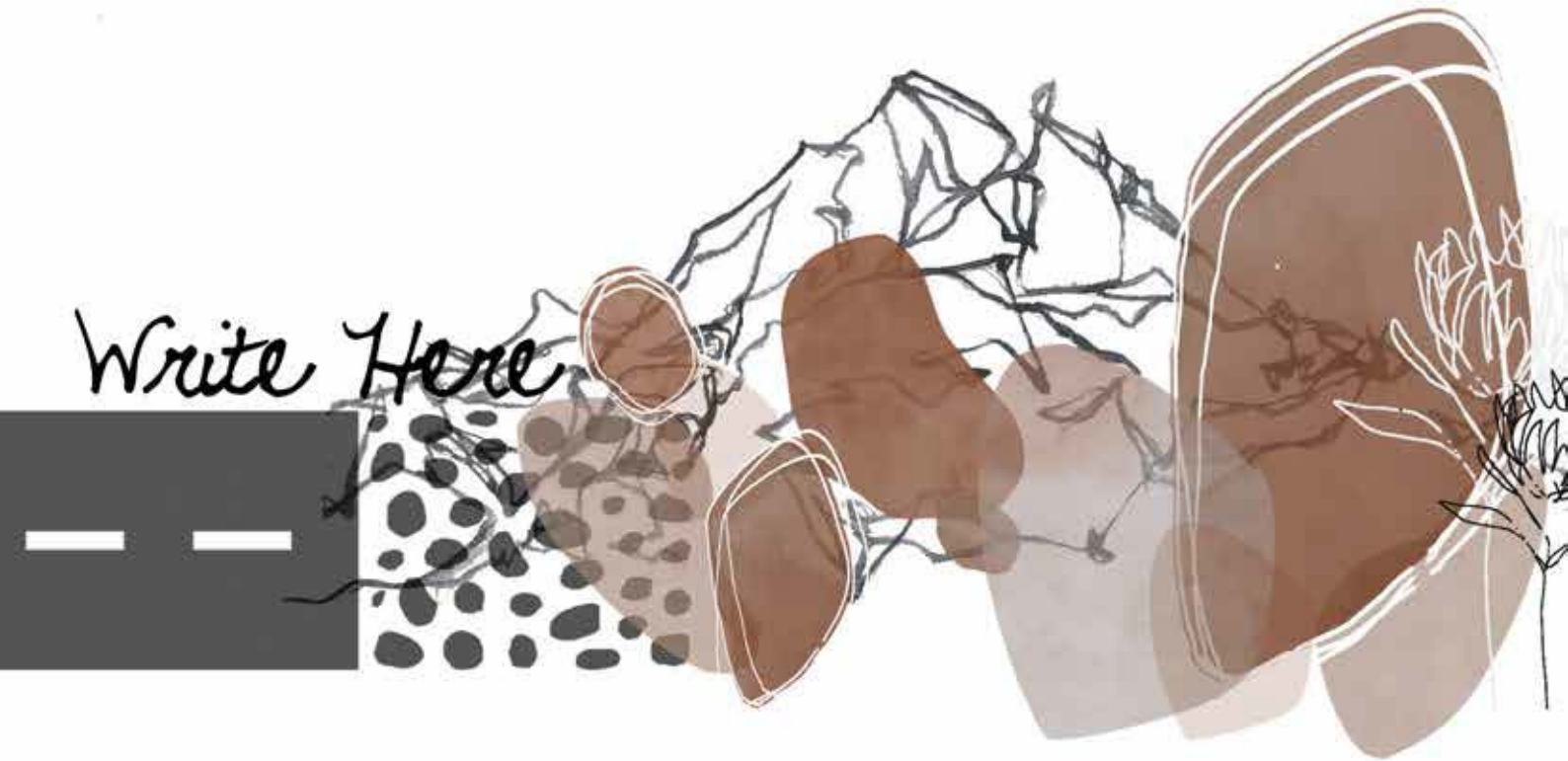


Write Here



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2015025949  
Masters Design Dissertation  
M.Arch (Prof)



This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree M.Arch. (Prof)

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**Declaration and original Authorship**

The work contained in this document has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge, this document contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made.



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Acknowledgement of editorial and proofreading services:  
The work contained in this thesis has been submitted for  
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### **Dedication and Thanks**

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Glen and Liesl,  
thank you for the unconditional love and support, all the  
proof-reading and typing, the mamma-pakkies and many  
tearful phonecalls.

I would never have come this far without you.


Thank you to Jason and Kobus for taking care of me and  
always encouraging me when this journey would get too much.

Thank you to Prof Jan and Petria for dealing with all my  
chaos this year and for all the Pinterest pins.

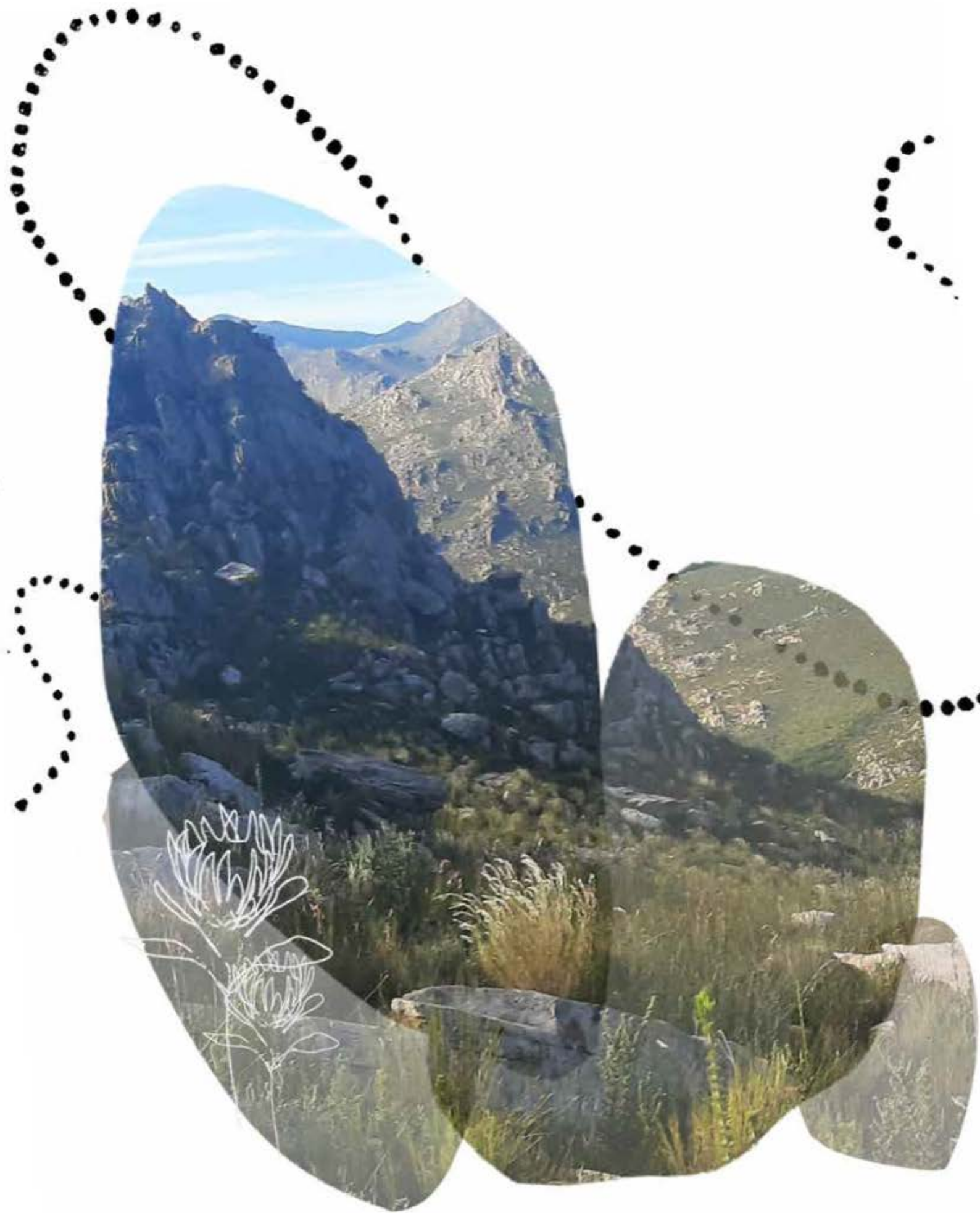
Thank you to Hein for all the help and sarcastic commentary  
throughout the creation of this document. I appreciate it  
all.

Thank you to Dr Gerhard Bosman for guiding me in the  
creation of this document.





Into the  
mountains I go,  
to lose my mind  
and find my  
soul



# Preface.

The Swartberg Pass, part of the majestic Swartberg mountain range which links the Little and Great Karoo, holds a special place in my heart. From the memory of building my very first snowman as a preschooler to teenager picnics and tea-baskets on a Sunday drive and now my Masters Dissertation. The pass is a place of magnificent beauty, a place of wide open spaces and crisp Karoo aromas of veldplants and vygies, where it feels as though you can breathe again.

But, alas, it is so terribly unappreciated and has so much underexploited potential. This is what drove me to the decision of selecting the Swartberg Pass as the site for my dissertation.

This dissertation has brought all the memories, feelings, passion and love for the pass to light in a way that I had not previously experienced. It is hoped that this envisaged writers retreat will ignite a spark in the reader, and coax a flame of desire to experience the awe of this resplendent feat of nature with its synergy of awesome rock formations, breath taking views, and harmony with nature whilst experiencing the invigorating mountain air.



*Leigh-Anne*



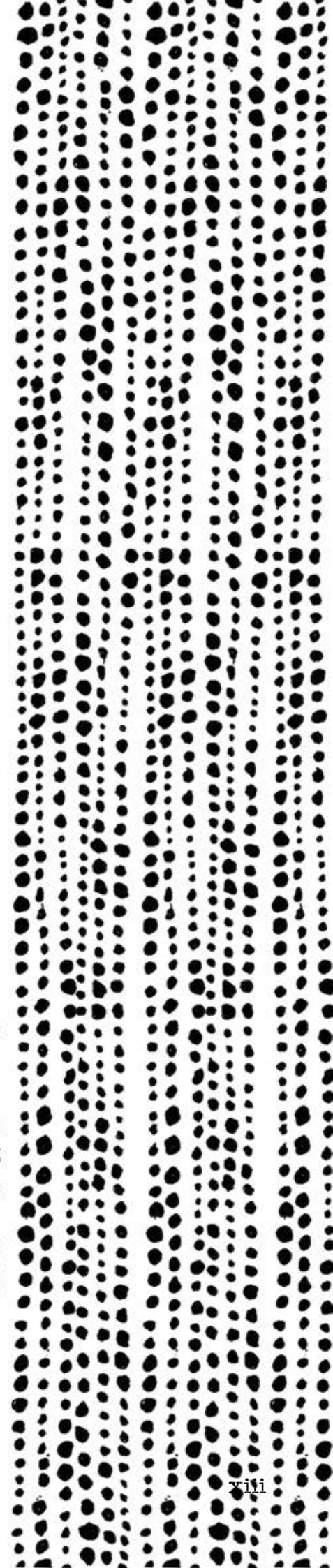
Figure 1: The spirit of the author in nature (author: 2020)

# Abstract

This investigation explores how to mitigate the lack of inspiration and the distraction of everyday life that writers struggle with, by experiencing a writers' retreat in the Swartberg Mountain range in the Western Cape Province. The proposed design for the retreat explores the relationship between the writer's deep and self-conscious minds. The dissertation considers the question: How can a designed place of isolation in nature stimulate the awareness within the self in order to promote the engagement of the deep and self-conscious minds during the writing process? During the writing process the awareness of the self, of nature and of the self in nature is important. Few other buildings show this awareness specific for writers in nature while exploring the deep and self-conscious minds. This dissertation aims to propose a place with spatial awareness to create various experiences and interactions between man and nature, the self and the self-less, isolation and integration. This study engaged with theoretical constructs of; the deep mind and the self conscious mind a theory devised by Maggie Ross as well as The Art of Travel - written by Alain De Botton, the self and the awareness of the self as well as the concept of being-in-the-world - theories by Martin Heidegger. It also made use of case studies and precedents during the investigation into the writing process, and how architecture can enhance the writing process. The proposed design can demystify the writing process through an enhanced spatial experience in other places such as the Swartberg Mountains.

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Chapter  
1.

In this chapter, the landscape, surrounding context and site will be introduced and discussed as it originally was the site that influenced the function and program of the project. This chapter takes an indepth look at the Swartberg Pass, the history thereof, how it came to be and how it may have an influence on design decisions made in this dissertation. It also introduces the theoretical discourse on which the dissertation is based by discussing the concept of arrival.



Figure 3: "No artist tolerates reality" (author: 2020)

# Introduction

**"No artist tolerates reality"** (Nietzsche, 1909-1915: 74).

It seems to be safe to say that Nietzsche may be correct in saying this, but it might be more apt to say that no artist tolerates reality well, or for very long. When it comes to writers it is no different.

Writers live in a world where realities are abundant and thus complexities are ever present. This document is to be an exploration of the writer, the self and the influence of the environment on these entities. The experimental aspect would be to remove the writer from their reality, their everyday life, and to have them in a place of inspirational beauty, thought provoking solitude and self-reflective silence. A place where the practical mind may be rested, and creativity may be at the helm to encourage the childlike spark of imaginative ingenuity and curiosity to once again reignite.


This dissertation documents the process of designing a writer's retreat in the Swartberg mountains, the challenges of creating a place which is essentially the manifestation of the plethora of paradoxes that make up the writer, the writing process and the written piece. And the complexities of architecture versus nature.

This is to be achieved by means of research on what it is that a writer needs in order to write, why writers write and what kind of an influence nature and architecture may have on the writer and the writing process.

This dissertation primarily aims to address the idea of **isolation** and how this may allow for the writer to realign their focus and find what it is within themselves that may be the cause of the imbalance of their own equilibrium.

It is said that one must "... stay drunk on writing so that reality cannot destroy you" (BrainyQuote.com, n.d.: online), this dissertation also aims to create a place where writers can come to get a little drunk.

In the following chapters this dissertation will address the landscape, the site and how the site came to be as well as the history of the Swartberg Pass, the theory behind the writers and writing process and how this theory influenced the design of the proposal, the development from touchstone to concepts to the various design attempts. The precedents that influenced and encouraged the further development of the final design and the construction report of the final proposal.

The image shows a scenic landscape of a mountain pass. In the foreground, a dark, rocky ridge runs across the frame. Beyond it, a valley opens up, featuring a winding road and a river. The terrain is rugged and appears to be a high-altitude or volcanic region. The sky is clear and bright. Overlaid on the center of the image is a white, paper-like graphic with several overlapping, rounded rectangular shapes. The title text is printed on this graphic in a simple, black, sans-serif font.

The  
Swartberg  
Pass

# The journey begins...

as the first rays of auburn lick the landscape, breathing life into every tale ever told of the lifetimes lived, etched into that which outlines the fire-lit horizon.

The winding path awaits, tentatively snaking around the hairpin bends, each corner a renewed sense of anticipation brings, the path clouded in the remnants of who have gone before, fiercely parching with every footstep, precipitating a halt and initiating a breath. A breath that waters the soul with the secrets whispered over the knolls and through the dales, igniting a desire to just be.

But the possibilities of what lies beyond the next kink in the tale beckons and the path adjourns, the luminescent apex luring as a flame to a moth. It reveals an existence at its feet, unbeknownst to any who are yet to come. Yet there is no time for hesitation, the path is unrelenting, it propels forwards, stumbling over itself, tasting the edges of place with reckless abandon, searching.

Quite suddenly and all at once, it halts.

It stretches out and curls up, claiming its place, content with here and now.

The ridge rises up, barring the way, inciting another breath.

Hushed by the surroundings, stripped of all speech, the only form of expression left is the rise and fall of the ribcage, the release of earthly inhibitions, the filling of the soul, the freeing of the mind and the heightening of the senses.

This is it.

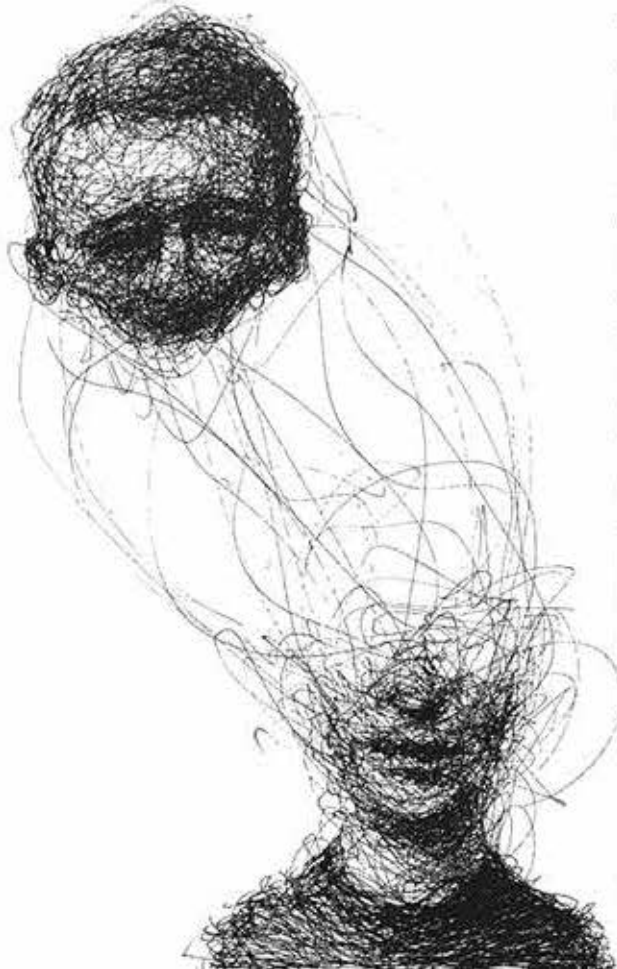
This, is  
where the  
j o u r n e y  
begins.

The Swartberg Mountains, the epitome of serenity, a more idealistically isolated place would be near impossible to find. In the summer months the critters are abundant, providing the mesmerising melody carried upon the wings of the gentle breeze that softly caress the faces of those who wander there, but why wonder? What makes this wonder worth the wander?



Figure 5: A view of a part of the Swartberg Pass (author, 2020)

What ignites the desire in the self to go somewhere? The want to find a new place, experience something out of the ordinary. Perhaps it is just that - the ordinary, the banality of everyday that incites a yearning within the self, a yearning for a break in routine, to open the mind to the possibility of possibility that there may be something more, something greener? So the anticipation begins to build, the anticipation of the new place, new people, new adventures - the excitement of romanticising, the unknown and creating this expectation of what is to be experienced.



This anticipation alone has opened the mind to what could be and freed the imagination from the cage that everyday life has become. Now the gnawing feeling of having to find out what lies on the other side of travel sets in and the day comes that curiosity wins and the ordinary and everything "known" is left behind in search of this utopian dream conjured up from a single wondering thought, what if? Suddenly the thought pops up again; what if? But this time the thought is laced with anxiety of the unknown but it's too late ...

Figure 6: The wandering mind (anonymous, n.d.: online)

The journey has already begun.

# The History of the Swartberg Pass

This magnificent 27km untarred pass (Figure 8) which has a summit of 1583m above sea level was built from 1881 to 1888 by Thomas Charles Bain (Figure 7) whose construction philosophy was, "A good hat and good boots" (Frandsen, 2013: online), this philosophy seemed to stand the test of time. Thomas Bain was the son of the famous Andre Gedde Bain who was responsible for the building of the Bain's Kloof Pass and many others (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online).

The Swartberg Pass was the second pass built in the Swartberg by the Bains the first being the Meiringspoort which was built in 1858 and is just further east of the Swartberg Pass. The Pass was built by means of convict labour and was officially opened to the public on the 10th of January 1888 (Roberts, 2013: online).

This spectacular mountain pass can be accessed from Prince Albert on one side and Oudtshoorn on the other and the turn off to Gankaskloof lies near the pass' summit.



Figure 7: Thomas Charles Bain (Wikipedia, 2020: online)

## Prince Albert

It was built because at that stage the routes through Meiringspoort and Seweweekspoort were the only links between the Mosselbay port and the towns in the Great Karoo and these were often closed due to flood damage and rock falls. At this time there was only a footpath leading over the mountain that had to be ventured either on foot or on horseback (Frandsen, 2013). Thus there was a rather great need for another means of travel to get to the port in order to trade.

Oudtshoorn

The building of this pass was an engineering feat of gigantic proportions as it was built using local stone and over 130 years later some of its original dry stone retaining walls are still standing, supporting the hairpin bends of The Pass (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online). These walls range from a height of 0.5m to up to 13m and are as sturdy and solid as ever. The stones used for the building of the pass were the products of the splitting of the large boulders by means of heating up the boulder by lighting a fire underneath it and then dousing it with cold water. This method succeeded in breaking the boulders into sizable stones that could then be further broken up with pick axes and sledgehammers. The stones were then carefully dressed and stack by the convicts (Roberts, 2013: online).

Along The Pass there are remnants of what once was, of the history of when The Pass was built, such as an old prison, a toll hut, a hotel and other interesting sites (Figures 9-19).

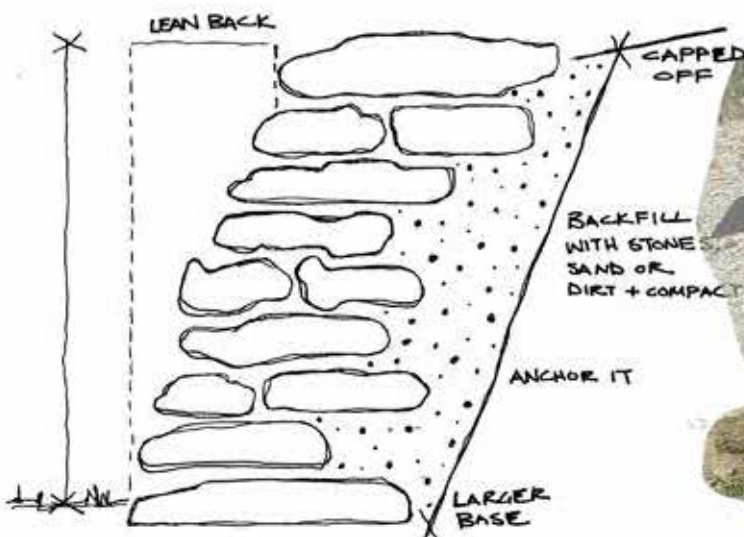


Figure 8: Dry stack building method (author: 2020)

Figure 9: Start of Swartberg Pass (author: 2020)

**TO PRINCE ALBERT**

This is the spot in the mountains where geraniums (*Pelargonium zonale*) grow luxuriantly. They are always green and often covered with flowers. One just cannot miss them. This natural inlet offers the traveller a place to stop and look at the rock formations. One of the Swartberg's most beautiful hiking trails starts here.



During the building of the pass, a stone and clay structure to confine the convicts at night, was built at this spot. The present ruins are the remains of this structure.



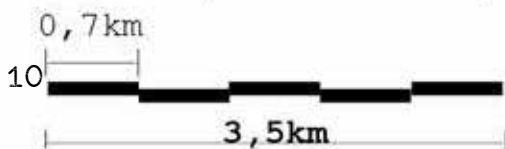
Also known as The Hell, it is a secluded settlement in a valley in the Swartberg Mountains and is well-known for its delicious fruit and vegetables. Its dried figs are a gourmets delight.



The Top is 1 583m above sea level and the highest point of the pass. From this point nature lovers can see the marvels of creation for kilometres to the north and south.



To the traveller from the north, the road seems to come to an end, and then it turns sharply to the left. From the south the road is very steep with a difficult, concealed hairpin bend, hence the name.



Figures 10-20: Stops along the Swartberg Pass (author: 2020)



It was given this name because the draught animals could be outspanned here before the long, tiring journey. On their return they were fed and watered here. Bain's first convict base camp was here and the ruins are still visible.



During the rainy season it is a unique sight to see the water cascading down. During the summer months it is usually dry; hence the name.

WATER  
EKRANS

In this area you will find the well-known honey tea bush which was much sought after by earlier inhabitants. Dealers used to market the honey tea in large quantities. This is surely one of the most aromatic teas, but unfortunately it is unknown to the younger generation. From this point the summit of the pass is visible, and if you look into the chasm, you will recognise 'Malvadraai' far below.



Here a perennial stream flows from the high peaks to revive tired travellers. In bygone days a watermelon was placed in this stream by travellers from Prince Albert when they visited Oudtshoorn. On their return the well chilled melon could be enjoyed.



After the completion of the Swartberg Pass a postal service was instituted between Prince Albert Road and Oudtshoorn. To offer overnight accommodation, a modest hotel, the ruins of which can still be seen today, was erected on the southern slope. Some old maps still refer to this old inn as the Victoria Hotel.



DRAAI

WITDRAAI  
FONTEINTJIE  
HOTELLETJIE  
PLANTASIE

DIE STALLETJIE

The horses that were used to draw the mail coach were fed and watered here. Fresh horses were harnessed for the journey both to the north and the south.



These curves are so named because of the two hairpin bends cut into the limestone deposits, which give the road a whitish appearance.

TO CALITZDORP

TO OUDTSHOORN

(Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online)

These structures along the pass were also built by the convicts and were used as camps for them during the duration of the build. Unfortunately due to the unfavourable weather conditions during the winter months of the build, heavy rain and mudslides would interfere with the progress of the newly built road as often parts would have to be rebuilt (Bicycle South, 2017: online). Tragically during one especially cruel winter the snowfall caused for one of the camps' roofs to fall in and a gang of 30 convicts was killed (Roberts, 2013: online). It is said that their souls still haunt the Swartberg Pass, stuck in a never ending toil to finish The Pass.

There are many tales of the forgotten, wandering souls still up on the mountain, haunting the twists and turns of The Pass.

There is a sharp bend on the plateau on top of the mountain. It was too dangerous to erect a sign there, but the bend is called 'Neville se Draai.' At the age of 42 John Fitz Neville, Clerk of Works during the construction of the Swartberg Pass, was killed in an accident on this curve on 8 March, 1888. Some people believe he was killed in a dynamite explosion and others say he was thrown from his horse (Roberts, 2013: online).

There is the tale of Chrisjan Swanepoel, accidentally shot dead on the pass, his angry spirit allegedly still wanders the dusty road and sometimes appears to walk The Pass alongside those who dare to venture it on foot (Reid, 2014: online).

There is also the tale of the murderous innkeeper who would serve those who visited in groups as if they were royalty and murder those who travelled alone, they would be murdered in their beds and their possessions would be taken and sold. It is rumoured that the presence of the ghosts of those murdered at the inn along the pass can be felt by a sharp drop in temperature and a sudden chill down the spine (Tudhope, 2013: online).

There's also a convict guard who accidentally shot himself dead that supposedly still guards the pass and when the wind blows the cries of a little family that died in a blizzard can be heard (Reid, 2014: online).

It is these stories, legends and tales that inspired the idea that this would be a place to be inhabited by writers. The Pass is already so saturated with fact and fiction and everything in between that it would be inconceivable not to be inspired by the rich tapestry of it all.

Figure 21: Ghostly footprints along  
The Pass (author, 2020)



The proposed site is found along the Swartberg Pass in the Swartberg Mountain Range found in the Western Cape, South Africa.



Figure 22: South African provinces (d-maps, 2007: online) adapted by author

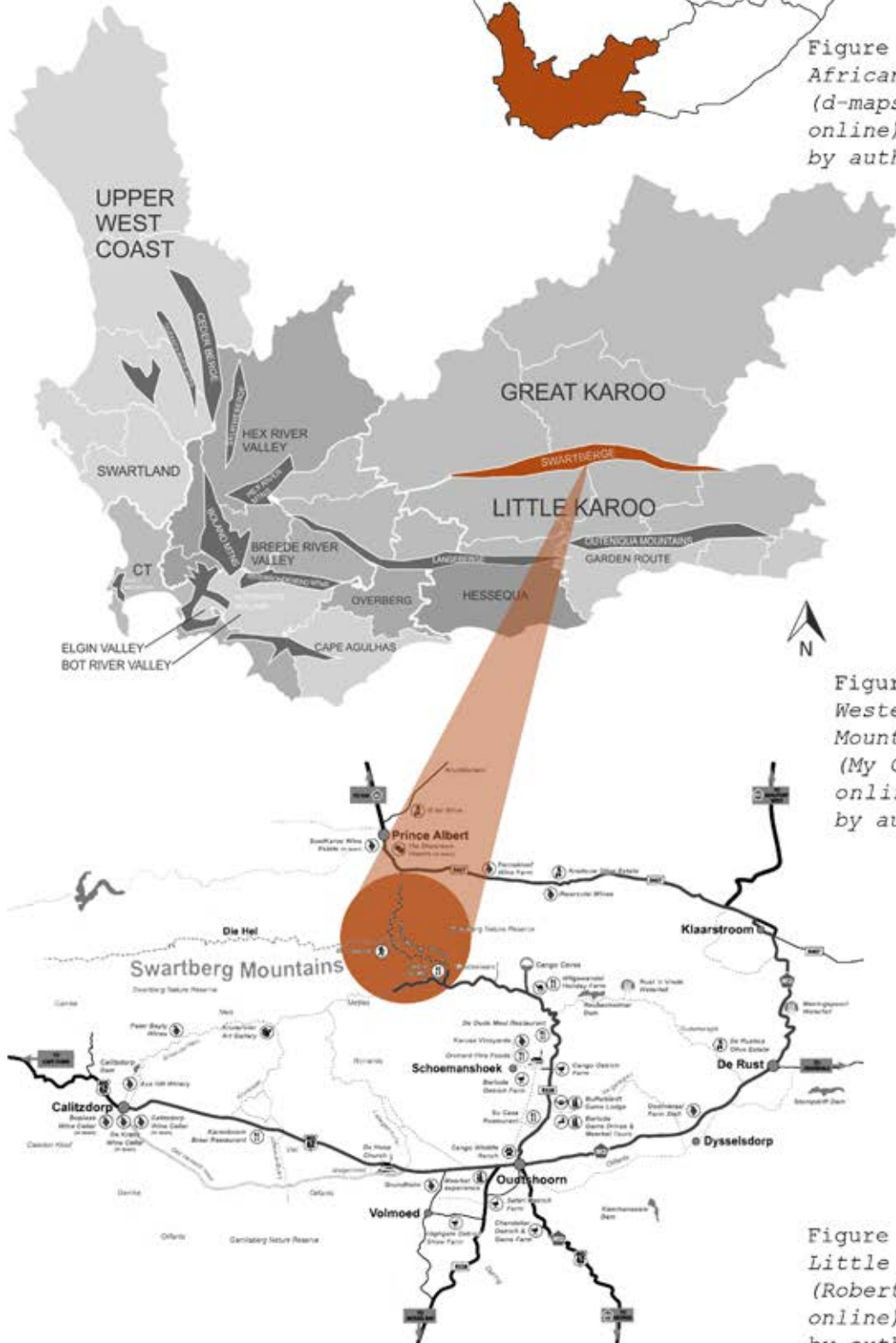


Figure 23: Western Cape Mountain Ranges (My Cape, 2008: online) adapted by author

Figure 24: Map of Little Karoo (Roberts, 2013: online) adapted by author

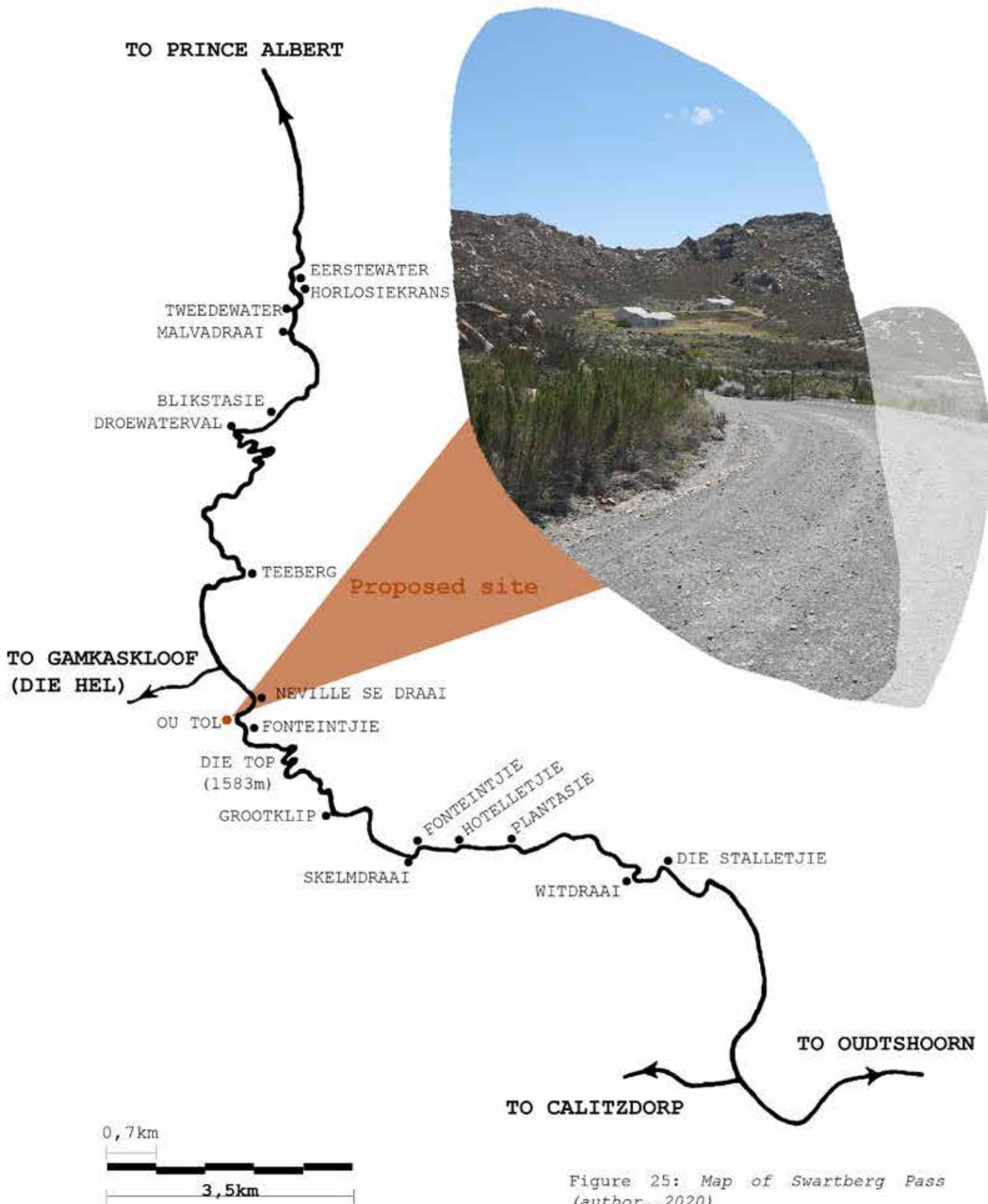


Figure 25: Map of Swartberg Pass (author, 2020)



# The Site

*"Isolation in an unfamiliar landscape can cause feelings of unease but paradoxically allows the individual to undergo self-reflection that strengthens their connection with their identity."*

(Temilorun, 2019: online)

Figure 25: Ou Tol  
site (author, 2020)



# Theoretical discourse



What  
makes  
the  
wonder  
worth  
the  
wander?

What if the anticipation of what's to come is better than the destination? Alain De Botton, based on JK Huysamen's novel, *A rebours* (Against the Grain), theorises that reality is hardly ever as exciting or interesting as it is desired to be (De Botton, 2014, p. 23). Reality is limited, it is stunted by logic and factuality, by factors as mundane as the economy, laws and the depth of pockets. But what can be dreamt, what can be imagined, what can be conjured up by the mind is limitless, unrestricted, unrestrained and perfectly incomprehensive. Surely if the mind is capable of such wonderful adventures the body becomes redundant?

Yet there is a yearning. Just as reality is stunted, so is the mind by the banality of every day. The deep mind becomes restrained to the darkest corners of the mind and the most intimate dreams, because every day is always on our minds, the rat race is brutal and the conscious mind never rests. The mind is trapped between the four walls of daily routine, thus breaking out, experiencing what lies beyond the comfort of the city limits plants itself beneath the skin, the desire to escape grows and grows until the mind is consumed by the want for quiet, for the sun's rays to feed the soul and the isolation to settle the mind.

It is an undisputed fact that the most commonly missing factor in lives today is nature, nature is what allows for pause, nature benefits not only the body, but the mind and soul as well. Nature is the only element that requires no assistance to survive, nature is a prominent reminder of man's insignificance and reminds man of his frailty and mortality.

Man will live and man will die but this will make no difference to the grass beneath his feet. Nature can allow for man to find himself again, to become quiet and undisturbed by the franticness created by man himself, but it can also allow for man to lose the self and awaken the realisation that man is not always needed, the earth will still turn, the flowers will still bloom. Nature creates a sense of awareness, an awareness of the self.

The isolation and serenity of the nature stills the mind and centres the self but in the same breath the vastness and limitlessness thereof cultivates a different awareness.

William Wordsworth proposes (De Botton, 2014, p. 154) that once experienced nature can become a place for the mind to retreat to when every day becomes too overwhelming. Nature can be stored in the subconscious as "spots of time" memories, flashes of experiences that when accessed can re-engage the same senses to allow for the same awareness to be triggered within to counter the subconscious mind and stimulate the deep mind.

"What though the radiance which was once so bright  
be now forever taken from my sight,  
though nothing can bring back the hour  
of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower,  
we will grieve not, rather find  
strength in what remains behind."  
Ode: Imitations of Immortality  
-William Wordsworth (De Botton, 2014, p. 133)

These "spots of time" can be described as an oasis in the desert, a place to come and quench that yearning for silence, that parched desire for peace, instigated by the stressors of every day, and just as the desert dwellers require the oasis so does the self as these "spots of time" become crucial to understanding what the Greek philosophers have so beautifully termed Eudaimonia which translates to human flourishing. Because along with the flowers man too must bloom.

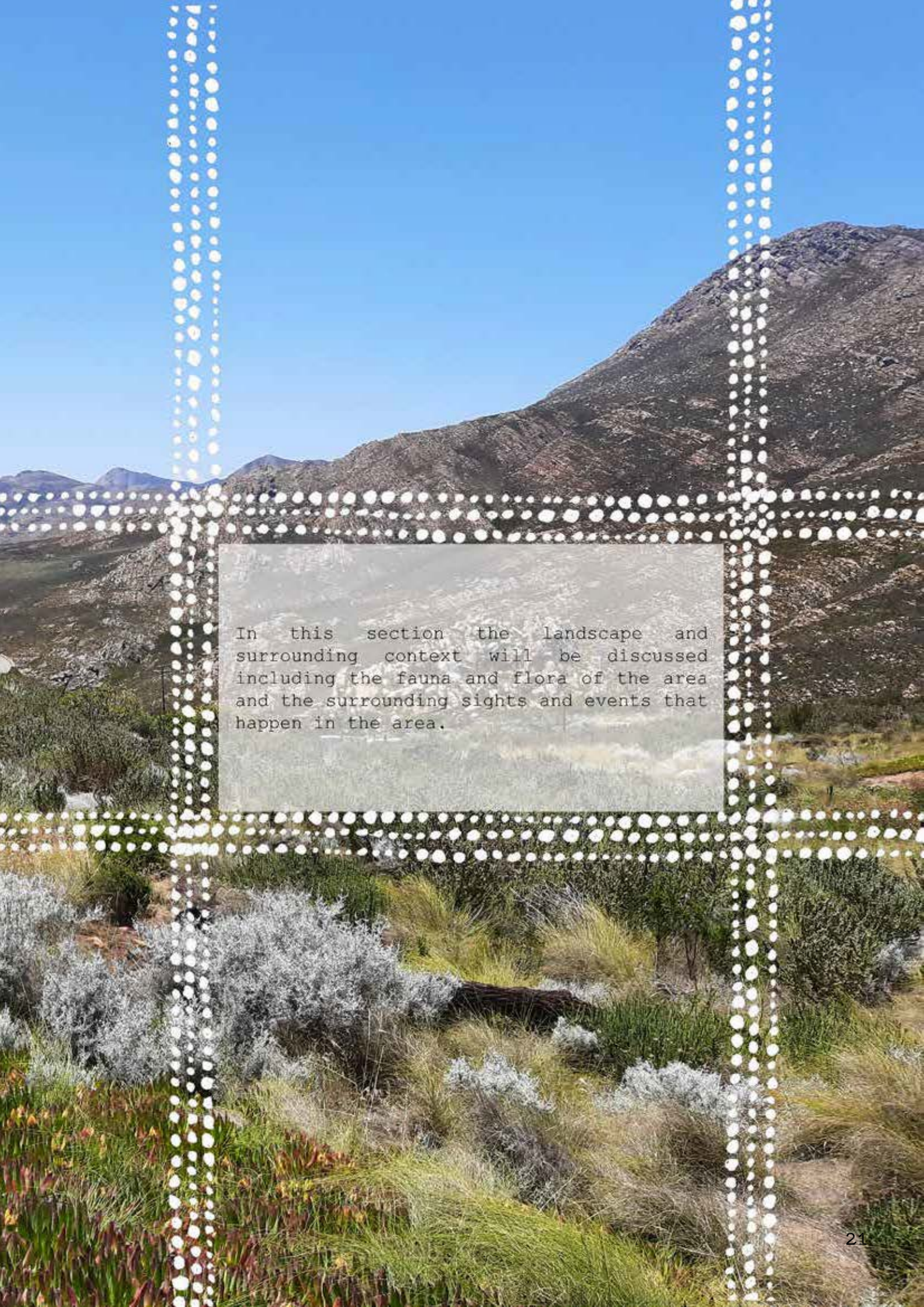
"For oft, when on my couch I lie  
in vacant or in pensive mood,  
they flash upon that inward eye  
which is the bliss of solitude;  
and then my heart with pleasure fills  
and dances with the daffodils"  
-William Wordsworth (De Botton, 2014, p. 156)



Figure 26: Head in the clouds (author, 2020)



# The Landscape



In this section the landscape and surrounding context will be discussed including the fauna and flora of the area and the surrounding sights and events that happen in the area.

