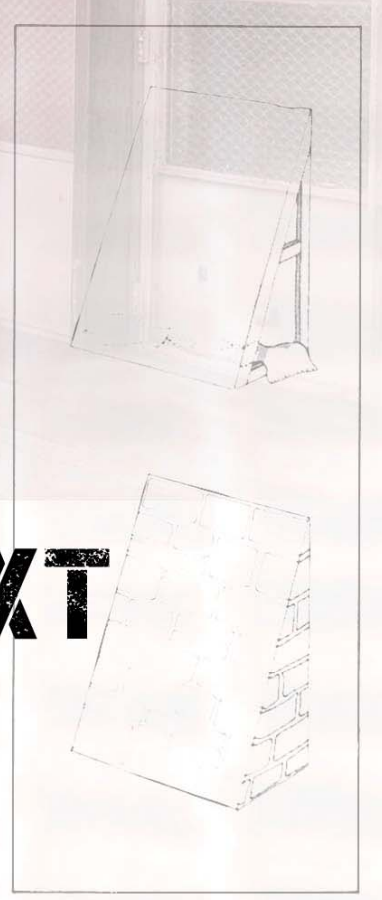


02 | **CONTEXT STUDY**



2.1 | MACRO CONTEXT STUDY

The theatre industry in South Africa has developed consistently since the launch of Johannesburg's innovative Market Theatre in the mid-1970s. Today, South Africa has more than one hundred theatres across the country exhibiting a wide variety of genres (<http://www.southafrica.info/about/arts/drama.htm>, 17 Aug. 2008)

2.1.1 PRETORIA

Tshwane, in the Gauteng Province, is one of three capital cities of South Africa. The inner city has to accommodate capital city functions in terms of achieving exceptional environmental quality, ensuring monumentality and symbolism, and reflecting an entire nation's values and aspirations.

Pretoria has a strong sense of history and culture, with numerous theatres, museums monuments, and places of learning. There are many theatres in and around Pretoria catering for diverse dramatic genres. **The South African State Theatre** is arguably one of the most renowned and prominent theatres in Tshwane. It is situated in the heart of Pretoria's CBD, in the block formed by Church, Prinsloo, Van Der Walt and Pretorius Streets. It is a multi purpose venue that is used for performances, conferences, and a variety of other functions.

The Breytenbach Theatre, situated on Gerhard Moerdyk Street in Sunnyside, belongs to The Technical University of Tshwane (TUT) and therefore often hosts productions from the University of Pretoria, the University of South Africa as well as the TUT's own functions. Additionally, technical training for the Vocal Arts, Drama, Music and Dance Departments from the University of Pretoria are held here (stuku student culture, 2008).

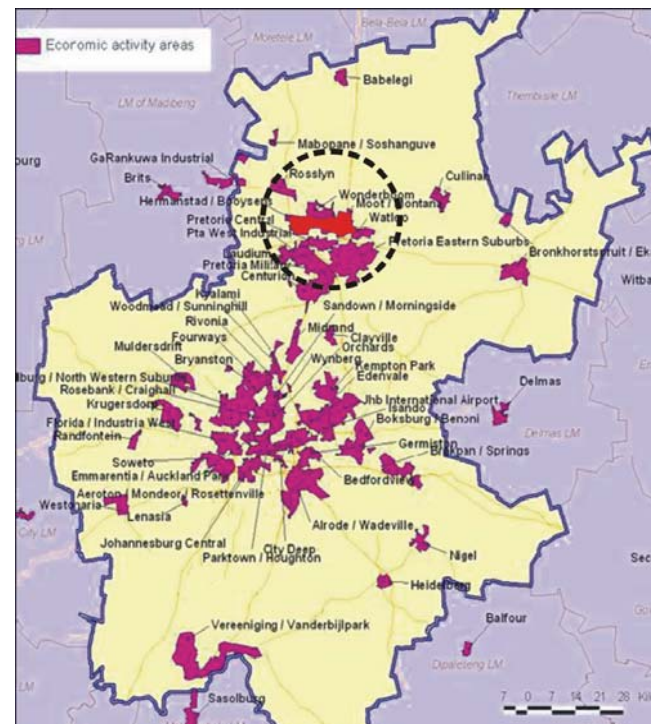


Figure 2.1.1: GDP Areas of Large Scale Economic Activity (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (2007))

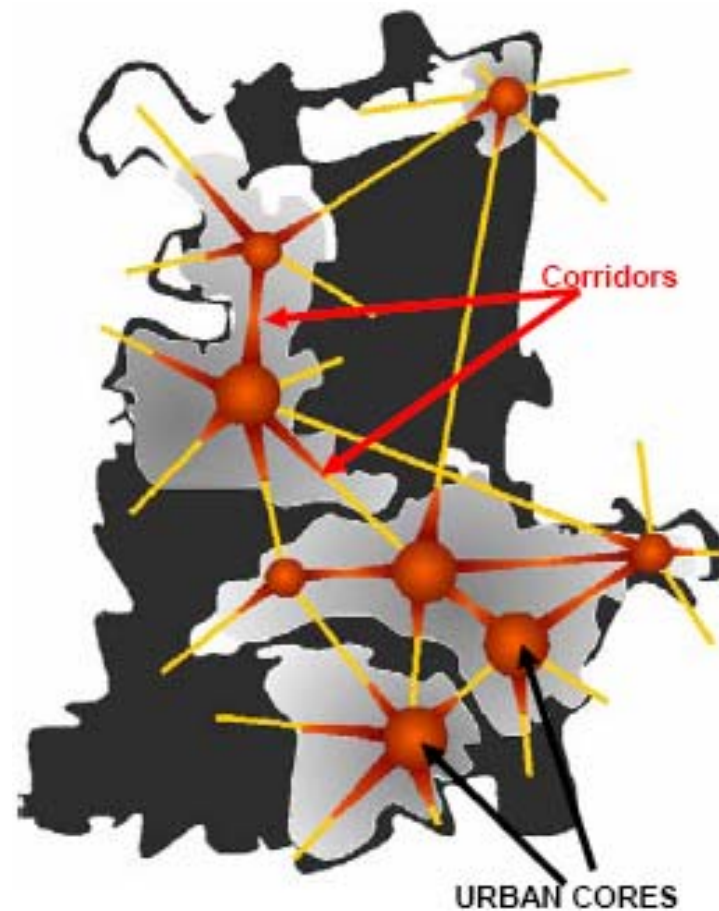


Figure 2.1.2: Metropolitan activity nodes in Tshwane (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality (2007))

2.1.2 SURROUNDING PLANS AND DEVELOPMENT

The City of Tshwane has developed an Urban Framework around the proposed Gautrain stations situated in Hatfield and the CBD. The Gautrain Rapid Link System intends to link Johannesburg, Tshwane and the Oliver Tambo International Airport. It is anticipated that the development will serve as a pivotal stimulus for economic and social development along Gauteng's main north-south transport axis.

