

CHAPTER

3

SITE ANAYSIS

31

HILLBROW

WELLNESS





Fig 24. Hillbrow Health Precinct aerial photograph (www.jda.org.za)



SITE LOCATION:

JOHANNESBURG AND THE INNER CITY

The Department of Health and Social Development contributes to the provision of primary well-being of Joburg's residents. The health arm looks to the healthcare to residents and also ensures the availability of safe, quality medication. It runs local clinics, provides education programmes and workshops, supports other healthcare bodies and monitors residents' health.

Amongst the many needs of citizens in Johannesburg, health and social wellbeing is a priority. Health and socio-economic development are inseparable, in the quest to stabilise the state of poverty, sickness, and disease. The inner city, which is Region F, is a particularly complex and challenging context in which to implement development as it is characterised by a very competitive economic market, high population densities, a lack of infrastructure, and unhygienic living conditions - among many other shortcomings. Sub Area 5 in Region F encompasses greater Hillbrow and Berea, areas which typify the general state of inner city. (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

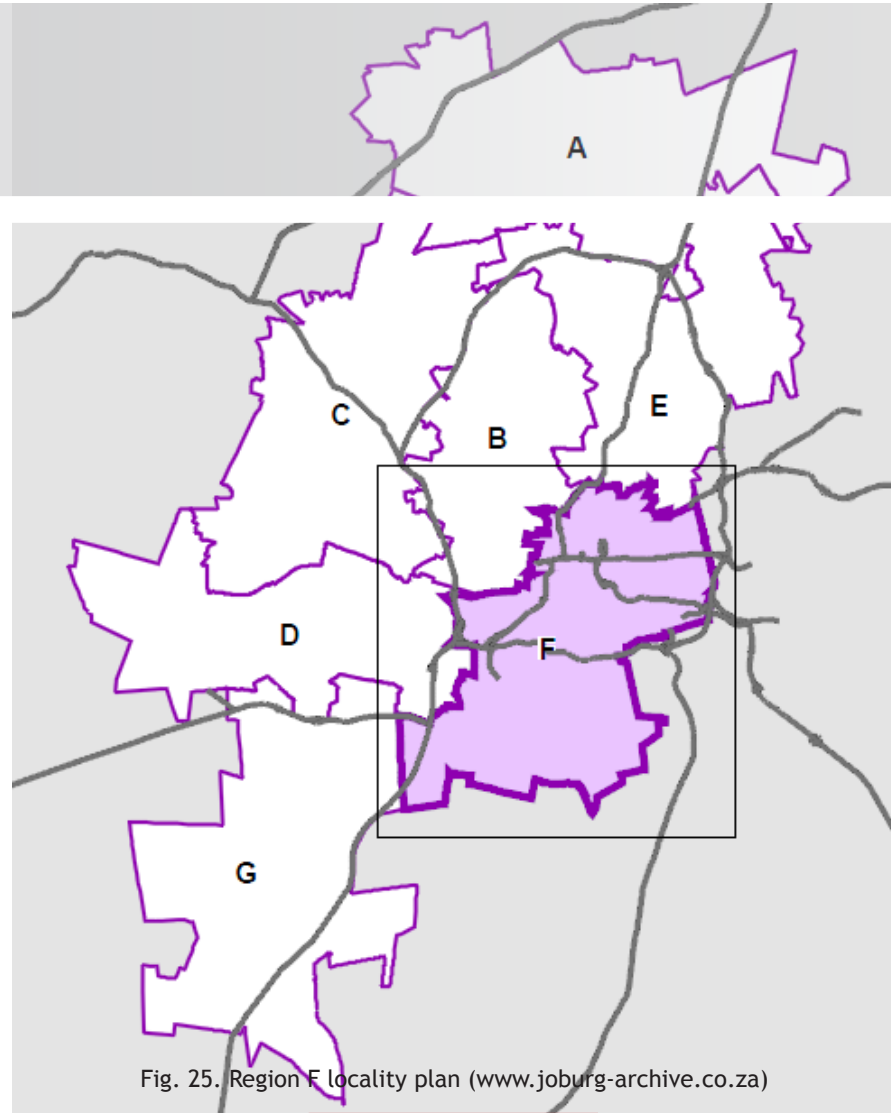


Fig. 25. Region F locality plan (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

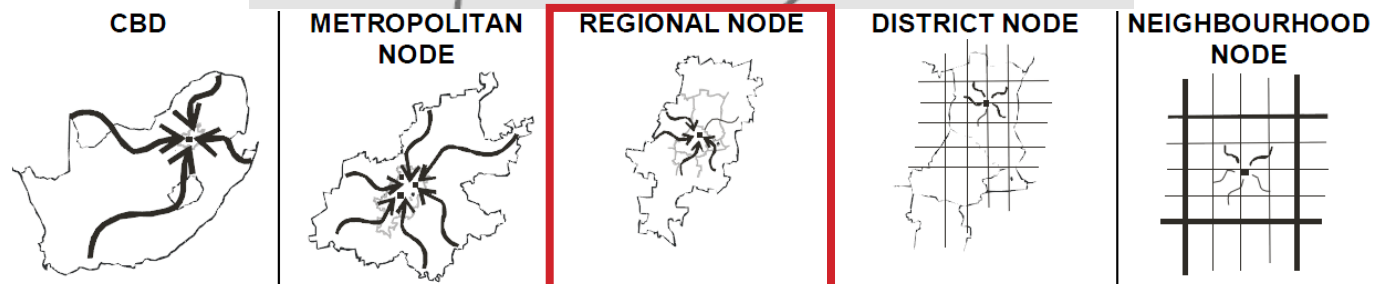


Fig. 26. Nodal Classification (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

