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RESPONSE OBJECTION REPRESENTATION IN RESPECT OF THE INTENTION OF THE AMAFA AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO ISSUE A PERMIT FOR

DEMOLITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ALTERATION/ADDITION	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHANGE OF USE	<input type="checkbox"/>
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in respect to buildings/structures situated on

Erf/lot no	
Street address	Marine Terminal Drive, T-jetty, Point Precinct, Durban (SAHRIS Case ID: 18075)

I/WE THE UNDERSIGNED MAKE THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTATION IN RESPECT TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ABOVE PROPERTY:

ARCHITECTURAL/AESTHETIC SIGNIFICANCE:

Docomomo South Africa strongly objects to the proposed demolitions at T-jetty - please refer to our letter attached dated 27.01.2023 which expands on the precinct's heritage significance.

Architectural / aesthetic significance - refer to section (6) of the attached letter.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Refer to section (3) of the attached letter.

SOCIAL/SPIRITUAL/LINGUISTIC SIGNIFICANCE:

Refer to section (4) of the attached letter.

SCIENTIFIC/TECHNOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Refer to section (7) of attached letter.

ENVIRONMENTAL/CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Refer to section (5) of attached letter.

IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL ON THE EXISTING STRUCTURES:

Refer to section (9) of attached letter.

OTHER FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED:

Refer to sections (8), (9) and (10) of attached letter.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE UNDERSIGNED TO THE APPLICANT PROPERTY:

I&AP - conservation body

NAME/S OF RESPONDENTS/OBJECTORS	Docomomo South Africa
PHYSICAL ADDRESS	n/a
PHONE NO	004 951 8625
	info@docomomo-sa.org
SIGNATURE	SrdMenne
SIGNED AT	Claremont
DATE	27. 01. 2023

27 January 2023

Kanyi Zondi
KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute
By email: khanyi.zondi@amafainstitute.org.za
(copied: Ros Devereux; ros.devereux@amafainstitute.org.za)

Comment and objection to the Proposed Demolition of Buildings and Structures in the Point Precinct in the Port of Durban, SAHRIS Case ID 18075

Dear Khanyi

1. Introduction

Docomomo South Africa objects to the proposed total demolition of the Modern buildings and structures located on the T-jetty at Point Precinct in the Port of Durban. This letter serves to expand on the headings of the AMAFA response form.

2. Scope of comment:

2.1. Gaps in application:

Docomomo-SA agrees with the latest Heritage Scoping Report Executive Summary (October 2022) by Rennie Scurr Adendorff (RSA) that the scope and number of demolitions of buildings within the prominent site, to enable redevelopment of the Point Precinct, must not be undertaken piecemeal but that the heritage significance of the whole precinct and its constituent parts must be considered holistically, with an in-depth Heritage Impact Assessment.

The present submission on SAHRIS has significant gaps as i) the 2020/2021 heritage reports by Transnet, Lindsay Napier and Paul Dekker focus on the Ocean Terminal building and therefore leave out a number of buildings/ structures within the present demolition proposal, and ii) the latest 2022 scoping report by RSA is limited to preliminary gradings and recommendations pending confirmation of the type of heritage application the client wishes to pursue. The statements of heritage significance and the assessments of the buildings/ structures affected by demolition are therefore incomplete, and must not be used as the basis for condemning structures within such a huge and prominent precinct for demolition until all the relevant information is tabled. Nevertheless, Docomomo SA will use this opportunity to object to the proposed demolitions and to motivate the retention of the structures we believe have heritage significance.

2.2. Scope of present comment:

The Point Precinct comprises a number of 20th-century buildings and structures. Docomomo-SA's comment and objection will focus on the grouping of buildings we believe are the most significant contributors to the Modernist precinct i.e. the MHA building, L-shed, Durmarine Building, M-shed, Ocean Terminal, South Access Tower and N-shed. For ease of reference, we'll be calling these seven structures the "Ocean Terminal Precinct". We strongly object to the total demolition of these structures.

Pending information that the further heritage studies may bring to light, the following structures and buildings are excluded from our objection, for now: the Schoeman's Bridge, the MHA Garage, D Shed, F Shed, G Shed, the Fresh Produce Terminal (O and P sheds, including their extensions), the helicopter hanger addition to M-shed and the small free-standing toilet block near N-shed.

3. Historical Significance

Prompted by the lack of recognition and protection of 20th-century heritage and the traditionally narrow definitions of what constitutes built heritage, the Getty Conservation Institute and ICOMOS have recently produced a guideline called "The Twentieth-Century Historic Thematic Framework: A Tool for Assessing Heritage Places"¹. These guidelines call for a (re)evaluation of 20th-century heritage places in a more holistic manner – beyond the typical

¹ Full document available at: <https://gtv.art/tchtf>

chronological, biographical, stylistic and architectural histories – according to the main social, technological, political and economic phenomena that shaped the 20th century. The guidelines motivate that conservation of 20th-century built heritage must consider a broader range of scales, sites and typologies, including non-buildings and modest structures and objects. The thematic approach facilitates the identification, contextualization, comparative assessment and analysis of heritage places at various scales, including regional and global scales.

The Ocean Terminal Precinct is a good example 20th-century heritage place that represents the themes ‘World Trade and Global Corporations’ and ‘Transportation Systems and Mass Communication’. The Precinct is a significant part of Durban’s historical role and evolution as one of South Africa’s main port destinations. The precinct shows the advances made in the 20th century and also the speed of technological changes, for example, air travel replacing ocean liners as the preferred mode of long-distance travel, and the changing port landscapes and facilities against the background of international trade. It is highly significant and rare that the Terminal combined cargo and passenger terminals in a highly technical building complex to handle large-scale logistics brought about by 20th-century developments in mass communication and transportation systems (post, cargo and passengers within a convergence of modes of transport – ocean liners, mail/cargo ships, rail and road). Comparing the precinct to other South African ports, to our knowledge, the Ocean Terminal Precinct is unique as most ports (including Cape Town) separate passengers and cargo. This historical significance is compounded by the historical significance of the precinct as a landmark within Durban, and a location with high associational value as an arrival point to the city and the country. After all, the harbour is Durban’s reason for being: its history is wrapped up in its identity as a gateway city, with the Ocean Terminal Complex being its threshold. Demolition of this public interface strips away this legacy.

