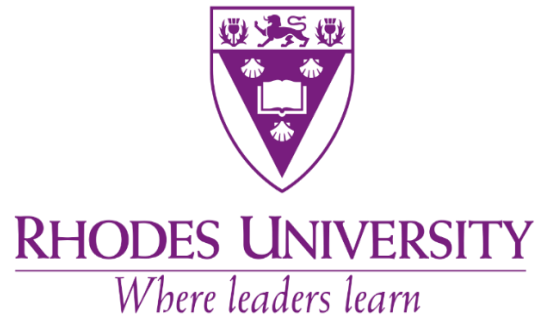




Urban Renewal Strategies for the Southernwood Suburb of Central East London

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Geography

at

Rhodes University

By

Siphiwo Gumbi

G21G7401

ORCID: 0000-0002-3778-9215

Supervisor: Dr S. Memela

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ABSTRACT

As South African cities and central business districts physically deteriorate, this study explores strategies to renew Southernwood, a central suburb of East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Southernwood is undergoing structural decline, necessitating the rehabilitation of its derelict urban stock. This process is known as urban renewal. This study has four objectives: to explore the successes and challenges of previous urban renewal strategies, to identify how these strategies influenced Southernwood, to explore alternative renewal strategies suited to Southernwood's context, and to compare three selected South African case studies to identify strategies applicable to Southernwood. Neoliberal city planning provides the theoretical framework for this qualitative study. It accounts for market-led urban initiatives aimed at restoring, improving, and managing central city spaces. Two methods of data collection were employed: semi-structured interviews and the use of existing data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 103 respondents, 100 residents and 3 experts: the chief town planner and two estate agents. Existing data consisted of spatial planning documents. The study found that previous renewals, such as the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, the Urban Renewal Tax Incentive, and the University Town Plan, had limited success, which is attributed to deficiencies in institutional urban renewal expertise, prioritisation of outer-city development, weakened service delivery, lack of a renewal framework, lack of strong partnerships and low public investment in the central city. The sleeper site, located outside Southernwood but part of the University Town Plan, underwent positive renewal with the construction of a new road and a new cluster of student residences in Southernwood. Alternative urban renewal strategies are proposed, including building additional residences for higher education institutions, functional specialisation, property tax cuts, a Southernwood development agency, a property owners' association, a new pedestrianisation scheme, and tax-free renewal zones. Three case studies were used to identify urban renewal strategies that can be applied to Southernwood, and the strategies from Florida Road mostly informed Southernwood's residents' choice of development. The study highlights the strengthening of Public-Private Partnerships and a more significant market role in city planning, guided by an inclusive public framework, as the best avenue for urban renewal due to the city's fiscal constraints and prioritisation of the city fringe.

Keywords: *Urban renewal, Southernwood, Neoliberalism, Displacement, Higher Education Institutions, Public-Private Partnerships.*

DECLARATION

I, Siphiwo Gumbi [G21G7401], declare that:

1. Except where otherwise indicated, the findings reported in this thesis are my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. Unless expressly acknowledged, this thesis does not contain other people's data, pictures, graphs or other information.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing unless expressly acknowledged as being sourced.

Signed:



Date:

02/12/2025

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIS	Anchor Institution Strategy
BBC	Buy Back Centre
BCMM	Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality
BEPP	Built Environment Performance Plan
BKCOP	Border Kei Chamber of Business
CBD	Central Business District
CID	Central Improvement District
COGTA	Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs
CPF	Community Policing Forum
DMS	Development Management Scheme
FRUIP	Florida Road Urban Improvement Precinct
GAA	Group Areas Act
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICURA	Inner-City Urban Renewal Area
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IUDF	Integrated Urban Development Framework
LUMS	Land Use Management Scheme
LUS	Land Use Scheme
MSA	Municipal Systems Act
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NDPG	Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant
NSDP	National Spatial Development Perspective
NT	National Treasury (of South Africa)

PGDP	Provincial Growth & Development Plan
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PRZ	Priority Restructuring Zones
RCP	Recreational Communal Parks
RDP	Reconstruction & Development Programme
SA	South Africa
SAPS	South African Police Services
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDZ	Special Development Zone
SPLUMA	Spatial Planning & Land Use Management Act
SRA	Special Rating Area
UAA	Urban Areas Act
UDZ	Urban Development Zone
UFH	University of Fort Hare
UK	United Kingdom
URP	Urban Renewal Program
USA	United States of America
UTC	University Town Concept
US	United States (of America)
WSU	Walter Sisulu University

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

As South African inner cities and Central Business Districts (CBDs) face deterioration (Hoogendoorn *et al.*, 2008; Turok *et al.*, 2021; Das, 2022; Khumalo *et al.*, 2023), this study explores physical strategies to renew Southernwood, one of the central suburbs of East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Currently, Southernwood exhibits signs of urban decay, characterised by physical deterioration and the undesirability of buildings, as well as a declining quality of the built environment (Shouhai, 2015; Cuthbert, 2017). Southernwood's decay is evident through the dilapidation of public roads and pedestrian infrastructure, utilities and buildings, neglect of recreational spaces, illegal open dumping, encroaching urban informality on single residential properties, and disregard for building standards in parts of the suburb.

Urban decay poses significant challenges to the sustainable development and revitalisation of cities and towns worldwide (Ndlebe, 2017; Conradie, 2020; Ndou & Nyamwanza, 2023). If neglected, the combination of these urban conditions may heighten crime levels in the area, induce economic distress and fuel slum conditions. Furthermore, urban decay can negatively impact the aesthetic appeal of an area, cause instability of property prices, utility service delivery, and investor confidence (Andersen, 2002; Smith, 2018; Martella & Tesei, 2024). In economically distressed neighbourhoods, abandoned houses and apartments can become hangout dens for thieves, drug dealers and prostitutes (Spelman, 1993; Porter *et al.*, 2018; Kondo *et al.*, 2021). As a result of these conditions and potential impacts, Southernwood requires urban renewal, the process of rehabilitating derelict urban spaces (Waymer & Hill, 2024), to mitigate and alleviate these issues. Southernwood is discussed in the problem statement later in this chapter and in the following chapter, which provides an extensive coverage of the study site.

Since the inception of South Africa's democracy in 1994, cities have actively pursued urban renewal projects to address decades of neglect and decay (Donaldson, 2015; Massey, 2020). Urban renewal is a common planning practice. It is mainly adopted to address urban degeneration issues and meet cities' various planning, legal, environmental, political and socio-economic objectives (Kayembe & Nel, 2022; Lilius, 2025).

Urban renewal in South African cities has responded to industrial and economic changes associated with shifting facility locations, changing land use needs, and customer preferences of the late apartheid era and thereafter (Govender, 2019; Kayembe & Nel, 2022). These authors

view urban renewal as a response to the national and regional economic cycles of this period. These restructuring cycles underpinned further disinvestment within inner cities and CBDs, along with the suburbanisation of manufacturing and a range of related service functions (Isaacs, 2004). The changes underpin the physical decline of CBDs and surrounding inner-city areas (Visser & Kotze, 2008; Conradie *et al.*, 2020). Jordaan (2004) argues that inner cities, in general, experience greater difficulty in surviving economic distress compared to decentralised areas.

Inner cities are centres of production and consumption activities that primarily contribute towards economic growth within the urban environment (Parnell & Robinson, 2012; Kamana *et al.*, 2024). As drivers of growth, development, and production, South African cities generate almost two-thirds of the country's economic activity and account for just over half of the national employment (SACN, 2016). Despite acting as engines for the South African economy, cities are plagued by planning challenges for decaying inner cities and CBDs. In addressing these planning challenges, the state planning machinery implements national policies to inform local planning and alleviate urban conditions.

One such national policy is the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013 (SPLUMA). SPLUMA is a statutory policy that contains tools and instruments to address various planning issues, including decaying inner cities and CBDs. Much of urban policy is derived from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015. The SPLUMA of 2013 and SDGs, specifically SDG 11, highlight the need to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG, 2015).

The SPLUMA (16 of 2013) statute articulates norms and standards for local Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs). SDFs guide and dictate the spatial distribution of current and desirable land uses within a municipality, thereby affecting the vision, goals, and objectives of the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (Wust, 2022). The norms of these plans emphasise liveable communities and, most importantly, sustainable development and urban renewal (SPLUMA, 2013). Urban renewal rehabilitates deteriorated urban areas; it is usually a state-sanctioned programme with private actors assisting communities in improving and redeveloping physically deteriorated, unsafe, or poorly planned areas (Nachmany & Hananel, 2022).

Urban renewal is a tool to respond to crucial urban problems, particularly regarding economic stimulation, land use planning and design, housing and social inequality through reusing resources and rebuilding the urban environment (Li *et al.*, 2024; Hlaváček *et al.*, 2016).

As a planning remedy, urban renewal responds to city regions with a weakened economic base and concentrations of unemployment and socially disadvantaged residents (Tourcu, 2012; Zhu

et al., 2024). Poor physical and environmental settings characterise these areas, such as derelict land and inadequate housing and amenities. If unkempt, these urban conditions can lead to heightened poverty, crime and other problems, such as low land values (Said & Dindar, 2024).

Today, urban renewal refers to local and small precinct-scale plans such as rehabilitating streets, restoring iconic buildings, and improving urban enclaves and urban quarters (Nevin, 2014). These urban renewal plans are designed to attract and keep investment in cities, market cities as ideal destinations for tourism, protect property prices and discourage high vacancy rates within inner cities. Urban renewal is integrated into policies and development-promoting parameters from ordinances such as the previously mentioned URP, SPLUMA (16 of 2013), the National Development Plan (NDP) of 2013, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015, Provincial Growth Plans (PGPs), which also, by policy directive, give effect to the latest National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF) of 2022, which is mandated by the SPLUMA (16 of 2013) and local SDFs. These ordinances inform the design of regional land use plans and provide a framework with the Municipal Systems Act (MSA 32 of 2000) for developmentally orientated planning.

All local planning authorities and jurisdictions within the Republic of South Africa must have these ordinances to promote desirable planning. Also, each local jurisdiction has a Land Use Management Scheme (LUMS) regulating land use and development within a defined area, usually through zoning. Each LUMS varies depending on area size, economic base, population needs, location, geography, demography, etc. Against a backdrop of flourishing inner-city spaces in South Africa, such as Maboneng in Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town, and Florida Road in Durban, Southernwood is found lacking compared to the development of these three cases. Therefore, this study explores strategies that can be attempted to renew the Southernwood suburb of central East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. These strategies are intended to contribute to and advance flourishing academic material concerning contemporary South African cities and assist in designing and packaging plans to arrest decay and decline in Southernwood.

1.2. BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Urban renewal has been extensively studied in South Africa. Significant research has been produced in cities such as Cape Town, Johannesburg and, to a lesser extent, Durban, East London and some secondary cities (Khosa & Naidoo, 1998; Visser & Kotze, 2008; Gregory, 2016; Hoogendoorn, 2018). Its epistemological popularity is evident in the large volumes focusing on understanding both previous and contemporary urban conditions and predicting future urban needs. Urban renewal is also evident in understanding the role of spatial policy in

mitigating and alleviating city planning issues, urban poverty, spatial fragmentation, land use mix and improving service delivery to an extent.

The current urban issues can be attributed to problems dating back to the 1920s with the enactment of the Natives Act. The Natives Act, or the Urban Areas Act of 1923, segregated residential spaces and introduced influx control measures to reduce Africans' access to cities (Strauss, 2019). Subsequently, the Group Areas Act was enacted in the 1950s. The Group Areas Act imposed control over interracial property transactions and property occupation throughout South Africa (Lemon, 2005). These policies led to the institutionalisation of the segregation of Africans and other groups from white areas. Fundamentally, through these policies, Africans and other racial groups were denied access to specific property markets. The legacy of these policies and their processes has contributed to the urban decline of South African cities.

Previous studies on urban renewal in South Africa focus on various avenues. For instance, Orange and Voges (2014) investigated the impact of urban renewal projects on sustainable livelihoods in townships. Furthermore, Reddy (2016) traced data from the literature on South African local government pre-and post-1994, as well as legislative and policy frameworks underpinning urban renewal in the post-apartheid era, to enhance contemporary regulatory and policy frameworks for South African cities. However, Nevin (2014) expressed a concern that while there are tangible benefits to renewed access to the inner city, it must be carefully managed to avoid voyeurism and the potential displacement of residents with vulnerable livelihoods.

Reviewing lessons learned from the Urban Renewal Program (URP) of 2001, Donaldson and Spocter (2013) investigated policies aimed at enhancing Khayelitsha, one of the areas originally targeted by the URP in Cape Town. Ashworth and Turnbridge (2016) focused on redevelopment practices to adopt more sustainable ways to enhance urban centres. Bank and Ntomabana (2022) analysed the symbiotic relationship between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and cities, contending that innovation districts containing universities and other HEIs, such as colleges, can propel the renewal of urban cores and their periphery. Studies by Kayembe (2022) and Cogle and Els (2022) have collectively provided recommendations for declining inner-city spaces of South Africa. These recommendations range from policy adjustments and less stringent controls to property development and unlocking the potential of HEIs (Sibanda, 2018), which are seen as drivers of the urban economy and the town to improve renewal.

While these innovative strategies exist, planning problems continue within some South African cities, especially East London and its suburb of Southernwood. East London has not received the same academic attention as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. The persistence of

these problems can be attributed to recent factors such as the urban influx of disadvantaged populations and exodus of high-paying residents to edge cities, unsuitable urban policy, prioritisation, issues of crime and congestion, bulk infrastructure deterioration, unemployment, poverty and so forth.

Given these challenges, it is prudent to leverage effective renewal strategies from other South African cities to develop a comparative model strategy. This approach would integrate policy recommendations with practical land use control measures applicable to the Southernwood area. Comparatively, modelled strategies are effective at problem solving (Pinsly, 2022), mainly when certain variables can be exported from policies and projects and imported into a logic model applicable to an intended area.

The following section discusses the problem statement, followed by the aim and objectives of this thesis.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This thesis explores strategies to renew Southernwood, a suburb of central East London, South Africa. As mentioned in the introduction, Southernwood is experiencing processes of urban decay. A dense inner-city space, a patchwork of commercial, institutional, cluster residential and single residential properties dominate Southernwood. Structural decay exists within this land use mix, wherein building and bulk infrastructure require structural renewal above other forms, such as economic renewal. The varied responses to urban decay, such as urban revitalisation, enhancement, intervention, urban upgrading, improvement, rejuvenation, reconstruction, development and face-lifting, are loosely defined as urban renewal within this thesis. One of the well-publicised problems is that South Africa's central cities are facing a decline and encroaching informality (Charman, 2016; Nkoane, 2019). As a result of these well-publicised processes, spatial policies such as SDFs have been extensively reconfigured to address these issues through public investment and encouraging private investment in the central city to stem the tide of decline (Musvoto *et al.*, 2016). While certain cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban have been able to renew and develop some parts of central areas, East London, specifically Southernwood, lacks this development aspect.

This thesis builds and advances research gaps and debates by Izadi (2000) and Ashworth (2017) as well as contemporary local studies by Cogle and Els (2020), Kayembe (2021), Bwalya and Seethal (2014) and Bank and Sibanda (2018), which call for renewal studies on urban cores due to insufficient research on successful renewal approaches, especially regarding the absence of comparing and assessing their results. This study addresses the gap by assessing urban renewal shortfalls and a comparative analysis of urban renewal strategies used in other

South African cities. The study outlines urban renewal strategies that can be implemented in Southernwood to address existing deficiencies. Present South African studies on urban renewal have yet to fully present an integrated and comparative approach to urban renewal for central Southernwood.

In a study covering East London, Bank and Sibanda (2018) discuss the importance of universities as city builders. They (2018) propose collaborative efforts between public anchors and private entities to drive urban growth and lay the platform for urban renewal in declining precincts of old industrial cities, of which East London is an example. While they draw on international experiences and cases, a local comparative study on urban renewal strategies with application to Southernwood is yet to be established. One of the main findings of their research was that students residing in Southernwood have undertaken mass demonstrations in protest against the quality of the inner-city neighbourhood where most of them reside. The collective raises concerns about lowering fees and feeling trapped in a decaying, crime-ridden university district (Bank & Sibanda, 2018). Importantly, these findings problematise the inadequate discussions on contemporary urban renewal in the Eastern Cape.

The significance of this thesis lies in gaining deeper insight and a better understanding of urban renewal approaches to revitalise the urban centre of East London, which is contrasted against other flourishing inner-city spaces in South Africa, such as Maboneng in Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town, and Florida Road in Durban. These inner-city areas share similar variables with Southernwood, including close proximity to the CBD, HEIs and commercial centres.

Prior work in East London was limited to universities as city builders (Bank & Sibanda, 2018), neighbourhood and cohesion (Bwalya & Seethal, 2016), city development challenges (Seethal *et al.*, 2021), spatial integration (Bwalya & Seethal, 2014), and tracing historical protests in East London (Breier, 2024). From this evidence, it is evident that addressing urban renewal strategies for the inner-city of Southernwood is necessary. As urban renewal strategies are a global phenomenon, Li (2015) highlights that with accelerated urbanisation, cities face problems such as land scarcity, building decay and environmental pollution. Urban renewal can improve land use efficiency, the urban living environment and the quality of life for residents (Douglas & Kempel, 2013). However, despite existing empirical contributions on urban renewal, studies need to be updated regularly to inform city policy and planning within a fluid and rapidly changing urban environment. Informed city planning policy, particularly on urban renewal, can drive urban productivity by enabling mixed-use development projects in the CBD (McCarthy, 2010; Melo, 2016). Urban renewal assists in creating regional hubs outside city limits to reduce residential and commercial pressure on inner city areas (Morontse, 2010).

Academia is replete with urban renewal discourse. Its importance continues to necessitate strategies focused on extending and preserving the quality of the built environment to induce growth effects in the city. Despite the recognition and significance of urban renewal, an integrated review covering urban renewal strategies for the inner city is yet to be entirely produced for East London. There are some areas for exploration despite studies such as those by Kay (2006), Voges (2013), Bank and Sibanda (2018) and Massey (2020) attempting to not only bridge urban renewal and urban sustainable development but also emphasising the positions that city practitioners need to take for inner-city improvement.

Further areas of exploration include strategies focused on drawing on successful urban renewal frameworks and exporting these frameworks to degraded areas with similar variables. These areas of exploration are under-theorised in their application to cities of the Eastern Cape. There is a definite scope for exploring such strategies for urban renewal, particularly identifying how previous urban renewal has influenced the area and determining which strategy is suitable based on the understanding of prior attempts.

These aforementioned studies are excellent in theorising the mechanism responsible for urban renewal; however, studies of this nature are limited in the combined consideration and analysis of urban renewal trends linking stakeholder participation and the role of the private sector in the revival of inner-city precincts (Massey, 2020). As a result, the studies do not consider urban processes such as the role of developmental urban management in projects, land value degradation, corporate strategies for urban land, etc. As a result of these shortcomings, a new analysis consolidating these missing elements with comparative material is necessary; this is the first of three drivers for this thesis. Further data is required to answer critical questions which need to be fully addressed in studies of this nature. These questions include whether past strategies in Southernwood were inclusive and, if so, to what extent. Further questions that need to be addressed are whether past and present renewal, despite its limits, has transformed the area's economic base, pulled new residents, and which aspects of previous or current renewal residents think could be more suited to the area and their livelihoods.

The paucity of urban studies which apply comparative urban renewal strategies for the South African inner city and CBD is the second driver for this study. In South Africa, inner-city areas with similar variables to Southernwood, such as proximity to the city centre, predominant student population due to the proximity to HEIs, flexible zoning, Special Development Zones (SDZ) or Central Improvement Districts (CID) land statuses, have seen and continue to see sustained renewal. These areas include Florida Road in Durban, De Waterkant in Cape Town and the Maboneng Precinct in central Johannesburg. These areas are a point of reference and form the secondary sites for this study.

Despite the positive urban renewal trend in other South African cities, East London's Southernwood has yet to feature these development aspects, which not only alleviate decay but also improve physical land use, the area's aesthetic appeal, and enhance area attraction. The lack of success from previous attempts requires a nuanced investigation of strategies to improve the conditions within Southernwood. This is the third driver for this thesis. Therefore, this study explores strategies to renew the Southernwood suburb of central East London.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study examines physical strategies to renew the Southernwood suburb of central East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

Objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the successes and challenges of previous strategies in Southernwood.
2. To identify how previous renewal strategies have physically influenced Southernwood.
3. To investigate alternative physical urban renewal strategies suited to the context of Southernwood.
4. Compare South African case studies (Maboneng in Johannesburg, Florida Road in Durban and De Waterkant in Cape Town) to identify urban renewal strategies that can be applied to Southernwood. Particularly, ways in which urban renewal instruments from the secondary sites can inform Southernwood's planning.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THESIS

Chapter Two presents the primary study site. This chapter discusses content on the suburb of Southernwood in East London, including the geography and demographic trends.

Chapter Three engages with urban renewal studies and chooses the theoretical framework to guide the study. This chapter applies multiple perspectives, and neoliberal urban renewal is selected as a framework to account for urban renewal processes. Urban renewal processes within these primary and secondary sites exhibit privately driven urban planning techniques.

Chapter Four is divided into two sections and presents urban renewal case studies in South Africa. The first section covers South African policy governing the development of urban space. The second part discusses the case studies: Maboneng in central Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town and Florida Road in Durban, respectively.

Chapter Five covers the paradigm, research design, sampling methods, data collection, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations concerning the thesis.

Chapter Six presents the first part of the study's findings. It presents the material from fieldwork and secondary data, covering the information on past and present urban renewal. The chapter further presents the second part of the findings, particularly on alternative urban renewal strategies.

Chapter Seven presents the study's comparative analysis, wherein the primary field site is juxtaposed against the three secondary sites: Maboneng in Johannesburg, Florida Road in Durban, and De Waterkant in Cape Town.

Chapter Eight, the final chapter, presents the study's discussion and conclusion, areas for future research, limitations, and recommendations for the thesis.

The following chapter presents the study site.

CHAPTER TWO: STUDY SITE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the leading study site of Southernwood (Figure 2.1) in central East London, located within the Eastern Cape province. Southernwood is located precisely 2.2km north of the East London city centre, which is the seat of the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM). The central suburb of Arcadia buffers Southernwood and the CBD of East London. The Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, which Southernwood falls under, is only one of two metropolitan municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province, the other being the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. The chapter begins with a thorough discussion of East London and Southernwood, detailing existing statistics related to the Southernwood area.

2.2. EAST LONDON

East London is a port city at the mouth of the Buffalo River on the Southeastern seaboard of the Republic of South Africa. Its history is expertly covered by the seminal work of Watts and Agar-Hamilton (1970). These authors, Watts and Agar-Hamilton (1970), contend that since its founding in 1847, East London was the dominant urban area in the Border region of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope during the latter part of the 19th century. The city was initially developed as a port for the border area. In the early days, it was smaller than King William's Town, but now it overshadows it in terms of size. For instance, in 1875, East London had only half the population of King William's Town (Bettison, 1950).

The historical development of East London and Southernwood is documented by Tankard (1990), who covers four decades of municipal control from 1873 to 1914. It was only in the 1890s that economic growth and vibrant leadership led to rapid civic advancement in the city's development, marked by large-scale expenditure on street construction and the establishment of an electricity and tramway system (Nel, 1991).

The original East London settlement falls, more readily than most, into periods defined by the circumstances of its growth. Apart from the occasional mention in tales of shipwrecks and exploration, the mouth of the Buffalo River does not appear in the annals of the Europeans until after the Sixth Kaffir War of 1834 (Bettison, 1950). In 1834, Sir Benjamin D'Urban proclaimed the annexation of the "Province of Queen Adelaide", extending from the Keiskama River to the Kei (Bettison, 1950). This involved building forts and settlements to control the annexed territory and demanded a port of access that would reduce the weary haul of men and material by ox wagon from Port Elizabeth, now officially renamed Gqeberha. In terms of the 1960 population of the metropolitan area, as formally defined by the Bureau of Statistics, East London ranked

tenth in size in the Republic (Watts & Agar-Hamilton, 1960). In terms of urban planning and general spatial organisation, similar to other South African towns and cities, East London and all its settlements, including Southernwood, had an ingrained pattern of racial segregation well before the passing of the 1950s Group Areas Act (GAA) (Watts & Agar-Hamilton, 1960).

2.3. SOUTHERNWOOD

Southernwood's first houses or mansions were built in 1882, several years after East London was established in 1836, and a municipality was established in 1873 (Tankard, 1990). Initially, these mansions housed German and British settlers, as well as a sizable Jewish population, after 1889. East London expanded from the West Bank (Bank & Qebeyi, 2017). According to Tankard (1990) and Nel's (1991) historical work on East London's development, Southernwood's physical development was initiated by the City Council's ambitions in 1891, when it recognised the potential for developing East London into a coastal resort.

Secondly, the development of Southernwood was further induced by street development ambitions to be the finest in the Colony of the Cape (Tankard, 1990). From these ambitions, a small portion of the funds was also devoted to refurbishing streets on the West Bank. Focus subsequently shifted to constructing roads in the North End and Lower Oxford Street. Additionally, work commenced on St Peter's Road, with partial funding provided by the Divisional Council due to its significance as a primary route to the Nahoon agricultural area and the Transkei.

During the construction of these roads, the increase in trade led to an escalation in land value (Tankard, 1990) and contributed to the number of existing mansions in the area that came to be known as Southernwood in 1882. Buildings of "considerable size and beauty of architecture" were erected, and it became apparent that Southernwood would become an essential residential area in the future (Tankard, 1990). Due to these developments, and most importantly, the development of tramway routes, Upper Southernwood and Belgravia were already thriving as elite residential areas. The tramway routes through these suburbs offered prospects of generating revenue using tram fares, land sales and subsequent rates, which would more than compensate for the costs of the new service.

After the 1940s, new suburbs and townships were created to accommodate the growing urban population (Bwalya & Seethal, 2014). The energy of this population increased, revived the city centre as old civic buildings were repainted and refurbished, and the old High Street was modernised during the 1940s. Many Victorian buildings were torn down and replaced with multi-storey, modern, glass-and-iron high-rise buildings in the city (Bank & Sibanda, 2018).

The Group Areas Act (GAA) impacted Southernwood in much the same way as it did throughout South Africa, a practice of separation with discriminatory land use policies. These discriminatory land use policies deprived a sizable portion of the population of the right to the city but also created and demarcated townships outside the city based on racial classification. One of these townships is Mdantsane, the second largest township in South Africa, the second largest South African township following Soweto. In a study on spatial planning in East London, Busayo *et al.* (2019) note that Mdantsane was established in the 1960s to accommodate black labour working in industries bordering East London.

Originally, Southernwood was demarcated, like all areas within the city, as a white area from its inception, prior to the advent of the Group Areas Act in the 1950s. Before the 1950s, segregation was initiated by the British military in the then colony of British Kaffraria. Successive municipal councils later enhanced it. From the 1950s, in and around East London, the Group Areas Act enforced the legislative creation of racially based townships. It established strict controls on city access throughout South African towns and cities. Southernwood and its surrounding suburbs were kept white because the Group Areas Act of the 1950s prohibited all interracial property exchanges in East London. Southernwood is experiencing a steady decline in property prices due to an exodus of wealthy residents to new suburbs and the decentralisation of commerce to these areas.

A 2018 study by Bank and Sibanda covering the prospects for city development driven by HEIs covers Southernwood's transition towards becoming a crime-ridden area. Bank and Sibanda (2018) argue that by 2010, more middle-class black families bought new homes in East London than whites. This homebuying trend started in the inner city in the mid-1990s, where properties were cheaper, but spread across the entire city after 2000. The inner-city suburbs of Quigney and Southernwood were white dominated in the early 1990s, but had grown to a population demographic that was over 50% black by the early 2000s.

In 2014, these suburbs comprised an 80% black population, with relatively young residents. Meanwhile, the departure of wealthy residents, both black and white, to the urban edge had negative implications for the city centre, which led to a downward social and economic spiral. These factors moulded the area into what it is today. A plethora of inner-city areas in South Africa, including Hillbrow and central Durban, have exhibited similar trends that have led to disinvestment in the inner city, extensive building degradation and neglect, plummeting property prices, and heightened crime levels. These degradation trends within inner-city spaces and CBDs exist in other South African cities.

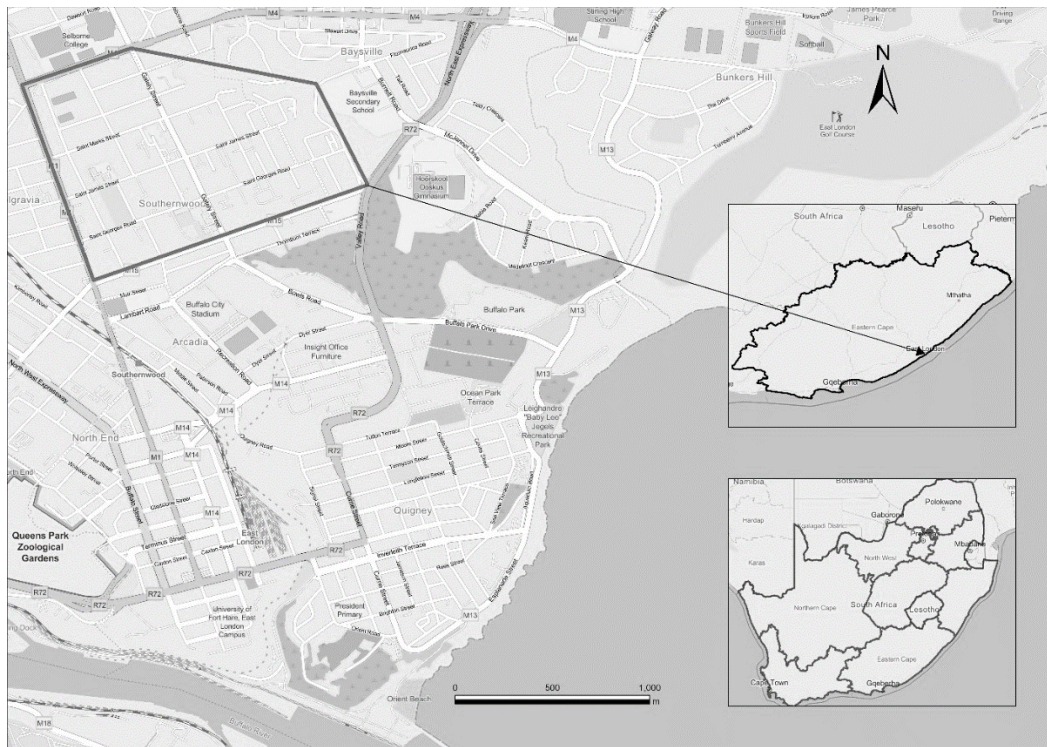


Figure 2.1: Southernwood, East London (Author)

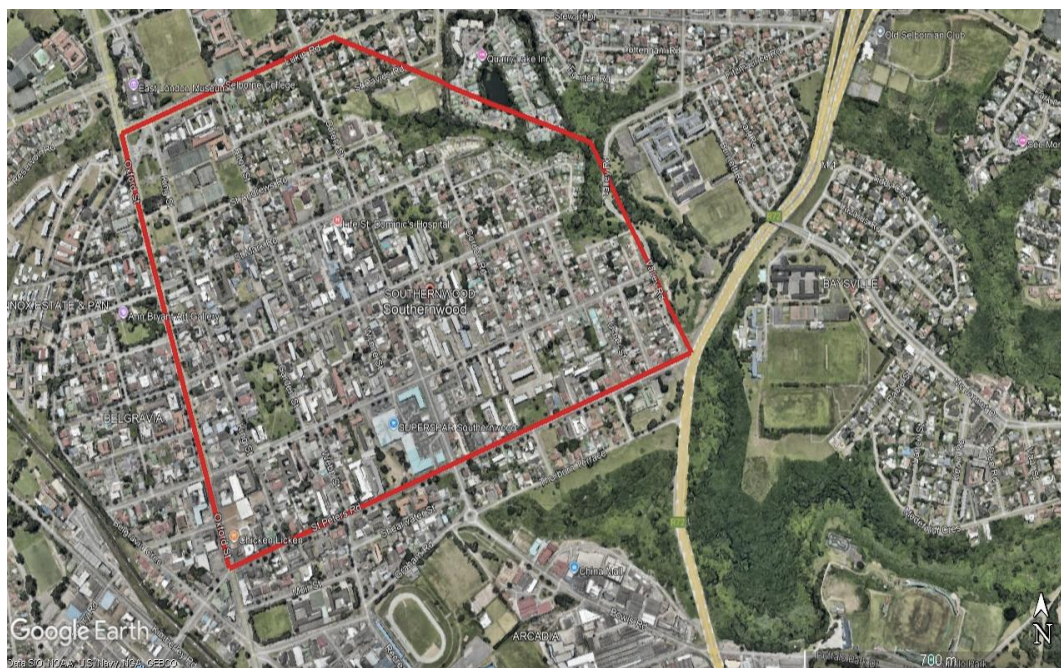


Figure 2.2: Satellite image of Southernwood (Google Earth)

2.3.1. Southernwood Today

Southernwood (Figure 2.1) is a racially diverse suburb with mainly black Africans living within the city (BCMM, 2022). Residents include a strong student contingent from Walter Sisulu University (WSU), the University of Fort Hare (UFH), and Buffalo City College (BCC), located near the CBD. While these campuses did not exist pre-1998, by 2004, the inner city was

cluttered with satellite campuses. In addition to the new faculties and buildings associated with Walter Sisulu and Fort Hare, a small branch campus of the University of South Africa, known as UNISA, was also established. At the same time, the Buffalo City Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training College was also located in the inner city (Bank, 2018).

Today, Southernwood, statistically at least, is one of the most crime-ridden inner-city areas of central East London, bettered only by Quigney. One of the findings by Bank (2018), who has done extensive work on the development of East London, is that students in Southernwood felt that neither the universities nor the metropolitan authorities had their best interests at heart. The neighbourhood aspect of their political demands was reflected in the fact that students from all institutions joined forces by barricading key inner-city arteries to express their grievances and solidarity.

2.3.2. Southernwood Population

In the 1950s, except for domestic workers permitted to reside with their employers, Southernwood was legally demarcated as a white suburb (Bank & Qebeyi, 2017). However, since the early 1990s, Southernwood has, over time, turned into an African suburb through residential succession by the black middle class (Buku, 2014). According to Bank and Sibanda (2018), a large black middle class, many of whom were employed in the civil service, settled in the city from the late 1990s, reviving its real estate and retail sectors. Although it took a while for this middle class to commit fully to the city, the adoption of East London as a homecoming city for the new black middle class was in full swing by 2000, with the construction of several suburban malls and the growth of a black property market in the city (Bwayla & Seethal, 2016).

Whilst divisions between black and white suburbanites were visible, whites attempted to protect themselves from crime and what they believed to be urban encroachment by the poor, as Southernwood was now becoming a slum environment (Bwayla & Seethal, 2016). These concerned and affluent residents relocated out of Southernwood due to the establishment of new suburbs, such as Vincent and Melbourne, in the town. In addition, Bwayla and Seethal (2016) emphasise that relatively poorer populations of whites moved into Southernwood.

Today, statistical shortages still exist in the exact population figures and population composition for the Southernwood area. Southernwood covered an area of 1.24 km², with a population of 10,439 (8,435.60 per km²) and 3,823 households (3,089.31 per km²) in 2011. The year 2011 was the last instance in which statistics for sub-places were collected in central East London. At present, only aggregated statistics of East London are provided. The 2011 figures 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5, which represent the sex ratio, population age, and racial composition, serve as a reference point for projecting demographic changes.

In projecting the 2025 population, this thesis uses a population growth formula (where P=Population, CP= Current Population, r=rate, t=Time) to arrive at 12,560 residents – the South African growth rate is 0.9%. Stats SA (2024) states that the annual population change is 1.33%.

Population growth is $P(t) = CP \cdot (1+r)^t$

$$P(14) = 10\,439(1+1.33\%)^{14}$$

$$P = 12\,560$$

The last detailed figures on the sub-place of Southernwood were compiled in 2011. The descriptive statistics below show the existing population dynamics of sex ratio, age, and racial composition within the area at the time of the last detailed census.

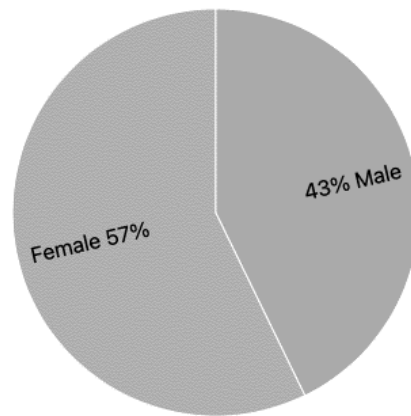


Figure 2.3: Sex Ratio of Southernwood (Frith, 2011)

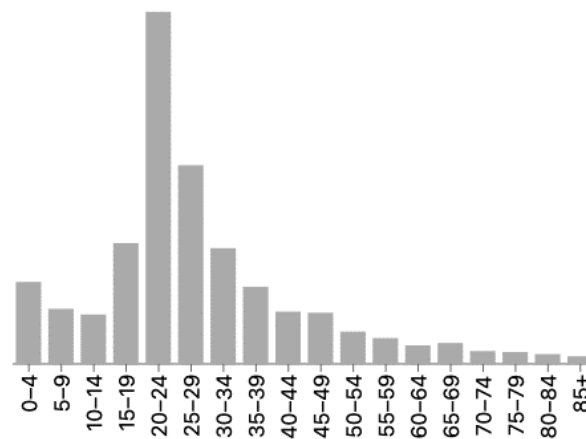


Figure 2.4: Age of Southernwood population (Frith, 2011)

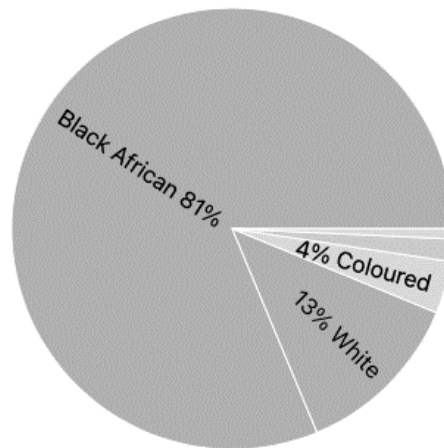


Figure 2.5: Racial composition of Southernwood (Frith, 2011)

Southernwood has a transient and fluid population, densely concentrated with students from various HEIs. It is located near the CBD and is a thoroughfare to other suburbs such as Vincent and Berea. There are no exact, recent or specific statistical figures for the number of tertiary-level students residing in Southernwood today (Bwalya & Seethal, 2016). Area-specific statistics were last collected in 2011, where people aged 20-35 made up a sizable share of the Southernwood population, as shown in Figure 2.4. One of the plausible explanations for this trend is the substantial student population of the suburb. The dominant race group in 2011 was Africans, who comprised over 80% of the Southernwood population, as shown in Figure 2.5.

However, throughout their interviews and observation, Bwalya and Seethal (2016) noted the marked presence of students in the suburb, with a considerable number in privately rented boarding houses and apartment flats. As a result of a significant student presence, many municipal programmes include the University Town Concept (UTC), which proposes the creation of the East London Inner City Innovation District, which would be located in the East London CBD and the surrounding suburbs of Southernwood and Belgravia (Bank, 2018; BCMM SDF, 2019).

2.3.3. Southernwood and Urban Renewal

The City of East London has numerous development projects underway to revive the city while promoting urban integration. Among these development projects, spatial planning interventions for Southernwood are detailed in Chapter 6, specifically sections 6.2 and 6.3. Southernwood is classified as a Special Development Area (SDA) and Provisional Restructuring Zone (PRZ). These land statuses indicate that the area is earmarked for extensive development, including the improvement of existing utilities, the integration of transport networks, and land use intensification through the promotion of mixed-use developments. One of the reasons for these zones is population. According to Census 2022, the population of the Eastern Cape increased by 10.2%, rising from 6.5 million in Census 2011 to 7.2 million in the latest population and

housing census (Stats SA, 2025). As a result, initiatives are focused on drawing people to the city and improving urban densities and physical conditions.

The first and most notable initiative is the university as a city builder, also known as the UTC, for areas of East London such as Southernwood and Quigney, which are located close to HEIs in Southernwood. The focus of this intervention is to promote desirable planning using these linkages. This initiative is drawn from international and local experiences, as documented by Bank and Sibanda (2018). The UTC project exists because there are opportunities for HEIs to play a more instrumental role in shaping economic development and the urban built environment. The initiative's focus is that universities must actively participate in city building. However, drawing on international experiences, this planning strategy emphasises spatial integration and sustainable development through institutional partnerships.

The UTC initiative links to the green city zone. The aim is to enhance the role of universities in the economic development of city spaces while improving high-density areas. Both policy and studies underlie the idea that Fort Hare and WSU arrived in the city without regard for themselves as universities of the city. This is primarily because both these institutions are rural-based and classified as previously disadvantaged. A survey by Bank and Sibanda (2018) reveals that these HEIs have developed their East London campuses because of the demand for higher education in the city, not because it is their home. With their main campuses elsewhere – in Alice and Mthatha, respectively – the universities of Fort Hare and Walter Sisulu have continued to embrace their rural base, which is connected to forms of African nationalism that view rurality, cultural authenticity and rural development as primary focal priorities for these universities. These identity and ideological issues can be understood as cultivated in an anti-urbanism that constitutes a barrier to greater urban participation in what was historically seen as a white settler city. Overall, the most significant analysis of the different models available for city-campus development has shown that cities with specific characteristics are better placed than others to take advantage of a positive city-campus dynamic.

Drawing on international perspectives about HEIs assisting in urban development, similar experiences exist in Britain, the Rustbelt region within the United States of America (USA), and Vietnam. Walling *et al.* (2021) and Wilson and Heil (2022) expertly describe the Rust Belt region as a region which experienced an industrial decline starting in the 1950s. During this time, job losses affected large industrial cities in Britain and the US Rust Belt; inner-city precincts entered a downward spiral of poverty, crime and urban decay. The metropolitan university model was popularised in Britain as a response to this inner-city decline (Addie, 2016). These new institutions were intended to help impoverished inner-city communities recover by combining opportunities for academic study with community outreach and engagement (Namvar *et al.*,

2019). In the USA, the state attempted to strengthen the role of inner-city community colleges to impede ghettoisation and inner-city decay (Bank and Sibanda, 2018). In both cases, universities were seen as enabling centres for poor communities to rebuild capacity. In South Africa, a similar community engagement function was imposed on all universities after 2000 to assist their surrounding communities (Bank, 2018).

Ngo and Trihn (2016) propose the design of a university-city complex in Hung Yen province. In Vietnam, universities are predominantly located in urban areas; however, they have not yet fully engaged with their local communities in a meaningful way. Similar observations can be made regarding HEIs in East London. The overarching theme anchoring the university-city complex is that, in the wake of globalisation, it is necessary to establish mutually beneficial relationships between universities and their urban areas (Ngo & Trinh, 2016). Addi (2016) emphasises that the impact of neoliberalisation and the global extension of urbanisation processes demand a reappraisal of the urban university for the 21st century. The history of the modern urban university and current calls for universities to assume proactive roles as economic drivers and civic leaders. Bose (2015) indicates that neoliberal planning involves universities facilitating the redevelopment of surrounding locations, which has been the case in Southernwood.

The third initiative is the priority intervention zone within the Urban Network Strategy (UNS) under the broader theme of spatial targeting (BCCMM BEPP, 2016). This renewal initiative aims to develop areas on the CBD periphery, including Quigney, Southernwood, and Belgravia. These areas can be described as composite areas comprising non-residential land uses, including offices and commercial/retail complexes (primarily located west of Gately Street), as well as various residential dwellings, ranging from high-density, multi-storey dwellings to single-family houses. The genesis of this initiative is that these areas are identified as having significant potential for urban renewal, with an explicit focus on prioritising their residential component.

According to the BEPP of the BCMM (2016), the rationale behind such a move would be to use existing infrastructure to create an improved urban environment that can house people at relatively high densities in an inner-city location. For Southernwood, in particular, the intervention's aim is three-pronged. First, the intervention aims to increase operating thresholds for businesses. Second, to provide relatively high-density housing areas for people seeking well-located accommodation with reasonable access to areas of opportunity by maximising the use of existing buildings (including high-rise buildings) in need of rehabilitation. Thirdly, the intervention encourages partnerships between BCMM and local landowners/landlords (BEPP, 2016).

While outlining the statement of the problem earlier in the thesis, it was noted that despite the existence of these interventions, the socio-economic and physical condition of Southernwood remains unchanged. The impacts of these three previous initiatives are described in Chapter 6.

2.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the main study area, the Southernwood suburb of central East London. The focus was on the inception of Southernwood, its development over the years, and the various projects aimed at improving inner-city conditions, particularly in Southernwood. In detail, the chapter discusses the current condition of the suburb, demographic trends, and urban renewal within Southernwood. The following chapter discusses the theoretical framework merged with a literature review. The theoretical framework is underpinned by neoliberal urban renewal as a theoretical mechanism to account for urban processes.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review on urban renewal and the theoretical framework for this study. The theoretical framework serves as the structure and support for the study's rationale, problem statement, purpose, significance, research questions and methodological components. Further, the theoretical framework utilises existing theories, concepts and definitions that assist in collecting relevant data. A theoretical framework and planning ideology are essential to inform urban practice at all stages (Ferreira *et al.*, 2009; Aggerholm & Hordvik, 2024). Neoliberal urban planning was used as a theoretical framework for this study.

3.2. URBAN RENEWAL

This section reviews the concept of urban renewal by exploring literature from the global North and South perspectives. Urban renewal is a combination of two concepts: one being urban and the other renewal. The idea of urban stems from the Latin concept of *Urbs* or *Urbanus*, which was translated to English in the early 17th century to mean and relate to a city or built-up sections of settlements (Foster, 2007). The characteristics of an urban area may include a diversified population, a densely built environment, and an emphasis on business, leisure, and other forms of cultural expression (Veckalne, 2023). Renewal, understood as a process to create again, became vastly famous due to American actions to reconstruct and revive depressed downtown areas (Zipp, 2009; Schindler, 2024). Additionally, as previously discussed, it became synonymous with and widely recognised for post-war reconstruction and inner-city slum clearance in Britain (von Hoffman, 2008).

There is a large volume of published material detailing that, in recent history, the root of the concept and the practice of urban renewal dates back to the early 1950s, when attempts at urban slum clearance in Britain and the United States of America (USA) emerged (von Hoffman, 2000). These attempts were made to address post-war reconstruction while dealing with the disorder of the industrial city model (Ludwig *et al.*, 2024).

The term 'urban renewal' is used in this study because it is the key terminology used in South Africa, especially when the Urban Renewal Program (URP) was launched in 2001. The URP, discussed later in this thesis, was a 2001 strategic intervention focusing on eight township nodes across South Africa; this intervention aimed to channel state resources to tackle peri-urban underdevelopment (URP, 2001; Donaldson *et al.*, 2013). Before the URP of 2001, city improvement processes and the restoration of dilapidated urban stock were referred to as reconstruction and regeneration (Massey, 2020).

Urban renewal has shifted from building demolitions amid environmental and cost concerns to a focus on urban sustainability and liveability (Greig, 2010). In support of this urban renewal narrative, Williams and Needham (2016) detail how, contrary to common understanding, the US government's urban renewal policy was conceived as an alternative to slum clearance. Bitterly opposed to public housing, conservative housing-industry trade associations sought a way to reform the urban redevelopment formula, which included clearance and public housing, established under the Housing Act of 1949.

During the 1950s, industry groups seized on citizens' neighbourhood fix-up efforts to conduct a national campaign to popularise code enforcement, rehabilitation, and private low-cost housing development as methods to restore and stabilise city neighbourhoods (von Hoffman, 2008). For much of the 20th century, Collins (2013) and Miquel (2021), the people who cared most about the health and form of cities in the US—including city planners, government officials, and downtown businesspeople—considered dilapidated and deteriorating neighbourhoods as among the most vexing of problems, and the policy alternative was urban renewal. At the time, urban renewal was first coined as urban redevelopment (Fernandez, 2016).

Urban renewal initiatives can be either market-led, state-led, or jointly led, depending on the governance system and the powers of local planning authorities, as well as the type of policy and nature of the practice (Zhou, 2021). Despite the recent history of urban renewal, Calvano *et al.* (2023) trace urban renewal remnants to ancient Rome. After 1870, planning took on an entirely new dimension, due to ancient Rome's absorption into the new Kingdom of Italy. In that period, Rome's new rulers quickly reshaped the town for the latest activities associated with a nation's capital, restructuring the old town for new uses and activities, such as hosting pilgrims and tourism, took precedence (Afcan, 2015).

3.2.1. Urban Renewal in the Global North

As a departure from post-war reconstruction and slum clearance, urban renewal today serves as a planning remedy for areas with a weakened economic base, combined with concentrations of unemployment and socially disadvantaged residents (Bakir, 2019). Urban renewal is prescribed for an area characterised by poor physical and environmental settings, such as derelict land and inadequate housing and amenities (Czischke *et al.*, 2014). If untreated, the nexus of these urban conditions can lead to poverty, crime and other problems (Mohan *et al.*, 2019).

Many researchers have, to a degree, unanimously agreed that beyond structural improvements, urban renewal is also a means to attract new business and stimulate the growth of existing

companies within a targeted area to reverse the urban decline by improving an area's physical structure and economy (Rhodes & Murray, 2007; Kang & Kim, 2023; Harada & Jorgensen, 2016; Strykiewicz, 2018). However, despite the positive denotation of urban renewal, Watt (2024) argues that urban renewal has the disadvantage of unfavourably affecting poor members of society and disenfranchising them by uprooting them from places where they developed social and cultural attachments and significance. This process is known as gentrification.

For De Magalhaes (2015), urban renewal encompassed comprehensive strategies, actions, processes, and visions to tackle urban problems, better understand the process of decline, revitalise declining economic activity, improve social function, and reverse environmental deprivation. Litchfield (2000), Roberts and Sykes (2000) and Afcan (2015) all conceptualise urban renewal from an urban sustainability perspective. Their Eurocentric perspective on urban renewal mainly lies in the growing importance of sustainable planning worldwide, which they believe has implications for urban renewal that are understudied. In particular, Fernandez and Pinto (2016) analyse urban renewal as a means to improve the host areas of universities, claiming that universities have resources for urban dynamics that are difficult to provide by other means. For this reason, these organisations are crucial actors in urban renewal.

European studies often examine the adverse effects of urban renewal projects and question their ability to enhance urban life and meet residents' needs. Hadjri *et al.* (2019) view urban renewal as informed and driven by the causes and effects of globalisation, climate change, the global economic crisis, and lifestyle changes. They argue that, in Europe, there is currently a pressing demand to redevelop brownfield areas, inner-city heritage sites, post-conflict and post-disaster areas, and large housing estates (Hadjri *et al.* 2019).

In post-Soviet cities and other parts of Eastern Europe, the post-socialist era in the towns of Serbia has witnessed the challenges of market-driven urban movements (Hirt, 2013). These housing movements significantly impacted the housing stock in new developments and intentions to renovate existing ones. The local authorities of these city districts were consciously seeking tools that could make the neighbourhood more attractive to certain social groups and accelerate gentrification. This interest is understandable since the capital's population, especially the inner city of Budapest (Hungary) and its inner neighbourhoods, decreased substantially until the late 2000s (Hadjri *et al.*, 2019). The most famous urban renewal in the towns of Hungary is the multi-story housing building, which mainly consists of different stories or loft spaces. In some cases, the multi-story housing building contributed to better physical performance, but for a significant percentage of buildings, such interventions meant a degradation of ambient characteristics (Kovacs *et al.*, 2013).

Urban renewal proliferated in the USA between 1949 and 1974 (Gotham, 2001). At this time, the USA introduced urban development grants for degraded inner-city districts, largely spearheaded using a Department of Housing and Urban Development grant and loan programme (Ellis, 2021). Urban renewal in the USA was built around a narrowly economic or neo-liberal model of redevelopment rather than a socially inclusive or participatory new regionalist model (Song & Zenou, 2005; Jonas & McCarthy, 2009). Studies with historical perspectives on urban planning have reported that throughout the cities of the USA, the consequences of urban renewal included the destruction of historic structures, the displacement of low-income families and the removal (often closure) of small businesses; this was the process of gentrification (Knight & Gharipour, 2016).

Local officials and business leaders who promoted urban renewal regarded the federal programme as the best available method for addressing the problems accompanying suburbanisation (TIHH, 2019). However, Mallach (2010) further contends that it was a tragedy, injustice, and loss of home and community for many black, Latino, and low-income families at the time. Urban renewal reshaped the geography and demographics of American, British, and other European cities, and in the process, exacerbated conflict and promoted resistance (Rhodes & Brown, 2019).

