

CS STUDIO ARCHITECTS

WESBANK MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE

LOCATION: LANGA, WESTERN CAPE

DATE: 2006 - 2008

BACKGROUND

While working on the Wesbank Primary School, the Wesbank community identified the need for a multi-purpose centre. The building was designed in community workshops where up to 450 people attended. Models were used to explain the design. At the time (2000) an extremely high crime rate and a high rate of drug abuse was tearing the community apart. During the design process of the Wesbank Primary School, the leaders of the community organised themselves to identify the most important needs for the area, namely:

- i) Multi-Purpose Centre
- ii) Clinic
- iii) Taxi Rank

After a 7 year struggle all three of these projects were approved and are currently under construction. This indicates the ability within disadvantaged communities to drive their own development if they are empowered to do so. CS Studio Architects structured the planning for all the projects although we were only appointed to do the Multi-Purpose Centre. It is also the project that received the least funding.

DESIGN

The lessons and experience gained during the design of Guga S'thebe Arts and Culture Centre in Langa and the Wesbank Primary School has been carried through and implemented in this project.

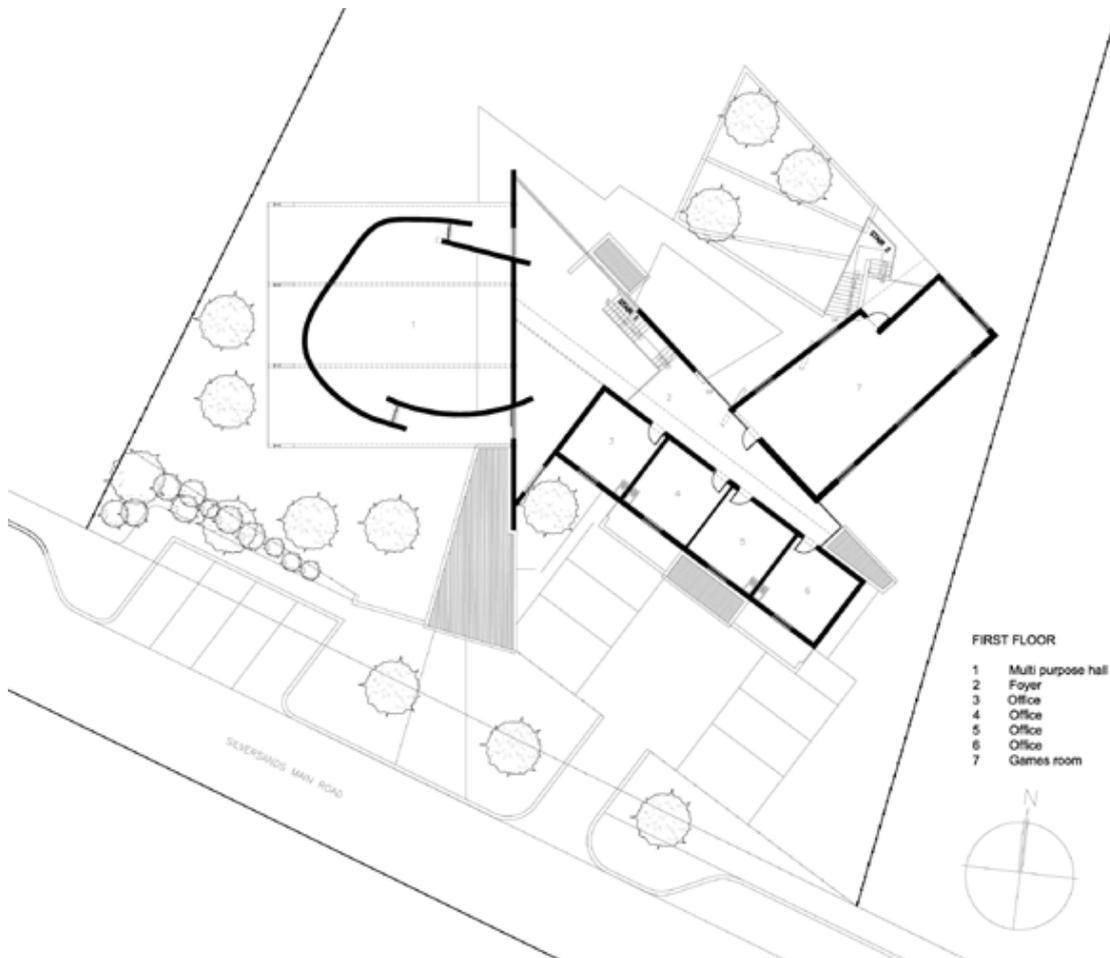
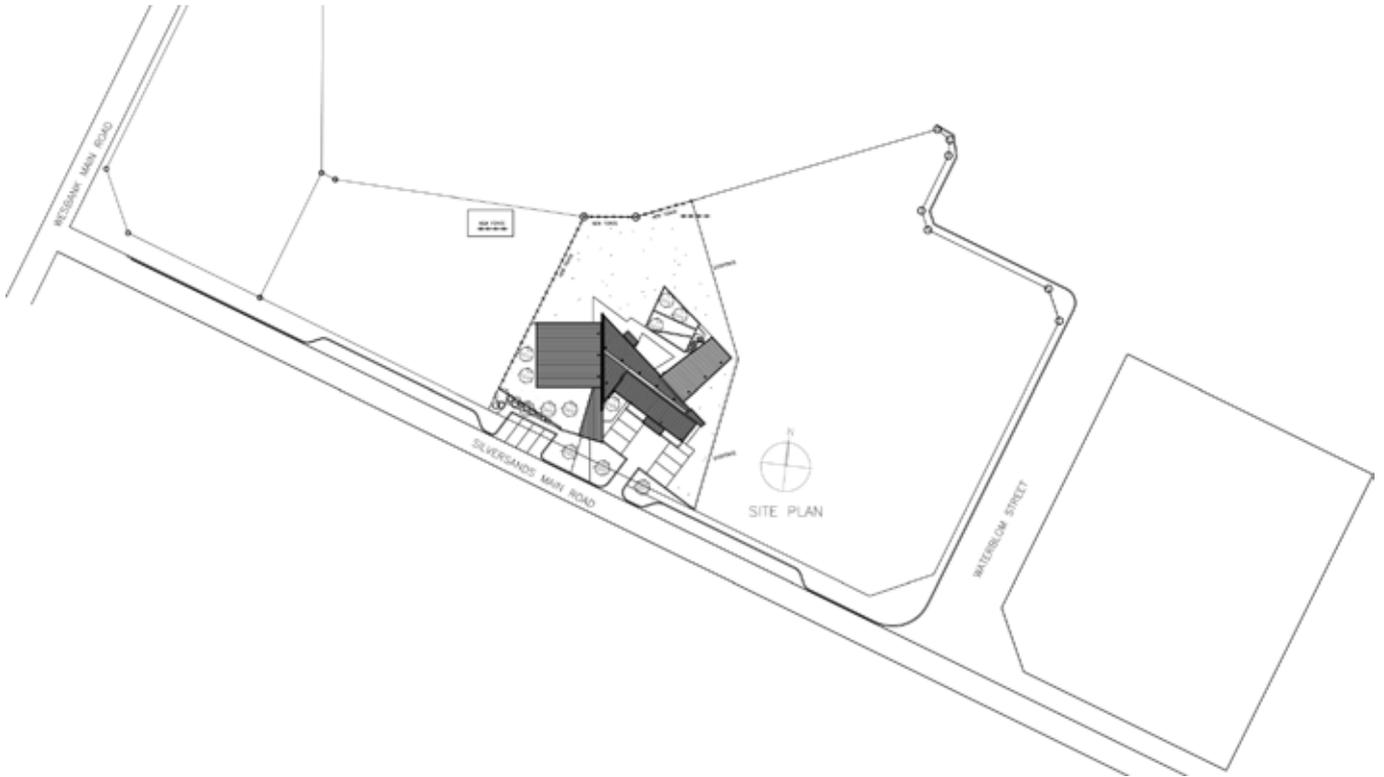
The building is made up of three main components, namely the main multi-purpose space, the office component and the multi-purpose office and youth area. These spaces are held together by a central foyer which will allow for the display of artefacts, crafts etc, and will also be used for seating and other interactive activities.

