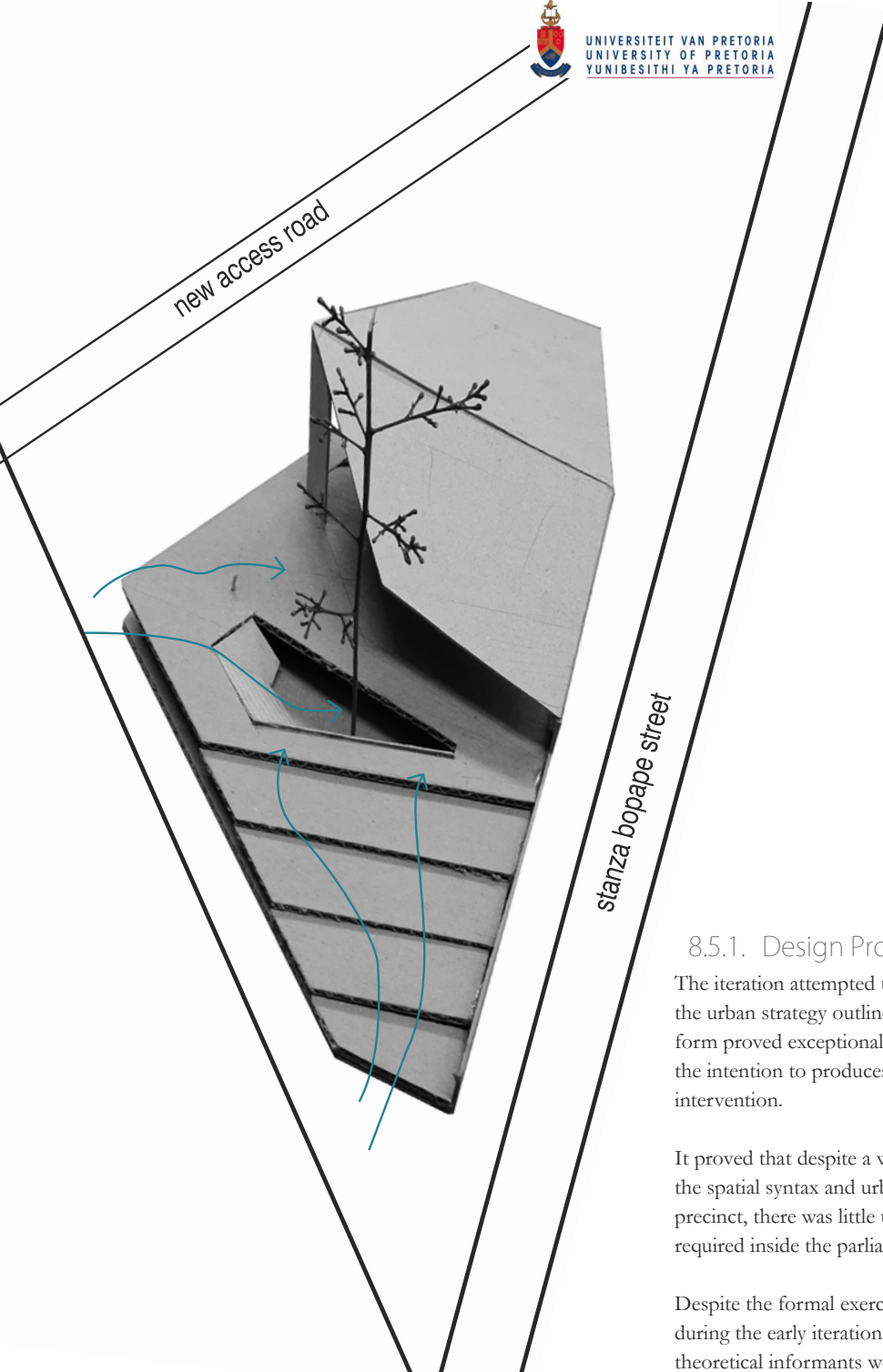




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Chapter 8:
PROCESS
Development of the Scheme



8.5.1. Design Proposal: Iteration 1

The iteration attempted to apply the outlined form from the urban strategy outlined in the previous chapter. The form proved exceptionally large and not fully in line with the intention to produce a subtle, close to the ground intervention.

It proved that despite a well-developed understanding of the spatial syntax and urban condition required for the precinct, there was little understanding of the intricacies required inside the parliamentary building.

Despite the formal exercises and the results produced during the early iterations, the formulation of concept and theoretical informants were still being explored.

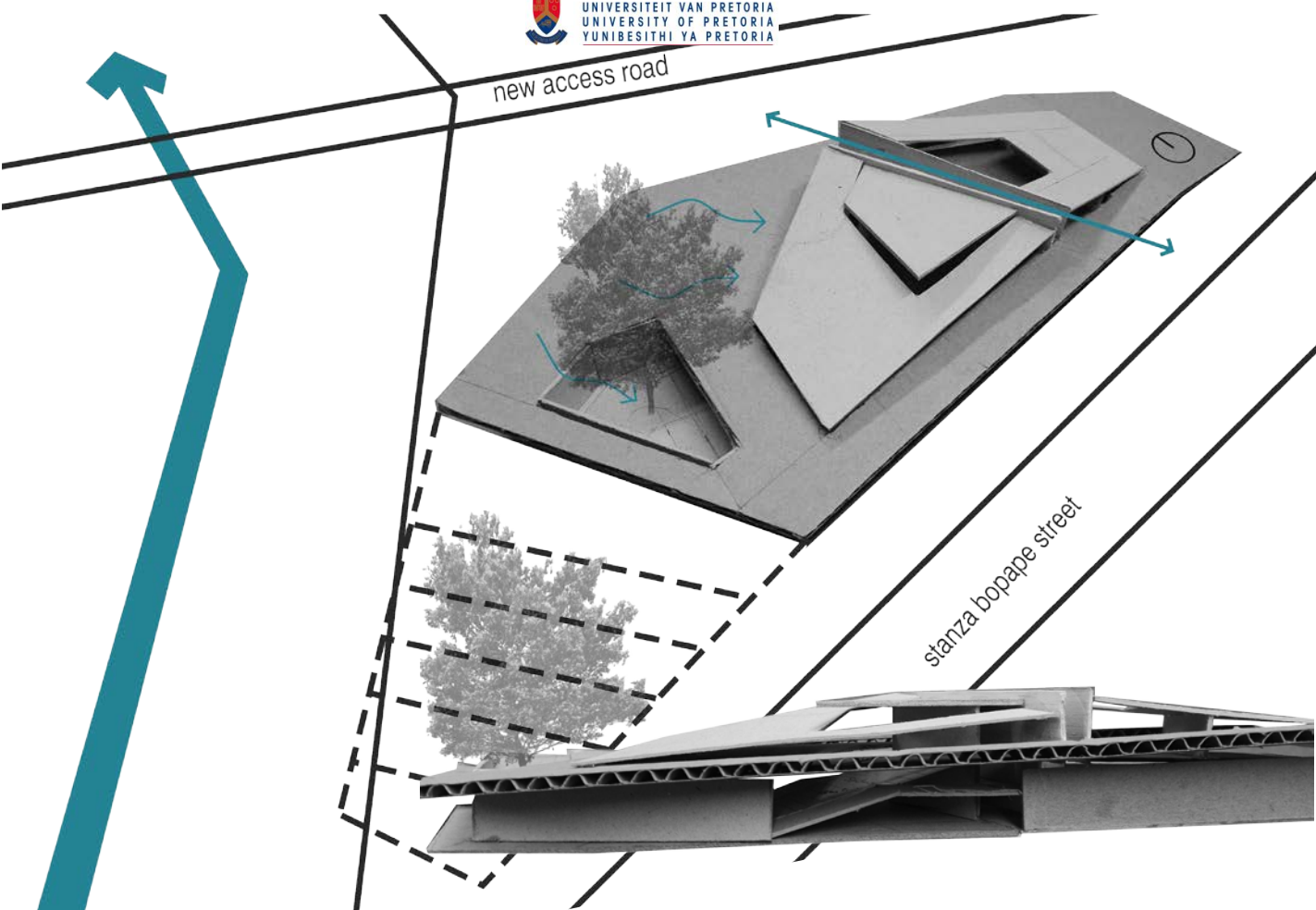
The manner in which edge between the formal spaces within the building and the informal public spaces outside the building were treated became relevant from the onset. The act of creating and outdoor amphitheatre that was essentially embedded in the skin of the building was one exploration of this idea.

Above, and opposite page:

Figure 67 - Photograph of the model built to illustrate Iteration 1 (May 2016), aerial view.

Figure 68 - Photographs of the model built to illustrate Iteration 2 (May 2016), aerial view and side view showing levels inside building

Figure 69 - Conceptual elevation of the second iteration.



