

Figure 3.2: The Apies River with Meintjieskop (Pierneef 1914, edited by Author)

Figure 3.3: Apies River,



Figure 3.1: The Apies River and Union Buildings (Wenning, edited by Author)



Transvaal (Pierneef 1937, edited by Author)

Context

03

Origins and development of Pretoria

Pretoria's character and sense of place is derived from its natural landscape which consists of ridges and rivers. According to Jeppe (1906:7) during the early years of the town's establishment, the Apies river did not just provide the people of Pretoria with healthy freshwater and productive food systems, but it was also a place of social and spiritual fulfilment. It is exactly these natural features, providing protection and a source of life, which prompted the Voortrekkers to settle in 1839, and establish the town of Pretoria by the 1850's with its functional pioneering town planning grid overlaid over the natural landscape (Biljon, 1993:38).

This first planning transition from natural to functional resulted in a harmonious

marriage between man and the natural order/landscape as a sensitivity to place and social nature of people was still present (Biljon 1993:39), but it didn't last long. In 1903 the first democratic council of Pretoria was elected and soon after more water management infrastructural development started rolling out (Haarhoff et al. 2012:781). At that time, a major change affected Pretoria's sense of place as the Apies river was channelised. This modification, although functional in use, completely disregarding the river's former natural state (Goodman 1992).

Up until the 1940's, Pretoria's development was mostly governed by building and health regulations, as it had no clear framework for development, but as the city grew larger, a strict development plan had to be formulated. The council appointed William Holford

Figure 3.4: Untouched natural landscape (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

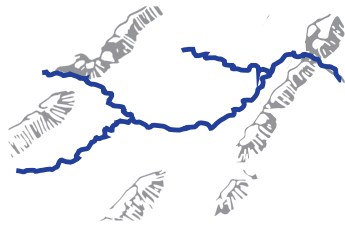


Figure 3.5: Harmony of classical and cosmic order (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

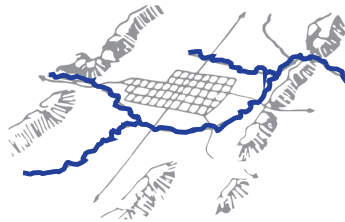


Figure 3.6: Expansion of the city (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)



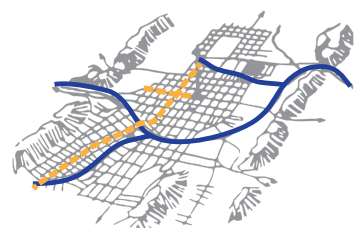
Figure 3.7: 1910-1930 Channalisation of the Apies river (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)



Figure 3.8: 1992 Implementation of Ringroad (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)



Figure 3.9: 2013 BRT infrastructure implemented (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)



in 1948 to formulate a proposal for the city's development. His proposal had two components; one was to strengthen the image of Pretoria as the administrative capital through implementing a strict blueprint planning scheme indicating building heights, setbacks and densities, and the other infrastructural component was to physically define the CBD with a limited access ring road which would also accommodate more vehicular traffic through the city (Biljon 1993:41). It is clear that the first development framework undermined the sense and character of place, defined by the natural landscape, through enforcing a rigid blueprint planning scheme, as well as to undermining the social nature of the city's people by favouring vehicular infrastructure development.

Numerous iterations of the original ring road proposal had been made to scale down on the size of the intervention. It was not until 1992 that the southern leg of the proposed road ring road was implemented. In order to execute the vision, land had to be expropriated and buildings demolished for road-building purposes (Biljon 1993:41). The expropriation of land for road-building resulted in fragmented public space, a spatial disconnection of the public environment, coined by Transik (1986:2-6) as 'lost' space. Through the fragmentation of public space, the social nature of the city's people was forced to change and as a result influenced lived experiences.

In 1973, the Pretoria city council decided to formulate a two-phase master plan for the whole city that would regulate any future planning. According to Biljon (1993:42), the first phase, Policy Plan, was very functionalist, comprehensive and blueprint-like with strong underlying Garden-City-thinking. The second phase, the Structure Plan, intended to optimise vehicular movement within the city as well as to minimise conflict between land uses (Biljon 1993:42).

The next major step in the city's planning and development framework was the conception of the Greater Pretoria Guide Plan by the Pretoria City Council in 1984, which instated statutory guidelines for all town planning schemes to adhere to. This 'guide' claimed to be process-driven, but was also blueprint-like and functionalist at its core.

Figure 3.10: Pretoria's origin conceptualised (Author 2019)

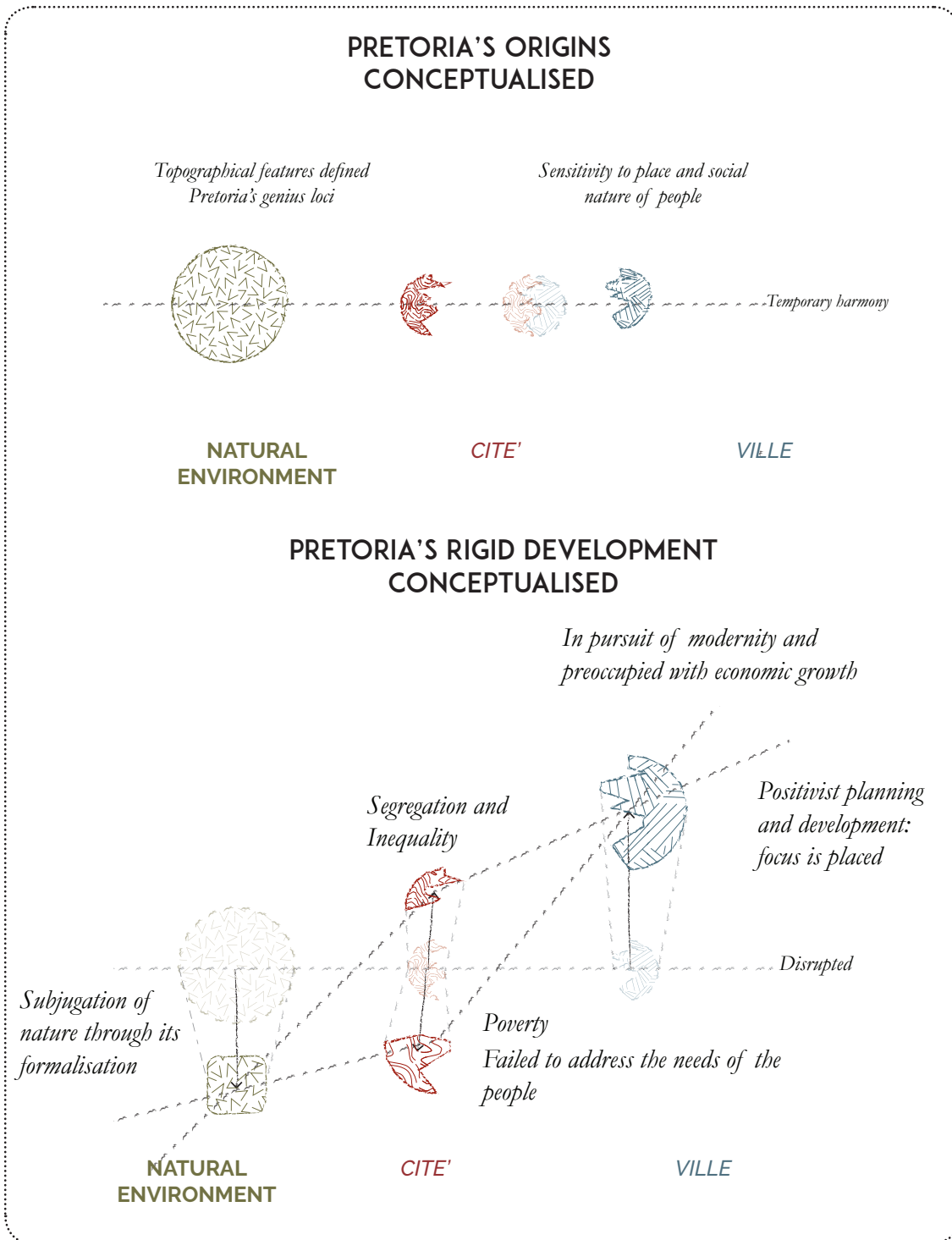


Figure 3.11: Rigid Development overtime conceptualised (Author 2019)

Following the inception of the Greater Guide Plan, the Structure Plan for Pretoria was revised in 1992 to be more accepting of the new South Africa, but with its blueprint structure, it still failed to address challenges of sustainability, inequality, poverty and informality within the city (Biljon 1993:43).

The development of Pretoria started out slowly and conservatively, with an understanding of place and the social nature of the city's people (figure 3.10), but as the city grew, the scale of interventions also grew larger and started to change the character of

place as well as the social nature of people. According to Biljon (1993:42), the city's planning and development rationality was positivist (and not normative) and focused predominantly on infrastructural development and not on addressing the needs of the people. It dealt only with the issue of 'things' rather than with the needs of its inhabitants (see figure 3.11).

Regenerative Frameworks

With the establishment of the new democratic South African government after 1994, the city council's attention shifted from merely developing rigid planning schemes, to focusing on inner-city regeneration strategies and visions that celebrates our heritage and the country's diverse cultures (City of Tshwane 2005) (see figure 3.15). The Tshwane Open Spaces Framework proposal of 2005, aimed to identify place-making opportunities in areas with a confluence of nature and city to redefine the 'lost' character of the city of Pretoria, a city that is part of the natural landscape (City of Tshwane 2005). The

spatial framework's normative approach (opposing the development frameworks' positivist approach) hinged on the spatial dualism of the African context as it emphasises the importance of a spiritual and productive connection to nature. The Apies river was identified as an important natural asset and therefore its regeneration and upgrading were highlighted as central themes within the framework and a key target for the city's 2030 vision (City of Tshwane 2013).

In 2013, the City of Tshwane's Renewal Project was initiated to focus on the city's economic growth. One major infrastructural development was the implementation of the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT) as part of its movement strategy to improve circulation not only within, but also to and from the city. The implementation of the BRT system meant that public space and land had to be expropriated to build the new roads for the required bus lanes and stations (City of Tshwane 2013).

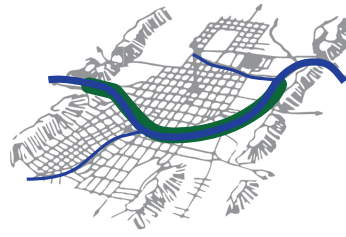


Figure 3.12: Left, 2005 Placemaking: Confluence of nature and city (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

Figure 3.13: Mid, 2015 Nelson Mandela Green corridor (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

Figure 3.14: Right, 2015 Kopanong - The gathering space (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

Urban vision

The Tshwane Open Space Framework's vision statement proposes a network of interconnected ecologies and systems that facilitate economic, social and environmental upliftment (City of Tshwane 2005). Thus, identifying the regeneration of open spaces in the city as an important strategy for providing socio-economic and ecological place-making opportunities. These places have the power to enhance

community integration, generate and facilitate economic activity and stimulate growth (City of Tshwane 2013).

The Tshwane inner city Regeneration Strategy of 2015 and vision for 2055 envisages a city where its people have access to social and economic opportunities in order to improve their quality of life (City of Tshwane 2015). The Regenerative Strategy has identified various projects of regeneration within the city, with one of these being the Nelson Mandela Green Corridor development. This project focuses on the rezoning and spatially restructuring the urban fabric through design interventions on both sides of Nelson Mandela drive, as well as upgrading the Apies river into a

promenade with public access and circulation which interacts with the river itself (City of Tshwane 2015).

