

“Thresholds are where transformations begin, where identities are declared”

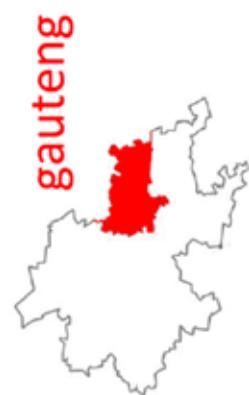
(Pollak, 1999, inside outside)



figure 11.

photo of zoo the entrance

chapter 2 urban context



study area

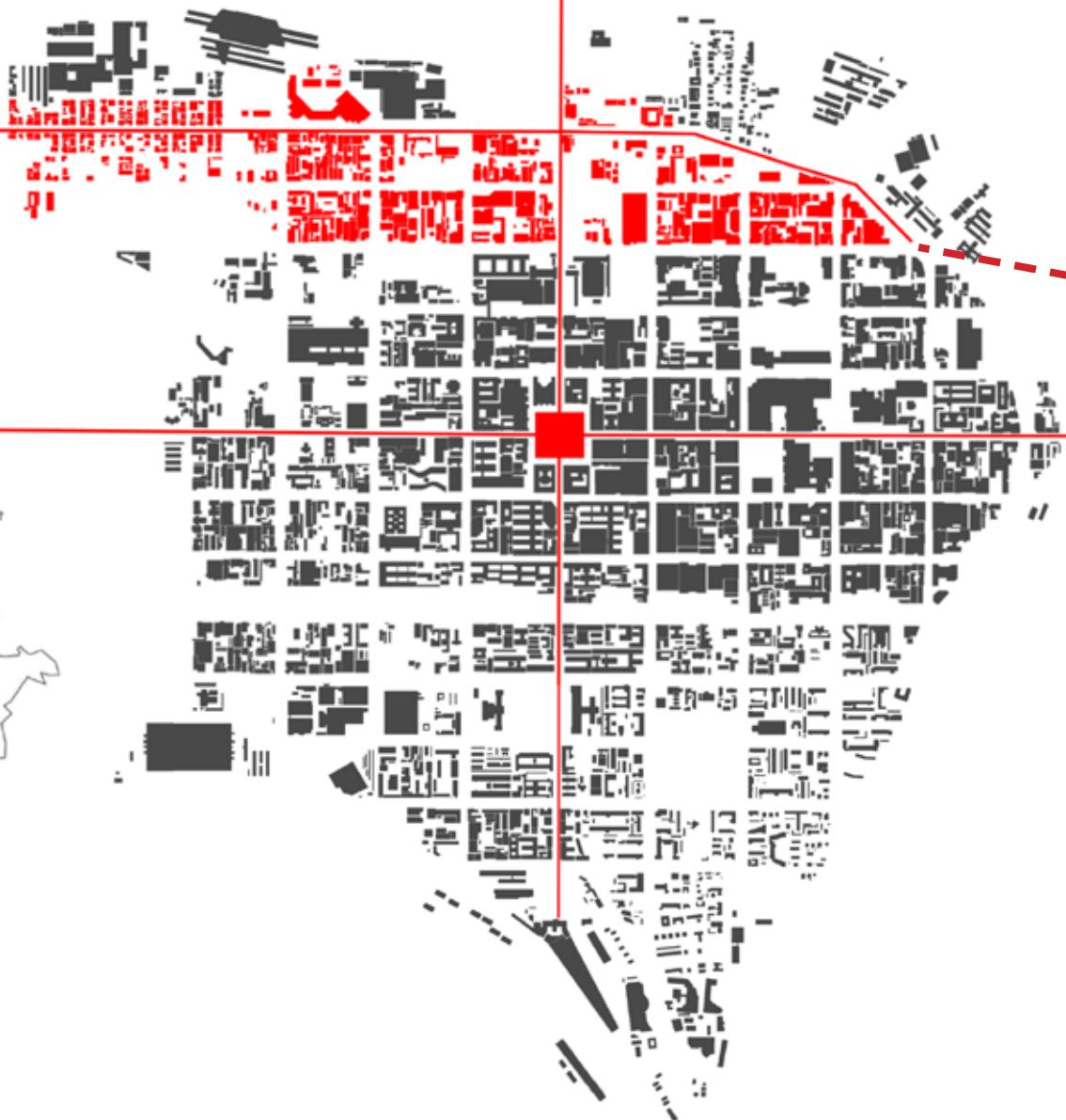
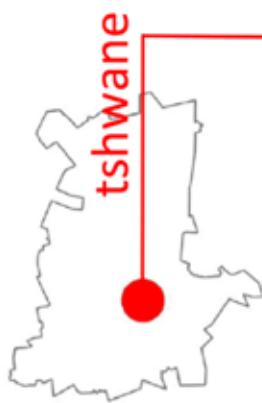
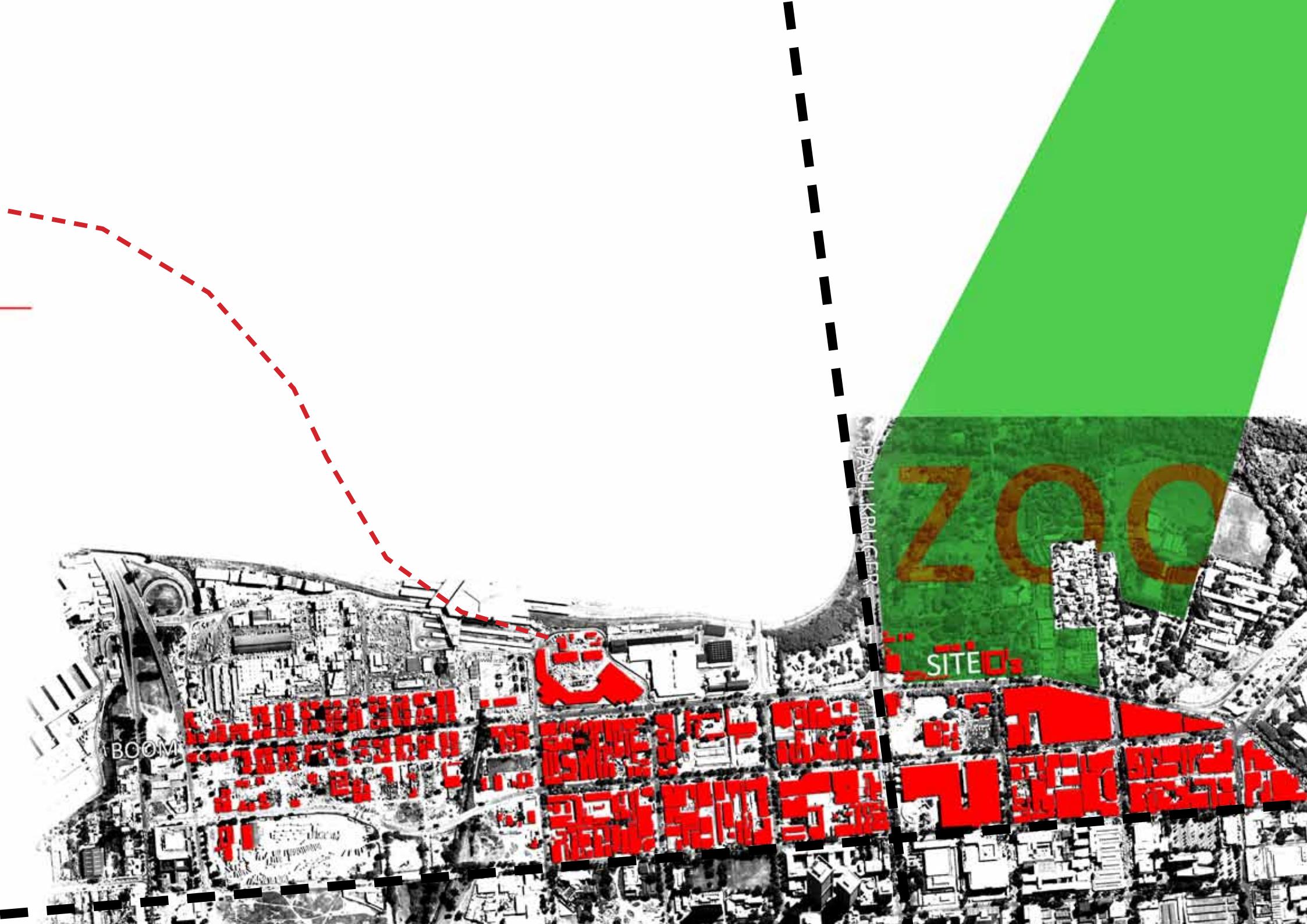