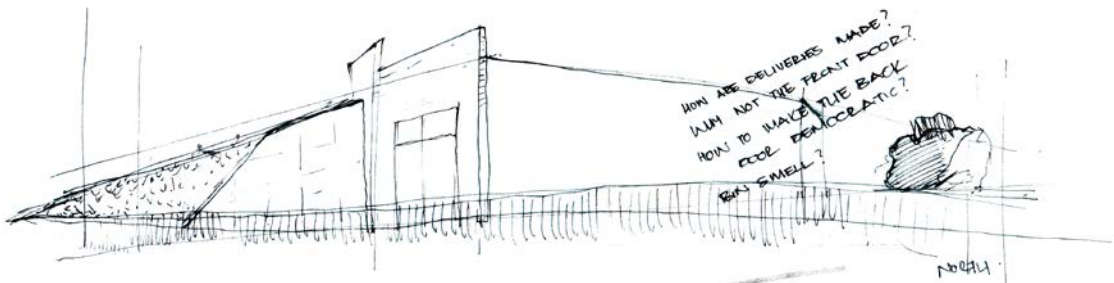
8.1.1. Design Proposal: Iteration 2

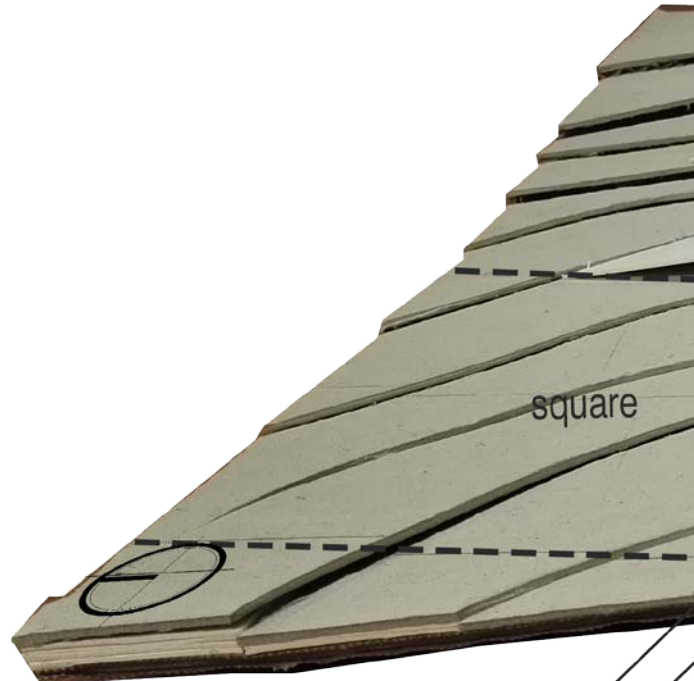
A variation on the exploration undergone in iteration two, this attempt aimed to reconcile the subtlety of the first iteration (in terms of scale and a perceived *growing* from the ground plane).

The drastic volume of the building was reduced by creating a void inside the volume, so that it may still respond to the urban requirements outlined in the site planning (chapter 8).

The exploration of liminal spaces (especially those of circulation into and through the building) manifested in the introduction of drastic cutting of the form. This hoped to

create visual connection between the democratic liminal spaces and the outside. The ramp cutting through the building exaggerates the ritual of descent into the chamber; enforcing accountability and decorum upon entering the proceedings.





The model built to illustrate the third iteration of the design and development of the precinct. (Scale 1:500)

Figure 70 - Overhead view of the model (Iteration 3)

Figure 71 - Oblique view of the model, showing the edge between discussion chamber and public amphitheatre.

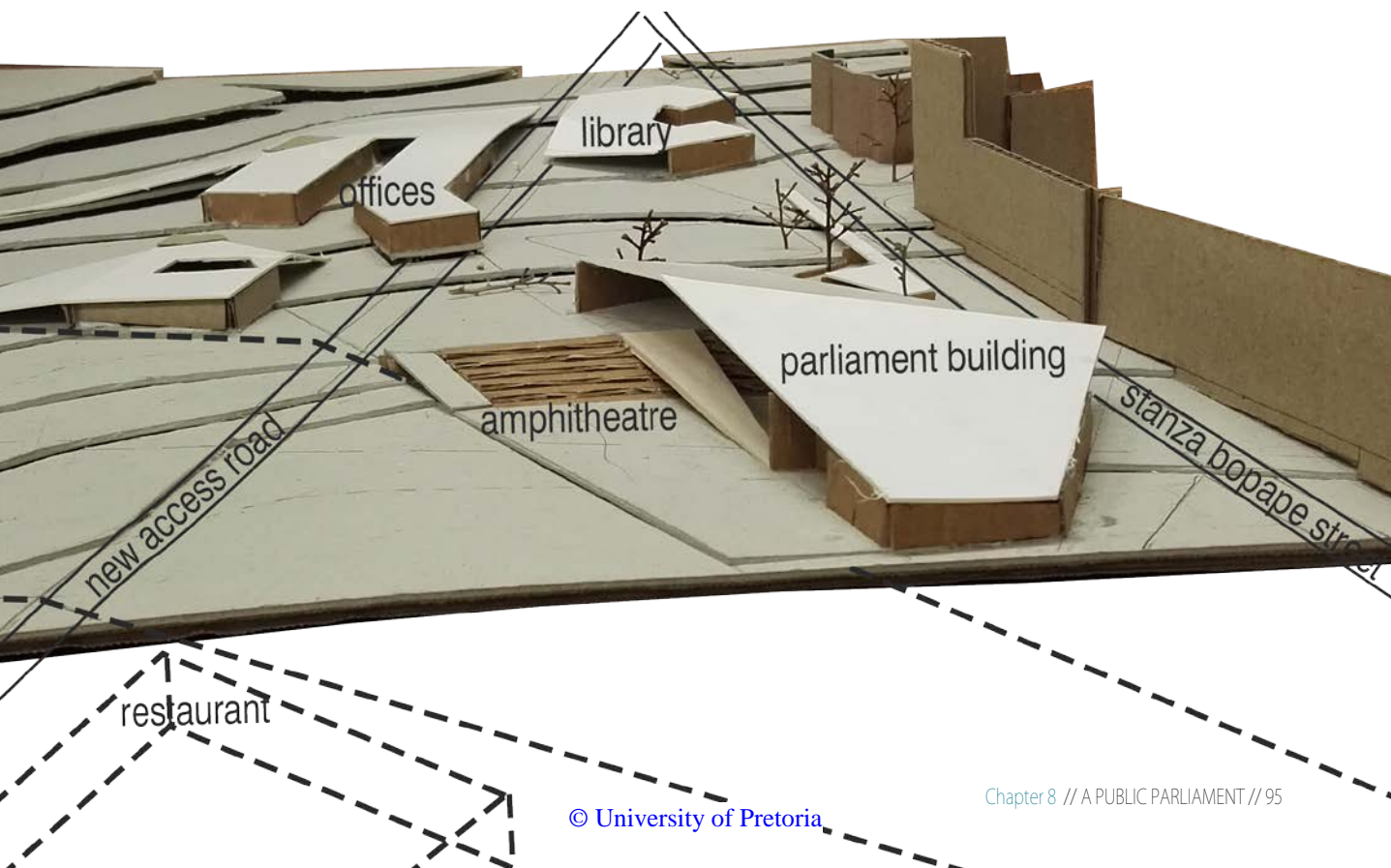
8.1.2. Design Proposal: Iteration 3 (June)

The development of the scheme further saw the design of the public space around the building take precedence. The importance of auxiliary programmes was addressed by the inclusion of other buildings.

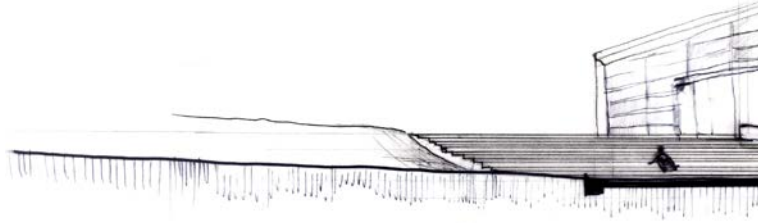
The language in which these buildings was to be treated was in keeping with the subtlety attempted in earlier iterations. The nature of the forms thus sat firmly grounded in the landscape and only subtly rose from the context. Majority of the roofscapes were designed to be landscaped, blending into the landscape and only visible on the human scale.

