

### 3. CONTEXT



■ Some painters transform the sun into a yellow spot; others transform a yellow spot into the sun." - *Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)* ■ "As the yellow gold is tried in fire, so the faith of friendship must be seen in adversity." - *Ovid quotes (43 BC)* ■ "There is no blue without yellow and without orange." - *Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890)* ■ "Gold! Gold! Gold! Bright and yellow, hard and cold." - *Thomas Hood (1799-1845)* ■ "Only God, my dear, could love you for yourself alone, and not your yellow hair." - *William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)*

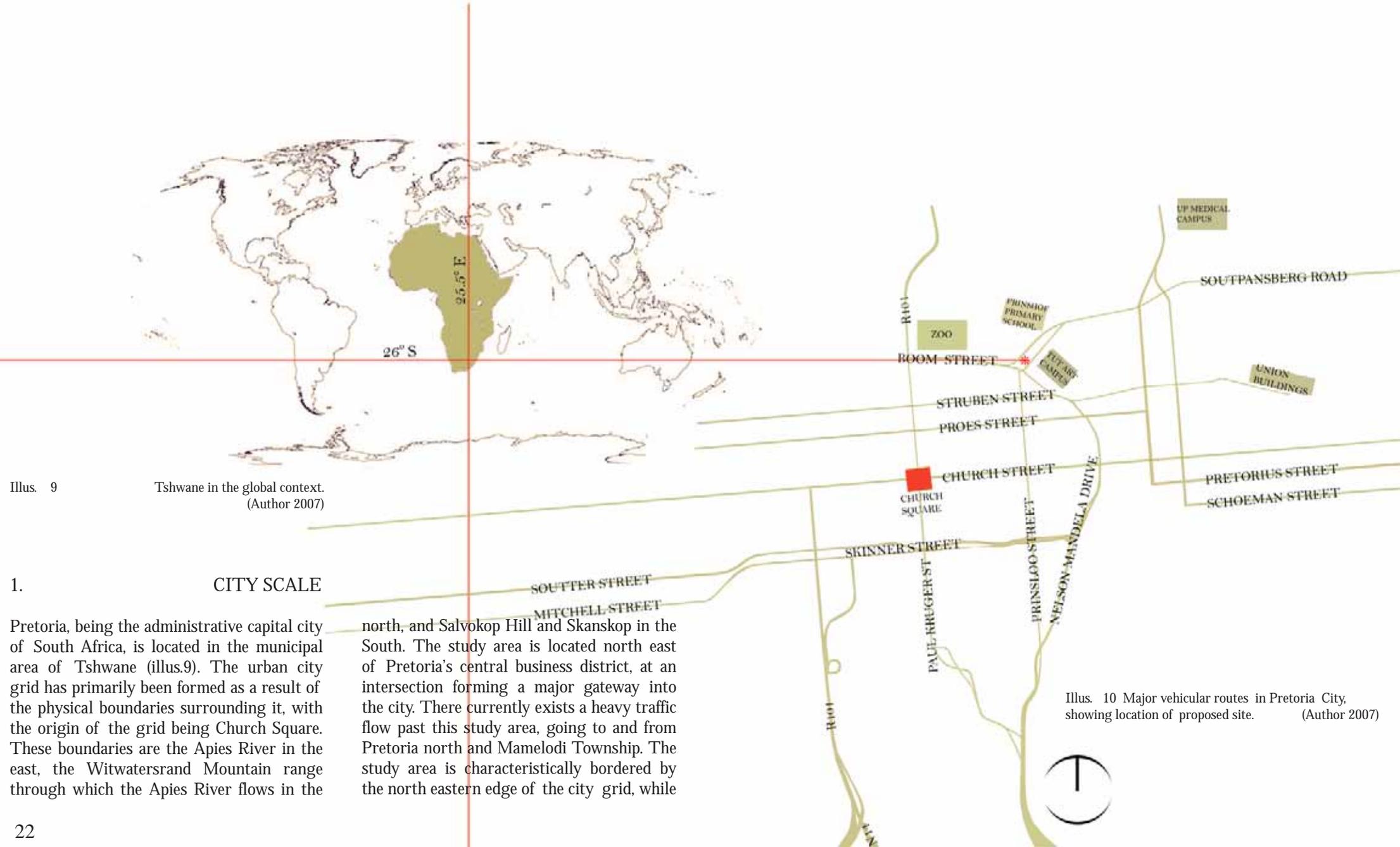
3.1  
3.2  
3.3  
3.4

STUDY  
AREA  
SITE  
HISTORICAL









Illus. 9 Tshwane in the global context. (Author 2007)

Illus. 10 Major vehicular routes in Pretoria City, showing location of proposed site. (Author 2007)

1. CITY SCALE

Pretoria, being the administrative capital city of South Africa, is located in the municipal area of Tshwane (illus.9). The urban city grid has primarily been formed as a result of the physical boundaries surrounding it, with the origin of the grid being Church Square. These boundaries are the Apies River in the east, the Witwatersrand Mountain range through which the Apies River flows in the

north, and Salvokop Hill and Skanskop in the South. The study area is located north east of Pretoria's central business district, at an intersection forming a major gateway into the city. There currently exists a heavy traffic flow past this study area, going to and from Pretoria north and Mamelodi Township. The study area is characteristically bordered by the north eastern edge of the city grid, while

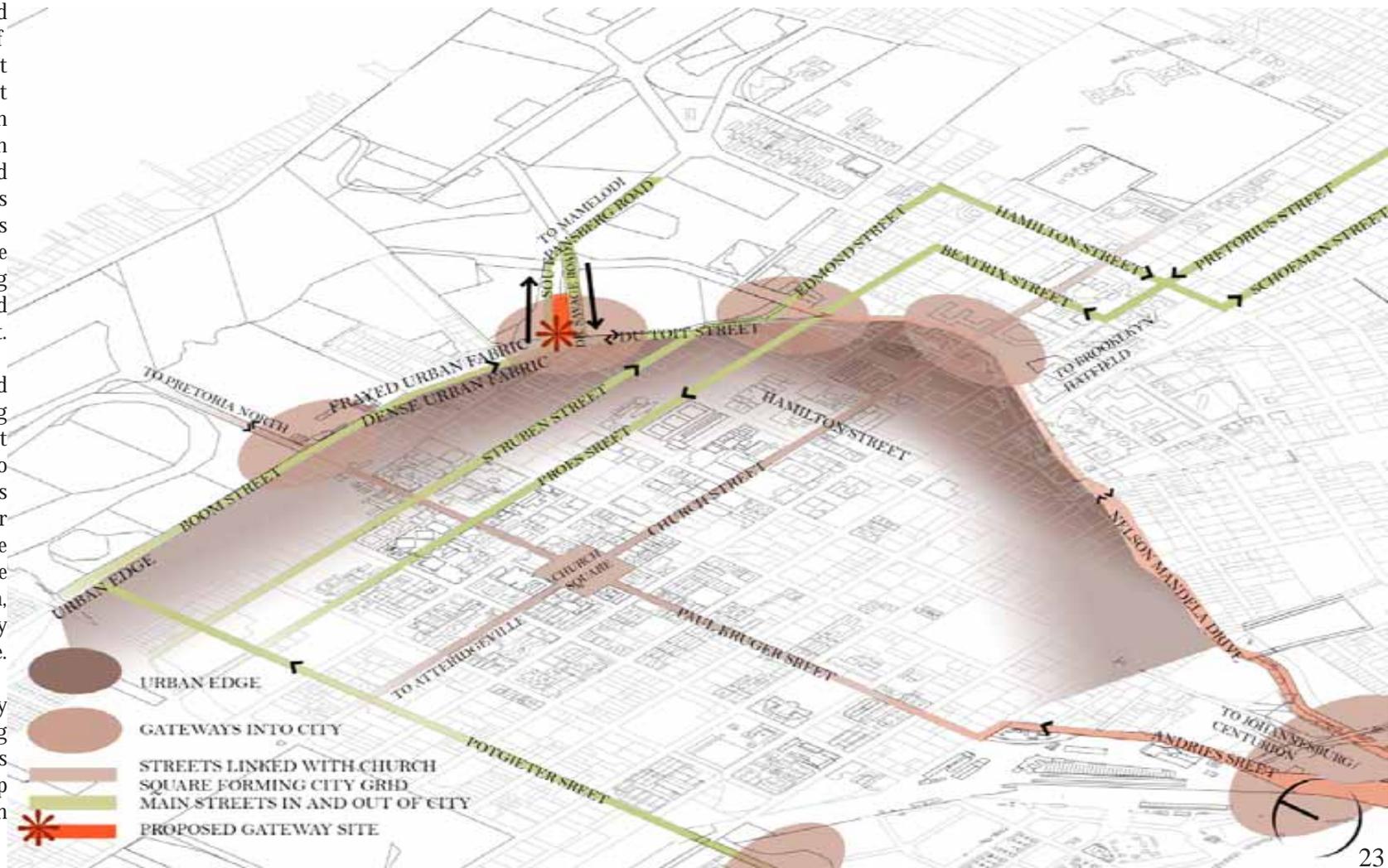
being wedged to form an island in between busy 4-lane streets converging into an intersection of 5 roads – Boom -, Bloed-, Dr. Savage-, Du Toit-, and Prinsloo Street.

