

Site Location + Context





Fig. 16: Location Map: World (Loveisarevolution, 2008).

2 SITE LOCATION + CONTEXT

2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From Church Square, which is historically considered the centre of the Pretoria CBD, the city blocks of Pretoria were laid out in a rigid Cartesian grid expanding outwards in both a north-south and east-west axis. These axes were laid out so as to correspond to the geographical openings in the surrounding mountain ridges as well as to the sun's cosmic path.

Paul Kruger Street, which is the north-west axis or *cardo*, terminated in the Daspoort mountain range in the North and the Schurweberge mountains in the south. Church Street constitutes the east-west axis, or *decumanus*, and terminated at the crossing with the Apies River on the eastern side and the Steenhoven-Spruit on the western side.

The larger urban study area identified for this dissertation lays south of Church Street (*decumanus*) and is intersected by Paul Kruger Street (*cardo*).

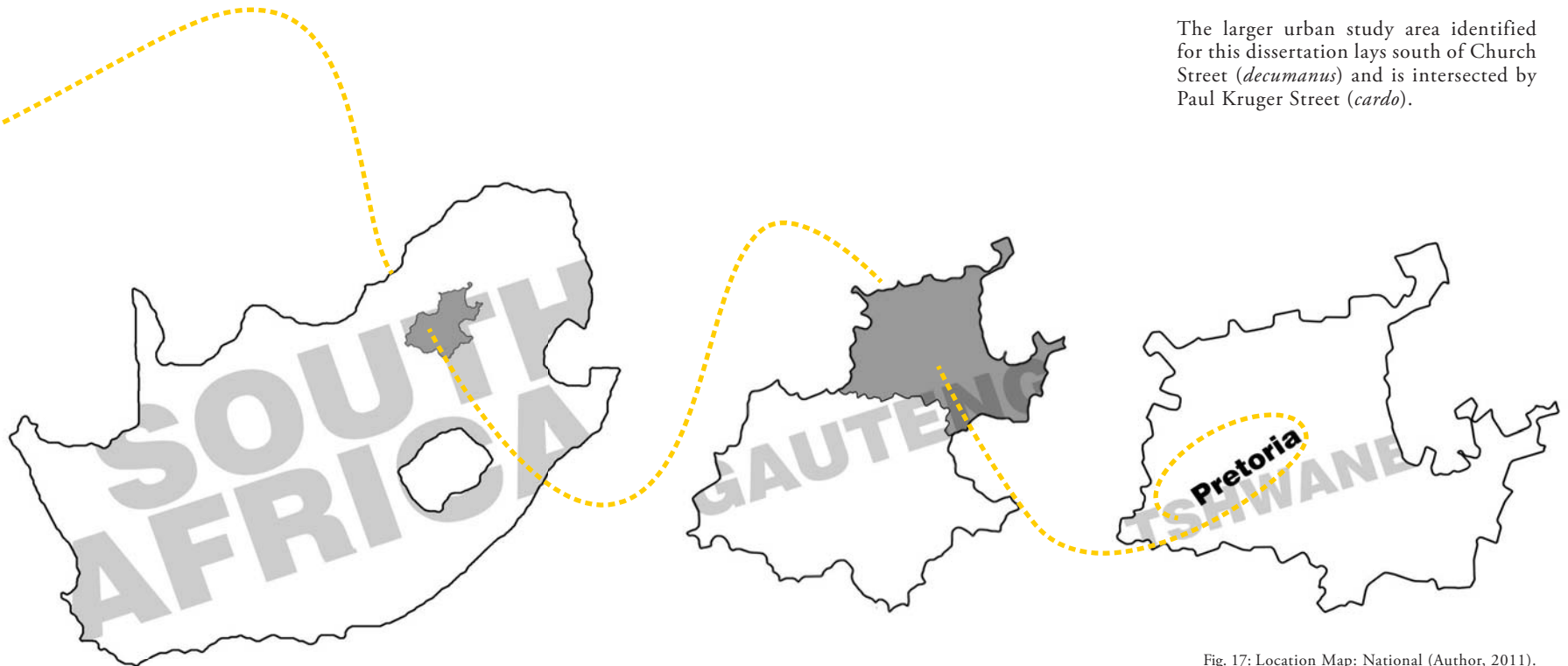


Fig. 17: Location Map: National (Author, 2011).

2.2 PRECINCT LOCATION

The precinct under investigation is clearly defined by both man-made and geographical boundaries. The study area in question is located between Skinner Street in the north, Nelson Mandela Drive in the east, the rail tracks and Salvokop to the south, and Potgieter Street to the west. For the rest of this dissertation this precinct will be referred to as The Burger's Park Framework (BPF) precinct .

Within this precinct, the Museum Park development is also situated. Museum Park is a development that was initiated by the government in the early 90's but was abandoned shortly after with only a few of the envisioned goals realised. The Museum Park is bordered by Visagie Street in the north, Van der Walt Street in the east, Minnaar Street in the south, and Schubart Street in the west (see Fig. 2). The Park includes the National Cultural History Museum, City hall and Pretorius Square, the National Museum of Natural History, Burger's Park and Melrose House.

KEYWORDS:

- Museum typology
- Museum park district
- High Pedestrian activity
- Unique sense of place compared to the rest of the CBD
- Closely located to CBD, but still has a human scale
- Suburban within urban area, very liveable space
- Historical importance
- Critical role in the urban context of the CBD
- Gateway to the city

The Burger's Park framework (BPF) area was chosen due to its high potential for re-appropriation and re-activation. Within the BPF there is both a well established residential community and an urban fabric that is highly mixed-use in character and well balanced. The precinct is also decidedly culturally orientated, therefore it supports the envisioned programme for the proposed intervention. This area does however have presiding problems, challenges and opportunities that are unique to itself, thus creating a remarkable study laboratory for exploration and creativity to flourish.



Fig. 18: Study area - Pretoria South CBD (Author, 2011).



Fig. 19: Museum Park precinct within study area (Author, 2011).

