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CONTEXT ANALYSIS

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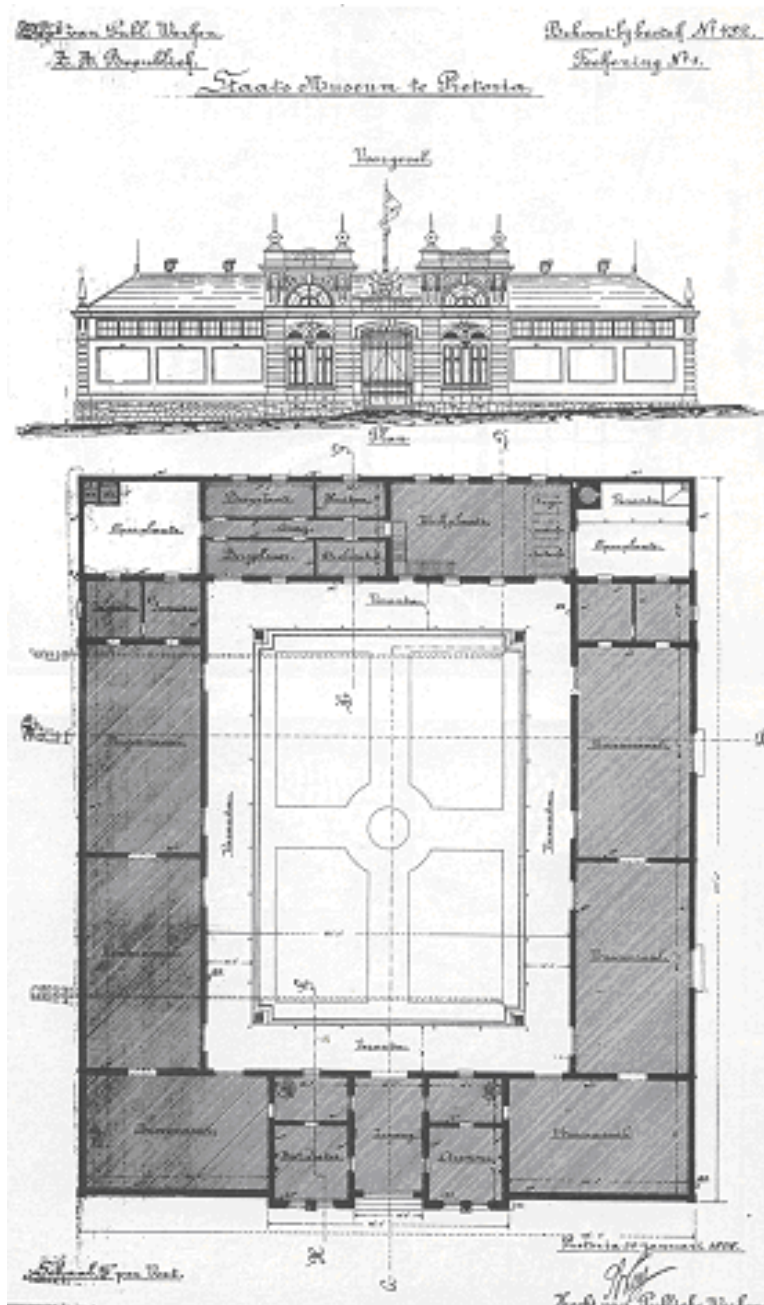


Figure 3: Copy of original Z.A.R. Staatsmuseum plan 1899

3.1 HISTORY

Time Frame

Paul Kruger (States President of the 'Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek' or ZAR: 1883-1900) realised that the state motto 'Eendracht Maakt Macht' (strength lies in unity) would be of greater significance once an appropriate person had expressed this motto. The appearance and the dignity of the state were important to Paul Kruger and the council (Volksraad). A capable head for the 'Publike Werken' department, who would identify with the state motto, was needed to improve the state's appearance through impressive architecture and to control the state's building projects.