figure 12.

national context and figure
grounds of regional context



ZOO

SITE

BOOM

JHB

JOHANNESBURG

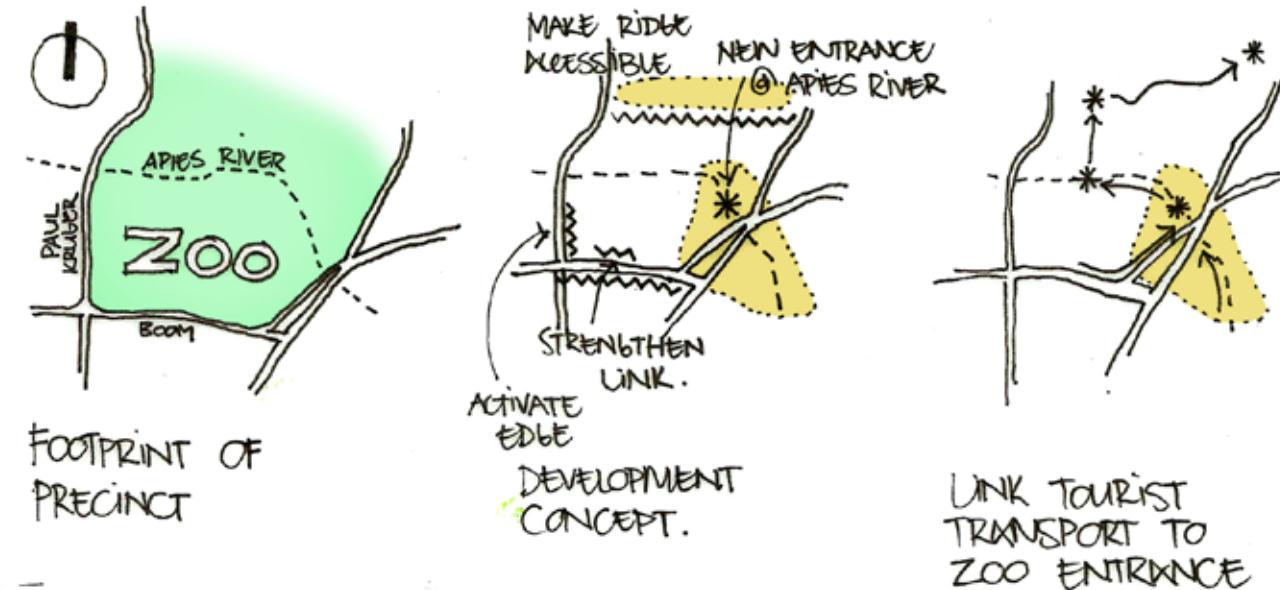


figure 13.