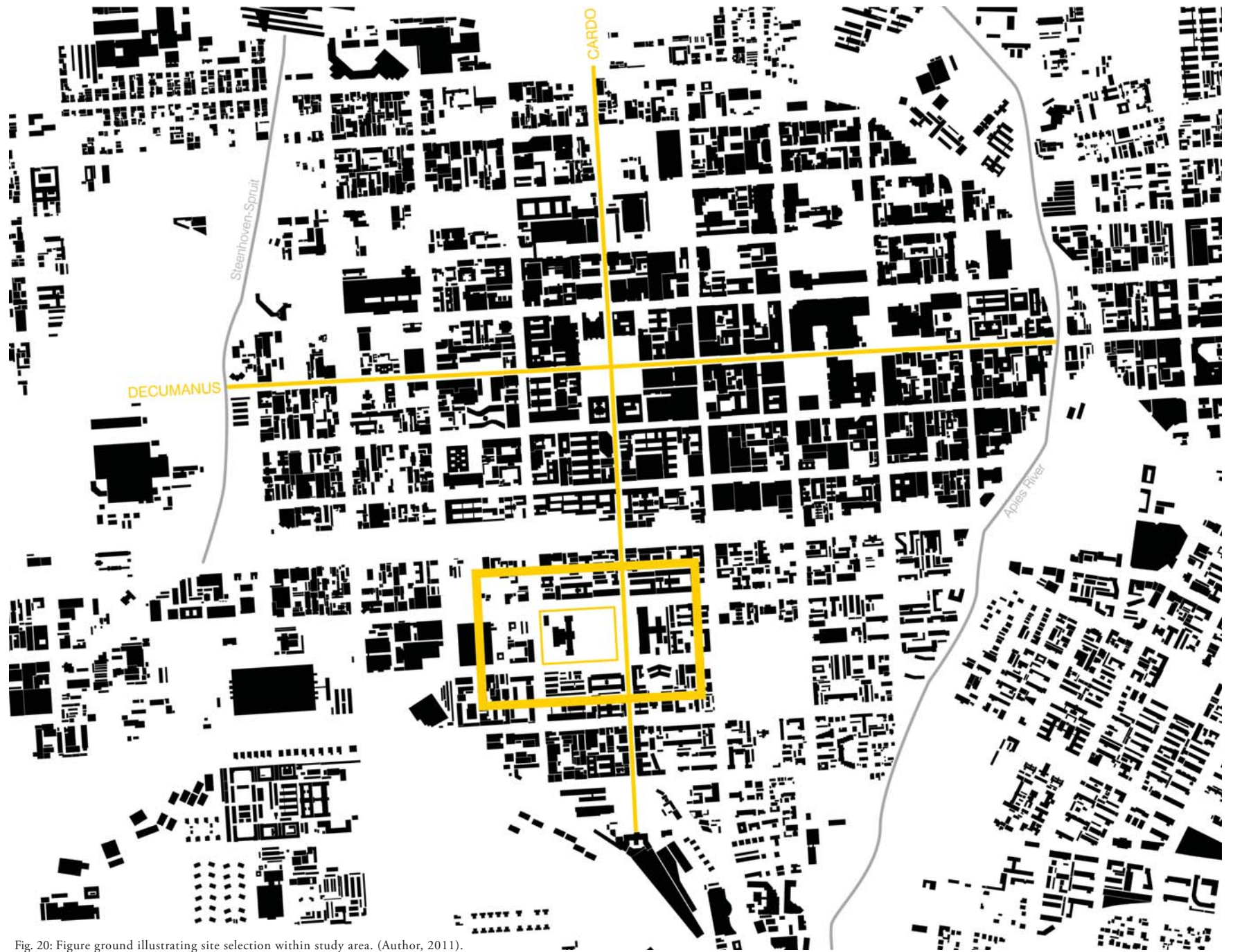


Fig. 20: Figure ground illustrating site selection within study area. (Author, 2011).

2.3 MAPPING

In order to get a better understanding of the precinct and its functionings, an extensive mapping exercise was done.

The mapping exercise allowed for the identification of the various problems and opportunities that are associated with the study area, thus ensuring better informed design decisions.

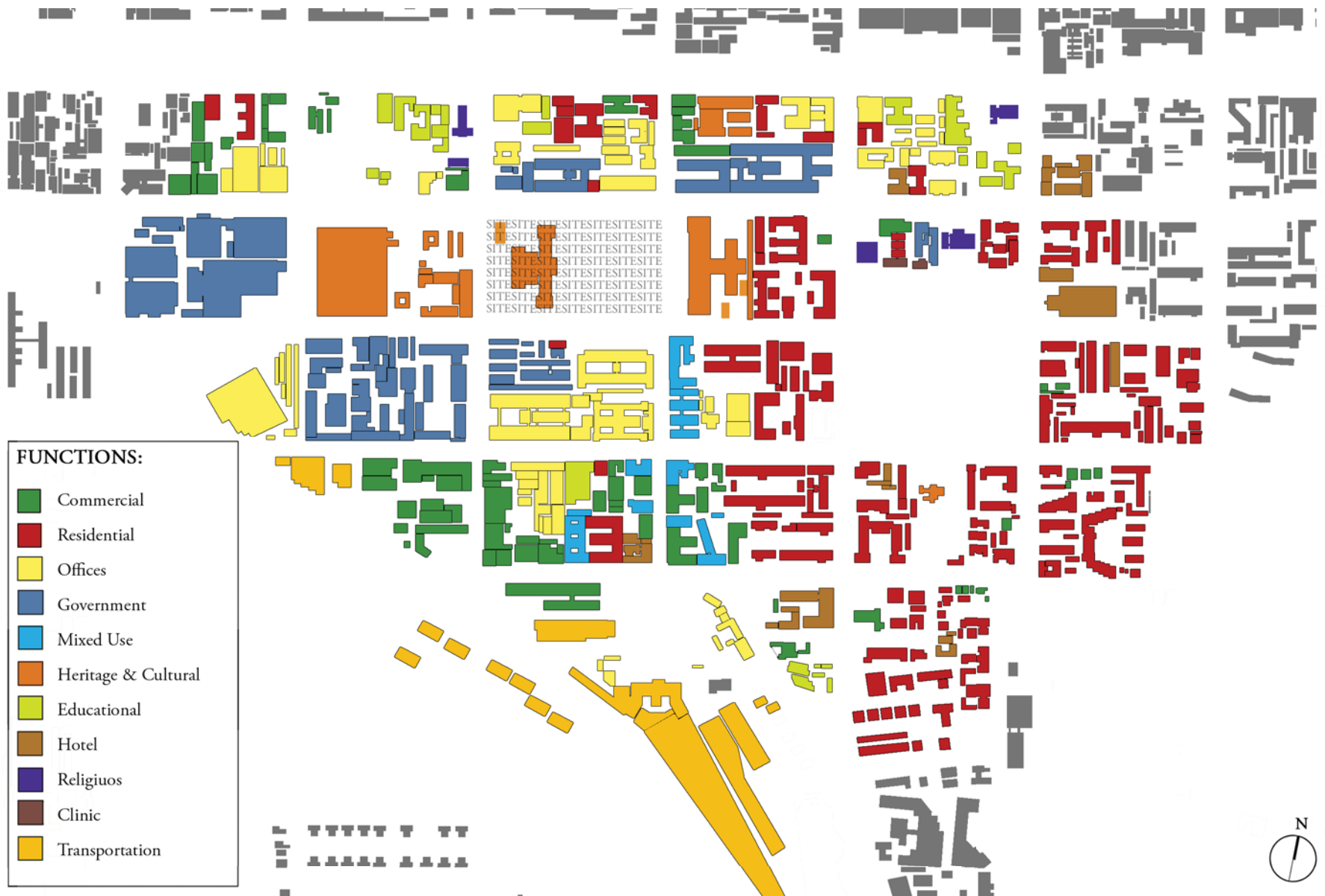
These observations and findings were then processed and distilled into a comprehensive urban framework proposal for the newly envisaged precinct.

The elements of the precinct that were studied are:

- Building Functions
- Pedestrian Activity
- Parking
- Typography
- Surfaces and Textures

Also, see Addendum B for:

- Public Transport + Routes
- Gautrian Bus Routes
- Boundaries + Nodes
- Edges + Access
- Private Transport + Routes
- Public Space Network



FUNCTIONS:

- Commercial
- Residential
- Offices
- Government
- Mixed Use
- Heritage & Cultural
- Educational
- Hotel
- Religious
- Clinic
- Transportation

Functions
Observation(s)_
 Very good mixed use characteristic per city block within precinct. Lack of community functions. Existing museum buildings not functioning optimally.
Proposal_
 Introduction of more mixed use functions per individual building. Reconsider community functions within precinct as well as museum functions.

