

Namibia's urban transformation: people-driven urban development

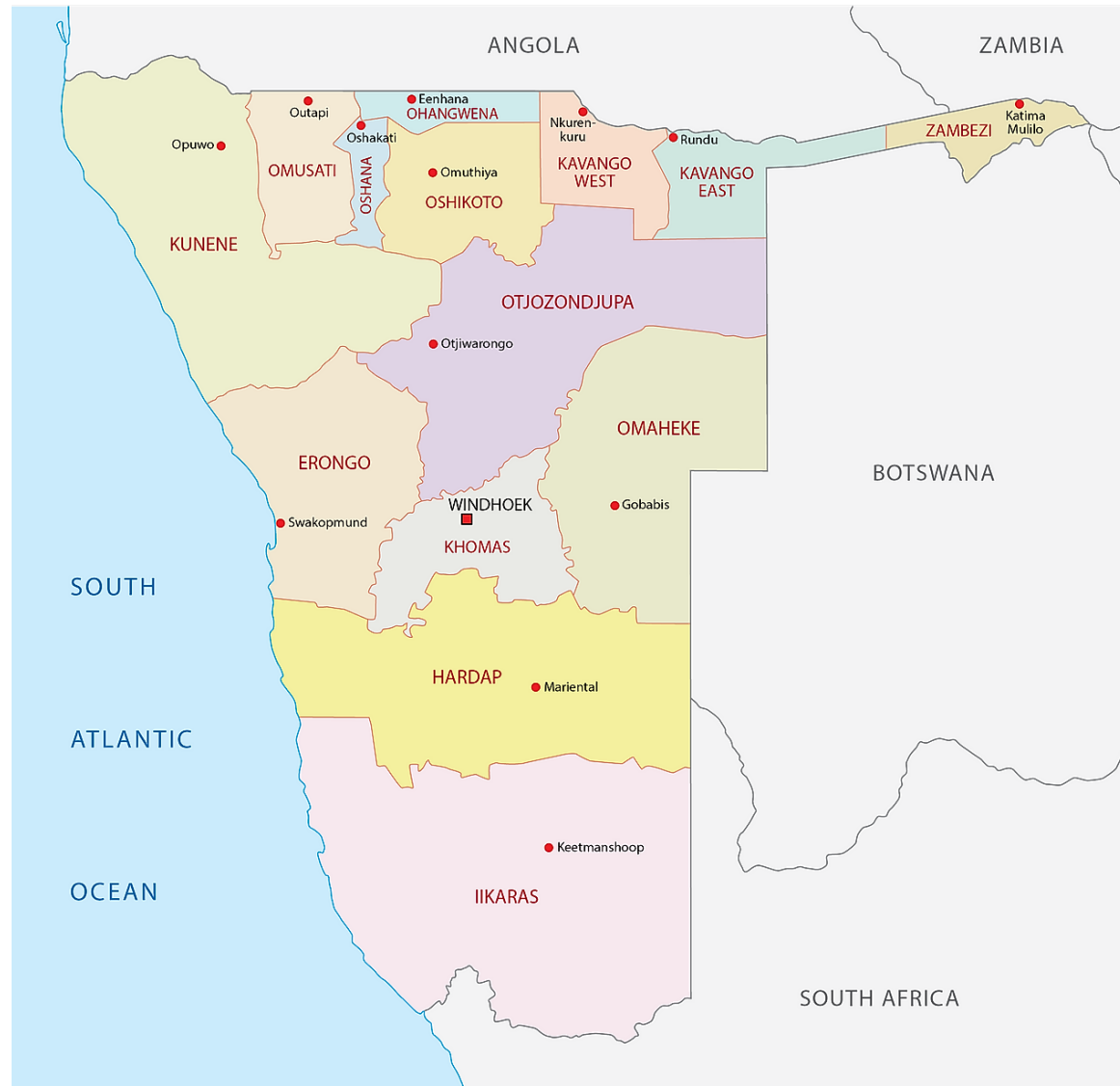
Gaby Hansen
Jennilee Kohima

December 2023



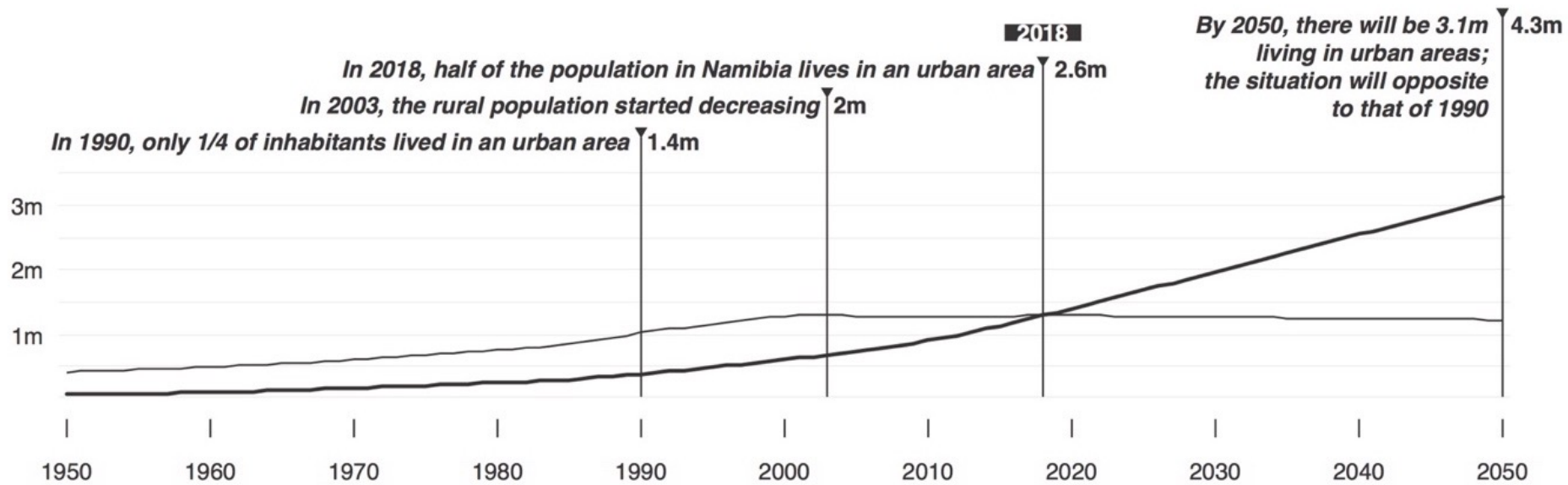
Overview of Namibia

- Population 2.5mil (2018)
- High urbanisation rate
- >50% of population live in urban areas (2020)
- Housing - high demand with limited supply
- Emergence of informal settlements in urban areas
- Urban land discourse
- 2nd National Land conference 2018
- National Urban land policy



<https://www.worldatlas.com/maps/namibia>, 2021

Unprecedented scale and rapid urbanization



NAMIBIA'S INDEPENDENCE - SOCIO-SPATIAL LEGACIES & URBAN CHALLENGES