zoo precinct developments from Pretoria Inner City Integrated Spatial Development Framework

2. URBAN CONTEXT

2.1 INVESTIGATION OF THE AREA

2.1.1 EXISTING FRAMEWORKS

Previous studies focusing on the Northern precinct of the CBD have dealt with similar problems in this region. In this regard, the Pretoria Inner City Integrated Spatial Development Framework proposed a series of interventions in and around Boom Street. These interventions include upgrading the existing environment around Marabastad, introducing a formal entrance into the city at the crossing of Boom and Paul Kruger Street and creating a new entrance to the Zoo in the Apies River Open Space Development.

The framework, however, fails to mention that the existing entrance should be optimised in order to promote the public face of the Zoo on street level. The proposed new entrance seems detached from the main entrance and is definitely not a part of the gateway into the city.

Another key point, that the framework does not address, is the lack of proper urban density in the Northern region. A successful density is missing at present, and does not contribute to rebuilding the decaying urban fabric.

The framework mentions the implementation of a mixed use theory, but does not describe where or how this will be implemented, or what the positive outcomes might be. The framework successfully proposed to conserve the tree lanes currently found in Boom Street. This is vital for the promotion of natural environments in the city and frames the East West gateway through the precinct. It is also a historical element in Boom Street; an element which led to the streets name, and frames the East West gateway through the precinct.

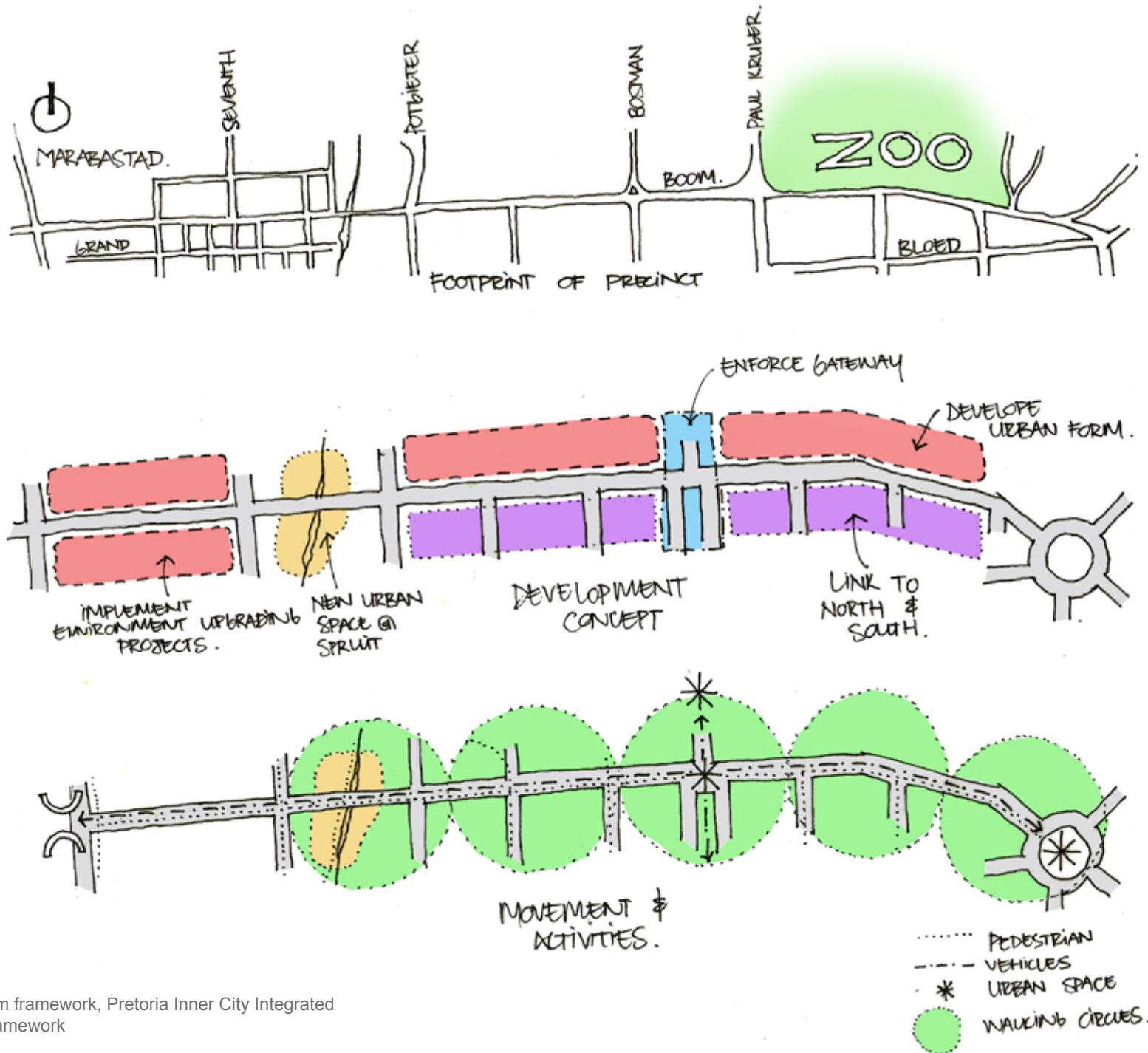


figure 14.

boom street concept from framework, Pretoria Inner City Integrated Spatial Development Framework



2.1.2 PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

“CONNECTIVITY THROUGH ACTIVITY”

With the lack of clarity and resolution in the researched frameworks, our group set out to prepare an urban framework that will address all the issues we feel necessary to rejuvenate this vital precinct of the city.