the inner city so that a true South African identity can be created - an identity of a city working together as a whole.

A distinct urban edge has been formed around the central business district of Pretoria by the busy vehicular Boom Street in the north, continuing into Du Toit Street in the northeast corner and with Nelson Mandela Drive in the east (illus. ). It is in this northeast corner that the city grid and ultimately the dense urban fabric lose its form and disintegrates into lost space. This lost space continues to the north with the major vehicular link being Soutpansberg Road leaving the city and Dr. Savage Road coming into the central business district.

As already mentioned, the study area is wedged in between these busy incoming and outgoing streets, forming a distinct 'island' of lost space, yet, this area is such a vital gateway into the central business district of Pretoria. This lost space causes a distinct loss of character and urban identity in this quadrant of the city, which makes the vision of Pretoria as the administrative capital city of South Africa, to be a city that represents the true identity of nation state, a little harder to achieve.

The ideal is to form a prominent activity corridor by means of an integrated layering along this defragmented part of Pretoria's grid which links Mamelodi Township and the extended Pretoria North with



Illus. 11 Isometric view of Pretoria CBD, showing gateways into the city, main routes in and out of the city and the urban edge formed by the city grid. (Author 2007)





Illus. 12 Aerial photograph of Pretoria City with its land parcels, showing proposed site and its location within close distance from important facilities and buildings in the study area. (Author 2007)



3.2 STUDY AREA SCALE

3.2.1 PHYSICAL LOCATION

- Tshwane: Administrative Capital of South Africa
- Pretoria Central, northeast corner
- Prinsloof area
- Intersection of Boom Street, Soutpansberg Road, Dr. Savage Road, Du Toit Street and Prinsloo Street

3.2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

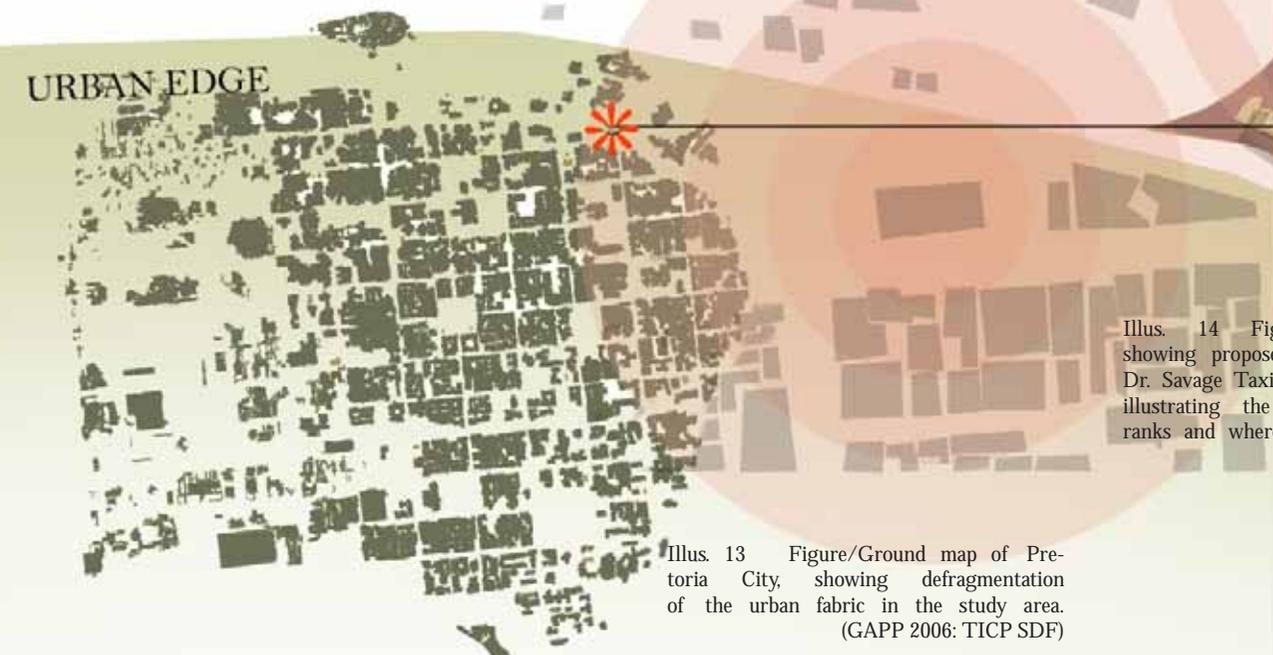
The site is formed into a 'wedge' by Soutpansberg Street and Dr. Savage Road with the northern part of the site ending with the crossing of the Apies River. The Dr. Savage Taxi rank serving mainly long distance routing and the local Pretoria suburbs is located on the northern part of the site, contributing to the vibrant pedestrian movement around the site.

3.2.3 NORTH PRETORIA CENTRAL AND PRINSHOF AREA

The northern part of Pretoria CBD has a rich cultural character and a big tourism trade with the Pretoria Zoological Gardens and Aquarium as well as the Snake Park in Boom Street. The museum next to the zoo has significant heritage value as do the smaller houses in Boom Street, being older than 60 years.

A building of very important historical value is located on the southeastern corner of the site, the Carbonatto Building built in phases from 1938 onwards and designed by Gordon McIntosh, with its peculiar current shape formed as a result of demolition. The Prinsloof area houses a large amount of Institutional buildings such as the Tshwane University of Technology Art and Drama Campus, the Prinsloof School for the sight impaired, the University of Pretoria Medical Faculty, the Pretoria Academic Hospital, the Association for the Disabled as well as the School for the Cerebral Palsy. The Prinsloof Primary School is also located within walking distance of the site (illus. 12).

