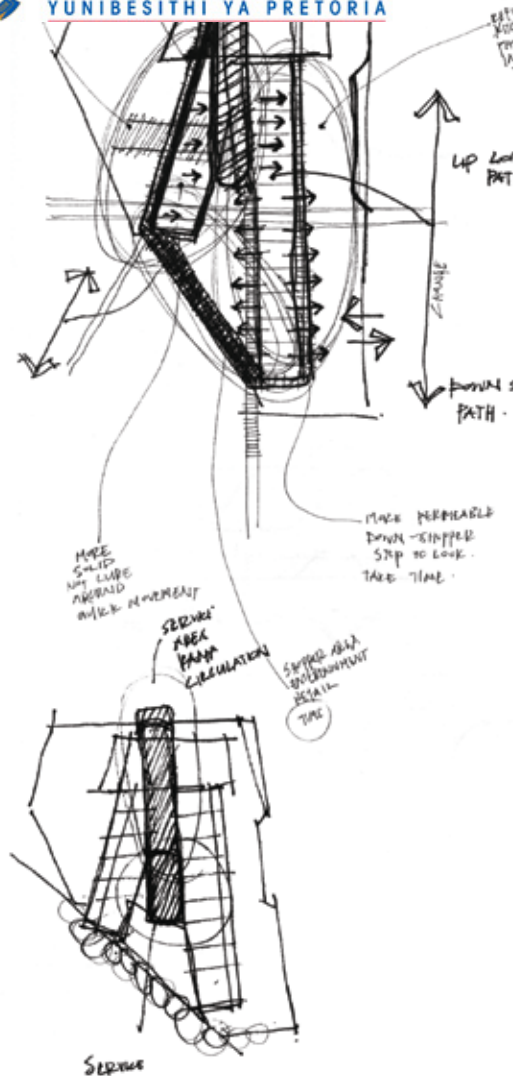


FIG.89. FIRST DESIGN ROUTE PLAN DIAGRAMS

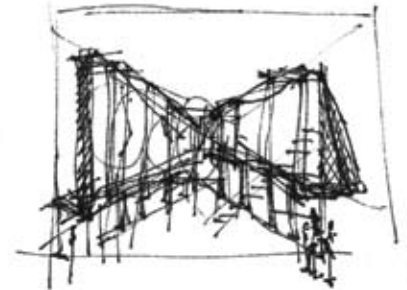
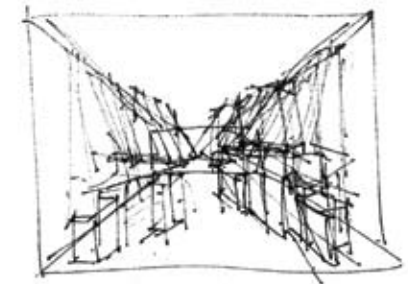


FIG.90. FIRST DESIGN ROUTE SPATIAL EXPLORATIONS

JUNE

Within the design the taxi facility takes on the identity of an 'airport'. The architectural language moves away from the informal. The organic circulation plan of the building was moulded to become a service port. The three sides along this path defined the edges of the taxi circulation routes. The edges were established as pick-up areas integrated with waiting areas. The trader facilities were shaped around this. The building covered the pedestrian paths through the site moving towards specific destinations. At the destination the paths terminated or passed through, resulting in transition and interaction spaces. Ground Floor was served as a service area with retail, trader and waiting facilities. On First Floor offices were allocated with the Top Level serving as a motel.

CRITIQUE:

- How do taxi rank and pick-up points function?
- How will the building structure work?
- Positive critique on geometries.