Sytze Wopkes Wierda, originally from the Netherlands, was personally chosen for this architectural position in the ZAR and was appointed in November 1887. His significant work and his Z.A.R. identification granted him the title 'Hoofd van Publike Werken'. (Figure 3)

From 1890 to 1899, Wierda appointed new draughtsmen, site supervisors, clerks and bookkeepers. The department did well and needed to expand further. Wierda chose to educate his students himself, ensuring a strong unity regarding culture-politics, and took full responsibility for their work. The plans for the 'Staatsmuseum' were delivered in 1899, at the end of the ZAR era, when Wierda was the main architect of 'Die Publike Werken'.

The department was already greatly hindered before the occupation of the British, but after the Anglo-Boer War (1899 -1902) the department was completely destroyed.

'Die Publike Werken' received orders from the front line to send all but the most important workers into war. Wierda is remembered for his commitment to his

position, right up till the take over of Pretoria by the British. He never fought in the war. Most of the department's personnel were deported back to the Netherlands in captivity or were fighting.

The annihilation of the 'Publike Werken' department happened in two ways. Firstly, the department as an institution was destroyed with the take over of Pretoria. Secondly, it was symbolically destroyed when the ZAR coat of arms was removed from the 'Ou Raadsaal' (Parliament House) when the capital city was invaded. The department's personnel were not re-employed, resulting in an immediate loss of department skill. (Minnaar 2001: 204)

The State Museum

The establishment of the State Museum in 1892 can be attributed to the initiative of the ZAR State Secretary, Dr W. J. Leyds, whom the board of the State Museum regard as 'the Father of the State Museum'. The idea behind the museum was to establish a true museum with a national collection of natural and manufactured products, and art and antiques of South Africa and other countries. Initially, the museum was biased towards cultural artefacts, but the weight soon shifted towards national history (Dippenaar 1992: 2).

It was first housed in a small room, the Museum Room, next to the clock tower on the top floor of the 'Raadsaal' on church square. In 1894, when that room became too small and too inaccessible to visitors, the government allocated the museum to a small building at the Pretoria fresh-produce market, situated on the now Sammy Marks Square in Van der Walt Street. Dr J.W.B. Gunning was appointed as the museum director in December 1897.

It was not long till the market building also became too small to house the rapidly growing collections. In December 1898, after several attempts for a

new, 'proper' museum building, tenders were released for a building on Boom Street, at the point where Andries Street intersects it. The cornerstone of the new building was laid in July 1899.

The Second Anglo-Boer War broke out on 11 October 1899, interrupting the building process. When the British invaded Pretoria on 5 June 1900, the museum had reached roof height. The museum was closed till 8 June 1900, when it was re-opened with the name Pretoria Museum, later to be changed to Transvaal Museum. The museum building was finally completed in December 1904 (Dippenaar 1992: 9). (Figure 4)

On 20 January 1902, after the war, the British colonial government closed a contract with the same builder contracted to build the museum before the war to complete the building. Dr Gunning stayed on as director until his death in 1913.

By 1930, the museum exhibited significant historical, ethnographic and archaeological collections. Most of these collections were donated, and traditionally, the name of the donor would be part of the exhibition. Several spectacular collections were displayed. The Louis Botha collection, dating back to 1922, is one of the most significant collections added to the holdings of the history section. In 1952, the museum housed a complete 'Voortrekker' cultural history exhibition and facilitated a Van Riebeeck Festival. The museum excelled. An Anglo-Boer War collection was added in 1972, and the National Cultural History Museum celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1989.

Yet, the Old Museum was abandoned as head office and closed down in 1991. The displays in the eastern wing were damaged severely after a pipe burst in the same year. Another pipe burst in July 1992 caused irreparable damage to the





