

02. Context

Figure 8. Satellite photo highlighting Tshwane municipality and the Pretoria CBD.

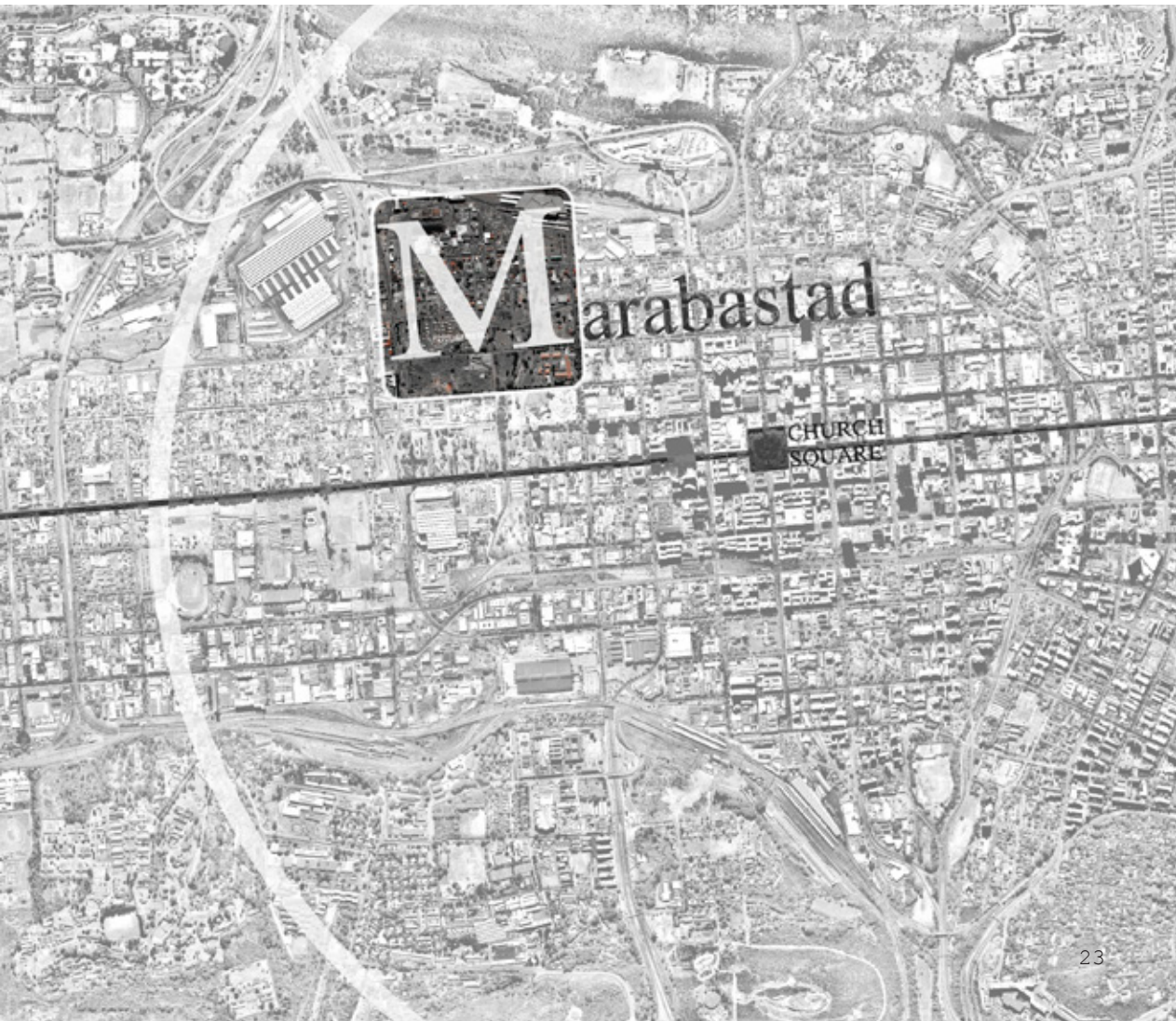
Figure 9. (opposite) Aerial photograph of the Pretoria CBD, highlighting Marabastad.



Background to study area

The area of investigation, Marabastad, is identified through consideration of programme and user. Marabastad acts as a portal to the city for a large community of commuters who use Belle Ombre rail station, various municipal and provincial bus systems and taxis to enter the city. However, Marabastad implies more than a simple place of public transport modal interchange. The area is a vibrant fine grain mixed-use suburb, with an established and expanding residential, commercial and entertainment character.

Historically the Marabastad area has been a neglected corner of the Pretoria inner city, having been allocated to the Black, Asian and Coloured communities under a succession of laws characterized by discrimination in attitude to land tenure. The Community Development Act of 1966 stunted all development in the area for three decades. The result is a suburb degraded into slum conditions, with inadequate services and disintegrated community life (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002: 24). Recent attempts to re-establish Marabastad have been delayed by unresolved land claims following the forced evictions of 1940 to 1953. As nearly all land claims have been finalized, thereby opening the opportunity for development of Marabastad. Municipal projects in the area are underway or reaching a stage of completion. These include an informal trade market and a jazz park amongst others.





