Urban and Contextual Framework

- Macro Scale
- Meso Scale
- Micro Scale
Figure Ground of the Pretoria CBD

The two central axes in Pretoria are dominant visual and spatial features, and the grid system creates a strong visual hierarchy. Natural features shape the form of the city. To the west and east the Hennops and Apies Rivers form the historic city edges, while to the north and the south the city is contained by parallel ridges, the Magaliesberg and Salvokop ridges. Church Square, in the city centre, is a vital node and can be considered the heart of Pretoria.

The proposed site is located in the north-eastern quadrant of the city, on the historical edge. It can similarly be defined as a node with vertical and horizontal axes formed by the pedestrian and vehicular movement patterns.

* The city is referred to as Pretoria which forms part of the Tshwane Metropolitan area.
**Figure 3.02. Cultural landmarks in Pretoria.**

1. Post office museum
2. Pierneef museum
3. Grootkerk
4. Paul Kruger House
5. Paul Kruger Church
6. Capitol Theatre
7. Raadsaal
8. State Theatre
9. Mosque
10. Lion Bridge
11. Claude Malan Museum
12. Museum of Science and Technology
13. Little Theatre
14. National Cultural History Museum
15. City Hall
16. Transvaal Museum
17. Barton Keep
18. Burgers Park
19. Melrose House
20. Pretoria Station
21. Unisa Art Gallery
22. Kirkness House
23. Moordijkhuis
24. B.J. Vorster Tower
25. Mea Vota
26. Breytenbach Theatre
27. Oost-Eind
28. Pretoria Art Museum
29.ismall Mosque
The Cultural Network

According to the guidelines set out in the Tshwane Inner City Development and Regeneration Strategy (2005: building block 2), Tshwane should be developed as the Cultural Capital of Africa. This idea is vital for shaping the identity of Tshwane.

As part of the context analysis, existing cultural landmarks were identified and mapped (Fig. 3.02). These include, amongst others, historical buildings, museums, theatres, galleries and tourism nodes.

From this analysis it is clear that there is a rich mixture of existing cultural landmarks. However, there is a lack of linkages between them, especially to and from the TUT Arts Campus. Although these landmarks are in close proximity to one another, they remain fragmented.

If the Tshwane Framework is to be realised, the cultural landmarks cannot function in isolation, but must be linked within a network where they strengthen and support one another.
Fig 3.03: Existing vehicular movement patterns in the vicinity of the study area.
Vehicular movement patterns

The Dr. Savage Road gateway into the north-eastern area of Pretoria is currently undefined. Prinsloo Street, west of the proposed site, is a one-way street leading into the city centre. Struben Street, a quiet street with sporadic activity, is a one-way street leading to the Union Buildings that forms part of the Government Boulevard.
Fig 3.04, Existing pedestrian movement patterns in the vicinity of the study area.
Pedestrian movement patterns

The formal taxi rank in Bloed Street together with the informal taxi rank in Dr. Savage Road service the study area. Pedestrian activity occurs mainly around those transportation nodes. The primary pedestrian movement routes flow along Van der Walt and Prinsloo Streets, to the west of the proposed site. It is difficult to negotiate the sidewalks in Du Toit Street, as they are blocked by cars from the workshops as well as the taxis which use the area as informal parking rank. This situation has a negative effect as most pedestrians avoid the area.
>fig 3.05. Proposed new links as per Group Framework.
Proposed new links

The proposed new pedestrian network aims to connect the new and existing open spaces with the city fabric. There are three proposed new routes that serve the site from the west, south and the north-east. The route from the North-East will incorporate the isolated TUT Arts Campus with the city. It should also open up the large green space of the Apies River. A tram stop on the proposed site also forms part of the proposal.

* Refer to Group Framework Proposal - addendum to document.
Fig 3.06. Existing buildings of historical significance...
>Heritage value_<p>
The existing built fabric was investigated and listed according to the following criteria:<p>

- **Building construction type**<br>
  Buildings were grouped as of either brick and concrete structure (traditional load bearing) or steel-frame structure<p>

- **Building condition**<br>
  Condition of the existing fabric was evaluated and placed in one of three categories - excellent - well maintained and structurally sound, average - minor repairs and maintenance required, poor - bad state of repair, not structurally sound<p>

- **Heritage value**<br>
  Various sources were used to assign a heritage value of low, average or high to buildings. See Group Framework addendum.
>fig 3_07. Combination of existing movement patterns...
>Movement patterns and areas of congregation

The existing movement patterns of private vehicles, public transport and pedestrians were combined and overlaid with the various areas of congregation. High traffic volumes occur at the intersections of Prinsloo and Struben Streets, places of gathering which are usually densely populated. Opportunities for informal trade and public transport pick-up/drop-off zones were identified at these points. Areas of congregation which have a low traffic volume generally act as rest/pause areas. These usually occur in side streets, in shaded or semi-enclosed spaces, as in for instance Shepherd Street.
>fig 3_08. Existing areas of congregation for city dwellers.
Interaction was witnessed at street intersections where pedestrians pause before continuing their journey or changing direction. These places create opportunities for informal trade to occur. In quieter areas, the pace slows down and pedestrians gather to seek refuge from the primary routes.
Fig 3.09. Existing building use.
Existing Building Use

A large portion of the proposed context is commercial, in keeping with the current uses in the Pretoria CBD. The proposed site is located on the edge of the CBD.