Our framework, entitled “Connectivity through Activity”, is based on connecting civic, public, transport and tourism nodes in the city. By integrating activity spines and more multi-functional spaces and buildings in the CBD, the framework will not only solve the density

problem in the area, but also create activity nodes to cater for all needs. By linking these nodes together through viewpoints, activity spines and pedestrian routes, the urban fabric becomes a finer weaved environment, able to accommodate more functions and serve a greater number of users.



figure 15. sketch of men setting up informal trade stalls

figure 16. context model showing connectivity between activities



The first strategic goal of the framework proposes to enhance tourism around the National Zoological Gardens. This will be done by creating a tourism hub around the Zoo, stretching from Paul Kruger Street to Andries Street. The hub will contain multi-functional areas for tourists and general public, as well as heritage and learning facilities.

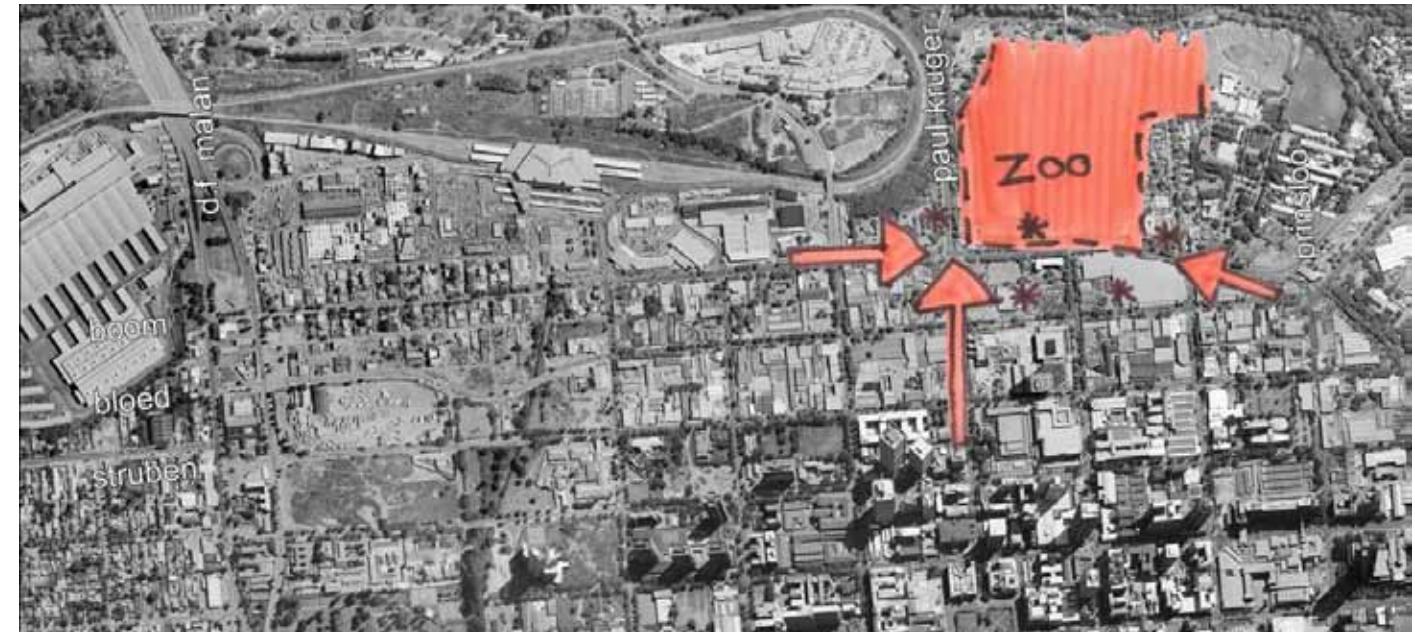


figure 17.

enhance tourism around the National Zoological Gardens

The second strategic goal aims at creating a creative industries zone between Paul Kruger Street and Marabastad. This area will be re-developed with a pedestrian walkway mid-block, from which various coffee shops, restaurants, theatres and galleries will be accessible.

