

## 2. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

### 2.1 Development site/area location and boundaries

Erven 414/418 1552 and Portion 397, Arcadia are located on the north-western corner of the Loftus Park precinct. It is bounded in the west by Kirkness Street, on the north by Park Street and the school ground of the Pretoria High School for Girls, on the east by the Pretoria High School for Girls, (Erf 379) and directly to the north by the Loftus Park stadium. Kirkness Street is located on Erf R/238 and Erf R/200 Arcadia. This last-mentioned erf also contains the Loftus Substation, which stand under the control of the City of Tshwane Electricity Department.

It lies between two suburbs, Arcadia lies to the north and Clydesdale to the west.

The site is historically associated with the Loftus precinct, having historically served as community sports fields.

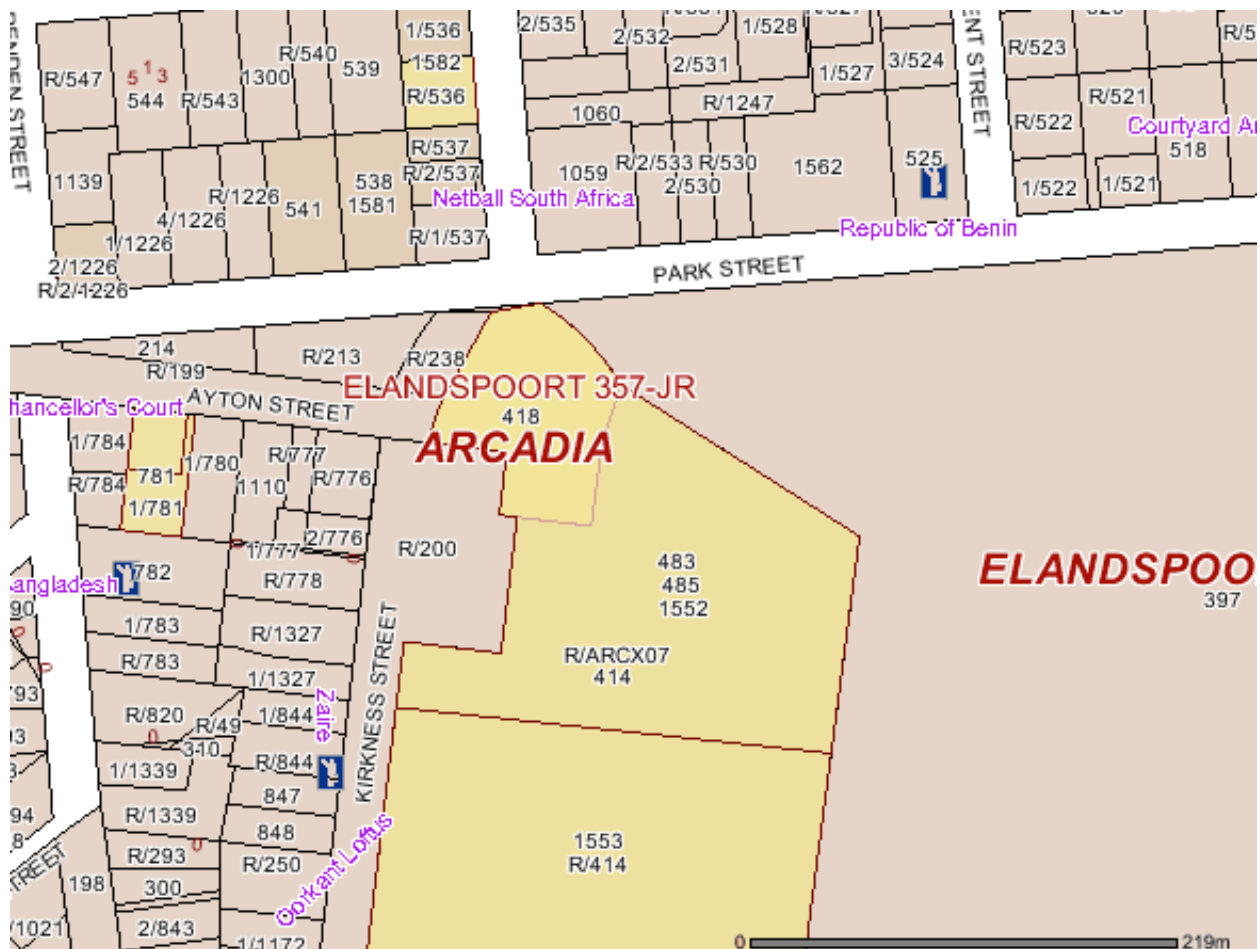


Figure 2 Location of Erf 414/418, 1552 and Portion 397, Arcadia.



Figure 3 Google Earth image (2014) illustrating the study area (approximate site boundaries) in its wider context. (Adapted from Google Earth, 2014)



Figure 4 Close up of the study area. Exact site boundaries are indicated. (From the City of Tshwane GIS database, www.tshwane.gov.za, 2014)

**2.2 Environmental features**

The site has been under constant redevelopment for 120 years and no distinguishable natural environmental features remain on site. Off-site environmental features of note is the pine avenue down the Girls High grounds and used to axially connect the Old Arts Building at the University of Pretoria with the corner of Kirkness and Park Streets. This has over time been disrupted. This is a built environment feature (man-made) and therefore further discussed as proximate heritage resource.



Figure 5. The original spatial intent of the Pine Avenue is indicated with a Blue arrow. Notice to what extent this has been disrupted in time.

**2.3 Built environment features**

S 3(2) NHRA heritage resource	DESCRIPTION SUMMARY
