

# chapter 02

## the context

"The campus of the University of Pretoria is probably the prettiest and most impressive in the country." (unreferenced article, University of Pretoria Archives, 2008). Situated within the vibrant urban area of Hatfield in Pretoria, the campus has managed to retain its sense of serenity and natural beauty. Main Campus presents a harmonious collection of buildings from traditional times as well as the more modern, contemporary eras. These sculptural structures sit within a landscape glued together by tranquil green gardens and pedestrian walkways. Vehicular traffic is restricted to a few routes, e.g. The Ring Road that runs along the campus perimeter, connecting parking areas and access points with the surrounding urban fabric.

The development of these vehicular routes has lead to the division of the campus

into smaller precincts, some with distinct character. The current music precinct is one such area on Campus defined physically by circulation routes, but also defined in terms of historic and cultural significance due to its architectural legacy and contributions to the arts.

It was once noted in an article in the *Skakelblad* that of all the buildings on Campus, "the Aula stands out as the queen". With the introduction of the Aula on the university grounds, a new standard of excellence in architecture and facilities were set. It was also the beginning of a unique precinct for music on Main Campus and the cultural hub of the former Transvaal. Once the "aesthetic trio" was completed, the University of Pretoria was equipped with the Aula (hosting operas, ballets, symphonic

orchestras and plays), the Musaion (equipped for chamber music) and the Amphitheatre (back-to-back with the Musaion and able to host a variety of performances and functions). Indeed "a trio in service of the arts".

For the purpose of this dissertation, the development and cultural significance of the music precinct will form the key aspect of the contextual analysis for it is within this sensitive precinct that the new music school will be introduced. The music precinct includes the area on Campus situated between Tukkies Avenue, Libri Avenue and the 90 degree bent of the Ring Road. It includes the Aula, Rautenbach Hall, former Student Centre, the Old Club Hall, La Pat, Café Burgundy's, the Amphitheatre, Musaion, the Music Building and the parking area behind the Aula.



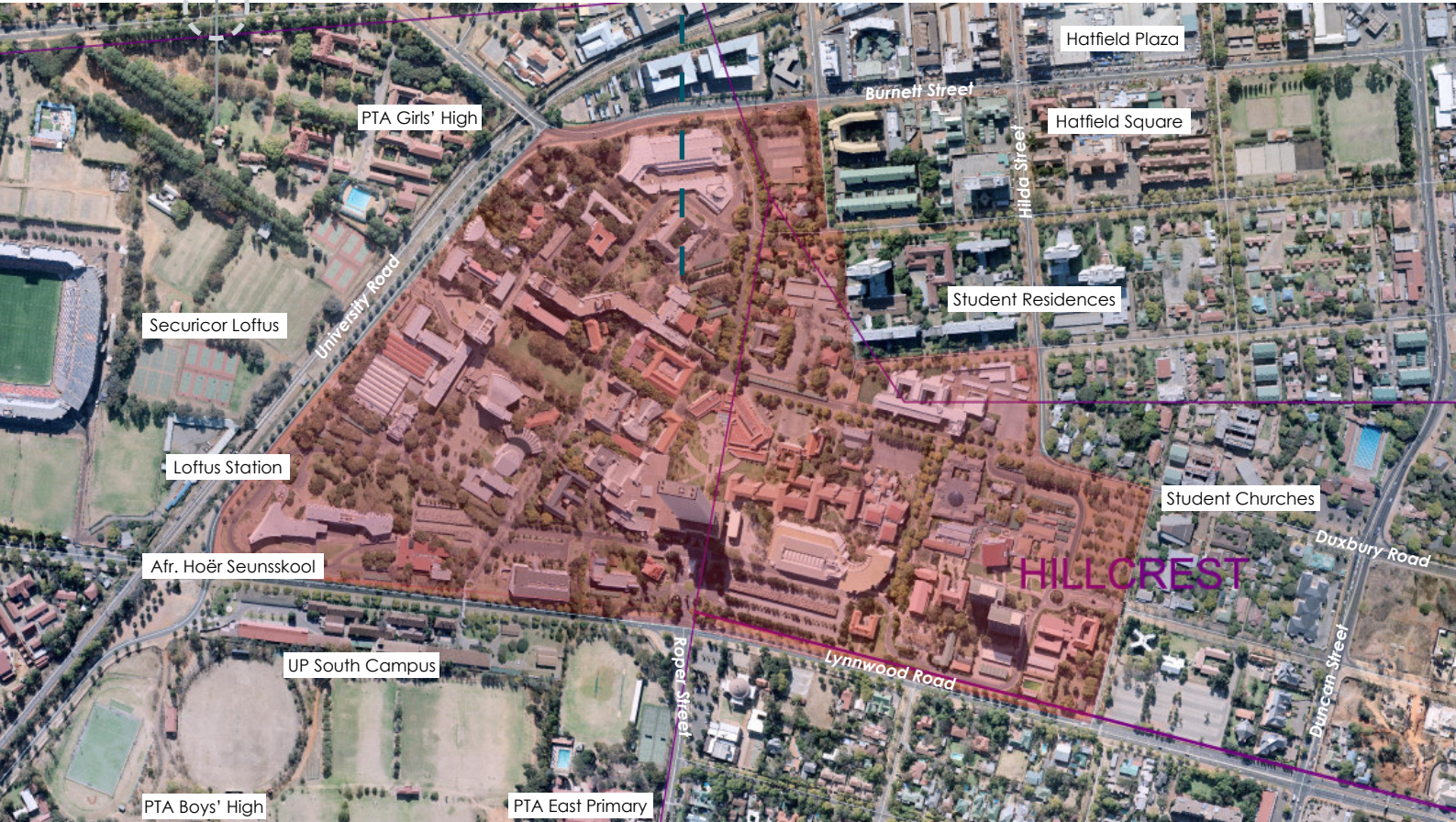
fig. 2.1 : Main Campus of the University of Pretoria situated within the urban environment of Hatfield.

The area surrounding the campus is diverse and contains an international / political precinct (Arcadia) to the north, various academic and recreational facilities to the west (Muckleneuk & Sunnyside), dense residential areas to the south (Brooklyn) and the mixed-use student precincts of Hatfield and Hillcrest to the east.

This university precinct is visually the most impressive man-made campus in South Africa, with a rich cultural and historical heritage. It is also the largest residential university in the country.

Once seamlessly integrated with the surrounding public realm, the campus nowadays forms a secure academic precinct within the dense, mixed-use urban fabric.

# Main Campus of the University of Pretoria south africa



## 2.1.

# development of the campus

In 1907 Jan Smuts decreed that a Pretoria campus, separate from the Transvaal University College in Johannesburg, be established for the arts faculties. From there other faculties developed that eventually lead to the establishment of the University of Pretoria.

The campus in Hatfield expanded around the first buildings, the Old Arts and the Old Chemistry building, with the addition of more facilities to accommodate the more diverse curriculum. Planning soon became a priority and in 1940 the University appointed Gerhard Moerdyk as architect for the design of a long-term development strategy. His framework proposed the creation of a central green area along an east-west axis, linking the University's signature building, the Old Arts, with what was at that stage the University's main entrance in University Road, Elandsport. In 1954 the architect Brian Sandrock was commissioned to design a new long-term strategy and some of the much needed facilities on Campus. With Sandrock, a fresh architectural language also arrived at the University: New Brutalism. Daring engineering and monumental functionalism defined his buildings although the planning was often uninspired and the spatial qualities ignored (Fisher, 1999:e2).

