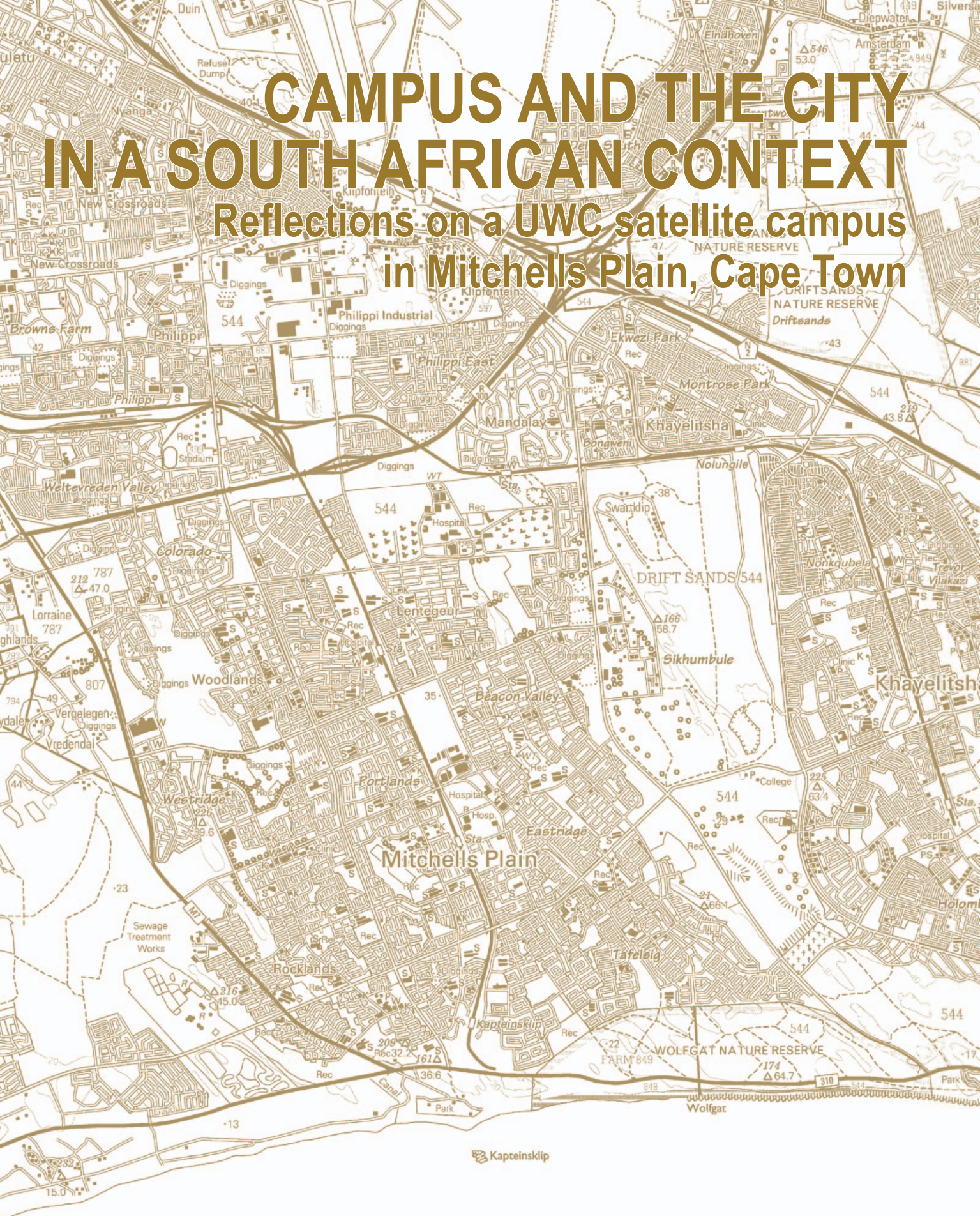# CAMPUS AND THE CITY
IN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT
Reflections on a UWC satellite campus
in Mitchells Plain, Cape Town

by Eva De Bruyn

Campus and the City in a South African Context.
Reflections on a UWC satellite campus in Mitchells Plain,
Cape Town.

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CAMPUS AND THE CITY
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PREFACE

The initial intention of this thesis was to find out in what way the UWC faculty in Mitchells Plain - a dense township in Cape Town - influences its surroundings, how it interacts with the local community and what lessons can be learned from this particular case to develop a strategy for future satellite campuses. However, by conducting fieldwork in and around the Mitchells Plain campus, it became evident that there is surprisingly little interaction. From the moment we arrived, we were advised not to leave the building or linger at the entrance. Our questions on what is 'outside' were answered with a clear "*we don't go there*" by both staff and students. Nevertheless, we perceived the town centre as one of the few lively places we found on the Cape Flats and although not always safe, it has an urban feel and an active community. Therefore, my focus shifted: Mitchells Plain would not serve as case study to develop a scenario for other sites; it would become the site to work on.

In conversations with the institutional planning department, it became apparent that developing ideas for an improved integration of the Mitchells Plain campus with its surroundings is not on the current agenda. There is an intention of buying more land adjacent to the existing building, but this is regarded as "*a land bank*" rather than an opportunity.[1] Staff of the residing faculty nonetheless acknowledges the potential of the site, as it is located in the heart of a dense community, neighbouring one of the most important transport nodes of the Cape Town Metropolitan Area.[2] This thesis therefore seeks to put the potentially interesting campus higher on the agenda of both the university and the City planning department. The objective of the work is twofold. On a more specific level, the aim is to start a polemic discussion on how the university campus in Mitchells Plain can be developed as a positive campus, as an investment of UWC that benefits both the university and the community. Three design scenarios intend to feed the discussion about the desirability and implications of a satellite campus in a deprived community. Secondly, the general undercurrent throughout the thesis is the search for an alternative to prevailing tendencies of urban design in the context of South African townships. The overall structure and issues of the studied township and the importance of local partnerships in urban design will feed the proposed scenarios.

It is important to understand that my position as an outsider and a Belgian student coloured my view on the South African context. At the same time, I believe this allows to perceive things differently and to propose actions that are considered unrealistic by those that are confronted with the South African reality on a daily basis. I believe a certain form of naivety is crucial to shed new light on ongoing discussions. Reflecting on a two-month stay in Cape Town, our general impression can be summarized by a series of tensions, between visions and actions, the planned and the built, the public realm and the 'gated' city, tolerance and fear, international prestige and local engagement, etc.

In what follows, I will specifically focus on the township of Mitchells Plain to explore these perceived tensions and their spatial implications. The introduction will delineate the spatial issues of UWC, both in general terms as specifically for the Faculty of Dentistry that resides in Mitchells Plain. The premise that forms the base of this thesis, namely the potential of a satellite development, will be outlined. The studied satellite campus will briefly be discussed as to sketch the current situation and intentions.

The first part of this work studies the evolution of Mitchells Plain from the planned township over actual implementation to the current appropriation of space by residents. Analysing the city structure in each of these phases allows redrawing the spatial structure

as to emphasize those elements that are structural for the current functioning of the township.
This general structure of Mitchells Plain is then taken into account in part two, which focuses on Mitchells Plain's town centre and the presence of UWC in it. By mapping the town centre's problems and potentials, three spatial strategies for the development of the centre are discerned. In each of these, the possible role of UWC is explored and the implications of this model for the UWC campus are visualised by concrete projects.
The designs are spread throughout part two, as they are not intended to offer a final solution but aim to feed the debate around the questions that should be on the agenda of the university's and city's planning department.

1. Larry Pokpas, conversation held in Cape Town, 6 September 2011.

2. Neil Myburgh, conversation held in Mitchells Plain, 13 September 2011.

INTRODUCTION

Satellite campuses in the search for an urban anchoring

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) profiles itself as an institution on the edge of *"two worlds that define the South African context: a highly developed technologically advanced world and an underdeveloped world". "Many institutions are either located in the one or the other world or have the choice - the luxury - to choose between the two worlds. (...) We operate deliberately in the space which is the tension between those two worlds."*[3] Because of its establishment in the 1960s as a university for the coloured community and its important role in the struggle for equality, UWC has always been committed to the disadvantaged population of the Cape Flats. It intends to take on a role of urban actor and socially engaged university by means of 'outreach projects' while simultaneously developing 'a centre of excellence'. In this search, the university is faced with its spatial context, surrounded by industrial areas and undeveloped sites. In order to establish a more urban context and a community to engage with, UWC wishes to develop its immediate surroundings, specifically the Transnet site, into an environment that would be more conducive to the university's aspirations. In 'UWC Off Campus Catalogue', a scale comparison of the site with the centres of Cape Town and Ghent illustrates the enormous scale of this development. It is therefore doubtful that a development of the complete site can be steered by UWC.

Instead of directing towards an urban development around its own campus, I want to argue that a model of satellite campuses could offer a more viable potential for the embedding of the university in an urban environment. Furthermore, the seeds for this spatial strategy are already present today. Firstly, UWC's student population is particularly characterized by its diverse origin. Because of the foundation of UWC as the sole coloured university in the Western Cape, students are still drawn from various parts of the peninsula. Recent data on students' home addresses indicate that, except from those on campus, the majority does not reside near Bellville, but in the townships of Mitchells Plain (1008 students), Athlone (928 students) and Lavenderhill (802 students), all situated over 15 kilometres from the main campus.[4]

Secondly, UWC already holds some satellite campuses or buildings, as is mapped in the first part of our research, 'UWC off campus catalogue'. The origin of these satellites is diverse and, most importantly, is not directed by a global and long-term vision. Students generally appreciate these off campus sites, but explicitly state the lack of facilities that offer a valuable student life, such as spaces for social and extra-curricular activities. The current lack of an overall vision concerning the development of these satellites has resulted in a rather ad-hoc planning that mainly responds to pressing needs, not opportunities. Nevertheless, the mapped sites offer great potential in terms of community engagement, research potential and urban surroundings.

Thirdly, over the past years the university has set up a large number of widely recognized outreach projects. In my opinion, this is a true strength of UWC and should be reinforced. With the exception of the dentistry faculty, the current outreach projects are of temporary nature. They typically take place on weekends and count on voluntary participation of students and staff. The location and reached community varies for each project. A spatial base could form the incentive for a more profound and long-term engagement with specific communities.

Moreover, by establishing satellite campuses in those areas that interest UWC in light of community services, outreach becomes an integral part of the university's programme. *"Rather than isolate the service mission of the university through discrete activities and programmes of 'outreach' and 'extension', it is becoming redefined as part of the core of activities of an engaged university"*[5] A UWC satellite campus in a deprived community can form

the starting point for academic research on the Cape Flats in various research domains. Outreach will thus become one of the research niches in which the university excels and can form the identity with which UWC wishes to receive international recognition.

UWC Oral Health Centre in Mitchells Plain

In what follows, I focus on UWC's satellite in the township of Mitchells Plain because of its exceptional location and unconventional functioning within the university's network. Its outreach project is one of the few long-term community engagements UWC has set up thus far. Nevertheless, it will be illustrated that the current situation offers little interaction between the university and its surroundings. Located in the heart of the town centre of a coloured township, 20 kilometres from the main campus, this satellite raises questions about safety, autonomy, mobility and accessibility and could therefore shed a different light on a development strategy for the University of the Western Cape.

Establishment of a satellite

It seems like an odd choice to locate part of a faculty 20 kilometres away from its other campus. The history of the Faculty of Dentistry explains the move to Mitchells Plain as a desperate, yet strategic one. To complete the puzzle this history formed, we conducted a series of interviews, with the dean and former dean of the faculty, the responsible for the Mitchells Plain campus and former rector Jakes Gerwel, who each had a different story. Combining these stories with official documents and newspaper articles made it possible to formulate a coherent chronology.

When the faculty was founded in 1974, its facilities were located on the Tygerberg hospital campus, a highly segregated site, where coloured UWC staff could not move freely, even within the premises. In 1992, the faculty had to move out of the Tygerberg building. *"UWC faced an ultimatum to leave Tygerberg or close down. Instead, with profound material support from the UWC Rectorate, Dentistry established itself in Mitchell's Plain in the period 1992-2004"*[6] is the explanation given by Neil Myburgh, professor of Dentistry and responsible for the Mitchells Plain site. The departure of UWC from Tygerberg is thus found an involuntary one, yet offered a solution to the difficult position on the Tygerberg site. Larry Pokpas states that *"the situation [of racial segregation] was embarrassing, we had to move out"*[7] and former rector Jakes Gerwel described Tygerberg as a condition in which *"UWC was almost what we call 'bywoners', squatters, on an Afrikaner site."*[8] This resulted in an aspiration of the university to profile itself differently from the Stellenbosch dental faculty, by means of a strong focus on community engagement.

Consequently, the potential of buying part of a hospital in the heart of a deprived township was immediately recognized. *"There's about a million people in Mitchells Plain and a million more in Khayelitsha. That's where the real needs are, not in Tygerberg."*[9] This new location offered UWC the possibility to provide dentistry services to patients as part of the students' practical training. Up to today, residents of Mitchells Plain can receive dental care at the 'Mitchells Plain Oral Health Centre' charged according to their income. Consequently, a large share of the faculty's expenditure is subsidised by the government's Department of Health, as it constitutes a form of community health service.

The Faculty of Dentistry was thus located solely in Mitchells Plain, until 2004, when a national merging of all dentistry faculties resulted in a single Faculty of Dentistry in the Western Cape, assigned to UWC.[10] Consequently, the current student population of Dentistry partly consists of former Stellenbosch students, mostly coming from a white upper class. This makes Dentistry a very unconventional faculty within the university, as the total white student population at UWC is only 600 on a total of 18.000 students.[11]

3. Larry Pokpas, conversation held in Cape Town, 6 September 2011.

4. Based on a database of student addresses in 2011 provided by Vincent Morta at UWC.

5. David C. Perry and Wim Wiewel, *The university as urban developer : case studies and analysis*, Cambridge, Mass.: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2005.

6. Premesh Lalu and Noëleen Murray, *Becoming UWC: reflections, pathways and unmaking apartheid's legacy*, Cape Town: Centre for humanities research UWC, 2012, p. 102.

7. Larry Pokpas, conversation held in Cape Town, 6 September 2011.

8. Jakes Gerwel, conversation held in Cape Town, 12 October 2011.

9. Larry Pokpas, conversation held in Cape Town, 6 September 2011.

10. This decision was influenced by the post-apartheid government that had always been supported by UWC. The merger wasn't immediately accepted by the University of Stellenbosch, and led to a strong polemic in the newspapers. Neil Myburgh writes on this matter that 'merger' is just a euphemism for what it actually was, a takeover. (Neil Myburgh in: Premesh Lalu and Noëleen Murray, Becoming UWC: reflections, pathways and unmaking apartheid's legacy, p. 102.)

11. University of the Western Cape, *Annual Report 2010*, Cape Town, 2010.

The campus at Mitchells Plain represents a mix of higher-class students and students originating from townships like Mitchells Plain but who, unlike most of their community, have received the advantage of a good education. That this complex group of students is trained in a place where the latter originate from and the former never come into contact with, holds opportunities for creating a common ground, a middle group. It is this group of students that forms an interesting 'next generation' and that represents the stated *"tension between two worlds"*.

An island with a ferry

The Melomed hospital, where UWC owns two and a halve floors, is located on a very prominent place in the town centre of Mitchells Plain. As the entire township is characterized by single-story standardised housing, Melomed stands out with its seven-story building. Nonetheless, the presence of UWC does not reach further than the 'UWC'-sign on this prominent building. The university only owns the fifth, sixth and part of the first floor. The entrance is a small door in the central hall of Melomed Hospital, with a security guard and two elevators that go straight to the UWC-owned floors. Thus, on a spatial level there is no interaction between the faculty and it surroundings.

To bridge the distance between Mitchells Plain and the campuses at Bellville and Tygerberg, a UWC transport system is put up.[12] This shuttle is limited to one service in each direction per day, leaving students little opportunity to linger longer or leave earlier. Students are picked up at the residence in Tygerberg and transported to Mitchells Plain, where they are dropped in front of the entrance. The situation is best characterized as "*an island with a ferry*" as Gordon Pirie has put it.[13] In its return to the campus, the bus is empty. As discussed in 'UWC Off Campus Catalogue', the opportunity to deploy the empty ride back for transporting students residing in Mitchells Plain to the main campus should be considered.

Potential of the site

Today, the University seems to struggle with defining the importance of the Mitchells Plain site. It is financially interesting because of the government's subsidies for providing community services, it offers great potential for outreach activities, and students receive a hands-on training. Nonetheless, the area has the reputation of being unsafe, which has led up to the current isolated position of UWC in the Melomed 'tower'.

Discussing the possibilities of this site is a very actual concern, as the University has the opportunity to buy the adjacent parking lot to expand their facilities in the light of a growing student population. As a meeting with the heads of the Faculty and the institutional planning department[14] revealed, the University is uncertain if they should leave Mitchells Plain or invest to make it a better functioning campus.

Furthermore, the deprived township of Mitchells Plain is gradually being acknowledged by city officials as an important region in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area (CTMA). A map of population densities illustrates the relative size of Mitchells Plain's population in relation to the entire CTMA.[15] Investments in Mitchells Plain are on the rise[16], thus the early presence of UWC in one of the most prominent spots can be considered an advantage. The question then is: how can the university interfere in its surroundings and influence city planning in a more pro-active way? Which spatial strategies can be conceived that will benefit both the university and the local community?

Mitchells Plain hospital as viewed from train station
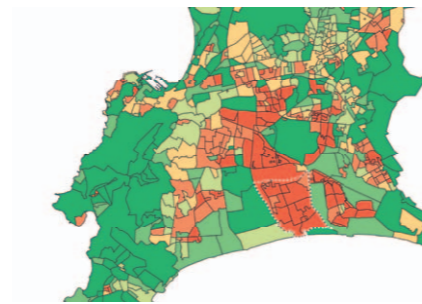
population density per km², extracted from GIS data per quantile (based on census 2001)
inhabitants per km²:

- 0 - 356
- 356 - 1441
- 1441 - 2321
- 2321 - 3709
- 3709 - 7225
- 7255 - 46509

12. UWC's transport services are discussed in our booklet 'UWC Off Campus Catalogue', p. 30-33.

13. Gordon Pirie, conversation held in Cape Town, 12 October 2011.

14. Meeting concerning Tygerberg and Mitchells Plain campus, Mitchells Plain, 12 September 2011. (Present: Larry Pokpas, Lois Dippenaar, Alex Robertson, Julian Elliot, Yussuf Osman, Neil Meyburgh, Eva De Bruyn, Ana Michelena)

15. Mitchells Plain (outlined by a dotted line) is not the only dense area in the Cape Flats, but is of significant size and is moreover planned and constructed as one coherent town.

16. Recent investments include upgrading programmes by the City of Cape Town and by the National Government, a 86.000 m² shopping mall, a 4-storey hospital and a privately funded mixed-use housing project.

Mitchells Plain

From garden-city to high-density township

INTRODUCTION

The township of Mitchells Plain was built in the 1970s as a dormitory town for the coloured community. Following the rules of apartheid planning, it was to ensure a strict separation of the coloured population from other racial groups in Cape Town.
Being the fourth largest township of South-Africa[17], the amount of research done on Mitchells Plain is surprisingly low. Most works deal with socio-economic issues and often look at Mitchells Plain solely in the context of gangsterism and drug abuse. This chapter aims to discuss the development of this township in spatial and ideological terms and is based on the analysis of planning documents, existing research and own fieldwork observations.

After a brief introduction on the context in which Mitchells Plain originated, its development will be studied by marking three phases: the original intentions with the underlying ideology, the actual implementation of the plan and the current rapid densification. Studying the evolution will make it possible to redraw the plan of Mitchells Plain as to mark those spatial elements that are crucial and that can inform the ensuing design proposals. The cartography for each section thus serves as a tool for analysis, parallel to the study of literature.

Forced removals under apartheid

Racial inequality and the development of apartheid in South Africa are firmly rooted in the colonial area.[18] Already under the British rule, laws were constituted that regulated black native movement and residence in the country. The Natives Land Act (1913) was the first law that regulated segregated living areas for the indigenous population. It defined specific 'native reserves' for Black communities and is thus considered as the first stage in drawing a permanent line between Africans and non-Africans. Later, similar regulations for urban areas were laid down in the Natives Urban Areas Act (1923) that required local governments to establish separate locations for black communities. This realised and justified by means of large-scale state housing schemes, funded by the central government under the Housing Act (1920). Although the Act contained no racial connotations, *"it was expected that local authorities 'will do their duty and provide for the coloured and native people within their areas'"*.[19] The complex judicial system of pre-apartheid segregation acclaimed to be based on administrative motives, without official racial connotation. It tried to *"impose racial segregation in a non-racial manner"*.[20]

It was only after the election of the Afrikaner National Party in 1948 that segregation on explicit racial base was formalized, resulting in isolated spatial structures and inbuilt inequalities in all facets of urban life. The Population Registration Act that was implemented from 1950 on divided the population in four racial groups: white, African (black), coloured and Asian. Consequently, this provided the authorities with the opportunity to determine strict living areas for each racial group within the city as was implemented by the Group Areas Act (1950). Achieving this racial segregation led to enormous forced removals for those residing in the 'wrong' racial zone.[21]
One of the most well known evictions took place in District Six, at that time a lively and racially mixed area near the Cape Town CBD.[22] In 1966, this district was declared as a whites only area because of its proximity to the city centre and the port. Sixty thousand people were forcibly removed and their houses bulldozed. Up to today, the site largely remains a void in the urban landscape. Many of the former residents later arrived in Mitchells Plain.

The Cape Flats, apartheid's dumping ground

In Cape Town, the relocations and subsequent urban segregation roughly meant that the central and western part of the city became a whites only area, while all other racial groups were transferred to the Cape Flats, an uninhabited and climatically hostile plain approximately 30 kilometres east of the city centre. Before 1960, this area was practically deserted except from the few farms in between the barren dunes.
From the 1960s on, the Flats became known as apartheid's dumping ground. Large-scale building operations established several new towns, destined to house the biggest number possible at the smallest expense. These government-built townships were merely dormitory towns, entirely dependent on Cape Town for jobs and services. In the 1970s, the majority of the Flats' inhabitants were coloureds, as the Western Cape was designated as a Coloured Labour Preference Area since 1955. The intention was to remove all Africans from this region and relocate them in the destined rural 'homelands'. This only changed in 1985 when the black settlement Khayelitsha was built and many Africans were relocated to the new township in an attempt to control illegal settlements.[23]
The term 'coloured people' eventually encompassed not only Cape Malay[24] and all people of mixed race, but also Indians and other Asians. Because of this broad definition of the coloured group, the newly established 'communities' were artificial constructions of apartheid's social engineering. They did not share a common past, which made it difficult to establish a distinct identity and sense of community in the townships. In many cases, this led to disrespect and low association with the living environment, resulting in high crime rates and violence.[25]

17. Information and Knowledge Management Department City of Cape Town, *A Review of Literature Emanating from and Related to the City Of Cape Town's Urban Renewal Programme*, Cape Town, 2006.

18. A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, 2nd ed., London ; New York: Routledge, 2001, p. 10-17.

19. Minister of Public Health Sir Thomas Watt, as quoted in: A.J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 36.

20. A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 30-36.

21. Errol Haarhoff, "Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township," *ITU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture, Istanbul, Turkey*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2011, p. 188.

22. Originally established as a mixed community of freed slaves, merchants, artisans, labourers and immigrants (http://www.districtsix.co.za/)

23. A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 121-122.

24. The Cape Malays are descendants of the slaves imported into the Cape Colony by the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. They adopted the Afrikaans language, but are mostly Islamic. (ibid., p. 21)

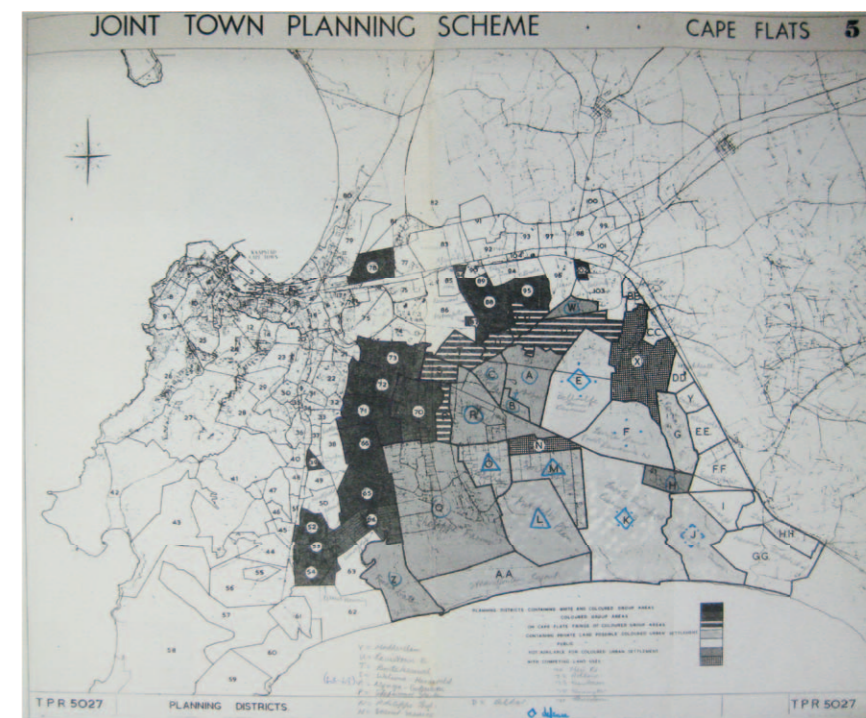25. Charlotte Lemanski, "Houses without community: problems of community (in)capacity in Cape Town, South Africa," *Environment and Urbanization*, vol. 20, 2008.