Buildings, structures, places and equipment of cultural significance	The site contains the historic remains of community sports fields. These include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The still legible footprints of bowls and croquet fields</li> <li>• Historic paths with granite kerb stones</li> <li>• A historic pedestrian focal point (circle).</li> <li>• A commemorative column commemorating the removal of the statue “The spirit of sport’ to the Pilditch Stadium.</li> <li>• The c.1929 Club House building</li> <li>• The old entrance gates and piers</li> </ul>

CULTMATRIX

S 3(2) NHRA heritage resource	DESCRIPTION SUMMARY
Areas to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with intangible heritage	The sports fields served in community service. It is possible that various narratives exist regarding their use as sports fields.
Historical settlements and townscapes	The site forms part of the Loftus sports precinct which in turn is located in the 'old East of Pretoria, the layout of which goes back to the 1890's.
Landscapes and natural features of cultural significance	Remnant sports fields, pedestrian walkways and the adjacent pine avenue.
Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance	None identified
Archaeological and palaeontological sites	None identified
Graves and burial grounds	None identified
Areas of significance related to labour history	None identified
Movable objects	None identified

**2.3.1 Development site – Erf 414/418, 1552 and Portion 397, Arcadia.**

A Cultural Historical survey, commissioned by Abland (Pty) Ltd was conducted by Francois P Coetzee for both the development site, erven 414/418 1552 and Portion 397, Arcadia, as well as the adjoining Loftus Substation Building (erf R/200). These are submitted as stand-alone documents along with this HIA. These reports contain a brief history as well as identification and evaluation of the heritage resources on and proximate to the site. Excerpts and interpretations of those documents are presented here.

**2.3.2 Site history**

The Northern Sports Fields of the Loftus Park precinct originally formed part of the larger Eastern Sports fields, created in 1917 by the then City of Pretoria to serve as community sports fields. The site, originally the commons of the suburb Sunnyside, was first used as sports fields in 1906. The formalizing of the site for sports use was largely due to the exertions of Mr. Loftus Versfeld, a lawyer and amateur sportsman from Pretoria, hence the later name, Loftus Versfeld, bestowed in 1932 upon the death of Mr. Versfeld, today Loftus Versfeld Stadium.