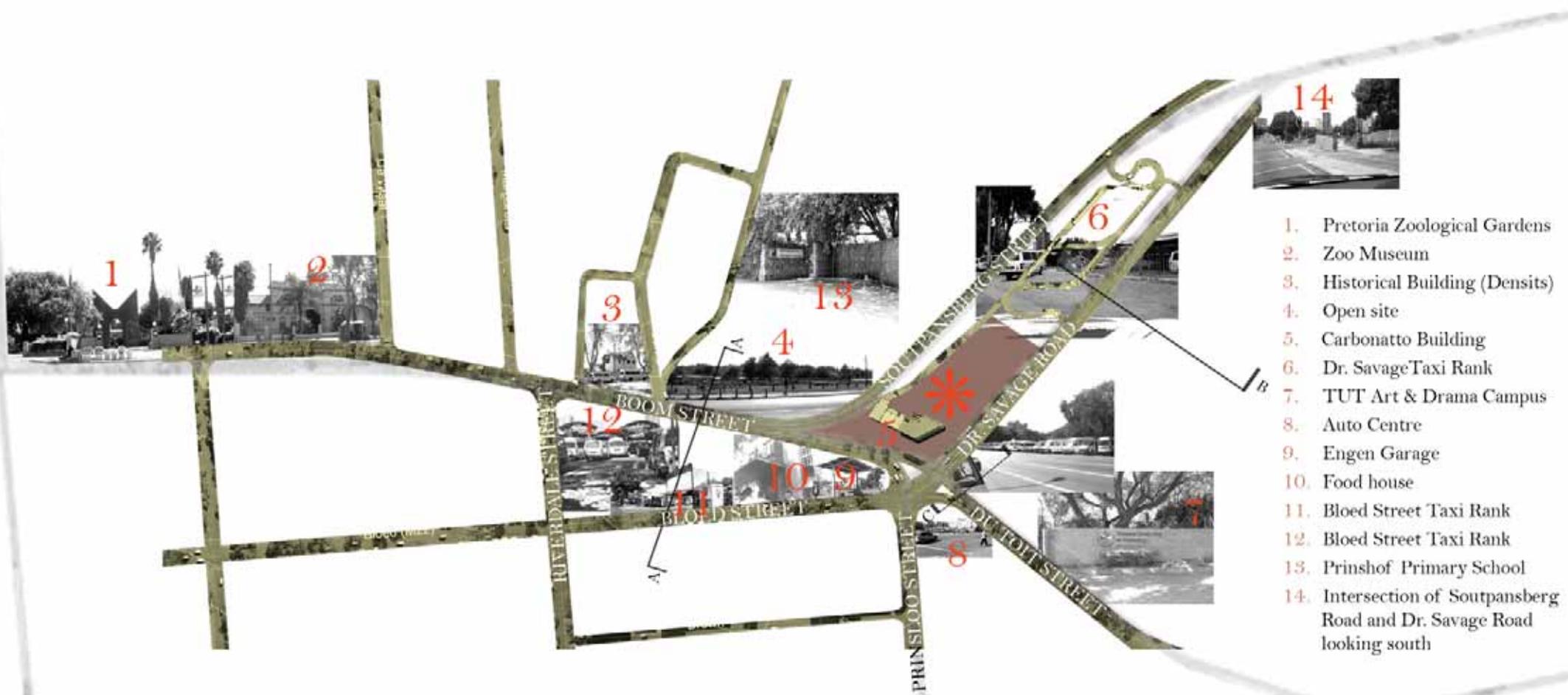
Du Toit Street splitting into Edmond Street links directly with the Union buildings located on Meintjieskop, which creates a very important visual link with the study area (illus. 12). The area located more to the centre of the CBD, where the fragmentation of the urban city fabric starts to appear (illus. 13), houses the very important Bloed Street Taxi Rank, and forms an activity node which is vibrant with pedestrian movement, social interaction and street vending. The 5 minute walking circles from the aforementioned Dr. Savage Taxi Rank and the Bloed Street Taxi Rank crosses where the proposed site is located, which makes it an ideal area for rest and rejuvenation (illus. 14).



Illus. 13 Figure/Ground map of Pretoria City, showing defragmentation of the urban fabric in the study area. (GAPP 2006: TICP SDF)

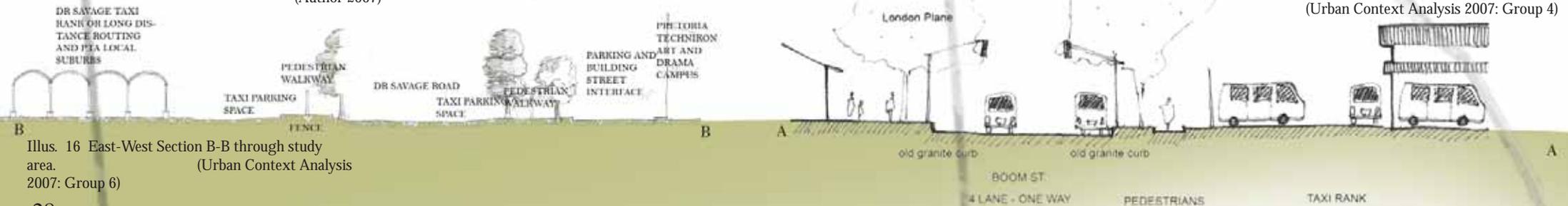
Illus. 14 Figure/Ground map of Pretoria City, showing proposed site and its location in between Dr. Savage Taxi Rank and Bloed Street Taxi Ranks, illustrating the walking circles from both taxi ranks and where they overlaps on the proposed site. (Author 2007)

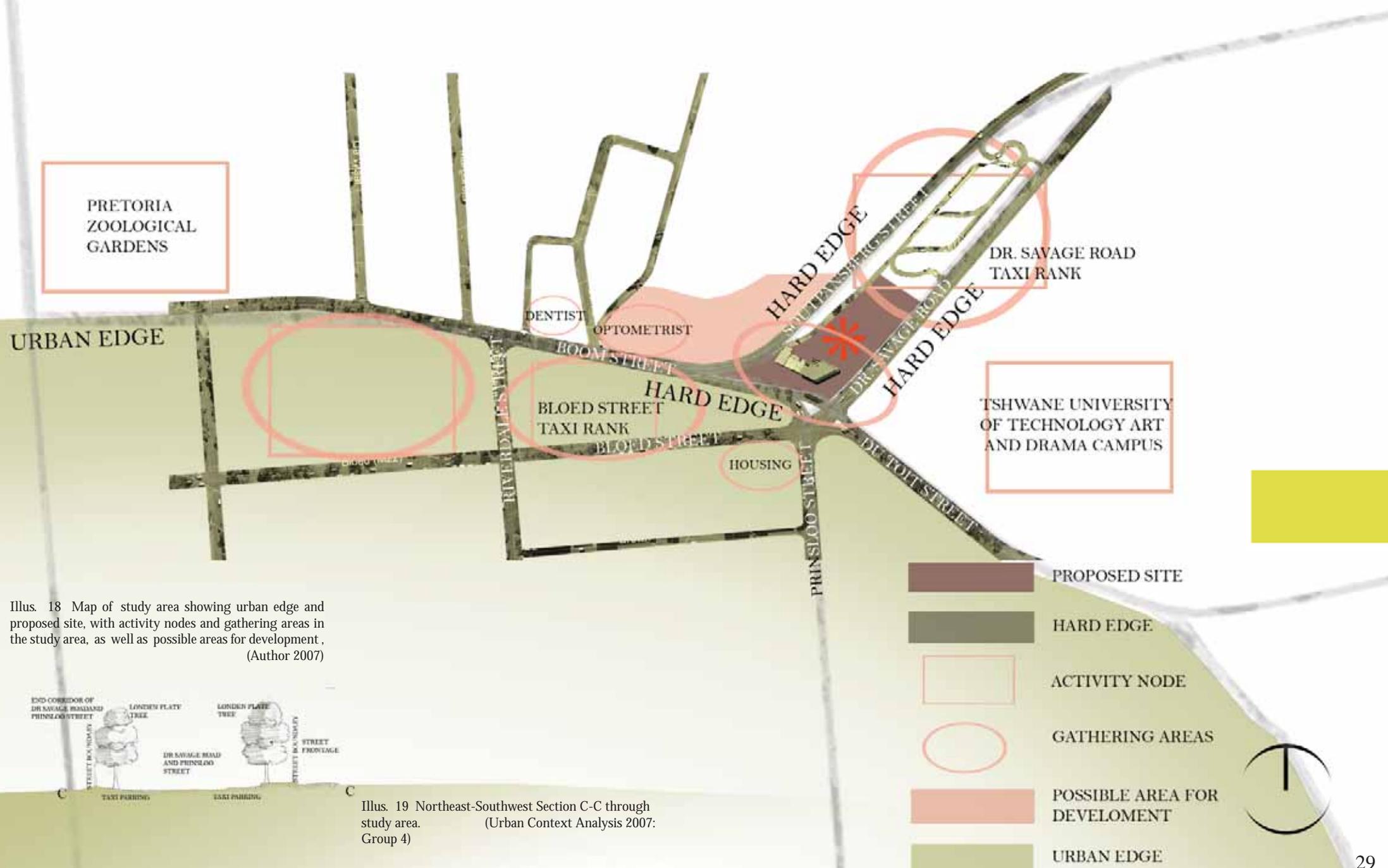




Illus. 15 Urban identity map of study area, showing location of proposed site as well as important facilities and buildings. (Author 2007)