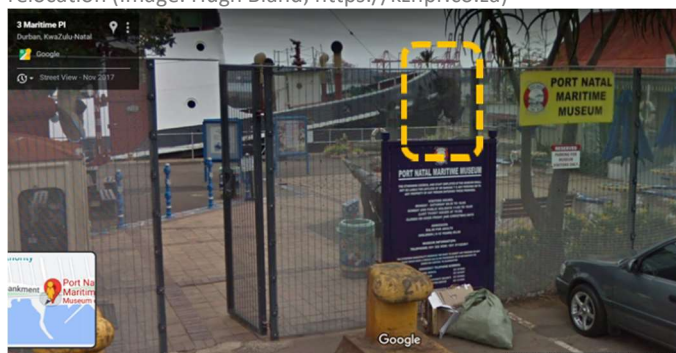
4. Social Significance

The RSA Heritage Scoping Report (pages 33-36) starts to contextualize the Ocean Terminal Precinct project within the social-political and economic context of its inception, peak operation and winding down, with themes such as race, class/ privilege, labour and social memory/lived experiences. We agree with the points raised on pages 33-36 of this report regarding the need for further interrogation of the social intangible heritage significance of the Ocean Terminal Precinct. At their presentation to AMAFA at meeting of 23 November 2022, the applicant, Transnet, also noted the rich heritage in the Port of Durban, particularly relating to dock workers and their legacy of labour activism, which is not captured or published widely, and is therefore at risk of being lost. The research into the social significance of the Ocean Terminal Precinct should form part of the further studies to fill the gaps in the present statement of significance.

Within the theme of popular memory, there is the example of the memorial of The Lady in White, Perla Siedle Gibson. The Lady in White serenaded World War II troops from Durban North Pier, but the statue in her honour could not be erected there, so in 1995 it was positioned near N-shed and the Ocean Terminal where the Union Castle ships and present-day cruise liners docked to approximate her ritual singing to the arriving ships (see insert 1a& 1b). In 2016, when the T-jetty area had become securitized and inaccessible to tourists, the statue was relocated to its somewhat sad and inconspicuous present-day location at the Maritime Museum forecourt (insert 2). If the Ocean Terminal Precinct were to be repurposed or re-imagined as proposed in Scenario 1 of the scoping report Executive Summary, the Lady in White could be reincorporated in the Precinct.



Insert 1a. The Lady in White serenading arriving troops (Image: Notrthglen News, July 2016); 1b: Her statue at the OTB before its relocation (Image: Hugh Bland; <https://kznpr.co.za>)

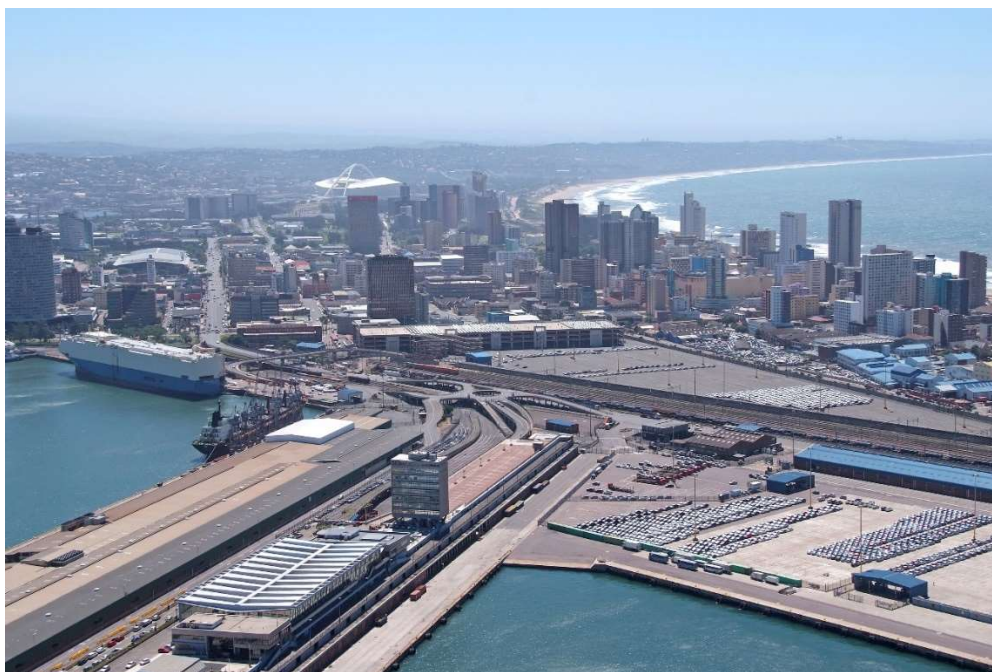


Insert 2. The present location of the statue (yellow outline), at the Maritime Museum (Google Streetview)

5. Contextual significance

We've already noted that the building/programmatic combination of the Ocean Terminal Precinct is unique, compared to other South African ports. Within the harbor the raised Durmarine tower and Ocean Terminal are particularly prominent landmarks in the foreground of the tall buildings of the Durban CBD and the Golden Mile beyond (see inserts 3a & 3b). The buildings were scaled to be in proportion to the massive ocean liners docking along T-jetty (an aspect which is lost in the design of the new International Cruise Terminal to the east), and to provide the Port Authorities visual surveillance over the harbor activities.²

The views in Inserts 3a and 3b also illustrate the massive scale of the Ocean Terminal Precinct, and makes evident the extent of usable space of the existing cargo and parking deck levels. The precinct represents massive historic financial investment in the public interface of port to landside. Complete demolition of the complex to leave a flat, sterile area (such as the future car and container terminal) will irreversibly change the interface to the city.



Insert 3a & 3b. Views of the Ocean Terminal Buildings as prominent buildings against the Durban background. (Images: <https://www.transnetportterminals.net/TPTImages/Forms/AllItems.aspx>)

6. Architectural/ aesthetic significance

"...the most revolutionary Government building in the country..."³

It has already been noted that the overall Ocean Terminal Complex is a unique typology, integrating industrial, public and logistic operation functions within the complex. Although the individual components of the precinct each have their own Modernist architectural and aesthetic merit, it is the overall scale, composition, and combination of functions that make the precinct magnificent and rare. In each component, from the logistics areas, the Ocean Terminal and the Durmarine Building there is a balance of practical function, technical performance, robust and appropriate materials for the harbor environment and elaborate public interface areas combined with public art.

