

# 04

# heritage

The surrounding light industrial heritage fabric and the historical layers of the site itself provide impetus for an interrogation of heritage theory, normative position, charters and approaches in the formulation of an attitude towards the heritage of the site which will be explored in the next chapter.



Figure 60: Gabled façade and brick detailing, Rivertown Beerhall (Author 2021)



## HERITAGE AS TRANSMISSION

#### Normative Position

Contrary to heritage fabric being interpreted and reused to sustain elite narratives or Western ideals, that produce exclusive "utopias" (Foucault 1986:24), heritage sites should strive to become 'heterotopias' (Foucault 1986:24) in their authentic reflection and inclusion of a diverse society.

In the context of an Ecological worldview and Regenerative Design, heritage should not remain static but open to change and improvement of its natural and social systems through the co-evolution of place. This should be done in such a way to invite a multiplicity of readings and interpretations so that previous power relationships or dominant narratives demonstrated on site can be undone to invite a diversity of perspectives and stories to be exchanged (Bakker 2011:245-246) (figure 61).

The theme of "Heritage as transmission" (Bakker 2011:239) (figure 62) reinforces the practices of decalcomania in the sense that heritage can facilitate the transference of knowledge between different cultural groups. This would create a new, collective, and inclusive ownership of heritage. In this way, heritage landscapes can act as thresholds for the mediation of diverse cultures instead of enclaves that do not accommodate anything different.

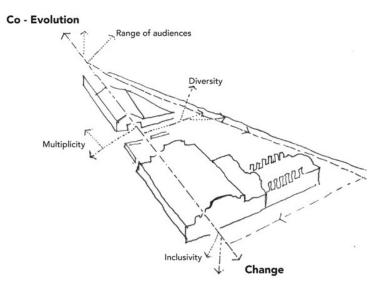
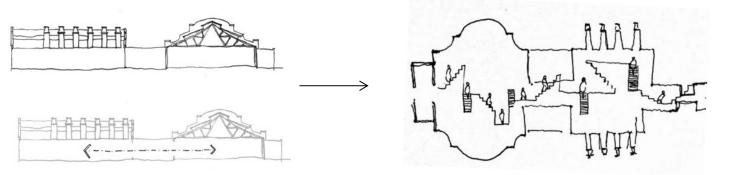


Figure 61: Heritage as Transmission: (Author 2021)

#### TRANSMISSION

1. Cause something to pass from one person/place to another



Decalcomania/Rhizome (Deleuze & Guattari 1988)

Exchange, Collective space & Surveillance across space

(Merriam-Webster Dictionary, not dated).



## REVIEW OF HERITAGE CHARTERS

The ICCROM Living Heritage (2003:3-4) supports the notion of "heritage as transmission" through its advocacy of the continuity of use, community, and cultural traditions through heritage conservation. In addition, this approach to conservation aims to recognize a multiplicity of identities in the promotion of ownership of heritage places (ICCROM Living Heritage, 2003:11).

Ownership in heritage places becomes complex when viewed within a tourism context. The International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999:1) advocates that tourism is a catalyst for cultural exchange. As described previously, the context of Rivertown itself, presents a unique threshold between two heavily dominated tourist places of the ICC and the Durban promenade. The heritage of the Rivertown Beerhall therefore has the potential to reinforce the social and cultural exchange between tourists and the host community.

At this point, it is important to define the host community of the project which ranges in its diversity. The initial host community related to site's history of sorghum beer is representative of many cultures in Africa but is specifically rooted in the Xhosa and Zulu cultures (Slater 2014). In a wider sense, this host community extends to various cultures in South African society that use and value traditional and indigenous crops as part of generational traditions and ceremonial events. The second dimension of the host community relates to the current community of Rivertown that presents itself as a mix of factory workers, small entrepreneurial businesses, and occasionally UNISA students.