In time the Eastern Sport Fields became the home for Rugby in the city, the first concrete stadium was constructed here in 1922 (some sources indicate 1923) and the stadium has seen continuing upgrades, the last being in 2010 to host the Rugby World Cup.

The Northern Transvaal Rugby Union was formed in 1938 and found its natural home at Loftus Versfeld.

The ownership of the fields, originally in the custodianship of the City of Pretoria, was transferred to the Blue Bulls Rugby Union in 1995.

Of note is that Mr. Versfeld initiated an experiment for the use of Kikuyu grass (*Penesetum clandestinum*) at the Eastern Sports Fields in 1919-1920- the first grass playing fields in what was then the Transvaal. This was the first use of the grass for sports playing fields which has now become common in South Africa.



*Figure 6 1947 Aerial photograph of the south-east of Pretoria, the site is roughly indicated.*

The stadium is today a landmark in its environment and can host up to 40 000 people, seated and another 20 000 standing.

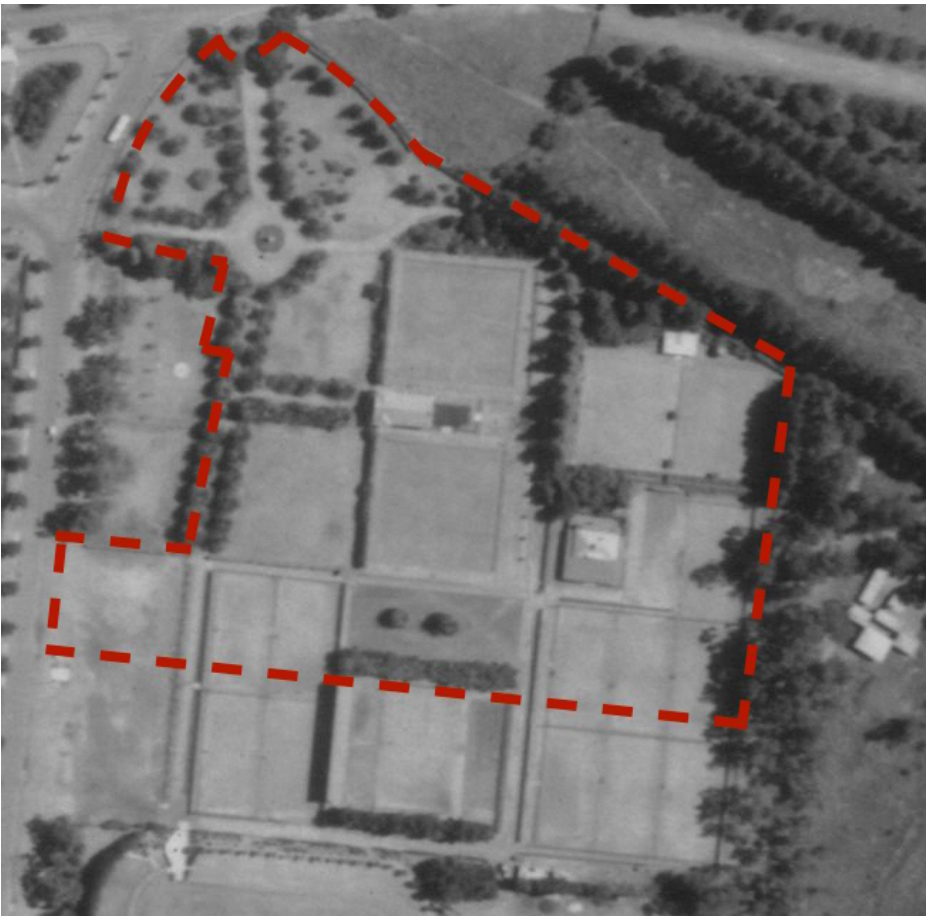


Figure 7 Enlargement of the 1947 Aerial Photograph with the development site indicated.