Re-production of **socio-spatial** inequality



(a)



(b)



(c)



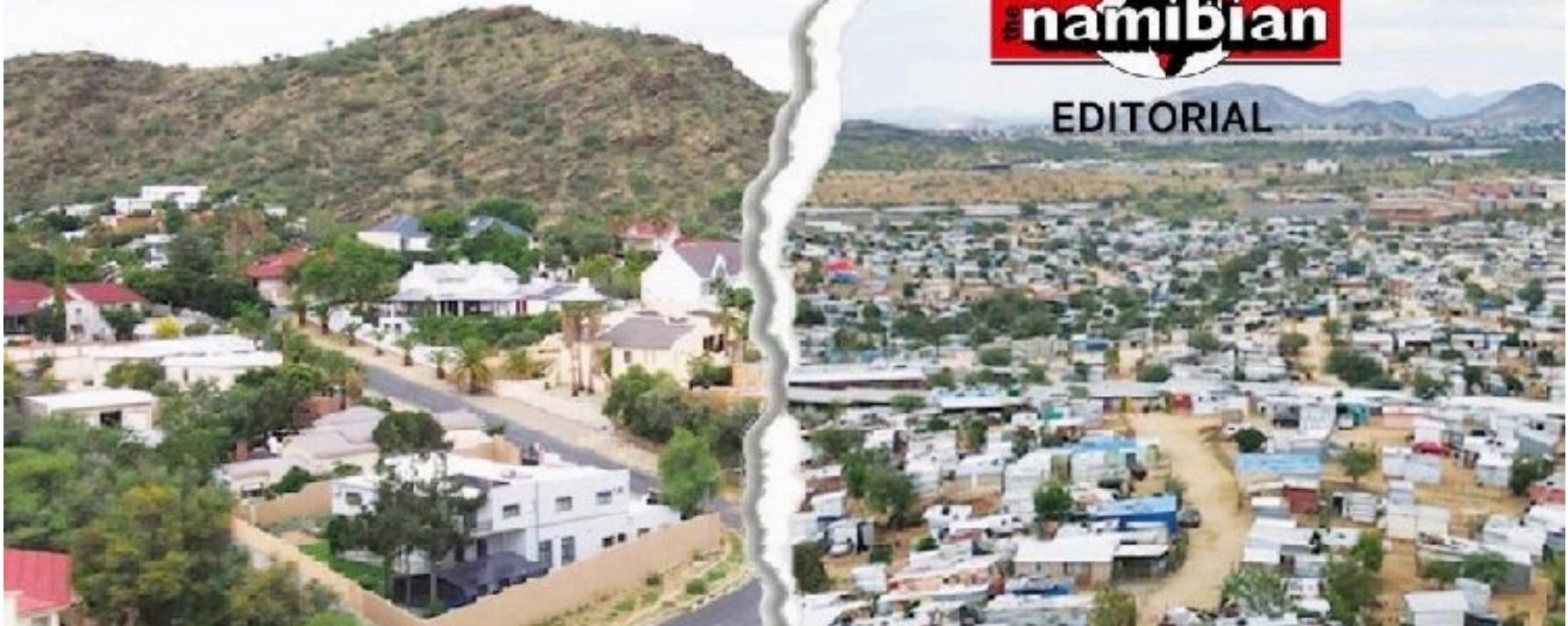
(d)

- **Urban spaces** continue to be characterized by excessive **inequality**
- **Colonial 'skeleton'** of Namibian urban spaces has not been challenged
- Lack of **Urban "green" spaces**

Continuation of colonial urban planning principles

- **Modernist land use zoning** (separation of functions)
- Concern with **'land value'**
- **Spatial segregation by income/use**
- **Automobile-biased infrastructure**
- Low urban densities





2008

235 informal settlements

135 000 shacks

500 000 shack-dwellers

2019

291 informal settlements

218 235 shacks

953 937 people live in countrywide.