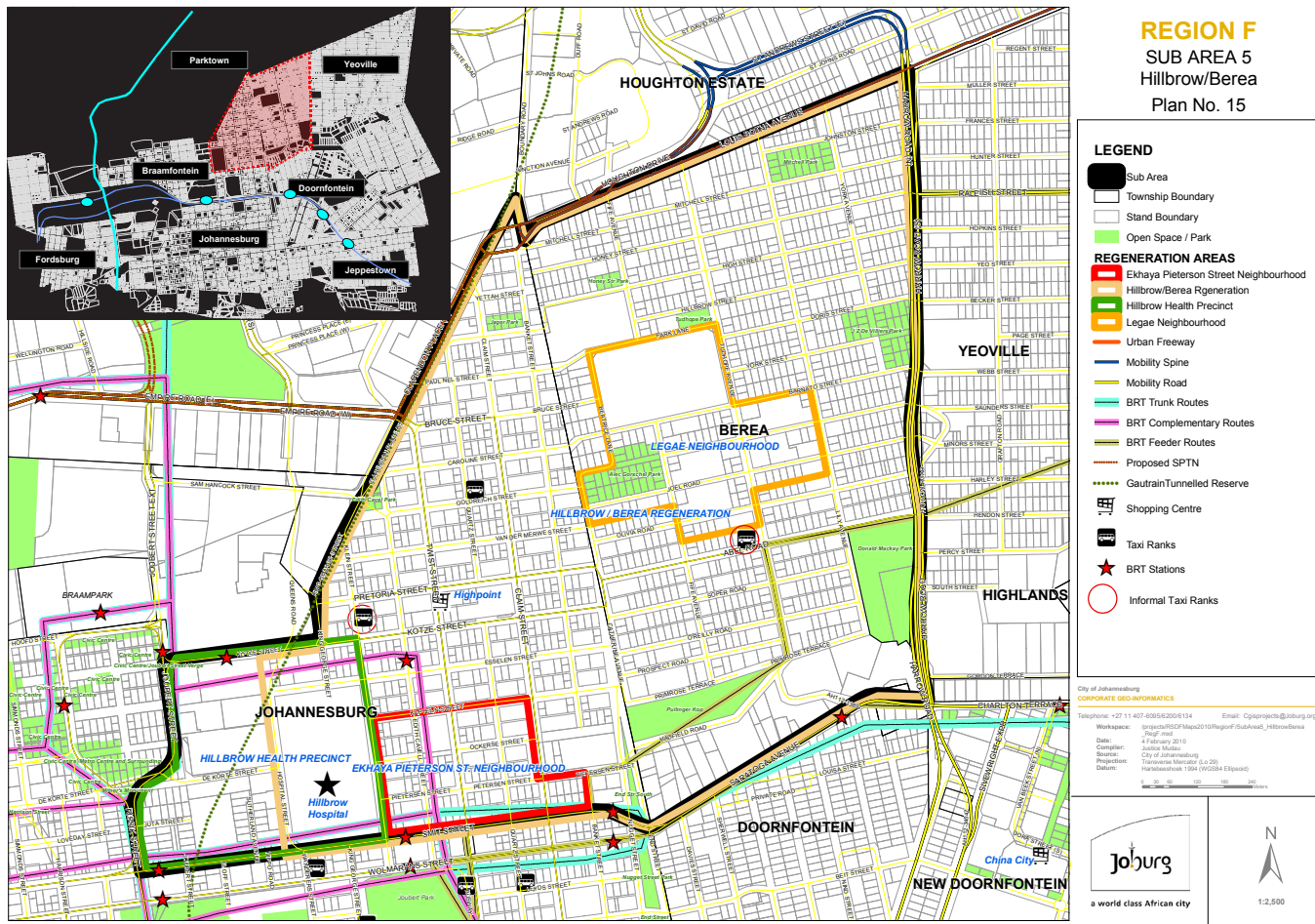


Fig. 27. SUB AREA 5 Hillbrow/Berea (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

HILLBROW AND BEREA

The Hillbrow/ Berea area is located in the central area of Johannesburg and is an urban area under stress, facing a range of challenges. There is an urgent need for neighbourhood regeneration programmes in the area, which will create a framework in which to pursue a range of initiatives.

The Hillbrow Health precinct and the Ekhaya initiative are two such, neighbourhood regeneration programmes. Ekhaya seeks to regenerate the physical quality of the neighbourhood, increase the sense of security and wellbeing of its residents, generate increased private and public investment in the area, and stimulate social cohesion.