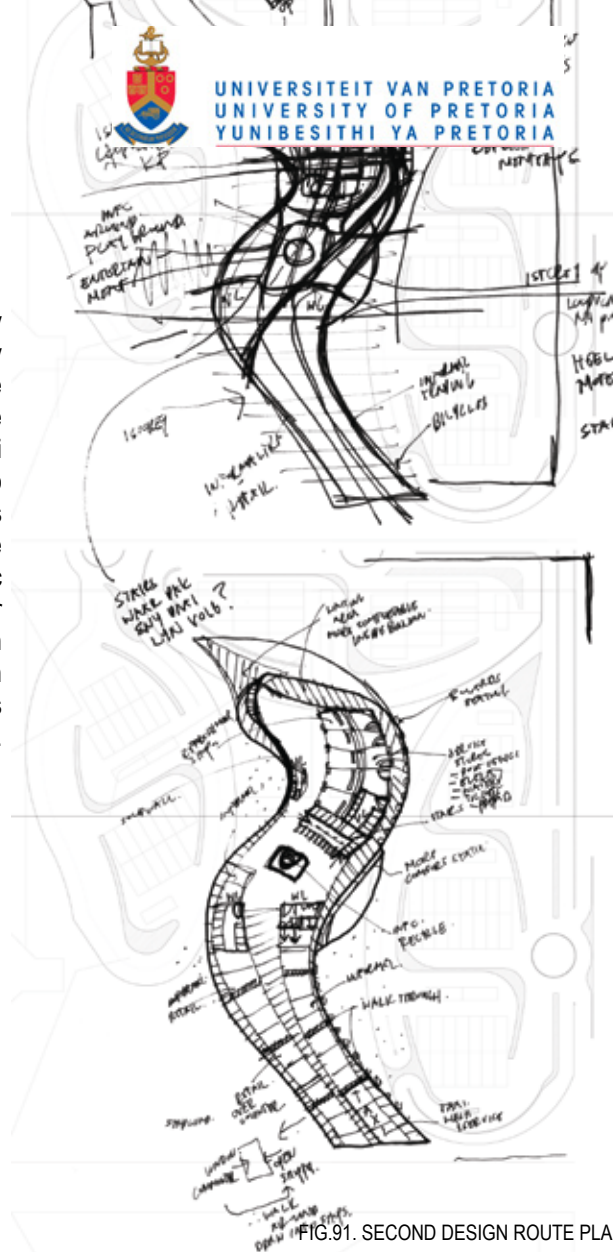


FIG.91. SECOND DESIGN ROUTE PLAN DIAGRAMS

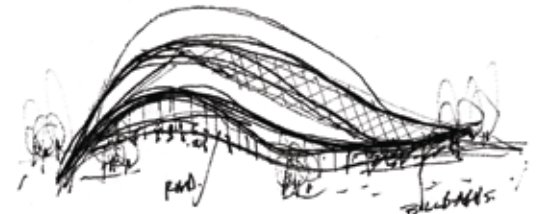
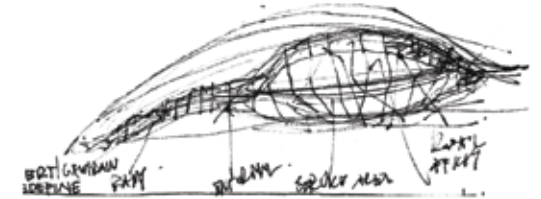


FIG.92. SECOND DESIGN ROUTE SPATIAL EXPLORATIONS

The third design aimed to simplify the previous form. A logical design order was established.

- The circulation plan is both logical and complex. This adds to the complexity of the design.
- The question regarding the economic viability of a taxi rank as part of the urban fabric remained largely unanswered?
- The sea of parking surrounding the building did not make a positive contribution to the environment. In addition it was not utilised at night.
- Does the design conform to a day and night life cycle?
- Security of the building was a problem that had to be addressed. The movement through axis the building perpetuated this aspect.
- The building form is enclosing and it was difficult to puncture it.
- Shelter for the users was not addressed adequately. The original goal of creating a place for people rather than a place for taxis was not entirely achieved.

