



2: Context study

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2.1 The target user-group

Most of the visitors to the GNR are urban tourists, that is, visitors currently living in South Africa. Urban tourists are either day visitors (living in Pretoria or within an hour's drive) or overnight visitors (living elsewhere in the country, or alternatively, groups of learners on excursions). The process to identify user-groups involved conducting interviews with frequent visitors and with the management of the GNR. The different types of users are discussed below, arranged from the most frequent visitors to the least frequent.

2.1.1 SPORT ENTHUSIASTS

The type of user in this group visits the GNR for the purpose of partaking in adventure sports for the excitement experience, for training purposes or for socialising.

2.1.2 LEARNERS

Learners from the schools in Sunnyside, an underprivileged area of Pretoria, make up a portion of this group. Groups of learners undertake day or weekend excursions, and sleep at the Bamber camp (Figure 18: D). The groups include on average 60 to 80 learners and their activities comprise hiking, lectures and socialising.

2.1.3 FAMILIES

Parents or grandparents with one to three children are common visitors over weekends. These users generally come to the GNR for recreational reasons.

2.1.4 NATURE ENTHUSIASTS

Visitors who enjoy the solitude of nature and the escape from the hustle and bustle of the city are uninterested in the social and entertainment aspects that the site has to offer. They usually travel alone.

2.1.5 CORPORATE GROUPS

Business groups from Toyota and Fritz Pienaar's cycle shop frequently visit the GNR for corporate weekends and team-building initiatives. They go for 4x4 or mountain bike rides, then socialise and sleep over at the self-catering accommodation within the GNR.

2.2.6 PENSIONERS

Small groups of pensioners enjoy the peace and quiet that the GNR offers. These visitors mainly do bird-watching, relaxing in the picnic area and taking short walks around the reserve.



Identifying the target users is an integral part of this study. The type of user is to be targeted for the *Interactive Centre* are for the most part active nature enthusiasts who travel in groups of two to twenty people; their age is usually in the 18 to 35 years category. Typical examples are Ilze (25) and Riaan Lategan (35), mountain biking parents, who were interviewed for the purposes of this study.

2.2 The client

The primary client is Groenkloof Nature Reserve Management and therefore the proposal has to be approved by the City of Tshwane Metro Municipality and the National Parks' Board. The GNR and its facilities is a service that the National Parks' Board provides for the public of Tshwane. Apart from generating funds for maintenance and rehabilitation of the fauna and flora, the reserve is not currently a profit-driven organisation.

The resources available to government-owned institutions are often limited and therefore it is proposed that external investors should serve as profit-driven tenants on the

reserve's property. The most popular activities in the reserve are mountain biking, hiking and family-outings but there are inadequate facilities provided for these activities.

The following sub-clients have therefore been selected to fill the growing need to attract families and adventure-sport enthusiasts to the GNR:

- a Fritz Pienaar cycling shop
- a small eatery and coffee shop, similar to the Seattle franchise outlets
- a curio shop that promotes local arts and crafts

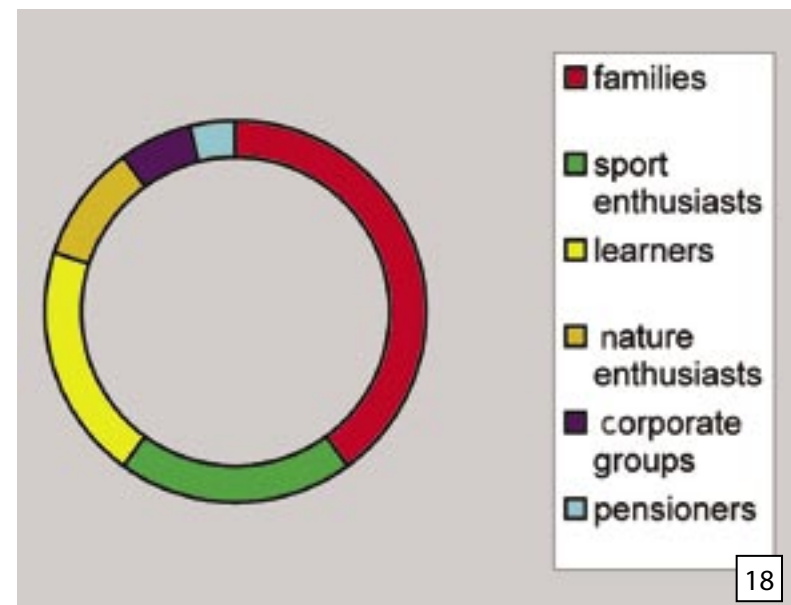
These independent commercial ventures will become part of the *Interactive Centre*, and serve as a catalyst for possible future development of the Centre.