BOOM STR
BLOED STR
STRUBEN STR



Figure 11



Figure 12





Figure 10. Aerial photograph of Marabastad. White highlighted areas indicate the highest concentration of informal trade (Kunz, 2007:15).

Marabastad, as a modal interchange of public transport, hosts 18 % of the informal trade of Pretoria. Informal trade is considered as a growing economy and a means of alleviating unemployment (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002:103). Traders in Marabastad are well established and supported by regular customers. Most formal traders consist of members of the local Indian community while informal traders are diverse in origin (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002: 126).

The presence of formal trade along the Boom Street corridor, together with informal trade at the intersection between 11th and Boom Streets support the potential programme. Existing and future commercial activity considered integral to the public bathhouse is foreseen to harmoniously coexist within this environment.



Figure 13. Photograph of Belle Ombre rail station from the east.



Figure 14. Public transport relative to the Pretoria CBD.

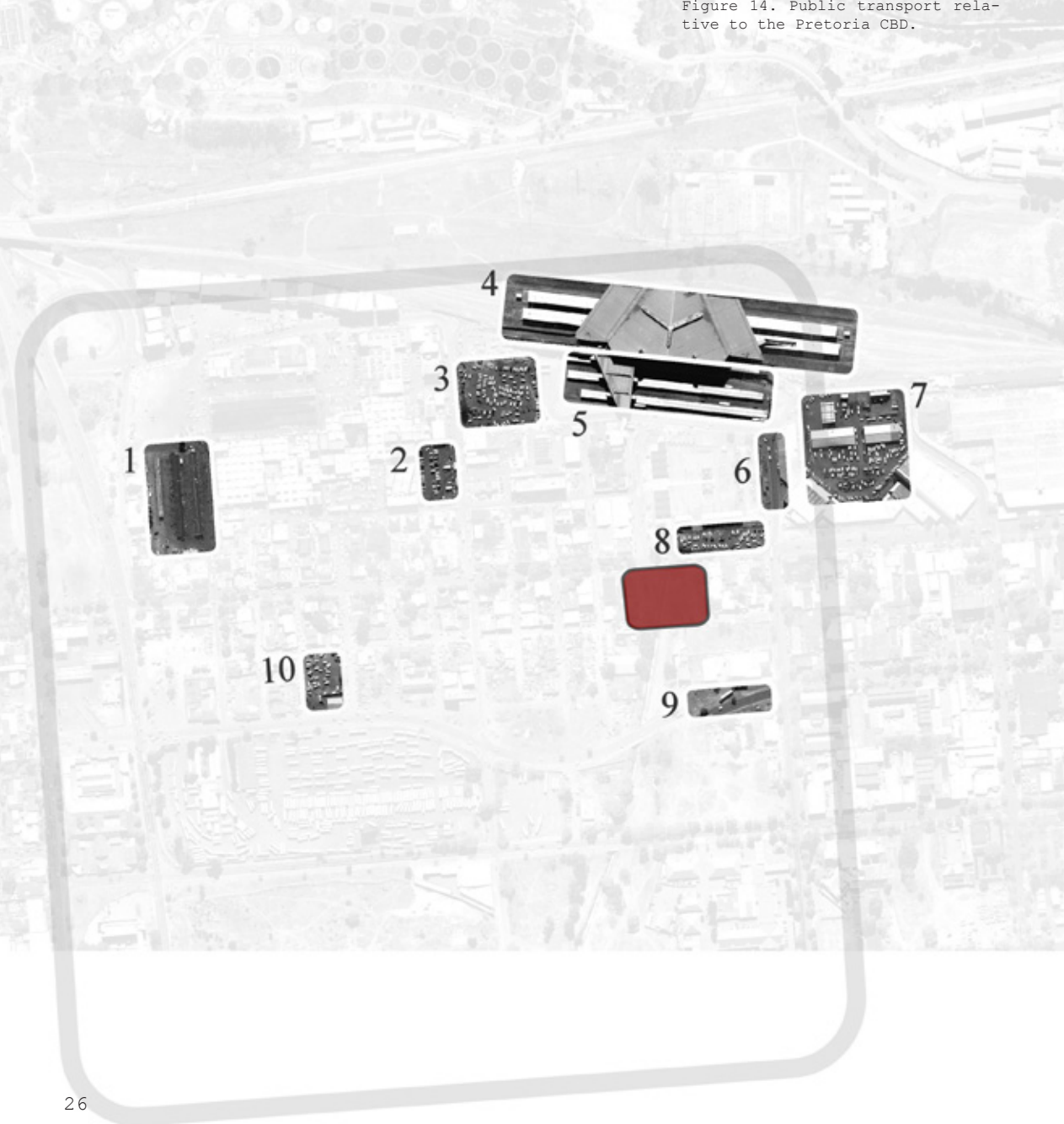




Figure 15.



Figure 16.

