

THE LEARNING Co.

literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa

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improving lives through literacy

democracy

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responsibility

reconciliation

Improving Lives through Literacy.

equal opportunity

diversity

freedom

respect



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1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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1.1 The Proposal

The first democratic elections in South Africa took place in April 1994 and marked one of the '...most startling periods of political and social transformation in recent history.' (Coombes: 2003)

The Learning Co. is a literacy Centre situated in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Due to restrictions imposed on education by the previous government, a large majority of South Africans were denied the right to a basic education and as such have been marginalized in society. As well as the implications of this inequality for the individual, the lack of a basic or a very limited education for a large portion of the population has created social imbalance in South Africa.

'The legacies of inequality in expenditure and the poor standard of education dished out to blacks by the apartheid regime remain evident today in low literacy levels, low enrollments, lack of fully trained and qualified teachers, poor and inadequate facilities, high drop-out rates, and other ills that will take the new government of South Africa years of vigorous and sustained efforts, as well as enormous resources, to address and redress.' (Afolayan: 2004. p207)

Since the first general elections of 1994, the new government of South Africa have embarked on numerous ambitious public projects in an attempt to rectify the political polices of the past and in doing so to create an environment of equal opportunity for all South Africans.

The Learning Co. hopes to contribute to these initiatives, by providing a mechanism through which those who were previously denied a basic education are rightfully afforded one. The centre caters primarily for adult education, as it was these past generations that were most affected by the education policies of the past.

A strong connection exists between the lack of basic education and the increasing statistics of poverty and crime in South Africa. The Learning Co. will attempt to address this situation at the source and in this way will attempt to contribute to social change in South Africa through the medium of literacy.



The release of Nelson Mandela from prison, 1990. (www.bbc.com)

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Learning Co. will incorporate new technologies and media advances, as these are essential tools in the world market today. At the same time it will also explore the economic viability of such civic based programs and investigate alternative funding opportunities, including: literacy organizations, technological media corporations and publishing houses. The incorporation of a wholesale book store will contribute to the financial feasibility of the project and simultaneously its realization.

The provision of a daycare facility aims to bring the young and old together in a cohesive learning environment; where knowledge and learning will be encouraged to pass between generations.

Lastly, the architectural language of the Learning Co. will challenge changing ideas of South African vernacular architecture that are taking form in a climate of political change.

The project is aimed at providing a place where individuals are able to better their circumstance through literacy and learning.



1.2 Project Objectives

- 1.o To facilitate **Social Change**
- 2.o Establish a **Cultural Connection** with Context
- 3.o Fuel the **Imagination**
- 4.o Allow for Physical + Psychological **Accessibility**
- 5.o Propose a Feasible **Financial Possibility**

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.3 Design Principles

MATERIALITY + LOCATION

The choice of location + materials has been made by their perceived accessibility and transparency to the public.

LEARNING SPACES

Literature will be used as a base tool for social upliftment + personal fulfilment.
Learning spaces are versatile + accessible and encourage dialogue between different generations.
Social space of the Lekgotla encourages openness and interaction.
Incorporate an interactive + progressive technology infrastructure.

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

South Africa has a particularly complex cultural heritage. The Learning Co. explores that diversity and attempts to find common spatial connections in an environment of learning.

FEASIBILITY + REALIZATION

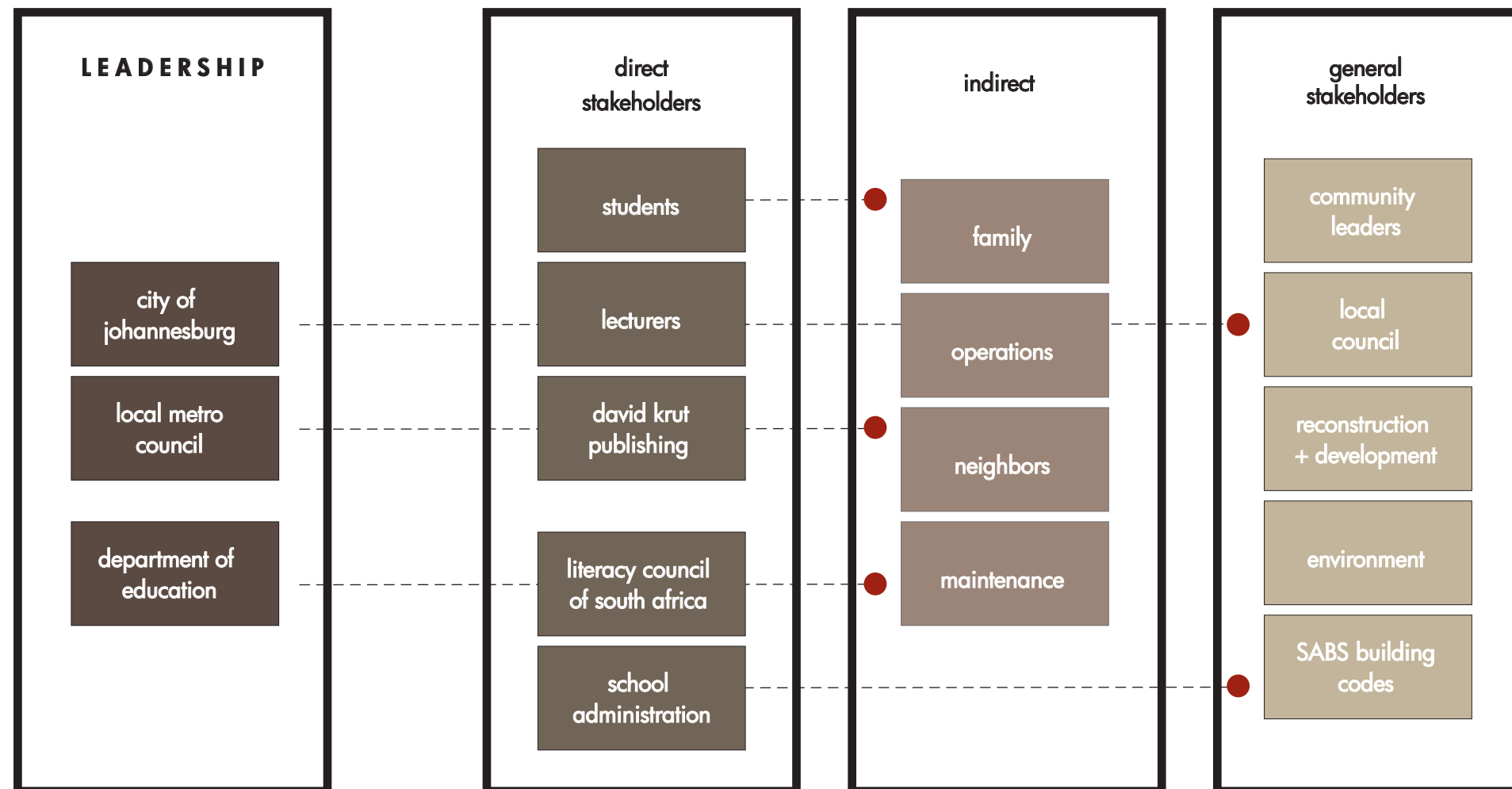
To encourage personal economic enhancement for the individual through learning.
The centre incorporates a retail component to encourage financial feasibility and stability.

AESTHETICS

The building itself will be a tool for learning literature, incorporating visual + graphic stimulus.

1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.4 Stakeholders



2.0 RESEARCH COMPONENTS

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2.1 Literature + Literacy

'Literacy, the art of reading and writing, came to South Africa with the Europeans and was formally consolidated with the establishment of the Dutch settlement on Table Bay in 1652. Europeans did not, however, introduce literature to the region. Before 1652, and long after, the indigenous peoples of South Africa gave expression to their creative and intuitive imagination through the medium of oral tradition. Transmitted by word of mouth from one generation to another, oral traditions are means through which nonliterate societies conceptualize, preserve, and transmit their empirical and cosmic realities. Oral traditions are not just rote recitations, they are performances. In this regard, context is as important as content' (Afolayan: 2004: 87).

The practise of literature, through oral tradiion and performance, was and still is an important social and cultural tool of many of the indigenous people of South Africa. In addition to this, however, it is also the multitude of foreign and imported traditions that have made South Africa such a rich cultural nation. It is these seemingly opposing influences that the Learning Co. intends to harness to create an architectural language uniquely South African.

The Learning Co. intends to explore ways in which contemporary forms of learning can be intertwined with traditional literary practices, primarily oral in nature, through the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems. In this way the Centre will provide a middle ground where current literature practices can co-exist with traditional wisdom. In this way culturally rich local practices will be maintained and enhanced while allowing the opportunity to compete globally.



PERFORMANCE

2.0 RESEARCH COMPONENTS

2.3 Precedents

2.3.1

Project:
CITY LITERARY INSTITUTE

Location:
Covent Garden, London

Architects:
Allies + Morrison

Structural Engineer:
Ramboll

Completion:
April 2005

Cost:
\$ 13 million

Size:

Student Capacity:
approx. 20 000

City Lit is an adult education facility situated in Covent Garden, a vibrant commercial district of London. The school caters for approx. 20 000 students and offers more than 2700 education courses.

Accommodation includes 56 teaching rooms, including dance studios, a learning resource centre, rehearsal rooms and seminar rooms. Common + social spaces are primarily situated on the ground floor with direct access to the street level. Pause spaces are scattered throughout the school to encourage social interaction + create a dynamic educational environment.

the programmatic + quantitative parameters of the school were of particular interest to the Learning Co. Catering solely for adult education City Lit provides a model for the dynamic and versatile spaces required for a more mature student body.

City Lit offers a diverse range of courses and qualifications including: business training, visual arts, languages, dance, deaf education, computing + speech therapy among many others.

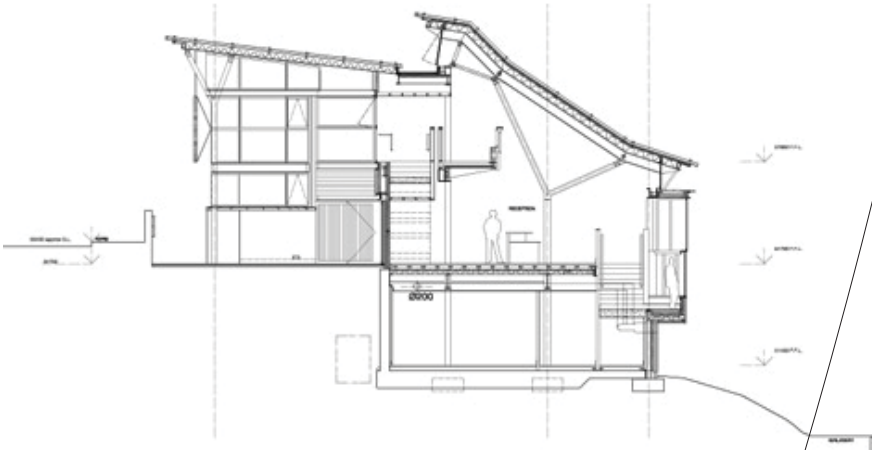


Exterior views of City Lit (www.Rumboll.com)

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Approach and corner view along the river.



Interior view of resource learning centre.
 (www.richardmurphyarchitects.com)

2.0 RESEARCH COMPONENTS

2.3 Precedents

2.3.2

Project:
KIRKINTILLOCH ADULT LEARNING

Location:
Kirkintilloch, Scotland

Architects:
Richard Murphy Architects

Structural Engineer:
Atkins

Completion:
February 2009

Cost:
\$ 7.5 million

Size:

Student Capacity:

The aim of the Kirkintilloch Adult Learning Facility was to create an open learning environment which would attract potential students from all sectors of society. An aspect equally as important in the design of the Learning Co.

The centre provides traditional type learning spaces while also incorporating a resource centre, and places particular importance on media technology. Here adults who were unable to receive further education, or who wish to return to their studies are able to do so in an accessible environment.

The open reception arrangement allows the visitor to be easily orientated, and intentionally avoids intimidation or confusion. From this vantage the position of private learning spaces and public gathering spaces can be easily identified.

The building also demonstrates a connection to the exterior. The learning spaces aligning the river adjacent to the centre, project out of the building in a series of triangular bays. In this way learning spaces have been created almost among the trees. Through physical + visual connectivity provided in circulation + communal spaces emphasis is placed on the social aspects of learning.

A continuous roof light positioned between the classrooms and main gathering space plots the progress of sunlight through the day.