> *Town planning scheme for the Cape Flats indicating land considered for coloured group areas. The darkest areas (west) are districts containing white and coloured group areas.*
> *Mitchells Plain ('L') is described as 'private land possible coloured urban settlement'.*

— grid roads
- - - - - loop
·············· local neighbourhood roads
pedestrian green connections
suburban centre
density of 80 inhabitants/ha

26. Errol Haarhoff, "Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township.", p. 184.

27. Documents containing original maps, interviews with involved planners or text by planners were found in the archive of the Mitchells Plain library - a modest yet interesting loose collection of reports and newspaper articles on the construction of Mitchells Plain - and the Built Environment library of the University of Cape Town, where we found several folders containing pamphlets, reports and historical maps on urban developments in the Cape Flats.

28. Engineering department City of Cape Town, *Motivation to receive the award of 'most outstanding civil engineering achievement'*, Cape Town, 1980. (archives of Mitchells Plain library)

29. Ibid.

30. Noëleen Murray, *Designing the common: The Chamber of Commerce Group Housing Project at Belhar (unpublished paper)*, Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 2011.

31. David Dewar et al., *The structure and form of Metropolitan Cape Town: its origins, influences and performance (working paper)*, Cape Town: The Urban Foundation, 1990, p. 63.

32. Denis Mabin, *Mitchells Plain* (paper presented at the conference of the Institute of Housing Management, Durban September 1977). (UCT Built Environment library)

33. J.G. Brand, *Building a new town: City of Cape Town's Mitchells Plain of Work* (report), Cape Town, 1979. (UCT Built Environment library)

34. The neighbourhood unit concept initially emerged in the USA as an anti-urban philosophy that sought to promote an alternative urban living encapsulating the qualities of the village, which was thought to be more conducive to a stable family life. The inwardly oriented residential areas that would remind of small towns and villages was one of the main concepts that influenced the plan for Mitchells Plain.
David Dewar et al., *The structure and form of Metropolitan Cape Town: its origins, influences and performance (working paper)*, p. 33-35.

35. "Special Report Mitchells Plain," *Financial Mail* 5 May 1978, p. 7. (archives of Mitchells Plain library)

1. PLANNING IDEOLOGY

Little is written on the underlying planning ideals that have inspired the design of Mitchells Plain. In the following section, I want to develop the argument that Mitchells Plain is based on two motives: firstly the influence of British new towns and the neighbourhood unit concept, and secondly, the social engineering of apartheid-based city planning. We will see how Mitchells Plain perfectly answers the statement that *"the modern movement provided a rationale for advancing the programme of spatial segregation as a largely technical exercise that enabled the social and political contradictions involved to be sidestepped."*[26] The reconciliation of racial segregation with imported town planning principles that originally advocated positive social outcomes is a contradiction that characterizes the plan for Mitchells Plain. This argument is based on an analysis of the original planning documents[27], combined with newspaper articles from the 1970s and work by scholars, notably Noëleen Murray who conducted research on townships in the northern Cape Flats, Errol Haaarhoff who studied the appropriation of the modernist discourse in South Africa, Charlotte Lemanski who did extensive study on housing in townships and A.J. Christopher's book '*The Atlas of Changing South Africa*'.

Creating a middle class New Town

Mitchells Plain was designed in 1971 within the City of Cape Town's engineering department, with a significant influence of private consultants, architects and planners.[28] Several of the involved planners later became important figures within the Cape Town Planning department, such as J.G. Brand and David Jack who were responsible for the planning and construction of Mitchells Plain. The latter was to become the first City Planner at the formation of the city's planning department in 1986.[29]
A number of architects were invited to design sections of the plan, such as Roelof Uytenbogaardt, who later became head of UCT's architecture and planning department and played a key role in South African planning by developing *"an alternative urban vision and approach to planning, which proved to be highly influential in the post apartheid era"*.[30]

At that time it was estimated that the backlog of housing for the coloureds in Cape Town was about 30.000 dwellings, including some 7.700 for squatter families. On top of that, the City took into account the high growth rate of the coloured community and decided the establishment of housing for 250.000 people was needed. To get an idea of the scale of this development it can be compared with populations of long established South-African cities in the 1970s. Bloemfontein, the capital of the Free State and judicial capital of South Africa counted approximately 184.000 inhabitants; Cape Town then counted 740.000 inhabitants.[31] The brief for Mitchells Plain was thus formulated as a housing project aiming to house 250.000 people on a 3100 hectares land by the end of 1984.[32]

The neighbourhood unit

Prior to the development of Mitchells Plain, the emphasis for non-white settlements in the Western Cape had been on providing housing at the lowest cost possible, neglecting the provision of an interesting urban environment. The aspiration of Mitchells Plain however was to offer a counterpart to this tendency by creating a middle class township that would kickstart a cycle of upward mobility and would *"temper rebellion amongst the urban poor"*.[33] It was conceived as a 'model township' based on an interpretation of the 'neighbourhood unit'[34] and British New Towns of the 20th century. Especially the influence of Milton Keynes is evident from the plan and is literally referred to by consulting architect Revel Fox as *"the only other New Town of similar size, and planned and designed to similar standards as Mitchells Plain"*.[35]

1 km

civic centre
grid roads + 2nd order roads + pedestrian web

high schools
grid roads + local roads + pedestrian web

primary schools
local roads + pedestrian web

churches
2nd order roads

100 m

<   *Interpretation of the diagram for a typical neighbourhood (Westridge)*

Strategic plan for Milton Keynes, 1969:

- residential area
- employment area
- centre
- secondary schools
- open space

The city of Milton Keynes, designed in 1967, forms part of a third generation of British New Towns. It combined the coherent town planning of the first generation, such as Harlow, and the more urban aspirations of the second generation, which criticized the earlier New Towns for being anti-urban. Milton Keynes thus represents a strong reaction to a number of the earliest New Town principles such as the concentration of all services in the heart of the unit and the consequent centralized road system, which leads to congestion in the centre. The Milton Keynes road system is a hierarchically organized grid that avoids any specific centre. Wide arterial roads demarcate the separate neighbourhood units, which are inwardly focused and only have local traffic. The overall grid is slightly curvilinear as it follows the topography of the site. Non-motorised traffic is separated from the grid roads, allowing pedestrians to circulate safely without using any of the high-order arterials. Local facilities such as primary schools are situated at the centre of a neighbourhood cell, whereas shopping areas and other traffic-generating functions are located at the perimeter of the unit, for example on the crossing of two arterials.[36]

The initial plan for Mitchells Plain is clearly based on the same principles. Public facilities are grouped at major arterials. Neighbourhood units can be crossed by pedestrians using a secondary network of open spaces that cut through the residential areas. Each unit is developed differently, providing various forms of housing, including freestanding, semi-detached and duplex housing. Five suburban centres, one for each pair of suburbs, were planned, completed with one overall town centre in the heart of the township.[37] These suburban centres were to include shopping facilities and community facilities such as a library, a multipurpose hall and a clinic. A distinction was made between functions that might generate inter-suburban traffic and more local facilities such as a school and sport facilities, that had to be provided in every single suburb and were therefore located along the pedestrian green connections.

In order to define the relationship between different elements of the plan and the logics that structured it, I will briefly focus on the first built suburb of Mitchells Plain, called Westridge, because it followed the plan meticulously. As the analysis of its structure shows, a difference is made between functions that would draw traffic from outside the neighbourhood - civic centres and high schools -, those that generate some traffic, but mainly within the unit - churches - and functions that should be safely accessible by foot - primary schools. Every 'area' delineated by roads had its own primary school accessible by green spaces that formed an internal pedestrian network. Placing primary schools in each local area was seen as a tool to create a local community. Secondary schools were placed at the crossing of the pedestrian network with the road, as they tend to draw students from distant neighbourhoods. An elongated suburban centre along a major arterial road contained a community centre, an all-purpose civic hall, a family health care clinic, a library, a visitor centre, supermarkets, shops and offices.

The example of Westridge formulated directives to which all suburbs in Mitchells Plain were to be designed. Ideas that were generated in the plan for Mitchells Plain were used in several later townships, as it was generally accepted to *"represent a most significant shift in [urban design] thinking"*.[38] The collective places that were envisaged at Mitchells Plain in the form of linear spaces gathering community functions around them were to become an important aspect of the approach to urban design set out by Roelof Uytenbogaardt and the City's planning department from that time on.[39] Nevertheless, in Mitchells Plain as well as in the successive new towns, Uytenbogaardt's idealised public spaces and playgrounds have given way to dangerous and alienating open spaces. *"It is as if the modernist spaces of the South African new towns conceived under apartheid are not liveable"*, Noëleen Murray concludes.[40]

36. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, "Reflections on Milton Keynes," *Architectural Design,* vol. 64, no. 10, 1994.

37. "Special Report Mitchells Plain."

38. Nuttall, Jean, 1993, 'Roelof Uytenbogaardt', *Transvaal Institute of Architects (TIA) Journal,* Architectural press, Cape Town, November 1993, as quoted in: Noëleen Murray, *Designing the common: The Chamber of Commerce Group Housing Project at Belhar* (unpublished paper).

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

The ownership society

"*Mitchells Plain is an instrument for social transformation, cultural upliftment, educational advancement and hence human development. (...) It will provide the goals and incentives for the less privileged of the community to better themselves and pull themselves up 'by their own bootstraps'.*"[41] This statement by J.G. Brand, city engineer during the years Mitchells Plain was planned, illustrates a shift that took place in township planning in the seventies. 'The Cape Flats as dumping ground' was showing its side effects; ghettos of the urban poor were being formed along the edges of Cape Town, surrounding the city with an uncontrollable mass of people. It was acknowledged that something needed to be done to alleviate the poor's living conditions. Moreover, most new townships consisted of households that were forcefully relocated from every corner of Cape Town, thus lacking any shared background. To "*promote a community spirit of belonging*", Brand insisted on stepping away from the governmental subsidized rental housing and move towards more homeownership. Households were assigned a house on a repayment period of 30 years.

The emphasis on policies providing property titles to low-income households as a means of social upliftment has become a strategy common to governments throughout the global South, though not without critics. The integration of poor households into the capitalist economy by using state-subsidized homeownership is intended to provide poor people with an asset that can be used in a productive manner. "*The basic premise is that poverty-alleviation at an individual or household level is intrinsically linked to homeownership. In other words, government provides beneficiaries with their first step on the property ladder and then hands them over to the existing capitalist housing market in which they now have a stake, with the implicit assumption of market integration, upward mobility and collateral security.*"[42]

In contrast to other relocation township schemes, the marketing of Mitchells Plain did not focus on its high number of cheap dwellings for the thousands of homeless families; it was advocated as a modern and prestigious living environment, "*providing homes, not houses*".[43] The general idea was to establish a middle-class coloured community, entirely in line with the imported modernist models.

Apartheid social engineering

Township planning

In 1955, specific guidelines for demarcating the boundaries of group areas within cities were drawn up by the Land Tenure Advisory Board. These guidelines for the 'ideal' segregated town plan propose a sectoral pattern - created by dividing the land radially starting from the CBD - with blocks for each group that allowed for further extension outwards. The sectors were to be separated by 30 metres wide buffers of open land, complemented with rivers, ridges, industrial areas, railways, etc. The plan aimed to limit links between the racial groups, preferably with no direct roads between the different group areas.[44]
The guidelines were formulated in very practical terms, allowing for a meticulous implementation and a re-organization of South African cities over a short time span. They were incorporated in manuals for town planning, such as the guidebook for township planning by Floyd: "*Railway lines, main roads, rivers, streams and ridges all form separation media and these should be used as far as possible. Where no suitable feature of this sort exists, the Group Area Board may insist on a buffer strip. In the case of native locations buffer strips can vary from 200 to 500 yards.*"[45]
In practical terms, given the white dominance in the Advisory Board, some alterations were added to the plan: in virtually every city, the central zone was planned as white

newspaper advertisement *Financial Mail*, 5 May 1978

group area, while the other group areas were restricted to peripheral locations with little expansion possibilities. These guidelines reflect the model apartheid city as was applied in the whole country.[46]
Extensive new residential areas such as Mitchells Plain illustrate the far-reaching extent of governmental control over the detailed planning of the city. As the ideal plan proposes, Mitchells Plain was located on a peripheral location, with no expansion options. Up until today, the township is bounded by the Philippi agricultural area in the west, the coastline in the south, a buffer of protected dunes in the east and the R300 highway in the north.

The modernist discourse as justification

The rationale of the modernist movement seemed to provide the ideal justification for spatial segregation. By pointing to modernist planning and its positive outcome proclaimed by the New Town movement, apartheid constructions such as Mitchells Plain were justified by stressing the "*unique opportunities*" that would arise in these newly built "*prestigious surroundings*".[47] The first completed neighbourhood, Westridge, was used by the South African state as a showcase to illustrate the national township housing policy to international guests.[48]

In '*Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township*', Errol Haarhoff traces the early impact of the modern movement in South Africa and the emergence of close relationships between local and European protagonists. The spread of the modern movement towards South Africa appeared as early as 1928, when an architectural study trip by the University of Cape Town included a visit to the just completed Bauhaus in Dessau. Students from several other universities followed and soon became leading characters of the modern movement in South Africa. In 1938, a conference was organised by students at the University of the Witwatersrand, including presentations on Le Corbusier's work, modernist town planning and, most remarkably, hypothetical projects for a 'model native township '. This model was produced as a student thesis "*to demonstrate the application of rational, modern planning and design approaches*" on the prevailing practice of racial segregation.[49] It combined the overall structure of the neighbourhood unit ideal with concepts of Le Corbusier's Radiant City: the building units were conceived as large tower blocks, each with a primary school and a cultural centre, surrounded by green open space.[50]
In the 1950s, the formal appropriation of modern principles appears as a base to justify the state's mass housing programs. Under the commission of the National Building Research Institute, national standards for state funded housing were drawn up, with a specific focus on minimizing costs. The Garden City model was adopted to justify the peripheral location of townships and their separation from the city by 'green' buffer zones.[51]

The planning of neighbourhoods equally received a lot of attention in the housing standards, although it was stressed that "*in Native housing schemes, the first object is to simply supply shelter at minimum cost, and the second to create an environment conducive to living a full and happy life*"[52]. The remark that "*if such pedestrian access [to schools and playing fields] could be entirely free of any roads used by vehicles, then planning would be ideal,*" suggests the same influence of the neighbourhood unit as later applied in the plan for Mitchells Plain.

Although the plan for Mitchells Plain did comply to the national standards concerning dwelling units, it forms a special case in township planning because of its strong and primary focus on neighbourhood qualities. Adopting the model of New Towns such as Milton Keynes allowed for major investments in infrastructure that could not have been justified in the preceding native township planning schemes.

41.   J.G. Brand, Building a new town: City of Cape Town's Mitchells Plain of Work (report), p. 2.

42.   Charlotte Lemanski, "Moving up the Ladder or Stuck on the Bottom Rung? Homeownership as a Solution to Poverty in Urban South Africa," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,* vol. 35, no. 1, 2011, p. 58.

43.   "Special Report Mitchells Plain."

44.   A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 103-104.

45.   T.B. Floyd, *Township Layout*, Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1951, p. 204.

46.   A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 103-104.

47.   Newspaper advertisement in: "Special Report Mitchells Plain", p. 10.

48.   Engineering department City of Cape Town, Motivation to receive the award of 'most outstanding civil engineering achievement', Cape Town, 1980, p. 15.

49.   Errol Haarhoff, "Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township", p. 186-190

50.   See image in annex
David Dewar et al., *The structure and form of Metropolitan Cape Town: its origins, influences and performance (working paper)*, p. 50-53.

51.   Errol Haarhoff, "Appropriating modernism: Apartheid and the South African township", p. 190.

52.   Calderwood, D.M., *Native Housing in South Africa* (1953), as quoted in ibid.

━━━ grid roads
------ loop
··········· local neighbourhood roads
▓▓▓ suburban centre
░░░░ density of 80 inhabitants/ha

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IDEAL PLAN

This chapter will discuss how the stated 'ideal township plan' was implemented. It will reveal which crucial parts are left out and how the local context plays an important role in the success of its intentions, creating a tension between the ideal (imported) plan and the reality of the township.

A dormitory town

Although J.G. Brand portrayed Mitchells Plain as a "*self-contained viable addition to the Metropolitan area of Cape Town*", it remained a dormitory town lacking job opportunities, sufficient recreational facilities and social services. The origin of this deficiency can be traced back to the decision to establish another coloured township, Atlantis, 45 kilometres north of Cape Town. Both Mitchells Plain and Atlantis were initially conceived as self-contained new towns on the periphery, yet a significant difference existed between both townships as Mitchells Plain was the responsibility of the Cape Town City Council, while Atlantis was a national government initiative. Consequently, both areas were developed in competition with each other. The intent of Atlantis was to move heavy industry out of the centre of Cape Town while simultaneously ensuring that the factories had a ready supply of cheap manual labour, by relocating part of the coloured community there. By means of new legislations constraining the development of industry in metropolitan areas, industrial development in Mitchells Plain was disallowed by the government in order to promote Atlantis as a coloured 'decentralisation' point.[53] The success of Atlantis in relocating the coloured working class thus depended somehow on the 'failure' of Mitchells Plain in providing employment sites.

Despite the lack of job opportunities, Mitchell Plain was still intended to provide a "*full range of community facilities*"[54] As stated before, a suburban centre was planned for each pair of suburbs and on top of that, one main town centre.[55] Most of these have never been realised or remained the mere collection of a few supermarkets. Although the first completed neighbourhood Westridge followed the plan meticulously and thus included a town centre, it has devaluated and lost its importance as a centre on a higher scale than the local unit.
The failure of the suburban centres rendered Mitchells Plain far more monofunctional than originally intended. This placed large pressure on the main town centre, that would not only serve the whole area of Mitchells Plain, but also the even less serviced neighbouring township Khayelitsha.

Post-building investment

Economic and spatial marginalization

Several of the current issues in Mitchells Plain illustrate a gap between the initial intentions and the reality in which they were implemented, particularly in relation to the actual socio-economic context. The acute poverty in the area is one of those factors that were not taken into consideration in the idealistic New Town plan. According to the 2001 census, half of the population of Mitchells Plain is unemployed, with one third of households living below the poverty line.[56] As stated, job opportunities in the surroundings of Mitchells Plain have always been limited. Even in the few retail centres, shops were predominantly owned by national retailers who did not rely on local labour. The fierce competition with white-owned chain stores led up to the establishment of only a few locally owned businesses in the area.[57] Furthermore, because of a shift from a traditional manufacturing economy to a service sector economy with a focus on tourism, financial services and computer

53. The idea of 'decentralisation points' was put into practice since the 1940s. The main intention was to create industrial nodes in the homeland areas as to discourage African migration towards the city centres. Further legislation in the 1970s imposed constraints on the industrial expansion in metropolitan areas and also aimed to control the coloured population in urban areas.
David Dewar et al., *The structure and form of Metropolitan Cape Town: its origins, influences and performance (working paper)*, p. 68-69 and 79.

54. J.G. Brand, Building a new town: City of Cape Town's Mitchells Plain of Work (report).

55. "Special Report Mitchells Plain."

56. "Census 2001- Mitchells Plain," 2001, http://www. capetown.gov.za/en/stats/2001census/Documents/MitchellsPlain.htm.
Planning department, *Spatial Development Framework; Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain district plan*, Cape Town, 2011.

57. Cecil Madell, "Guidelines for the development of central business districts in townships in South Africa," in *Proceedings of the Planning Africa 2006 Conference*, ed. M.; Madell Cullinan, C.; Watson, V., Cape Town: South African Planning Institute, 2006, p. 15.

technology, the formal economy of Cape Town is increasingly unable to provide a significant number of jobs to the poorly educated and unskilled residents of the townships.[58] Whilst recent investments in Mitchells Plain reflect the changing perception of the area and a growing recognition of the business opportunities, these have mostly been in the form of shopping mall development rather than a mix of economic activity with greater job potential. Consequently, the only opportunity for employment lies either in the informal sector or in industrial sites as Bellville and Epping, at significant transportation costs.[59]

Administrative marginalization

Besides the economic and spatial marginalization of the Cape Flats townships, their administration was also kept apart from 'white' Cape Town. Together with the spatial segregation, each racial group was afforded its own type of local government, albeit with very different capacities and powers. Cape Town was divided in 69 racially based municipalities. Thus tax revenues were also collected locally. This formed a major problem for local authorities in areas such as Mitchells Plain, since the low income of its population and the small amount of formal businesses provided the municipality with little revenue. In 1996, governmental bodies in Cape Town Metropolitan Area were reformed. Six municipalities were formed, in such a way that every township was linked to a more affluent area in order to collect sufficient tax revenue to help redistribute resources. Nevertheless, this system cannot count for general support from the more affluent population who believe their money is spent in areas where each investment means an outflow of cash without any return.[60]

Urban environmental quality

As a consequence to the low tax revenues pre-1996 and the little support on township development post-1996, investments by authorities have been consistently low after the establishment of Mitchells Plain. This resulted in a general neglect of public amenities and of urban environmental quality. The intended common space and pedestrian web is not maintained and in many cases even never laid out as a valuable public open space, resulting in "*the exceptional blandness of the township landscape*".[61]

One of the results of the high-standard plan for Mitchells Plain is that certain amenities have been provided in abundance. It seems as if schools are overprovided in the original areas of Mitchells Plain and are provided with immense open spaces that were never fully laid-out. Certain centrally located areas in the town centre and around stations have been reserved for higher order development and are still vacant. Many of these underutilised properties still belong to the City, which presents both a challenge as well as an interesting opportunity for further development and densification.[62]

Moving up the ladder

In '*Planning Fictions*', Steven Robins wonders how "*city planners and officials came to believe that individual home ownership could dramatically transform the social fabric of a working-class neighbourhood characterised by exceptionally high levels of unemployment, crime, gangsterism and violence?*"[63] The 'ownership society' that formed the ideological base of Mitchells Plain did not have the intended effect on several levels.

First of all, the intention of Mitchells Plain to create "*good governance and virtuous consumer-citizens out of the raw material of bricks, mortar and 'the unruly masses'*"[64] did not take into account the lacking structural base of social and economic opportunities.

Secondly, occupants seemed unable to maintain their homes and pay for necessary costs. After receiving a standard house, they had to invest in plastering, floorboards, ceiling, bathroom appliances, etc.[65] This contradicted strongly with the requirement that households had to provide evidence of a low income to be eligible for state-funded housing. Furthermore, Lemanski's research in a Cape Town low-income settlement indicates that homeownership brings pressure to exhibit 'proper living' by purchasing furniture, electrical appliances and decorations that are not deemed essential in informal settlements, thus further increasing the financial burden of homeownership. "*Ironically, the inadequate income that provided qualification for a housing subsidy, constrains them from enjoying the financial and social benefits of homeownership.*"[66]

Thirdly, township housing does not seem to function as an asset for upward social mobility. The economic and spatial marginalization of Mitchells Plain undermined the ideal of homeownership as a means of cultural (and financial) upliftment. The intention that households could use their property as assets on the housing market did not coincide with the reality. Up to today, Cape Town's property market shows an extreme gap between subsidised housing and the next rung of private dwellings.[67] Although state-subsidized houses are considered a financially tradable asset, the small dwelling sizes and typically peripheral location have resulted in transaction values that are too low for low-income owners to secure upward movement to the next rung on the property ladder.[68] The majority of subsidy-beneficiaries are thus locked into a self-contained market. As a result, the social and racial polarisation resulting from apartheid policies has not been amended. The patterns of land economy confirm and contribute to the racial homogeneity of certain township areas. This persistent spatial divide is further intensified by current building operations. Despite the recommendations in the Spatial Development Framework to work towards a more evenly spread provision of low-cost housing, this document has no binding powers.[69] The high land and housing prices in all areas except the southern Cape Flats force low-cost housing developments to the same region that already consists of disproportionate poor communities.[70] The land economy thus confirms the historic segregated spatial patterns in Cape Town.

58. Steven Robins, "Planning fictions," in *Desire lines: space, memory and identity in the post-apartheid city*, ed. Noëleen Murray, Nick Shepherd, and Martin Hall, London ; New York: Routledge, 2007.

59. Planning department, Spatial Development Framework; Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain district plan, Cape Town, 2011.

60. Ivan Turok, "Persistent Polarisation Post-Apartheid? Progress towards Urban Integration in Cape Town," *Urban Studies*, vol. 38, no. 13, 2001, p. 2368.

61. Iain Low, *Space and Transformation*, in: Edgar (ed.) Pieterse, *Counter-currents : experiments in sustainability in the Cape Town region*, Auckland Park: Jacana Media, 2010, p. 211.

62. The last proposal in part 2 of this work will start from the potential of the vast open spaces to propose an integrated urban network.

63. Steven Robins, "Planning fictions," p. 21.

64. Ibid., p. 23.

65. "Special Report Mitchells Plain."