The building is small, but this is compensated for by splitting up and juxtaposing the main elements. It makes the internal spaces feel much larger and in turn creates a better sense of civic scale.

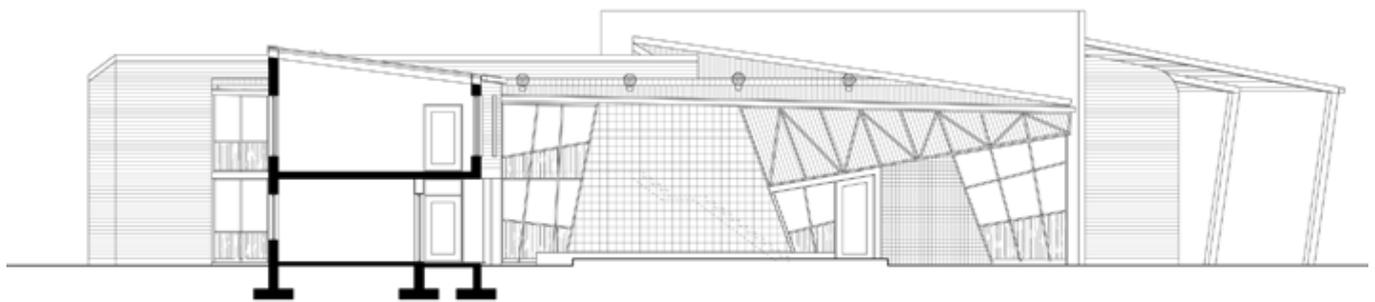
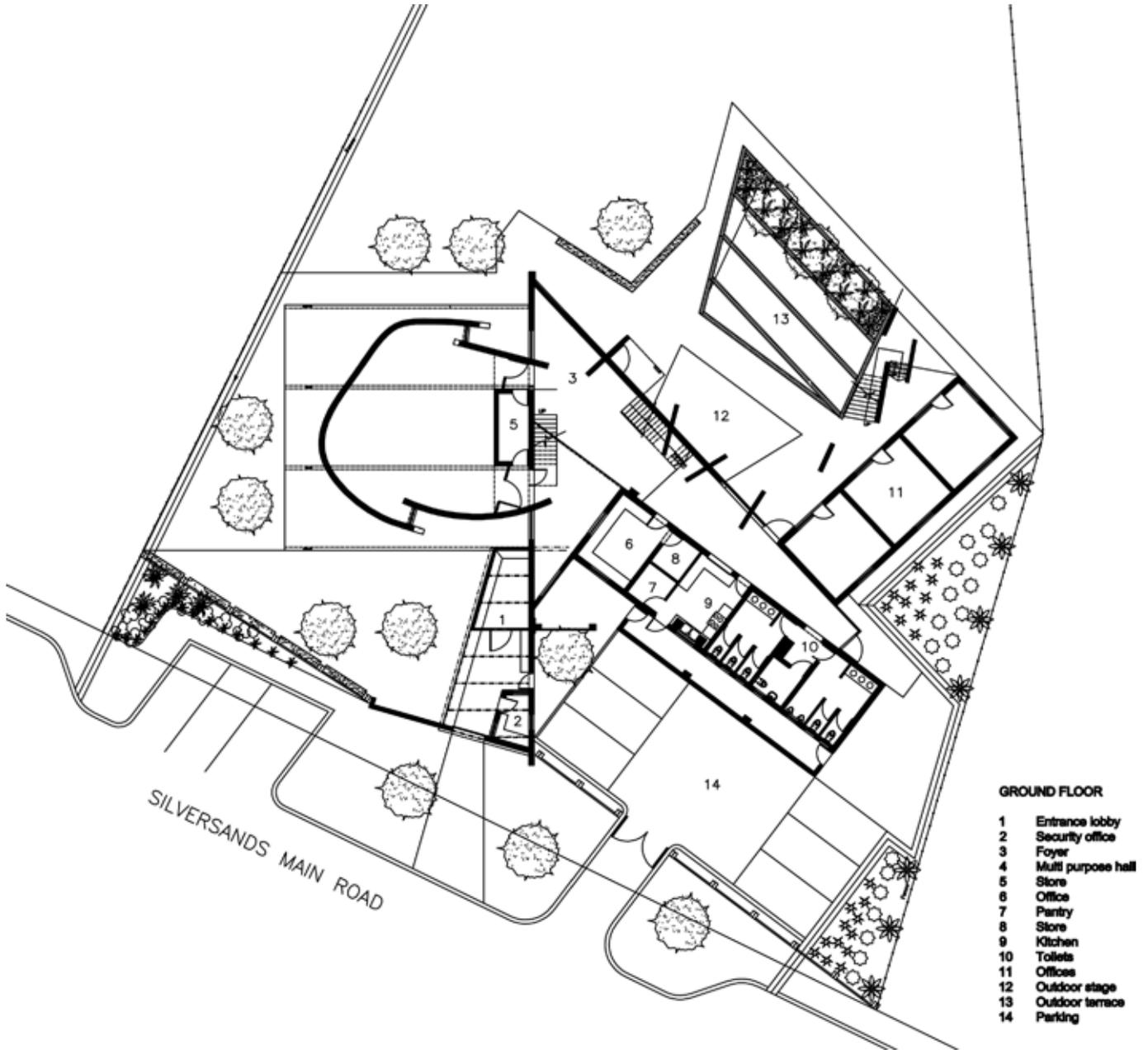
Due to the budget constraints, CS Studio Architects motivated the client to use maxi brick, which is a face brick finish and was developed for low cost housing purposes. This has many positive implications. The face brick exterior of the building reduces maintenance in the long term. It also allows for a larger cavity and as a result improves the thermal qualities of the walls. The one and a half brick scale also contributes to the building appearing larger.