The Tshwane Development Framework proposes linking the Gautrain with the Tshwane Rapid Ring Rail System in and around Pretoria CBD. The target market for the Rapid Rail Line is the affluent commuter transport markets that travel between Pretoria and Johannesburg.

This system will connect eleven different settlements in Tshwane and link the economic nodes which will be fostered in each settlement. These settlements will have one or more urban cores which will be integrated with and around major railway stations. These urban centres should therefore focus on high activity levels and should be developed as a dense urban place in terms of residential, commercial, social, and cultural activities (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, 2007).

2.1.3 METROPOLITAN ACTIVITY

[Fig 2.1.2] The highlighted areas are where public transport facilities and specialised infrastructure are concentrated and where people will enjoy the highest level of accessibility. The Tshwane Metropolitan Framework proposes developing these nodes and therefore making them efficient; such as optimizing accessibility, mobility and additionally providing for sustainable neighbourhoods.

2.1.4 HATFIELD AS A CONTEXT

Hatfield has been identified as one of six metropolitan cores in the Tshwane Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, 2007). The plan is to densify the area due to the upcoming Gautrain Rapid Rail System. This will cause a market change in the area to commuters. The development of Hatfield will be oriented to a large extent around transit. This means that areas that are mainly suburban and educational will progressively become more urban. A higher quality environment will be needed to counteract the foreseeable increase in population density in Hatfield as well as the University. Hatfield is envisioned to become a vibrant, safe, mixed-use urban area. The consequent development of attractive, interesting and interlinking activities, as well as public spaces for pedestrians and public transport should renew investor confidence.

2.1.5 MAJOR VEHICULAR MOVEMENT ROUTES

These routes link the metropolitan activity nodes as well as the major railway stations and therefore become the most important vehicular transport routes. In order to exploit them to their full potential the routes need to be highly visible and accessible, making them into important activity corridors.

In Hatfield these can be seen along Lynwood Road, Charles Street, Duncan Street, and Atterbury Road, the four main roads that connect Brooklyn, Menlyn and Hatfield. In these nodes, due to high density and convergence points for commuters, public transport and pedestrian walkways become of great importance.



Figure 2.1.3: Above: Diagram showing urban nodes in Pretoria, Hatfield being an urban node. Aerial photo of Hatfield showing vehicle routes in the Hatfield Urban Node.

2.2 | MICRO CONTEXT STUDY

The University of Pretoria is a self contained organism amongst an ever growing and changing urban fabric. It forms part of the educational core of Pretoria along with the Technical University of Tshwane and UNISA. The University of Pretoria is located on Lynwood Road on the border of Hatfield and Brooklyn. It has the ability to be the central node in the area, because many of the activities in and around Hatfield revolve around student life.

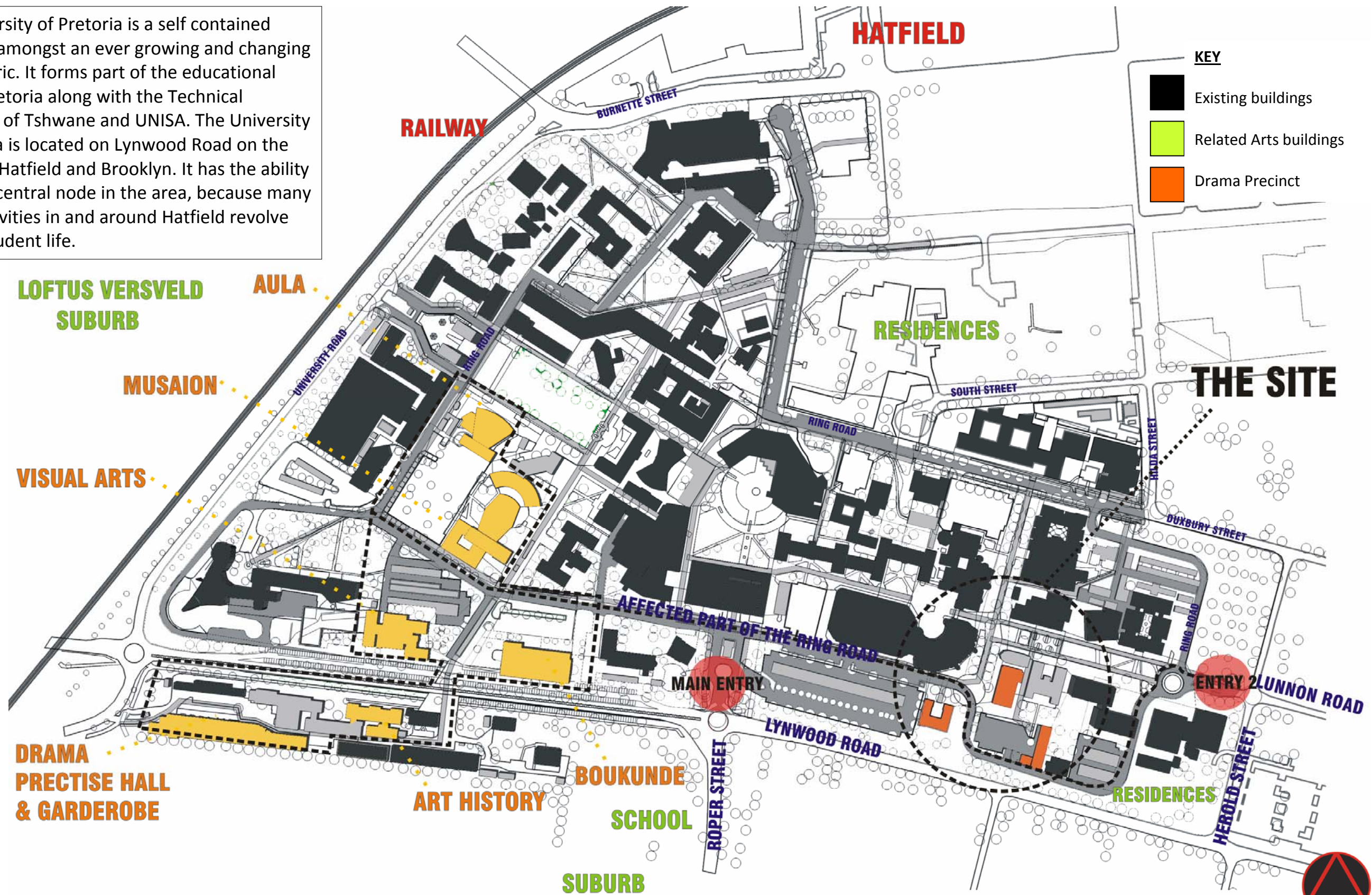


Figure 2.1.4: Aerial drawing of the University of Pretoria main campus and South Campus, Hatfield. The orange labels depict the other arts buildings and the circled area depicts the chosen site culminating at the end of the ring road. Author: Chita M

