

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT

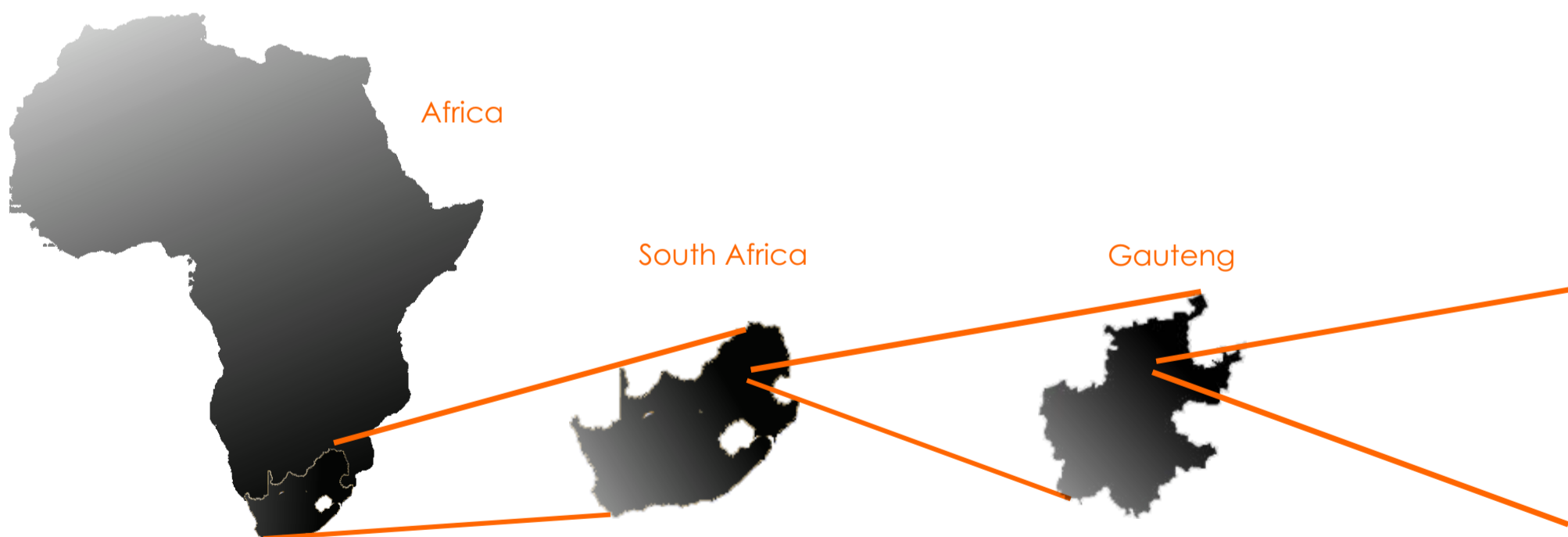


Figure 2.1. Location of museum in greater context

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter investigates the chosen site within the context of Pretoria CBD, the chosen building, Ditsong: National Museum of Cultural History, and the client, Ditsong museums of South Africa.

2.2. PRETORIA

The site, Ditsong: National Museum of Cultural History (D:NMCH) is situated on Visagie Street between Bosman and Sophie de Bruyn Streets in Pretoria, Gauteng. The CBD is vibrant with diverse functions in close vicinity of one another. Activities are dispersed throughout Pretoria CBD, which also has “a growing tourism sector that contributes to job creation and investment” (Ganief and Thorpe 2013). A growing tourism sector indicates that increasingly more people, local and international, use these facilities. It includes the D:NMCH, which supports this dissertation's intention to revitalise the museum by means of investigating the visitor interaction with the museum facilities.

There are many tourist attractions in the city centre, as seen in figure 2.2.1. This image shows the location of other museums, some associated with Ditsong Museums of South Africa.

Ditsong museums visible on Figure 2.2.1 include: National Museum of Natural History, National Museum of Cultural History and Kruger Museum. Other Ditsong museums not seen on this figure are: National Museum of Military History; Pioneer Museum; Sammy Marks Museum; Tswaing Meteorite Crater and Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum. It is noteworthy that there are other museums also associated with Ditsong Museums of South Africa. These museums interact with each other on an organisational level in terms of collection management, as well as referring visitors to the other museums. There is the opportunity to include combination tickets where visitors can purchase tickets to visit more than one museum. This creates incentive to visit more museums in close vicinity to one another.

Pretoria CBD is accessible by various means of transport (Figure 2.2.); these include the Gautrain with its busses; metro busses; A Re Yeng bus system; private vehicles and pedestrian access. By investigating the access modes to the CBD, specifically the area surrounding the D:NMCH, an understanding is generated of the way in which visitors can arrive at the museum. There is an opportunity to view these modes of transportation as a possible place where the promotion of the museum can be exposed to the general public.

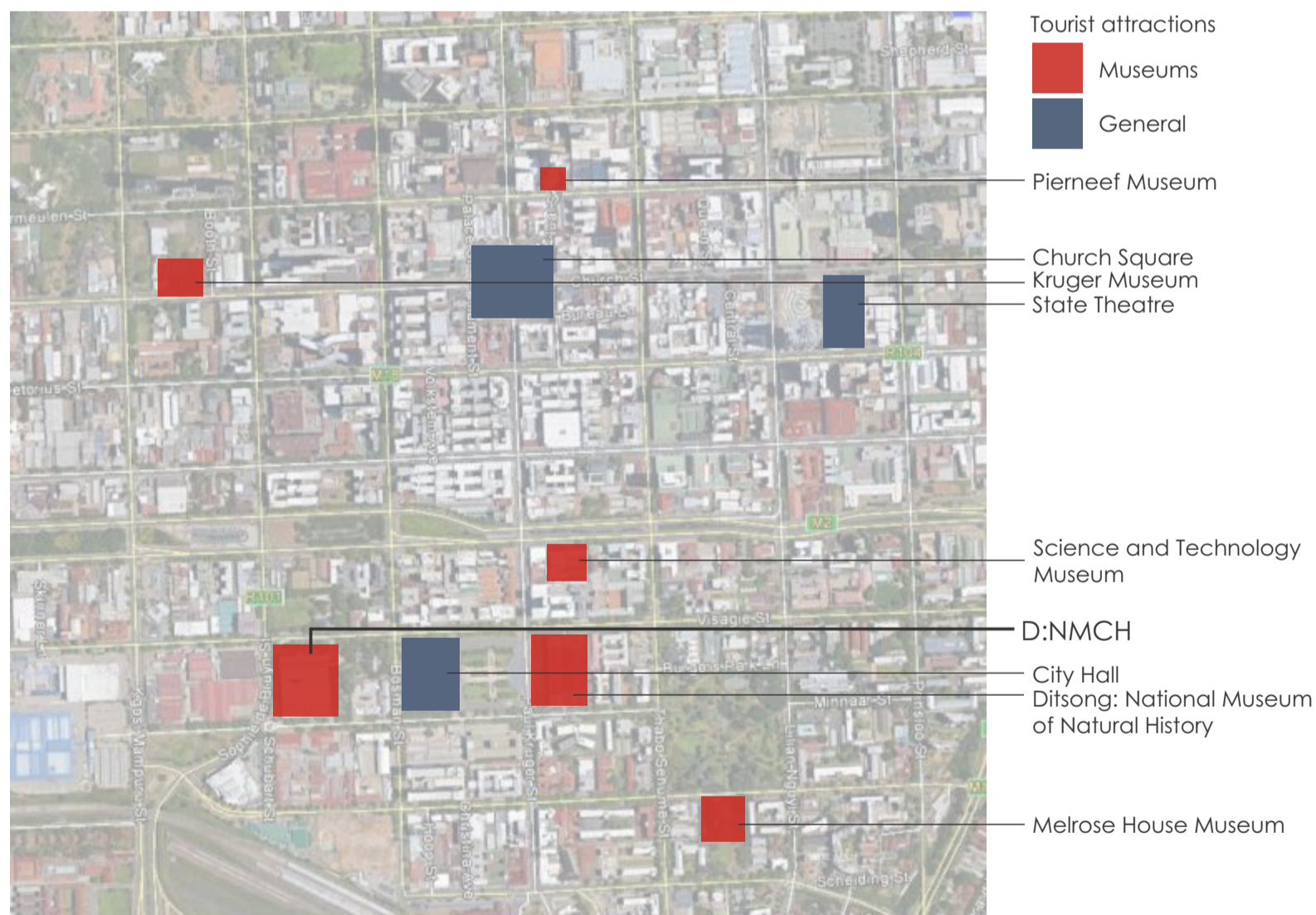


Figure 2.2.1. Pretoria CBD tourist attractions. (Adapted Google Earth image 2015)

