

HARNESSING POTENTIAL IN HERITAGE SITES
THE ADAPTIVE REUSE OF OLD BUILDINGS IN OLD ACCRA

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the MArch and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

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I am very grateful to my parents, Mr. & Mrs. F. B. Addo and my siblings for the support and encouragement throughout my years of study.

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DEDICATION

To my family for always being supportive.

KNUST



ABSTRACT

In an attempt to regenerate the Old Accra Township, the Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City is undertaking various urban regeneration projects to help achieve its aim. Most of the urban regeneration projects include the adaptive reuse of some historical buildings taking into consideration interests of visitors to the site as well as the needs of the community. In developing heritage sites, although concern should be on the heritage objects, other supporting elements in its environment should be considered as well. The built environment of heritage sites can have key roles to play in managing the sites values. Buildings on heritage sites may not be of historic importance; however they form an embodiment of the sites values. These buildings have survived several years of history and tell their story in their own characteristic features. Revival and renewal of the old buildings will enable them tell a better story to be understood by all to enable their community derive great benefits from them. The goal of this thesis is the sustainability of Old Accra. The idea is to investigate adaptive reuse efforts on the site and its ability to aid in developing the site. The premise is to adapt the old buildings in Old Accra to new uses, convenient with socio-economic and cultural structure of the site.

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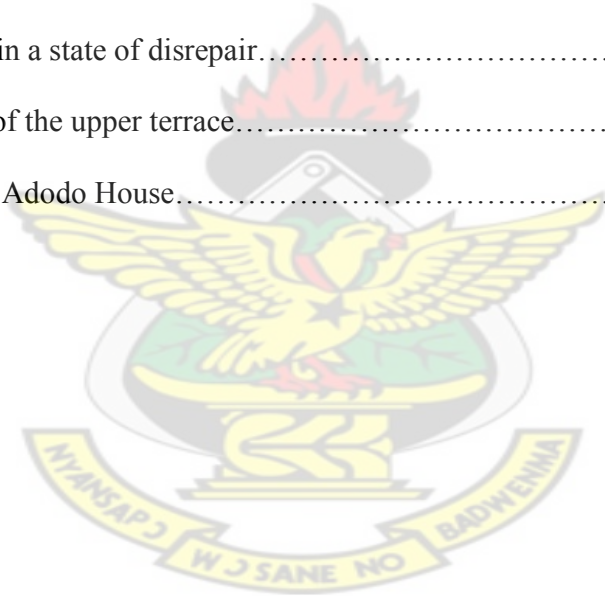
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 OVERVIEW

Heritage sites the world over have varied potential which have been explored and has benefited the heritage areas immensely making those sites attractive to visitors while meeting the community's needs and sustaining the sites identity as well. The potential heritage sites hold lies not only in their objects of interest but also in other elements within its environs. These other elements are not the focus of attraction to the heritage sites however they could become secondary sources of attraction to the site. The development of heritage sites should therefore be viewed from a wholesome approach of including both objects of heritage interests and other elements within the heritage area if great benefits are to be accrued. In Ghana, most heritage sites are yet to be properly developed and the focus is mainly on the objects of heritage interests. This approach to safeguarding the objects of interest ignores other elements on the heritage site or within the heritage zone which are not of heritage interest but could be exploited to add value to the site.

Old Accra the historical part of the nation's capital, designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1979 is a site in dire need of development of its potential. Effort is being made to develop the objects of heritage interest on the site. However, little attention has been paid to the abundant old buildings in Old Accra in the development process. The old buildings form a part of the site's heritage. These buildings exhibit the legacy of the pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial periods. Most of the old buildings are in a state of disrepair with broken window panes, weather beaten doors, cracked screed and walls etc. since there has been no occupancy for several years, the buildings types range from

residential buildings, office blocks, warehouses, stores etc. Some of these buildings however have solid framework and exhibit interesting architecture.

In line with government's plan to modernize the nation's capital it is important that careful measures be taken to incorporate existing old buildings into the modernization scheme for Old Accra. The renewal of the old buildings will give a new appeal to the site and aid in preserving its history, for present and future generations.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Heritage sites in Ghana have several old buildings which have been standing for several years without any prospects for them; this has led to their gradual dilapidation. Old Accra is no exception, characterised by a lot of old buildings, these buildings have not been put to any use beneficial to the site and the community. The state of these buildings is a disadvantage to upholding the sites values. Also, Old Accra has no space to expand its boundaries however the space occupied by the buildings and their surroundings has not yet been utilised for any benefits. The location of these old buildings within a heritage area gives them a potential worth exploring in redevelopment schemes.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to evaluate existing old buildings on the site regarding their original, subsequent and proposed use and how the old buildings can be made functional in present times. It proposes adaptive reuse as a means of generating benefits for the site and the community. This thesis seeks to:

- Examine the phases the old buildings have undergone from their original use to their current use and the significance of the old buildings to the heritage site.

- Identify problems associated with the reuse of the old buildings in the past and present and challenges faced.
- Ascertain benefits associated with adaptive reuse of the old buildings

1.3 SCOPE

This thesis provides information on the existing situation at Old Accra, and it will encompass, the history of selected buildings and the potential of the building and its impact on the heritage site. It will also provide information on using adaptive reuse as an effective architectural tool in merging the past and the present. The target area of study will cover Jamestown and Ussher town in the capital of Ghana, Accra.

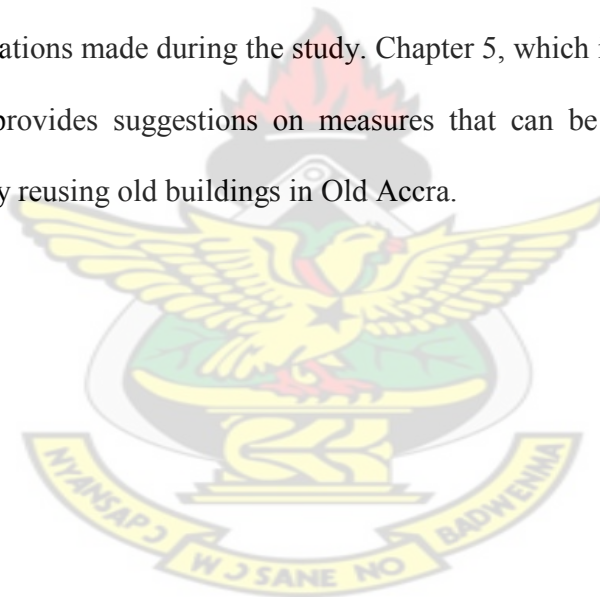
1.4 LIMITATIONS TO STUDY

Access to reliable data on Old Accra was a great difficulty encountered in carrying out this research. Feasible data on the area and related topics was scanty and difficult to obtain. Most of the data was old and out dated and in some cases the required information was not documented. It was impossible to get documented evidence, drawings, records and pictures showing the various stages the old buildings have undergone and . Data on immediate past reports on Old Accra was however readily available especially information from the Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). Many of the people contacted were not willing to give information about the buildings and were reluctant to allow for a survey of the building. Also some people opposed the taking photographs of the old buildings. Time constraints did not allow for the

study to cover a broad scope, as such most of the buildings sampled were from the area proposed for conservation.

1.5 ORGANISATION OF THESIS

Chapter 1 of this document presents the background to the thesis, and the aim of the research. Chapter 2 explores the background of Old Accra and the theories, trends and benefits of adaptive reuse and its impact. Included in this chapter is a study of buildings that have been adapted to new uses. Chapter 3, this chapter explains the research methods employed to gather the data needed to serve as a basis for the research work. Chapter 4 evaluates the observations made during the study. Chapter 5, which is the concluding part of this document, provides suggestions on measures that can be taken to ensure the success of adaptively reusing old buildings in Old Accra.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter explores the background of Old Accra and the theories, trends and benefits of adaptive reuse and its impact. Included in this chapter is a study of buildings that have been adapted to new uses.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Overshadowed by the tower blocks of the Central Business District, Old Accra is on the fringe of a city that nevertheless owes it everything. The traditional cradle of the modern metropolis of Accra, Ga Mashie- the Ga Homeland- lived through the major stages of the construction of this city¹

Old Accra was initially settled in the 16th century by the Ga people to supply fish and salt to the Ga capital, located near the present day town of Amasaman. The strategic coastal location and the arrival of Europeans in the 16th and 17th century turned Old Accra into a trading centre for fish, gold, guns and other goods.² In 1962, however, the harbour activities were transferred from Old Accra to the new harbour at Tema. Simultaneously there was also a displacement of the centre of the city and the organisation of the Government from Ussher Town and James Town to the east. Since then the Old Accra area has fallen into oblivion.³

2.1.1 Places of Interest in Old Accra



Fig.1 Jamestown Harbour



Fig.2 Salaga Market

(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)



Fig.3 Ussher Fort



Fig. 4 Fort House

(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)



Fig.5 Franklin House

(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)

2.2 PRESENT DAY OLD ACCRA

Old Accra has been the heart of the history of Accra and the Ga People for centuries. After the transfer of the James Town Harbour activities to Tema in 1960, the area has lost its economic base without compensation or the possibility to expand geographically. ⁴All that remains today of its glorious past are numerous testimonies, gradually being eroded with the passages of time. ⁵

2.2.1 Condition of buildings

Participants of the student workshop in July 2001 identified from the research that; A number of residential buildings in Old Accra have structural defects due principally to age (SIF 1999:13). Apart from the buildings with structural defects, a number of other buildings are falling apart. From walking through the community it is visible to see buildings with damaged and cracked walls, roofs with holes and windows and doors missing. Of the windows and doors, which are in place, residents recently stated that they do not provide the ventilation needed or adequate protection from the natural elements. Results from the student workshop found that housing in Old Accra could be classified under four main types:

- Type A: Very sound & conform to modern building standards.

Fig. 6 T₁

- Type B: Structures, which are sound but are poorly maintained. Old Accra has an estimated 110 of these structures.



Fig.7 Type B building
(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)

- Type C: Structures, which are structurally weak and which would enjoy much upgrading work and maintenance. Such structures constitute the core of the housing stock within Old Accra, with about 1088 such buildings.



