

CHAPTER 03

URBAN CONTEXT

Setting is the architecture around which a story revolves

- Gaston Bachelard (1964) -

SITE INTRODUCTION

Marabastad, situated to the north-west of Pretoria's CBD, has been identified as part of the Inner City Development and Regeneration Strategy. Its location is ideal in relation to the CBD and connects it to areas on the fringe of the city. Marabastad is one of the main public transport hubs in Pretoria and the precinct is activated by users who travel to and from the city on a daily basis for economic opportunities.

The area of Marabastad is defined by the railway to the north, Johannes Ramokhoase Street to the south, Steenhovenspruit to the east and E'skia Mphahlele Street to the west. These borders define the area of Marabastad. The large vacant land to the south and industrial area to the south-east, remnants of historic events and apartheid city planning, give Marabastad a sense of autonomy and isolate it from the CBD.

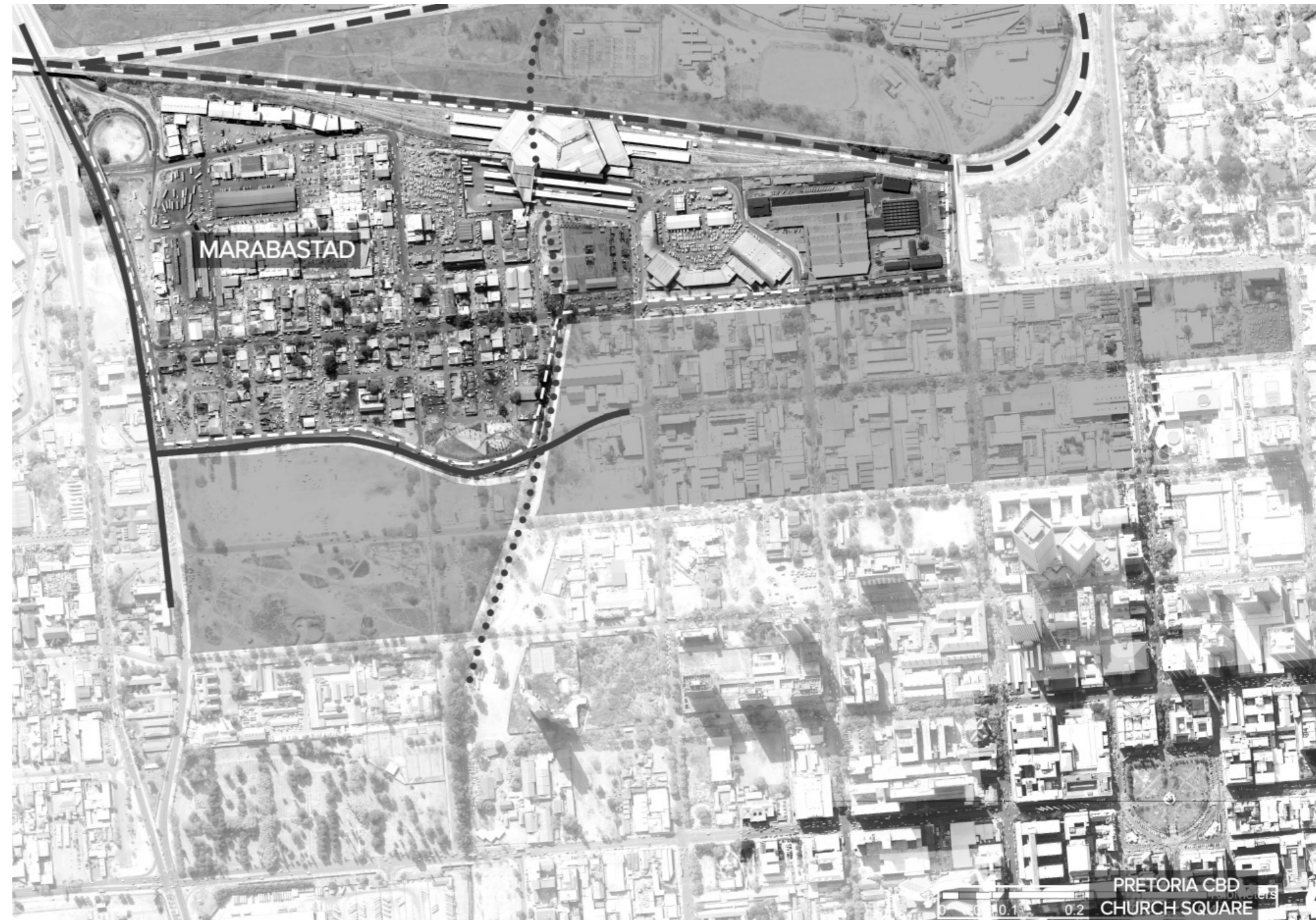


Figure 3.1 Aerial showing physical barriers isolating Marabastad from Pretoria CBD (Author)

The historical fine grain of the original grid still exists in the southern part of Marabastad and, although highly active and lively, some of the structures have become dilapidated over the years due to a lack of maintenance. The fine grain of the original built fabric is pedestrian friendly and has resulted in active street edges that are populated by formal and informal traders. The larger retail and public transport facilities are situated in the northern part of Marabastad and bring a significant change in scale in relation to the original urban fabric. Much of the original fabric is still intact in Boom Street, which gives a clear sense of what a typical street section of Marabastad looks like (discussed in Chapter 7 *On Site*).

