

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work submitted is the original work of the undersigned

**PERCEPTIONS AND PREFERENCES ON HIGH
DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LOW-
COST HOUSING: A CASE STUDY OF LANGA**

SIGNATURE

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I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work, and has not been previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any university for a degree.

ABSTRACT

The provision of low-cost housing constitutes one of South Africa's biggest challenges. As a result, high density residential development, amid an ever increasing urban population in South Africa, is seen as the answer to address the housing problems by the authorities. The concept of densification presupposes, upon its implementation, the advantages of promoting an integrated urban system, more economical use of land, a better quality of life for the recipients, containing urban sprawl and the protection of the agricultural and natural resources.

However, the application of the concept of high density development in low-cost housing has been criticised for failing to fulfil its main objectives which are intended to better the lives of the people. The hypothesis is that the concept of densification may impact negatively on the quality of family living. As a result, the main objective of this study is to seek statistical data which is related to quality of family living and to uncover the views and experiences of household members.

To achieve this objective, a questionnaire, interviews and literature-based research method was adopted in this study. In addition, built housing models complemented the questionnaire. Since part of the government's high density development strategy is to expand the existing townships, the Langa township in the Western Province was chosen to conduct the study.

The findings of this study revealed that the application of the concept of high density development in Langa has resulted in situations of overcrowding and noise, a lack of privacy, smaller housing structures and erven, a lack of space for children to play and adults to socialise and regular clashes between the residents and the authorities regarding these issues.

Therefore, the hypothesis that although densification may have resulted in more housing units being built whilst at the same time impacting negatively on the quality of family living has been proven to be true by this study. However, this study has revealed the fact that although there is nothing inherently wrong with the concept of densification, the problem lies with the manner in which the concept is applied in South Africa.

SAMEVATTING

Die voorsiening van laekostebehuising vorm deel van Suid-Afrika se grootste uitdagings. Die resultaat is dat die ontwikkeling van woongebiede met 'n hoë digtheid deur die owerhede gesien word as een van die oplossings vir behuisingsprobleme van 'n steeds snelgroeiende stedelike bevolking. Met die toepassing van die konsep van verdigting word daar veronderstel dat die voordele van 'n geïntegreerde stedelike stelsel, die ekonomiese gebruik van grond, beter lewensgehalte vir burgers, die beperking van stedelike uitgestrektheid en die beskerming van landbou- en natuurlike hulpbronne, verwesenlik sal word.

Die toepassing van die konsep van verdigting in laekostebehuising word egter gekritiseer omdat dit tekortsiet in die primêre doelwit wat daarop gemik is om die lewensgehalte van burgers te bevorder. Die hipotese is dat die konsep van verdigting gesinslewe en daarby die lewenskwaliteit van persone negatief kan beïnvloed. Die doel van dié studie is dus om statistiese data wat verband hou met die gehalte van gesinslewe, in te win ten einde sienswyses en ervarings van gesinne in laekoste woonbuurte te verwoord.

Om hierdie doelwit te bereik, is 'n vraelys, onderhoude en 'n literatourgebaseerde navorsingsmetode gevolg. Bykomende behuisingsmodelle het die vraelys gekomplementeer. Aangesien die regering se verdigtingstrategie vir ontwikkeling ten doel het om bestaande townships uit te brei, is Langa in die Wes-Kaap gekies as studiegebied.

Die bevindinge van die studie toon aan dat die implementering van die konsep van die ontwikkeling van hoëdigte, laekostebehuising oorbevolking en geraas, 'n gebrek aan privaatheid, kleiner huisstrukture en erwe, 'n gebrek aan speelplek vir kinders en onvoldoende plek vir volwassenes om te sosialiseer, teweeg gebring het - dié toestande het tot gereelde botsings tussen die inwoners en owerhede gelei.

Dié studie bewys dus die hipotese dat hoewel verdigting tot die bou van meer behuisingseenhede gelei het, dit ook 'n negatiewe impak op die gehalte van gesinslewe meegebring het. Die studie bewys dat hoewel daar niks inherent met die konsep van verdigting verkeerd is nie, die probleem lê in die manier waarop die konsep binne Suid-Afrika toegepas word.

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- The lack of available land for the development of new housing in the Central Business Districts and other places of employment.
- The lack of government funds to meet the housing demand.
- The lack of integrated planning.
- The overloading of the existing infrastructure and public services.
- The development of informal settlements, and
- The rising incidence of HIV/AIDS, and other diseases, unemployment

"There is no city in the world that is completely integrated. All cities, in fact, show a degree of racial or class segregation, manifested in different spatial forms. In Johannesburg, however, are segregated as an estate that is not found elsewhere. This is the result of colonialism, which was later entrenched by apartheid." (Purcell, 1974)

South Africa, at stated, is not immune from the above-mentioned problems, which are common to the whole world. It is a country faced by, inter alia, rapid urbanisation, development of informal settlements, apartheid past. This high rate of urbanisation can be observed in areas where blacks have previously been forbidden from owning property in the past. One such area is the Western Cape, which is now seen by migrating people to be offering better opportunities under the new dispensation whilst in reality it is struggling to cope with - for example the ever rising housing demand. This resulted in the development of vast informal settlements.

In order to address these and many other problems reminiscent of the apartheid South Africa, the concept of high density residential development is globally seen as one of the solutions to address

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM FORMULATION & BACKGROUND

It is estimated that by the year 2000, more people would live in the cities than in the rural areas worldwide (United Nations Report, 1996:12). This projection of urbanisation, as well as the high population growth - especially in developing countries - poses a big challenge to the management of cities. Contributing to this complex environment are the following factors:

- Urban sprawl which threatens the sustainability of agricultural land and also the costs in terms of infrastructure development;
- The lack of available land for the development of low-income housing close to the Central Business Districts and other places of employment;
- The lack of government funds to meet the housing demand;
- The lack of integrated planning;
- The overloading of the existing infrastructure and public facilities;
- The development of informal settlements; and
- The rising incidents of HIV / AIDS, TB, other deceases, unemployment and crime.

“There is no city in the world that is completely integrated. All cities are characterised by some degree of racial or class segregation, manifested in distinct spatial forms. South African cities, however, are segregated to an extent that is not found elsewhere. This is the result of years of colonialism, which was later entrenched by apartheid (Planact, 1997:4).”

South Africa, as stated, is not immune from the above-mentioned challenges, which affect the whole world. It is a country faced by, inter alia, rapid urbanisation due to its colonial and apartheid past. This high rate of urbanisation can be observed in areas where black people have been forbidden from owning property in the past. One such area is the Western Cape Province which is now seen by migrating people to be offering better opportunities under the new political dispensation whilst in reality it is struggling to cope with - for example the low-cost housing demand. This resulted in the development of vast informal settlements.

In order to address these and many other problems reminiscent of the apartheid South Africa, the concept of high density residential development is globally seen as one of the methods to address

the problem of urban sprawl, housing shortage and for the creation of compact cities that will be spatially integrated.

As a result, according to the South African Government's Mid-Term Report to the nation (2002:4), a total of 1.2 million houses have been built or were under construction during the period between 1994 and 2001. Authorities attribute this achievement to their implementation of the concept of density development. However, a considerable number of the intended beneficiaries have raised some serious concerns about the impact of high density development on the quality of their lives. They have claimed that density development impacts negatively on the quality of their lives. These opposing views between the authorities and the residents regarding the impact of dense development motivated the writer to conduct this study.

As a result, the hypothesis in this study is that, although densification may have resulted in a large number of houses being built in South Africa, its perceived *negative* impact on the very beneficiaries might have been overlooked during the process of planning and implementation of the concept. Therefore, the hypothesis is built on the fact that densification affects the quality of life of the residents, whether positively or negatively. The nature and the extent of this effect are what this discussion seeks to identify, as the goals below suggest.

1.2 RESEARCH GOALS

The objective of this study is primarily to examine the dynamics, which underlie the application of the concept of high density residential development and its impact on the quality of family living. For this purpose, the specific goals are:

- To establish the correlation between high density residential development and the quality of family living;
- To explore other concepts that are relevant to low-cost housing development;
- To uncover the dynamic factors which underlie low-cost housing development;
- To look at the application and implementation of the concept of high density residential development and other relevant concepts in South Africa with reference to a particular township (Langa, Western Cape Province) as a case study;

- To look at the legal framework for housing in South Africa;
- To establish what the authorities, town planners and other role players in housing development mean and, or understand by the concept of high density residential development;
- To undertake a survey that will reflect the extent to which the quality of family living might be affected by the application of the concept of high density residential development;
- To highlight the needs and preferences of the residents and to assess the extent to which these are met during the housing delivery process;
- To establish whether dense development affects residents in a negative or positive way; and
- To suggest recommendations for the way forward.

The discussion of these goals will, hopefully, shed some light on the main source of the problem in low-cost housing provisioning. It will seek to address the controversial application of the concept of high density residential development. It will try to establish whether high density residential development impacts positively or negatively on the quality of family living and the reasons thereof. The findings of the research will determine whether the concept of high residential density development is applied in a correct manner or some adjustments need to be done.

1.3 RESEARCH METHOD

As the aim of the study was to seek statistical data related to quality of family living for generalised conclusions and to uncover the views and experiences of household members regarding low-cost housing and to back the findings by theory; a questionnaire, interviews and literature-based method was adopted.

Built housing models complemented the questionnaire. The models were mounted on boards consisting of simplex, duplex and three-storey apartment housing structures. All three structures were equal in size (the number of rooms and their sizes). This point was explained to the respondents in order to avoid confusion when it comes to select the most and least favoured structures. Each structure had three bedrooms, a living/dining room, a kitchen and a toilet/bathroom. In the case of the duplex and the apartment, access to the upper floor was explained by removing the upper floor.

The target group for this study happens to be a group belonging to the working class. As a result, to ensure that the questionnaire was answered by suitable respondents, the survey was conducted on weekends over a period of one month.

1.4 CHOICE OF STUDY AREA

The writer sought to conduct this study in one of Cape Town's African townships which would be typical of South African townships, characterised by their peripheral location to the city, lack of open land for development despite the ongoing housing. Development projects in them, influx of people from rural areas and long housing waiting lists in the township was to be well established so that housing development projects and family living conditions in new and current housing stock were evident.

Since part of the government's high density residential development policy is to expand the existing townships through, inter alia, infill and the conversion of hostel dwellings into family units, Langa township was chosen to conduct the study, because such developments had already begun here. Moreover, since the writer resided in Langa, it was more convenient for him as no travelling costs were necessary. As a result, it was possible to conduct the research during the evenings. As the writer knew the township very well, it was possible during the course of the study to carefully select participants in a way that fairly reflected the different opinions of the whole community.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DENSITY

2.1 Introduction

It is indicated in chapter 1 that the beneficiaries of high density residential development in South Africa have raised some serious concerns regarding the quality of life in their houses. Yet, the authorities see the concept of dense development as a method to address the housing problems caused by rapid urbanisation in this country.

As a result of the different perceptions regarding the effect of the implementation of the concept of high density development, this chapter will seek to explore the concept of high density development, its objectives, the need for its application in South Africa, the approaches adopted to achieve it, and its interrelationship with other concepts related to housing development. The purpose for this is to determine the nature and the extent of the impact that high density development might have on housing development and quality of life, respectively. The findings are intended to eliminate any misconceptions regarding the concept of high density development. Firstly though, we take a look at the application of the methods of density on a global scale.

2.2 The occurrence of high density on the international front

South Africa in comparison with other international countries has relatively low patterns of density. According to Senior et al (1988:6), the City of Mexico has an average density of approximately 65 persons per hectare, while densities in Sao Paulo and Los Angeles are respectively 34 and 14 persons per hectare. This compared to the density of Johannesburg, which is 12 persons per hectare, reflects the afore-mentioned statement.

The Cape Metropolitan Council in its MSDF (1996:22) illustrates the problems Los Angeles experienced and relates it to those of South Africa. It seems that the vision that guided development in Los Angeles was "Paradise: one house at a time". In other words each family would own a plot that would be as large as possible to accommodate a swimming pool and a large garden. Every household would also have its own car(s) as this was seen as the best way to achieve the go-anywhere/anytime mobility. The result was that Los Angeles today is a *massive, sprawling metropolis*. It is characterised by dangerous levels of air pollution, an ineffective public transport system, a vast road infrastructure that is costly to maintain, to mention but a few. South African cities it seems are threatening to continue in the trend set by Los Angeles if

serious changes in the urban landscape is not anticipated, and in this case, the application of methods of densification.

Sao Paulo made the mistake of favouring a plan identical to that of Los Angeles, which needless to say, ended catastrophically. It did not have the enormous wealth of Los Angeles to carry out this vision, and with this financial constraints coupled with that of a weak metropolitan governing structure led to the wealthiest occupying the safer, best located and serviced land while the poor were concentrated on the outskirts of the city. Likewise in South Africa, the poor communities have the least access to the facilities and services located in cities. This led to the illegal occupation of land and public open spaces, as well as placing a burden on the delivery of services and resources in cities. Unplanned methods of densification can thus cause situations where the poor can be further disadvantaged and addressing these problems can take a lifetime to eradicate (CMC, 1996:23).

Curitiba has been quoted as one of the success stories, mainly because of their revolutionary transport system, a strong city management and an integrated approach towards planning and financial management of the cities' resources. The concentration of people and activities in and around high density corridors have contributed to an urban system that functions optimally.

It is clear that if implemented correctly, densification can be very advantageous. South Africa however has to be careful not to adopt these international recipes as an easy route to success.

2.3 The Need for Densification in South Africa

Urbanisation is a worldwide phenomenon. The average population of the world's 100 largest cities was less than 200 000 inhabitants in 1800, 2.1 million in 1950 and over 5 million by 1990. The world has become far more urbanised during the last few decades of this century, consequently, a high proportion of the world's population has been living in large cities and metropolitan areas. It is envisaged that soon after the year 2000 more people will be in urban areas than in rural areas worldwide (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Report, 1996:12).

In South Africa, Calitz (2000:21) projected that by the year 2021, the population will increase from the current figure of 44 203 000 to 49 558 000. The population of the Western Province will respectively increase from the current figure of 4 421 000 to 4 949 000 by the year 2021 (Calitz, 2000:133).

The Urban Foundation estimated that over 7 million people in South Africa live in urban informal housing (1991:6). It has also found Cape Town to be the fastest growing metropolitan area in South Africa. The total population of Cape Town was 2 555 800 in 1990. Of this figure, 570 000 was part of the black population. In addition to the number of Blacks in the Cape Town, the Western Cape President of the Institute of Professional Land Surveyors claimed that between 7000 and 10 000 people were moving into the informal housing in the Cape Metropolitan area each month. However, the Cape Town City Engineer put the figure at 5000 people per month. The migration rates, according to Japha (1995:3), remained high during the late 1980s and the early 1990s. It is therefore projected that black people in the Cape Metropolitan area will comprise about one third of the total population of 4 million by the year 2010 (Urban Foundation, 1991:11).

Thus, considering all the statements above, population growth and rapid urbanisation necessitate the building of more houses in order to accommodate the growing population, particularly in the Western Cape. However, the lack of land allocated for low-cost housing in urban South Africa makes this a very difficult task. Therefore, high density development seems an ideal method to address this land scarcity problem. It also aims to solve the problem of urban sprawl since it implies mechanisms of urban integration that will (hopefully) create compact cities, more sustainable land use patterns and quality living environments.

In a metropolitan-wide attempt to address these problems and many other relevant planning and development issues, the idea of a Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) for the Western Cape was brought to life in June of 1991. The drafting of the MSDF (referred to in section 2.2) was informed by the following key special policies or principles:

- Management for Sustainability;
- Creating Quality Urban Environments;
- Contain Urban Sprawl;
- Residential Intensification;
- Urban Integration; and
- Redressing Imbalances

In April 1996, a Technical Report was endorsed by the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) after a broadly-based and long consultative process and subsequently, supported in principle by all the Metropolitan Local Councils (MLCs) in the Cape Metropolitan Area (CMA). High density development became one of the spatial principles of the MSDF (Cape Metropolitan Council,

Statutory MSDF, April 1999). This briefly illustrated the birth and adoption of the concept of densification in South Africa.

2.4 The Objectives of High Density Development

It has been proven that the location of a housing development affects the quality of life of its residents. As a result, it is important that safe, well-designed and maintained neighbourhoods are created by encouraging the location of housing near transport, employment and social facilities, particularly along activity streets, spines and nodes. The purpose of densification is to protect the urban edge and to achieve a more efficient and effective urban form. An efficient and effective urban form would be the one where housing is linked with public transport, public facilities, public open spaces and the place of work (Cape Metropolitan Council, MSDF, 2000:8). The individual objectives of density development are as follows:

- To create thresholds for better service provision
- To promote better urban functioning;
- To lessen the wastage of urban land;
- To allow for better urban design;
- To contain urban sprawl; and
- To protect agricultural and natural resources.

A further exploration of related and relevant concepts will henceforth be pursued.

2.5 Definitions

2.5.1 The Concept of Density

According to CMC (MSDF) Hand Book, ¹ 'Densification is the process whereby residential densities (the number of dwellings per hectare) are increased in a planned and meaningful way within the existing boundaries of a specific area' (2000:17).

In breaking down the concept of dense development, the term, density, is defined as the *intensity of development and human activity within a certain spatial area*. Development is defined as a broad term, which refers to actions taken, by individuals, communities or government with the purpose of improving the quality of life. These actions find expression through the socio-economic and man-made environment. The term, development, needs not to be seen only from a

¹A report on MSDF with no official status but acts as guidelines

physical perspective, for example, the structure and the growth of the city, without considering the social, cultural, economic and political dimensions that are attached to it (CMC, 1999:17).

The above definition of the concept of dense development spells out clearly the fact that, if applied correctly, the concept is supposed to improve the quality of life rather than to impact on it negatively. Therefore, by definition, the concept should have a positive impact on the lives of the communities.

