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CHAPTER 02 THE URBAN CONDITION

2.1 BACKGROUND

Historical Context

Dewar (1991: para 01) suggested appropriately, planning consciousness needs to be firmly rooted on two pillars. The first is humanist. The art of urban planning is concerned with the making of human settlements. The modern context within which this occurs is dominated by three dynamics: rapid population growth; rapid urbanisation and rapid technological change.

Initially known as Vlakfontein, Mamelodi was established as Black Township in 1951, located 20km east of the city of Tshwane (Pretoria). The first residents of Mamelodi were people who were removed from other areas according to the Group Areas Act (1950). The name Mamelodi is the name of which President Paul Kruger was known by black residents meaning 'mother of melodies', as he was known for imitating the whistling of the birds or 'father of the whistling'.

'Phumolong', in Se-Sotho means 'resting place', is the local name for the area occupied entirely by informal settlers and shacks with very limited municipal services. Phumolong has a population of over 27 000 people living in an area 600 thousand square kilometres, there are no hospitals, schools or police stations. There is no formal transport system within the community, women generally walk on foot and men use bicycles in order to get around.

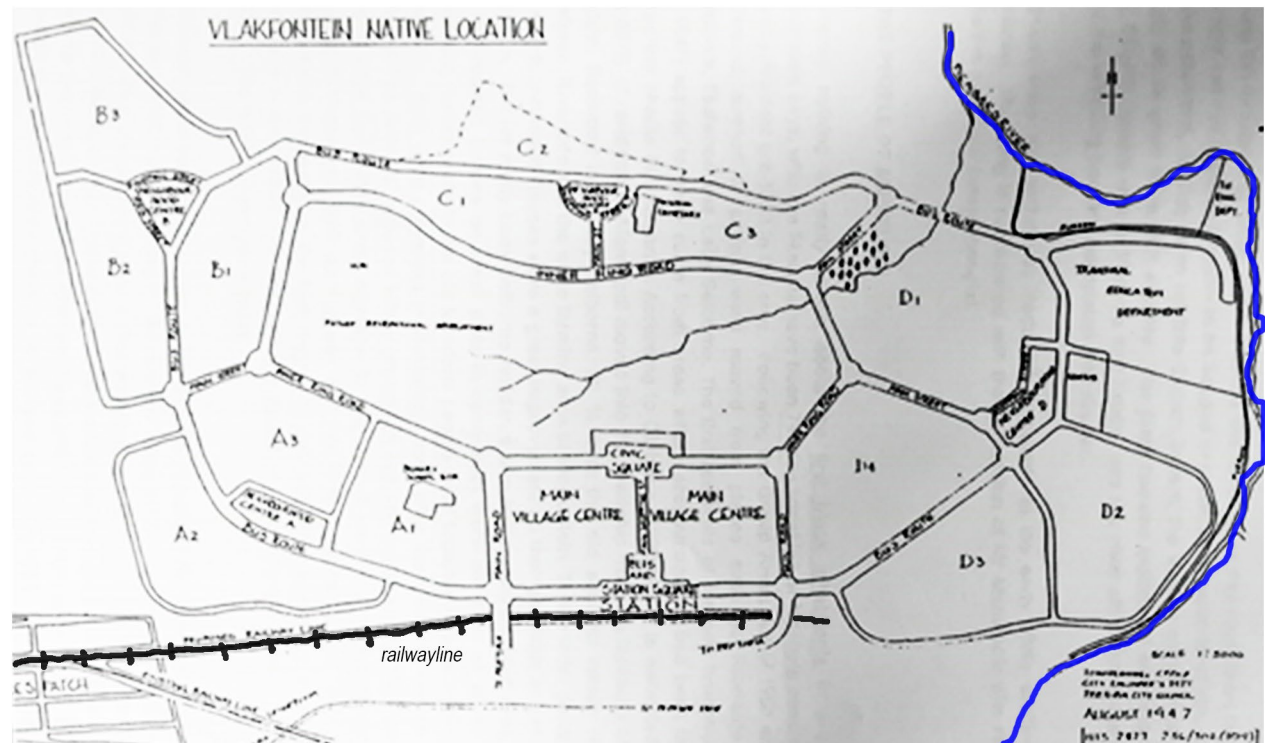


Fig. 2.1
Vlakfontein Native Location in 1947

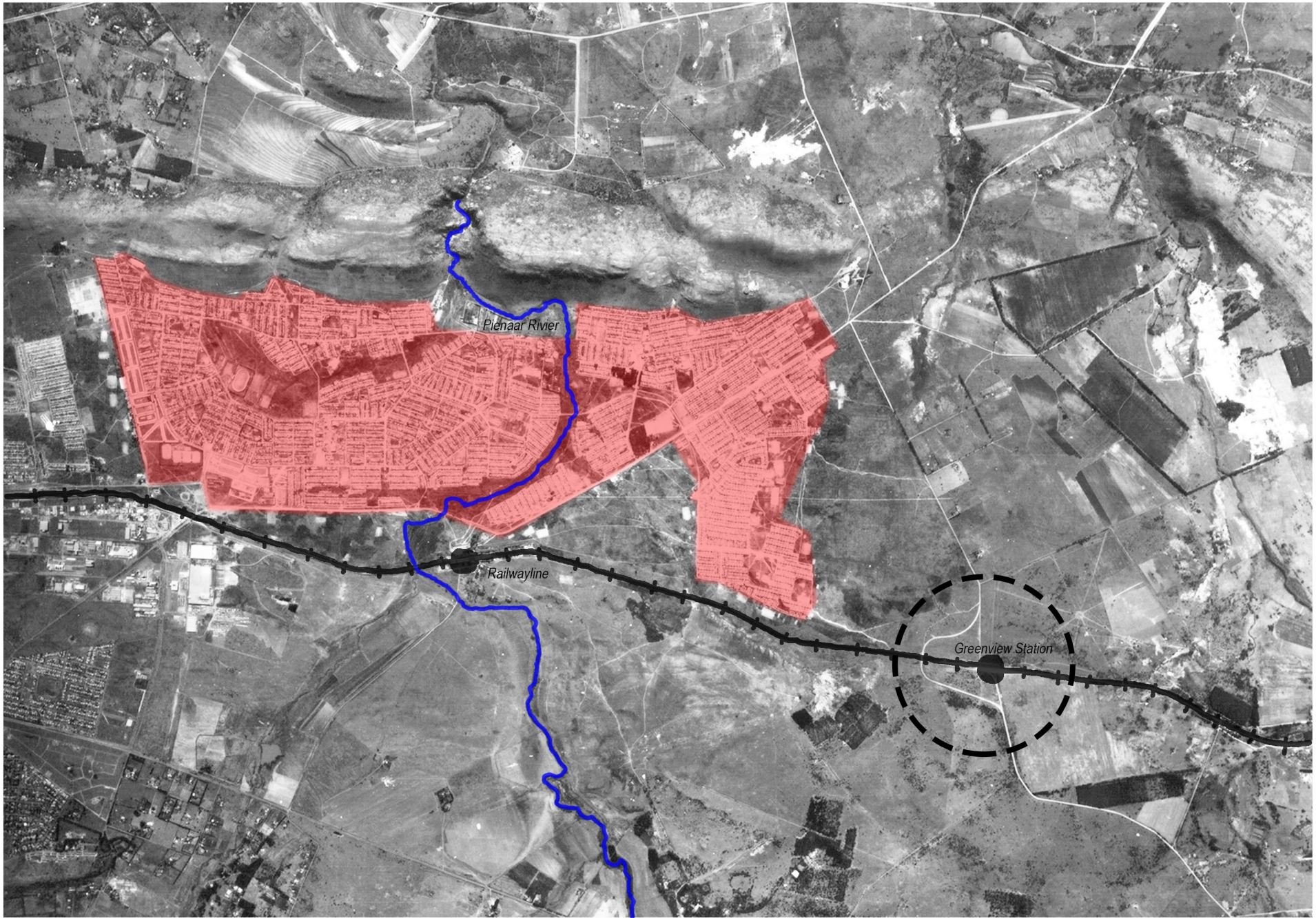


Fig. 2.2
Mamelodi Township in 1976

2.2 THE CURRENT CONDITION

The informal settlement of Phumolong, is found in extension 6 of Mamelodi and located in ward 16 of Tshwane, South Africa Gottsman (2009: 29). The Settlement is almost completely surrounded by the Township of Mamelodi, the south edge of settlement is buffered by the railway line and the newly completed Green View station.

The Tsolosolo Programme by GAPP Architects and Urban Designers identifies issues and opportunities facing the Mamelodi Township area. Mamelodi is located at the periphery of Tshwane and therefore it is separated from developing infrastructure. The inhibited growth towards the east in places such as Phumolong and Alaska has polarised the location of new mass housing schemes as well as the location of infrastructure and transport nodes. Poor north and south connection due to apartheid buffer zoning means that Mamelodi is congested during traffic peak hours on the main access roads. Movement towards the North is restricted due to the ridge of the Magaliesburg mountain and the railway line on the south. The housing is generally of low-density and it is overcrowded in the more informal areas such as Phumolong and Alaska.

There is limited range of socio-economic infrastructure and basic services in the eastern region of Mamelodi therefore creating insecure, unsafe spaces that lack 'sense of place'. Most peri-urban areas of Tshwane are populated by a wide range of inhabitants and cultures with disposable income that gets spent in more established or work opportunity areas therefore further disadvantaging Mamelodi.

Later in the chapter solutions to this urban problem will be explored towards a vibrant economy in Phumolong.



Fig. 2.3
Physical issues faced by Mamelodi (GAPP, 2010)