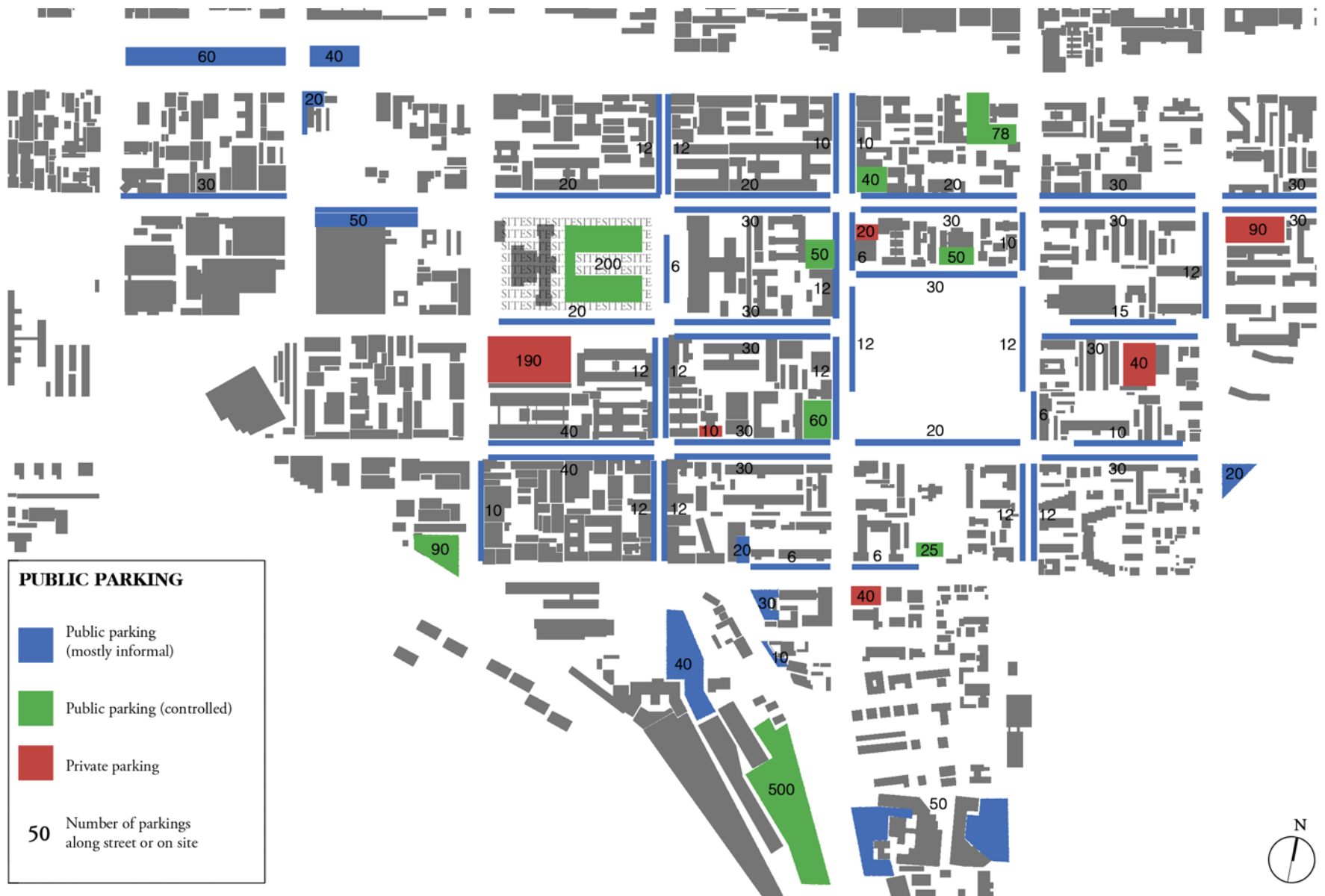
Fig. 21: Mapping - Illustrating functions of buildings within study area (Author, 2011).



AVERAGE DAYTIME PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY
05H00 - 18H00

Pedestrian Activity_Daytime
Observation(s)_
 Paul kruger street forms main pedestrian thoroughfare through precinct due to link with Church Square and Pretoria station. Bosman and Andries street form secondary routes. Minnaar street is underutilized.
Proposal_
 Activate Minnaar street as main east-west pedestrian route within precinct. Also activate night time pedestrian activity, as the current pedestrian numbers during the evenings are negligible.

Fig. 22: Mapping - Illustrating pedestrian activity within study area (Author, 2011).



Private Parking

Observation(s)_

Limited parking within precinct. With the new developments proposed within the framework, parking is going to be severely compromised.

Proposal_

All new developments to accommodate more parking either by basement parking or through other strategies. Possibility to have centralised parking strategy.

Fig. 23: Mapping - Illustrating parking facilities within study area (Author, 2011).

2.3.1 MUSEUM PARK PRECINCT A PRECINCT OF TYPOGRAPHY

A typographic survey was conducted within the study area in order to determine the prevalence of type and letterforms within the urban environment. The aim was also to establish to what extent an individual navigates the city in relation to these typographies.

It was found that the urban environment is almost entirely navigated through the reading and interpretation of signage and letterforms. For an individual, the city (if completely unfamiliar to him/her) would be nearly illegible if there wasn't guidance through the use of type.

Through the study, it was also concluded that the prevalence of type within the precinct is extremely high, especially along the Paul Kruger street axis with its high commercial and retail activities.

Through these letterforms and signage, the urban landscape conveys a narrative and it tells a story of place, of identity and of everyday life (see Fig. 23).



Fig. 24: Paul Kruger Street signage (Author, 2011).

Fig. 25: Next page: The typographies of the Museum Park Precinct (Author, 2011)



Type can tell us what to do...



eringe is om voetgangeroegan gebou en die Gautrain Pretoria r ter wille van 'n beter integrasie re verkeer tussen die bestaande er regstasies en om die areas ngers gebruik word op te gradeer. esonderhede aangaande die vo leringe is ter openbare insae beske ASA kantore, 546 Paul Krugerstraat Pretoria, 0001, gedurende kantoor



...and what not to do...



Type can have character...



...or be utilitarian...



...or austere...



Type can be permanent...



...or temporary...



Type can help us find our way...



...or be confusing.



Type can make one thing...



...different from another.



Type can be informal...



...or formal...





Type can be crude...



...or elegant.



Type can help us improve our health...



...and feed the masses...



...clothe us...



Type can give identity...



...and take it away.



Type can connect us...



...and make us enemies.



Type can help us escape...



...or guide us on our way.



Type can signal change...



...or reflect on the past.



Type shapes our environment...



...it is here...