66. Charlotte Lemanski, "Moving up the Ladder or Stuck on the Bottom Rung? Homeownership as a Solution to Poverty in Urban South Africa", p. 71.

67. Catherine Lowe Besteman, *Transforming Cape Town*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008, p. 50.

68. In Charlotte Lemanski, "Moving up the Ladder or Stuck on the Bottom Rung? Homeownership as a Solution to Poverty in Urban South Africa.", Charlotte Lemanski assessed the South African 'housing subsidy system' using extensive data on property prices in a state-subsidized housing settlement in Cape Town.
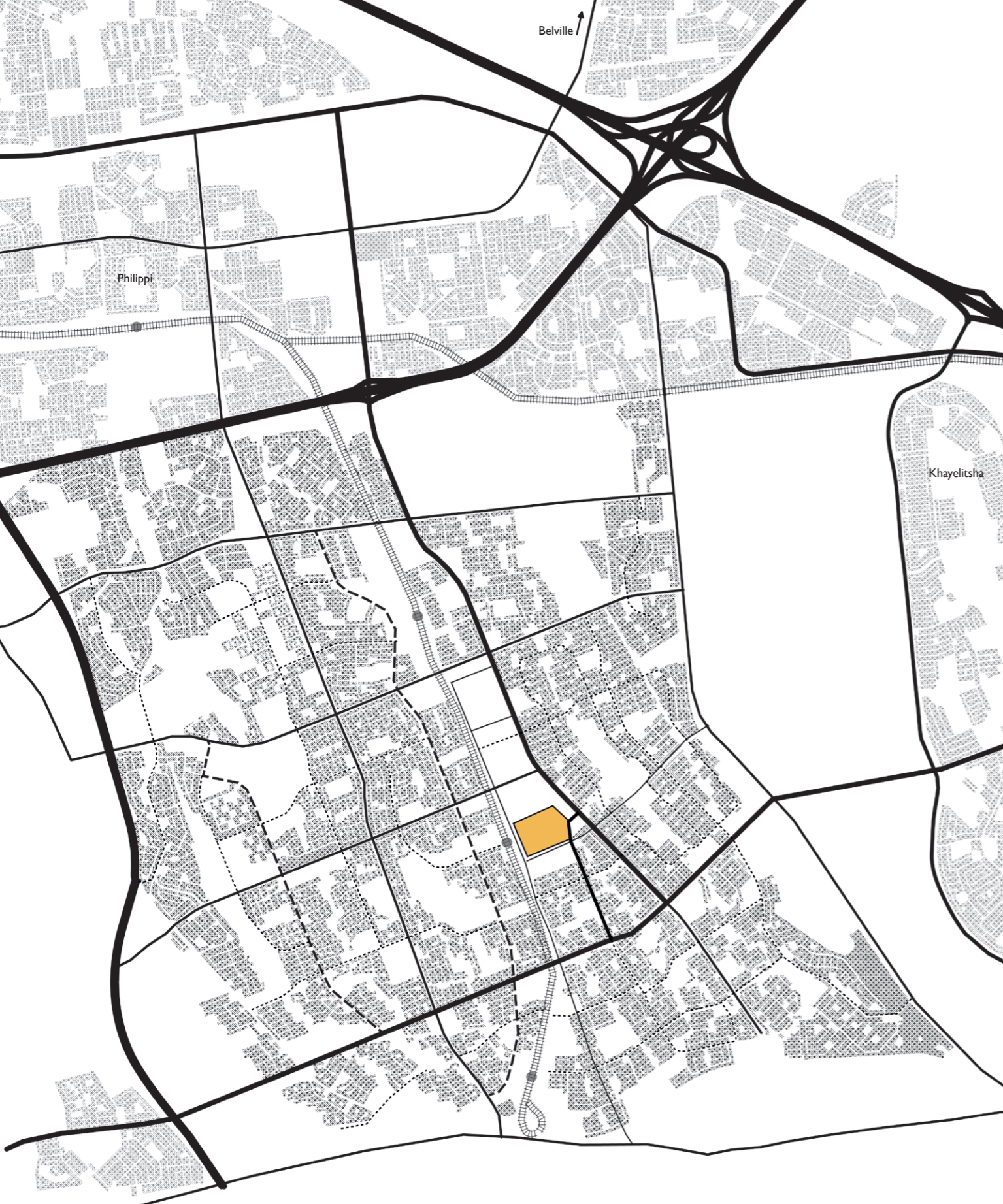
69. The Cape Town Structural Development Framework (SDF) is a long-term planning document for the entire Metropolitan Area, further divided in eight medium-term (10 years) District SDF's. The process includes several rounds of public consultations. The process towards a draft plan started in 2001 and was completed and approved in May 2012. It is the first large-scale planning documents after the apartheid era 'Guide Plans', but has little legal power. The documents are accessible via: www.capetown.gov.za/en/sdf.

70. Ivan Turok, "Persistent Polarisation Post-Apartheid? Progress towards Urban Integration in Cape Town", p. 2368.

Belville

Philippi

Khayelitsha

3. INFORMAL DENSIFICATION

As stated, Mitchells Plain's residents are mostly unemployed or underpaid, but generally own their house, which would by now be completely paid for.[71] Unlike the original intentions, this has not led to the emergence of a middle class with the potential of moving up the social and real estate ladder. Nevertheless, house ownership does present households the opportunity to exploit their plot, thus providing a means of (informal) income.

This chapter will study how this group of cash-poor landowners increases the asset value of their property by providing low-cost rental accommodation. It will be argued that there is a strong interdependence between formal and informal housing, which is generally ignored by policymakers. Nonetheless, it is exactly the failure of the formal housing market that forms the incentive for this type of informal subletting. Moreover, it will be argued that for the specific case of Mitchells Plain, this informal densification is made possible by the abundance of infrastructure. The phenomenon of backyard dwelling has been researched by Charlotte Lemanski and Vanessa Watson, whose articles I will compare to the specific case of Mitchells Plain.

Informal provision of rental stock

Despite the enormous housing backlog[72] and the large vacant plots, Mitchells Plain is less characterised by slum formations than the surrounding townships. Still, a fair amount of residents does not live in formal dwellings, but in backyard dwellings, "*a distinctly South African phenomenon*"[73]. Informal structures, comparable to slum shacks, are added to government subsidised housing by either the house owner or by tenants. According to Charlotte Lemanski, backyard shacks are typically erected by their occupiers, with permission of the landlord. She states the terms 'landlord' and 'tenant' give the wrong impression and are not common amongst residents, although both are often used in the literature. The relationship between house owner and backyarder are far more complex than is generally believed. Most backyarders are employed, whereas the house owner lives from the collected rents. There is an inherent contradiction in this situation as the persons more able to pay are actually living in poorer housing conditions. The abundance of dwellings with large vacant backyards in a planned neighbourhood as Mitchells Plain implies the landowner is forced to improve the tenants' living conditions or risks to lose his much needed rental income. This creates the remarkable interdependency of landlord and tenant. Therefore, rack-renting or slumlordism is less likely to be found.

Although this is true in the specific case of peripheral townships, the comment must be made that it is likely that conditions in centrally located residential zones will differ from the findings in Mitchells Plain. Residential areas near the Cape Town CBD are much sought after, which will give landlords the occasion to demand high rents for badly serviced shacks.

The preference of backyard dwellings over freestanding shacks

In Mitchells Plain, backyard dwellings appear as garage-like extensions to the house or as freestanding shacks in the backyard as well as in front of the house. Extensions to the front hide the facade's windows, rendering the house very introvert and thus lowering social control and interaction with the street.

Although most backyard dwellings are similar to informal settlement shacks in size and quality of the room, they differ in being located in a residential zone, thus offering shared services such as electricity and sewerage and a reduced threat of eviction.[74] In most cases, they are placed within the wall or fence, offering more safety than informal settlements.

71. The term of repayment was 30 years, with an average monthly payment depending on household's income. (Source: pamphlet in the archives of Mitchells Plain library)

72. In 2010, the estimated housing backlog in Cape Town was around 400 000 units, growing at a rate of 18 000 units per year.
Robert Mongwe, *Race, class and housing in post-apartheid Cape Town*, November 2010, retrieved from Human Sciences Research Council: www.hsrc.ac.za/HSRC_Review_article-221.phtml

73. Charlotte Lemanski, "Augmented informality: South Africa's backyard dwellings as a by-product of formal housing policies," *Habitat International*, 33, no. 4, 2009, p. 472.

74. The comment must be made that in some cases, tenants need to negotiate access to services through difficult landlords and the limited capacity of infrastructure is often insufficient for more than one family. Formal settlements have no provisions like communal sanitary facilities, unlike (upgraded) informal ones.

1 km

<   *zoom on aerial photographs of 2002 and 2009, showing the rapid densification process in Mitchells Plain.*

This has especially become important since the outbreak of xenophobic attacks in 2008, when frictions over local trade and governmental aid led to the murder of hundreds of foreign Africans in Cape Town's townships. For these reasons, the proportion of immigrant households living in backyard dwellings is growing faster than the proportion in informal settlements.[75]

Still, backyard dwellings are not cheap[76] and tenants are dependent on the goodwill of landlords, who often control the access to the street. Disagreements over rent or access to the toilet, which is in the main house, are common. Some victims of these arguments stated they stay in the backyards because they believe they will have the right to future state housing constructed in the vicinity.

As the location of Mitchells Plain is far from ideal in terms of job opportunities, there must be other reasons why this area is so popular with backyard dwellers. Firstly, the over-dimensioned infrastructure and large residential plots provide the perfect opportunities for backyard dwellers. Secondly, the issue of access to the backyard is solved in many areas of Mitchells Plain because of the pedestrian open spaces in between the houses. These allow a secondary entrance to the backyard and make it possible to fill the backyard with a maximum of shacks, invisible from the street side.

A hidden housing crisis

When looking at documents about Mitchells Plain, one notices that population numbers vary from 400.000 to one or even two million. The township was intended for 250.000 people with 80 persons per hectare, but accommodates now an estimated population[77] of 580.000 with 186 persons per hectare. It is thus surprising that housing is not high on the agenda in this area. Nonetheless, over-crowding is as much characteristic of Mitchells Plain as it is for typical slum-like townships such as Khayelitsha in Cape Town and Alexandra in Johannesburg, but due to its physical form, it is less evident and therefore less taken into account in urban policy. Backyard dwellings lack the mass visibility and collective force of an informal settlement. They are perceived as less problematic than slum shacks, although both share some of the same problems like a lack of tenure security, no formal residing place nor social security and bad building quality. Moreover, the excessive increase in housing density has placed significant strain on the existing services, in some cases leading to absent services.[78] The government's focus on eradicating informal settlements overshadows the situation of backyard dwellers.

In Mitchells Plain, backyard dwellers have undertaken several actions to increase visibility and awareness. They organised themselves in the Mitchell's Plain Backyarders Association and invaded a vacant land in Tafelsig in May 2011. By building shacks and tents on a plot of highly visible state-owned land, they raise the question on why the government only has attention for people living in slums while backyarders live in comparable circumstances. Slums on prominent locations, such as the illegal settlement next to Cape Town's international airport, are a thorn in the officials' side and are therefore high on the agenda for upgrading or relocation. Most of these slums' residents are recent immigrants, from South Africa or other African countries. The Backyarders Association believes they receive a subsidised house after a shorter waiting period than backyard dwellers. As the Mitchells Plain backyarders put it, they have all been on the waiting list for subsidised housing for more than a decade.[79]

75. Charlotte Lemanski, "Augmented informality: South Africa's backyard dwellings as a by-product of formal housing policies", p. 476.

76. Backyard dwellers indicate paying between R500 - R1500 per month. (Natasha Prince, 'Bricks and bullets fly in land grab', *Cape Argus*, 16 May 2011.)

77. Projected population for 2011 based on census 2001, extrapolates the trends between 1996 and 2001 (http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/stats/CityReports/Documents/PopulationProjection/Population_Projection_for_Cape_Town_2001-2021_1992006151750_359.pdf, document composed in 2005)

78. Lone Poulsen; Melinda Silverman, *Learning from our own backyard. Informal provision of affordable rental stock.* November 2011, retrieved 3 March 2012 from The South African Informal City Exhibition: http://informalcity.co.za/learning-from-backyard
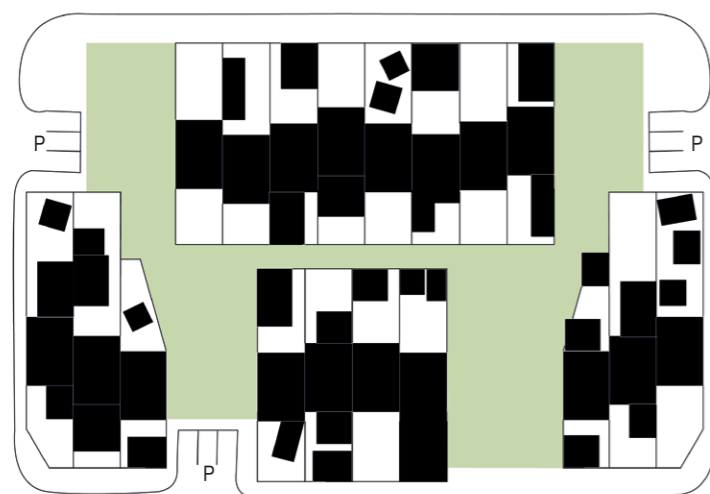
79. Natasha Prince, 'Bricks and bullets fly in land grab'.
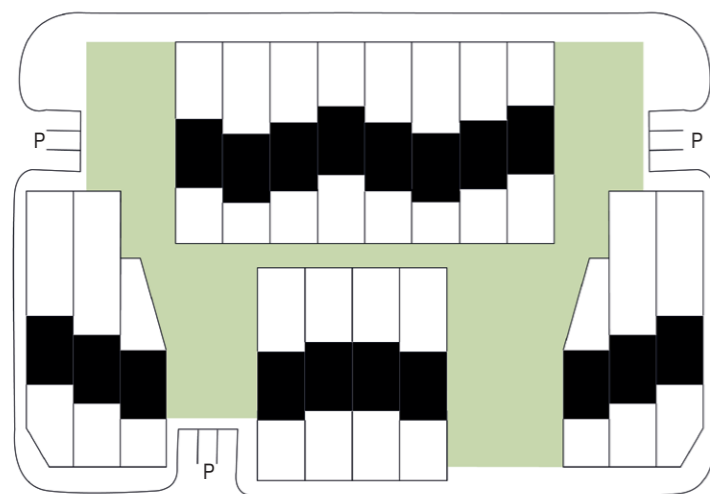
< *typical layout of 2-storey dwellings with front yard and backyard*
1. as planned
2. today

■ *dwelling units*
▨ *pedestrian web in between dwellings*

80. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is a policy framework implemented by the newly elected ANC government of Nelson Mandela in 1994 in order to address the socio-economic inequality resulting from the apartheid regime. One of its main outcomes is the construction of cheap standardised housing throughout the whole country. Because of the focus on immense quantities, RDP housing is known for being of extremely low quality, both in terms of building materials as design aspect and public facilities in the vicinity. They are criticized for being "*new zones of exclusion not unlike the informal settlements they are meant to replace*". (Luyanda Mpahlwa, *An experiment in innovative public housing*, in Edgar (ed.) Pieterse, *Counter-currents : experiments in sustainability in the Cape Town region*.)

81. Charlotte Lemanski, "Augmented informality: South Africa's backyard dwellings as a by-product of formal housing policies", p. 479

82. Ibid., p. 480.

83. Spaza is a South African term for a small informal shop, usually attached to a house.

84. Charlotte Lemanski, "Augmented informality: South Africa's backyard dwellings as a by-product of formal housing policies", p. 472-484.

85. Vanessa Watson, "Housing policy, subletting and the urban poor: evidence from Cape Town," *Urban Forum,* vol. 5, no. 2, 1994.

86. Although, this should not mean backyarders' situation is less alarming from a health-related and social point of view. As noted before, the fact that they are built on residential land has caused ignorance by policy makers.
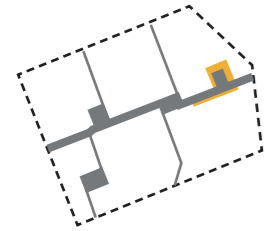
The roots of backyard dwellings in formal urban policy

A plausible explanation for scholars' observation that this is a uniquely South African phenomenon can be found in the formal housing policies. As stated, the township's density is extremely low due to a strong belief in 'pleasant environment creates a decent community'. The same goes for more recent housing programmes, such as the infamous RDP houses[80]. Both apartheid housing and RDP housing programmes favoured state-funded ownership above rental, thereby creating a class of cash-poor but asset-rich homeowners. To apply for an RDP subsidy, one must earn below R3500 (350 euros) per month. Research has shown that most recipients even earn below R1500, including some without any income.[81] Thus many households are unable to cope with the additional financial pressure of owning a house, such as electricity, water, furniture and taxes. The combination of the need for income and the presence of an over-dimensioned building plot explains the almost instant erection of informal structures in the backyard. The housing policy, that aims to eradicate informal housing, is actually creating the need and opportunity for more informality. "*The very poverty that gave households eligibility for RDP homeownership is the same factor that forces them to invite informal housing into their yards. In other words, a housing policy that seeks to promote formal homeownership is unwittingly promoting informal tenancy*"[82]

The strong interweaving of a formal and informal property market and the interdependence of both seems not to be taken into account by policymakers. It is clear that, in contradiction to the government's prioritisation of ownership, there is a demand for low cost rental housing. Officially, RDP beneficiaries are expected to use houses exclusively for 'living', not income-generation. Actual use of housing shows almost every house has some form of income-generator, be it a backyard room or a 'spaza-shop'.[83] The practice of backyard shacks is therefore "*a direct response to the failures of the housing policy to recognise poor people's poverty, as well as their uses and understandings of land and property*"[84].

Acknowledging the need for backyard dwelling

It is clear that, although the quality of backyard dwellings is often problematic, there is a demand for this form of accommodation. Lemanski concludes her research with the suggestion to stop policies that work anti-backyard dwellings and to supply low-cost residential areas with the necessary infrastructure to cope with the extra demands of backyard dwellers. Vanessa Watson states that the practice of subletting clearly demands recognition in policy terms, although "*the danger now appears to exist that subletting, as was the case with the 'informal sector' of the economy, will be seized on by governments as offering a privatised solution to the particularly thorny problem of assistance for the urban poor. (…) Subletting must be formally recognised within a national housing policy as one of a range of housing options for the urban poor. As such, state intervention is required in order to contain particular negative aspects but primarily in order to facilitate the operation of subletting as a functional and flexible form of accommodation.*"[85] Other research, by architects Poulsen and Silverman states the model of backyarders also offers potential solutions to some of South Africa's housing problems. Firstly, higher densities are required in some areas. This would generate higher thresholds for public transport and trade, making these services more viable. Secondly, the rental system means a house can function as an economic generator for its owner as well as supply much-needed low-cost rental accommodation. And thirdly, from a municipal perspective, backyard dwellings in a residential zone form fewer nuisances than freestanding shacks on unsafe land.[86] The remarkable fact that backyard dwellers actually form a higher - employed - class than the current residents can form an argument for the local authorities to tolerate this mode of densification and social mix while not ignoring it in terms of provision of services.

Mitchells Plain Town Centre

Spatial strategies

EXPLORATION

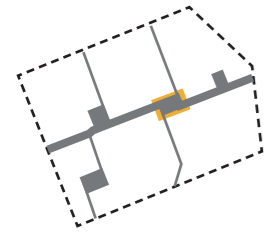Community library and Melomed/UWC.

Square in front of library

View from library to Melomed/UWC

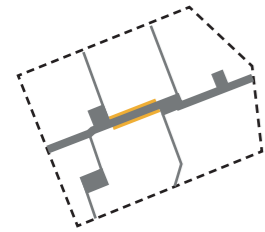Backside of Melomed/UWC hospital

Banks adjacent to Melomed/UWC

Fresh produce trading

Dilapidated residential flats, partly re-appropriated
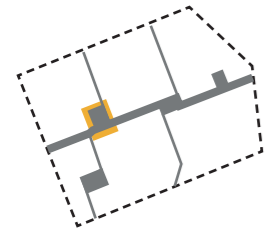

Typical small scale retail

Pick 'n Pay supermarket

Shopping gallery with cheap supermarkets
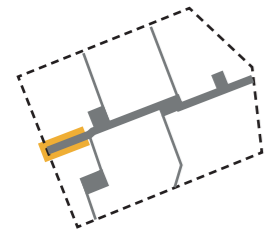
stairs leading up to the entrance of the train station

Pedestrian bridge giving access to the train station
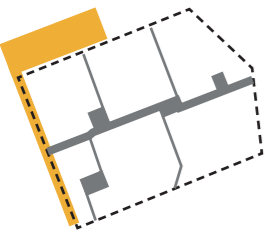
View towards entrance bridge to train station

Ground floor shopping mall in train station

Golden Arrows bus station

empty parking lots surroundin the town centre

new covered market

typical retail alley with (vacant) residential flats

Police station

Magistrates' court

vacant land facing Melomed/UWC hospital

parking area UWC consideres purchasing

blind walls

Urban Form

0 m 100 200 300

PUBLIC GARDENS AS IMAGE MAKER ON ARRIVAL BY CAR + AS VISUAL TERMINATION OF MALL

Commuter Parking

Civic Buildings

Bus Terminus

Town Square

Shops and Offices and Housing over

Shops and parking

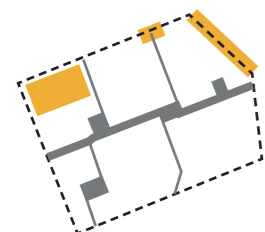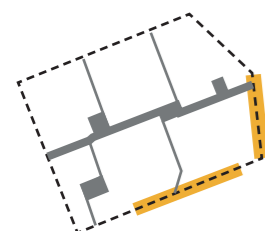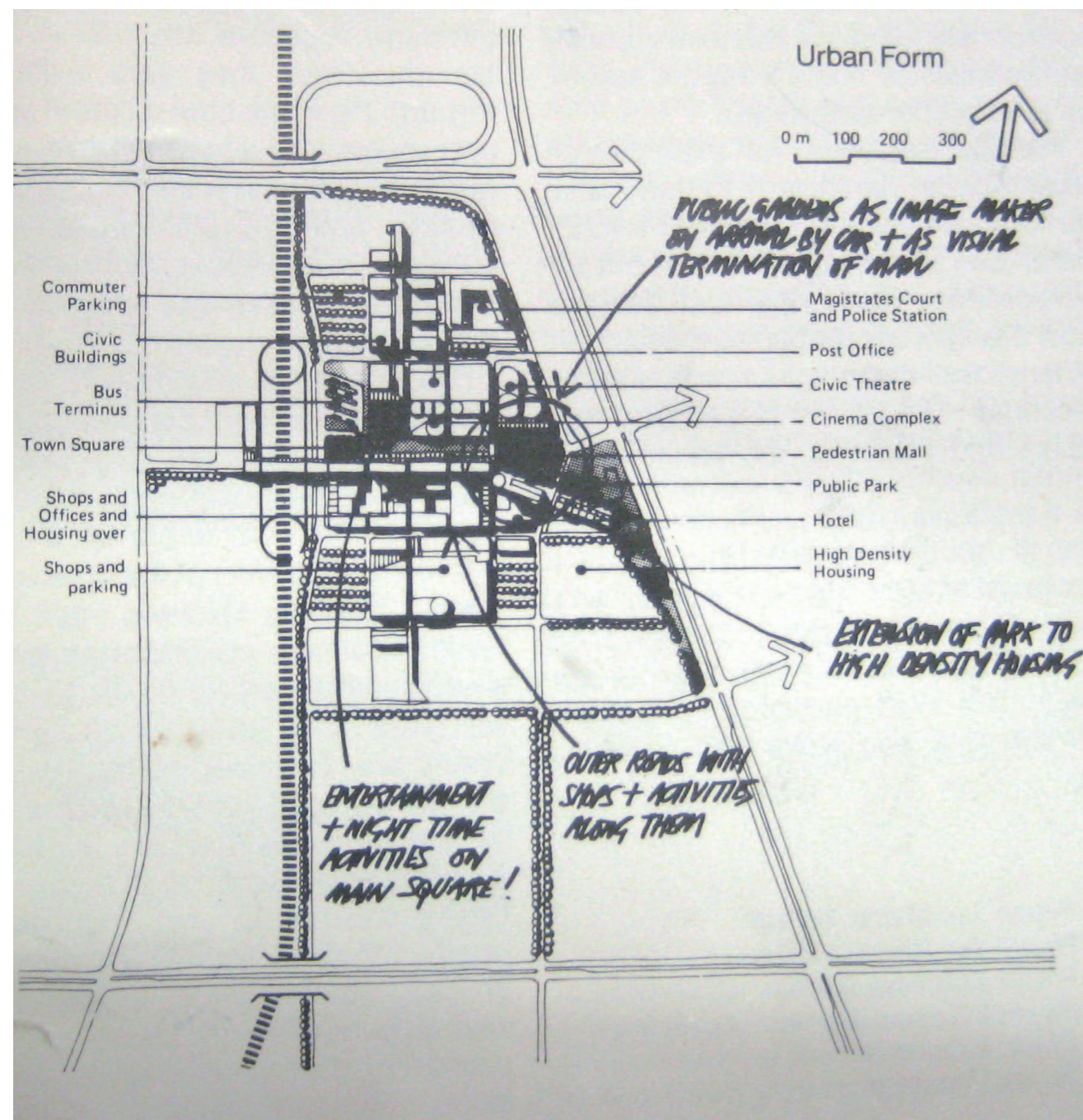Magistrates Court and Police Station

Post Office

Civic Theatre

Cinema Complex

Pedestrian Mall

Public Park

Hotel

High Density Housing

EXTENSION OF PARK TO HIGH DENSITY HOUSING

ENTERTAINMENT + NIGHT TIME ACTIVITIES ON MAIN SQUARE!

