

URBAN ANALYSIS

Positioning the investigation within the north-western quadrant of Pretoria's inner-city

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- 4.1 Pretoria's inner-city
- 4.2 North-west quadrant: Photo analysis
- 4.3 North-west quadrant: Interpretation
- 4.4 North-west quadrant: History
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INTRODUCTION

This chapter positions the project within the inner-city of Pretoria, investigates the north-west quadrant of Pretoria's inner-city as urban context and sketches a development proposal for the precinct surrounding Schubart Park as site for intervention

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4.1 INTRODUCTION: PTA INNER-CITY

INTRODUCING SCALES OF ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY PRECINCTS WITHIN THE INNER-CITY OF PRETORIA

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The urban analysis moves from the larger scale of Pretoria's inner city (figure 4.1) through an investigation of the problematic north-west inner city quadrant (figure 4.2) to a precinct analysis and development proposal (figure 4.3) that forms context for the Schubart Park complex as site for intervention.

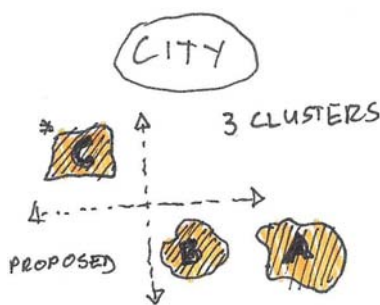


Fig. 4.1 First scale of analysis: Inner-City

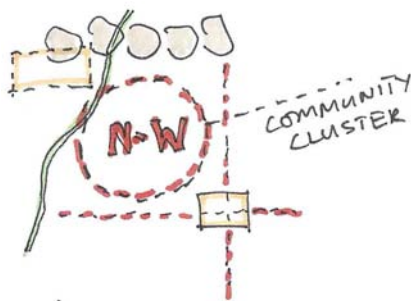


Fig. 4.2 Second scale of analysis: North-west quadrant



Fig. 4.3 Third scale of analysis: Development precinct

4.1.2 PRETORIA'S INNER-CITY

Community precincts

The inner city of Pretoria greatly needs integrated housing developments that create healthy urban communities. Currently, two Important housing/community precincts (figure 4.5) can be identified within and surrounding the urban fabric of Pretoria's inner city:

a) The Sunnyside precinct

- Main housing precinct to the inner-city
- Multi storey privately owned apartment buildings
- Esselen street commercial axis
- Schools, parks, churches

b) The Burgers Park precinct

- Multi storey private owned apartment buildings
- Grouped around Burgers Park open space
- Within Pretoria station precinct

This study identifies (figure 4.5) a third and important future community precinct in the north-west quadrant of the inner city.

A potential third precinct

The identification of a potential third community development cluster in the north-west quadrant, as indicated in figure 4.5, is based on the following observations:

-Location of precinct proximate to the urban core, public transport and employment opportunity

-Key importance of precinct as transition between the formal urban core and the volatile peripheral landscape to the north-west

-Presence and potential of the Schubart park and Kruger park housing mega complexes.

-Existing housing and amenities

-Undeveloped stands and renewal potential

-A variety of official housing proposals for the area

-The need for social services within the area

-Situated as link between the inner-city and Marabastad/Belombre station



Fig. 4.4 Aerial photo showing the inner-city of Pretoria

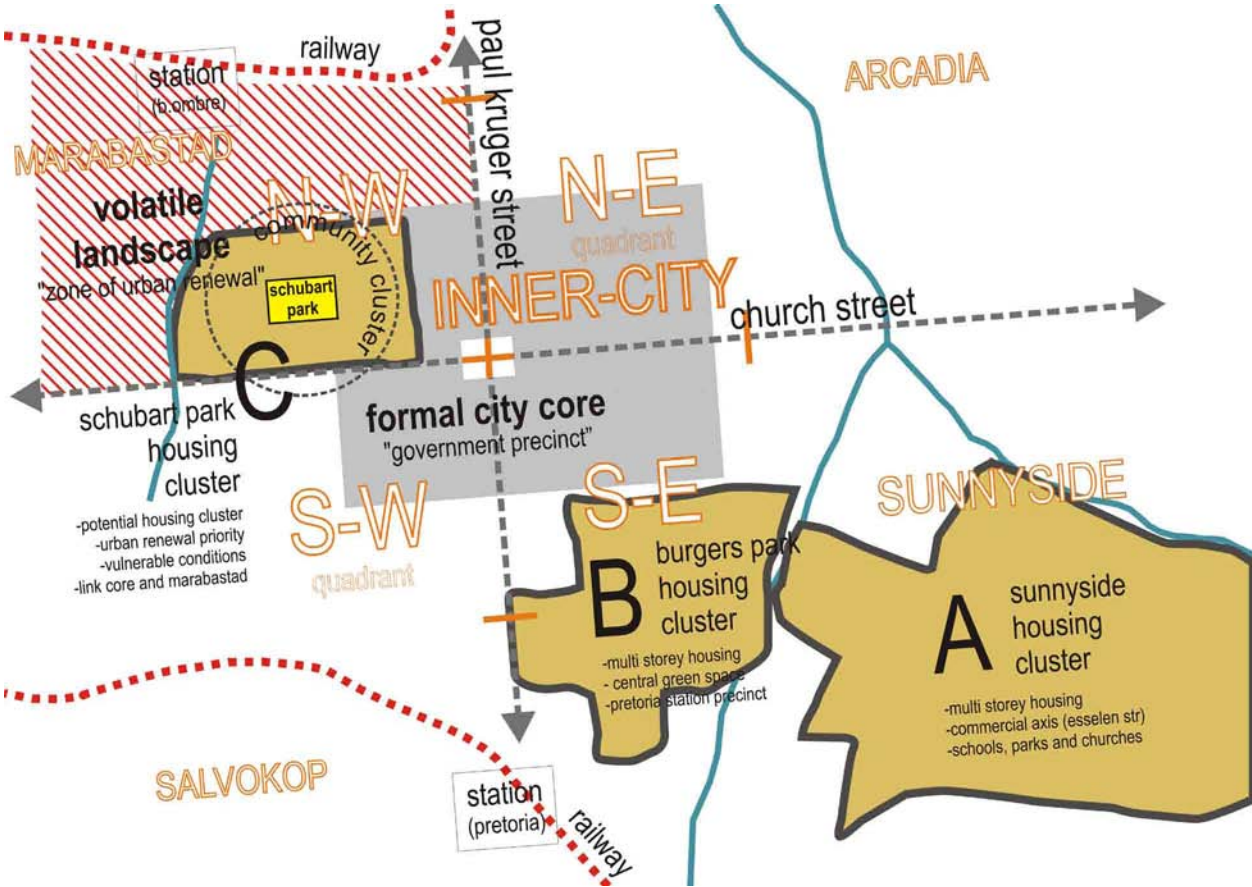
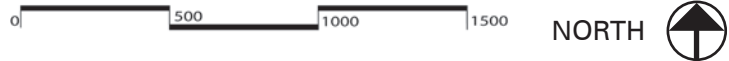


Fig. 4.5 Interpretation of urban conditions and identification of community clusters in Pretoria's north-west inner city quadrant



4.2

NORTH-WEST QUADRANT: ANALYSIS

UNDERSTANDING THE NORTH-WEST QUADRANT OF PRETORIA'S INNER-CITY AS URBAN CONTEXT



Fig. 4.6 Government and institutional office buildings



Fig. 4.11 Marabastad



Fig. 4.7 Familiar elements: Bosman Street N.G. Church with Poyntons Centre behind