The proposed site hosts a strong mix of commercial and light industrial activities, with a few residential and institutional buildings scattered in between. Vehicular parking facilities on hard open spaces, tend to be cut off from the general public, mainly for security reasons.

The ground floor areas of buildings are mostly used for commercial activities. Covered sidewalks cater for pedestrian movement and informal trade. Residential buildings in the area cater mostly for students.
SWOT analysis

> Strengths
Tree-lined walkways
Presence of buildings with heritage and cultural value
Zones of tranquility and energy
Few derelict areas
Existing infrastructure moderate to good
Roads, electricity, water, sewage, waste disposal
Informal and formal economic activity
Informal economic activity along walkways
High volume of pedestrian movement along van der Wall and Bloed streets
Variety of commercial, institutional and residential activities
Presence of taxi rank in Bloed Street
High volume of taxi buses in streets

> Weaknesses
Lack of public green space and public buildings
High ratio of hard to soft space
Presence of derelict spaces, especially in Brown and Shepherd Streets
Derelict state of buildings with heritage value
Irregular build to lines in van der Wall and Bloed Streets
Perimeter movement around blocks, limited permeability
Tension between formal and informal traders
Restricted activities after 7 in evening due to taxi rank closure at 19:30

> Opportunities
Open and green space converted into public spaces
Wide hard-surface walkways covered with trees
Integration of formal and informal trading
Diversity of spaces and activities
Increase pedestrian movement along walkways
Use arcades to increase permeability of blocks
Densify designated area
Increase residential density and activities
Attractiveness and ease of taxi and bus transport
Increased economic activity due to taxi passengers
Taxi rank in Bloed Street

> Threats
Derelict open spaces with garbage pile-up
Lack of public green space
General security is low with little police presence
Specific market conditions due to low-income group clientele
Illegal trade
Disruption and tension between formal and informal traders
Low maintenance of infrastructure and services
Temporary removal of taxi rank for upgrading purposes
High-risk investment conditions
Prinsloo Street

The proposed new pedestrian network aims to connect the existing open spaces within the city with each other. Three new proposed routes will serve the site from the west, south and the north-east. The route from the north-east would act as a link between the isolated TUT Arts Campus and the city. It should also open up the large, under-utilised green space of the Apies River. A tram stop on the site forms part of the proposed Group Framework.
Struben Street

Struben Street is a relatively quiet one-way street connecting the city and the Union Buildings. Apart from late afternoon rush hour traffic leaving the city, only sporadic vehicular traffic passes the proposed site.

The sidewalks are pedestrian unfriendly and uncomfortable. Buildings have inactive street frontages and open space is fenced off with palisades.

The proposed site is currently dominated by Autozone*. Motor repairs spill out onto the sidewalk. Palisade fencing acts as a barrier on the prominent corner, which also acts as a refuse collection area.

Jacaranda trees (Jacaranda mimosifolia) line Struben Street. They provide an ‘avenue-like’ quality to the street and can help extend a colonade effect similar to the one on Prinsloo Street.
Du Toit Street

Du Toit Street, lined with London Plane trees (Platanus acerifolia), is a busy two-way street defining the north-east city edge. There is a positive visual link between the proposed site and the street, especially at the intersection with Prinsloo Street.

The main entrance of the TUT Arts Campus is situated on Du Toit Street. However, the existing precast concrete perimeter wall acts as a visual barrier.
>fig 3.22. Aerial view of proposed site.
The Proposed Site

The proposed site is located on the main access route to the city from the north-eastern areas of Tshwane, and is situated on the north-eastern edge of the CBD. Its boundaries are formed by Prinsloo Street to the west, Struben Street to the south and Du Toit Street to the north-east.

To insert a permeable scheme into the city, new links must be incorporated with the existing links through the site from the surrounding areas.

The proposed site is within easy walking distance of the currently being upgraded taxi rank in Blood Street, and the informal taxi rank in Dr. Savage Road. Furthermore, the site functions as an entrance or threshold for visitors arriving by private transport.

Pedestrian activities occur mainly on Prinsloo Street to the west of the site, to and from the taxi ranks. Current light industrial activities on the site have a negative effect on how the city is perceived. The existing buildings and workshops have limited interaction with the sidewalk, and are generally avoided by pedestrians.

Proposed new links include a new pedestrian network and the new tram system. A new tram stop is envisioned on the Du Toit Street boundary of the site. The new pedestrian network aims to connect the isolated TUT Arts Campus with the city, allowing the site to act as a transition zone. Within this zone, the green belt of the Apies River should also become accessible to the city, and the city should also become accessible to the students.