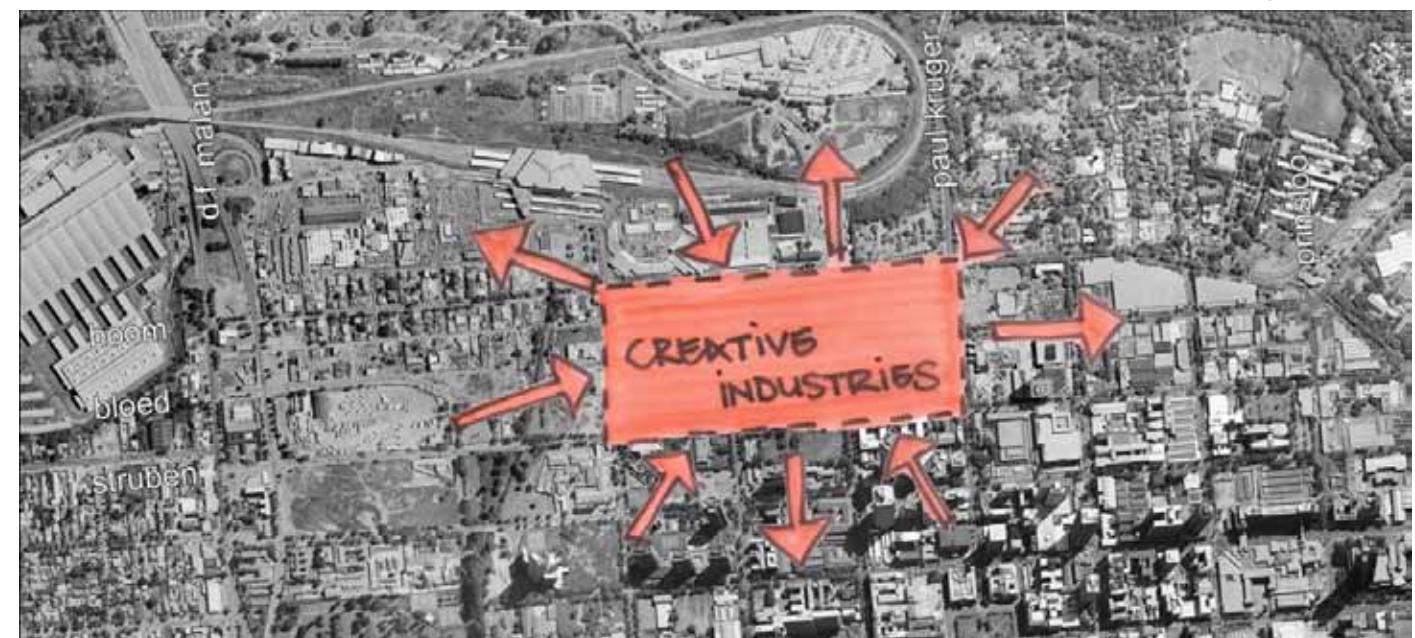


figure 18.

zone between Paul Kruger and Potgieter Street to act as catalyst for regeneration of inner city activity

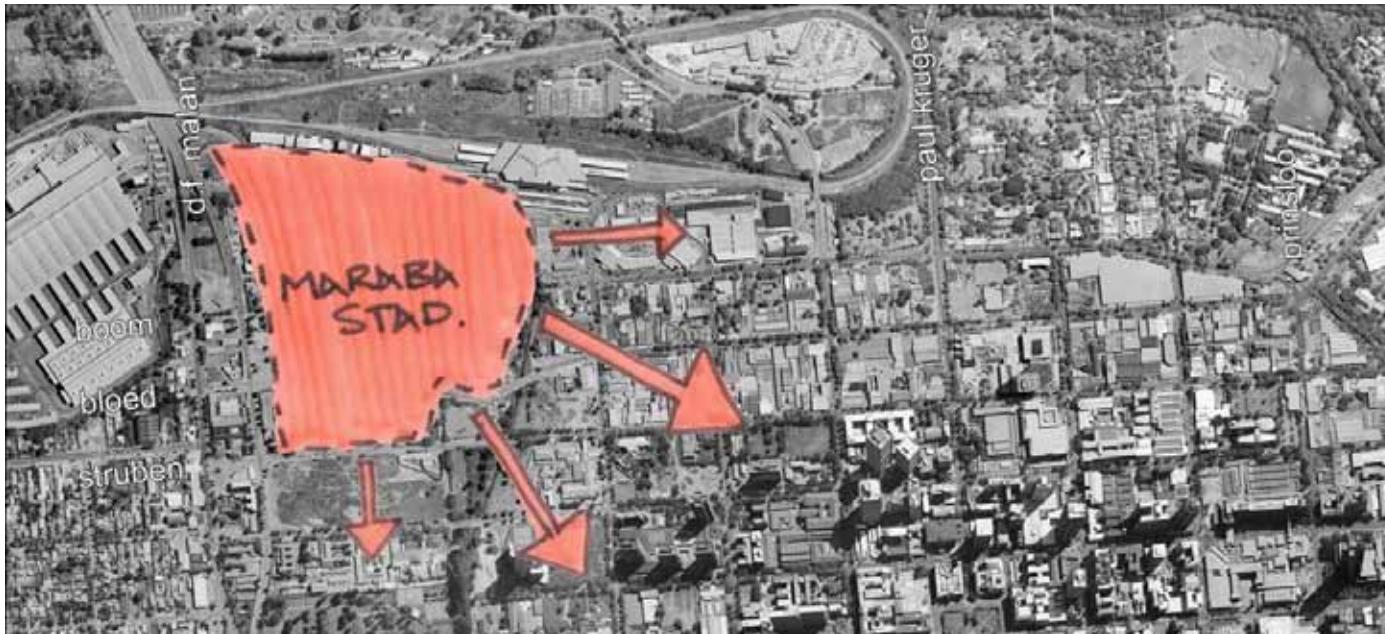


figure 19. re-connect Marabastad to the CBD



figure 20. branch and infuse the natural environments into the CBD

Another aim of the framework is to re-connect Marabastad to the CBD. The afore mentioned creative zone will serve as a strong link. Development in Marabastad will also aid this, as street fronts and public areas will be regenerated in order to create a more tourist friendly environment.

Lastly, the framework proposes that the natural environments in and bordering the CBD should branch out and spread through the city. Areas around the Zoo and the Steenhoven Spruit are tree rich, and the expansion of these areas can aid the process of striving towards a greener city.

The greatest element of the framework is the establishment of a gateway into Pretoria via Paul Kruger Street. The current entrance lacks identity and does not announce a proper arrival when entering the area, while buildings built to the edge of sidewalks along Boom and Paul Kruger Street does an injustice to the gateway.

The framework proposes a gradual approach; a mixture of infrastructure with pedestrian crossings and natural elements such as trees and lawns.