Other concepts related to density are briefly described below in Box 1.

Coverage: the percentage of the area of a site which may be covered in total by buildings which are covered by a roof or projection, measured over the exterior walls thereof, provided that the area covered by an eave or other projection to a maximum width of one metre shall be excluded from the calculation of the maximum allowable coverage;

Floor factor: the ratio prescribed for the calculation of the maximum floor area of a building or buildings on a site and for the purpose of these by-laws means the same as floor space ratio or bulk;

Floor space: the total area of all the floors of all the buildings on a site covered by a roof, slab or projection, measured from the outside of the walls of such buildings with the proviso that in the determination of the maximum allowable floor area of a building the area covered by a roof protruding over the outside wall may be excluded from the calculation for a maximum overhang of one metre. A canopy or projection on the street side of business premises in business zones shall not be regarded as floor space;

Franschhoek Zoning Scheme Bylaws, 1999

2.5.2 The House Concept

According to Wedin and Nygren (1976:167), “... house form is not simply the result of physical forces or any single casual factor, but is the consequence of the whole of socio-cultural factors seen in their broadest term”. As a result, the design of a house must conform to the prevailing values, attitudes and aspiration of the culture. If these are not accommodated in the design of the house, the occupants experience strains and dissatisfaction, which will be shown in various ways.

This definition of the concept of a house is supported by Dewar (1993:5) and he goes on to add that a house itself impacts on the life of the individual and family in a number of ways, inter alia:

- On physical health- factors such as adequate air circulation, space, protection from damp and extreme temperatures are all important in this regard;
- On psychological health- factors such as overcrowding and lack of privacy

- On social conditioning- the need of adequate space and privacy for positive social interaction; and
- The design and amount of available space affects the extent to which the unit facilitates and enriches household activities.

This definition of housing is also supported by Lazenby (1977:39) when he states that housing was a programme of organization of physical space. This implied a relevant use of land and investment of considerable resources with the intention of providing lodging to social groups that were unable to obtain it on the open market. However, a problem with this approach to housing provisioning arose, that it has changed over time and is now presented according to the conditions and needs of the society in which it is manifested. As a result, Lazenby (1977:132) suggests that housing must be seen in its total socio-cultural context because a house is more than a place to live in, but a man's base for his entry to new life and for the preservation of certain intrinsic values.

In addition, Harrison (1977:189) suggests that people do not only value houses simply because of the shelter or accommodation provided by the structure, but also because of the following factors:

- accessibility to opportunities and general public facilities;
- the quality of the physical environment in its immediate vicinity; and
- the proximity of other dwellings, the extent of traffic noise and the general appearance of the surroundings.

The definition of the concept of the house by the above authors indicates that the concept is more than just a physical structure or a roof over one's head. The concept has psychological, social and cultural connotation. Disregard for these aspects will impact on the lives of the occupants negatively. This was also the opinion of the Area Manager of Langa, Mr Trout, when by asked by the writer for his views during an interview with him on this aspect. However, he added that lack of funds and will, from the side of the authorities make it difficult for these aspects to be portrayed in the structure of the house.

➤ **Housing Quality and quantity**

Moller and Schlemmer (1980:18), argue that the concentration on the provision of more housing units will solve the problem of housing shortage in a short space of time. However,

concentration on quality will result in the provisioning of housing units which are durable and do not need replacement at a later stage. Therefore, the decision to focus on quality or quantity will be determined by whether the provision of housing is a long or short-term investment.

➤ Adequate Housing

The concept of adequate housing is somewhat confusing as there is no clear indication as to what this really means in qualitative terms. For example, there is nowhere in the Constitution or in any other piece of legislation where the government specifies as to what it means by adequate housing. Even the Council of South African Bureau of Standards (1990:11), falls short of telling what the term means other than saying that it means *acceptable, adequate, satisfactory or suitable in the opinion of any local authority*.

When Mr Trout, the Area Manager of Langa, was asked on 25 January 2002 by the writer to explain the meaning of an adequate house, to him it was the one which, in its structural design, takes into consideration the needs of the occupants. Such needs would be, for example, the size and the number of bedrooms required by the family, the size of the living room, and so on. However, lack of will from the senior housing officials makes the consideration of such needs almost impossible.

This state of affairs, therefore, means that the meaning of the term 'adequate housing' depends on the interpretation of the authorities. This state of affairs, Wegelin (1978:58) adds, where the residents have no say in the structural design of the houses they occupy, implies an inherent authoritarian element in determination of residents' needs.

➤ The Housing Types

Different housing types constitute different measures for densities. The Republic of South Africa's Western Cape Planning and Development Act, of 1999, (Subsection 4.2 under Schedule IV), requires that development should result in security of tenure and should provide for the widest possible range of tenure alternatives, including individual and communal tenure.

In Langa the following types of housing are available and occupied by families, hence its inclusion in this study:

(i) Detached Housing

The origins of a detached house could be traced at the time when medical doctors were very much involved in the design and construction of housing. When doctors found that diseases tended to spread in contiguous buildings, the separation of people was favoured from the point of view of public health. This resulted in people favouring detached single housing to apartment or other forms of housing (Wedin and Nygren, 1976:31).

Detached housing provides the greatest degree of privacy. However, it is an expensive type of housing to build for the lower-income groups. As a result, it yields place to semi detached housing, which is considerably cheaper to build (Ashworth, 1947: 34).

(ii) Row-housing

Ashworth (1947:35) indicates the following disadvantages regarding row housing:

- (a) Lack of privacy due to the house adjoining on either side;
- (b) The high level of noise penetrating through the partitioning walls;
- (c) The absence of windows on the third side of the house; and
- (d) The difficulty of access to the back in the case of middle houses.

As a result of these conditions, many people do not favor row housing.

(iii) Multi-storey apartments

Although improvements can be made to apartments, family life can never prevail in the same manner as in a single dwelling. This fact is supported by Ashworth, 1947:34 when he states that apartments lack the provision of privacy, access to a garden, facilities for supervising children at play, and for keeping pets. This form of housing has for mainly cultural reasons, been largely unacceptable for the South African housing market. The counterpart of a single storey dwelling on an erf has also, however proven, to be an unsustainable form of housing delivery.

(iv) Communal Living

The city council of Moscow is in the process of abolishing communal apartments of the communist era. They are being replaced by one-bedroom flats, which are built at less cost. Life in communal flats where people of different backgrounds and lifestyles are expected to share one kitchen and one toilet is no longer considered a normal way of living. The hardships of communal living were also described by President Vladimir Putin in his recent memoirs where

he recalled the kitchen arguments between his parents and their neighbours, and the joys of chasing rats on filthy stairways (Gentleman, A. 2001, January 26-February 1. Mail & Guardian, p.17).

The above comment is an indication of some of the difficulties, which could be associated with the quality of family living where communal living is used as part of densification strategy. Baum and Valins support this point by stating that spatial reductions can cause people to get in one another's way (1977:12).

However, according to Franck and Ahrentzen (1991:5), there are some economic and social benefits in communal living. Economic advantages are that the rent is usually low in shared housing. Sharing also allows for amenities such as a large living room, which some people would not afford, if they were to live in single residential housing. Social benefits include the presence of increased security resulting from the presence of others. There is also the possibility for social interaction between the residents.

2.5.3 The Concept of Housing Standards

In terms of the United Nations Report (1968:9), standards can be defined as measures of levels of acceptability at a given time and place and in a set of cultural, technological and economical conditions. Therefore, a standard is what should be. Standards should take into account the need for the provision of open space between buildings wide enough in relation to their height to enable light, air and sunshine to penetrate into the rooms.

According to Ashworth (1947:13),² the Burt Committee, which was appointed by the Ministry of Works in Britain to compile a report on house construction, suggested a criterion by which the construction of houses might be assessed. The Committee came up with seven structural requirements, which should be met in an adequate house. These were:

- *Strength and Stability*: this involves the considerations of the loads for the floors, roofs, and wind pressure.
- *Resistance to Fire*: a house can be exposed to fire as a result of the planning and design involved. The risk is that of catching fire from the adjacent buildings or other outside sources. To avoid this from happening, suitable spacing of houses and the limiting of the size of the blocks is one of the solutions.

² Although the book is more than 40 years old, its content has been confirmed by Langa Area Manager to be still relevant in terms of today's housing construction.

- *Resistance to vermin infection:* Although it is impossible to avoid infestation, it can be reduced through adequate natural and artificial lighting and careful design in detail.
- *Durability and Ease of Maintenance:* A poor design in detail or the use of unsuitable materials can result in a number of problems in brickwork causing, for example, water leakages. This can be avoided by applying designs and materials of good standard.
- *Avoiding dampness:* With regard to rain penetrating through the external wall, serious penetration of water into the house usually takes place through fine cracks between the units and the mortar. The cracks are caused by the shrinkage of the mortar as it dries, by inevitable slight settlements to which every house is subjected or by poor adhesion. The quality of the material used in the walling unit and the mortar has a significant influence on the amount of water that will penetrate the house. In the case of rising damp, the resistance of floors to moisture rising from underground is supposed to be the same as that of the foundation floor. What makes the foundation floor resistant to water/moisture penetration is the waterproof membrane inserted in it. Therefore, a lining should be included in the floor.
- *Thermal Insulation:* The amount of heat required to warm a room depends largely on the quantity of heat lost by passing through the wall, windows, door, ceiling, roof and floor. A comfortable temperature can be obtained by providing adequate thermal insulation during the course of the construction of the house.
- *Sound Insulation:* Ashworth (1947:21), suggests that noise is unwanted sound. In modern life all people have to put up with a certain amount of noise, but within the home it should be limited so that it does not become a nuisance or affect the nerves of the occupants. Therefore, attention should be given to this during the course of construction of the house especially in the building of flats. The reduction of noise can be effected by the design of the house.

The above standards, according to Ashworth (1947:22), could be achieved through good planning. Rooms such as the kitchens can separate living rooms. In the case of an apartment, living rooms and bedrooms can be separated from the public access areas containing noisy stairs. However, there is a limit to the extent to which sound insulation can be achieved by planning measures. As a result, it becomes necessary to include insulation in the structure. This can be done by lining each living room with an inner shell or in a house of cavity construction, the cavity could be returned along the whole length of the party wall, thus dividing the adjacent houses by a 2-inch gap.

2.5.4 The Concept of Needs

The concept of needs is defined as measurements of the gap between what is there in the community and what is desirable. Needs are expressed in terms of what society feels is required to bridge the gap between a level of fulfilment acceptable as a minimum standard and the real

quality of life of its people (United Nations Report, 1968:9).

When it comes to South African housing legislation, Subsection 2 under Section 19 of the Republic of South African Local Government Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998), requires that a municipal council should annually review the needs of the community and its priorities to meet those needs. This requirement by the Local Government Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998) supports the suggestion by Wedin and Nygren (1976:152), that housing should meet the needs of the residents. The individual housing needs cited by these two authors are as follows:

People need a **sense of place**. This means a connection of their own and this could be in the form of a physical place and/or furnishings. The mere fact that some people “abuse” their house means that they do not feel as part of it. Pride in peoples’ immediate environment is related to the way they and the environment interact (Wedin and Nygre, 1976:152).

Wedin and Nygren (1976:152) say that, ‘ **Relatedness** is the sense of relationship to the whole gamut of society. The house helps families fit into the web of life and establish relatedness.’ Relatedness would be between people in the same house or in other houses. Children need to know their parents’ friends and parents need to know their children’s playmates.

According to Wedin and Nygren (1976:152), people appear to have a desire to become involved and then to withdraw into their own private world. Thus, children need **privacy** for the pursuit of hobbies, studies, daydreaming and to escape the presence of disapproving parents. The parents must also have a measure of privacy if the marriage is to be fruitful and enduring. Given these reasons for the importance of privacy, it can be assumed that lack of privacy could have psychological effects on those who are denied this need.

The furniture that people buy for their houses and the way they arrange it, the pictures they hang on the walls and the plants they choose for their houses are all messages about themselves that they wish to convey back to themselves (Wedin and Nygren, 1976:156). Therefore, it is important that the size and the **design of a house** allows for the fulfillment of this need.

A house can be stimulating or over stimulating. A stimulating house refreshes, strengthens and encourages those who live in such a house to do exciting things. A house, that provides over stimulation as caused by overcrowding due to the lack of sufficient space can as a result, cause illness to the occupants (Wedin and Nygren, 1976:152).

Wedin and Nygren (1976:153) argue that, people who are given houses in which they are unable

to add their own touches as a result of the regulations or the way the structure was designed, respond with apathy. People have a **creative need** that they are born with. They will always try to satisfy such a need.

People use their houses to depict who they are in their communities. They use their houses to show their status in their communities. The house becomes an expression of self. Therefore, the type and the design of the house are very important aspects for meeting the need to **define oneself**.

Wedin and Nygren (1976:157) indicate that most people describe their ideal house as freestanding, square, detached, single-family house and yard. Most families universally reject the image of the apartment buildings. An apartment is not seen as a home. They elaborate and qualify this claim by stating that one could argue that people are conditioned to be interested in such a dwelling unit through advertising, model homes salesmanship and the image of good life that is portrayed on television. According to these authors, this must be true to a certain extent as these media are in turn only reflecting what seems to be a universal need for a house form in which the self and the family unit can be seen as separate, unique, private and protected.

The above statement indicates clearly the fact that all the above mentioned individual housing needs, from sense of place to defining self, are more likely to be achieved through a detached single house than the other types of houses. This however is questionable in the South African housing environment.

At this point of this discussion, there is enough convincing evidence that the concept of needs is more than just the physical structure of the house. It includes, among other things, the aspects of psychological, sociological and cultural needs.

2.5.5 The Quality of Life Concept

The concept of the quality of life is used to denote a certain degree of goodness or excellence in life. When it comes to housing, it relates the extent to which the physical, social and psychological needs and aspirations of the occupants are realised in the houses in which they live (Moller and Schlemmer, 1980:1).

What can be deduced from the above definition is that the house in which people live and the extent to which their physical, social and psychological needs are met, is a measure of determining the quality of life of such people. Therefore, there is a correlation between housing development and the quality of life of the occupants.

2.5.6 The Concept of Space

No matter what level of development a country is going through, its people have basic human functions that they need to carry out in their homes. They need to prepare and eat meals, to care for babies, to rest and sleep, to wash and dry clothes, to spend leisure time in recreation, to teach the kids, and to converse with and entertain guests. This is an indication of the extent to which space, particularly inside the house, is important to every house owner (United Nation Report, 1968:22).

In addition to the above statement regarding the importance of space, Dewar and Uytendogaardt (1995:10) emphasise the importance of public space. To them, public spaces are extensions to the private dwelling unit. They are places within which people experience the area in which they reside, particularly the urban poor. The poor, who cannot meet some of their household needs, turn to public spaces in order to play their lives collectively. Therefore, there is a need to create a balance between a settlement and nature.

2.6 Methods of achieving high density development

The availability of land in the urban area for the development of housing, particularly for the development of low-cost housing is a problem. Land close to the Central Business Districts is very expensive for the location of low-income groups. For these reasons, the CMC (2000:8) proposes the following approaches for high residential density development:

- infill;
- conversion of hostels and vacant commercial/industrial buildings into residential uses (where appropriate);
- subdivision; and
- redevelopment.

Infill development is the development of pockets of vacant land within an existing urban settlement (CMC, 1999:19). These pockets of land are the result of traditional planning model to settlement making which have led to urban sprawl, low density development and fragmented cities (Dewar and Uytendogaardt, 1995:3). In taking this point further, the Urban Problems Research Unit Report (May, 1987:3) argues that this was the result of the apartheid system which created buffer strips in order to segregate residential areas along racial lines. According to Dewar and Uytendogaardt (1995:4), 'These buffers are residual spaces rather than spaces designed to contribute to peoples lives'.

As a result, it is the intention of the present government to develop these vacant parcels of land in order to address the shortage of housing in the urban areas. The government hopes that by doing so, more people will be housed near existing community facilities and thereby save on the cost of an additional infrastructure needed in the case of developing a new settlement.

With regard to the conversion of the hostels and vacant commercial buildings into residential uses, it is argued in Arrigone (1995:6), that this could be done by legally changing the current use of the non-residential buildings into residential ones or by increasing the residential use of a residential building. In regard to the second option, a Hostels Redevelopment Programme was agreed to between the National Housing Forum and the Department of Local Government and National Housing in 1993. This programme is referred to as the hostel initiative. Its purpose is to develop and empower the community that lives in the existing hostels in the townships. This development and empowerment of the hostel community take the following form (Clarke, 1994:2):

- Rehabilitation: by renovating the building structure to its original condition;
- Upgrading: through improvement of communal facilities;
- Conversion: this means the accommodation of both single-persons and families;
- Transformation: by integrating the hostel dwellers into the whole community of the township;
and
- Demolition: partially or completely demolition of the building structure in order to make additions and alterations or to clear the ground for more suitable for of accommodation.

The conversion of hostels and vacant commercial or industrial land has also started to take place. For example, as indicated by the area manager of Langa during an interview held on 25 January 2002, the authorities are in the process of converting hostels in Langa into family units. These units consist of either one-room family units where facilities such as the kitchens and toilets are shared by up to five families or one bedroom unit per family.

The legal subdivision of the existing plots in low-density residential areas encompasses the subdivision of erven into two or more new plots for new dwellings. The minimum area required for the new subdivided erven is taken into consideration in terms of local planning regulations such as zoning ordinances (Arrigone, 1995:6).

Redevelopment means the legal construction of additional dwellings on existing erven in low density residential areas. This is done to meet the changing needs of the household in terms of the size of space required. However, this approach has less impact on densification as the scope for additional dwellings is limited in this regard (Arrigone, 1995:6).

Nonetheless, redevelopment is a broader concept in that it encompasses all of the above approaches to density development. Infill, conversion and subdivision are all part of redeveloping an erf or residential area.