OUTER ROADS WITH SHOPS + ACTIVITIES ALONG THEM

< *town centre design by Michael Lowe, 1977*

Impression of planned Mitchells Plain town centre, 1978

Town centre of Cumbernauld, 1960

Mitchells Plain Town Centre in 1989

87.   Michael Lowe, "An architect's appraisal,"
Architecture SA, Autumn 1981. (UCT Built Environment library)

88.   "Shopping," *Weekend Argus*, 22 April 1978. (Archives Mitchells Plain library)

89.   A. J. Christopher, *The atlas of changing South Africa*, p. 129-130.

90.   Simonéh De Bruyn, *Town centre opened in 1980*, Plainsman 25th anniversary edition, 25 August 2004. (Archives Mitchells Plain library)

INTRODUCTION

Planning history

Of the five planned commercial centres in Mitchells Plain, only one is in operation today and is generally referred to as the 'town centre'. Its overall design was made by architect Michael Lowe, who composed the 'town centre development framework' in 1977. The intention was the "*creation of a focus or core to Mitchells Plain that would have a special environmental quality and character*"[87] in keeping with the overall aim of creating a middle-class coloured suburb.

The ambition of a central business district

The initial sketch shows a mixed-use town centre, with a far more diverse functionality than what we know today. It comprises a hotel, a cinema, a large civic hall, offices, high-density housing and a public park. In the core of the town centre, large open public spaces were planned. Where the present library is, a public park was intended as a finale of the pedestrian mall and as a facade when approaching the town centre by car.

The structure reminds of the town centres of Hook and Cumbernauld, classic examples of the second generation of British New Towns, where the town centre was conceived as one enormous superstructure in which architecture and infrastructure were integrated. The initial plan for Mitchells Plain's town centre reflects much of these examples. "*The basic concept for the Town Centre is a 280m long east-west pedestrian mall between the planned railway station and the public gardens. It will stretch through the commercial zone. A town square will be sited adjacent to the mall. The railway station will be bridged by a pedestrian deck extending from the mall. The deck will provide a novel entrance to the Town Centre.*"[88]
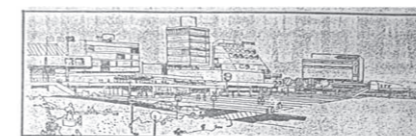
Six different architectural offices designed parts of the centre, which becomes evident in the differing architectural expression of building blocks. The plan made by Lowe only served as a framework and was therefore not strictly followed. When construction started in 1979, little was left of the original intention. Aerial photographies show how in the 1980s the pentagon-shaped centre already resembled the current state. All community and business activities were located on the north-eastern edge, where high-density housing was originally planned. The pentagon is reduced to a pedestrianized open-air shopping mall, that suffers from a lack of activity at night and on Sundays.

Free trade area

Just before the construction of the town centre, several important investors signalled to withdraw from the planning process, because they did not belief the success of the shopping area could be guaranteed. They raised the issue of the Group Areas Act (1950) that not only defined segregated living areas but also restricted trading in business districts to white people. This created an impossible situation in many South African cities, mainly for the Indian and Chinese communities who depended on trade for a livelihood. In 1957, the negative effects of this issue for the national economy were recognized and followed by the introduction of 'Free Trade Areas', in which white, coloured and Asian entrepreneurs could buy property and start businesses.[89] The Theron Commisson, which dealt with matters related to the coloured population group, recommended for the particular case of Mitchells Plain that "*the Group Areas Act be amended that certain areas be defined as 'not controlled', i.e. that members of the population concerned may qualify as 'eligible' regarding land ownership and regarding occupation in these areas.*"[90]

Still, further restrictions on trade areas in townships, such as limited size of stores,

discouraged potential white investors to start sizeable businesses. In Mitchells Plain, authorities wanted to get national chains in, such as Pick 'n Pay, OK and Checkers - all 'white' stores -, to meet the goal of setting an international example of a well-designed satellite township. The town centre was thus declared as a free trading zone with specific regulations that lifted additional restrictions.[91]

Beautification

In February of 2001, a national campaign against urban poverty and underdevelopment was announced and named the Urban Renewal Programme (URP). Across South Africa, eight urban nodes were designated as URP focus areas. In the Western Cape, both Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain were identified as such focus nodes.[92] Because they are located within the municipal boundaries of the City of Cape Town, the programme is implemented and monitored by the City's Urban Renewal Programme Department.[93]

In Mitchells Plain, one of the anchor projects is the upgrading of the town centre. After several disjointed attempts for renewal that lacked a driving power, a much needed reorganisation of the transport interchange was taken as an incentive to steer the process.[94] Together with the upgrade of transport facilities, an integrated renewal of the town centre was realised, including a re-organization of formal and informal trade and the redesign of public spaces. These interventions mostly reflect an ideal of beautification, as the main objective was to structure the 'uncontrollable' informal sector, clear the public space of obstructions and lay out wide sidewalks and pedestrian avenues. The beautification ideal manifests itself in the prohibition of informal trading and the strong control thereof. Specific aspects of this upgrade will be further discussed in the analysis of public space and trade.

Demographic centre of gravity of Cape Town

As a result of Apartheid planning, Mitchells Plain's town centre is the sole urban core in this part of Cape Town Metropolitan Area (CTMA), south of the airport. The neighbouring township Khayelitsha relies on small-scale informal trade and does not have a centralized core. The importance of Mitchells Plain's town centre is hence extended beyond the township's borders. Furthermore, with about 75.000 daily commuters, it is one of the busiest transport interchanges in the city.[95]

When we look at population densities, the southern Cape Flats districts form the centre of gravity for CTMA. A combination of a population densities map and a socio-economic status map reveals that middle class suburbanisation is taking place beyond the current borders of the city. Thus it is not the lower class but the middle and higher class that is pushed to the peripheries. The townships that, historically, have been on the edge are increasingly becoming the effective centre.[96] Transport infrastructure however does not follow this tendency. Up to this day, all infrastructure is organized radially from Cape Town CBD. We can nevertheless presume that the north-south connection between Bellville, the airport and the southern suburbs will eventually become an important arterial in the metropolitan area. Mitchells Plain's town centre would then be a strategic node along this line, as it has connections to both the western and eastern suburbs as well as Cape Town CBD. This increases the potential of developing the town centre as a valuable Central Business District.
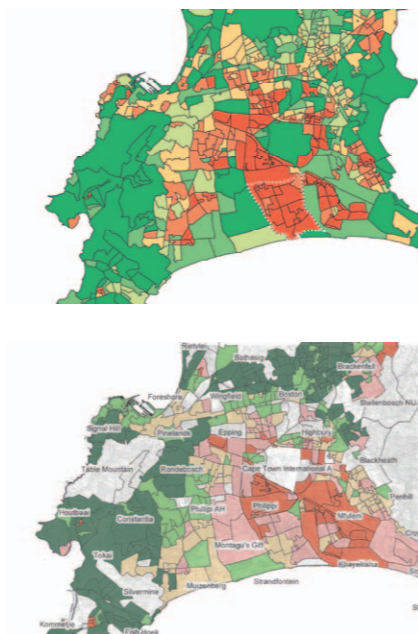
densification and concentration of the urban poor in the south-east
top: population density per suburb (data census 2001)
bottom: socio-economic status (data census 2001)

91. "Special Report Mitchells Plain."

92. The eight nodes are: Alexandra (Johannesburg), Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha (Cape Town), Inanda/Ntuzuma and KwaMashu (eThekwini Municipality, Durban), Mdantsane (Buffalo City Municipality, East London), Motherwell (Port Elizabeth) and Galeshewe (Kimberley).

93. Information and Knowledge Management Department City of Cape Town, *Socio-economic profiling of urban renewal nodes: Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain*, Cape Town, 2006, http://www.capetown.gov.za.

94. Alastair Graham and Ivan Anthony, "Township renewal: Mitchells Plain case study", Cape Town: South African Cities Network, 2009, retrieved from www.urbanlandmark.org.za/downloads/sourcebook_cs03.pdf

95. City of Cape Town, "Comprehensive Integrated Transport Plan", retrieved from http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/IDP/Statutoryplans2011 2012/AnnexureK_Integrated_Transport_Plan_Revised.pdf

96. Mark Swilling and Amy Davison, *Sustaining Cape Town : imagining a liveable city*, 1st ed., Stellenbosch: Sun Media, 2010, p. 7.

Spatial strategies for a UWC satellite campus in Mitchells Plain CBD

On the assumption that Mitchells Plain has the potential to develop a significant CBD in a densely populated part of the city, UWC's presence in the heart of the town centre will be of major importance. The town centre can produce the urban context and community engagement the university is searching for.

In what way can the university become a relevant actor in the developing CBD? How to generate an urban renewal that is conducive to the university without taking over town planning and the City's responsibilities? The existing Spatial Development Framework for Mitchells Plain is silent on the presence of UWC's Faculty of Dentistry in the town centre and does not mention the university as a potential actor in the redevelopment of the town centre. Likewise, the Urban Renewal Programme, which only runs for 10 years, "*aims to attract, prioritise and integrate investment/effort in these areas; mobilise local partnerships; deepen democratic participation in the life of the city; and develop or test new approaches for wider application*"[97], but makes no mention of UWC as one of these partners.

The following chapter therefore explores the various ways in which UWC's presence can be of meaning for Mitchells Plain and vice versa, how the university can profit from its location in the town centre.
To understand the actual functioning of the town centre, a set of observed characteristics or issues is defined, namely (1) the importance of public transport versus the disconnection from the road network, (2) the public space and how it is increasingly shaped by dead walls and fences, (3) the differing trading patterns, (4) the presence of doctors and lawyers as a response to present institutions and (5) the vast open spaces surrounding the town centre. In the following sections, they are each discussed through mapping and, where relevant, a study of existing literature on the issue. In many cases, a tension between city planning and actual functioning will become evident.
By analysing the town centre based on key themes, we are looking for overlap between different actors. Thus the field of action for UWC to interact with the local context is explored. The proposals linked to the mapped themes are discussed on their relevance, potential and benefits for all partners.
Each proposal starts from a long-term view for CBD development. UWC is considered as one of the possible actors to initiate these developments. The concrete actions UWC can undertake to stimulate this development are hence explored in the proposal.
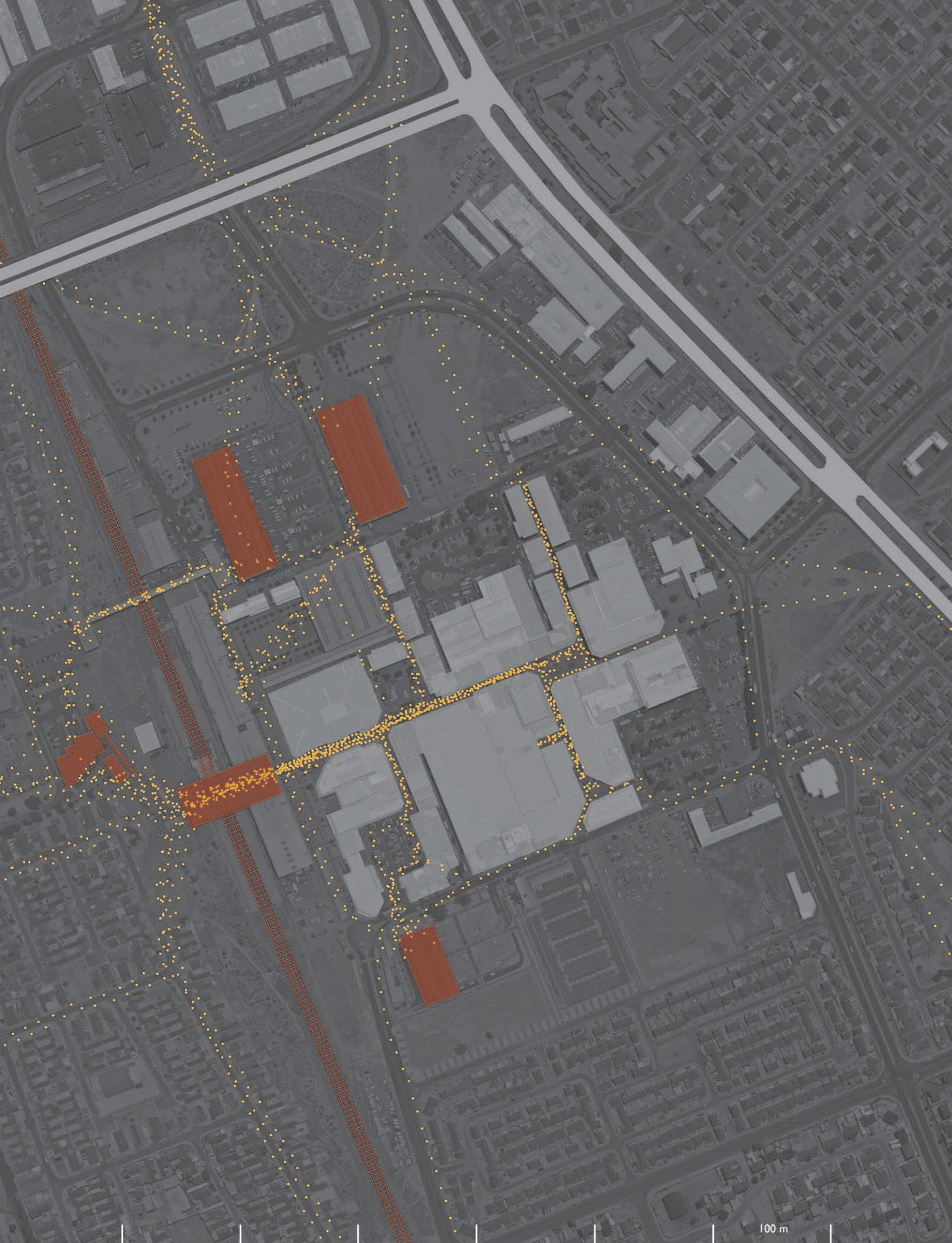
97. Alastair Graham and Ivan Anthony, "Township renewal: Mitchells Plain case study."

1. MOBILITY

Mapping: mobility densities

The reconstruction of the ideal plan for Mitchells Plain has shown how the planned town centre was the only of the civic centres to be situated at the crossing of two grid roads. Where the local centres would serve the adjacent neighbourhoods, the town centre was intended to operate on a higher level. The imported ideas of New Town planning placed a strong emphasis on private motor vehicles. The context to which it was applied was nonetheless very different. Car ownership in the low-income neighbourhood was and still remains very low, leaving roads oversized. Their dimensioning, with two or more lanes in each direction, renders them unsafe for pedestrians.

We see today that the developments have been more or less confined within a pentagon-shaped form. It is separated from the major traffic arterials by an additional strip of institutions, namely the police station, court and a day hospital. This strip is oriented towards A.Z. Berman Road - one of the grid roads - and is thus detached from what is generally perceived as the town centre. Consequently, we can say that the pentagon-shaped town centre is dislocated from the New Town grid and not immediately visible from the main road, A.Z. Berman. When looking at the pedestrian flows, it becomes clear that the actual centre of gravity of the town centre is not located at the major roads, but at the transport interchange, of which the train station is the most densely crowded.

In what follows, I will discuss the town centre in light of public transport facilities.[98] The specific focus is firstly on the functioning of the train network, as it is of high importance for Mitchells Plain but suffers from inefficient functioning and a bad reputation. Secondly, the integrated transport plan that is currently developed and implemented by the City of Cape Town will be evaluated specifically for Mitchells Plain.
The subsequent design proposal starts from a broader vision on how to connect Mitchells Plain to the various transport modes in order to develop its CBD in a substantial way and proposes a UWC satellite that reacts to this development scenario.

Mitchells Plain transport interchange

Due to the absence of job opportunities in Mitchells Plain, we see significant movement to Cape Town CBD and industrial areas such as Epping and Bellville. The strong reliance on public transport for this movement is reflected by the fact that the Mitchells Plain public transport interchange is among the busiest of the Cape Town Metropolitan Area. Currently an average of 75000 commuters passes through this interchange twice daily.[99]
The public transport facilities include a train station, a bus terminal that is privately run by Golden Arrow and two taxi ranks, run by a cooperative of independent minivan taxi services.[100] The train station is incorporated in a shopping mall that also forms the connection between both sides of the rail lines.
In 2008, the transport interchange has been redesigned by Holm Jordaan Architects. New bus and taxi terminals as well as offices for the interchange management, a market square and a pedestrian bridge across the railway line were provided. 7th Avenue, which runs parallel to the station, was pedestrianized as to ensure safe passage between the various modes of transport.[101] However, as we will see later on, this connection is barely used due to the lack of activities along the road.

Despite the extensive range of transport modes, the overall Cape Town network offers little connections to Mitchells Plain as both the road network (and consequently the bus and taxi networks) and the train network are based on a radial organisation in which every line departs from Cape Town CBD.

98.   A discussion of Cape Town's mobility issues with a focus on minibus-taxis can be found in Daan De Vree, *Cape Town mobility issues, a UWC regional development proposal,* Master dissertation, Universiteit Gent, 2010.

99.   Planning department, Spatial Development Framework; Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain district plan, Cape Town, 2011.

100. Laura Huss, *Informal Economy Within a Capitalist System: A Focus on Mitchells Plain Town Centre in Cape Town, South Africa,* Master dissertation, University of Cape Town, 2009.

101. Holm Jordaan Architects, http://www.holmjordaan.co.za.

100 m

Morning peak hour rail capacity utilization

■ > 100 %
■ > 90 %
■ > 60 %
◄┈┈┈┈► desired connections

Cape Town train network

5 km

Cape Town bus network

5 km

> *Bus Rapid Transit planning*
> *fig. 1: implemented routes*
> *fig. 2: complete planned network*
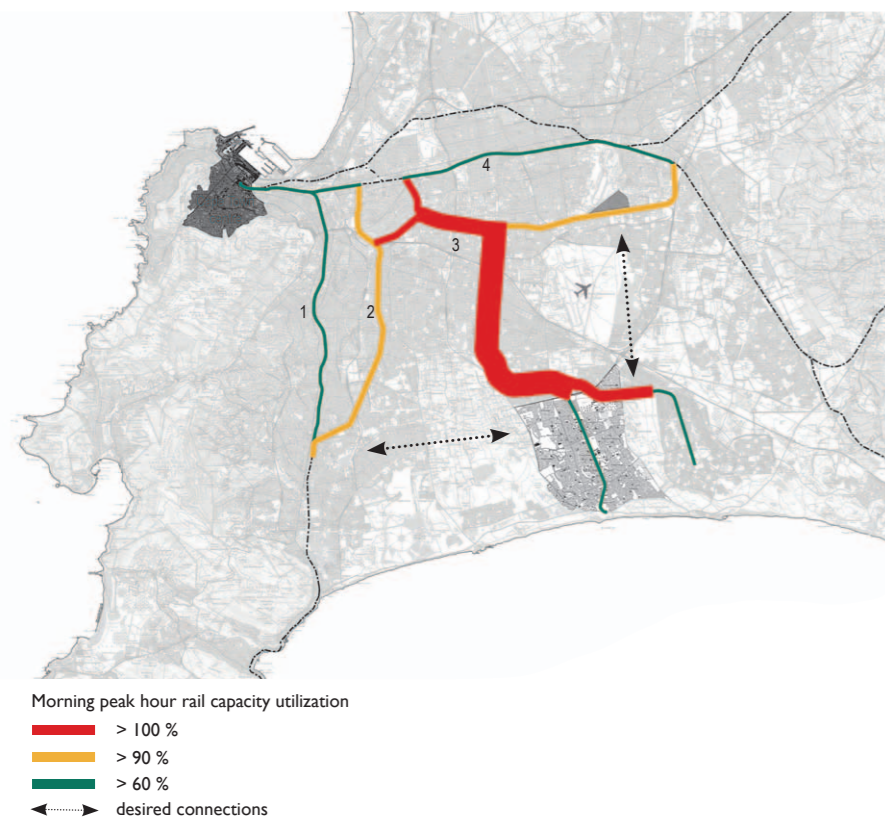
Congestion on the train: the desire for new connections

Cape Town's train network consists of four lines, all of which originate from Cape Town station in the CBD: the Southern Line goes straight southwards to Simon's Town; the Cape Flats Line runs almost parallel to the Southern Line; the Central Line splits up in Langa to either Belhar or Mitchell's Plain/Khayelitsha; and the Northern Line runs parallel to Voortrekker Road. Of these lines, the Central Line is the most used, with about 150 000 daily passengers on the Khayelitsha segment and 120 000 on the Mitchells Plain segment. Together, these branches constitute 51% of all boarding passengers. [102]

If we illustrate the overcapacity utilisation of each rail segment on a map[103], it becomes evident that the tree-like subdivision of the Central Line is causing congestion. In the direction of Cape Town, the line is running at overcapacity as soon as it is joined by the Mitchells Plain branch. This is even slightly increased when the Belhar branch is added, but is stabilized when the line connects with the Northern and Southern Line. This dynamic identifies the actual desire for movement from the Southern Cape Flats towards Bellville and towards adjacent southern areas. Due to the lack of direct transport links to these areas, commuters travel a roundabout way to their final destination. Critical missing links in public transport are thus a north-south connection and circumferential connections between the isolated townships.

102. Department of Transport, *Current Public Transport Record*, Cape Town, 2005.

103. The relative line weight on the map shows the network in terms of utilisation over capacity during the morning peak. Map composed by author based on similar maps and graphs in: Peter Clark and Wilfred Crous, "A strategic review of public transport user needs in the Cape Metropolitan Area," *Transport Reviews*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2002
Department of Transport, Current Public Transport Record, Cape Town, 2005.

Integrated Rapid Transit and the need of the poor

Following the example set by South American cities such as Bogota and Curitiba, Cape Town has started planning and operating a Bus Rapid Transit system, referred to as *MyCity*, as part of an overall Integrated Rapid Transit programme that aims "*to integrate all of the current [road based] transport modal options into a coherent package*"[104].

The model is based on a public-private partnership in which daily operation is delivered via the private sector, which allows participation of the existing bus and minibus operators, while the municipality is responsible for oversight and quality control. The network consists of trunk-routes on important arterials, where the infrastructure is remodelled with separate 'busways', and feeder-routes, intended to transport commuters from different neighbourhoods to the trunk-route.

In Johannesburg the first phase of BRT rollout was to link the township Soweto to the central business district, a move that was widely praised by the general public. In Cape Town however, the BRT-planning gave rise to a range of unfavourable criticism, as the City did not prioritise the townships from which thousands of commuters travel to work. This would have relieved the pressure on the city's poor and reduced travelling time significantly for the group that uses public transport most.[105] The reason behind this is that the first phase of Cape Town's BRT was explicitly intended to serve the FIFA World Cup in 2010. The first lines ensured a safe connection of the airport with the CBD and a range of tourist destinations.