Fig.8 Type C building
(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)

- Type X: Structures that are dangerous structurally and generally deserted. There are roughly 96 of these structures in Old Accra.



Fig.9 Type X building
(Source: Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra)

Without any maintenance, houses and buildings have deteriorated rapidly.⁶

2.2.2 Current solutions

Serious problems linked to the status of single family houses contribute to their neglect. Nevertheless, a number of conservation initiatives have been taken by certain owners, mainly in relation to commercial property. Unfortunately attempts at repairs have been made on an amateur basis by the local population itself. There are no indications so far of any structural repairs being made using specialist techniques.⁷ In many cases the owners of buildings have either died or are living outside of the community. Thus attempts to redevelop houses are thwarted by the reluctance of inhabitants to take on the responsibility of landlord or family head.⁸

2.2.3 Potentials of the Site

The town as a whole bears witness to original technical know-how in terms of architecture, decoration and craftsmanship. A full spectrum of different types of architecture is represented: military, religious, civil, vernacular, pre-colonial and considerable aesthetic significance was created through using materials and techniques, as in the combination of stone and wood for the house of dignitaries. Old Accra served as

a laboratory for the elaboration of the urban models of modern Ghana.⁹ The historical site of Old Accra thus embodies a variety of values that justify its preservation and development.¹⁰ Old Accra includes a very large concentration of historical buildings reflecting more than three centuries of architecture, economic activities and social struggles. The coastline, beaches and the inner part of Ussher Town are particularly dotted with Ga historical sites. James Town is more characterised by its maritime past and the fishing and commercial economy related to it.¹¹ Until now, the historical and oldest quarter of Accra has been largely sidelined by modern development and is often ignored by visitors who have no occasion to go there. There is a wealth of historical buildings and sites, which, if restored, rehabilitated and made more accessible to visitors, could serve as a magnet for ancillary heritage and tourism based on commercial investment.¹² In addition, the need for Ghana, as a Nation to continue forging its identity and to teach the youth about its Cultural Heritage, makes Ga Mashie-an open History Book in the heart of the Capital-an exceptional site that must be protected for future generations. (Old Accra Redevelopment Strategy)

2.3 REDEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR OLD ACCRA

In 1999 the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) and the Accra Sustainable Program (ASP), in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), prepared the Ussher Town and James Town Old Accra Integrated Urban Development and Conservation Framework. The development framework seeks to rehabilitate and revitalize the urban fabric; facilitate the conservation and tapping of the historical heritage, touristic, economic and other potential of the area; as well as the social and economic upliftment and general welfare of the resident

population.(Institutional framework for the Old Accra Integrated Urban Development and Conservation Project.)In 2003, a Ministry of Tourism and Modernisation of the Capital City was finally created to boost the campaign for raising awareness, advocacy, institutional development and capacity building activities, in close cooperation with AMA and with the support of UNESCO. (Old Accra Redevelopment Strategy)

2.4 ADAPTIVE REUSE DEFINED

Adaptive reuse - A use of a building that is different from its original use or previous use often involving conversion work.¹³ Old buildings often outlive their original purposes. Adaptive Reuse, or Re-use, is a process that adapts buildings for new uses while retaining their historic features. An old factory may become an apartment building. A run down church may find new life as a restaurant...And a restaurant may become a church.¹⁴

2.5 CONCEPT OF ADAPTIVE REUSE

It is inevitable that structures will age and outgrow their originally intended functions. With changes in technology and lifestyle, construction design is constantly updated to meet modern demands, leaving the predecessors in its wake. For those sensitive to history, it may be preferable to restore older structures to their former glory, however this is often not realistic. Adaptive reuse allows structures to retain their historical integrity while providing for the occupants' modern needs. Through changing certain elements of a building, an ecclesiastical structure can become a commercial structure, a commercial structure can become a residential building, and a residential building can even become an ecclesiastical structure. The possibilities are practically limitless.¹⁵

Historic buildings help define the character of our communities by providing a tangible link with the past. Today, historic districts around the country are experiencing unprecedented revitalization as cities use their cultural monuments as anchors for redevelopment. Sometimes, efforts to preserve and revitalize historic buildings run up against financial obstacles, restrictive zoning and codes, contamination, and structural problems that create challenges in reusing these unique structures.¹⁶

2.5.1 Factors to consider

‘There is a wealth of historical buildings and sites, which, if restored, rehabilitated and made more accessible to visitors, could serve as a magnet for ancillary heritage and tourism based on commercial investment.’¹⁷ It is therefore necessary to consider factors that will ensure an effective adaptive reuse of old buildings. ‘Two very important factors in assessing the adaptive reuse potential of an obsolete facility are who currently owns it, and who or what is/are the driving force(s) behind creating a new use for the facility.’¹⁸

2.5.2 Current trends in adaptive reuse of buildings

In the publication, *Merging, Old and New*, Jonathan Baners traces the term parabuilding from the New York Times architectural critic Herbert Muschamp coined the term “parabuilding” in 1999 to describe what he called an “embryonic building type” that allowed architects to build vertically in the city. Muschamp defined the term as using the Greek-derived prefix for “alongside” for an alteration to a previously existing building. He also likened the term to the concept of a parasite that feeds off a host, with the older building acting as the host and the newer addition as the parasite that interacts with it organically. Since then, Muschamp and other architectural writers have used the term parabuilding to describe other buildings that merge old with new, often creating entirely different uses and looks for the original building. Parabuilding gives developers an

opportunity to expand on a site they already own while, at the same time, allowing them to hide unsightly structures such as parking garages. As additions to existing structures, parabuildings can help create a balance in terms of scale and visual impact, so that neither tends to dominate the other. The concept is even more prevalent in Europe, where there are more historic buildings to act as hosts for parabuildings. With this type of adaptive use, building owners can profit by expanding their available sellable or leasable floor space, while residents/tenants of landmark buildings can profit with upgrades to their homes or offices. The Hartman Building was built at the turn of the last century, as a medical hotel by a wealthy local physician. Today, the building is being converted to urban loft condominiums. The historic street facades of the Hartman Building were restored while the remaining facade, once a party wall with an adjacent building, became the location of the new tenant entrance. Built of contemporary materials, the stair tower with its physical and stylistic relationship to its historic host provides a strong contrast that helps create a new image for the building.



Fig.10 Hartman Building
(Source: *Merging Old and New*)

The historic street facades of the Hartman Building, built at the turn of the century as a medical hotel and now home to urban loft condos in downtown Columbus, Ohio, has a projecting six-story, steel and glass staircase that serves as the tenant entrance.

The Brunson Building—including a 12-story addition that contrasts strikingly with the architectural style of the original building. However, the old and the new parts are compositional equals, with the parabuilding reinterpreting the existing historic architectural features in a modern aesthetic and with today's materials. Stone lintels and brick banding align with adjacent two-toned glass spandrel panels, emphasizing continuous horizontal lines in both buildings. The Brunson Building was constructed in the early 1900s in the architectural tradition of the Chicago School. Decorative brick banding, arches, and a tripartite organization—base, shaft, capitol—distinguish the building as a prime example of tall buildings of its time. But by the turn of this century, the Brunson was nearly vacant, and dated as an office building. The new owners took advantage of the current upswing in the downtown Columbus residential real estate market and began plans to convert the building to high-end residential lofts. The extensive use of glass contrasts with the solid masonry of the original structure, and floods the interiors with sunlight. The exterior balconies, cantilevering beyond the building's corner like a diving board for a full 180-degree view of downtown, represent outdoor space, and, from the street, are the unmistakable clues to the building's residential use.



Fig.11 Brunson Building
(Source: *Merging Old and New*)

Some parabuildings can create a balance between the new addition and the host building in terms of scale and visual impact so that neither dominates the other. The steel and glass addition to the 1900s Brunson Building in downtown Columbus, Ohio, reflects a contemporary version of this. Designing parabuildings has certain challenges for architects and developers: they must be careful not to underestimate—or overestimate—the structural capacity of an older building. Concrete warehouses from the 1920s frequently can support several additional stories, unlike their modern steel-frame counterparts. But care must be taken to determine the quality of existing construction. Voids in concrete columns or poorly mixed concrete, cracked wood timbers, and poorly maintained masonry must be remedied. The risks of adding a new structure to an old building can be hidden and difficult to identify. Architects and structural engineers need to make detailed examinations; selective demolition may be required to discover deficiencies. Parabuildings can transform a neighborhood. For example, the Hartman Building renovation and addition led to a number of residential, office, retail, and restaurant projects in the neighborhood, helping to rejuvenate a once-thriving business district.

2.5.3 Other examples of Parabuildings



Fig.12 Hearst's Corporation building
(Image courtesy Norman Foster and Partners)

The host building for Norman Foster's design for the Hearst Corporation is Hearst's present home at 959 Eighth Avenue. The parabuilding, a faceted tower of steel and glass that rises 42 stories above the host, is enclosed on three sides by "buildings" formed from the upper floors of the existing building.



Fig.13 Mid-Manhattan Library
(Drawing courtesy Gwathmey Siegel)

The host building for Gwathmey Siegel's parabuilding design for the Mid-Manhattan Library is the former Arnold Constable building which The New York Public Library owns. The expansion will add an additional eight floors and 117,000 square feet for library service to the existing 139,000 square foot building.

2.6 ADAPTIVE REUSE AND ITS BENEFITS

According to Adaptive re use; Preserving our past, building our future (2004) of old buildings encompasses environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits

Environmental

When adaptive reuse involves historic buildings, environmental benefits are more significant, as these buildings offer so much to the landscape, identity and amenity of the communities they belong to.

Social

Keeping and reusing historic buildings has long-term benefits for the communities that value them. When done well, adaptive reuse can restore and maintain the heritage significance of a building and help to ensure its survival. Rather than falling into disrepair through neglect or being rendered unrecognisable, heritage buildings that are sympathetically recycled can continue to be used and appreciated. Communities increasingly recognise that future generations will benefit from the protection of certain places and areas, including heritage places. Our lifestyle is enhanced not just from the retention of heritage buildings, but from their adaptation into accessible and useable places. The reuse of heritage buildings in established residential areas can provide the community with new housing and commercial property opportunities. Town planners and councils that recognise and promote the benefits of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings will be contributing to the liveability and sustainability of their communities.

