



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

# 1. introduction



10%

of the world's population  
lived in cities in 1900

50%

live in cities today

75%

is an estimate for the  
year 2050

## 1. introduction

### 1.1\_background

Cities have always had a magnetic pull. For over 5000 years people have been streaming into cities in the hope of finding freedom and a better future (Nowak, 2001: 6).

In recent years, cities all over the world have been growing rapidly due to increasing populations and almost aimlessly stretching the edge or periphery of the city. Because urban populations continue to decentralise, businesses, amenities and heavy industries have followed in this pattern of moving to new suburbs. As a result of these city growth patterns the public amenities and open space in the inner city are now in severe decline and disinvestment (Berger 2006: 205).

As the cities grew in population, so did the area that the city covered. Cities grew horizontally, rather than increasing the density of the well established core of the city. This process of horizontal growth in the city is called 'urban sprawl'. The energy that was once synonymous with urban environments has moved with the residents and businesses to the periphery of the city, leaving many of the buildings in the inner city to become disused and derelict.

Waste Landscapes emerge out of two primary processes: first, from rapid horizontal urbanisation or urban sprawl, and second, by the de-industrialisation of older city areas (the city core) and the rapid urbanization of newer city areas (the periphery). De-industrialisation is a result of improved technology and industrial growth (Berger 2006: 200). Sadly, these waste landscapes are an indicator of urbanisation and healthy economic urban growth, to the detriment of the old urban city core (Berger 2006: 203).

All buildings, once handed over by the builders to the client, have three possible fates, namely to remain unchanged, to be altered or to be demolished (Scott, 2008: 1). The idea of alteration / adaptation of a building offers an alternative to preservation or demolition. It becomes an act of transition or translation, from past into present, with logically also a consideration for the future of the host building (Scott, 2008: 11). Industrial buildings are especially well suited for adaptive reuse due to their large open spaces.

Pretoria is no exception to these waste landscapes in and around the inner city as a result of urban growth patterns with an increasing low-income population that cannot afford to stay close to the city, resulting in informal settlements on the periphery of the city in areas such as Atteridgeville, Mamelodi and Soshanguve.

Improved technology and an increase in the number of consumers resulted in production facilities in the industrial area west of Pretoria CBD moving to newer industrial buildings with newer technology and a bigger capacity to produce in areas such as Rosslyn, Silverton and Centurion.

In these post-industrial sites, the current buildings were designed with function as main form-giving factor. Because these buildings are not used and offer big open 'work spaces', they are well suited to be reprogrammed with "light" and "clean" industries. These industries have a limited impact on the environment during the production process. Examples of these are Clothing Manufacturing, Furniture Manufacturing, Food Production, consumer electronics and household items.

Policies from the Department of Trade and Industry suggest limiting international imports and increasing local procurement of products, as well as supporting technology upgrading and skills development in the local industry, especially in the Clothing and Textile Industry which have been on a downward path in the long run (Breitenbach, 2007: 43).

Although Pretoria West is laid out on the same infrastructural grid as Pretoria Central, there is a much lower density of buildings. Current building stock is built according to a production typology. The vision for the area is to motivate production of goods through clean industries and giving smaller manufacturers the opportunity to develop their products. The reality is that South African export markets are threatened by international trade agreements, especially with countries in the Far East (Breitenbach, 2007: 36).

## 1.2\_problem statement

As the city grows and the investment energy is focused on new developments in newer parts of the city, the historic centre of the city becomes under-used and under-utilised.

How can one retain, preserve and improve buildings in these 'forgotten' historic areas in a way that will revitalise the surrounding urban fabric?

Industrial manufacturers have moved to new warehouses which can facilitate a higher running capacity to cope with growing populations. The industrial area in Pretoria West is an example of this. The Pretoria West Power Station, for example, is currently running at full capacity but only contributes approximately 3% of the power for the City of Tshwane. To upgrade the Pretoria West Power Station to

serve current needs with new technology is not economically viable and demolishing it is too expensive (Masut, 2010). The inevitable future of the power station is that it will be decommissioned within the next ten years. If this 'landmark' in the west becomes derelict, businesses around it will follow, which will have a negative effect on the urban quality of that area.

### 1.3\_project aims: [RE]dress

The definition of redress is the act of correcting an error, the making right, reformation, correction, to put something in order again. The aim is to implement this process of redress on different scales, by identifying the problems or errors, correcting them through new interventions and translating them from a disused problem state into a functional vibrant state.

On an urban scale (Pretoria West) and site scale (Pretoria West Power Station), an Urban Framework was developed to address the problems of the area and offer guidelines for the re-development of the area.

