5. Design development

Architectural theory, if it is to be of any use, should be composed of a set of what Cedric Price (1934-2003) terms working concepts. A working concept is a theoretical tool which allows the designer to make a series of consistent reasoned decisions. Good concepts are those that have the potential to shape the strategies that solve a stated design problem. The theory that precedes the design is not translated into a form, but is used to make informed decisions and to create connections with contemporary ideas: "Theory is not intended to defend, justify, or promote design." (Tschumi 1994:11) Decisions regarding massing, program layout, materials and finishing can thus be brought in line and given coherence. Taken in this light it is clear that there is no inherent separation between theory and practice.

5.1 Your surroundings positioned: organisation of space

5.1.1 Scenarios

"When there was fire we brought gasoline." (Guy Debord (1962-1972))

Connecting the inner city to Salvokop Suburb and Freedom Park is used as a starting point for the urban proposal. Attractions placed on the side of Salvokop Suburb encourage pedestrian and vehicular flow across the railway lines from the city. Selected activities in Pretoria are identified, amplified and synthesized to generate a scenario. Thus, a scenario is a speculative predictive tool to generate appropriate program and activity for a given site. There is no intention at prescriptive master-planning, but rather an illustration of potential amongst many possibilities. Three scenarios are sketched:

5.1.1.1 Something old, something new: urban terrain

This scenario is premised on an amalgamation of traditional urban design principles, and the *field condition*, a contemporary theory by Stan Allan and James Corner of *Field Operations*. According to Allen, *field conditions* refer to a network of actions, objects or places; a formal or spatial matrix that is capable of merging various elements while each element retains its individuality (1997 :24). Small local connections are privileged above the master plan. Porosity and local interconnectivity are its definitive characteristics (*ibid* :24). Thus, the ingredients for a successful urban terrain, traditionally *directional permeability*, *ease of access, perimeter block-typologies* and *mixed use programming* (in this case leisure amenities, restaurants and ablutions) are combined in a porous lattice that is inextricably tied to its immediate surroundings. A square in Kobe, Japan (2005) designed by Barbara Agnoletto and Laura Mascino, illustrates an urban terrain providing seating, lighting and entertainment to its users (fig. 66-68) (Bossi 2006:52).

5.1.1.2 Something borrowed: sculpture park / art research

The terrain is made available as a deinstitutionalised site for the contemporary arts - creating an open landscape housing site specific sculpture, performance and critique. Government and commercially commissioned work begins to jostle for attention with private projects in a highly visible public environment; scheduled events and festivals modulate daily practice; the terrain is in constant flux, moulded by and pressing back on its context.

Jinhua Architecture Park is a sculpture park with seventeen public pavilions next to the river Yiwu south of Shanghai. The architects and designers were brought together by the artist, designer and curator Ai Wei Wei (Capezzuto & Grima 2006:19). Ai Wei Wei was approached by the municipal authority of Jinhua to design a park dedicated to the memory of his father, a well-known poet and intellectual. It is a permanent exhibition, consisting of pavilions containing the programmes that the park requires (tearooms, bookshops, toilets). The park is a collaboration between Ai Wei Wei and Herzog & de Meuron architects (*ibid* :19).

5.1.1.3 Something dark and dirty

What at first glance appears to be abandoned landscape is revealed as an obstacle course under the cover of darkness. The open terrain verging on the railway tracks is a favourite haunt of off-road bicycle enthusiasts. Nocturnal runs, with up to twelve cyclists participating, regularly criss-cross the site. As discussed earlier, a conscious effort is made to preserve existing use patterns on the site. To this effect dedicated bike lanes separating cyclists and pedestrians is introduced. The obstacle course is formalised and partially buried in the site. The submerged half-pipe channels high speed riders through the site, accommodates skateboarders, and becomes a rain water culvert during storms. The route dips below the surface of the terrain, revealing its stratified archaeology and affording glimpses into the gallery space below. Emerging next to the soccer field the route reverts to its off-road state as it drains into the sculpture park.