2.0 RESEARCH COMPONENTS

2.3 Precedents

2.3.3

Project:
FREEDOM PARK HERITAGE PRECINCT

Location:
Tshwane, South Africa

Architects:
Mashabane Rose, GAPP + MMA

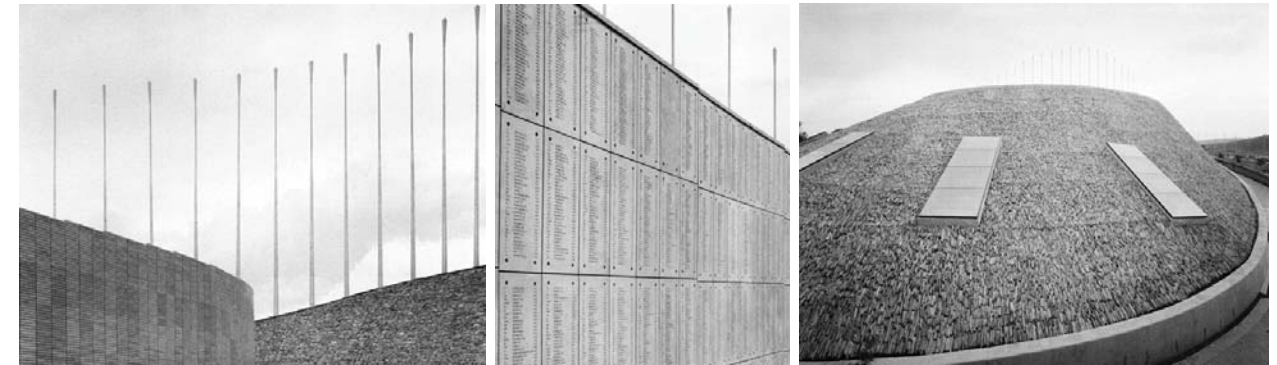
Landscape Architect:
Newtown Landscape Architects

Completion:
Phase I + II December 2006

Cost:

Size:

Student Capacity:



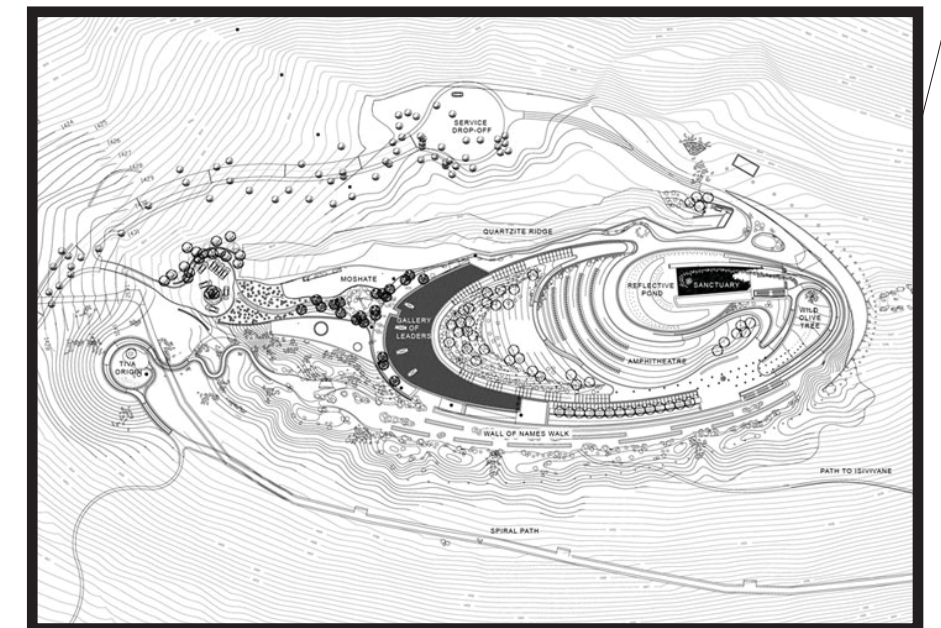
Freedom Park is a national heritage precinct, situated in Tshwane, the capital city of South Africa. Although it is not an educational building, the primary purpose of Freedom Park, as a civic institution, is to educate + inform the public.

Freedom Park is intended as a centre of knowledge and aims to create a deeper understanding of South Africa and its people through the narration of the country's pre-colonial, colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid history.

In an attempt to convey an unbiased representation of South Africa's complex past, extensive research into the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) of South Africa was carried out. These IKS gave the project an authenticity which had a vast reach among many South Africans.

Local culture and customs informed both architectural program and landscape form, to provide a rich + meaningful place to commemorate the heritage of South Africa. This approach influenced the conceptual direction chosen in the design of the Learning Co.

Through the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems, in particular those associated with learning + literature, the Learning Co. sought to achieve an appropriate cultural and contextual response.



Site plan of freedom Park Heritage Precinct. (www.mashabanerose.co.za)

2.0 RESEARCH COMPONENTS

2.3 Precedents

2.3.4

Project:
CONSTITUTIONAL COURT

Location:
Johannesburg, South Africa

Architects:
Urban Solutions + OMM Design

Landscape Architect:

Completion:
March 2004

Cost:
\$ 50 million

Size:

Student Capacity:

The Constitutional Court of South Africa was designed to reflect the values of the new constitution: Freedom, democracy, equal opportunity, diversity, responsibility, reconciliation and respect.

The building was intended to reflect the openness and transparency called for in the new constitution. It illustrates the intentional agenda of the new government of nation building. By its material form, the building intends to reflect the ideals and ambitions of the new government and stands as a symbol for these principles.

Although the Learning Co. has a very different functional purpose, it does have similar cultural and civic intentions, including public appeal and accessibility; finding appropriate form and expression in a new social climate; and bridging public perception.

The site selected for the Constitutional Court was historically significant. In direct opposition to its original function as a fortress, the new court building was designed to mend the surrounding fractured urban grid and to become incorporated into the city creating an accessible public precinct.

The location of the Learning Co. adjacent to the court building intends to build upon the creation of a public, civic precinct and to extend the gesture of reconciliation and healing initiated by the Constitutional Court.



Light on a Hill, landmark of the Constitutional Court and Peoples' Square. (www.mashabanerose.co.za)



3.0 CONTEXT

3.0 CONTEXT

3.1 Social Context

The site chosen for the Learning Co. is situated in Braamfontein, an inner city neighborhood of Johannesburg, just north of the Central Business District. Although not the capital of South Africa, Johannesburg developed into the country's economic centre after the discovery of gold in the 1830's.

The Zulu name for Johannesburg is eGoli, meaning 'City of Gold', which beyond its historical significance is a perception of promise and opportunity held by many South Africans. Johannesburg and its perceived promise of wealth and opportunity attracts many migrant laborers from rural areas. In most cases, however, the city does not live up to expectations resulting in low employment rates, high crime and over-crowding.

In South Africa the conscious search and struggle for the formation of a unified national identity has taken two distinct directions. 'The first of these is that of resistance, defiance, struggle and triumph; a narrative of loss, heroism and celebration, in which national identity is packaged in terms of the resilience, resistance, vitality and creativity of apartheid's opponents. The second is a narrative of forgiveness and reconciliation, a necessarily publicly unscripted message of recuperation, around which the myth of post-apartheid as a unitary force is formed.' (Bremner:2007:95)

Through these strategies the new civic spaces of post-apartheid South Africa form a particular narrative of the South African journey and in this way the buildings begin to tell a select story of the formation of and the resulting character of the 'New South Africa'. The Learning Co. intends to contribute to the ideals of the 'New South Africa' by creating spaces which are socially responsible and culturally accessible to all South Africans.

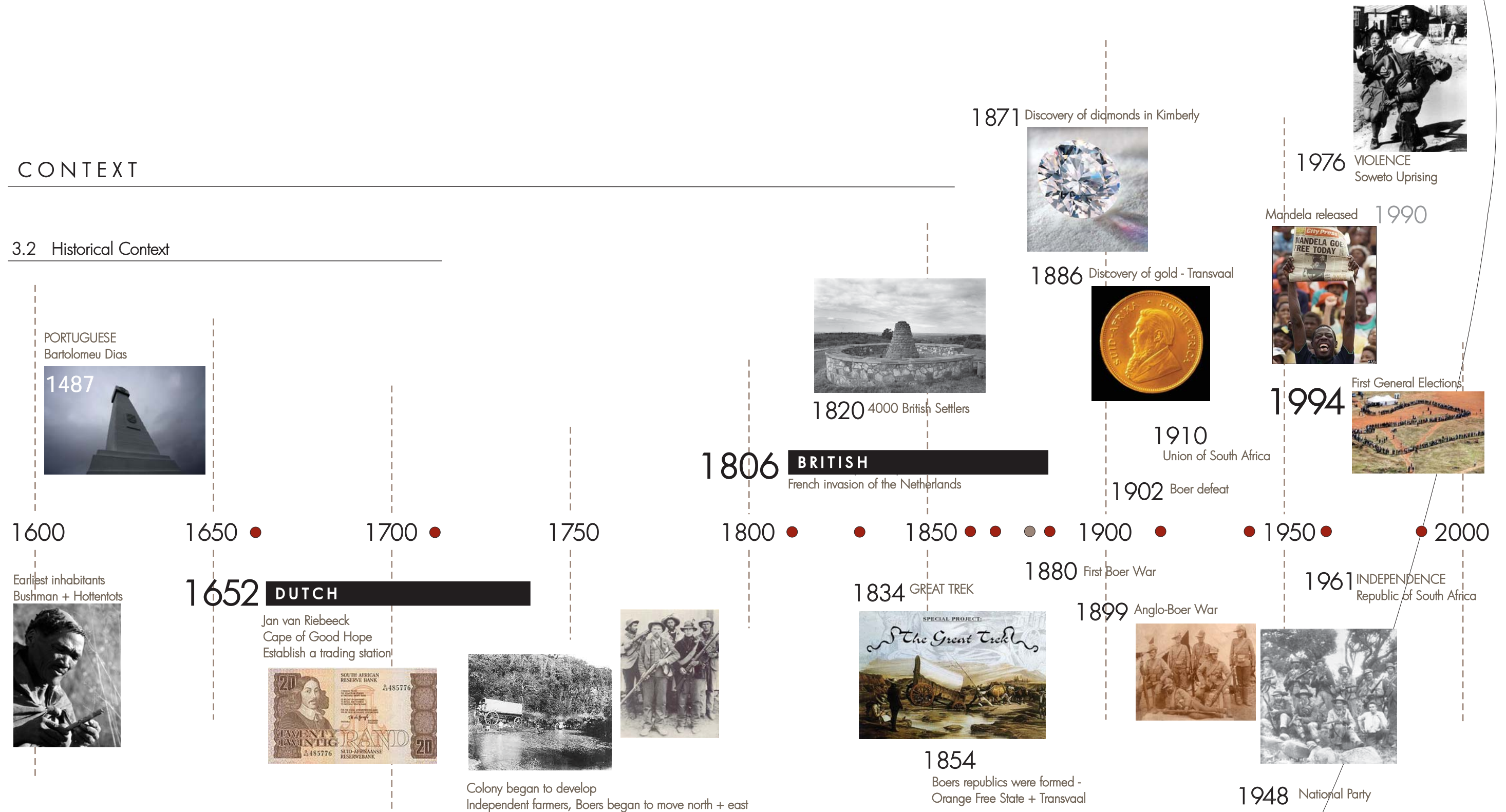
PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

3.0 CONTEXT

3.2 Historical Context



3.0 CONTEXT

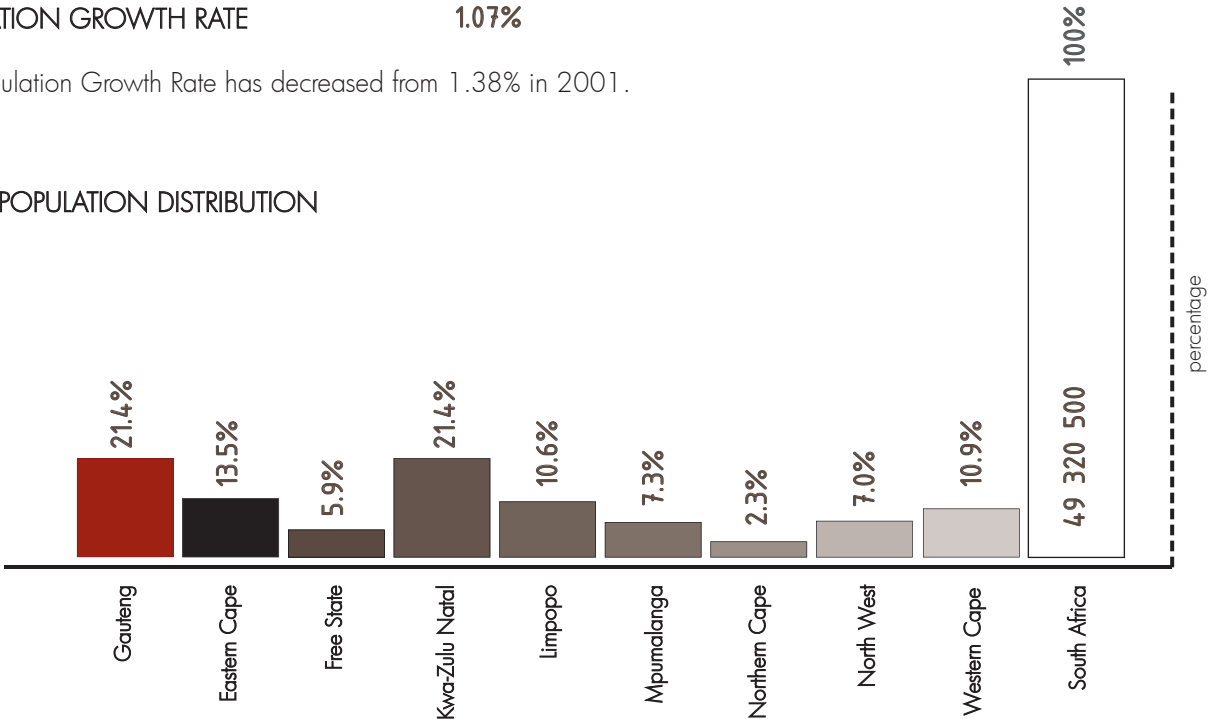
3.3 Demographics 2009



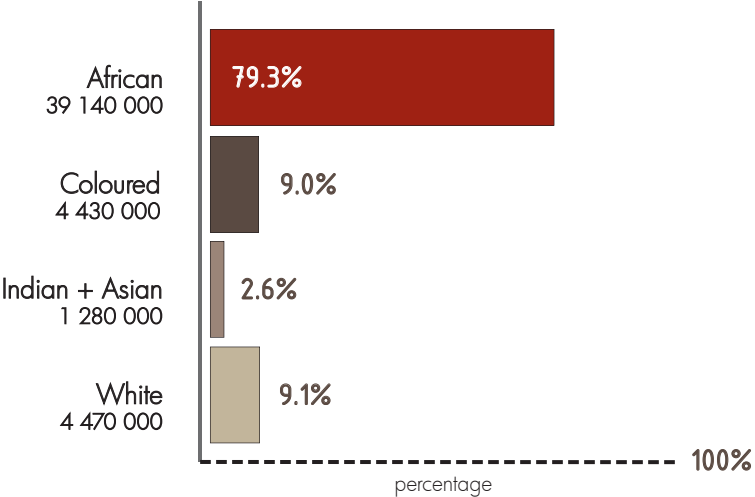
POPULATION GROWTH RATE 1.07%

The population Growth Rate has decreased from 1.38% in 2001.

