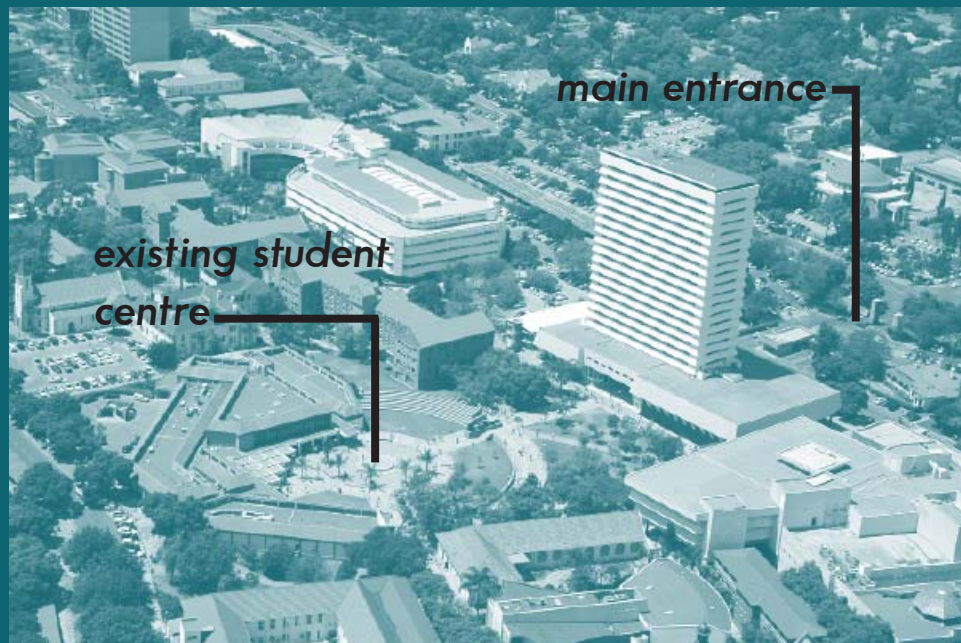


# Chapter 03

## Context analysis

Fig. 3.1



## 3.1 Introduction

Hatfield Main Campus is situated off Lynnwood Road, Hillcrest, in the eastern suburbs of Pretoria. The Main Entrance is to be found along Roper Street. The Campus hosts all administration services and the following Faculties:

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences and Faculty of Theology.

The campus is spread over 24 hectares and it also houses most of the student residences. (www.up.ac.za:17June2008) Top sport facilities are offered at the LC de Villiers Sports Centre and High Performance Centre that are situated east of the main campus. The University also offers a variety of venues for the advancement of culture and music - the Musaion, the Aula, Edoardo Villa Museum, Van Tilburg Museum and the Van Wouw Museum. (www.up.ac.za).The lively Hatfield cosmopolitan shopping area is within walking distance of the University's residences and all amenities. The study area is along the north south axis formed by Roper Street, and can be considered the most central point of the existing campus lay-out. Thus, it provides excellent access and the presence of the mega-multi-storey Humanities building makes the site the most legible place on campus and in the general district.