5.1.1.1 Something old, something new: urban terrain

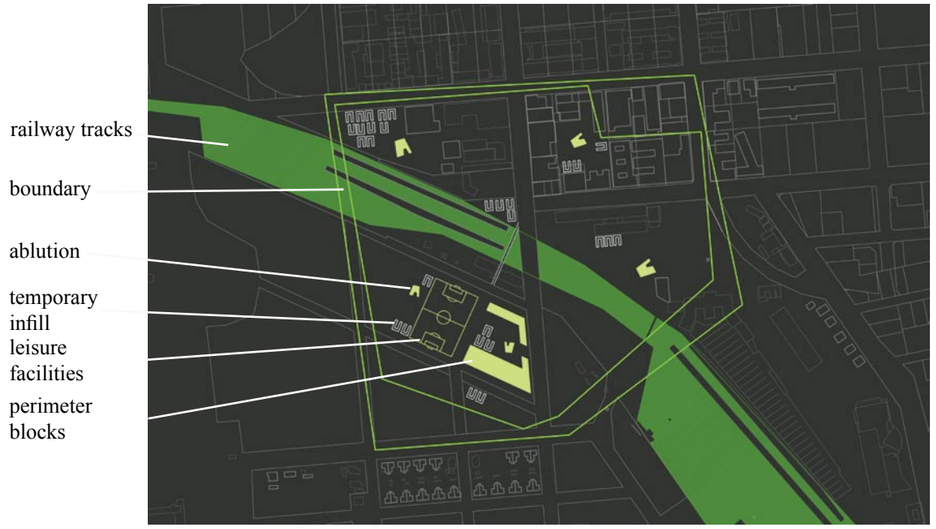

Fig. 65 Urban terrain scenario (Author 2006)

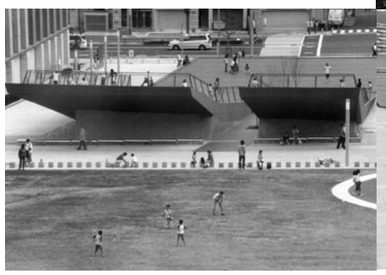

Fig. 66 Square in Kobe, Japan, 2005, Barbara Agnoletto & Laura Mascino - night time (Capezzuto & Grima 2006:52)

Fig. 67 Square in Kobe, Japan, 2005, Barbara Agnoletto & Laura Mascino (Capezzuto & Grima 2006:51)

Fig. 68 Square in Kobe, Japan, 2005, Barbara Agnoletto & Laura Mascino (Capezzuto & Grima 2006:51)

Fig. 69 Fireworks (Konrad 2003:62)

5.1.1.2 Something borrowed: sculpture park / art research

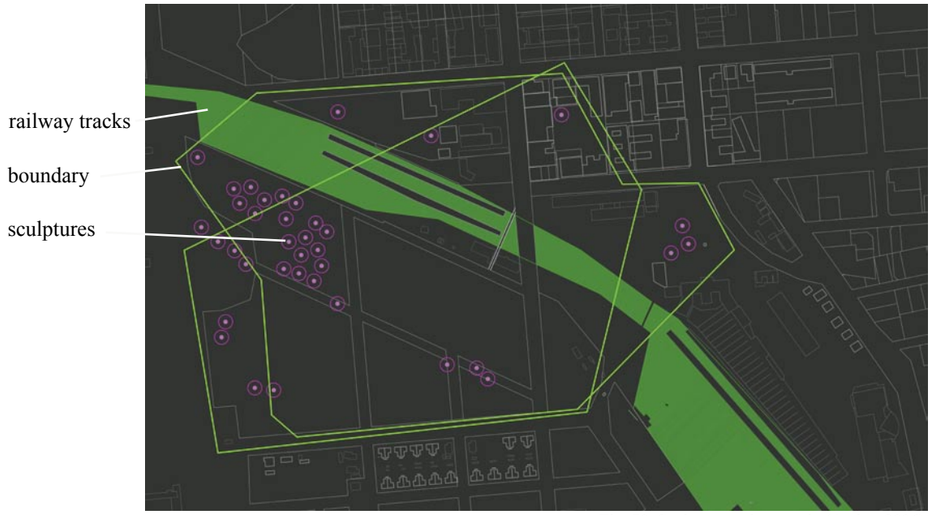

Fig. 70 Sculpture park scenario (Author 2006)