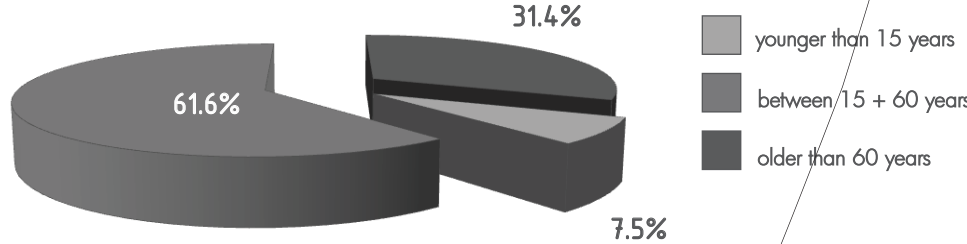
02 POPULATION DISTRIBUTION



03 POPULATION ETHNICITY



04 POPULATION AGE



3.0 CONTEXT

3.3 Demographics 2009

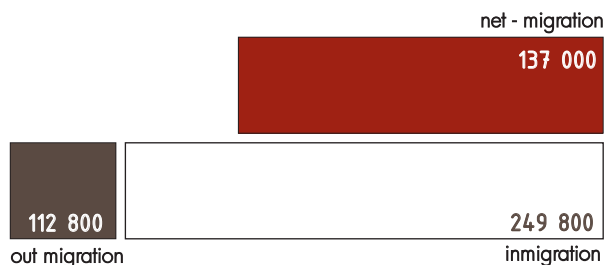
05 POPULATION MIGRATION

Migration is an important demographic process in shaping the age structure and distribution of the provincial population. An definite concern not reflected in the statistics is the migration of skilled + educated individuals and the migration of unskilled.

06 MORTALITY RATE



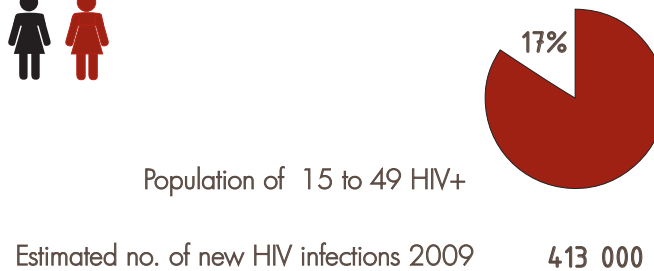
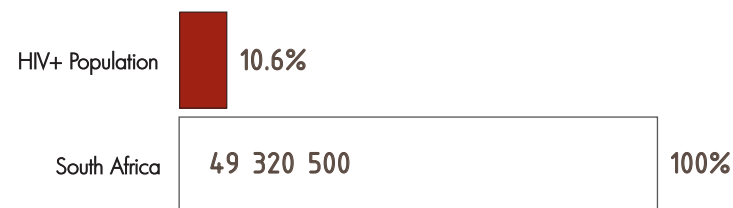
INFANT MORTALITY RATE 45.7 per 1000



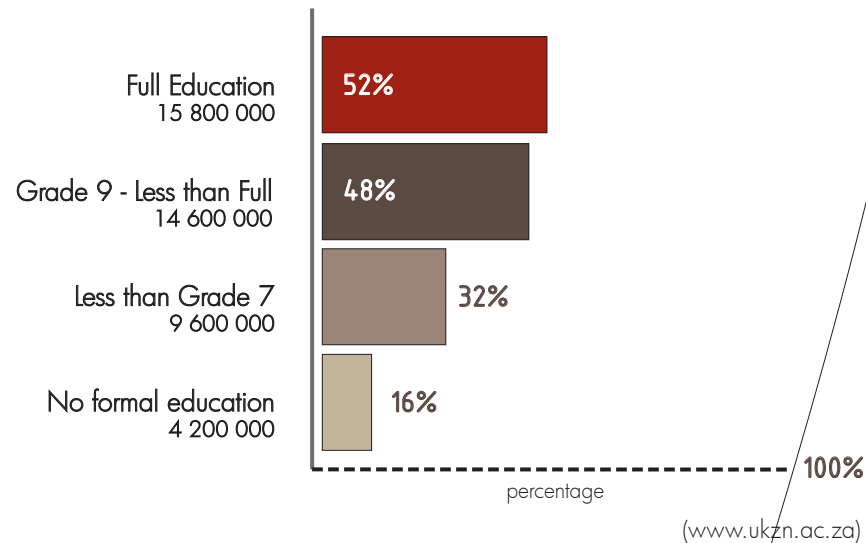
07 POPULATION + HIV

Total No. of people living with HIV 5 210 000 million

One fifth of South African women in their reproductive ages are HIV+

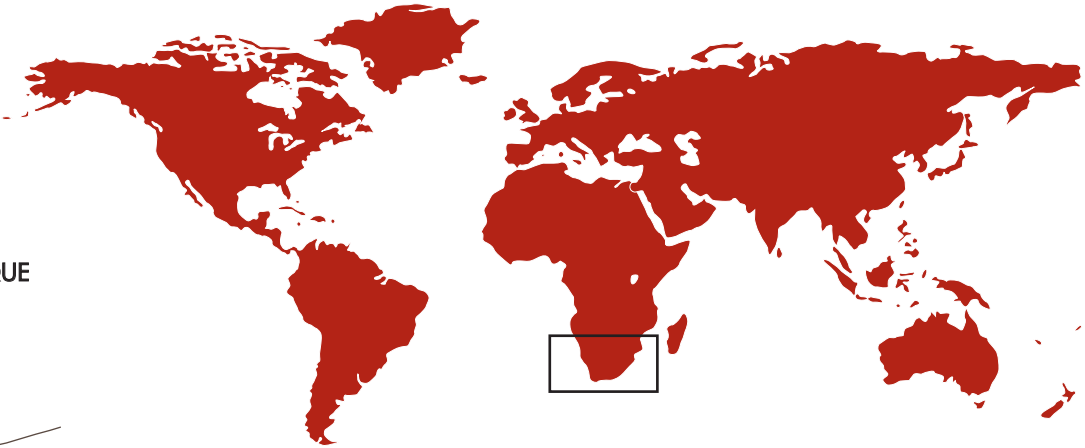


08 LITERACY STATISTICS - 2001



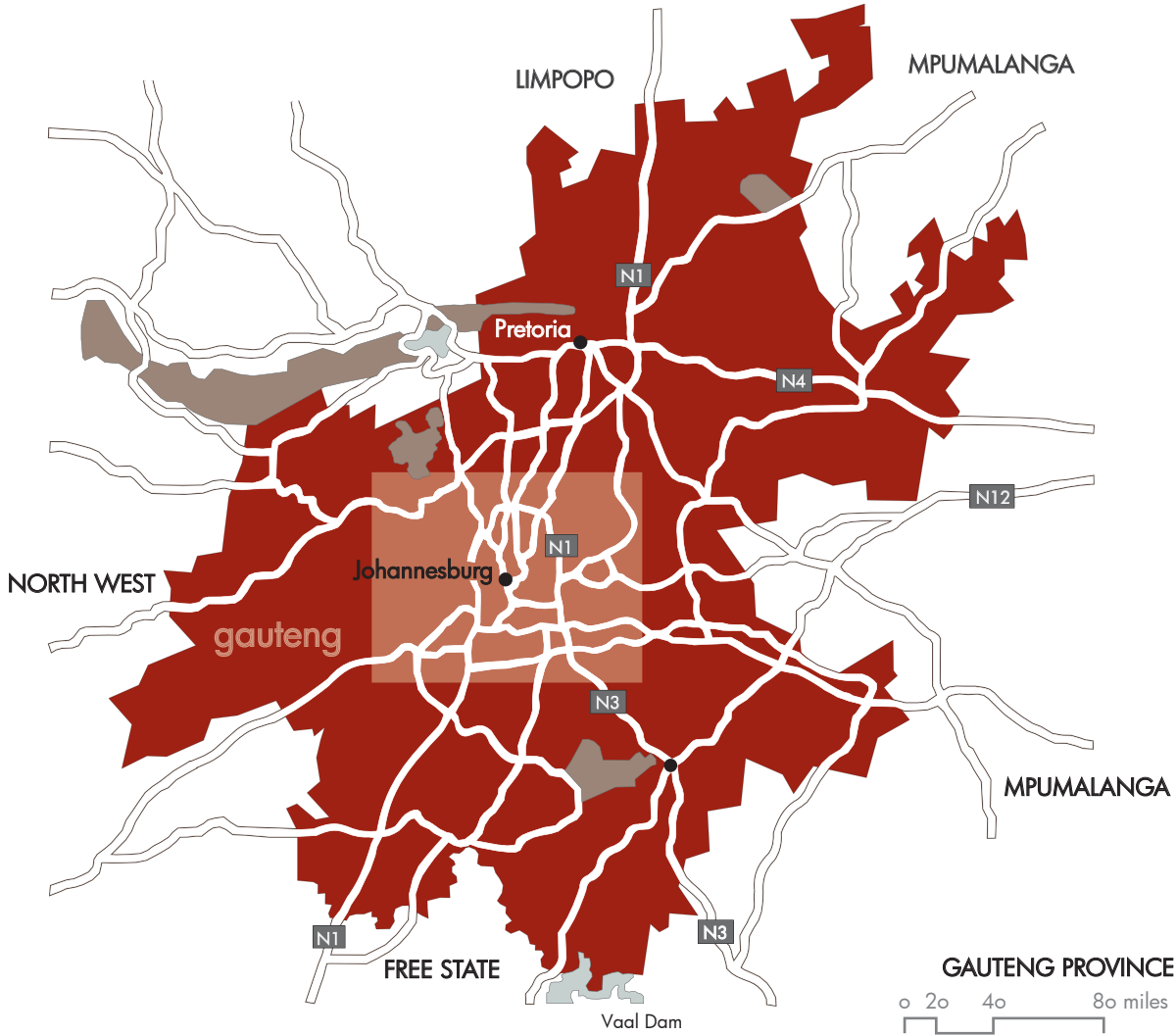
3.0 CONTEXT

3.4 Geographical Context



3.0 CONTEXT

3.4 Geographical Context



3.0 CONTEXT

3.4 Site Location

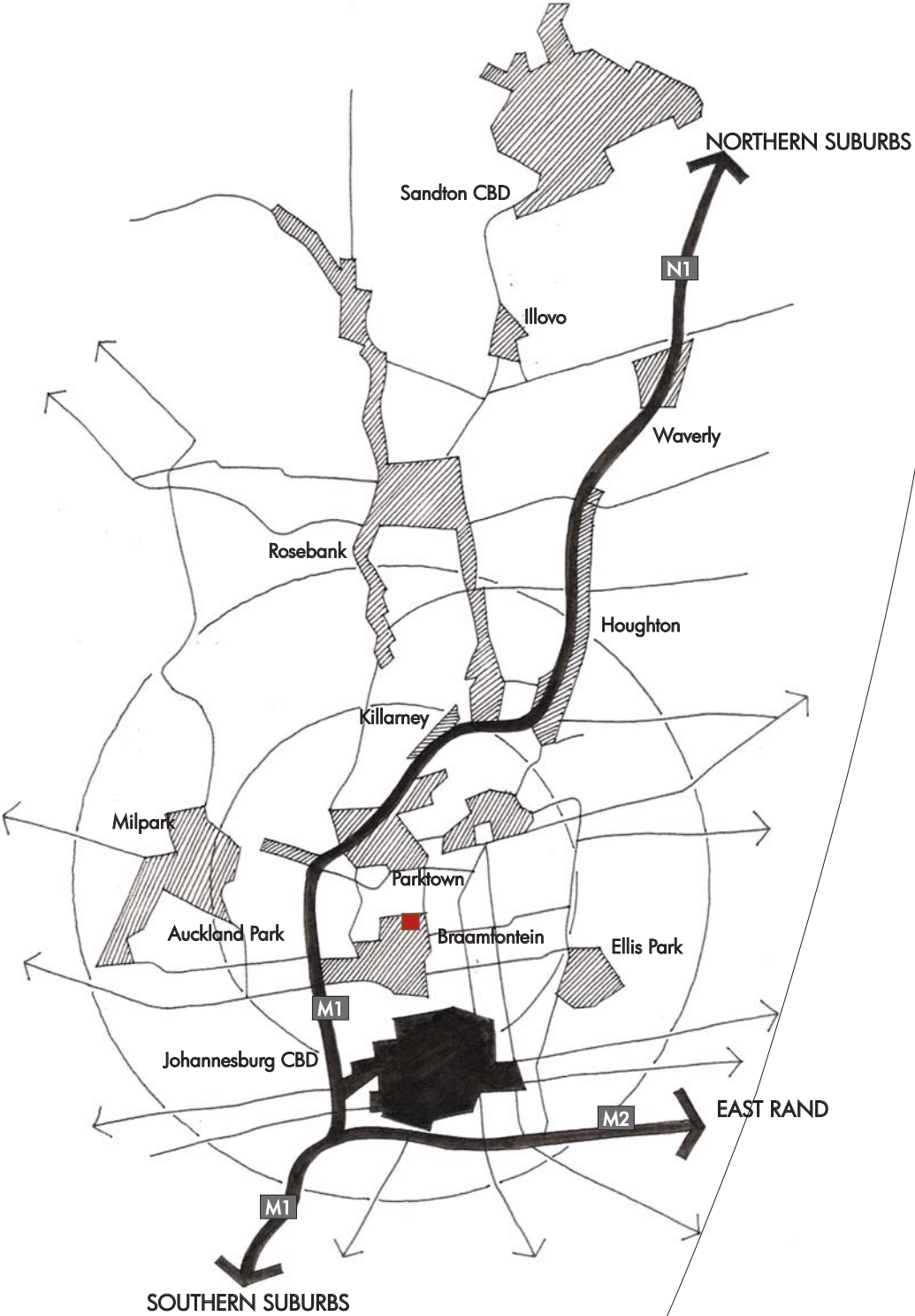
The site lies in the inner city neighborhood of Braamfontein, a historically significant area of Johannesburg which has recently undergone a period of significant renewal.

