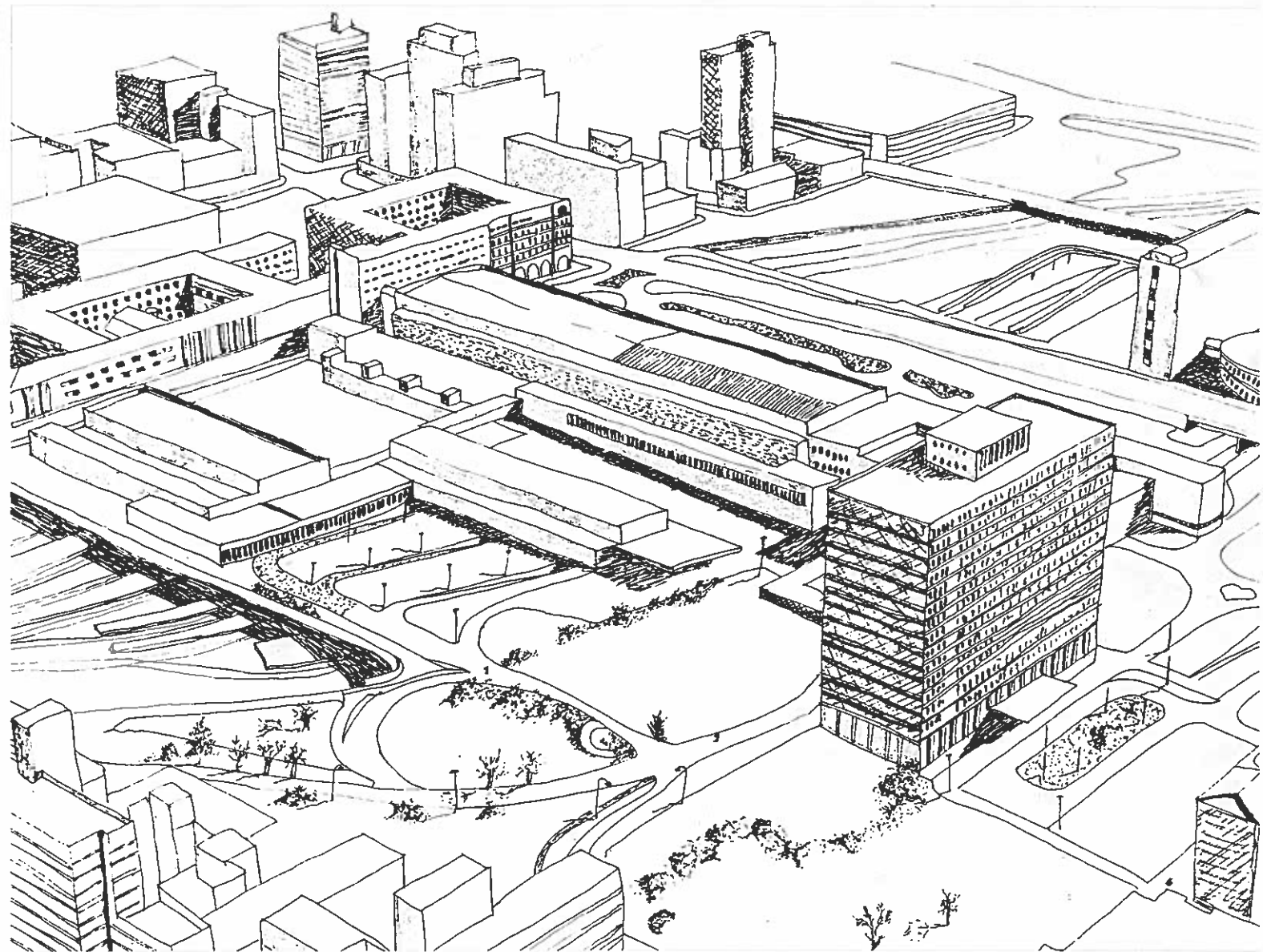


**JOHANNESBURG STATION
AND ENVIRONS
STAGE ONE REPORT**



**NOVEMBER 1987
CHIEF DIRECTOR
(BUILDING SERVICES)
S.A.T.S.**

THE JOHANNESBURG STATION AND ENVIRONS

STAGE ONE REPORT

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Section, S.A.T.S..