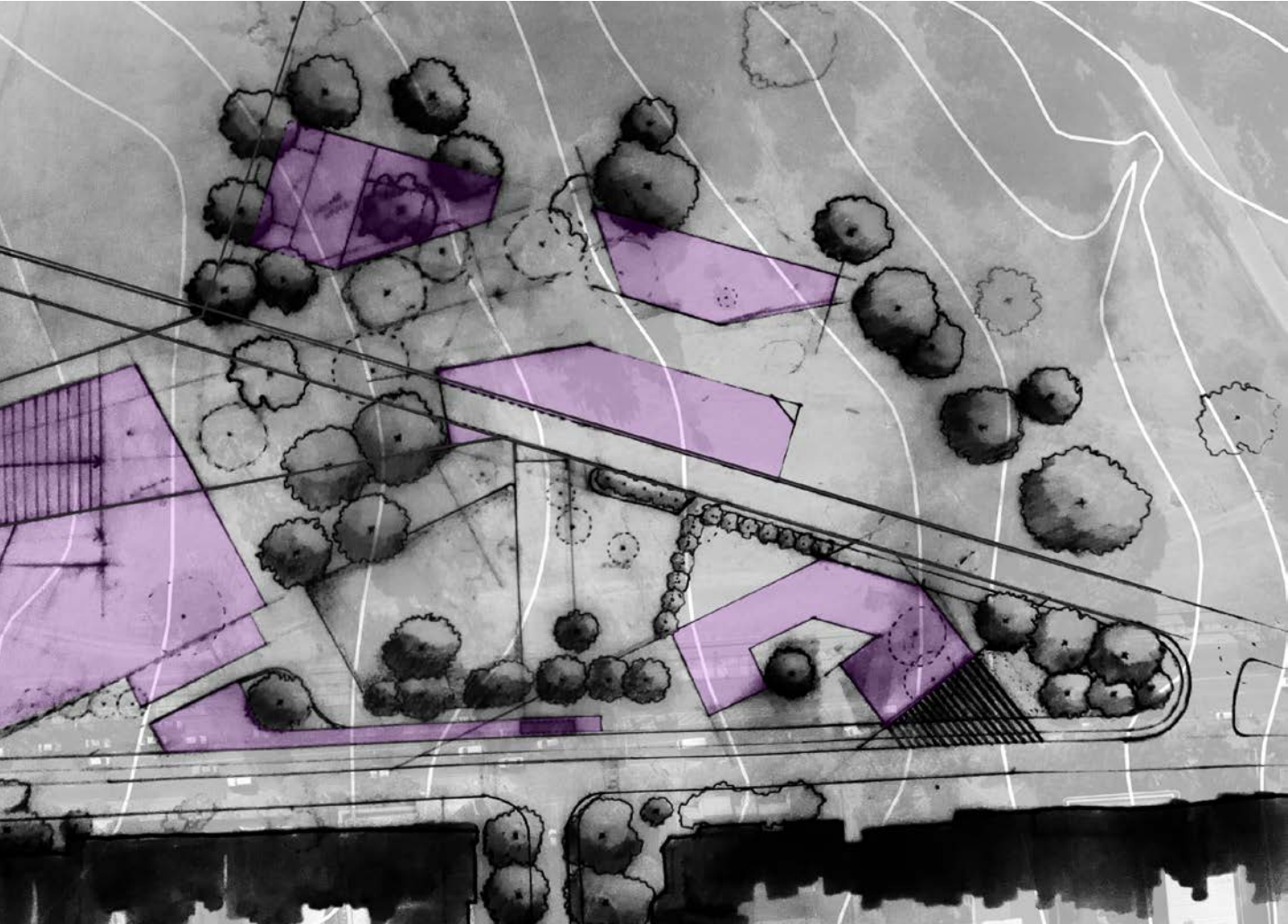
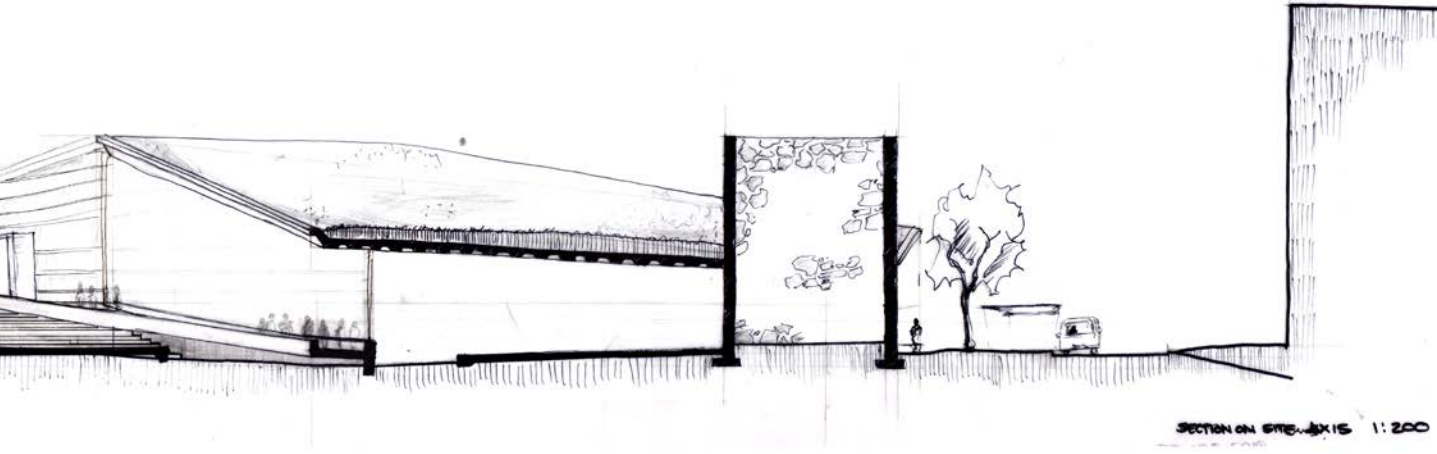
The urban response was complimented during the June review, despite the clumsiness with which buildings appeared to have been arranged. It appeared as though the initial ordering geometry had become distorted and thus lost on the viewer, leaving the precinct seeming unordered.

The building itself still failed to address the intricacies of the programme, perhaps due to a lack of understating as to the intricacies involved. The structural aspects of the massive roof were also brought into question.



Drawings of the development (June 2016)
Figure 72 - Section (NTS)
Figure 73 - Site Plan (NTS)

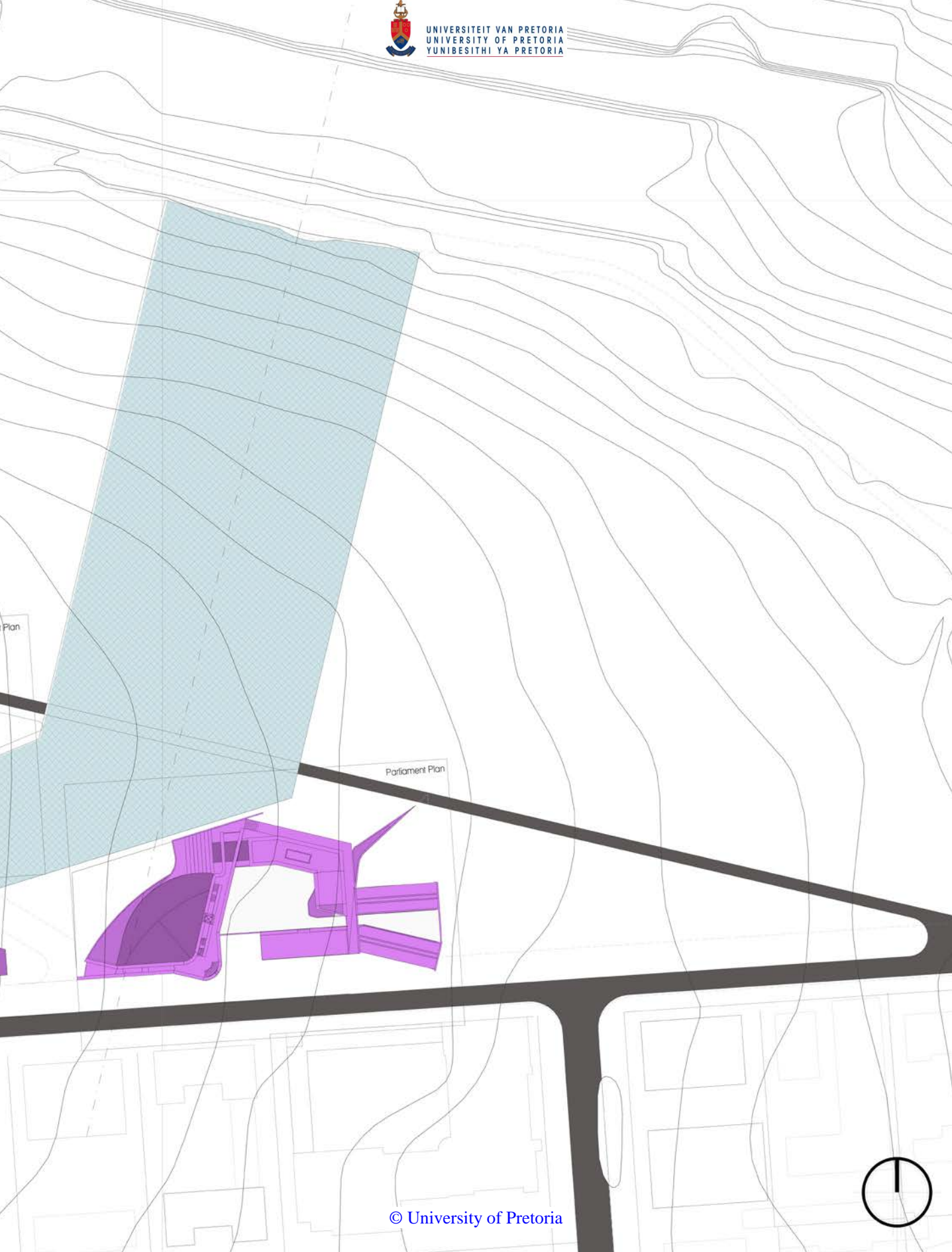






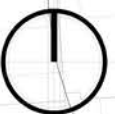
8.2. Design Proposal: Iteration 4 (August)