Figure 4: Museum soon after completion, 1904

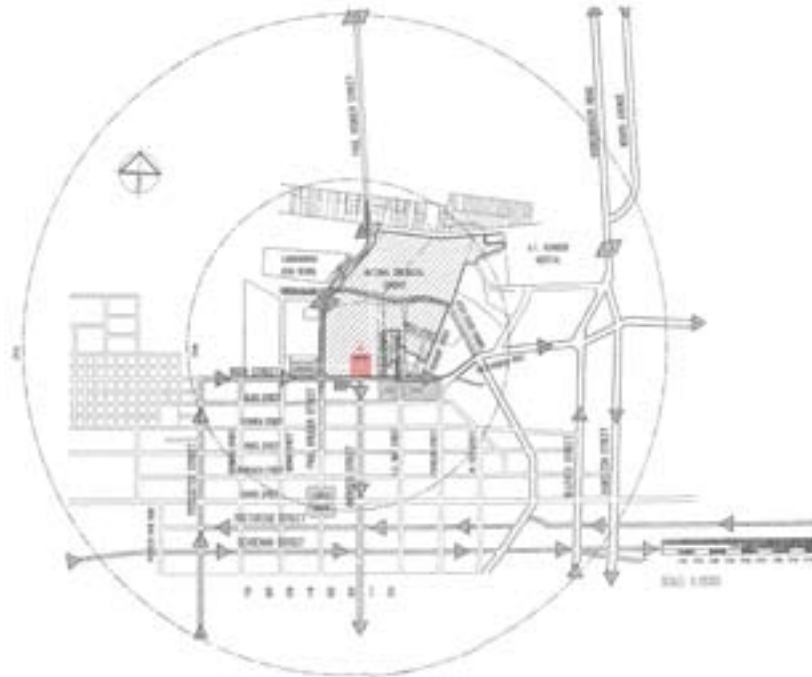


Figure 5: Access routes, location of site

museum, which had to be closed to the public (Dippenaar 1992: 92).

Traces of the old collections and exhibition cabinets can be found in the abandoned Old Museum, which has been declared a National Monument.

2.2. PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Location

The old ZAR museum is located in the northern part of the Pretoria CBD, against the Daspoort Ridge. It is built on the premises of the Pretoria Zoo, where Boom Street and Andries Street intersect. The zoo and Boom Street physically enclose the museum (Figure 5).

Zoning

The wider area is zoned as predominantly 'business' and can be seen and experienced throughout Boom Street and Bloed Street in the form of small and large scale commercial activities. This business zone excludes the use of noxious industry and spray-painting (Figure 6).

To the east, zoning includes special and general residential. This area stretches along De Waal Street and Margaretha Street, which is laden with heritage material.

No specific land use is allocated to the west, allowing for many future options.

The previously demolished area in Marabastad, claimed for the 1967 Freeway Scheme, is zoned as undetermined. This affected area unfortunately lacks order and identity.

Links

Most of the north-south streets terminate against Boom Street. One exception is Paul Kruger Street, which leads up past the zoo to disappear in the north. Paul Kruger Street is the major transport route, leading directly to the Pretoria Station. The old 'Staatsmuseum' forms the focal end of the Andries Street axis (Figure 7).

Climate

The generally high summer temperatures and the often high humidity result in an uncomfortable, clammy heat.

Seasonal rainfall averages 741 mm per year. Thunderstorm precipitation rates can go up to between 90 and 100 mm p/hr. Hailstorms are quite common and can be severe (recorded stones of 142 g in 1949), and the annual cloud cover is 33%, ranging from 13% in winter to 54% in summer.

Prevailing winds are calm, and are mainly from a north-east direction in the morning and a north-west direction in the afternoon. Strong winds occur during thunderstorms, and afternoon winds are expected to be much stronger, as they are funnelled through the Daspoort Ridge (Tayob 1999: 90).

The slope, the river and the ridge have a negative impact on the dispersion of air pollutants. According to residents, the pollution, high summer temperatures, high diurnal temperature range and precipitation intensity cause uncomfortable living conditions. At night the smells of the zoo stir into the eastern residential side.

Topography

The Pretoria Zoo is situated 1 300 m above sea level. A mild slope of 1:27 runs

from the south-west to north-east, from Boom Street to the Apies River (Tayob 1999: 87).

The Daspoort Ridge and Apies River form the northern boundary, inhibiting further development in the northerly direction. The ridge is part of the Witwatersberge, an east-west mountain range running through the inner city (Figure 8).



Geology

A geological map shows that most of the underlying geology is composed of localised Andesitic lava with agglomerate, shale and turf. Observation shows that annual erosion removes residual soils, but, this does not create building problems (Figure 9).