Some of these approaches to density development are already underway in South African low-cost housing as the means of addressing the shortage of the existing housing stock. However, the manner in which these are applied is what this study will scrutinise at a later stage, in order to assess the impact of each on the quality of life.

2.7 Proposed Application of the Concept of High Density Development in South Africa

Some of the aspects that, according to the MSDF (CMC, 2000:53-58), require consideration regarding the application of the concept of high density residential development, are the following:

- That densification would be more appropriate within the activity corridors, activity streets, activity spine and the nodes although these are not the only locations where densification is desirable or possible. The purpose of this is to locate more people close to public transport, public facilities and the work place.
- That densification should be seen as part of a broader strategy to improve the quality of the urban environment.
- That densification does not mean high-rise buildings or flats.
- The building material and the colours used.
- Is the architectural style compatible with the surrounding area?
- Is the general quality of the building acceptable?
- Is the building orientated in the most appropriate way on the site and have privacy and the overlooking windows been carefully considered?

Although the Report on MSDF has no official status, the above aspects act as guidelines for the application of the concept of high residential density development. Given the above aspects of densification, the MSDF document gives a clear indication as to how the concepts of

densification should be applied. The application of the concept should conform to certain guidelines as a measure of fulfilling the desired goals of density development.

As a result, high residential density development which is underway in Langa will, in the process of this discussion, be tested against these aspects to determine whether or not the MSDF guidelines are adhered to or considered during the application of high density development. The findings will be very helpful in getting to the root cause of the problem regarding density development, particularly in the townships. This will also help to determine the kind of correlation that exists between the concepts of density development and the quality of family living.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in this chapter, it should be noted that, in its proposals, the MSDF does not directly link low-cost high density development with the concepts of quality of life, housing, needs, standards and space. Nevertheless, it should be concluded that by its definition, objectives, approaches to achieve it and its proposed application, the concept of high density development is intended to improve the organisation and management of the urban environment through the creation of compact cities. These compact cities should in turn, bring about integrated cities in which residential areas are brought closer to opportunities and the built environments are linked to public spaces. Eventually, this is supposed to improve the residents' quality of life rather than to impact on it negatively.

From this, it can be deduced that there is nothing wrong with the concept of high density development itself and its proposed application by the MSDF. The problem may lie somewhere else, particularly in the way in which the concept is implemented by the authorities. This is what this discussion will explore in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

CONTEXTUALISING DENSITY WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA – THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In order to contextualise the aspects discussed in chapter 2, an understanding and discussion of the past legislation which shaped the apartheid city, and the present legislation on housing provisioning, as the means of identifying the underlying dynamics related to low-cost housing development in the country, are essential.

3.2 The Legislative Framework before 1994

The shaping of the apartheid city in South Africa began long before the National Party came to power in 1948. The growth of the mining industry from the 1850s resulted in rural people migrating to the cities in search of job opportunities. This migration to the cities was also enhanced by the land dispossession that took place in the rural areas. As a result, most black people who relied on subsistence farming for their livelihood, found themselves forced to move to the cities in the event of colonial dispossession of greater amounts of land. In order to legitimize the dispossession of land, different laws were passed by the colonialists and the apartheid government (Planact, 1997:4).

3.2.1 The 1913 Land Act

The Land Act of 1913 was passed as the cornerstone of land dispossession. Large amounts of land were taken away from rural Blacks under this Act and added to designated reserves. This dispossession of land, together with the evictions from private farms resulted in a large landless section of the South African population. This section of the population then moved to the cities in search of job opportunities. This Act was enhanced and enforced even in the cities through the application of other supporting pieces of legislation by the colonialists.

3.2.2 The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923

The Native (Urban Areas) Act was passed in 1923 as a measure of controlling the numbers of people who were migrating to the cities. Under this Act, a system of municipal-controlled passes was put in place, as the movement in the urban areas was controlled by the local authorities at that time. This system resulted in construction of informal settlements on the outskirts of the cities. Moreover, very few houses were built between the two World Wars. This resulted in

overcrowding in the areas that were designated for Blacks. In turn, overcrowding led to land invasions and other forms of urbanisation.

Therefore, the housing problems that are highlighted in the previous two chapters in fact started long before the National Party came to power. The apartheid policy of the National Party *added* to the problems that were already in existence.

3.2.3 The Homelands Policy

When the National Party came to power in 1948, it immediately formulated a homelands policy. The purpose of this policy was to contain the urbanisation of Blacks. As a result, the policy set aside certain land in the so-called 'Black reserves'. These were to be known later as Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the TBVC states). The government tried to encourage people to remain in these homelands by introducing industrial decentralisation which was to provide job opportunities in the homelands through state-initiated industrial schemes. Since a large part of the economy was dominated by urban mining which required Black labour, industrial decentralisation was unsuccessful as an incentive to make black labour remain in the homelands.

Therefore, the migration of Blacks to the urban areas was inevitable. However, the government devised some means to control the entry and the movement of Blacks in the urban areas through other means.

3.2.4 The Pass Laws

Since the mining industry required Black labour in the cities which were regarded as the domain of Whites and the government wanted the majority of Blacks to remain in the homelands, the National Party introduced a national system of pass laws to correspond with the homeland policy. These pass laws controlled the entry of Blacks to the cities. Therefore, Blacks were regarded as temporary sojourners who would return to the homelands in the end and their families were discouraged from coming to the cities.

3.2.5 The Group Areas Acts of 1950 and 1966

After the government had realised that the presence of some Blacks in the cities was necessary for the well-being of the economy, separate townships were created for them. This development of separate locations for Blacks was enforced through Group Areas Act. The government was

responsible for the provisioning of housing in the townships, hence, the standard housing that is to be found in the townships today.

According to Planact (1997:5), the Group Areas Act and the fact that the government was prepared to subsidise public transport for black labourers resulted in the development of townships away from the workplace. Therefore, the location of low-cost housing away from opportunities that characterises today's townships, dates back to the introduction of the Group Areas Act.

During the 1970s, more Blacks migrated to the cities and despite this, the government did not build houses to accommodate these increasing numbers. This refusal of the government to build more houses led to a gradual overcrowding in the townships. As a result, black migrants had no alternative, but to build shack settlements on the outskirts of the cities.

Thus, although the government tried to prevent migration to the cities through legislation and incentive measures such as industrial decentralisation, there was a large number of permanent black population in the cities by the 1980s. The government could not keep up with the swelling numbers of permanent Blacks in the cities by this time, as the growth manufacturing industry was attracting more people to the cities.

The growth of the manufacturing industry meant that the economy of South Africa was more urban based. The manufacturing industry needed a more settled workforce. As a result of these developments, the government decided to allow an expanded and controlled migration to the cities through its White Paper on Urbanisation in 1986. At the same time, the government withdrew its previous role of a direct housing provider in the townships, in line with the international privatisation trends. This led to a massive spread of informal settlements throughout South Africa.

At this stage, discussion in this study has managed to trace the shaping of the South African cities way back from the nineteenth century. It has revealed the fact that housing problems in South Africa began before the National Party came to power in 1948. It has shown how the apartheid policy of the National Party had worsened the housing problems. This helps to understand how South Africa got to the point where it is today in terms of housing problems. This information also helps to explain the reason why there is a need for the concept of density development in South Africa. This information is useful for the overall discussion in this study as it links to what is happening in the present housing scenario. It is also useful as a point of

reference for the present housing legislation in the South African new political dispensation.

Thus, the current housing legislation will be weighed against this background in this study. This will help to determine the extent to which the current problems on low-cost housing are a result of the current housing legislation.

3.3 The Legislative Framework after 1994

In 1994 a new political dispensation began in South Africa. The new government was faced by problems created as a result of the apartheid system. Among these problems, was the migration of rural people to the cities and shortage of existing low-cost housing stock in the urban areas. In order to deal with this problem, the old apartheid land and housing laws were repealed and replaced with new ones. The most important of these laws are discussed below.

3.3.1 The South African Constitution (108/1996)

To begin with, in terms of Section 26 (1) and subsection (2), of the South African Constitution (108 of 1996), everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing, and the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to ensure the realization of this right. Subsection 3 states that everyone has the right not to be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished without an order from the court, while Section 28 further explores the right to shelter. These constitutional rights refer directly to housing rights, but other constitutional rights can also be used to protect housing rights, for example the right to equality, the right to just administrative action, the right to dignity, and the right of the child to family care or parental care (Liebenberg & Pillay, 2000:191).

3.3.2 The National Housing Act, No. 107 of 1997

In terms of the preamble of the Housing Act, No. 107 of 1997, the parliament of the Republic of South Africa recognizes that:

- housing, as adequate shelter, fulfils a basic human need;
- housing is both a product and a process; and
- housing is vital to the socio-economic well-being of the nation.

However, the Act does not explain what an adequate shelter is. This causes a problem as different authorities and residents have different definitions of adequate shelter. For example, the majority of residents in this study saw a three bed roomed house as adequate, whilst the

Act is vague in this regard.

The Housing Act, of 1997, also provides some general principles that are applicable to housing development. These principles are set out in Section 2 of this Act and must be carried out by all three spheres of government.

Although the principles cover a wider range of housing issues and the housing authorities are required by the Act to adhere to such principles, there is room for conflict between the authorities and the housing beneficiaries provided by this Act. This conflict comes as a result of the Act falling short of stipulating fully the required implementation processes for some of these principles. This shortfall is contained in the structure and the content of these principles as indicated below.

The Act does not provide the authorities with guidelines for consulting meaningfully with individuals and communities. This is left to authorities to determine what the Act means by meaningful consultation. As a result, this situation allows, for example, different local governments to have different degrees of consultation. In turn, this is a recipe for disputes between authorities and the community as the latter may argue that it has not been fully consulted by the former. This has been the case in the development of Langa, as participants in the empirical research in chapter 5 indicated that they were not consulted by the council, whilst the area Manager of Langa claimed to have consulted the housing beneficiaries.

The Act does not say the extent of the wide range of housing and tenure options that would be considered as being reasonable. Again, this is left to authorities to decide. This has resulted in the development of communal family units in Langa as indicated in chapter 4, and in the occupants of these units being very unhappy, as the research findings in chapter 6 reveal.

The effect of the above state of affairs in regard to the principles of the Housing Act of 1997, is that residents may feel unable to take recourse to law in the case of a dispute with a municipality, hence, many see the non payment for services as a way of resolving a dispute. To this effect, the Act is vague and dubious as it falls short of taking full responsibility for its principles.

However, the criticism on the Housing Act No. 107 of 1997 does not mean that the Act is bad, as its principles are therefore good intentions. The criticism suggests that more detail could have been done to the Act. Therefore, there could be a room for improvement in this Act in terms of legislative amendments.

3.3.3 The Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 117 / 1998

Section 19(2) of the Local Municipalities Structures Act requires that a municipal council annually review the following:

- (a) the needs of the community;
- (b) its priorities to meet those needs;
- (c) its processes for involving the community; and
- (d) its organisational and delivery mechanisms for meeting the needs of the community.

These requirements act as a room for improvement of housing delivery. They give the municipalities the opportunity to plan their housing delivery mechanisms in line with the needs of the communities that they serve. They highlight the necessity of fulfilling the needs of the community including the involvement of the community in the process of development.

This implies that housing development in South Africa should be in line with the expectations of the communities. However, given the fact that residents have raised some concerns regarding housing development, as indicated in chapter 1, the question is whether or not the municipalities are well informed about the needs of their communities so that their housing delivery processes could be directed towards meeting those needs. This is what this study intends to find out in the following chapter. It seeks to discover what the community needs are and, the extent to which the efforts of the authorities are directed towards meeting these needs.

3.3.4 The Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995

Some of the requirements of the Development Facilitation Act for land development under Section 3 are that policy, administrative practice and laws should promote efficient and integrated land development in that they:

- promote the availability of residential and employment opportunities in close proximity to or integrated with each other;
- discourage the phenomenon of urban sprawl in urban areas and contribute to the development of more compact towns and cities;
- members of communities affected by land development should actively participate in the process of land development; and
- land development should result in security of tenure, provide for the widest possible range

of tenure alternatives, including individual and communal tenure, and in cases where land development takes the form of upgrading an existing settlement, not deprive beneficial occupiers of homes or land or, where it is necessary for land occupied by them to be utilized for other purposes, their interest in such land or homes should be reasonably accommodated in some other manner.

These requirements seek to address the land and housing problems that were created by the past regimes. For example, when considered individually, it will be noted that each requirement is intended to correct a particular problem which was created by a certain law in the past.

To begin with, the first requirement above is meant to address the problem that was created by the Group Areas Act. This implementation of this act resulted in the development of separate locations for urban Blacks. In turn, this meant that the areas for Blacks were to be located away from the city centres as these were reserved for the white communities. The consequences of this were that black people had to travel long distances to the workplace and to other opportunities.

Therefore, the availability of residential and employment opportunities in close proximity to each other is a reversal of the above-mentioned case. As a result, this clause plays an important role in South African housing development process.

The second requirement is focused mainly at addressing the problem of urban sprawl which is created migration to the cities and the shortage of housing in the urban areas. Therefore, this clause is directed at dealing with the Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 which encouraged the construction of shack settlements, the refusal of the National Party government to build houses in the 1970s, and a host of other measures that have resulted in the springing up of shacks throughout South Africa.

The third requirement of the Development Facilitation Act is intended to encourage the participation of all role players in housing development, particularly the members of the community. Although, the act requires active participation of the community, the level and the degree of participation is not stated.

The fourth requirement guarantees the security of tenure and the provision of housing choice. The extent to which this is done in practice, is what this study is interested in finding out.

3.3.5 The Western Cape Planning and Development Act 7 of 1999

Section 4(1) (a) suggests for the preparation and submission of an Integrated Development Framework (IDFs) to the cabinet by the Provincial Minister. In addition to this, subsection 3(a) requires that an integrated development framework be submitted to the Provincial Minister by the local authority. In turn, these requirements suggest a consolidated and holistic approach towards the development of housing in the province of the Western Cape as the provinces and different local authorities are expected to work in a concerted effort.

In addition to the above, Schedule IV sets out some planning and development principles. These are the principles of decision-making and dispute resolution, participation, development, environment restructuring, sustainable development and environment protection.

Therefore, the Western Cape Planning and Development Act of 1999 is a regional legislative document which is drafted in line with the national legislation that has been discussed so far. This guiding legal document will also be useful as a point of reference in the course of discussion in this study.

3.4 The Principles of Urban Development

3.4.1 The Conventional Modern Town Planning Model

According to Dewar and Uytendogaardt (1995:5), modern town planning practice has replaced the traditional model of settlement-making. It was born out of a need to deal with and accommodate the problems of urban population growth and the impact of technological advances on urban development. The movement was based on the belief that there was a need to redefine the very nature of urban settlements in order to improve the quality of living. However, some of the features of this approach had some shortcomings with regard to the development of urban areas, inter alia,

- technology is treated as if it is available to every member of the community;
- the focus of urban development was on individual spatial objects rather than on collective or public environment;
- the period has been characterised by high level of specialisation in terms of disciplines associated with built environment. The fact that the quality of settlements is determined the manner in which the different parts are brought into relationship with each other was not

acknowledged.

In turn, these aspects have led to fragmented decision-making. Thus different role players have made decisions about different urban components, for example, housing, transport, education, health, and so on, in isolation from each other and with each agency. As a result, they have also pursued different agendas. In the end, the focus of each agency has been on the optimisation of the part they assigned to them instead of optimising the whole.

This approach has also brought about standardisation in urban development, particularly the one which characterises South African townships. This has been influenced by the application of standardised rules such as, Guidelines for the provision of Engineering Services for Residential Townships (1983). The resulting effect of this is that different settlements look and feel the same. In other words, there is no sense of place.

In the face of continually decreasing financial resources for urban development, the size of each subsidised house becomes smaller, the private space is not green and the standard of services provisioning is reduced. In addition as only a smaller portion of the households obtain housing assistance, this may lead to negative social practises such as downward raiding, war-lording and bureaucratic corruption (Dewar and Uytendogaardt, 1995:6).

Therefore, in light of the above, although apartheid has exacerbated urban problems in South African cities, there are also other causes to these problems. As a result, the eradication of apartheid legislation alone is not automatically going to improve the quality of life in the urban environment. Thus, embedded in the problem of development is the way in which the planning is approached. Changes to the approach are therefore necessary.

3.4.2 The Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (MSDF)

The MSDF (CMC, 2000) document was the first step towards correcting the shortcomings of the conventional planning approach. The application of MSDF ensures a different and positive approach to urban development. This fact is born out of the following six key spatial principles (mentioned in Chapter 2) that inform the drafting of the MSDF.

The first two principles of sustainable management and creating quality urban environments are

very broad and are not specific. They act as overlapping principles that apply to all situations and contexts. The other four principles of containing urban sprawl, residential intensification, urban integration and redressing Imbalances are more specific. These are linked to the first two broad principles and support them.

These six spatial principles are intertwined and work together in the planning of urban development. Therefore, unlike the modern planning practice, MSDF has a coherent approach towards the development of urban settlement. Details regarding the concept of MSDF are discussed in chapter 2.

3.4.3 Guidelines for Human Settlement Planning and Design (2000)

This document also signifies a shift from conventional modern town planning approach. Although it has no legal status but acts as a guideline for the purpose of planning and development, it plays a significant role in urban development. With regard to housing development, this document highlights, among other things, the importance of the concept of place-making (Chap. 5.1:11) and the principles of accommodating sameness and diversity, and that of flexibility (Chap. 3:3-4).

With regard to the concept of place-making, it is argued that the manner in which the movement network on a site is arranged can contribute to a sense of place. This concept refers to the images and feelings associated with the uniqueness of a particular part of a settlement. Therefore, it is argued that a sense of place cannot be achieved through standardised planning and design, as this fails to recognise the natural and cultural uniqueness of the environment and its people.

Therefore, development in each community should be in line with the values and the aspirations of that particular community. Failure to recognise the importance of this might cause a psychological strain to a given community.