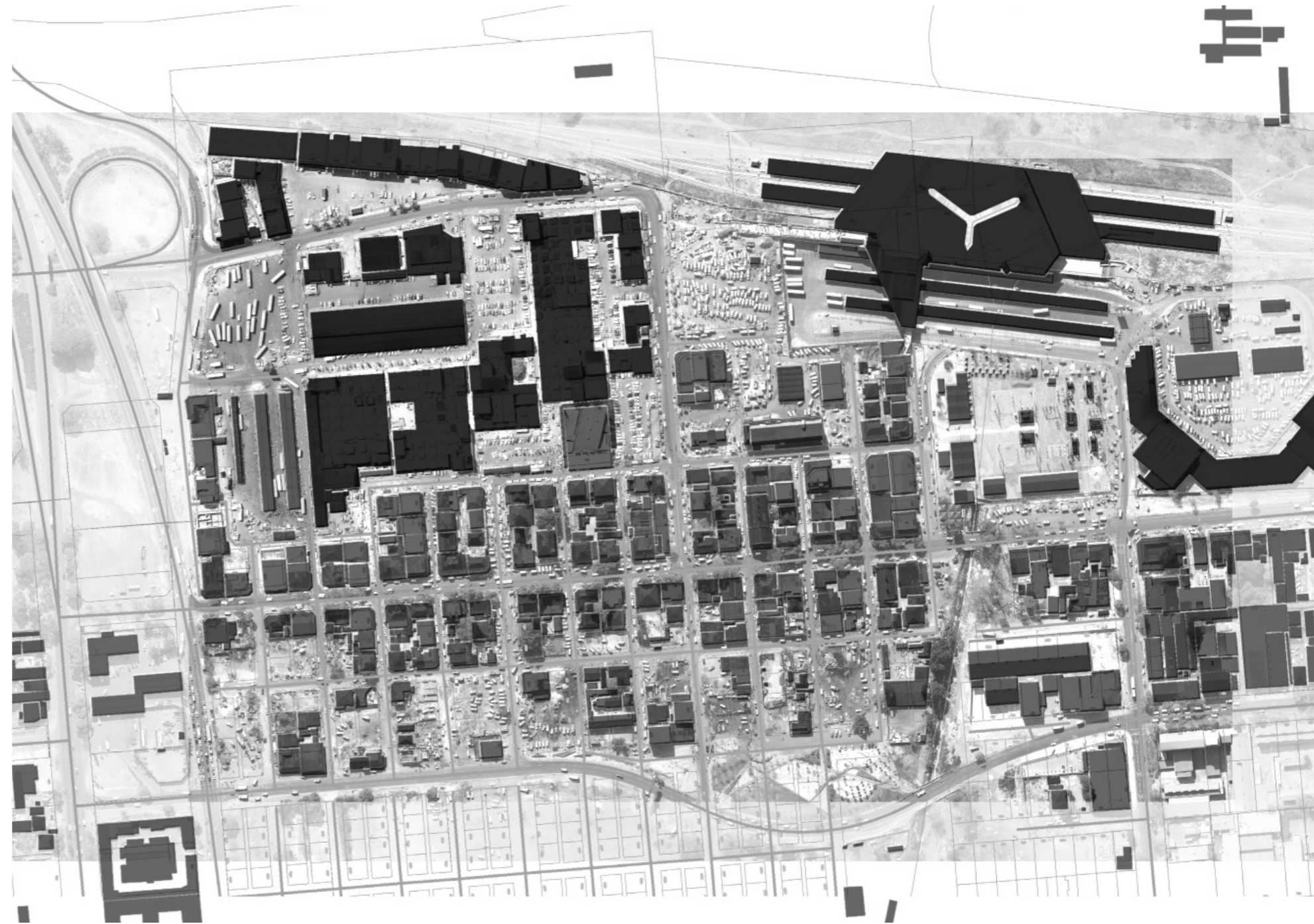


Figure 3.2 Aerial showing original fine grain of Marabastad in relation to larger retail and transport facilities (Author)

After a number of site visits, it was clear that the precinct of Marabastad is dominated by transport and retail activities, with high activity in the morning when people come into the city and in the late afternoon at the end of the working day. Due to the many people moving through Marabastad, formal and informal trade does well. Yet, these two dominating systems give Marabastad a transitory characteristic with little to no activity at night.

The following illustrates the number of people coming through Marabastad on a daily basis (Aziz Tayob Partnership 2002:138).

	persons/day
1. Belle Ombre train station	12 000
2. 7th St. Informal taxi-rank	3 500
3. Belle Ombre bus stop	9 000
4. Belle Ombre informal taxi rank	700
5 Proposed BRT terminal	11 150
6. Jerusalem St. Informal taxi rank	3 500
7. Putco bus rank	12 000