2.2.1 SITE LOCATION

The site identified for the project is situated on the south-eastern corner of the University's main campus. It sits along the ring road which runs parallel to Lynwood Road. The chosen space is comprised of three buildings that will be the spaces that enclose the square; the fourth boundary would be the road and designed landscape. The basic aim is to draw attention to the fact that arts and culture is an important, even integral element within a community, be it social or economic. The fact that it can actually draw people closer and create a different method of thinking is imperative to the education of people.

The site has an ideal location because the group of buildings sit on the corner of a ring road and is the culmination point where the various arts faculties look to commune. It is located at the opposite side to the administration building on the eastern end of the ring road, which therefore creates the opportunity for the chosen site to be another focal point, or landmark space, for the University near a big intersection (Lynwood Road and Duncan Street.) Completing this arts Precinct would result in a completion of a node and create movement and access along the ring road within the campus just parallel to Lynwood Road.

This kind of a facility will be most important to the university as an improvement to its arts status, but would also add to the enjoyment of the students; a way in which they can experience art as an aspect of education and as a novel, fresh way to gain access to culture. This will produce the greatest positive impact on the image that the Arts Department can have on the university. The site makes up a series of buildings ranging from a heritage building, a converted school hall and a newer school type building with an attached theatre that seat 150 people. It stages performances of exploration as well as private performances.

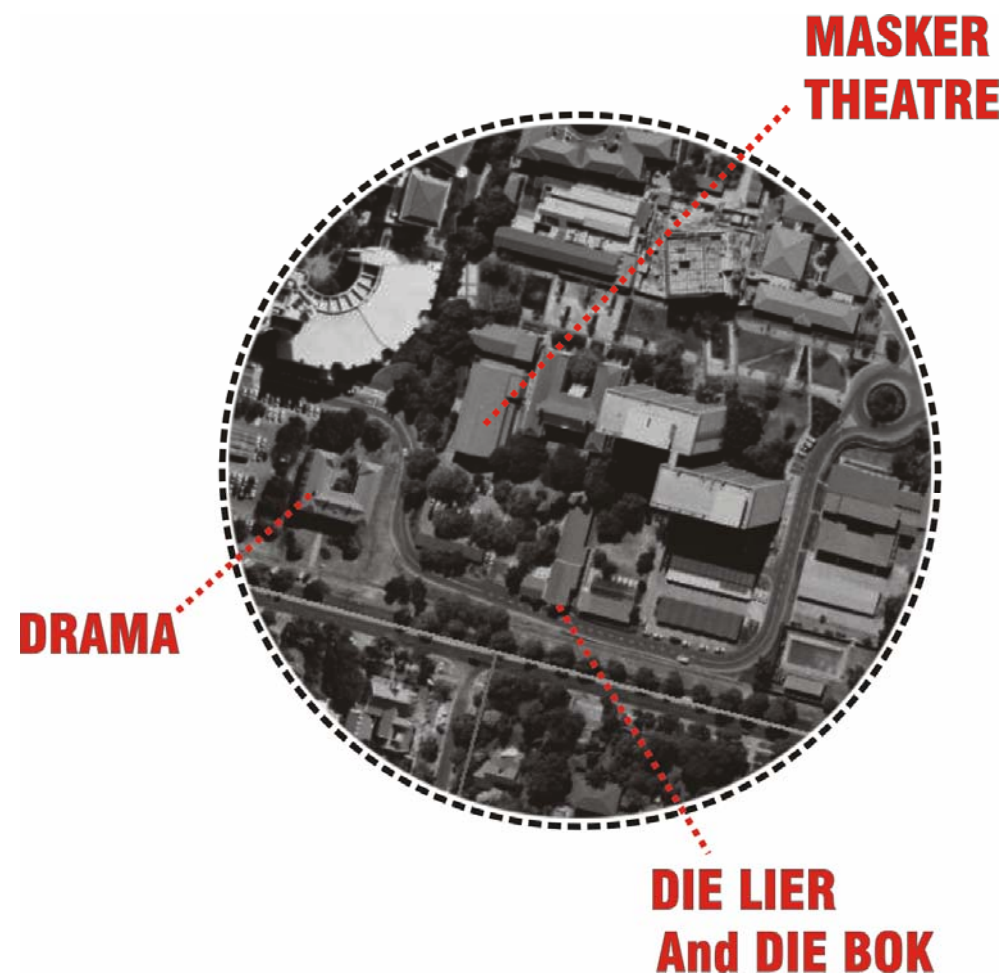


Figure 2.1.5



Figure 2.1.6: Panoramic photo of the Drama Building from Lynwood Road, Misra, S May 2008



Figure 2.1.7: Photograph of the entranceway into Die Masker. By Misra, S may 2008



Figure 2.1.8: Photo of Die Lier from the entrance of Die Masker. By Misra, S May 2008

2.3 | SITE ANALYSIS

2.3.1 HISTORY OF THE C3C

In 1971 Bishop Cox and father Ryan O.M.I., parish priest of Pretoria, wrote to the Superior General offering to secure a site for the school if a staff of brothers could be promised. Consequently the site on Lynwood Road adjoining the University was purchased from Mr Johan Rissik. The brothers themselves were responsible for the erection of the College building and seven years later they completed the building of the Christian Brothers residence. The architects of the residence were Messrs. Cowin, Powers and Ellis and the builders were Clark and Downie (Pty) Ltd. It was not possible to start the College until 1921. In the 1960's the University of Pretoria urgently required the property to expand to the east towards the LC de Villiers sport grounds to consolidate the two properties. In 1965 the University began steps to purchase the property in the east of Roper Street. This included the Christian Brothers College, Loreto Convent and the Roman Catholic Church. The Church only sold its property in 1980. The buildings therefore take on the characteristics of the Old Christian Brothers College and a school hall from the convent (Br Duggan (2008). (refer to appendix 1 for full heritage Report)



Figure 2.1.9: Panoramic view of the courtyard to the Drama Building (old CBC), by Misra, S, May 2008

2.3.2 THE VISUAL CONTEXT

Two of the three buildings on the site are inward facing, i.e. towards the parking area. The buildings do not communicate with one another as they act as separate entities, totally introverted. Dense trees and pathways as well as a central parking lot separates the buildings and their functionality, they have no communication with one another. The Drama building is located across the ring road on the corner and it sits along Lynwood road, the other two building (Die Masker and Lier) are bound in by the Ring road, the parking areas and the pedestrian pathways).