According to Fourie (2001), the construction of the Department of Trade and Industry was the first attempt in realising the Nelson Mandela Green Corridor vision as it started out with great ideals of being inclusive but ended up being closed off due to its private functions. The purpose and outcome of the inner-city regeneration is to create a more resource efficient and resilient city, to sustainably grow an inclusive economy and to foster social cohesion, happiness and encourage healthy citizens.

It is very clear that the city of Pretoria's planning and development frameworks are very functional and prescriptive whereas the visions provided throughout the years have all been focused on the well-being of people and nature. This positivist development favoured the *ville* and has had negative spatial and cultural consequences on the lived experiences of the city. As a result, space has become physically and socially fragmented and 'lost'. For years there has been a disconnect between the city of Pretoria's vision's goals and their frameworks' and planning schemes' ability to measure its development success. Pretoria's sense of place has been lost due to the continual blueprint planning schemes, the city's positivist development prioritisation and the city's negligence towards the cultural and social health of its people.

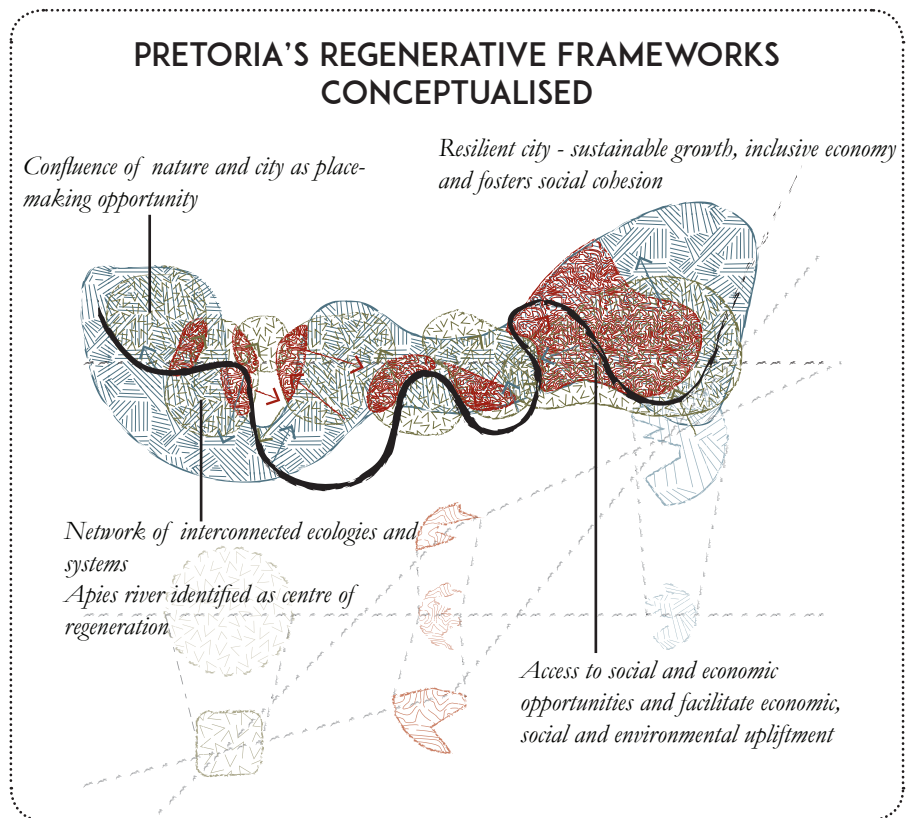


Figure 3.15: CoT's Regenerative Framework conceptualised (Author 2019)

Figure 3.16: Achieving the Regenerative vision (Author 2019)

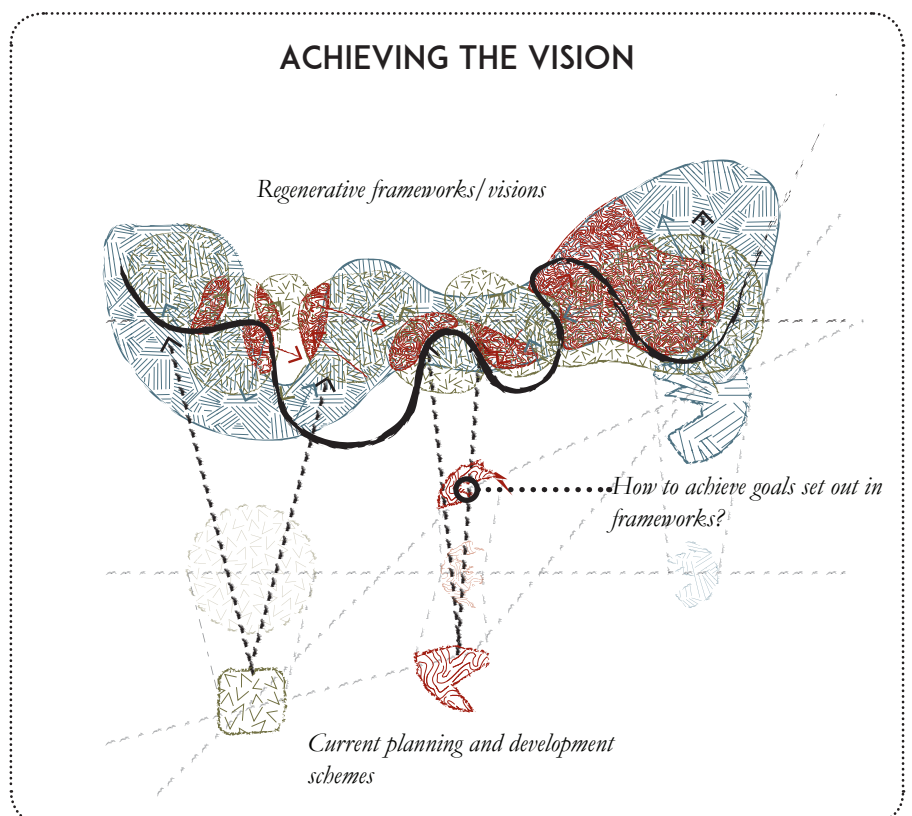




Figure 3.17: Trevenna Macro location (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Site selection

To address the disconnect between the city of Pretoria's past development and their latest regenerative development goals, the dissertation will situate itself within Tshwane's 2055 vision for the city. The area designated as 'Kopanong' or the gathering space, located in Trevenna adjacent to the Apies river, has been identified as a hub for social, economic and environmental enablement and growth. As mentioned in the Tshwane Open Space Framework, regenerating the Apies river and establishing a spiritual and productive connection with the natural landscape is a central focus in order to redefine the lost sense of place of the city of Pretoria. As this dissertation aims to improve the sense of place and bridge the divide between *cite'* and *ville* in the city of Pretoria, the chosen site has the best opportunity to reconcile the lived experiences and the built environment through an architecture that supports place-making.

To better understand and respond to the urban condition, an analysis of Trevenna was done. The most relevant findings were that a robust economic trade and services network exist due to a high amount of pedestrian flow for the residentially dense Sunnyside. The presence of physical barriers inhibit social interactions and thus discourages public place-making. Lastly, there is a poor relationship between the Built environment and the natural landscape as the built environment doesn't engage but rather subjugates the environment it is in.

Figure 3.18: 2055 Kopanong - The gathering space (Jordaan 1987, edited by Author)

KOPANONG THE GATHERING PLACE

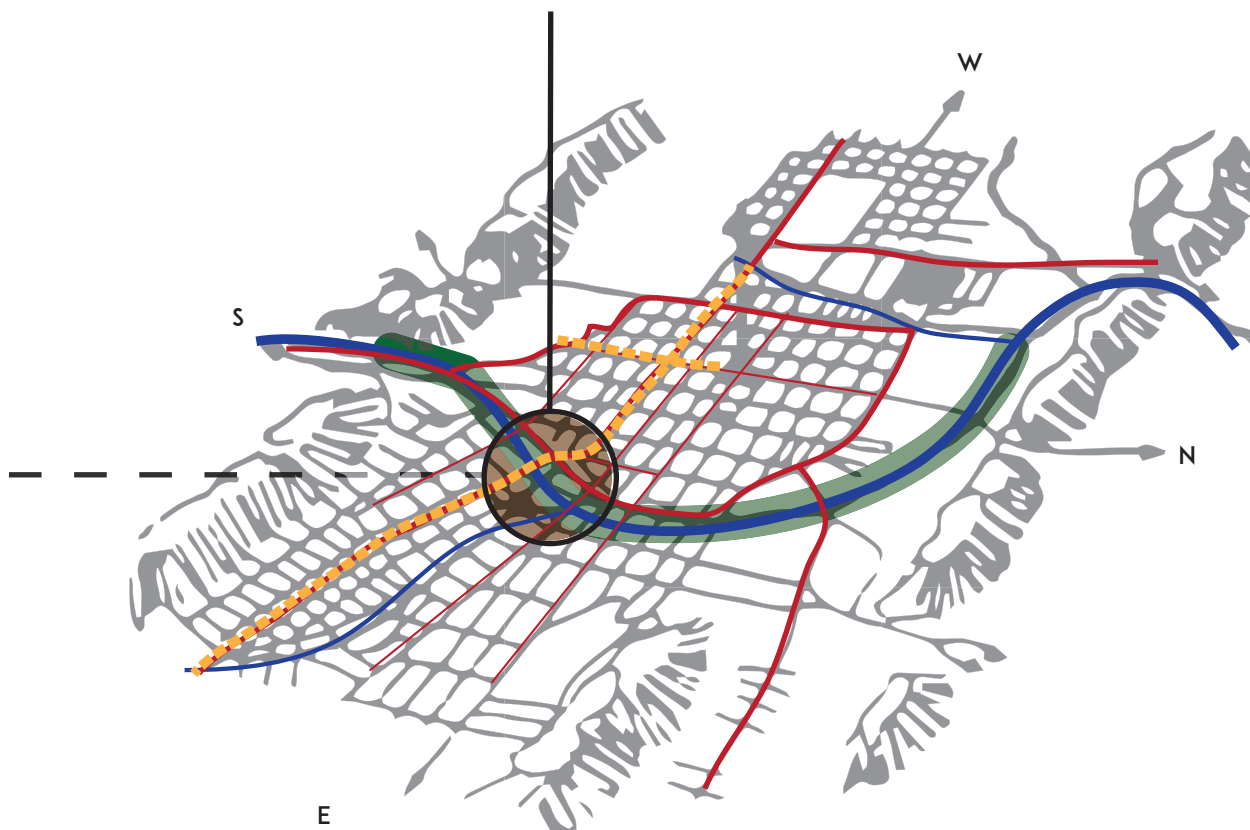
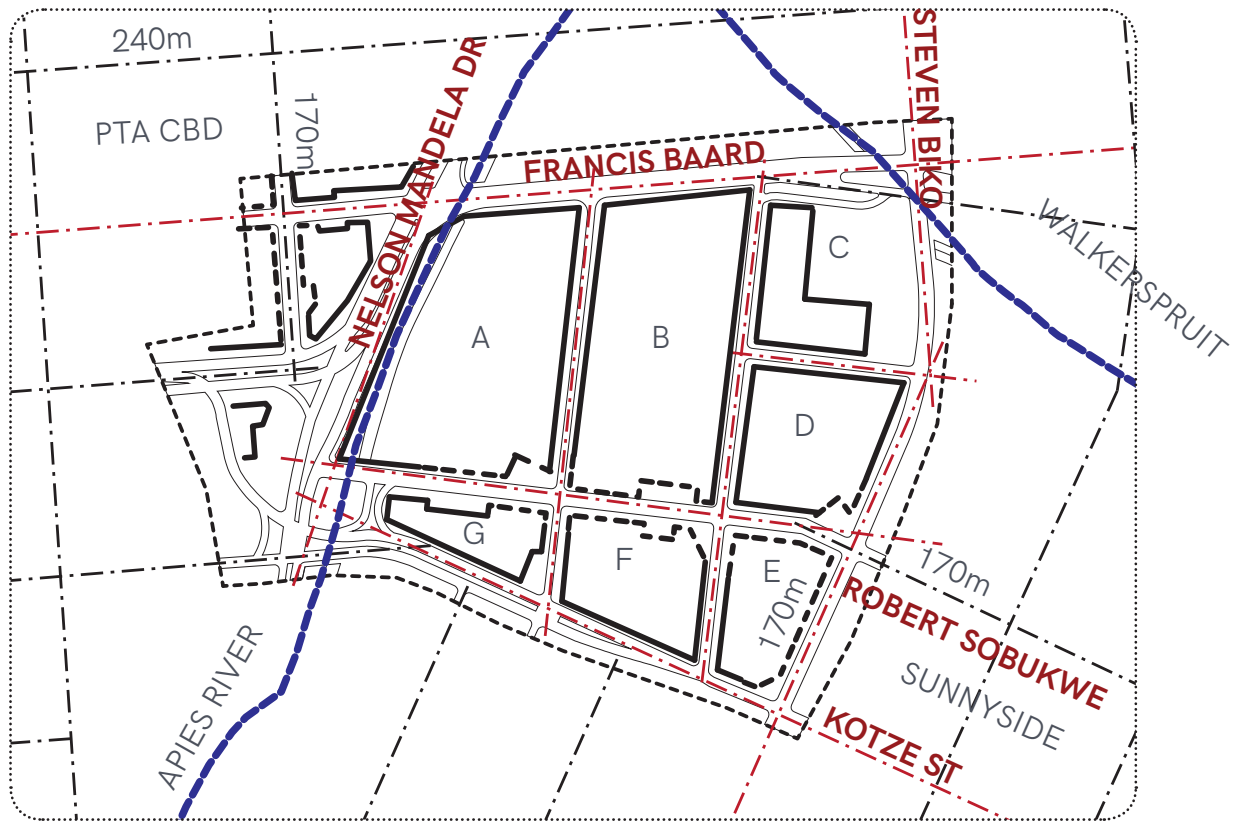