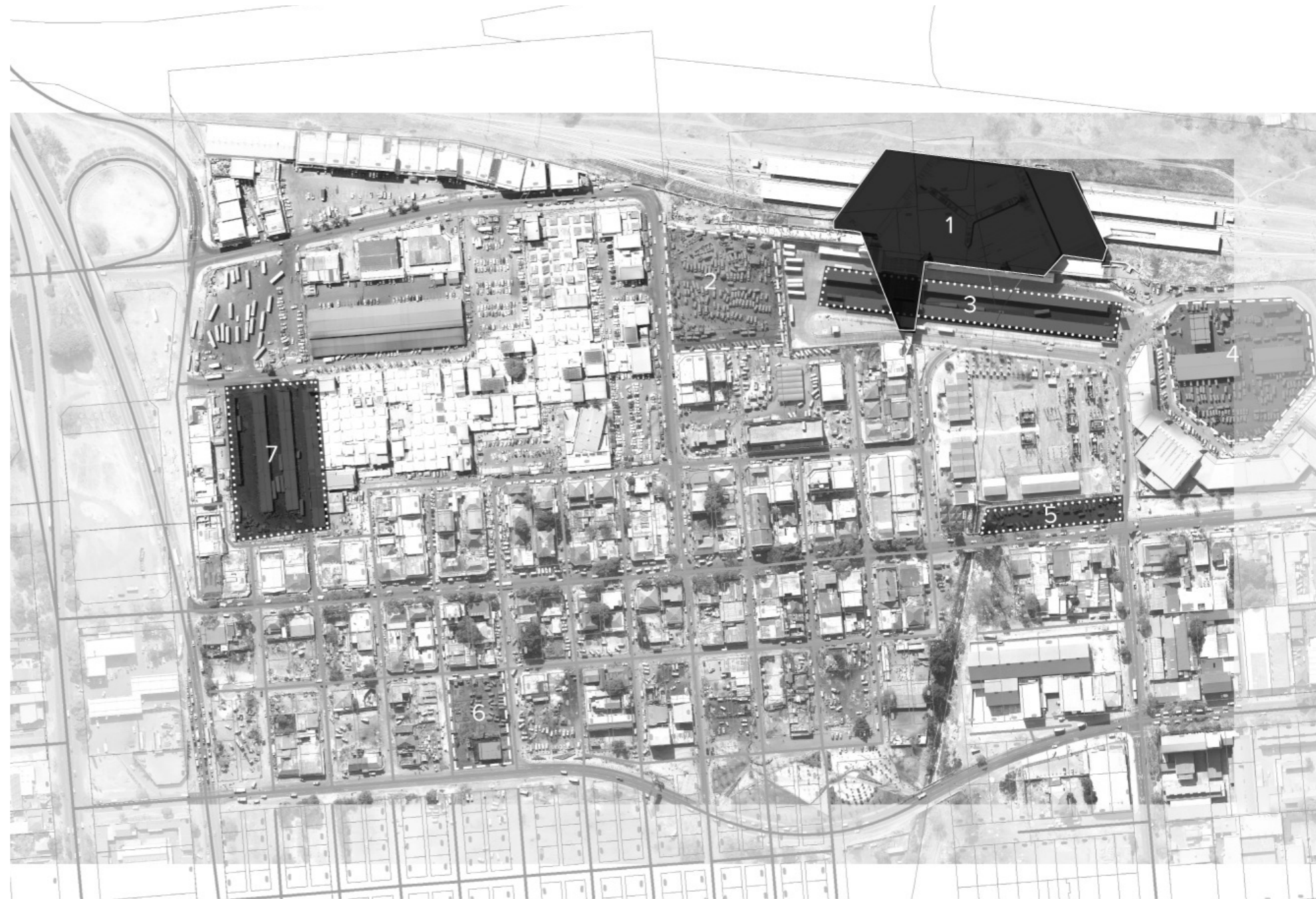


Figure 3.3 Aerial showing transport nodes (Author)

GROUP FRAMEWORK PROGRAMMATIC MAPPING

As mentioned in Chapter 01, an urban group was formed with two fellow students working in Marabastad. An extensive mapping exercise was done, through research and observations during a number of site visits.

Figure 3.4 illustrates the mapping of existing activities in our focus area. The image illustrates the networks that run through Marabastad. From this graphic it is also clear that retail and transport are the two dominating networks.

