

6. SITE DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

This section follows the GAPP Architects compiled site development guidelines for the Newtown Precinct. While it explains the interpretation and analysis of it, it also quotes verbatim in certain sections.

INTRODUCTION

The Newtown Urban Design Framework provided a general overview of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council's intentions regarding the development and regeneration of the Western Sector of the Inner City. A substantial portion of this framework is the Council's intentions for the Newtown Cultural Precinct. The Newtown Urban Design Framework outlines the overall physical development of the area and splits it threefold as follows: Northern precinct, Central precinct (including the Newtown Cultural Precinct) and Southern precinct.

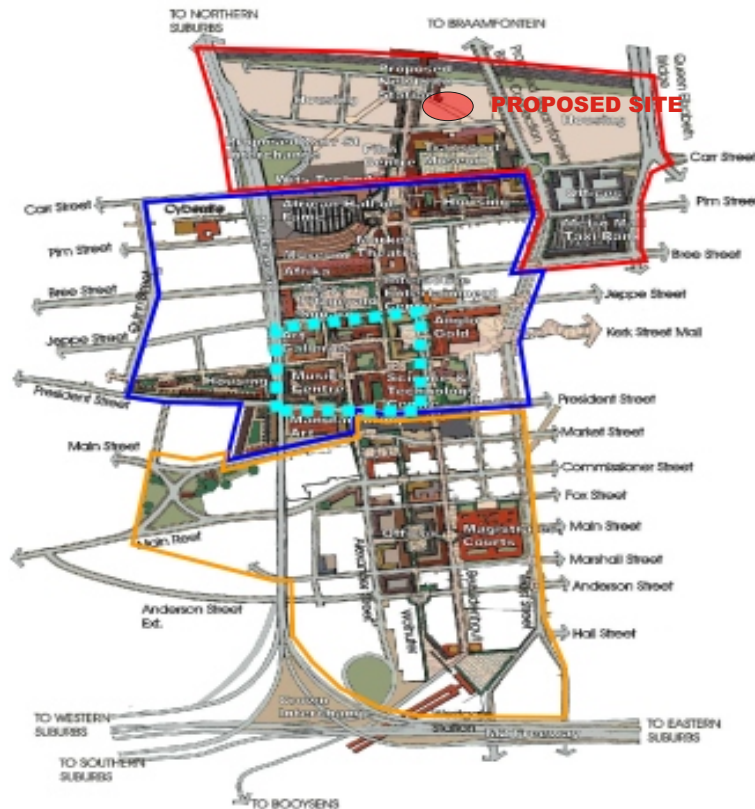


Figure 25. Newtown Precincts

Its spatial structure concept is founded on an interlinked public environmental system. It begins with the integration of existing key activities but goes onto creating further linkages to adjoining areas being concurrently developed as well as activity clusters. There are predominantly three public places; Mary Fitzgerald Square, Newtown Piazza and Turbine Square, that are connected by a series of pedestrian-dominant routes and lanes. These routes are further developed out of this central activity hub into neighbouring areas like the Johannesburg CBD and Church Street (east), to the Oriental Plaza (west), to the proposed Craft Centre and the West City initiative (south), to the Transnet Railway Land and Braamfontein (north), and north-east to the Metro Mall development.

This public environment structure forms the physical network with Newtown's cultural core at its nexus. The planned connections in the form of pedestrian (and other) routes into neighbouring precincts also include plans through the proposed Brickfields residential development site, in the northern precinct.

An overall series of goals have been established through the Newtown Urban Design Framework. The goals include:

- Creating a safe and secure environment.
- Improving accessibility.
- Creating a critical mass and a 24 hour city.
- Establishing a coherent development framework for the area.
- Establishing a focussed special purpose vehicle to drive the development and land release process.