² Michal S. Zakrzewski and Partners, Brochure, 1966, p.35

³ Undated newspaper clipping from Jackson, Allan. 14 November 2015. "Ocean Terminal". Facts about Durban. <https://www.fad.co.za/2015/11/14/ocean-terminal/>

This multi-disciplinary approach of collaboration between engineering, architecture and art was at the core of Zakrzewski and Partners' philosophy as a practice. Zakrzewski articulates the practice's approach as follows in a 1966 brochure (**attached**): "The most outstanding development in recent years in our practice is the concept of Total Engineering. This is the name we use for the comprehensive integrated professional service in which our firm 'specializes'".⁴ Founding partner, Michal S. Zakrzewski (refer to **career notes** attached), applied his considerable international engineering training to the South African context and particularly contributed towards the development of grain silo construction. Zakrzewski and Partners (later ZAI Consultants Pty Ltd), established 1951, started out as an engineering consultancy but early on evolved into a multi-disciplinary practice comprised of Civil and Structural Engineers, Quantity Surveyors and Architects, to combine structural efficiency and economy with modern aesthetics and technology on projects that ranged from bridges, silos, and industrial complexes to apartment blocks and art installations. Zakrzewski & Partners was the first⁵ multi-disciplinary consulting firm in South Africa, preceding Arup⁶ and Aecom locally.

This environment nurtured a generation of engineer-architect collaborations and cross-overs that shaped Modern South African modernism and Durban in particular, as can be seen, on a large scale, in the industrial buildings, infrastructural projects and shipyards of the region, and on smaller scales, the various projects of Modernist Architect Hans Hallen (a frequent collaborator with ZAI), and more personal projects like the iconic House Masojada.



Insert 4a. Zakrzewski Associates Building, 245 Peter Mokaba Road, Morning Side, Durban, Architect: Jurak Brejowski, architect (Photo: Al Stratford 1975).



Insert 4 b. House Masojada, Architects: Diamond & Hallen, Structural Engineer: Milek Mosojada of Zakrzewski & Partners 1961, commissioned by Shirley Masojada (Photo: <https://www.kznia.org.za/durban-city-guide/modernism/house-masojada>)



Insert 4c. Voortekker Munument, Winburg, 1964-1968, architects Hallen & Dibb with Zakrzewski & partners as consulting engineers. (Photo credits, Postcard by 'Stigting NALN, Bloemfontein' on www.artefacts.co.za and right, Petronel Fourie - Eie werk, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=86347680>)



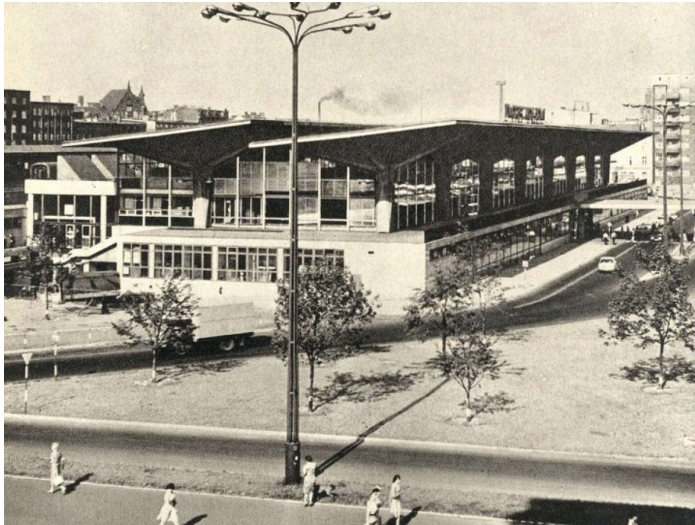
The architectural design of the Ocean Terminal precinct was led by Polish architect, Janusz Warunkiewicz (refer **career notes** attached). Not much documentation can be found about Warunkiewicz's body of work before he came to South Africa in 1959, but from the information available of working for the Polish Government, the work of his

⁴ Michal S. Zakrzewski and Partners, Brochure, 1966, p.35

⁵ Alistair Johnstone, retired Managing Director of ZAI Consultants, in conversation with Kirk White, January 2023.

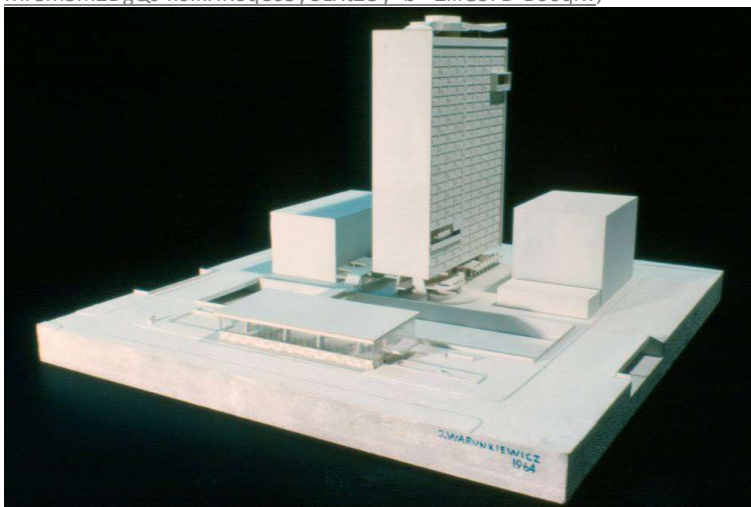
⁶ Jack Zunz and Michael Lewis established the South Office of the engineering firm of Ove Arup in 1954 (<https://www.arup.com/offices/south-africa>). Arup Associates, where architects and engineers worked on an equal basis was established in 1963 (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ove_Arup).

previous collaborators in Poland and works he undertook after settling in Canada, a picture emerges of an ever evolving architect specializing in high profile, public and infrastructural projects (see insert 5).

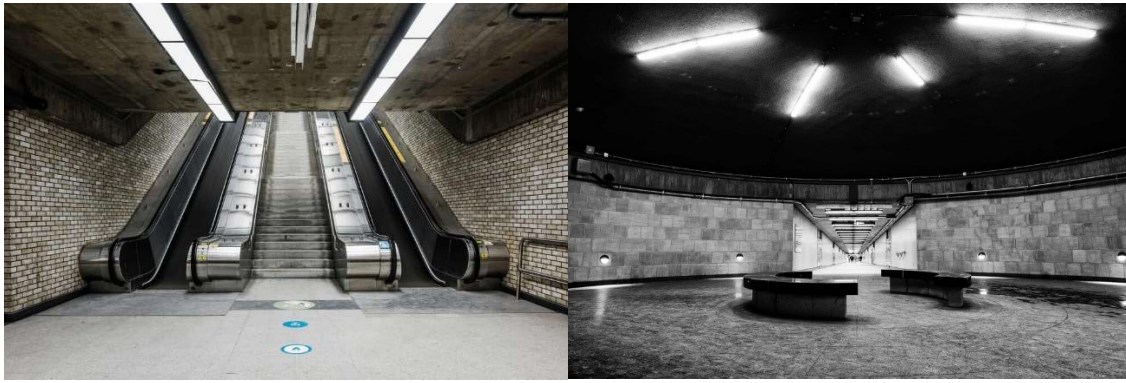


Insert 5a. Main Railway Station in Katowice, Poland, 1959 to 1972 (now demolished) designed and executed by colleagues of Warunkiewicz from his Zakopane years, namely architects Waclaw Klyzewski, Jerzy Mokrzyński, Eugeniusz Wierzbicki and engineer Waclaw Zalewski.