Developmental proposals

The Capital Consortium developed the ISDF (Integrated Spatial Development

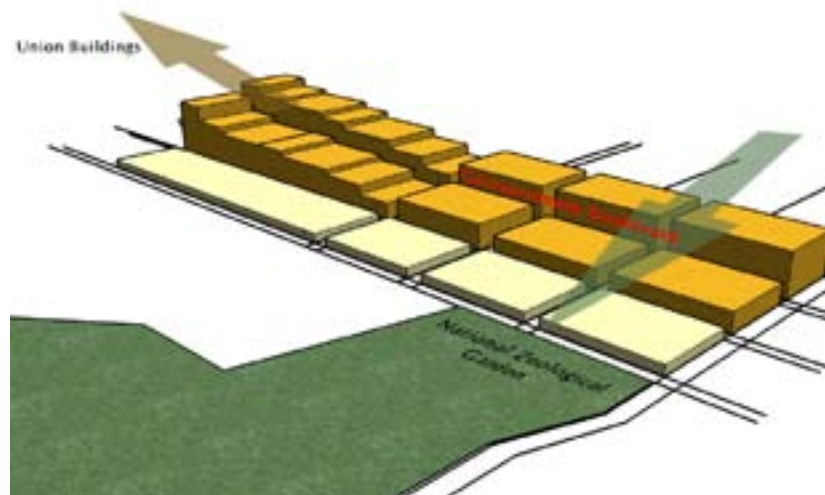


Figure 7: Movement Map illustrating different forms and intensities of transport



Figure 9: Soil Map

Framework) and proposed that a Government Boulevard should be developed along either side of Struben Street. In order to enhance the processional qualities of the street, it was stated that the highest building should be in Paul Kruger Street, with a descending line in height towards the Apies River, where the lowest point is reached. It was proposed that the height line should ascend towards the Union Buildings in the east in order to enhance views and sight lines from within the boulevard (Figure 10).



An 'Open Space System' is characterised by the Apies River, the Walker Spruit and the Steenhoven Spruit, along which there are several activity nodes. The ISDF proposes the relocation of the zoo's main entrance to the east, next to the Apies River. However, if this should happen, Boom Street will lose its unique character and the zoo will be even more alienated from the inner city.

Public and Transport proposals aim at formalising the taxi rank located between Boom and Bloed streets, thereby concentrating the washing, maintenance and informal parking on a specific area. This proposal would still have a negative

effect on the desired pedestrian-friendly zone and would harm the impression of the city entrance as well.

Another ISDF proposal plans to pedestrianise Paul Kruger Street. This would have a huge impact on the pedestrian-friendly access to the zoo and would invite a safer environment. It would also break the high speeds of taxis and other traffic driving along Boom Street.

The ISDF further promotes the reinforcement of the existing CBD grid. By reinforcing the grid, all axes leading to Boom Street should be enhanced — especially Andries Street, which has a focal ending against the exceptional old 'Staatsmuseum'. Edges and activities along Andries Street should be well maintained so as to allow clear visibility and attraction (Moolman 2001:).

The pedestrianisation of Paul Kruger Street and the reinforcement of the CBD grid would vastly benefit the chosen site.

Sensory context

A wide variety of senses are triggered when in the district of the Old Museum. The informal taxi rank is situated between Boom Street and Bloed Street, and a lot of noise is created here. Taxis hoot, music is played loudly and people shout, all combined with the traffic noise of the speeding cars in Boom Street. Conversely, exceptional peace and quiet can be experienced in the residential part to the east of the zoo. Other surrounding noisy areas do not affect the chosen site.

Boom Street is one of only a few streets in Pretoria that are lined with London Planes. This is an attractive feature which gives the street its unique character. Bloed Street, like the majority of Pretoria's street, is lined with Jacaranda trees.

A beautiful, peaceful atmosphere is found in the church square park. However, the area around the chosen site is, to a great extent, visually unorganised and unattractive. Too much information is provided to the onlooker.

Inhabitants complain about a urinal odour coming from the zoo and invading the air at night. A variety of smells are generated by the informal trading along Bloed Street as well. These smells include chicken or meat being braaied, rubbish and car fumes. Together with smelling the food comes tasting the food, if bought. Formal shops offer more food and drinking beverages. The design will respond to this problem by filtering out the bad smells and reintroducing pleasant, therapeutic scents.