Fig. 4.12 Infrastructure



Fig. 4.8 Derelict site



Fig. 4.13 Schubart Park housing complex



Fig. 4.9 Steenhoven Spruit



Fig. 4.14 Kruger Park housing complex



Fig. 4.10 Open site north of Schubart Park



Fig. 4.15 Buildings of heritage value



Fig. 4.16 Aerial photo showing Pretoria's north-west inner city quadrant

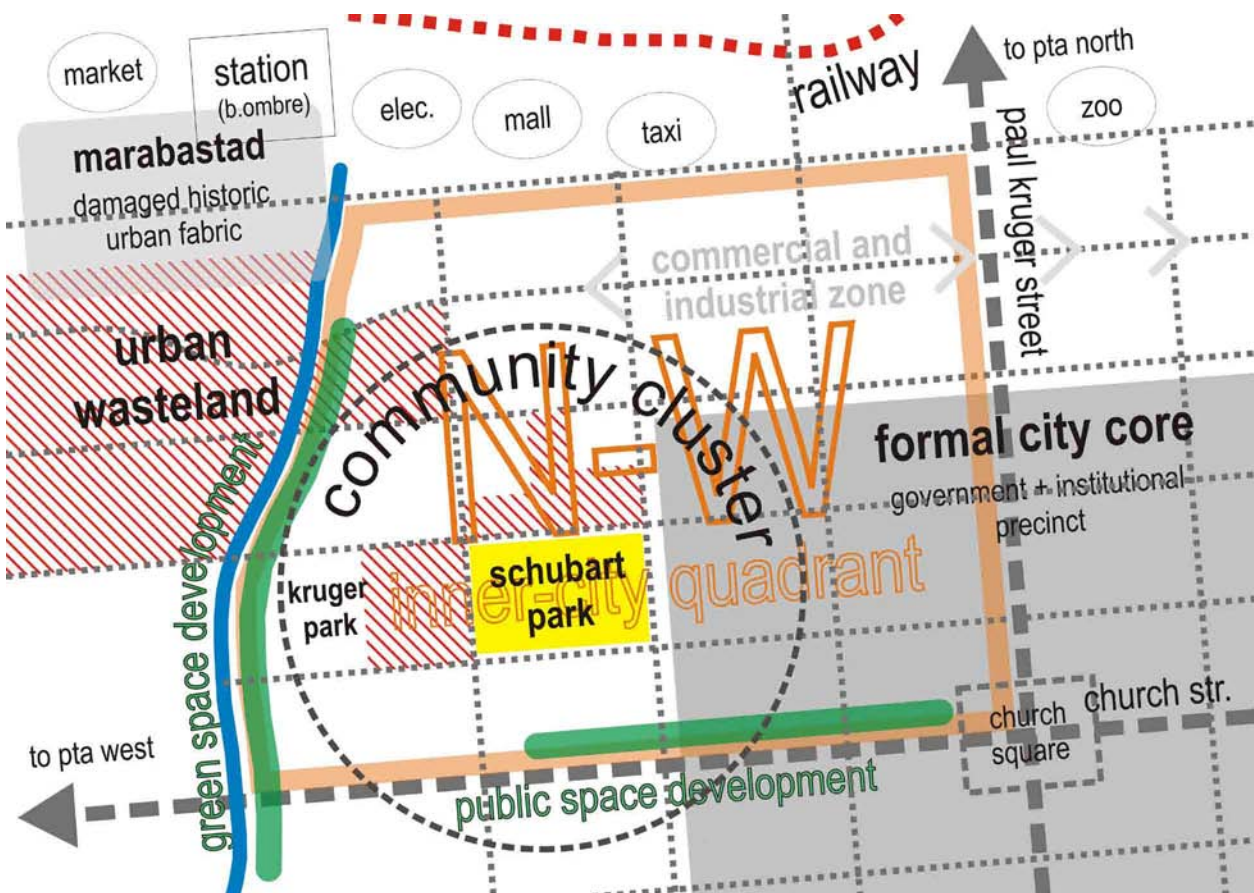


Fig. 4.17 Interpretation of urban conditions in Pretoria's north-west inner city quadrant



4.3

NORTH-WEST QUADRANT: HISTORY

HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING WITHIN THE INNER-CITY'S PROBLEMATIC NORTH-WESTERN QUADRANT

4.3.1 PRETORIA'S "FALLOW"

Nearly 20 years ago, Naude (1991:106) referred to the north-west quadrant as Pretoria's "fallow," a type of no man's land rich in rancidness. He describes the area as being difficult to define, neither core nor periphery - avoided by the alert tourist and ignored in passing by white people. Today this description is still accurate. The City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (2005:27) refers in a more euphemistic tone to the "zone of urban regeneration" which is yet to show notable signs of regenerative activity.

4.3.2 PERIPHERAL COMMUNITIES IN THE CITY'S NORTH-WEST QUADRANT

The grouping of various non-white settlements on the periphery of the north-west quadrant in the late nineteenth century, created an area which, according to Van Biljon (1991:109), was diverse, vibrant and cosmopolitan in character and where living and working spaces were mixed. However, Visser (1991:110) refers to perceptions of this area and states that what is for one person a house, is for another person a slum and for another a romanticized landscape. Van Biljon (1991:109) discusses how this area's negative image grew, seen increasingly as an unhygienic environment in a condition of decay.

Eitzen (1994:11) asserts that in most South African cities, non-whites were positioned on the periphery, these developments took on the form of shanty towns and by the 1950's were considered as health hazards and subsequently demolished.

The proximity of non-white communities to the inner-city caused discomfort to a white municipality, which led to slum removal programmes from as early as the 1940's (Van Biljon, 1991: 109). This conflict between the white inner-city and the non-white periphery to the north-west of the inner-city led to various damaging interventions being made in the area: The resulting decay is still evident and ongoing today.

4.3.3 POLITICS AND PLANNING

In the 1960's, the north-west quadrant of the inner city was transformed by a series of political and planning decisions, examples, as discussed by Van Biljon (1991:109), could be grouped as follows:

1) Segregation: The Group areas Act (1966) declared white-only areas and its implementation eroded the physical and social fabric of urban neighborhoods in Pretoria's north-west quadrant.

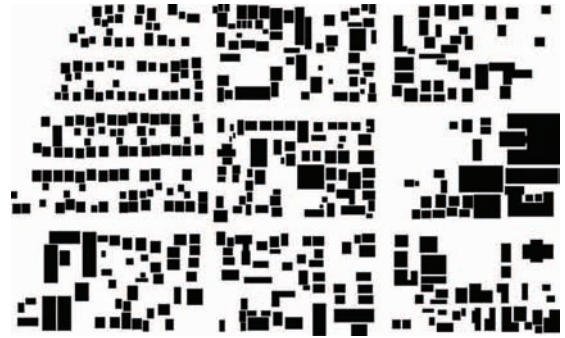


Fig. 4.19 Figure ground study of site precinct: 1947



Fig. 4.20 Figure ground study of site precinct: 2010

2) The freeway proposal of 1967 (figure 4.22), although never implemented, was added justification for forced removals, described by Jordaan (1989:26) as forcing itself into the city's grid structure and cutting up city fabric

3) Declaration of 24-block frozen area by the former department of "Gemeenskapsbou" (Community building) for re-development under the Goedehoop housing and renewal scheme.

4.3.4 THE "GOEDEHOOP" DEVELOPMENT

The Goedehoop housing development was according to Le Roux & Botes (1991:73), preceded by a clean-up of an area that was seen in some circles as a "sorry" part of the capital city. A proposal for establishing multiple high-rise residential towers (figure 4.21) in the area bound by Vermeulen-, Proes-, Schubart Street and Steenhoven Spruit was done by Interplan Town Planners.

Schubart Park, was to be the “launch project” and was, according to architect Clive Biddington (2010), envisioned as prototype for multiple new buildings (figure 4.23) in the vicinity. Schubart Park, along with the Kruger Park housing development, was according to Naude (1991:107), an attempt to settle people (whites) in Pretoria’s “fallow”.

4.3.5 THE “GOEDEHOOP” FAILURE

The vision of the “Goedehoop” development failed to realize: Le Roux & Botes (1991:73) explains that of the original plan to establish high-rise, living component in the west of the city, only Schubart Park realized. They add that the bold intentions for the area was never executed, that disconnected groups of buildings remained and larger developments happened in isolation.

Today, open sites still stand derelict where, according to Van Biljon (1991:109), the earlier fine urban fabric was erased (figure 4.19 and 4.20) to make space for Goedehoop. Van Biljon (1991:109) adds that after the Schubart Park and Kruger Park housing complexes, there has been almost no new developments in this area. This is still the case in 2010.

4.3.6 THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Visser (1991:110) describes the planning context in the 1960’s that lead to developments like the Goedehoop scheme, he refers to:

1) Systemic planning methods: Based on empirical scientific method, often inflexible in long term and showing little concern for social needs and the requirements of the community involved. This method was used to justify hidden political agendas. Visser (1991:110) mentions as examples of the failure of Systemic planning: Triomf in Johannesburg, District 6 in Cape town, The north-west quadrant of Pretoria and Pruitt Igoe in the USA.

2) Political intervention as urban renewal method: Visser (1991:110) states that in this method, decisions in the hands of bureaucracy who used urban renewal - in the South African context - as method to displace non-white lower income communities from the inner city.

3) Engineering approach: Visser (1994:110) explains that utopian ideals underpin this approach and are often not in tune with the complexity and dynamic of the city, examples include Louis Costa’s plan for Brasilia and Le Corbusier’s plan for Chandigarh.

