

'The Briefing Document gives an overview as deduced from information gathered in South Africa.'

BRIEFING DOCUMENT

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1.1

INTRODUCTION

Mozambique and South Africa have taken great leaps in strengthening their relations in the last 10 years. The development of the Maputo Corridor has enhanced trade and activity between the two countries substantially, and economic growth and global competitiveness is now within reach.

The Maputo Corridor runs through one of the most highly industrialised and productive regions of Southern Africa. It follows the N4 national toll road from Johannesburg and Pretoria, and runs on an east– west axis to the capital of Mozambique, Maputo. Large concentrations of manufacturing, processing, mining and smelting industries occur in this belt. The corridor passes through vast industrial and primary production areas containing steel mills, petro-chemical plants, quarries, mines, smelters and plantations of forests, sugar cane, tropical fruit and citrus.¹

The aim and intention of the corridor is to work with organised business, and South African and Mozambique authorities, to allow optimum efficiencies along the corridor and provide exporters and importers with cost-effective access to their nearest deep water port in Maputo, and neighboring Matola. Many South African businesses, especially those in Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga, see this as a more viable route of business compared to using the harbours at Richards Bay and Durban. Cost savings are achieved due to shorter distances, and the entire rail link to Maputo is now run by one company, Spoornet, which excludes the need for carriage changes at the border.²

Today there is still the distinction made between first world and third world countries, those still developing and those already developed. This distinction can be made between South Africa and Mozambique. Economic, social and cultural differences are evident, but where this was a barrier in recent times, today these differences can be the basis of opportunity.

With this discourse, the border between these two unparallel domains is challenged. A seam between two countries, different in stature, needs to be created to provide a connectedness, so that international relations are strengthened, and economic and social growth inspired. The choice of border type, and how to arrange it on this specific site demands an understanding of the prevailing socio– cultural system, and the behavioral and spatial components currently in place.

1.2

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The existing Lebombo Border is a point of weakness in the flow of trade and travel between Mozambique and South Africa. With the ever increasing movement of goods and people between the two countries, problems at the border are now a cause of concern. Traffic congestion and bottlenecks often result in queues up to 3km long, and trucks often take as long as 8 hours to transit the border.

Lack of office and storage space for the Government departments also result in inefficient operation. Official procedures need to be simplified and speeded up if trade is to flow, and productiveness to increase. Ultimately the problem of traffic congestion needs to be alleviated so that there is a normalisation of trade and commercial links between the two countries.

This scheme aims to promote fair trade between the two countries. Currently the foreign relations between South Africa and Mozambique stand in good stead, and trade agreements have in recent months been signed, resulting in prosperous export and import contracts. Mozambique currently has two major investment projects in terms of trade in South Africa. Mozal currently exports large quantities of aluminum to South Africa, and Mozambique provides natural gas underground from Maputo to Secunda. The border post plays a vital role in the facilitation of trade and commerce by ensuring smooth flow of traffic by both people traveling, and goods ferrying between the two countries. The R40 billion multi–industry Maputo Development Corridor is set to revolutionise the economies of both countries and the intervention of a new border complex will aid in giving access to the Maputo coastline to both tourists and industries from the landlocked provinces in South Africa.

There exists an entire precinct at the border. Border activities, housing for Customs and Immigration officials, and the adjacent town of Ressano Garcia needs to be investigated as a whole. In a landscape where river gorge and mountain provide the site, physical constraints need to become the basis of new design initiatives. Scenery and landscape are two ideas which carry strong emotional associations. Frustration caused by the poor operation of the border needs to be alleviated. Movement needs to evoke the emotions that make the travel a good experience.

1.3 STAKEHOLDERS AND ROLE PLAYERS

The Governments of South Africa and Mozambique operate the border.

The Departments of Home Affairs (DHA), South African Revenue Services (SARS), and the South African Police Services (SAPS), are the three key role players in border control on the South African side. The Department of Home Affairs controls all Immigration aspects, SARS controls all Customs and Excise duties, and the SAPS is responsible for all patrolling and security at the border.

Additional role players who are also active in border control, include:

SANDF	South African National Defence Force
NIA	National Intelligence Agency
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DOH	Department of Health
DOA	Department of Agriculture
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
DOT	Department of Transport
DPW	Department of Public works

It is however only the DHA, SARS, SAPS, the NIA, DOH, and DOA who require office space and who are physically present at the border.



