

Bathandwa Childrens Day and Night Care Centre

Background & Context

Bathandwa started informally in the family home of a couple living in Makhaya, Khayelitsha, while they were raising their own three children. Their home grew into a place of safety that cares for abandoned, HIV+, and physically and mentally disabled children of all ages. Eventually, 36 children were living in the original private home [more suitable for a family of five]. A private fundraising and networking group identified their need for support and started by supplying food, clothing and furniture, and organising regular outings and mentoring.

The need to find a more suitable venue for *Bathandwa* was identified, and the search for funds and a suitable site commenced. After 3 years of testing different sites, schemes and fundraising models, a suitable site was acquired and a site specific scheme developed. The stipulation for local government welfare grants for on-going child support required a “cluster home” approach with 6 children and a house mother in each home. This was quite different to the more communal living models that we had investigated leading up to this. All the funds for construction were raised privately, and governmental support was not forthcoming. The building was designed to be constructed in phases, since fundraising will be on-going concurrent to construction and into the future.

Site and Siting

The 1700m² flat sandy site was purchased in Mandela Park, Khayelitsha, in a neighbourhood of smaller plots [typically 132m²] with stand-alone single residential starter homes and backyard shack appendages, some of which were encroaching on the site. The community and development forum were included in the dialogue and local jobs were created during the construction phase. This inclusive approach led to a cooperative, harmonious and secure building phase. The buildings are slightly raised, connected, and staggered around the perimeter of the site, framing three sides of a scaled and secure landscaped courtyard space, which is used as a playground and a food garden, and opens up to the north. This allows for optimal solar orientation and protection from the incessant and sandy summer south-east gales.

Built Form and Arrangement

Linking between the two street boundaries and along the south side of the courtyard, a communal “Big Room” allows for different group activities: eating, playing and learning, as well as an administration office, physiotherapy room, kitchen, laundry and washing yard. It has separate access and can be used independently from the rest of buildings.

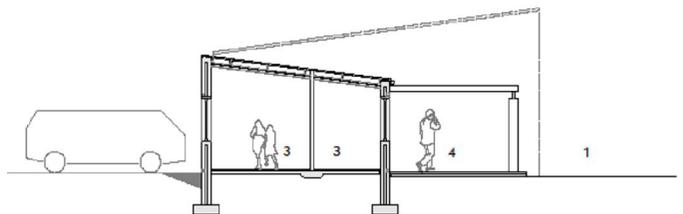
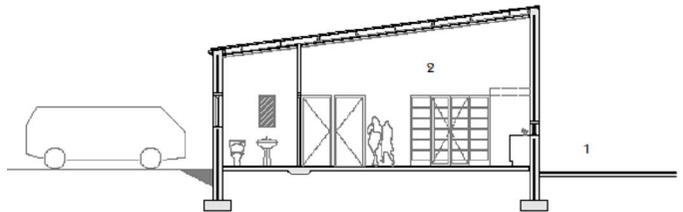
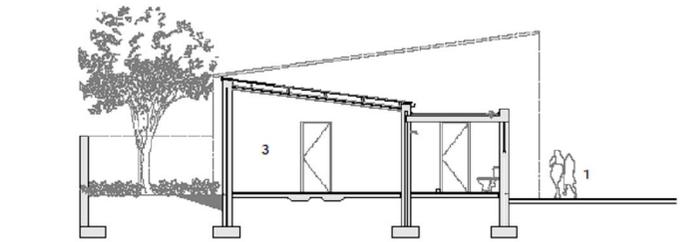
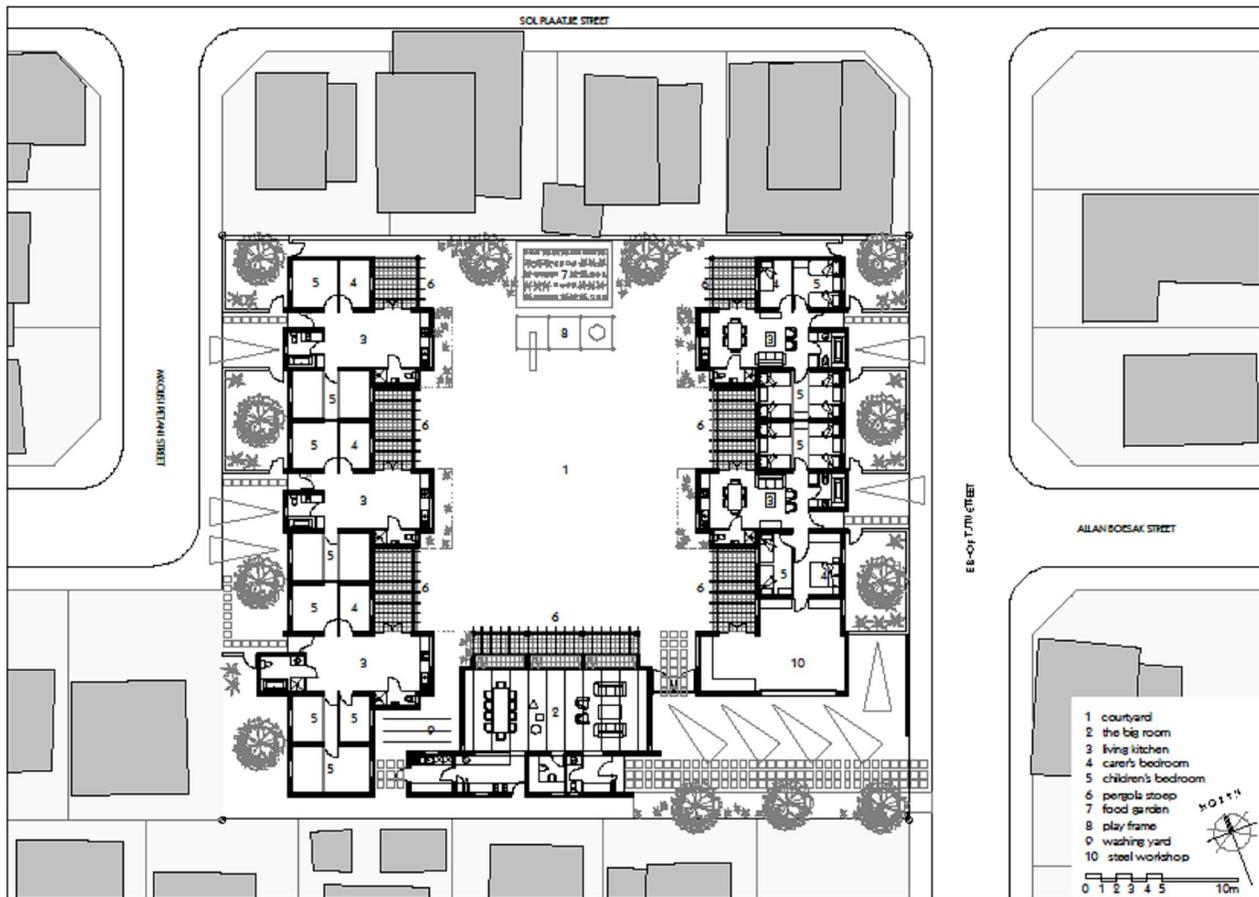
The couple who started the home relocated here and have their home alongside the “Big Room” and main entrance, from where the husband runs his steel welding workshop, which can be used for skills training and income generation. The remaining 4 homes line the east and west sides of the courtyard, and also face onto the two streets.

Each house has its own public front door and street edge, with a low garden wall and parking for the house mother. The internal organisation of each unit is arranged around the Living Kitchen Room, which has a rising mono-pitch volume towards the internal courtyard. Lower mono-pitch volumes connect onto this space for the bedrooms and bathrooms. The arrangement creates a stepped street façade that is respectful of the scale of the surrounding neighbourhood. In each house, the Living Kitchen Room opens to the north onto its own pergola-covered paved stoep which leads onto the main internal courtyard.

Materials and Environment

The buildings are staggered rectangular forms with mono-pitch metal roofs, plastered and painted walls, with punctures for steel windows and doors. Inside, there are durable linoleum floors throughout and insulated ceilings for thermal control. Wet areas are tiled. All rainwater is collected on site and stored in tanks. The scheme is ready for solar heating when funding permits. The food garden is a source of food, skills training, and recycling of vegetable waste through composting. Physically disabled kids have appropriate access and facilities. The whole building is designed to allow for conversion to a dormitory type arrangement should the welfare funding model change.





- 1 courtyard
- 2 living kitchen room
- 3 bedroom
- 4 pergola

SECTION STUDY: PHASE 1 & 2