The Health Precinct on the other hand seeks to achieve similar urban renewal goals through the redevelopment of the Old Johannesburg Hospital, into a hub of research, health information, treatment, and greater social development. (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

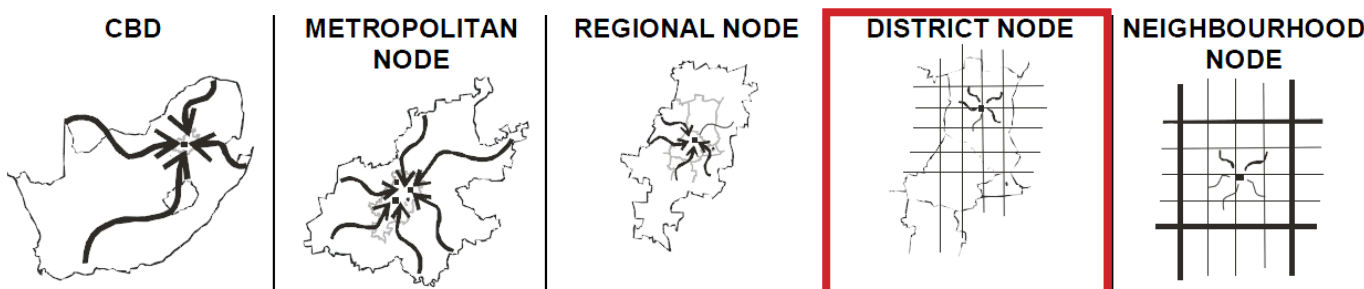


Fig. 28. Nodal Classification (www.joburg-archive.co.za)



HILLBROW HEALTH PRECINCT:

PRECINCT PLAN

The Hillbrow Health Precinct (HHP) comprises an agglomeration of institutional land uses (predominantly health services / facilities and associated laboratories). The land uses have clustered such that they are inward facing and are isolated from their surroundings. The latter has also prevented the development through-linkages, effectively forming a movement barrier between Hillbrow and Braamfontein (east-west), and to a lesser degree in a north-south direction.

Overall the precinct is unintelligible due to building on an ad hoc basis over the past 100 years. The older built fabric is decaying due to a lack of services maintenance and the ingress of water. Furthermore underutilised and empty buildings have not been maintained, subsiding into a state of disrepair and becoming unusable. (www.jda.org.za)

Broad principles set out for the precinct encompassed:

- Making connections: Links to surrounding areas.
- A grid of streets: establishment of a public environment system and pedestrian cross-links.
- A public open space network: establishment of a network of local parks, pedestrian links and urban squares.
- Mixture of land uses: a diversity of activities and functions.
- Landmark elements: introducing image-ability and legibility through gateways, local nodes, edges, landmarks and axial vistas.
- Establishing catalytic projects that kick-start the redevelopment of the precinct.

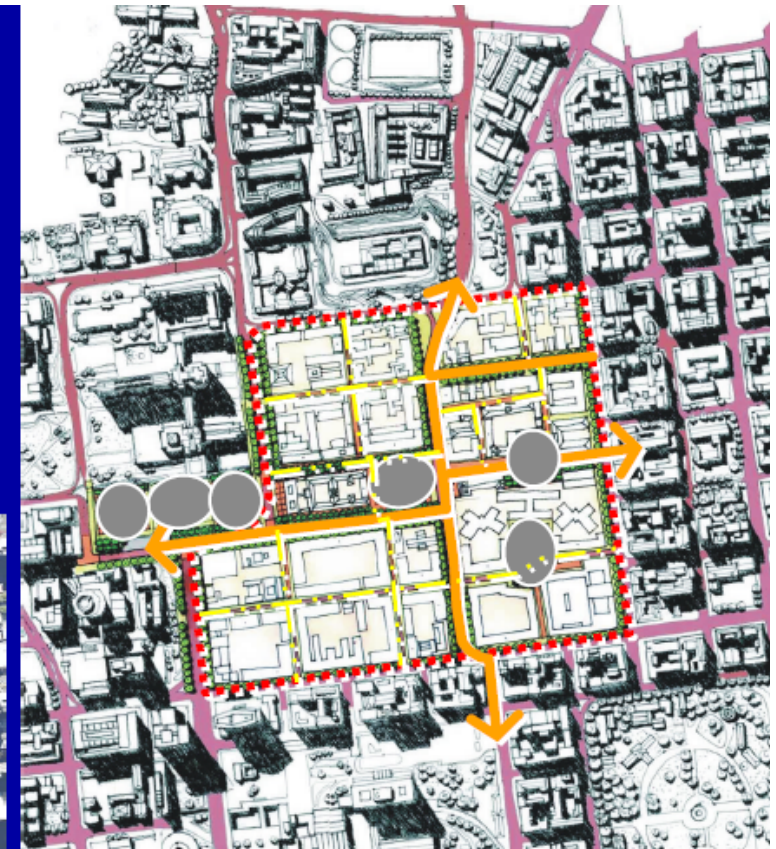
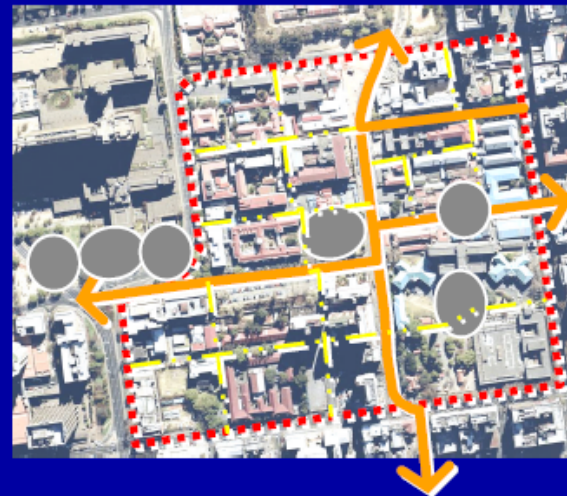


Fig.3 Principles from the Initial Urban Design Scoping Study

Fig. 29. Urban design scope (www.jda.org.za)