Fig. 71 *The reading space pavillion,* Herzog & De Meuron, 2006 (Baan 2006:21)

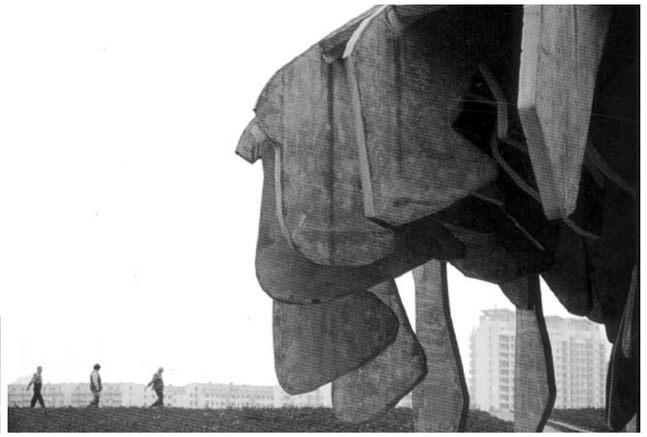

Fig. 72 *The ancient tree,* Emanuel Christ & Christoph Ganterbein, 2006 (Baan 2006:26)

5.1.1.3 Something dark and dirty

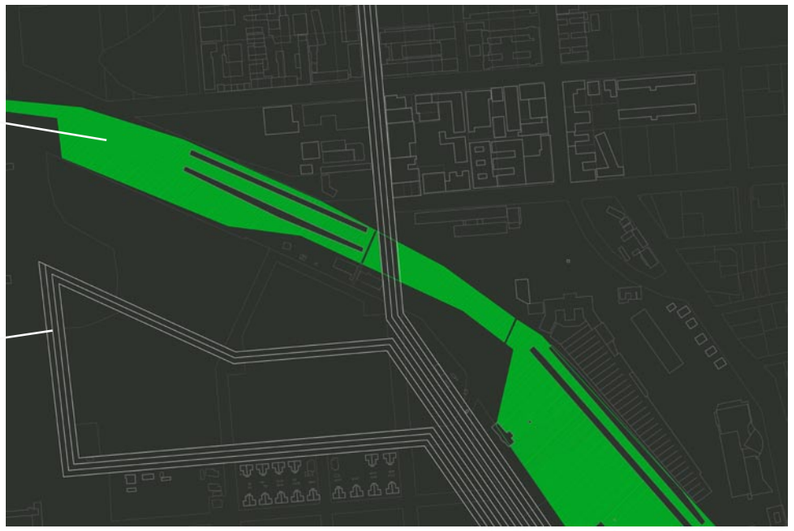

Fig. 73 Art research scenario (Author 2006)

Fig. 74 Skate-boarder

Fig. 75 Bicycle rally (www.son-art.com)

5.1.2 Programming a street edge

Chora's *spatial stories* (see p. 50-55) are used to map the effects of the scenarios and the programmes they generate, as they simultaneously unfold (see fig.76 & 78). The politically charged and officially sanctioned Freedom Park complex to the south of the site attracts local and international tourists, feeding into the proposed exhibition space next to the railway tracks. Public amenities (such as a soccer field, stalls, swimming pool and a space for events) are provided for the proposed residential area to the west of Salvokop. The presence of state institutions (Department of Correctional Services, City of Tshwane 2005:238), though not finalised at the time of writing, necessitate restaurants, and entertainment for office workers. In turn, illicit activities, such as illegal dumping, are curbed by the twenty four hour presence of people on the site. Taken in concert the spatial stories sketch one of many possible effects the project might have on its context.