Boom Street maintains a relatively safe atmosphere. By keeping the zoo's main entrance next to the museum building, some order is kept. Sidewalk pavements along Bloed Street barely exist, and if they do, they are uneven. This street has a faster, alerting vibe and can make a stranger feel nervous. This feeling is, in turn, contrasted by the calm informal traders. Rough textures dominate these streets.

It is extraordinary how the atmosphere around the Old Museum building is in total contrast with the building interior, the courtyard and the zoo. Peace, harmony and timelessness characterise this scene (Figure 11).



2.3. METAPHYSICAL CONTEXT

Setting

The site is situated between the zoo and the medical institutions to the north-east. The 'Healing Activities Centre' thus, literally and physically forms a link between the two.

The physical context of the site, situated on the edge of the National Zoological Gardens, is historically important, strategically located, in desperate need of intervention, and has the potential to make a striking impact on the surrounding urban quality (Figure 12).



The physical realm chosen has definite metaphysical undertones, which contribute extensively to the desired development of people and especially people with special needs (Moolman 2001: 64).

The setting provides a safe transition zone from the busy Boom Street to the quiet, peaceful zoo landscape. The users are thus exposed to both chaos and serenity and thereby, are made fit to cope in both worlds. The calm building interior offers a good environment for concentration skills, hearing skills and soothing treatment types. The site also allows people to find balance and harmony in today's rat race life style.

The people with special needs will, by travelling to the inner city, familiarise themselves with a bigger territory on a daily or weekly basis. This will boost their self-confidence and independency (Moolman 2001: 66).

People with special needs are often rejected as 'different'. Activities could

be planned at the zoo, where the 'able' children could play with the disabled children, thereby enhancing interaction and acceptance. For example, children could feed the animals together or enjoy animal rides.

Building state

The dilapidated façade unfortunately almost disappears in the disarray along Boom Street. (Figure 13) The backside of the building stretches into the zoo, where it enjoys the peace and quiet of nature. It is a double-storey plastered brick structure with a basement and courtyard in the middle. The courtyard offers a variety of spaces for the semi-private environment. (Figure 14) The south facing front façade is cut from sandstone and the surrounding corrugated iron roof features triangular ventilators. The main entrance allows pedestrians to enter via the museum front façade in Boom Street, where the museum front looks straight down Andries Street. (Figure 15) The Old Museum is currently in a derelict condition. Nature has taken its toll over the past, and the building has suffered damage due to burst pipes. Due to weathering, the building almost blends in with nature. However, the front and west façades stand out and catch the eye immediately.

Building interior

The building interior is faced with endless possibilities in terms of the flow of space, careful opening up of walls, light, acoustics, scale, etc. Currently, it consists of exhibition areas, which are mostly delapidated, throughout. Due to darkly painted clerestory windows, the entire ground floors of the south wing and the west wing are pitch black.

Two separate timber staircases inside the disconnected southern towers lead up to second storeys, which look into the courtyard and out onto Boom Street. The top storeys are filled with light and contain neglected pressed steel ceil-

ings (Figure 16). These spaces are the spaces filled with a sense of privacy. A lower timber ceiling has been added underneath the top floor.

The eastern wing has a high pressed steel ceiling and clerestory windows, which are partly closed up and weathered, but still allowing good light. (Figure 17) Inside the courtyard, a further addition has been added to the eastern wing, which led to the destruction of the original veranda and slate slabs. This addition is dark and dilapidated inside, resulting in it being an awkward add on (Figure 18).

Only two big timber doors (Figure 19) lead to the western outside, while four smaller timber doors open up to the courtyard. (Figure 20) As the storey goes, the museum building material was transported by horse carriage and offloaded on the western façade. The façade doors were used as entry onto the offloading platform into the building interior. This also explains the door height (4 m) and the lack of exterior stairs leading up to the interior floor level. The ceiling is once again a high pressed steel ceiling, but is vaulted in (Figure 21). One of the two main spaces is chaotically subdivided into smaller spaces. One big western timber door is completely concealed by these additions.

Lastly, there is the northern wing which has the friendliest atmosphere due to it being warm and filled with light. A staircase in the main area forms the focus and leads up to a second floor (Figure 22). To the eastern side, inside the northern wing and the adjacent eastern wing, there are display rooms which were late additions. All three rooms, however, are isolated. To the western side, are partially rebuilt rooms which are as storage. Upstairs, one main wall originally divided the space into two. Later additions have left it full of illogical sub-rooms.