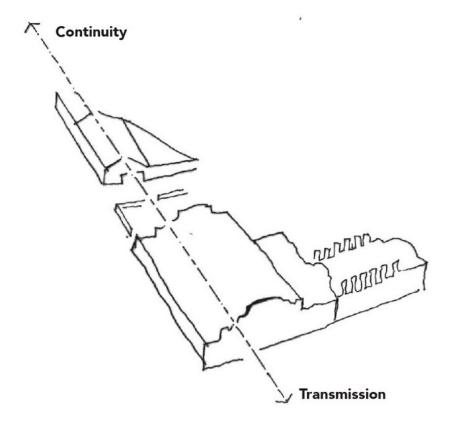
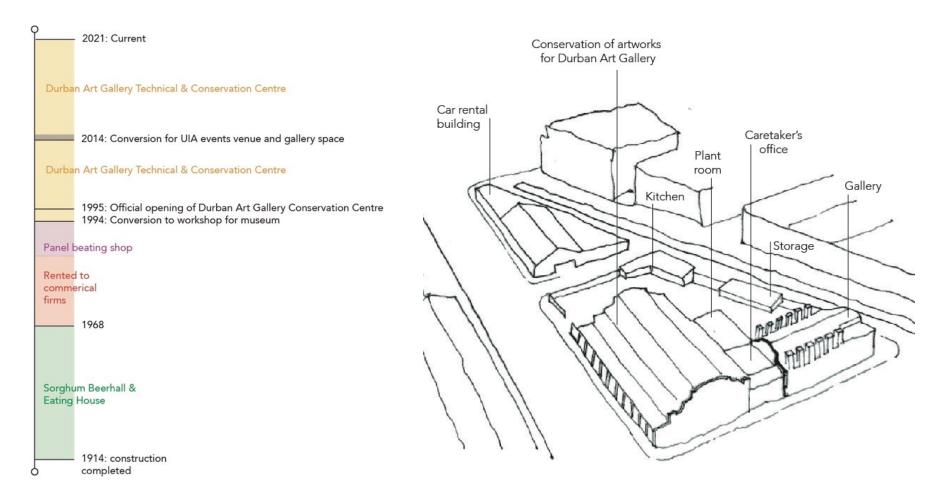


Figure 63: Diagram of continuity and transmission (Author 2021)



In line with principles stipulated in The International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999:2), tourism within heritage places should be conserved in such a way that respects and even enhances the heritage of the host communities. The current function of the Rivertown Beerhall (figures 64-65), however, is an inward-looking, private function which fails to involve tourists or the host community in the interpretation and reuse of this shared heritage. One of the original intentions for the conversion of the Rivertown Beerhall, alongside its main function as a conservation centre for the Durban Art Gallery, was that it would function as an event and gallery space (Hlongwa 2021: Appendix A). Unfortunately, this has not come to full fruition and the intended gallery space does not currently function as an asset to the precinct (Hlongwa 2021: Appendix A). As a result of this current function, the value of this heritage is lost to both tourists and the local host community.





Objective 2 of The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008:2) reinforces the notion that heritage sites should be presented to and interpreted by a wide "range of audiences" (figure 66). As indicated through the case of the current use of the Rivertown Beerhall, cultural exchange can be enriched or overlooked through the way in which heritage sites are presented, managed, and interpreted.

In ensuring that inclusivity and cultural diversity is represented in the heritage of Rivertown Beerhall, an understanding of the meaning of the place needs to be interrogated before considering the attitudes, approaches and strategies employed towards this heritage. This is supported in understanding the "cultural significance" of a place as stipulated by the Burra Charter (2013:1). Cultural significance is defined as "aesthetic, historic, scientific, social, or spiritual value for past, present or future generations" (The Burra Charter, 2013:2). Furthermore, this charter advocates to "do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained" (Burra Charter, 2013:1). This cautious attitude in response to the conservation of heritage is quite limited in that cultural significance is not always easily identifiable in heritage sites and must first be discovered and uncovered as such.

This review of charters initiates certain intentions in the formulation of an attitude towards this heritage:

In alignment with ICCROM Living Heritage (2013), cultural traditions associated with traditional and indigenous crops should be valued and thus continued as living heritage through the conservation of Rivertown Beerhall. This continued use of suppressed cultural traditions speaks to the promotion of ownership of these sites by host communities in alignment with The International Cultural Tourism Charter (1999). Furthermore, the Rivertown Beerhall should allow for tourism to be involved in this heritage in such a way that it benefits both the tourist and host communities. The diversity of tourists with host communities calls for the heritage of Rivertown Beerhall to be represented and interpreted so to invite a multiplicity of identities to benefit from the place in accordance with ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (2008). Furthermore, this inclusivity of diverse identities will be achieved by changing the place in such a way to reveal its cultural significance for it to be retained in the future (Burra Charter 2013:1).

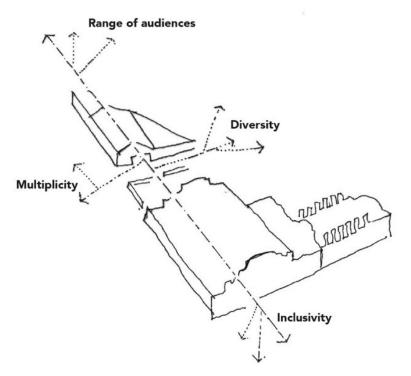


Figure 66: Diagram of intentions (Author 2021)



## SURFACING THE HIDDEN

In trying to understand the cultural significance of the Rivertown Beerhall, it is not so much a question of retaining cultural significance than it is about first revealing past suppressed value in the present for it to be retained in the future. This notion is supported by Article 18 of the Burra Charter (2013:7) which states that "restoration and reconstruction should reveal culturally significant aspects of the place" and that perhaps change is necessary if it will retain the cultural significance of the place. In this way, an attitude towards this heritage should change as much as necessary of the site to reveal the cultural significance of the place so that it can be retained.