Illus. 17 North-South Section A-A through study area. (Urban Context Analysis 2007: Group 4)





Illus. 18 Map of study area showing urban edge and proposed site, with activity nodes and gathering areas in the study area, as well as possible areas for development, (Author 2007)



Illus. 19 Northeast-Southwest Section C-C through study area. (Urban Context Analysis 2007: Group 4)



Illus. 20 Aerial photograph showing pedestrian movement in the study area, as well as the urban edge and proposed site. (Author 2007)

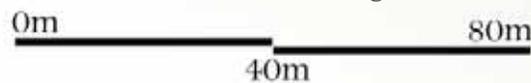
### 3.2.4 MOTIVATION FOR CHOICE OF SITE

Currently, it is a lost space with defragmentation of the urban city fabric on the periphery of the Tshwane CBD. It forms part of the northeastern gateway into the CBD and thus forms a site which

can serve as a landmark for city inhabitants, tourists and suburban inhabitants. It is located next to the Dr. Savage Taxi Rank as well as within five walking minutes of the Bloed Street Taxi Rank. The site is located next to the busy Soutpansberg Road with vehicular movement to Riviera, Capital Park, Gezina, Rietondale etc, as well

as the Mamelodi - and Soshanguve Township. The Carbonatto Building on the site is of high historical value with specific visual landmark importance. The site is located near the institutional buildings mentioned, the

most important being the TUT Art and Drama Campus, the UP Medical Faculty and the Prinshof Primary School. The site is located in the same street as the



PROPOSED SITE

PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

URBAN EDGE





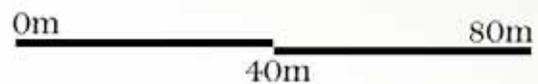
Illus. 21 Aerial photograph showing vehicular movement in the study area, as well as the urban edge and proposed site. (Author 2007)

**Pretoria Zoological Gardens – Boom Street**  
 The site falls within the vehicular access road of the Union Buildings, as well as has a visual axis with the Union Buildings from the higher storeys of the Carbonatto Building and the proposed building.

**3.2.5 OPPORTUNITIES AND POTENTIAL**  
 The site has the potential to become a landmark site with the opportunity of starting the activity corridor needed to link

the northern suburbs and townships with the Pretoria central business district. This in turn has the opportunity to be the golden thread

with which the urban fabric could be ‘stitched’ together so that Pretoria’s urban identity could become a national identity to be proud of.

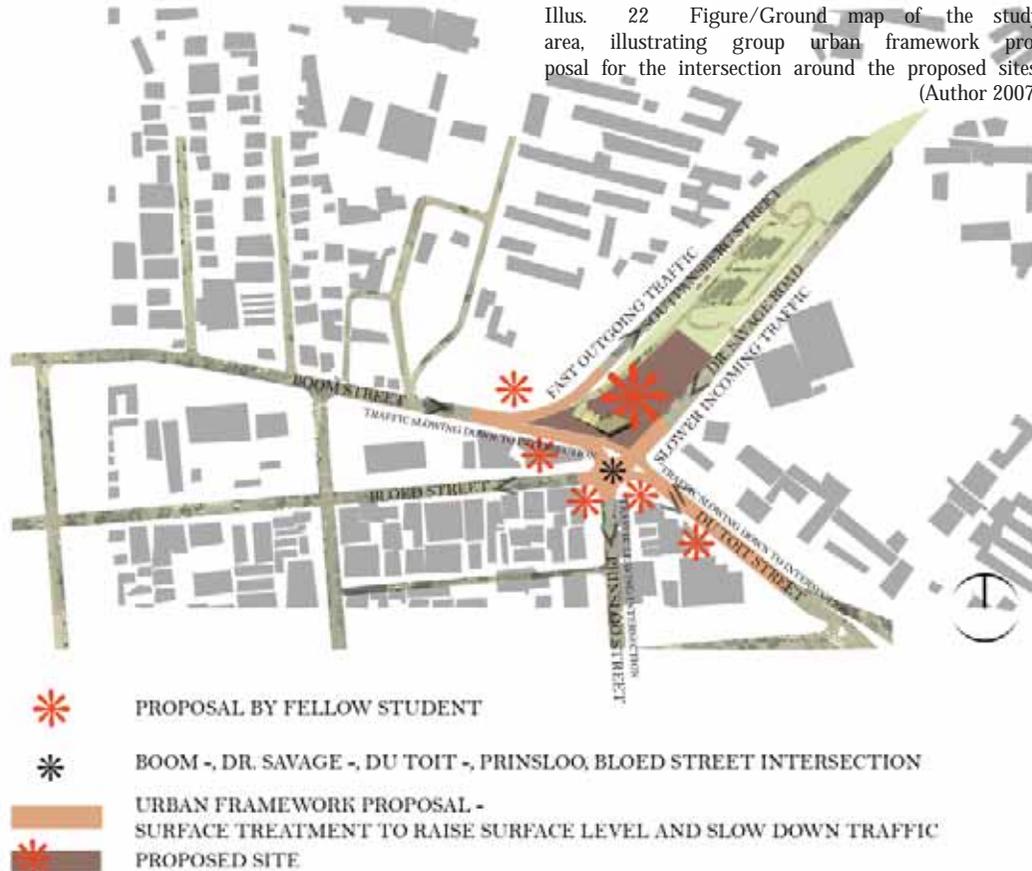


### 3.2.6 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AREA

The study area is characterized by a medium to low density residential context, the residential society being multi cultural. A high level of informal trading exists along the Zoo

entrance as well as around the two important taxi ranks. The majority of multi cultural pedestrians rely on public transport, which they access from the existing taxi ranks. The area is also characterized by heavy pedestrian movement during all times of the day, not only during peak hours as

Illus. 22 Figure/Ground map of the study area, illustrating group urban framework proposal for the intersection around the proposed sites. (Author 2007)



expected (illus. 20). Heavy vehicular traffic surrounding the study area occurs during peak hours to and from the townships and suburbs (illus. 21).

### 3.2.7 GROUP URBAN FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL

The study area includes several proposals by fellow students, on sites in close proximity to the authors proposed site. As this study area is characterized by heavy vehicular traffic on major intersecting streets, the study area, with the various proposals, has to accommodate the heavy pedestrian movement - already existing as well as anticipating an increase due to the other student proposals. The existing vehicular movement is currently slowed down to an extent by the traffic junction of the intersection, but further pedestrian safety is vital if the proposal for more pedestrian friendly movement is to succeed.

It is also evident that although very important proposals have been made on inner city spatial development, such as the Tshwane Inner City Spatial Development Framework (TICP SDF) by GAPP, these proposals do not include the study area under investigation. As this study area is an important gateway into the city, the urban framework proposal was thus made by the group to mainly target pedestrian and vehicular movement. It can not be denied that the busy four-lane Boom Street and Du Toit Street form a hard edge to the study area, and as such is vital for vehicular movement. This does

however impede upon the pedestrian movement of the proposed study area and excludes the proposed site by the author from the urban city grid as already mentioned.

The urban framework for the study area was thus very simple but vital to the success of the proposal. The surface of the intersection with extended areas is to be raised and treated by means of various materials which will slow down the vehicular movement drastically so that the road area for the intersection will be pedestrian dominated (illus. 22). This would enliven the study area making informal trading and dwelling, part of everyday happenings.