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Figure 17: The Centre has a multidimensional user profile

Figure 18: The segments of the chart show the percentages of certain categories of visitors to the reserve



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2.3 History of the Groenkloof Nature Reserve

Recent research carried out to justify the name change from Pretoria to Tshwane has established beyond doubt that indigenous black communities lived in the vicinity of the present city for many years before the arrival of the white pioneers. The powerful leader of the Ndebele, Mzilikazi is known to have established his headquarters in the area in the 1830s. However, because of the lack of documentary evidence about these early residents the arrival of the whites in what is now the GNR is often seen as the first settlement of the region.

The Bronkhorst brothers were the first white families in the area and in 1855, with more pioneers arriving, the town of Pretoria was established. According to information available at the GNR, 'From old records at the deeds office, it is evident that the Bronkhorst brothers lived in the Fountains Valley. "Now I have trekked far enough, this poort is now my home" is a rough translation of the words uttered by Lukas Bronkhorst who in all probability refused, with a shake of his head, to go along with the other Trekkers to Orighstad after he rested along the Apies River for the first time' (*Groenkloof 4x4 nature trail, interpretation booklet* 1999:5).

The Bronkhorsts (Figure 21) and other early settlers in the Fountains Valley must have hunted the wide variety of game for their livelihood. This led to trophy hunting and a flourishing trade in ivory, horns and hides. For this reason, the then president of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger, declared the valley a protected area on 25 February 1895. According to the *Groenkloof interpretation booklet* (1999:5), portions of the farms Groenkloof and Elandspoort were then leased to the Union Government's agriculture and Forestry Department in the 1900s for the establishment of a commercial wood plantation. With the rationalisation of the forest reserves during the late 1960s, the area was returned to the City Council. In the 1970s it was decided to create a hiking trail in the valley and this led to the thinning out and rehabilitation of the area.

In the 1990s the Nature Conservation department of the Pretoria City Council started to rehabilitate the area's vegetation and systematically reintroduced game to the reserve. "Today much game is found in the reserve including Impala, Blesbuck, Red-hartebeest, Blue Wildebeest, Zebra, Giraffe, Kudu and various smaller game species. This rich

diversity of fauna and flora makes Groenkloof Nature Reserve a must for visitors; it is situated only 5km from Church Square as the crow flies' (*Groenkloof interpretative booklet 1999:5*).

Until 1930, the Fountains Valley supplied all Pretoria's water '... it still forms a large portion (8%) of the total use of water' (Küsel: 2006, 5). A monolith-shaped stone (Figure 20) exists to this day to commemorate the importance of the first source of water for Pretoria. The 'old pump' (Figure 19), a remnant of Fountains Valley during the first 75 years of occupation is another monument nearby.

A sound heritage management plan would be invaluable to assist with the maintenance and conservation of the original water supply systems, pioneer architecture and other historic material. All the relevant monuments should be included in the proposed heritage-hiking trail (cf. 4.2) to expose visitors to the history of the Fountains Valley and the GNR.

2.4 The site

Hiking and mountain bike trails

There is an established 4x4 trail starting at the selected site (Figure 24). The initial idea of the trail was that it should have certain marked features and lookout points that correspond to the information in an interpretation booklet that the driver receives upon entrance to the GNR. This booklet was devised to orientate the driver on the various routes and to explain significant views. However, the execution of the system has not proved successful because over time the handout at the entrance has been discontinued.

The mountain biking (approximately 35km) and hiking routes on the reserve vary from easy (light exercise) to



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Figure 19: The 'old pump', located in the Fountains Valley Resort. The pump will be protected as one of the monuments the visitor can view on the proposed historical trail

Figure 20: The monument indicating the site of the two original fountains in Fountains Valley. The plaque reads: '*Fontes origo Praetoriae 1855-1955*'

Figure 21: The remains of the Bronkhorst house in the Groenkloof Nature Reserve. The area has been fenced off to commemorate the arrival of the first white pioneers in Pretoria



difficult (strenuous). The routes (Figure 23) all start from the same area, which is the selected site for the Interactive Centre ■. Frequent visitors to the area know the trails well, but new cyclists or hikers have no way of knowing which of the trails they follow. This problem is solved at the Interactive Centre's information desk where the cyclists receive the relevant maps.

Day visitors' picnic area

This recreational area with ablution facilities is located beside the Apies River (Figure 15: C). It is an ideal spot for weekend cyclists to rest after returning from a trail. Large groups for informal functions can rent one or both of the two lapas. The one lapa is situated next to the ablution building and the other is near the Youth Camp (Figure 15: D).

Overnight facilities

An overnight hut that can accommodate 12 people is located opposite the lapa (Figure 22). This facility is used primarily by hikers or for informal overnight functions. On the opposite side of the Apies, hidden from view, is a youth camp used for school excursions. Two separate buildings accommodate the boys and girls respectively. Up to 80 learners can be accommodated simultaneously.

