

# 04

## PROGRAMME

ULWALUKO,  
SHOPPING FOR THE AMAKRWALA,  
LADUMA NGXOKOLO,  
TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA,  
HAND-LOOM WEAVERS  
PROGRAMME,  
TEXTILE ROUTE VISION,  
SITE.

## Ulwaluko

Ulwaluko is an isiXhosa word for the initiation rituals and practices from boyhood to manhood (Ulwaluko. n-d).

Every year either in June or December, boys between in the ages of 18-23 are sent to an initiation school (Meintjies 1998), and they are taught what it means to be a man. Part of the journey of becoming a man involves being circumcised, which is a physical manifestation of the process of becoming a man. The initiates are traditionally named “amakrwala” which means “new man” (den Hartigh, 2011).

Now that the initiate is on the road to manhood, all his old clothes are donated to symbolise the end of boyhood. One of the first items given to him at the initiation schools is a blanket; his first possession as a man. Once the *amakrwala* returns home, begins a six month long journey into adulthood (den Hartigh, 2011).

Whilst back home, after the family has donated his old clothes, they need to buy new clothes to symbolise the fact the boy is now embarked on the journey to become man. One of the main items given to the *amakrwala* is high quality knitwear garments (den Hartigh,2011), as knitwear is a symbolic item of clothing that represents the transition; it is a man’s identity (den Hartigh, 2011).



Fig.105. “Amakrwala” with his blanket at initiation school.

## Shopping for the Amakrwala

The Marabastad of today is a retail and transport interchange. Marabastad is the public transport hub for many commuters who travel into the CBD from outlying townships, and because of this, it has become the shopping district for most commuters who travel into the CBD with public transport.

Being a transport interchange, the amount of traffic that flows through Marabastad on a daily basis allows for the trade and commerce aspects to flourish.

Every year either during the months of June and December (Meintjies, 1998), families come into the area buying clothes and blankets for their sons who are away at initiation school. This established practice of replacing the *amakrwala*’s clothes with good quality clothes has made Marabastad synonymous with high quality international brands, since local manufactures could not provide the type of goods needed. Brands such as Lyle and Scott, Pringle of Scotland, Navada, Brentwood, and many others can be found in Marabastad. These European and American brands have been appropriated by these young men and they have transformed them into their own unique identity (Den Hartigh, 2011). This identity has manifested into what we now know as the Pantsula or Skhothane lifestyle, as well as various other local styles. There is a gap in the

market, however, for high quality locally produced brands which can become a welcome representation of South Africa’s specific cultures, customs, and rituals (MaXhosa, 2013).



Fig.106.



Fig.107.



Fig.108.



Fig.109.



Fig.110.



Fig.111.

Figures 106 to 111 illustrate the various types of knitwear available in Marabastad.

## Laduma Ngxokolo.

Laduma Ngxokolo, a fashion and textile designer from Eastern Cape runs his own fashion line, 'MaXhosa'. Laduma Ngxokolo is the proposed client for this scheme, and the following brand description was taken from the company website;

*MaXhosa, a desire to explore knitwear design solutions that would be suitable for amakrwala. Laduma Ngxokolo's vision was to create a modern Xhosa-inspired knitwear collection that would be suitable for amakrwala, who are prescribed by tradition to dress up in new dignified formal clothing for six months after their manhood initiation. As a person who has undergone the process, Laduma felt that he had to develop premium knitwear that celebrates traditional Xhosa aesthetics. Along his journey into exploring astonishing traditional Xhosa beadwork patterns, symbolism and colours, he discovered that they would be the best source of inspiration for the knitwear, which he then reinterpreted into modern knitwear (MaXhosa, 2013).*

Laduma creates high quality knitwear for both men and women, as well as blankets and rugs. His garments are all influenced by international trends but as represent his heritage and identity. The fusion of these cultures provide a unique identity, which both international and local clients can understand and appreciate.

The clothing that is produced under the MaXhosa brand might be avant-garde in conception, but it's becoming an accessible clothing item for the everyday consumer.



Fig.112.



Fig.113.



Fig.114.



Fig.115.



Fig.116.



Fig.117.



Fig.118.



Fig.119.



Fig.120.