Although some renewal projects, such as Stuyvesant Town in New York City, predated the Housing Act of 1949, this law and later iterations effectively expanded the practice to cities nationwide (Finney, 2016). To improve the nation's housing stock and revive its towns, the federal urban renewal programme provided grants and loans to municipalities, underwriting much of the cost of site acquisition and clearance (Akimoto, 2009). According to the TIHH (2019), the urban renewal programmes were attractive to city leaders because they provided what appeared to be an answer to declining tax revenue (Song & Zenou, 2005; Jonas & McCarthy, 2009).

Unlike the USA's slum clearance endeavours, the concept of urban renewal gained popularity with Europe's urban policymakers to denote interventions seeking to reconstruct the built environment of European cities at the end of World War II (Collins, 2013). Cities such as London had been heavily bombed during the war and needed to revamp their industrial sites, docks, and city buildings (White, 2014). Notably, according to Marie (2018), from the 1950s onwards, there was a significant investment in slum clearance, the construction of new houses and apartments, and the improvement of services in Europe. One of the theories behind the successful urban renewal of Western European cities was *laissez-faire* approaches to market growth, which would provide the state with the capital for projects (Dembski *et al.*, 2021). At the time, these market-centred approaches first required the abolition of the command economy. A

command economy is a political system in which the central governmental authority dictates the permissible production levels and the prices that may be charged for goods and services (Rabbiosi, 2016; Mohan & Longo, 2019).

Later, in the 1970s, in response to deindustrialisation and economic recession, urban renewal policies were created in the USA and parts of Europe to convert abandoned or degraded port and industrial areas (Ravaz *et al.*, 2024). This type of intervention in the pre-existing urban environment also tentatively included attempts to revive economically depressed or marginalised areas, adopting urban renewal with a more rounded and holistic approach to improve the physical, economic and social-environmental conditions (Thomas, 2021). This process came to embody other concepts (depending on the policy denotation) that describe the rehabilitation of the physical environment and economic rejuvenation of urban space (Huang *et al.*, 2022).

3.2.2. Urban Renewal in The Global South

In the global south, particularly Brazil, the urban reform movement gained traction towards the end of the 1970s (Nobre, 2002; Carter, 2010). The Brazilian model of economic growth introduced by the military government began to exhaust its possibilities, and popular social movements became increasingly influential in Brazilian politics (Martins & Perreira, 2019). From this increasing influence of grassroots voices, mainly in smaller cities and towns around the state capital, several forms of public actions emerged with the involvement of social movements. In such contexts, and as a consequence of mobilisation, claims and proposals were made by urban social movements in pursuit of city reform (Maricato, 2011).

Subsequently, from the 1990s, urban renewal projects with some form of participation by the private sector gained prominence in Brazil, and the associated development of a range of such policies in the country led to the incremental development of a legal and regulatory apparatus directly or indirectly related to their implementation (Martins & Perreira, 2019).

In China, planning policy is replete with references to urban renewal. From a historical perspective, Huang *et al.* (2022) conceptualise the Chinese urban renewal narrative from the end of World War II, wherein urban renewal began to proliferate worldwide and in China. Unlike some developed countries, China has experienced urban renewal and urbanisation. Early urban renewal took the form of demolishing dilapidated buildings, renovating architectural styles, constructing and maintaining public facilities, and redeveloping industrial structures and spatial equality. Therefore, renewal promoted urban expansion in China (Yin, 2015). After that, urban renewal in Chinese cities started to address material problems that stemmed from the speedy

urbanisation process, the relationship between people and land, and social fairness and justice (Dong *et al.*, 2020).

Urban renewal and urban sustainability were integrated with the adoption of smart city policies in Beijing and Shanghai (Chen & Dagestani, 2023). These digital cities utilise new-generation Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, mobile communication networks, internet infrastructures, and satellite communication facilities to promote greater urban efficiency (Wu, 2022; Song *et al.*, 2023). This digital infrastructure serves as a means to simultaneously strengthen the economic base and collect data from the city to improve urban governance (Rosas, 2021).

Comparative studies on Hong Kong, Taipei, Tokyo, Singapore, and Chinese cities such as Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Shanghai have shown that these cities have undergone significant changes in recent years. These cities provide an excellent guide and blueprint for developing urban renewal practices in China. Innovative work by Tang and Yang (2022) highlights the institutional systems, key policies, planning formulations, and implementation paths in China's urban renewal process. Since the 1990s, numerous cities in China have been undergoing urban renewal (Ye, 2021). Cheshmehzangi (2023) argues that because of this state-led renewal, skyscrapers are being built rapidly in major cities to attract the affluent middle class, resulting in countless relocations and the displacement of the working-class population. This process, also prevalent in the renewal of American downtowns in the late 1960s to 1970s, is known as gentrification (Zukin, 1987; Carey, 1988; Chronopoulos, 2016; Schnake-Mahl, 2020; Onwukwe *et al.*, 2024).

The Chinese urban renewal process took the form of short-term reconstruction, revitalisation and renewal before the 1980s (Song, 2023). This process is not dissimilar to urban reconstruction and renewal, which mainly focus on physical upgrading but are not necessarily concerned with the social impacts on local communities (August & Walks, 2017). Unlike the USA and Europe, Harding (1991), Tallon (2010) and Gaffney (2015) all assert that Chinese urban renewal policy and practice are configured through property-led redevelopment. Wu and Tan (2014) characterise property-led redevelopment as the assembly of financial, land, and market resources, as well as labour, to produce or improve buildings for occupation and investment purposes.

As emphasised by Gulati (2020), African cities are expanding in areas with sensitive, critical and fragile ecosystems. These areas include forests, low-elevation coastal zones and mega-deltas. As a result, urbanisation is altering the natural landscape of these cities, leading to a

range of adverse ecological impacts such as deforestation, habitat fragmentation, habitat loss and soil erosion (Baffi, 2018; Gambe, 2023).

Urban renewal policies in African countries emanate from the global north and have also been influenced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs were adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030, all people enjoy peace and prosperity (United Nations, 2015). To realise these goals, urban renewal has been a strategy to counter a weakened economy and infrastructure base in cities like Lagos, Nigeria (Oyebode, 2018).

A weakened economic base has persisted since Lagos stopped being the capital of Nigeria. The urban morphology of Lagos has changed significantly from the early 1900s to the present day, and it is still evolving (Unekwu, 2019). Today, the planning of Lagos focuses on becoming greener and healthier by creating and maintaining functional and operational parks and gardens, as well as planting and maintaining trees. This form of green city planning is administered by the Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency (LSPGA) (Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency, 2023). However, despite the commitment to greener planning, Akoni (2019) calls for Lagos planners to divert attention towards urban techniques to counter flooding and improve urban resilience and inclusive planning. Akoni (2019) argues that flood resilience and inclusiveness must be the main drivers for the city's sustainable development, calling for the Lagos State Parks and Gardens Agency to play a more prominent role in achieving developmental goals.

In other African cities, such as Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Cairo in Egypt, renewal was on the agenda of planning practitioners from the early 1990s (Kaitilla, 1990). Urban renewal was brought into focus from a growing concern about the deteriorating conditions in inner-city areas and vegetation clearances on the fringes of cities in order to accommodate growing settlements. In the early 1990s, almost all inner-city areas within these cities required primary and urgent renewal programmes (Hamman & Hendawy, 2021). Like other African cities, inner-city degradation has been a significant challenge in South Africa and will be discussed in Chapter Four. Watson (2009) emphasises that urban decay results from poorly planned urbanisation and socioeconomic and political problems.

This section has discussed the genesis of urban renewal and its various applications from different global perspectives.

The following discusses state-led and neoliberal urban renewal.

3.3. STATE-LED URBAN RENEWAL

The origins of state-led renewal can be traced to post-war Europe in the 1940s and the USA's federal housing programmes of the 1940s and 1960s, which made city rebuilding and slum clearance a national priority (Shwartz, 2007; von Hoffman, 2024). At the time, efforts to repurpose, clear, and rehabilitate urban areas to improve or modernise the city through redevelopment, infrastructure improvements, and other rebuild initiatives were known as urban reconstruction (Badescu, 2019). Also at this time, the state primarily oversaw and led city reconstruction planning, development and management efforts (Hunt, 2024; Heathcott, 2024).

In Europe, urban reconstruction was framed and publicly funded as a process needed for general post-war recovery, prioritising urgent needs (Ludwig *et al.*, 2024), including particular concerns of emergency housing for victims of bombings and displaced populations, as well as infrastructural recovery (Diefendorf, 1993; Barakat, 2005). At the time, while European cities began reconstruction, urban renewal was intertwined with the federal slum clearance programmes of 1949 in the USA (LaVoice, 2024). For Europe, renewal operated under the premise of urban reconstruction, while in the USA, urban renewal was under the assumption of clearing blighted areas.

In the USA, federal urban renewal programmes subsidised the clearance of blighted urban areas, and the vacant lots were subsequently sold to private developers for redevelopment. The programme's objectives were to eliminate substandard and inadequate housing, and to realise the goal of a decent home and a suitable living environment (Polaha, 1972). One of the defining features of early American state-led urban renewal was the demolition of blighted buildings and dwellings which did not adhere to building codes. This renewal programme was intended to rebuild and recreate cities.

From the 1940s to the 1970s, US cities were marked by strong contrasts. While gleaming skyscrapers rose in CBDs, many inner-city neighbourhoods suffered overcrowding, dilapidated housing and inadequate infrastructure, and were largely inhabited by poor, black communities (von Hoffman, 2002). These areas, often labelled "slums", were seen as breeding grounds for poverty, crime and social unrest. Within this context, the US government embarked on a grand experiment – the US Urban Renewal Program (LaVoice, 2009). The aim of these state-led initiatives was not solely to improve the physical urban fabric, but also to stimulate the economy of targeted areas (Spiess & von Hoffman, 2002).

Overall, state-led urban renewal is attributed to the post-war reconstruction in Europe and slum clearance efforts in the USA. Renewal was aimed at controlling urban development and was also premised on enforcing building codes (Collins & Shester, 2011).

The influx of private capital into city planning was known as the neoliberalisation of space under the auspices of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), which were introduced in the 1980s (Williams, 2009). This core idea of planning came under pressure in the increasingly neoliberal political climate (Olesen, 2014). The period was characterised by policies of roll-back neoliberalism and suspicion of state-led planning, which was primarily regarded as restricting economic growth and competitiveness (Healy, 2004; Olesen, 2014; Vallier, 2021).

The trend of “neo-liberalisation” of space, planning and development in the built environment can be partly attributed to the decreasing hierarchical role of government in planning and the subsequent need for governance arrangements with private actors (Hackworth, 2007; Lovering, 2009; Olesen, 2014). These arrangements with the private sector were informed by a departure from capital-intensive state investment to private collaboration (Moser *et al.*, 2023).

The state attracted private actors into renewal as a risk-sharing exercise, and it also attracted private actors due to the public debt crisis and extensive urbanisation. The state looked to the market for planning cooperation as a risk mitigation exercise, also known as risk sharing, within urban planning and other areas of public service delivery (George, 2020; World Bank, 2022). These risk mitigation strategies were developed in response to the need to reform the mode of public procurement. Yusuf and Mohd (2023) argue that the need to change arose from concerns about public debt, which grew enormously during the macroeconomic dislocation of the 1970s and 1980s. During this time, the state could not provide basic services, and thus private capital was invited to ally with the government to provide finance and maintain these public services (Greenberg, 2006; Law Teacher, 2025). Due to the extensive renewal costs, state-led renewal in countries such as the USA looked to outsource finance and invited private actors to finance, build and operate public projects (Bugaric *et al.*, 2019). One of the benefits for the state was that private actors could plan, finance and develop projects when public funding was not available or immediately available (Lorman Education Services, 2018).

The state sought to translate the market's efficiency (Noring, 2019), skills, and expertise into the city-building processes as a supplementary effort due to budgetary constraints in delivering public services (Joseph, 2002). The bottom line is that the government cannot solve cities' problems by itself (Schmoke, 1997). As a result of this challenge, governments actively attract private capital to cities through policy adjustments to assist in urban planning and development. Private sector involvement introduces an element of competition, which can lead to higher standards and better service delivery in crucial sectors such as healthcare, transportation, and education, thereby improving the quality and accessibility of these public services (Partida, 2023).

Due to the capital-intensive and risk-associated nature of urban renewal projects, public planning authorities sought to offset financial risks (Wilson, 2016). These financial risks were associated with large-scale land development by partnering with the private sector while setting planning guidelines requirements (Heurekens, 2018). Neoliberal political ideology has gradually been implemented through the new public management governance models, which claim “that market and business rationality can be made to operate as effectively in the public interest as it does in securing private interests” (Sager, 2009; 21).

3.3.1. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

PPPs in a simplistic form involve the private sector delivering public goods and services for a fee (Mandiriza *et al.*, 2021). At the broadest level, PPPs are a cooperative institutional arrangement between public and private sector actors (Feldman, 2020). Private and public sectors collaborate to provide infrastructure and service delivery to public institutions. PPPs are prevalent in city planning and public service delivery of utilities, and exist within other spheres such as individual government departments, education, wildlife protection, etc. There are four main types of PPPs: service contract, management contract, lease contract and concession agreements (Mandiriza *et al.*, 2021).

More recently, in the 1960s, corporate leaders in the USA famously started cooperating with city practitioners to tackle American inner-city decline (Baeten, 2018). Typically, PPPs involve the private sector sharing risks, costs and resources with the public institution (Fieldman, 2020). Sharing responsibility is usually established as a reasonably long-term cooperation, comprising parties that share decision-making and any risk associated with the joint venture. This cooperation includes an agreed outcome where all parties benefit from mutual collaboration and effort (Pfajfar, 2022).

PPP and privatisation are two distinct modes; often, they are mistaken for one. While privatisation is a transfer of ownership of public assets permanently to the private sector, under the PPP, the government is constantly liable to perform specific tasks (Bond & Ruiters, 2024). In contrast, the private sector's intervention is obtained in different modes, as described by the Finance Commission of Sri Lanka (the Finance Commission of Sri Lanka, 2021). In this way, PPPs are ongoing agreements between the government and private sector organisations that allow private organisations to participate in the decision-making and production of public goods or services.

PPPs in this study are market enabling instruments as opposed to market substitution models. PPPs do not relinquish land use to the private sector; however, they ensure that private actors act within a joint public planning framework with the state. Market substitution models by the

state transfer planning and its tenets exclusively to the private sector developer. As a result, PPP are underlined by inclusivity to ensure that displacement is minimised and land speculation is avoided within urban renewal planning. Issues of displacement and gentrification are also discussed later in chapter 8 of this study.

A few studies (Loxley, 2013; Arimoro, 2018) have emerged to investigate whether PPPs answer Africa's infrastructural ambitions. Loxley (2013) and Tayo's (2024) stances are that the infrastructure deficit and budget constraints experienced in developed and emerging economies of the world need to benefit from private sector expertise while public authority concentrates on making policies to collaborate with the private sector to procure much-needed public infrastructure. Within this public-private collaboration, various models and approaches of PPPs exist, such as the User Fee Public Private Partnership, which entails planning, implementing, financing, and maintaining certain infrastructural assets owned by state agencies assigned to a private party (Ittman, 2017).

The User Fee Public-Private Partnership model can be used to upgrade or widen public assets. Under a concessionary agreement, a specific project or investment is assigned to a private party for a particular period, for example, 25 or 30 years. After the period expires, it is returned to the government. Other approaches and models, such as PPP, are based on ready-made services, where the production of a service, or its responsibility, is assigned to a private party by the government based on existing rules and regulations. Accordingly, planning, investment, building, rebuilding, management and maintenance are given to a private company, or an investor and the services are purchased by the government (Finance Commission of Sri Lanka, 2022).

Further models and approaches include providing infrastructure facilities through small-scale private suppliers, prevalent in many developing economies for urban renewal (Noring, 2019). The system is based on projects that provide public utilities or services through small or medium-scale entrepreneurs (Simone, 2020). Projects like small-scale power plants and drinking water supply schemes implemented by middle- and small-scale entrepreneurs are good examples of this approach. The provision of infrastructure facilities is not privatisation; it is similar to management contracts (Debaere & Kapral, 2021; Enafoghe & Magigaba, 2023). Management contracts are typified by government institutions responsible for providing the relevant service by continuously investing in the private sector to get involved through short-term or long-term contractual agreements (Manyathi *et al.*, 2021).

These contractual agreements are only for implementing the provision and maintenance of services. Highly developed countries like the USA adopt the PPP approach even when

managing service institutions, namely hospitals, schools and universities. For example, the operation of a state hospital is done using the least contract method under PPP in the State of Columbia (Navarro, 2005). The ownership of hospital assets is with the State of Columbia, and the Columbia Health Care Corporation acts as the private partner or operator of the hospital.

In countries like India and Sri Lanka, governments have accepted the policy of obtaining private capital through PPP arrangements, particularly for infrastructure development projects at both national and regional levels (FCSL, 2015). In India, all state provinces have developed policies and strategies to attract foreign investments through PPPs to fill the investment gaps. Also, these countries share a similar planning thread where PPPs are recognised as a successful alternative funding method (Jain *et al.*, 2022). At national levels, the strategic plans adopted to uplift infrastructure have made considerable progress in the PPP approach in both countries.

For example, according to the Asian Development Bank, the government has constructed water with foreign funding in the Colombo-South Harbour improvement project in Sri Lanka (Asian Development Bank, 2017). In contrast, the private sector has been allowed to work like building a terminal. In India, where the federal system of government exists, the provinces have been entrusted with many powers and have autonomy in making investment decisions relating to PPPs (Mashwama *et al.*, 2018). While India is a federal system, Sri Lanka functions as a unitary state with a provincial council system with limited devolution of power. Under this system, there are opportunities to enter into PPPs, which are used to address funding shortages for public projects (Weeraratne, 2016).

In South Africa, PPPs date to April 1997 on an ad-hoc basis when the South African cabinet approved the appointment of an inter-departmental task team to develop a package of policy, legislative and institutional reforms to create an enabling environment for PPPs (Arimoro, 2018). Following the initiative, several pioneering projects were implemented between 1997 and 2000. These include, but are not limited to, the N3 and N4 toll roads, South African National Parks, and two maximum-security prisons. South Africa's unique PPP programme mirrors how developing countries with an enhanced investment and financial sector can achieve milestones with a PPP programme (Albertus & Fisher, 2021). The initial PPP projects provided a springboard for developing a functional framework for the administration and regulation of PPPs in South Africa.

Many urban planning PPP projects are operational in South Africa and this is discussed in the next chapter. For now, the emphasis is on the PPP ordinances regulating PPP operations within South Africa. Regarding legislation, South Africa adopted a strategic framework for PPP in 1999 (Mandiriza & Fouri, 2022). Following this framework, the government issued Treasury

regulations for PPPs in consonance with the terms of the Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 1999 (NT, 2001). According to Kwak (2009) and Prussing (2015), the asset can be transferred back to the public sector at the end of the partnership, or the private party can maintain ownership due to this Act.

1) PPPs in Urban Planning

Globally, most empirical work on PPPs focuses on their physical construction and procurement benefits, which continues to be primarily fixated on how they have performed against other forms of procurement (Raisbeck *et al.*, 2010; Ramolobe & Khandanisa, 2024). The first and most prevalent PPP configuration and planning is the comparative work on project time and cost outcomes observed in the market. Governments deliver these projects via traditional procurement methods (Raisbeck *et al.*, 2010).

The data gathered and analysed in PPP studies show that joint projects operate better in the cost dimension than projects procured by traditional methods or single actors. PPP projects are rigorous regarding the return of capital invested in the project. However, these studies also note that benchmarking and performance of PPPs globally between different states, institutions and tasks will always be a source of debate, as there is no universal PPP arrangement. The existence of various issues prevents the standardisation of PPP. There are differences between currency strength, labour availability, resource availability, project scale, and the use of materials (Gqoli, 2004).

The second point is the link between the concept of smart cities and the concern of PPP smart infrastructures, which has long been a challenge to funding and financing. According to the South African Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) (2021), the smart city has evolved when perceived from a South African lens. Earlier, the focus was on the technologies to be used. However, there seems to be a growing realisation that innovative technologies should not be prioritised at the expense of social inclusion and sustainability.

The idea of smart cities originated in the early 1990s, with cities starting to label themselves as bright upon introducing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure, embracing e-governance and attempting to attract high-tech industries to encourage economic growth (Singh & Sahu, 2022). The origins of the smart city concept have been linked to North American growth theories of the 1990s—a community-driven reaction to address traffic congestion and air pollution through improved development practices.

The concept of smart cities in South Africa is similar to the conceptualisation of a smart city in Britain in that both countries have PPPs for achieving smart cities (Enwereji & Uwuzeyimana,

2022). Both countries label a smart city as one that increases the pace at which it improves social, economic and environmental sustainability outcomes, responding to challenges such as climate change, rapid population growth and political and economic instability (Kolondaisami, 2020). This is achieved by improving how the city engages with society, how it applies collaborative leadership methods, how it works across disciplines and city systems, and how it uses data, information and modern technologies to provide better services and quality of life to those in, and involved with, the city (DCG, 2021). The overall concern with smart cities and PPPs is determining priority between business model categories and the state as well as funding and financing options and selecting infrastructure implementation (Mirzaee & Sadroud, 2022).

The third point tying PPPs to urban planning is sustainable urban development, which focuses on incorporating sustainability considerations in infrastructure projects delivered through PPP (discussed later in the chapter). A study by Hueskes *et al.* (2017) explores how such incorporation can be encouraged. While these forms of analysis have been carried out, limited literature fully supports the idea that these urban renewal PPP projects are unsustainable (Othman & Elsaay, 2018). Those regarded as sustainable see continued investment and structural improvement. Adaptive re-use is an innovative approach to generating sustainable values for historic buildings in developing countries.

The fourth point is focused on urban transport, specifically, urban transport successes and failures under contractual PPPs in delivering active transport. Infrastructure includes urban toll highway concession programmes (Vassallo *et al.*, 2020). There has been considerable attention to this connection and substantial new precinct developments linked to an existing city and its transport. In South Africa, the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) is the government's policy framework that guides urban areas' future growth and management. The IUDF aims to steer urban growth towards a sustainable growth model of compact, connected and coordinated cities and towns to achieve the intended outcome of spatial transformation. Specifically, integrated transport and mobility as well as investment in information and communication technology (ICT) are essential to strengthening and integrating public transport modes, of which PPP forms a part (Wagner, 2005).

II) Infrastructure Projects and PPPs

Under neoliberalism, PPPs are presumed to enable governments to transfer some operational roles to efficient private sector operators (Ginsburg, 2012). Private firms provide a growing number of infrastructure projects in developing countries through PPP (Feng *et al.*, 2023), including those in South Africa. Various studies recognise PPP infrastructure projects as an

essential driver of economic growth (Cui, 2018). Traditionally, these projects are provided by the public sector. However, Feng *et al.* (2023) argue that with the growing demand for infrastructure and the increasing scale of investment, it has become increasingly more difficult for the government to afford the cost, especially for governments in developing economies whose fiscal budgets are heavily constrained. As a result, the PPP model is being increasingly adopted worldwide (Qiu & Wang, 2011).

According to a 2021 estimation, there were over 240 PPP investment projects in the world, with a total investment commitment of 76.2 billion dollars (USD), distributed in 50 countries. These financial figures represent an increase in investment commitments compared with the 51 billion dollars (USD) raised across 251 projects in 2020 (World Bank, 2021). Although the number of projects in 2021 is significantly less than in 2020, the private sector investment commitments increased by 49% from 2020, showing clear signs of recovery in the third year of COVID-19 (World Bank, 2021).

In the UK, PPPs are increasingly used in public facilities and services provided through Private Finance Initiatives (Akintoye *et al.*, 2003). Despite some casualties, PPP-Private Finance Initiatives projects have been undertaken successfully. The reasons for their success show that the three most important factors are a solid and sound private consortium, appropriate risk allocation, and an available financial market. Factor analysis revealed that appropriate factor groupings include effective procurement, implementation ability, government guarantee, favourable economic conditions and available financial need. While the UK PPP programmes are extensive, several grand PPPs are also relatively successful in South Africa, although not to the economic and physical scales of the UK; by 2021, 34 PPP projects valued at R89.3 billion had been completed in South Africa (Seeletse, 2016; NT, 2021).

PPPs are thriving in South Africa despite several challenges. According to the National Treasury (NT, 2022), new PPP transactions have been declining from an estimated R10.7 billion in 2011/12 to R5.6 billion in 2019/20 partly because the projects are perceived to involve high costs. In September 2019, the National Treasury initiated a review of the PPP regulatory framework to address these challenges and recommend changes to the framework to improve its effectiveness and encourage private sector participation (NT, 2021). The comparative analysis chapter will discuss South African PPPs in depth.

While the success of PPPs is widely publicised, key issues and weaknesses accompanying this arrangement have also been published, mainly by the World Bank's PPP Resource Centre (2020). These fundamental issues include but are not limited to the monopoly of service providers, lack of community engagement and consultations, high service costs and high tariffs.

The primary concern is that monopolisation of services can result in situations where legal frameworks or contractual agreements are established to safeguard projects. These arrangements grant exclusive service rights to official providers within a region, effectively prohibiting any alternative providers (Louw, 2021). Alternative providers are often prevented from operating without the official provider first connecting these areas to infrastructure services. The second issue is the need for more community engagement within PPPs, which includes links to consultation meetings, which may be held periodically to maintain community engagement. It is also important to understand and accordingly suggest sound solutions to address the community's needs, which sometimes requires the presence of PPP programmes.

The third issue covered is the high service costs and tariffs imposed by PPPs. Fees are typically payable to connect a household or business to a service such as electricity or water. These fees may be disproportionately costly for a low-income family or small business, particularly if arranged as a one-time payment. The connection fee for lower-income households and entities may be higher than that paid by more affluent individuals in city centres, as new infrastructure may be necessary to provide the service. Consideration should be given to making this more affordable, either by spreading the cost over time or through cross-subsidy or via grants. This would ensure the initial costs do not deter disadvantaged households and businesses from accessing services. The same is true for tariffs, which can be structured to optimise cost recovery (a key consideration in a PPP) while still minimising the impact on disadvantaged households and businesses. Legal limits on tariff increases across the board may have adverse effects as they prevent needed gains from improving services and creating cross-subsidies for underprivileged areas.

The main takeaway on the discussion on infrastructure projects and PPPs is that more governments are looking to PPP for planning, as it entails the benefits of shared costs for procurement and project operation. Even with these benefits, various issues associated with this type of planning persist. Overall, PPP and private projects are credited for creating walkable urban spaces, integrated non-linear cities and inclusive urban ecosystems. Moreover, they are credited with the adaptive re-use of buildings and other laissez-faire approaches that dominate global cities and grand-scale projects, otherwise known as flagship projects (Owojori, 2019).

3.4. NEOLIBERAL URBAN RENEWAL

This study is grounded in neoliberal urban renewal, which is the principle of how the market operates in the planning and development of towns and cities. The motivation for applying it as a planning framework for this study is twofold. On one hand, sustainable development is at the top of the agenda for South African and global cities, with innovative technologies and market-

led strategies constantly deployed to aid in developing cities and managing their resources (Mchunu, 2006). The theory's importance in this study can be explained in two ways. The first is that successful urban renewal, from three secondary sites within this study (discussed in Chapter Three), is a market-led endeavour. As a successful market-led endeavour, the study views private-led development as the best principle in addressing urban deterioration within the primary field site of Southernwood.

On the other hand, the motivation for neoliberal city planning links to recent market solutions for cost-effective measures to create liveable cities and maintain development conditions (Mouratidis, 2021), deter building demolition, endorse walkability and reduce carbon emissions from pollutants such as motor vehicle congestion (Schindler & Dionisio, 2024). Such advances are essential for developing urban business development and protecting land and property prices. Ultimately, the theorisation of cities using neoliberal planning is due to how the market has and continues to exert authority over the city, its land uses, labour division, arrangement of economic classes, transport network distribution and resource distribution (Turok, 2021).

South African policies, discussed later under section 4.2, have recently tended to feature neoliberal principles such as Urban Development Zones (UDZs), Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI), Central Improvement Districts (CIDs), and Special Rating Areas (SRAs) as an attempt to draw private capital into city building processes. These policy features encourage market participation in urban planning and development. Deficiencies in resource allocation, maladministration, corruption, low revenue turnover, drive for competitiveness and political instability may be some of the plausible explanations for market inclusion within the state's urban planning machinery. Thornhill (2014) highlights prospects and challenges faced by South African municipalities arguing that a lack of citizen participation and an unprecedented influx of populations deter development.

Challenges to the neoliberal theorisation of cities in the global south, especially South African cities, are driven by work emphasising that the current planning systems have been imposed or borrowed from elsewhere (Watson, 2009). Despite the challenges to theorisation, neoliberal urban renewal has presented ways in which cities can revive decaying stocks and engage in the adaptive reuse of buildings and property. Neoliberal urban renewal has also provided sufficient capital for city improvement and design, which aids in placemaking and attraction of populations to repurposed and revived land use in the city.

Markets are interested in the development of urban space and urban renewal as the city is the theatre for the market (McKinnie, 2006). This means that the city is a market phenomenon wherein transactions are conducted, and land price determinations are due to the city's decentralisation and urbanisation. These positions link to discussions of the city being a theatre

for the market and further emphasise the importance of market-driven theoretical positions in conceptualising the city (Cui, 2018)

Neoliberal urban planning, the role of private capital in city planning and development (Baffoe, 2023), forms the theoretical framework for this thesis. This framework of market-led development frames and accounts for urban renewal processes discussed within this study. While many theoretical positions may apply to the field sites, market-driven planning best encapsulates the nature of planning, the projects, the outcomes and the actors that shape urban space within the context of this study's primary and secondary sites.

Like all theoretical positions, neoliberal or laissez-faire approaches have limitations. However, its popularity and widespread use in framing the South African city delineate the increasing role of the market in assuming planning authority over public goods and public space.

One of the primary motivations for applying this theoretical perspective in viewing and understanding land use change, particularly urban renewal, is because the state requires the assistance of the market in a broad range of endeavours to meet development goals. These issues include, but are not limited to, healthcare, education, public service provision of utilities, corrections, planning, and various services, which are the realm and domain of public institutions.

As a result, the state has and continues to delegate and jointly work with the market (through public-private partnerships [PPP]) to achieve development aims. For urban planning, these aims are to revive run-down inner cities and arrest the decline of traditional CBDs. Given these challenges, the state proposes favourable mechanisms, planning policies and projects for the market to achieve these goals. As a result, through neoliberal principles, private actors operate within the sphere of provision, which traditionally was the domain of the state (Ramolobe & Khandanisa, 2024).

Historically, neoliberalism, the doctrine that market exchange is an ethic capable of guiding all human action, became dominant in thought and practice worldwide since the 1970s (Harvey, 1973; 2003). For Kotz (2000), neoliberal planning is a body of economic theory and a policy stance. The neoliberal theory claims that a largely unregulated capitalist system (a free market economy) embodies the ideal of free individual choice and achieves optimum economic performance concerning efficiency, economic growth, technical progress, and distributional justice.

Harvey (2008) understands neoliberalism as encompassing three intertwined characteristics. The first is an apparatus of institutions, policies and practices. The second is an economic,

social and political reproduction structure espoused by financialisation. The third is a system of capitalism for the minority and against the majority. As a market-led system, it reduces the state's role in planning and development. The state is assigned a minimal economic role: defining property rights, enforcing contracts, and regulating the money supply (Klein, 1981; Kotz, 2000). Before applying neoliberalism to planning, it is necessary to understand the fundamentals of the concept. Neoliberalism can be understood as a new stage in the growth of capitalism, evolving from the wake of the 'post-war boom' (Mfete, 2020).

In attempting to simplify the concept, Mfete (2020) argues that the most rudimentary principles of neoliberalism are commercialisation, privatisation of state-owned sectors and decentralisation. Further processes include market deregulation, the corporatisation of public entities and public resources, and the retreat of the state in the provision of social goods. Mfete (2020) further asserts that the rationale behind adopting neoliberal policies was that this would help attract international investors, gain confidence, and help boost economic growth.

Neoliberalism favours a growth-first ideology. In response to the market challenges of the 1960s, neoliberals turned to the virtues of deregulated market-oriented development for capital accumulation (James, 2015). This deregulation was achieved through various market-friendly policies and strategies (Sager, 2011; Su, 2020). Kotz (2000) further emphasises that the policy recommendations of neoliberalism are mainly concerned with dismantling what remains of the welfare state's regulations.

These recommendations include deregulation of business, privatisation of public activities and assets, elimination of, or cutbacks in, social welfare programmes, and reduction of taxes on corporations and the investing class. Despite this neoliberal episteme, it is essential to understand it as a framework, theory, and condition that reaches beyond the analogy of market exchange of goods and services within a global, homogeneous sphere (Collier, 2025). The neoliberal framework is a condition of our time, as Feudalism and Fordism were conditions of their time. At present, the neoliberal condition brings unification of the market in which the world and its institutions feature substantial homogeneity in culture, needs, monetary policies, planning, language and so forth (Piletin, 2023).

Overall, the epistemology of the neoliberal condition is best summarised by Christian (2011) and King (2018), who assume that capital influences practical matters relating to space, from the construction of buildings to the distribution of investment and the worldwide division of labour. Although the neoliberal condition favours market superiority, the state has considerable influence over public institutions, social goods, political institutions and the city. The city's neoliberal condition is multifaced, evolving in geographical and temporal dimensions (Taşan-

Kok & Baeten, 2012). At its core, neoliberal planning prioritises economic development and private profitability over social justice and public welfare within the city, which leads to detrimental socio-economic and environmental consequences (Sager, 2011; Taşan-Kok & Baeten, 2012).

David Harvey sees two valid competing explanations for neoliberalism. Harvey (2006) considers neoliberalism a theoretical design for reorganising international capitalism. He also finds neoliberalism to be a political project aimed at re-establishing conditions for the accumulation of capital and the restoration of the power of economic elites. While Harvey's view of this condition is grounded on the global market homogeneity with limited emphasis on politics; other voices extend the conditions to a more political project (Castree, 2010).

These voices understand the neoliberal condition as a political project to restore class power. Some academics, such as Forster *et al.* (2020) and Fourie (2022), assert that structural adjustment explains how neoliberalism was forced on developing countries in South America and Africa, from which South Africa is not exempt. Structural adjustment in Africa is based on neoclassical economic principles derived from the experience of industrialisation in Britain and the USA (Roy, 1999). Ultimately, neoclassical economics claims that unregulated markets maximise output across contexts. Based on the above discussion, the neoliberal condition sees state policies as impediments to competitive markets (Bruff, 2024).

However, the neoliberal condition should not be regarded as confrontational to state planning, as the state actively assists private sector capital (King, 2007). For example, the state relegates public planning functions to the market, increasing market dominance in planning and developing cities, particularly urban land. Neoliberal land use practices have been widely publicised, including tax-driven urban renewal schemes and property redevelopment models to arrest urban deterioration. These market interventions are based on returns for financial investment (Mosselson, 2017).

The underlying case for the market's intervention in the arrangement and administration of urban space is to provide efforts to mitigate risks and intrusions of the ghettoisation of the city. If left unchecked, these intrusions affect the markets' ability to profit from tourism and property and city services. Hence, initiatives such as gentrification are market attempts to restore city capital accumulation processes. By doing so, neoliberal planning restores and increases city property prices, attracting new tax groups, agglomerates and commerce to renewed areas (Benguerba, 2021).

For Joy and Vogel (2021), neoliberal planning emphasises that cities are more than physical geographies; they are areas from which surplus value is extracted. This is because cities are recognised as spatial representations of capital (Harvey, 2007; Howell, 2019). Moreover, beyond neoliberal views, places are increasingly recognised as representations of values and interactions between people, processes, technologies and images (Lane, 2011).

Overall, the foregoing discussion on neoliberal city planning demonstrates that city planning authorities, in conjunction with private planning, have gone to great lengths to invest in and construct grand projects. These projects are designed to attract people, arrest decay, and promote the city as an ideal destination for residency and capital investment through marketing and cooperation through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). The following sections cover these themes.

3.4.1. City Marketing

City marketing refers to ways urban planning emphasises creating attractive spaces with a high pull rate for high-earning workers (Balencourt & Zafra, 2022). Yezhova (2020) argues that city marketing is concerned with a wide range of beautification and marketing attempts to sell cities as a product, building their brand and reputation, making them attractive in the 'urban market' for investors, partners and current and prospective residents. In a 2020 study, Yezhova (2020) addresses why some cities get more investments than others, considering their equal locality, capital and potential. City marketing can be a direct answer to this. Selling cities as a product, building their brand and reputation, and making them attractive in the 'urban market' for investors, partners and current and prospective residents is one of the aims for cities by neoliberals (Hunter *et al.*, 2010).

For example, active city marketing and beautification are relatively new in developing countries such as Brazil (Trevisa & Fischer, 2016). For years, city marketing has been and continues to be central to the sustainable development agenda in the United Kingdom (UK). In 2018, for example, the UK government established the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission (BBBBC) as an independent body advising on promoting health, well-being, and sustainable growth (BBBBC, 2020). In its final report, the commission emphasised that beauty needs to become a policy objective and that beautiful placemaking should be a legally enshrined aim of the planning system (BBBBC, 2020). The report further suggested that planning practitioners and institutions aim for long-term investment instead of a quick profit at the cost of beauty and community. The commission asserts that values that matter to people – beauty, society, history, landscape – are safeguarded from long-term investment.

In other parts of the world, like China, the beautification of cities is central to the urbanisation spine (Cartier, 2022; Yu *et al.*, 2024). Similar to the BBBBC in the UK, China has a comparable programme, the Beautiful China Initiative (Wang *et al.*, 2015). The Beautiful China Initiative is a plan for the sustainable development of China to fulfil the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to achieve the United Nations 2030 Agenda, Chinese cities are centred on the sustainability of enormous metropolitan populations, which drive economic production (Chuanglin *et al.*, 2020). One of the unique processes contributing to the sustainability of Chinese cities is counter-urbanisation, wherein many urban residents are forced to relocate to suburban and even remote rural areas to live, establish and operate businesses over the past decade (Yu *et al.*, 2024).

Since 1994, South African tourism has emerged as a leading economic growth sector. It is now one of the most significant contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), contributing close to 7.1% (Muzekenyi *et al.*, 2018). Tourism attracts foreign revenue and stimulates a broad range of other industries. Therefore, beautifying South African cities is essential in sustaining this growth trend, even though nature is the main attraction for tourists (Giddy & Kelso, 2025). South African towns attempt beautification through grand projects, which are a mecca for tourism and investment. These places include but are not limited to the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, which sees over five million tourists annually, as does Sun City, which has its fair share of domestic and international visitors (Ferreira & De Villiers, 2014). Overall, the literature suggests that cities with grand projects continue to see an influx of tourists more rapidly than towns without such attractions (Smith, 2023).

In South Africa, making cities attractive is conducted under an operational framework of inclusive urbanisation (Turok & Visagie, 2018). This inclusivity results in cities such as Cape Town that evolve as gateways to investment and global markets, as generators of wealth, hubs of innovation and business formation. All these factors collectively contribute to prosperity and a rising quality of life for citizens through urban renewal projects (Bai, 2023). Inclusive growth and strong PPPs sustain economic growth, as no sector can fully flourish without the help and support of others.

Overall, the city attraction agenda is tackled by various projects, initiatives and planning tools to encourage the creation of beautiful cities (Angelo, 2016). These city initiatives focus on drawing capital from commerce and higher-earning populations. Urban renewal projects and adaptive reuse programmes concentrate on profitability. City marketing aids in a strong sense of place and retention of investment; it also aids in the sustainability of urban spaces, sometimes carried out through PPPs, which form the subject of the following section (Leshinka *et al.*, 2023).

The following discussion focuses on neoliberal planning and HEIs.

3.4.2. Neoliberal Planning and Higher Education Institutions (HEI)/Universities

A characteristic feature of the transformation of the space economy of cities in the USA, since the 1970s, has been the increasing market role in planning. This neoliberal development trend exists not only in the USA but in other countries as well. In this context, several neoliberal experiments of place-making and marketing have been carried out by various entrepreneurial actors, including universities, to improve the host area and generate profit (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Bose, 2015). One of the primary reasons for university involvement in planning is the fundamental expansion to accommodate new student housing, new schools, and so on, or to improve the social conditions in the surrounding neighbourhood, as they often find themselves surrounded by deteriorating areas with a prevalence of crime (Bose, 2015).

City-based universities have become significant players in the economy and planning of those cities such as Birmingham in England, and Berkeley in the USA (Harris & Holley, 2016; Bank, 2018). According to Campbell *et al.* (2005), universities have driven the urban economy and growth. In other words, universities and other HEIs are anchors of development that steer the growth processes of the city and the region (Perry and Wiewel, 2005). In the international development literature, there has been a growing recognition that universities have had an essential role in urban and regional development for quite some time and have increasingly given way to the idea of universities as agents for the transformation of place (Bank & Sibanda, 2018).

Britain responded to inner-city decline by creating the metropolitan university model (Thomas, 2004). The new institutions aimed to help impoverished inner-city communities recover by combining opportunities for academic study with community outreach and engagement. In the USA, the state attempted to strengthen the role of inner-city community colleges to slow the urban decay. In both cases, universities were seen as enabling centres for poor communities to rebuild capacity. Even in South Africa, a similar community engagement function was imposed on all universities after 2000 to assist their surrounding communities (Bank & Sibanda, 2018).

International experiences exist even in Canada, where the emerging idea of the public university linked HEIs in Montreal and Toronto to regional economic and social benefits began around the middle of the 20th century (Peters, 2017). Work by Peters (2017) highlights those Canadian cities, enter into agreements with universities and colleges that have a presence in the city to recognise their role in economic and social development. The universities are committed to encouraging and facilitating collaboration between professors, researchers and community groups to document, study and resolve various issues identified by the city. Such trends further

fortify the idea that universities are neoliberal institutions which regulate themselves in market-friendly ways to ensure growth and development. Cities in the USA, Canada and South Africa, to name a few countries, have been transforming since the 1970s, giving rise to the neoliberal city. Universities adopt and operate under this ethos. Bose (2015) argues that universities are increasingly becoming arenas for neoliberal 'experimentation' by adopting corporate models of functioning for profit (see Lipman, 2011).

Therefore, with universities actively taking control of their host communities, they shape business practices and are engaged with other universities in a competitive stance to attract and retain investment for the institution itself and its host area, providing spatial coherence for more effortless student mobility or to provide an 'on-campus' cultural experience instead of being spread across the city. In driving the idea that universities are neoliberal institutions, Bose (2015) argues that universities perform many functions for the capitalist division of labour, but highlights two.

Firstly, universities produce commodifiable knowledge supported by grants from the likes of pharmaceutical, engineering and insurance companies as well as other entities. Secondly, universities contribute to the generation of specific professional skills. Medicine, law and business schools, education colleges, among others, equip students and researchers with marketable skills. Thus, universities fulfil the role of directly reproducing labour power (Harvey, 1982; Revington, 2021). Universities attempt to improve the quality of labour power through education and inculcate work ethics, skills and discipline. For Vasantha and Bano (2020), universities create social conditions conducive to producing surplus value by creating a skilled labour force. Overall, the relationship between universities and cities has become increasingly important, and this link pertains to the economic, physical, geo-political and cultural facets of city life. Universities contribute to the local economy through research, reputation, and the creation of capital infrastructure for campus development. Universities are considered educational and cultural institutions and a mainstay for urban transformations (Namvar *et al.*, 2019).

3.4.3. Challenges, Critiques and Displacement

There is evidence that although neoliberalism drives economic growth, it presents threatening challenges, including exclusion and inequality, insecurity, corruption and informality (Baffoe, 2023). For example, there have been housing exclusions in the inner-city from PPP; redeveloped housing units primarily cater for higher income groups, as these PPP projects require extensive investment returns. These planning issues exist despite policy arrangements for low-cost housing (Sobuza, 2010).

Neoliberalism is contemporarily associated with market-oriented reform policies such as eliminating price controls, deregulating capital markets, lowering trade barriers, privatisation, austerity and limiting state influence in the economy (Balan, 2023). However, this has led to corruption. For Myint (2000), corruption is defined as using public office for private gain, or in other words, the use of an official position, rank or status by an office bearer for personal benefit. Following this definition, examples of corrupt behaviour include bribery, extortion, fraud, embezzlement, nepotism, cronyism, appropriation of public assets and property for private use, and influence peddling.

Wolf (2002) argues that while government officials, international financial institutions and multilateral lending agencies emphasised the relevance of ending corrupt practices, state negotiations with foreign investors during the privatisation process and day-to-day political activities at every level of government were blatantly based on illegal deals, corruption, favouritism and clientelism. David Harvey's concepts of accumulation and the city which illustrates the perspective of the economic elite, exemplifies how neoliberal ideals can drive change and progress while also serving as potential avenues for corruption (Ortiz, 2018).

Historically and today, neoliberal privatisation practices are well documented from international perspectives of the 1980s in Eastern Europe. A study by Kaufman (1997) tracks corruption in Eastern Europe's privatisation of state-owned entities. In the article, Kaufman (1997) examines the relationship between crime and privatisation. Without privatisation, the transition economies of Eastern Europe had no real hope of alleviating bankruptcy. During this era, an enterprise survey of 200 firms in Ukraine and Russia indicated that firms that significantly underreport their activities have had to make higher extra-legal payments than those that underreport less. Against this background, it is not surprising that privatisation and corruption have been perceived as closely linked.

As these economies of Eastern Europe were being thrust into the free market as inadvertent capitalists, many bureaucrats and citizens felt no cultural imperative to discourage the unbridled pursuit of wealth by any means. It was against this background that the issue of privatisation arose. Presently, many case studies on neoliberal practices leading to corruption exist. Mainly, qualitative evidence on the corruption-inducing effects of privatisation is abundant. In the former Soviet Union countries, managers with good connections to the authorities purchased many former public enterprises (Reinsberg, 2019).

Martimort and Straub (2009) and Reinsberg's (2020) studies scrutinise the corruption-abating effect of privatisation by using new data and advanced statistical methods to complement existing research based on case studies. The main crux of these studies is that privatisation

generates new opportunities for corruption, specifically in an environment of unequal information access in which insiders can exploit advantages to acquire newly privatised state assets to the detriment of bidders who lack informal contacts to privatisation decision-makers (Martimort & Straub, 2009). These case studies depict a transparent thread: privatisation induces certain levels of financial misconduct between actors (Velte, 2020). In these case studies, references are made to executives having discretionary power to implement favourable economic reform through little parliamentary control and weak legal frameworks. While neoliberalism drives economic growth and privatisation of public goods and space, it has unintended issues such as gentrification, a process whereby areas experience an influx of wealthier residents, displacing previous occupants (Dasse, 2021).

Gentrification, in a variety of instances, has been the unintended outcome of well-meaning urban policy frameworks (Kotze & Van Der Merwe, 2010), such as urban densification, inner-city regeneration and urban heritage conservation, but with arguably negative consequences. When neighbourhoods and cities decline, cities and investors see an opportunity to turn the declining sites into profitable new projects; this happens worldwide in indifferent renewal projects or under gentrification (Lundqvist & Patterson, 2022).

Donaldson *et al.* (2012) argue that gentrification a by-product of a range of contemporary neoliberal urban development policies intent on attracting investment capital. One of the reasons why urban renewal today is a grey or mutated concept is that it is associated with similar processes of modern-day gentrification. Gentrification and urban renewal now encompass similar concepts, including infill housing, brownfield developments, and the construction of newly built luxury housing developments in city centres.

In July 1999, the Cape Town Partnership (CTP), a non-profit management agency, was established (Donaldson *et al.*, 2012). CTP comprises representation from the City Council, the Cape Metro Council, the South African Property Owners Association, private businesses and their representative organisations. The CTP's brief was to lead and manage the regeneration of Cape Town's central city, promoting it as a destination for global business, investment, retail, entertainment, and leisure, thereby launching Cape Town into the international arena. Among the unintended consequences of these developments was urban commodification, which displaced low-income residents and businesses.

However, gentrification can also be the unintended outcome of well-meaning urban policy frameworks, such as urban densification, inner-city regeneration and urban heritage conservation, but with arguably negative consequences. These consequences are typified by urban displacement of both formal and informal residents in the targeted area. Displacement

occurs when development expels residents due to issues such as higher property cost for units, walling and gating of renewed areas as well as the building of high-end projects which target wealthy residents. Several interventions have been applied in renewal contexts to mitigate displacement and exclusion; these interventions include market-rate housing development that may help alleviate rent pressures locally (Chapple & Song, 2024). Within international cases across North America, Europe and Japan, there exists insufficient housing stock to meet urban needs (Parrott & Zandi, 2021). Steady demand from higher income households has resulted in increasing rents for existing residents, potentially leading to indirect displacement, or increased household out-migration from a neighbourhood (Marcuse, 1985).

The following discussion covers the application of urban renewal in urban contexts.

3.5. NEOLIBERAL URBAN RENEWAL APPLICATION

Despite the earlier discussed challenges and drawbacks of class succession and displacement, which is gentrification, this study contends that neoliberal strategies may be a suitable approach to urban renewal in Southernwood. Neoliberal urban renewal is applied in secondary sites, which are discussed later in the following chapter. Neoliberalism aids commercial growth and development, essential elements for central city spaces (Chapman, 2019). These commercial benefits induce labour attraction to the city, protect property prices, and enhance security and delivery of utility services. Moreover, the market assists in service delivery as rapid urbanisation have led to a demand for public services and infrastructure that often outgrows the public supply (Tsheoga & Orga, 2016), creating severe infrastructural shortages.

Neoliberalism also aids in the restoration of heritage buildings and city beautification, which aids in placemaking and sense of place (Idazi, 2000; Long, 2013). Whilst primarily driven by the private sector and commercial concerns, neoliberal renewal aids in expanding the supply of affordable housing available in some central city areas (Mosselson, 2014). While most urban renewal projects are hybrid, private sector-led renewal has demonstrated that the market can plan and develop urban land. The success of neoliberal urban renewal demonstrates that neoliberal and marketised approaches to city-building and housing provision continue to prevail and shape how the city is being transformed (Peck *et al.*, 2009; Sager, 2011; Mosselson, 2014).

3.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter began by exploring urban renewal as a concept and framed it with perspectives from the global north and global south. The chapter also covered the ways in which urban renewal is carried out, through state-led, private-led, and a hybrid model of PPPs was discussed. Neoliberal or market-led planning was used as the foundational perspective of understanding urban renewal. This perspective is evident in the private-led techniques to

improve cities and arrest the decline of urban space. The foregoing chapter delineated that neoliberal planning accounts for urban renewal processes and the role of the state and the market in land use development. The chapter also highlighted strong points and gaps in the literature concerning the global north and south urban renewal studies. The chapter also discussed how market-led planning has become one of the preferred strategies to alleviate derelict urban conditions, create liveable cities and establish flagship urban projects due to its capital-intensive nature.

The following chapter provides detailed urban renewal case studies in three South African cities: Maboneng in Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town and Florida Road in Durban.

CHAPTER FOUR: URBAN RENEWAL CASE STUDIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter further provides an understanding of urban renewal policy and its adoption, interpretation, and application within different areas that have undergone successful urban renewal. This chapter provides detailed discussions of South African policies on urban renewal, including three case studies covering Maboneng in central Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town, and Florida Road in Durban.

In terms of the organisation, this chapter has two main sections. The first part of this chapter discusses eight South African policies on urban renewal. These policies are the Municipal Systems Act (MSA 32 of 2000), the Urban Renewal Program (URP), the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP), the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG), the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA 16 of 2013), the National Development Plan (NDP) published in 2013 as well as the Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) also published in 2013 and lastly, the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) (2014-2019 & 2019-2024).

The second part of this chapter discusses case studies from three South African cities where inner-city urban renewal projects have been successful. Notably, within the three sites renewal occurs in different forms and under different urban conditions. These case studies were selected based on variables similar to those of the leading research site of Southernwood in central East London (The study area was extensively covered in chapter two). The variables include, proximity to the city centre, geographical size, population composition, land use ordinances, successful renewal, proximity to HEIs, commonality of land uses, and development potential. These are the variables that informed the choice of case studies.

All three case studies are located in or near the centre of South African metropolitan cities. Also, the three areas share some recent historical similarities of transition between different economic groups: from low-income residents before development and medium to high-income young adult presence (the creative class) after the development was complete. Further, all three case studies are examined using similar variables focusing on: the location and history of the area, the area land use ordinances, the composition of dwelling types in the area, the socio-economic composition and issues relating to PPP and urban renewal, gentrification and the creative class, area management, and planning lessons extracted from the area.

4.1.1. Urban Renewal in South Africa

In South Africa, state-led renewal was branded as reconstruction in 1994 to correct urban decay. Reconstruction was primarily aimed at economic growth, housing provision, resource and wealth redistribution, improving urban townships and enhancing the sustainability of urban areas (RDP, 1994). It was not until the URP of 2001 that urban renewal strategies were explicitly formulated for ailing township nodes. At the time, urban renewal efforts were formulated to include initiatives like the Urban Development Zone (UDZ), which provides tax incentives to encourage private investment in South Africa's inner cities (Todes, 2012; Massey, 2020).