The methodology of “Connectivity through Activity” can be utilized to create a tourism hub around the Zoo, and increase the public perception of the Zoo.

The framework proposes a pedestrian route running mid block between Boom and Bloed Street, from Grand Street in Marabastad up to Andries Street, and will terminate in the Bloed Street Mall. This route will branch off into places of activity, with the main link, crossing over Boom Street, into the entrance of the Zoo.

This link will connect the Zoo to the inner city in a way that is at present prohibited by the fences and buildings around the Zoo. It will also serve as an opportunity to branch out the greenery, confined inside the Zoo, into the city fabric.

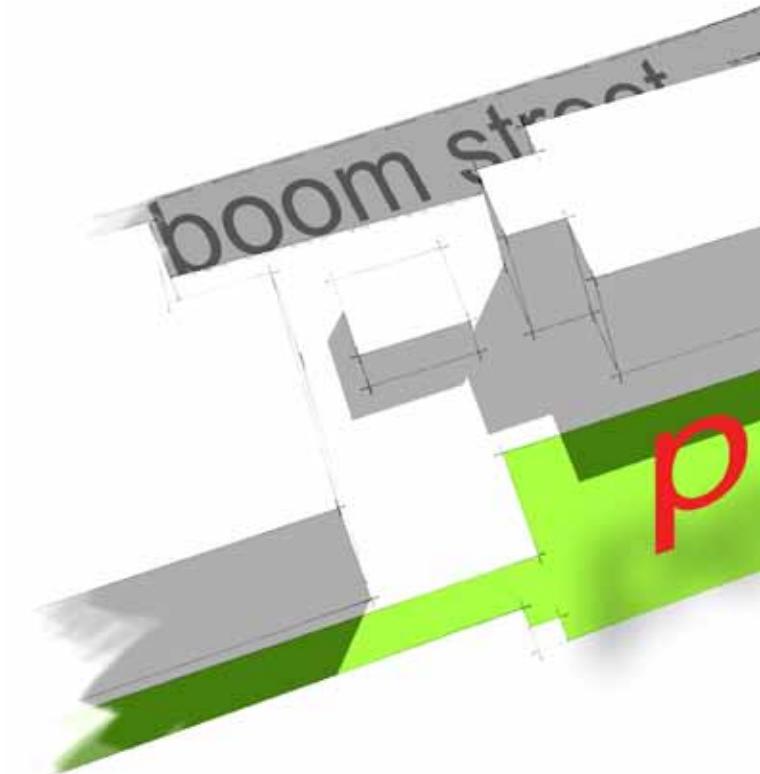
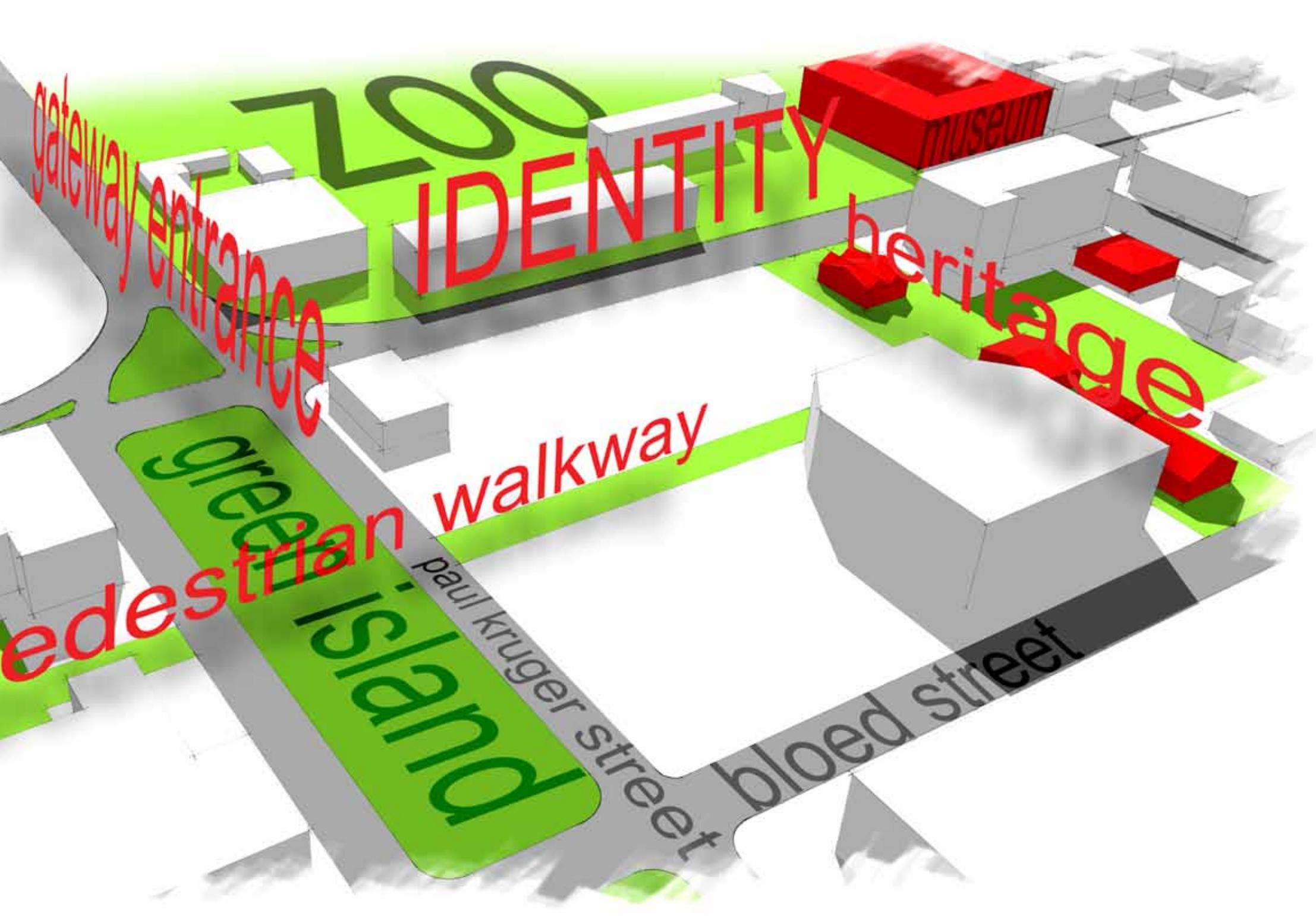