Die Lier and Masker building have the potential to combine with their surrounding buildings, the Visitors Reception Building, of which the drama department use the ground floor facilities for lectures and the agricultural staff uses the top floor; the Theron Hall, also used for lectures; and the Agricultural Sciences Building which, at ten storeys tall, towers over the site.

The oldest buildings in that area of the campus are: the Old Christian Brothers College (the CBC) and the Drama Building which were designed in a Neo-Classical style. The other buildings are designed in a Neo-Brutalist manner (the Education and Law Buildings) and the New Modern style (the Agricultural Sciences Building). The other buildings north of the site are all designed in a brick Post Modern style (University of Pretoria buildings, (2005). South of the chosen site for the arts Precinct is the affluent suburb of Brooklyn that is characterised by new houses on larger residential sites as well as newer student residential complexes, embassies and a Greek Orthodox Church.

2.3.3 ACCESSIBILITY

There are two access points to the University in close proximity to the Drama Precinct; the first is through the main entrance at the intersection of Lynwood Road and Roper Street. The secondary access point is at the Herold Street and Lunnon Road intersection; this entrance is not as prominent and is used primarily by the University's staff. Moreover, it is a highly pedestrian friendly access point from Hatfield. Most student pedestrians access the University from the northern gates in Hatfield off South Street and Festival Road.

Urban design around the Gautrain Station in Hatfield foresees the area becoming an increasingly pedestrian-friendly zone with more focus on various modes of public transport (City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, 2007). Access to the university campus still must be controlled; however, this does not mean that the campus has to be closed off from its surroundings. The aim of the Tshwane Metropolitan Council (2007) is to integrate it with the surroundings and densify the area with multi-purpose zones that allow for a balanced lifestyle and integrate the commuters and students into the plan.

2.3.4 OTHER UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUMS

Aside from Die Masker, Die Lier, Die Bok and the Drama Building located on the chosen site, the following auditoriums are also found on the Hatfield Campus. These are the Aula, the Raytenbach Hall, and the Musaion.

2.3.5 PARKING

The Drama Precinct is situated along the edge of Lynwood Road. There are public parking spaces along the walkways just outside the fence surrounding the University as well as existing parking lots at the main entrance and behind Die Lier Theatre, both of which can be expanded. However, it is undesirable for the Drama Precinct to be swarmed by cars; rather the activity of pedestrians, namely students, staff and the local public, are to be encouraged.

2.3.6 PRETORIA CLIMATE

The following averages in climate for Pretoria are taken from an analysis carried out in November 2007 by the South African Weather Service and relates to the last five years (South African Weather Service, 2008).

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Pretoria: Transitional area between the Highveld and the Bushveld. North-east of South Africa (25°43'S and 28°17'E). 1370mm above sea level | |
| Daylighting | |
| Jan-Dec: sun rises at ±5am and sets as ±6:30pm | |
| March and august: sun rises at ±6am and sets at ±5pm | |
| May-Aug: sun rises at ±6:30 am and sets at ±4:30pm | |
| Temperatures | |
| Summer months (Aug-Apr) | Winter months (Apr-Aug) |
| Highest recorded temperature | |
| 31°-36°C | 25°-33°C |
| Average daily maximum temperature | |
| 25°-29°C | 19°-22°C |
| Average daily minimum temperature | |
| 12°-18°C | 5°-12°C |
| The lowest recorded temperature: | |
| | -6°C |
| Rainfall | |
| Highest rainfall month: | January 136mm |
| | December 110mm |