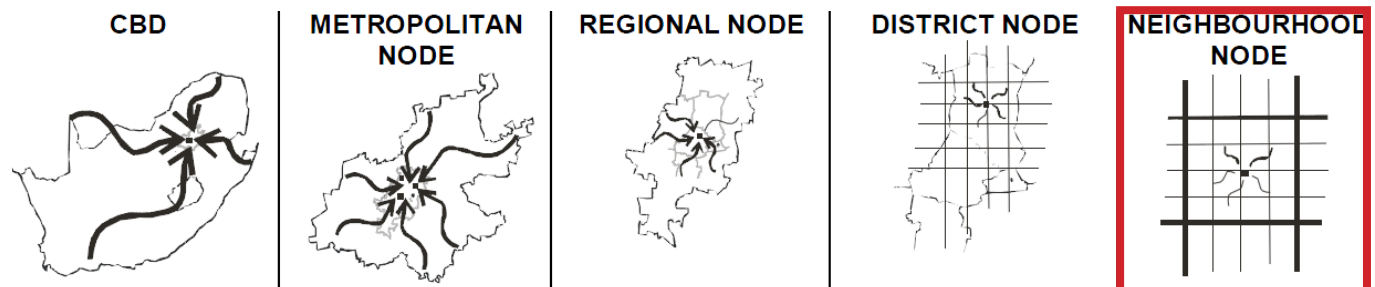


Fig. 30. Nodal Classification (www.joburg-archive.co.za)

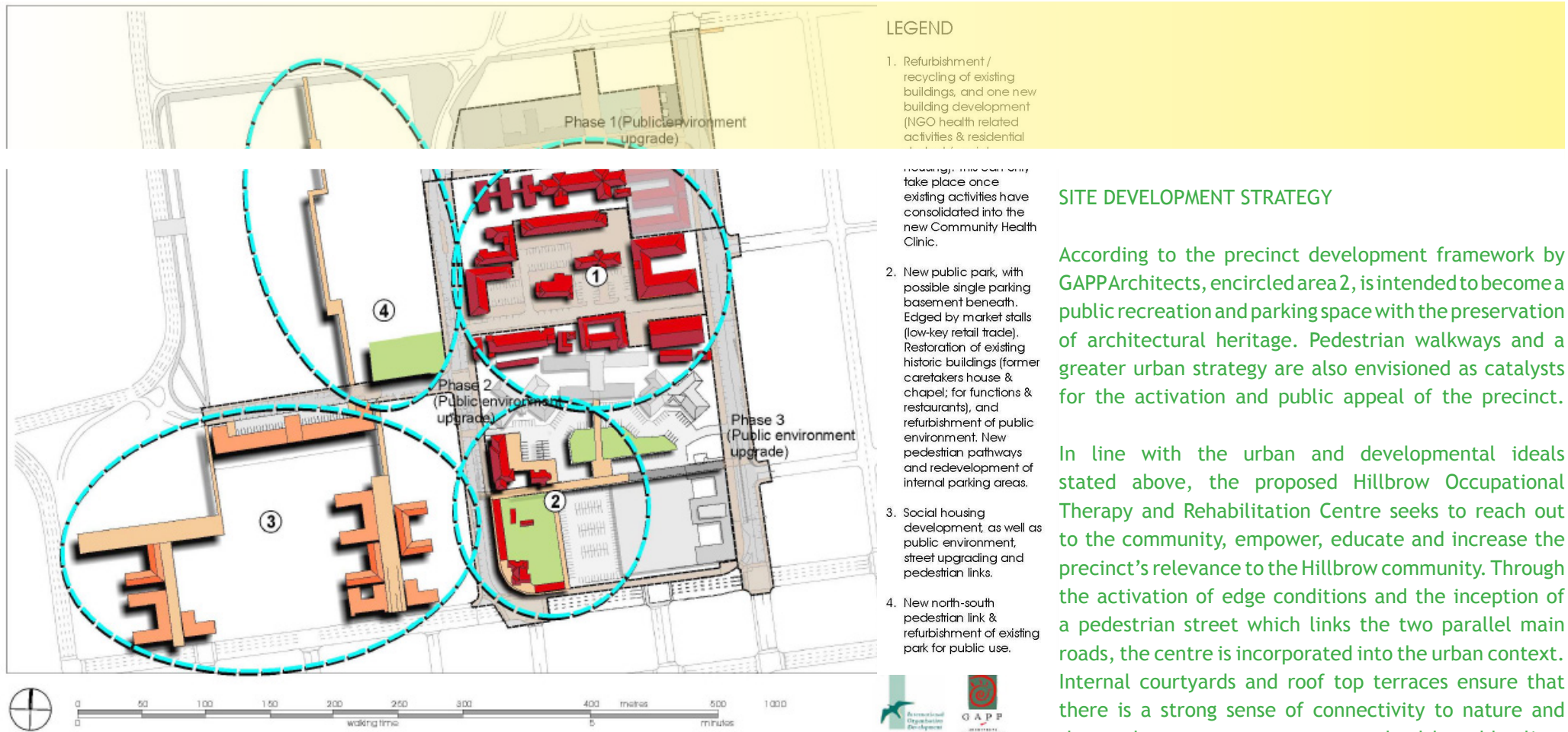


Fig. 31. Proposed phasing (www.jda.org.za)