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 The South African Transport Services owns large tracts of prime land in the heart of nearly every city in the Republic. Much of this land is either unutilised or underutilised and has become blighted as new developments have moved further away from railway stations. However, the concentration of people at railway stations and the necessity to rely on public transport has awakened renewed interest in railway land and in available airspace over such land. Consequently, the Transport Services has realised that its land could be used for more than just a transport function and that this asset could become a significant source of additional income.

1.1.2 To prove its commitment to the upgrading of Transport Services property and thereby the surrounding environment, and to ensure that its property portfolio is more effectively and efficiently managed, a Business Development Section was established within the organisation in January 1986.

1.1.3 The prime objectives of the Business Development Section are: -

- i) the identification of development opportunities presented by the unutilised and under-utilised Transport Services fixed assets;
- ii) to obtain development rights for such properties through negotiation with the relevant local authorities;
- iii) the marketing of these opportunities and rights to the private sector for implementation.

1.1.4 In order to accommodate the activities of the Business Development Section it was necessary to amend section 9(26) of the South African Transport Services Act, 1981 (Act 65 of 1981). This amendment was duly effected with the promulgation of the South African Transport Services Amendment Act, 1986 (Act 46 of 1986), in terms whereof the Transport Services is empowered to lease its property for business development purposes.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 The considerable interest displayed by the private sector has drawn attention to the significant development potential of the Johannesburg Station complex for the creation of a properly integrated nodal interchange facility having related commercial and business enterprises.

1.2.2 The Chief Director (Building Services) of the Chief Civil Engineer's Department was therefore requested by the Business Development Section to analyse existing problems which may influence development and to identify the development potential of the area.

1.2.3 The Johannesburg Station complex is defined as the area bounded by De Villiers Street to the South, Rissik Street to the West, Wolmarans Street to the North and Wanderers Street to the East.

1.2.4 The purpose of this investigation is to establish a development framework, in co-operation with the Johannesburg City Council, whereby the development of the area can be undertaken in harmony with the needs of the citizens of Johannesburg, the travelling public and tourism, taking into account all aspects relating to present and future developments in the

surrounding area and the Central Business District of Johannesburg.

1.3 Purpose of this report

1.3.1 This report highlights relevant factors which will have an influence on the future development of the study area and as such create the foundation on which the development framework can be based.

1.3.2 Due to the importance of the Johannesburg Station Complex to the future development of the Central Business District of Johannesburg and the complexity of the analysis, this document forms a separate entity to the overall study, in order that all interested parties will have the opportunity to comment, prior to proceeding with specific proposals which will be made in the next phase of the investigation.

2. EXISTING SITUATION

2.1 Existing Buildings

There are seven buildings situated in the station complex, namely the Regional Managers' Office on the corner of Rissik and De Villiers Streets, the South Station Building facing on to De Villiers Street, the first as well as third class railway station concourses in the centre of the area, Tippet Building on the South side of the main concourse, the Paul Kruger Building facing on to Wolmarans Street and the memorial chapel on the corner of Rissik and Wolmarans Streets. The Rotunda and S.A. Airways buildings have also been described in section 4.4 of this report because of their proximity to and affinity with the station complex.

The locality and type of these existing buildings are illustrated in Figure B. Facades and sectional elevations, which give an indication of the heights, levels and massing of the complex, are shown in Figure C. The total built areas of all existing buildings may be seen in Figure L.

2.2 Land Use and Tenure

The Regional Manager, Southern Transvaal's Estates section co-ordinates and negotiates all leases to the private sector of existing areas in the station complex. An annual income of R232 500.00 is presently obtained from the total number of 26 leases. Smaller leases change hands on a fairly frequent basis, and the extent of interest shown indicates that the market potential is not fully exploited.

Mr. MacGregor's finding in the Appendix, item 6.2 that the South Station building 'houses diverse activities most of which should economically be accommodated elsewhere' is equally true for the entire station complex. Parking / holding areas for buses, inefficient use of open space and buildings as well as inappropriately located functions all contribute to the extremely unsuitable utilisation of prime urban land. It is evident that unco-ordinated, ad hoc decision making has resulted in the present disjointed mix of activities, which in most cases do not complement or support one another. Refer to chapter 4 for the specific land uses of the

22 individual sites which comprise the study area and immediate environs.