Figure 3.19: Micro Location: Trevenna (Visco[city] Group 2019)



- A,B - Very large block
- C,D - Small block
- E,F,G - Very small

Urban morphology

Figure 3.22: Analysis: morphology (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Pedestrian realm

Figure 3.23: Analysis: pedestrian realm (Visco[city] Group 2019)

- Low traffic interference ○
- High traffic interference ○
- Low activity |||
- High activity ||||

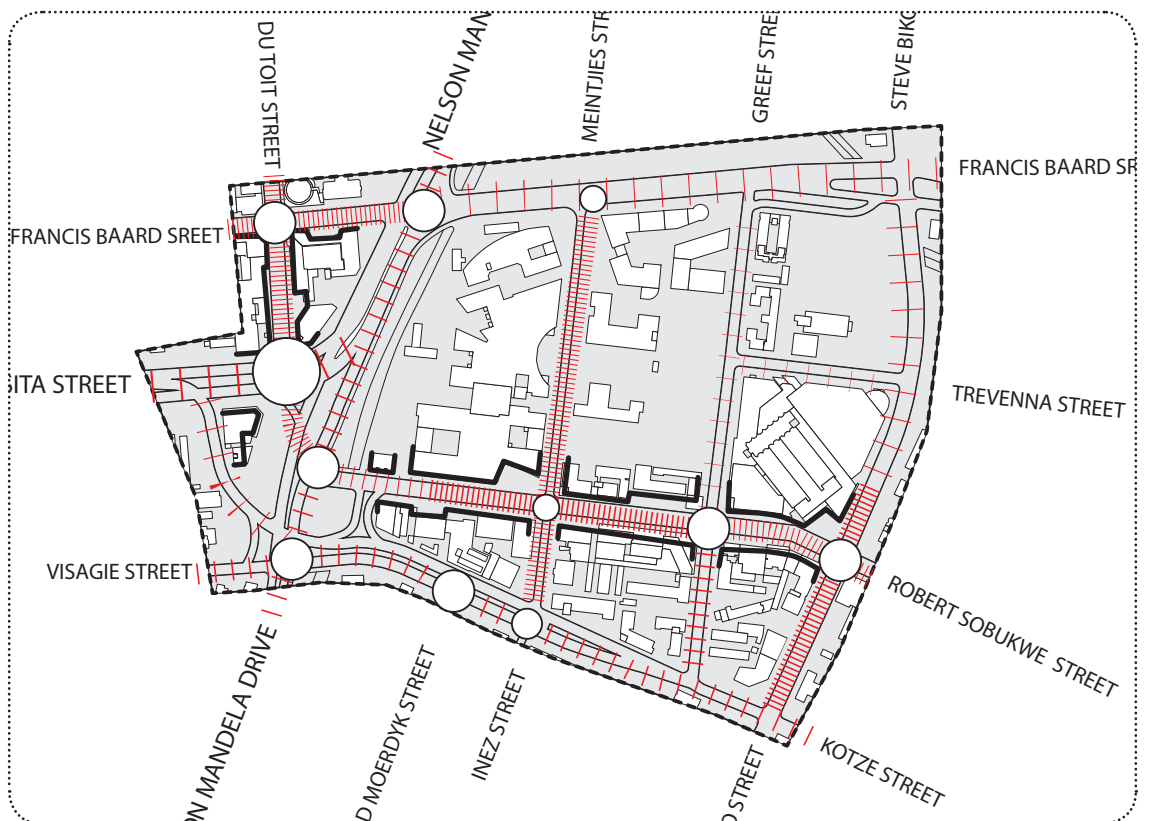


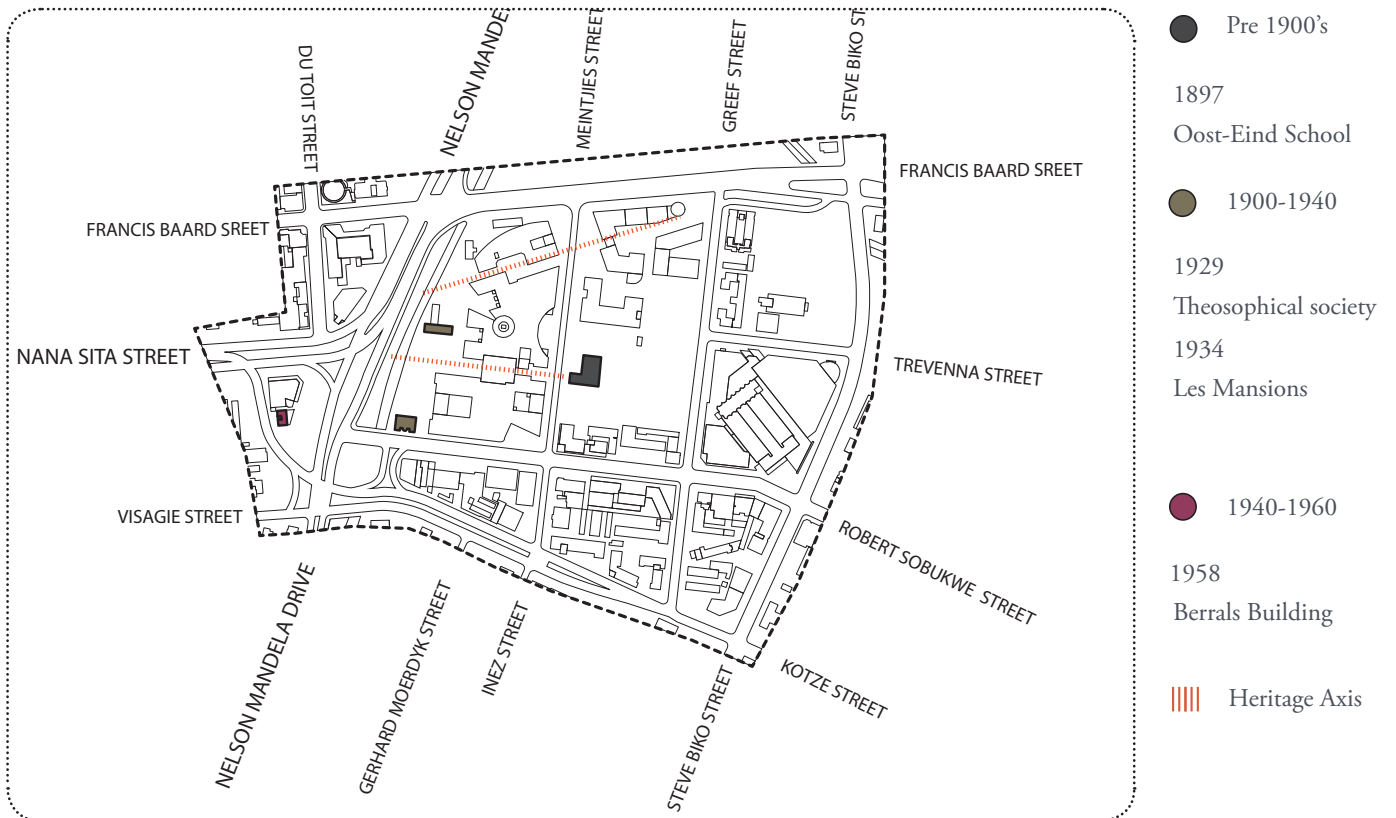


Figure 3.24: Analysis: economic activity (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Economic activity

Figure 3.25: Analysis: heritage fabric (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Heritage Fabric





Green spaces

Figure 3.26: Analysis: green space (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Layered findings

Figure 3.27: Analysis: layered findings (Visco[city] Group 2019)



