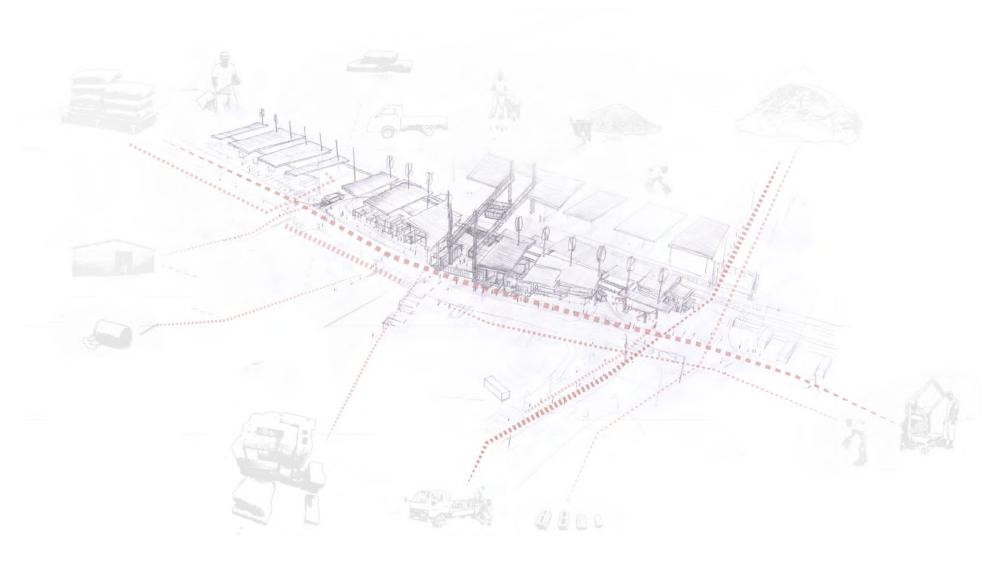


PLATFORMS of ENGAGEMENT

A PROCESS OF CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITHIN A DEVELOPING CONTEXT





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PLATFORMS of ENGAGEMENT



Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree MArch (Prof) Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology University of Pretoria South Africa

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This dissertation's core lies in a participative design/build project, held in Slovo Park, Gauteng 2010. Undertaken as a post graduate module, the process of engagement, research, design and construction laid foundation towards critical stance for this dissertation. (See Illus: 26)

The Slovo Park Project was followed by a field research trip. The trip was arranged by the author to gain a radical understanding of how contemporary architecturally recognized buildings functioned in the developing context and whether they truly engaged with their environments beyond the building process. (Appendix Illus: 27, page 174)

These research projects then set the foundation for the departure point of this dissertation, an exploration into what a truly appropriate architectural intervention in a developing context can be.

he South African population has been experiencing an unprecedented rate of urbanization that has left government bodies struggling to meet the qualitative and the infrastructural demands of the emergent sector in undeveloped areas. (Todes et al., 2007: 14)

This dissertation aims to focus on the intensive networks found in these developing areas of vulnerability that display strong cohesion due to activities surrounding the production process. The premise presented is that in order to intervene architecturally with these networks, designers should critically engage these networks through participative processes of research, design and ideally construction.

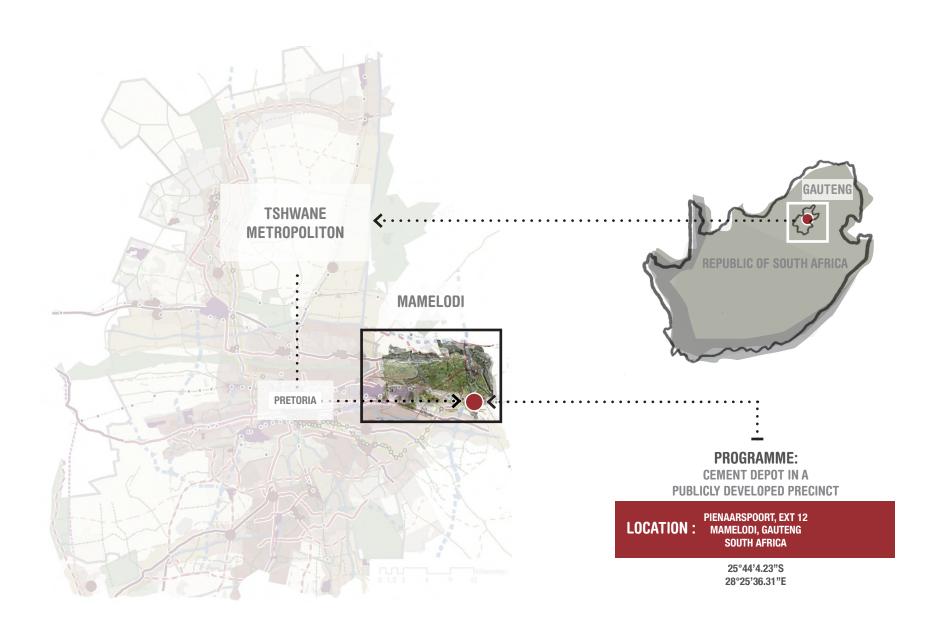
Through the authors own process of engagement, several key Architectural principles for an intervention emerge. Primarily the concept that a built intervention in a vulnerable settlement should first seek to associate itself with a network for its initial survival, and then aim to exist in a symbiotic relationship with this network through a mutually beneficial relationship.

A context specific intervention programme is thus proposed based on the process of engagement, and guided by the observed genius of the site.

What emerges is a piece of architectural infrastructure that aims to facilitate ground-up-growth, while guiding larger scale development. This unit of growth allows network members to take ownership through a self-build building and control system.

This 'Infra-tecture' piece is then hypothetically placed on-site, and a small section of the larger development is explored Architecturally with an identified network as user.





Illus: 2 Location and Programme of Dissertation (Author, 2010)



2 3 5 LENS OF PARTICIPATION

2.3.4 METHODOLOGY OF ENGAGEMENT

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

COMMUNITY - In this dissertation the notion of the community has been replaced by concept of the relationships between people and place within an intangible network.

CRITICAL ACTIVISM - term describing the academic stance on social issues that require objective and productive activist attitude.

GROWN/GROWTH - used in place of development or structural construction. The term growth implies a more organic process of development.

GROUP AREAS ACT - The mandate law segregating the people of South Africa into areas by race, enforced by the government during Apartheid.

NETWORKS - dissertational term used to replace the relationships that currently define 'community'.

RDP HOMES- Reconstruction and Development Programme Government subsidized housing

RESILIENCE - the term indicative to the ability to survive and bounce back from adversity in any form; political, natural social etc. (Hamdi, 2010; 54)

SELF-BUILD/SELF-BUILT - Structures built by inhabitants of permanent materials (bricks, steel or concrete)

SOCIAL CAPITAL - networks and alliances and neighborhoods not easily visible. through quantitative methods of analysis. (Hamdi, pg 80, 2010)

STALLETJIE - roadside stand selling vegetables, cigarettes, airtime e.t.c

MOKHUKU/SHACK/Z0Z0 - Term to describe temporary housing made from sheet metal or any other 'temporary' material.

URBANIZATION - process of transition from a rural to a more urban society. Statistically, urbanization reflects an increasing proportion of the population living in settlements defined as urban, primarily through rural-to-urban migration.

URBAN GROWTH - increase in the number of people who live in towns and cities, measured either in relative or absolute terms. (UN,2007;6)

URBAN TRANSITION - passage from a predominantly rural to a predominantly urban society. (UN,2007;6)

VULNERABILITY - term used to describing defenselessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shocks and stress.

Vulnerability stands out as recurrent concerns of people living in poverty which professional definitions of poverty overlook. (Hamdi, 92;2010)



PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

In accordance with Regulation 4(e) of the General Regulations (G.57) for dissertations and theses, I declare that this dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Architecture (Professional) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

I further state that no part of my dissertation has already been, or is currently being, submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification.

I further declare that this dissertation is substantially my own work. Where reference is made to the works of others, the extent to which that work has been used is indicated and fully acknowledged in the text and list of references.

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Jhono Bennett