

## Chapter 1\_Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

At this point in time the uncertainty which is characteristic of the 21st century has seen a possible paradigm shift which spans the entire continuum of human endeavour. This is most perceptibly recognised through our challenges and responses through architecture and planning to the social, economic and political environment. Technological advancement, urbanization, intercontinental influences in the form of globalization as well as natural ambitions has led us as society to commit higher education as necessity.

Our democracy affects architecture and planning and it is in this regard that numerous possibilities arise, however it also creates conditions of competition between opposing forces, which provokes great complexity within our social matrix, it is this complexity and the arising contradictions that provides for the exercise of imagination, inevitably affording a wealth of potential for innovative design responses and architectural transformation.

The dual effect of democracy and economic growth has placed considerable strain on the higher education institutions. These conditions however, are both fortuitous and perilous for the disciplines of the built environment. Universities are an essential component in society since we have committed ourselves to utilising the institutions for training our professionals and conducting research.

The spatial planning and its physical forms which accommodate the process of education are self evidently important. The scope and nature of the challenges we face when designing these facilities are often times complex and not common knowledge.

In terms of Campus planning it is rather important to embrace the provision of pioneering and empowering heritage which in turn challenges the institution to reflect upon its past, improve the present and build onto the future by responding to our nations rich historical, cultural and spiritual background.

Perhaps in order to achieve this, focus should be on considering new means and programmes that support such change consequentially confronting the radical divide that our country is facing. Where space itself is not only the primary arena for innovation, but also a transformative arena where the collective voice of community may be heard.

The current challenge is the implementation and physical manifestation of these conditions through reintegrating the University of Pretoria into the urban fabric of the city. The final proposal will create new economic and educational opportunities for student, staff, hotelier and general public. The design intent will be to unify a portion of the University and Hatfield by stimulating public participation through interaction.

This dissertation aims to understand the tripartite relationship between the University, the programme and its surrounding within the context of Pretoria. The realisation of which would further reinforce the institutions commitment to community participation and responsiveness within the policy strategies agreed upon between the University, Hatfield business community and the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality.

The premise is that through the Hotel School, progress can be made in showcasing talent that the University fosters, exposing South African pride and promoting the Universities brand as the premier UP destination.

Emphasis will be placed on the role that the School and the management thereof will have a significant impact as buffer, bridging the boundaries between communal space and the private realm, effectively benefiting the involved communities by unifying the fragmented space and offering choice.

There is a pragmatic truism that society prescribes what architecture may express. "Whenever ideological convictions were strongly entrenched in the educational curriculum, architectural continuity was consistently related to the institutions past preferences for architectural style or campus form. However when the institution continued to hold onto the task of being the leading edge of thought, their buildings and campuses were as advanced or as retrogressive as their time." (Dober 1963)

A requirement for an adequate campus design is a general design form and structure which can adapt itself to future change, and at the same time maintain its integrity as a design. Here we see the relationship between planning, architecture and education in a youthful vitality that embraces the elderly wisdom, it should act as a progression and transmutation, with the physical form containing educational concepts that are representative of our people. The physical plans must be both general and specific. Spatial configurations must be concerned with immediate requirements as well as long range considerations. The totality of which must cover the campus and its surroundings, where the implementation of today's educational goals are simultaneously applied with the encouragement of new spatial objectives.

The Hatfield region is experiencing rapid expansion, with business and residential developments, together with their respective infrastructure requirements exerting tremendous pressures on the urban environment. The area surrounding the University of Pretoria is dominated by the vehicle, which results in an unfriendly pedestrian or individual experience. The public space is therefore a critical part of the design proposal as it offers untapped potential with regards to the upliftment and life choices offered to the public by proper planning and execution of the urban environment.



Fig 1.1: The approach to the project site becomes progressively more dominated by the vehicle



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## Chapter 2\_Brief

## 2.1 Problem statement

Although the University is an autonomous institution, it does not attempt to relate to or encourage public interaction. This reactive response to the urban environment is uncharacteristically disparate to our countries democratic ideology. It is the opinion of the author that as a leading edge of thought, the institution has a societal obligation to challenge and apply those methods of design solutions which they themselves teach.

It is the intention that through the Hotel School model a critical new spatial configuration would be both reflective of our democratic principles and contest the previous translations of power in space, effectively addressing social and political objectives for a society who are constantly challenging old ideas and translate these ideas into a meaningful, proactive form of identity which would effectively transcend the practicality of function.

“Social inclusion gets at the heart of what it means to be human, to experience belonging, acceptance, and recognition. Social exclusion, at the other extreme, is what is done to those who are vulnerable, considered ‘disposable’ or inferior, or, even less than human. Social inclusion and exclusion, as both processes and outcomes are at opposite ends of the continuum, but exclusion and inclusion are also metaphors: social inclusion for how we are alike as human beings, for what binds us together as persons; social exclusion for what divides us and the distances that separate us, whether they are economic, social or physical. Social inclusion is not just about the periphery versus the centre; it is about participating as a valued member of society. Inclusion makes the link between the well being of children, our common humanity, and the social, economic, political and cultural conditions that must exist in a just and compassionate society”. (Freiler 2001)

In order to completely understand the challenge concerning the current situation, the dilemma may be further explored by analysing the following sub problems:

- The analysis and investigation of tourism within the South African context and the potential of the Hotel School to act as unifying element in the community.
- The analysis of similar education institutions and their relevant programme.
- The study of successful public space, taking into consideration the public and private characteristics of such places.