Economic

There are several financial savings and returns to be made from adaptive reuse of historic buildings. While there is no definitive research on the market appeal of reused heritage

buildings, they have anecdotally been popular because of their originality and historic authenticity.

Promoting innovation

The adaptation of heritage buildings presents a genuine challenge to architects and designers to find innovative solutions. As development pressures increase in our cities, more heritage buildings are being reused, producing some excellent examples of creative designs that retain heritage significance.

Limitations to adaptive reuse

Although adaptive reuse has many benefits it faces a number of limitations, ranging from planning laws and building codes to ownership and use of the buildings.

2.7 CASE STUDIES - [Adaptive Reuse; Preserving our past, building our future (2004)]

2.7.1 Case Study I

Building: The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

Location: Inveresk, Tasmania

Function: Museum and gallery

Owner: Launceston City Council

Architect: Peddle Thorp and Walker, Artas



Fig.14 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery
(Source: *Heritage NSW Newsletter, Does Heritage Make Good Economic Sense?*)

The redevelopment of the derelict Launceston Railway Workshops into a new cultural hub for the city of Launceston included the transformation in 2001 of a large proportion of the site into a new venue for The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery. The Launceston City Council received support for this ambitious redevelopment of a disused site for the QVMAG not only from state and federal governments but also from a range of sponsors and benefactors. Listed on the Tasmanian Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate, the workshops were the center of Tasmania's railway from 1868. Closed in 1994, they formed one of Tasmania's most intact 19th century industrial environments. True to best practice adaptive reuse principles, the project created a strong distinction between original and new works. While intact relics of the site's industrial past, including the unique Blacksmith Shop and Weighbridge were maintained as key interpretive features, references to the past are also present in the transformation of the Stone building and former foundry into the art gallery, exhibition spaces and visitors services area. New features adopted the primary colours used in industrial signage on the

site, such as the yellow walkway that now defines the building's main entrance. An energy efficient air conditioning system featuring geothermal heat exchange and supported by double-glazing allows the museum to maintain a stable environment required for the international standard gallery space.

2.7.2 Case Study II

Building: Submarine Mining Depot

Location: Chowder Bay, NSW

Function: To be determined pending outcome of Expressions of Interest

Owner: Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

Architect: Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and Allen Jack & Cottier

Builder: Safin Pty Ltd

Before



After

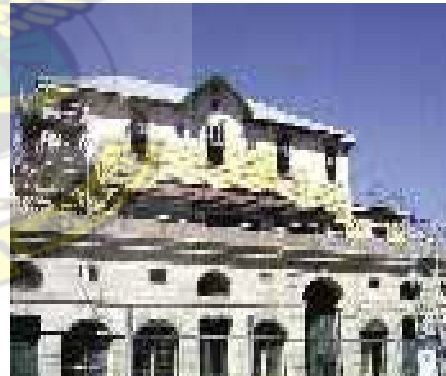


Fig.15 Submarine Mining Depot

(Source: Heritage NSW Newsletter, Does Heritage Make Good Economic Sense?)

Conserving the run-down historic Submarine Mining Depot at Sydney Harbour's Chowder Bay so it could accommodate a range of uses compatible with its heritage significance was a challenging job for the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust. Chowder Bay was set up as a site to maintain a defensive, electrically triggered minefield within

the harbour in 1892. The Trust took over management of the site in 1999 and began to revitalise the property, which is listed on the Register of the National Estate. Alterations had concealed the building's original functions and layout, and water had damaged its timber, stone, paint and balustrades. Ad hoc renovations had replaced original fabric and the kitchen. The adaptive reuse project repaired and conserved the main building, removed renovations that confused interpretation of its heritage significance and introduced modern facilities and services to cater for a range of possible uses. As the final use had not yet been determined, it was given flexible services and fittings. Separate metering of each floor allows for a number of tenants or uses to occupy the building. Renovation methods and materials had minimum environmental impact to avoid polluting the harbour.

2.7.3 Case Study III

Building: Beechworth Lunatic Asylum, May Day Hills Hospital

Location: Beechworth VIC

Function: International Hotel School and accommodation

Owner: La Trobe University

Architect: Cox Architects (formerly Cox Sanderson)



Fig.16 May Day Hills Hospital/ La Trobe University Campus
(Source: *Heritage NSW Newsletter, Does Heritage Make Good Economic Sense?*)

The conversion of a disused hospital for the mentally ill into a university campus has saved an important heritage site and provided space for specialist international hospitality training. Once known as the Beechworth Lunatic Asylum, May Day Hills Hospital was built between 1864 and 1867 and used in caring for the mentally ill until its closure in 1992. The institution comprised 54 buildings on 106 hectares of land, 11 hectares of which are gardens of significance, all in a park-like setting at the top end of Albert Road, Beechworth. While the complex held historical significance to the state, the need for its original purpose diminished over time. Much work was needed before La Trobe University could reuse the buildings. The team working on the project removed ailing trees, re-established services and carried out extensive sympathetic alterations for adaptive reuse as the University's professional development and conference venue. Today, around half of the buildings in the complex are still in use, albeit for quite different purposes. A major feature of the campus is the International Hotel School, where students study the finer points of the hospitality industry. La Trobe at Beechworth also provides accommodation to visitors both domestic and international. The hospital has gained a new lease of life as it adapted to the changing needs of society.

2.8 CASE STUDY OF THE CAPE COAST CASTLE

Cape Coast Castle is a fortification in Ghana built by Swedish traders.¹⁹ Today the Castle is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.²⁰ The first timber construction on the site was erected in 1653 for the Swedish Africa Company and named Carolusborg after King Charles X of Sweden. It was later rebuilt in stone. In April 1663 the whole Swedish Gold Coast was seized by the Danes, and integrated in the Danish Gold Coast. In 1664 the Castle was conquered by the English and was extensively rebuilt by the Committee of

Merchants (whose Governors administered the entire British colony) in the late 18th century. In 1844, it became the seat of the colonial Government of the British Gold Coast.²¹

The Castle served as the head of English administration of the Gold Coast until 1877, when the colonial government moved its headquarters to Christiansborg. Since then, the Cape Coast Castle has functioned as a provincial center, complete with a law court and a school.²² The Castle was built for the trade in timber and gold. Later the structure was used in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The Castle, or Castle and Dungeon, to give it its official name, was first restored in the 1920s by the British Public Works Department. In 1957, when Ghana became independent, the castle came under the care of the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB). In the early 1990s, the building was restored by the Ghanaian Government, with funds from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United States Aid for International Development [USAID], with technical assistance from the Smithsonian Institution and other NGOs²³

Today the Castle is a museum that encourages tours of the old slave-holding dungeons.²⁴ On display in the castle & museum are historical objects used in the slave trade such as branding irons & shackles. Other emotionally moving sights include the dungeons where condemned slaves were kept;²⁵ Cultural and theatrical performances are often staged here. Prominent among these are the re-enactment of the horrors of the slave trade as well as a solemn, touching portrayal of the final journey of the Africans as they walked through the hellish dungeons into the awaiting ships that transported them to the Americas.²⁶



Fig. 17 Cape Coast Castle
(Source: http://www.nkran.net/cape_coast_castle.jsp)



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- ² Attafuah-Annafi, S., Lottner, C., Wolters, C., [2001], “Student Workshop on the Redevelopment of Old Accra”, p.18
- ³ ibid, p.19
- ⁴ ibid, p.61
- ⁵ op cit, Adegbidi, p.4
- ⁶ op cit, Attafuah-Annafi, p.61
- ⁷ op cit, Adegbidi, p.15
- ⁸ op cit, Attafuah-Annafi, p.36
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- ¹⁰ ibid
- ¹¹ op cit, Attafuah-Annan, p.32
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- ¹⁴ “What is adaptive reuse?” [2006], [<http://architecture.about.com/librarry/blgloss-resuse.htm>], (accessed 2006 October 31)
- ¹⁵ Clark, D. and Frye, M., [2006], “Adaptive Reuse”,
- ¹⁶ Cantell, S.F., [2005], “The Adaptive Reuse of Historic Industrial Buildings: Regulation Barriers, Best Practices and Case Studies”, p.2
- ¹⁷ op cit, Attafuah-Annafi, p.32

¹⁸ Scadden R.A., and Mitchell S.J., [2001], “Facility Decommissioning and Adaptive Reuse”, p.2

¹⁹ [2007], “Cape Coast Castle”, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Coast_Castle]

²⁰ Roth, C.[2007],”Cape Coast Castle”

²¹ op cit [2007], “Cape Coast Castle”

²² op cit, Roth, C

²³ op cit [2007] Cape Coast Castle”

²⁴ op cit, Roth, C

²⁵[2009] “Places of interest in Ghana” [http://www.nkran.net/cape_coast_castle.jsp]

²⁶ [200]”Cape Coast Castle”, [<http://content.ghananation.com/articles/Cape-Coast-Castle.aspx>]



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Outlined in this chapter is the approach and process through which data was gathered to aid in the research as well as the limitations encountered during the study.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODS

The following methodologies were applied when undertaking the project:

- Literature
- Interviews
- Site surveys
- Case studies
- **Literature Review**

An extensive literature review was conducted to provide information need to form the basis of the research studies. Literature reviewed was collected from secondary sources of data regarding the site's history and background, the concept of adaptive reuse and its issues related. The information was taken from research and publications produced by reports conducted in the area of study over the past years and other publications.

- **Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with various experts and stakeholders to give a comprehensive understanding of the existing situation at Old Accra's and redevelopment plans for the area. This provided the author with supplementary information from discussions with randomly selected community members on measures that have been taken by individuals to maintain or reuse their old building and the challenges experienced.