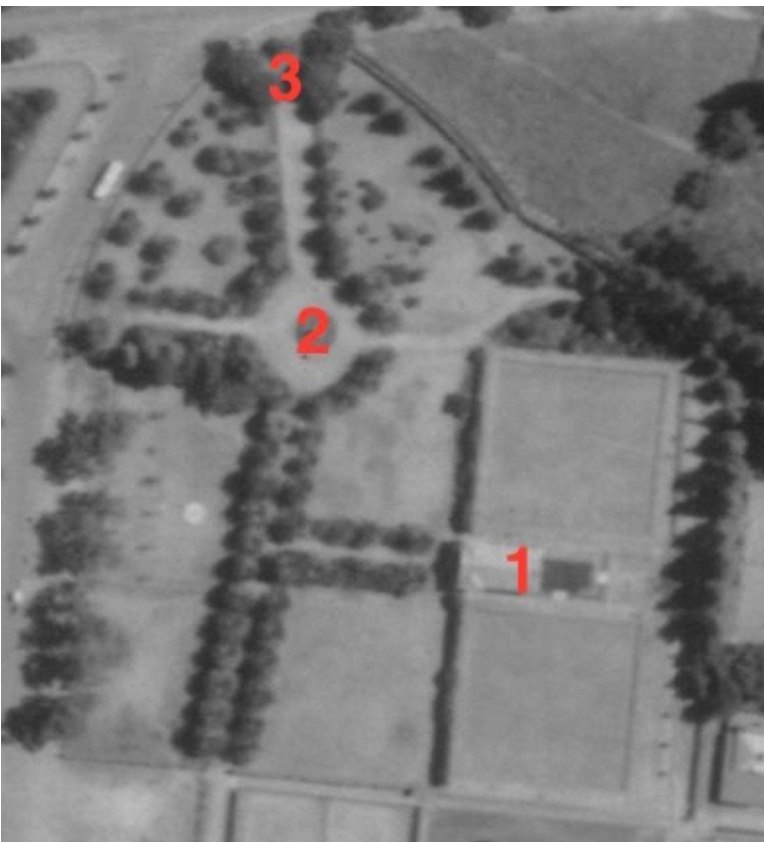


Figure 8 Enlargement of the 1947 Aerial Photograph with identified built heritage resources on site identified.

**2.3.3 Club House (Refer to label ‘1’ on figure 7)**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c.1929	Sports Club house, later restaurant (The Sinbin)	Vacant. Structurally threatened	c.1990 when an addition was added to the east This was demolished in c.2010.	Section 34 (Structures older than 60 years.)

<b>Description</b>							
<b>Number of floors</b>	<b>Plinth</b>	<b>Walls</b>	<b>Ground Floor</b>	<b>Intermediate Floors</b>	<b>Windows</b>	<b>Roof</b>	<b>Notable Features</b>
1	Face brick	Plastered and painted baked brick fill to concrete frame.	Suspended timber	n/a	Timber	Clay Tile	The western entrance is articulated with a Cape-Dutch Revival gable.



Figure 9 The eastern façade of the Club House (F Coetzee, 2012)



Figure 10 The western façade of the Club House (F Coetzee, 2012)

**CONSERVATION ISSUES**

The Club House Building is in a poor state of preservation. Its past use as sports bar and the following period of decay have eroded its integrity. Environmental factors currently threaten its structural stability. The water table has risen dramatically of late and historically unknown natural fountains are emerging on the site. This seems to be adversely affecting the foundations and structural stability of the structure.

**Structural Integrity:**

- The structural stability of the Club House needs to be investigated by a qualified structural engineer and recommendations made as to methods of preservation.