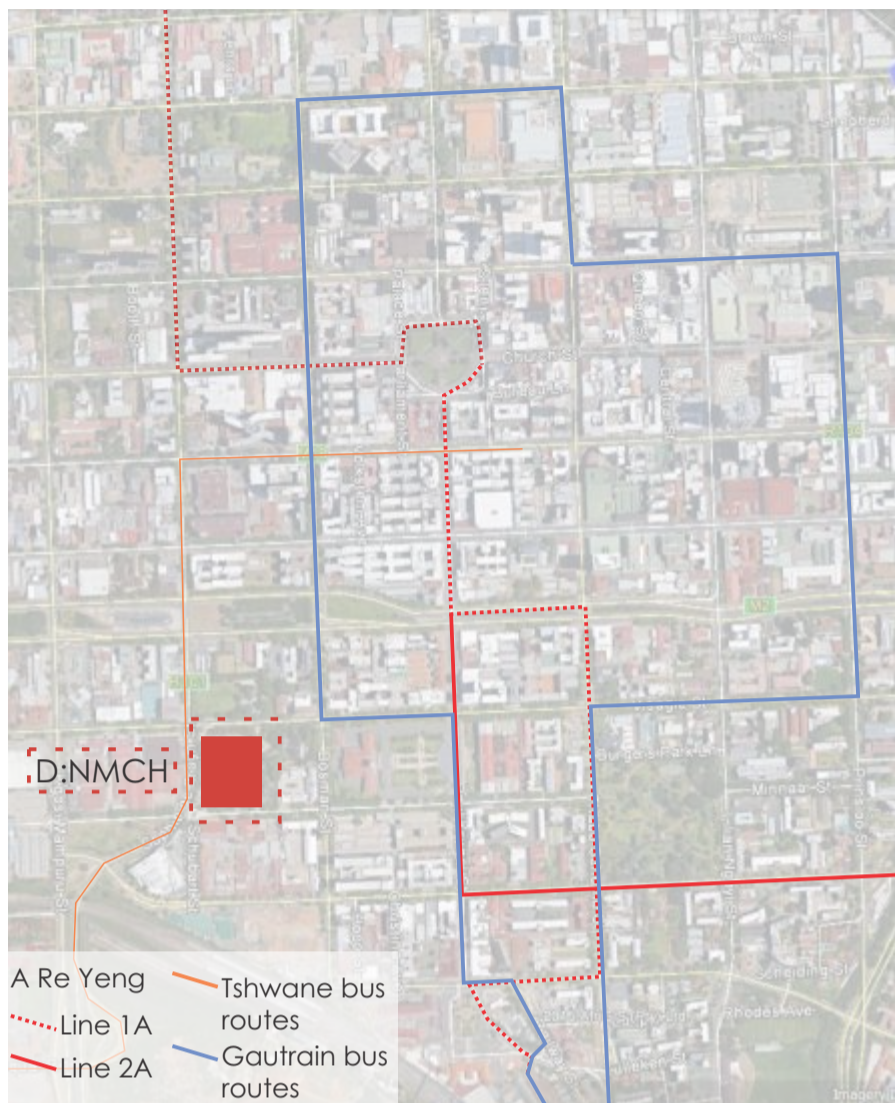


Figure 2.2.2. Transportation in Pretoria CBD.
(Adapted Google Earth image 2015)

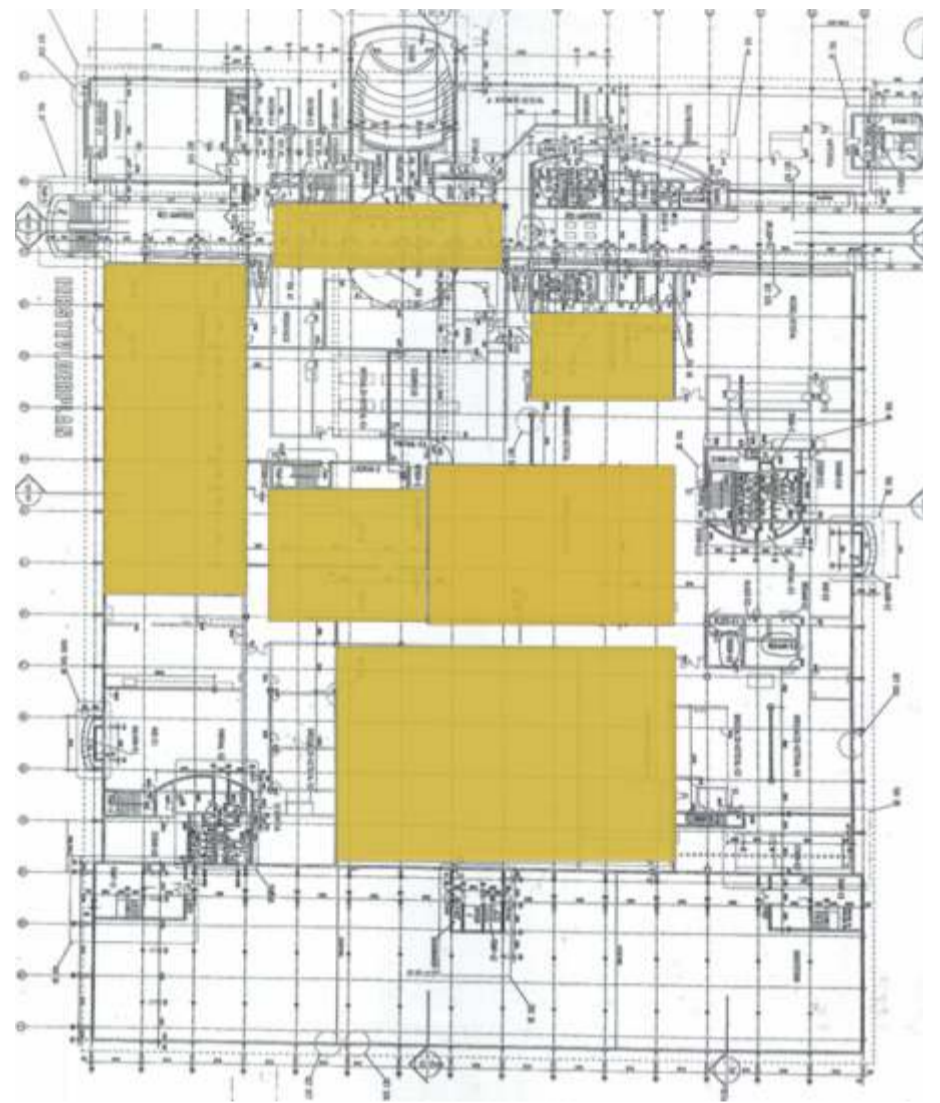


Figure 2.3.1.1. Original Museum plan indicating infill of double volumes.
(Adapted original plan (KWP 1993)).

2.3. THE DITSONG: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CULTURAL HISTORY

The D:NMCH is part of the Ditsong: Museums of South Africa (an amalgamation of eight national museums). Before a separate museum for cultural history emerged, it was part of the Ditsong: National Museum of Natural History (then Transvaal Museum). The original site of the museum was next to the Pretoria Zoological Gardens in Boom Street before it moved to its current location after a flood occurred in 1990. The old South African Mint building was identified and refurbished (by KWP architects and landscape architects) as the current museum building in 1997. (Department: Arts and Culture 2014.) Before any design intervention can occur it is important to understand all aspects of the D:NMCH, from site history, building structure to current impressions.