Plan

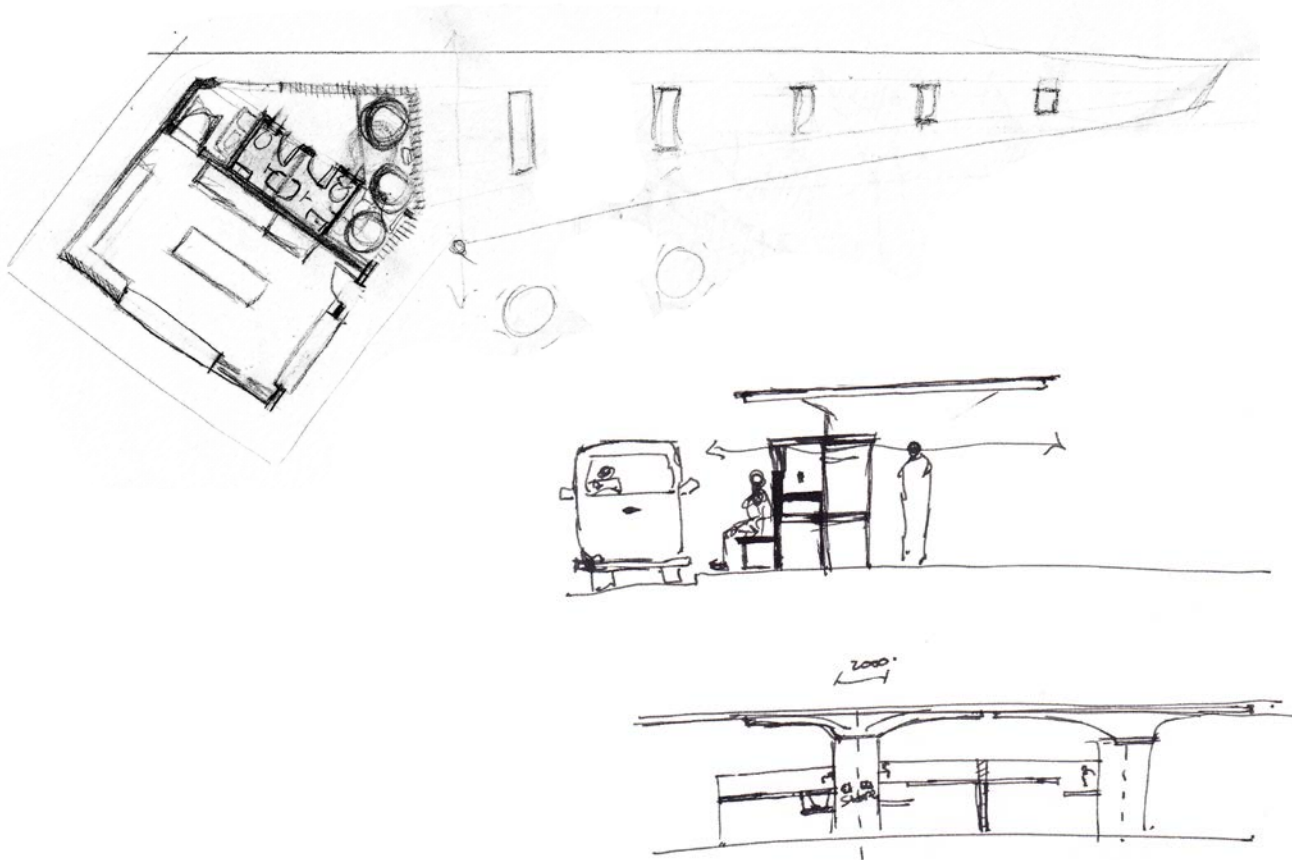
Parliament Plan

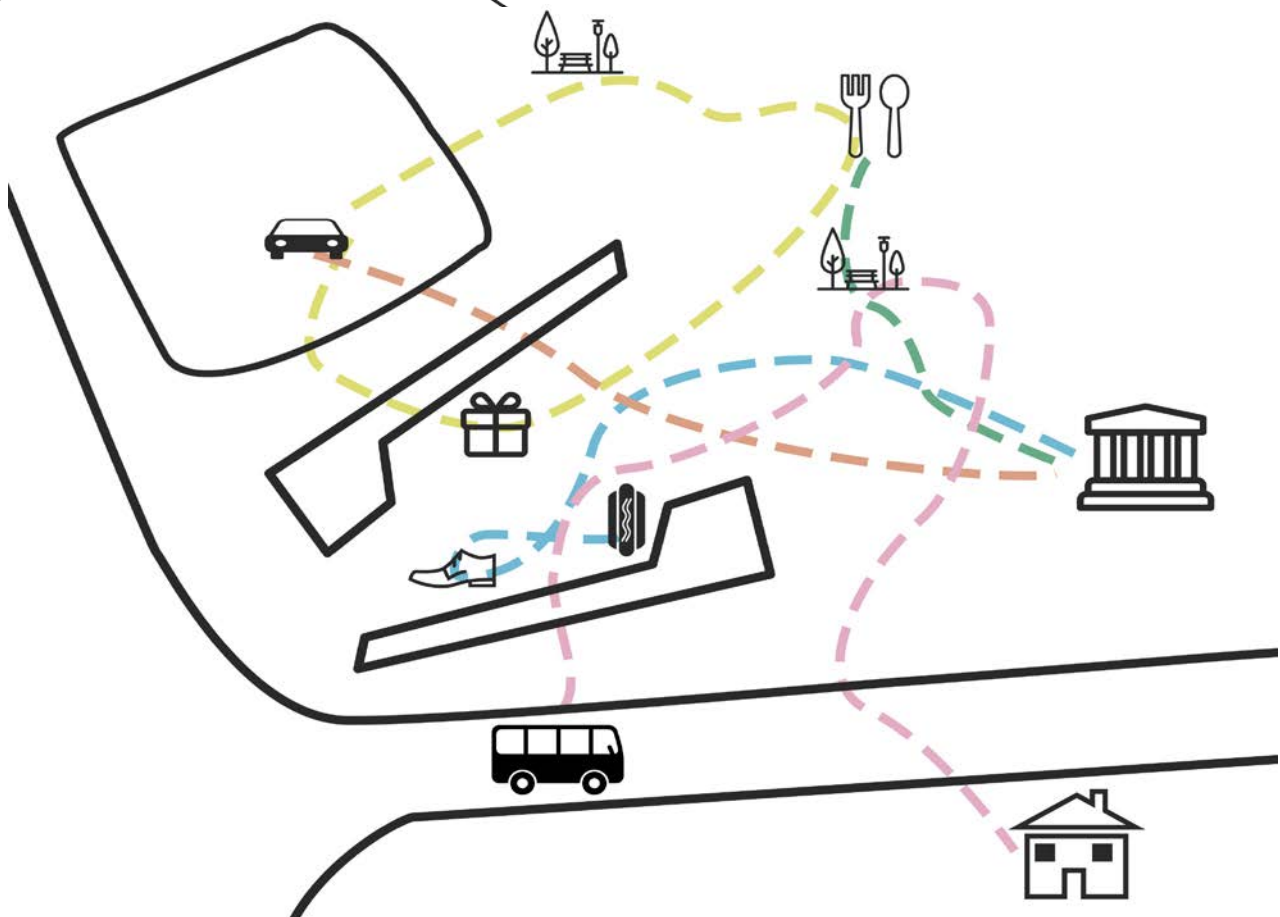
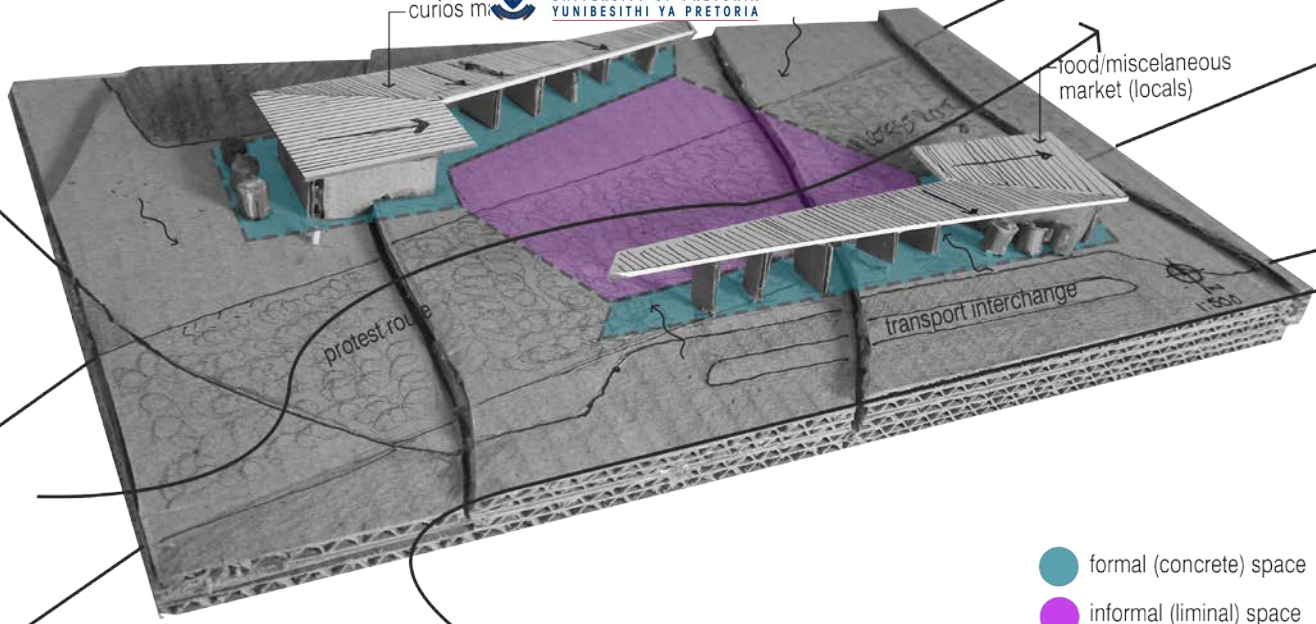




8.2.1. Market

The market space acts a funnel for the protestors during protests. By using two flanking structures, the activity of trade is housed at the centre of the public space. It also encourages interaction between tourists, accessing the curios market, and the everyday public, using the food vendors. The inclusion of food vendors' informal seating arrangements will increase the sociability of the space allowing employees of nearby buildings (and parliament) to interact with the everyday users of the space and tourists.

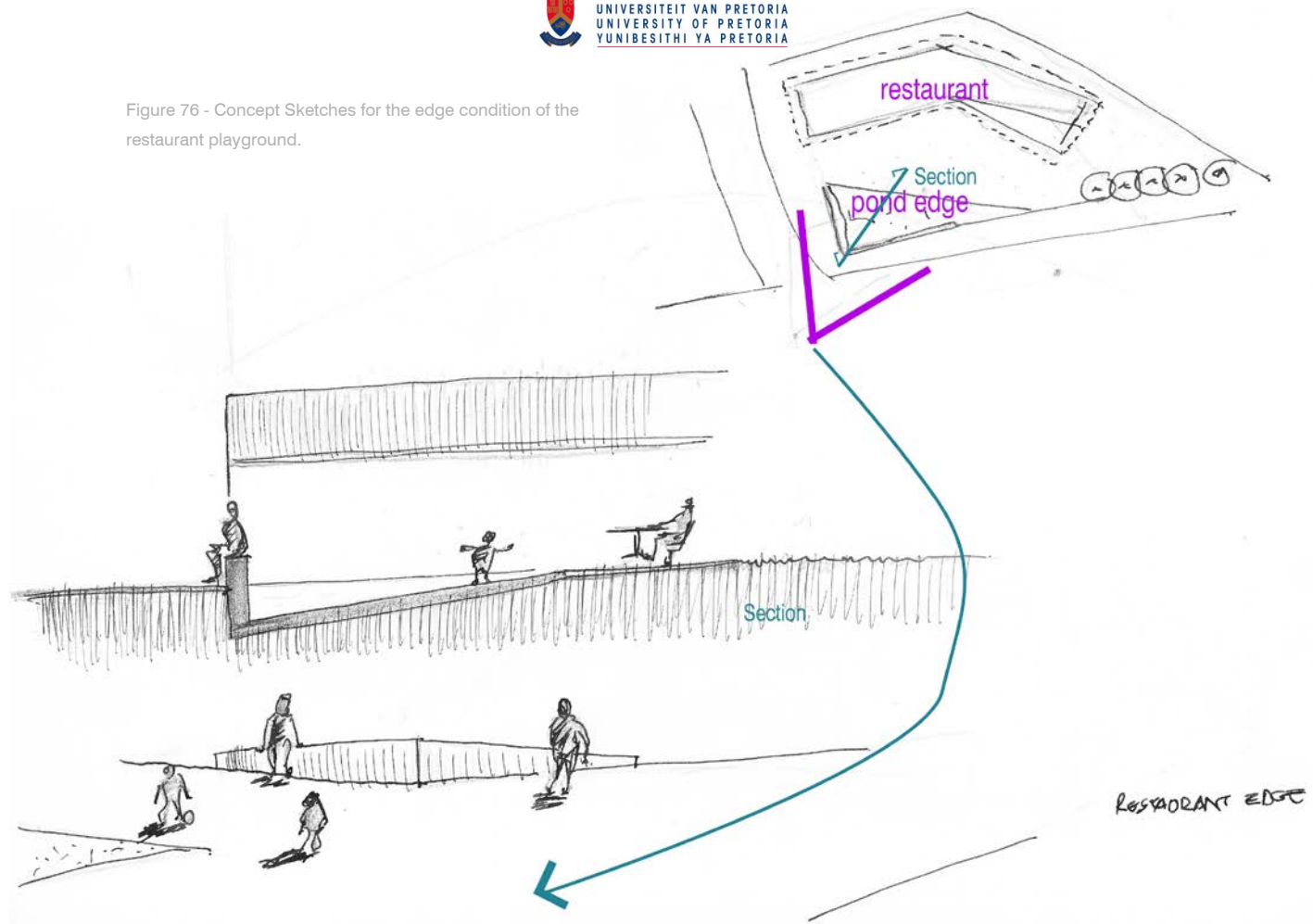




Opposite Page
Figure 74 - Concept sketches of the market space

Opposite Page
Figure 75 - Concept sketches of the market space
This Page

Figure 76 - Concept Sketches for the edge condition of the restaurant playground.



8.2.2. Restaurant

The restaurant on site addressed the initial aspect of the programme that allowed for large gatherings and functions at the parliament building. The restaurant serves as venue for these gatherings and because of its position in the public space, there is a strong likelihood of interactions between different users.

The restaurant also incorporates a bar which might become the watering hole for locals in the area and parliamentarians alike. The proximity of the restaurant to the memorial and the Union Buildings renders it a likely point of interest to visitors to the site as well. The restaurant, market and parliamentary building form an enclosure of a public playground, for the children living in the area as well as patrons of the restaurant and market to allow their children to play under surveillance. This also encourages interactions between children of different walks of life.

8.2.3. Public Toilets

The frequency of public toilets throughout the precinct is in anticipation of the users a public park can expect. The treatment of these public toilets also needs to be unique in that the programme holds possibilities for liminality and is not often celebrated.

The design should increase the desire in users to linger and should encourage an identification with one another's humanity.

Case Study: Public Ablutions, Richard Leplastrier, 2006

Leplastrier's public ablutions are exceptionally humble but the manner in which space is dealt with is unconventional.

The building internalises its functions, but the planting within the building and the floor finishes create a sense of outdoor space. The roof overhead seems to unify smaller buildings in the building.

The privacy of the toilet cubicles is respected and seating inside the building gives people a place to wait, without feeling like they are inside a toilet building. Communal handwashing troughs increase the likelihood of social interactions.



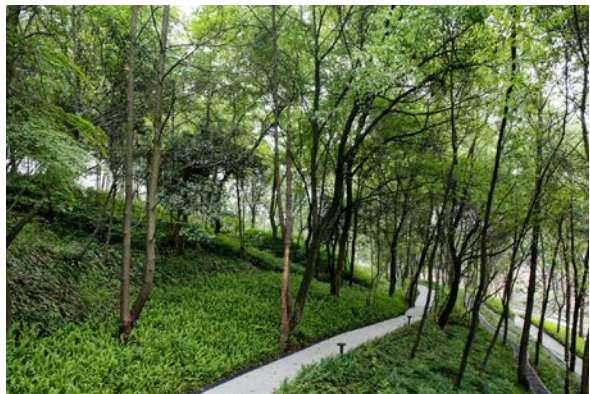
Figure 77 - Photographs of Richard Leplastrier's Public Ablutions in Sydney. Completed in 2004. (De Wall & Przywecki 2016)

8.2.4. Interpretation Memorial

The issue of colonial symbols has been brought into question in the South African political discourse over recent years. The Rhodes Must Fall saga marked a turning point in the debate, taking it from mere discussion into action.

The question of what to do with the colonial history of South Africa and its symbols in our present era is dressed by this intervention in the form of an interpretation memorial, that places a number of these symbols in context, with each other and themselves. By introducing new works of art, making information about the the works available and introducing additional programmatic aspects to the Union Buildings Estate the intervention hopes to honour the artistic value of the colonial statues and busts while contextualising them in a manner that makes their meaning useful and relevant.

Similar to a sculpture park the space will be both archive and gallery but equally functional as an outdoor recreational space. Using the natural slope of the landscape, the introduction of terraces following an undulating path with portions of high speeds and others that encourage slow movement and contemplation, the memorial will tell a story along its narrative that hopes to provide insight into the political history of South Africa, also contextualising the Union Buildings edifice, and making the estate more of an attraction to both local and tourists. It will lend practical value of a contribution to the political narrative in South Africa, a valuable asset to The Capital City.



Conceptual informants for the memorial, right. Top to bottom:
Figure 78 - The Olympic Sculpture Park, Seattle. (Charles Anderson / Atelier ps, 2007) (Buchanan 2010)
Figure 79 - Nirox Sculpture Park, Johannesburg. (N.A. 2016)
Figure 80 - The Hillside Eco Park, Hunan China (Z+T Studio) (Zhang 2016)

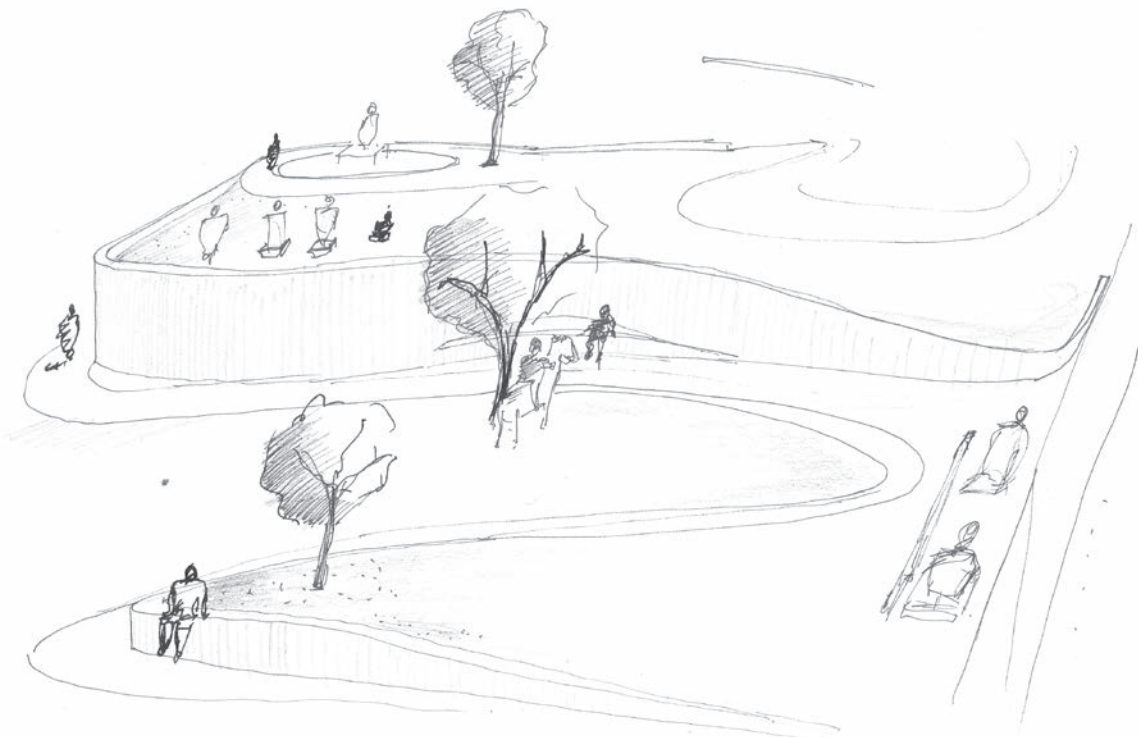


Figure 81 - A conceptual illustration of the memorial (Author 2016)

Figure 82 - A conceptual section of a portion of the memorial (Author 2016)

8.2.5. Concept

The concept for the building developed from its *place* and the requirements set out in the *pragmatics* section of this document., from here it was guided by the *postulations* about democracy, destruction and the value of what has been destroyed.

The building, being in the presence of a historical object with very specific political implications, as well as a precinct that serves as political dialogue, forms part of the continuum of political discourse on the site (dialogue brought forward by the memorial outlined in the previous section). Despite the traditional *gravitas* expected of governmental institutions, it is important that it takes on a more subtle tone in its context, to establish it as a possession of the people, who are the focus of the democracy it aims to uphold. This will also serve to limit formal contestation with the Union Buildings, reducing the opportunity for debate. It also addresses the nature of the street and the humanity of the public space within which it sits - the building needs to find a way to be both human and institutional.

Another issue revolves around this *publicness*. The building occupies public space by which it is surrounded. It needs to acknowledge all sides as fronts. It needs to address the liminality of its edge conditions and, considering this is

where most interactions with the public will occur, these edges must be embodied and occupiable. They must be of the public and of the private.

Following the investigations into the democracy of liminality and the importance of destruction in the South African political discourse, the building needs to surrender to its people fully. This implies, for this investigation, that it needs to be an object that the people may choose to burn in the event of unrest. Aspects that contribute to the process of democracy, the liminal, will be treated in a more robust manner so that they may outlive the attempted destruction of the building.

Other aspects, which deal more specifically with the decorum and procedures of the building will be treated in a manner appropriate for government buildings, with sophistication and a simultaneous air of fragility - marking the temporality and mortality of these processes. The sophistication of these spaces will, however, not be protected from the public in any manner (returning to the idea of ownership by the public) and will most likely be susceptible to vandalism and destruction. These aspects; their condition, destruction and maintenance, will be used as a measure of the nation's position on the scale of democracy (chapter 4).

The intentions for the building can be outlined as follows:

It needs to form a subtle part of the political discourse on the site, in its locality, relationship to context and legacy in the event of its demise.

It needs to address publicness on all its sides. It needs to be surrendered to its public.

Its institutional spaces should be fragile and susceptible to public appropriation and destruction. There may be fire.

Its liminal spaces: edges, circulation spaces, generic spaces need to be its most celebrated and robust - they will serve as a monument to democracy amid the ruin.

Developing the plan

The commentary received after the June review expressed the lack of order in the scheme, despite the intention of marrying site influences with programmatic requirements.

Returning to the concept of democracy as divine institution and the street as the domain of the people, the two main ordering systems of the site were identified. The first, that of the Union Buildings, the seat of government, serves to symbolise the divinity of democracy that South Africans strive towards. The second is that of the street.

The site had already been ordered according to these systems, but the building itself needed to be guided by them as well. The decision to highlight the procedural aspect of the decorum of parliament was investigated early on. It was important not to lose the gravitas of this process, which is why the processional corridor was placed on the intersection of the two planes - the departure point (west) leaving the public space behind and the final view to the north is that of the Union Buildings. The corridor is used as holding device for the discussion chamber.

The decision to attach the office building to this anchor was not simple to execute. The importance of separating it was to identify it as not belonging to the parliamentary space. Its connection to the anchor is below ground, where it can be observed from above. However, from the public space the buildings appear as separate entities, hovering near one another but never touching.

Progression from ordering system through to conceptual layout:

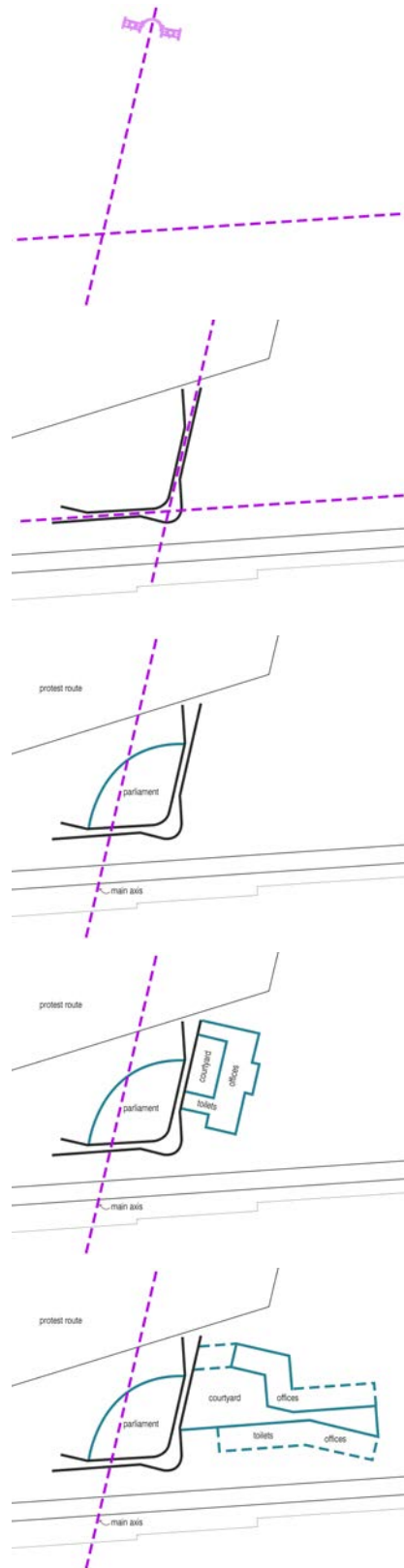
Figure 83 - The main ordering systems imposed on the site are that of the union buildings (divine) and street (mundane).

Figure 84 - The marrying of the mundane (the people) and the divine (the value of democracy) creates an intersection, the location of the descent into parliamentary proceedings.

Figure 85 - The union of the two systems holds the discussion chamber, where it is in view of the public space, which acts as backdrop for parliamentary debate.

Figure 86 - The first attempt of attaching the office buildings and toilets to the main space.

Figure 87 - Iteration of the position of the offices, creating a lengthened courtyard encouraging spectatorship of, not only the formal proceedings but also the daily functioning of the parliamentarians.



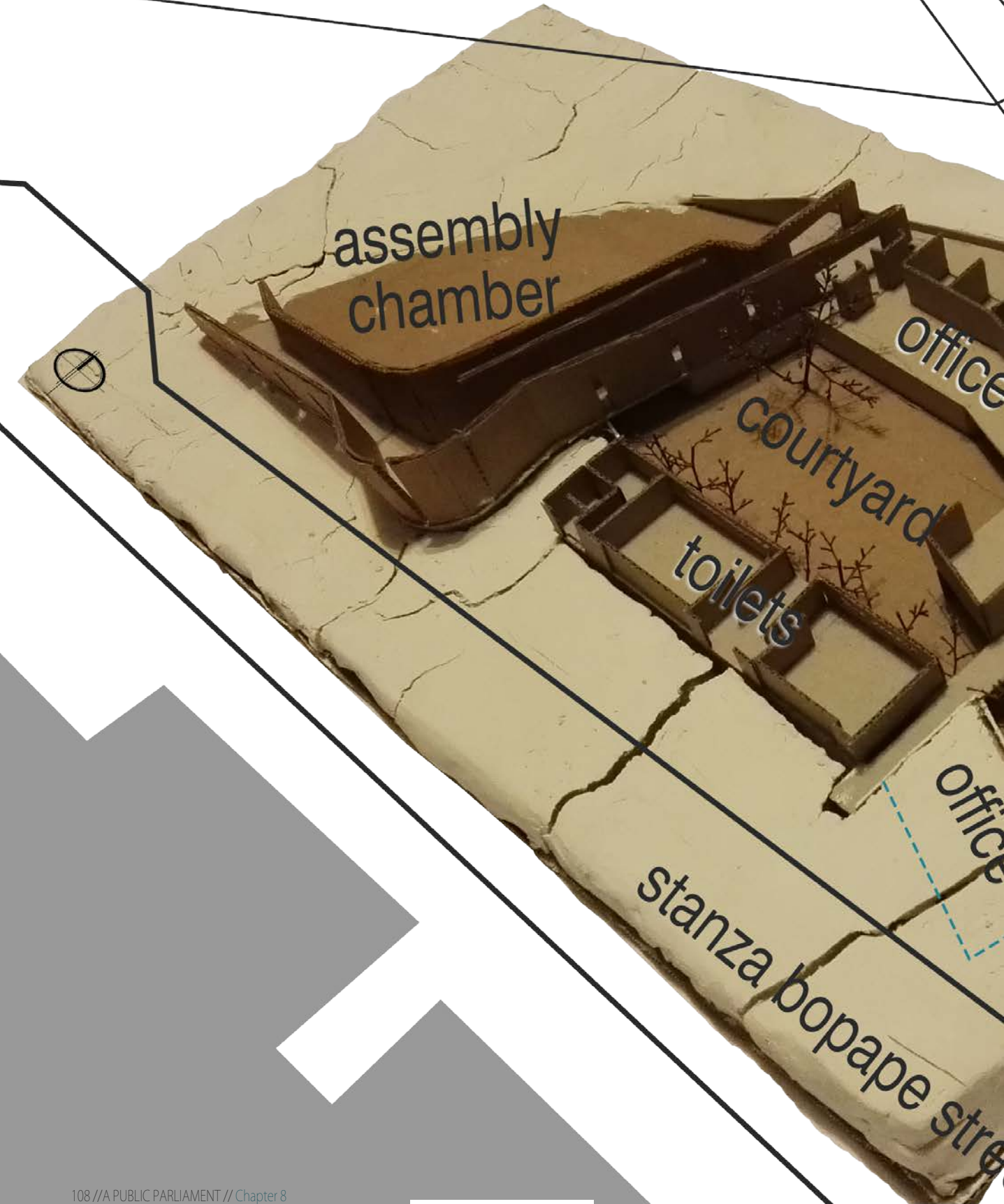
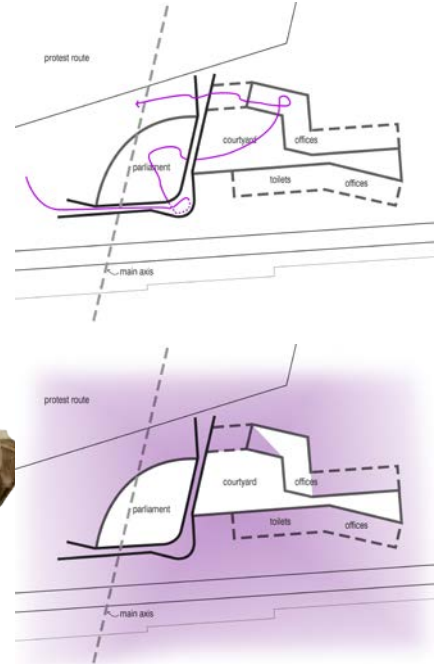
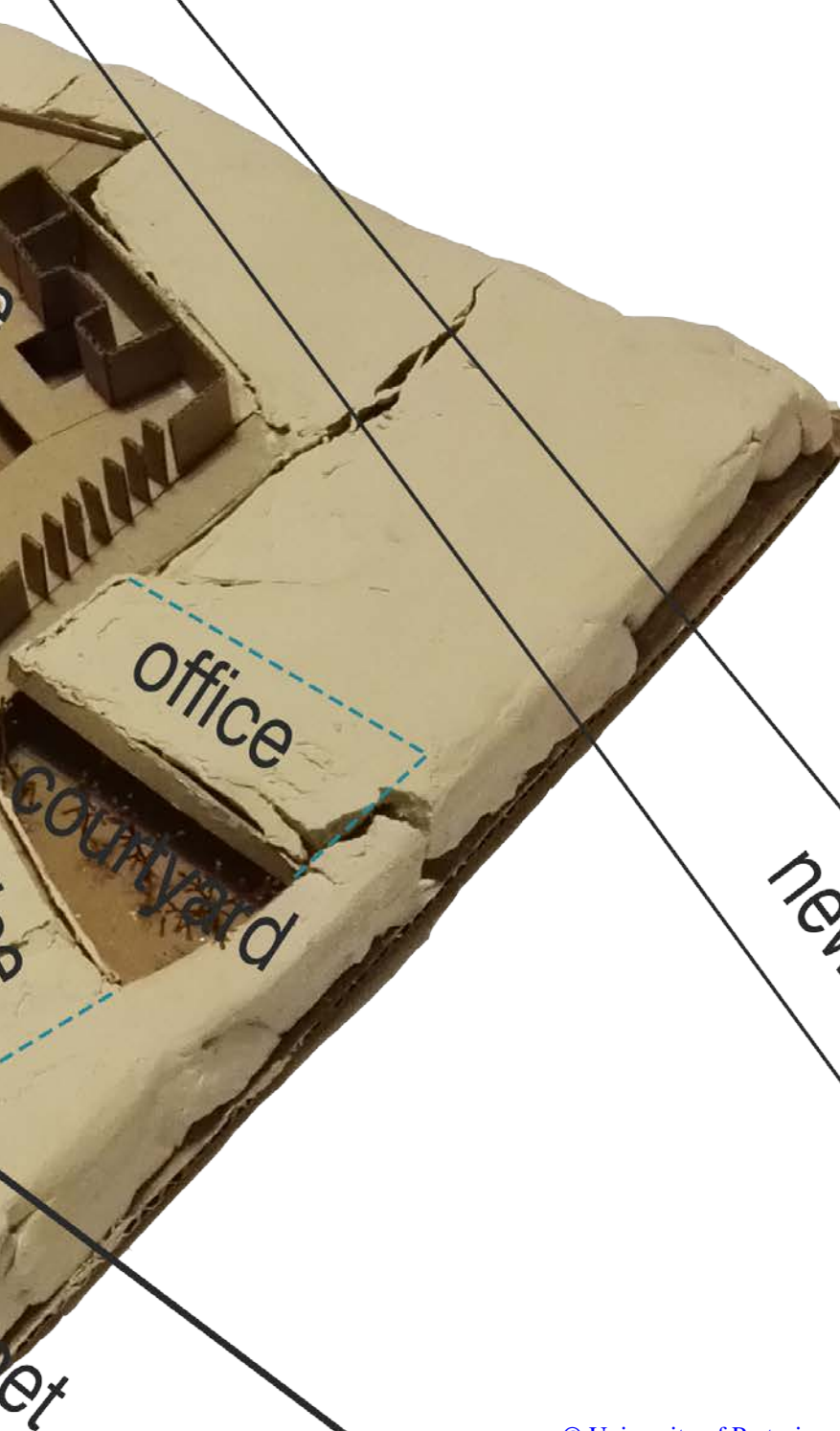


