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1 INTRODUCTION

The Urban Design Studio, together with Annemarie Loots and Arup, was been appointed by JDA to draft an Urban Development Framework with Urban Design Guidelines for the Randburg CBD (A Revision of the Randburg Revitalisation Strategy of 2004). This document is the first draft and deals with the Status Quo Analysis, Development Concept, Development Guidelines and Strategies as well as the Implementation Framework for the Randburg CBD.

1.1 STUDY AREA

The brief identified the study area to ‘mainly be the Randburg Regional Node and areas of direct influence’. It also stated that the proposal ‘may include the review of the Regional Nodal Boundary as contained in the Spatial Development Framework’.

Randburg is located within Administrative Region B which is the central region of the City, situated to the north-west of the Johannesburg CBD. Randburg CBD falls entirely within Sub Area 18. It is abutted by Sub Area 19 to the west, Sub Areas 20 and 22 to the north, Sub Area 17 to the east, and Sub Area 14 to the south.

Sub Area 18 is 251ha in extent and its boundaries are as follows:

- **West**: The first row of properties on the western side of Main Street. The properties abutting Republic Road up to the Klein Jukskei Spruit are also included.
- **South**: The first row of properties on the southern side of Republic Road, as well as the properties abutting Bram Fischer Drive and Oak Avenue up to Grove Street.
- **East**: Bram Fischer Drive, Selkirk Avenue, Jan Smuts Avenue and Hilltop/ St. Giles Streets.
- **North**: Alexandra Street, Milner Road, Nerina Street, Main Avenue and York Avenue.

The study area includes, amongst others:

- The Hill Street Mall;
- The Civic Precinct consisting of a taxi rank, informal traders market and licensing offices of the City of Joburg;
- The offices of SARS, SASOL, and M-NET;
- The Land Claims Court; and
- The Ferndale Park and Community Centre.
1.2 PROJECT BRIEF

The project brief requested a ‘Revised Urban Development Framework (UDF) for the Randburg Node, based on sound urban design principles, which aims to

- Integrate the node with the network of transport routes and facilities,
- Appropriately intensify land uses,
- Provide for a mix of land uses,
- Improve the quality of the public environment and experience of the node, and
- Establish a safe and walkable environment.’

The brief stated further that the core of the UDF must be a ‘plan outlining a development proposal and related spatial interventions, for a high density, high intensity mixed-use development, which caters for a range of housing options across the income spectrum, specifically for the ‘gap’ market in the area supported by the strengthening of existing social amenities.’

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology consisted of four phases:

- Phase 1: Status Quo Analysis
- Phase 2: Development concept
- Phase 3: Design Guidelines and Development Strategies; and
- Phase 4: Implementation Framework.

1.3.1 PHASE 1: STATUS QUO ANALYSIS

The aim of the Status Quo was to gather all relevant information in order to develop a thorough understanding of the characteristics
and dynamics of the node and identify spatial implications that would guide the UDF.

Information was obtained through perusal of existing documentation, site visits, analysis of aerial photography, land use and environmental quality surveys and interviews with key stakeholders.

Much attention was paid to the perusal of existing documentation as several studies and frameworks have already been completed on the Randburg CBD Precinct.  

Care was also taken to meet as many as possible stakeholders in order to address the conflict which has prevented the implementation of previous Frameworks and ensure that the framework addresses a wide spectrum of needs.  

1.3.2 PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The aim of this phase was to develop a spatial concept to guide the structuring of the node through highlighting major structuring elements, such as the movement network hierarchy and development precincts. The spatial concept was based on the outcomes of the status quo analysis as well as city-wide policies. The development concept was tested with key stakeholders and adapted based on comments received.

1.3.3 PHASE 3: DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The aim of the design guidelines and development strategy is to guide both public and private actions in achieving the Development Concept. It addresses the design guidelines for each precinct as well as a parking and a public art strategy.

1.3.4 PHASE 4: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The aim of the implementation strategy is to guide public actions and budgeting to ensure the implementation of the proposals contained in this document. As such aspects such as an institutional framework, catalytic projects, phasing/prioritisation and costing were addressed.

1.3.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation formed an important part of the project. Stakeholders were involved through three public meetings, several meetings with individual stakeholders, newspaper articles, website articles, posters and flyers. Inputs were solicited on the issues, problems and opportunities facing the Randburg CBD as part of the Status Quo Analysis as well as on the proposals contained in the Development Concept. An excellent response was received. For the full public participation report please refer to Annexure B.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF DOCUMENT

The remainder of the document is structured as follows:

- Section 1: Status Quo Analysis
- Section 2: Development Concept
- Section 3: Development Strategies
- Section 4: Implementation Strategy

---

1 A list of documents consulted is attached as Annexure A.
2 A list of stakeholders consulted is attached as Annexure B.
SECTION 1: STATUS QUO ANALYSIS

1 INTRODUCTION

The status quo analysis addresses:

- History of Randburg CBD;
- Randburg in Regional Context in terms of function, market economics and access;
- Higher Order Plans and Frameworks;
- Existing Frameworks and plans;
- Topography and urban form;
- Movement patterns, including private, public and non-motorised;
- Land uses in terms of spatial pattern, typology, economics and trends;
- Development opportunities; and
- Institutional aspects.

2 HISTORY OF RANDBURG CBD

In order to understand the current state of the Randburg CBD, it is necessary to review the historical development of the area. The most important milestones of the development of Randburg CBD are as follows:

- In the 1950s Randburg was little more than a low-density residential area. When the area was electrified in 1955/6 some commercial development took place and retail development began to emerge along the major arterials.

In 1959 Randburg received independent municipal status and a plan was drawn up to develop a “central business district” with retail, civic and office uses, but excluding residential uses as per the fashion at the time which valued the strict separation of land uses.

A new plan was commissioned by the Randburg Council in 1972. The fundamental innovation contained in this plan was the development of an outdoor retail mall, running east west along Hill Street which was closed to traffic. The mall was constructed in 1976. The new mall was complemented by the construction of a new civic centre to house the municipality in the triangle bounded by Selkirk, Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts, known as the Civic Precinct.

Major new commercial developments followed and it is estimated that a R1 million investment in the public environment realised a return investment of over R45 million of private development in the CBD.

- The development pressure necessitated a plan for the expansion of the CBD, which was commissioned in 1985. It was envisaged that the CBD would stretch from Bond Street in the north to Republic in the south, and as far as Main Street in the west.

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3 The history of Randburg CBD is to a large extent based on the detailed account given by Michael Hart in the Randburg Revitalisation Strategy, dated 2004.
The plan for the expanded CBD was never realised, and only a limited numbers of blocks managed to attract commercial development. The plan was not realised due to the Randburg CBD being negatively affected by two major property trends that manifested itself in the late 1980s to early 1990s:

- The development of **large enclosed malls** under single ownership with well-maintained internal pedestrian environments. This made the outdoor Randburg Mall seem increasingly unfashionable and progressively less attractive.
- The development of **office parks** in other suburban locations within Greater Johannesburg.

At more or less the same time, the **combi-taxi industry** experienced a significant growth spurt within an urban context that made no provision for this form of transport. Two informal ranks were established in Randburg on the Civic Precinct and on the Hilltop site to the east of Jan Smuts/ Bram Fischer. The taxis attracted informal traders that clustered in and around the taxi ranks. The taxis brought new customers into the area, but the unregulated and chaotic nature of the taxi ranks and informal trade also served as a push factor to some of the existing businesses and customers.

By 1997, the decline of the Randburg CBD necessitated action. GAPP Architects and Urban Designers were commissioned by the then Northern Metropolitan Local Council (NMLC) to devise **“A Revitalisation Strategy to enable the Rejuvenation of the Randburg Business District” in 1997.**

Little came of the Revitalisation Strategy and Randburg CBD was dealt another blow when the offices of the **NMLC closed down** in the wake of local government restructuring after the 2000 elections and the municipal functions housed in the old civic centre moved out. This had the effect of removing another important activity from the heart of Randburg.

Closely following the relocation of the municipal offices was the relocation of the **Magistrate’s Court** on the Civic Site as well as the **Police Station** on Bram Fischer. The building housing the Magistrate’s Court has since been demolished.

Decline was compounded by a **lack of investment by the public sector** in maintaining the pedestrian environment in and around the Randburg Mall.

Between the 1970s when the Randburg Mall was first established and the late 1990s the Randburg CBD thus experienced **changes in clientele and visitors** towards lower income households, **changes in composition of office and retail businesses** located in area and it started to play an increasing role as a **taxi hub** and interchange serving almost the entire city.

In 2001, an attempt was made to rationalise pedestrian movement and taxi activities. The Hilltop rank was closed down and fenced off and a **new enlarged more formal rank** together with informal traders stalls were established on a part of the Civic Precinct that was previously used for parking.
In an attempt to address the vehicular-pedestrian conflict across Bram Fischer created by the taxi rank, a new pedestrian bridge was constructed that linked the taxi rank to the Hill Street Mall via the Oriental Plaza shopping centre. The bridge was funded by the owners of the Oriental Plaza shopping centre and forced pedestrians to take a detour through the shopping centre. This dramatically increased the footfall within the centre itself.

The rationalisation of the taxi rank and the pedestrian bridge did little to address the decline of the Randburg CBD. Perceptions that the area was crime-ridden, dirty and badly maintained were commonplace. According to the Randburg CBD Performance Survey conducted by John Luiz in April 2004, the overall satisfaction of stakeholders in the Randburg CBD is 47.9 on their index which compares to a similar index of 43.5 for the Johannesburg Inner City in 2002.

The study area thus experienced symptoms of urban decay similar to the inner city of Johannesburg. However attention and amendments were given to the other CBDs experiencing problems, whereas the problems experienced by the study area were neglected. Perceptions obtained from stakeholders indicated that the lack of effective local government prioritisation of the area, budgetary allocation and co-ordination between landowners were the main problems behind the study area’s decay and caused the loss of its competitive edge.

GAPP Architects and Urban Studies drafted a Spatial Development and Design Plan for the Civic and Hilltop Sites in 2003 for The Johannesburg Property Company. It criticised recent developments, i.e. the taxi rank and pedestrian bridge as being contrary to previous proposals, ad hoc, inconvenient etc.

By 2004, when Michael Hart was appointed to do a Revitalisation Strategy for the Randburg CBD, Randburg was confronted with ‘strong competition from competing nodes, negative perceptions, stagnant development and loss of consumer market’ (Kayamandi, 2004) and it was faced with a major challenge in establishing a balance between the informal sector and small businesses associated with the taxi industry on the one hand and the formal, bigger business on the other.

Both the GAPP and Hart studies proposed:
- the complete or partial closure of Bram Fisher Drive between Selkirk and Jan Smuts Avenues;
- rerouting traffic through the central CBD area of Randburg;
- the redevelopment of the Civic Precinct;
- the opening up of Hill Street Mall to vehicular traffic;
- the removal of the pedestrian bridge; and
- the establishment of a CID; and

Although some of the changes proposed in the GAPP and Hart studies were implemented, i.e. the upgrading of certain intersections to allow vehicular traffic into the mall and the creation of a larger informal market area on the Civic Precinct, key elements were not implemented, most importantly the
introduction of vehicular traffic in the Hill Street Pedestrian Mall
the closure or partial closure of a portion of BramFisher Drive and
the removal of the pedestrian bridge. The reason being that key
land owners opposed the proposals and actually took the council
to court to prevent these changes from taking place.4

One of the successful outcomes of the studies was the establishment of a CID, the Randburg Management District (RBMD), in 2004. It launched a number of initiatives to improve the environment and reverse the decline in the CBD area. It appears as if this has had a positive impact as vacancy have shown a steady and continuous decrease since 2004, from 17.5% in 2005 to 6.8% in 2007. Moreover, Randburg Square which was only 60% let in 2004, were 100% let in both their office and retail space by 2005.

Since 2008, the RBMD has lobbied for the City to undertake a Review of the Randburg Revitalisation Strategy to address:

- the points of conflict;
- new issues such as the introduction of the BRT to the area; and
- the creation of an appropriate and interactive partnership between the RBMD and the relevant City Departments that are responsible for guiding development in the node.

From the above it is clear that Randburg has experienced more than two decades of decline, due to several factors ranging from property trends, lack of maintenance and relocation of several key government functions. Despite several plans being commissioned and drafted, limited success has been achieved in turning Randburg around, mainly due to a lack of consensus around key proposals and a lack of urban management outside of the CID area.

3 Randburg in Regional Context

Randburg is one of several economic nodes located in the highly sought after, high income, established northern part of the City of Johannesburg. According to the RSDF this region is one of the economic and financial hubs in the city and the mixed-use nodes in this region are of critical importance to the city’s economy.

Although Randburg CBD was one of the first decentralised nodes in the area, several new nodes have subsequently developed and are still developing in this area, resulting in competition between the different nodes to attract investors, companies and consumers. Randburg has been negatively affected by this competition. The negative image of the Randburg CBD has contributed to its losing its initial competitive edge. The negative image is clearly displayed in
the following comments given by respondents during a perception survey: ‘Once was a sought-after area outside Johannesburg, but is no longer; The area has had its day, it is a forgotten town now; Down and dirty, dull, rundown compared to the early 80’s when it was “new”; Area has become worse over time, more informal traders, more homeless people, more “dodgy” nightclubs, general deterioration of buildings, roads, environment, etc.’

In terms of offices, Randburg already had 370 000m² of office space in 1993. Although office space supply increased steadily over the years, the demand has declined and the highest office vacancies were experienced in 2003 at around 20% (similar to that experienced in the Johannesburg CBD). The increased vacancy rate was due to the outflow of larger corporate businesses due to the declining image of Randburg CBD, its ageing office stock and the fact that as stand-alone office blocks they seem less attractive to tenants than newer office parks situated in other commercial nodes with better access and visibility.

Randburg’s functioning as an office node has further been compromised by an oversupply of offices at a metropolitan scale. The GAPP report, prepared in 1997, stated that the permissive attitude of the council to office use along arterials led to the dispersion of commercial activities outside of the urban core and contributed to the decline of the Randburg CBD. The report made recommendations to reverse this trend so as to force office activity back into the centre. This recommendation seems to have been ignored as there is evidence of continuing change of use from residential to office along the main roads.’ (Randburg Revitalisation Study, 2004)

Although there has been little growth in the office market in Randburg CBD, vacancy rates have improved to 7.3% in 2007 due to the reduction in office supply, low rentals and the central location of the Randburg CBD. Rentals for all grades offices are considerably lower than in other decentralised office nodes (e.g. R60 for A+ grade offices compared to R100+ in Melrose Arch, Sandton, and Illovo in 2006), rentals are slightly higher than the Johannesburg CBD but slightly lower than Braamfontein CBD. Randburg CBD thus attracted smaller businesses that in most instances are start-up businesses catering for smaller one-man markets as well as several call-centres.

The change in focus and character of businesses has attracted:

- Small businesses who have little or no direct contact with customers;
- Businesses that are not prestige related and are not involved in trade; and
- Businesses that are more cost sensitive.

Due to its unique conditions within the decentralised office market, Randburg CBD is still a significant contributor to the office market in Johannesburg and is the fourth largest office node in the city, after the Johannesburg CBD, Sandton and Midrand. The presence of M-NET has led to several media companies also locating in the area and the low rentals have attracted numerous call-centres to the area.

In terms of retail, there are approximately 150 000 middle to high income residents living within the 5km catchment of the Randburg CBD. Within this 5km catchment there are five regional nodes and several shopping centres all vying for the same consumer source. The surrounding retail development has been described as some of the best shopping centres in the country. These nodes and shopping centres are more convenient, better located, more modern and more attractive and thus attract a large number of the population living within the Randburg CBD catchment. Thus nodes and shopping centres are such as Cresta, Northgate, Fourways Mall and Sandton City are favoured for major purchases and the smaller centres in the suburbs
for top-up shopping. The Randburg CBD thus falls in the “retail shadow” cast by other centres and is unable to offer the amenity associated with enclosed malls – protection from the elements, climate control, enhanced security and the benefits of ongoing renovation.

In contrast with offices, retail in Randburg has declined and deteriorated over time and the retail profile has changed dramatically. Randburg has a Market Attractiveness Index slightly above average at 107. This is much lower than areas like Sandton (165), Fourways (143) and Midrand (133).

Regional access to the CBD is poor. Randburg is compromised by its distance to the freeway system and by poor connections between Randburg and freeways. The closest freeway access points are Malibongwe and William Nicol for vehicles travelling north and Beyers Naude for vehicles travelling south. Connections are generally indirect, along congested arterials with bad bottlenecks at intersections where motorists are obliged to turn right. Other nodes such as Rosebank and Sandton are much better located in terms of highway access and thus have a competitive edge over Randburg. Given that freeway access is one of the major determinants of commercial value in the office market, Randburg’s awkward location relative to the freeway is a major weakness.

In terms of sub-regional movement and access, Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer, provide direct access from the north and south. Indirect east and west access is provided by Republic and Bond which run on the edges of the CBD.
Jan Smuts is the longest of these routes connecting Randburg to the Johannesburg CBD but is compromised by virtue of bottlenecks along the way particularly in areas where it accommodates only one lane of traffic in each direction. Both Republic Road and Bram Fischer offer less connectivity and are significantly shorter and therefore offer less connectivity.