2.3.1. SITE HISTORY

The site history is investigated with the primary use of the report by the design team, *Pretoria: Ou Munt gebou; omskepping in die Nasionale Kultuur Historiese Museum vir die Departement Plaasklike Bestuur, Behuising en Werke* (KWP 1993).

A prison was built on the site in 1874-1876. During the Transvaal war, 1880-1881, a viewing tower was erected on the south-eastern corner. The site was enclosed with a fence during this time. A fort was also located on the site and was known as the 'Convent Redoubt'. (KWP 1993.) These buildings were demolished at a later unknown stage.

The original Mint building (the Royal Mint) was built in 1921. In 1968 the first phase of the final Mint building was started, and completed in 1972. The Mint house, Minnaar Street house and other buildings on site were also built in 1921. The Director of the Mint lived in the Mint house. The site manager of the Mint lived in the Minnaar Street house.

The Mint moved to their current site next to the N1 highway in Midrand in 1991. The last of the Mint equipment was removed from the Mint building in December 1992 and January 1993. Part of the building was then temporarily used as storage depot by the Department of Education before the Cultural History Museum (now D: NMCH) moved in. (KWP 1993.)

The final Mint building consisted of a two storey office building with foyer on the northern side, separated from the Mint factory by four courtyards. Two corridors connected the offices to the factory. The factory space was large and in some places double volume. The main vault was located in the factory between the connecting corridors. There were two smaller vaults in the factory as well, and one vault in the office building. These vaults were to remain when the Mint was converted into the Cultural History Museum, as it would have been too expensive to demolish them. The vaults were to be used as storage for artefacts such as guns and ammunition.

There were two staircases in the office building and five staircases in the factory. To the southern side of the site, a steel structure was used as storage.

In 1993, when the architect's report was completed, the Cultural History Museum was contained in seven buildings (with a total floor area of 18400m²) throughout Pretoria. The Cultural History Museum has attempted to bring their collection together for 28 years, before they moved into the Mint building. (Roodt-Coetzee 1989:5.)

Some expectations from the Cultural History Museum as stated in a meeting with the architects on 14 September 1992 (KWP 1993:1.3):

- The current site should remain untouched, with the two houses and gardens included in the planning.
- The museum strives towards a cultural route with Minnaar Street as connection road.
- Relaxation spaces for the public are important.
- Planning only includes space planning. Exhibitions will be designed and completed by the museum staff themselves.
- The interior should allow for adaptability.
- Visitors' peak times are weekdays in school quarters when organised school groups visit the museum. Some schools send one group per visit, while others send the whole school in four to five busses.
- Toilet facilities should be located throughout the building and is especially important at entrances, rest areas and cafeterias.
- An orientation area is needed
- There is a need for an omnimax theatre.

Floor area in the museum is optimally used by infill of the double volumes and adding mezzanine levels in certain areas. The concrete infill (Figure 2.3.1.1.), adds an extra 2644m² floor area to the museum. The architect's approach was to keep walls where possible and to reuse the Mint vaults. The entrance ramp from the parking area has a large landing which connects the museum, Mint house and garden. This ramp leads to the

main access walkway from which visitors can disperse to different museum facilities. This walkway, covered with an arched roof is an addition to physically link the office building and factory to create one museum building. (KWP 1993.)

The site history has not only situated the building in its historical context, thereby highlighting its significance, but has also revealed the original structure and new infill.

2.3.2. SITE ANALYSIS

The site is L-shaped, 25516,95m², and is bordered by Visagie Street to the North, Minnaar Street to the South, Sophie de Bruyn Street to the West and Bosman Street to the East. (Figure 2.3.2.1.). The site can be divided in two, the Mint building on the Western side and the Mint house, Minnaarstreet house and other buildings on the Eastern side.

Through site observation and the investigation of construction documentation, the following is apparent. The existing structure of the Mint building is in good condition and consists of structural columns on a 6x6m grid and 600mm reinforced concrete slab over the basement and ground floor. 2707m² of the first floor is a double volume over the ground floor, with viewing windows from the first floor.

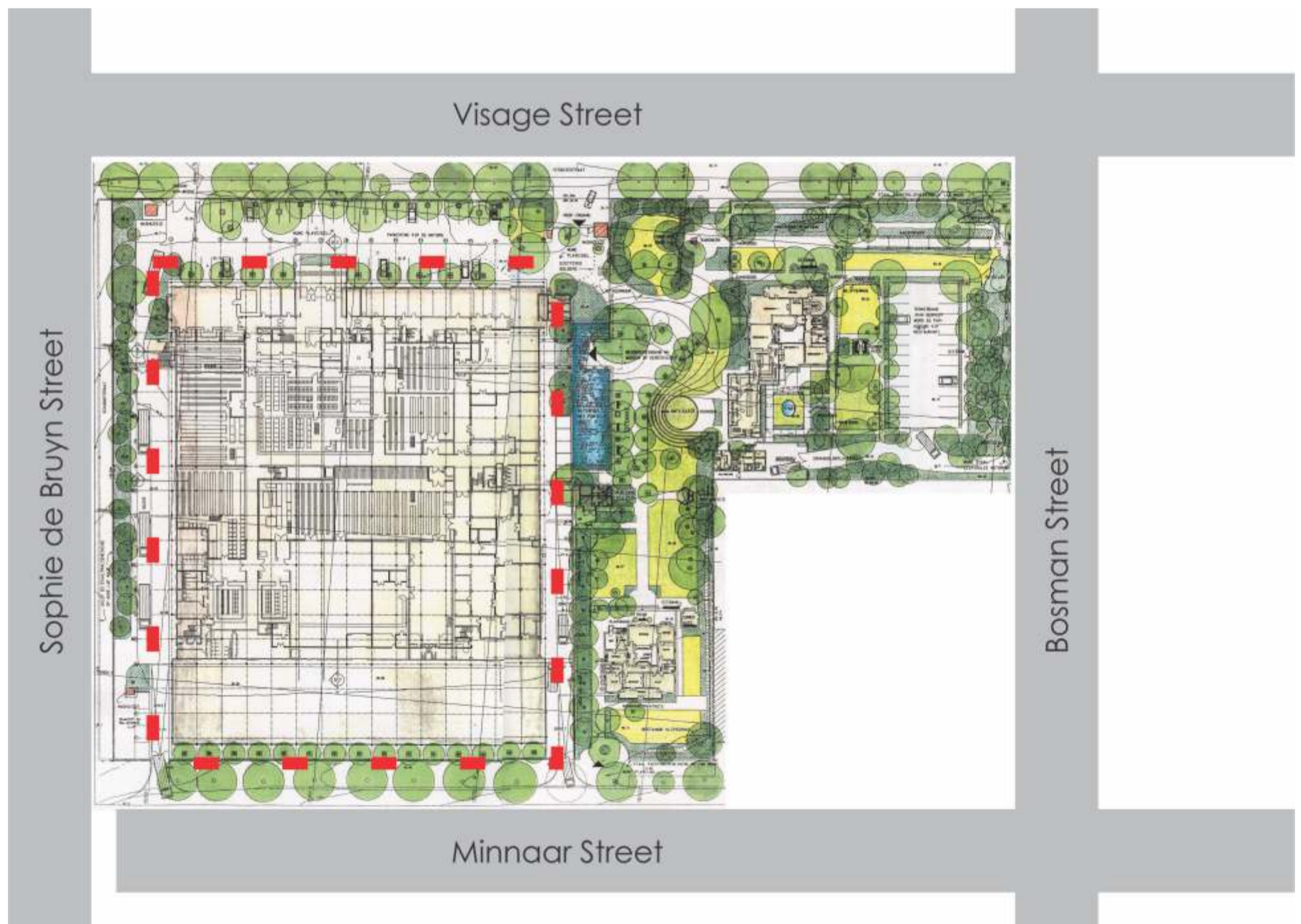


Figure 2.3.2.1. Site configuration. (Adapted site plan (KWP 1993).

The roof consists of steel beams with IBR sheets, which are interchanged with steel gutters. In some areas the sides of the gutter act as skylights. The roof is insulated on the underside. The roof is supported by eight columns dispersed in the column grid.