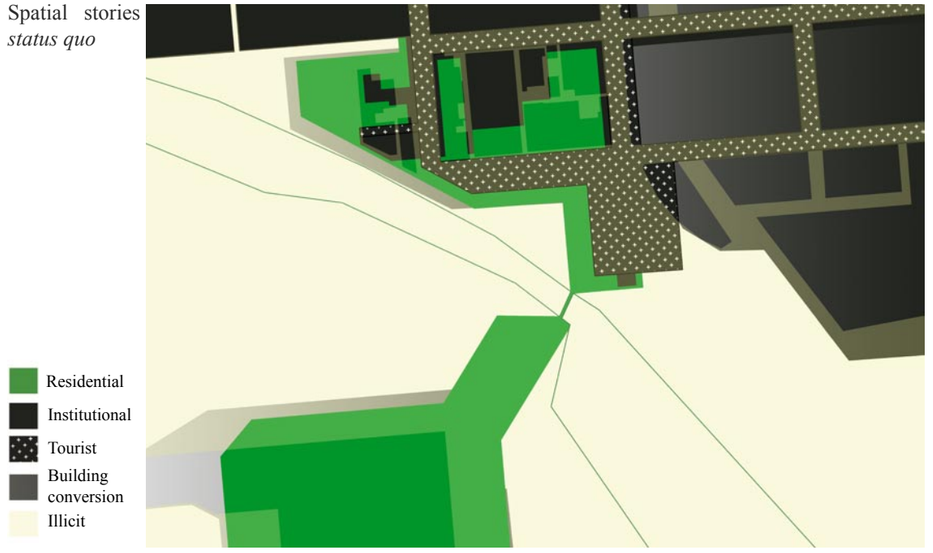

Fig. 76 Spatial stories *status quo* (Author 2006)

Combined urban proposal

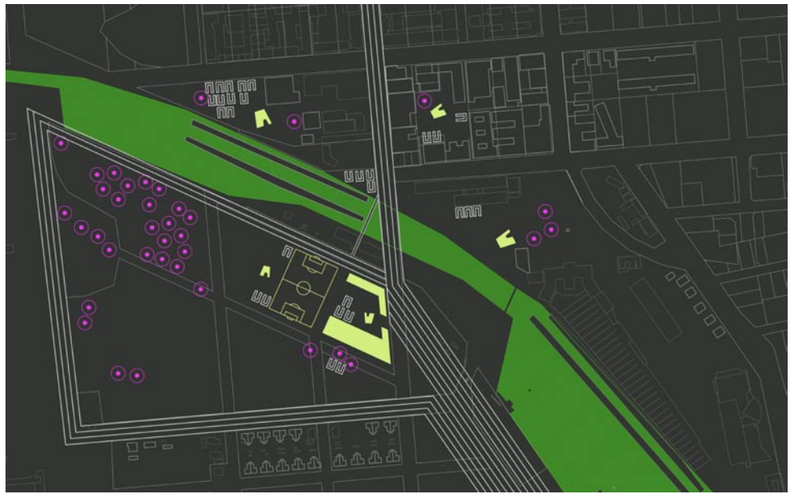

Fig. 77. Urban proposals combined (Author 2006)

Scenario of the spatial stories after the intervention

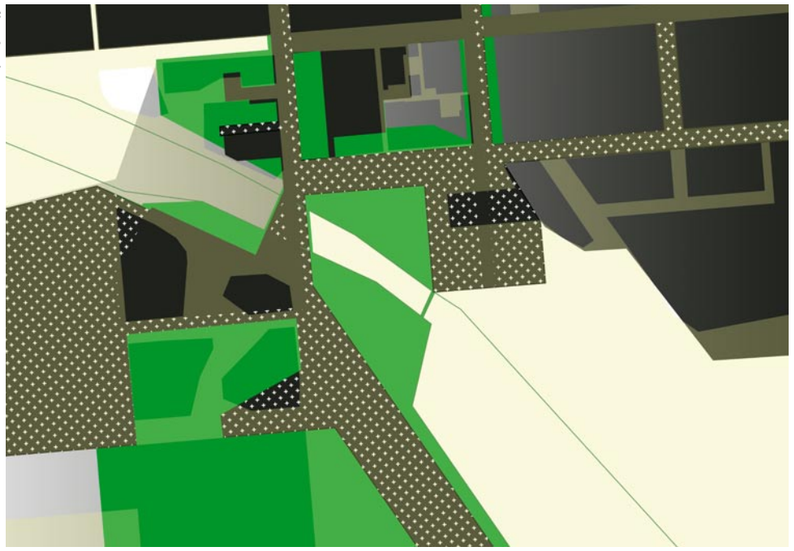

Fig. 78. Spatial stories after intervention (Author 2006)