The area of Marabastad is reflective of a largely informal, fragmented public transport modal interchange. The Streets of Marabastad serve as the connection between different modes of public transport. The result is a lack of formalized service delivery to commuters and operators of public transport. The superimposition of public transport onto the fabric of Marabastad does provide opportunity and commercial viability to residents and vendors.

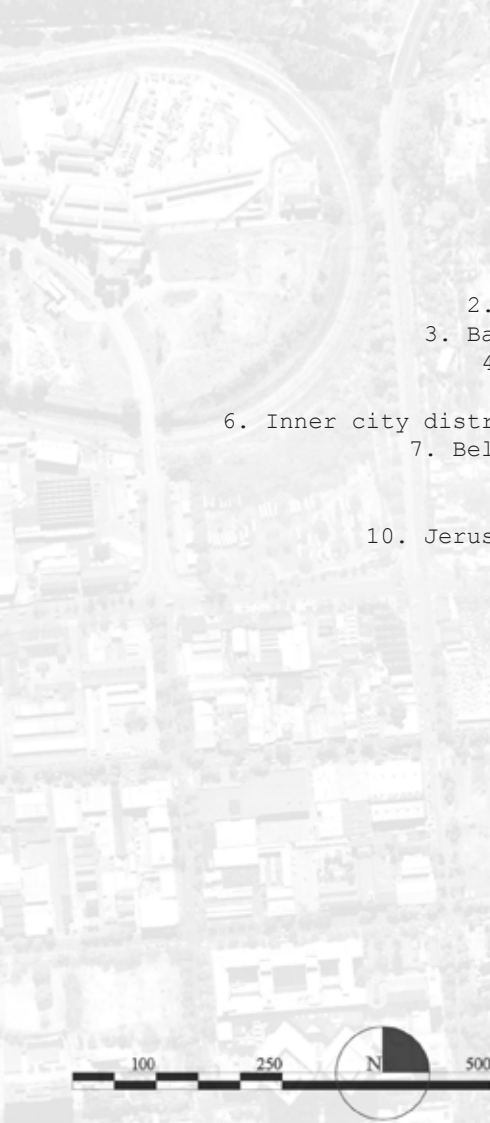


Figure 17. Aerial photograph of the study area highlighting public transport nodes in Marabastad

1. Putco bus rank-	12 000 persons/day
2. 7th St. Informal taxi rank-	500 persons/day
3. Bazaar St. Informal taxi rank-	3 500 persons/day
4. Belle Ombre train station-	24 000 persons/day
5. Belle Ombre bus stop-	9 000 persons/day
6. Inner city distribution bus stop proposed by the city of Tshwane	
7. Belle Ombre Informal taxi rank-	700 persons/day
8. Proposed BRT terminal-	11 150 persons/day
9. Proposed BRT stop-	11 150 persons/day
10. Jerusalem St. Informal taxi rank-	3 500 persons/day

(Aziz tayob Partnership, 2002:138)
(BRT operational plan, 2004:30)



Figure 18. Despite its importance as a public building, the Belle Ombre railway station is isolated from its environment through its inhuman scale. Along with the railway track loop, the station forms the northern border of Marabastad

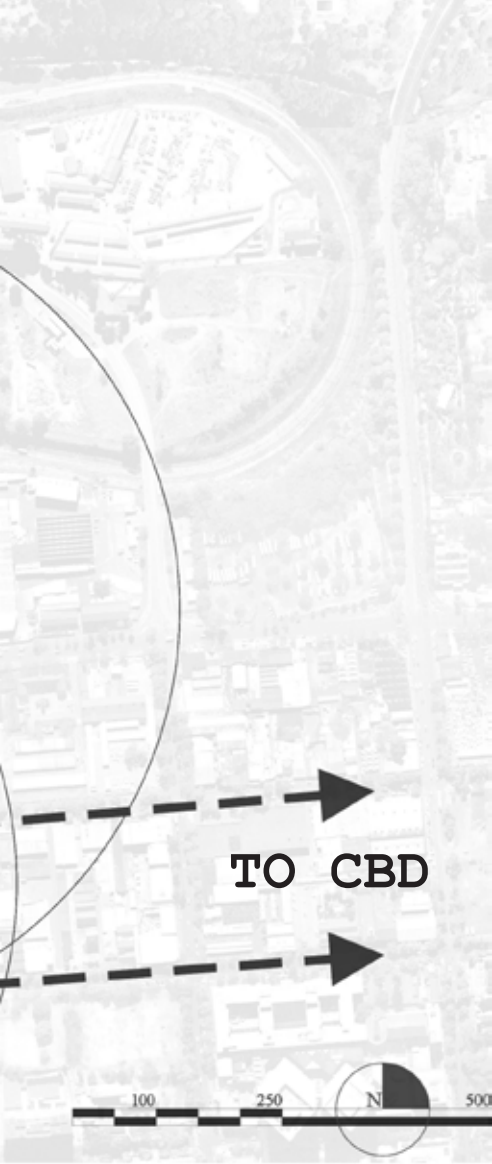


Figure 19. Aerial photograph of the study area illustrating pedestrian movement.