6.1. VISION

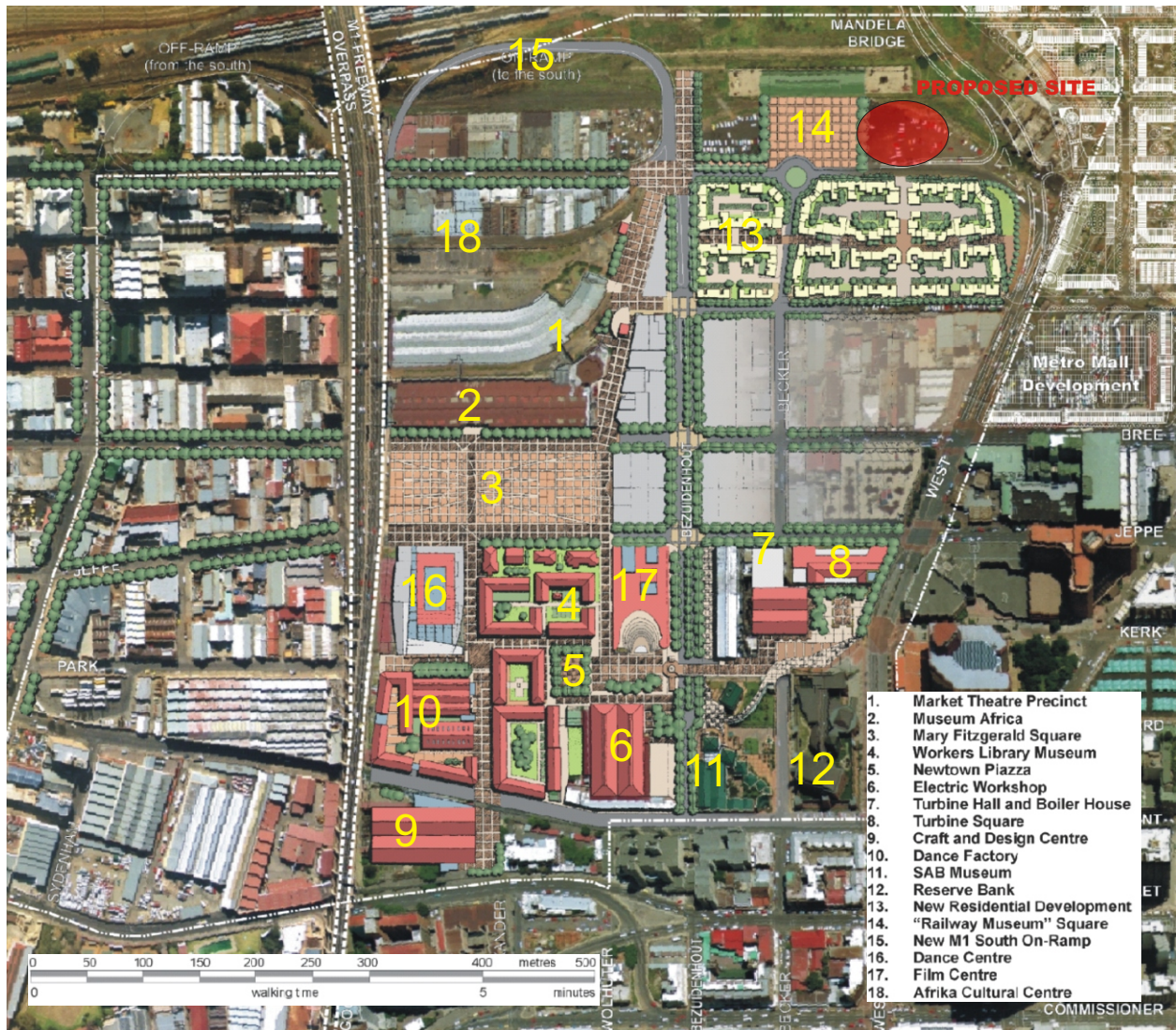


Figure 26. Newtown Vision

The development vision focuses on creating a human-scaled, active, vibrant and amiable public environment, within a milieu of art and cultural activities (in the broadest sense of the definition), with supporting retail, commercial, business, office and residential uses.

The principles underpinning the vision include:

- The fundamental principle is to “accommodate pedestrians first” and emphasising a human scale of development, in order to establish the public environment as the core structure of the Newtown Cultural Precinct.
- The establishment of a continuous public environment network, which forms the guiding spatial structure to which development responds.
- An easy, safe, convenient and pleasant pedestrian environment and movement, co-ordinated with ease of vehicular movement and access to well located and safe parking areas.
- The utilisation of extensive tree-scaping and landscaping in ameliorating climatic conditions and promoting a comfortable public environment.
- Focussing on the need of pedestrians first, and ensuring that vehicular movement supports the diverse human activities that are envisaged.
- Building on the distinct hierarchical road structure.
- The promotion of a mix of land use activities to promote a complex range of opportunities and activities.

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The development objectives are guided by the outlined goal to turn the Newtown Precinct into a special cultural place for the City of Johannesburg. The objectives include:

- Creating pedestrian orientated environments where people can walk, sit, relax and shop.
- Designing a series of quality public spaces, both soft and hard, of different character to accommodate a variety of uses.
- Revitalising the existing urban fabric and historic buildings.
- Extending the city road grid and creating streets for people for good local access.
- Developing a strong residential component of urban housing for a variety of income groups.
- Planning improved access by car and public transport.
- Designing a mixed-use environment driven by Art and Cultural activities utilising both old and new Buildings.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND OBJECTIVES

The Newtown Cultural Precinct Plan sets out a series of development proposals, which establish detailed urban design principles and development controls. The potential SDP's should be directed by these principles. They comprise the following components:

- Movement:** The proposed road networks, the development of new road infrastructure, public transportation routes and stops, the pedestrian dominant routes and the public environment.
- Land Use Activities:** The envisaged land uses and activities for the area, as well as the mandatory and desirable location for specific users, such as activity edges (active ground floor uses, e.g. retail and other), public plazas and piazzas.
- Urban Space and Landscape:** Design Principles outlining the spatial structure of the public environment and pedestrian routes, urban soft and hard spaces (piazzas, squares and parks), the location of trees and development of boulevards, and colonnades and covered walkways.
- Built Form Directives:** Outlining physical development parameters regarding mandatory and desirable build-to lines, mandatory and desirable colonnades / covered walkways, desirable and expanded building development zones, buildings and / or building facades of historic value, landmark sites, points of architectural accentuation, building heights and extent of the public environment and pedestrian routes.
- Architectural Guidelines:** Outlining a design ethic that achieves an architectural precinct of distinction. The guidelines are parameters, which allow for a range of design opportunities that integrate individual buildings into an overall environment of architectural pedigree.