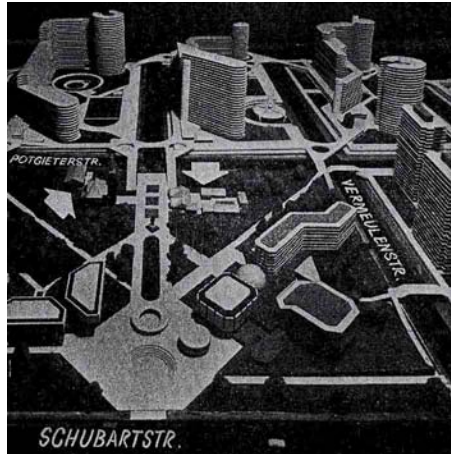


Fig. 4.21 “Kruger Plein” development as proposed in the 1970’s

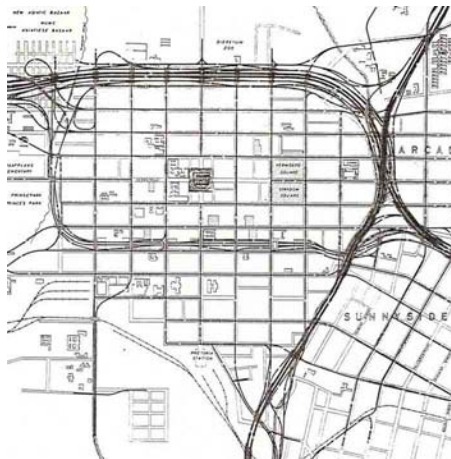


Fig. 4.22 The proposed 1967 Freeway scheme for Pretoria’s inner city



Fig. 4.23 Collage image interpreting the original planning intention of duplicating developments such as Schubart Park throughout the North-West quadrant

4.4 PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO FOR THE SCHUBART PARK PRECINCT

4.4.1 OVERVIEW

The proposed precinct development sees Schubart Park at the core of an urban renewal process that will aim to 1) Build on existing housing and community facilities, 2) Develop derelict and open sites within the precinct 3) Strategically adapt, fix or densify selected existing sites.

Current proposals for developments within the precinct (4.4.2a) is seen alongside new development proposals to create a vision for the proposed community cluster. Creating a variety of housing options, providing for social needs, enhancing amenities and developing quality streets/public spaces are key issues.

4.4.2 INTERVENTIONS

(as indicated on fig. x)

A) Official proposals

Various proposals by stakeholders currently await implementation within the identified precinct:

B) New proposals

Derelict, open or low density sites proposed for development:

C) Existing (to adapt)

Proposed development/renewal opportunities related to existing infrastructure within the precinct

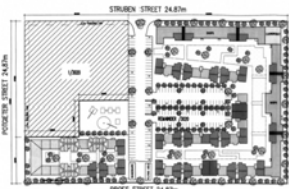
D) Existing (to keep)

Existing buildings such as housing, community facilities, heritage structures and government offices to be retained.



a1
official

Fig. 4.24 Open site for development of the the Thembelihle social housing scheme to be developed by Yeast City Housing



a1
official

Fig. 4.25 Plan of the Thembelihle social housing scheme to be developed by Yeast City Housing



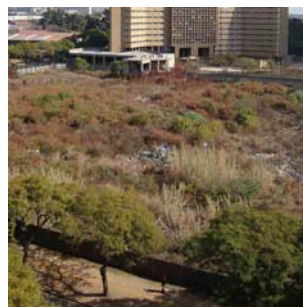
a2
official

Fig. 4.26 Open site for the development of Social housing by the Tshwane Housing Company



a3
official

Fig. 4.27 Open site proposed for mixed use development by the Gauteng Development Fund



b1
new

Fig. 4.28 Derelict site adjacent to the Kruger Park housing project proposed for new development



b2
new

Fig. 4.29 Empty corner site adjacent proposed for new development



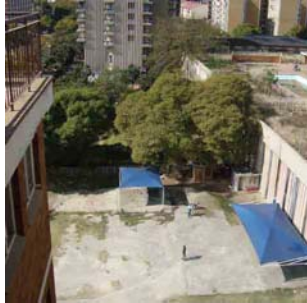
a official

b new

c adapt

d keep

Fig. 4.30 Precinct map indicating development proposals



b3
new

Fig. 4.31 Open site adjacent to the Schubart Park housing project proposed for new development



c4
adapt

Fig. 4.36 Low scale commercial development to be redeveloped and densified



b4
new

Fig. 4.32 Open site adjacent to the Schubart Park housing project proposed for new development



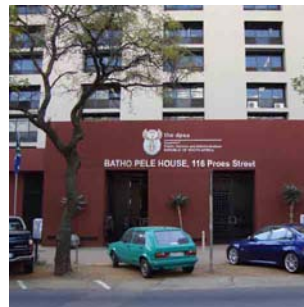
c5
adapt

Fig. 4.37 Eendracht Primary School to be densified



c1
adapt

Fig. 4.33 Site of the Government Printers to be re-used in a mixed-use development after the Printers' move to a new location is completed



d1
keep

Fig. 4.38 Existing government office building



c2
adapt

Fig. 4.34 Kruger Park housing complex to be refurbished



d2
keep

Fig. 4.39 Existing Telkom office tower



c3
adapt

Fig. 4.35 Schubart Park housing complex to be re-developed



d3
keep

Fig. 4.40 Existing heritage structures at the Government Printers



d4
keep

Fig. 4.41 Existing heritage structure: Kruger house



d9
keep

Fig. 4.46 Existing nursery school: Tekkies



d5
keep

Fig. 4.42 Existing government offices: Poyntons building



d10
keep

Fig. 4.47 Existing nursery school: Pennies



d6
keep

Fig. 4.43 Existing housing



d11
keep

Fig. 4.48 Existing housing



d7
keep

Fig. 4.44 Existing housing



d12
keep

Fig. 4.49 Existing government offices



d8
keep

Fig. 4.45 Existing college

SCHUBART PARK

Description and analysis of Schubart Park as site
for intervention

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- 5.1 Visual introduction
- 5.2 Photo analysis
- 5.3 Introduction and information
- 5.4 Discussing Schubart Park
- 5.5 Theoretical context
- 5.6 Analysis: drawings

INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the Schubart Park housing complex as site for intervention. The history, decay and current status of Schubart Park is outlined, its potential future discussed and the theoretical framework it related to discussed

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5.1 VISUAL INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCING THE SCHUBART PARK COMPLEX: UNDERSTANDING SCALE, COMPOSITION AND CONTEXT

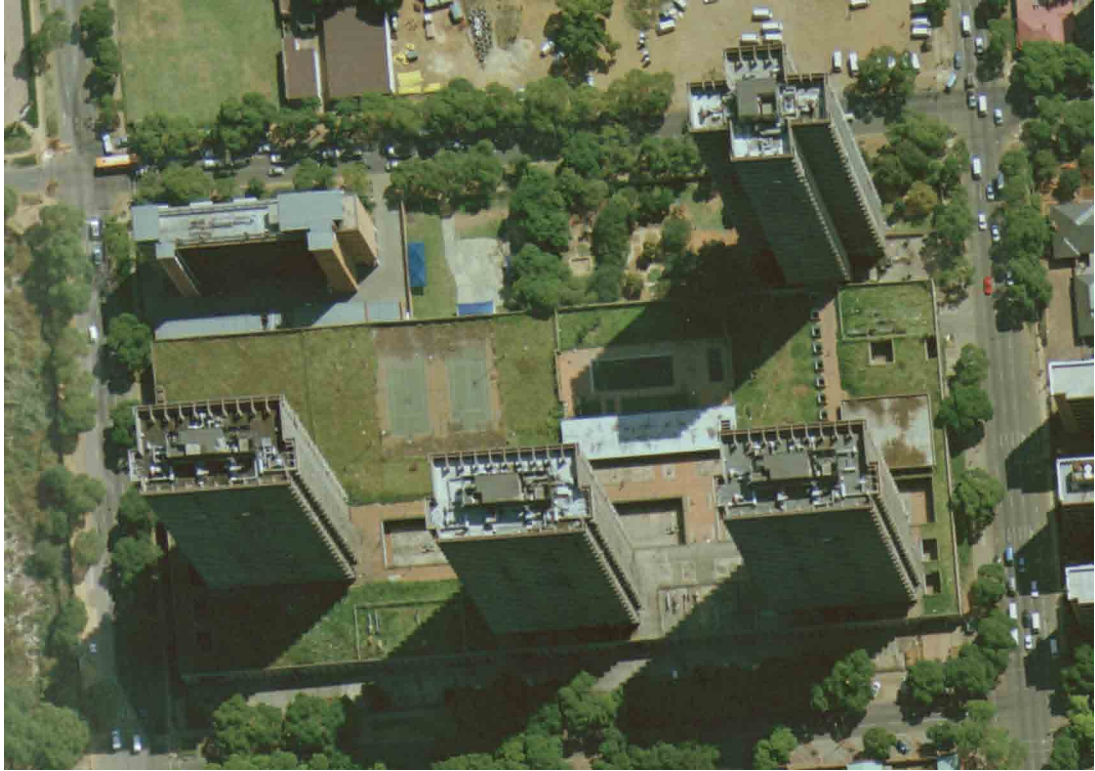


Fig. 5.1 Aerial photograph of Schubart Park,



Fig. 5.2 View of Schubart Park from the east





Fig. 5.3 Elevated view from the north-west



Fig. 5.4 Figure ground study indicating Schubart Park within its surrounding context



