



fig.4.1. SITE



# SITE: CONTEXT FOR THE ARCHITECTURE

The greatest challenge that agricultural development faces is the means by which agriculturalists gain their knowledge, in terms of the practice of sustainable agriculture. According to research done by Mutizwa Mukute in 2010, the “approaches to, training and perception of sustainable agriculture in the region are currently rather negative, under-resourced and weak” (Mukute, 2010:4).

Between the city of Pretoria and the agricultural land of the Highveld (Delmas) one finds the remnants of what was once the model farm in the Transvaal. The Irene Farm was the brainchild of business tycoon Hugo Alois Nellmapius. Of Hungarian descent, this visionary businessman felt that the Highveld soil could yield much greater numbers than the practice of the day, and he employed numerous professionals on the farm to ensure that all aspects of the farming industry would perform to their greatest potential.

Over time the farm has been reduced in size due to the expanding city fabric, and what remains today is a mere fraction of the approximate 27 000 hectares that was once the Irene Farm. The current owners maintain the herd of dairy cows, but this is merely for the nostalgic atmosphere the cows add to the farm and not for any financial gain. Their fortunes came from the land that the farm occupied that was sold off and today house various occupants, from industry, to commercial and residential functions.

## BUILT FABRIC

There are numerous buildings on the farm, which vary in size and function, some of which were in existence from the beginning of the farm and serve the same function to this day. Next to these historical buildings are various additions to the site that were added purely for their functional requirements and not do necessarily consider the sensitivity of the heritage of the adjacent buildings of the spaces.

## HERITAGE SPACES AND BUILDINGS

Considering the significant heritage of the site and the spaces that define the Irene dairy farm, there are a few of the buildings that contribute to the significance of the place. The first and most important building to consider is the main stable, that is still in use today as it was designed in 1889. Nellmapius based the barn structure on a Hungarian model, as this was the country he moved from to the Transvaal. It was designed to house the seventy Friesland dairy cows on the farm. Today this building forms an integral part of the workings of the farm. The dairy herd are fed before being milked in the adjacent milking parlour building.