*Figures 112 to 120 show the various knitwear garments designed and produced by Laduma Ngxokolo.*

## Textile Industry in South Africa

Textiles and the textile industry is shaping the South African landscape through the economic development and skills training. Since 1994, the South African government and the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) have tried to boost the textile manufacturing industry in South Africa (Industrial Development Corporation, 2016).

This industry has been playing a vital role in shaping South Africa's economy, as the textile industry contributes by creating jobs, stabilising the economy, and contributing about 8% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Additionally, it is the second largest contributor of tax revenue in South Africa (Business/Partners, 2014).

In recent years the influx of cheaper imports from countries such as India, Pakistan and China have put a strain on this developing sector. In 2002 the textile industry employed over 181000 people, but by 2013 the number had decreased to 80 000 people (IDC, 2016). Now, due to the change in consumption patterns, many consumer analysts have noted that the need for "fast fashion" has overtaken the need to wait for international trends to be delivered to the stores. Many of the large retail stores are sourcing locally produced goods in order to feed this need of "fast fashion". This has seen an increase of up to 30% of locally produced items (Business/Partners, 2014).

Understanding growth patterns in consumption helps understand society on a basic level of what the needs, wants and desires are. Mary Douglas (1979), a retired Professor of Anthropology, writes that:

*Consumption is not a way of behaving that is added on after social patterns have been fixed. It is part of a way of life. Consumption is making gestures for making esteem, marking the calendar and making identity. The patterns of consumption show up the pattern of society. We should watch the flow of goods if we want to understand what consumption is doing to the form of society (Douglas 1979: i).*

Douglas (1979) clearly understands the influence that consumption has on *everyday* life. Whether they influence each other or not, consumption is a form of identity in its self and it has a physical presence in space. The identity of an individual who needs to be clothed in a certain manner, and a collective which produces such garments, influences the way that this process takes place in space. These are the ripple effects that the *everyday* has on space, place, and individuals.

## Hand-loom weavers: Identity through weaving.

Garment manufacturing has become an automated industry, and hand-loom weaving is a lost craft. Handmade garments are labour and time intensive, therefore the value of the garment would be far more than a garment made by a machine. Is there still space for handmade clothing garments within South Africa's already struggling textile industry? If so, what would its relevance be?

The Indian textile industry employs over 6.5 million people who are hand-loom craftsmen, but this number is slowly diminishing due to the number of jobs being lost to the mechanized process of creating loomed garments (Nemana, 2014). The "Handloom Reservation Act of 1985" protects the craft of hand loom products and provides a guideline of garments that can only be produced by a hand loom machine, such as certain school uniforms and uniforms for certain government issued jobs. Mohandas Gandhi (Nemana, 2014), saw the importance of this craft, as the preservation of this skill was an essential tool for survival and self reliance, as well as a form of rejection of the British occupation in India. Gandhi saw that by preserving the skill it instilled the preservation of individual and collective identity, in addition to the rejection of the Colonial identity in Indian space.

Many in India are trying to protect this craft from dying out. One such activist,

Dastkar Andhra argues that *"Unless our skills survive, how can we survive as humanity? These are a resource with which you can build a new world"*.

The Indian government has implemented various laws and structures that mix both the hand-loom craft as well as mechanized looms in order to preserve this skill and make it a profitable model (NDTV, 2016). The art of handmade objects is vital in the preservation of the identity of a group of people, through the identity of the craftsman and their specific talent. Each hand crafted piece is unique and carries with it a heritage that the machined garments cannot produce, but, in order to make this a feasible venture, a hybrid programme of machine and man needs to happen, between profit, craft, time, and quality. Only then can the preservation of such traditions stand the test of time in a world arena as driven by capitalism.

Learning from these lessons, it is proposed that this dissertation will investigate this hybrid model of production. By creating handmade garments, the identities of the designer, craftsman, and consumer become a tangible object, and the idea of uniformity is lost. This mode of production is seen as a tool to build on the existing identities in Marabastad through the design, manufacturing and selling of these products.



Fig.122. Weaver weaving the thread.



Fig.121. Laying out the thread for a garment.



Fig.123. Weaving on a hand loom.



Fig.124. Weaving.



Fig.125. A hand loom weaver creating a garment.



Fig.126. A hand loom machine.

## Programme

The proposed programme for this dissertation is the design and production of knitwear garments. In order for this to be a viable project, it is proposed that the entire process of textile manufacturing for the garments will be made in the study precinct of Marabastad.