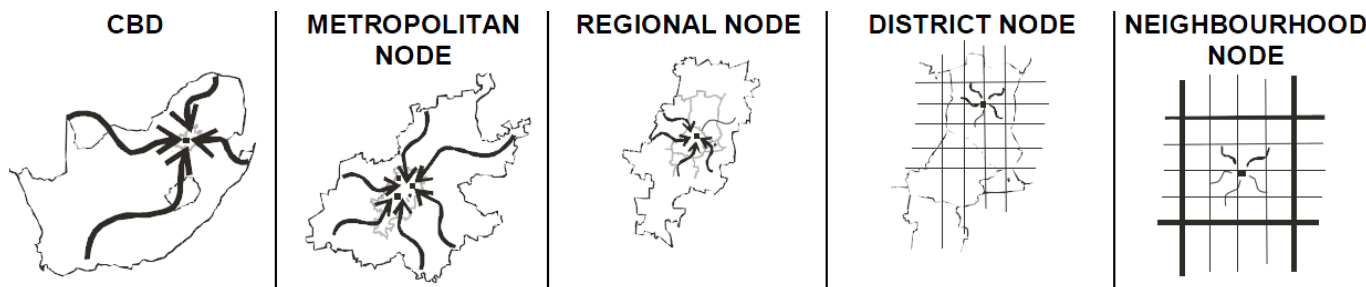


Fig. 32. Nodal Classification (www.joburg-archive.co.za)



MAPPING:

The map illustrates the Braam Park area, showing streets such as Robert Street, Queens Road, Pretoria Street, Kotze Street, and Hoofed Street. It displays property boundaries with numbers and color-coded zoning areas. A legend on the right side of the map explains the symbols used, including Amendment Schemes, Use Zones, and various business and commercial zones.

The site is subject to the typical hospital zoning laws of this institutional typology in the inner city. Surrounding land usage is predominantly commercial, office, and residential. There is also a fair amount of regeneration, especially concerning social housing, as there is an ever present demand for accommodation in the city - hence building renovations by institutions such as Ithemba, Connaught, TUHF, AFHCO, Jozi Housing, Trafalgar and the Johannesburg Housing Company.

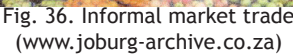
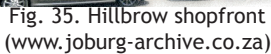
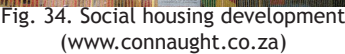
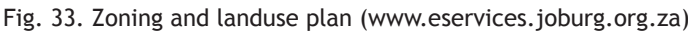




Fig. 37. Inner city nodes (www.jda.org.za)

FIGURE - GROUND

The surrounding urban context of the Health Precinct consists predominantly of high density residential flats which are typical of the built fabric in Hillbrow. As a result of the typical Johannesburg city block which is more or less square as opposed to a more generous linear arrangement in cities such as Pretoria and Bloemfontein, pavements and roads are congested with foot traffic and vehicles. This dense urban template of high-rise buildings is inadequate in accommodating and facilitating well, urban functions in the highly populated and overcrowded Hillbrow environment.

These planning, urban design, and architectural constraints lead to difficulties in the walkability, liveability, security, and safety of the city. As such, it is a major concern in terms of future developments which seek to improve these conditions through the devises of well anchored and appropriate contextual design responses. (www.jda.org.za)



Fig. 38. Figure-ground plan of JHB inner city (www.joburg-archive.co.za)



Fig. 39. Aerial view of Hillbrow (www.joburg-archive.co.za)



Fig. 40. JHB inner city grid-ion city plan (By: Author)



RELEVANT COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SITE CONNECTIVITY

At a greater urban scale, it is important that the Hillbrow Health precinct forges relationships with surrounding inner city developments such as Constitutional Hill, the Braamfontein regeneration, Park Station, and Joubert Park. Main arterial and transport routes (namely: Rissik st, Smit st, Kotze st, and Klein st) demarcate the edges of the precinct and link it to the above mentioned zones of development; while internal streets (i.e.: De korte, Hospital, and Esselen) allow for permeation through the precinct; and proposed pedestrian streets complete the third degree of access from the pavement.

Existing social development services and initiatives such as crèches, schools, colleges, churches, a police station and recreational facilities - are relevant to the endeavours of the proposed intervention of the O.T & Rehab. Centre. Most strikingly similar to the ideals of the Centre are the MES impilo health and wellness centre and the Lutheran Church Community Program, as these endeavour to achieve holistic wellbeing for the Hillbrow community. (www.joburg.org.za)

