

**INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH
AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: The Influence of Culture and Identity.**

A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg

By

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PART ONE
BACKGROUND RESEARCH ON ISSUES

1.1 Background

Contemporary South African architecture is determined by various psychological and physical elements; however, it seems to be influenced by many Western and European traditions. The application of these traditions into the South African context seems to portray architecture that fails to interact with local cultures and traditions. Therefore, rather than adapting foreign traditions into South African architecture, local and indigenous traditions should be used to influence contemporary South African architecture. Contemporary South African architecture has a tendency to imitate Western and European trends which are a response to foreign climates and contexts. As a result, architecture in South Africa no longer supports cultural and social interaction which serves as a platform for society to engage with each other.

South Africa has a rich cultural background which forms the foundation for a contemporary multi-cultural society, yet it faces a huge challenge of re-establishing its identity, an identity which has disappeared over the centuries due to foreign interventions. South Africa is regarded as the most developed country in Africa and therefore plays a pivotal part as a link between the western and eastern countries. Factors which contribute to the identity of South Africa are its landscape which is characterized by grasslands, wildlife and un-spoilt nature and most importantly, the country is characterized by its indigenous people. Most of the contemporary architecture in South Africa tends to ignore the importance of identity.

The indigenous South African society preserves tradition and culture by encouraging a self-identity through participation in group activities while modern western society promotes the originality of style as a statement of one's self (Frescura, 1985). The influence of western culture has resulted in a blurred identity and moral decay in society. The quest to transform South Africa into a modern first world country has resulted in the adoption of many foreign methods, which has unfortunately led to the disregard of indigenous culture and tradition.

The concept of establishing a South African culture and identity has been the subject of many debates; however, the method required seems to be elusive (Deckler, 2006). The apparent loss of identity within modern South African society is a major challenge which will take many generations to resolve. However, contemporary South African architecture needs to respond to the issue of identity with extreme caution in order to create uniquely timeless buildings and spaces that respond directly to the needs of current and future generations. Contemporary architecture also faces the challenge of incorporating indigenous culture and tradition as a means of creating a tangible physical identity that attempts to unite all members of society.

Since democracy, significant approaches have been made to recognize and introduce African elements into the contemporary world as a means of paying homage to the local culture and establishing a local architectural identity. However, this method appears to have taken a literal approach by replicating certain African elements which portray a modern building with a local identity by including “*crude underdeveloped materials and decoration, regarded as African Traditional elements*” (Mhlaba, 2007; 4). Therefore, the establishment of a South African architectural identity that will inform the social identity is one that is of utmost importance that should filter through into everyday life as a certain way of living.

South Africa still suffers from the injustices of past separation and discrimination. However, since democracy there seems to have been significant efforts focussing on reshaping and remodelling the state of our urban landscapes. New buildings and new transport facilities are being introduced to make our urban landscapes more accessible and legible. Although the root of these facilities stem from foreign models; they are necessary to make our cities more legible and accessible.

The Republic of South Africa is almost two decades into political democracy and it is in a transition from being a teenager to being an adult. Just as in real life, these can be very testing times for teenagers. Knowing one’s history and culture becomes the foundation

for the development of one's future. Therefore, it is important for South Africa to establish its culture and identity among the global community (Deckler, 2006). How can we achieve this?

Mbeki (1996) highlights that the major factors contributing to the African identity are the environment and history which shape social patterns of indigenous and contemporary society. Therefore, in order for the country to establish an identity, it should use its environment and history as a means of interpreting indigenous culture and tradition. Indigenous arts and crafts are globally recognized as the symbol of the indigenous character of South Africa, this is evident through the number of arts and crafts curio shops around the country which sell locally manufactured goods to mostly tourists. Unfortunately, tourists find more value and meaning in the local arts and crafts industry than the local people. Therefore, South Africa has to draw inspiration from indigenous art and use it as the backbone to forming a unique African form and aesthetic which will expand past the borders of architecture, but eventually infiltrate into every design related field.

1.2 Problem Statement

The growth and transformation of South African indigenous architecture has been non-existent over the past century due to the influence of colonialism which imposed its own architectural identity. As a result, the last century has seen the growth of foreign 'colonial' architecture to contemporary aesthetics through the influence of European and western trends. Simultaneously, the growth of indigenous architecture in South Africa has become less important among architects and planners. The growth of foreign trends in South Africa has brought about the loss of identity among South Africans, as many cities and buildings mimic European styles and influences. As a result, the morals and values of modern society are depreciating due to the lack of interaction and unity among communities.

According to Frescura (1985) indigenous architecture served more than just a means of providing shelter. However, it acted as an opportunity for the community to work together on a project which united the community; the process became a social event showcasing the solidarity of the community. Modern society is sadly lacking in this regard, however, there are many lessons to be learnt from indigenous communities which will prove to be vital character building elements within modern society in South Africa. It is unfortunate that the level of education within the indigenous communities is very low, as a result, there is very little documented evidence of how our ancestors related with the natural environment through built form. However, the only way the indigenous communities had of documenting their events was through arts and crafts. Through music, dance, sculptures and paintings, the indigenous communities would document celebratory, comical and depressing events. This is a tradition that is still practiced in our modern community, for example, the Zulu king has an 'imbongi' (poet) who goes out to the awaiting crowd before the King's arrival and chant the names of his forefathers, hence telling a story about the King's history. The same can be said of Nelson Mandela, during his tenure as president, he also had an 'imbongi,' who would warm up the crowd before his arrival. Therefore, 'imbongi' verbally describes ones history as a means of allowing the audience to relate to one's historical identity.

Therefore, this research shall explore how the indigenous arts and crafts can influence the built environment, not only as a means of defining a new African form and aesthetic, but also as a framework for how our urban spaces should relate to the natural environment, thus establishing a sense of cultural identity for our cities.

1.3 Aims

The study aims to explore the influence of indigenous arts and crafts on contemporary South African architecture as a means of establishing a national architectural identity which reflects the social identity of modern society. This notion suggests architecture has a vital role to play in helping South African society form an identity through the

understanding of indigenous arts and crafts of which its cultural values are passed onto future generations.

1.4 Objectives

Within the historical timeline of South Africa, there is a monumental event which allowed the local indigenous culture to become inferior as the influence of colonialism became superior. The effects of this event only became pertinent within the post apartheid regime as modern society attempts to remember its identity before the colonial era, and also establish a new identity that responds to the modern world and at the same time maintain its indigenous values and traditions.

The main objective of the study is to analyse the ever growing anomaly between the indigenous and the contemporary. An understanding of this anomaly can be established through the following:

- Bridge the apparent gap between indigenous architecture and contemporary architecture in South Africa by analysing indigenous arts and crafts.
- Highlight the importance of indigenous values that can strengthen contemporary South African architecture towards the formation a national identity, where the spaces are forms created are sympathetic to humanistic needs as an expression of the past, present and future.
- Explore methods and techniques through which the identity of a society can be reflected in contemporary architecture.
- Seek relevant ways where indigenous knowledge, culture and tradition may be expressed and preserved in contemporary South African architecture.

- Promoting the creation of architecture that accommodates for societal requirements in a contemporary manner without the romanticization of indigenous forms, but rather seeks innovative methods of more humanistic architecture.

1.5 Delimitation of Research Problem

Although this is an architectural research study, issues pertaining to planning and urban design will be explored since they are a reflection of past injustices and affect modern South African society. This study is not simply about the revival of indigenous architecture, but more about providing an understanding of the positive influence of indigenous arts and crafts with regards to the creation of architectural environments which unite communities and integrate our multi-cultural society.

It has been argued across many circles that architecture originated in Africa with the Nubians, although this statement is connected to the research topic in terms of adding more importance for the need for South African architecture to remain firmly rooted in Africa, the research shall focus particularly on South African arts and crafts as a means of establishing and architectural identity.

1.6 Key Questions

The primary question which will guide the research is as follows:

How can indigenous arts and crafts contribute towards enhancing the identity of contemporary South African architecture?

Secondary questions:

- What is the relationship between arts and crafts and architecture?
- Why is it important to develop and educate the significance of indigenous arts and crafts in architecture?

- What factors should be considered in providing spaces that encourage the interaction of indigenous art and architecture?

1.7 Definition of Terms

Haptic- Relating to the sense of touch, tactile.

Imbongi- bard or praise singer traditionally used to accompany a leader and to introduce him to an audience through personal praises.

Material Culture- cultural practices pertaining to material items such as dress, ceramics, beadwork and woodcarving.

Pattern- Referring to a particular arrangement of social elements.

Foreign- Relating to ideas, elements and issues that are of another country and not naturally belonging to the native country.

1.8 Hypothesis

Indigenous arts and crafts can have a vital influence on contemporary South African architecture with regards to forming a unique South African architectural identity that portrays the political and social values of the country. As a result, contemporary South African architecture would contribute to the physical and social development of society which promotes a better standard of living that is respectful of the local indigenous background at the same time responding to current global issues and trends.

1.9 Concepts and Theories

The research document highlights the influence of culture and identity in both indigenous arts and crafts and contemporary South African architecture. Therefore, the main concepts which the research shall explore are culture and identity. In explaining identity, Charles Correa (2001) states that our identity can be found by understanding ourselves and our environment. Therefore, it can be suggested that 'place' and meaning are closely

linked with identity. Identity, place and meaning are the main concepts of which phenomenology addresses, however, the research shall focus specifically on the 'place theory' as a means achieving identity within contemporary South African architecture.

Correa (2001) highlights that an understanding of identity is closely linked with 'place' and meaning, therefore, the research shall not only analyse the spirit of place, but it shall also develop a semiological understanding of place. In other words, through a semiological approach, the meaning of place can be understood. Therefore, in order to achieve meaning, the manner in which people experience architecture should be a multisensory experience that evokes powerful emotions. Apart from specific functions, buildings can also evoke emotion through form (Nesbitt, 1996). Art exists in the consciousness of the person experiencing it. The images transmitted by the forms and their emotional strength create meaning for the artwork (Nesbitt, 1996). Therefore, form merely becomes a tool in which the observer can engage with the built environment, as mentioned before, only by understanding our environment and understanding ourselves can we find identity.

Therefore, the place theory should be explored due to the two methods in which it shall be analysed; spirit of place and meaning of place. The unison of these two methods shall provide an understanding into identity and the forms and spaces that architecture needs to provide in order to unite modern South African society.

1.10 Research Methodology

The research methods which will be used in this study will be qualitative and quantitative through primary and secondary data collection. The primary data collection will consist of an analysis of theories and concepts that have emerged within the concept of the establishment of a unique South African identity. The secondary data will consist of books, journals, theses and electronic sources. Primary data collection will comprise of a site visit and an interview. The primary source of data collection will provide an

understanding into what the community regards as appropriate South African architecture.

Study Area:

The study area will focus on the Pietermaritzburg Central Business District (PMB-CBD) area, firstly because the city is the capital of Kwa-Zulu Natal and therefore the creation of a new identity should originate in the capital city of the province which represents a bulk of South African history. Secondly, the PMB-CBD is in dire need of urban regeneration as many buildings in the central business district (CBD) have fallen into a state of disrepair, as a result, the economic hub of the city has moved away from CBD. Therefore, as a result, the proposed building should be located in close proximity to the PMB-CBD and one must be familiar with all the relevant issues regarding the context and people of the region.

Research Plan:

Primary and secondary data collection methods will be used in the study in order to justify the establishment of a new Post-Apartheid South African architectural identity. Although the idea of a new South African architectural identity has been discussed within the academic arena, there is no recognized physical interpretation of the identity that carries through into urban spaces. Therefore, primary and secondary data collection is necessary in order to achieve a holistic image of the South African architectural identity. The secondary data would be accessed through a relevant medium of books, journals, internet and papers from both local and international sources. In turn, this would inform the manner in which the primary data would be investigated which would be in the form of interviews and observations. This will help to provide an understanding into what the proposed building will require in order to meet the needs of the public, of which a schedule of accommodation can be established.

Secondary Data:

Since architecture is a multi-disciplinary practice, the form of research will be influenced by a range of other disciplines such as philosophy, media and human sciences. It will look into the concept of the new South African architectural identity and its development and progression since 1994 which represents the birth of the new Republic of South Africa. The research will also investigate other relevant factors and issues that directly or indirectly affect the concept of a South African architectural identity.

The research will also identify if there is a building within an urban landscape that represents the new South African Identity, regardless of the outcome, a varied approach will be applied when selecting relevant precedent studies. The new South African identity should be applicable within all facets of society; however, within the realm of architecture, the new South African identity should be applicable within all building typologies. Therefore, the secondary data will establish a relevant building typology that would relate to the issues of urban regeneration within the city of Pietermaritzburg. Once a building typology has been selected, two types of precedent and case studies will be investigated.

The first type of precedent and case studies would investigate buildings and spaces that depict the South African identity which will include contemporary and traditional buildings, in order to establish a better understanding between contemporary and traditional buildings, between the new and the old. This will firstly establish if the contemporary architecture is on the right path towards establishing unique South African buildings. Secondly, this will provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between contemporary architecture and indigenous architecture and provide a necessary remedy for enhancing contemporary architecture and establishing a unique South African identity.

The second type of precedent and case studies would address the selected building typology in terms of functions required for the building. It will also investigate relevant

architectural issues such as sustainability and how buildings and public spaces can encourage a safe environment where people can interact.

A culmination of the two types of precedent and case studies will provide the solution for how indigenous arts and crafts can be accommodated within the contemporary world.

Primary Data:

Primary data will be in the form of an informal interview with a person in the arts and crafts field to determine methods and techniques that can be applied to architecture. Secondly, the interview shall determine how craft artists view contemporary architecture and if they see a relationship between the two disciplines. The interview also hopes to uncover ways in which contemporary artists use tradition as a guiding principle for their work. Therefore, within the category of the arts and crafts (inclusive of architecture), it is hoped that this will provide a better understanding between the contemporary and indigenous, between old and new. The aim of the interview will be to acquire information about indigenous arts and crafts which can be applied to contemporary South African architecture as a means of formulating an architectural identity.

1.11 Outline of Chapters

The whole process of data collection is aimed at ensuring that contemporary South African architecture establishes an element of uniqueness that draws motivation and inspiration from indigenous arts and crafts. In this way, South African architecture and urban spaces will form an identity of which modern society can relate to and be part of.

The literature review study comprises of three segments. The first focuses on the relationship between place and identity which will provide an understanding of the importance of place as a determinant of architectural identity. This segment concentrates primarily of architectural issues that affect the establishment of an architectural identity. The second segment focuses on culture and identity which seeks to provide further

understanding into cultural dynamics and groupings which inform the architectural identity. This segment also concentrates on social issues such as how the identity of the individual can affect the identity of the group. These two forms of identities are important in the creation of an architectural identity.

Therefore through the understanding of both architectural and social identities, the third segment focuses on the role of indigenous arts and crafts on the architectural identity and the social identity. Therefore indigenous arts and crafts can become a tool which can be used to manipulate social and architectural identities simultaneously.

The process in which these ideas will be formulated – literature review, case study and precedent study- aim to find ways in which locally responsive architecture may be achieved and used as a tool to preserve the culture and tradition of indigenous communities whilst adhering to urban, environmental and architectural principles. In this way, the past is used as a guiding element to inform the present and future.

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this part of the research is to expand on some of the issues that were mentioned earlier in the introductory chapter. This chapter seeks to review relevant published material which relate to the topic of indigenous arts and crafts and contemporary South African architecture. In addition, as stated in the topic, the research seeks to determine the influence of culture and identity on both South African architecture and arts and crafts, therefore, the place theory will be used as a base for the discussion.

2.2 Architecture and Identity

2.2.1 Introduction

As Malan (2001) points out that the new democracy in South Africa has brought with it a need for architecture that depicts a free and democratic society, however, the quest to finding that architecture has been an on-going process. Contemporary South African society is in the process of social transformation, from a repressive social order to a multi-cultural democracy (Zegeye, 2003); therefore the concept of an architectural identity becomes an important aspect of defining an appropriate response to the social transition. However, what is the South African identity?

The speech Mbeki (1996) titled "*I am an African- I am a South African,*" expresses the identity of South Africa, where he emphasises that an individual's national identity comes from their sense of belonging to a country and being proud of its history, cultures, languages, landscapes and tradition. However, as pointed out in the title of Mbeki's (ibid) speech, the South African identity is inter-connected with the African identity. Throughout the course of history, especially during the apartheid era, South Africans

have always worked together with other African countries and therefore, they share a past of connectivity.

“I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land” (Mbeki, 1996).

It should be noted that the identity which Mbeki (1996) refers to is a social identity, however, as it shall be clarified at a later stage, both social and environmental patterns influence architecture, therefore, although Mbeki (1996) encapsulates the image of identity in South Africa from a social aspect rather than architectural, the principles of the place theory still apply. The extract above gives a brief description of the climate and landscape of South Africa, which paints a visual image of the natural environment of the country.

The natural environment which we live in is a vital component of our identity as it has shaped social and political history, and in turn informs our present and future. As Mbeki (1996) continues, he states that although our country has a rather repressive history, nevertheless, all the acts of the past should be recognised because they inform the present. The migrants from Europe who found a new home in South Africa remain a strong part of the South African identity. Essentially, the crux of Mbeki’s (ibid) speech highlights that, the environment and our history has shaped social patterns which has influenced the individuals of the country. The knowledge of our history, culture and heritage contributes to the South African identity.

Although the tone of the research has taken a rather aggressive tone with regards to European culture in the pursuit of a South African identity, the new South African identity should be informed by European culture as well because it is a part of the past, and therefore it will always influence the present and future of South Africa.

The speech also pays homage to the Malay people from the east, although they are of foreign descent, they remain a vital part of the essence of South Africa and hence, they are also part of the South African identity. History also plays an integral part in the identity of the country, from the warrior men and women that were led by King Hintsa and Sekhukhune, to the patriots that were led by King Cetshwayo, to the soldiers of King Moshoeshoe. It was the successes and failures of these leaders that have led to the country that we live in. Whether good or bad, history has played a vital role in determining the present, and therefore, it should be respected. However, apart from understanding the history of the country, the concept of identity has far greater benefits for modern South African society.

2.2.2 The Concept of Identity

The concept of identity becomes a tool which can be used to understand the relationship between the individual and the social realms, and eventually between architecture and society. (Zegeye, 2003). Identity is also a fundamental element that can be used to understand individuals, behavioural patterns and social processes (ibid). These components are crucial in how architecture is to respond to the new Republic of South Africa.

In explaining identity, Correa (1983) states that our identity can be found by understanding ourselves and our environment. He continues by giving an example, if an architect were to see a glass building in New York and then try to reproduce it in a foreign context, like India, the architect would not be respecting the local community and its needs. However, if the architect were to take the principles of architecture and apply them on the local customs, climate and tradition, in this way, the building would be identifiable with the local community (ibid). Therefore, the example suggests that 'place' and meaning are closely linked with identity, as they are the tools which create the identity.

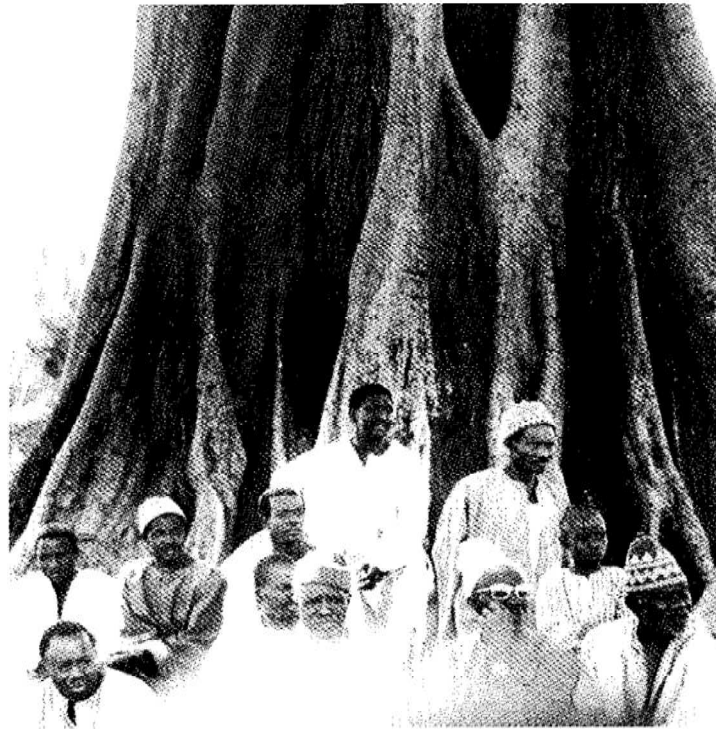


Fig 2. 1- African Village in a warm climate where people have an outdoor relationship with the built form (Correa, 1983; 10).

A second point emphasised by Correa (1983) is that there is a close relationship between form and identity. He states that we can only find our identity by understanding ourselves and our environment. This process is achieved through applying ourselves to the materials, customs, climate and traditions (ibid). These are also the primary elements that determine form. As Correa (ibid) continues, he states that he finds climate helps to determine form on two levels; firstly it is an immediate determinant for finding an expression as seen with courtyards which serve a specific ventilation purpose. Secondly, climate helps to determine the patterns of culture and rituals; as a result, it determines the built form (ibid). For example, the warmer climate of Africa means that people have a different relationship with the built environment than that of people in colder climates (ibid). As a result, the climate determines cultural patterns by encouraging more of an outdoor living environment in Africa to capitalize on the advantages of the warm climate (Fig 2.1). Therefore the search for identity could provide greater sensitivity in the way we perceive our environment and also the way we perceive ourselves in the society we live in. Through the process of identity, it forces society to look at greater social issues- living patterns, urbanisation and the nature of change- which affect our environment.

Rapoport (1969) also shares similar views by highlighting that in addition to climate and materials, political and religious context also play a role as a determinant of form. Through this Rapoport (ibid) concludes by stating that form is not simply the result of physical elements, but also the result of a range of socio-cultural factors, “*form is in turn modified by climatic conditions and by methods of construction, materials available and the technology*” (Rapoport, 1969; 47). Therefore it can be said that socio-cultural factors are essential as a determinant of form which also provides an identity for the built environment in a particular place.

Phenomenology addresses the issues of place, space and meaning, however, the research shall focus specifically on the ‘place theory’ as a means achieving identity within contemporary South African architecture. The ‘place theory’ highlights *genius loci* (the spirit of place) as a concept that gives life to people and places (Nesbitt, 1996). However, another key element in establishing the spirit of place is orientation. This element is closely linked with the work of Lynch (1960) who bases the concept of orientation on five elements which constitute an environmental image which “*gives its possessor an important sense of emotional security*” (Lynch, 1960:45).

The example by Correa that was mentioned above highlighted that an understanding of identity is closely linked with ‘place’ and meaning, therefore, the research shall not only analyse the spirit of place, but it shall also develop a semiological understanding of place. In other words, through a semiological approach, the meaning of place can be understood. Therefore, in order to achieve meaning, the manner in which people experience architecture should be a multisensory experience that evokes powerful emotions. Apart from specific functions, buildings can also evoke emotion through form (Nesbitt, 1996). Art exists in the consciousness of the person experiencing it. The images transmitted by the forms and their emotional strength create meaning for the artwork (Nesbitt, 1996). Therefore, form merely becomes a tool in which the observer can engage with the built environment. Only by understanding our environment and understanding ourselves can we find identity (Correa, 1983).

2.2.3 Place as a tool for establishing Identity

Apart from orientation as a key element of the spirit of place, Lynch (1981) also highlights that a good place should be accessible to all senses, in this way, spaces become memorable. Whilst dealing with spaces, Trancik (1986) defines a space to be a place when it is given contextual meaning derived from the culture of the context. It is this distinct character that makes a space a place and it results in the formulation of the spirit of place (ibid). Therefore, spaces can be described as purposeful voids with the potential of linking different components; however, they only become a place when they have are given meaning which is derived from the cultural and regional context.

The place theory is important within the process of establishing a South African identity, however, although the place theory refers to the more physical aspects of the environment. The search for a national identity seeks to infiltrate the broader social aspects of the country, however, within the context of architecture, the place theory becomes vital as architecture should seek to make a positive impact in society through creating meaningful spaces and places which start to address broader social issues. In this way, architecture becomes relevant to the society. *“The concept of relevant architecture calls for the rejection of universal formulas, imitation of international paragons and the uncritical embrace of stylistic or technological fashions in favour of an architectural expression that is determined by the specific and unique parameters of its place”* (Marschall, 2000; 1). Therefore, relevant architecture should reflect aspects of the country such as climate and landscape and its society.

Architecture should seek to enhance the environmental identity and sense of place and at the same time create an appropriate link between the human, physical and cultural context in order to accommodate the requirements of modern society (Trancik, 1986). Similarly, from a South African context, Marschall (2000) states that architecture should also take into consideration specific conditions such as economic, social, environmental, cultural and technological issues that prevail within the new post apartheid South Africa. In this way, the building becomes socially relevant in addressing issues such as

generating employment and providing training opportunities which engage and involve society in different ways.

Trancik (1986) also states that the people, culture and activities that occur in a certain space help to give that place an identity and character. In order to establish an identity, architects need to acquire a deeper knowledge into the people and culture of a place, where they pursue to dig deeper into issues such as local history, feelings and needs of the community, tradition and indigenous culture (ibid). In addition, Marschall (2000) states that “*An architecture of place takes advantage of the particular natural characteristics of places; constructs or reinforces identifiable urban spaces or enclosures.... and makes use of the skills and devices of generations of design (such as scale, proportion, colour, etc) in order to achieve meaningful architecture*” (Marschall, 2000; 11). Therefore, a literal imitation of indigenous architecture reflects the identity of the past and not the present, however, the analysis and applications of indigenous values leads to more relevant architecture which respects the transformation of modern society. However as mentioned by Schultz (1997), architecture can not break away completely from tradition, but it is rather dependent it should seek to conserve the structural principles of tradition rather than its motives.

Rapoport (1969) highlights that tradition is the regulator of forms; the exclusion of tradition results in institutionalization. However, the use of tradition as a regulator has disappeared in modern society due to the increasing number of building types, many of which are too complex to build in a traditional way (ibid). However, he continues to express that tradition has also disappeared due to the “*loss of a common shared value system and image of the world*” (Rapoport, 1969; 6). This results in the loss of the communal spirit of co-operation which allows people to respect the rights of their neighbours and their buildings (ibid). The product of the lack of co-operation is seen in modern society, where zoning rules and regulations have been introduced to enforce co-operation. The indigenous communities did not have these rules; instead the whole system relied on the communal spirit. Therefore, these are one of several lessons that can be learnt not only from indigenous arts and crafts, but also from indigenous lifestyles.

2.2.4 The Spirit of South Africa

The 'genius loci' is described by Schultz (1996) as the spirit that gives life to people and places and it determines their character and essence. Similarly to art, the 'spirit of place' is present in everyday life; however, within modern society it may be referred to as an 'atmosphere' or feeling of a place. He explains that it is the genius loci that allows artists to find inspiration in local character such as landscapes and urban settings (ibid). The choice of an individual to walk along a busy retail fronted street as opposed to a dark empty street is dependent on the spirit of the place. As a result, an important determinant of a certain culture is the spirit of place (ibid). This is evident in the desire for people to travel and interact with other cultures; as a result, tourism has become a major economic tool in the modern world. It is the spirit of a place that attracts tourists to it.

The genius loci is regarded to be a space where life happens, similarly to the thoughts of Trancik (1986), Schultz (1980) defines place as a space with distinct character (ibid). However, as discussed above, Trancik (1986) expands this notion by highlighting that the distinct character constitutes meaning, which is derived from the cultural context. Through the lynch theory, Schultz (1980) states that a place is not merely an abstract element, but it also consists of elements such as materials, substance, colour and texture. The combination of these elements constitutes an environmental character which forms the essence of place.

Another key element in establishing the spirit of place is orientation and the ability to identify certain environments. Both elements are equally important in this case in attempting to define national identity which will in turn inform an architectural response. It is therefore vital that the architect or the designer creates places that the people can relate to, identify with and own. The experiential aspects of the genius loci are closely linked with the work of Lynch (1960) where he bases the concept of orientation on the on paths, nodes, landmarks, edges and districts. These five elements constitute an environmental image which "*gives its possessor an important sense of emotional security*" (Lynch, 1960; 45). Architecture can achieve an environmental image through

buildings which display the character of the place and hence form a linkage with the community (Schultz, 1980). The ability to identify certain environments is also important, to expand, the process of identification is derived from identity, and the identity of a place is formed through the integration of various characters such as context, environment and social aspects relating to a certain place (ibid). Therefore, this notion suggests that the *genius loci* can be defined as the image of identity; however, they share a mutual relationship where one entity can influence the other as they both have similar constraints and attributes which helps create meaningful places. An example of this can be seen with in the design of Freedom Park (which will be discussed later) where meaningful spaces are created through the use of traditional forms, languages and principles of indigenous architecture which informs the environmental image and in turn provides the image of identity which contribute to the spirit of the place.

2.2.5 Sensual Identity in Urban Landscapes

Closer examination of the *genius loci* states that all cultures 'have' different systems of orientation, which are the spatial structures, which facilitate the development of a good environmental image (Schultz, 1996). However, the use of the word 'have' implies that this process is already happening, but when it is applied to the South African context, it can only be seen with the difference between urban and rural communities. The urban spaces in South Africa depict landscapes which are deeply entrenched in European culture rather than South African culture. Therefore, the image portrayed by cities in South Africa is that of foreign culture and not local culture.

Lynch (1960) describes the system of orientation as imageability, which consists of shape, colour or any other arrangements that facilitate the making of identifiable mental images of the environment. However, Schultz (1996) is very critical of this statement as it suggests that the elements which govern spatial structure are physical elements with character and meaning. Although physical elements should be taken into consideration, the body and the senses should also play a vital role in imageability, as a negligence of the body leads to inhumane architectural spaces (Pallasmaa, 2005). Architectural spaces

that fail to recognise the body and senses lead to experiences of alienation and detachment which juxtapose the concept of national identity.

However, a later publication by Lynch (1981) suggests that all spaces and places should be accessible to all senses. Therefore, although Lynch's theory (1960) of orientation refers to more physical elements, his second publication (1981) makes an effort to recognise bodily senses as a key element in orientation as well.

Another criticism of the Lynch (1960) theory of orientation is that its reliance on visibility for orientation. Elements such as shape and colour appeal more the visual sense and disregard the other senses. Although the visual sense is the most used, "*it has also suppressed the other senses and pushed us into detachment, isolation and exteriority*" (Pallasmaa, 2005; 25). Therefore, contemporary urban spaces need to encourage the use of all senses in order to provide a fulfilling architectural experience. Each of the senses plays an important role in the experience of architecture as they might evoke certain memories which might make places more familiar. Lynch (1981) raises the idea of personal memories which are strongly linked to the bodily senses and to place identity and personal identity. The sense of hearing and sound for example might be a gravel path leading to house might announce the arrival of a visitor, as a result, even in a foreign context; a similar noise might evoke the same emotional response as that of the house. Certain places are identifiable through use of other senses, for example the smell of a garden, steam from Laundromats, which might conjure up memories of past experiences (Von Meiss, 1990). The way in which we are able to use our hands to touch and feel various textures might provide a fulfilling architectural experience, where the walls, floors and other objects can be felt (Von Meiss, 1990). The importance of personal memories and sensual experiences are particularly important for both architecture and arts and crafts because these two disciplines affect people psychologically.

Although the visual sense is an important aspect, it has to work in conjunction with the other senses in order to enjoy a meaningful architectural experience (Pallasmaa, 2005). Architecture needs to accommodate for a multi-sensory experience, architects need to

constantly remember that architecture is an image only on paper as a drawing or photograph, “*as soon as it is built it becomes the scene and sometime the scenario of comings and goings, of gestures, even a succession of sensations*” (Von Meiss, 1990; 15), therefore, in simpler terms, once the building has been erected, it ‘should’ become a place. Although the use of the word ‘should’ implies that a certain formula has been used to conjure up a place, in this statement it is used with the intention of created a sense of awareness among architects that firstly, this is a process that needs to be addressed more delicately, and secondly, what may be drawn on paper may be a different experience once built. Therefore, architecture should look to providing spaces that cater for a multi-sensory experience and accommodating of people needs rather than the architects image.

Pallasmaa (2005) states that the task of architecture is to create an internal environment that is no different to the external environment. The external environment constantly forces society to engage with it, therefore, a similar interactive approach needs to be considered for internal spaces. As an extension of the natural environment, the built environment should therefore evoke similar experiences and sensations as those in the natural environment. Indigenous architecture provides a similar relationship with the natural environment, as mentioned by Frescura (1985), the materials used in construction of dwellings in the indigenous community were predominantly saplings, clay, grass and cow dung and these materials were locally available, but it is important to note that these materials were not machine made, therefore, the material choice allowed for the literal extension of the natural environment into built form (ibid). Through the use of local materials, the users of the space were able to relate to the space through the body; the users could smell and touch the construction materials. As a result, the users of the space would feel more comfortable inside the space as it was an extension of their contextual environment.

Therefore, architects should seek to create buildings which define and create places with distinct characters but also remain in unison with the natural environment. Architecture is an extension of the natural environment into the man-made environment (Pallasmaa, 2005; 41), hence architectural places should have a distinctive character and atmosphere which is in response to the environmental context and at the same time respond to social

needs. Through this process, South African architecture will become distinctive and portray an identity unique to the country.

In order to establish an identity within Contemporary South African architecture, architects should look to the surrounding natural environment for clues on how to create a relationship between society and the built environment through seeking integration on a variety of levels (Malan, 2001). Architecture is mostly a visual art; however, the above statement suggests that varieties in the levels of integration are required in order to establish an identity. As a result, architects should look at the relationship between society and the natural environment, for example the sun can be felt without necessarily having to be seen. Therefore, the various ways in which society interacts with the natural environment provides a fulfilling experience which should be applied in the built environment.

The advancement of modern technology has also catered to the level of fragmentation among society. Architects are expected to create spaces that respond efficiently to the environment and to the needs of the people, however, how can the architects themselves cater for these needs when they are not in constant interaction with the environment, for example, many architects prefer to take pictures of a site and then proceed to the office to start designing. This approach may prove unsuccessful on many aspects, most notably, without appropriate interaction with the environment and the society, this leads to buildings that are reflections of the architects desires rather than that of the community's. As a result, *“architecture has adopted the psychological strategy of advertising and instant persuasion; buildings have turned into image products detached from existential depth and sincerity”* (Pallasmaa, 2005; 30). Before the days of media technology, architects were forced to stay on the site and observe and sketch various elements of the environment which was a thinking process that involved more interaction with the environment. Pallasmaa (ibid) goes on to state that architecture has become an art of printed images and within the modern culture of images; architecture has been reduced to a picture that has lost its quality. It seems architecture has become an art which is visual and two-dimensional (plans and elevations) as opposed to a meaningful situational bodily encounter.

As buildings lose their quality, they lose their connection with the body, which renders them as distant visions with no level of engagement (Pallasmaa, 2005). As a result buildings become flat and repulsive. Pallasmaa (ibid) goes on to mention that the sense of aura which is necessary for an authentic art piece has been lost. He describes the sense of aura as an authority of presence which can be compared to the genius loci. However, the genius loci describes the spirit of a place which is inclusive of contextual, social and environmental aspects that make up the character of the place (Schultz, 1996). The sense of aura on the other hand tends to describe the spirit of the building and its character with the exclusion of society, in other words does the building depict its presence and does it encourage people to explore it? In his analysis of the genius loci, Schultz (ibid) focuses more on the social aspects that constitute a spirit of place, perhaps as a reaction to Lynch's (1960) focus on physical aspects, however, Pallasmaa (2005) digs deeper to focuses on the emotional content depicted by buildings in order to achieve a more holistic view if the genius loci. Therefore it can be summarised that the sense of aura is a component of the genius loci. The sense of aura refers to the spirit of an individual building, however, the genius loci is the combination of buildings to form streets which affect the spirit of cities. However, in understanding the relationship between the sense of aura and genius loci, streets and cities would not exist without buildings, similarly, the genius loci would become irrelevant without the sense of aura.

Pallasmaa (2005) continues to criticize the level of modern technology which conceals the process of construction. He describes the use of reflective glass in architecture as an *“architectural mirror, which returns our gaze and doubles the world, is an enigmatic and frightening device”* (Pallasmaa, 2005; 31). The transparency of a building is more integrative than the mirror effect, it is important that the building form a relationship with the outdoor environment in order to create a meaningful place, both internally and externally. As a solution, he applauds the new sensible architectural imagery has emerged that uses reflections, different grades of transparency, overlays and juxtapositions as well as light to reverse the immateriality and weightlessness of modern technological materials into a positive experience of space, place and meaning (ibid). Although he applauds the type of architecture, with regards to his overall aim of providing a multi sensory experience, the example he mentions above still relatively focuses on the visual

sense through the use of mirrors. However, a transparency of the building might allow for a closer relationship with the exterior which might provide a fulfilling experience of the interior (ibid). For example, external sounds from the exterior might begin to infiltrate the interior. In this context, sound (which will be discussed later) has the potential to play an important role in the overall architectural experience (Storr, 1992).

Architecture is often conceived as a visual rather than a spatial art form. Architects regularly overlook the sound aspect of space. Beale (2000) states that acoustic spaces can be recognized by firstly, listening to space which involves analysing the street and how architecture shapes and modulates sound to create healthy functioning environments. Secondly, listening to users which involve assessing the users' aspirations, views about a building, street or any architectural space. In order to listen, architects and urban designers need to not only focus on space but also size, materials, activity and ambience. Architecture involves more than sketches on pieces of paper, the built form creates the human experience through sound and vibrations of the environment in inner and outer spaces. In a separate article, Beale (2000) states that public spaces are connected to each other through sound. Architects need to develop an understanding for the spaces which they desire to create. With regards to public spaces, these spaces may constitute, outdoor performance spaces, public squares which promote market trading or even smaller humane spaces which include quite serene environments.

2.2.6 Interactive Public Spaces

There is a major difference between urban spaces and rural spaces in terms of infrastructure. Although the research focuses mainly on the identity of urban spaces, it is important understand the relationship between the urban and the rural. As Fathy (1973) states, urban spaces have a direct impact on the character of both suburban and rural spaces. The styles and designs of urban spaces will filter down over several years through to the suburban and rural areas; as a result, it will slowly surpass indigenous cultures and traditions (ibid). Therefore architects need to set an example for draughtsmen, technicians and students who have not received the same level of education and experience and as a result they look towards the architects for leadership. Neglecting this notion will result in

cultural decay. Tradition is vital in keeping in the process of establishing the identity of urban spaces. However, “*tradition is not necessarily old fashioned and is not synonymous with stagnation*” (Fathy, 1973; 24). Instead, tradition is constantly changing to suit the needs of modern society. For example, as soon as a craftsman encounters a new problem, he uses his existing indigenous knowledge to overcome the problem, in this way; tradition is modified to comply with the context. However, there should be a fine balance between tradition and innovation, innovation should be a well thought-out response to a change in the environment, and not included as the craftsmen’s image or personal motives (Fathy, 1973). Therefore, architecture should seek to preserve tradition rather than destroy it. Fathy (ibid) also notes that the architect should always respect the work of predecessors and public sensibility by not using architecture as a medium for personal advertisement. Architects should feel proud of their local traditions; therefore, there is no need to introduce alien traditions into the local context. The preservation of tradition in the art of architecture will result in spaces that promote the identity of South Africa.

It should also be understood that all forms of art attract people of all cultures, traditions, religions and social classes together. It is one of many binding elements that unify all facets of society. As a result it should not be limited to the wealthy; it should be a right for everyone. Architecture is a public art form that is visibly accessible to everyone. Although many buildings might not be totally accessible to everyone, the public spaces shaped by buildings are public domains that should be used as ideal spaces for promoting cultural diversity. An understanding of the public image of the city is an important component in providing adequate public spaces suitable for cultural expression. In relation to an urban landscape, an understanding of the internal language of a city needs to be examined in order to understand the basic technical requirements which will help to inform the overall image of the city and the poetic form it needs in order to create an identity that is city specific.

Lynch (1960) describes the five key components which constitute the public image of a city, paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. These components relate mainly to the visual perception of the built form and the ease at which an observer is able to navigate

through it. The observer uses the components as tools in “*way-finding*” (Lynch, 1960; 3). The examination and application of these components will lead to the creation of spaces and places that are legible in a public space.

Paths are defined as streets, walkways, canals or any channels which an observer would move on. Edges are any linear elements that the observer considers not to be a path; they may be shores, edges of developments or walls. Districts are medium to large sections of the city which the observer can enter. Nodes are strategically placed points which the observer can also enter, they may be at the convergence of paths, or even bus stops. Landmarks are also reference points which are external, the observer does not enter them, and they may be building, signage or a mountain. (Lynch, 1960).

Lynch then gives a guide as to how each of these elements should be designed on an urban scale to define space. Key paths should have quality that separates them from surrounding paths, this can be achieved through textures, lighting, planting, smell or sounds. Edges should be accessible in order to increase visibility. Edges should become more of a seam than a barrier; an edge should also be provided with many visual connections to the rest of the city so it can be a feature to which everything can be easily aligned. Landmark location is crucial, if it is large, the spatial setting should allow for it to be visible. Nodes are anchor points within cities, if there is a break in transportation, which should coincide with the node which will draw more attention to the node. The node can also be used as a joint between paths (Lynch, 1960).

Torre highlights materials and textures as features that create the image (Torre, 1989). This essentially refers to how well the public realm is perceived by the visitor. Gehl (2006) emphasizes that an enjoyable public realm is achieved through public spaces that promote safety and social interaction. This can be done by providing lighting, furniture, and landscaping. Gehl (ibid) highlights that the process of creating good urban environments is an ordered process of life, spaces and buildings. The process firstly involves discussing what kind of life is desirable. Secondly, which types of public spaces would support the desired activities and life in the area. Finally, guidelines can be created that new buildings must adhere to in order to create desired public spaces.