Through mapping exercises it was revealed that Marabastad has a recycling culture. During the day, many recyclers walk around the streets of Marabastad collecting scrap plastics from dustbins and sidewalks. The main sorting area for the plastics is located on Johannes Ramokhoase Street next to the Water and Sanitation depot. The proposed vision is to turn the raw plastic into polyester. The vision includes the entire process of production which entails the manufacturing of polyester, blending it with natural fibres, to dyeing the thread and packaging the spools of thread to be used in the knitwear manufacturing process.

The focus of this dissertation will be a design studio, retail store, and the production aspect, and Laduma Ngxokolo will serve as a mentor to aspiring fashion designers. The production component will be a hybrid of mechanical looms and hand loom machine with on the job skills training.

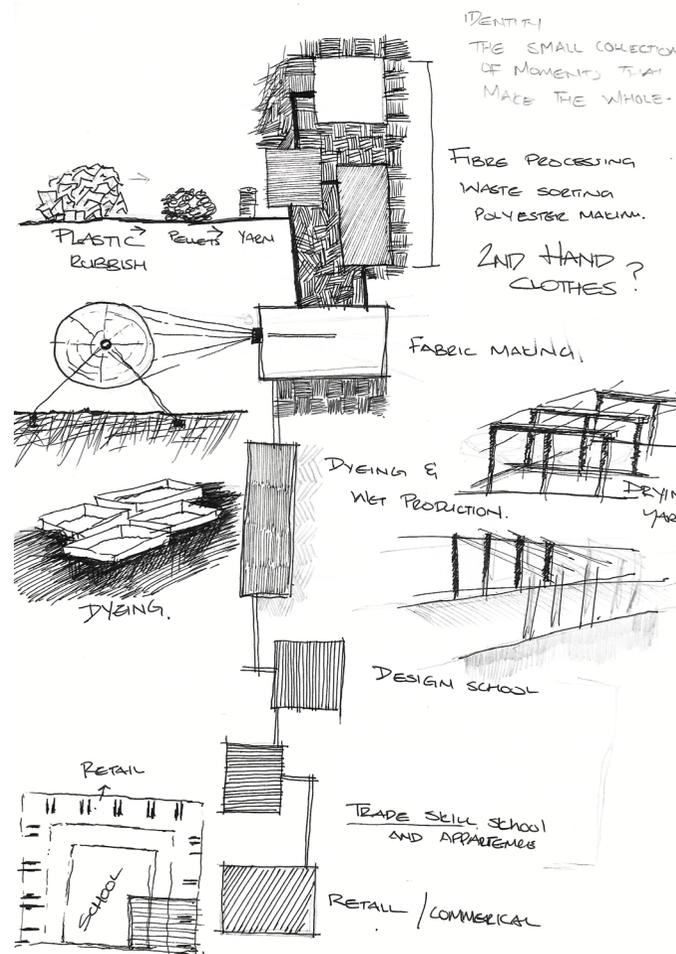


Fig.127. Conceptual diagram of the Textile Route.



Fig.128. Plastic collection to be processed.



Fig.129. Shredding plastics for recycling.



Fig.130. Spinning plastic into yarn.



Fig.131. Dyeing yarn.



Fig.132. Mixing natural and synthetic fibres.



Fig.133. Hand loom garment weaving.



Fig.134. Knitwear production.



Fig.135. Retail of garments in Marabastad.

Figures 128 to Fig. 135 illustrate the various capacitors along the proposed Textile Route which runs along the proposed Cultural Avenue.

## Vision

*Marabastad, A legacy of Utopia's*(2016), the urban vision proposal for this dissertation, a *Cultural Route* is proposed from the existing old trading stalls and Jamat khana Mosque, to the Heroes Acre cemetery (fig. 41).

Along this route various capacitors will be inserted to allow for the urban fabric to expand. The current condition of the area where the proposed Cultural Route will run along is the vacant land between Bloed Street and Johannes Ramokhoase Street. The built fabric was demolished under the Group Areas Act of 1960. Therefore the capacitors that will be inserted will be informed by the site conditions in Boom Street.

In *Marabastad, A legacy of Utopia's*(2016), the idea of a capacitor is defined as *latent energy* found in the study area and when inserted as an object on site the latent energy is released and growth in terms of development occurs.