By 1960 Main Campus still fitted comfortably between the borders of University Road, Lynnwood Road, Roper Street and Burnett Street. The development report of 1965 projected that the Campus would expand in an eastern direction, consolidating the academic campus, the residences and the sports grounds at the experimental farm. This would result in a campus comprising of

a western and eastern part, connecting at the new central entrance at the crossing between Lynnwood Road and Roper Street. As Campus developed in a more eastern direction it was inevitable that the central area of Campus also shifted: from the central green area in front of the Old Arts Building to the area of the Roper Street entrance. Resultantly the more specialised, applied sciences and lecture facilities were also located around the new core of Campus to maintain the 400m radius that students could easily walk in ten minutes between classes.

With the closing of Roper Street for vehicular traffic and the move of the main entrance to the Lynnwood-Roper crossing, the central green area was left to be built up with buildings to create a more human scale and a peaceful courtyard for student socialising. The relocation of the Heart of Campus lead to the creation of a significant historic museum precinct at the end of the former central green area, including the Old Arts, the Old Merensky Library and the Old Chemistry Building. The declaration of the Old Arts Building as national heritage in 1968 and the proposal by the Building Committee in 1979 to renovate the building into a museum and cultural centre further supported the idea of the historic precinct. Over the years, the Old Arts developed into a symbol of tradition of the University. The two symmetrically placed buildings to the side of it, the Old Club Hall and the Old College, strengthen the prestige of the building's location on the courtyard and lawn on Campus.

In 1965 the vehicular road in front of the building became a pedestrianised avenue – Tukkies Avenue - connecting the north and

south parts of Campus. A fountain was introduced to link the old and new on Campus. The modern sculpture from which the water spurts signifies the progression from the traditional to the modern structures, like the Aula, surrounding the courtyard. This project caused the former Heart of Campus to become a more peaceful environment, indicative of an exclusive academic atmosphere.

The 1960's were also a period of drastic expansion of the Campus. Prior to then buildings on Campus were representative of the conventional, horizontal profile, a trend that was gradually replaced with more contemporary multi-storey structures. The first examples of the new modern architecture were the Aula and the Music Complex.

In 1980 parking facilities on Campus became a necessity. It was hard to believe that only 20 years earlier, parking areas on Campus did not exist and Campus was still an accessible precinct as part of the contiguous public realm. Cars used to park in the few designated spots on the side of the roads in front of faculty buildings. But larger enrolment numbers forced the campus to become a more pedestrian orientated environment and so it became necessary to adjust the vehicular traffic pattern on Campus accordingly. Secure and limited parking provision necessitated the need for control and soon the campus became a restricted environment with access control via parking discs. As times and social circumstances changed, so did the security of the University. In order to maintain the atmosphere of the Campus, various strategies of control had to be implemented.



fig. 2.2 : Diagrams summarising the development of the campus relevant to the Music Precinct.

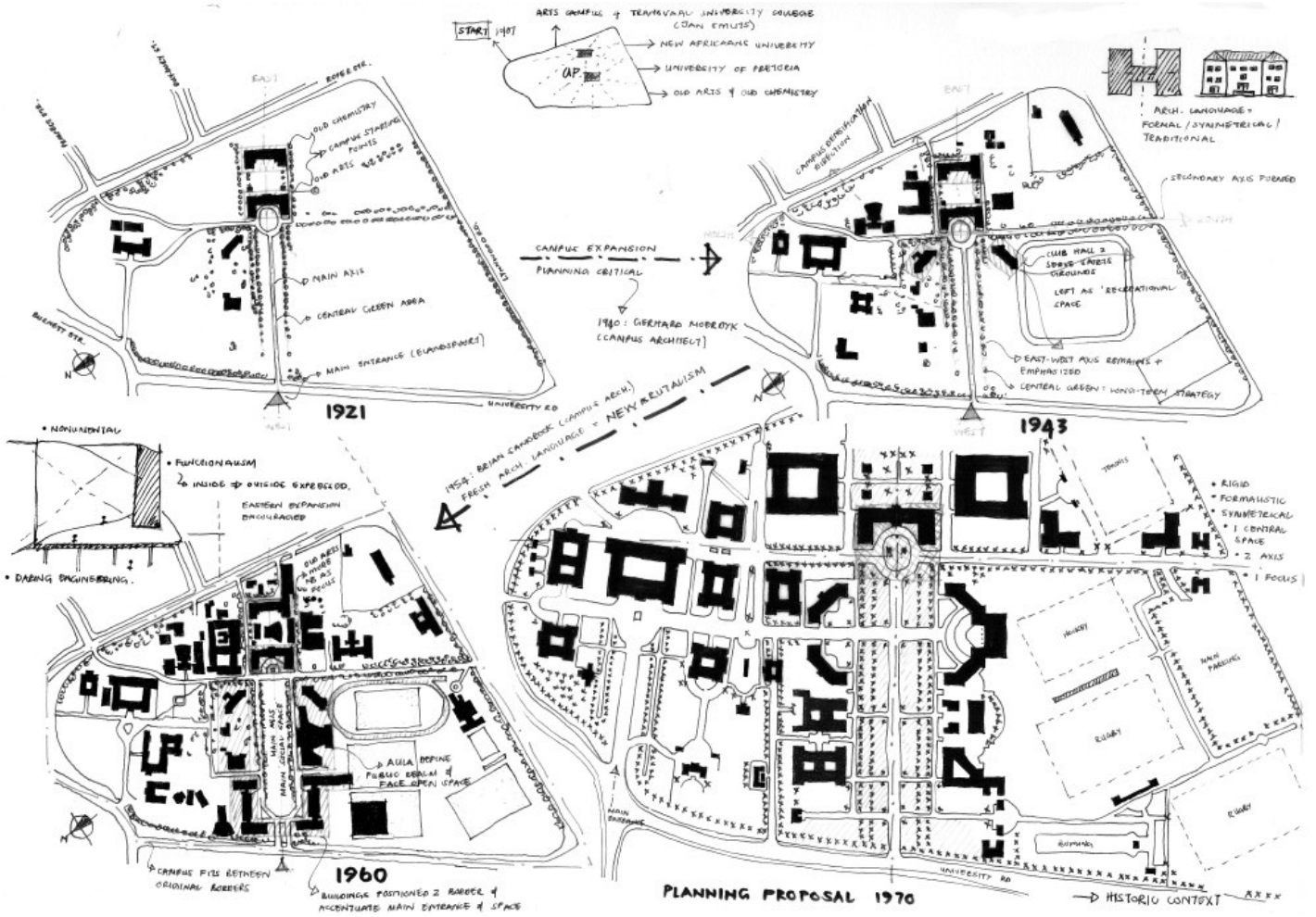




fig. 2.3



fig. 2.4



fig. 2.6



fig. 2.5



fig. 2.7





fig. 2.8



fig. 2.9

fig. 2.3 : Traditional donkey races on the sports fields on Spring Day.

fig. 2.4 : Traditional "Boeresport" activities on Spring Day.

fig. 2.5 - 2.7 : 1950 Aerial photographs of the Heart of Campus, the central green area in front of the Old Arts with the Old Club Hall and sports fields to the south.

fig. 2.8 & 2.10 : 1960 Aerial photographs of the "aesthetic trio" on Campus. The scale of the buildings reflects their public role and modern monumental style. The recreational precinct on Campus was transformed into a cultural hub, serving the arts community of the University, the Transvaal and South Africa alike.

fig. 2.9 : The Old Club Hall surrounded by recreational spaces like the sports fields and the Aula Green.

fig. 2.10



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## 2.2.

# development of the precinct

In 1951 the idea of a cultural centre for the University's students was on the agenda. Two ideas merged: the practical lack of a student centre and the idealistic endeavour for a cultural centre. And so the Aula emerged. It took 20 months to complete the building, the biggest and most beautiful of its kind in the country.

The Aula and the student centre complex were built between 1956 and 1958 due to a need for students to have a congregation space as well as the need for an auditorium where large-scale productions could be delivered in Pretoria. As Dr. H van der M Scholtz said at the opening of the Aula: "It is not only the University that needs a properly equipped auditorium. The capital of Transvaal also needs one".