During the post-1994 era, South African neoliberal policies were gradually conflated with public planning policy due to state attempts to achieve sustainable growth and development (GEAR, 1996). Furthermore, neoliberalism in South Africa's public planning was a direct result of state attempts, particularly the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Policy of 1996, to open the South African economy to international competition (Le Roux, 1997; Maharaj, 2012), establish new frameworks for service delivery, and undertake public sector reforms which included budgetary reprioritisation and improved service delivery in both urban and rural areas.

Due to the internationalisation of planning ideas, spatial policy instruments and global homogeneity of urban forms (Rodriguez *et al.*, 2020; Blanc *et al.*, 2023), the South African planning machinery underwent policy adjustment. These adjustments allowed private capital to plan and develop the urban environment to aid the state in urban building initiatives.

Urban renewal is framed with development objectives from various policies, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, under the mantra of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (United Nations, 2019). Urban renewal is also framed with the Vision 2030 (NDP) development objectives, and calls for urban renewal to promote mixed housing strategies and more compact urban development to help people access public spaces and facilities (NDP, 2013).

In chapter 3 of the Agenda 2063 document, an emphasis is placed on inclusive growth and sustainable urban development. While the Agenda 2063 document does not explicitly cover urban renewal, it does cover issues relating to peri-urban conditions and rapid urbanisation, which are also challenging for South Africa.

In all these policies, there is recognition that urban renewal is a means to improve a city's physical and environmental aspects to revitalise underutilised assets and redistribute opportunities (Rhodes & Murray, 2007; Nevin, 2014). Overall, successful urban renewal produces aesthetically pleasing cities and attracts high-paying residents. It aids in city

cleanliness for health reasons, in protecting and preserving historic landmarks, and attracts tourists (Maghaeles, 2015; Strykiewicz, 2018; Miquel, 2021).

South African cities and urban practitioners have, since 1994, focused a great deal of energy and large portions of their budgets on renewing the inner city to hinder the steady decline of the buildings and reverse the high building vacancy rate, the illegal occupation and use of buildings, and the slow degrading of CBD infrastructure (Hansen, 2010; Massey, 2020). Urban renewal proliferated into planning focus largely post-1994 when South African cities experienced an exodus of high-paying residents from inner cities to edge cities, which grew into affluent centres. This practice left the central part of cities and suburbs open to lower-paying residents. Urban decay became rife in South African inner cities (Edward, 2022). Thereafter, urban renewal attempts were labelled restructuring zones, and urban restructuring became part of the planning machinery of the state and local governments (Govender & Reddy, 2019). However, despite these positive trends, Totaforti (2020) argues that the urban regeneration strategy was founded on confinement and exclusion, and for poor people, it represented the negation of the right to the city.

In 1994, the first inclusive urban renewal strategy in South Africa was associated with the National Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994. Urban renewal, referred to as reconstruction within the RDP, was not entirely separate from the widely covered and publicised mass housing provision. Redevelopment of the urban space included urban integration, improvements in urban townships, zoning reform to promote urban development patterns and integrated transport planning (RDP, 1994).

Later, in 2001, the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) was initiated by the Department of Provincial and Local Government to promote public and private investment that addresses poverty and underdevelopment in Johannesburg and within the City of Cape Town. Its mandate was to alleviate poverty in eight designated urban zones (Khayelitsa and Mitchels plain) – nodes representing areas with the largest concentration of urban poor, generally in former township areas and informal settlements (Donaldson *et al.*, 2013; Voges, 2013; Maeselela, 2018). However, these did not have a primary focus on housing investment. Urban renewal does not occur in informal settlements on the periphery of the cities. Instead, it targets areas with potential economic return on investment. The inner cities that suffer from urban decay were seen as the most appropriate areas for public and private investment (National Association of Social Housing Organisations, 2013).

In 2008, urban renewal was extended to focus on social housing when policy documents such as the Social Housing Act, No. 16 of 2008, provided rental or cooperative housing options for

low-income persons provided by accredited Social Housing Institutions and in designated restructuring zones. Overall, in a South African context, urban renewal proliferated since the mid-1990s, when a combination of factors was in favour (Wasserman, 2020). These factors include the accelerated decay of the inner cities and the entrepreneurial downturn of the 1990s, when efficiency concerns, fiscal discipline, growth and competitiveness became dominant and impacted the city fabric. Lastly, decentralising urban governance and administration as well as explicitly creating metropolitan municipalities left certain areas with more significant planning budgets than others (Gelb, 2003; Marutlulle, 2019).

4.2. SOUTH AFRICAN POLICIES ON URBAN RENEWAL

While this section discusses South African policies on urban renewal, it first details South African urban renewal studies, focusing on the current state of renewal, physical limitations to urban renewal, impediments to successful renewal implementation, and future areas for research on urban renewal. Based on an analysis of policies published in the government gazette, the national platform for all issued policies, the general function of urban renewal is primarily coded under 'urban development' in policies.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, most South African inner cities were subject to crime, decay, and illegal building occupation. On one hand, this had adverse effects such as the deterioration of central city services and the exodus of high-paying residents from the core of cities (Chirisa, 2010). On the other hand, these adverse effects, although partially a result of edge cities and new suburbs, rapidly contributed to the growth and development of these edge cities and new suburbs outside major cities (Michel & Scott, 2005).

Urban development policies encompass urban renewal, land use tax incentives, urban densification and compaction, spatial integration, greening and adaptive reuse. According to Massey (2019), since the start of South Africa's democracy in 1994, cities have actively pursued urban renewal projects due to decades of neglect and decay as well as unjust and inadequate planning practices. These urban renewal policy interventions have taken on both pro-poor and pro-growth approaches with varying degrees of success. Other urban renewal policy interventions are extensively studied by Govender and Reddy (2019), who review the legislative and policy frameworks underpinning urban regeneration in the post-apartheid era. The work of Govender and Reddy (2019) recommends that local government enhance its regulatory and policy framework to augment urban regeneration initiatives. Similar to the theoretical foundations of this study, the IUDF responds to the previously mentioned SDG 11, which focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The IUDF also builds on various chapters of the NDP and extends Chapter 8: Transforming Human Settlements and the National Space Economy, as well as its vision for urban South Africa.

This new urban development saw the decentralisation of an economic base that had been concentrated and had been the backbone of central city areas to areas outside the city. As a result, property prices within cities declined because of a combination of factors, while those on the edge increased. Scholars investigated the shifting and decentralisation of the economic base within cities and the transfer of capital to the outer rim of cities, where new suburbs and edge cities emerged and developed (Ferm & Raco, 2023).

In the years following the post-1994 era, urban projects were driven by the concept of regeneration and reconstruction, wherein large-scale urban projects attempted to provide mass infrastructure (Parnell & Oldfield, 2014). In what seems like a welfare approach to planning, this mass infrastructure provision included the construction of state-sponsored housing, township civic centres through spatial targeting, roads and bridges, and bulk utility services. These bulk utility services included the physical extension of water and electricity. Also, during this era, plans were formulated to redistribute and rearrange the national spatial economy of South Africa. Particularly, the spatial decentralisation of specific industries in attempts to link urban industries with rural enterprises and their industrial development (Dutta, 2002; Harrison & Todes, 2011).

Altman (2003), Makgetla (2004) and Masters (2019) argued that the post-1994 state capital investment programmes primarily drove the post-1994 era through increased welfare. Most post-1994 era policies were enacted with the aim of poverty alleviation. As a result, national policy through industrial development, land use development, spatial targeting, and market and investment reform were all state endeavours that were encouraged to alleviate poverty. South African policies shifted from state welfarism to growth-centred approaches focused on shared growth and privatisation (Mosala *et al.*, 2017).

In 2006, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa, known as ASGISA, further drove this shift. One of the aims of ASGISA was to reconfigure spatial distortions, which were, at the time, seen as an impediment to new investment opportunities. ASGISA, therefore, was set as the latest economic framework to respond to a range of ongoing constraints to economic growth, particularly issues of poverty and unemployment, and aimed to improve policy implementation. ASGISA paid attention to the spatial situation within South Africa by striving to improve the country's economic performance and increase the country's job creation capacity (Masters, 2019). Market-led development pockets were born from these policies which offered tax incentives on property development, and flexible land use controls within cities.

Du Plessis (2014) argues that spatial development policies and planning instruments in South Africa have undergone fundamental changes, especially since 2006. Departing from a grand scale welfarist approach to urban planning, the state sought to restructure cities with a specific

focus on achieving compact mixed-use development and higher densities (Du Plessis, 2014; Stevens, 2016). This neoliberal-driven urban planning approach fuelled cities' private land development strategies. This drive saw the proliferation of private planning forms such as security estates, gated communities, and areas planned and developed through private capital wherein the market negotiates with the state on the physical land use developments.

Today, these incentives include Urban Development Zones (UDZs), Special Development Zones (SDZs), and Central Improvement Districts (CIDs), which are discussed in parallel with the study sites later in this chapter. Beginning in the post-2006 era, the South African spatial planning machinery slightly withdrew from investment in capital projects to policy incentives to encourage the renewal of cities for new investment. From this policy shift, private actors in urban planning assumed a position where joint projects were developed between the state and private actors, resulting in small precinct-scale city developments, mainly through gentrification (Todes & Turok, 2014). One example is property developments leading up to 2010. The period leading up to 2010 saw the country invest heavily in urban infrastructure due to the 2010 FIFA World Cup and encouraged property development in these tax-incentive areas. From this narrative on urban renewal, it appears that the empirical study of these policies was, and still is, significantly influenced by political events and national policy positions.

Further work on South African policies for urban renewal is provided by Thwala (2019). Thwala (2019) argues that urban renewal and inner-city regeneration have become serious for the South African government, which has invested in several structures to stem the tide of decline in the country's nine major cities. The main crux of this work focuses on challenges to urban renewal, such as high unemployment, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and the concentration of employment in industrial areas. Thwala (2019) argues for clear objectives for sustainable urban development, as a careful approach to sustainable development might avoid problems within urban renewal projects. Urban interventions of renewal are also extensively covered by Hansen (2009). Similar to the work done by Massey (2019) and Thwala (2019), Hansen (2009) earlier conducted a time series analysis of approaches to urban renewal. Like other studies discussed in this brief section, that study cites various issues that impede urban renewal in cities such as urban policy disjuncture, imported prescriptions for achieving urban modernity, and a failure to create a sense of place.

Most studies on urban renewal in South Africa aim to understand the institutional powers that enable development, gentrification, pro-poor planning and policy disjuncture. Understanding these institutional powers is important because local planners have autonomy over land use affairs. As a result, there is significant heterogeneity within the institutional powers of different cities. These differences exist because of historical planning patterns, the size of metropolitan

regions and the variations in their economic base, location and proximity to natural resources such as the ocean, physical geography and underground minerals.

There is a significant gap in combining homogeneous variables in South African urban renewal studies. Currently, most areas in South Africa are studied in isolation or about their immediate and surrounding geography, hence the contribution of this study. Urban renewal studies must broaden their scope by applying case studies between inter-provincial metropolitan areas. In areas facing development challenges, urban renewal can enhance the functionality and vitality of old urban areas (Zhang *et al.*, 2024). Hence, governments worldwide have proposed urban renewal programmes to combat urban deterioration and foster sustainable urban development (Shen *et al.*, 2024). Because of these benefits, studies must tackle areas where urban renewal has failed. An extensive volume of literature covers new precincts with sustained renewal and historical and cultural significance. Academic attention is required for areas with developmental shortcomings in South African cities.

In a study by Kayembe (2022), an investigation was conducted into whether urban regeneration can promote community development. Kayembe (2022) emphasises that while urban regeneration and community development often go hand in hand, their progression was impacted by COVID-19. The negative impact of COVID-19 is that various projects were postponed to redirect resources towards the COVID-19 response (Kayembe, 2022). Like the above studies, Kayembe's (2022) findings argue that no concrete plan is implemented to promote urban regeneration in municipalities. While purely state-led renewal has been criticised, Maresce (2013) finds that the Durban CBD is still in severe urban decay, with sustainable development only occurring in areas controlled by the elite.

The success of precincts, however, also carries social challenges with the common perception that the precinct is an exclusive space (Maresce, 2013). These challenges include the previously mentioned process of gentrification. The exclusionary nature of urban precincts is also covered by Nevin (2014), wherein the author underlines the margins of exclusions covering the Maboneng Precinct in Johannesburg. According to Nevin (2014), the great lengths the developers have gone to ensure crime “stays out” also means that people are kept out. One of the study's primary responses was that, under the guise of crime prevention, access is controlled so that the developers can control what type of people come to the area. Further, ‘this heightened security enhances the image of Maboneng as an island, or a fortified enclave’ (Nevin, 2014, p. 197).

In support of findings by Maresce (2013), other studies (Pierre, 2013; Ahmed, 2014; Simbanegavi, 2021; Cogle, 2022) also cite that successfully renewed areas are at times exclusionary and designed in ways to exclude low-income populations. Failure to factor in

affordable housing or apartments in the design process of renewal plans is the cause of this. These studies also mention that the solution to urban renewal lies in well-targeted, well-researched public-sector infrastructure investment (that responds strongly to the market and customer needs). These studies argue that sustained urban renewal lies in a joint participatory process that ensures that the final design of infrastructure projects is the outcome of what the market requires to ensure sustainability and the most significant possible response in private sector investment.

From the short discussion above, it is apparent that South African literature is replete with themes associated with challenges to implementing urban renewal, particularly local-level inefficiencies and property rights. However, the integration and application of successful renewal frameworks is necessary in underperforming areas where renewal has not been fully realised. Furthermore, numerous investigations have been conducted to analyse planning shortfalls within projects, community consultation in planning and the role of the private sector in planning. However, no attempt has been explicitly made to apply various successful renewal frameworks to areas with similar variables to the areas where renewal is successful. In summary, the most significant consensus within the above studies is that the core of urban renewal lies with local municipalities and how they interpret and apply land use using goals from developmentally oriented policies. Before each of the eight policies is thoroughly discussed, a short synopsis is given below in the order in which they are discussed.

In 2001, the URP, with its area-based 10-year urban renewal plan, was the leading explicit post-1994 urban renewal initiative (Du Plessis, 2013). The URP focused on eight urban townships in the country as pilots that would pave the way for an urban development strategy on urban renewal. The plan was to be developed and implemented nationally after the 10-year pilot period (Donaldson *et al.*, 2013).

In 2003, the URP was followed by the National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) of 2003 and 2006, which focused on the equitable national economic and spatial layout of South Africa (NSDP, 2006). From the five NSDP principles, urban renewal components are framed under principle five, which focuses on an essential element. This element focuses on future settlement and economic development opportunities that should be channelled into activity corridors and nodes adjacent to or that link to the main growth centres (NSDP, 2006).

Also, in 2006, the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG) was set up to assist municipalities with developing and integrating extensive transport networks. This served as a form of spatial targeting for mainly townships to strengthen strategic spatial planning, coordinate investment, and integrate public transport (Brand & Drewes, 2018).

In 2013, SPLUMA (16 of 2013) empowered municipalities to regulate land use in their jurisdiction (SPLUMA, 2013). From these powers, municipalities may amend their land use schemes by rezoning any necessary land to achieve the development goals and objectives of the SDF (SPLUMA, 2013). These approaches and policies include area-based renewal, township renewal, and informal settlement upgrading, which are pro-poor approaches. Further, attempts like gentrification, inner-city renewal, and leisure and tourism-based renewal are pro-growth responses (Massey, 2010).

In 2013, the NDP brought additional urban development and renewal objectives. These objectives include the renewal of commuter rail, the physical renewal of HEIs, and the renewal of rural communities. The NDP also brought objectives for the renewal of inner cities, such as improved urban housing ownership and spatial compaction, to combat fragmentation through urban renewal (NDP, 2013). In addition, the IUDF was adopted as a strategy for managing urbanisation and achieving the goals of economic development, job creation, and improved living conditions. The vision of the policy is for South African urban areas to be liveable, safe, socio-economically integrated and globally competitive.

In 2014, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation launched the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) of 2014 and revised it from 2019 to 2024. The MTSF was designed to promote alignment, coordination and, ultimately, full integration of all development planning instruments into an integrated framework (DPME, 2019). The MTSF and policies that inform urban renewal are discussed below, starting with the MSA (32 of 2000).

In chronological order, this section engages with the MSA (32 of 2000), the URP of 2001, the NSDP of 2003, the NDPG of 2006, the SPUMA of 2013, the NDP of 2013, the IUDF of 2013, and the MTSF of 2019.

4.2.1. The Municipal Systems Act (MSA 32 of 2000)

The MSA (32 of 2000) was introduced to give local planning authorities more autonomy over land use affairs within their jurisdiction (MSA, 2000). It was enacted because municipalities were sectioned and re-demarcated in the same year. Therefore, this new legislation was introduced to give powers to municipalities in the wake of their reorganisation. The MSA (32 of 2000) is a legislative tool vital for municipal revenue collection, ensuring cities can deliver on their constitutional obligation to provide much-needed public services (Mabaso, 2019). In terms of actual planning, the MSA (32 of 2000) explicitly emphasises two factors with regard to enabling municipalities more extraordinary development powers.

The first is that municipalities should undertake more developmentally orientated planning and use Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) to promote social and economic development with an SDF (MSA, 2000). The SDF forms part of the IDP and includes the provision of basic guidelines for a land use management system for the municipality (MSA, 2000). An SDF is a framework that guides the overall spatial distribution of current and desirable land uses within a city to affect a municipal IDP's vision, goals and objectives (Ndlovu, 2016). From the above spatial provisions, local planning practitioners can establish mechanisms to encourage urban renewal by attracting investment with flexible planning tools and the previously discussed SDZs.

The second factor advocated for municipalities to provide for community participation. Participation improves local communities' social and economic upliftment and, most importantly, encourages the involvement of communities in local government matters (Govender & Reddy, 2019). From this planning provision, initiatives like CIDs are part of land use schemes and allow for the urban renewal of areas and community-driven development. The MSA (32 of 2000) was a guideline for planning bodies, especially since, at the time, municipalities were given more autonomy over their land use affairs.

The MSA (32 of 2000) is an essential legislative component granting planning powers to local governments. All IDPs and their SDFs throughout South Africa adhere to its principles of uplifting local communities and core processes of planning for areas within their jurisdiction. Steytler (2003), in a study on the developmental nature of municipalities as mandated by the MSA (32 of 2000), highlights that municipalities have broad discretion on how essential municipal services are delivered, including through privatisation. These policy imperatives link to this study's previous theoretical framework by highlighting that while the state is developmental, the market assists with the delivery of essential services. Other existing studies (Thornhill, 2004; Brits, 2014; Cilliers, 2016) on the MSA (32 of 2000) are centred on legal challenges to the statute. In particular, the challenges are property development, property transfer, and municipal capacity to deliver services.

These studies intersect on issues relating to failures in service delivery, which have led to municipalities becoming significant contributors to environmental pollution in South Africa. Like this study, these previous studies primarily drew on existing legal cases and a multiple case study approach to evaluate the service delivery capacity of six local municipalities in the North West province of South Africa. However, the theoretical position of these studies veered from neoliberal planning and focused on welfare, particularly the ability of the state to provide services. A key homogeneous finding of the studies in this section shows that although local municipalities are mandated to provide essential municipal services, they lack sufficient capacity to deliver on this mandate effectively.

Another study (Koma, 2016) focused on improving municipal governance by using document review techniques and literature. The study was born from an inquest into disappointing results reflected through the Auditor-General's annual reports, including those published by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs as well as the National Treasury. Koma (2016) provides strategies for a functional municipality and recommends sound development planning, adequate resource mobilisation and investment into the various strategic areas the municipality prioritises, and a proper execution of policies.

The MSA (32 of 2000) incorporated the amendment Act 7 of 2011 to improve municipal efficiency. According to Nzama (2023), the amendment sought to halt the phenomenon of staffing municipalities with unqualified personnel, thereby ensuring that skilled persons are appointed. Urban renewal requires expert planners and policy strategists, and implementing this amendment improves institutional skills development, which is a part of urban planning.

4.2.2. Urban Renewal Program (URP)

The inception of explicit urban renewal in the South African state policy was the 2001 launch of the URP, an area-based approach and spatial targeting policy. The URP entails coordinating investment towards economic and social infrastructure, enterprise development, enhancement of local government capacity and poverty alleviation (URP, 2001). The aim was to contribute to urban, economic and social renewal by targeting national comprehensive nodes (Donaldson *et al.*, 2013). The bulk of this renewal was area-based approaches within major township precincts.

Area-based approaches intend to change the nature of a geographical area by involving residents and other interest groups with a stake in its future (Kay, 2006). Depending on the character of local problems and opportunities available, the URP typically embraces a range of social, economic and physical development objectives. The development objectives cut across the responsibilities of government in fields such as education, housing, transport, sport, recreation and economic development (Nkabu, 2021).

Area-based approaches require a more flexible land-use management system, which may be more desirable in an urban URP node. Area-based approaches are essential when dealing with private and public investments in a single project area (Peter, 2008). Ultimately, area-based approaches address poverty and underdevelopment in targeted areas, explicitly improving joint government planning and implementation (Donaldson & Du Plessis, 2013). Overall, the URP focused on eight urban townships as 10-year pilot schemes, which would pave the way for a development strategy on urban renewal to be implemented nationally at the end of the 10-year pilot period (Donaldson, 2013).

4.2.3. The National Spatial Development Perspective

The National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP) is a spatial and economic intervention introduced in 2003 and was later revised and upgraded in 2006. The NSDP was intended to eradicate the damage wrought by decades of colonial and apartheid manipulation of settlement patterns and economic activity in South Africa (NSDP, 2006). It was an explicit attempt to reconfigure the national spatial economy, particularly in terms of industry location and integration of links between the country's main economic hubs. The NSDP is not explicit on urban renewal; however, it contains principles that advocate for the urban renewal of cities through improving spatial connections of economic nodes (Oranje, 2009). Urban renewal remnants are framed under principle five of the NSDP. Principle five focuses on future settlement and economic development opportunities that should be channelled into activity corridors and nodes adjacent to or that link the main growth centres (NSDP, 2006).

The NSDP, both the original and revised versions, provides principles and mechanisms for guiding infrastructure investment and development decisions (NSDP, 2003). The NDSP also describes the spatial manifestations of the leading social, economic and environmental trends that should form the basis for a shared understanding of the national space economy (Merrfield, 2003). Lastly, the NDSP interprets the spatial realities and the implications for government intervention. From all these provisions, local practitioners configure planning tools available for development controls and spatial projects.

4.2.4. Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant

In 2006, South Africa initiated a revised spatial targeting grant to the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant (NDPG) to stimulate investment by renewing marginalised areas. The National Treasury manages the NDPG. The grant funds support and facilitate the planning and advancement of neighbourhood development programmes and projects that will catalyse further growth in these areas (NT, 2021). Up to 2017, South African municipalities managed to spend 67% (R1.5 billion) of the allocation (Maesela, 2018). Portions of this budget are spent on developing precincts, cluster housing apartments and retail developments to encourage area renewal by attracting commerce. Overall, the grant has funded roads, bridges, streetlights, multi-purpose centres, public spaces and parks, sports precincts, informal trading stalls, transport interchanges, non-motorised transport routes, pedestrian walkways and other community facilities throughout South African cities (NDPP, 2012).

4.2.5. The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA 16 of 2013)

The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013 (SPLUMA) is an overarching statutory with tools and instruments to counter decaying inner cities and CBDs. The SPLUMA (16 of 2013) ordinance articulates norms and standards for local SDFs to promote desirable settlement patterns. In particular, the norms of SPLUMA (16 of 2013) articulate liveable communities and, most importantly, sustainable development and urban renewal, which is one remedy for decaying inner cities (SPLUMA, 2013). The SPLUMA (16 of 2013) repealed the Physical Planning Act of 1991 and the Development Facilitation Act of 1995. While the SPLUMA (16 of 2013) has various land functions concerning urban renewal in South Africa, it intends to provide a stance for three main principles. The first is to provide a framework for spatial planning and land use management in the Republic. Herein, all matters concerning the land are covered, particularly land development in cities and the need for compact and sustainable planning (SPLUMA, 2013).

The second is to promote greater consistency and uniformity in the application procedures and decision-making by authorities responsible for land use decisions and development applications. Herein, attention is fixed on liveable communities and remedies for reviving decaying inner cities, one being urban renewal and the other adequate development measures. The third principle provides a framework for monitoring, coordinating and reviewing the spatial planning and land use management system. Herein, the focus is on development and land use systems, which are flexible and growth-oriented. Flexible systems include restructuring zones known as UDZs, priority zones, CIDs and SDZs; different land use schemes use CIDs and SDZs interchangeably.

The UDZ acts as a tax incentive to encourage inner-city renewal across South Africa. UDZ takes the form of a tax allowance covering an accelerated depreciation of investment made in either refurbishing an existing property or creating new developments within the inner city over time (NAHSO, 2013). CIDs are geographic areas where most property owners determine and agree to fund supplementary and complementary services to those usually provided by the local authorities. The legislation allows CIDs to raise an additional levy to be charged on all property within the defined area. SDZs are underutilised areas within metropolitan cities that are given special development status with flexible leasing, rezoning and other forms of development control. Usually, PPP projects or strictly private developments in cities take place within the SDZ provision.

The SPLUMA (16 of 2013), NDP and land use schemes all borrow policy imperatives from an array of international policies, from the 1987 Brundtland Commission report to the SDGs. Among these 17 goals, including gender equality plus clean water access, SDG 11 focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG, 2016), like many of the SPLUMA (16 of 2013) imperatives. The SPLUMA (16 of 2013) standards are articulated through SDFs, which guide the overall spatial distribution of current and desirable land uses within a municipality to affect the municipal IDP's vision, goals and objectives (Manzini, 2016). The SPLUMA (16 of 2013) gives national directives to local planning instruments and tools such as IDP, SDF, and LUMS, wherein local and regional area zoning schemes are contained.

4.2.6. The National Development Plan 2030

The most important policy for urban renewal at present is the National Development Plan (NDP) of 2013. Using a seven-point implementation plan, the NDP aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030 in South Africa (NDP, 2013). The most significant NDP contribution to this study is chapter eight, which covers the transformation of human settlement and the national space economy. In particular, chapter eight focuses on addressing urban inefficiencies and shaping urban futures. The NDP aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by implementing direct and immediate measures such as 'promoting mixed housing strategies and more compact urban development to help people access spaces and facilities, state agencies, and work and business opportunities' (NDP, 2013, p. 28). The overall aim of the NDP's urban intervention in Chapter eight is to promote creative and cultural industries as a catalyst for urban change. The NDP's policy position is that these industries can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal.

Furthermore, as a guiding policy, the NDP encourages infrastructure that supports human settlements. It explicitly mentions housing, water, sanitation, roads and parks. By enabling the local planning sphere to redress poorly planned human settlements, the NDP charts a path for effective urban development. One of these development paths is a plan to increase urban densities to support public transport and reduce sprawl. The developmental goal of the NDP with regards to urban settlements stretches beyond land use but also focuses on the adequate provision of essential bulk services to urban populations, integrated transport and increasing destinations to reduce the environmental footprint associated with delivering utility services such as waste management, sanitation, electricity and water (NDP. 2013).

In the quest to transform human settlements, the NDP emphasises urban approaches led by active citizenship in spatial development. These approaches are supported and incentivised

through various interventions, including properly funded, citizen-led neighbourhood vision and planning processes and introducing social compacts from the neighbourhood to the city level (NDP, 2013). As emphasised in a plethora of post-1994 planning policies, including the NDP, it is the planning vision of the state to 'create spaces that are liveable, equitable, sustainable, resilient and efficient, and support economic opportunities and social cohesion' (NDP, 2013, p. 259).

The NDP makes a case for increased strategies and location-specific approaches to remedy urban problems in South African cities. According to the NDP (2013), metropolitan areas vary enormously in spatial form, economic base and institutional strength. As a result of this heterogeneity within cities, local planners are encouraged to use spatial targeting to reshape human settlements and regenerate run-down city areas. One of the global resistance challenges to urban renewal has been and continues to be a lack of spatial compactness. According to the NDP (2013), spatial compacts must deal with matters of direct concern where there are competing interests, such as developing new public transport systems, upgrading informal settlements, and managing informal trading, inner-city regeneration, neighbourhood safety, as well as measures towards environmental sustainability and infrastructure maintenance.

The NDP does not explicitly dictate planning frameworks to local planners; however, it does show necessary transformative measures to be adopted by local planners to transform South African cities. Overall, the NDP's endeavour to transform South African cities is driven by establishing spatial compacts for inclusive local planning and sustainable infrastructure delivery to arrest the decay of cities. The NDP's efforts to transform South African cities are also predicated on adequate public and private planning coordination, property-funded incentives, citizen training in spatial competencies, synchronisation of transport with planning and the renewal and expansion of South African universities. The NDP views urban development as an integrated issue, wherein urban development is dependent not only on improving physical city infrastructure but also on building local government capacity and community safety, as well as improving education and economic transformation, as imperatives for city renewal.

All these policies, including the NDP of 2013, translate planning imperatives to local municipalities and form a core component of a municipality's economic, sectoral, spatial, social, institutional and environmental vision. In other words, these are directives to inform tools to achieve the desired spatial form of a specific urban area. These directives inform IDPs, land use schemes, and SDFs – the primary policy tools that inform the organisation and development of urban space. In their organisation of urban space, these policy tools include spatial provisions dictating the use of urban land. Also, they provide building and housing regulations relating to size, density and use intensity. The following policy discussed is the IUDF.

4.2.7. The Integrated Urban Development Framework of 2013

The Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) is the government's policy position to guide urban areas' future growth and management. It was published in 2013 as a 'new deal for South African cities and towns' (IUDF, 2013, p. 1), and serves as a strategy for managing urbanisation, and achieving the goals of economic development, job creation, and improved living conditions. The policy's vision is for South African urban areas to be liveable, safe, socio-economically integrated and globally competitive. The framework of the IUDF has nine levers, the most significant for urban renewal being lever three: integrate sustainable human settlements.

The IUDF recognises the heterogeneity of South African cities, acknowledging that the country has different types of cities and towns, each with different roles and requirements. Out of its overall strategic goals – inclusion and access, growth and governance – the most essential and relevant to this study is the spatial integration goal, which prioritises the objective of integrated urban planning forms as the basis for achieving integrated urban development.

The overall policy is centred on stimulating the organised use of urban spaces, guiding investments and encouraging prudent use of land and natural resources to build sustainable communities (IUDF, 2013). This policy addresses land use planning and advocates for sustainable cities, as data shows that as early as 2011, inner-core populations in South Africa were well over 25 million (IUDF, 2013). Policies like the UIDF, SPLUMA and the NDP is due to state attempts to achieve poverty alleviation goals and stimulate employment creation.

To achieve the above, state policies and instruments recognise that combating urban issues is critical for achieving their goals. These issues, if left untreated, lead to adverse conditions for South African cities, such as urban poverty, slum conditions, capital exodus and high unemployment. Beyond new forms of planning and renewal, the underlying aim is to arrest the urbanisation of poverty, improve the spatial efficiency of towns and cities and improve proximity to jobs (Harrison & Todes, 2016).

4.2.8. Medium-Term Strategic Framework (2014-2019 & 2019-2024)

The last policy in this section is the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) of 2014, launched by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation to promote alignment, coordination and, ultimately, full integration of all development planning instruments into an integrated framework (DPME, 2019). The MTSF and revised MTSF reflect the NDP Five-year Implementation Plan and Integrated Monitoring Framework nationally. Regarding local focus,

the MTSF incorporates the PGDP of all nine provinces and the IDPs at the metropolitan and district municipality levels to ensure effective service delivery (DPME, 2019).

The MTSF has seven development priorities; out of these seven, the one applicable to this study is priority five, which is focused on elements central to this study's aim: spatial integration, human settlements and local government. These elements are central to the development of a renewal strategy. One of the critical outcomes for this priority is establishing funding support mechanisms towards improved investment and job creation that also contribute to spatial transformation and spatial justice objectives, informed by regional dynamics (MTSF, 2019).

In this study, the MTSF applies to developing a renewal strategy requiring its critical elements of funding attraction, integrated planning, and alignment with PGDP/S. Furthermore, the MTSF contains outcomes associated with identifying existing towns and cities for refurbishment and transformation into smart cities (MTSF, 2019), which could be an applicable policy tool for the area of Southernwood in East London. Overall, the most crucial feature of the MTSF concerning this study's aim is removing inhibiting regulations to ensure the integration of township economies into the mainstream local economic development landscape (MTSF, 2019). Flexible development controls are essential in the renewal of areas, as seen in SDZ regulation contained within LUMS of metropolitan cities, where areas are given special rules to encourage area renewal.

From the above policies, inclusivity and liveable South Africa cities are some of the desired outcomes. realising these outcomes would alleviate poverty, improve distorted planning patterns and drive employment creation. The following section briefly discusses urban policy application in South African cities, particularly the role of planning practitioners and private actors.

4.2.9. Policy Application in Cities

In the ensuing discussions, only three cities have been selected as field sites for this study: Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Within these metropolitan areas, there are common policy threads, such as special spatial provisions in their land use schemes for attracting investment through the demarcation of SDZs and provisions for Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for both small and large-scale projects. The following five factors are apparent from analysing planning ordinances from these three South African cities.

First, metropolitan planners endeavour to achieve compact cities. Both urban policy and planners promote commerce in single and cluster residential zones to meet the development objectives of compact settlements and infill development (Birbi & Krogstie, 2020). Second, there

are similar flexible regulations for developing the economic base. South African cities have increased provisions for mixed land-use zones to not limit commerce development and expansion into areas traditionally zoned for activities apart from commerce, such as light industry areas and those earmarked for bulk residential establishments (Qumba, 2023). Third is flexible development controls, which fast-track development projects from rezoning applications (Brand, 2014).

Metropolitan municipalities strive to promote flagship projects, often administered as PPPs. Mandiriza and Fourie (2023) argue that the state should invest more in major cities to accommodate migrants and prevent urban poverty from worsening. Fourth, there are similar local area development plans and the use of municipal subsidiaries to drive development and planning; this includes tailor-made spatial plans and development agencies of cities (Nevin, 2014). These development agencies promote and even, in some instances, provide financial assistance in planning CIDs, also referred to as SRAs. These areas are self-sustaining and assist in preserving property prices and maintaining the structural integrity of buildings and vacant erfes (Turok, 2012; Matiashe & Germond, 2020).

The fifth factor is competitive planning. South African cities constantly compete to attract and retain investment within their jurisdiction (Turok, 2013; Mandirazi & Fourie, 2023). This process links to city marketing, where cities actively plan in a competitive fashion to attract and retain investment. As a result of this competitiveness, local planners continue to develop innovative ways, such as creating intermediate business zones. These zones, prevalent within metropolitan areas, act as a buffer or interface between general business zones or other high-intensity non-residential uses and residential areas (CoJLUS, 2021). These intermediate business zones are predominantly for residential, office and associated purposes, but limited retail activities are possible with the council's approval. The following brief section focuses on the policy synthesis within South African cities.

4.2.10. Policy Synthesis

Overall, all these policies focus on various matters concerned with developing the built environment. These matters range from urban renewal through social housing programmes, especially for townships and inner cities, to restructuring zones. Further, these matters concern development objectives transmitted from the NDSP and SPLUMA to IDPs, SDFs, SDZs, and objectives from the NDP. South Africa is yet to have a single explicit urban renewal policy. South Africa has policies that inform local, metropolitan and district frameworks and set the development objectives by which planners abide and configure developmentally orientated planning.

These policies and frameworks emphasise and pay attention to inner cities, CBDs and outer suburban areas. These policies also reference rural planning and integration within the national spatial economy. They inform various planning frameworks, especially those provided by planning institutions that act as municipal subsidiaries and metropolitan state-owned enterprises. These state-owned enterprises (SEOs), like the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), are responsible for cities' growth and development strategies that respond to ideals of resilience, liveability, and sustainability.

The following section presents urban renewal case studies from Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Table 4.1 below contains the field site perimeters, illustrating the areas' sizes for 4.3 Maboneng, 4.4 De Waterkant, and 4.5 Florida Road in the following section.

Table 4.1: Field site perimeter and size in km²

Field site	Perimeter & Polygon	Size in km ²
Maboneng (JHB, Gauteng)	2.7km	0.16km ²
De Waterkant (CPT, Western Cape)	2.3km	0.14km ²
Florida Road (DUR, KwaZulu-Natal)	2km road length with adjacent properties	0.10km ²

4.3. THE MABONENG PRECINCT IN JOHANNESBURG

Maboneng is a gentrified and fortified enclave in central eastern Johannesburg, within the Gauteng province of South Africa (see Figures 4.1 & 4.2). Some properties within the precinct have been extensively developed; the development is ongoing in others. The precinct falls within the 1,645km² Johannesburg metropolitan municipality. Below are some recent pictures of the precinct. It is branded as 'Joburg's most unique and innovative area, offering live/work and entertainment opportunities within a fully integrated urban environment' (Maboneng, 2021, pp. 3-4).

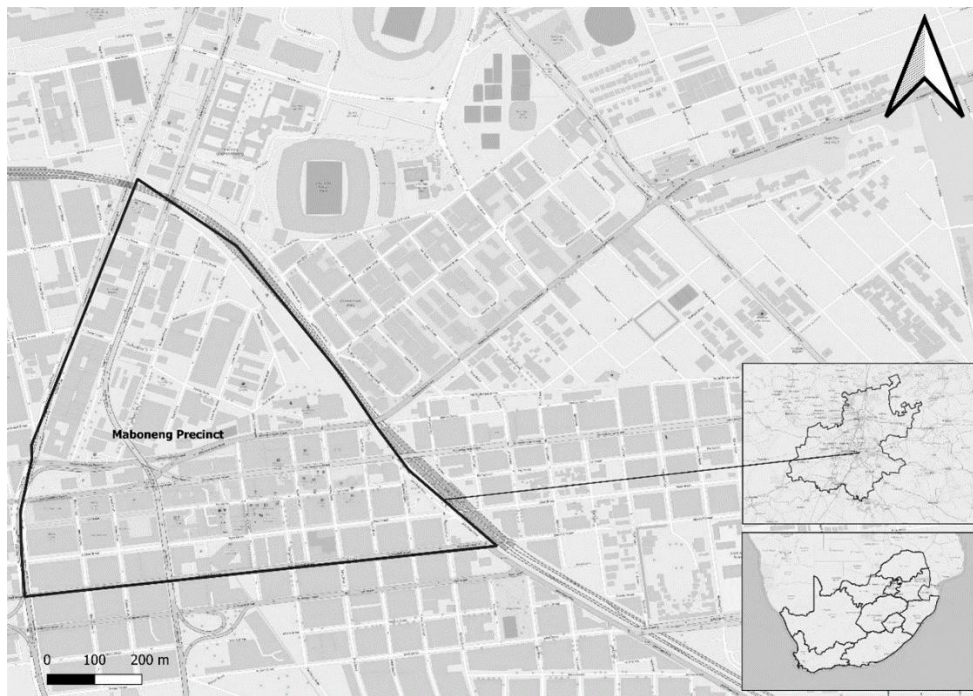


Figure 4.1: Maboneng, central Johannesburg (Author)

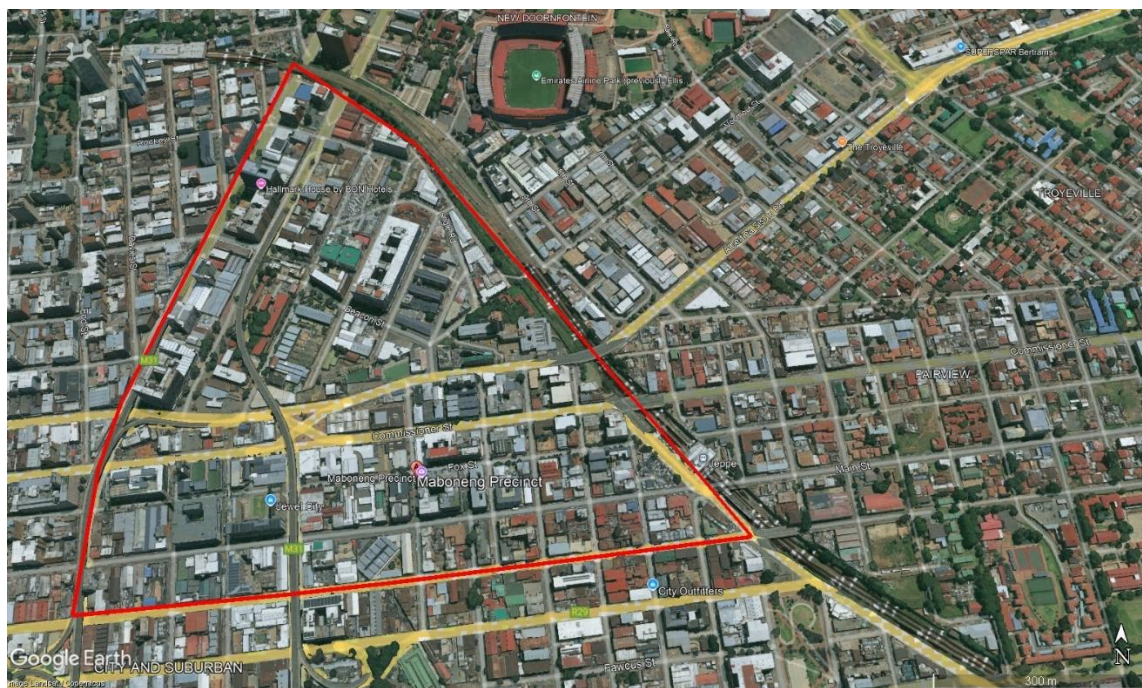


Figure 4.2: Maboneng, Google Earth (Google Earth)



Figure 4.3: Maboneng Precinct (Lepatle, 2019)



Figure 4.4: Fox Street Maboneng (Maboneng, 2014)

Geographically, the Maboneng precinct stretches over the City of Johannesburg, Jeppestown, and New Doornfontein (Gardner, 2017). At its inception, the area attracted investments, artists and institutions, including the SPARK schools and the African School of Excellence, which are prestigious private schools. These schools erected their campuses in Maboneng (Propertuity, 2017). The precinct is identifiable by Fox Street, rooftop bars, and structural integrity, surpassing

the outdated blight of surrounding buildings, seen in the above Figures 4.3 and 4.4. In conceptualising the area, Marx (2018) labels Maboneng, with its distinctive walkable blocks and an ensemble of art, entertainment and leisure, as South Africa's answer to Williamsburg, Brooklyn, which is a renewed New York City, USA precinct developed from repurposing old factory warehouses.

4.3.1. History and Present

Dedicated initially to bourgeois residency for much of central Johannesburg's history, the Doornfontein inner-city apartments (forming part of Maboneng) fell to crime and decay (Vejby, 2015). Historically, parts of what is now Maboneng were exclusively white spaces, which explicitly stated two things. One is that South African cities and towns are divided into segregated residential and business areas. The second is influx control, which reduces blacks' access to cities (Christopher, 2001). Initially, parts of Maboneng, those without industrial warehousing, were demarcated as white residential areas along with areas such as Hillbrow (Mashiri, 2019). In the 1980s, the legislation only permitted white residency in the city, and all other racial groups were relegated to the city outskirts and townships (Ahman *et al.*, 2010). In the 1980s, after the affluent white exodus, parts of Maboneng underwent decay, eventually consisting of old, dilapidated apartment blocks and unused industrial buildings.

A study by Bremner (2000) highlights that the inception of renewal attempts in the area was due to the unsustainability of an economic exclusion system, which, at the time, resulted in a declining economic base. Because of this decline in the 1980s and 1990s, local planning practitioners initiated two local economic development initiatives to re-invent, re-imagine and re-formulate the inner-city landscape of Johannesburg, especially during an exodus of the affluent. Contributing to this exodus was the easing of the segregation policy, which filtered more racial groups into the inner city and established newer and more affluent northern suburbs in Johannesburg, drawing wealthier residents out of the city (Bremner, 2000). Overall, this section attributes the renewal of the central city to the endeavour of planners to position Johannesburg as a global city. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 (before dilapidation) are from the 1940s and 1980s of parts of central Johannesburg, including now Maboneng, before the late 1980s and the white exodus from the central area.



Figure 4.5: Central Johannesburg in the 1940s (Mavudza, 2018)



Figure 4.6: Doornfontein in the 1990s (The Heritage Portal, 2023)



Figure 4.7: Hijacked building near Maboneng (Mohammed, 2023)



Figure 4.8: Streets near parts of the Maboneng section (Majavu, 2021)

By the 1990s, the central areas of Johannesburg had become replete with hijacked buildings and dilapidated and underutilised infrastructure (Hoogendoorn & Gregory, 2016). Work by Kreutzfeldt and Malcommes (2013) indicates that these buildings and industrial warehouses were abandoned by landlords. Part of its decommissioning was due to new land use controls (Figures

4.9 and 4.10), which separated and looked to shift industrial pursuits out of the inner city through rezoning. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 emphasise the dire planning conditions within the inner city.

In 2009, early in the construction of the gentrification project, developer company Propertuity renamed the site to Maboneng, which means place of lights in Sotho (Murtagh, 2015). The private developers led the Maboneng renewal programme, which can be seen as part of neoliberal planning. However, these attempts focused solely on building reuse and adaptation (Harrison, 2014; Nevin, 2014; Gregory, 2016), which can be considered part of sustainable market-driven urban renewal.

4.3.2. Maboneng Land Use and Ordinances

Regarding the land use application to Maboneng, the central part of the City of Johannesburg, of which Maboneng (Old and new Doornfontein) forms part, comprises the mentioned SDZ. Specifically, this relates to ordinance provisions for focused planning and development intervention and investment. An SDZ has a specific urban management focus, including heritage resources, environment, transportation, urban renewal, housing, and economic development-related focuses (Puren, 2014). Such SDZs can be added to, amended or removed in terms of council resolution and official publication. One of the initiatives to encourage development in the area and other areas falling within the SDZ jurisdiction of Johannesburg is legislative means to develop erfs, less stringent floor area developments, parking and loading, and other measures such as office space and less stringent site development plans. Figure 4.9 shows the current zoning under which Maboneng falls; as an SDZ, the area receives the special status, and much of the light industrial warehousing is now demarcated as a general business, indicated by this (XB) classification, which is now the zoning status covering the entire precinct, as shown in Figures 4.9 and 4.10.



Figure 4.9: Zoning scheme of Maboneng (CoJ, 2023)

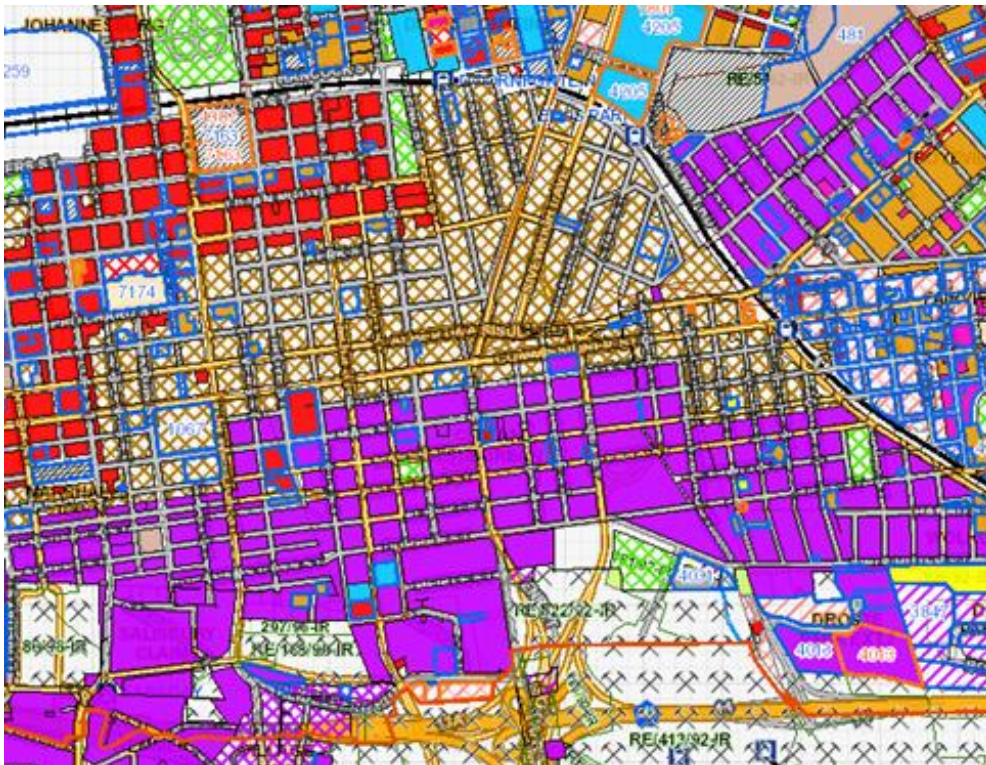


Figure 4.10: Zoning scheme around Maboneng (CoJ, 2023)

In Maboneng, land use regulations are less strict because development within the SDZ typically involves mixed-use projects with various uses distributed across each floor and erf. Regarding

environmental aspects, which are central in all policies, the ecological consideration for SDZs that Maboneng falls under is the private open space rezoning. Overall, the powers that be, being the council of the city, give administrative rights to particular developments which are seen to be in service of core policy objectives such as the previously mentioned SPLUMA (16 of 2013), PGDP and local IDPs (CoJLUS, 2018). All rights are given under the condition that they do not contravene or cause a nuisance to other users near the precinct. Figure 4.10 provides a comprehensive view of land uses that were part of Maboneng. These land uses include light industry (■); Figure 4.10 shows that almost all of Maboneng's industrial zoning classification has been changed to business.

All these land use provisions allow for the flexible development of special zones that meet development standards and central policy objectives. These land use provisions were also bolstered by the fact that some of the Maboneng Precinct's development took place in an area that was not formally occupied, as it consisted of light industrial warehousing. Areas with existing tenants were subjected to removal as large-scale revamp and reuse activities were carried out, especially in older structures in a state of decay (Nevin, 2014). Maboneng denotes essential elements such as the role of planning legislation and local by-laws in establishing and encouraging private planning in the city.

Further, Maboneng shows the interconnected nature of neoliberal planning perspectives and the type of land use issues that arise from that nexus. Matters relating to gentrification, high property prices, exclusion and physical urban fragmentation are all central to private-led developments in the city. Despite these harmful elements and planning outcomes, private developments have been able to protect property prices. They have also managed to attract capital and assist in attracting capital development of a solid economic base for the area. Lastly, this model shows the interconnected realisation of planning objectives ranging from mixed land use to infill and compact development from SPLUMA and related policies.

4.3.3. Composition of Maboneng Dwelling Types

A study by Gregory (2016) on creative industries, urban regeneration and Maboneng shows that creative enterprises are reclaiming not only the northern part of Johannesburg but also the central city, of which Maboneng is a vital case study. The Maboneng precinct has various dwelling types, mainly from varying property types, such as vacant light industrial warehousing and offices to old but refurbished medium-rise buildings (Gregory, 2016). As the Maboneng precinct serves young middle-class professionals, it has various dwelling types and services, such as owned and rented apartment studios (Propertuity, 2017).

Overall, the renewal of the area and establishment of the precinct is built on the ethos of a creative urban industry, an area characterised by urban renewal of one-of-a-kind space, an environment that brings together artists and office users while minimising the displacement of existing businesses (Rogerson, 2006; Lysgard, 2012). The Maboneng precinct also has many art galleries, commercial activities and food outlets, which are forms of the creative industry. In cases where residence and work mix, determining the fixed population is difficult, as it is a service area and place of residence (Meek, 2017). The variety of dwelling types ranges from reused industrial buildings, revamped offices in medium-rise story buildings, and rooftop food establishments on both reused industrial and residential buildings.

The flexibility and special provisions within land use schemes permit creative industries in cities. The City of Johannesburg Land Use Scheme (LUS) sets out the conditions for land use regulation. Conditions include flexibility under the Land Use Scheme of Central Johannesburg. As previously discussed, provisions allow land development applications, including several developmental tools, to achieve desired objectives (CoJLUS, 2018). These tools include urban renewal, high-density developments and inclusionary housing. Policy on dwelling types prioritises urban initiatives like increased density and inclusionary housing, aligning with SPLUMA (Act 16 of 2013) and the City of Johannesburg Municipal Planning By-law, 2016, to require inclusionary housing contributions and units.

The conditions for these land use provisions cover the entire Maboneng Precinct, which, in terms of geography, stretches over four areas of central Johannesburg, including Old Doornfontein and Jeppestown. It primarily provides residential apartments within 14 of the 34 buildings (Propetuity, 2017; Letlape & Gumbo, 2019). The enclave of Maboneng represents laissez-faire approaches to how cities allow market-centred planning tools to advance development objectives. These planning kits blend aspects of cultural policy and planning policy within the design practice to form new urban spaces (Gregory, 2015).