Fig. 2.4
Harthely Landfill, extraction of resources



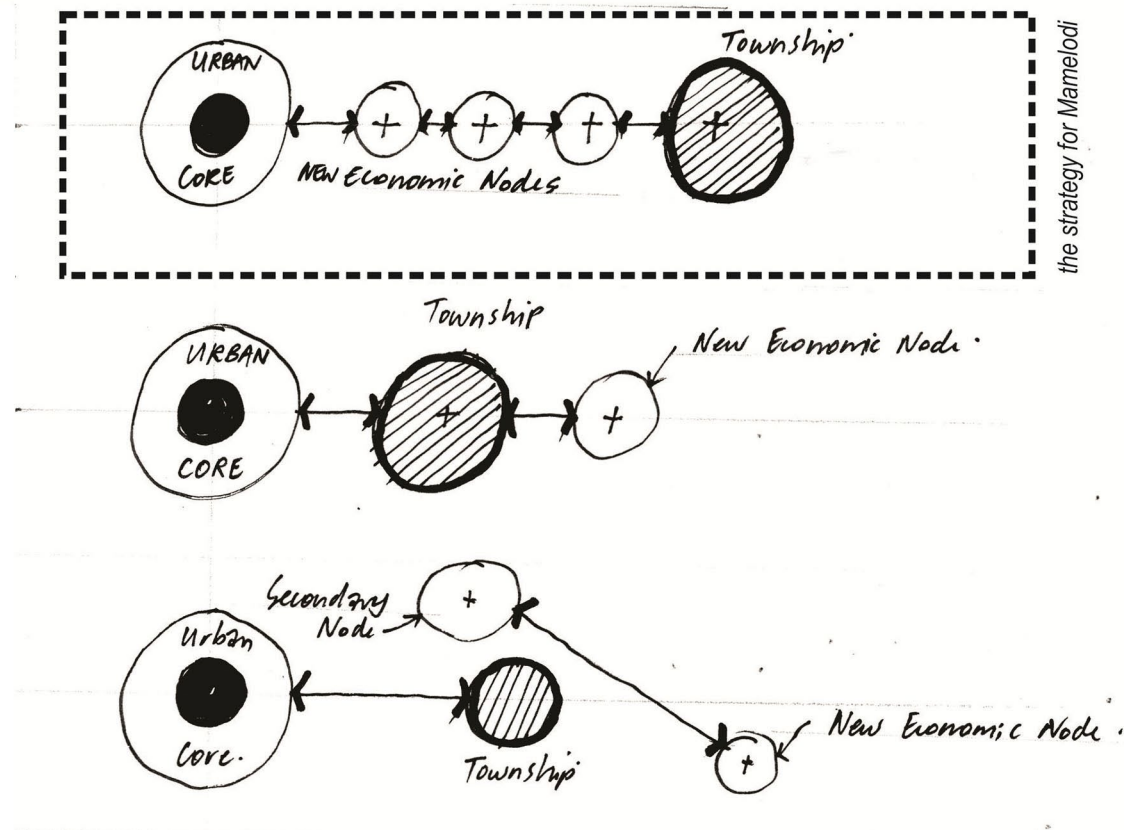
Fig. 2.5
The railway crossing



Fig. 2.6
The informal Settlement of Phumolong

2.3 MAPPING STRATEGY

According to Dewar and Uytenbogaard, the 'urbanisation explosion' occurs predominantly among poor, leading to increasing unemployment and inequality in big cities. Yet despite the magnitude of these problems, very few questions asked about how urban growth should be managed. Dominant urban planning and management practices in South Africa are largely based on either simple ideological considerations, separations or on conventional planning wisdoms developed in Western Europe and the USA'