Chapter 3 deals with the analysis of the built fabric of Boom Street. The programme of each capacitor along this *Cultural Route* will form part of the textile vision, and the process of manufacturing will become the nodes from which activities will grow. The proposed route runs North-South of Marabastad (fig. 41).

Existing programmes on site are identified to determine potential anchor points for growth. The recycling plastic depot on Johannes Ramokhoase is located on the southern edge of the study area. This has been selected as anchor point one. The historic trading stalls on Boom Street will reestablished as a trading point and will become be anchor point 2. These two nodes create an avenue that will run north to south across the Marabastad precinct and will form the proposed textile route. These two nodes are an important part of Marabastad's existing identity as well as being part of the facilitation process from which the textile identity will emerge.

The various activities that will act as capacitors are as follows (fig. 4.27):

1. Collection of plastics (anchor point 1)
2. Processing of the raw materials
3. Turning the raw material into polyester
4. Blending thread with natural fibres
5. Dyeing of the thread
- 6. Design and Production of Garments**
7. Reviving the Historic stalls (anchor point 2)

Figures 137 to 140 illustrate the current condition of the proposed sites for capacitors. Figure 141 shows the proposed vision for the Textile Route and figures 142 to 146 are diagrammatic sections of the vision.

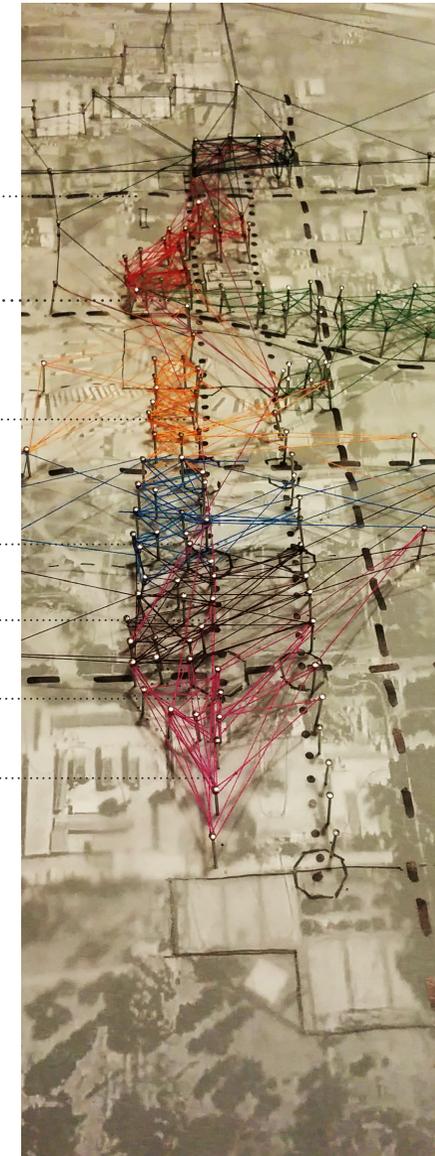


Fig.136. Conceptual model of the textile route



Fig.137. Reviving the trading stalls (7).



Fig.138. Design & Production of garments (6)



Fig.139. Production Route, sites 2 - 5.



Fig.140. Recycling depot hidden away (1).