Braamfontein is an important cultural district of the inner city; it incorporates the Civic Theatre, The University of the Witwatersrand, The National School of the Arts, and the recent addition of the Constitutional Court Precinct.

The position of Braamfontein in relation to greater Johannesburg is significant as it acts as a buffer between three diversely Johannesburg inner city neighborhoods. As mentioned above the city centre lies directly south of Braamfontein; with Hillbrow to the east, notorious for its inner city slums and high-crime rate; and Parktown to the north, a historically and materially rich remnant of colonialism. In this way and illustrated by the following figure ground, Braamfontein provides an important connection between these disparate neighborhoods.

Site Advantages:

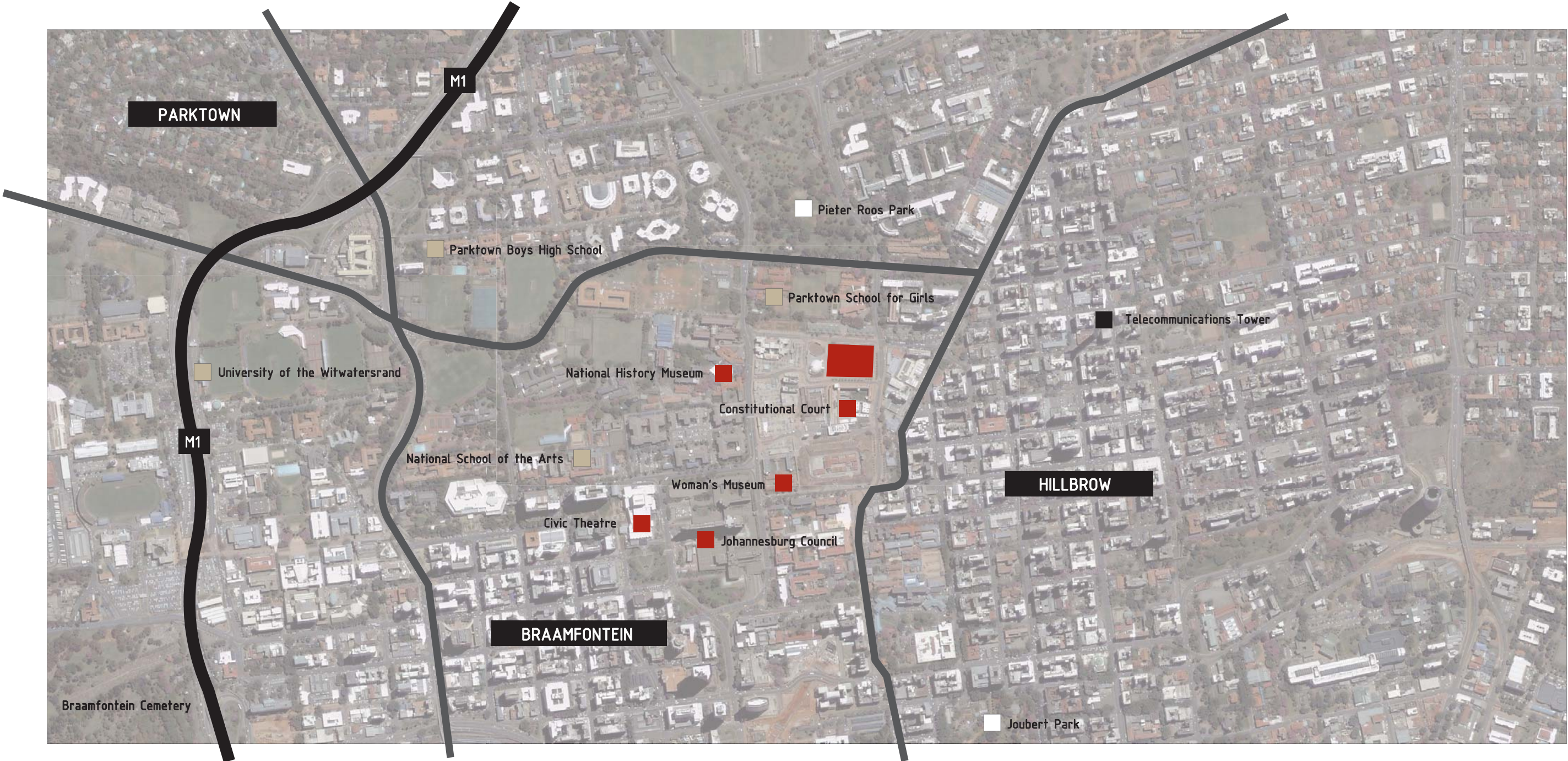
- Braamfontein is an established **cultural district**.
- Adjacent to the **Constitutional Court** - Symbol of South African democracy.
- Addition to + an extension of a **cultural precinct**.
- Close **proximity** to the Johannesburg CBD + - perceived as the promised land.
- Adjacent to Hillbrow, an **area of need**.



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SITE ADJACENCIES indicating the neighborhood character of adjacent areas.



- THE LEARNING Co.
- RECREATION
- EDUCATIONAL
- CULTURAL
- RESIDENTIAL

THE LEARNING Co.

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FIGURE GROUND indicating the intersection of three vastly different neighborhoods.



3.0 CONTEXT

3.6 Site Location



ARIEL IMAGE of SITE

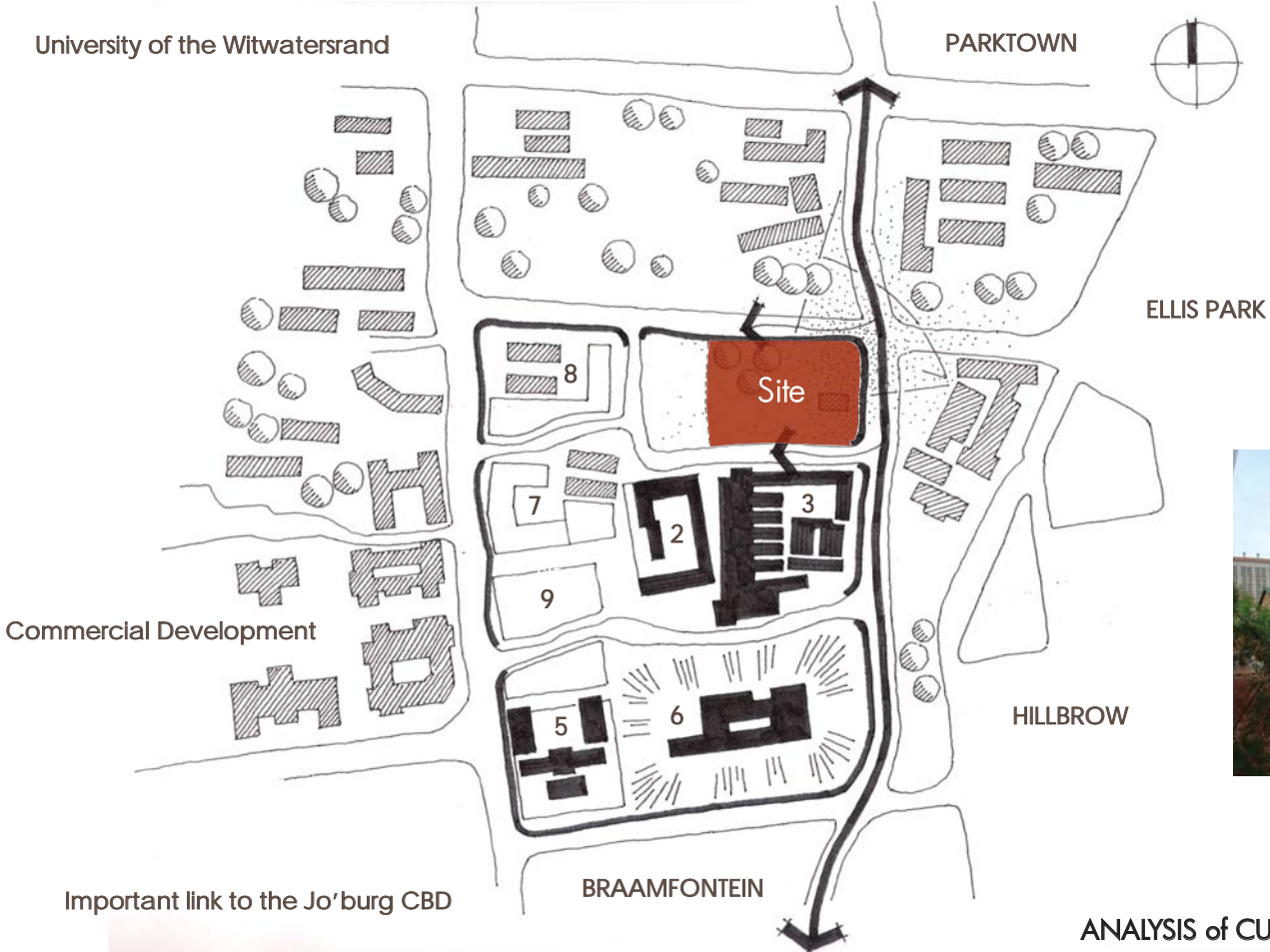
0 100 200 ft



Illustration of the inner city neighbourhoods of Johannesburg, Braamfontein is situated just east of the M1 motorway and west of the telecommunications tower.

3.0 CONTEXT

3.6 Site Analysis - Cultural Precinct

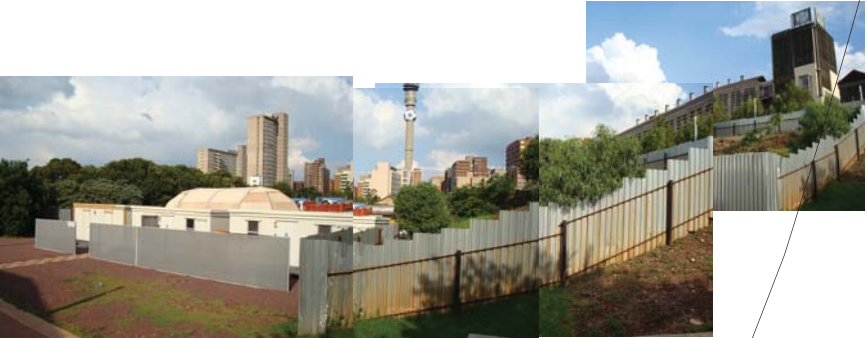


CULTURAL PRECINCT

- 1. The Learning Co.
- 2. Section 4 + 5 prisons (historical significance)
- 3. New Constitutional Court
- 4. Constitutional Square
- 5. Womanis Jail (museum)
- 6. Old Fort
- 7. Proposed Mixed Use Development
- 8. Old Queen Victoria Hospital
- 9. Covered Parking



internal site view south



western boundary towards hillbrow

ANALYSIS of CULTURAL PRECINCT

0 100 200 ft

4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Quantitative Parameters

	1.0 LEARNING	qty	net sq. ft	no. student	total sq. ft	qualitative characteristics
Personal Learning	Learning Room	12	900	20 per room	10 800	45 sq. ft per student for specialized learning
	Conversation Room	4	250	4	1000	
	Reading Room	1	900	20	900	
	Indaba Room	2	400	8	800	Meeting + student exchange
					13 500	
Communal Learning	Auditorium	1		500	6000	10 sq.ft per seat
	Exhibition Lobby	1	1800	n/a	1800	To function as a lobby for the auditorium
	Pause Areas	8	400	8	3200	
	Library	1	12.5 student	300	3750	Recommended Standard
	Apple Room (Media Center)	1	1500	30 stations	1500	Adjacent to the library
	Workshop + Crafts	1	2000		2000	
	Story Room - Young Learning	1	1800	30	1800	
					20 050	
	TOTAL Building Area					54 950
	2.0 STAFF SPACES					
	Instructor's Lounge	1	600	18	600	
	Restrooms	2	400	30	800	SABS 400 Building Codes
	Staff Kitchen + Pantry	1	300	n/a	300	
						1 700