The museum building has a very distinctive covered arched walkway with Ndebele drawings on the walkway walls as seen in Figure 2.3.2.2.



Figure 2.3.2.2. Ndebele drawings on walkway walls.

The balustrade and column details are characteristically Postmodern in style and colour (Figure 2.3.2.3.). Curved walls are used throughout the building to demarcate certain functions (Figure 2.3.2.5). This is further investigated in Chapter 3.

As seen in figures 2.3.2.4. a and b, there are various sized spaces currently used for exhibitions and events.



Figure 2.3.2.3. Balustrade detail.

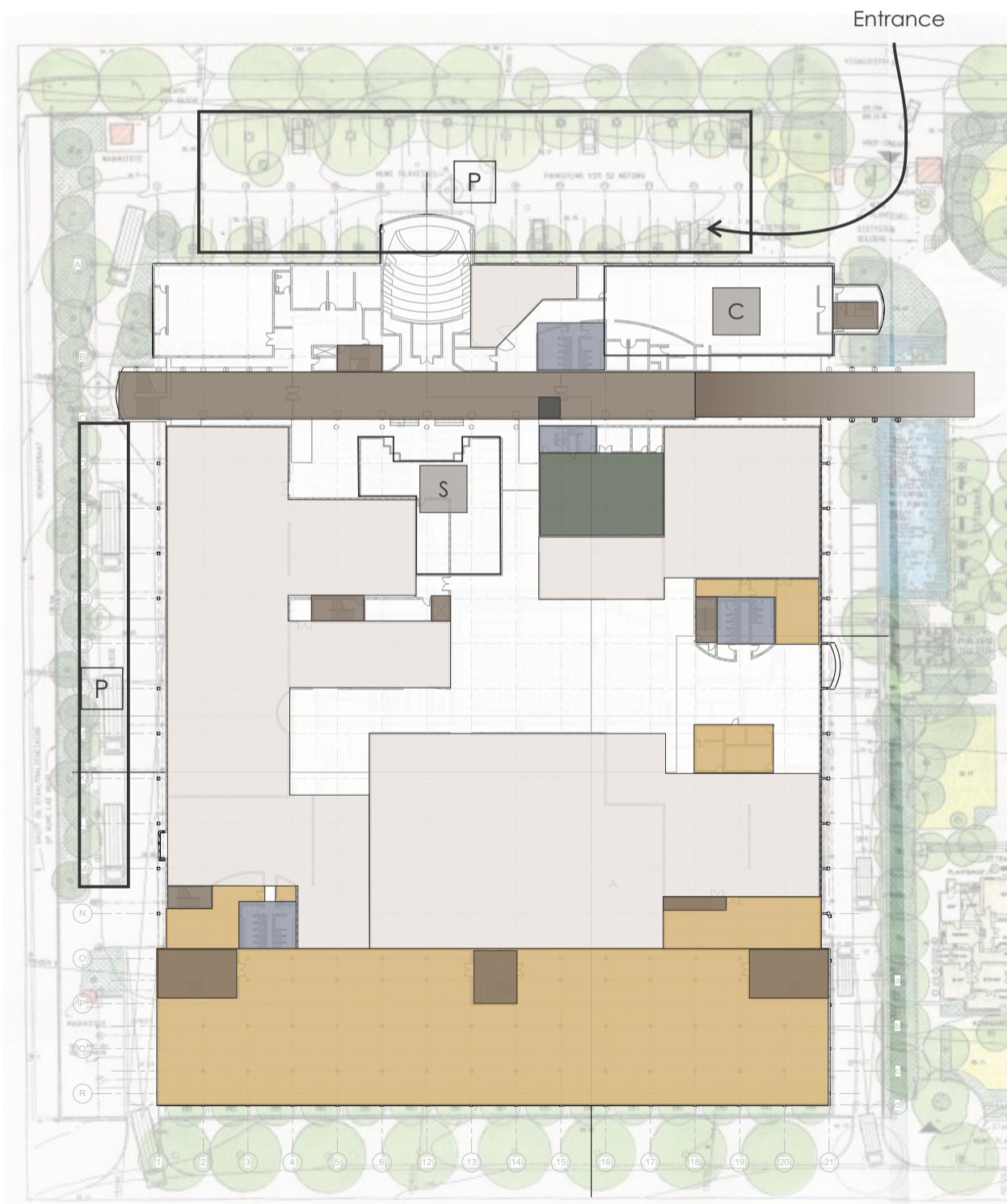


Figure 2.3.2.4.a. First floor plan (Adapted plan (KWP 1993)).

- P Parking
- Circulation
- Tickets and information desk
- WC
- Cafeteria
- Shop
- Activity area
- Exhibition
- Storage

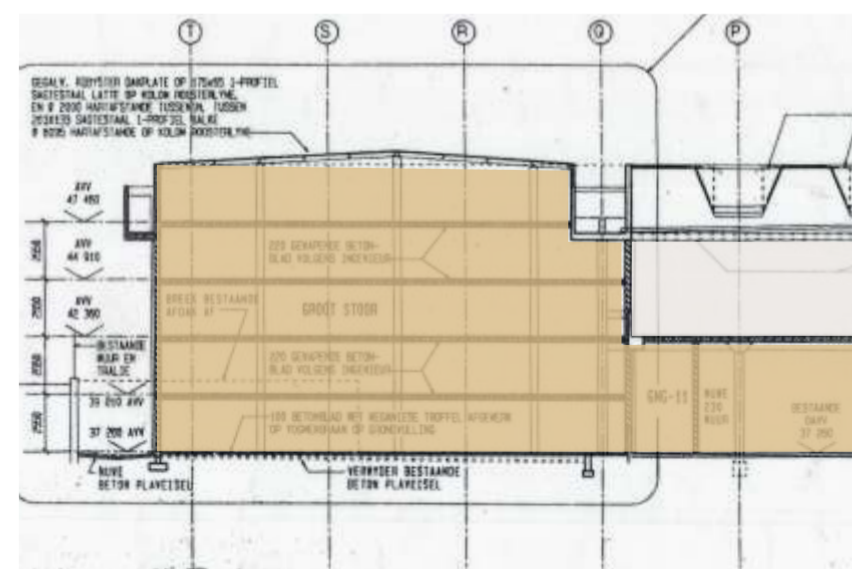


Figure 2.3.2.4.b. Section (Adapted section (KWP 1993)).

The basement is used for mechanical and electrical equipment, with minimal storage area. The ground floor is mainly used for storage, archive of artefacts, restoration workshops, receiving and packing of objects. Many workshops are located on the eastern and western side of the building to allow museum staff a view to the outside. The southern, five floor, addition is dedicated to storage areas. The storage area is a vital part of the museum and contains the larger part of the collection. It also plays an essential role in the development of the museum and is closely linked to other activities, such as research, consultation, exhibitions, education, conservation and loans. The air quality and safety aspects are extremely important in the storage areas as "...the storage areas guarantees the preservation of and accessibility to the collection..." (UNESCO 2010:3).

The first floor is mainly used for exhibitions. The main walkway divides the floor in two parts. To the north are lecture rooms, an auditorium, conference room and a cafeteria. The auditorium can seat 120 persons, and the conference room can accommodate 90 persons. To the south are the exhibition areas and shop. In this part of the museum is a multi-functional area available for events, which can accommodate 400 people.

The multi-functional area within the D:NMCH is used for various events unrelated to the museum. An event that does relate to museum activities is the International Museum Day celebrations on 16 May (Ditsong 2014). The International Museum Day is used at the D:NMCH, to launch a one week event across all Ditsong museums. At the 2014 International Museum Day launch, all Ditsong museums showcased their collections in an exhibition at the D:NMCH. "This will show that indeed at Ditsong collections are accessible to the visitors and the public in general" (Ditsong 2014).

2.4. INTERVENTION LOCATION

This investigation has indicated appropriate areas for a design intervention within the D:NMCH. Any intervention would be able to easily occur in the location of the original double volumes. When investigating the ideal placement of an intervention, within these infill areas, certain issues arise. As seen in Figure 2.3.1.1, there are six areas where the intervention can take place. The southern area is too far from the interior to make an impact on the visitor's first impression of the museum. The northern areas are located above the vaults on ground level (Figure 2.4.1.), which dictates that an intervention in those areas can only be on the first floor. Thus the ideal location for a double volume intervention would be in the central area of the museum. Figure 2.4.2 shows the area for intervention to be located within the boundaries of an original double volume space.