With regards to public spaces, the main focus must be on attending to detail and to people who will be using the space. The place should be safe and provide for basic human needs such as strolling, standing, and sitting, observing and listening (Gehl, 2006). Public space is defined as a “*term that refers to a social space defined by the activities which take place there and by its symbolism*” (Cousseran, 2006; 111). Public space is a social space created specifically for the bringing together of people, a place where locals can meet strangers. Creating comfortable humane spaces creates life, which in turn create patterns. As Schultz (1971) explains, life interprets itself as space. In other words, the manner in which architects shape spaces defines and influences life in those spaces. Therefore, the art of architecture should focus mainly on providing a base for social interaction and provide the necessary facilities to the usage of public spaces. Active ground floor frontages provide a meaningful point for the public to interact with architecture and provide for a pleasant image of the city along a certain path or edge.

Lynch explains that an image may be analyzed into three components; identity, structure, and meaning (Lynch, 1960). Understanding these three components will provide further enlightenment on how architecture should respond to its culture and society. Identity can be explained as the identification of an object which separates it from other things, which implies its distinction from other things, and hence it is then recognized as its own unique entity (ibid). On a human scale identity is easily identifiable through rituals, clothing, language, gender etc. These are features that form part of a person’s identity and through these features; he/her can be easily identifiable amongst others. With regards to the built environment, the same principle applies. The way architects ‘clothe’ their buildings in relation to the context contribute to creating an identity for the built environment. The creation of successful public spaces creates high pedestrian density in the space. A higher population density helps create a stronger identity for the city (Shultz, 1971). Structure is the “*spatial or pattern relation of the object to the observer and to other objects*” (Lynch, 1960; 9). In other words, the image requires an identifiable object which is placed in such a manner that it is recognisable within its context. Meaning is then described as an element of emotional or practical significance to the observer.

The manner in which architects shape spaces defines and influences life in those spaces. Within an urban landscape, it is crucial that public buildings are designed to promote social interaction through the use of public spaces as a platform. The creation of successful public spaces affects the usage and public perception of public buildings. With regards to human comfort and awareness, French (1983) also indicates that public spaces need to relate to an individual's sensory awareness. Designers of public spaces should be cognisant of the importance of human senses as they apply to the function of the public space. Senses such as "*sound, smell and touch play upon our subconscious comprehension, which tends to result in our liking or disliking a place but not quite knowing why*" (Grove, 1983; 83). Therefore, art plays an important role towards evoking feelings and emotions which contribute to the intensity of architectural spaces and form an architectural identity.

2.2.7 Understanding Architecture and Identity

Historically, architecture has been used as a symbol of power and identity. Through the process of cultural conquest, when a certain culture gains control over the less powerful culture, they enforce their traditions and culture on the inferior culture (Awotona, 1999). Architecture was a tool used to visually insert dominance, for example, when the British conquered South Africa; they built monuments and structures that symbolized their rule. The British asserted their identity through architecture. Vale (1992) states that architecture is used as a tool for expressing political power and national identity. As a sign of political power, he investigates how government buildings assert their dominance and instil a sense of national identity.

With regards to designing spaces that reflect identity of a certain group of people, the architect or designer should first understand the behavioural patterns, values and the typology of the place (Von Meiss, 1990). Therefore, establishing the identity of a space would involve designing a space that allows the future users to totally engage and to modify the design of the space in their own individual way. This method is seen especially in markets and squares around the world (ibid). An example of this can be seen with the Warwick Junction Precinct (WJP), which respects the local community that

occupies the spaces and at the same time, it reflects new innovations in the planning of urban spaces that represents the community both in the current and future situations without the need to directly imitate indigenous architecture for indigenous purposes.



Fig 2. 2- Spatial layout of Warwick Junction Precinct and surrounding areas ('KZ-NIA Journal', 2001; 7).

The WJP in Durban is an area that is a major transport node in the city and includes the major bus and taxi ranks located around the major train station (Rosenberg, 2008). As a result, the precinct generates about 500 000 commuters who pass through on a daily basis (ibid). The high level of pedestrian activity led to the establishment of informal markets and trading which has contributed to the economic stability of the city of Durban. The herb and muti market alone generates an estimated annual turnover of R200 million (Dobson, 2008). Although the spatial development (Fig 2.2) of the precinct was shaped by the apartheid laws of segregation, to a large extent, the laws have also contributed to the diverse mix of activities and land uses in the precinct that make it unique (Rosenberg, 2008). The apartheid laws also positioned WJP to become the gateway into the inner city, as a result, the activities that occur in the precinct made it an “*important symbol of Durban as a vibrant African city*” (Dobson, 2008; 24).



Fig 2. 3- New cooking facilities for the Bovine head cookers (Dobson, 2008; 23).

With regards to the regeneration of the precinct, the architects designed spaces that preserved the identity of the community through an in depth process of understanding their behavioural patterns, values and the typology of the place. During this process, it was understood that the only way to determine the needs of the community was to listen to them (Dobson, 2008). Therefore, the first stage of the regeneration came in form of refurbishing an old building in the area into a project centre which allowed the project

team to engage more directly with the community through observations and consultations which started a meaningful dialogue between the architects and the community (ibid).

Through interaction with the community, new urban issues were identified, and new solutions were included to preserve the needs of the community. As a result, new facilities were provided for fruit and vegetable traders, live chicken sellers, cardboard collectors and for those cooking and selling mealies and bovine heads (ibid). The cooking activities provided a dilemma where the use of open fires for cooking created a potentially hazardous environment. However, rather than ban these activities, the project team worked alongside the cookers to design appropriate spaces which now cater for about 28 registered cookers (Dobson, 2001). The team designed a facility dedicated to bovine head cooking (Fig 2.3) where cookers have pavement kitchens to maximise retail opportunity. The kitchens consist of a cooking bench with sides to protect the primus stove flame from the wind, a stainless steel surfaced preparation table and a tiled serving table (ibid). The waste flows into floor drains which lead to specially designed sumps lined with stainless steel sieves to catch solid waste (ibid). In addition, each of the cookers is provided with pre-treatment buckets designed to separate fats from liquid waste (ibid). This provides an example of how the identity of Warwick Junction has been preserved through the design of spaces that respects the community and the environment they have created. In addition, the architectural spaces provided enhance the functions that exist in the area. As the research continues, further aspects of Warwick junction shall be analysed and understood. The precinct also provides a valuable lesson as to how indigenous functions can be incorporated into urban environments in a manner which incorporates and enhances the architectural identity of the city.

The lessons learnt from the WJP seem to juxtapose those of the Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (NMYHC) which seeks a modern interpretation of the indigenous architecture of the region. Referring to the NMYHC, Eicker (2007) states that “*the vernacular architecture found in the region was interpreted to reflect a progressive first world aesthetic*” (Eicker, 2007; 18). However, within a rural landscape, the NMYHC fails to attract people due to the fact that it seems to be a response to the rural context and reflects no sense of modernity with regards to material selection and use of spaces,

therefore, as a result, it loses its relevance with the local community. However, in contrast, the WJP is primarily shaped by the functions of spaces which then determine an aesthetic response; as a result WJP became an identifiable urban landmark that attracted people to the spaces.

The Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (NMYHC) is located in the Eastern Cape and it forms part of the Nelson Mandela Museum (Eicker, 2007). The Museum consists of three segments; the historic Bhunga Building in Mthatha dedicated to Nelson Mandela's journey, the open air museum at Mvezo where Mandela was born and the Youth and Heritage Centre (Fig 2.4) at Qunu (ibid). The project was commissioned by the Departments of Arts and Culture and was designed by Stauch Vorster Architects, Osmond Lange Architects, RFB Consulting Architects and Mthethwa and Associates Architects (ibid).

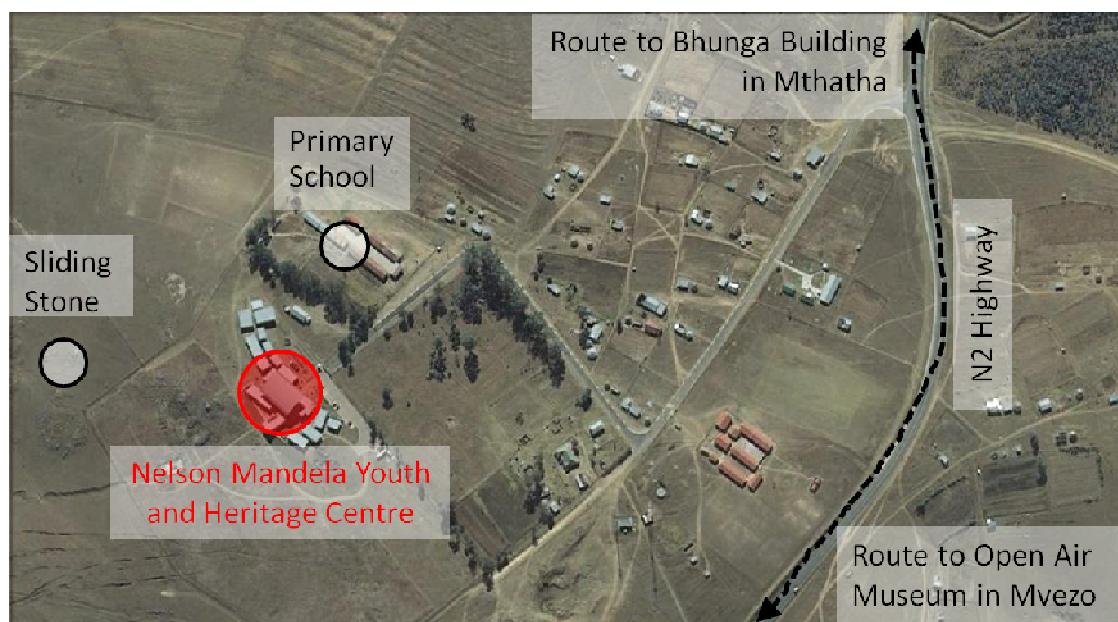


Fig 2. 4- Aerial image of Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.

It was Mandela's wish that the NMYHC should not be a formal centre; however, it should be community orientated where the South African people could visit the centre and experience the rural lifestyle which Mandela enjoyed in his youth (Eicker, 2007). Therefore, activities such as the nearby rock slide; pony rides, garden tending, stick

fighting and stone throwing are included in the centre as a means of incorporating the community.

The site is located on the top of a hill where Mandela spent his early school years and the foundations of the school he attended are still visible on the site; although the buildings are no longer present (Eicker, 2007). Therefore, as a result, the location of the old buildings formed centre of the site and the new buildings were located in a manner which does not intrude on the original school site (ibid). Since the site is located on top of a hill, the new buildings had to be quite striking, therefore; as a result, they were broken up into smaller segments in order to compliment the rural landscape (ibid). In addition, the hill also served as a pathway connecting Lower Qunu and Upper Qunu, therefore, the positioning of the building segments formed a ribbon type of development (Fig 2.5) which expands the centre as opposed to one large complex in order to suit the surrounding rural context (ibid).



Fig 2. 5- Plan of Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (Eicker, 2007; 17).

The rural context and the community were taken into consideration for the design of the NMYHC (Eicker, 2007). The community of Qunu was involved in design discussions

and decisions from the beginning of the project as a result, the community was able to change the initial design which was more of a literal interpretation of the local vernacular architecture (ibid). The community wanted to see a building that would be locally and internationally appreciated (ibid), therefore, this notion suggests that the rural community also requires buildings and spaces that reflect the contemporary qualities of an ever changing community. Eicker (2007) goes on to state that the building was designed in a modern fashion but using the same principles common to the area. However, the critique of the NMYHC will highlight ways in which contemporary architecture should use elements of vernacular architecture to enhance the identity of South African architecture, regardless of whether buildings are in rural or urban landscapes.

The design of NMYHC draws inspiration from the local vernacular architecture, therefore, as a response to the local architecture of using timber structures that can be roofed before filling in the cladding on the walls, a similar principle is used for the centre with steel framed buildings with a brick and mortar infill (Eicker, 2007). It is in the author's opinion that replacing materials used in vernacular architecture with more contemporary materials such as steel is the literal interpretation of vernacular architecture which seems to portray a misconception with regards to African architecture as one which is stagnant and not capable of transforming. The form of NMYHC resembles the local adobe architecture with soft rounded corners (Fig 2.6) and window reveals (ibid). In addition, the buildings have a solid softly shaped wall at the back and on the sides as well as fenestrated screens (Fig 2.7) which include timber panels for spaces that require privacy at the same time allow for views of the surrounding landscape (ibid). With the location of the site on top of a hill with views surrounding, the buildings are arranged to face a southern direction towards the lower Qunu Valley which are bordered by masonry walls on the east, west and north sides, however, the southern sides are glazed in order to maximise views of the landscape (ibid). The buildings are arranged in a way which allows for views and allow for the continuity of the valley into the centre and also provides interplay between light and shade cast by the buildings (ibid). Therefore, as discussed above, an important aspect of portraying a South African identity in architecture is the unity of the natural environment with the built environment.

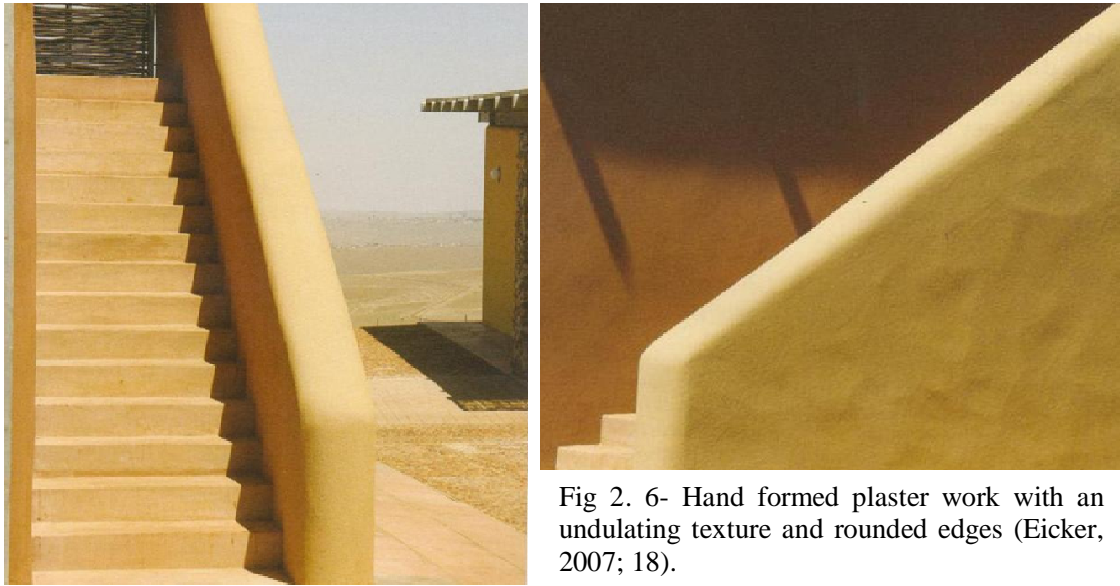


Fig 2. 6- Hand formed plaster work with an undulating texture and rounded edges (Eicker, 2007; 18).

The design of the centre also includes the use of various textures which evoke a sense of warmth and softness of the natural landscape which contrast the sharp linear lines of the structural steel framework (Eicker, 2007). In this way, the materials have been expressed to reflect their modest attitude through the use of various textures which also engages the user of the space to experience the building in its entirety. This idea has been achieved through the use of hand formed plaster work (Fig 2.6), which creates an undulating texture and round edges (ibid). In addition, the exoskeleton of the building uses a low pitched roof in order to reduce the impact of the buildings on the horizon and the raw steel used has only been galvanised and not painted, and the masonry finishes have been kept to a minimum and not heavily decorated (ibid). As Eicker (2007) explains, the idea was that the buildings should be simple and in unison with the environment as a reflection of the nature of Nelson Mandela, therefore, the impact of the buildings on the hilltop is moderated by the naturally coloured materials of the structures and the tall tree line as a backdrop.



Fig 2. 7- Latte screens used as shading devices and as a means of privacy and the screens were made from locally harvested wattle branches (Eicker, 2007; 18).

The rural villages in the area of Qunu have buildings located around a central outdoor space which becomes the central meeting space for discussions and social gatherings (Eicker, 2007). Therefore, the concept of a central courtyard has also been applied to the NMYHC where the central gathering space becomes the heart of the complex, as a result, this central space in the design has been covered with a 10 meter high canopy which casts a large shadow and shelters the space (Fig 2.8), in addition, the shape of the canopy imitates the shape of the hill and gives the centre visual prominence (ibid). The canopy is supported by vertical steel columns which are clad in timber to symbolise the shape of trees, starting with a thick stem at the base and then branching out into four branches (Fig 2.9), in this way, these tree shaped columns symbolise the forest that used to exist in the area (ibid). The concept of the central gathering space is further emphasised through the creation of a village street between the buildings which form an open thread that passes from the west (Fig 2.10), through the complex, and outwards to the east and surrounding villages (ibid). As Eicker (2007) states, this allows the complex to become part of the macro-context as another small village along a pedestrian route, which facilitates social interaction and gives significance to the central gathering space.



Fig 2. 8- Main canopy providing protection to the single storey buildings below (Eicker, 2007; 20).



Fig 2. 9- The main canopy's columns are steel clad in timber to symbolise the forest (Eicker, 2007; 21).

The centre is grouped as a series of small elements which symbolise a village environment; each element is represented as a building with an individual function (Eicker, 2007). On the western side of the complex is the sports centre which can cater for boxing matches, games and meeting and it has been designed to be flexible and operate outside the hours of the centre (ibid). The complex also includes a residential component and a dining hall and kitchen for the youth who visit the centre from the different parts of Africa (ibid). The central meeting space in the heart of the complex is intended to be the main point of arrival into the complex, as a result, this space leads to a commercial restaurant; exhibition space which displays gifts given to Mandela during his time as President of the country; a community hall for functions, movies and meetings; an administration component; and a resource centre which provides a young learning opportunity for the youth of the community (ibid).



Fig 2. 10- Image of Village street between buildings which forms an open thread through the centre (Eicker, 2007; 16).

Therefore, with regards to how the NMYHC relates to the issue of architecture and identity, the point discussed earlier is the need for architecture to become an extension of the natural environment into built form; however, the NMYHC seems to interpret this notion in a literal manner. It is in the authors opinion that the architectural response of the architects to the needs and requirements of the community needs greater authenticity, where vernacular elements are analysed accordingly to recreate spaces and buildings that respond to the needs of the community, in this way the building becomes relevant primarily to the local community and secondarily to the greater community of South Africa. The community called for a building that could be locally and internationally appreciated; therefore, it can be said that the community required a building that is at an international standard, however, the architectural response was one that used the

principles of vernacular architecture to influence all design and structural aspects of the building. Therefore, the building becomes an imitation of vernacular architecture through the use of modern materials, which rather than make an international statement, it becomes an arbitrary building which becomes just another village on a hill.

2.2.8 Conclusion

In order to establish a South African architectural identity, as architects we need to understand the environment which we are designing for. As pointed out by Mbeki (1996) the climate and the landscape of the country are elements of our natural environments. In addition, identity is a fundamental concept that can be used to understand social realms which is vital to shaping contemporary South African architecture. Therefore, as stated by Correa (1983), understanding ourselves and the environment leads to finding our identity. The place theory becomes an essential tool for establishing our identity as it deals with our environment and suggests ways and methods to make urban spaces more accessible and legible.

2.3 Culture and Identity

2.3.1 Introduction

Identity and culture are two concepts that are closely linked, however, within the process of establishing a national identity, it is important to gain an understanding into culture and the culture which we trying to identify with. However, the concept of identity is rather complex, especially within the South African context. For example, there are eleven official languages in South Africa which correspond to the major ethnic groups (Zegeye, 2003). The country is in a struggle to break free from the constraints of its oppressive past and create a new multi-cultural social order that is based on reconciliation and social equity (ibid). Some might say that it has been almost two decades and the country has healed, however, the various social problems that plague society serve as proof that the country is still in the healing process. Therefore a study into the culture will provide an understanding into cultural identity which will in turn inform the national identity.

2.3.2 Cultural Diversity and Cultural Interaction

The English dictionary defines culture as an *“intellectual and artistic achievement or expression, customs, achievements etc of a particular civilization or group”* (Pearsall, 1998; 364). Serrat (2008) describes culture as the totality of society’s distinctive ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge and it portrays the manner in which society interprets its environments. Therefore, through these two definitions, we can understand that culture is society’s expression of their environment. However, it is important to note that culture is a complex concept and has many similar definitions and expressions. *“Culture is material and symbolic, belonging and being, pattern and process, macro and micro, corporate and public, product and public good. Culture, it is said ‘is everything”* (Monclus, 2006; 22). Therefore, cultural activities can be classified as activities that promote intellectual, artistic and expressive diversity. It should be understood that culture is a *“theoretical concept...no one has ever seen or will ever see or observe culture, only its manifestations, effects or products”* (Awotona, 1999; 2). Cultural activities include a

broad spectrum of creative endeavours such as music, film, television, drama, art, design and media. These activities are important in the process of economic development, urban regeneration and place-making (Monclus, 2006; 21). Cultural activities provide an opportunity for even more social interaction among different social groups. For example, the Newtown precinct (Fig 2.11), which is regarded as Johannesburg’s cultural precinct, provides a platform for different cultural groups to engage in cultural activities. The precinct features Museum Africa, Mary Fitzgerald Square (Fig 2.12), shops, restaurants, performing arts centres, and live music venues. No matter what your cultural background may be, from Soweto, from Sandton, the precinct provides facilities that promote integration which contributes to strengthening the cultural integrity of the city. The precinct is divided into four smaller precincts which are wrapped around the main square which is Mary Fitzgerald Square. Each smaller precinct focuses on smaller cultural activities which conceptually all interact with the main public square. This eclectic mix of cultures provides an inspirational and vibrant atmosphere which also features old buildings which have been transformed into museums or galleries. It represents a modern African mix of cultural diversity whilst maintaining and enhancing the identity of the city.

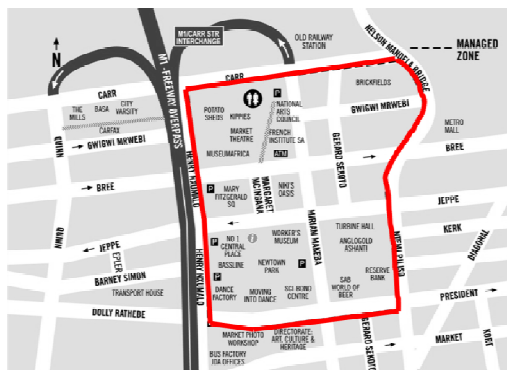


Figure 2.11- Diagrammatic plan of Newtown Cultural Precinct, Johannesburg.
http://www.jda.org.za/keydocs/newtown/geotech_newtown_report.pdf
 Accessed 30/03/2012.

Figure 2.12- View of Mary Fitzgerald Square.
<http://www.joburgnews.co.za/2004/sep/jda3.jpg&imgrefurl>
 Accessed 30/03/2012.

However, in order to understand the concept of cultural diversity, it is important to firstly understand the process of cultural interaction. The history of South Africa has left many unhealed scars of past injustices, therefore, cultural integration and interaction becomes an important aspect of healing modern society. According to Awotona (1999), cultural integration involves five phases; cultures making contact, cultural conflict, cultural conquest, cultural confusion and finally cultural integration.

Cultural integration results from cultures with different values systems making contact. The conflict amongst the cultures is the result of them discovering their incompatibility (Awotona, 1999). The conflict leads to a phase of culture conquest where the one culture establishes its supremacy and sometimes even compels the more vulnerable culture to surrender (ibid). Cultural confusion is a period where the integration of the cultures leads to confusion with regards to identity and character (ibid). Within a South African context, when the Europeans first made contact with the indigenous Africans, this led to a phase of cultural conflict and confusion resulting from the disharmony of different value systems. However, at present South Africa is in the process of cultural integration, where it is trying to break free from past racial oppression and is focussed on social equity (Zegeye, 2003). Therefore it is important for contemporary South African architecture to promote social activities that encourage cultural activities as a tool to unite the modern society.

Within any urban landscape, the need for cultural interaction and diversity is critical to building city character and identity. Cultural art forms provide unique platforms for locals and tourists to interact. They help provide tourists with opportunities to learn about the culture of the people, through displays and cultural activities.

2.3.3 Cultural Theory

The cultural theory seeks to define fundamental concepts of culture. It focuses on how certain phenomena affect cultural issues such as ideology, nationality, ethnicity, social class and gender. Since culture is such a broad subject, Rapoport (2002) suggests that it

should be broken down into manageable segments. He focuses mainly on cultural groups which give a sense of scale at which culture operates. Many cultures are grouped according to their nationality, hence the terms 'Americans' or 'Chinese' or 'British.' Generally, these are recognized as different cultural groups. However, the idea of multi-culturalism has meant that classification of cultural groups extends to a level that is far deeper than nationality. Rapoport (ibid) gives an example of Guatemala which is a relatively small country with a population of eleven million. Sixty percent of the population identify themselves as Maya, but they speak 22 different languages. Therefore this statistic suggests that there are different cultural groups within the country of Guatemala (Rapoport, 2002). The idea of recognizing certain cultures through nationality is irrelevant to the current state of society. Nationality only serves to distinguish as to which cultural group an individual might belong to. Another example is that of Nigeria where there are three major groups (Yoruba, Hausa/Fulani and Ibo), however, there are also a further 300 smaller tribal groups that exist (Rapoport, 2002).

Apart from the different languages that define cultural groups, the example of Nigeria also indicates the various tribal/ethnic backgrounds that also contribute to cultural grouping. However, in addition, these groups can be further defined by social status, education, occupation, sex, age, etc (Rapoport, 2002). The concept of culture is undergoing rapid change which involves the unification of the more traditional forms of culture and the more modern forms. The modern forms of culture focus mainly on cultural expression which can also become factors which define cultural groups (ibid). As mentioned before, culture is a very broad and complex subject; therefore, defining cultural groups according to every single fine-grain element of culture can become a very tedious process which would eventually define groups of individuals rather than cultural groups. A key factor in defining cultural groups is lifestyle groups (ibid). Lifestyle groups cater for an overlapping of various cultural issues within the social domain. *"Lifestyle is possibly the most useful component of culture in dealing with the excessive breadth and generality of that concept"* (Rapoport, 2002; 10).

In America, the research into lifestyle groups is well developed and they are defined in terms of geographics, demographics and psychographics (Rapoport, 2002). For example,

through this research, housing requirements for different groups can be analysed. From a marketing point of view, research into specific lifestyle groups allows for a better understanding of sales techniques required for certain groups (ibid). The social expressions of culture often impact on the built environment by influencing lifestyle and eventually the activity patterns around the built environment (ibid). Lifestyle is an important component of culture and so are the other components such as the social expressions of culture which contribute towards cultural diversity and interaction.

In the case of South Africa, there are many cultural groups which stem from various ethnic groups and the country's apartheid history, therefore the concept of achieving cultural diversity becomes even more complex. The research mentioned above on cultural groups is a means of identifying with certain cultures and hence allowing the built environment to respond directly to the needs of the specific cultural group. The concept of cultural identity is one which allows for a collective number of similar cultural groups to share the same cultural identity to which architecture can respond accordingly to their specific cultural needs.

2.3.4 Cultural Identity

Africa is a continent that is dominated by high poverty levels. An estimated third of the world's population live off a daily rate of one dollar or less and only fifteen percent of the world's entire population are able to live off more than three dollars daily (Forjaz, 2002). Therefore, it is important that architecture should undergo a major change where architects start to cater for the needs of the majority impoverished population, rather than the exclusively privileged minority. This will lead to the creation of more meaningful architecture that respects past, present and future cultural climates (ibid).

Good architecture originates from respecting social needs and the environment. Architecture should be aesthetically enriching and become part of its cultural setting (Forjaz, 2002). Therefore, it is vital that urban spaces are designed accordingly in order to acknowledge the various cultural groups that use the urban landscape. With regards to

cities and the urban landscape, Forjaz (ibid) also states that good cities are not necessarily a collection of good buildings alongside each other; however, good cities are made of good relationships between buildings and open spaces. To a certain extent as well, this also creates better buildings in the city, where every building addresses issues in the macro and micro context. Good relationships between buildings ultimately create better interaction between the public and the built environment. Good cities are constructed of good buildings that promote identity and the individuality of each citizen by promoting social interaction at every opportunity which helps towards providing well functioning cities (Crosby, 1965).

Architecture forms a whole with the city and through this; every function in the city is a reflection of the success or failure of architecture (Argan, 1996). Forjaz (2002) also states that through this basis, we can develop a theoretical framework where we are able to assess the quality of architecture and also develop a meaningful architectural identity that reflects the reality of our world. The reality of our world is that the relationship between the rich and the poor is widening and becoming more distant. Society is constantly changing and in turn, culture also changes (ibid). The traditional lifestyles are rapidly being sacrificed for more modern ways of living. All forms of culture have changed, from the way people dress, socialize and relationships between parents and children are changing to reflect new economic trends and technologies (ibid). Architecture should seek to resolve the physiological and psychological needs of humans as well as address the relationship between man and place. As various social, economic and technical climates change and adapt to each era, architecture should also change with new forms and new relationships which adapt better to the ever changing conditions (ibid). The history of architecture shows the intellect which our fore-fathers had where they were able to use the available tools, materials and spatial demands to express how they viewed their natural environment. In the modern context, the main focus of architecture has still maintained that ancient view of expressing the relationship between man and the environment off which its interpretation differs between the various cultural groups (ibid). Modern African cities are strongly influenced by western cultures and building methods, however, the establishment of a unique architectural identity depends on our ability to critically analyze architectural models of our past and present, in order to

learn from the failures and successes of the past to mould a better future (ibid). Therefore, architecture can be used to manipulate the human habitat in a way which enhances the quality of human life and activity in those spaces.

In his conclusion, Forjaz (2002) highlights the point that architects should devote themselves to understanding the elements of the culture of the cultural group they work for, from their history of thought, religion and social and economic organization and the physical environment. The process should involve identifying characters and architectural expression of cultures and also understand what makes them valuable and exceptional. These characters allow humans to completely experience connect with the architecture.

2.3.5 Conclusion

Within the process of establishing our identity, we are influenced by our culture which depicts most of our living patterns and how we interact with the world. Therefore, in South Africa's multi-cultural society, Rapoport (2002) thoughts on cultural groupings promote the idea of groupings based on lifestyles rather than race and ethnic origin. Through this analysis, cultural diversity and interaction become vital elements towards strengthening the bonds of modern society. Within any urban landscape, the need for cultural interaction and diversity is critical to building city character and identity. The thoughts of Forjaz (2002) on cultural identity seek to promote a type of architecture that respects the culture of communities. Though this we can say that Forjaz (ibid) seeks to determine the culture of place and how architecture responds accordingly.

2.4 Arts and Crafts in Architecture

2.4.1 Introduction

Art is a broad subject that affects everybody, in many ways it is similar to both language and social organization as it is essential to man because it has accompanied the existence of mankind since prehistoric times (Newman, 1974). Art is seen as an entirely subjective concept which relies on one's personal judgment. It may be present in our society and whether we realize it or not, it may shape our perception of the past present and future. Art stretches from the more indigenous art forms to contemporary which range from huge billboards which add colour and imagination to our everyday lives to vehicles designs and accessories that contain a certain appeal to us (Leuthold, 1998). However, within the context of establishing a new South African architectural identity, it is also important to look at indigenous arts and crafts as it represents the beginning of art in South Africa, it is pure without foreign influences, and instead it is a response to our land and depicts its history.

The built form in South Africa is strongly influenced by western and European cultures and traditions. The built form in European cultures is strongly influenced by historical art movements that encapsulated art into the built form. South Africa is a relatively new democratic country that has various social and cultural backgrounds that are different to western traditions (Whelan, 2001), therefore, a new design approach for the built form is required in order to capture the country's new found identity. However, in order to capture the relevant architectural response, contemporary architecture should be informed by the past, but remain firmly rooted in the present in order to express aspirations and provide for the demands of the future (Malan, 2001). Therefore, contemporary architecture should reflect an understanding of indigenous values in order to appropriately respond to modern complexities.

Indigenous art is a reflection of our culture and traditions. It expresses the past, describes values, mediates social relations, expresses emotions and enhances the quality of life. Painting, sculpture, music, dance are expressions of indigenous art that have the ability to

connect and influence people (Leuthold, 1998). Therefore, firstly, indigenous arts and crafts can be used to define architectural form which reflects the history and future of South Africa. Secondly, indigenous arts and crafts should be incorporated extensively as a tool which can be used in architecture to manipulate, depict and portray society.

2.4.2 The History of Arts and Crafts in South Africa

The indigenous communities had no distinction between art and craft, instead these two fields were considered to be the same; the individual was involved in both the process and the product. According to Nettleton (1989), the differentiation of art and craft only arose in the 17th and 18th century through art academies in Europe. The art academies in Europe promoted the celebration of individual rather than the collective; as a result, artists such as Michelangelo and Leonardo Da Vinci were praised as artistic genius (ibid). As time continued, laws and regulations were adopted that meant that every artist had to serve an apprenticeship in the studio of a recognized master, in order to be recognised as an artist and attain his/her independence (Nettleton, 1989). However, process places more emphasis on the individual without much consideration for the group or the community. As a result it elevates art to a level where it has no interaction with the community and makes it an elitist discipline which caters for the wealthy.

However, within the Indigenous African communities “*there was no term equivalent to art and the notion of a specialist artist as individual genius was unknown*” (Nettleton, 1989; 8). Therefore, the arts and crafts in Africa allowed for more flexibility within the community, where carvers might specialise in making headrests and chairs, but also make fighting sticks and also participate in the daily duties for the family and the community. Nettleton (1989) goes on to say the European viewpoint introduced distinctions between art and craft, as a result, an object would only be considered as art if it complied with European categories. However, the function of European art was different to African art, therefore, the criteria used to evaluate European and African art should differ considerably. The arrival of colonialism in Africa imposed the separation between the arts and crafts according to European ideals.

Colonialism transformed indigenous art through the introduction of new forms of expression, which Nettleton (1989) calls transitional art which shall be discussed later. She continues to add that colonialism also led to the development of ethnic art as a means of establishing a group's identity among a larger language group, an example of this is seen through the colourful wall painting and elaborate dresses and ornaments of the Ndebele people.

However, before and after colonialism, indigenous art developed over centuries where the traditional techniques and methods have been passed down from generation to generation. As a result, it has a unique relationship with indigenous culture, expressing social status and religious beliefs (Nettleton, 1989). However, there are various indigenous styles and techniques among the different cultural groups of the indigenous communities, and as a result, the art may be interpreted differently. Therefore, *“the meaning of the art then depends on its place in the total structure: its form is a combination of traditional styles interacting with materials available in the natural environment”* (Nettleton, 1989; 12). It is thus important to understand the meanings and forms used in indigenous arts and crafts in order to establish the culture and traditions of South Africa.

2.4.3 Meaning and Identity in Indigenous Arts and Crafts

Indigenous arts and crafts are often enhanced by their symbolic quality due to the fact that each object carries a dimension of mystery, functionality or ritualistic purpose to it (Nettleton, 1989). Therefore, as a result, these objects are not merely signs, but they are triggers for the sub-consciousness, which discharge associations from the memory and the overall knowledge of the observer (ibid). Therefore, art essentially tries to move away from a realistic portrayal of nature and society to a fixation with the state of the mind, in this way, the symbolic quality of the artwork becomes more personal and cover a wider scope which can be used to communicate anything with the community.

The work of Pallasmaa (1996) also makes a point of highlighting the link with the sub-consciousness. He notes that architecture should seek to make contact with sensory memories in our sub-consciousness and link with our senses (Nesbitt, 1996). Although Nettleton (1989) raises a case for the meaning in arts and crafts- found mainly through the symbols depicted by the images- which appeals more to the memory of the mind; Pallasmaa (2000) explores the concept in greater detail by incorporating the mind as a part of the body and therefore plays a vital role in the experience of architecture. He highlights the importance of a haptic and sensuous architecture that becomes a multi-sensory experience which triggers all the elements of the body and helps to allow the meaning in each building to be understood better.

Nettleton (1989) describes meaning as the message conveyed by a certain work of art; in this context it refers the philosophical order of symbols. However, there is a sensory order that is present with all symbols, “*for symbols are concrete objects that stand for abstractions*” (Nettleton, 1989; 16). Therefore, it can be said that arts and crafts are a representation of reality in an abstracted and symbolic manner which portrays a relevant message to the observer. In addition, Nettleton (ibid), goes on to state that it is not only the message that is of importance but also the form of the object because it is the perfection of the form that is the main criteria that determine the status of any object. In other words, the form of the object must be relevant to the contextual environment in order for it to be critiqued.

On a similar note, “*indigenous arts and crafts express the communal nature of African society*” (Sellschop, 2002; 19). Therefore, craftsmen use a limited range of designs on different materials to form material culture styles that act to form a group identity. In addition, everyone in the group can learn symbolic meanings which relate to the crafts. However, these meanings do not act as separate entities, instead, they become part of a network of associations which are essential to African society, and these networks play an active role in daily life (Sellschop, 2002). Therefore, it can be said that the symbols work together to form group styles which help to provide a cultural identity through indigenous craft.

Most indigenous symbols are classified according to their ethnic background such as Ndebele or Zulu or Xhosa. Each ethnic group has its own style which is a way of distinguishing each culture (Barnes, 1989). *“The function of an ethnic style is to create a coherent visual form that functions as a badge of identity within the group”* (Barnes, 1989; 18). Therefore, it can be said that ethnic symbols become the basis for creating identity through the expression of images which range across a wide spectrum, from colourful dress patterns to the architecture of the indigenous communities. Barnes (1989) also states that ethnic styles materialised primarily as a method of dealing with others and their main objective was to create a difference from other cultural groups. Therefore, this explains the reason as to why there are various indigenous styles of art and architecture in South Africa; the Zulu people sought to produce art that was different to the Ndebele people. In addition, the visual form was essential in the understanding of ethnic identity. The characteristics of these visual distinctions were made through the manipulation of forms so that they were clear, easily remembered, recognised and repeated (ibid). It is important to note that sometimes, the forms used to create ethnic identity may be borrowed from other cultures, but it enhances rather than lessen the effectiveness of the forms, this is evident in the Durban city hall which was built in a baroque style with the use of architectural elements that represent the English Baroque style which is not indigenous to the South African context (Barnard, 2007). However, the City hall still remains a dominant feature of the identity of the city and its meaning is understood. The borrowed styles possess meanings which in turn represent the timeless embodiment of the identity of the community (Barnes, 1989). Although the form may be borrowed, the borrowed form has a strong meaning which contributes to the identity of the community. As often the case with contemporary architecture in South Africa, it features various borrowed styles from European and western traditions. Although the method above supports the idea of borrowing styles, however, careful attention needs to be taken in understanding firstly if there is a need to borrow a certain style and secondly in understanding the social context and whether the environment requires the influence of a foreign style.

According to Nettleton (1989), the ethnic symbols portrayed in indigenous arts and crafts are very powerful because they link the community with cultural traditions which are no

longer negatively viewed as they were during the colonial era; instead they are becoming the focus of both national and continental consciousness which is centred on change and liberation. The continuous use of ethnic symbols creates repetition; however, one might ask how arts and crafts objects differ from each other if they both serve the same function. As Nettleton (ibid) describes, the difference between the artists lies in their interpretation of the environment. Although they might express the same symbol in their work, they use it creatively in complex or subtle ways to make a statement about the environment (ibid). Therefore, through this process, similar lessons can be applied to South African contemporary architecture where architects share the same goal to enhance and promote the identity of the country in their work. Although they share the goal, they should express it creatively to make a statement about the environment and society.

Although Nettleton (1989) speaks of symbols in relation to indigenous arts and crafts, her work can be closely linked to that of Correa (1983) who speaks in an architectural context. Correa (ibid) describes the difference between a signal and a symbol; a signal suggests a reactionary or manipulated response, his example mentioned in beginning of this chapter, highlighted that the reproduction of a building in a foreign context is simply transmitting signals; however, if the architect were to use the principles of architecture accordingly, then the building becomes symbolic. According to Correa (ibid), the use of this method not only establishes relevant contemporary architecture, but it also produces architecture that enhances the identity of an area.



Fig 2.13- An example of carved walking sticks (<http://www.carvedwoodenwalkingsticks.com/>) Accessed 03.07.2012.

In arts and crafts, there are often examples of walking stick with elaborate decorations, however, the decoration sometimes has no relation to the function of the object (Fig 2.13); instead the decoration is derived from the carvers' instinct to make the walking stick aesthetically pleasing (Nettleton, 1989). Therefore, according to Correa (2001), the artist is simply transmitting signals rather than symbols. To a certain extent, this ornamental type of art has an attraction to the public as it draws the observer's visual sense to make an impact. In this regard, Nettleton (1989) expresses that although the understanding of the meaning is essential for a wholesome experience of art, the direct visual impact of the art object forms the basis of the experience. However, it is important to note that although it is possible to partially appreciate a work of art without understanding its meaning, full appreciation of art is a bodily experience that stretches beyond the visual impact (ibid).



Over the past decade, indigenous arts and crafts have gained more recognition among tourists and although most of what is produced today has changed from the traditional methods, the craftsmen have found contemporary ways of creating objects that appeal mostly to the tourist sector (Nettleton, 1989). One might argue the point that contemporary arts and crafts have sacrificed its values and traditions for economic prominence, however, although there is an element of truth in this point, the advantages outnumber the disadvantages. The advantages are that the commercial growth of arts and crafts creates a platform for the sharing of indigenous knowledge (Nettleton, 1989). Therefore, in this way, the indigenous arts become a tool for which modern society can connect with their traditions, which will inform their own identity in the modern world. It should be noted as well that arts and crafts can be separated into three categories (Fig 2.14), traditional, transitional and

Fig 2.14- Example of 3 types of Arts and Crafts (Sellschop, 2002; 41).

contemporary arts and crafts (Sellschop, 2002). The traditional arts and crafts refer to the artists that still use traditional techniques and methods that were used by the ancestors (ibid). Transitional refers to artists who express modern crafts through the use of traditional and raw materials (ibid). Contemporary refers to the use of modern materials to create objects that relates to modern society (ibid). The styles and forms of indigenous arts and crafts look backward into their history as an element that can influence the present and future which informs the images and objects that are created (Barnes, 1989). Therefore, the three categories are proof of how the arts and crafts field has adapted and changed through the years to accommodate new ways of thinking in modern society, however, it does not turn its back on its origins; as a result, all three categories have captivated the hearts of modern society. In this way, an appreciation for arts and crafts and indigenous knowledge is developed.