Steep stairs leading to the basement are found in the northern wing (Figure 23). The basement consists of one bigger room, and from an arch leads into more arched corridors. It is evident that arches have been closed up to form a long narrow room. The basement only has windows along the northern façade (Figure 24). As the natural ground level slopes down a storey height from the northern to the southern façade, it offers the possibility of inserting doors for direct access into and out of the building.

Northern, southern and western covered verandas form a link between the interior and the courtyard (Figure 25). The open museum entrance within the southern wing allows visual access from Boom Street into the courtyard. A fully-grown London Plane and a quiet, peaceful atmosphere dominate the courtyard (Figure 26).







Figure 18: View into courtyard addition

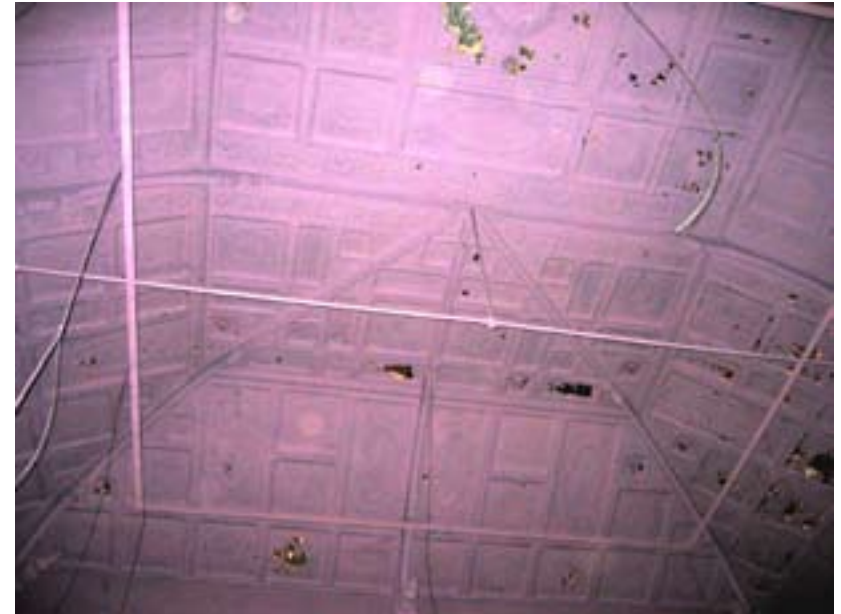


Figure 21: Unique vaulted ceiling



Figure 19: 'Wagon' timber door



Figure 20: Existing door into courtyard





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Links

The most important link is the inside and the outside. The building, as pro-



posed, is divided up into different functioning zones. The courtyard is situated in the centre of all of these zones, thus playing an essential role in combining all areas and therapy types. All interior zones will lead out into the courtyard.

A clearly defined link between the Healing Activities Centre and the animals in the zoo is vital to ensure the safety and arrival of all users. Such a link, as a pathway, must have a tactile quality and must be distinguished by colour, texture, sound and scent.

A literal link from the unfamiliar to the familiar is facilitated through the seminars and workshops and the library, where parents, family members and friends can receive further training or information regarding a relevant sensory healing topic. This will aid the understanding and helping of the sensory affected person.

2.4. THE TARGET-USER GROUP

The Healing Activities Centre caters for a mixed user group. The group is made up of children who experience sensory integration problems and individuals who need healing, either emotionally or physically. The centre also facilitates chess and bridge matches. It will be possible to book the centre for a weekend for national or international tournaments. School groups, clubs and companies are invited to book the centre for exercise, such as 'teambuilding through art therapy.' Furthermore, people who may be missing a sense will be able to come to the centre to receive healing via using and concentrating on remaining senses.

All age groups are included, ranging right from children to pensioners.

Treatment can take place either on an individual basis or in group therapy. Flexible spaces will accommodate both. It is equally beneficial for the sensory affected and non-affected to interact with one another in order to understand and accept the other. This will have a ripple effect on the greater community and will lead to better socialising skills and job possibilities. After recovery, the patients will leave with new life skills.