On the intervention scale the project looks at the existing buildings, their significance and how they can be redressed to accommodate the new program.

The spaces in and around the existing buildings at the Pretoria West Power Station offer a unique, imposing character, a quality that should be retained and enhanced with new functions. These dilapidated settings also have a picturesque quality and fashion photographers have used the charm of these settings to film their models in. The contrast between the existing buildings and the models puts emphasis on the

models' beauty, their outfits and how they move through the space

The metaphor of the process of re-dressing the district, site and buildings, as well as the juxtapositioning of old industrial buildings and new contemporary additions, informed the program: a facility for the fashion industry with an adaptable space which can be used for events like fashion shows and work spaces for fashion designers and a production house where they can manufacture their clothing. This would be just one of many new programs in the Pretoria West area which will offer new opportunities to residents and have a positive effect on land values in the area.

For Pretoria-based fashion designers to manufacture their designs, they need to outsource the process to Clothing Manufacturers in either Johannesburg or Cape Town, where there is a more stable textile industry (Meijering, 2010). Local designers would benefit if there were a facility in Pretoria where the manufacturing process could take place.

### 1.4\_design problem

To work with an existing building offers an array of challenges. The aim is to add a new layer onto, into and over the existing buildings by implementing a new program into them. The existing building should be redressed to be able to accommodate the new functions.

In order to redress the new programs, the problems usually associated with it need to be identified and addressed.

## 1.5\_research methodology

The theoretical component of the study investigates urban growth patterns: what causes a city to grow and the results of rapid urbanisation. The study investigates the possibility to adaptively re-use an existing building as an alternative to demolition or restoration. The picturesque quality of industrial areas that fall in a state of disuse called for an investigation of fashion photography and the parallels between the fashion industry and architecture.

Previous examples of projects where an existing buildings are adapted are analysed in order to determine the approach to working with existing buildings, as well as the way in which the buildings handle the threshold from public to private spaces. The study also investigates the effect these buildings had on their surrounding context.

Site visits to the Pretoria West Power Station and surrounding area served as the informant about the character of the spaces in and around the buildings on the power station site. This unique sublime character informed the intuitive decision to create a facility for the fashion industry in the existing buildings.

Personal interviews with fashion designers gave more insight into the fashion industry in South Africa, as well as the needs of local fashion designers. Visits to various clothing manufacturers informed the author of the clothing manufacturing process and their part in the creation of a fashion brand.

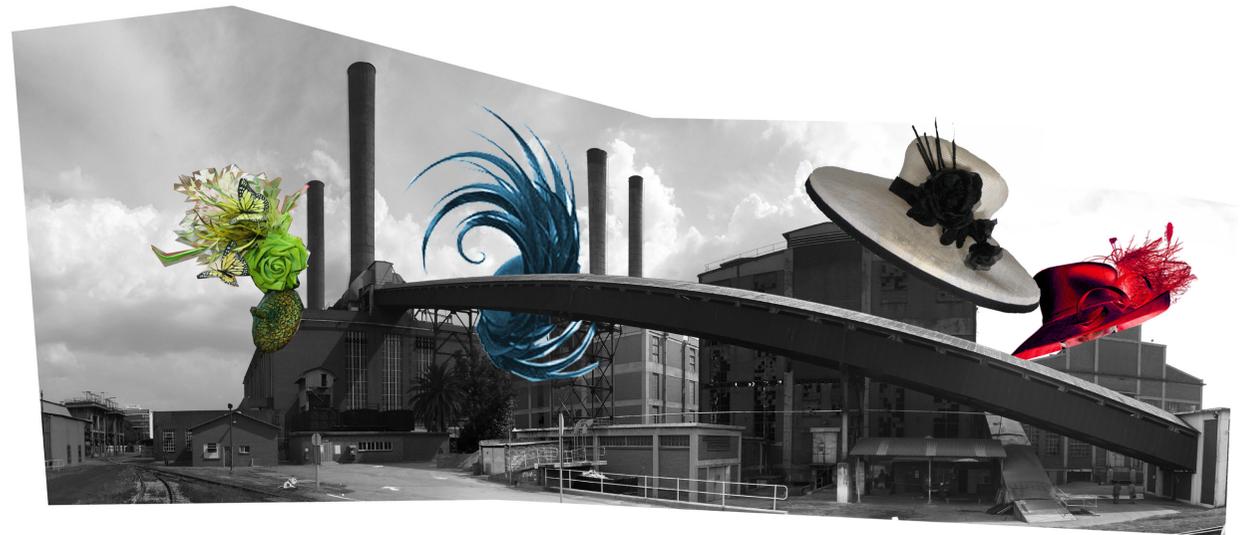


Fig 1.1 [RE]dress