- **Site Surveys**

On-site surveys were conducted to observe old buildings in the area give an indication of the buildings condition and setting and possible influences to the site. This formed a base in appreciating the background of the old buildings.

- **Case Studies**

Research case studies were conducted on buildings that had been adaptively used and those that have not been used for several years to examine the process involved in adapting buildings to new uses, the benefits derived and associated problems.

3.2 DATA COLLECTION

Data was gathered on the research topic from several sources to ensure that the information sourced is reliable.

3.2.1 Primary Sources

(i) Direct observations, on-site technical surveys, and documentation of existing, features of some old buildings.

A reconnaissance survey was conducted on the randomly selected building sites and information was gathered to know the history of the buildings and the phases the buildings have undergone.

(ii) Personal informal interviews

Professionals and experts involved in the development of such a facility were consulted, this included personnel from the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, UNESCO, Ministry of Tourism and Modernization of the Capital City. There was a lot of interaction with the

local people as well. Contributions made were well noted and included in the analysis of the data gathered.

(iii) Measurements and Maps

On site measurements were taken and maps of the area were acquired from the survey department

iv) Photographs, sketches, and CAD drawings

Photographs were taken during the study and some sketches were made to graphically document some information. Photographs were also retrieved from other sources. CAD drawings was also used in representing information.

3.2.2 Secondary Sources

(i) Archival records/documentation

Reports and documents on Old Accra from varied projects and published and unpublished books and articles on topics related to the study were reviewed to obtain pertinent literature.

(ii) Internet and multimedia sources and a variety of search engines such as Yahoo, Hotmail, Goggle, etc were sourced for information.

3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

In evaluating the data gathered, comparison was made between the original use and aesthetics of the old buildings and the current condition of the old buildings. From studying the data gathered using the comparative method of analysis; size and condition of building, the old buildings have no regular maintenance routine, some of the old buildings had no specific owners while others had a number of owners sharing the property, there were no immediate prospects for the old buildings. Interpretation of data;

difficult to maintain the building by a single effort, the long periods of abandonment exacerbates the deterioration of the old buildings and more funding will be required to remedy the situation, maintenance work carried out on some of the buildings was only at times when a prominent member of the family has passed on and painting of the house is seen as the main maintenance work, no specific owners makes decision taking impossible, ignorance about possible benefits to be derived from the use of the old buildings.

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CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This chapter outlines the observations made during the study

4.0 EXISTING STATE OF BUILDINGS

Most of the buildings in Jamestown and Ussher are currently used for residential purposes and for mixed purposes. Many of such buildings are in a better condition than those that have been abandoned for years apart from building that are being used currently. A number of the abandoned old buildings have broken windows and doors with cracked floors and rusty ironmongery and dilapidated roofs.



Fig.18 Adoso house, Jamestown
(Source: Author)



Fig.19 Fort House, Ussher Town
(Source: Author)



Fig.20 Lighthouse and old police station, Jamestown
(Source: Author)



Fig.21 Residential buildings, Ussher Town
(Source: Author)



Fig.22 Old Kingsway Department Store, Ussher Town
(Source: Author)



Fig.23 Sea View Hotel, Jamestown
(Source: Author)

Generally, the very significant effort made to maintain the old buildings has been painting the buildings occasionally. Spaces within the old buildings have been rented out to individuals mostly for residential and commercial purposes. Some buildings have attached other structures and other building units to satisfy the needs of the current inhabitants. A number of the old buildings were not built originally as residential units, they have been converted to residential unit and other buildings have also been used for commercial purposes when their original industrial purposes ended. This proves that adaptive reuse of buildings in the area is not a new phenomenon. However not all the attempts to adapt the old buildings to new uses have been successful and in some cases the adaptive use some of the buildings have been put to have resulted in edifices that are not aesthetically appealing and some have also altered the building's design. Adapting old building to new uses for tourism purposes has not been explored since the uses the buildings have been adapted to do not have any link with tourists' activities in the area.

4.1 BIBLE HOUSE

The building presently known as the bible house has been used for several years ever since the original use ceased. The adaptive reuse of this building has kept it in good condition exhibiting its old architectural features while, satisfying the modern needs of its users.



Fig.24 Bible House, Jamestown
(Source: Author)

- **History**

Built over two decades ago by a shipping company (Black Star Line), the building was originally used for administrative purposes for the company and had office spaces and warehouse facilities as well. Making use of the ground floor as storage areas, and the upper floor as offices, the design on the building incorporated a courtyard where goods were off loaded before and storage. The courtyard had a staircase which enabled access to the upper floor. Access to the courtyard was from a side road. After serving this purpose for several years the building was handed over to the bible society of Ghana and has been in use over the years. Since 1965 when the building was inaugurate for use by the Bible Society of Ghana, recent renovation works was under taken in 2005.

- **Problems and Challenges**

Most of the changes made were in the interior since more office spaces had to be created than the original design provided for. In the exterior, the staircase in the courtyard was reconstructed to make room for more space and provision of additional storage units. In adapting this building to its present day use, a lot of factors had to be considered from the structural stability of the building to the aesthetics of the building. The challenge faced by the architect in the adaptive re-use of the facility was to provide working spaces to suit the nature of work to be carried out there and also maintain the aesthetics of the building. Careful consideration was given to the choice of materials used due to the nearness of the site to the sea. The original exterior wooden shutter windows were replaced with glass sliding windows with plastic frames. The materials employed had to be rust free due the salinity of the environment as well as the prevailing humidity. Although maintenance works are carried out by the current users there is no regular maintenance plan for the building.

- **Significance**

This building is one of the many examples that bear witness to the large presence of shipping companies that traded at Old Accra when brisk trading activities took place at the port. A good example of buildings constructed in that period by trading companies having the characteristic features of a high room height at the ground floor than the upper floor.

- **Benefits**

The adaptive reuse of this building has maintained the aesthetic appeal of the building in present day while satisfying the modern needs of its users by providing comfortable office spaces with present day technology as required in any modern

office. The space available on the site has also allowed the provision of additional storage areas needed by its current users.



Fig.25 Bible House before and after renovation
(Source: Consortium)

4.2 G.B.OLLIVANT BUILDING



Fig 26 G.B. Ollivant Building, Ussher Town
(Source: Author)



Fig 27 Frontage of building showing additions
(Source: Author)

- **History**

This building was built in 1923 by a trading company to serve as a warehouse facility with offices and stores. The frontage of the building had a veranda with arches at the ground floor which housed the shops and the upper floor with wooden shutter windows for offices. The rear part of the building which had a courtyard was used as a warehouse facility accessible from the rear. Trading activities became dormant after a while and eventually its original purpose as a commercial facility, ceased. A change

in ownership of the building lead to the facility being uses as a printing press and other spaces rented to individuals for smaller trading activities presently.

- **Problems and Challenges**

Although no major changes have been made to the structure, the impact of minor changes on the original character of the building prevents a good appreciation of the buildings aesthetics due to the additional features resulting from adapting the building to new uses. The veranda on the ground floor has been enclosed and partitioned into small units for individuals for varied purposes. The upper floor has office spaces for individuals and the warehouse facility is used for individual storage purposes while other spaces are yet to be occupied. The efforts to adapt the building to new uses has not been cohesive as a result the building is not been used efficiently. The most common material used in the adaptive reuse efforts is wood, for enclosing some spaces. Iron grating have been used to cover doorways.

There is no maintenance routine for the building and it is difficult to ascertain ownership of the property. Also there is no projection for the future use of the building

- **Significance**

The G. B. Ollivant building is another building that indicates the active trading at the port. It gives an understanding of the nature of buildings for trading purposes during the 1900s constructed to showcase goods in stock that the company traded in while housing other needed spaces.

- **Benefits**

The adaptive reuse of this building has allowed the use of its space for economic activities in the areas. The continuous use of the building has ensured its maintenance

to some extent and has allowed the large space occupied by the building to be of use rather than lie dormant with no activities taking place.

4.3 OLD KINGSWAY DEPARMENTAL STORE BUILDING



Fig.28 Old Kingsway building, Ussher Town
(Source: Author)



Fig 29 Existing access road
(Source: Author)



Fig. 30 The old building and warehouse
(Source: Author)

- **History**

The building originally belonged to the United African Company (U.A.C) a trading company housing a main department store. The Black Star Line; a shipping company later occupied the building and used the space for its offices. Food Complex Corporation later used the spaces for offices also. Later the property was sold to a private individual who used it for catering services which activities ceased long over ten years ago. Extensions to the warehouse are currently being used as an office space and a residential unit. The original design had an open floor plan both at the ground and upper floor this made allowed for easy interior partitioning of the various spaces required by the varied users of the space.

- **Problems and Challenges**

Today the building is vacant and in a state of disrepair, however the current owner has ideas of renovating the building when the needed funding for the project is available. The idea is to still use the building for some kind of a catering facility. This may not be feasible with current trends in the area. In adapting this building to a new use, a lot of factors will have to be considered especially the structural stability of the building. Since the building has not been in use for several years the structure appears to be weak and will need to be stabilized. Consideration must be given to the choice of materials used due to the salinity and humidity of the environment. The building has been abandoned for years and although the owner has prospects for it, lack of funding is has prevented work to be carried out on this old building. Abandoning the old building for several years has increased its rate of deterioration and is likely to adversely affect funding.

- **Significance**

Many people have fond memories of the old department store and its surrounding activities. It is a reference point for most people who still refer to the area as the old Kingsway Department store. It displays an interesting style of architecture which differs from most of the other buildings which were also owned by trading companies.

- **Benefits**

The location of the building is very opportune .The reuse of this facility for tourist related purposes will aid in entertaining visitors to the site thereby encouraging them to extend their visit to the site .The adaptive reuse of this building can aid in maintaining the aesthetic appeal of the building while satisfying the present day needs of its users with modern technology as required in any modern setting for economic or commercial purposes to benefit the community.