'Surfacing the hidden' (figure 67), is the proposed attitude and contribution towards heritage landscapes in this dissertation. This attitude accepts Machado's (1976:46-49) attitude of remodelling as a premise which views the building as a series of different layers of meaning that have been added over time and which can be accepted or rejected (Machado, 1976:46-49). This attitude, however, moves beyond this and challenges the palimpsestic approach in which layers of the building can be added to, uncovered or written over (Barker 2020: 132). In this palimpsestic approach, existing value can remain hidden, suppressed and inaccessible beneath new layers that are written over or added to existing ones.

'Surfacing the hidden' rather explores the reorganization and reordering of existing layers of heritage to cause hidden or suppressed value to rise through the reuse of this heritage. This notion of reuse supports the fundamental principles of adaptive reuse which involves the addition of a new function to heritage fabric (Barker 2020: 132). However, instead of a completely new externally derived function, this new use is derived predominantly from the internal reordering and rereading of exiting significant heritage layers on site.

Consequently, this attitude can not be fully classified as either remodelling, palimpsest or adaptive reuse, but rather as an attitude that straddles between them and accepts parts of each of these attitudes in the formulation of a new contribution (figure 68).

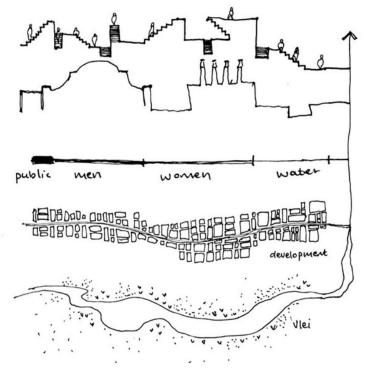
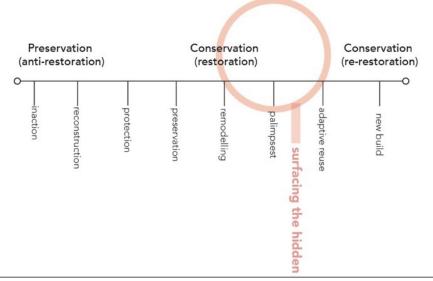


Figure 67: Surfacing the hidden (Author 2021)





## HERITAGE VALUE SURVEY

To fully assess the layers that make up the place, a heritage value survey was undertaken. The methodology involved in understanding the significance of the place consisted of interviews with staff on site, site visits using observations and photography, as well as desktop research of past heritage studies performed on the site.

It is not evident whether the site of the Rivertown Beerhall is graded. Therefore, in terms of Section 7(1)(c) of the National Heritage Resources Act (25/1999) and in accordance with Regulation 43 (485/2003), it can be assumed for the purposes of this project that the site can be classified as a Grade III heritage building which is described as a Local Heritage Resource (Heritage Western Cape 2016:4 & Section 7(1)(c) of National Heritage Resources Act (25/1999)).

#### Architectural Quality

The classification of the Rivertown Beerhall as a Local Heritage Resource, arises from the site's unique and distinct architectural quality that causes it to be a landmark and focal point within its local surroundings. The heritage impact assessment therefore begins with an overall analysis of the architectural quality of the Rivertown Beerhall, as the initial, most tangible value of the heritage.

In terms of architectural quality, the building is positioned within a continuum of architectural styles to highlight its significance (figure 69). The Rivertown Beerhall was built in 1914 (Choromanski 2013:3). The theme of power throughout the project is exemplified by the fact that the Rivertown Beerhall was built at the onset of World War 1, and continued its function throughout WW2 and through most of Apartheid. Therefore, the building has always existed in the context of power both locally and internationally. The architecture of Durban was heavily influenced by the international context starting with Queen Victoria's reign which resulted in the Victorian Style of buildings in Durban in the 1800s (Castle 1992: 2-3). Furthermore, the Edwardian Style of architecture in Durban grew as a result of the end of Queen Victoria's reign, her replacement on the throne by Edward, coupled with the end of the Anglo-Boer war (Emmett 1992: 4-5). The Edwardian style, was usually depicted by precast Tuscan Doric columns and pronounced gables (Emmett 1992:4-5).