The total developed area of the site amounts to 147 587 m². If a bulk of 5 is assumed, the maximum allowable area which may be developed on the site is 737 935 m². The study area is consequently developed to only 20,0 % of its permissible bulk, or put in another way, it is 80,0 % underdeveloped at present.

2.3 Commuter Circulation

2.3.1 At least 220 000 commuters, main line passengers and pedestrians enter or leave the Johannesburg Station through a few access ways every day. (Survey conducted on 21 May 1987.) However, at current unofficial estimates, by the Regional Manager, Southern Transvaal, Passenger Services this figure is about 300 000, with 20 000 people using the station concourses solely as access routes and through ways to their destinations.

The flow of commuters to the city centre is indicated on the existing pedestrian circulation plan. See Figure D.

2.3.2 Approximately 56 000 1st and 2nd class rail commuters use the main concourse, and move towards Rissik, Joubert and Eloff Streets.

A much smaller amount of passengers leave the 1st and 2nd class concourse in the direction of Braamfontein.

2.3.3 Approximately 164 000 3rd class rail commuters (mainly Blacks) use the 3rd class concourse every working day, and flow towards Hoek Street.

A smaller amount of passengers leave the station complex in the North, West and the Eastern directions.

The 2,5 and 5 minute walking distances have been indicated in Figures E and F.

2.3.4 Commuters and pedestrians circulate through a limited number of access/egress "gates" to/from the station complex.

Eight of these access or egress points have been identified, each with their own impediments. See Figure G.

- i) The Noord-Rissik Streets access point, (1) has stairs which impede the flow of passengers.
- ii) The forecourt parking (access way (2)) is obstructed by traffic and parked vehicles and has no clearly defined pedestrian ways.
- iii) The communication building access way (3) is difficult for use by elderly or disabled passengers. The stairway accommodates a 6 m change in level.
- iv) The impediments on the Wanderers Street access (4) include a narrow walkway and heavy traffic on Wanderers Street.
- v) The second Wanderers Street access/egress point (5) is the only one where there is no impediment. It is a pleasure to walk away or towards the station on the small boulevard bordered by beautiful trees.
- vi) The Noord - Hoek Streets access way (6) is the busiest of the complex. Well over a 100 000 3rd class commuters, move through this narrow walkway, which is filled to capacity, especially in the morning peak. The shelters for vendors in Hoek Street

form an obstruction to this pedestrian flow.

vii) The De Villiers - Eloff Street access point (7) has traffic lights which retard the flow of commuters in the morning and the afternoon peaks.

viii) The De Villiers - Joubert Street subway (8) is one of the worst access points to the station. An uncomfortable ramp and stairs make this route difficult for use by elderly or disabled passengers. The subway is unhygienic, badly lit and an invitation to muggers.

2.4 Vehicular Circulation and Parking

2.4.1 General

The area in the immediate vicinity of the Johannesburg Station Complex is used for the parking of the following categories of vehicles, as determined in the 'Report on Parking in Vicinity of Johannesburg Station' (1987) by the Regional Manager of Southern Transvaal:

- i) "vehicles of passengers or prospective passengers (air, rail and bus) and/or persons dropping or collecting passengers.
- ii) vehicles of persons collecting or delivering parcels.
- iii) vehicles of persons collecting or delivering supplies to the station complex (including leased premises).
- iv) official Transport Services vehicles.
- v) taxis and buses.
- vi) private vehicles of Transport Services personnel.

vii) vehicles of the general public (including persons visiting Transport Services buildings in a private or official capacity).

viii) vehicles of car hire companies.

Up until May 1986 various unsuccessful attempts had been made to control this parking.

In June 1986 the platforms and forecourt to Johannesburg station were hired out to private enterprise (National Auto Parks (Pty.) Ltd.) and in these areas there is now controlled parking.