The principle of accommodating sameness and diversity relates to accommodating both homogeneity and heterogeneity in settlements. It accommodates both cultural and economic diversity and expression within settlements. It also recognises that in a democratic, multi-cultural society, all communities, individuals and cultures are to be accorded equivalent respect.

In respect of this principle, the differences that exist between individuals and groupings in terms of economic and cultural aspects should be reflected in the planning of a settlement in order for

the quality of living to be accepted by a community.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In concluding, the sequence of the discussion in this chapter has shown that there is a connection between the past and the present housing development legislation. Thus, the past legislation was put in place in order to reserve the South African cities for Whites and to force black people to remain in the homelands. However, the success of this settlement strategy was hampered by mining and industrialization that required the black work force in the cities. This led to urban sprawl, shortage of low-cost housing and the current wave of rapid urbanisation.

Therefore, the present housing development legislation is designed to reverse the damage that was done by the past legislation to the society of South Africa. It is intended to deal with the legacy of the past housing legislation. It seeks to get rid of urban sprawl and develop more low-cost housing through densification as the means of dealing with rural-urban migration patterns. Thus, on the one hand, there is an interrelationship between the past and the present legislation, and the concept of density development on the other hand in South Africa.

CHAPTER 4

An Overview of Langa Township

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to investigate through literature, interviews and personal observations, the opportunities and threats offered by low-income areas in regard to the application of the concept of high density residential development through the processes discussed in chapter 2. The main objective is to find out whether or not high density development will put a strain on the available infrastructure, public facilities and housing as a result of further overcrowding and thereby, affect the quality of living in the area. For this purpose, Langa as one of the oldest South African and Western Cape townships which reflects the general characteristics that are common in South African townships was chosen as a case study.

4.2 Location

It is stated in the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies Report (May 14-25, 2001) that Langa is the oldest African township in Cape Town, built in 1901. Having been located on the then periphery of the city, as a dormitory township for black migrant workers, the growth of the city has absorbed Langa into the urban fabric. Langa is now strategically situated within the metropolitan area. The location of Langa within the City of Cape Town is illustrated in the diagram in the next page.

Langa lies 10 kilometres from Cape Town City Centre. The area is approximately 300 hectares in extent and is located approximately mid-way between the Central Business District and the airport along the N2 freeway, and lies adjacent to Epping Industrial Area. Ndabeni, Parow Industria and Bellville are about 15-20 by public transport (Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies Report, May 14-25, 2001:3).



FIGURE 4.2.1 LOCALITY MAP

SOURCE: Cape Metropolitan Council Report, September 1997.

4.3 Historical Background

The dispossession of land from Blacks during the early part of the twentieth century forced Blacks to migrate to the cities for employment opportunities. Therefore, the rapid development of job opportunities in Cape Town resulted in an increase in the number of African people in this city. In Cape Town they settled on less desirable land, just outside the white residential areas but close enough to the work place. Thus, the first settlements for Blacks in Cape Town were on the slopes of the Lions Head, in District Six and the dock area (Dewar et al, 1991:12).

When the bubonic plague of 1901 and the flu epidemic of 1918 and 1919 broke out, there was an outcry and demand from the white communities for residential segregation, since the residential areas were badly affected. This was one of the causes for the removal of Africans from the inner city areas. Therefore, segregated townships were constructed to accommodate Black people (Dewar et al, 1991:13).

A township called Ndabeni was established in 1901 and became known as Langa in 1922. Permanent residents were housed in one room to three bed roomed structures. Migrant workers were housed in single sex hostels. According to Elias (1984:30), Langa was built with skilled labour and this affected the residents as they had to pay high rents. However, in order to encourage more people to move to Langa, rents were reduced drastically although this meant a loss to the Native Revenue account.

4.4 The Population

There is no population data base for the community of Langa. This is caused by the fact that it is impossible to count the ever rising number of people who migrate mainly from rural areas and then live in the back yard shacks, informal settlement and unauthorised settlements in Langa. Moreover, people who live in these structures make the bulk of the community of Langa. It is estimated that the population of Langa is between 120 000 and 140 000 (Langa Area Manager, January 25, 2002).

However, Dewar et al (1991:8) found that the population of Langa was 69 487, according to Cape Provincial Administration in 1989. This figure was expected to grow to 111 758 by 1998. This projection was worked out by applying a standard growth rate of 6,12 percent for metropolitan townships. In addition, The Serviced Land Project (Report No. 4: November, 1992) discovered that

in 1992 there were 2000 people in the informal housing, 6000 in the hostels and 2000 in the backyard shacks requiring accommodation. However, this number must have gone up at the time of doing this study.

Although these were projections for 1998, there is no real and recent official population data for the township of Langa. Therefore, the number of the population in Langa remains a guess work at the time of writing this study. This might have negative implications on policy formulation since both the council and the municipality have no data to work on as the basis for their planning.

4.5 The Nature of Housing

Owing to the fact that the township was primarily designed to accommodate migrant workers, a wider range of house types is found. These can be divided into six groups.

(a) The Council Owned Stock

The Area Manager of Langa stated that the council owned stock consists of new Flats, single-storey hostels, multi-storey communal family units, Flats, dormitories and barracks. Occupants pay rent to the local council. A typical hostel unit has three bedrooms with a kitchen and one toilet. Two of the bedrooms have three beds each and the third bedroom has two beds. This amounts to eight beds per hotel unit. A typical room is approximately 15m² in size.

The families or couples who share a bedroom occupy only the bed space and make use of bunks for sleeping purposes. The state of the ablution and kitchen facilities are more than often in a very poor state, wet and dirty. In a typical unit there will be approximately thirty persons sharing the facilities.

The state of the rental accounts is not satisfactory. Quite a number of the occupants are not paying their rent. This puts the council in a difficult position as. More information on the individual structures is given below.

At present the conversion process is underway and families have started to occupy the ones that are already completed.

- **New Flats.** These are called New Flats although they are hostels by design. These were designed to be converted into family units. There were 27 units with a total of 108 bedrooms. There was an average of 3 beds per room. The total number of beds were 1728.



FIGURE 4.5.2 NEW FLATS

SOURCE: Granelli, R. and Levitan, R. 1977.

However, since the policy of converting hostels to accommodate families has been put in place, the situation with these structures has now changed. As a result, some of these structures have been converted into family units and are now occupied by families. Additional blocks have also been built in order to meet the housing backlog in Langa.

Single-storey hostels. There are 112½ units of these in Langa. This figure makes available a total of 430 rooms and in turn, 3440 beds.

The council is in the process of converting these structures into family units. Such units will consist of one bedroom and a living room/kitchen. Two such units have been completed and are occupied. However, according to the Area Manager, the conversion process was hampered by the disappearance of the contractor. Nevertheless, this study has discovered that conversion was stopped as a result of refusal of a business person to give way for builders to do their work. The business person wanted the units to have three bedrooms instead of one.

- **Multi-storey communal family units.** These were built in 1999 and people started to occupy them towards the end of that year. The ground floor of these units consists of a bedroom and a living room/kitchen per family. The top floors consist of one bedroom/living room per family, a shared kitchen and a toilet. There are six rooms in each unit, one for each family.



FIGURE 4.5.3 MULTI-STOREY FAMILY UNITS AND THE PROBLEM OF SPACE

SOURCE: Taken by the researcher.

- **Old Flats.** These are officially called flats although they are hostels by design. There are eight blocks of these units. There are four floors in each block. Each floor has a toilet and a kitchen for the people on that floor. However, the kitchens are now used as bedroom because most people prepare their food in their bedrooms.



FIGURE 4.5.4 OLD FLATS

SOURCE: Taken by the researcher.

- **Dormitories.** These structures were built since 1966 by the employers for their Black contract workers. Each used to house between thirty and fifty men.

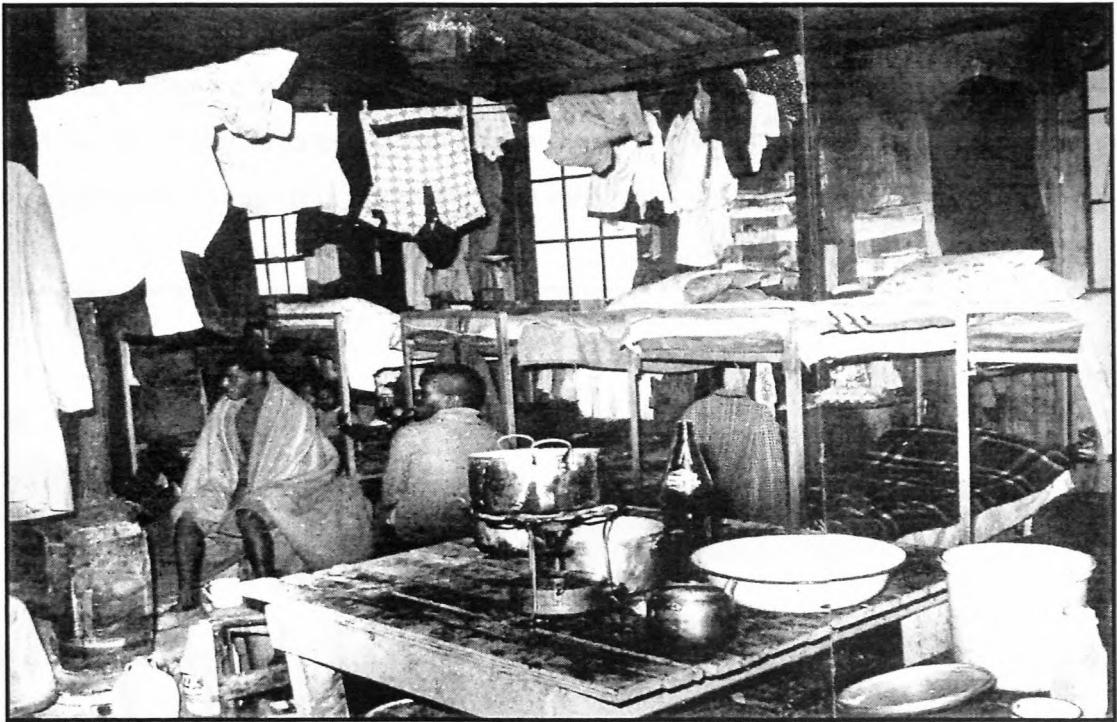


FIGURE 4.5.5 (a) DORMITORIES
SOURCE: Granelli and Levitan, 1977.

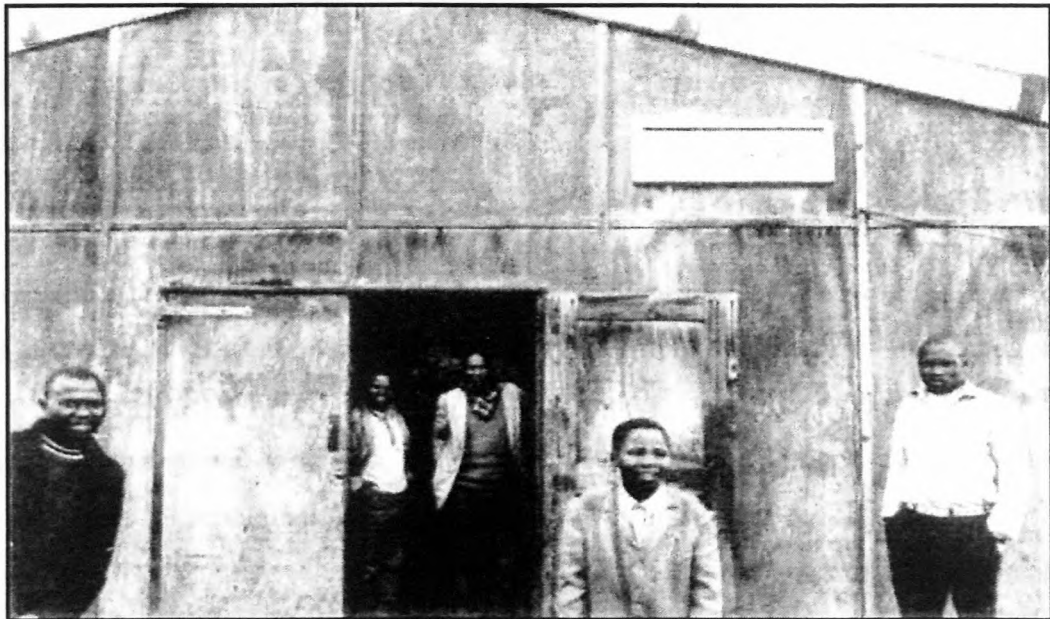


FIGURE 4.5.5 (b) DORMITORIES
SOURCE: Granelli and Levitan, 1977.

However, there are also families who occupy these structures today although the design of these structures makes it impossible to convert these into family units.

- **Barracks.** These were built in about 1927 and consist of two separate but similar structures called the Main Barracks and North Barracks. Each block had large identical rooms which housed between twenty-four and twenty-six men per room.



FIGURE 4.5.6 BARRACKS

SOURCE: Granelli and Levitan, 1977.

Nevertheless, the size of the rooms has now been reduced by informal partitioning to accommodate families. The design of these structures also makes it difficult to convert them into family units.

As indicated, all the above structures, except the recently built multi-storey family units, were designed and built to accommodate single migrant workers. The bulk of these is now being occupied by families, whether or not a structure has been already converted. Therefore, this is an indication that there is a huge demand for low-income family housing.

(b) Housing Stock Previously Owned by the Council

These consist of one, two and three bedroom family houses. There are of course very few of the three bedroom houses. In addition, there are two bedroom houses that used to be part of the single-storey hostels in Langa. These were converted into two bedroom houses in the eighties.



FIGURE 4.5.7 HOSTELS CONVERTED INTO FAMILY HOUSING

SOURCE: Taken by the researcher.

All the above types of houses have one thing in common and that is, that they are row housing. They are well serviced, with only storm water drainage being notably inadequate. Although the streets are tarred, they lack side walk provision for pedestrians. Therefore, the design is transport oriented. This is one aspect which needs some attention regarding this area in Langa.

(c) Privately Purchased Houses

These are the only “real houses” in Langa, according to the Area Manager of Langa. They were built by private companies for the ‘Black middle class’. However, these are occupied by people of different economic backgrounds varying from the working class to professionals. With regard to the working class members, the houses happen to have been purchased for them by the employers as a gesture of appreciation for a good service rendered.

The major problem in this area is the presence of an informal settlement and a water canal adjacent to it. The canal emits a bad odour in the area. In turn, this affects the price value of these houses.

(d) Controlled Informal Settlement

This is the Joe Slovo informal settlement and lies in the buffer strip between N2 and N7 freeways (See figure 4.1). Most of the land in this area is not suitable for housing development, as the Area Manager of Langa indicated. The majority of residents here are from the rural areas. The settlement, although it is a dwelling type catering for most people in Langa, is inadequately serviced. The older parts have only communal water points and bucket system toilets, while the newer parts have no services. The dense ad hoc pattern of the shacks made servicing these areas extremely difficult.

As a result of this dense pattern, the occurrence of a fire hazards have become a critical problem in the area. Small fires have occurred regularly as the residents had to use wood and paraffin fuel to prepare food, provide light and warm themselves. In addition, this pattern made the work of fire fighters very difficult as they could not reach to some areas during the incidents of fire.

However, the council has now constructed streets for fire engines and installed electricity in the shacks. Moreover, the density of the area has been reduced by the council by moving some of the residents to new low-income residential areas. This has to a certain extent lessened the problem.

The other problem is that flooding occurs regularly in the winter months. During this period the ground water table rises and cause displacement of numerous households. In turn, this gives rise to numerous health problems.

Given all the above stated facts regarding the Joe Slovo informal settlement, these reflect the seriousness of the housing problem in Langa and South Africa as a whole. As a result, the council is faced with a difficult task of housing these people under acceptable conditions of living, while there is no additional land available in Langa for housing development.

(e) Unauthorised Settlements

These comprise of backyard shacks and shacks that spring up overnight in areas not desirable for shacks and in pockets of unused land. The council of Langa has found that more people live in the back yard shacks than in the houses that have those shacks. This again reflects the seriousness of the housing problem in the townships. This is also an indication of overcrowding in Langa.

4.6 Public Facilities

(a) Educational facilities

Observations have shown that there are thirteen schools in Langa of which four are lower primary schools, three are higher primary schools, one is a combined school, three are high schools and two are finishing or adult schools. A number of higher primary and high school pupils studying in Langa are not residents of the area. This is common practice, particularly among older pupils, not to attend the neighbourhood schools. Most of these pupils come from Gugulethu, Nyanga, New Cross Roads and Khayelitsha. Langa pupils likewise do attend schools in other areas. Therefore, the pattern is one of inter-township schooling.

Likewise, there are Langa pupils attending primary and high schools in the predominantly White and Coloured areas. These pupils are attracted by the quality of education in these areas as these schools are better equipped compared to the ones in the townships. This has, to some extent, reduced overcrowding in Langa schools.

Nevertheless, the teacher/pupil ratio still remains a problem in the schools of Langa (Teacher, June 17, 2002). This is attributed to economic stagnation, lack of investment in community services and the resulting rapid urbanisation, by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Report (1996:91).

Therefore, Langa has fairly adequate schooling facilities. Thus, if high residential density development means accommodating people who already reside in Langa, not much strain would be put on educational facilities of this township.

(b) Recreational Facilities

● Sport

Observations have also shown that there are three soccer fields, two rugby fields, two netball fields, one tennis court and five basket ball courts in Langa. Of these, soccer, rugby and netball sports are the most popular, with soccer being the one with the most following. In addition to these sport fields, the school fields are also linked to public recreational facilities and thereby, made available to the rest of the residents.

Soccer is the most popular sport among boys and men in Langa. It is supported by adults and young people. In spite of this, the soccer fields that are available in Langa are not in good condition. They are characterised by growing weed and patches of sand or gravel. This condition is attributed to the lack of funds by the council.