## Swartberg

The Swartberg mountain range runs east-west along the northern edge of the semi-arid Little Karoo in the Western Cape. It is made up of two officially named ranges, the little and greater Swartberg mountains. The Smaller (ironically the higher range) includes the highest peak, Seweweekspoort piek (2325m) and Towerkop (2189m). The Greater is to the east, the Gouritz River dividing the two ranges, the highest peak here being the Tierberg (2132m) (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2011: online).

These mountains are a world heritage site and are home to the world famous, Cango Caves as well as the most famous subterranean system in South Africa, located just north of Oudtshoorn.

The most famous pass over the mountains is the Swartberg pass, which connects Oudtshoorn and Prince Albert.

This mountain range is regarded as one of the finest exposed fold mountain chains in the world (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online).

### Swartberg Nature Reserve

Lies in the Oudtshoorn District and is critical to the management of mountain catchments and water yields in the region.

The reserve is concerned with the conservation of the indigenous fauna and flora as well as the mountain catchment areas and the water yield thereof as well as educational and recreational opportunities.

The area was home to the San for many centuries, the evidence of this can be found all over the reserve in the form of rock paintings and artefacts (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online).

## Climate

The Swartberg has climatic extremes, going from freezing in winter, the temperature dropping well below 0°C with snow on the mountains, to uncomfortably hot summers with temperatures of 40°C and up. Rain occurs throughout the year, peak time being early winter and spring, with thundershowers in the summer months (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online).

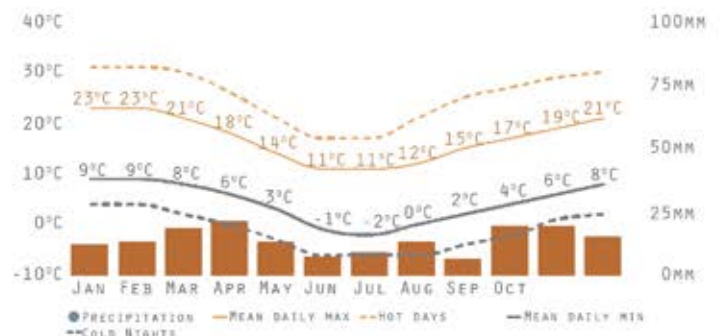


Figure 28: Graph depicting temperature and rain in the Swartberg region (author, 2020)

### Meiringspoort

A 25km tarred pass through the Swartberg with beautiful rock formations and indigenous fauna and flora, which has become quite a popular tourist attraction due to the Meiringspoort waterfall hidden in a deep ravine. The water cascades about 60m and the bottom of the natural pool is yet to be found (Oudtshoorn Info, 2019: online).



Figure 29: Meiringspoort (author, 2020)

## Prince Albert

Prince Albert a a quaint little town found in the foothills of the Swartberg Mountain in the Great Karoo. It is known as a 'little oasis"out in the arid Karoo due to it being blessed with water from the Swartberg Mountains (Prince Albert Info, 2020: online). The town was named after Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort (Figure 30), in 1845 (The Great Karoo, 2017: online).



Figure 30: Prince Albert (The Great Karoo, 2017: online)

This town thrives on tourism and has become a place to break away and rid oneself of the stressors of modern day life. It was established in 1762 and it holds a great many memories of life back then, Prince Albert has an antique feeling to it which enthralls those who are seeking a blast from the past. There you will find the Karoo-style at its very best; Karoo-style homes, Karoo-style food, Karoo-style art etc (Prince Albert Info, 2020: online). It is the perfect place to experience the Karoo to the fullest.

Prince Albert is a town very different from its neighbours, something that adds to the unique feel of the town are the "Prince Albert Gables". There are so many different shapes, forms and types of gables to be found in the town that it became one of the towns trademark sights (Figures 32-40). This "trend" was started by Prince Albert himself who had a unique gable designed for his daughter by Carel Lotz (Figure 31).



Figure 31: The unique Prince Albert Gable (Story Weaver, 2020: online)



Figures 32-40: The gables of Prince Albert (Gibson, n.d.: online)

Prince Albert very much became an inspiration for the design proposal moving forward due not only to the rich history and authentic "Karooeness" found in the town but also because of the incline in job scarcity, as of a census done in 2017 which put the unemployment rate at 20,3% (Western Cape Government, 2018, p. 28).

The proposal is aimed to assist the local economy by bringing in more tourists and providing jobs to the people of Prince Albert.

## Fauna and Flora

Vegetation is remarkably diverse. A range of the following can be found in the area:

- Renosterveld
- Mountain fynbos
- Karoo-veld
- Spekboom-veld
- Geophyte species
- Proteas (including the rare Protea Venustra)
- Leucadendrons
- Ericas
- Watsonias
- Gladiolus
- Disas
- Haemanthus species
- And many more

Of the world's six floral kingdoms, this is the smallest and richest per area unit.

(Cape Nature, 2020: 38-81)

The fauna in the area is just as diverse with some species found nowhere else on earth:

- 11 Snake species
- Booted & Martial Eagle
- Cape Eagle Owl
- Victorin's Warbler
- Protea seedeater
- Sun Birds
- Sugar Birds
- Rock Jumpers
- Black Eagles
- Dassie
- Klipspringer
- Baboon
- Leopard
- Otters
- Jackal
- Aardvark
- Kudu
- Steenbok
- Grysbok
- Grey Rhebok

(Cape Nature, 2020: 113-139)



# The arrival

The arrival is most oft the most thrilling part of the journey. The sense of achievement of eventually getting to the destination, of finally being able to be where it is that the self, wishes to be.

The arrival at Ou Tol is quiet, deafeningly so, there is no hustle and bustle, it is as if the world has been put on pause. The feeling of frustration begins to emerge, it feels as though there is cotton wool filtering the sounds as if the volume has been turned down during the crux of a film, thoughts still racing. It is incomprehensible how anything could be so slow and so quiet. But as the crunch of the gravel echoes in the walk up the pathway, the mind begins to settle and senses begin to heighten.

Suddenly the reds and greens are vibrant, the sun's rays are warm and the earthy smells are poignant. It takes a moment to realise that this place is speaking, its spirit, its genius loci, seems to be saying; "Just be".

It is whispered by the breeze swirling in the valley, it's hummed by the bees, gliding from one vibrant Protea to the next, and it is said by the mountain peaks, imploring to be explored, by the ethereal glow illuminating the entirety of the landscape as the sun begins to retreat behind the peaks.

The sense of arrival, of calm, of release fills her soul with a single breath, the mind already feels less frantic, the storm inside subsiding, the stressors of life already less back-breakingly dense.

But this will not last long as the mind is wired for tension, for stress, the fight or flight instinct has been the over-ruling go-to response for too long and the mind cannot help but wonder; "what if?".

Suddenly the thought of isolation is overwhelming and the fact that this is a new place with new people becomes irrepressibly apparent. But this, is the first step, this is how the journey begins.

*"Isolation in an unfamiliar landscape can cause feelings of unease but paradoxically allows the individual to undergo self-reflection that strengthens their connection with their identity."*

-Alain de Botton (De Botton, 2002)

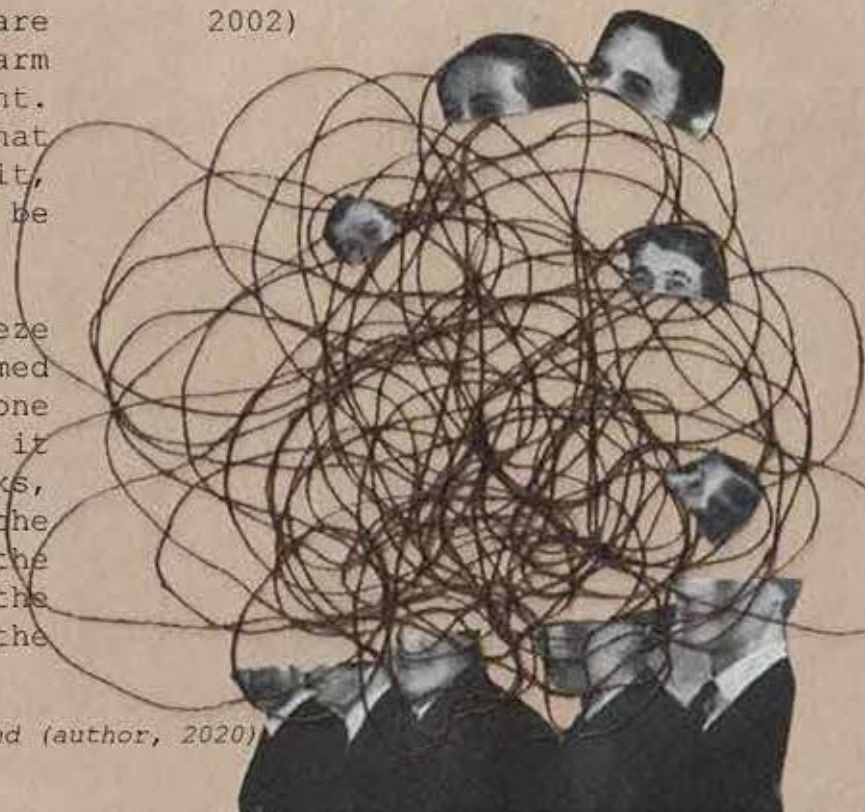


Figure 41: *The chaos of the mind* (author, 2020)

Isolation, the fact of being alone. Isolation can be a terrifying notion especially when coupled with the unknown but this is what provides the challenge, the opportunity and possibility to be in the most raw and authentic form. According to Martin Heidegger's interpretation there are two modes of being or dasein - Authentic and inauthentic (Mattey, 2005, p. 1). Authentic dasein is of one's own will, it is unencumbered by anything outside the self, untarnished by external influences (Wikipedia, 2020: online).

Inauthentic being however, the direct opposite. This is a form of being perturbed by outside forces - society, family, expectation, economy etc (Wikipedia, 2020:online) form of being that does not allow the depiction of the self's truest manifestation.

Heidegger expresses the authentic or inauthentic experience of dasein as being grounded as a theoretical grounding on a state of being known as being-in-the-world.

Being-in-the-world, it focuses not on the physicality of the location of the body but rather the presence of the self within everydayness of life. The absorption of the self into that which is ready-to-hand.

Heidegger describes two methods of approaching the world: Ready to hand - referring to the practical reaction that the self has to things that are practical or useful, meaning that the things are viewed as tools that once engaged with become an extension of the self, the self becomes absorbed into the object in the sense that the self is required in order to validate the existence and the function of the thing.



Figure 42:  
Isolation  
(author,  
2020)

In the same way the thing is needed in order for the self to fulfill a certain function without the thing or tool, to this specific need the self is redundant. Just as the hammer becomes an extension of the workman's hand in Heidegger's being and time.

Present-at-hand, which concerns the theoretical apprehension of a world made up of objects. This is the conception of the world from which science begins (Critchley, 2009: online), in the sense that this is a perception of the world that is based on viewing an entity as an object to be observed, concerned only with the bare facts of the object in order to theorize about it (Parsons, 2017: online). This is much like any scientific experiment which takes place in a vacuum where there is no mood and everything is neutral, the only thing that matters is the factual evidence of that specific element in the vacuum.

Because if the writer's focus is on what is to happen next and should be happening and where the writing must ultimately end up, the writer is stunting not only his own imagination but the reader's as well, as the writing then only resonates with the writer and the somethingness is lost. This is why awareness is key, awareness of the being of the self rather than the self, as by acknowledging the being of the self. The self is also acknowledging the existence of the being of others and this awareness is what leads to literature that serves the somethingness that each self has an awareness of within the self.

This then leads to the paradox of isolation and the integration and how without the one there cannot be the other. This is related to the notion of awareness of the being of the self which cannot exist without the awareness of the self, the authentic self which fails to exist without inauthentic self. Thus derived the theories of the deep mind and the subconscious mind. These theories were proposed by Maggie Ross in *Silence: A User's Guide* (Ross, 2014) and constitute of the following: Ross theorises that there are two states in which the self functions; the self-conscious and the deep very much like Heidegger's notions (HEIDEGGER, 1962) of the authentic and inauthentic self. Ross states that the everyday version of the self, the self that is mostly present is that of the self-conscious mind, the mind that is aware of the self (Ross, 2014).

This self-conscious mind is linked to left hemisphere of the brain as this is where new knowledge is organised, classified and arranged,

it is where all of our experiences and encounters are put into language in the way that we best understand it.

So it is possible for our left hemisphere to manipulate what we are experiencing as language in itself. It is self-reflexive and can be used to explain something in a way that is personal to each individual. The left hemisphere works in a logical and linear fashion, it finds a problem and takes calculated steps in order to solve it.

The left hemisphere works much like that of a **maze** (Figure 43). The point of a maze is to find its centre through rational and logical steps, it requires definite choices to be made and there are consequences as a result of those choices. The left hemisphere often forgets that it is only one half of a whole and thus mistakenly believes that it is the master, when in actual fact the left hemisphere is entirely dependent on the right hemisphere, which is of course, the deep mind (Ross, 2020: online).



Figure 43: *The mind depicted as a maze* (author, 2020)

The right hemisphere can be seen as the "silent partner" in the self's awareness, as this is the part of the brain from where the sub-conscious is able to be accessed. The right hemisphere is the receptor for new information, new experiences, it is the source of perception and insight. The right hemisphere is able to think spatially and holographically. It is also able to access the rest of the mind, excepting the self-conscious as this is the primary function of the left hemisphere (the self-conscious mind).

The mind that the right hemisphere accesses is silent, it does not aim to necessarily comprehend everything that it experiences but rather aims to be aware of what the brain is receiving. This awareness is what allows for the self to have any depth of understanding of being. The deep mind can be compared to that of a **labyrinth** (Figure 44), as a labyrinth has not calculated decisions to be made, it is purely a journey of self-reflection and a method of delving into the self to try and comprehend more of the self (Bumgardner, 2020: online).

A silent journey of contemplation.

The deep mind is often accessed purely by chance in the banality of routine, the deep mind can skip to the front of the mind not pausing the self-conscious mind that allows the self to function or perform tasks but rather almost as if the deep mind is relegating the self-conscious mind to the back seat. As if the deep mind is drowning out the self-conscious mind without turning it off.



Figure 44: The mind depicted as a labyrinth (author, 2020)

This is what may be known as day dreaming or simply a lapse in time without the self-conscious mind being aware of it. This often happens when driving or washing the dishes, for instance, suddenly the chore is complete but there is no recollection of how or when it was done.

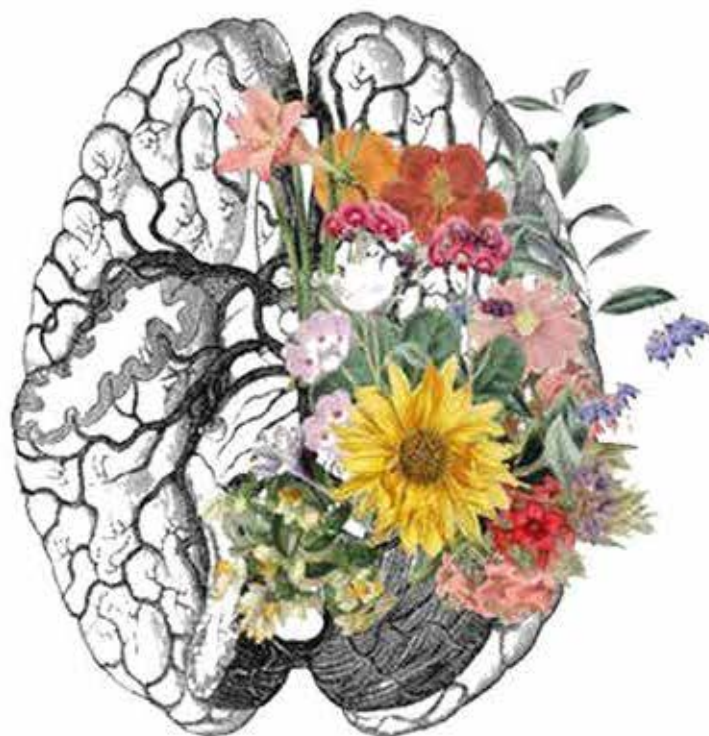


Figure 45: The mind depicted as a place of biology and anatomy (author, 2020)



Chapter 2 discusses the conceptual approach and development that informed the design. It also further discusses the theoretical motivation that is extracted from the conceptual approach. It discusses the writer and writing process, the effect that architecture may have on the writer and the rituals that form part of a writer's very being. It also includes the touchstone, the outcomes thereof and how it will influence the design.

Figure 47: *The Touchstone*  
(author: 2020)

# The touch stone

The development and creation of the touchstone was more focused on Nature as a main element in the design. How nature may act as a balancing measure in daily life was the theme that was explored by means of this touchstone.

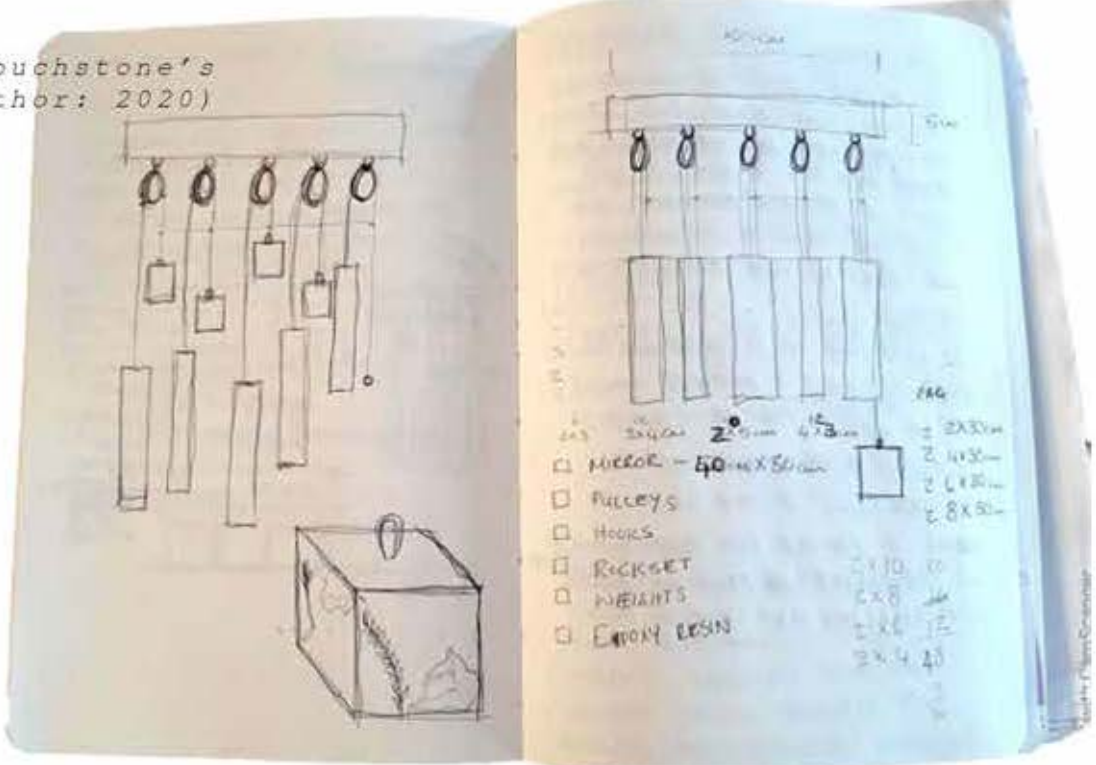
Daily life is filled with "weights" or stressors, be they work, studies, outstanding bills, the needs of others etc. Whatever these stressors may be they have a tendency to overshadow the positives and take over. Man allows himself to get caught up in these factors and this is what ultimately throws the balance of daily life out. What is often forgotten is that moment of peace, a moment in time where man is aware of the self, a moment in nature.

This touchstone is representative of that.

**Centering the self by means of nature and thus changing man's perspective from the fragmented vision every day life inflicts.**



Figure 48: The Touchstone's creation (author: 2020)



**Mirrors**

The mirrors are representative of the self and the fragmented state the self is in and the fragmented view that man has.

The weight Resin block is what allows the mirrors to align.

**Resin**

Inside the resin are stones found on site, this represents the fluidity and organic, uncontrollable force of nature.

**Nature is the driving force.**

**Weights**

The weights are representative of the different stressors we may have in daily life. the weights are all of the same material as it is important to note that not all stressors will be the same for each individual.

Only by the addition of nature into man's daily life, will man be able to find balance.

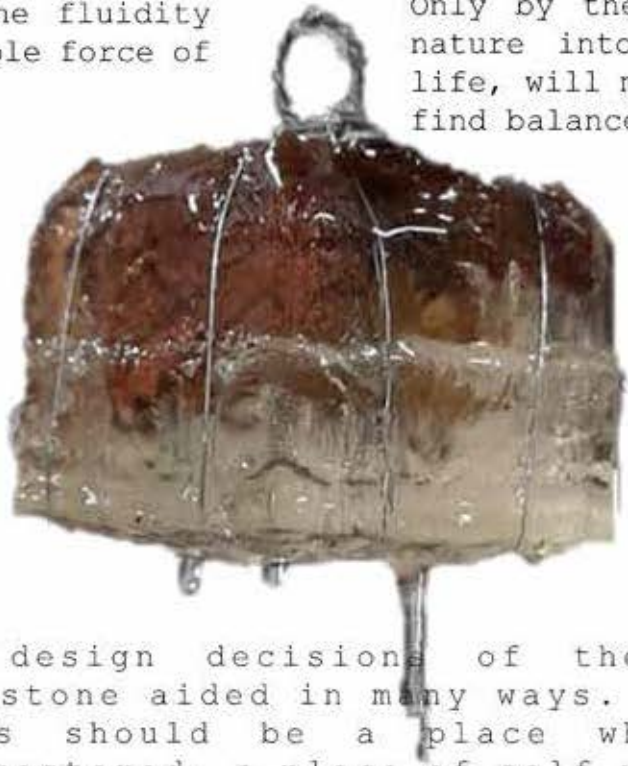


Figure 49: Nature (author: 2020)

In terms of the design decisions of the proposed structure the touchstone aided in many ways. It made it apparent that this should be a place where one's equilibrium can be restored, a place of self reflection, a place where the experience should be the top priority. It also influences the design by bringing in the element of interaction. The building should interact with the landscape and vice versa but also that it should interact with the building within nature to truly complete the entire experience.

A scenic landscape featuring a winding road, a white house, and a large white graphic overlay. The text 'Ou Tol' is written in a serif font on the overlay. The background shows a valley with a winding road, a white house with a blue roof, and a rocky foreground.

Ou Tol

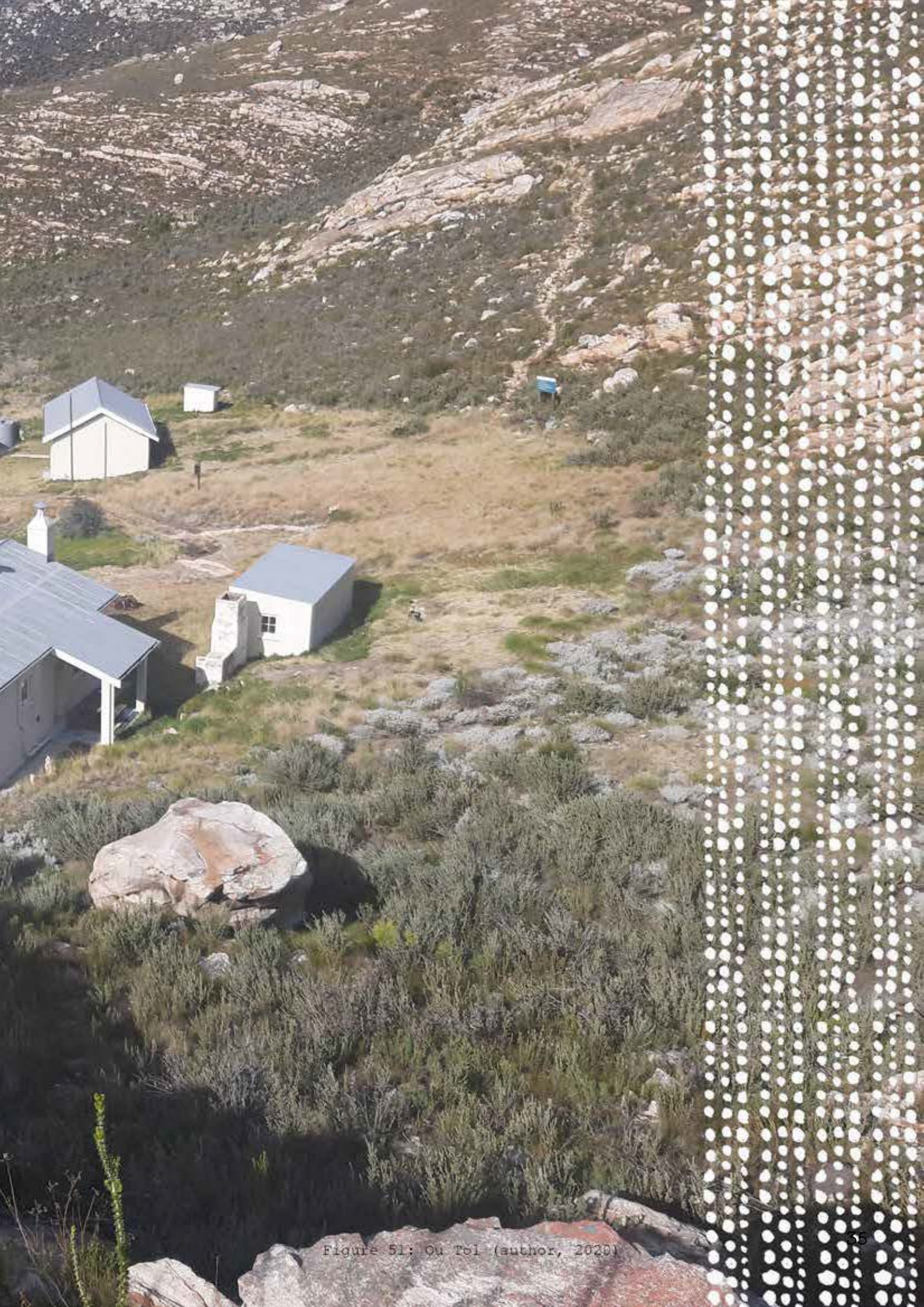


Figure 51: Ou Toi (author, 2020)

The proposed site was suggested by Alan Wheeler, a Conservation Services Manager at Cape Nature. It was thought that due to this being a UNESCO World Heritage Site that it would not be able to be utilised for these purposes but Mr Wheeler confirmed that due to the fact that this site had already been built upon it would not be an issue.

On the proposed site, known as Ou Tol, is the starting point of one of the most well known hiking trails on the Swartberg mountain, Ou Tol hiking trail. It is a 12.8km trail from Ou Tol to Bothashoek.

On site there are small cottages, which were previously old forestry houses. These houses were fully equipped overnight self-catering houses for hikers or anyone wishing to be accommodated there. These houses are unfortunately no longer in use and are now standing empty. They were always maintained by Cape Nature and still belong to them but they no longer function as accommodation.

This site is raised and thus looks over the road and the valley and mountains below without obstruction. This is a fynbos region with plenty of animal life and is located in one of the world's 6 floral kingdoms making it one of the most beautiful and serene sites, the perfect place to achieve self-awareness in order to move the focus from the self.



Figure 53: Site analysis (author: 2020)

Mountain side

Unobstructed views over road

Only accessible by car via Swartberg pass



Entrance to site

NE

Unobstructed views over road

Overnight chalet #1



# The concepts

With these concepts the idea of what the writing process consists of, and what a writer needs in order to write is explored. Not necessarily the physical needs that the writer may have, but rather the psychological and environmental needs, the non-physical needs that may transform a writer's space into a writer's space.

Writing is a complex art form.

One that not only requires quite a bit of time but quite a bit of the artist's self as well.

Writing is essentially putting the writer's thoughts onto paper in way in which they can be understood and interpreted by others. It is a way of giving a part of the person to the public and showing the world the person's thoughts in their most vulnerable state. This is due to the fact that these thoughts are now open to interpretation as others may not perceive the written ideas in the same way that the writer thought them.



Figure 54: Books carved to look like a mountain (author, 2020)

It has become apparent, by means of research into the writing process, that in order for a writer to write there are three crucial concepts that must be considered.

Isolation

Integration

Paradox

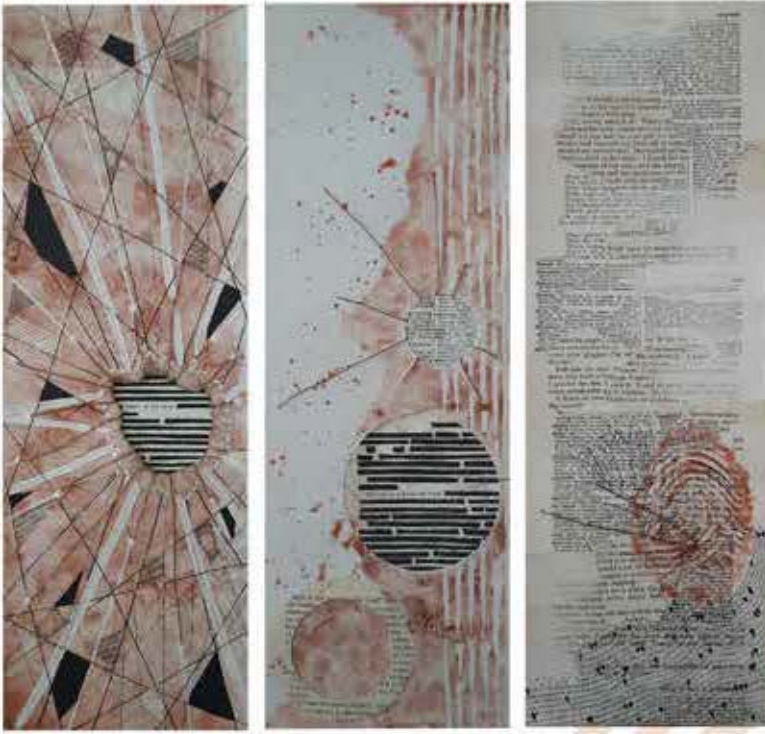


Figure 55-57: *Isolation, Paradox, Integration* (author, 2020)

**The point of a  
maze is to find  
its centre.  
The point of a  
labyrinth is  
to find your  
centre.**

Figure 58: *Carved books display* (author, 2020)



## Isolation

The concept of isolation refers back to the idea of escaping the world in order to find peace and to settle the mind, to get away from the 'franticness' that everyday life precipitates. To do some soul-searching.

The main objective being, to get back to the very essence of who you are and what you are trying to achieve in this world.

## Integration

The concept, Integration has a layered meaning, it speaks of the integration of the people that will be attending the retreat. It refers to the integration of ideas into a story. But most of all it refers to the little piece of the author that is bled into their writing, that makes the whole writing process so incredibly personal and leaves the writer in their most vulnerable state as they offer a piece of themselves to the world.

## Paradox

Paradox is the most important concept as it refers to the fact that the writer needs both isolation as well as integration in order to write.

There needs to be rigidity and structure, calculated decisions and order in the writing process but there also needs to be imagination, faith and freedom in order for there to be any kind of writing. There needs to be quietness and clarity of the mind in order for the chaos



Figure 59: Isolation  
(author, 2020)

## Isolation

Nature, painted into the 'franticness' of everyday life. The self, the words isolated from it all. Thoughts cancelled out to find clarity in one. To find the self's voice, to focus the mind.



Figure 60: Paradox  
(author, 2020)

## Paradox

The chaos of nature splattered throughout the pages tainting the words written by man. Providing a new perspective, a new point of view to the previously rigid academically focused words.

Man's words capturing nature and nature capturing man's words.



Figure 61: Integration  
(author, 2020)

## Integration

Nature, integrated into man's identity. The mountains becoming part of the commas and periods of a written piece. The flowers captured in the words on the page. the golden, auburn rays of the sun, stitched into the written words.



Figure 62-66: The book of Isolation (author, 2020)



Figure 67-71: The book of Nature (author, 2020)



Figure 72-76: The book of Writing (author, 2020)



Figure 77-81: The book of Integration (author, 2020)

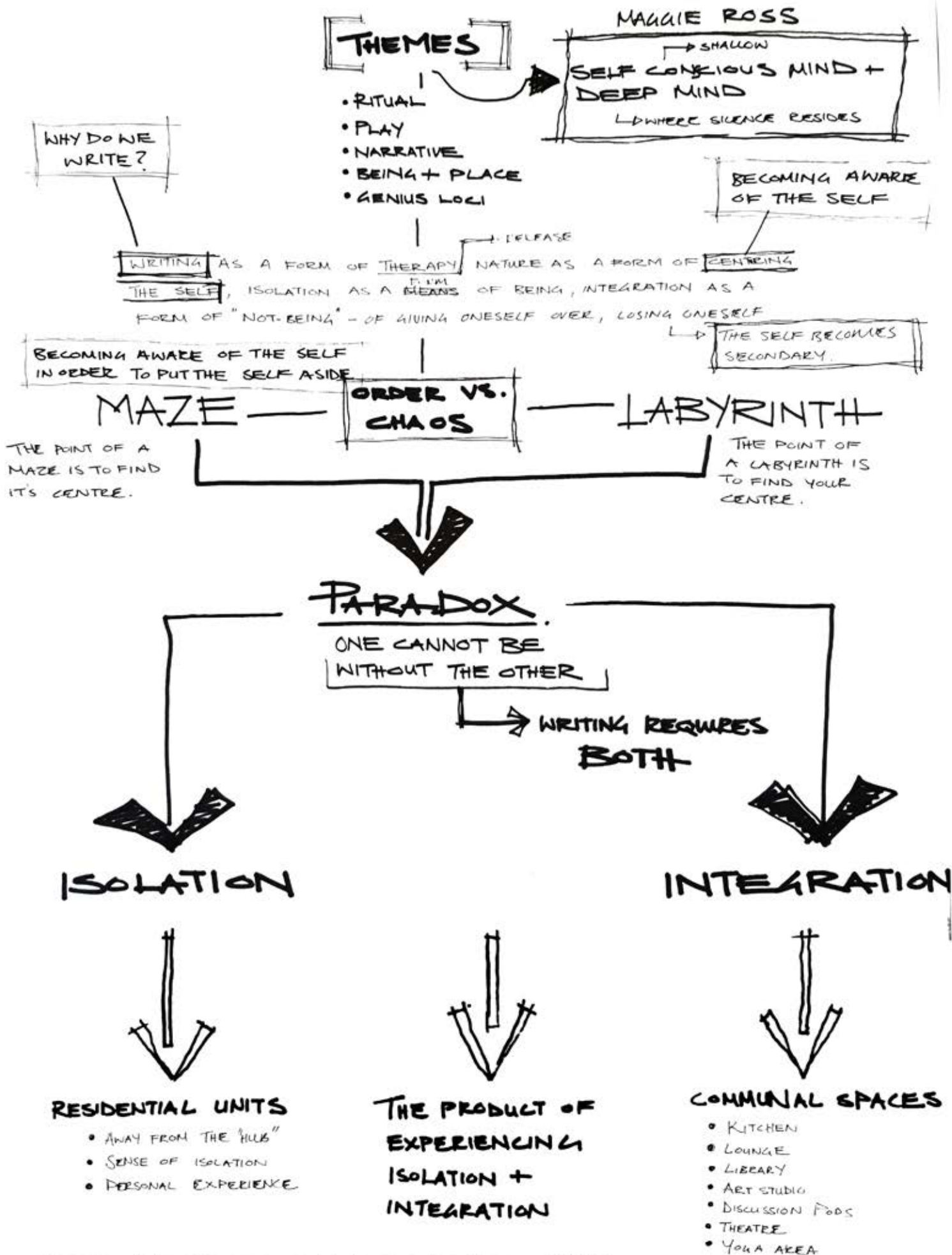


Figure 82: Diagram of theory (author: 2020)

# The Essence

Finding yourself in  
nature in order to  
lose yourself in  
writing.

Finding oneself refers to returning to the stripped back, rawest version of the self, the truest version, the very core of the being.

This is very important when it comes to writing as being aware of the self and what is seen as important in order to be able to write with honest intention.

The aim is to do this by means of nature. This is often achieved through meditation or travel, it can be referred to as 'soul-searching'. By being in isolation from the distractions of every day life and being placed in nature, little is left to worry about besides the contemplation of life.

Losing oneself is equally as crucial to the writing process as finding oneself. One must first be aware of the self in order to be able to remove the self from the awareness.

This is important in order to be able to be present in the writing and focus only on the writing and simply being in the presence of the self immersed in the writing.

It also refers to the way that the writer becomes integrated into the writing. The writer's thoughts and notions are what the writing is made up of. Thus the writer is bled into the writing.

# Why writers write

As the deep mind is connected to the right hemisphere of the brain and the left hemisphere is connected to the self-conscious mind it is important to note that without the one the other would be unable to function. The right hemisphere would have no way to understand the experiences it is receiving and the left hemisphere would have no source of experience understanding thus, the paradox. The maze and the labyrinth.

The maze and the labyrinth, both equally crucial to the act of writing. Writing entails bearing your soul and printing it onto paper. It requires access to the deepest recesses of the deep mind.

A writer requires the freedom of the imagination yet the writer also requires the structure and disciplines of putting pen to paper as without either of these not a single word would be written.

A writer requires every paradox, the authentic and the inauthentic self, isolation and integration, self-awareness and awareness of the being of the self, the deep mind and the self-conscious mind, the anticipation and the arrival, life and mortality in order to write, in order to immortalise the

## The Blaze

Set fire to my pen.  
Ignite my words  
until they're  
seared  
into your memory.  
When emotions  
smolder  
and paper  
turns to ash,  
sift remnants  
for lyrics,  
pull verse  
from remains,  
until inspiration  
sparks  
and my pen is  
lit again.

~Christy Ann Martine~

Set fire

to your  
emotions

until inspiration

is  
lit again.



...s it?  
...und  
...ny eye  
...my h  
...face. S  
...ber arms  
...of her neck;  
...rt and her p  
...valst; then  
...ch disgust to de  
...heir own hopes, in  
...co, but not submissi  
...d Passion holds his l  
...ich shall atone for ye  
...came, it cometh, and  
...punish or forgive

Clear, placid L CHAP  
With the wild  
Which warns  
Earth's frag  
...Rosle aga  
...and so  
...nucleus of  
...second  
...old term for  
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...installed (Gk.).  
...value of (esp.  
...to Sela'obil n.  
...Don't be stupid  
...worth  
...Devr  
...loss a coin for the local  
...cover your plaques. I'm ask  
...his bet.'  
...all  
...put his cigar do  
...that kind of lo  
...lose Y  
...ble for fun. I  
...iced it  
...y seeing other De at Yo  
...flicker of conte  
...Maidsto  
...looked  
...Doe  
...paving-stone.—dalle n.  
...over flat rocks in a gorge (etym.  
...dallop (dal'-op) n. a lump of any  
...doll'op (etym. uncertain)

...at ab  
...d west  
...n of  
...ufort  
...sho slight  
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...yn; value, to be  
...g-ril) n. a let  
...alphabet, and  
...rinting of Sae  
...K meaning  
...for more than a week. She  
...id a night with her mother.  
...don. Then she  
...towards the north. microcephal, se  
...selen  
...translucent crystals  
...calcium sulphate); a salt of selen  
...a hypothetical dweller on the  
...selen is a part. to lime containing  
...plaster of Paris (Gk. selen, the  
...selenium (se-len-ium) n. a non-  
...element; just the remarkable prop  
...alter  
...to f

# Architecture and Writers

What makes architecture important to writers? Does architecture play a role in the mind's ability to think creatively and if so how? The following was found by means of doing research to answer these very questions. It was German illustrator, Heinrich Zille that said "you can kill a man with an apartment as with an axe - it takes only a little longer" (The New Yorker, 1958, P 168).

This statement albeit said over 60 years ago still rings true. Architecture makes up our lives, it is what we live in, work in, love in, die in. Architecture is what we spend our whole life in, it is impossible that, that which encompasses 95% of our existence would not have an effect on us. The space we inhabit could be the very difference between having a good day and a bad day, being productive and procrastinating, focusing and floundering.

Architecture is the cornerstone of our existence and it, unawares to man, plays an enormous role in how humans interact, react and transact with one another every single day.

"Architectural Psychology" is a relatively new field of study and for the past several years this field has been doing extensive research into the effects that architecture may have on man's cognitive abilities, thinking, processes, mental and physical wellbeing and even emotions (Margarete, 2018: online).

This research is done with the goal of being able to recommend certain designs to promote certain qualities and cultivate specific environments or work cultures. For example, how a home might be designed to promote mental wellbeing and reduce stress or an office may be designed in order to promote productivity and positivity (Margarete, 2018: online).

Dr Harald Deinsberger-Deinsweger (Figure 84) from the institute for residential and architectural psychology in Austria is currently exploring how various rooms must be designed to have the most positive effect on its inhabitants (Margarete, 2018: online). He is investigating how the potential short comings in architectural design may be affecting man but also what the possibilities could be should these so called short comings be rectified and how that may be achieved. There are however many variables in this kind of study as there are many areas within man that architecture may have an effect on.