5.2 PHOTO ANALYSIS

VISUAL OVERVIEW OF SCHUBART PARK'S STRUCTURE, CONTEXT, DETAILS, CONDITION, MATERIALS AND USERS

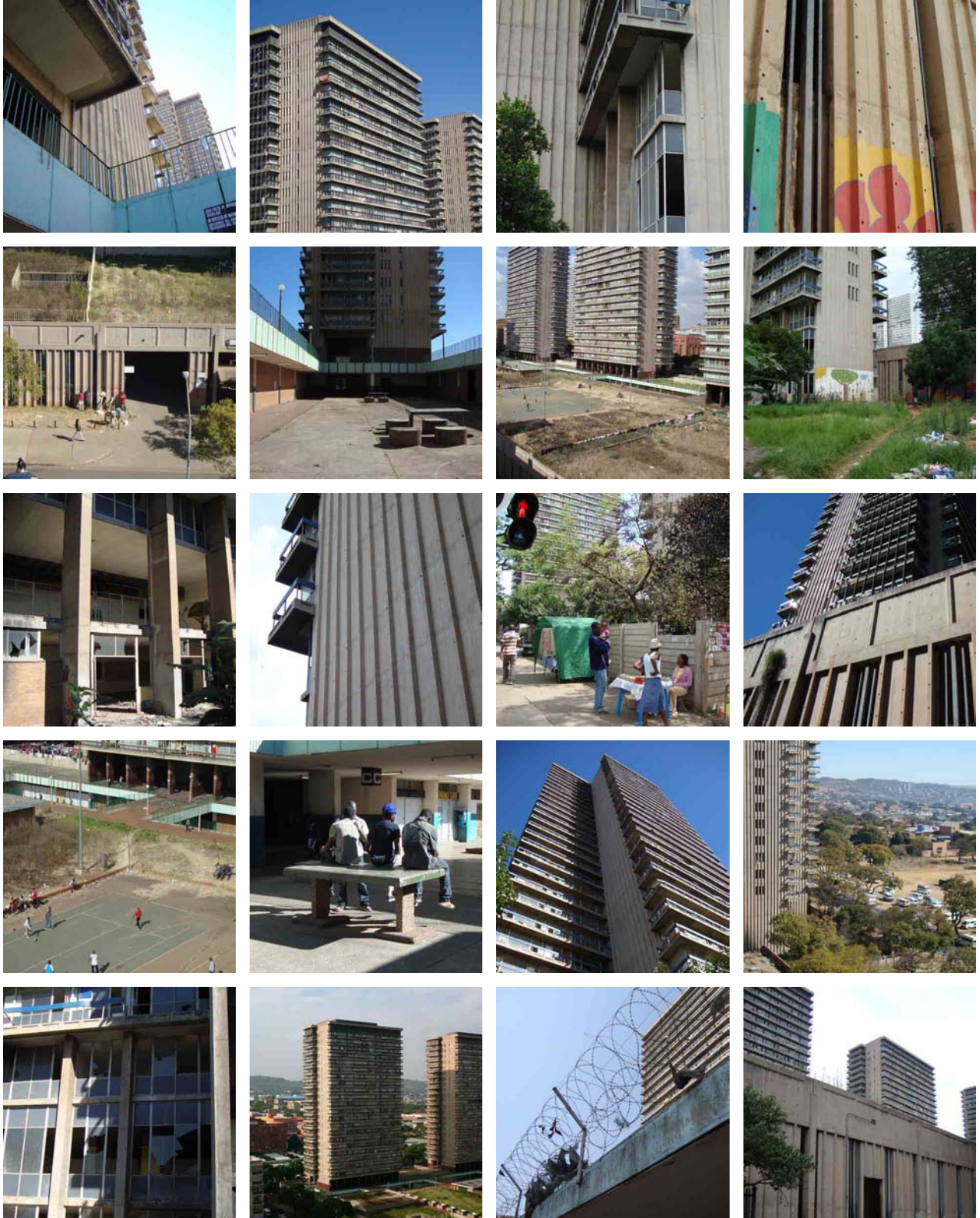


Fig. 5.5 Collage of photos of the Schubart Park building complex taken in 2010

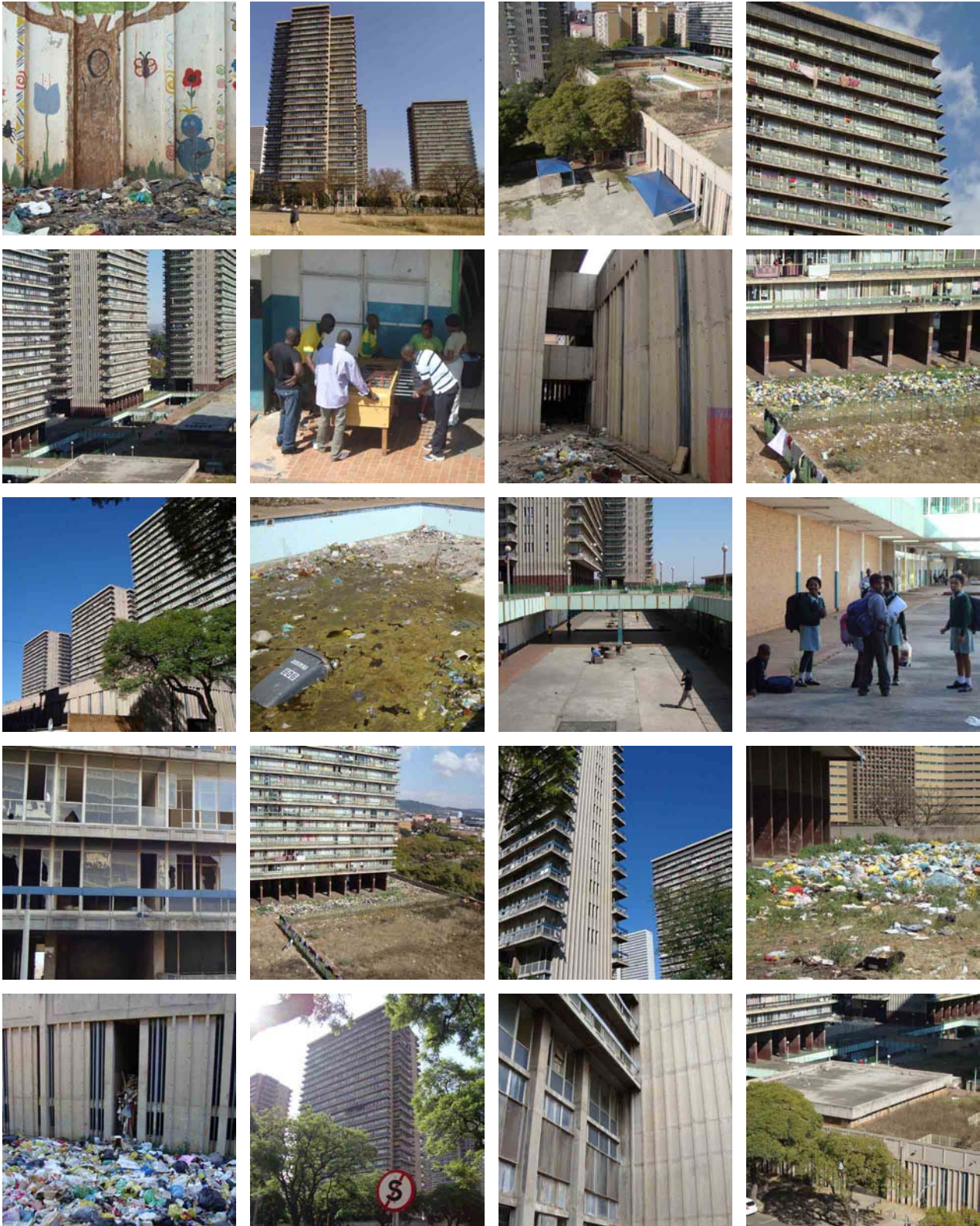


Fig. 5.6 Collage of photos of the Schubart Park building complex taken in 2010

5.3

INTRODUCTION AND INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION AND BASIC INFORMATION OF SCHUBART PARK

5.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Schubart Park is a high-rise housing development in the north-west quadrant of Pretoria's inner city, developed by the former department of Community development (Le Roux & Botes, 1991:73). Completed in 1976, the complex consists of 4 high-rise tower blocks on a continuous base structure (figure 5.1). Filling almost an entire city block of 38 400 square metres, this self-contained complex is a unique example of high-rise modernist housing typology within the South African context. Schubart Park is currently owned and managed by the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (CTMM). The physical condition of Schubart Park is rapidly deteriorating and it houses a volatile community under severe social distress.