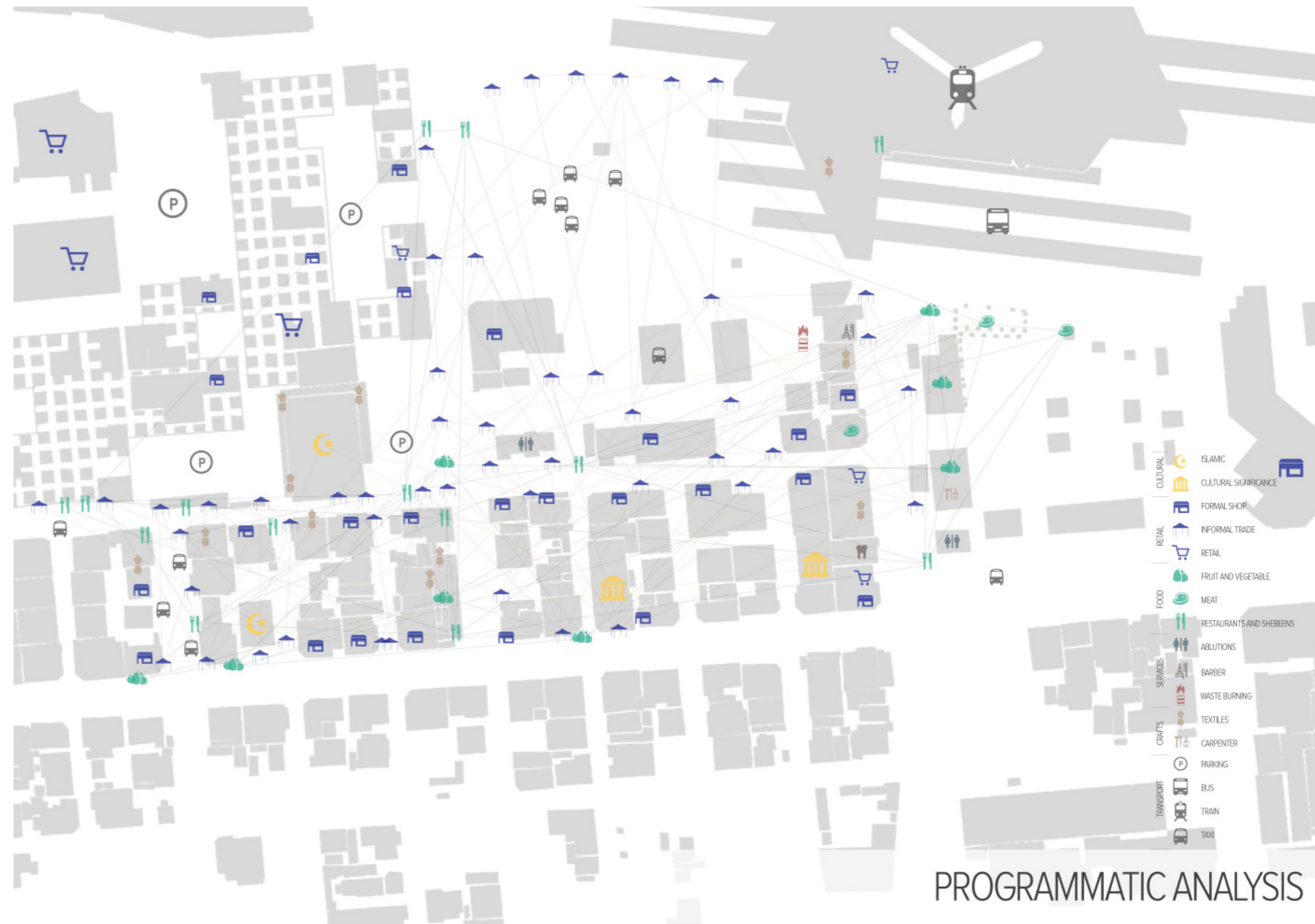


Figure 3.4 Programmatic analysis (Urban Framework Group).

GROUP FRAMEWORK SPATIAL MAPPING

Figure 3.5 illustrate the resultant spatial qualities perceived as negative or positive space. This was based on certain unstructured interviews during site visits. Some of these resultant spaces, although very active, were dominated by vehicular traffic and does not allow for pedestrian movement.

Vehicular movement should be limited and controlled to create friendlier, walkable cities and therefore the focus should be placed on the space and place making of the pedestrian (City of Tshwane, 2012).



SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Figure 3.5 Spatial analysis (Urban Framework Group).

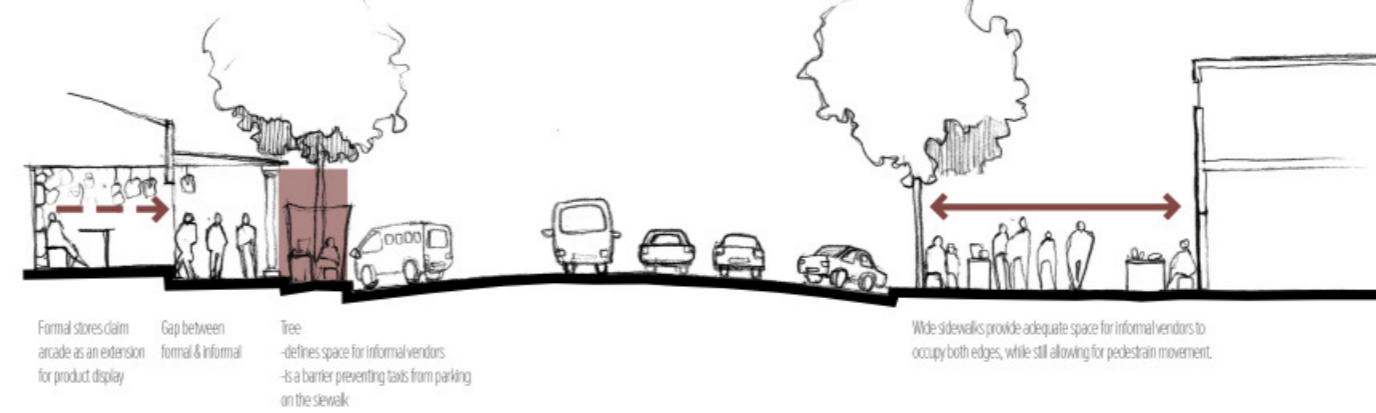
**GROUP FRAMEWORK
SECTIONAL ANALYSIS**

Figure 3.6 is a sectional investigation of Marabastad to illustrate how space is used and occupied in Marabastad. There is a well-established relationship between the formal and the informal traders as they occupy the streets throughout Marabastad. Formal traders often encourage informal traders to buy and sell their goods.

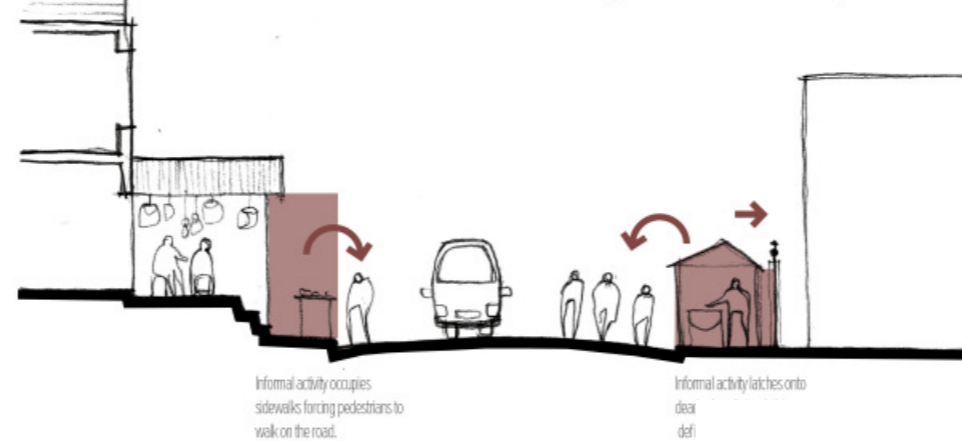
This however has great spatial implications, as the sidewalk intended for people moving through Marabastad is now congested with informal traders. This results in forcing pedestrian to walk in the road, often carrying heavy vehicular traffic.