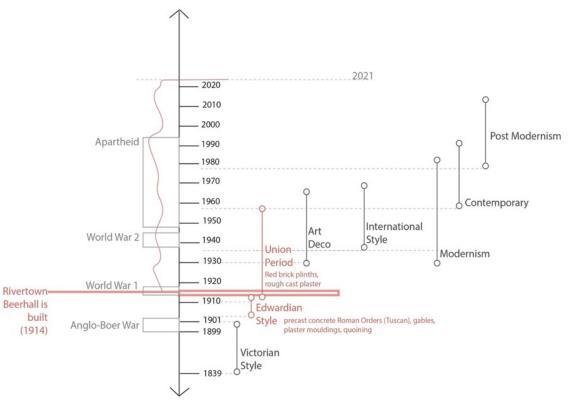


Figure 69: Timeline of South African Architectural Styles (Author 2021)



The Rivertown Beerhall forms part of the Union Style period initiated by the building of the Union Buildings by Herbert Baker (Harber 1992:8). In Natal specifically, however, architects tried to find their own style in reaction to this new period (Harber 1992:8). Many architectural elements of Rivertown Beerhall reference the previous Edwardian Style of architecture (Emmett 1992:4-5). Such features of the building include the fine brick detailing found by the red brick plinths (figures 73-74) as well as heavy Tuscan Doric columns (figure 76) and the gabled facade (figure 75).

To fully understand how the Rivertown Beerhall references two style of architecture, a building was chosen from each style that embodies similar features to this heritage. The Workshop building, built in 1904 (figure 70) is an example of utilitarian Edwardian style architecture (Emmett 1992:5) that has a similar aesthetic to the Rivertown Beerhall built ten years later through its gabled façade. Similarly, the Hub built in 1910 (figure 71) at the beginning of the Union Period depicts a rhythmic colonnade at pavement level which is guintessential of the Union Period (Harber 1992:9), similar to that of the Rivertown Beerhall built four years later.

Owing to the fact that the Rivertown Beerhall references a combination of the Union Period and the Edwardian style in Natal, it is a significant building in its precinct and requires sufficient protection which enables it to be classified specifically as a Grade III B Local Heritage Resource (Heritage Western Cape 2016:5).



Edwardian Style: Figure 70: The Workshop, 1904, Conservation Architects: Bentel Abramson & Hallen Theron and Partners (KZNIA 1992:5)



Union Period : Figure 71: The Hub, 1910, Ing & Jackson, 425 West Street Durban (KZNIA 1992:8)

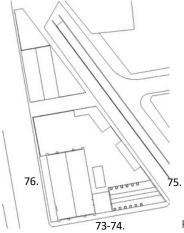








Figure 75: Gabled façade (Author 2021)

Figure 76: Tuscan column (Author 2021)



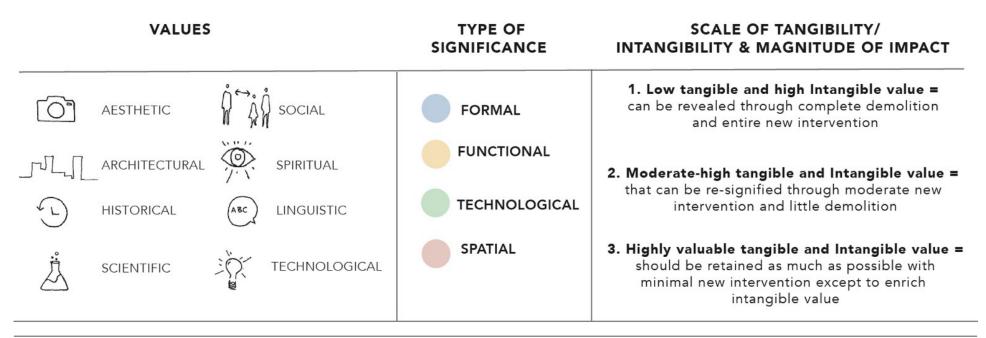
### Rubric for heritage value and significance

To delve further into the value of this heritage, the site is analysed through the 7 individual buildings and spaces that make up the place. Each of these study areas is assessed in terms of the values that make up the cultural significance criteria in the Cultural Heritage Survey Guidelines and Assessment Tools for Protected Areas in South Africa (2016:20) which are namely; aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic, and technological.

A rubric (figure 77) is created to compare each study area and its resultant value. This rubric comprises of the values described above, as well as the type of architectural significance that they embody, namely; formal, functional, technological (Barker & Swart, 2019: 67) as well as spatial significance. The third component of the rubric is all about the connection between intangible heritage, transmission and 'surfacing the hidden'.

This area of the rubric indicates the scale of 'tangibility' of a certain layer of value. Intangible heritage can only continue its existence through its relevant transmission from generation to generation (UNESCO: Intangible Cultural Heritage, not dated). Therefore, if intangible heritage remains hidden, suppressed or inaccessible as a layer of heritage, it could potentially cease to exist (UNESCO: Intangible Cultural Heritage, not dated). not dated).