Pedestrian activity at peak hours generally results in an east-west migration of commuters as they pass through Marabastad. The major pedestrian artery through Marabastad is Boom Street, with most commuters moving along Boom Street at some point in their journey. An alternative route to and from the CBD is along the Steenhoven spruit, where pedestrians move into Church Street. Within Marabastad Most public transport nodes fall within a 5 minute walking distance from one another, allowing for comfortable movement from one grain of public transport to another. Contributing to the success of Marabastad as a public transport modal interchange, however fragmented.

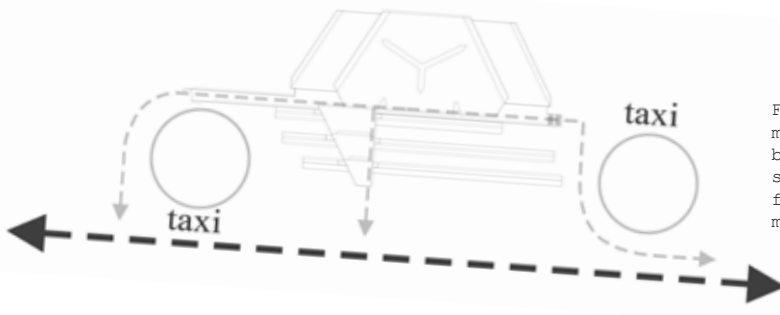


Figure 20. Diagram illustrates movement between modes of public transport based on the layout of Belle Ombre station, also the manner in which informal taxi ranks establish around the movement of people.



Figure 23.





Steenhoven spruit stormwater channel



Figure 24. Aerial photograph illustrating the proposed development of the Steenhoven spruit stormwater channel.

Figure 25. (opposite left)
Channel from Boom St.

Figure 26. (opposite centre)
Channel from Bloed St.

Figure 27. (opposite right)
Channel towards Boom St.

Figure 28. Sketch of envisioned treatment of the Steenhoven spruit.



Steenhoven Spruit, despite its current canalised condition, remains the dominant natural asset of Marabastad. The Marabastad Development Plan, proposed by Aziz Tayob architects, allows for the entire length of the spruit from Princes Park in the south to Boom Street in the north to be developed into a pedestrian green corridor. Potential extension beyond the Belle Ombre station north to the Apies River is envisioned, to be developed into a public green belt to form part of the city-wide green and open space network. The Steenhoven Spruit redevelopment could house a variety of regular activities, such as a permanent or weekly African Arts and Crafts market. The future growth of Marabastad as tourist attraction will indicate if this is feasible (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002: 232). Currently the channel terminates at Boom Street, from where it runs underneath an electrical substation and Belle Ombre station (fig.27). The proposed site intends to celebrate this termination of the Steenhoven spruit through a meaningful use of water.