As an Urban Framework Group, we propose to embrace this informality and therefore our proposals should integrate the informal traders. Therefore spatial consideration of the informal should be acknowledged and applied in our design proposals.

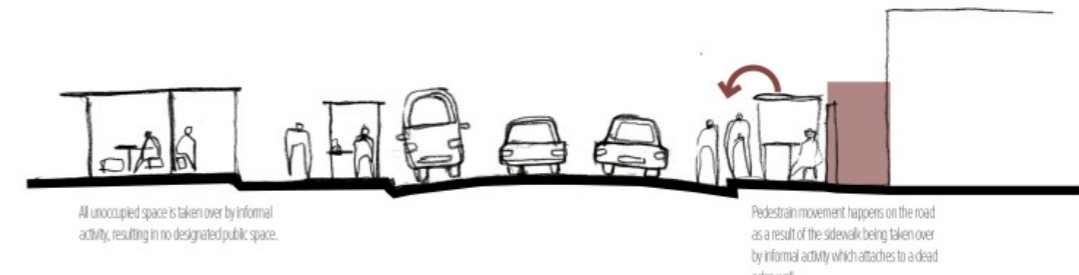
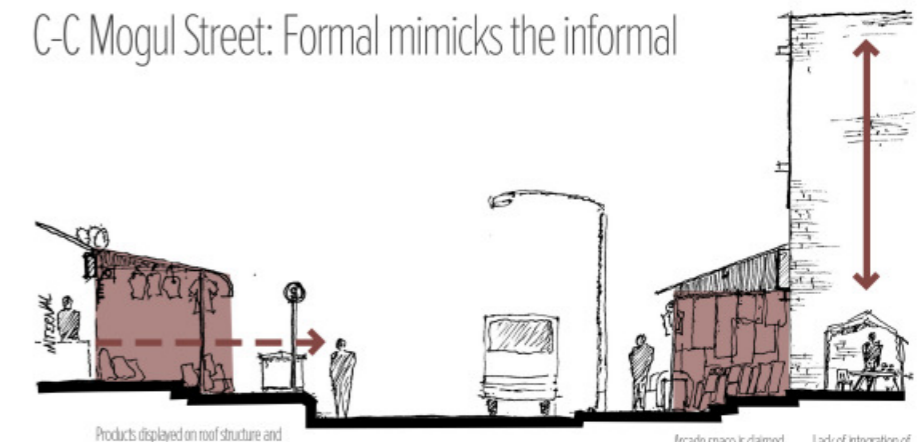
A-A Boom Street: Spatial adaptation



B-B Jerusalem Street: Sidewalks invaded by informal activity



C-C Mogul Street: Formal mimicks the informal



11th Street (East): Lack of infrastructure for informal vendors

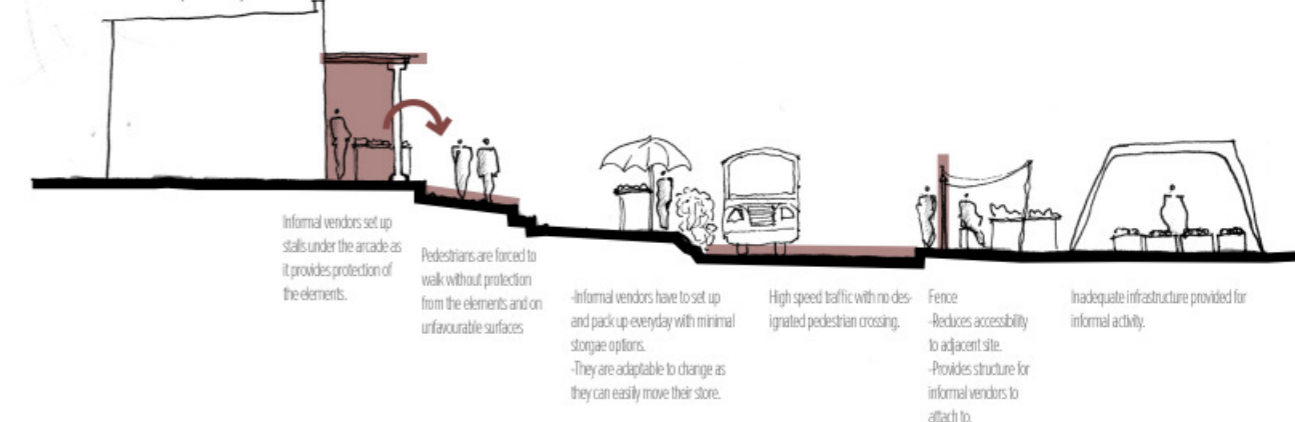


Figure 3.6 Sectional investigation of various streets, showing how space is used and altered to accommodate the needs of the inhabitants of Marabastad (Urban Framework Group).