4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

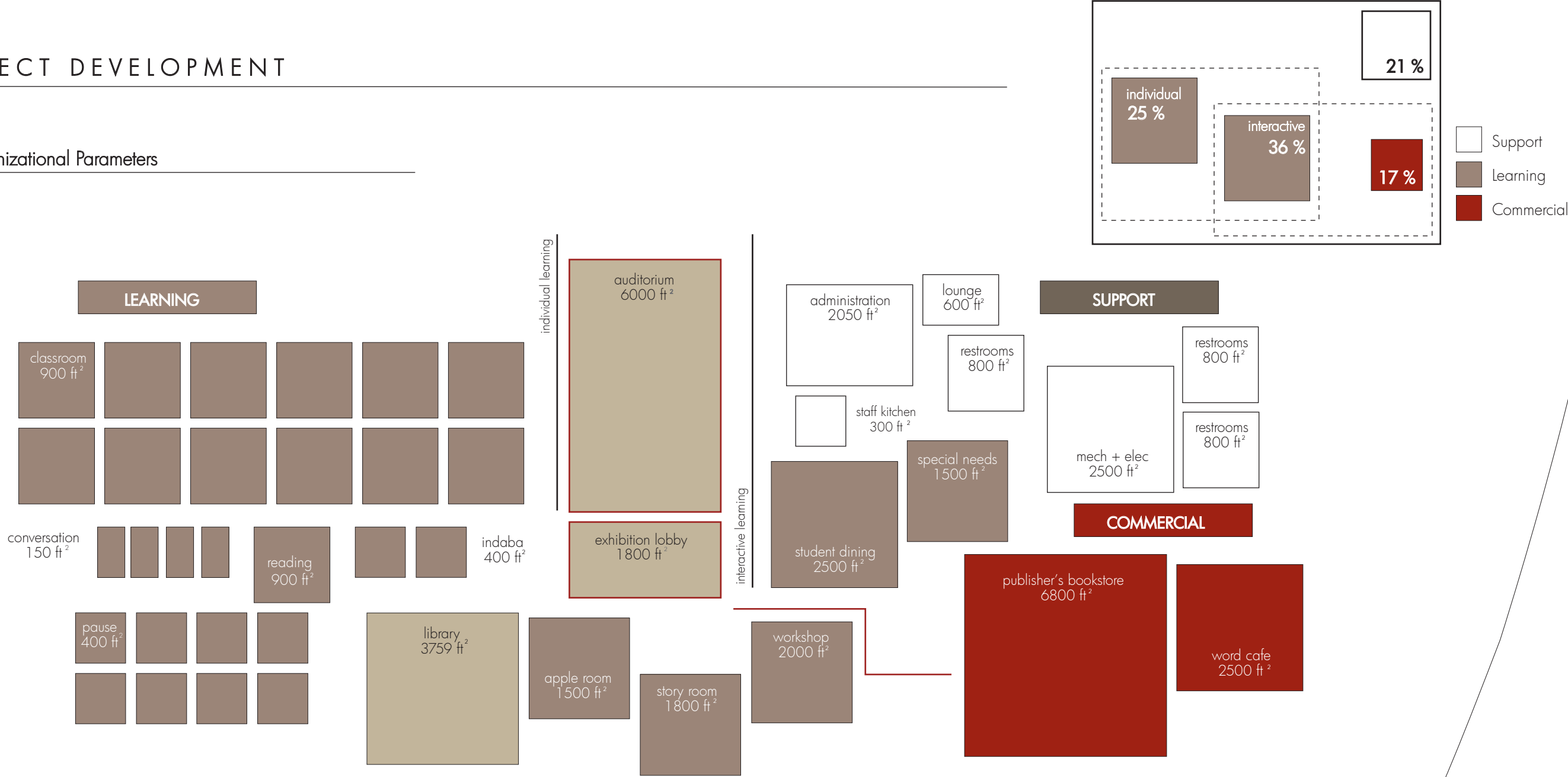
3.0 SUPPORT SPACES	qty	net sq. ft	no. student	total sq. ft	qualitative characteristics
Administration	1		approx. 8 staff	2050	Please refer to detailed program 3.1 ■
Special Needs	1		7	1500	Please refer to detailed program 3.2 ■
Lunchroom	1	approx. 15	180	2400	Please refer to detailed program 3.3 ■
Mechanical + Electrical Storage	1	5 %	n/a	2500	5% of Indoor Area
Student Restrooms	2	800	300	1600	SABS 400 Building Codes
				11 750	
4.0 COMMERCIAL SPACES					
Publisher's Bookstore	1		n/a	6800	Please refer to detailed program 4.1 ■
Word Cafe	1		30	2850	Please refer to detailed program 4.2 ■
				9650	
3.1 ADMINISTRATION					
Reception + Waiting	1	300	2	300	Accessible + transparent to the public
Administration Workspace	2	150	2	300	
Finance Office	1	200	1	200	
Cloak Room	1	50	n/a	50	
Store Room	1	220	n/a	220	
Printing + Copy Station	1	100	n/a	100	
Meeting Room	2	250	6	500	
Management Office	1	180	1	180	
Director's Office	1	200	1	200	
				2050	

4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

	qty	net sq. ft	no. student	total sq. ft	qualitative characteristics
3.2 SPECIAL NEEDS					
Therapy Rooms	4	150	4	600	Incl. storage space for therapy equipment
Speech Therapist Office	1	150	1	150	
Psychologist	1	200	1	200	
Social Worker	1	200	1	200	Private counseling rooms
Store Room + Waiting Area	1	350	n/a	350	Discrete location
				1500	
3.3 STUDENT LUNCHROOM					
Dining Area	1	1200	180	1200	Based on 60% usage
Preparation Area	2	450	180	450	Cooked snacks only
Serving Area	1	200	1	200	
Management Office	1	150	1	150	
Store Room	1	400	1	400	
				2400	
4.1 PUBLISHERS BOOKSTORE					
Retail Area	1	2800		2800	Visible + accessible to passing traffic
Administration Office	1	250	2	250	
Store Room + Cloak	1	650	1	650	Large storage space required
				6800	
4.2 WORD CAFE					
Internal Seating	1	300	300	800	Vibrant cafe with internal + external seating
External Seating	1	450	450	1200	Approx. 15 sq.ft per seat
Preparation + Serving Area	1	400	n/a	400	Coffee + light meals
Management Office + Store	1	350	1	350	
				2850	

4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

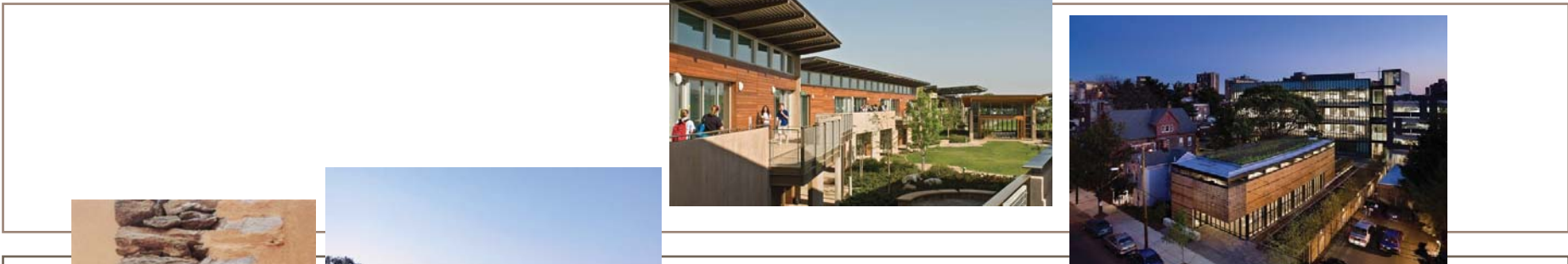
4.1 Organizational Parameters



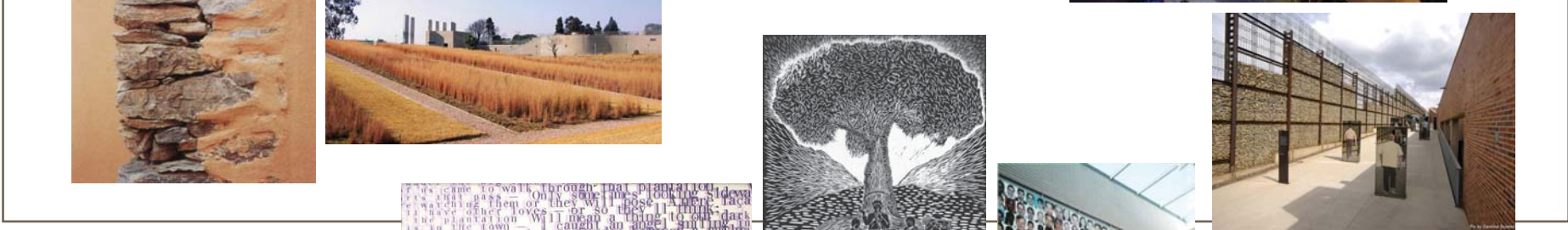
4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4.3 Qualitative Parameters

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY



REGIONAL MATERIALITY



EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT



4.0 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

4.3 Qualitative Parameters

LIGHT ACCESS



MULTI-FUNCTIONAL APACES



TRANSPARENCY + ACCESSIBILITY



5.0 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.0 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Cultural Concept

As mentioned previously, oral traditions are a vital social and historical tool for many indigenous people of South Africa. 'In symbolic and idiomatic languages, they explore the fundamental issues of life, such as love and hostility; courage and resourcefulness; beauty and ugliness; justice and retribution; order and chaos; and the triumph of good over evil' (Afolayan: 2004:90).

Although 'European literary culture from the mid seventeenth century provided an apparently more efficient alternation, orality has remained a dominant element of indigenous culture.' (Afolayan: 2004:214) Oral traditions and story telling are still practiced in South Africa today despite the presence of strong colonial influences which have introduced their own cultural traditions and technologies.

Addressing the current social climate of nation building and reconciliation, I intent to use the Learning Co. to merge these seemingly opposing influences and create a vernacular or a language appropriate for the social complexities that exist in South Africa.

Indigenous Knowledge (IK) can be broadly defined as the knowledge that an indigenous (local) community accumulates over generations of living in a particular environment. Through the incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, including local traditions, materials and form, the Learning Co. hopes to achieve learning spaces that resonate with and are accessible to its users.

By using familiar cultural elements and local materiality that have a strong cultural connection to the Indigenous Knowledge Systems of South Africa, I intend to make the building both physically and psychologically accessible.



Image of the former president, Thabo Mbeki in typical western clothing with the current president, Jacob Zuma in traditional Zulu dress.

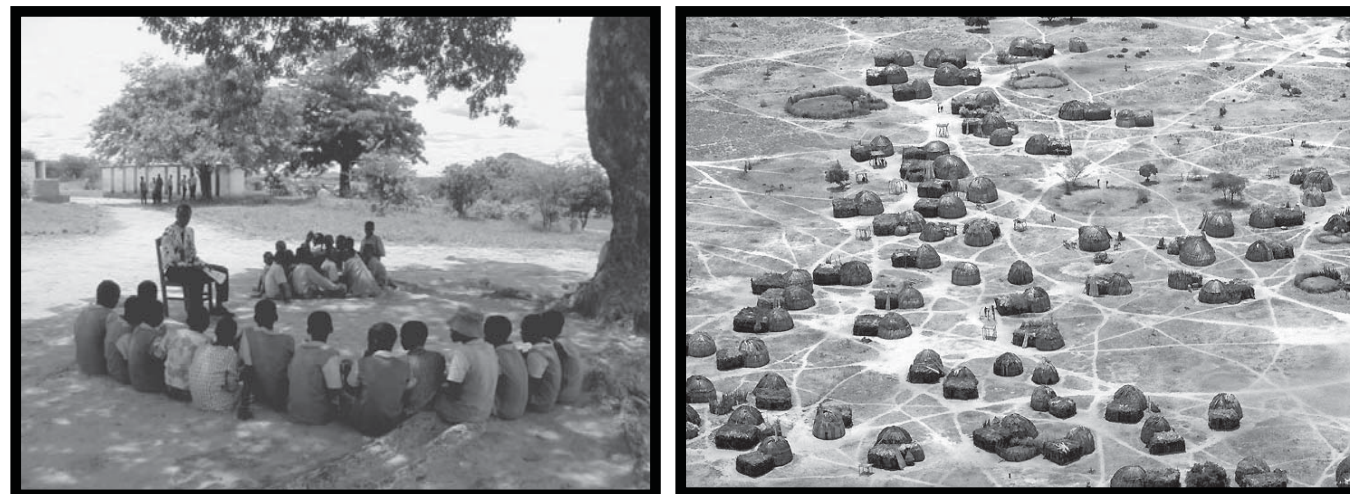
5.0 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.2 Indigenous Form

A central element to these indigenous oral traditions and performances is the Lekgotla. The Lekgotla is a circular space, formed around a tree, it is the social centre of the traditional African village, where public meetings are held and community decisions are arrived at by consensus. The tree has an important spiritual connection with ancestors, it provides place and shade.

'A village is usually established around a central tree, which serves as a social and political anchor for the group. The site of this tree is where the chief kindles his first fire, which is then used to light the fire of the other members of the camp. This site also serves as the meeting place for the men and the dancing space for the group.' (Afolayan: 2004: 138).