5.1.3 De-programming a core

An unprogrammed space behind the street edge, facing the railway tracks serves as a platform for events. These events are the consequences of the *urban terrain, art research* and *dark and dirty* scenarios (as discussed on p.). From the precedent studies conducted during the course of this dissertation it is clear that unprogrammed space if not adequately serviced, ceases to be viable, sustainable or functional. Bearing this in mind cafés, exhibition spaces and a subterranean parking lot serve as enabling 'infrastructure' for the open space.

The 'infrastructure' is housed in architectural objects that shape and organise their surroundings (see fig. 79). Pedestrian movement is directed towards the central public space; moving through the site requires traversing the open area in its centre.

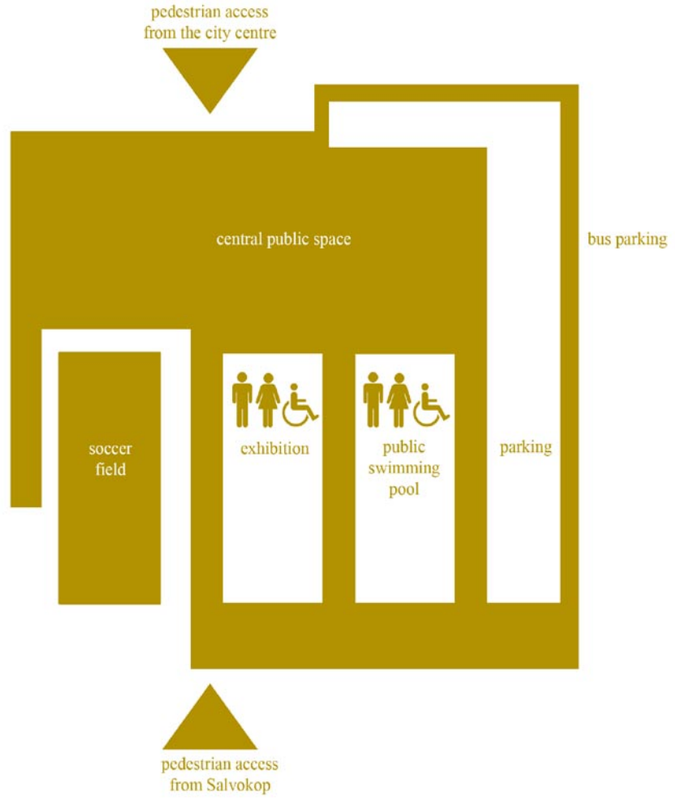

Fig. 79 Accommodation July (Author 2006)