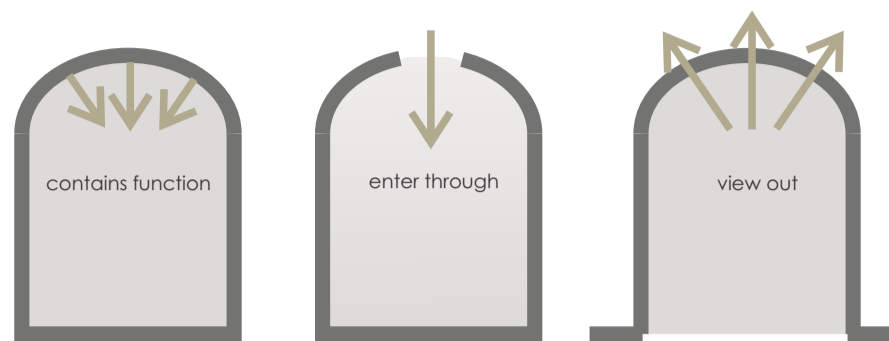


Figure 2.3.2.5. Curved wall functions.

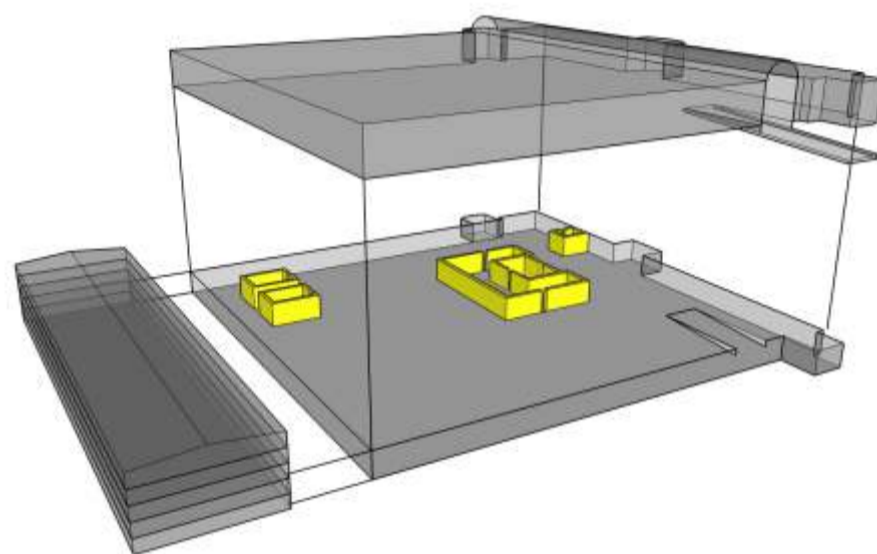


Figure 2.4.1. Vault location on ground floor.

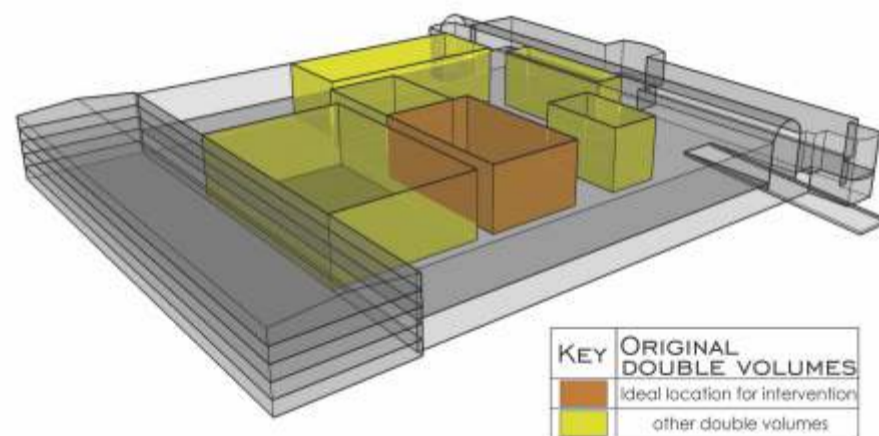
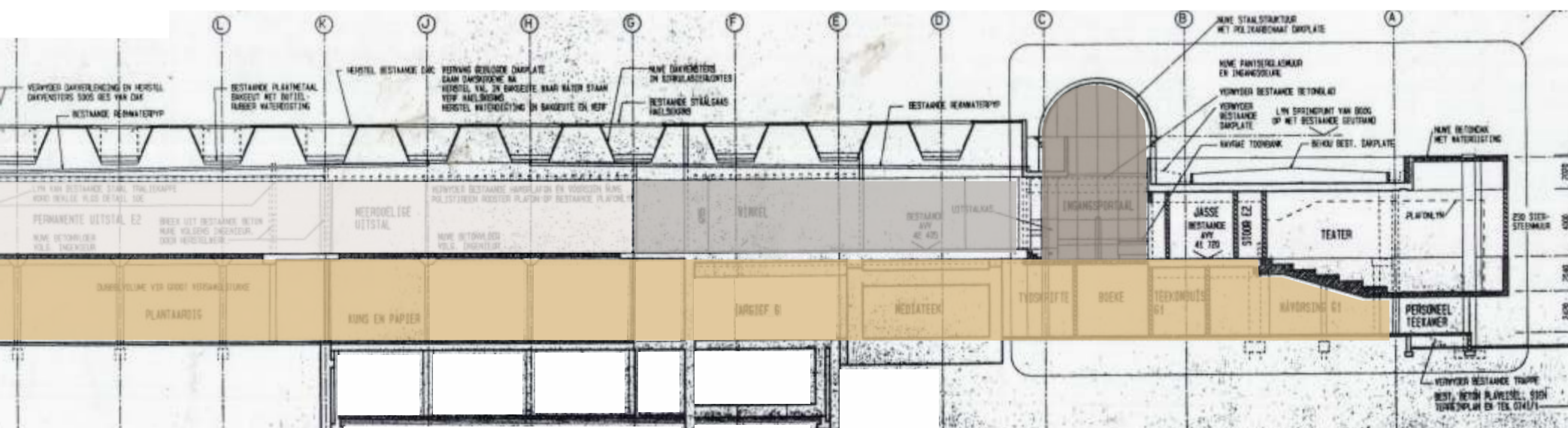


Figure 2.4.2. Original double volumes with ideal location for intervention.



2.5. MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

A number of visits to the D:NMCH contributed to the site investigation, documentation and analysis and serve to inform the design process.

2.5.1. Visit 1

Date: 3 October 2014, 10:00.

The intention of this visit was to experience the museum as a first time visitor would.

Entrance and orientation:

During this visit, a person with a walking impairment was observed using the unobtrusive observation method as explained in Chapter 1. Confusion arises as this is the first visit to the museum and there are no clear wayfinding cues.

The visitors enter the building from the western parking lot (1) via the staircase (Figure 2.5.1.2.), as there are no indications on how to proceed to the ramped walkway. In the main circulation walkway (Figure 2.5.1.3.), the visitor proceeds to the eastern information desk (2) as seen on Figure 2.5.1.4. The staff are helpful in showing the visitor how to proceed through the museum, as there is no other clear wayfinding system.

Exhibitions:

The museum staff member at the information desk indicates the first exhibition to view, *Sculptured in Clay* (3) (Figure 2.5.1.5. and 2.5.1.6.). This exhibition is new (2002) in relation to the other permanent exhibitions which were constructed in 1997. (Ditsong 2002). The staff member guides the visitor to the next exhibition, *San Access to Power* (4) (Figure 2.5.1.7.). This exhibition is designed in the "immersive environment" (Mckenna-Cress 2013:175) style. This exhibition's intent is to let the visitor experience the San objects on display as if they are in a cave-like environment.