With the pressing need at hand, architect Karel Jooste (under the guidance of the office of Phillip R. Nel) produced a design for the Aula complex. It was a monumental modernist building, almost the first in the country just after Stauch's Meatboard Building, and a prestigious cultural centre that remained the major venue in the city until the State Theatre was completed in the early 1980's (Fisher, 1999:e2). Jooste designed the auditorium, seating 1021 people in luxurious theatre chairs and a stage large enough for the décor pieces and sets required for operas, plays and ballets and a sunken space for an orchestra of approximately 60 members. During the years since the completion of the trio, the Aula and the more intimate Musaion caused a renaissance in Pretoria's cultural circles. Before the arrival of the Aula performing arts had to be delivered in mediocre venues and performances could only last for a maximum of three evenings due to inadequate stage facilities and halls

that were uninteresting and uninviting to the audiences. Once the Aula was there to top the par, more new venues for cultural performances were established. Above them all the impeccable quality of the Aula and Musaion stood tall and they soon became the resident theatres of internationally acclaimed artist Mimi Coertze, TRUK and COSA (Chamber Orchestra of South Africa). Orchestral concerts by highly professional musicians were presented throughout the year, attracting academics, students and the general public. The collaboration between artists, musicians and the University and the positive way in which they contributed to the growth and development of the music culture in South Africa, established the University as a "centre of excellence in the arts" (Bergh, Ferreira, Grobler, Pretorius & Stals, 1996:106).

For the students of the University the theatre complex held a unique position as no other South African University possessed such modern facilities. At the opening of the Aula the Chancellor noted that the Aula and student centre complex were indeed built in the proper location: the Heart of Campus. He further mentioned that the campus is a symbol of the spirit and quality of a nation's youth and that these buildings exemplify that spirit and quality culturally.

The re-institution of the Department of Music in 1960 presented an urgent need for new facilities to house the Department. At the end of 1959 architect Brian Sandrock was commissioned to design the facilities. The complex consisted of three parts: a three-storey structure covering practise rooms, studios, lecture rooms, offices and a library; an open-air amphitheatre and an intimate auditorium, the Musaion. The entire complex

was constructed on the site of the former athletics track, south of the Old Club Hall and the renowned Aula complex.

Soon after completion the need for more space for the Department arose. A new square, single storey practise room facility with soundproof rooms and an internal courtyard were added onto the south façade of the existing Music Building. In 1996 a few more additions were made to the Music Building at the hand of architect Samuel Pauw. The completion of the Music Building in 1960 gave the green light to start the extensive music educational program at the University of Pretoria. Everything was in place: acclaimed personnel and all the possible required facilities. At the start of the 1961 academic year, the Department of Music welcomed its first enrolled students.

The Amphitheatre also provided a venue for students' mass meetings, concerts and other congregations.

Over the past 50 years the trio has served the University, the public and the arts well. Cultural evenings are still being planned throughout the year and art lovers still look forward in anticipation to the grand formal performances of excellence that have become synonymous with the University and the trio (Bergh, Ferreira, Grobler, Pretorius & Stals, 1996:112). However, some of the facilities surrounding the three venues have ceased to be the vibrant hubs of student and public interaction that they used to be. In line with the University's proud tradition of contributing to and building out the arts, it is thus necessary to re-evaluate the facilities and streamline them with a new era of diversity in arts and music (Van der Watt, 2002:84).



fig. 2.11 : The Music Precinct within the context of Main Campus. The precinct is defined by pedestrian routes - Tukkie Avenue and Libri Avenue - and the vehicular route, the Ring Road.

The precinct is highly accessible with Tukkie Avenue to its east terminating in a main pedestrian entrance at Lynnwood Road with an overhead link to the south campus.

Public vehicular access is mainly via the University Road and Lynnwood Road entrances and various parking areas are available within close proximity of the precinct.

With the new Heart of Campus located to the east of the Music Precinct the entire orientation of the campus shifted more to the north-east, leaving the south-west corner of Campus with few attractions for students and visitors. The unclutteredness of the south-west corner does however emphasize the monumental architecture of the area – objects within a green landscape.



# Music Precinct on Main Campus

## hatfield





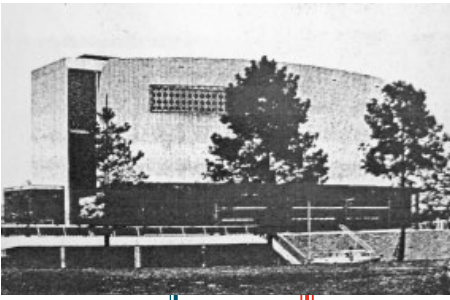


fig. 2.12

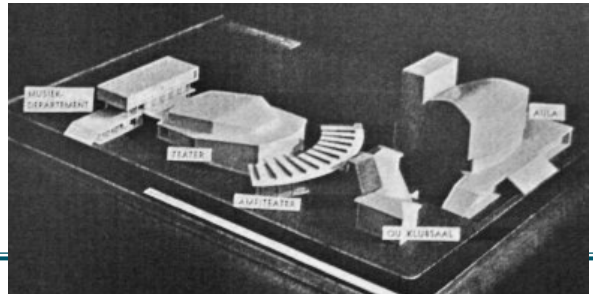


fig. 2.13

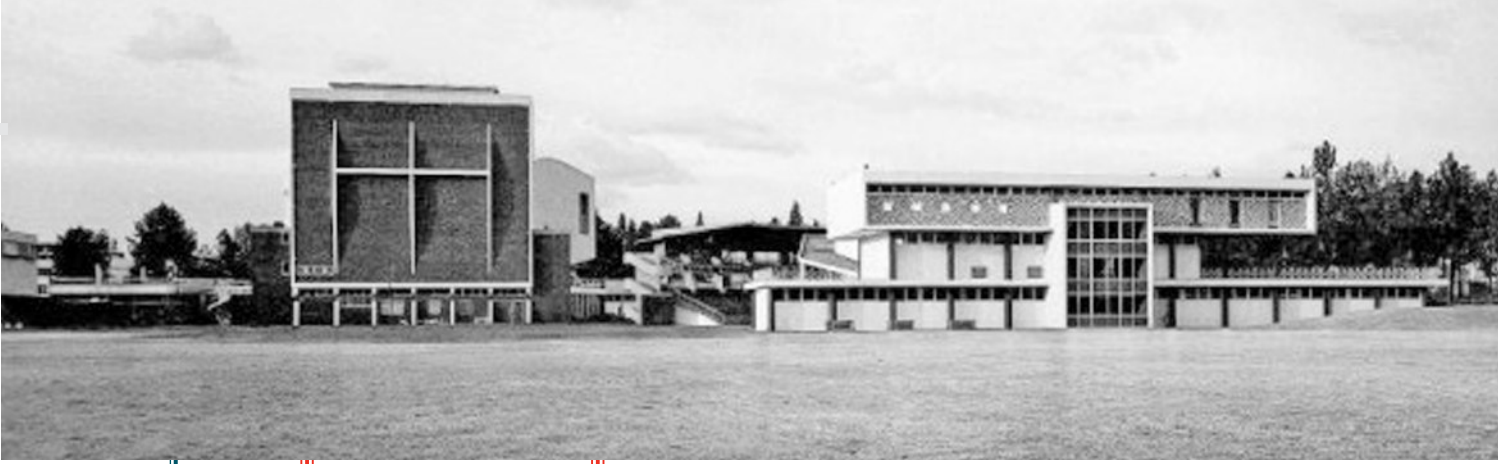
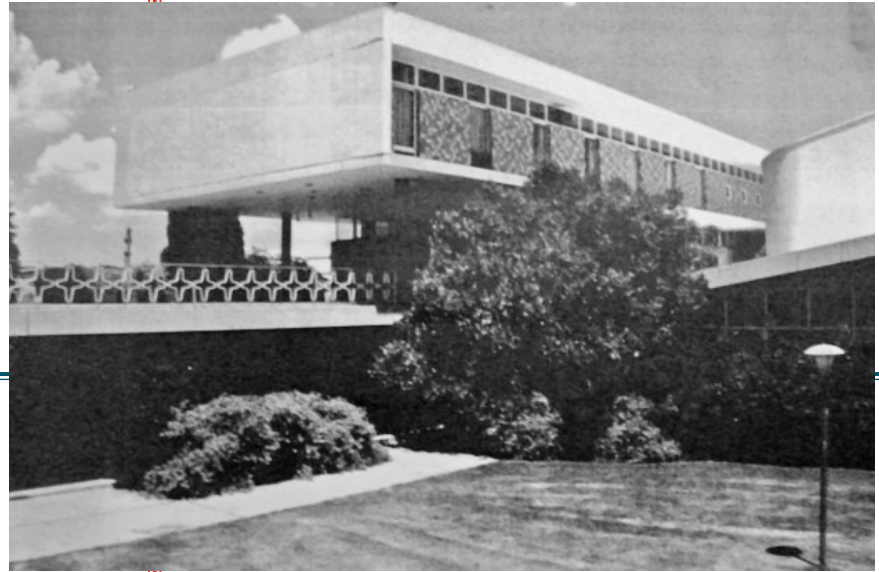