↑ 23.8% (increase)

↑ 61.7% (increase)

↑ 90.8% (increase)

SOURCE: SHACK DWELLERS FEDERATION OF NAMIBIA



Together with the 9 777 backyard shacks in Walvis Bay 991 767 live in shacks countrywide.

Anti-informal economy bias



- Regulatory frameworks and policy continue to be based on the assumption of economic growth and formal employment
- Namibia has experienced ‘jobless growth’ close to **50% unemployment**
- In 2016 already **67% of employment was informal**
- Many urban residents (especially in informal settlement) must create own livelihoods

Mental conceptualizations of the urban space

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Geingob wants rural-urban influx control

NEW ERA REPORTER ARCHIVES KHOMAS
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National, Front Page News

Shacks ‘offend’ Geingob... wants them gone in 5 years



By The Namibian

30 January 2019

Housing



- **Forms of housing typologies pre and post independence**
- **Organic and present identify**
- **Rigid and monotonous**
- **Inadequate housing structures**

Water and Sanitation matters



Climate Change



Waste management



Mis-representation of Children in planning & design of cities



SOLUTIONS – Co-production approaches involving communities connected to housing, climate adaption, infill development and urban gardening.



PARTICIPATORY PLANNING FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING IN FREEDOM SQUARE, GOBABIS SDI-AAPS PLANNING STUDIOS



**Co-producing land for housing through
informal settlement upgrading:
lessons from a Namibian municipality**

GUILLERMO DELGADO , ANNA MULLER, ROYAL
MABAKENG AND MARTIN NAMUPALA

**Grounded Research Initiatives and
Developments**

Bottom-up approach NHAG/SDFN

SHACK DWELLERS FEDERATION OF NAMIBIA (SDFN)

A Social Movement on National Level of 1,016 Saving Groups, Comprised of 31,197 households - aim to improve the living conditions by working together as saving groups and supporting informal settlement communities according to their needs.

Supported by

NAMIBIA HOUSING ACTION GROUP (NHAG) TRUST

An NGO with 10 employees support the SDFN and informal settlement communities financially, technically, linking the community to the formal sector and administering their Poor People's Fund (to meet land, service and housing needs)



2 development initiatives for social inclusion, targeting the low-income households

1) SAVING GROUPS DEVELOP THEIR OWN HOUSING SOLUTION

- Independent saving groups financed by Built Together and Local Authorities
- Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia managing their own Poor Peoples Development Fund – Twahangana Fund supported by MURD, Private Sector and Communities to build their own houses and develop their own land

2) PARTICIPATORY INFORMAL SETTLEMENT UPGRADING

- Multi-partner approach to community driven informal settlement upgrading (enumerations, mapping, studio planning, reblocking and servicing) to open housing development opportunities – currently MURD funds channelled through Twahangana Fund



Community Land Information Program (CLIP): Enumerations



CLIP: Feedback to the community and local authority



CLIP: Feedback - Who are we, what can we afford, and what do we need?



CLIP: Data capturing and planning studio



Layout plans prepared by community with students and professionals: what do we want?



Draft layout plan for Local Authority approval – Can our dream become a reality?



Preparations for re-blocking of structures to suit new layout



Surveying of plots according to new layout



Removal of structures and repositioning to suit new layout



Servicing of land



Communities reducing housing and servicing cost through own contributions - savings, brick making and managing their construction