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1.4 CLIENT PROFILE AND FUNDING

The Government of South Africa and the Government of Mozambique have identified that the Lebombo Border Post, a southern border between the two countries, is inefficient in operation and that a design intervention is needed. Negotiations and the drafting of legal frameworks have already commenced with regard to the proposal of a new 'one-stop' border. The option of the total redesign of the entire precinct has been agreed to, and the required land in both countries has already been procured. The Departments from both countries will operate from one building. The initiative will be driven through Cabinet, and the various regulatory processes and procedures will be undergone that are required for the scheme to commence. The facility is commissioned as a joint venture between the two Governments.

Due to time constraints, and cash flow and economic differences between the two countries, a public/ private enterprise is to be established between the two governments and Old Mutual Property. Old Mutual is to provide all capital funding and develop the facility. Upon completion of the project, based upon rentable area, both Governments will pay monthly rentals for agreed periods of time, until it is owned as a dual asset by the Governments of South Africa and Mozambique. Time frames and payment strategies are to be in place prior to the commencement of the project.

1.5 FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The border complex would primarily have to provide the necessary accommodation space for the Customs and Immigration procedures of the two countries to operate effectively. This would include work space that allows for the control of travelers through the building, and the processing of all legal paperwork and passport control.

All Governmental Departments would need the necessary accommodation to be able to carry out their relevant procedures. Office and storage space are the primary requirements and vary according to the needs of each department.

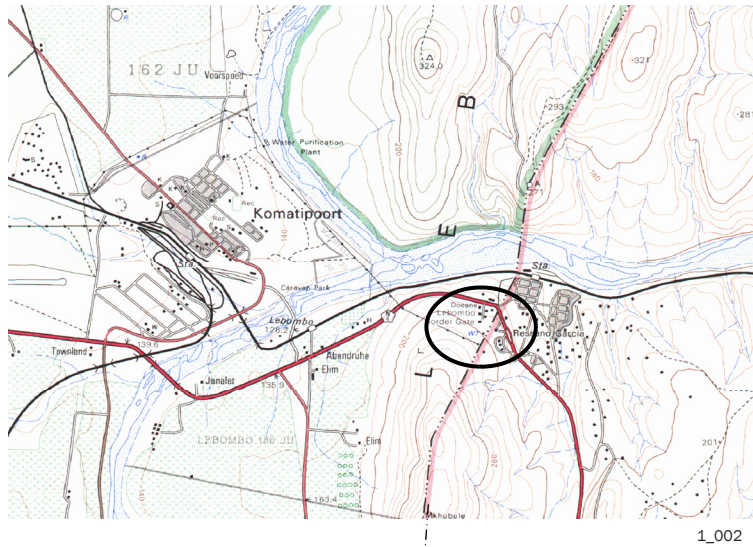
Other requirements include a suitable road design to facilitate traffic flow, sufficient parking, and a transportation terminal on the South African side for taxis, cars and buses. The transportation terminal does not form part of this study.

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SITE SELECTION

The site is situated where the existing Lebombo border post is positioned. It lies along the N4 national toll road, 5km east of the town, Komatipoort. Site is predetermined due to the nature of the project. The new building will fall in the procured site, within range of the border fence. As a 'one-stop' border post, the necessity to alight from your vehicle more than once is alleviated, and the exact placement of the building is to be determined by the physical constraints of the landscape.

A framework would need to be set in place between the two countries regarding the maintenance and use of the site. Although it is a one stop facility, the operation is still handled as it is currently, whereby the South African process falls under South African regulations and the Mozambiquan process falls under Mozambiquan regulations.



SOUTH AFRICA



MOZAMBIQUE

1.7

PRECEDENTS

The study of the operation of existing border posts, those between South Africa and her neighbouring countries, and global examples, will form the main precedent research objectives. Problems at existing ports of entry need to be identified and researched, and flaws that currently undermine control made visible prior to the commencement of the new design.

African border posts that would be included in the investigation include

Beit Bridge	(South Africa and Zimbabwe) and,
Ngwenya	(South Africa and Swaziland)

African examples are to be used for operational and socio-cultural context studies.

Global borders to be investigated include:

Rainbow bridge	(United States and Canada),
Point Roberts	(United States and Canada) and,
Calexico	(United States and Mexico)

Americans have never agreed on the purpose of their borders; are they internationalist bridges or isolationist walls? NAFTA (North American Free Trade agreement), and the realities of illegal immigration make this an unanswerable debate.