fig. 2.14

fig. 2.15



music precinct - a retrospective view



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fig. 2.16

fig. 2.12, 2.18 & 2.19 : The Aula - monumental modernism at its most beautiful. The Aula was the pride of the University and a public building at a public scale.

fig. 2.13 : Model of the buildings of the Music Precinct.

fig. 2.14 : The Aula, Amphitheatre & Music Building as seen from the south. The modern design and structural dare were completely new phenomena on the campus on completion in 1960.

fig. 2.15 : The Music Building in its original form. The intricate details of the building correspond with the level of detailing of the Aula.

fig. 2.16 : The Music Building, Musaion and Amphitheatre under construction in 1959.

fig. 2.17 : The Aula under construction in 1951. The design of the auditorium, like the Musaion, is based on the principle of "form follows function" and the spaces are designed from the inside towards the outside.



fig. 2.17

fig. 2.18



fig. 2.19



## 2.3.

analysis of the  
site

## location

The site is located on the south edge of the music precinct on the existing parking area. It is defined by the back of the Music Building to the east, the tree-lined Ring Road to the south and west and the balance of the parking area to the north.

Vehicular entrance points to the site / existing parking are on the south and west edges from the Ring Road. Pedestrian access and circulation are less defined and pedestrians mainly enter the site from Tukkies Avenue

## edges

## entrance points

through the Music Building or from the restaurants to the north. Very little pedestrian circulation occurs across the site from the restaurants towards the Administration building and vice versa.

The climatic data of the site corresponds with that of the city: pleasant weather conditions occur throughout the year due to the rainfall pattern. Pretoria is a summer rainfall region and the late afternoon thunderstorms tend to cool down the warm, sunny summer days.

## circulation routes

The average monthly rainfall varies from 110-130mm during the months of December and January and 3-7mm during June and July. The temperatures of the area remain relatively moderate throughout the year. An average maximum of 27,5°C and an average minimum of 12°C have been recorded over the past thirty years. Winter average maximum temperatures can rise to about 21°C (<http://www.wheathersa.co.za> : 2009).

The stage tower of the Aula casts a large shadow on the parking area to its south in the afternoons. Due to the location of the site on the south edge of the precinct, it falls outside this shadowed area and can make optimal use of the average 8-10 hours of quality sunshine each day.

Although the site is an open area free from any built structures, it is well shaded and protected by lush trees. These trees are mostly indigenous and well established and for the purpose of the project, some of these trees will have to be removed and relocated to create a green buffer between the site and the remainder of the parking area. The avenue of "Fever Trees" along the Ring Road is however of sentimental value to the campus and its users and will therefore need to be preserved.

The diagrammatic site sections on the left indicate the site's geography and surrounding built fabric. The site slopes down from Tukkies Avenue to the west where it levels out. From the north to the south the site slopes towards the centre. The most drastic level differences are on average 1,390m and can easily be accommodated with ramps to allow continuity of circulation at ground level.

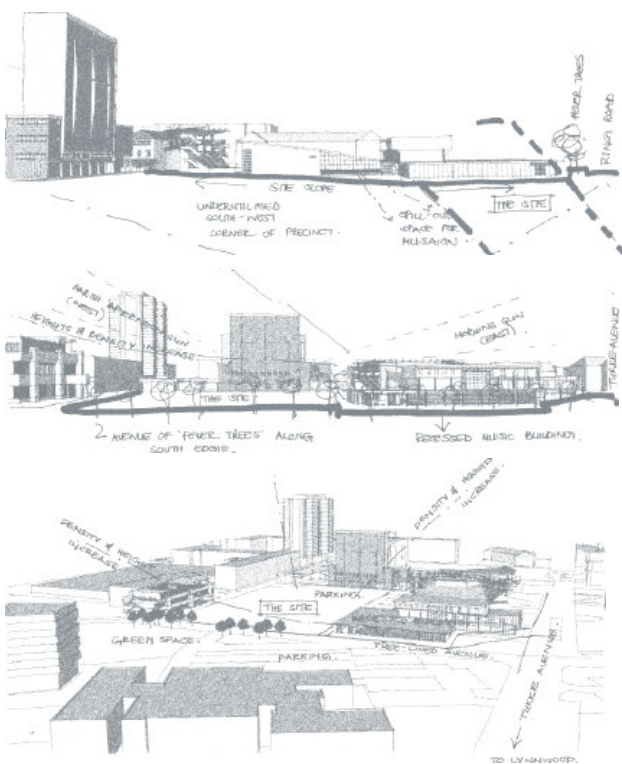


fig. 2.20 : Diagrammatic site sections indicating the geography of the site.



fig. 2.21 : Aerial photo of the site with diagram indicating pertinent contextual aspects.