Unfortunately as a direct result of the introduction of controlled parking in certain areas as well as the amalgamation of the Railway Police with the S.A. Police the problems of control in the surrounding areas have escalated. Serious traffic and access problems are caused by "illegal" parking on islands, sidewalks, in bus lanes and in the roadways.

Approaches were made to the City Traffic Authority for their help but they explained that they have no powers (sic) on Transport Services property and have advised that private vehicles should not be moved or tampered with by Transport Services unless Transport Services are fully prepared to accept liability for any loss or damage claims by the owners.

The South African Police also claimed that they have no authority to move or fine illegally parked vehicles."

2.4.2 Parking Areas

An indication of the parking areas presently allocated to the South African Transport Services,

Municipal and private cars as well as taxi ranks, see figure H.

The Station Complex is very conveniently situated in the C.B.D., and more parking areas would therefore be greatly in demand.

An investigation was recently done by the Regional Manager, Southern Transvaal on the provision of parking in the vicinity of the Johannesburg Station. This investigation resulted in a proposal for a new parking layout (Drawing No. BRR 305-524-I-441 dated 16 September 1987), which does not represent any major change to the status quo.

Parking areas in and around the station complex are indicated in Figure H.

2.5 Railway, Bus and Taxi Problems

2.5.1 General

i) The railway service at Johannesburg Station caters for the main line and suburban train services. A Fastfreight Parcel Express Service city office is presently being developed in the Johannesburg Station Complex, whereas heavier goods are being conveyed from Kazerne Goods Depot.

ii) Bus services are readily available fairly close to the Johannesburg Station Complex. See Figure J.

Buses of the S.A. Transport Services for 1st and 2nd Class passengers are parked on the western side of the 1st and 2nd class concourse of the Station Complex. Long distance buses of private companies are parking mainly in Leyds Street close to the

Rotunda, while the buses for passengers to Jan Smuts Airport park in front of the Rotunda building (SAA Terminal Concourse). Bus stops for buses of the Johannesburg City Council are situated within 2 to 5 minute walking distances from the Station Complex.

Buses for 3rd Class passengers are presently being parked at the north side of the 3rd class station concourse.

- iii) Taxi ranks are in De Villiers Street opposite Attwell Park and at the Rotunda Building. Third Class taxis are mostly parked at the eastern and south eastern side of the Station Complex.

2.5.2 Problematic Situations

- i) Railway Service

The present service between Soweto and the C.B.D. should be upgraded and therefore the planned sextupling of railway lines to Soweto is becoming a necessity. Further delays in the financing of this project will be to the detriment of the quality of the transport service being provided at present, as well as the natural growth of the C.B.D.

- ii) Buses : 1st and 2nd Class

Long distance buses of the Road Motor Transport are staged on the Western side of the 1st and 2nd Class Station Concourse for the following routes: Heidelberg, Vereeniging, Meyerton, Van der Bijl Park and Durban. According to the Road Motor Transport Section these buses could be parked at their depot

at Langlaagte. Plusbuses vehicles will in future be serviced and parked at Germiston. Buses to Durban are parked overnight and during the day at the station until their departure in the afternoon.

The bus service from the Rotunda Building to Jan Smuts Airport is being rendered by a private company.

The numbers of air passengers are greatly reduced compared to five years ago and this has led to the closing of the Rotunda Building at 18h00. The South African Transport Services were therefore recently approached by the Association of S.A. Travel Agents for the provision of adequate public services at the Rotunda or in the vicinity of the Station Complex.

Long distance bus services are being provided by private companies and the departure spot for these buses is in Leyds Street. The facilities for passengers making use of these bus services are inadequate however.

From meetings held and judging by the opinions of various organisations in the field of tourism, it is clear that a central tourist centre in the Johannesburg Station Complex or close to it, would be an advantage to passengers and tourism in general.

iii) Buses for Third Class Passengers

Buses for Third Class Passengers are presently being parked north of the 3rd Class Concourse. There are 13 boarding/alighting parking

bays. The statistical figures for 3rd class passengers and buses are as follows:

In 1985 it was estimated (Conceptual Capital Budget) that the number of passengers were 2 500 during Friday evenings with 50 buses being used. During 1987 a total of 3 027 passengers were counted on a Friday evening and 76 buses were used.