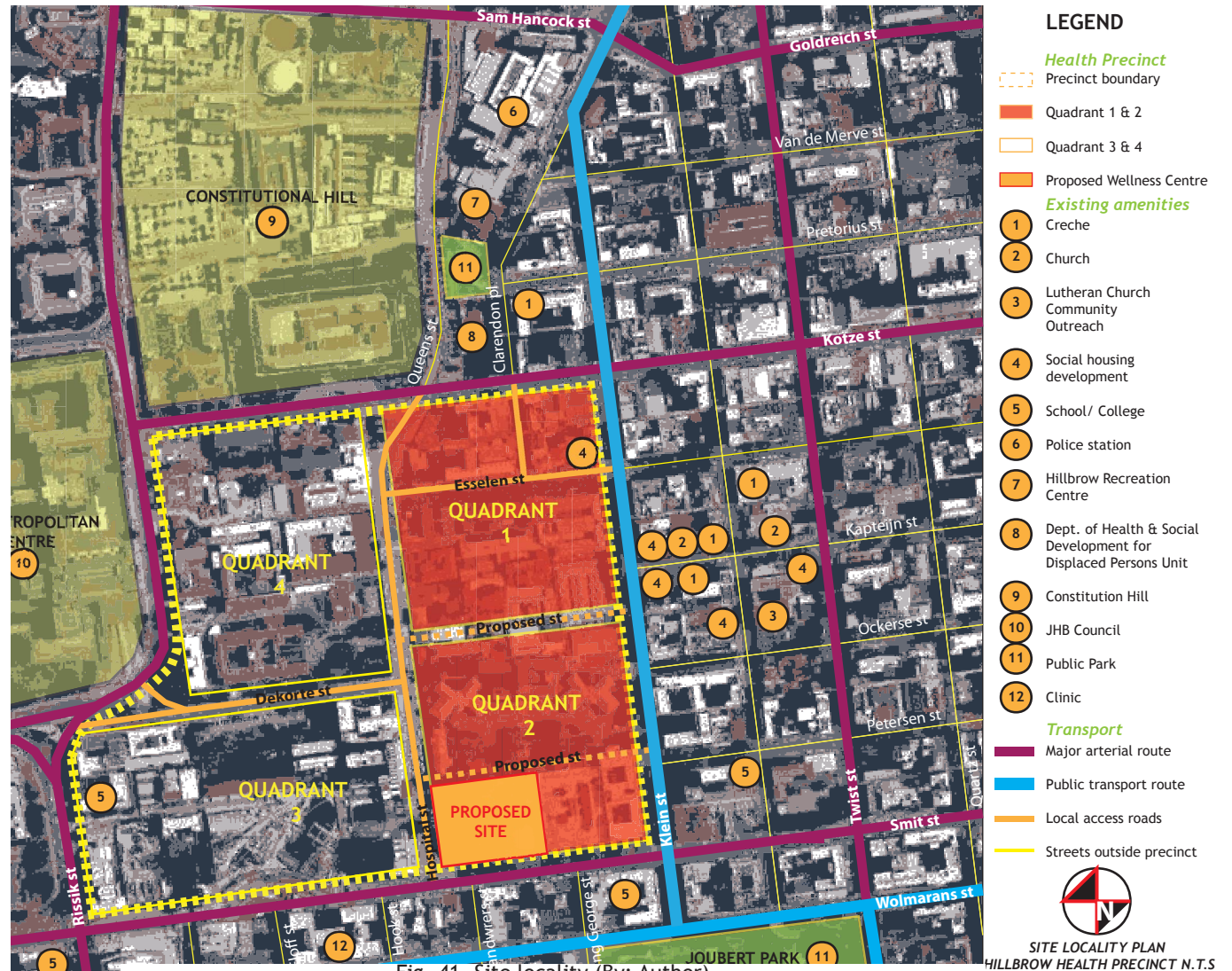


Fig. 41. Site locality (By: Author)

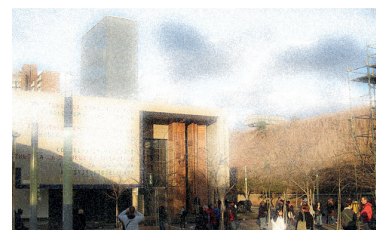


Fig. 42. Constitutional Court
(www.freecourseware.uwc.ac.za)



Fig. 43. Joubert Park
(www.joburg.org.za)



Fig. 44. MES Assessment Centre
(www.mes.org.za)