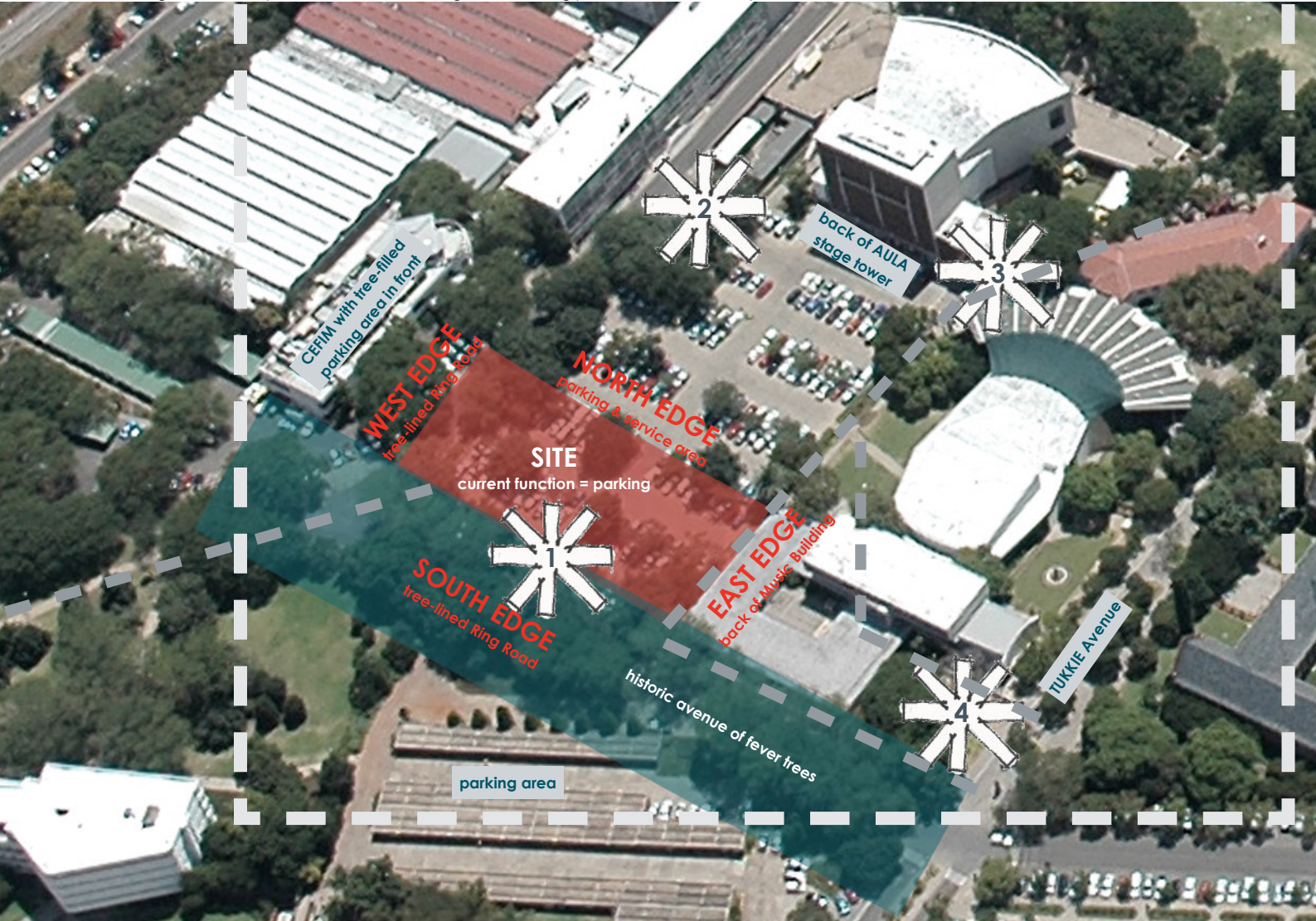




fig. 2.22



fig. 2.23



fig. 2.24



fig. 2.26

fig. 2.25



fig. 2.22 : Current view of the site as a parking area.

fig. 2.23 : View from the site towards the stage tower of the Aula.

fig. 2.24 : The back of the Music Building creates the east edge of the site.

fig. 2.25 : View to the south-west corner of the site with the parking area entrance from the Ring Road on the foreground.

fig. 2.26 : View from the Aula's terrace down the Ring Road towards the site.

fig. 2.27 : The tree-filled site from the parking area opposite the Music Building.

fig. 2.28 : The west side of the Musaion - currently the only spill-out space for the auditorium and also the service entry side.

fig. 2.29 : The avenue of Fever Trees that forms the south edge of the site.

fig. 2.30 : The pedestrian route at the back of the Music Building. This is the primary route for the public between the parking area and the performance spaces of the precinct.

fig. 2.31 : The main entrance and through-route to the site is via the Music Building.

fig. 2.32 : The walkway along the south edge of the Music Building.





fig. 2.27



fig. 2.29



fig. 2.31



fig. 2.28



fig. 2.30



fig. 2.32

the site - a photo montage



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functional zones

energy concentrations & flow



Fig. 2.33 : Diagram indicating the functional zones of the precinct:

- social / interaction
- public / performance
- service
- academic / preparation
- administrative

The orientation of the main buildings is all along a north-south axis, with the Aula's terminating in the service tower at the back of the auditorium. The Musaion has spill-out spaces towards the east and west, but these spaces do not extend past the edges of the Music Building and therefore do not draw significant energy from Tukkies Avenue. The space on the west side functions as a spill-out space for the Musaion during performances. During the day, this area is a lingering and relaxation space for a few students.

The social hubs of the precinct are the three restaurants on the north edge: La Pat, Café Burgundy's and Steers. Energy is concentrated at these venues which act as destination spaces. Thus none of the energy filters through to the south-west corner of the precinct except for users that move through the precinct on their way to the south edge of Campus.

The energy associated with the pedestrian routes, Tukkies and Libri Avenues, is beamed off from the south-west side by the spatial layout of the buildings of the precinct. The vehicular nature of the Ring Road on the south and west edges further prevents a vibrant, interactive atmosphere along these edges.

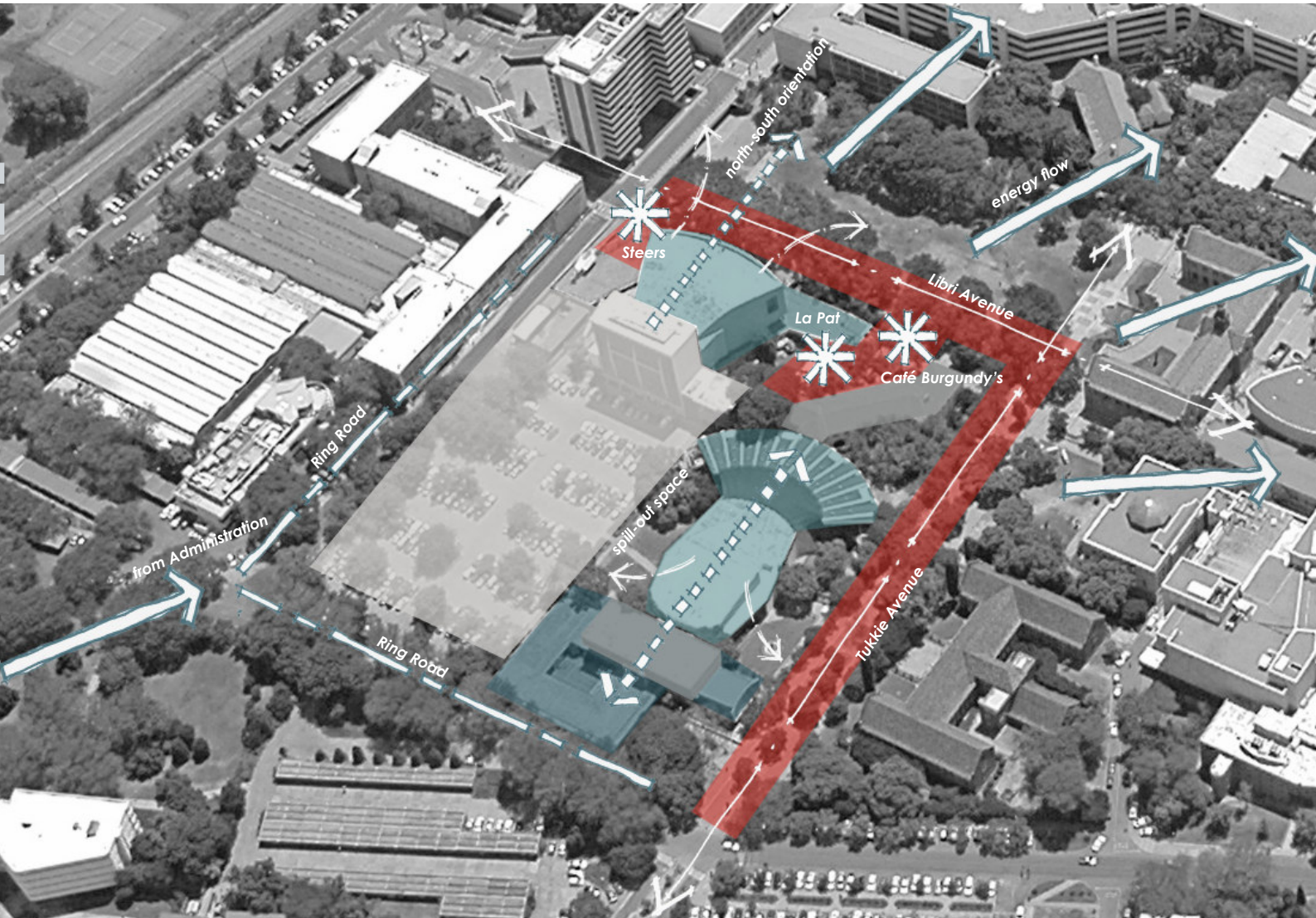
With the life of Campus situated towards the north-east and no social draw card to the south-west, it is inevitable that the life of the precinct terminates at the northern edge.

The site west of the Musaion that currently functions as an area for much needed parking, is actually underutilised in the light of its historic significance. Therefore a conversion of this area will be appropriate in order to restore its former vibrancy.



orientations

boundaries



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positive & negative open spaces

pedestrian movement

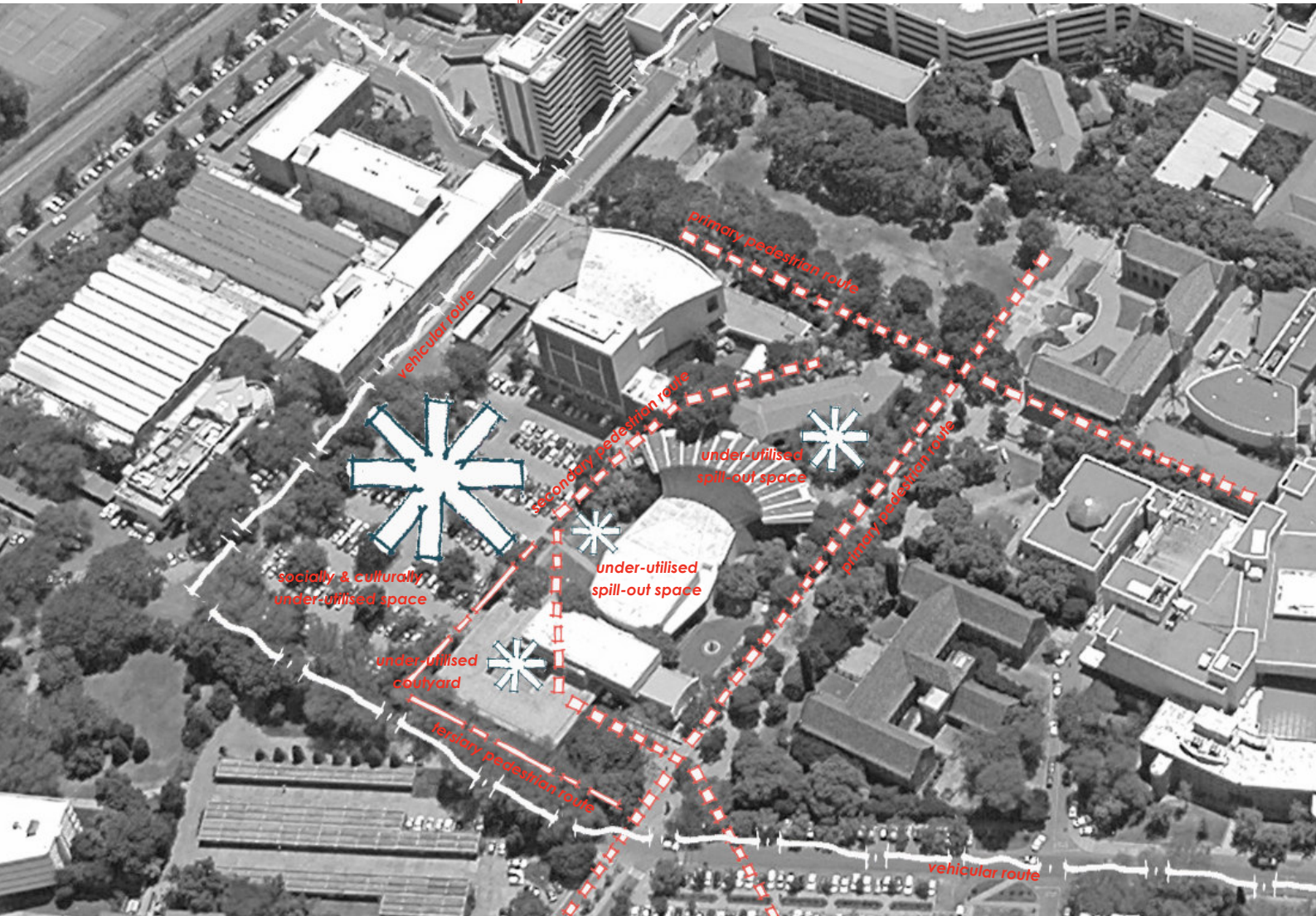
*fig. 2.34 : Diagram indicating the primary routes across and around the precinct. These routes are pedestrian walkways - those along Tukkies and Libri Avenues are organised and structured, while the route through the Music Building is a more spontaneous circulation pattern and mostly used by students and faculty of the Music Department. The route along the perimeter of the Music Building is a secondary pedestrian path. The Ring Road acts as a vehicular vein along the south and west edges of the precinct, linking the main two entrances serving the area, the one at Lynnwood Road and at University Road, to the parking area behind the Aula.*

*Various dead spaces developed throughout the precinct due to poor spatial layout and scale of the buildings. The area that has lost most of its energy over the years is the current parking area. This space used to be the sports fields, the heart of recreational activities on Campus. The central courtyard of the Music Building is also completely underutilised due to its sterile nature and the fact that none of the spaces of the building bleeds out to the courtyard. It is surrounded by internally orientated, private practise rooms. The space on the west side of the Musaion is the most favourite outdoor space of the precinct, but it is only used by music students in between practises and classes and the glare from the Musaion's west wall affects the space negatively in summer. The space at the back of the Old Club Hall is also underutilised, cold and hard, edged by large-scaled structures.*



vehicular accessibility

social & historical significance



future site possibilities

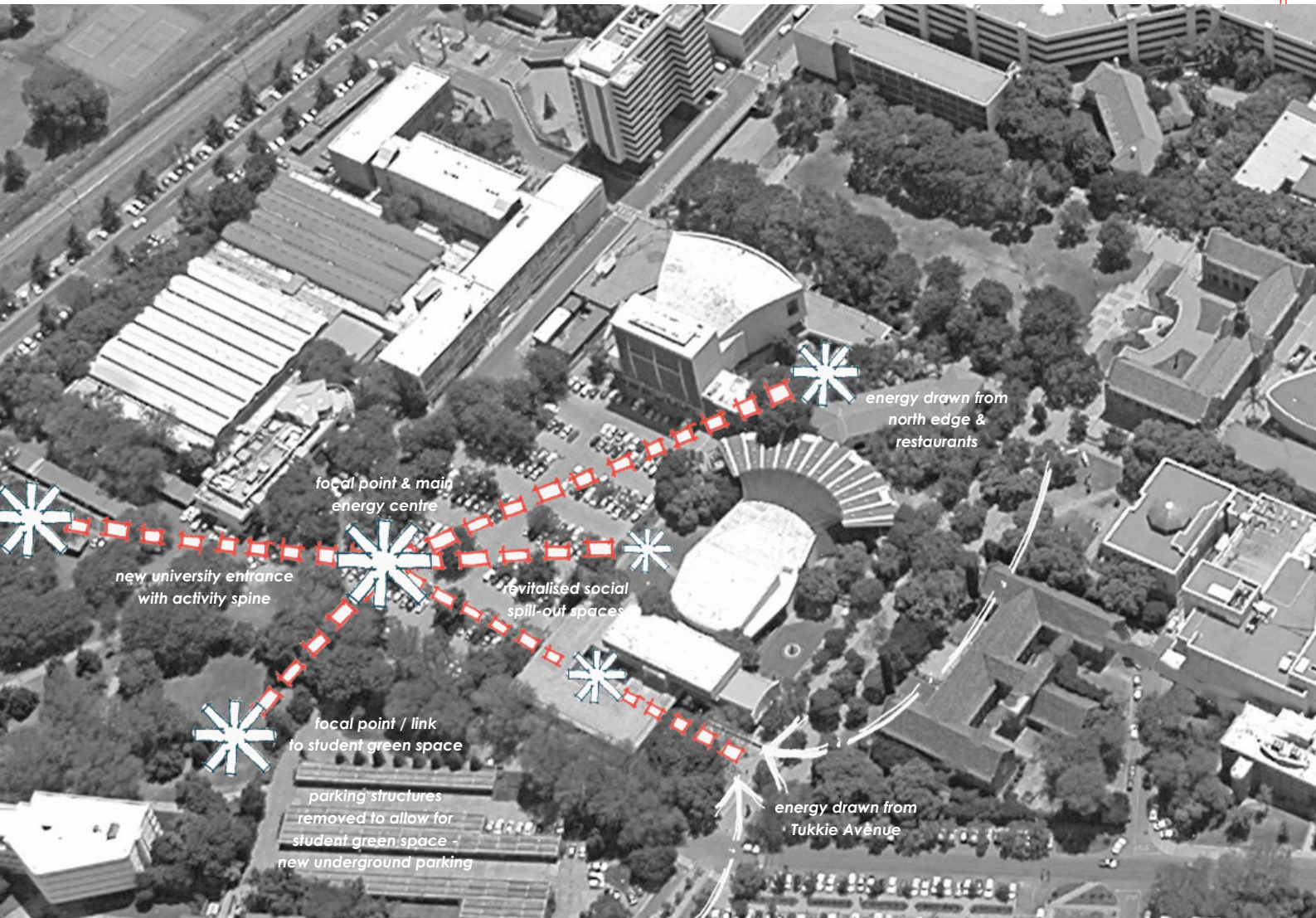
contextual links



fig. 2.35 : Diagram indicating the future possibilities for the precinct and the site. A series of new gathering spaces can be defined and some existing spaces can be revived in order to form a coherent system of energy flow across the site. The proposal to move the University Road entrance from the Engineering building to Senaats Road, with the new Gautrain station across the road, will bring more activity to the precinct from the south-west corner. Public or semi-public facilities along Senaats Road towards the precinct can create a main social avenue with a focal point on the south-west corner of the site. Energy from Tukkies Avenue and the restaurants on the north edge can then be channeled through to the south-west side. The central courtyard of the Music Building can become a revitalised, intimate courtyard along the route from Tukkies Avenue, exposing the process of preparation of music within the building and the new extended music school. The area on the west of the Musaion can be converted into an intermediate meeting space between members of the Music Department, the public and other students of Campus coming from the north. By introducing a focal point across the Ring Road at the open green space, a link between the site and the student green can be established and be used in future as an extension route for further expansion of the Music Precinct. An underground parking area might be the solution to the parking problem and bring the public into close proximity of the music school, its activities and performance venues.

precinct revitalisation

parking solutions



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## 2.4.

# architectural language

analysis of the  
style, technology & materials

fig. 2.36 : The architectural legacy of Brian Sandrock defines the impressive aesthetics of Main Campus. From left to right: Engineering 1, Administration building, the Music Complex and Humanities building.

The buildings of the music precinct were the first of many across Campus bearing the Brian Sandrock trademark. Sandrock's designs were influenced by the contemporary architectural languages of the time and the new innovative materials available, mostly reinforced concrete. Monumental Modernism, New Brutalism and the Brazilian Modern Style provided the language for these buildings and can be observed in the designs of the Administration building, Building Sciences, Human Sciences, Engineering 1 and Merensky Library buildings to name but a few. In the context of the new music school, the Aula was the first Monumental Modern sculpture that arose.

The impressive building was designed at a public scale with an entrance along the 27m long concrete steps of the wide terrace, leading to the spacious foyer with entrances to all the parts of the building.

The fan-shaped auditorium with 1071 luxurious theatre chairs looks onto a large stage, capable of hosting exquisite performances of plays, ballets, film festivals and orchestral concerts. A front stage is also provided, covering the 60 member sunken orchestral pit and bringing the performances right to the audience. The ancillary services include the stage tower for storage and manoeuvring of sets and spacious cloakrooms. The Aula is an honest building, built according to sound, tried and trusted architectural values. Its

design is truly modern, not contemporary, adhering to the "form follows function" injunction and yet showing great structural daring, with the precarious balancing of large masses on small, slender pilotis (Fisher, 1999:e4). Designed from the inside out, the form is determined by the internal needs which are showcased on the outside by the structural muscle of the building, clearly identifying its functional spaces into which brilliant qualities such as acoustics, indirect and direct lighting and air conditioning are introduced. "It has weathered both the elements and the vagaries of architectural taste well; its worst enemy has been the University itself with insensitive demolitions and additions." (Fisher, 1999:e4).

The Rautenbach Hall and the Student Centre were designed together with the Aula, completing the new cultural and student facilities needed on Campus. "The huge mass of the Aula hovers over the Rautenbach Hall below, an effect emphasized by the transparency of large sliding doors on the western and eastern walls." (Fisher, 1999:e4). The concrete in the foyer is *beton brut*, and its use in the main foyer was novel and adventurous for its time. Finishes and structure are articulated as distinct, with the waved ceilings floating between exposed concrete ribs. Stairs are cut free from the supporting floors to emphasise their independence. In the student hall the architect, Karel Jooste, took his greatest liberties – the sculptured

free-form cut-out concrete screen, the concrete lectern, the wedge-shaped ancillary screen to the dais. The sliding doors are part of the repertoire which distinguished the Pretoria School – an innovative exploitation of ordinary off-the-shelf industrial materials. In a remote corner is the most offbeat device, Georgian wire glass set directly into the jagged edge of a random-rubble wall." (Fisher, 1999:e4)

The Rautenbach Hall and student centre used to be the core of student life with a cafeteria seating 200 people, an exhibition space, recreational hall, student representatives' offices, personnel rooms, toilets and built-in terraces.

The Club Hall was designed by Gerhard Moerdyk in 1929, thus its deviation from the modern style of the rest of the precinct's buildings. It was funded by TUKS Sport who desperately desired a students' social centre. The design is a copy of the appearance of the College House, directly opposite the Club Hall from the central green area. The symmetry of the two buildings emphasized the entrance layout plan of the University as well as the prestige of the Old Arts building located at the end of the open area. Initially only the first floor was constructed due to financial constraints, but in 1936 the second floor was added on recommendation of the architect to prevent further structural damage to the building.





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fig. 2.37

The facility was the social venue of TUKS Sport and the first home of the Building Department. It also contained a reading room and accommodation for students, a hall for social gatherings, students' representative offices, cloak rooms and a tea room which was established in 1931. The traditional architecture and social connotations of the Old Club Hall create an interesting and authentic touch to the precinct as a whole. With the construction of the modern Aula and Music Complex, public spaces have been created in between the buildings, some vibrant and positive, some more negative.

The Amphitheatre with 1799 fixed and 709 loose seats was designed by Brain Sandrock as part of the Music Complex in 1963. The footprint of the venue originated from the former curve of the athletics track and some of the track steps still remain on the east side of the Amphitheatre. In the years that followed a roof structure was added to make the venue more sheltered and thus more versatile for hosting a wider variety of events. The stage has been designed back-to-back with the stage of the Musaion, sharing ancillary services. The architectural language of both the Amphitheatre and the Musaion is purely modern and, like the Aula, portrays the function of the building externally. Large concrete fins support the hovering organic balcony and roof of the Amphitheatre and the concrete steps/seats are also articulated



fig. 2.38

to create the impression of hovering volumes. The Musaion's formal-organic shape is anchored by the geometric three-storey Music Building. Free-standing, flanking walls define the side entrances to the auditorium with large curtains walls creating a transitional circulation zone between the inside of the auditorium and its surrounding external spaces. The auditorium is renowned for its excellent acoustic qualities and intimate atmosphere, ideal for smaller performances like chamber music concerts. The shell construction of the auditorium, similar to that of the Aula, enables both auditoria to have large internal open spaces, free from any structure. The structure remains on the perimeter of the auditoria, hidden in-between a double layered skin that assists with the climate and acoustic control in the auditorial spaces. The envelope around the auditoria is free from windows or unnecessary openings to maintain an internally orientated, artificially controlled and sound acoustic environment. Links, relationships and views to the external surroundings are restricted to entrances and gathering spaces. Here the light glass infill between the pilotis or free-standing walls creates a pleasant juxtaposition to the solid, hovering, organic and sculptural components.

Despite the simplistic structural design and detailing of the Music Building, it still conforms to Monumental Modernism, reflecting a strong Brazilian Modern Style influence as

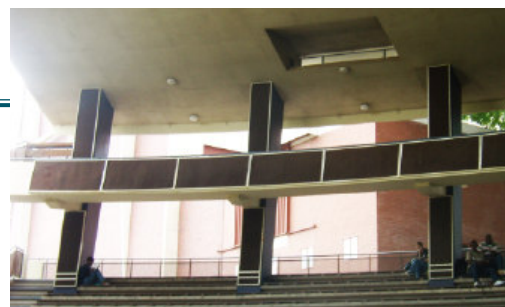


fig. 2.39

well. Square, cross-shaped columns on a 4,205m grid provide structural stability to the ground and first floors while the second floor is contained in a shell-like, concrete box. The volume extends past the first floor structure to create the illusion of a floating box. The low floor-to-ceiling heights of all three levels emphasise the horizontality of the building, further expressed in the narrow ribbon windows placed directly below the structural slabs as a sort of shadow-line between structure and infill. Although the window sizes remain relatively constant throughout the building, their composition and placement differ to express the level of privacy of the internal spaces externally: ground floor windows and doors establish a more public atmosphere and indicate entrances and a relationship with the central courtyard while the first floor ribbon windows with intermediate vertical sections from floor to ceiling indicate the semi-private nature of the offices at this level. The second floor houses the library and here the ribbon windows indicate the quiet, internal nature of the private library.

The infill of brick and glass are used at will to articulate the facades of the building and the composition as a whole. Detail such as the glazed tiles in shades of blue and white, the blue painted concrete columns and the balustrade design repeat the same square, cross-shaped pattern and tie all the elements of the building together.





fig. 2.40



fig. 2.41

fig. 2.42



fig. 2.43

These contextual photographs illustrate elements of the Modern styles that influenced the architecture of Brian Sandrock and provided the music precinct with such a distinct character.

fig. 2.37 - 2.39 : The Amphitheatre with its hovering steps, sculptural balconies, concrete ribbon stairs and the large concrete fins that support the structure.

fig. 2.40, 2.42 - 2.43 : The Musaion has a formal organic shape anchored by the Music Building with its floating concrete box at the top. The glass curtain walls and flanking walls indicate the circulation areas and the glazed tiles on the facade are reminiscent of the Brazilian influence.

fig. 2.41, 2.44 - 2.45 : The mass of the Aula seems to hover above the thin pilotis which enables the facade infill to be non-structural. Glass doors and windows are used here to indicate the entrance areas, distinguish solid from light and create inside-outside relationships with nature. The wide steps to the foyer emphasize the public scale of the building.



fig. 2.44



fig. 2.45







red brick, stucco & rough-hewn stone

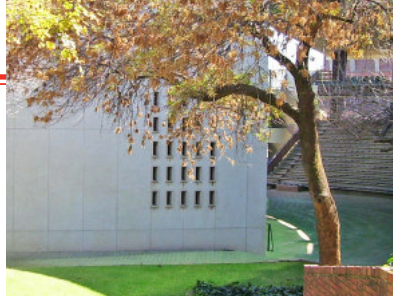


concrete pavers

breeze blocks & brise soleil



off-shutter reinforced concrete



brick pavers



pigmented plaster

glass curtain walls, louvres & glazed tiles

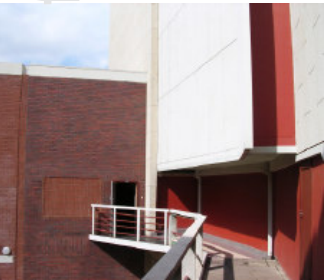
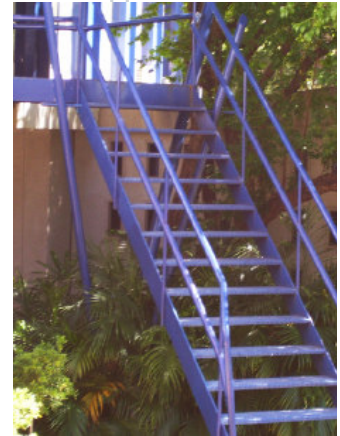


patterned pre-cast concrete elements / sand-blasted concrete



exposed aggregate concrete

steel



## Strengths

1. The site is located within the established Music Precinct with an already rich cultural heritage. The new intervention can thus contribute further to the "centre of excellence in the arts" created by the existing facilities.
2. Sufficient open, underutilised space exists within the precinct, specifically to the west of the Music Building, to expand the Music Department as one, combined facility.
3. The site is in close proximity to existing, main circulation spines of the campus and energy can easily be drawn from these activity spines into the quiet, south-west corner of the precinct.
4. The site is already accessible from various pedestrian and vehicular routes and an extension of these routes can link the precinct effectively to the surrounding context to further enhance accessibility and legibility of the precinct.

## Weaknesses

1. The existing buildings in the precinct are either orientated away from the site or their edges facing the site are relatively solid. This might prohibit optimal integration of the site and the new building with the existing built fabric.
2. Various underutilised spaces exist intertwined amongst the buildings in the precinct. Due to the spatial layout of the existing buildings these spaces might not all be resolved and revitalised with the insertion of a single new building in the south-west corner of the precinct.
3. Due to the orientation of the existing buildings a service area is required on the west edge. This will prevent the central area of the precinct to be converted into a large green space to the benefit of all the surrounding buildings and as a communal space tying the precinct together. Especially the site's relationship with the Aula will be compromised by this compulsory service space.

4. Energy from the circulation routes to the north and east of the precinct is almost completely obstructed from the south and west edges by the spatial organisation of the existing buildings. Without a drastic intervention, the site will remain an under-utilised service area.

## Opportunities

1. Expansion of the Department of Music can occur within the precinct, incorporating currently weak connection points, routes and spaces in an effort to create a new integrated facility with a mutually beneficial connection to the existing amenities.
2. The Music Department and its students can become active participants in the live of Campus with diverse energy from the areas surrounding the precinct filtering through it and exposing the Department and the performing art of music to various audiences.
3. The new entrance to the University at the end of Senaats Road will be welcomed by an iconic focal point – reflecting the contemporary image and dynamics of the University and the Department of Music.
4. The existing facilities of the precinct will be provided with a legible access and circulation system aimed at streamlining public involvement and participation in the arts.

## Threats

1. The existing buildings in the precinct and specifically the Music Building are of great cultural, social, historic and architectural significance. Care need to be taken with the new music school as to not distract from this significance. Instead, the new intervention will have to enhance and revitalise the existing fabric.
2. The phasing of the project will be important to allow for practising and performing of music to continue while the new building is in progress.

SWOT  
analysis