To ensure public support, the City is now promoting phase 2 of the IRT plan, which is defined as the Metro South East area, comprising the townships of Mitchells Plain and Khayelitsha. The system would be fully operational by April 2014.[106] Although the detailed plan is not yet defined, phase 2 would include a connection from Mitchells Plain to Cape Town and to Bellville. The plan is however contested due to the long distance of the trajectories, compared to the successful South American examples, and due to the low income of the targeted groups, which means a large investment for a group that brings the City little revenues.[107][108]

104. City of Cape Town, www.capetown.gov.za.

105. Charlene Houston, "How Decent Public Transport Can Strike a Blow to Poverty", 30 September 2011, http://sacsis.org.za/s/story.php?s=648.
106. Jooste Bronwynne, "IRT heads for the Cape Flats," *Cape Argus*, 29 March 2012.
107. See chapter I.2. on how the local authorities were redefined, combining townships with more affluent areas. Mitchells Plain falls under the Central Cape Town government.
108. Babalo Ndenze, "MyCiTi bus service to Cape Flats 'not feasible'," *Cape Argus*, 16 May 2012.
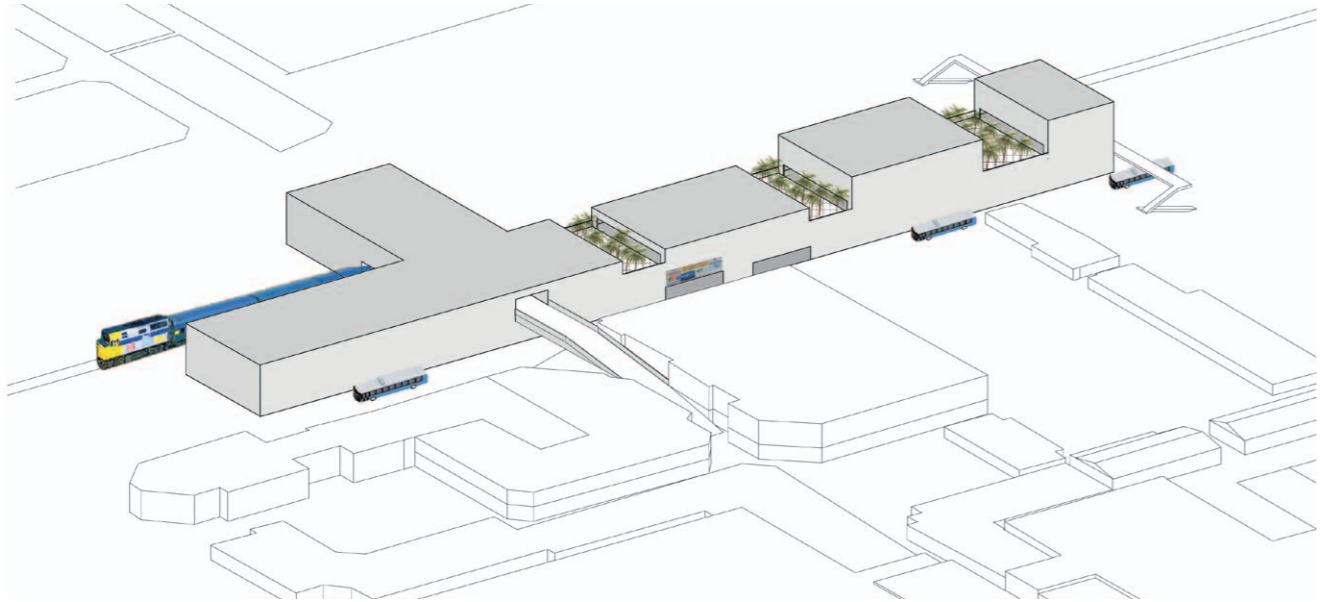
PROPOSAL: STATION ENCLAVE

CBD development scenario: station hub

The following proposal starts from the observations on mobility in the town centre. Bearing in mind the conflicts around investments in long-distance BRT-routes, I want to argue for a different approach to the planning of the BRT-network. What we see now is that many of the proposed routes duplicate an existing rail line. City officials do not see this as an inefficient doubling because of the current image of the train as a means of transport for the poor only; it is always congested, outdated and consequently unsafe. If, however, the strategy would be to improve the rail system and deploy BRT-buses for the missing links in the train network, the route distances of the latter would be reduced. Moreover, north-south and east-west connections can resolve the stated overcapacity utilisation of the train network. This would present an incentive for upgrading the rail transport. The result is a network in which train provides long distance connections from Cape Town to the periphery, whereas BRT forms the connections between these radial train trajectories.

This proposal suggests to leave out the planned BRT-connection between Mitchells Plain and Cape Town, but focus on two new connections: one trunk route from Bellville CBD to Mitchells Plain CBD, with feeder routes connecting this line to the airport and other residential zones in Mitchells Plain; and one circumferential trunk route connecting the townships of Mitchells Plain, Khayelitsha and Blue Downs. These two connections will relieve the pressure on the train network, which can thus be revitalized.
As train and BRT will interact to form an integrated public transport network, the BRT trunk routes should be linked to the train network. In this proposal 7th Avenue - which runs along the station but is now pedestrianised - is opened for public transport. The mapping of pedestrian activity during our fieldwork research in September and October 2011 has shown that there is little traffic on this avenue as the main entrance to the station is at the second level, accessible by a ramp.
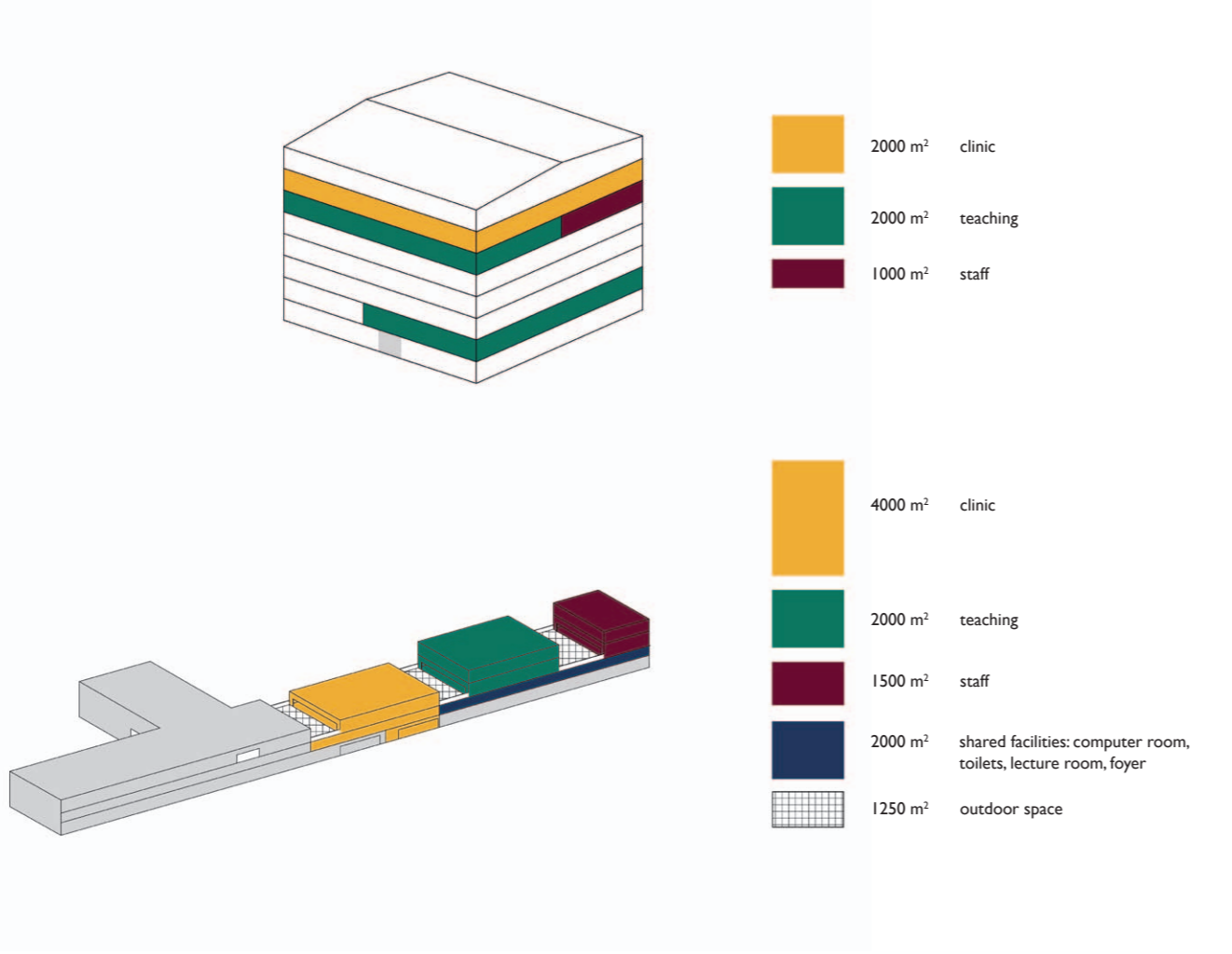
By combining the assumption that the transport node in Mitchells Plain will gain even more importance and the observation that the town centre is dislocated from the road network, we can envisage how the train station becomes the centre of gravity of the town centre. This of course opens up possibilities for new developments and creates the opportunity to develop a mixed programme as opposed to the current trading-only programme of the complex. Currently, all civic facilities such as library, police station, clinics, social services and municipal services, are situated in the east of the town centre, where - as the previous mapping of pedestrian densities illustrated - pedestrian passage is low.

< *The Faculty of Dentistry is placed on top of the train station annex mall, where all transport modes come together. The university isolates itself from the public realm, thus provides its own 'public' space on the building.*
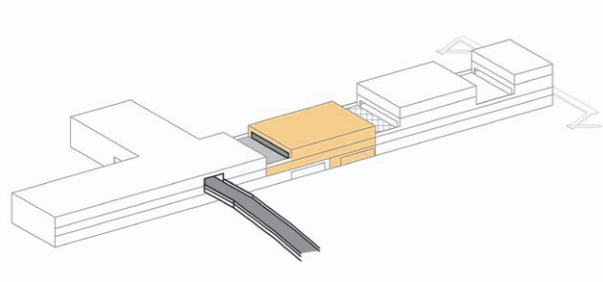
< *Existing programme*
To determine the surface needs of the new Faculty building, the existing building is taken into account. Conversations with staff pointed to the need of enlarging the clinic and staff areas. Teaching space in the existing building is sufficient, although a need is expressed for a larger lecture room or auditorium. Students expressed a lack of common space.

< *Projected programme*
The proposal doubles the clinic space. The teaching space is completed with a lower floor with space for lecture rooms and a computer room, facilities that can be shared with local partners.

∨ *Station annex mall: existing building*

2000 m²	clinic
2000 m²	teaching
1000 m²	staff

4000 m²	clinic
2000 m²	teaching
1500 m²	staff
2000 m²	shared facilities: computer room, toilets, lecture room, foyer
1250 m²	outdoor space

The main entrance to the clinic is situated in the station hall, very visible and accessible from both sides of the rail tracks. A first courtyard forms the transition between station/mall and clinic. It is the place were patients meet and informal conversations between doctors and patients can take place.

A second entrance to the clinic is located on the ground floor, in front of the market square. The proposed BRT connection runs through this street.

This design proposal therefore places UWC's dental faculty on top of the train station, instead of its current location in the east of the town centre. By relocating the institution, the development towards a multifunctional hub can be started around the transport node, thereby breaking out of the pattern of segregated zoning. The presence of UWC can form an argument in the decision on the trajectory for the future BRT-line and will thus ensure connection with other transport modes. Moreover, the start of this proposed development at the station can bridge the gap between the west and east side of the rail tracks. The station is thus not viewed as a border of the town centre, but as an important node, that has the potential to connect both sides of the rail tracks and catalyse the formation of a multimodal junction.

UWC satellite: enclave

To accomodate UWC's Faculty of Dentistry, an extra volume is added to the station annex shopping mall, in the void that is created by the de-escalated volume of the northern wing. The design thus uses the model of an enclave - characteristic of the current building - but adapts it in such a way that (1) an interaction with the context is possible and (2) the campus benefits from its isolated location which allows for private open spaces.

1. The new volume is divided in three parts: a dental clinic, a teaching block and staff offices. The main entrance to the clinic is the elevated station hallway, forming a point where train, mall and university converge. Bustling with activity of commuters, shoppers and pedestrians, this place offers the clinic the necessary accessibility and the opportunity to reach out to both the community of adjacent residential zones and all commuters passing through the interchange. The second entrance is on the ground floor, directly facing the market square. Because of its high visibility, the clinic could focus here on prevention and basic oral hygiene education.
Students and staff enjoy a direct access on the side of the building, which connects easily to the various transport modes or UWC shuttle.
Part of the teaching block, namely the computer room and lecture halls that are situated one level below the three extending volumes, can be accessed from the pedestrian bridge north of the station after closing hours of the university. Thus these facilities can be shared with local community organisations, each on different times of the day.

2. As the enclave isolates itself from general public space, it requires 'private' common spaces. The three blocks are thus disconnected and courtyards are placed in between. They form the places of encounter between the users of the adjacent blocks: commuters and patients, patients and students, students and staff.

This proposal reacts to some of the characteristics of the current UWC faculty in Mitchells Plain. Similar to the current building, the location on top of the train station answers to the need of control of access and creates a form of safe enclave.
It brings up some questions of how to ensure privacy and security while simultaneously being accessible and visible in order to offer a valuable outreach service. Moreover, the argument I would like to bring to the fore is that the creation of a safe enclave should not mean that users (students and staff) feel trapped in their building. By taking the radical measure of creating this enclave on top of the train station this design aims to tackle safety issues in a clear-cut way, thus creating room for reflection on valuable spaces for students in the university satellite. The terraces in the proposal are symbolic for this reflection.
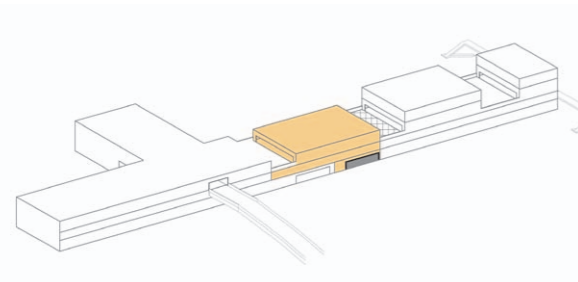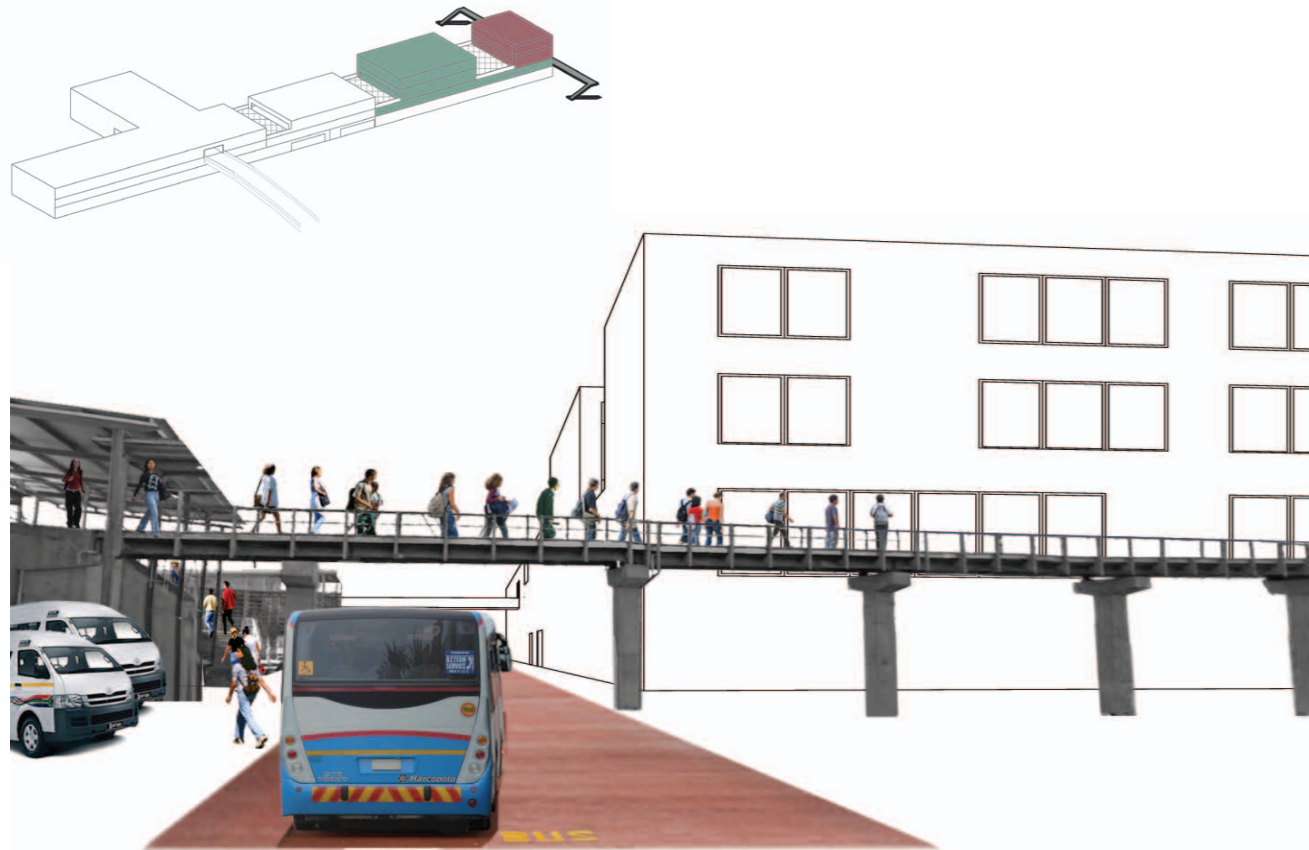
< Pedestrian bridge - during the day
The already present pedestrian bridge gives access to the teaching part of the university. Students have an immediate access from the BRT-bus or train.

< Pedestrian bridge - during the evening
After teaching hours, one part of the building can be opened separately. The lobby and auditoria can be rent out to other partners.

2. PUBLIC SPACE

<   Map indicating the lack of social control on the public space in the town centre.
—————— blanks walls
············· fences

Mapping: blank walls

The central pentagon of the town centre is entirely pedestrianized. It forms a network of narrow shopping streets connected by public squares. Most pedestrian traffic follows an east-west route, connecting the residential areas in the east to the train station.
The reasonable number of public squares and pedestrian streets suggests a CBD-worthy public realm. However, the actual perception of the town centre is entirely different. Some of the so-called squares and pedestrian connections are abandoned and generate a highly unsafe feeling. A mapping of blind walls in the town centre illustrates the lack of activity, social control and surveillance on the public space. By comparing this map to the pedestrian flows (see 'mobility'), a correlation is suggested between blind facades and urban activity.

In order to understand why the few public spaces in an otherwise dense town are neglected, I will focus on the general attitude towards public space. Because the little attention given to the public realm in townships is historically anchored, we will be looking at literature that specifically addresses the South African context.
After studying the urban policy and how it deals with public space, a second aspect will be explored that is very relevant for any contemporary South African urban landscape: the question of security and fear of crime.
These reflections will influence the second design, an exploration on how a shift of borders and control points can be established in order to activate and define the public space.

A historical neglect of common space

Urban public spaces have generally received little attention in Cape Town's planning history. While there was a great deal of vacant land in most townships, it had no civic, social or cultural role. Public space was and still is regarded as unaffordable to provide and maintain, especially in light of the high demands for basic services and housing.[109] Apartheid developments such as Mitchells Plain prove that although good intentions were formulated, the primary focus was still on alleviating enormous housing shortages. Public spaces and general public facilities were planned, but never built. The resulting township landscape of the Cape Flats is described by Mannon and Paterson as an extremely bleak setting, "*particularly alienating due to the absence of any meaningful public space*". The public arena has no form and is thus incapable of supporting basic aspects of interactive city life. As a result "*residents struggle to locate themselves culturally and are unable to engage positively with their pasts and/or futures*".[110]
Similar situations arise in current building operations such as the RDP housing program. In Delft, the housing precinct in between Bellville and Mitchells Plain, thousands of low cost RDP houses are being built since 2008 without the essential community provisions such as places for social and commercial activities. The dwellings are aligned according to a strict grid, without any interruptions that could relieve the monotony and provide a common space. The streets look empty, except for children playing on the sandy banks of Symphony Way. Clearing space for community facilities within the urban fabric later on will become difficult, as analogous to Mitchells Plain the scarce unused space is already occupied by backyard dwellers and dwelling extensions. Barbara Southworth states that "*in rapidly evolving new settlements such as Philippi and Khayelitsha, where land is at a premium, and, for the first few years, housing is the overriding concern, the need for land for collective purposes is often only felt once a community is established. (...) Given the extremely low levels of formal urban management in these places, the physical designation of public space is the only way to protect it for public use.*"[111]

109. Barbara Southworth, *City Squares in Cape Town's Townships: Public Space as an Instrument of Urban Transformation; The Origins, Objectives and Implementation of the City of Cape Town's Dignified Places Programme*, Cape Town 1999, p. 4.
Lisa Findley and Liz Ogbu, "South Africa: From Township to Town", 2011, retrieved from http://places.designobserver.com/feature/south-africa-after-apartheid-from-township-to-town/31148/

110. Nisa Mammon and Jody Paterson, *Urban space, memory and the public realm* (paper presented at the the Community Healing Regional Conference hosted by: The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, Cape Town, 2005), p. 9.

111. Barbara Southworth, *Making public space in 21st century Cape Town*, in: Edgar (ed.) Pieterse, *Counter-currents : experiments in sustainability in the Cape Town region*, p. 106.

100 m

The dignified places programme

Freedom and diversity as basis for a public space initiative

Of course much of the neglect of common space is related to politics, as investments in public space cannot compete for popular and political support in the face of high demands for basic shelter. In 2003, the City of Cape Town therefore launched the Dignified Places Programme that aims to set off urban transformation by small interventions in public space, feasible with little investments. The programme attempts "*to demonstrate the principles of equity, integration and sustainable development*" by constructing new public spaces in the poorest parts of the city.[112] A strong focus is placed on 'dignity' in a belief that a feeling of dignity is what is necessary to create a sense of community in fragmented parts of the city that have, just like Mitchells Plain, been composed out of different relocated groups.

The approach that is at the basis of the programme is laid out in *'South African cities: a manifesto for change'*, a UCT publication from 1991 by David Dewar and Roelof Uytenbogaardt. It is built on David Crane's concept of the 'capital web', which he describes as the infrastructure of all public facilities in a city. He promotes performance driven planning and design, defined by a core set of 'needs' on which planning actions can be evaluated. In light of two of these 'needs', namely freedom and diversity, Dewar and Uytenbogaardt proposed minimalist rather than comprehensive interventions, to grant people the choice in how to use and interpret space. The choice of interventions is based on the celebration of important civic institutions and already present collective activities. These interventions would be strategic and catalytic for further development of public space, based on the idea that "*to make public design is to leave and make creative opportunities for the private sphere.*"[113] Their approach thus acknowledges the need for flexibility in the dynamic and rather uncertain context of Cape Town's historically deprived areas. Many projects of the Dignified Places Programme answer to this need for flexibility by adopting a certain attitude of indeterminacy, leaving space for private actions.

The economic significance of public space

Several of the Dignified Places projects take the economic use of public space as a starting point. In most planned neighbourhoods, locations for markets and other commercial activities - both formal and informal - were never provided. Hawkers and informal trading occur in a survivalist way, in unregulated conditions that often create health, safety and accessibility problems. However, public facilities, spaces and institutions provide the trigger and backdrop for trade and are therefore key components of the economic environment. The presence of an institution or a public facility that generates flows of people is crucial for traders. Vice versa, by their presence traders activate and watch over public spaces. The location of traders is thus a critical aspect in the attempt of creating collective urban space.[114]

Two Dignified Places projects in Philippi, just north of Mitchells Plain[115], follow the strategy of addressing the local economy. Both were constructed in 2003 and although the intervention is similar in both places, the outcome differs greatly. The first case is a market infrastructure in Browns Farm, an informal settlement that forms part of Philippi.[116] It is situated on the corner of Landsdowne Road and Ingulubu Drive, two important arterials that structure the area. The designers (Du Toit & Perrin) describe it as 'the gateway' into Philippi and originally intended to develop all four corners of the crossroads.[117] The realised project is an L-shaped concrete pergola-structure where traders can attach to

Browns Farm trading infrastructure - car wash

Browns Farm trading infrastructure

112. Barbara Southworth, *City Squares in Cape Town's Townships: Public Space as an Instrument of Urban Transformation; The Origins, Objectives and Implementation of the City of Cape Town's Dignified Places Programme*, p. 1.

113. Barbara Southworth, *Making public space in 21st century Cape Town*, in: Edgar (ed.) Pieterse, *Counter-currents : experiments in sustainability in the Cape Town region*, p. 105.

114. Nisa Mammon and Jody Paterson, *Urban space, memory and the public realm*, p. 2.

115. In Cape Town's spatial development framework (SDF), Philippi is incorporated into Mitchells Plain. In this thesis however, Philippi is left out, because it is a much more recent development of mainly black residents in informal housing. Moreover, a railroad separates Philippi from Mitchells Plain and - as our fieldwork has confirmed - forms a strict border.

116. The following Dignified Places projects are - among other projects - discussed in detail in Kim De Raedt's research on the role of identity, memory and community in the post-apartheid architecture practice in Cape Town. (Kim De Raedt, *Bouwen voor de Rainbow Nation: een kritisch onderzoek naar de rol van identiteit, geheugen en gemeenschap in het architectuurlandschap van postapartheid Zuid-Afrika*, Master dissertation, Ugent, 2010.)

117. Planning Department City of Cape Town, *Creating a dignified place for all: the City of Cape Town's Uluntu Plaza - Dignified Places Programme*, 2003.

Philippi Station trading infrastructure - open courner gives access to residential neighbourhood

Philippi Station trading infrastructure

Guga S'thebe Arts Centre in Langa

118. Conversation with South African architect Heinrich Wolf, Philippi, 23 September 2011.

119. Lisa Findley and Liz Ogbu, "South Africa: From Township to Town."

120. Planning Department City of Cape Town, *Creating a dignified place for all: the City of Cape Town's Uluntu Plaza - Dignified Places Programme*, 2003.