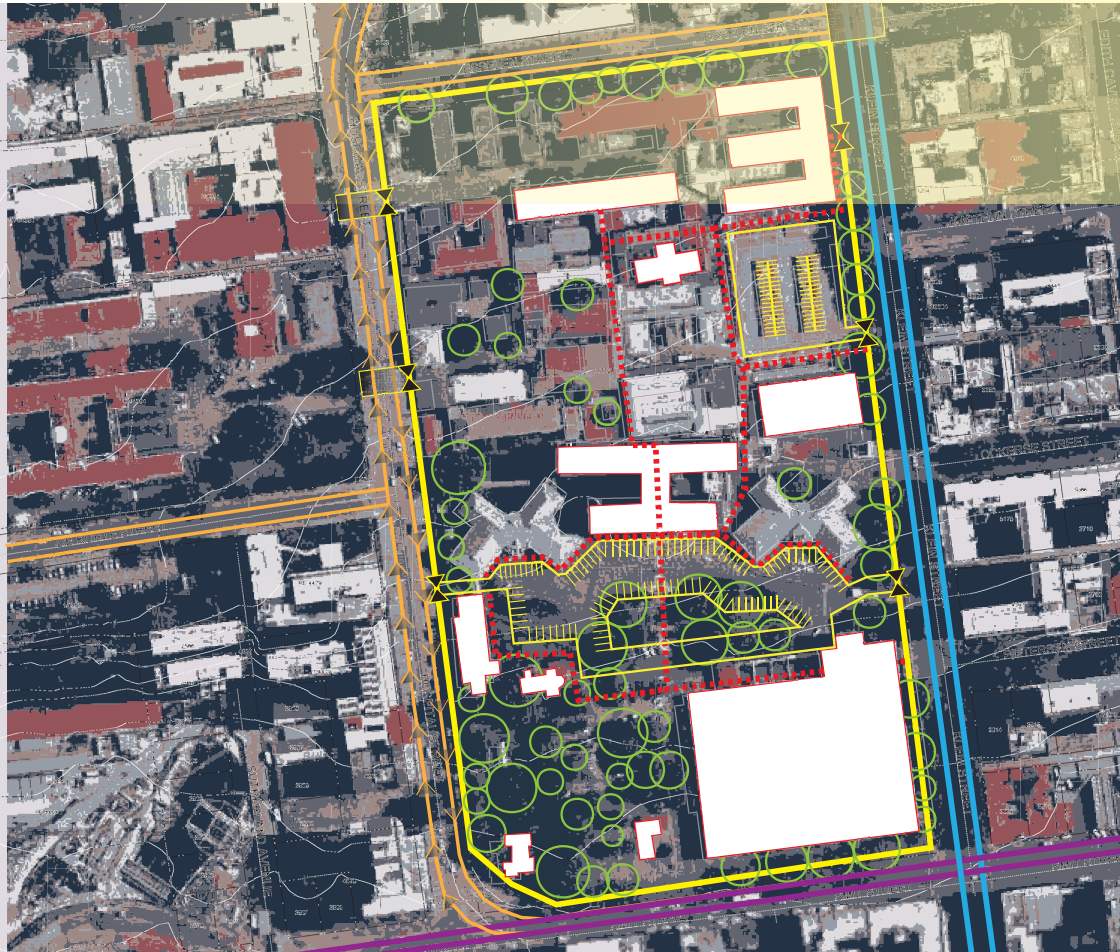


Fig. 00. Site context analysis (By: Author)

EXISTING SITE DEVELOPMENTS

The site is a dense conglomeration of buildings where many of them are in a dilapidated state, due to neglect over recent years. There however pockets of development which have pioneered the envisioned full restoration and development of the site in the future. In Quadrant 1, there is the Wits Reproductive Health Institute (WRHI) - which facilitates the administrative headquarters of the organisation. The Community Care Centre provides psychosocial care and support to individuals and families infected and affected by HIV. Ward 21 is the world's largest non-hospital antiretroviral treatment site, serving over 4000 patients a month with life-saving antiretroviral therapy. The Shadukani project is a most recent development which is exemplary in the subject of the conservation and reuse of existing heritage building stock in the precinct. It includes services which deal with HIV/AIDS; TB; maternal and child health; infectious diseases; reproductive health; and social science. Research is a pivotal aspect, which spearheads the community outreach endeavours of the Shadukani project(www.wrhi.ac.za)

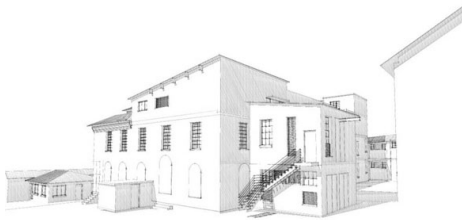


Fig. 45. Shadukani view from courtyard (www.breathingnewlifeintohillbrow.co.za)

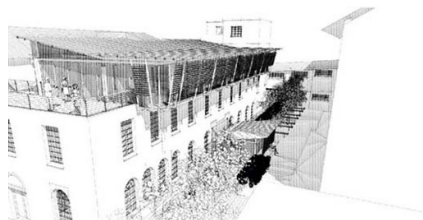


Fig. 46. Shadukani Aerial view



Fig. 47. View from Hugh Solomon Building



ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ON SITE:

THE CHURCH BUILDING

There is not much information available about the history of the chapel on site, however it can be compared to similar religious building of the period along Johannesburg's timeline. One such example is the Friedenskirche Lutheran Church.

“In the middle of the bustle of Hillbrow, the inner city highrise residential neighborhood of Johannesburg stands the Friedenskirche -Church of Peace. In the concrete jungle of the most densely populated area of South Africa, this national monument and the areas of garden around it invite to quiet and peace-a green oasis of contrast to its surroundings. An estimated 120,000 people live within a few square kilometers in the flat buildings, the hotels and on the streets. Now notorious for its crime and social problems, Hillbrow is and has always been a cosmopolitan centre, a magnet for people from around the world who come to Johannesburg, the city of Gold, and a hot-spot of social developments.