Arts and crafts objects allow the observer to use his/her imagination to its full capacity, by hinting certain aspects rather than saying or reading (Nettleton, 1989). Therefore, the main difference between literature and crafts is that words often limit meaning; arts and crafts are symbolic and therefore express reality which is interpreted accordingly by the observer while influenced by the context and culture of the region.

2.4.4 Literature and Architecture

“The contemporary city is increasingly the city of the eye, detached from the body by rapid motorised movement, or through the overall aerial grasp from an airplane” (Pallasmaa, 2005; 29). The visual image of the city has become more apparent in recent years with the advancement of digital technology which has detached the society from integrating completely with the environment. The phrase ‘a picture says a thousand words’ has become a characteristic of modern society, where as opposed to writing a thousand words, a simple click of the camera will portray the same image. The act of writing should not be made to be inferior due to the advancement of technology, although, it might take longer than taking a picture, the actual act of writing allows for the image to be captured in words which demands a greater level of interaction with the

environment. Literature is an art which facilitates the interaction between society and the environment.

In an attempt to define architecture, Graves (Nesbitt, 1996) compares architecture to literature as they are both cultural art forms. Literature is a cultural form that can be used to express architectural conversations and dialogue (ibid). Literature is a standard art form that allows for daily interaction between people. Therefore, the language expressed by architecture becomes critical in creating appropriate dialogue between the public and buildings. Graves (ibid) explains that there are two types of languages expressed by architecture. Firstly, the internal language of a building which is an analysis of the buildings basic form with regards to its constructional and technical requirements. Secondly is the poetic form of architecture which is a response to external issues of the building and “*incorporates three-dimensional expressions of myths and rituals of society*” (Nesbitt, 1996; 86). The Poetic forms of architecture respond directly to the figurative, associative and anthropomorphic attitudes of any culture (ibid). Once architecture starts responding to the possible cultural influences, the next stage is to understand social patterns which are also known as rituals (ibid). Therefore, the poetic form of architecture is more expressive and allows for an artistic expression that responds effectively to cultural and social structures in society.

Shepherd (1994) theatrically explains the relationship between literature and architecture as two characters that are continuously in a fight for possession of space. He explains the two elements (literature and architecture) as characters from ancient Greek theatre. Architecture plays the role of a gilded hermaphrodite, carrying a spear and wearing Greek sandals, while literature is represented by a balloon shaped figure from a Bauhaus theatre. As the performance continues, the hermaphrodite is unable to catch the ever moving balloons. Therefore, architecture is unable to keep up with the pace set by literature, by the ever changing human minds. As a result, this leads to a confusion regarding space and how it should be treated. “*Literature has stepped into the breach and made a bid for the delineation of space by claiming it as a mental notion*” (Shepherd, 1994; 78).

Through the comparisons of architecture and literature as art forms, we have established one of the main issues that help define architecture. Architecture seeks to provide spaces that respond to cultural and social issues within any given society. Literature, in its many forms, from conversational dialogue, theatre performances and poems, creates interaction between people and spaces.

As discussed above, Graves (Nesbitt, 1996) discussed the two types of languages in architecture, the internal language, and the poetic form of architecture. These two types of languages can be described and be compared to the relationship between functionalism and post functionalism. It is critical to provide a unique balance between the two languages. Eisenman (Nesbitt, 1996) explains the relationship between form and function which governs how internal spaces are used and whether the function of the building should be portrayed in its form. He explains that humanist architecture tried to find a balance between the technical elements of a building such as accommodation, and the articulation of themes in forms. However, the rise of industrialism created an imbalance when new functions were introduced that seemed to add more confusion to the idea of building typology. As a result, form became saturated by function; essentially function had evolved to determine the form and massing of the building.

The relationship between literature and architecture seeks to promote dialogue between the building typology and building form. Eisenman (Nesbitt, 1996) gives an example of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's preference for a duck shaped envelope over a shed. Similar to the Eisenman theory, they rejected the building function in preference of an exaggerated expression. The shed rejects function as a determinant of form (ibid). Therefore, as opposed to the internal form, the poetic form represents the concept of freedom of expression. It allows for an even closer relationship between art and architecture. The rejection of the internal language as a form generator allows the poetic form of buildings and spaces to be moulded artistically in a manner which expresses the myths and rituals of modern society. Myths and rituals were a huge element in the culture of indigenous communities; therefore, it is important to understand how they used literature and what effect it had on their community.

According to Schapera (1946), indigenous literature can be separated into three categories; the first two categories are in the form of written literature which has been through the influence of western civilization or translations of western thoughts into native languages. However, this analysis will focus on the third category which refers indigenous literature that functions completely without western influence and therefore acts as proof that indigenous literature has been in existence before the influence of colonialism, however, none of it was ever recorded (Schapera, 1946). Therefore it can be said that original indigenous literature was in an unwritten form but rather it was verbally expressed. The form in which literature was portrayed was through folk tales, proverbs and riddles, songs and praise poems (ibid).

Much of the indigenous literature has been lost through the many generations which it has been passed down orally, as a result, the quest to determine the original author is a very difficult task. Although the concept of individualism was present with indigenous communities, it was not at the extent that it is with modern society, therefore, the need to pursue fame by expressing the authors name in literary work was non-existent (Schapera, 1946). Schapera (1946) also states that a large portion of the indigenous communities were potential creators literature. Therefore, it was a normal daily skill that did not require to be singled out. It was incorporated into every aspect of daily life, for example, the literature form of songs were adapted into every element of their culture and tradition; they had mourning songs, love songs, war songs, hunting songs and work songs. Therefore, similar methods should be applied within modern society where artist consider the needs and requirements of the community above the pursuit of personal glory and fame.

2.4.5 Music and Architecture

Art is a form of expression that evokes emotion. Sound affects people's emotions and how places and spaces are perceived (Storr, 1992). Therefore, art can be used to manipulate how individuals experience public spaces. For example, a secluded dead space with no activity could essentially be injected with sound to help create a vibrant atmosphere which helps to give people a better perception of that space. Storr (1992)

suggests that music draws groups of people together because it evokes similar responses within different people at the same time. People recognize each other's emotions and in that way, they are able to relate to each other. This might be visible through small movements such as tapping feet to the rhythm of the music. In this way, music as an art form helps to create further cultural interaction and diversity amongst different cultures. *"Music has the effect of intensifying or underlining the emotion which a particular event calls forth, by simultaneously co-ordinating the emotions of a group of people"* (Storr, 1992; 24). However, each individual has the freedom to have their own personal emotions, but there would be a few aspects that would be commonly shared amongst a group of people.

Music is an art form that has been through many changes throughout its history through sound and the functions it serves through various societies and cultures. It is not known exactly where the origins of music come from, but Storr (1992) suggests that it is likely that music was derived as a means for humans to interact through emotions, before system of distinct speech was recognized. However, this is not the same type of music that we are familiar with nowadays, it was more of a series of tones and sounds which functioned to convey certain emotions. For example, many animals such as dogs, cats and birds make different sounds to express information and emotion.

Storr (1992) also states that another possible origin may be that singing was discovered to be an easier means of communicating over long distances as opposed to a series of words. Less strain is put on the vocal muscles in conveying a singular flowing message in the form of a tune, rather than a punctuated message of separate sounds. His theory suggests that the use of instruments were introduced as a means of signalling and communicating with others through the use of horns, drums and other historic music instruments (Storr, 1992).

Music has also been used as a tool for communication with religious powers. According to Storr (1992), vocal music was believed to serve as a special medium through which one could communicate with the supernatural. This concept can be seen in indigenous cultures where singing and dancing become part of a religious ceremony of honouring the

ancestors. In a religious sense, the aim of music was to promote communication between man and between higher powers (Storr, 1992).

Through the ages till modern day, people and societies have evolved; however, music has kept its spiritual and religious affiliations, which is evident through various worship and cultural rituals. The social power of music started to become recognized and began to develop as a source that could essentially spark interaction and pleasure and eventually become a source of entertainment. In contemporary society, music seems to extend into many areas of most people's everyday lives, for example, some people listen to music in the mornings to put them in a good mood. We all hear music everywhere and all the time, from car audio systems, to movie soundtracks and even music on cell phones, etc. Music has also become a powerful marketing tool which has been used extensively by commercial industries to sell their products.

Armies used music as a tool of instilling a sense of unity and patriotism by using songs and instruments (drums, bagpipes, etc.). However, music can also be used as a tool of negative expression. Nowadays, we have seen examples of music being used as a controversial weapon of expressing disapproval of disrespect upon anyone they disagree with, from government to police.

Storr (1992) also states that music is a cultural entity which is specific to a given culture at any given epoch in time. Different cultures have different languages and traditions, so their music is also different. Just as how one language of a certain culture might be a foreign concept to an outsider, music is exactly the same where it might not be understood by everyone because of its history and different interpretations. Different individuals can have differing interpretations of the same piece of music depending on their cultural perception of it (Storr, 1992). However, these different interpretations spark conversation among members of the community, which leads to the sharing of ideas and perceptions and contribute towards enhancing the cultural identity of spaces.

Within the indigenous communities, music is a powerful tool that has the power to unite all members of the community. Traditional song and dance captures the hearts and minds

of modern society as they try to make a connection with the cultures of their ancestors. For example, during events and ceremonies nowadays, it has become a normality to have a traditional performance which becomes the main feature on the event, especially among rural communities (Fig 2.15).



Fig 2.15- Traditional Zulu dancers' eMsinga during traditional ceremony (By Author).

Song and dance are vital component in indigenous communities. The figure above highlights several elements which communicate the level of detail and preparation involved in indigenous dance. Although this is a still image, a sense of movement is visible in the snake-like composition of the dancers, at the same time the simplicity and abstract quality of indigenous art is seen in the shadows cast by the dancers. Therefore, it can be said the major characteristics of indigenous song and dance is its simple depiction of movement and expression. Therefore, similar techniques can be applied to architecture where the art of architecture is expressed through abstract qualities of movement.

Each form of art has a very close relationship with the other forms, for example, music loses its value if it is too far away from dance, and poetry is linked in a similar way to music and songs. Therefore, if architecture moves away from its origins, then it also loses its effectiveness. Architecture should seek to make contact with sensory memories in our sub-consciousness and link with our senses (Pallasmaa, 1996). At the same time, architecture can be used as a tool to shape spaces and how they are perceived.

Architecture is an art form that is publicly available to everyone, and music is an art form that has the ability to manipulate people feelings and make them feel good, which can be expressed through various social endeavours.

2.4.6 The Importance of Art in Architecture

Indigenous art has often been referred to as primitive art in some circles, however, the word 'art' is a European term that grew from Greek philosophy and was formally established by European culture (Newman, 1974). Therefore, the categorization of the local arts as primitive and even vernacular suggests the notion of inferiority and also implies that local South African art is on a lower cultural level compared to European art (ibid). Rather than being inferior, the preferred term should be 'different' to European, since European culture is different to African culture, therefore, their art is different. The effects of colonisation and the globalisation of European culture created a situation where everything that was 'different' to European norms was classified with terms such as barbaric and primitive which suggested an inferiority rather than adaptability and different levels of creativity (ibid). The cultural identity of the indigenous society was always present in the art that it produced (ibid). Although the history of indigenous communities is not as well documented as that of the Europeans, an analysis of the indigenous art provides clarity as to the processes and values that guided their relationship with the environment.

African art attracts because of its powerful emotional content and its beautiful abstract form (Newman, 1974; 2). The abstract response to form, which was often through the use of bare lines, shapes, textures and patterns portrayed powerful energy and spirituality (Newman, 1974). There are many distinct ethnic cultures in South Africa, and as a result they all have different stylistic responses to conveying abstract forms, however, the emotional content remains just as powerful (ibid). Indigenous art also depicts a way of living in the environment and all its forms, such as masks, dwellings, fabrics, pottery, music and dance reflect the meaning of the confrontation between life and death (ibid). Unlike European art which develop a lifestyle independent of the environment, the indigenous art shares a closer relationship with the environment. Indigenous art

recognises that the environment has a process for which it must respect; the process of life and death, function and decay. Since various artworks were moulded from the environment, they would simply perform its function and live out its life span and then decay back into the environment (Frescura, 1985). Architecture should pursue a closer relationship with the environment; the machine-made materials used in contemporary architecture tend to aim at ageless perfection rather than aim for building which incorporate the dimension of time and aging (Pallasmaa, 2005). Within the indigenous society, buildings were erected from natural materials such as stone, thatch and wood, and in no matter what building style they were used in, they became an extension of the environment into built form, and therefore allowed for a closer relationship with the inhabitants. The materials expressed their age and history as opposed to modern materials which portray society's fear of death by depicting a timeless element (Pallasmaa, 2005). This statement should not be taken literally, as modern architecture can not moves backwards towards creating temporary buildings as seen in indigenous architecture, however, the statement should be analysed figuratively, where there is consideration to how materials age, and collectively how the building will age.



Fig 2.16- image of Zulu woman in traditional attire showing beadwork as a way of living (Newman, 1974; 53)

Apart from being a medium between the community and the environment, indigenous art was also a way of living of living, within the indigenous society, there was no distinction between and art and craft because it was present in everyday lives, it was worn and it was used, for example, the indigenous Zulu people from kwa-Hlabisa in Kwa-Zulu Natal are renowned for the beadwork skills, although they have achieved a high level of artistry, to them it is not art, rather it is a way of living and interacting with the world (Fig 2.16) (Newman, 1974). In the same way, there was no recognised profession called art, instead it was a versatile field where essentially every member of the community had a certain artistic skill which they

used, and the artist might have been a farmer by profession (Frescura, 1985). The versatility meant that art became a multi-disciplined profession which used other disciplines to draw various methods and ways of interacting with the environment. Therefore, contemporary architecture needs to reflect similar versatility. Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo were artists that went on to become very famous architects. They did not receive any formal training in architecture; however, they understood the fundamental essentials of art which gave them the power and knowledge to basically design anything. Frescura (1985) emphasizes this notion by mentioning that even in traditional indigenous architecture, there was hardly a difference between a craftsman and an artist as they both did the same functions but were skilled differently. Therefore, firstly, architecture should seek to be more versatile by encouraging diversity through promoting a closer relationship with tradition. Secondly, architecture should also seek to provide educational facilities that promote architectural diversity. The diversity of indigenous man should influence the way in which modern man relates with his environment. In order to achieve architectural diversity, arts and crafts can be used as a tool to encourage a positive relationship between architecture and tradition, and at the same time allow for artistic expression through form.

The close link between traditional and contemporary can be seen in Tadao Ando's Aomori Contemporary Art Centre (ACAC) in Honshu Island in Japan (Fig 2.17). The ACAC is located on the outskirts of Aomori City, on a secluded hill surrounded by forests (Pollock, 2004) The ACAC is a residency for artists and it provides a canvas for potters, printmakers and other art disciplines to practice their craft in a serene natural environment (ibid). The building is separated into three segments; places for artist to work, display their art and live (ibid). The display segment is served by a two-storey, circular building (Fig 2.18) that has a gallery, amphitheatre and administrative offices (ibid). The living and working components are located further down the site.

The ACAC enables the local community to interact with the artists (Pollock, 2004). In this way, similar to indigenous communities, the artist always has direct access to the community and shares a bond with it that will constantly influence his work. In addition, the community itself becomes part of the art process where they can view and sometimes

give valuable insight to an artist regarding a certain art piece. The design of the centre caters for eight artists, from around the world, who would live and work in the centre for three months, and in this time, they would be supplied with materials and facilities in exchange for them hosting exhibitions, performances, lectures and workshops (ibid). This process provides a platform for the artists to educate the local community and it also allows for the promotion of Japanese culture as both the artists and community will influence each other in various ways.

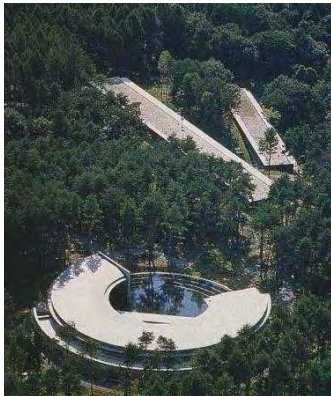


Fig 2.17- Three segments of the ACAC located within the forest (Pollock, 2004; 124)

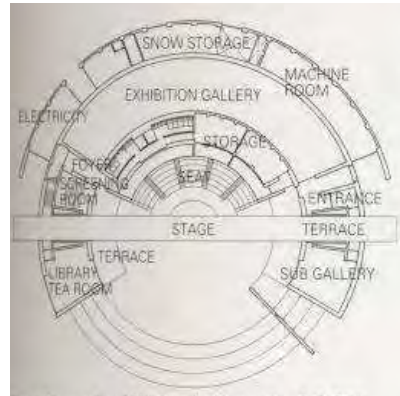


Fig 2.18- First floor plan of the ACAC ('Japanese Architect', 2003; 17).

The artists can exhibit their work anywhere on the site (Pollock, 2004), as a result, the architecture of the centre allows for expansive open spaces that give the artists freedom to mould the spaces creatively as they see fit. The exhibition hall (Fig 2.19) consists of concrete surfaces that can accommodate both ceiling suspended sculptures and also floor installations (ibid). Another exhibition space provided is the amphitheatre which is defined by tiered seating and a terraced stone covered pool that extends towards the forest (ibid). The terraced liquid form of the stage conceptually represents the flow of the land in liquid form (ibid). A narrow concrete strip has been provide for performers who do not wish to get their feet wet, however, at the same time, the strip also serves as a circulation spine for the whole building (ibid). The double purpose of the concrete strip ensures that the visual presence of the amphitheatre is constantly experienced throughout the day and not only at performance times (Fig 2.20).

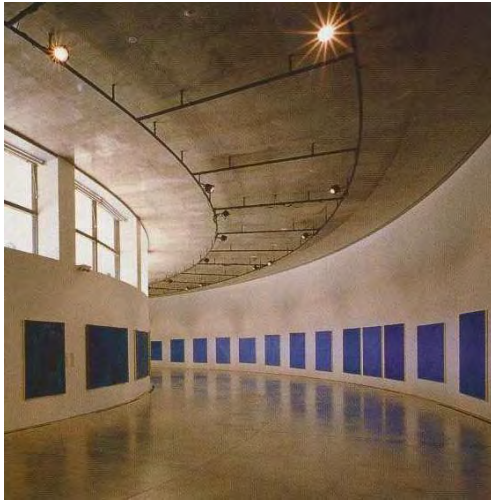


Fig 2.19- Circular exhibition space (Pollock, 2004; 130).

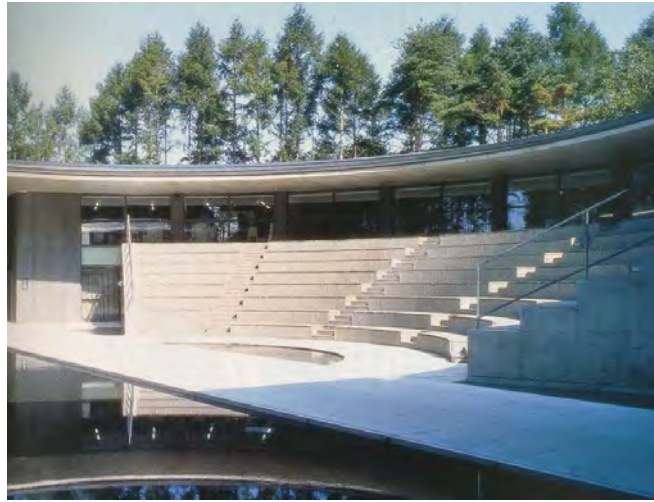


Fig 2.20- Amphitheatre seating overlooking performance space and stone covered pool (Pollock, 2004; 125).

The concept of water moving through the site continues to the living and working facilities (Pollock, 2004). Each facility becomes a bridge, spanning across a stream which originates at the amphitheatre (ibid). The rectangular living facility consists of bedrooms at either end with a communal dining area in the middle (Fig 2.21). The living quarters lead to the rectangular creative hall which is a huge open work area that is flanked by a wood shop and lecture hall (ibid). The hall also includes specialized spaces for photo processing, printmaking, and sound recording (ibid).

- 1. Machine
- 2. Woodworking
- 3. Workshop
- 4. Printing
- 5. Editing
- 6. Dining
- 7. Kitchen
- 8. Bedroom
- 9. Terrace

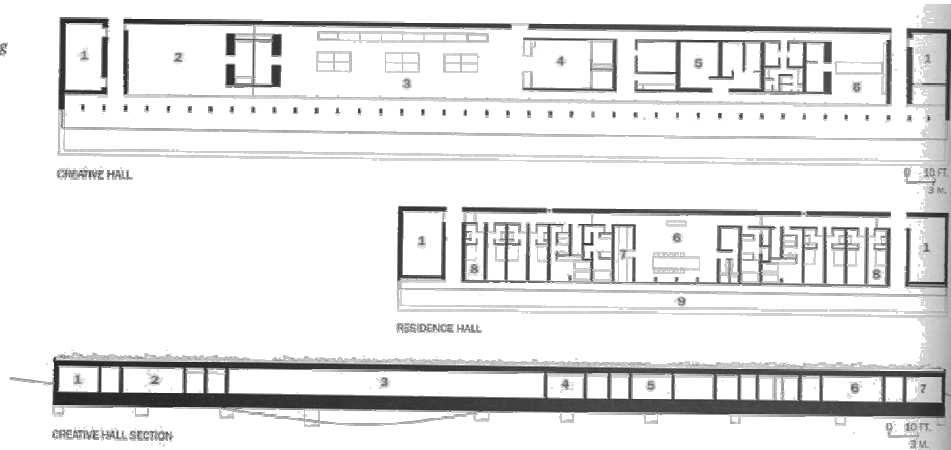


Fig 2.21- Plans of creative hall and residence hall (Pollock, 2004; 126).

Therefore, the study of the ACAC is pertinent to the research as the programme of the centre allows for the promotion of Japanese culture internationally through the incorporation of international artists in the centre's residency. This is achieved through the constant interaction between the community and the artists which serves to educate both parties. The ACAC also promotes a collaborative environment between the artists through living together where ideas and beliefs are constantly shared, hence providing more versatility and diversity among the individual artists. Similarly, the same method can be applied to architecture, where architects should seek to hone their artistic skills through constant interaction with the public and with other members of the art society. In this way, the artistic expression of architecture will become limitless. The understanding of the art, not only allows for more flexibility within each industry, it also creates more interaction and diversity within the society.

Indigenous art became a process that incorporated every member of the community. As opposed to the European individualistic expression, indigenous art was a communal aspect. In support of this statement, Newman (1974) acknowledges that the indigenous community recognised that the community existed before the individual, and therefore, the individual became a small part in a long tradition which had to be upheld. The whole community became involved in the process of creating a product (Newman, 1974). The involvement of the community created unison among community members because every member had a positive role to play in the process. There was constant interaction between the different gender and age groups, for example, in indigenous architecture, the children would weave grass ropes whilst hearing folk tale and singing songs, while the women would be out collecting thatching grass (Frescura, 1985). The women would also help build and plaster the walls (ibid). This notion suggests that 'arts and crafts' as a collective term focussed more on the process rather than the product. In other words, arts and crafts is a development that allowed more social interaction between members of the community, which is in contrast to the term 'art', which suggests more of an intellectual procedure focussed primarily on the end product (ibid). Therefore, the social problems that plague modern society were never an issue in the indigenous society. Modern society is always affected by the need to acquire more money because it buys a better lifestyle; as a result, there is a high unemployment rate in South Africa, although the government has

promised to provide more job opportunities. The need to acquire more wealth has created a widening gap between the rich and the poor, which leads to deeper social problems and fragmentation of society. However, the communal experience provided by indigenous communities conquered any aspirations of deviancy and fragmentation.

Therefore a study into the processes involved in the creation of indigenous arts and crafts will provide a better understanding into the social issues of the indigenous society, and secondly, it will serve as a locally inspired design generator for architectural spaces that responds to the modern society and hence participate in the establishment of a national identity.

South African arts and crafts *“have a universal attraction that crosses cultural and geographic borders and transcends time”* (Sellschop, 2002; 11). Proof of this statement is seen through the tourism sector, where the desire to travel has sparked a global interest in the traditions and cultures of other nations which has led to tourists purchasing certain craft objects and art which is representative of a nations culture. For example, a South African pottery bowl can be found inside a house in New York or any other city in the world. According to Newman (1974), African arts and crafts attracts the attention of many tourists through its strong emotional substance which is often shown through abstract forms depicting simple lines, textures and patterns. Therefore, these qualities make South African craft identifiable within the global market, however, in architectural terms, it can be said that indigenous arts and crafts can be used to promote contemporary South African architecture.

The South African Chancery (SAC) in Berlin, Germany is an example of how indigenous arts and crafts to can used to enhance the quality of South African architecture. The building was designed by MMA Architects and it represents the presence of the country on the world diplomatic stage as a democratic country (‘Architect and Builder’, 2004). The site is located in the Tiergarten district and it has been vacant since the World War II bombings (‘Architecture South Africa’, 2004). The architects envisioned the building as one that would explore the identity of the new South Africa and at the same time conjure up images of indigenous South Africa which recognizes indigenous architecture through

the concept of inkundla, and through the use of indigenous arts and crafts as features which best describe the identity of South Africa (ibid). However, as noted in 'Architecture South Africa', the success of the building lies not only with its abstract interpretation of indigenous art, but also in the use of materials and details which reflects the pride and passion of the South African community.

It should also be noted as well that although the SAC is envisioned to reflect the South African identity, the building also responds to the local context through respecting city planning regulations and the history of German architecture. This can be seen through the planning (Fig 2.22) which centres on a central atrium with various ambassadorial departments feeding off it over four storeys ('Architecture South Africa', 2004). Although the planning might have elements of German architecture, the central atrium originated from the concept of inkundla. The embassy is viewed as a village consisting of various departments which are all unified by the central atrium as the main gathering space ('Architect and Builder', 2004).

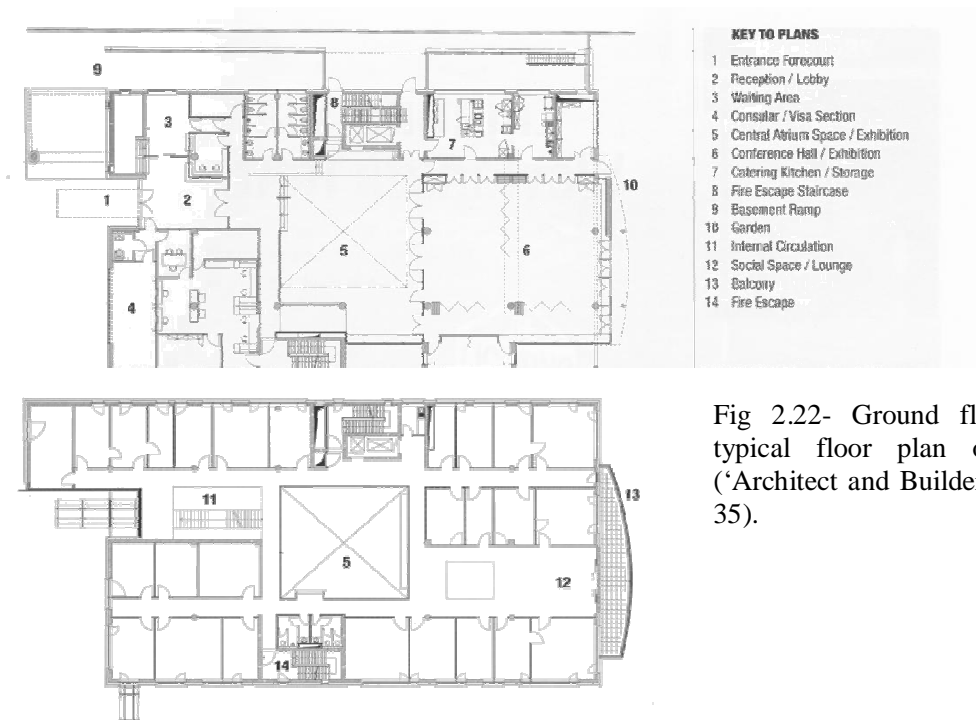


Fig 2.22- Ground floor and typical floor plan of SAC ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 35).

The outer shell is finished with sandstone cladding, which is typical of German architecture (ibid), however, the sandstone is from South Africa and its orange colour symbolises the warmth and colour of South Africa (Fig 2.23). As a means of promoting South African architecture and its products, all the materials used in the building originated in South Africa (ibid), however, the importing of all materials delimits the local community's participation in the building process. Although the material choice was made in order to promote South African architecture, in this case, the local community refers to the German public of the Tiergarten district and not the South African public. Therefore, although the SAC promotes South African art and architecture, it turns its back on the German community by not involving them in the process, but rather supplies a product.



Fig 2.23- Sandstone cladding used at front facade ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 20).



Fig 2.24- Rear facade highlighting horizontal aluminium elements ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 22).

The outer shell also consists of horizontal aluminium elements (Fig 2.24) which represent bangles and necklaces, symbolic of South African jewellery ('Architect and Builder', 2004). Apart from their aesthetic quality, the aluminium elements also have a utilitarian purpose which is to house the external sun-shading screens (ibid). The interior of the building is dominated by artwork that showcases South Africa, through the use of textures, materials and patterns. The interior is detailed with indigenous patterns ('Architecture South Africa', 2004), which allow for and sensual experience through the various textural qualities of the materials. The materials encourage users of the space to touch and feel the different textures (Fig 2.25), in this way; the user enjoys a wholesome experience of the building.

The approach to the architectural expression of the SAC has been to express the character of the building through the use of materials and elements derived from South African building techniques and technologies, as a result, the building is articulated more by how it is made than how it looks ('Architect and Builder', 2004), in other words, the aesthetic quality of the building is derived from the processes involved in material usage rather than the desire to produce a certain product. This can be seen in the atrium glass roof structure (Fig 2.26) which incorporates a dome shaped sun screening which is a modern interpretation of the construction technique and form of traditional Zulu dwellings (ibid). As noted in 'Architect and Builder', this notion highlights the progression of South African architecture towards forming an architectural identity. Unlike countries such as India or other Arabic and Far East countries, South Africa is still in search of an architectural expression that can be identified and that will be embraced by the people of South Africa (ibid). Therefore it can be said that the SAC also highlights the diversity and richness of our country which provide us with everlasting inspiration which seems *"to be the one unifying factor, which could point towards defining our South African architectural identity"* ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 34).



Fig 2.25- Coloured and textured sculptural plaster finishes on walls ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 29).



Fig 2.26- Atrium roof representing traditional Zulu dwelling ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 27).

The SAC is vital to the research as it highlights important aspects that should be considered in providing contemporary architecture that reflects the identity of the South African community. The building shows us how indigenous art and architecture can be interpreted to survive in the modern world. The interpretation of indigenous art into built form should not only involve the aesthetic product, but also incorporate the whole process, which is inclusive of material selection and detailing, in this way; buildings can represent the South African identity through its abstract qualities and use of materials to enhance the sensual experience of the user. The simplicity of the building will allow the user to relate to the building, at the same time, the textural quality of the building will allow the user to engage with the materials and the architectural process. As a result, the user creates a bond with the building and therefore appeal to emotive sensibilities.

Due to the dominance of arts and craft elements in the SAC, it can be said that the building is an interpretation of South African craft into built form, where the characteristics of indigenous craft such as simple lines, textures and patterns have been emphasised in the throughout the building. Therefore, just as how South African craft has become identifiable within the global market, in the case of the SAC, South African craft has also been used to make contemporary South African architecture identifiable as well.

2.4.7 The Relationship between Indigenous Craft and Contemporary Architecture

The research has focussed primarily on how indigenous craft influences contemporary architecture in South Africa, however, in order to truly understand the relationship between craft and architecture, the research will also look at how architecture can influence craft. Therefore, an in depth interview with a local craftsman should provide further understanding into craft and its relationship to architecture.

Indigenous arts and crafts products are handmade, as a result, they appeal to society because they express the mood of the craftsman (Fathy, 1973). As opposed to machine made products, handmade products are prone to have imperfection, and it is this imperfection that becomes the primary difference between any object. In this regard, architecture and arts and crafts are similar because they both offer a unique- one of a

kind- product to clients. On the same notion, handmade products also encourage the use of the senses as they encourage people to touch and feel the textures. Evidence given by Clive Sithole- a popular craftsman in Durban, states that hand crafted pots would have amantsumpa (Fig 2.27) which served the utilitarian purpose of providing a firm grip for handling (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May). Therefore, the use of amantsumpa firstly encourages the sense of touch, through the different patterns and textures of them. Secondly, meaning is achieved through the traditional role of amantsumpa; they were a symbol of wealth within the indigenous communities, for example, royalties would have their craft objects decorated with many patterns and textures (ibid).



Fig 2.27- Clay pot with amantsumpa detailing (Sellschop, 2002; 57).

Meaning and identity are strong factors that influence the work of Clive Sithole. He uses traditional patterns and techniques to mould modern craft materials. The main characteristics of his products are firstly, cow mouldings (Fig 2.28) which have been sculpted onto pots. Secondly his objects tell a story which is mainly inspired by Zulu traditions, for example, he uses oxen mouldings as well as simple geometric patterns embellished onto the object, however, he uses protruding vertical lines to symbolise ploughing fields (Fig 2.29) where the oxen would plough; in this way he is telling a story about traditional lifestyles (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May), and revealing his memories as a child (Coetsee, 2002; 87). The protruding ploughing fields also serve the same purpose as amantsumpa because they also provide a firm grip. The third characteristic is seen in the highly polished and smoke marked finish of his work. According to Sithole (ibid), this makes his objects look like more like art objects at the same time they maintain their traditional utilitarian purpose. The smooth surface is due to the fact that the local material in Durban is more refined than that of the inland indigenous areas (ibid). After the clay has been burnished, it produces a highly polished surface. Therefore, as stated by Coetsee (2002), the highly burnished pots by Sithole reveal his respect for tradition and culture.



Fig 2.28- Clay pot by Clive Sithole highlighting the oxen embellishment revealing elements of his childhood which inform his personal identity (By Author).



Fig 2.29- Clay pot by Clive Sithole showing vertical detailing which represents ploughing fields which depicts a story of traditional lifestyle (By Author).

Therefore, within the context of meaning and identity, Sithole (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May) uses his own personal identity as a factor that governs the form and message portrayed by his objects, however, it is important to note that his personal identity is firmly based on tradition; as a result, his products remain a part of the South African identity. A similar approach can be applied to architecture where an architect can use the traditional elements as a means of establishing a personal identity which relates to the communities identity.



Fig 2.30- Sibaya Casino and entertainment complex showing details with elements reminiscent of royal Zulu crowns, which can also be viewed as a collection of izicholo (plural for isicholo). The circular forms could also be seen to represent a collection



Fig 2.31- Unknown women wearing isicholo on her head which bears similarities to the shape and form of Sibaya Casino
(<http://www.africaimagelibrary.com/media>) Accessed 01-06-2012.

Sithole's (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May) products are primarily inspired by traditional Zulu culture. However, in his more recent works, he tries to draw inspiration from both natural and built environment. For example, when he analyses the Sibaya Casino and Entertainment complex (Fig 2.30), which has vertical elements detailed to represent royal crowns ('built' 2005), however, he views the vertical elements as a diagrammatic representation of isicholo and the grouping of the several circular elements represent a collection of clay pots (Fig 2.31). As a result, he is able to find a strong link between isicholo and the work of Magdalene Odondo who is also a craftsperson, Magdalene explores the relationship between the utilitarian purpose of the clay pots and the form which traditionally symbolises the female body (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May). Through this notion, Magdalene therefore incorporates elements of the female upper body into her work (Fig 2.32); the expressive form of isicholo provides a perfect balance with the shape of the pot (ibid). Therefore, as a result, Sithole has used this concept to develop a new

sculptural range (Fig 2.33) which expresses tradition and culture in a new manner, whilst the form remains as a balanced composition influenced by the form of the female body (ibid). Although he currently works with clay, he also states that the new range will feature different materials such as bronze (ibid). The change in material is will highlight the sculptural and exhibitiv quality of the object, as opposed to the traditional clay material which suggests a purpose to the object.



Fig 2.32- Clay pot by Magdalene Odondo which is an interpretation of the female body and isicholo (http://magdaleneodondo.com/selected_works_6.html) Accessed 01-06-2012.



Fig 2.33- New range of sculptural pots by Sithole which features an abstract representation of the female body in traditional attire which was inspired by Sibaya Casino and the work of Magdalene Odondo (By Author).

2.5 Conclusion

Therefore, the analysis of the process and products of the works by Sithole (2012, pers. Comm., 11 May) reveal that there is an interconnected relationship between crafts and architecture, where both disciplines influence each other in various ways. Therefore, through this relationship, it can be assumed that elements and methods applied to crafts can also be applied to architecture in order to achieve a contemporary architectural identity that is informed by tradition. The analysis also showed a clear link between crafts and tradition and the culture of the country, and through this process, it “*gives relevance and a sense of place to the craft, ensuring that a South African style will*

continue to evolve” (Sellschop, 2002; 78). The same notion can be applied with regards to an architectural identity, where the influence of local tradition and cultures can give contemporary South African architecture a sense of place, and through this process, South African architecture shall continue to evolve along a path that has relevance to the modern community.

3.1 Introduction

The selection of the precedent study is based on its relevance to the topic of the research. The aim of the precedent study is to focus to test the theories and concepts discussed above. The analysis into the precedent will provide further understanding and insight into how indigenous arts and crafts play a crucial role in defining an architectural identity in the modern world. .

The precedent study selected relate more to the concept of unity and reconciliation, however, it sets a precedent in defining ways and means in which a contemporary South African aesthetic can be achieved through the influence and promotion of indigenous culture. The precedent study which will be discussed is Freedom Park. An analysis of the buildings will provide valuable lessons which can be applied in South African contemporary architecture.

3.2 Freedom Park, Tshwane, South Africa

Freedom Park is an important element in the research as it seeks to *“help heal this country’s broken past and reconcile diversity through the spirit of nation building”* (‘Urban Green File’, 2008; 17). Through the process of providing knowledge and remembrance to the historic events of the past, the Freedom Park contributes to the concept of identity by recognised the need to respect and honour the past. As discussed above, the past, present and future inform our individual identity, which in turn will inform the country’s architectural identity.

Freedom Park was designed by the Office of Collaborative Architects which comprised of several architectural firms such as GAPP Architects, MMA Architects and Mashabane Rose Architects (‘Urban Green File’, 2008). The vision for the park was structured around four key ideas; reconciliation, nation building, freedom of people and humanity,

therefore the architectural spaces provided in the park seek to enhance the origins of these ideas and transform them into physical form (ibid). It should be noted that these are ideas are vital to modern society, due to the fact that as a new democratic country, in order to achieve a meaningful social identity, people of the country need to reconcile and unite. Once an understanding into the social identity of the country has been established, only then can an adequate architectural response be formulated to respond to the social identity, hence forming an architectural identity. Only through the existence of a social identity can an architectural identity be formulated to depict society. Therefore, the concept of achieving an architectural identity becomes that much harder to accomplish without the formulation of a social identity amongst the members of the community. However, this critique may appropriately relate better to other buildings that have tried to portray the south architectural identity, such as the South African Chancery, Bat Centre and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government complex, which will be discussed at a later stage. Freedom Park should be excluded from this list due to the fact that that actual brief for the park was based more on created a place of remembrance for all the heroes of the past which would help to unite society. It should be noted as well, that during the early stages of the post apartheid era, society was (and still is) in a state of confusion with regards to their identity, therefore, rather than attempt to enforce an architectural identity to a confused society, instead, it uses architecture as a platform to unite society which will hopefully help mould an firm social identity for the people of South Africa. Once this has been achieved, an architectural identity becomes possible.

Freedom Park is located on a prominent 52 hectare site on Salvokop Hill at the entrance to Tshwane from Johannesburg ('Urban Green File', 2008). The site was chosen for its symbolic, historical and cultural significance ('Urban Green File', 2004). It provides views to Voortrekker monument (Fig 3.1), on the south west, which juxtaposes the history of the monument and at the same time symbolises the process of society moving forward as a united nation (ibid). The Hill also offers views to the Union Buildings and Church Square (ibid). Therefore these sight lines become visual connections between the past and the future.

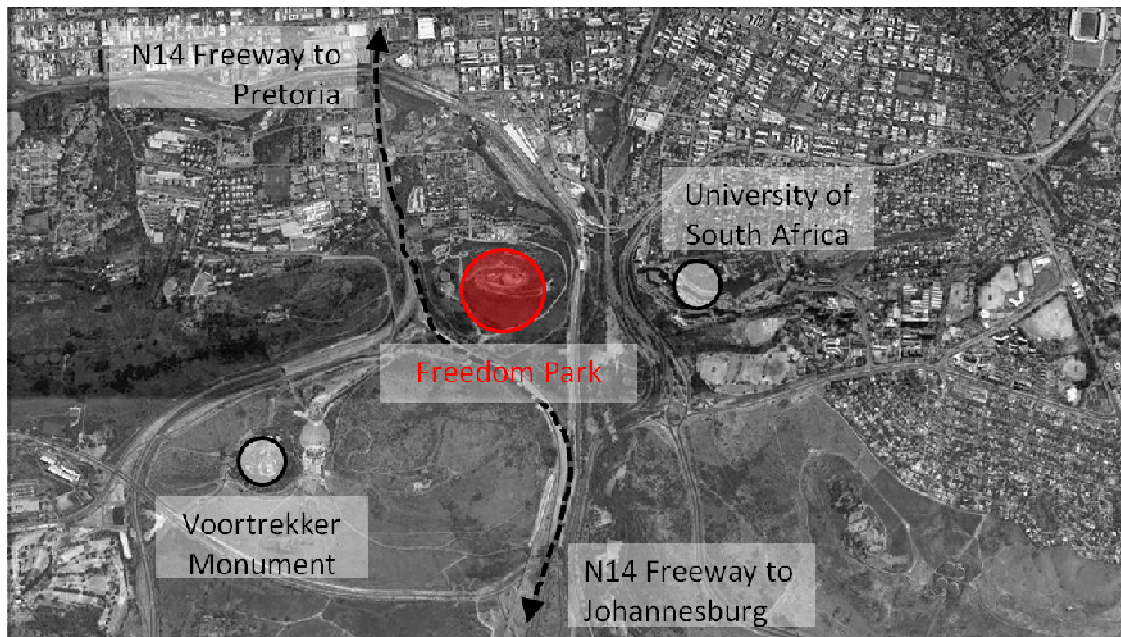


Fig 3. 1- Aerial image of Freedom Park (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.