The majority of traffic in Randburg is through traffic rather than destination traffic (GMKS, 2004). This is afforded by the functioning of Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts as mobility spines rather than access routes and may have compromised the success of Randburg as a node, given the ease with which cars can bypass the area.

Although the Randburg CBD has lost its competitive edge due to access problems, a negative image and its relative age, it currently plays a unique role within the region in that it serves a different market from the other nodes and serves both a high and low income market. Its most important assets in this regard is its function as a public transport hub and its lower land prices and rentals. It should thus not compete with the other decentralised nodes in the region, but should capitalise on the strength of its unique position.

4 Higher order plans and frameworks

The fact that Randburg CBD has developed into a major public transportation hub has been its saving grace. Randburg currently appeals to lower income segments and it therefore encourages businesses who employ people from these groups to relocate and invest in Randburg. These employees are dependent on public transport which is a key strength. The fact that it caters for a variety of income groups makes it unique from the other decentralised nodes within the northern suburbs.

The Urban Development Framework for the Randburg CBD must comply with higher order plans. In this regard, the Draft Johannesburg Spatial Development Framework, the Regional Spatial Development Framework for Region B and the Integrated Transport Plan were taken into account.
4.1 DRAFT JOHANNESBURG SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 2010/2011

The draft Johannesburg SDF 2010/2011 proposes seven development strategies. Two of these strategies are of particular importance for the Randburg CBD: ‘Ensuring Strong Viable Nodes’ and ‘Strategic Densification’.

4.1.1 ENSURING STRONG VIABLE NODES

The SDF states that: ‘The clustering of various activities at appropriate and accessible nodal locations provides the City with a network of opportunity centres. The link between sustainability and nodes has a similar rationale to that of densification. The spatial intensification of resources, diverse uses and typologies strengthen the functioning of the node, which will benefit from significant public and private sector investment in services and infrastructure, facilitating economic growth and development. This infrastructure does however need to be managed, maintained and protected.’

Randburg CBD is identified as a Regional Node together with places such as Cresta, Fourways, Greater Sloane, and Northgate. A node is defined as a ‘well-defined and legible urban environment where highly accessible, mixed and compatible land uses are concentrated and serviced’.

According to the SDF most nodes endure cyclical phases of growth and development. Randburg is identified as being at the mature development stage i.e. ‘nodal development that displays many of the desired characteristics of a node’. It is however also identified as a declining node that ‘is likely to have a detrimental impact on both public and private investments’. It states further that the Regional Nodes are in ‘tight competition against each other’ and that ‘the oversupply of nodes causes business to easily move out and not committing to the upgrading and maintenance of an area. The focus should be on the monitoring and management of nodes to prevent an oversupply’.

The SDF also provides guidelines5 for development at nodes stating that: ‘The design approach should focus on integrating various parts of the node in one cohesive whole, as well as integrating the node within its surrounding environment through pedestrian linkages’.

- With regards to transportation the focus should be on pedestrian movement, public transport and densification.
- With regards to land uses, the focus is on containing the horizontal spread of nodes by placing higher densities, mixed uses and social facilities in close proximity of public transport.
- With regards to design aspects the focus is on safety, sense of place, and inclusive design.
- With regards to urban management, the role of the private sector is important.
- With regards to nodal growth management, the focus is on upgrading of existing nodes, residential densification and balance between public and private transport.

4.1.2 STRATEGIC DENSIFICATION

The SDF states that ‘Densification of strategic areas (in and around nodes, along mobility and transportation routes) is seen as a key restructuring strategy. The strategy is a means to mitigate increased urban sprawl on the periphery of the City’s established areas and with a view to accommodating demand in close proximity to existing economic opportunities and infrastructure. Densification therefore

5 The detail guidelines are incorporated in Section 2 Paragraph 2.
facilitates sustainable settlement planning through more efficient use of spatial resources including bulk service infrastructure, energy sources and most importantly, an ever-decreasing supply of well-located land.

It proposes the following density parameters within nodes: ‘In order to maximise nodal growth and to benefit from nodal characteristics of mixed use and public transportation orientated there should, in principle, be no upper limit on the number of dwellings that may be provided in any node... The application of the recommended densities must compliment the surrounding uses and in particular those properties next to and adjacent to the applicable site. It is recommended that the density is scaled down the further the distance from the core where the highest density applies.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION PARAMETERS</th>
<th>DESIRED UNITS PER HA (Max. no. Indicated - NOT CUMULATIVE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within defined Nodal Boundary</td>
<td>No upper limit defined e.g. where infrastructure, access and design 100+ du per ha could be supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contiguous to a defined Nodal Boundary</td>
<td>Where infrastructure, access and design allows 40-80 du per ha could be supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 500m of a defined Regional Nodal Boundary</td>
<td>Where infrastructure, access and design allows 15-30 du per ha could be supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It gives the following density parameters for mobility and BRT routes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION PARAMETERS</th>
<th>DESIRED UNITS PER HA (Max. no. Indicated - NOT CUMULATIVE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjacent to and fronting on to a Phase 1 BRT Route</td>
<td>Where infrastructure, access and design allows 70-90 du per ha could be supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 REGIONAL SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The RSDF for Region B is currently being revised, and the proposals contained in this document will be included into the revised RSDF at a later stage.

The previous RSDF for Region B Sub Area 18 stated that: ’The Randburg Regional Node has experienced urban decay in the recent past. However Randburg remains an important economic role player in the City that needs to be revitalised and upgraded. The Randburg Regional Node requires revitalisation and redevelopment, as there are opportunities for employment and inclusionary housing within the node.’ It states further that the development objective for the Randburg CBD is ‘To revitalise and upgrade the Regional Node’ and propose the following interventions and guidelines:

The RSDF designates the entire Sub-area 18 as a Mixed Use Node and classifies Bram Fischer, Jan Smuts and Republic Roads as Mobility Spines and Bond Street, Main Street (north of Hill) and Hill Street (west of Main) as Mobility Spines.
4.3 INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PLAN

The Randburg CBD is identified as a major public transportation hub in a number of the CoJ’s policy documents and plans. Vision 2030, for example, addresses the importance of good public transport in supporting the City’s optimum functioning as a local economy and argues for efficient connections between commercial activity nodes, focusing around Sandton, Randburg and the CBD.

This is reiterated in the Integrated Transportation Plan (ITP) for Johannesburg which recommends a “hub and spoke” system for the City with Randburg as one of the more important transportation hubs. Randburg thus features prominently in the planned Strategic Public Transport Network (SPTN) for Johannesburg.

The ITP also envisages a strong east-west corridor that can connect Alexandra, Wynberg, Sandton, Randburg, Strijdom Park, Northgate, Kya Sand and the future Cosmo City with its proposed 20 000 housing units. According to the ITP, this ‘link has much potential for viable public transport in that it connects residential areas and nodes - Sandton and Randburg being the two major nodes in CoJ after the CBD – offers opportunities for business travel, and could see good ridership turnover in both directions.’ Randburg is one of the hubs where this envisaged east west route connects to the north south grid.

Randburg has been identified in the ITP as a ‘transport node of the primary network’ and the following noted as to its status: ‘ranks exist; embayment’s required on primary route’. It is expected to be ‘medium size node’ (compared to Sandton and the CBD which are identified as large nodes). It has a medium status as far as proposed interventions are concerned.

4.3.1 GAUTRAIN

Gautrain is currently under construction and is expected to become the premium public transport provider in South Africa. Modern high speed trains will operate on the system linking the two major metropolitan areas in Gauteng to one another and also to OR Tambo Airport. The rail line between OR Tambo and Sandton is expected to open in 2010, hopefully in time for the Soccer World Cup in July and August 2010. The remainder of the system is expected to open in 2011.

The nearest Gautrain Station to Randburg is Sandton, which is located approximately 7km away to the east. A Gautrain feeder...
route service is proposed which will follow Sandton Drive, William Nicol Drive and Republic Road to Randburg. It is proposed that the feeder should form a loop within Randburg (Republic Road, Kent Avenue, Bond Street and Jan Smuts) to pick up passengers along the way.

The Gautrain feeder will run with general traffic on its route and not provided any priority or sharing any dedicated public transport lanes.

4.3.2 BUS RAPID TRANSPORT (BRT)

Within the northern part of Johannesburg there are two major BRT routes proposed including the Randburg to Alexandra route and the Parktown (Johannesburg CBD) to Sunninghill route. These two routes intersect in Sandton near the Gautrain Station. It would therefore be possible to transfer between Gautrain and BRT within the Sandton area.

The Sandton to Randburg leg of the BRT follows the same route as the Gautrain Feeder route. However, the BRT route will operate on a dedicated road lane and therefore does not need to negotiate general traffic. Journey times on this route are expected to be much shorter than that of the Gautrain route which mingle with general traffic. The BRT routes are expected to operate at a headway of 5 minutes (12 buses per hour) during the peak periods, which will make this mode of transport attractive to use. It is also proposed that the BRT should form a loop within Randburg; although a much smaller one following Republic Road, Bram Fisher and Jan Smuts.

A number of BRT feeder routes are proposed within Randburg to provide additional accessibility and coverage to the BRT system.

These routes include the Jan Smuts/ Milner Rd route, the Jan Smuts/ Dover Road/ Hill Street/ Malibongwe Drive and the Republic Road route.

Figure 11: TRANSPORT PROPOSALS

IN SUMMARY RANDBURG CBD IS AN IMPORTANT REGIONAL NODE WITHIN THE CITY THAT IS EXPERIENCING DECLINE. IT IS ALSO A MAJOR TRANSPORTATION HUB.
5 EXISTING FRAMEWORKS AND SECTORAL PLANS

Several frameworks have been drafted for the portions of the Randburg CBD area and there are also several sectoral plans for portions of land in the CBD. In this section the latest Randburg Revitalisation Study (2004), the Framework for the Civic and Hilltop Sites (2003) as well as the plans of JOSHCO and Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) are discussed.

5.1 RANDBURG REVITALISATION STUDY

The Randburg Revitalisation Study (2004) was drafted by Michael Hart Architects and Urban Designers, Syn-Consult Africa (Pty) Ltd and Melinda Silverman. The Revitalisation Study (UDF) for Randburg was commissioned by JDA in response to the City’s recognition, through its RSDF 2003/04, that Randburg has experienced serious decline over the last decade.

The main objective was to enhance the spatial structure for Randburg in order to accommodate the evolutionary process of Randburg’s transformation from a declining commercial zone to a vibrant node that plays a unique role within Johannesburg’s metropolitan system.

Randburg was envisioned as a vibrant mixed-use node which secures economic value for existing and future stakeholders and exploit its core strengths of regional centrality and accessibility to a diverse range of users.

Five objectives were identified:
- Promoting socio-economic growth and investment;
- Improving connectivity and transit facilities;
- Positioning Randburg as a destination;
- Improving legibility of urban form and activity in the public realm;
- Enhance and diversify residential market.

5.1.1 PROPOSALS

The study focused mostly on the area around the Civic Precinct and Hill Street Mall. The study found that Randburg CBD is not well-linked to other areas and that traffic bypasses the CBD instead of passing through it. The proposals were thus premised on redirecting traffic through the CBD.

It proposed the following spatial interventions:

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**Figure 12: REVITALISATION STUDY PROPOSALS**

[Diagram showing spatial interventions]

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- General upgrade of public spaces, through clean up of streets and public spaces; improvement of lighting; street trees and planting.
- Re-inhabit, upgrade and extend the Civic Centre, through ensuring that as many council departments occupy the centre; redeveloping of existing structures and adding new structures; creating a positive interface of its edges; and introducing retail and office uses.
- Re-develop and consolidate the Taxi Rank on the civic site, through upgrading the rank over multi-storeys to address future needs, accommodating related services such as retail and informal trading stalls and facilities such as washing bays; improving ease of access and egress; developing positive edges; improving pedestrian circulation and developing a multi-modal interchange between taxi, metered taxi, bus and metro rail feeder system.
- Closure of Bram Fischer Drive to all vehicular traffic and install new public open space with parking facilities, articulated intersections with Selkirk Avenue and Jan Smuts Avenue; greening and street furniture, good lighting, tree planting and street furniture and informative signage.
- Residential Precincts at the Civic site and between Oak and Kent Avenues to include medium density low rise residential units for mixed income and with mixed tenure options with a minimum of 30 percent subsidized rental.
- Peripheral road projects in order to alleviate traffic congestion on Jan Smuts Avenue, Bond Street, Republic Avenue and Hill Street.

5.1.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Randburg Revitalisation Study was approved by Council and a Business Plan was drafted which led to the execution of several actions. Implementation was however stopped due to conflict between JDA and the large land owners.
5.1.2.1 BUSINESS PLAN

A Business plan was drafted by JDA to ensure the implementation of the Randburg revitalisation Strategy. The goal of the business plan was to develop Randburg as an attractive and vibrant mixed-use node particularly focused on maximising and enhancing its public transportation and small businesses, and which plays a significant economic role in the context of the city.

The following strategies were proposed:
- Promoting socio-economic growth and investment
- Improving connectivity and transit facilities
- Improving legibility of urban form and activity in the public realm
- Enhance and diversify residential market

The following interventions were proposed:
- Intervention 1. Implement the Randburg Revitalisation Strategy through the redevelopment of the Civic Precinct and the promotion of office, residential and retail development.
- Intervention 2. Improve accessibility between Randburg and Sandton Regional Nodes, through the BRT link to Sandton a direct road link between Randburg and Sandton.
- Intervention 3. Develop Randburg Regional Node as a destination by altering mobility patterns to and through the Node, through the closure of Bram Fischer, opening of Hill Street and upgrading of Pretoria Avenue as well as the development of a new taxi rank.
- Intervention 4. Jan Smuts Avenue and Bram Fischer Drive (north of Hill Street) have been classified as Mobility Spines.
- Intervention 5. Republic Road, Hill Street and Bond Street have been classified as Mobility Roads.
- Intervention 6. Improve the management of the Node.

The following projects were proposed:

PROJECT 1: PHYSICAL UPGRADE to improve the urban amenity and accessibility within Randburg
- Sub project 1: Closure of Bram Fischer Drive to all vehicular traffic and install new public open space at the intersection with Jan Smuts Avenue.
- Sub project 2: Re-opening of Hill Street Mall to vehicular movement.
- Sub project 3: Upgrade of Pretoria Avenue to accommodate additional vehicular movement.
- Sub project 4 & 5: Bram Fischer Drive Phase 1 & 2 - Upgrading of the road from 4 to 6 lanes (phase 1) and two to four lanes (phase 2).
- Sub project 6: Upgrade of Rocky-Bond Streets from 2 to 4 lanes.
- Sub project 7: Phillips/ Burke intersection upgrade.

PROJECT 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - revitalisation of retail core and increased business and investor confidence
- Subproject 1 & 2: Develop economic strategy for retail and commercial.
- Sub project 3: Marketing and branding.
- Sub project 4: Informal trader development including a database and training.

PROJECT 3: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - empower local communities through capacity building.
- Sub project 1: Develop Social Upliftment Strategy.

PROJECT 4: URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT - manage the urban environment and maximise public open space.
Sub Project 1: Develop Environmental Management Plan.
Sub Project 2 & 3: Visible Service Delivery and CID.
Sub Project 4: Law Enforcement.

PROJECT 5: LAND ASSEMBLY AND RELEASE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT - to ensure appropriate and integrative land parcel development for a sustainable town and neighbourhood
Sub Project 1: Land Assembly And Release Plan (mixed income and mixed tenure housing)
Sub Project 2: Civic Precinct Upgrade (relocate civic functions, upgrade current facilities and taxi facility)

5.1.2.2 PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED
The following projects were implemented:
- The Phillips/ Burke intersection was upgraded.
- The Bram Fischer/ Pretoria intersection was upgraded to accommodate increased traffic flow due to the closure of Bram Fischer.
- The Pretoria/ Hill intersection was upgraded to allow for greater vehicular movement along Pretoria Avenue as well as the opening of Hill Street for vehicular traffic. The intersection was thus changed from a pedestrian-friendly intersection to a vehicular orientated intersection.
- A trader's market was created on the Civic Precinct between the taxi rank and Bram Fischer to accommodate small traders within a clean and safe environment with access to essential facilities such as electricity, water, storerooms and toilets.

In addition a CID, the Randburg Management District (RBMD) was established in 2004, as proposed. The proposals were also used as the basis for tenders put out by JPC for the development of council-owned land within the Randburg CBD.

However, projects that were critical to the realisation of the plan were not implemented. These are:
- Closure of Bram Fischer Drive.
- Partial re-opening and public space upgrade of Hill Street.
- Demolition of existing pedestrian bridge between the Civic Precinct and Hill Street Mall via the Oriental Plaza.

The reasons why these projects were not implemented were mostly due to conflict between the JDA and some of the large land owners in the Randburg CBD. Most contentious was the closure of Bram Fischer, which implied the demolition of the existing pedestrian bridge, and the opening of the access gate from the new trader's market to Bram Fischer, which meant that pedestrians were no longer 'forced' to use the pedestrian bridge. The owners
of the Oriental Plaza indicated that this will lead to a loss of income due to less feet moving through their shopping centre.