Fig. 3.3



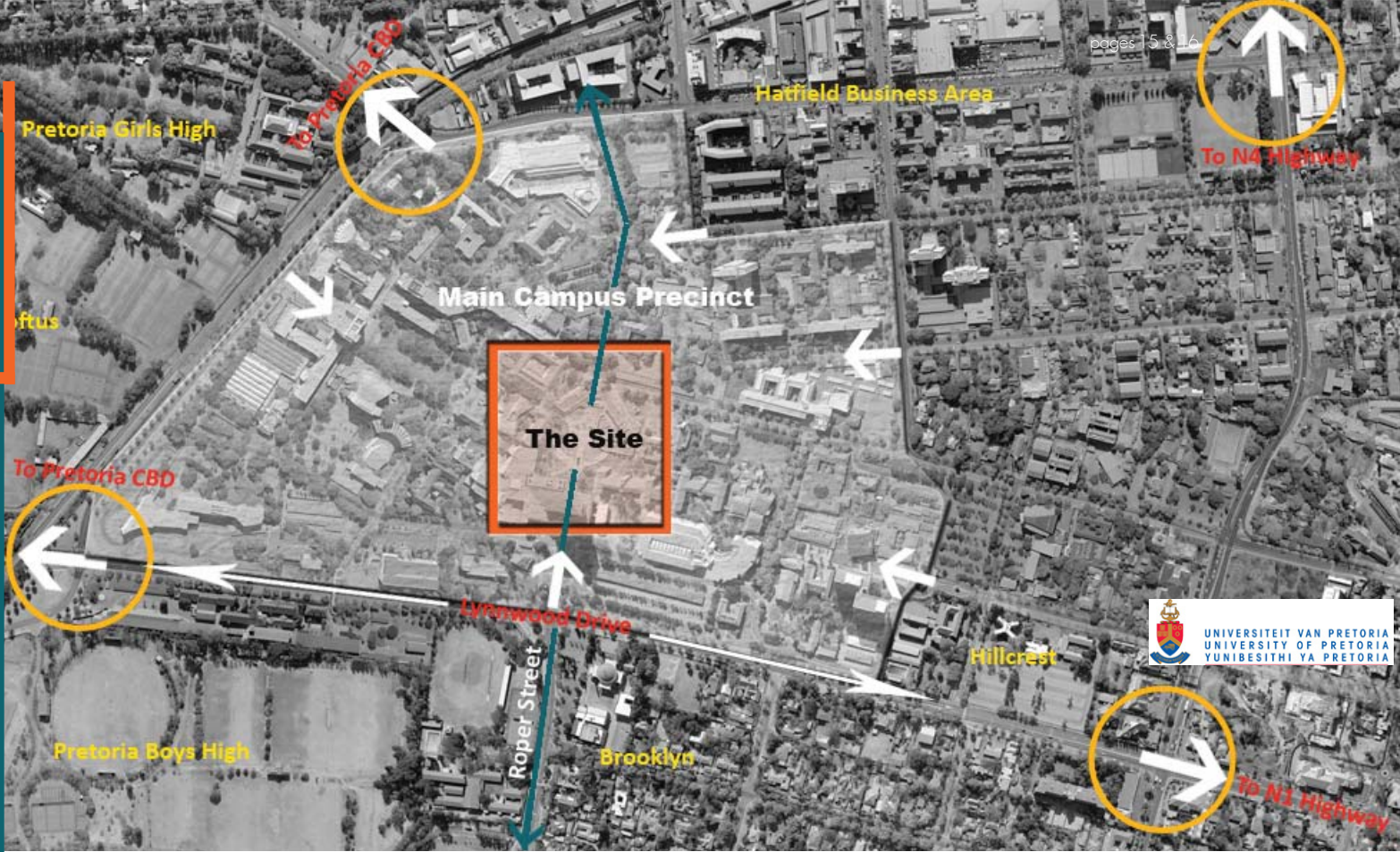


Fig. 3.4

# THE CAMPUS DISTRICT 1:10 000

Fig. 3.5



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# 3.2 The Site and Its People (a photo montage)

# 3.3

## Historical context

The first of three important issues, regarding the history of the site, is the Roper Street question. The road was closed after 20 years of debate between community and the University. (AD Destinatum: 62) A new student centre (1994, AD Destinatum) claimed the ground in an attempt to stitch up the two parts of campus while causing an urban blockage on this, now pedestrian only, spine. The second and third issue has to do with the significance of the buildings surrounding the site and their new foyers created by the Roper Street closure and the new student centre. Most of the buildings edging the site were built during the 1920's. They have been custodians of the land for almost 90 years, one of which "Tukkiewerf". This student centre forms uncomfortable spatial relationships with the old buildings disowning them of generous foyer and approach spaces. Any new development has the potential of reinstating these spaces while promoting the whole site as part of Roper Street re-establishing the historical narrative of the site.