In this way, the third component of the rubric recognizes the scale of tangibility of a value in order to allow it to be reordered in the interpretation and reuse of this heritage so that it can be transmitted to future generations. This scale of tangibility then indicates the magnitude of resignification or 'surfacing' (demolition or intervention) that needs to occur to allow such layers of value to rise or be maintained in significance.





## HERITAGE VALUE SURVEY

#### Study Area 1, Thifty Car Rental (figures 78-81):

The main value of the Thrifty Car Rental is its historical value, demonstrated through its original, functional significance. Historically, part of this site is labelled on the 1931 context map as a sawmill (figure 79). This previous function signifies the industrial relationship between man and nature whereby man dominated and transformed natural resources purely for his own benefit without giving back to nature itself. This is significant in the context of the ecological world view previously described and points to the potential of the site being reconciled to give back to nature through a new function in this area.

In a technological sense, the building is low in significance with the use of common materials such as concrete and corrugated iron, which could potentially be reused in the new intervention. The form of the Thrifty Car Rental is not representative of any architectural style nor is it aesthetically unique in its context and thus is low in significance. Spatially, the building forms an important urban entrance or exit to Rivertown as well as indicating the start or end of the underground canal (figure 78). Internally, the space is relatively mundane and low in significance owing to its simple form that provides little light, volume or ventilation.

In this way, this study area holds high intangible value through its historical function but little tangible value and thus achieves a rating of 1 so that the intangible relationship between man and nature can rise in value through a new intervention and function.



Figure 80: Thrifty Car Rental (Google Maps 2021)



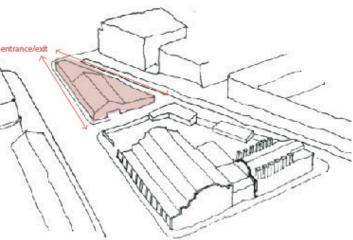


Figure 78: Spatial value (Author 2021)

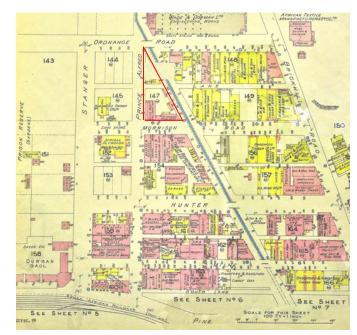


Figure 79: 1931 Context, (Choromanski & eThekwini Municipality 2015)

Figure 81: Findings, Study Area 1 (Author 2021)

Figure 82: Key plan (Author 2021)

80-



**Study Area 2, out buildings (figures 83-85):** The out buildings are part of the original site in 1914 and are historically valuable owing to their age. The form of the out buildings is not aesthetically unique, but their exterior facades contribute to the continuous eastern edge (figure 83). Spatially, these are rectangular spaces subdivided into smaller rooms, thus relatively low in significance. Their interior function, has changed overtime between mundane uses from workshops to storage units, ablutions and a kitchen. The technology of these out buildings is a combination of brick, concrete and corrugated iron, but there is little significance or uniqueness in the details. In this way, the site achieves slight formal significance through the eastern façade but achieves a rating of 1 as new intervention could redefine and improve this edge condition and relationship between the site and the canal.

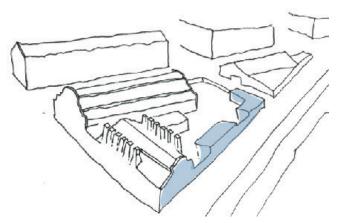


Figure 83: Formal value of East facade (Author 2021)



Figure 85: Findings, Study Area 2 (Author 2021)

Study Area 3, plant room & courtyard (figures 86-89): This study area is socially valuable through its historical functions over time. Functionally, the courtyard is of intangible significance as it was once used for gathering as an extension of the former beerhall but the current function of both the plant room and the courtyard holds little value (figure 88). Formally, the plant room holds little significance in the wider complex of buildings. Spatially, the courtyard has the potential to be a significant space between the complex of buildings but currently the buildings do not fully enrich this space. Technologically, the remains of the roof above the plant room indicate timber trusses, but this is not incredibly unique to one specific architectural style and therefore is low in significance. In this way, the study area achieves a rating of 1 as the intangible, functional significance of gathering needs to be re-signified through new intervention.