(source: Facebook group 'Krakowski Szlak Modernizmu'; <http://www.krakowpost.com/276/2007/07;a>
https://www.bryla.pl/bryla/1,85301,8936060,11_1_11_koniec_Brutala_z_Katowic.html/amp?fbclid=IwAR3OhQqR-Mr8m3m2DgQs-k6lkHKoqC05yUzXtZOy_b-ZIIIGS7D-Bo6giw;

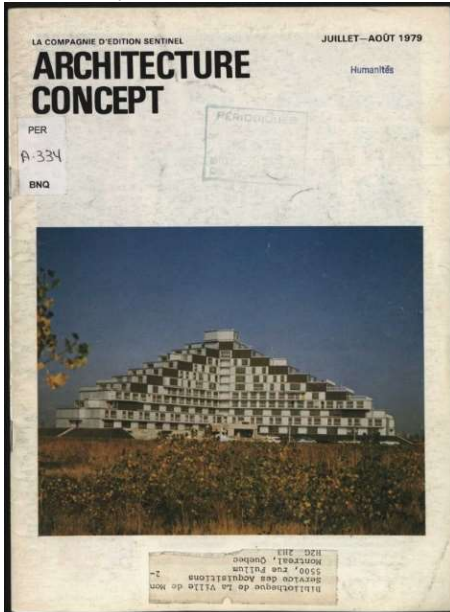


Insert 5b. Metro station Place-d'Armes, Montreal by Janusz Warunkiewicz (City of Montréal), Note Warunkiewicz's name and date 1964 on the base of the model. (photo: STM Archives via Facebook group 'STM - Mouvement collectif')



Insert 5c. Montreal Metro Station, Place d'Armes, 1964, designed by Warunkiewicz.

(source: <https://www.shawnmoreton.com/blog/montreal-metro-street-photography-gone-underground>)



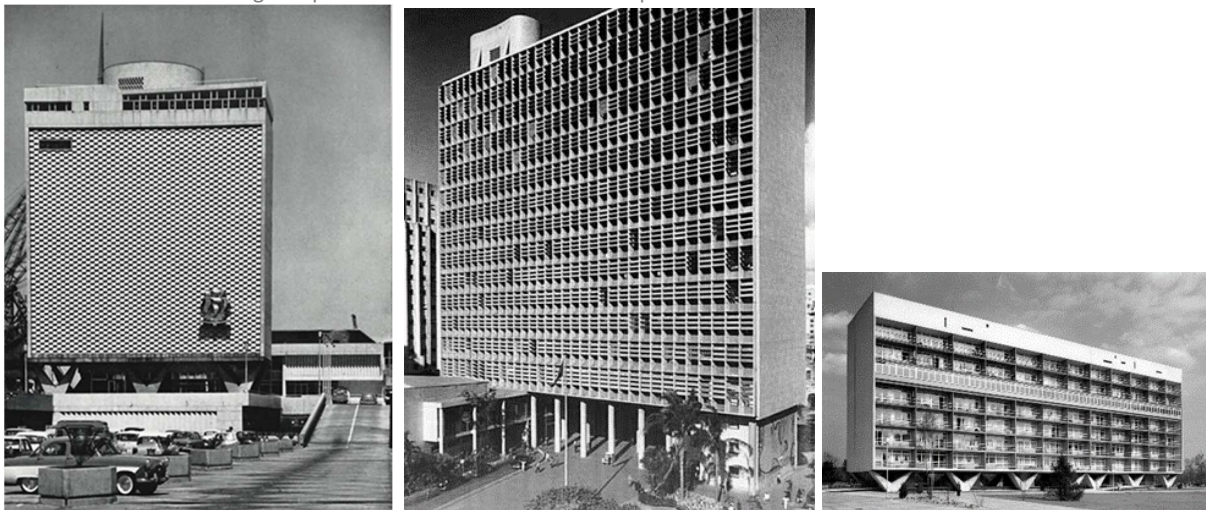
Insert 5d. Apartment block 'La Pyramide' by Warunkiewicz, 1977, l'Île-des-Soeurs (Nuns' Island), Montreal.

Left: on the cover of Canadian architectural journal, Architecture Concept, July–August 1979; above: Architecture Concept Vol 33, no.340, March April 1977 page 6

(Side note: The development of Nuns' Island drew high-profile projects, including some of the last works by Mies van der Rohe, 3 high-rise apartment blocks and the only gas station he ever designed.)

The architectural highlights of the Ocean Terminal precinct are undoubtedly the Ocean Terminal Building with its V-shaped folded concrete roof, and the Durmarine Tower and V-shaped columns at the base. These two buildings draw reference from international Modernist precedent, especially Brazilian Modernism. As illustrated in Insert 6, the Durmarine tower, in particular is clearly influenced by Le Corbusier's and Niemeyer's work.

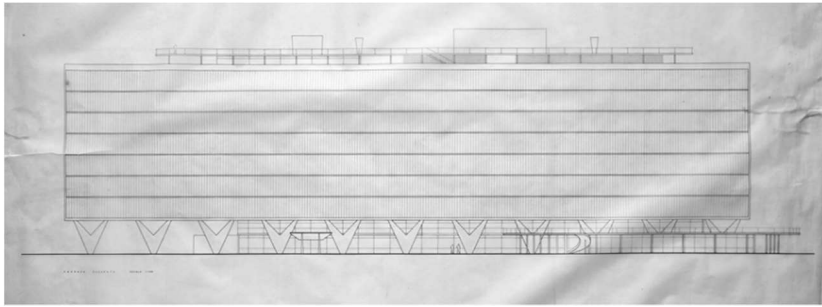
Insert 6. Durmarine Building compared to international Modernist precedent.