Although the above figures show an increase of 10,04 % per annum as far as 3rd Class passengers are concerned, RMT officials do not expect this trend in the future. Recent figures of October and November 1987 indicate that the number of passengers are fluctuating tremendously, due to the strikes and services rendered by 3rd class combi taxis. Under these circumstances further investigations are required to establish proper design criteria.

The number of 3rd Class bus passengers during public holidays are much higher. During Easter and Christmas the number of passengers exceeds 12 000 per day, although it is debatable whether facilities must cater for these high numbers.

- iv) In general facilities for the 3rd Class passengers are extremely poor, and need to be substantially upgraded.

Difficulties in controlling crowds in confined spaces are causing considerable delays in the departure of buses.

Although shelters were erected for passengers, the facilities are still not

adequate.

The number of boarding/alighting bays are also inadequate and should be increased.

2.6 Hygiene and Image of the Station Complex

The Chief Health Inspector of S.A.T.S. has stated that because there are no toilets on platforms and the "toilets" on trains flush directly on to the track, unhygienic conditions, as well as odours on the poorly ventilated platforms, have become unacceptable. Similarly, the absence of refuse bins for security reasons, has contributed to the spreading of litter throughout the station complex. The image of S.A.T.S. suffers immensely because of this set of circumstances, and use of the transport service is discouraged.

There are many examples of pleasant, neat and well sign-posted stations in Europe which clearly demonstrate how such areas may become attractive as well as functional.

Pentagraph, a multi-disciplinary firm of industrial design and corporate identity consultants, have been appointed to improve and rationalise the corporate image of S.A.T.S.. Their final detailed recommendations are expected during 1988, and these will determine how the image of the station complex and service to passengers should be improved.

3. CONSTRAINTS

3.1 Spatial

- 3.1.1 The railway cutting forms a physical barrier, and takes up useful, prime space to the east and west of the station complex. The logistics and cost of decking the cutting combine to constrain the development of such space. Light, ventilation and access to the railway lines must be allowed for in all airspace proposals.
- 3.1.2 The historic Regional Manager's Office Building and South Station Building with its fine piazza and central court, are constraints to development in that these buildings and spaces will have to be retained. The historic value and aesthetics of these facilities must not be impaired by unsympathetic alterations, additions and/or rehabilitation.
- 3.1.3 The Rissik Street bridge presents an obstacle to movement of pedestrians, vehicles and buses to the forecourt west of the 1st and 2nd class station concourse.
- 3.1.4 No space is readily available to alleviate extreme congestion in the morning and afternoon peak commuter flows at the third class concourse.
- 3.1.5 Several facilities need not locate within the station complex, such as the New Fastfreight city office, and the communications building in the northern side of the main concourse; the printing works in the South Station building and the chapel to the west of the Paul Kruger building. However the re-location of such functions to alternative sites, may be a costly exercise. Consequently, such facilities which take up valuable space in the station complex, form costly constraints to the planning of a multi-modal transport centre.

3.1.6 Space is being taken up by the natural, albeit chaotic, gravitation of buses, taxis, cars and service vehicles to the station complex. Such occupation of valuable area forms a severe constraint to the availability of space within the station complex.

3.2 Financial

3.2.1 Uncertainty regarding the future of the Johannesburg C.B.D. is a constraint to investment in a new transport centre. For example, two opposite points of view as to the future of the C.B.D. are evident.

Frank Jeans (The Star, 3 December 1986) states that: "Despite the suburban shift and forecasts of downtown's eventual death, central Johannesburg remains a vibrant business area and in office accommodation terms alone, the city appears to be winning the battle for tenants".

Jeans goes on to list tenancy rates of Ampros properties (Carlton Centre, Barnib House, African Life) as being 90% and higher. The vacancy factor in Parktown, Rosebank, Sandton and Randburg is said to be 36%, compared with 19% in the C.B.D.

In marked contrast to Jeans, Andre Viljoen (Finance Week, July 9 - 15 1987) states:

"The increasing tendency for head office operations to decentralise has resulted in formerly C.B.D. - based service operations, such as computer installers, (sic) accountants, legal firms and advertising agencies either taking space close to their clients or opening branch offices ... If the tenant can achieve an upgrading in prestige and at the same time save money or even come in at

comparable rentals, he will move."