4.4 THE ADOSO HOUSE



Fig.31 Adoso house in a state of disrepair



Fig.32 Broken slab of the upper terrace

(Source : Author)

- **History**

The Adoso House, a notable townhouse was built in 1910. It belonged to a wealthy merchant who lived there with his family. Later the building served as a guest house. Ever since the death of the original owner, management of the property has been difficult financially and this has led to its gradual deterioration. The building was sold to a church by the owners of the property however the building was listed to be restored under the urban redevelopment scheme for the area but before the new owners could be paid off they pulled down they demolished the building.

- **Problems and Challenges**

The building had severe structural defects and would have required major structural repair works with specialist know how. Funding needed to undertake this project was unavailable. No major changes had taken place on the structure however owing to lack of maintenance, parts of the building such as balconies and slabs have collapsed and the original facade cannot be easily appreciated. It was unsafe for children to play on the terraces of the building due to cracked screed and walls and exposed badly rusted ironmongery. The compound surrounding the structure has a smaller residential unit with the other areas bare. Adapting this building to a new use would have required consideration to the structural stability of the building as well as aesthetics. Also careful consideration would have been required for materials to be incorporated into the design to make it suitable for the environment. Owing to the size of the structure, it was impossible for the regular maintenance routine to be carried out on the building since there was no funding available this led to its gradual state of dilapidation.

- **Significance**

The building was an example of the expression of wealth of merchants during the 1900s. It is a major reference point within James Town. It displayed an interesting style of architecture which differs from other residential buildings during that period.

- **Benefits**

The reuse of building would have been a model to educate generations on 20th century architecture in Old Accra. It would have been a tangible evidence of the past in the present.



Fig. 33 Ruins of the Adodo House, Jamestown
(Source: Author)

4.5 EXISTING SOLUTIONS

Most old buildings have either been used as residential unit or for commercial purposes. Attempts have however been made to adaptively reuse some warehouses for commercial purposes and some commercial buildings have had their spaces used for different commercial activities at different times and for administrative purposes as well. However

the attempts made have not been substantial in drawing benefits for the site. Structures of heritage interest such as the Ussher Fort which was formerly used as a prison and later had a unit of it serving an administrative purpose for the Ghana Museum and Monument Board, is to become a museum devoted to the forts in Ghana, a section of it has already been organised as a small museum, showcasing items used during the slavery era. There are also plans to create an international centre of documentation on the forts of Ghana for the Museum and Monuments Board, which will operate inside the Ussher Fort. The Brazil House has been converted into Mantse Tabon Hall. Franklin House which was built as a small fort to hold slaves before transporting them to ships at sea is to be converted into a slavery museum-the first in Africa. Plans have been made for other heritage properties as well to bring them to new uses.

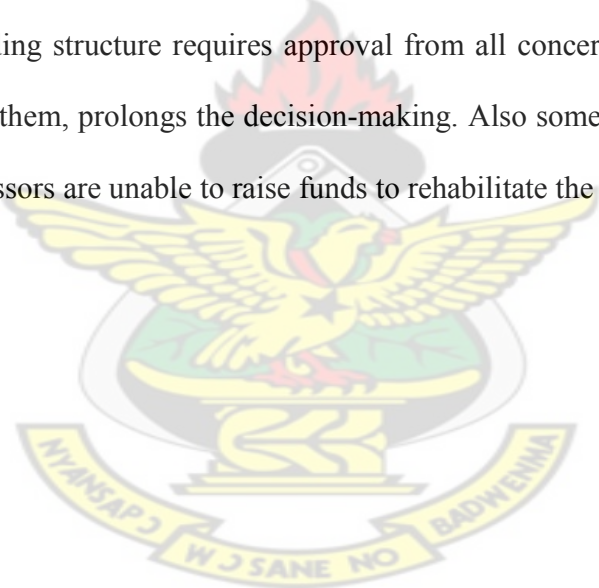
4.6 EXISTING PROBLEMS

Old buildings occupy space and since land in this area is scarce the space occupied by these buildings could contribute in making land or space available, however because the buildings are not in full use all the land or space that the old buildings occupy are not yielding any benefit to the community. Also Old Accra can no longer expand its boundaries due to surrounding developing areas; therefore there is a need for space to be created for the community.

The condition of the buildings is not aesthetically appealing and so although the area has interesting history the building structures and the environment does not invite visitors to the site and those who do visit the site are not eager to revisit the site. The dilapidated state of these old building structures makes it difficult to identify them. Though the area

can boast of abundance in heritage properties, the state of disrepair of some of these old buildings does not allow for visitors to explore the structures since they might put the visitor into danger as such they are only appreciated from a distance, this limits visitors experience of the site. In addition, some of the old buildings have broken doors and windows, cracked screed and rusted ironmongery which are a danger to children in the community who play in and around some of these building structures.

Many of these buildings continue to be in their dilapidated state because of ownership problems. Some buildings are, owned by more than one person; hence decision-making concerning the building structure requires approval from all concerned. This takes time and disputes among them, prolongs the decision-making. Also some building owners are dead and their successors are unable to raise funds to rehabilitate the buildings.



CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter which is the concluding part of this document provides suggestions on measures that can be taken to ensure the success of adaptively reusing old buildings.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

In recent times it is not only an old building that should be put to a new use but also where possible an old and a new building can be merged making it possible for old buildings and new buildings to be fused in design to perform as one unit. However care must be taken to ensure effective compatibility. An old town such as Old Accra can be totally transformed when its old buildings are adaptively reused with many benefits to the community. Adaptive reuse when well executed will benefit different sectors of the society such as:

Environment

The space occupied by the old buildings will the spaces within them will offer more to their landscape in view of the fact that useable spaces will be created in an area that is in dire need of expansion thereby assisting in spatial problems in the area.

Economic

Aside the interest of the heritage properties, the old buildings when effectively used for facilities that assist visitors and enrich visitors' experience, will start a revitalization process and the resulting high influx of visitors to the site will yield economic benefits for the community and the sustenance of the environment. Adapting the old buildings to new uses will make them beneficial to meet present day needs especially for both economic and commercial purposes. Some of these old buildings can be adapted to new

residential units thereby providing housing opportunities, which is much needed in the area.

Social

The effective adaptive reuse of these old buildings will prevent deterioration as their continuous use will ensure their maintenance. This will enable a better appreciation of the old building. The reuse of these buildings enhances their edifice making them aesthetically appealing. After their abandonment for several years the adaptive reuse of these old buildings will revive renewed interests in the area by locals. Also the identity of the community will be safeguarded as all these old building form a part of that identity.

Tourism

Due to the interest the area draws from both far and near, early adaptive reuse plans should be focused on attracting more visitors to the site by enhancing visitors experience and perception of the site. Adaptive reuse plans focusing on tourist related activities old building could be put to uses such as a heritage centre, entertainment centres, museums, art and craft galleries, accommodation, etc. among many others. A heritage centre will provide a place where all information regarding the site can be accessed especially for educational purposes and it will also help to safeguard the site by monitoring heritage and tourism interests in Old Accra. Provision of entertainment centres where visitors can be entertained with cultural music, drumming and dancing as well as a food centre or court where visitors to the site can taste local dishes will enable the locals to exhibit their culture for visitors' appreciation of the site's intangible heritage. Arts and craft shops will let visitors appreciate local craftsmanship pertaining to the area. Museums will give visitors an opportunity to learn more about the history of Old Accra and for visitors who

may want and extended stay on the site, providing accommodation for such visitors will allow more interactions with the locals. Other places of interest such as the old fishing harbour and jetty could also be developed to add to the attractions of the site. Most of the buildings when adapted to new uses will enhance tourist related activities on the site allowing tourists to enjoy what the site has to offer and also have an opportunity to learn about the site. When the livelihood in the area is regenerated, adaptive reuses projects can address other issues.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

For adaptive reuse of old buildings in Old Accra to be successful, it will require co-operation from all stakeholders. Education on the benefits that can be accrued from the adaptive reuse of old building is of key importance to the success of adaptive reuse projects. All stakeholders in Old Accra must be educated especially on benefits to be reaped from adapting old buildings to tourist related purposes. A better understanding will generate support from everyone involved. The education must not be limited to only the people directly involved in the projects but to everyone in the community.

Ownership problems must be adjudicated by the decision makers in the community with collaboration from government agencies so that decision making concerning the old building will be made within the reasonable time to salvage the deterioration of the site.

With the exception of the listed heritage sites, a vast majority of the old buildings belong to individuals who are unable to undertake the required measures needed to adaptively reuse the old buildings, I recommend that a partnership is formed between the owners of the buildings and the governing bodies to develop a framework where individuals will be

encouraged to adaptively reuse their old building with assistance from other interested stakeholders according to laid out rules formulated by the governing bodies. This partnership will enable property owners to be actively involved in implementing proposed projects.

To ensure that rules governing the heritage site are well enforced, there must be a monitoring body to make certain that all guidelines are adhered to and careful consideration is given in deciding what use a building should be put to and compatibility in merging old and new structures.