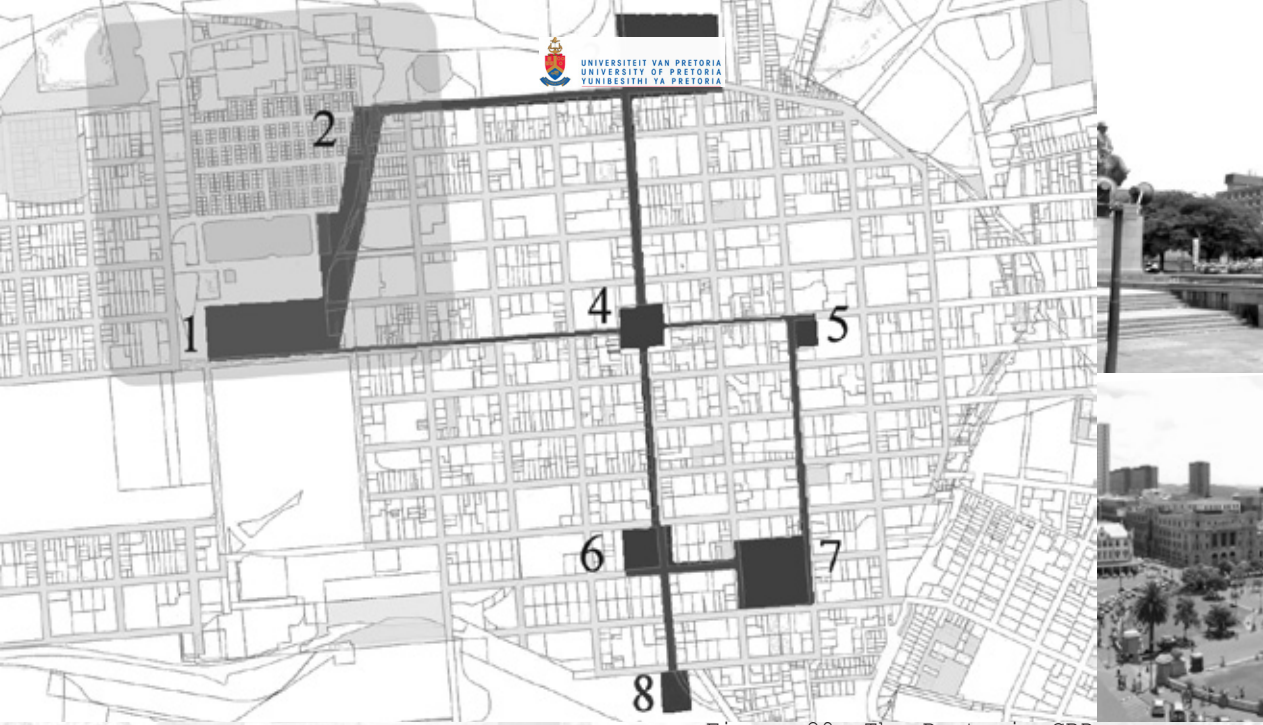


Figure 29. The Pretoria CBD open and green space network.

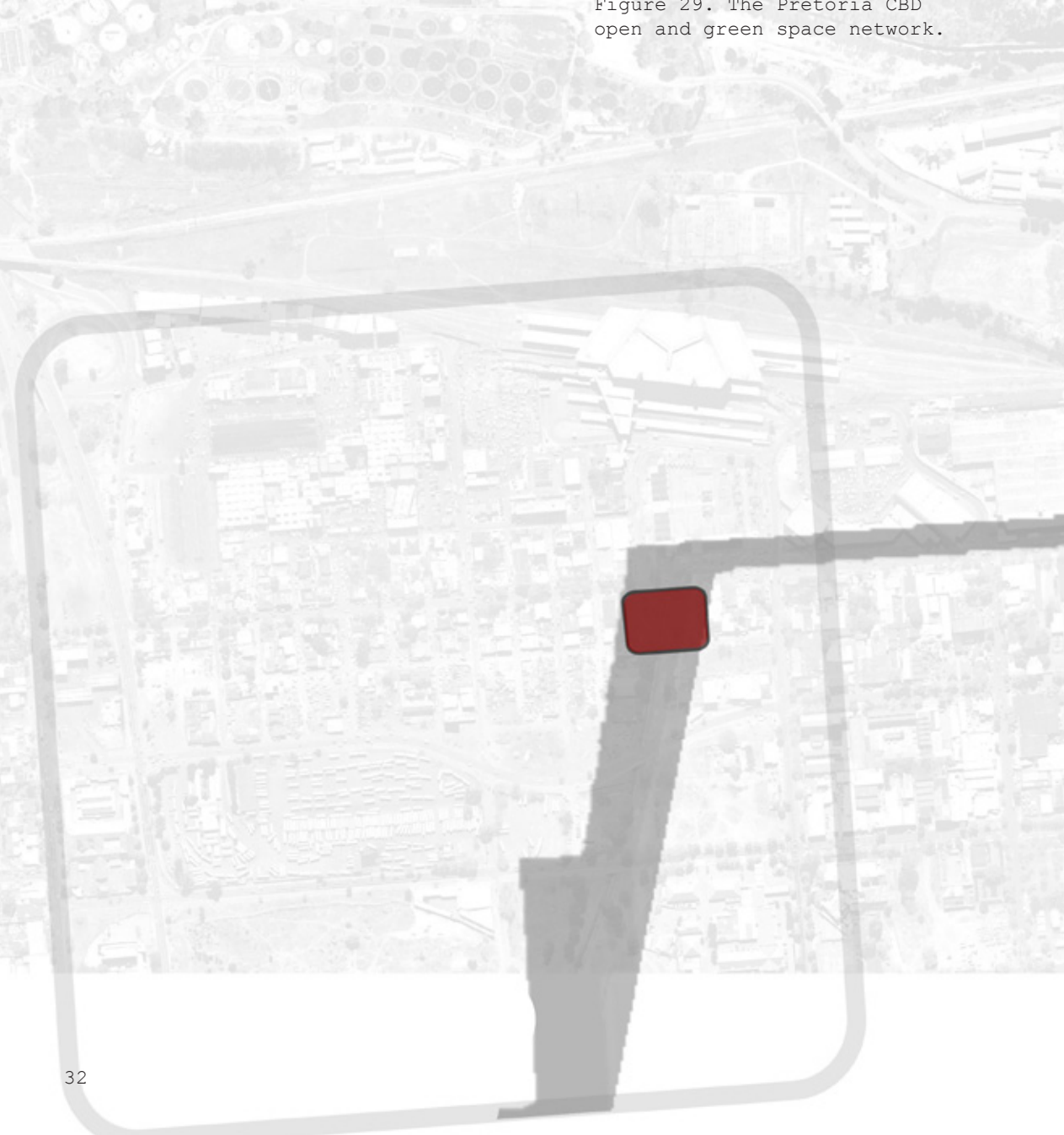


Figure 30. Pretorius square



Figure 31. Church square



Figure 32. The open and green space network relative to Marabastad and site.