The Maboneng residential spaces are relatively small compared to other renewed residential areas in the city, many of which fall under the social housing bracket, for example, those developed by the Johannesburg Social Housing Company. Regarding the overall regulation application, the CoJLUS (2018) delineates that all land rights given under the Maboneng SDZ may be revoked if the council passes a resolution to revoke them. Under such conditions, an area previously classified as an SDZ will be subject to the original conditions of the scheme, given that the area no longer aligns with the previously mentioned planning objectives.

4.3.4. Socio-economic Composition

As previously stated, most of the revamped building stocks and erfs of the Maboneng precinct were vacant and unused industrial lots. The Maboneng area, like neighbouring Hillbrow, is an area that saw a dense influx of migrants from the African continent since the early 1980s, partly because of an exodus of wealthy residents from the inner city to newer suburbs of the city (Stadler & Dugmore, 2017). At its peak, the precinct generally housed students from nearby HEIs, such as the University of Johannesburg and the University of the Witwatersrand, as well as young white-collar workers who had entrepreneurial projects within the precinct, such as offices, art studios and coffee shops.

In terms of figures, published research by the Propertuity company (2016) and Meek (2017) indicates ownership of residential units is split into four core age segments: 18-24 years old, 25-34 years old, 35-49 years old and 50+. In Maboneng, the 25-34 years old segment owns 47% of all residential units, followed by the 35-49 years old segment, which owns 31%. As of 2016, only 34% of all residential units sold by Propertuity were occupied by the owners (Propertuity, 2016), which illustrates that the 'buy-to-rent' model in Maboneng was widespread, with 66% of the residential owners preferring to buy property to rent out for profit, rather than purchasing the property for living.

Maboneng is predominantly a rental market. Data demonstrate an even younger age skew amongst tenants, with 25-34 years old being the most dominant age segment, leasing 44% of all rental units. The 18-24 years old are the second largest rental segment at 25%. Therefore, the 18-34 years old age segment combined rent 69% of all residential rentals (Propertuity, 2016). In terms of race, property ownership of residential units reflects a diverse racial split. There is a bias towards white ownership, with 47% of all units being purchased by white owners. Black ownership comes in at 27%, and Indian ownership follows at 14%. The remaining 12% of owners opted not to disclose their race in documentation (Propertuity, 2016). Overall, Maboneng caters for younger age groups. Also, research has shown that the buy-to-rent model is popular as opposed to renting apartments and office space (McCord *et al.*, 2013). The following section covers Maboneng's PPP aspect.

4.3.5. PPP and Urban Renewal

As previously mentioned, Maboneng's architectural- and social distinctiveness invokes a sense of separation from adjacent Johannesburg. The Maboneng precinct was privately developed from 2008 onwards in an area that had primarily been dedicated to industrial pursuits for most of Johannesburg's history (Nevin, 2014). Unlike other urban renewal initiatives in Johannesburg,

like the Ekhaya regeneration project, which was designed as a Residential City Improvement District, the Neighbourhood Improvement Program was implemented with the support of the City of Johannesburg and the Johannesburg Housing Company (Mashiri, 2017). The Maboneng urban renewal project is entirely privately funded and run. Regarding cost, Maboneng was developed under a multi-dimensional commercial and residential district property portfolio. Propertuity had a portfolio of over R1 billion, which included other urban renewal projects in other cities of South Africa (Propertuity, 2017).

The Maboneng development can be viewed in two ways. First, it involves reusing and adapting old buildings, which is part of sustainable market-led urban renewal. Second, the Maboneng precinct is a neoliberal project that operates within a stipulated flexible state framework that promotes land and building development goals. Further, its inception reflects a contemporary market orthodoxy of city projects that are widely popular in cities of the global north and global south. The area was developed from an exploited market opportunity to repeat, and, to an extent, mirror laissez-faire projects and approaches where unused industrial stocks are bought and redeveloped for middle- and upper-class constituencies. From these developments, Maboneng is a gentrified enclave. Nevin (2014) conceptualises the Maboneng precinct as using a model of gentrification and congruent new urbanism-like processes. These processes are framed using liberalism as the precinct is one of the first bourgeois private development projects that took place in the Johannesburg CBD.

Nevin (2014) argues that there is no doubt a high and critical need for renewal projects in Johannesburg, and the Maboneng precinct has indeed fashioned an inner-city urban space to which different people from across the city are drawn. The Maboneng precinct is described by Propertuity (2017) and Mashiri (2017) as a mixed-use community. Maboneng finds its roots in Arts on Main, a building bought and converted into an art and retail development by Jonathan Liebmann through his property development company, Propertuity (Propertuity, 2017). Jonathan Liebmann wanted to transform the area on Main Road around Arts on Main (the first significant development) into a fully integrated community and a comprehensive and mixed-income residential precinct.

According to Propertuity (2009), Arts on Main, once an unused light industrial warehouse, was bought from the DF Corlett construction company and further developed on an abandoned site in 2008. Liebmann collaborated with his friend and business partner, architect Enrico Daffonchio, to convert the warehouse into a cutting-edge city destination. Liebmann called the area in which he was to buy and develop buildings Maboneng, the SeSotho word for 'place of light', because he felt the area 'represents an enlightened community (Propertuity, 2009, pp. 3-4). The character of Maboneng is depicted by Propertuity (2017) on its webpage as 'unique

mixed-use spaces encouraging entrepreneurship, culture, urbanism, creative expression and design’.

Initially, the area was bought building by building, lot by lot. The benefit of this purchase was that the area fell under the City of Johannesburg's SDZ. Rezoning a property or building in South Africa begins with submitting a rezoning application to the local municipality. This application must be accompanied by several supporting documents, including a zoning certificate, a title deed and a site plan (Deventer, 2018). All these requirements are prescribed within the Gauteng Planning and Development Act of 2003. The ordinance aims to provide a single development, planning and land management system in the province and, ultimately, to set out principles for planning and development.

To further encourage private property investment within Johannesburg, a property tax incentive was promulgated at the end of 2003 concerning the erection, extension, addition or improvement of buildings within a demarcated UDZ of which Maboneng falls (Ah Goo, 2017). Maboneng leverages incentives as a financial tool to attract property developers. The government introduced the UDZ tax incentive in 2003, allowing buyers to reclaim 30% of the purchase price as a tax deduction against taxable profit over five years (Marshal, 2015). Unlike other PPP projects in South Africa, Maboneng's pure market orthodoxy does not include state ownership. However, the converging nexus between public and private is the tax incentives, SDZ allocation of land development rights, and special land conditions relating to the rezoning of land and buildings.

Regarding literal planning, before a proposed development takes place, the local authority advertises any objections to the development by law. Since some buildings in Maboneng were underutilised for light industrial warehousing, development objectives took precedence. Notably, regarding sub-dividing property, applicants, along with an architect, are required to consult a town planner. Site plans must be drawn and submitted to the city council (CoJLUS, 2018). Applicants are then required to inform neighbours of their intention to sub-divide via registered letter and will also need to advertise it, calling for objections. Once the neighbours have approved the plans, the council will need to approve them (Remax, 2020).

Maboneng had come to symbolise how urban decay could be conquered through property development with its edgy galleries, artisanal shops, and famous Sunday market (Meek, 2019). In 2016, financial services firm Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) bought a 49.6% stake in the Propertuity property company. By late 2019, properties in the area went on a liquidation sale, marking the end of Propertuity, the company behind the precinct. The deal includes assets in

South Africa's coastal city of Durban, where Propertuity tried a similar mode of reclaiming the inner city.

4.3.6. Gentrification, Creative Class and Displacement

As stated, the Maboneng precinct serves young professionals as its intended residents and target market. This form of target planning has been opposed, especially by advocates for the right to the city and socio-spatial justice. A conundrum Baeten (2018) highlighted was the immediate danger and injustice of writing away specific neighbourhoods, buildings and places to commodify a place ready for consumption. There are clear indications that some form of displacement occurred in Maboneng as a gentrified enclave within the city (Nevin, 2014; Mashiriri, 2017; Ah Goo, 2018).

In the case of Maboneng, city marketing attracted members of a younger middle class to the area, specifically targeting a group referred to as the creative class. Of course, this formula is predicated on what Baeten (2018) describes as successful urban economies that depend on the creative class and creative industries (Wojan, 2015). In simple terms, creative industries are occupied by the creative class. Wojan (2015) further reiterates that the creative class is a collection of occupations that specialise in a novel combination of knowledge and ideas to solve problems or create value. The creative class construct is used to explain differences in urban and regional economic performance, where this capacity is thought to be central to growth in developed market economies in an era of globalisation.

Despite Wojan's (2015) current understanding of the creative class, Florida (2002) publicised the concept. Florida (2002) worked on a research programme to understand why Pittsburgh, a city in the USA, was having difficulty retaining highly educated workers produced by its universities. For Ashem and Hansen (2015), the basic reasoning of the creative class approach is that technology, talent and tolerance are three crucial cornerstones facilitating regional growth in the knowledge economy. These three Ts are regarded as corresponding parameters that individually have a positive but limited influence on development and have a significant synergetic effect: 'Each is a necessary but insufficient condition to attract creative people, generate innovation and stimulate economic growth; a place must have all three' (Florida, 2002, p. 48).

These notions are based on the neoliberal principle that cities that attract the creative class generate more employment. Interestingly, and notwithstanding positive economic outcomes, the creative classes exclude low-income segments, as the notion is based on a class system (Donegan *et al.*, 2008). Baeten (2016) highlights planning parallels within various Urban

Development Projects (UDP) of state, private and joint ventures. He argues that when an area of the city needs and qualifies for urban renewal, it is carved out and subjected to special planning procedures (as seen in Maboneng). These procedures sideline conventional municipal planning authorities. Despite some positive outcomes, all UDPs are cited as contributors to city polarisation and expelling low-income groups to impoverished parts of the city.

4.3.7. Management of Maboneng

In terms of services and given the level of crime in the inner city of Johannesburg, a CID was developed in order to create a safe and clean environment where residents, retailers and visitors to the broader area feel secure enough to walk the streets without fear (Meek, 2017). Propertuity and RMB, along with other stakeholders based in the area, contribute towards the CID, and all parties monitor the CID, providing street cleaning and security, and addressing issues related to public space management with the city council.

4.3.8. Lessons and Theoretical Reflection

This brief discussion covers key planning lessons from Maboneng. These lessons are associated with various city processes that serve as a planning blueprint for other areas or the establishment of other areas. From these lessons, policy adjustments can be made regarding development controls and the overall regulations governing SDZs in South African inner cities. There are five planning lessons on the Maboneng precinct. The first is gentrification, wherein the gentrification has been viewed (Nevin, 2014) as part of global urban processes which Maboneng mirrors. In a planning conundrum, private urban renewal attempts have often been cited as exclusionary and only partially accommodate low-income groups.

Mushiriri's (2017) study on Johannesburg's inner city highlights that urban regeneration causes exclusion and forced evictions of pre-existing lower-income residents in the effort to make way for the middle class, leading to undesirable social problems such as urban marginality and segregation. However, Vejby (2015) argues that the Maboneng precinct has successfully branded itself as an inclusive and integrated alternative to the exclusive northern suburbs.

Despite negative planning trends, Maboneng has managed to protect property values, restore city aesthetics, attract investment, and draw high-income residents back to the central city, improving urban conditions. Ah Goo (2017) explains that displacement and evictions caused by developments in Maboneng, particularly issues where residents are unlikely to afford the increased rent. This is an example of exclusionary displacement. As Maboneng expands and the area is further transformed to cater to the middle class's needs, other indirect forms of displacement may become evident.

Southern cities are constantly reinventing planning methods and tools to promote themselves as global cities (Parnell *et al.*, 2009; Tataforti, 2020). The quest for global city status is tied to the attraction of financial investment and large multinational corporations. In a globalised world where cities increasingly show substantial homogeneity, there is a drive for promotion as leaders in innovation, with one of the avenues being grand-scale projects (Fritsch & Wyrwich, 2016). While such projects are desirable for a city's image, they bring adverse effects such as heightened exclusion and limited opportunities for white collar workers. These exclusionary practices can occur through the construction of artificial barriers, which all but bar one group from entering a space deemed for another group. These barriers include high-rise walls, security monitoring, and infrastructure variations, which indicate that an area is catering for high-income groups, all of which are forms of gentrification (Nevin, 2014).

The second is urban fragmentation, where the state's inner-city policy contradiction is evident. While state policy, particularly the planning objectives of the SPLUMA, NDP and local ordinances, call for compactness and equitable spaces, the opposite effects are happening in Maboneng. Indeed, levels of compaction and specific development objectives such as urban renewal have been met at the expense of further fragmenting the inner-city space of Johannesburg. Although the area primarily consisted of light industrial warehousing, it has created a distinct space from the adjacent areas. Maboneng has been cited as a gentrified enclave with its own CID, meaning it receives more services than surrounding areas (Nevin, 2014). Adding to the fragmentation is the property price increase near Maboneng; this makes it difficult for small businesses to establish themselves amidst high property tax prices, which could be more favourable for entrepreneurship. The third is displacement and exclusion, primarily due to various factors, notwithstanding the two already mentioned. The level of displacement in Maboneng has manifested through pricing. Residents are priced out of their apartments for redevelopment, and another issue is that they are often unable to return to live in the new development.

In statutory planning of SDZ and CID, as well as other privatised planning models often act against low-income groups that are most at risk from exclusion. Generally, this risk manifests as being isolated from opportunities, such as when low-income individuals and minorities live in neighbourhoods without access to jobs, good schools and healthcare facilities. While this is a general understanding, in settings like Maboneng, low-income groups become disadvantaged in acquiring property near amenities and living in desirable spaces.

One of the planning conundrums presented by PPP and private planning, resulting from state negligence, is publicly neglected spaces and property revaluation. This planning conundrum leaves specific city spaces dilapidated, and because of these conditions, private developers are

looking to renew the area. Grand-scale projects often arise from neglected public spaces where public practitioners have prioritised and favoured certain areas. Such spaces are appealing because of low property prices, proximity to the city centre, integrated road networks, and low valuations for erfs and buildings. Also, these conditions present developers with innovative ways to partner with the state and secure financial tenure.

The fifth lesson is the need for more private developer partnerships with local planners and municipal planning subsidiaries. Despite issues of gentrification, private developers have been successful at renewing areas. Government and planning authorities must find a medium, such as PPP, to explore the renewal of other inner-city spaces with contractual clauses to provide low-income housing units. Such agreements can mitigate exclusion and promote inclusion. Planning policy could pose structural restrictions within SDZs to mitigate walling off segments of cities from other parts of the built environment. Lessons from the Maboneng precinct show that city planning is diverse and complex.

The state and private developers implement urban renewal projects to meet development objectives, financial goals and improve a city's physical outlook. The nature of the urban renewal intervention in Maboneng subscribes to a neoliberal position against which it is framed. Selectable variables such as private sector-led development, gentrification, exclusion, urban privatisation, surveillance and the physical enclave form of Maboneng contribute to commonalities associated with neoliberal city planning. For Baeten (2016), the neo-liberalisation of city planning implies a partial retreat by a public institution, the state at its conventional core – namely, the conception of administering planning of the built environment and natural environment to the private sector. As the state delegates planning responsibility, the private sector commodifies urban space and centres the organisation of space and its inhabitants, their movement, resources and consumption to benefit the market.

Therefore, as done in Maboneng, neoliberalism connotes the privatisation of public services such as utilities and infrastructure, exerts enhanced controls on property taxes, and further controls a wide range of deregulation in land use laws and flexibility in physical land use to promote market principles while safeguarding individual assets (Harvey, 2005; Harvey, 2006; Weaver, 2016). In the realm of theory and practice, neoliberal city planning mobilises urban space as an arena for market-oriented economic growth and elite consumption practices and, in so doing, transforms the politico-economic setting in which public plans and projects are implemented (Sager, 2011). As a result, gentrification processes, for example, are widely associated with the agglomeration of private housing and commercial developments in newly developed areas by private capital.

The following section focuses on De Waterkant in Cape Town.

4.4. DE WATERKANT IN CAPE TOWN

De Waterkant is a historical enclave of 0.04 km², shown in Figures 4.11 and 4.12, nestled between two arterial routes – Somerset Road and Strand Street – which connect the Cape Town CBD with the Atlantic seaboard neighbourhoods of Three Anchor Bay, Green Point and Sea Point in the Western Cape (Visser, 2003). Before it was known as De Waterkant, it formed part of the taxonomy of the Green Point sub-district, known as the village. De Waterkant initially bordered the Somerset Road area, which mainly consisted of light industrial ribbon development.

4.4.1. History and Present

De Waterkant's architectural style combines Cape Dutch and Georgian due to the area's diverse cultural heritage from the 19th century (Cape Town Tourism, 2023). De Waterkant was home to a racially mixed community before being declared a white group area, with the neighbourhood's non-white residents removed between 1969 and 1973 (Visser, 2003). Loader, Dixon, Napier and Waterkant Streets, among others, were emptied to make way for white people (Dreyer, 2001).

De Waterkant's history dates to the 1700s and the neighbouring Bo-Kaap district. An influx of Malays into the Malay Quarter began in the 1830s when slavery was abolished, and those forcibly brought to the Cape set up homes there (SEEF, 2023). The architecture of these buildings is a mixture of Cape Dutch and Georgian in origin. This is reflected by the open verandas along the fronts of the houses as an element of the styles of the time (Coetzer, 2021).

De Waterkant presents a unique built environment on a small village scale. The Georgian architecture that characterises much of the residential architecture of the area is rooted in the British colonial period. Before De Waterkant was known as such, it was defined by one colourful but notorious street, Loader Street, which came to be known as Louder Street. Louder Street (Figure 4.14) gets its name from the masses of rambunctious children who played in the busy lane (Rink, 2015). In the 1970s, the area slowly transformed into a bohemian area with many owners and tenants involved in the arts, hence its appearance (Du Plessis, 2001).

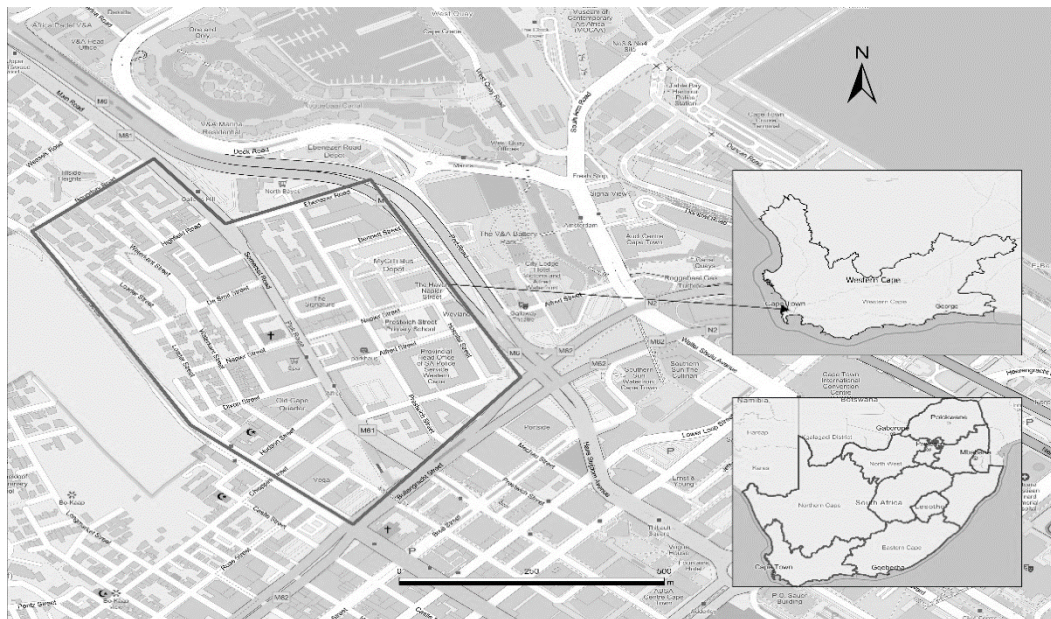


Figure 4.11: De Waterkant Village, Cape Town (Author)



Figure 4.12: De Waterkant, Google Earth (Google Earth)

De Waterkant was home to a racially mixed community before being declared a white group area after Waterkant Streets, among others, were emptied to make way for whites (Kotze, 1998). As a result of these evictions, property prices were favourable to proprietors. At the beginning of the 1990s, gentrification was established with a significant inflow of middle-class professional men. From this influx, the area got its moniker, gay village. Much of the geographical literature on De Waterkant – written by Kotze (1998), Visser (2003; 2004), Sonnekus (2007), and Rink (2013a; 2013b) – portrays the area as a gay village, with studies

focusing on themes such as second homes and development within a gay utopia, the queering of space, epistemologies of comfort in a gay enclave, and the emergence of a bohemian quarter

De Waterkant is a bourgeois area. Primarily, it acts as a temporary residence for tourists. It is an upmarket enclave with a fixed demography that is difficult to pin down. There is difficulty regarding the area's socio-economic composition because of the guest village concept which complicates the residential profile since it makes it temporary. In a study about community and enclave developments, Rink (2013) emphasises that the temporal status of residents creates an unstable community that constantly shifts week after week. There needs to be more fixed residency in the precinct.

Visser (2008) and Rink (2015) contend that in the mid-1990s, the Village and Life group of companies began by purchasing and renovating De Waterkant properties for use as tourist accommodation. At the same time, as a result of gentrification there was a significant inflow of middle-class professional men (Visser & Kotze, 2008; Rink, 2013). The Village and Life business model, explored in depth primarily by Visser (2004), helped promote tourist-oriented development through the company's property management scheme using second home ownership. As a result of developments like Harbour View Cottages, visitors and holidaymakers in De Waterkant during the early 2000s could choose from an array of accommodation options, from up-market backpacker lodges to fully furnished self-catering luxury cottages (Rink, 2015).

De Waterkant is primarily studied through the lens of being a gay village and a symbol of gentrification by Visser (2012) and Rink (2013). Earlier, Elder (2004) labelled De Waterkant as having shifted with the dissolution of the apartheid city; the area witnessed a surge of economic and infrastructural development that, in the late 1990s, gave birth to the area's reputation as Cape Town's gay village. Rink (2013) sees De Waterkant as an urban quarter that is charming, historic, sophisticated and cosmopolitan while also being controversial and exclusive. The area is a mixed-use residential, industrial and commercial area. It is a tourist hub, iconic for its colourful houses and leisure outlets such as bars, upscale retail shops, art galleries, among others (Cape Town Tourism, 2023).

The area is a second home for homeowners who are tourists themselves (Visser, 2004). As a temporary residence for visiting tourists, the area is known for manicured Cape Dutch-style houses with luxury accommodations. Interestingly, Visser (2004) previously used De Waterkant to understand the impact of second homes as enablers of development. Notably, Visser (2004) analysed the structured nature of a tourism-oriented property management system and found a range of development impacts, which hold the potential for enabling second homes to make significant contributions towards the development of the host community.

Regarding financing and ownership, De Waterkant is one of three areas in Cape Town currently part of a tourism-inspired property management company called Village and Life (Visser, 2003). According to Visser (2003) properties under the management of Village and Life are specially managed and maintained according to a range of detailed hospitality standards, with the comforts and services of a luxury hotel, and marketed as tourist accommodation. Village and Life do not hold ownership of the enclave; rather, it controls substantial portions through its acquisition of businesses and its role as landlord to over 100 companies operating within the enclave (Visser, 2004). In promoting the area, SEEF Properties (2023) describes the houses in De Waterkant as primarily semi-detached cottages that have been tastefully renovated to preserve their facades. De Waterkant is also a cultural hub, with various vibrant restaurants, art galleries, yoga and fitness studios, gay clubs and bars; recently, chic apartments have been built (Rink, 2015).

4.4.2. De Waterkant Land Use and Ordinances

Today, De Waterkant is a small village-style quarter with varying land uses primarily oriented towards leisure provision. The land use character of the area is a patchwork of restaurants, cafés, luxury apartments, guest houses, and bars. Part of its popularity is its proximity to Cape Town's most prominent attractions, such as the V&A Waterfront, Table Mountain and the harbour.

All properties within the city's geographic area are part of the integrated zoning scheme and are subject to land use provisions. These provisions are contained in the Development Management Scheme (DMS), which forms part of the Cape Town Municipal Planning By-law (MPBL). De Waterkant is a bourgeois area, evidenced by its exclusion from the City of Cape Town's current renewal scheme. According to the City of Cape Town (2023), the Mayor's Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP) works on targeted CBDs, centres and community nodes within a limited number of geographic areas, from which De Waterkant is not a part.

Almost every erf within De Waterkant falls under one of three classifications. The first is a mixed-use one, two and three, depending on land use intensity. The second is general residential and general business. The third classification is heritage, somewhat unsurprisingly, given that the nature of the buildings in the enclave is iconic; almost all of De Waterkant is overlaid with heritage status according to the zoning scheme. The zoning scheme also shows that the erf demarcations of De Waterkant remain as they were in the 1990s, despite extensive property development. However, there is limited development choice for the exterior of these buildings as they fall under heritage status, as shown in Figures 4.13 and 4.14, respectively.



Figure 4.13: Aerial view of De Waterkant (Holiday Apartments, 2023)



Figure 4.14: Loader Street (SA Venues, 2023)

De Waterkant was initially proposed for general residential and commercial use. However, three sets of pivotal planning goals emerge from analysing the land use scheme, its zoning classification, and the area's development under heritage status. First, planning terminology has evolved to incorporate newer planning concepts, such as those in Maboneng and Florida Road, including SDZs and SRAs. Although somewhat unsurprisingly, De Waterkant is dominated by

mixed land uses. Interestingly, nearly the entire quarter is zoned as an overlay. When analysing the zoning map of Cape Town, the land uses overlap and intersect both vertically and horizontally. Under the theme of single residential and general residential, De Waterkant consists of conventional and group housing classifications. Also dominant is the classification of general and conventional business (Cape Town LUS, 2020).

In terms of property rights, De Waterkant's property, in its entirety, is to be developed under the Subdivisional Area Overlay zone. The City of Cape Town's planning scheme protects places of historical and tourist value. The Subdivisional Area Overlay Zone may or may not be used with the Special Planning Area mechanism (Cape Town LUS, 2020). It is a separate planning tool, detached from SPAs, yet like SRAs. Key contributors to the area's ongoing development, commercial vitality, and appeal to the creative class include specific regulatory frameworks, such as the Incentive Overlay Zone, Density Overlay Zone, and Heritage Protection Overlay Zone. These statutory tools support development priorities, strategies and goals (Cape Town LUS, 2020). Areas like the Old Cape Quarter are being developed using these tools.

Overall, the statutory tools deployed by the City of Cape Town within the scheme resemble those of other metropolitan regions, albeit with a few notable nuances. The policy objective is to give developmental incentives through controlled and, at times, special regulations for land development while minimising land use intrusions that might cause a public nuisance.

4.4.3. Composition of Dwelling Types

The De Waterkant quarter in Cape Town comprises various land uses within a 0.4km² precinct. Adding to the area's appeal was the 2010 World Cup, where Rink (2013) argues that a wide range of infrastructural improvements were made. Ultimately, the composition of dwelling types is largely informed and shaped by a transition brought on by short-term guest accommodations. The provision of tourist accommodation added an essential economic and cultural dimension to De Waterkant.

Today, De Waterkant consists of semi-detached cottages, over 100 stores within the quarter, sidewalk cafes and up-market apartments. Bordering De Waterkant is the Old Cape Quarter development, which emerged in 2007 and now comprises over 50 upmarket apartments, including penthouses (Muller, 2023). Most of the single and general residential dwellings were converted into second homes for tourists. De Waterkant continues to be portrayed as a luxury village with heritage and a guest village where all residents are temporary (Rink, 2013).

As mentioned, the original homeowners vacated the area and used their residences as second homes for tourists. Thereafter, tourists bought the apartments as their own second homes and

developed them further into second-home residences for other tourists through the real estate and development company, Village and Life (Rink, 2013). These residential changes destabilise the identity of De Waterkant in that the ever-changing profile of visitors continually brings new influences, new identities, and thus new meanings to the area.

4.4.4. PPP and Urban Renewal

The re-casting of De Waterkant quarter as a guest village began when Village & Life purchased multiple properties in Loader Street to renovate and rent them to short-term visitors and holidaymakers (Visser, 2004; Rink, 2013). Village & Life markets and operates De Waterkant as a 'hospitality village', offering three- to four-star holiday accommodation with 69 participants who are owners that rent their properties. Village & Life levies a 25% fee for their cleaning and property management services (Rink, 2013), effectively acting as a surrogate property steward on behalf of actual owners who reside overseas.

4.4.5. Gentrification, Creative Class and Displacement

Gentrification took hold when the area was developed into an upmarket quarter with properties managed by the Village and Life company. This mirrors the approach of the real estate and development firm Propertuity, which spearheaded the regeneration of the Maboneng Precinct in central Johannesburg. Since the early 2000s, property prices in De Waterkant have been escalating briskly over the past decade (Visser, 2004). The initial cycle of gentrification had already passed by the time Village and Life started to operate and promote the area (Kotze, 1998; Visser, 2003). Thus, many of the properties entered the market already renovated or with 'potential' for such restoration, factored into the purchasing price.

4.4.6. Management of De Waterkant

De Waterkant conducts its administration through its own SRA under its heritage status. Similar to the CID management of the Maboneng precinct in central Johannesburg, which oversees a variety of functions, property owners in De Waterkant pay for and provide private security. De Waterkant administers its SRA by way of the De Waterkant Civic Association which keeps watch over more than just security. The association is also vigilant of the area's history, especially the preservation of the area's 10 architectural heritage (Rink, 2013). While recent ownership details are unclear, by the early 2000s, it became evident that approximately 50% of the ownership base (of properties under the company's management) was foreign, and the remaining 50% comprised South Africans (Lategan, 2003).

4.4.7. Lessons and Theoretical Reflection

The first lesson from De Waterkant is that SRAs and CIDs are central to sustaining ongoing renewal projects because they allow host communities autonomy over specific affairs, from security to building regulations. Therefore, by pooling their resources in an SRA, individual property owners can enjoy the collective benefits of a well-managed area, a shared sense of place, safety and security, social responsibility and access to joint initiatives such as waste recycling, energy efficiency programmes, and ecological and environmental programmes to common property and parks which translate into a tangible boost in property values and capital investment. These arrangements are evident in Maboneng, where Nevin (2014) emphasises that the CID oversees public responsibilities such as refuse and security. However, SRA and CIDs are not generally inclusive, especially to less affluent economic groups, as these planning tools are located within affluent precincts and suburbs (Mashiate & Germond, 2019).

The second lesson from De Waterkant is that areas under heritage status see more in the way of tourists and, therefore, more investment is made towards the physical appearance of the place. These areas typically include unique or classical physical buildings distinct from the surrounding metropole. Also, these areas might include statues and other physical landmarks, which draw domestic and international tourists. Typically, these areas have undergone gentrification, where many residents were evicted to make way for bourgeois developments. While evictions are often viewed negatively, areas with designated heritage status or SRA and CID areas manage to retain exclusive property prices, ensuring stable property values for the area under their jurisdiction.

The third lesson is the exclusionary nature of De Waterkant in terms of property prices, physical appearance and social construct. It is known as Cape Town's gay village, a cosmopolitan upmarket enclave with retail residences, restaurants, and bars designed specifically for those in good economic standing.

The fourth lesson from De Waterkant is that private developers and real estate companies are increasingly asserting control over South Africa's urban centres. In De Waterkant, developers capitalise on flexible land use regulations to drive inner-city renewal, leveraging the area's heritage assets and its proximity to a diverse range of urban functions and amenities. As a theoretical reflection, private planning and development have become a driving force for place marketing and competition. This means that urban development, from a neoliberal perspective, is competitive (Beaten, 2012). Siddiqui (2023) argues that healthy market competition is fundamental to a well-functioning economy.

Using the enclave form of Maboneng and De Waterkant as examples, planning and development of these areas are consistent with neoliberal practices from their establishment to their land use, economy and dwelling structures. Despite these urban forms and their exclusivity, it has been reiterated that urban renewal, whether by state or private actors, is a crucial means to tackle urban decay and facilitate socio-economic development (Chan & Lee, 2008). De Waterkant largely demonstrates that private urban renewal projects can be sustainable for second home owners and property management agencies through urban design features and regulation of property prices. This means that apart from the spatial arrangement, investment in design features to integrate, beautify and diversify land use is essential for the area's development.

The following theme discusses the Florida Road case study in Durban.

4.5. FLORIDA ROAD IN DURBAN

Florida Road (see Figures 4.15 and 4.16) is situated in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and forms part of the Windermere area of the City of Durban (eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, 2022). Florida Road is bounded by the suburban areas of Essenwood and Musgrave and is strategically positioned north of the Durban CBD (Cele & Chipunga, 2018). Florida Road is known for its warm street vibe, unique and historic architecture, restaurants and cultural area. It is home to restaurants, art galleries, pubs, boutiques, eclectic little shops, studios and bars lined along a 2km road (Phori, 2017). Florida Road, often called 'The Hub of Durban Entertainment', has earned its reputation as one of the city's trendiest streets, where people gather to shop, eat, drink, meet and hang out (South African Tourism, 2016, Phori, 2018). Depending on the municipality's concept choice, Florida Road falls under the Urban Improvement Precinct (UIP) or an SRA. The UIP manages public spaces by charging a supplementary fee to property owners in the UIP, along with the rates charged to all property owners. In simple terms, UIPs are intended to establish a local management structure for specific strategic areas where property owners and investors participate to ensure their area is clean and safe. There are several commercial and residential UIPs in operation in KwaZulu-Natal, including the Point Waterfront, Florida Road precinct, Umhlanga and Ballito (Accelerated Services, 2023).

4.5.1. History

Cele (2015) characterises Florida Road as one of the oldest streets in the Durban metropolitan area. At the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, many large residences were built along the road in Victorian and Edwardian styles, creating a unique street

identity. The veranda pillars on Florida Road are typically still Edwardian, complete with base, shaft and capital detailed with foliage, and braced with filigreed brackets and beams (Berea Mail, 2023). Historically, according to the Berea Mail (2023), the first municipal tram line in South Africa was laid along Florida Road in 1892 using horses as motive power. Florida Road was once a key thoroughfare through Durban, as a well-worn track used by elephants on their daily journey to fetch water from the top of Berea down to the Grayville Marsh (now part of the Royal Durban golf course).

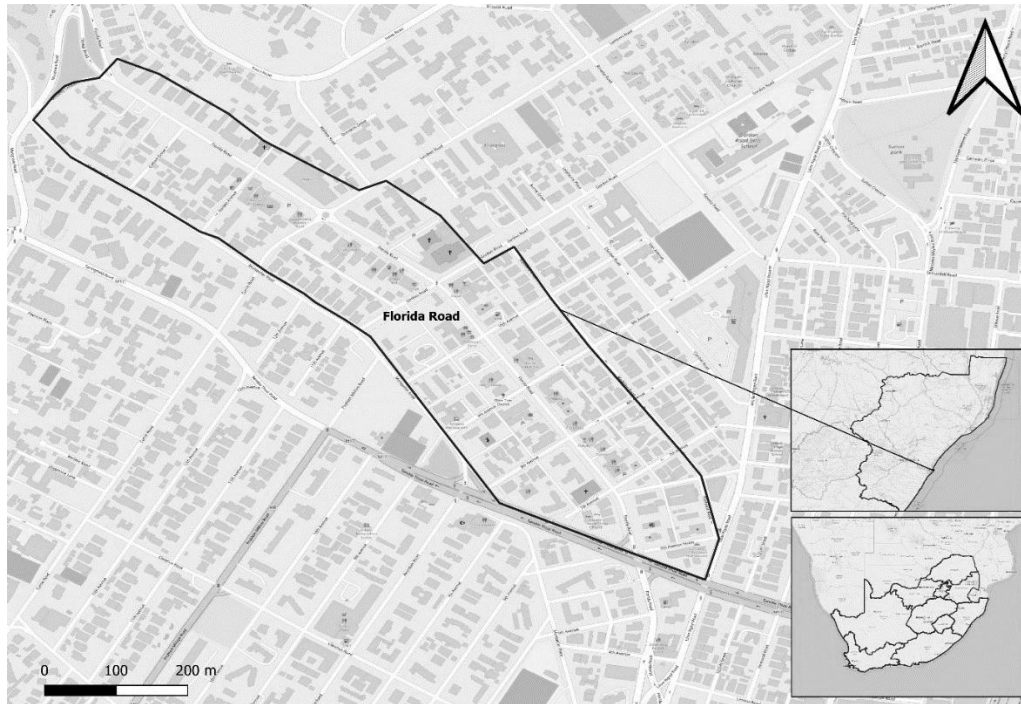


Figure 4.15: Florida Road, Durban (Author)



Figure 4.16: Florida Road, Google Earth (Google Earth)

The precinct has retained its architectural character with a mixed-use zone for residential, office and commercial buildings. These buildings add value to the urban fabric and carry a particularly unique history and aesthetic quality. Prior to the development of the precinct's UIP, between 2009 and 2012, the area was in disrepute because of its association with drug-related activities between 2009 and 2012 (Cele, 2015). The establishment of the Florida UIP initiated through the collaborative efforts of concerned property and business owners has led to notable and effective precinct management changes. The 2010 FIFA World Cup infrastructure upgrade is one of the significant events that initiated the development of the area (Phori, 2018).

4.5.2. Florida Land Use and Ordinances

Florida Road's land uses and ordinances differ from surrounding streets and areas. The area has a special status through the UIP for the erection and development of buildings, which does not apply to the surrounding areas. Although previous attempts before the 2010 FIFA World Cup initiated developments on Florida Rd (Phori, 2018), the rejuvenation officially began in 2013. The area's renewal was due to local property owners, businesses and community groups, who formed the Florida Road Urban Improvement Precinct (FRUIP) together. The FRUIP has motivated, lobbied and worked with the eThekweni Municipality since July 2013 to collectively manage public space in Florida Road to grow and sustain property values, ensure business prosperity and create a high quality of life for all the area's users (Cele & Chipunga, 2013).

The FRUIP levy is collected via the city's rates system and paid monthly to the UIP. The levy is used to deliver security patrols, cleaning and greening services within the 2km stretch precinct. While the FRUIP is responsible for developments within the area, ultimately, the area subscribes to the Durban Central Land Use Scheme (DCLUS) and SDF. Although the Florida Road area was previously predominantly residential, it has grown organically into a vibrant activity corridor with a more diverse, mixed-use orientation (Cele, 2015; Phori, 2017). It is also ethnically, socially and architecturally diverse. The FRUIP, which acts as a CID, is the dominant ordinance within Florida Road, allowing flexible property controls and greater land use diversity.

While developers such as Propertuity were essential in developing Maboneng on Florida Road, Urban Lime Properties is working with stakeholders, particularly the successful UIP. The company aims to raise awareness of safety and perceptions regarding security within Florida Rd (Private Property, 2023). Therefore, it aims to introduce traffic calming measures, such as reducing lanes from double to single, extending public spaces, increasing parking and installing speed bumps.

4.5.3. Composition of Dwelling Types

Upon analysing property data and the cadastral and zoning set-up, residential property is mainly in the upper part of Florida Road, primarily apartments and sectional title units. Much like De Waterkant and Maboneng, various complementary dwelling types exist on adjacent sides of the street and within the same building. However, commercial properties dominate classifications on Florida Road (See Figure 4.17). Moreover, the UIP has preserved the historical design of buildings (See Figure 4.19).

The precinct has retained its architectural character (Figures 4.19 and 4.20) with a mixed-use zone for residential, office and commercial buildings. Other land uses in the precinct are similar to those in Maboneng and De Waterkant: cafes, art galleries, design studios and restaurants. Florida Road is an entertainment strip and a busy thoroughfare towards the uMngeni Business Park. The buzzing nightlife is a major attraction to those who visit Florida Road. Most restaurants and bars are situated between 9th Avenue and Lambert Road, and it is in this section that Florida Road has the busiest vehicle traffic (Figure 4.17) (Bilala, 2012). Overall, Florida Road dwelling types include a variety of uses, with the dominant practice being commercial, evidenced by the wide distribution of commercial activities, as shown in Figure 4.18.



Figure 4.17: Florida Road in Durban (IOL, 2015)

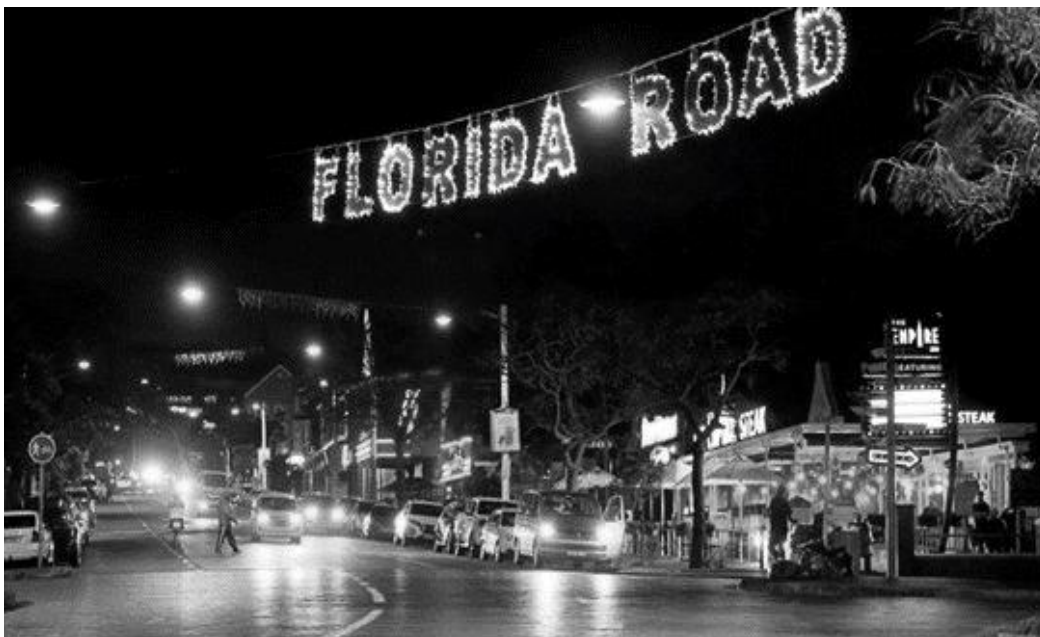


Figure 4.18: Florida Road (Bilala, 2012)



Figure 4.19: Florida Road Housing (Reid, 2008)



Figure 4.20: Florida Road House (Marjoribanks, 2020)

4.5.4. Socio-economic Composition

Like Maboneng and De Waterkant, the socio-economic composition of Florida Road is a transient zone with a transient population; there is no fixed statistic. The area is an entertainment and lifestyle hub with minimal residential dwelling types. It is a bourgeois area similar to De Waterkant in Cape Town. Bilala (2020) affirms that residential apartments are scattered

throughout Florida Road and have a higher concentration towards the north (between Lambert Road and Musgrave Road). Florida Road retains a portion of residential buildings as it is located within a suburb. Windmere, the suburb in which Florida Road is located, is one of the suburbs of Durban, surrounded by other suburbs with similar economic stances, such as Morningside to the north (Yuan, 2002).

4.5.5. PPP and Urban Renewal

The renewal of Florida Road was due to previous attempts to improve the area leading up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The second stage in its improvement came with the inception of the FRUIP, which oversees the area's development jointly with the Durban Municipality. The FRUIP acts as the Maboneng CID, which also provides similar services within the precinct, such as surveillance, waste management services, cleanliness and security guarding divisions. Ultimately, there exists a trend between CIDs, SDZs, UIPs and the improvement of areas, especially with the provision of extended services to ensure lasting renewal and physical improvement in order to maintain the structural and aesthetic aura of the area, not only to retain but also attract commerce.

4.5.6. Gentrification, Creative Class and Displacement

According to Phori and Mbali (2020), Private Property (2022), which has listings on Florida Road and throughout the City of Durban, the residential component on Florida Road is slowly disappearing. These is due to zoning changes and an increasing commercial, retail and hospitality component. Regarding the creative class, up-market areas such as Maboneng, De Waterkant and Florida Road are designed to attract young professionals, as evident in the type of dominant business practice in these areas. The area continues to develop and attract business; however, there is less of a gentrification element than in De Waterkant, where forced removals were carried out in the late 1950s and 1960s. Similarly, areas adjacent to Maboneng saw expulsions and exclusion with rising property prices induced by new developments in Doornfontein, which later became Maboneng. Although no forced removals are logged on Florida Road, the area still has middle-income homes since it is located within a middle-income suburb.

4.5.7 Management of Florida

The management of Florida Road is similar to the structure of Maboneng and De Waterkant. It resides with the FRUIP, which oversees the development controls that promote commerce in the area. These regulations also encourage the development of various land uses within individual buildings and adjacent lots, which, under normal zoning parameters, would be

unsuitable and classified as a conflict or a nuisance. Together with Urban Lime Properties, the eThekweni Municipality, and members of the FRUIP ultimately preside over the area's development, commerce and future area plans. These bodies preside over the choice of development, physical and surveillance security, structural improvement and modification of roads, lights and sidewalks, and walling, as well as the protection of heritage buildings in the area.

4.5.8 Lessons and Theoretical Reflection

Lessons gleaned from the Florida Road renewal strategy indicate that sustainability is improved by tools such as CIDs, SRAs and SDZs, and area reputation is essential for commercial sustainability. Land use sustainability is central to tools such as UIPs and CIDs throughout the selected field sites. The sustainability of these projects ensures a solid economic base with the ability to retain and attract investment. It enables residents to actively engage with the area's amenities, supported by physical security and electronic surveillance that foster a sense of safety.

A study by Phori (2017) on Florida Road highlights that safety and security are pillars of tourism growth and destination competitiveness. However, within the same study, Phori (2017) further argues that the number of tourists has decreased in the last three years due to perceptions of crime, including high levels of motor vehicle theft and robbery. Therefore, a lesson from Florida is the active work by the FRUIP to increase security to ensure an influx of visitors, which ultimately aids in the area's sustainable development. The concept of area reputation is essential for Florida Road. Several publications, including academic works by South African Tourism (2016), Cele and Chipunga (2016), Phori (2018) and Bilala (2018), describe Florida Road as the hub of Durban entertainment. A key lesson, however, is that its sustainability and continued appeal are maintained through a steady influx of visitors attracted by the area's reputation.

Florida Road shows the state's willingness to relegate city planning forms to private developers and the community. Still, due to a demand for city improvement and the aim of reviving the inner city, the market was granted a license to develop land with favourable controls. As a result, the state became active in introducing market principles (SDZ) to promote private sector-led economic development in the central city. This was done through unique land controls and permissions, which allowed developers to assume city planning and development activities.

Sustainable market-led urban renewal focuses on the collaborative and multi-disciplinary process of shaping the physical setting of the area. This may include controlling access,

configuring new patterns of transit and walkability, and levels and intensity of mixed land-use spaces to ensure the area is protected from encroachment, which may affect its value and aesthetic appeal.

Moreover, for these secondary sites, sustainable market-led urban renewal relies on market transactions among property rights holders and the stability of property prices. The drive for developers to post a return on investment by continuing to improve the area is a nuance by which sustainability is integrated into neoliberal city planning. However, a study by Zheng *et al.* (2024) highlights that sustainable market-led urban renewal is studied mainly through the perspective of market mechanisms.

In the case studies under 4.3, market-led urban renewal has been successful due to the area's ability to retain its appeal, which is enhanced by its location, proximity to the city, design, pricing, the nature of its land use, and exclusive amenities not offered by adjacent locations. Market-led urban renewal for secondary sites entails continued improvement and investment in the built environment, the maintenance of its long-standing appeal, and the stability of its property prices to retain residents in an exclusive and distinct urban space. Florida Road and Maboneng serves as a reference point for debates on market-led urban renewal within a neoliberal framework. This shows that private land use is sustainable through practical urban design principles, mixed land use, and the regulation of property prices, albeit within a privatised planning model.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter highlighted similar nuances with the study area, such as location, residents' socio-economic composition, and the varying situations that necessitated urban renewal. The chapter also covered the locations, history and land use ordinances that govern the spatial layout for these sites. Key findings and themes from this study are the homogeneity of the three field sites: Maboneng in Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town and Florida Road in central Durban. Central to this study was the similar spatial variables that homogenise these study sites with Southernwood, which is discussed in the following chapter. While positives are extracted from these sites, the chapter also discussed planning lessons from these areas. These lessons are essential in developing a planning strategy. The information in this chapter informs the comparative analysis later in this study.

The following chapter discusses methods and tools adopted in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: METHODS AND TOOLS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a framework for collecting and analysing data. A research methodology uses a step-by-step framework to describe, evaluate, and justify using tools to collect, analyse, and interpret data (Grover, 2015; Taylor & Cameron, 2015). This step-by-step framework systemically outlines procedures to solve or provide ways to answer the research problem (Singh & Walwyn, 2017). In stressing the importance of methods and tools, Lenger (2015) emphasises that research methods are crucial for conclusions; the research methods affect what can be said about the cause and factors influencing the phenomenon under investigation. While every research problem is unique, almost all research methods are characterised by a specific research design informed by the research paradigm (discussed later in this chapter). By juxtaposing successful urban renewal projects from selected field sites, the study will gain insights on what worked and whether those measures can be applied to aid in developing suitable urban renewal strategies for Southernwood.

This chapter is structured in the following fashion: the first part opens with a discussion of research paradigms, which encapsulates theories and practices of various disciplines, specifically the geography discipline, to create the research plan. Thereafter, the chapter's second part covers research designs and then expands to cover the research design of this study. The third part discusses the sampling population, its various techniques, and the specific purposive sampling techniques employed in this study. The fourth part discusses data collection methods, specifically primary and secondary data collection. Lastly, the chapter discusses the primary and secondary data analysis techniques and the ethical considerations of this study, as it involves human participants.

5.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

A research paradigm is the process of constructing a research plan that assists in understanding how the theories and practices of research projects work (Slevitch, 2011; Berryman, 2019; Keong *et al.*, 2023; Sanabria *et al.*, 2023). The importance of choosing a paradigm for a research project stems from the fact that it establishes the foundation for the study and its methodologies (Abbadia, 2022; Caron *et al.*, 2023; Fulton *et al.*, 2023). The paradigm is the philosophical view of the knowledge relating to a study. This understanding of knowledge paves the way for determining what tools and models are applicable and suitable for a research project. In emphasising the importance of a paradigm, Khaldi (2017; Keog *et al.*, 2021) asserts that properly implementing a research paradigm provides researchers with a clear path to examine a topic of interest.

A paradigm includes positivism and interpretivism. On one hand, a positivist paradigm relies on measurement and reason, and that knowledge is revealed from a neutral and measurable (quantifiable) observation of activity, action or reaction (Chan *et al.*, 2023). Positivism asserts that if something cannot be measured in this way, it cannot be known with certainty.

This study uses an interpretivism paradigm, it assumes that reality is subjective, multiple and socially constructed (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016), interpretivism means we can only understand someone's reality through their experience of that reality, which may be different from another person's, shaped by the individual's historical or social perspective.

For Lawhon *et al.* (2014), interpretive approaches rely on questioning and observing to discover or generate a rich and deep understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. This is closely associated with qualitative data collection methods like human observation and interviews. The types of research designs related to this paradigm would be ethnography, case studies and phenomenological research.

Generally, the discipline of geography is divided into two branches: human geography, primarily aligned with interpretivism and physical geography, which is aligned with positivism. In this instance, research paradigms provide a framework for understanding the nature of what is being studied and the types of methods applicable in investigating objective or subjective matters (Khivunja, 2017). Specifically relating to this study, the research paradigm position aligns with the research questions and theoretical framework guiding this study. The subjective nature and socially constructed meanings of places and within places are not quantifiable; they cannot be measured using scientific instruments associated with natural sciences.

Importantly, this study subscribes to individual perspectives on urban renewal, and these perspectives can be understood using interpretive tools such as interviews to deduce meaning and answer the main research question and the guiding questions. The study also subscribes to existing data on urban renewal to assist in answering the research questions.

The relevance of paradigms in this geographical urban renewal study is twofold. First, paradigms establish a guiding framework for how urban renewal is seen. For this study, urban renewal is a subjective inquiry into a socially constructed phenomenon. As a result, qualitative tools such as interviews are necessary for gaining perspectives and personal views that cannot be gathered using mathematical tools, expressions and experiments. Despite this position, qualitative data can be expressed in formats used in natural sciences, such as charts, spreadsheets, graphs and numbers.

Second, the relevance of paradigms for this study is that knowledge can be validated using methods which do not apply to the natural science realm but apply to the realm of social science. Overall, the stance of this study, informed by an interpretive paradigm, is that belief in socially constructed multiple realities leads the researcher to reject the notion that people should be studied like objects of natural sciences; the researchers' position is to get involved with the subjects and try understand phenomena in their contexts.

The following theme further discusses the ontological and epistemological perspectives. While ontology concerns what is true or accurate, epistemology is the theory of knowledge (Young, 2023). It refers to the principles of what can be known and how you can know it; that is, how you can find out about it. This is extensively discussed in the following section.