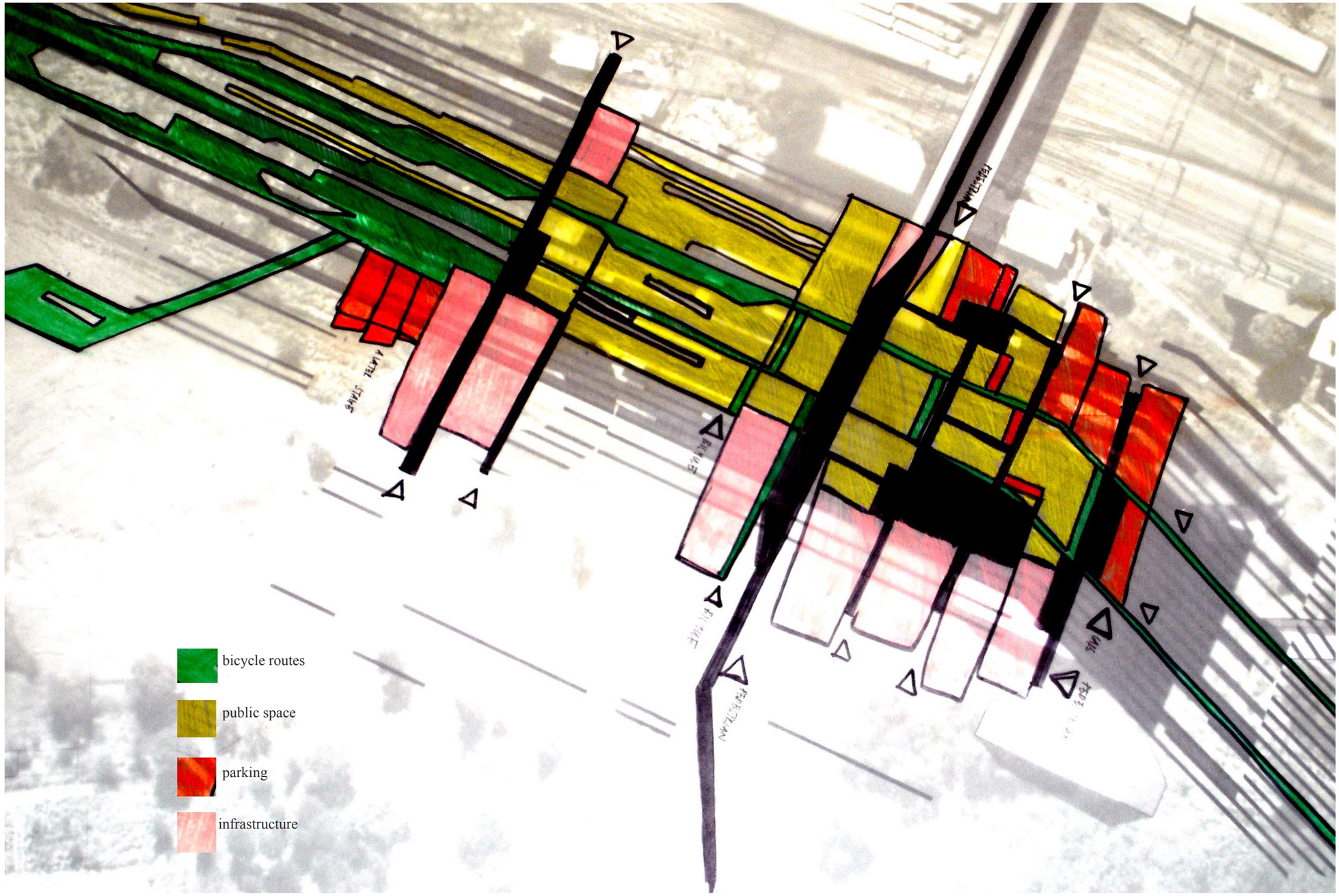

Fig. 80 Design process - planning (June) (Author 2006)