3.2.2 The feasibility of commercial ventures at the station depends primarily on the state of the economy, and also on the successful implementation of a development plan.

As authorities, developers and investors need to be supportive of the development proposals for these to succeed, their approval is vital. The inherent risk in obtaining consensus, is in itself a constraint to investment.

3.2.3 The timeous allocation of funds by City Council and/or Regional Services Councils is essential to provide essential public amenities such as new bus termini, taxi ranks, toilets, closing of streets and new public open space.

3.2.4 Space for parking, pedestrian/vehicular traffic and public transport, as well as new urban amenities is extremely limited and costly to assemble at the station complex. The requirement that an unimpeded right of way be retained to enable the revision/increase of tracks in future, adds to the cost of airspace structures.

3.2.5 The strategy of holding developable space in reserve, and allowing property values to increase around such space, (as opposed to providing a surplus of developable space) will increase income in the longer term, but may adversely affect momentum of development in the shorter term.

3.2.6 Benefits that have been created through public finance, are available to all, whereas improvements brought about by private developers may be directed at specific groups, to the exclusion of others. The reservation of facilities for

certain groups in what is a public facility could promote conflict and limit investment.

3.3 Administrative and Legal

3.3.1 Single proposals, whether based on the evaluation of alternatives or not, will tend to be rejected by one or more interest groups/authorities. A project of this scale requires participation within the planning process on as broad a front as possible and parties involved must include:-

- i) The Johannesburg City Council and its departments.
- ii) S.A. Transport Services and all its departments concerned.
- iii) A cross-section of developers.
- iv) The Central Business District Association.
- v) Putco
- vi) Jomet.
- vii) The Southern Africa Black Taxi Association (Sabta).
- viii) Regional Services Councils.
- ix) Representatives of public interests, such as Jomag.
- x) The ^{relevant} Ratepayers Association.
- xi) The National Transport Commission and The Department of Transport.
- xii) The private sector dealing with transportation.

The formulation and approval of a development framework should of necessity proceed with the co-ordinated involvement, participation, and comment of all parties concerned in the first instance. In fact, this process

will allow the substance of an acceptable structure plan to be identified.

A framework for communication, negotiation and co-operation between all parties listed above should be defined. Each group's needs, wishes, and rights need to be determined. Similarly, matters which are not negotiable or fixed, and issues which are negotiable must be listed. This process is complicated and costly, and the end results are not always predictable, all of which act as constraints to the administration and legalising of any development proposals.

3.3.2 At present no comprehensive transport study of all modes at the station complex, or recommendations on how these modes may effectively be integrated in an efficient transport centre, are available. This is a crucial issue and a priority to the determining of a development framework for the study area.

3.4 Social

3.4.1 Stations are either seedy, unsafe, crime ridden spaces; or vibrant, pleasant, safe places to go to and enjoy. It is in the interest of everyone who uses a station to ensure that its full potential as a multi-modal transport node with functionally related amenities, is realised.

3.4.2 Mr Sol Makgabutlane (The Star, 24 March 1987) gives some valuable insight into the existing social network in and around the third class station:-

"Pirate taximen, hawkers, shoeshine boys and thousands of passengers jostle each other at Johannesburg Station, the busiest railway station in South Africa. You can buy anything from vendors - whose wares range from an Afro comb

to a shoelace, from a guitar string to a can of Coke, from a pair of sunglasses to a packet of biscuits, from a beaded pendant to an "I Love Seshego sticker".

It is clear from the above that a central railway station is not merely a place where passengers arrive and depart, but provides work opportunities and a livelihood to hawkers, vendors, shopkeepers, taxi drivers and beggars. In short, both the informal and formal sector find a niche here. Service - related activities, from shoe shiners and dry-cleaning to medical, legal educational (technical college) and residential (Victoria and Springbok Hotels) seem to gravitate to the station, underlining the public as well as the predominantly Third World nature of this central city complex.

3.4.3

The 1st and 2nd class station, although twice the size of the 3rd class station, has much less social activity within it. This may be attributed to the present transient quality of an underutilised concourse, which is characterised by the random location and/or lack of facilities for commuters.