Figure 84:  
Dr  
Deinsberger-  
Deinsweger  
(Management  
Circle,  
2015:  
online)



## Health

It is believed by Deinsburger-Deinsweger that inferior or badly executed architecture along with other everyday stressors could exacerbate stress, worsen fatigue, induce psychosomatic symptoms and could even result in actual physical discomfort. The symptoms of all these effects are not obvious immediately but will begin to show after a period of time that may fluctuate for each individual. But just as it is true that architecture may have negative effects on man it is also true that the solution is also architecture but architecture that provides for places of healing and places that promote wellbeing.

## Senses and the Nervous System

Feeling comfortable in one's environment is crucial to the overall state of one's wellbeing. In order to be comfortable each of the following factors must be taken into consideration:

- Indoor climate
- Light
- Plans
- Materials
- Constructions methods
- Temperature
- Air conditions

(Margarete, 2018: online).



Figure 85: 5 Senses (author, 2020)

All these factors have an effect on the human's holistic perception which is the premise that man's senses influence the entire body as they have an effect on the thinking processes, feelings and actions. Our experiences are completely dependent on our senses and as such they must be taken into account when designing. If the senses are positively stimulated within a space it can result in a positive outcome, be it a good mood, creative thoughts, productivity, calmness or even all of the above. As such if in an uncomfortable environment or an insipid one the opposite will be true, it may even result in anxiety and hypersensitivity (Margarete, 2018: online).

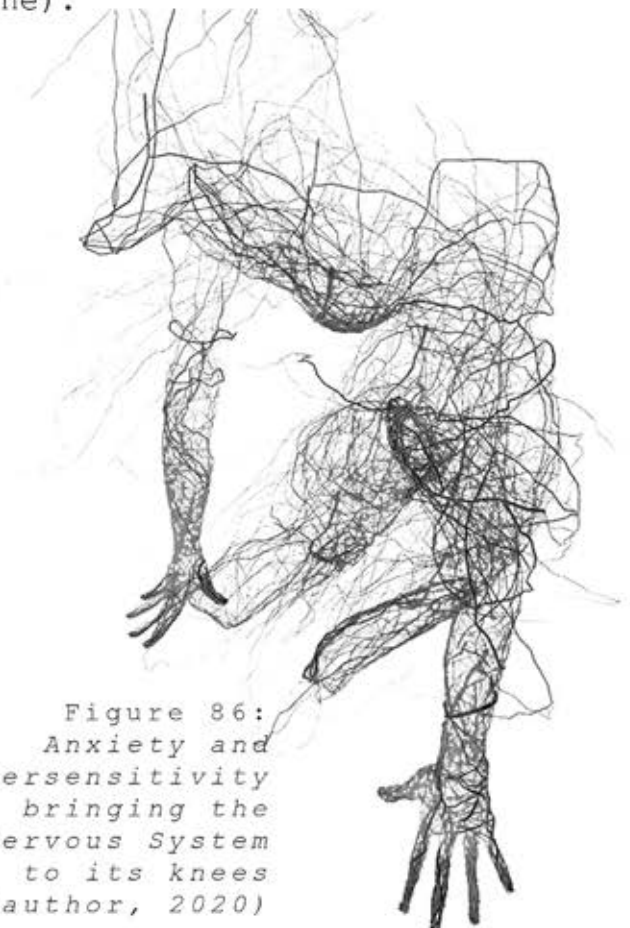


Figure 86:  
Anxiety and  
Hypersensitivity  
bringing the  
Nervous System  
to its knees  
(author, 2020)

## Personality and Evolvment

The environment in which one lives and dwells is where the sense of self will develop along with the personality and personal traits. It is safe to say that if the environment does not prove to be a place of comfort and positive attributes it could lead to a lack of self-esteem, self-improvement and self-worth as the constant negative environment and discomfort experienced by the senses will not have a positive effect.

Danny Friedman, a housing and social policy researcher has linked poor housing/settlements and the health and wellbeing, likelihood of criminality and educational aspirations and attainment in his study he shows that due to the deficit in design considerations, those who live in these settlements or government funded housing schemes have a lack lustre attitude towards educational achievement, experience a rise in health issues and tend to get caught up in criminal activities. But once again as architecture attributes to the problem it is also the solution (Margarete, 2018: online).

## Use and Behaviour

It is true that spatial structure can influence behaviour as they will provoke a reaction from whoever inhabits the space. Acts such as vandalism improper use, dilapidation are all as a result of architecture that does not promote a positive interaction with its inhabitants. But how does one address an issue like this? By designing for the inhabitants, to provide an architecture that will 48courage an emotional bond with its inhabitants.



Figure 87: Our environment affects who we are (Behance, 2016: online)

This will ultimately cultivate a culture of respect and responsibility for the built environment. Conclusively if the architecture does not take those whom it is being designed for into consideration the outcome and effect on the people will never be positive (Margarete, 2018: online).



Figure 88: The result of not designing to suit the needs of the people you are designing for (Waddington, 2013: online)



# Writing as a Ritual

Creativity is a very subjective concept as each artist is an individual and will be inspired by very different things as it is a fact that creativity can be stimulated in countless ways. This is of course also true for writers. But however it may be that a writer is generally a catalyst that allows the baking soda volcano that is creativity to erupt and bubble over.

This, is the ritual.

Every writers' ritual is of course different and it is the ritual that allows the writer to slip out of reality and into a headspace that is conducive to writing. Some rituals are as simple as tidying up the work space before sitting down to write while others may be far more involved. Some writers feel they cannot write without a certain pen or a specific type of paper, this is what makes designing for writers so challenging. Some writers, like Francois Smith prefer to write with no distractions, staring at a white wall (Smith, 2020), while writers like Wilbur Smith liked a messy desk and jazz music playing in the background (Metcalf, 2013: online). Deon Meyer prefers to write at home in the busiest room in the house surrounded by the hustle and bustle of his family going about their busy lives (Brink, 2019: online), whereas Roald Dahl only writes away from home - in his shed, in the same armchair everyday with the same yellow pencil and a yellow legal pad (WHSmith, 2015: online).



Figure 91: Francois Smith (*Sunday Times*, 2018: online)



Figure 92: Wilbur Smith (*The Real Book Spy*, 2018: online)

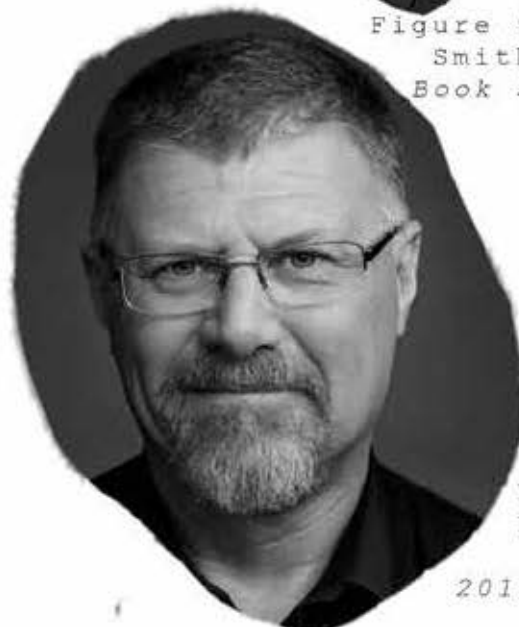


Figure 93: Deon Meyer (*Magwood*, 2015: online)



Figure 94: Roald Dahl (*Emaze*, 2008: online)



Figure 95: Andre Brink (*Emaze*, 2008: online)



Figure 96: Ernest Hemingway (*GoodReads*, n.d.: online)

Then there's Ernest Hemmingway who believed he had to stand to write as he would think better (Oppong, 2017: online) and of course, the easiest writer like Andre Brink would could write absolutely anywhere (Tayler, 2010: online. But no matter where or how the writers write, it is that, which the ritual is.

But what does the writer's ritual have to do with architecture and vice versa?

It is seen that architecture can influence a person in a certain way to achieve a certain goal and that is exactly the premise that this dissertation aims to apply to writers to try and achieve a kind of architecture that enhances the effect of the ritual, to become the catalyst for the catalyst so that the writer that may feel that his/her ritual is starting to lose its magic touch may be it reignited again by the manipulation of space and thus manipulation of the creative spark within the writer.

This will have to be a versatile and diverse architecture in order for each individual to gain the same experience within the structure. There will have to be white walls, quiet areas, writing nooks with views, communal areas with noise and movement and of course plenty of jazz. All designed in such a harmonious way that each ritual can be valued without taking away from another.

It is also worth noting the phenomenon that was Building 20 in 1942, right in the midst of WWII MIT's radiation lab required expansion under the direction of the military, who wanted to develop new weapons, fast. Hundreds of new scientists had been hired. For the time being while the expansion was being done a temporary structure was erected, Building 20, and all those from MIT's radiation facility as well as the new scientists were placed in this one, very poorly designed and constructed building, which most definitely prioritized space requirements over design. But even with all its physical shortcomings this soon became a centre of groundbreaking military research (Molloy, 2013: online).

Strange, considering that it is scientifically proven that the environment one is placed in has an effect on mood, emotion, mental and physical state so how did such a poorly designed building become a place of creative ingenuity?

After the war the building was to be demolished. MIT was once again in need of space so instead of demolishing building 20 it was used as an overflow space for a diversity of departments all having to share the same space. The departments ranged from electronics to nuclear science to linguistics among many others. The result? An enormous melting pot of minds interested in and sharing information on a magnificently broad spectrum, each person learning from the next collaborating on projects and creating the most innovative ideas together (Molloy, 2013: online).

*"By the time it was finally demolished, in 1998, Building 20 had become a legend of innovation, widely regarded as one of the most creative spaces in the world" (Lehrer, 2012: online).*

So how did such a poorly designed building become one of the most creative spaces in the world?

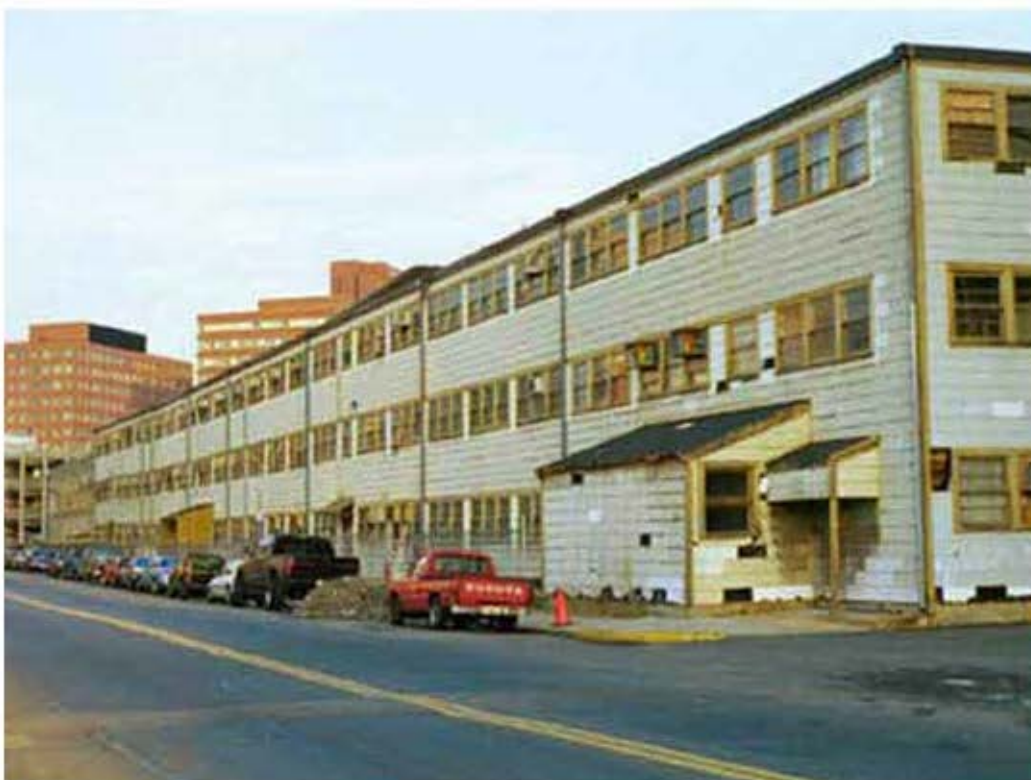


Figure 97:  
Building 20 -  
The "Plywood  
Palace"  
(*Ingenious  
Growth*, 2013:  
online)

It was actually due to the lack of design that people had to interact with one another, they had to ask for directions, they had to use the one single vending machine, they had to use the long narrow walkways, there was no way to avoid it, they were going to bump into one another whether they liked it or not. And every time they did, they interacted, they built relationships and eventually the building fostered a kind of a kinship within it (Molloy, 2013: online).

It was also the alleged temporary nature of the structure, this gave its inhabitants the freedom to alter the building to suit them. It was as if the building was alive with its users changing as their needs did, providing for them no matter the situation because the building became almost an extension of its user. The building itself was interactive.

## Conclusion

The main points from this building's story are the following:

1. Architects had nothing to do with it
2. Architects designing for creativity can learn from it

The lessons being:

### 1. Encourage interaction

a. Creativity does not stem from a single place, it is an amalgamation of different views and ideas, cultures and ethnicities, etc. Creativity is created by means of interaction (Molloy, 2013: online).

**"The collisions that happen when different fields of expertise converge in a shared physical space ... that's where the true sparks fly"**  
(Johnson, 2011, p. 162)

The famous urban theorist, Jane Jacobs, calls these interactions **"knowledge spill overs"**. People are excellent at using those "spill overs" in a new way, a form of recycling ideas, the only thing needed is for them to hear them - so why not use architecture as their hearing aids?

2. Involve the user and allow for change

Architecture should not be an element that stands on its own, it should encourage the users to interact with it, to adapt it and alter the space to make it truly theirs.

In the story of building 20 it was not the building on its own that made for such a creative meaningful place but rather the interaction of the users with the building. Don't be too precious about the architecture because then the building will never truly be lived in (Molloy, 2013: online).

By means of employing these lessons in the design of this dissertation it could be possible to design in such a way that the outcome is a place that cultivates a creative identity within its four walls and fosters a culture of interaction and **"knowledge spill overs"** by having a "main building" with areas such as a communal kitchen where the writers are encouraged to be together and interact around the dinner table it is hoped that this will be achieved.



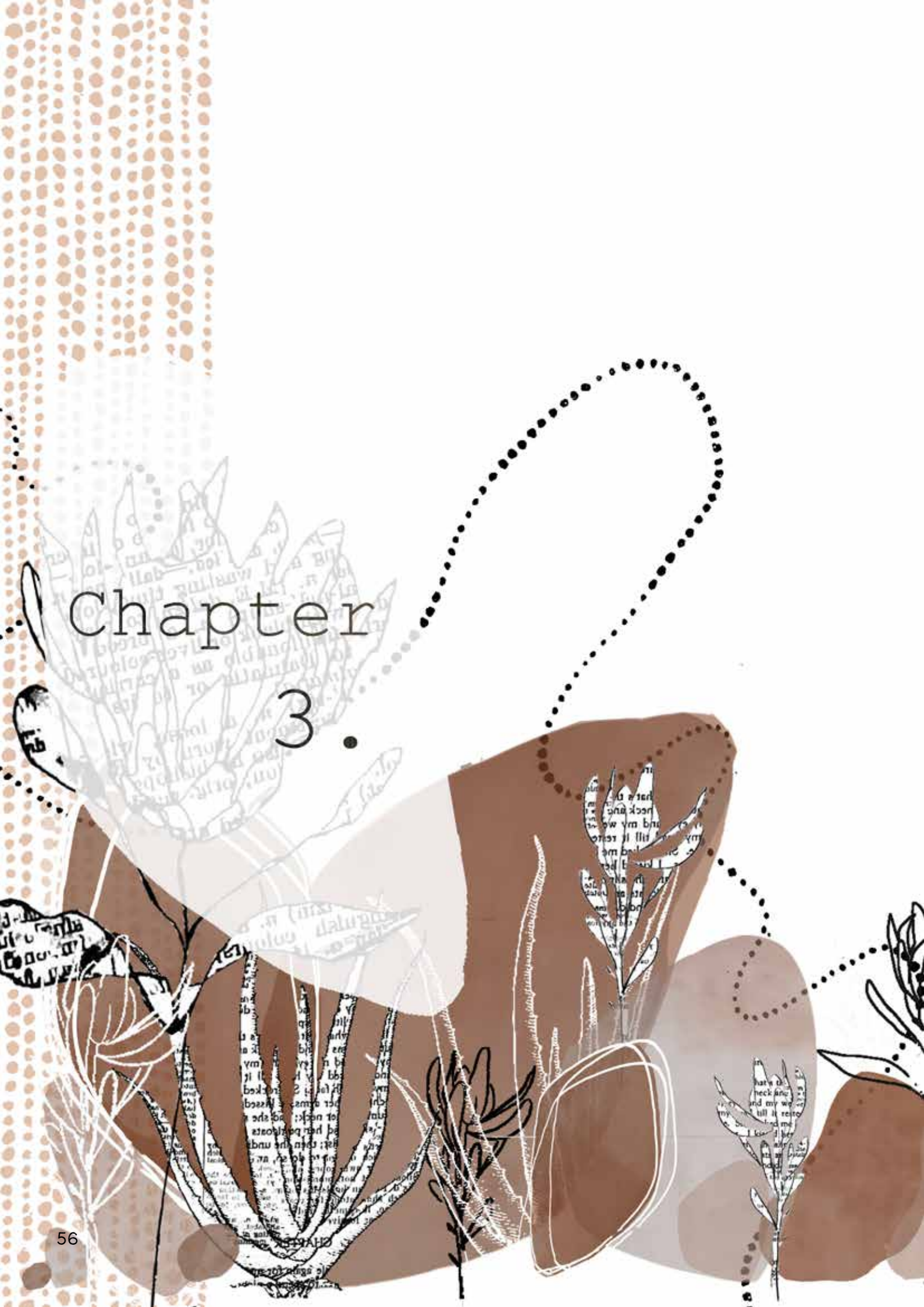
## Research question

How can creating a place of isolation in nature stimulate the engagement of the deep and self-conscious minds during the writing process?

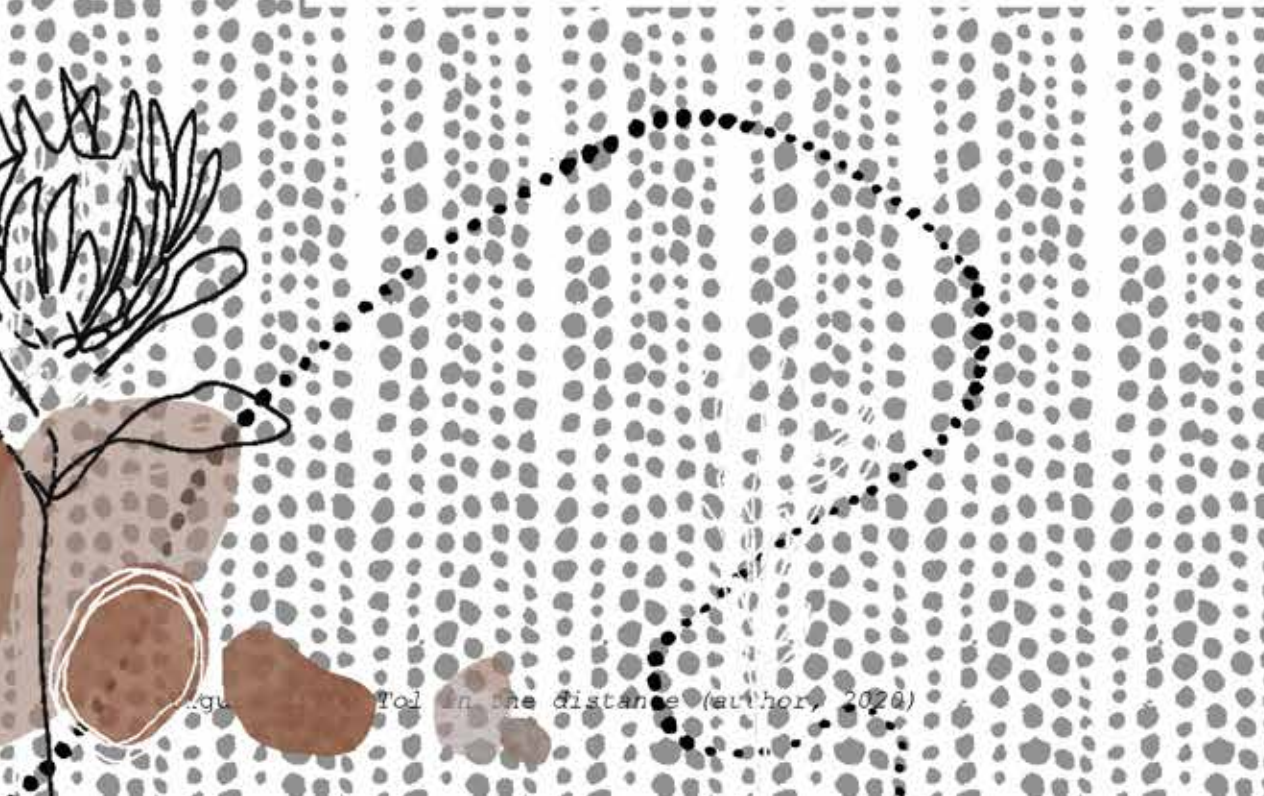
Figure 98: The  
Writer's Mind in  
Nature (author, 2020)



# Chapter 3.



In this chapter various design ideas and proposals are explored as well as the construction ideas and proposals that helped shape the designs and inform their layouts. It also takes a look at the various precedents that played a role in the different designs. It then also has a look at vernacular aspects and how they may influence the design in a way that may aid in the creation of a design that is more honest in design, layout, materials used and construction methods employed.



Design  
attempt  
#1.

DANE  
Dane].  
**danewort** (dān'-w) *n.* a plant with berries, leaves like the common elder.  
*Elder* [E. *Dane*; O.  
**danger** (dān'-jer) *n.* evil; peril; hazard.  
**dan'gerous** *a.* attending to involving risk; perilous.  
**dangerously** *adv.*—**dan'ger**  
*n.* a sign or warning.  
[M.E. *danger*, *po*  
**dangle** (dang'-l) *v.* to hang loosely; (Fig.) to hang loosely; to  
*n.* a trifle [Scand.  
**Danites** (or *Dēstr*)  
*n.pl.* a band of men to prevent the immigration of non-M.  
*n.pl.* members of the  
**dank** (dangk) *a.* unwholesome.  
—**dank'ish** *a.* rattling.  
[Scand. *danka*, *m*  
**danki** (dan'-ki) *n.* an expression signifying contempt.  
[contr. of Dut. *dan*  
**danks** (dangks) *n.* a fine coal [etym. *u*  
**dansant** (dong'-s) *n.*  
**dansant** (tā'-dong'-) *n.* a man with dancing.—**dan**  
**Dantean, Dantesque** (dāntē'sk) *a.* pertaining to the Italian poet;  
**Dan'tist** *n.* a Dantean lover of the word.  
**Danubian** (da-nū) *n.* a river bordering on, the

... *Done*, a

ort) *n.* a perennial herb  
 es and flowers similar to  
 sometimes called *Dwarf*  
*El wart*, a herb.  
*n.* exposure to injury or  
 ; insecurity; jeopardy.—  
 nded with danger; dan-  
 ous; hazardous.—*dan'ser-*  
 ousness *n.*—*dan'ger's* signal  
 of impending danger.—  
 re  
 to swing loosely or care-  
 use as a hat;—*vi.* to  
 hang around.—*dan'gler*  
*dangle*, to swing].  
 oying Angels) (*dan'tists*)  
 ily Mormon organized  
 migration into Mormon  
 Mormon people.—*Dan'te*.  
 the Hebrew tribe of *Ben-*  
 pleasantly damp or moist  
 er damp.—*dan'tes* [*dan-*  
 ist].  
*ter*]: (*S. Africa*) an ex-  
 g refusal; no thanks  
*me*, thank you].  
 black shale mixed with  
 uncertain].  
 ong) *n.* dancing.—*the*  
 -song) *n.* afternoon tea  
*seuse* *n.* [See *dance*]. [*Fr.*].  
*sque* (*dan'tē-an*, *dan'*-  
 or in the style of Dante,  
 sublime; epic; severe.—  
 student.—*Dantop'h'ilist* *n.*  
 ks of Dante.  
 -bi-an) *a.* pert. to, or  
 River Danube.





Design  
inspiration

Protea Venusta  
AKA "Creeping  
Beauty"

Endemic to Swartberg  
pass region.

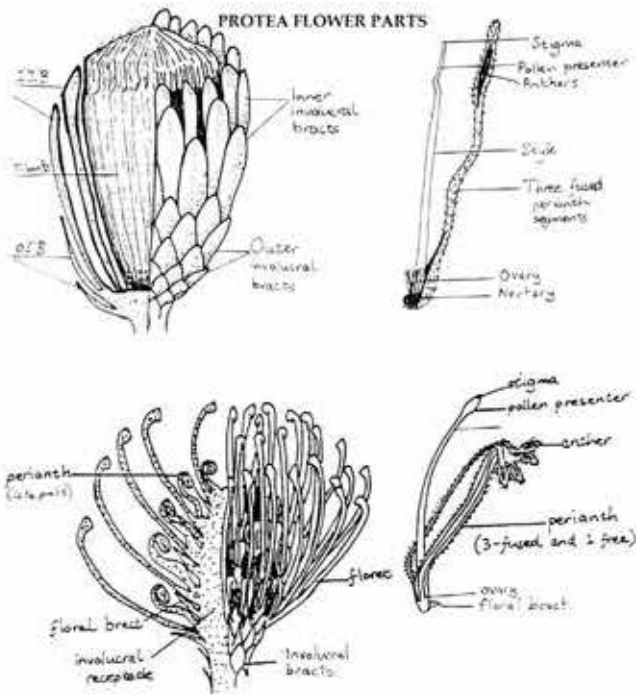


Figure 100: Biology of a Protea (Protea Atlas Project, n.d.: online)

The first design proposal was focused on the anatomy of a protea as by means of doing research on the site and a thorough site analysis, it was found that there is a very rare protea that is endemic to the Swartberg mountains but what makes it even more special and site specific is that it is only found along a certain part of the Swartberg, the swartberg pass, exactly where the site is located.

What inspired this design was the layeredness of the protea. It lead to the idea of layered walls of different heights that would speak of the layered petals. Also the idea that the building be more solid and confined at one end and then open up and fragment at the other end just the way the protea blooms.

The other concept that was born from the inspiration of the protea was that the different layers of the flower would correlate with the different structural elements of the structure.

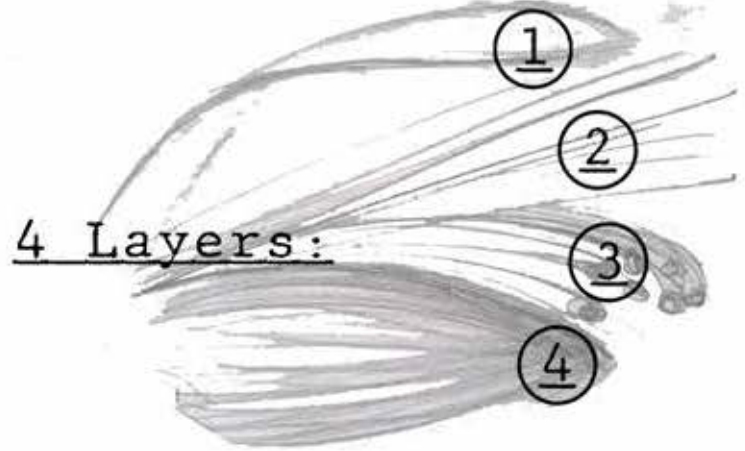


Figure 101: Layers of a Protea (author: 2020)

**Entrance**

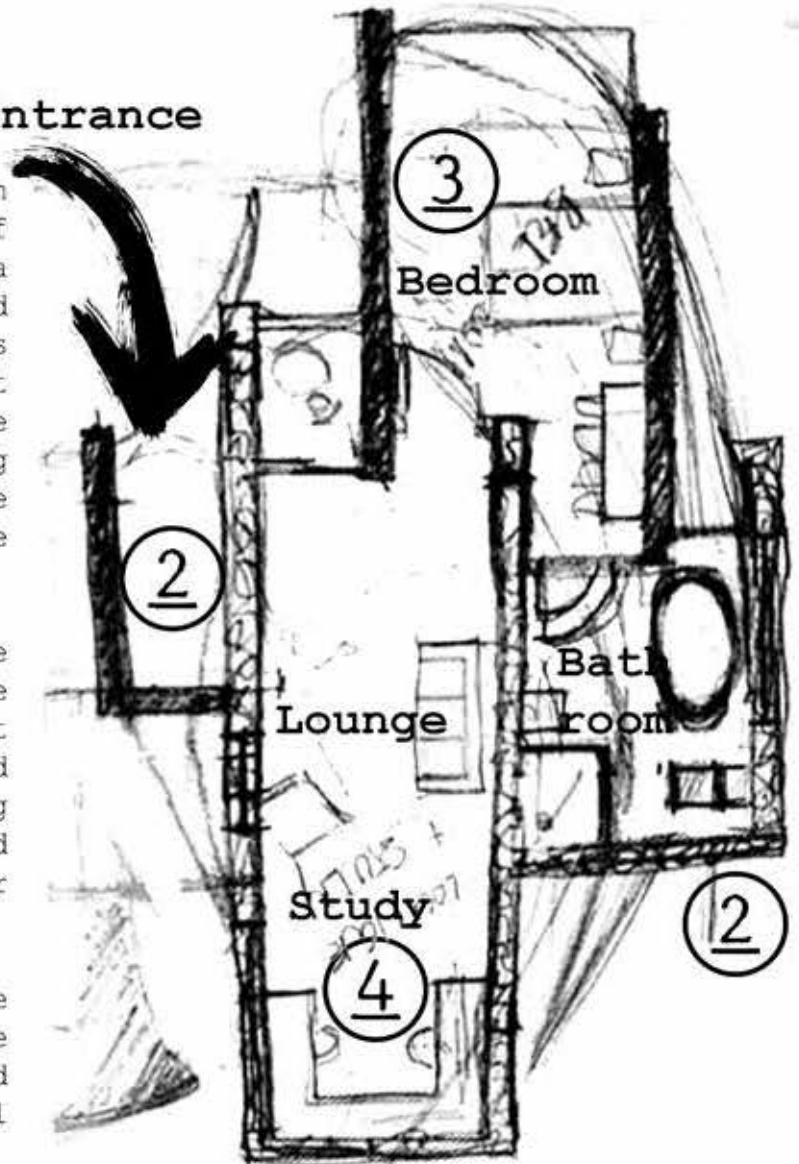


Figure 102: First design attempt plan sketch (author: 2020)

# Design #1.

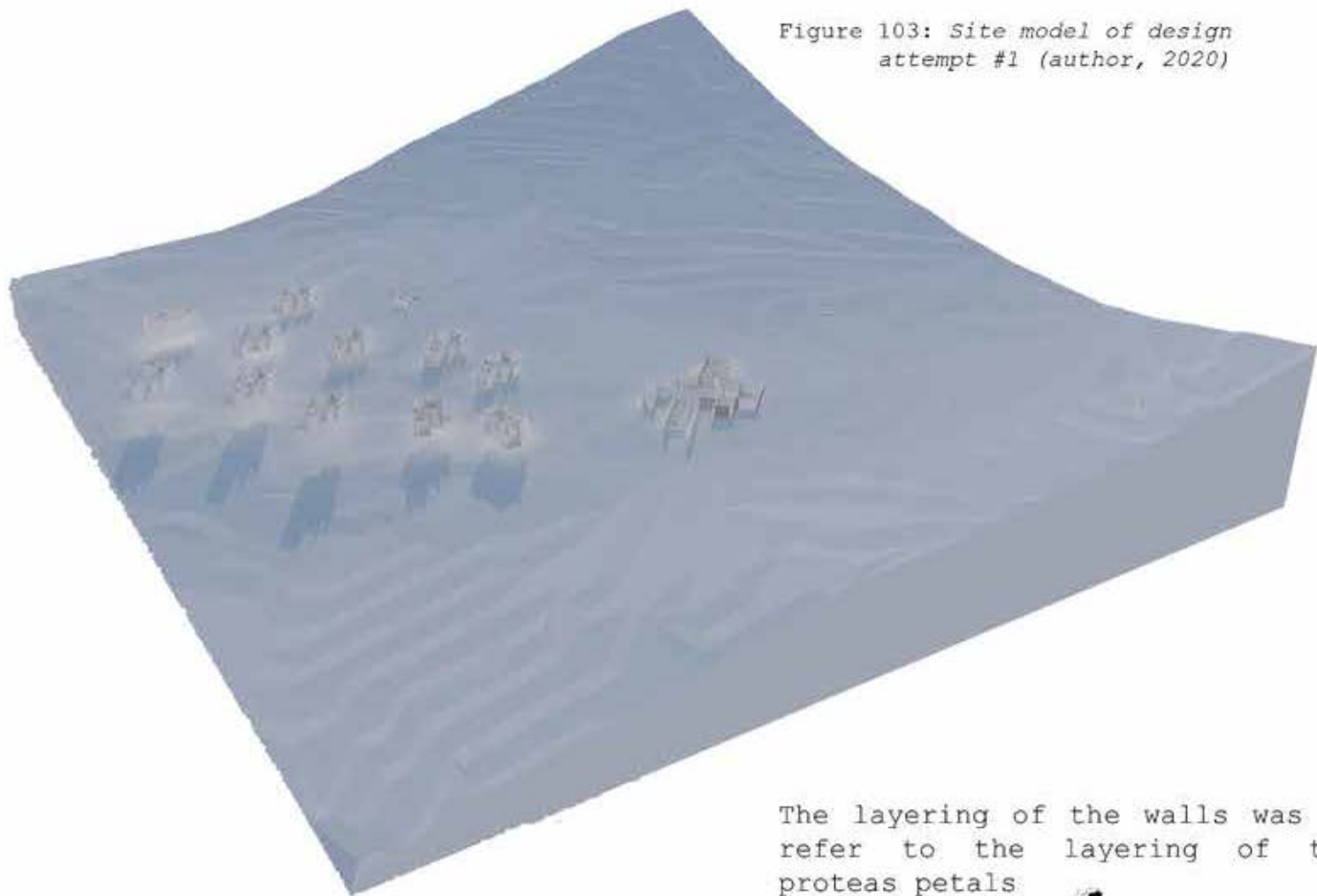


Figure 103: Site model of design attempt #1 (author, 2020)

The layering of the walls was refer to the layering of proteas petals



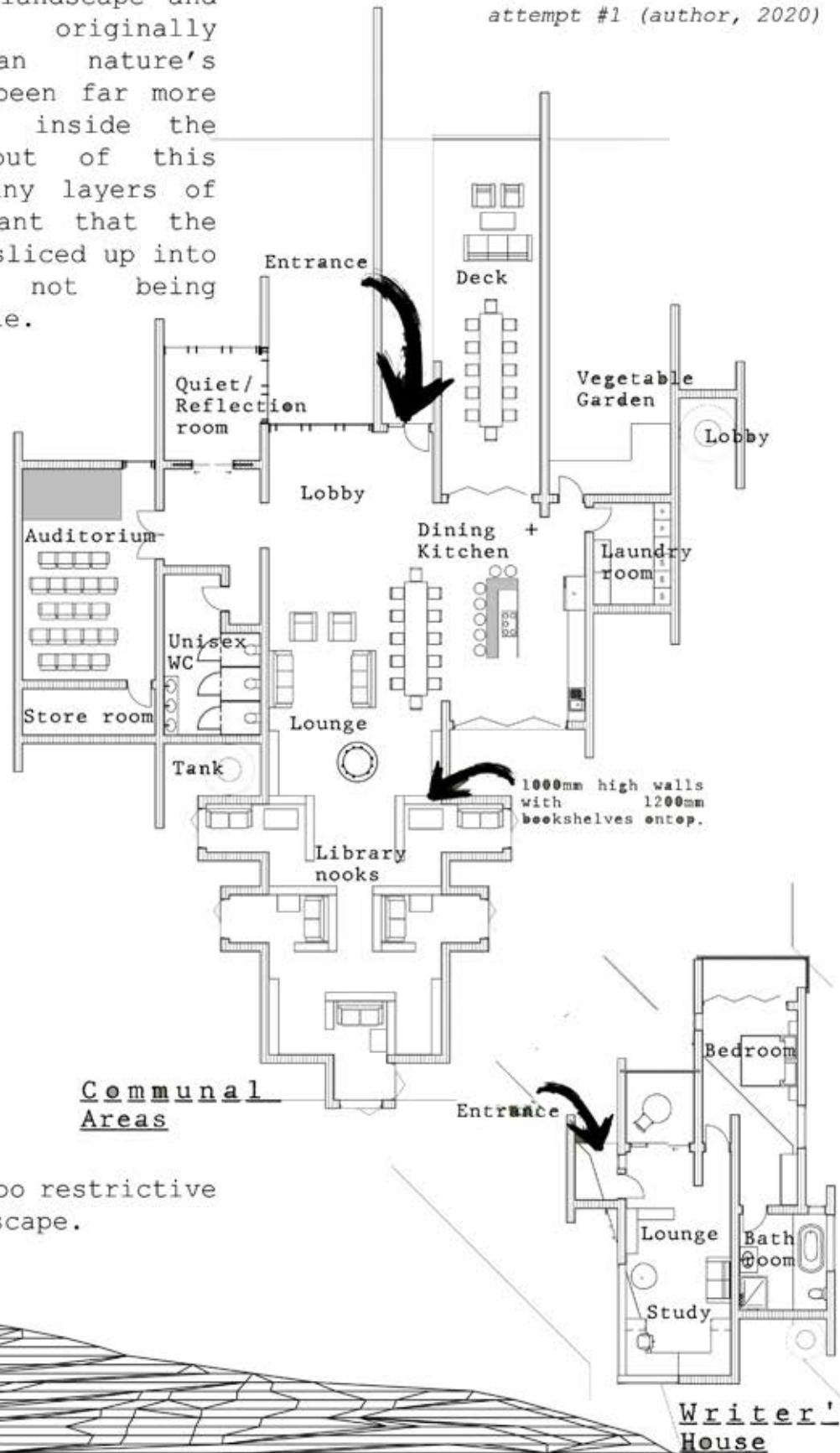
Figure 104: Site section of design attempt #1 (author, 2020)



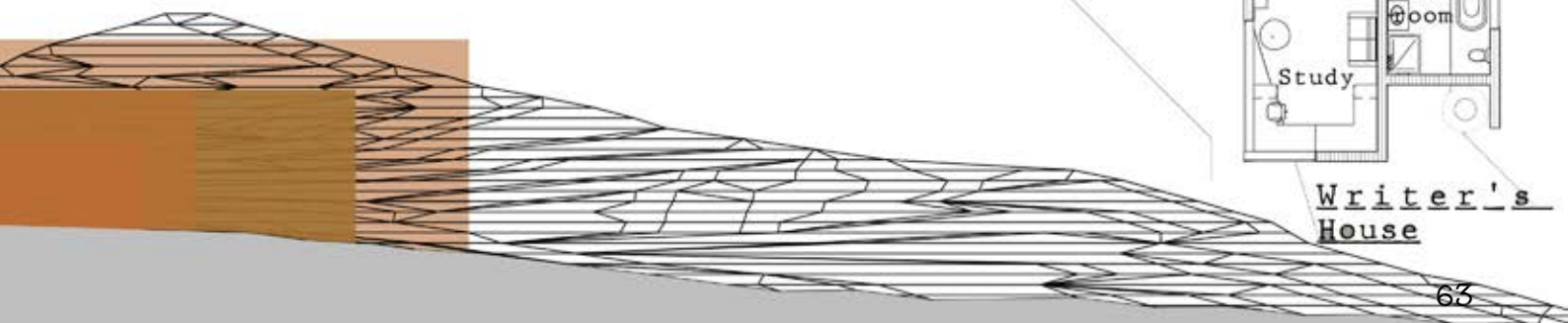
# Reflection

Upon reflection it soon became apparent that even though this was a potentially exciting design it was not conducive to the feeling of being one with the landscape and nature that was originally intended. On plan nature's influence may have been far more apparent than once inside the building. The layout of this building and the many layers of walls also just meant that the landscape was being sliced up into tiny views and not being appreciated as a whole.

Figure 105: Plan of design attempt #1 (author, 2020)



This design was far too restrictive in terms of the landscape.