121. Kim De Raedt, *Bouwen voor de Rainbow Nation: een kritisch onderzoek naar de rol van identiteit, geheugen en gemeenschap in het architectuurlandschap van postapartheid Zuid-Afrika*, p. 108.

with containers, thus creating small shops. Initially, the trading bays would be leased to individual traders or community organisations, with the intention to transfer ownership after some time. This would establish a sense of permanence, important regarding the informal settlement nearby, and encourage business consolidation. The City nonetheless decided to rent out the individual trading bays without offering eventual ownership.[118] When we visited the site in September 2011, it became apparent that the structure and the plaza were not maintained and that most of the trading bays were unoccupied, as they offer little advantages over street trading due to high rentals and a rather isolated location. The main actor on the site is a car wash that works quite well and obviously profits from the car-oriented location of the project. Nonetheless, the overall image of the square is that of a dilapidated place. According to Findley and Ogbu, this is one of the many examples of how the post-apartheid ANC government on one hand wants to signal intentions of transforming the townships by means of quick and inexpensive gestures, but on the other hand has no intentions for maintenance and improvement.[119]

The second project is a similar L-shaped structure by the same architects, adjacent to the busy Philippi train station. The project was set up as a reaction to a design proposal for a new taxi rank by the City's transport engineering department, which neglected the opportunity of designing the public space around the station.[120] Du Toit & Perrin landscaped the public square in front of the busy train station and created an infrastructural backdrop for traders that would be able to absorb existing dynamics. Although very similar in design as the first project, the pergola here works quite well, both in its intention to provide a public front to small commercial businesses as in consolidating public activities and creating a place of significance for the area. An important difference is that in this case, the project uses the already present activity to generate place making, whereas the project in Browns Farm is merely based on the crossroad as an important node in the (motorized) transport network.

The notion of identity

As the two case studies illustrate, not all Dignified Places projects reached the aspired result. A key factor in township projects seems to be the social basis or public support and the notions of identity and memory. Another community project is the Guga S'thebe Arts Centre in Langa. The establishment of this community centre, in one of the oldest black townships, has not only set off a local cultural organization, but draws many tourists to the township. It is initiated by a local community association (the '*Langa Development Forum, Arts and Culture Environment and Tourism committee*') who sensed the presence of a cultural centre was a need expressed by most residents. The eventual design by Carin Smuts was commissioned by the City of Cape Town, with the underlying motive to establish a new tourist destination. Today, the centre is still led by the local community. The success of the project can be related to the already present sense of community and the collective 'memory', as Langa is one of the older townships with a very homogenous population in terms of social status, language (Xhosa) and origin. In contrast to the Xhosa-speaking community, the coloured group does not share a common background, as anyone of mixed blood was included in the racial group 'coloureds'. Sense of community in old districts such as District Six thus relied on alliance with the place itself rather than language and culture. After relocation, this group lost its common ground, resulting in a sense of rootlessness and the consequential high criminality rate in townships such as Mitchells Plain.[121] Talking about 'community projects' is thus difficult in Mitchells Plain, where there is no homogenous community. A lack of defined user body makes it unclear which culture

and identity should be affirmed. It is therefore questionable that the notion of memory would provide sufficient grounding for creating qualitative urban space in Mitchells Plain. There is a need to acknowledge the difference between real and constructed notions of community, especially in a place like Mitchells Plain, where not only a common history is missing, but daily mobility to other parts of the city also alienates the working class from their domestic environments.

Security issues

"Where has all the public space gone? All that is left is a city of urban forts."[122]

South African statistics indicate alarming increases in serious crime over the past years. Although such statistics are considered unreliable because they are dominated by an increase in the rate of crime *reporting*, the public perception is nonetheless one of decreased security. While historic responses to urban fear and insecurity have been largely state-led, in recent years, fear management has been increasingly (although not exclusively) taken over by private forces and individual actions by citizens.[123] Private security companies, including armed forces, are present in all kinds of neighbourhoods, even in Mitchells Plain. Gates and fences spring up only days after a dwelling is built. Public institutions are gated with the purpose of enclosing potential offenders within the premises in case of threat.[124] Semi-private buildings restrict access to the building to a limited number of entrances, manned by security guards.

Attempts to mitigate fear have thus resulted in the creation of fortified enclaves and a general withdrawal from public space. Although the more extreme manifestations of entirely gated communities are restricted to affluent areas, levels of residential protection have increased among all groups. All citizens seem to respond to fear with the fortification of houses, regardless of race and socioeconomic group.

Institutions follow this trend, closing their premises for unwanted guests. Setting up a gate before starting up the building process seems to have become the norm in urban South Africa, where a climate of fear and mistrust pervades everyday life.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions to the general practice, which have also received some national and international recognition. An example of an alternative practice that aims to regard architecture as an agent of social change is Noero Wolff, the practice of Heinrich Wolff and Jo Noero. Their projects intend to offer something to the community and are often situated in deprived neighbourhoods with difficult social issues. The school project Inkwenkwezi in the township of Du Noon for example provides a large hall that can be used by the local church. Other projects put forth the creation of public space as a side agenda to the initial commission. Importantly, this ideal does not mean a naive opening up of facilities to the public realm. The projects even show a very strong divide between the private and the public. In Inkwenkwezi, the classrooms form an outer wall, enclosing the playground within the school building. They thus respond to the existing security and control issues (and in the case of schools: discipline), albeit in a way that does not entrap the user in a gated enclave nor creates a public realm of dead walls.

Entrance of Mitchells Plain library

Typical streetsight Mitchells Plain

Ikwenkwezi school NoeroWolff - enclosed playground

> *backsides around town centre*

122. Karina Landman, "Privatising public space in post-apartheid South African cities through neighbourhood enclosures," *GeoJournal,* 66, 2006, p. 11.

123. Charlotte Lemanski, "A new apartheid? The spatial implications of fear of crime in Cape Town, South Africa," *Environment and Urbanization* 16, 2004, p. 102.

124. The site of Tygerberg hospital is a good example of a public campus with free access, but nonetheless entirely walled as to be able to close the gates in case of infringement.
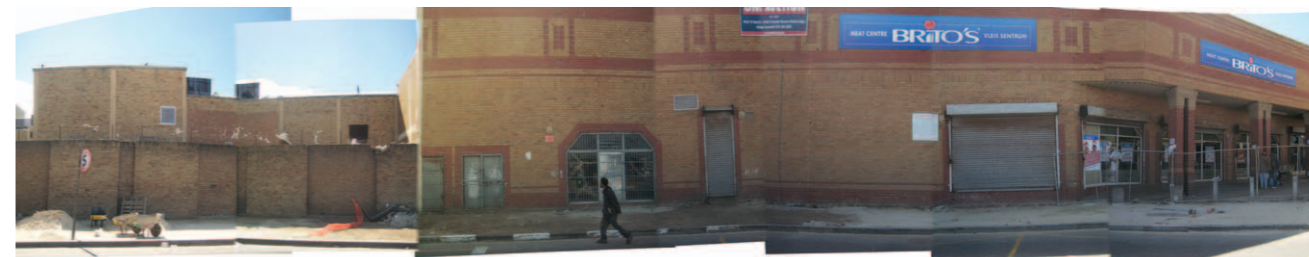
3. TRADE

◼ malls and supermarkets
◼ retail
◼ wholesale, mainly construction materials
✖ street trading

Mapping: trading patterns

Trade, in both formal and informal ways, forms a large percentage of the usage of Mitchells Plain's town centre. Already in the first design proposals, a large fraction of the centre was thought of as an open-air shopping mall, comprising both small retail and larger store chains and supermarkets. However, during the past ten years the town centre has seen a gradual decline in investments from high-end retail chains. Today, the centre seems dominated by second-rate retail directed to a low-income community and about 1500 informal traders who trade seven days a week.

As a result of the declining retail investments, informal activity has become a significant part of the local economy. It responds to a potential market and is thus concentrated around the main public transport interchanges and along heavily utilised pedestrian routes. Moreover, in light of the high unemployment rate, the informal economy is an important sector for Mitchells Plain. It provides for more job opportunities than just shopkeeper; typical trade-related jobs are watchmen for overnight security and trolley-pushers, who are hired by vendors to transport goods from their car or a storage space in the town centre. The latter mostly work on a fairly regular schedule for an individual vendor all day. Furthermore, so-called storage managers earn income by renting out storage rooms for overnight stocking of goods.

The map indicates all retail shops, informal trading stalls and hawkers in and around the town centre.[125] Although many of the marked informal traders rebuild their stalls every day and are thus more flexible in terms of location, the general perception is that traders rely on a fixed location in order to meet their clientele. The larger of these businesses usually leave their goods overnight in the market streets and squares which requires the hiring of a night watchman.[126]

In order to understand the changing spatial patterns of trading in Mitchells Plain, the first section will look at how a new development near the town centre - the realisation of the second largest shopping mall of the Western Cape, named Liberty Promenade[127] - has influenced the spatial evolution of trading in Mitchells Plain. It will be argued that a diversification of trading based on class or income is taking place and that this process forces the town centre to reorient its operations.

The second section addresses the formalization of informal trade that is being imposed by the City of Cape Town in light of an urban renewal of the town centre.

Finally, a development scenario for the town centre based on the observations on public space (previous chapter) and trade will look at how the identity of the town centre can be re-established on the basis of trading culture and a clear definition of public space. The role of UWC in influencing the spatial patterns that would benefit both the university and the local community in this scenario is further explored.

125. Most mapping results from fieldwork in September 2011, but is compared and completed with information from pictures and Google images, as these reflect a summer situation, which differs to some extent from the observed winter situation in September.

126. Eileen Gribouski et al., *Informal Trading Infrastructure and Management Evaluation with Recommendations for Improvements to the Mitchells Plain Central Business District*, Bachelor thesis, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2007, p. 22.

127. "Liberty Promenade Shopping Centre re-launches following two year R500-million upgrade," *SA Commercial Prop News*, 22 November 2011.

Diversification of trading culture

In 2003, private investor Liberty Group, whose properties include some of the largest shopping malls in Gauteng and Port Elisabeth, has built a new shopping mall on a vacant land near the town centre. It is the largest investment of Liberty Group so far and thus expresses a renewed interest for developers to invest in the community of Mitchells Plain. This new typology of trade raises the question on how trading in the town centre is influenced by the emergence of large-scale shopping centres. The essay *'The race, class and*

100 m

residential
commercial
facilities
transport
schools

Liberty Promenade Mall

Wholesale

Town Centre

Liberty Promenade Mall

128. Richard Tomlinson and Pauline Larsen, "The Race, Class and Space of Shopping," in *Emerging Johannesburg: perspectives on the postapartheid city*, ed. Richard Tomlinson, New York: Routledge, 2003.

129. "Liberty Promenade," http://libertypromenade. co.za.

130. Cecil Madell, "Guidelines for the development of central business districts in townships in South Africa.", p. 16.

131. "Mitchell's Plain," http://mitchellsplainonline.com.

132. Richard Tomlinson and Pauline Larsen, "The Race, Class and Space of Shopping," p. 47.

133. Ibid., p. 44.

134. Ibid., p. 49.

space of shopping' by Tomlinson and Larsen studies the decentralisation of shopping out of Johannesburg's CBD since the 1960s and the reorientation of certain groups towards suburban shopping malls. This article will be compared to the situation in Mitchells Plain in order to understand the emerging spatial patterns of trading in and around the town centre.

In Johannesburg, high-end retail relocated to shopping malls outside the CBD, leaving the CBD empty to be taken over by a new type of retail, oriented towards the black community. However, the emerging black middle class does not associate with the CBD and increasingly heads to the shopping malls. The result is a correlation between trade, race and class as white consumers share the peripheral shopping malls with the black middle-class and the CBD re-orients itself towards the lowest black class with an increasing number of immigrant Africans.[128]

A similar process of diversification of trading culture is emerging in Mitchells Plain's town centre, despite the fact that its construction only started towards the end of the 1970s. Since the opening of Liberty Promenade in 2003, trade in the town centre shifted its focus specifically towards the low-income market whereas Liberty Promenade aims for a higher-class clientele, as is evident from their latest expansion, a R450 million entertainment wing including eight cinemas and a bowling complex.[129] Consequently, middle- and upper-class commercial business increasingly relocates to the shopping mall.[130] Woolworths, a South African chain of retail stores that has specialised in the selling of clothing and luxury food products, was historically located in an economically interesting spot in the town centre, near the train station. However, recently it was relocated to Liberty Promenade. Several retail chains have followed, leaving the town centre with cheap retail and a rising number of informal traders. Following the same pattern, the Pick 'n Pay department that was established in the 1970s as a key building in the town centre, now receives only little investment and is likely to close in favour of its newer store at Liberty Promenade.[131] Nevertheless, Tomlinson and Larsen state for the case of Johannesburg that "*the establishment of suburban malls did not lead to the demise of retail in the CBD. On the contrary, the restructuring of the CBD retail market to serve the black consumer was, for a time, viewed as its savior*" as the CBD had lost most of its grandeur and liveliness and was now being re-appropriated by migrant groups.[132] In Mitchells Plain a similar pattern of salvation emerges, as the orientation of the town centre towards cheap retail draws in consumers of the neighbouring townships, where spending power is much lower and formal retail is almost inexistent. The shopping mall did not kill trade in the town centre, but forced an adaptation that actually addresses a larger clientele.

The resulting diversification takes places within the coloured community, unlike Johannesburg, where the decentralization of retail activities is primarily related to "*a search for the white consumer*"[133]. Mitchells Plain's Liberty Mall still draws its customers from within the township. Their location at the intersection of two main arterials suggests a new spatial strategy, focusing on car owners. The spatial differentiation of shopping in Mitchells Plain is thus not related to race, like Tomlinson and Larsen conclude for Johannesburg, but reflects an increasing class divergence *within* the township. This should also be regarded in light of the stated gap in the South African housing market. Those of the original residents that do make a decent living and are able to purchase a car etc. are still unable to move to non-subsidised dwellings. Thus "*CBD and township shopping becomes the preserve for the poor and the measure of a township inhabitant's wealth is how far they travel to purchase goods and services.*"[134]

Map of trading bays (small brown mark) allocated in the Town Centre renewal scheme by City of Cape Town
1. Harmony Square
2. Lyric Place
3. Melody Square
✳ official trading bay

covered market

2x2 metre trading bays on market square

night storage is not provided

2x2 metre trading bays (yellow)

illegal trading on busy square

Trading stall extending well beyond the 2x2 m bay

traders in the narrow town centre streets before the formalization by-laws

Formalization of informal trading

The outflow of high-end businesses and their clientele did not escape notice of the authorities who condemned the disorderly nature of the informal traders as one of the primary causes for this efflux. Consequently, the whole informal market in the town centre has been subject to objection by the City of Cape Town and has been under constant threat of eviction for over 10 years.[135]

At the beginning of May of 2009, the City went forward with a reallocation of trading bays that would only allow space for 500 of the current 1500 traders. The permitted trading spaces were drawn out with yellow paint on the pavement.[136] Special by-laws that are directly related to the informal traders in the town centre have been subsequently written and give the authorities legal ground for eviction. These by-laws, outlined by the City government, call for a valid permit for all traders. The City also holds the right to charge traders a trading fee, and additional fees or tariffs may be added if the authorities deem it necessary. Upon the given permits, the government is allowed to impose trade hours, types of goods the trader can sell, bay location and type of trading infrastructure.[137] Originally, bays were provided on all squares, including the smaller Harmony Square and Lyric Place, as well as along the major pedestrian route Symphony Lane. Although the latter were most desired by traders, the City decided by means of by-laws that hawking on Symphony Lane would be prohibited.[138] Notwithstanding the fact that Symphony Lane does offer sufficient width to accommodate trading bays without causing congestion, conflicts were caused by traders extending their stand well beyond the allotted section. The 2x2 metre bays appear to be inadequate for those traders that store produce that they cannot transport back and forth from home. The City's reaction to the lack of adherence was to relocate - by force - all traders to the widest streets and squares.[139] This answers the City's wish to concentrate all street trading around the new market square and the transport interchange. It also answers the traders' need for larger stands,[140] but ignores their dependency on traffic flows, which could severely impact the exposure of these vendors to their customers.

Our fieldwork and mapping of traders revealed that most traders still trade on 'prohibited' places. Although the new market square has been taken in use, but is still underoccupied, which seems strange given the fact that the authorities provided less trading bays than the current number of traders. The 'failure' of this formal trading structure reminds of the litle success of the Browns Farm structure. It points out the fragility of typical formalization efforts and the need for a better understanding of stakeholders' needs. This topic will be taken into account in the following design proposal.

135. Laura Huss, *Informal Economy Within a Capitalist System: A Focus on Mitchells Plain Town Centre in Cape Town, South Africa*.

136. Ibid., p. 13.

137. Eileen Gribouski et al., *Informal Trading Infrastructure and Management Evaluation with Recommendations for Improvements to the Mitchells Plain Central Business District*, p. 7.

138. Laura Huss, *Informal Economy Within a Capitalist System: A Focus on Mitchells Plain Town Centre in Cape Town, South Africa*, p. 16.

139. Eileen Gribouski et al., *Informal Trading Infrastructure and Management Evaluation with Recommendations for Improvements to the Mitchells Plain Central Business District*, p. iii.

140. Although the official allowed space is still restricted to 4 m² per trader, larger stands are tacitly approved by means of bribes and fines.
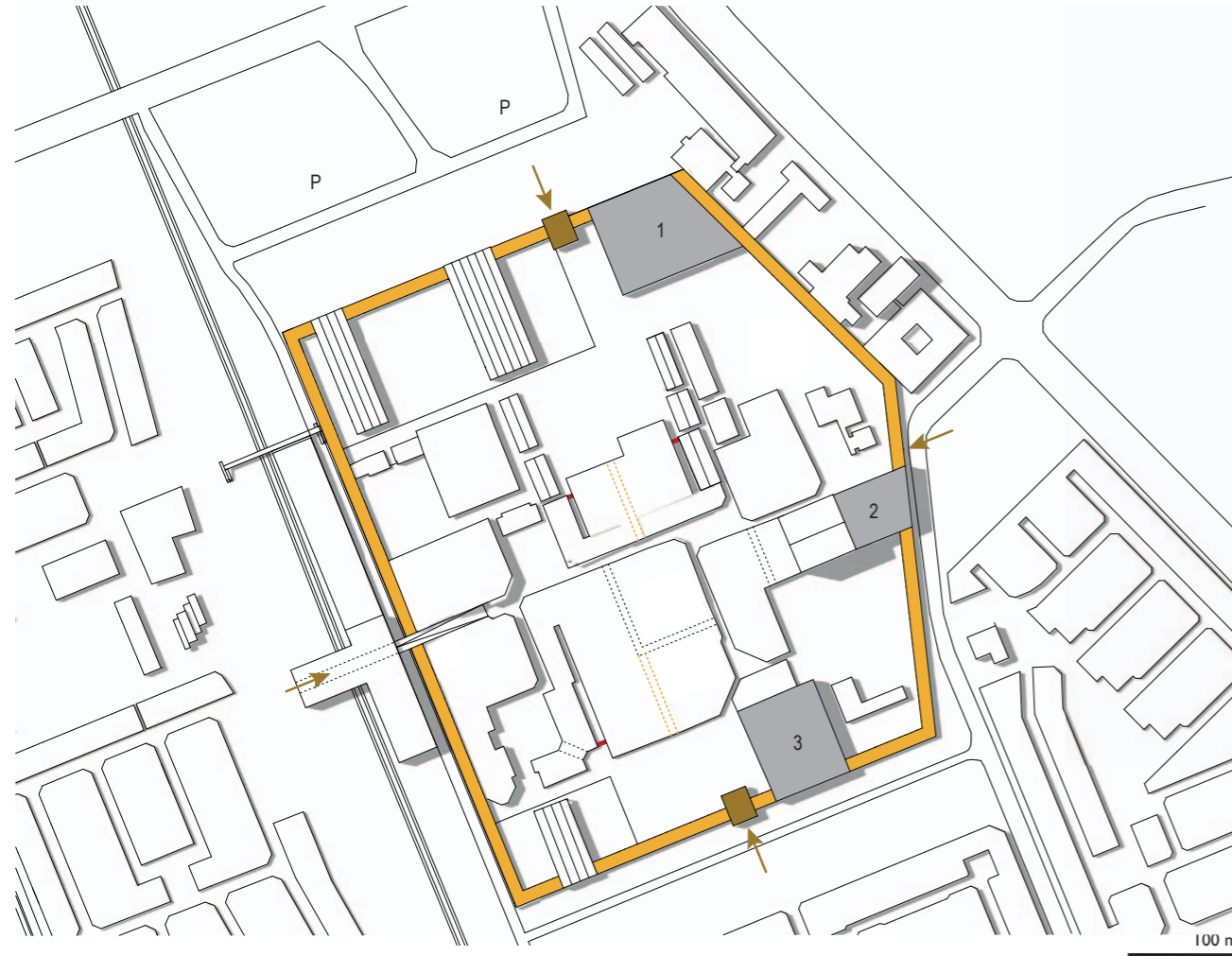
< *The town centre is enclosed by a wide city wall, formed by a colonnade with trading bays. Existing facilities along the edges are given a new facade in the colonnade. Parking areas are relocated to the outside, which forms the opportunity for the large supermarkets to create a second entrance. Delivery alleys are closed off during the day. The four entrances to the complex link up with the existing streets.*

—— *closed off delivery alleys*

------- *existing passage*

------- *extended passage*

▨ *new volumes:*
 1. Sports Centre
 2. extension UWC Dental Faculty
 3. UWC Centre for Performing Arts

< *Impression of southern entrance*
The volume forming the entrance 'gate' offers office space for the management of the site and the Traders' Association.

141. The project was published in Thorsten Deckler; Anne Graupner; Henning Rasmuss, *Contemporary South African Architecture in a Landscape of Transition*, Cape Town: Double Storey Books, 2006. It was also featured in the exhibition *Fast Forward Johannesburg* at the Architecture Forum Aedes, Berlin, in March and April 2005.

142. Thomas Tale, '*Defaulting hawkers locked out of Metro Mall*', 5 August 2003, retrieved via www. joburgnews.co.za.

PROPOSAL: CITY WALL

CBD development scenario: delineated shopping precinct

As opposed to the previous design, this second proposal does not construct a safe UWC-island that distances itself from the public space in the town centre, but rethinks the town centre as a controlled public area, where activity is concentrated. UWC is seen as one of the many actors that are situated within this controlled space.

This design starts from an acceptation of the monofunctional trading nature of the town centre and the amalgam of volumes that shape it. The many blind walls and fences are stretched out to form a city wall, thus making fences and gates within the enclosed town redundant. Cars are kept out of the centre and relocated to the main access roads. The city wall delineates the constructible area, in order to concentrate activity within one city block. It is closed off after trading hours, creating a controlled public space within its boundaries. This allows for traders to leave their goods at night and allows daytime institutions such as the library to open their facade, as night criminality can be easily monitored and controlled. Deliveries for shops can take place in the morning, before the complex opens.

The enclosed trading zone that is proposed here is not an elitist place. It accepts the diversification of trading cultures and the identity of the town centre as an accumulation of traders, small retail, cheap supermarkets and public transport. The clear demarcation provides coherence to the whole.

The city wall is shaped as a continuous arcade that forms a clear and legible city block. It is created to be durable and low maintenance, using robust materials like brick and concrete. Its generous dimensions allow it to function as a walkway along which traders are positioned, in stalls ranging from solid counters for small hawkers to lockable shops with shutter doors. The trading stalls form the border of the city wall. They open up to the walkway. Equally, the currently isolated institutions and public facilities will be accessible from the walkway. The library opens op to the arcade; police, court and community clinic get a new facade along the arcade, etc. It forms the social space among the diverse users.

Nonetheless, it should be remarked that similar projects have proven to be very fragile. The formalization of informal trade in the town centre shows the importance of understanding the needs of traders. Nobody is keen on paying for a trading bay that is badly located and smaller than his or her previous 'free' spot.
An example of a building that tried to formalize the trading business and taxi services is Metro Mall In Johannesburg. The 2003 building has been erected in order to relocate the chaotic taxi stops and trading stalls. Although the building has been positively received[141], trading stalls appear to be too expensive and the organisation of the taxi rank too complicated. Consequently, traders and taxi drivers refuse to pay and are again using the adjacent streets in stead of the provided building.[142]
As the two projects by Du Toit & Perrin in the chapter 'public space' have illustrated, it is not so much the architecture that determines the success of these projects, but the complete process and the social support of the project.
It will therefore be important in this proposal to define the needs and wishes of all stakeholders and to set up a process of interaction with different actors as to ensure the necessary engagement.

< *Impression of the walkway with the sports centre, the existing community clinic and small trading bays as well as lockable shops.*

UWC satellite: mediator

UWC is one of those stakeholders that can attach to the thickened city wall. It takes on a strategic location at the south-eastern side of the centre. In this proposal, the extension to UWC's dental faculty is situated on the site they already intend to buy. Where the building links up to the arcade, the dental clinic will be positioned, ensuring an engagement with passers-by.

A second building can hold UWC's Centre for Performing Arts, which is currently situated in a temporary building on the main campus. The functioning of this arts centre could be similar to UCT's praised Baxter Theatre. Established in 1977 with support of the City of Cape Town, it is now one of the major live theatre venues in Cape Town, hosting both own productions by university students as well as external and international productions.[143] UWC's Centre for Performing Arts currently is a non-academic unit. It offers music and theatre courses that are open to anyone - even non-students - and are mostly free of charge. Nevertheless, there is the ambition to start a full academic programme similar to UCT.[144] The establishment of this new Arts Faculty can grasp the opportunity of stepping out of the borders of the main campus and setting up a collaboration with local cultural organizations. Although cultural organizations in Mitchells Plain address social issues such as xenophobia and youth gangs, they have no place in the township to showcase their activities and thus head to the centre of Cape Town.[145]

By proposing this location for the Centre for Performing Arts, this design opens up the questions on the desired scale and importance of a UWC satellite campus. As the performances and non-academic courses of the Centre for Performing Arts will draw students from diverse faculties, the flow of students between the main campus and Mitchells Plain would enlarge significantly. This requires a rethinking of the current shuttle service, as it would no longer cater exclusively for dentistry students. A continuous shuttle service offers the opportunity to transport not only students that need to be in Mitchells Plain, but would also improve the mobility of students residing around Mitchells Plain on their way to the main campus.