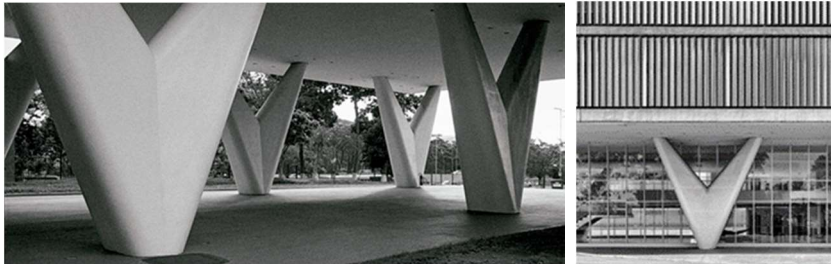
6a (left) Durmarine Building. North façade with the 'cheese grater' sun screen.

6b (middle). Ministry of Education and Public Health, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1936, Le Corbusier and Lucio Costa (with Oscar Niemeyer on the team), was influential as one of the first Modernist skyscrapers worldwide. It displays the ideals and concepts of Le Corb's principles of modernism (windows/fenestration, main floors raised on pillars, an articulated rooftop) with Brazilian sun-screening and the introduction of climatic control/ climatic modernism. Integration of art on the public ground plane.

6c (right). Apartment block by Oscar Niemeyer for Interbau, Hansaviertel, Berlin, 1957 (the International Building Exhibition of 1957, West Berlin (7 storeys, raised on concrete V-columns)



6d. Palau de Agricultura, 1955, now MAC USP (Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo), Brazil, by Oscar Niemeyer, pioneering the use of V-shaped columns



6e. Details of the MAC USP V-shaped columns

(Sources: Michal S. Zakrzewski and Partners, Brochure, 1966, Foundation Le Corbusier; <https://americasouthandnorth.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/get-to-know-a-brazilian-oscar-niemeyer/>; <https://hansviertel.berlin/en/bauwerke/altonaer-strasse-4-14-oscar-niemeyer/>; Facebook group 'Oscar Niemeyer Works'; <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=2991308701138575&set=pcb.2991308757805236>; <https://casa.abril.com.br/casas-apartamentos/a-nova-sede-do-museu-de-arte-contemporanea-da-usp/>; www.archdaily.com)

As a result the Ocean Terminal Building has an imageability that evoke references to international Modernism and establishes the precinct as a landmark for Durban, especially aimed at travellers arriving by sea. Magda Zakrzewski, daughter of Michal Zakrzewski, recalls that that the client originally wanted warehousing to be built to process both visitors and cargo arriving by ship, and that it was her father's creative idea to turn it into a magical arrival location instead.⁷ By placing the Ocean Terminal Building on top of the cargo and cooling store levels of M-shed, the terminal hall was located at eye level of the decks of the docked ocean liners, adding to the ceremony of arriving and departing. Originally the precinct included many original artworks, either specific installations or integrated into the building fabric (see insert 6). Marek Warunkiewicz (Janusz's son) recalls that his father not only designed the buildings but also many of the artworks in it.⁸ Janusz designed the fibreglass galleon on the land-facing façade of the Durmarine Building and a series of plexiglas and back-lit fibreglass artworks with a maritime theme. From the photographs provided by Marek to the Facts about Durban website (see insert 7) it can be seen that Warunkiewicz had inputs from Hans Hallen on the in-situ artworks and screens of the complex.



Insert 7a. Warunkiewicz on site, directing the installation of artworks. Right, the stunning screen of the south access tower. (photo credits: Marek Warunkiewicz via Facts about Durban)

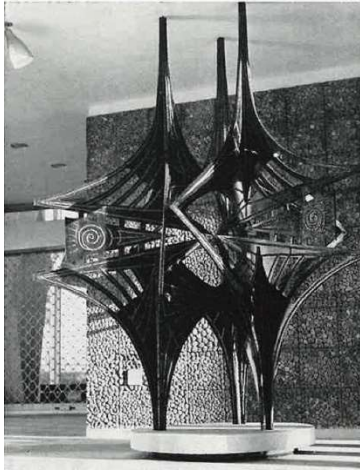
⁷ Email communication between Magda Zakrzewski and Docomomo SA, December 2022.

⁸ Marek Warunkiewicz quoted by Jackson, Allan. 14 November 2015. "Ocean Terminal". Facts about Durban, <https://www.fad.co.za/2015/11/14/ocean-terminal/>



Insert 7b. Warunkiewicz and Hans Hallen on site, with the artworks. (photo credits: Marek Warunkiewicz via Facts about Durban)

Insert 7c. Artworks at Ocean Terminal Building, as featured in Zakrzewski and Partners pamphlet, 1966, p.43. It was also included in the Architectural Review article.



The steel artwork was designed by John Hooper, senior lecturer in the Fine Arts at the Natal University

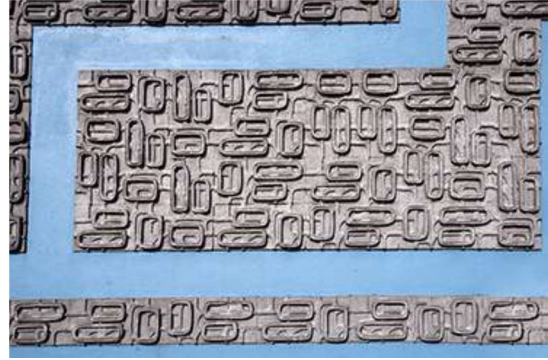
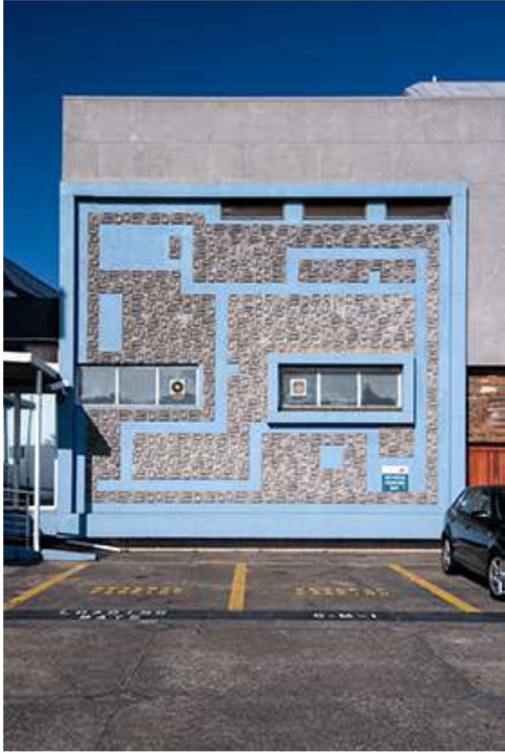
In 2014, the Ethekwini City Architectural department commissioned a series of photos of the Durmarine tower and Terminal Hall, for the UAI conference of 2014. Some of the photos focusing on the buildings' artworks are included in Insert 8.