**2.3.4 Original location of the statue ‘Spirit of Sport’ (Refer to label ‘2’ on figure 7)**

The circle, bound by pedestrian walkways originally contained a statue called ‘Spirit of Sport’. This was sculpted by renowned South African sculptor Fanie Eloff and is the only big monumental statue he ever created. It is seen as one of his masterpieces. Eloff was a sculptor of note and received numerous awards and commendations in his life, including being elected a member of the *Union Internationale de Beaux Artes et de Lettres* in Paris (1912). He was also awarded the Medal of Honour by the South African Academy of Arts and Science (1944). Eloff is mostly known for his portrait work, which makes the *Spirit of Sport* all the more unique.

**HISTORY OF THE STATUE**

The statue was first exhibited in Johannesburg in 1922 where it caught the attention of art expert Dr. FV Engelenburg. He in turn managed to convince the precursor of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, the Pretoria City Council, to purchase this statue for, what was then a very expensive £500.

The statue was installed at the Loftus Versfeld Sports field in 1936 where the landscaping was adapted to accommodate this monumental piece.

Here it stood, gracing the rose beds leading to the bowls fields for 59 years before a Council Decision ordered its relocation to Pilditch Stadium, in the west of the city. This was undertaken because ownership of the sports fields were then transferred to the Blue Bulls Company.



Figure 11 *The Discus Thrower in its original location on the Loftus Park Northern Sports fields in c. 1975 (Our Art Vol II)*

It seems that even on the Loftus site the presentation of the 'Spirit of Sport' was occasionally altered. Figure 10 illustrates the situation in 1975, the photograph in figure 11 showing a different composition.





Figure 12. An earlier undated photograph of the 'Spirit of Sport' on a different plinth. Why this was altered over time is unknown.

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c.1936 and later before 1975.	Column commemorating the place where 'Spirit of Sport'. Later remodelled.	Memorial to the location of the statue.	1995	• None



Figure 13 The sandstone column on the place where the 'Spirit of Sport' once stood. (F Coetzee, 2012)



Figure 14 Close view of sandstone column where the 'Spirit of Sport' stood. (F Coetzee, 2012)

**2.3.5 Entrance Gate, corner of Park and Kirkness Street (Refer to '3' on Figure 7.)**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c. Unknown	Entrance Gate	Occasional Entrance Gate		Section 38 (Believed to be a structure older than 60 years. Stylistic and material based assumptions)

<b>Description</b>							
<b>Number of floors</b>	<b>Plinth</b>	<b>Walls</b>	<b>Ground Floor</b>	<b>Intermediate Floors</b>	<b>Windows</b>	<b>Roof</b>	<b>Notable Features</b>
n/a	n/a	Rough hewn shale ashlar with c.2000 palisade fence.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a



Figure 15 The Entrance gate on the corner of Park and Kirkness Streets. (F Coetzee, 2012)

**2.3.6 Granite Kerb stones**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c.1936 (installation of the 'Spirit of Sport'.	Edging to vehicular and pedestrian pathways	Edging	n/a	Cultural Landscape



Figure 16 Granite kerbs occur throughout the site.

These kerbs were quarried at the municipal stone quarries at Honingnestkrans, north of Pretoria. They were standard issue of the city for many a year between the first decade of the Twentieth Century and Second World War.

**2.3.7 Platforms of earlier playing fields**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
From c.1920 onwards	Playing fields	Vacant/occasional parking	c.1995	n/a



*Figure 17 Current state of the playing fields. The outline of the spatial structure can be discerned, partly due to still extant retaining walls. (Google Earth)*

These platforms can be typified as relictual landscape elements and today serve no purpose other than of occasional parking.