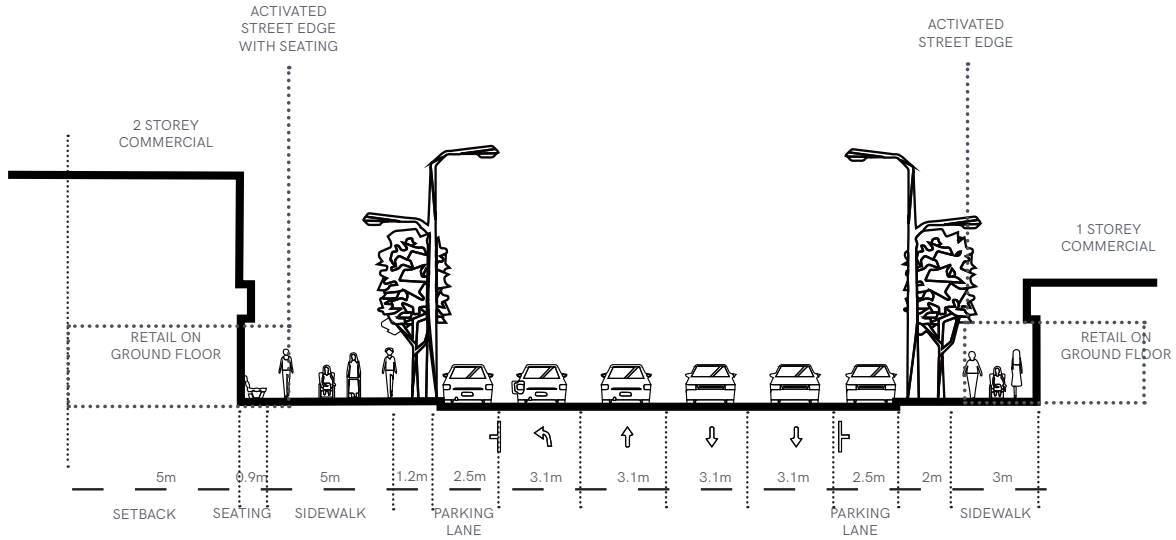
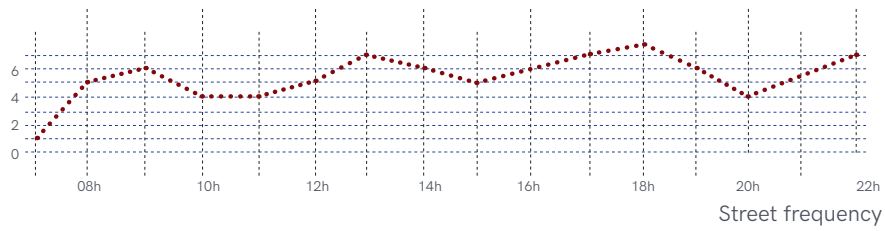


Figure 3.28: Analysis: street section A (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Section A-A

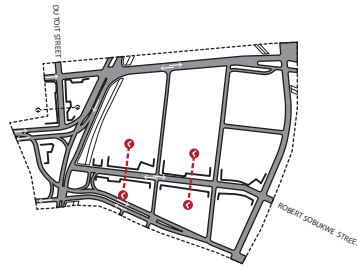
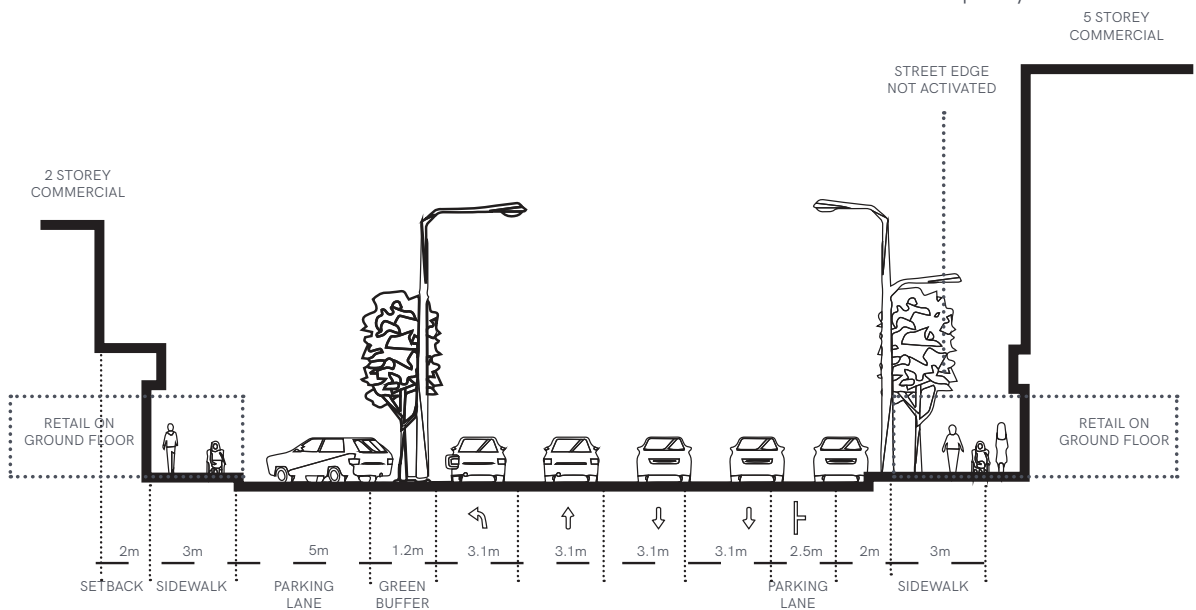
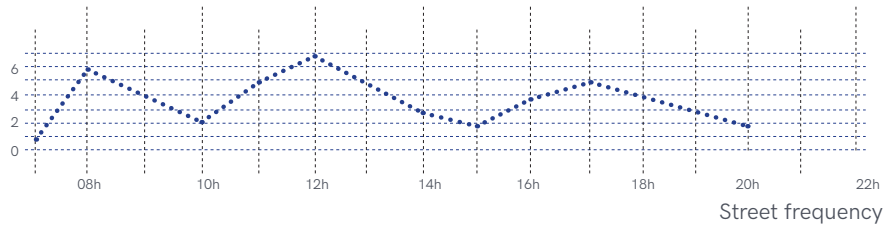


Figure 3.29: Analysis: street section B (Visco[city] Group 2019)

Section B-B



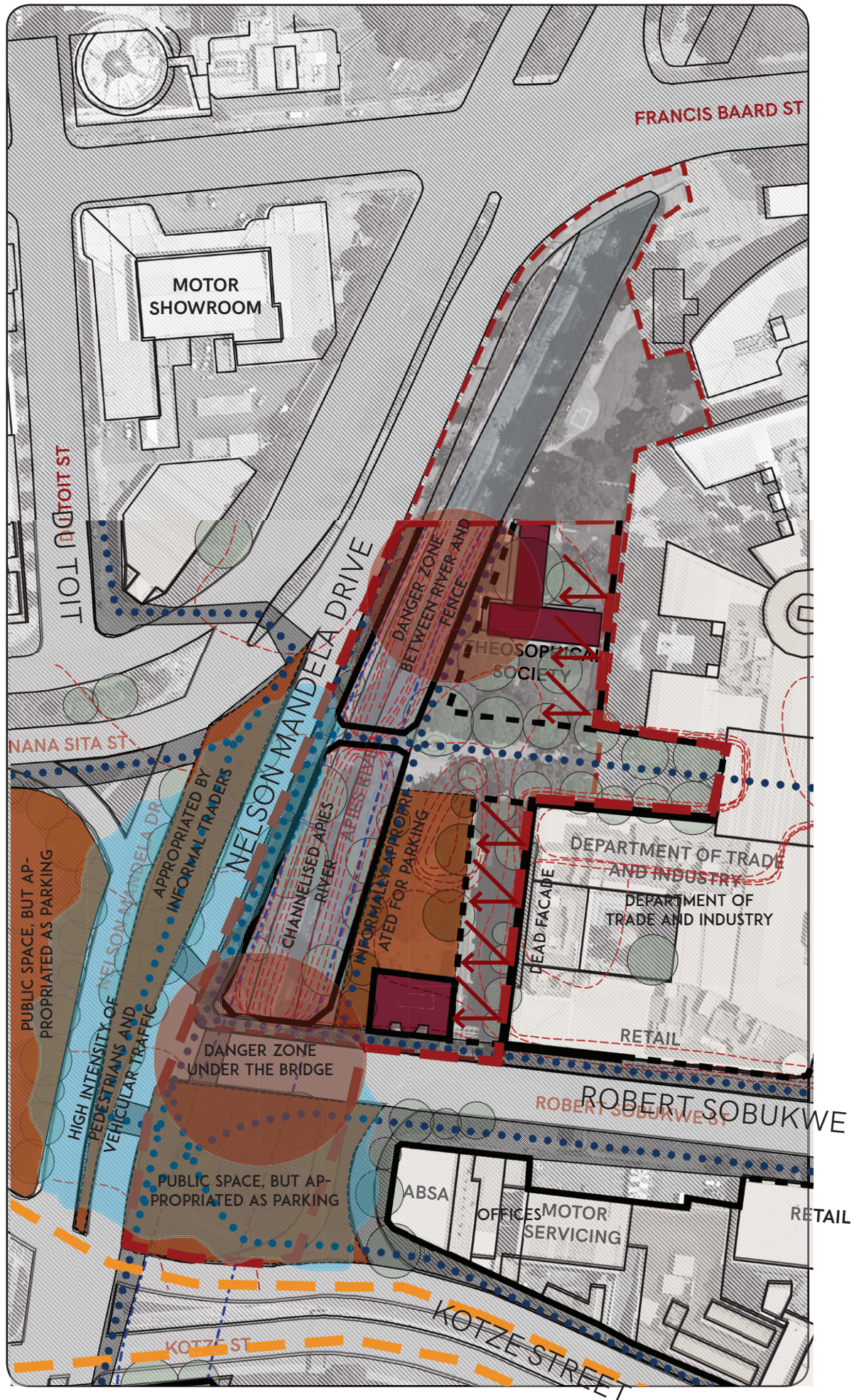


Figure 3.30: Site Analysis (Author 2019)

Development over time



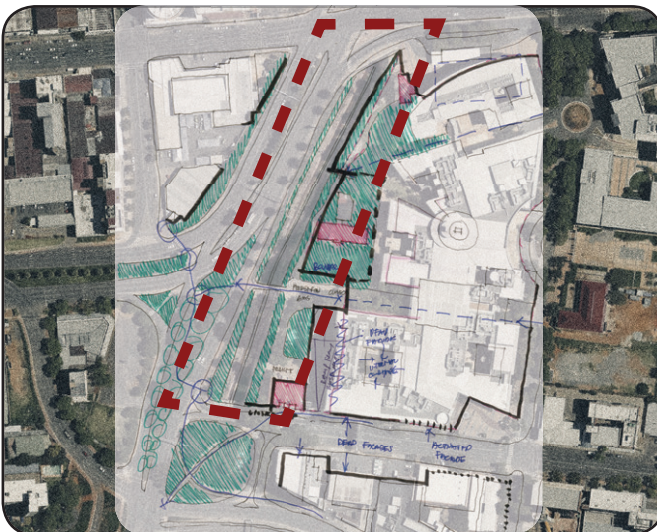
Before the implementation of the CoT's ringroad in 1992, the urban fabric around the Apies river was still mostly unaffected (illustrated in figure...). Not only did private residences (on the western bank) had unrestricted access to the river but the public (on the east) also had access to engage with the natural landscape through pedestrian routes.

Figure 3.31: 1948 Aerial photograph (UP, edited by Author)



To construct the ringroad in 1992, public space had to be expropriated as well as private residences demolished to make the road-building possible. The private residences on the western bank were removed to make way for the road and as a result the road has formed a barrier, restricting physical interactions with the Apies river. The eastern bank was still untouched, allowing engagement.

Figure 3.32: 1999 Aerial photograph (Google maps 1999, edited by Author)



The construction of the Department of Trade and Industry was supposedly a catalyst project for the regeneration of the Apies river (City of Tshwane 2015), but has had the opposite effect on the urban fabric by restricting the public from using the space around it, further isolating any opportunities for engagement with the Apies river.

