

3 Brief

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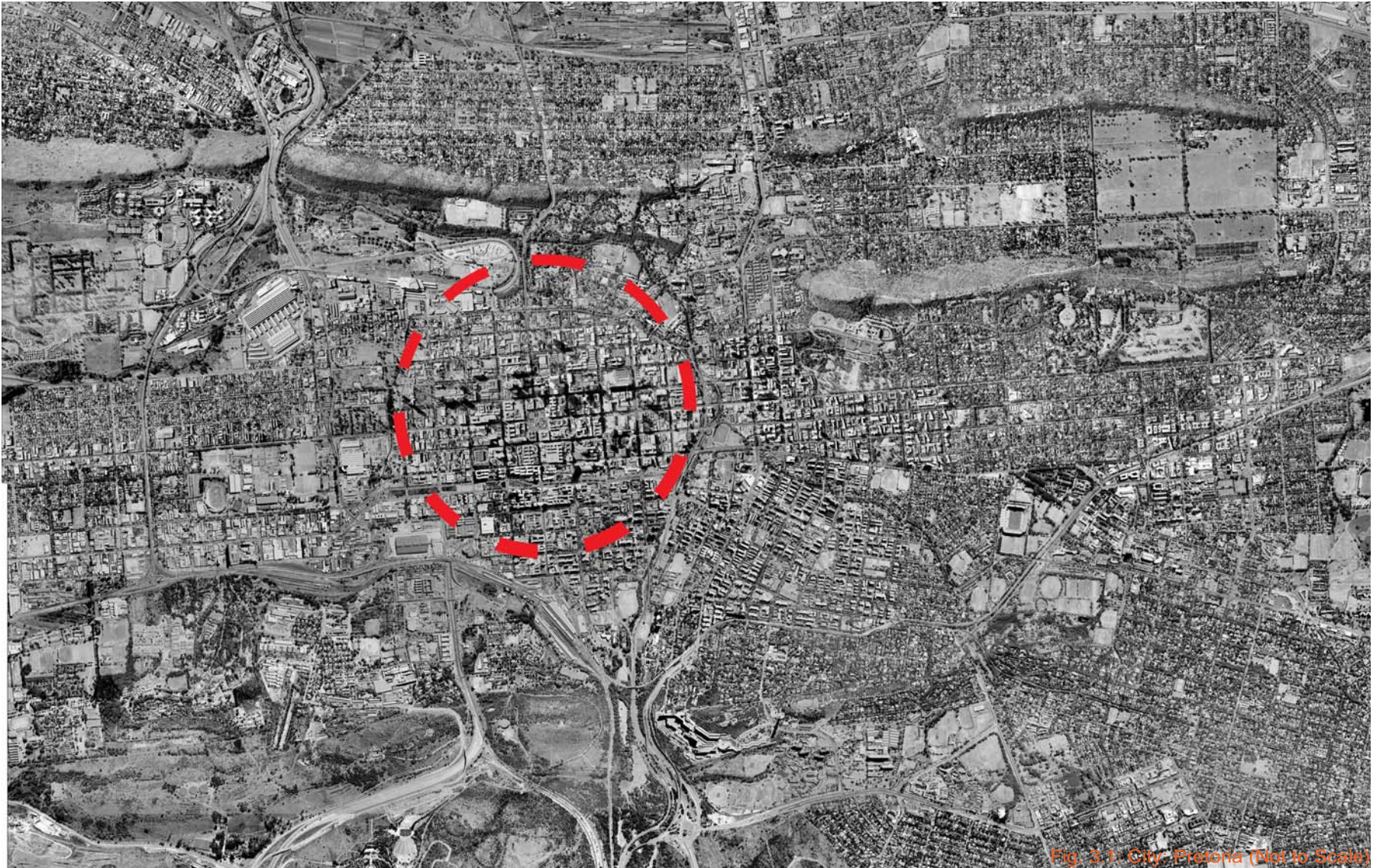


Fig. 3.1: City, Pretoria (Not to Scale)

3.1 Problem Statement

The Department of Education require that the inner city campuses of the Tshwane North College and the Tshwane University of Technology on the corner of Du Toit and Church Streets be converted to a mixed-use city block where students can directly interact with industry. The project is to be phased to allow for the restructuring of departments. Careful consideration must be given to the city context, addressing issues of safety and security. The project is aimed at a public-private partnership between the Department of Education and private investors, such as Atterbury Property and the Mandela Development Company. A mixed-use development as envisioned by the client incorporates elements of retail, theatre, restaurants, entertainment and residential uses of facilities thereby using the consumer market to generate urban renewal. The aim is to allow students to work in a commercial environment used by the public. Such a project is vital to realize the potential of students at the two institutions.