Similar to these UWC additions, other day-time facilities can be located in the town centre. A third proposed building contains a sports centre. This could be a municipal initiative or could be in partnership with UWC as it would benefit its students as well.
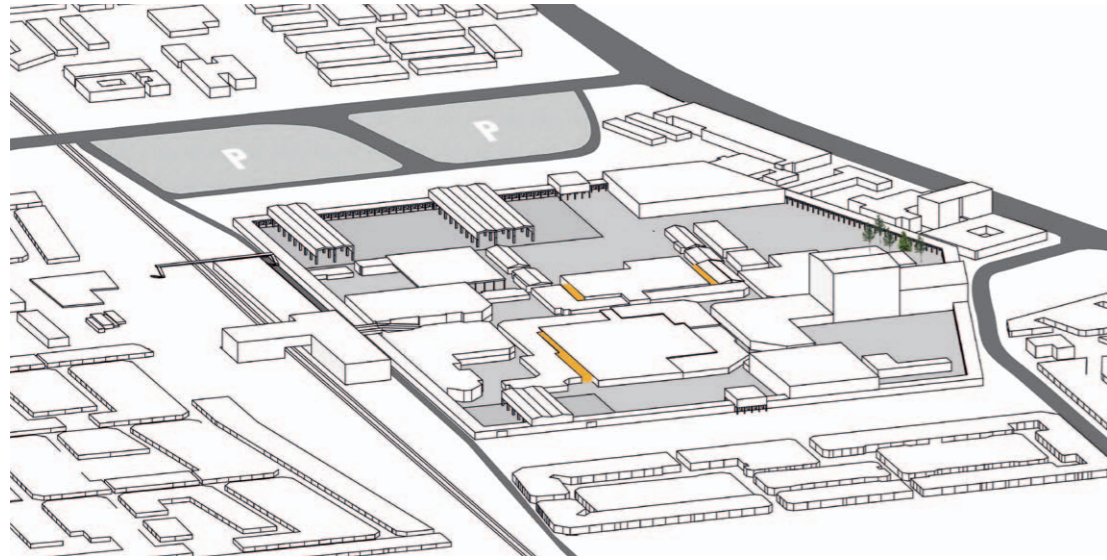
143. "Baxter Theatre Centre at the university of Cape Town," http://www.baxter.co.za.
144. "University of the Western Cape", http://www.uwc.ac.za.
145. "*Mitchell's Plain*.", http://mitchellsplainonline.com.

< Timetable of use:

morning
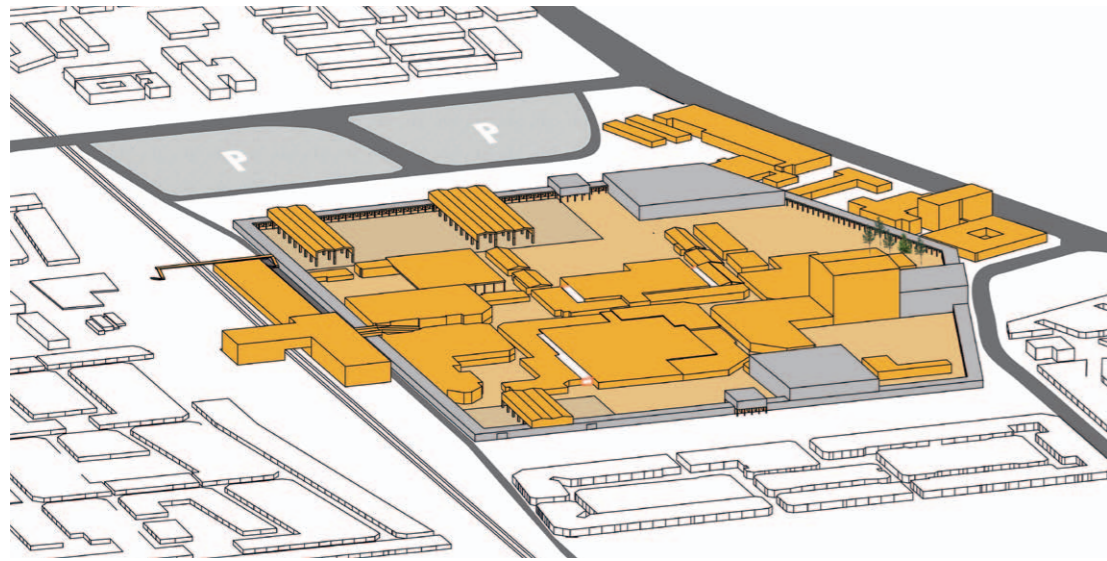*trucks*
trolleypushers

As the access to all facilities is controlled by the 'wall', this allows for a diversification in uses and users on different times of the day.

In the morning, delivery can take place, trolleypushers can transport goods without obstructing pedestrians in the narrow streets and the space can be cleaned.

During the day, the whole complex is accessible, including shopping, public transport facilities, public services and the university facilities.

At night, the complex is closed off, except for a connection between the university facilities. As this proposal envisages a UWC satellite that is of greater importance, the provision of student residences should be considered. The suggestion in this proposal is to provide student residences on the top floors of the Arts Centre. The roof of the walkway is only accessible from the university buildings and can thus function as a separate circulation for residing students. Thus, they can have evening access to the library of the dentistry faculty, rooms for study and the sports facilities.

The difference in scale between this proposal and the previous one is important, as it raises the question on the weight the university wishes to give to its satellites. Should they be secondary locations with specific services like the dental clinic? Or should they be campuses in which several disciplines are located that would benefit from partnerships with present actors, that could offer outreach services, or that could conduct research on township issues?

day
shopping
library
Melomed clinic
UWC clinic
UWC centre for performing arts
sports centre
banks
public transport
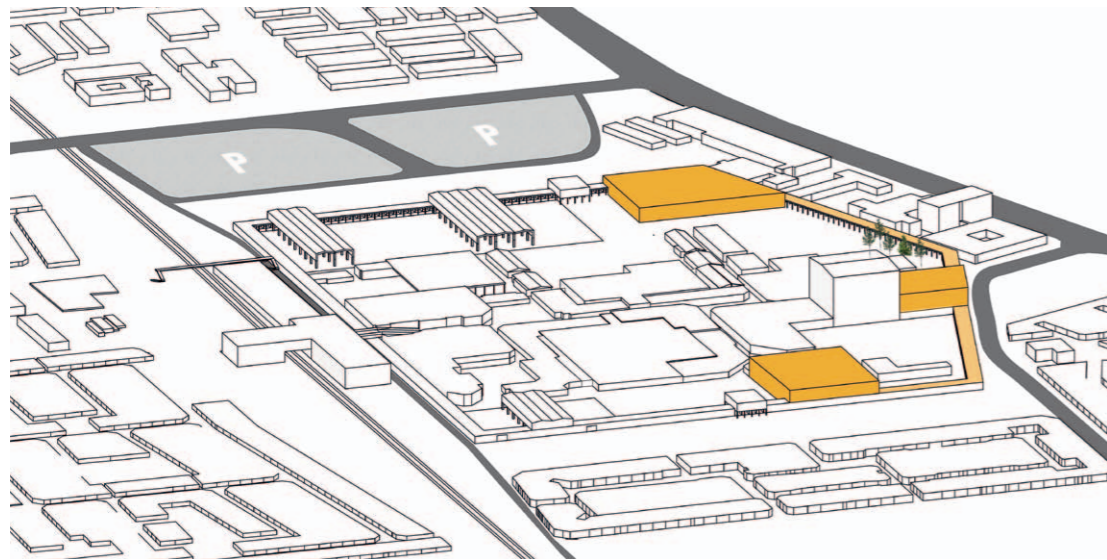
night
UWC students

4. CATALYTIC INSTITUTIONS
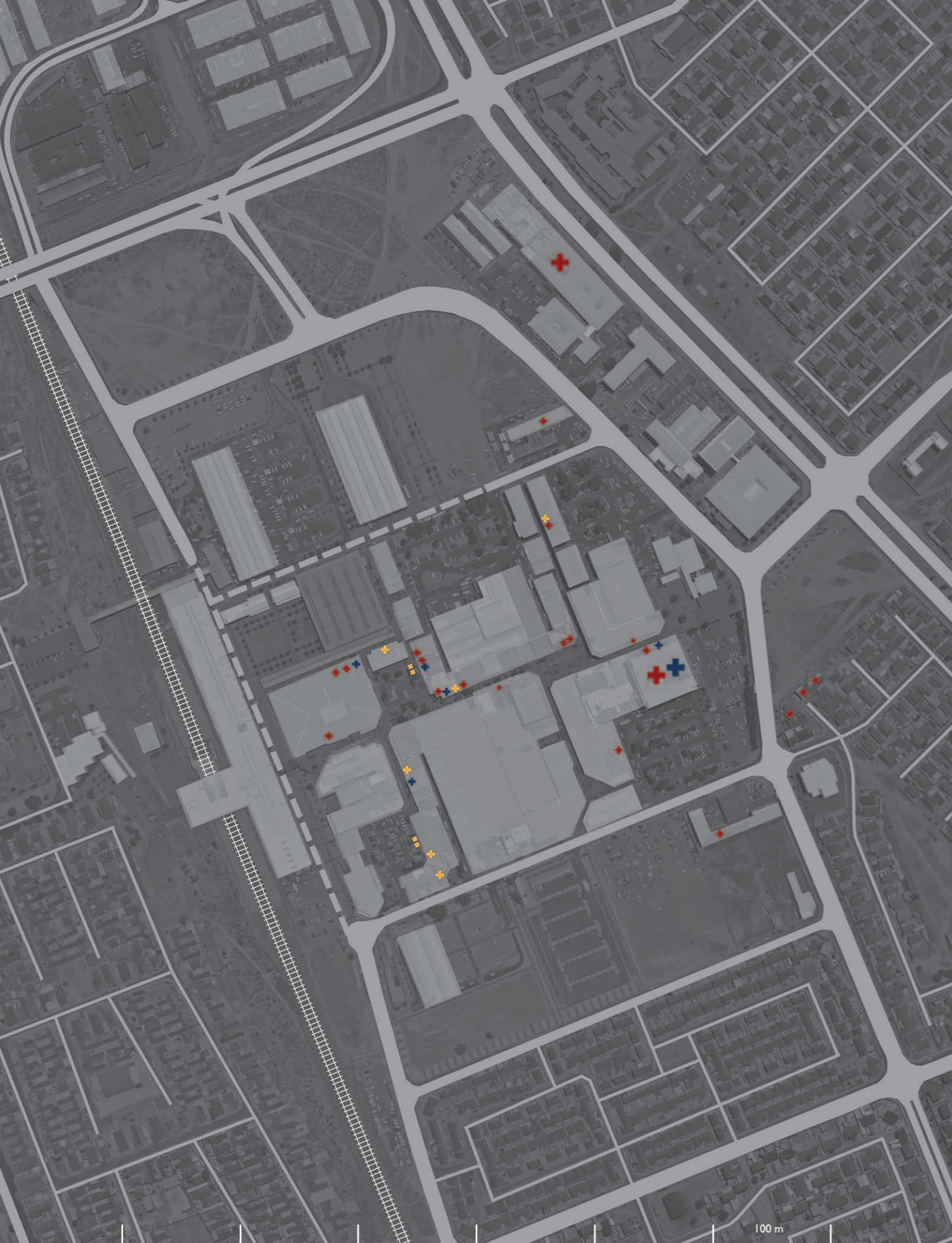
< *Mapping of the responses to formal medical institutions (large red mark) and dentists (large blue mark):*

+ *doctor practices*

+ *dentists*

+ *traditional healers or 'herbalists'*

The responses to the latter are herb and medicine street vendors (■)

Mapping: influence of formal actors

Analogous to how traders are concentrated around the entrances of formal shops and supermarkets, a high number of small suppliers of medical services and lawyers have their practice in the town centre using the leverage of the large health institutions and the magistrates' court. The medical facilities, attracted by the presence of Melomed private hospital and UWC's dental clinic, range from 'herbalists' and other unqualified doctor practices to dental clinics and private surgeons. This pattern is very similar to the trading sector, which ranges from mobile hawkers over organised market stalls to shops, retail chains and shopping malls. A mapping of formal actors and informal responses shows how the location of these services is highly influenced by present activities: the presence of a clinic is followed by several doctors in the same building or street; vendors selling herbs and traditional medicines are located near herbalists and informal doctors.

The recent expansion of the legal court has caused an increasing number of lawyers settling in and around the town centre. Several of them also reside in Mitchells Plain, albeit in highly secured dwellings. This is an important shift, as it gradually alters the monofunctionality of the town centre and introduces higher educated doctors, dentists and lawyers to the area. Moreover, many of the mapped medical and juridical facilities are located in empty apartments above the shops and thus re-appropriate the abandoned residential infrastructure.

Interplay of formal and informal systems

It is important to understand that there is no strict formal-informal dichotomy. As several examples illustrate, both systems are intertwined and form a dynamic economic system. From one perspective, the informal imitates the formal; almost every part of the formal economy seems to have an informal counterpart. The mapping shows how the same services are offered on different levels of (in)formality. From another perspective however, it becomes evident that it is not a one-sided imitation. Both markets respond to each other; informal minibus taxis fill the gaps in the public transport network and, vice versa, a formal transport service such as UCT's Jammie Shuttle deploys minibus taxis to complement their shuttles.[146]

The informal economy has increasingly become the only way for employment in the deprived and isolated townships. In the Western Cape and Gauteng, the two wealthiest provinces of South Africa, the informal sector accounts for about one-quarter of all employment"[147] For former apartheid townships such as Mitchells Plain, this number would be even higher. The presence of institutions on Mitchells Plain's town centre forms the necessary backdrop for (informal) businesses, shops and services. The lack of places of public significance in the monofunctial residential zones makes the town centre one of the only places where these activities can survive.

In the third design proposal, an incremental development of a spread university campus will be imagined, in which responses from the private market play an important role. But first, the next section will present a mapping of all vacant land in order to identify the potential for development.
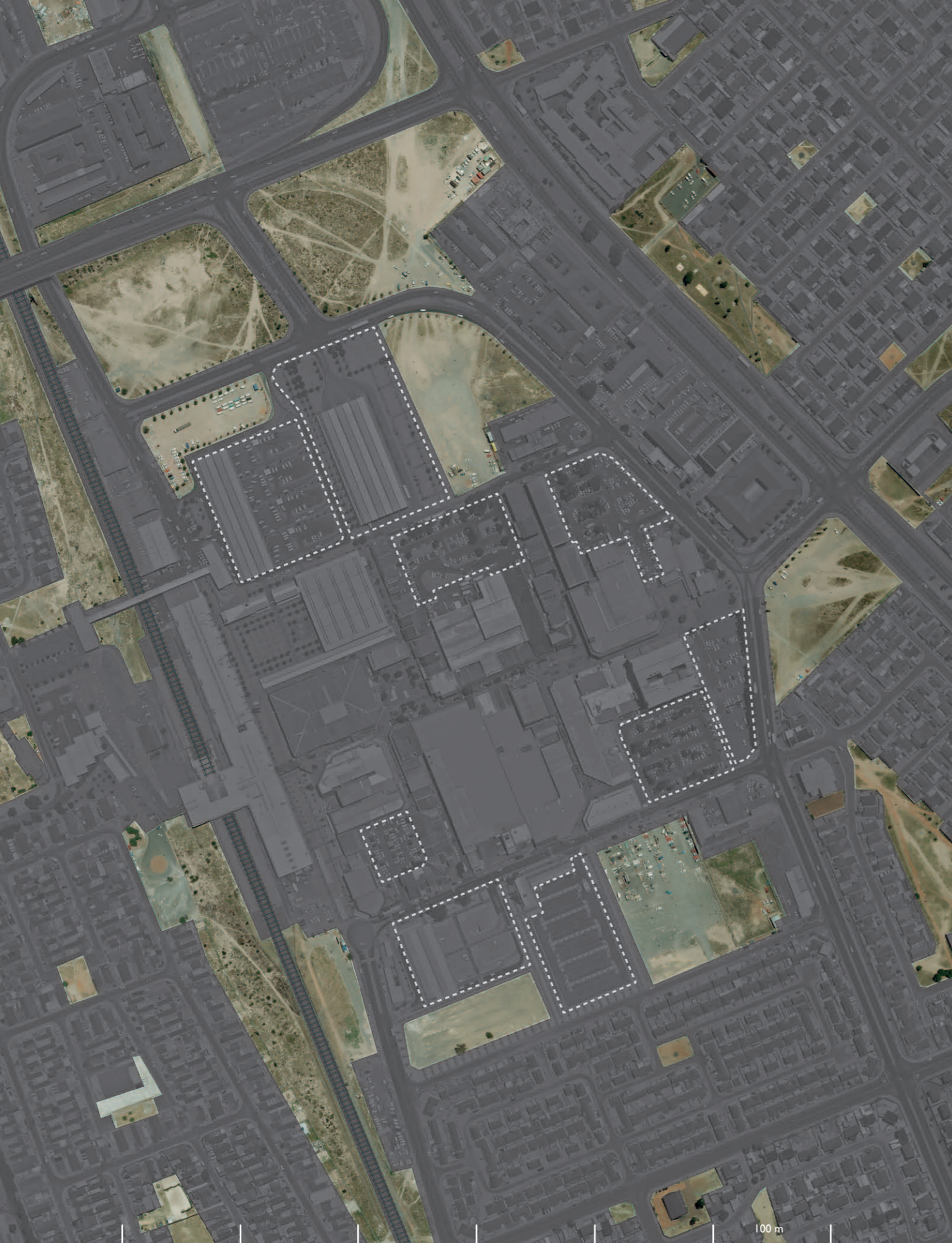
146. See UWC Off Campus Catalogue for a case study of the Jammie Shuttles.

147. Laura Huss, *Informal Economy Within a Capitalist System: A Focus on Mitchells Plain Town Centre in Cape Town, South Africa*, p. 11.

100 m
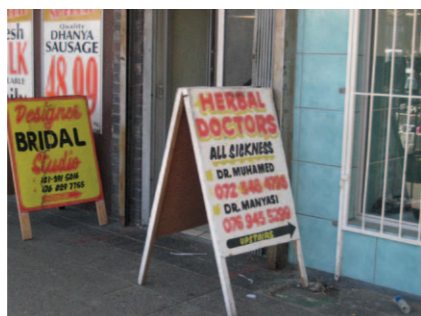
5. VACANT LAND

< *Map indicating vacant land, based on GIS data, fieldwork, aerial photography and a vacant land study executed by the City of Cape Town. In addition, parking areas on City-owned land are marked (dotted line).*

Mapping: vacant spaces

The town centre of Mitchells Plain is quite clearly defined as a pentagon-shaped shopping area on the one hand and an additional strip of institutions along A.Z. Berman Road on the other. A mapping of all vacant space shows how wastelands and parking lots surround both the pentagon and the strip. The town centre is thus defined as a combination of two islands - a shopping pentagon and an institutional strip - detached from the urban fabric. In order to identify which land is suitable for development, only the non-private parking areas are shown. The site that UWC is considering to purchase is equally marked, as it is currently owned by the City.

The current evolution of the town centre shows how the edges of the pentagon are systematically exploited as parking areas and bus terminals. This neglects the opportunity to develop the town centre as a coherent centre in the township. If the current evolution continues, new developments along the northern arterial (Wespoort Drive) will a priori be disconnected from the main town centre.

Instead of looking at the numerous open spaces as a problem, I would like to focus on the potential of this amount of City-owned land for further development of the town centre. In the (very likely) scenario that Mitchells Plain will densify further, the vast open space is of high value and unique in the township context.[148] Moreover, the pedestrian web forms a complex network of open spaces connecting sites of public significance, such as schools, churches, creches etc. The original intention of the 1970s plan was to broaden the web at certain points, creating space for parks and sport fields. As the Structural Development Framework states however, "*Mitchell's Plain has a culture of sports, but few sports facilities and gardens have been provided, making the existing facilities of great significance to the community.*"[149] Many of the intended facilities have not been provided. Consequently, the pedestrian web functions merely as a place of transition, not as a destination. If the residential web would be of greater significance in daily routes of people, this would show in the manifestation of backyard 'spaza'-shops giving out to this public open space. The appearance of high walls however suggests the opposite.

Typology of vacant spaces

In a third design proposal, the vacant land will be deployed to extend the pedestrian web that structures Mitchells Plain's residential areas. To define which land qualifies for the completion of this 'public web', a typology of vacant spaces is drawn up, with four categories of vacant spaces: public open space, which comprises the pedestrian web; infrastructure leftovers; school sites; and wastelands. The categorization of each plot is based on the definition given by the City in GIS-documents.

148. As stated in the section 'public space', public spaces in townships were generally not provided until it was too late.

149. City of Cape Town, Structural Development Framework.

100 m
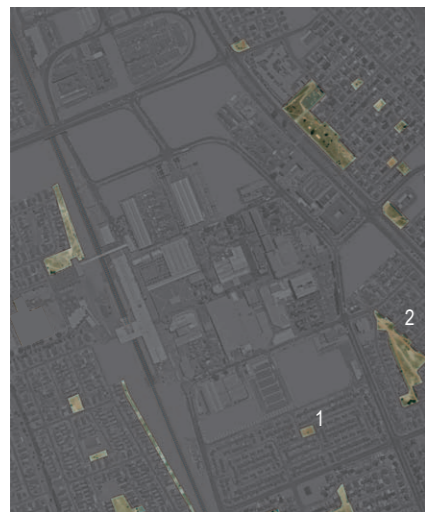
public open space

The amount of residual space in Mitchells Plain is enormous. One of the reasons is the excessively generous space standards applied for public open spaces and facilities. Frequently, the facilities themselves were never built do to a lack of finance and/or support, leaving the land vacant. Instead of being centre points of the neighbourhoods, these areas are neglected and became dumping grounds for waste. Consequently, they distort the continuity of the settlement more than connecting it.
This land is City-owned and thus holds potential for connection between the isolated residential zones.
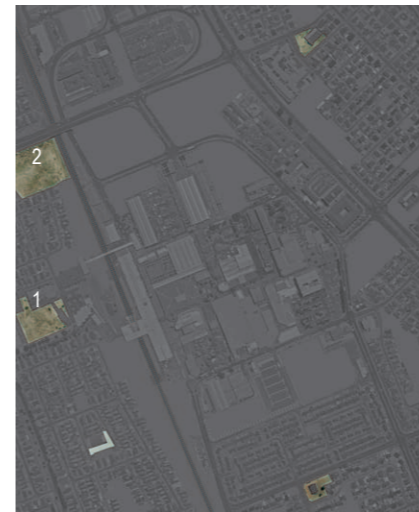
school sites

In the original New Town plan (see the close up on Westridge), schools were provided in abundance, in the idea that every area should have its own centrally located school. The provisioned sites were enormous compared to the number of students these schools had to address. As a consequence, schools stand as individual buildings in a sea of open, dusty land. There is little continuity of urban fabric.
The schools and their grounds fall under the authorities of the Western Cape Province.
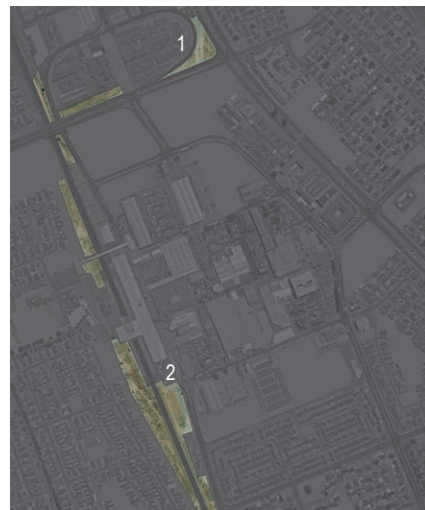
infrastructure leftovers

These narrow tracts of vacant land border the roads and rail line. Following the plan for Milton Keynes, Mitchells Plain was catering specifically for motorised transport. Its structuring grid consists of high-speed motorways, with 2x2 or 2x3 lanes. Consequently, they are constructed similar to highways, with a large buffer strip on the side and little connection to adjoining buildings. This land is City-owned. Infrastructure leftovers around the rail line are connected to the public transport service and are thus owned by national bodies such as Metrorail.
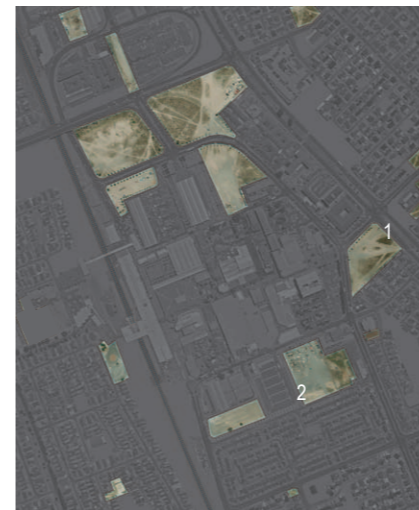

wastelands

A common practice in the development of complete new townships was to leave space 'reserves' around shopping centres etc. for later expansion. As stated before, budgets for such expansions were and still are low, and they were never materialised. The town centre is surrounded by vacant land, now mostly used as dumping grounds, parking area or place for informal trade that is more specific than the food and clothing trade in the town centre (car parts, sanitary fixtures, building materials, etc.)
As Mitchells Plain was built by the City of Cape Town, this land is owned by the City.
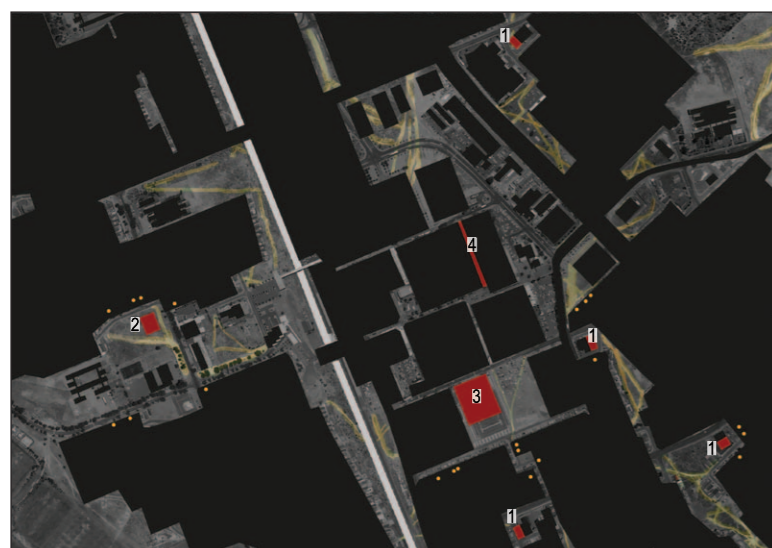
built space and major roads
open space
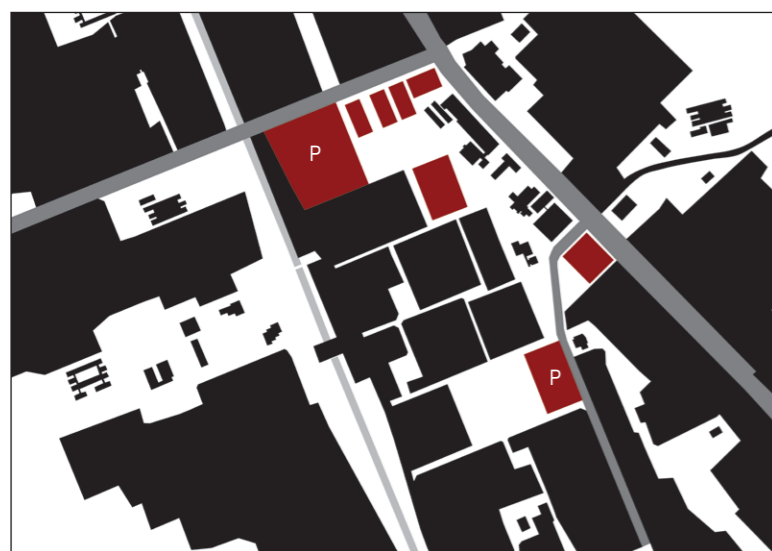
high-order roads
proposed traffic generating programme

desire lines in open space
proposed UWC interventions
  1. outreach clinics
  2. sports centre
  3. centre for agriculture + fresh produce market
  4. residence alley
○ private responses (residences)

PROPOSAL: URBAN WEB

CBD development scenario: programming the web

The third proposal is radically different from the previous two. It looks beyond the borders of the town centre and aims not to concentrate all activity in one place, but explores how the present activities could be connected to the surrounding residential areas. It takes account of the planned pedestrian web as one of Mitchells Plain's potentially most valuable resources and uses it as an incentive for restructuring the town centre.