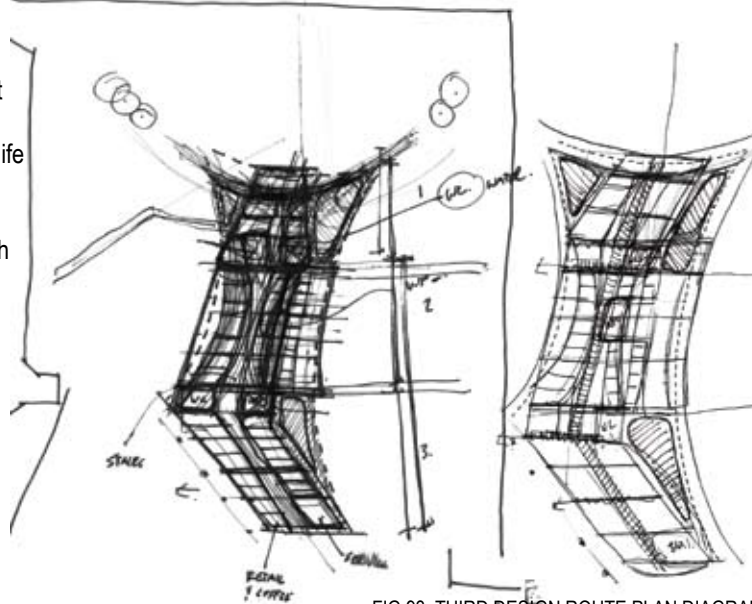


FIG.93. THIRD DESIGN ROUTE PLAN DIAGRAMS

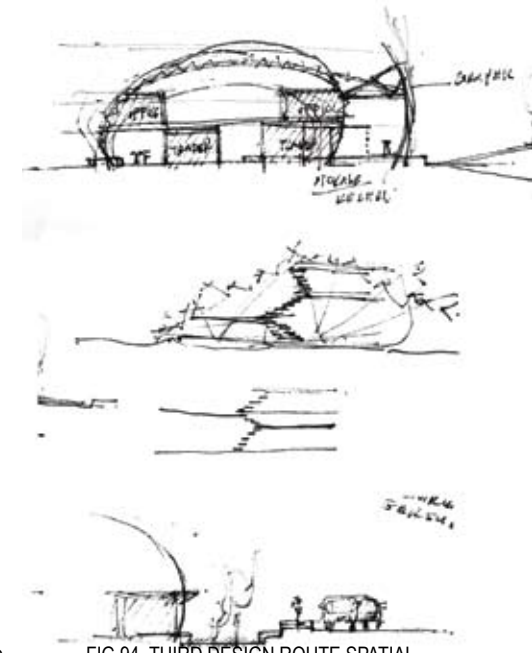


FIG.94. THIRD DESIGN ROUTE SPATIAL EXPLORATIONS



AUGUST

This design proposal explores the taxi circulation plan derived from Ekurhuleni Kempton Park Station Taxi Rank.

In the previous design the surrounding vehicle circulation alienated the building from the city and context. Here the invert of the previous is investigated. The circulation approach results in an urban fabric that read as buildings surrounding a courtyard. Street fronts are activated through the buildings that define the edges, thus contributing to urban upliftment.