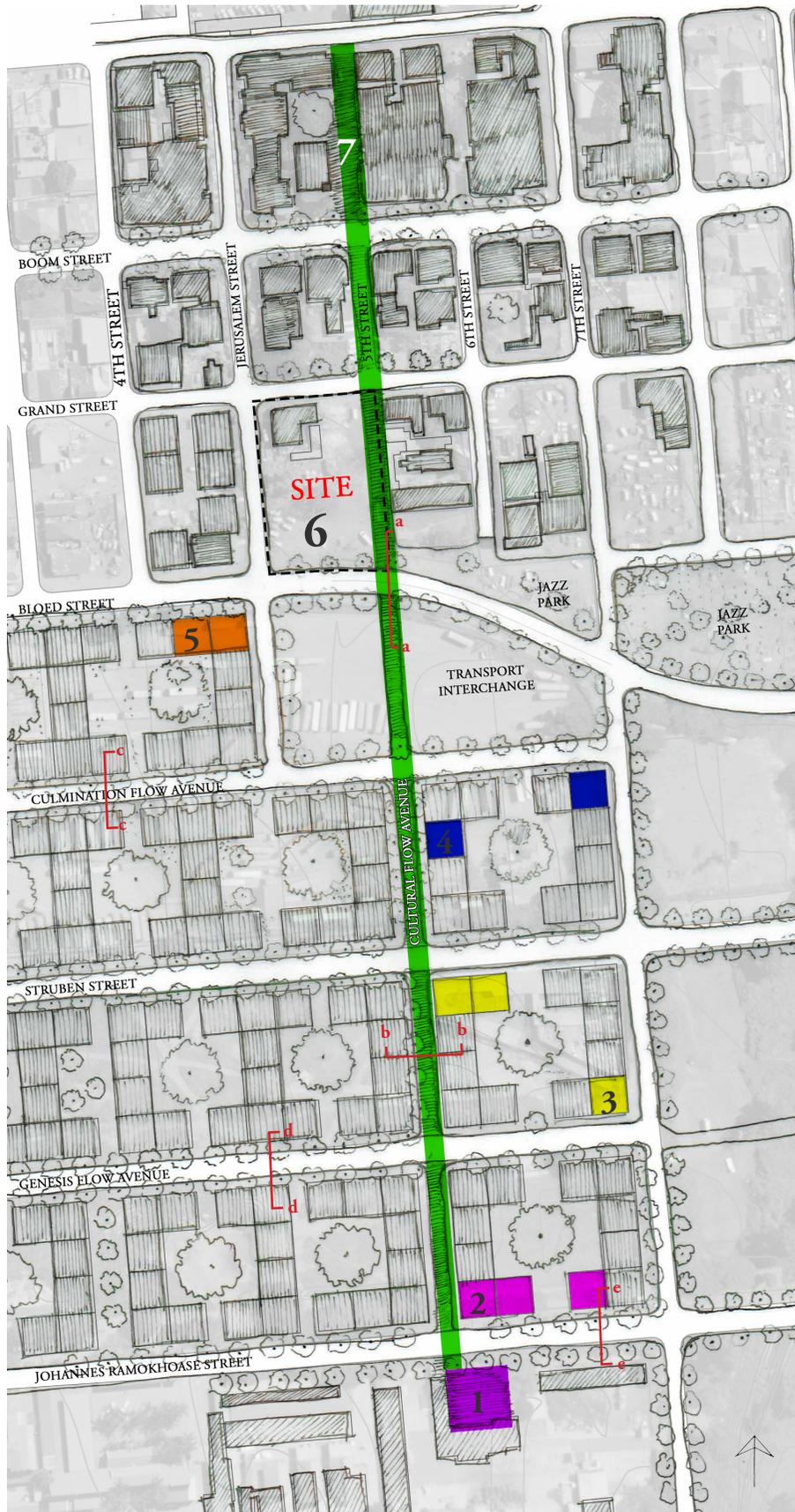


Fig.141. Vision map indicating the various capacitors along the route.

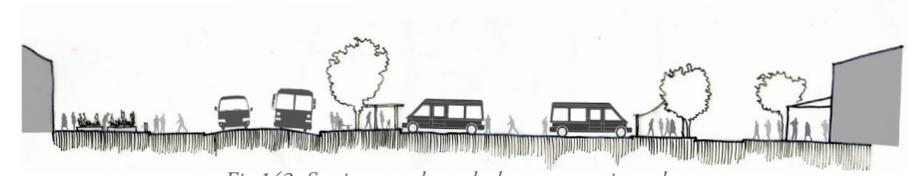


Fig.142. Section a-a through the transport interchange.

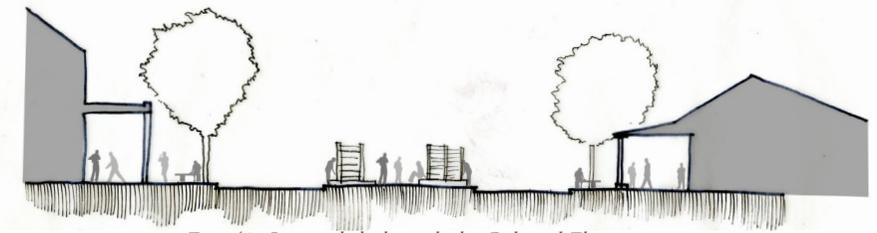


Fig.143. Section b-b through the Cultural Flow route.