Illus. 23 Pedestrian space and link network.  
(GAPP 2006: TICP SDF)



Illus. 24 The seven development precincts.  
(GAPP 2006: TICP SDF)



Illus. 25 Axes and Corridors.  
(GAPP 2006: TICP SDF)

## TSHWANE INNER CITY SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (TICP SDF)

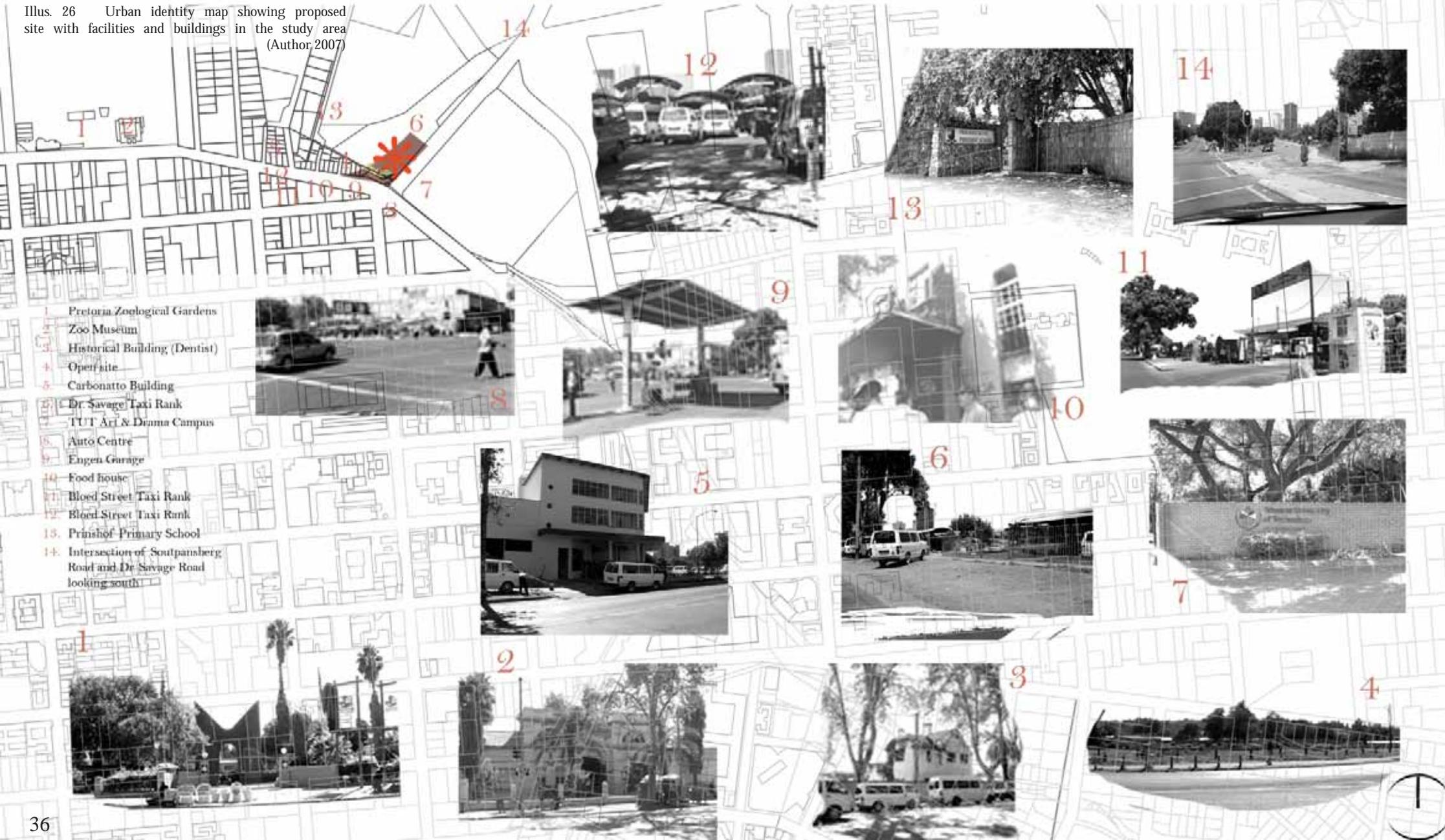
This inner city framework is a macro scale urban development framework to achieve sustainable urban renewal. The framework involves the strengthening of movement corridors, namely Paul Kruger and Church Street corridor, as well as the Union Buildings – Freedom Park visual axis (illus. 25). (TICP SDF 3 February 2006 by GAPP) *The movement corridor from the study area connecting the inner city with northeastern Pretoria is not included in this framework and is therefore one of the reasons for the choice of site.*

The framework also promotes a pedestrian friendly environment which is supported by an upgraded public transport system linking regional transport nodes with bus and taxi activities (illus. ). (TICP SDF 3 February 2006 by GAPP) *The group framework thus proposed can add to this pedestrian friendly framework proposed by GAPP.*

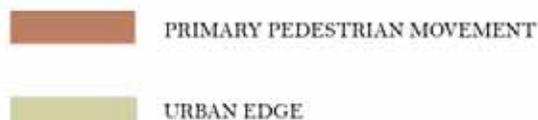
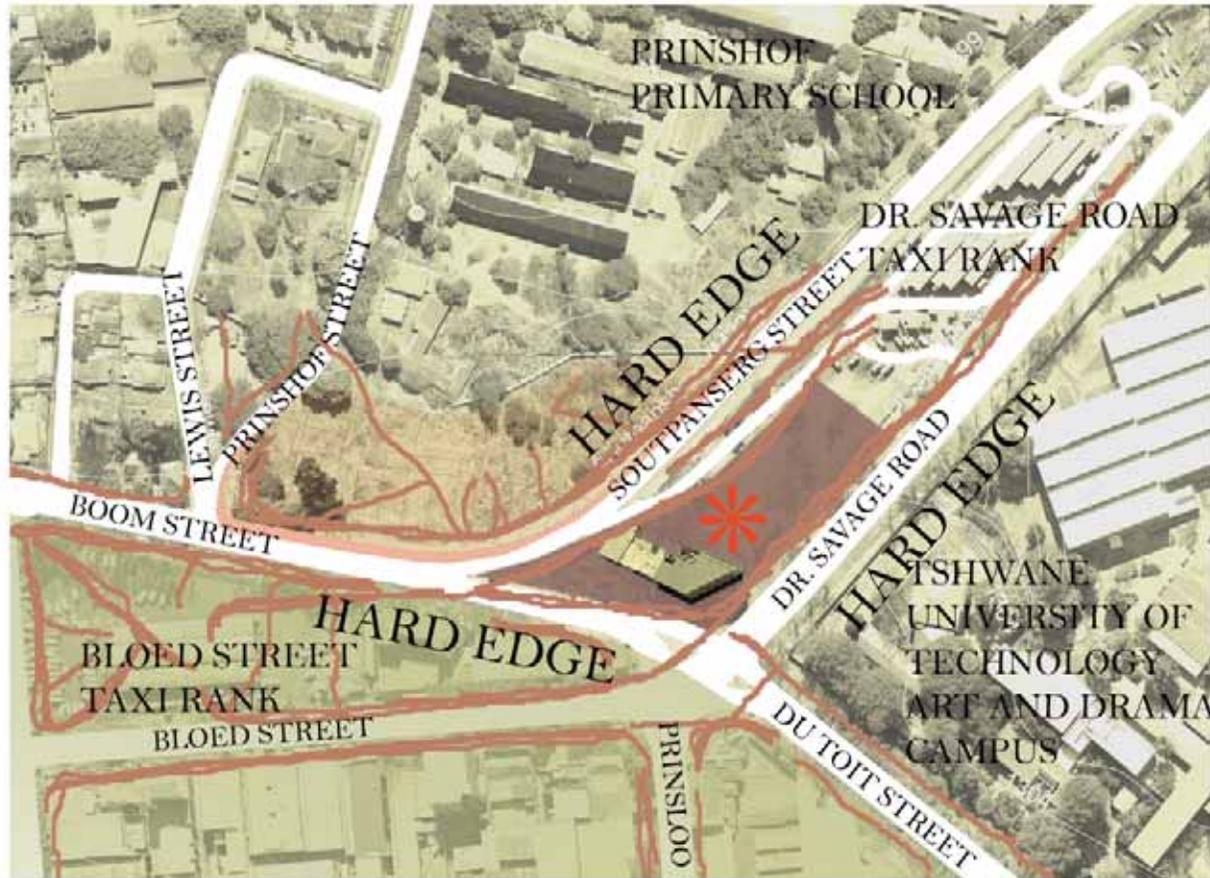