5.3.2 INFORMATION

Current owner:

City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality

Original client:

Department of Community Development

Professional Team

Architect: Joubert, Owens en Van Niekerk
 Quantity surveyor: H. Grothaus & Du Plessis
 Structural engineer: BKS Consulting engineers
 Town planner: Interplan

Contractor

Pace Construction

Date of completion

1976 (Le Roux & Botes, 1991:73)

Original cost

R 8,321,061 (Grothaus and Du Plessis)

Heights

Base and podium: 3 Storeys above ground
 Tower A, B and C: +21 Storeys above base
 Tower D: +25 Storeys above base

Site area

26 758 square metres

Zoning

Use zone 28: Special

FSR

2.5

Approximate intended occupancy

2400 (Schutte, 1984:19)

Approximate current occupancy

10 000 (Ramothhale, 2010)

Apartment types/numbers

Total units: 813

Small bachelor	:21
Large bachelor	:178
1 Bedroom	:268
2 Bedroom	:323
3 Bedroom	:23

(Schutte, 1984:15)

Main functional elements

-4 Tower blocks housing a variety of apartment types

-Open raised podium level with gardens, swimming pool, tennis courts, washing yards and entrance lobbies to tower blocks

-Retail spaces surrounding open courtyards

-Internal parking filling the semi-basement and ground floor levels with 897 parking bays (Schutte, 1984:17)

-Community hall, crèche and offices

5.3.3 CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

-Figure 5.7 and 5.8

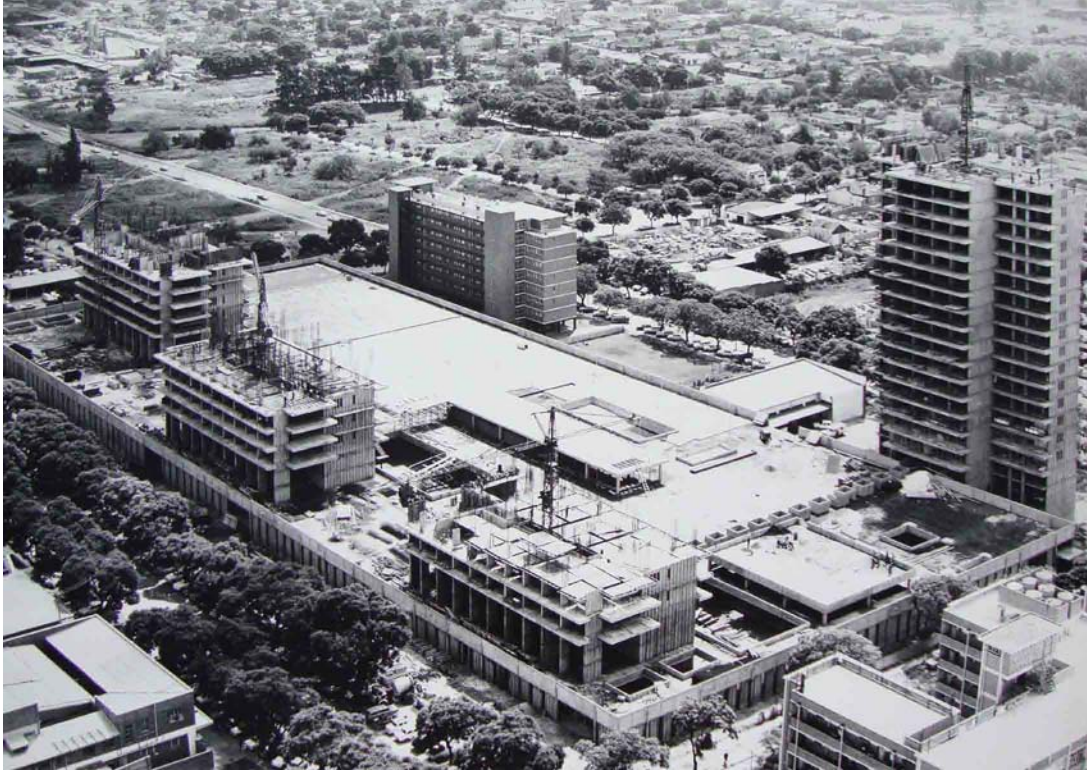


Fig. 5.7 South-east view of Schubart Park during construction



Fig. 5.8 Collage of photos of the Schubart Park's construction captured during 1975

5.4 DISCUSSING SCHUBART PARK

THE MANAGEMENT, FAILURE, CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE OF SCHUBART PARK AS BUILDING COMPLEX AND COMMUNITY

5.4.1 ORIGINAL INTENTION OF SCHUBART PARK

Introduction

Schubart Park was, according to Le Roux & Botes (1991:73), realized in the 1970's as part of a plan to create a high density, high-rise housing component in the west of the inner-city. Along with other projects, Schubart Park formed part of a dramatic renewal scheme for the north-west quadrant of Pretoria's inner city (refer to heading 4.4).

As housing complex, Schubart Park aimed to provide for all the requirements of city living: According to Le Roux and Botes (1991:73), Schubart Park forms a district in itself, complete with recreational facilities, social amenities and essential shops.

Original tenure and management

As part of an urban renewal project in the inner-city, the focus of Schubart Park was to house "white, middle income government employees" (Du Toit, 2009:160), the eventual occupancy included, according to Biddington (2010): government officials, families, professionals and young adults.

From the start, apartments at Schubart Park were in high demand and a sense of pride towards the complex prevailed within the community. Schutte (1984:18) states that initial occupation started in 1976 and that by 1983 there was a waiting list of more than 2000 people with an average waiting period of 5 years.

Schubart Park was initially strictly managed: Du Toit (2009:160) states as examples that security staff conducted regular inspections and that strict allocation policies, such as setting minimum income levels for different apartment types, were applied.

5.4.2 THE FAILURE OF SCHUBART PARK

Management and ownership

The former Department of Community Development (the original client) was disassembled towards the end of the apartheid era. Ownership of Schubart Park was, according to Du Toit (2009:160), transferred to the housing department of the Gauteng Provincial Government.

Although De Beer (2008:102) states that the depart-

ment maintained the status quo at Schubart Park, signs of decay were becoming visible. Certain management principles were changed during this period and Du Toit (2009:160) explains that "the former policy of allocating on the basis of minimum income levels was changed to allocating on needs basis to attempt income integration".

In 1998, ownership of Schubart Park, along with the adjacent Kruger Park housing complex, was transferred to the City of Tshwane (figure 5.9) and managed through the Tshwane Housing Company. Claasen (2010) explains that the City of Tshwane has since (both in its own capacity and through private sector outsourcing to City Properties) "tried in vain to manage the properties effectively". Aubrey Ramotlhale, chairperson of the Schubart Park residents committee, states in an interview (2010) that the City of Tshwane does not have the capacity to manage Schubart Park, that allocated funds are not used for maintaining the complex and that various forms of corruption occurs. He explains that outsourcing management to City Property (PTY LTD) also failed due to non-payment of residents, the loss of tenant data/records and lack of interest by City Property to protect/maintain the physical infrastructure.

The Schubart Park community

A changing community

Du Toit (2003:4) notes that Schubart Park has suffered "noticeable deterioration since the nineties", there has been an "influx of poorer households" and issues of "social distress" are becoming evident. Du Toit (2009:160) explains that "Administrative changes and racial and income integration took place during transition from apartheid to democracy in 1994", he adds that: "Poor administration and social problems soon impacted residential quality, while the socio-demographic profile of residents became increasingly mixed".

Ramotlhale (2010) states that over the years, most of Schubart Park's "official" tenants have left, he explains that there has been an increase of criminal elements within Schubart Park, that illegal occupancy of flats is allowed by corrupt city officials and that there has been an influx of foreign immigrants. Many long standing residents, feeling unsafe in Schubart Park, have according to Du Toit (2009:160) "moved out, leaving behind a transient and unstable community".

The current occupancy within Schubart Park, according to Ramotlhale (2010), has grown to 10 000 people (four times more that what the buildings were designed for) of which around 60% is believed to be



Fig. 5.9 Responsible for Schubart Park: The City of Tshwane municipality



Fig. 5.10 Residents of Schubart Park protesting against looming evictions



Fig. 5.11 South African National Civic organization (SANCO)



Fig. 5.12 On 22 July 2008 a fire was started in the Kruger Park building during attempted evictions at Schubart Park



Fig. 5.13 Fire-fighters attempt to contain a fire at the Kruger Park building

immigrants from African countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Worsening tenant/owner relationship

The relationship between residents and the municipality as landlord has deteriorated to the extent that the municipality do not receive or even expect to receive payment of rent, illegal sub-letting has become the norm, enriching some residents to the detriment of others who are forced to rent and share small spaces within overcrowded apartments.

De Beer (2008:102) explains that there is a feeling amongst residents that the municipality has abandoned its responsibilities of managing Schubart Park properly. Ramotlhale (2010) explains that other factors influenced residents to stop paying rent, these include 1) The involvement of the South African National Civic organization (SANCO) (figure 5.11) who convinced residents to rebel and pay rent into separate accounts set up by SANCO, and 2) The perception of Schubart Park residents that apartments within Schubart Park fell under the same legislation (section 21) as RDP housing schemes which lead to a sense of entitlement amongst residents.

Failure

Management failure

In 2003, Du Toit (2003:4) stated that there is a lack of funding, administration and maintenance from the current owner, the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. During the past years, conditions grew even worse, Fife (2008:5) states that "Schubart Park and Kruger Park are the very few truly slum buildings in the City of Tshwane".

There is a lack of decision making about how to manage the complex and, according to Claasen (2010), "the consequence of this was that they became dangerous and life-threatening... criminal elements were living in the flats and... vandalism was rife".