+7,000 Houses constructed by SDFN



Climate Sensitive Settlement Development in Onyika No.2

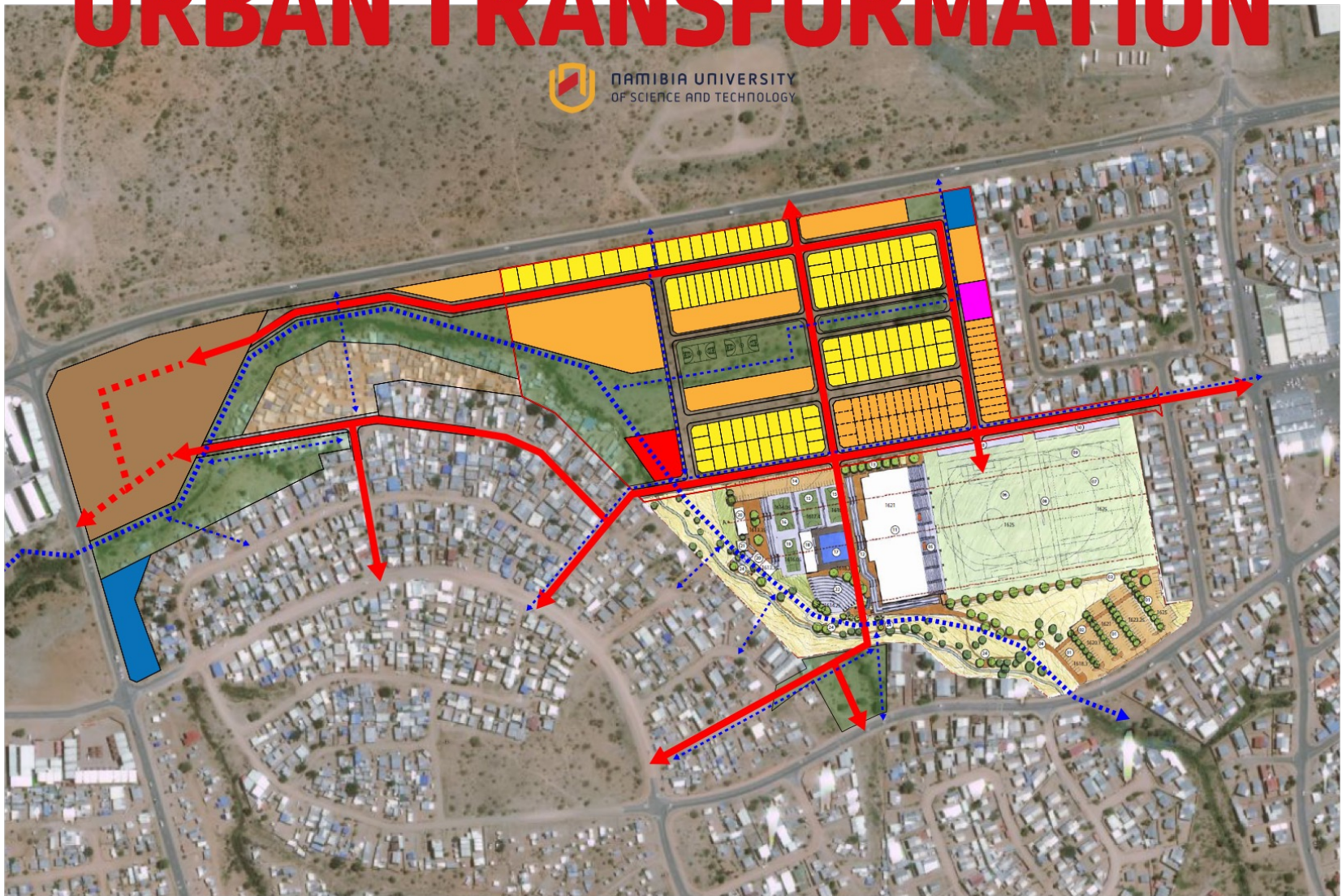


Fig 7: Proposed BIOSWALE intervention within the existing drianage (Gaby & Martin,2019)

In the context of social-ecological and climatic challenges in cities, the GIZ, NNF and the CoW engaged in a **participatory urban development exercise** with the community of Onyika No.2 settlement in Okuryangava. Three consultation workshops were held during which the community, the team of consultants and experts engaged and developed different propositions to produce a conceptual development plan for the Onyika settlement.

The conceptual development plan addresses social-ecological issues raised by the community during the consultations. The main social issues identified were **safety and crime, health issues** related to solid waste and wastewater; and the main **ecological** issues were **flooding** within the settlement, erosion, dust from the road, heat and lack of shade.

URBAN TRANSFORMATION

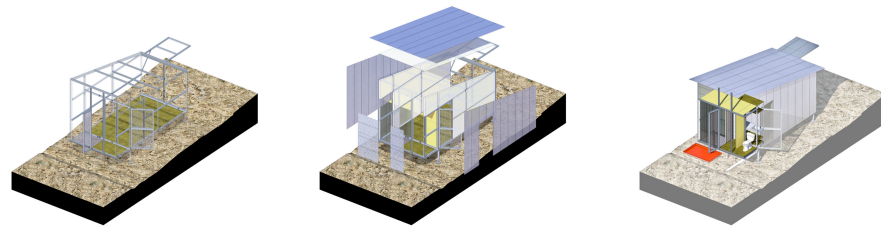


Urban Infill Housing

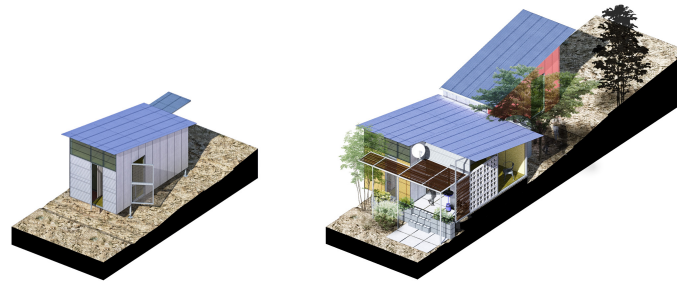
Otjomuise urban design for emergency relocation housing, public space development and social infrastructure, infill housing and informal settlement upgrading.