figure 21.

3d sketch showing beginnings of framework interventions



gateway entrance

pedestrian walkway

island

paul kruger street

bloed street

200 IDENTITY

heritage

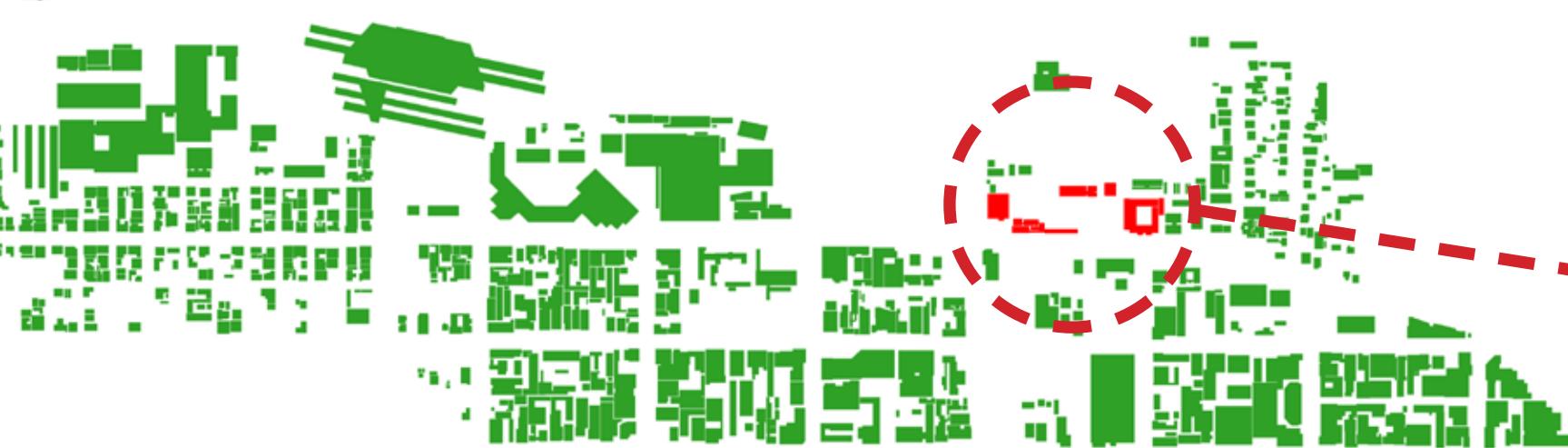


figure 23. study area with site marked in red



2.2 SITE

2.2.1 LOCATION

The chosen site is the existing parking lot and infrastructure at the entrance to the Zoo, on the corner of Boom and Paul Kruger Street. The site is surrounded by the main entrance and State Museum to the East, the information centre and old penguin pools to the North, Boom Street to the South and the reptile enclosure and aquarium to the West.

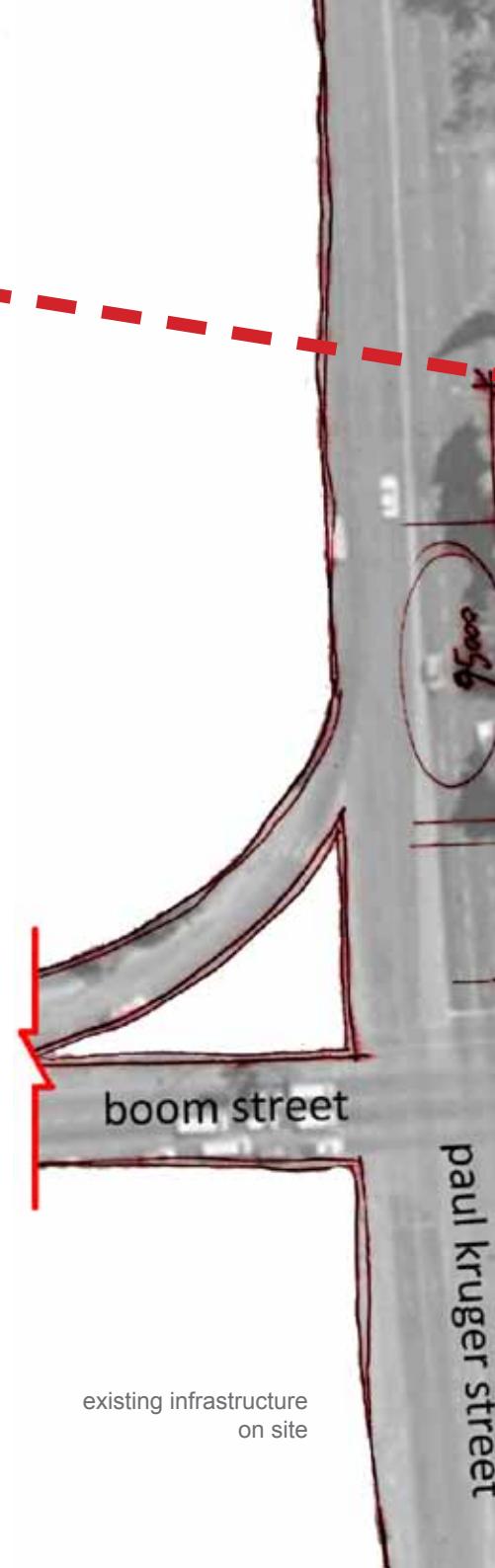


figure 22.