Steenhoven spruit and its floodplains could be developed as parkland, intended support pedestrian routes within Marabastad. Within this park a play field (soccer field), shallow lake (duck pond) in the portion flanked by the housing developments, surrounded by lawns, for recreation of the residential population and trees along the banks to provide shaded pathways are proposed (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002:207). Figure 29. illustrates the relationship between Marabastad and the Pretoria CBD through existing and proposed open and green space network. The successful formalization of green space in Marabastad could serve as connection between Marabastad and the Pretoria CBD.

Figure 29. (opposite top left)
Legend:

- 1. Heroes acre
- 2. Formalized Steenhoven spruit park
- 3. National zoological gardens
- 4. Church square
- 5. Lillian Ngoya square
- 6. Pretorius square
- 7. Burgers park
- 8 Pretoria station square



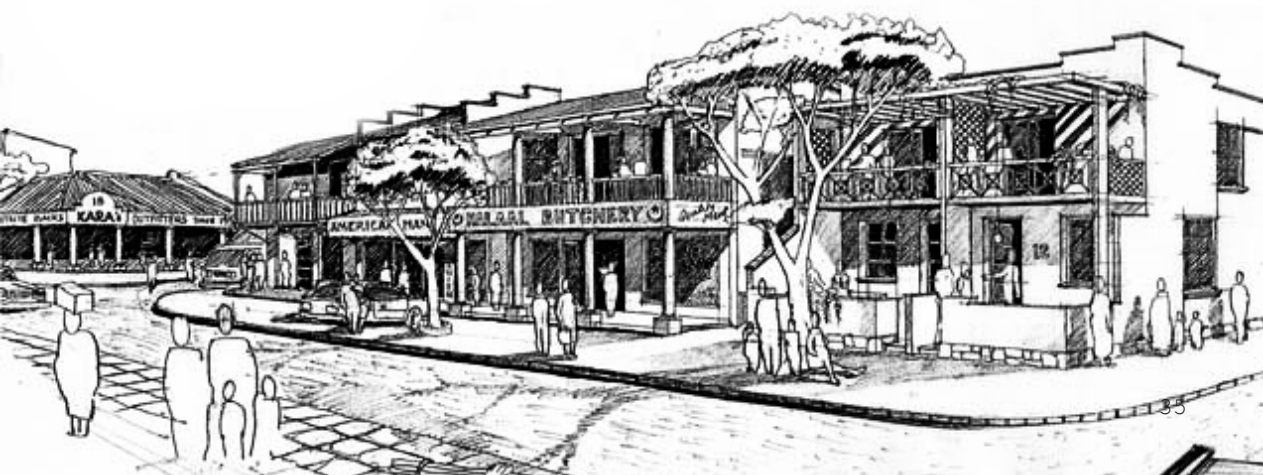


Figure 33. The proposed residential densification of Marabastad.

Figure 34. (opposite)
Sketch of proposed development of Marabastad

Figure 35. (bottom)
Sketch of proposed development of Marabastad

The proposed Housing Development area within Marabastad (bordered by Seventh Street, Struben Street, D F Malan Drive East and the Cemetery) has the advantage of an inner-city location, close to places of employment. The housing development area permits establishment of several landparcels, to promote variety in type, appearance and spatial configuration of housing developments. Subsidised housing should be developed in the form of larger projects, variety should still be accommodated in the scheme to acknowledge Marabastad's ordering grids and fine-grained character. The area marked for residential development is seen as a transition zone between the CBD and Marabastad. It extends the existing housing belt of Schubart Park and Kruger Park into the Marabastad area, albeit on a different scale (Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002:).





The area where Boom Street crosses Steenhoven spruit is a rectangular public open space, with edges defined by existing building fabric typical to Marabastad (Figure 37).

"This space attains a potentially charming character through the stream crossing it and the large established trees in the space. Until the area was cleaned up, this was a favoured hawking spot, given the large volumes of pedestrian traffic crossing the space from the station en route to the city centre"

-(Aziz Tayob Partnership, 2002: 244).

Photographs of landmarks and places relevant to the chosen site.

1. Mixed-use buildings in Boom Street, Empire Theatre. Figure 37.
2. Steenhoven Spruit stormwater channel. Figure 38.
3. Informally appropriated land west of site. Figure 39.
4. Proposed BRT stop. Figure 40.
5. Boom St. with mixed-use buildings. Figure 41.
6. 11th St. with mixed-use buildings. Figure 42.
7. Electrical substation south of Belle Ombre train station. Figure 43.
8. Belle Ombre train station. Figure 44.
9. New informal trade market in 11th St. Figure 45.