Rugby is gaining popularity in the township. However, like in the case of soccer, rugby fields are also in bad state. In turn, this has some negative effect on the growing popularity of this sport.

Netball, like soccer, is a popular sport among girls. However, unlike soccer fields, the netball fields are in acceptable condition. This is attributed to the fact that these fields do not require regular maintenance since they are made up of cement. The only notable problem with these fields is the vandalism to the fences. Nonetheless, as already indicated, their condition is fairly good.

● Children's Playgrounds

There are playgrounds for children distributed evenly throughout Langa. These are generally in good condition. The problem with these is that the green grass that is common in the White areas is replaced by cement in Langa. This means that the maintenance costs are reduced as cement does not require regular maintenance. However, children get injured from falling on the cement, as one resident puts it:

*Every time they came home from those playing grounds,
their knees or elbows would be bleeding. I therefore, decided
to stop them from playing out there before the worst happens.
Come here son, just show your healing elbows and knees to
this gentleman (resident, June 17, 2002)*

As a result of this, the question to ask is what comes first: the maintenance cost or the safety of children. It appears that the maintenance cost is more vital to the council as its financial resources are limited, whilst safety of children is more important to residents. Therefore, this should be regarded as one of the areas which require some attention.

● Community Centres

There are three community centres for recreational and social purposes. The centre contains a main hall and adjacent rooms. The hall is used for entertainment and community meetings. The adjacent rooms are used for indoor sport.

(c) Public Baths

These are provided throughout the township as most houses do not have hot water in the area. However, these are used by very few members of the community. The reason given for this is that some people in these baths use 'umuti'¹ as soap in order to deal with their curses and misfortunes. As a result, those who do not use these baths claim that they fear those misfortunes might be passed over to them.

Based on this finding, it can therefore be concluded that the problem with these baths has something to do with cultural beliefs. This indicates the important role of taking culture in communities. Therefore, the application of densification should also take the dominant culture into consideration during the planning stages.

(d) Post Office

There is one post office in Langa. The service is considered by the community as being of low standard. The staff members claim that the problems come as a result of their being understaffed while residents say the problem started after the old staff was replaced by new staff. As a result, people have to wait in long queues. In addition, residents complained that their post is sometimes delivered at wrong addresses. This indicates the existence of a problem with the functioning of the post office. Therefore, the application of the concept of high residential density development should take issues such as this one into consideration during the planning stages.

(e) Police Station

The community of Langa is served by one police station. It is centrally located on the public transport route and is therefore accessible to all residents. The police claim that they are understaffed and do not have enough vehicles to serve the community. The community on their side claim that the problem with the police is that they are not committed to their duties and they are always drunk.

(f) Clinic

There is one clinic in Langa. It is a combination of TB patients and babies clinic. A clinic for general illnesses is located in Bontheuwel, a Coloured township that lies adjacent to Langa and

¹ An African traditional plant which is believed to cure illnesses and misfortunes.

therefore, these two townships share this facility.

Among the major community complaints observed during the course of this study were the following:

- understaffed clinic;
- long queues that take almost the whole day before a patient is attended;
- the clinic sometimes running out of some medicines since they have been given free;
- patients having to make a booking a day before going to the clinic; and
- some of the nurses were accused of being uncaring and rude

In regard to these complaints, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Report (1996:91) noted that, as the populations of the African cities continued to increase in the 1980s and 1990s as a result of rapid urbanisation and economic decline, so did the burden on basic infrastructure and urban services. Basic drugs, once given free, have disappeared from public clinics and professional medical care became very difficult to be obtained by the low-income group.

Therefore, based on these findings, the problems that are experienced at the clinic by Langa residents are not unique. It can be concluded that they are a product of, among other things, a declining economy and the ever increasing rural-urban migration pattern.

(g) Transport

There are three modes of public transport that are in operation in Langa. These are taxis, buses and trains. The taxi rank is well built and covered by shelter to protect commuters from rains and sun. However, it is not centrally located. As a result, some commuters have to walk long distances to and from the taxi rank than others. Therefore, taxi owners have to pick up commuters along the public transport route to the taxi rank, free of charge. The taxis transport people to different destinations in Cape Town. They run as far as Bellville in the northern suburbs, as far as Wynberg in the southern suburbs, and to Sea Point in the direction that runs through the city centre. They also transport people to other townships in Cape Town. As a result, taxis are the second most important mode of public transport after the train service.

The buses are owned by City Tramways. They transport people mainly to other townships, such as Gugulethu, Nyanga and Khayelitsha. Their role to destinations such the Cape Town City Centre, Bellville and Wynberg, is minimal. Nevertheless, buses play a vital role in the every day lives of the people of Langa.

The train service is the most important mode of public transport in the lives of the residents of Langa. One of the main reasons for this is the fact that train fares are much less when compared to taxis and buses. The railway station is situated on the buffer strip that separates Langa from the Epping Industria. Therefore, the station is located on the boundary of the township, instead of being centrally situated.

The main problem cited regarding the railway service is that the trains have a tendency of being late in most days of the week. In response to this problem, the railway officials point their finger at cable thieves. However, it is indicated in the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Report (1996:91), that transport systems in African cities are seriously overburdened as a result of the high rate of migration to the urban areas. Therefore, it can be deduced from the findings of the United Nations that the problem with trains in Langa are related to socio-economic factors as experienced by the whole of the African continent, rather than just a cable theft problem.

(h) Economic Activity

People in Langa derive their incomes from being employed, self employed or from the combination of the two. Work within the township is provided mainly by the government through employment in public facilities. However, this form of employment is limited since these public facilities have low staff levels as indicated throughout this chapter.

The majority of the community is employed in the suburban business areas, the suburban residential areas and the industrial areas such as the Epping Industria which lies adjacent to Langa. Some of these people also run home based businesses in order to supplement their income. These home based businesses include shebeens, vegetable stalls and spaza shops. These are supported by the communities in which they operate. Shebeens are everywhere in Langa except in the privately purchased housing area.

Other, non home based informal businesses include meat stalls and second hand clothing at various strategic points of the township. The meat stalls are a problem as they attract flies to the areas where they are located.

Apart from the home based and the other forms of informal businesses, there are the following businesses:

- general dealers
- cafes
- butcheries
- dairies
- fisheries
- shoemakers
- funeral undertakers
- petrol service station

These are the formal businesses in Langa. They are evenly distributed and centrally located throughout the community. These businesses also provide some form of employment to the residents of the Township.

In addition to the above businesses, tourism is another form of business which is growing strongly in Langa. Tourist attraction centres are available in the area in order to display African history and culture. This is enhanced by the presence of cultural performances in such centres.

4.7 Conclusion

This profile leads one to the inevitable conclusion that there are both strengths and weaknesses with regard to the application of the concept of high residential density development in Langa township. These opportunities and threats to development can be summarised as indicated below.

The strengths comprise the fact that Langa is centrally located in the City of Cape Town. This offers the residents the opportunity to be somehow close to various employment opportunities that are available in the city centre and the surrounding suburbs. This is proven by the fact that travelling to these surrounding areas is about fifteen minutes from Langa. Therefore, high density development here would enable more people to be closer to opportunities as required by the housing legislation.

Another strength is the fact that the infrastructure such as roads, storm water, water, sewerage and electricity is well developed. Therefore, density development in this regard would mean a saving in costs that would be incurred in the case of developing a new township. This cost saving on infrastructure is in line with the legislative proposals as indicated in the previous chapter.

In addition, public facilities appear to be good. This is another opportunity for density development

as good public facilities are already in place and development is intended for people who already reside in Langa. However, if density development was to accommodate people from outside the township, these facilities would be overburdened and thereby eventually lead to them malfunctioning.

The legislation requires that a road network be developed to link a settlement area with opportunities in the business districts. Therefore, the fact that Langa is accessible by both road and rail, and the transport network is well developed is an advantage to the township. In turn, density development would be applicable as more people would be able to commute to and from Langa. This should encourage outside investment in the area, economic development and eventually increase the level of employment. What is needed is the community, local authorities and the business sector to take advantage of this situation.

Last but not least, Langa has the potential for economic development. Informal and micro-medium formal businesses are already there. In addition, a foundation for Langa to attract more tourists has already been laid. What is needed is investment by big businesses in partnership with the local government. In turn, this would create employment opportunities inside the township and thereby, allowing more residents to save on travelling costs.

In spite of these opportunities for the application of density development, there are weaknesses as well. These include the lack of land, the presence of informal settlement and backyard shacks, general overcrowding and land invasion.

The lack of available land for further development means that the township cannot be expanded for the purpose of density development. Hence, the local council has decided to densify the area through infill of very small pockets of land and the conversion of hostels into family units.

The problem with informal settlement and the backyard shacks is that these structures are difficult to control. This has an impact on the population data base as the number of people in these structures is difficult to ascertain. In turn, this affects density development since the authorities cannot a proper planning to house these people.

With regard to existing overcrowding and the invasion of land, these are threats to the successful

application of density development in Langa. This is borne by the fact that these two factors make the work of the authorities extremely difficult since there is no land to build additional houses, and the only small pockets of land available, is sometimes invaded.

Therefore, these factors lead to the conclusion that density development in Langa should be continued but with extreme caution for factors such as overcrowding, overloading of the infrastructure and the negative impact on the quality of family living.

According to Pridemore, density development is defined as:

...user acceptability (1997: 17). This has been done using the means of interviews and a questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to the residents of Langa. As a result, residents Hondo, Kooze, Mkhomo, Mkhomo and Gama were selected for the study on the basis of their responses to the questionnaire.

5.2 The Interviews

As the aim of the interviews with residents was to get to know their views on the questions were prepared beforehand. Although the questions were prepared beforehand, for convenience sake, during the interviewing process, by the nature of the language spoken by most Africans in the Western Cape.

The interview took place in five households. The interview began with a set of questions given and answers or information regarding further questions. As the interviews continued, attempts at story-telling or descriptive information were given.

To avoid suspicion and fear by the respondents, no tape recording was used. The interview was written down. In addition, participants' anonymity was guaranteed. The names of the interviewed go by different names from those used in the paper. The fact that the study was not lead to material gain was conveyed to the interviewees.

5.2.1 Household 1 (three bedroom detached housing)

The house in which Mrs Ecol lives is a detached house with a garden. The following are immediately evident on arrival at the house were the following:

¹ For the details of the individual interviews, please see the addendum.

CHAPTER 5

PERCEPTIONS & PREFERENCES ON DENSITY – THE CASE OF LANGA

5.1 Introduction

According to Arrigone, successful application of densification depends on, among other things, user acceptability (1995:17). This has therefore made it vital that this study investigates by means of interviews and a questionnaire, the acceptability of densification to the residents of Langa. As a result, residents living in row housing, detached housing, communal family units and flats were selected for this study on the basis that they represent the family structures in Langa.

5.2 The Interviews

As the aim of the interviews with residents was to uncover the quality of family life, guide questions were prepared beforehand. Although the questions were prepared in English for convenience sake, during the interviewing process the questions were asked in Xhosa, the first language spoken by most Africans in the Western Cape.

The interviews took place in five households.¹ The interview format changed according to the answers given and as issues or information requiring further elaborations were raised. As the interviews continued, attempts at story-telling or discursive interview techniques were made.

To avoid suspicion and fear by the respondents, no tape cassette was used but the proceedings were written down. In addition, participants' anonymity was guaranteed. As a result, those interviewed go by different names from those used in the paper. The fact that participation would not lead to material gain was conveyed to the interviewees.

5.2.1 Household 1 (three bedroom detached housing)

The house in which Mrs Booi lives is a detached house with a relatively bigger yard. Immediately evident on arrival at the house were the following:

¹ For the details of the individual interviews, please see the addendum.

- a typical township black middle-class house with paving, flowers, lawn with toys on it, stoep, driveway and a garage;
- silence as if there was no one in the house; and
- a domestic worker.

These observations pointed to the following situations:

- the presence of privacy from the neighbors
- comfort way of living
- the ability to portray oneself image through the design of the house

The interview took place in the living room. We moved from room to room to observe the house and to establish sleeping patterns. The house consisted of a large living room, three bedrooms, a large kitchen, a separate toilet, and a bathroom with hot water including a shower and a garage. The kitchen was fitted with built-in cupboards, including an eye-level oven and a hob. One of the three bedrooms was a double bedroom. The living room was well furnished and there was adequate space for circulation.

The inspection of the house showed that two people, the husband and the wife occupied the main bedroom. The other two bedrooms were occupied by one person each, the two children of the family. This arrangement pointed to the following:

- presence of individual's privacy inside the house;
- sleeping arrangement of the children according to their sex;
- children's ability to do their schoolwork without being disrupted.

5.2.2 Household 2 (two bedroom row-housing)

The house in which Mr Somtaki and his family live is a middle house as most of houses in this type of neighborhood are. As a result, the plot is relatively smaller than the corner houses. Immediately evident on arrival at the house was the following, which is typical of low-cost housing in South Africa:

- the type of the house, a typical NE (NON EUROPEAN) 51/6 three roomed² type with a toilet/bathroom located inside the house;
- the presence of two shacks, a common scene in black townships;
- the presence of many people, males and females, children and adults; and
- the presence of a well looked-after lawn with a polished stoep.

These observations immediately pointed to a situation characterised by:

- housing shortage;
- overcrowding; and
- a lack of privacy.

The interview took place in the living room, although we moved from room to room when observing the house and establishing sleeping patterns. The house consisted of a living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen and an inside toilet or bathroom with no provision of hot water. The kitchen was fitted with built-in cupboards. The living room was well furnished although it was difficult to move around due to its smaller size. No additions to the house were evident.

The inspection of the house showed that more than two persons occupied the main bedroom. Three people of different sexes occupied the other bedroom. The living room was used for sleeping purposes at night. The toilet/bathroom was also used as a storage room. This information pointed again to:

- a situation of overcrowding;
- lack of privacy;
- lack of space for storage; and
- lack of sleeping arrangements according to sex division.

5.2.3 Household 3 (Multi-storey family units)

The multi-storey building in which Mrs Bam and her two children live has three floors. The bottom floor consists of two-roomed family units. The second and third floors consist of one-roomed family units and Mrs Bam occupied a room on the second floor. On arrival at this place, the following were immediately evident:

- the absence of enclosure around the building;
- the absence of a play ground for children;
- the absence of noticeable area for hanging the washing;
- the presence of too many people, males and females, children and adults;
- the presence of many meat stalls about four metres away from the building;
- very loud music coming from radio-cassettes;
- a number of drunken people going in and out the building;
- people peeping through the windows and talking to people who were standing on the ground, and a fight between two men who appeared to be drunk.

These observations pointed to the following:

² The number of rooms in this house refers to the number of habitable rooms. The official description of the NE 51/6 as being four-roomed includes a kitchen. This is not the right practice (Granelli and Levitan, 1977:15).

- quality of life typical to that of hostel dwellers;
- overcrowding;
- housing shortage;
- alcohol abuse;
- noisy accommodation;
- health hazard;
- opportunity for psychological over stimulation; and
- lack of opportunity for sense of place, relatedness, creativity and privacy .

The interview took place in a 12-m² room, which Mrs Bam uses as a bedroom, a living, a kitchen, a bathroom and a storeroom. The unit had five rooms for five different families, and a 6-m² kitchen, which was very dirty and filled by bad smell, a toilet and a cold shower full of smelling garbage. The kitchen, the toilet and the shower were used communally for communal use. Mrs Bam's family room is furnished as follows:

- a double and a single bed;
- a couch and a coffee table;
- a small table on which she has a double-plate stove for cooking, and under which she put her pots, dishes and cups;
- a small drawer-table in which she keeps her toiletry and some of her clothes . Other clothes were hanging on the wall and some were in suitcases both under and on the single bed;
- a drawer table on which a television set stood;
- there were two pictures hanging on the wall and
- behind the door stood a washing basket and a ironing board with washing towels hanging on it.

Upon asking her about the sleeping arrangement, it was revealed that all the four people slept in this one room. This situation again pointed to:

- overcrowding and lack of space;
- lack of storage space;
- lack of sleeping arrangement according to sex division;
- lack of opportunity for sense of place, relatedness, creativity and privacy;
- opportunity for psychological over stimulation; and
- health hazard.

5.2.4 Household 4 (Mr Mawawa's four-roomed hostel)

On arrival at the hostel the most noticeable thing about the place was that three of the four rooms were full of people who were drinking liquor. The fourth room was full of people who were buying liquor. Although Mr Mawawa was very busy, he agreed to be interviewed provided that the interview was not going to take too long. The interview took place outside the hostel since the place was too noisy as a result of the large numbers of people who were inside.

He indicated that, as his family was running a home based business and renting the whole four rooms in the hostel, he was in trouble with the authorities who wanted to convert these hostels into two roomed family units. He also indicated that he has refused to move out to allow the conversion of his hostel since a two roomed house would be a way too small to accommodate his family and the business.

It is worth noting the fact that although Mr Mawawa is in trouble with the housing authorities, Subsection 1(k) under Section 3 of the Development Facilitation Act, 1995 requires that land development and the upgrading of an existing settlements should in some manner, reasonably accommodate the interests of the beneficial occupiers of land or homes. Therefore, Mr Mawawa's interest is that of running a home-based business, which in his opinion is being threatened by the conversion of a four-roomed hostel into a two-roomed family unit.

While the residents of the area have confirmed Mr Mawawa's side of the story regarding the discontinuation of the conversion of hostels, the authorities had a different story. Mr Trout, the Langa regional manager, indicated during an interview with the author that the reason for the discontinuation with the project was that the contractor had gone bankrupt and was as a result unable to continue.

5.2.5 Household 5 (A hostel dwelling converted into two family units)

An interview was held with the occupant of one of the two family units, which were previously a hostel like that of Mr Mawawa before conversion. Immediately evident on arrival at Mrs Mjekula's family unit was the following:

- Standard design, a typical two-roomed NE 51/6 house type, which was used in the past to preserve land;
- the 12 m² front room was used for living, sleeping and cooking. The other room was used for sleeping;
- the presence of a cold shower and a toilet inside the house.