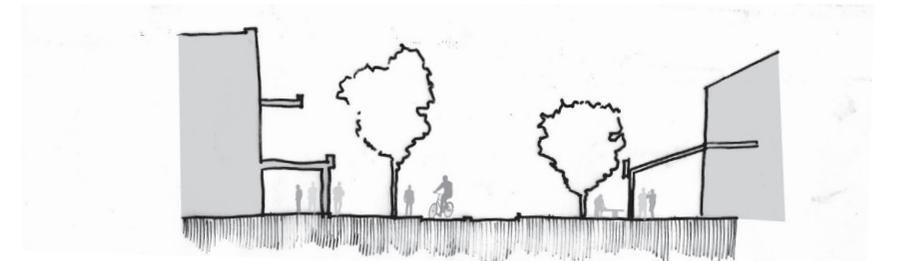


Fig.144. Section c-c through the Culmination avenue pedestrian route.

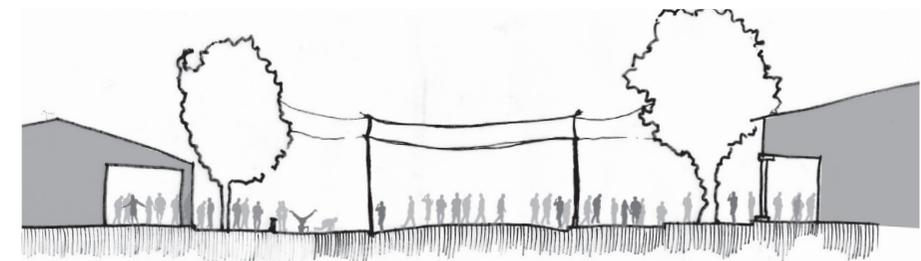


Fig.145. Section d-d through the Genesis Flow route as public avenue.



Fig.146. Section e-e showing mixed use buildings on Johannes Ramokhoase and Struben street.

Site location.



Fig.147. Aerial map indicating the proposed site.

Site Analysis.