Figure 22: Sketch of selected site to show the existing buildings and layout in relation to the Apies River

Figure 23: Map of the GNR showing the available trails for hiking and for mountain biking in the reserve. The chosen site for this study project is indicated by the symbol ■

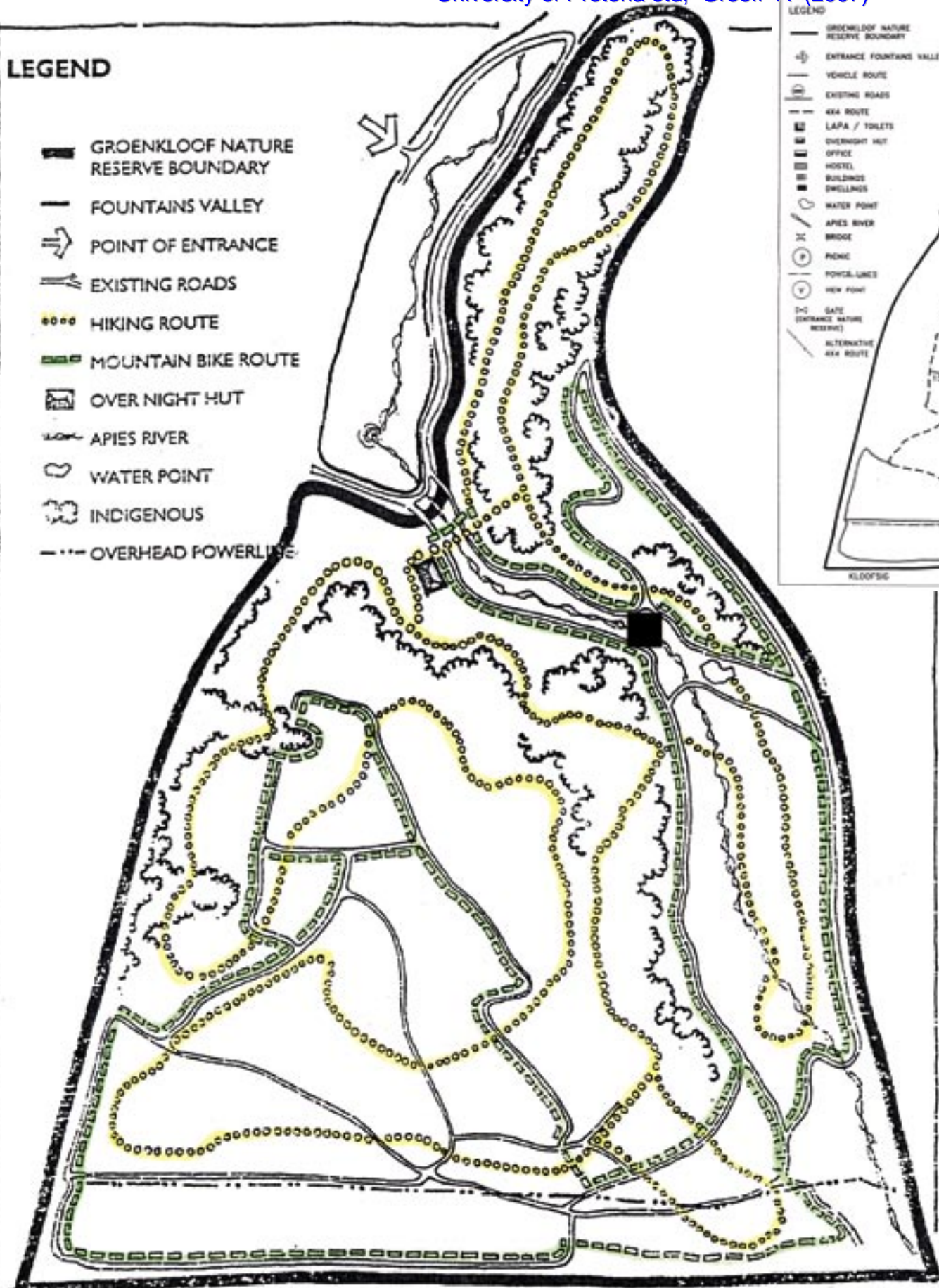
Figure 24: A map of the GNR taken from the *Groenkloof interpretation booklet*

LEGEND

- GROENKLOOF NATURE RESERVE BOUNDARY
- FOUNTAINS VALLEY
- POINT OF ENTRANCE
- EXISTING ROADS
- HIKING ROUTE
- MOUNTAIN BIKE ROUTE
- OVER NIGHT HUT
- APIES RIVER
- WATER POINT
- INDIGENOUS
- OVERHEAD POWERLINE

LEGEND

- GROENKLOOF NATURE RESERVE BOUNDARY
- ENTRANCE FOUNTAINS VALLEY
- VEHICLE ROUTE
- EXISTING ROADS
- 4x4 ROUTE
- LAPA / TOILETS
- OVERNIGHT HUT
- OFFICE
- HOSTEL
- BUILDINGS
- DWELLINGS
- WATER POINT
- APIES RIVER
- BRIDGE
- POND
- POTCH/LINE
- VIEW POINT
- GATE (ENTRANCE NATURE RESERVE)
- ALTERNATIVE 4x4 ROUTE



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