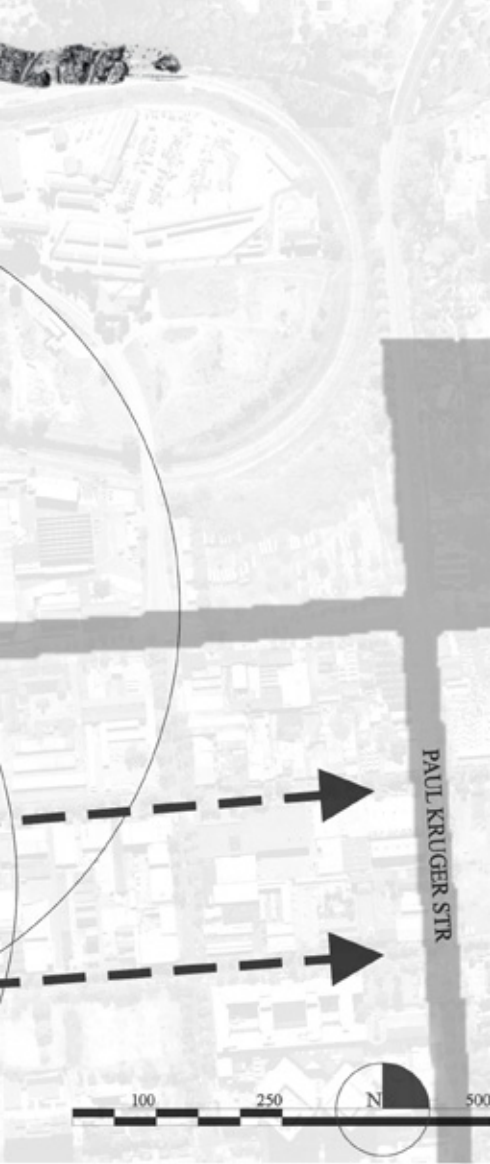


Figure 36. Collage illustrating the chosen site relative to context.

The collages conceptually and experientially explore the relationship between people who use Marabastad differently, and the people to Marabastad itself. Commuters, residents taxi drivers and vendors are positioned in relation to one another and relative to Marabastad. The result is a fragmented use of the area, with little common ground between people. The social intent of the proposed programme is to provide a place of neutrality. This place is defined as being both physical, experiential and part of the ritual use of Marabastad.

The proposed intervention intersects the place and people within the context of Marabastad. The intended facility provides an opportunity to experientially and socially integrate Marabastad to the city. The site is the intersection between the pedestrian active Boom Street and the recreational atmosphere of the Steenhoven channel, and its proposed surrounding park. The channel represents the traditional eastern edge of Marabastad. The project positions itself in-between situations, with programme becoming integrator.



Proposal

On an urban scale, the project aims to initiate programme in the Steenhoven spruit corridor through a provision of infrastructure in the proposed act of altering the channel cross section as suggested by the Marabastad integrated urban design framework. This process follows strategies proposed by Alex Wall, of thickening, folding and providing for non-programmed use of and on the urban surface. These strategies allow for the manipulated urban surface to act as an instrument for unfolding new urban realities (Wall, 1999:245). Thickening of the surface allows for the urban surface to be serviced from below, increasing potential uses. Folding exposes greater surface area, while in the case of the proposed design, the natural water body is made accessible. By allowing for and anticipating nonprogrammed use, the surface can be appropriated by the public, enabling a diverse and flexible range of uses (Wall, 1999:245). The layering of infrastructure and natural water provides an introduction to the bathhouse, where the use of and interaction with water through service provision intensifies. This densification of possibility takes place on the proposed site, the crossing between pedestrian movement along Boom Street, and the natural water body, Steenhoven spruit.




Figure 48. (left)
Site on digital collage

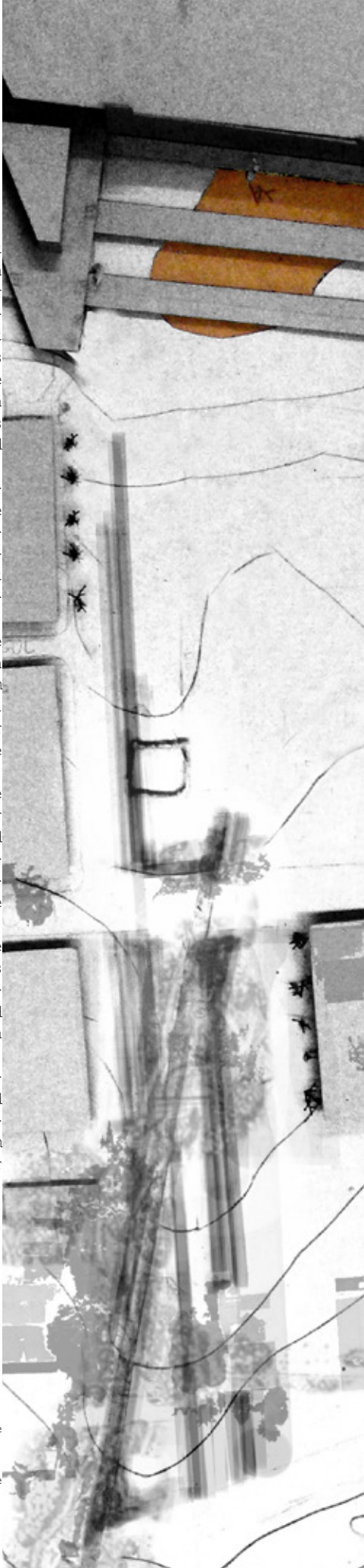


Figure 49. (right)
Manipulation of ground plane

Complimentary to the manipulation of the channel, a conceptual 'field' of shelter is superimposed onto the site. This system intends to act as translation between the park and the urban. By cutting away from, thickening and thinning the conceptual shelter based on the needs of programme, the bathhouse form is revealed. The intent of Heidegger is present, where he defines architecture as making places, indeed as bringing out that which is already there (Higgot et al, 2000:14).