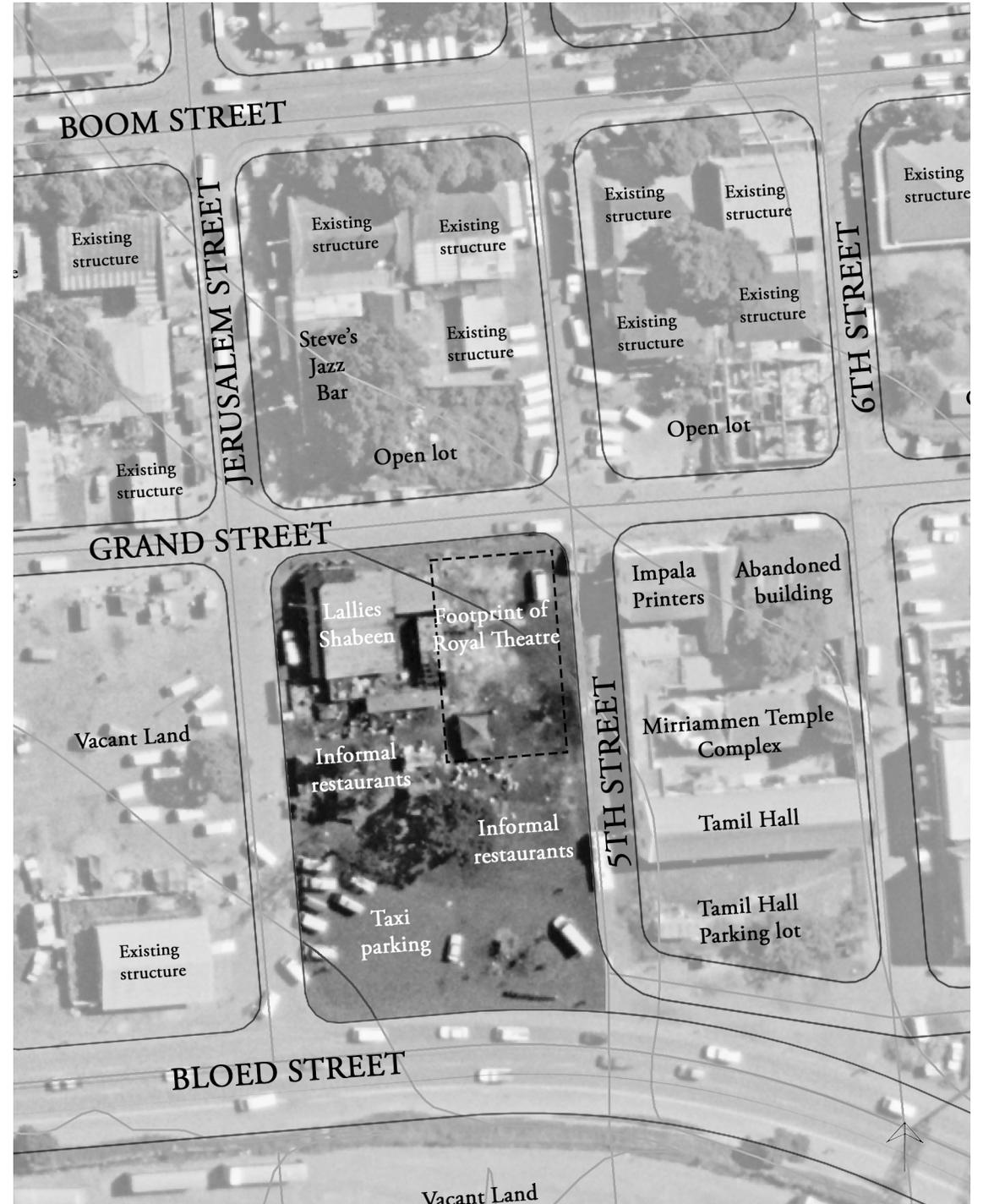


Fig.148. Existing site conditions.

## Site Analysis

The project is located along the proposed Cultural and Textile route. The sites boundaries are Grand Street to the north, Bloed Street to the south, Jerusalem Street to the west, and the now pedestrian road 5th Street to the east (fig. 149).

The only built structure left on the site is Lallies Shabeen on the corner of Grand and Jerusalem Street (fig. 153), which has one main entrance: the windows have been either closed with brick and mortar, or fenced in. The veranda that faces the street is used as social space with a pool table and foosball table. Behind the shabeen are public ablutions in a container-type structure, and the rest of the site has been demolished. The buildings were demolished in 1967 under the highway upgrade scheme.

The Royal Theatre, which was one of the three theatres that played a vital role in Marabastad's social identity and once stood on this site.

Jerusalem Street is now a main taxi route and drop off zone for many commuters. Small informal restaurants have set up under makeshift canopies along the site. These informal restaurants provide amenities such as a place to wash your hands, a covered eating area with tables and chairs, a serving counter for takeaways, an open flame cooking area, and the public ablutions which they share with the shabeen (fig. 156).

Taxi drivers use the site as a place to park the vehicles in order to service or wash them or simply just to park and grab some lunch.

5th Street is a pedestrian route which forms part of the sites eastern boundary (fig. 154). The adjacent block houses the Miriammen Temple, which is a protected heritage structure, the Tamil hall and parking lot (fig. 157), Impala printers (fig. 150) and an abandoned residential structure.

Jazz Park, which sits further east on the site and tapers off along the edge of Bloed Street (fig. 151). The planter boxes that are part of the landscape design serve as seating for pedestrians that move by or as a drying area for the taxi drivers to hang the car mats along (fig. 158).

Other conditions of the site include a blanket of soot and ash that covers the ground from the open flame kitchens (fig. 152).



Fig.149. Eastern site boundary and Temple wall.



Fig.150. Printers.



Fig.151. View of Bloed Street & Jazz Park.



Fig.152. Open air restaurants.



Fig.153. Lallies Shabeen.



Fig.154. 5th street



Fig.155. Tent Structures.



Fig.156. Seating for patrons under the tent.



Fig.157. Parking lot and Tamil Hall



Fig.158. Jazz Park Planters.



Fig.159. Grand Street and sidewalk.



Fig.160. Informal Trade.

# 05

## PRECEDENTS

EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURE.  
THE STREET  
FACTORY SPACE ON DISPLAY  
PUBLIC STEPS PUBLIC SEATS  
ORDINARY DETAILS