Attempted evictions

On 22 July 2008, 5 lives were claimed when a fire was started by angry protestors in the Kruger Park building (figure 5.12 and 5.13). Residents were protesting (figure 5.10) against their eviction from the Schubart Park and neighbouring Kruger Park buildings by the Tshwane Municipality who attempted clearing buildings ahead of a proposed re-vamp of these structures that has not realised to date.

Claasen (2010) explains that the subsequent report on this tragedy found that the buildings had no firefighting equipment, no fire extinguishers and no water on the day of the blaze. The so-called Mosoma report found that the Council was warned by the fire-department about a fire hazard in these buildings two years prior to the blaze. The report states that Tshwane Municipality should have been prepared for this kind of incident because of preceding violent protest (figure 5.10) by angry residents, and that "communication between residents and the metro council's controversial housing entity, the Housing Company Tshwane (HCT), had been inadequate in the period leading up to the tragedy" Claasen (2010).

5.4.3 CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Tshwane Municipality - despite being responsible for the Schubart Park complex and despite the fact that an estimated 10 000 people live in Schubart Park - have according to Smit (2010) withdrawn all security and cleaning services from the complex. He adds that there are no operational lifts within the complex and that water and electricity are often completely cut off for weeks at a time.

Current conditions within Schubart Park pose a biohazard risk (figure 5.19) due to poor management (Claasen, 2010), there is no fire-equipment in the entire Schubart Park and rubbish heaping up on certain floors could cause structural damage.

Block D, the northern tower of the Schubart Park complex (figure 5.18) has recently been evacuated and its residents placed within the other 3 already overcrowded tower blocks of Schubart Park. After being evacuated, block D was never secured and according to Otto (2010) "almost totally ruined by vagrants who illegally slept there or ransacked it for anything that could be sold... Lift doors, motors and cable had been stolen, with empty lifts dangling in mid-air"; he adds that "fires made on floors by illegal tenants weakened the structure..."

An internal report by the Fire Brigade Services who, according to a newspaper article (figure 5.14) by Claasen (2010) are regularly required to put out fires at Schubart Park, confirms these claims and states (Fire brigade services, 2010:2) that:

"all doors, steel and aluminium windows have been removed... solid brick walls and division walls have been broken down and the rubble is lying in heaps... holes where service shafts were are 2sqm in size and have been made on at least 10 floors" (see figure 5.15 - 5.17).

Claasen (2010) states that as long as damage to the

buildings is allowed to continue the costs that future tax payers will have to spend to fix the problem increases.

Smit (2010) states that police and emergency services are reluctant to enter Schubart Park's towers, this adds further desperation to the plight of Schubart Park residents and is explained by Otto (2010): "Paramedics, firefighters and police all said they feared for their lives should they have to enter the notorious Block D, branding it a death trap."

Signs of vandalism and building decay at Schubart Park is evident (figure 5.16) and garbage keeps piling up in various parts of Schubart Park (figure 5.20). Building services are left to disintegrate: drinking water (figure 5.22) and sewerage (figure 5.21) leaks continuously from damaged pipes. According to Ramotlhale (2010) conditions at the complex have become exponentially worse during the last 5 years.

5.4.4 VALUE AND FUTURE

Negative notions:

Negative emotions and anger concerning the conditions at Schubart Park are widespread: Winston Campbell, the DA spokesman for housing in Tshwane (in Otto, 2010) states:

"this building is an abuse of tax payers' money. It should be disbanded. The administration and management of Schubart Park is inhumane and ridiculous. The city council allows it to fall into disrepair."

Francios Smit of Pretoria Evangelical Services (PEN), who has a long-standing relationship with the problems of Schubart Park, believes (2010) that Schubart Park is being "managed for destruction," implying a purposeful carelessness by the municipality, allowing Schubart Park to "self destruct"

Community organization:

Aubrey Ramotlhale (chairperson of the Schubart Park residents committee) explains that attempts are made at Schubart Park to form community organizational structures: A residents committee has been set up with leaders representing each floor and each tower. Attempts have further been made to set up a funding system to allow the community to pay for private contractors to resume currently absent services such as security and garbage removal. However, Ramotlhale (2010) adds that creating a sense of community and achieving co-operation on pressing issues is proving to be extremely difficult.

‘Gebou se verval stuur op ramp af’
Skokverslag maan oor woonstelle in Pretoria

Fig. 5.14 Newspaper headline reading: “Building’s decay heading towards disaster”



Fig. 5.15 Conditions within Schubart Park’s Tower D: Total destruction of lift-room



Fig. 5.16 Conditions within Schubart Park’s Tower D : Ducting and internal walls removed



Fig. 5.17 Conditions within Schubart Park’s Tower D: Occupation by illegal tenants



Fig. 5.18 Damage to Schubart park;s Tower D caused by vandalism and looting



Fig. 5.19 Conditions at Schubart Park posing potential health risks



Fig. 5.20 Garbage piling up within the Schubart Park site



Fig. 5.21 Sewerage leaking from damaged pipes



Fig. 5.22 Clear drinking water flowing from the building into the storm-water system



Fig. 5.23 A newspaper report about the municipality’s promise to spend 40 million rand upgrading Schubart Park and neighbouring Kruger Park

Future promises

The Council has, according to Otto (2010), promised to refurbish Tower D during the next financial year and stamp out illegal and criminal activities. Tshwane Mayor Dr. Gwen Ramokgopa stated during her presentation of the 2010/11 budget for the city of Tshwane: "An amount of R40m in the next financial year will be considered... to finalise the upgrading of Schubart Park and Kruger Park" (Hlahla: 2010) (figure 5.23). Given the recent history of Schubart Park, it remains to be seen if the municipality will or can act. The problem of relocating thousands of angry residents during any attempted refurbishment remains, costs of refurbishment will likely be higher than anticipated and the structural integrity of the building has not been thoroughly analysed

5.4.5 SCHUBART PARK: RE-USE OR DEMOLISH?

Comparison: Pruitt-Igoe



Fig. 5.24 The Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in St. Louis, USA



Fig. 5.25 Demolition of Pruitt-Igoe in 1972

The Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in St. Louis, USA (figure 5.24) was, according to Mogilevich (2003:1), an award winning project, heralded as a "revolution in low-cost, high-density housing". In 1972, just 17 years after completion it was razed to the ground (figure 5.25), a moment that has been described by Charles Jencks as the death of modernism. A comparison can be drawn here between the attributes of Schubart Park and those of Pruitt-Igoe:

- 1) As a patent building type, Pruitt-Igoe was intended, like Schubart Park, to be duplicated.
- 2) Like Schubart Park, Pruitt-Igoe became a "nucleus of crime and vandalism" (Mogilevich, 2003:1).
- 3) As is the case with Schubart Park, Pruitt-Igoe was considered, according to Mogilevich (2003:1), to be a "symbol of the failures of urban renewal then called slum clearance".
- 4) Both Pruitt-Igoe and Schubart Park embodies modernist urban thinking that have been widely contested within subsequent theory and best-practice.

In a discussion of Schubart Park, contextual issues need to be considered as a case against condemning the complex to a similar fate than that of Pruitt-Igoe.

A different fate?

Value as Inner-city housing density

Despite current conditions, Schubart Park remains home to thousands of residents who seek affordable housing in the inner-city. The need for housing proximate to Pretoria's commercial core remains high and counter-acting sprawl a constant planning concern. Du Toit (2009) states that current policy in South Africa advocates more high-density housing and further suggests that in a context of declining household sizes and increasing costs of commuting: "certain groups are becoming more amenable to the benefits of high-density housing".

Value: Embodied energy and adaptive re-use

Severe economic constraints in South Africa and global concerns for the sustainable use of resources are factors in favour of a re-use scenario for Schubart Park. Schubart Park's concrete structure is durable and high in embodied energy; demolition would be expensive in both financial terms and through the loss of embodied energy.

This study assumes that the building is still structurally safe and can be adaptively re-used.

Management

The reasons for failure in the case of Schubart Park have been critically argued (refer to 5.4.2) and although elements of architectural and planning intent could be justifiably criticized, the current condition proves to be mostly of social and political origins.

Other case-studies such as Spruitsigpark (figure 5.26), which is also situated in Pretoria and of similar architectural intention as Schubart Park, have proven successful. In the case of Spruitsigpark, the building is privately managed and owned (figure 5.27).



Fig. 5.26 Spruitsigpark, situated in Pretoria and of similar architectural intention as Schubart Park, have proven successful as housing complex



Fig. 5.27 Private ownership and management of housing developments like Spruitsigpark in Pretoria

5.5

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

SCHUBART PARK WITHIN THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CORBUSEAN CITY AND SUBSEQUENT COUNTER-REACTIONS

5.5.1 SCHUBART PARK AND THE MODERNIST CITY

Schubart Park and Le Corbusier's urban visions

Broadbent (1990:133) explains that Le Corbusier's plans and perspectives (figure 5.28 and 5.29) "captured the imagination of architects and planners worldwide" and that "a great number of architects and planners were enabled to make their own cities - or segments of them - look remarkably alike"

Le Roux & Botes (1991:73) adds that the form and principles of Schubart Park reminds strongly of Le Corbusier's plan for a contemporary city of 3 million inhabitants (figure 5.28 and 5.29), which, according to Tsonis (2001:72) was a theoretical work aimed to "redefine the idea of the city".

