This can be seen in the South African context, where the country is said to have 3 capitals, Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Cape Town, each housing one of the arms of government. Considering this, we can understand Vale when he states that the decision to create a new capital city is often “motivated more by dreams of economic development of the hinterland than by regional or ethnic rivalries.” (1992:44)

Could the decision of choosing a site in the ‘hinterland’ between two cities be based on the economic development hopes?

This might be the case since the competition brief, describing the centrality of Midrand, gives a lengthy historical description of Johannesburg and Pretoria yet describes Midrand not in terms of history but in terms of growth:

“Over the past (5) years Midrand has shown major growth with more than 3000 businesses and many offices increasing by 17% since 1995. In addition, the area has been accredited with good residential growth.”

This opinion is further strengthened by the Gauteng Provincial Governments vision, of the city of Johannesburg expanding to cover most of the province by 2015.

This could mean that the PAP competition site, was decided on the basis of anchoring a ‘government’ institution in the area, thereby encouraging investor and developer confidence in the area.

“A third frame of reference for the design of post colonial parliament buildings and new capitals is the governments interest in treating architecture as a visible symbol of economic development.” (Vale 1992:53)

This is one possibility indeed a probability, however others do exist. Nnamdi Elleh, in Architecture and Power in Africa, looks at a comparison between two iconic African buildings built in the late 20th century. These are the Hassen the second mosque in Casablanca, Morocco and the Our Lady of Peace Basilica in Yamoussoukro, Cote D’ Ivoire. In his analysis he concludes that the patrons of these projects “truly believed they were the antithesis of colonial legacies” (2002:162)

Perhaps in locating the PAP, those with the power of decision, decided to locate it away from the former colonial and apartheid cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, seeking a neutral ground to pursue these Pan African ideologies, in a place that is not tainted with the association of belonging to South Africa and former centers of apartheid and British colonialism. This explanation seems plausible considering the history of postcolonial Africa.
The Nigerian capital was moved from Lagos to the geographically central and ‘ethically neutral’ Abuja in order to leave the colonial port city as a symbol of self-reliance. In Tanzania the capital was moved from Dar es Salaam to central Dodoma, in a time of change in ruling ideology to socialism, and since Dar es Salaam was associated with German colonizers (Vale 1992:134 & 148)

A third explanation is the availability of abundant land located away from the city away from the view of the majority. Perhaps the South African Government while on one hand expressing its “commitment to the making of an effective contribution to the challenge of accelerating the process of renewal and integration of the African content”, on the other hand is concerned about the reception of its Pan African ideals amongst its citizens.

(www.dfa.org.za/speeches&documents.html , cited 23 May 2007) Perhaps this has translated in a conservative site strategy that the PAP located outside of the accessible public spheres of Johannesburg and Pretoria. In this light Afronews reports the critical voices of the South African public: “It is generally assumed that the South African taxpayers will have to assume financial responsibility for the parliament, which has led to many South Africans questioning the purpose of this new body without powers.”

(www.afronews.com , cited 23 May 2007)
The site perpetuates the top-down perception of national and continental politics and its institution, denying the PAP the opportunity to fulfill its continental role. As such in the view of this thesis, ample justification exists to challenge the competition site.

**Towards an inclusive site selection criteria**

From the previous discussion, we see that the proposed site is unsuitable for the fulfillment of the core mandate of the PAP. However before alternative sites can be proposed the development of a relevant ‘inclusive’ site selection criteria is vital. From the previous discussion important points can be taken forward, these are:

- Locating the PAP in a location that is physically, psychologically and philosophically accessible to both elite and layperson, local and continental visitor.
- The site should not favor the elite over the layperson nor the layperson over the elite.
- The site should not favor the local over the continental nor favor the continental over the local.
- The site needs to afford the opportunity for all to interact on an inclusive basis.
- To ensure sustainable levels of interaction the site should not function exclusively as a destination point.

**Alternative Sites: The Process of Trial and Error Selection**

With the above criteria in mind, the following potential sites were identified.

![Proposed Midrand site](image)

Re 3/405 JR, Halfwayhouse ext 13, Midrand
Proposed Sandton site
Erf 134 & portion 2 of Erf 13 Sandown, Sandton

Proposed Johannesburg Site
3) Erf 601 & portion 61/91 JR Newtown, Johannesburg

This proposed Midrand site is 2km away from Gallagher Estate, near Grand Central Airport. This airport handles light aircraft, private planes and helicopter flights. It is also within close proximity to the N1 highway and the proposed Midrand Gautrain station. The site has good access to the Midrand business district. The site is split in two by a lower level road that leads up to Grand Central Airport.

The site is bordered to the west by old Pretoria road and the Midrand business district, to the east by Grand Central Airport and its related functions and to the south by the proposed Zonkizizwe Regional mall and proposed Gautrain station. The proposed rail reserve would be on the western boundary bridging the two portions, at the entrance to the site.

At a larger scale, this site is geographically central, being located halfway between Johannesburg and Pretoria. It is easily accessible from the N1 highway, by train, private jet and helicopter.

Aerial photograph of Midrand (Goggle Earth: 2007)
Proposed Sandton site

This proposed site is located within the CBD of Sandton, opposite the proposed Sandton public transport interchange and gautrain station. It is in walking distance to the regional shopping mall of Sandton City, Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton International Convention Center and prestigious hotels such as The Michelangelo and the Sandton Sun Intercontinental.