6.2. MOVEMENT

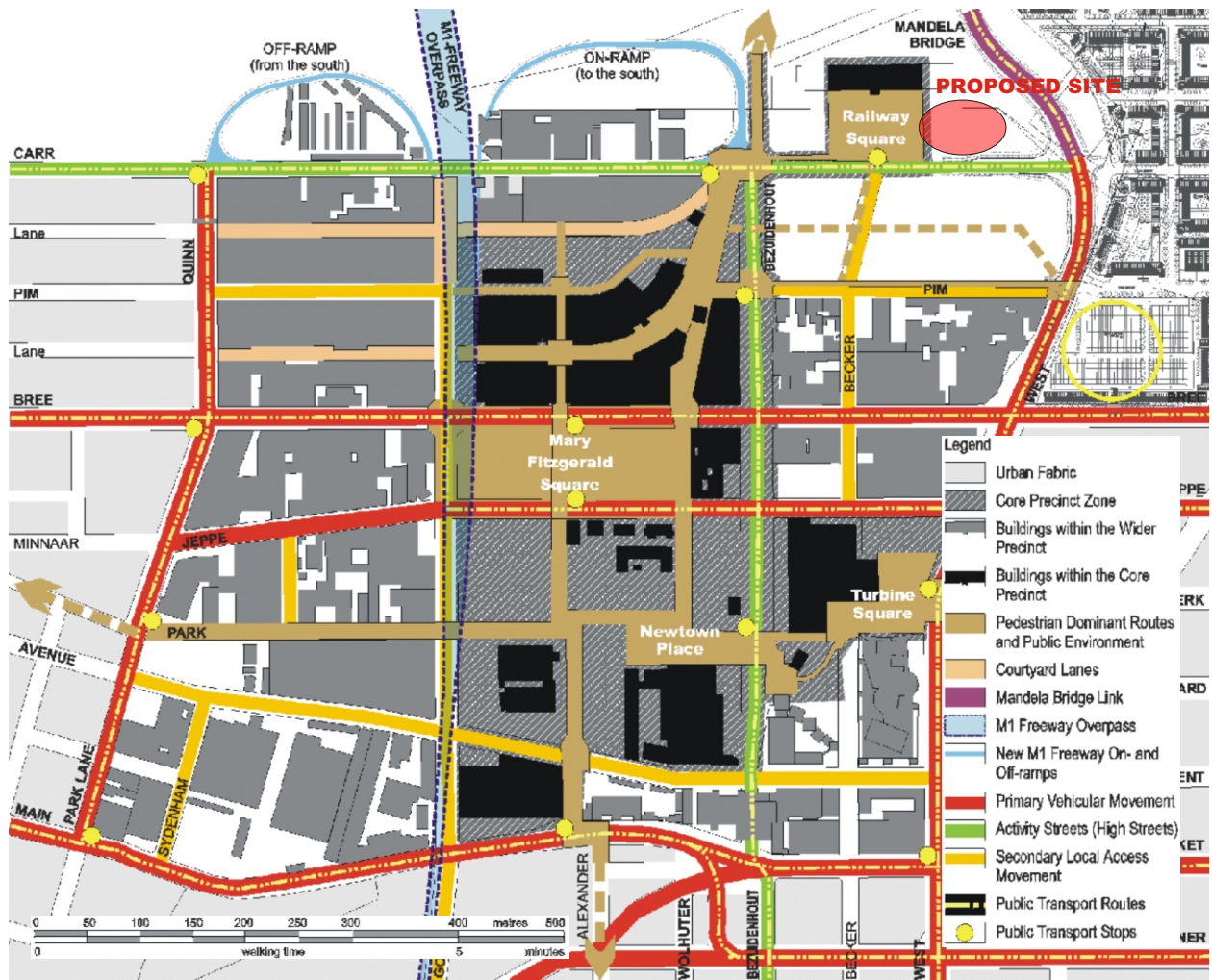


Figure 27. Newtown Movement Pattern

Two activity Streets, or “High Streets”, have been proposed namely Carr and Bezuidenhout Streets. These are envisaged to have more intensive retail and other activities fronting on to them, with significant on-street parking, wider pedestrian pavements, catering for entertainment, restaurants, daily needs and convenience shopping.

The remainder of the road network forms vehicular and local secondary access roads, which provide circulation throughout the Cultural Precinct, with on-street parking.