Figure 3.33: 2009 Aerial photograph (Google maps 2009, edited by Author)

PROPOSED SITE
Condition and development
overtime

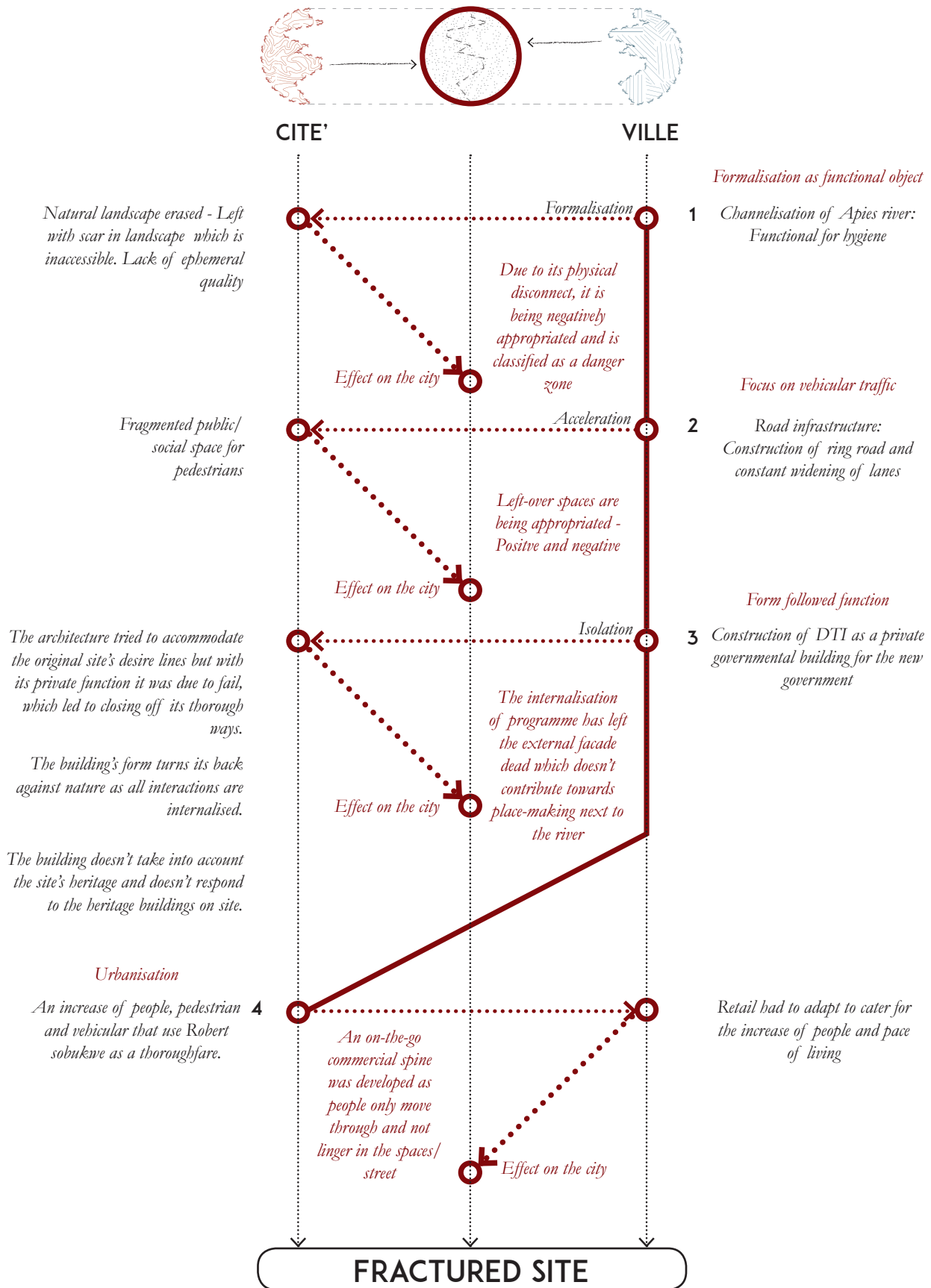


Figure 3.34: Proposed site's fracture overtime (Author 2019)

Current condition

The chosen site for the dissertation is situated between the Apies river, to the west, and the Department of Trade and Industry to its east, and Nelson Mandela drive. The site is a busy thoroughfare for pedestrians travelling to and from Sunnyside to Pretoria's CBD. The CoT's positivist development focus has had a significant impact on the site's lived experiences, with the three biggest issues being the chanalisation of the Apies river, public space being expropriated for road-building purposes and the privatisation and mono-functional development of the Department of Trade and Industry.

In contradiction to the initial conceptualisation of the *cite'* and *ville* as positive realisation of space it, currently can be more critically described. *Ville* refers to abandoned and lost spaces which have lost its initial and/or planned value and *cite'* reflects the negative connotations of everyday lived experiences of those forgotten locales (Sennett 2018:3). Relph (1976:142-3) affirms that a positive relationship to place is not the only lived experience one can have, but as one explicitly distances oneself, the relationship becomes one of alienation or 'outsiderness' and thus affects the lived experience negatively.

The question then becomes how architecture can mend this fracture between *cite'* and *ville* by creating better lived experiences that foster an enriched sense of place and belonging within the city? How can architecture change the emergent *ville* to produce instead of consume experiential qualities and enhance the sense of place? In order to establish a sense of place, place-making strategies that has the potential to reveal latent opportunities, need to be investigated.

"The existential purpose of architecture is therefore to make a site become a place, that is, to uncover the meanings potentially present in the given moment" – Norberg-Schulz 1979:18



Figure 3.35: Walking the street (Author 2019)

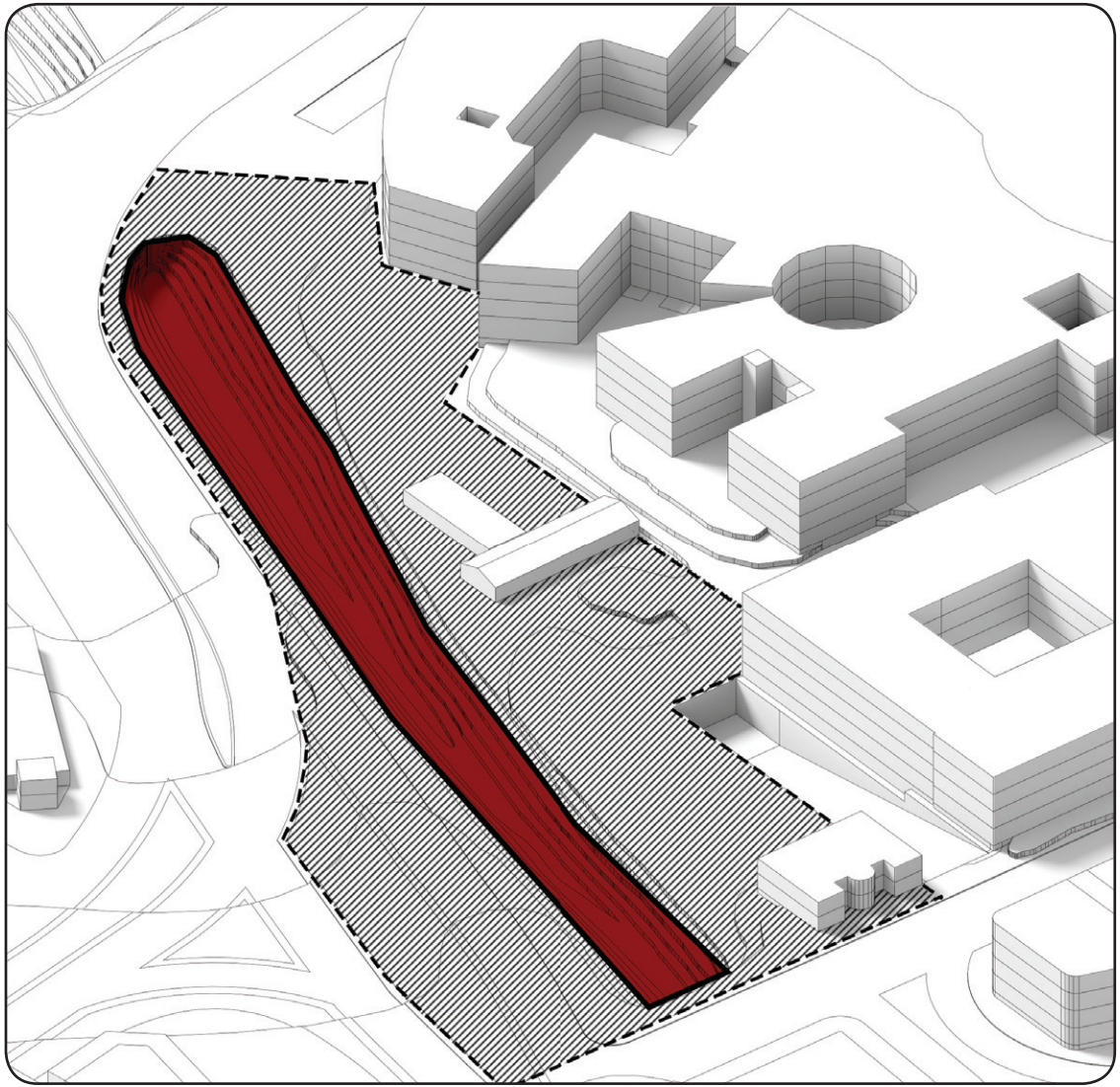


Figure 3.36: Channelised Apies river Axo (Author 2019)

Figure 3.37: Degraded river bank (Author 2019)



Figure 3.38: View to Robert Sobukwe Street (Author 2019)



Channelised Apies Rivers

The chanalisation of the Apies river has left a physical scar in the landscape, resulting in little to no interactions between the city's citizens and the river on a spiritual or productive level. Its formalisation has also resulted in the river's initial character of place being lost.

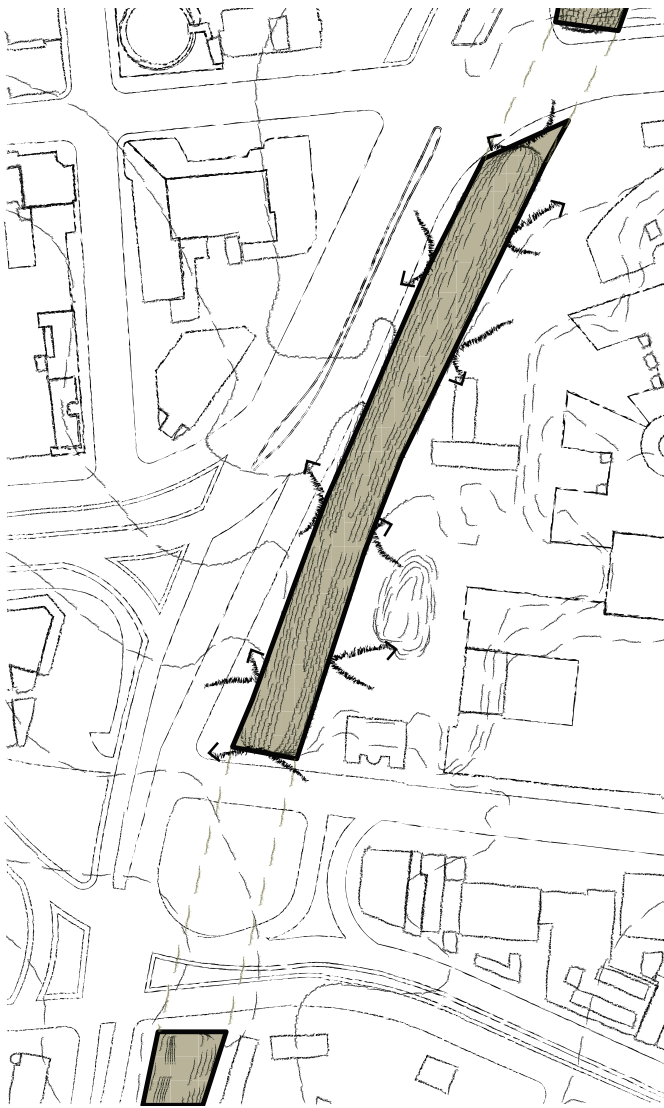


Figure 3.39: Scar in the landscape
(Author 2019)