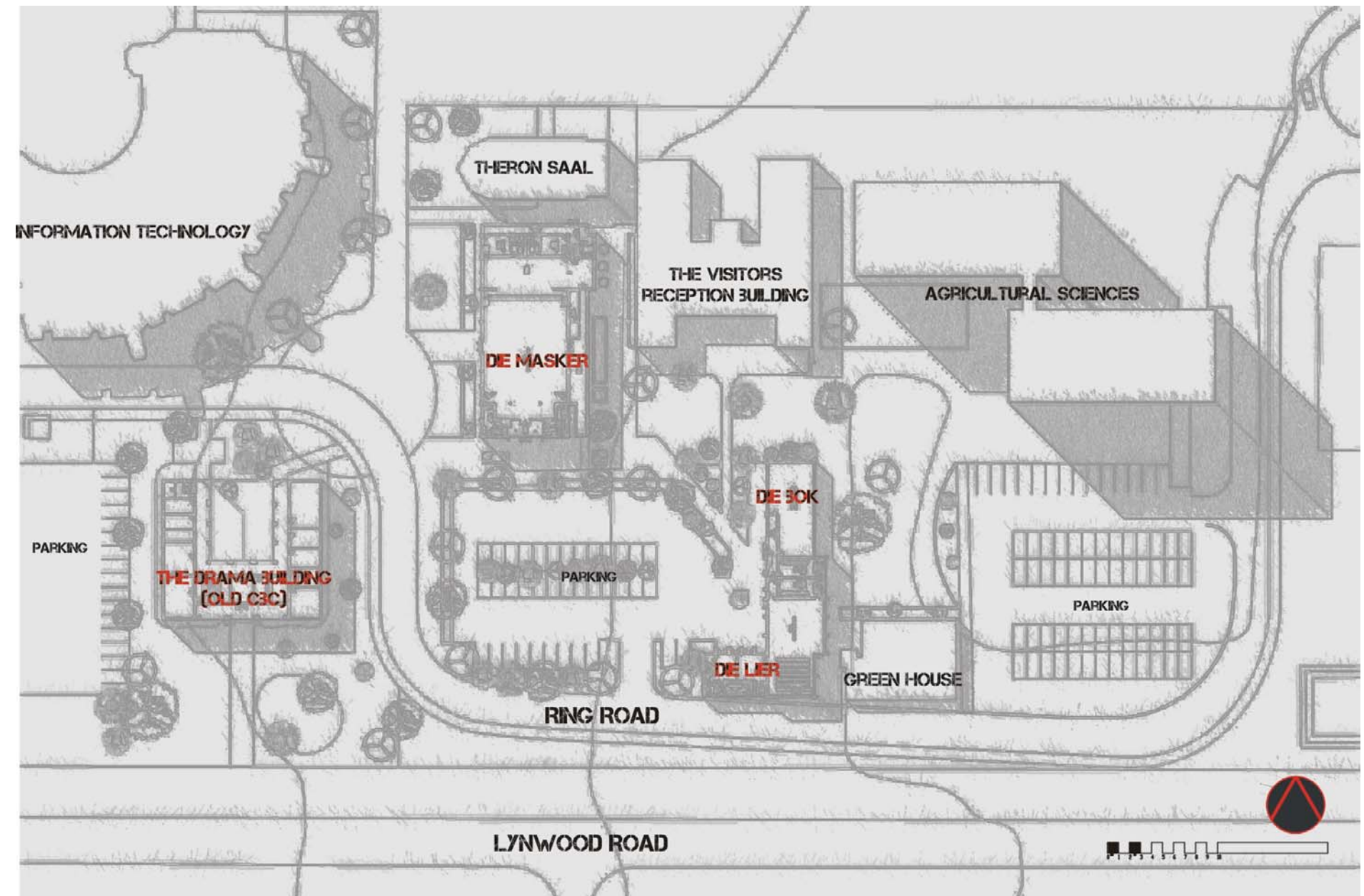


Figure 2.1.10: Existing Site plan of the Proposed Drama Precinct

2.4 | BUILDING ANALYSIS

2.4.1 | DRAMA BUILDING (OLD C3C)