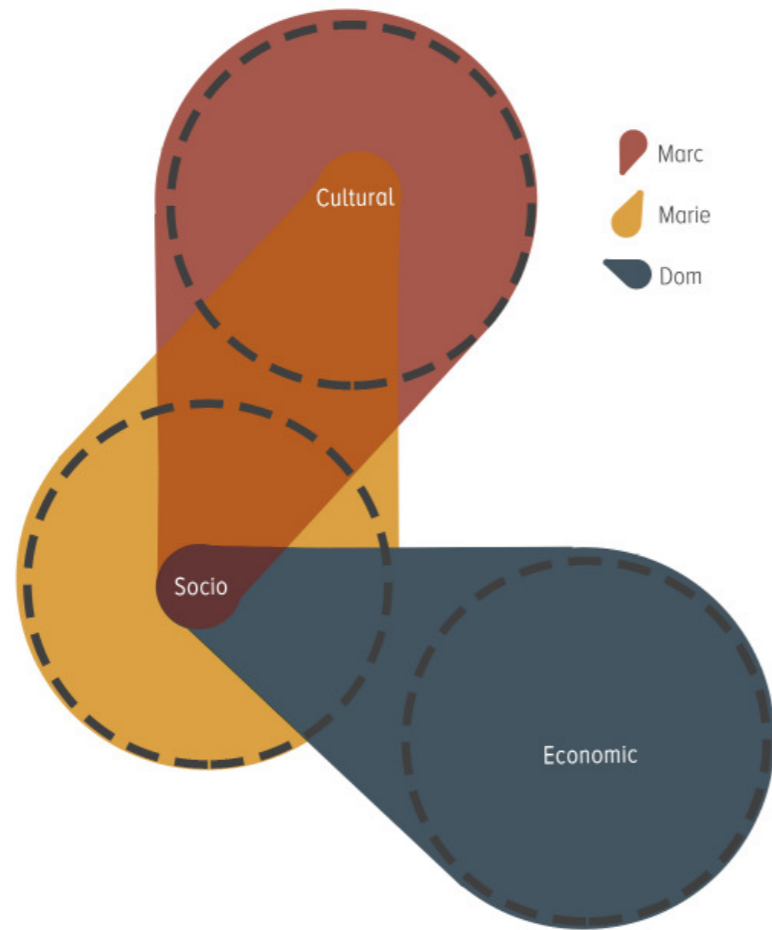


Figure 3.7 Issues identified in our Urban Framework Group addressed in individual design projects (Urban Framework Group).

GROUP FRAMEWORK INTENTIONS

The Urban Framework Group acknowledges the potential of Marabastad to be developed into a unique, rich and diverse place within the city. The Urban Framework set up by the group strives to strengthen existing network to build on the success of Marabastad and improve its weaknesses.



Figure 3.8 Selected sites identified by group members (yellow Author) (Urban Framework Group)



Figure 3.9 Individual proposals supporting the existing networks in Marabastad (Urban Framework Group)

GROUP FRAMEWORK PROGRAMMATIC VISION

Figure 3.10 illustrates how each individual project will programmatically connect to the existing networks in Marabastad in an attempt to strengthen them.

As identified earlier in this chapter there are two dominating networks (transport and retail). This issue is addressed through the introduction of new programmes, such as a residential development.

This approach of creating alternative programmatic opportunities is also supported by the proposal of alternative public spaces. These public spaces are pedestrian focussed with better infrastructure and aims to greener, friendlier public space for the users of Marabastad.