These conditions, as in most of the other households already discussed in this chapter, pointed to overcrowding and lack of privacy.

Therefore, although the housing legislation discussed in chapter 3 indicates clearly that one of the objectives of the new political dispensation is to address the housing problems in the townships, this is undermined by the manner in which the concept of high density residential development is applied. In other words, it can be noted the fact that a contrast exists between the legislative framework and the concept of densification. In addition, these interviews indicated quite explicitly the fact that, although the authorities pursue a policy of one bedroom family living as the means of addressing the housing backlog, a three bedroomed house is the most desired and acceptable size to the recipients of these social houses.

5.3 The Questionnaire

A partially structured questionnaire³ was prepared to assess the quality of life of the respondents, pertaining to the current housing conditions, their location in relation to opportunities and to get the respondents' views on the types of housing they would prefer under high residential density development policy. The questionnaire was structured to obtain the following information:

- family size, composition and period of residence
- number of lodgers and where accommodated
- preferences regarding housing types
- preferences regarding the number of bedrooms and the location of the toilet and bathroom
- incidence of house alterations
- attitudes towards:
 - the present housing
 - All houses being similar
 - erf and top-structure sizes
 - the same or different income groups living next to one another

³ Copy of the questionnaire is attached in the addendum.

– the proximity of neighbours and whether more privacy was desired

- the condition of the house and garden

The respondents were also asked to indicate as to which house type they liked the most and the one they liked the least and to give reasons for their choices. They were also asked as to whether the one they liked the least would be preferred if it was near opportunities such as place of work, schools or public transport.

As indicated in chapter 1, the questionnaire was complemented by a housing model. A model of a simplex, duplex and a three-storey apartment house types was constructed.⁴ These housing types were constructed on the same scale and this was explained to the respondents. Each comprised of three bedrooms, a kitchen and a living room. In the case of the duplex and the apartment, access to the upper floor was explained by removing the upper floor.

5.4 The Findings

5.4.1 The Household

Details pertaining to the period of residence in Langa are presented in Table 5.3.1

TABLE 5.4.1: YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN LANGA

	ROW HOUSING		DETACHED HOUSING		COMMUNAL UNITS		FLATS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
30-34	5	13,9	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-29	3	8,3	-	-	-	-	2	16,7
20-24	15	41,7	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-19	6	16,7	-	-	-	-	7	58,3
10-14	2	5,5	13	76,5	-	-	3	25
5-9	3	8,3	4	23,5	-	-	-	-
0-4	2	5,6	-	-	15	100	-	-
	36	100	17	100	15	100	12	100

The population of Langa can therefore be regarded as matured and stable. It can be noticed from Table 5.4.1 that row housing and flats are the oldest types of dwellings since one finds families

that have lived for more than 30 years in these two types of housing. The communal family units are the latest type to be constructed in Langa as these were occupied in 1999. However, it is worth noting the fact that although respondents indicated the number of years they have lived in their present types of residences, some of them were living in other residences before moving to the four types of housing mentioned in this study. Therefore, the recent wave of migration from rural to urban areas -which started after 1994- plays a lesser role with regard to years of residence in Langa.

TABLE 5.4.2: HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE OF THE RESPONDENTS

		INHABITANTS		RESPONDENTS	
		MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
ROW HOUSING (R)	N.36	22	31	12	24
	%	61,1	86,1	33,3	66,7
DETACHED HOUSING	N.17	13	15	6	11
	%	76,5	88,2	35,3	64,7
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	N.15	2	13	2	13
	%	13,3	86,7	13,3	86,7
FLATS	N.12	8	9	3	9
	%	66,7	75,0	25,0	75,0
TOTAL:	80	45	68	23	57
PERCENTAGE:	100	56,3	85	28,8	71,3

⁴ A photo of the housing models is attached on the questionnaire.

TABLE 5.4.3: HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE: DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Age group	Total	MALE R=57 D=36 M=25 F=22					FEMALE R=74 D=53 M=37 F=28				
		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+
Row Housing (R)	131	4	9	15	19	10	7	11	17	25	14
%		3,1	6,9	11,5	14,53	7,6	5,3	8,4	13,0	19,1	10,7
Detached Housing (D)	17	3	13	10	8	2	5	17	16	10	5
%		8,3	36,1	27,8	22,2	5,6	9,4	32,1	30,2	18,9	9,4
Communal family units (M)	15	0	10	8	7	0	3	13	10	9	2
%		0	40,0	32,0	28,0	0	8,1	35,1	27,0	24,3	5,5
Flats (F)		2	6	9	5	0	3	9	5	10	1
%		9,1	27,3	40,0	22,7	0	10,7	32,1	17,9	35,7	3,6
TOTAL		9	38	42	39	12	18	50	48	54	22
%		6,4	27,1	30,0	27,9	8,6	9,4	26,0	25,0	28,1	11,5
Male + Female	332						27	88	90	93	34
%							8,1	26,5	27,1	28,0	10,3

Regarding the number of parents in the different housing types, the figures showed in the Table 5.4.4, below applied.

TABLE 5.4.4: MOTHER / FATHER RATIO

	Percent indicating:		
	No Mother	No Father	Mother & father
ROW-HOUSING	13,9	38,9	47,2
DETACHED HOUSING	11,8	23,5	64,7
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	13,3	86,7	0,0
FLATS	25,0	33,0	42,0

Well over half of the dependent children can be classed as adolescent or youngsters approaching early adulthood. Well over a quarter are younger than 10 years of age and just over one - tenth are 20 years and older. An illustration of the number of dependents per family (Table 5.4.5) shows the following:

TABLE 5.4.5: DEPENDENT CHILDREN PER FAMILY

CHILDREN PER FAMILY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
7	8	10,0
6	13	16,2
5	11	13,7
4	19	23,8
3	16	20,0
2	8	10,0
1	3	3,8
0	2	2,5
Total	80	100

TABLE 5.4.6: FAMILIES WITH OTHER RELATIVES AND WORKING CHILDREN LIVING IN THE HOUSE OR ON SITE

		IN HOUSE	% OF HOUSE HOLDS	ON SITE	% OF HOUSE HOLDS
OTHER RELATIVES	ROW – HOUSING	6	16,7	10	27,8
	DETACHED HOUSING	2	11,8	-	-
	COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	-	-	-	-
	FLATS	-	-	--	
WORKING CHILDREN	ROW - HOUSING	3	8,3	21	58,3
	DETACHED HOUSING	3	17,6	-	-
	COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	2	13,3	-	-
	FLATS	1	8,3	-	-

It is worth noting though that the highest incidence of other relatives living with families is related to grand children. In addition, relatives and working children are accommodated both on the site where there is property to build additional rooms and in the house where such property does not exist. The exception with the detached housing where both the relatives and the working children are accommodated in the house comes as a result of the fact that the conditions laid by the banks from which loans were obtained, forbids any changes to the structure of the houses until the whole amount of the loans has been paid.

TABLE 5.4.7: LODGERS LIVING IN THE HOUSE OR ELSEWHERE ON THE PROPERTY

HOUSE HOLDS SURVEY-ED	HOUSEHOLD PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION IN THE HOUSE OR ELSEWHERE ON THE PROPERTY	NUMBER OF LODGERS LIVING IN HOUSES	NUMBER OF LODGERS LIVING ON THE SITE	TOTAL NO. OF LODGERS LIVING IN THE HOUSE OR ON THE SITE
36	32 = 88,9%	8	172	180
17	3 = 17,6%	3	–	–
15	–	–	–	–
12	–	–	–	–
80	35	11	172	180

The fact that respondents in the communal family units and the flats indicated that they accommodated no lodgers can be attributed to the fact that the inside of these two house types is very small in size and residents have no individual property. The size of the communal family units varies between 6 m² to 12 m² per room and that of the flats between 12 m² and 13.5 m². On the basis of 88,9 percent of the row-houses where lodgers were present and the recorded number of 172 lodgers, it would appear that lodgers account for on average, six additional people on the properties.

TABLE 5.4.8: BEDROOM AND TOILET REQUIREMENT

		NUMBER OF BEDROOMS REQUIRED PER FAMILY					LOCATION OF TOILET	
		1	2	3	4	+	IN	OUT
ROW HOUSING	36		4	22	10		36	
	%		11,1	61,1	27,8	100		
DETACHED HOUSING	17		1	11	5		17	
	%		5,9	64,7	29,4		100	
COMMUNAL UNITS	15		4	11			15	
	%		26,7	73,3			100	
FLATS	12		4	8			12	
	%		33,3	66,7			100	
TOTAL	80		13	52	15		80	
PERCENTAGE	100		16,25	65,0	18,75		100	

The fact that 65 percent of the respondents prefer a minimum of three bedrooms could be reasonable given the following facts:

- Of the eighty respondents, 83,7 percent have between three and seven children living with them. (See Table 5.3.5);
- Households with working children living on the site in row-housing accounted for 58,3 percent and only 8,3 percent for those living in the house (refer to Table 5.3.6); and
- 58,3 percent of the row housing had additional rooms as indicated in Table 5.3.10.

Therefore, the data indicated in Tables 5.4.5, 5.4.6 and 5.4.10 supports the 65 percent of respondents in table 5.4.8 who indicated that they prefer a three bed-roomed house. Given this information, if one allows for sex separation of children and a separate bedroom for parents, a house with three bedrooms is required.

Only row-housing and detached houses were surveyed regarding the use of outside areas as the design of the other two walk-up structures did not make provision for such areas. However, residents in the walk-up structures indicated that they seriously needed outside areas for personal use.

TABLE 5.4.9. USE OF OUTSIDE AREA

DO YOU MAKE USE OF THE OUTSIDE AREA		YES
ROW – HOUSING	36	27
	%	75,0
DETACHED HOUSING	17	17
	%	100

The main uses of the outside areas given by the respondents are as follows:

- Aesthetic purposes such as having beautiful flower garden and stoep;
- Sitting on the lawn on sunny days and talk to neighbourhood people who happen to pass nearby;
- Drying washing;
- Traditional occasions such as brewing umqombothi (African tradition beer made from

maize) for ancestors, marriage ceremonies and erecting of a kraal for young men coming from the circumcision school; and

- As a play ground for children.

Residents from the multi-storey communal family units and flats indicated that they felt very strongly about the fact that they could not freely perform their traditional activities as they wish due to the lack of yard space. They also indicated that the lack of an enclosed yard has made the victims to people who steal their washing.

“I do not know that how many items I have lost hanging on that washing line. Moreover, it is very difficult to hang something and not watch it as someone could smear your washing with umuti⁵” (Langa resident).

Incidents of beliefs in supernatural came up very strong among the respondents from the communal family units and the flats. One of the residents blamed the death of her husband on the sharing of a kitchen. She pointed out that her husband died because someone poured umuti in the food he was preparing in the communal kitchen. Based on these beliefs, it can therefore be said that communal living makes every day life difficult for the affected residents.

Alterations and Additions

Alterations and additions refer to any improvements such as additional rooms, enlargement of living rooms, installation of quality doors and big windows and any other changes that alter the original design of the structure and are permanent.

Of the 80 households that were surveyed, no alterations or additions were reported in the case of detached housing, the communal family units and the flats. This is attributed to the fact that, in the case of detached housing, these dwellings are still the property of the banks that have loaned bonds to the inhabitants. As a result, the contract signed with the banks demands that these dwellings should not be altered until the bonds are paid up. In the case of communal family units and the flats, these structures are rented by their inhabitants from the municipality and therefore should not be altered. Moreover, these are walk-up structures and this makes it almost impossible to make alterations or additions. As a result, alterations and additions could only be found in the row-housing dwellings.

However, those row housing respondents who did not make any alterations or additions to the structure of the house noted that they have shacks for additional living space.

TABLE 5.4.10: ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

		CHANGES MADE TO THE HOUSE			
		ADDITIONAL ROOMS	ENLARGED LIVING ROOMS	NEW FITTED DOORS	BIG FITTED WINDOWS
ROW HOUSING	36	21	7	29	29
	%	58,3	19,4	80,6	80,6

Reasons Cited for Making Alterations and Additions

- The family is too big;
- The need for privacy;
- Separation of children of different sexes;
- To accommodate visiting relatives and friends;
- To fit in the required furniture;
- A bigger house as a life-style; and
- For aesthetic purposes, better views and more sunlight in the case of new fitted doors and windows.

Reasons cited for not making alterations and additions:

- Lack of finance;
- A middle house in the case of row housing can not be altered as one would like; and
- Did not care.

TABLE 5.4.11: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE HOUSE

		DO YOU LIKE YOUR HOUSE?		
		YES	NO	DON'T CARE
ROW HOUSING	36	10	24	2
	%	27,8	66,7	5,5
DETACHED HOUSING	17	14	3	
	%	82,4	17,6	
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15		12	3
	%		80,0	20,0
FLATS	12		12	
	%		100	

⁵ A powder believed to bring misfortune.

As reflected in Table 5.4.11, attitudes towards the house seem to have been influenced by the type and the size of the house in which the individual respondents live. Arrival at this conclusion is justified by the fact that only the respondents from detached housing were to a large extent happy with their houses. An overwhelming majority of respondents from the other three types of houses did not like them.

TABLE 5.4.12: REASONS FOR LIKING OR DISLIKING THE HOUSE

REASONS FOR LIKING	%	REASONS FOR DISLIKING	%
Don't care. Not interested in owning a house in the urban area.	17,5	It is too small.	52,0
Have no where else to go.	56,3	Bad workmanship and middle house.	2,2
This is a peaceful neighbourhood.	5,0	The shebeen next door.	7,5
Have improved the house.	10,0	It looks like a train carriage.	3,8
Cannot leave Langa for any other area.	11,2	Flat-mates are a nuisance.	10,0
		It is not suitable for raising a child.	2,5
		There is no privacy.	22,0

TABLE 5.4.13: ATTITUDES TOWARDS SIMILAR LOOKING HOUSES

		DOES IT BOTHER YOU IF THE HOUSES ARE ALL ALIKE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?	
		YES	NO
ROW - HOUSING	N=36	29	7
	%	80,6	19,4
DETACHED HOUSING	17	12	5
	%	70,6	29,4

Only the respondents from row-housing and detached housing were asked to respond to this question as they were the people with first hand experience of living in houses that looked the same. Although detached housing in Langa are dwellings that do not look the same, most of their occupants have lived in row housing before. This is the reason for their inclusion under this question

Reasons for being bothered or not bothered by houses looking the same:

- The area looks boring;
- There is no provision for personal choice; and
- Row housing looks like railway carriages.

- Don't care (in the case of those who are not bothered)

TABLE 5.4.14: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THOSE WITH SIMILAR OR DISSIMILAR INCOMES LIVING CLOSE TO ONE ANOTHER

		SHOULD PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT INCOME LEVELS LIVE NEXT TO ONE ANOTHER?		
		YES	NO	DON'T CARE
ROW HOUSING	36	12	21	3
	%	33,3	58,4	8,3
DETACHED HOUSING	17		16	1
	%		94,1	5,9
COMMUNAL UNITS	15	6	9	
	%	40,0	60,0	
FLATS	12	1	9	2
	%	8,3	75,0	16,7

Reasons for or against being located close to persons with similar or dissimilar incomes:

- Don't care;
- Better-off families will make poor families feel uncomfortable;
- The poor will steal from the better-off;
- Personal interests are different; and
- Children from better-off families will cause those from poor background to make unattainable financial demands as the parents of the latter have no money to provide their children with most of the basic necessities.

TABLE 5.4.15: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CLOSE PROXIMITY OF NEIGHBOURS AND THE NEED FOR MORE PRIVACY

		DO YOU THINK THAT LIVING CLOSE (RIGHT NEXT) TO YOUR NEIGHBOURS IS A PROBLEM ?		DO YOU LIKE MORE PRIVACY ?	
		YES	NO	YES	NO
ROW - HOUSING	36	27	9	31	5
	%	75,0	25,0	86,1	13,9
DETACHED HOUSING	17	-	17	-	17
	%		100		100
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15	13	2	15	-
	%	86,7	13,3	100	
FLATS	12	8	4	12	-
	%	66,7	33,3	100	-

With respect to row housing, having 75 percent of the respondents indicating that proximity of neighbours was a problem and 86,1 percent of them liking more privacy, could be attributed to the fact that in row-housing each resident is sharing the sidewalls of the house with one or two neighbors. With regard to the seventeen detached housing respondents indicating that they do not have a problem with living in close proximity to their neighbours and having no need for more privacy, this could be the result of the fact that these are freestanding houses. The findings from the communal family units and the flats came as no surprise as people have to share facilities such as toilets, kitchens and passages in these units.

Those respondents who indicated to have no problem with living in close proximity to one another cited security reasons as the motivation behind their preference. Those against this cited the following reasons:

- Noise from shebeens and loud radios or church services right next door;
- Children next door being a nuisance; and
- The need for more privacy.

TABLE 5.4.16: ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE SIZE OF THE ERF

		IS THE PLOT TOO SMALL, TOO BIG OR SATISFACTORY?		
		TOO SMALL	TOO BIG	SATISFACTORY
ROW-HOUSING	36	28		8
	%	77,8		22,2
DETACHED HOUSING	17	3		14
	%	17,6		82,4
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15	15		
	%	100		
FLATS	12	12		
	%	100		

The main reason noted for the high percentage of dissatisfied row housing respondents was that most houses were middle houses. As a result, the erven of such houses tended to be smaller when compared to corner houses. The high percentage of satisfied respondents in detached

housing could be attributed to the fact that these are freestanding houses. As a result, most of the erven are reasonably big. The dissatisfaction indicated by respondents in family units and flats was influenced by the lack of facilities such as washing lines, areas for parking and playing space for children. As a result of these deficiencies, noted the respondents, washing and cars are easily stolen and the children had to play in the street.