Figure 86: Courtyard & Plant Room (Author 2021)

Figure 87: Out building (Author 2021)

Figure 84: East Façade (Author 2021)

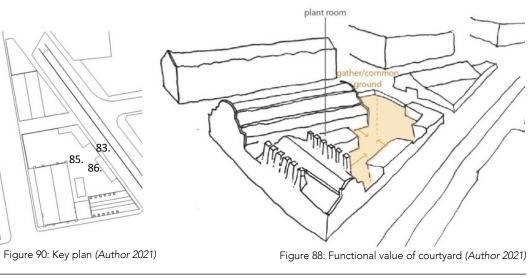


Figure 89: Findings, Study Area 3 (Author 2021)

Study Area 4, Hall 1 (figures 91-96): The existing Hall 1 was built as part of the original site in 1914, which makes it historically valuable. Formally, this building is highly significant through its gabled facade and unique windows on the east, industrial chimneys on north and south façade with red brick plinths along these edges, as well as its roof form with clerestory windows that collect north and south light. Spatially, the hall is well-lit and benefits from the higher volume created by the central part of the roof. Spatially, this hall is highly significant on site as it is situated in and contributes to a sequence of spaces from west to east. Functionally, the current use as an office for extra eThekwini library staff is of little value to the larger precinct. The historical function of this space, however is of very high significance. This space was the kitchen where women brewed sorghum beer to be consumed by men in the second hall towards the west of the site. Furthermore, this function is culturally significant in its representation of intangible traditions and practices associated with indigenous crops such as sorghum. Technologically, the chimneys are representative of an industrial way of making and the brick plinths are unique to the Edwardian and Union Period of architecture, making it highly significant. Therefore, this building receives a rating of 3 indicating that it has high tangible and intangible significance, and thus should be retained as much as possible but the current function can change to re-signify the intangible value of the historical cultural traditions and practices that took place in this space.

TECHNOLOGICAL

SOCIAL

HISTORICAL



Figure 93: Gabled East facade (Author 2021)



Figure 94: Chimneys (Author 2021)



Figure 95: Interior of chimneys (Author 2021)

FORMAL

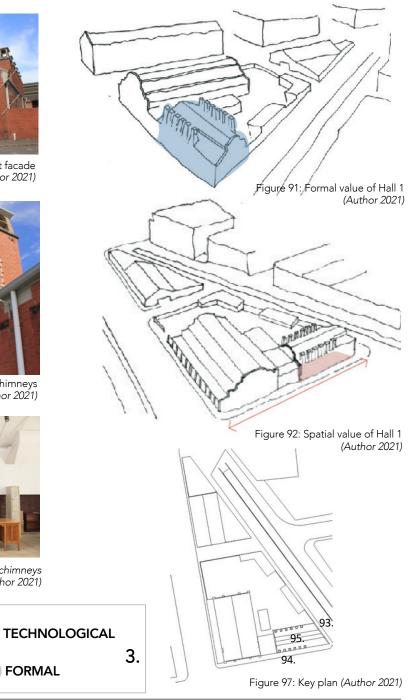


Figure 96: Findings, Study Area 4 (Author 2021)

ARCHITECTURAL

AESTHETIC

[O]

**SPATIAL** 

FUNCTIONAL



Study Area 5, Link Area (figures 98-104): The link area is historically valuable owing to its age as it was built in 1914. Formally, the link area contributes to the southern façade that has remined intact since 1914. Spatially, it is of significance as it defines the tangible and intangible relationship between the two halls. Functionally, it currently holds a few offices and ablutions which is of little significance in terms of the heritage of the site. Historically, this is of functional significance as it acted as the back door entrance space into the former eating hall from the kitchen thus reinforcing the hierarchical nature of the historical space and the resultant intangible power discrepancies of the site.. Technologically, the space continues the red brick plinth on the south façade and is therefore in this sense of high value . In this way, the site holds tangible (formal and technological) and intangible (functional and spatial) value. This area receives a rating of 2, indicating that the tangible value should be retained as much as possible but moderate new intervention can occur to re-signify and redefine the intangible past power relationships in space.



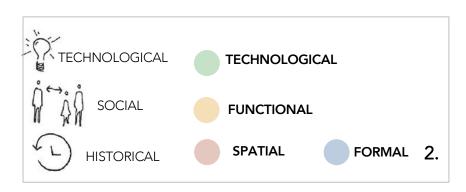


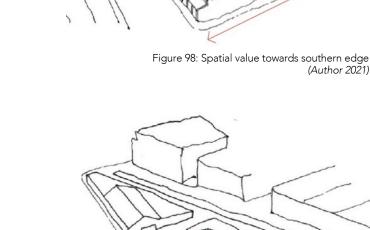
Figure 101-102: Brick plinth on southern façade (Author

2021)



Figure 103: Southern façade (Author 2021)