Several court applications followed, the end result being that the access gate could remain open, the pedestrian bridge remained and the process for the closure of Bram Fischer had to be reinitiated as the wrong procedure was followed.

The opening of Hill Street Mall to allow vehicular traffic was also met with resistance from surrounding land owners who felt that vehicular traffic within the Mall will have a negative impact on the Mall as a shopping destination.

5.1.3 REVISION OF THE RANDBURG REVITALISATION STUDY

In June 2008, Michael Hart was requested to review the Randburg Revitalisation UDF in the light of the conflict around the existing proposals as well as the introduction of the BRT to the Randburg CBD.

It was accepted that:

- Hill Street Mall should remain closed at least between Bram Fischer and Oak Avenue;
- Pretoria Avenue should not become a through route due to conflict between pedestrians and vehicles; and
- The BRT should be used to the advantage of the Randburg CBD.

Several Scenarios were developed. Scenario 1 presented the status quo. Scenario 2 proposed several changes to Bram Fischer from complete closure, to only allowing BRT traffic, to reducing the width of the road.

Scenario 3 proposed different alternative for the proposed BRT route:

- BRT route A: Jan Smuts – Dover – Pretoria – Republic
- BRT route B: Jan Smuts – Dover – Kent – Harley – Pretoria – Republic
- BRT route B: Republic – Jan Smuts – Bram Fischer
Scenarios 4, 5 and 6 dealt with traffic flow through the CBD and Oak Avenue was proposed as an alternative to Pretoria Avenue to carry through traffic. Scenario 4 proposed the revision of the Pretoria/ Hill intersection to be more pedestrian friendly. Scenario 5 proposed a link between Bond and Oak Streets and Scenario 6 proposed the opening of Hill Street between Kent and Oak.

The revision however did not progress past the Conceptual Design Stage, but according to feedback from the large land owners in the area consensus was reached on:

- Hill Street Mall remaining closed for vehicular traffic between Oak and Bram Fischer;
- Bram Fischer remaining open for vehicular traffic;
- Oak Avenue becoming a main through route instead of Pretoria Avenue.

5.1.4 ASSESSMENT

The Randburg Revitalisation Study provided a solid design framework but its implementation was hampered by a lack of consensus between key role players with regards to critical elements of the design. It could therefore not be implemented as envisaged.
It furthermore focused on the Civic Precinct and Hill Street Mall and did not take sufficient cognisance of the rest of the precinct.

### 5.2 RANDBURG CIVIC SITE AND HILLTOP URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

GAPP Architects and Urban Studies drafted a Spatial Development and Design Plan in 2003 for The Johannesburg Property Company (JPC) for the Randburg Civic Site (bounded by Selkirk, Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts Avenue) and the Hilltop Site (bounded by Bram Fischer, Jan Smuts and Hilltop Street). The aims of the framework were to maximise development opportunities on the site and spatially integrate the sites into their surrounding urban context.

#### 5.2.1 ISSUES

The following issues were identified:

- The site is functionally disparate due to ad hoc and uncoordinated development.
- Certain buildings are purpose built, limiting recycling options.
- The taxi terminus is a dominant use on the site that is introverted and isolated. Besides the extensive physical impact, it also brings sceptical perceptions of the site into the development market. The holding area expansion of the taxi terminus further restricts development on the site; particularly considering that the taxi terminus has taken up virtually all the parking areas of the site. This immediately has an implication for development (lack of surface parking area, requiring more expensive basement parking, which can severely inhibit development and increase development cost).
- Lack of overall legibility and poor imageability.
- Extremely inconvenient pedestrian movement, which is also hazardous at road crossings due to pedestrian/vehicular conflict. Poor and hazardous pedestrian links between the site and adjoining areas, particularly to the Randburg Mall. The existing pedestrian bridge exclusively serves to connect the taxi rank and the ‘oriental plaza’. The extensive road infrastructure physically takes up a lot of space isolating the site from its surroundings (i.e. arterial traffic movement dominates).

#### 5.2.2 OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunities were identified:

- The consolidation of municipal functions and facilities into the municipal buildings including the library, clinic, Region B management offices, Randburg traffic, licensing, social services and a people centre.
- The existing house offices, car port structures and library/clinic building can be removed to free up the site for development.
- Inclusion of medium density walk-up residential development (social housing).
- Building on the excellent public transport accessibility to the area.
- Redevelopment of the site to enable integration and linkage between diverse functions and isolated activities.
- Reorganisation and restructuring of street space, road alignment and traffic functions into a more efficient configuration, that would be more suitable for the site and its surrounds.
- Viewing the taxi holding area as a permeable development, i.e. more pedestrian entrances and links.
- The slope of the land allows for the establishment of cut fill for basement parking possibilities and possible road underpass development.
5.2.3 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FOR THE SITE

The development potential for the site was identified as follows:

- Limited potential for office development mainly because of current poor perceptions and oversupply due to high vacancies.
- 6 000m² call centre – accessible for call centre workers.
- Retail facilities of up to 2 000m² (based on convenience, services and fast foods) linked to high commuter volumes at taxi rank.
- Consolidation of community facilities, traffic, police, library, clinic, as well as upgrading of municipal facilities, including municipal offices.
- Training and educational purposes.
- Medical facilities such as doctor’s rooms (for commuters from Diepsloot and Alexandra).
- Residential flats (multiple walk-up units) between R120 000 to R180 000.
- Filling station.

5.2.4 PROPOSALS

The proposals for the development of the site included:

- The Randburg Civic Site being one of six nodes together with SARS and the bus public transport, Randburg Square, and the Hilltop Medical Centre which has recently been refurbished, the Oriental Plaza, and the Checkers Centre, working together as beads on a string that are tied together via a supportive public environment and movement network.
- The integration of the site to achieve a consolidated pedestrian dominant core through:
  - The re-routing of traffic along Selkirk in order to free road space along Bram Fischer.
- Turning the road space of Bram Fischer into a pedestrian dominant space with slow-moving traffic, parking and pedestrian links.
- A public square on the Bram Fischer/Jan Smuts intersection to link the Civic Precinct to Hill Street Mall.
- The expansion and consolidation of the Civic Site to accommodate mixed uses: offices, medium density residential with limited ‘work from home’ commercial space such as small scale workshops on ground level (along Selkirk and on the Hilltop Site), education (places of learning), community facilities, medical suites, limited retail, motor-related uses (including petrol station, motor show room), a hotel on the magistrate’s court side, and possibly conferencing and a call centre as a catalytic use.
- The creation of a memorable place and legible environment through urban space and landscaping through undertaking the development of boulevards, extensive tree planting and greening, links to the public open space system the establishment of public places and squares, pedestrian walkways and associated public amenities.
- Urban form directives that create a human-scaled, functional and comfortable public environment.

5.2.5 IMPLEMENTATION

None of the proposals have been implemented. The Framework was however used as the basis for tenders put out by JPC for the development of council-owned land within the Randburg CBD.
5.3 SELKIRK SOCIAL HOUSING PROJECT

JOSHCO proposed a residential development on the corner of Bram Fischer and Selkirk Ave in line with the proposals emanating from the two frameworks as mentioned above.

The proposed development consists of 192 residential units in two to three storey walk-ups. The units are placed in a perimeter configuration with an internal space used for parking. Vehicular access is obtained from Selkirk Avenue and possibly Bram Fischer Drive. A pedestrian link is proposed from the centre of the development to the northern portion of the Civic Precinct. A park is proposed on the northern edge of the development with units designed to overlook the park. Special attention is given to the corners with a transparent circulation space to provide ‘aesthetic and to draw passers-by eyes onto the proposed development’.

The following residential mix is proposed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit mix: type</th>
<th>Size m²</th>
<th>Nr of units</th>
<th>Average monthly rental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 bed/ flat</td>
<td>1 970</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 bed/ flat</td>
<td>5 032</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1 350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 bed/ flat</td>
<td>2 494</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>totals</strong></td>
<td>9 496</td>
<td><strong>192</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average unit size is 49.46m² and the average unit costs was R265 178 at a projected cost of R3 958/m². The total scheme costs was R50 914 183 with a subsidy amount of R7 013 376.
No subsidies have yet been received for the proposed development. The initial proposal for Social Housing included the Hilltop Site. JPC has however continued with negotiations with private companies for the development of the Hilltop Site and the site is therefore not available for use by JOSHCO any longer.

Although the design is of a high quality and addresses the guidelines as set out in the UDF, the scale of the development is possibly too small to be economically viable and to make an impact on the revitalisation of the Randburg CBD.

5.4 JPC ALIENATION OF COUNCIL LAND

JPC put all the council owned properties in the Randburg CBD out for tender in October 2007. The Call for Tenders was based on the proposals contained in the UDFs for the CBD and included six different sites.
5.4.1 SITE 1

Site 1 is made up of Erven 846, 847, 848, 849, 851, 853 and Portion 1 of Erf 850 Ferndale. It is located between Kent, Oak and Sentrum Avenues and is 2.5428ha in extent. It is currently used for parking.

The proposed development on the site included:
- A new pedestrian street lined with retail at ground floor level and offices at upper levels through the western portion of the site.
- 3 - 4 storey walk-up residential perimeter blocks enclosing courtyards on the northern and eastern portions of the site.
- A residential/hotel tower of up to 20 storeys high at the south-east corner of site.
- A new public square on the southern side of the site.
- Parking at basement level and within enclosed courtyards.

According to JPC, no suitable bids were received. JPC, JOSHCO and DPUM agreed that the properties should be rezoned to include dwelling units, as part of the property release strategy. The rezoning application was submitted in March 2008. It was subsequently discovered that the right to use all 540 free public parking bays on the site was given to the owner of the adjoining properties Erf 855 and 1763 Ferndale. It was thus proposed that the rezoning application currently in process at DPUM be amended to include a condition that reduces the number of public parking bays on site as well as to delete the word 'free' in the public parking area and that negotiations with the adjoining owner and DPUM be held with a view of clarifying that there is no legal agreement between JPC and the adjoining owner to use the site as a private parking area. It appears as if no consensus has yet been reached between the Council and the adjoining land owner.

5.4.2 SITE 2

Site 2 consists of Erven 17 to 22, Bordeaux and Erf 744 and the Remainder of Erf 745, Ferndale. It is located on the ‘Hilltop Site’ between Bram Fischer Drive and Hilltop Street and is 1.3282ha in extent. It is currently used for parking and a driving school.

The proposed development for the site includes:
- 3 - 4 storey walk-up residential perimeter blocks between Rock, Noreen and Hilltop Streets.
- A new public square between Bram Fischer Drive and Noreen Avenue.
- Residential/office towers of up to 20 storeys high on the northern edge of the square.
- A new pedestrian arcade lined with retail/trading space linking to Hill Street, the BRT Station and taxi rank at Noreen and June Avenue.
- Parking at basement level and within enclosed courtyards.

A tender was awarded to Prop 5 Corporation (Pty) Ltd on 4 June 2009 by the EAC to develop mixed commercial, retail and residential development. It was anticipated that the agreement would be signed by the end of January 2010.

5.4.3 SITE 3

Site 3 consists of Erven 971, 973, 975, Portion 1 of Erf 969 and the Remainder of Erf 976, Ferndale. It is located on the north-eastern corner of Kent Avenue and Retail Street. The site is 0.18ha in extent and is currently used for parking. Erf 969 is leased for parking purposes on a temporary basis but the lease agreement with SASOL lapsed.

The development proposals for the site are as follows:
- A new pedestrian street.
- 3 to 4 storey walk-up residential perimeter blocks enclosing courtyards.
- Parking in enclosed courtyards.
- Vehicular access via a new street linking with Retail Avenue.

A rezoning application to permit high density residential was submitted in 2008 by George van Schoor Town Planners. A traffic study and civil engineering reports were done in June 2009. Once the CoJ approves the proposed rights, the JPC will be in a position to invite proposals for the development of said properties which will be in line with the recommended land rights:

- Subdivide the property into 2 approximately equal portions.
- 100% of one portion to be for social housing (rental or sale).
- 100% of the other property to be for mixed uses.
- Business development to provide parking as per scheme.
- Residential development to provide parking at 1 bay per unit.

### 5.4.4 SITE 4

Site 4 includes Erf 1001, Ferndale and is located on the eastern side of Pretoria Avenue between Retail Street and the Hill Street Mall. The site is 0.4015ha in extent and is currently used for parking.

The proposed development for the site is:

- A new pedestrian street lined with retail at ground floor level on the northern boundary of the site linking from Pretoria Avenue to Bram Fischer Drive.
- 3 - 4 storey walk-up residential perimeter blocks enclosing courtyards.
- Residential tower of up to 20 storeys high on the eastern side of site.

- Reduced parking requirements due to the site's proximity to the BRT and taxi rank.

No suitable bids were received.

### 5.4.5 SITE 5

Site 5 includes Erven 34 to 50 Blairgowrie and is located on the Civic Precinct adjacent to Selkirk Street. The site is ???? in extent and houses several community facilities such as a clinic, a facility for the aged and a training facility as well as some house offices.

The proposed development on the site is 3 - 4 storey walk-up residential perimeter blocks enclosing courtyards. The site will be developed in two phases. Phase 1 would be the existing row of stands Erven 34 - 50. Phase 2 would be the extension of those sites to include a portion of the Civic Site.

The property was rezoned from Res 1 to Bus 1 (3 storeys, 60% coverage and 1.8 FAR and is in the process of being transferred to JOSHCO for the Selkirk Social Housing project as discussed in Section 5.3.

### 5.4.6 SITE 6

Site 6 includes the remainder of the Civic Site which is located between Bram Fischer, Jan Smuts and Selkirk. It is ??? in extent and currently houses the taxi rank, traders market, CoJ licensing offices and the library.

The development proposals are based on the UDF proposals by GAPP and later Michael Hart Architects and involve the development of substantial civic facilities, the creation of a focal civic square, the initiation of a PPP to develop higher order office
and retail uses and accommodation of existing tenants. Detail proposals include:

- A new trader market arcade linking to the interchange with Hill Street with housing at upper levels.
- New public squares at either side of the proposed BRT station.
- Bram Fischer Drive converted into a BRT-only street with a public park.
- Residential towers up to 20 storeys located on sites fronting onto Bram Fischer Drive and Jan Smuts Avenue.
- Reduced parking requirements due to proximity to the BRT and taxi rank.
- New multi-level public transport interchange with housing at upper levels.

An investigation on the office space requirement for the Council Departments was done by Finlay and Associates\(^6\). Wesplan submitted an application for the consolidation of the two farm portions and applied for the extension of the boundaries for Blairgowrie (Erf 2913 Blairgowrie) as well as the rezoning of the properties to Business 1 (3 storeys, 60% coverage and 1.8 FAR). Further applications would be to consolidate and re-subdivide the properties and also to increase the height and FAR in line with the UDF. Once the town-planning application is finalised, the intention is to call for proposals for the development of the site.

**6 TOPOGRAPHY**

Randburg CBD has a unique and special topography which can enhance its imaginability and sense of place.

The Civic Site and Bram Fischer are located on the highest point with dramatic drops to the north, east and west. Moreover, the main roads accessing the Randburg CBD from the west (Hill and Republic) and the south-east (Jan Smuts) pass through a valley just outside of the borders of the CBD. Thus not only is the Randburg CBD visible from a distance, but spectacular views onto the CBD is created along the main entrance roads.

\(^6\) The findings of this study are discussed in Section 3 Paragraph 4.
Tall buildings on the highest points will thus create a skyline that will be visible over a very large area. The area is underlined by granite which is ideal for the development of tall buildings as it forms a solid foundation. Unfortunately, current building heights do not emphasize the topography.

**Figure 23: LOCATION OF TALL BUILDINGS**

**Figure 24: OAK AVENUE - VIEW FROM THE WEST**

**Figure 25: HILL STREET – VIEW FROM THE SOUTH**

The topography also limits pedestrian movement through the area due to the steep slopes.

_In summary, the topography creates opportunities for improving the imageability of the Randburg CBD. This is not currently capitalised on._

---

5 times vertical exaggeration

5 times vertical exaggeration
7 MOVEMENT NETWORK

This section deals with the road hierarchy, public transport and non-motorised transport. The main mode of transport to the Randburg CBD is taxis (62%), followed by car (32%). Only 4% of visitors use a bus and only 2% access the area on foot.

7.1 ROAD HIERARCHY

The majority of traffic in Randburg is through traffic rather than destination traffic. According to the RSDF/ITP the mobility spines in the Randburg CBD are Bram Fischer, Republic and Jan Smuts. Bond, Hill up to Main and Main up to Hill are identified as mobility roads. These however do not form a coherent network to accommodate through traffic as it is incomplete.

The actual functioning of the road hierarchy is quite different from the proposals contained in the ITP/RSDF. Although Republic and Jan Smuts, to a lesser degree, function as mobility spines, the functioning of Bram Fischer in this regard is compromised by the large number of access points to adjacent development, especially in the section in the vicinity of the Randburg CBD. Bram Fischer thus performs a strong access function and has lost some of its mobility function over time.

In terms of east-west connections, Hans Schoeman/Hill could have served as a relatively important east-west connector. However the termination of the Hans Schoeman/Hill link at the Hill Street Mall at Kent Avenue, forces traffic to travel north towards Bond or south towards Republic.