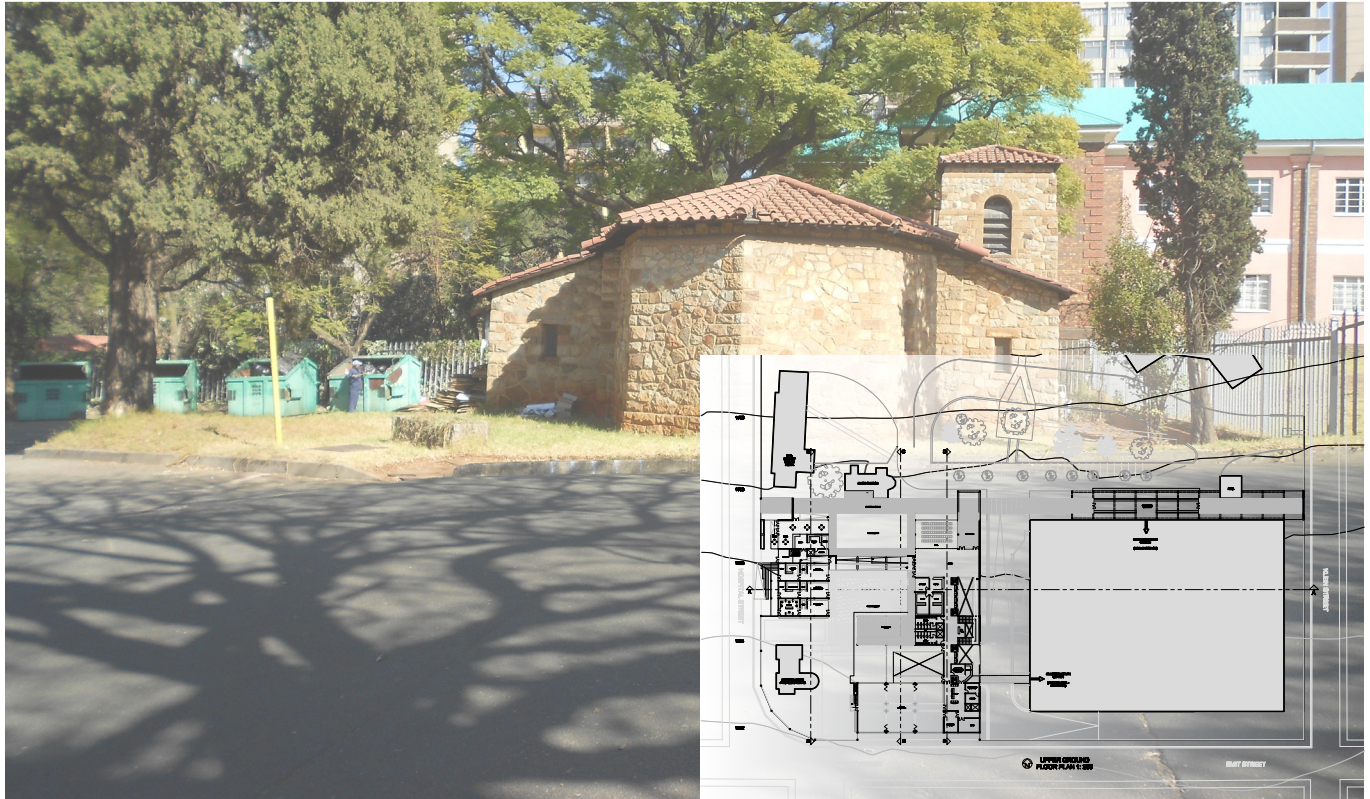


Fig. 48. East elevation of stone chapel (Author, 2013)

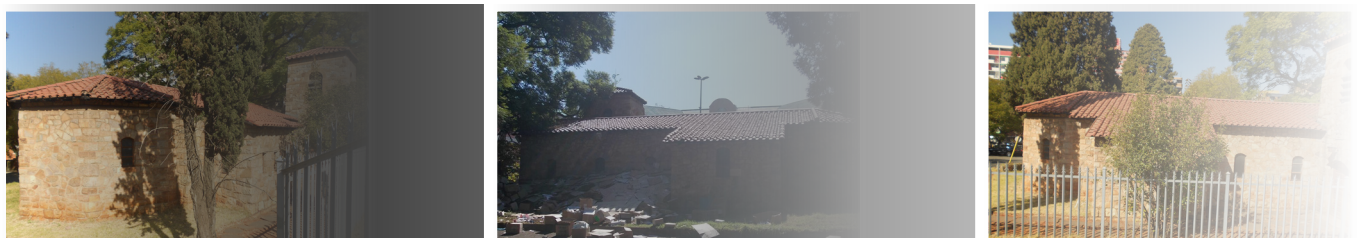


Fig. 49. Perspective views of stone chapel (Author, 2013)



Fig. 50. Lutheran Friedenskirche (www.blueplaques.co.za)

The Friedenskirche congregation was founded in 1888, shortly after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, to minister to German-speaking Protestants, and give the German community a home in a foreign country. Particularly during and after the world wars, the congregation demonstrated its commitment to minister to the religious and social needs of this community and to be a visible sign of peace in Johannesburg. The present Church was built in 1912 in Romanic style, with some Cape Dutch features added. It is one of the oldest, best-preserved Church buildings still in use in Johannesburg, and was declared a national monument in Hillbrow beside the Old Fort. The funds to construct it came from the congregations, supporters in Germany, amongst whom the Prussian royal family figured notably, and the German-speaking Jewish community businessmen in Johannesburg. A trust to provide for maintenance needs has been established” (www.elcsant.org.za)



THE FORMER SUPERINTENDANT'S HOUSE

Not much information is available about the history of this house, except that it is situated on one of the more prominent sites of the 1980's. This former superintendent's house, now suffers neglect and possible threats of demolition. Recently there have been plans from the Provincial Government to proceed with the demolition of this historic relic, but there is opposition from the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation and other relevant parties (including Johannesburg citizen).

"The Johannesburg Heritage Foundation (JHF) vehemently opposed the plans pointing out that the house was identified as one of the 100 sites of great significance to the City in 1986. The Foundation also emphasised the important architectural features of the house and highlighted its landmark position on Smit Street. The JHF went on to question how the owners could get away with demolition by neglect for so long." (www.heritageportal.co.za)



Fig. 51. East elevation of former superintendent's house (Author, 2013)



Fig. 52. Perspective views of superintendent's house (Author, 2013)



Fig. 53. Double volume inside superintendant's house (Author, 2013)

A TUDOR-STYLE BRICK HOME

“Tudor house plans are inspired by building techniques from the medieval era. The Tudor Revival caught on in America during the 1920s and 1930s. Rustic and romantic, these charming homes feature steeply pitched roofs with prominent cross gables. The gable ends and sometimes the upper stories are embellished with decorative half-timbering (a pattern of wood beams set against a stucco surface) combined with walls of brick, stucco, or stone. The massive chimneys common in Tudor home plans are often made of patterned brick or stonework and capped with decorative chimney pots. Sunlight streams through tall windows arranged in groups of three or four, often with small diamond or rectangular panes. Tudor style house plans often feature a front entrance surmounted by a rounded Tudor arch, giving them a storybook appearance.” (www.dreamhomesource.com)



Fig. 54. Perspective views of superintendant's house (Author, 2013)