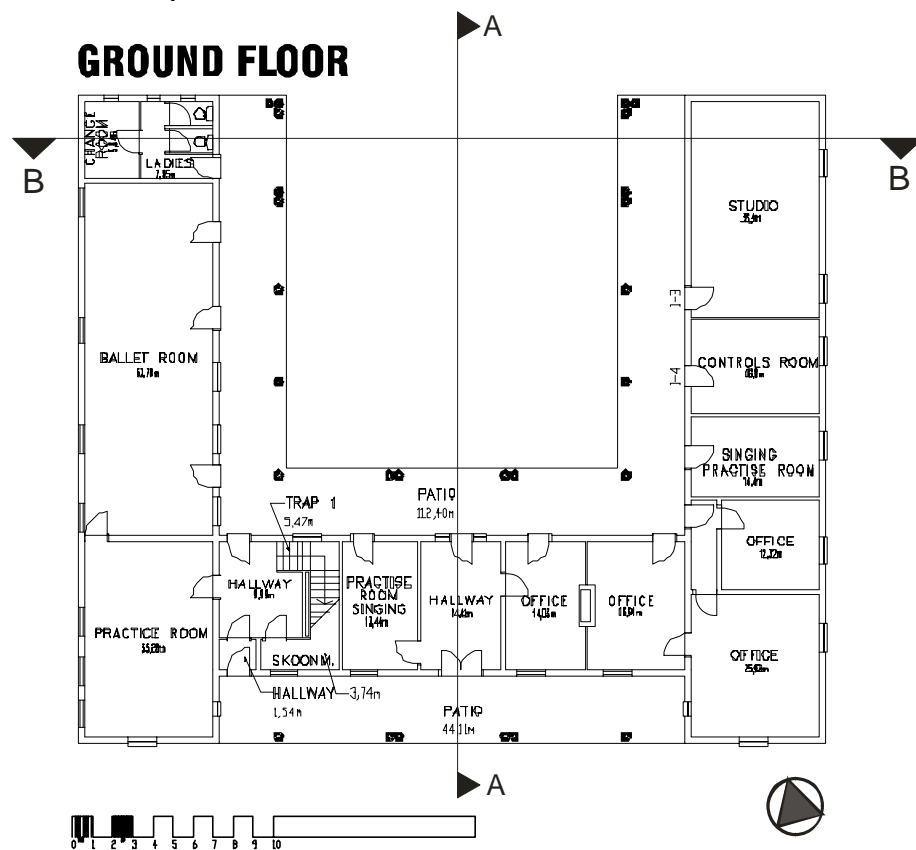


Figure 2.1.11: ground floor plan

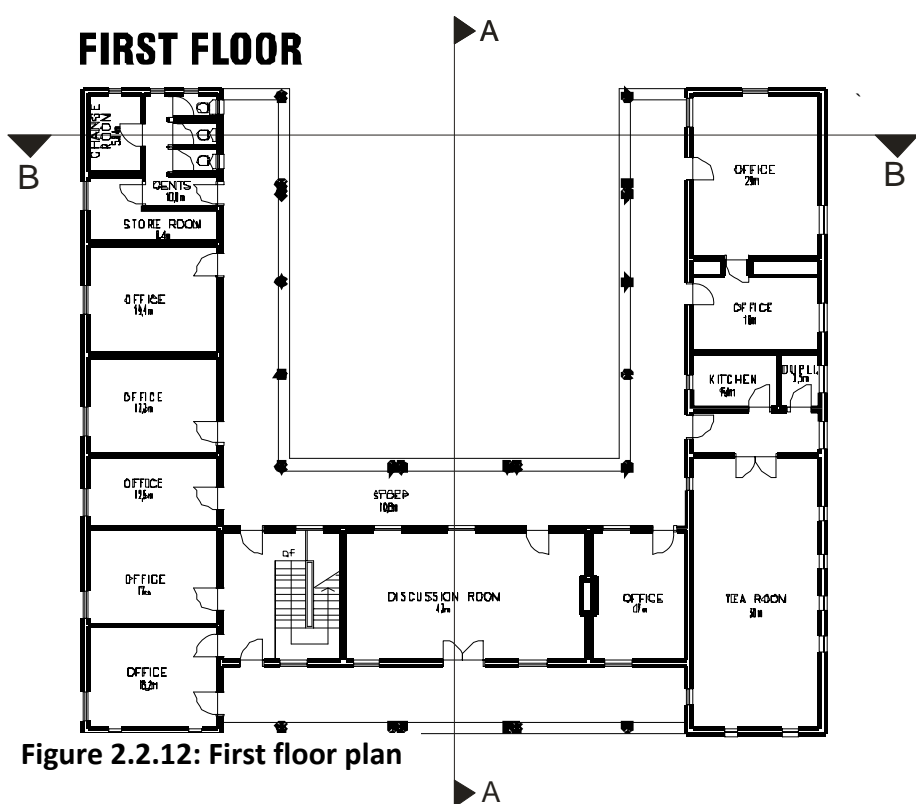


Figure 2.2.12: First floor plan

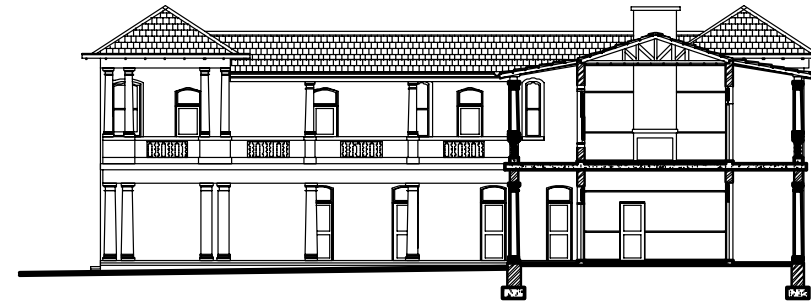


Figure 2.1.13: Section A



Figure 2.1.14: Section B

The Drama Building is structurally sound and relies on a few internal, but mostly external, load bearing walls. The exterior finishes have been well-maintained, the paint work on the walls seem to have been done recently, and the roof tiles are all still intact. There is a problem with birds nesting in the ceilings in the corridors and eaves. The shutters on the western façade windows have degraded from weathering [fig. 2.1.5 g]. The storm water drains through gutters into down pipes and into outlets onto the landscape. The air-conditioning units were added at a later stage to the facades of the building.

The interiors have not been altered much; the floor, doors and windows have all been retained and painted. The interiors need attention as the timber floors are deteriorating with age [fig. 2.1.15 b] and the dado rails leak water [fig. 2.1.15 c]. The floor tiles in the bathroom have worn away [fig. 2.1.15 f]. The floors in the offices are fitted with carpet tiles to keep the offices warmer in winter [fig. 2.1.15 a]. The timber stairwell is well kept; it is the only access to the first floor [fig. 11]. The chapel on the first floor has

undergone minor changes with a new ceiling to improve the acoustics; the space is sometimes used for performance and is rented out. The spaces on the ground floor have been increased in size and turned into studios for dance and rehearsal, and so dance rails and mirrors have been added. Some spaces in the building are unused. The courtyard has good acoustics.

The office windows are all placed in the northern face and are therefore cold. The site is landscaped on the south, east and west sides with trees that are planted by various alumni classes. The previous access to the building was from Lynwood Road but the campus has been fenced off. The building is over 60-years old and is of heritage value, see [appendix 1](#).



Figure 2.1.15

- **MATERIALS AND FINISHES**
- **Arched timber window frames;**
- **Timber flooring [fig. 2.1.12b];**
- **Concrete corridors (painted in maroon enamel);**
- **Concrete ionic columns in the corridor;**
- **Painted timber doors and windows;**
- **Brass ironmongery [fig. 2.1.12h]; and**
- **Stained-glass windows on the eastern façade**

2.4.2 | ANALYSIS OF DIE MASKER BUILDING



Figure 2.1.16: Die Masker, Existing façade, by Misra. S



Figure 2.1.17: Photograph of western façade of Die Masker, by Misra s



Figure 2.1.18: Photographs of all the facades of Die Masker, By Chita M

Die Masker Theatre is an old converted school hall that belonged to the Christian Brothers College, dating from the 1970's. The building is a simple concrete framed building with orange face brick infill panels, the school type windows painted in dark colours to give the internal space the darkness necessary for performance to take place. An additional structure was built along the eastern and northern facades of the original building for services [fig. 2.2.18 b & d]. The roof is corrugated sheeting at a three storey height at its apex. A few panels of wall are fronted by a concrete brise soleil. The services are also on the facades of the building, in the eastern service passage, i.e. the electric meter.

The interior of the building is left exposed to the concrete structure; it is painted in dark colours (black) for performance purposes [fig. 2.1.20]. The theatre is long and narrow and therefore ungainly as a theatre space. The foyer is separated from the theatre by a purple velvet curtain [fig. 2.1.20]. The theatre seating is a series of old rostra that can be altered for various seating purposes. The stage is in a typical school hall position with back stage access from the change rooms and toilet. The stage is at 800mm above ground floor level. The space above the theatre space is equipped with six parallel rigs from the roof at 6m from ground level. Where the theatre separates from the lobby there is a mezzanine level above where the lighting and controls area is situated [fig. 2.1.21].

The outside of the building is brick paved with a few planters, trees and grass on the eastern side along the ring road and pedestrian path [fig. 2.1.18].

There are benches and planters that separate the theatre from the parking area and a series of notice boards that are not used, just along the front façade of the building [fig. 2.1.18].