5.2.1 The Ontological Perspective

Ontology focuses on reality and how the subject under investigation is viewed (Al Saadi, 2014). Overall, ontology concerns our beliefs about the type and nature of reality and the social world (Simons *et al.*, 2023). Due to the nature of the subject under investigation, urban renewal, its variables and meanings suggest that it falls within the ambit of a constructivist ontological perspective.

According to Al Saadi (2014) and Lemish (2023), a constructivist ontological perspective views reality as socially constructed, context-dependent, and shaped by human meaning-making processes, rather than fixed or naturally existing.

5.2.2 The Epistemological Perspective

Epistemology is the assumptions we make about the type or nature of knowledge or how it is possible to discover the world (Snape & Spencer, 2000; Richards, 2003; Pham, 2018). Crotty (1998) argues that epistemology is about the assumptions one makes about the very bases of knowledge – its nature and form, and how it can be acquired and communicated to other human beings. Furthermore, the type of epistemological assumptions that we make or hold about knowledge profoundly affect how we go about uncovering knowledge of social behaviour (Crotty, 1998; Fabri, 2021; Simons *et al.* 2023).

In terms of alignment, this study aligns with an interpretivist epistemological position. Since the paradigm and questions are qualitative, focusing on urban renewal, this epistemological position focuses on how people make sense of their lives, experiences and world structures. This paradigm dictates that the qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Kivunja *et al.*, 2017; Situmorang, 2023). Data are mediated through this human instrument rather than inventories, questionnaires or machines (Soaita, 2023).

Unlike the quantitative positivist paradigm, the interpretivist paradigm delineates that the researcher and the social world impact each other. Furthermore, the paradigm also dictates that facts and values are not distinct; objective and value-free inquiry is impossible since the researchers' perspectives and values inevitably influence findings. Chowdhury (2014) argues that under an interpretivist epistemological position, methods of natural science are inappropriate for studying social phenomena, for the social world is not governed by law-like regularities but mediated through meaning and human agency.

For Shah *et al.* (2013), the qualitative interpretivist paradigm delineates that knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of the people who are being studied. Also, this paradigm sees learning as personal, subjective and unique (Kivunja *et al.*, 2017; Pham, 2018). The interpretivist paradigm considers that the social world is approached through understanding human behaviour. This approach aligns with a qualitative research design, which the following section covers.

5.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

As already emphasised, this study explores strategies to renew the Southernwood suburb of central East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. In pursuing these strategies, a research design is necessary to provide the overall framework for collecting data (Pezzagno *et al.*, 2024). The research design is a plan for selecting subjects and data collection procedures to answer the research's central and guiding questions (Goginsky & Collins, 2007). This study subscribes to a case study design. Numerous research strategies, inquiry traditions, qualitative approaches and design types are available for selection. In this study's subscription to a case study design, a logical framework is formed between the aim of the study, the objectives, the theory, the choice of tools, and the analysis techniques.

Some popular explanatory research methods include literature searches, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and case analyses (Stebbins, 2001; Boru, 2018). Saka and Joe (2023) argue that explanatory research is characterised by its flexibility. When a problem is broad and unclear, the researchers use explanatory research as a beginning step. Explanatory studies are a valuable means of understanding what is happening, seeking new insights, asking questions, and assessing phenomena in a new light (Thomas, 2020). As a result of the paucity of literature around explanatory research as a methodology for urban renewal, the work of Stebbins (2001), a sociologist, is influential. Stebbins (2001) defined explanatory research as a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximise the discovery of generalisations leading to the description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life.

In other words, an explanatory research design explores the research questions, leaving room for further research (Rashid *et al.*, 2019), unlike a conclusive research design, which primarily provides a framework for the final findings of the research. This study integrates explanatory research techniques with a case study design for an in-depth understanding of urban renewal. This case study design is discussed in the following section.

5.3.1 Case Study Design

A case study is one of the most extensively used strategies of qualitative social research. Over the years, its application has expanded, and it is now being employed in several social science disciplines such as sociology, management, anthropology, psychology, and others (Mohajan, 2018). A case study is an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual, group, community or some other unit in which the researcher examines in-depth data relating to several variables (Heale, 2023), and it is one of the most extensively used strategies of qualitative social research (Denscombe, 2021; Bell & Warren, 2023). For Crowe (2011) and Bell (2023), a case study enables in-depth, multifaceted explorations of complex issues in real-life settings. Besides case study applications in social science research, it is also well-recognised in business, law and policy but somewhat less so in health services research (Crowe *et al.*, 2011). Despite its replete application across a range of fields, Platt (1992) and Hooker and Tyndall (2023) argue that case study design originated in anthropology and sociology with multiple approaches (Hagman, 2023). Hooker and Tyndall (2023) argue that, case studies are often used to gain an in-depth understanding of contemporary issues in their real-world context. Case studies explain, describe, or explore, for example, land use preferences, making this research design particularly useful in geography associated with land use trends (Anthony & Jack, 2009; Hill, 2014; Yin, 2018; Cicellin *et al.*, 2019). The following section presents approaches to urban renewal research and strategies essential for understanding the trends, methods, and tools applied to urban renewal studies.

5.4. APPROACHES TO URBAN RENEWAL RESEARCH

Numerous advances have been and continue to be made in research concerning urban renewal in South Africa and worldwide. There are many qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research approaches to urban renewal. Attempts range from policy-based renewal, strictly one-dimensional and integrated renewal and comparative modelling, to name a few approaches.

5.4.1. Qualitative Approaches to Urban Renewal Research

Approaches to urban renewal by Abass (2021) highlight appropriate methods for dealing with urban problems and improving the infrastructure of slum neighbourhoods. Urban renewal may be seen as a panacea, and a building-by-building approach must take time to resolve such

difficulties. Kocak (2022) approaches urban renewal through a comparative interpretative method and proposes four urban renewal principles within the scope of human rights law to improve urban housing—a qualitative study using policy analysis, property trends and interviews.

A comparative study by Bowen (2009) used qualitative data collection methods, including 34 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, field observations and analysis of official documents. The results of the inquiry indicate that investments are necessary in the local economic and social infrastructure to ensure the quality and sustainability of community development in urban renewal initiatives. They created a strong and resilient partnership between governmental and local authorities, residents and philanthropic organisations.

Earlier comparative work by Idazi (2008) also focused on relative techniques for urban renewal, particularly the restoration of heritage sites in two different countries. From this approach, the study emphasises mechanisms and interrelationships that affect the process and product of urban renewal. More recent work by Idazi *et al.* (2022) approaches urban renewal using a social sustainability model in the context of historic regeneration based on Parsons' Systems Theory.

Karaman (2014) uses a qualitative approach in a case relating to communities' resistance to urban renewal. Karaman (2014) explores the various factors that shape the trajectories of resistance to urban renewal, including solidarity networks, levels of participation and trust in local neighbourhood associations, the strength of neighbourhood identity, extra-local support, and the traditions and channels of negotiation with state actors. Using qualitative methods, the study found that despite resident and non-profit organisations' efforts to improve the housing conditions for disadvantaged urban communities, state-led urban renewal projects have displaced thousands in Turkey.

Li *et al.* (2024), through an empirical study, follow an inductive research logic, with a comparative case study as the primary approach. Qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews, group discussions and participatory observations, were applied in extensive field investigations in the two case study neighbourhoods in Changning District, Shanghai. Li *et al.* (2024) aimed to better adapt multi-storey residential buildings for the needs of the country's ageing society, using the Changning District, Shanghai, as a case study. Using these methods, the study found that institutional co-production promoted substantial spatial change for elderly residents and stimulated administrative and bottom-up initiatives. However, the need for the state to provide a bottom line for more vulnerable actors was highlighted; an over-representation of dominant actors and uneven information assembly in the process also resulted in unequal distributions of benefits among actors (Li *et al.*, 2024).

Overall, qualitative approaches to urban renewal in cities draw heavily on grassroots approaches to development, citizen-centred development, issues relating to the right to the city, urban inclusivity and human rights debates within the built environment. While these approaches continue to evolve and develop, just as cities are changing and evolving, the same evolution in approaches is present within quantitative approaches to urban renewal.

5.5. SAMPLING AND PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT

From the study's case study design, non-probability sampling was most appropriate. Non-probability sampling uses subjective judgment and conveniently selects units from the population, often saving time and money for interviews (Ayhan, 2011).

Importantly, as with every aspect of research, non-probability sampling has strengths and limitations. The strengths of non-probability selection are that when conducting a questionnaire, the researcher will likely get a lower rejection rate than when designing and conducting a systematic or stratified survey. Sample sites may be safer, more convenient or more accessible (Vehora *et al.*, 2016). Some apparent limitations of non-probability sampling are that sample sizes are likely less representative of the entire population and only provide more representative results if a more homogeneous population is selected (Forster, 2001).

There are various non-probability sampling methods; the commonly known and widely used ones are the five main types. These are convenience, quota, snowball, self-selection and purposive (Palinkas *et al.*, 2013). While these sampling techniques are widely used, they receive some criticism and are often dismissed or criticised because they lack the statistical foundations of probability methods (Ames, 2019). For this study, a purposive sampling technique was applied.

5.5.1. Purposive Sampling Technique

Generally, the purposive sampling technique refers to a process in which units are selected because they have characteristics that a researcher needs in their sample (Danao, 2025). Under the theme of purposive techniques, typical case sampling, extreme case sampling, critical case sampling and expert sampling are used. Purposive sampling relies on the researcher's judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases or events that can provide the best information to achieve the study's objectives (Palinkas *et al.*, 2013; Campbell *et al.*, 2020). It is beneficial if you need to find information-rich cases or make the most out of limited resources, but it is at high risk for research partiality like observer bias (Omona, 2013).

This study combines two purposive techniques: expert sampling and typical case sampling. Expert sampling is applicable in selecting experts on urban renewal, such as town planner and

real estate agents, who have specialist knowledge of the area and its land use trends. It is commonly accepted within qualitatively orientated research that expert sampling requires individuals with a high level of knowledge about a particular subject. In such cases, experts are selected based on a demonstrable skillset or experience level (Tongco, 2007). This type of sampling is ideal for exploratory research. One of the benefits of expert sampling is that a sample is used to avoid information, or worse, research findings and recommendations being rejected because they have been obtained from suspect, perhaps even deviant, cases (Nel, 2020).

Typical case sampling is used in selecting Southernwood residents as participants, as they are likely to behave similarly to others, sharing the same characteristics or experiences within a defined geographical location. One of the benefits of typical case sampling is that it identifies and includes people who can be regarded as usual for a community or phenomenon (Palinkas *et al.*, 2015). For this study, these are residents of Southernwood in East London.

The study sampled 103 participants. The nature of the research questions guided the selection of participants for this study. Additionally, the sample size was determined by the nature of the research, as qualitative research is a time- and resource-consuming process, as well as by the participants' willingness to engage with the study. These participants included three (3) experts – the chief town planner, and two real estate agents – who were sampled using expert purposive sampling, and 100 participants were Southernwood residents, sampled using typical case sampling. Sample sizes were determined by the availability and willingness of participants. In terms of estate agents, the study chose the agents with the most listings in Southernwood.

The interviews were conducted either at the residents' homes or at the key informant's offices. Recruitment was based on Southernwood residency and, for experts, through their knowledge of the area. Sample saturation was determined by the time needed for an interview, which was an average of 20 (twenty) minutes per interviewee, leading to 33 hours of interview time, which was the time available to the researcher. Data saturation is characterised by the recurrence of themes among respondents. Different interview schedules (attached under Appendices 3, 4, and 5) were used for expert sampling groups. Telephonic calls and emails were used to recruit key informants to participate in the study. The key informant's details were taken from the public websites. The researcher went door-to-door to access resident participants. The number of participants was determined by willingness of participants to partake in the study.

These sampled groups were chosen as they had knowledge of urban renewal in the area, including historical renewal attempts and policy orientation of Southernwood. Additionally, this group of participants shares homogeneous features, such as residency; a large portion of the group consists of current students who attend HEIs in East London.

Having outlined the tools for participant selection, the following section describes the data collection and analysis process of this study.

5.6. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is gathering and measuring information on variables of interest. This information is systematically collected, enabling the researcher to answer the stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Taherdoost, 2021; Presser *et al.*, 2023). This study used both primary and secondary data.

5.6.1. Primary Data

Primary data is described as raw data or first-hand information (Taherdoost, 2022). The study utilised semi-structured interviews. These semi-structured interviews were administered to all 103 research participants. However, the interview schedules differ: one set was for those sampled using purposive expert sampling, which includes three experts, and the other was for those sampled using purposive typical case sampling for Southernwood residents (100).

Semi-structured interviews were used to solicit open-ended and in-depth responses from residents regarding the type of residential planning they prefer and whether the current planning effectively meets their spatial needs. Moreover, the aim was to find out the desired planning for Southernwood. For experts, the aim of semi-structured interviews was to ascertain the nature and condition of previous and current renewal attempts in Southernwood. Further, the aim of these open-ended interviews was to gain insight into the development of property transactions, the Southernwood real estate market and proposed strategies to improve the built environment. Overall, the interview schedules is in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 at the end of the research project.

5.6.2. Secondary Data

Secondary data is second-hand data already collected and recorded by some researchers for their purpose rather than for the current research problem (Martins, 2018). Ajayi (2016) emphasises that secondary data is accessible through data collected from different sources such as government publications, censuses, internal organisation records, books, journal articles and website reports. Secondary or pre-existing data was primarily collected from 12 public spatial planning documents. Supporting material, such as academic articles, was also used. These public planning documents include the East London Framework Plan (1996), SDFs (2002 - 2023), LUMSs and BEPPs (2022), a total of five (5) public planning documents. Other documents – seven in total – were used include Inner City Regeneration Charters, SDFs, and other urban planning-related documents as well as academic papers from the secondary sites of Maboneng, Florida Road and De Waterkant. These documents are essential for comparative

analysis of not only the site but also its conditions. The importance of secondary data lies in the ability of multiple data types to be used from historical to contemporary perspectives. Secondary data explicitly consists of public planning strategies within existing documents such as the IDP, SDF and BEPP.

The aim of these strategies was to solicit past, present and future urban planning strategies for the suburb of Southernwood. These public planning documents served to specifically inform the research about what type of spatial instruments and the extent of their use with application to Southernwood's renewal over the years. The documents contained in detail, the length of projects, collaboration with planning stakeholders as well as the financial situation with regards to existing renewal in Southernwood. Journal and books provided the theoretical background and literature on urban renewal.

5.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Different methods were used to analyse primary and secondary data. For this study on urban renewal, primary data analysis involved using a thematic analysis technique and detailed coding to highlight recurring themes in the data, extract meaning from those highlighted themes and establish a narrative. The analysis aimed to draw inferences, lessons and conclusions by condensing extensive data into small, understandable pieces of information. Secondary data relied on document analysis, also known as textual analysis, and the same coding technique was used as for primary data analysis; the only distinction is that secondary data already exists and does not need to be transcribed, as it is already in a transcribed format. The primary and secondary data analysis techniques aim to identify a code in the transcribed and existing data.

5.7.1. Primary Data

The primary data analysis gathered from semi-structured interviews was analysed using a thematic content analysis instead of a narrative analysis. A thematic content analysis begins with weeding out biases and establishing overarching impressions of the data (Humble & Mozellus, 2022). This data is coded to deduce meaning, highlight recurring themes and select a narrative from responses. Rather than approaching data with a predetermined framework, the aim is to organically identify common themes from the materials. The goal is to find common patterns across the dataset; overall, thematic content analysis aims to find common patterns across the data set (Guest *et al.*, 2020). The analysis process included collecting feedback from qualitative research, organising and transcribing, contextualising and segmenting data. In objective 1, 2 and 3, thematic analysis was used. Objective 4, used responses from objectives 1,2, 3 and document analysis.

Once data had been analysed, theme development started with reviewing recurring codes. Specifically, this happens by analysing all responses linked to a research question. From these responses, a narrative is extracted based on codes that regularly appear and those that are least frequent. In terms of expressing findings, while narratives and responses are provided, quotation marks are used to emphasise specific findings of the study. The reason for quotation marks is to emphasise responses. While italic, bold and underline types are three techniques for achieving emphasis, quotation marks are another method.

5.7.2. Secondary Data

Document analysis was applied to various types of documents, including books, newspaper articles, academic journal articles, and institutional reports. Any record containing text is a potential source for qualitative analysis (Patton, 2015). Analysing planning documents such as IDPs, SDFs, BEPP, and land use schemes was essential to understand spatial development. Documents included project planning documents from three field sites: Maboneng, Florida Road, and De Waterkant. Documents and those from projects are essential for tracing the development of land use regulations and specific property controls, which can encourage or deter spatial development. From these documents, past, present and prospective planning strategies were extracted.

After analysing both datasets, triangulation was applied to test validity by converging information from different sources (Carter, 2014). Pre-existing data are often used with other types of data for triangulation, a strategy designed to increase the trustworthiness of a study. Triangulation helps to determine if the findings of a study are consistent and to develop a deeper understanding of the topic being investigated (Guion, 2011).

5.8. LIMITATIONS

This study encountered four limitations: area and data; sampling and population; research design; and the level of crime in Southernwood, which impacted fieldwork. These limitations are discussed after the findings under section 8.5 in the last chapter of this thesis.

The first limitation of the study relates to the area and data. Southernwood is a densely populated suburb. However, the study did not obtain relevant and up-to-date data on the community. The plausible reasons for this are the lack of BCMM funds to conduct a census and the residency duration in the suburb. Each year, the demographic profile changes unpredictably due to new student allocation, drop-outs and mid-year relocations. As a result, it is challenging to predict demographic changes in Southernwood precisely.

The second limitation is sampling and participants. This study applied semi-structured interviews as an inquiry tool. Due to its time-consuming nature, the sample size was 100 participants with three (3) experts, a total of 103. The sample size was also hampered by the unwillingness of prospective participants for various reasons, such as their perceived lack of area knowledge, urban renewal strategies and urban planning techniques. Although a survey could have increased Southernwood residents' participation and representation, it would not have captured their detailed knowledge and perspectives as effectively as semi-structured interviews did. Further limitations presented by this study are the inability to secure population groups in business, policing and security, and other area stakeholders. Participant interaction in research can present several issues, including bias, ethical concerns, and practical challenges (De Souza *et al.*, 2024). These issues affected this study.

The research design and methods presented the third limitation. The study utilised an area- and time-bound case study design. Due to this constraint, investigation before the pre-1990s period was not feasible. The main reason for this is the availability of pre-1990 planning frameworks, and at the time, East London had not been unified into a single metropolitan area. Utilising other quasi-experimental designs would have expanded the scope. However, the case study design is qualitative and thus requires qualitative collection and analysis tools. The methods and tools were specifically designed for a study of a qualitative nature.

The fourth limitation was crime. Due to the high crime rate, attention had to be paid to participant and researcher safety during the fieldwork. Interviews had to be conducted during the day with the assistance of an area guide. As a result of the crime, the study could not fully explore every corner of Southernwood's participant pool. Earlier in this study, all respondents pointed towards crime as a thorn in the community's side. The findings also showed that several businesses relocated from Southernwood due to crime, although other formal businesses replaced them. The respondents proposed establishing a police station in the area, along with implementing extensive visible policing operations, to address crime primarily affecting students.

5.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study involves human participants. As such, an ethics application to conduct research was approved by Rhodes University (2023-7419-8247). The ethical clearance is attached at the end of the thesis as Appendix 1. The study did not involve participants under the age of 18. In line with human ethics principles, the nature of the study was explained before the interviews were conducted, and informed consent was obtained, as also outlined in Appendix 2.

This informed consent was explained to all respondents before interviews commenced. This assisted the study's respondents in making an informed decision on whether to participate or

not. The study ensured that all ethical protocols were explained to participants and that interviews were solely on a voluntary basis.

The study ensured that participant anonymity and privacy was upheld as respondent names were protected. According to Adarmouch *et al.* (2020), protecting the privacy of research participants is widely recognised as one of the standard ethical requirements for research. Importantly, confidentiality is essential as it serves as an agreement to maintain privacy (Kang, 2023), it follows on from consent to protect participants' identifiable data.

When reference was made to residence interviews, the term "resident" was used as a protective measure to refer to Southernwood participants, thereby protecting participant names in the results section. For experts, the study used "Town Planner" and "Estate Agent 1 and 2" to uphold their anonymity.

The right to withdraw was explained to participants. Should they feel uncomfortable with the questions or anything that may arise, they may withdraw.

Participants will receive research feedback upon completion of the study. Participants may choose the format of the summarised findings they want, either a written or an electronic copy.

5.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The preceding chapter covered the methods and tools used for this thesis. The initial part of the chapter focused on the research paradigms. It made a case for the use of an interpretivist paradigm as opposed to the use of a positivist paradigm. The initial part of this chapter extensively delineated the use of qualitative techniques informed by a qualitative approach due to the nature of how urban renewal is seen and understood through the paradigm lens. Also covered in the initial part of this chapter were in-depth discussions of the ontological and epistemological positions underpinning this thesis. The importance of these perspectives gives rise to the choice of research design and methods. The chapter also covered qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches to studying urban renewal. These approaches are essential in understanding what tools apply to urban renewal studies, the generated findings, and the epistemological positions concerning the present study.

The chapter's primary offering was the importance of a research design, particularly the case study design, which informs the qualitative approach to data collection. The chapter also covered the sampling and recruitment of participants. In the main, it discussed the use of two purposive sampling techniques and the type of recruits for the study. These recruits are primarily residents of Southernwood and experts from real estate, town planning, land use management, community policing and commerce entities. Data collection, specifically the use of primary and

secondary data, was discussed in this chapter as well. The latter part of this chapter covered the analysis of data for both primary and secondary data and the ethical considerations associated with this study. This chapter explicitly highlighted semi-structured interviews for primary data and pre-existing land use planning documents as secondary data.

The following chapter discusses findings collected using methods and tools discussed in this foregoing chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: PAST AND PRESENT RENEWAL STRATEGIES IN SOUTHERNWOOD

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents past and present renewal strategies, with discussions built from interview responses and East London's past (2000-2019) and present spatial policy (2019 to date). Past strategies date back to 2000, when the MSA (32 of 2000) was enacted, introducing new planning mechanisms, such as an IDP containing an SDF, to guide and inform local planning and set municipality development priorities. Present urban renewal strategies date from 2019 due to the latest municipal SDF (2019-2024).

In terms of structure, this chapter is organised into five main sections. The first section deals with past urban renewal in Southernwood, while the second section deals with present urban renewal in Southernwood. Other areas include; the current condition of Southernwood, concerns by residents and experts.

6.2. PAST URBAN RENEWAL

The following section discusses four past urban renewal strategies in Southernwood. The first is the sleeper site development, followed by the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, and the Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI), and the fourth strategy is the University Town Plan (UTP).

6.2.1. Sleeper Site

The sleeper site development shown in Figure 6.1, an open land parcel previously owned by Transnet, which the BCMM petitioned for in 1998 and was granted the land rights to the property in 2015. The site has remained unoccupied since 1990. According to a respondent [Town Planner, 22 November 2024], the CBD sleeper site is the most suitable land for urban renewal and mixed land use, although it is a stone's throw away from Southernwood. The proposed development of the sleeper site is a mixed-use zone (Figure 6.1) linking the CBD with HEIs and other nodes, such as medical institutions in East London. Although outside Southernwood, it is integral to the development and linkage of the UTP.

The sleeper site is approximately 1.26km from central Southernwood, with an area of 0.17km². The sleeper site connects the CBD to the beachfront and is roughly the same size as the CBD (Bank & Sibanda, 2018). The sleeper site framework plan was approved in 2016 and contains site subdivision for mixed land use, allocating land to HEIs within the site, a pedestrian network connecting the site to the East London beach and a CBD management model to oversee the development of streetscapes in the promotion of walkable city environments (BCMM BEPP,

2020). Although the sleeper site falls outside the boundary, it was conceptually identified as a development node to link Southernwood to the lower CBD of East London through a mixed land use corridor, as both areas fall within the urban development zone of central East London.



Figure 6.1: Sleeper Site, East London (Author)

The development corridor was planned in the late 1990s; however, the renewal mixed-use project stalled due to the non-release of land until 2015. Furthermore, the project development has remained in question due to municipal finances:

We [BCMM] wanted that sleeper site since 1998 already; we did a plan with Portnet [Transnet] and BCMM, we did a CBD plan and a sleeper plan, the idea was to wrestle the site away from Transnet, we only got the land release in 2015, it took 17 years to get a piece of government land they [Transnet] were not using, the land release is part of urban renewal, key land parcels.

We built a road through it [sleeper site] in 1998 to divert heavy truck traffic from Quigney, there were studies done, even American experts were involved. That sleeper site has not changed since 1990 [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Further, an interesting finding of the study is that, to date, an operational budget has yet to be allocated to the development of the sleeper site by the BCMM despite the site being documented as a development strategy for inner-city land development for over 20 years. The initial site plan was meant to develop a science park, mixed-use offices, residential lots, including student accommodation and a knowledge hub to link HEIs to city entities like the West Bank Logistics

hub and ELIDZ, as well as medical entities in and around central East London (BCMM SDF, 2003). Based on Google Earth observations and site visits, the site (Figure 6.1) remains vacant, and issues such as land invasion have not occurred.

The initial plans for the site, which include the work done by American experts, could not be made available for this study. The City's planning policy has since 2002 referenced its development; 22 years later. There has been no development on the site. The site remains vacant; a significant and successful development was a 2020 sectional road construction project linking the R72 to the N2 route at a project cost of R52 million (BCMM, 2020).

This study found that the previous spatial policy [BCMM SDF 2003, 2013] for East London cites the main drivers of the sleeper site project as the BCMM. Between 2003 and 2006, R300 000 was allocated to the Densification Strategy for Special Development Areas of East London, which include Southernwood and the sleeper site. The densification strategy consists of drawing plans for site developments in the city, as shown below in Figure 6.2.



Figure 6.2: Sleeper site zoning (BCMM BEPP, 2023)

The present planning agenda of the BCMM is fixated on joint projects between the state and the public sector (BCMM SDF, 2013; BCMM BEPP, 2023), emphasising laissez-faire approaches to the site's development and urban development throughout the city. Private initiatives were discussed to integrate with the smart city strategy for the sleeper site. The smart city strategy is a proposed linkage between the East London Industrial Development Zone

(ELIDZ) and the sleeper site, which comprises high-speed data cables that go to the site for ICT projects for skills development:

We tried to link that as well in the last SDF [2019] to the internet, the WI-FI. We were going to get a cable to come in and we said fine, that's going to make the IDZ an attractive place to be. They had a science centre there, and we said you can link that science centre with the students that are here; what can the IDZ, with its internet, do to support students and bring in the fourth industrial revolution" [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The study also found, in the 2013 BCMM SDF, preparation of an institutional long-term financing strategy – a project preparation activity including analyses of feasibility options and investigations into alternative and innovative project financing through vehicles such as PPP, which were envisioned to assist the city to fast-track the implementation of catalytic programmes which of the sleeper site forms part. However, development of the sleeper site is yet to occur due to several challenges, particularly finance and investment. The study also found that the municipality's overall financial position is a cause for concern for urban renewal and essential service delivery throughout East London and Southernwood:

But we are dealing now, like the rest of South Africa, with bankrupt municipalities. [September 2024] ... We are almost bankrupt if we are not already bankrupt, so there will be no money to fill posts; urban renewal is difficult [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Besides project finance, another challenge to the sleeper site is the need for more partnerships, despite BCMM policy advocating for greater private sector involvement. Contrary to the study's findings is the misalignment between policy and interview responses. Interview data shows private actors must still fully commit to the sleeper site development. Among the plausible explanations for these findings is that while BCMM policy advocated for private industry in land use development, particularly that of the sleeper site, there must be a balance between private concessions and government requirements. The findings indicate that institutional leadership is one of the significant issues within the urban renewal machinery of BCMM:

Even if you have a department full of people doing urban renewal, if there isn't that leadership at political level with business buy in, your staff are going to be running around without a mission [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

There is no dedicated urban renewal office or directorate within the BCMM; perhaps a specialised structure for urban renewal is necessary for project success as it allows for a concentration of expertise on urban renewal. No dedicated urban renewal unit exists, meaning

no specialist urban renewal practitioners drive projects. Urban renewal is cited as an intricate process requiring specialists to succeed, since it extends beyond physical land improvements and entails a socioeconomic and environmental perspective:

Urban renewal, in a way, is one of the most complicated things to get right because everyone has to work together, when you are trying to get urban renewal to happen, of course it's the built environment, but it's also economical and there is a social angle to that, you have to get all those things going, it's difficult [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Also, the study found that a lack of partnerships regarding urban renewal is not only an issue in the field site of Southernwood but throughout the city of East London, which is, as previously mentioned, somewhat contradictory to the indications of BCMM spatial policy. The study found that a lack of partnerships, leadership and institutional capacity is a limitation and impediment to urban renewal projects in the city. This is evident through the need for PPPs in land development in central East London:

We do not work traditionally with the private sector; the government has to do everything on its own, and there is no room for the private sector [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

As the sleeper site falls outside the area of Southernwood, its residents need to learn the intricacies of its development. Also, respondents of Southernwood have indicated that they have a stay of 3-4 years in the suburb, which could explain why little is known about the site's development or any other development predating several years. Another possible limitation could be the time-consuming nature of establishing urban renewal frameworks, performance indicators and outcomes for development wherein multiple stakeholders are involved, each with their own interests.

Regarding beneficiaries, the sleeper site development was to include a new development corridor of mixed land use linking Southernwood with the CBD. The beneficiaries include residents of Southernwood and the adjacent suburb of Quigney. These suburbs share the same land use features, such as extensive residential flats and a young professional and student population. Despite the land release for the sleeper site in 2015, urban renewal and site development are yet to materialise since plans were conceptualised in 1998 for site development. A land release backlog, budgetary constraints and a lack of partnerships for the inner-city project drive the overall findings concerning the sleeper site development.

6.2.2. Pedestrianisation of Oxford Street

The “Pedestrianisation of Oxford Street” is a 2013 urban renewal upgrade for the main street bordering Southernwood. The urban renewal project was driven by upgrading the existing road and pedestrian infrastructure to promote walkability in central East London, as shown in Figure 6.3 below.



Figure 6.3: Oxford Street, East London (Author)

The project intended to integrate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure into the transport system to encourage non-motorised transport (NMT) within the city and make it more attractive. The underlying principle for BCMM planning is refocusing on the need for efficient, walkable, compact cities. According to Google Earth Oxford Street is a 3.3km route dividing central East London's east and west parts.

The project was assumed under “Humanising the City” within the city's integrated transport system framework, wherein an urban transport system was to be improved in conjunction with walkability, as previously mentioned. The aim was a system designed at a human scale, meaning route planning and transit were centred on promoting ‘a safe, pleasant environment for walking, will contribute to a more attractive city’ (BCMM SDF, 2013, p. 147). The aim of the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street was to develop a public non-motorised transportation system.

Apart from promoting the city as attractive, other conditions that necessitated the project were threefold: it was enacted due to the area’s high traffic volumes and motor congestion.

The second condition, based on respondent interviews, was the high pedestrian volumes of Southernwood residents transiting between the CBD and its neighbouring suburb of Southernwood, and thirdly, it was based on that a significant number of people within the area need access to a private car or public transport for daily transport in East London. Spatial policy claims that access to work, education, especially for students, and other activities is done by walking.

Regarding the actual project parameters, the length of the pedestrianisation is approximately a 0.87km section of Oxford Street's 3.4km length, which borders Southernwood from Muir Street to the St Andrews Road intersection of northern Southernwood. The project was initially published in the 1996 East London Framework Plan, and reiterated for publication in 2013 under the theme of promoting walkability in the city. In all BCMM spatial plans from 1996, street improvements and public infrastructure maintenance were mentioned, with Oxford Street as the primary focus. A respondent [Town Planner] noted that the city is falling short in this regard as these plans have yet come to fruition:

The public realm is a mess, it is the streets, the roads and the parks are falling to pieces, and there is not even the basics getting done in Southernwood, never mind urban renewal which talks to about economic stimulation.

Our LED (Local Economic Development) unit should be front and centre. There is an LED unit, but it's missing in action, engineering infrastructure for pavement is missing in action, taxi and the BCM bus transport are missing, and the taxis have taken over that space. Formal and informal transport is available for students who want to move around safely. It's not just urban renewal, it's also LED. [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Respondents living in Southernwood, especially the student contingent and estate agents, were unanimous in their calls for street and pedestrian improvements in the area, which have been cited as needing significant attention. As a densely populated inner-city suburb, Southernwood experiences extensive traffic and a high volume of pedestrians. Confronting the vast traffic and pedestrians, are decaying streets and sidewalks which are yet to receive attention, according to all respondents:

It will end up looking like the backstreets of Nairobi, dirt and potholes. Southernwood could end up looking like that, informality and gangs [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Despite their short tenure, all respondents interviewed admitted that they have not seen any extensive form of street and pavement revitalisation in Southernwood and the bordering Oxford Street. On countless occasions, all student respondents who walk to HEIs and the CBD have used Oxford Street, citing it as a busy but safer route to and from HEIs and the CBD. However, the safety aspect of Oxford Street is limited to daytime transits along the route. The study found

that despite its frequent use by Southernwood residents, it is also a stretch of road where common robbery occurs, especially after 6:00 pm. Respondents cited a lack of lighting as one of the factors perpetuating common robberies on Oxford Street in the early evening hours.

Unfortunately, respondents openly admitted to not knowing and, therefore, not reading urban planning documents of BCMM wherein such strategies are contained. As a result, their knowledge of previous urban strategies could be improved. The study found that despite the need for knowledge of past urban renewal projects, some student respondents felt projects of this nature would only benefit building and property owners:

Building owners, because this place is congested with flats and all that. I don't think it's about students because there is still crime; it's the building owners who will benefit from street improvements which will make their properties attractive [Southernwood Resident, 24 November 2024]

Despite the above sentiments, respondents were optimistic when the project was explained to them, adding that increased police presence, surveillance and street lighting along the stretch of road would be a welcome development. In terms of the physical condition of Oxford Street, the study found that heavy traffic volumes significantly contribute towards the deterioration of infrastructure, which has yet to receive significant attention. Also, unfinished public works on the stretch of road and pedestrian sidewalks are an added feature of the deterioration of the street. Overall, traffic and pedestrians are attributed to the Southernwood population and neighbouring areas of Vincent, the CBD, Quigney and Berea.

Due to its unique central location, Southernwood is a thoroughfare to these suburbs, hence the volume of traffic and pedestrians cited by respondents. The main project driver for the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street is the BCMM. However, yet to feature in this project are HEIs of East London, and the large contingent of its students residing in the suburb of Southernwood. The study found that pedestrianisation aims to improve and promote the city's image and merge integrated land use with walkability. Despite this development premise, the lack of an operational framework for the project could be one of the challenges deterring private investment. The study found that despite the attention given to providing safe sidewalks and walkways on major routes, including Oxford Street, a pedestrianisation masterplan and operational framework for the city is absent, which is a challenge to the project's success (BCMM SDF, 2003; 2013).

Ultimately, the sternest challenges to this urban renewal initiative are the previously discussed sleeper site development, finance and the absence of an operational framework for pedestrianisation. As previously mentioned, the BCMM is under severe financial strain, which bears on service delivery and implementing urban renewal projects in the city. Unfortunately,

no operational budget has been allocated to the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street as a stand-alone renewal project in central East London. As a result, the pedestrianisation project is yet to materialise.

6.2.3. Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI)

The Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI), established in 2003 under the broader theme of the UDZ, is an incentive-based strategy to promote and stimulate investment within inner-city areas of East London. These inner-city areas comprise Quigney, the CBD and, most crucially, Southernwood. The renewal strategy aims to revive the inner city, create jobs and attract more people to live there. In achieving this strategy, building proprietors and investors are enticed, through tax incentives, to refurbish existing buildings within these areas.

The study found that the operational framework of the incentive is centred on investor eligibility. Investors can receive a 20% tax deduction in the first year of earning income, plus an annual depreciation of 20% over four years (BCMM SDF, 2013; BCMM SDF, 2019, p. 153). For new developments, this incentive offers a tax deduction of 20% in the first year plus an annual depreciation of 5% for the next 16 years. The study further found that as early as 2002, BCMM, along with other metropolitan areas in South Africa, was requested by the National Treasury (NT) to identify areas to benefit from tax incentives being made available for urban renewal by the national government. The URTI introduced by NT aimed to encourage investment in the inner cities of the 16 largest cities in South Africa, including East London. The overall intention was for the URTI to stimulate the refurbishment and construction of commercial and residential buildings in designated decaying inner city areas.

Furthermore, the URTI makes provisions for PPPs in mixed-use developments that integrate social facilities into new commercial and residential developments (BCMM SDF, 2019). Potential PPP development partners broadly include HEIs for Southernwood, as these institutions house a significant portion of their students in procured accommodation in Southernwood. Moreover, according to estate agents, these flats are not only limited to students, but many also house young working professionals.

Importantly, in the interest of urban renewal, the URTI supports other initiatives, such as policies to write off existing bad debt from inner-city buildings to allow for these buildings to be sold, restored and refurbished. The URTI is a significant development strategy for Southernwood as the area is intensified with high-rise flats, as shown in Figure 6.4. Regarding Southernwood's residential configuration, most residential multi-story dwellings are concentrated towards the western part of the suburb. In contrast, the eastern part of the suburb consists extensively of single residential dwellings.

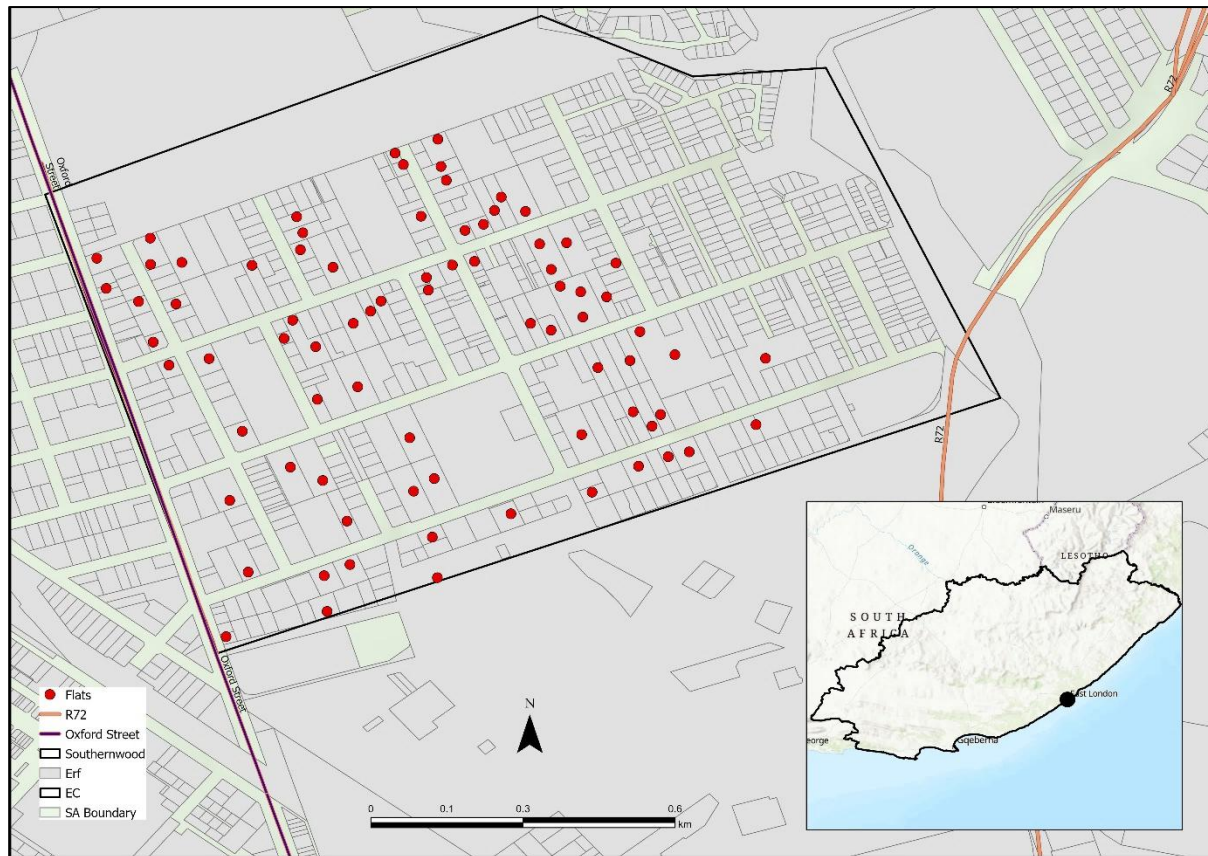


Figure 6.4: Distribution of Flats in Southernwood (Author)

One of the benefits of the URTI in Southernwood is that since the early 2000s, the area has seen less stringent regulation concerning property erections and development. According to a respondent [Town Planner] who has worked on East London's planning controls for over 30 years, the spatial position of planners has been since the 1990s and 2000s to allow Southernwood to 'grow organically' into a densified inner-city suburb.

Regarding planning, there is no red tape, just a light touch. If you want to do flats, erf size is not a problem, if you want a shop go for it, what's happened is that Southernwood has grown more organically, what you see there is mostly student accommodation. We have got out of the way as planning to make it easy for people to rezone. [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The main project driver of the URTI is BCMM, which processes land and building applications for sub-divisions and rezonings related to lot size and height requirements in the area. While the BCMM drives the URTI, the primary beneficiaries are residents through improved property and area aesthetics. Building owners and developers also greatly benefit from the URTI as it markets their buildings more attractively, thereby drawing tenants (BCMM IDP, 2019). The URTI is essential for Southernwood as many buildings' pre-dates 1990 despite some recent developments, especially HEIs who have procured and built flats in the area. While the URTI

makes provisions for building erections, the prerogative is given to improving existing buildings, which primarily entails extensions, additions, and refurbishments.

There are three primary beneficiaries of the URTI project: the first is the BCMM, which is achieved through improved property development and a stable and broadened revenue collection base, which includes land and utilities. The second is building owners because the refurbishment of buildings improves building property prices and attractiveness, which ensures sustainable building occupancy. The third beneficiaries are residents of Southernwood, who, through improved buildings in the area, reside in refurbished flats.

However, despite the financial strategy, the URTI has planning challenges like finance. Although separately financed, issues of inadequate delivery of essential services and the decay of public infrastructure have a bearing on the development of Southernwood and its general appeal. Further challenges to the success of the URTI include a reduction in revenue collection [Town Planner, September 2024]. A rate deduction through the URTI allows property owners surplus capital to develop the property. However, it poses a disadvantage to the revenue collection base for BCMM. Despite tax benefits to projects and building developments, a municipality's inability to generate the tax base needed to sustain and expand public services and amenities poses a significant development challenge. One limitation of the URTI is that while it has residential and commercial building aspects, Southernwood has few commercial properties, as multi-story and single stand-alone residential buildings dominate the area.

Unfortunately, the study could not attain property records with transactions for properties and land developed through the URTI. However, there are moderately new high-density buildings in Southernwood, especially those along St Marks Road and Gately Street. Overall, the URTI remains in situ within Southernwood and other inner-city locations. While sustained investment in property benefits Southernwood, service delivery issues, crime and decay counteract and deter the developmental nature of the URTI. For urban renewal to succeed, many factors within the local area need to work together towards the area's improvement. These integrated factors include policing, resource allocation, granting of planning privileges, urban design, service delivery, spatial regulation provision and investment by public and private actors in land use development.

6.2.4. University Town Plan (UTP)/ Concept (UTC)

The fourth past renewal strategy is the University Town Plan/ Concept (UTP/ UTC), see Figure 6.5. The UTP and UTC are interchangeable concepts that define the role, operation and impact of HEIs on the city's growth, development and innovation in land use development, integration and economic development (BCMM SDF, 2013; Bank and Sibanda, 2018).

Since the early 1990s, the town of East London formulated the UTP/ UTC, an integrated urban strategy to link the city's HEIs with the city's development and growth. The UTC aimed to promote HEI research, innovation and enterprise to impact the city's development. Central to the UTC framework is the cooperation between landlords, the West Bank Logistics hub, HEIs, the municipality and other businesses in central East London (BCMM SDF, 2013). The overall goal of the UTC is to create a city development plan and network whereby HEIs in the city operate to strengthen, complement each other, and link their education offerings to the needs of the local economy.

Despite being a project for central East London, the UTC's central node was determined to be the sleeper site development discussed under section 6.1.1. An operational budget of R325 million was initially proposed for the UTC's science and technology park. The science and technology park is an ELIDZ and BCMM initiative linking businesses with local HEIs. The initiative also includes linkages with the West Bank Logistics hub, an industrial and commercially agglomerated zone consisting of a port, offices and a container terminal.

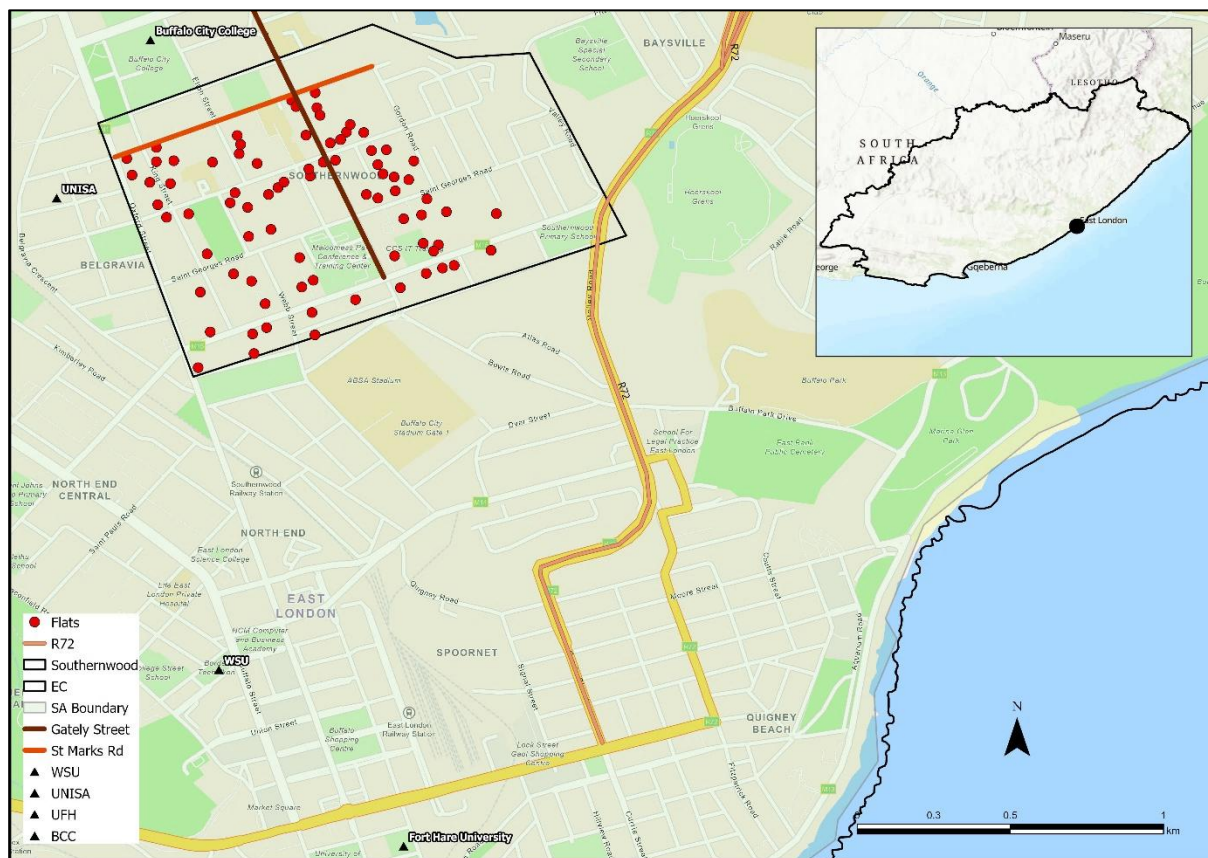


Figure 6.5: UTP/ UTC in East London (Author)

At present, the UTC is anchored by four main HEIs in East London: Walter Sisulu University (WSU), University of Fort Hare (UFH), UNISA and Buffalo City College (BCC). The UTC strategy was conceptually drawn to include HEIs, industrial entities, commercial entities and medical

institutions as supplementing partners in its development. According to a respondent [Town Planner] who has been central to the UTC since its early proposals in the 1990s:

We have students, which are there [in Southernwood], their medical facilities that are there, nobody wants to put two and two together because the council doesn't work with business either, they don't work with business, so nobody wants to step across to the hospitals and say okay, what can we do, go to the Universities and say can you or what can you offer and how can we make it work [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The study found that there is yet to be adequate cooperation between the public and private realms in extensive urban renewal projects in East London:

They keep saying we must work with the private sector; the latest SDF mentions it, but local government doesn't work with the private sector, it doesn't work with anybody, they just work on their own in their corner. So, there's no way to say how can we work with the Border Kei chamber [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The study also found that the inability and difficulty in establishing partnerships for urban renewal projects in East London is a recurring theme from respondents. Apart from the BCMM with its financial constraints, private businesses and HEIs in East London have also been unable to establish concrete frameworks for land use development despite conceptual plans. In support of the previous finding, the study also found through the central figure in the planning and development of East London [Town Planner] that the inability to establish partnerships in the city extends beyond the Southernwood context:

How can we work with business? How can we work with the IDZ, we [BCMM] own a portion of the IDZ, so it's our vehicle how can we work with you, what can business do, there seems to be no regular meetings, you would think the mayor would meet CEO of the IDZ and the universities, all the big guys, the heads of health departments and the private sector to get all the big guys, when they get together things start to happen or might happen. [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The severest challenge to the success of the UTC is cooperation between parties within East London; another significant challenge is developing measures and a central body to oversee its implementation. The study did not find any existing policy plan to jointly promote land use development between the BCMM and HEIs of East London within Southernwood, which house thousands of students from various HEIs in the city.

Despite the challenge, respondents [Town planner and estate agents] argue that the existing conditions of Southernwood, particularly its population composition and density, are favourable for a multi-stakeholder renewal approach. Notwithstanding the challenges to the UTC, there are

merits to the strategy. The study found that the continued investment in Southernwood property, particularly HEI investment in multi-story residences for students, is a developmental aspect which needs to be cultivated.

Unfortunately, all student respondents are yet to gain prior knowledge of the UTC planning policy. Despite its planning since the 1990s and post-2000, the UTC today is still an urban strategy for the city, which still needs to secure funding; despite some successes in the absence of a framework, finance and joint partnership funding constraints are cited as the project's limitation. One example of the UTC development is former residential flats on St Marks and St. Georges Roads in Southernwood. These high-density and multi-story buildings have been bought and refurbished into high-end student units contracted to UFH. At the same time, WSU also has multiple properties in Southernwood.

The study also found that estate agents in the area recall the project but have explicitly stated that they have not been involved in its development framework. Regarding project drivers, the UTC is driven by the BCMM and HEIs in East London, particularly WSU and UFH, which have invested in and continue to invest in the Southernwood property.

The primary beneficiaries of the UTC include not only the City of East London but also students and partnering entities discussed earlier under this theme. Students of Southernwood are in line to receive area investment and improved access to business and research through HEIs' collaborations with other BCMM stakeholders. Partnering entities in East London may benefit from the UTC through student research and spatial policy integration, which promotes and extends business influence, such as real estate and commercial development. Overall, the UTC remains an urban strategy concerning Southernwood and other inner-city locations of East London.

Past renewal strategies in East London and Southernwood have encountered extensive circumstances that have hindered their success, primarily due to financial and institutional constraints. Extensive fiscal resources and policies have largely favoured previously disadvantaged areas of the city, particularly those outside the city boundary, such as Mdantsane, Dimbaza, and Duncan Village. For example, Mdantsane is one of the biggest townships in South Africa after Soweto; it was established to accommodate black labour working in industries bordering East London in the 1960s (Busayo *et al.*, 2019). It can be hypothesised that the urgent development needs of these areas are prioritised above the needs of the inner city, swayed by conditions, population and the historical context of marginalisation.

Overall, past urban renewal strategies in Southernwood have been unsuccessful, partly due to the various reasons mentioned throughout the discussion. As a result, some of the past renewal strategies have been remodelled into present strategies for continued development objectives.

Only UTP and URTI have yielded some developmental progress regarding property development and building infrastructure in Southernwood. The transition from past renewal strategies to present ones (discussed in the following section) shows that, despite some positive development trends, past strategies in Southernwood have been largely unsuccessful.

The following discussion covers present urban renewal strategies in Southernwood.