After this exhibition the visitor is free to explore the rest of the exhibitions in any manner they wish. Without clear signage, the flow through the exhibitions was not clear. Orientation is a form of wayfinding, but with part of the central space (5) inaccessible due to an event, orientation becomes difficult with no interior landmarks to refer to. Recent additions (6) are exhibited in a corner hidden to the approaching visitor by different screens. (Figure 2.5.1.8. and 2.2.5.1.9.) The only temporary exhibition on display is the Steve Biko exhibition (7). This is also the only space with seating for visitors. *Objects with Stories* (8) is exhibited according to a timeline as seen in Figure 2.5.1.10. There are two entrances to this exhibition. The main problem with this exhibition is that there is no indication of where the timeline starts, thus it is easy to use the 'wrong' entrance. The last exhibition available to view is the Marabastad exhibition (9). This exhibition is more successful in the way the designers used different manners of display. Light and audio effects are incorporated as well as using the floor, walls and ceiling for display. (Figure 2.5.1.11. to 2.5.1.13.).

Other museum facilities:

The shop (Figure 2.5.1.14.) was closed at the time of the visit. The visitor walks past the ablution facilities (Figure 2.5.1.15. and 2.5.1.16.) to the restaurant, which is not a positive experience. This is the only known ablution facilities on the first visit. The restaurant (Figure 2.5.1.17.) has a seating area, bar area and take-away area. The restaurant design is not cohesive. Maroon leather chairs have been supplemented with silver painted timber chairs as the museum capacity has grown. Brown, orange and white textiles are stretched over some window areas to reduce the amount of natural light that enters the space.

Other noticeable issues:

Visitor fatigue becomes a problem as there are long distances to walk between exhibitions and there is no seating provided other than the seating in the temporary exhibition space and in the main circulation corridor.

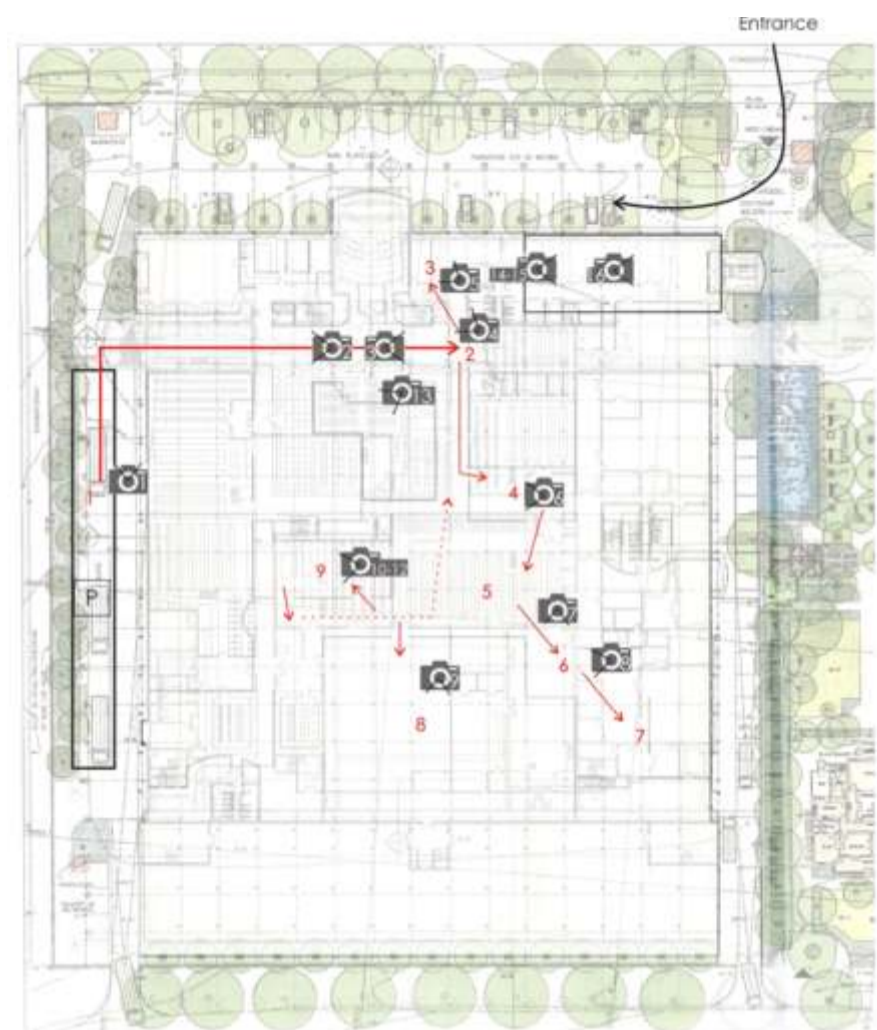


Figure 2.5.1.1. Visit 1 (Adapted plan (KWP 1993)).

Glare is another problem when moving towards the exit, this can clearly be seen in figure 2.5.1.18. There is too big a contrast when moving from the central space (5) with some skylights and general artificial lighting (Figure 2.5.1.19.), towards the main circulation corridor with natural lighting. The polished granulate floor finish contributes to this problem as well.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is completed to help in assessing visit 1 to the D:NMCH.

Strengths

- Natural light in main walkway
- Variety of cultural exhibits
- Helpful staff
- Can be hired for events

Weaknesses

- Glare on polished floor
- Interior is very dark
- Internal spaces are not optimally used
- Almost no navigational signage
- No depth of information in exhibitions
- No museum map/ guide given
- No other wayfinding system
- Outdated exhibitions
- Event in central open space
- No seating – fatigue becomes a problem
- Empty exhibition rooms

Opportunities

- Create a new wayfinding system
- Revitalise the museum
- To create a better first impression to visitors
- Create a better learning environment
- To design a central, multi-functional gathering space
- To design a new artificial lighting system

Threats

- Existing users of building should not be disregarded
- Museum as event space should not take priority over museum as a learning facility
- Museum is becoming obsolete

Overall my first experience of the museum was negative. The first impression that the museum gives to visitors is that of an outdated museum that is becoming obsolete. It was confusing to navigate, as there is no wayfinding system in place. There is no clear interaction between the visitor and the museum facilities. There is nothing to attract the visitor to visit the museum again.




Figure 2.5.1.2. Western staircase to main circulation corridor. 




Figure 2.5.1.3. Sketch of main circulation corridor. 



Figure 2.5.1.4. Information desk 




Figure 2.5.1.5. Sculptured in Clay exhibition entrance. 




Figure 2.5.1.6. Sculptured in Clay exhibition. 




Figure 2. 5.1.7. San Access to Power exhibition. 




Figure 2.5.1.8. Recent additions exhibition. 




Figure 2.5.1.9. View of screen towards the recent additions exhibition. 




Figure 2.5.1.10. Objects with stories exhibition. 



Figure 2.5.1.11. Marabastad exhibition 




Figure 2.5.1.12. Marabastad exhibition 




Figure 2.5.1.13. Marabastad exhibition 




Figure 2.5.1.14. Museum shop 




Figure 2.5.1.15. View towards restaurant. 




Figure 2.5.1.16. Ablution facilities 



Figure 2.5.1.17. Restaurant interior 



Figure 2.5.1.18. Glare problem.



Figure 2.5.1.19. Lighting conditions.

2.5.2. Visit 2

Date: 12 February 2015, 13:00

The intention of this visit was to investigate the 'behind the scenes' of the museum: the stored collection and processes of acquisition and documentation.

A limited number of photographs could be taken, due to the sensitive nature of objects stored in the storage areas on the ground floor.

The stored collection is the most important part of the museum, as it is where the management of the museum lies. The processes of the museum are: 1. Acquisition (documenting) of objects, 2. Collection, 3. Storage, 4. Research, 5. Exhibitions, 6. Educational program. Steps 1-4 are concerned with the collecting, conserving and storing of cultural objects, these are done with the outcome of display and education in mind.

Entrance and orientation:

This visit was conducted to understand the collection management of the D:NMCH. Access was via the northern staff entrance (1) on ground level (Figure 2.5.2.2.). A museum curator guided me through the ground floor facilities. The staff areas are intimate in size. The ground floor area is difficult to navigate without a guide, as signage is seen as not needed in an area where staff know their way around.