Figure 88 - A photograph of the model illustrating an extrapolation of the plan developments

Diagrams below:

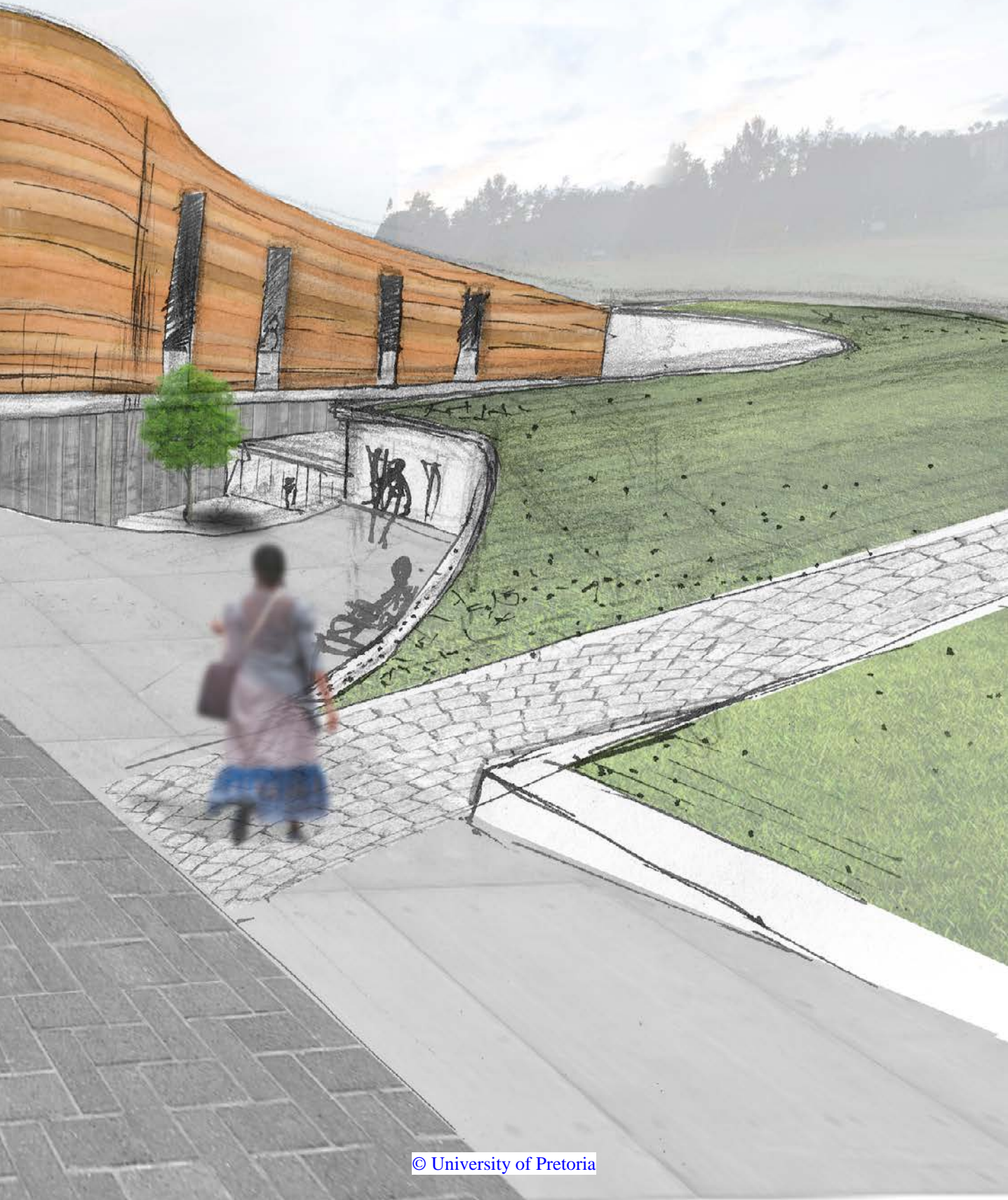
Figure 89 - Route of parliamentarians through the building

Figure 90 - Parts of the building accessible to the public physically (coloured region indicates where people are permitted).



8.3. The Parliament Building



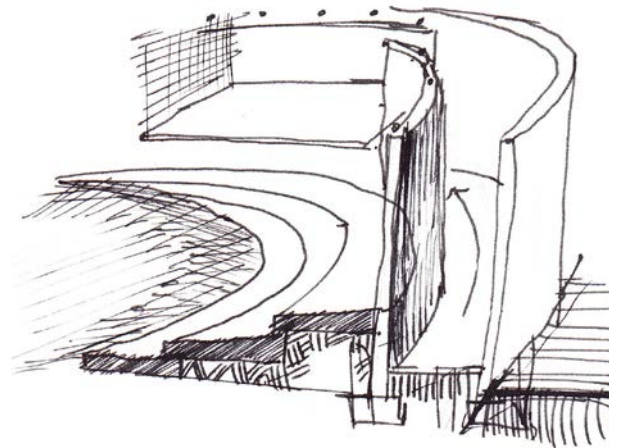
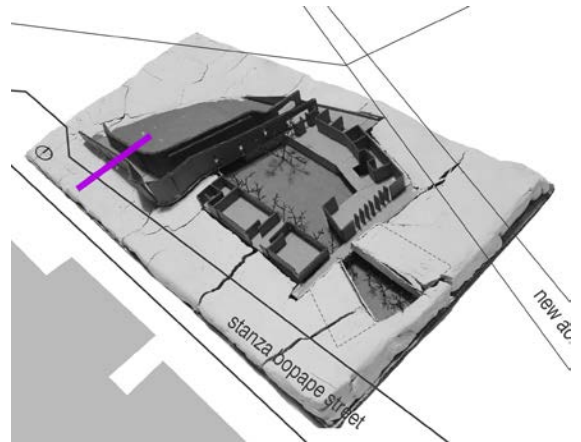


Assembly Chamber and Corridor

The assembly chamber is governed by strict rules regarding protocol and procedures. However, it is not the focus of the investigation in that it is merely anchoring point around which the liminal spaces investigated revolve. The space is designed to become an open air amphitheatre in the event of the building's demise.

The corridor leading parliamentarians to the chamber, however is of significance to the programme. This space is designed to be deliberately imposing, with high, heavy walls that are narrowly spaced. This creates a sense of enclosure on users. However, from the outside, despite acting as landmark, the corridor appears as though it grew from the earth, its narrowness asserts no dominance over the public space.