Figure 28. (A) Major pedestrian movement towards site (Movement indicated in red from core area)

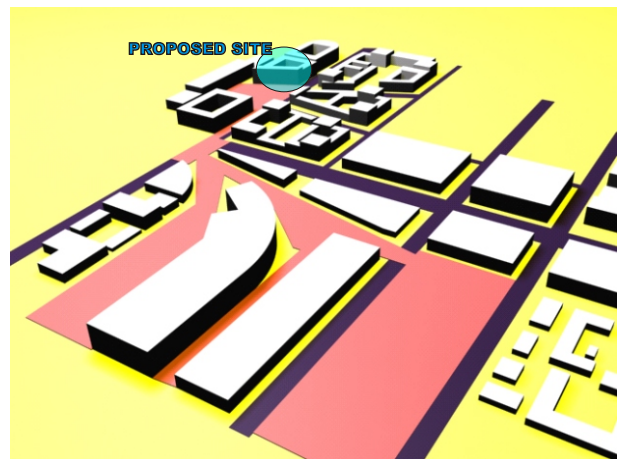


Figure 29. (B) Major pedestrian movement towards site (Movement indicated in red from core area)

6.3. LAND USE ACTIVITY

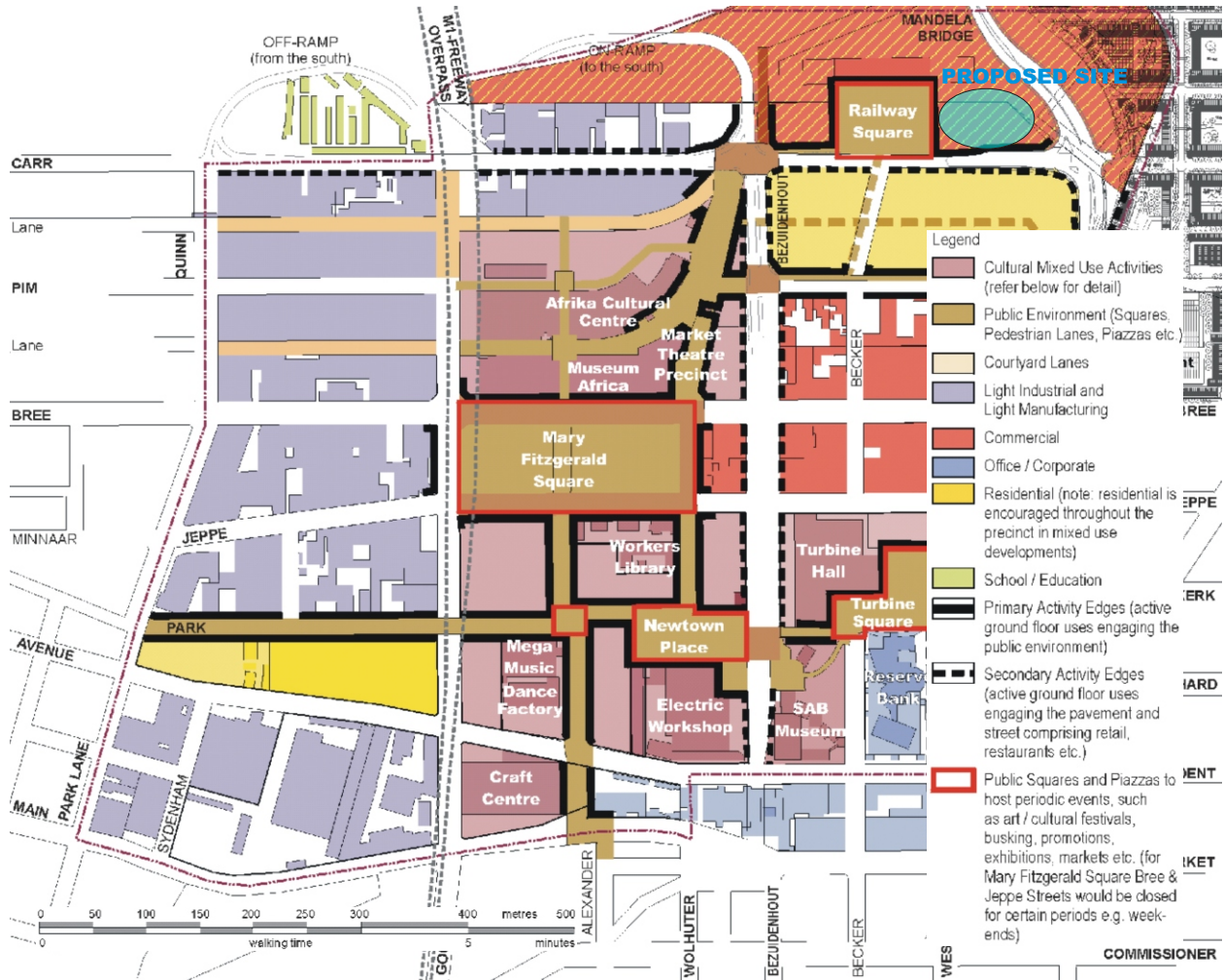


Figure 30. Proposed Land uses

According to the Council's development strategy as well as the guidelines in the Newtown Cultural Precinct Plan, emphasis is placed on mixed-use developments within a cultural and art theme. Developers are encouraged to integrate a complexity of cultural, art, entertainment, retail, commercial, office and residential activities.

