Project Overview

Study area

The Halffield area - soon to be home to one of the Gautrain stations - is situated on the crossroad of South Africa, where the N4 highway and the N1 highway connects the North to the South and the East to the West of the country. The study area of the proposed site stretches to the boundaries of Pretorius Street to the north, Duncan Street to the east, Lynnwood Street to the south and Kirkness Street to the west (fig. 3.6).
The site is at the centre of the rapidly developing Hatfield precinct, covering an area of 3.25 hectares.
There are very little public facilities within the study area. These facilities are mono functional and are restricted to time constraints. Such as Loftus Versfeld stadium - only occupied during match times on weekends. It is apparent that the study area lacks diversity.
The street perimeter lacks continuity that building heights and placements offer. There are too many under utilized open spaces inaccessible to the public. These open spaces need to be defined by the placement of walls, landscaping or buildings (4-6 levels). Ground floor edge treatment to relate to a pedestrian scale through facade design.
fig 3.13 - 3.18_Contextual photographs
Main vehicular and pedestrian link to the south, and ultimately Johannesburg. Existing pedestrian route between Hatfield and Brooklyn.

Important vehicular and pedestrian link to the site, linking the east (Meryln) to the site and ultimately Johannesburg.

Note: Most commuters currently use this road to the Brooklyn area.

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Currently a visual link with Loftus Versfeld Stadium, with great potential of becoming a physical link.

Currently this is a link via Metrorail towards Hatfield but in future this will become a link to the Gautrain station. Therefore this is an important link to the rest of South Africa. Embracing this link in future for pedestrians presents itself as an opportunity.

Once a physical link to Loftus Versfeld Stadium - now a visual link only due to fenced off community.

Direct link to the University of Pretoria. By facilitating students with cost effective travelling, the commuter rail will gain strength and diversity.

Locally, linking the Hatfield CBD to the site.

Major vehicular link leading to the N1 highway - thus the rest of South Africa.

fig. 3.19 - 3.26_Contextual photographs
Paths

According to Lynch, “channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally or potentially moves” (Lynch, 1960:47).

03:11

Main Pedestrian route

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Main Vehicular route

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The path of the user is determined by the layout of the city grid. Pedestrians are forced to walk around large city blocks - no through fare exists. Vehicles dominate roads, sidewalks are inadequate and the walking distance radius to large.
Existing nodes are dependant on each other, yet these nodes are not physically linked.

According to Lynch, "strategic spots in a city into which an observer can enter, and which are intensive facts and from which he is travelling" (Lynch, 1960:47).
According to Lynch, "landmarks are another type of point-reference, but in this case the observer does not enter within them. They are external." (Lynch, 1960, 46)

The study area contains many significant landmarks symbolic of Hatfield area. These landmarks are visible throughout the area and act as points of reference. The accessibility of these landmarks are an issue and need attention.
Buildings are set back too far from the street. No continuous edge exists, resulting in a poor street interface and passive surveillance.

According to Lynch -
edges are the linear elements not used or considered as parts by the observer (Lynch, 1960:47)
Study area conclusion

From the analysis of the project area, one can clearly see that one of the main problems with the site is the large scale of the city block. The city block is too large and results in inadequate pedestrian movement around a vacant area which is inaccessible and detrimental to the proposed train station. Therefore the proposed site will be divided into typical size city blocks (Fig. 3.27) with defined edges, activating and reinforcing existing pedestrian routes in the area.
Versfeld Stadium
Site Analysis

Currently Loftus Metrorail Station consists only of a platform, with a length of 250m, and under utilized staircases leading to various neighbouring facilities such as Loftus Versfeld Stadium, Pretoria Girls High School and the municipal depot (fig. 3.38). All of these facilities are fenced off for safety reasons. Thus, there is no direct route to the surrounding areas and the only entrance to the station is from University road. The entrance consists of a tunnel underneath the train tracks that terminates with staircases onto the respective platforms (fig. 3.48). There are no ticket, control or security offices at this point (fig. 3.33). The provided synthetic lighting is out of order and the ablutions are vandalized and not fit for use (fig. 3.40). This creates an unsafe and hostile environment.
1960's • Around this time the station was constructed on the current site.

1970 • Urbanization out of control. Railways overloaded.

1979 • Pressure resulted in SARATH changing to South African Transport Services (SAT5) in 1981.

1979 • SAT5 transported nearly 500 million commuters, but due to political problems in the 80's and 90's, the market share for rail declined.

1989 • SAT5 transferred its functions to a newly formed company called Transnet, with various main businesses such as Spoornet, Portnet and SAA.

1990 • Transnet shedd its commuter services to the South African Commuter Corporation (SARCC). The SARCC inherited land and properties in and around stations and corridors for the purpose of commercialising these areas for financially contributing to a reduction in subsidisation of the social commuter rail service.

1992 • A wholly-owned subsidiary of the SARCC, Intersite Property Management Services (IPMS) was formed to perform this function for the corporation.

2004 • Transport Minister Jeff Radebe announced that the SARCC is to lead and drive the consolidation of passenger rail entities to form a single passenger rail entity. Consolidation of Metrorail in 2006 will be the first phase.

Today • Due to the lack of investment in rail infrastructure and shortage in management and technical skills the rail is facing challenges. Limited coverage also meant the loss in market share.

2010 • The Loftus stadium is currently being upgraded to Soccer World Cup standards with 51,762 seats.
2. The specific urban fabric is too large a scale, limiting pedestrian movement.

The gated community of the University is another issue. Pedestrians are forced to walk around the block. This cuts off the Hatfield Business Core from the South of the precinct. The same goes for the Loftus Stadium Urban block which is according to many urban principals simply too large to function correctly with the urban fabric.

Drawbacks
- The University grounds, Loftus Versfeld and Pretoria High School for Girls create a pedestrian barrier due to its palisade fence enclosing the grounds.
- Above mentioned institutions will not easily remove these fences due to its security importance.
- The lack of pedestrian arcades through the large city block.

Opportunities
- To provide security to the above mentioned institutions through means of other architecturally designed elements, other than a mere palisade fence.
- The creation of secured pedestrian arcades through these city blocks.

3. The area needs to be sensitive to the lowest common denominator: the pedestrian

Drawbacks
- The lack of accommodating other transport/movement systems
- Current physical context does not cater for pedestrians

Opportunities
- Creating tree planted boulevards with sidewalks for pedestrians
- Calming traffic by means of focusing on pedestrian design
- Softening the urbanity through pedestrian scaled design
- Influx of pedestrian movement to the area feeding the Metrorail Station and its accommodating functions.