## 2.2 Sub Problems

### Isolated entity

The safety and security of the University and its users are a primary concern; however the spatial strategies employed to provide it are similar to that of office parks, gated communities and residential developments in that they ironically oppose the opportunity of maturing our post apartheid cities. The impermeable morphology of the University extends the problem of vulnerability to the urban scale, and thus begins to characterise a portion of the city.

The University Main Campus is spread over 24 hectares, this is a substantial portion of land which is isolated from the surrounding suburbs. The dull grey palisade barrier physically separates the University from the neighbourhood which contributes to the pattern of social exclusion and spatial fragmentation. These conditions result in a lack of opportunities for social contact and interaction at the broader city scale, due to different groups operating in separation whilst equity is reduced through particular groups

enjoying the benefits of well developed space and others being excluded.

Crime is a very real threat. The proposal will not presume to solve the complex problem of crime, but will attempt to provide a spatial framework which would be better suited to manage it. An attempt will be made in response to boundary, to blur the reactive rigidity of the institutional carriage. Particular attention will be placed on the notion of surveillance as chief means of security, to improve the sociability of the community.

### Parking

There is a serious lack of parking at Main Campus. Although the University is in the process of implementing facilities capable of reducing pressure related to vehicle parking, it cannot provide for necessary area to facilitate an estimated 8000 standing vehicles on a daily basis. Parking is an essential component of the development, since it will cater for the staff of the University and visitors alike.

### Disabled Access

The University has not put into place any regulations concerning accessibility by disabled users. The majority of faculty buildings do not incorporate the concept of inclusive design principles. The physically challenged are therefore excluded from taking part in the programmes offered by the institution.

The built environment is not neutral or value free, it is an active shaper of human identity and daily life. Buildings have the ability to either enhance people’s ability to function or diminish the capacity to function completely. It is therefore critical to plan for enabling environments which add to our sense of competence, comfort and belonging.

## 2.3 Methodology

The approach aims at including the Campus as site into the city context by analysing published statistics as well as the various urban frameworks and policies available. The site specific design challenges are investigated and compared with both local and international design solutions and programmatic responses.

### **City wide context**

The method of integrating and incorporating the eastern edge of the University into the city context will be investigated through the analysis of the city context.

### **Campus Context:**

A framework will be designed through analysis of the University's contextual setting as well as the investigation of statistics concerning tourism capacity at the local and provincial tiers.

### **Site Context:**

In order to produce and situate an appropriate architectural intervention the campus framework will be investigated. The analysis will inform the design response, which would generate an inclusive built environment with the intention of acting as link between public and private realm.

## 2.4 Design objectives

The primary aim of the proposal is to generate a platform which would be conducive to social interaction and freedom within the context of the hospitality and education institutions and the immediate surrounding.

The core of the strategy is to allow the University to act as catalyst which would provide for an environment that is contributory to the furtherance of the Universities core ideals of academic excellence and transformative assimilation that allow for the various levels of interaction at both the micro and macro scales. The extent of these interactive levels naturally depends on the programme as well as the context of location; however the quintessential component is that the community involved should be empowered through choice.

## 2.5 The Client

As will be mentioned in the forthcoming sections there is a dire need for skilled human resources within the tourism and hospitality sector. The Government has identified the potential of tourism and hospitality, resulting in the implementation of strategies such as the Gauteng Tourism Development Strategy as coping mechanism since South Africa is fast becoming a premier destination for both local and international visitors.

Funding for the project will be a public-private initiative, with capital being obtained from the Gauteng Tourism Authority, the Department of Education, the Gauteng Provincial Government and the University of Pretoria. Additional funding will be obtained through partnerships with primary tourism enterprise such as Hyatt or Southern Sun Hotel groups, as well as secondary tourism enterprise sponsors such as Nestlé or Rich's.

The University of Pretoria will be the primary stakeholder and thus the development will be managed by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences.

## 2.6 Literature Review

The literature review explored the relationship between campus planning and faculty programming on the local and international arena. The investigation revealed that in relation to local strategies the international hospitality education programmes focused on effective local management of facilities and flexible, adaptable buildings. This effectively aids in accommodating fluctuating learner numbers, changes in curricula as well as teaching and learning methodologies.

Locally however it is evident that South African policies on education focus on human rights, transformation, and equitable access to quality education for all as well as addressing infrastructure backlogs.

Very few hospitality education programmes look at the users, building programme, their interrelatedness and impact on quality education. Changes occurring in the international arena are rapid and in line with technological advancement, thus greater emphasis is being placed on life-long learning and continuous skills development. In order to remain competitive in the workplace adults are required to continuously develop their skills, with tertiary education centres playing a vital role in ensuring skills development does occur.

South Africa as a developing country is fortunate in the sense that we are in a position to learn from the experience of other countries. It is therefore not tied to a linear progression of development and is free to progress to an advanced point without the unnecessary delay thus bridging the gap between past systems and future aspirations.

## 2.7 Theoretical Framework

From the literature review school infrastructure objectives and indicators were developed in order to guide the investigation.

The hypothetical objectives created aided in establishing which of the performance areas were vital in support of the various design components. In order to accommodate the requirements of the building, the following three focus areas were defined:

- **People:**  
Programme infrastructure should ensure optimum user comfort and health whilst enabling a productive environment.
- **Infrastructure:**  
Programme infrastructure should support the inherent activities, by ensuring building structural stability, low operating costs and spatial and resource efficient planning.
- **Programme:**  
Infrastructure should effectively support activities as well as accommodate various services. Curriculum activities and hotel facilities must be accommodated effectively.

The building user is the primary concern, with the programme and infrastructure requirements supporting the user needs. The nature of the proposal requires a flexible design response in terms of physical plant as well as the management of the curricula. An adaptive design approach will ensure a sustainable outcome, which is to the benefit of both public and private user alike.