6.3 PRESENT URBAN RENEWAL

The following section discusses five current urban renewal strategies in Southernwood, 2019 to date, with 2019-2024 being the latest IDP alongside its accompanying SDF and BEPP. This discussion of results begins with the University Town Concept (UTC)/ Anchor Institution Strategy (AIS). The UTC/AIS focuses on knowledge institutions as economic drivers and catalysts for urban development in central East London. The second strategy is the Southernwood Local Spatial Development Framework (LSDF), which establishes the conditions for Southernwood's distinctive land use controls. The third is the Buy Back Centre (BBC), a joint waste management strategy in Southernwood. The fourth is the Recreational Communal Parks (RCP) and multi-purpose centre. The RCP focuses on promoting and developing hard and soft recreational spaces as well southernwood and the multi-purpose centre, a multi-story centre envisioned as a compact mixed-use precinct.

6.3.1. The University Town Concept / Anchor Institution Strategy

Initially proposed in the early 2000s, the UTC, also known as the AIS, is still an ongoing and active strategy for East London. The revised definition maintains the emphasis on the role of HEIs in city development but distinguishes AIS by shifting from research-based initiatives and connections to city growth toward a focus on economic stimulation and an enhanced role for the private sector, led by the HEIs of East London.

The UTC/AIS is a planning mechanism that utilises partnerships between HEIs, the corporate sector, and the government to fuel job growth and redevelopment in targeted areas of East London, particularly Southernwood and the sleeper site. The premise for this plan is based on collaboration and productivity resulting from proximity, wherein urban development and employment creation are driven through the intentional clustering of businesses, HEIs, institutions, people and ideas (Bank & Sibanda, 2018).

The UTC/AIS is about establishing and improving place-based opportunities using HEIs to drive city development. The aim is for HEIs to play a more instrumental role in shaping the built environment and economic profile of East London (Bank & Sibanda, 2018). To improve blighted urban areas, the UTC/AIS connects the scholarship of innovation to the theory and practice of

economic development, real estate investment, urban design and land use planning (Sibanda & Ntombana, 2022). The overarching principle for this mode of urban renewal and development is predicated on concentrating development on a specific area instead of city-wide projects.

Generally, UTC/AISs are not a new phenomenon; they are applied throughout South Africa as a modus for developing a town or city's land use around HEIs. Moreover, in some instances, they are also referred to as Innovation Districts (IDs). The UTC aims to create social integration, create employment opportunities, and promote economic stimulation within central East London.

One of the nuances of the UTC/AIS from the one conceived in the early 2000s is the introduction of the Buffalo City Metropolitan Development Agency (BCMDA) into the strategy. One of the roles of the BCMDA, since 2015, is to promote property management and commercialisation. Specifically, to acquire, plan, develop and manage land and buildings (BCMM SDF, 2024). In terms of commercialisation, the UTC strategy, with Southernwood being one of its areas of intervention, is focused on area-developing incentives for property owners such as slumlords to improve their properties.

In East London, the UTC focuses on prospects of urban renewal through place-based opportunities jointly explored between BCMM HEIs and other role players. While the UTC is primarily a HEI-driven strategy, the BCMM has a conceptual model to promote urban development around HE infrastructure, such as student residences in Southernwood. Ultimately, planning documents acknowledge that “the project seeks to encourage the diversification of the urban economy. It is intended that the Knowledge and Innovation Precinct will assist with the revitalisation of the inner-city areas” (BCMM SDF, 2024, p. 204).

The study found that the promotion of the UTC/AIS is based on attempts to boost Southernwood's economic performance and link education offerings to the needs of the regional and national economies (BCMM SDF, 2024). However, the success of the UTC is predicated on the finalisation of the Southernwood LSDF, which is discussed in the following section, as it allows for extensive integration of Southernwood's land use. Since 2000, 19 LSDFs have been finalised in East London; the one for Southernwood is still outstanding (BCMM SDF, 2024).

The study also found that respondents felt that cooperation between the state and higher education is the only precondition necessary for the urban renewal of Southernwood. At present, there are four HEIs with an interest in Southernwood as host to a large number of students. While these institutions are outside the area of Southernwood, only Buffalo City College (BCC) is located within the Southernwood boundary, as shown in Figure 6.5.

The financial structure and stakeholder participation still need to be clarified despite the framework. The study also found that despite the state's financial shortcomings, establishing PPPs is one of the hindrances to the fulfilment of urban renewal in Southernwood and throughout East London:

Nobody wants to step across to the hospitals and say okay, what can we do, go to the universities and say can you or what can you offer and how can we make it work. The theory is there: how can the education institutions back up the medical, and how can the medical support? Can there be something? Other cities seem to do it [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The study identified the primary challenge to implementing the UTC as the need for partnerships in East London and the complexity of coordinating a large network of stakeholders, including HEIs, medical organisations, private companies, and civic groups. Another UTC challenge in East London and Southernwood is that, apart from BCC and UNISA, the HEIs in the city are satellite campuses based outside East London.

As a result, there are continued efforts to retain WSU and UFH as anchor institutions in East London (BCMM SDF, 2024). Despite this challenge, the UTC has promoted land use development in Southernwood, wherein former residential flats on St Mark and St. George's Roads have been bought and refurbished into high-end student units contracted to UFH (BCMM SDF, 2024). WSU also has a variety of recently refurbished student accommodation in Southernwood.

The study also found that there are numerous challenges, particularly the unmet preconditions to urban renewal in Southernwood, as well as the need for concrete operational plans within the SDF to not only bring conceptual plans to policy but also to allow the area stakeholders to access and merge their endeavours to SDF priorities beyond conceptual work:

We [City Planning] thought the ideas were pretty good but there was nobody to take it forward, so the SDF is just theory, well not theory just text, it needs people to do it and there aren't people to do anything so just doing the basics in Southernwood. Picking up waste, litter, crime and that kind of stuff which isn't urban renewal as such, maybe a precondition to urban renewal even that you can see what's happen, nobody is picking up waste. [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

As a result of these combinations, urban renewal remains a challenge in Southernwood and throughout central East London. Present spatial policy and land use plans still need to integrate the private sector or HEIs into planning frameworks, which is a concern. Overall, the general condition of Southernwood, with its physical challenges, has led the town planner, estate

agents, and residents to conclude that attracting the desired investment to the area is unlikely if the area's aesthetic is not given the attention it requires: *The visual condition of the place does not attract business and investment; that is this city [Town Planner, 22 November 2024].*

The AIS is still an active strategy for central East London and Southernwood. However, according to a publication by Bank and Sibanda (2018), one of the questions has been whether HEIs need to contribute to development and place-making in East London.

6.3.2 The Southernwood Local Spatial Development Framework

The second urban renewal strategy is the Southernwood LSDF. The LSDF is a micro-SDF designed to further integrate land use in Southernwood using a unique zoning framework distinct from surrounding frameworks. The primary aim of the LSDFs is to set and configure existing land use instruments and create new guidelines for developing land in Southernwood. This means that, while the BCMM has its primary SDF, Southernwood will use a distinct strategy whereby its land use differs from surrounding land uses in terms of density and intensity requirements and property size regulation. These changes include revisions to improve the minimum erf size of parent properties in Southernwood, which is 2000m² for townhouses and high-density flats. Overall, the LSDF in Southernwood exists to create a spatially and structurally distinct and densified inner-city suburb. The study found that the aim of the LSDF is threefold.

First, it is a mechanism to encourage greater building density in Southernwood and greater densities in other central suburbs of East London. While density is the aim, the lessons of abandoned property, vandalism and illegalities associated with vacant urban property in the central city have prompted a stern focus on urban densification and intensification.

Second, the LSDF aims to promote property development through less stringent regulation. One main deterrent to building development and property rezoning is the building and lot size requirements for erecting new structures. The study found that Southernwood's land use regulation is configured to accommodate a variety of land uses, with rezoning encouraged by planners to ensure building occupancy and to deter vacant property in Southernwood by fast-tracking land rezoning applications in the interest of land use development: *We identified urban renewal areas as town planners, we have then said what we can do is don't worry about the regulation, apply [Town Planner, 22 November 2024].*

Also, extensive student accommodation in Southernwood has anchored planners to focus land use development on high-density dwellings:

Instead of trying to control what happens in Southernwood, let's just do mixed-use, allow mixed-use. We haven't got workshops there that emit noxious gasses and stuff like that. We don't have a specific policy if you want to do flats, erf size is not a problem, if you

want a shop go for it, what you see there is mostly student accommodation. We have got out of the way as planning to make it easy for people to rezone, which may have had a bit of a difference in urban renewal areas of which Southernwood falls under. [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The third aim of Southernwood's LSDF is to promote the area as an ideal destination for commerce and residency. Despite Southernwood being clustered with high-density dwellings, as shown in Figure 6.5, a sizable portion of the inner-city suburb contains single residential housing to which the LSDF also responds with proposed fewer restrictions on controls to develop the property, given the development does not have resident objections or are commercially unsuitable. The LSDF's aim to promote the area is predicated on using urban tax incentives, which provide discounted property rates to businesses and other commercial property forms, such as flats, which may relocate or be erected in Southernwood.

Overall, the LSDF's mechanisms involve the adjustment of land controls within the scheme boundary of Southernwood, as it now falls under the Inner-City Urban Renewal Area (ICURA). These adjustments promote higher densities, promote mixed land use varieties, and lessen property control over rezoning. Notably, the study found that further scheme measures to ensure Southernwood is distinct from the surrounding suburbs of central East London include relaxed controls for erecting buildings and specified zones. Furthermore, these relaxed controls include the combined use of buildings and the external appearance of buildings.

The primary challenge, however, of the Southernwood LSDF (and LSDFs in general) is the amendment of the zoning scheme in Southernwood. While regulations have been relaxed for over 20 years, amending the zoning scheme presents numerous challenges to the area in the present and future settings. These challenges include, but are not limited to, uneven erf development and demarcation, long-term land use incompatibility and commercial infringements on residential property. Through secondary data (BCMM IDP, 2013), the study found that another challenge to LSDF implementation is land acquisition, spatially fragmented settlement patterns, unmanaged urbanisation, signage of by-laws to ensure compatibility with LSDFs, low-density settlement tracts, physical constraints limiting the availability of usable land, as well as formal and informal land rights.

Another challenge to the Southernwood LSDF and other proposed inner-city LSDFs is that previously disadvantaged areas have taken precedence in the planning order of East London, particularly areas such as Dimbaza and Mdantsane. Beyond area focus, challenges to Southernwoods LSDF are presented by state attempts to secure land for development, which outer-lying areas have; hence, they have been prioritised:

The SDF from a long time ago identified that we have to open up new land, take a loan over 25 years for infrastructure and charge rates on that infrastructure and then you have a whole suburb paying off the loan. The only thing we have built are RDP houses and those houses don't bring in any money, they cost money, we need to open up suburbs. We have no new areas to bring in income to expand the rate base. We have to encourage business to come and invest [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Although the Southernwood LSDF is yet to be fully implemented and passed, the present scheme of Southernwood, which has seen significant regulatory flexibility, has, to an extent, promoted land use intensification through organic urban growth, particularly that of high-density buildings, which are a dominant feature in Southernwood. Organic urban growth is an avenue planners took to promote development pending the finalisation of the LSDF area, which has taken over 24 years to complete. As discussed earlier, from 2003 to 2013, 14 LSDFs were approved in East London. Only 19 LSDFs have been approved in East London, and Southernwood is yet to feature despite an approved budget of R700 000 for its development (BCMM SDF, 2013).

Overall, land use planning, particularly the amendment of area size land use controls, is a meticulous process, especially for areas with high density. While present considerations are essential, future land use forms are also central to minimising issues of incompatibility. Also, setting standards for urban land is more of a challenge than setting standards for land on the fringes of a city, where property is usually more affordable and less dense settlement patterns exist. Investors and the property market are critical for areas such as Southernwood. All these factors could contribute to the implementation of LSDFs in Southernwood.

6.3.3 The Southernwood Buy Back Centre (BBC)

The Southernwood Buy Back Centre (BBC) is part of East London's Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP). According to the BCMM (BCMM SDF, 2013), the BBC was set up in 2021 by the BCMM, Border Kei Chamber of Businesses (BKCOB) and Mercedes Benz to assist in keeping the city clean.



Figure 6.6: Buy Back Centre in Southernwood (Author)

The BBC (Figure 6.6) is a centre in Southernwood where people recycle; it acts as an incentive to realise that there is value in waste management by providing a centre for waste disposal. The BBC aims to curb Southernwood's ongoing littering and illegal dumping crisis. It offers cash incentives to those who recycle paper, glass and plastics. On receiving recycled material, payments are made in "kilorands". Residents can spend kilorands at participating mainstream chain stores.

The Southernwood BBC is located on a park edge on St George's Street in Southernwood. It was the first BBC operation in East London, with more than three others in the city. BBCs are also prevalent in the suburbs of Gauteng.

The study found that while the BBC serves the primary purpose of encouraging recycling, it also serves the secondary purpose of deterring open dumping and littering in Southernwood. One of the key takeaways from the discussion with a respondent [Town Planner] was that despite the BCC's operation, the project is under strain as the private sector operates the bulk of the Southernwood BCC:

The Border Kei Chamber has a waste strategy; one of their sites is in Southernwood. The private sector can do stuff, but the agency has no will. Urban renewal is possible with the private sector. The private sector is trying, but on its own, it cannot do it; it's all

voluntary, there is no help and support, no integration of support [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The waste collected at the centres is disposed of in landfills and returned to product manufacturing systems through recycling. These centres are for the buying, sorting and reselling of recyclable waste, including plastic, paper, cans and glass. The study found that despite the operational BBC, litter and open dumping still need to be addressed in Southernwood:

Urban renewal people to do it and there aren't people to do anything so just doing the basics in Southernwood, picking up waste, litter, crime and that kind of stuff which isn't urban renewal as such, maybe a precondition to urban renewal even that you can see what's happen, nobody is picking up waste [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

At present, the BBC is the only PPP strategy in Southernwood. Despite operating in Southernwood, additional input and support remain from other area stakeholders outside the area. The BBC is integral to the renewal as open litter and dumping deter new investment in the area, and pollution can contribute to numerous respiratory health issues for residents and possible contamination of underground water resources.

There are two main challenges to the BBC in Southernwood. The first is financial: although jointly opened and initially run by multi-stakeholders, the findings show that the BBC is now solely run by the BKCOB, which poses a threat to its sustainability. The second challenge to the BBC is its location. Located near St George's Park, there is limited erf available for extension, which would probably require the BBC to relocate to another erf within Southernwood if the project scope is extended. Another location conundrum is the siting of a refuse site near a recreational space in Southernwood, which, if extended, might pose a land use incompatibility.

Despite the operating challenges and limited erf size, the BBC successfully launched a PPP approach. This is one of the main ingredients in improving urban spaces, as seen in projects throughout South Africa, of which Southernwood and East London need more. The PPP approach is successful as it sets the condition for establishing further PPPs in the city, specifically in Southernwood.

The primary beneficiaries of the Southernwood BBC are its residents. Despite the project operating since 2021, open dumping and littering are still ongoing issues in Southernwood, which was highlighted by all the study respondents. Exacerbated by the density levels of Southernwood, efficient service delivery is cited as one of the agents contributing to the area's open dumping and litter problem. The BCMM is also a significant beneficiary of the BBC as it effectively privatises recycling and contributes to its overall appearance. Unfortunately, as one

of its limitations, the study could not obtain exact figures and amounts exchanged for recycled material and the precise volumes of recycled material in Southernwood.

6.3.4. Recreational Communal Parks and the Multi-Purpose Centre

The Recreational Communal Parks (RCP) (Figure 6.7) in Southernwood is a green initiative to revitalise parks. At the top of the sustainable development agenda of BCMM are urban renewal, densification, and programmes aligned with open spaces and green facilities. Conceptually, RCPs are parks typically consisting of lawns, trees, gardens, buildings, playground structures, ponds, fountains and monuments. Moreover, a distinction is made between soft and hard recreational areas; hard recreational areas are paved and may include squares and streets, while soft recreational areas typically include green parks.



Figure 6.7: Parks in Southernwood (Author)

In urban renewal, recreational areas and the green environment are a prime feature throughout South Africa. There are seven open space developments for communal parks in Southernwood, as shown in Figure 6.7. The RCP intends to promote compact, walkable development patterns. The intention is to support efforts to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles and discourage development patterns that rely solely on cars for transportation to reduce vehicle miles travelled in the area.

The study found that parks are an essential part of the Southernwood community, especially for young respondents who indicated that the parks in the area require urgent attention. When asked about recreation spaces, all respondents unanimously called for improving parks within

Southernwood: *Maybe we could get more activities to do, and the park is no longer a park.*
[Resident, 17- 22 April 2024]

However, Southernwood parks have become a space for nefarious activities such as drug use and a commonplace for robbery. This is mainly due to the parks being used as a thoroughfare by students.

This is a challenge to RCP. At present, there needs to be a specific operational budget for parks and recreational spaces in Southernwood. While the RCP is a stand-alone strategy, the recreation office is tasked with the general maintenance of parks. The RCP renewal of the seven recreational areas within Southernwood has remained the same. One of the challenges to the RCP and parks, in general, is the inappropriate use of developed parks due to a lack of management and control.

The fourth urban renewal strategy discussed in this section is the Southernwood multi-purpose centre on St James's Road, as shown in Figure 6.8. The proposed centre is a recreational space, which is discussed in section 6.2.4. The site perimeter is approximately 333.5m with an area of 5 410 m². The multi-purpose centre was developed under ward priorities and as part of the BCMMs participatory democracy outreach agenda.



Figure 6.8: Multi-Purpose centre site in Southernwood (Author)

As part of area improvements, the study found that the centre, as an urban renewal node, focused on bringing the following five features:

- i. a community hall for Southernwood;
- ii. an indoor sports facility to merge the residential aspect of the area with sports and recreation;
- iii. a community library which includes a computer centre;
- iv. an art centre; and
- v. a clinic and commercial offices (BCMM IDP, 2024).

These different land uses are to be housed within this new multi-story development near the centre of Southernwood. While planning information is limited, the multi-purpose centre is approved, but details of financing and project dates on breaking ground are yet to be made available.

At present, it is difficult to fully ascertain whether there have been notable changes in the area. On one hand, Southernwood has improved and continues to see property development through the construction of new HEI residences, in the western part of the suburb, where student residences are concentrated—the establishment of the BBC indicates Southernwood's development in its western park. Moreover, the envisioned developments, such as RCPs, pedestrianisation of the Oxford Street project and a multi-purpose centre, are all located in the western part of Upper Southernwood. The concentration of these developments in the western part of Southernwood significantly shows the area's development endeavour.

On the other hand, the eastern part of the suburb, particularly the southeastern part, which is dominated by single residential housing (Figure 6.9), continues to see signs of deterioration and fewer property transactions than the western part. One of the causes of this condition is the lack of high-rise cluster buildings in the southeastern part of Southernwood.



Figure 6.9: Single residential housing in Southernwood (Author)



Figure 6.10: Open dumping in southeastern Southernwood (Author)

The clustered residential development provides an inclusive development opportunity for both residents and businesses in terms of the protection of property prices, the attraction of tenants, and newer and refurbished residences. Also, favouring inclusivity for businesses has been the relaxed regulation, which has seen existing businesses replaced by new formal businesses and property development of multi-storey buildings in the area.

The southeastern part of Southernwood experiences some exclusion due to the area's lack of formal businesses and clustered developments. The commercial focus is not concentrated in these parts, disadvantaging the area compared to the western part of Southernwood.

6.4 CURRENT CONDITION OF SOUTHERNWOOD

This section explores alternative urban renewal strategies suited to the context of the Southernwood suburb. It is divided into three main parts. The first part provides a background on the current condition of Southernwood, while the second discusses the concerns raised by the residents and experts. Lastly, the third part discusses urban renewal strategies proposed by the residents and experts.

While the overarching theme is based on alternative strategies, this section briefly discusses the current condition of Southernwood. Despite issues such as crime and area neglect, estate agents describe the property market as attractive, mainly in the western portion of Southernwood. One of the popular listing trends is multi-story properties, mostly buildings procured for rental as student accommodation and for young professionals:

Mostly its listings for residential and then it's those people who are renting out their properties, they sell them so people can invest in them. There are two options, some sell and then the problem is they are selling, they were used as rentals. Maybe someone wants to buy a place for investment for student accommodation we have those. It's very rare these days in Southernwood for someone who says I want to stay there, mostly now its residential for students [Estate agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]

The estate agent, who has been working in Southernwood since 2019, acknowledges that obtaining rental income was the main reason for purchasing property in Southernwood: *It's rare that a person will say I want to stay in Southernwood, if they buy a property they don't normally stay there, they rent it out [Estate agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]*

Also, when asked about the attractiveness and whether the Southernwood property market is lucrative, residents were quite negative, citing crime and the area's shortcomings such as rising informality. In contrast, estate agents stated that, despite the crime and neglect, Southernwood property remained lucrative, primarily due to its location. However, despite gains, the desire for property was not at the levels of previous years:

"Not anymore because of crime and then maintenance, people don't maintain their properties, so the standard is a kind of down, it isn't like before. Southernwood used to be popular and the place but now no, the quality is not the same, it's the crime, and

AmaPhara [Hobos/drug addicts who terrorise communities] are plenty. Also, the students are mischievous, they are young people.” [Estate agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]

Regarding business property trends in Southernwood, estate agents state that they do not think big businesses will relocate; their confidence is driven by the presence of St Dominic’s Hospitals and general health practitioners. One of the striking results to emerge was the attribution of building neglect to property owners who do not exercise sufficient oversight over their property and the municipality’s inability to exercise development control over vacant erfs in Southernwood. The overall confidence in the property market is predicated on processes whereby other formal businesses replace vacant formal businesses:

No, those that are there already, I don’t think so even though they are moving but when they move, they are replaced by other formal businesses. Standard Bank left, and the AVIS car rentals moved in, so the way things are structured, I don’t think they will leave. [Estate agent 2, 26-28 November 2024]

The findings also suggest that property owners need to exercise more control over the maintenance of their properties in Southernwood, especially those used for rental purposes. Among the plausible explanations for Southernwood’s littering and dumping conditions could be neglect by the municipality and property owners over refuse collection and disposal:

There is no maintenance there, starting from the municipality and the owners of the properties, they don’t go back to check on the properties, they just let people in and disappear, they don’t go back to check the status of the buildings. Most of the buildings in Southernwood are old building, they need maintenance. There are filthy places, in front of this property I am working with is an open space, this open space is used for rubbish, the municipality is not maintaining it and the people are taking advantage. [Estate agent 2, 26-28 November 2024]

Despite the area’s challenges, estate agents see it as a balanced situation as there is continued investment in Southernwood’s student accommodation. Contrasting the area’s conditions with its property market, Southernwood’s property advantage is influenced more by its location than by issues of crime and decay.

Investment and purchasing property in student accommodation by HEIs, such as WSU, which have purchased several buildings in Southernwood for students, has significantly disadvantaged individual property owners in securing tenants for property rentals. The estate agent claims that WSU is currently procuring several buildings in Southernwood and pricing out individual property owners for the student market. Additionally, the study found that despite

student saturation in the area, the young working class is also present due to Southernwood's location, which is its prime advantage, offering accessibility to Vincent and Berea.

At present, large units are purchased for rental purposes within the area. When posed with questions of attractiveness and the prospects for Southernwood property, agents claim that despite the challenges, the region remains attractive due to vibrant and frequent property transactions. Moreover, respondents argue that Southernwood will continue to appeal as property within the area is significantly cheaper than the surrounding suburbs:

Depends on your customer base, I would say if you have someone coming out of a location, they would definitely live in Southernwood. If people want to own property it's a challenge. Stand-alone businesses are very much on the decrease with regards to quality and desire for purchase, if someone can create a property for group living it's a much better attraction and with regards to area improving or becoming worse, from a general point of view, it looks like it's getting worse right now. There is currently no programme that I have noticed that is affectively working to curb the decline [Estate agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]

The study's findings concerning Southernwood property suggest that, despite its shortcomings, Southernwood remains an attractive proposition for rental and acquisition. The findings indicate that decay and crime have not deterred the real estate market in the area. Estate agents who see the areas as marketable despite older dwellings in certain sections:

So, Southernwood is noticeably cheaper than other areas of East London, Southernwood-Quigney, in a lot of people's minds, they are associated with each other. Pricing has increased but not as seen in other areas, but it's still affordable. That's the thing, it's affordable to live there partially because of the challenges, for example, you would go there with the intention of being more security conscious than you would need to be in other area [Estate Agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]

The overwhelming consensus among estate agents is twofold. While Southernwood is plagued with the current nexus of planning issues, its real estate remains attractive to buyers and building proprietors looking to secure tenants, especially in the western portion of the suburb. On the other hand, a significant challenge in Southernwood is its dated buildings, some of which need restoration and maintenance. The study found that clustered and multi-story buildings are desirable. In contrast, stand-alone buildings and single residential houses face significant structural challenges. Despite the dual condition of Southernwood property, agents are confident in its property market and the area's retention of formal businesses:

The area by and large has older dwellings, the biggest point is that it is becoming increasingly unattractive because of generic litter that seems not to be getting better, that's growing worse. The buildings themselves, it just depends; stand-alone buildings can struggle, but well-maintained complexes and business structures can function if they continue to be maintained. There will always be business for estate agents in Southernwood, I am confident of that. Its nature may change but there are enough people working and living there, there will be enough business [Estate agent 1, 26-28 November 2024]

The general view by estate agents is that Southernwood remains attractive to property buyers and will continue to be so. This confidence in the real estate markets exists despite crime, decay and worsening litter conditions in large sections of Southernwood. The dominant property trends and transactions lean towards multi-storey and clustered buildings and townhouses. Unfortunately, single residential housing and stand-alone buildings are experiencing declining demand and are being seen less frequently in property transactions.

6.5. CONCERNS BY RESIDENTS AND EXPERTS

This brief section discusses findings from the residents and experts. The first theme is the area outlook, particularly further urban decay, specifically building decay, if existing problems persist. All respondents claimed that if urban renewal was not realised, one of the challenges posed will be rapid informality due to building decay and possible building hijackings, as seen in a plethora of South African cities and most alarmingly, the decline of property and real estate in the area. Declining real estate has implications such as the exodus of formal businesses and undervalues homeowners' property due to Southernwood's potential nexus of conditions:

If the structural decline is not addressed, from my subjective point of view, property prices will continue to maybe not decrease from their current levels but they will not keep up with the natural increase of property by in large prevalent. If you compare like for like, the value of a home in Southernwood is not the same as in a lot of other areas, that change will continue to get larger, that gap [Estate agent, 26-28 November 2024].

One respondent (Town Planner) claimed that creative measures such as property rebates and enforcing building regulations must be taken to attract investment and arrest the area's structural decline:

Enforcing by-laws is a precondition for urban renewal along with land release and reducing rates, in Southernwood we could say we are going to forego revenue, to make it easier for homeowners and property owners to develop property but BCM will lose income, we are stuck, financially the City is stuck [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The second theme is gentrification, which is associated with increased land and property taxation and social and economic exclusion. The study previously highlighted findings related to fears of urban renewal. While urban renewal is necessary, its market nature could result in gentrification and increased property and land values within Southernwood.

An increase in land and buildings effectively prices out certain residents and simultaneously introduces new classes of inclusivity and exclusivity. The study found that despite the area's developmental potential and density promotion, a lack of physical improvement and investment in new infrastructure is a challenge for Southernwood, with new planning initiatives (PPPs) proposed as a remedy to this conundrum:

Even though plots are smaller we encourage high density there, even though the plots are smaller, Southernwood is clustered while the streets are wider in Quigney. The future, to me, given the financial reality with no money to spend on areas doesn't look good unless there are major initiatives [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The third theme of concern is slum conditions. Stemming from the earlier theme of decay, slum conditions emanate from untreated urban decay. The study found that slum conditions concern not only residents of Southernwood but also invested parties such as estate agents and town planners. Slum conditions in Southernwood would mean structurally deficient and unsafe housing in the area. One of the conundrums of slums for cities is that they are overcrowded and lack access to appropriate utilities, such as safe drinking water and sanitation.

Furthermore, slums subject areas to insecure tenure. According to the town planner, if the situation of dilapidation is not arrested, Southernwood could resemble areas such as Hillbrow. The northeastern side of Southernwood almost exclusively consists of single residential houses, while a significant portion of western Southernwood consists of multi-story dwellings. Of concern is the north-eastern Southernwood, which is currently undergoing processes of informality and extreme decay. According to the town planner, the likely scenario for the area is dire, with business exodus and extensive informality:

The way we are going now, we want to look at scenarios, it is going to get worse, and it will look like Hillbrow. People will die in buildings from fires because of the density, it's getting more dangerous, students getting raped, businesses pulling out, guys are struggling, there will be rapid informalisation and that's a business. You will get a lot of foreigners and drugs, it will end up looking like the backstreets of Nairobi, dirt and potholes [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

Southernwood could end up looking like that, informality and gangs, Students maybe take back their suburb, if we keep on not investing in Southernwood it's going to slowly but surely, it's going to end up terrible [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

According to an estate agent, stark differences exist between Southernwood's eastern and western portions. This study found that agents have reasonable confidence in the western portion of Southernwood. Their confidence is boosted by recent structural renovations at St Dominic's Life Hospital despite some of its specialization being transferred to Beacon Bay:

It's [St Dominic's Life Hospital] not going to move, they are improving it, they improved another big one there, they moved sections, let me say the baby care unit, they moved it to Beacon Bay and some other stuff, they are renovating it which means they are not going anywhere. Some of the specialists in East London occupy St Dominic's [Estate Agent 2, 26-28 November 2024].

Enforcing the stark differences in Southernwood are businesses like St Dominic's Hospital, general practitioners, food retail outlets, guest houses, fast food outlets and consultants, to name a few businesses on the western portion of Southernwood. In contrast, the eastern portion of Southernwood houses few businesses. Single residential houses dominate compared to the western portion, which contains clustered and dispersed multi-story dwellings.

The fourth theme is suburban erosion by illegal foreigners. The study found a general dissatisfaction with the informal conditions in areas where perceived illegal foreigners are concentrated, particularly in the northeastern side of Southernwood. The study found that there have been community mobilisations to evict perceived illegal foreigners engaging in what respondents feel are illegal and unsavory trading practices:

What I do see happening strangely enough, weirdly enough, but I think it's a xenophobic thing is guys here all over Buffalo City are knocking down illegal stuff. The informal elements of car washes and businesses have been removed. I was asked to find alternative land for car washes, so we fined car owners who washed there. Implementing the law can help reduce informality; it makes it more pleasant to sit at the beachfront. Small initiatives make a difference [Town Planner, 22 November 2024]

The study found further concerns about the future of Southernwood if the current challenges of decay and neglect are not addressed. The emerging theme is that if urban plight is not halted in the area, it could resemble central Johannesburg's Hillbrow, which, in many aspects, shares variables and characteristics with Southernwood:

There is potential. There is Hillbrow potential because of the crime, its crime that devalues the place, the other thing is the foreigners, they are now dominating there.

Unfortunately, wherever they are the area goes down. You see here in East London, there is a part, part of Southernwood but a little bit down, where they have taken over the area, its theirs, it's their area, they are plenty. Therefore, its them, once they dominate the area goes down, the standard goes down [Town Planner, 22 November 2024].

The overall emerging theme is that in Southernwood, there is a “for sale” sign on most streets, with property by general practitioners high on the list of transactions despite the presence of the hospital in the vicinity. Despite the departure of general practitioners, they are replaced by others. Estate agents feel the hospital will continue operating as it has undergone several physical redevelopments to improve capacity.

Regarding the future of single residential housing, the study found that transactions for this type of property are mainly for rental, not family occupation. Due to the area's crime, rising informality, and general decay, agents contend that many families have relocated from Southernwood as an unsuitable environment for children.

The fifth theme concerning the future of Southernwood is the exodus of formal businesses from the area. The departure of formal businesses from dilapidated city centres is typical in South Africa (Turok, 2021). In Southernwood, several respondents claimed that there has been and continues to be an exodus of formal businesses in the area, such as general health practitioners and estate agency offices. Issues associated with crime, the eroding informality of property, and the overall decline of the suburb's physical outlook have all been cited. Despite the business dynamism, business departure and occupancy have been claimed to be balanced, meaning exiting formal businesses are replaced mainly by incoming formal businesses.

One of the main findings about urban renewal perceptions is that it is understood differently between residents and experts. Residents understand urban renewal not only as a structural improvement initiative, but they primarily associate it with improved safety and pedestrian infrastructure within Southernwood. However, experts perceive urban renewal as a cooperation between stakeholders, both public and private, for area improvement, protection of property prices and structural improvement.

The following section discusses alternative urban renewal strategies prescribed by the residents of Southernwood and experts.

6.6. ALTERNATIVE URBAN RENEWAL BY RESIDENTS AND EXPERTS

At present, the spatial planning machinery of East London is focused on several priorities, including attempts to improve linkages between places of employment and residency, promote

higher-density residential use, outer city housing provision, facilitate government and private sector partnerships to support spatial initiatives and, most importantly, renewal of the central city.

In this section, various alternative proposals for urban renewal are discussed and presented by the residents of Southernwood and experts. Before discussing the alternative strategies, it is worth highlighting that the BCMM focus is on prioritising the revitalisation of former industrial areas of East London, establishing a mass public housing supply around townships, and upgrading informal settlements over the CBD and inner-city renewal to a lesser extent.

Concerning the CDB and inner city, which comprises Southernwood, the planning agenda focuses on policies and programmes to position the central city on the path to greater compaction. The study found that concerning prospective planning in Southernwood, four main themes emerged from residents, most of whom are students living in the area and experts knowledgeable about Southernwood.

The first is the need for a public library dedicated to the students of Southernwood; while the BCMM has made proposals for its development, the ground still needs to be broken for the project. The public library theme dominated discourse as many student accommodations in the area must be fitted with study facilities. Also contributing to this demand is that HEIs are not easily accessible by walking; after shuttle times, commuting to study is seen as an inconvenience according to the study's respondents.

The second theme is a police station and surveillance technology in Southernwood. Nearly all respondents of this study, including experts who do not reside in Southernwood, unanimously proposed opening a police station in Southernwood to combat and deter crime in the area. In Southernwood, common robberies and house break-ins are the most frequent crime classifications, according to respondents and the BCMM IDP. Respondents feel that the presence of a police station and surveillance will alleviate the crime rate. According to Bank (2018), Southernwood grievances related to the quality of university-supplied residences and, most alarmingly, being trapped in a crime-ridden inner city. One of the respondents cites the vibrancy of the area as a magnet for criminals to terrorise students:

At least a police station, it would be safer, for example the police station is far, it's in town, so at least a police station. It's the busy streets that attract criminals here [Resident, 17-22 April 2024]

The third theme is improving traffic calming measures due to the large pedestrian population. As previously stated, Southernwood is a thoroughfare to other suburbs and the inner city of East London. As a result, the area experiences high traffic volumes; residents feel drivers do not

respect road rules, accusing them of excessively speeding in a suburban area and calling for traffic measures to alleviate this condition.

The fourth dominant theme includes a variety of findings, such as demands for private security in Southernwood, a public clinic, building quality, area clean-up, affordable food retail outlets catering for students and urban improvements to improve the outlook of the area. One respondent highlighted that while crime is generally associated with dilapidated areas, urban improvements would suit Southernwood but may lead to more crime due to its aesthetic appeal:

*If it looked better, it would be safer, but no, since it looks better, it will attract more crime
[Resident, 17-22 April 2024]*

In terms of building quality, several residents were unsatisfied with their landlords’ efforts to maintain the property in Southernwood:

I can tell that Landlords don’t care because I rented here before 2022 and then like didn’t give attention to a lot of things such as refuse collection, inner and outer yard maintenance. The one here is worse; Southernwood landlords are not good [Resident, 17-22 April 2024]

Overall, the study found that the focus of BCMM planning is a challenge. The focus of planning in East London is not on inner-city renewal, but on the following areas: Mdanstane, Reeston, Duncan Village, and Postdam—particularly the integration of fragmented townships, the provision of mass housing, and the upgrading of informal settlements (BCMM SDF, 2013). Land development programmes are primarily reserved for industrial area revitalisation, the Dimbaza Agri-park, Airport extension and extended roadworks to link the sleeper site to the beachfront. The city’s priority zones focus on the development of public transport efficiency and the supply of mass public housing in previously disadvantaged areas (BCMM SDF, 2013).

One of the challenges to the inner city’s renewal is the outstanding Southernwood LSDF, which has not been completed. Also, city improvement district models cannot be implemented unless the LSDF has been finalised, as it sets the land use conditions for new development in the area.

While the CBD and inner city are allocated budgets for catalytic programmes, the figures pale in comparison to other areas of East London. Among the plausible explanations for these figures is that the development priority of the different regions outweighs the CBD and the inner city. The previously mentioned programmes of industrial revitalisation, the revival and integration of township economies, and the mass public housing supply take precedence over the CBD and inner-city areas.

Table 6.1: Project budget for BCMM (BCMM BEPP, 2014)

CATALYTIC PROGRAMME	2023/2024 CAPITAL BUDGET		2024/2025 CAPITAL BUDGET		2025/2026 CAPITAL BUDGET	
BHISHO- QONCE (KWT) - ZWELITSHA CORRIDOR	R	33 100 000,00	R	49 300 000,00	R	51 419 022,94
DIMBAZA NODE	R	2 500 000,00	R	5 000 000,00	R	5 223 998,20
EAST LONDON CBD AND INNER-CITY REGENERATION PROGRAMME	R	35 700 000,00	R	23 800 000,00	R	16 671 994,59
MDANTSANE URBAN HUB	R	25 581 000,00	R	28 000 000,00	R	27 000 000,00
MELD CORRIDOR CENTRAL	R	151 380 360,00	R	88 012 082,00	R	87 030 000,91
NTABOZUKO (BERLIN) NODE	R	17 187 900,00	R	13 000 000,00	R	8 223 987,52
OTHER	R	921 877 043,76	R	913 269 709,16	R	947 799 359,78
WEST BANK LOGISTICS HUB	R	32 000 000,00	R	47 424 463,00	R	49 728 245,46
GRAND TOTAL	R	1 219 326 303,76	R	1 167 806 254,16	R	1 193 096 609,40

The general response from Southernwood residents is mired in uncertainty. Uncertainty not on the part of prospective projects, but on whether the municipality will give Southernwood attention concerning land use development and addressing the nexus of conditions in the area.

6.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The preceding chapter focused on two main themes: past urban renewal and present urban renewal of Southernwood.

From the first theme, the BCMM faced significant challenges in realising urban renewal plans. Finance and a lack of institutional capacity with mixed-use projects and urban renewal were cited as impediments to the success of projects. Finance, leadership and institutional capacity were also cited as impediments. When juxtaposed with previous strategies, the study found that current strategies are oriented towards concepts of land use flexibility to achieve development goals. Emerging from the last theme, it is evident that the municipality is prioritising areas outside the inner city. As reiterated throughout this study, urban renewal improves urban areas by enhancing physical, social-economic and ecological aspects. This is evident from past and present strategies to improve the area with residential, economic, and physical development in Southernwood. Moreover, there have been notable improvements in the area's physical condition. However, this development has been concentrated mainly in the western part of Southernwood.

This chapter also discussed three main themes: The first was Southernwood's current condition, which covered the real estate dynamics of the area. The second theme was centred on concerns by Southernwood residents and experts in the area. This theme includes issues such as the gradual decline in real estate activity, gentrification and emerging slum conditions in Southernwood. The third theme discussed alternative urban renewal, which was prescribed by residents of Southernwood and experts as well.

The study found that the general outlook for urban renewal plans in Southernwood, through policy, is proposed through more significant laissez-faire partnerships over land use developments. The state's position on urban renewal for future developments promotes private capital as a driver for land use change in East London. The study also found that respondents point towards future multi-stakeholder approaches as viable options to renew the area with an improvement in essential service delivery, urban infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks, traffic calming measures on the suburb's main routes, reduction in urban informality and slum conditions, street lighting and the improvement of recreational infrastructure. The alternative urban renewal strategies prescribed by residents primarily lean towards student-friendly planning. Experts prescribed urban renewal, leaning towards strategies to protect property in Southernwood and densified planning to make service delivery easier in the area while ensuring compact development patterns instead of dispersed patterns.

The general conclusion of this chapter is that urban renewal is necessary first to keep formal businesses in the area, second to ensure the stability of urban property, and thirdly to arrest the area's decline through student-friendly measures. However, despite these prescriptions, issues like the lack of essential service delivery, which acts as a precursor to urban renewal, have not received significant attention in Southernwood. As discussed earlier, another challenge to the area is its spatial fragmentation; stark differences exist between the west and east portions of the suburb. On one hand, the western side of Southernwood comprises multi-story buildings. On the other hand, the suburb's eastern side is characterised by derelict single residential houses. If not addressed, the nexus of this condition can lead to further fragmentation, rising informality and disproportionately priced urban land.

The following chapter presents a comparative analysis of the challenges in Southernwood with the three secondary field sites examined in this thesis—Maboneng, Florida Road, and De Waterkant.

CHAPTER 7: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS AND SOUTHERNWOOD URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGIES

7.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comparative analysis, with the intention of identifying strategies that can be applied to Southernwood, East London, drawing from the three secondary field sites examined in this thesis—Maboneng, Florida Road, and De Waterkant—which are discussed in detail in Chapter 4 (see sections 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5). Juxtaposing these urban renewal case studies with Southernwood may provide practical ideas for successful urban renewal. In all case studies, area-specific actions are guided by the same overarching key planning frameworks (see section 4.2).

This chapter is organised into four sections. It begins with an analysis of the Maboneng comparison, followed by case studies of De Waterkant and Durban's Florida Road, all of which are considered within the context of Southernwood. Moreover, four sub-themes are detailed: urban renewal approach, controls and spatial policy, the economy, finance, and agencies, as well as limitations. The fourth section (7.5) discusses strategies that can be used to renew Southernwood, as well as the limitations of these strategies.

7.2. MABONENG AND SOUTHERNWOOD CASE STUDY

Throughout this thesis, the aim of urban renewal plans and activities has been reiterated as upgrading neighbourhoods and suburbs in a state of distress or decay (Thomas, 2021; Cordeiro *et al.*, 2024). While the intention is to improve the urban environment, the variety of improvement initiatives depends on the type of urban environment and its approach to renewal.

7.2.1. Urban Renewal Approach

Delineating an urban renewal approach is essential in urban planning as it indicates the type of renewal suitable for an intended area (Maculan & Dal Moro, 2020; Pinsly, 2022). The study identified two competing approaches to urban renewal: a neoliberal approach and a conservative, state-led approach. These delineations are far from a new phenomenon. Since the 1950s post-war reconstruction in Europe through to the 1980s slum clearances in the USA (Collins & Shester, 2011; Collins, 2013; Earley, 2023; LaVoice, 2024), urban renewal approaches have been understood between state-led reconstruction, market-driven development and a combination of both, referred to as PPPs.

The urban renewal approach for Maboneng is neoliberal; it reflects a capital-intensive endeavour to acquire and convert vacant buildings from the de-industrialisation processes of

the 1980s that resulted in empty light warehouses and factories, which were privately acquired with a vision for 'nurturing a creative community and enterprises in inner-city Johannesburg' (Nevin, 2014; Gregory, 2016: 163). The objective was to convert and develop these properties and other buildings into private holdings led by a private property group to establish a gentrified enclave. (A detailed discussion of Maboneng was presented in Chapter 4).

The urban renewal approach for Southernwood is based on resource optimisation, with a strong focus on using planning controls to increase inner-city density through tax incentive-driven development and the deregulation of land use. The process for this project has been influenced by land vacancy and a market niche for the creative industry in central Johannesburg.

Unlike private equity-led urban renewal, East London's priority for the inner city, without public and private capital investment, is to use existing infrastructure and policy to achieve urban renewal by encouraging inner-city densification. The reliance on these controls has, to some extent, slowed the decay rate in one part of Southernwood, while the other is confronted with processes of informality due to the nature of its strictly single-residential land use.

A few residents were knowledgeable about the area's approach to urban renewal, plans, and policies. One plausible reason for this could be that most respondents are students who reside in Southernwood for no more than five years. While students could not detail specific approaches, experts in the study provided ample knowledge on approaches, having worked in the area for many years.

Further analysis revealed that the urban renewal approach for central East London was based on cost-effective measures, relying on policy flexibility rather than capital-intensive programmes. This is expected, as findings have shown constraints in public spending, which impacts urban renewal and essential service delivery in the suburbs. One of the limitations of this research project was the inability to secure detailed and specific public spending records for Southernwood.

As a result, a significant shortcoming of this study is the lack of public spending data, which would indicate financial priorities within Southernwood. This finding has implications for further research to divert from aggregate spending of municipalities to focus on specific suburban data. This can provide detailed and location-specific data on utilities, programmes and other areas of public interest within specific city zones. There has been a tendency in South African urban studies to regard the city as one singular entity, providing city data as if the city is a singular economy. While true, to an extent, more research is required to frame city regions and provide accurate data on the sum of the parts of a city.

Comparatively, the approaches followed for Maboneng and Southernwood are similar in that they utilise distinct controls to encourage land development. A plausible explanation is that the correlation between distinct controls and urban renewal is determined by an area's general zoning classification, which for both areas is the UDZ, at times referred to as the CID. Despite this homogenous feature, Maboneng's renewal approach through capital investment is distinct, while Southernwood lacks this aspect. In Maboneng, planning changes have been accompanied by rearranging and commodifying industrial property, while sub-divisions were considered best practice for urban renewal in Southernwood, which lacks rearrangement. Another limitation of the study was the inability to source a detailed property rezoning catalogue due to the sensitivity of property records.

There are two challenges in comparing Maboneng and Southernwood. The first is Maboneng and Southernwood's lack of development models and master plans for urban renewal. Models and master plans assist in urban planning by acting as two- and three-planning guides for future planning to mitigate urban fragmentation. While models have been widely successful in state-led urban renewal, one of their limitations is spatial rigidity. Without these models in Maboneng and Southernwood, future studies need to investigate using models for urban renewal. This is necessary to predict future development and assist in long-term utilities and settlement containment planning.

The second challenge in the comparative approach of both areas is size: Maboneng primarily consists of no more than 30 buildings in an enclave with a perimeter of 2.5km and an area of 0.26 km², whereas Southernwood is an entire suburb, with a perimeter of 4.4km and 1.28km². In further research, upscaling development trends will be necessary to compare areas of varying sizes through land use and population projections. This study suggests that projections and models can assist in comparing diverse urban centres which might not share similar variables. Further, they may assist in areas lacking homogeneity in central values of comparison, wherein structural variables could provide the denominator for comparative analysis. The various elements of private development covered under the theoretical framework and case study discussions of chapter 3 present a viable option for Southernwood. As the location is an advantage, private development would promote pedestrianism, which a constant feature in South Africa's private development frameworks, due to the polycentric nature of Southernwood and privately led structural programs.

An advantage of this market-driven approach to renewal in Southernwood is the proximity to the city, human resources, HEIs and industrial nodes such as manufacturing hubs, airports and harbours in East London. Besides the proximity, the nature of Southernwood's regulation may prove to be an advantage for private capital. One of the alternatives to private renewal may be

citizen-led development. However, a major challenge to this approach is that Southernwood, unlike Maboneng, has a transient student population. As a student suburb, citizen-led approaches would encounter significant challenges for continuity as occupancy rates in the area, are no more than five years.

The comparative analysis of these two approaches reveals that aside from the similar planning aims of compaction, tax incentives, densification and mixed land use, a suitable approach will have to strike a balance between conservative and liberal planning. These can include PPPs or private and citizen-led development approaches to urban renewal, combined with a structural renewal approach. This is not to deny the importance of economic and environmental renewal. As discussed in earlier chapters, the economic performance of Southernwood is not an issue; the points of emphasis are structural decay and eroding processes of urban informality. One of the objectives of this study is to delineate which type of renewal is suitable for Southernwood. Choosing an ideal approach gives insight into the drivers of development and the renewal type. Neoliberal, laissez-faire approaches to renewal tend to align with structural and economic renewal to ensure favourable returns on investment through the property and a functional market (Anas, 1992; Tugwell, 2023). Overall, the importance of an appropriate approach cannot be understated.

The approach must be given significant attention as it guides the choice of urban renewal for the area and its framework, ultimately impacting the shape and form of the built environment. Beyond the approaches to urban renewal, controls and spatial policy are essential.

7.2.2. Controls and Spatial Policy

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, land use controls are standard urban policies in nearly all cities worldwide (Metternicht, 2021; Nuisssl & Siedentop, 2021; Monkkonen, 2024). While this is common, there are exceptions for cities that do not have zoning controls/regulations, such as Houston in the USA (Olin, 2020). This study uses controls and regulations interchangeably as concepts and legislative tools guiding land development. Typical regulations include zoning, which restricts land use by zone. These regulations include lot size, which restricts the size of each housing lot; urban growth boundary, also known as the urban edge, which separates urban development areas from urbanisation control areas; and floor area ratio regulation, which restricts building sizes (Kono & Joshi, 2019).

Maboneng's controls, on the one hand, are a combination of industrial and business zone classification. Its development utilised existing commercial spaces, which powerfully aligned with the city's vision (spatial policy) for compact development and, more importantly, building refurbishment. To an extent, there were minimal rezoning requirements as the area's development did not feature extensive repeals of land use restrictions. These controls include

street and side building lines, height adjustments, and minimum lot size requirements. On the other hand, Maboneng's spatial policy allows and attracts investment by representing a more inclusive and integrated approach to city space. Effectively, such a policy encourages private developers to shape urban land use. In simple terms, the state permits the market to shape land use within a confined zone (UDZ, CID, SDZ) to realise and meet the development vision and its goals.

For comparative purposes, the distinction between controls and policy is that controls refer to the ordinance parameters and legislative tools that dictate and guide physical development, giving literal shape to the built environment. Spatial policy is built on ordinances to address or control integration issues, population density, compaction and other parameters such as the general direction, put, controls are the domain of town planners. At the same time, policy is informed by public desire. It is the domain of land use managers, public representatives and development practitioners who are less technical than town planners.

In combining controls and policy of central Johannesburg, under which Maboneng falls, Webber (2019) delineates that in central Johannesburg, urban land use controls and policy are actively intended to use unique flexible controls to promote economic development, attract investment and represent a more inclusive and integrated approach towards the regulation and enforcement of land use and development rules in the city. This is one of the ways renewal has been successful and sustainable.

The controls and spatial policy of central Johannesburg through its implementing agency, the JDA, much like cities throughout South Africa, is focused on deterring building demolitions by promoting building refurbishments, promoting flexibility in building ratios, and revitalising blighted inner-city areas through density promotion. These endeavours have been widely acknowledged in South Africa and globally, with the revival of cities in a cost-effective and environmentally sound process.

By utilising and improving existing infrastructure, the environmental impact of demolition and reconstruction in urban spaces is reduced (Okeke, 2024). Urban renewal strategies of this nature are widely accredited with reducing city carbon emissions (Lui, 2023). Overall, the policy in Johannesburg dictates that the city must focus on investment in areas where urban complexity is evident or where the potential for developing and sustaining mixed-use and efficient urban environments is greatest (CoJ, 2024).

One of the main reasons for configuring controls in this fashion is to bridge the historical imbalance within Johannesburg's city planning with the assistance of the private sector. In particular, the renewal and revival of the inner city as the heart of the new compact polycentric city acts as the connector, bridging Johannesburg's historical north-south geographic divide.

The planning approach promotes precinct conversions as a revitalisation tool, wherein land use setups include diverse floors with shops, restaurants, offices, and services, with minimal building setbacks.

Southernwood, much like Maboneng, shares nearly the same controls and policy. However, the disparity between the two areas is that the market chose to invest in Maboneng. Despite its encouragement in Southernwood, that market commitment has not been feasible. On the one hand, the market invested in Maboneng; on the other hand, they have not shown interest in investing in Southernwood.

There is little to separate the controls and spatial policies of both areas. One of the nuances of Southernwood is its organic growth model. In the absence of both capital-intensive state renewal and private sector-led development, organic growth was utilised to encourage land development and building refurbishment by not imposing strict controls on proprietors regarding their choice of property development. The previous findings indicate that most urban development is permissible, provided no objections or incompatibilities exist, such as the emission of noxious gases. This organic growth model was not applied to Maboneng because its aim was to establish creative industries and mixed land use in a confined and controlled urban setting.

Comparatively, Maboneng and Southernwood prioritise physical renewal, which is part of the national agenda for cities and the SPLUMA (Act 16 of 2013). The intention is to arrest the physical decline of cities and curb urban informality, which manifests in slum conditions in blighted areas. Both areas focus on the adaptive reuse of buildings and area-specific controls to guide development in different ways to geographies outside the specific zone delineated by the area's controls.

However, due to Southernwood's homogeneous population, most of its land use is configured to serve its student population. Unfortunately, due to the density of the area and the nature of city practitioners in treating all city regions as a singular urban unit, sufficiently credible, up-to-date statistical data on Southernwood are severely limited.

Generally, urban data on specific inner-city precincts and suburbs are scarce because cities are treated as one singular entity. Understanding the micro-regions of cities is essential in understanding the development patterns of the aggregate city form. A considerable amount of empirical work is required in conducting census data for inner-city suburbs and precincts, notwithstanding the challenge of collecting data which may be considered short-term due to the fluid and transient population nature of inner-city areas.