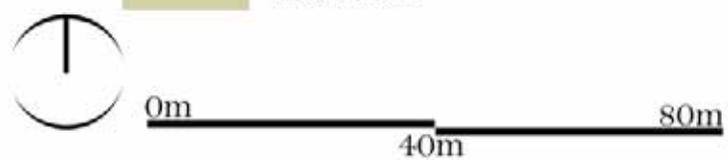
Illus. 26 Urban identity map showing proposed site with facilities and buildings in the study area (Author 2007)



- 1 Pretoria Zoological Gardens
- 2 Zoo Museum
- 3 Historical Building (Dentist)
- 4 Open site
- 5 Carbonatto Building
- 6 Dr Savage Taxi Rank
- 7 TUT Art & Drama Campus
- 8 Auto Centre
- 9 Engen Garage
- 10 Food house
- 11 Blood Street Taxi Rank
- 12 Blood Street Taxi Rank
- 13 Prinsloof Primary School
- 14 Intersection of Soutpansberg Road and Dr Savage Road looking south



Illus. 27 Aerial photograph of the study area showing dominant pedestrian movement through and around the proposed site. (Author 2007)



### 3.3 SITE SCALE CONTEXT

#### 3.3.1 ACCESSIBILITY

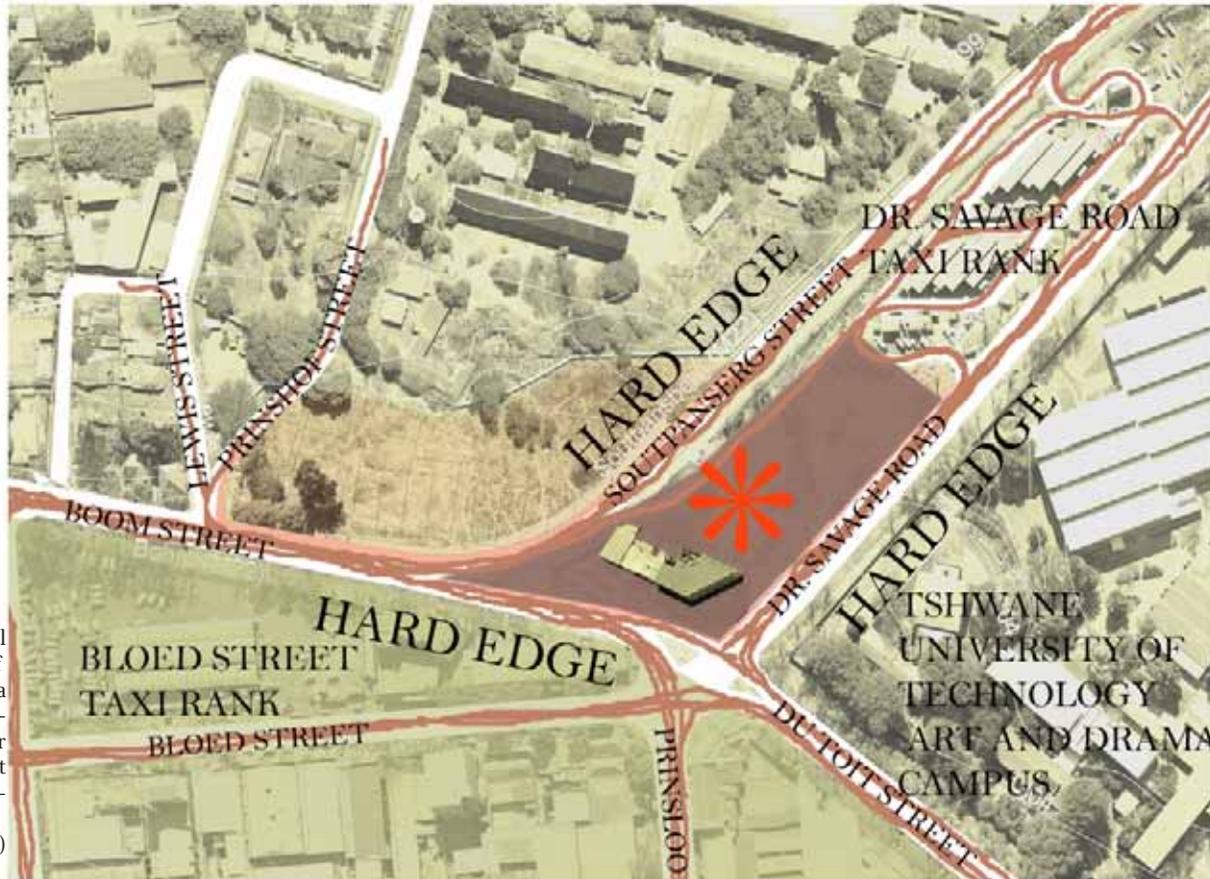
##### PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

Heavy pedestrian movement occurs from the Dr. Savage Taxi Rank on both sides of the site, moving toward the inner city (illus. 27). There is heightening of pedestrian movement during peak hours, as the long distance routing from the townships and northeastern suburbs brings people to and from their work in the CBD. Pedestrians moving from the east crosses over Dr. Savage Road from the TUT Art campus onto the site, normally wait for the robot and

cross Boom Street toward the inner city. A constant pedestrian flow also exists on the eastern side of the proposed site from the taxi rank down Prinsloo Street and vice versa. Free pedestrian movement across the site from the sidewalks on both the western and eastern side, which is the longest dimension of the site, is prevented by green fencing on both sides.

The existing Carbonatto building on the southeastern corner is currently not in use. It stands empty, while preventing free pedestrian movement by diamond wire fencing. Although this fencing is effective in prohibiting pedestrian movement, a person could easily get through this fence and stay illegally in the building which is currently not locked on the ground level.

It is of paramount importance that the group urban framework of making the study area more pedestrian friendly be implemented in order for the proposal on the site to work, as pedestrian movement through the site is very important and the major vehicular roads separating the site from the city grid makes pedestrian movement difficult and somewhat dangerous around the site.



Illus. 28 Aerial photograph of the study area showing dominant vehicular movement around the proposed site. (Author 2007)

Road, incoming Dr. Savage Road, and continuing Boom Street respectively, form an almost impenetrable barrier on the western, eastern and southern edges of the site. The incoming and outgoing roads feed the inner city and north eastern suburbs with vehicular traffic. Even though access to the site is restricted by these major vehicular roads, the slipway access road from Soutpansberg Road to the Dr. Savage Taxi Rank could serve as both an access road and a delivery road for the site proposal, which becomes vital for the success of the design.

### 3.3.2 BOOM STREET

Boom Street originates from D.F. Malan west, moving east toward the proposed site. The Pretoria Zoological Gardens as well as the Bloed Street Taxi rank is reached from this road. Boom Street got its name from the unique London Plane Trees which grows along both sides of this

four-lane street. This is the only street in Pretoria lined with these London Plane Trees, and is therefore very significant, as it distinguishes Boom Street from the other Jacaranda lined Streets in Pretoria Central. This road forms the southern edge of the site and ends in front of the proposed site at the busy intersection with Du Toit -, Prinsloo -, Dr. Savage -, and Bloed Street.

### 3.3.3 SOUTPANSBERG ROAD

Soutpansberg Road originates in Queenswood at the crossing with C.R. Swart Street, and connects Mamelodi Township, Eersterust etc. to the inner city through Stormvoël Road. Soutpansberg Road also connects Gezina, Riviera, Wonderboom etc. with the inner city.

### 3.3.4 DR. SAVAGE ROAD

Dr. Savage road forms the eastern edge of the site and connects with Soutpansberg Road in the north where the Apies River crosses underneath. It crosses Soutpansberg Road and curves around to the east, passing the Pretoria Academic Hospital, the Centre for the Cerebral Palsy, and the University of Pretoria Medical Faculty.