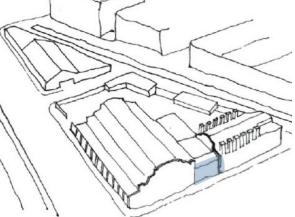


Figure 99: Formal value towards southern edge (Author 2021)



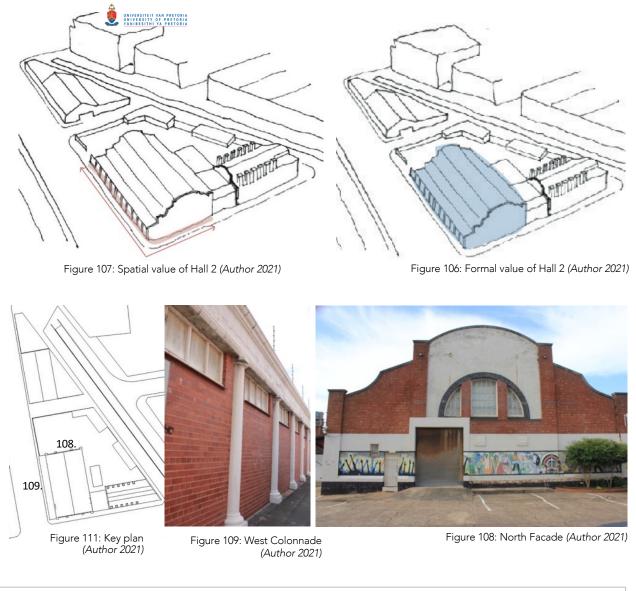
103,102,101.

Figure 104: Findings, Study Area 5 (Author 2021)

(Author 2021)

Study Area 6, Hall 2 (figures 106-110): Hall 2 was built in 1914 and therefore is historically valuable owing to is age. Formally, this building is highly significant owing to its gabled façade on the south and north, Tuscan Doric columns creating a colonnade on the west, and through its roof form with clerestory windows facing east and west. The windows, however collect east and west light which is inconvenient. Spatially, this is of high value as it frames the site by running the length of the west street behind the colonnade as well as contributing to the southern façade. Furthermore, it marks the beginning of this sequence of spaces towards the east. Functionally, it is currently a conservation centre for artworks which is not a highly unique use towards its history and therefore is not of much value. Historically, however, the use of this as an eating hall occupied by men reinforces the gendered power relationships between the two halls. In addition, this historic function is also representative of the valuable notion of social gathering. Technologically, the hall uses fine brick detailing along its plinth and around the windows that causes it to be of high significance.

This study area achieves a rating of 2 indicating that the tangible should be retained as much as possible but change or new intervention can occur if it will redistribute the past intangible power relationships on site.

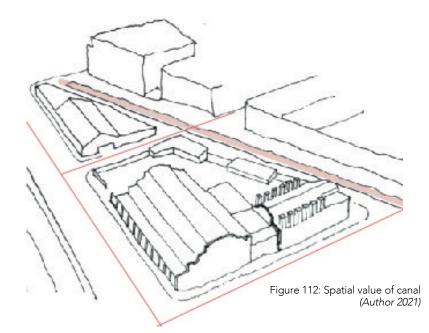


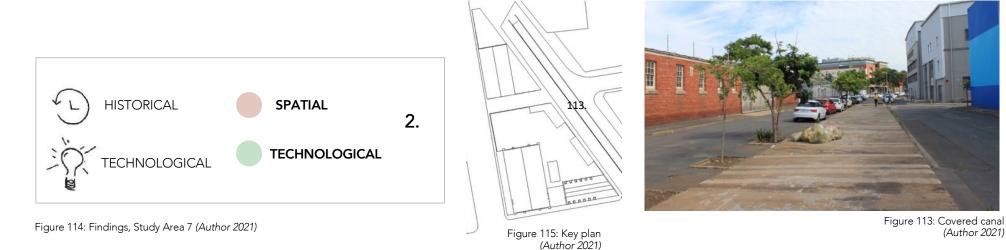




Study Area 7, Underground Canal (figures 112-114): As described previously in this dissertation, the original Eastern Vlei that made up the current site was subsequently reduced into a canal for drainage purposes around 1855 (Choromanski, 2014:4). This canalisation of the vlei is highly significant in terms of the historical, infrastructural and technological power imposed on the landscape as well as the site's lost relationship to water. The form itself is of little value as it is not more unique than other underground canals. Spatially, the canal is of high significance as it diagonally traverses the streets of Rivertown, and offsets its grid. Furthermore, it is spatially significant as it is the element through which the precinct derives its name. Functionally, the canal is currently underutilized, but has the potential to be of great value to the site of the beerhall and the surrounding precinct. Technologically, the canal is unique in that it displays traces of brick detailing instead of merely being concrete infrastructure.