Insert 8a (left). Detail of the Poseidon sculpture, and (right) its position next to the building entrance.



Insert 8.b. (left) Detail of sculpture on the Terminal Hall and (right) its position on the building.



Insert 8.c. (left) Integrated artwork on the Terminal Hall Building, and (right) details.



Insert 8.d. Wall mosaics in the Terminal building
(Photos courtesy of Angela Buckland, 2014)

The Ocean Terminal precinct received international peer recognition through the publication of the precinct in the *Architectural Review*, March 1963. This is very significant as very few South African projects received international recognition overseas, especially since the 1960s onwards. It is also noted that article recognized the technical, architectural and aesthetic contribution of the whole precinct, rather than singling out the more 'architectural' components of the precinct, the Durmarine Building and Terminal Hall (as the heritage consultants' reports to date have done).

In summary, the Ocean Terminal complex has exceptional architectural heritage significance, it is unique, inventive, artistically creative and groundbreaking in its conceptualization and exquisite execution. The structures have remained in good condition and are relatively intact (with the exception of some of the artwork installations which have been removed). It has been already been proven, by the refurbishment of the Ocean Terminal into offices, that the precinct is open to considerate transformation and re-use, without diminishing its architectural value.

7. Technological significance

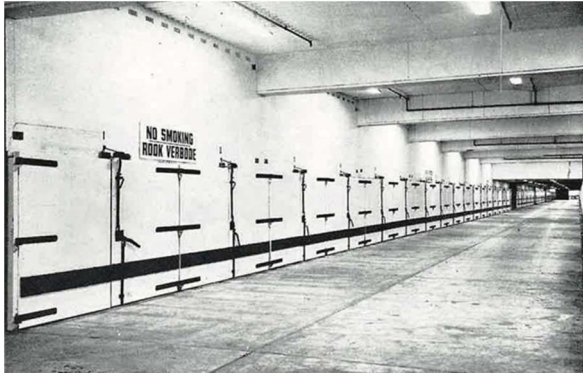
The Ocean Terminal precinct has high technological heritage significance in its innovative resolution of the technical brief and the manner in which structural, functional and environmental performance were translated into the architectural form, using the latest material and structural technological advances.

Firstly, the technically complex programme was resolved in an innovative manner:

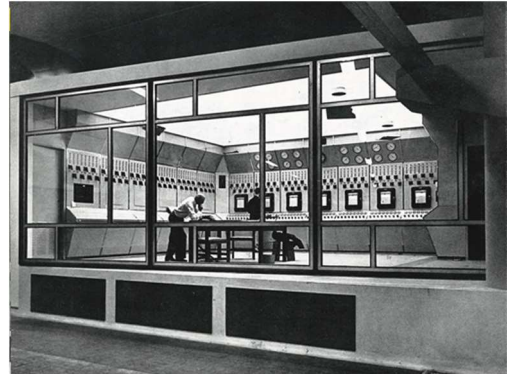
The components of the ocean terminal precinct each came with its own spatial, programmatic, operational and highly technical engineering requirements which were combined in one precinct in a highly challenging maritime environment. The Ocean Terminal needed to process the arrival and departure of large numbers of people in a building with a public presence. The Port Captain needed an elevated position to survey the harbor while floor space

was needed for offices. At the same time, the precinct needed to manage the logistics of handling and exporting tons of fragile fresh produce which requires technical storage and cooling requirements. Instead of typical cargo sheds, the solution, as the Architectural Review article illustrates clearly, is for the programme to be stacked vertically, parallel to the quay, similar to the docking ships themselves: cargo stores and precooling stores located below the public decks or passenger levels, with the Port Captain placed in an elevated tower similar to the ship captain's bridge.

The 1st floor of M-shed was a dedicated pre-cooling store with insulated tunnels designed to handle 4000 shipping tons of export produce, fruit in particular. Some of the existing drawings indicate what appears to be a sea water heat transfer system, but this requires further research.

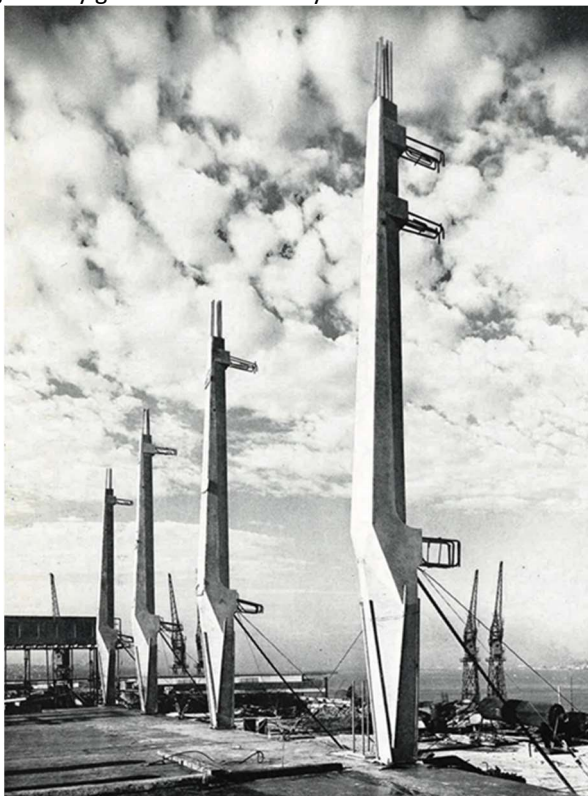


Insert 9.a. The 1st floor of M-shed was a dedicated pre-cooling store with insulated tunnels.
(image sources: Michal S. Zakrzewski and Partners, Brochure, 1966, p.27 & 36.



Insert 9.b. The futuristic control room of the pre-cooling level.

Secondly, once you look beyond the decorative architectural elements, the enduring modern architectural quality and tectonics of the precinct are largely the result of the structural frame and construction techniques: Structurally and architecturally the buildings had to comprise materials robust enough to manage the windy, hot and abrasive marine environment but malleable enough to allow for expressive public interfaces. Accordingly, the material pallet is mostly reinforced concrete and steel with aluminium framed fenestration and screens (nick-named the 'cheese-graters') to the facades with most sun-exposure (north façade of the Durmarine building, and east and west facades of the Terminal hall). These turned out to be excellent choices as the structures appear to be in generally good condition 60+ years on.



Insert 10.a. The elegant pre-cast columns to the Terminal Hall (image source: Michal S. Zakrzewski and Partners, Brochure, 1966, p.27 & 36.