MACRO

Fig. 2.7
Strategies for improving spatial disadvantage



Fig. 2.4
Aerial image showing urban condition in 2010



Fig. 2.8
Image showing urban condition in 2015

2.4 URBAN MAPPING

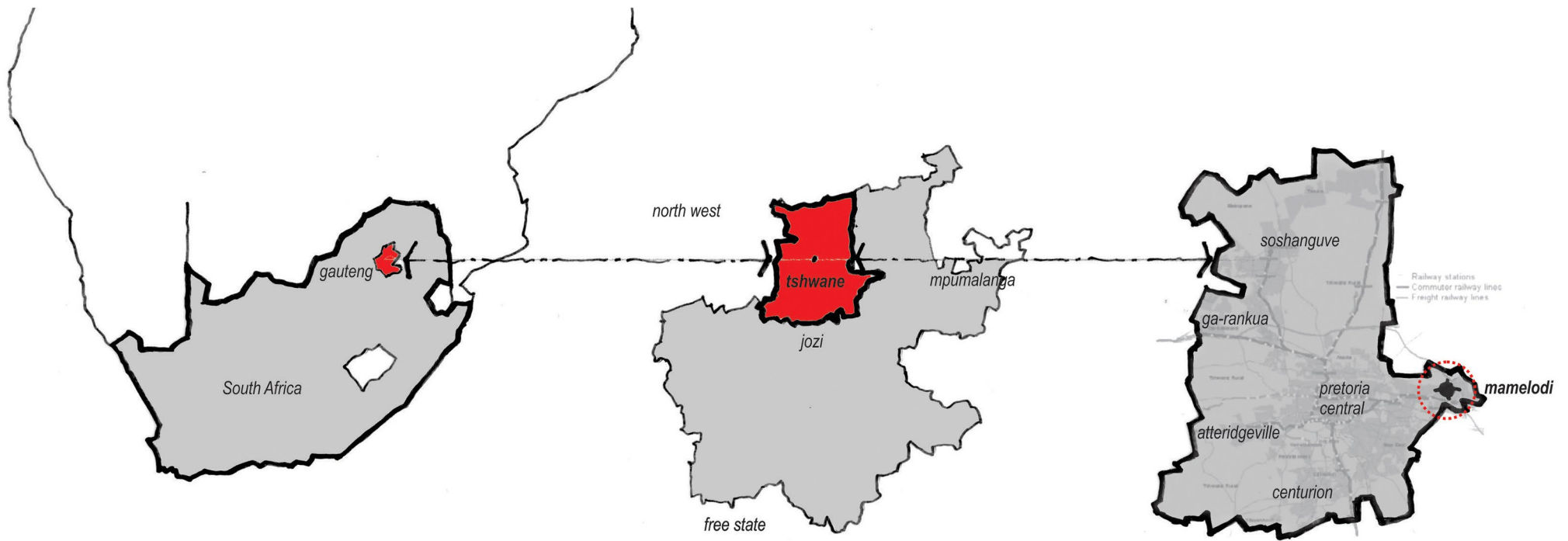


Fig. 2.9
locality diagram

3.3 THE URBAN STRATEGY

The intention of the Urban Vision is to implement urban renewal strategies targeting the informal settlers of Phumolong in order to improve the neighbourhood and public environment for the purpose of enhancing education levels, skills and entrepreneurship. The township renewal strategies that are studied are the Urban Renewal Programme and the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG).

The group Vision proposes an activity corridor connecting two important local nodes; the newly upgraded station by Prasa and the existing commercial node located at the intersection between the University of Pretoria Mamelodi and the bus depot.