This study area receives a rating of 2 indicating that the tangible footprint and outline of the canal should be retained but intervention can occur so that the value of this water is re-signified on site.







## SUMMARY OF VALUE & SIGNIFICANCE

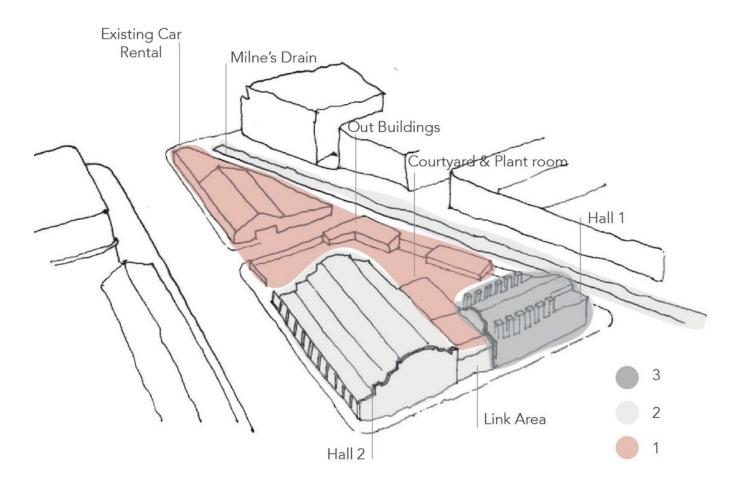
Study Area				Values					Significance	Tangibility & magnitude of impact
	Aesthetic	Architectural	Historical	Scientific	Social	Spiritual	Linguistic	Technological		
1. Top Triangle			(L)						FUNCTIONAL SPATIAL	1.
2. Out Buildings			()						FORMAL	1.
3. Courtyard & Plant rooom			(L)		ĥ⇔àÅ					1.
4. Hall 1	6		(c)		₽°\$\$				FORMAL FUNCTIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL SPATIAL	3.
5. Link Area			Ð		Å				FORMAL FUNCTIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL SPATIAL	2.
6. Hall 2	6		(J)		\$~}			N. N	FORMAL FUNCTIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL SPATIAL	2.
7. Milne's Drain (Canal)			5						TECHNOLOGICAL	2.

Figure 116: Summary of value & Significance (Author 2021)



## THE WAY FORWARD

From the heritage value survey, it can be concluded that Hall 1 should be retained in its entirety but can change functionally (figure 117). The Link Area, Hall 2 and the canal should be retained as much as possible whilst still allowing necessary changes to occur that will resignify intangible value or that will cause intangible power to be redistributed across the site (figure 117). The existing car rental, out buildings and courtyard and plant rooms have little tangible value and can be changed and manipulated substantially to allow respective intangible value to be revealed in the reuse of the site (figure 117).





## HERITAGE APPROACH

It is important to note that the attitude towards heritage of 'surfacing the hidden', can not be fulfilled by an approach of replication of past value. 'Surfacing the hidden' needs an approach towards heritage where intangible value is reinterpreted in its process of being "surfaced" so that it can be relevant in order for it to be transmitted to future generations. In this way, revealing current relevance of past value is an important principle for the approach towards heritage.

Transformation (Barker 2020:140) is the chosen approach that aligns with the attitude of 'surfacing the hidden' whereby spaces, forms, functions and artefacts are reinterpreted and signified through the building's reuse. These elements are not replications of past value but rather transformed into new conditions that are formally or functionally associated with the previous features yet modernized to suit the current need or context of the place (Barker 2020:140) (figure 118).

## HERITAGE STRATEGY

The approach of transformation is translated in more detail through the architectural strategy of addition which is used to define the relationship between old existing heritage and new fabric on site. The strategy of 'addition' is defined as "link[ing] new with old using an independent joining elements to retain the identity of both parts" (Barker 2020:142).

This architectural strategy will be expressed in more spatial, formal and technological detail through intersection which "requires the meeting of both conditions through a junction that could be additive or penetrative" (Barker 2020: 143).

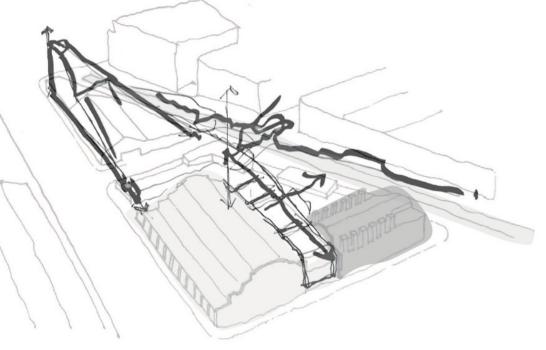


Figure 118: Transformation on site (Author 2021)