Illus. 29 (opposite) Aerial photograph of the study area showing existing and proposed pedestrian/vehicular movement around the proposed site. (Author 2007)



### 3.3.5 BIO-PHYSICAL CONTEXT

#### 3.5.1 METEOROLOGICAL ASPECTS

##### MACROCLIMATE

The site has dry and warm intermediary savannah biome with a summer rainfall of 125 – 375mm and a winter rainfall of 62 – 250mm.

##### TEMPERATURE

- The range of summer temperatures is 20 – 38 degrees Celsius
- The range of winter temperatures is 10 – 27 degree Celsius.
- The average relative humidity is 59%, with 60 to 80% sunshine per year.
- The prevailing winds in the summer are northeast, southeast, and southwest, northeast in the winter. (South African Weather Bureau – 2007)

- The summers are hot with characteristic thunderstorms generated by thermal air movements. Hail is not uncommon in the area (Napier 2000: 9.8)

##### MICROCLIMATE

The site is fairly tree rich which was planted haphazardly on the site. Three beautiful London Plane trees grow on the southern edge of the site, which continues the row of London Plane trees planted on the sides of Boom Street. Due to the Dr. Savage Road Taxi Rank, the soil on the site is barren without any grass covering. South from the taxi rank, the area is being used for parking and washing taxis causing further barrenness of the soil. Erosion due to run-off is thus a serious problem on the site in the case of thunderstorms which occur frequently in the summer months.

##### VEGETATION

The trees growing on the site that could be identified is mainly Jacaranda Trees, White Stinkwood (Celtis Kraussiana, Africana), and the ‘Enkel Doring’ (Acacia Robusta), as well as the already mentioned London Plane tree.

##### NOISE

Due to the Dr. Savage Taxi rank, as well as the Bloed Street Taxi Rank, there is a very high noise level around the site. A constant hooting and buzzing of noise is characteristic of this study area and thus also on the site, as it is situated in the middle of these two taxi ranks. The noise level around the site was also a major factor in choosing the appropriate program for the site.

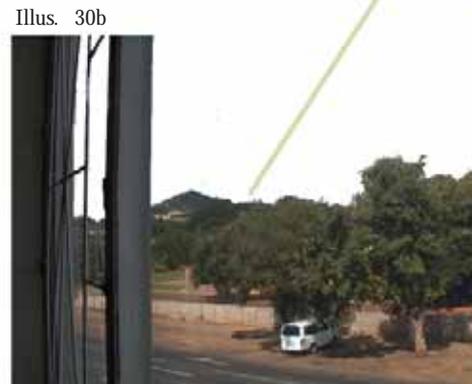
### 3.3.6 ZONING

The proposed site is mainly zoned as Government, with the southern edge of the site being zoned as Special. (see documents in Addendum)

VIEW OF RESERVE BANK FROM FIRST FLOOR OF EXISTING BUILDING



VIEW OF UNION BUILDINGS FROM FIRST FLOOR OF EXISTING BUILDING



VIEW OF TAXI RANK FROM EXISTING BUILDING BALCONY



VIEW OF PRETORIA ACADEMIC HOSPITAL



Illus. 30a-d Photographs from within the existing Carbonatto building on the site. (Author 2007)



Illus. 31 Photograph of unidentified tree on site. (Author 2007)

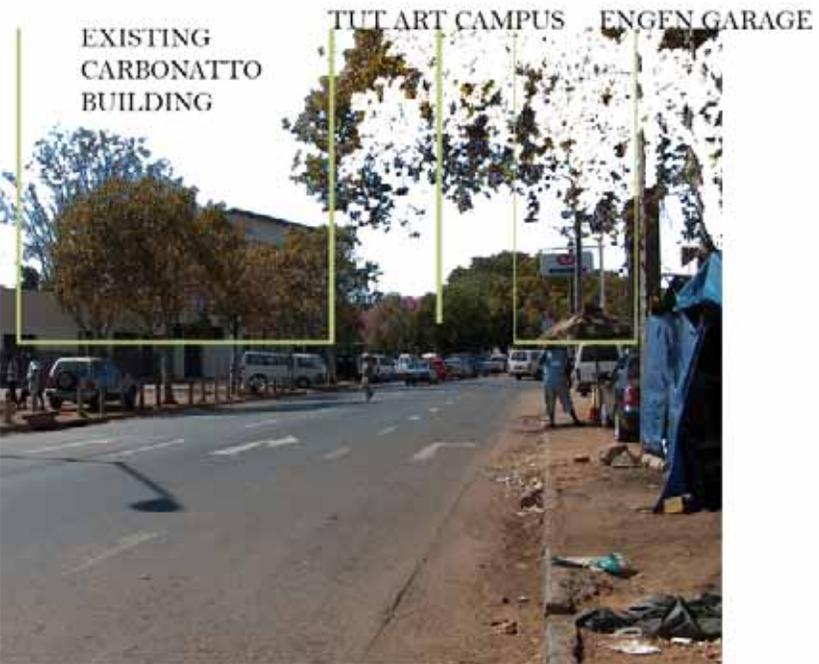


Illus. 32 Photograph of 'Enkel Doring' (Acacia Robusta) (Author 2007)



Illus. 33 Photograph of London Plane tree on site. (Author 2007)

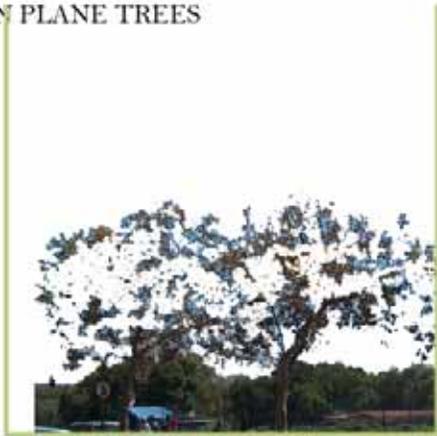




Illus. 34 Context Analysis

(Author 2007)