Ground floor facilities:

The library and archive are located in the large vault (2), these areas are functionally well executed (Figure 2.5.2.3. and 2.5.2.4.). Mobile shelving systems are used in the library and archive to save space and to provide easy access to documents. The next area visited was the ceramics laboratory (3) where restoration is completed on all ceramic objects. Figure 2.5.2.5 shows the amount of natural light that enters the ceramics laboratory as it is located on the western side of the building.

The next space we proceed to is the area where objects are received (4). The corridor to this area is very dark, with only wall mounted lighting in working condition (Figure 2.5.2.6.). The lighting in the corridors is not adequate for safe circulation. The area where objects are received is large enough to allow a vehicle to enter and the roller doors to be shut (Figure 2.5.2.7.). Next to this area is a storage unit where any timber objects are temporarily stored before they are taken to be smoked for protection against insects.

The vertical circulation (5) to the five storey, southern storage facility includes a fire escape and service lift. The only access point to these storage areas is on the ground floor. (Figure 2.5.2.8. and 2.5.2.9.)

The storage areas visited in this area (6) include textiles, timber furniture and other furniture. After viewing the storage facilities on the ground floor we proceed to a fire escape (7) that is used as vertical access to the main museum floor by museum staff.

Other noticeable issues:

It is important that the storage correlate with the exhibition, which it currently only does in terms of objects. "The nature and scope of collections define the exhibitions that can be mounted, the services that are offered, the research that is undertaken and the skills required to manage them" (SAMA 2006:6). The objects exhibited are fully researched within the collection they belong to. The exhibitions should showcase this research.

It is evident that the objects are stored in a manner in which deterioration is slowed or avoided. Within the exhibitions this care management becomes an issue. Figure 2.5.2.10 shows a display case which is not fully enclosed. This means that dust and other particles can enter the display case and lie on the objects. This would not be a

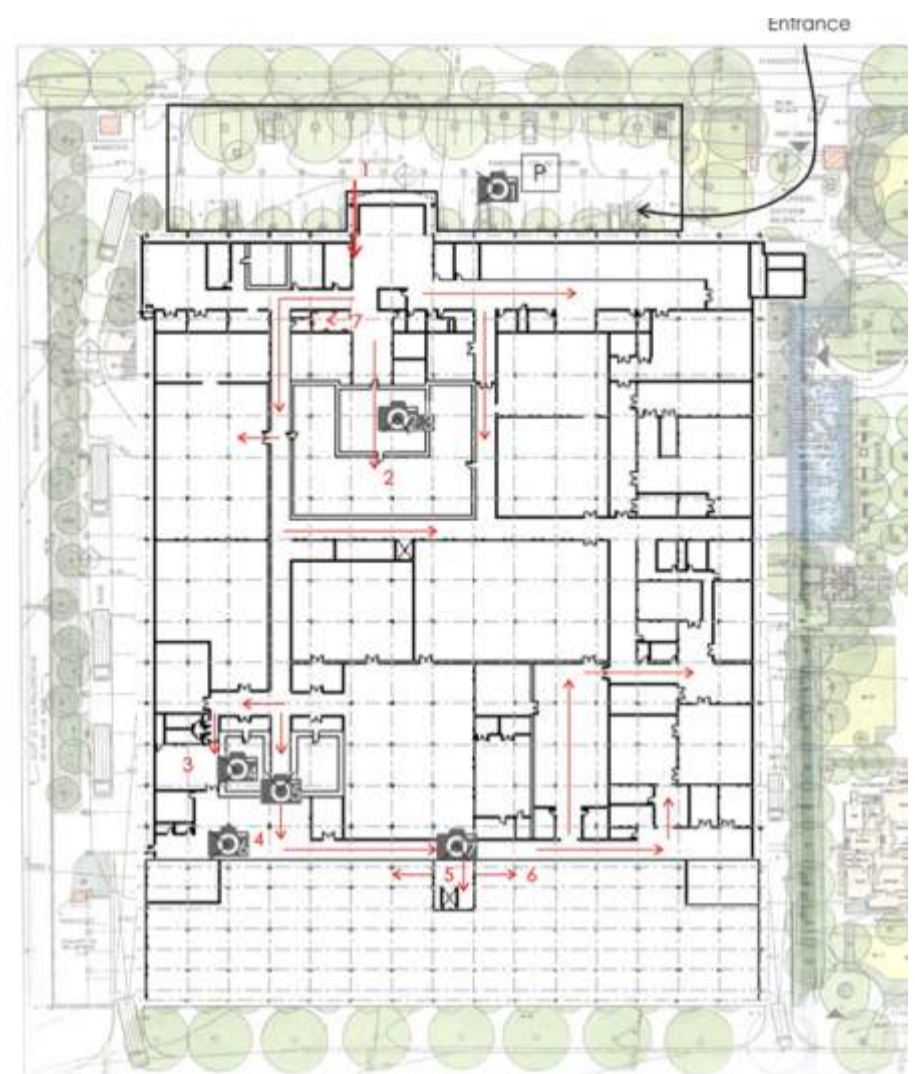


Figure 2.5.2.1. Visit 2. (Adapted plan (KWP 1993)).

problem if the objects are easily accessible for museum staff to clean the objects at regular intervals, such as with the *San Access to Power* exhibition (Figure 2.5.2.11.).

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is completed to help in assessing visit 2 to the D:NMCH.

Strengths

- Large, well organised storage areas
- Natural light in workshops and laboratories

Weaknesses

- Inadequate lighting in corridors on ground floor
- No wayfinding system on the ground floor
- Only connection to the public first floor is through a fire escape, or around the outside of the building
- No offices on public first floor
- The only access point to the southern storage areas is on the ground floor
- Vaults on ground floor will inhibit any vertical intervention on the first floor

Opportunities

- Create a physical link between the ground floor and public first floor
- Create a physical link between the southern storage areas and the first floor
- Incorporate a wayfinding system
- Incorporate offices on the first floor

Threats

- Existing users of building should not be disregarded
- Museum as event space should not take priority over museum as a learning facility

The second visit to the museum was important to help me understand how the museum functions and what the intentions of the museum are. The research areas located in the storage areas are available to use by appointment, but do not showcase the museum in a positive manner. It is clear that the ground floor and first floor need an intervention to link them and make both accessible to all users. This intervention should also address the inadequate lighting conditions of the museum.



Figure 2.5.2.2. View towards northern, staff entrance.



Figure 2.5.2.3. Library and research area.



Figure 2.5.2.4. Mobile shelving system.



Figure 2.5.2.5. Ceramics laboratory.



Figure 2.5.2.6. Ground floor corridor.



Figure 2.5.2.7. Area where objects are received.



Figure 2.5.2.8. Vertical circulation in five storey storage facility.

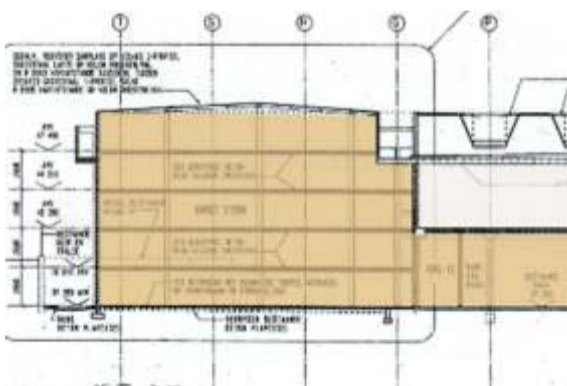


Figure 2.5.2.9. Five storey storage facility. (Adapted section (KWP 1993)).



Figure 2.5.2.10. Display case detail.



Figure 2.5.2.11. San Access to Power display.

2.5.3. Visit 3

Date: 22 April 2015, 11:00

The intention of this visit was to experience the museum as a return visitor would.

Entrance and orientation:

Access to the main museum floor was via the external ramped walkway (1) leading up to the main walkway Figure 2.5.3.2. This walkway is difficult to ascend as it is steep and no landings are provided. (Investigation of ramp see Chapter 4). At the information desk (2) a museum map was given. This map is helpful to show where exhibitions are located, but it is not successful in how it is presented (Figure 2.5.3.3.). The map is a black and white photocopy of poor quality, which is not a professional reflection on the D:NMCH.