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3.1.1 Sub-Problem One

The client provides the perfect opportunity for a commercially driven urban renewal project. The question arises of how our environments are shaped by the consumer driven paradigm and what role the architect has to play.

3.1.2 Sub-Problem Two

The location of the site in the inner city needs to be considered carefully in order to establish how the urban fabric can be changed to create a safe environment.

3.1.3 Sub-Problem Three

What legal implications would a development of this magnitude have?

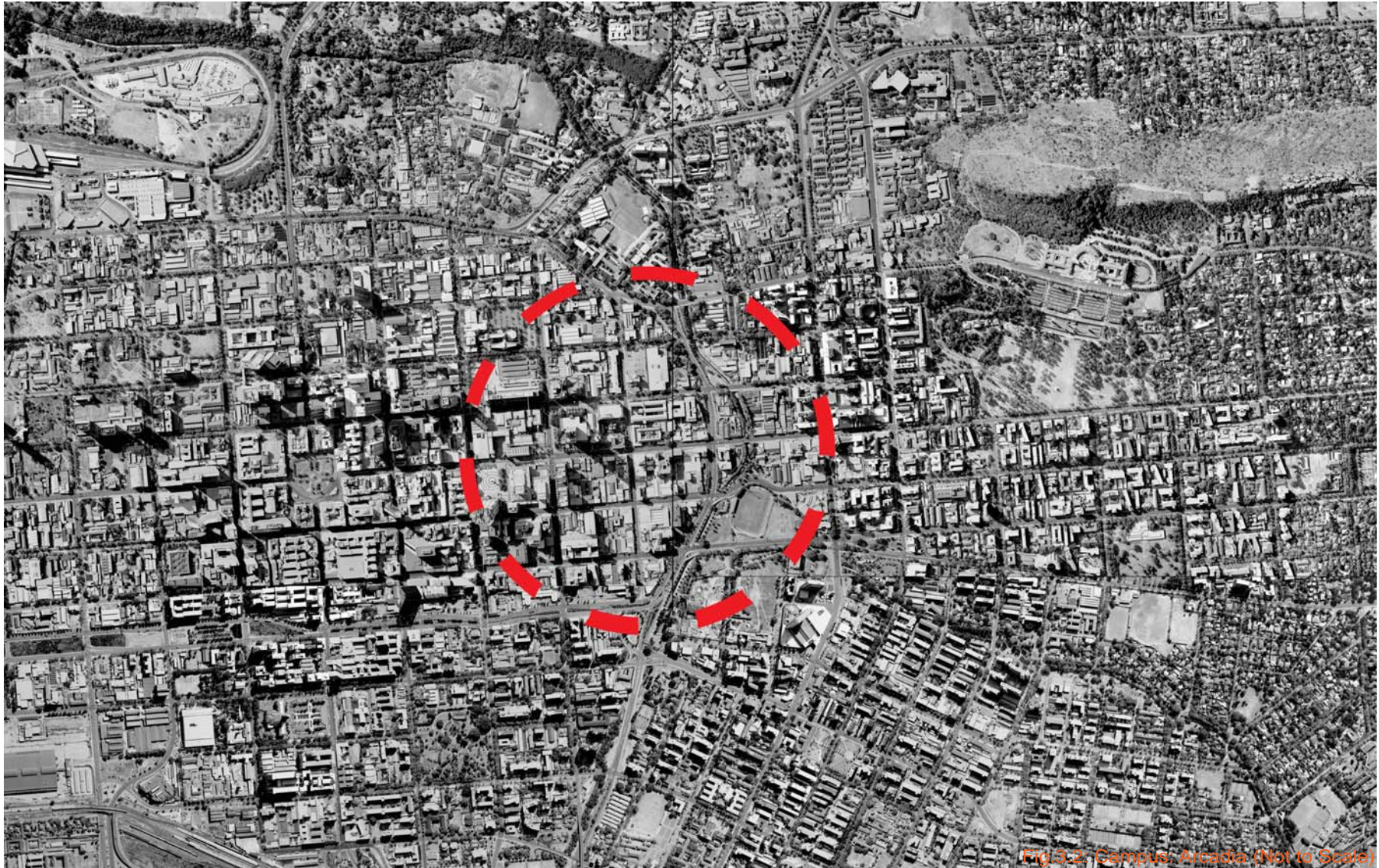


Fig 3.2: Campus, Arcadia (Not to Scale)

3.2 The Project

3.2.1 Introduction

An 'incubator facility' for the Tshwane University of Technology is envisaged for the south-east quadrant of its Arcadia Campus to form part of a greater mixed-use development for the entire city block. This facility will provide for postgraduate students to develop skills in order to open their own businesses while providing opportunities for the acquisition of capital.

The envisaged facility will operate on the same basis as the Innovation Hub, a Blue IQ project near the University of Pretoria aimed at developing innovative ideas in the science and technology industries. The facility will be focusing on the design and entertainment industries.

Graduate students will be given the opportunity to submit a business proposal to the facility. If the idea is proposed fresh and innovative, the graduate is accepted into a program known as Pre-Incubation, during which, for six months, the student receives mentorship to develop his/her idea further and prepare it for the business world. After this period the idea is reviewed. If found to be needed in the industry, graduates proceed to a two year Incubation Period during which they rent office space from the facility to develop their ideas further (Maboya, personal communication, 2006).

The vision behind the project is to create a vibrant and safe social space, part of a greater mixed-use development, where students can interact directly with the public.

3.2.2 The Aim of the Project

The stated aim is, firstly, to create a facility which empowers the previously disadvantaged demographic while providing for some of the needs of the Arcadia Campus of the Tshwane University of Technology.

Secondly, the project will encourage citizens to return to the inner city. It is hoped that they will understand that urban areas are made safe by interactive communities, not by the isolation of a gated and fenced-in society (Jacobs 1961:46).