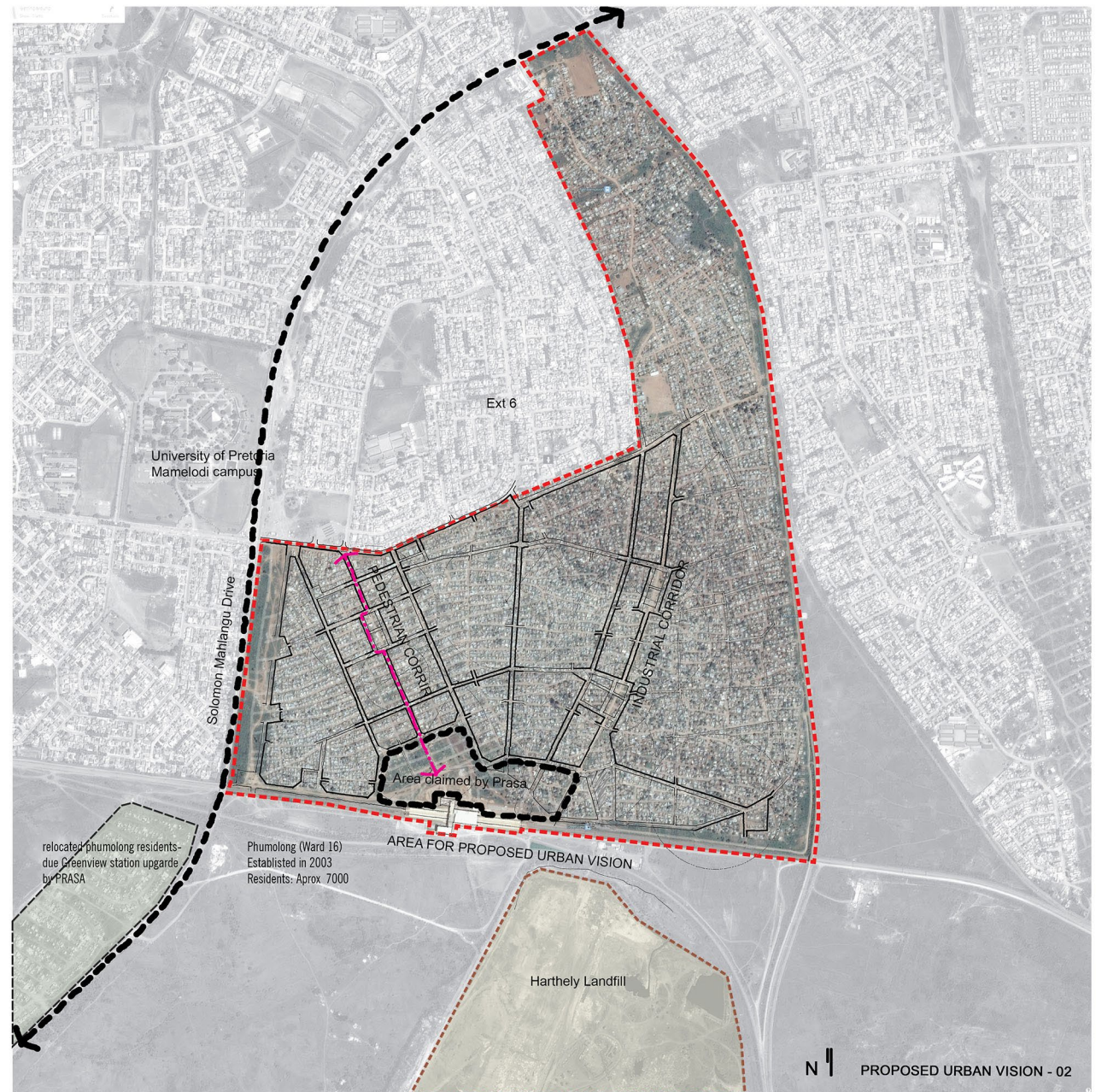


Fig. 3.7
phumolong strategy

2.5 PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Site Analysis

The substation in Green view is one of the oldest structures on the site. It is secured with a fence and sits adjacent to the railway line, the power station is an orientation point to the people of Phumolong

This building is a site office that was erected during the inception of the new Greenview station by Prasa. It houses the project team who work on site, it has meeting spaces, site offices as well as materials and equipment.

This portion of the Rail way line belongs to Transnet, a company which specialises in heavy haul freight. This has been separated from the commuter line running from east to west, this railway line continues in the south delivering goods to the east rand.



Fig. 2.11
panorama of chosen site

The Resources

The Heatherly Landfill also known as the dumping site was initiated in 1960 as a small dumping ground for Pretoria's eastern suburbs, Industrial, organic builders rubble, as well household waste are dumped every single day. The people of Phumolong have found this land fill to be an invaluable resource. Thousands people who live across the railway line cross over daily through the "Site" in order to collect valuable resources.