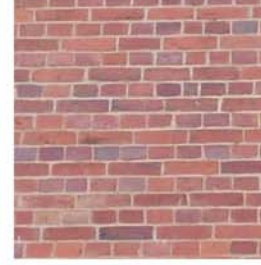
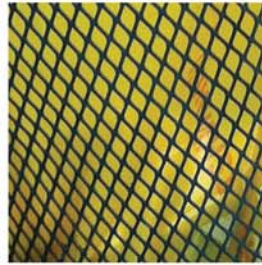
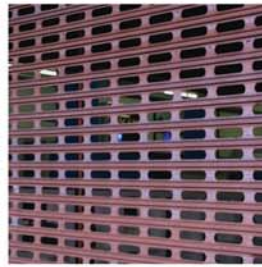
...there...



...it is everywhere.

2.3.2 MUSEUM PARK PRECINCT THE SURFACES AND TEXTURES

Fig. 26: The surfaces and textures of the Museum Park precinct (Author, 2011).





2.4 URBAN DESIGN

It would be idealistic for architects and urban designers to postulate that a single intervention, either on architectural or urban scale, would be able to solve all the problems facing humanity today. Architecture and urban design does however have valid and significant contributions to make, but can only be the catalyst and create the impetus for this change.

The social fundamentals on which the South African city is built is largely dependant on that of choice and the ability to choose. According to Fred Inglis (Bentley & Watson, 2007: 7), choice is seen as the 'supreme value' within developing countries and allows the individual to be filled with a sense of purpose and identity. A recent World Bank survey found that the necessity and the ability to choose ranked as the essential factor for well-being (Bentley & Watson, 2007: 8).

Allowing for choice rather than an absolute solution should be the starting point of an urban proposal within a South African context. A South African model for a new urbanity should allow for, and accommodate, the social needs of its citizens, respond to them and be flexible.

2.4.1 VISION + AIMS

- Promote and establish a unique environment with a well defined and culturally orientated identity.
- Establish an environment that promotes the importance of the pedestrian, through ease of movement as well as the potential to linger.
- Allow museums to be re-appropriated by the public and once again establish the typology as that of the public.

- Focus on the users and on social exchange. A high level of accessibility should be promoted and the precinct must have well defined public spaces.
- Ensure a high degree of flexibility and choice throughout the precinct and its built fabric.

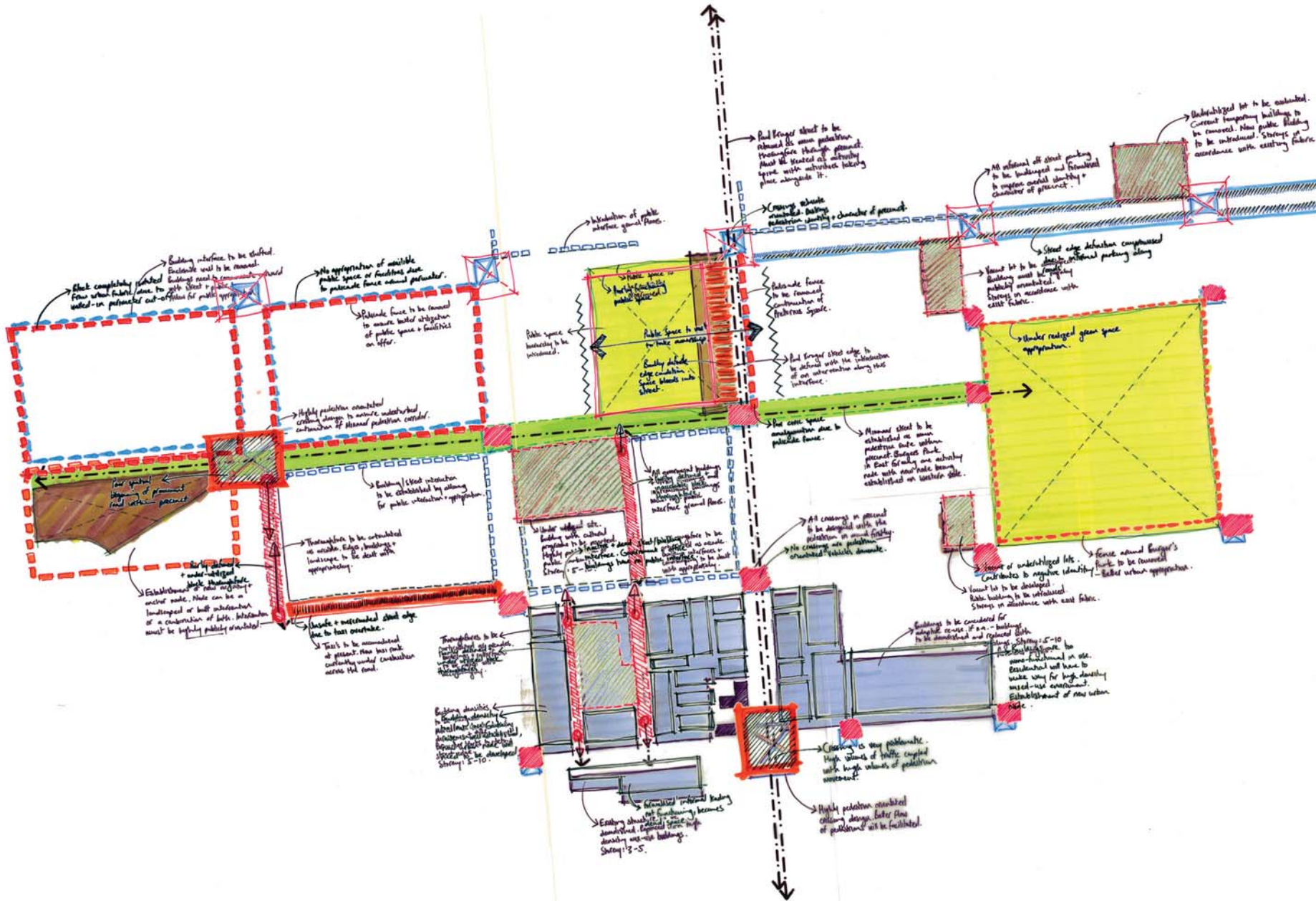


Fig. 27: Conceptual development of framework (Author, 2011).

1. Minnaar street termination
 Poor spatial origin for prominent road within precinct

2. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection
 Dangerous for pedestrians and unarticulated

3. Crossings within precinct
 Orientated towards vehicular use

4. Current museum buildings
 Severely underutilised and neglected

5. Palisade fences and brick walls
 Prevents urban and pedestrian appropriation of space

6. Underutilized and vacant lots
 Degrades urban character of precinct

7. Taxis along Jacob Mare street
 Creates dangerous urban edge to street

8. Government Buildings
 All government, office and institutional buildings to have public interface ground floors

9. Block thoroughfares
 Poorly defined and severely under utilized arcades

10. Pretorius square
 Poorly functioning public space - no established hierarchy

11. Pretorius square / Paul Kruger street edge
 Threshold condition to be re-evaluated. Better integration between street, square and pedestrian.

12. Paul Kruger street
 Street and edges need revision in order to improve pedestrian environment

13. Informal off-street parking
 Street edge definition and pedestrian environment compromised

14. Buildings close to Pretoria Station
 Densities too low to accommodate increased economic activities from Gautrain

15. Pretoria Station crossing
 Dangerous for pedestrians and unarticulated - lacks "gateway" to precinct

2.4.2 URBAN PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED WITHIN PRECINCT



Fig. 28: Framework - Urban problems identified within precinct (Author, 2011).

1. Minnaar street termination
 New civic space and anchor node to be established.
 Post office building to be demolished and relocated
 to Post office precinct west of Potgieter street

2. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection
 Crossing to be articulated and made highly
 pedestrian orientated

3. Crossings within precinct
 Articulated and orientated towards pedestrian use

4. Existing museum buildings
 Museums to be fully refurbished and modernised.
 What is exhibited needs to be showcased and
 propagated to the public.

5. Palisade fences and brick walls
 Boundaries to be removed to allow for better spatial
 utilisation and amalgamation

6. Taxis along Jacob Mare street
 To be accommodated in newly developed taxi rank
 south of Jacob Mare street

7. Government Buildings
 All government, office and institutional buildings to
 have public interface ground floors

8. Block thoroughfares
 Connection between city, pedestrians and public
 space need to be considered

9. Pretorius square
 Square to be programmed and hierarchy to be
 introduced

10. Pretorius square / Paul Kruger street edge
 Edge to be amalgamated and activated

11. Informal off-street parking
 Parking to be landscaped and formalized in order to
 improve identity and character of precinct

12. Buildings close to Pretoria Station
 Replacing existing low-rise structures with high
 density mixed use buildings

13. Pretoria Station crossing
 Crossing to be articulated and made highly
 pedestrian orientated. Establishment of gateway
 into precinct is necessary



Fig. 29: Framework - Interventions + opportunities identified within precinct (Author, 2011).

1. Minnaar street termination

Creation of a new pedestrianised anchor node. The node will include new landscaped areas as well as new cultural facilities

2. Relocation

New site for the relocation of the Pretoria Art Gallery

3. Minnaar street / Schubart street intersection

Crossing to be paved in order to facilitate a change in texture as well as level. Current termination of Minnaar Street to be non-mountable

4. Reprogramme

Government Printers to be reprogrammed in order to interact with the new node as well as gain museum / educational functions

5. Crossings within precinct

Crossing to be paved in order to facilitate a change in texture as well as level in order to indicate the predominance of pedestrian use

6. New cultural / civic building

Existing structures to be demolished and underutilised site to be developed. Program to be cultural / civic based and highly public in nature. Building height to be between 7 and 9 storeys. Public parking to be included

7. Block thoroughfares

Thoroughfares to be articulated as arcades. Building interfaces and landscape to be dealt with so as to appropriate these spaces.

8. City Hall

City Hall to be reprogrammed to function as Tshwane Public Forum and provide information on events in Tshwane. Housing of Tshwane tourist office and Museum Park head office. Provide overall coordination and information of all existing and available events and event spaces in the precinct.

9. Paul Kruger street

Sidewalks along Paul Kruger Street to be extended by one lane on each side in order to better facilitate informal trade as well as flow along the Paul Kruger axis. Boulevard to be created through the addition of a pedestrianised island in the middle of the road. Landscaping to be dealt with as appropriate

10. BRT Station

Proposed location of new BRT Station to move one city block to the north

11. Vacant / underutilised lots

Vacant sites to be developed. Buildings to be highly public in nature with the building height in accordance with existing built fabric

12. Buildings close to Pretoria Station Western block

Building densities to be increased and reprogrammed as mixed use high density development. Perimeter blocks to define street edge with a building height of 5-10 storeys

13. Pretoria Station crossing

Crossing of Scheiding Street to be adapted as to facilitate high levels of pedestrian movement

14. Buildings close to Pretoria Station Eastern block

Building densities to be increased and reprogrammed as mixed use high density development. Buildings above 5 storeys to be considered for adaptive re-use

15. Melrose House

Bicycle rental facilities to be provided



Fig. 30: Framework - Urban design proposal (Author, 2011).

2.4.5 SELECTED SITES AND ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMES WITHIN FRAMEWORK

1. Isabel van Wyk

A Centre for Architecture

2. George F. Pieterse

A Museum of Typography

3. Gavin Williams

Burger's Park Opportunity Platform

4. Alexia Philippou

A Community Creativity Facility

5. Deirdre Marais

Soup Kitchen and Dance Centre

6. Heinrich Olckers

An Urban Transition Space

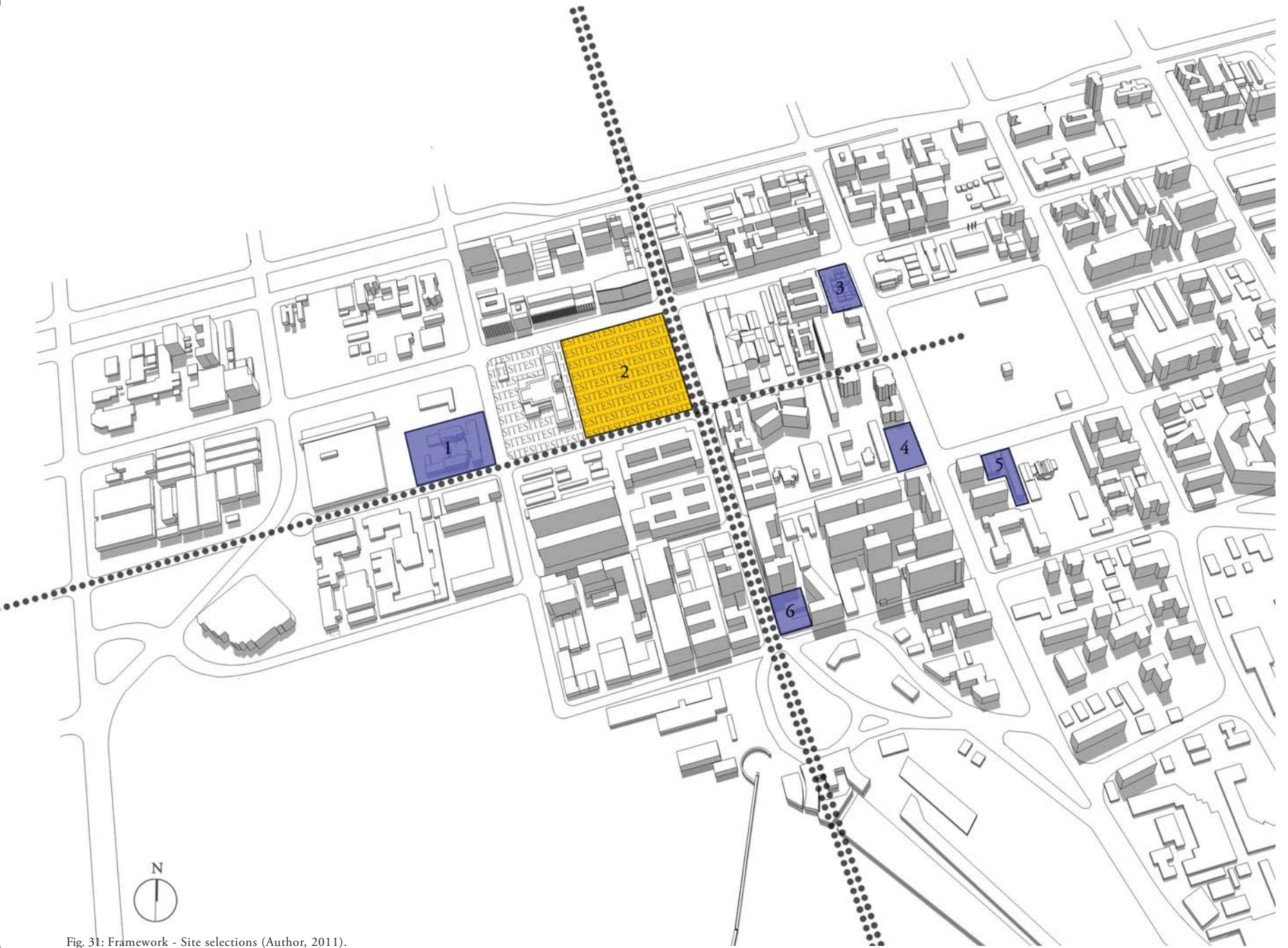


Fig. 31: Framework - Site selections (Author, 2011).

2.5 IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

2.5.1 SURROUNDINGS

CITY HALL (1)

The first corner stone of the City Hall was laid in 1931, with the building being completed in 1935 (le Roux, 1993: 33). The building was commissioned as part of a competition process and was done in celebration of Pretoria obtaining its city status.

The competition was won by F.C. McIntosh, who designed this Neoclassical building in 1926. McIntosh however passed away before the construction began and so the project was continued by his assistant John Lockwood-Hall (van der Waal, 1995: 18).

The building's front facade is built from granite with the back end towards Bosman Street consisting of plaster work.

The two main elements within the facade of this imposing building are the clock tower and pediment. The pediment was designed by Anton van Wouw and depicts the history and development of Pretoria (Da Costa, 2007: 16). The building looks out onto a garden formerly known as Pretorius Square.

PRETORIUS SQUARE (2)

Pretorius Square is a formal garden that sits in between City Hall and the National Museum of Natural History along Paul Kruger Street.

The landscape itself has little or no heritage value (Bakker, 2011) except for the strong visual and axial connection between the City Hall and the Museum of Natural History. It is thus the inherent characteristics of the intangible space between these two buildings that carry heritage value, and not the physical elements occupying the space.

There are three statues along the ceremonial axis, with the oldest two being of the Voortrekker leaders Marthinus Pretorius, who established Pretoria in 1855, and his father Andries Pretorius (Da Costa, 2007: 16). A third bronze statue was erected in 2006, that of Chief Tshwane. These statues (as isolated objects) does have heritage value, but their validity in their current context is questionable (Bakker, 2011). The possibility of relocation is thus investigated.

1. City Hall
2. Pretorius Square
3. Statue of Chief Tshwane
4. Statue of Andries Wilhelmus Jakobus Pretorius
5. Statue of Martinus Wessel Pretorius
6. National Museum of Natural History
7. National Department of Public Works
8. Tshwane Metropolitan Police Department
9. Lisa's Place Housing
10. The Land Bank Building
11. The Bank of Lisbon and the South African National Defence Force
12. Paulhof Building - Retail and Housing
13. NZASM Building - Spoornet
14. Old railway building -

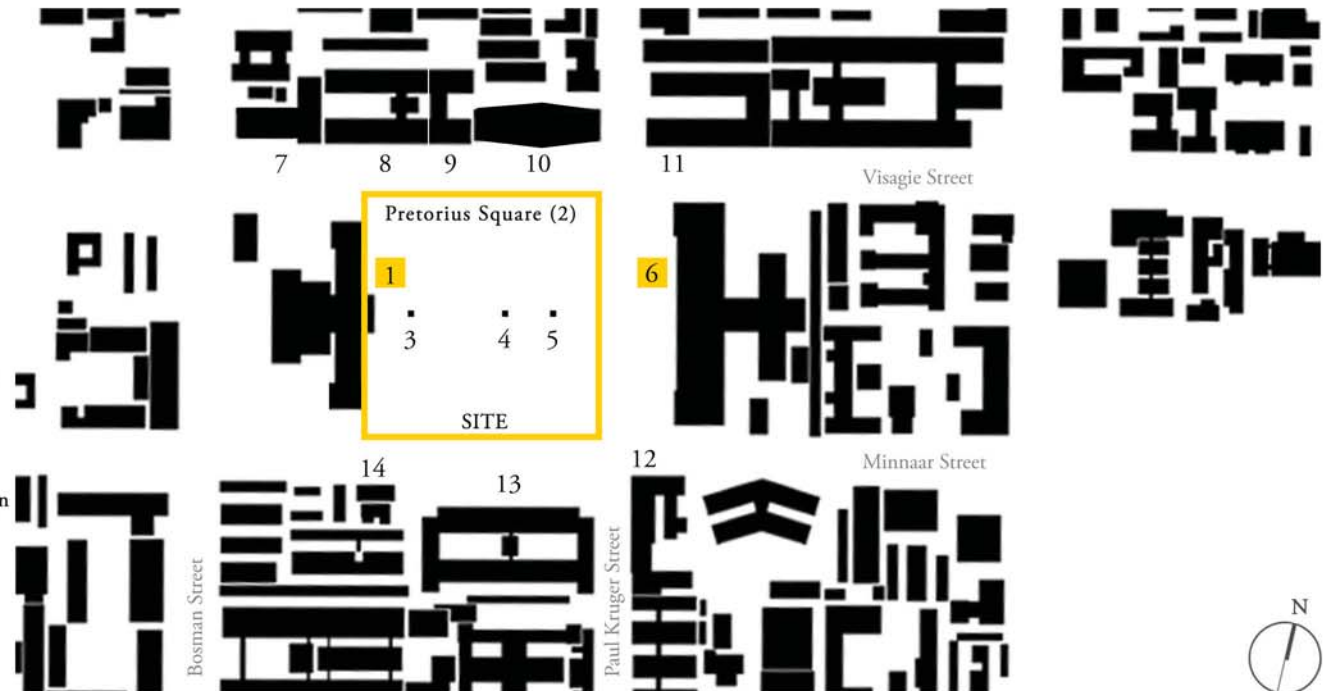


Fig. 32: Site and surrounding buildings (Author, 2011).

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (6)

This Neoclassical sandstone building sits on the Eastern edge of Pretorius Square across Paul Kruger Street. The building was designed by architect J.S Cleland and built between 1910-1912. The original plans proposed two additional wings on the northern and southern sides of the building - these were never realised (Da Costa, 2007: 17). In 1995, Holm Jordaan Architects from Pretoria designed and built these two planned extensions (Bakker, 2011).

The additions extended the existing wings and were built using clay brick masonry mimicking the existing neoclassical features of the main building.

2.6 SITE: PRETORIUS SQUARE

Pretorius Square is flanked by the City Hall on the western edge and by the National Museum of Natural History on the eastern edge. Because of the orientation of these two buildings there exists a very strong and prominent axis that runs east-west across the site that attempts to connect the two buildings. The space is also intersected from north to south by Paul Kruger Street.

Pretorius Square also takes up a big portion of urban space but does not seem to 'occupy' this space successfully (le Roux, 1993: 32). The urban expanse of space is too big to sustain and nurture any appropriation into the spatial matrix of the city. The space lacks a clear sense of hierarchy and programme.

The square is also the only edge interruption to be found along Paul Kruger Street which has a highly built-up and well defined street edge stretching from the Pretoria Station all the way north to Church Square.

This characteristic affords it a vital role within the open-space network of the inner city - a role that is as of yet, underutilised. The edges of the square are also very ineffectively defined leading to the space bleeding off into the streets; the exception being that of the Western edge which is defined by the City Hall.

The space is in need of the establishment of hierarchy, the introduction of programme, the definition of edges, and the founding of thresholds.

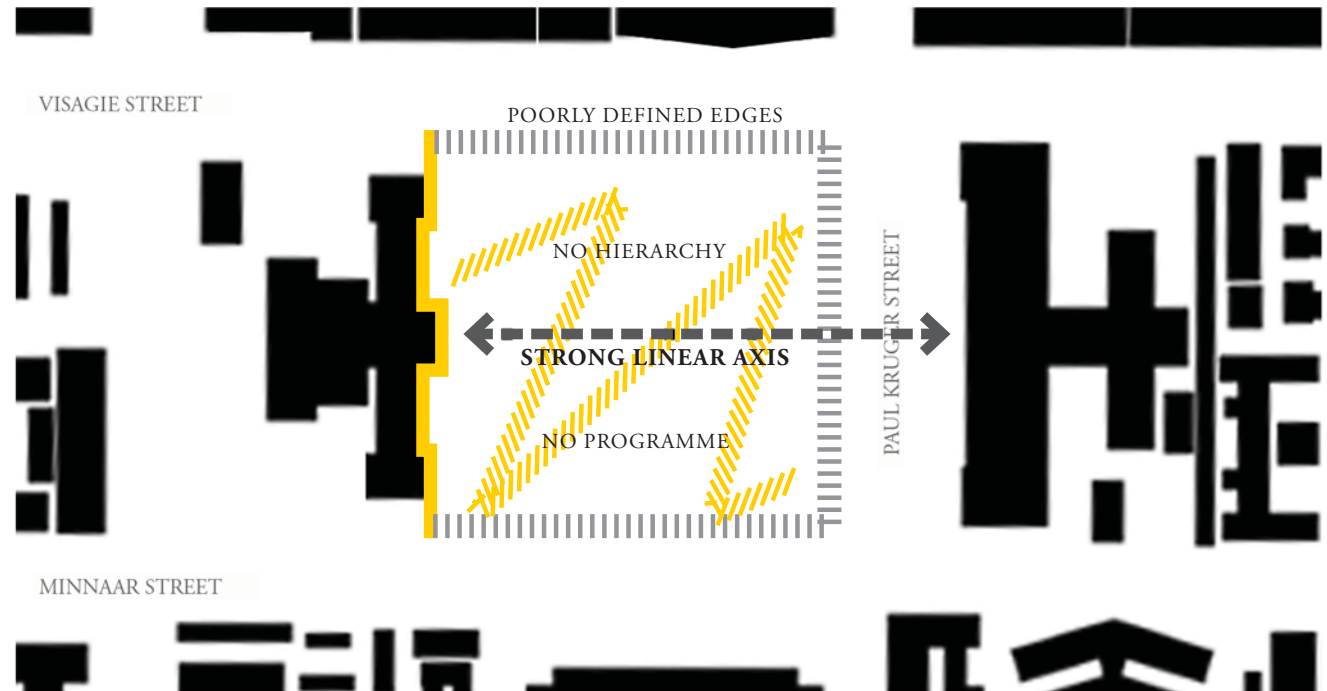


Fig. 33: Site - Identified characteristics of site (Author, 2011).

2.6.1 LOCALISED SITE VIEWS

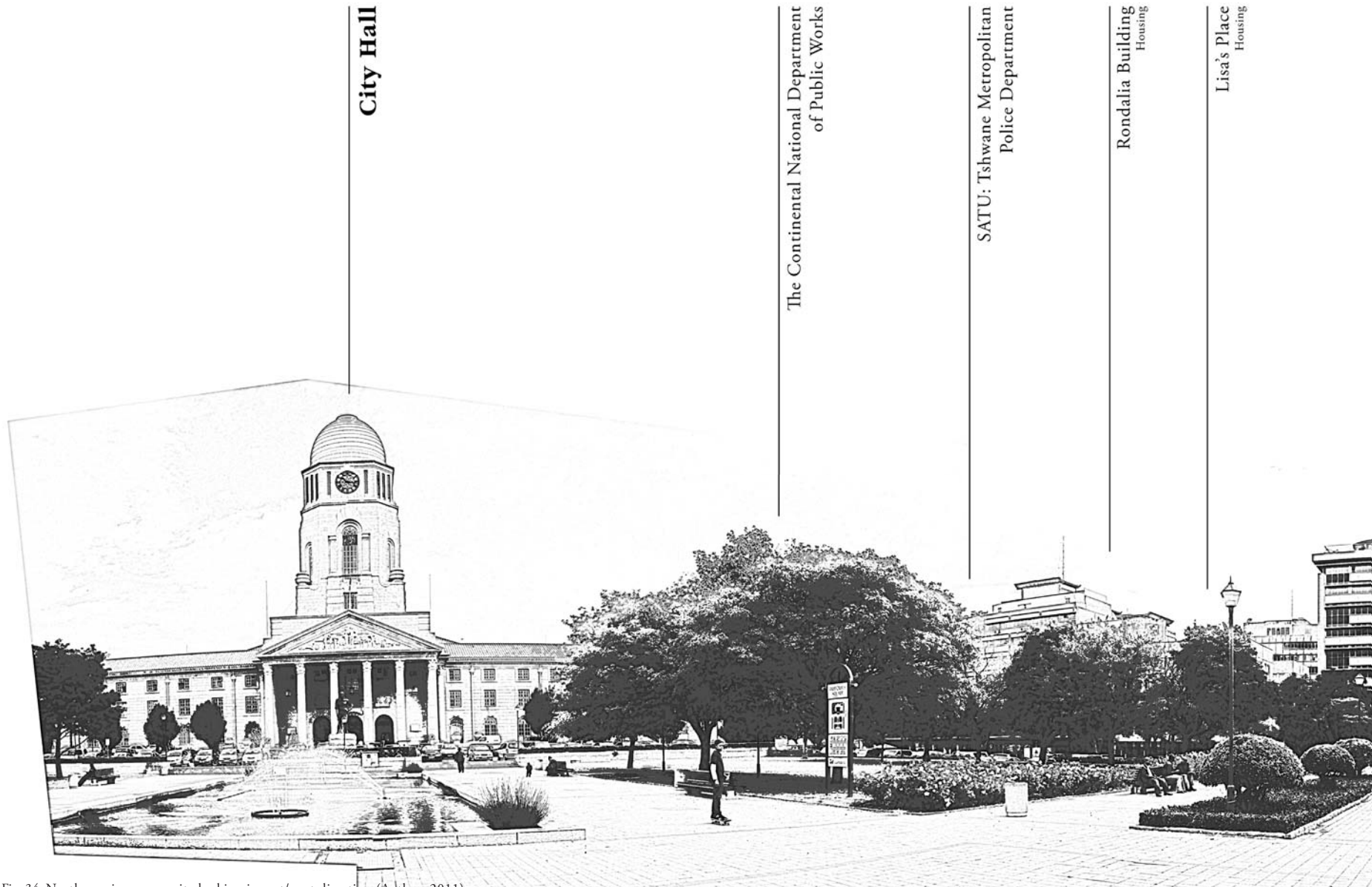
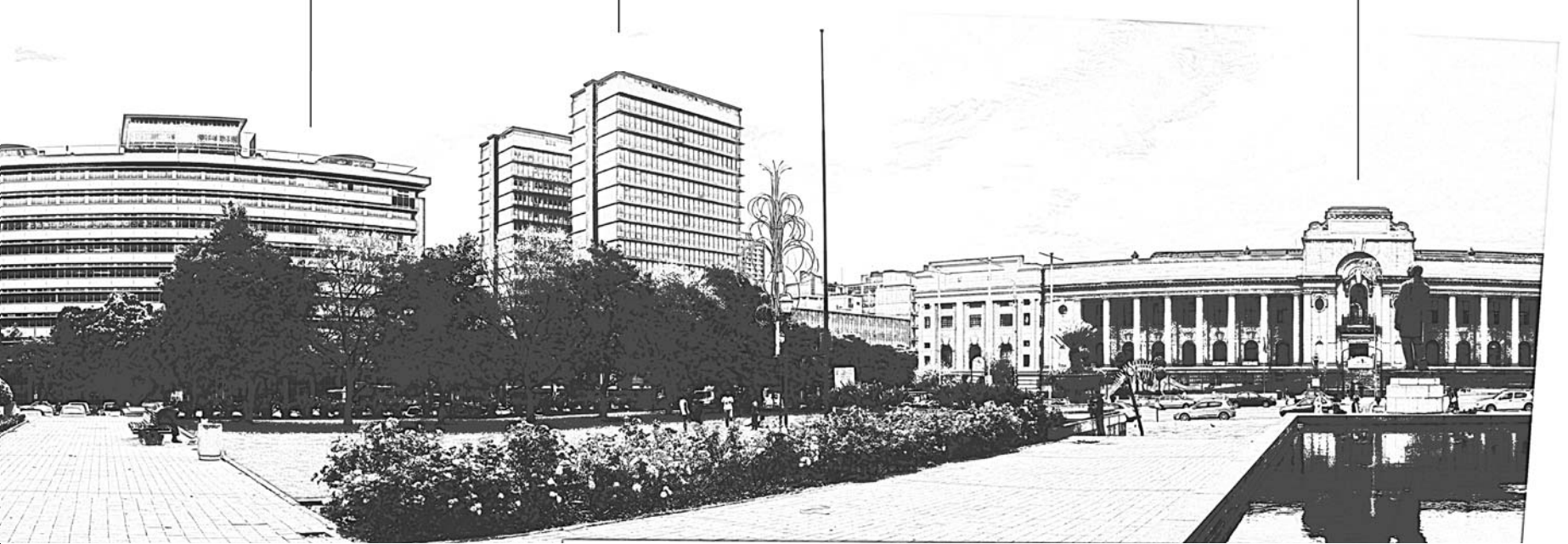