The fact that only a handful of respondents seem to be satisfied with the size of their erf is a matter for concern. Even the majority of these few satisfied respondents occupy the 'black middle class housing.'

The reasons given for the erf being regarded as too small or satisfactory are as follows:

Too Small:

- Lack of space to build a garage or additional room for the growing family.
- If additional rooms are built, there is always the possibility of a lack of space to hang the washing and for the children to play.
- lack of enough space to erect a kraal in the case of cultural events.

Satisfactory:

- The family is small.
- It is at the end of the row and the yard is bigger as a result (corner house in the case of row housing).
- It is a detached house
- Don't care. Only interested in the house left in the rural area.

Numerical data pertaining to the answers given by the respondents are presented in Tables 5.3.17, 5.3.18 and 5.3.19 below. Reasons for preferences and analysis thereof follow after each table.

TABLE 5.4.17: THE MOST PREFERRED HOUSE TYPE

		SIMPLEX	DUPLEX	APARTMENT
ROW-HOUSING	36	27	4	5
	%	75,0	11,1	13,9
DETACHED HOUSING	17	13	4	
	%	76,5	23,5	
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15	11		4
	%	73,3		26,7
FLATS	12	12		
	%	100		
TOTAL	80	63	8	9
	%	78,75	10,0	11,25

The main reasons given by respondents for preferring a simplex house structure are mainly the availability of space and privacy. They highlighted the availability of the yard that would enable the occupant to do alterations to the house in the future. The importance of these factors to them was that these make the house more suitable in the case of raising children.

With respect to those who preferred a duplex structure, they highlighted the presence of better views and the fact that children can play up stairs and thereby not disturb the adults at all times. The apartment was preferred mainly by smaller families who intend to keep their size that way and they indicated that flats were cheaper when compared to the other structures.

TABLE 5.4.18: THE LEAST PREFERRED HOUSE TYPE

		SIMPLEX	DUPLEX	APARTMENT
ROW HOUSING	36		4	32
	%		11,1	88,9
DETACHED HOUSING	17			17
	%			100
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15		4	11
	%		26,7	73,3
FLATS	12			12
	%			100
TOTAL	80		8	72
	%		10	90

The main reasons given for disliking the duplex and the apartment are as follows:

- The walk-up stairs and some just don't like it in the case of a duplex.
- With regard to the apartment they disliked the walk-up stairs;
- the noise;
- the absence of a personal garden;
- the lack of privacy;
- the lack of space to perform cultural customs; and
- the unsuitable conditions for children.

TABLE 5.4.19: ACCEPTABILITY OF THE LEAST PREFERRED HOUSE TYPE WHEN IT IS CLOSE TO OPPORTUNITIES

		IF THE HOUSE YOU LIKE LEAST WAS NEAR YOUR PLACE OF WORK, SCHOOLS, SHOPS OR PUBLIC TRANSPORT, WOULD YOU THEN CHOOSE TO LIVE IN IT?	
		NO	YES
ROW HOUSING	36	15	21
	%	41,7	58,3
DETACHED HOUSING	17	3	14
	%	17,6	82,4
COMMUNAL FAMILY UNITS	15	8	7
	%	53,3	46,7
FLATS	12	7	5
	%	58,3	41,7
TOTAL	80	33	47
	%	41,25	58,75

5.5 Summary of the Findings

From the statistical data gathered in this study it is clear that, inter alia, most households in Langa are headed by females. In addition, even in households that are headed by males, these also have a considerable number of females. Therefore, females can be said to play a very important role in these households.

The age of dependent children is between the ages of 10 and 14 in the case of males and between 15 and 19 in the case of girls. In addition to this, most households have four children on average. As these are grown up children, sleeping arrangements according to sex division is necessary for the sake of privacy for both the children and parents.

In the case of row housing, it is evident that most households have working children living on site. These households also have a certain number of relatives living with them. In addition, a higher percentage of these households provide for lodgers in the house or elsewhere on the property. While it can be said that this type of housing is characterised by overcrowding, the same can be said for the walk-up apartments, since in the latter's case the data indicates that the size of each family unit is very small.

As a result of these living conditions, the research has indicated that most respondents prefer a three bedroom house. They regard this size as the most suitable for their family needs in terms of sleeping, living and storage spaces. These needs are reinforced by the fact that most of row housing structures have additional rooms and their original forms have been altered. In addition, the majority of detached and row housing types make use of the outside areas. Therefore, the findings indicate very clearly that sufficient space is a problem when it comes to low-cost housing and this results in the situations indicated below.

An overwhelming majority of the residents has indicated that they are not happy with their houses. This study has discovered that the residents do not like houses that are identical in appearance and very close to the neighbours. They also prefer residential areas to be defined in terms of the level of income.

The simplex is the most preferred house type by all participants in this study. They choose it over other types for reasons such as the presence of a yard, privacy and space. An apartment is the least preferred type. This is due to the lack of privacy, space, and the fact that people have to walk up and down the stairs. However, this type of housing is acceptable to a considerable

number of people if it is located near the opportunities.

Based on these findings, it can therefore be concluded that housing per se is more than just the physical structure. It encompasses a lot of things that are important to the lives of the residents. In turn, these aspects influence the choice of the residents when it comes to housing.

Given the scarcity of land and government's funding for housing, and the large number of people who need low-cost houses, this study acknowledges the fact that these findings, regarding people's preferences, might not always be practical as the development of three bedroom houses would limit the amount of housing units on available land. Nevertheless, as Arrigone (1995:17) has suggested in the beginning of this chapter, high density residential development must take all these findings into account if it is to be successful and be in line with sustainable development.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study has been primarily to examine the dynamics which underlie the application of the concept of high density residential development and its impact on the quality of family living. This objective has been the result of the hypothesis that, although densification may have resulted in a number of housing units being developed in South Africa, it might have impacted negatively on the very people who are the beneficiaries. In regard to this hypothesis, this study has been able to uncover a number of positive and negative aspects regarding the application of the concept of densification in South Africa.

With regard to the positive aspects of densification, it has emerged that the main objectives for the application of this concept are the following:

- To promote better urban functioning;
- To lessen the wastage of urban land;
- To allow a better urban design;
- To contain urban sprawl;
- To protect agricultural and natural resources; and
- To create thresholds for better service provision (commercial, social and transport-related).

To this effect, the application of the concept of densification can be regarded as a positive step. As a result, given the structural layout of South African settlement areas which were designed and engineered by the apartheid laws of the previous governments, it is common sense that there is a need for the application of the concept of high density development in this country.

However, the findings in this study have also revealed that the majority of the people for whom the concept of densification is intended, were very unhappy with the manner in which the concept was being applied. To them, densification meant the following, inter alia:

- Overcrowding and noise;
- Lack of privacy;
- Smaller top structures and erven;

- Lack of spaces to hang the washing and for children to play; and
- Poor public participation processes.

What is noticeable here is that the approach adopted in dealing with the housing problems seems to complicate the problem that has started as a backlog in the development of low-cost housing. The problem now is no longer only the need for more housing units, but also a need to do something about the structural design of these units. Therefore, the manner in which the concept of densification is being applied with regard to low-cost housing development is seen as a negative step by the beneficiaries of these houses.

This, as indicated in this study, could be attributed to the housing legislation itself. For example, the above mentioned positive aspects of densification are hampered by the fact that the MSDP in which these objectives are contained is a guide document and does not have any statutory obligations as a result.

In addition, the supreme law of South Africa, The South African Constitution (108/1996) recognises that everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing and that the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to ensure the realisation of this right. However, nowhere does this law stipulate as to what is meant by adequate housing. Therefore, the housing legislation is somewhat vague when it comes to the quality of living in low-cost housing.

Also, the National Housing Act, No. 107 of 1997 recognises that housing is both a product and a process. Nevertheless, the details to this effect are not mentioned. As a result, the meaning of the housing concept is left to individual authorities to decide.

As a result, the housing legislation that was adopted after 1994 sought to address the housing problems in South Africa. Since then the focus has been on developing as many housing units as possible, and the authorities have been successful to this effect. However, the housing concept has not been included in the housing legislation. With regard to low-cost housing development, the focus has been mainly on the physical aspect. In other words, the focus has been on the development of small housing units

in order to accommodate as many people as possible. The socio-cultural aspect in the development of housing has not been considered.

This approach has been evident in the case of the application of high density development in Langa. In this regard, this study has indicated that the approach with regard to recent housing development in Langa has been the construction of single room-multi storey family units.

However, participants in this study have indicated very strongly the fact that a three bedroom house is most suitable for the majority of the families. In addition, they have also indicated the fact that a single-detached dwelling is most desirable. An apartment would only be considered if it is located near opportunities.

In short, considering the aspects that are mentioned above, it has emerged from this study that unplanned methods of densification can result in situations where the occupants of the houses experience strains and dissatisfaction. As a result, the poor can be further disadvantaged and the problem of housing can therefore be further complicated.

However, this study has also shown that if implemented correctly, densification can be very advantageous. Therefore, South Africa has to be careful in its approach to the application of the concept of high density residential development. Authorities have to be careful not to concentrate more on the number of units and disregard the importance of socio-cultural factors that go with housing.

Therefore, the hypothesis that although densification may have resulted in more housing units being built whilst at the same time impacting negatively on the quality of family living has been justified by this study. However, it should be noted the fact that there is nothing wrong with the concept of densification itself. The problem is in the manner in which this concept is applied in South Africa.

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ADDENDUM

THE TRANSCRIPTS OF THE INTERVIEWS

Household 1 (three bedroom detached housing)

The house in which Mrs Booï lives is a detached house with a relatively bigger yard.

Immediately evident on arrival at the house was the following:

- a typical township black middle-class house with paving, flowers, lawn with toys on it, stoep, driveway and a garage;
- silence as if there was no one in the house; and
- a domestic worker.

These observations pointed to the following situations:

- presence of privacy from the neighbours
- comfort way of living
- ability to portray oneself image through the design of the house

The House

The interview took place in the living room. We moved from room to room to observe the house and to establish sleeping patterns. The house consisted of a large living room, three bedrooms, a large kitchen, a separate toilet, and a bathroom with hot water including a shower and a garage. The kitchen was fitted with built-in cupboards, including an eye-level oven and a hob. One of the three bedrooms was a double bedroom. The living room was well furnished and there was adequate space for circulation.

The inspection of the house showed that two people, the husband and the wife occupied the main bedroom. The other two bedrooms were occupied by one person each, the two children of the family. This arrangement pointed to the following:

- (i) presence of individual's privacy inside the house;
- (ii) sleeping arrangement of the children according to their sex;
- (iii) children's ability to do their schoolwork without being disrupted.

Internal Finishes

Lounge	As built	Improvements
Floor	Carpet	None
Walls	Plastered and painted	None
Ceiling	Timber and painted	None
Windows	Wooden and large	None
Internal doors	Timber and painted	None
Kitchen	As built	Improvements
Floor	Tiled	None
Walls	Plastered and painted	None
Ceiling	Painted timber	None
Windows	Wooden and painted	None
Bedrooms	As built	Improvements
Floor	Carpet	None
Walls	Plastered and painted	None
Ceiling	Painted timber	None
Window	Large and painted	None
Doors	Timber	None

Household Members

1. Mrs Booi: 33 years old and employed full-time as a nurse. She has been living in the house since her marriage to Mr Booi in 1993.
2. Mr Booi: 37 years old and employed full-time as a schoolteacher at a local school
3. Daughter, Wendy: 8 years old and doing grade 3 at a private school.
4. Son, Sicelo: 4 year-old and attends a crèche` in the suburbs

The Interview (Q & A)¹

Q: Mrs Booi, how many people live in this house?

A: We are four people altogether. It is my self, my husband our daughter, Wendy and that

¹ In the interview dialogues:

Q: Signifies researcher's questions and comments and **A** signifies participants'

A: Signifies participants' answers.

handsome little boy, Sicelo.

Q: What is the sleeping arrangement in this house?

A: My husband and I sleep in the main bedroom. Each of the two children use the two bedrooms respectively.

Q: Where do visitors sleep when they visit your family

A: Usually, Sicelo sleeps with us in our bedroom when we get visitors.

Q: Does your family have any problem regarding privacy both within the house and in as far as the neighbours are concerned?

A: No. The size of our family and that of the house make it possible for each of us to have privacy in this house. The fact that this is a detached house gives us privacy in as far as the neighbours are concerned.

Q: If you were to live as this family in another type of a house, which type would prefer?

A: Perhaps, a semi-detached house.

Q: What about a flat or communal living structures like those in zone 20?

A: Regarding a flat, I wouldn't mind living in it as a starter house if I had no children. You see, flats are not places where you could raise your children. Regarding those communal structures in zone 20, over my dead body would I live under such misery. Don't you think that it is very sad that we say we now live in a new South Africa but people are still accommodated in those apartheid structures. Most of those people must have voted for the ANC as you know that area is an ANC stronghold. I am sure that they are still going to vote for the same person who put them in that misery. The reason for that, lack of education. How can you raise children under those conditions. Sorry, I don't want to talk about that sad situation, can we change to another question.

Q: What in your opinion, would be a solution to the problem in zone 20 and housing in general?

A: I said I don't want to talk about that heart-breaking situation.

Q: Any other thing you would like to say or add to our conversation?

A: No, I have nothing more to say. I don't feel right now, because I am a sensitive person especially when innocent people are being used and fooled by the very people who are supposed to help them.

Household 2 (two bedroom row- housing)

The house in which Mr Somtaki and his family live is a middle house as most of houses in this type of neighbourhood are. As a result, the plot is relatively smaller than the corner houses . Immediately evident on arrival at the house was the following, which is typical of low-cost housing in South Africa:

- the type of the house, a typical NE (NONE EUROPEAN) 51/6 three roomed² type with a toilet/bathroom located inside the house;
- the presence of two shacks, a common scene in black townships;
- the presence of many people, males and females, children and adults; and
- the presence of a well looked-after lawn with a polished stoep.
- These observations immediately pointed to a situation characterised by:
 - o housing shortage;
 - o overcrowding and
 - o lack of privacy.

The House

The interview took place in the living room, although we moved from room to room when observing the house and establishing sleeping patterns. The house consisted of a living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen and an inside toilet/bathroom with no provision of hot water. The

²The number of rooms in this house refers to the number of habitable rooms. The official description of the NE 51/6 as being four-roomed includes a kitchen. This is not the right practice (Granelli and Levitan , 1977 : 15)

kitchen was fitted with built-in cupboards. The living room was well furnished although it was difficult to move around due to its smaller size. No additions to the house were evident.

The inspection of the house showed that more than two persons occupied the main bedroom. Three people of different sexes occupied the other bedroom. The living room was used for sleeping purposes at night. The toilet/bathroom was also used as a storage room. This information pointed again to:

- a situation of overcrowding;
- lack of privacy;
- lack of space for storage; and
- lack of sleeping arrangement according to sex division .

Internal Finishes

Lounge	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	Carpet
Walls	Unpainted concrete block	Plastered and painted
Ceiling	None	Oak wood
Window	Small and steel	Large and wooden
Kitchen	As built	Improvements
Floor	Concrete screed	Tiles
Walls	Unpainted concrete block	Plastered and painted
Ceiling	None	Timber slats
Bedrooms	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	Carpets
Walls	Unpainted concrete block	Plastered and painted
Ceiling	None	Timber slats
Windows	Small and steel	Large and wooden
Doors	None	Installed

Household Members

1. Mr Somtaki: 64 years old and employed full-time as a gardener. He has been living in the house since their marriage with Mrs Somtaki in 1963.
2. Mrs Somtaki: 58 years old and employed full-time as a domestic worker.
3. Daughter, Yolanda: 34 years old and employed full-time as a cleaner in a restaurant. She has two children of her own although she has never been married.
4. Daughter, Thunyiwe: 31 years old, working as a cashier in one of the local stores and she has a child although she also has never been married.
5. Daughter, Nomhle: 27 years old, unemployed with matric education level and she too has a child.
6. Son, Mandla: 25 years old and studying towards a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the university of the Western Cape.
7. Son, Sizwe: 20 years old and repeating matric at a local school.
8. Grandchildren: 11 year old Pumeza, 8 year old Nkunzi, 7 year old Nonto and 2 year old Ntsikelel.

The Interview

Q: Mr Somtaki, how many people are in this household?

A: We are eleven altogether: myself and my wife, three daughters, two sons and four grandchildren.

Q: Now that the house has only two bedrooms and given the number of people in the family, how do you sleep?

A: My wife and I sleep in the main bedroom with Yolanda's two children. Sizwe sleeps on this living room couch. Mandla and Nomhle together with her child use the second bedroom. Yolanda and Thunyiwe sleep in their shacks, the latter with her child.

Q: Why doesn't Mandla and Sizwe share the same room as they are of the same sex?

A: My daughter, Nomhle who shares the second room with Mandla has a two-

year-old child. As a result, we decided that the best place for this child would be the bedroom.

Q: Do you ever encourage the working children to get their own houses as a measure of reducing the number of people in your household?

A: We are a poor family. Therefore, it is important that the working children assist us with financial needs for as long as they are still not married. You cannot expect us to follow the culture of the white people whereby working children stay on their own.

Q: Do the individual family members have any privacy inside the house?

A: No. This is what we have been living with for many years. Yolanda and Thunyiwe have been trying for years to get themselves the “Vezinyawo houses”³ but all their efforts have been in vain.

Q: Does the family have any privacy from the neighbours?

A: We hear almost every thing our neighbours say whenever they raise their voices. So the same thing should apply when we raise our voices. If they were to play music now, you would swear that the music is being played inside this house.

Q: Do you cook and eat as one family?

A: Yes. We cook together but because of the size of this living room, we can't all fit in here at one time as some of us would sit uncomfortably. Some use the kitchen and the bedrooms. Yolanda and Thunyiwe usually take their food to their shacks.

Q: Given the size of your family and that of this house, how do you cope with the use of a single toilet/bathroom?