I have taken the element of the Lekgotla and placed it at the centre of the Learning Co. encircling an existing tree. In this way the Lekgotla will form the social hub of the learning centre and will encourage interaction and learning among its users. The form of the Lekgotla is intended to form a physical and psychological connection with its users and to span the cultural distances that exists in South Africa.



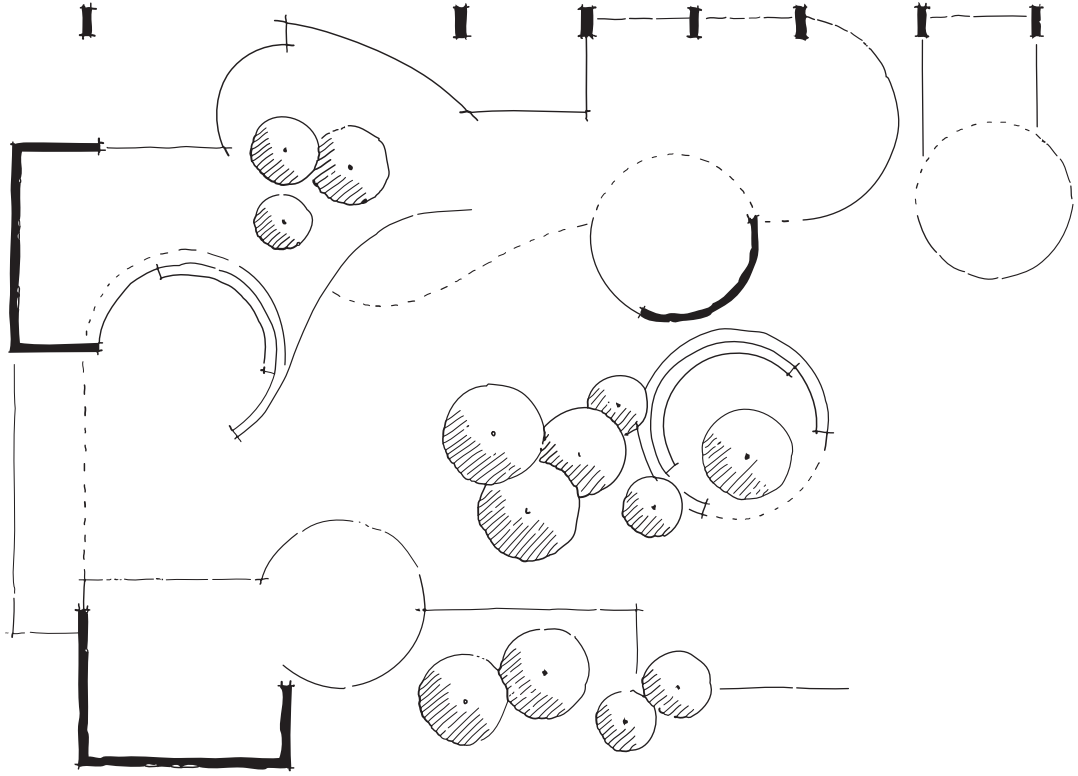
Images of traditional outdoor learning spaces and village form, identifying the importance of the tree in making place.



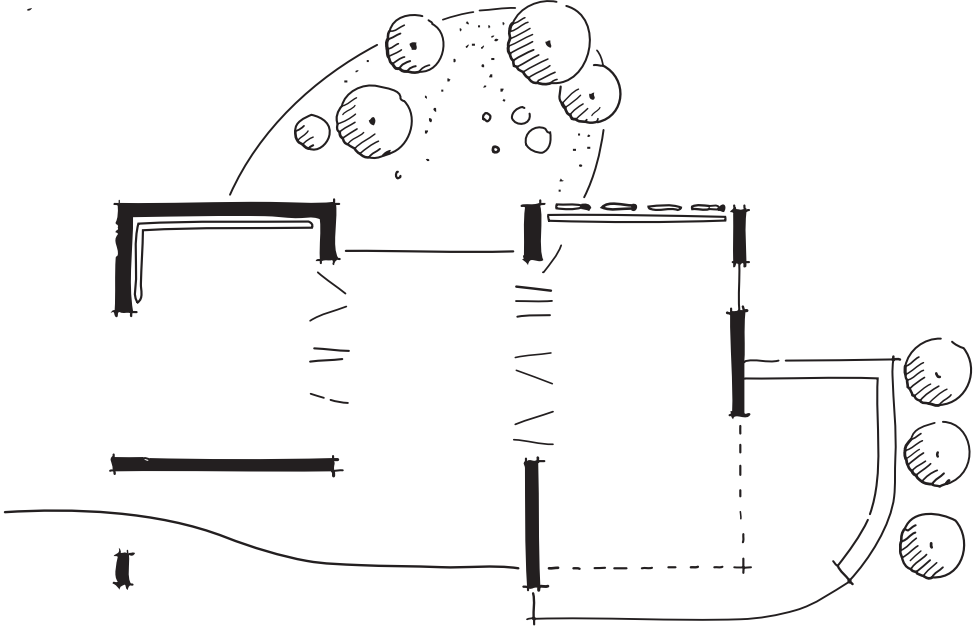
LEKGOTLA

5.0 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.3 Indigenous Form - Gathering + Performance



GATHERING SPACE

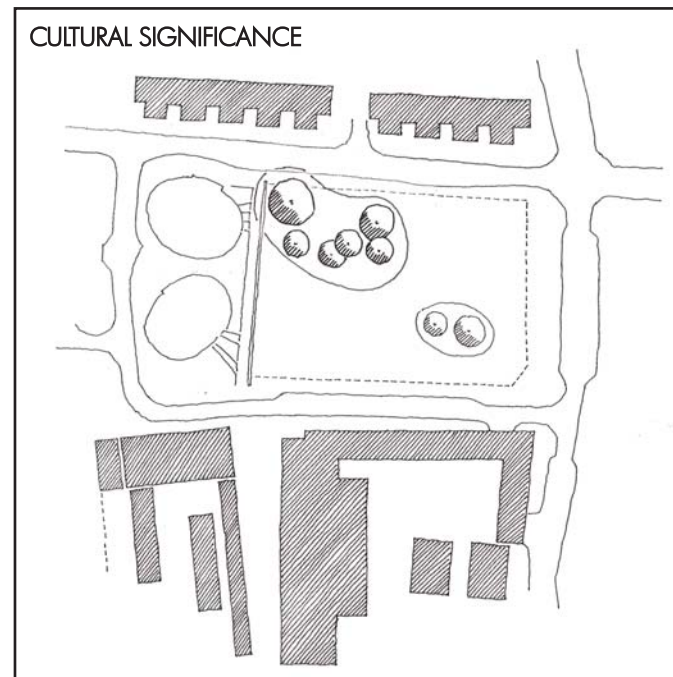


PERFORMANCE SPACE

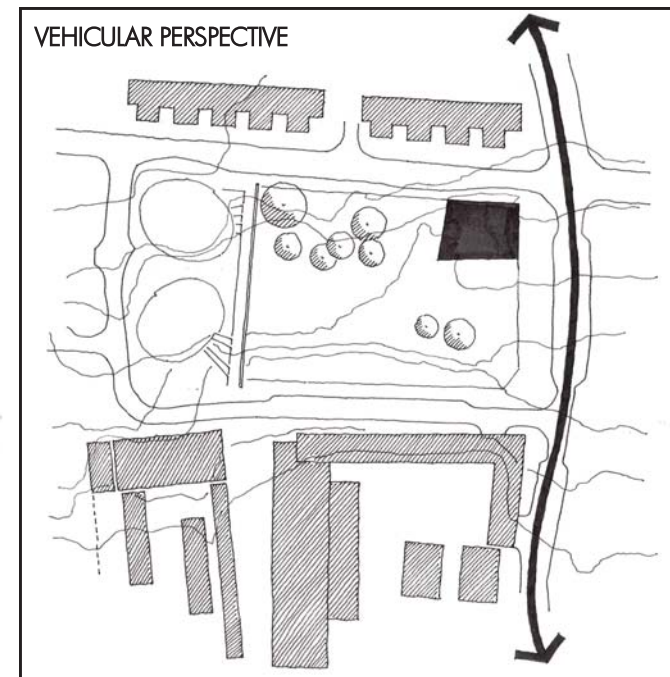
5.0 CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

5.3 Site Development

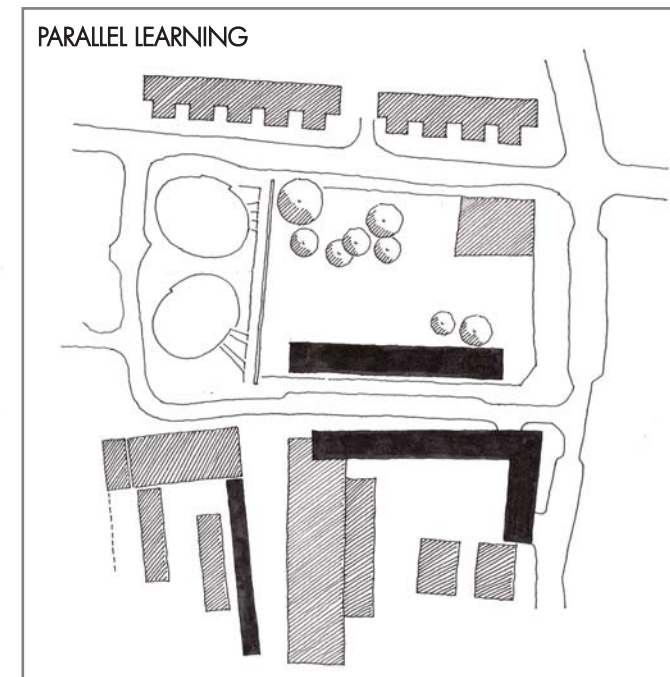
01 Retain Existing Trees



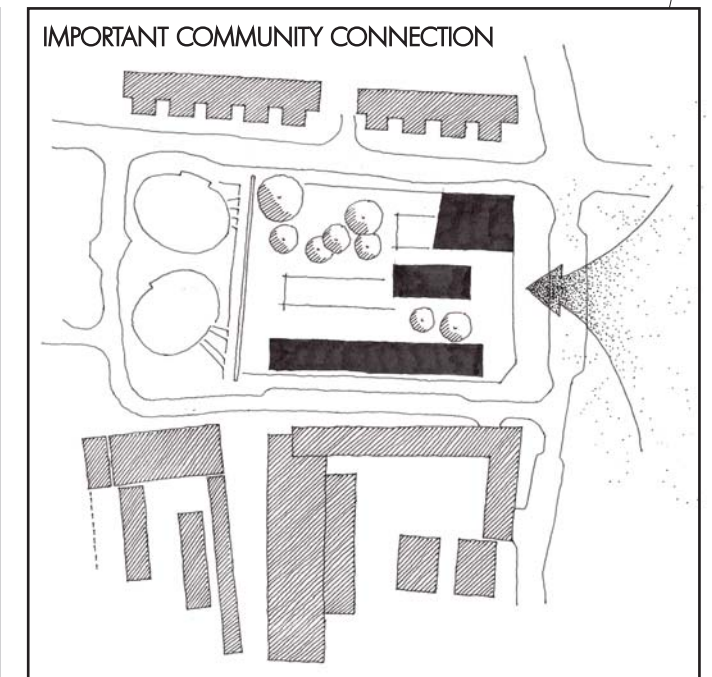
02 Focal Corner



03 Linear Edge



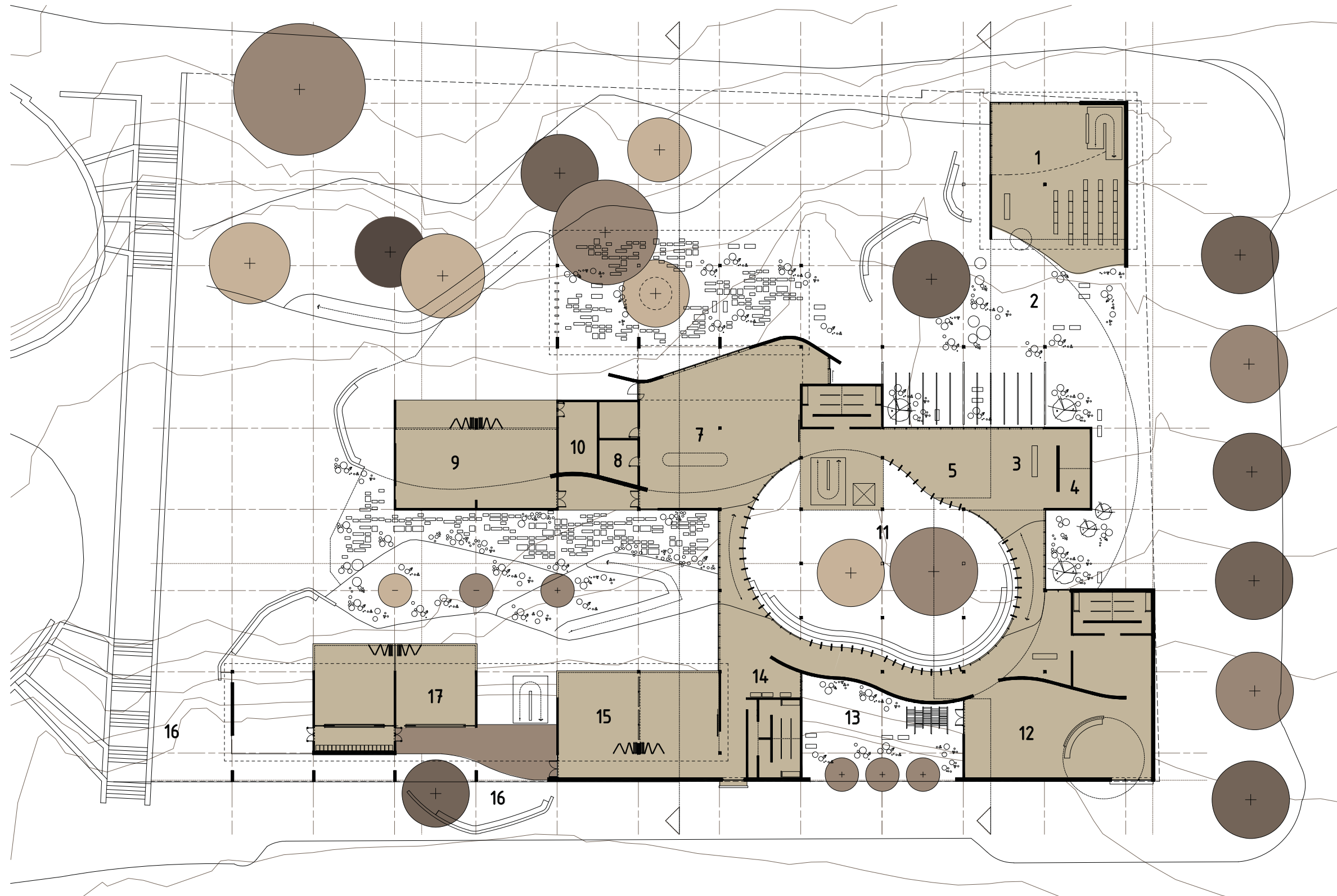
04 Entrance Element



6.0 DESIGN DRAWINGS

THE LEARNING Co.

literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa

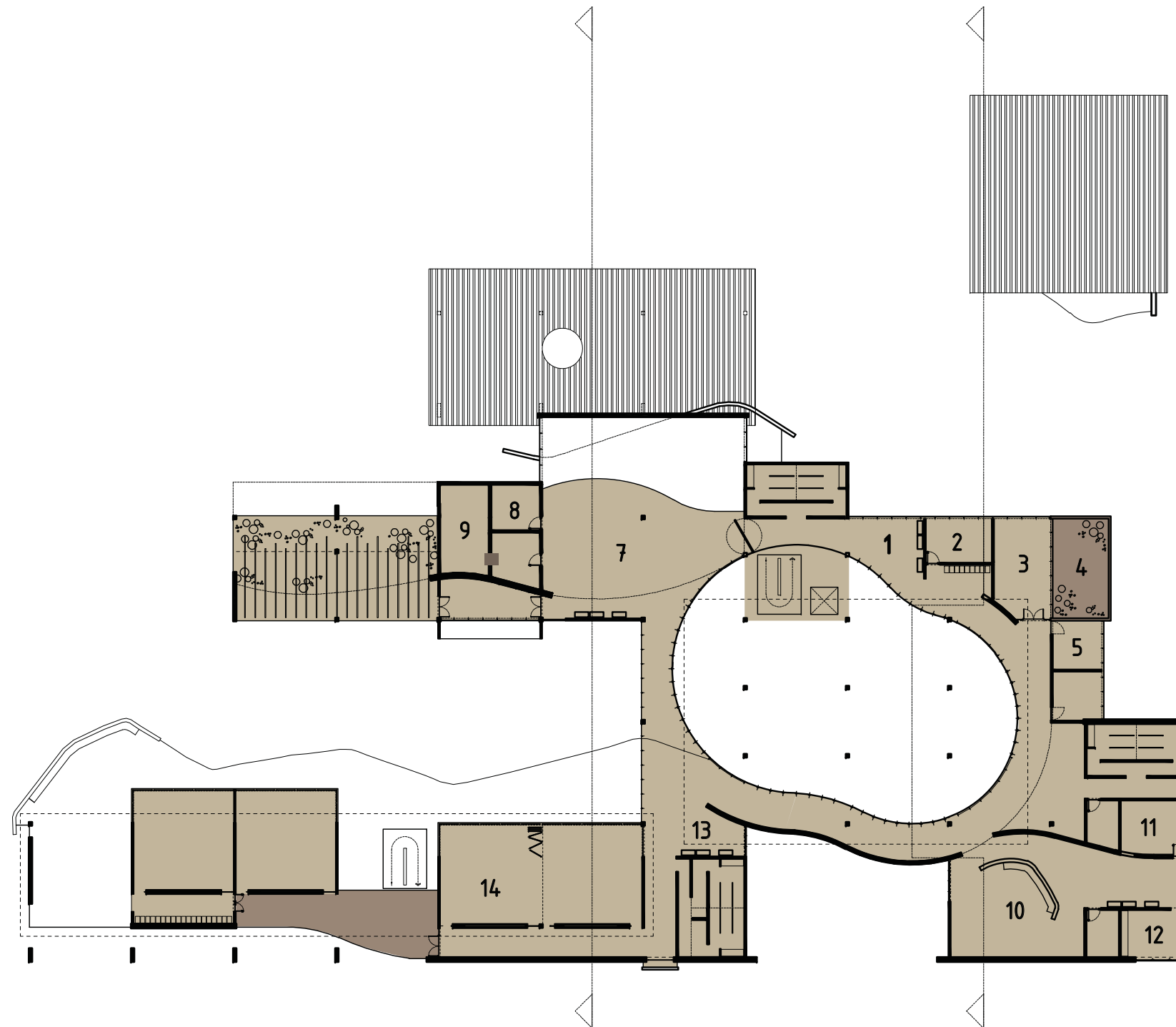


- 1 bookshop
- 2 public terrace
- 3 reception
- 4 admin + store
- 5 media space
- 6 restrooms
- 7 canteen
- 8 prep area + store
- 9 crafts + workshop
- 10 office + store
- 11 lekgotla
- 12 daycare
- 13 playground
- 14 pause area
- 15 performance space
- 16 outdoor classroom
- 17 typical classroom

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

THE LEARNING Co.

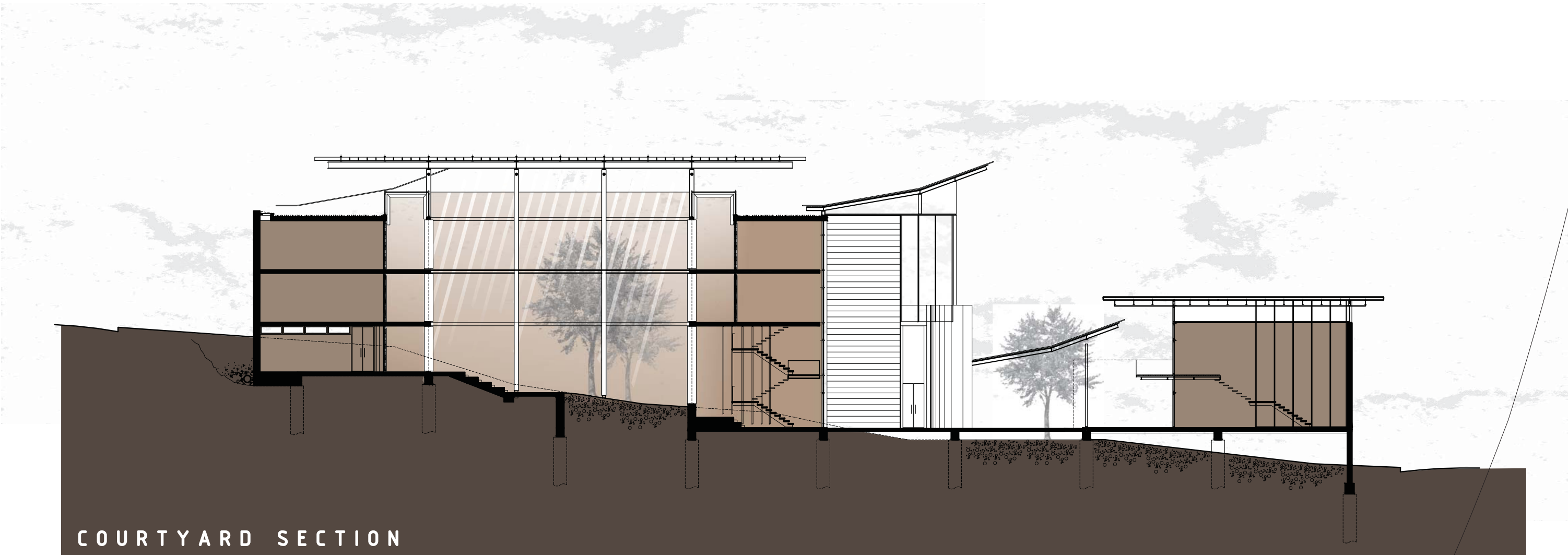
literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



- 1 bookshop
- 2 director's office
- 3 meeting room
- 4 balcony
- 5 management
- 6 restrooms
- 7 media space
- 8 office + store
- 9 av room
- 10 staff lounge
- 11 store
- 12 kitchenette
- 13 pause area
- 14 classroom

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

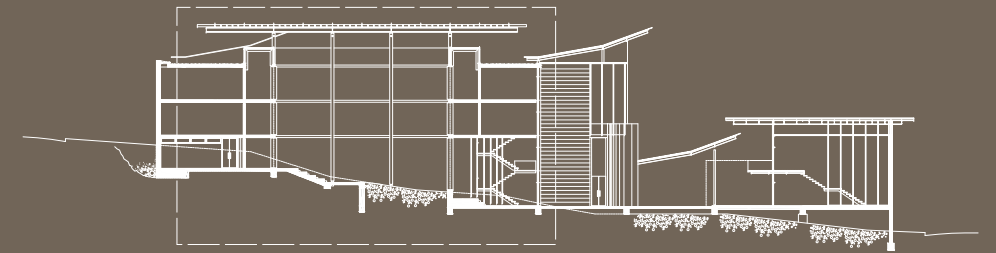
THE LEARNING Co.
literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



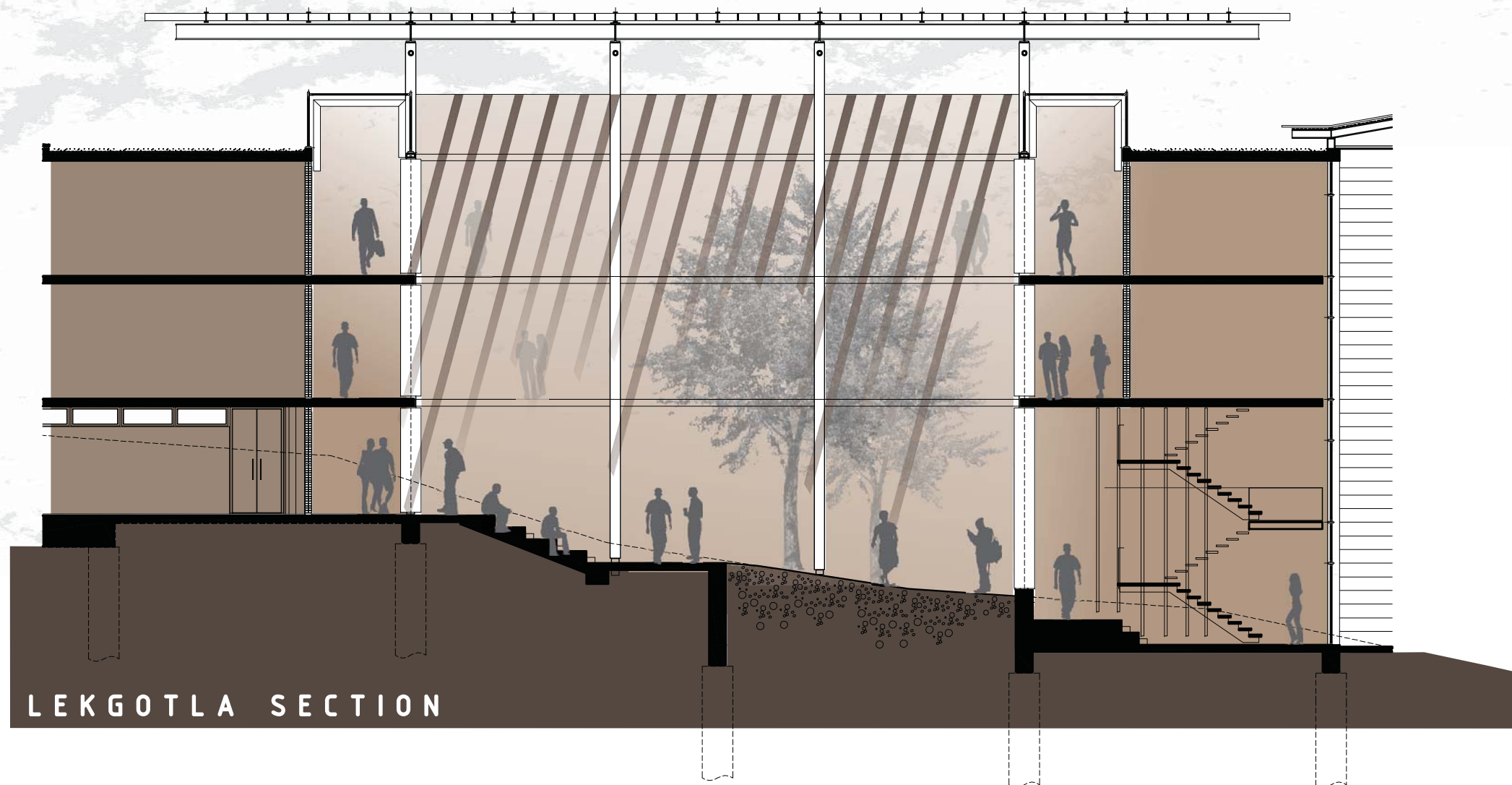
COURTYARD SECTION

THE LEARNING Co.

literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



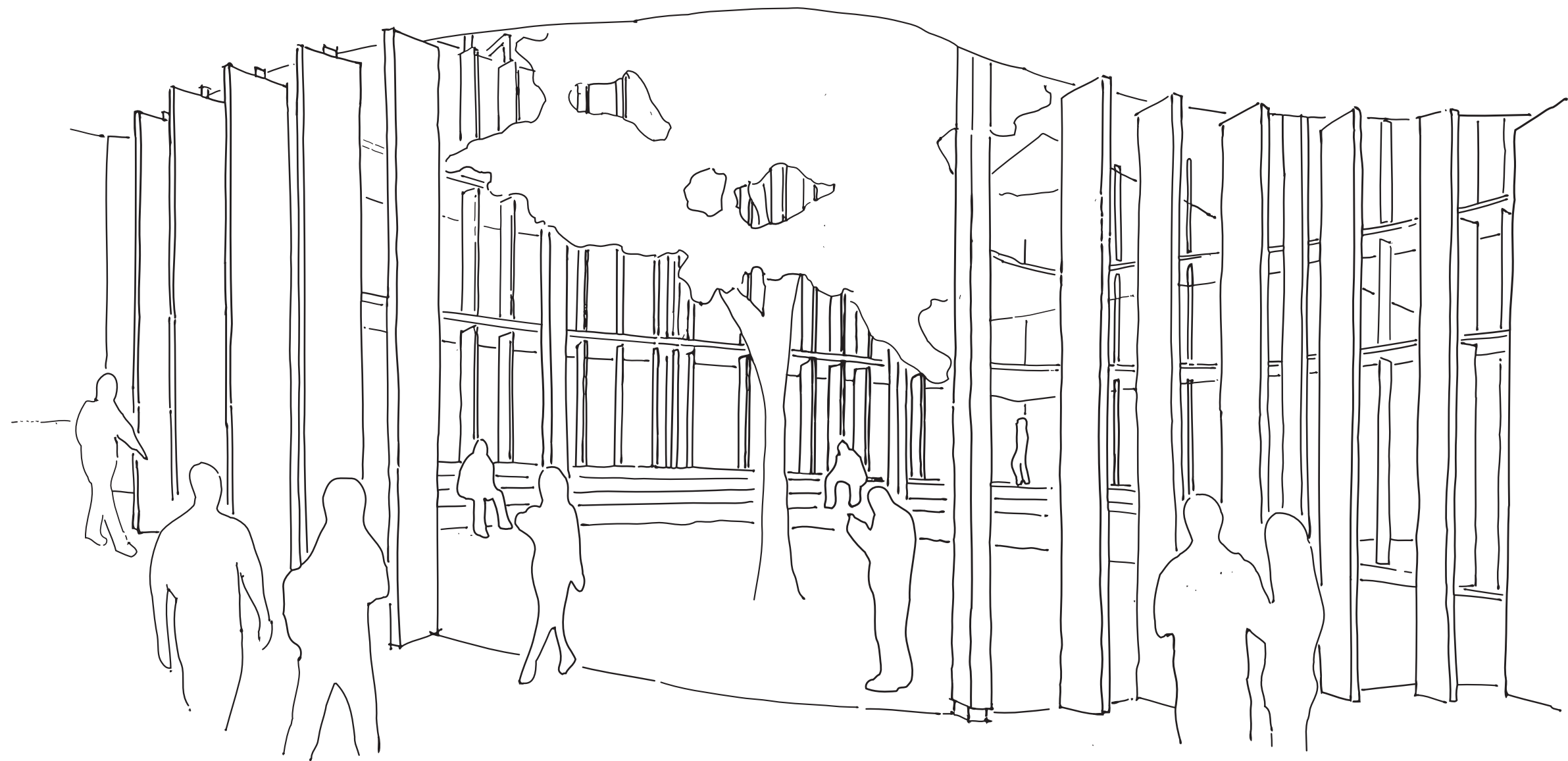
CROSS SECTION



LEKGOTLA SECTION

THE LEARNING Co.

literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



VIEW OF LEKGOTLA

THE LEARNING Co.
literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa

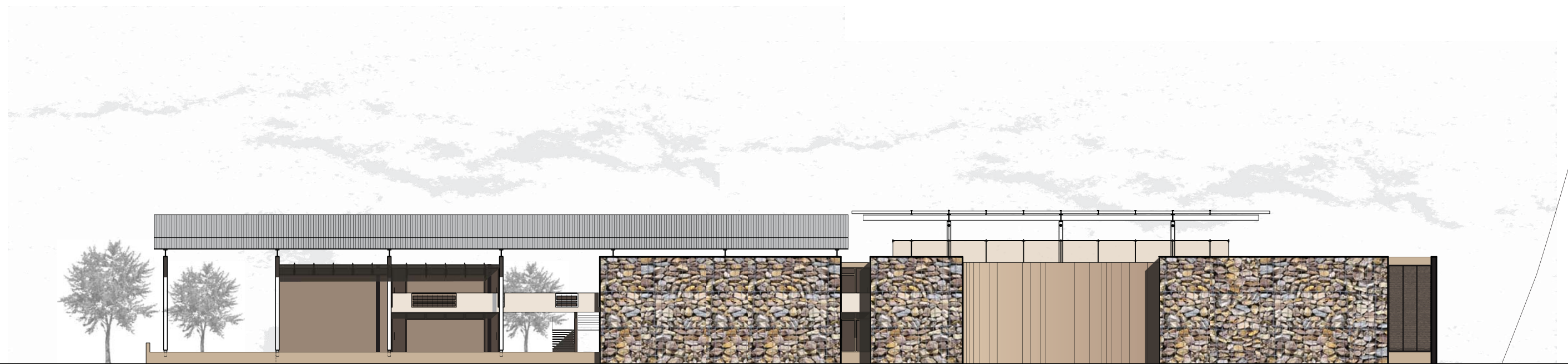


CLASSROOM SECTION

THE LEARNING Co.
literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa

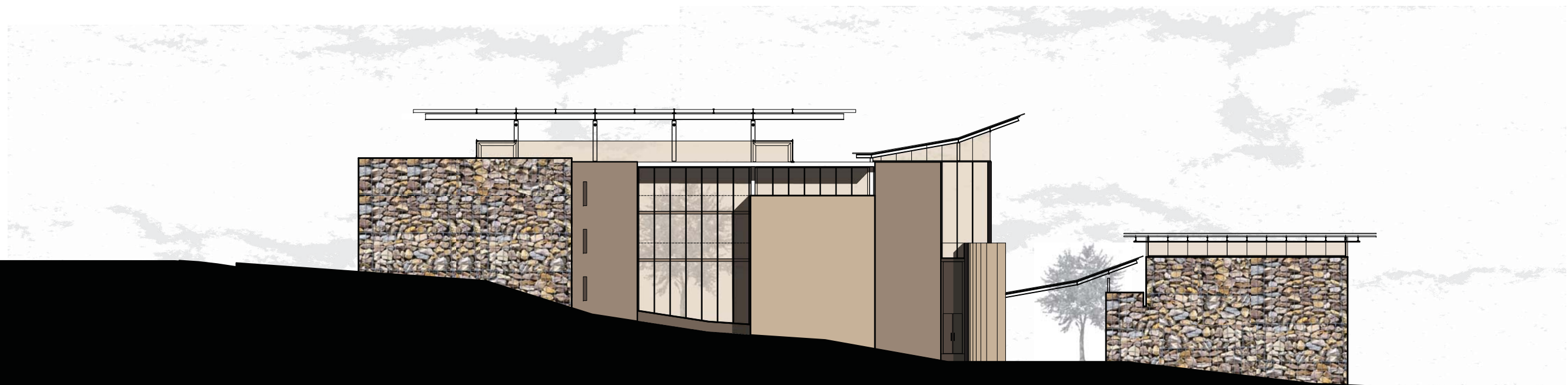


NORTH ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION

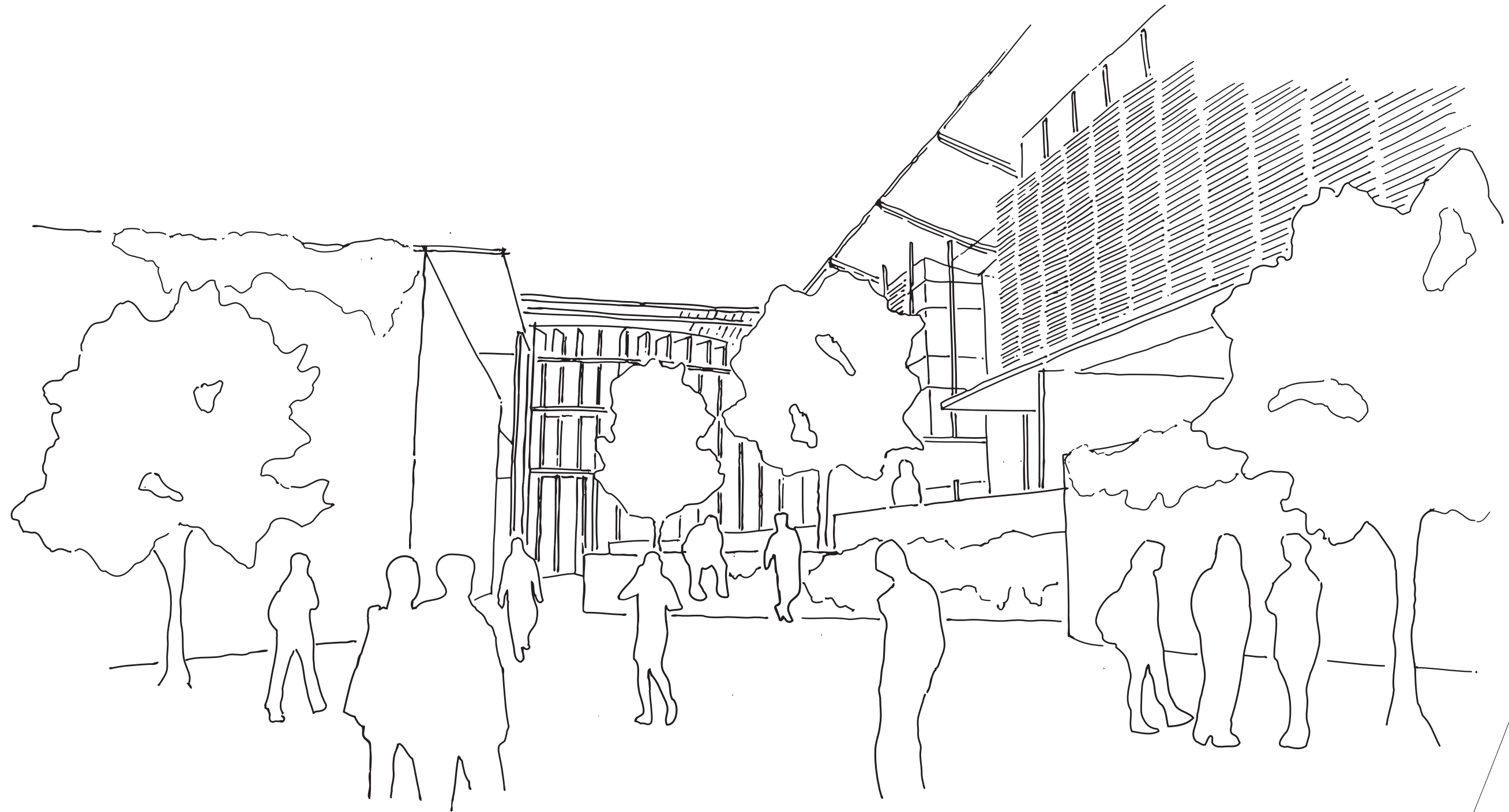
THE LEARNING Co.
literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



EAST ELEVATION

THE LEARNING Co.

literacy centre, johannesburg, south africa



EXTERNAL COURTYARD

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The Proposed

The Learning Co. is intended as a place where individuals can improve their lives through literacy.

As a European import, literacy is not a practise that has a strong connexion to many of the indigenous people of South Africa, but is often pervieved as something foreign and unknown. Literature, however is a dynamic and passionate practice of the indigenous people of South Africa, and is a strong cultural and social element.

By centering the Learning Co. around the form of the Lekgotla, the literacy centre intends to create a connection with its user and to overcome preconceptions about learning. The familiarity of form will encourage the user to feel at ease in a space previously percieved as foreign and unfamiliar.

The Lekgotla is intended to be a space of learning as well as gathering, where planned performances and spontaneous gatherings can occur. It is also intended to encourage interaction and learning between students.

The use of local materials, of brick and stone, coupled with imported technologies of glass and concrete, add an additional layer of cohesiveness and corroboration to the material form of the structure.

The Learning Co. intends to create a dynamic place for learning. Incorporating the ideals of the new constitution: democracy, equal opportunity, responsibility, reconciliation, diversity, freedom and respect - the Learning Co. intends to create a physically and psychologically accessible environment of learning for all South Africans.

8.0 RESOURCES

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