

# 06

## conclusion & reflection

### DESIGN INTENTIONS

The proposed intervention aims to uncover the site's latent potential by celebrating the special moments of informal appropriation and architectural heritage. It aims to reimagine the existing architecture and spaces on site from a place of social and spatial decay to a layered, reintegrated urban place.

In this essay, the phenomenon of neglected building occupation by the homeless was explored through the theoretical lens of appropriation, palimpsest, phenomenology and overlaying difference. Through this lens, the informal appropriation by vulnerable groups of neglected buildings and interstitial spaces is considered a creative strategy of resilience to meet basic needs and express belonging, ownership and identity.

By means of a case study methodology, five occupation scenarios in the City of Tshwane were analysed for a local overview of this phenomenon and to draw conclusions on the nature of appropriation in each study. The author observed that in instances where opportunities to take ownership of the spaces were available, the resulting informal appropriation tended to be more positive and supportive of community life. On the one hand, sites such as Westfort Village and Melgisedek, which are peri-urban sites with numerous smaller-scale buildings, are appropriated by a legitimate community. These spaces evolve with recurring uses and typologies that serve the community, and graffiti on the walls functions as the artistic expression of identity. On the other hand, inner-city sites like Schubart Park and Justice College, with intimidating built scales and where forceful eviction and harassment are more likely, were transformed more negatively. These spaces have been stripped, vandalised and used for resource extraction, and the graffiti on these sites tends to express the occupants' plight, struggle and desperation.

Finally, the Melgisedek case was selected to be analysed further as the site for this dissertation's proposed intervention. A brief overview of the current scenario and the events that contributed to this scenario were documented to set the scene for research into design. This study forms a rich contextual understanding of the site and its inhabitants for further analysis of the existing needs towards developing a programme and design approach that address the site's complexities (which will be unpacked in Essay Two).

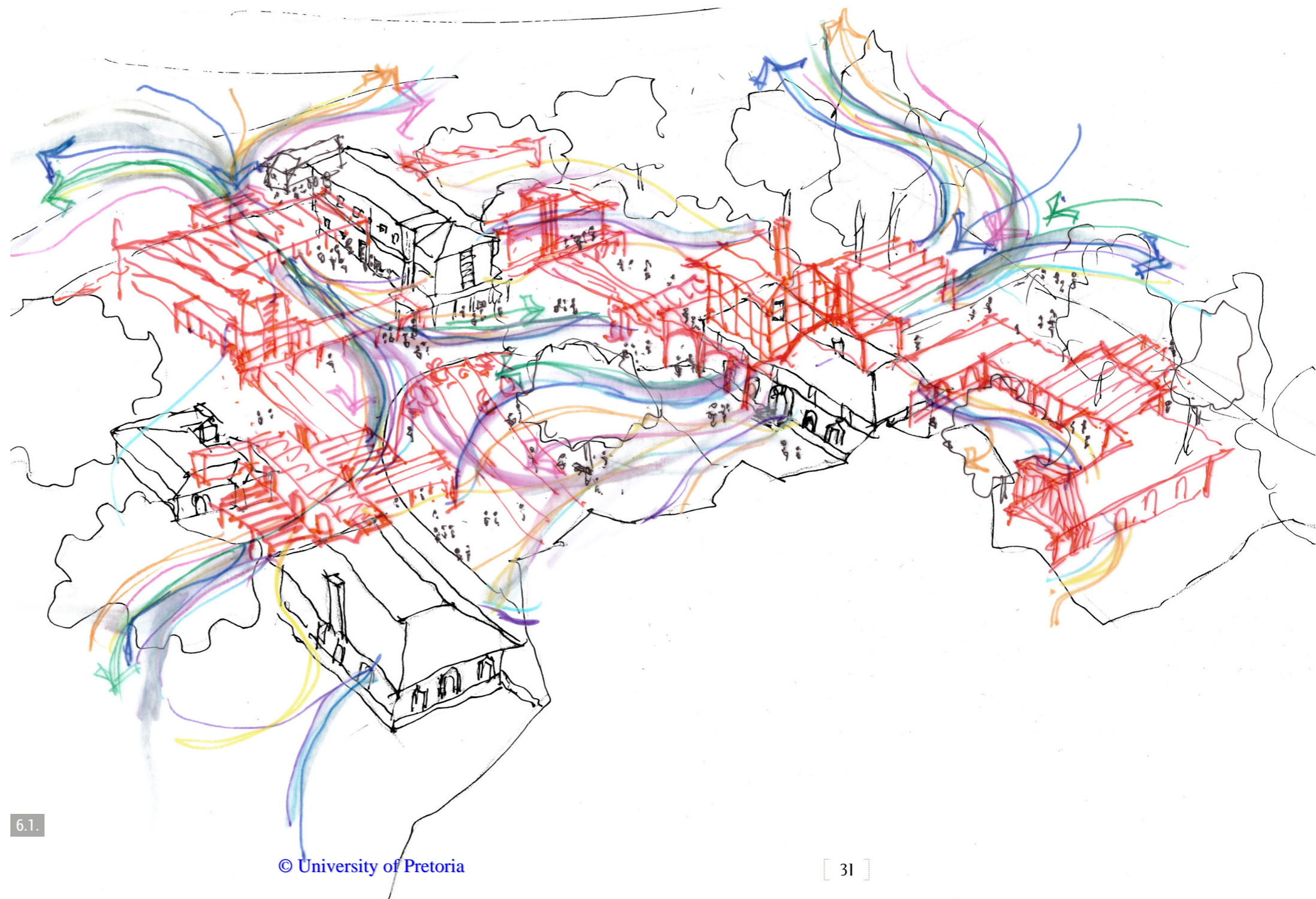


Fig 6.1. Bottom right: Design intention illustration (Author 2021)

6.1.