The Hill also symbolises importance in African culture ('Urban Green File', 2004). Mountains and hills served as the seat of governance for many royal kraals in African culture, and in some cultures, they were considered to be sacred and to be used for prayer or for the burial of kings (ibid). It was believed that the ancestors lived on mountain tops which were the closest places to the heavens (ibid). Therefore, with regards to site selection, the understanding of indigenous knowledge is of particular importance to contemporary architecture as it creates a platform to create deeper meaning in architectural spaces.

In order to unite the South African community, Freedom Park focuses primarily on the emotional power that lies in the history of the country. In this way, the park is moulded into an emotional path or spiritual journey which culminates around the concept of unity and reconciliation ('Urban Green File', 2008). Therefore, similarly to the NMYHC, the path symbolises a thread that connects all the phases of the park. The spiritual journey is emphasised through indigenous knowledge which acknowledges indigenous culture and traditional African religious thought (ibid). This idea is explored in a variety of themes, such as ubuntu, creation and healing which in turn has informed the layout of the site as well the choice of materials (ibid). Therefore, it can be said that a major element in the

reconciliation of South African society is the wealth and sharing of indigenous knowledge, which is a characteristic of African civilization as it incorporates social issues such as tradition, culture and politics.

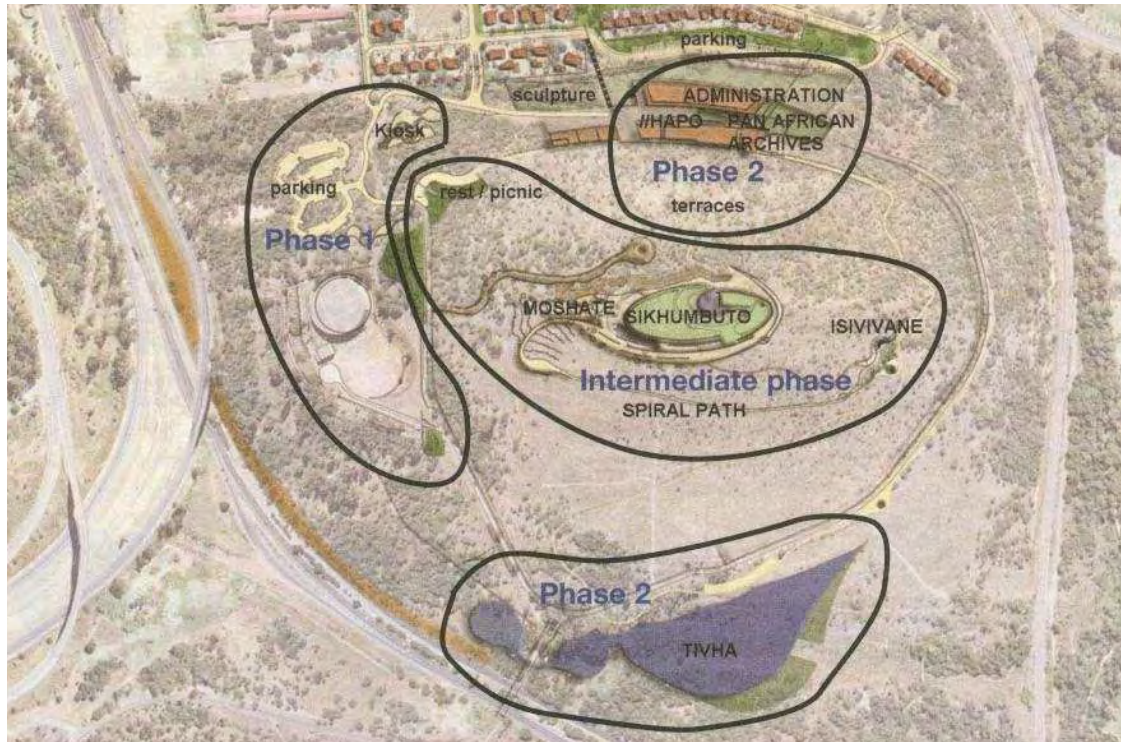


Fig 3. 2- The three phases of Freedom Park ('Urban Green File', 2006; 31).

The Park is divided into three phases (Fig 3.2), the first is the garden of remembrance, the second is the Place of remembrance and the third is iXhapho (dream). However, the spiritual journey begins at the base of the hill with iXhapho ('Urban Green File', 2008). iXhapho is the museum component that tells the story of South Africa, and it includes welcome and arrival spaces, healing garden and the museum structure which is grouped around a central courtyard (ibid). The museum was created to tell the story of South Africa (ibid), the museum seeks to connect architecture and literature through the concept of storytelling which is the central mode of projecting ideas. The museum is located around a central courtyard which is used to express indigenous knowledge through the use of basic landscape elements, such as rocks, water and fire. This method is similar to that of indigenous communities which was the primary method of communicating and transferring knowledge. Therefore, the space encourages verbal communication between all members of society which is an important step in the process of national unity.



Fig 3. 3- Large circle of boulders which define iSivivane ('Urban Green File', 2008; 18).

From iXhapho, visitors progress through a spiral path that winds its ways up the hill- past Isivivane- to a pause area which has the Wall of Names (ibid). ISivivane (phase one) is a symbolic final resting place of people who lost their lives during the apartheid struggle (ibid). Isivivane is an area defined by a circle of large boulders (Fig 3.3) which have been sourced from the nine provinces of the country and it represents the spiritual cleansing and healing of the nation (ibid). The spiritual journey continues to iSikhumbuzo on the hilltop (ibid). ISikhumbuzo is a memorial to all the people who died during the various conflicts that led to the establishment of a democratic South Africa, which includes the pre-colonial wars, the border wars, the Anglo Boer war and the first and second World Wars. ISikhumbuzo (Fig 3.4) consists of several components, such as the Wall of Names, Sanctuary, Reeds, Gallery of Leaders and Moshate which is a hospitality suite for dignitaries (ibid). The Wall of Names is made form 140 000 sandstone blocks which each have a name imprinted on it (ibid). The Sanctuary is located at the end of the Wall of Names.

The Sanctuary overlooks a flame that burns eternally in honour of the lives that have been lost (ibid). The flame is positioned in a pond (Fig 3.5) which reflects orange light at night (ibid). Although the flame represents the loss of life, which is a particularly sad

moment, the reflection of the orange light at night enlivens the space and symbolises the notion continuity; although lives have been lost, the future holds many possibilities.

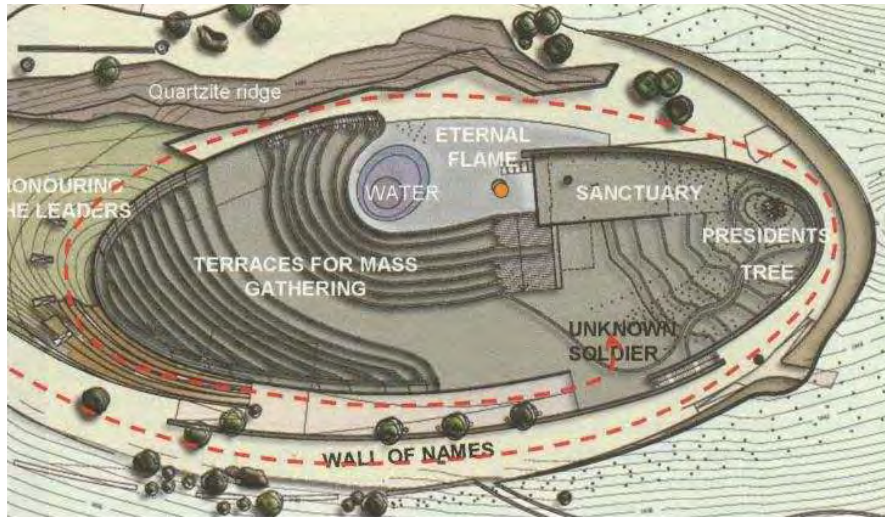


Fig 3. 4- Plan of iSikhumbuzo ('Urban Green File', 2006; 35).



Fig 3. 5- Sanctuary pond ('Urban Green File', 2008; 19).

The Sanctuary has been designed to accommodate people from different belief systems to pay homage and remember those who died ('Urban Green File', 2008). Therefore, it should be noted that although Freedom Park is based on uniting society through the concept of indigenous African knowledge. The indigenous knowledge concept is perfectly balanced with the functionality of the park. In other words, the African theme of

the Park is inclusive of all cultures and not exclusive to Africans. This has been achieved through the positioning of spaces and landscaping which allows the park to become part of the Hill (Fig 3.6).

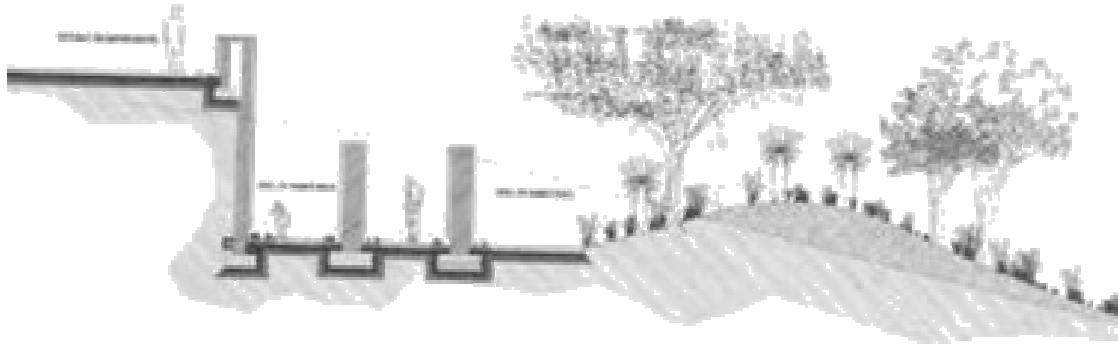


Fig 3. 6- Section through Wall of Names showing how the structure is built into the site ('Digest of South African Architecture', 2007; 20).

The design of Freedom Park symbolises the process of nation building through architecture that is not forceful, but rather compassionate to the landscape ('Urban Green File', 2008). This can be seen through in the design process, where the landscape architects identified ecologically sensitive zones in the site (Fig 3.7), through this, they were able to identify areas where development should be positioned or limited ('Urban Green File', 2004). As a result, the conference centre, parking area and administrative buildings were repositioned from the south east to the north of the Hill (ibid). In this way, it also allowed for a more direct relationship with the urban edge of the site and the natural southern slopes of the site were retained (ibid). Therefore, an understanding of environmental conditions is also vital to the language of architectural spaces. Although a major portion of Freedom Park consists of landscaped areas, the positioning of the built structures is directly related to the natural landscaped areas. In this way, the built environment shares a closer relationship with the natural environment.

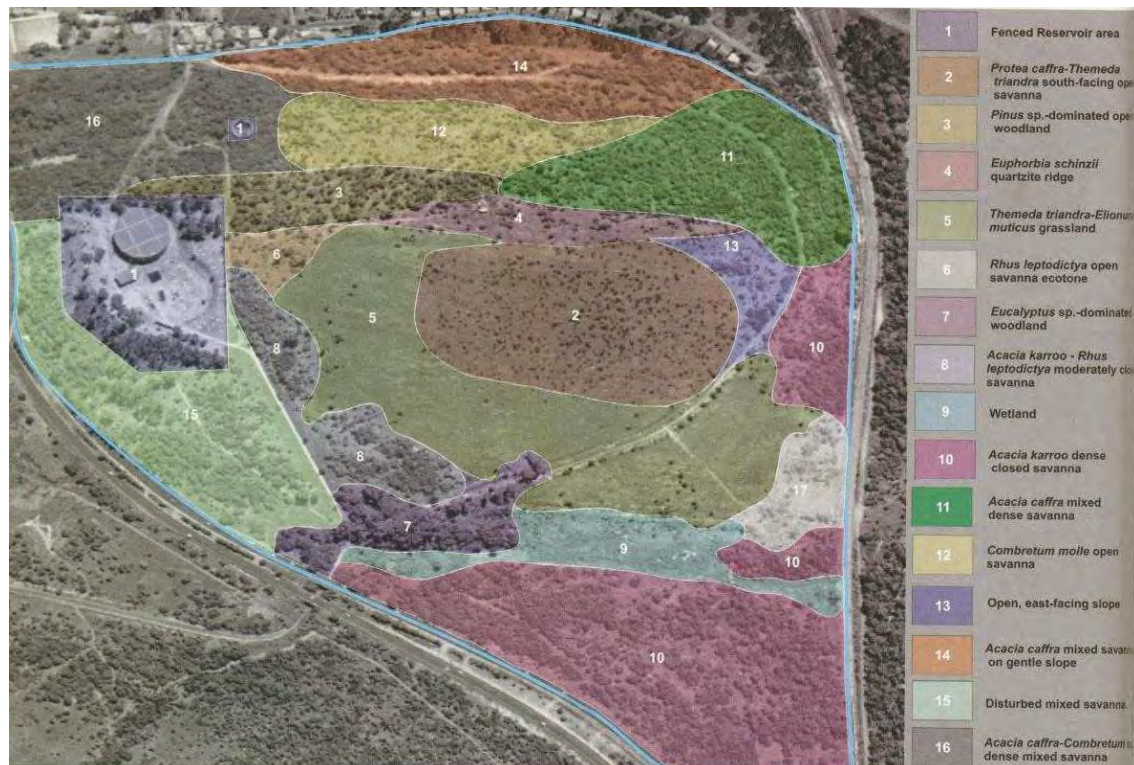


Fig 3. 7- Ecological survey that highlights ecologically sensitive zones ('Urban Green File', 2004; 18).

"The whole project revolves around indigenous knowledge systems that have not been acknowledged through contemporary telling or records" ('Urban Green File', 2008; 20). Therefore, the study of Freedom Park is pertinent to the research as it seeks to bridge the apparent gap between indigenous and contemporary cultures. However, the Park focuses primarily on indigenous communication methods which should inform contemporary communication. In other words through the idea is creating social unity, the design team recognised that the architectural response could firstly become a catalyst for social transformation and secondly that an understanding of the past and present social status of the country could form the backbone to achieving the desired future for modern society in South Africa. In this way, architecture becomes the instigator of social unity and identity which influences the architectural identity for the country. The design team also realised that in order to break down the barriers of apartheid, society needs to meaningfully engage with each other verbally in order to promote a diverse society that is united by its history. Therefore, in order to achieve this, indigenous methods have been used as a model to inform modern society.

3.3 Conclusion

The analysis of Freedom Park also highlights that in order to establish an architectural identity; efforts should be made to understand the social identity of a place. The multi cultural social status of the country dictates that there is a dire need for architecture to promote social unity which will heal the wounds from the past and at the same time formulate a social identity. Although the research seeks to establish an architectural identity, however, the social and architectural identities are interlinked and influence each other. Therefore, Freedom Park seeks to use indigenous knowledge as a factor that influences both social and architectural identities. In addition, the functions and spaces providing in the Park support social unity, such as the museum which seeks to unite social through the process of verbal interaction, which is inspired by indigenous knowledge.

4.1 Introduction

The selections of case studies are based on their relevance to the topic of the research. The aim of case studies is to focus on the aspects that would reiterate the influence of indigenous arts and crafts on contemporary South African architecture, in order to support the theories and concepts discussed in the above chapters. It should be noted as well that the case studies selected will focus on two vital components. Firstly analysis will create an understanding about the role that indigenous arts and craft plays within the modern community, and how architecture should respond to promote arts and crafts. Secondly, the analysis will provide further understanding into vital components that constitute a contemporary South African building, regardless of the function.

It has also become evident in the research that certain groups of people react differently to a building according to its relevance within modern society. Issues such as accessibility and architectural form contribute towards the relevance of any building which ultimately leads to its success. It has also become clear that most buildings are more identifiable due to their architectural expression that is based primarily on the understanding of architectural principles which have been adapted to compliment their surroundings. The case studies selected relate more specifically to the arts and crafts field, where the buildings form should exhibit a closer relationship between its function and its form. The case studies which will be discussed include the BAT Centre and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government Complex. An analysis of these buildings will provide valuable lessons which can be applied in South African Contemporary architecture.

4.2 BAT Centre

4.2.1 Introduction

The Barthel Arts Trust (BAT) Centre is a centre for local artists to exhibit their skills in the arts. This case study is important to the research since it is a building that addresses some of the issues raised with regards to the promotion of arts and crafts. According to the BAT Centre Trust (BCT) (n.d.), the building aims to uplift the community through developments and programs that focus primarily on the needs of the people through the use of art as a positive catalyst for social transformation. The centre also aims to ingrate formally established artists with the developing and informal artists that exist in the city and surrounding under-developed communities (ibid). The centre is a multi-purpose arts and crafts development centre. The centre contains a restaurant and bar, large hall and several retail outlets. There are also art studios for exhibitions, music practice rooms, a dance studio, a resource centre and a conference room (Claude, 1996). The building was designed in 1997 by Paul Mikula from Architects Collaborative for the Barthel Arts Trust.

4.2.2 Location



Fig 4. 1- Aerial view of Durban harbour showing position of site (Google Earth) Accessed 23.05.2012.

The BAT Centre is located on the north east side of the Durban harbour and is situated off Victoria embankment (Claude, 1996). The site was chosen because of its harbour views, with the idea that the facility would act as a catalyst to encourage development along the harbour edge (Mikula, 1996). The site is also in close proximity to other art facilities in the City such as the Playhouse and the Durban Art Gallery (ibid). It was seen to be well located to serve the communities along the Esplanade and workers at the harbour (ibid). However, it is in the author's view that the location of the site isolates its function as a community centre. Although it is located in close proximity to other art centres in the CBD, it makes no attempt to connect with these facilities or the city. Mikula (1996) states the vision for a level crossing to connect the centre to the city never materialised, however, a level crossing would have minimal effect with regards to resolving the issues of high vehicular traffic along the Victoria Embankment (Fig 4.1).

4.2.3 Historical and Social Context of Case Study

The BAT Centre founded through an inheritance by Hugo Barthel who established the Barthel Art Trust in 1992 (Bat History, n.d.). However, upon his death, Paul Mikula and Dick Breytenbach- a partner at the Shepstone and Wylie law firm- were appointed as the trustees (ibid). Mikula and Breytenbach engaged in a process to establish the best way to use the trust to benefit the arts community in Durban (ibid). From their research, they sought to establish a multipurpose centre for arts (ibid). The centre was an alteration to the SAS Inkonkoni building which was formerly a navy building in the harbour.

The BAT Centre is a *“home for all who seek support and vibrant spaces to develop their artistic talent. It is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of music, visual arts, dance, craft and literature of KwaZulu Natal”* (BCT, n.d.). Therefore the centre seeks to promote a variety of art disciplines which in turn increases cultural activity and interaction. The idea of a variety of cultural activities also relate to the context of Durban as a multi cultural society. The activities promoted by the centre range from weekly entertainment programmes which include comedy evenings, music evenings and drumming evenings (BCT, n.d.). The centre also has various art and craft shops, a visual art studio, youth development programmes and community art programmes (ibid).

Therefore, it can be said that the centre acts as a community centre that uses art as a tool to unite and promote cultural diversity in the city.

4.2.4 Empirical Data



Fig 4. 2- South elevation of BAT Centre (by author).



Fig 4. 3- North elevation of BAT Centre with railway line barrier (Claude, 1996; 6).

As discussed above, the centre makes no attempt to connect with the city; as a result, accessibility to the site is very difficult. The south facing facade is welcoming and sensitive to harbour views (Fig 4.2), however, the north facing facade (Fig 4.3) is concealed by the railway line and the busy road.

The building therefore fails to make a connection with the CDB as the railway line and busy road becomes a barrier which prevents a visible link between the centre and the inner city. Although pedestrian underpasses have been provided, most members of the public are reluctant to use these passages as they pose a security risk. Although the need to separate vehicular and pedestrian movement has been acknowledged, the solution creates a security risk.

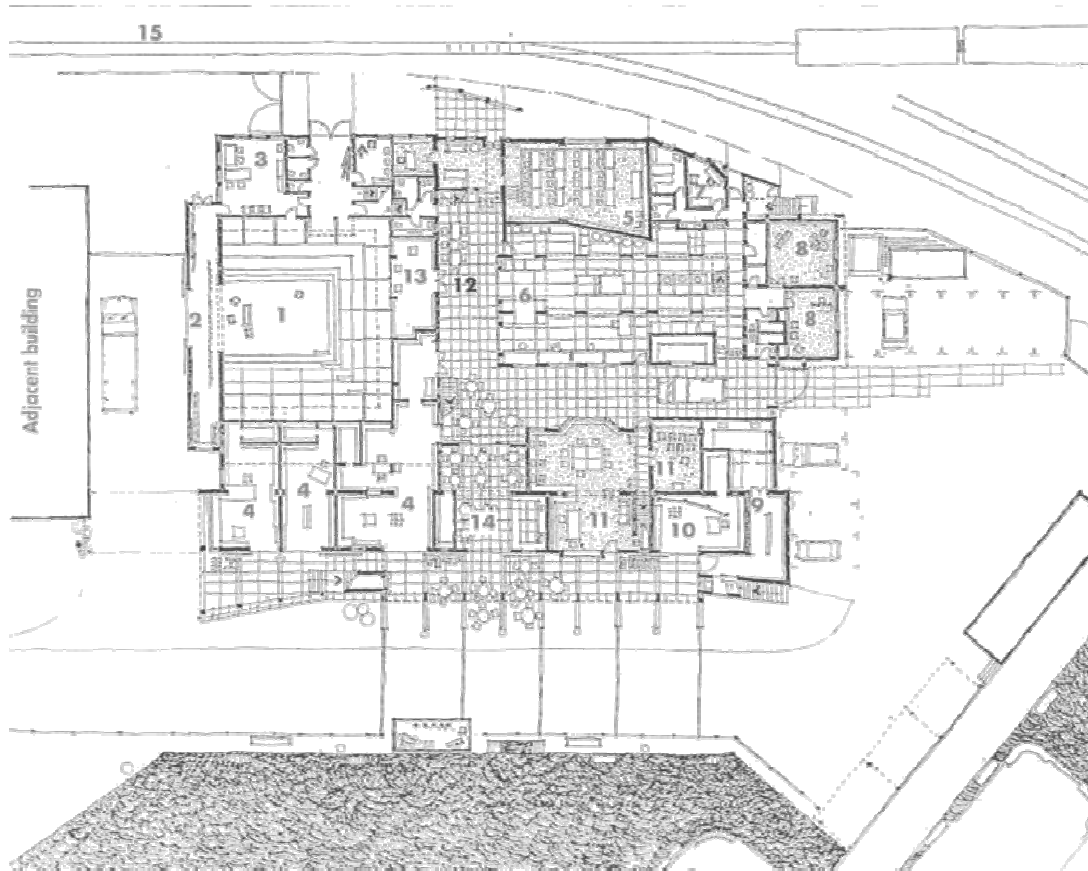


Fig 4. 4- Ground floor plan with internal courtyard shown as number 12 (Claude, 1996; 7).

With regards to the layout of the centre, the spaces are shaped around a north facing internal courtyard (Fig 4.4). Conceptually, the use of the internal courtyard is similar to that of the South African Chancery (SAC) which also features spaces positioned around an internal courtyard. However, in this case, the courtyard of the BAT Centre is open which shows its relevance to its local environmental conditions as opposed to that of the SAC, which was covered as a response to the environmental conditions in Germany. Similarly, it can be said that the internal courtyard of the BAT Centre is representative of inkundla (gathering space). However, as a gathering space, the internal courtyard should be bigger in order to accommodate for both indoor and outdoor activities. In this way, the art performances and displays can extend to the courtyard as well. The only performance spaces in the centre are the theatre and the jazz cafe. It is in the authors opinion that the theatre should cater for greater versatility, where it can also connect with the external spaces, in order to increase its volume if needs be. On the other hand, the jazz cafe, the secondary performance space, makes a greater connection with the harbour views than

the courtyard. However, although internal performance spaces fail to link with the internal courtyard, access to the art studio is located alongside the courtyard, as a result, the yard is constantly filled with activities as students from the studio sometimes use this space as work spaces due to its north facing position which allows for an abundance of light (Fig 4.5).



Fig 4. 5- View of internal courtyard with students, tourists and staff members (by author).

With regards to the architectural response, it should be noted that although indigenous materials have been used in the construction of the centre, it is not a depiction of contemporary South African architecture, but rather it intended to be a “*model to show that memorable buildings do not have to be excessive or expensive*” (Mikula, 1996; 2). Therefore, the use of telephone poles as beams and the use of corrugated iron serve to make a statement that for “*architecture to be amazing, money is not necessarily a prerequisite*” (Mikula, 1996; 2). However, there has been a certain element of innovation that was involved in the construction of the BAT Centre. For example, insulation and waterproofing were sprayed onto the top of the roofs which helps to seal

the new roof and the existing roof (Fig 4.6). At the same time, the structural process is also extended and visible in the internal spaces (Fig 4.7).



Fig 4. 6- Waterproofing detail of new and existing roof (By Author).



Fig 4. 7- View of internal roof structure with exposed materials (By Author).

4.2.5 Conclusion

Therefore, the Bat centre provides valuable lessons with regards to the role in which arts crafts play in the community. Although accessibility is a major issue with the centre, the cultural programmes accommodated by the centre make it successful as it provides spaces for artists and the public. Similarly to the Aomori Contemporary Art Centre, the BAT centre encourages integration between artists and the community. In addition, the centre provides social programmes that unite the community through arts and crafts.

4.3 Mpumalanga Provincial Government Complex

4.3.1 Introduction

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government Complex (MPGC) is the first major public building to be built in the new democratic (Malan, 2001). And as a result it was designed to represent the new South African democracy (ibid). Although it focuses primarily on the concept of the African Renaissance, it also seeks to develop an understanding between architecture and art (ibid). Therefore, this relationship is vital to the research as it will highlight methods which can contribute towards establishing an architectural identity in South Africa.

4.3.2 Location

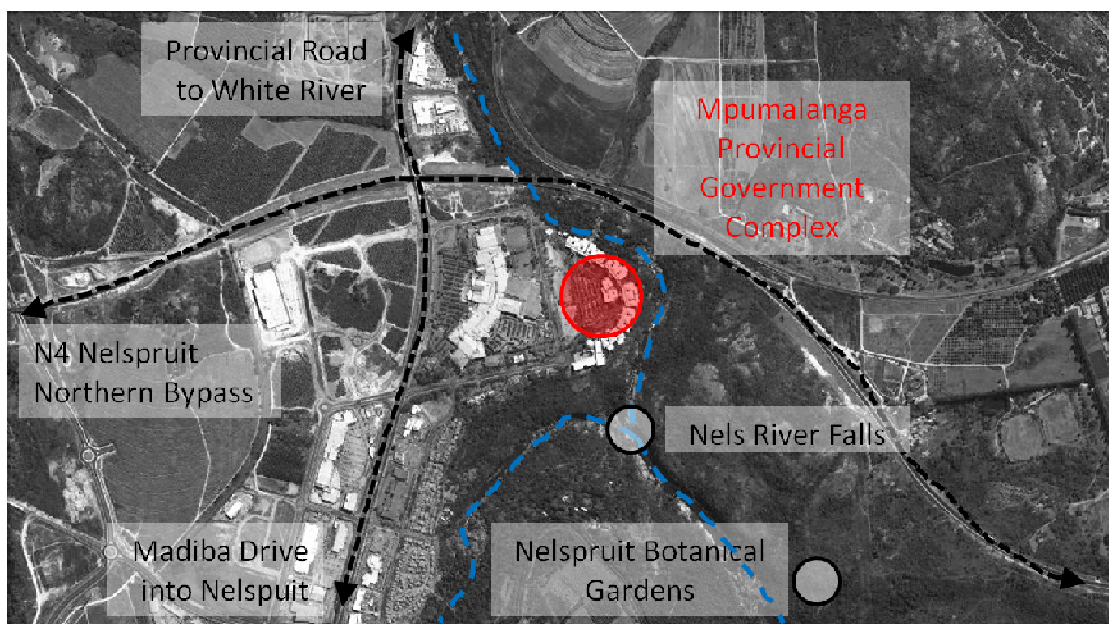


Fig 4. 8- Aerial image of Mpumalanga Provincial Government Complex (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.

The site is located on the outskirts of Nelspruit in the Mpumalanga province (Malan, 2001). It is a triangular site bordered by cliffs and steep forested slopes which lead to the Nels and Crocodile rivers (Fig 4.8), at the same time, the site is easily accessible from the city (ibid). The site also provides views of the natural landscape which have come to

define the character of the province (ibid). Malan (2001) also states that the landscape evokes memories of indigenous communities who roamed the land. Therefore, since the MPGC seeks to portray an African expression, it can be said that the inspiration for this expression is derived from the landscape. In fact, as confirmation of this, during excavation on an adjacent site, ancient storage pits, cattle byres, and burials were found (ibid). The findings were studied by archaeologists who discovered that the storage pits dated as far back as 550 AD (ibid). Therefore, these findings further justify the need to create an African building in respect of the people who lived in the area centuries ago.

4.3.3 Historical and Social Context of Case Study

In 1994, the then premier of the Mpumalanga Provincial government announced that Nelspruit would be the capital city of the province; therefore, the province required a suitable facility for its legislative assembly and its government departments (Malan, 2001). After a year, a brief was formulated and an architectural competition was launched in 1997 (ibid). The brief called for a single, unified complex for the Legislature and administrative offices for various departments which total have a total of 85 000m² (ibid). The architectural design competition was awarded to Meyer Pienaar Tayob Schnepel Architects due to their response to the brief by creating a group of buildings that express the character of the region and that of a democratic government.

The design of the MPGC was inspired by African precedents rather than European examples (Malan, 2001). The design is asymmetrical, dynamic in form and expresses the character of a free and democratic country (ibid). the scale and size of the MPGC meant that similar sized precedents were analysed, although the Union Buildings are of a similar scale, it was disregarded due to its colonial origins, which is seen in its static, imposing and symmetrical form (ibid). Although it remains a part of the country's architectural heritage, the MPGC had to make an architectural statement informed by African culture and not European. Therefore, indigenous architecture – although restricted to a domestic scale- was found to offer inspiration in spatial organization, forms, textures and decoration (ibid). Upon a deeper analysis into the vernacular architecture of the

Mpumalanga region, the colonnaded bee hive hut became a dominant feature (ibid). Therefore, characteristics of the beehive hut have been incorporated into the design.

4.3.4 Empirical Data

4.3.4.1 Interaction with the Environment

The surrounding environment has been used to inspire the form of the MPGC; the architects attempted to link the building with the environment through encouraging integration with the context on a variety of levels (Malan, 2001). In this way, as discussed in chapter one, the building merely becomes an extension of the natural environment. The individual buildings are positioned along the edge of the forest (Fig 4.9) and are connected by a colonnaded walkway which also links to the chamber and the public piazza (ibid).

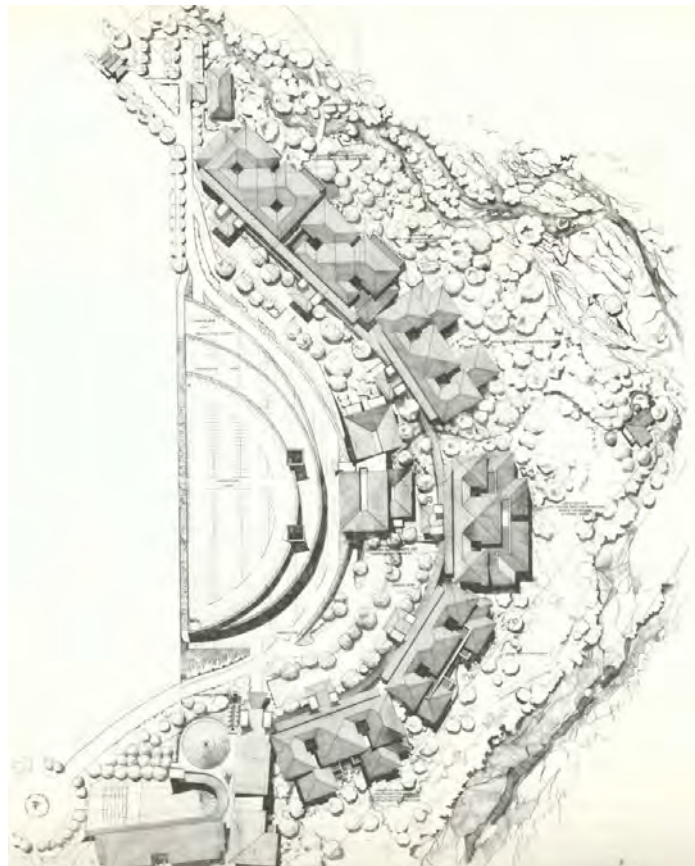


Fig 4. 9- Site diagram showing buildings positioned along the forest edge and integrated into the landscape (Malan, 2001; 26).

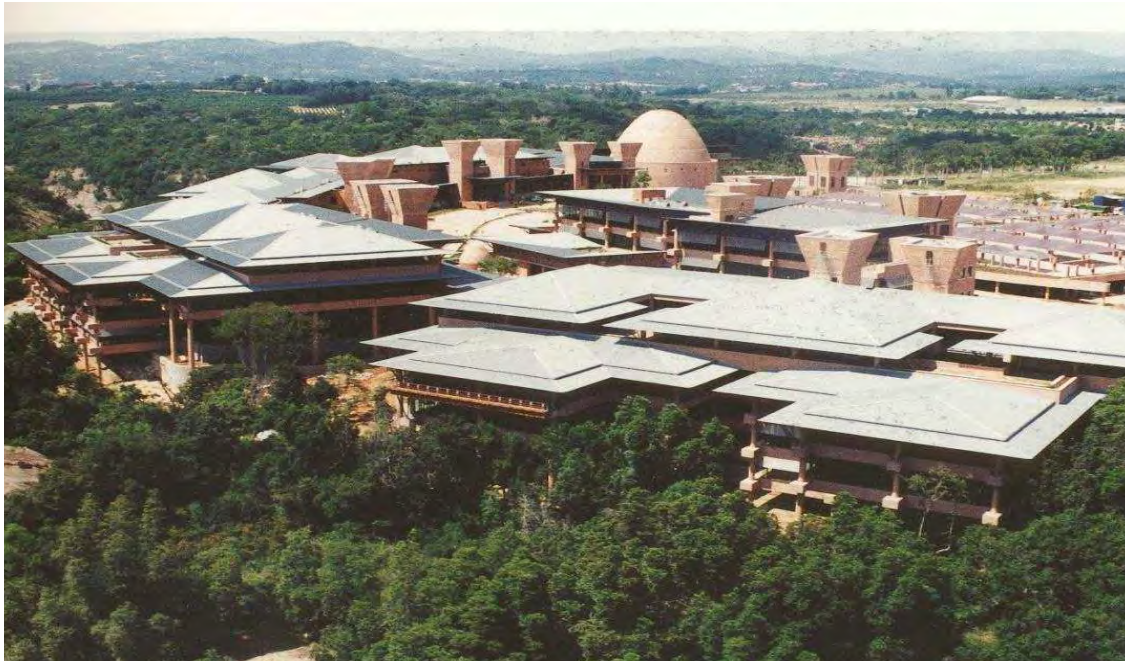


Fig 4. 10- View of complex highlighting the domes relationship with the rest of the complex and the context (Malan, 2001; 101).

The natural landscape is dominated by large granite domes (Fig 4.10), therefore, the architecture responds through a dome that covers the Legislature (ibid). Although the dome responds to the natural landscape, it deviates from the initial design concept which is based on the abstract interpretation of African architecture. As mentioned before, in chapter four, a signal is a reactionary response, and a symbol involves a certain level of understanding, therefore, the dome shape that covers the Legislature is a response to the granite domes and to indigenous architecture, through this, the dome shape loses its symbolic quality. It should be noted that visual dominance does not necessarily entail symbolic quality. The dome appears to speak a different language than the rest of the complex, as a result, it appears to be disjointed and out of place. Nevertheless, similar to Freedom Park, the MPGC highlights the importance of the natural landscape as an important element that contributes to how the building is experienced.

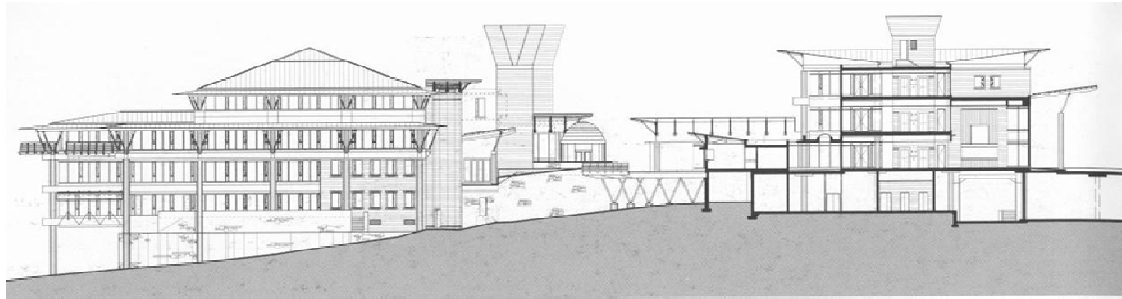


Fig 4. 11- Section through complex highlighting the architectural response to the western and eastern edge (Malan, 2001; 52).

The complex essentially has two facades, which address climatic conditions in different ways. Firstly, the western edge of the complex has a civic character, with a closed facade formed by a linear core to each building, and contains small openings protected by the colonnade (Malan, 2001). The linear cores along the walkway form an urban edge to commercial development on the adjacent site, and at the same time, the cores also provide a barrier for sun protection which enables the eastern edge to open up complexly to the forested environment (ibid). On the eastern edge, the building shares an intimate relationship with the forest and the river (ibid). The section of the building above (Fig 4.11) illustrates this relationship. The use of bricks with minimal openings on the western edge emphasises the structure of the building which mimics the harder contextual landscape. On the other hand, the eastern edge uses bricks for construction however, this edge has been softened which the interplay of softer materials such as timber and maximising the use of glazing which encourages a connection with the water's edge (Fig 4.12 and Fig 4.13). In addition, firstly, the large roof overhangs respond to the environmental conditions by protecting the glazed facades, secondly, the building responds to environmental conditions by projecting above the ground in order to minimize impact along the water's edge (ibid).

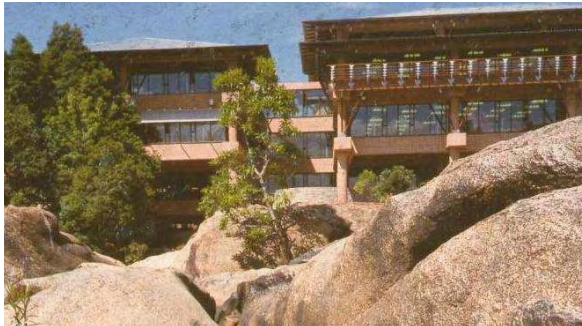


Fig 4.12- View of the administration buildings overlooking the Nels Rivers (Malan, 2001; 130).



Fig 4.13- Eastern edge of complex which interacts with nature and provides views of the landscape (Malan, 2001; 32).

4.3.4.2 The Council Chamber as a symbol of Power.



Fig 4.14- Acacia tree planted in the public square at the Legislature which highlights the notion of a gathering tree (Malan, 2001; 34).

The administrative buildings and the Legislature are orientated around the dominant feature of the council chamber (Malan, 2001). As discussed above, the architectural form is a response to the landscape; however, the form of the chamber is also symbolic of the function of the chamber, as a place where parliament would gather to discuss democratic issues. Therefore, the notion of gathering spaces is expressed through walkways which connect pavilions and

other buildings in the complex to the chamber as the focal point of the complex (ibid). The notion of ‘gathering’ is also derived from indigenous African people who also gathered in a similar manner, as a result, the walkway of the Legislature around the public square is marked with a paperback acacia tree (Fig 4.14) which symbolically distinguishes Kgoro- the traditional gathering space of leaders (ibid). The interpretation of indigenous knowledge is differs slightly to that depicted in the precedents mentioned in previous chapters. Freedom Park interpreted the hill as a significant gathering space for discussing important political issues, at the same time, the South African Chancery

represented gathering space as inkundla in which all spaces and functions literally gather around the central gathering space. With regards to the MPGC, the architectural form of the chamber represents the hill-like component depicted with the design of Freedom Park, however, with regards to the planning of the MPGC, the gathering space is only shown with the chamber area which has its own gathering space which is separated from the rest of the complex (Fig 4.15), as a result, the gathering space fails to become the centre of the whole complex instead it only focuses on gathering the political leaders separately to the every-day users of the complex. Therefore, a vital lesson can be learnt from this analysis; the interpretation of indigenous knowledge can be represented through architectural forms or it can be interpreted in planning where the notion of gathering informs the layout and positioning of functions.