As a result, controls and spatial policy respond to a dense student environment, whereas Maboneng aims to attract working professionals. Southernwood's control and spatial policy allows for the development of feature relationships like previously discussed UTCs. These relationships, in turn, can apply to features driven by markets without state regulation. The development of these student-friendly, HEI-linked features is predicated on incentives as a response to a lack of large-scale state-sponsored urban renewal projects. Given the market's predominant role in the urban renewal project of Maboneng, its feature classes would find certain instances of suitability in Southernwood.

These instances include the development of the UTC, which is a neoliberal planning approach to city development. Urban planners and policymakers may wish to think about approaches beyond inviting and proposing spatial projects to private actors. While this seems plausible, it has found no success in Southernwood, where urban renewal has not been the market's focus despite calls for private developers. More enticing controls and freedoms over land use development may be visited as a possible lure for private renewal. However, granting excessive freedoms to private development has its drawbacks, such as gentrification.

One of the shared nuances between these two areas is creating live, work and play environments by juxtaposing controls and policy. As a result, the controls of both areas focus on polycentric development to achieve this. Polycentric models enable development that involves disconnecting traditional street networks and creating interlinking, walkable street patterns. Mixing residential and commercial space fulfils compaction and infill aims while also reducing commuter times between residence and work. Only by systematically compiling data that allows us to learn what policies are most effective at polycentric scales, such as inner-city quarters, will it be possible to rate and model development without urban fragmentation. As noted, however, existing data related to this is absent in South African discourses on urban renewal.

The findings have indicated that in Southernwood, sub-dividing larger erven into smaller sizes such that they would be in keeping with the density aim is popular and well-practised. Since the state faces challenges in financing capital-intensive renewal programmes in the city, the spatial policy strongly promotes PPPs in support of inner city and CBD revitalisation processes. Unlike Southernwood, Maboneng and its unique property structure of vertical mix land use find success from being in one of the biggest cities on the African continent with a strong economy and sufficient spending power for its population.

In contrast, this renewal type would be unsuited to Southernwood because of students' lower purchasing power and disposable income. The dual property structure of Southernwood highlights this, where the general population, primarily students, is concentrated in the western

part of the suburb. The western part comprises extensive multi-story residential buildings, communes and commercial buildings. In contrast, the eastern part of Southernwood is comprised of single and stand-alone residential buildings with less density but more informality.

The primary stance of Maboneng's controls and spatial policy is predicated on private actors shaping the city. One of the successes of the Maboneng approach was the area's low residency rate at the time of its inception. These low occupancy rates ensured seamless structural redevelopments without issues such as evictions. Despite concerns about gentrification and fragmentation, another source of influence on the urban renewal of Maboneng was lessons from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. These urban lessons ensured that the national policy agenda focused on the revival of industrial cities, which had fallen into decline due to decay during the aforementioned period.

Southernwood's controls and spatial policy are oriented towards an open-ended planning system where private enterprises, individual building developers and homeowners have access to, and choices for, developing property.

One of the challenges to planning in Southernwood is the area's high population density. This means property development occurs within the confines of more significant spatial considerations as compared to Maboneng. These considerations include a patchwork of cluster student residences and single residential properties, which are not present in Maboneng. Another potential challenge and risk was the uncontrolled development patterns in Southernwood and the heterogeneous patchworks of urban space. While land use mix is the aim, there must be a sustained level of spatial homogeneity.

While these planning case studies reveal structural commonalities in the above policies, they also lack strong environmental considerations. This is plausible because both areas lie within the inner city where there is minimal environmental sensitivity to natural ecosystems compared to eco-estates developed in natural environments with sensitive ecosystems. While parks and recreational areas are a policy feature, the environmental stance in urban policy receives less significant attention in both case studies due to a lesser sensitivity to natural environments.

Controls and spatial policy are pivotal in configuring precise urban renewal projects suited to the needs of intended areas. Notwithstanding the importance of controls and spatial policy, in conducting a comparative analysis, using case study values such as the nature of the economy, finance and planning agencies is essential to understanding the site situation of the intended intervention, as the following section covers.

7.2.3. Economy, Finance and Agencies

The general overview is that Maboneng is a service economy with a small residential component compared to Southernwood. Its residential component is meshed into mixed land-use buildings, while in Southernwood, the residential component is split between cluster residential living and single residential living in the eastern parts of the suburb.

Maboneng, as a service economy, does not function as a diurnal economy, but the area has a famous nightlife scene and tourism aspect. Moreover, the Maboneng economy is primarily based on its original 18 buildings, which host a variety of mixed commercial land use. These commercial activities are spread within the enclave and do not feature industrial activities. Significantly smaller than Southernwood, Maboneng has the economic benefit of being located at the heart of the second-largest city in South Africa by inhabitants (Statista, 2024).

Unlike the Maboneng context, Southernwood has a dual economy. The first component is a service economy that is considerably more significant than Maboneng, which mainly consists of retail. The Southernwood economy is dominated by services such as a private hospital and clinic, various general practitioners, two large retail nodes, and a string of fast-food franchises spread across the western portion of the suburb, which can all be considered as diurnal. The second component is a residential and commercial economy that features estate agencies, colleges and accounting firms in the area. Western Southernwood, in many respects, can be considered an extension of the commercial belt of central East London. This means the commercial activities of western Southernwood are linked to the central city, evidenced by the concentration of businesses along Oxford Street, which is one of the leading commercial arteries of East London.

The economies of Maboneng and Southernwood are central city locations and share core similarities. However, three main avenues render their economies distinct comparatively. First, Southernwood's economy is considerably larger than that of Maboneng; the size of an area's economic footprint is essential to its growth and development. Second, the Maboneng economy, considered 'a creative economy', boasts of tourism, which the Southernwood economy lacks. Third, the Southernwood economy is mainly student-driven, with its cluster residential component featuring students and young professionals. Developing a suitable renewal model for Southernwood will require treating the areas as two distinct geographies with a tailored strategy for each.

Comparatively, Southernwood's economic structure and spread require a strategy that cannot exclude private businesses. At the same time, the strategy will require a substantial residential development due to the area's land use. The Maboneng case study is strained by limitations that render it inapplicable to Southernwood, such as population to size and land use intensity.

As a result, using a single developer to attempt the renewal of Southernwood is not feasible due to its size, population and structural heterogeneity.

A three-factor development approach is a possible outlet for Southernwood's urban renewal. Considering the limitations of present strategies, Southernwood's renewal will require joint input from the state, private sector and community-based organisations to cover the area's size. Generally, many studies have explored the use of PPPs to drive urban renewal. These studies have and continue to inform current policy. Despite these successes, there is a need for more studies to investigate models beyond PPPs, investigating the joint relationship for renewal between municipal involvement, private involvement and the involvement of community-based organisations such as SRA committees.

Established in 2002, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) is Johannesburg's principal state development agency. The JDA mandate is resilient, sustainable, and liveable urban areas, primarily in central Johannesburg. The specific function of the JDA focuses on the pre-development and post-development phases to enhance the value added by the capital works interventions and improve the longer-term sustainability of the capital investment (JDA, 2024).

Although Maboneng is a privately led urban renewal initiative; yet it does not exist in a silo. The influence of the JDA on land use and the direction of urban renewal in the city includes Maboneng. According to Todd (2017), the initial investment has totalled over R1 billion for the development of the enclave.

Since its establishment, the JDA has overseen over 1300 development projects throughout the city over 22 years. In central Johannesburg, it is responsible for five urban renewal strategies established in 2018: the Hillbrow Tower precinct, Gandhi Square East precinct, Fordsburg Public Environment Upgrades (PEU) and the Park Station regeneration. Many other urban renewal initiatives driven by the JDA lie outside the boundary of central Johannesburg. The effectiveness of the JDA is its straightforward approach to central city and central node revival. The intention is to improve central city locations with public investment in structural rehabilitation. This is not the aim of BCMDA, which lacks a stern focus on central city renewal.

The Buffalo City Metropolitan Development Agency (BCMDA) is the principal development agency for the City of East London. Unlike the agency-driven projects of the JDA, the BCMDA's development framework is fixated on corporate partnerships to drive urban renewal. There are six projects under the administration of the BCMDA; however, only 1 of these projects, the Business Improvement Districts, fits the inner-city urban renewal mould. The remaining projects are the Mdantsane Eco Park upgrade, Water World upgrade and expansion, Court Crescent Development, Integrated Beach Front programme and the inner-city safety programme.

Juxtaposing the two development agencies, the JDA approach to urban renewal drives publicly led and publicly funded initiatives to renew inner-city precincts. The primary focus of the JDA is countering urban decay, with the facilitation of private partnerships undertaken to supplement public efforts. A key strength of the JDA is its ability to establish, run and sustain urban renewal projects. Unlike the JDA, the BCMDA, as the principal development initiator in East London, has a distinct framework, focusing on development projects by attracting investors into East London. This is demonstrated by the over 10 corporate partnerships secured for the six development projects in the city.

The city's planning priorities pose a significant challenge for East London. From the six projects undertaken by the BCMDA, only one focuses on urban renewal. While attracting investors is ideal, the BCMDA pales in comparison to the five urban renewal projects currently underway in central Johannesburg, which are state-funded and administered. However, using investors for capital projects necessitates a return on investment which limits development within the parameters of profitability.

The most significant distinction between the two agencies is that the JDA is an implementing agency responsible for pre- and post-phase renewal programmes, which dramatically improve project sustainability, while the BCMDA is a facilitation agency – a bridge connecting public planning endeavours with private resources. As a result, the BCMDA, unlike the JDA, is not involved in every aspect of the renewal logic framework. It is apparent that for the development of central East London to succeed, the planning priority needs a radical shift from outer-city and recreational investment to inner-city investment. In addition, a revised funding model must be applied to East London to evaluate how capital-intensive projects are allocated to the urban core. A revision of the present East London urban renewal approach, repositioning of planning priorities, and reallocating resources considering the financial and economic limitations are discussed in section 8.5.

The following section discusses the De Waterkant and Southernwood case study.

7.3. DE WATERKANT AND SOUTHERNWOOD CASE STUDY

7.3.1. Urban Renewal Approach

De Waterkant, discussed in length within section 4.4, is a unique historic yet modern enclave within the City of Cape Town, bordering the iconic Victoria and Alfred (V&A) Waterfront. De Waterkant is affectionately known as the Pink District or Gay Quarter due to the abundance of gay bars and restaurants (Rink, 2013). Also mentioned in earlier chapters are De Waterkant's distinct buildings, attributed to its 19th-century architectural style, which combines Cape Dutch and Georgian aesthetics. According to the area's official website, it is a street shopper's delight,

filled with coffee shops and interior design firms. De Waterkant is one of Cape Town and South Africa's oldest neighbourhoods. By 2000, the neighbourhood was already 112 years old (Kotze, 2000), making it 137 years at the time of writing.

De Waterkant's urban renewal approach is not too dissimilar to Maboneng's in that the unique structural integrity of the building is prioritised as it gives the area a distinct aesthetic, which areas immediately outside its demarcation lack. While like Maboneng in structural integrity, it also shares similarities in gentrification processes, forming an enclave through private means to redevelop urban space and its land use activities.

The urban renewal approach of De Waterkant is centred on the vision of the Village and Life property management company in a similar model to Maboneng's development under the Propertuity company. The approach includes an extensive renovation of cottages and other historic buildings to promote it as a tourist destination for both local and international consumption (Visser, 2014). The urban renewal approach of De Waterkant is also based on private efforts to regulate tourism and second home development within the enclave and local economic development. The aim is to ensure the steady growth of bourgeois second homes while improving tourism through area management.

De Waterkant's urban renewal approach also focuses on structural rehabilitation to maintain heritage structures. The area falls within the ambit of a heritage zoning classification, prioritising its distinct architectural style's structural preservation and improvement. The area's approach to urban renewal is also emphasised through mixed land use of residential and general business within the confines of its heritage status to produce a bourgeois development.

Like Maboneng, De Waterkant's development is not determined by a PPP but by a private approach to land use development. In summary, the urban renewal approach to De Waterkant is administered by the Village and Life property management company as it sets development standards, leasing agreements on property and the limits on which property can be modified in keeping with heritage zoning limits. Thus, for De Waterkant, land use development is tied to international tourism and second-home development (Visser, 2004).

Contrasting the Southernwood approach to urban renewal with De Waterkant, evidence shows that Southernwood's incentive-based renewal approach is the opposite of the privately driven models of De Waterkant and Maboneng. Setting De Waterkant apart from Southernwood is the unique approach of structural preservation and planning a closed economy within the enclave. Despite glaring limitations in merging or finding new solutions from De Waterkant to Southernwood, the following urban renewal approaches may apply to Southernwood.

De Waterkant provides a market-community approach that may be suitable for Southernwood, whereby property owners and groups, both public and private, consolidate into an entity for urban renewal and its management in Southernwood. This would entail a legislative body being granted authority to consolidate buildings' aesthetic appeal and design, as Southernwood is fractured in its land use and buildings. This approach would further grant the entity powers in urban design, controlling transit patterns, points of entry and egress within Southernwood. This approach may also be suitable as it could determine transit patterns, combine them with surveillance and security, and make structural improvements to enhance safety in a suburb where crime is among the most cited issues.

Southernwood, like many areas throughout South Africa, such as Braamfontein and areas of Stellenbosch that have seen studentification, has been compelled to focus on anti-crime measures and research ways to mitigate it. This is due to rising crime levels in areas with substantial student populations. The crime levels in student-focused areas are due to a concentration of electronic devices, such as computers and cell phones, in unregulated student accommodation (Gregory, 2022).

This market-community approach may also be suitable for Southernwood as the area includes both public and private property owners. An approach where planning powers are consolidated under one body may improve the development prospects of the area due to a centralised planning system. Moreover, such an approach may ensure the area has similar development aims and standards while combining the development preferences of private property owners and individual homeowners without an LSDF. Overall, this approach may be suitable for Southernwood as it can assist in establishing a competitive and attractive inner-city space for investment portfolio managers, tourists, workers and most importantly, residents.

7.3.2. Controls and Spatial Policy

The controls of De Waterkant's are similar to Southernwood's controls concerning sharing spatial flexibility as a tool for land use development. However, Southernwood's controls are not as well defined as De Waterkant's, and it lacks the overarching development theme that De Waterkant has due to the area's unified administration approach.

Comparing De Waterkant's controls with Southernwood, there is greater development alignment due to a single entity acting as an SRA to control development. As a result, the area development is set by a regulating body under the Table Bay district heritage protection area, mixed land use and general residential land use.

A benefit to De Waterkant is the absence of some controls regarding single residential housing structures. While the area has historic homes configured as cottages, Southernwood has single-

family residential houses. To an extent, De Waterkant's zoning laws are void of single residential controls, which may restrict the construction of high-rise buildings and limit the types of businesses allowed to operate.

For these controls to be adequate in Southernwood, the area would have to consolidate and delegate property development rights under a single body, which would make decisions on an approach to land use development and area improvement. However, this would require homeowners to contribute levies towards the area's development. This model may be a challenge for Southernwood, being less affluent than De Waterkant. Additionally, the heterogeneous spread of land uses in Southernwood would render this model inefficient since De Waterkant is largely a homogeneous property structure.

Southernwood controls, discussed in the earlier comparison with Maboneng (section 8.2.2), are suited to be configured in various ways provided that the aims of the development intervention align with city principles of density improvement, mixed land use and structural rehabilitation. According to the Land Use Scheme of the City of Cape Town, De Waterkant's controls and those of much of Cape Town's central suburbs are more conservative and configured to guide investment for the private sector, especially in areas with an LSDF.

LSDFs, as previously mentioned in earlier discussions, are more area-focused development controls to promote area-specific development. A local SDF may include an implementation plan, which must, among other things, inform and guide actions aimed at realising local spatial development framework proposals. One of the challenges for Southernwood is the lack of an LSDF to guide and tailor its spatial planning and land use management.

While building height is a limitation for De Waterkant, Southernwood controls make provisions for adjusting building heights in the western portion of the suburb, primarily consisting of multi-story residential buildings and commercial property. Southernwood does not have heritage controls on its zoning classification, meaning the area can develop land vertically, a feature De Waterkant lacks due to controls and the nature of its land use, which is primarily tourism-focused. Overall, De Waterkant's spatial policy is centred on a land use mix within the confines of a heritage zoning model where enterprise and vertical business development occur within the confines of preserved structural integrity and aesthetic homogeneity. Any suitable approach to redeveloping Southernwood's structural integrity and conglomeration of new building stocks to realise densification is predicated on finalising its LSDF.

Regarding controls and spatial policy, two main development strategies can be exported to Southernwood: establishing a homeowner's association, CID or SRA, and renewing pedestrian infrastructure. For Southernwood, a homeowners' association model may assist in establishing

homogenous spatial policy aims for the suburb to ensure similar urban renewal objectives. However, HEI private businesses and possibly developers will have to contribute to its sustainability. Unlike De Waterkant, Southernwood is not an affluent area; its population primarily consists of students, and its single-residential component faces decay challenges.

Southernwood may also adopt the De Waterkant functionality model, which promotes walkability, compactness and density. This model prioritises these features in the design and development of land use within the enclave, mainly due to the area's size and compact and enclosed nature. While Southernwood is larger, walkability is a strong policy feature in the area, and previous planning, although unsuccessful, targeted pedestrianisation as one of the urban renewal components of the suburb. However, a limitation found by the study includes concerns about safety, especially at night, poorly lit streets, inadequate sidewalk improvements, and a lack of traffic calming measures, which residents feel contribute to excessive speeding and heightened danger for pedestrians in the suburb.

7.3.3. Economy, Finance and Agencies

De Waterkant, unlike Southernwood, is an affluent enclave located in one of the most affluent urban areas in Cape Town and the entire African continent (Business Insider, 2024). One of the disadvantages of Southernwood is that it is located in East London, which pales in comparison to Cape Town. What also counts against Southernwood is its demographic composition; while sharing similar ages to De Waterkant, its drawback is the extensive student population, which does not possess the buying power of young professionals, tourists and affluent homeowners of De Waterkant.

While Southernwood's economic, finance and agency theme has been covered previously (section 8.2.2), De Waterkant's economy is primarily service based, with land use dominated by guest houses, rented apartments, restaurants, cafés and various tourist attractions and penthouses. Despite its affluence, De Waterkant is remarkably smaller than Southernwood.

Regarding finance and the development agency, De Waterkant's development is overseen by an SRA, the Village and Life property management company. Whereas De Waterkant is largely homogeneous, Southernwood has varying property ownership from private retail, property management groups, individual homeowners, HEIs, and medical institutions. Such ownership models may be complex for urban renewal without an LSDF. Moreover, for such a large and densely populated area, an SRA would have to establish the aim of the renewal intervention and set development parameters for both the eastern and western parts of Southernwood in isolation due to the varying extremity of its buildings, land use and general population.

Another challenge in adopting an approach similar to De Waterkant is that the BCMDA, the principal development agency of East London, focuses on investment attraction instead of the planning and development of state-led capital-intensive projects. While this approach is sensible as a development means, the BCMDA requires funding and coordination to bring together various Southernwood stakeholders to determine the appropriate planning model. The joint PPP intervention for Southernwood may be suitable. Herein, urban renewal is a shared endeavour between the BCMDA, an established SRA comprising western Southernwood, and another to represent the development interest of eastern Southernwood. No single plan can address Southernwood's urban renewal, as its diverse land use and population require multiple strategies.

The following section discusses the application of the Florida Road case study to Southernwood.

7.4. FLORIDA ROAD AND SOUTHERNWOOD CASE STUDY

7.4.1. Urban Renewal Approach

Florida Road, often called 'The Hub of Durban Entertainment', has earned its reputation as one of the city's trendiest streets, where people gather to shop, eat, drink, meet and hang out (South African Tourism, 2016; Phori, 2018). Much like De Waterkant and Maboneng, Florida Road has a distinct historical element and unique architectural character that sets it apart from areas immediately outside its jurisdiction. Florida Road is one of the oldest streets in Durban. Its urban renewal approach was designed through the FRUIP (see section 4.5.2) to transform the street into a bustling area of restaurants, shopping and leisure. This urban renewal approach is a PPP between the city and Urban Lime Properties, unlike the private-driven planning models of Maboneng and De Waterkant. The renewal approach was based on a pedestrian-friendly urban development model with a patchwork design for front street commerce, residential housing and retail.

At its inception, the urban renewal approach focused on commodifying Florida Road. This endeavour was made seamless by the area's zoning classification, allowing reconfiguration controls to meet urban renewal aims. These regulations also encourage the development of various land uses within individual buildings and adjacent lots, which would be unsuitable and classified as conflicting or a nuisance under normal zoning parameters. Together with Urban Lime Properties, the Durban municipality, and members of the FRUIP, ultimately preside over the area's development, commerce, and future area plans.

While the urban commodification approach is similar to Maboneng and De Waterkant, Florida Road is the only one of the three case studies where a PPP model is in effect. Ultimately, the

FRUIP body, using the area levies, presides over the choice of development, physical security and surveillance security, structural improvement and modification of roads, lights and sidewalks, and the protection of heritage buildings in the area. A distinctive element between the Florida Road model and the Southernwood model is that, although Durban does not have a development agency, as seen with Johannesburg, the municipality has the capacity and means to ensure the sustainable development of the UIP through levy collection and redistribution to the UIP body. The approach has been highly successful due to the area's location and appeal, which has been achieved by marketing it as an ideal destination for leisure in the City of eThekweni.

7.4.2. Controls and Spatial Policy

The central principle of controls is to separate and divide land use into various categories, each in a separate part of the city (Hirt, 2007). Comparatively, the controls of all case studies, Maboneng, De Waterkant, Florida Road and Southernwood, challenge this general approach to land use organisation to stimulate and revive urban areas.

Mixing controls has been central to the American planning system for years, where urbanists Krier (1998), Grant (2002) and Talen (2006) agreed that bringing mixed land use to cities was the key to restoring urban vibrancy. Also, these urbanists argued that mixing controls brings urban efficiency and better access to services. In the selected case studies, the benefits of land use mix are evident in promoting urban densification, building refurbishments and other infrastructure improvements and urban agglomeration.

The controls of Florida Road through the UIP may be regarded as similar to those of Maboneng and De Waterkant. These controls aim to ensure that areas are given licenses to develop land uses in ways that regions outside the UIP are unable to. This means land use controls are configured explicitly for mixed land use activities to support the area's urban renewal objectives and, broadly, city improvement objectives.

The South African planning machinery has developed several tools, such as UDZ/ SDZ, to allow controls to accommodate mixed land use, a prerequisite for successful urban renewal in all case studies. While mixed land use is a standard feature, few distinctions exist between the controls of Maboneng, Florida Road, Southernwood and De Waterkant. The main distinction may be that De Waterkant and Florida Road are focused on preserving historic structures in the city. While Maboneng lacks these aspects, it shares the same policy of urban refurbishment as opposed to building demolition. Another commonality within these controls is their shared drive for vertical land use mixing within individual buildings, residential streets, or boulevard-focused development. Overall, these controls may be regarded as similar, with minor limitations on

property development. These controls are most evident in neighbourhood housing improvements linked to general and special residential land use.

The spatial policy of Florida Road is to promote the preservation of historical buildings, the area as an entertainment avenue for shopping and restaurants, and business development and growth, while also maintaining the night-time economy of the street in a mixed land use configuration. Although this spatial policy shares similarities with those implemented at other field sites, it is distinguished by its developer- and state-driven approach, in contrast to the incentive-driven strategies employed in Southernwood. The Southernwood spatial policy and Florida Road policy essentially aim to redevelop city structures to enhance structural appeal as opposed to other renewal attempts aimed at economic development or environmental restoration. While urban greening is part of the approach, it is secondary to the main development aim of structural rehabilitation and preservation.

One of the study's main findings was that political will is a strong determinant of spatial policy, which dictates developments such as urban renewal and land use scheme modification that promote city development. One shared policy distinction between Johannesburg and Cape Town is that both cities have strong political intentions to promote city renewal through state-funded projects, PPPs and exclusively private development projects. This is evident in the sustainability of their projects. Further, these cities focus on physical and economic renewal through nodal development to promote linkages between agglomerate towns and businesses, making exchanging goods, people and services easier. East London's main planning priority is public housing supply and attention to urbanising sprawling townships.

The initiative of urban design and beautification in Southernwood is the responsibility of the developer to keep within the limits of controls and policy. In the Florida Road case study, the UIP directs all urban improvement and design elements within the street, including layout and transit patterns. Overall, Florida Road and Southernwood share similar controls and spatial policy apart from area management, which, in the case of Florida Road, is the responsibility of the UIP.

7.4.3. Economy, Finance and Agencies

Unlike the enclave development of Maboneng and De Waterkant, Florida Road has the smallest economy and general size. The Florida Road economy is more affluent, although significantly smaller when compared to Southernwood. However, Southernwood possesses an excellent real estate economy compared to Florida Road, which, unlike Southernwood, has a strong daytime and night-time service economy of leisure amenities and is generally regarded as an entertainment precinct (Cele & Chipungu, 2022). The economy of Florida Road is based on just

over 50 adjacent buildings with six land use classifications, which are dominated by commercial and residential land use with mixed land use within individual buildings.

The UIP operates in a similar model to De Waterkant regarding its finances. Levies are collected and administered by a body to provide top-up services for the area, including security improvements, refuse collection, beautification and design features. Interestingly, the Durban UIP company is a non-profit organisation that partners with the city to promote inner-city revitalisation. The study found that UIPs/ SRAs are mainly successful in affluent areas. Also, a few South African studies (Yuan, 2002; Visser, 2004; Matiashe, 2020) focusing on SRAs, UIPs, and other forms of state-sponsored privatised planning models apply to wealthy areas. This trend suggests that SRAs and UIPs are mainly applicable to affluent regions or areas where property owners are willing to contribute additional levies to improve urban conditions because homeowners and businesses in these areas have more disposable income to include a top-up levy to municipal tax. Also, homeowners and businesses in prosperous SRA areas have largely homogenous properties and are relatively smaller than those in Southernwood's area.

A key drawback of the Southernwood model is its limited effectiveness, as the commercial centre and residential areas are not fully integrated, unlike De Waterkant, Florida Road, and Maboneng. Based on this challenge and the area's nature, the eastern section may require some form of commodification or a limited economic renewal intervention to agglomerate the section. For Glaeser (2009), Ozguzel (2020) and Chen (2003), agglomeration has benefits such as capital influx and increased density.

In terms of agencies, the City of eThekweni does not have a development agency, as seen in Johannesburg with the JDA and the BCMDA. However, the municipality assists in the administration of PPPs and SRAs; Durban also has a UIP, which is a non-profit organisation. While the lack of an agency is not a limitation for Southernwood, the focus and development strategy of the BCMDA may improve Southernwood's situation by providing more investment opportunities focused on inner-city areas through extensive incentives. Development agencies in South Africa have emerged as an appropriate institutional structure for advancing socio-economic development in the local government-led development landscape due to the inability of local municipalities to lead regional economic development (Khambule, 2022).

The following section discusses urban renewal strategies that may be used to renew the Southernwood suburb of East London and the limitations accompanying these strategies.

7.5. SOUTHERNWOOD URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGIES

This section discusses in detail what strategies may be used to renew the Southernwood suburb of East London. These strategies are taken from a comparative discussion of the three secondary sites. The discussion is divided into three parts.

The sections discuss strategies from Maboneng, De Waterkant and Florida Road that may work for Southernwood. Limitations accompany each of these three sections.

7.5.1. Maboneng and Southernwood

A comparative analysis between Maboneng and Southernwood proposes the following four strategies: increase the flexibility of controls, reduce property tax, build additional HEI residences in Southernwood, and functional specialisation.

First, since spatial control is the only means of fostering urban renewal, Southernwood may extend the flexibility of controls in the western portion of the suburb to attract private developers and enable plans like the UTC to find minimal resistance in property development. Nowadays, a hallmark of projects is neoliberal hegemony; its agenda is place and brand marketing (Maculan & Del Moreo, 2020).

Place and brand-making are significant contributors to the urban sustainability of projects as they entail marketing the place as an ideal destination and creating unique spaces to attract investments and partnerships. For the success of this strategy, planning should focus on open invitations to developers and other entities, such as HEIs, to develop land, leveraging flexible controls as a motivator.

Second, excessive cuts in property tax rates are proposed for land zones in eastern Southernwood, which is primarily dominated by single-residential housing. These property tax rates would necessitate considering prerequisite structural improvements to houses. By doing so, protecting housing stock prices and property values in Southernwood while enhancing the area's aesthetic appeal may address future obsolescence issues within single residential land use. However, given the BCMM's dire financial position, a reduction in property rates is unlikely, as property tax is one of the BCMM's main revenue streams.

Third, establishing more HEI residences in Southernwood is a viable renewal option as it introduces new building stock to Southernwood's physical fabric. Since the area underwent extensive studentification, records showed that as early as 2011, there were approximately 10,439 residents living in Southernwood. Hence, investment in student infrastructure is ideal. As recent as 2016, the actual number of tertiary-level students who resided in Southernwood could not be established (Bwalya & Seethal, 2016) because precise population data only exists

in aggregate format and no longer as area-specific data for sub-places (i.e., focusing on suburbs) since 2011.

In projecting the 2025 population, this study uses a population growth formula: the South African growth rate is 0.9%. $P = \text{Population}$, $CP = \text{Current Population}$, $r = \text{rate}$, $t = \text{Time}$. Stats SA (2024) states that the annual population change is 1.33%.

Population growth is $P(t) = CP \cdot (1+r)^t$

$$P(14) = 10\,439(1+1.33\%)^{14}$$

$$P = 12\,560$$

A previous study on Southernwood by Bwalya and Seethal (2016) found that students unanimously agreed it would be ideal for Southernwood to be declared a student village. they also found that slumlording was one of the most cited characteristics of Southernwood's neighbourhood context. Slumlords are residential property owners who maximise their returns from renting their residential property to as many people as possible with little or no maintenance of their premises. New HEI residences in the area have enhanced the structural appeal of the area's building stock. provides opportunities to incorporate rent control within spatial policy. While renewal strategies pose significant gentrification threats, especially for a student-centred area, rent controls may assist in protecting affordable accommodation for students within Southernwood.

The fourth is the promotion of functional specialisation. Functional specialisation refers to the adaptive use of urban space through infill development to promote structural agglomeration of urban spaces (Hamidi *et al.*, 2023). This means Southernwood will push to attract commerce, which as non-functional for the area, if it promotes property prices and commercial growth and does not provide a nuisance.

Attracting these specialised land uses and services may help Southernwood promote polycentric development. In various cases, functional specialisation in support of polycentric development patterns has been found to self-reliant and largely self-sustaining communities (Goess, 2016). One of the benefits of functional specialisation within a mixed land-use framework is the promotion of urban sustainability by integrating essential land uses central to community needs and development (Azizi, 2024).

By integrating land use, Southernwood's economy may become more competitive through more economic centres, thereby improving business sustainability. Of the various past and present studies (Hague, 2003; Hall, 2009; Knaap & Ding, 2011; Foster & Ioane, 2022; Morrison, 2023)

have argued that economic agglomeration is a vehicle for growth. Furthermore, these growth centres provide more significant development, which aid towards sustainable development.

Based on interview data, residents are keen on nodes such as a public healthcare centre, a library, and a police station to serve the Southernwood population. While these are the primary areas of urgent concern for Southernwood residents, the overall takeaway is that residents preferred the structural renewal of the suburb with the accompanying land uses. The proposed structural renewal includes structural enhancement to the main thoroughfares of Southernwood, which are an avenue for other suburbs in East London, physical street refurbishment, traffic calming measures, new sidewalks and street lighting, as crime is a primary concern.

Overall, this study proposes an urban renewal strategy focused on extended flexibility of controls to enable private developers to find minimal resistance in developing property. Moreover, excessive cuts on property taxes are recommended, provided that single residential homeowners improve the physical appeal of their property. The strategy also focuses on promoting more HEI residences and unlimited functional specialisation to attract and ensure business sustainability. Central to this chapter is one of the guiding questions of this research project: exploring alternative urban renewal strategies suited to the Southernwood context. Specifically, the question focuses on what residents' think can be applied to the area.

These strategies have six drawbacks and three limitations. Like any renewal strategy, the first drawback is gentrification, which can lead to overpricing of property, hence the integration of rent controls into student urban renewal projects in Southernwood. Secondly, an overreliance on the student population may limit the area's spending power and disposable income. The third drawback and concern for such a strategy is traffic and congestion in Southernwood. The fourth is extensive noise pollution, zoning complications from patchwork patterns of land use mix, and encouragement of functional specialisation.

The fifth drawback relates to security due to the proximity of different land uses, which might raise security concerns. This requires careful planning for surveillance and access control at the area's main points of egress and entry. Security is already a concern for the area, as previous studies and interview data have extensively shown. Lastly, the proposed renewal strategy has limited control for residents over adjacent properties, potentially leading to noise, business operations, and shared area management conflicts. Due to the nature of controls and prospective agglomeration of businesses, purely residential property rights may be infringed.

There are three main points of discussion on the limitations: the approach to urban renewal, gentrification, and area size. Southernwood's approach to urban renewal presents the first limitation. This approach requires remodelling if urban renewal is to be successful. Taking area

characteristics into account, the approach needs to be centred on neoliberal principles as opposed to the present commitment of the state to the outer city developments.

The second limitation is gentrification. Although similar, a simple export of Maboneng controls to Southernwood presents several challenges. On the one hand, overrelaxing regulations and policies may lead to extensive gentrification in Southernwood. On the other hand, “studentification” issues require forming new controls suited to student development and urban sustainability. This will remain a challenge until the finalisation of the Southernwood LSDF. Additionally, Maboneng is void of issues plaguing Southernwood, such as slumlordism. The concept was coined in the Southernwood context from previous research (Bwayla & Seethal, 2016) on the area and is defined as a shanty part of the suburb with substandard student accommodation. Slumlordism was one of the most cited characteristics of Southernwood’s neighbourhood context. Slumlords are residential property owners who maximise their returns from renting their residential property to as many people as possible with little or no maintenance of their premises (Bwayla & Seethal, 2016).

The third limitation concerns the economy, finances, and agencies that extend beyond Southernwood’s economic footprint. This means that due to its relatively smaller size, the Maboneng model excels in sustainability due to the unique nature of its homogenous economy. One of the limitations of Maboneng is space. As an enclave, its development has spatial limitations due to city confines, and as a result, contrasting to an area as large as Southernwood is a challenge. In particular, Southernwood’s heterogeneous economy means that an economic intervention must consider that the area is a spatial patchwork of light commerce, intensive commerce, areas of no commerce and differences in affluence between the eastern portion of the suburb and the western portion.

In terms of comparators, there are several strategy instruments which cannot be transferred from the Maboneng case to Southernwood. The first is the ownership model, Maboneng was established using a developer driven model which maximised vacant industrial property. Also, developers bought several buildings and converted these into mixed land use hubs. For Southernwood, the model cannot be replicate as there are not vacant buildings.

The following section covers urban renewal strategies from De Waterkant that may apply to Southernwood.

7.5.2. De Waterkant and Southernwood

The following three strategies are proposed from a comparative analysis between De Waterkant and Southernwood. The first is the property owner’s association, followed by promoting structural homogeneity, and the tax-free urban renewal zone in Southernwood.

A property owner's association with an SRA policy, which includes residential and commercial property and, to an extent, privately owned property, is the first proposed strategy. Such a development model may mix with the University Town Concept (UTC) to initiate urban renewal. Notably, the property owner's association would ideally operate with its board of directors and liaise across the public (including HEIs) and private sectors, working together to develop, promote and manage Southernwood. The board of directors would be accountable to the community for good governance and to ensure that the levy collected is spent wisely and in the best interest of Southernwood. Overall, the main idea is to develop a model where additional property rates can be levied to finance municipal services within that area. Such a strategy may be one where gentrification threats are minimised.

Many of the study's respondents argued for interventions to establish critical nodes such as a police station, a library, a public health centre and other measures such as rehabilitating green spaces and adequate refuse collection and disposal. In keeping with residents' aims for the area, a property owner's association with an SRA policy would allow the community of Southernwood to establish its development measures and initiatives based on the area's revenues.

The second strategy is the promotion of structural homogeneity in Southernwood. While land use diversity is essential for diverse spaces, in terms of population, Southernwood is mainly homogenous concerning residents, while structurally, it is largely non-homogeneous. Southernwood is split between a large student contingent and a relatively minor residential population.

Such a disparity may pose development barriers, such as non-conforming land use. Promoting homogeneous urban spaces has certain benefits, such as more straightforward and relevant property valuation on prices and energy consumption. Another advantage is that it becomes easier to develop homogeneous land due to fewer varying structural considerations and regulations. For example, western Southernwood cannot be in the same manner as eastern Southernwood due to their varying controls and land use functions, as shown in Figure 8.1.



Figure 7.1: Flats and Residences, Southernwood (Author)

Moreno *et al.* (2022) argue that homogeneous urban zones offer a novel residential urban classification for building energy assessment in the built environment to support homogeneous development. Furthermore, they highlight that a homogeneous urban zone boosts resilient cities through tailored and practical frameworks for future building energy retrofitting plans and urban regeneration strategies (Moreno *et al.*, 2022). Despite this positive feature of urban homogeneity, a 2024 European Union (EU) report argues that as cities and towns become increasingly homogeneous, the culture and lifestyles that once served as the social fabric of local communities often get lost. As this fabric unravels, so does our motivation to engage with places.

The third strategy is structural incentive improvement through a tax-free urban renewal property zone. The Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI) has had little impact on land development in Southernwood. While the approach is ideal, its parameters can be adjusted to a nearly minimal tax collection from the state on developed properties within Southernwood. While Southernwood has measures that align with the URTI, significant improvement is needed to entice developers to assume urban renewal in Southernwood. In Cape Town, the present tax incentive structure within UDZs/ CID administered by SARS under the Income Tax Act of 2000 allows property

owners to claim a tax reduction of 55% of the purchase price (between R247,500 and R822,250) against taxable income on the property (Hassan, 2023).

While this is mainly successful in Cape Town due to the area's affluence, for a less affluent area such as Southernwood, a tax-free urban renewal zone may be a viable option to stimulate urban renewal. However, despite the suitability of this intervention, a previous study by Visser and Kotze (2008) questions and probes urban renewal interventions, particularly those in central cities, contending that specific state policies and interventions focused on inner-city regeneration underpin new forms of gentrification in South Africa.

According to the chief town planner, property tax from residential zones and businesses is one of the main revenue streams for the BCMM. As a result, any rebates on tax may be a significant challenge for the city. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the area's property owners' association, in partnership with their SRA policy, to use generated funds to improve the structural integrity of the area and enhance its aesthetic appeal. The state may oversee all these measures to ensure effective service delivery, as SRAs are part of municipal by-laws.

This study proposes integrating rent controls and affordable housing measures into the tax-free urban renewal zone policy, as this third strategy may lead to gentrification. The strategy aims to generate the tax base needed to sustain and expand public services and amenities within its jurisdiction. A tax-free urban renewal zone, a form of tourism in large human agglomerations, usually in the main cities or metropolitan areas (Aall & Koens, 2019; Urosevic, 2024), may lead to further inner-city development through tourism.

For the Southernwood context, a tax-free urban renewal zone and urban tourism practices could have a twofold positive effect: they could increase the standard of living where inhabitants would be able to afford high property rates due to increases in property values as a result of local tourism multipliers. The other positive effect could be increased property values due to high-income residents displacing low-income residents. Property rates can be decreased by preventing foreign displacement of local inhabitants through rent controls as a vehicle for urban inclusivity and a gentrification mitigation tool.

A tax-free urban renewal zone strategy may benefit from urban tourism linked to historical buildings in the area. The refurbishment of the first houses and mansions in Southernwood, which were built in 1882 (Bwalya & Seethal, 2016), may be revisited to ensure that the cultural identity of the suburb is preserved through structural rehabilitation. Historical buildings in many of South Africa's cities have seen renewal attempts, aiding urban tourism development (Rogerson, 2002). These buildings include, but are not limited to, old forts, museums, armouries and other historical buildings such as churches.

As discussed in the preamble of the first chapter, South African cities face profound and complex urban planning challenges, namely decaying inner cities and CBDs, and Southernwood is not exempt from these conditions. To address these urban issues, the state declared central city areas 'urban development zones' (Hassan, 2023), where private-sector investment enjoys tax incentives to construct and improve building stock. These developments show a quasi-urban government approach, a hybrid organisation that combines private and public sector characteristics to provide governmental services and urban development to intended areas.

There are three limitations to De Waterkant's urban renewal strategy when applied to Southernwood. These limitations are area size, area needs and student-friendly development. De Waterkant is significantly smaller and more compact than Southernwood, which limits the projection of whether the Cape Town model applies to East London. De Waterkant is approximately 0.14km², while Southernwood is 0.85km² in size. Additionally, despite its size, De Waterkant is configured in a cluster development form with narrow streets and close-quarter cottages. Southernwood is expansively planned and pales in comparison when compared to De Waterkant. As a result, urban renewal may be more capital-intensive in an expansive area than in a clustered development.

The second limitation is the area's needs. Urban renewal and land development in De Waterkant serve different needs than those in Southernwood. De Waterkant's urban renewal and sustainability are focused on structural preservation and are designed for tourism and the stability of property prices, many of which are second homes. It also serves the needs of more affluent residents of Cape Town. De Waterkant, however, is limited by the heritage zoning classification, which dictates the type of building improvements that can be made, whereas Southernwood does not have this development feature.

In contrast, Southernwood is focused on land use development and is centred on promoting the area as a student-friendly suburb with controls and policies such as the UTC. These initiatives are designed to attract private investment, using the area's location and population density as a pivot for urban renewal.

Student-friendly development is the third limitation. The limiting factor in exporting some of De Waterkant's strategies to Southernwoods is linked to the concept of studentification. De Waterkant is not a student village, while Southernwood has the potential to be one, especially with the proposed models, such as the UTC and property ownership by HEIs of East London. These present trends and previously attempted urban renewal strategies suggest that the present and future intervention focuses on enhancing Southernwood as the prime student quarter in East London.

Student areas lack affluence and buying power due to students mainly living on state subsidies and scholarships and not being considered as having the buying power of employed persons. However, an advantage of Southernwood is that, while lacking in affluence, the area's property prices are far below those of other inner-city areas.

The study found that Southernwood is projected to be attractive in the property market due to its location and relatively stable property prices. Estate agents emphasised that while property generally increases throughout South Africa, Southernwood's property prices are below the rising trendline. A limitation to De Waterkant's approach is that it does not cater for students. Therefore, its land use is dedicated to tourism, bourgeois residency development and leisure activities. Despite this, three urban renewal strategies can be exported to the Southernwood context, as the following section covers.

In terms of comparators, while the home renovation strategy may prove applicable to Southernwood, the body corporate strategy of converting these homes into second home ownership for international tourism may not be a viable strategy. The Cape Town model is based on high tourism and land use development to serve this industry. The fiscal position of Cape Town and its housing market cannot be replicated in Southernwood which has lower paying residents as compared to De Waterkant. Applicable strategies are discussed under 8.5.

While there is strong compatibility, purely market based techniques such as those employed in De Waterkant may prove strictly unsuitable for Southernwood. Also, a resident funded CID may also prove unsuccessful as these two instruments require beforehand, strong financial commitment from residents. Such instruments would find success in areas where tourism, relatively high property values and stable homeownership is present.

7.5.3. Florida Road and Southernwood

The following four strategies are proposed and may be applicable from a comparative analysis between Florida Road and Southernwood: a new pedestrianisation scheme for Southernwood, establishing a Southernwood development agency, commodifying Southernwood, and rebates on single-family housing.

The first strategy that may work for Southernwood as part of urban renewal is a pedestrianisation scheme / boulevard-focused development, which is thriving on Florida Road. Although the pedestrianisation scheme in Southernwood was unsuccessful, a transferable strength lies in the mechanisms used on Florida Road to manage conflicts among vehicles, pedestrians, and safety concerns in an urban setting. This approach aligns with findings from the study, particularly in response to students' requests for enhanced pedestrian infrastructure

in Southernwood. To meet the needs of pedestrians in the Florida Road area, the UIP and planners devised a pedestrianisation scheme.

The pedestrianisation scheme provides effective services to pedestrians and enhances the quality of pedestrian facilities in urban and town areas. Good facilities and services make walking more accessible, comfortable, convenient and safe (Yuan, 2002). A pedestrian scheme entails the investment and development in sidewalks, traffic lights, crosswalks, street lighting, urban greening, street furniture, open space developments such as recreation pockets, creative intersections and attractive parking bays for cars, cabs and cyclists.

The second strategy is the establishment of a Southernwood development agency. Urban Development Agencies (UDA) have been successful throughout the discussion of case studies. While the BCMDA exists, Southernwood requires a narrow-focused body to initiate urban renewal due to its size and complexity. The BCMDA's lack of success is due, in part, to its development priorities, which are focused on tourism development in the city, addressing urban informality on city fringes, and improving street and beach fronts.

The BCMDA, in a limited capacity, does focus on business improvement district plans for the inner city, which include street and sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal, infrastructure development, beautification and the installation and upgrading of streetlighting (BCMDA, 2024). Also, the BCMDA focuses on security for the vast student body in the area, along with other stakeholders in the business and tourism sectors. Despite this focus, crime remains one of the most cited issues within Southernwood. While these are positive developments, Southernwood requires a focused, tailor-made agency to address its development shortcomings. By having its development agency, another benefit for Southernwood may be developing its capital investment strategy with the assistance of stakeholders such as HEIs, the municipality, students, landlords and private homeowners.

UDAs worldwide operate on different institutional models. These development agencies are specialised bodies within city planning structures to support comprehensive, place-based urban development. Moreover, they have been cited as catalysts for urban sustainability (Scholz *et al.*, 2022). Southernwood would need to configure an area-specific model and approach to urban renewal focused on student-friendly urban development. However, this may lead to displacement and uncontrolled private developments, which may lead to gentrification. Unchecked developments may shape Southernwood or, in large part, into small enclaves, limiting accessibility.

The third strategy is commodifying eastern Southernwood. While there are no specific criteria for what general commerce is allowed in residential areas, eastern Southernwood may explore introducing commerce into residential spaces as long as it serves the daily needs of the

neighbourhood. The intended commerce may be land uses such as small stores, non-disturbing industries, restaurants and small workshops. One of the aims of this strategy is to reduce urban informality in eastern Southernwood, provide area-specific businesses, enhance the value of single-family property prices and improve urban efficiency through easy access to goods and services. This commodification strategy aims to strengthen eastern Southernwood's standard to match that of western Southernwood.

This commodification strategy implicitly endorses a patchwork of residency and light commerce in eastern Southernwood, provided commerce does not emit noxious gases or noise intrusions, to create a more homogenous land use and improved building standards for the entire suburb by stimulating buildings with businesses. Urban commodification has, and continues to be extensively studied as neoliberalism exerts a significant influence on urban planning (Grange *et al.*, 2006; Serin, 2020; Pericich & Loyola, 2023); this is not only in the widely discussed cities of the global north but also in southern cities.

There are three main benefits of urban commodification for Southernwood. While it is a profit-driven process, the first is that commodification assists in concentrating levies into real estate development and city improvement in host areas. Second, urban commodification gives area-based approaches greater autonomy to shape land use to community-specific needs. Third, commodification increases area competition, inadvertently attracting higher earners, firms and investors and providing an area of focus for income release.

Despite these positives, issues such as the privatisation of land and the implementation of market-oriented housing policies have been key drivers of urban sprawl (Santos, 2018; Pardo Montaña, 2018). Similar processes were observed in cities of Brazil, where the ascendance of the real estate sector has undermined progressive and redistributive planning efforts. In South Africa, issues such as urban fragmentation and gentrification are due to a type of urban commodification strategy, particularly in areas with a strong residential footprint.

The fourth strategy is single-family housing improvement rebates for eastern Southernwood. However, while land use variety is essential, developing plans to renew Southernwood cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach. The eastern portion of the suburb requires a different approach from the western portion. The strategy may propose a lower property tax for qualifying single-family houses, provided they adhere to set property development criteria from the city's land use managers, planners and urban designers.

One of the prerequisites for these rebates is that landlords and housing owners must redevelop their property, enhancing its structural appeal and that of the eastern portion. Once properties are improved, land use managers may grade the property and approve rebates based on adherence to development standards.

Applying some of the Florida Road strategies to Southernwood presents three primary limitations. The first is the Florida Roads Boulevard development, followed by integrated residential development, and the third and final limitation is area affluence.

The first limitation of the Florida Road model is that it primarily applies to street or boulevard urban development instead of suburban development. Suburban development is more complex and does not necessarily share the linear development of models like the one applied in the Florida Road case study. While the Florida Road case study has elements of suburban urban renewal, its model does not contend with planning elements such as high-rise complexes, expansive multi-story land use and the integration of functional nodes such as schools and other institutions.

Suburban urban renewal must contend with issues such as gentrification, housing prices, social inclusivity and exclusion, balancing commercial and residential controls, and other conundrums such as the high development cost, often including structural, social, economic and environmental aspects. For boulevard or street urban renewal, there are fewer issues to attend to than planners would for suburban renewal, which is a far more expansive planning effort.

The second limitation of the Florida Road model is that, unlike Maboneng, Southernwood and De Waterkant, which have significantly large integrated residences, Florida Road does not share this dimension. However, residential flats and houses are integrated into the development and outside its jurisdiction. In a 2016 study on Florida Road, Cele and Chipungu (2016) argued that there is a higher intensity of land-use activity, such as restaurants operating as nightclubs near residential flats. Despite this intensity, there is dialectic tension between the relevant stakeholders relating to planning and the decision-making processes, including business tension with neighbouring residents. The 2016 study specifically found that these tensions were due to Florida Road having a range of compatible and incompatible land uses, all within walking distance, characterised by horizontal and vertical mixed uses. The urban renewal of Florida Road is funded by Florida Road commercial landlords and property owners (Cele & Chipungu, 2022). As a result, levies are directed towards promoting multi-use establishments.

This model's third and final limitation lies within the precinct size. The Florida Road model may not be entirely suitable for an expansive area such as Southernwood with interrelated issues such as varying property types and populations and problems such as crime and informality. However, despite this limitation, the Florida Road model may apply to past strategies, such as the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street. Based on respondents' views, such a model where nearly all commercial landlords and property owners contribute to a levy may be unfeasible. Also, the Florida Road case study is mainly dominated by leisure land use, while Southernwood has a more extensive property and land use portfolio. This unequal dimension in the property and land

use portfolio severely limits the applicability of the Florida Road case study. In terms of compatibility, while the Florida Road case study is excellent in similar land use controls and urban features, quantifying the development is a challenge. Florida Road, a street development pales in comparison to the development of a suburb. While land controls may be exported to Southernwood, quantifying the size of the development to a suburban scale is a challenge.

7.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The research question tackled in this chapter was to compare South African urban renewal case studies (Maboneng in Johannesburg, De Waterkant in Cape Town, Florida Road in Durban) to identify strategies that can be applied to Southernwood, East London.

After analysing and evaluating the different factors of the comparative analysis, the study found that 13 strategies may be applied to Southernwood. However, despite the applicability of these interventions, they have several limitations, perhaps the main one being the incomplete Southernwood LSDF. Based on the findings of this study, it is apparent that the finalisation of the LSDF serves as a prerequisite for successful urban renewal in Southernwood. The LSDF will guide decisions about land use, development, density, transportation and urban design within Southernwood. Beyond structural planning, an LSDF also informs public investment in infrastructure. Southernwood requires the finalisation of its LSDF to chart a development path and set area-based development standards.

However, urban renewal is not a magic wand. Instead, it is an integrated process between various public and private actors, as well as agencies representing state interests and those representing private interests. One of the main takeaways from this chapter is that urban renewal is a capital-intensive process. Incentives are necessary, but cannot compensate for a lack of capital investment. The chapter has shown no singular approach to urban renewal from the secondary case studies because urban renewal is an integrated process requiring the consensus of various groups to succeed.

A primary lesson from this chapter is that neoliberal planning principles underlie all the proposed strategies and modus operandi of the secondary field sites and within Southernwood. As a result, urban renewal is tied to private planning. Another lesson from this chapter is that while the market may dictate the choice of development, the state must play a proactive role in urban renewal by making inner-city renewal a priority in terms of policy and monetary investment.

From all three case studies, the planning model and strategies used for Florida Road in Durban may apply to Southernwood more than the other case studies from Johannesburg and Cape Town. A plausible explanation is that one of the defining features of the Florida Road case study is strong community participation, which is lacking in the context of the Johannesburg and Cape

Town case studies. Florida Road presents a PPP approach to urban renewal that is more inclusive than the private models of associated case studies from Johannesburg and Cape Town. Another plausible explanation is that Florida Road, in terms of economy, finance and agencies, presents strategies that may suit Southernwood's economic groups.