Figure 2.1.19: Interior view of the stairway to the controls level, by Chita M



Figure 2.1.20 Interior view of the foyer, by Misra S



Figure 2.1.21 Interior view of the theatre. By Misra S

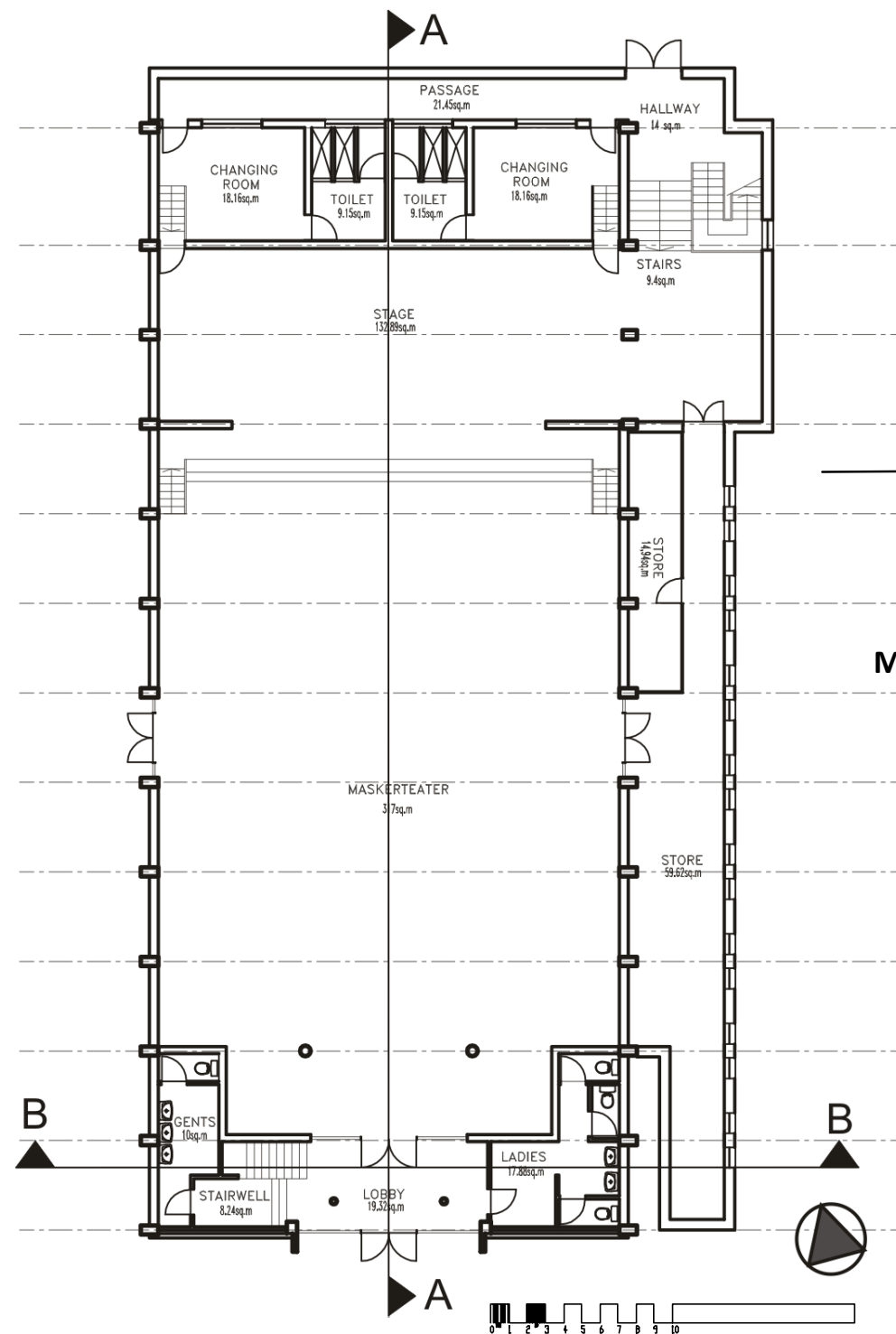


Figure 2.1.22: Existing Plan Masker Theatre, By Chita, M

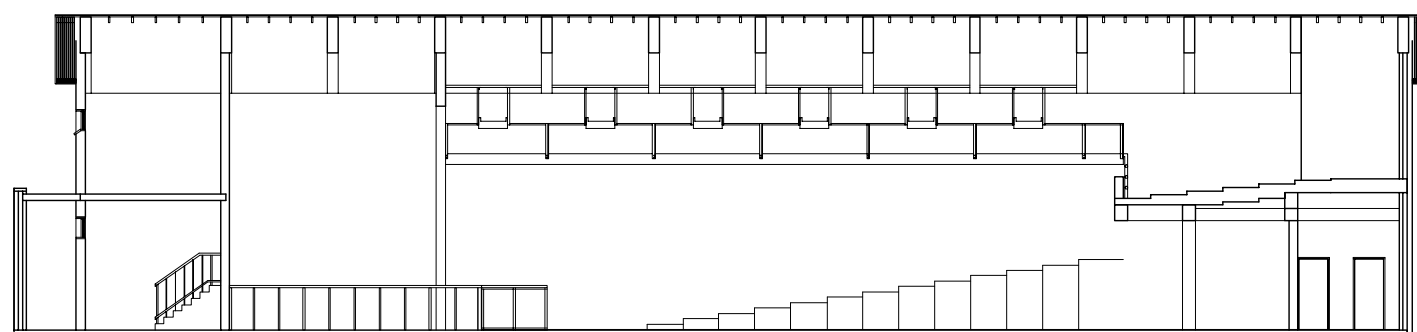


Figure 2.1.23: Longitudinal section B through the theatre

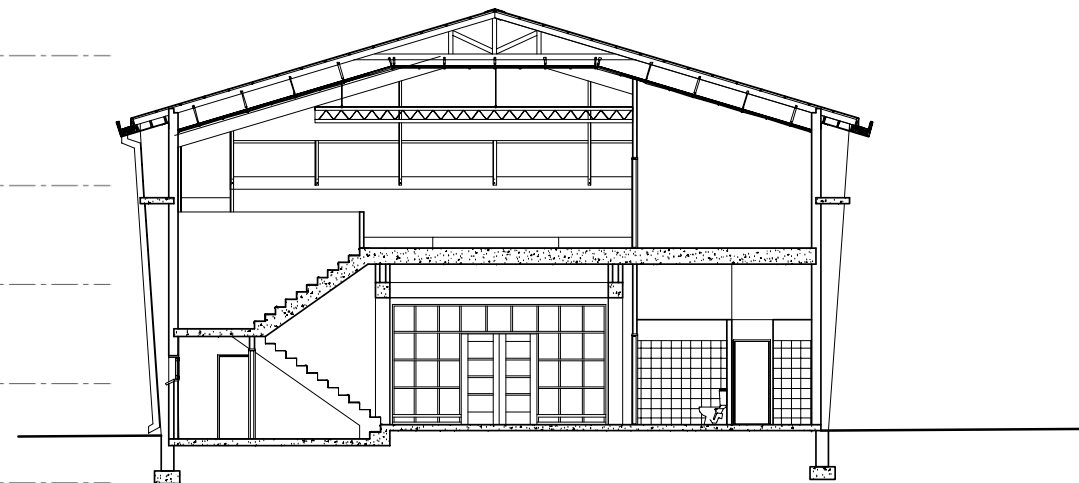


Figure 2.1.24 Existing Cross section A through the foyer

Materials and finishes

- Painted concrete frame structure;
- Corrugated sheeting pitched roof;
- Orange brick infill panels;
- Steel-framed school windows;
- Internal walls of theatre are plastered and painted;
- Floors are tiled with blue vinyl tiles;
- Internal doors are timber;
- The front entrance has a projected concrete frame and a steel door that allows no view into the interior (steel mesh behind the glass);
- Lighting in the lobby is done using live wire and down lighters; and
- Bathrooms are finished with white porcelain tiles with electric green plastered and painted walls.



Figure 2.1.25: Interior view of the extension used as storage for props and lighting



Figure 2.1.26: Stage wings used for storage, by Chita M



Figure 2.1.27: interior view of existing dressing rooms

2.4.3 | BUILDING ANALYSIS OF DIE LIER THEATRE AND DIE BOK THEATRE



Figure 2.1.28: Photograph of Die Lier entrance



Figure 2.1.29: Interior View of the foyer



Figure 2.1.30: Interior of Die Lier



Figure 2.1.31: Interior of Die Bok



Figure 2.1.32: Photograph of the exterior of Die Bok

Die Lier theatre was constructed at a later stage when there was a need for more facilities for the Drama Department. It is a simple orange face brick building with brick piers at 4m intervals. In some sections, the façade has a decorative base that is finished with plaster and paint to a height of 2.5 meters from

finished floor level. It has both timber-framed doors with glazing and solid timber door into Die Lier theatre. The roof is made of painted green steel corrugated roof sheeting.

Behind the dressing rooms is a rehearsal and performance space known as Die Bok. It is a long narrow room with a corridor on the eastern side. There are school type steel windows along the top of the wall on both the east and west façades. Unfortunately, since the ceiling height is only 3.5 meters and the shape of the room is long and narrow, the space tends to echo. Moreover, it cannot be used for dance or performance and although currently it is being used for rehearsal, the space is not optimal. The corridor space is used as storage and is not maintained. At the northern corner of the corridor there is a vinyl tiled niche that acts as a performance space and has a removable curtain so the niche can be also be used as a backstage area.

- Materials and finishes
- Orange face brick walls with piers every 4m;
- Standard FLB timber doors;
- Steel-framed windows;
- Polished concrete foyer floor;
- Vinyl brown tiles; and
- Grey brick pavers with trees and planters and concrete benches along the pathways, separating the building from the parking area that's situated centrally between the three buildings.

The building is not suitable for interior intervention due to its limiting, unusable spaces. It requires architectural intervention in order to make it work to its optimal level as a dramatic arts facility.

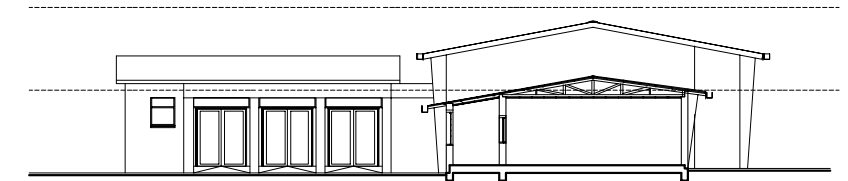


Figure 2.1.33: Section E. By Chita M

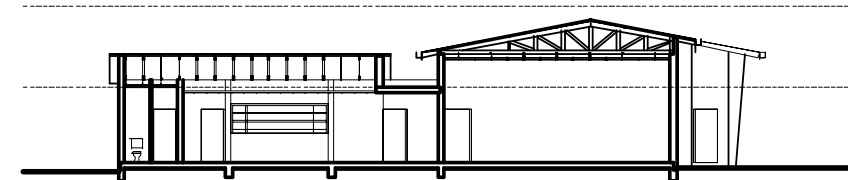


Figure 2.1.34: Section F. By Chita M

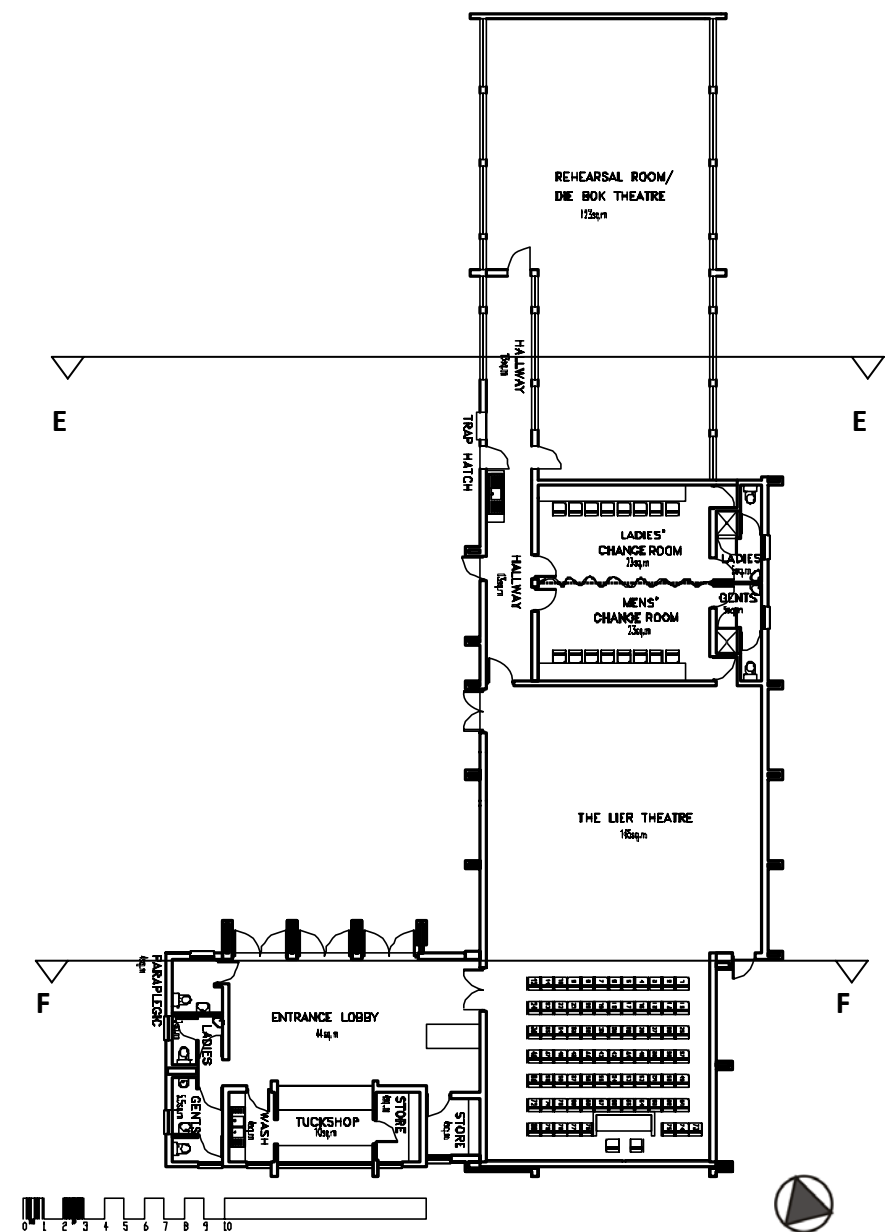


Figure 2.1.35: Plan of Die Lier and Die Bok