Du Toit (2003:2) asserts that the design of Schubart Park is underpinned, as the work of Le Corbusier was, by idealist and utopian thinking that refers to functionalism, permanence, abstraction, conformity and precision.

As was the case with planning intentions behind the Schubart Park precinct (see heading 4.4), Le Corbusier's urban visions aimed to create new cities to the detriment of existing urban fabric (figure 5.28), according to Jenger (1996:50), proposing unrealistic and dramatic change.

Schubart Park as development of almost an entire city mega-block, is explained by Du Toit (2009:160) to relate to a tradition of "Modernist high-density public housing based on Le Corbusier's super block precedent" which, he adds "has been a symbol of utopian architecture and planning"

Schubart Park forms, according to Le Roux and Botes (1991:73), a district in itself, complete with recreational facilities, social amenities and essential shops. Evident thus in Schubart Park as functional system is Le Corbusier's formulas for high-rise living: the development of self contained housing systems where "everyday shopping is no longer done along the streets" (Tsonis, 2001:74), and "children do not have to cross any roads between home and school" (Jenger, 1996:102).

Counter actions

Regarding modernist, high-rise, housing towers based on scientific positivism, Visser (1991:111) states that for criticism, one only has to look at the multiple examples of failure in cities around the

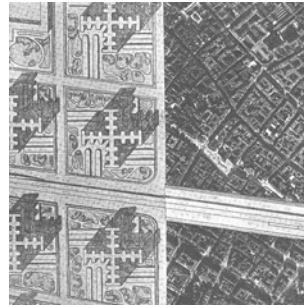


Fig. 5.28 Image explaining Le Corbusier's plan for a contemporary city of 3 million inhabitants in contrast to the urban fabric it proposed to replace

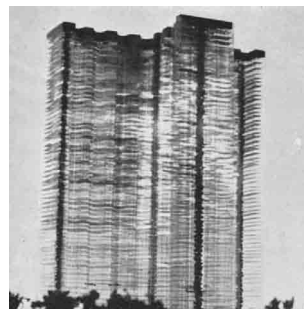


Fig. 5.29 Drawing of a tower-block within Le Corbusier's plan for a contemporary city of 3 million inhabitants



Fig. 5.30 The cross-shaped Tower D of Schubart Park

world (including that of Schubart Park), with Pruitt Igoe (refer to heading 5.4.5) being the most spectacular.

New urban principles

Le Roux and Botes (1991:73) asserts that the principles underpinning projects like Schubart Park and Le Corbusier's city for 3 million inhabitants have fallen into dis-use due to the current timeframe and social concerns. Du Toit (2003:3) refers to the post-modern reaction, that "architecture must be regional, local and particular".

Visser (1991:112), discusses the planning principles that underpin the Schubart Park development and states as counter reaction thereto the movement towards a humanitarian approach led by individuals such as Jane Jacobs, Christopher Alexander, Kevin Lynch, Colin Rowe and David Crane.

Visser (1991:112) lists some principles of this new approach: incremental growth, avoiding tower-block housing, mixed use, high densities, hierarchical struc-

tures and public participation. Broadbent (1990:321) explains that individuals such as Christopher Alexander and his colleagues advocated new principles such as 1) Coherence between buildings and their position within the street and neighbourhood 2) Contribution of buildings towards well shaped public spaces next to them.

5.5.2 CONTESTED PRINCIPLE: VERTICALITY

Le Corbusier described the vertical qualities of his proposals for cities of the future with great vigour: "The air is clear and pure; there is hardly any noise... look out into the sky towards those widely-spaced crystal towers which soar higher than any pinnacle on earth..." (Broadbent, 1990:129).

The vertical images of New York (figure 5.31) made a great impact on modern architects like Le Corbusier, who described New York as "a vertical city" where "one sees canyons rising up, deep and violent fissures" (Broadbent: 1990:135). Cities like New York, synonymous with scy-scrapers and vertical development have stirred the still ongoing debate over high-rise architecture: both positive and negative perceptions of verticality exist in various forms and through various arguments.

Broadbent (1990:75) explains that New Yorkers learnt, after the oil crisis of 1973, that many of their scyscrapers represented the "most energy-inefficient buildings conceived". However, the density that tall buildings provide could on the other hand be seen as energy efficient in terms reducing the need for transportation and reducing sub-urban sprawl.

Schubart Park, according to Du Toit (2009:159) was developed despite the awareness of negative notions about a high density, high-rise housing typology. Du Toit (2009:160) adds that existing research into high rise, high density housing that "often suggested that residents were generally dissatisfied and that dissatisfaction and antisocial behaviour were related to modernist architecture."

In a sociological report on the place perspectives experienced by the residents of Schubart Park, Schutte (1984:1) discusses the tendency towards negative perceptions of high rise urban developments: "Non-residents tend to deplore the alleged anonymity of life in these places that supposedly combine minimum living space with maximum social distance"

However, Du Toit adds (2009:160) in the case of Schubart Park, residents' initial perceptions towards the housing type was positive, he adds that research in the east, particularly in Singapore (figure 5.32) and



Fig. 5.31 High density vertical developments of New York



Fig. 5.32 A High-density housing development in Singapore

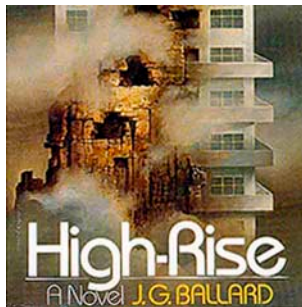


Fig. 5.33 Cover image of J.G. Ballard's novel "High-rise"



Fig. 5.34 High density tenement housing in Nairobi, Kenya

Hong Kong, suggested the possibility of residential satisfaction within such housing types. In other examples, such as the inner-city of Nairobi, high density tenement housing (figure 5.34), as described by Huchzermeyer (2009:45), seem to expand uncontrolled and organically as response to the need for urban housing.

Authors such as science fiction writer J.G Ballard writes in apocalyptic terms about the effects of high rise architecture on society and psychological health. Mcgragh (2004) explains that in his novel: "High-

Rise" (figure 5.33), Ballard has "created an isolated environment for the close study of how an ultra-modern apartment block can transform its denizens"; the characters of this fictional apartment block are all described as being essentially the same: "prisoners of an eventless world of solitary confinement in a social structure nurtured by a live-in machine"

5.5.3 CONTESTED PRINCIPLE: ABSTRACTION AND RECTILINEARITY

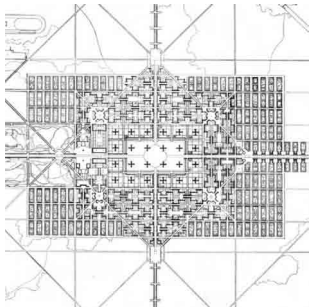


Fig. 5.35 Plan of Le Corbusier's plan for a contemporary city of 3 million inhabitants



Fig. 5.36 Abstracted and rectilinear nature of Schubart Park

Broadbent (1990:72), explains that pure, unadorned rectilinear geometry became the basis for everything that was serious in post-war design, from the scale of radios and fan heaters to, most certainly, the scale of buildings, not to mention the spaces between them. Regarding rectilinear abstraction (figure 5.35), Le Corbusier is quoted (in Broadbent, 1990:72) to say: "The right angle is, as it were, the sum of forces which keep the world in equilibrium... is unique and constant... the essential and sufficient instrument of action because it enables us to determine space with absolute exactness"

The spatial interpretations in modern cities that resulted from abstraction and rectilinearity, as evident in the design of Schubart Park (figure 5.36) is criticised by Broadbent (1990:73): "the abstractionists... were quite incapable of thinking of space as

something that can be modeled in three dimensions. Internally their spaces simply were the volumes clamped between their horizontal floors... externally, too, space seemed to be simply that which was left over between their rectilinear slabs."

5.5.4 CONTESTED PRINCIPLE: THE STREET

Tsonis (2001:74) explains that in Le Corbusier's urbanism, "the street was purged" and became corridors for vehicle movement. Schubart park (figure 5.37) according to "Le Roux & Botes (1991:73), turns inward and stands unsympathetic towards the street.

Broadbent (1990:138) explains that for Le Corbusier, the streets between the lower-scale developments of New York were too mundane, too ordinary to be of any interest. This same context (figure 5.38) was however seen by Jane Jacobs as an ideal environment for urban living. She wrote of its many qualities in her book: "The Death and Life of Great American Cities", which according to Broadbent (1990:138) infuriated those whose lives have been devoted to the design, planning and building of brave new worlds based on Le Corbusier's vision of the Radiant City.