# The CONSeption

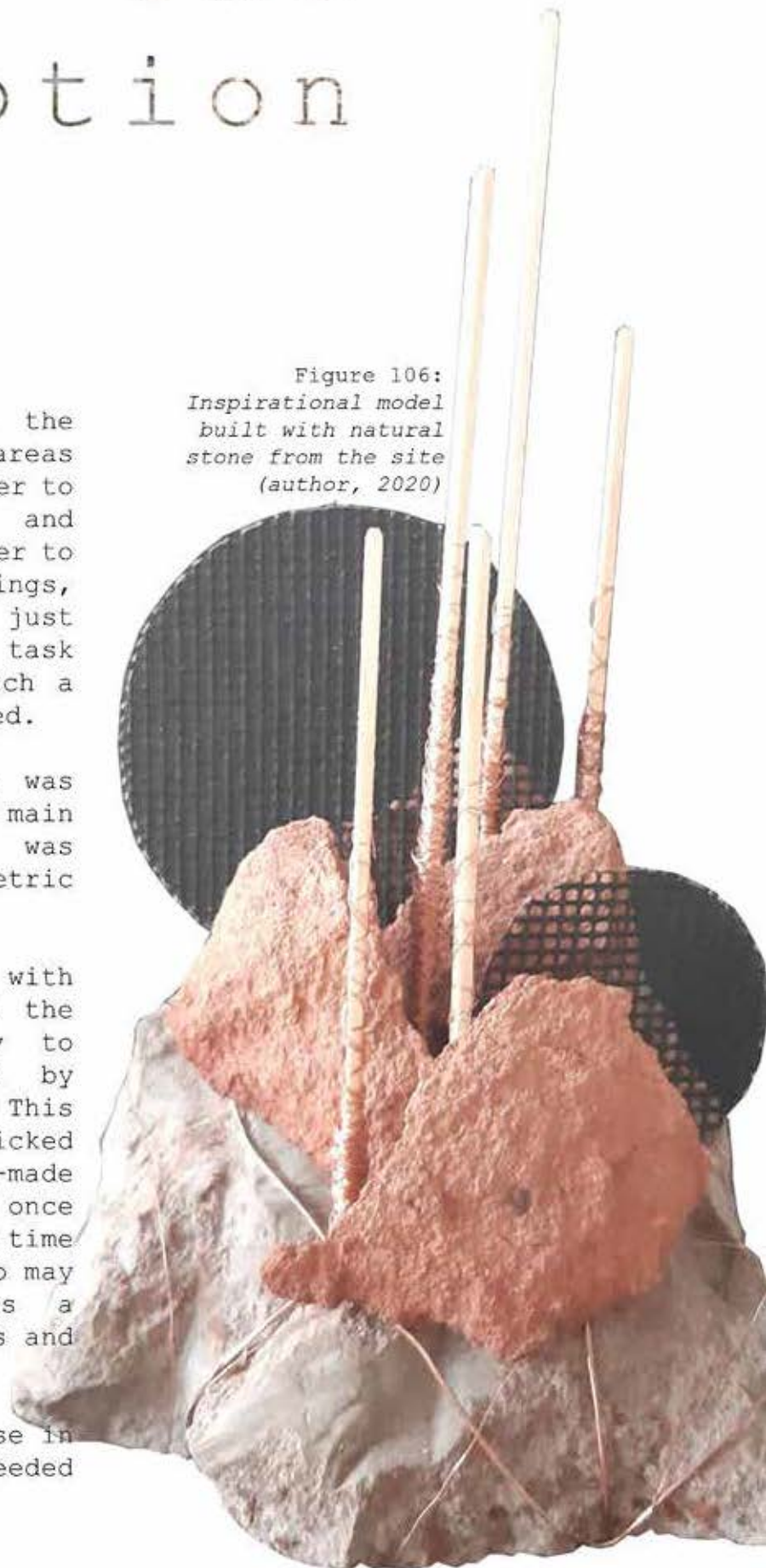
After the realisation that the first design was lacking in areas it became apparent that in order to allow the creativity and imagination to flourish in order to adapt to the surroundings, creativity and imagination is just what was needed. The task CONSeption was an aid in which a form and a section was explored.

During this time the protea was still very much the main inspiration and the form was derived from a more geometric approach to a protea.

The first design was lacking with regards to its approach to the site, and what better way to connect to the site than by connecting with the site. This model was built using stones picked up on site. It also has man-made materials such as concrete to once again bring in a paradox, this time man vs. nature and how the two may be connected. It also has a combination of geometric forms and organic forms.

This model was more an exercise in reigniting the creativity needed to readdress the site.

Figure 106:  
*Inspirational model  
built with natural  
stone from the site  
(author, 2020)*



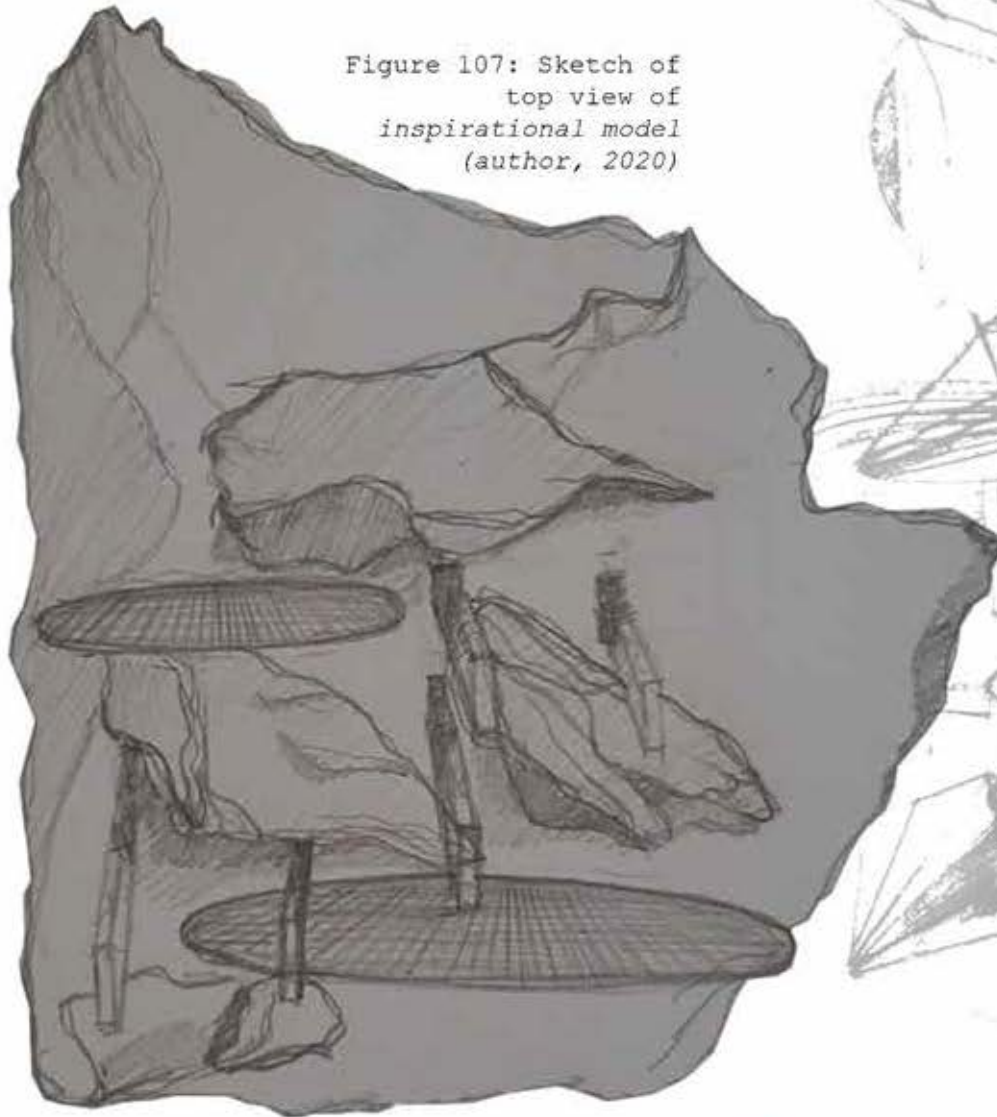


Figure 107: Sketch of top view of inspirational model (author, 2020)

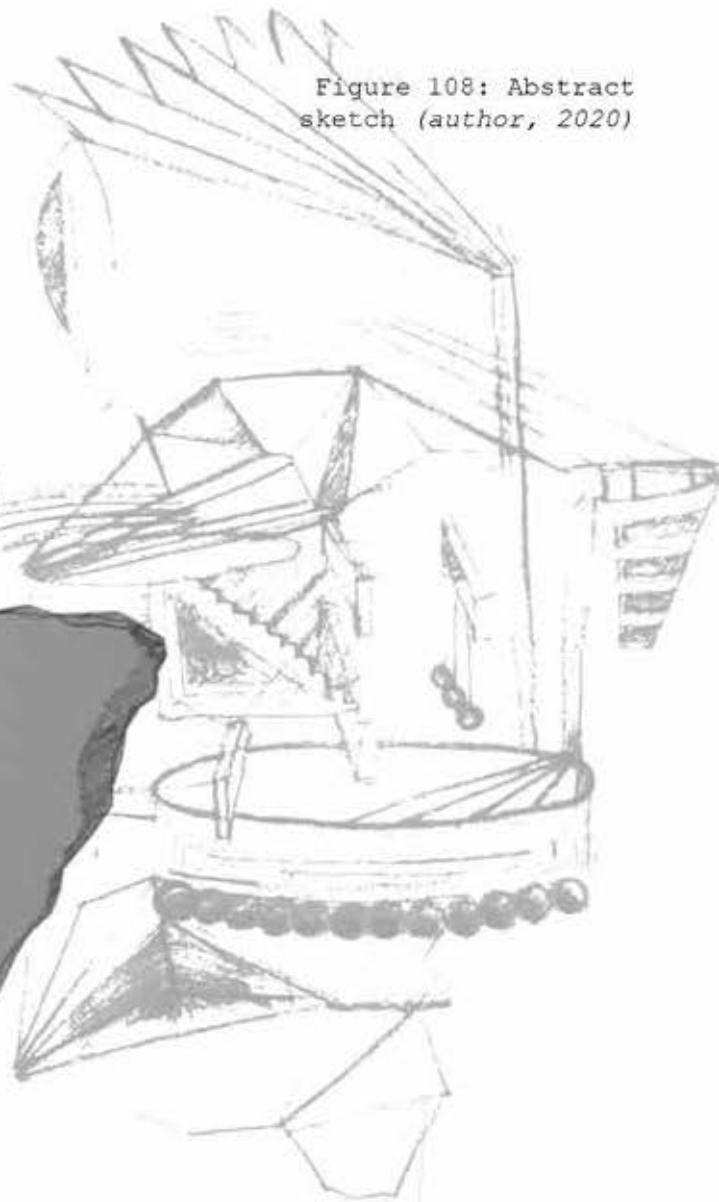


Figure 108: Abstract sketch (author, 2020)

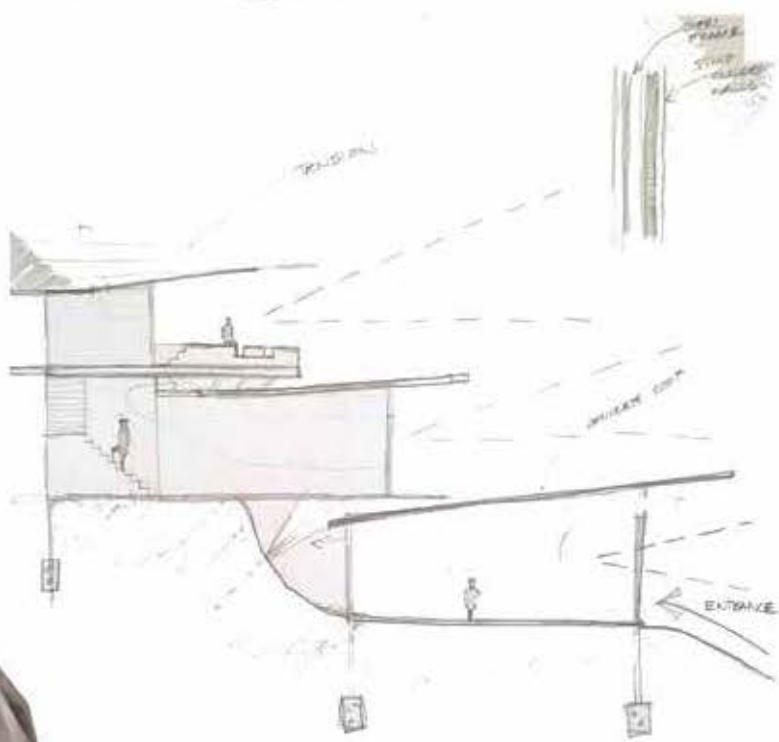


Figure 109: Diagrammatic section of how vistas might work in proposed design (author, 2020)

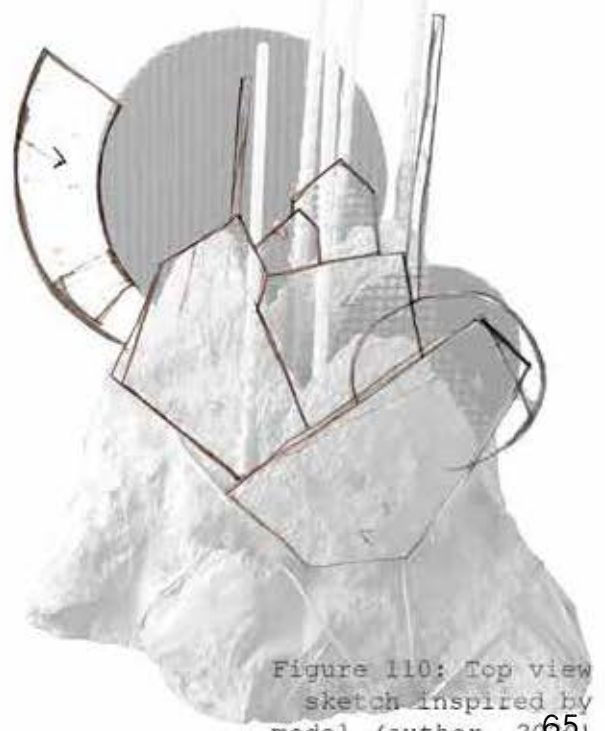


Figure 110: Top view sketch inspired by model (author, 2020)



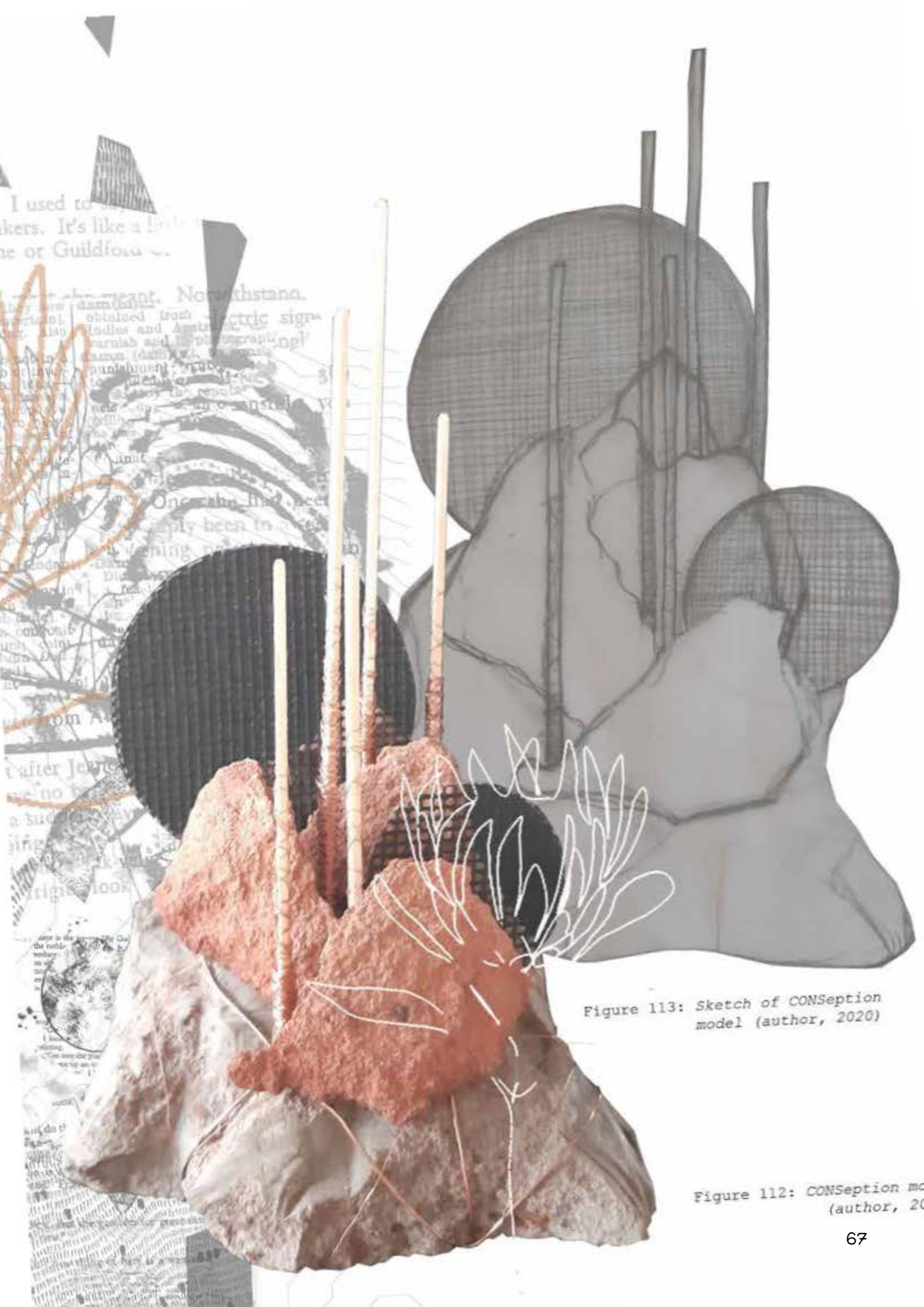


Figure 113: Sketch of CONSeption model (author, 2020)

Figure 112: CONSeption model (author, 2020)

# Design #2.

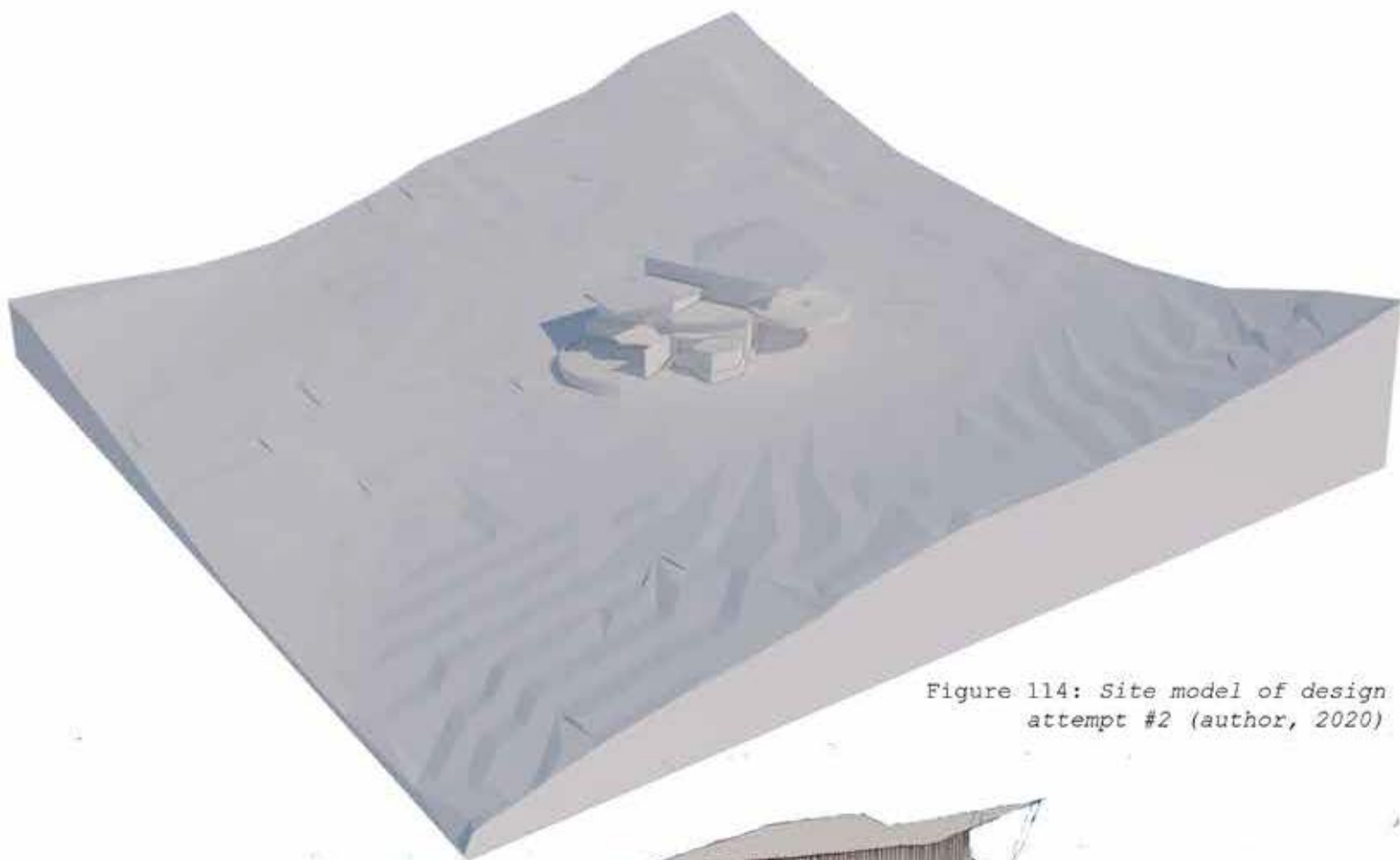


Figure 114: Site model of design attempt #2 (author, 2020)



Figure 115: Sketch of design attempt #2 North east perspective (author, 2020)

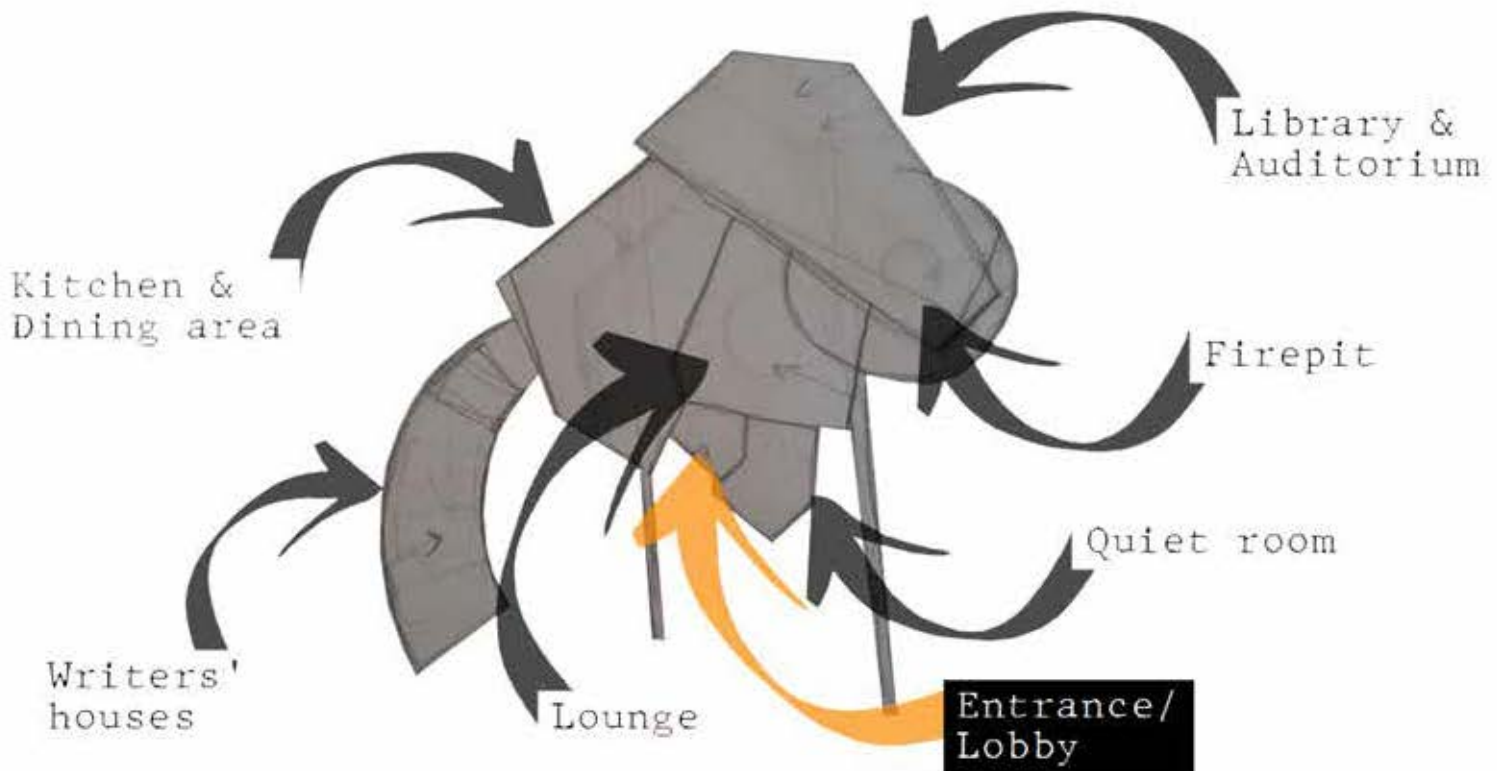


Figure 116: Top view sketch of design attempt #2 (author, 2020)

## Reflection

Upon reflection of the second design attempt it too became clear that the building was once again just too condensed for the expansive landscape, the building was also not interacting with the landscape in the appropriate manner. It was clear that the building had to be expanded upon and the way in which it interacted with the landscape had to be reconsidered.

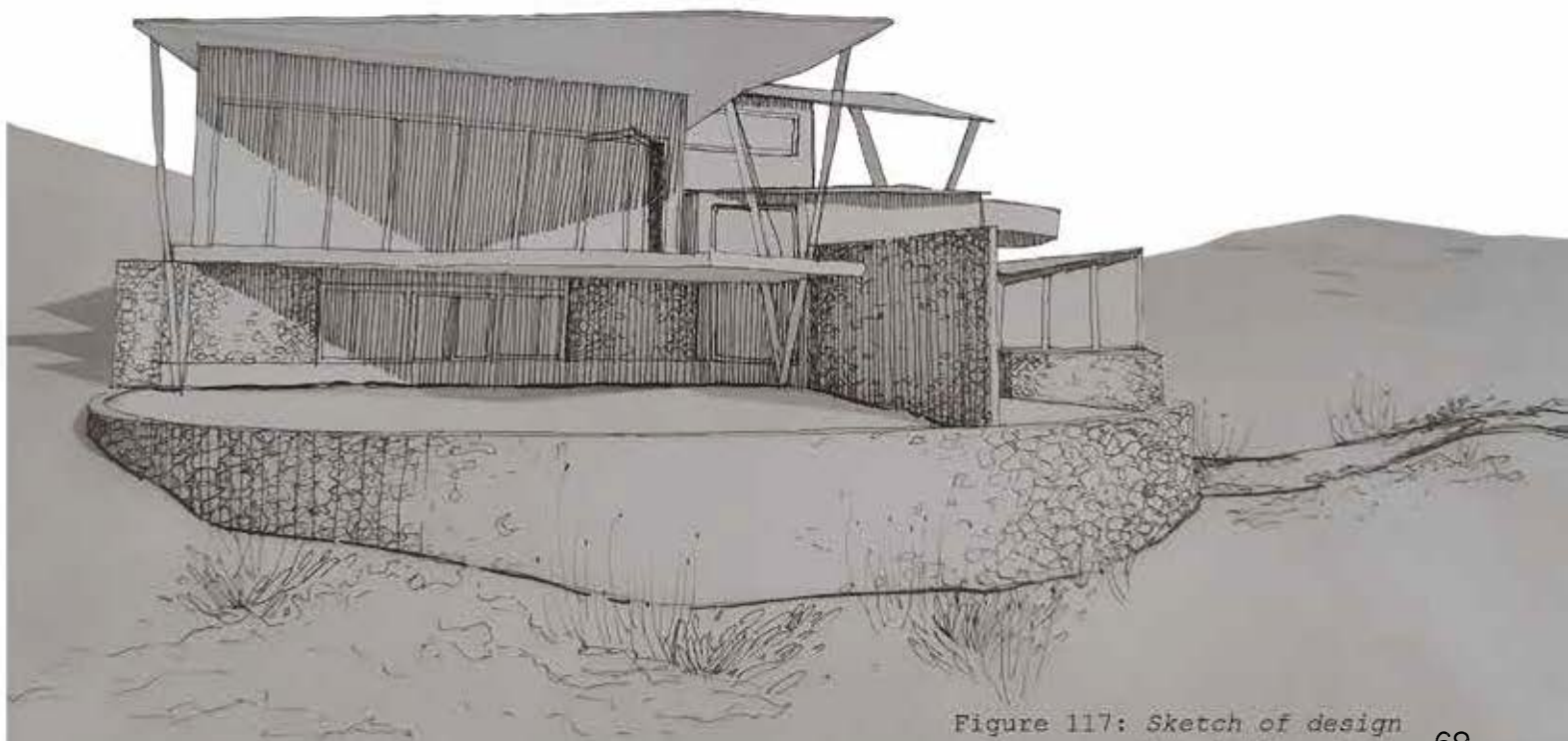


Figure 117: Sketch of design attempt #2 eastern perspective (author, 2020)

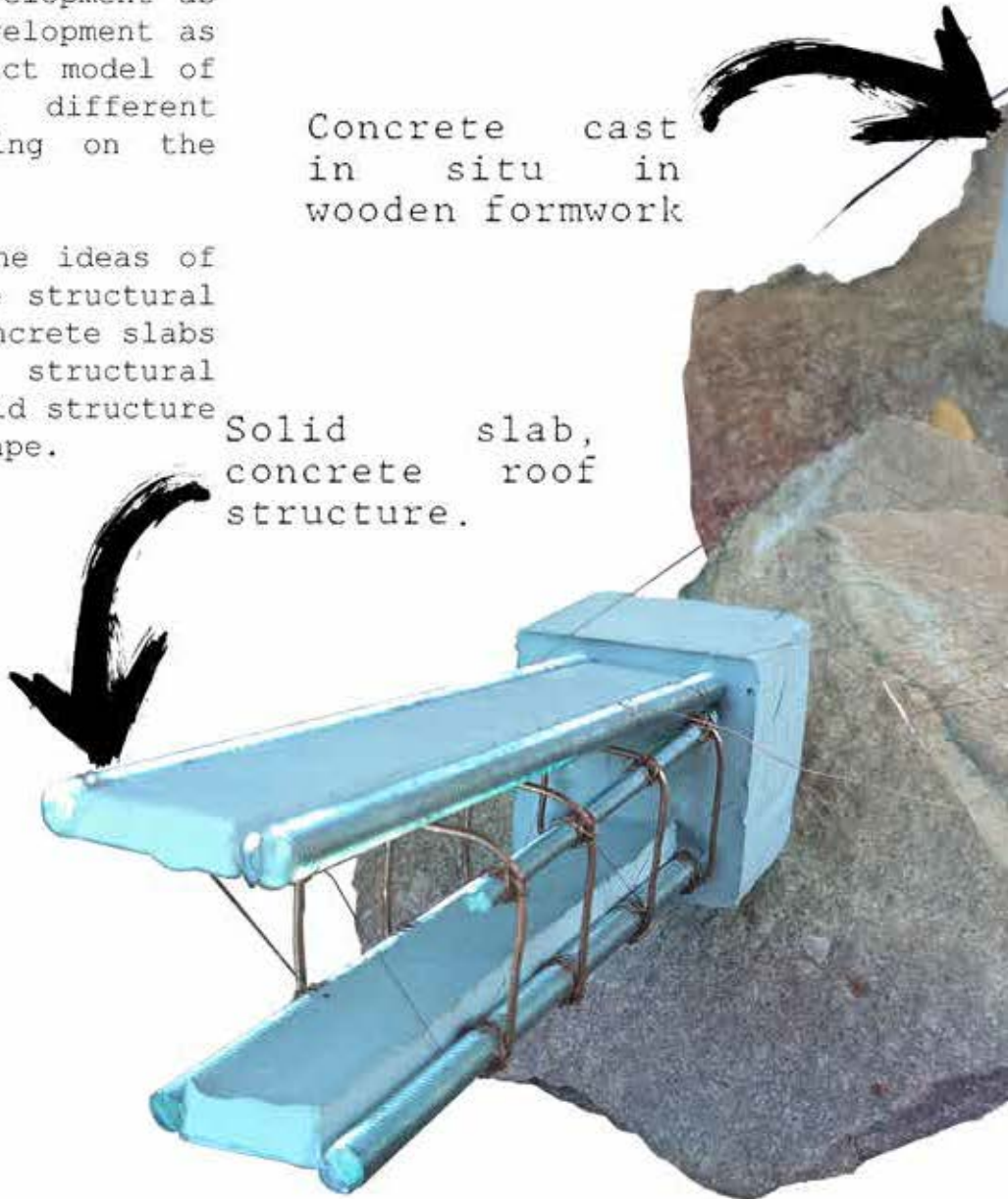
# The Structural Touchstone

The structural touchstone allowed for further design development as well as structural development as it was to be an abstract model of the exploration of different methods of constructing on the chosen site.

This model explored the ideas of tension, a steel frame structural system with precast concrete slabs and a portal frame structural system with a more solid structure anchored to the landscape.

Concrete cast  
in situ in  
wooden formwork

Solid slab,  
concrete roof  
structure.





Make use of tension in structure, less obtrusive, lighter structure.

Solid structure tied back to mountain, anchored into rockface. Significant to theory - area of isolation and relevant to protea structure dematerialisation / deconstruction.



Steel frame structure, open up building to views, capture views of surroundings.

Figure 118: Structural Touchstone  
(author, 2020)

Design  
attempt  
#3.

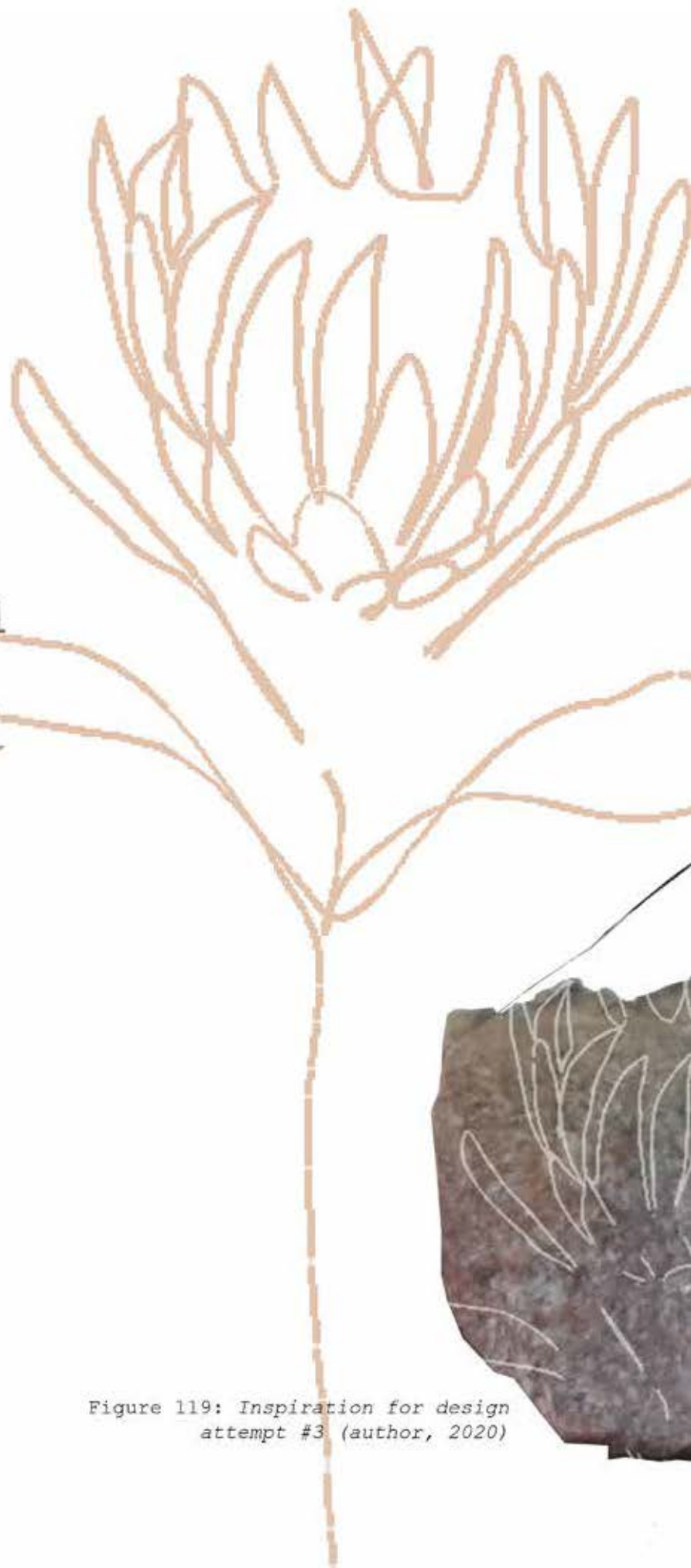


Figure 119: Inspiration for design attempt #3 (author, 2020)



# Design #3.

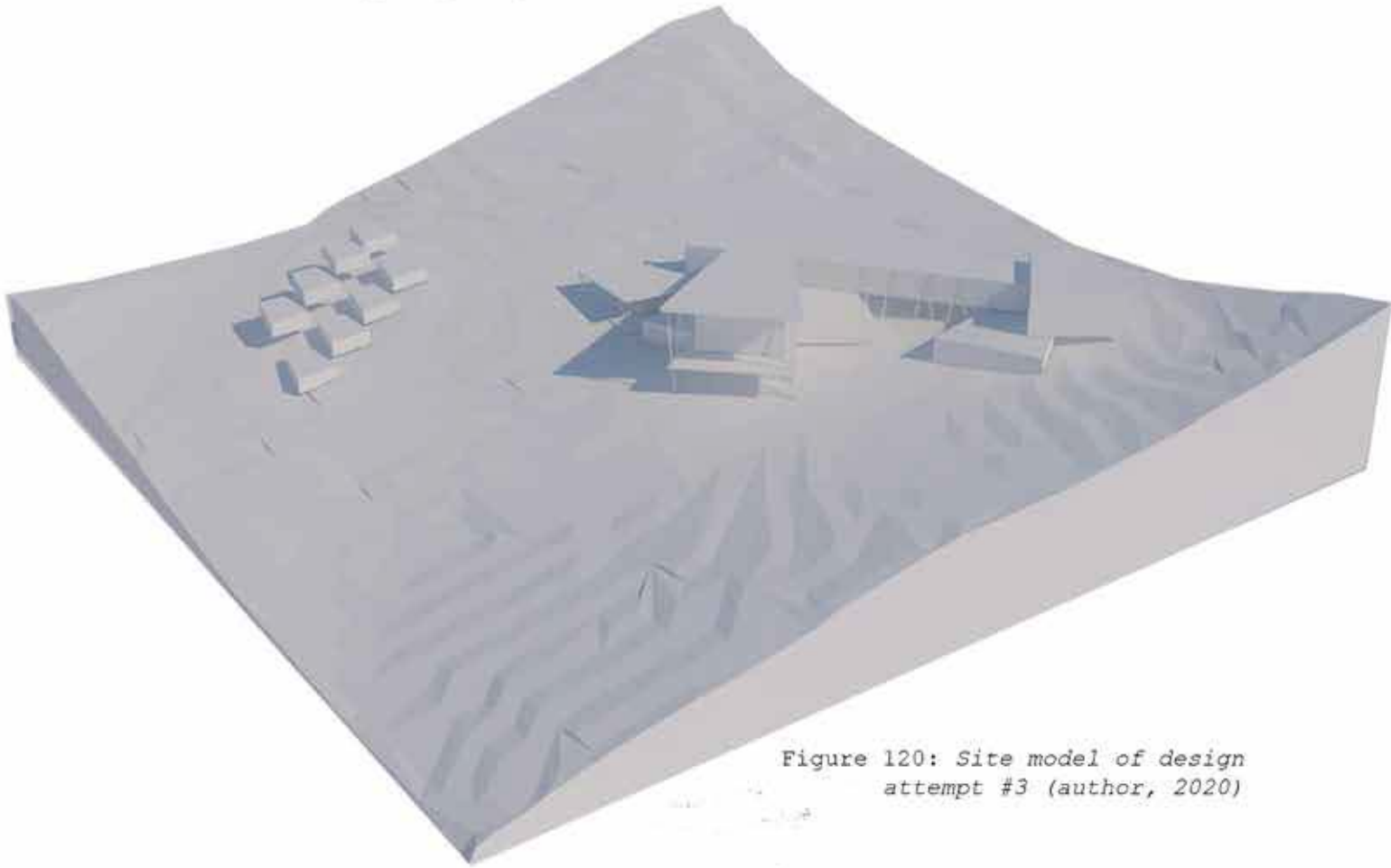


Figure 120: Site model of design attempt #3 (author, 2020)

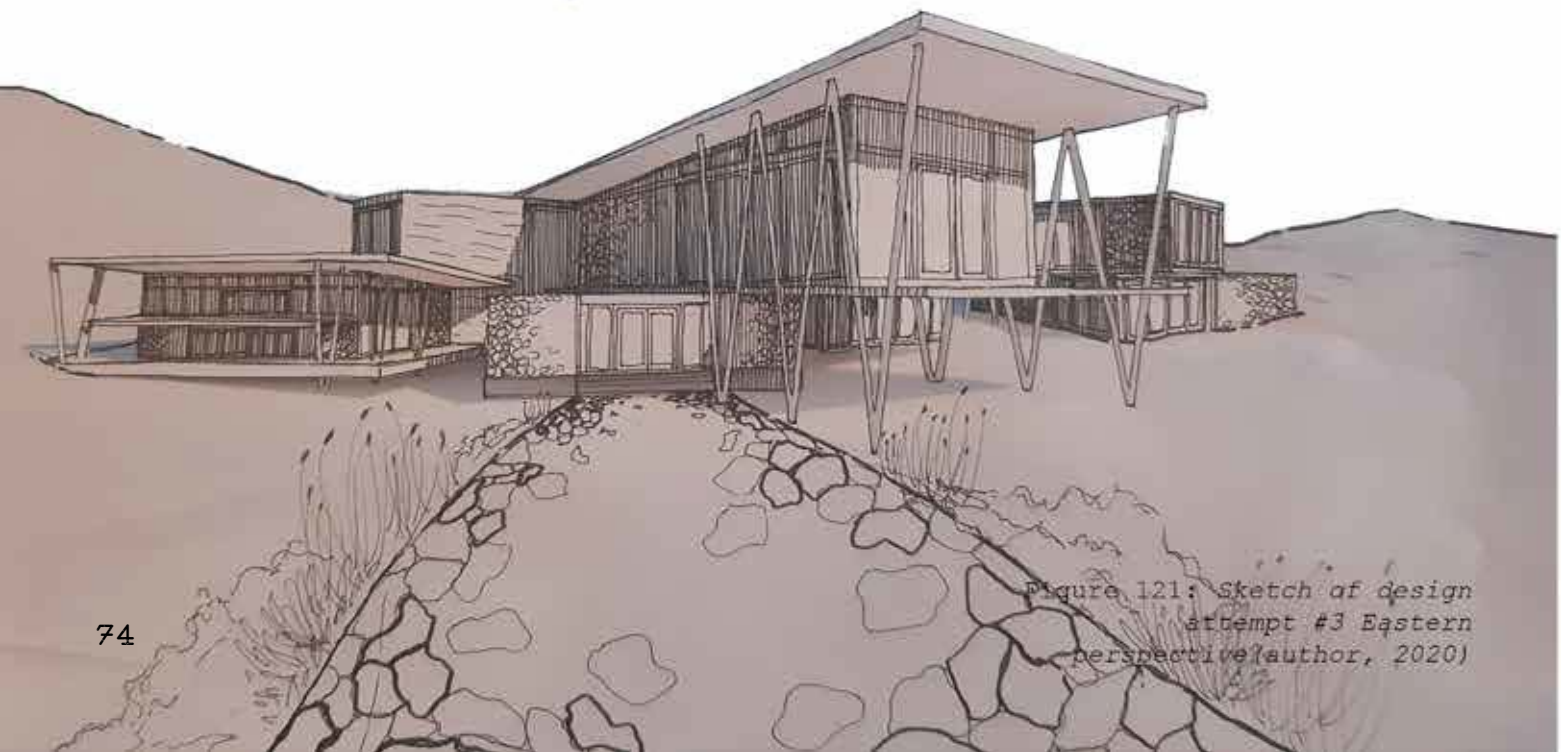
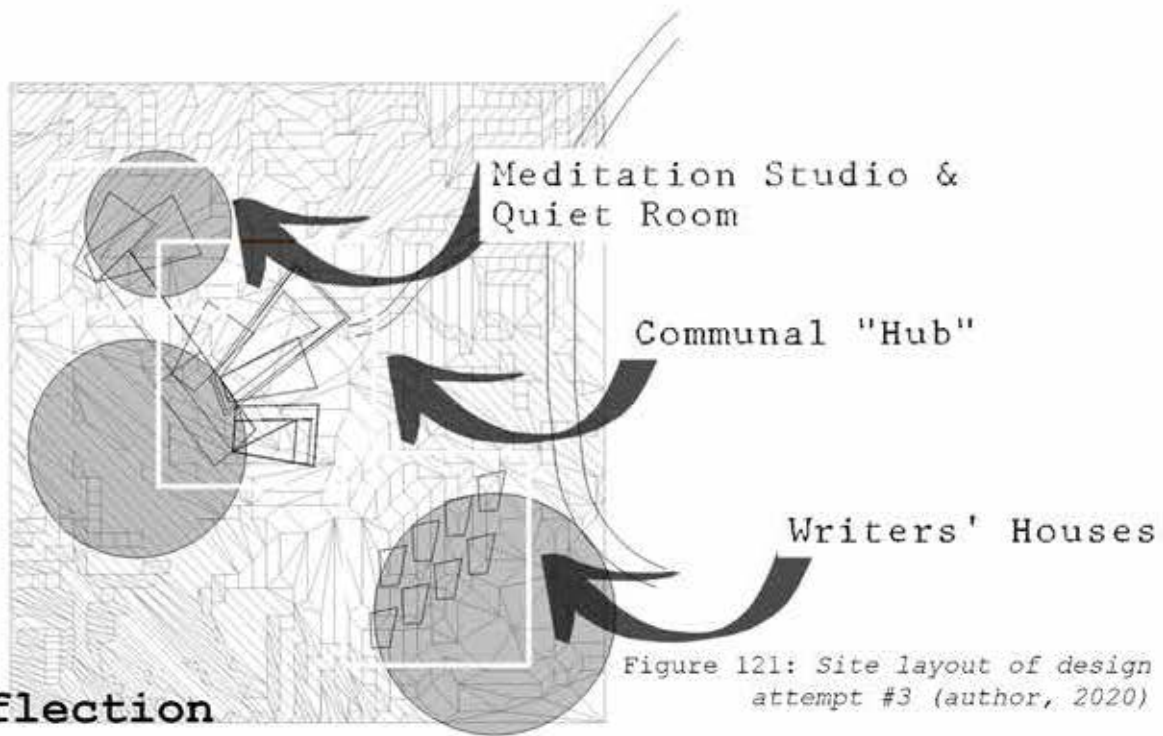


Figure 121: Sketch of design attempt #3 Eastern perspective (author, 2020)



This design was beginning to take on more of the site it was more spread out and offered views and experiences of the site from various angles but the design was still not interacting with the landscape enough, the design needed to be reevaluated and redesigned in a way that encouraged more of an encounter with nature.