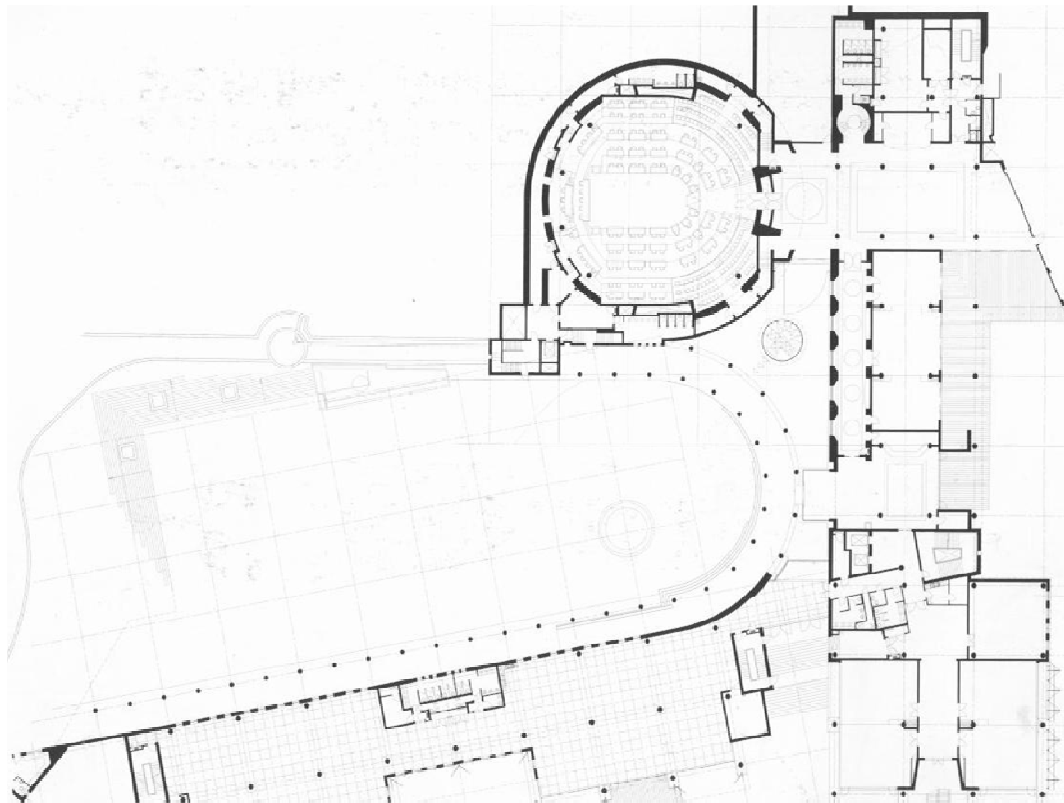


Fig 4.15- Ground floor plan of Legislative complex (Malan, 2001; 36).

The notion of gathering political leaders is encouraged through open engagement with the public; this is made visible in the form of colonnades which form the circular gathering space (Malan, 2001). The combination of the tall colonnades and the vast dome form express the power of the legislature, as a result, the verticality of these elements

emphasise the notion of the gathering of democratic power (ibid). Therefore, it can be said that apart from being visually dominant features, tall structures also express power and also make an impact to the user.

4.3.4.3 Interactive Public Spaces

According to Malan (2001), the structure of the complex encourages social interaction through the creation of a variety of spaces. It is intended the interaction will occur in a planned and spontaneous nature, therefore, the spaces provided cater for this interaction (Malan, 2001). This effect has been achieved through the use of architectural elements and forms which combine to create spaces to pause and interact along the public routes (ibid). The Civic Square terminates the axis of the Government Boulevard; as a result, social interaction is encouraged firstly by the Square, which has been splayed slightly to welcome the public, secondly, the finishes and landscaping have been extended beyond the colonnade to form a grand plaza (ibid). In addition, the complex encourages social interaction through the design of micro-environments within the grand plaza. The steps leading to the plaza have trees positioned between them which ensure their versatility (Fig 4.16). The steps do not merely serve a functional purpose but they also become spaces where the public can sit in shaded areas during large scale gathering at the square.



Fig 4.16- The Square at the Legislature which is the primary space for gatherings (Malan, 2001; 40).

Therefore, it can be said that the creation of spaces that encourage social interaction is a vital aspect of ensuring that buildings remain relevant within the community in which it has been designed for. However, the aspect of human scale is also just as important as it ensures that the adequate spirit of the place is ensured; if a space is too small or too huge for its intended purpose, this affects how the public will use it.

4.3.4.4 Spaces in Human Scale



Figs 4.17- The use of different materials such as timber, create a contrast with the facebrick building which blend to integrate with the surrounding environment (Malan, 2001; 42).

Relating the complex to human scale come through a holistic approach that deals with both scale and tactile experience, as well as with the way people orientate themselves (Malan, 2001). The complex compliments the human scale on a variety of levels, firstly, the shape and gradient of the site has been used to reduce the impact of the complex on the environment, secondly, the colonnade has been introduced to reduce the scale of the complex (ibid). The complex also relates to human scale through the use of timber (Fig 4.17) as a tactile element which softens the hard facebrick shell of the building which creates a sympathetic response from the user (Malan,

2001). In terms of the planning approach, the design of the complex is organised to create human scale by providing, “*in the overall configuration, a very distinct head with two separate arms*” (Malan, 2001; 41). This has been achieved by using symmetry, and identifiable spaces for services, working, moving recreating and gathering (ibid). The collection and organisation of these spaces make the complex understandable to the user, which in turn allows them to easily orientate themselves along the spaces.

In addition, different textures and finishes are used to create patterns which generate interest; “*enabling identity through scale of experience*” (Malan, 2001; 41). It can be said that the use of a variety of textures and finishes to create patterns allow the users to attach

meaning through the patterns which immediately start to affect how they use the spaces. In other words the spaces become familiar and comfortable for the user which affects the way they orientate themselves around the spaces. Therefore, in this case, the patterns of art have been used to transmit signals to the user; however, the signal transmitted carries a certain meaning to the user, in this way, the buildings identity connects with the users' identity.

4.3.4.5 Finishes and Materials

The complex seeks a contemporary expression of the African spirit through the architectural forms, selection of materials and the translation of traditional motifs (Fig 4.18) (Malan, 2001). The colours and textures of the surrounding landscape have been reflected in the finishing materials of the complex (ibid). The motifs of the Sotho, Pedi, Tsonga, Tswana, Swazi and Ndebele people have been incorporated into the finishes as textures, colours and patterns (ibid). According to Malan (2001), the combination of these elements helps to provide unity and create a uniquely African-South African and Mpumalangan experience. Therefore, the use the various types of finishes which originate from different indigenous backgrounds helps to establish a stronger connection with the people of Mpumalanga.



Fig 4.18- The incorporation of traditional patterns, textures and colours into the wall finishes of MPGC (Malan, 2001; 45).

The finishes have been themed into three categories; earth (derived from rock, mud or clay), grass (woven fabrics derived from weaving) and reeds (vertical elements on the edges of spaces such as colonnades and reeded panelling) which originate from indigenous cultures (Malan, 2001). Therefore, these themes inform the selection of materials for the interior spaces such as natural stone mosaics, stone-tiled floors, slate, carpet and richly coloured plaster finishes which are all sourced locally

(ibid). In addition, the variety of finishes contribute to the notion of gathering as they

represent an integrating process which brings together the creativity of various cultures which are blended with the colours and textures of the region (ibid). Therefore, since South Africa is a multi-cultural society, it can be said that in order to establish a contemporary South African architectural identity, elements of various cultures should be incorporated into architectural designs so that buildings can develop a multi-cultural appeal. However, as seen with the MPGC, these cultural elements should be interpreted and portrayed in a local manner which strengthens the buildings connection with the local context and it becomes unique to the place and community which it serves.

4.3.4.6 The Interpretation of Arts and Crafts

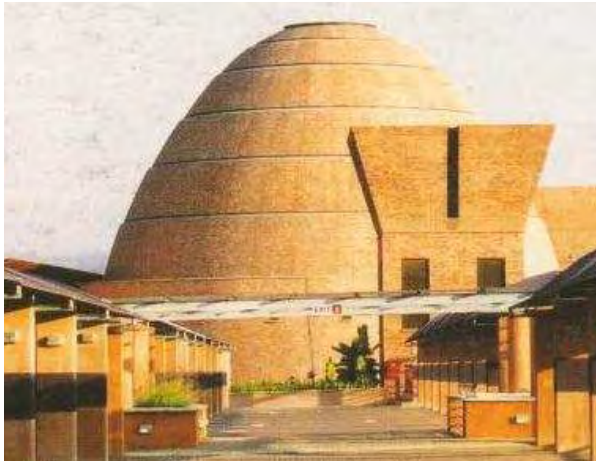


Fig 4.19- Dome structure with interwoven panels clad with bricks (Malan, 2001; 50).

Indigenous arts and crafts, such as carved woodworks, tapestries, beadwork and basket weaving, have been integrated into the interior design of the MPGC which has allowed for a unique architectural expression (Malan, 2001). This notion has been derived from analysing the work of indigenous basket weavers who use organic raw to express their creativity as the

character of their living environment (ibid). The exterior form of the dome housing the Legislative assembly suggests the shape of woven baskets (Fig 4.19); as a result, it generates the geometry of interwoven panels which are often used by indigenous basket weavers (ibid). Similarly, the interior of the dome expresses the same geometry through woven ceiling panels (Fig 4.20).

The basket weaving motif (Fig 4.21) is also featured on the floor of several public spaces surrounding the chamber and in the entrance foyers to each office block (Malan, 2001). These motifs are made from marble mosaics which evoke the colours, textures and shapes of the Mpumalanga landscape (ibid).



Fig 4.20- Looking up into the dome, triangular interwoven ceiling panels representing the geometry of basket weaving (Malan, 2001; 86).



Fig 4.21- The woven mosaic floor in the foyer of the Legislature (Malan, 2001; 91).

African art is promoted through the work of Mpumalanga born Gerard Sekoto's, *The Song of the Pick* (1946) artwork (Fig 4.22) which hangs in the Legislature chamber foyer (Malan, 2001). This art piece shows a row of labourers carrying picks which conjures up memories of the country's apartheid history, however, the colour, brightness and contrast express the power of the rainbow nation and bears testament to the country's liberation (ibid). In addition, an initiative was established for the collection of new art from known and unknown artists from around the country (ibid). through various forms of media publishing, artist were invited to submit proposals, this culminated in an arts and crafts Roadshow which toured remote and rural areas in Mpumalanga with the aim of uniting artists in a new provincial art collection, as a result, the new provincial art collection boasts with an impressive 800 works of artist from around the province (ibid). The provincial art collection was initiated to deliberately act as a catalyst to stimulate conversation and debate about aesthetic value among community members, politicians and officials, as a result, the collection is displayed in accessible public areas which add a different dimension to public spaces and how they are used.

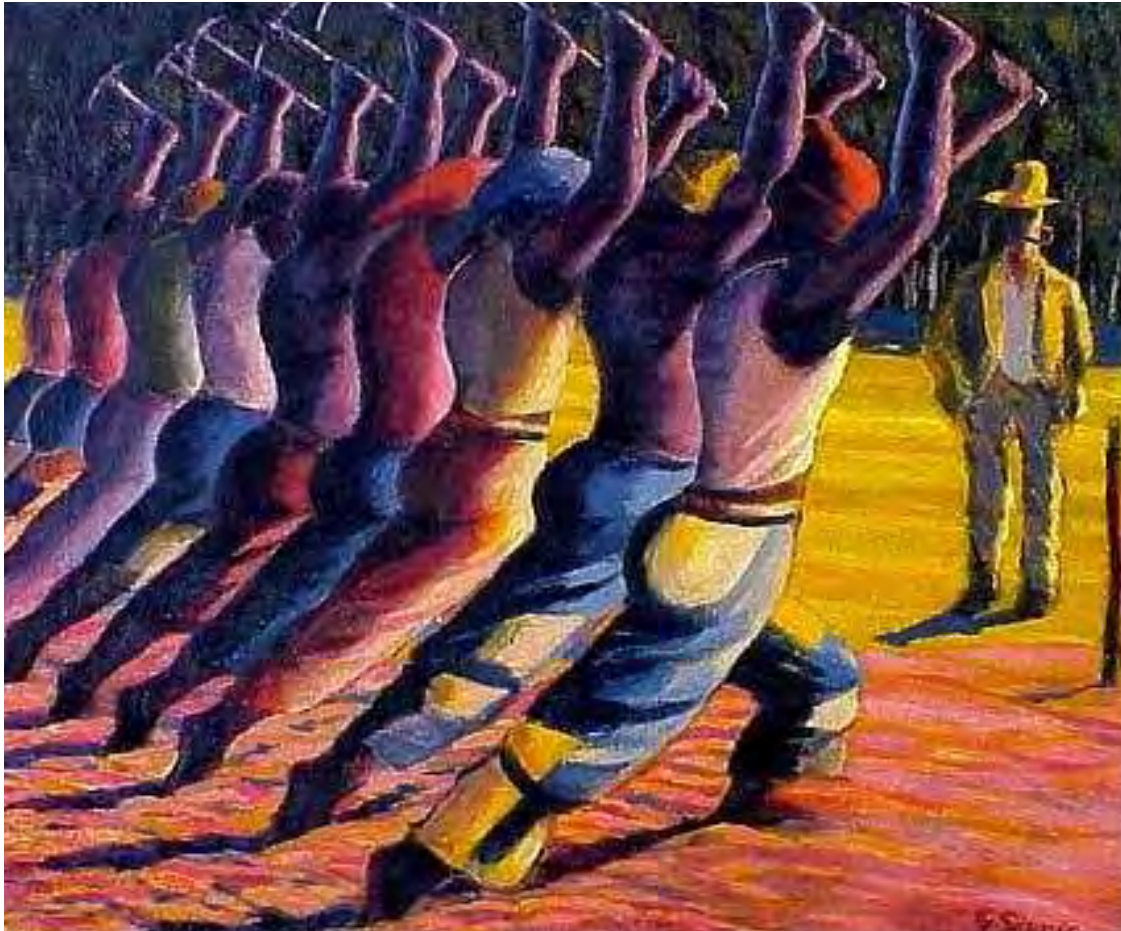


Fig 4.22- Gerard Sekoto, *The Song of the Pick* (1946)
(http://www.terminartors.com/artworkprofile/Sekoto_Gerard-Song_of_the_pick) Accessed 03.06.2012.

4.3.5 Conclusion

Therefore, although the MPGC is said to look towards promoting architecture and art, the inter-relationship between these two elements is non-existent in the design of the complex. Instead, the exterior spaces are a response to the landscape and indigenous architecture, in contrast to the interior spaces which incorporate aspects of indigenous arts and crafts. As the research has indicated, art and architecture share a mutual relationship where they both work in unison to create unique spaces. Therefore, although the MPGC highlights important aspects with regards to how the built environment should connect with the natural environment, it fails to appropriately highlight the importance of arts and crafts as an important tool that informs architectural expression both internally and externally.

This chapter will focus on the analysis of key points highlighted in the research document, which would be linked to the author's opinion, so as to come to a conclusion of this document and therefore the recommendations.

As pointed out by Malan (2001), the quest to finding an architectural expression that represents the modern South African community is an on-going process. As pointed out by Zegeye (2003), South African society is in the process of a social transformation; therefore the concept of identity becomes an important aspect in defining an appropriate architectural response to this social transition. Mbeki (1996) adds to the concept of identity by highlighting that national identity originates from a sense of belonging to a country and being proud of its history, cultures, languages, landscapes and tradition. Therefore, in order to achieve a national identity, certain components of a particular place come to fruition to inform one's identity. Through this notion, it can be said that place plays a vital role in determining one's identity. The research document referred to three forms of identity, individual identity, social/ cultural identity and architectural identity and these three forms influence each other. Correa (1983) explains architectural identity as an understanding of ourselves and our environment, which highlights the powerful connection between the individual, groups and architectural identities. However, as emphasised by Rapoport (2002) and Forjaz (2002), individual identity influences the group identity which in turn informs the architectural identity. Therefore, the research highlights the importance of both individual and social identity as key informants for the architectural identity. Although place is a key informant of individual identity, the research document analyses the place theory as a key informant to architectural identity.

Therefore, with regards to architectural identity, in addition to the words of Correa (1983), an understanding of our environment can be achieved through applying ourselves to the materials, customs, climate and traditions of a particular place. In this way, the search for identity provides greater sensitivity in the way we perceive ourselves and our environment. Therefore, this justifies the connection between place and identity. However, Trancik (1986) explains the deeper connection that exists between space, place

and meaning. He defines a space to be a place when it is given contextual meaning which is derived from the culture of the context. Therefore, spaces can be described as purposeful voids with the potential of linking different components; however, they only become a place when they have been given meaning which is derived from the cultural and regional context.

The place theory is an important within the process of establishing a South African identity. The place theory becomes vital as architecture should seek to make a positive impact in society through creating meaningful spaces and places which start to address broader social issues. In this way, architecture becomes relevant to the society. *“The concept of relevant architecture calls for the rejection of universal formulas, imitation of international paragons and the uncritical embrace of stylistic or technological fashions in favour of an architectural expression that is determined by the specific and unique parameters of its place”* (Marschall, 2000; 1). Therefore, relevant architecture should reflect aspects of the country such as climate and landscape and its society.

Trancik (1986) also states that the people, culture and activities that occur in a certain space help to give that place an identity and character. In order to establish an identity, architects need to acquire a deeper knowledge into the people and culture of a place, where they pursue to dig deeper into issues such as local history, feelings and needs of the community, tradition and indigenous culture (ibid). In addition, Marschall (2000) states that *“An architecture of place takes advantage of the particular natural characteristics of places; constructs or reinforces identifiable urban spaces or enclosures.... and makes use of the skills and devices of generations of design (such as scale, proportion, colour, etc) in order to achieve meaningful architecture”* (2000; 11). Therefore, a literal imitation of indigenous architecture reflects the identity of the past and not the present, however, analysis and applications of indigenous values leads to more relevant architecture which respects the transformation of modern society.

The ‘genius loci’ is described by Schultz (1996) as the spirit that gives life to people and places and it determines their character and essence. He defines place as a space with distinct character. Architecture can achieve an environmental image through buildings

which display the character of the place and hence form a linkage with the community (Schultz, 1980). The ability to identify certain environments is also important, to expand, the process of identification is derived from identity, and the identity of a place is formed through the integration of various characters such as context, environment and social aspects relating to a certain place (ibid). Therefore, this notion suggests that the genius loci can be defined as the image of identity; however, they share a mutual relationship where one entity can influence the other as they both have similar constraints and attributes which helps create meaningful places. An example of this can be seen with in the design of Freedom Park where meaningful spaces are created through the use of traditional forms, languages and principles of indigenous architecture which informs the environmental image and in turn provides the image of identity which contribute to the spirit of the place.

Freedom Park seeks to bridge the apparent gap between indigenous and contemporary cultures. However, the Park focuses primarily on indigenous communication methods which should inform contemporary communication. In other words, the design team has realised that in order to break down the barriers of apartheid, society needs to meaningfully engage with each other verbally in order to promote a diverse society that is united by its history. Therefore, in order to achieve this, indigenous methods have been used as a model to inform modern society.

Over the past century, architecture in the country has seen minimal progress. As a consequence of colonialism, architectural expression in South Africa is based on foreign principles, however, rather than adapting foreign traditions into South African architecture, local and indigenous traditions should be used to influence contemporary South African architecture. The precedents reviewed in the research document reveal that at the moment contemporary architecture in South Africa is primarily influenced by indigenous architecture. However, the product produced represents a literal interpretation of indigenous architecture and fails to depict the transformation that the country has undergone. As a result, the gap between the contemporary and indigenous architectural expression becomes wider.

However, as the research shows, indigenous arts and crafts have the potential to narrow the widening gap between contemporary and indigenous architectural expression. The indigenous knowledge obtained from the research highlights that are vital to the success of architectural spaces. The key to relevant contemporary architecture is the interpretation of indigenous knowledge into built form as it represents the history of our country. At the same time the analysis of arts and crafts provides evidence that indigenous South African elements can remain firmly entrenched in the tradition and at the same time have a contemporary atmosphere. Arts and crafts expand the expressive quality of architectural spaces in a manner which relates to the South African context. In this way an architectural identity can be established.

The document highlighted the relationship between contemporary architecture and arts and crafts, it was stressed that these two disciplines are interconnected. Therefore architecture should be used to promote indigenous arts and crafts; similarly, arts and crafts should be used to promote contemporary architecture. Therefore, the proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre should be located on a significant site that is in an urban environment which will serve as a tool for the promoting indigenous arts and crafts on modern society. Secondly, in order to showcase the power of indigenous arts and crafts on contemporary society, the site should be located near transport infrastructures which

generate high pedestrian activity, which is essential to the success of an Arts and Crafts Centre.

Through the interconnected relationship between contemporary architecture and indigenous arts and crafts creates a platform for both fields to not only enhance the identity of architectural spaces, but also influence the social identity where cultural integration and diversity is promoted through the use of indigenous arts and crafts as a social binding tool. Therefore, the future of the urban landscape should seek to develop and educate the community as a whole with regards to indigenous knowledge and values which seek to firstly transform the architectural identity and secondly transform the social identity to one that reflects the uniqueness of South Africa.

“The whole project revolves around indigenous knowledge systems that have not been acknowledged through contemporary telling or records” (‘Urban Green File’, 2008; 20). Therefore, the study of Freedom Park is pertinent to the research as it seeks to bridge the apparent gap between indigenous and contemporary cultures. However, the Park focuses primarily on indigenous communication methods which should inform contemporary communication. In other words through the idea is creating social unity, the design team recognised that the architectural response could firstly become a catalyst for social transformation and secondly that an understanding of the past and present social status of the country could form the backbone to achieving the desired future for modern society in South Africa. In this way, architecture becomes the instigator of social unity and identity which influences the architectural identity for the country. The design team also realised that in order to break down the barriers of apartheid, society needs to meaningfully engage with each other verbally in order to promote a diverse society that is united by its history. Therefore, in order to achieve this, indigenous methods have been used as a model to inform modern society.

The research also established that the social and architectural identities are interlinked and the formulation of an architectural identity for contemporary South Africa will be determined by the social identity, therefore, it is important that architectural spaces seek to enhance social integration and promote cultural diversity amongst South Africans.

Although indigenous arts and crafts plays a particular important function with regards to establishing the architectural identity, however, the overall understanding of indigenous knowledge influences functions and spaces required to enhance social integration.

PART TWO
DESIGN REPORT

1.10 Background

Indigenous arts and crafts can have a vital influence on contemporary South African architecture with regards to forming a unique South African architectural identity that portrays the political and social values of the country. As a result, contemporary South African architecture would contribute to the physical and social development of society which promotes a better standard of living that is respectful of the local indigenous background at the same time responding to current global issues and trends. Indigenous arts and crafts promote local identity and promote cultural diversity and interaction in achieving social unity.

1.11 The Notional Client

1.2.1 The Clients Requirements

In order to establish Pietermaritzburg as the Arts capital, the Msunduzi Local Municipality (MLM) requires an Arts and Crafts Centre that strives to unite and solidify the identity of the city through promoting indigenous arts and crafts.

It is envisioned that the centre should also seek methods of incorporating modern arts with indigenous arts. In this way, culture and tradition is preserved whilst remaining modern and relevant to modern society. The centre should also accommodate for an educational programme which links and unites the existing cultural centres in the city.

1.2.2 The Clients Organisation

The client for the project would be the Msunduzi Local Municipality. Since the project is more about social interaction through enhancing the identity of the city. It would be in the interest of the public and the municipality to promote the funding and reality of the project.

Pietermaritzburg is in the process of defining its identity. Although it is the Legislative capital of Kwa-Zulu Natal, it has always been in the shadows of Durban. Through the years, Durban has progressed to become the sporting capital of the country. However, Pietermaritzburg has the opportunity to formulate both its architectural and social identity through indigenous arts and crafts as a tool which can promote cultural diversity and interaction. In this way, Pietermaritzburg shall form its own independent identity making it the arts capital of KwaZulu natal.

The vision statement of the Msunduzi Local Municipality aims to be “*a globally competitive metropolitan City of choice which capitalizes on its strategic location, environment, cultural heritage and educational facilities creating a choice quality life for all*” - Msunduzi Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2006/ 2007 to 2010/ 2011
Therefore, the promotion of Pietermaritzburg as a Legislative and arts capital will make it the city of choice for all.

1.2.3 Detailed Client Brief

The brief is for the design of an arts and crafts centre on any chosen site in Pietermaritzburg.

The choice of site and design should seek to:

- Promote cultural diversity through indigenous arts and crafts.
- Integrate indigenous elements with the contemporary.
- Display the identity of the city which all people can relate.
- Propose current and future interventions which would contribute the Pietermaritzburg as the Art capital of choice.

2.1 Site Selection and Discussions

The Research identified the selection of the site is based on the following:

- 1 -The site should be in or close to the city.
 - It should be in an urban environment
 - Or it can be in a semi urban environment where a meaningful connection can be established with the inner city
- 2 - It should be located on or near visually prominent landmarks.
- 3 - The site should have historical significance to the community or it should be located close to historical or cultural landmarks.
- 4 - The site should be accessible to the public at large through:
 - Selecting a site near learning /educational institutions in order to educate the public through the use of arts and crafts.
 - Various existing and future transport infrastructures and routes.
- 5 - The site should be located in such a place that would allow for it to connect to other precincts in the city in such a way that it can unify the urban space which will also help unite the community.

In addition, as per the research document, a preliminary schedule of accommodation was discussed which was informed by both the case and precedent studies of the research.

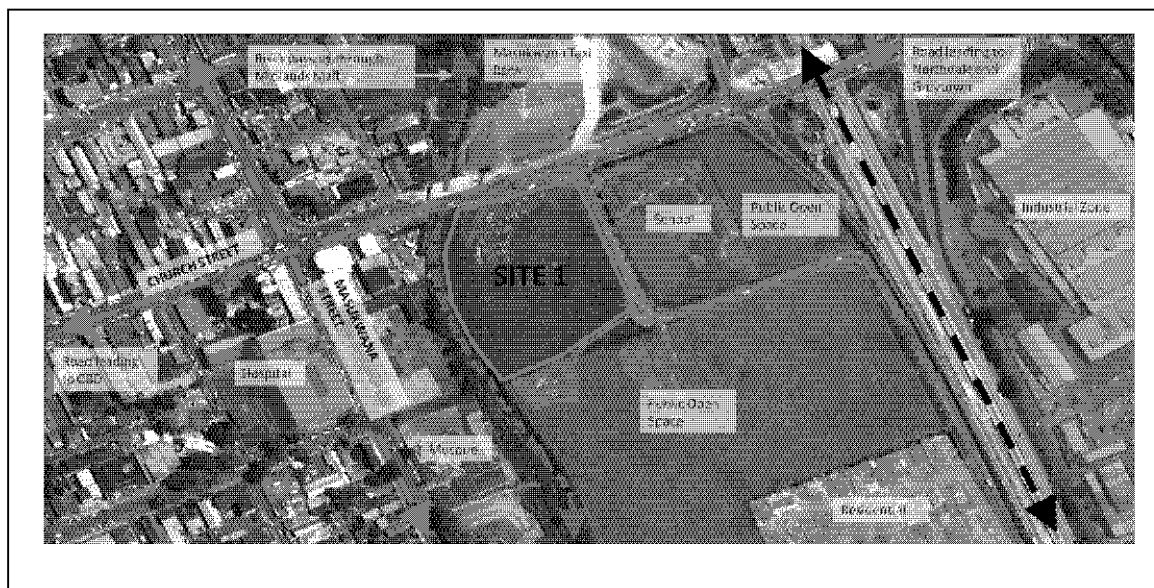
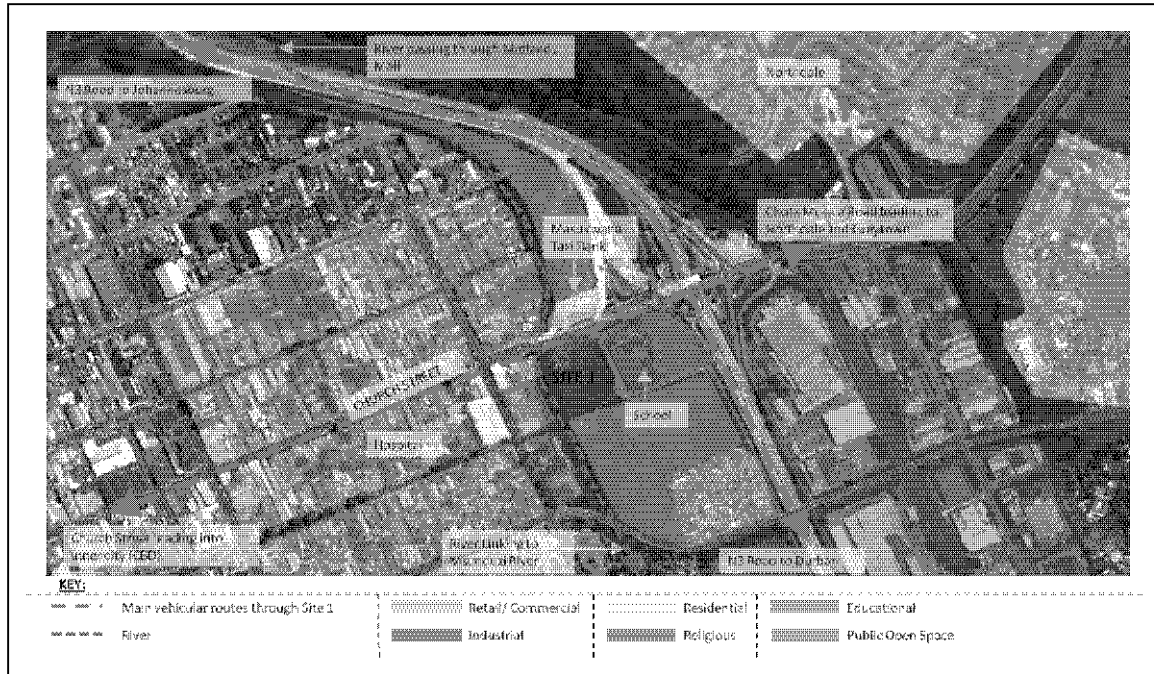
The analysis of both precedent and case studies has informed the selection of spaces and services that should be provided for the Arts and Crafts Centre.

The schedule of accommodation is as follows:

- 1 Artist residency
 - Artist living quarters (Rotational process which allows well established artists to interact with the less established).
- 2 Exhibition/gallery
- 3 Markets and restaurant
- 4 Museum component
- 5 Indoor/outdoor performance space
- 6 Educational component
 - Library and media centre.
 - Training studios for art, craft, music, dance and literature.
- 7 Formal component such as conference hall and seminar rooms.

Therefore, through the collection of this information, 3 site options were selected based on the site criteria and the size of the site with regards to catering for the functions required for and Arts and Crafts Centre.

2.1.1 Site One



The advantages of the site are as follows:

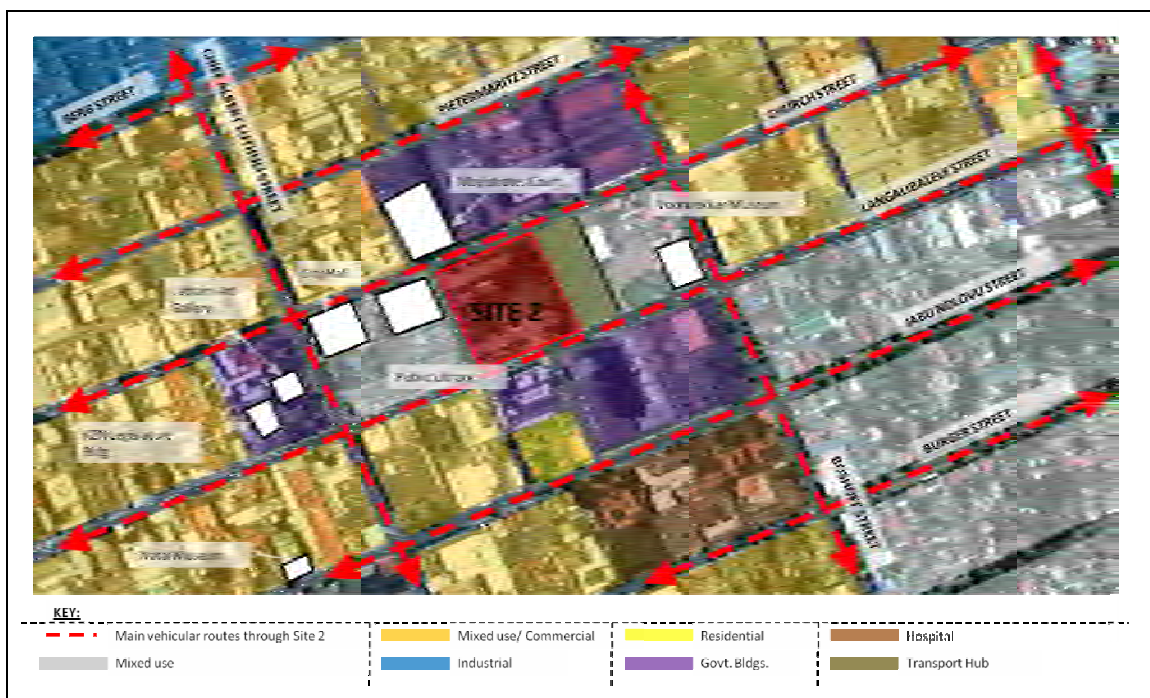
- It is located on Church Street which makes it a prominent site as a gateway into the city.
- It is located opposite a Taxi Rank which makes it accessible to the public.

- It is close to residential areas which allow it to appeal and be accessible to a greater community.
- It is located close to a school which allows for learning initiatives to exist between the ACC and the school.
- It is located next to a river.

The disadvantages of the site are as follows:

- Its distance from the CBD, however, Church Street allows for a visual connection and the street is a transport route.
- Its distance from other cultural landmarks in the city, however, the allocation of cultural landmarks in the city is not structured; therefore, the ACC could become a gateway to cultural landmarks in the city.

2.1.2 Site Two





The advantages of the site are as follows:

- It is bordered by both Church and Langalibalele Street which are the busiest streets in the CBD.
- It is located adjacent to a Taxi Rank which makes it accessible to the public.
- It is close to other cultural buildings in the city.
- It is located on a historically significant site- Freedom Square (formerly Market Square).
- It is located in the centre of the CBD which would prove to be a better site to test the issues of contemporary architecture in South Africa.
- It is located in close proximity to the Tatham Art Gallery which would allow for a closer interaction between the ACC and the gallery.
- The proposal for the ACC could allow the building to interact with Freedom Square as the Taxi rank makes no attempt to connect with the square.

The disadvantages of the site are as follows:

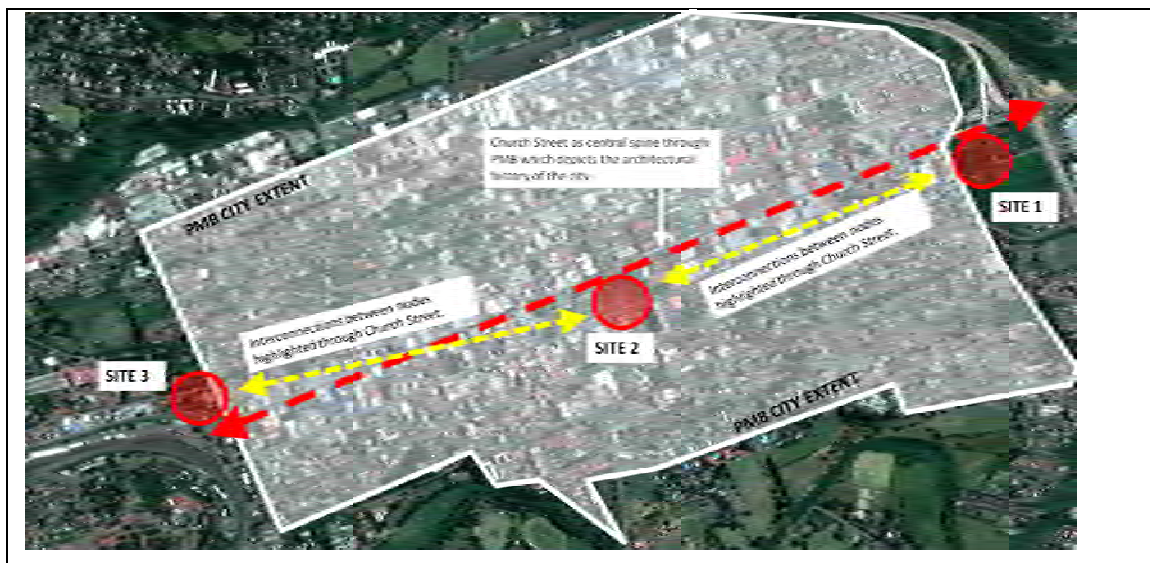
- It is located in an area which seems to be an office/ Government precinct which means that the site could be better used as a remembrance park (similar to Freedom Park in Pretoria).
- Although the area has many cultural facilities, they seem to be dispersed across the area; therefore, the location of an ACC could simply contribute to the un-organization.

- It close to residential communities.
- It is the South West gateway into the city, located at the beginning of Church Street.
- It is in a historic area that was once dominated by Indian trading shops which specializes in hand crafted items.

The disadvantages of the site are as follows:

- Its distance from the CBD, however, Church Street allows for a visual connection and the street is a transport route.
- Its distance from other cultural landmarks in the city, however, the allocation of cultural landmarks in the city is not structured; therefore, the ACC could become a gateway to cultural landmarks in the city.

2.1.4 Conclusion



Site two was selected for the Arts and Crafts centre (ACC) as it is located in the heart of the city and the functions and buildings that surround could be harnessed to add more importance to the Arts and Crafts centre as a tool that enhances the identity of the city.

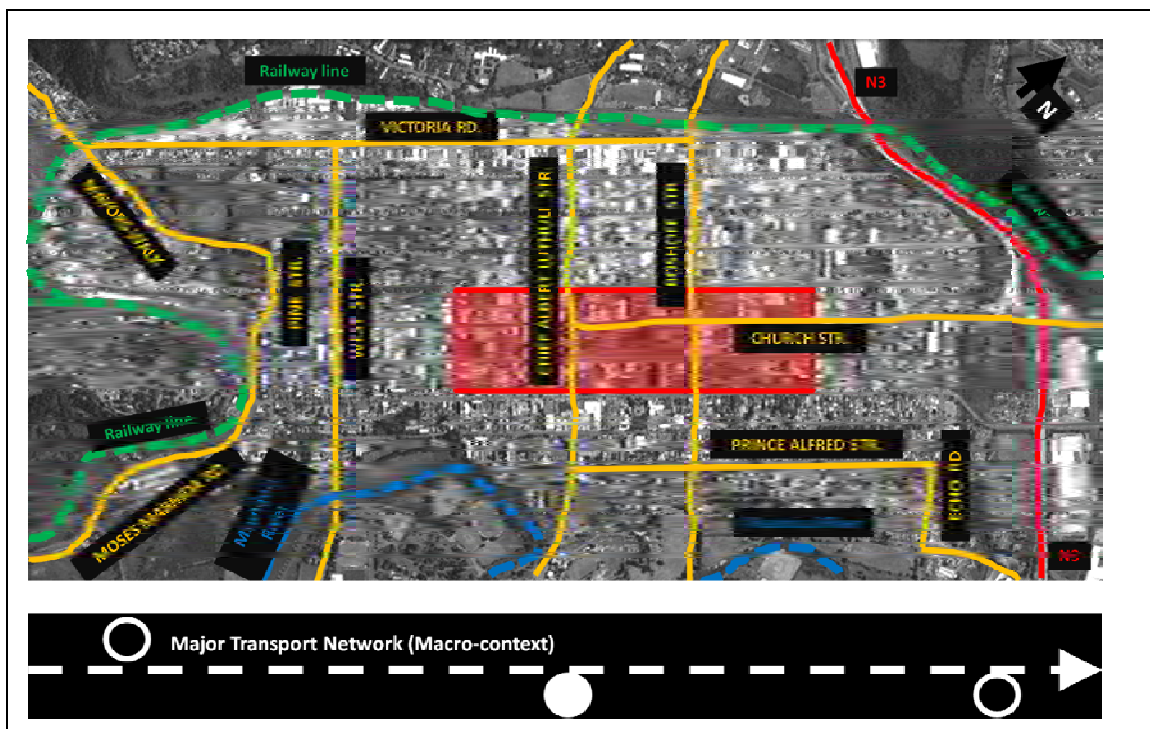
“The face of the city is a subtle blend of old and new, of east and west, of European and African” (Pietermaritzburg City Council, 1986; vi).

Pietermaritzburg represents a unique architectural mix of Voortrekker, British and Indian influence in the Africa. Therefore, the selection of Pietermaritzburg as the city of choice for the ACC is due to its rich history which will inform the architectural identity. Regardless of the site chosen, three potential precincts have been identified which are at the start, middle and end of Church Street which symbolically represent the past, present and future. These elements are vital in establishing a South African architectural identity.

2.2 Historical Background of Selected Site.

Site Two is located in what used to be known as Market Square. Market Square was used by the Dutch settlers in the 1800's to park their wagons as they went about their shopping. The site was surrounded by retail shop and outlets where farmers could buy products and goods. Nowadays, the site is known as Freedom Square and it is a public park that is surrounded by municipal offices and other civic buildings.