Incremental Housing Prototype



Design principles: [1] Modular steel frame; [2] Metal cladding, insulation and interior panelling; [3] Service core

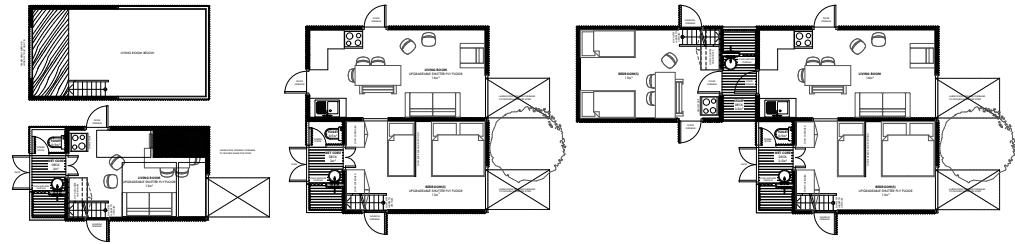


PROJECT TEAM:

Lecturers:
Phillip Lühl
Sophia van Greunen
Oliver Quarmy

Students:
Tapiwa Maruza
Martin Jimmy Namupala
Jeremy Scholtz

Design principles: [4] Core unit (emergency response); [5] Future potential for expansion.



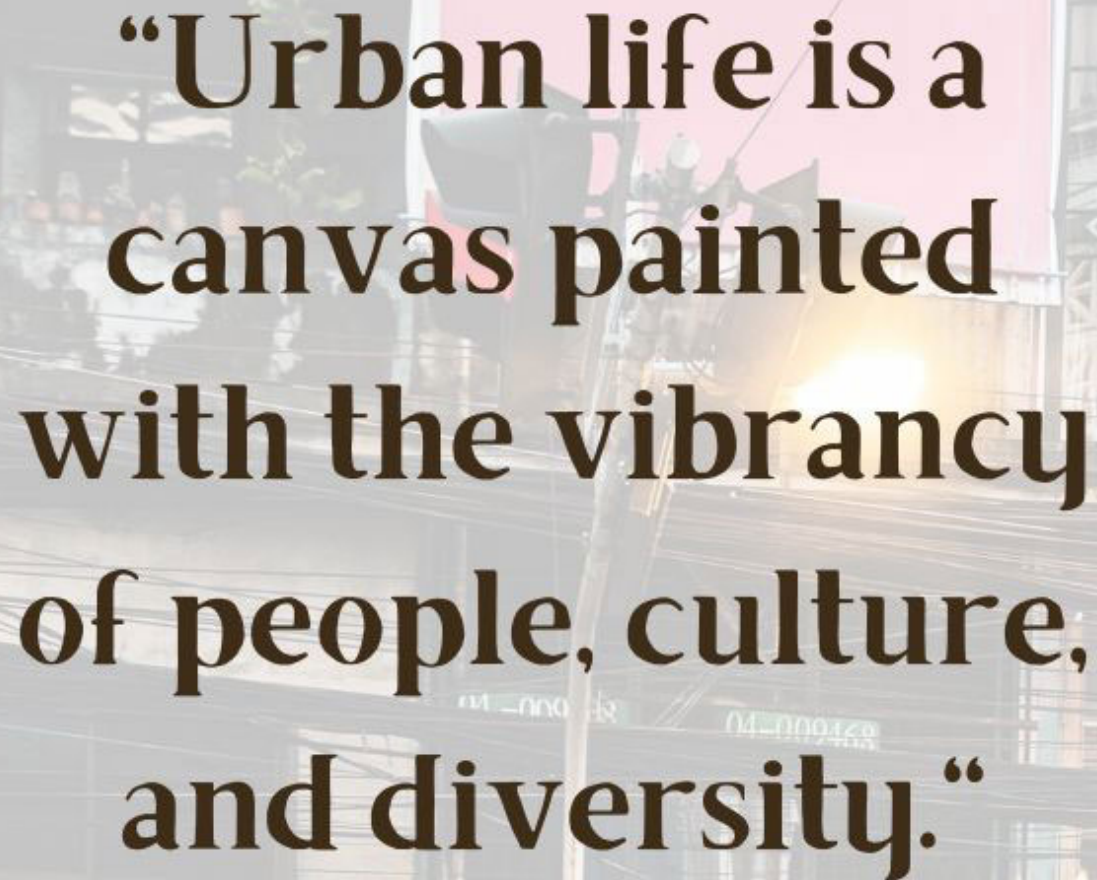

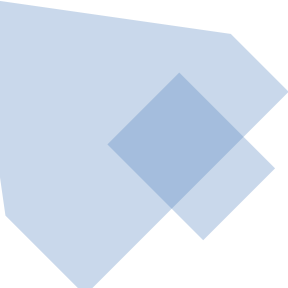
Layout plans: [1] Emergency response unit with service core; [2 & 3] Future potential for expansion.




Current affordable housing options: [1] Corrugated iron shack; [2] SDFN model house.

Urban Gardening





**“Urban life is a
canvas painted
with the vibrancy
of people, culture,
and diversity.”**



THANK YOU

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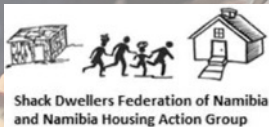
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OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