Fig. 2.42
plantains and other resources

Fig. 2.5
The railway crossing

Fig. 2.6
The informal Settlement of Phumolong

2.6 TYPOLOGY STUDY

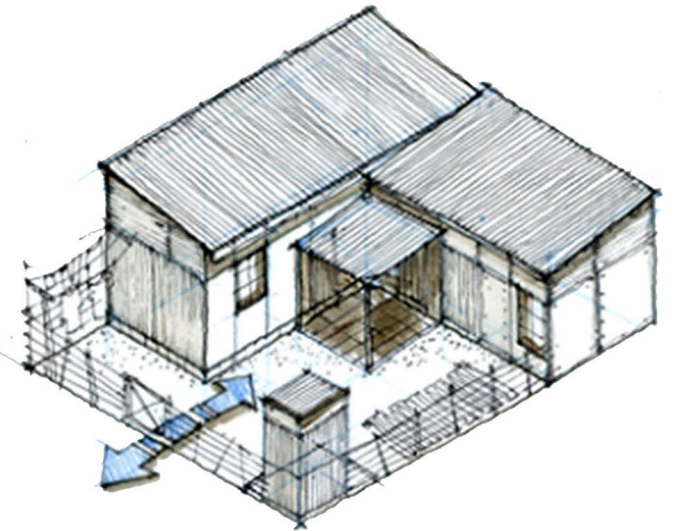


Fig. 2.13
existing conditions on site

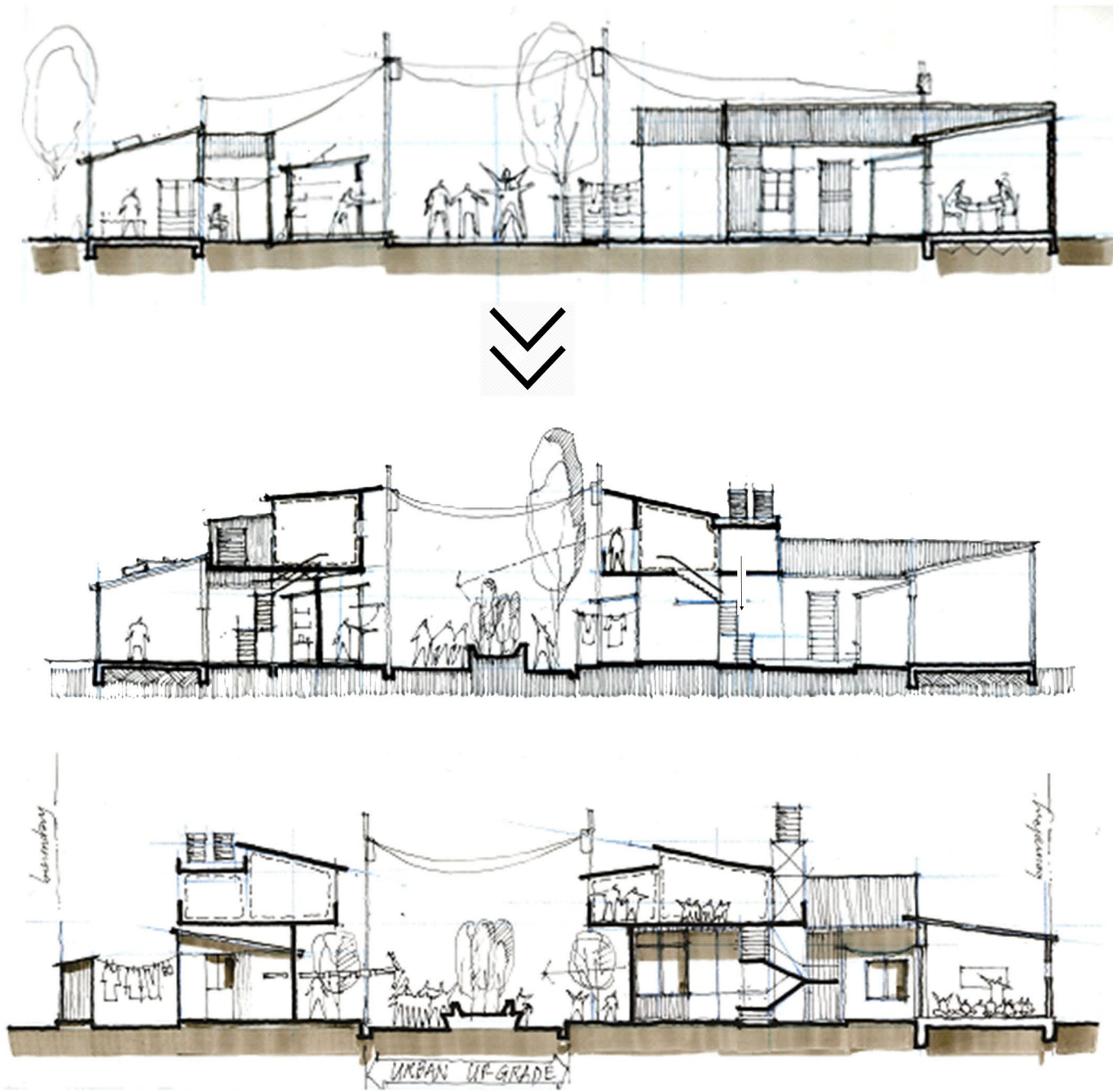


Fig. 2.14
envisaged incremental growth on site