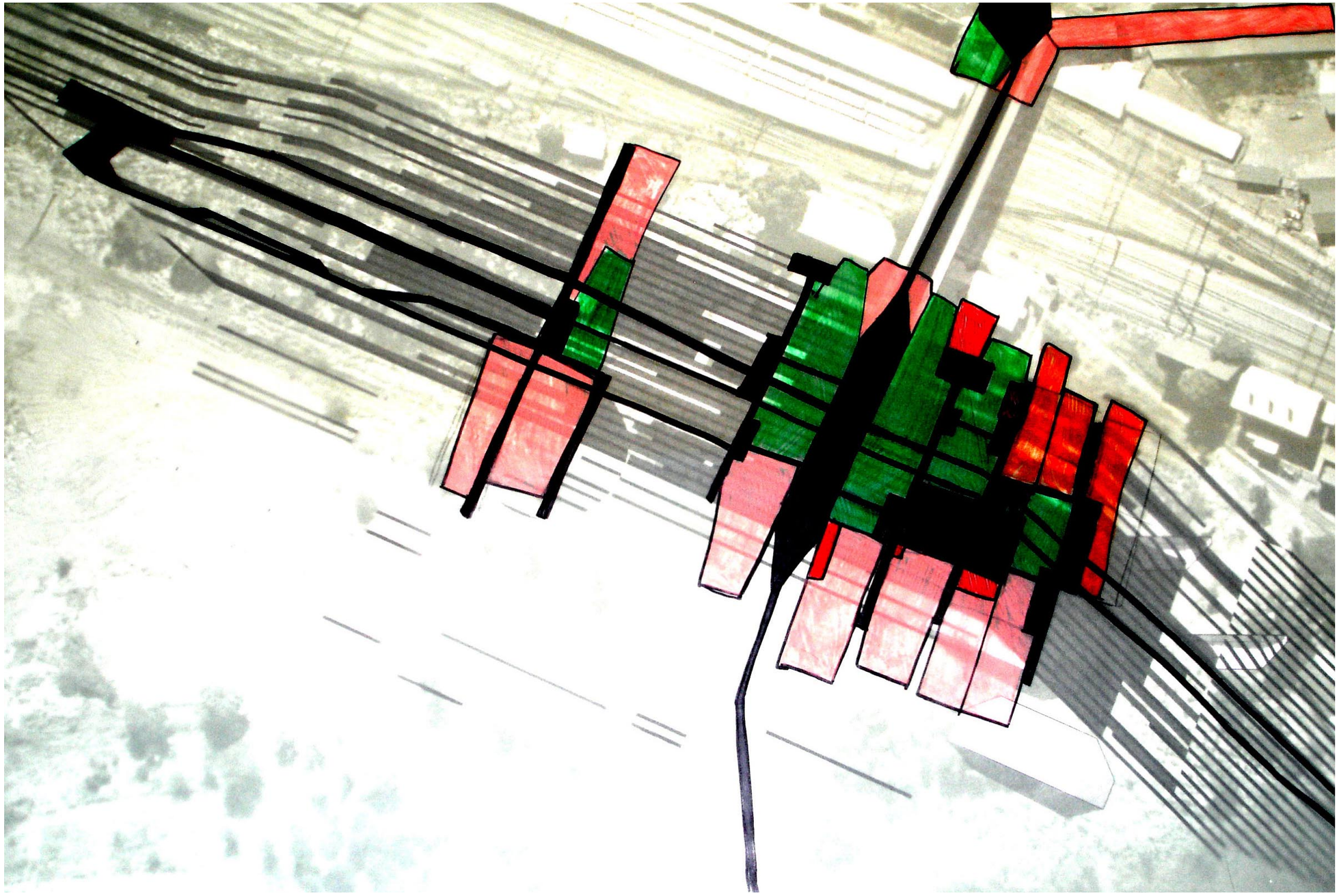

Fig. 81 Design process - planning (June) (Author 2006)

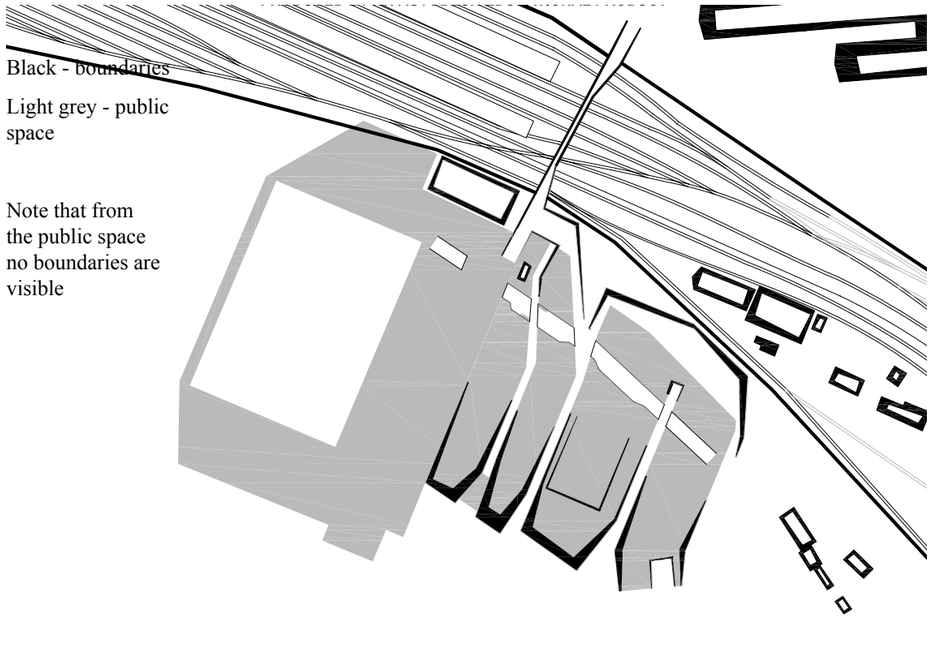

Fig. 82 Boundaries (Author 2006)