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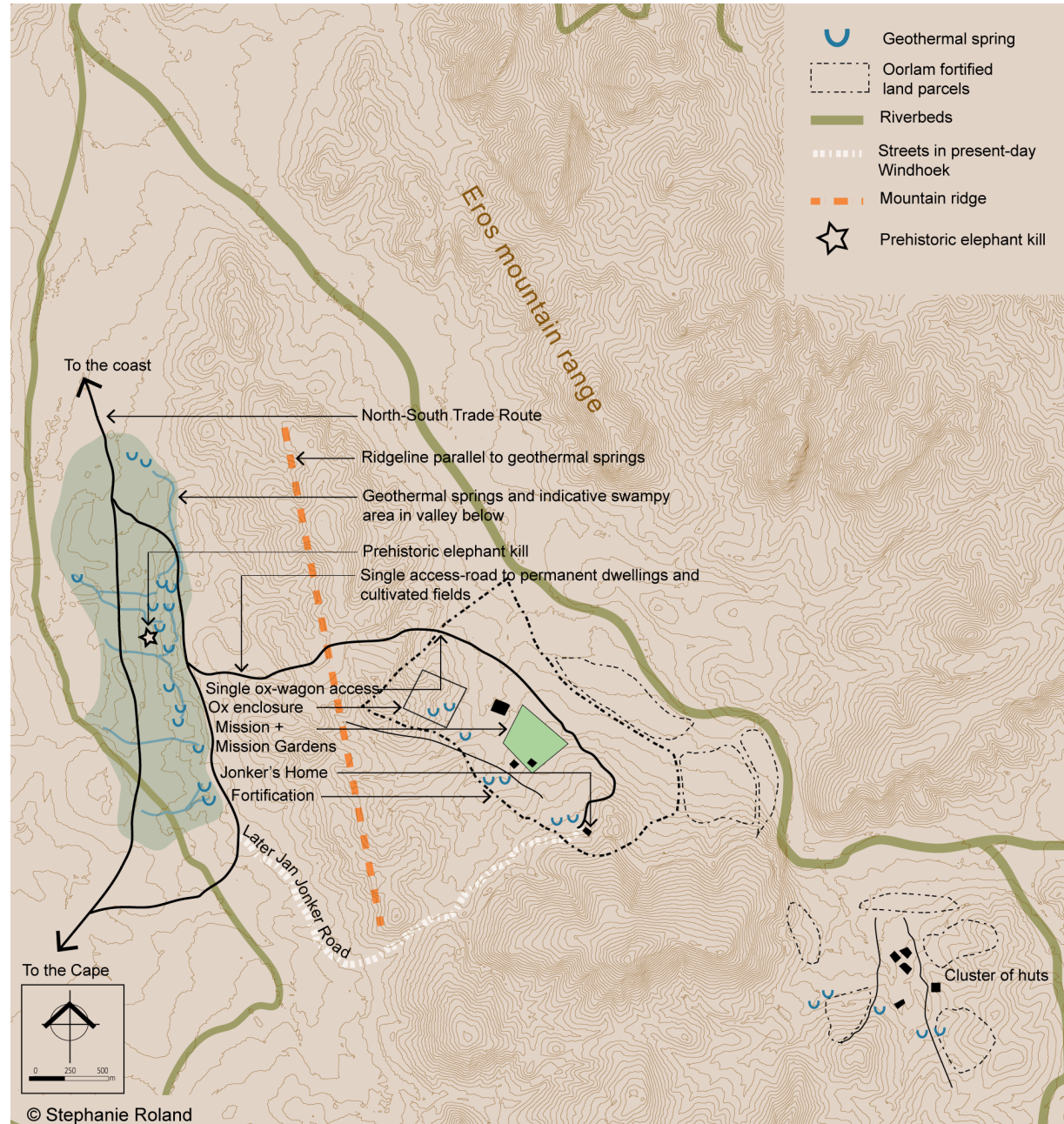
Appendix

MAPS OF WINDHOEK DEVELOPMENT –
A HISTORIC TIMELINE

WINDHOEK

Pre-Historic- 1880

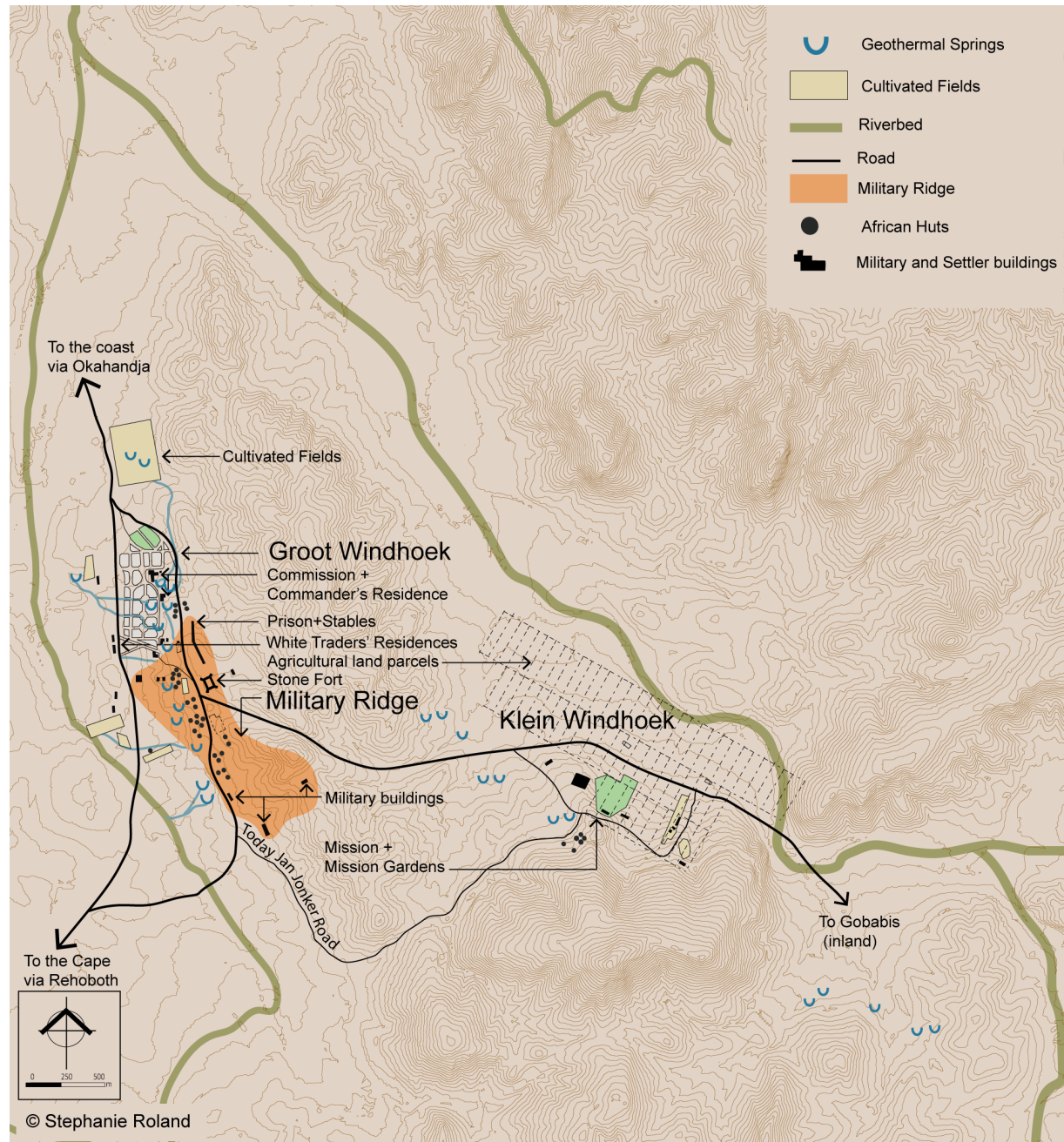
- Windhoek developed connecting Namibia to the Cape - settled along water resources