2.4 Proximate Heritage Resources

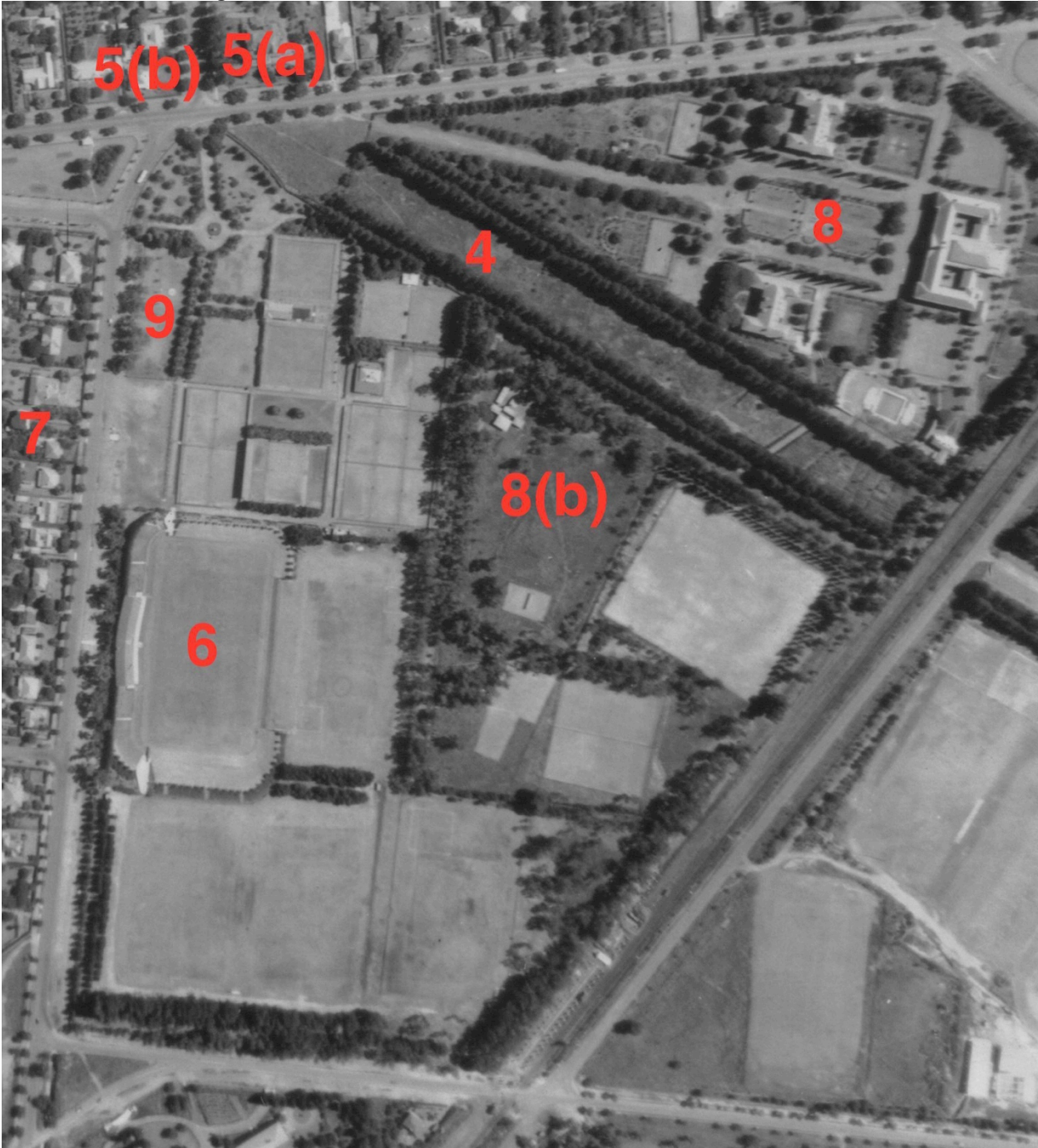


Figure 18. Adapted 1947 Aerial photograph. Note. Some of the resources were not extant when this photograph was taken.