The centre also invites parents, family members and friends to take part in the training, counselling and information sessions offered in order to receive guidance and motivation.

2.5. THE CLIENT

The clientele is made up of the institutions funding and building up the centre. Such members will become shareholders of the Activities Centre and will include: specialised schools- such as the Prinshof School for the Visually Impaired and the Transoranje School for the Deaf; social workers; occupational therapists; the Department of Health and Education and Pretoria Council Culture Department; Chess SA; bridge clubs; Blue IQ; and the Pretoria Zoo. One (private) company, receiving support from its shareholders, will manage, facilitate, promote and market the Healing Activities Centre.

2.6. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Many of the workers in the CBD travel by train from their home locations and arrive at the Belle Ombre Station to the west of the site. A secondary transport need is created through taxis taking the workers to their work destinations. The taxi rank is situated between Boom Street and Bloed Street near the zoo. The need for taxi transport spills over to create a need of having for the sale of beverages along the streets.

A limited amount of travellers, mainly residential, make use of private transport. Little flow of money goes into the area.

The Belle Ombre Station allows for outside business entering the CBD. An influx of money keeps the area going, and both taxis and beverage stalls benefit from it.

Although a lot of activity happens around the zoo, the zoo does not feed off of it. The taxi rank and stalls, and the resultant chaos along the streets have a negative impact on zoo visitors. Due to the CBD disintegrating, the quality and safety of the CBD are falling apart, and many potential visitors do not even consider going into the city anymore.

The taxi rank and stalls however, do create ways of life and do generate income, and they keep the current Boom Street culture going. Although, it is debatable whether it is a culture conducive to the upliftment of the environment.

A Timbercity is located along Bloed Street, but it has plans to relocate to a 'better' suburb. Shoprite can be found in the same street, but they target a different market.

The economy in the district will be boosted by the introduction of the Activities Centre. A different crowd, with a different need will be drawn to the area - a

crowd which will possibly be of another class and which will feed money into the local economy. Within the Centre, the Art Café, exhibitions, performances, accommodation and tournaments are all money generating opportunities. The activities happening within the centre will not interfere with what's happening outside, thus the centre will contribute to uplifting the area.

2.7. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Rush suggests that the interior should resolve the direct demands that people make on the building to provide comfort in supporting activity. He outlines five performance mandates (spatial performance, acoustical performance, visual performance, air quality and building integrity), which are defined by physiological, psychological, sociological and economic needs (Rush 1986: 232-316).

Street levels, critical dimensions, stairways, glazing, lighting and ventilation, disabled facilities (body, blind and deaf), fire protection and public safety will comply with the SABS 0400-1990.

Other treatment centres will be studied to certify that the 'Healing Activities Centre' will comply with all therapy standards, thereby ensuring great success.

2.8. DISCIPLINE

Interior architecture offers reaction to space, thereby restructuring and/or reorganising the interior spaces inside a building. It is important not to do this on an isolated scale, but rather as part of the bigger development, linking to the greater framework.

By researching the required function of the building, the interior architect is able to make an informed decision regarding the interior spaces and layout. On a heritage basis, important, historical documentation should be kept and celebrated, as the old should always be remembered. The building is used by people, thus it should optimally accommodate the users.

The theoretical approach should be in balance with the concept of discipline and site context. Proper site investigation forms a crucial part of understanding the site problems and possessing the ability to intervene with constructive design.

2.9. EDUCATION AND HEALTH

As mentioned before, the 'Healing Activities Centre' is located amidst medical and educational institutions.