It was originally the intention to develop the PWV9 along Bond Street to link to the PWV3 in order to provide an east-west link. Only a staggered link is however now available and it appears as if the plan has been aborted.

In reality all the routes, except for Republic, Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts are of the same order, offering equal levels of mobility and access. All the roads are 20m wide and accommodate two-way traffic with two lanes in each direction and with no on-street parking. There is traffic lights at all intersections except along Surrey Avenue. Harley, Hill, Dover, Main, Kent and Oak thus carry similar loads of through and local traffic and read as the same order streets. This compromises the legibility and functionality of the road network. Only Surrey reads and acts as a lower order route providing mostly access, due to the lack of traffic lights at intersections with mobility roads and spines.

Sentrum Road, Retail Avenue and Micro Lane did not form part of the original layout and were later introduced to provide access to the retail core after the closure of Hill Street for vehicular traffic.

Perception surveys indicated that private car users are satisfied with the functioning of the car in the area and accessibility of the road infrastructure into Randburg CBD from surrounding areas is rated as high. In contrast access from areas requiring highway access is rated poor.
7.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

This section deals with the public transport operations within the Randburg area. It deals with existing public transport operations which currently include taxi services, Metro Bus and Putco bus services. The information provided on the existing public transport operations were obtained from electronic sources and also site observations and discussions had with public transport operators and users.

7.2.1 BUS SERVICES

Randburg CBD is currently served by both Metro and Putco bus services.

The Metro bus services only operate during the morning peak hour period (05:00 to 08:00) and the afternoon peak hour period (16:00 to 18:00). The frequency of buses on routes varies significantly. For example the 420 (Westgate Centre to Randburg) and the 520 (Johannesburg South - Naturena to Randburg) respectively runs four and five buses on each route while others such as route 553 (Soweto-Randburg-Kya Sand) runs only one bus in the morning (and one in back in the afternoon.

The table below presents each Metro Bus route and the frequency of buses during the morning peak.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTE NR</th>
<th>FROM</th>
<th>TO</th>
<th>NO OF BUSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>520</td>
<td>Naturena</td>
<td>Randburg (via Cresta)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>522</td>
<td>Naturena</td>
<td>Randburg (via Jan Smuts)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>553</td>
<td>Soweto</td>
<td>Kya Sand (via Randburg)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>JHB CBD</td>
<td>Randburg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Westgate</td>
<td>Randburg</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>Westgate</td>
<td>Randburg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 ABCD</td>
<td>Westgate</td>
<td>Randburg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>420</td>
<td>Westgate</td>
<td>Randburg (via Strijdom Park)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bus routes are limited only to and from a few origins and destinations. All the bus routes travelling to Randburg during the morning peak period are from the south including locations such as Soweto, Southgate/ Nasrec and Westgate. The majority of buses from Westgate travel through Johannesburg City Centre. Some routes continue through Randburg to other destinations such as Kya Sands and Ferndale. Metro bus also provides a local bus service.
within Randburg (99 ABCD routes). The Metro bus concourse is located at the Main Street/ Harley Street intersection.

Similar to Metro Bus, Putco Bus only operates during the morning and afternoon peaks with limited or no buses running midday. Putco buses generally complete one trip in each peak period and are generally kept at depots for the remainder of the day, which are located at Randburg, Kelvin View (Marlboro Drive) and Fourways.

Approximately three quarters of the buses going to Randburg come from Soweto. Some of the buses take a direct route to Randburg via the N1 while others travel to Randburg via Johannesburg CBD. One quarter of the buses originate from Vosloorus and travel through Johannesburg CBD. From Randburg routes are available to both Sandton and Fourways during the morning peak period.

Buses from Soweto via the N1 take the interchange with Malibongwe Drive and continue on Malibongwe to Hill Street. Buses via Johannesburg CBD travel to Randburg via Jan Smuts Avenue. The route between Randburg and Sandton uses Republic Road, William Nichol and Sandton Drive while the route to
Fourways follows Bram Fischer Drive and Main Road. The bus concourse is located at

Figure 30: PUTCO BUS ROUTES

7.2.2 TAXI SERVICES

Taxis are the largest public transport service provider within Randburg, carrying substantial numbers of people per day. According to the Revitalisation of Randburg Feasibility Study Status Quo Traffic Report completed by Goba, it was estimated in 2004 that approximately 12,000 passengers travel to Randburg during the morning peak period and approximately 6,000 travel from Randburg during this time period.

The taxi service operates throughout the day, but there is no service after 20:00.

Taxis serving Randburg are available to and from many destinations and include both long distance and short distance services. The majority of the destinations are located to the north-east of Johannesburg. Randburg is a major destination for passengers living in Johannesburg CBD, the West Rand and the vicinity of Fourways. No direct services are however available from Soweto and it is expected that passengers have to transfer to other routes to travel to Randburg.

Although Randburg is a destination, it is also a major taxi interchange area and provides taxi services to locations including Johannesburg CBD, Cresta, Northgate, Fourways, Sandton, Midrand, Pretoria and even Brits. There are also local taxi services.

Figure 31: TAXI LINKAGES
The major taxi routes within the vicinity of Randburg include Jan Smuts Avenue / Bram Fischer Drive, Republic Road, Malibongwe and Hans Schoeman. Jan Smuts Avenue is a particularly busy taxi route.

A large taxi rank is located on the Civic Precinct between Bram Fisher, Jan Smuts and Selkirk. The entrance and exit to the taxi rank is on Jan Smuts Avenue. Located close to the entrance is the passenger drop off area, which caters for incoming traffic. Passengers dropped off would typically proceed towards the taxi ranking areas from which short and long distance journeys can be made. Alternatively passengers will proceed towards Randburg CBD as an end destination. There are three taxi ranking buildings. The long distance taxi rank provides services to locations such as Pretoria, Brits and Midrand. One of the short distance ranks provides journeys to Johannesburg CBD and Fourways while the other provides services to Sandton, Rosebank, Northgate and Lanseria. To the back of the ranking areas is a taxi holding area and a car wash is available on the southern portion of the site.

Perception surveys indicated that the taxi rank creates negative perceptions for the area.

7.3 NON-MOTORISED TRANSPORT

Although few visitors to the Randburg CBD travel there on foot, there are large numbers of pedestrians within the CBD area. The origin of most of the pedestrian trips is from the taxi rank at the Civic Precinct. From here most pedestrians move across Bram Fisher Drive to the Hill Street Mall. A limited number use the pedestrian bridge since...
the opening of the access gate to the traders' stalls. Even before the opening of the access gate, it was estimated that only 50% of pedestrians used the bridge. This is in spite of the many deterrents for pedestrians that are placed on Bram Fischer Drive, e.g. fencing on the median and a chain fence on the southern side of Bram Fischer. The area where the bridge descends to meet Bram Fischer Drive is heavily congested because taxis still drop people here and informal traders still cluster at this point.

Another point of vehicle-pedestrian conflict is at the intersection between the Hill Street Mall and Pretoria Avenue, where the intersection has been changed from pedestrian friendly to vehicular orientated. There is less pedestrian conflict at the Oak Avenue/Hill Street Mall intersection as the intersection is pedestrian-friendly and there are notably less pedestrians in this area due the lack of an anchor at the western end of the mall to draw pedestrians through the mall. Within the mall, pedestrian movement could be effectively accommodated if the environmental conditions were to be enhanced. The primary pedestrian route through the mall is complemented by a number of subsidiary walkways which are also in need of significant upgrading.

There is a major conflict in the movement patterns within the Randburg Business District. While vehicular traffic moves north-south, the major pedestrian movement, determined by the direction of the Mall, is orientated east-west.

The original layout for the Randburg CBD area consisted of a standard grid with large blocks that provided access for the large residential stands. GAPP developed an analysis comparing Randburg to the Sandton, Rosebank, and Johannesburg CBDs grids. In contrast to the fine grain of Johannesburg CBD and Rosebank, Randburg CBD has a coarse grain consisting of huge city blocks of 380m long by 180m wide. Although the large blocks are ideal for vehicular traffic, given the limited intersections, it has a negative impact on pedestrian movement.
The ideal road network for pedestrians is a grid with a maximum block size of approximately 100m. This means that ideally an additional route should be created in a north-south direction through each block and three additional routes should be created in an east-west direction through each block.

Pedestrian movement is further compromised by:

- An almost complete lack of pedestrian pavements;
- Poor quality of pavements;
- Extreme levels of noise and air pollution in areas;
- Intersection designs aimed at facilitating high vehicular turning speeds at the expense of safe pedestrian crossing;
- Obstructed pavements due to parked cars (illegal or legal), poor design, utility poles and signs, uncollected rubbish, vendors, etc.
- No protection from harsh climatic conditions;
- Lack of sufficient lighting;
- Blank walls, which make pedestrian routes unsafe and uninteresting; and
Pedestrian overcrowding in areas due to narrow or below-capacity pavements.

A high quality pedestrian environment is critical for the successful implementation of the proposed BRT system and its importance is stressed by the SDF. This aspect thus warrants attention.

Although several cyclists were observed, there are no facilities to serve their needs.

**In summary, the road network in the Randburg CBD is incomplete and most roads have similar functions. The functioning of the main mobility spines is compromised by the number of access points along these routes. There is thus a huge difference between the proposed and actual network hierarchy.**

Randburg CBD contains a major taxi hub and this is the most important mode of transport for people travelling to and from Randburg.

Buses and taxis provide access to the Randburg CBD but there is limited public transport for distribution through Randburg CBD. Several different routes are used for the different public transport modes.

The pedestrian environment is insufficient and serious pedestrian-vehicular conflict exists.

### 8 Main Land Uses

Randburg CBD is characterised by a variety of retail, office and residential land uses. 49% of the total area of the Randburg CBD is made up of offices, 19% of residential, 10% of retail, and 7% of auto related and light industries. 9% of the total area is either vacant or used as open parking areas.
8.1 MIXED USE

Although the Randburg CBD is earmarked for mixed land uses, only 10ha (5% of the total area excluding streets) is actually used for mixed land uses. These are concentrated mostly around the Hill Street Mall where retail on ground floor and residential or offices on the upper floors are common.

The main reasons for promoting mixed land uses are:

- To reduce the need to travel by car and increase the potential of walking between different land uses through allowing people to stay, work and play in one area;
- To create a 24 hour city;
- To make optimum use of scarce land at strategically located land.

In order to achieve these goals, more the following criteria for mixed use should be met:

- More than one land use within one building, or at least in close proximity to each other and linked with pedestrian routes;
- Uses should be active over 24 hours seven days of the week, e.g. a combination of residential/entertainment and offices/retail.

If a property (erf) in the Randburg CBD had more than two land uses and if these consisted of retail and offices or residential, the property was classified as mixed land uses. Although there are a variety of land uses within the Randburg CBD, few of these can be classified as mixed land uses.
8.2 RETAIL

In this section the retail sector of the Randburg CBD is discussed. It deals with the distribution of retail, the retail clientele, retail profile, development potential for retail and the Hill Street Mall as the most important shopping strip and public space.

In contrast with offices, retail in Randburg has declined and deteriorated over time. In the words of Dirk Prinsloo of Urban Studies: ‘The Randburg Pedestrian Mall has almost collapsed as a functional mall as it is no longer maintained properly. Water features are not working, plants are in bad shape, no or little repairs are done to broken paving and retainer walls, etc.’ He goes further to describe some of the shopping malls ‘very dated and dilapidated buildings’.

8.2.1 RETAIL DISTRIBUTION

The retail sector in the Randburg CBD has been identified as one of the main economic sectors in the area accounting for 30% of economic activity with 930 formal businesses in the study area. In 2004 the formal retail sector accounted for 2 677 jobs and the average weighted monthly turnover for formal retail outlets was R82 437.

Retail uses are distributed through the entire Randburg CBD. The largest concentration of retail is around the Hill Street Mall with several shopping centres such as Randburg Square, Oriental Plaza, and Randburg City, lining both sides of the Mall, especially the western side which is close to the taxi rank.

Intense retail uses are also found next to Bram Fischer Drive north of Harley. The northern portion of Bram Fischer is characterised by auto related activities and light industries.
Smaller clusters are found next to the western section of Republic Road, adjacent to Dover, and on the corner of Main and Oxford.

There is a further clustering of retail at Brightwater Commons, the erstwhile Randburg Waterfront, just outside of the study area. In addition smaller convenience shopping centres serving local residents are to found in the immediate vicinity. These include:

- Homeworld at the corner of Malibongwe and Rocky;
- The Frangipani Centre at the corner of Oxford and West;
- Peter Place at the corner of Homestead/Peter and Bram Fischer;
- The Piazza Centre at the corner of Republic and Jan Smuts Avenue;
- Canterbury Crossing at the corner of Hunter and Bram Fischer.

### 8.2.2 RETAIL CLIENTELE

The retail in the Randburg CBD has experienced a change in clientele. It initially served the middle to high income residents of the surrounding areas and even further afield. By 1997 it still accommodated the neighbourhood residents, but also office workers and taxi commuters. Today the majority of clientele are taxi commuters from lower income areas. Market research has indicated that Randburg CBD accommodates a transient community: large numbers of people who work and shop in the area, but who do not necessarily live in the area.

Surveys done for the RBMD and by Urban Econ indicated the following with regards to the shopping patterns of the residents in the surrounding area:

- Less than half of Randburg residents (45%) visit the Randburg CBD on a regular basis. These are mostly residents living within 300m of the CBD; mostly Black, Coloured and Asian residents, and mostly lower income residents.
- Reasons for not visiting Randburg CBD centre mostly around safety concerns, that the area is not appealing and that other centres are more convenient.
- The CBD is not a favoured destination for high and middle-income residents. Other nodes such as Cresta, Northgate, Fourways Mall and Sandton City were favoured for major purchases and the smaller centres in the suburbs for top-up shopping.
- Cresta appears to be the main attraction for those not visiting the Randburg CBD and Sandton mainly competes when it comes to Movies and Eating/Dining out.
- Shopping taking place is mostly for groceries and clothing/fashion.
- There is some evidence that local residents continue to shop in the Sanlam Centre as the number of casual parkers visiting the centre has remained relatively constant.

With regard to office workers, approximately 76% of the estimated 22 600 employees in the Randburg CBD indicate that they shop in the area. 49% of shoppers indicated that they work in the area. Shop owners thus have a ‘captive’ market, in that the highest percentage of visitors is coming to the area because they work in the area. It does however leave 24% who do not shop in the CBD, although they are in the Randburg CBD every day. This indicates that there is a problem of market ‘leakage’, i.e. the Randburg CBD is losing a significant segment of its market to other centres.

With regards to visitors and commuters to Randburg, the following was found:
A big proportion of people coming to the Randburg CBD come from Soweto, Alexandra and Diepsloot.

Most respondents are regular visitors to the Randburg CBD area.

People come to the Randburg CBD to do shopping or because they work in the area.

Most shoppers do grocery and clothing/fashion shopping in Randburg, followed by shopping for cellular products/accessories and shopping for personal services (health & beauty, pharmacy) in a weaker second position.

Two thirds of shoppers doing grocery shopping in the Randburg CBD do all their shopping or the bulk of their shopping in the area.

Reasons for enjoying shopping in Randburg CBD include that it is close to work, easy accessible, conveniently located, and safe.

Those not doing shopping in Randburg CBD do most of their shopping in Cresta, followed by South Gate, Fourways and Maponya Mall.

Reasons for not shopping in Randburg CBD include the lack of variety of shops, badly maintained buildings and environment, and the fact that they have shops closer to home.

Other areas are preferred mainly because they offer a bigger variety and nicer shops, they feel safer and more secure; have a nice vibe/atmosphere; are closer to home.

Visitors/Commuters will definitely be attracted by entertainment facilities: more restaurants/pubs/bars, cinemas/theatre and places to take the whole family.

8.2.3 RETAIL PROFILE

The change in clientele has resulted in a change in the type of shops. However the change in type of shops catering for a lower income market results in less higher income shoppers. The type and variety of goods are focused more on consumer’s basic daily needs at affordable prices for lower income clientele and there is a lack of specialised, department and national stores. There is an increase in smaller retail facilities with an average two employees and floor areas of between 11 and 20m² as well as start-up business that do not have the capital to start big and pay high rents. None of the businesses in the study area owns their own properties.

The largest majority of shops are clothing stores (32%), followed by cell phones and food stores (8%); shoes stores and general dealers (7%); supermarkets; furniture; jewellery and cosmetics stores (5%).

Retail businesses that have moved into the Randburg CBD include cell phones, jewellery and cosmetics, home appliances, clothing, cleaning materials, food stores and pharmacies.

The majority of businesses have traded for less than 5 years in the study area. Consequently business retention in the study area has not been very successful.

The majority of businesses that have relocated from the Randburg CBD have moved to Fourways (35%). Johannesburg CBD, Sandton CBD and Midrand are also preferred areas to which businesses relocate. The main reasons being the prospects of better business operations in these areas.

63% of businesses are expecting no changes in their business operations in the future. Virtually none of the businesses are selling or planning to close down and 13% are planning to expand. However more than 20% of businesses indicated that they are
8.2.4 POTENTIAL FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

Urban Studies identified that potential for future retail development will depend on:

- the new residential units to be constructed in the area;
- the supply of retail facilities in the immediate vicinity;
- the ability to capitalise on the presence of office workers in the immediate vicinity;
- sufficient parking provision;
- the creation of a safe environment;
- the ability to get a strong anchor tenant that would attract shoppers.