**Annotations:**

- 4 - The Pine Avenue
- 5 - Arcadia, a historical suburb with
  - 5(a) Kingston House
  - 5(b) Netball SA house
- 6 - Loftus Versfeld Stadium
- 7 - Clydesdale
- 8 - Pretoria High School for Girls with
  - 8(a) The Main complex
  - 8(b) The Sports Fields
- 9 - Loftus Substation



Figure 19 Adapted 1947 Aerial photograph. Note. Some of the resources were not extant when this photograph was taken.

**Annotations:**

- 4 - The Pine Avenue
- 5 - Arcadia, a historical suburb with
  - 5(a) Kingston House
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- 6 - Loftus Versfeld Stadium
- 7 - Clydesdale
- 8 - Pretoria High School for Girls with
  - 8(a) The Main complex
  - 8(b) The Sports Fields
- 9 - Loftus Substation

**2.4.1 Pine Avenue (Refer to label '4' on Figures 16 and 17)**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c. 1911	Landscape feature	Landscape feature	n/a	• Part of a historic townscape (S 3(2.c))

The historic Pine Avenue was planted shortly after the completion of the University of Pretoria's Old Arts building (inaugurated in 1911). The avenue created a visual axis, which connected the building, then located

in the open veldt, with the more structured parts of town. The assertion that the avenue is orientated to intersect Church Square is incorrect. Others have cleaned that it was orientated on the Union Buildings. This too does not hold water. Most probably the building of the Old Arts Building was located to orientate to the corner of Kirkness and Park Street, at 90 degrees to the railway line which was already extant in 1911.

The avenue might have been meant as a drive up the university, crossing the rail via a level crossing. This was however changed very quickly when in 1917 construction commenced on the Old Agriculture building of the university and the entrance was moved to the corner of University, Park and Burnett Streets. At the same time (1917) the portion of land to the south of the Avenue was granted to the Pretoria High School for Girls (PHG), effectively ending the avenue's use as a linear movement route.

Over time the avenue has been severely impacted on. This includes:

- Completion in 1960 of the University of Pretoria (UP) Engineering II Building and later (2011) the Mining Industries Study Centre.
- Removal in the late 1980's of the Pine trees on the UP campus to be replaced with indigenous Acacias.
- Gradual expansion into the Pine Avenue of the PHG school grounds
- Lack of maintenance of the lower (Park Street) reaches of the avenue, leading to overgrowth
- Lack of maintenance of the avenue, due to its lack of function leading to its slow demise.

The avenue created the strong geometries of Girls High and the main University of Pretoria Campus. Today less than 25% of the original trees remain.

**2.4.2 Arcadia (Township)**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
1890 - onwards	Suburban township	Suburban township	n/a	• Part of a historic townscape (S 3(2.c))