Possible factor that may not be transferable to Southernwood from Florida Road is the urban development zone design which is successful in Florida Road due to the homogenous nature of land use. Also, Florida Road is a highly commercialised street whereas Southernwood is relatively has more residential building when compared to commercial ones. As a result, economic factors may not be transferable between the two areas.

The chapter also highlighted that it is essential to ensure that urban renewal is successful but also accessible and inclusive, especially when factoring in the use of neoliberal frameworks of city development. An important conclusion that can be drawn from this chapter is that in all case studies, neoliberal frameworks show that urban renewal is rarely openly inclusive but is dictated by affluence. The less obvious finding from the comparative analysis is that urban renewal projects are seldom large-scale; they are small-scale precinct plans which cater to specific economic groups. As a result, any urban renewal strategy for Southernwood has to consider spatial accessibility, affordability and socio-economic inclusion.

The following chapter covers the discussion and conclusion.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters discussed the study's key findings. This chapter summarises the key findings according to objectives. It provides the theoretical reflection, recommendations, areas for future research, and implications for policy, research and the community of Southernwood.

8.2. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This study investigates why central East London's Southernwood has not realised sustained urban renewal despite proximity to advantages, and it proposes context appropriate renewal strategies. The study frames renewal through a neoliberal planning lens, juxtaposes Southernwood with three South African comparators. The study also advances a suite of practical planning interventions. The overarching argument presented by this study is fiscally constrained municipalities must leverage market actors within a clear and inclusive public framework.

Four objectives informed the study: to explore the successes and challenges of previous urban renewal strategies in Southernwood; to analyse the influence of previous urban renewal attempts in Southernwood; to explore alternative strategies suited to the Southernwood context; and to compare South African case studies to identify strategies that can be applied to Southernwood. This section summarises the findings per objective.

8.2.1. The Successes and Challenges of the Previous Strategies in Southernwood

This objective explored the successes and challenges of the previous strategies in Southernwood, namely sleeper site development, pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI), and University Town Concept/ Plan (UTC/ UTP).

Findings show that urban renewal attempts in Southernwood were primarily a neoliberal strategy, where the private sector, HEIs and building proprietors were invited to develop urban land or form part of an integrated approach to urban development. One of the ways this was achieved was through incentive-oriented development strategies. These strategies included a range of mechanisms, specifically the use of flexible urban development controls to promote mixed land use to arrest urban decay.

Regarding challenges, the study found that the four urban renewal attempts were made in Southernwood. While their success was limited, the study notes that their lack of success was due to numerous constraints, such as public finance, outer-city planning priorities,

studentification, and the lack of inner-city partnerships between HEIs and businesses and crime. The study also showed that while previous renewal attempts were necessary to arrest urban decay, the success of these strategies was hinged on functional alliances between public and private planning.

The sleeper site development was the most successful renewal intervention of all previous strategies. The success was in constructing a new dual-lane road, diverting traffic from residential areas to commercial and industrial centres of East London. The pedestrianisation of Oxford Street's renewal was not fully attained due to a lack of improvement in walkability infrastructure, which is critical to pedestrianisation. Another challenge with Oxford Street was crime in the late hours, which affected pedestrianisation and unfinished road works seen during a site visit.

The Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (UTRI) saw limited success in developing residences in Southernwood and implementing minor property upgrades to multi-story residential buildings. However, Southernwood's lack of new building stocks emphasises the limitations of incentive-driven planning and the influence of the URTI.

Furthermore, the UTP saw limited success in improving student residences in Southernwood, while it had a more significant impact on other suburbs with HEI residences. The main challenge was that despite Southernwood's substantial student population, HEIs have also invested in student housing infrastructure in other neighbouring inner-city suburbs of central East London, such as Quigney, which also has extensive student populations and institutional residences.

8.2.2. Previous Influence of Urban Renewal on Southernwood

This objective primarily concerned understanding how the discussed strategies have shaped or attempted to shape Southernwood's built environment. While the previous objective delineated the limited success of these strategies, this objective further highlighted that previous urban renewal attempts in Southernwood had not brought significant structural reforms, as seen with the development and transformation of secondary field sites. While these strategies yielded minimal success, they showed that a lack of strong partnerships impedes Southernwood's success in urban renewal. The study's findings depict minimal area improvements in student residences and the discussed BBC. At the time of this study, new residences constructed on St Marks Road remain the only newly built student residences in Southernwood. The study has shown that the lack of success from previous urban renewal attempts in Southernwood is attributed to the need for improved partnerships, resource allocation, prioritisation of inner-city development, and the recruitment of expertise on urban renewal and urban design.

The study also highlighted that structural rehabilitation in Southernwood extends beyond building infrastructure to road and sidewalk pedestrian infrastructure, which, in the case of Oxford Street, has not been fully realised. Overall, sufficient improvement is needed in Southernwood, especially in the structural rehabilitation of buildings, roads and green space development such as parks. Clearly, the development aim of urban renewal and area improvement is generally inclusive in Southernwood, as opposed to the exclusive developments of Maboneng and De Waterkant. Although unsuccessful, previous urban renewal mechanisms are primarily inclusive in nature and community-oriented, mainly focusing on strategies to develop space in an integrated fashion instead of limited-scale developments.

These findings have shown that while previous attempts were made to improve Southernwood, present conditions necessitate urban renewal strategies to address the decaying infrastructure, derelict streets, open dumping/litter, and improve building aesthetics. As a result of these persistent urban planning conundrums of urban decay in Southernwood, there is a need to develop new urban renewal strategies to address these planning issues.

The following section discusses the third objective, alternative strategies that can be used to renew Southernwood.

8.2.3. Alternative Urban Renewal Strategies Suited to the Context of Southernwood

This objective drew on alternative strategies proposed by residents of Southernwood and those from the existing spatial policy. First, the residents proposed a pedestrian-friendly development as walking was a large part of their daily routine, primarily to and from campus, the CBD and retail outlets. Second, the respondents also wanted local area-based security and surveillance strategies. This was due to the high number of crime incidents in the area. Third, respondents proposed street refurbishments, adequate street lighting and traffic calming measures, particularly on Gately Street and St James Road, which they felt were among the busiest and longest streets in the suburb.

Fourth, a police station dedicated to Southernwood, a public health facility for students and a central library for the area were also proposed by the residents. The primary evidence from respondents and experts suggested that physical renewal is at the top of the Southernwood agenda. The findings also showed that while structural renewal was a primary concern, issues of green space improvement were brought into the discussion, although in limited talks. These discussions were linked to criminality in parks and recreational areas, which have become places where criminals prey on pedestrians, particularly those who use parks and other green areas as shortcut routes. In addition, the residents strongly recommended area cleanliness and

adequate refuse and waste disposal methods. While these themes are prevalent, the residents were concerned with the structural or physical improvement of the suburb, particularly streets, over other forms of area improvement.

One of the plausible explanations is that most pedestrians are students walking to and from campus, which they claim to do often as transport, mainly that provided by HEIs, is usually late, unreliable and too congested. In all, physical urban renewal of streets and pedestrian infrastructure and green renewal were thoroughly expressed as urgent by residents over other forms of renewal, such as economic revitalisation in the area. Regarding financial aspects, residents suggested student-friendly pricing as their primary concern within the suburb.

Southernwood is a melting pot of students, young professionals and a few single residential families. The area will likely continue to see a student influx due to its favourable conditions, proximity to the CBD, affordable rates and commerce. While this may be the case, previous work on Southernwood (Bwalya & Seethal, 2014) and parts of Johannesburg (Gregory, 2021) raised issues of studentification and the rise of crime due to the influx of students seeking privately rented student accommodation near HEIs. These demographic changes can potentially displace families and alter the Southernwood population to exclusively young professionals and students. These development trends are evident in other parts of South Africa, which have a substantial student population in residential areas (Gregory, 2021). The developments in demographic residential structures highlight the theoretical underpinnings of neoliberal city planning, where population displacement forms part of the theory, accompanied by social disorganisation and class shifts due to the changing population structure.

This poses a challenge to urban sustainability from a displacement perspective. The primary challenge to neoliberal development in Southernwood is presented by social justice, specifically the application of changing demographic structures and displacement due to an influx of the student population. As social justice advocates for equality, they argue that social processes within cities should not lead to denying a place for others (Young, 1990; Smith, 2004). While the planner did not explicitly recommend new strategies, the importance of previous strategies, such as the UTC, was thoroughly emphasised along with the need to improve essential service delivery, which served Southernwood as a prerequisite for successful urban renewal.

8.2.4. Compare South African Case Studies to Identify Strategies

The last objective used was a comparative analysis to draw on the successful urban renewal of secondary sites to determine what may apply to Southernwood. The study showed homogenous traits between the three secondary field sites and their strategies. Particular elements include studentification, historical buildings, centralised location, high density and neoliberal strategies

such as private-led urban development and area improvements to market the area as attractive and competitive.

Despite commonalities within the field site of Southernwood, the study found institutional impediments, particularly urban planning priorities, public finance and a lack of institutional capacity and expertise as contributors to unsuccessful urban renewal. While the survey found suitable strategies applicable to the Southernwood context, these strategies depend on private-sector funding and community-based organisation approaches for the area's growth and development.

From a comparative analysis of Maboneng and Southernwood, the study found four strategies that can be adopted. These strategies include increasing the flexibility of controls, cutting down on property taxes, building additional HEI residences, and functional specialisation in Southernwood. These strategies may be successful for three primary reasons. First, these strategies require minimal capital investment, which is already challenging for Southernwood. Configuring controls to be more attractive is a planning endeavour and policy adjustment requiring little financial input compared to state investment in erecting new building stocks. Second, these strategies may work due to the existing infrastructural network and community ties between Southernwood and the HEIs of East London. The third and last reason these strategies may work is that Southernwood is an area where experimentation has already occurred through flexible planning controls. Additional experimentation, such as functional specialisation of land use, may promote the area as an ideal space for constructing new land uses and improving the urban space with less property tax. Following a comparative analysis of Southernwood and De Waterkant, the following three strategies were found to be suitable. The first was a property owner's association consisting of HEIs, followed by promoting structural homogeneity. The last strategy found was a tax-free urban renewal zone within the suburb.

These strategies may succeed in Southernwood due to specialised and localised planning and development tailored to meet the community's needs. Also, promoting structural homogeneity may lessen land use incompatibilities from developing new land uses. At the same time, tax-free pockets may enhance the development of a precinct scale, a more cost-effective way to create urban space.

Having summarised the comparative strategies from Maboneng and De Waterkant, the study also found four strategies that may apply to Southernwood from a comparative analysis with Florida Road. These strategies are drawn from an analysis of successful urban renewal strategies juxtaposed with the current condition and spatial policies governing Southernwood. Also, these strategies are informed by residents who indicated their preferred choice of

development concerning the area. The strategies from Florida Road in Durban are most applicable to Southernwood, as residents' choice of development also informs them.

The strategies mentioned include a new pedestrianisation scheme, the establishment of a development agency, the commodification of sections, and the provision of rebates on single-family housing in the suburb. These strategies may succeed in Southernwood due to an existing pedestrianisation plan requiring improvement and modification. Additionally, clear benefits of commodification for degraded areas, which improve the building stock and halt the devaluation of the property prices due to improvement, are clearly articulated in these strategies. The 11 strategies presented are derived from a comparative analysis of effective urban renewal initiatives observed at three secondary field sites: Maboneng, De Waterkant, and Florida Road.

Despite these urban renewal strategies, the main development challenges to Southernwood are density, crime, studentification and investment. This study found that while existing development controls positively contribute to favourable conditions for urban renewal, primarily through building structures, more flexible controls are required to entice private capital and other stakeholders, such as HEIs, to develop land use in the area.

The demographic structure of the suburb severely limits the effectiveness of community-based initiatives. Community-based initiatives have been and continue to be successful in various South African suburbs. One factor affecting Southernwood is its young student population and the area's vacancy rate, typically under five years. The duration of academic programmes at HEIs in the city influences these vacancy rates. The duration of academic programmes at HEIs in the city influences these vacancy rates. Therefore, the average time spent by residents of Southernwood is less than five years, which is a limitation to the long-term development of the area, as new community members are replaced frequently, adversely impacting sustainability.

8.3. LITERATURE REFLECTION

The literature on neoliberal urban renewal, which was critically discussed under themes 3.4 and 3.5 as a theoretical framework, has shown that global processes of market-led planning are similar to the South African context. Although not to the same extent as the successes of international case studies discussed in Section 3.4, similar processes, such as displacement, gentrification, and social exclusion, as discussed in the literature and theory, are evident in the selected cases used in this study. The findings of this study show similarity with the literature wherein neoliberal frameworks may theoretically improve the planning and development of Southernwood, particularly, joint planning attempts by the state, HEIs, and private developers. Previously discussed areas that have undergone successful renewal have applied a similar stakeholder model led by the market to revive deteriorated urban space. These findings demonstrate a positive correlation between the literature and the results. The study further shows that despite the success of neoliberal frameworks in planning, issues persist. The discussed issues throughout this thesis of neighbourhood succession, decline in social cohesion, and the walling off and access control to urban space cannot be separated from neoliberal planning and have been observed in the findings of this study. As a result, it is a concern, primarily for expert respondents, that such planning processes may unfold in Southernwood. Respondents also argued that if renewal is not managed and unchecked, it may lead to heightened property prices, thereby excluding low-income residents, and this is consistent with the discussions in the literature of this study (Mchunu, 2006; Mosselson, 2014; Mfete, 2020; James, 2015; Bruff, 2024).

Earlier literature (Idazi, 2008; Bowen, 2009; Li *et al.*, 2014) focused on comparative renewal, various processes were discussed (3.2.2., 3.4. & 3.5). These studies considered multistakeholder approaches, the role of philanthropic organisations, inclusive frameworks, pro-poor policies, and the preservation of cultural buildings as central to the renewal process. However, further studies (Abass, 2021; Kocak, 2022) also noted that renewal was accompanied, in some cases, by forced renewal, increased security with renewed areas, undesired and imposed development patterns, spatial exclusion, and business success over social inclusion and cohesion. These processes are evident in the three case studies used for this study. Theoretically, if Southernwood planners do not consider the drawbacks of renewal, the above negative processes may manifest in the suburb as they have in other study areas that have undergone renewal.

The proposals of previous similar studies (Mosselson, 2014; Bwalya & Seethal, 2016; Gaffney, 2015) have also been proposed for Southernwood, one of the plausible reasons for this similarity is that inner-cities areas are undergoing similar processes of decline, crime, business

exodus, informality, and increasing densities. Overall, there is a pattern within the three secondary sites that mirrors international processes of neoliberalism; however, the experience of Southernwood has not yet shown many of the neoliberal elements due to the unsuccessful nature of previous renewal.

8.4. THEORETICAL REFLECTION ON SOUTHERNWOOD

Section 3.4 of this thesis discussed neoliberal urban renewal. This section used neoliberal urban renewal to reflect on the case study of Southernwood. One of the primary points of departure and prediction of the study's theoretical framework was that neoliberalism, as a planning ethos, subjects' areas to differentiation. This is particularly evident in the homogenous market-led development and its associated themes of urban exclusivity and polarising forms of fragmentation, as seen in the secondary sites of this thesis (Maboneng in Johannesburg, Florida Road in Durban and De Waterkant in Cape Town). While the lack of intervention in the leading site limits theoretical applications, it can be predicted that applying market principles in urban renewal will present polarising forms of fragmentation in the city. These market principles manifest through concentrated gentrification processes, such as buffer designs and enclosure planning strategies, such as walling, controlled entry, and egress. They also manifest through the exclusion of low-income groups, particularly in central city areas with access to markets and amenities.

Based on the study's findings, market principles in planning provide encroaching features despite positive developments such as alleviating derelict conditions within areas. One of the theoretical strong points discussed in earlier themes of city marketing (see section 3.4.1) and PPPs (see section 3.3.1) accurately accounts for processes and interventions by the state to promote development by making city regulations attractive and conducive to developer-driven planning. Partnership approaches and land-based incentives show how city planning practitioners integrate free market principles and spatial order in the state planning machinery.

Public planning in Southernwood is leaning towards a privatised model of city planning for various reasons, such as a lack of public sector funds for urban renewal and the strong encouragement of private investment and partnerships for development in the area. One of the plausible explanations for this development approach is that the state requires the assistance of the market in developing inner-city space. Improving inner-city spaces such as Southernwood may enhance revenue collection, improve property prices in the area, and contribute to alleviating high crime levels.

Public sector planning in Southernwood is also leaning towards privatised planning due to several positives the market provides. These positives include property improvement by HEIs

and waste management strategies by a waste PPP. The urban renewal strategies employed in Southernwood include market-related urban improvements focused on walkability and street improvement strategies. Apart from capital investment, the market offers services such as beautifying the city through renewal and arresting property in the concentrated area.

A pattern observed within this thesis's three secondary sites is that, the market also assists the state with new tax revenue collection from renewed areas. Private developers help improve commerce zones, green infrastructure, and pedestrian infrastructure. Other market improvements, such as security and surveillance, reduce crime within this secondary site.

South African cities actively pursue urban renewal through unique spatial policies and incentives to attract private capital to redevelop dilapidated parts of inner cities. Projects initiated in Southernwood, although largely unsuccessful, are underpinned by market principles such as the UTC, which, may be regarded as a laissez-faire strategy for HEIs and private capital with state oversight to bring development to Southernwood. Other market inferences are presented by projects such as the pedestrianisation of Oxford Street (see section 6.2.2), which bears the hallmark of neoliberal principles, the Urban Renewal Tax Incentive (URTI) (see section 6.2.3), and the Buy Back Centre (see section 6.3.3), a privately led waste disposal and recycling initiative in Southernwood.

The case study of Southernwood and the three secondary sites presents a lens through which to understand how the state caters to market intervention to assist city planning and development within a structured framework. However, neoliberal city planning practices inherently present challenges. Drawn from international and local lessons, private planning exhibits conundrums such as urban fragmentation, gentrification, exclusive quarters and enclaves, social exclusion, property speculation, increased inequality, environmental neglect and the prioritisation of market principles over more expansive and inclusive community development (Jenkins *et al.*, 2007; Yenikalayci, 2022; Alia & Mualani, 2023). These processes have been evident in renewed areas such as Maboneng, where Nevin (2014) highlights that only informal residential evictions occurred on the outskirts of Maboneng. Also. Informal businesses were displaced because of the development. Overall, displaced lower-income groups have been evident in many urban renewal projects, not only in cities of the global south but also in the global north. Some state policies force private developers to factor in affordable spaces and lots for lower-income groups; however, such a policy is yet to be fully implemented in South African city development controls.

In De Waterkant, Rink (2008) argues that the quartering of the urban enclave builds a false notion of togetherness, adding tensions of privilege and exclusion to the landscape in Cape Town. Other renewal developments, such as the Point Road project in Durban, have been cited

as exclusionary to the predominantly black working-class communities that have kept Durban's city centre alive (Chutel, 2019). While the Southernwood projects were largely unsuccessful, such processes could not be observed. However, areas that have undergone successful urban renewal exhibit these neoliberal processes.

These processes, as discussed earlier, form part of the global hegemony of neoliberal planning and its spatial blueprint, of which Southernwood and the secondary field sites are not exempt from, but are instead examples of the worldwide planning order that transcends the global north and south divide to produce homogenous spaces designed by the market.

The following section covers the recommendations of the thesis.

8.5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This brief section details recommendations for this thesis. These are recommendations for the government and the community of Southernwood. But first, an interlude of these recommendations.

8.5.1. Government Recommendations

There are four government recommendations. The first is a student-focused LSDF with a new master plan for Southernwood. An LSDF primarily aims to provide packaging for local area-specific development plans (BCMM, 2024). In its current state, Southernwood requires unique planning controls to guide the development and intensity of its land use while considering studentification processes. As a form of micro-spatial targeting, the LSDF may provide an attractive feature for developers looking to invest in Southernwood and student-centred infrastructure, services and amenities. There is a gap for investigating the application of a student-focused LSDF for areas that underwent studentification in South African cities.

A student-focused LSDF, using innovative technology, surveillance, pedestrian infrastructure and lighting, may also mitigate issues such as crime in student areas. A study on studentification in South Africa by Gregory (2022) argues that neighbourhood dynamics are not prioritised with the development and accreditation of student accommodation in the inner city of Johannesburg. The dynamics of inner-city Johannesburg mirror Southernwood's processes concerning crime and safety in a student-dominated inner-city space. Student-focused planning through an LSDF may provide ways to mitigate these challenges, especially if coupled with a new master plan for the area.

A master plan is a comprehensive, long-term blueprint that guides a city's physical development, covering land use, infrastructure, and spatial organisation, typically for 10 to 20 years (Harrison & Croese, 2022; Khadour *et al.*, 2023). Master plans include predictive and forward-looking

planning elements for future development. For Southernwood, a new master plan catering to student-friendly development and land use may promote increased spatial integration.

No present studies in South Africa have attempted to investigate the application of a master plan to address urban planning issues within inner-city areas that have undergone extensive studentification. As master plans are not set in stone (Akimoto, 2009), Southernwood may benefit from revising this planning tool to produce unique land uses, aid in the area's sustainability, create an equal spatial distribution of commerce in Southernwood, and improve the density functionality.

The second is to develop urban renewal capacity within the development and planning directorate to establish a Southernwood development agency. While the BCMDA is the premier agency in East London, the nature of issues facing Southernwood and its size may require a specialised development body solely focused on urban renewal. Further, the initiatives driven by the BCMDA are misaligned with Southernwood's spatial and structural needs. These needs have previously been highlighted as improvements to green recreational spaces, street improvements, and traffic calming measures, as well as adequate refuse collection and disposal within Southernwood.

Studies have explored cases of misalignment and planning contradictions between societal demands and state provisions. Ngwenya and Cirolia (2020) explored the conflicting realities between land occupation and state housing provision, using Cape Town as a case study. As the study mentioned, urban planning contradictions are not a foreign concept exclusive to Southernwood. One of the primary implications of this contradiction between societal demands and state provision was that planners must deal with the struggles and conflicts between communities and authorities (Hillier, 2002; Watson, 2003; Makhale, 2015; Ngwenya & Carolia, 2015).

Ngwenya and Cirolia (2020) further argue that planners must play a more significant role in addressing the contradiction. They state that planning practitioners must understand how occupiers or social movements mobilise and organise themselves, as well as work with the complexity of their organisational structures and demands. Simultaneously, planners must recognise that, within the state's political and bureaucratic structures, they are relatively weak. They often hold small budgets compared to those of the infrastructure departments. Planning is a government function in many cities, and local governments are generally weak. Complex synergies and alliances are necessary if planning practice is to operate effectively at this challenging interface. Despite these planning contradictions due to its diversity and strategic location, Southernwood may serve as a pilot for area-based development agencies, which may market and give it a competitive edge over other inner-city areas of East London.

Third is the establishment of the Southernwood SRA. SRA or CIDs have achieved widespread success in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town. One notable example is the Claremont SRA, one of the first SRAs established in Cape Town (Matiashe & Germond, 2020). Another SRA example from Cape Town is the Observatory Improvement District (OBSID), which was ratified in 2009. The OBSID offers top-up services in the areas of safety and security, public safety, urban management, and social development.

OBSID also works on projects supporting business development, arts, heritage, and culture (OBSID, 2025). While this strategy has succeeded in Cape Town, it might also succeed only in Western Southernwood as opposed to Eastern Southernwood. SRA requires levies: the portion of Southernwood west of the area is more affluent than the east and hosts a more balanced land use mixture than the eastern portion of Southernwood. With the current issues of informality and run-down housing, Eastern Southernwood may be unable to set aside levies in the same way that Western Southernwood can.

One of the primary contributing factors to the success of SRAs is the willingness of residents, through a development body, to establish development goals and projects financed by levies. Southernwood may bring civil society leaders, building proprietors and other stakeholders, such as HEIs, to realise the foundation of an SRA. Since the primary aim of an SRA is to drive community development, doing so in Southernwood may create a unique urban space that is both attractive and functional in its land-use orientation. Similar to the previously discussed UTC, SRAs are primarily responsible for enhancements such as surveillance and security, structural rehabilitation, environmental programmes to enhance green infrastructure, and initiatives relating to refuse and adequate waste disposal sites and methods. Despite the BBC's presence in Southernwood, open dumping and litter remained an integral part of the area, and a significant concern in responses from residents.

The fourth recommendation is for tax-free urban renewal pockets in Southernwood. While controls have been espoused as adequate development tools, less stringent regulation is needed to entice developers without state-funded renewal programmes. One way to achieve this is to provide tax-free areas to encourage urban renewal. A significant risk of this development strategy is the formation and fortification of exclusive urban land use, which may present the opposite effect of integration, namely, urban fragmentation.

Overall, these recommendations are integrated to realise urban renewal goals in Southernwood. Working in an integrated fashion, they can provide a development structure that supports urban renewal goals and their sustainability.

An LSDF may allow Southernwood to develop its strategies based on local areas. Establishing a Southernwood development agency may ensure that a local development body prioritises area needs. An SRA-CID ensures community-driven planning and development. This policy feature allows communities to share their land use according to resident preferences. A revised master plan for Southernwood may be developed in collaboration with the LSDF to promote desirable land use patterns, levels of integration, and land use intensity. Tax-free urban renewal areas may encourage developers, building owners, and investors to consider Southernwood an ideal investment location.

8.5.2. Recommendations to Southernwood Community

The study recommends the establishment of community-based development bodies for eastern and western Southernwood. The primary reason for the two organisations relates to the varying needs of each region of Southernwood. Despite being in the same central suburb, the development needs are not homogeneous. Urban renewal universalism does not apply to Southernwood, particularly regarding the structural needs of the two suburban areas. On the one hand, Western Southernwood primarily consists of multi-story dwellings, HEI residences, places of commerce, healthcare institutions, and other formal businesses. Eastern Southernwood consists mainly of single-family residential housing, in contrast to Western Southernwood's extensive land use mix.

This thesis further recommends that homeowners of Southernwood properties, particularly those with single properties, make a concerted effort to redevelop their properties to meet accreditation standards to house HEI students seeking private accommodation. The reason is twofold: property owners can earn an income by using their property as student accommodation, and the structural improvement of housing may qualify as a form of urban renewal, thereby enhancing the general appeal of Southernwood.

The following section focuses on areas for future research.

8.6. AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH IN SOUTHERNWOOD

Four main areas for future research are discussed below.

First, more work needs to be done to determine whether state-led inclusivity and affordability measures, such as rent controls and prescribed affordable housing quotas, can be integrated into urban renewal frameworks in Southernwood. These studies may present ways to improve urban renewal sustainability for projects while minimising gentrification.

Second, further research is needed in Southernwood to examine land use controls that support a high-density student suburb. This includes exploring how urban planning and development

can address student requirements, such as implementing pedestrian-focused urban designs for safety.

Third, studies that focus solely on understanding the role of communities in shaping local area-based spatial policy are needed. While the state is the principal actor in land use planning, communities can proactively shape their local land use. Studies are required to understand and uncover the mechanisms that affect this.

The fourth area for future research is studies investigating the viability of strategies to create, strengthen and improve the UTC within Southernwood. Particularly, management frameworks and institutional financial structures, as well as their feasibility in committing to a joint integrated project. Moreover, this area of future research may aid in informed decision-making regarding urban renewal. Currently, Southernwood employs various strategies for area improvement. One of the challenges to these plans is the lack of studies and research data on project management frameworks and methods for developing a dense student suburb.

8.7. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, RESEARCH AND SOUTHERNWOOD

The findings of this study provide insights into the issues that city planners, policymakers and other land use practitioners, such as land use managers and development practitioners, should consider in designing urban renewal policies and developing programmes and efforts dealing with the problems of not only unsuccessful urban renewal but also core issues of decaying inner cities and CBDs.

8.7.1. Implications for Policy and Planning

Recognising that previous renewal strategies have yielded minimal success; policymakers can utilise the recommendations presented in this study to determine whether they can be applied to Southernwood. Again, this study has a dedicated section (section 9.2.4) addressing the different strategies:

1. Increase the flexibility of controls in Southernwood; reduce property taxes.
2. build additional HEI residences in Southernwood;
3. functional specialisation;
4. property owner's association in Southernwood, consisting of HEIs;
5. promoting structural homogeneity in Southernwood;
6. tax-free urban renewal zones within the suburb;
7. a new pedestrianisation scheme for Southernwood;
8. establishing a Southernwood development agency;
9. commodifying sections of Southernwood; and

10. rebates on single-family housing to encourage renewal.

East London planners can learn and adopt these strategies to inform IDPs, SDFs and BEPPs.

The study has also shown that residents wish to see the area developed, particularly through pedestrian-friendly planning and the integration of safety measures into urban planning. This may be where planners can start implementing place-based planning approaches, which include gathering public views on desired planning patterns and forms.

Urban planners may benefit from this research as it outlines how spatial regulation can be remodelled and retrofitted to suit present urban planning situations in Southernwood. While there are risks with modifying zoning controls, the study has shown that for planners, zoning reform is accompanied by positive development trends, as seen with successful urban renewal case studies, which were extensively covered in this study (see Chapter Three), wherein modifying zoning controls was the foundation for urban renewal and investment.

The findings also benefit and have implications for land use managers and HEIs' residence management, as they ensure that the municipality and HEIs have an updated record of property conversions through the rezoning of properties. New zoning parameters may encourage retrofitted student accommodation to meet accreditation standards. A previous study by Bwalya and Seethal (2016) highlights that "slumlordism" was a widely cited characteristic of Southernwood. According to the study, slumlords are property owners who maximise returns from renting out their residential property to as many people as possible with little maintenance of the premises. This condition is due to a shortage of residential accommodation in Southernwood. If implemented, this study's findings may provide land use managers with accurate and up-to-date data on property conversions.

The findings may also be helpful to HEIs' residence management as they may have insight into the concentration of slum student accommodation, which requires accreditation. Such developments may ensure property owners upgrade their properties to university-set standards. Ultimately, these developments may improve students' housing standards and enhance Southernwood's aesthetic appeal.

Grassroots community planning may also benefit from this study as it explicitly shows that there are means by which socio-economic exclusion can be minimised from urban renewal projects. The study has demonstrated that incorporating urban inclusion mechanisms, such as rent controls, into urban projects minimises the displacement of existing economic groups in South African cities. Urban renewal projects are widely cited for exclusion, primarily through gentrification (Mehdipanah *et al.*, 2018; Earley, 2023). The study has shown that incorporating inclusionary mechanisms into urban policy may enhance socio-economic inclusion in

Southernwood, provided that private projects are successful. Another consideration is for urban planners to address community needs by providing essential facilities, such as police stations and public healthcare centres. Additionally, planning measures should include pedestrian-oriented infrastructure, recognising that walking is the primary mode of transportation in the suburb.

The implication is that by making the need for flexible zoning controls explicit in central city spaces, cities can reform traditional land-use laws to enable new forms of development and prevent decay. While conventional zoning is necessary to curb nuisances and ill-fitting land uses (Nel, 2015), the study shows that flexible zoning is a potent tool for reforming dilapidated inner-city spaces by manipulating controls. These controls include tax-free urban renewal areas in targeted locations to promote growth and new or refurbished structural development.

The study also found that residents lack awareness of public participation in urban planning, and some residents are not knowledgeable about public planning procedures and policies, such as IDPs and local area development plans. Due to low public awareness of planning policies in Southernwood, this thesis may contribute to improved collaboration between residents and planning authorities.

The last implication is for the policing and security bodies of Southernwood. This study has shown that students who use parks and green spaces as thoroughfares to residences are a prime target for criminals, exacerbated by poor lighting in Southernwood and the park. The study recommends lighting improvements in areas of high crime activity in Southernwood, particularly along high pedestrian traffic areas. The findings may help policing and security focus on these areas to ensure pedestrian safety in Southernwood.

The following section covers the implications for research and the Southernwood community.

8.7.2. Implications for Research

This thesis may be beneficial to academics and researchers in the following ways. First, it contributes to the combined academic discourse on urban renewal, the role of HEIs in their host communities and studentification in South Africa's residential inner-city spaces. Particularly, ways in which academic discourse can contribute to understanding the changing land use needs and trends associated with student encroachment on inner-city residential areas, as well as the implications for the existing population and land use scheme.

Second, the study also benefits researchers and academics due to its urban renewal dimension, which encompasses market-led sustainability. Traditionally, urban sustainability within urban renewal has been left to the state to ensure inclusivity, lasting improvement, and well-being in projects. This thesis has demonstrated that prospective studies can focus on private-led urban

renewal that can be sustainable and, if configured correctly, can mitigate socio-economic displacement while providing elements such as green planning and spatial integration, which were previously within the state's planning domain.

Thirdly, in the problem statement, the thesis highlights that despite the recognition and significance of urban renewal studies, an integrated review covering sustainability, planning, and urban renewal has yet to be produced for South African cities in the Eastern Cape, particularly East London. Additional studies are required to understand the funding models allocated to urban renewal. The sourcing of financial data on projects has been a limitation of research projects. The thesis has provided ways in which East London can be studied, and further areas for research remain, such as ways to establish and ensure lasting PPP between BCMM, HEIs and landlords of Southernwood.

8.7.3. Community Implications

The Southernwood community is now aware of some planning policies, such as IDP and, more significantly, SDFs, which affect the spatial layout of communities and shape their built environment. Understanding planning policy is essential because it has far-reaching consequences, such as the permitted land use and its intensity, as well as its impact on density, property prices, and integration.

Another implication for the Southernwood community is that they are now more informed about their role in local area development and, broadly, in urban planning. Such knowledge enables increased community involvement, participation in spatial planning matters, and a greater role in determining the type of planning that suits their host communities.

Communicative planning cannot be overlooked, as many successful city planning strategies are due to grassroots planning and community-led approaches. Communicative planning is a planning ideal and a theoretical stream that has developed from this new 'paradigm'. It is based on citizen participation as a win-win situation, where the planning process builds social sustainability, enhancing the likelihood of success (Mannberg & Wihlborg, 2008). Due to the complex nature of planning and the intricacies of integrating multiple parties and stakeholders, community involvement is essential and cannot be ignored. Recent work by Rijal (2023) emphasises that the role of the community in public decision-making impacts efficiency, effectiveness, and fairness in public service delivery.

8.8. CONCLUSION

The foregoing thesis explored strategies to renew the Southernwood suburb of central East London. The challenges of decaying inner cities and CBDs, along with the shortcomings of

previous urban renewal strategies in Southernwood, necessitated this thesis. The outcomes reflect how comparatively drawn strategies from successful urban renewal sites with similar variables can be applied to a dilapidated area. The identified urban renewal strategies for Southernwood have the potential to be more effective and inclusive if implemented through a coordinated effort. Hence, there is a need for strong partnerships and integration, such as the University Town Concept and the study's proposed Southernwood development agency, to bring a coordinated approach, effort and unified development plan for Southernwood.

For Southernwood residents, especially students, urban renewal means improving and enhancing safety, green spaces and lighting within the suburb, especially at night. One plausible reason for the safety focus is that nearly all student respondents reported walking regularly as their primary means of transit to and from campus. For experts, the city planner and estate agents, urban renewal means the structural improvement of Southernwood, including roads and bulk infrastructure, adequate refuse collection and disposal methods, housing improvement in eastern Southernwood, PPPs with stakeholders such as HEIs and the protection of property prices.

The success of urban renewal strategies has positive implications, including a strengthened economic base, enhanced revenue for municipalities, structural rehabilitation, and, in some cases, a reduction in crime, urban beautification, and improved delivery of basic services. The study highlights that adequate basic service delivery is the precursor to successful urban renewal in Southernwood. Apart from basic service delivery, which is a prerequisite for urban renewal, the absence of an LSDF for the area presents a legislative challenge that must be addressed to enable greater land use flexibility and area-specific development plans.

In an era where uncontrolled and sprawling urbanisation is a primary concern for governments worldwide, improving the inner city through renewal strategies may help mitigate uncontrolled urbanisation by attracting populations back into the inner city. Additionally, the inner-city renewal aligns with local, provincial, and national priorities of improving city compactness and revitalising cities. The role of host communities is essential for urban renewal. The thesis found that many residents, especially the student population, lack knowledge of their role in public planning and an understanding of urban planning policies, such as IDPs and SDFs, which shape Southernwood. Future studies and government programmes must address this knowledge deficiency and provide education on these planning tools to facilitate informed and inclusive planning.

This thesis concludes that, without integrated and inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships and strategies, urban renewal will inadequately address the spate of urban issues which Southernwood faces. Furthermore, the state needs to provide more flexible controls and

incentives to HEIs, homeowners and private proprietors to develop land and buildings in Southernwood, as it lacks the intensive capital for large-scale renewal projects. While these incentives are essential, the state planning machinery must promote and balance conducive urban renewal while minimising land use nuisances from extensive urban renewal attempts, especially those involving land use mix with suburbs. The thesis finds that the best alternative to successful urban renewal in Southernwood relies on increased incentives and a more significant market role in city planning, guided by an inclusive public framework, due to the state's capital constraints and fringe prioritisation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee
Main Admin Building, Drosty Road, Makhanda, 6138, South Africa
PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa
T: (27) (0) 48 803 7314
e: ethics_committee@ru.ac.za
<https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics/>
NHREC Registration number: RC-241114-046

22 November 2024

Mr Siphiso Gumbi, Philippa, Sinxhlanhla,

Geography

Email: nonyandagumbi@gmail.com

Review Reference: 2023-7419-8247

Dear Mr Siphiso Gumbi

Re: Urban renewal strategies for the Southernwood suburb of East London

Researcher: Mr Siphiso Gumbi

Supervisor(s): Dr Sinxhlanhla Mamele

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee (RU-HREC). Your Approval number is: 2023-7419-8247

Approval has been granted for 1 year. An annual progress report will be required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying you when the annual report is due.

Please apply for a protocol amendment should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators. Email your request to ethics-committee@ru.ac.za.

Please submit a brief report to the ethics committee on the completion of the research. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully, if any aspects could not be completed, or if any problems arose that the ethical standards committee should be aware of.

If a thesis or dissertation arising from this research is submitted to the library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) repository, please notify the committee of the date of submission and/or any reference or cataloguing number allocated.

Sincerely,

Dr Janet Hayward

Chair: Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee (RU-HREC)

APPENDIX 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT



PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT DECLARATION

Project Title: *Urban renewal strategies for the Southernwood suburb of East London.*

Siphiwo Gumbi from the Department of Geography, Rhodes University, has requested my permission to participate in the above-mentioned research project.

The nature and the purpose of the research project: To explore strategies for the urban renewal of Southernwood, a suburb of central East London within the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. South African cities face development challenges such as degraded inner-city spaces and central business districts. Southernwood is also faced with these conditions; the nexus of these conditions leads to building hijackings, property devaluation and crime. Other South African inner-cities with a similar geography to Southernwood have received renewal, but Southernwood lags in this developmental aspect. Urban renewal is key as it assists in protecting land prices, developing a sense of place and reviving an economic base.

The study's objectives are first to explore the successes /challenges of the previous strategies in the suburb of Southernwood. Second, to identify how previous renewal has influenced the suburb of Southernwood. Third, to determine which type of urban renewal is suitable for the area of Southernwood. Fourth, to explore alternative urban renewal strategies suited to the context of the Southernwood suburb. Fifth and lastly, using comparative analysis, recommend urban renewal strategies that can be used to regenerate the suburb of Southernwood.

The nature and the purpose of the research project and this informed consent declaration have been explained to me in a language I understand.

I am aware that:

1. The research project aims to formulate Urban Renewal strategies for the Southernwood suburb of Southernwood.
2. Rhodes University has given ethical clearance to this research project (7419), and I have seen/may request to see the clearance certificate by contacting the Ethics Coordinator (ethics-committee@ru.ac.za)
3. By participating in this research project, I will contribute to understanding Southernwood and what urban renewal strategies can be used to develop the inner city.
4. I will participate in the project by answering questions about Southernwood and what urban renewal strategies can be used to develop the inner city.
5. My participation is entirely voluntary and should I at any stage wish to withdraw from participating further, I may do so without any negative consequences.
6. I will not be compensated for participating in the research, but my out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed.
7. The following no risks are associated with my participation.

Rhodes University, Research Office, Ethical Review
Ethics Coordinator: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za
t: +27 (0) 46 805 7727 f: +27 (0) 46 816 7707
Room 204, Main Admin Building, Doreddy Road, Grahamstown, 6139

8. The Researcher intends to publish the research results in the form of Research publication. However, confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained and my name and identity will not be revealed to anyone who has not been involved in the conducting of the research, *unless I indicate to the contrary/recognize that as a public figure my identity will inevitably be/become known, in which case I agree to accept the loss of anonymity.*
9. In terms of the Protection of Personal Information Act (No. 4 of 2013) it remains my right to request the Researcher to provide me with a detailed explanation of exactly how confidentiality and anonymity of the data I provide will be achieved. I may also request to know exactly how my personal information will be stored securely, for how long it will be stored.
10. If any data collected from me for this research project is to be used by the Researcher for any further study, I am to be informed in writing and my written consent requested again. I need not give consent for the new research if it is incompatible with the initial purpose of the present study (POPIA, s15(3)). Equally, I can simply reject the request. In such cases, a formal request needs to be made to me by the researcher via the Ethics Coordinator (ethics-committee@ru.ac.za).
11. In terms of the POPI Act, I possess the right to receive feedback about this research. This will take the form of emails and a complete renewal strategy, unless *I elect not to receive this feedback.*
12. Any further questions that I might have regarding the nature of the research and/or my participation in it will be answered by Mr. Sipiwo Gumbi, email: q21q7401@campus.ru.ac.za and Dr. Sinenhlanhla Memela, email: s.memela@ru.ac.za
13. By signing this informed consent declaration, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this informed consent declaration will be given to me, and the original will be kept on record by the Researcher.
14. I *agree/disagree* (delete inapplicable) to the Researcher's use of voice recording of my comments and opinions during interviews, the purpose of which is to ensure the accurate recording of my views/responses. Furthermore, I have the right to request a copy of the interview transcriptions to confirm that my opinions are accurately recorded

I, _____, have read the above information / confirm that the above information has been explained to me in a language that I understand and I am aware of this document's contents. I have asked all questions that I wished to ask, and these have been answered to my satisfaction. I fully understand what is expected of me during the research.

I have not been pressurised in any way and I voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned project.

Participant's signature

Witness

Date

Rhodes University, Research Office, Ethical Review
Ethics Coordinator: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za
t: +27 (0) 48 603 7727 f: +27 (0) 56 616 7707
Room 204, Main Admin Building, Doreddy Road, Grahamstown, 6139

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TOWN PLANNER



INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TOWN PLANNER

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. Characterise the area of Southernwood.
 - a) *Stakeholders*
 - b) *Challenges & strengths*
2. Why did you choose the area?
 - a) *Benefits & reasons*
3. What do you think is most significant about this area?
 - a) *Characteristics*
 - b) *Meaning & sense of place*

SECTION B: PAST URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGIES

1. What was the philosophy/ thinking behind past urban renewal?
 - a) *The thinking behind the nature of projects*
2. Tell me about previous urban renewal strategies in the area?
 - a) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - b) *Intended population*
 - c) *Intended outcome*
 - d) *Successes & failures, etc*
3. Has previous urban renewal resulted in displacement?
4. Describe impediments to urban renewal in the area.
5. Describe past land use trends in the area.
6. Were there Public Private Partnerships in past urban renewal?

SECTION C: PRESENT URBAN RENEWAL

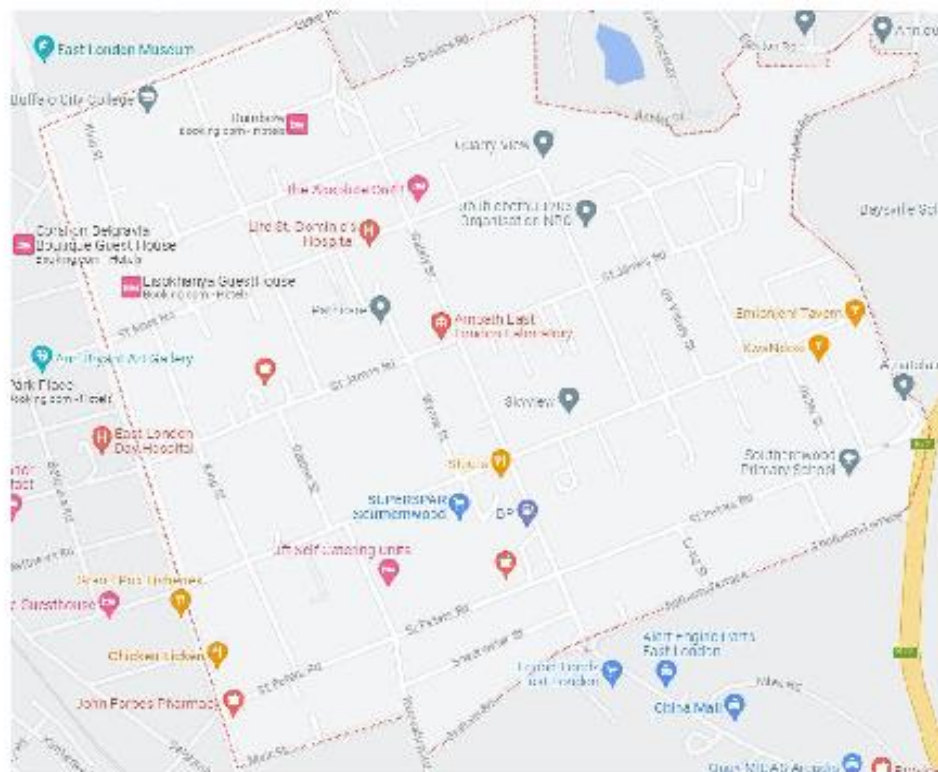
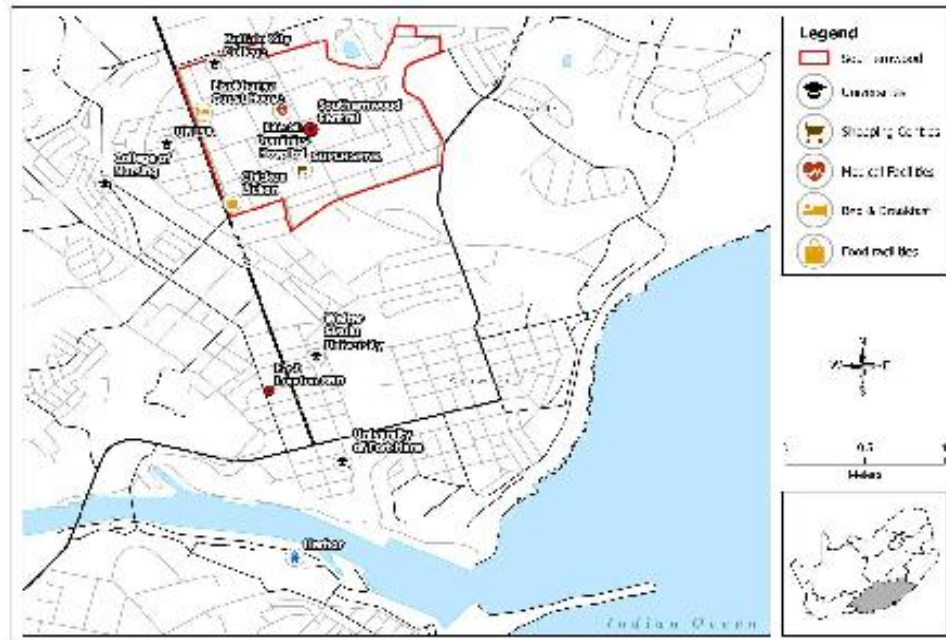
1. Are there current urban renewal strategies in the area?
 - a) *If so, what are they*

- a) *Do they involve Public-private partnerships or developers?*
 - b) *If so, what are their intended outcome*
 - c) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - d) *Intended population*
 - e) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
2. **Who is consulted in urban renewal plans?**
 - a) *Ward councillors, planning consultants, pre-existing reports, community, academic specialists, etc.*
 3. **Who is most likely to benefit from urban renewal?**
 - a) *Residents*
 - b) *Municipality*
 - c) *Business base or environment*
 4. **At present, what additional strategies would you recommend for the area?**
 5. **Are there active developers or Public-private partnership projects in the area?**
 - a) *If so, what role do they play? / What is your role?*
 6. **At present, which areas within Southernwood do you think require urgent attention?**
 7. **How is inclusivity factored into urban renewal strategies/ projects?**

SECTION D: FUTURE URBAN RENEWAL

1. **Describe future urban renewal for the area?**
 - a) *Projects*
 - b) *Scope of projects*
 - c) *Extent of projects*
 - d) *Intended outcome*
 - e) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - f) *Intended population*
 - g) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
2. **Any needs that need focus in future urban renewal strategies?**
3. **From previous urban renewal, what can be exported to future strategies?**
4. **Will the municipality alone have capacity for future urban renewal projects?**

Figure 1: Southernwood



APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SOUTHERNWOOD RESIDENTS



INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR RESIDENTS

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. Characterise the area of Southernwood.
 - a) *Stakeholders*
 - b) *Challenges & strengths*
2. Why did you choose the area?
 - a) *Benefits & reasons*
3. What do you think is most significant about this area?
 - a) *Characteristics, features*
 - b) *Meaning, layout & sense of place*

SECTION B: PAST URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGIES

1. Tell me about previous urban renewal strategies you are aware of?
 - a) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - b) *Intended population*
 - c) *Intended outcome*
 - d) *Successes & failures, etc*
 - e) *Point to areas on map*
2. Have you benefited from past urban renewal?
3. Were you consulted about urban renewal?
4. What do you think were the challenges to urban renewal implementation?

SECTION C: PRESENT URBAN RENEWAL

1. Are there current urban renewal strategies that you are aware of in the area?
 - a) *If so, what are they*
 - b) *If so, what outcomes are you expecting*
 - c) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - d) *Intended population*
 - e) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
2. Are you involved in urban renewal plans?
3. Who is most likely to benefit from urban renewal?
 - a) *Residents*
 - b) *Municipality*
 - c) *Business base or environment*
4. At present, what additional strategies would you recommend for the area?
5. Do you think urban renewal strategies/ projects are inclusive? Explain your answer
6. Which area of East London would you like Southernwood to resemble? Explain your answer

SECTION D: FUTURE URBAN RENEWAL

1. Any future urban renewal needs for the area?
 - a) *Projects*
 - b) *Extent of projects*
 - c) *expected outcome*
 - d) *Where (Point on provided maps), when, how & why?*
 - e) *Intended population*
 - f) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
2. From previous urban renewal, what can be exported to future strategies?
3. Where should future urban renewal be focused?
 - a) *Point on the maps provided*

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ESTATE AGENTS



INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ESTATE AGENTS

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. Characterise the area and community of Southernwood.
 - a) *Stakeholders, characteristics*
 - b) *Amenities, services etc*
 - c) *Spatial characteristics, sense of place*
 - d) *Area challenges & strengths*
 - e) *Benefits & reasons for families, investors, businesses, renters and buyers*
2. Why does your real estate business operate in this area?

SECTION B: PAST URBAN RENEWAL STRATEGIES

1. Describe/ explain previous urban renewal strategies you are aware of?
 - a) *Where (point on the provided maps), when, how & why?*
 - b) *Intended population*
 - c) *Intended outcome*
 - d) *Successes & failures, etc*
2. Who do you think has benefited from past urban renewal?
3. Would you like to be consulted about urban renewal in the area?
4. Describe past land use trends in the area.
 - a) *Point on the provided maps*
5. What do you think are the challenges to urban renewal implementation in Southernwood?
6. Does past urban renewal impact on property development, sale, rental etc? Explain your answer

SECTION C: PRESENT URBAN RENEWAL

1. Are there current urban renewal strategies that you are aware of in the area?

- a) *If so, what are they*
 - b) *If so, what outcomes are you expecting*
 - c) *Where, when, how & why?*
 - d) *Intended population*
 - e) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
1. Are you involved in urban renewal plans?
 2. Who is most likely to benefit from urban renewal?
 - a) *Residents*
 - b) *Municipality*
 - c) *Business base or environment*
 3. Which areas of Southernwood have the most frequent property transactions and why?
 - a) *Point on the provided maps*
 - b) *Value of property and which areas see frequent rentals*
 4. At present, describe land use trends in the area.
 - a) *Point on the provided map*
 - b) *Reasons people buy property in the area*
 - c) *Investment in the area*
 5. Do you think urban renewal strategies/ projects are inclusive? Explain your answer
 6. Do you think Southernwood is attractive to prospective home owners, businesses or investment? Explain your answer
 7. Do present urban renewal have impact on property development, sale, rental etc? Explain your answer

SECTION D: FUTURE URBAN RENEWAL

1. Any future urban renewal needs for the area?
 - a) *Projects*
 - b) *Extent of projects*
 - c) *expected outcome*
 - d) *Where (Point on provided maps), when, how & why?*
 - e) *Intended population*
 - f) *Possible successes & failures, etc*
2. From previous urban renewal, what can be included in future strategies?
3. What strategy/ project, if any, would you recommend for the area?
4. Do you think future urban renewal will have impact on property development, sale, rental etc? Explain your answer?