Figure 122: Space layout of design attempt #3 (author, 2020)

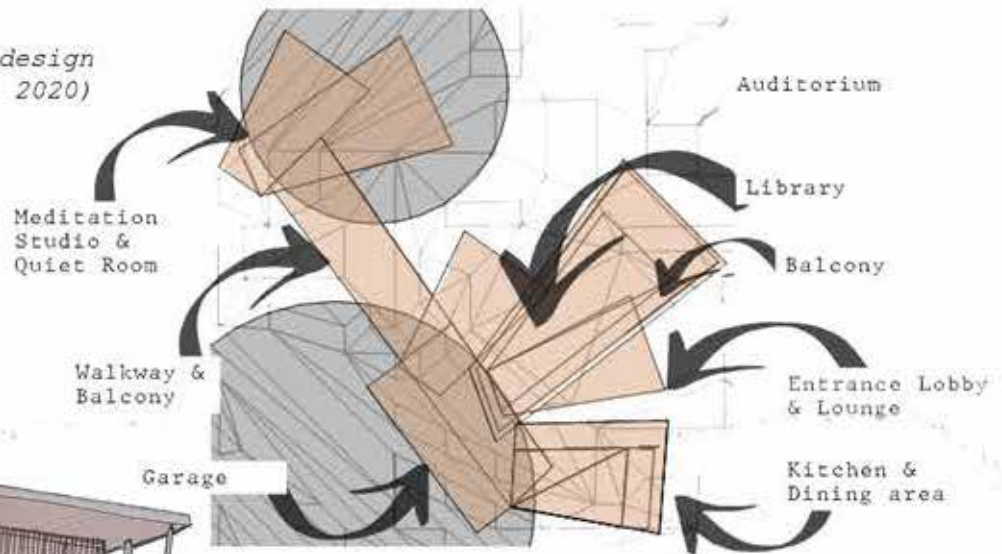


Figure 124: Sketch of design attempt #2 North eastern perspective (author, 2020)

# Taking a step back

It became apparent that a new perspective was required. One that was more focused on the landscape, that would allow for the structure to follow the contours of the landscape and fold seamlessly into the ridges and valleys of the Swartberg mountains. The focus thus far had been very micro but now it was needed for the focus to become more macro and to take the site in its entirety into consideration not only the smaller elements on site.

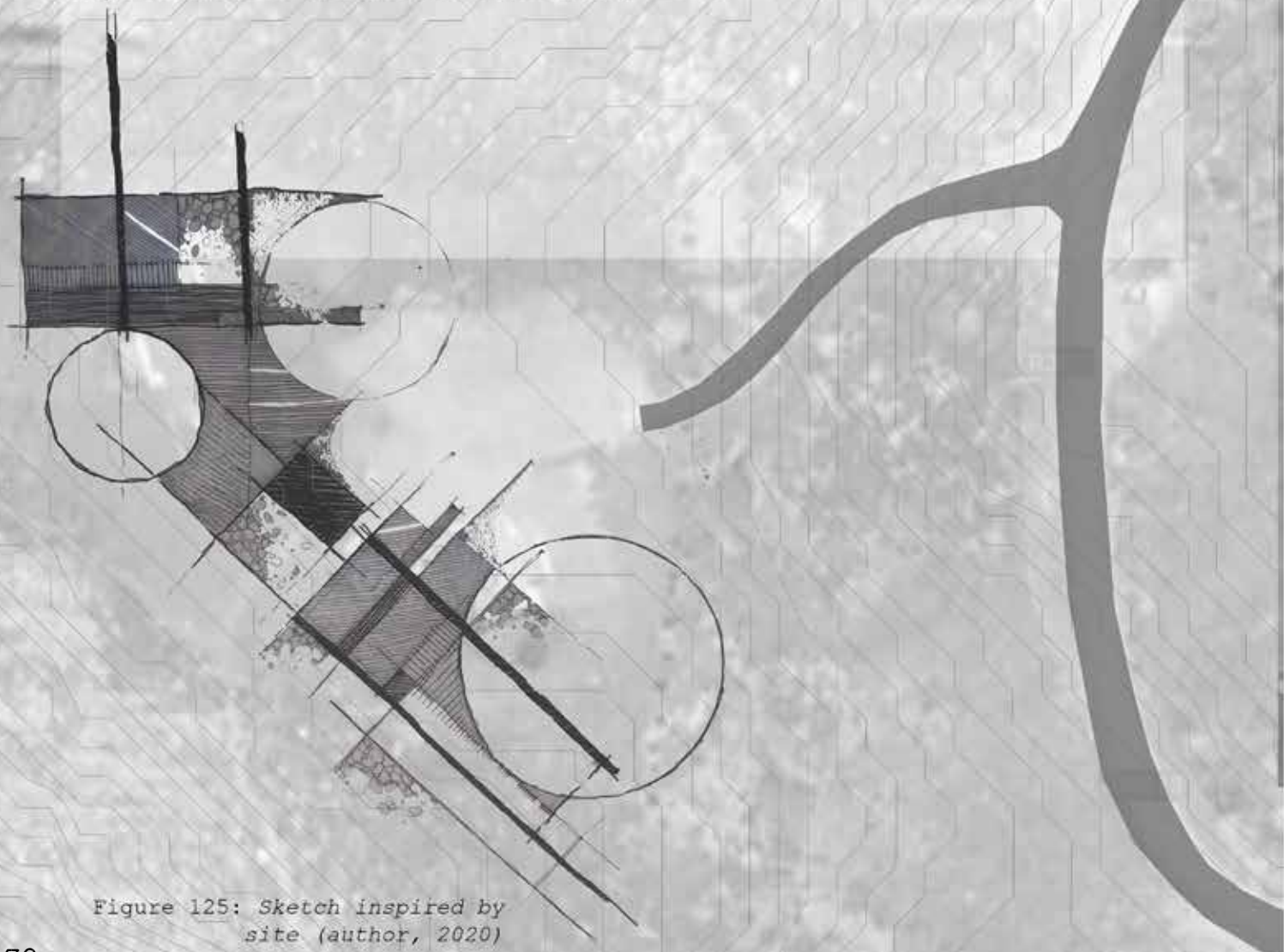


Figure 125: Sketch inspired by site (author, 2020)

# Accommodation list

## Places to Write:

Writer's house  
Hiking trails  
Writing pods  
Lounges  
Library

## Places to Be:

Writer's house  
Meditation areas  
Hiking trails  
Viewing decks  
Library  
Lounges  
Games nook

## Places to Learn:

Masterclass studio  
Discussion pods  
Meditation areas  
Library

## Communal Hub

Kitchen  
Washing up area  
Dining area  
Lounge  
Theatre  
Games nook  
Discussion pods  
Master class area  
Creative studio  
Men's toilets  
Women's toilets  
Reception area  
Fire pit

## Writers' Houses - Personalised

Kitchenette  
Dining area  
Lounge  
Bedroom  
Bathroom  
Study

## Separate areas

Yoga studio  
Meditation studio

# Initial Precedent

CONS  
Precedent

- Bigwood  
Residence



Aesthetic  
Precedent

- Unfolding  
the land



Theoretical  
Approach  
Precedent

- Amangiri  
Resort



# ents

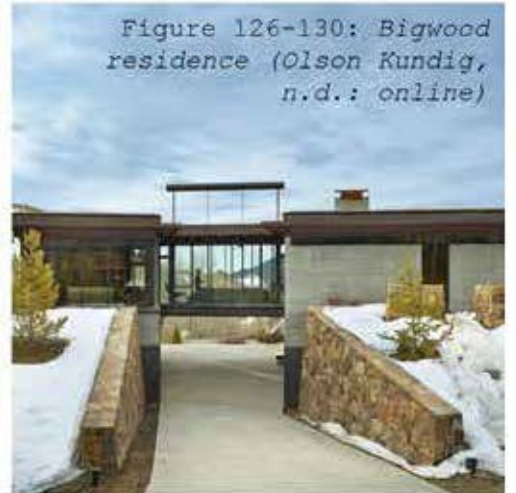


Figure 126-130: Bigwood residence (Olson Kundig, n.d.: online)

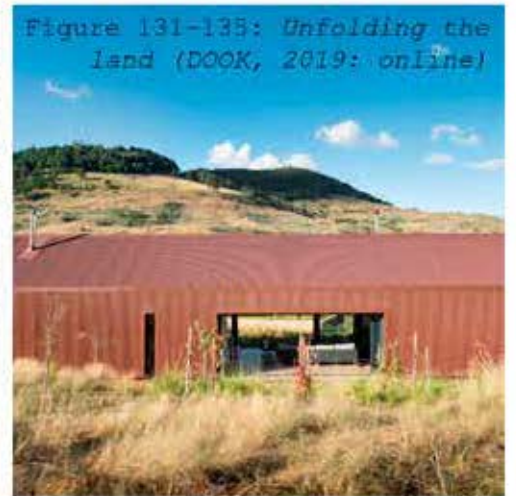


Figure 131-135: Unfolding the land (DOCK, 2019: online)



Figure 136-140: Shangri-la (Mueli & Partner Architects, 2019: online)

# Bigwood Residence

Olson Kundig  
Architects

The Sun Valley lies on 1816m above sea level. Generally, it is cold and temperate in Sun Valley. In winter, there is much more rainfall in Sun Valley than in summer.

*In Sun Valley, the summers are warm, dry, and mostly clear and the winters are freezing, snowy, and partly cloudy. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $27^{\circ}\text{C}$  and is rarely below  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  or above  $31^{\circ}\text{C}$ .*

The warm season lasts for 3 months, from June 13 to September 12, with an average daily high temperature above  $21^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The hottest day of the year is July 25, with an average high of  $27^{\circ}\text{C}$  and low of  $9^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The cold season lasts for 3-4 months, from November 18 to February 28, with an average daily high temperature below  $3^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The coldest day of the year is January 1, with an average low of  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  and high of  $-3^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

(CLIMATE-DATA.ORG, 2020)



Figure 141: Min and max temperatures for Sun Valley (author, 2020)



Figure 142: Bigwood Residence (Kundig, 2015: online)

## Orientation

This building is orientated with the main entrance facing South to allow for optimal sunlight due to the fact that this building is located in the Northern Hemisphere. Due to the materiality of this building and the large expanses of glass it is crucial that this building receive as much sunlight as possible in order to minimise the need for artificial heating systems and maximise the sustainability of the building, but luckily due to the expansive site there are no obstacles preventing the sunlight from warming up the interior of the building (Figure 145). The architects have however made provision for some privacy and the sun by including sun shading devices, which are painted metal panels. These panels not only allow for relief from the sun's rays but also provide the owners with a method of securing the house when it is not in use.



Figure 143: Orientation of site (author, 2020)

The main entrance as well as the main living area and the second bedroom are south facing while the owners' entrance for their vehicles is north facing as well as the main bedroom and the sewing room (Figure 144).

North facing means that the residents will always have light but without the heat from the direct sunlight that one would receive if it were facing South.

The services and circulation (stairs) are located more to the rear end of the building but receive light from the east and the west (Figure 143 & 144).

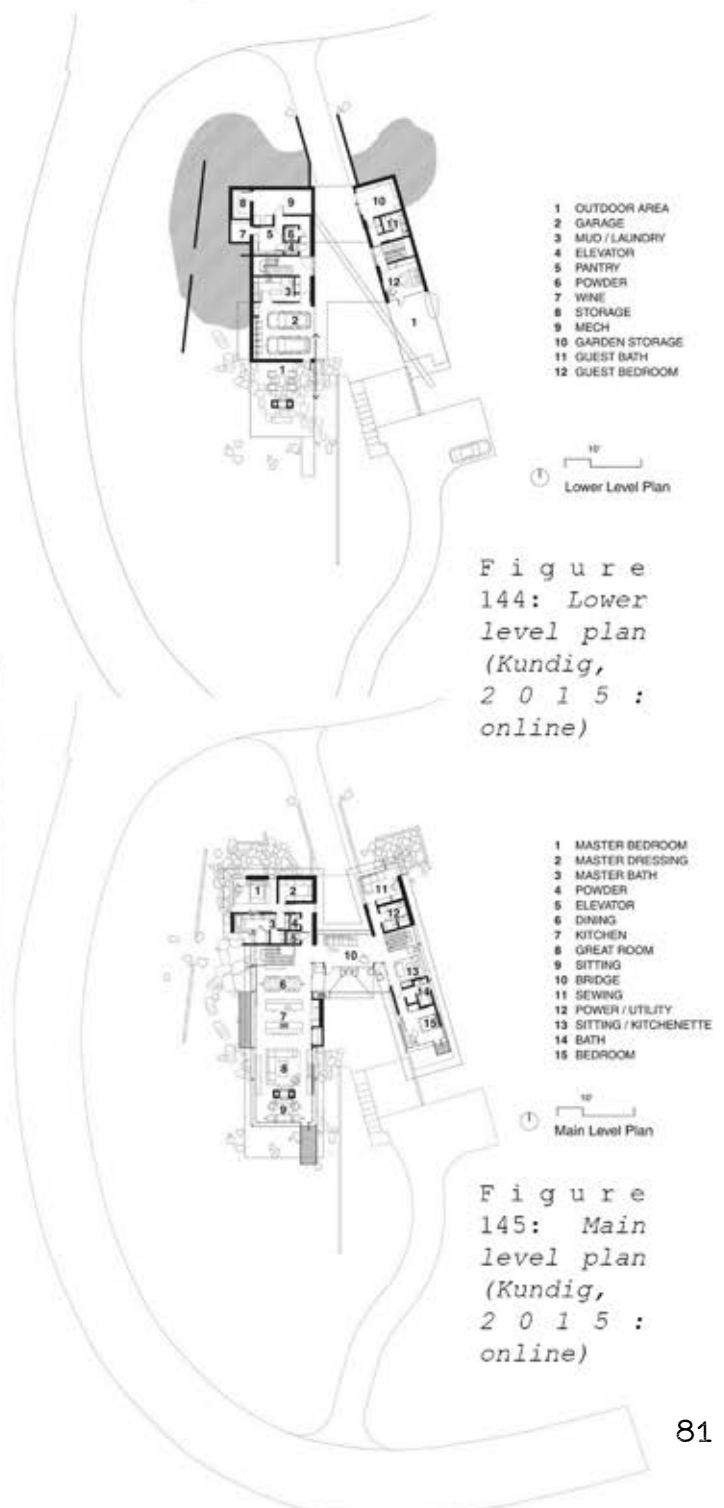


Figure 144: Lower level plan (Kundig, 2015 : online)

Figure 145: Main level plan (Kundig, 2015 : online)

## Materiality

The chosen materials for this building are stone and board formed concrete for everything that touches the earth, steel and glass for the expansive windows and doors, corrugated weathered steel for the roof and wood finishes for the interior in order to create a warmer atmosphere within the house to contrast against the coldness of the steel glass and concrete.

The board formed concrete however also allows for a feeling of warmth as it is textured by the wooden boards and thus looks to be wood as well (Kundig, 2015: online).

These materials have been well sourced as they are effective, long lasting, and low maintenance in the cool climate experienced in Sun Valley.

The wooden finishes are also a good choice for the interior as the sun is not harsh enough to weather the wood quickly or easily. Due to the cold climate it is essential to focus on how the house could be designed and built in order to compensate for the freezing temperatures. The use of wood for the flooring as well as the ceiling is a typically good solution as well as the warm yellow lighting used to illuminate the entirety of the building against the frosted winter backdrop.

The architect has also made use of warm colours in the steel panels incorporated into the design of the house as the bright orange/rust colour also gives of a sense of warmth even though it is metal.

The architect has also made provision for the cold temperatures by means of including two fireplaces the supporting mast of the home, one on ground level for the outdoor socialising area and one on the main floor, this fireplace is located in the sitting room and heats up the majority of the open plan living area and kitchen.

Figure 146: Diagram of sun entering building (Benschneider, 2015: online) adapted by author

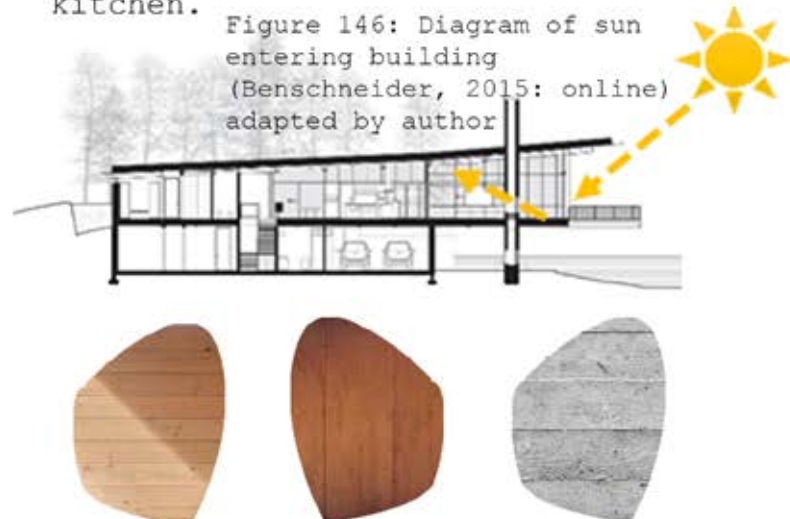


Figure 147-149: Materials used to create warmth (Benschneider, 2015: online)

### User Behaviour, socio-economic profile of user group and building requirements

This building has two levels; a ground floor level where mostly utilities are housed, the garage, the garden store room, the laundry room, the wine cellar, the pantry and then a guest room and guest bathroom and an outdoor socialising area; and then a main level where the family will spend most of their time where, the sitting room, kitchen, main bedrooms, sewing room and dining room are. This house has 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms as well as 2 guest toilets and is able to accommodate a total of 6 people (Kundig, 2015: online). This is a family home and thus must fulfil the requirements of that specific family.

## Site Planning and Landscape Detailing

The vehicle entry point was designed as to enter at the highest point of the site and move in underneath the bridge to concretize the sense of arrival. The walkway entry point was located at the lowest point of the site as to create a sense of grandeur when approaching the building but also to allow for the building to have an unobstructed view of that landscape unfolding below it.

## Utility and Space Enhancement

The space is utilised extremely well as the main goal of this home is to create spaces as light and airy as possible, so by allowing for open plan areas with large expanses of glass, the space is experienced as much larger than it actually may be, there was also not such a need for an enormous structure as the focal point of the experience was to be nature, not the house. The large windows invited nature in at every turn which allowed for the restrictions of the house to dissolve into the expanse of the landscape. This makes this building an excellent precedent for the proposal of a place that makes for nature to be an integral part of the experience of the building.



Figure 150: Interior opening up creating interaction between nature and structure (Benschneider, 2015: online) adapted by author

## Form and Function

This abstracted H-form was chosen in order to optimise the view of the landscape so that nearly every room could have an unobstructed 270° view of the Bald mountain range. **"The idea was to create more intimate moments that would balance the big views."** - Tom Kundig

This house was designed to fade onto the backdrop of the mountain by means of the materials used that mimic the colours of the surroundings.

## Conclusion

This precedent is relevant due to the different functions it houses as the design proposal of a writer's retreat will house many of the same functions and shared spaces.

The materials used are also relevant except for the use of wood. Overall this is a successful building as it has made use of the landscape in a very clever and efficient way, the materials used are very efficient and well thought out, they will need little maintenance and will last for quite some time.

This is a good example of how to invite nature into the building and how to ensure that nature will be a part of every act within the building. This precedent will be very useful with regards to what is to be proposed for the writer's retreat.

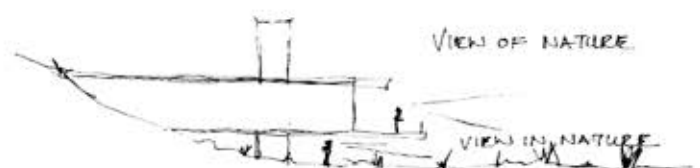


Figure 151: Interaction between man, nature and structure (author, 2020)

# Amangiri Resort

— Rick Joy

The Amangiri Resort is the perfect precedent due to the setting in which the resort is placed and due to the regard with which the landscape is handled. The building is also designed in such a way that the landscape is invited in at every turn.

*At first glance Amangiri is simple to understand. It is a collection of a few natural elements configured to respond to the offerings of the desert. But as one watches light and shadow play across its walls, rest under its shade, sit beside its pools and you begin to understand that it is as experientially stratified and complex as the land that engulfs it. Its connection to the terrain is definite and humble. Its forms are power-ful. Its spaces are evocative. Simply, it is a quintessential desert experience*  
(Farrand, 2017: online).

The Amangiri Resort is the perfect precedent due to the setting in which the resort is placed and due to the regard with which the landscape is handled. The building is also designed in such a way that the landscape is invited in at every turn.

*Three elements define the Amangiri Resort's surrounding landscape: stone, wind, and water. The stone is heavy, an immovable force. The wind, in contrast, is in motion, refusing to remain static. The water can be swayed. Once time is considered, however, the greater complexity of the three elements and this place come into focus.*  
(Deike, 2015: online)

This is to ensure a seamless transition from the natural environment to the built environment. It also contributes to the experience, the sheer embodiment of being-in-the-world, a ready-to-hand form of being. This is a poem the architects intended to have express the genius-loci of the building the intention of the building, the way the building is to be indiscernible from the surroundings and to be experienced as though nature is the building and the building is nature.



Figure 152: Amangiri resort in the landscape (Fletcher, 2010: online)

wind water and stone  
The water hollowed the stone,  
the wind dispersed the water,  
the stone stopped the wind.  
Water and wind and stone.

The wind sculpted the stone,  
the stone is a cup of water,  
The water runs off and is wind.  
Stone and wind and water.

The wind sings in its turnings,  
the water murmurs as it goes,  
the motionless stone is quiet.  
Wind and water and stone.

One is the other and is neither:  
among their empty names  
they pass and disappear,  
water and stone and wind.

- Octavio Paz

This resort is also an excellent precedent to use in terms of the layout of the building and how it has been planned in order to allow for nature to be the focus of the building. This building is designed to enhance every experience, the minimalism and simplicity thereof encourages the user to rely on all of the senses in order to experience what the surroundings and the building have to offer.

*In this spacious resort, the ethereal and immaterial aspects of intimate spatial experiences—sounds, smells, textures, moods—come to the foreground, as the architecture itself retreats into the rocky landscape through its dense materiality, staccato volumes, and striated horizontal profile.*

*In its deliberate simplicity, the architecture nudges visitors into a more acute attunement with the place they inhabit (Farrand, 2010: online).*

The lessons learned on simplicity and minimalism in order to maximise experience are most applicable to the idea of a writers retreat as this is where minimalism is essential in order to allow for an undisturbed environment where creativity is allowed to flourish and the self is allowed to be at peace with being. This resort is an excellent precedent of what can be achieved by the integration of nature not only in the form of views but also into the materiality of the building by either making use of materials on-site or by mimicking the colours and textures in the surrounding areas and how to achieve the desired experience and sense of being. Due to this the resort creates an isolated environment where relaxation is the main goal and a feeling of peace and serenity is what is desired by those who go there. There are activities that encourage this such as meditation, an essential practice in the pursuit of a calm mind and an at-ease soul. All of the aforementioned play a crucial role in the proposal of a writer's retreat as the same experience is required, the same feeling of peace in order for the retreat to be effective in its attempt to guide the writer into a more creative headspace.



Figure 153:  
Inviting the  
landscape in  
(Fletcher,  
2010:  
online)

# Teitipac Cabin

Luis A. Martínez

This cabin is to be one of the main precedents for the design of this dissertation.

The cabin is found in the city of San Sebastian Teitipac in Mexico. It was designed by Luis Alberto Martínez Zúñiga of LAMZ Arquitectura and was constructed in 2018 (Archdaily, 2018: online).

This structure has come to be one of the most inspiring examples of what this dissertation is aiming to be, not only due to the nature of the more obvious features such as the materiality and the similarities of the sites among others but due to the approach taken by the architect during the designing of this building. It was designed in such a way that the landscape seemed to become even more striking and important than before the structure was erected. The structure was built to honour the landscape and it does so in almost every aspect possible.

The scale of the building, never overpowering the landscape, the materials an ode to the surroundings, the orientation - a celebration of every view, the layout - an extension of the earth, the genius loci - a true reflection of the effortless dialogue between man-made and nature. This structure is a true example of how that which is man-made may dissolve into nature.



Figure 154: *Cabin in the landscape* (Darquea, 2018: online)



This cabin is made up of two independent structures only connected by a single glass hallway. The first structure is lighter and more open as this houses the more public and social functions whereas the second one is more solid and closed in, it is also sunken into the earth as this structure's functions are those of a more private nature and call for a more enclosed, personal space.

It is a steel frame structure with what is presumable either brick or concrete block infill panels, clad in locally sourced stone. This is to allow for a more camouflaged and seamless look against the hillside backdrop.

The floors are covered with reclaimed timber planks and fluctuate between levels via steel stairways.

The roof is supported by a series of timber beams that indirectly encourage the dweller to move outside onto the patios to appreciate the surrounding landscape. The ceiling is also made up of timber panels which together with the floors and wooden furniture makes for a very pleasant, warm and cozy atmosphere within the structure.

The large glass windows, some perfectly capture the landscape, framing the views, taking full advantage of the surroundings, while others provide views of the earth and only slivers of light are let in, a reminder of the interaction between the structure and nature (Archdaily, 2018: online).

Figure 155: Glass corridor linking the two structures (Darquea, 2018: online)

## Conclusion

The precedent study proves to be very useful in terms of the way the landscape is approached, by employing similar principles in the design of this dissertation the sense of appreciation of the landscape can be cultivated and the landscape can be handled in a way that enhances every experience within the proposed structure. The clever use of materials will also add to the blurring of the line between man-made and nature. The stone cladding however is something that seems to detract from the honesty of the materials and makes the attempt to employ the vernacular moot.

This precedent will aid in designing a form of dialogue between the landscape and the man-made.



Figure 156: Interior of cabin (Darquea, 2018: online)

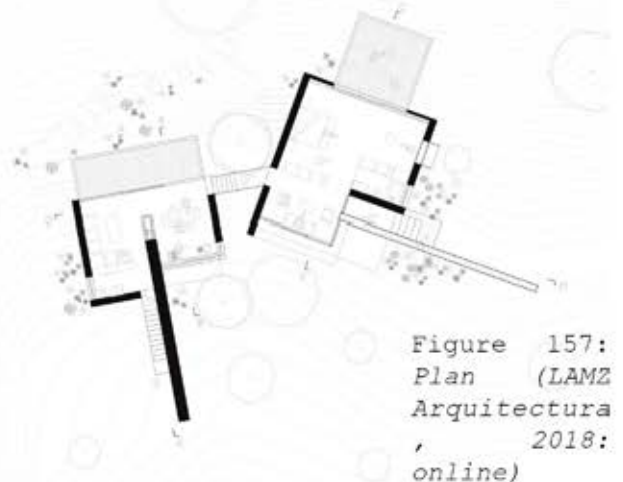


Figure 157: Plan (LAMZ Arquitectura, 2018: online)

# Coromandel Estate

Marco Zanuso

Found in the foothills of Mpumalanga's sweeping escarpment between Lydenberg and Dullstroom designed by Italian architect Marco Zanuso, Coromandel is a farm of about 5800 Ha and was made up from 24 smaller farms in the area. It houses the first Blueberry orchard in South Africa, the largest Holstein dairy, yellow and white maize, potatoes, wheat, sugar beans, sunflower, soya, peaches, nectarines, a packaging facility, immaculate stud breeding, a yearling barn and wool farming (Architizer, 2014: online).

The architect was approached by the farm's owners to design their new weekend home on the farm. This building was finished in 1975, 6 and a half years after the fact.

This is due to the fact that Zanuso insisted on employing his own construction crew from Italy as he believed that only the very best would suffice and it most definitely proves to have been worth it when taking look at the magnificence that is now known as Africa Manor House.

The architect designed this building in such a way that it seamlessly blends into its environment (Architizer, 2014: online).



Figure 158: Coromandel Estate in the distance (DVH Architectural Photography,



Figure 159: Nature enveloping the structure (DVH Architectural Photography, 2014)

This was achieved by making use of local stone, cross cut timbers as floor finish to emphasise the rustic qualities of that of the natural palette, the architect also added elements such as deep shaded verandahs and windows in climatic response but also as a way of incorporating the style of the vernacular architecture in the area. There was also a great consideration for the grasslands, farming landscape and natural features that were prominent throughout the design of the building (Peres, 2013, p. 3).

The physical approach in terms of materials and structure is not the only factor that makes this building seem as though it belongs in that landscape but the entire metaphysicality of it as well. The design of this building is so rooted in the *genus loci* of the landscape that it is quite impossible to argue the placement, design or presence of this building.

*".... an authentic architecture in which man can 'be in world'"*  
*"the adaption of Zanuso's ideas for living to the nature of the site as embodied within the architecture of place, result in the timeless regionalist qualities of the manor house"* (Architizer, 2014: online)



Figure 160: Interior materials (DVH Architectural Photography, 2014)

A long and winding driveway leads up to the mostly concealed house, it is the view of the house from the drive is obscured by a thicket of trees which allows for the already camouflaged building to dissolve even further into the landscape. This camouflage effect is achieved by the dolerite stone walls which aid in the concealment of their contents. The house was intended to have the feel of an Italian town, mimicking the idea of a public piazza in the middle as a gathering space with roads of a very narrow nature that lead to more private dormitories (Peres, 2013, p. 4).



Figure 161: Iconic Arches (DVH Architectural Photography, 2014)

Due to the architect being Italian it was possible for him to morph the Italian experience into one that would be just as romantic in the South African landscape. The way that the atria of the house is designed to be reminiscent of the narrow streets of Rome is just further proof of this fact.

The roof covering this structure is entirely green, it is a planted roof, planted with all endemic and indigenous plants, to further address the sensitive approach to the site and the means of blending the building into the landscape (Peres, 2013, p. 6).

The structure is a reinforced concrete frame structure, the walls brick infill cavity walls with a natural stone cladding.

The spaces in this building are all framed by long walls extrapolating into the landscape, directing the dwellers line of sight to a specific landmark in the landscape, it also draws the eye out into the landscape creating the illusion that the structure fades into the surroundings.

This building has of course those iconic arches that define the threshold from veld to outside to inside.

These arches are found on the northern side of the building so they can be presumed to have been erected not only for poetic reasons but for the practicality of providing shade as well.

The interior of this building was carefully designed and curated by the architect. Even though this timeless structure seems to be one that would employ the more natural and passive approach to technology it is actually quite technologically advanced as it has features such as electric sliding doors and central heating, providing modern day comfort for the client while still capturing the timeless spirit of the veld.

### **Conclusion**

Coromandel Estate proves to be an excellent benchmark to which every ecologically inspired design can be measured. If the approach to the landscape can be imitated in this dissertation it is possible to have a design that seems to morph into the Swartberg just as Coromandel does in its landscape.

The main elements of this design however, to be adapted and employed in the design of this dissertation would be the romanticism of the spaces and the genuine inclusion of the spirit of the place into the building itself.

The emotional experiences that inhabit every inch of Coromandel are what is aimed to be introduced into the design proposal in the Swartberg Mountains.



Figure 162: *Coromandel in the landscape*  
(DVH Architectural Photography, 2014)





Design  
attempt  
#4.

Figure 163: *The textures of the landscape (author, 2020)*



# Design #4 inspiration

This design was far more inspired by the landscape, it followed the contour lines and grew out of the earth in a way that the previous designs failed to.

This design is attempting to make the landscape king by utilising methods and materials which aim to blur the lines between the landscape and the building.

This design was inspired by the rock formations and the layering of the stone due to the fact of the mountains being and exposed fold mountain chain.

These mountains are formed by two continental plates or one continental and one oceanic plate move together or collide, forcing sedimentary rocks upwards in a series of folds. The vegetation and the way the vegetation grows between the rocks and ridges and allows for the stones to blend so seamlessly into the background of the mountain scenery, were very influential factors when it came to this design. just as the stones blended so seamlessly, is how the structure was aimed to blend into the site.



Figure 164: Rock formation on site (author, 2020)



Figure 165: Rock formation on site 2 (author, 2020)



Figure 166: Rock formation on site 3 (author, 2020)



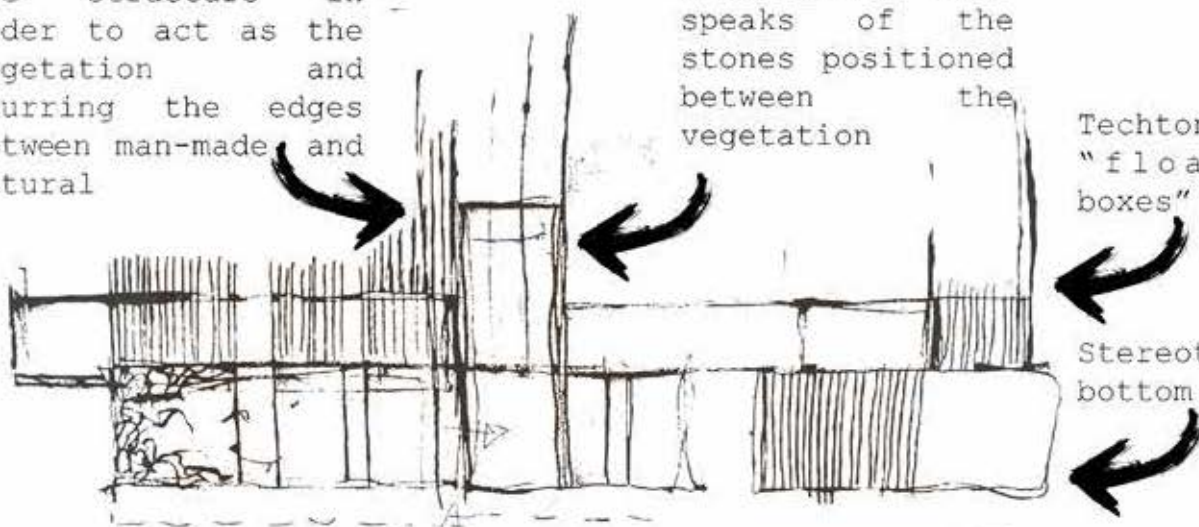
Figure 167: Textures of the landscape  
(author, 2020)

Fins extending above the structure in order to act as the vegetation and blurring the edges between man-made and natural

Large glass "box" speaks of the stones positioned between the vegetation

Tectonic "floating boxes"

Stereotomic bottom



Stone-clad structure sunken into the earth - "grows" out of the earth as the mountains did and sunken in to embed man in nature

Figure 168: Quick sketch inspired by grass growth through rock formations  
(author, 2020)

# Design #4.



Figure 169: Site model of design attempt #4 (author, 2020)

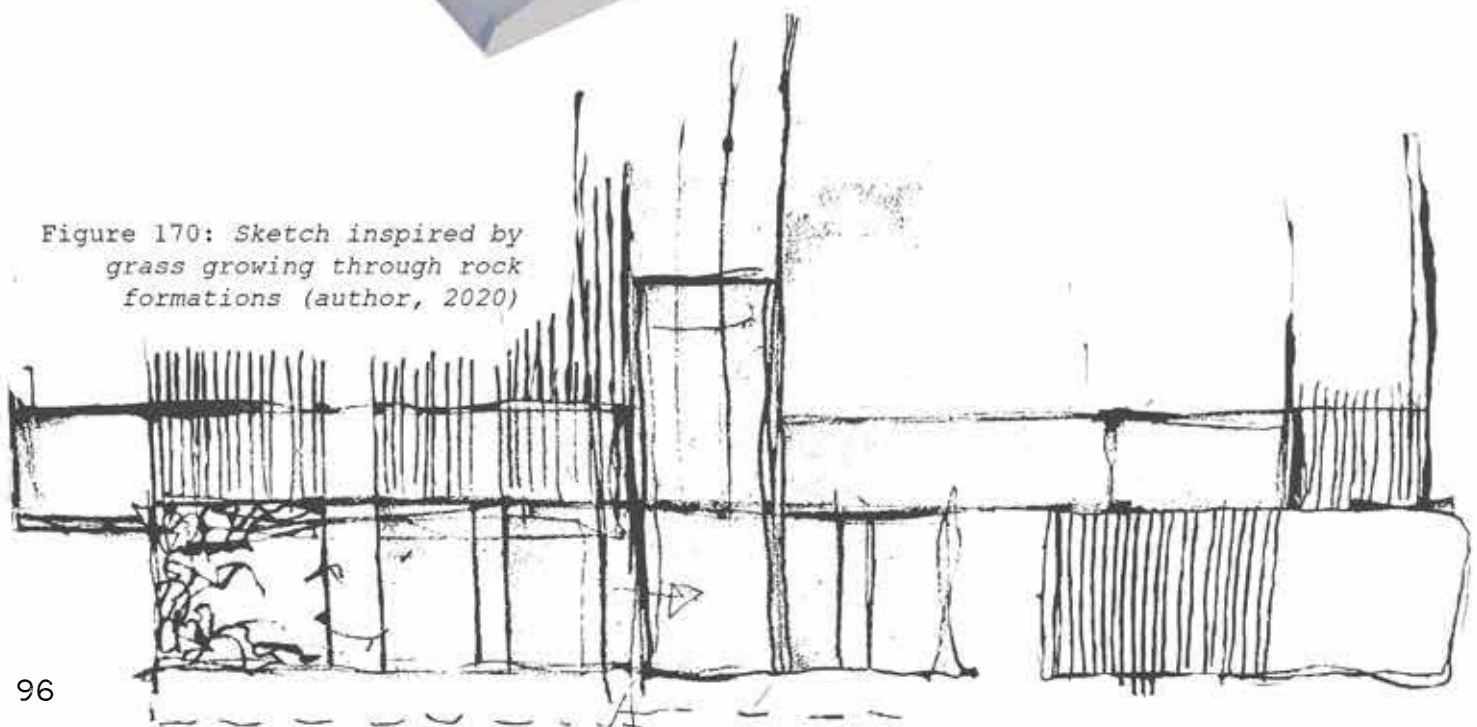


Figure 170: Sketch inspired by grass growing through rock formations (author, 2020)

# Site layout:



Figure 171: Site layout of design attempt #4 (author, 2020)

This design was far more inspired by the landscape, it followed the contour lines and grew out of the earth in a way that the previous designs failed to. This design is attempting to make the landscape king by utilising methods and materials which aim to blur the lines between the landscape and the building.