LONDON PLANE TREES



LONDON PLANE TREE ON THE SITE



EXISTING  
CARBONATTO  
BUILDING 1938

TAXI PARKING  
AND WASHING  
ON THE SITE



EXISTING  
CARBONATTO  
BUILDING 1938

ENGINE GARAGE

OPEN SITE/VELD

EATING HOUSE

RESERVE BANK

ABSA BUILDING



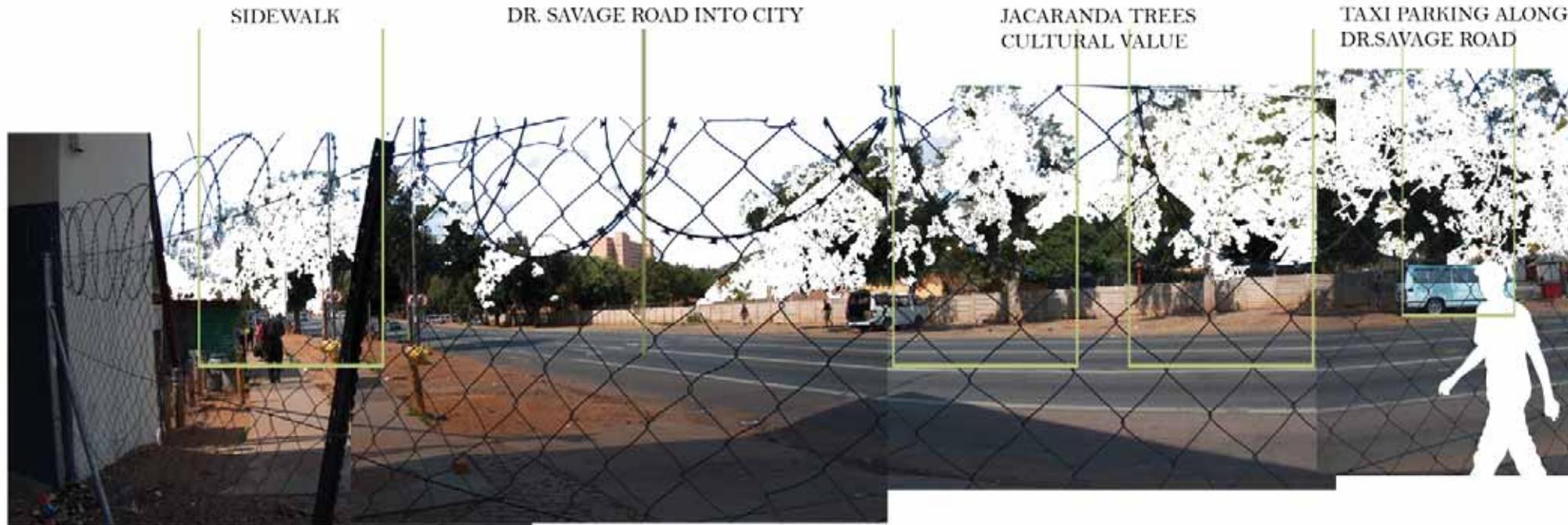
JACARANDA TREES ALONG DR. SAVAGE ROAD



ROOM STREET SEPARATING  
SITE FROM THE REST OF  
THE CITY GRID



PRINSHOF STREET



TAXI RANK FENCED OFF FROM STREET INTERFACE  
FORMING A HARD EDGE

DR. SAVAGE ROAD SIDEWALK TAXI PARKED ON ROAD EDGE

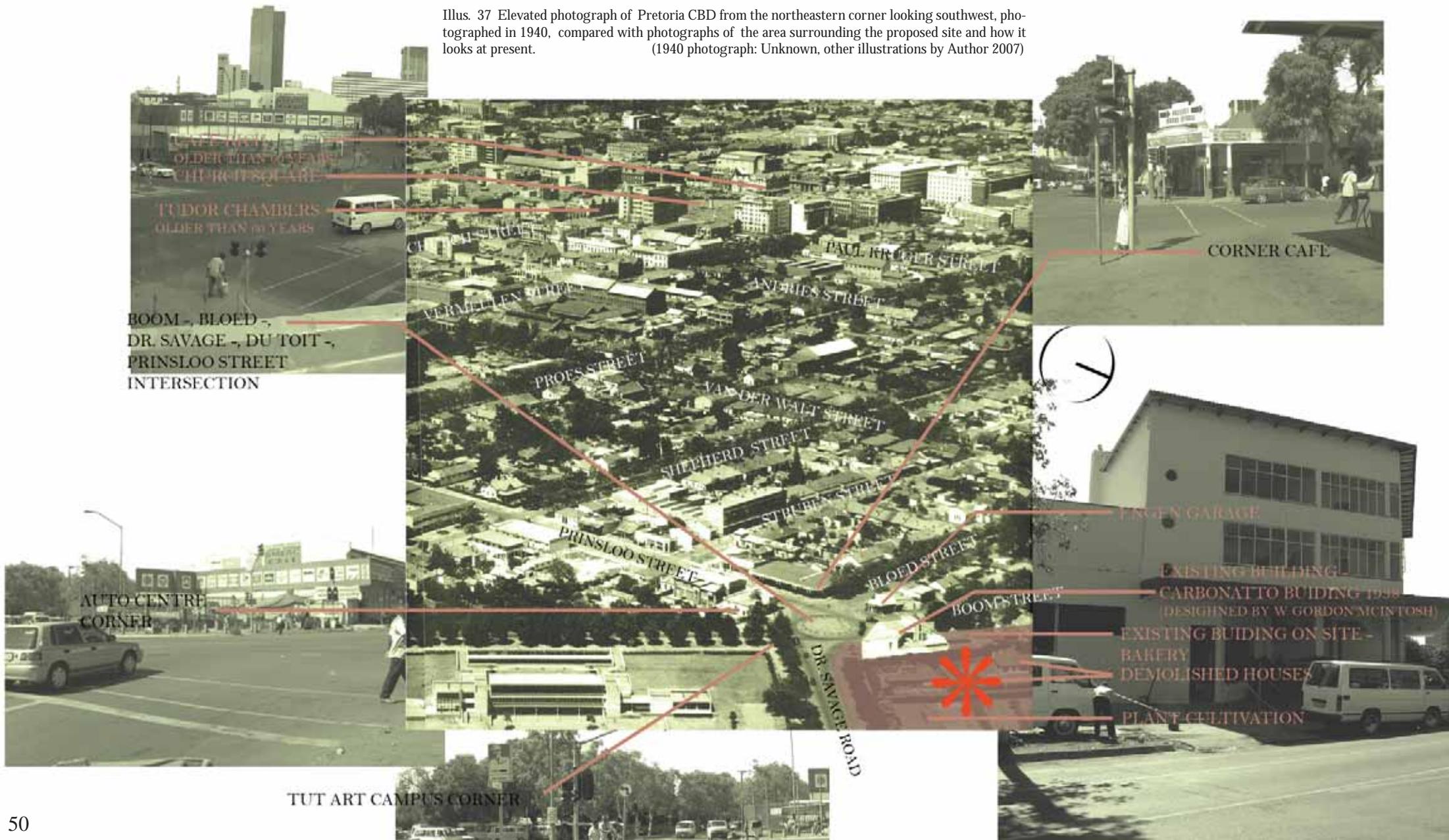








Illus. 37 Elevated photograph of Pretoria CBD from the northeastern corner looking southwest, photographed in 1940, compared with photographs of the area surrounding the proposed site and how it looks at present. (1940 photograph: Unknown, other illustrations by Author 2007)



### 3.4 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Carbonatto Building on the southern part of the site has a very high heritage value. The existing part of the building was designed by W. Gordon McIntosh in phases from 1938 onwards. (illus.38). The western part of the building existed long before this date, and served as a bakery, house and several shops. Unfortunately this part of the building has since been demolished and rebuilt with a structure without any significant identity in 1981. This structure is literally falling apart at present, with old wooden floors lifted up, walls broken down and painted in bright colours (illus.42a-d). It is evident from paintings

Illus. 38 Scans of the original plans of the Carbonatto Building, 1938 by W. G. McIntosh  
(McIntosh: Original building plans: 1938)

on these walls that the structure was used as a nightclub of some sorts. McIntosh was first commissioned by Emilio Romeo Carbonatto and Ricardo Carbonatto to design a garage on the ground floor, which gave the main corner building its significant shape, with its high ceiling level and open façade with a definite column support system. The plans for the garage were approved by the City Council of Pretoria on the 10<sup>th</sup> of

EXAMPLE A



Illus.

EXAMPLE B



Illus.

EXAMPLE C

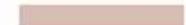
Illus. 39 Scans of the original demolition plans of the Carbonatto Building by W. G. McIntosh  
(McIntosh: Original building plans: 1938)

Illus.



Illus. 40 Aerial photograph showing buildings with high to low heritage. (Author 2007)



-  HIGH HERITAGE VALUE
-  MEDIUM HERITAGE VALUE
-  LOW HERITAGE VALUE

Illus. 41 Scan of the original elevation of the Carbonatto building, by W.G. McIntosh, 1938 (McIntosh: Original building plans: 1938)

March, 1937. Two years after the construction of the garage, the architect was commissioned to design flats on top of the newly built garage. The construction for the site finished ± 1940. The architect was again commissioned to do a second level of flats, which was approved on 11 March 1953 by the City Counsel of Pretoria. Since then no major construction work has been done on the building. Currently, the peculiar shape of the

Carbonatto Building is as a result of demolition. Three designs of demolition plans were designed by McIntosh, and the first example chosen by the owners (illus. 39).

The Building is currently owned by a Close Corporation called The Kaprivi Investment Corridor CC, by Kamal Narotam Bhana since the year 2000. (CIPRO Company Search – 2007) The building is currently not in use, and

sadly in a very bad physical state, with walls demolished, all the original wooden floors and designed cupboards removed (illus. ). Only a shell with the interior walls is left standing.

As a significant heritage building, the Carbonatto Building was a very important design factor for the proposal, with the goal to reinstate the building as a landmark building in the area and to celebrate its heritage value.

Illus. 42a-d Photographs of the existing Carbonatto Building on site, showing its current physical state. (Author 2007)

Illus. 42a (Author 2007)



Illus. 42b (Author 2007)



Illus. 42c (Author 2007)



Illus. 42d (Author 2007)