Fig. 3.6  
Fig. 3.7

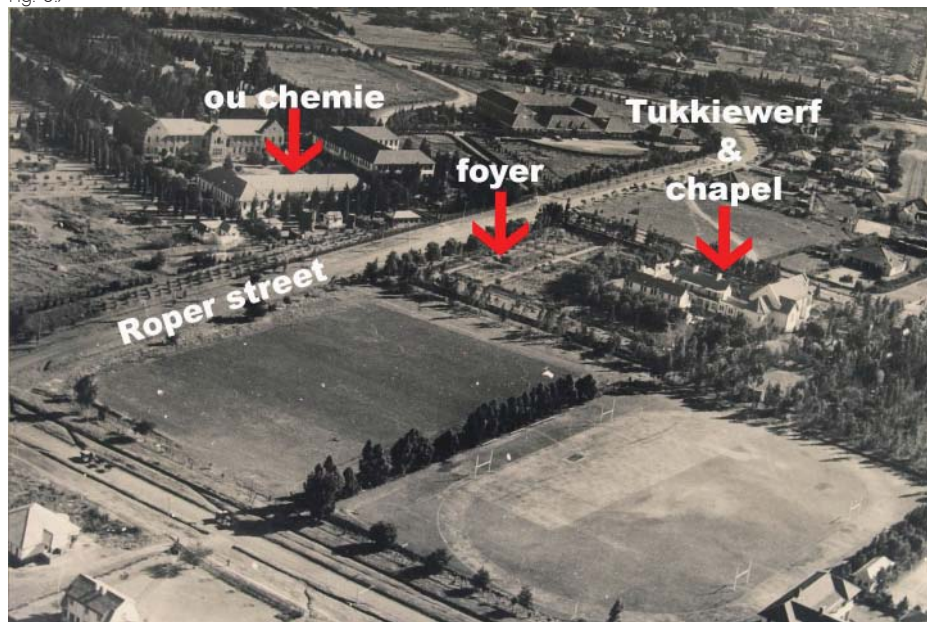


Fig. 3.6 (top right) Existing situation, relationships and blockages.  
Fig. 3.7(right) Tuks campus 1929

# 3.4

## Community, Views, Preferences and Aspirations

### *Students*

The University of Pretoria has major transformation processes in place of which details can be found on the website [www.up.ac.za](http://www.up.ac.za). Similar transformations over time made the University an educational institution of a diverse nature including multi cultural identities. Since the recognition of the importance of tertiary education a diversity of age groups also resulted. This age diversity includes anything from school leavers to the long-learners.

These students share a common goal to empower themselves and ready them for the corporate world. Although this ideal takes up most of the time spend on campus it is supplemented with social events that generates the memoirs of any student. (Personal interviews, 2008) Students currently spend their lunch time in one of two ways by either getting food as quick as possible (on average 20minutes) or spending an hour or two engaging in the same process. A new student centre must cater for both

while a framework must allow for maximum interaction between students.

According to the mission statement of the University, future and previous students are as important as existing students. It is very important to provide for this spatially and generate the canvas that can become the chronicles of each student.

Due to a lack of facilities and mostly open space, important events on the social calendar are being hosted on satellite sites. The site provides the luxury of space and the possibility of making a space that can host these events.

These events include open days, spring days, RAG festivals, rock concerts, political processions, prize giving events and open air graduation ceremonies. The possibility exists to host these events with the "University" as backdrop.

The staff generally prefers to have lunch at separate venues as the students, especially when guest lecturers are present although

the current situation does not allow for that. (Personal interviews, 2008) The new student centre, branded a social classroom, will cater for staff as well as for students looking for quiet more pr



### *Local and General Community*

The institutional value of the University makes it an asset for the local community. The community does not only benefit from higher sustained property prices but also from the vitality provided by student life in a city. Physically, however, the university development forms an urban barrier. As mentioned in section 3.3, local residents fought for more than 20 years against the closure of Roper Street (AD Destinatum), which include them into the narrative of the site.

community

Fig. 3.8



Fig. 3.8 (top) Newspaper article announcing the official closure of Roper Street  
Fig. 3.9 (top right) Rock concert with Humanities building as backdrop  
Fig. 3.10 (right) Graduation on stage in front of "Tukkiewerf".

Fig. 3.9

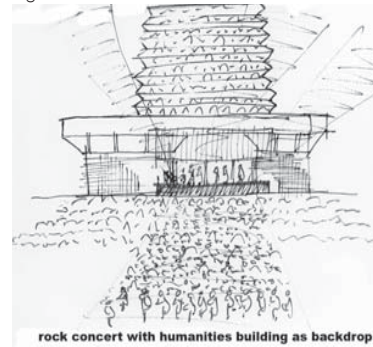


Fig. 3.10



## Education in South Africa

In 2001, the Minister of Education unveiled the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE). The NPHE formed the basis of a comprehensive restructuring of the higher education landscape in South Africa, introducing a new era in higher education in South Africa, and promptly



of higher learning in the country to reflect on their vision, mission and positioning. The University of Pretoria grasped the opportunity, and subsequently developed a new vision, mission and strategic plan, entitled Inspiring the Innovation Generation 2002 - 2005.

To be appreciated as an institution of international standards the University has to upgrade student facilities starting with the student centre.