A: That is a problem. In order to be able to wash ourselves, we have to get up earlier than we would if we were not overcrowded. To use the toilet is mere

³The word “vezinyawo” refers to the smaller size of the government subsidized housing, meaning “protruding feet”

problematic and I would not like to talk about it.

Q: How do you dress up and undress yourselves?

A: We normally use the toilet / bathroom as there would be people, especially the children, in the bedrooms.

Q: How do Mandla and Sizwe prepare their schoolwork here at home?

A: Depending on where are most of the family members at a given time, they either sit here in the living room or use the bedrooms.

Q: Where do you accommodate the visitors that come far away?

A: We discourage visitors from coming to our house because of the lack of space otherwise we would not have a place for her to sleep. She used the main bedroom and my wife and I had to sleep in Mandla and Nomhle's bedroom whilst they used the kitchen and living room to sleep.

Q: Why don't you add more rooms to the house.

A: That is a good idea but where do I get money for that. If I were to show you my salary-advice you would retract that question.

Q: What do you think is a solution to the housing problem?

A: The government must start delivering on the promises it made in 1994.

Q: But the government is building houses although the pace would be not the one you would expect to see, isn't that so?

A: No, the problem with the construction of those houses has never been the pace but the house structure itself. People are told that they can add more rooms to those small-subsidized houses and the very government is following the trend of the private sector thereby downsizing public servants. Where are these people going to get jobs so that they can enlarge those houses. In addition, when time comes for people occupying those houses to have grandchildren, they will experience exactly what we are experiencing.

Q: Any other thing you would like to add to this conversation?

A: When I voted in the last two elections I thought I was voting for the future of my grandchildren. Now I have come to realise that all I voted for was that our brothers and sisters should sit in the parliament and become rich. This is a shame.

Household 3 (multi-storey family units)

The multi-storey building in which Mrs Bam and lives her two children live has three floors. The bottom floor consists of two-roomed family units. The second and third floors consist of one-roomed family units and Mrs Bam occupied a room on the second floor. On arrival at this place, the following were immediately evident:

- (i) the absence of enclosure around the building;
- (ii) the absence of a play ground for children;
- (iii) the absence of noticeable area for hanging the washing;
- (iv) the presence of too many people, males and females, children and adults;
- (v) the presence of many meat stalls about four metres away from the building;
- (vi) very loud music coming from radio-cassettes;
- (vii) a number of drunken people going in and out the building;
- (viii) people peeping through the windows and talking to people who were standing on the ground, and
- (ix) a fight between two men who appeared to be drunk.

These observations pointed to the following:

- quality of life typical to that of hostel dwellers;
- overcrowding;
- housing shortage;
- alcohol abuse;
- noisy accommodation;
- health hazard;
- opportunity for psychological over stimulation; and
- lack of opportunity for sense of place, relatedness, creativity and privacy .

The House / Unit

The interview took place in a 12-m² room, which Mrs Bam uses as a bedroom, a living, a kitchen, a bathroom and a storeroom. The unit had five rooms for five different families, and a 6-m² kitchen, which was very dirty and full of a bad smell, a toilet and a cold shower full of smelling garbage. The kitchen, the toilet and the shower were used communally for communal use . Mrs Bam's family room is furnished as follows:

- a double and a single bed;
- a couch and a coffee table;
- a small table on which she has a double-plate stove for cooking, and under which she put her pots, dishes and cups;
- a small drawer-table in which she keeps her toiletry and some of her clothes . Other clothes were hanging on the wall and some were in suitcases both under and on the single bed;
- a drawer table on which a television set stood;
- there were two pictures hanging on the wall and
- behind the door stood a washing basket and a ironing board with washing towels hanging on it.

Upon asking her about the sleeping arrangement, it was revealed that all the four people slept in this one room. This situation again pointed to:

- overcrowding and lack of space;
- lack of storage space;
- lack of sleeping arrangement according to sex division;
- lack of opportunity for sense of place, relatedness, creativity and privacy;
- opportunity for psychological over stimulation; and
- health hazard.

Internal Finishes

Mrs Bam's room	As built	Improvements
Floor	Concrete screed	Lino pieces
Walls	Unpainted and unplastered concrete blocks	Painted
Ceiling	Unpainted timber slats	Painted
Windows	small and steel x 2	None
Communal kitchen	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	Lino pieces
Walls	Unpainted and unplastered concrete blocks	Painted
Ceiling	Unpainted timber slats	Painted
Passage and inside staircase	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	none
Walls	Unpainted concrete blocks	Painted
Ceiling	Unpainted concrete block	Painted

Household Members

1. Mrs Bam: 38 years old and employed full-time as a domestic worker;
2. Mr Bam: 41 years old and employed as a security guard;
3. Son, Luvuyo: 17 years old and doing grade eleven at a local school; and
4. Daughter, Nasiphe: 9 years old and doing grade 4 at a suburban school.

The Interview

Q: Mrs Bam, how many members of your family live in this household?

A: There are four of us here. My husband, the two children, Luvuyo and Nasiphe and myself

Q: How do the three of you sleep in this room?

A: Nasiphe sleeps on that single bed. My husband and I, on this double bed. Luvuyo sleeps on this couch.

Q: How come the whole family of four shares a single room?

A: We used to live in the hostels that you see behind this building. We were told that the hostels were going to be converted into family housing and that additional flats were going to be built to accommodate the surplus from the converted hostels. Then, these things in which we now live were built before the conversion of the hostels. We were among the first group of people to be moved into these things.

Q: Back in the hostel where your family comes from, did you have your own room as a family or did you share it with other people?

A: We shared a room with another family.

Q: Isn't perhaps better now that you have a room of your own?

A: No,, its just the same thing as you can see yourself that there is still no space

here.

Q: I see that you also use this room as a kitchen. How come you don't make use of the provided kitchen?

A: Five families are expected to use that small kitchen. The result, that smell and dirt you see in that kitchen. We are different families with different backgrounds and behaviours. Some of us are hygienic conscious and some of us just don't care. Some don't mind living dirty dishes unattended for three to four days. It all has to do with the way we were brought up by our parents. So, if I were to cook something in that kitchen, would you eat it?

Q: How many rooms, families and people per each family live in this unit?

A: There are five rooms and families. There is one family per each room. There are three people in the room facing this one. There are four people in the room next to the toilet. The room next to that one has also four people. The smallest room next to mine has three people. Therefore, there are eighteen people living in this unit.

Q: Of these eighteen people, how many are children?

A: There are eight children and ten adults.

Q: How do eighteen people cope with one toilet and one shower?

A: It is a nightmare when it comes to the use of the toilet especially if one has a loose stomach. The shower we do not even use it as there is no hot water. They should have installed a bath instead of a shower so that we could use our stoves and kettles to boil water. We could also wash our clothing in the bath. Now we always go to the flats opposite us to do our washing as they are provided with washing rooms and basins .

Q: Where do you wash yourselves if you don't use the shower?

A: We all use our rooms to wash ourselves .The adults usually lock the children outside before they can wash themselves. Nasiphe and I also have to live the room when Luvuyo is about to wash himself.

As the interview was in progress, there was a loud noise of people voices,

which was coming from one of the rooms.

Q: What is all that noise about?

A: The second room from the toilet is a shebeen. Those are people who are drinking .

Q: Does that shebeen cause any problems to people who live here?

A: A lot of problems. As you can hear, that shebeen causes more noise than the one caused by the number of people who live in here. The customers make the toilet very dirty when they are drunk. They urinate on the toilet floor. Some even vomit in the passage or on the toilet floor.

Q: Is there nothing that can be done by the rest of other people who live here in order to solve this shebeen problem?

A: We tried to reason with the owner of the shebeen. We told her about our complaints but she told us that she was more than willing to stop selling liquor if we were prepared to give her the money she makes out of this business.

Q: Given the conditions under which your family lives, how do Luvuyo and Nasiphe manage to do their schoolwork here at home?

A: It is very difficult especially for Luvuyo as his level of schooling requires lots of concentration. He has to go to friends places in order to do school work that needs some concentration . This is no place for children.

Q: In your opinion, what is a solution to your present accommodation problem?

A: The parliamentarians must not only come here to campaign for votes but must come and live here for just one week. You know as well as I know that they wouldn't last for even three days. Only then would the government learn to give people real homes. My family prefers to live in an Uvezinyawo⁴ house than this misery.

⁴A Xhosa word meaning ' protruding feet' . The detached state assisted housing is generally referred to as such because of its small size . By this it is meant that whilst the inhabitants are sleeping, their feet protrude to the outside of the house .

Q: What happened to the conversion of the hostels in which you used to live.

A: Only one hostel was converted into two two-roomed family units. Mr Mawawa who lives and runs his business in the hostel next to the already converted hostel, refused to give way for the conversion of his four-roomed hostel.

Q: Is there a way that I can speak to Mr Mawawa. I would like to ask him few questions regarding the conversion of those hostels.

A: I will ask Nasiphe to go and show you where he lives. He doesn't live far from here.

Q: Is there any other thing that you would like to say regarding our conversation before I go to Mr Mawawa.

A: The only thing I would like to add is about my family's pain. My family lived through the fires of the backyard shacks and informal settlements. We shared a room with another family in a hostel . We responded to the call to vote for a better life in the 1994 and 1999 elections. The result, the construction of these so-called family units in which my family occupies this tiny single room. We therefore still have not found a place called home even in this new South Africa.

Household 4 (Mr Mawawa's four-roomed hostel)

On arrival at the hostel the most noticeable thing about the place was that three of the four rooms were full of people who were drinking liquor . The fourth room was full of people who were buying liquor . Although Mr Mawawa was very busy, he agreed to be interviewed provided that the interview was not going to take too long.

The interview took place outside the hostel since the place was too noisy as a result of the large numbers of people who were inside.

The Interview

Q: Mr Mawawa, do you share this hostel with other people or families?

A: No I don't share it with other families. I live here with my family and as a result I pay rent for the whole hostel. Some of the people who used to live here passed away while others moved to stay in the rural areas. That is how I came to rent the whole hostel. I now run this business as you can see.

Q: I have been told that the authorities wanted to convert all the hostels in this area into family units and that the project was discontinued after you refused to move out for builders to do their work. Would you mind telling more about that story?

A: That is true. The street committee told us that these hostels were to be converted into family housing. We all agreed that such a move was welcomed. When the street I asked the street committee about the size of each house, they sidestepped my question in the general meeting. It was only when they started converting the hostel next door that I realised how small these houses were going to be. That is the reason why I refused to give way for conversion of my hostel.

Q: What did other people say when they became aware of the size of these family units?

A: I do not know about the other people. The only thing I know is that the authorities are using the street committee to make people to accept these small houses. They take advantage of the fact that most people here are poor and illiterate. The people will only realise when they move into these houses that they have been cheated.

Q: What did the authorities do after you refused to give way for the upgrading of the hostels?

A: Initially, they called me to a meeting, which was attended by the street committee, the residents of this area and SANCO. The authorities were not there. I told SANCO and the people that I was not doing that only for myself, but for the community at large. SANCO understood the reason that why I was refusing to give way.

Q: What about the people. Did they as well understand you?

A: The people understood my point but they were afraid to speak out. They thought that the authorities would send in the police to arrest them. You see, as I have already told you, our people are being taken advantage of because of their lack of education.

Q: What happened then?

A: the street committee to become a member later approached me. I agreed to join and am now a member of the street. However, the members do not talk to me or greet me when we see each other in the neighbourhood . They say that I am very stubborn .

Q: How do you think this problem could be solved?

A: The government must get more land so that people can be housed properly.

It is worth noting the fact that although Mr Mawawa is in trouble with the housing authorities, Subsection 1(k) under Section 3 of the Development Facilitation Act, 1995 requires that land development and the upgrading of an existing settlements should in some manner, reasonably accommodate the interests of the beneficial occupiers of land or homes. Therefore, Mr Mawawa's interest is that of running a home-based business, which in his opinion is being threatened by the conversion of a four-roomed hostel into a two-roomed family unit.

While the residents of the area have confirmed Mr Mawawa's side of the story regarding the discontinuation of the conversion of hostels , the authorities had a different story .

Mr Trout , the Langa regional manager , indicated during an interview with the author that the reason for the discontinuation with the project was that the contractor had gone bankrupt and was as a result unable to continue .

Household 5 (A hostel dwelling converted into two family units)

An interview was held with the occupant of one of the two family units, which were previously a hostel like that of Mr Mawawa before conversion. Immediately evident

on arrival at Mrs Mjekula's family unit was the following:

- (i) Standard design, a typical two-roomed NE 51/6 house type, which was used in the past to preserve land;
- (ii) the 12 m² front room was used for living, sleeping and cooking. The other room was used for sleeping;
- (iii) the presence of a cold shower and a toilet inside the house.

Internal Finishes

Living / sleeping / cooking room	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	Lino pieces
Walls	Unpainted and unplastered concrete blocks	Painted
Ceiling	None	Timber slats
Window	Small and unpainted steel	Painted
Bedroom	As built	Improvements
Floor	Cement screed	Carpet
Walls	Unpainted and unpainted concrete blocks	Painted
Ceiling	None	Timber slats
Door	None	Installed

Household Members

1. Mrs Mjekula: 45 years old and a house wife
2. Mr Mjekula: 49 years old and employed as a petrol attendant;
3. Nomsa: 22 years old and studying towards a diploma in Marketing.
4. Phumzile: 18 years old and doing matric at one of the local schools
5. Nosipho: 13 years old and doing grade 7 also at a local school

The Interview

Q: Mrs Mjekula, where did your family live before you moved into this house?

A: We lived right in here. However, this was a four-roomed hostel at that time.

We occupied a room as a family. The hostel has now been converted into two-roomed family units .

Q: Now that you have your own house, how happy is your family?

A: We don't consider this as a house but as another form of a hostel. A house should at least have two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen. Here, there is only one bedroom and the living room is also a kitchen as you can see. As a result, have to use the toilet as a dressing place when my husband or myself is in the bedroom .

Q: How do you arrange yourselves for sleeping purposes?

A: My husband and I sleep in that small bedroom and all my three children sleep here on sponges in this living room/kitchen area .

Q: Have you ever considered adding another room to this house ?

A: We have no yard here and we not even told as to where our yard runs. Therefore, we don't know as to how much space we have outside the house.

Q: Why is the conversion of the other hostels is not continuing?

A: I would not like to talk about that.

Q: Anything that you would like to add to our conversation before I live?

A: Like what?

Q: Something that you would like the authorities to do as a means of rectifying the concerns you have raised regarding your house?

A: All I can say is that I sincerely hope that the government is going to come back to build us real houses because this is misery.

After this interview, no participants were selected from the flats as the living conditions were exactly the same as those found in the multi-storey one-roomed family units . Participants were only selected as respondents to the questionnaire in the case of the Langa flats .

ANNEXURE

Booi,V., Langa Resident. (2001). Personal Interview, 11 August, Langa.

Bam, T., Langa Resident. (2001). Personal interview, 12 August, Langa.

Mawawa, S., Langa Resident. (2001). Personal Interview, 16 August, Langa.

Mjekula, P., Langa Resident. (2001). Personal Interview, 17 August, Langa.

Somtaki, M., Langa Resident. (2001). Personal Interview, 12 August, Langa.

Gender of the respondent

Male	Female
------	--------

Position in the household

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1. How long has your family been living in this house? Years

How big is your family
(only people living in the house)

Male	Woman

2. Is there a

Grandmother	Grandfather	Aunt
-------------	-------------	------

living in the

house	outside room
-------	--------------

3. Are there any lodgers? YES / NO

If yes, how many

	M	F	CHILDREN
--	---	---	----------

4. Is the plot

too small	too big	satisfactory
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If too small or too big how big would you like it to be?

UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING DIVISION

QUESTIONNAIRE: RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES PERTAINING TO HOUSE TYPES

Please mark each box with an X or circle either YES or NO

A.THE HOUSEHOLD

Address of unit:

Gender of the respondent :

Man	Woman
-----	-------

Position in the household :

1.How long has your family been living in this house ? Years:

How big is your family
(only people living in the house)

Man	Woman	Children (age)				
		0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20+
Boys						
Girls						

2.Is there a

Grandmother	Grandfather	Aunt	Uncle
-------------	-------------	------	-------

living in the

house	outside room
-------	--------------

3. Are there any lodgers ? YES / NO

If yes, how many

M		F		CHILDREN		B		G	
---	--	---	--	----------	--	---	--	---	--

4. Is the plot

too small	too big	satisfactory
-----------	---------	--------------

If too small or too big,how big would you like it to be ? _____

5. Do you make use of the outside areas (for normal living uses) e.g. stoep,lawn ? YES /NO

If yes,specify: _____

6. Are there any rooms added to your house ? YES / NO

If yes,for what are they used ? _____

7.Do you like your house ? YES / NO

why ? _____

8.Where do you prefer the toilet ?

inside	outside
--------	---------

9. Does it bother you if the houses are all alike in your neighbourhood ? YES /NO

Give reasons: _____

10. Do you think that living close (right next) to your neighbours is a problem ? YES /NO

Why/why not: _____

11. Do you like more privacy ? YES / NO

Why/why not: _____

12. Should people of different income levels live next to one another in the same area? YES / NO. Why ? _____

13. Do you prefer to own rent the house?

Why? _____

B.PREFERENCES

1.If single houses are not available which of the house types (models) do you like most ?

SIMPLEX

DUPLEX

APARTMENT

Reasons: _____

2.Which house type do you like least ?

SIMPLEX

DUPLEX

APARTMENT

Reasons: _____

3.If the house you like least was near your place of work,schools,shops or public transport,would you then choose to live in it ? YES / NO

Reasons: _____

4.Would you like your house to be

ATTACHED

SEMI-DETACHED

DETACHED

ROW-HOUSE

Reasons: _____

HOUSING TYPE MODELS: A, APARTMENT; B, DUPLEX; C, SIMPLEX.