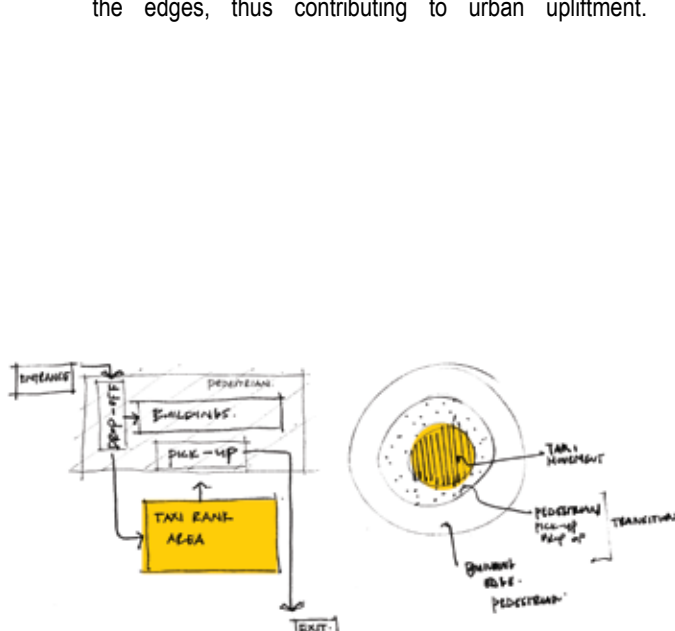


FIG.95. TAXI RANK CIRCULATION PLANNING DIAGRAM

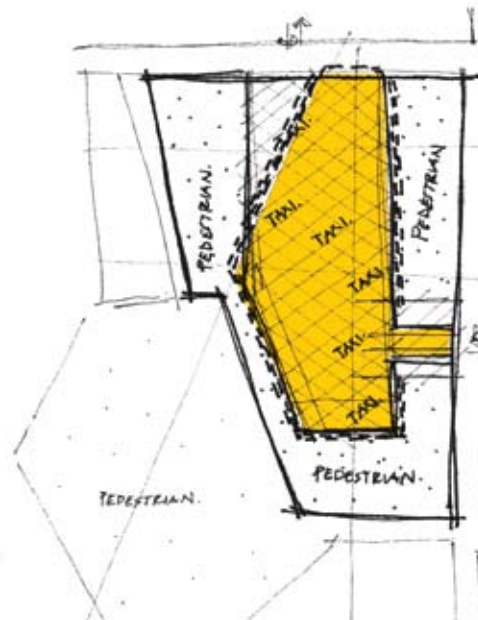


FIG.96. SECOND OPTION: CIRCULATION PLAN DIAGRAM

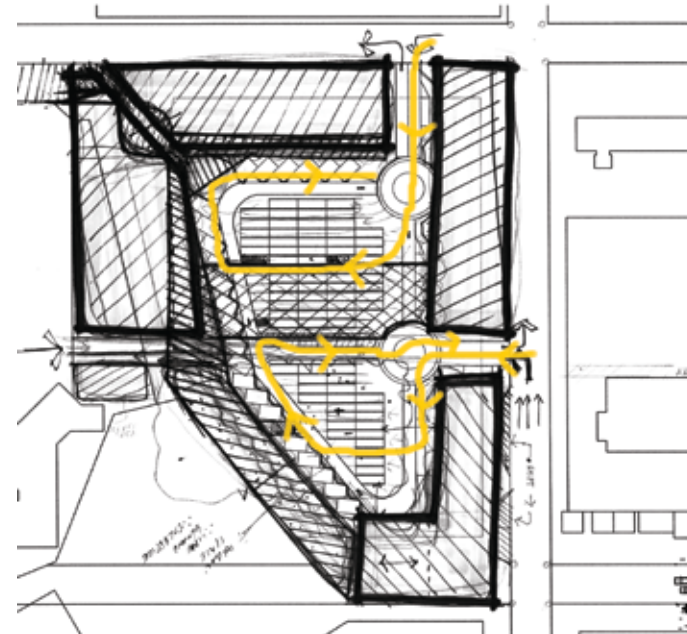
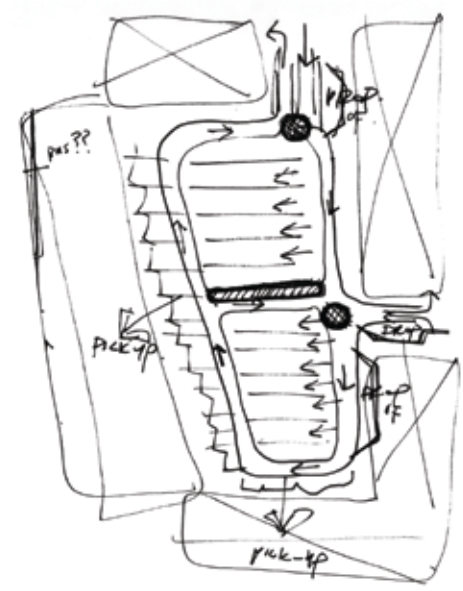


FIG.97. SECOND OPTION CIRCULATION PLAN



AUGUST

The drop-off area attaches to the service building where various associated economic enterprises are hosted. In addition an area demarcated for information is provided. The service building is connected to the waiting area. The vertical circulation route acts as an anchoring point between the two levels. The design focuses on the movement inside, through and around the building. The user is being guided along his/her path through a sequence of spaces and the experience thereof. The Ground Floor level connected to the taxi ranking area is designed as a recreational public area. After hour sport activities could be accommodated by utilising the existing paved surfaces of the taxi rank.

CRITIQUE:

- The plan with its associated movement patterns was still not legible enough and it required further refinement.