### 3.6.1 Regional identity

Pretoria is world renowned for its pleasant weather conditions and microclimate introducing a natural vitality to open public/social spaces. Little or no rain during the cooler winter months provides the window for social activities. Daily temperatures range from cool to cold during the mornings and evenings while the biggest part of the day feature temperate conditions, pleasant for external activities. Rain during the summer months is limited to an hour or two of thunder storms where after conditions clear up to temperate ideal conditions. The climate promotes social events that are externally performed to take advantage thereof.

### 3.6.2 Local character

The presence of the Loftus Sports stadium and a multitude of educational institutions within the vicinity of UP promotes a common goal for the community and gives the region a cultural and educational identity. The presence of students provides the area with vivacity that in turn sparks a lot of other opportunities.

By developing a major event space will create a positive tension in the area between venues of activity. The fact that the Campus grounds become a usable asset for the local community will form part of the strengthening of this common goal. The architecture of Pretoria or "The Pretoria Vernacular" (coined by Prof. Roger Fisher) provides the build environment with a distinct character with local and international influences.

### 3.6.2 Morphology

Appropriate design forms can be explored when looking at the figure ground of the area. The growth over time can be identified in terms of volumes of buildings. Due to climate buildings were kept narrow or made use of courtyards to facilitate cross ventilation. Newer additions to the area made use of mechanical ventilation systems and buildings occupy large areas and disproportional forms. It would be important to revert back to the original idea of linear buildings with courtyards and natural ventilation and light.

### 3.6.4 Natural Resources


According to Freek Rol  of the program "Praat Saam" on the Afrikaans radio station, RSG, the global energy crisis alerted authorities and lead to the development of many sustainable development initiatives across the world. Governments implemented legislative strategies to guide designers in an understanding to conceive buildings with a layer of sustainability optimizing natural resources. In a recent survey BBC Weather recorded that Pretoria enjoys 8 - 10 hrs. of quality sunshine per day. These conditions are ideal for natural lighting, space heating and sun energy to be converted into usable energy through photovoltaic photosynthesis. (more on these topics in Chapter 9). Pretoria experiences minimum precipitation at times but harvesting contribute to annual water needs



Fig. 3.12

# 36

## Place

- Regional identity
- Linkages to site
- Connections
- Local character
- Morphology
- Natural resources