existing infrastructure
on site





figure 24.

panormaic view of flats
to South of Zoo entrance

2.2.2 CONTEXT

The site is surrounded by a great deal of heritage and significance to Pretoria.

The State Museum, established in 1892, is situated to the right of the main entrance. It is the oldest museum in the city, and after renovations, to become the new Museum of Life Sciences. Across Boom Street is a series of residential properties marked as heritage buildings, stretching from Andries to Paul Kruger Street. To the south of the parking lot

entrance we find a 6 storey block of apartments, with a great view over the gardens thanks to its orientation.

To the West of the site, across Paul Kruger Street, is a vacant plot owned by the Department of Justice. The lot is currently being loaned to the Zoo and used for parking over the weekends. The Department of Justice plans to erect a new departmental building on the erf.

The two most significant pieces of context that will be taken into consideration is the Zoo itself and the vacant plot to the South, where Andries Haasbroek (March Prof. 2010) proposed his thesis project.

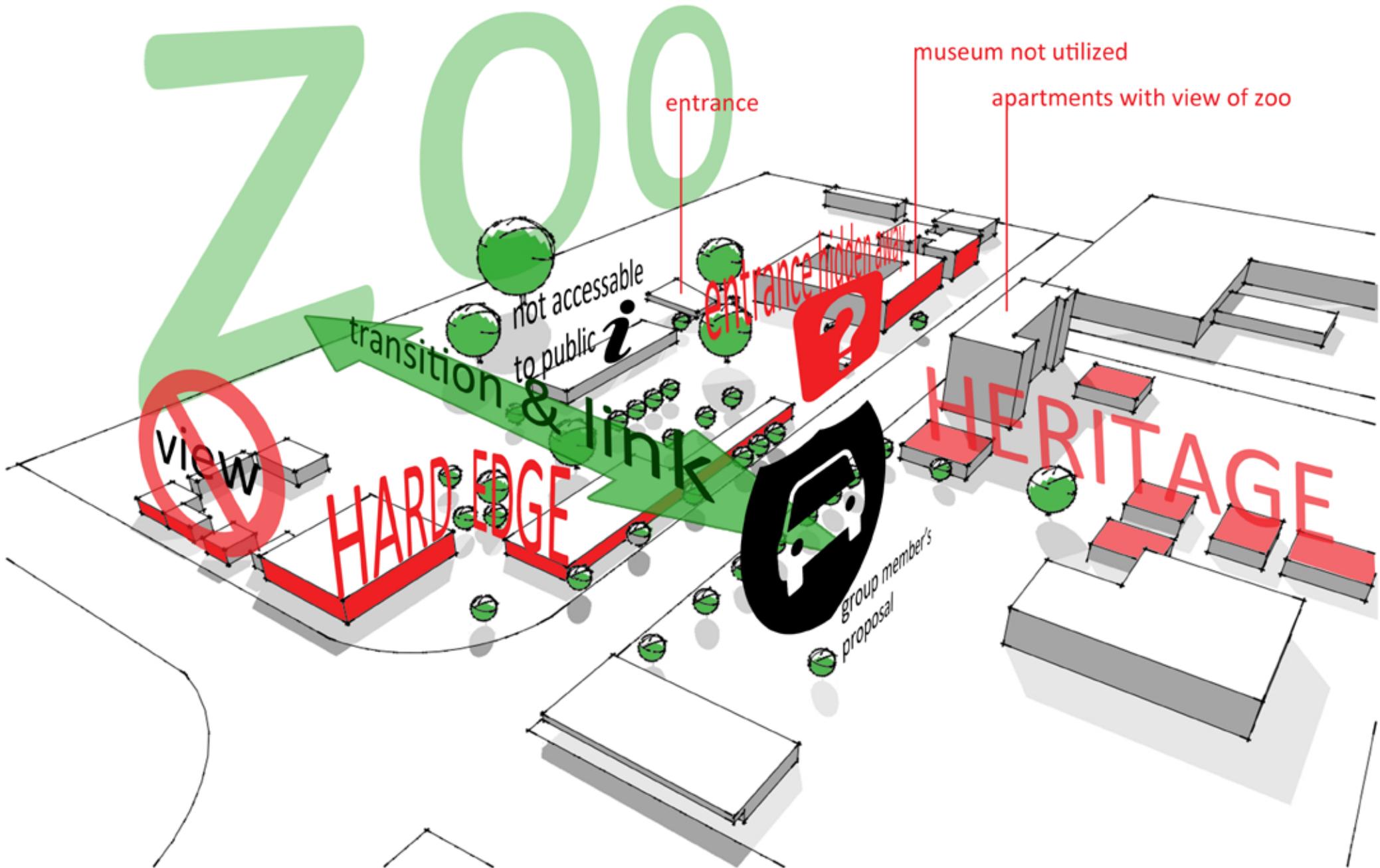


figure 25.

3d site analysis





figure 26. site context indicated on panoramic photo. facing North