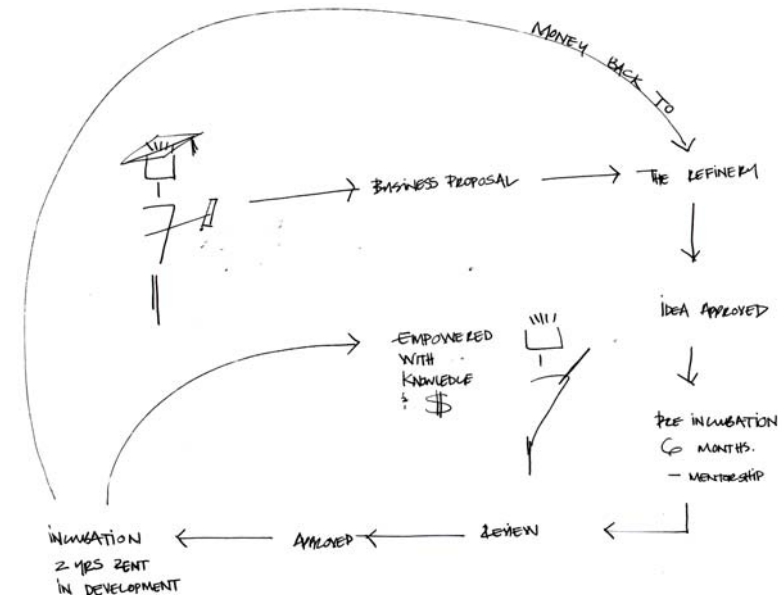


Fig. 3.3: The concept of Incubation

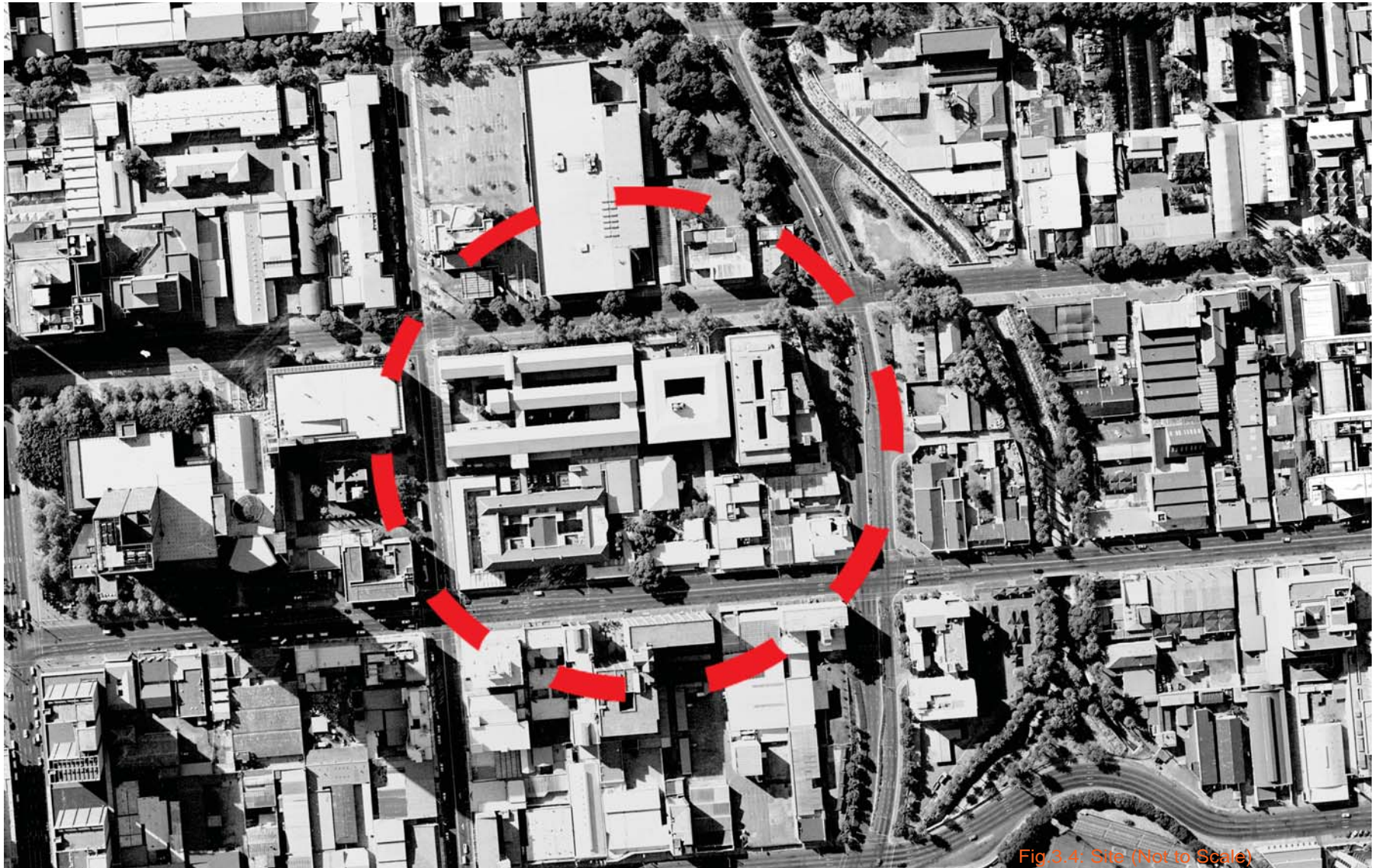


Fig.3.4: Site (Not to Scale)

3.2.3 Why an Incubation Facility?

An interview with Ronel Venter (Venter, personal communication, 2006), the marketing manager for Tshwane North College, has revealed that even though previously disadvantaged students might receive an education, the majority find it difficult to break into the commercial market. The result is that some brilliant and talented individuals are at a loss after receiving a tertiary diploma or degree.

The student will benefit through:

- Mentorship

The facility will provide an opportunity for such individuals to develop their ideas under the guidance of qualified mentors for six months, on a one to one basis arranged according to individual needs.

- Community

The bringing together of like-minded individuals will provide opportunities for the exchange and generation of new ideas from within (Maboya, personal communication, 2006).