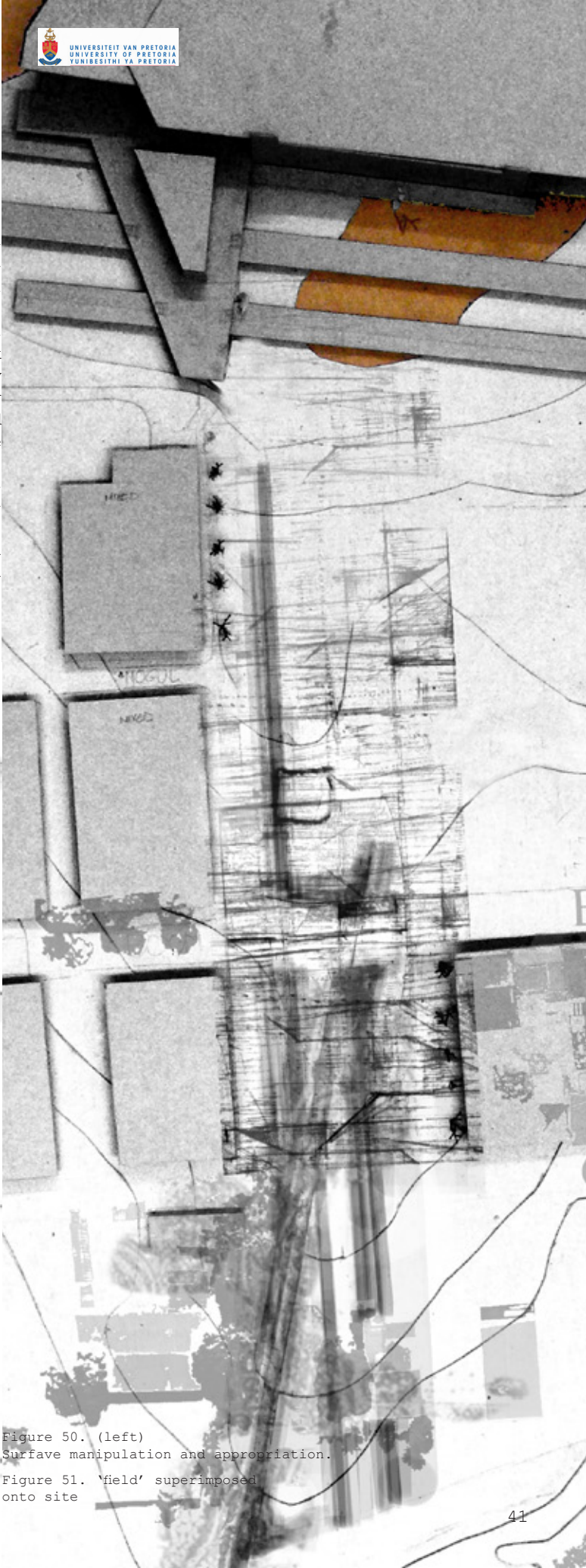
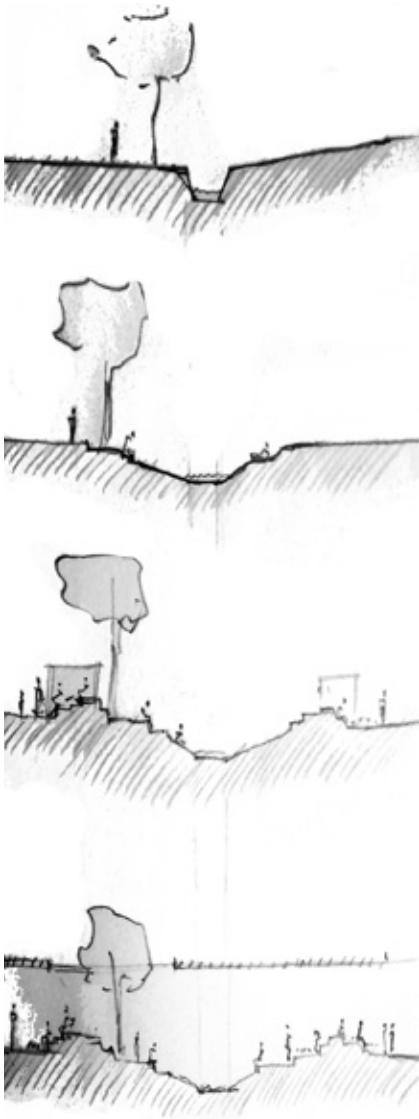


Figure 50. (left)
Surface manipulation and appropriation.

Figure 51. 'field' superimposed
onto site