Today, the pedestrian web is little more than a connection of open terrains, with no other functionality than being a shortcut for pedestrians. It is incomplete and is interrupted at the town centre. Residents do use these spaces to cross neighbourhoods, but the enormous scale and indeterminateness of the public space makes these flows very scattered and sporadic.

In order to restructure the town centre, we look back at the New Town plan where centres are located on the crossing of two logics: the higher order and the local neighbourhood. Along the high-order roads, the following proposal locates functions that draw motorized traffic, such as offices and large institutions. The parking areas as well will be transferred from within the inner core of the centre to parking areas or parking buildings alongside these grid roads.
To connect the town centre to the adjacent neighbourhoods, the proposal is to extend the pedestrian web through the centre. The current logic of the town centre, an interconnected system of public spaces (square - alley - square), will be integrated in this web.
Subsequently, the pedestrian web is programmed to use its potential fully and to connect with the already present actors. Thus the monofunctionality of the residential areas will be altered and the purpose of the web as pedestrian connection and focal point of the neighbourhood is re-established. It becomes an urban web.
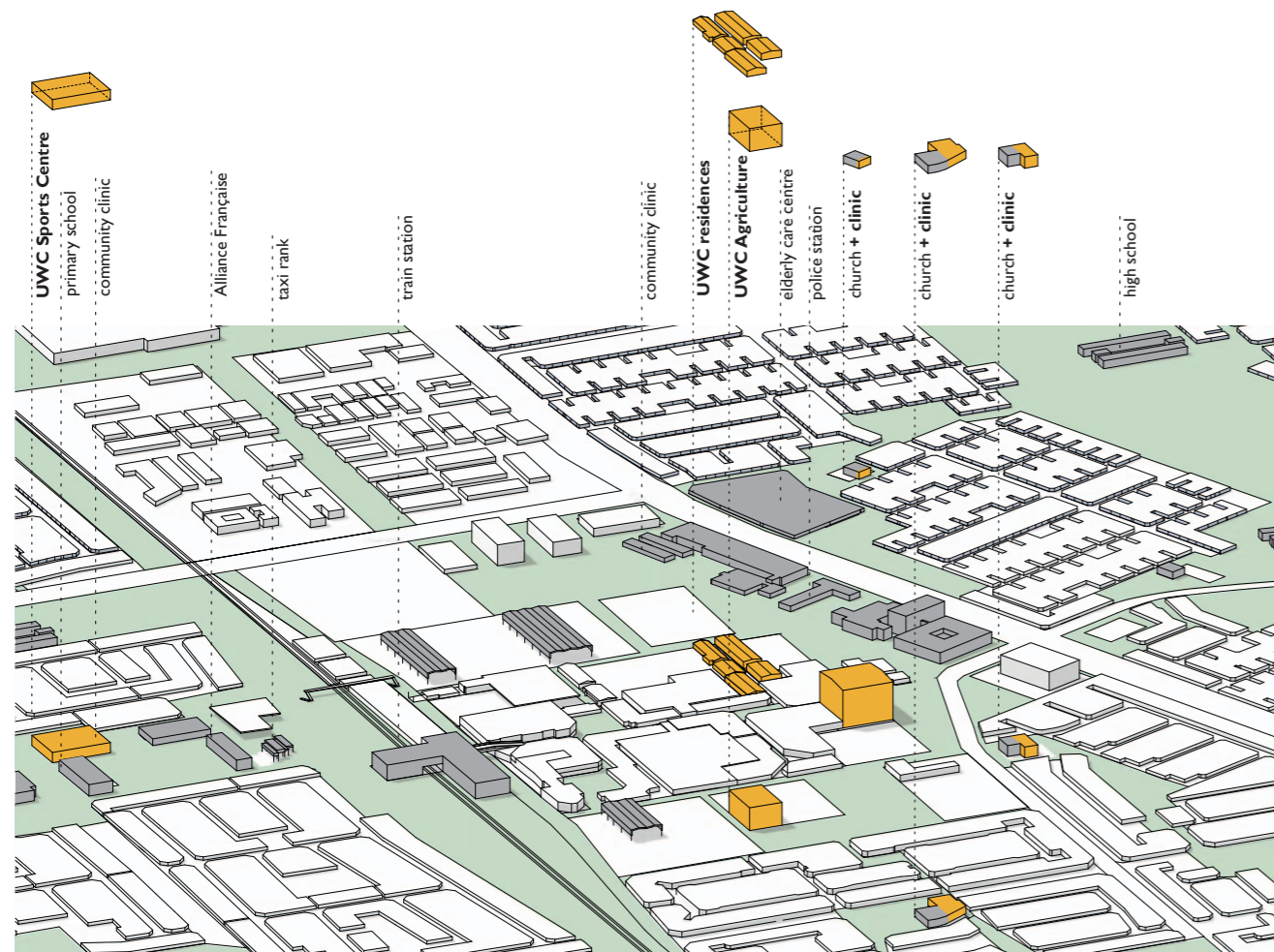
The proposal forms the urban web as a continuous space of community functions. It forms a new type of 'town centre', very different from the current central yet isolated location of the town centre. The assumption is that residents will answer to the presence of certain programmes and will use their homes, garages or backyards as shops, restaurants, etc. in a way similar to the mapped responses to medical institutions. In an incremental way, the web becomes both a destination as a space of flows. Thus the existing model of development that focuses all investments in one centre is gradually replaced by a connected system of spaces that allows for addressing all neighbourhoods.

UWC satellite: catalyst

The university can be one of the autonomous actors to charge this web. It is therefore important to look at domains in which the interests of both UWC and the urban web overlap. We are looking for satellite projects of the university that would benefit from a location in the urban web of Mitchells Plain and at the same time we want to define places of interest in the web that would benefit from the presence of an urban agent.
This relationship is further explored by means of 4 UWC projects: health sciences, community sports, agriculture and housing.

UWC Sports Centre
primary school
community clinic
Alliance Française
taxi rank
train station
community clinic
UWC residences
UWC Agriculture
elderly care centre
police station
church + clinic
church + clinic
church + clinic
high school

< urban web actors
To form a clear urban web in the overload of vacant spaces, the public open spaces are further densified there were activities are already present.

< Sports Centre on vacant land adjacent to high school. Present 'desire lines' of pedestrians are incorporated in the design.

150. Report on research project by Brown University and the University of Cape Town on Urban transformation, http://www.s4.brown.edu/southafrica/Reports/CapeTown/Eastridge.pdf
151. Lotus International Environmental blog, *Philippi Housing*, http://www.lotusenvironmentalblog.it/philippi-housing.
Noero Wolff, http://www.noerowolff.com.

1. UWC's Community Health Sciences and Dentistry outreach projects aim to address those community members that are difficult to reach. The proposal identifies the strong presence of churches as an opportunity to address a broad community. In light of the dental faculty's outreach project, small outreach clinics can be established. Part of UWC's mission concerning dentistry in Mitchells Plain should not only be the service free of charge, but could also play a significant role in oral hygiene education. By being more present, oral hygiene is brought to attention. The necessary infrastructure for the clinics is provided in collaboration with the local churches that use them for community activities, cultural festivals, market space, etc. The management of the space is in hands of the local church.

2. A second satellite activity is set up on a site where two schools are present. The proposal is to establish a satellite to the university's Sports Faculty and establish an after-school sports programme in collaboration with the local schools. The sport terrains are articulated to be clearly distinguishable from the general open space.

3. The third activity focuses on the vacant spaces in the residential areas. In partnership with UWC's agriculture research department, a project of urban agriculture can be set up on the open space that cuts through residential zones. A possible partner would be the Beacon Valley centre, located north-east of the town centre, that runs a project of vegetable gardens in the local schools.[150]
An interesting example of a project for urban agriculture in the Cape Flats is the Philippi cement factory by Noero Wolff. This (not yet realised) project is an attempt to define a new attitude towards social housing that would be sustainable in the sense of offering the urban poor the opportunity to become self-sufficient. The need for income-generation is regarded as part of the housing programme and answered by the integration of an agricultural programme. The project is located at a former cement factory, just north of Mitchells Plain.[151]

4. In this scenario, two phases of student residences are proposed. In a first phase, UWC could provide student residences close to its base in the town centre. Being a first residence in the area, this would require a careful exercise in providing a safe and valuable student environment. This proposal therefore identifies one street in the town centre that offers potential for mixed use development: the current buildings consist of ground floor retail space with residential flats on top, which are accessed by an outdoor colonnade. Currently, the residential part is unused, except from a few medical practices and a traditional healer. The design proposes to close off the street, making it only accessible for UWC students and staff. The ground floor retail will be specifically oriented towards students with food courts, copy centers, shops, etc. As they have a backside for delivery, the shops can be run by private owners.
By re-appropriating the dilapidated residential structure of the town centre, UWC can be the agent that encourages mixed-use development in and around the town centre.
In a second phase, UWC could engage with the private sector to expand its supply in student residences. Partnerships will be set up with individuals that rent out their houses on specific terms set by the university. Off campus spread residences offer the opportunity to diversify the specific living typologies as to answer to all students' needs. The proposed UWC satellite activities in the pedestrian web can work as a catalyst for further, privately driven, developments.

< *Urban agriculture on vacant land in residential zone. The ensuing presence of students, school children and residents, will trigger responses from the private market, such as spaza-shops and food stalls.*

Of course, this proposal raises questions on safety as it requires UWC to move further than the relative controlled environment of the town centre. Nevertheless, this allows reaching other outreach groups, such as school children. In such a scenario, a strict border between public and private in the building itself will be crucial, in contrast to the previous proposals were a certain border was intrinsic to the development concept.

Also importantly, this proposal suggests a form of development in which UWC does not supply everything to form a complete campus, but can rely partly on private initiatives. The university engages with partners that are already present and forms diverse stakeholder relations. "*Recognition of community stakeholder status is associated with a growing variety of partnerships and a gradual blurring of public/private and for-profit/not-for-profit distinctions.*"[152]

< *UWC residence alley in town centre, with ground floor retail and food courts.*

152. Ray Bromley, "On and Off Campus: Colleges and Universities as Local Stakeholders," *Planning, Practice & Research,* vol. 21, no. 1, 2006, p. 20.

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IMAGE CREDITS

All mapping underlays are aerial photos from UCT GIS-lab (2006-2009)
The topographic map of Cape Town used as black-and-white underlay is courtesy of Cape Town Chief Directorate Surveys and Mapping.
Residential pattern and vacant land maps are based on GIS data (surveys dating from 2001-2009): Municipal Department Strategy and Planning of Cape Town; UCT GIS-lab; Cape Town Chief Directorate Surveys and Mapping.

All pictures are courtesy of the authors (September - November 2011), unless indicated:
p. 13: Joint Town Planning Committee, 'Cape Flats', March 1967 (UCT Built Environment library)
p. 17: Rasmussen, S., "Reflections on Milton Keynes." *Architectural Design* vol. 64, no. 10, 1994: pp. 8.
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p. 28, image 1: *Architecture SA,* Autumn 1981.
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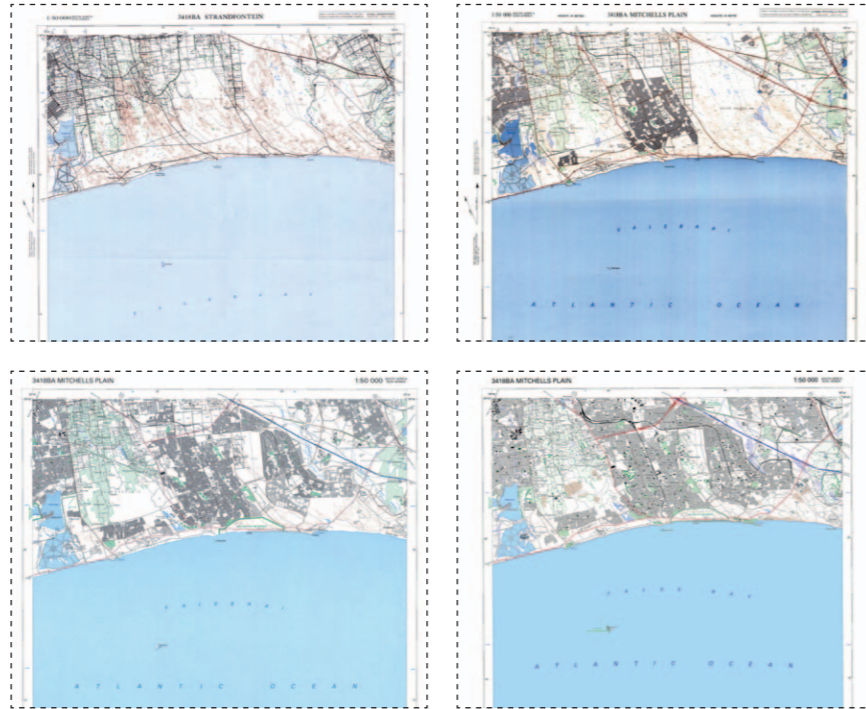p. 76-77: Google: 2009-2010.

ANNEX 1 : CARTOGRAPHY

The enclosed DVD comprises a collection of images that were used for the reconstruction of Mitchells Plain's history. The following grid of pictures forms the basis of the document. When clicking on an image, it can be seen enlarged with date, source and a description.
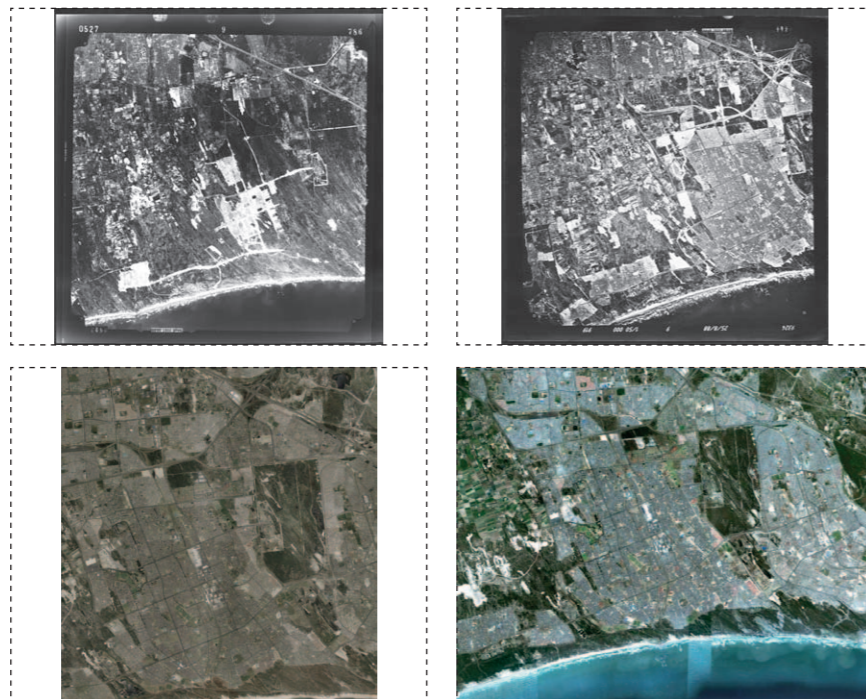
Topographic maps

1959
1081
1995
2000

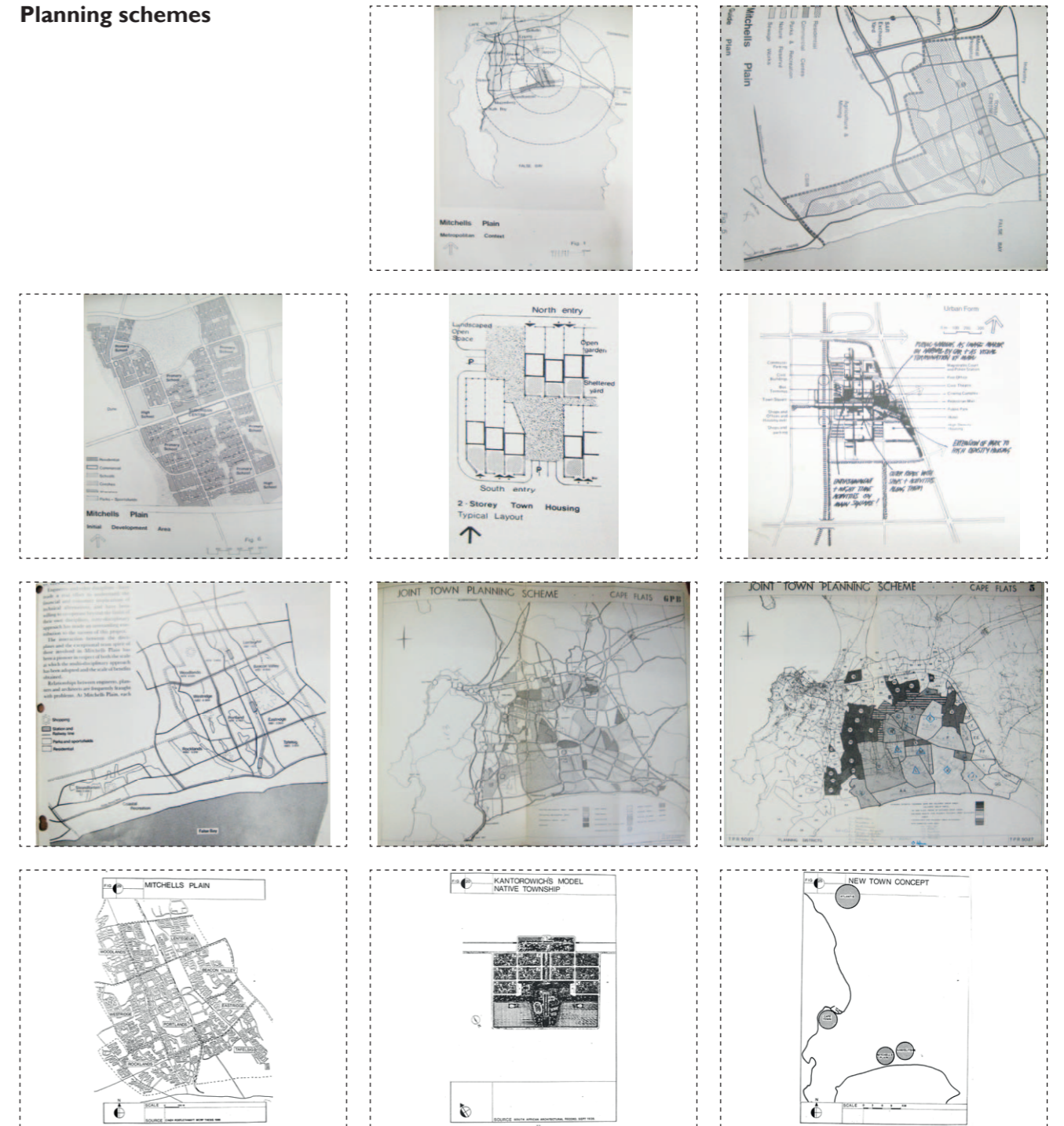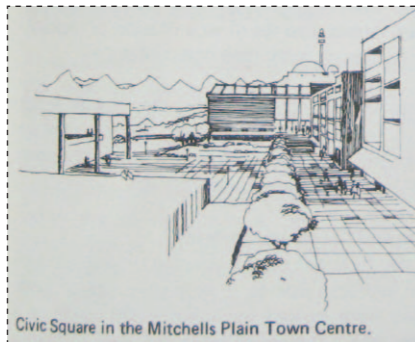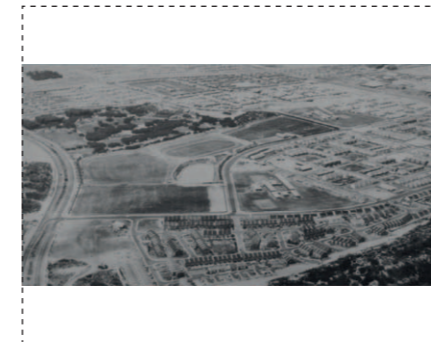## Aerial photography

1977
1989
2009
2011

Planning schemes

ANNEX 2 : HISTORICAL IMAGERY

Historical photographs and sketches

Oblique aerial photographs

Advertisements

Wyndover • Rondebosch East • Crawford • Athlone Industria • Primrose Park

Harfield Road • Belthorn • Manenberg

Kenilworth Hosp. • Lansdowne • Rec Stadium • Hanover Park • Nyanga

Kenilworth Racecourse • Sunlands • Kenwyn • Lansdowne Rd • Guguletu

Kenilworth Race Course • Kenwyn • Wetton • El Paso • Ollandia • Training Track

Diggings • Springfield • Buhr • 1454

Youngsfield • High Riding • Philippi • Highlands • Weltevrede

Plumstead • Ottery • Sonnenstrahl • Groenvlei • Village Farm • 1454

Fairways • Ottery • 1378 • Pine Acres • Sandvlei • Nooitgedacht • Onverwacht

Royal Cape Golf Course • Klein Rietvlei • Skaapkraal • Sandrug

Steurhof • Parkwood • Parkwood • 1448 • 1449

Southfield • Lotus River • Sonnenhof • Vredelust • Montague Farm

Punts Estate • Flintdale • Montagu's Gift • Lindesdam • △211

Elfindale • Grassy Park • Pelican Park • Mac's Farm • Ermadene • Olieboom

Retreat • Grassy Park • Princess Vlei • Lindesdam

Cafda Village • Cafda • Zeekoevlei • Pelican Park • Rus-en-Vrede • Strandfontein

Rondevlei • RONDEVLEI BIRD SANCTUARY • Rondevlei Yacht Club • Lawrenseville

Zeekoevlei • Zeekoevlei • Aquatic Club

△230 25.3 • Lavender Hill • 844 • Aquatic Club • Strandfontein Pavilion

Coniston Park • Seawinds • Blue Haven • Sewage Treatment Works • △141 40.6 • △168 31.8

Vrygrond • Refuse Dump • Marina