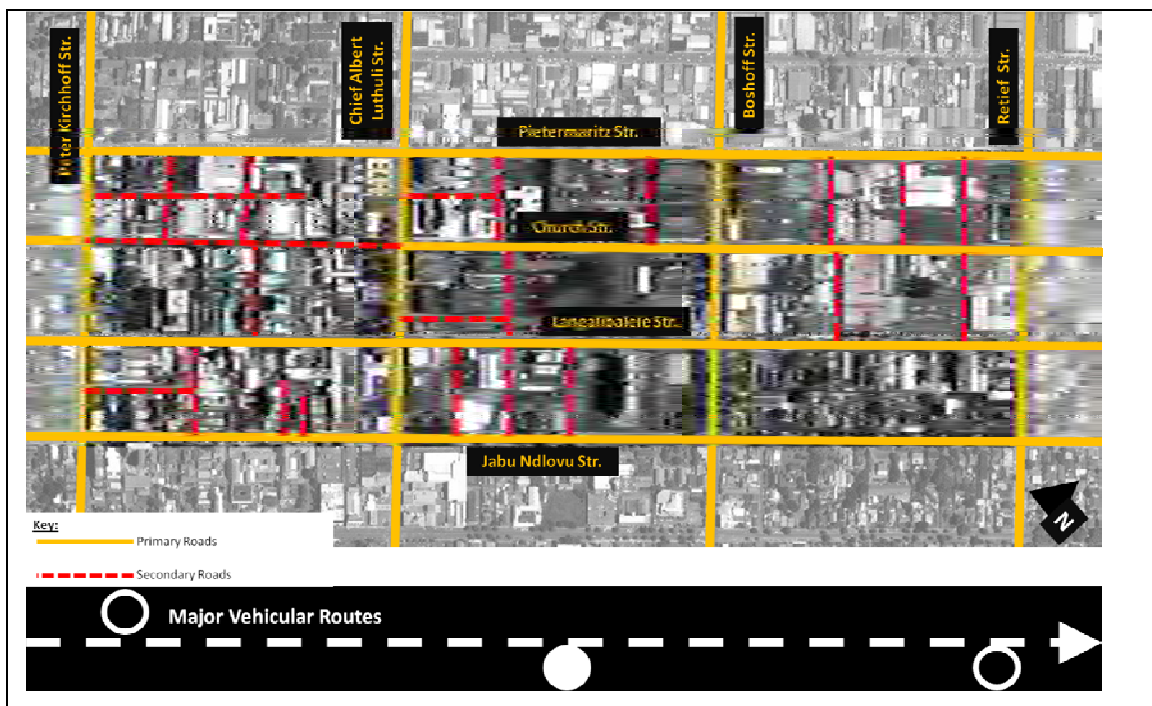
2.3 Site/ Urban Analysis

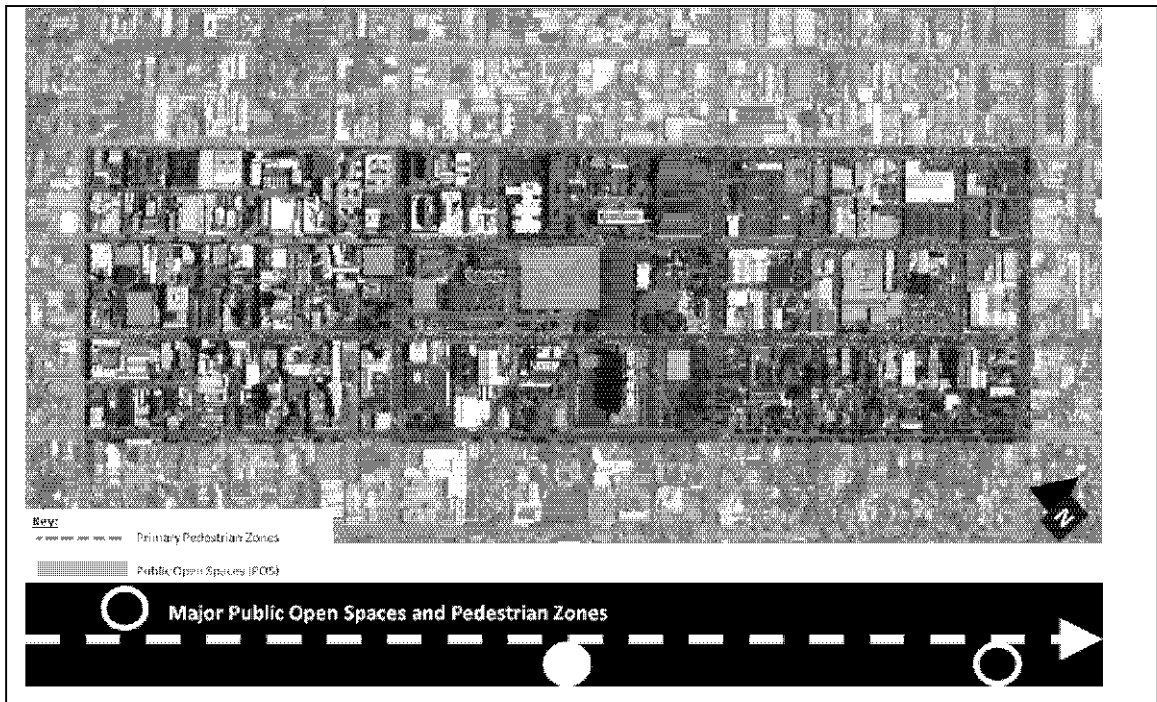
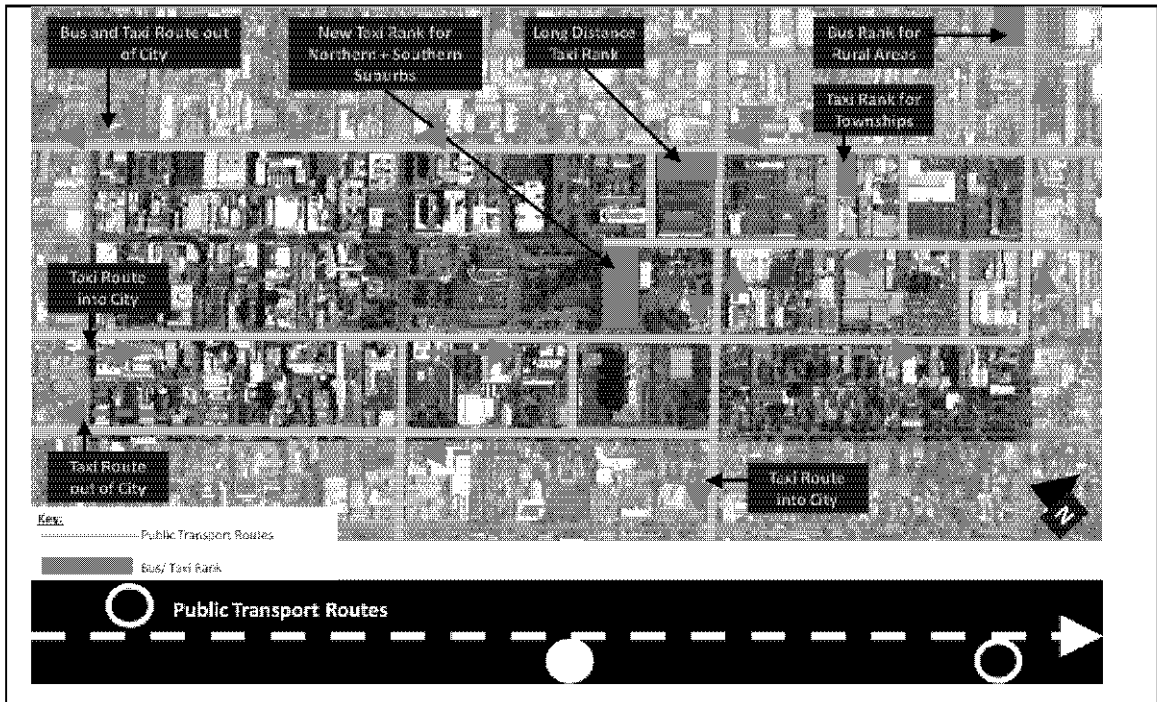


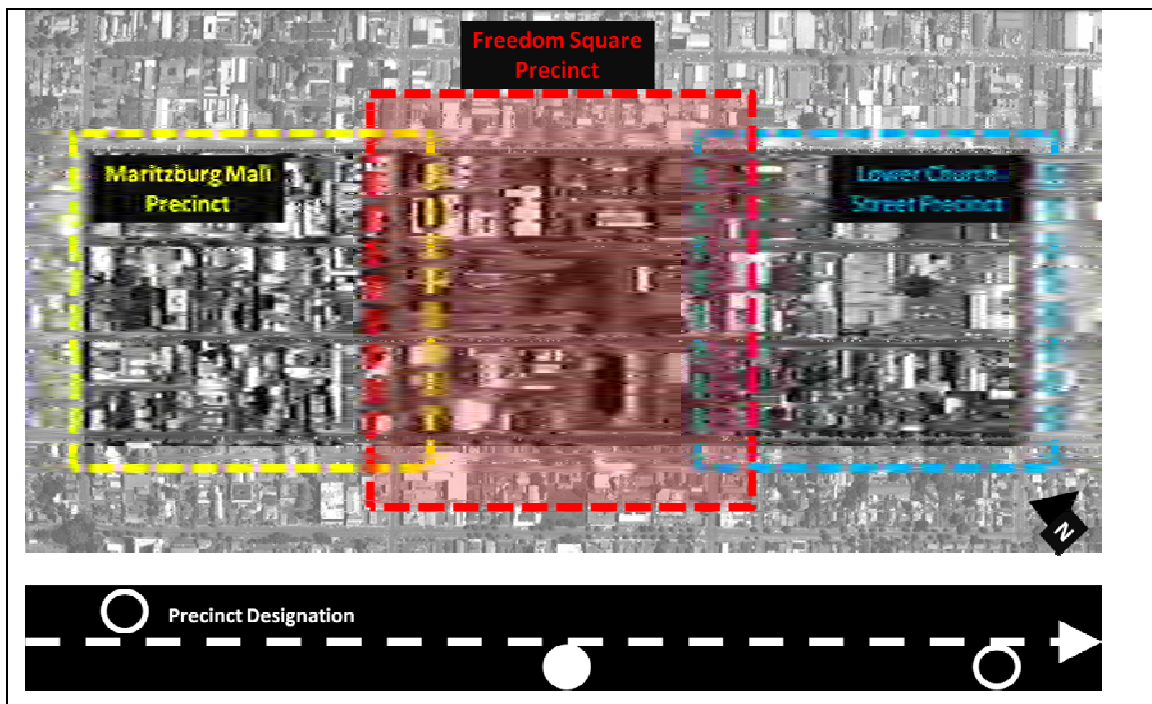
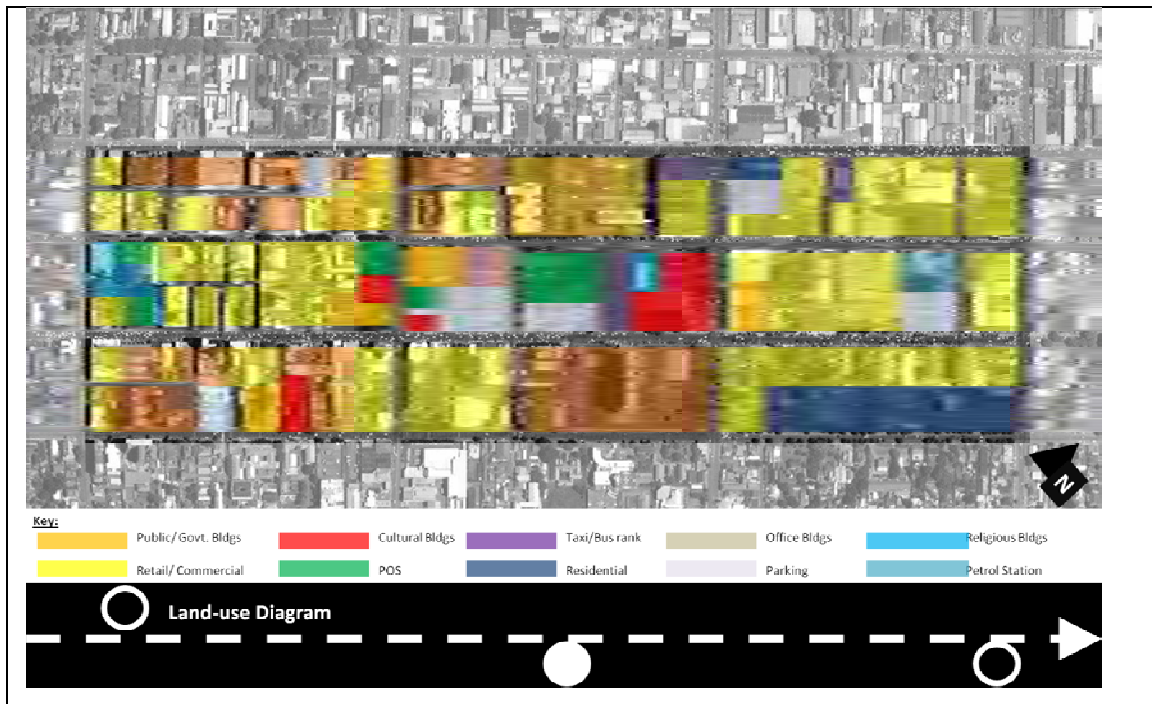
From an urban point of view, the city of Pietermaritzburg is flanked by two features, firstly, the railway line, which surrounds the northern part of the city. Secondly, the city is flanked by the Msunduzi River on the southern edge of the city. In addition, on the eastern edge, the N3 road passes through the outskirts. These are important features of the city that seem to engulf the central business district.

Upon closer inspection on the chosen urban design precinct, an in depth urban analysis was conducted in order to provide an understanding into the elements that should be taken into consideration when designing an ACC and also establish the identity of Pietermaritzburg.

The Analysis is as follows:

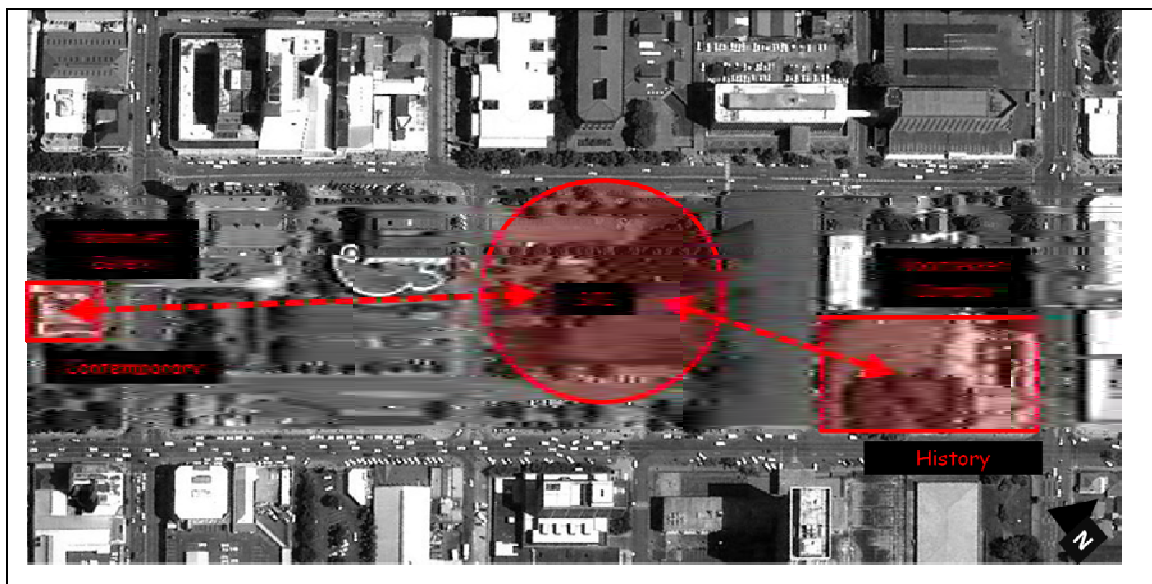
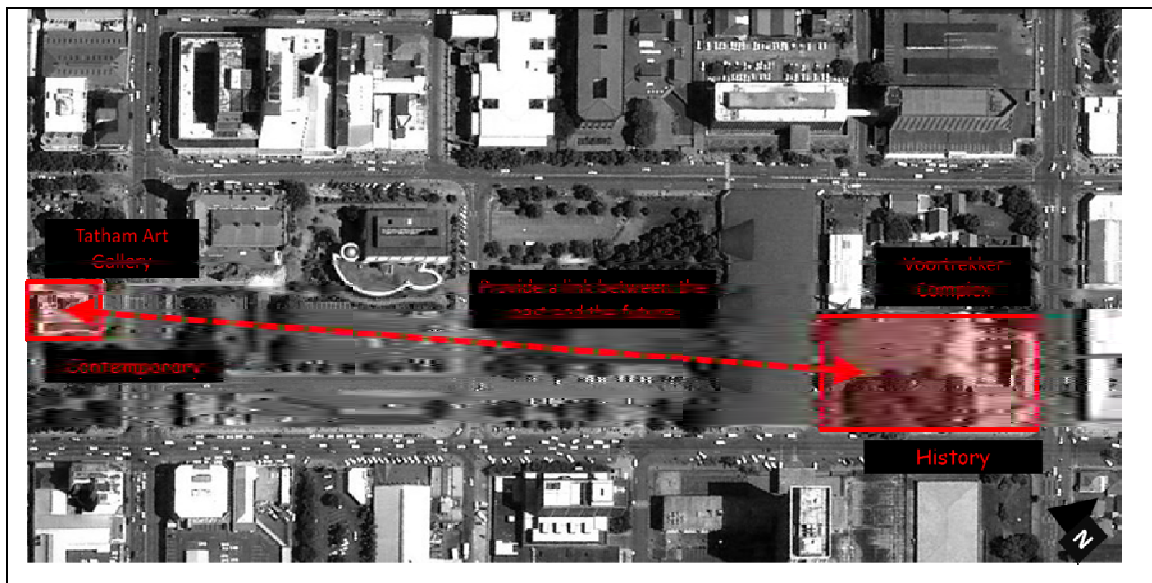




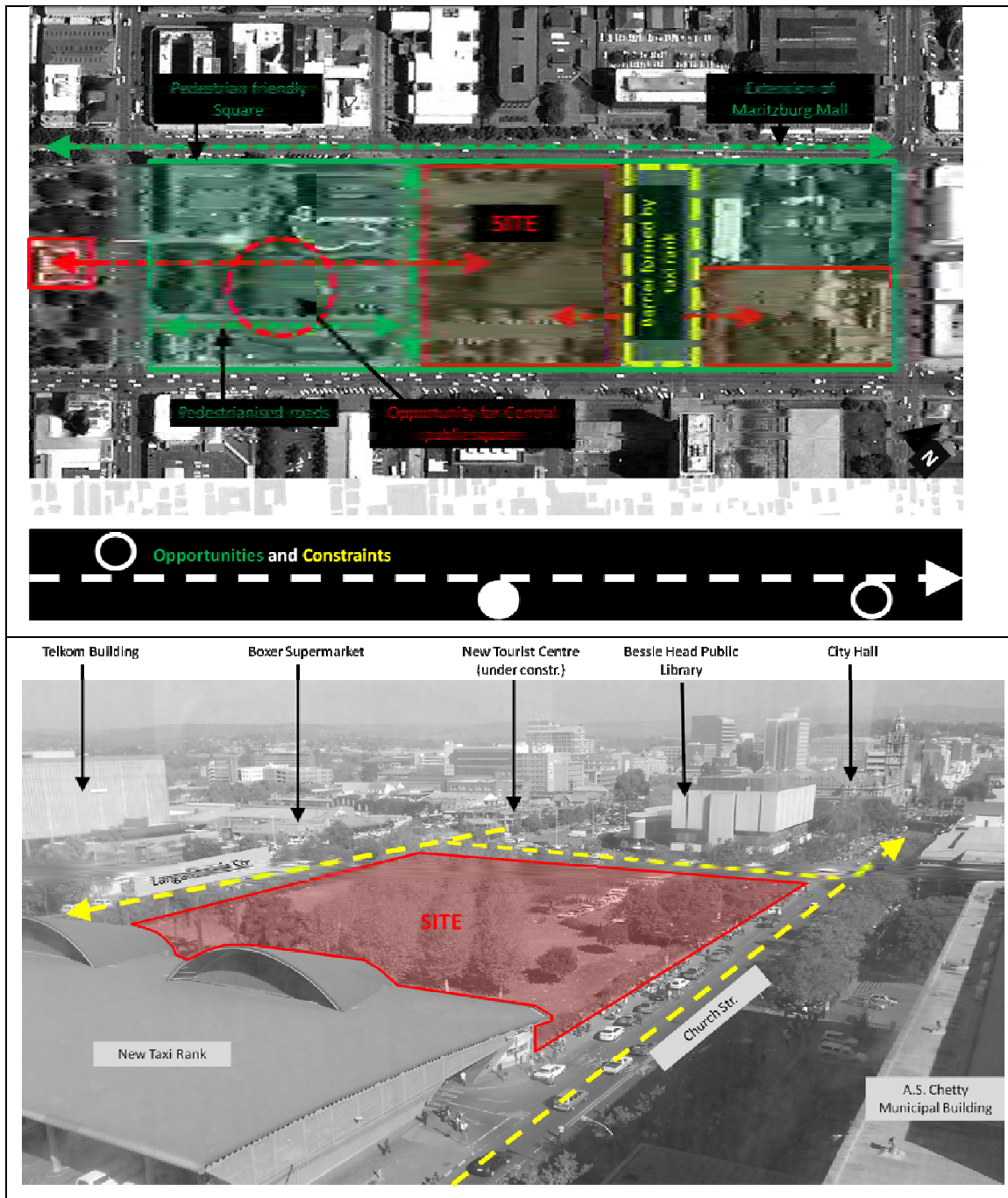


The above urban analysis provides contextual understanding of the city which starts to inform responses to the site.

The site analysis is as follows:



The two images above seem to highlight the importance in the location of the site, between the Tatham Art Gallery, which focuses on contemporary art and the Voortrekker Museum which focuses on the history of arts and culture in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Therefore, the site is located in the middle of these two landmarks. The ACC should seek to become a bridge between the contemporary and historical elements of art and crafts.

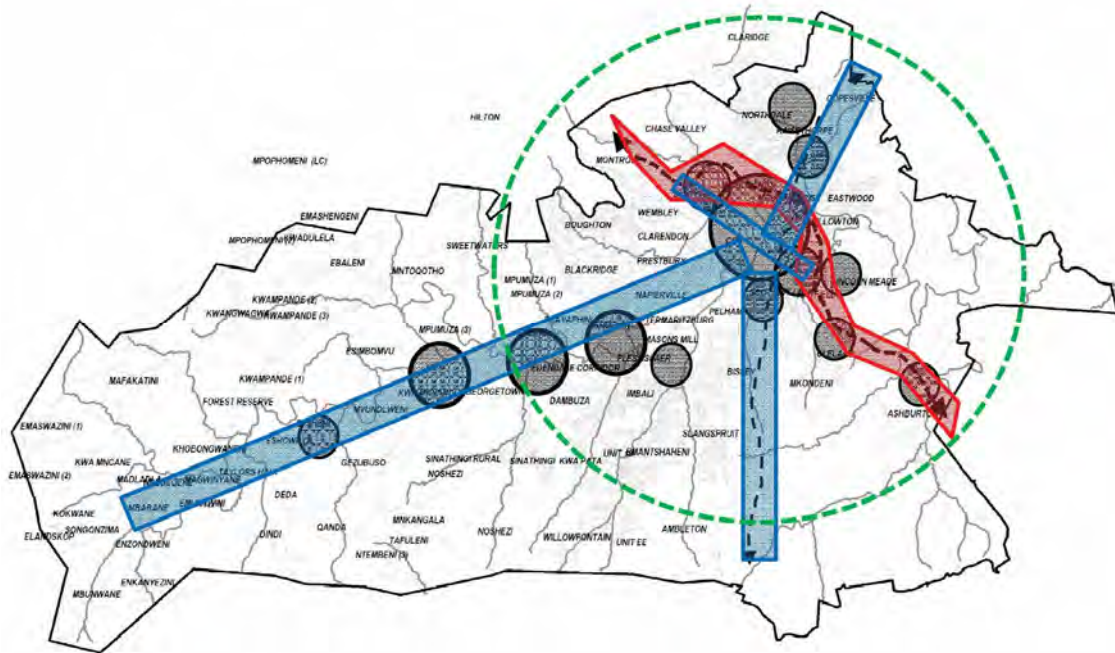


2.4 Conclusion

Therefore, it can be said that in order to establish an architectural identity for the city of Pietermaritzburg, an understanding into the existing patterns of the city from an urban perspective, inform how the site and the ACC should respond to all members of the city and not just the surrounding community.

3.1 Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

3.1.1 Urban Design Concept Development



The concept for the urban design was derived from the Msunduzi Municipality Spatial Development Framework (SDF), which highlighted the main nodes and routes of accessibility into and around the city. The SDF refers to the routes as ring roads, which are to be introduced as a means of reducing vehicular traffic into the city, at the same time; the ring roads also connect the outskirts of the city. These nodes inspired the concept of beadwork that is connected by these routes which form a string for the beads.

Therefore, the same beadwork concept was adapted for the central business district as follows:



The urban design concept refers to the terms, “macro-beads” which is derived from the linkage and accessibility concept of the SDF. The macro beads are based on the concept of connecting the city’s cultural landmarks. The Msunduzi River is used as an important string that connects the six beads to the city. At the same time, Church Street is used as a historical road that is used to connect the three site selections from the previous chapter.

The concept of the macro beads seeks to also enhance the city by allowing for potential growth along the water’s edge of the city. This element could enhance the image and identity of the city.

The 6 beads highlighted in the urban design are as follows:

- The Railway station, as a historical landmark in South Africa as it marks the beginning of Mahatma Gandhi’s fight for Human rights and equality. The Railway Station was constructed in the 1860’s as a means of connecting Durban to the northern Natal coalfields. Therefore, although the station and railway lines were constructed for industrial purposes, it could provide alternative transport link to Durban and other cities to reduce the amount of vehicular congestion between Pietermaritzburg and Durban.

- The Camps Drift Waterfront Development: According to the Msunduzi Municipality Spatial development Framework (SDF), the Camps drift Waterfront Development is proposed as a commercial component that seeks to make a connection with the water's edge (refer to SDF diagram). In addition, the development would be located alongside the start of the Dusi Canoe Marathon.
- The PMB Sports Precinct includes the Harry Gwala Stadium, the PMB Cricket Oval and a series of sports fields located around the Alexandra Park area. In addition, every Sunday, there is a popular arts and crafts market in Alexandra Park. Therefore, the Sports Precinct should be kept and maintained as a cultural landmark that unites all facets of society whilst providing public opens spaces along the Msunduzi River.
- Located at the intersection between Church Street and the N3 Toll Road, the proposed cultural centre has the potential to become the gateway into the Pietermaritzburg CBD. At the same time, the Cultural centre should serve to highlight the rich culture and diversity of Pietermaritzburg.
- The Midlands Mall is located alongside the N3 and it is the prime shopping centre in Pietermaritzburg. At the same time, the area between the Royal Show grounds and the Mall is dominated by commercial
- The Royal Agricultural Showground's (RAS) represent the heart and soul of Arts and Crafts in Pietermaritzburg. The Royal show, which occurs annually, started in 1851 and it hosts merchants, businessmen and farmers who use the show as a platform to exhibit their goods to the public. The Show is the largest mixed exhibition incorporating a fully-fledged agricultural component on the continent of Africa. Not only does this include the exposition of some of the country's finest livestock and agricultural equipment but also a range of ancillary activities and displays covering the entire industrial, commercial and service sectors within the province.

3.1.2 Architectural Design Concept Development

The concept for the design of the ACC is called Solve for Pattern. This concept was derived in 1959 by a poet and farmer called Wendell Berry, who believed that one

solution could be used to solve several problems. Similarly, indigenous Arts and crafts could be the solution required to solve several problems and issues of identity in the city.

“What will this place require us to do? Permit us to do? Help us to do?”- Wendell Berry- Farmer and Poet.

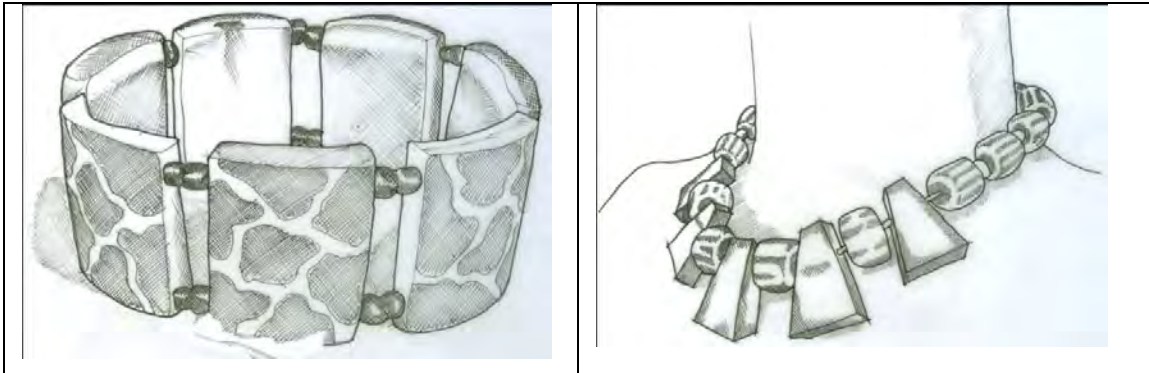
Indigenous arts and crafts can be used as a solution to solving various problems/ issues of identity that exist within the urban landscape. Social defragmentation can be threaded together through indigenous arts and crafts. Indigenous arts and crafts re-affirm the social identity whilst seeking to influence the architectural identity by promoting cultural diversity whilst responding accordingly to the natural environment. The solve for pattern concept seeks to promote social unity through the stitching together of existing arts and crafts centres which will lay the foundation towards sewing the future of South African architectural identity.

Arts and crafts is influenced local tradition and culture and it *“gives relevance and a sense of place to the crafts, ensuring that a South African style will continue to evolve”* - Sellschop, S. Craft South Africa.

Therefore indigenous arts and crafts can be used to provide a platform for cultural interaction whilst the indigenous element and use of indigenous knowledge provides a sense of place to contemporary architecture.

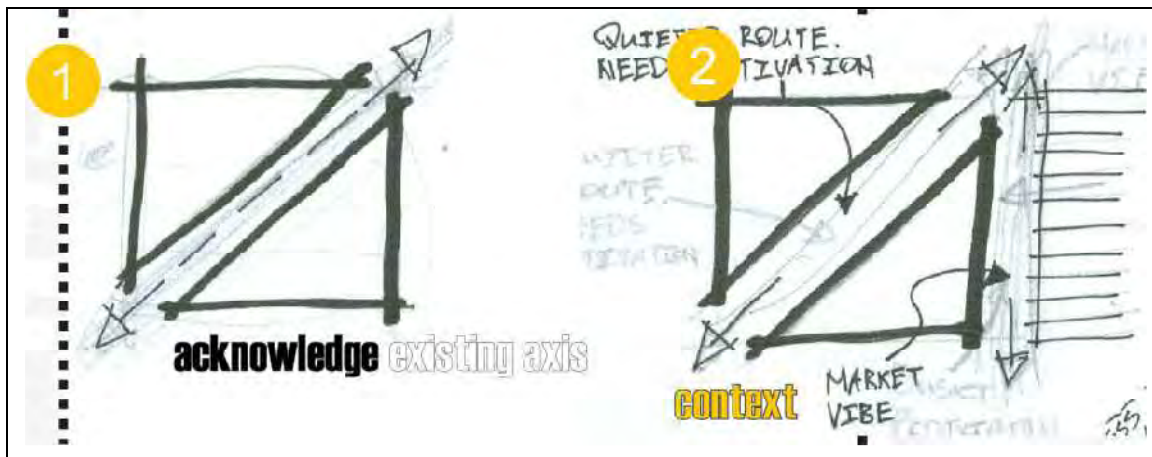
3.1.3 Patterns

With regards to solving for patterns, two types of patterns were used to assess the city and potential of the ACC. Existing city patterns and Indigenous Arts and Crafts Patterns were used to analyse the site.

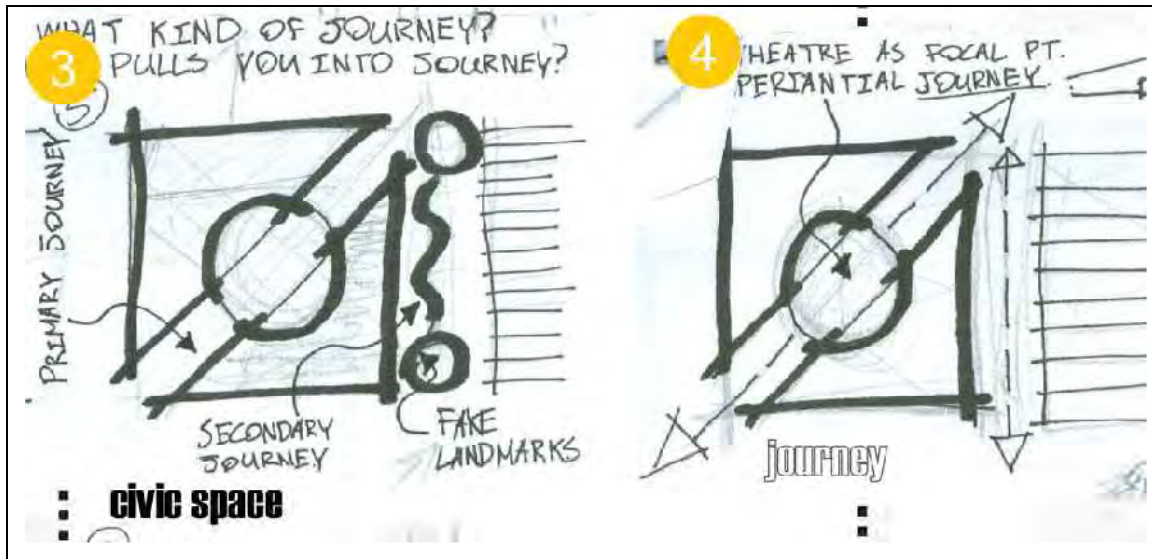


The patterns seen and used in indigenous arts and crafts can be used to generate architectural patterns which respond to the local community and identity.

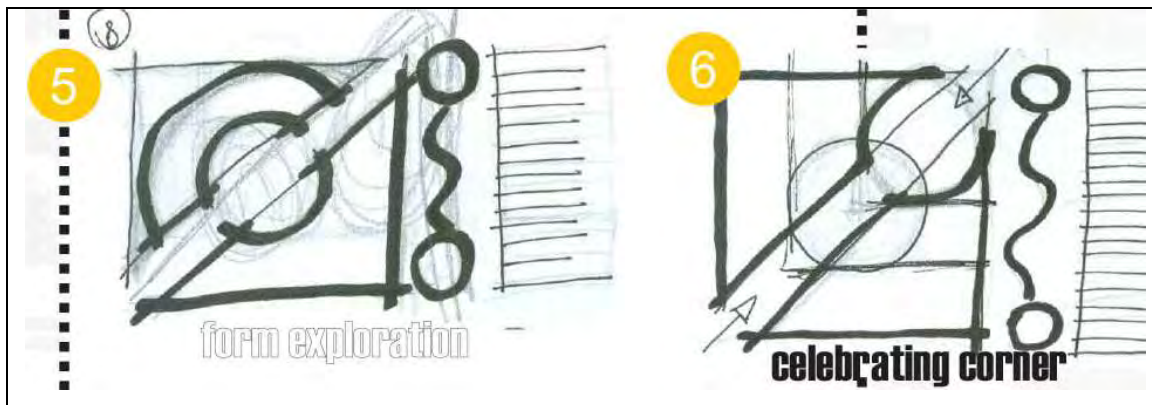
3.1.4 Conceptual Development



The first stage of the design involved acknowledging an existing route the cut through the site. Secondly, the taxi rank next to the site should be highlighted as an element that is part of the development of the site.

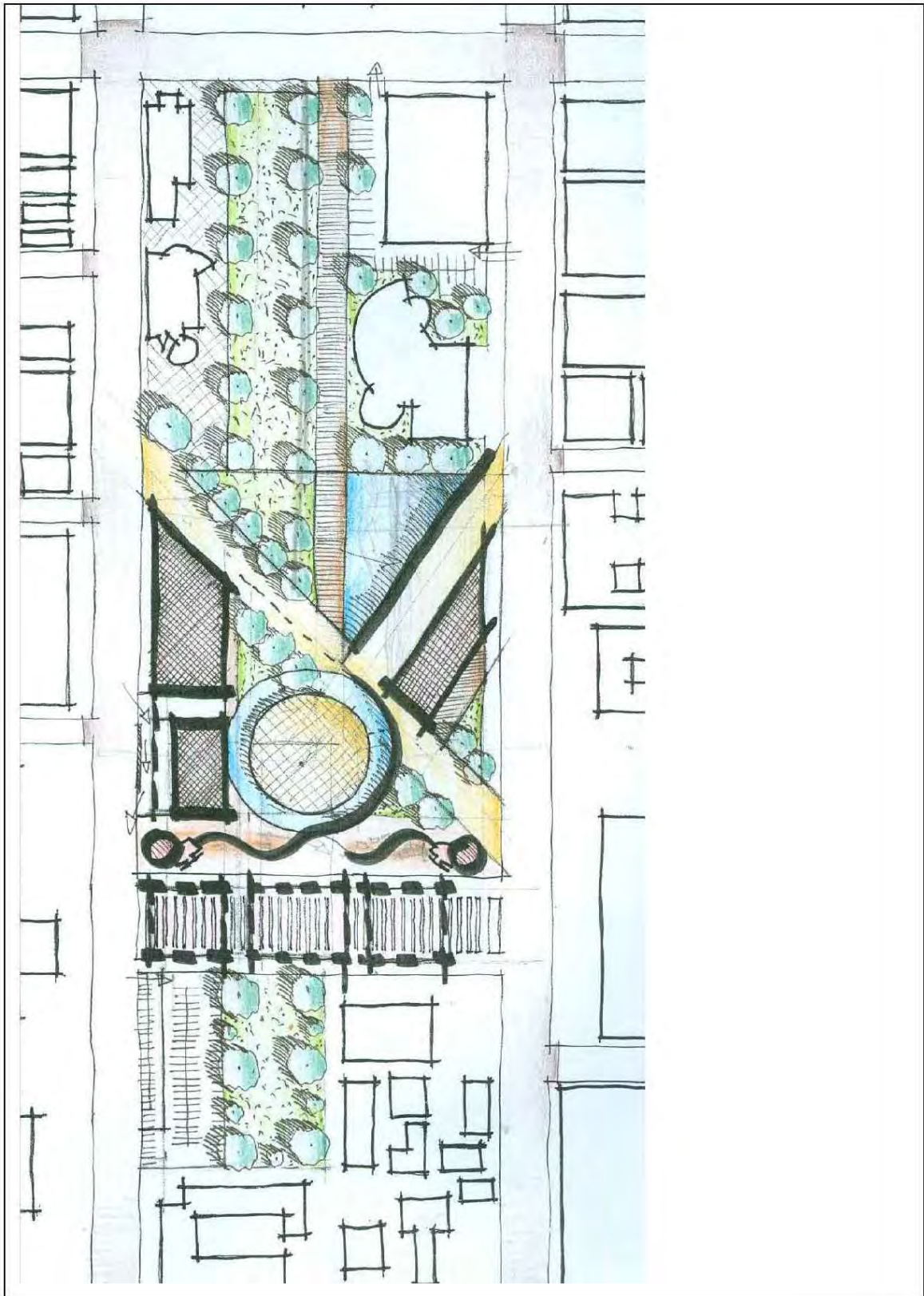


The amphitheatre space of the site needed to be located and also the experience of the space and route needed to be analysed.



In addition, form was also explored and the idea of celebrating the corner.