It was estimated that ±6 000 additional housing units within the expected catchment area would create a retail potential of 8 000m² to satisfy the convenience needs of the local residents and office workers. Urban Studies stated that future retail development will very much depend on how the area would be upgraded. If the area is upgraded additional retail up to ±12 000m² could become viable.

Future retail development is however limited based on:

- the very strong competition at surrounding regional shopping centres;
- the specific profile of the area, and
- the under-performing of adjacent retail facilities at Brightwater Commons and the Piazza on the corner of Jan Smuts Avenue and Republic Road.

Perception surveys indicated that ‘nightlife’ is least likely to attract people to the Randburg CBD, whereas other services/ stores/ retail outlets as well as entertainment facilities (places to take the whole family, cinemas/ theatre, more restaurants/ pubs) are more likely to pull people. Suggestions to improve the Randburg CBD to attract more shoppers included the cleaning and renovation of the area, improved safety and security; a bigger variety of stores; and better control over taxis and hawkers.

8.2.5 HILL STREET MALL

Hill Street Mall is the key structuring element within the Randburg CBD: it is the most important public space (the only true public space), accommodates large numbers of pedestrians, has the highest concentration of shops and mixed land uses and is the ‘face’ of Randburg. It was thus deemed necessary to analyse the Mall in detail.

The Mall stretches over three blocks starting at from Bram Fischer in the east and terminating at Kent Avenue in the west. It crosses Pretoria and Oak Avenues. It is approximately 1km in length and 18m wide.

8.2.5.1 ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALL

Pedestrians mostly move from the taxi rank at the Civic Precinct across Bram Fischer Drive using the Mall to access a variety of facilities and activities. The crossing of pedestrians at level on Bram Fisher Drive causes much pedestrian-vehicular conflict as discussed in Section 7.3. Pedestrian flows are high in the western portion of the Mall due to its proximity to the taxi rank and decreases towards the west as there is not a magnet in the western portion pulling people through the Mall.
Pedestrians have to cross Pretoria and Oak Avenues. The Oak Avenue crossing is designed to be pedestrian friendly with a wide median, pedestrian light, a raised platform and only one lane of traffic in each direction. Illegal parking in the intersection, especially by Cash-in-Transit vehicles however obstructs the pedestrian flow. The Pretoria Street crossing has been redesigned to accommodate vehicular traffic rather than pedestrians. This is problematic as heavy pedestrian flows pass through the intersection.

The Mall is also access from arcades through the different shopping centres.

The Mall also serves as a gathering place for office and shop workers. It also serves as a socialising space for the learners from the education facilities in the vicinity. People take their lunch breaks and smoke breaks in the Mall.

Most informal traders have been removed from the Mall and relocated on the Civic Site. The only traders in the Mall are newspaper sellers. The RBMD ensures that no informal trade takes place in the Mall itself and its security officers are visible throughout the Mall.
8.2.5.2 DESIGN OF THE MALL

The design of the mall is outdated and its cluttered character complicates pedestrian movement and contributes to the feelings of being unsafe. It was designed to have a suburban feel, but the area currently functions as an urban area, thus making the design ill-equipped to deal with needs of its current users.

Street furniture is an important element in the image and usability of a public space. The benches in the Randburg Mall, although well-used, are inadequate in terms of the quantity. People use the planting boxes and all available surfaces for seating. These spaces are not protected from the elements and people are forced to sit unprotected in the midday sun. Several special street elements such as ‘arenas’, ‘pavilions’ and play areas formed part of the original design. These are almost without exception in a bad state of repair and some have been placed in obstructive positions. There are large variations in the design and quality of the street furniture: urban elements; benches, bollards, litter bins, street lamps, and fences are of a highly varied design, quality and state of repair. It leaves an impression of a disintegrated urban space, haphazardly furnished by many actors over a long time span.

Lighting is a critical element in ensuring 24 hour usage of a space and the safety of users. There are many pedestrian orientated lighting along the Mall but none of the lights work, which renders the area unusable after dark.
There is ample landscaping within the Mall, mostly in the form of planter boxes and large trees. The many water features that made part of the original design have since been converted into planter boxes because of the high cost of maintaining them. Trees are overgrown in some areas but do not provide sufficient shade in the largest part of the Mall. Planter boxes contain a few struggling plants but are mostly just filled with soil. The large planter boxes also impair ease of pedestrian movement and are mostly obstacles rather than features.

**Building frontages** are an important part of the Mall environment and should contribute to the quality of the public space. Good ground floor facades are rich in detail and exciting to walk by, interesting to look at, to touch and to stand beside. Activities inside the buildings and those occurring on the street enrich each other. Interesting ground floor frontages also provide good reasons for walking around an area in the evenings. Blank walls, on the contrary, underline the futility of visiting the city outside working hours. Narrow units (buildings and/or shops) have the fine effect of making streets more interesting because narrow units mean many doors and many different uses to look at, even on a short walk. Many narrow units also provide a predominantly vertical facade structure which has the important visual effect of making distances feel shorter. This makes it more interesting and comfortable to walk around in the city.

In order to create a lively and people friendly city a substantial part of the street frontages need to be open, transparent and welcoming.

The quality of the building facades vary dramatically along the Mall. In the eastern part most buildings have active facades that,
if not necessarily attractive, at least are interactive. Towards the
west there are several blank facades and parking areas facing onto the Mall.

The block between Bram Fischer and Pretoria is by far the busiest
and is filled with plant boxes which limit ease of movement for
pedestrians. The block between Pretoria and Oak has a sound
design, but the crossing over Pretoria is insufficient for safe
pedestrian movement. The block between Oak and Kent has a
significant slope and is probably the worst of all three.
Figure 45: BLOCK BETWEEN BRAM FISCHER AND PRETORIA

BLOCK A
ORIENTAL PLAZA AND RANDBURG PLAZA
(PRETORIA ROAD TO BRAM FISCHER)

RETAIL PRECINCT ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRUCTURES</th>
<th>BUILDING INTERFACE</th>
<th>LANDSCAPING/LIGHTING</th>
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<tr>
<td>PEDESTRIAN RIGHT OF WAY</td>
<td>GOOD INTERFACE</td>
<td>STRUCTURED LANDSCAPING</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHADEN CANOPY</td>
<td>MEDIUM INTERFACE</td>
<td>UNSTRUCTURED GRASS/SHRUBS</td>
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<td>BUILDING OVERHANG</td>
<td>NEUTRAL/UNINTERESTING INTERFACE</td>
<td>TREES</td>
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<td>LANDMARKS</td>
<td>UNATTRACTIVE INTERFACE</td>
<td>LIGHTING DISTRIBUTION</td>
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<td>BLANK FAÇADES</td>
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Figure 46: BLOCK BETWEEN BRAM FISCHER AND PRETORIA
Figure 47: BLOCK BETWEEN OAK AND KENT

RETAIN PRECINCT ANALYSIS

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<th>STRUCTURES</th>
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<td>LIGHTING DISTRIBUTION</td>
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</table>
8.2.5.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE MALL

According to a survey conducted by the RBMD, the visitors to Randburg Mall have the following impressions:

- Positive impressions:
  - Clean and well maintained (24%) – view not shared by Whites
  - Security is tight and visible (19%)
  - Spacious/Easy to shop (11%)
  - Fewer hawkers (10%)
  - Quiet/Space to sit (6%)
  - Not big but enough shops, all one needs (5%)

- Negative impressions:
  - Dull/old-fashioned/unattractive/boring (13%)
  - Too few shops (12%)
  - Dirty/Untidy/Run down buildings (10%) – view shared more by Whites
  - Over crowded/Busy/Many people walking (8%) – view shared more by Whites
  - Feel unsafe (5%)

8.2.5.4 OPENING OF THE MALL TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

Previous UDFs for the Randburg CBD proposed opening Hill Street Mall to vehicular traffic in an attempt to enhance its attractiveness for shoppers. However, according to Urban Studies the failure of the pedestrian mall is not the location but more the maintenance and upkeep of the entire area and the fact that it does not offer a one-stop destination.

The perceptions regarding the opening of Hill Street Mall to vehicular traffic was tested by RBMD. Slightly less than half of respondents indicate that they don't care if the Pedestrian Mall is converted into a street carrying traffic; however, just more than a third are negative. The main reasons for negativity include that people will not be able to move around, that it will traffic/congestion and that it will be unsafe.

Respondents that were positive argued that the Mall will be more alive and attract more shoppers, it will avoid many people moving up and down and it will be safer and more secure.

8.3 OFFICES

The Randburg CBD is a significant contributor to the office market in Johannesburg and it is currently the fourth largest office node in the city, after the Johannesburg CBD, Sandton and Midrand. According to SAPOA it had 393 443m² of rentable A and B grade offices and a further 134 331m² of C grade property in 2004. The office market employed 9629 people and the average weighted monthly turnover for each business is approximately R47 666 in 2004.

Although there has been little growth in the office market, vacancy rates have improved since 2003 as the available office space, low rentals and central location of the Randburg CBD attracted smaller businesses that in most instances are start-up businesses catering for smaller one-man markets, small businesses that have little or no direct contact with customers, businesses that are not prestige related and are not involved in trade and businesses that are more cost sensitive.

The office sector is very strong in the CBD of Randburg and is spread over a large area. Offices make up nearly 50% of the total built-up area. The highest intensity of office uses is adjacent to the Retail Core. The intensity of office uses decreases towards the west. There is a distinct band of office accommodation...
between Kent and Surrey. Along Jan Smuts Avenue there are older office blocks with retail on ground floor level.

Generally office buildings within the Business District are older than those developed outside the business district. Although most (90%-+) of office blocks are in good or excellent condition and appearance and most blocks are fairly new (10 years) there is a clear distinction between the good southern section and the poor central/northern section. Except for refurbishment of offices, there were little building activities for new office developments to be seen.

Offices range from home and house offices to office blocks and complexes with more than one building. Most office occupy one of the original erven of 4 000m², which limits expansion possibilities. Most office blocks are 2-4 storeys high including ground floor with a number of tenants.

There are several high profile tenants in the Randburg CBD, such as M-Net, Multichoice, Sasol Oil, First National Bank, Markinor, and National Geographic Channel. Educational facilities such as Damelin have also located there. The area is also home to several call centres, which have an implication for the 24 hour activities in the CBD.

80% of businesses are tenants and only 20% own the buildings. 25% of offices are head offices, mainly in the southern area. 59% have been at their current address for 5 years or less, although newcomers are lower in the southern section. 48% of offices moved to the Randburg CBD from the wider Randburg area and from Joburg CBD. 32% plan to relocate within the wider Randburg area. 12% from the southern area plan to relocate and 58% from the central and northern areas.
90% have negative perceptions of the Randburg CBD, mostly because of crime and 10% have positive views mostly because of the central locality.

According to Urban Studies it will be necessary to create a new improved office environment to attract offices to the Randburg CBD. The success of office development strongly depends on the micro location, the image of the area, the ‘boss theory’ (the decision makers and their home address), and the availability of a good workforce. Office development will strongly be influenced by the image of this area and therefore the need to improve the perceptions of people/clients. The area will remain a secondary office address.

8.4 RESIDENTIAL

8.4.1 RESIDENTIAL PATTERN

Residential development is concentrated to the west of Surrey Street. Residential development ranges from single residential on 4 000m², to subdivided properties, group housing complexes and medium rise flats. Several of the office blocks in the Randburg CBD have been converted into residential units, due to the high office vacancy rate of the past couple of years and the demand for affordable housing. Most residential is of a high quality, although there are some residential buildings notably in close proximity to the taxi rank, that are overcrowded and in a bad state.
8.4.2 DENSIFICATION

Randburg originally consisted mostly of residential properties on erven of 4 000m². It is estimated that the area originally accommodated approximately 500 erven at a gross density of 2du/ha.

Considerable densification has however taken place in the form of subdivisions, group housing and flats. At the same time much of the original housing stock has been lost to commercial development.

It is estimated that there is currently approximately 2 000 residential units within the Randburg CBD. The gross density has thus increased to only 9du/ha but the net density has increased to 59du/ha. The difference in net and gross density is due to the large areas that are for non-residential purposes. This is substantially lower than the 100+du/ha that is proposed within a defined nodal boundary by the SDF, but in line with the 40-80du/ha that is proposed for areas contiguous to a defined nodal boundary (as was discussed in Section 4.1.2).

There is an anomaly in the sense that the highest residential densities are to be found farthest from the main public transport hub.

8.4.3 RESIDENTIAL DEMAND AND NEED

Randburg CBD is well located in a sub regional context with regards to housing in terms of access to work, shopping areas and schools and houses a stable middle to high income residential population. Significantly, surveys conducted by Kayamandi established that large numbers of business owners/managers in both offices and shops in Randburg live in or near the area: 58.1% of office managers/owners and 53.8% of shop managers/owners live in the area.

House prices in the area range from between R1m to R2m (average sales prices was between R6 400 to R8 200/m² in 2007). Prices for multiple units range between R395 000 for a bachelor (studio) to R845 000 for a two bedroom unit. Rentals for these units range between R3 000 per month for a studio and R5 000 for a two bedroom unit. The residential prices and rentals are lower than for the surrounding areas and the residential quality is quite high. The main clients are young executives from all race groups that work in surrounding areas such as Rosebank and Bryanston but cannot afford to live there. Consequently Randburg with slightly lower rental is ideal as it is only approximately 15-20
minutes drive from their workplace. Due to the lower rentals, yet apart from the nominal residential growth in the area, rental of specifically sectional title flats are in high demand. In some instances the demand is so high that waiting lists for rental exist.

The housing market does however not cater for the large number of lower income households who use the CBD on a daily basis. Surveys indicated that only 17% of visitors would consider staying in the area due to the unaffordability of the area. Social Housing is should be a viable option to consider, although affordability might be a challenge.

The scarcity of affordable units coupled with the large demand for accommodation in proximity of the Randburg CBD has led to overcrowding in some blocks of flats, notably in the vicinity of the taxi rank. This has created a negative image of the area. Respondents to the surveys stated that the office blocks being converted into flats/residential blocks create a Hillbrow feeling.

There is no evidence of people sleeping on the streets at night. Evidence given at the public hearings indicated that it is however a problem in the spruit to the west of the Randburg CBD.

According to Urban Studies, potential for residential development will be determined by:

- the need for housing in the inner ring suburbs to be closer to work;
- the attractiveness of new residential units especially to the west of the precinct;
- improvements in the image of the area.

8.5 ENTERTAINMENT AND ACCOMMODATION

There are limited entertainment, restaurant, conference and accommodation facilities in the area that can cater for the surrounding residents and office workers. This has a negative impact on the office and residential markets for the area and limits the 24-hour functioning of the Randburg CBD.

Most restaurants are located around the Hill Street Mall. These are however mostly fast food establishments and few are open after office hours. The night clubs in the area have been described as a negative influence.

Hotels/conference facilities are mostly on the fringes of this area: three within Randburg CBD and two just outside. The average occupancy rate ranges from 75% to 80%. Not one branded, quality name is present in the area.

The attraction of more entertainment and accommodation establishments will depend on a change in the image of the area, further growth in the office sector and the number of employees in the area and an increase in the number of residential units in the area.
8.6 SOCIAL FACILITIES

There are limited social facilities in the Randburg CBD and the social facilities that do exist mostly cater for regional needs rather than neighbourhood needs. The immediate vicinity does however contain a number of high quality social facilities which can be easily accessed by residents of the Randburg CBD.

Green open spaces are limited to the area around the Ferndale Community Centre and the spruit to the south. The spruit is however not managed properly which means that it is unusable for all practical purposes.

The only effective hard open space is the Hill Street Mall as discussed in the previous section.

Limited social facilities are particularly worrying given that the Randburg CBD is earmarked for densification.
8.7 PARKING

Although parking is strictly speaking not a land use, the vast areas within the central areas of the Randburg CBD warrants its classification as a land use. Almost the entire area to the north and south of Hill Street Mall, behind the rows of buildings is dedicated to public parking. Because the retail centre was intended for local car-owning residents, huge emphasis was placed on parking when the CBD was first developed. Large tracts of land were set aside for these purposes. As the user profile of the Randburg CBD changed, the demand for parking declined. GAPP estimated that the executed floor area compared to the number of parking bays provided within the CBD precinct shows a marked under-utilisation of existing parking facilities (with) some 5 000 bays unutilised.

These parking lots have thus become a wasteland separating the retail core from the surrounding offices, giving rise to a fragmented urban pattern. It has also limited the expansion of the development along Hill Street Mall.

Motor vehicle users stated that availability of parking and convenience of the location of parking areas are very good in the Randburg CBD. However, security in these parking areas is a major problem. Outside of the retail core, in the area dominated by offices, parking is however a problem. No provision has been made for on-street parking.
8.8 INFORMAL ACTIVITIES

Informal activities within the Randburg CBD consist of informal trade and informal recycling.

Informal trade makes up 11% of business within the Randburg CBD. These are mostly located in the trader’s market at the taxi rank and on the eastern side of Bram Fischer under the pedestrian bridge. Informal traders used to be spread through the entire mall area but have been moved to the trader’s market and is generally well-managed.