Jacobs state (in Broadbent, 1990:138) that "the streets and squares of the village were the very stuff of which real urban fabric are made". She explains: "Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If the city's streets look interesting, the



Fig. 5.37 The edge-condition of Schubart Park stands unsympathetic towards the street



Fig. 5.38 A typical street within Greenwich village, New York.

city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull." Jacobs adds that "No one feels really secure within the canyons of Wall Street or lower Manhattan. Nor does one feel secure within - or between - the slab-blocks and towers of the Corbusean City"

5.6 ANALYSIS: DRAWINGS

BASIC COMPOSITION OF SCHUBART PARK AND ANALYSIS OF ITS 3 BASE FLOOR LEVELS



Fig. 5.39 Basic components of the Schubart Park complex

NORTH

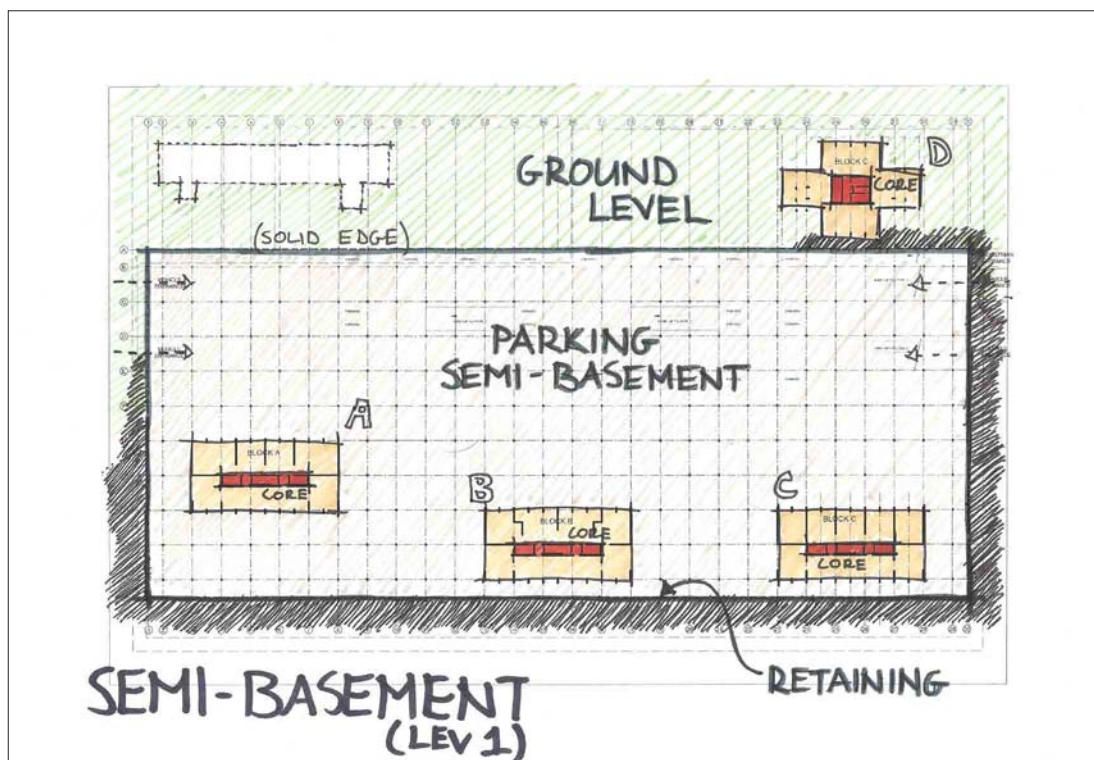


Fig. 5.40 Analysis of Level 1 (semi-basement)

NORTH



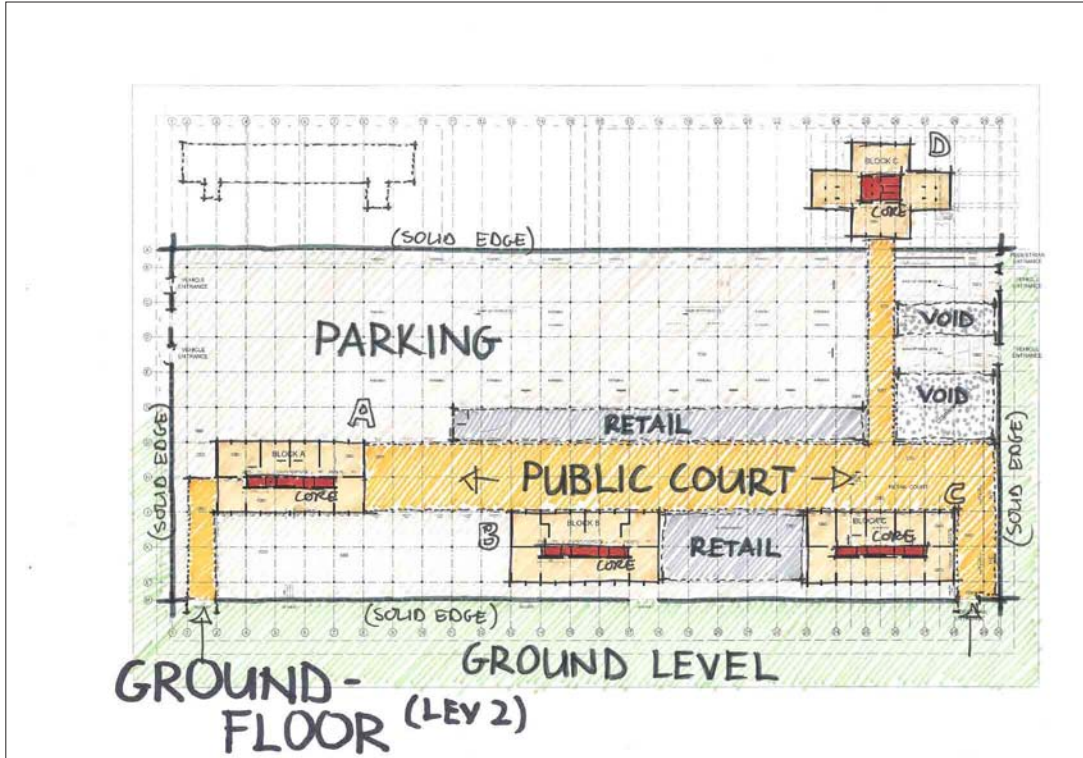


Fig. 5.41 Analysis of Level 2 (ground floor)

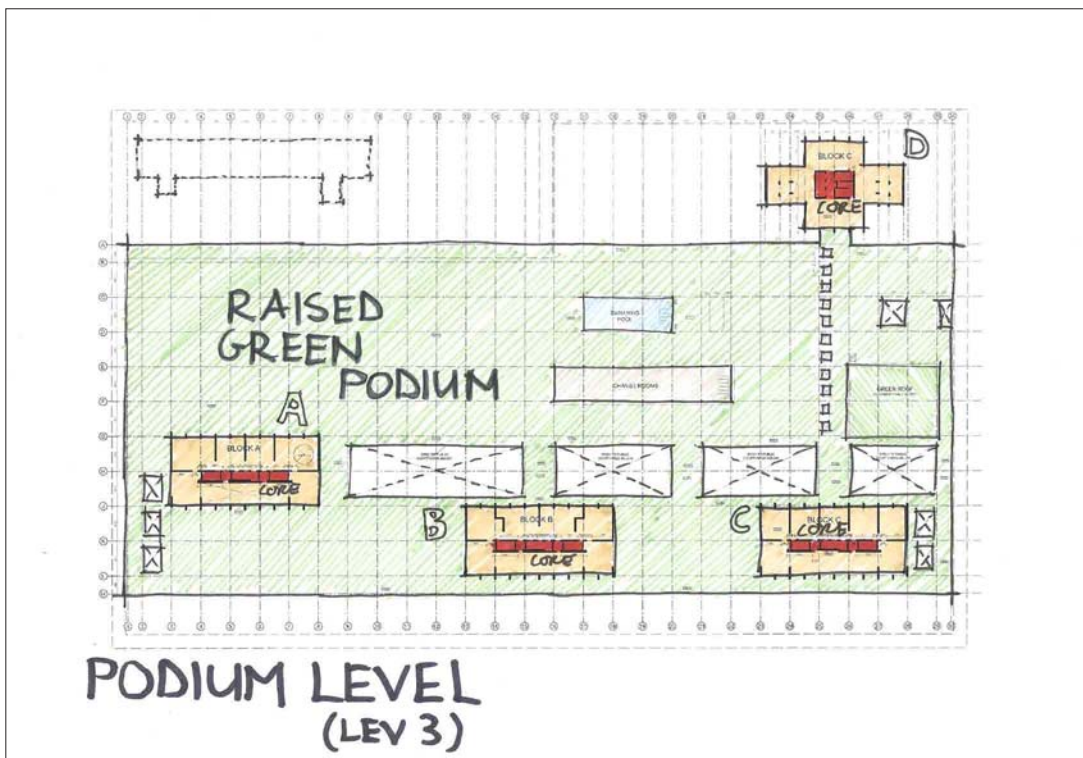


Fig. 5.42 Analysis of Level 3 (raised podium)