The activities and uses within buildings at ground floor level are also critical to maintaining this sense of continuity and a vibrant, urban life. Developers are therefore encouraged to use the ground floor, as far as possible, for retailing, entertainment, restaurants and uses that can flow out onto the sidewalk space adjacent to the building.

Above ground floor, the design of the building and the uses on the upper floors are to encourage view vantage points onto the key public spaces. In this regard the facing out of office and residential uses from upper floors, together with balconies, is encouraged.

6.4. URBAN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE



Figure 31. Urban Space and Landscape

The urban space environment of the Newtown Cultural Precinct is characterised by a public environment network comprising pedestrian walkways and routes, piazzas and public squares. More semi-public courtyard lanes have also been identified, for the use by adjoining businesses for courtyard parking, landscaping and places of relaxation.

The proposed landscaping is structured such that it adds to the aesthetics, legibility, sense of place, linkage and physical comfort of the environment. Elements used are:

- Formal planting of street trees along the primary routes to form boulevards.
- A second order of street tree planting used to define important areas of the public environment, pedestrian routes and secondary streets.
- The extensive utilisation of formal planters and landscaping features throughout the public environment.
- The inclusion of soft green spaces such as local parks.

In addition colonnades and / or covered walkways have been proposed to enhance overall physical comfort and protection from the elements.

More private courtyards have been considered throughout the design, which should include significant landscaping and green space, contributing to the overall landscaping of the precinct.

6.5. BUILT FORM DIRECTIVES



Figure 32. Built Form Directives

The built form directives envisaged are:

- Individual developers are required to use their buildings to define space: buildings are to be used in grouped form to define the edges of the public environment.
- Consequently the buildings are encouraged to be designed to stand on their boundary lines and collectively form a human scale to achieve a feeling of containment and natural surveillance, giving the public environment a sense of (and promoting) human scale, safety and security. This is underpinned by active ground floor uses facing on to the public environment.
- The mechanisms used to promote the built form include mandatory and desirable build to lines, building zones, and the definition of either colonnaded or covered walkways.
- Buildings and building facades of historical value have been identified and set aside for conservation. Historic buildings are to be retained and recycled and historic building facades retained and integrated with the redevelopment of the site, should this occur.
- Height of buildings is a critical ingredient of the spatial qualities being sought. The development of buildings is thus encouraged to be two to four storeys, in keeping with the existing scale of the urban environment, and achieving a human scale of enclosure.
- The development of landmark buildings of distinct character is also promoted, as well as the architectural accentuation of buildings at important locations along the public environment. This is to promote legibility.



Figure 33. (A) Built Structure

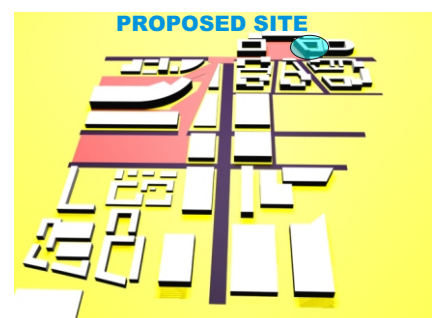


Figure 34. (B) Built Structure

6.6. ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES AND PRECEDENT

A number of images have been selected to depict the type of environment that is being sought, both from an architectural point of view, as well as the nature of the public environment.

There is an emphasis on the quality of the public environment and the importance of high quality streetscapes, piazzas, pedestrian lanes and public squares. A well maintained, clean, attractive and, above all, secure public environment is a critical component to the successful development of the Newtown Cultural Precinct. A car-dominated environment is de-emphasised, including the visual intrusion of unattractive parking areas, particularly on surface parking.

Excellence in the quality of private developments is encouraged, specifically in terms of their appeal to the market, their architectural expression, the use of high quality materials, attention to design detail and, above all, the creation of a vibrant, people-friendly public environment. The architectural approach that is sought is that of an urban character displaying “good public manners” meaning that, as important as the building may be, it recognises its context, is respectful of its neighbours, responds to and enriches the public, semi-public and private environments it defines, and contributes to an overall group form. Consequently buildings are used to define space rather than for buildings to simply appear as objects in space having little or no relationship to another. The slavish copying of historical style (that is, creating a *pastiche*) is strongly discouraged.

Where historical reference is to be made in the design, particularly important in the context of the de+velopmental history of Newtown, the building should display a clear analysis of that style, the principles on which it was based and demonstrates how these are re-interpreted into a contemporary idiom.

The following design codes are derived from the objectives and goals set out in the Newtown development framework.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

- The architecture must have contextual and historical significance to the Johannesburg CBD in general, and Newtown in particular.
- The urban design controls will, to an extent, control the form and size of buildings and their relationship to one another and to the hierarchy of open spaces proposed. This will ensure a consistent integrity of urban form.
- The design code proposed for Newtown is required to prevent design deviations in the wrong direction, but this also permits the occasional flight of fancy that does enrich towns. The juxtaposition of more formal spaces, places, routes, landmarks, vistas, topography and interesting buildings conceived that makes memorable precincts, such as Newtown.



Figure 35. Layering of Facades



Figure 36. Ground level interaction



Figure 37. Character in Newtown



Figure 38. Relationship to street

DESIGN ETHIC

Buildings must define space, rather than be objects within it. The built fabric should be defined by:

- High Floor Area Ratios
- Minimum heights that achieve an acceptable degree of enclosure of the public environment
- Definition of build-to-lines ensuring strong edges
- Minimum design criteria that accentuate the building's relationship to the public environment, its point of entry, parking, vehicular circulation, security, massing of built form, elevational and roof treatment, facade modulation, vertical composition and relationship to adjacent developments, in particular active ground floor activities.

MATERIALS AND QUALITY

- High quality materials should be used, which can also be cost effectively maintained.
- The area is characterised by red brick and earthy colours. Materials of this colouring are encouraged.
- Materials and elevations should reflect a consciousness in respect of energy and water conservation.
- Roofs must be dealt with as a conscious element of facade treatment. Roofs should not dominate their buildings.

RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING

- The overriding group form sought is that of a street-related wall architecture, as is characteristic of the Johannesburg CBD. In other words, urban spaces must be lined by a continuous façade of buildings. While heights, build-to lines, and architectural styles may vary slightly, the net result should be a complex facade facing onto the public environment.
- Continuity of building is encouraged, with gaps between them being discouraged.
- Buildings must relate to each other, to the interior and exterior.
- The interior of each block should be considered with importance, as a place within its own right. It should form an important ingredient of the semi-private domain of the Newtown Precinct. The development of each site / erf should recognise it as an equally important frontage and respond to it accordingly.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

- Quality of life, ambience and activity in the area is dependent on the extent to which mixed-use developments are achieved. There is therefore a high priority on encouraging developers to respond in this regard.
- Continuity of a vibrant ground level is encouraged, for example, retail, restaurant and entertainment activities. Cultural activities are equally important here, such as theatres, galleries, and workshops.
- Sidewalk space becomes an important element in the architecture of a building. Colonnaded, canopied or protected sidewalk space becomes an important determinant of the adopted architectural approach. Enclosure of the sidewalk should be of a human scale.
- Ground level facades must interact with street if they are not to be used for active spaces. This will allow for surveillance and thus security.



Figure 39. Use of Materials in Newtown



Figure 40. Interaction with street



Figure 41. Internal courtyard



Figure 42. Relationship to surrounding



Figure 43. Vertical mix use

- The ideal mixed-use configuration is that of retail-related active uses at ground floor; with offices and studios two or three storeys above this, and one or two more levels of residential apartment above this. Densities must be maximised where possible.

CELEBRATE ENTRANCES

- Pedestrian entrances and circulation should be clear and emphasised, both from the street and the inner core of the block. Thus the building becomes a double frontage development.
- A hierarchy of spaces ranging from public to private must be encouraged.
- The area must be as user-friendly and as accessible as possible to all people, regardless of disabilities. Thus ramped access to buildings should be an integral part of the building's sense of arrival. Specialised facilities for mothers and their children, the elderly and the disabled would be welcomed.
- Vehicular access across sidewalks must be limited if possible.
- Corner buildings must be given particular attention, in terms of stature, by way of accentuating height and details.

SIGNAGE

- Designated zones are needed for signage that is visible to public, semi-public or neighbouring property.
- Discreet and restrained signs are encouraged, in other words, no flashing or moving signage should be allowed.
- Approval must be obtained for the display of external signs.
- No signage may appear on the facade above ground, other than the name of the building.
- Signs should be manufactured of high quality, durable and colourfast materials. Fixed elements of the sign should be concealed.
- Signs and support structures are to be ground related and integral to the building.

LANDSCAPING

- Landscaping is used to enhance the architecture of the building and to create a greening of the city fabric and to emphasise the relationship between built and natural elements.
- Landscaping must complement that of adjoining sites to create a unified landscape running across boundaries rather than defining them.
- The utilisation of indigenous planting is encouraged and is to be designed with a conscious attention to routine maintenance.
- 20% of the site's area (hard and soft landscaping) must be professionally planned and detailed.
- Planting must be properly maintained and irrigated. All hard surfaces must be designed to accommodate proper storm water drainage.



Figure 44. Entrance to Metro Mall



Figure 45. Discreet signage



Figure 46.(A) Use of landscape in Newtown



Figure 47.(B) Use of landscape in Newtown

7. DESIGN BRIEF

The design brief was drafted in collaboration with the client. This was developed from the strategic imperatives outlined by the client as well as a pre-analysis of the site.

The Brickfields Residential Development project forms a basis for an urban design structure for the development area. The proposed project is primarily guided by the client's mandate to develop sites to assist in Newtown's revitalisation. The client's intentions to create jobs, development and housing opportunities which are underpinned by the Newtown Urban Design Framework, are therefore critical considerations in the design development. As such it moves beyond a limiting design by building function to include the strategic developmental objectives for the precinct itself. In line with the City's development strategy, these are intended to stimulate a positive urban environment and to elicit private development responses. This is key to the sustained urban regeneration within the Johannesburg CBD from which the Newtown Urban Design Framework takes its cue.

An overall set of project goals and their aligned design objectives have been derived from the theory base as well as the Newtown Urban Design Framework. These are outlined below.

PROJECT GOALS	ALIGNED DESIGN OBJECTIVES
Promote a critical mass and a 24 hour city	Encourage mixed use activity
Reduce crime levels	Effective security enhancing design
Market the identified character of the site	Maximise the utilisation of opportunities set out in the framework
Help meet inner city housing demand	Create affordable cost effective housing
Create and maintain public open spaces	Interface with public spaces to enhance/ complement space
Provide effective service delivery	Provide facilities to accommodate functions
Develop financial mechanisms to attract and retain investment	Provide opportunity for a range of economic activity

Figure 48. Goals and Objectives

7.1.FUNCTION MOTIVATION

Function is determined by meeting the above-mentioned goals and objectives and at the same time utilising the development framework of the site's context. This ensures that appropriate land uses are assigned to the context.

The overriding group form sought is that of a street-related wall architecture, as is characteristic of the Johannesburg CBD. It also reinforces the street pattern and brings life and security back to the city. This in turn would provide a secure internal courtyard for tenant usage. The four facades created should capitalise on opportunities set out by the Brickfields framework and simultaneously meet the objectives set out above.

The magnitude of the functions is to be determined by target setting criteria. The height limit suggested by the urban design framework of four or five floors is used as a guideline in conjunction with estimated solar movement at this stage for concept development.

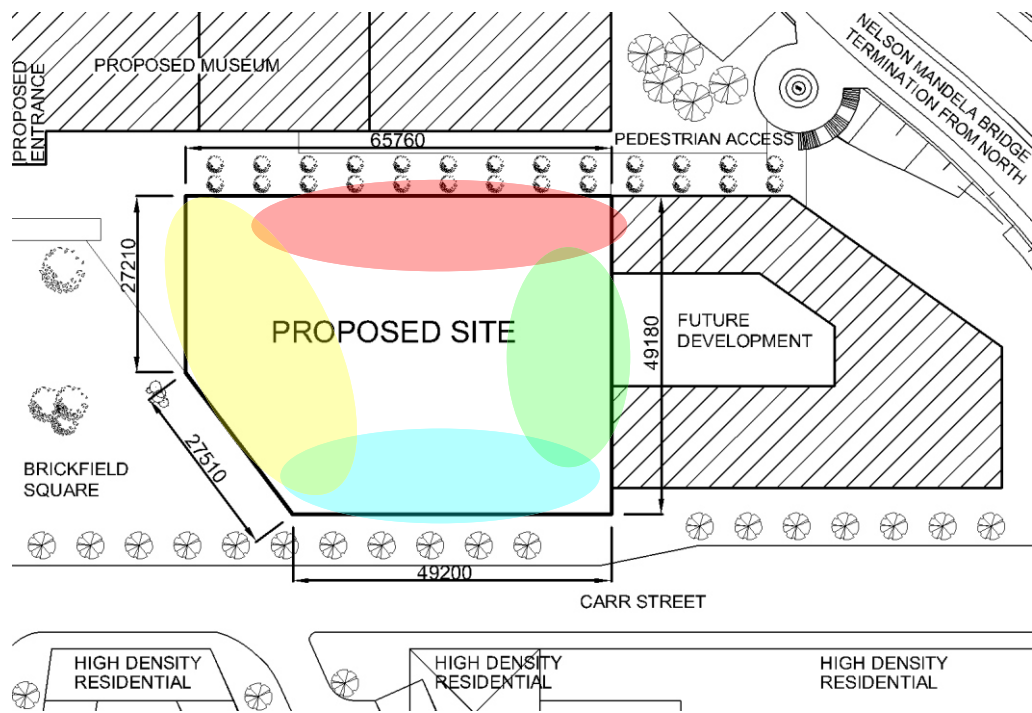


Figure 49. Land Use Zoning

SOUTH WING:

Guided by the structure of the Newtown Urban Development Framework it is anticipated that the south wing would experience the highest levels of pedestrian activity as it is situated in the planned “High Street”, Carr Street. Pedestrian traffic will also be increased with the proposed transport museum at Parktown Station. It is therefore suggested that tourist orientated stalls be located here due to the high dependency on pedestrian movement, allowing tenants to capitalise on this. These stalls should form a permeable edge to the Brickfield Square. A mixture of small-scale home based retail and formalised retail is also proposed on the south wing of the development at ground floor as to maximise utilisation of this pedestrian movement. This is in line with the Framework’s call for ground floor public engagement.. Added residential density on the floors above will reinforce safety on the street.