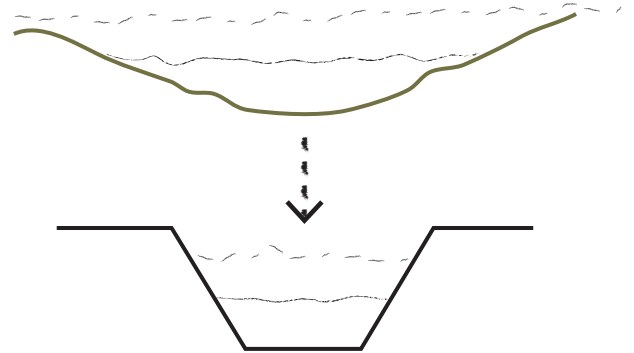


Figure 3.40: River modification
(Author 2019)

Figure 3.41: View of Apies north
(Author 2019)



Figure 3.42: View from Theosophy
(Author 2019)



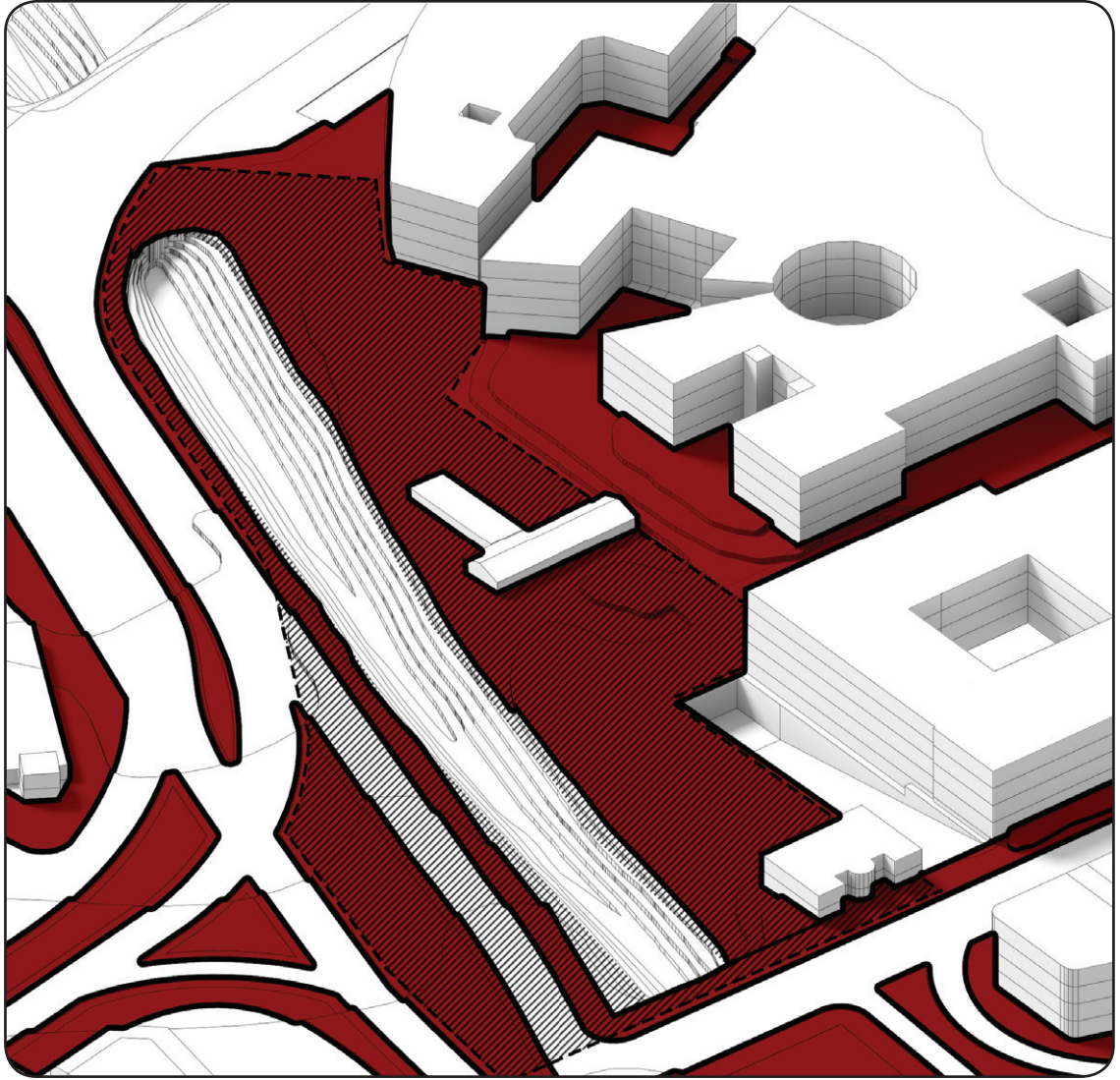


Figure 3.43: Public space fragmented axo (Author 2019)

Figure 3.44: Nelson Mandela Drive sidewalk (Author 2019)



Figure 3.45: Pedestrian crossing (Author 2019)



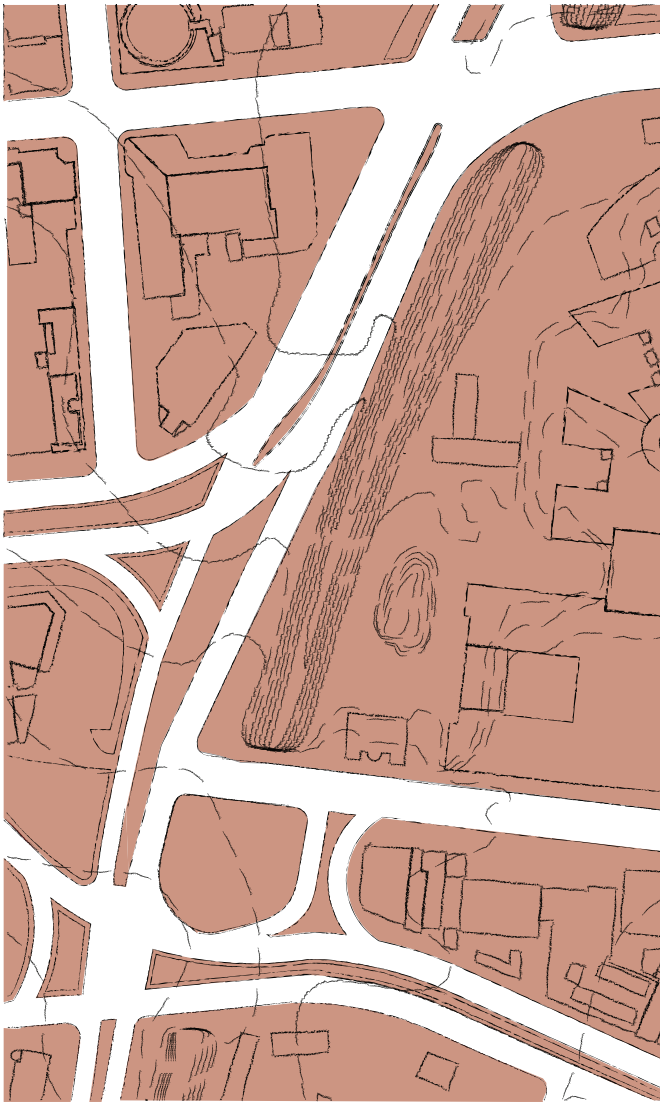


Figure 3.46: Public space fragmented
(Author 2019)

Fragmented public space

Due to road building, public space, such as sidewalks and green space adjacent to the Apies river has become fragmented to such an extent that traffic islands have been created, making it difficult to experience and interacting with urban space for a pedestrian. This is classified as “lost” space.

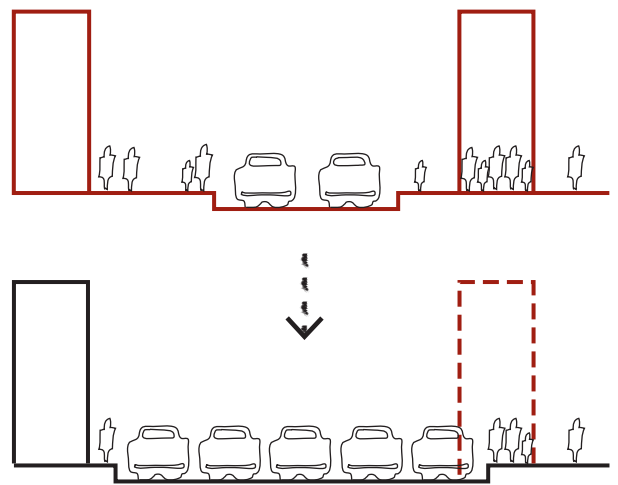


Figure 3.47: Space expropriation
(Author 2019)

Figure 3.48: View of busy pedestrian crossing
(Author 2019)



Figure 3.49: Traffic island (Author 2019)