Fig. 34: Northern view across site looking in east/west direction (Author, 2011).

The Land Bank
Currently Being Refurbished

The Bank of Lisbon +
The South African National Defence Force

National Museum of
Natural History



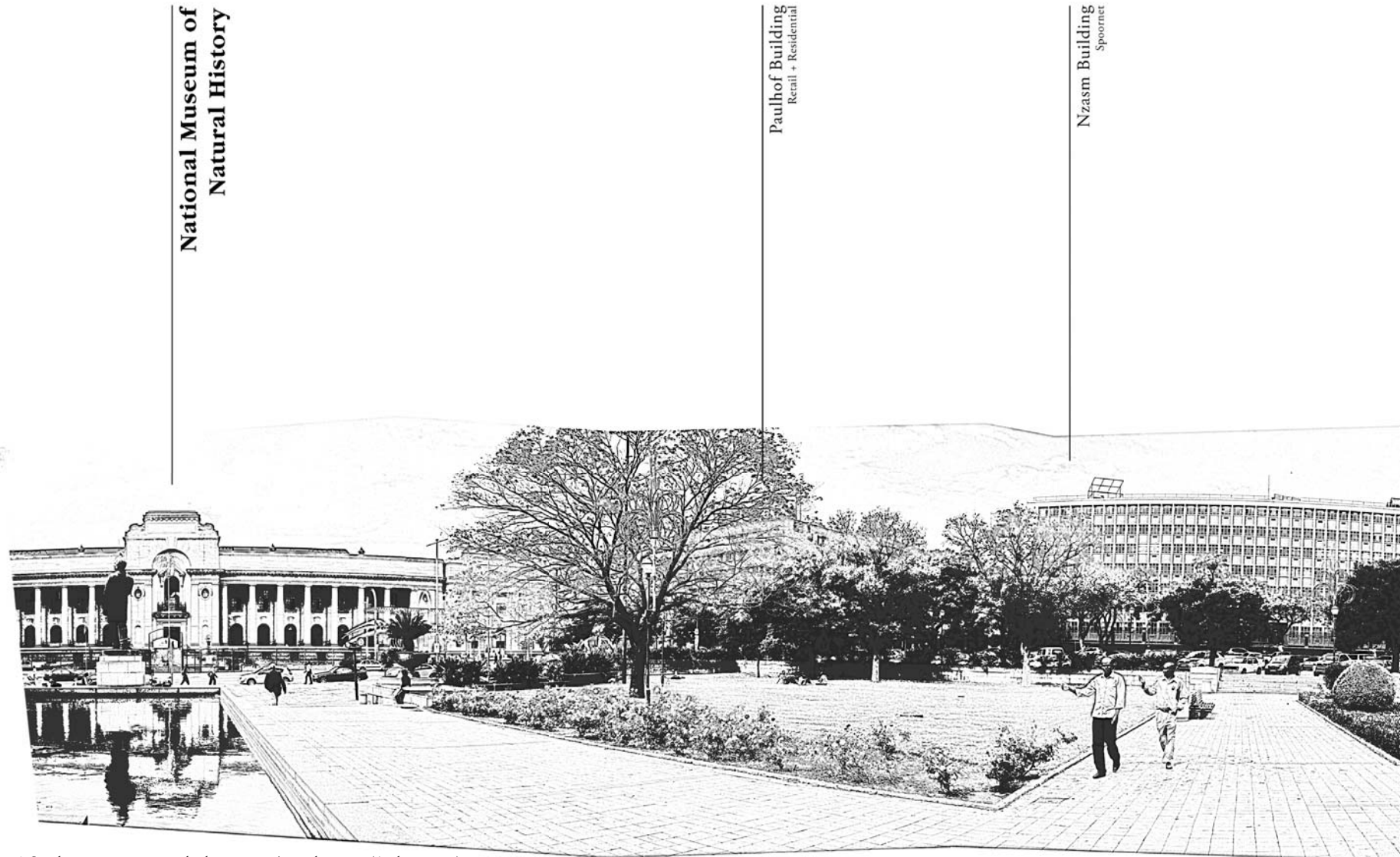


Fig. 35: Southern view across site looking in east/west direction (Author, 2011).

The Department of
Home Affairs

City Hall





Fig. 36: View of poor edge condition along Visagie Street (Author, 2011).



Fig. 37: Edge condition along Minnaar Street is better defined, but there is no access to square (Author, 2011).



Fig. 38: View of Pretorius Square and Paul Kruger Street edge condition (Author, 2011).



Fig. 39: Underutilised space on Pretorius Square (Author, 2011).