The multi-disciplinary nature of the Zakrewski design team contributed to the sculptural forms and quality of execution associated with the Ocean Terminal precinct. Lance Smith, in his article on Modernism in the NIA Journal 3-4/1992, describes the transfer of ideas and resultant technological innovation as follows: "Advances in the technology of concrete and steel structures made possible the creation of new forms in architecture. Generally these advances were in response to engineering problems, bridge building and the like, but there has been a transfer of this technology into the realm of architecture." He continues to identify the Ocean Terminal Hall as an example of "where technology is the over-riding determinant of the form of the building."

These ideas can be seen in the Durmarine Building, elevated on its V-shaped columns and the folded concrete V-shaped roof of the Terminal Hall. A mix of in-situ and precast systems was employed depending on the requirements for accuracy, aesthetics or construction sequence. There is a recurring theme of V, Y or tapered columns that tie the various structures aesthetically. The highlight amongst these is the shard-like smooth precast concrete columns to the façade of the Terminal Hall: the columns were cast on site in glass fibre and steel moulds and then hoisted into position.

L-shed was fast-tracked to be delivered on site while the Durmarine Building, M-shed and Terminal Hall were still being planned. The construction of L-shed was fairly standard as the structure could be founded on shallow spread footings. The real technical contribution was resolving the challenge of founding of the eleven-storey office and M-shed which required deep piled foundations. Zakrzewski recorded the challenges and eventual resolution of the foundations in an article for the journal "Die Sivile Ingeieur in Suid-Afrika", which not only contributed to the knowledge of building in marine environments (pre-cast, pre-stressed piles were used to overcome the impact of seawater in conventional concrete curing processes and meet the tight construction deadlines) but also provided lessons informing future projects by the practice (e.g. Connaught Bridge in Durban).⁹

In summary, the Ocean Terminal precinct has exceptional technological significance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period and in its contribution to expanding the technical construction knowledge of the era.

8. Proposed gradings

The heritage value of the Ocean Terminal Precinct has already been recognized in the following ways:

- The Ocean Terminal T-jetty is featured as a significant Modernist project in the SAIA-KZN Durban Buildings & Architecture City Guide on the SAIA-KZN website (<https://www.kznia.org.za/durban-city-guide/modernism/ocean-terminal-t-jetty>).
- The Ocean Terminal T-jetty is featured as one of the 6 projects representing modernism in the Special Edition UIA2014 Journal of the Kwazulu-Natal Institute for Architecture (KZNIA Journal 1, 2014, volume 39).
- The Ocean Terminal is included in the ten best buildings of the 20th century in KZN, as nominated by KZNIA in December 1999.
- The Ocean Terminal is featured as a place of 'Community' in the KZNIA'S "A Guide To The Buildings And Places Of Durban" (KZNIA Journal 2, 1998, volume 23), and placed at the top of the list of public Durban buildings of architectural merit (NPIA Newsletter 1-1981, Supplement to Architecture SA).
- In 1988, when the Ocean Terminal hall was at risk of demolition, the building was repurposed as offices instead. The refurbishment in itself recognized the architectural value of the building, and was executed as to be fully reversible.
- In both heritage applications to AMAFA to date (2020 and 2022), the independent heritage consultants have graded the modernist structures of the precinct highly and recommended their retention instead of demolition.

The Ocean Terminal Precinct meets the criteria of a place considered to be part of the national estate in terms of section 3 of the NHRA: the precinct has high cultural significance or other special value in terms of section 3(a) importance in the community, (b) rarity, (c) contribution to the understanding of SA's cultural heritage, (f) creative or technical achievement, and (g) association to the work of a person/group of importance. Docomomo-SA's own research into the Ocean Terminal Precinct's layered heritage significance at a range of scales, its authenticity and rarity as typology, its exquisite execution and its prominence as a landmark and symbolic gateway within Durban support that the precinct warrants the grading and status of at least a Provincial Landmark site in terms of the KZN Heritage Act (equivalent to a Grade II heritage site in terms of the NHRA)¹⁰, if not higher. There are still significant gaps to be filled in the story of the larger precinct, especially relating to the social history, which has the potential to amplify the heritage significance of the site to a National Heritage Site.

In the interim, we motivate that the precinct comprising the following structures – MHA Building, L-shed, Durmarine Building, M-shed, Ocean Terminal, South Access Tower and N-shed – make up the Provincial Landmark. Within the overall precinct, we concede that some of the individual components may be assigned lower gradings but that their contribution to the whole must be acknowledged. The structures which may be assigned NHRA Grade III status are the MHA Building, L-shed and N-shed, while the remainder of the structures must remain at least Grade II, within the overall umbrella status of the Provincial Landmark. We do not have sufficient information on the remainder of buildings and structures within the precinct to endorse their gradings. At face value of the photographs, the proposed Non-Conservation Worthy gradings for the remainder of the buildings appear appropriate, until further heritage significance comes to light.

⁹ Article by M. Zakrzewski, "The Foundations of the Ocean Terminal in Durban" in Die Siviele Ingeieur van Suid-Afrika, September 1962. Pp.175-188

¹⁰ There is existing precedent for declaring Modernist, industrial precincts as a provincial heritage site: in 2014 the Rex Trueform precinct in Salt River, Cape Town was declared a Provincial Heritage Site based on its architectural and social significance.

These gradings do not prevent the development of the T-jetty but provide guidance for the level of intervention that could be supported. We agree with the Summary of Recommendations in terms of proposed demolitions on page 7 of the October 2022 Executive Summary Report by RSA, namely:

- That for the areas shaded in red, which include M-shed, the Durmarine building, the Ocean terminal building, the South Access Tower and N-shed, “[d]emolition cannot be supported under any circumstances due significance. Adaptive reuse essential.”
- That for the areas shaded in blue, which include L-shed, “[d]emolition might be possible but retention in part (L-shed) or wholly (D/E-shed) or repurposing is recommended...”
- That for areas in green, “[d]emolitions can be supported subject to S34 or S38 [of the NHRA] applications and approvals”.

9. Impact of the proposal

The impact of the proposal is total demolition of all the structures on T-jetty and the railway line to create a flat ‘table top’ for Transnet operations, including further infilling and land reclamation of the bay. The T-jetty, in particular, is earmarked for a flat top to accommodate 6000 parking and stacking bays. There are no alternatives proposed for consideration that look to retain some of the significant structures. In the AMAFA meeting of 23 November 2022, where Transnet was offered an opportunity to present a revised motivation, Transnet maintained that all the identified structures must be demolished. When questioned why no alternatives to total demolition are presented by Transnet for consideration, the answers given were essentially the following:

- Presently the existing buildings are not accessible to the public and have limited staff access. If the buildings were retained, they will be further isolated at the centre of the identified vehicle terminal area, and “buildings being in the operational area may compromise the safety of visitors”.
- That there are no alternatives other than the flat table top proposed, as this is optimum for space and speed of operations. Structures and multi-level parking areas break the speed of operations as operators have to drive slower and more carefully to avoid the risk of damage to vehicle (our understanding).