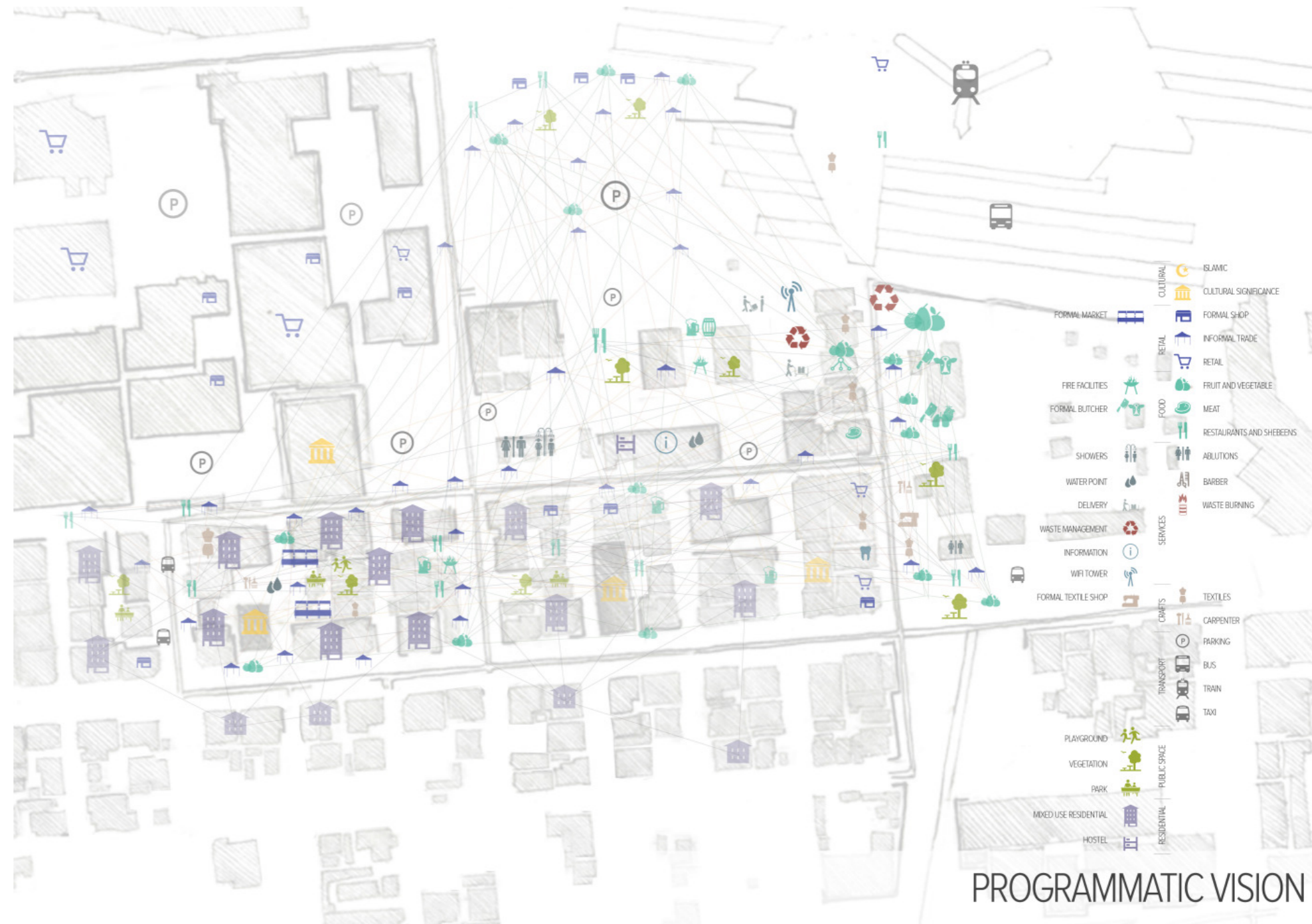


Figure 3.10 Programmatic vision (Urban Framework Group).

GROUP FRAMEWORK SPATIAL VISION

Figure 3.11 illustrate the spatial vision developed by the Urban Framework Group. Pedestrian priority streets and public spaces were identified. The aim was to create a series of public spaces that are connected by pedestrian priority routes to create a walkable city. These public spaces should have different programmatic orientations to create diversity in types of space, ranging from public to private, active to slow moving and hard- to softscaping.

The main vehicular routes form a loop to ease access in and out of Marabastad. To limit the use of private cars and to encourage the use of public transport, parking is concentrated in multi-storey parkinglots on the exiting parking areas identified in Marbastad.

This addresses the issue of parking considerations of a residential development. Because the target social group of the housing proposal does not necessarily fall under the classification of one car per family, it seems unnecessary to use valuable space and capital to create private parking. The proposal of concentrated multi-storey parking lots therefore caters for the public and the residence needs if necessary.



Figure 3.11 Spatial vision (Urban Framework Group).

CONSERVATION AREA

Le Roux (1991) conducted an extensive heritage value report on the buildings of Marabastad, which has been accepted by the Pretoria Inner City Partnership Development. Buildings were identified for different heritage value reasons, including architectural value and use value. Le Roux (1991) argued that the buildings should not be seen as individual elements, but should rather be seen as a collective that represents a certain way of life that existed in Marabastad.

Figure 3.4 illustrates the proposed conservation area according to Le Roux (1991) and the site under investigation. The site is bordered by Mogul Street to the north, Boom Street to the south, 7th Street to the east and Jerusalem Street to the west.

The heritage conservation area and the approach to heritage structures on site are discussed in Chapter 7, with an in-depth analysis of Marabastad's DNA.