There are different Border Post types. Depending on Political and Economic conditions of neighbouring countries, different needs arise as to what a border post is intended to be, and what building type is needed.

Border posts can be open or closed. Some countries have no built structure, others accommodate complex functions. Some have the sole purpose of controlling movement, and to provide a passage of travel, others control the movement of goods and regulate trade. Some are intense military zones, others have no need to provide a defensive front. Some borders go over mountains, others cross rivers and require bridges. Some are friendly borders, others are unwelcoming. Some are now no longer in existence and were pure barriers in the past. Museums at these sites now give insight as to how the function of borders have evolved over time.

What type of border is needed between South Africa and Mozambique? It was once a point of defence that no tourist wished to cross. Today the context has changed and it needs to act as a gateway that allows free movement of vehicles, people and goods.

The search is for an absolute unchangeable truth. The further we move away from the figurative, the closer we come to the truth. A literal and pragmatic approach to architecture ensures that no ambiguity exists and all obscurity is alleviated. A pragmatic approach to architecture is one bearing on human interests and practicality. It functions and is sensible. My approach to architecture is pragmatic. Adolf Loos stated that 'form follows function'. Form must however also provide a 'sense of place', the *genius loci*, as Norberg Schultz explains.³

Function and form create an image, and good architecture is one where the image is remembered. Functionality ensures the relation between building and user, as does form. The movement and flow through a space needs to be a subconscious phenomenon that occurs and decision-making needs to be reduced to the minimum. As in the case of a border post, the user has no decision to make. It is not a building whereby the visitor needs to make a decision as to whether or not to enter and engage with the building. It is one that once approached needs to be entered. It cannot be bypassed. The user is what drives its operation and there needs to exist a relation between building and user.

Any enclosure is defined by a boundary. The boundaries of a built space are known as floor, wall and ceiling. The boundaries of a landscape are structurally similar according to Norberg Schultz, and consist of ground, horizon and sky. This simple structural similarity is of basic importance for the relationship between natural and man-made places. The enclosing properties of a boundary wall are determined by its openings and the character determined by placement of windows doors and thresholds. The character is determined by the material and formal constitution of the place. It is therefore important to ask the following questions, what is the ground on which we walk, how is the sky above our heads, how are the boundaries that define a place. How a boundary is, depends upon its formal articulation, which is again related to the way in which it is built.

In general the boundary, and in particular the wall, makes the spatial structure visible as a continuous extension, direction or rhythm.⁴ At a border post there has to be a break in rhythm due to functional requirements. It is therefore my intention in this discourse to create a transition zone for trade and travel, whereby movement and rhythm across the border is achieved even although there exists a physical boundary. How the building rests on the ground and how it rises towards the sky needs to be considered.

Countries, regions, landscapes, settlements and buildings form a series, with a gradually diminishing scale. A border post is a detail in a larger operation. The contexts of two countries need to merge into one built complex. Symbolisation, visualisation and gathering are processes merging in this building and the meaning in this one place becomes a function of context.

New technology increases the ability to move and communicate, simultaneously eroding the connection to place, and perhaps alters identity and problematises those notions of time and distance with which people traditionally measure and map their world.⁵ Approach to a building is of extreme importance, with this scheme even more so. Road architecture, is one where acceleration and recession of size of a built structure or natural feature, is a function of distance. Upon approach to the border, signage, form, shape and thresholds determine movement through the site, and need to be treated suitably to allow transition to happen as smoothly as possible.

As people are becoming more used to movement, breaks in continuity affect our emotional states when we are in a physical space. Within a span of time, which is being incessantly restructured by advanced technology and industrial redeployment., space is no longer designated simply by a line, but it has become synonymous with the programming of a 'time schedule'.⁵ The process is therefore also of vital importance. Functionality, movement, identification and orientation all affect this time schedule.

To gain an existential foothold, man has to be able to orientate himself and know where he is. He also has to identify himself with the environment and know how he is in a certain place. Lynch's concepts of 'node', 'path', and 'district' denote the basic spatial structures which are the object of human orientation.⁶ This all lends itself to image, and a good environmental image gives a sense of emotional security. Identification is the basis for human sense of belonging and together with orientation, time and functioning can be affected.

All these ideas need to merge together in this scheme, and a precinct created where humans can live and work harmoniously. The architecture must be a part of us and a part of the experience so that the image is embedded in our memories.