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APPENDICES



Appendix 1



Old Accra Townscape

(Source: Students' Workshop Old Accra)

Appendix 2



Bible House
(Source: Consortium)

Appendix 3



G.B.Ollivant Building built in 1923
(Source: Author)

Appendix 4



Old Kingsway Department Store built in 1914
(Source: Author)

Appendix 5



Adoso House
(Source: Author)

Appendix 6

Before



Brazil House
(Source: Author)

After



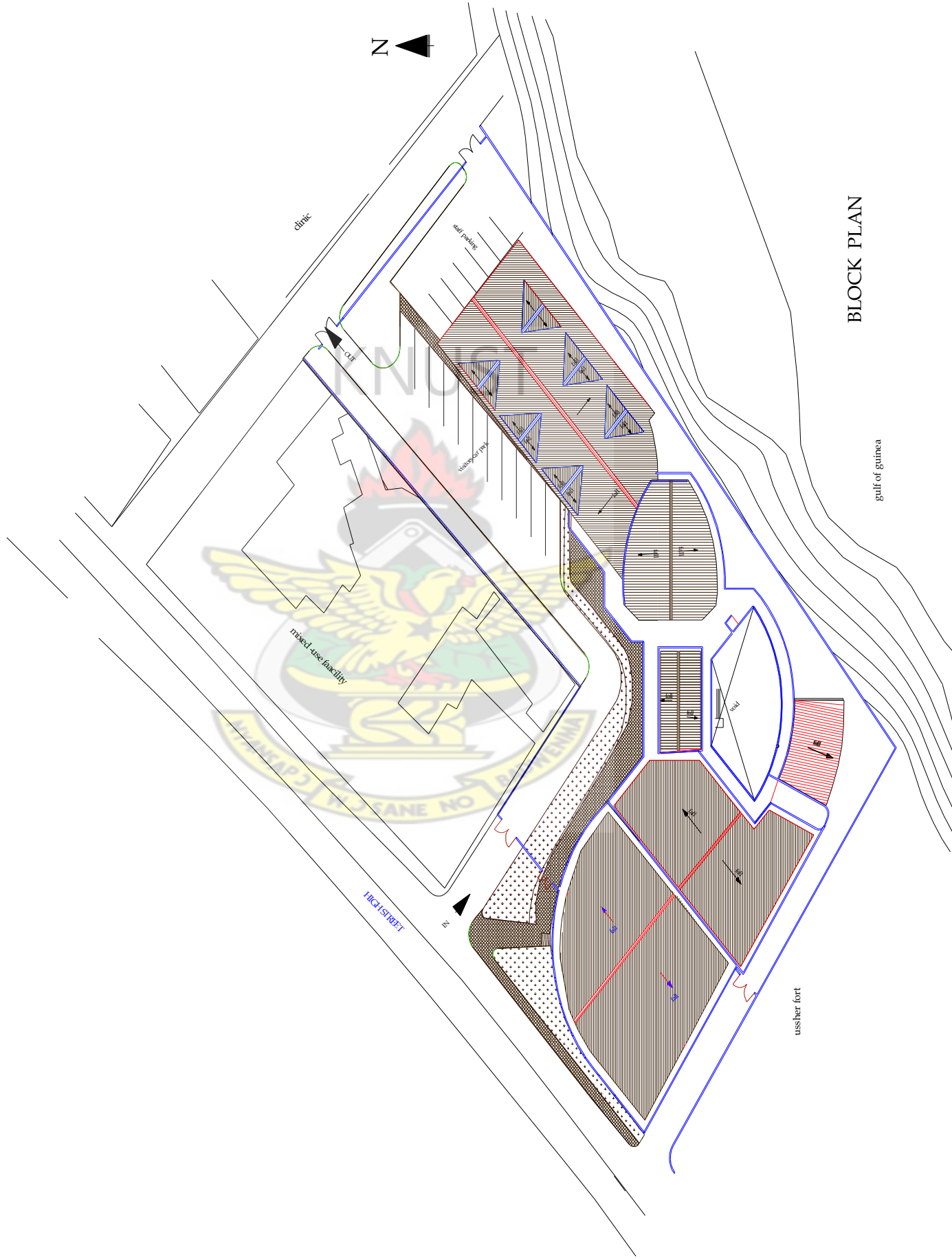
Tabon Mantse Hall

Appendix 7

Adaptive reuse of the Old Kingsway Department Store for a Proposed Old Accra Heritage Centre