The site is bordered by Rivonia road on the south, West street and the Sandton public transport interchange and gautrain station on the west and an office block and cluster homes to the north.

At a larger scale, Sandton has good linkages to Johannesburg and Pretoria via the highway system, being closer to Johannesburg. It also has good linkages to O.R Tambo International Airport via the highway system and the proposed gautrain station that links the Sandton CBD directly to the airport.

Aerial photograph (goggle earth:2007)

Proposed Johannesburg Site

This proposed site is located within the CBD of Johannesburg. It is sandwiched between the Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Mandela bridges that span across the city’s railway lines and link the more affluent northern suburbs to the city center. It is bordered by the railway lines to the north and Bree Street taxi rank to the south – part of which extends to form an open air taxi rank on the site. To the west across the wide road linking on to Nelson Mandela bridge, are the Brickfields higher density apartment blocks and the unused Victoria park station a historical site from the early days of Johannesburg. To the west is a wide road linking onto Queen Elizabeth bridge and the city’s long distance taxi rank.

At a larger scale, the site has excellent public transport connections, within close vicinity of the site. These include minibus taxi, bus and train. It has good highway links and is nearby to intercity and regional bus depots that connect Johannesburg to other cities within South Africa and neighboring states.

Aerial photograph (goggle earth:2007)
**Measuring of site against site criteria**

Each of these sites were carefully considered, firstly by weighing the site’s positive attributes against its negative attributes, and secondly by assessing it against the site criteria. The site criteria for assessment are as follows:

a) The site should be located in a location that is physically, psychologically and philosophically accessible to both elite and layperson, local and continental visitor.

b) The site should not favor the elite over the layperson nor the layperson over the elite.

c) The site should not favor the local over the continental nor favor the continental over the local.

d) The site needs to afford the opportunity for all to interact on an inclusive basis.

e) To ensure sustainable levels of interaction the site should not function exclusively as a destination point

Each of these points were given a weighting out of ten, with 10 being the best and 1 being the least, in terms of achieving the criteria.

**Proposed Midrand site**

**Positives:**
- Centrally located between Johannesburg and Pretoria
- Ease of access to highway, rail and air transport.
- Close to regional attractor (proposed Zonkizizwe mall)
- Close to hotel accommodation and other retail facilities

**Negatives:**
- Midrand is not in close proximity to the majority of people
- Seen as a destination site
- Rail reserve blocks visibility of site, acts as potential eyesore at entrance to site.
- It is a neutral site away from political and historical context.
- It would tend to reinforce an exclusive view of the PAP

**Site criteria rating:**

- a) 3 b) 2 c) 2.5 d) 5 e) 4

Overall rating out of 50: 16.5/50

= 33% compliant to criteria
Proposed Sandton Site
Positives:
- Prime location near International Convention Center, intercontinental hotels and business and retail functions.
- Ease of access to public transport including train, bus, cab and minibus taxi
- Good links to highway linking Johannesburg to Pretoria and the airport
- Good visibility factor.

Negatives:
- Sandton associated with elite and affluent.
- Would tend to reinforce exclusive view of the PAP.
- Not psychologically accessible to majority of ordinary people.

Site criteria rating:
a) 5  b) 3  c) 6  d) 6  e) 7
Overall rating out of 50: 27/50
= 54% compliant to criteria

Proposed Johannesburg Site
Positives:
- Ease of access to all public transport.
- Close proximity to a multitude of functions
- Good visibility from highway
- At the point in the city that links affluent north to the CBD.

Negatives:
- Existing perceptions of Johannesburg CBD as dangerous.
- Johannesburg CBD perceived as noisy, busy and congested.

Site criteria rating:
a) 5  b) 8  c) 6  d) 7  e) 8
Overall rating out of 50: 34/50
= 68% compliant to criteria

Conclusion
This chapter explored the challenge against the proposed PAP sit and contextualized the challenge within a theoretical framework.

It was discovered that the proposed PAP site is not suited for the core mandate of the PAP, of becoming an exclusive platform for involving ordinary Africans and grass root organizations in continental decision-making processors.
The main reasons for this are that although the site is geographically central, it is out of the view and reach of the majority of ordinary citizens. The location of the site outside of political and historical contexts followings the trappings of the current postcolonial paradigm, that seeks to find neutral ground and create symbolic references to a romanticized past and utopian present and future, outside of the context of ordinary everyday life.

In the placing the challenge to the competition site within an appropriate theoretical context, it was shown that the proposed competition site has more to do with the instilling confidence in investment of the ‘hinterland’ of Midrand, symbolic representation of economic development and keeping the South African governments’ Pan African agenda out of the public eye, while gaining leverage at a continental level.

A site selection criteria based on inclusive psychological & philosophical access and core inclusive mandate of the PAP, was derived. Three potential sites were tested against this criteria.

This revealed that the proposed Johannesburg site was best suited to meet the core mandate of the PAP. As such this site will be used for the purposes of this thesis to develop a design for the PAP’s permanent home.

Photo of Johannesburg site as viewed from the Nelson Mandela bridge (authors own:2007)
Photos in and around the site (authors own:2007)