Settlers- 1882

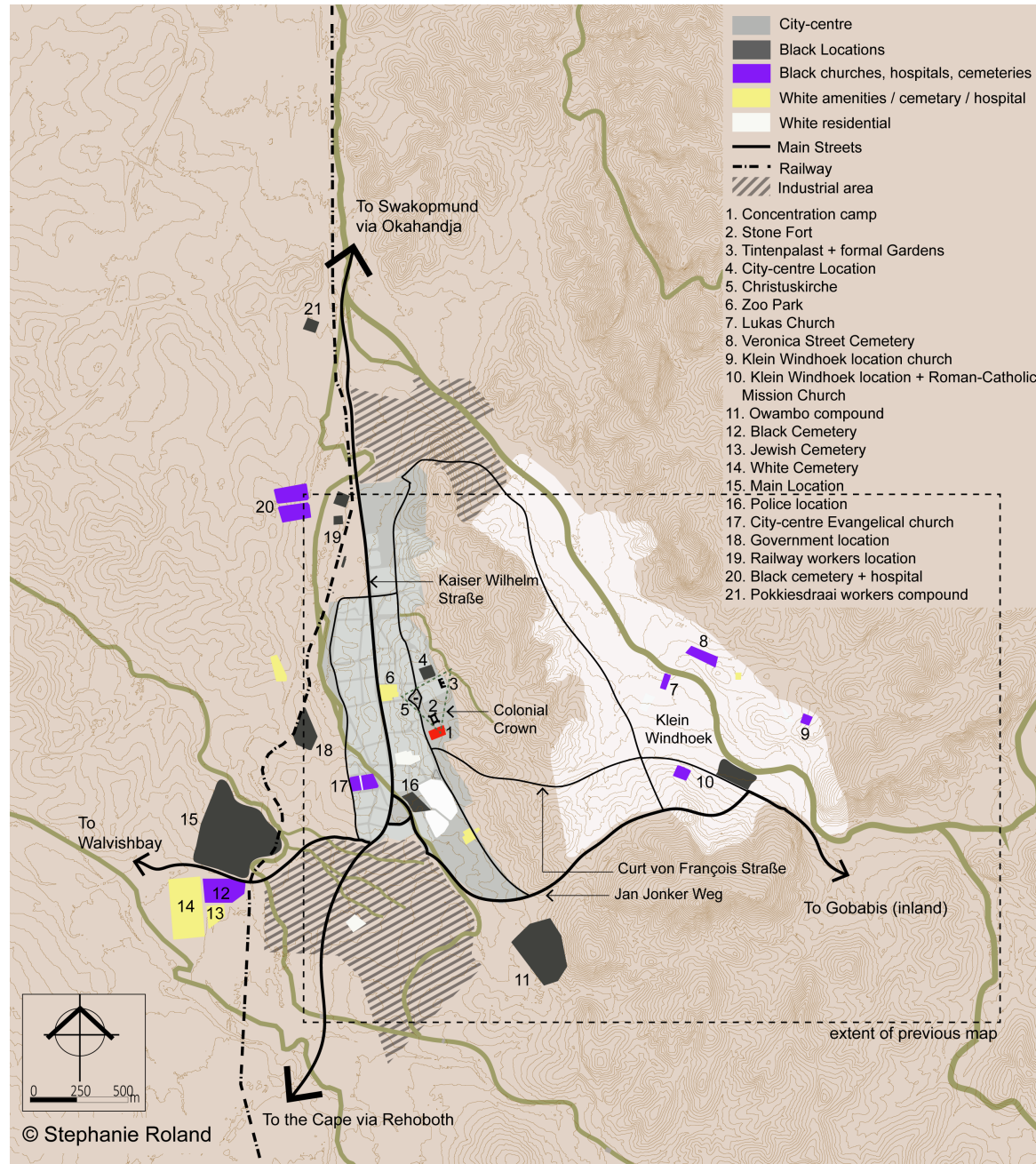
- Klein Windhoek - agriculture areas

- Alternative materials were considered as cheap and resourceful



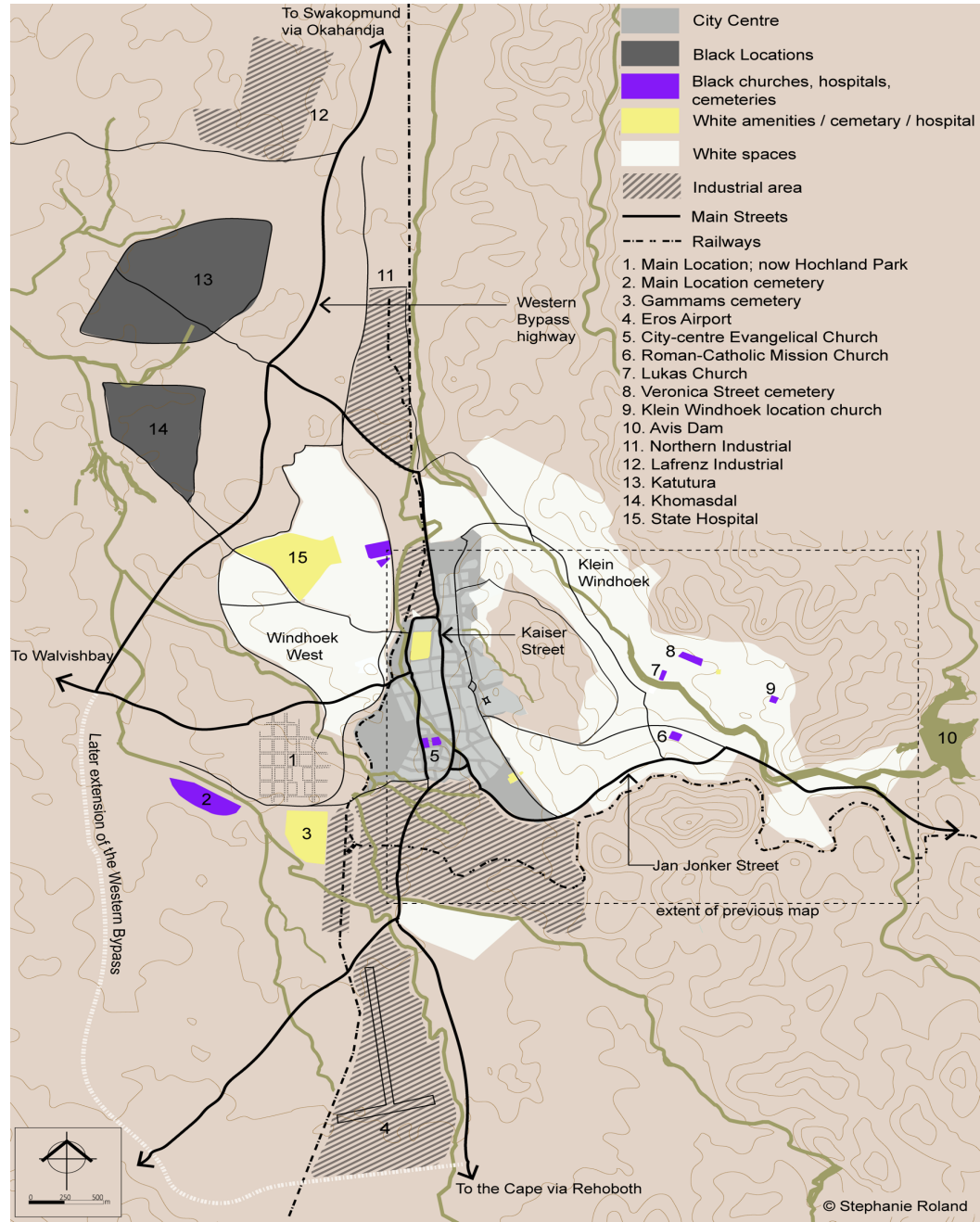
Colonial- 1921

- Separate living areas for settler and indigenous groups located on the periphery of the white settlements
- Alternative or indigenous material not recognised as relevant
- Greening as ornament spaces



Apartheid- 1970

- Apartheid city principles, influx control
- Forced relocations to racially segregated townships (disguised as development)
- Grid, setbacks, street widths - control of space
- Rural development



Independence- 1990-2023

- The city expands on the Apartheid Town planning scheme of 1976
- Informal and formal aspects are based on income
- Informal settlement areas increase exponentially
- Emergence of self-help groups since the late 1980s –Ituyeni saving groups