There are approximately 129 informal traders in the Randburg CBD, but this appears to be an undercount. Each trader’s average monthly turnover is less than R1 000. The informal sector in Randburg CBD employs 230 people.

Businesses that were questioned during the Randburg CBD Performance Survey confirmed that informal hawkers were amongst the many negative factors eroding their confidence in the Randburg CBD.

Although there are many negative perceptions regarding informal trade, informal trading is not necessarily bad. However it becomes problematic if it is not well managed. A study conducted by Linkages Development Agency and Siyaphambili Development Consulting highlighted five key issues relating to the impact of informal trading:

- Informal trade currently has a minimal effect on the local economy of Randburg. It argues that if trading were formalized traders would pay rent/levies thus contributing to the maintenance of the area. They could also sell goods that could entice shoppers to go to Randburg from various areas.
- Informal trade is one of the factors responsible for the decline of the Randburg Business District. But it is important to note that they are not solely responsible for this decline. Other contributing factors include crime, bad space planning and inadequate maintenance.
- Informal trade creates jobs and in some instances a trader may employ extra people other than himself/herself.
- It is the overall impression of various stakeholders in the Randburg Business District that informal trading generally has a negative impact the local property market. For example Gensec indicated that they charged the same amount of rent in 2002 as they did six years prior to that and they attribute that among other things to informal trading in the area.
- Around 80% of informal traders are women. This means that it is important to bear in mind, the needs of women and women related businesses when planning for informal trade.

The study concludes by saying that people (particularly those who are unemployed and desperate) will try to make a living by any means possible whether these means are legal or illegal, or whether they are managed or unmanaged. It is therefore important to adopt a more trader friendly policy and decriminalize informal trading so the traders can be engaged in an effective manner. Appropriate management structures and systems must be developed to regulate informal trading and eliminate the perception that informal traders do what they want, when they want and where they want.

According to Kayamandi the market served by formal retail and informal retail is clearly differentiated with informal traders catering
to impulse buys. As a result they do not compete directly with businesses in the formal sector.

Informal recycling also takes place. Two facilities are located within the study area: one in Micro Street and one behind the Land Claims Court.

**Figure 54: INFORMAL ACTIVITY DISTRIBUTION**

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**9 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

This section deals with development opportunities as presented by the current zoning, Council-owned land and un- and underdeveloped land.

**9.1 ZONING**

The RSDF has identified a trend of land use change from residential to commercial, especially along main arterials and around established nodes. There is also a trend towards densification as large residential stands are subdivided or redeveloped as townhouse and cluster house complexes. Some areas along Republic road south of the CBD and Kent and Surrey Avenues in the west have developed into successful office parks.

Although Region B is the most active and affluent residential and commercial node in the city there are concerns about ongoing development in the region which has led to fears about over-supply, which could impact particularly on the market for speculative office space. There is also strong market perception that local government planning is not effective in this region, with development being
allowed without concomitant upgrading and expansion of infrastructural capacity.

Almost the entire Randburg CBD has been rezoned. However not all of the available bulk have been utilised, suggesting uncertainty about the future of the area, but also potential for new development. The GAPP report concluded that ‘Businesses (49%) and Offices (30%) have the highest development potential. These zoning categories are followed by Business and Services (4%), Mixed Uses (3%) and Municipal (3%). In combination, the Business, Retail (formal) and Business and Service categories account for 1 100 779m² of potential floor area.’

The town-planning analysis in the GAPP study concluded that ‘The Randburg CBD commands a substantial potential expressed in unused floor area in terms of the approved zoning. This unused ‘bulk in hand’ can be put to good use as an incentive to stimulate development.’

9.2 LAND IN COUNCIL OWNERSHIP

The Council is a major land owner in the Randburg CBD and several strategic portions of land are in council ownership.
9.3 VACANT AND UNDERDEVELOPED LAND

The largest part of the Randburg CBD is developed. There are however several properties that are underdeveloped or undeveloped.

10 PERCEPTIONS

Several perception studies have been undertaken for the Randburg CBD. This section deals with the main findings of these studies.

For just more than half of respondents their view of Randburg CBD has improved over the past few years. Those that stated that their views have improved based it on the facts that it is clean and well-maintained; there are fewer hawkers; that it is safer and there is more visible security; and it is quiet and not crowded.

The following issues or weaknesses were however highlighted:

- **Security and safety** is an issue. There is a general feeling of being unsafe due to an increase in the number of people in the area; the lack of control and law enforcement; the rundown character of the area; the lack of lights during the night; and the number of people just standing around. Respondents were of the impressions that there has been an increase in crime and illegal activities (e.g. drug trading, illegal trading). However shoppers appear to feel safer in the study area than tenants. Tenants are under the impression that shoplifting, mugging and armed robbery at businesses are the most common crimes, and that these occur largely during working hours. Discussions with the police whoever indicated that there is very little crime in Hill Street Mall,
especially during the day. The mono-functional areas are however vulnerable to crime due to the lack of 24 hour activity.

- Randburg CBD lacks variety of shops and shops that people regularly shop at. Shops are mostly small individual traders and “Chinese type” shops. There are only a few national retailers which sell only a limited range of merchandise and there are no big retailers like PnP and Mr Price. There are no “decent” shops to shop at.

- The area lacks entertainment facilities. There are no cinemas or theatres and “proper”/good restaurants where one can take clients and where friends can meet while the children are kept busy. All these moved out of the area or closed down. Illegal nightclubs and shebeens are a problem. There used to be respectable nightclubs in Randburg, now it is “dodgy” places with foreigners taking over.

- Respondents had a negative perception with regards to hawkers stating that there is some illegal trading and trading on the pavements; that there are too many hawkers, which makes one feel uncomfortable, as if you need to protect yourself all the time; and that hawkers encourage impulse/low value shopping instead of monthly bulk shopping which leads to a specific tenant mix to suit this shopping behaviour. Informal trading is considered less of a problem by shoppers than tenants. Examples of the reasons why tenants believe informal traders pose a problem are unfair competition, blocking of free pedestrian movement and littering.

- Taxis and the taxi rank were regarded as negatives. Respondents stated that the taxi rank in the CBD is a problem as taxis stop anywhere to pick up/drop off passengers causing traffic congestion. Passengers cross the road where they are dropped off. Taxis don’t abide by the law, drive as they like, don’t park in the rank, and wash their vehicles in the street. The taxi rank makes the CBD area very congested as it brings in commuters who do not necessarily use the CBD for what it is intended, i.e. shopping, business and entertainment.

- The area is crowded and congested and was not designed for the number of people that it currently handles.

- Traffic is problematic especially to travel down Main Road is a nightmare, trucks off-loading in the road thus blocking one lane for traffic and the traffic in area of taxi rank is bad.

- Management of the Randburg CBD is lacking as there is a lack of law enforcement, taxis do whatever they like, hawkers trade illegally on pavements, etc.

- The tenant mix is problematic as there is no tenant association to evaluate new tenants, or police current tenants to protect image of Randburg and the current tenant mix attracts lower income clientele.

- Availability of safe and secure parking is lacking.

- Randburg is an “in and out” destination and there is nothing to keep people in the area, or to attract people to the area.

- Furthermore the majority of visitors interviewed were of the opinion that there are insufficient public facilities in the area (such as toilets and public seating).

### 11 INSTITUTIONAL

A CID, the Randburg Management District (RBMD), was established on 24 October 2004. It stretches more or less from Dover in the north, Surrey in the west, Harley and Selkirk in the south and Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer in the west.
It is a Section 21 company and currently represents 65 property owners and collects a total monthly levy of R260 968 (excl vat). The major owners and contributions are JPC (25%), URE (12%); Vukile Property Fund (5%); First Rand Bank (5%); Hat Properties (5%) and Sasol (1%). Other stakeholders include SARS; the Land Claims Court; UIF, and the Randburg Community Development Forum.

The goals of the CID are to:

- Make RBMD safe, clean, attractive and user friendly by providing a range of enhance management services
- Revitalize the RBMD area as a desirable commercial and residential node
- Promote public and private investment
- Promote and market businesses, assets and opportunities of the area
- Aggressively address negative perceptions of the area and increase positive factors which will encourage investment

The base services that the RBMD deliver are crime prevention, cleaning and communications and branding.

The achievements of the CID up to date include:

- Decreased crime: 92% decrease in armed robberies, theft, muggings and motor vehicle theft.
- Consistent cleaning
- Place making: including newsletters, a website, signage and dustbins and landscaping projects
- Vacancy rates have gone down, rentals and property values up and the footfall have increased since the establishment of the CID.

Surveys undertaken by the RBMD indicated that the majority of business stakeholders are aware of the Randburg CID initiatives, are positive about the initiatives and support them. Some are however of the opinion that the initiatives implemented so far are “little” things and not massive improvements and that current initiatives treat symptoms and not cause/root of problem. Visitors, commuters and residents are however less aware of the initiatives of the CID.

Awareness of “Safety & security patrols” is highest. Some state that they don’t see a lot happening, that changes must be visible otherwise people will not believe that area is changing and that the CID should focus on one initiative at a time and implement that so that it is more noticeable.
Although the RBMD is supposed to only provide a top-up service in addition to the standard services provided by the Council, the reality is that the Council is not delivering sufficient services at the moment relying on the RBMD to provide these services. Due to the small budget of the RBMD its initiative focus mostly on safety and cleaning which means that there is little money left for other initiatives such as the marketing of the area.

There also appears to be insufficient support from the side of the Council for the RBMD and communication channels are not working properly.

The RBMD requires more support from and communication with the Council, specifically JDA, JPC, DPF, UM, JMPD and other MOEs.

Support is required from Council with regards to:
- Increasing the effectiveness of the safe and clean initiatives run by RBMD
- Widening reach of RBMD
- Increasing law enforcement and education
- Increasing by-law enforcement through urban inspectors for on-the-ground monitoring, building inspectors and environmental health officers.

12 SUMMARY OF STATUS QUO

Randburg CBD has experienced significant decline over two decades. This is due to amongst others, the development of more attractive shopping centres in the surrounding area, the development of office parks, the relocation of civic functions, lack of maintenance of public spaces, lack of enforcement of by-laws and the development of the taxi rank and its related informal trade. The negative impact of the taxi rank can be seen in the clear distinction that offices make between the good southern area and the bad northern area, as well as the quality of buildings (both commercial and residential) which is much lower in the area surrounding the taxi rank.

Randburg CBD has been overtaken by other newer nodes. One of the reasons is the lack of easy access to the highway network.

Another factor that has negatively impacted on the Randburg CBD is the perception of crime. Research for this study has however confirmed that the area, especially the area around the Hill Street Mall has very low levels of crime.

The drop in land values has resulted in underdevelopment (as there is much bulk in hand) and the invasion of undesirable uses such as warehousing, dodgy nightclubs, liquor outlets and drug dealing. This compounds the feeling of unsafety.

Although the CBD is located within a stable middle class neighbourhood, few of the residents visit the CBD, with the exception of Randburg Square and the Licensing offices. The users of the CBD today is mostly a transient population that work in the area or pass through it via the taxi rank. Visitors have a lower income which has resulted in smaller shops selling a smaller variety of goods, further compounding the problem.

Since the establishment of the RBMD it seems that the situation has improved somewhat as the area is more clean, hawker activity is controlled and vacancy rates have dropped.
Although the character and users of the Randburg CBD has changed, this has created opportunities unique to Randburg. Lower rentals in both the commercial and residential markets, has led to a niche market of smaller offices that are not dependent on prestige and several call centres. The residential market now caters for young professionals working in the surrounding areas but who cannot afford to stay in those areas. The fact that Randburg is very accessible on intraregional level, even if its highway access is limited, has enhanced this function.

The fact that Randburg is home to several blue-chip companies such as M-Net and Sasol is another strength. M-Net and Multichoice has led to the development, albeit informal, of a media hub as several smaller media companies have also located in the area.

The taxi rank which brings people from all over the city to Randburg has resulted in a high level of accessibility for public transport users. Resultantly educational facilities are thus easily accessed and have created another niche market. The introduction of the Gautrain feeder and BRT station in the area will further enhance its public transport accessibility.

The civic precinct, as well as a number of civic functions that are still in the area, the large portions of land in council ownership, the Hill Street Mall and the large open areas originally planned for the private car market, and the special topography create a unique opportunity for redevelopment of the area.

In order to turn Randburg CBD around, it must capitalise on the strengths.
SECTION 2: DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

1 INTRODUCTION

This section deals with the development concept. It consists of
- the rationale or guiding principles
- the overall development concept consisting of the movement network and precincts;
- the development concept for each of the precincts.

2 RATIONALE/ GUIDING PRINCIPLES

According to the SDF, the design approach should ‘focus on integrating various parts of the node in one cohesive whole, as well as integrating the node within its surrounding environment through pedestrian linkages.’

The project brief requested a ‘Revised Urban Development Framework (UDF) for the Randburg Node, based on sound urban design principles, which aims to
- Integrate the node with the network of transport routes and facilities,
- Appropriately intensify land uses,
- Provide for a mix of land uses,
- Improve the quality of the public environment and experience of the node, and
- Establish a safe and walkable environment.’

The following issues need to be addressed:
- Randburg is downgraded but vibrant and serves a specific market. It is more inner city than suburban node and should not attempt to compete with the other nodes such as Cresta but rather develop its own niche based on its current strengths.

- The strengths of Randburg is that it is a transportation hub, a media hub, a call centre hub, an educational centre and an ideal residential area for young, middle to lower income residents.

- More people need to be attracted to the area and a larger diversity through expansion of public facilities.

- The needs of the commuters, office workers, and residents have to be addressed.

- Public investment, urban management involving all stakeholders specifically the service departments of the CoJ, and marketing should be used to leverage private investment.

- The perception of crime needs to be addressed through environmental design and urban management. Blank facades, grime, unused spaces and breaking of by-laws all contribute to the feeling of a lack of safety.

- Randburg CBD is uninviting and lacks legibility, despite its unique topography. All streets are of a similar order within the hierarchy, there are no clear access routes, entrances or entrance markers/gateways that announce arrival to Randburg CBD and hardly any buildings of public spaces of high quality, uniqueness or landmark quality. There are several unsuitable land uses such as warehousing.

- There is no spatial logic as the entire area has been designated as a mixed use node and a variety of land uses are approved in the entire area leading to high rise residential next to low rise offices, next to home offices next to group housing. This results in a lack of distinct areas.

- Although most visitors to Randburg are pedestrians provision is made mostly for private vehicles. This leads to vehicular-pedestrian conflict especially at the Bram Fischer-Hill Street intersection and the Pretoria-Hill Street intersection. No provision...
is made for pedestrians from the surrounding office and residential precincts to access the Mall area safely and with ease. The large street blocks further limit pedestrian permeability.

- Current interventions are too widely spread and too small to make an impact. An integrated high impact intervention is needed.

3 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

The development concept consists of three structuring elements: the movement network, which includes public transport, gateways and landmarks, and the different precincts. An open space network was not seen as a structuring element as there is limited open space within the CBD area.

3.1 MOVEMENT SYSTEM

3.1.1 MAIN MOVEMENT NETWORK

The issues regarding the existing movement network are as follows:

- It is undifferentiated with all routes having more or less the same order, if not in terms of the transport proposals, then at least in its functioning and image. This causes confusion for users as to which are the actual access roads to Randburg CBD and contributes to low levels of legibility.

- Traffic pass by the CBD instead of through it.

- There are no clear entrances to the CBD thus allowing traffic to by-pass it without even knowing it is there.

- Bram Fischer is congested.

- There is conflict between vehicular and pedestrian traffic at
  - Bram Fischer between Selkirk and Jan Smuts, and
  - At the intersection of Hill and Pretoria Streets.

The RSDF proposes the following hierarchy of roads:

- Mobility Spines: Bram Fischer, Jan Smuts and Republic.
- Mobility Roads: Main, Hill and Bond.

The previous UDFs proposed the following for the movement network:

- Partial of full closure of Bram Fischer for vehicular traffic between Selkirk and Jan Smuts to firstly alleviate vehicular-pedestrian conflict on Bram Fischer between the taxi rank and the Hill Street Mall and secondly force traffic into the heart of the CBD.

- The upgrade of either Pretoria or Oak Streets to accommodate traffic diverted from Bram Fischer and to pull traffic into the CBD.

- The opening of Hill Street Mall to vehicular traffic either between Bram Fischer and Kent as originally proposed or up to Oak Avenue as adapted in later UDFs in order to pull traffic into the CBD.

![Figure 59: EXISTING ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS](image)
Whilst the function of Republic and Jan Smuts as mobility spines as proposed in the RSDF is not disputed, an intervention is necessary on Bram Fischer Drive on the one hand to address vehicular and pedestrian conflict between Selkirk and Jan Smuts and to address its current congestion on the other.