The decorative ceramic murals and colourful walls off set against the red face brick walls give life to the street and reflect the cultural identity of the local community. The project was completed in September 2008.

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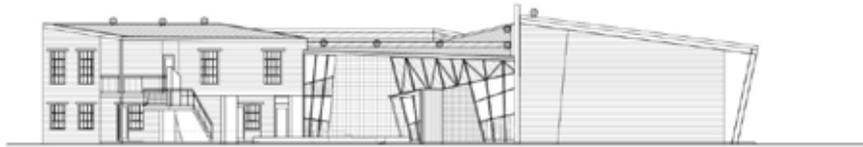


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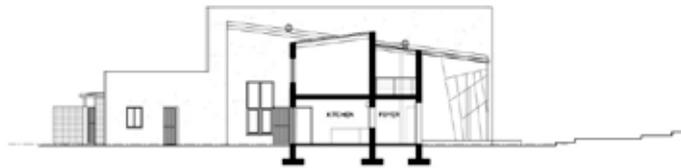


SECTIONAL ELEVATION B-B

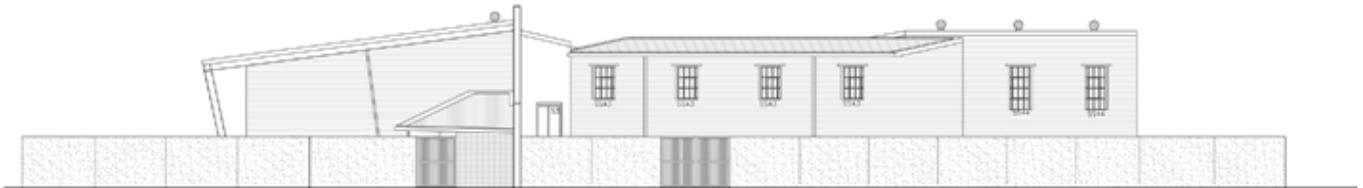
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NORTH ELEVATION



CROSS SECTION THROUGH FOYER



SOUTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION