

Site Analysis

“Unlike the treelike, hierarchical structures of traditional cities, the contemporary metropolis functions more like a spreading rhizome, dispersed and diffuse, but at the same time infinitely enabling.”(Wall 1999: 234)

What has probably become apparent by now, is that the nature of this dissertation is predominantly urban. Due to the large scale of possible intervention in the Sunnyside precinct, the choice of only one site becomes almost irrelevant. Although it would be more applicable to approach this dilemma in its entirety in a more abstract manner, a technical investigation needs to be conducted (for purpose of the fulfillment of the curriculum). From this it follows that a specific individual site must be chosen.

After investigation of the residential flat block typology within the north-south streets of Sunnyside, it was decided that the quintessential example of Sunnyside Functionalism would serve as the best example on which to test the Situationist experiment. This was found in the Spruitsig Park development.

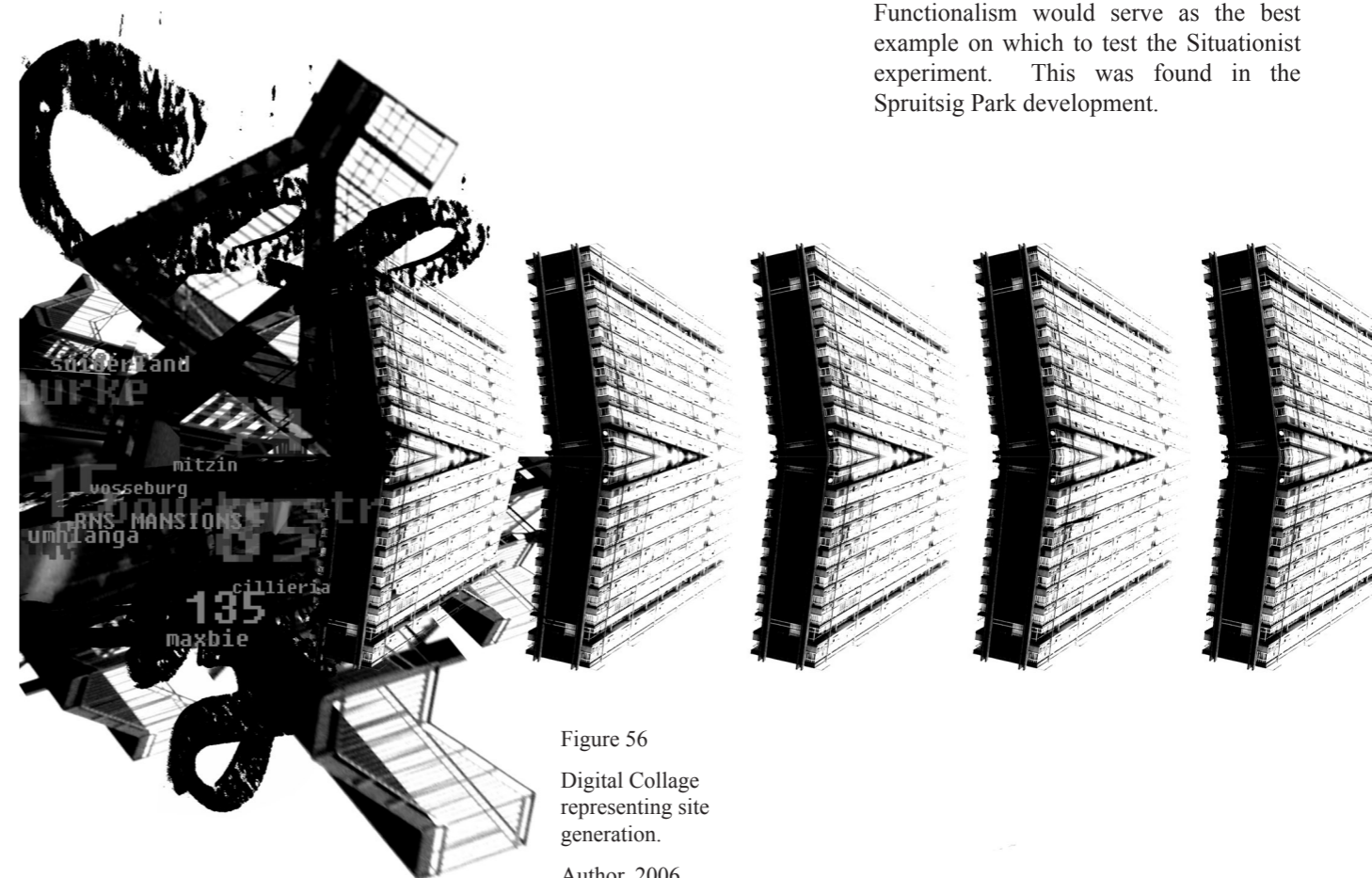


Figure 56
Digital Collage
representing site
generation.
Author, 2006

Locality

Erf no. 5/1201, the site on which the Spruitsig Park development was built, stretches the width of a whole city block. From this it follows that it borders on three streets. Leyds street, a north-south orientated, four lane street, lies to the west of the site. Bourke street, also north-south orientated, is considered to be the symbolic end of the Sunnyside precinct as it lies perpendicular with the end of Esselen street. It runs along the site's eastern boundary. De Rapper street, to the north of the site, is a quiet one-way street which separates the site from the Walker Waterway, with which it runs parallel. One block to the south lies Esselen street, the metaphoric life-blood of Sunnyside. As has been mentioned in the *Urban Analysis* section (pg. 60), Esselen street can be viewed as a finger of Pretoria's CBD extending into residential Sunnyside. It's influence on the succes of the intervention is paramount.

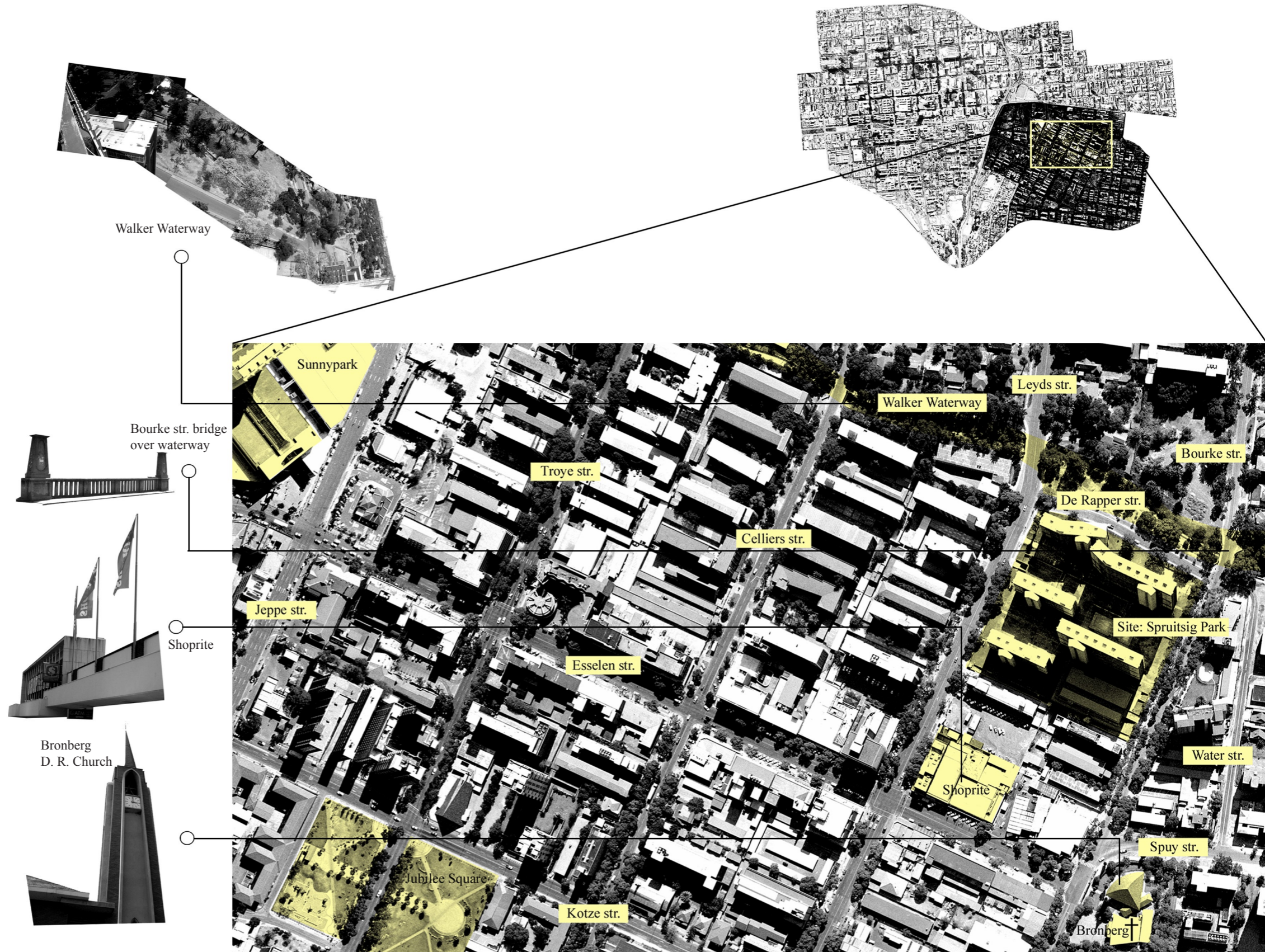


Figure 57

Locality plan of site. *Top-right:* Dark area shows the position of the Sunnyside precinct within the greater city context. The yellow area indicates the location of the blown up map below. *Bottom:* Locality plan of site and surrounds. Highlighted areas show landmarks, streets and the chosen site.

Author, 2006



Figure 58 (above)
View looking north
along Bourke street
towards the site from
the intersection of
Esselen, Spuy and
Bourke streets.
Author, 2006

Figure 59 (left)
View looking south
along Bourke street
from 18th floor of
the north-east block
(Maroela) of Spruitsig
Park.
Author, 2006



Figure 60 (left)
View looking south
along Leyds street
from 18th floor of
the north-east block
(Maroela) of Spruitsig
Park.
Author, 2006

Figure 61 (below)
View looking north
along Leyds street
towards site at the
intersection of Leyds
street and Esselen
street.
Author, 2006



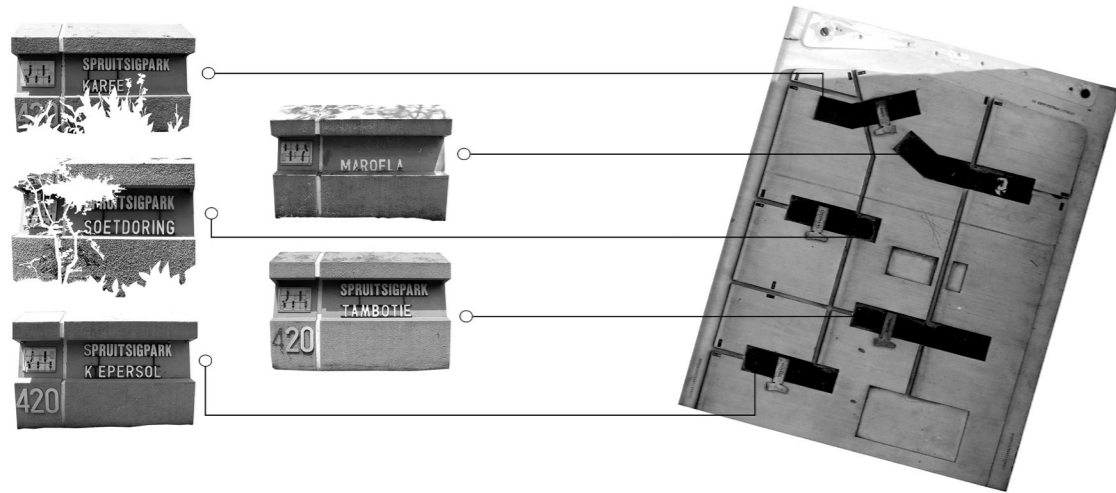


Figure 62 (above)
Spruitsig Park key plaque, linked to photographs of individual block sign boards.
Author, 2006

Figure 63 (right)
View west towards Pretoria's CBD. Photograph taken from the 18th floor of Maroela flat block.
Author, 2006

The Spruitsig Park development was designed in 1966 by Daan Kesting and completed in 1970 by Stocks & Stocks Construction. It comprises 531 flats in five separate structures, each with a variety of 1 room, 2 room, 3 room and bachelor units. The original client, Sanlam Insurance (the development used to be named *Sanlam Park*) later sold off the development as sectional titles. Today, the majority of the 531 units are owned by Real Estate Cooperations (City Property, Trafalgar & VIP Property to name a few) while the rest are privately owned.

Although Spruitsig Park doesn't represent Sunnyside's ubiquitous 5 to 6 storey functionalist typology, it typifies a confluence of South African Functionalism and Brutalism which borders on the megalomaniacal. The site can be categorised as a 'new' kind of urban site defined by Wall as "the ambiguous areas that are caught between enclaves." (Wall 1999:234) The north-facing, concrete framed structures soar into the air, with its two largest totaling 18 floors. An important aspect unusual for the typology of the precinct is the inclusion of underground parking, a necessity due to the inhabitant density. This has resulted in more than usual unused semi-private space after the erection of a boundary fence.



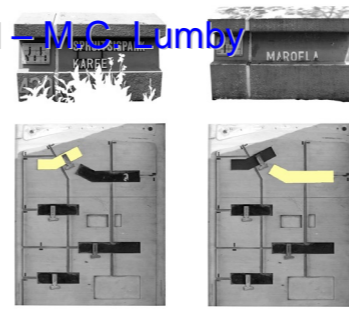


Figure 64

View looking up from the south side of the Maroela and Karee flat blocks.

Author, 2006



The inhabitants live in the machine endlessly dragged along by conveyor belts, by chutes and pneumatic tubes from the time of birth to the time of death. The machine takes care of everything; along the innumerable routes which intersect, unite and divide according to the incomprehensible programming of the machine. The inhabitants find food and fear, sleep and joy, sex and hope, death and anger, sometimes also rebellion; but they know very well that if they get off the obligatory routes established by the machine, they will inevitably be crushed by its machinery.

Twelve cautionary tales for Christmas: Ninth City. The Ville-Machine Habitée (Superstudio in Lang & Menking 2003:159)

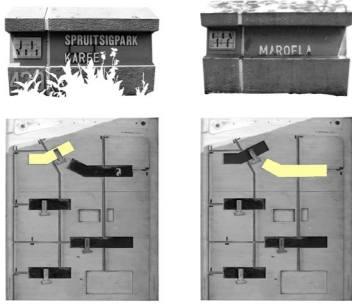


Figure 65

View looking up from the north side of the Maroela and Karee flat blocks.

Author, 2006



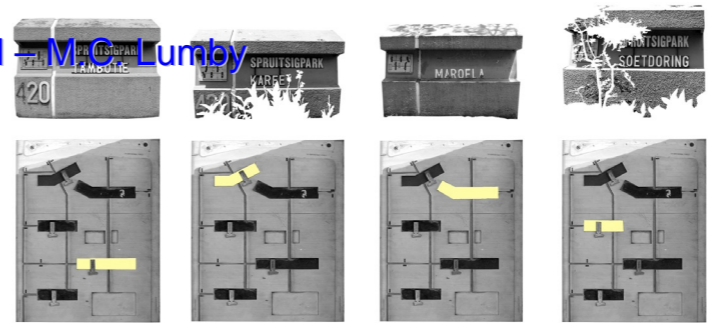


Figure 68
View looking West
from the eastern pe-
riphery of the site.
Author, 2006



Figure 66 (top)
View looking south-
west towards site
from the Pretoria Art Mu-
seum.
Author, 2006

Figure 67 (bottom)
View looking south-
west towards site
from Wessels str.. en route
to site.
Author, 2006



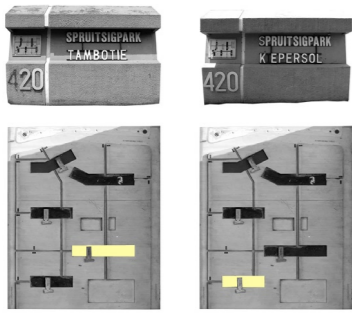


Figure 69

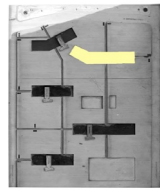
View looking east up at the Tambotie and Kiepersol flat blocks.

Author, 2006





Figure 70



View looking up from the south side of Maroela flat block.

Author, 2006



Figure 71 (top)

View south-west towards site from the 18th floor of Maroela flat block.

Author, 2006

Figure 72 (mid, left)

View looking at Kiepersol through the Tambotie and Soetdoring flat blocks.

Author, 2006

Figure 73 (mid, right)

View looking at Marula through the Tambotie and Soetdoring flat blocks.

Author, 2006

Figure 74 (bottom)

View looking west over unused ground plain in front of the Soetdoring flat block.

Author, 2006





Figure 75

Photograph of the northern facade of Tambotie flat block. Most of the curtains remain permanently drawn in winter & summer, testifying to the typology's inappropriateness for the Highveld climate (Dry & hot with summer rainfall). This is especially so when there is no external solar control)

Author, 2006



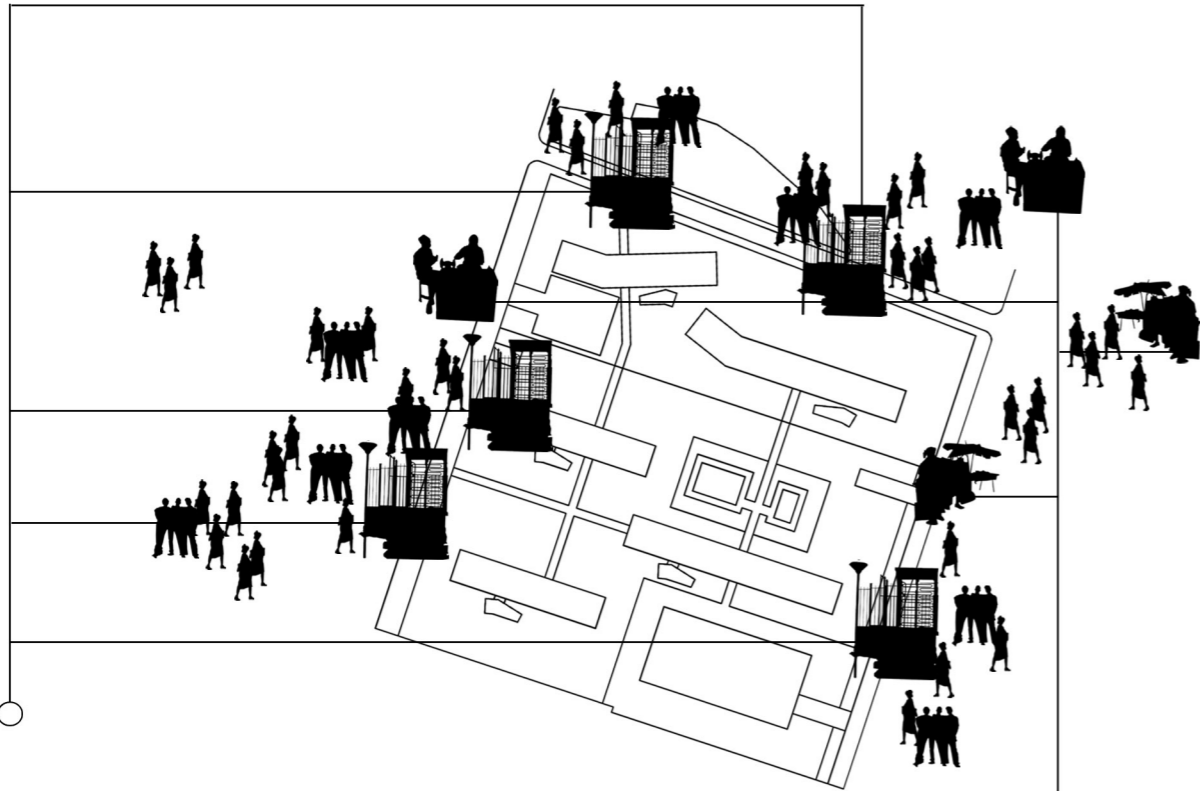
Figure 76

View looking up at the north facade of the Karee flat block.

Author, 2006



Pedestrian Access



Pedestrian access from the street onto the site is controlled by five revolving security gates. Three of these were erected in accordance with existing footpaths. Although they are meant to restrict entry, their effectiveness is questionable. Few residents carry the key with them which results in sporadic gatherings at these points, everyone waiting for a prepared resident. When he/she eventually arrives, he/she opens for everyone. The fact that the gate can be opened with a lollipop stick adds to their fallibility.



Figure 77
Digital collage illustrating the location and effects of the revolving security gates.
Author, 2006

As throughout most of Sunnyside, the pavements of the Spruitsig Park are littered with informal trade. While these have logically developed near the security gates, the variety of trade is limited to that of a portable nature. By incorporating entrepreneurship with working public spaces, seating and amenities, diversification of trade can occur.



Figure 78 - Figure 83
Photographs of original access routes. (1&2) One of the old pathways leading out from Maroela. Rubbish thrown from a balcony above further deadens the end. (3&4) Newly fenced in connection routes. (5&6) Another pathway to nowhere.
Author, 2006

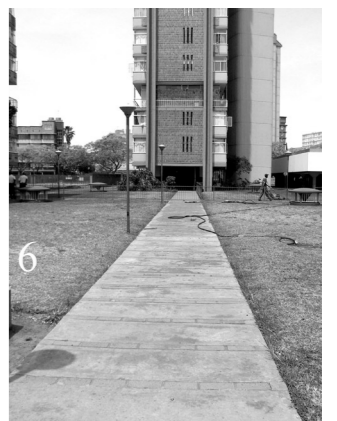
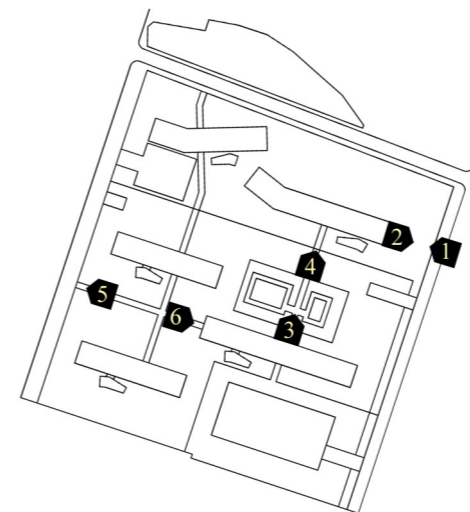
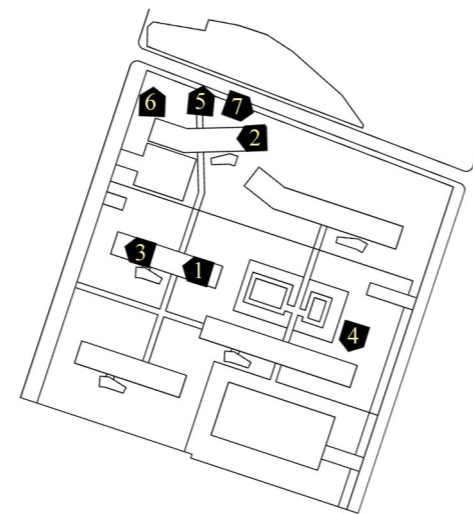
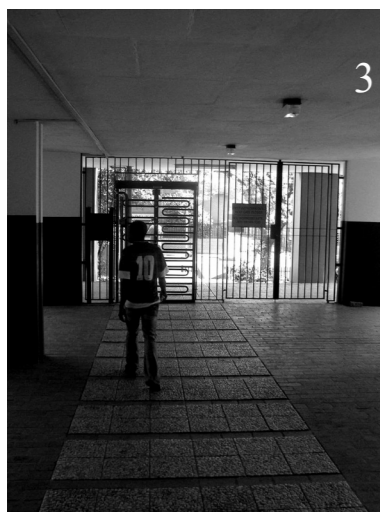




Figure 84
Entrance through piloti
into Karee flat block
lobby
Author, 2006

Figure 85, Figure 86
Views upon exiting
Soetdoring flat block.
(2) Through piloti and
lobby area. (3) Through
piloti and out through
security gate.
Author, 2006



Pedestrian Interface

Figure 87-89

(4) View of northern facade of the kiosk situated on the ground floor of Tambotie flat block. Instead of opening towards the open space to the north, its entrance is at the above-ground parking lot. (5) View from inside the northern periphery of the

site showing the lack of connection between Spruitsig Park and the children's playpark and waterway. (6) View from inside the western periphery of the site northwards up Leyds street.

Author, 2006

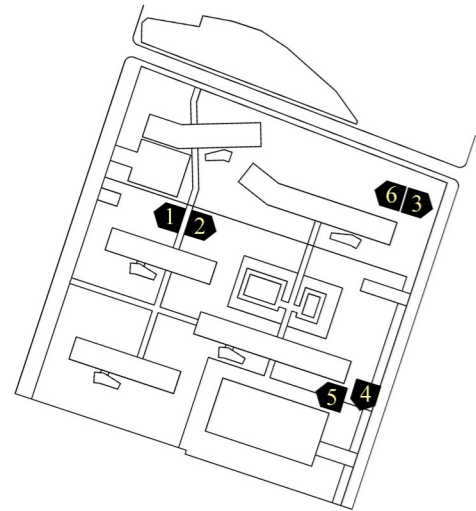


Figure 90

View east up De Rapper street illustrating the Karee flat block's relationship with the streetscape.

Author, 2006





Vehicular Access



Figure 92

(3) Entrance into small parking area in front of Maroela flat block from Bourke street. (4) Ramp from Bourke street into raised parking area behind Tambotie flat block. (5) View of ground level and raised parking from kiosk entrance behind Tambotie flat block. (6) Small parking area in front of Maroela flat block. Author, 2006

Figure 91

(1) Underground parking access from Leyd's street. (2) Underground parking access from Bourke street.

Author, 2006

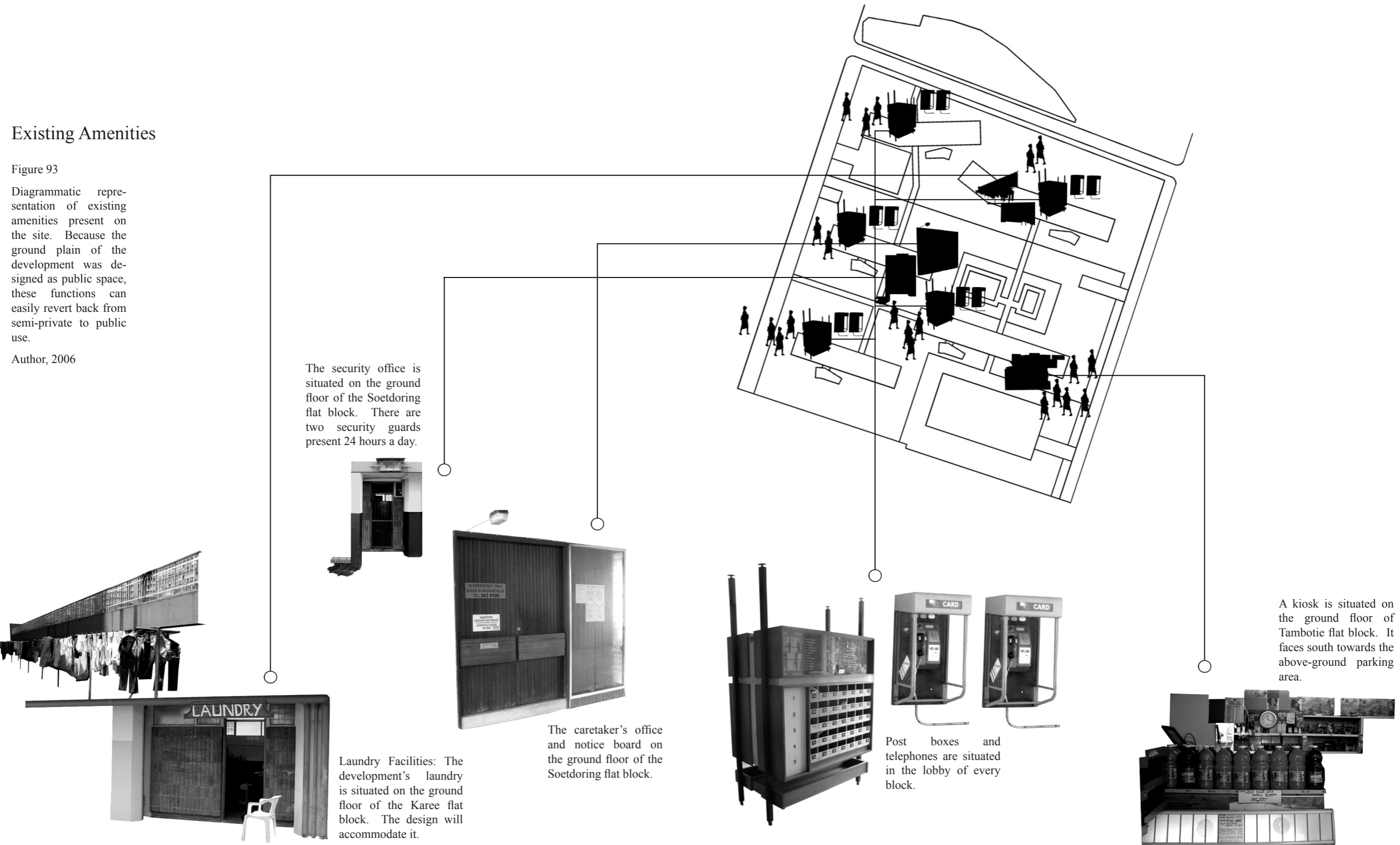


Existing Amenities

Figure 93

Diagrammatic representation of existing amenities present on the site. Because the ground plain of the development was designed as public space, these functions can easily revert back from semi-private to public use.

Author, 2006



The security office is situated on the ground floor of the Soetdoring flat block. There are two security guards present 24 hours a day.



The caretaker's office and notice board on the ground floor of the Soetdoring flat block.



Post boxes and telephones are situated in the lobby of every block.



A kiosk is situated on the ground floor of Tambotie flat block. It faces south towards the above-ground parking area.

Figure 94

View east past Maroela flat block showing the rarely used resident's swimming pool and fencing.

Author, 2006

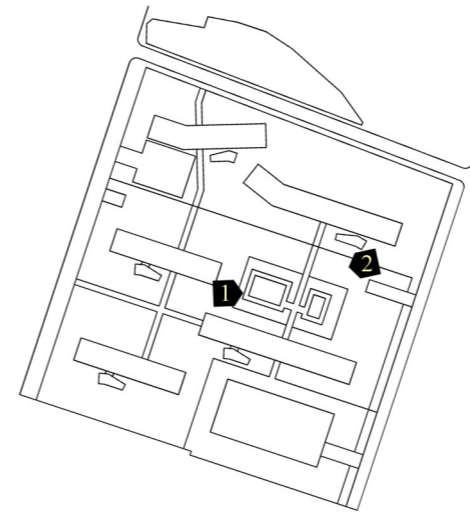


Figure 95

View west past Tambotie, Soetdoring and Kiepersol flat blocks showing the rarely used resident's braai facilities and fencing.

Author, 2006



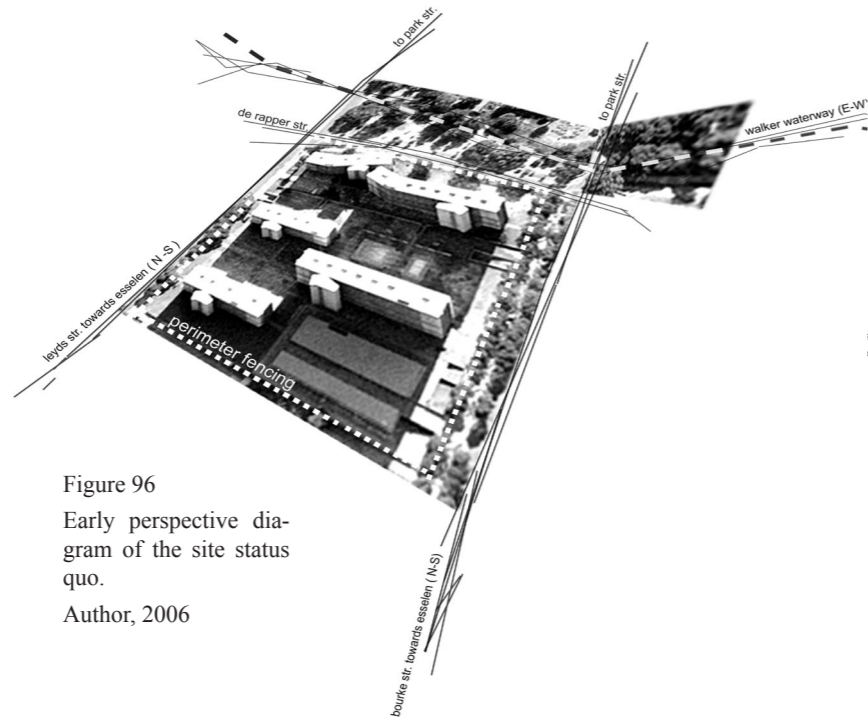


Figure 96
Early perspective diagram of the site status quo.
Author, 2006

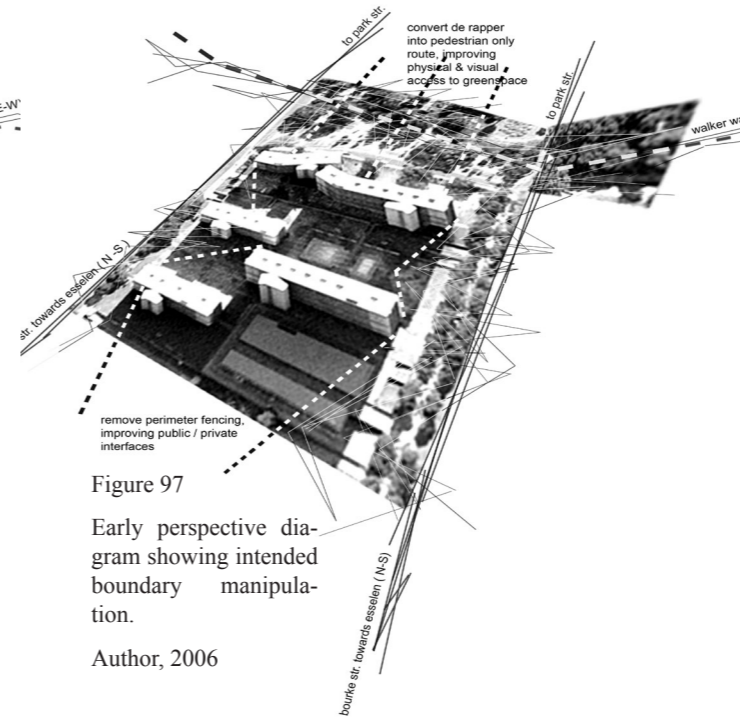


Figure 97
Early perspective diagram showing intended boundary manipulation.
Author, 2006

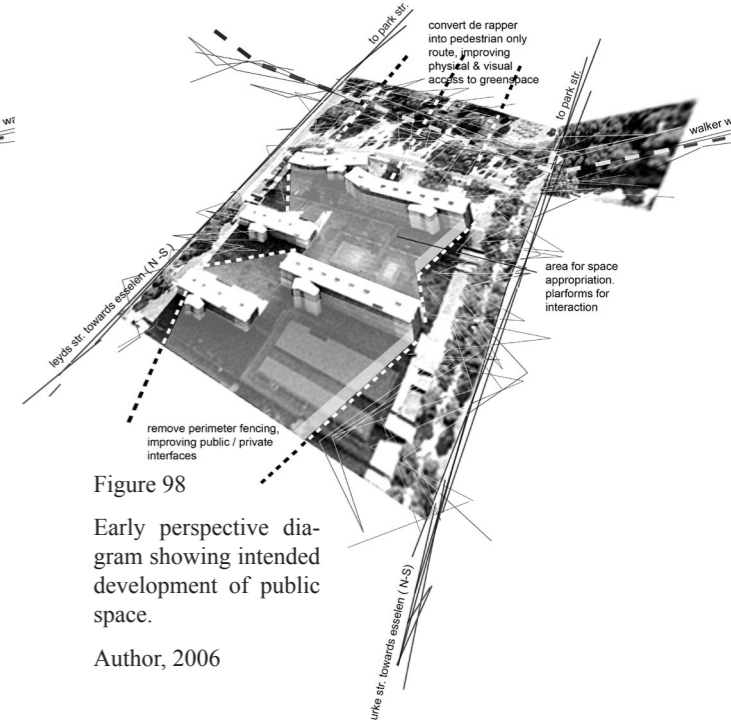


Figure 98
Early perspective diagram showing intended development of public space.
Author, 2006