Other museum facilities:

The activity area (3) for scholars is located near the entrance to the exhibitions. This area is aimed at 5-12 year olds. The connotation can be made that the children should sit quietly in rows and may only touch/view the object when they are called forward by the educator. (Figure 2.5.3.4)

The central space (4) was inaccessible due to an event. The majority of these events are unrelated to the museum. Event patrons can however view exhibitions on display while on a break. General visitors will not be able to view most of the exhibitions while an event is taking place. There were temporary exhibitions on display (5 and 6), but were inaccessible due to the event organisers using these areas as informal lecture rooms.

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is completed to help in assessing visit 3 to the D:NMCH.

Strengths

- Museum map given
- Natural light in main walkway
- Variety of cultural exhibits
- Helpful staff
- Can be hired for events

Weaknesses

- Exterior ramp is steep with no landings
- Activity area for children is too formal, and perceived to be an afterthought
- Museum map is not professional
- Temporary exhibition areas inaccessible due to an event
- Glare on polished floor
- Almost no navigational signage
- No depth of information in exhibitions
- Outdated exhibitions
- Event in central open space
- No seating – fatigue becomes a problem

Opportunities

- Create a new wayfinding system
- Revitalise the museum
- Rebranding of the museum
- Create a better impression of the museum to returning visitors
- Create a better learning environment
- Create a central, multi-functional gathering space

Threats

- Activity area in danger of becoming obsolete
- No attraction to returning visitors
- Existing users of building should not be disregarded
- Museum as event space can take precedence over museum as learning facility

The third visit was again negative. Even though I knew where most of the museum facilities were located, it was still difficult to navigate. Thus many of the strengths and weaknesses overlap with the first visit.

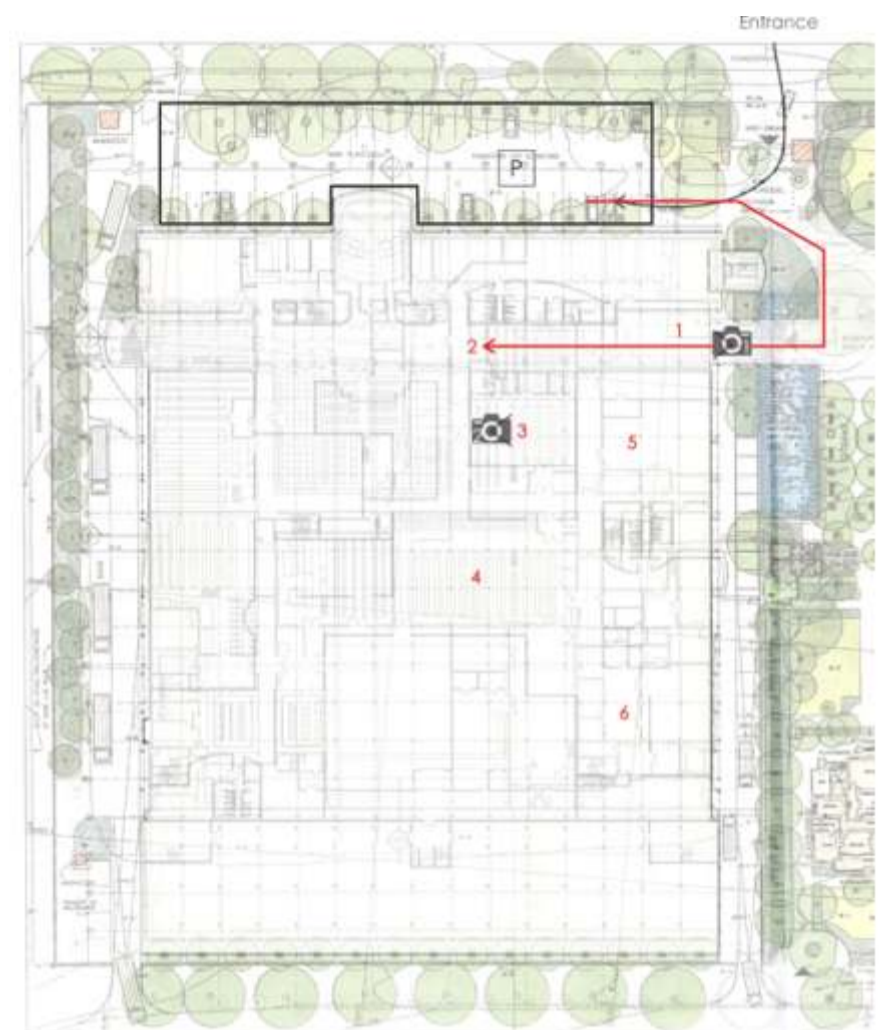


Figure 2.5.3.1. Visit 3. (Adapted plan (KWP 1993)).



Figure 2.5.3.2. Ramped walkway to entrance.

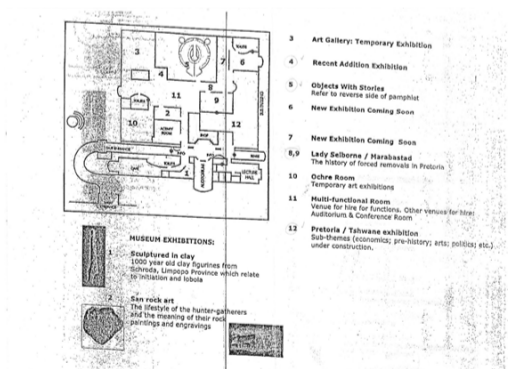


Figure 2.5.3.3. Museum map. (Ditsong 2015)



Figure 2.5.3.4. Activity area.

2.5.4. Conclusion

From these museum experiences it is clear that the D:NMCH does not give a very good impression to visitors. The museum facilities do not create a memorable experience for visitors, as there is nothing that stands out and grabs the visitors' attention. Although the information displayed is well founded, the visitor does not have any encouragement to view the information in more depth. As observed, visitors glance at the objects and information on display, but will mainly look at an object in depth if there is something that guides their attention to it.

According to McLean (1997:81) there are different layers to the visitor's experience. The first is the museum experience which occurs in the 'physical context' – the museum building. The second experience is how the visitor perceives the world through his own 'personal context'. The third is sharing this experience with other people to create a 'social context'.

Currently within the D:NMCH these experiences are mainly negative. While there is currently no sharing of experiences to create a social context for general visitors, there is an educational area where scholars can share information and experiences. This educational area focusses on primary school learners.

2.6. Client

Main client: Ditsong Museums of South Africa. Ditsong Museums is an amalgamation of eight national museums located in Gauteng, seven in Tshwane and one in Johannesburg. (Ditsong 2010.) These museums have diverse collections covering various fields such as cultural history, fauna and flora, palaeontology, geology, anthropology, archaeology and military history. "The target audience for these museums are children, youth, adults, students, tourists (foreign and local), researchers and the public in general" (Ditsong 2010).

The vision and mission of all Ditsong museums are to be leading African heritage institutions of excellence, that are accessible to all and to transform and enhance museums as vehicles for nation building and social cohesion. (Ditsong 2010.) This occurs through conservation, innovative research and relevant public programmes for the benefit of present and future generations. (Ditsong 2010.)

The Department of Arts and Culture will also have a vested interest in the redesign of the museum. (Department: Arts and Culture 2014.) The design of the onset of the visitor's journey through the museum and their interaction with museum facilities will attract new visitors and engage return visitors.

It is important that the Ditsong: National Museum of Cultural History is on par with international museum standards in terms of collections and design. This will be further investigated in Chapter 3. The museum should also adhere to the mission and vision as stated above. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the museum currently lacks an innovative, contemporary manner in which collections are stored and displayed for an optimum visitor experience.

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter investigated the site history, site condition and my experiences as a visitor to the D:NMCH. The physical site analysis motivates for the ideal location for the design intervention. This overall site analysis indicates the need to revitalise the museum, which may be achieved by enhancing the visitor's experience of the museum space and its facilities, as well as the exhibitions. Key problems requiring attention are lighting and wayfinding.