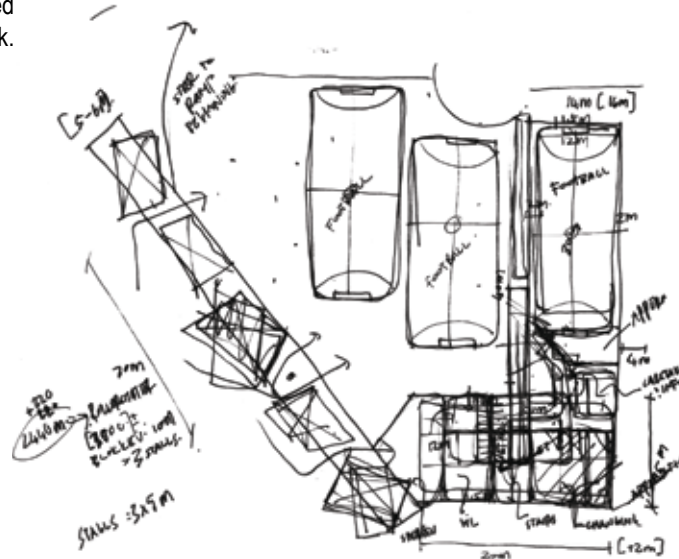
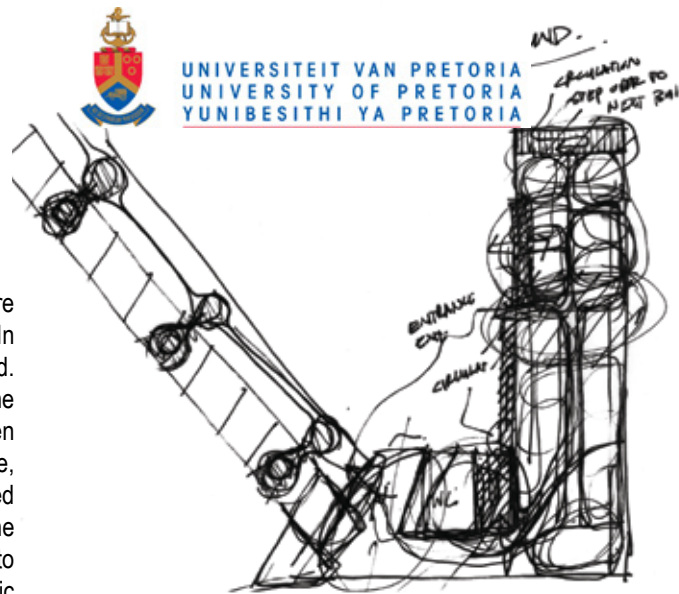


FIG.98. FOURTH DESIGN ROUTE PLAN DIAGRAMS



FIG.99. FOURTH DESIGN ROUTE SPATIAL EXPLORATIONS



MAJOR DISCOVERIES FROM THE PROCESS:

- 01] The initial idea was to establish a relationship with nature, and by doing so to create a social communal space for people. Return to initial idea.
- 02] The project is about function and placement.
- 03] There are certain issues that need to be addressed for a taxi rank to be viable in an urban context.
- 04] The design should promote pedestrian activity during day and night.
- 05] Interface transition represents a connection to a larger environment (the city).
- 06] Movement through, and the sequence of spaces should be legible throughout building.
- 07] The design should manifest as a sustainable multi-functional facility with the focus on the users, rather than only the taxis.



FIG.100. TAXI ROUTE HAND SIGNALS

TOWN/CITY /ATTERIDGEVILLE LOCAL/ AROUND HERE MABASA TOWN STATION / MAMELOK STRAIGHT MIDRAND

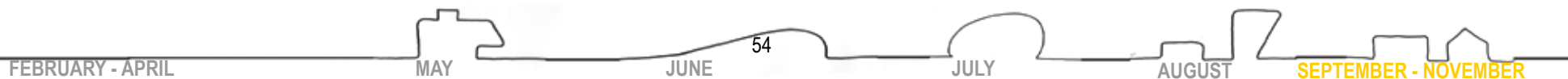




FIG.101. 3D EXPLORATION OF BUILDING IN CONTEXT