Docomomo-SA looked the Transnet’s previous submission to AMAFA on SAHRIS from 2020, when the application was to demolish only the Terminal hall and retain L-shed, M-shed, the Durmarine Building, South Access tower and ramps. The drawings included in the 2020 application, particularly the layout called “Proposed Layout Plans _car stacking at OTB-signed.pdf”, show that re-use of the cargo areas and roof decks of L and M-sheds can accommodate approximately 2650 parking bays (excluding the Terminal hall footprint). This number can easily be doubled on the southern section of the T-jetty, on the basis of a flat top area, if the Fresh Produce Sheds (O and P sheds) were to be demolished. Therefore, potentially the 6000 parking bays can be accommodated on T-jetty without the demolition of the significant Modern structures.

Transnet proposed the following measures to mitigate the massive loss of the heritage site, namely to relocate existing artworks to Transnet’s new offices, to record the Ocean Terminal Hall and Durmarine Buildings virtually and to make a virtual tour accessible to the public, and to build an “Ocean Terminal Building Preservation Centre, a smaller scaled architectural replica of Ocean Terminal Building, adjacent to the new Administration Building”. While we welcome the recording of the precinct and the principle of safe guarding of artworks, we reject the project of a small scale replica. This proposal shows that although Transnet acknowledges that there are heritage resources present, they do not yet fully grasp the heritage significance of the Ocean Terminal Precinct as a place and a precinct (an integrated set of parts, not isolated architectural elements), a landmark, or the developmental significance and economic value of the precinct in the context of Durban.

Transnet’s presentation noted that “the Port is aware they should find a balance between preserving heritage while putting the country on a growth trajectory”. Yet, the present development of Transnet is extremely short-sighted in putting their operational needs before the sustainable development of the City, while destroying an irreplaceable, unique heritage precinct with tremendous real estate value and re-use potential. It is evident there are serious misalignments and/or lack of consultation between Transnet and the municipality about the future planning of the Point Precinct, with no regard to the heritage value of the precinct.

Firstly, in terms of long-term planning, the Transnet proposal does not align with the 6 themes of the municipality’s Long-Term Development Plan (Creating a safe city, Ensuring a more environmentally sustainable city; Promoting an accessible city; Creating a prosperous city where all enjoy sustainable livelihoods; Fostering a caring and empowering city; and Celebrating our cultural diversity, history and heritage).

Secondly, in terms of medium-term planning, the proposal contradicts the city’s adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and themes of the 8 Point Plan towards achieving the Municipal Vision of being (becoming?) “Africa’s most caring and livable city”, contained within the integrated Development Plan 2020/2021. The Master Plan and Proposed Point Terminal Developments presented by Transnet on the 23

November 2022 Amafa meeting show more extensive reclaiming of the harbour than shown in the Ethekwini Municipality Municipal Spatial Development Framework 2021-2022 (MSDF) and furthermore the MSDF explicitly notes that Transnet's proposals contained in the Short-Term (2019-2028) Port Development Framework Plans (PDFPs) for the Port of Durban as per Transnet's National Ports Plan 2019 are "not deemed approved and will still need to be submitted for consideration via the required statutory processes".¹¹ Therefore, input and alignment from the Ethekwini City Planning Commission must be a condition for consideration of this demolition application and the development in its place, including undertaking other impact assessments like environmental and traffic impacts on the Point Precinct, the harbour and the city centre.

Thirdly, Transnet's terminal proposals entirely disregard the Local Area Plan for inner city Durban (including the Point precinct) which was approved in terms of SPLUMA (the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013) and adopted by Durban Council in 2016. The Local Area Plan and accompanying Regeneration Implementation Plan focus on achieving inner city generation to attract and retain investment and people to Durban. For the Point Precinct, it envisages intense, high-value uses around public realm e.g. water fronting edges, including densification and development of the T-jetty. If Transnet's present proposals are allowed to prevail long-term, the possibility of implementing this approved local area plan and the regeneration of inner city Durban is lost, leading to an exodus of potential investors and turning Durban harbour into a mono-functional industrial port instead of the multi-functional, accessible City envisioned.

Therefore, firstly, we appeal to AMAFA to refuse the demolitions of the modernist Ocean Terminal Precinct comprising L-shed, Durmarine Building, M-shed, Ocean Terminal, South Access Tower and N-shed and to endorse Docomomo-SA's proposed grading of the precinct as a Provincial Landmark, to be taken further into formal protection. Secondly, that the heritage significance of the remaining structures be investigated and tested before AMAFA takes a decision on their demolition.

Thirdly, we appeal to Transnet to reconsider their stance of total demolition of the structures on T-jetty and instead to recognize the long-term asset potential of this precinct, its massive existing structures and landmark value, either by realizing considerate reuse and repurposing of the structures themselves or alternatively releasing the area to the open market for redevelopment in line with the regeneration vision for the city of Durban. At a minimum, we request that the modernist buildings within the proposed Provincial Landmark extent be retained, even if the roof decks and store rooms are used for car parking and stacking. As already stated above, the 6000 parking bays intended for T-jetty could be accommodated without the demolition of the earmarked modernist heritage buildings.

10. Other factors to be considered

Regardless of the outcome of the present heritage application, Docomomo SA requests that we may record the precinct for the future, and use the plans and photos now available in the public realm for this purpose. We request permission from Transnet to access the precinct to photograph the structures, as part of this documentation process.

We look forward to AMAFA's feedback on the application, and request that Docomomo-SA be informed of any further developments and reiterations involving T-jetty and the Ocean Terminal precinct.

Thank you and kind regards



Sandra van der Merwe

On behalf of Docomomo-SA, written in partnership and in discussion with Docomomo-SA members.

Docomomo South Africa is the local chapter of Docomomo International, the international working committee for the documentation and conservation of Modern Movement buildings, sites and neighbourhoods.

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Attachments:

- M.S. Zakrzewski & Partners Brochure, 1966
- Notes on the career of M.S. Zakrzewski
- Notes of the career of J. P. W. Warunkiewicz

¹¹ Ethekwini Municipality Municipal Spatial Development Framework 2021-2022, p.449