Fig. 83 Shade (Author 2006)

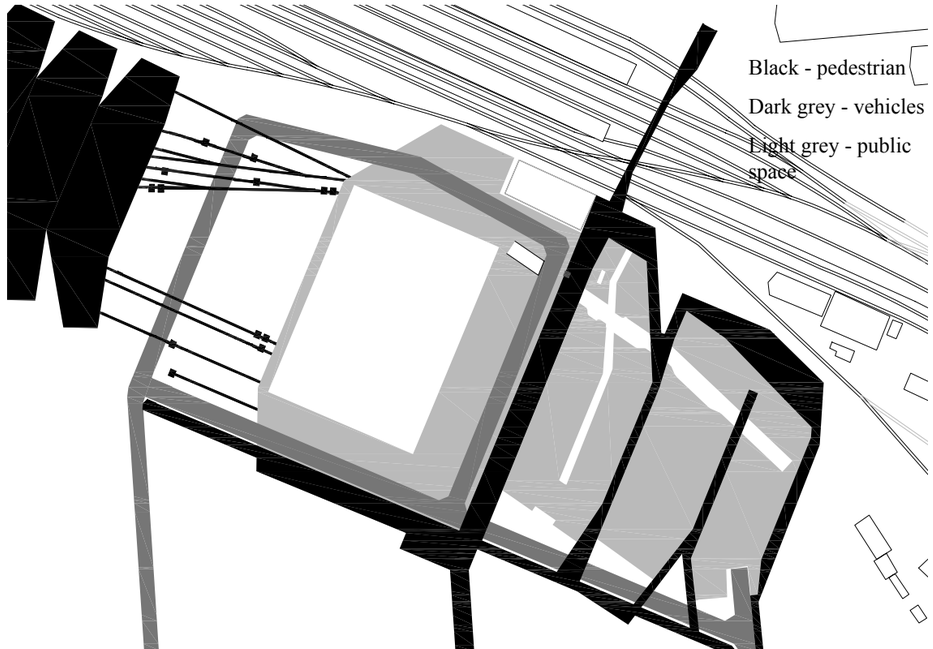

Fig. 84 Paths (Author 2006)

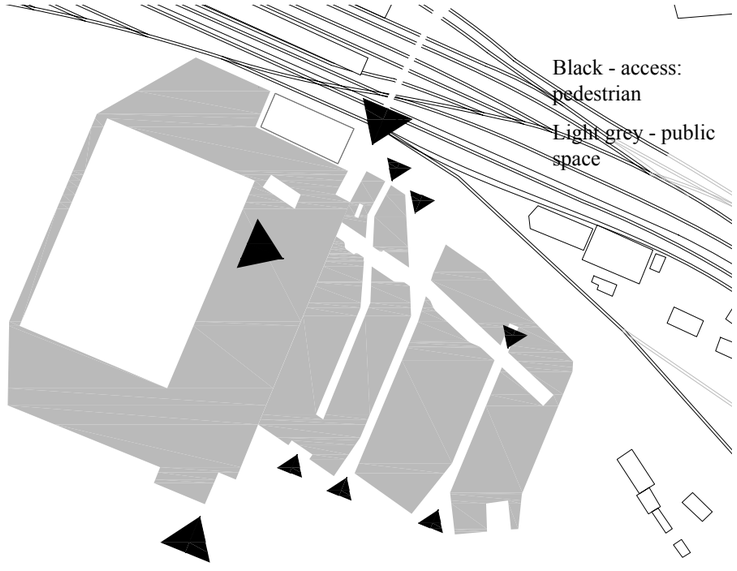

Fig. 85 Access (Author 2006)