3.1.5 Preliminary Conceptual Sketch





VIEW FROM LOWER CHURCH STREET



VIEW FROM CARBINEERS GARDEN



VIEW FROM HERITAGE PARK



RENDERERS
INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: A Proposal for and Arts and Crafts Centre in Pitermaritzburg

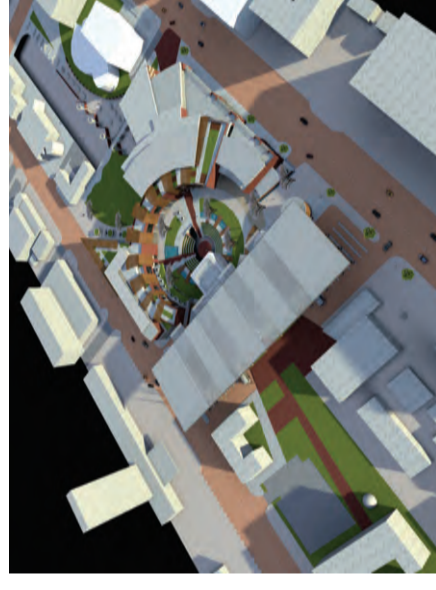
RENDERERS



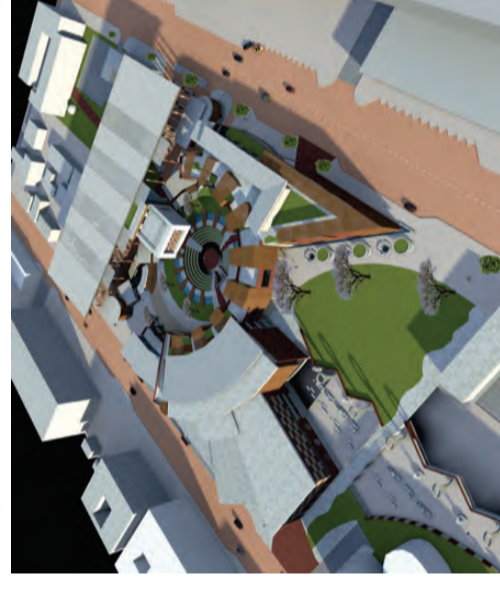
INDLU YAMADLOZI
ISHAHAAZI AND STORYTELLERS



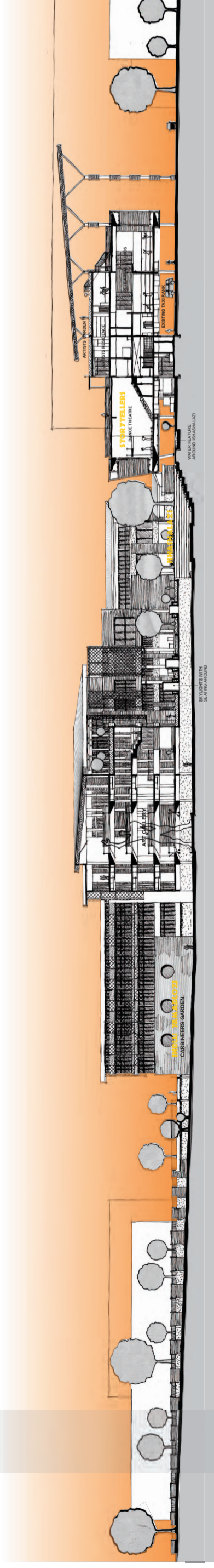
INDLU YAMADLOZI



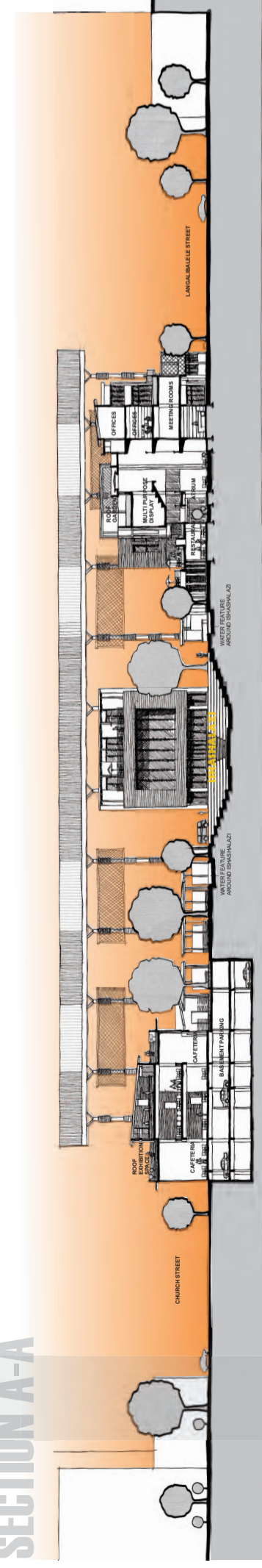
NORTH AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



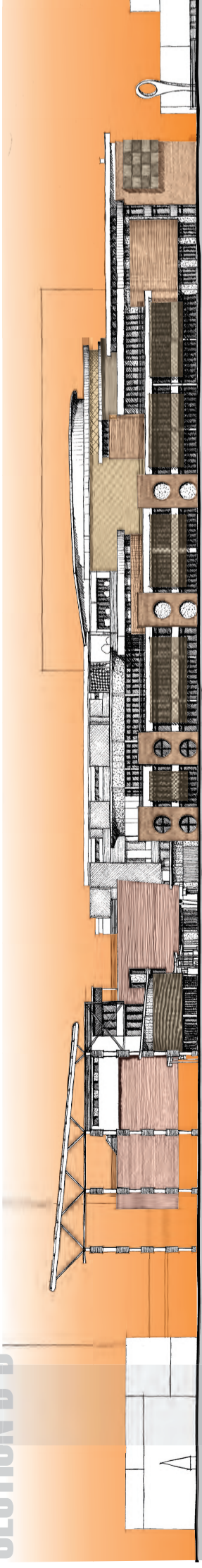
SOUTH AERIAL PERSPECTIVE



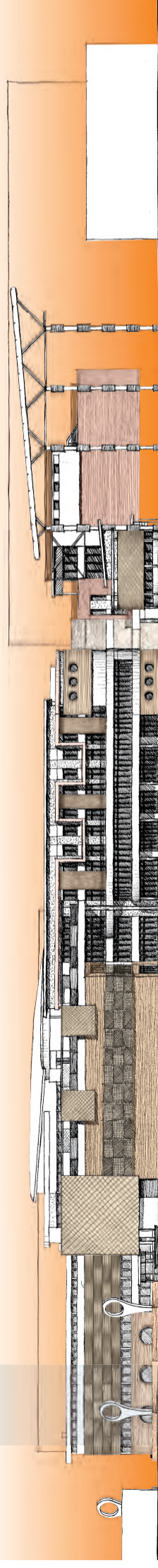
SECTION A-A



SECTION B-B

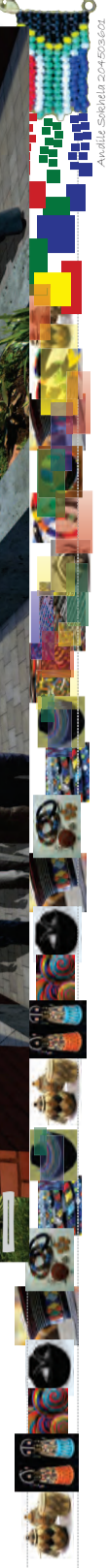


NORTH WEST ELEVATION

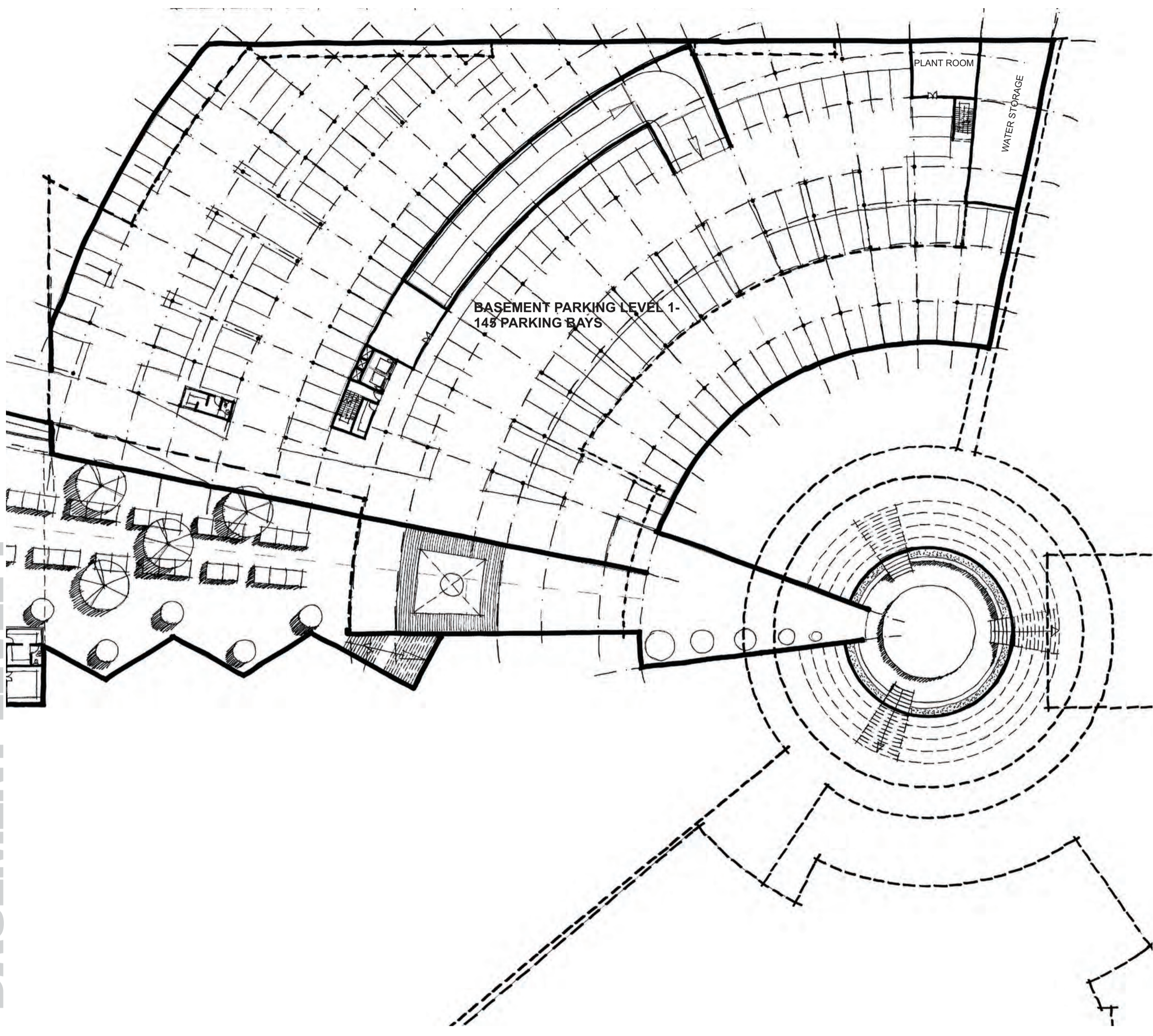


SOUTH EAST ELEVATION

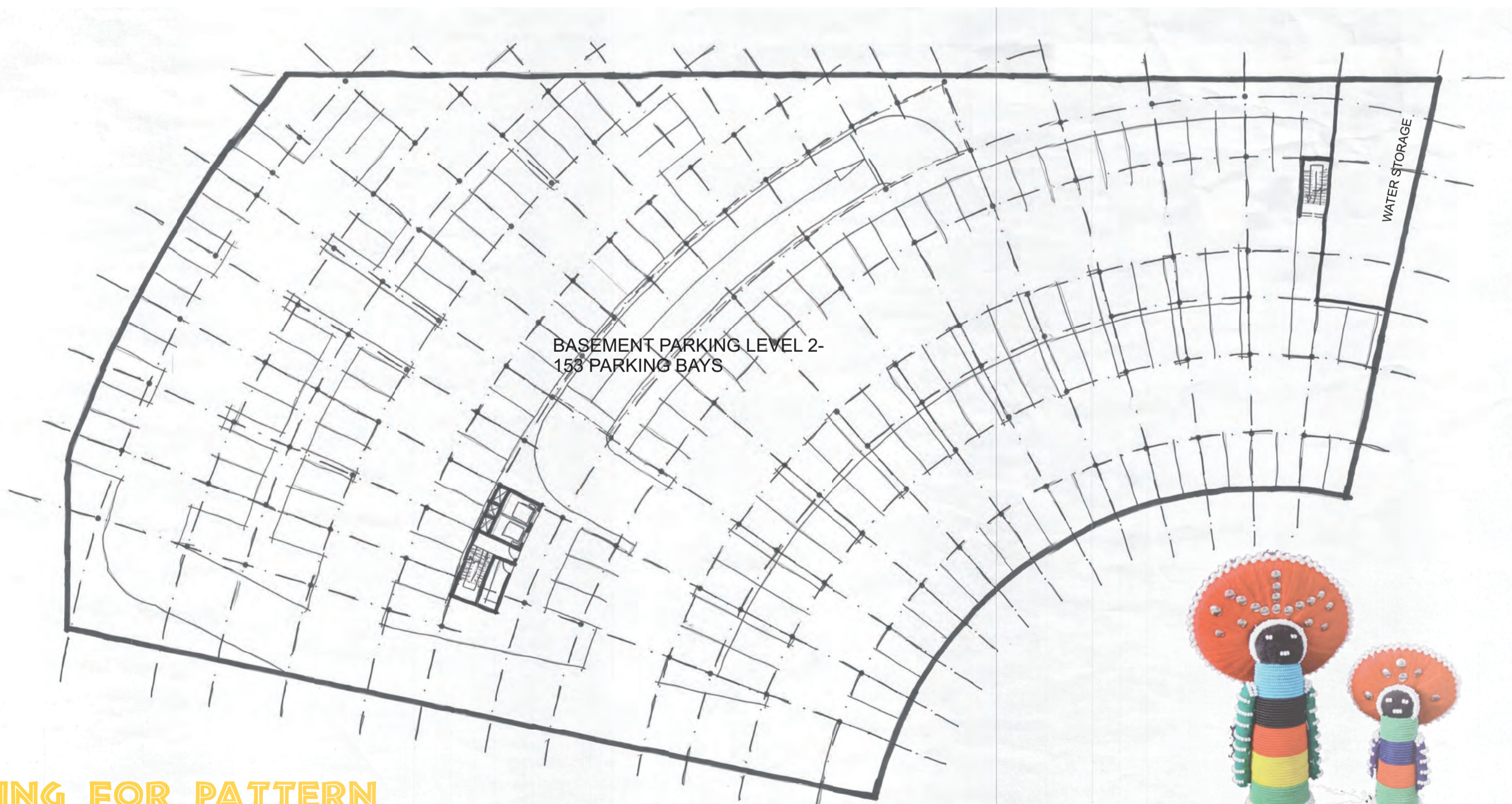
SOLVING FOR PATTERN
A Practice of Pattern and Craft in Contemporary African Architecture



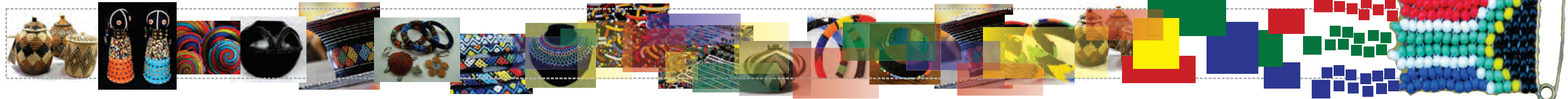
BASEMENT LEVEL 1



BASEMENT LEVEL 2



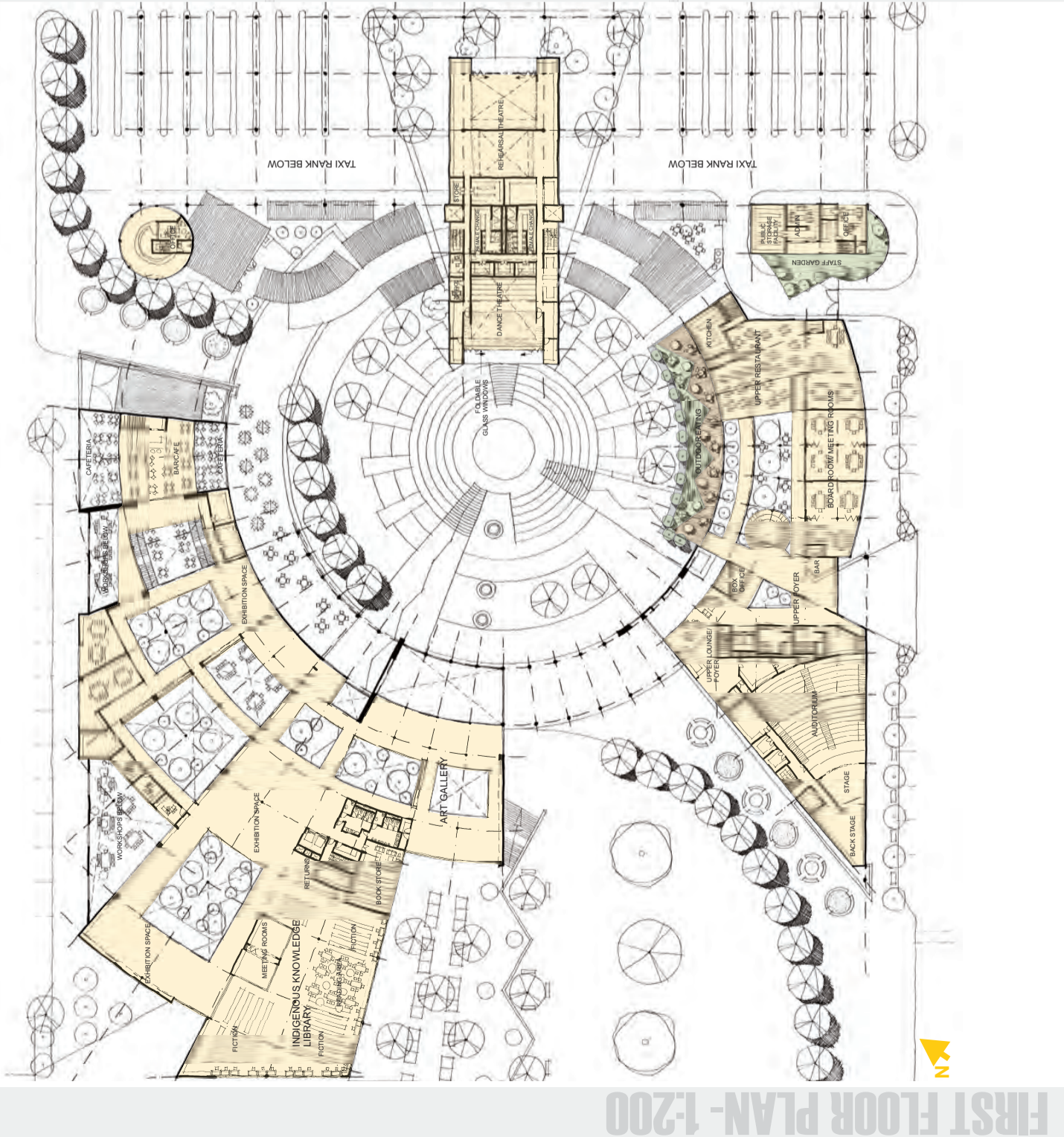
SOLVING FOR PATTERN
 A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg



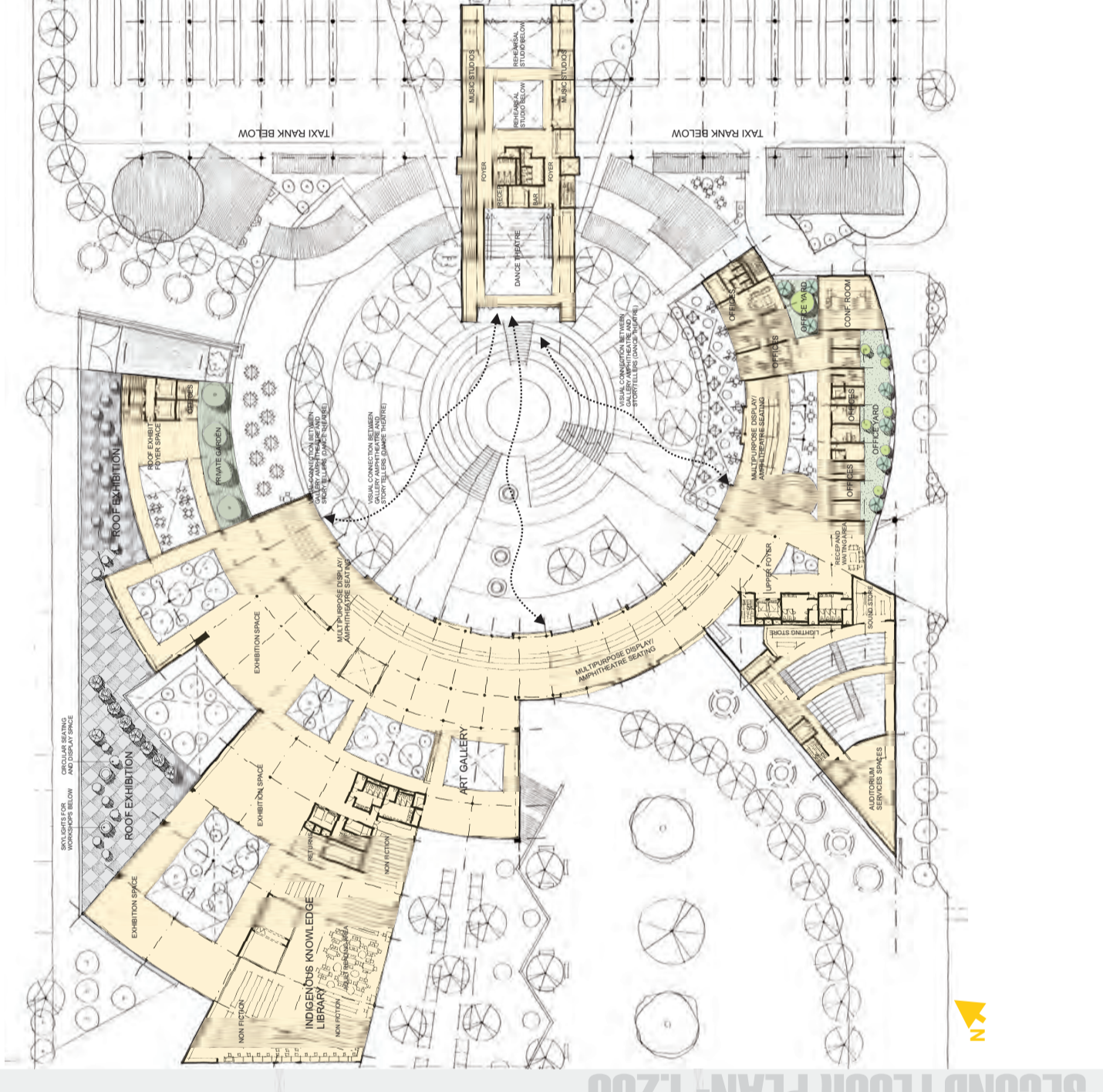
Andile Sokhela 204503601

7 LOWER FLOOR PLANS

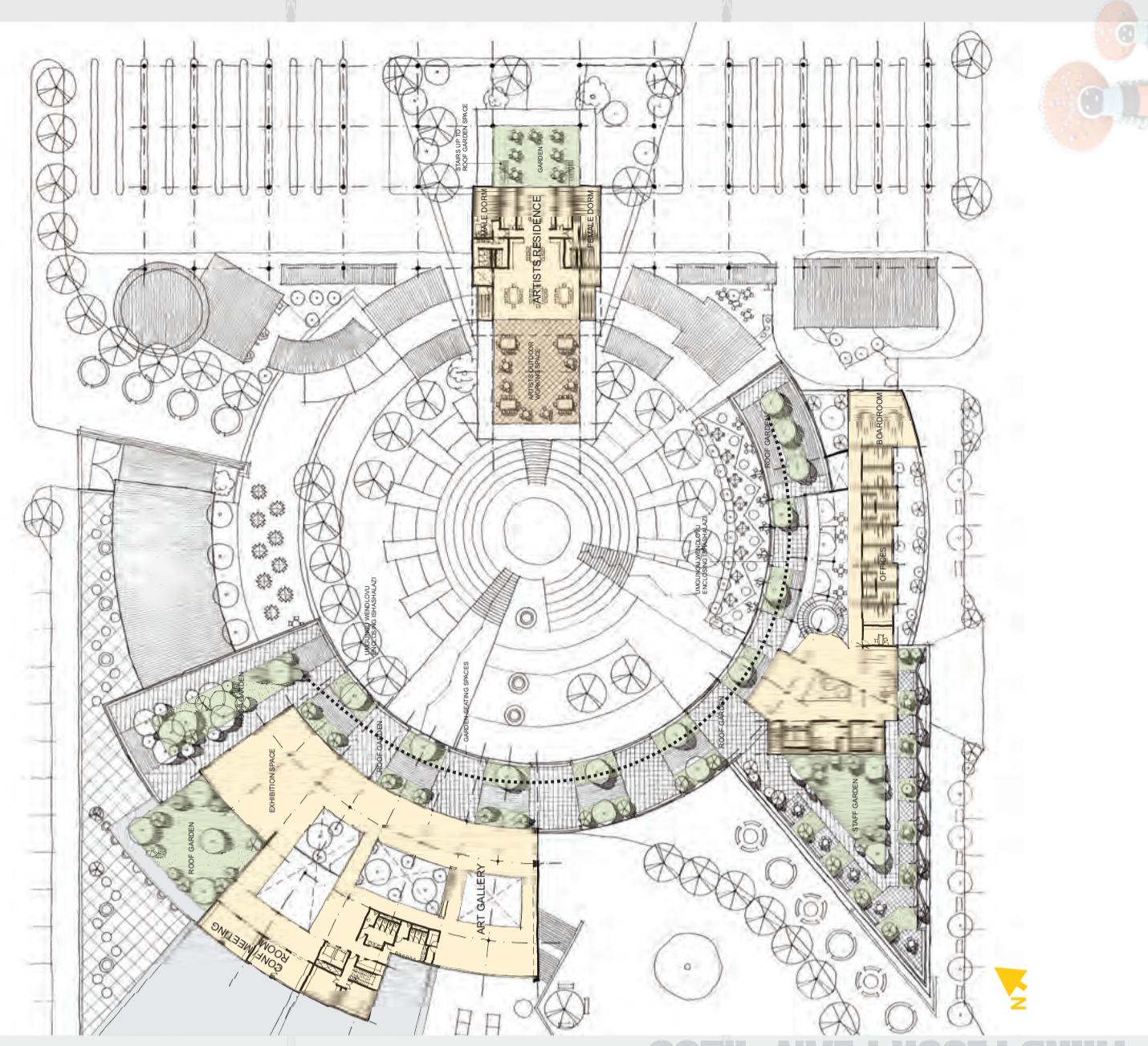
INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg



FIRST FLOOR PLAN-1:200



SECOND FLOOR PLAN-1:200

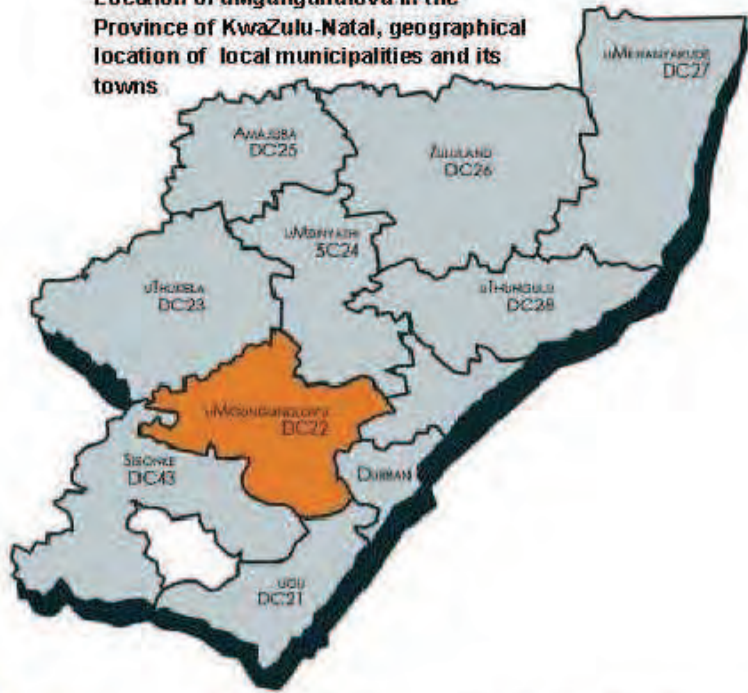


THIRD FLOOR PLAN-1:200

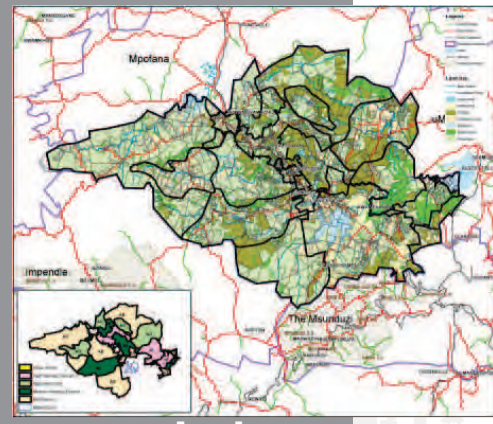
UMSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY

MACRO CONTEXT

Location of uMgungundlovu in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, geographical location of local municipalities and its towns.



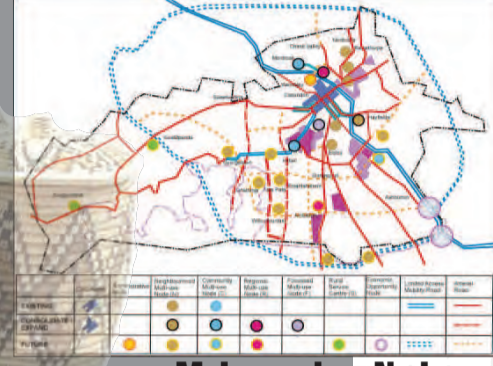
Local Municipalities



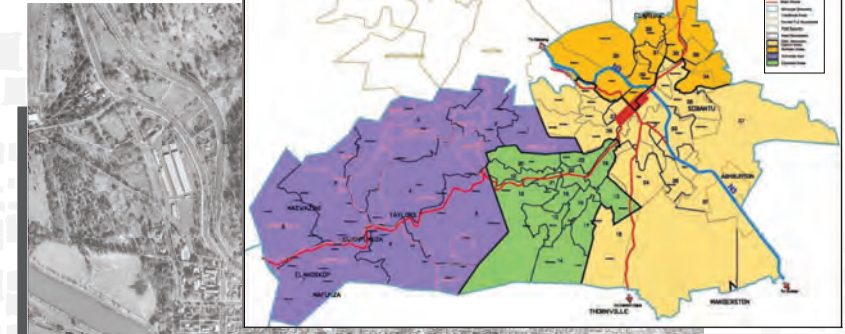
Land use



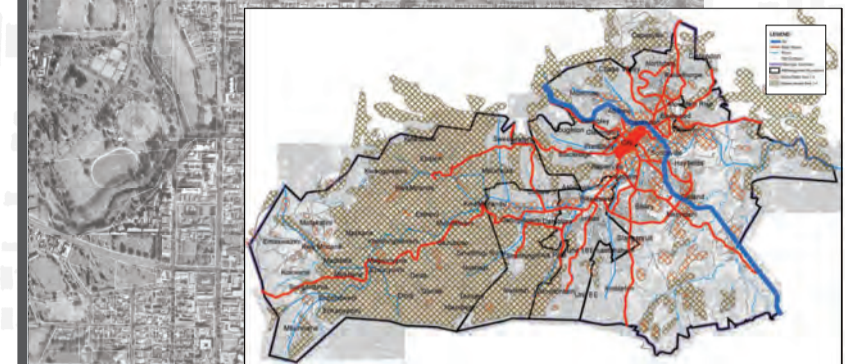
Spatial Development Framework



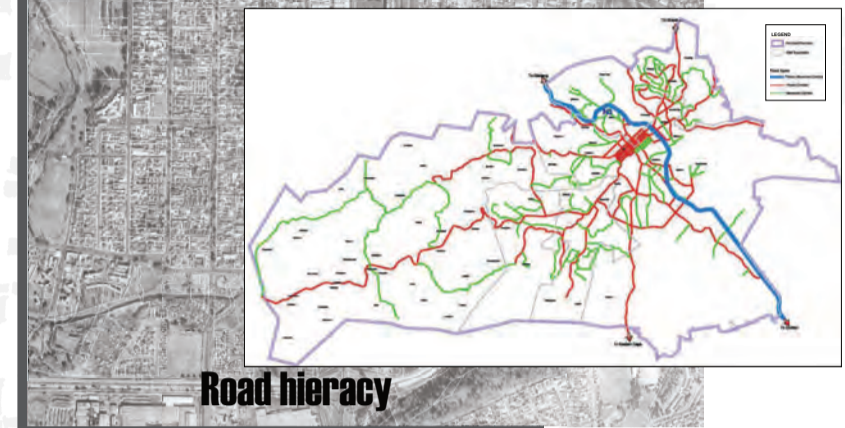
Main roads + Nodes



Contextual Map



Topography

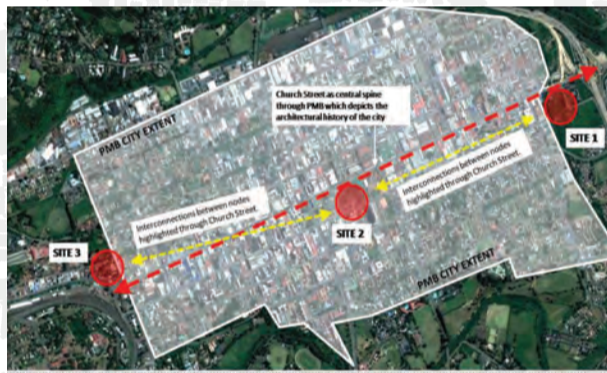


Road hierarchy

SITE CRITERIA

The site has to be;

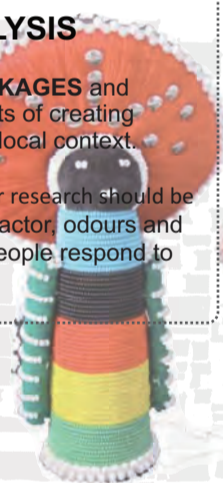
- in or close to the city
- urban/ semi urban environment
- **MEANINGFUL CONNECTION** can be established with the inner city
- located on or near visually **PROMINENT LANDMARKS**
- have historical significance to the community or it should be located close to **HISTORICAL OR CULTURAL LANDMARKS**
- **ACCESSIBLE** to the public
- near **LEARNING / EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS** in order to educate the public through the use of arts and crafts
- close to existing and future **TRANSPORT** infrastructures and routes
- allow for it to **CONNECT** to other precincts



ELEMENTS OF ANALYSIS

The analysis has focussed mainly on **LINKAGES** and **CONNECTIVITY** as these are vital aspects of creating spaces and buildings that respond to the local context.

Although these are physical elements, further research should be done on **SENSORY** elements, such as noise factor, odours and polluted areas as these also affect how people respond to spaces.



SITE INFORMATION

Located in City Centre zone, surrounded by Public Buildings
 Location - Corner of Church Street, Henrietta Street and Langalibalele Street.
 Site Area - 18 590 sqm
 Zoning - Civic Centre Sub Zone

SITE SELECTION



site 1



site 2



site 3



mail precinct



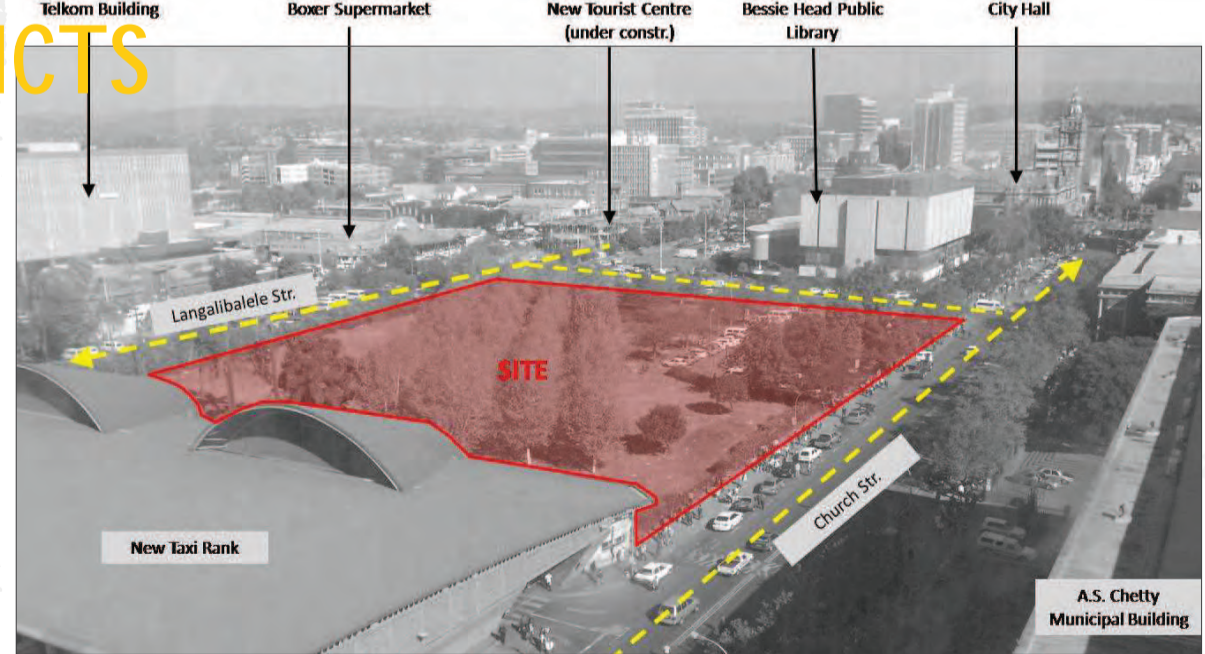
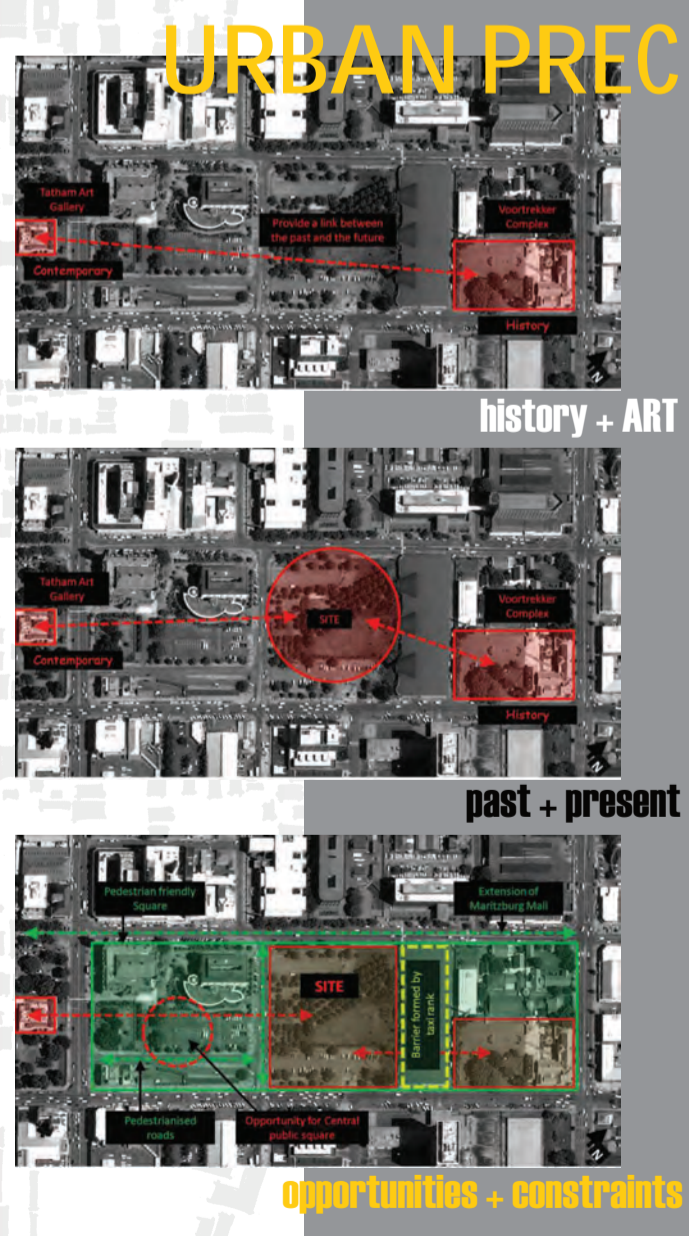
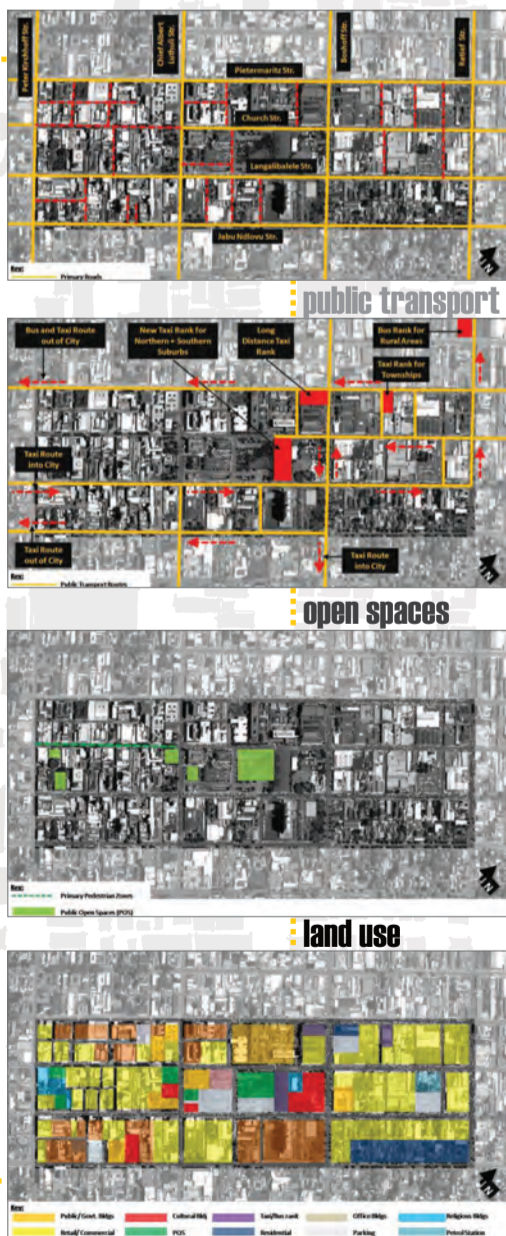
freedom square precinct



lower Church Street

SITE ANALYSIS

URBAN PRECINCTS



PMB IN PICTURES



SOLVING FOR PATTERN

A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg



SITE ANALYSIS

INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg

PIETERMARITZBURG

PROVINCIAL ANALYSIS

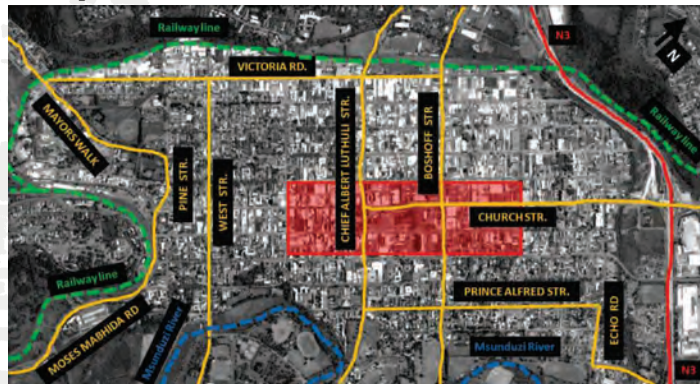
regarding transport linkages and social and economic opportunities

The Msunduzi Municipality SDP and IDP provide insight into future developments that should be taken into consideration.