- Acquisition of Capital

The opportunity for students to rent prime property in the inner city during the Incubation Period will allow for the acquisition of enough capital to develop their concept further.



Fig. 3.5: The logo of Tshwane University of Technology

Tshwane University of Technology will benefit through:

- Development

The development of its Arcadia Campus allows Tshwane University of Technology to develop prime property located in the heart of the inner city, providing an educational facility and receiving a financial return from rental. The location of the development will establish the image of the Tshwane University of Technology as a forerunner in empowerment.

The community will benefit through:

- Innovative Ideas

The development of ideas, otherwise lying dormant, will benefit the community in artistic ways. The opportunity for potential investors is endless as they will be able to shop for new talent which has been through an incubation process.

- The Development of the Inner City

The mixed-use development of the city block will create a node that will be used twenty-four hours a day. The facility will enable a previously fortified city block to be accessible and attract the general public back towards the inner city of Tshwane.



Fig. 3.6: The location of the three campuses of Tshwane University of Technology within Tshwane (not to scale)

3.2.4 Building Type

The proposed design project is a commercial building which displays the movements and activities of its users.

“...This last point, that the sight of people attracts still other people, is something that city planners and city architectural designers seem to find incomprehensible. They operate on the premiss that city people seek the sight of emptiness, obvious order and quiet. Nothing could be less true...”

(Jacobs 1961:47)

3.2.5 Client Profile

An interview with Piet Engelbrecht (Engelbrecht, personal communication, 2006), the Facilities Manager for Tshwane University of Technology, revealed the following:

- Tshwane University of Technology has three campuses located in and around the inner city of Tshwane.
- At present, all three campuses are running at very high costs due to inadequate facilities.
- It is believed that the consolidation of the campuses would result in a substantial saving.
- The Arcadia Campus, located in the inner city, is fully utilised to its capacity, so relocation to this facility would not be possible. The main campus, located in Pretoria West, would be the obvious choice for the consolidation as most departments are already on the campus.
- Any development would have to be phased so as to allow for the relocation of departments.
- The gated environment of the Arcadia Campus does not provide for increased safety due to the fact that most crime is internal.
- Each campus is responsible for its own funding, therefore outside investors have to be or should be approached for the development of an incubation facility.

3.2.6 User Profile

Users:

The primary users of the facility will be graduate students in the Incubation Programme and their mentors. Their needs are to interact with the public while developing new ideas.

Initial Users:

The initial users will be the 4 000 students now using Tshwane University of Technology's Arcadia Campus. Their immediate needs: a safe area to study, especially after 17:00 during the week, and areas to socialise and interact between and after classes.

Potential Users:

Once the mixed-use development of the city block has taken place, the users will extend to include the students of the Tshwane North College and the general public. It is hoped that by utilizing the existing energies and users on the site, users from elsewhere in the city will be attracted.



Fig. 3.7: Current location of interested and affected parties on the city block.

3.2.7 Interested and Affected Parties

Tshwane North College and Tshwane University of Technology will be the primary role-players in the development of the mixed-use inner city campus. The land owned by Jeka Foams and Carbuirettor City will have to be purchased for the development of the city block.

3.2.8 Funding Agencies

Funding could be obtained from the Department of Education and private investors such as Atterbury Property and the Mandela Development Company, who are actively involved in the development of the Nelson Mandela Corridor.

3.2.9 Site Selection (alternatives)

Possible alternatives for the location of the facility were discussed in chapter 2.2 of this document. It could be located on one of the other campuses of Tshwane University of Technology, but because of the possible consolidation of departments to the Pretoria West Campus it gives Tshwane University the opportunity to develop prime city property which they already own in the inner city.

3.2.10 Methodology

▪ City-wide context:

Ways of integrating the city block as a site into the city will be investigated by an analysis of the city context.

▪ Local context:

A campus framework will be designed by analysing of the campus context in order to improve its accessibility and functioning as a mixed use development that would be used at all times of the day. The suitable location for an incubation facility will be identified within the campus.

▪ Site context:

The site will be selected according to the campus framework and analysed in order to produce an appropriate architectural intervention through the creation of an inclusive built environment (Geel 2005:12) . This environment will function as a link between students and the greater public through an incubation facility and will address some of the immediate needs of the current users of the campus.