fig.4.2. MAIN STABLE: SITE



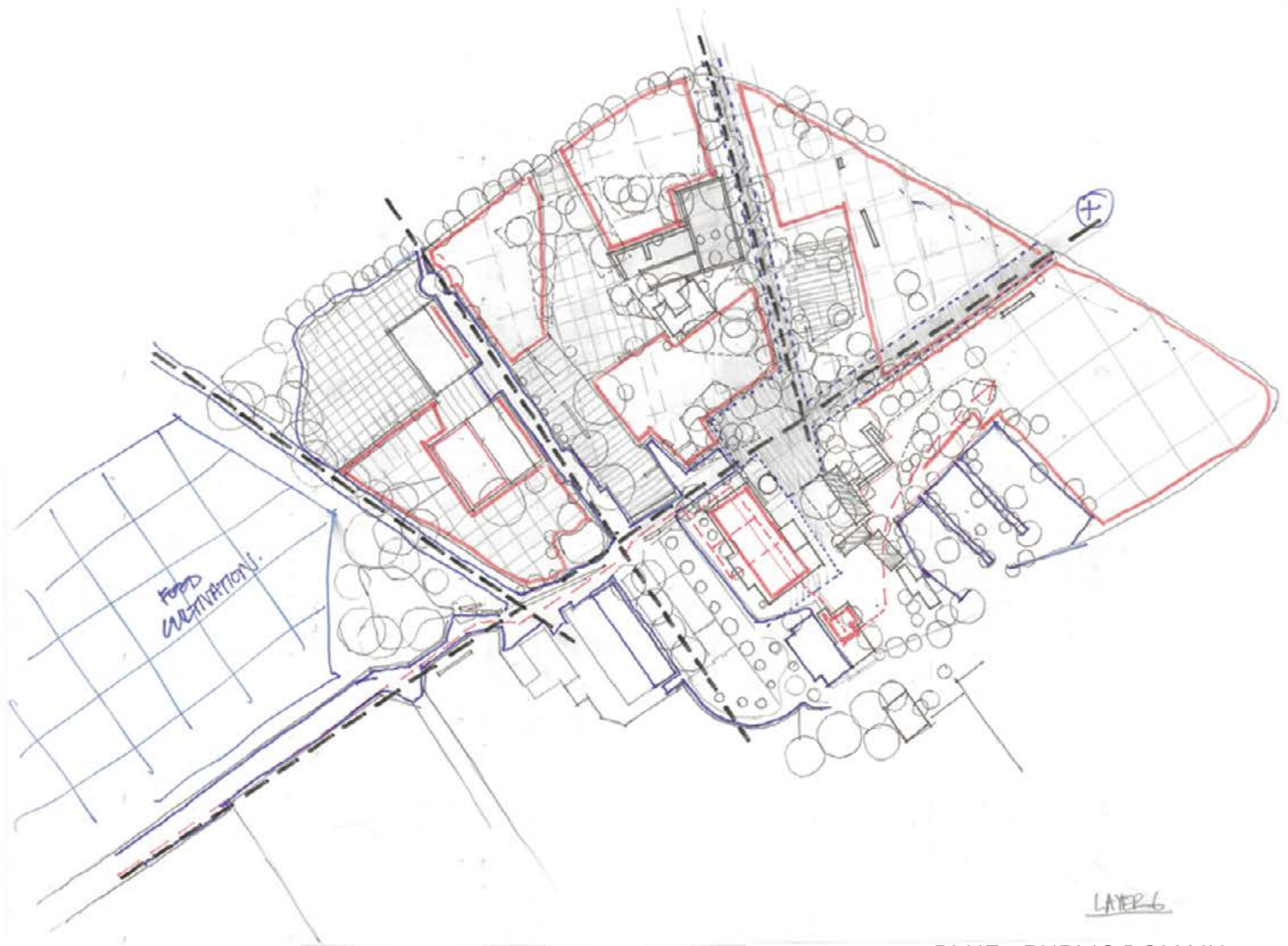
MAIN STABLE



fig.4.3. EXISTING BUILT FABRIC



fig.4.4. EXISTING BUILDINGS+HISTORIC AXES



BLUE - PUBLIC DOMAIN  