- Railway System connecting Durban and Pietermaritzburg
- N3 Corridor highlighting development opportunities.
- Airport Regeneration (Oribi Airport)



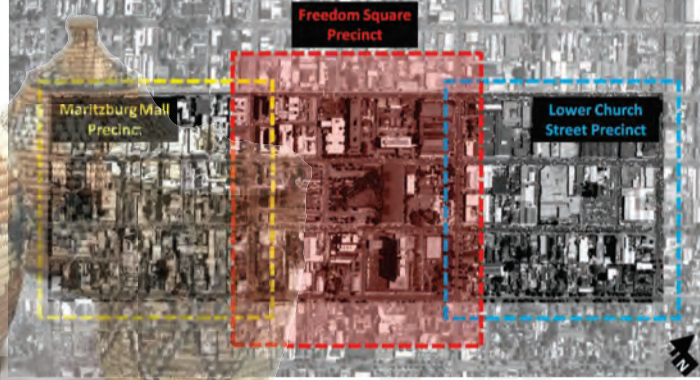
major transport network



urban design precinct



precinct designation



Msunduzi River



Vital natural THREAD connecting macro-context of the city

Jacaranda Trees



Natural feature that also enhances the PLACE and IDENTITY of the city

"KWA-NDONGA ZIBOMVU"



"place of the red bricks"



umgungundlovu

"uMgungu waNdllovu"
"city bordered by elephant tusks"

PIETERMARITZBURG- "the city of choice"

CITY NODES

1 - RAILWAY STATION

The Railway station is a **HISTORICAL LANDMARK IN SOUTH AFRICA** as it marks the beginning of Mahatma Gandhi's fight for Human rights and equality. The Railway Station was constructed in the 1860's as a means of connecting Durban to the northern Natal coalfields. therefore, although the station and railway lines were constructed for industrial purposes, it could provide **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT** link to Durban and other cities to reduce the amount of vehicular congestion between Pietermaritzburg and Durban.

2 - CAMPS DRIFT WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

According to the Msunduzi Municipality Spatial development Framework (SDF), the Campsdrift Waterfront Development is proposed as a commercial component that seeks to make a connection with the waters edge (refer to SDF diagram). In addition, the development would be located alongside the start of the Dusi Canoe Marathon.

3 - PMB SPORTS PRECINCT

The PMB Sports Precinct includes the Harry Gwala Stadium, the PMB Cricket Oval and a series of sports fields located around the Alexandra Park area. In addition, every Sunday, there is a popular arts and crafts market in Alexandra Park. Therefore, the Sports Precinct should be kept and maintained as a cultural landmark that unites all facets of society whilst providing public opens spaces along the Msunduzi River.

4 - PROPOSED CULTURAL CENTRE

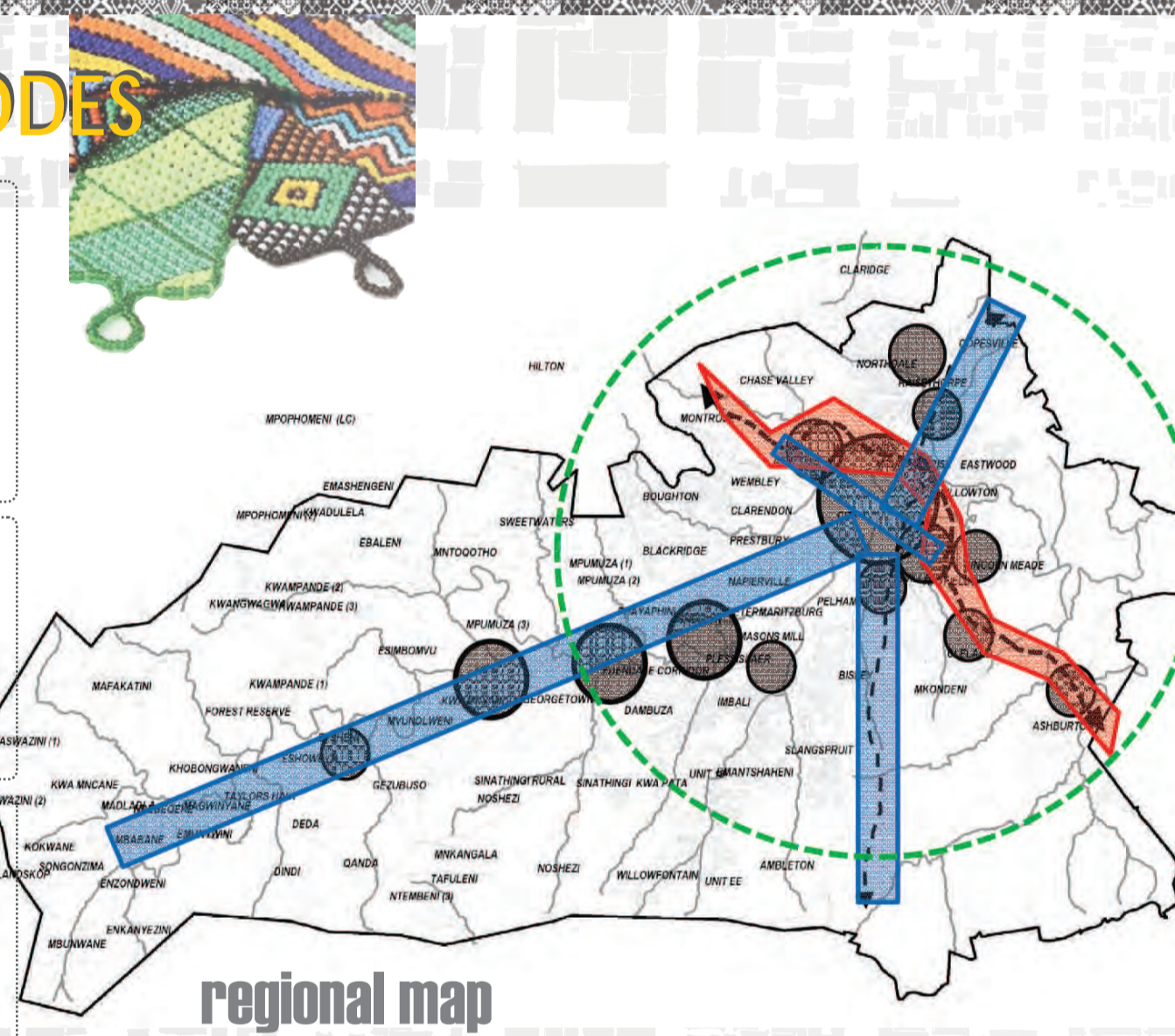
Located at the intersection between Church Street and the N3 Toll Road, the proposed cultural centre has the potential to become the gateway into the Pietermaritzburg CBD. At the same time, the Cultural centre should serve to highlight the rich culture and diversity of Pietermaritzburg.

5 - LIBERTY MIDLANDS MALL

The Midlands Mall is located alongside the N3 and it is the prime shopping centre in Pietermaritzburg. At the same time, the area between the Royal Show grounds and the Mall is dominated by commercial

6 - ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SHOWGROUNDS

The Royal Agricultural Showgrounds (RAS) represent the heart and soul of Arts and Crafts in Pietermaritzburg. The Royal show, which occurs annually, started in 1851 and it hosts merchants, businessmen and farmers who use the show as a platform to exhibit their goods to the public. The Show is the largest mixed exhibition incorporating a fully-fledged agricultural component on the continent of Africa. Not only does this include the exposition of some of the country's finest livestock and agricultural equipment but also a range of ancillary activities and displays covering the entire industrial, commercial and service sectors within the province.



regional map

MACRO BEADS



Water's edge



Church street



Social spaces



Life on the streets



city in sketches



Pedestrian friendly



Green cities



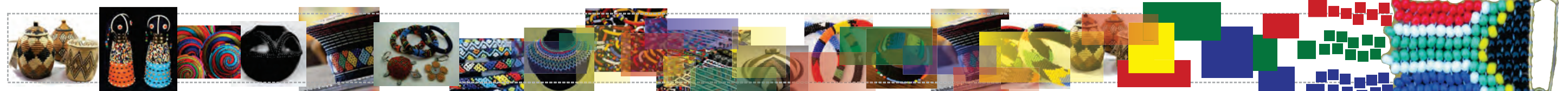
Civic spaces



Wetland park

SOLVING FOR PATTERN

A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg



CLIENT

CITY OF CHOICE MSUNDUZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The VISION STATEMENT of the Msunduzi Local Municipality aims to be "a globally competitive metropolitan City of choice which capitalizes on its strategic location, environment, cultural heritage and educational facilities creating a choice quality life for all" - Msunduzi Municipality Integrated Development Plan 2006/2007 to 2010/2011

Therefore, the promotion of Pietermaritzburg as a Legislative and ARTS CAPITAL will make it the CITY OF CHOICE FOR ALL.

regional map



CLIENT REQUIREMENTS

In order to establish Pietermaritzburg as the Arts capital, the Msunduzi Local Municipality (MLM) requires an Arts and Crafts Centre that strives to unite and solidify the identity of the city through promoting indigenous arts and crafts.

It is envisioned that the centre should also seek methods of incorporating modern arts with indigenous arts. In this way, culture and tradition is preserved whilst remaining modern and relevant to modern society.

CONCEPT

BRIEF

An ARTS+CRAFTS CENTRE is to be designed on any chosen should seek to:

- Promote cultural diversity through indigenous arts and crafts.
- Integrate indigenous elements with the contemporary.
- Display the identity of the city which all people can relate.
- Propose current and future interventions which would contribute the Pietermaritzburg as the Art capital of choice.

SOLVE FOR PATTERN

[one] SOLUTION to solve several problems

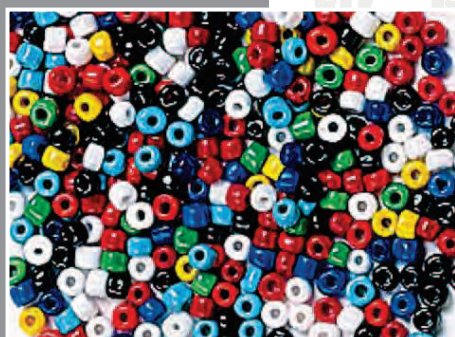
"What will this place require us to do? Permit us to do? Help us to do?" - Wendell Berry - Farmer and Poet.

Indigenous arts and crafts can be used as a solution to solving various problems/ issues of identity that exist within the urban landscape.

Social defragmentation can be threaded together through indigenous arts and crafts.

Indigenous arts and crafts re-affirms the social identity whilst seeking to influence the architectural identity by promoting cultural diversity whilst responding accordingly to the natural environment.

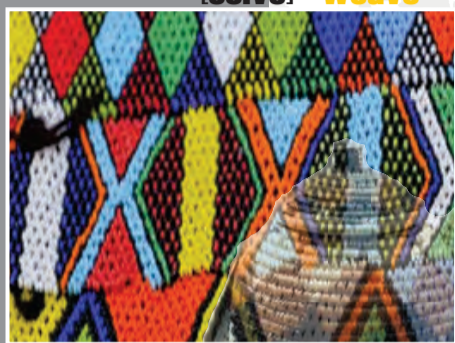
The SOLVE FOR PATTERN concept seeks to promote social unity through the stitching together of existing arts and crafts centres which will lay the foundation towards sewing the future of South African architectural identity.



[object] - beads



[solve] - weave

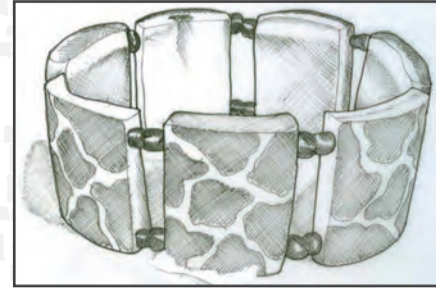


[product] - patterns

SOLVE for pattern



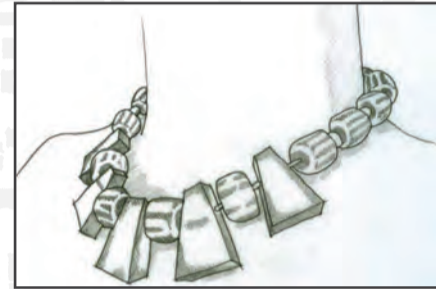
cattle kraal



African inspired bracelet



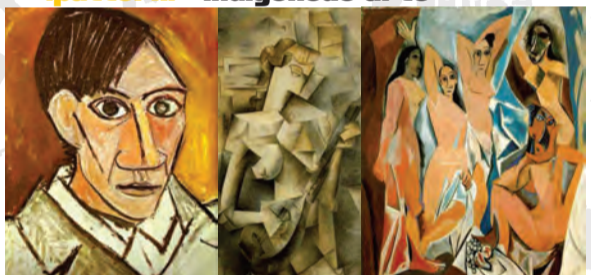
beaded necklace



African jewellery



[pattern] - indigenous arts



[solve] - art

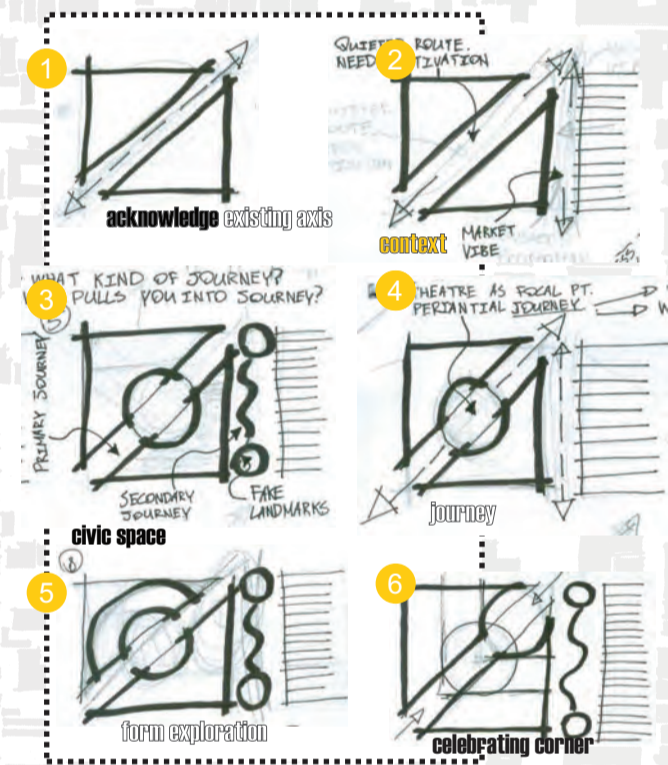


[product] - architecture

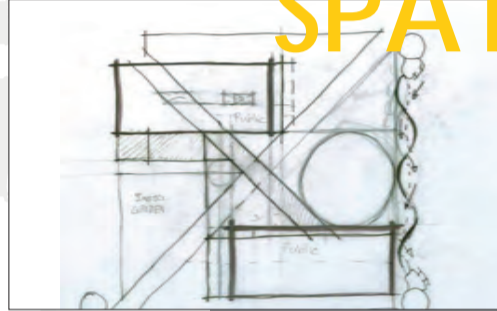
ARTS AND CRAFT

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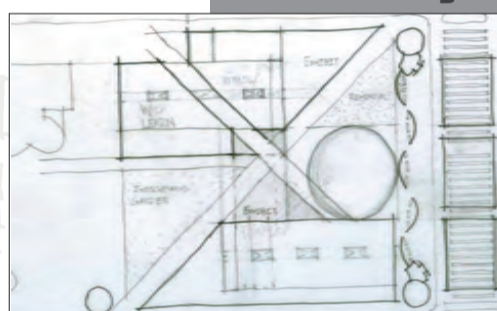
Therefore indigenous arts and crafts can be used to provide a platform for cultural interaction whilst the indigenous element and use of indigenous knowledge provides a sense of place to contemporary architecture.



SPATIAL PLANNING



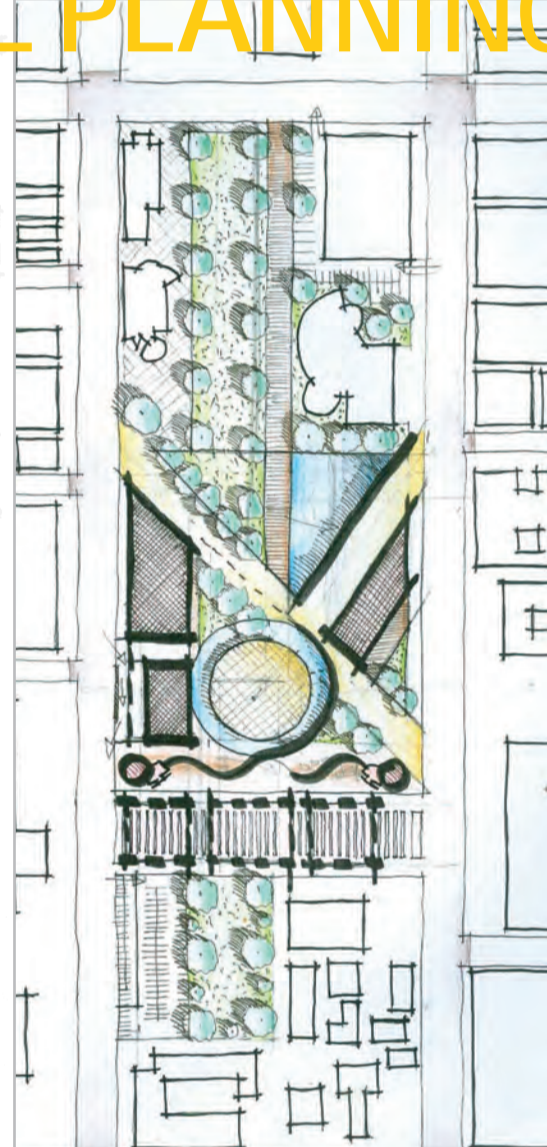
building 'block'



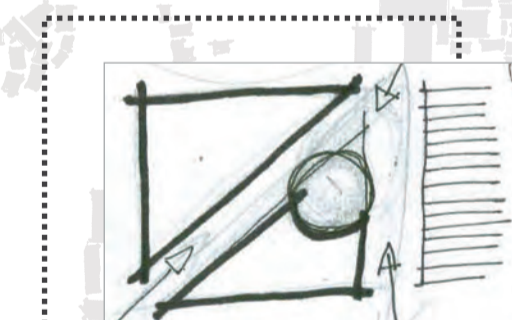
existing foot paths



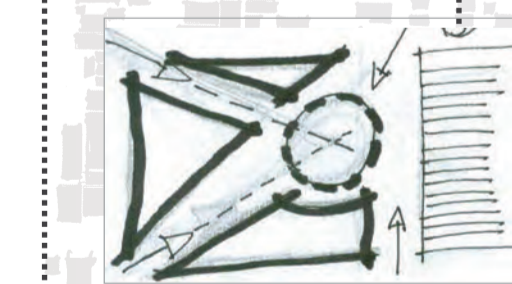
design footprint



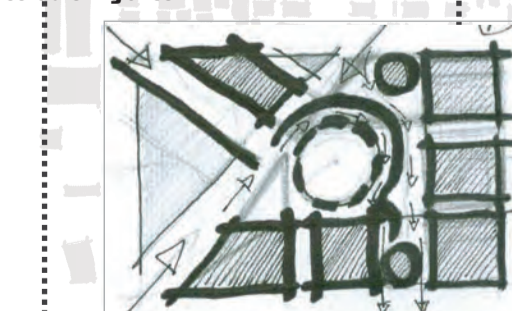
MASSING



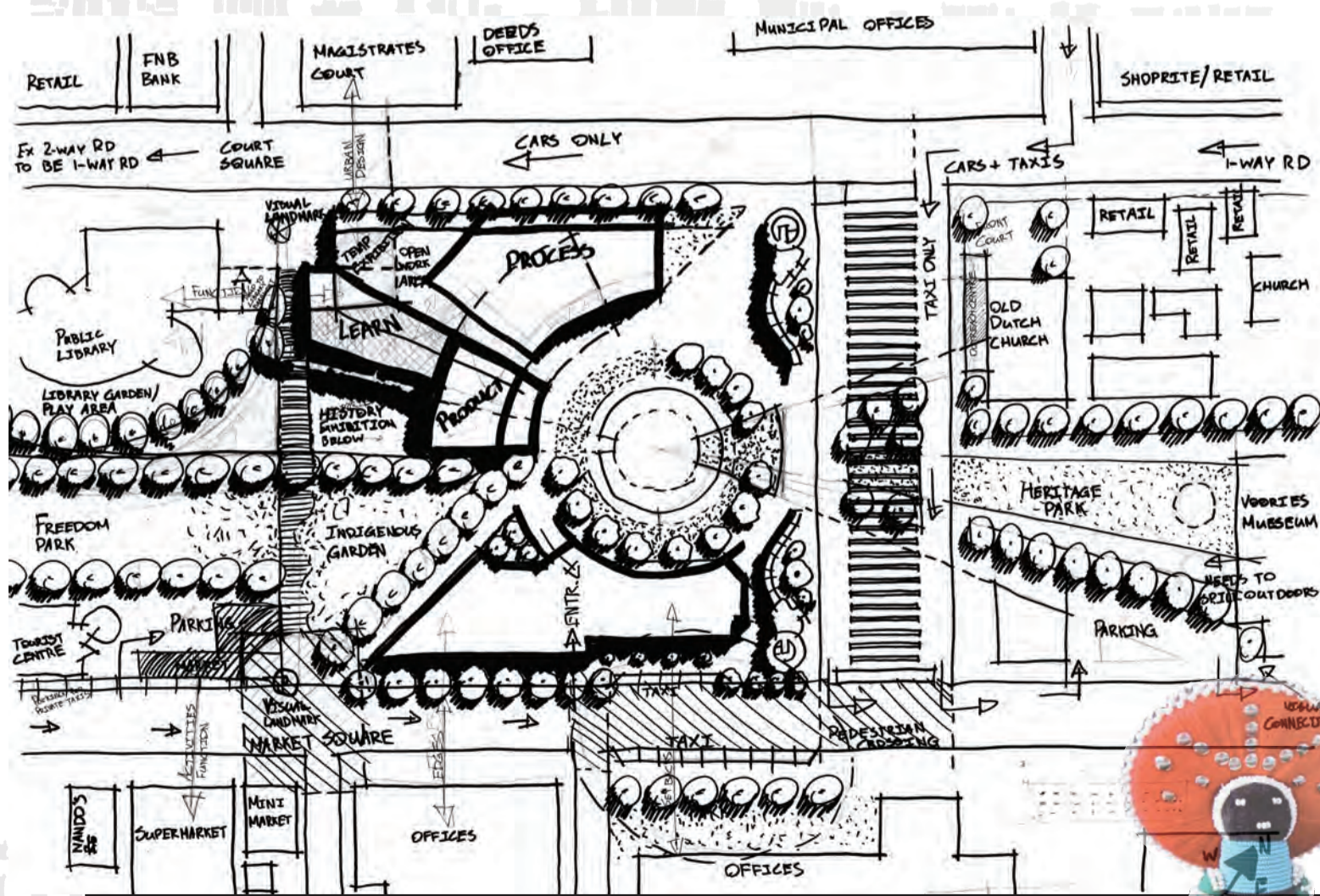
breaking the symmetry



establishing axes



break up mass



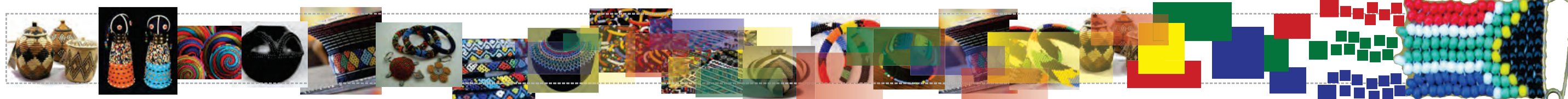
massing and spatial planning

PRECEDENTS



SOLVING FOR PATTERN

A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg

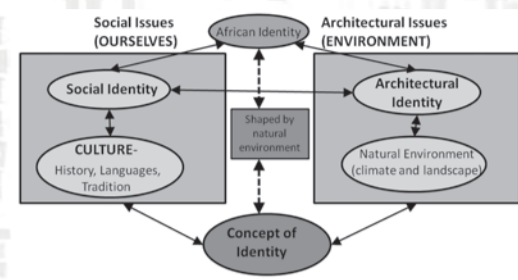
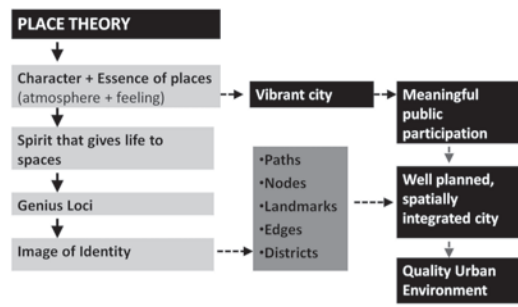
HYPOTHESIS

Indigenous arts and crafts can have a vital influence on contemporary South African architecture with regards to forming a unique South African architectural identity that portrays the political and social values of the country. As a result, contemporary South African architecture would contribute to the physical and social development of society which promotes a better standard of living that is respectful of the local indigenous background at the same time responding to current global issues and trends.

ISSUES

- Failure of architecture to interact with the public and local cultures.
- Lack of social unity promoted by lack of identity in architecture.
- Lack of transformation in indigenous architecture as opposed to modern architecture.

meaning
place
space



PLACE THEORY

The PLACE THEORY is a vital theory that highlights the importance of local elements to promote a sense of identity and meaning. Architectural spaces become places which people can identify with. Therefore, it can be said that the place theory seeks to establish identity through meaning. In this way, buildings and spaces become places by engaging with the public both physically and psychologically.

Therefore, through the PLACE THEORY, indigenous ARTS + CRAFTS can be promoted and used to inform contemporary South African architecture.

culture + identity

CULTURE OF PLACE- cultural integration and diversity which builds city character and identity.

CULTURAL ART FORMS- provide platforms for interaction

IDENTITY

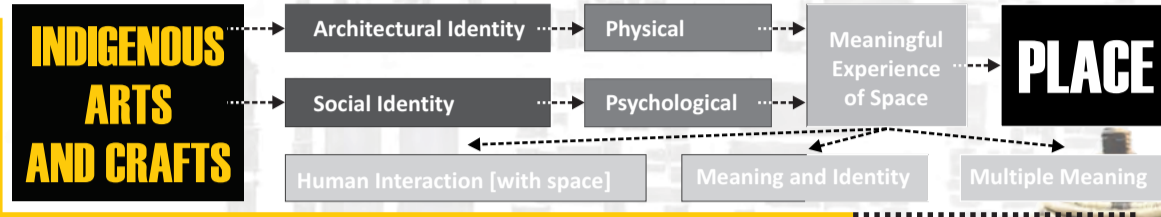
IDENTITY is the main concept which can be used to inform not only contemporary South African architecture, but also the social IDENTITY of the country. In this way, the concept of IDENTITY possesses multiple meanings which surpass the scope of architecture.

place + identity

In explaining identity, both Thabo Mbeki (1996) and Charles Correa (1983), place huge emphasis on the surrounding natural and social environment as an element that influences identity (refer to research document). Therefore, indigenous arts and crafts can be used as a tool to inform identity that reflects the past but also responds to the modern environment. In this way, architectural spaces become more interactive with people of all cultures



"Our identity can be found by understanding OURSELVES and our ENVIRONMENT" - Correa, C 1983, for Identity, in Powell, R (ed) Architecture and Identity



[indigenous] arts + craft

Promotes local identity

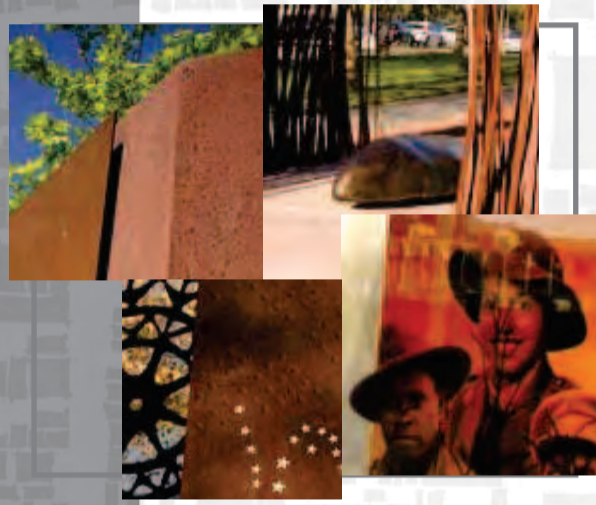
Promotes cultural diversity and interaction in achieving social unity

RECONCILIATION PLACE

Topic- Public Art
Location- Canberra, Australia
Architect- UAP Studio

Reconciliation Place is located in the democratic and cultural heart of Canberra and it is a prominent symbol of Reconciliation and national significance. It forms a pathway linking the High Court of Australia and the National Library of Australia.

The project was commissioned as an effort to improve Indigenous relations. Reconciliation Place provides a platform for indigenous artists of Australia, such as Judy Watson and Gloria Fletcher to exhibit works that engage with the public in terms of promoting indigenous culture.



AOMORI CONTEMPORARY ART CENTRE

Topic- Providing functional Art spaces
Location- Honshu Island, Japan
Architects- Tadao Ando

Aomori Art Centre is a residency for artists and it provides a canvas for potters, printmakers and other art disciplines to practice their craft in a serene natural environment.

The centre enables the local community to interact with the artists. In this way, the artist always has direct access to the community and shares a bond with it that will constantly influence his work. In addition, the community itself becomes part of the art process where they can view and sometimes give valuable insight to the artist.



THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHANCERY

Topic- Interpreting Indigenous Arts and crafts into architectural form
Location- Berlin, Germany
Architects- MMA Architects

The South African Chancery is an example of how indigenous arts and crafts can be used to enhance the quality of South African architecture.

The architects envisioned the building as one that would explore the identity of the new South Africa and at the same time conjure up images of indigenous South Africa which recognizes indigenous architecture through the concept of inkundla, and through the use of indigenous arts and crafts as features which best describe the identity of South Africa.



B.A.T CENTRE

Topic- Arts and Craft
Location- Durban Harbour
Architects- Paul Mikula

The Barthel Arts Trust (BAT) Centre is a centre for local artists to exhibit their skills in the arts. It is a building that addresses some of the issues raised with regards to the promotion of arts and crafts.

According to the BAT Centre Trust (BCT), the building aims to uplift the community through developments and programs that focus primarily on the needs of the people through the use of art as a positive catalyst for social transformation. The centre also aims to ingrate formally established artists with the developing and informal artists.



WARWICK JUNCTION PRECINCT

Topic- Indigenous Activities around Transport Junction
Name- Warwick Junction Precinct
Location- Durban, South Africa

The Warwick Junction Precinct respects the local community that occupies the spaces and at the same time, it reflects new innovations in the planning of urban spaces that represents the community both in the current and future situations without the need to directly imitate indigenous architecture for indigenous purposes.

With regards to the regeneration of the precinct, the architects designed spaces that preserved the identity of the community through an in depth process of understanding behavioural patterns, values and the typology of the place.



SOWETO THEATRE

Topic- Experiential Architecture/ Community Orientated
Location- Soweto, Johannesburg
Architects- Afrifects

The Soweto Theatre is designed by incorporating the concept of performance spaces during Apartheid oppressed Soweto which had no dedicated venues-theatres were make-shift, temporary and sidelined. Therefore, with the absence of a formal theatre space, this allowed for a performance atmosphere which was relaxed, accessible and unimposing with the focus being on entertainment.

The concept needed to allow for state-of-the-art facilities fitting the dramatic echelon whilst retaining the freedom of spirit that made performance in Soweto so enticing.



NELSON MANDELA YOUTH & HERITAGE CENTRE

Topic- Using Natural and Built Environment
Location- Qunu, Eastern Cape, South Africa
Architects- Stauch Vorster Architects in Association

The Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre forms part of the Nelson Mandela Museum. The design of the centre draws inspiration from the local vernacular architecture. Therefore, as discussed above, an important aspect of portraying a South African identity in architecture is the unity of the natural environment with the built environment.

The design of the centre also includes the use of various textures which evoke a sense of warmth and softness of the natural landscape which contrast the sharp linear lines of the structural steel framework. In this way, the materials have been expressed to reflect

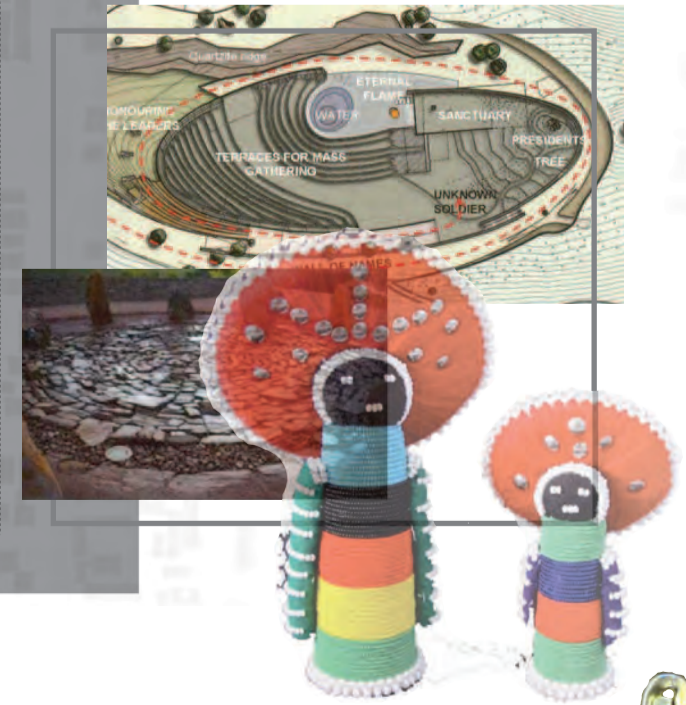


FREEDOM PARK

Topic- Indigenous values in public space
Location- Tshwane, South Africa
Architects- GAPP Architects in Association

Freedom Park seeks to "help heal this country's broken past and reconcile diversity through the spirit of nation building" ('Urban Green File', 2008; 17). Through the process of providing knowledge and remembrance to the historic events of the past, the Freedom Park contributes to the concept of identity by recognised the need to respect and honour the past.

In order to unite the South African community, Freedom Park focuses primarily on the EMOTIONAL POWER that lies in the HISTORY of the country. The park is moulded into an emotional path or SPIRITUAL JOURNEY which culminates around the concept of unity and reconciliation.



SOLVING FOR PATTERN

A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg

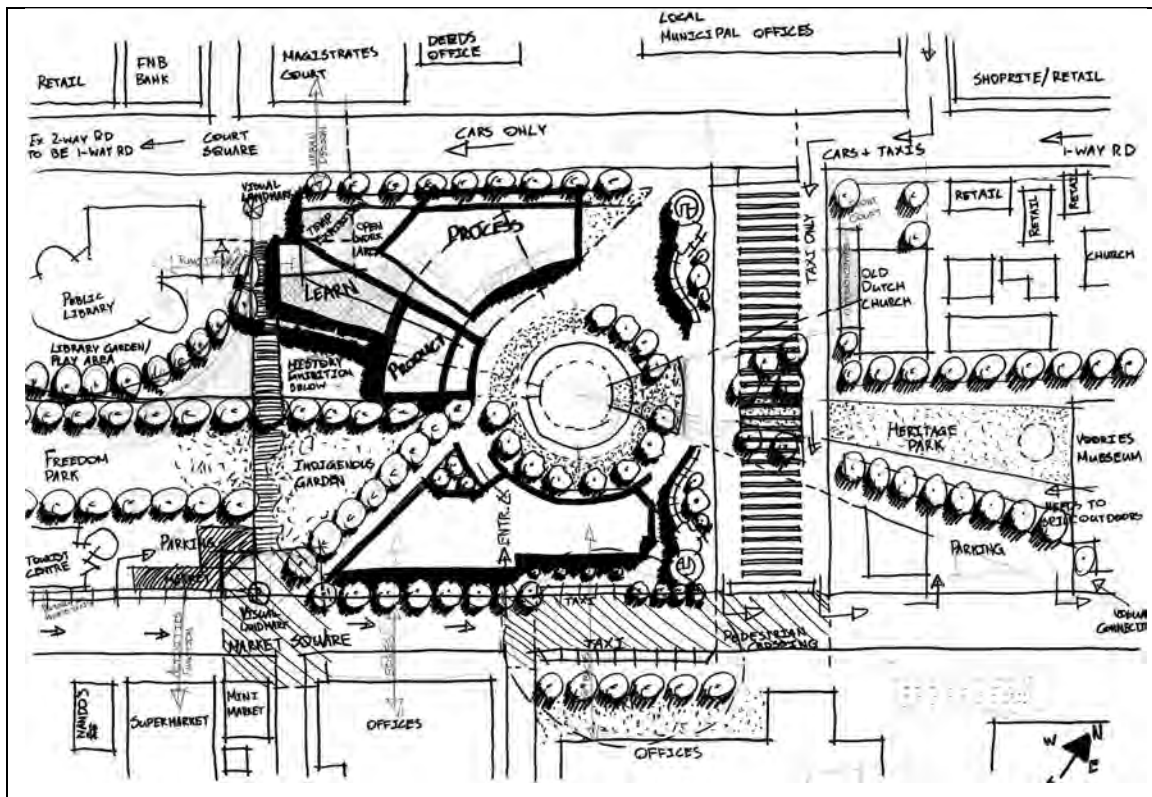


Andile Sokhela 204503601

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS ON CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURE: A Proposal for an Arts and Crafts Centre in Pietermaritzburg

3.1.6 Final Conceptual Sketch



3.2 Final Design Proposal

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- Fig 2.1- African Village (Correa, 1983; 10).
- Fig 2.2- Spatial layout of Warwick Junction Precinct and surrounding areas ('KZ-NIA Journal', 2001; 7).
- Fig 2.3- New cooking facilities for the Bovine head cookers (Dobson, 2008; 23).
- Fig 2.4- Plan of iSikhumbuzo ('Urban Green File', 2006; 35).
- Fig 2.4- Aerial image of Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.
- Fig 2.5- Plan of Nelson Mandela Youth and Heritage Centre (Eicker, 2007; 17).
- Fig 2.6- Hand formed plaster work with an undulating texture and rounded edges (Eicker, 2007; 18).
- Fig 2.7- Latte screens used as shading devices and as a means of privacy and the screens were made from locally harvested wattle branches (Eicker, 2007; 18).
- Fig 2.8- Main canopy providing protection to the single storey buildings below (Eicker, 2007; 20).
- Fig 2.9- The main canopy's columns are steel clad in timber to symbolise the forest (Eicker, 2007; 21).
- Fig 2. 10- Image of Village street between buildings which forms an open thread through the centre (Eicker, 2007; 16).

- Fig 2.11- Diagrammatic plan of Newtown Cultural Precinct, Johannesburg. (http://www.jda.org.za/keydocs/newtown/geotech_newtown_report.pdf) Accessed 30/03/2012.
- Fig 2.12- View of Mary Fitzgerald Square. (<http://www.joburgnews.co.za/2004/sep/jda3.jpg&imgrefurl>) Accessed 30/03/2012.

- Fig 2.13- An example of carved walking sticks (<http://www.carvedwoodenwalkingsticks.com/>) Accessed 03.07.2012.
- Fig 2.14- Example of 3 types of Arts and Crafts (Sellschop, 2002; 41).
- Fig 2.15- Traditional Zulu dancers' eMsinga during traditional ceremony (By Author).

- Fig 2.16- image of Zulu woman in traditional attire showing beadwork as a way of living (Newman, 1974; 53)
- Fig 2.17- Three segments of the ACAC located within the forest (Pollock, 2004; 124)
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- Fig 2.19- Circular exhibition space (Pollock, 2004; 130).
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- Fig 2.21- Plans of creative hall and residence hall (Pollock, 2004; 126).
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- Fig 2.23- Sandstone cladding used at front facade ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 20).
- Fig 2.24- Rear facade highlighting horizontal aluminium elements ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 22).
- Fig 2.25- Coloured and textured sculptural plaster finishes on walls ('Architect and Builder', 2004; 29).
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- Fig 2.27- Clay pot with amantsumpa detailing (Sellschop, 2002; 57).
- Fig 2.28- Clay pot by Clive Sithole highlighting the oxen embellishment revealing elements of his childhood which inform his personal identity (By Author).
- Fig 2.29- Clay pot by Clive Sithole showing vertical detailing which represent s ploughing fields which depicts a story of traditional lifestyle (By Author).
- Fig 2.30- Sibaya Casino and entertainment complex showing details with elements reminiscent of royal Zulu crowns, which can also be viewed as a collection of izicholo (plural for isicholo). The circular forms could also be seen to represent a collection.
- Fig 2.31- Unknown women wearing isicholo on her head which bears similarities to the shape and form of Sibaya Casino (<http://www.africaimagelibrary.com/media>) Accessed 01-06-2012.
- Fig 2.32- Clay pot by Magdalene Odondo which is an interpretation of the female body and isicholo (http://magdaleneodondo.com/selected_works_6.html) Accessed 01-06-2012.

- Fig 2.33- New range of sculptural pots by Sithole which features an abstract representation of the female body in traditional attire which was inspired by Sibaya Casino and the work of Magdalene Odondo (By Author).

- Fig 3.1- Aerial image of Freedom Park (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.
- Fig 3. 2- The three phases of Freedom Park ('Urban Green File', 2006; 31).
- Fig 3. 3- Large circle of boulders which define iSivivane ('Urban Green File', 2008; 18).
- Fig 3. 4- Plan of iSikhumbuzo ('Urban Green File', 2006; 35).
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- Fig 3. 6- Section through Wall of Names showing how the structure is built into the site ('Digest of South African Architecture', 2007; 20).
- Fig 3. 7- Ecological survey that highlights ecologically sensitive zones ('Urban Green File', 2004; 18).

- Fig 4.1- Aerial view of Durban harbour showing position of site (Google Earth) Accessed 23.05.2012.
- Fig 4.2- South elevation of BAT Centre (by author, 2012).
- Fig 4.3- North elevation of BAT Centre with railway line barrier (Claude, 1996; 6).
- Fig 4.4- Ground floor plan with internal courtyard shown as number 12 (Claude, 1996; 7).
- Fig 4.5- View of internal courtyard with students, tourists and staff members (by author, 2012).
- Fig 4.6- Waterproofing detail of new and existing roof (by author, 2012).
- Fig 4.7- View of internal roof structure with exposed materials (by author, 2012).
- Fig 4.8- Aerial image of Mpumalanga Provincial Government Complex (Google Earth). Accessed 03.07.2012.
- Fig 4.9- Site diagram showing buildings positioned along the forest edge and integrated into the landscape (Malan, 2001; 26).
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- Fig 4.22- Gerard Sekoto, *The Song of the Pick* (1946)
http://www.terminartors.com/artworkprofile/Sekoto_Gerard-Song_of_the_pick
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