

Safety during the day is not perceived to be a problem as movement and visibility assure users, but night-time use is problematic due to inadequate lighting.

In general the Donkin Reserve is perceived as reasonable or average as a public space, due to the cleanliness and maintenance of the area. The potential of the space is identified within already historically rich surroundings in terms of architecture in Central Hill. People identified the need for a communal space, a place that could become a real attraction for all residents, and not only tourists.

#### 6.4.1 Place description of the Donkin Reserve: personal analysis

In describing the Donkin Reserve, various aspects regarding spatial definition and spatial quality are observed. The first impression concludes a clean, open space on a large scale that is shaped by the adjoining roads. The elevated west side is modulated geographically by the steep gradient and allows for a commanding view over the city with the ocean to the east. Unsightly buildings, making undesirable noises on this edge, spoil the 180 degree view and experience of the ocean.



Fig 6-20: Donkin Reserve gradient (Grobler 2005)



Fig 6-21: Industries (Grobler 2005)

Limited elements of spatial definition are observed. The circulation routes from Belmont Terrace (west) are articulated with large palm trees that flank the tarred pathways. The paths toward the city below have no vertical definition, nor detail in the defining edges. The routes appear to be strategic in the sense that they following natural circulation routes diagonally across the space, as established in the historical investigation. Nodes created by the intersections of the routes have no special quality: it is purely a crossing of pathways. Garden lamps are positioned along sections of only two of the circulation

routes and also in other random positions on the site. The orientation of the benches does not acknowledge the view; some face the ocean, some face the road, but all are isolated. No interaction is suggested through this arrangement.



Fig 6-22 to Fig 6-24: Donkin Reserve lamps, nodes and pathways  
(Grobler 2005)

The Pyramid and Lighthouse are strong vertical elements, but no context is created around these landmarks. The natural vegetation of the reserve has long been removed and the site does not speak of reserve, but rather park. Opportunities in bringing back indigenous plants for spatial definition could create places for human use, improve the spatial quality and encourage more visitors to the Reserve.

The Donkin Reserve is centrally located in Central Hill, but does not speak or illustrate it as a place for the community to gather. Limited informal activities are performed in the space and no interaction between the neighbouring buildings and the site are observed.

The use of materials does not convey an identity of the context, nor interest and variety; it is limited and encourages no sensory experience. The place does however have potential of being a true destination in the city for residents and the workforce in the area, but also for Port Elizabeth at large.

## **6.5 Analyses of elements for spatial definition**

The analyses that will make clear the aspects that shape the spatial containment of the Donkin Reserve are conducted indicating valuable information to understand the spatial definition. The analyses are conducted according to the elements that form the criteria,

determined in the previous chapters: point, line, plane and volume. The observations are visually documented by illustrating the findings.