The corridor becomes the processional route for those entering the space, but is also open to the public who may use it to move through the building, to the lookout point, or to access the offices building. The narrowness of the space not only allows parliamentarians to rub shoulders, but may increase the likelihood of the public becoming acquainted with their politicians.

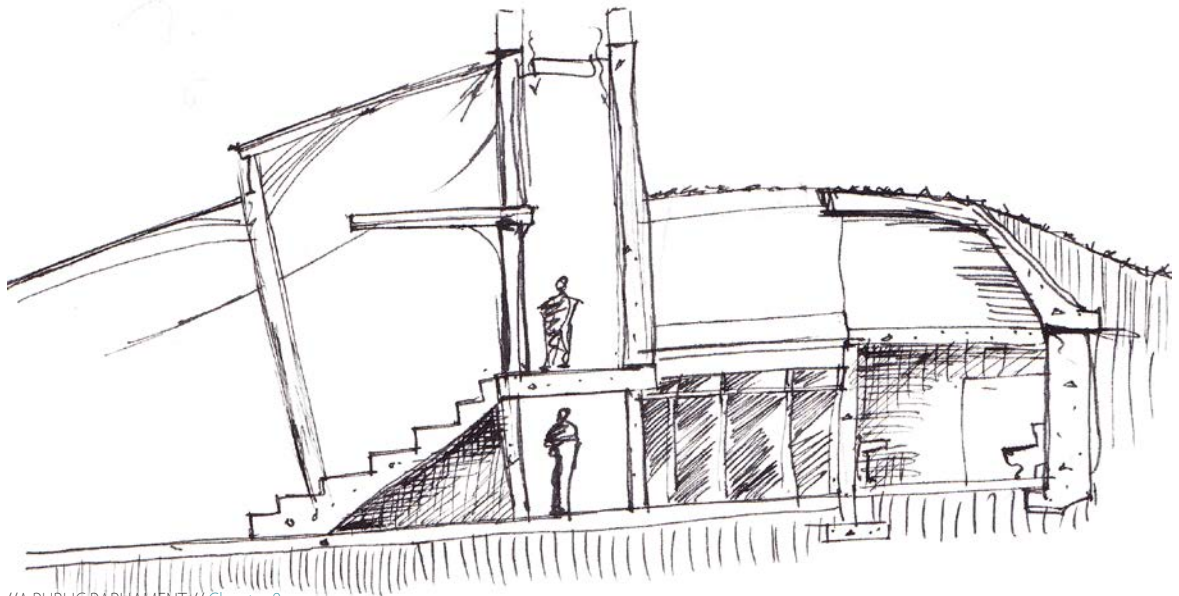


Top to bottom:

Figure 91 - Model with relevant section highlighted

Figure 92 - Conceptual 3D exploration sketch of the corridor behind the assembly chamber

Figure 93 - Early conceptual section through the discussion chamber, corridor and courtyard,

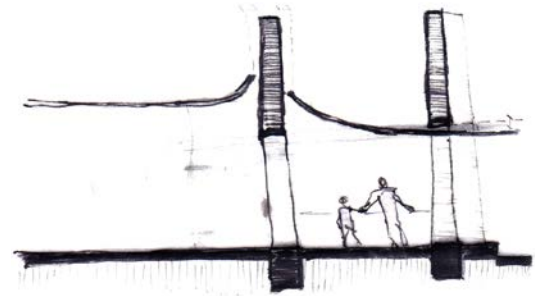
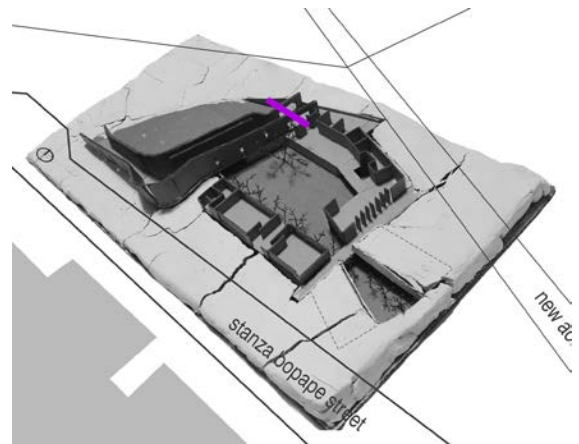


Entrance to Office Building

The building entrance forms the intersection of thresholds. The drastic cutting of an opening in the two heavy set rammed earth walls is an abrupt threshold, mediated by the overhead plane.

The canopy above appears as singular canopy a first, punching through both walls and mediating the user from public space into office space, but the canopy is actually split into two. This way, the canopy belongs to its own realm, it mediates the transition between spaces but does not belong to any of the spaces. It occupies the threshold.

The viewing space north of the entrance, frames the union buildings. This space is, however, also not held by the canopy. It thus becomes a destination space, and does not become associated with the canopy which denotes movement between spaces.

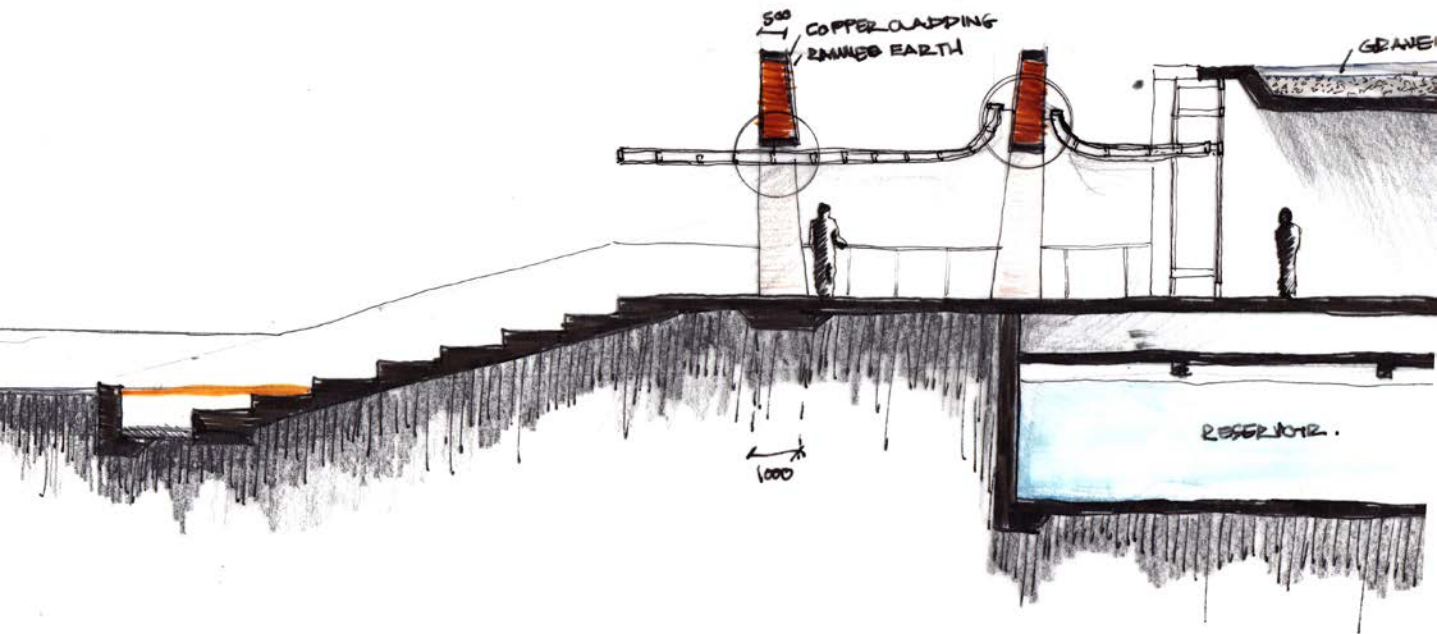


Top to bottom:

Figure 94 - Model with relevant section highlighted

Figure 95 - Conceptual sketch of the entrance to the office building.

Figure 96 - Development of the section.



Office Building

The office building houses the administrative functions of the parliament building. The manner in which the offices occupy the public space needs to be one that embodies daily democracy.

The courtyards become social spaces that encourage occupants to interact within the public eye. The casual interactions between people are the true manifestations of democracy. The visibility of these courtyards includes passers-by in the process.

Landscaped roofs aim to extend the park-scape over the building so that it takes less from the public space. The thermal implications of landscaped roofs and a wall backed by earth are also beneficial in creating passively controlled internal environments.

Figure 98 - Early Concept sketch of the type of edge conditions and the opportunity of having lower spaces that the public can view activity from

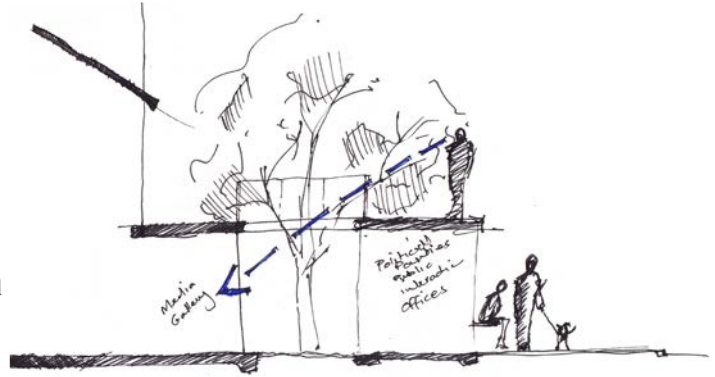


Figure 97 - Concept sketch of the office building showing the courtyards and terraced roofs.



Courtyard

The courtyard forms part of the parliamentary procedure, much like the entry corridor. It is the space into which parliamentarians are released and will gather during breaks and after sessions. It is in full view from the street, where passers by can overhear the casual discussions between officials.

Another space with democratic potential, the courtyard could easily be reduced to merely circulation. The introduction of planting and smaller spaces will encourage users to linger and potentially engage with one another.

Figure 99 - Concept sketch of the courtyard