Figure 172: Space/material allocation (author, 2020)

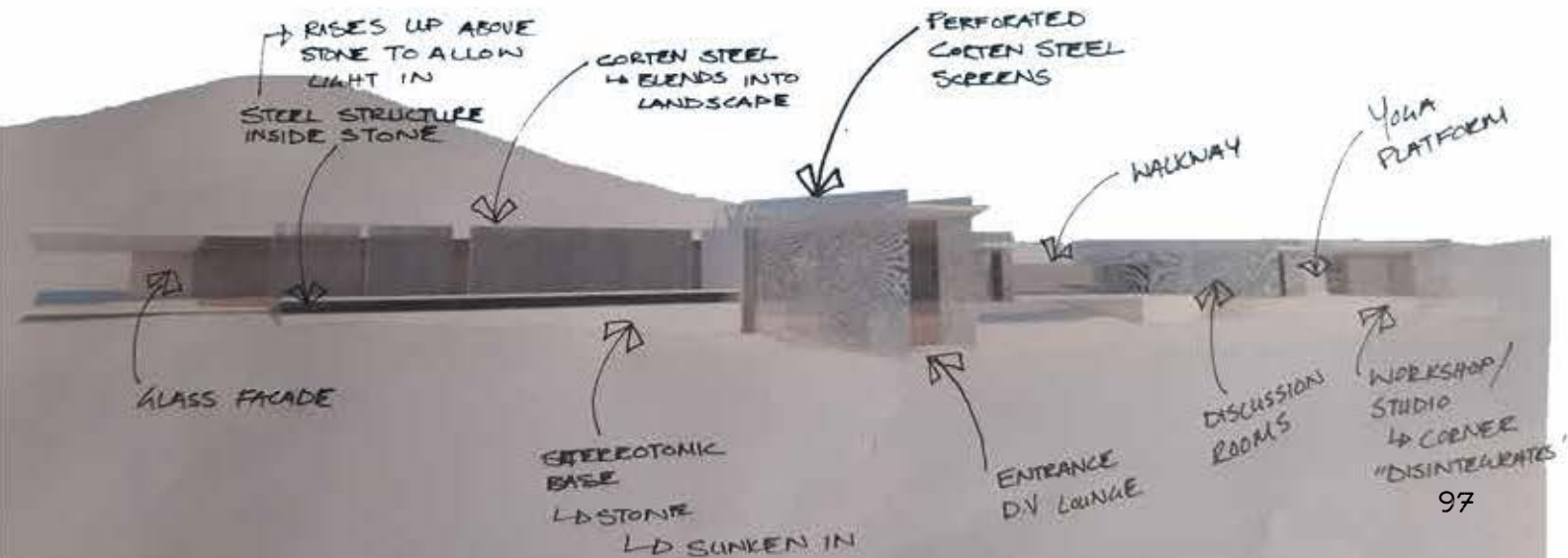




Figure 173: Design #4 attempt #1 in the landscape (author, 2020)



Figure 174: Design #4 Ground floor plan (author, 2020)



Figure 175: Design #4 First floor plan (author, 2020)



# Short section:

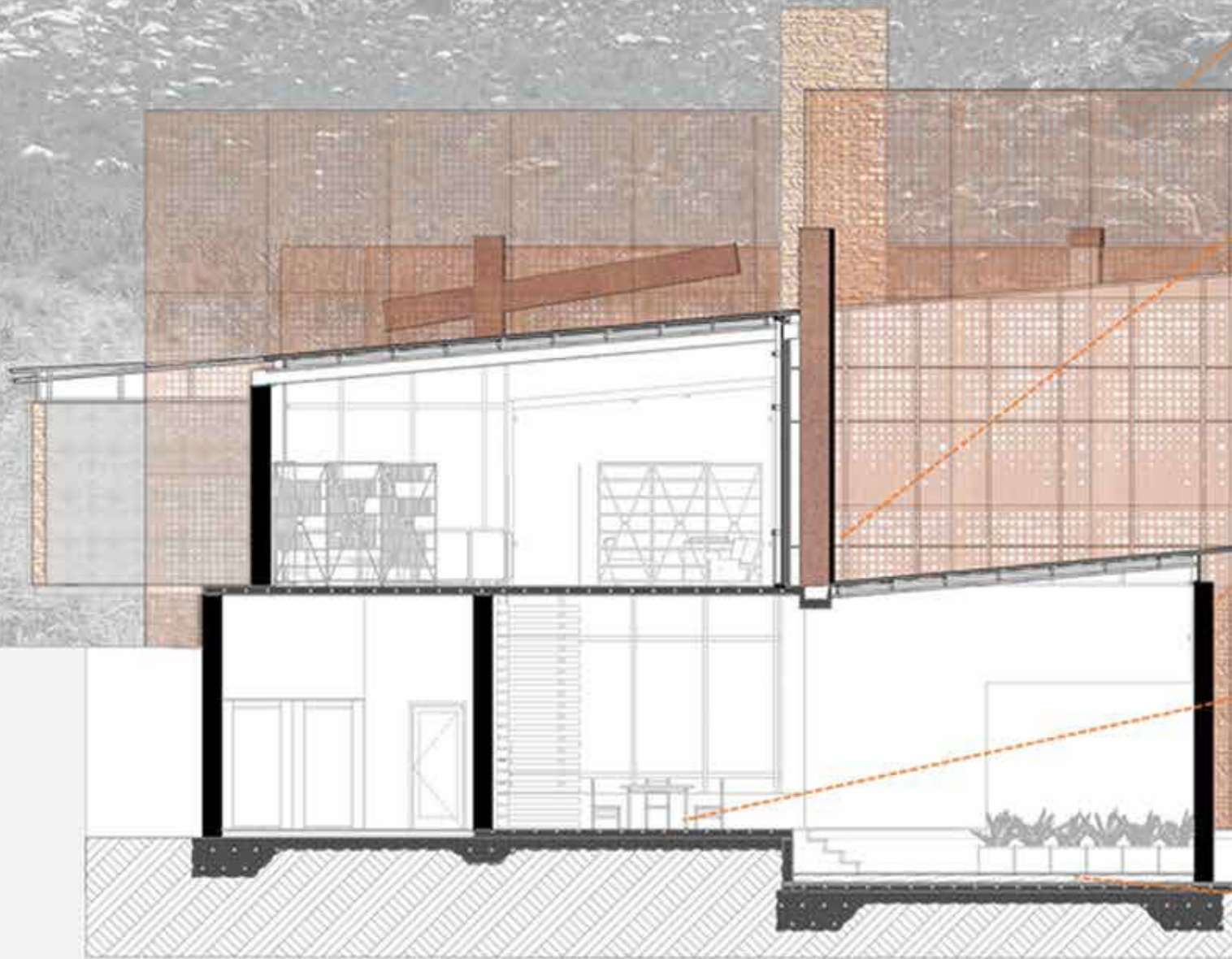
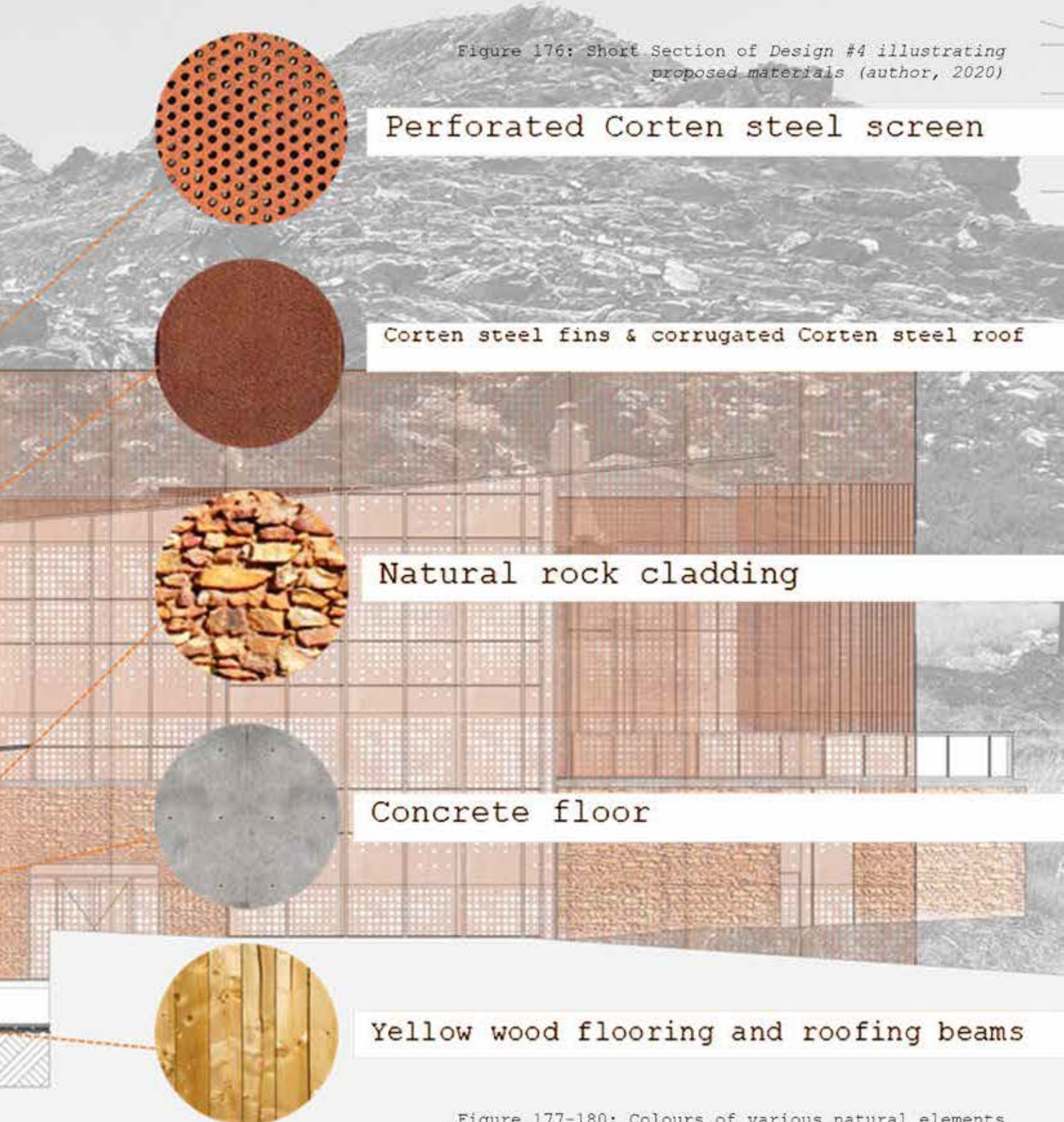


Figure 176: Short Section of Design #4 illustrating proposed materials (author, 2020)



Perforated Corten steel screen

Corten steel fins & corrugated Corten steel roof

Natural rock cladding

Concrete floor

Yellow wood flooring and roofing beams

Figure 177-180: Colours of various natural elements found on site (author, 2020)

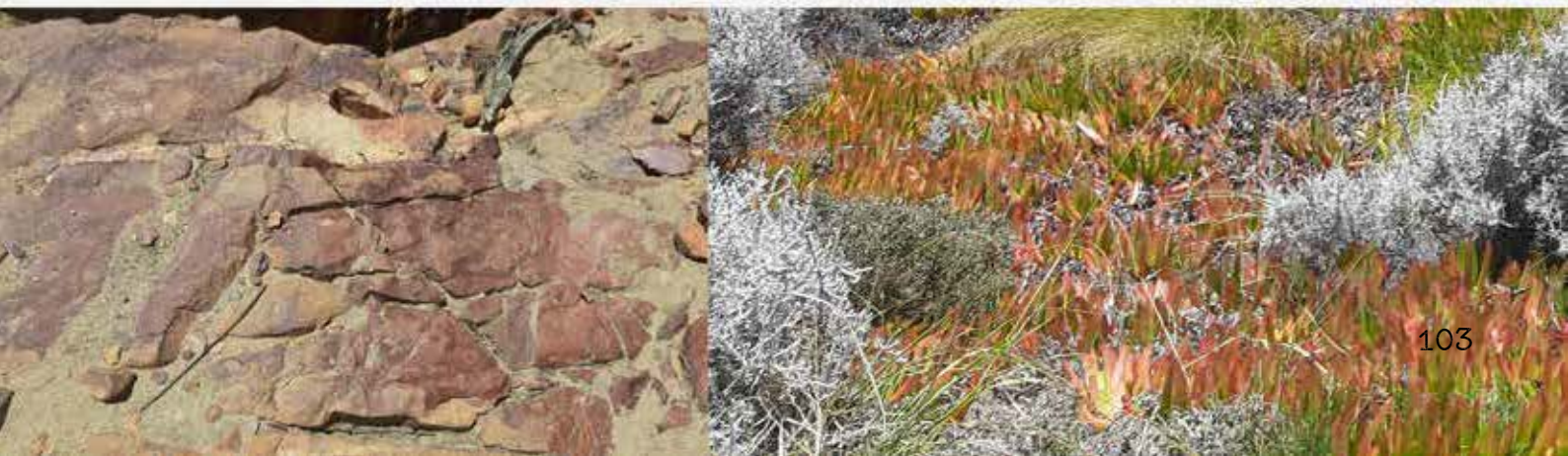




Figure 181: Design #4 attempt #1 in the landscape reflection(author, 2020)

Upon reflection it was apparent that this design was not engaging with the landscape in a way that allowed for interaction between the building and the site. The building was too extensive, it overwhelmed the landscape and was still far too urban. Certain elements however were promising, such as the heavy stereotomic base, the materials used and the general layout of the building. It was however decided that the glass walkway should be removed, the space sizing should be reconsidered and the overall extensiveness of the building should be addressed.





Figure 182: Design #4 attempt #2 in the landscape (author, 2020)



Figure 183: Design #4 attempt #2 Ground Floor plan (author, 2020)



Figure 184: Design #4 attempt #2 First Floor plan (author, 2020)

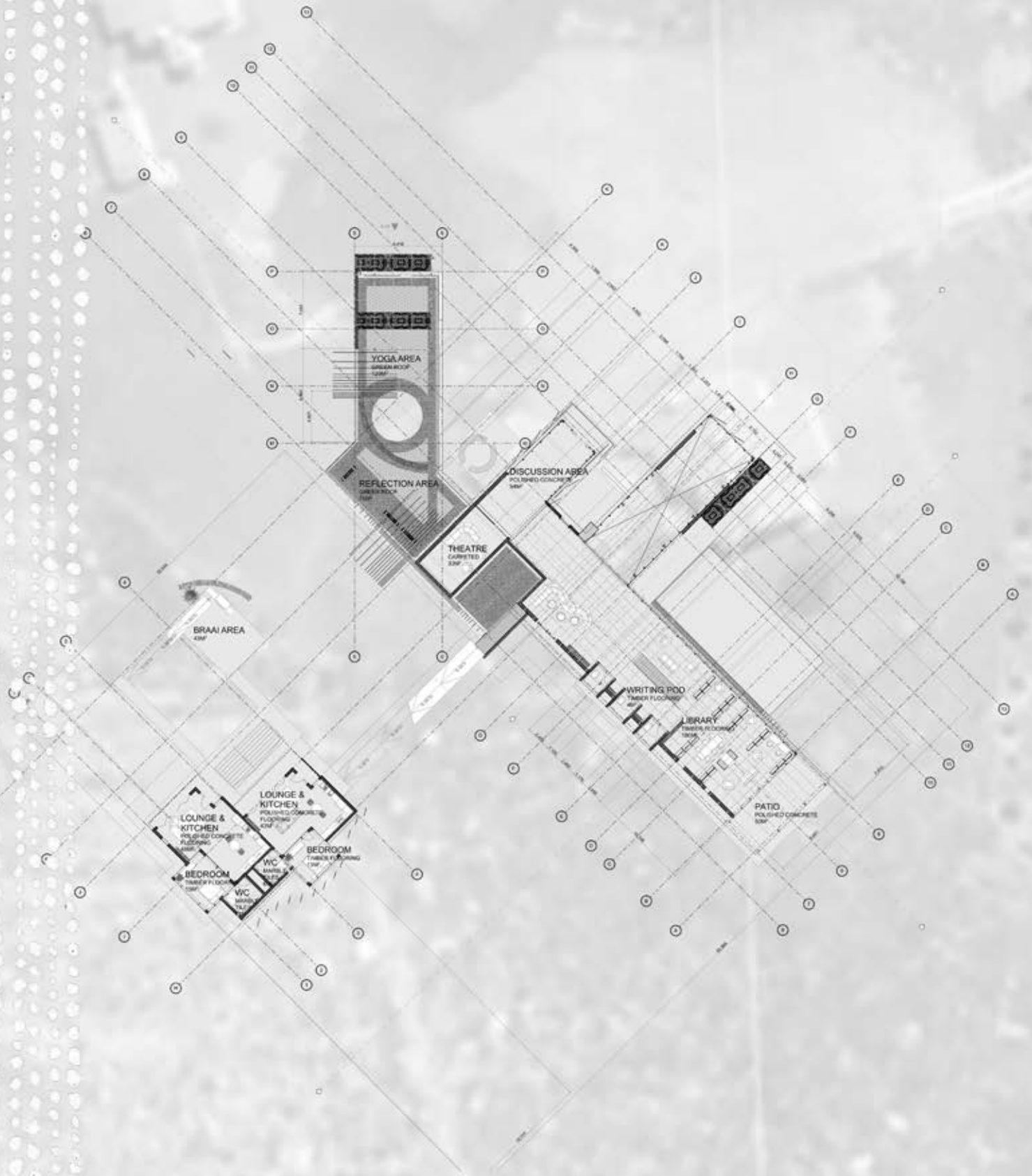


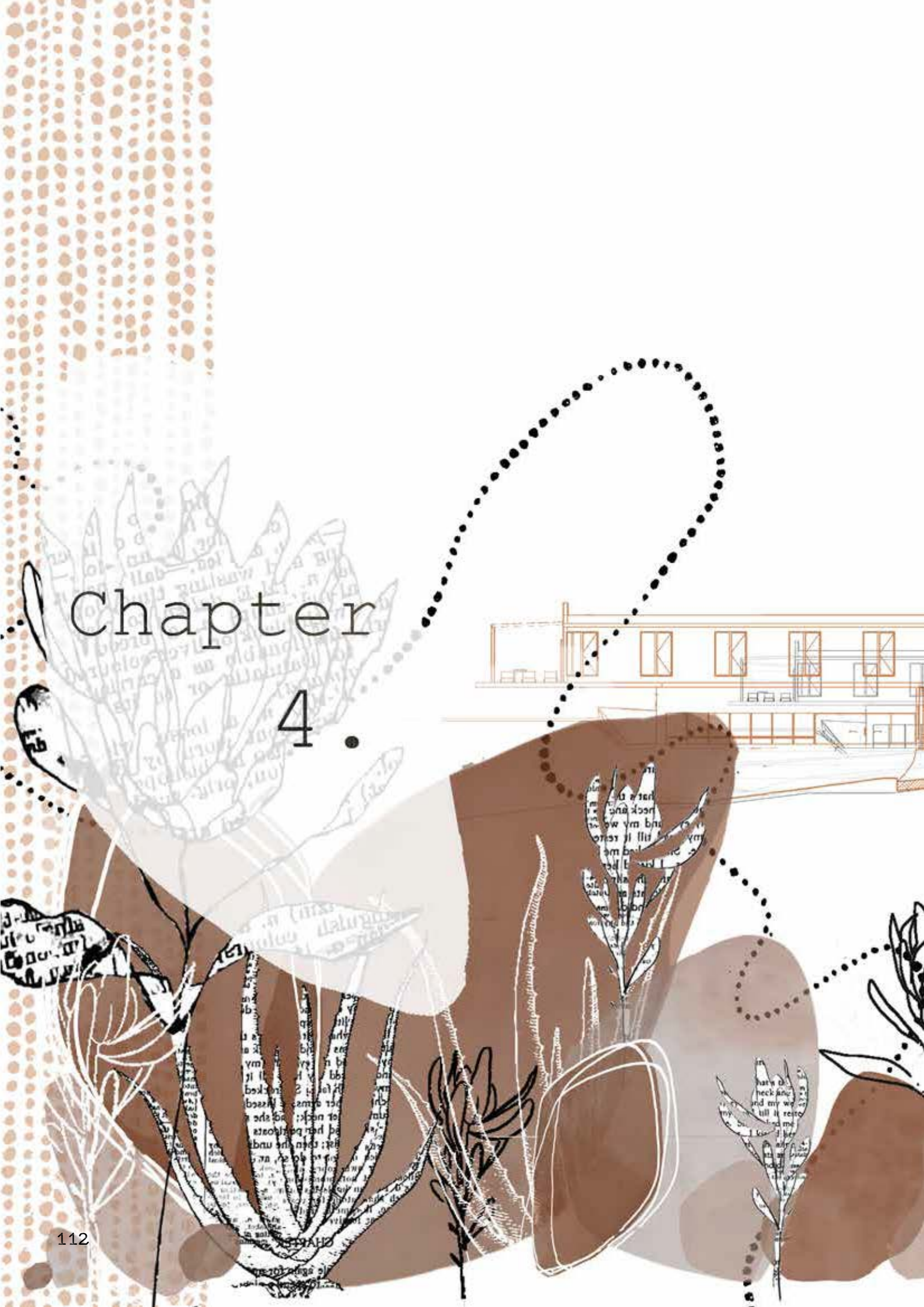


Figure 185: Design #4 attempt #2 reflection  
(author, 2020)

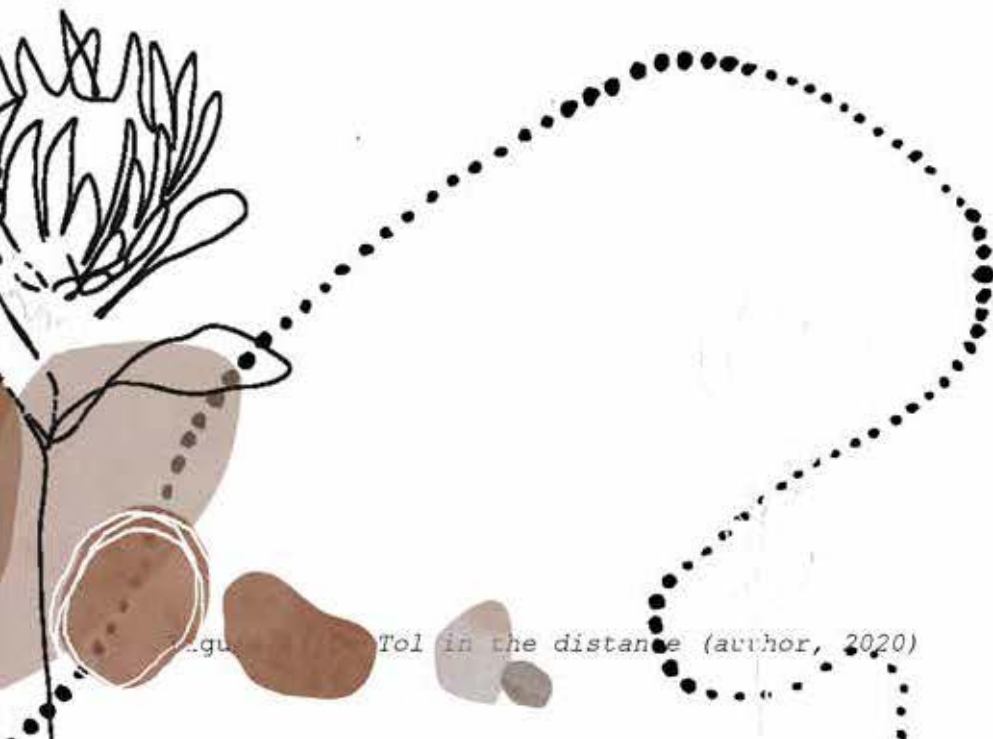
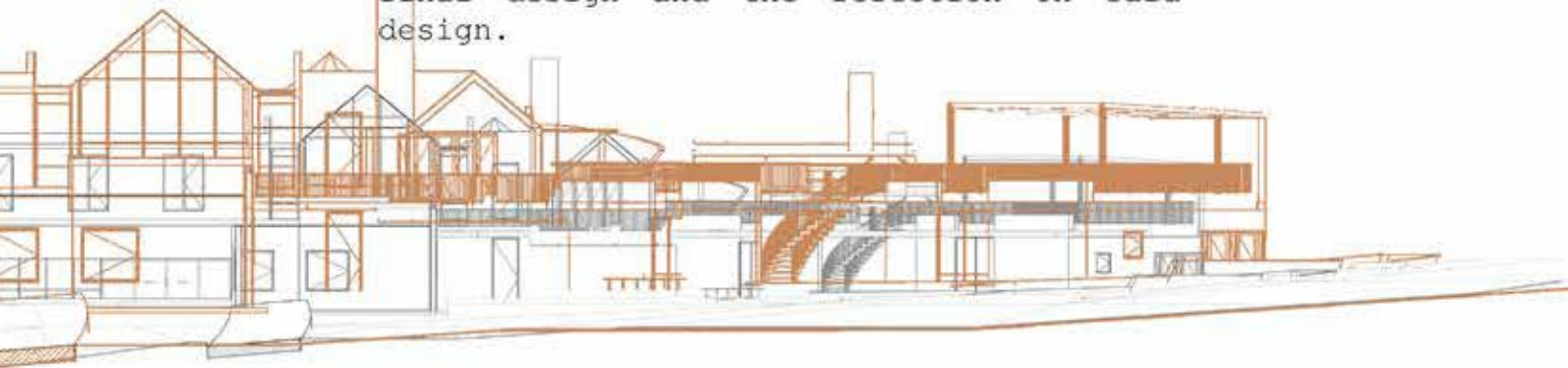
The structure was now far smaller and less obtrusive and sat better in the landscape but it still had no sense of belonging in the landscape, it still spoke a language that was too urban on the site, the screens seemed to be an afterthought and the large glass expanses seemed wasteful and impractical. The design was slowly edging closer to where it needed to be but there was one word that was missing - Vernacular.



# Chapter 4.



Chapter 4 starts off with a narrative of the writer's experience of the design. It also includes the design synthesis, the theoretical application on the final design as well as the construction report, the final design and the reflection on said design.



# Vernacular Architecture

Architecture concerned with domestic functional rather than public or monumental buildings.

Vernacular architecture is based on needs and that which is available to sate those needs, local materials and traditions specific to the region in which the need arises. It is also generally not architecture that is designed by professional architects but rather by local crafters and builders or whomever may be able to satisfy the need (Designing Buildings Wiki, 2020: online).

Vernacular architecture is not as widely preferred as it was in 1969 as then it encompassed 95% of the world's built environment. What was beneficial about this though is that through vernacular architecture regional architecture styles were developed using local materials and construction methods unique to the areas making for more energy efficient and sustainable design solutions, it also manages to create more of a connection between the people and their environment (Designing Buildings Wiki, 2020: online).

In this sense employing the vernacular in this dissertation's design in the most 'honest to materials' way would be to use the dry construction, construction methods used by those who originally built the Swartberg Pass. By employing the same construction methods, adapted to a more modern application and by using the same local stone the vernacular will be more apparent in the design. Also by making use of the style of architecture present in the 1800's when the Pass came to be, as an influence on the proposed design this will also allow for a more vernacular feel to the building and it will capture the spirit of the place more successfully.

Figure 187: Karoo-style vernacular house in Prince Albert (Mouton, 2011)



KAROO-STYLE HOUSES, PRINCE ALBERT, GREAT KAROO, SOUTH AFRICA



Figure 188: Gabled Karoo-style house in Prince Albert (afristay, n.d.: online)



Figure 186: Karoo-style vernacular house design (ACOMSA, n.d.: online)



Figure 189: The unique Prince Albert Gable (Story Weaver, 2020: online)



Figure 194-195: Use of stone stacking building techniques to build structures along pass while building pass (author, 2020)

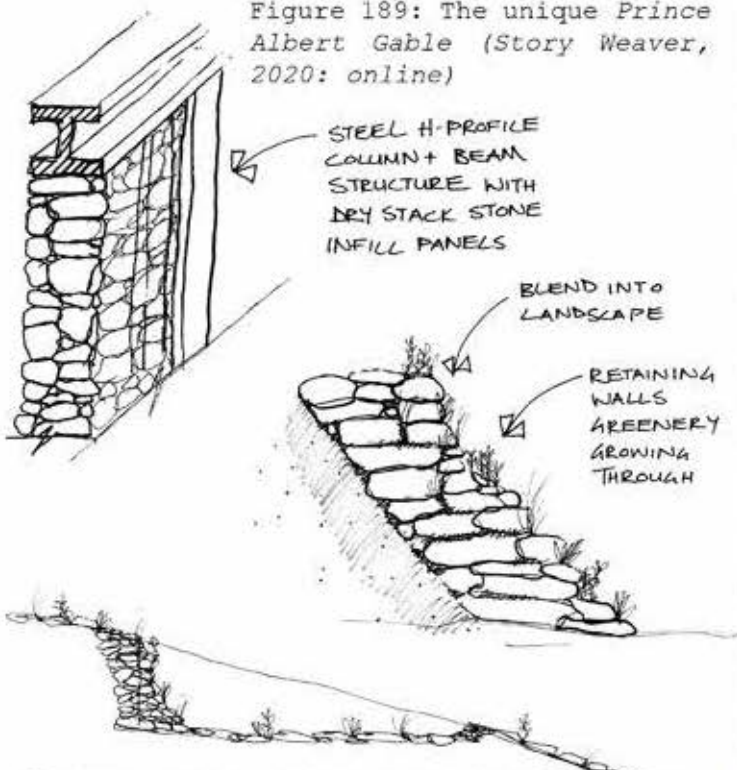


Figure 190-192: Use of vernacular building techniques in proposed design (author, 2020)




Figure 196: Use of stone stacking building techniques to build pass (author, 2020)



Figure 193: Use of vernacular building styles in proposed design (author, 2020)

# The Writer's Experience



The structure emerges from the earth and unfurls itself, stretching out into the landscape, once again forming part of it. The glass windows reflect the last golden rays of the afternoon sun between the green and pink foliage as if the structure may be winking, teasing, enticing.

The sunlight on the building is dappled by the pergolas, which are reminiscent of the "brakdakke" the Karoo is so well known for, further camouflaging the building, blending into the backdrop of the natural landscape like that of the majestic Cape leopard, indigenous to these regions, as if it belongs here. Just as with an encounter with such an incredible creature, a hushed sense of reverence befalls the self. The roof above the entrance is lowered and encourages a want to look down, a sense of submission washes over, claustrophobia creeps in and a noose of trepidation begins to constrict around the airway.


Stepping through the doorway it is as if somewhere between then and now reality had become a distant memory and the present was in a world anew, a world where the walls were merely an extension of outside, the windows - portals for the imagination and every staircase a teleportation device to places not yet discovered. The double volume space allowing air into the lungs as if breathing for the first time in a long time, as if all restrictions were left at that front door.

As if freedom, ironically enough, could be found in the vicinity of these walls. Because these walls are not boundaries, but rather a ground zero facilitating an interaction with nature on a completely new level. Touching the walls of this structure, is touching outside, looking through the windows is appreciating a specific view of this incredible landscape that may otherwise never have been appreciated.

Walking down the stairs into the lounge, sunken into the earth, it feels as though there is no longer a 'man versus nature' mentality but rather an amalgamation of the two where one is not attempting to overpower the other but rather to engage and harmonize in a way where a culture of understanding and appreciation is cultivated.

The proteas bloom at head-height and in the breeze, it seems as though they are nodding in acknowledgement, "we see you". Nodding back, there is an acknowledgement of mutual respect and understanding.

Dusk is here and the glow from upstairs, illuminating the staircase, is quite irresistible. The stairs double back on themselves, allowing for one last look at those on the sofa, softly chatting, another staring out of the window wordlessly conversing with nature, pen poised, waiting for a reply, others distracting themselves with a board game - soothing tired imaginations.




Upstairs the fire crackles, the senses immediately captured by the musty smell that fills every corner of a writer's dream, the walls are lined with books and a lingering exploration through the maze of shelves reveals hidden nooks, some occupied and unoccupied at the same time by minds transported deep into the pages of a book. Walking out onto the patio the landscape unfolds and the last fiery red rocks are fading as darkness settles in for the night. Laughter drifts up the staircase, a reminder of the construct that is time.

Down the stairs the communal kitchen is alive with colour, conversation and flavour. Wine is shared and food prepared, an irresistible environment, banter, laughter and interaction is engaged in. This is an area filled with light-heartedness, where the writer is forgotten, and the person emerges and comes alive.

The evening ritual comes to an end and some retreat back to their nooks and crannies finding these to be their finest writing hours, while others pair off and begin the trek to the cabins, facilitating the transition from integration to isolation.

The cabins are a fair way to walk along a dimly lit walkway dipping in and out of the earth. The fresh, crisp Karoo air heightening the senses, the stillness of the landscape clearing the mind and the sound of the nocturnal wildlife igniting a sense of peacefulness and calm, a reminder to just be.



With a noticeably stilled mind and a content soul, the night breeze caressing the skin, the path is broken away from and the gradual uphill path is the next venture to be dared. A few metres along the path and through the thicket of proteas obscuring the cabin, the area comes alive with a warm welcoming glow. The full moon is on the horizon, its bright light bathing the landscape, the stone walls are seemingly ablaze, every stone a different hue of bright orange, red and rust, convincing the eye of the illusion and an image of a flickering flame takes shape in the back of the minds eye.

This glow is emanating from a spot burrowed into the mountain, the cabin enveloped in the arms of the landscape, held so gently, so delicately as if the mountain were cradling its very own, nestled into its bosom. Immediately a feeling of warmth and content washes over and the toll of the day whisks the wonder away and the desire for a steaming mug of tea in the softest pyjamas next to a crackling fire sets in.

The entrance is recessed into the earth, overhead a light illuminating the doorway as if giving direction that this is the place, the oasis that the weary mind and soul have been yearning for. This is the place to just be. The doorway is transcended, and the room is aglow with the incandescence of the flickering flames dancing in the fireplace in the middle of the room.

It feels as though the self has been transported to a world where the only stressor is when this idyll will end. The boiled kettle beckons.

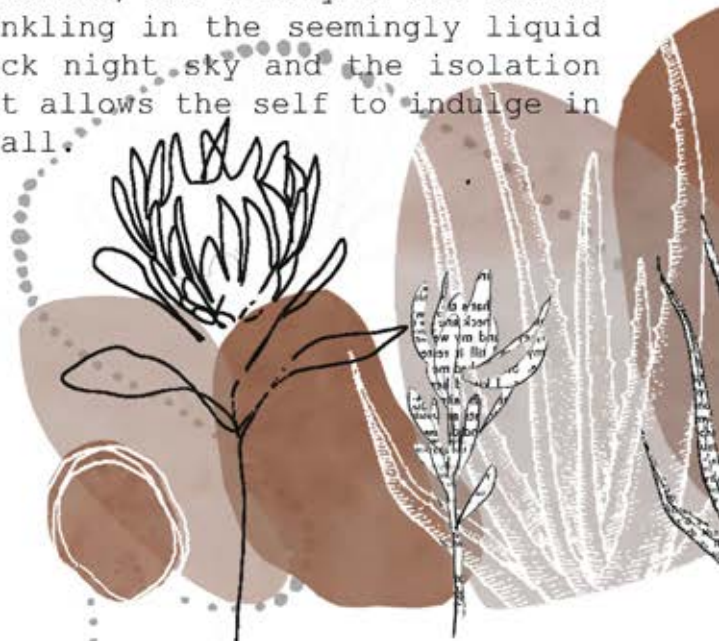
The floors are cold to the touch, the flickering light from the fire reflecting off of the local stone aggregate blended into the concrete floor as though the flecks of stone were cat eyes on the road directing the traffic towards the bedroom. Each step towards the bedroom is cold on barefeet keeping the senses alert, aware of the warm lights creating shadows on the walls, aware of every window cradling a view of the landscape in such a way that it seems as though nature is pouring into the cabin.

The reclaimed yellow wood floor of the bedroom creaks with every step telling the tales of its life it lived before. The bedroom is populated with a plush white double bed, a soft high pile carpet which envelopes the feet and a beautiful soft brown leather armchair positioned perfectly to capture the early morning sun. There is also a nook, a writer's nook with a large wooden desk tucked into it and a solitary small window at head height, framing a view that can only be described as designed by the gods. Such a specific view that captures every moment in time, it changes as the seasons change, as the creatures and critters come and go, the perfect spot of time to capture the true essence of nature.

There is a door across the room - another portal to new territory and new experiences. Through the doorway, as the fresh air softly tickles the skin on the back of the neck sending wonderful chills down the spine, the landscape once more unfolds and is awash with iridescent moonlight and the radiance of the brightest stars ever to be known, time seems to stand still for a while.

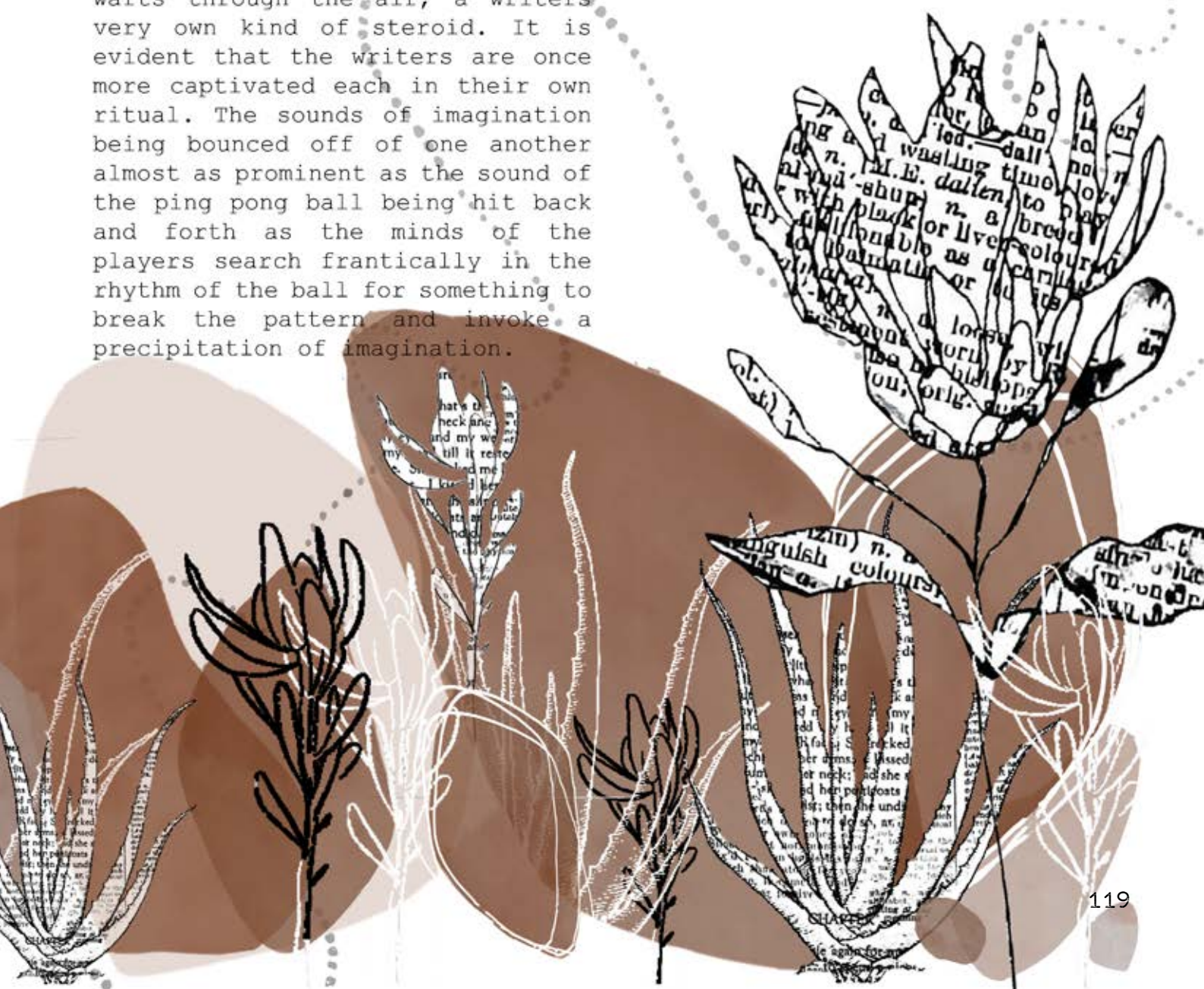
Eventually the tea turns cold and the mind gives in to the desire to turn in. Laying in bed the stars look down over the cabin through the skylights, the imagination filling the mind with all the wonderful possibilities of what they might be. The world fades with one last fleeting thought that this, right here is the place where man, nature and writing will flourish.

The day begins before the sun awakens the finest writing hours are long before the day breaks. With a steaming cup of joe and the Swartberg's version of God's Window, the ink begins to flow, staining the paper with words roused by the magnificence of the landscape, the sweet songs sung by the birds, the memory of the starts twinkling in the seemingly liquid black night sky and the isolation that allows the self to indulge in it all.



Soon joints begin to ache and it is time to give in to the relentless calling of the majestic landscape. It is time to venture out, to explore, to get just a little bit lost. The walk to the main building is a vastly different experience in the sunlight, the air seems lighter, and it carries an earthy aroma interlaced with something peppery - the scent of the indigenous Buchu plant. The main building winks in the sun, once again beckoning.

Entering the side of the building through first the veranda and then the kitchen, the smell of coffee wafts through the air, a writers very own kind of steroid. It is evident that the writers are once more captivated each in their own ritual. The sounds of imagination being bounced off of one another almost as prominent as the sound of the ping pong ball being hit back and forth as the minds of the players search frantically in the rhythm of the ball for something to break the pattern and invoke a precipitation of imagination.



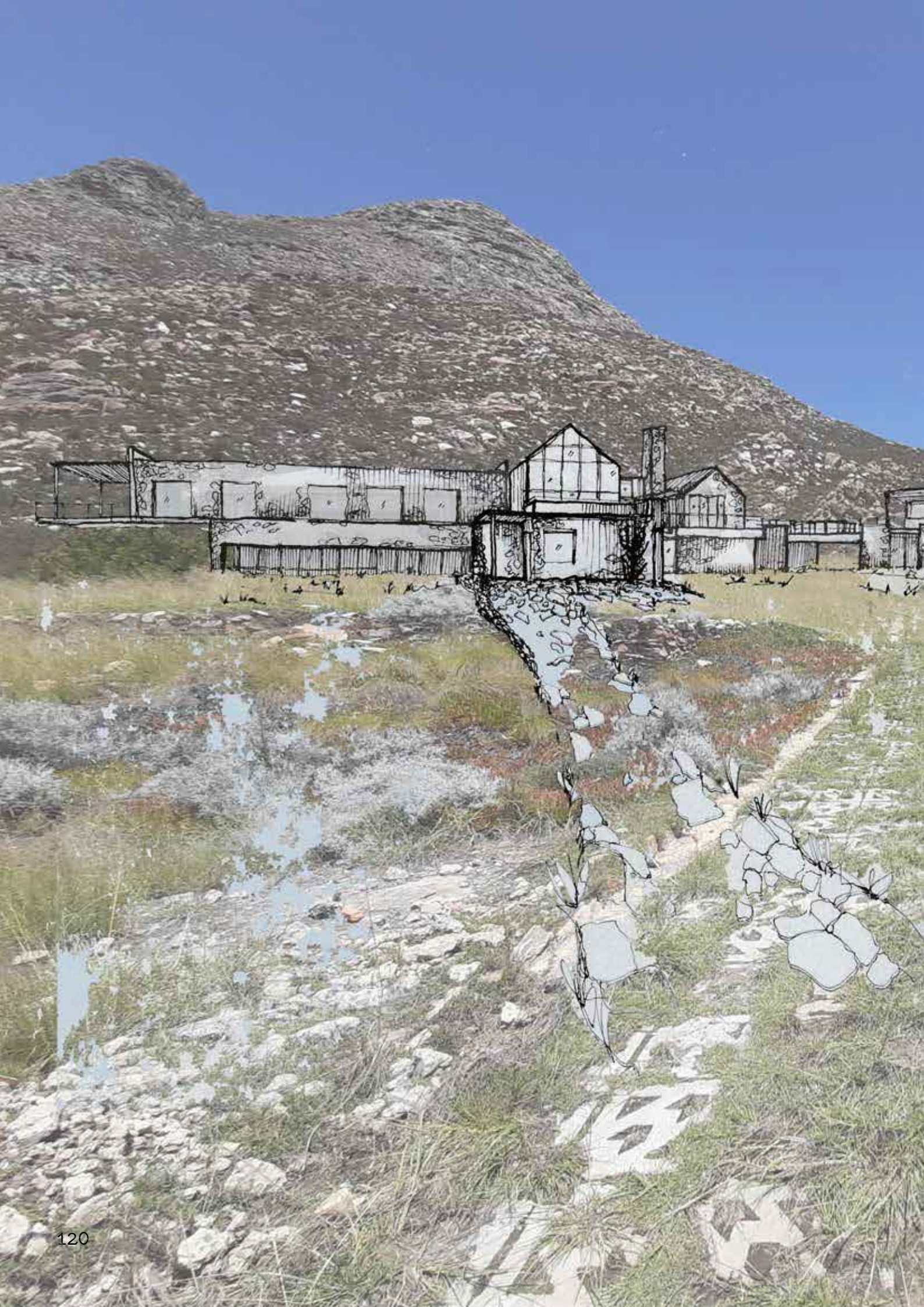
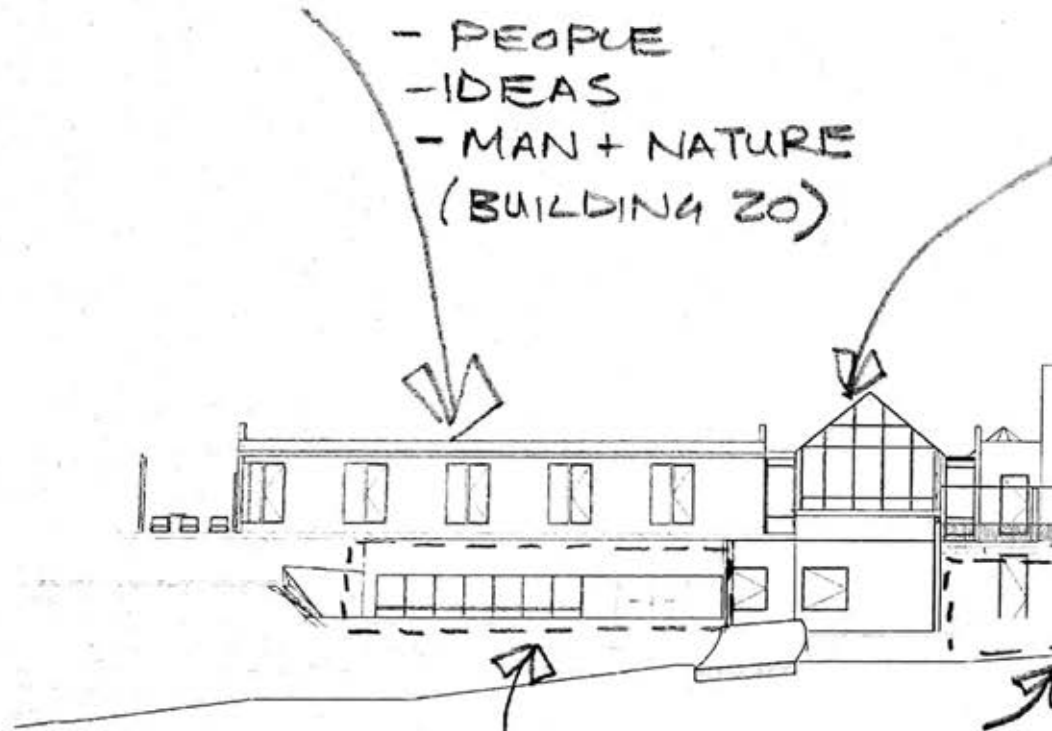


Figure 194: Quick sketch of the final proposal for the main building (author, 2020)



# MAIN BUILDING BECOMES PLACE OF INTEGRATION

- PEOPLE
- IDEAS
- MAN + NATURE  
(BUILDING ZONE)



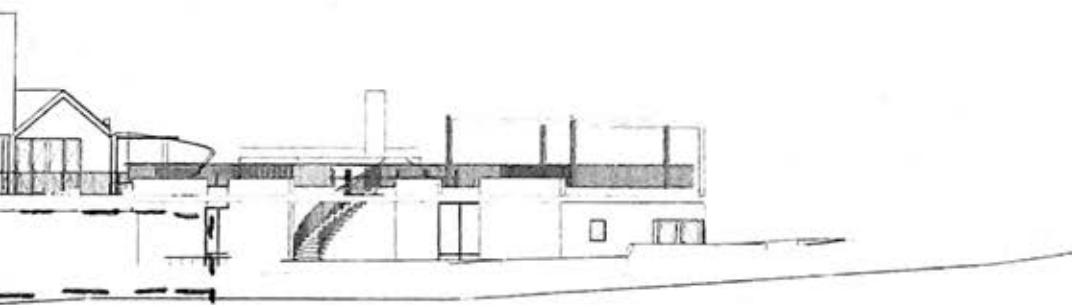
SUNKEN INTO THE  
EARTH - READY-

↳ BE EYE-LEVEL  
NATURE

↳ BECOME A  
NATURE, AND  
OF NATURE  
VERSA

A PLACE THAT ENGAGES  
SELF CONSCIOUS MIND

LIGHT WEIGHT TECTONIC STRUCTURE  
LOOKING OUT OVER NATURE  
PRESENT - AT - HAND  
↳ OBSERVE NATURE



↳  
THE  
AT-HAND  
LEVEL WITH  
PART OF  
EXTENSION  
AND VICE

Figure 195: How Theory ties into building  
(author, 2020)

The development was designed to follow the natural curves of the landscape. The main building is placed on the already previously leveled part on site due to the structures previously erected on site and the residential units are placed in the valley present on site. The residential units are placed in such a way that each of them will have an unobstructed view, while still receiving northern light. The main building has a north east orientation making sure to reap as much as possible from the magnificent sunrise views and sunset views from the western side of the building. The materials used are all sourced locally to have the structures blend into the environment as seamlessly as possible. Due to the variation in levels many of the roofs are to be green roofs as not to interrupt the view of nature.

**SITE PLAN**  
SCALE 1:500

Figure 196: Site Plan of proposed design (author, 2020)





**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

SCALE 1:500

Figure 197: Main Building Ground floor plan (author, 2020)

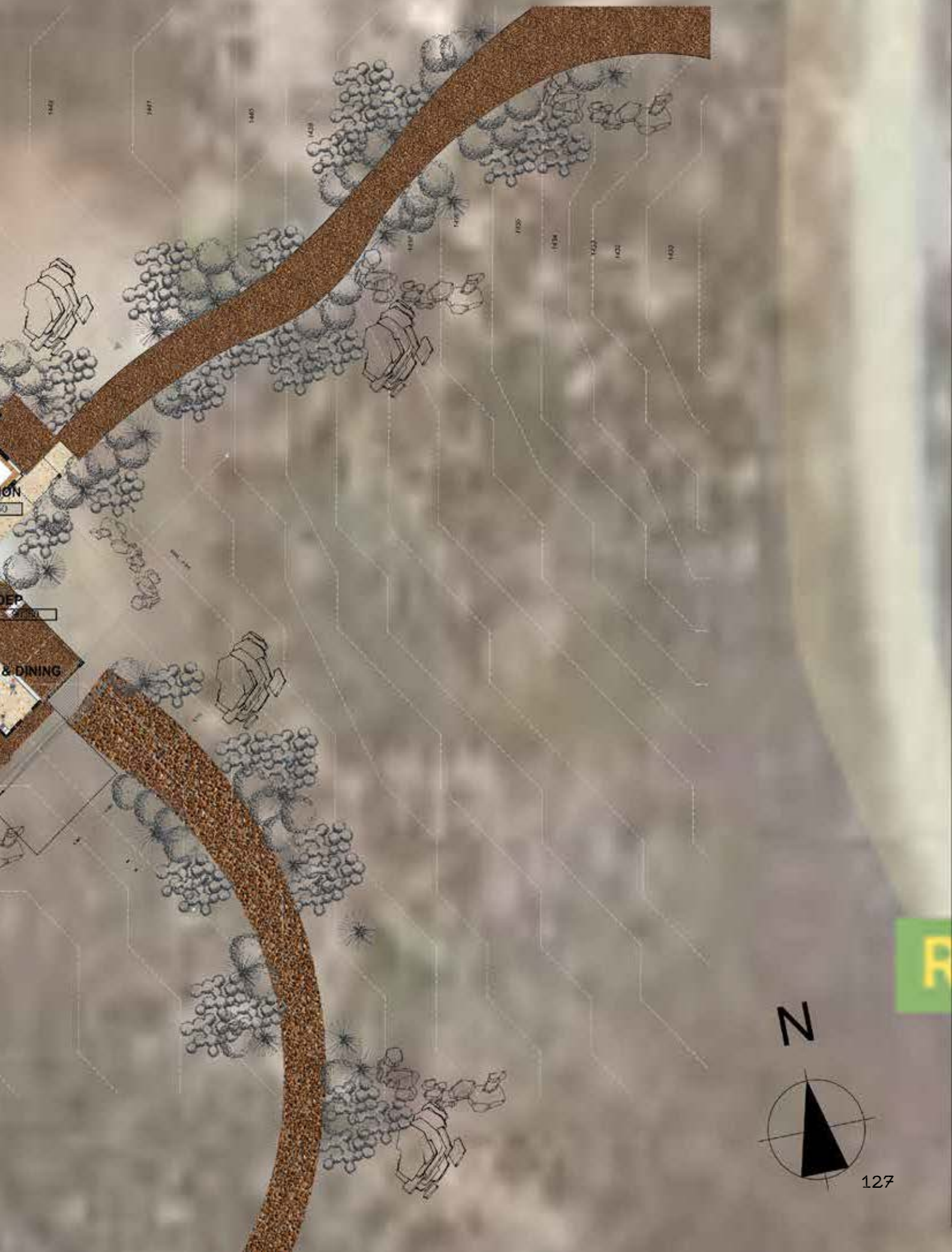




Figure 198: First floor plan of main building and facilitator's residence plan (author, 2020)



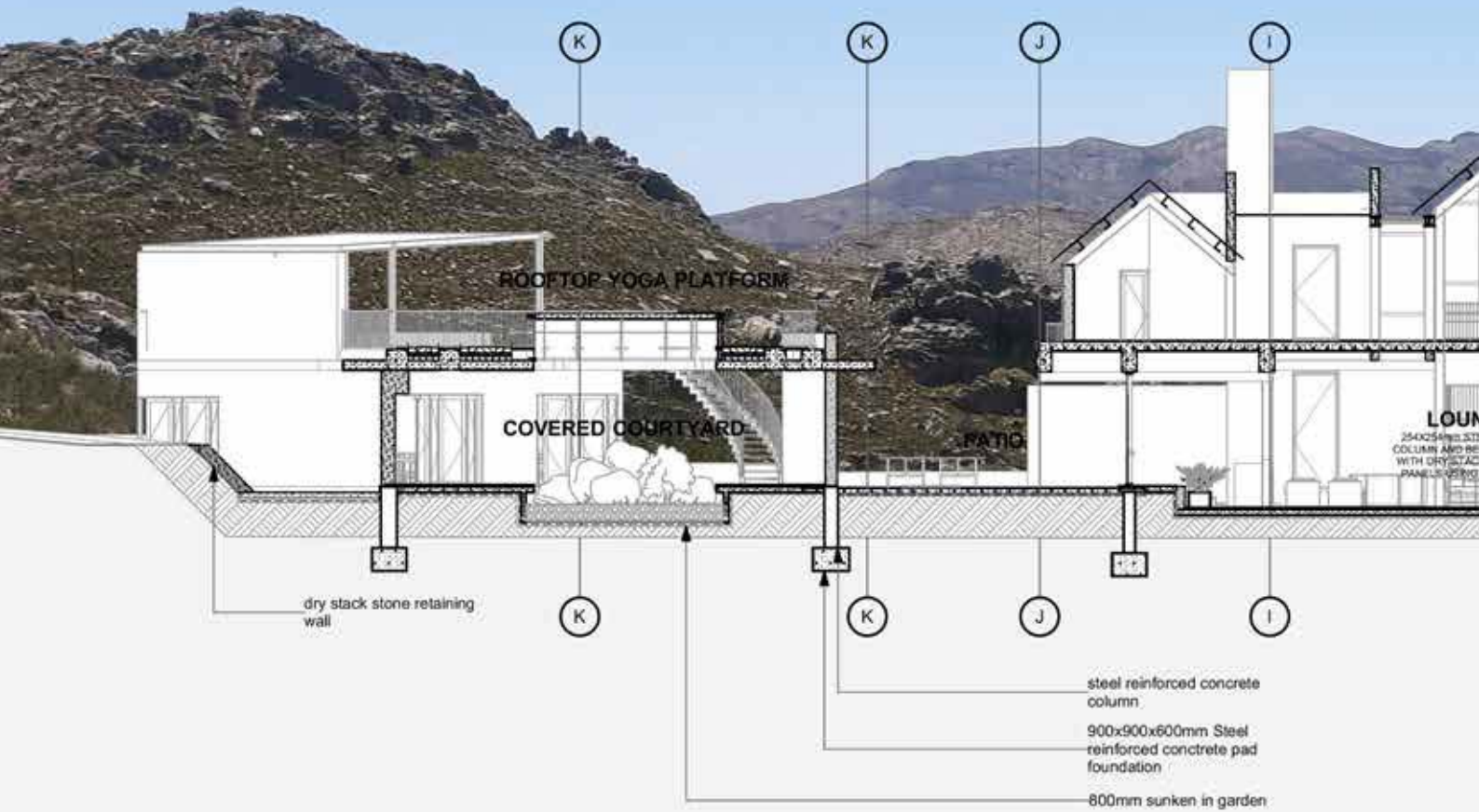
R32







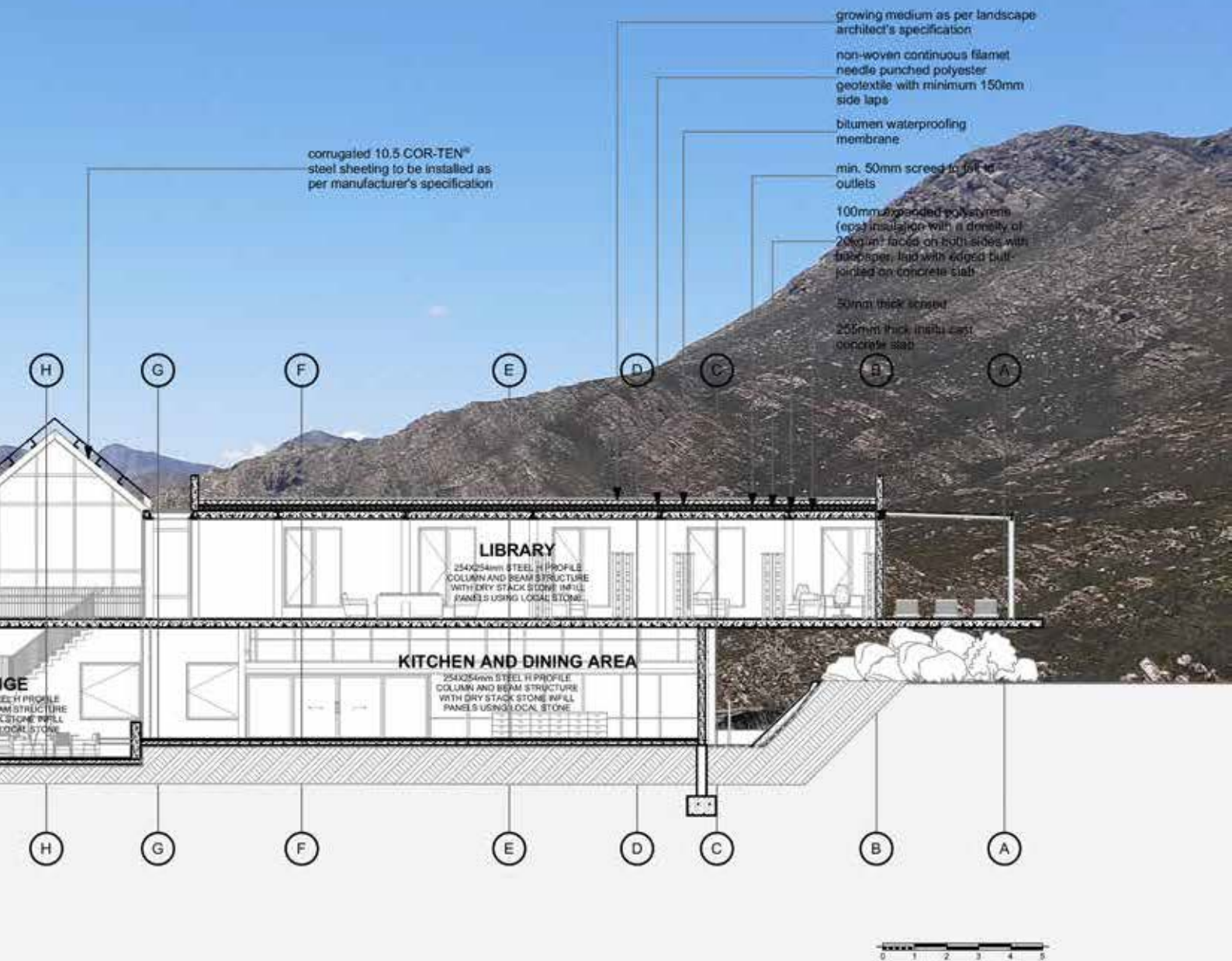
Figure 199: Site Section (author, 2020) 131

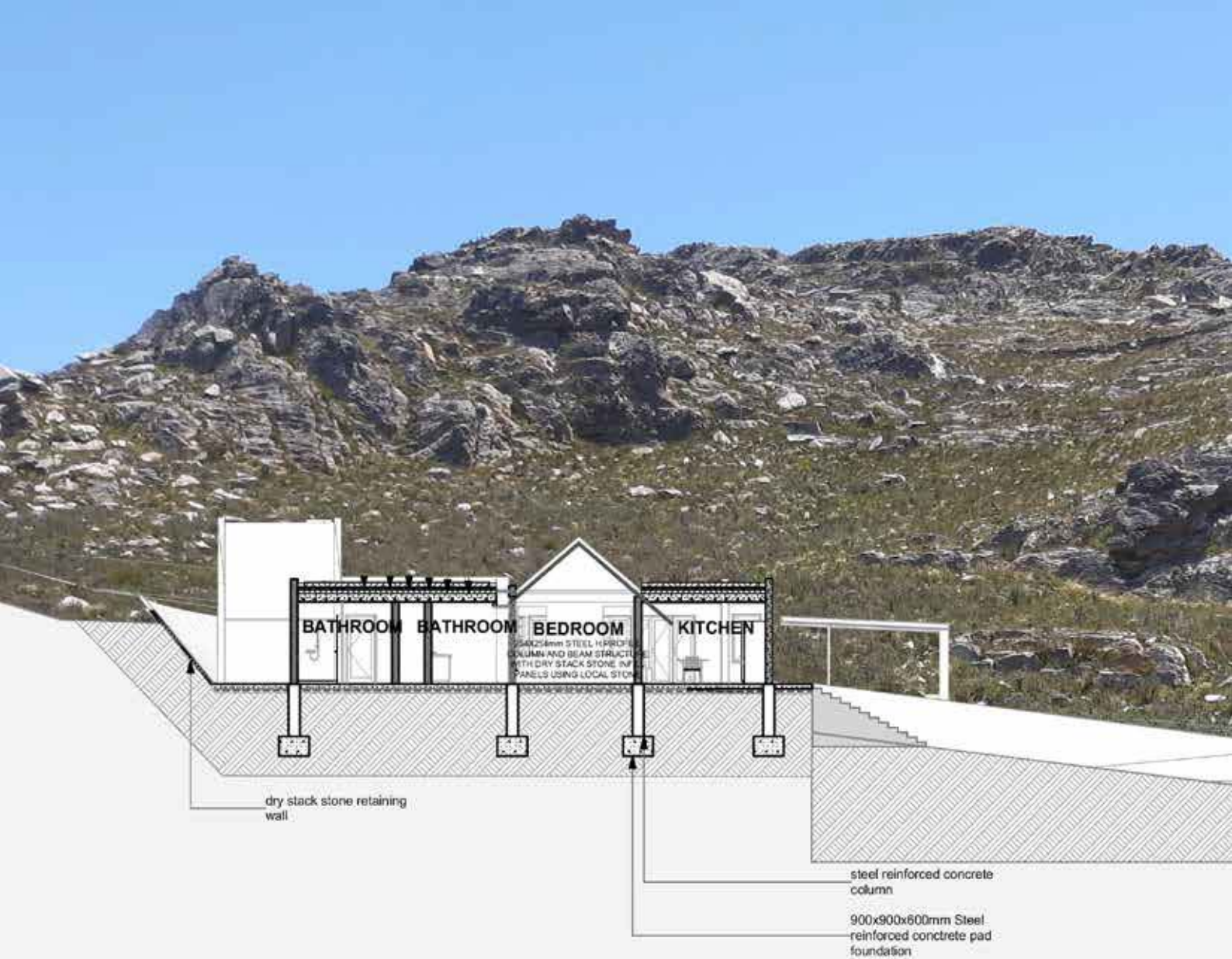


**LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF  
MAIN BUILDING**

132 SCALE 1:200

Figure 200: Long section through main building (author, 2020)





**CROSS SECTION OF MAIN BUILDING AND FACILITATORS RESIDENCE**

SCALE 1:200

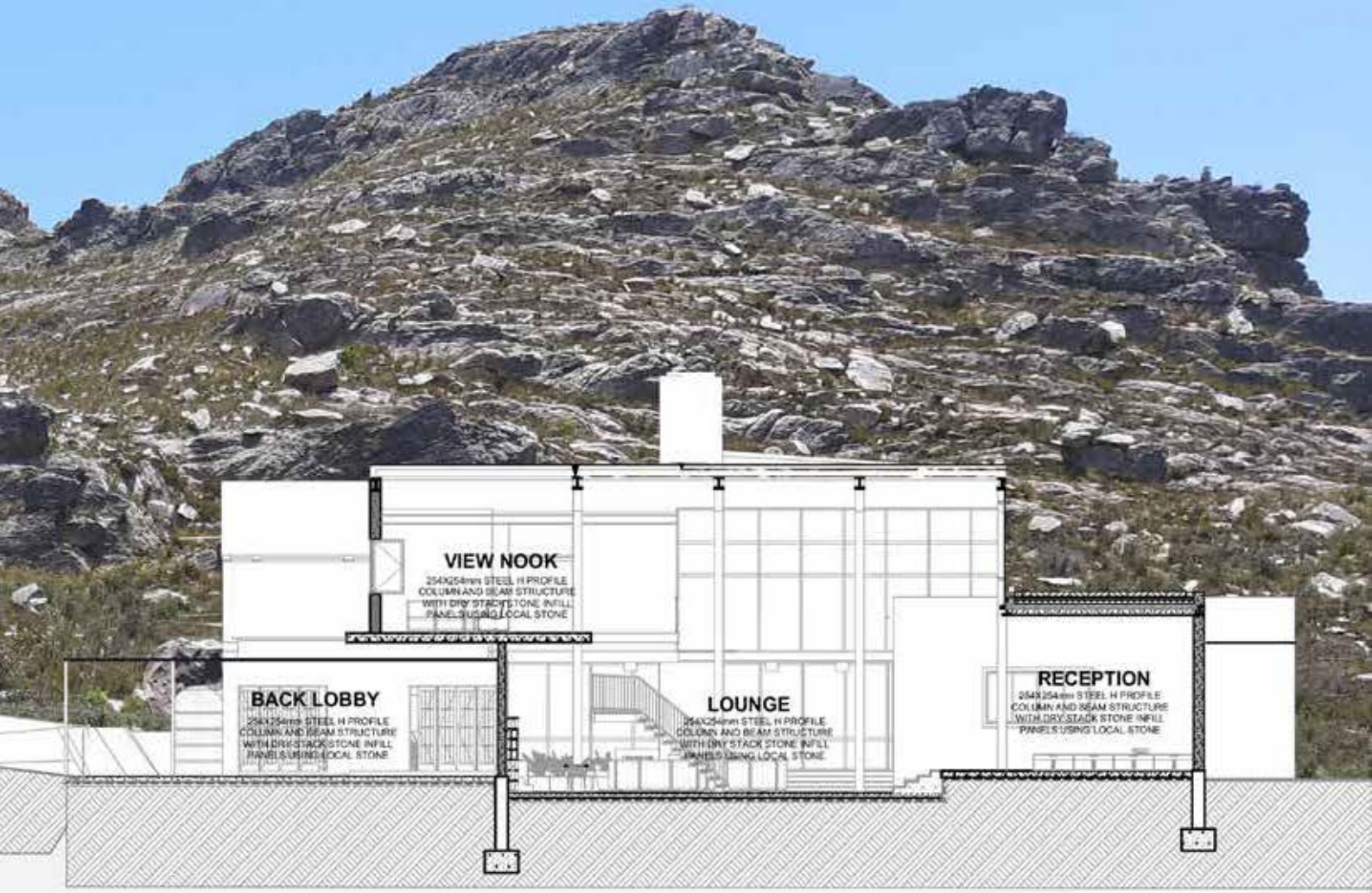


Figure 201: Cross Section through Main Building and Facilitator's Residence (author, 2020)

The Facilitator and Guest Speaker residences are to the western side of the main building, they are situated in such a way as to provide the Facilitator and guest speaker with privacy from the writers with whom they will be engaging on a daily basis. These residences are far larger than the Writers' residences as the Facilitator is the only person who is to be dedicated to remaining on the premises continuously while the writers are there and if the facilitator were to rather spend evenings alone and letting the writers integrate organically they would be able to break away to their residence. There is also a private socialising area. These apartments are also inspired by the "book-end" Karoo-style houses as well as the gabled houses featured so prominently in Prince Albert.



*Figure 203: View from facilitator's residence to main building (author, 2020)*



Figure 202: North east perspective of Facilitator and guest speaker residence (author, 2020)



Figure 204: North perspective of Facilitator and guest speaker residence (author, 2020)







Figure 205: Pathway leading up to main building entrance (author, 2020)





Figure 206: *South east perspective of main building (author, 2020)*





Figure 206: Entrance to Main Building (author, 2020)



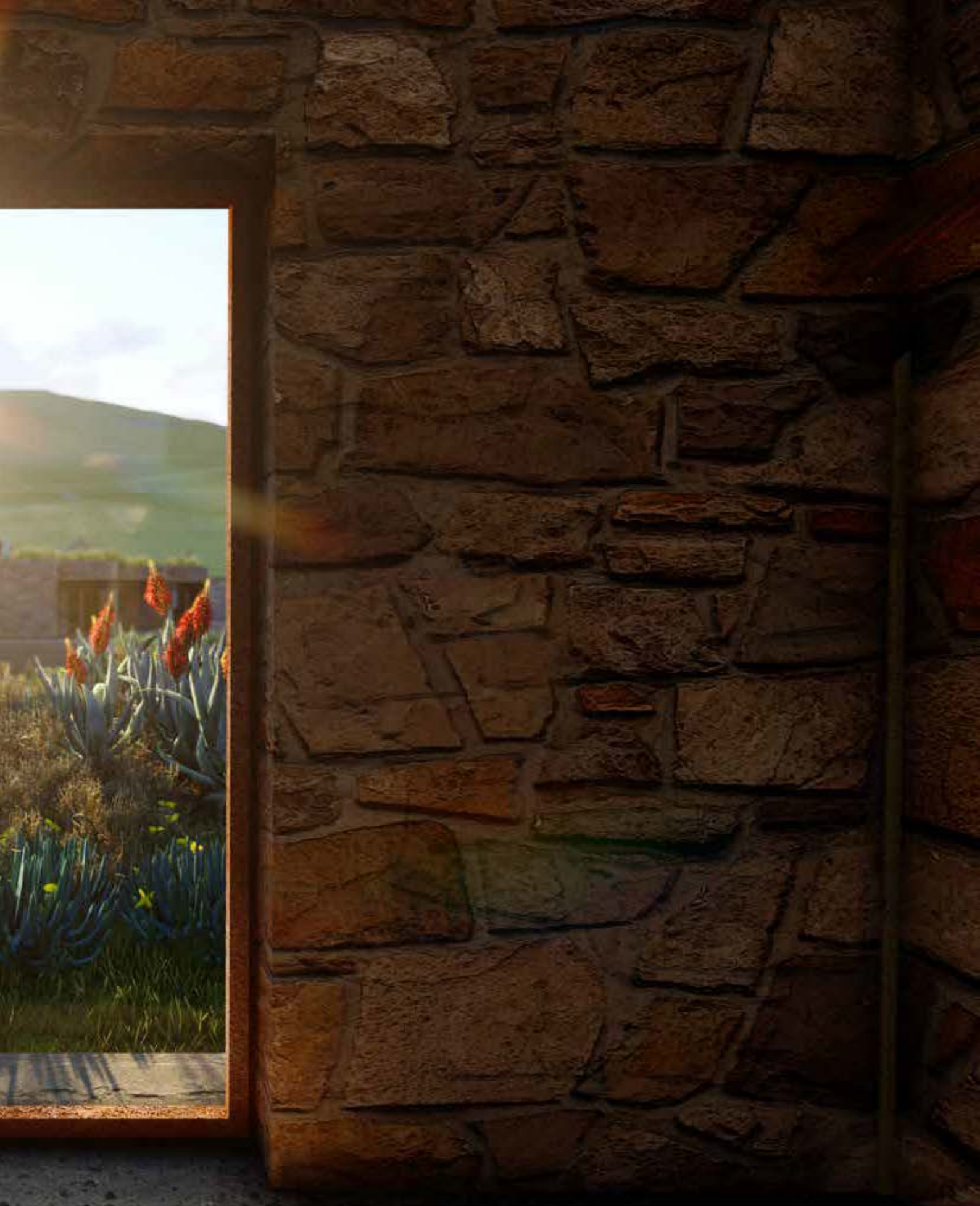


Figure 207: *View from corridor linking pitched structures' window, looking towards the west (author, 2020)*

# The Residential Units

The writer's residential units were designed to all have the same style inspired by the Karoo-style architecture of the flat-roof Karoo house with the veranda extending outwards. It was decided, after much deliberation, that the houses should all adopt the same exterior as it was not the exterior that would make these houses special but rather the writing nook on the interior. There are 5 different layouts, all very similar, only the writing area that changes and to a writer, this is everything. The layouts were inspired by famous authors who each adopted a different writing routine and style and thus they became the inspiration for the houses. There is Francois Smith the recluse writer who only seeks a plain wall to stare at while he writes, Wilbur Smith who prefers light jazz music and something to look at from his messy desk, there's Roald Dahl who never wrote from his home but rather preferred to keep his home a "work-free" zone, there's Deon Meyer who might bring his partner as he enjoys writing in the busiest room of the house where his family is and finally there is Ernest Hemingway who only stood while he wrote and who only wrote in the bedroom, first thing in the morning.



Figure 208: Francois Smith, Wilbur Smith, Ernest Hemingway Residence (author, 2020)



Figure 209: Roald Dahl Residence (author, 2020)



Figure 210: Deon Meyer Residence (author, 2020)

### **Francois Smith's House**



The house is plain and simple inspired by a Karoo-style layout, but due to the fact that a plain wall was needed with no distractions a nook was pressed into the wall cutting the writer off from any views and distractions with the exception of a small head height window in the nook, that has a sliding shade so that the writer may choose whether they would like a framed view for inspiration or not.

### **Wilbur Smith's House**



Once again plain and simple, the large desk placed in such a way that the folding doors act as a massive window to inspire the writer with a wonderful view while they listen to their soft music and make themselves comfortable in the writer's chair.

### **Roald Dahl's House**



The thing that makes this unit special is the fact that it houses no writing area. This is for the writer that wants to keep work at work and for their home or in this case, sleeping quarters, to be a stress and work-free area where they can come and relax and enjoy the splendid views from a long hot bath after a tiring day of writing.

### **Deon Meyer's House**



This unit is slightly larger than the others as it is designed for 2 people as this is for either a couple of writers or for a spouse or partner to accompany the writer. The desk is also placed in the living room and is focused on what is happening in the room instead of outside. For the writer that is inspired by the people he/she surrounds themselves with.

### **Ernest Hemmingway's House**



This is the only unit where the writing nook is located in the bedroom as this is the unit for the writer that writes either until they fall into bed or as soon as they fall out of it. The unit has a standing desk as well as a seated one, inspired by the house's namesake.

Figure 216: Roald Dahl residence entrance (author, 2020)

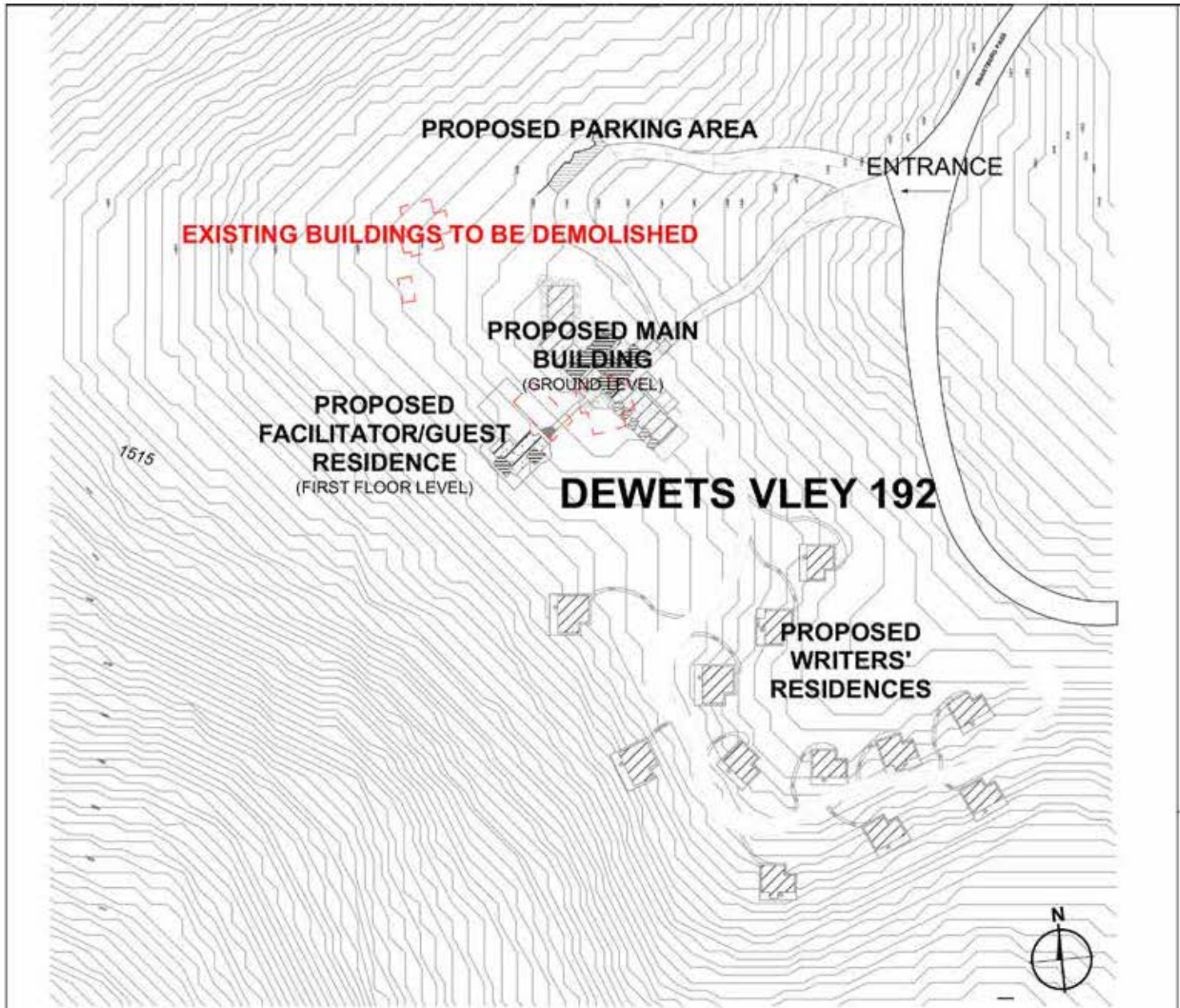


Figure 217: Francois Smith residence entrance (author, 2020)



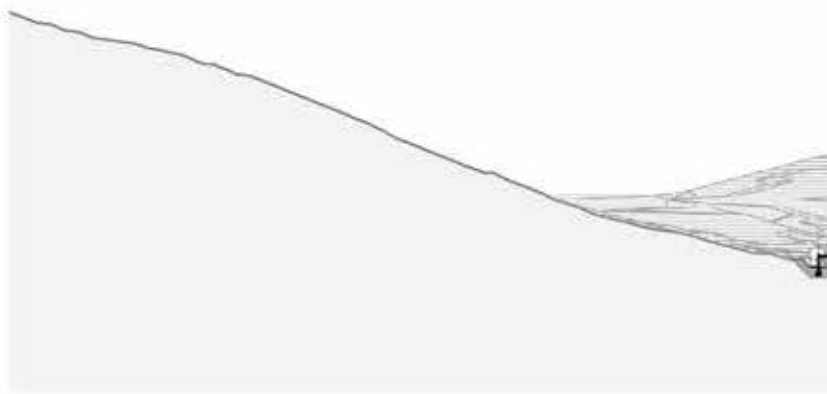
Figure 218: Wilbur Smith residence desk and view from desk (author, 2149)





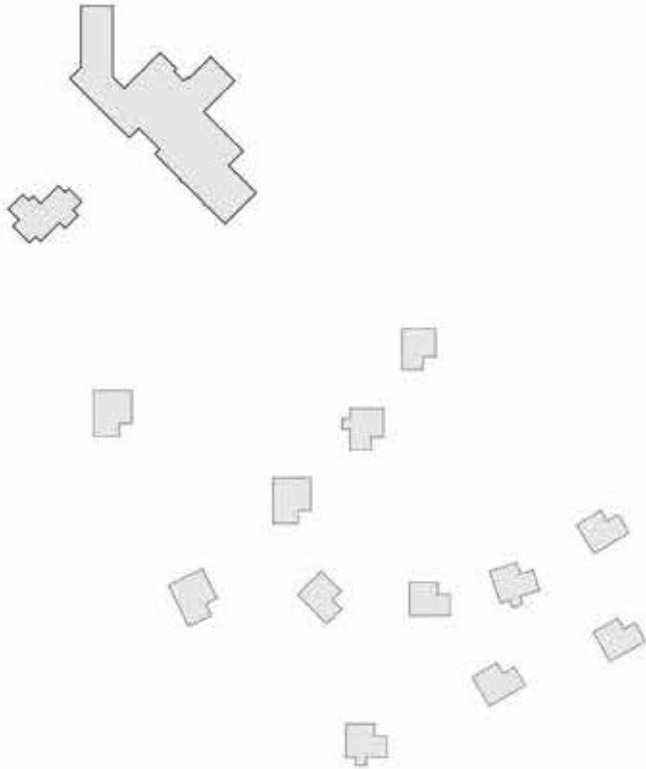
# SITE PLAN

SCALE 1:2000



# SITE SECTION

SCALE 1:2000



**KEY MAP**  
SCALE 1:2000



Revisions:

No:	Date:	Amendment:

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South Africa

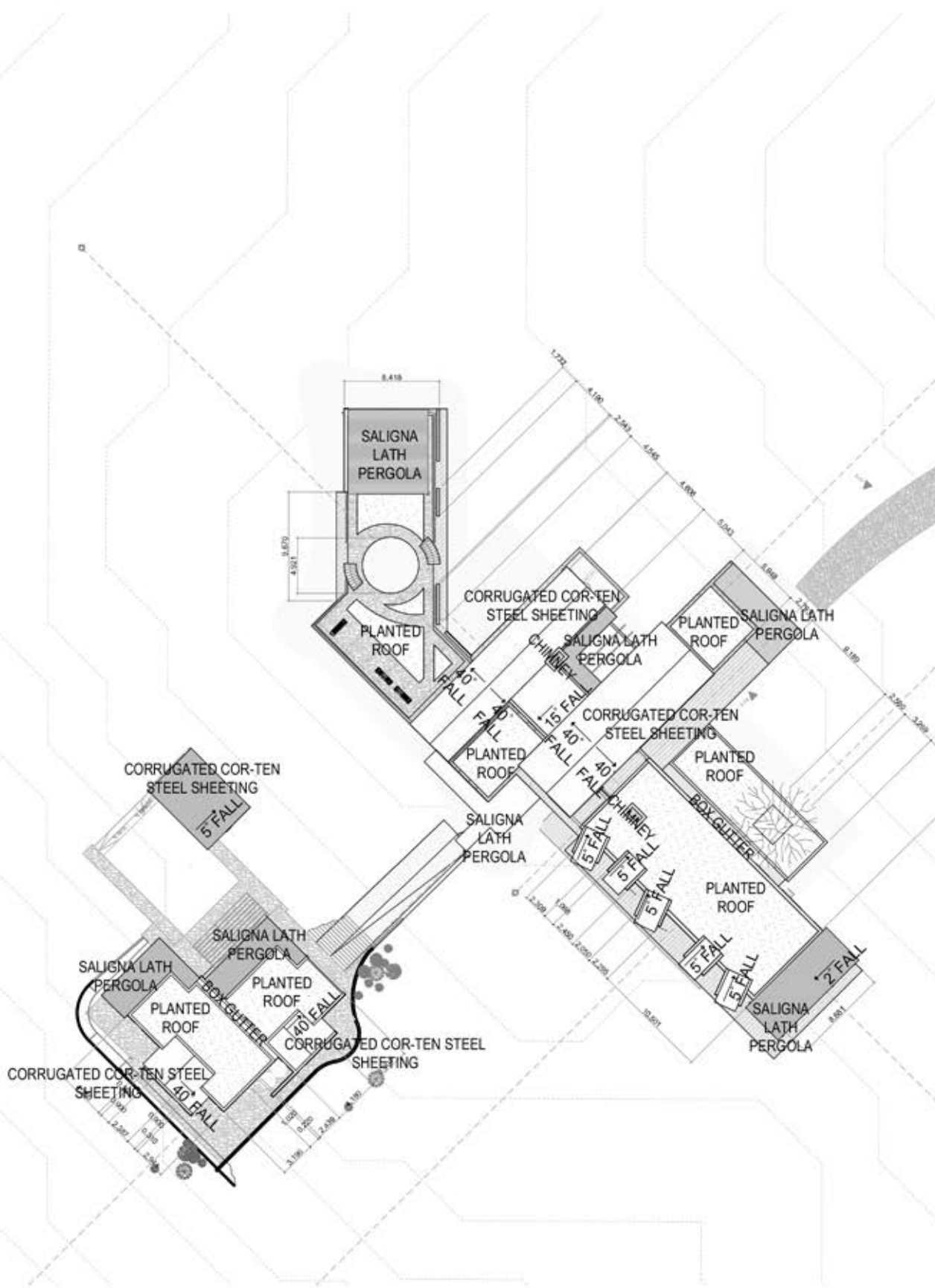
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NUMBER PROJECT NAME

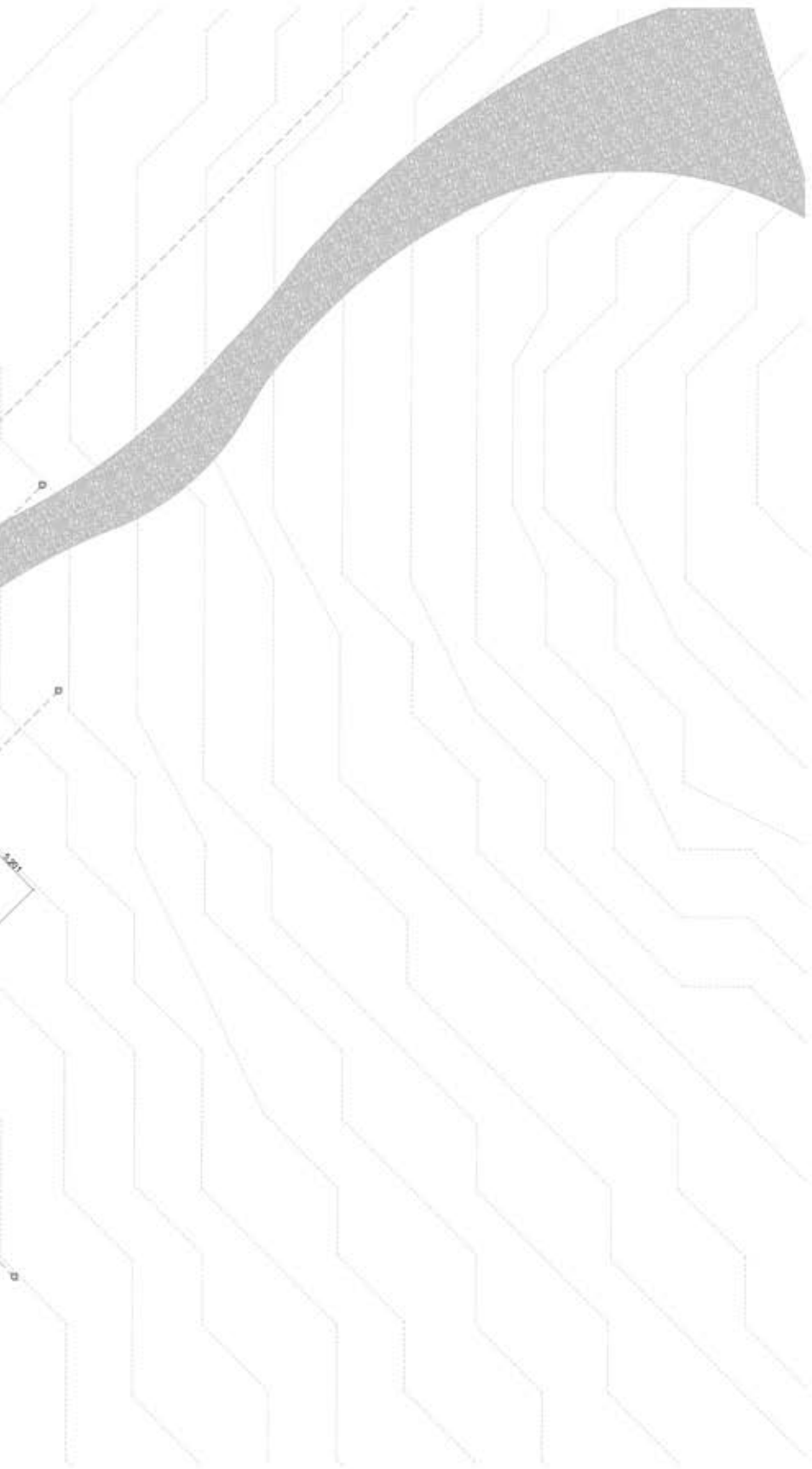
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SECTION**

Reference Number:	Drawn: LEIGH-ANNE CARLISLE
Scale: 1:2000	Student Number: 2015025949
Date: 2020/12/07	Checked: 151





**ROOF PLANS OF MAIN BUILDING AND FACILITATORS  
RESIDENCE  
SCALE 1:500**



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NUMBER PROJECT NAME

**ROOF PLANS OF MAIN  
BUILDING & FACILITATORS  
RESIDENCE**

Reference Number:	Drawn: LEIGH-ANNE CARLISLE
Scale: 1:200	Student Number: 2015025949
Date: 2020/12/07	Checked:

1489

150mm LAYER LOCAL STONE CRUSHED TO A MEDIUM GRADE, FILLED AND COMPACTED AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS



NATURAL LOCAL STONE FILLED WITH EARTH AND LAID ON 150mm LAYER OF COMPACTED GRAVEL AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS

254X254X167mm HOT DIPPED GALVANISED AND PAINTED WITH 'DUPLEX COATING' H SECTION STEEL COLUMN WELDED TO BASE PLATE, BOLTED TO CONCRETE COLUMN OF PAD FOUNDATION

150mm LAYER LOCAL STONE CRUSHED TO A MEDIUM GRADE, FILLED AND COMPACTED AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS

HOT DIPPED GALVANISED AND PAINTED WITH 'DUPLEX COATING' IPE 180 STEEL COLUMN AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS

800mm SUNKEN GARDEN WITH INDIGENOUS VEGETATION

200X600X20mm CERAMIC TILES FIXED TO 40mm SCREED ON 100mm REINFORCED CONCRETE SLAB AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS

200X600X20mm CERAMIC TILES FIXED TO 40mm SCREED ON 100mm REINFORCED CONCRETE SLAB AS PER ENG. SPECIFICATIONS

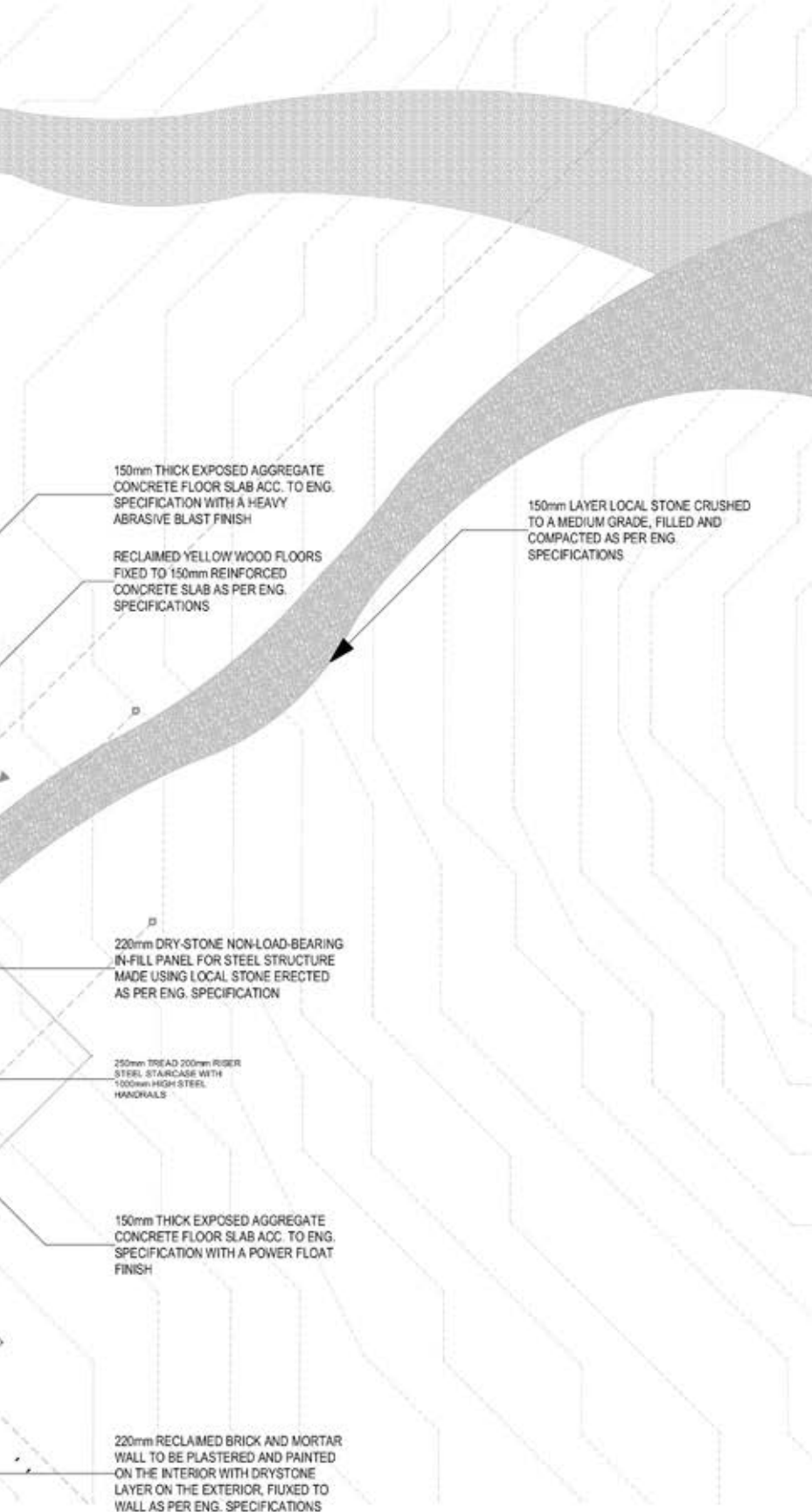
150mm THICK EXPOSED AGGREGATE CONCRETE FLOOR SLAB ACC. TO ENG. SPECIFICATION WITH A POWER FLOAT FINISH

# GROUND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1:200



1490

1487



Revisions:

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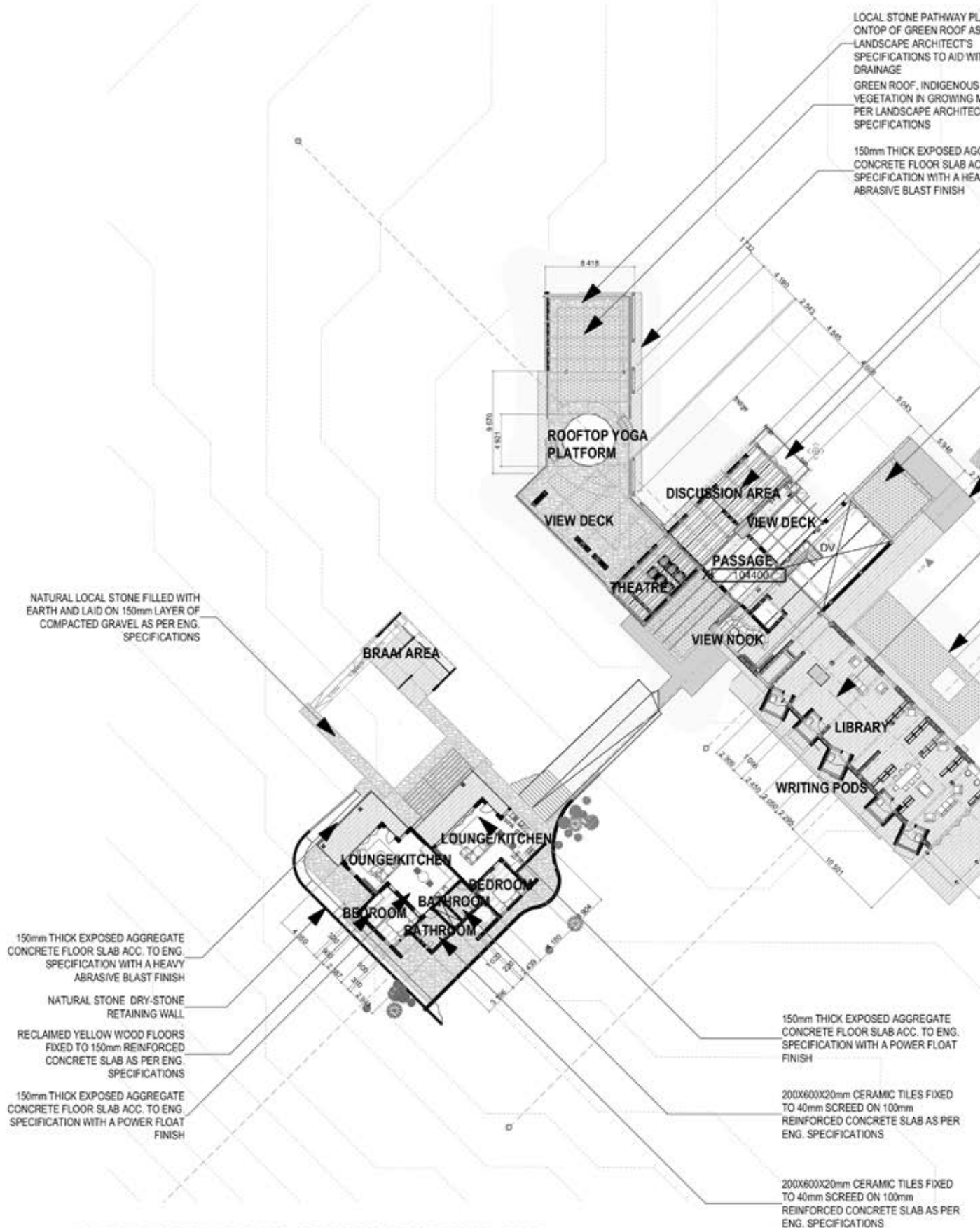
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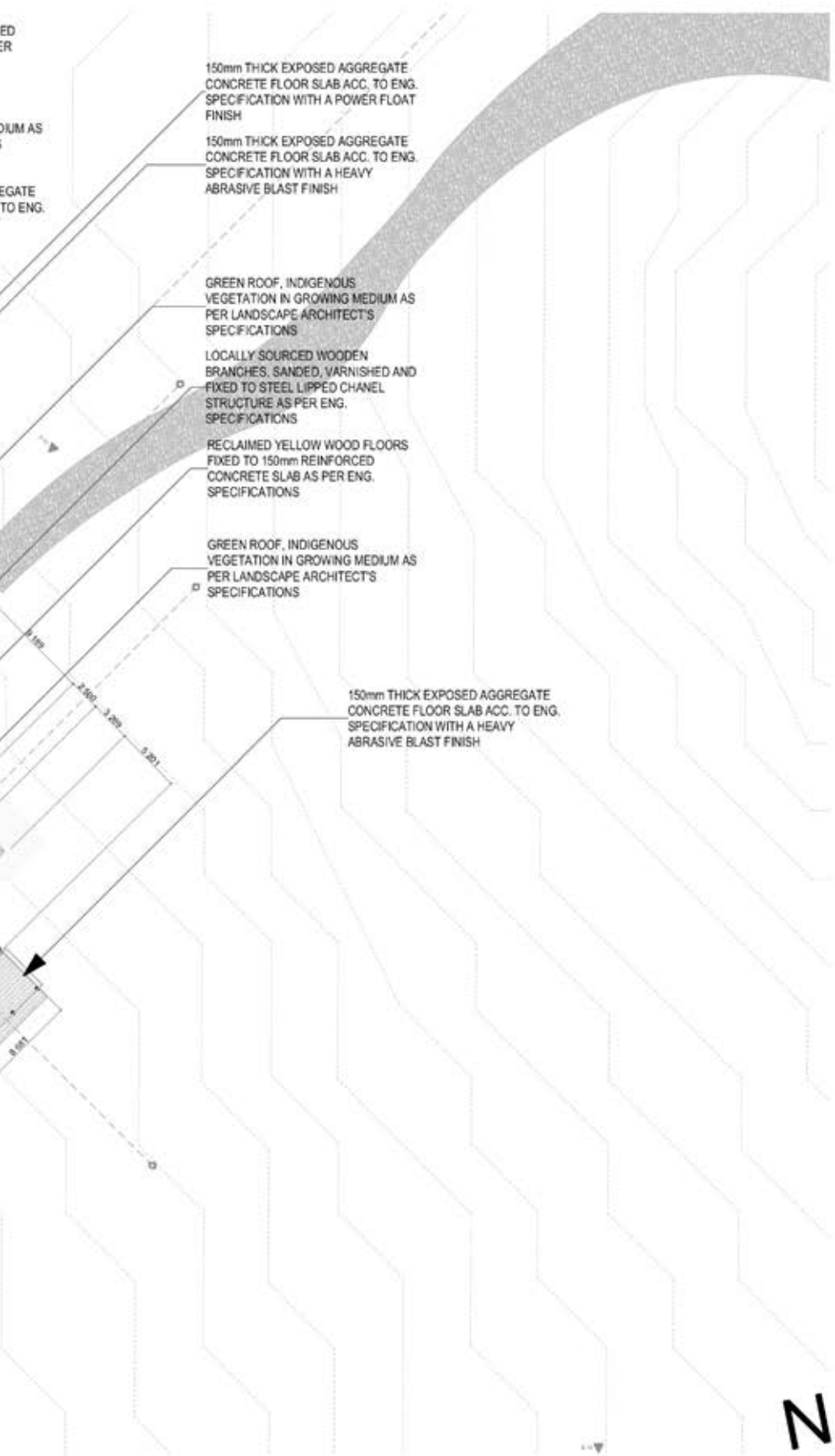
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**GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF  
 MAIN BUILDING**

Reference Number:	Drawn: LEIGH-ANNE CARLISLE
Scale: 1:500	Student Number: 2015025949
Date: 2020/12/07	Checked:



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF MAIN BUILDING AND FACILITATOR AND GUEST SPEAKER RESIDENCE**  
SCALE 1:200



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Drawing Number:  
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PROJECT NUMBER BUILDING  
NUMBER PROJECT NAME

**FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF MAIN  
BUILDING AND  
FACILITATOR'S RESIDENCE**

Reference Number:	Drawn: LEIGH-ANNE CARLISLE
Scale: 1:500	Student Number: 2015025949
Date: 2020/12/07	Checked:

# Reflection

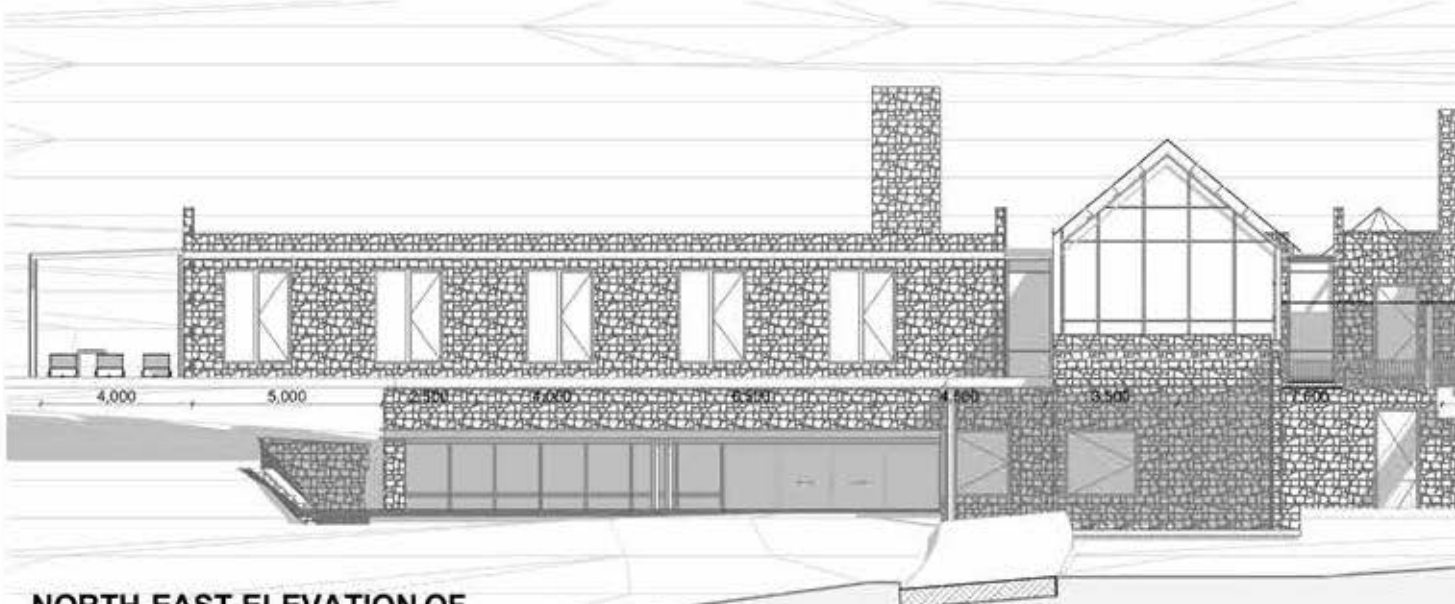
A place to find oneself, center oneself and ground oneself. A place to lose oneself in. A place to find oneself in. A place to be. A place to write. What a humungous task to set, to create this place.

In terms of being a place of refuge for a weary writer who craves inspiration and somewhere to reconnect with the self and nature - I believe this approach to be successful. It has plenty of potential and is something I wish to have realised to the fullest. With regards to sustainability there is a lacking in the design, this is definitely a shortcoming for me and something I will aim to solve to create a design that serves nature as much as it engages with it. Also with regards to the writer's residences, there is more to be said for what it is to create a writer's space and that is something I wish to have had the time to investigate more thoroughly.

This site is one very close to my heart and I believe that I have to a certain extent done it justice, giving it new life and creating awareness of the majesty of the Swartberg Pass. However, I don't think it ever is truly possible to do this magnificent creation the justice it demands.



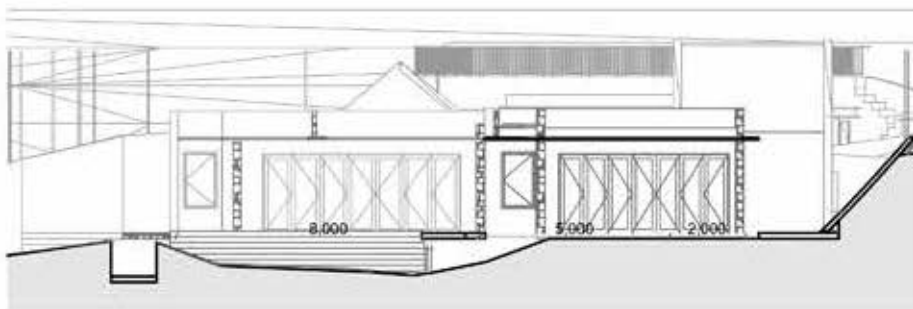




**NORTH EAST ELEVATION OF  
MAIN BUILDING**  
SCALE 1:200



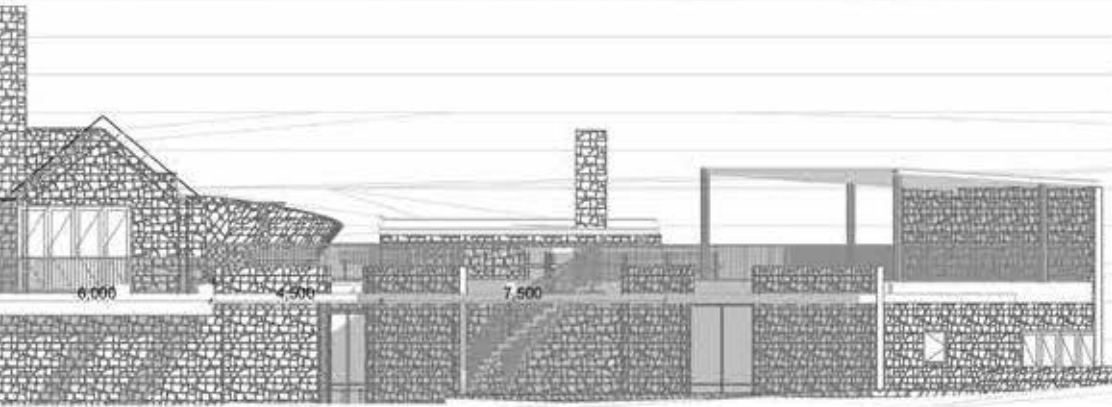
**NORTH EAST PERSPECTIVE OF  
MAIN BUILDING**



**NORTH ELEVATION OF  
FACILITATORS RESIDENCE**  
SCALE 1:200



**NORTH WEST PERSPECTIVE OF  
FACILITATORS RESIDENCE**



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Drawing Number:  
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NUMBER PROJECT NAME

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BUILDING AND  
FACILITATOR'S RESIDENCE**

Reference Number:

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LEIGH-ANNE  
CARLISLE

Scale:  
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Student Number:  
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Date:  
2020/12/07

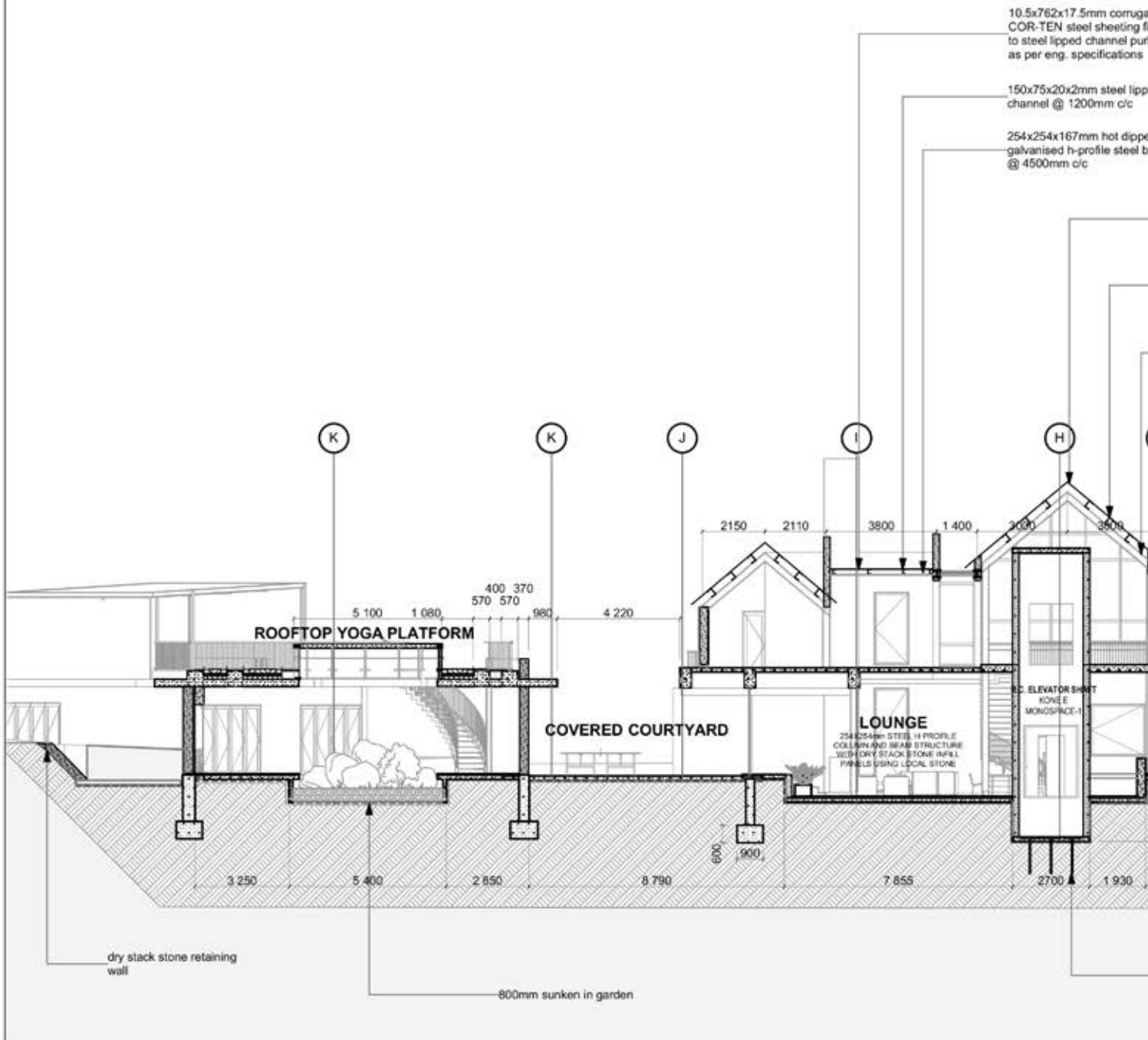
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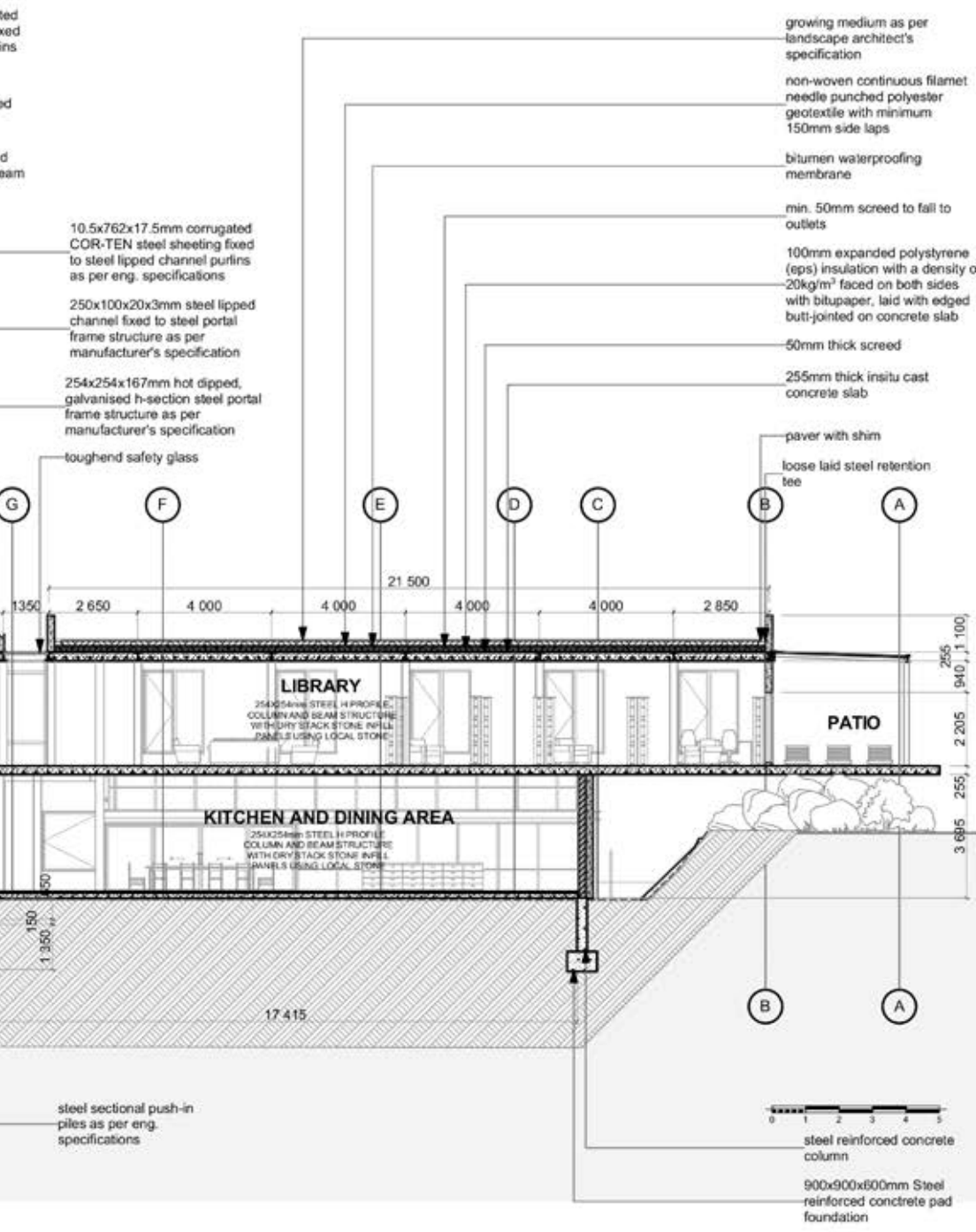
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**NORTH PERSPECTIVE OF  
FACILITATORS RESIDENCE**




**LONGITUDINAL SECTION OF  
MAIN BUILDING**  
SCALE 1:200




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Drawing Number:  
**A301**

**PROJECT NUMBER BUILDING NUMBER PROJECT NAME**

**LONG SECTION THROUGH MAIN BUILDING**

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Date: 2020/12/07	Checked:

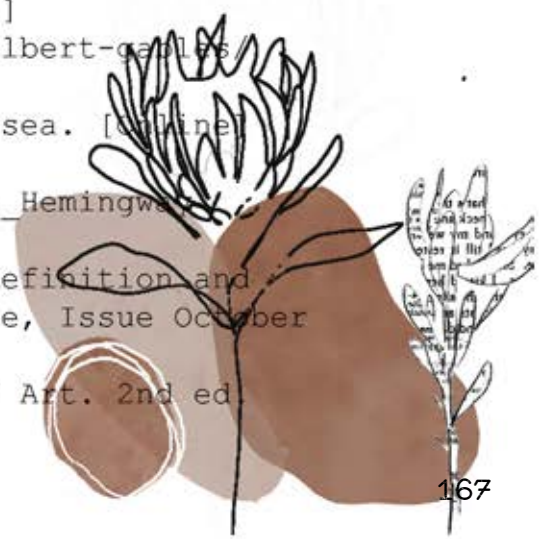




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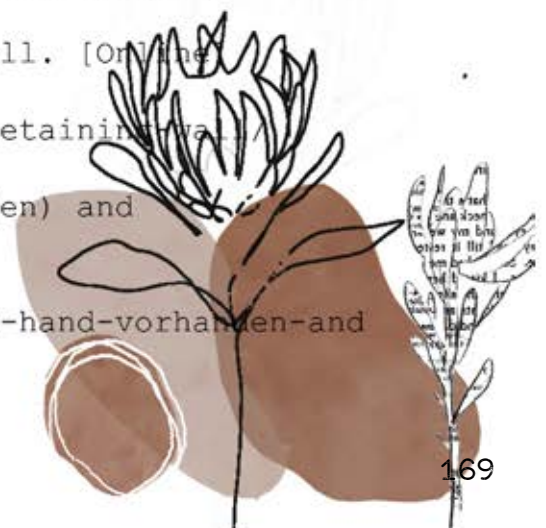
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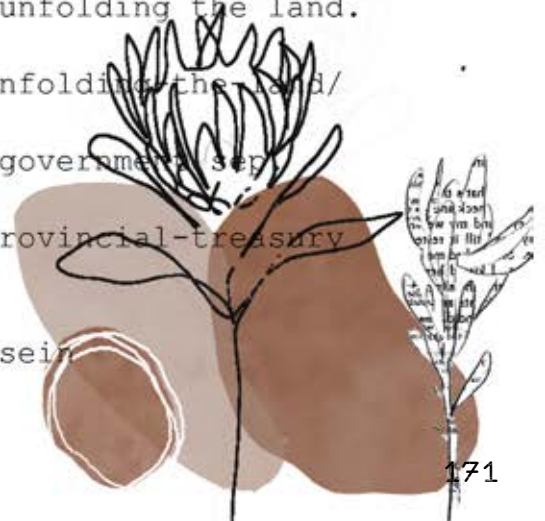
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