WEST WING:

Due to its position, the west wing should provide an appropriate interface with the Brickfield Square. This interface should serve to enhance this public open space and should integrate pedestrian friendly covered walkways into the design. Due to the nature of pedestrian activity associated with the public open space and proposed transport museum it is suggested that restaurants and eating facilities be located here at ground level. This would enhance safety and security as well as stimulate late night activity. These facilities should be allowed to spill out onto the square. This design consideration further supports the Framework’s call for ground floor public engagement..The ground floor should also provide an identifiable entrance to the upper floors. This with the proposed transport museum would serve as an anchor for the Brickfield Square. The building is surrounded by high density residential buildings and should accommodate services for the community engagement. Due to the public nature of the square it is appropriate that these functions be accommodated on the first floor of this wing. The upper floors here should incorporate office activity so as to provide opportunity for much needed small business development as well as enhanced activity for the square adding to the desired critical mass. These upper floors must be designed to meet the Framework’s guidelines to create viewpoints onto public spaces like Brickfield Square in this instance.

NORTH WING:

This wing is characterised with minimum pedestrian activity. This interface should have a minimal negative impact on the proposed transport museum. This facade should provide residential accommodation helping to meet the high demand for housing and reinforcing security on the street. Design of the residential section will factor in the Framework’s call for viewpoints - in this instance overlooking the Nelson Mandela Bridge.

EAST WING:

Careful consideration should be taken as this facade forms an interface with the proposed adjoining building. A cohesive integrated design approach is sought for the interface between the two buildings. The possibility of housing should be considered here or an integrated residential courtyard with the neighbouring building.

7.2. PROPOSED FACILITIES

PROPOSED FACILITIES										
Proposed land use	Small scale retail	Work live units	Formalised retail	Restaurant -eating	Office space	Community space	Residential units	Basement Parking	Street Parking	
South Wing 50m frontage										
Basement								X	X	
Ground floor	X		X							
First floor							X			
Second floor							X			
Third floor							X			
Fourth floor										
West Wing 55m frontage										
Basement								X		
Ground floor	X		X	X						
First floor						X				
Second floor					X					
Third floor					X					
Fourth floor					X					
North Wing 65m frontage										
Basement								X		
Ground floor		X					X			
First floor							X			
Second floor							X			
Third floor										
Fourth floor										
East Wing 50m frontage										
Basement								X		
Ground floor	Design dependent									
First floor										
Second floor										
Third floor										
Fourth floor										

Figure 50. Proposed facilities

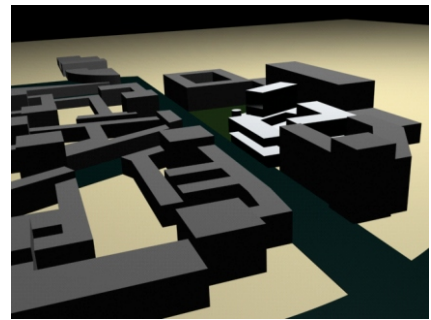


Figure 51.(A) Envisaged built form

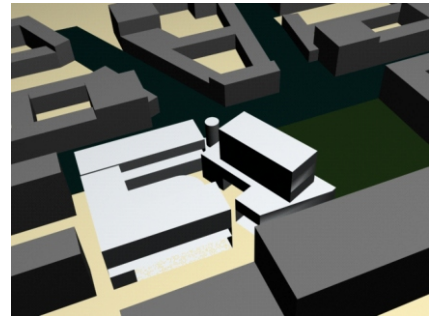


Figure 52.(B) Envisaged built form

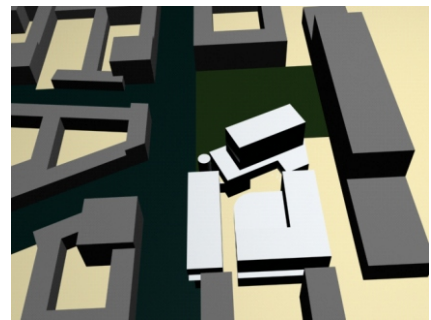


Figure 53. (C) Envisaged built form C

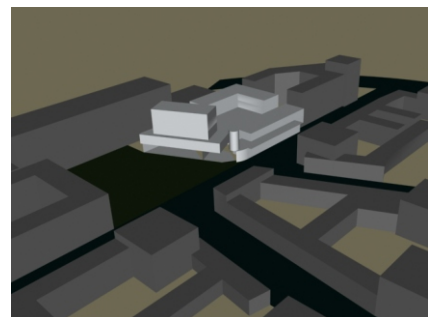


Figure 54. (D) Envisaged built form C



Figure 55. (E) Envisaged built form C