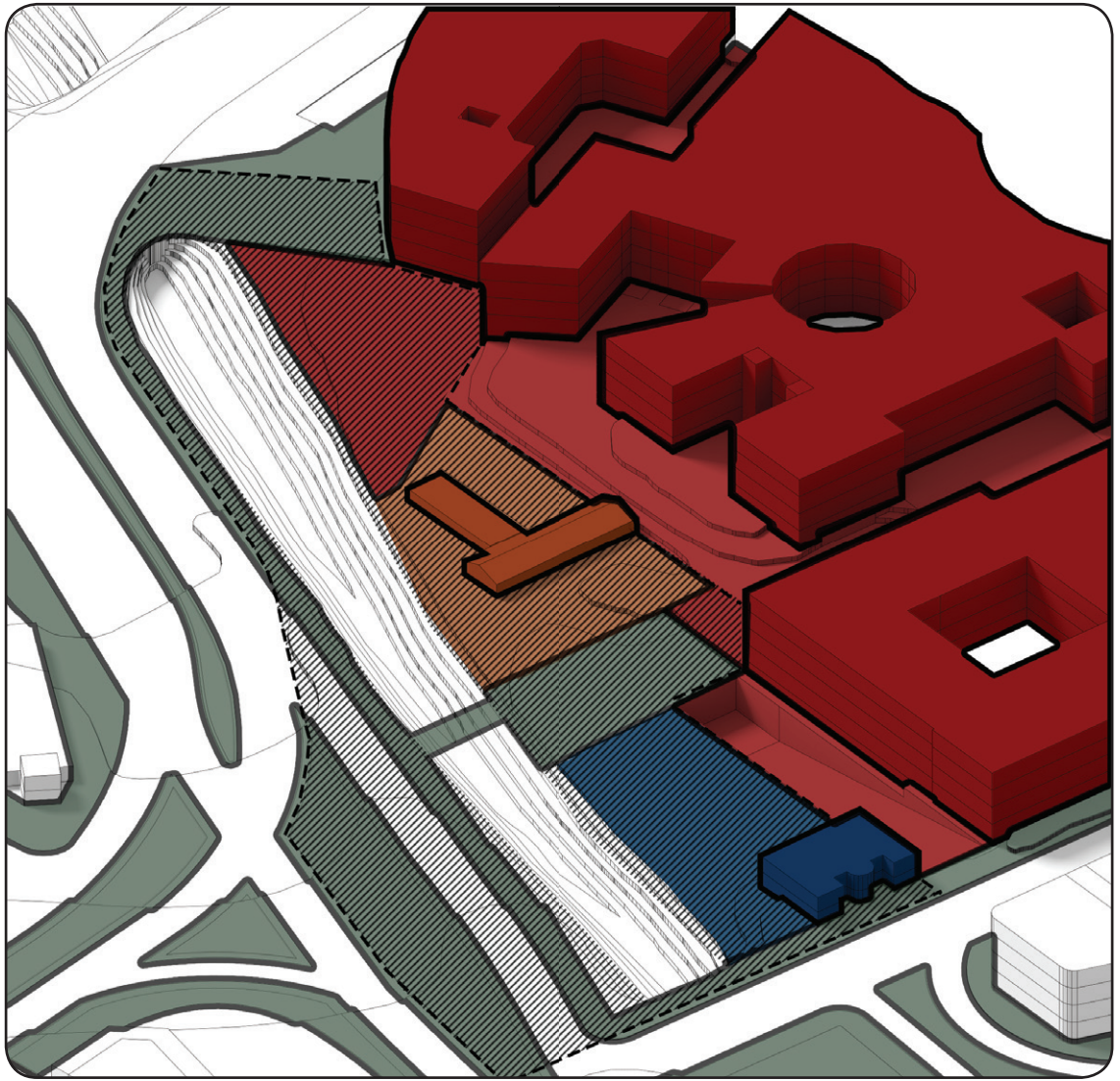


Figure 3.50: Privatisation of public space axo
(Author 2019)

Figure 3.51: View of Theosophical Society (Author 2019)



Figure 3.52: View to DTI boundary (Author 2019)



Privatisation of public space

Also contributing to lost and inaccessible space is the construction of DTI and privatisation of public space. The public is discouraged and sometimes unable to use the space adjacent to the Apies river.

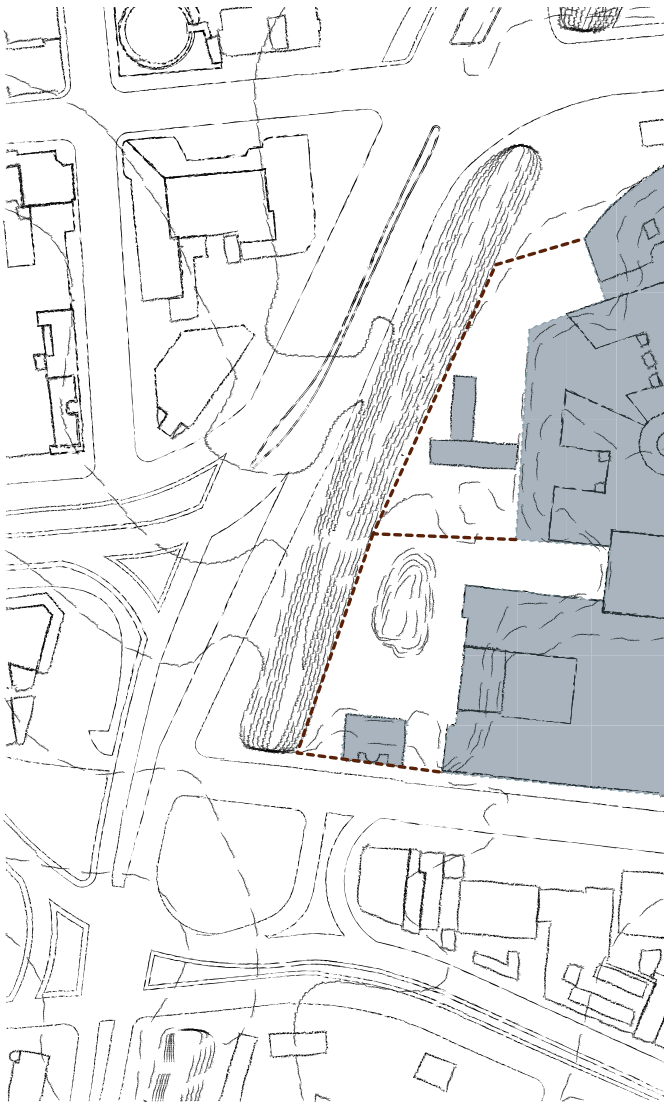


Figure 3.53: Security lines (Author 2019)

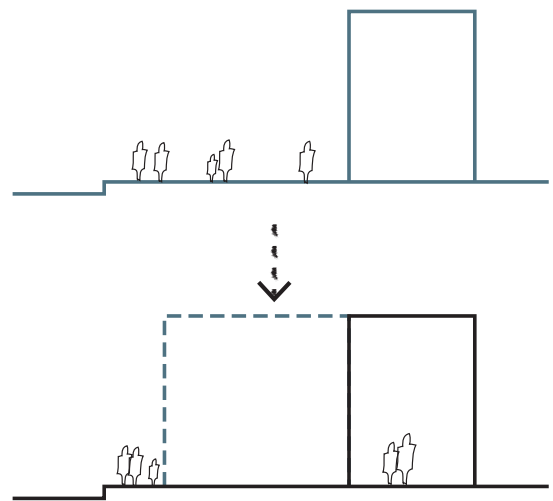


Figure 3.54: Current condition inaccessible (Author 2019)

Figure 3.55: View to DTI (Author 2019)



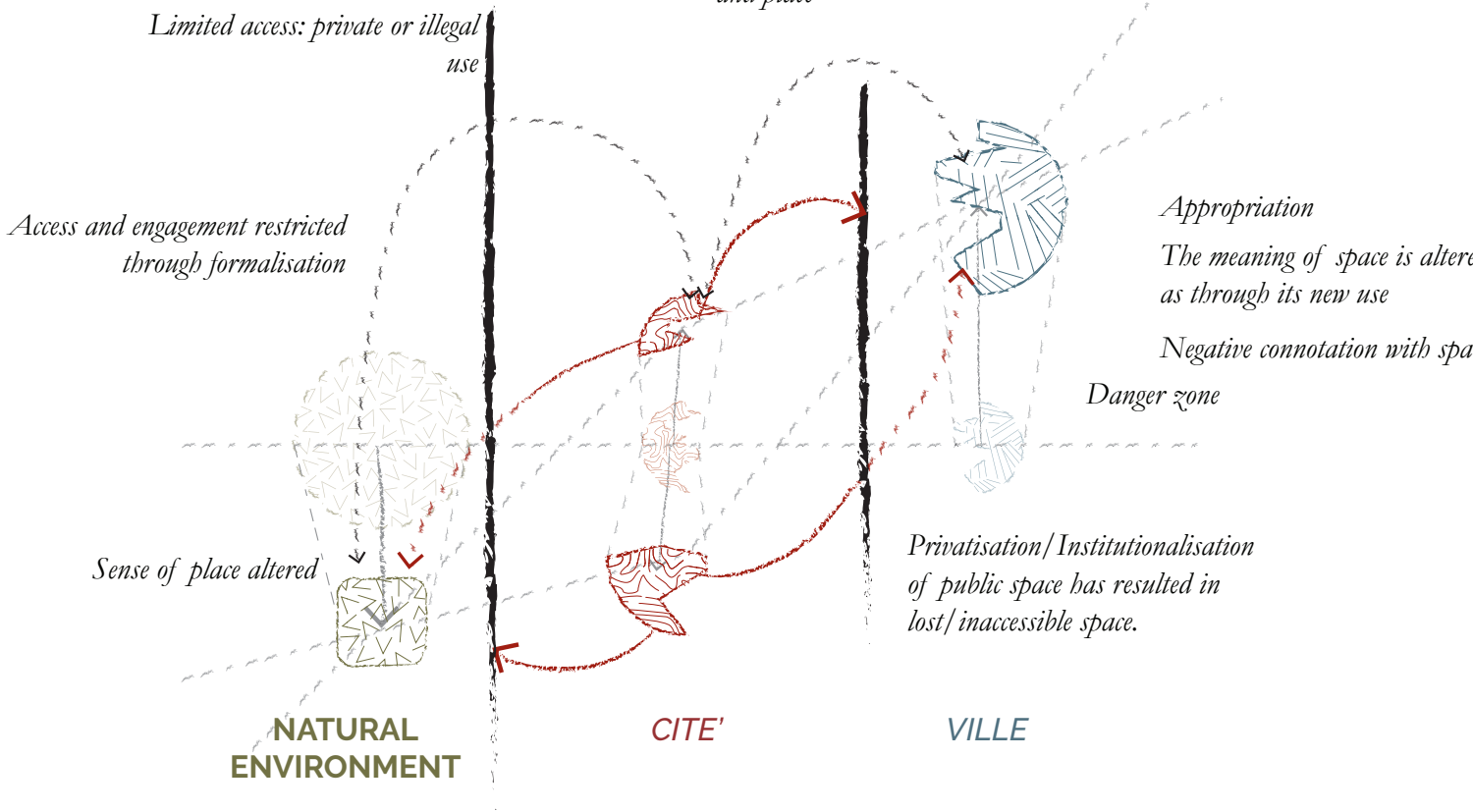
Figure 3.56: Walkway adjacent riverbank (Author 2019)



**CURRENT CONDITION
CONCEPTUALISED**

*Access
Transitions
Engagement is lacking*

*Movement [vehicular/pedestrian]
is required to engage with space
and place*



As the city grew, the scale of interventions also grew larger and started to change the character of place as well as the social nature of people. Pretoria's planning and development rationality was positivist and not normative and focused predominantly on infrastructural development and not on addressing the needs of the people.

Figure 3.57: Chosen site's fracture conceptualised (Author 2019)

Historical significance

Spiritual – event potential - Gathering space for people (theosophy)

The Theosophical Society lodge sits on the east bank of the Apies river. The historic place is confined to the building's footprint.

According to Clasquin (1999:347) the site choice for the Theosophical Society was an accident of geography. At the time of its construction, it stood on the outskirts of Pretoria, but as the city has expanded it now centrally located as it is situated just outside the CBD. Seeing that the Theosophists are open (as part of their teachings) and accepting towards other religious traditions, its current location makes it an ideal place for groups to meet. Their motto is 'there is no religion higher than Truth' (Clasquin 1999:347) and the society claims they have no dogma of any kind.

Due to its openness, the facilities have become so popular amongst different spiritual and alternative group that on any given evening two client groups use the venue at the same time e.g., a Buddhist group in the library and a Yoga class in the main hall. The function of the building has expanded so much that regular open days are held in order to promote activities such as astrology, aromatherapy, vegetarian food as well as the distribution of spiritual books and other materials (Clasquin 1999:346).