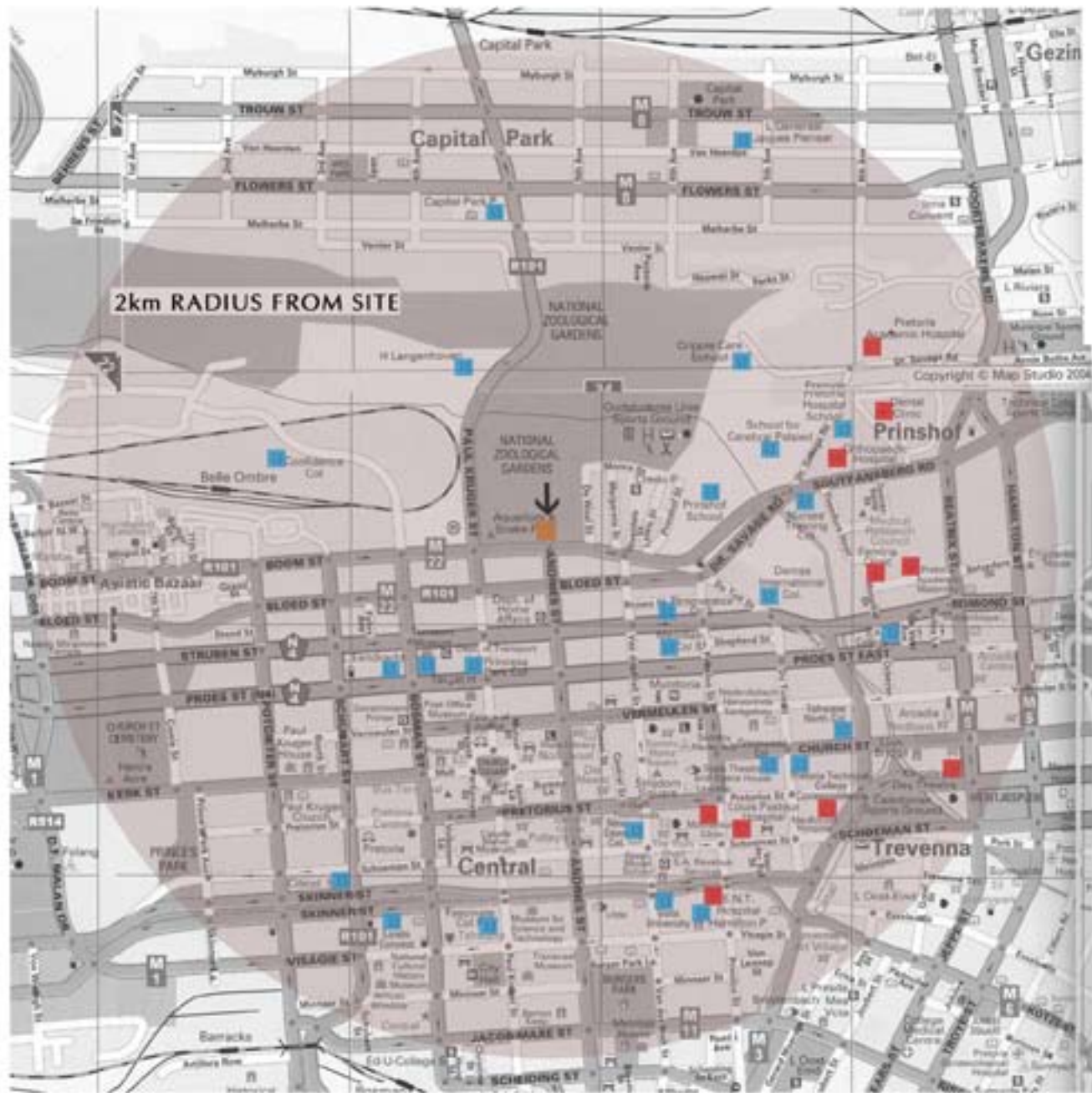
Schools, specialised schools, hospitals and clinics in the area encompass the Activities Centre whole-heartedly.

Within a radius of up to 2 km from the Old Museum, there are 25 educational (of which three specialised) and 10 medical registered institutions. (Figure 27)

2.10. GOVERNMENTAL GOALS

The Department of Home Affairs and the Department of Transport are situated along either side of Struben Street. Once the ISDF-proposed Government Boulevard along the Struben Street had become a reality, automatic ordering of the area would have taken place when the offices were spilling out to the sides.

In my opinion, the government has a big responsibility to rejuvenating the city. The city has disintegrated over time, and has lost quality and safety. Boom Street covers an important landscape and has possibilities that should not be forgotten in the future. The zoo's location is bound to stay, and the environment around it needs to be uplifted in order to draw more interest into and around the CBD.



- SITE
- Medical Institutions
- Educational Institutions

Figure 27: Medical and Educational Institution Map