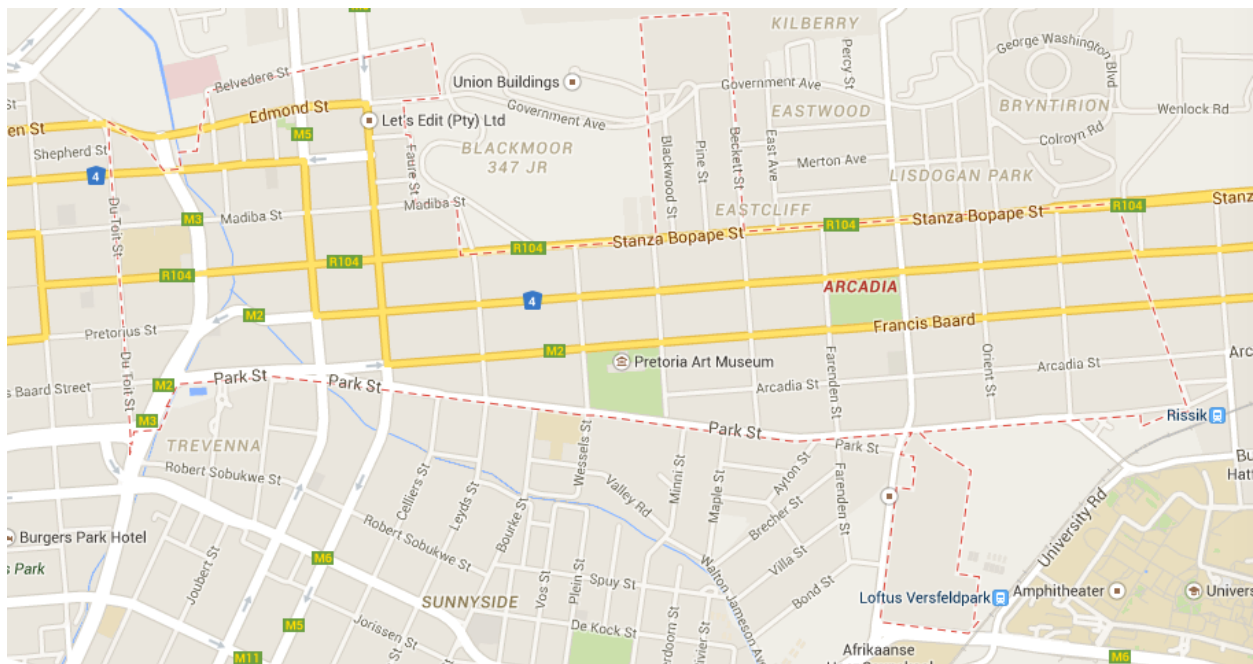


Figure 20. The extent of the township of Arcadia, although Blackmoor, Eastwood, Eastcliff and Lisdogan Park are often included.

The first portion of (erven 1-54) Arcadia was laid out by SJ Meintjies (after whom Meintjies Kop is named) in 1890. This section was located between the present day Du Toit Street and the Apies River (i.e. west of the Apies River). Du Toit had bought the property from AF du Toit, who had in turn acquired this portion of the farm Elandspoor from the then President of the then ZAR, MW Pretorius in a barter trade, the value of the property being deemed equivalent to a salted pony. Du Toit had named Arcadia after the Du Toit family farm

in the Cape. (Andrews, T and Ploeger, J. 1989. Street and place names of old Pretoria. Van Schaik: Pretoria, p 10.)

Arcadia grew over time with the proclamation (by TW Beckett) of Eastwood, Eastclyff, Blackmoor and the Government precincts. Arcadia is a historic townscape that grew over time and is still evolving creating a rich and layered cultural townscape. Two of the structures, proximate to the development site, Kingston House and the Netball SA House will be discussed here.

**- Kingston House (Refer to label '5(a)' on Figures 16 and 17)**

<b>Historical Data</b>				
<b>Date of origin</b>	<b>Historical use</b>	<b>Current Use</b>	<b>Date of adaptation to current use</b>	<b>Legal status under the NHRA</b>
c. 1900	Dwelling	Offices	Unknown	• Older than 60 years (Section 34)

<b>Description</b>							
<b>Number of floors</b>	<b>Plinth</b>	<b>Walls</b>	<b>Ground Floor</b>	<b>Intermediate Floors</b>	<b>Windows</b>	<b>Roof</b>	<b>Notable Features</b>
One	Rough stone	Plastered baked brick	Timber floor	None	Various	Corrugated iron gable roof on timber trusses.	Architecturally significant example of early late Victorian Architecture in Pretoria.



Figure 21 Kingston House, located on the corner of Kirkness and Park Streets.

Kingston House was constructed by TW Beckett for Frank Strange as an out-of-town Victorian-styled family house. Strange had emigrated to South Africa in the early 1800's to join TW Beckett in his TW Beckett and Co general dealership. Legend has it that Strange was in a charge of the tea section when Becket registered the trade name 'Five Roses' for one of the company's custom tea blends. The name 'Kingston House' refers to Gawith's home town, Kingston-upon-Thames.

The architect is not known. It is of architectural and historical significance.