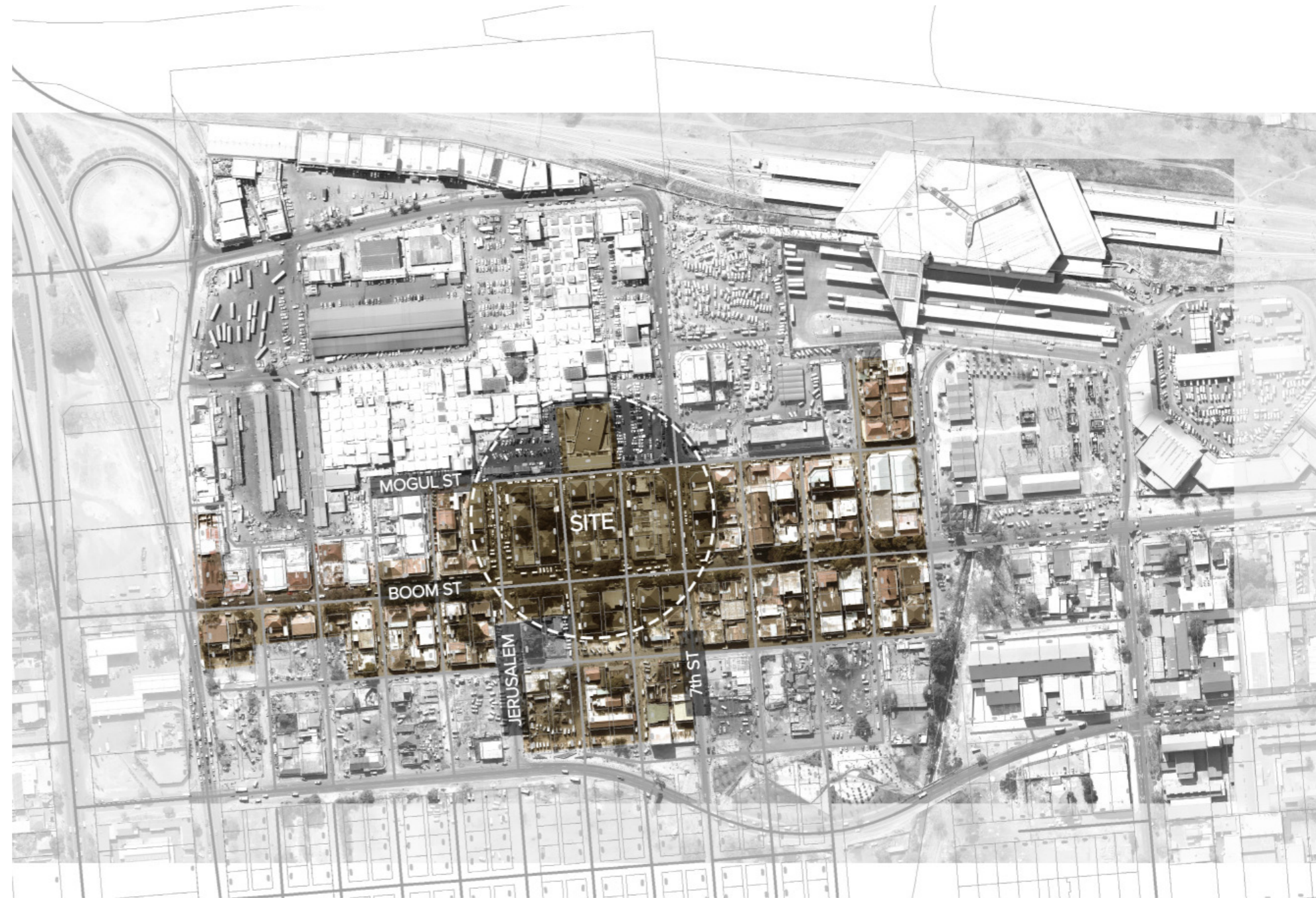


Figure 3.12 Aerial with mapped conservation area and selected site within its context . 2015. Author.

DENSITY OF MARABASTAD

Through our research and certain unstructured interviews, we concluded that many of the people currently inhabit Marabastad on a temporary basis. Although their primary reason for being there is economic, they do not invest their money in Marabastad, but elsewhere. According to the 2011 Census, the 57 ha area of Marabastad has a total population of 339 (approximately six persons per hectare) (Frith 2011).

According to the Tshwane Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (City of Tshwane 2012), the aim is to achieve compaction through infill development that promotes high residential density and mixed land uses. This is motivated by the approach to lower energy consumption, reduce pollution and decrease the city's footprint. The main goal of compaction and densification is to improve the living standards of people so that they can enjoy living in the city. The aim is to create a sense of safety and opportunities for social interactions by providing a large residential population in the city. This compaction strategy encourages walking services (City of Tshwane 2012:2-3).

The CSIR published guidelines for the planning and design of human settlements (CSIR 2005), which suggest a dwelling size of 4 to 6 m² per person for low-income areas and that a gross residential density over 50 du/ha is deemed appropriate in most developing urban areas of South Africa (CSIR 2005:216). However, there is no specific standard density (Tonkin 2008:16). The Development Action Group (DAG) publication Sustainable medium-density housing (Tonkin 2008) proposes a density of approximately 40 to 100 du/ha. Housing typologies typically associated with this density are semi-detached housing, row houses and three- to four-storey walk-up flats (CSIR 2005; City of Tshwane 2012; Tonkin 2008).

The City of Tshwane strongly focuses its direction of investment, development and energy on areas of opportunity. This aims to create high-quality living environments within the city (City of Tshwane 2005:13-14). The densification strategy also encourages the (re)development of existing built-up areas with sensitivity towards the diversity and unique spatial characteristics of an area (City of Tshwane 2012:62). For many low-income households, accessibility to urban opportunities is often limited because of their housing location, and the location of housing often becomes more important than the quality of housing (Tonkin 2008:21).

It can therefore be argued that the proposal for a mixed-use residential infill project is ideally situated in Marabastad, as it sits in direct relationship to the CBD and the surrounding areas. The project aims at increasing the population density to create a more sustainable environment supporting the further development of economic, transport and social facilities.

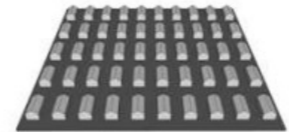


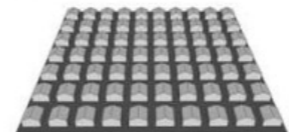

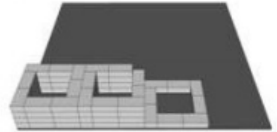
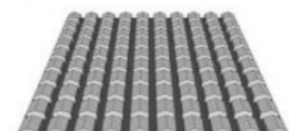


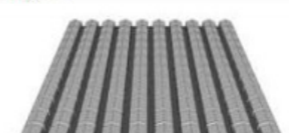


	DETACHED	STACKED	PERIMETER
50 du/ha	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,25 Coverage: 25% Height: 1</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,25 Coverage: 7% Height: 4</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,25 Coverage: 8% Height: 4</p>
70 du/ha	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,35 Coverage: 35% Height: 1</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,35 Coverage: 9% Height: 4</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,35 Coverage: 12% Height: 4</p>
100 du/ha	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,5 Coverage: 50% Height: 1</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,5 Coverage: 12% Height: 4</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,5 Coverage: 16% Height: 4</p>
120 du/ha	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,6 Coverage: 60% Height: 1</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,6 Coverage: 15% Height: 4</p>	 <p>Floor area ratio: 0,6 Coverage: 16% Height: 4</p>

Figure 3.13 Density Models (CSIR 2011)