It is thus proposed that:
- Vehicles travelling from south to north be allowed along this stretch of Bram Fischer, but that vehicles travelling from north to south not be allowed to turn right into Bram Fischer but be forced to continue straight along Jan Smuts and then turn right either in Selkirk or in Republic. This will lessen the number of vehicles in this stretch and thus also reduce vehicular-pedestrian conflict. Additional measures to ensure safe crossing for pedestrians such as traffic lights, a raised platform, wide sidewalks, a wide median and narrow vehicle lanes is also proposed.
- An access management plan should be implemented on Bram Fischer. This will be a long term objective: as new applications are made, access to adjacent developments should be provided from access roads running at the back. This is important to make and maintain the accessibility of Randburg.
- Kent replaces Main as a mobility road and that the mobility road stretches from Bond to Republic instead of only up to Hill Street in order to complete a traffic cell around the CBD. Surrey, Main and Kent were considered as options to provide a north-south linkage to complete a traffic cell around the CBD. Main is too far away from the CBD to fulfil this function effectively and will draw additional traffic through the residential area. Surrey would divide the residential area from the ‘hard core’ CBD area but will also have a negative impact on the residential developments to the west and also does not provide sufficient access to the central CBD area. Kent is thus the best option as it is centrally located in the business area of Randburg and it creates a north-south link at the termination of Hill Street. The function of Hill Street as mobility road should be extended to Kent. The advantages of Kent to take over the role of a mobility route are:
- Provides exposure to the CBD
- Defines the CBD and fits into a legible road hierarchy
- Is already a through route – links with Republic to the south (and continues further to the south compared to Main Street) and links to Bond to the north. Hill Street currently terminates at Kent and therefore wayfinding is natural (easier decision making).
- Land use around Main is primarily residential and less compatible with a busy road, while land use around Kent is primarily commercial and more compatible with a busy road.
- Need to create usable space for local residents – therefore more access road types are required.

In terms of the proposals contained in the UDFs:
- The closure of Bram Fischer and redirecting of traffic through either Pretoria or Oak is not supported for the following reasons:
  - Bram Fischer plays an important linkage role, connecting areas further south to the Randburg CBD. Its closure would negatively affect businesses further south.
  - Forcing traffic through the CBD via Pretoria or Oak Streets will cause further vehicular-pedestrian conflict and will be inconvenient for vehicular traffic as the connection back to Bram Fischer in the north via Bond, Phillips and Bourke Streets is very complicated. It is doubtful whether this ‘detour’ will be used and it will more likely encourage traffic to follow
alternative routes thus bypassing the CBD rather than moving through the CBD thus contributing to further decline.

- The surrounding land and shop owners are vehemently opposed to the closure of Bram Fischer as they fear this will result in reduced exposure and thus reduced sales and value of their properties. As stated earlier the closure was previously opposed by the land owners in court and was one of the factors that led to the non-implementation of the previous UDF proposals.

- The opening of Hill Street Mall either partially or completely is not supported, as the pedestrian mall is well-used and forms the heart of the CBD. Opening the Mall up to vehicular traffic will not generate any benefits but it will destroy the character of the Mall, especially given the current lawlessness of private vehicles.

In terms of the remainder of the road hierarchy:

- Dover and Harley are identified as important access routes to the CBD.
- Oak and Pretoria should become activity streets that link the office and retail districts, and make specific provision for pedestrians, on-street parking and cycle lanes.
- Sentrum and Retail should also become activity streets.
- Main and Surrey should become streets with a predominantly residential character and new routes should be created through the middle of the blocks (if and when possible) to accommodate pedestrian movement.

Each of the different roads making up the hierarchy should be designed with a different character to address their individual functions and improve legibility in the area.
3.1.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Issues regarding public transport are as follows:

- There are several taxi and bus services to and from Randburg. These routes do not have a distribution function to the different parts of the Randburg CBD but provide long distance access to and from the CBD from the rest of Johannesburg.
- Taxis and buses currently run on different routes and occupy most of the routes. Ranks are also distributed throughout the area. Current bus and taxi routes and ranks do thus not contribute to the structuring of the CBD.
- The proposed BRT centres on the Civic Precinct, whilst feeder routes connect to the north and west. The Gautrain feeder route connects from north to south. These proposed routes currently do not overlap with the proposed road hierarchy as described above or with the existing bus and taxi routes.
- The result of the existing and proposed public transport routes is that the different services do not complement each other to form a logical hierarchy of service and do not contribute to the structuring, legibility or equal access throughout the CBD.

One of the major concerns in relation to the existing location of the taxi rank is the pedestrian/vehicle conflict which occurs when passengers cross Bram Fisher. A proposal was considered within the GOBA report to relocate the taxi rank to Retail Street to the west of Bram Fisher to avoid the pedestrian/vehicle conflict. In light of the interchange function that the existing taxi rank currently performs, it can be expected that taxi organisations will oppose this proposal as the proposed location is less strategically located and would probably increase journey time. The proposed UDF considers the redevelopment of the taxi rank site, potentially increasing the development bulk on the site considerably. This site is expected to become a major trip attractor and therefore passengers will still cross Bram Fisher although in the opposite direction than previously. The redevelopment of this site and the current ingredients available is however an ideal opportunity to create a successful transit oriented development (TOD). Such an opportunity would also be beneficial to businesses within the development which would provide a high level of accessibility and create footfall through the site.

In terms of public transport, Randburg is regarded as being very accessible and will even be more so in the future when the Gautrain and BRT routes are in place. Randburg plays a significant public transport interchange role and this function should be strengthened as part of the UDF. The redevelopment of the taxi rank site provides a great opportunity to strengthen this role. One of the major drawbacks of the existing public transport services is the lack of integration of different public transport modes and the poor quality of ranking facilities. It is proposed that the redevelopment of the taxi rank site should incorporate all public transport modes, creating the opportunity for a TOD development. This would also provide the opportunity for Metro...
and Putco buses to potentially expand the current limited bus routes they are operating within Randburg.

New public transport services including the Gautrain feeder and BRT should be reviewed and rationalised. The attractiveness of the Gautrain feeder is expected to be low due to the expected shorter journey time offered by the BRT and the high service frequency of the latter. It is proposed that the Gautrain feeder is omitted or integrated into the BRT route to ensure its effectiveness.

There is a high influx of traffic from the north and west towards destinations such as Randburg, Sandton and Rosebank. Within the vicinity of Randburg roads are more or less at a standstill during peak hour periods. A park and ride facility within the vicinity of Randburg will provide the opportunity for motorists to travel via the BRT to Sandton etc. and avoid heavy congestion. The old Waterfront site presents a large number of unused parking spaces during the day and provides an ideal opportunity to provide a park and ride facility.

The proposed alignment of the BRT and Gauteng Feeder routes should be used to enhance the structuring of the Randburg CBD. It is proposed that these two routes coincide and in future even become one service.

An intermodal transport facility, which includes all modes of public transport as well as structured parking for private vehicles as part of a park-and-ride system is proposed on the Civic Site. The existing taxi and bus ranks that are distributed throughout the area, should be relocated to this site.

The Gautrain feeder and BRT routes enter the CBD via Republic and Jan Smuts Avenues. It is proposed that they move through the Civic Precinct in order to enhance the proposed intermodal transport facilities proposed for this area (see Section 4). A triangular route on Republic, Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts is thus proposed. As vehicles will pass through the Civic Precinct and not through the Jan Smuts-Bram Fischer intersection, congestion on this intersection as well as vehicular and pedestrian conflict will be alleviated.

The secondary or feeder systems should:

- Connect all important points, identified as M-Net, the Ferndale Community Centre, Brightwater Commons, Sasol, SARS, the Civic Precinct, the Hill Street Mall, the social facility cluster to the north of the study area on Milner Road and St Stithians.
- Include the existing long-distance bus and taxi routes.
- Support the proposed road hierarchy and structuring of the CBD.
- Rationalise the existing chaotic situation.

It is thus proposed that the following routes be used for the secondary/feeder public transport system:

- Bond Street;
- Republic Road;
- Bram Fischer Drive;
- Hill Street up to Kent Avenue;
- Kent Avenue between Dover and Harley Streets;
- Harley and Dover Streets between Kent Avenue and Bram Fischer Drive.

These routes will ensure that almost the entire precinct is within 250m-300m walking distance from public transport.
3.1.3 PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

The pedestrian network focuses on distributing pedestrians from the intermodal facility to the Hill Street Mall as well as the pedestrian/vehicle conflict on Bram Fisher Road is an issue to be addressed. With the redevelopment of the taxi rank site, this problem is expected to escalate. Bram Fisher is a Class 3 road and the provision of traffic calming measures on such a route is not recommended. The only option (without closing Bram Fisher) is to segregate pedestrians from vehicles. Footbridges are normally unsuccessful as pedestrians tend to avoid them.

3.2 GATEWAYS AND LANDMARKS

Given the fact that many respondents indicated that the Randburg CBD lacks legibility and it is possible to travel past the CBD without even knowing it is there, it was deemed necessary to create a series of gateways and landmarks.

The following different gateways or ‘entrance markers’ are proposed:

- As Malibongwe is the most important link from Randburg CBD to the N1 highway, a marker should be placed at the intersections of Malibongwe and Republic, Hill and Bond Streets being the most important linkages into the CBD.
- As explained in the Status Quo Analysis, Randburg CBD is located on a hill which affords exceptional vistas to the CBD especially at the points where the main roads cross the lowest points, which are all open spaces with a spruit. A marker should thus be placed where Bond, Hill, Republic and Jan Smuts cross the open space.
- Entrance markers should be placed at the main entrances to the CBD itself:
  - Bond-Kent intersection
  - Dover-Kent intersection
  - Harley-Kent intersection
  - Republic-Kent intersection
  - Bram Fischer-Dover intersection.

The Civic Precinct and the beginning and end points of the Hill Street Mall are special places, which have a high visibility and are of critical importance to the image of the Randburg CBD. It is thus proposed that landmarks be placed at the intersection of the Hill Street Mall and Kent Avenue; at the intersection of Selkirk and...
Bram Fischer Drive and at the intersection of Selkirk and Jan Smuts Avenue. The intersection of Hill Street Mall, Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer is of specific significance and should be celebrated with the highest order landmark.

Gateways and landmarks should be defined by surface treatment, landscaping, signage or public art or a combination of these, as is illustrated in Figure 65.

3.3 DEVELOPMENT PRECINCTS

Given the size of the Randburg CBD area (236ha), the designation of the entire area as a mixed use node in the RSDF and the lack of legibility and spatial logic, it was deemed necessary to divide the CBD into different precincts. Each precinct should develop a unique character over time. The determination of the precincts was based on existing land use and character.

Four precincts were identified:

- The Civic Precinct, between Selkirk, Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts Roads. It has a unique shape, is highly visible and accessible and accommodates a variety of government functions.
- The Retail Core Precinct, which focuses on the Hill Street Mall and its surroundings. It contains the highest concentration of retail
activities and has large portions of vacant land in Council ownership that can be developed.

- The Office Precinct which stretches to the north and south of the Retail Core Precinct up to Surrey Avenue, which contains the highest concentration of office uses.
- The Residential Precinct west of Surrey Avenue, which accommodates the bulk of residential development.

The next section will deal with each of the precincts individually.
4 CIVIC PRECINCT

4.1 LOCALITY

Civic Precinct is located to the east of the CBD, between Selkirk, Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer. It is approximately 9ha in extent.

4.2 CURRENT STATUS

The existing land uses on the site are:
- A taxi rank;
- A trader’s market;
- Vehicle licensing, water and rates, and JMPD offices. The largest part of the old council offices are however empty and the building is in a bad state of disrepair as it has been vandalised and is vulnerable to further physical deterioration;
- The library and clinic;
- Houses along Selkirk Avenue that are used for a variety of social facilities and offices;
- Vacant land where the Magistrate’s Court, which has been demolished, used to be located;
- Parking area in front of the library, which is used mostly by visitors to the licensing offices. Visitors are forced to walk along insufficient sidewalks from the parking area to the licensing offices.

The taxi rank and civic functions on the site attract many visitors from outside the area and are major stimulants for the Randburg CBD. The taxi rank has however been blamed for the deterioration of the area and the environmental quality of the surroundings of the taxi rank is noticeably lower than for the rest of the CBD area.

The development on the site is dislocated, fractured and ad hoc and the establishment of the taxi rank and informal trader’s market ignores the previous framework. There is also no clear architectural relationship between the taxi rank on Jan Smuts Avenue and the civic buildings. The spaces between the rank and the civic centre appear to be leftover spaces.
The public environment is of a very poor quality and weak pedestrian links. Although there are large trees on the site, the gardens are overgrown.

The Civic Precinct is surrounded by major streets, Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer, which cuts it off from the surrounding urban fabric and it is thus isolated from its surroundings. This is problematic as it is the most important transportation hub in the area. Pedestrians moving from the taxi rank to the Hill Street Mall and other areas have to either cross the major roads which have several pedestrian hindrances such as fencing, chains and level differences or make use of the existing bridge that detours through the Oriental Plaza. Research undertaken in 2003 when the bridge was the only access point from the taxi rank to the Mall (before the hawker’s market was developed and its gates opened) indicated that only 50% of pedestrians make use of the bridge. Since the opening of the gates to the trader’s market hardly anybody uses the bridge. Yet the conditions especially on Bram Fischer is extremely pedestrian unfriendly and thus creates a perilous situation for the pedestrians.

The site does however have good visibility and views being located on the hill. The site slopes down to south-east and the highest point is the Jan Smuts and Bram Fischer intersection.

Research commissioned by RBMD indicated that 61% of visitors and residents are positive about the redevelopment of the Civic Precinct.

4.3 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL FOR THE SITE

A market research study done in 2003 indicated the following development potential for the site:

- Limited potential for office development mainly because of current poor perceptions and oversupply due to high vacancies.
- 6 000m² call centre – accessible for call centre workers.
- High commuter volumes at taxi rank, retail facilities of up to 2 000m² (based on convenience, services and fast foods).
- Consolidation of community facilities, traffic, police, library, clinic, as well as upgrading of municipal facilities including municipal offices.
- Training and educational purposes.
- Medical facilities such as doctor’s rooms (for commuters from Diepsloot and Alexandra).
- Residential flats (multiple walk-up units) between R120 000 to R180 000.
- Filling station.

Indications are that the development potential has remained much the same, although the introduction of a multi-modal transportation hub, including the BRT and Gautrain Feeder route will increase the development potential for the site.

Finlay and Associated were appointed by JPC in 2008 to review the space requirements of different municipal departments within then Civic Precinct. They found that approximately 11 000m² were required to accommodate the following departments/ functions: public library, Ward Councillor, Region B, Environmental Health, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Health, Joburg Licensing Department, Ward Councillor governance staff, JMPD, Water, lights and rates.

4.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The Civic site is abutted by two important public transport routes and its three corners have been identified as landmark/gateway positions.

It is proposed that the Civic Precinct be developed as a large iconic building which accommodates the following:
- Extensive council and government function, re-instating the functions that have been relocated and adding additional functions such as a Thusong Centre.
- A multi-modal, multi level public transport facility accommodating taxi’s, BRT buses and the Gautrain Feeder route.
- A multi-level structured parking area, that can serve the BRT and Gautrain feeders and thus act as a form of Park-and-Ride facility and also provide public and private parking for the proposed civic functions and other proposed land uses.
- A variety of land uses including medium to high density residential (as well as affordable housing options e.g. Social housing), offices, retail, entertainment, refreshment and recreational uses.
- A hawkers market linked to the taxi facility.
- Public open spaces.
The following design guidelines are applicable:

- The building should be iconic, either through its height, its shape, its use of materials or its architecture (preferably all four).
- Building height and facade treatment should emphasize the three important corners which act as landmark elements. The most important of these is the intersection of Jan Smuts, Hill Street Mall and Bram Fischer.
- The buildings should define the surrounding streets and no parking areas or blank walls should be allowed along these streets.
- The BRT and Gautrain feeder routes should pass through the centre of the site.
- The northern corner should be used for civic functions as this is the most important portion of the site.
- The southern portion should be used for residential purposes to form a transition to the residential developments south of Selkirk Avenue.
- Special attention should be paid to pedestrian movement through the site, around the site and pedestrian crossings over the main roads, especially Bram Fischer and to the Hill Street Mall.
- The construction can be phased but the planning and design must consider the entire site.
5 RETAIL PRECINCT

5.1 LOCALITY

The Retail Precinct is bounded by Dover and Sentrum Streets in the north, Bram Fischer in the east, Retail Street in the south and Kent, Pretoria and Oak in the west. It is 32ha in extent.

5.2 CURRENT STATUS

The Retail Precinct contains the most important shopping malls within the CBD such as Randburg Square, Oriental Plaza, Randburg City and Hillview Centre. These are located along Hill Street Mall. There is also extensive strip development along Bram Fischer Drive. These are mostly small shopping complexes that obtain access directly from Bram Fischer resulting in slow moving traffic and congestion on an arterial route. Towards the north the retail activities become predominantly auto related. Large portions of the Precinct are designated for parking, which is currently underutilised.

Large portions of the precinct are owned by the CoJ. In addition there are three large land owners who on most of the properties along the Hill Street Mall belong to three large land owners: Amaryllis Properties, Urban Real Estate and Sanlam Properties. Most of these land owners have indicated that they are willing to contribute to the redevelopment of the area.
Figure 76: PRECINCT CHARACTER

- Uninviting pedestrian access points
- Blank building facades
- Pedestrian-unfriendly crossing points
- Randomly placed informal trading stalls
- Obstructed pedestrian crossings by vehicles
- Undersized building corners
- Pedestrian-vehicular conflict
- Converted land uses: retail to religious
- Converted land uses: office block to flats
- Dysfunctional building interface
- Dilapidated public environment
- Unattractive building facades
- Rubbish in streets
Figure 77: PRECINCT CHARACTER
5.3 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Retail Precinct has much development potential given the large council ownership of land and the un- and underdeveloped state of many of the land parcels. The following blocks are of particular importance in this regard:

- The block between Bram Fischer, Pretoria and Hill Streets
- The block between Retail, Pretoria, Hill and Oak
- The block between Hill, Oak, Retail and Kent.
- The block between Hill, Kent, Centrum and Oak.