RED - COW DOMAIN  
BLACK - EXISTING FABRIC

fig.4.5. EXISTING BUILDINGS+FUNCTIONS



fig.4.6. HERITAGE - BUILDINGS



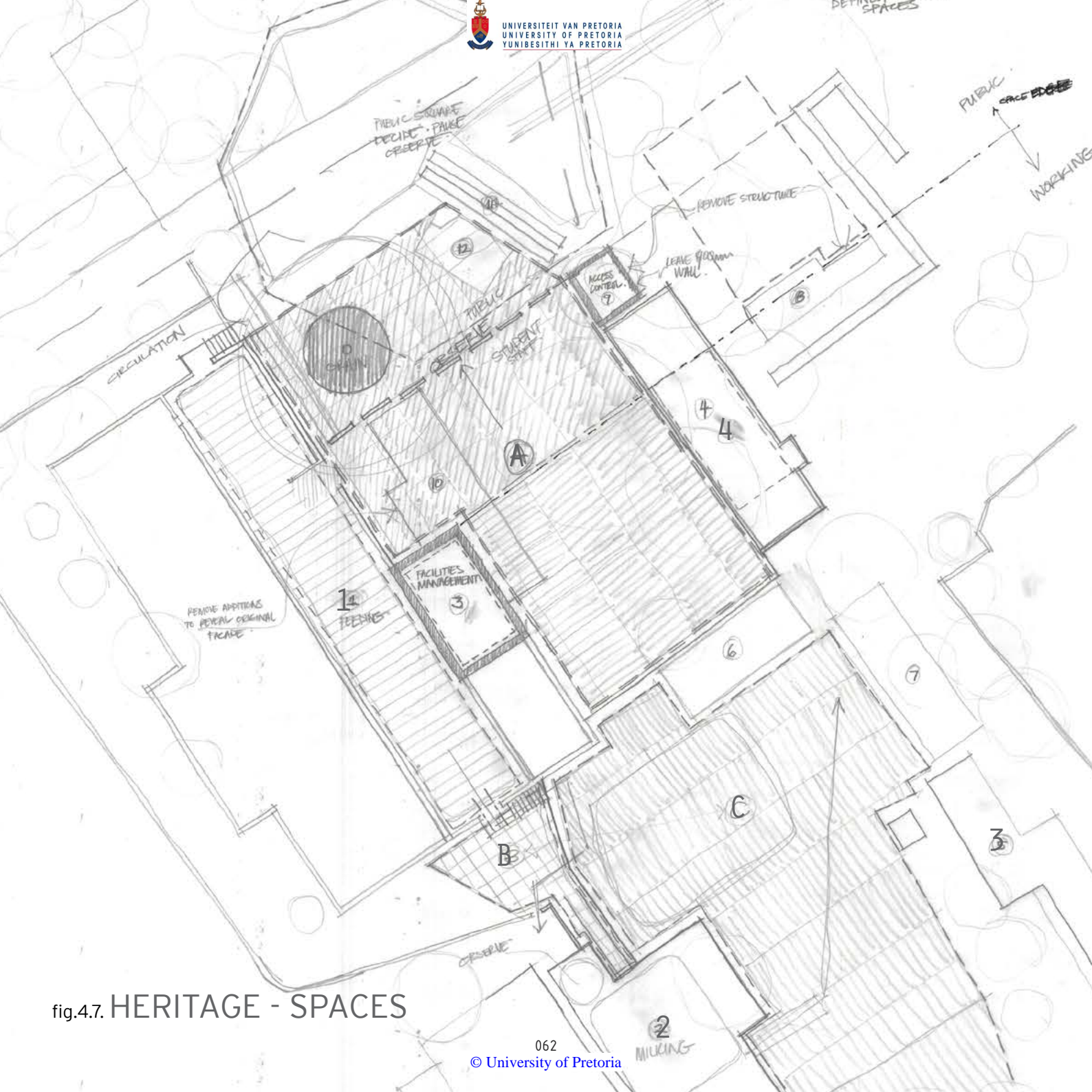


fig.4.7. HERITAGE - SPACES

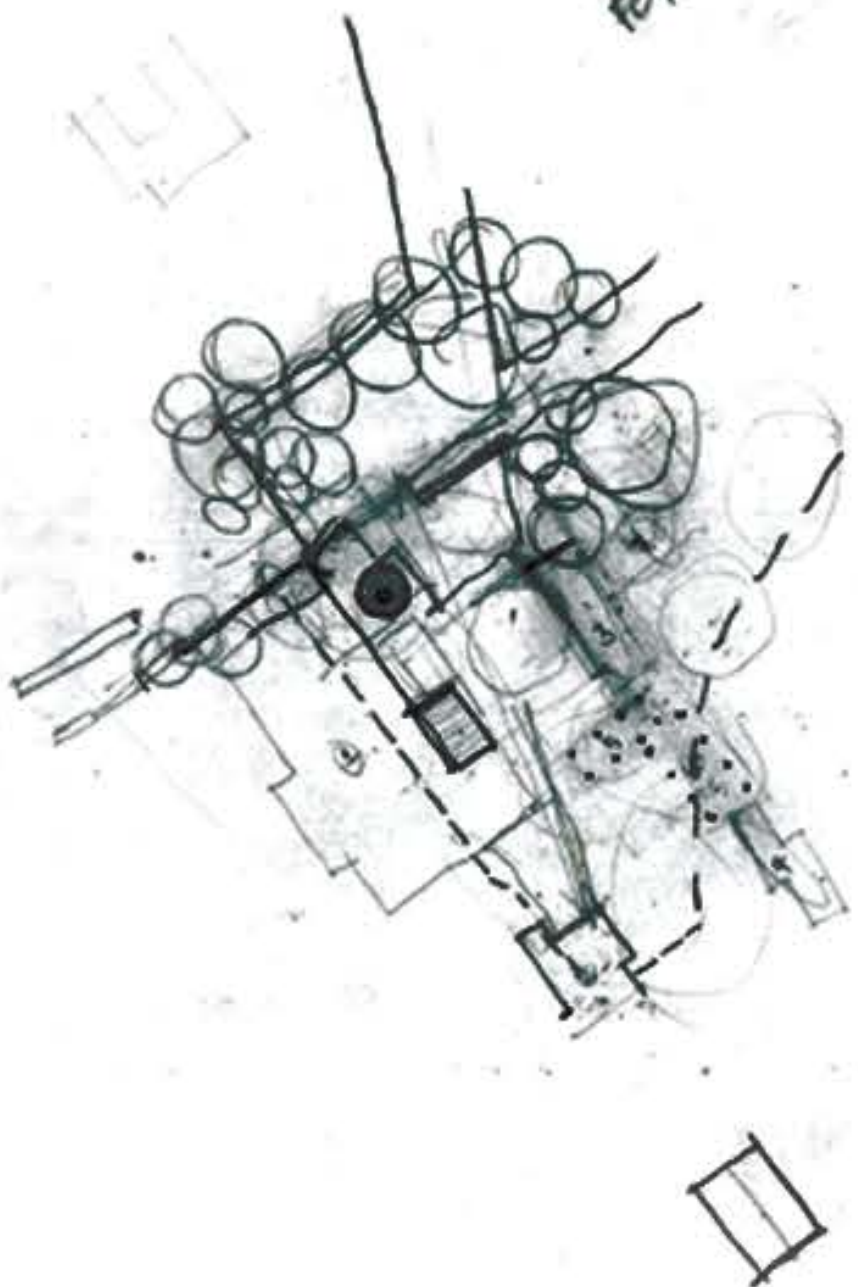


fig.4.8. FOCUS AREA - SIGNIFICANT HERITAGE

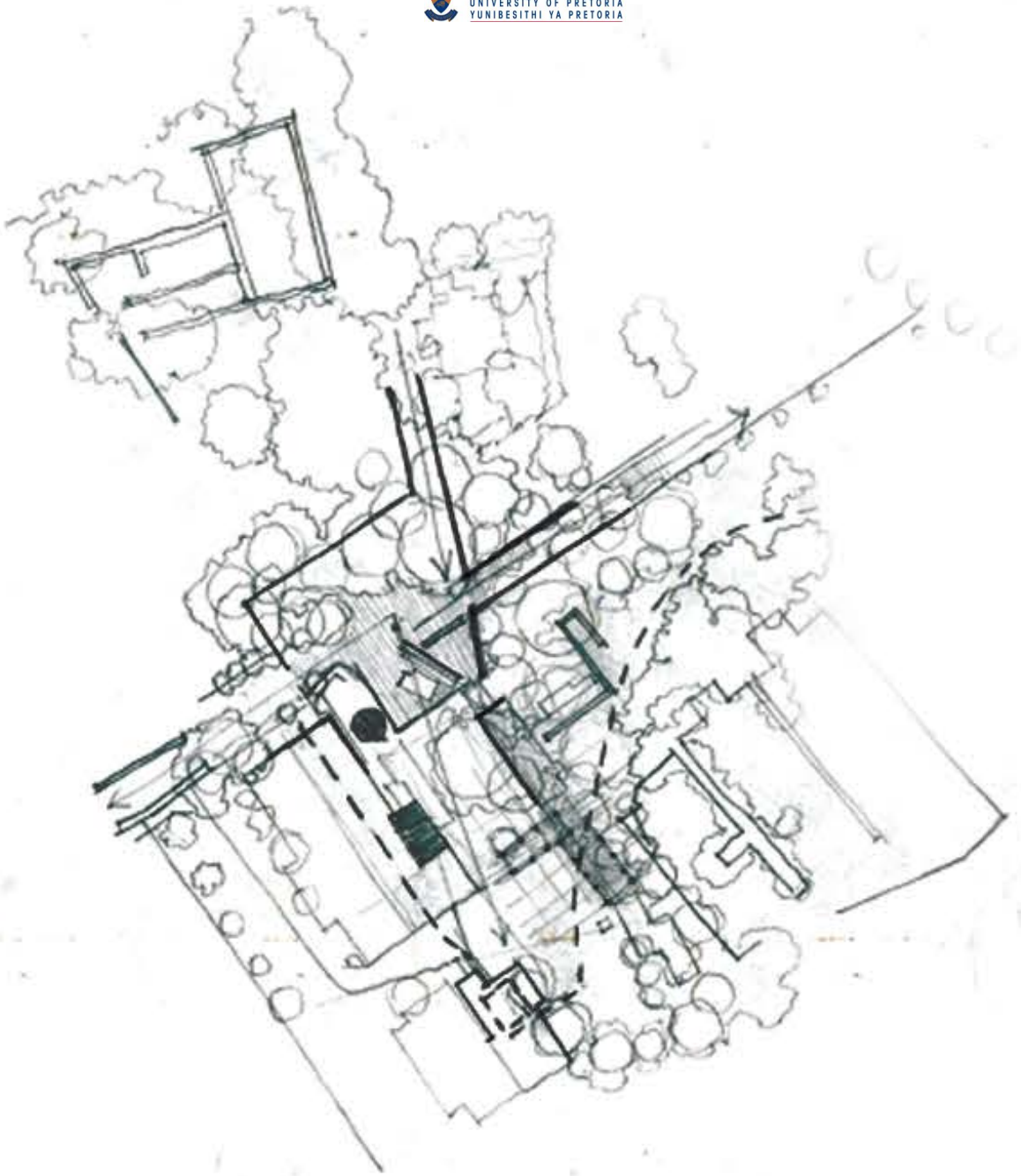


fig.4.9. FOCUS AREA - HERITAGE: BUILDINGS AND TREES