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N

clinic

air parking

covered parking

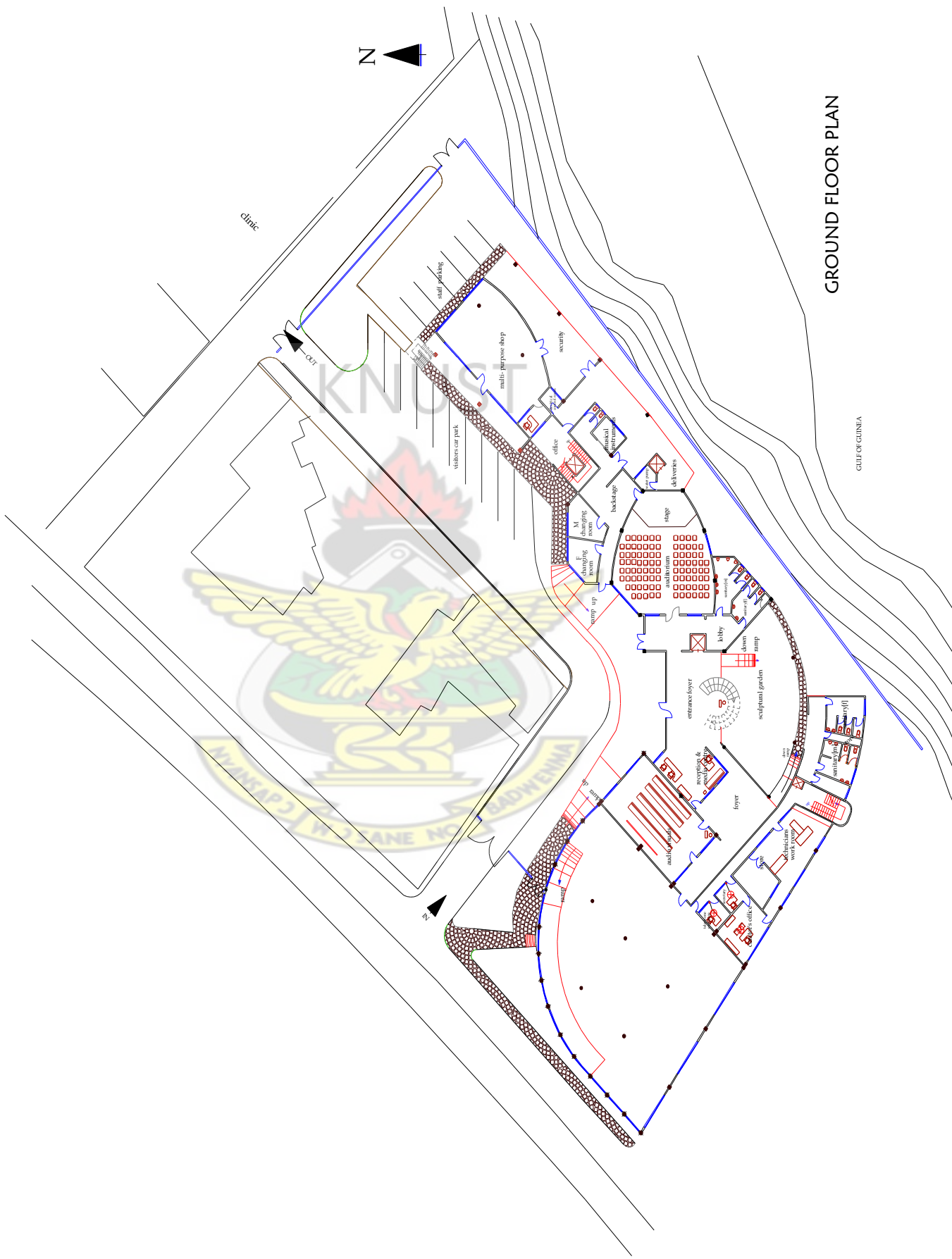
mixed-use facility

High Street

usher fort

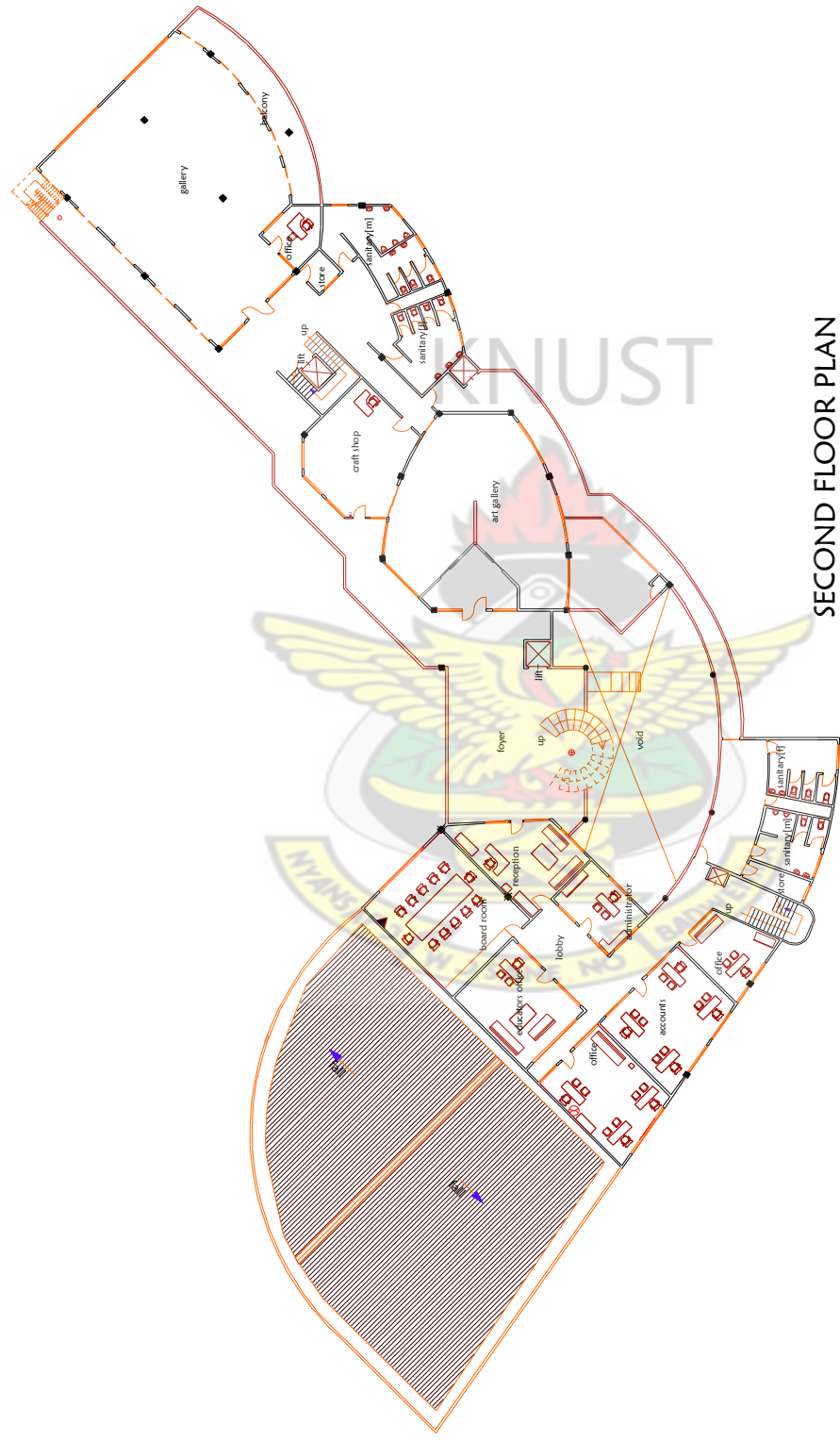
BLOCK PLAN

gulf of guinea

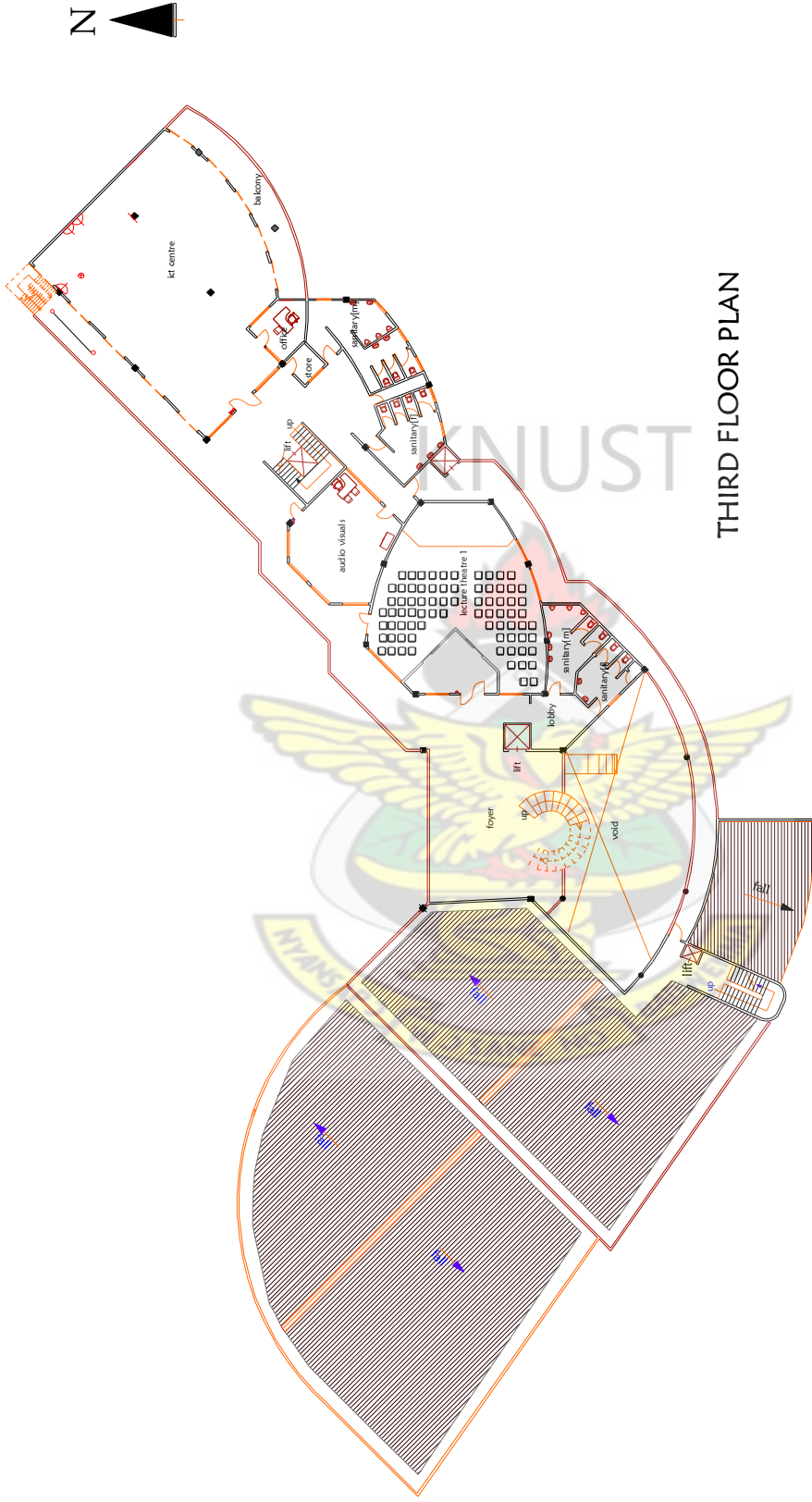


GROUND FLOOR PLAN

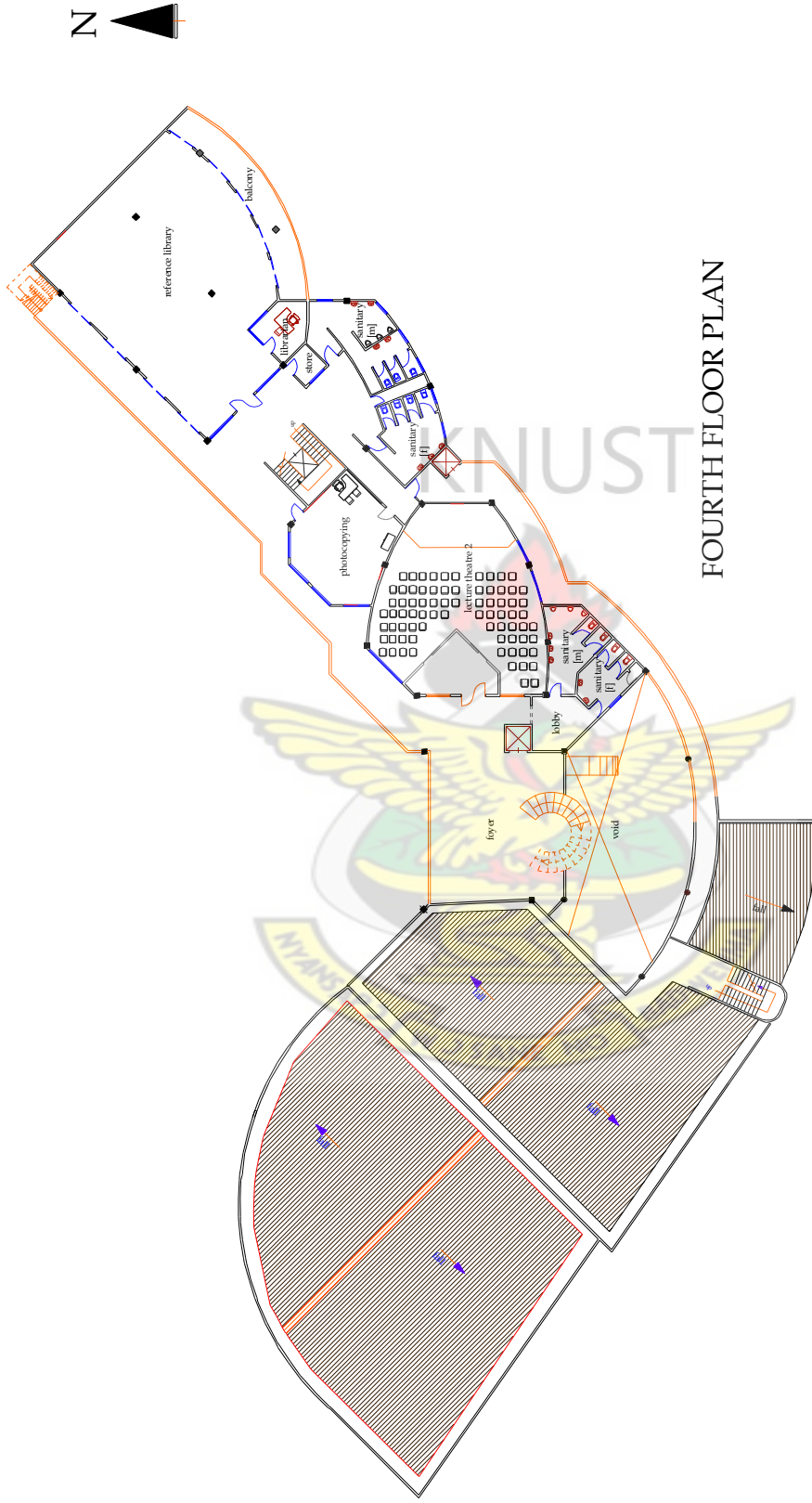
GULF OF GUINEA



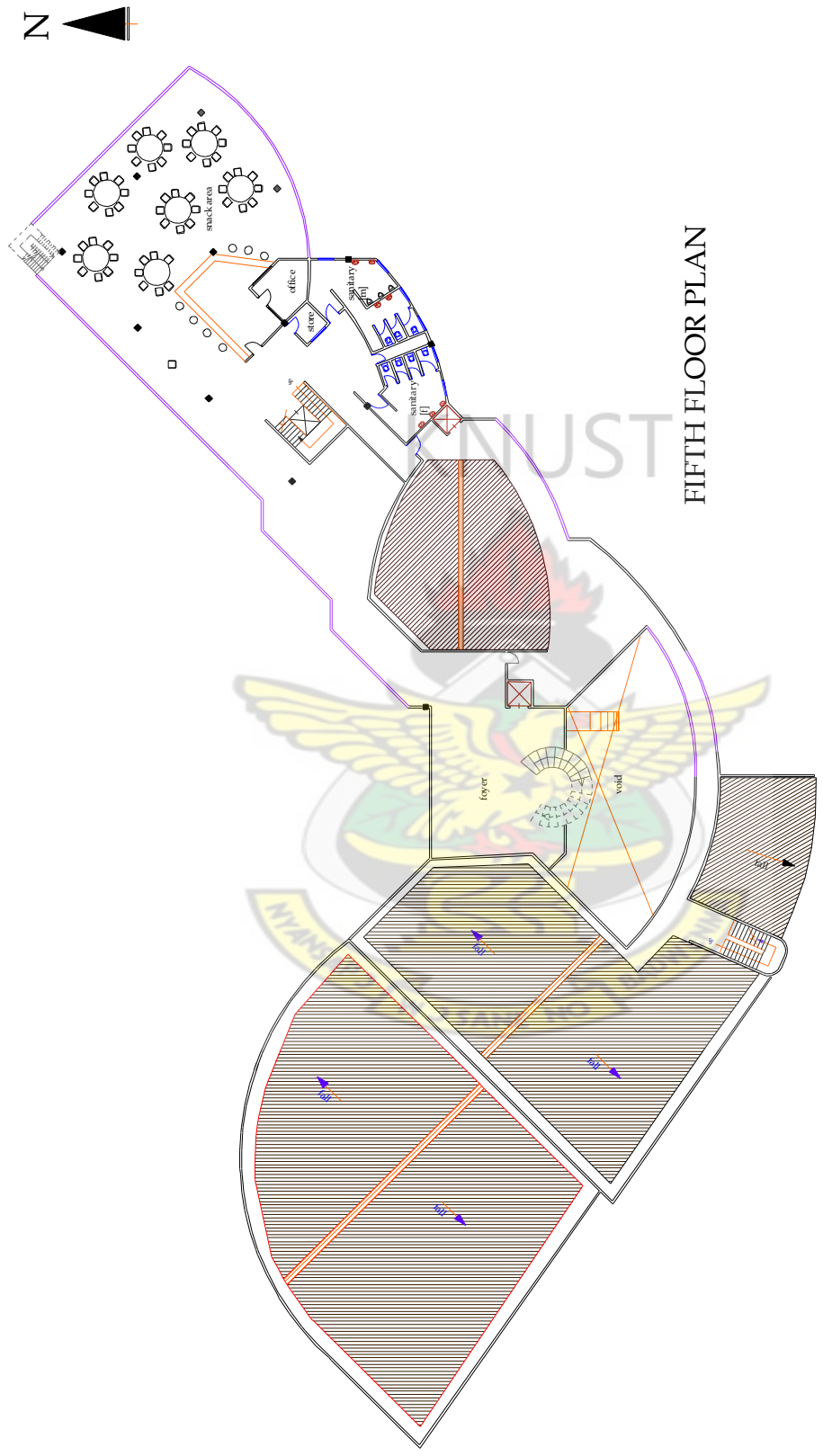