Connections to the site



Fig. 3.14



Fig. 3.17



Fig. 3.19



Fig. 3.15



Fig. 3.16

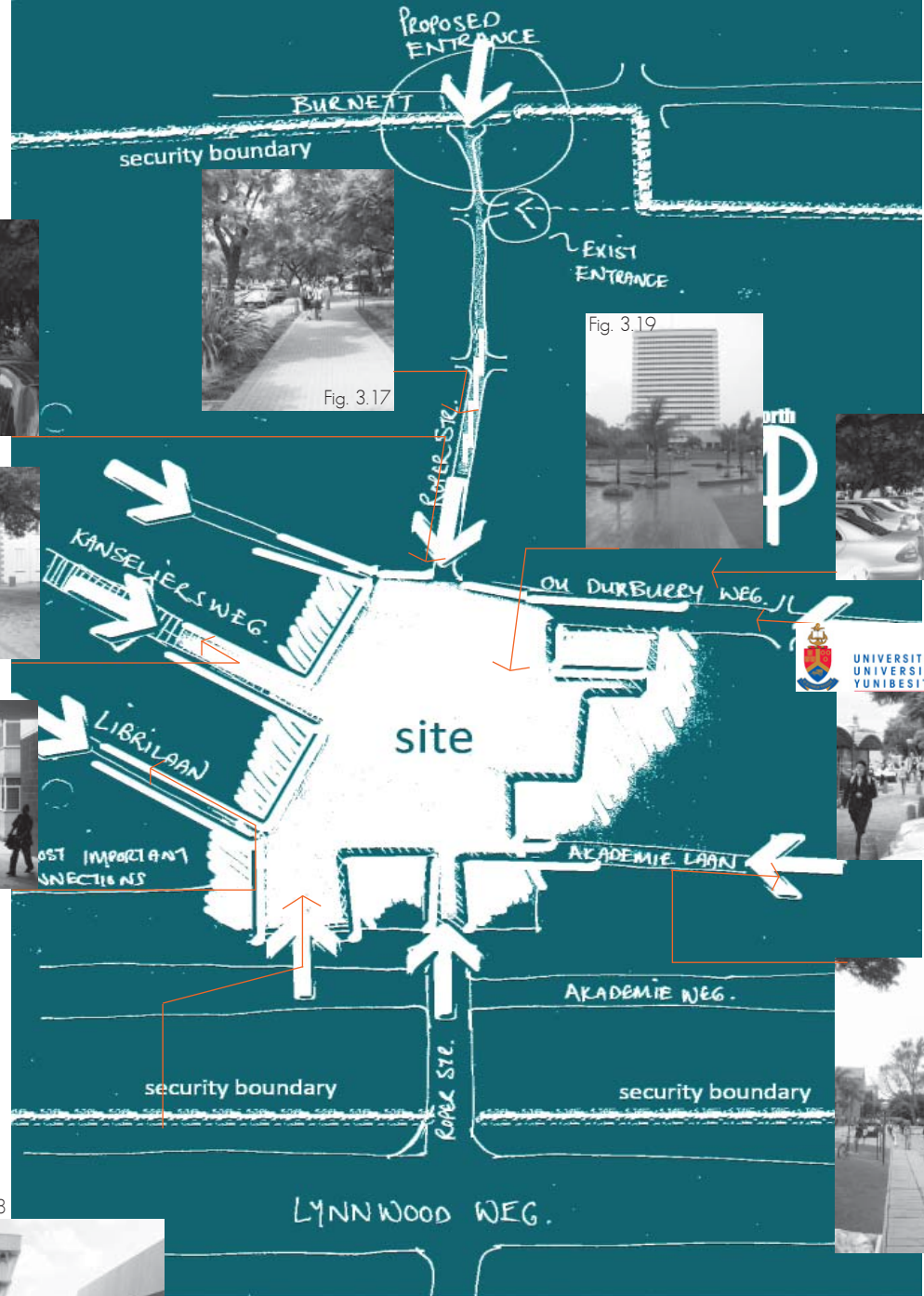


Fig. 3.20



Fig. 3.21



Fig. 3.22

3.7

Fig. 3.18





Fig. 3.23



Fig. 3.24



Fig. 3.25



Fig. 3.26

3.8

# SWOT

## analysis



Fig. 3.31

## Strengths

- The site is already the heart or the most central space of campus.
- The site features an abundance of open space, just in need of re-imagining.
- The location of the site provides it with a highly accessible core and promotes legibility with the main entrance as one of the access points to the site.
- There is a rich narrative to be made manifest in any new intervention.
- The site is edged by important historical buildings that promote the cultural element on site.
- Duxbury Street features two new contemporary buildings and three new proposals, which gives that edge a contemporary theme.



Fig. 3.27



Fig. 3.28



Fig. 3.29



Fig. 3.30

Fig. 3.23-3.30:  
Windows into  
the site.

## Weaknesses

- The existing spatial configuration does not allow the site a principal sense of place as is needed for a student lifestyle centre.
- The scale of the site is overwhelming and prevents the user from experiencing the whole.
- Inappropriate spatial provision by the existing building denies the site its vital social prospective.
- The existing building forms an urban blockage and promotes illegibility.

## Opportunities

In order to create guidelines for a new student precinct it is necessary to transform these embedded narratives into architectural notions. These notions must become manifest in the development in order to formalize the narrative into a legible vehicle for the users. The new precinct must continue to write this script of the past and for this to transpire the new site programme

must be carefully selected. The current site does not spatially provide for major events. The majority of events take place on the sports grounds (LC De Villiers). The site has the potential of hosting all major events and become the heart of Campus. In terms of student life the site can become the following:

- The first place you experience student life on an open day.
- The place of your first initiation circus.
- The first place you go look for console after failing your first test.
- The first place you celebrate after successfully completing your first year.
- The place you have your first RAG procession.
- See your first rock concert.
- Experience your first spring day celebrations.
- Your first award ceremony.
- Your first political procession.
- Your first Graduation ceremony.
- The first place you think about

when talking about student life.

All these new functions can happen on the given site with the University as backdrop, accentuating the idea of a cultural landscape. By exploring the possibilities of this site, it becomes manifest that the matrix of function must be revisited. intervention beyond proc



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## Threats

- Although the site does not function to its full potential, does it still contain a story for most of its users, the challenge would be to respect this memory while re-imagining the site.
- The new intervention must emphasize its future potential in order to convince the client of a development that will be appropriate for future generations.
- The phasing of the new development will play an immense part in the success of the intervention and efforts must be made to allow services on site to continue.