Figure 3.58: Top: Theosophy axo (Author 2019)

Figure 3.59: Cent: Theosophy from the street (Google 2019, edited by Author)

Figure 3.60: Left: lost space (Author 2019)

Figure 3.61: Right: View from DTI (Google, edited by Author)

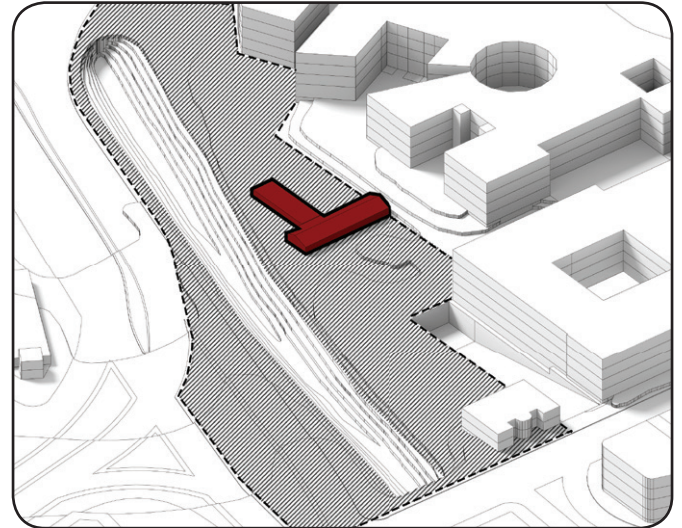




Figure 3.62: Tramcar crossing over the Apies (Hardijzer 1908, edited by Author)

Heritage value (Cultural/spiritual)

It was the first building erected and owned by a South African lodge in Pretoria in 1927. Their lodge building has served as a venue for many other religious and philosophical groups, which might otherwise have declined because of a lack of a suitable venue.

The Tshwane 2055 vision demarcates the study area as a cultural meeting place, called the 'Kopanong', which embodies the African dualism of our spiritual and productive connection with place. The vision strives to foster place-making within the city that promotes cultural diversity. By using the vision as a framework for development, value/significance can be ascribed to the Theosophy lodge's function as a cultural and spiritual catalyst.

The latent identity of the building seems to be rooted more in the function as a spiritual meeting place rather than a building of architectural significance. The very essence of the building and why it was constructed ties well into the Tshwane 2055 vision and retaining the integrity of the programme in the new proposed design will be important.

Water as life source and the rituals associated with it – productive, spiritual and recreation.

During the settlement of the town of Pretoria, the Apies river played an important part in the daily lives of its people. The river was not only a physical source for freshwater and productive food systems, but also a place of spiritual and social fulfilment (Jeppe 1906:7). As the city of Pretoria developed, it focussed mainly on developing the built environment through positivist planning schemes and as a result neglected its lived experiences, and in the process 'lost' the initial sense of place of the city (Biljon 1993:42).

The Apies river had been modified to such an extent that today it is unrecognisable as a river that once had such a strong spiritual and productive



Figure 3.63: Top: Tram Bridge in Esselen Street (Unknown, edited by Author)



Figure 3.64: Mid: Canalisation of Apies river (Unknown, edited by Author)

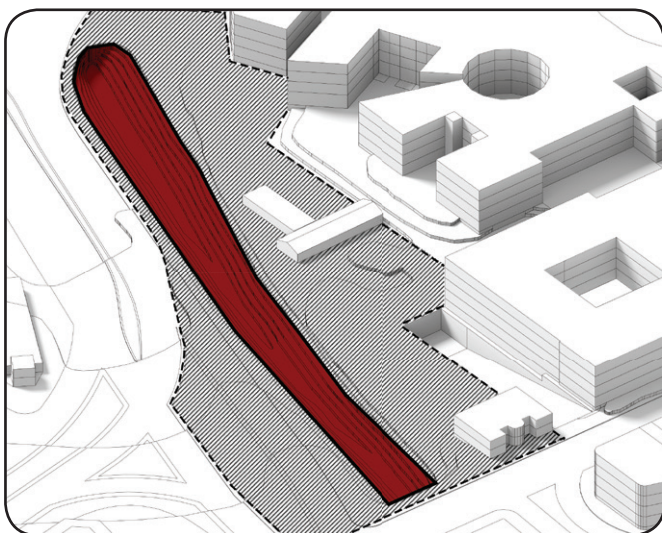


Figure 3.65: Bottom: Apies river axo (Author 2019)

affinity (Goodman 1992). Due to this change, the citizens of Pretoria are physically detached from the Apies, unable to connect with the river on a spiritual and productive level.

According to the CoT (Open Space Management Zone 2007:52), their Open Space Framework's development goal is to regenerate the Apies river by removing the modification that was made and, in the process, rehabilitating it back to its natural state. By regenerating the Apies river, new spiritual and productive connection with the river is made possible.

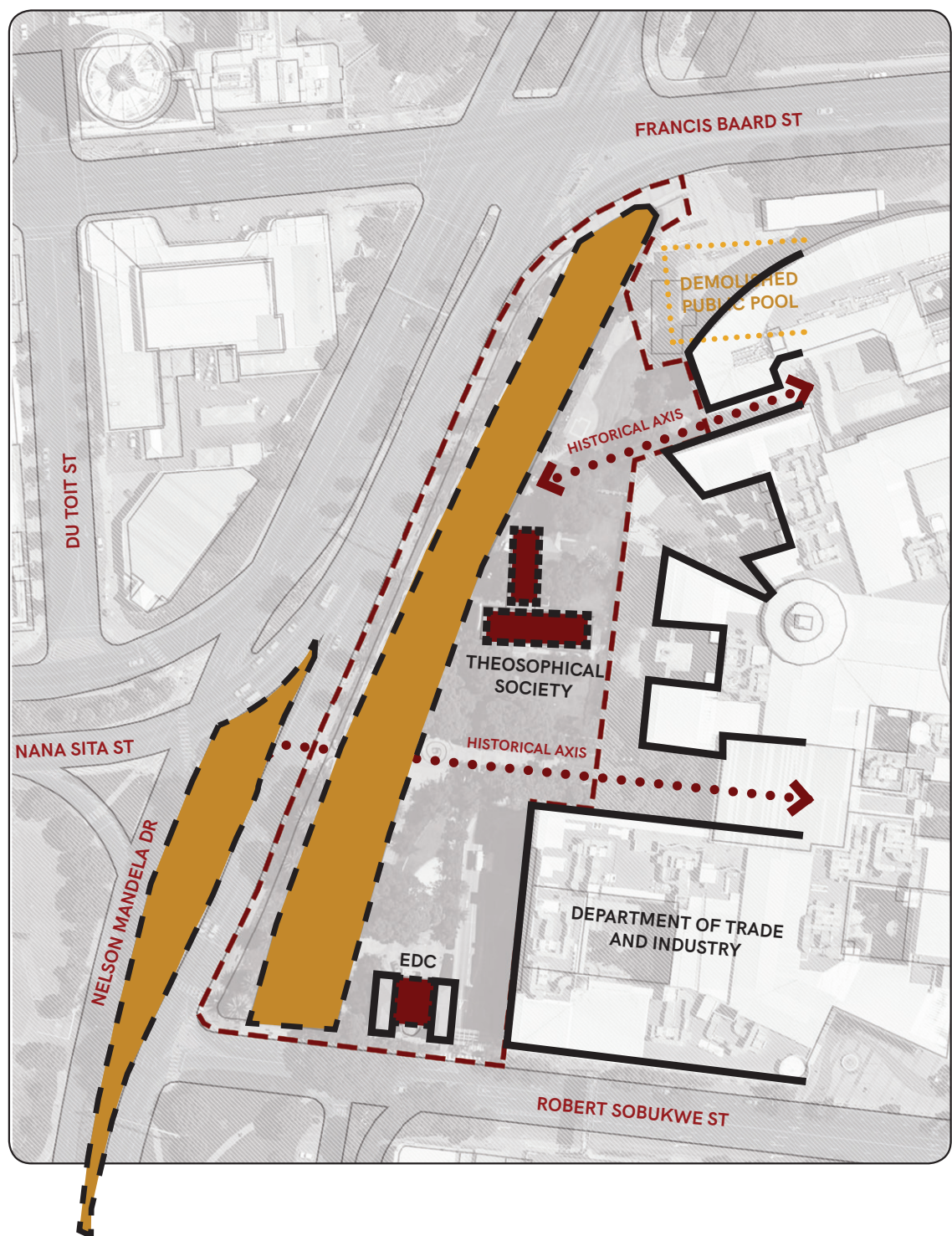
Architectural significance – Les Mansions 1934

The Les Mansion Art Deco building designed by architect L. Elis in 1934 for client Philip Novis is situated on the southern edge of the site in Robert Sobukwe (previously Esselen Street). Originally designed as a block of flats, the building is currently being used as an office for a security company.

This eighty-five-year-old building, with its symmetrical street façade, balconies and entrance portal is synonymous with the 1930s building style in Pretoria.

The rectangular recessed surrounds that frame each window, the horizontal protrusions that decrease in size underneath the balconies, are all characteristics of the Art Deco movement (Meiring 1984).

Figure 3.66: Heritage Fabric (Author 2019)



Currently protected under the National Heritage Resource Act 25 of 1995, due to the building being older than 60 years, the importance of the various architectural characteristics need to be analysed and an appropriate heritage theory adopted in order to allow responsible development.

In his article *Architectural design in historic contexts* Prof. Arthur Barker (2019:5) discusses Rodolfo Machado's theories on the remodelling of old buildings. Machado believes that change is unavoidable in remodelling, but that a balance between past and future needs to be achieved and that the significance of the past increases in value when being transformed or altered. He continues by comparing the past to a 'canvas' on which each remodelling can make its mark, building up meaning that can either 'be accepted, transformed or suppressed' (Machado 1976:46-49). Machado states that a new story or chapter begins when a building is changed to such an extent that the original function is no longer recognizable, but that this signifies a new interpretation born out of the past (Machado 1976:46-49).

This approach of transformation was adopted in order to allow a new sense of place to be created. Retaining some of the Art Deco characteristics in the form of the symmetrical street façade became important. The first transformation came in the form of removing the entrance portal and opening the building up to the public (and their everyday rituals) and in so doing, enhancing the building's relationship with the natural landscape. The second strategy was to create a connection between the old and the new, this was achieved by removing the roof off the existing building and extending the new market space roof over the existing heritage building. These changes allowed for the vision of a new type of ville, one that is conscious and sensitive towards the lived experiences and the importance of man's connection to nature, to take shape.

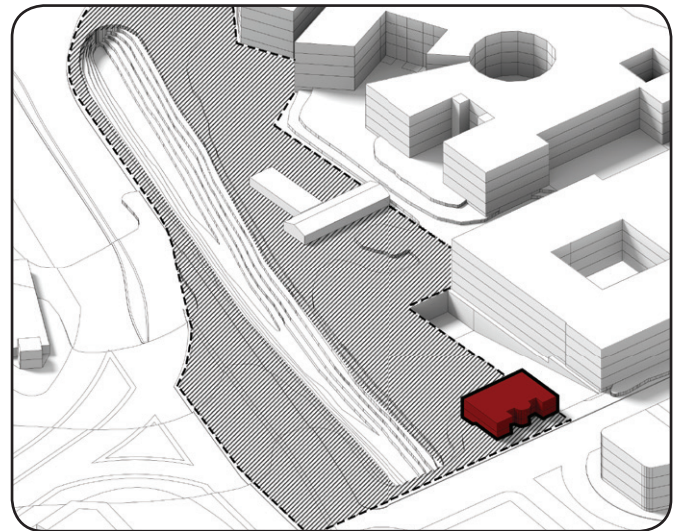


Figure 3.67: Top: Les Mansions axo (Author 2019)

Figure 3.68: Mid: Les Mansions Northern facade (Author 2019)

Figure 3.69: Bottom Les Mansions Southern facade (2019)