5.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

One important existing and one proposed public transport routes are located on the sides of the precinct. Pretoria and Oak Streets are identified as pedestrian orientated streets. Landmark/gateway positions have been identified at the ends of Hill Street Mall.

It is proposed that the entire Retail Precinct should be developed at the highest intensity with mixed land uses.

The following guidelines apply:

- A mix of at least two land uses;
- A residential density of 100+ du/ha;
- Coverage of 80%+;
- Building height should be at least ten storeys;
- All ground floor levels should be retail;
- Land parcels should be created that includes all the properties within a block;
- Access for pedestrians should be created through the middle of the blocks in an east-west direction;
- Buildings should front onto streets and blank facades and large parking areas on the streets should be avoided;
- Special attention should be given to the interface with Hill Street Mall. Buildings should have interactive facades, with at least two pedestrian linkages per block from Hill Street Mall;
- Open space should be provided in internal spaces or on rooftops;
- Pedestrian and cycle access must be included for all development and is to be independent from vehicular access.
5.5 PROPOSALS FOR HILL STREET MALL

It is proposed that Hill Street Mall be entirely redeveloped as it is outdated and do not comply with current design standards such as CPTED.

The following guidelines are applicable:

- The mall should be divided into different zones:
  - A 4m zone in front of the buildings on either side of the mall which should be used for restaurants and displaying of goods.
  - A 2m wide utility and tree planting zone adjacent to the above zones, which should be used for street furniture, lighting, and provisions for informal traders etc.
  - The remaining 6m strip in the middle of the mall should be used for pedestrian movement.
  - Special attention should be paid to the intersections of the Mall with Pretoria and Oak Streets. A raised cobbled platform with a central median and only one lane of traffic in each direction is proposed.
  - Ample use should be made of public art.
  - A landmark should be placed at the termination of the Mall at Bram Fischer and Kent.
  - Buildings directly abutting the Mall should have active and articulated facades.
  - Lighting should be both practical; enabling orientation and safety, and architectural; emphasizing certain areas or features and artistic; providing surprise, joy and visual splendour.

Figure 79: DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Figure 80: SECTION OF PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT
6 OFFICE PRECINCT

6.1 LOCALITY

The office precinct is located on either side of the Retail Precinct and stretches from Bram Fischer to Surrey. It is 115ha in extent.

6.2 CURRENT STATUS

The precinct contains mostly offices ranging from office blocks of several storeys, small office ‘parks’, home offices and house offices. Parking at some of the offices is limited due to individual erven being developed as offices. The quality of the offices differs dramatically between the northern and southern areas. There are limited support services for the offices such as conferencing facilities and restaurants and pedestrian movement from the offices to the retail precinct is difficult due to small sidewalks with several obstacles such as trees and parked cars. Most of the north-south roads are wide but carry low volumes of traffic.
Figure 84: PRECINCT CHARACTER

Figure 85: OFFICE PRECINCT CHARACTER

Neglected public space

Pedestrian dangerous

Limited trees and landscaping

No on-street parking

Inadequate space on driveways

Dysfunctional public private interface

Building height do not complement the street topology

Level changes on pedestrian ways

Attractive/redeveloped existing

Shopping and retail facilities

Restaurants and entertainment

Automotive retail and services

Training/educational facilities

Residential houses converted into office spaces

Old/retired building

High rise office blocks

Base offices

School building

Attractive landscaping

Nearby office block

Hotels

Figure 85: OFFICE PRECINCT CHARACTER
6.3 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are limited development opportunities for further office development with only a few underdeveloped sites and a small number of properties in council ownership.
6.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Interventions are limited to the streets due to the built-up nature of the area. It is proposed that Kent and Oak be upgraded to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists as well as overflow parking and to create a sense of public space in the streets. The road space should be narrowed to one lane in each direction. The street should function as an open space rather than a vehicular route.

As and when the office blocks redevelop, the following guidelines should be taken into account:

- Building should line street;
- Parking should be placed behind the building or in basements and not on the street;
- Walls should be transparent or form part of the building.
7 RESIDENTIAL PRECINCT

7.1 LOCALITY

The Residential Precinct is located to the west of the Randburg CBD and its eastern boundary is Surrey Avenue. It is approximately 63ha in extent.

7.2 CURRENT STATUS

The original layout made provision for 138 residential erven within this precinct. The number of residential units has increased to approximately 932 units. This is a sevenfold increase without any increase in the provision of open space or social facilities. The streets function as through routes instead of residential spaces.
Social facilities are scattered through the area and few make provision for residents as most cater for the office population. There are however several social facilities outside of the study area that can be utilised.

7.3 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are several low density units within the study area that can be used for increasing the density or to provide some social facilities.

The existing Ferndale Community Centre can be used more intensely.

7.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

It is proposed that the residential precinct be protected against any further invasions of non-residential land uses except where these provide social services to the resident community.

Main Street is currently a mobility route which does not serve the Randburg CBD but caters for through traffic through a primarily residential area. Given the densification in the area and the lack of
As and when the area redevelops the current option of developing 20 du/ha on 4 000m² erven should be discouraged. Properties should rather be consolidated to allow for better site planning.

**Figure 97: PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT**

### 8 NEW NODAL BOUNDARY

The current nodal demarcation of the Randburg CBD has resulted in the public transport hub being on the edge of the node, instead of centrally located. The principles of Transport-Orientated Development and land use and public transport integration dictate that the highest density and intensity of uses should be within a 500m radius around the public transport hub and a secondary zone of lower density and intensity (but still higher than in the surroundings) should be between 500m to 1km radius from the transport hub.

The implication of this for the Randburg CBD is that consideration should be given to including the areas directly adjacent to the Civic Precinct (east and south) into the nodal boundary. Areas outside of...
the 1km radius such as west of Main Street should possibly be excluded from the nodal demarcation.

9 CONCLUSION

In this section the broad development concept and precinct proposals as well as some guidelines were addressed. The next section will deal with the implementation framework, which will detail the strategy to achieve the set objectives and the realisation of the development concept.
SECTION 3: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

This section deals with the parking and public art strategies.

1. PARKING STRATEGY

1.1 ISSUES

The issues with regard to parking are:

- Large parking areas that are underutilised probably due to an oversupply based on the original use of the area mostly by private vehicle owners and due to the neglect of the parking areas which make it unsafe. This results in large areas that are underdeveloped and contributes to the feeling of unsafety and dereliction.
- The large parking areas adjacent to the Hill Street Mall are limiting the development of the area. High intensity and density developments are of critical importance in this area given its proximity to the public transport hub.
- Illegal parking in intersections and in the Hill Street Mall, due to a lack of law enforcement.
- Limited parking at office buildings, due to the relatively small stands used for development.
- The need for a Park-and-Ride facility for the Gautrain feeder and BRT.
- The need to reduce parking standards in line with the principles of TOD and to stimulate public transport whilst reducing the reliance on the private car.

1.2 STRATEGY OPTIONS

The various parking management strategies that better allow municipalities to control public space and the growth of private vehicle use are as follows:

- **Strategies that result in more efficient use of parking facilities**
  - Shared parking: Parking spaces are shared by more than one user, allowing facilities to be used more efficiently.
  - Regulate parking facility use: More convenient and visible parking spaces are managed and regulated to give priority to higher-value trips, increase efficiency and user convenience.
  - More accurate and flexible standards: Reduce or adjust standards to more accurately reflect demand at a particular location, taking into account geographic, demographic and economic factors.
  - Parking maximums: Establish maximum in addition or instead of minimum parking standards to avoid excessive parking supply.
  - Remote parking: Encouraging longer-term parkers to use off-site or fringe parking facilities, so more convenient spaces are available for priority users.
  - Improving user information and marketing: Provide convenient and accurate information on parking availability and price, using maps, signs, brochures and electronic communication.
  - Smart growth and location efficient development: Encourage more clustered, mixed, multi-modal, infill development, which allows more shared parking and use of alternative modes.
  - Improved walkability: Improve pedestrian conditions to allow parkers to conveniently access more parking facilities, increasing the functional supply in an area.
Transportation Management Associations: private, non-profit, member-controlled organizations that can provide variety of services that encourage more efficient use of transport and parking resources in an area.

**Strategies that reduce parking demand**

- Transportation Demand Management programmes: Various strategies and programmes can encourage more efficient travel patterns, which reduces automobile trips and parking demand.
- Parking pricing: Charge motorists directly for using parking facilities, and set fees to encourage efficient use of parking facilities.
- Improve parking pricing methods: Use of more convenient and effective parking pricing techniques to make parking pricing more acceptable and cost effective.
- Commuter financial incentives: Parking cash out and transit benefits give commuters financial incentives to shift modes and reduce parking demand.
- Unbundle parking: Rent or sell parking spaces separately from building space, so occupants pay for just the number of parking spaces that they use.
- Tax parking facilities: Impose special taxes on parking facilities and commercial parking transactions.
- Improve enforcement and control: Enforcement should be consistent, fair and friendly. Parking passes should have clear limitations regarding where, when and by whom they may be used, and these limitations should be enforced.
- Bicycle facilities: Supply bicycle parking, storage and changing facilities instead of some automobile parking spaces.

**Strategies that reduce negative impacts**

- Develop overflow parking plans: Encourage use of remote parking facilities and promote use of alternative modes during peak periods, such as busy shopping times and major events.
- Address spill-over problems: Address spill-over parking problems directly with management, pricing and enforcement strategies.
- Parking facility design and management: Improved parking facility design to address safety, storm water management, user comfort, security and aesthetic objectives.

### 1.3 PROPOSALS

It is thus proposed that:

- The existing parking areas adjacent to Hill Street Mall be made available for redevelopment without having to replace the existing number of parking bays within the new development.
- That parking ratios in mixed use developments within a 500m radius from the Civic Precinct be reduced by up to 50% for retail and places of entertainment, recreation and refreshment and up to 25% for office and residential development.
- On-street parking be provided.
- A fee should be charged for public parking instead of the current free public parking.
- Improved law enforcement take place.

### 2 PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

The existing Public Art Strategy of the City of Johannesburg makes provision for the installation of art in public places in order to:
To enhance the public urban environment and profile the image of the city through an on-going and dynamic programme of public art.

To increase public awareness and enjoyment of the visual arts.

To stimulate the creation of new works and the growth of arts-related businesses within the city.

The Percent for Public Art Policy requires that one percent (1%) of the construction budget of all major city building projects (R10 million or more) be devoted to public construction/renovation carried out by the City of Johannesburg. The percentage is calculated on the total construction/renovation costs of public buildings and facilities, including design fees and landscaping.

It is proposed that the policy should be expanded to include private developments and to provide incentives for private developers to contribute to public art and to make public art part of their developments.

Public art should also not only be seen as stand-alone objects but should be incorporated into

- building designs;
- landscaping elements;
- street furniture;
- paving; and
- landmarks/gateways.

A public art plan should be developed for the Randburg CBD.
SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the Implementation Framework is to guide both public and private investment and development decisions. As such it addresses urban management/institutional issues as well as projects.

1.1 URBAN MANAGEMENT/ INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

Given the perceptions with regards to the image of Randburg CBD as well as the number of management issues that have been highlighted urban management and institutional issues are of utmost importance. The following has to be addressed:

- Steps have to be taken to ensure greater co-operation between the RBMD and the City of Johannesburg. The RBMD is currently operating with little support from the City and can thus not operate effectively. A structure should be created (or an existing structure should be adapted) which will allow for close co-operation between the RBMD and the City with regards to all urban management issues e.g. cleaning, law enforcement, by-law enforcement, maintenance of public spaces, landscaping, infrastructure, roads etc. Clear responsibilities should be allocated for each task and sufficient budgetary allocations should be ensured for each task. The said structure should also ensure greater integration of the actions/projects taken by within the different entities of the City itself.

- The alienation of Council-owned land should be reconsidered. The current process of putting ad hoc parcels of land out on tender and the rezoning of such properties have not been effective. The blocks that have been identified in the Framework as suitable for redevelopment have the City as main land owner and a limited number of private or semi-state owners. These owners need to be identified and a public-private partnership created for the redevelopment of the entire street block in line with the guidelines proposed in this Framework.

- Additional funding should be allocated to the RBMD, through its members and the City, to allow it to expand its tasks beyond that of cleaning and security. Active marketing of Randburg CBD is necessary to change people's perceptions of Randburg CBD. The survey of perceptions indicated that many perceptions were misplaced and unfounded. An aggressive marketing strategy should focus on the strengths of Randburg CBD as a media and call centre hub and as a vibrant 24 hour alternative to suburban shopping malls. The marketing strategy should focus on attracting both businesses and visitors to the area and regular events should be held to place Randburg CBD on the map.

- A new CID should be created to cover a larger area of the Randburg CBD in order to increase the visibility of the benefits of the CID to a wider area.

- Special attention should be given to visible security measures such as visible policing and CCTV cameras to address the current perceptions of crime.

- Small business development should be prioritised. Several organisations are currently busy with such activities, but efforts are rather ad hoc and thus not effective. RCCI, RYCOB and LEEGRA have indicated that they already involved in such actions and will be interested in future co-operation with the City and the RBMD.

- An investors' conference should be held to involve private investors in the upgrade and development of the Randburg CBD.
Several private parties have indicated their interest in this regard.

- Consideration should be given to instituting a Zoning Overlay District in the Randburg CBD to ensure effective land use changes.
- The boundaries of Randburg CBD have to be reconsidered given the location of the main public transport hub, which is currently located on the edge of the CBD.
- The public transport routes through the area should be rationalised and located in such a way as to assist in the structuring and legibility of the Randburg CBD. Negotiations should thus be held with regards to the Gautrain and BRT routes and feeder routes.

2 PROJECTS

Several capital catalytic projects have been identified in this framework to ensure the regeneration of the Randburg CBD. These are discussed below.

2.1 CIVIC PRECINCT REDEVELOPMENT

2.1.1 AIM

To establish a Civic Precinct that will accommodate a variety of civic functions and a multi-purpose transportation hub (taxis, buses, BRT, Gautrain feeder, and public parking). The development should also accommodate a variety of land uses i.e. retail, offices, medium to high density residential, recreation facilities and public spaces. It should further be an iconic landmark structure.

2.1.2 ACTIONS

- Identify civic functions that should be located within the precinct and obtain commitment to the project.
- Develop a detailed development framework/site plan.
- Develop a financial model for the funding of the project.
- Get appropriate land use rights in place.
- Put out to tender/develop a public-private partnership for the development of the site.

2.2 HILL STREET MALL REDEVELOPMENT

2.2.1 AIM

To redevelop the Hill Street Mall according to the guidelines stipulated in the UDF.

2.2.2 ACTIONS

- Draft detailed Site Development Plan
- Organise a public-private partnership with adjoining land owners and RBMD for the implementation.
- Obtain commitment from adjoining land owners, who will benefit directly from the upgrade, to contribute to the upgrade of the Mall as well as to undertake to renovate/upgrade/redevelop their respective buildings/properties.

2.3 BRAM FISCHER/ JAN SMUTS INTERSECTION UPGRADE

2.3.1 AIM

To find a detailed solution for the pedestrian-vehicular conflict at the intersection of Bram Fischer and Jan Smuts where pedestrians
from the taxi rank cross over to the Hill Street Mall. Although the 
redevelopment of the Civic Precinct will address this problem in the 
long term several intermediate actions can be taken such as 
preventing vehicles travelling from north to south to turn right into 
Bram Fischer, the upgrade of the median and the removal of 
barriers such as fencing to allow for safer pedestrian crossing.

2.3.2 ACTIONS
- Initiate negotiations with all stakeholders, e.g. URE and the taxi 
associations.
- Appoint transportation and civil engineers to draft a detailed 
plan for the upgrade/ modification of the intersection.

2.4 LANDMARKS AND GATEWAYS

2.4.1 AIM
To develop gateways and landmarks at important localities with 
the Randburg CBD in order to improve the legibility and sense of 
place of the area.

2.4.2 ACTIONS
- Verify localities for gateways and landmarks.
- Identify local artists to take part in the design process for the 
landmarks and gateways.
- Identify possible funding options for the construction of the 
gateways and landmarks.

2.5 OFFICE STREETS

2.5.1 AIM
To upgrade Oak and Pretoria Streets to accommodate on-street 
parking, pedestrian routes, extensive landscaping and traffic 
calming measures.

2.5.2 ACTIONS
- Appoint transportation and civil engineers to draft a detailed 
plan for the upgrade/ modification of Oak and Pretoria 
Streets.

2.6 RESIDENTIAL STREETS

2.6.1 AIM
To ‘downgrade’ Main and Surrey Streets to accommodate overspill 
of residential activities.

2.6.2 ACTIONS
- Appoint transportation and civil engineers to draft a detailed 
plan for the modification of Main and Surrey Streets.