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



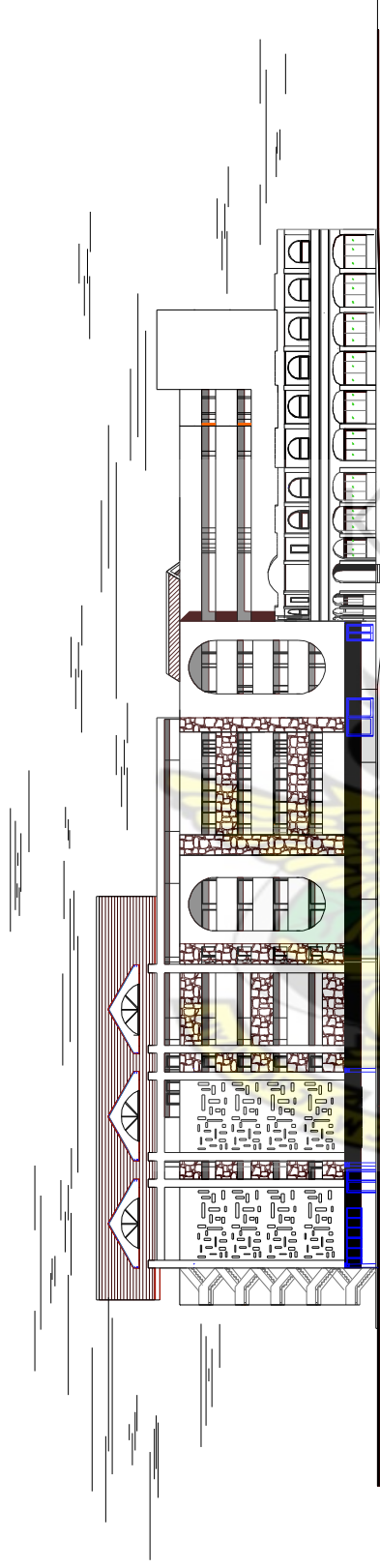
THIRD FLOOR PLAN



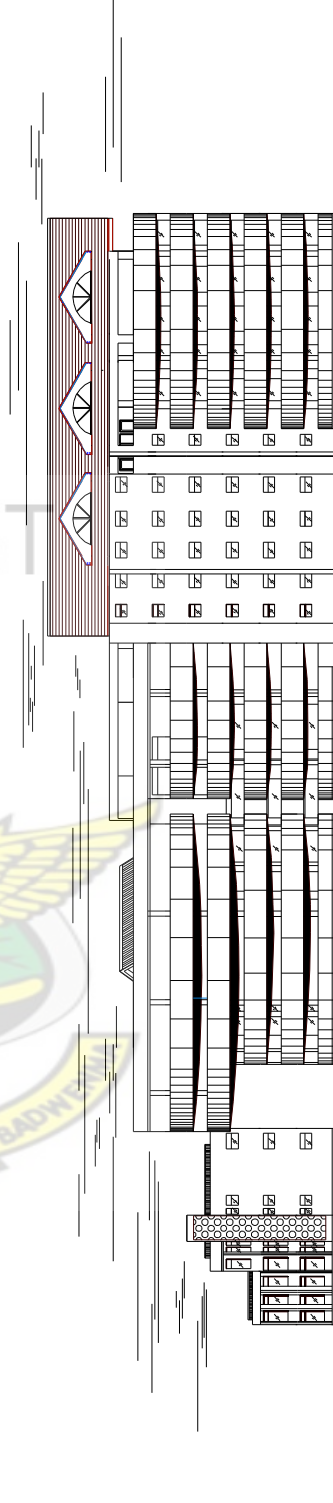
FOURTH FLOOR PLAN



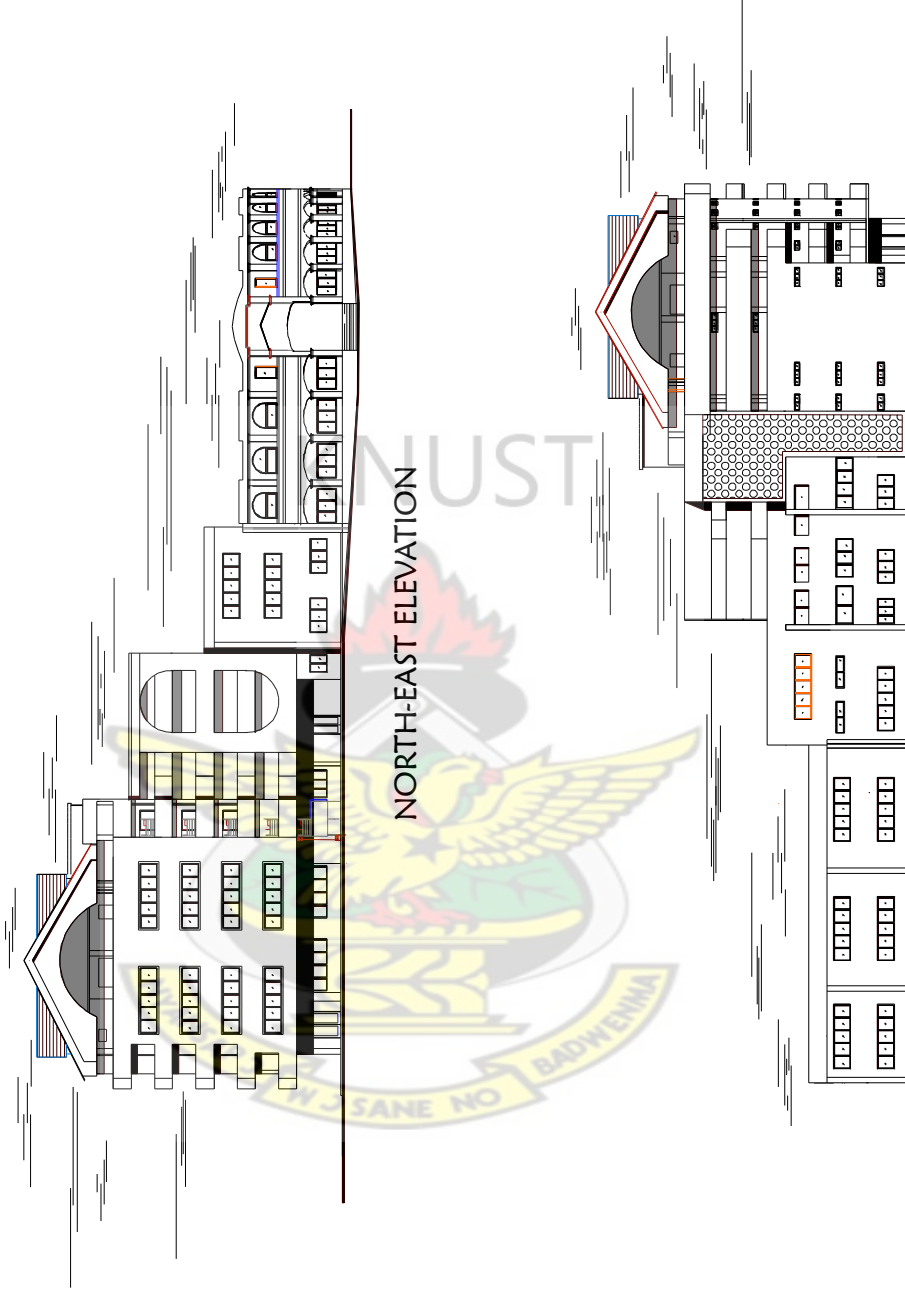
FIFTH FLOOR PLAN



NORTH-WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH-EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH-WEST ELEVATION



EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE