

**HOUSING CHOICE AND SATISFACTION: A CASE  
OF SUMMERFIELDS RESIDENTIAL AREA.**

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION - CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

## 1. 1 Introduction

The housing choice process and the resultant satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the residents with the quality of the residential environment. Therefore this chapter will be more introductory, and will comprise firstly the origins of the study and the context within which the study is being undertaken. It will then address the notion of the relevance of the case study to the topic, through analysing the development process which took place in the area and dynamics surrounding the development of that area.

## 1. 2 Context and background

Housing in South Africa remains a domain which raises hot debates within the government and within the private sector. The vision for housing in South Africa as outlined in the Aide Memoir to the Record of Understanding on Interim Arrangements for Housing which was signed in July 1993 is as follows:

“South Africa strives for the establishment of viable communities situated within areas allowing convenient access to economic opportunities and health, educational and social amenities within which all its people have access to; permanent residential structure, with secure tenure, ensuring privacy and adequate provision of facilities such as sanitation including waste disposal, electricity supply and portable water (Gardener, 1996 in Mandate to Build).”

The basic point of departure for the housing vision outlined above is the notion of sustainability and, an increased access to economic opportunities and crucial social services and facilities. There is an ongoing debate as to whether is it the government or the private sector which is better able to fulfil this vision. On the one hand the proponents of the state-driven housing delivery process argue that, there will be an equitable access to housing if the delivery process is undertaken by the state.



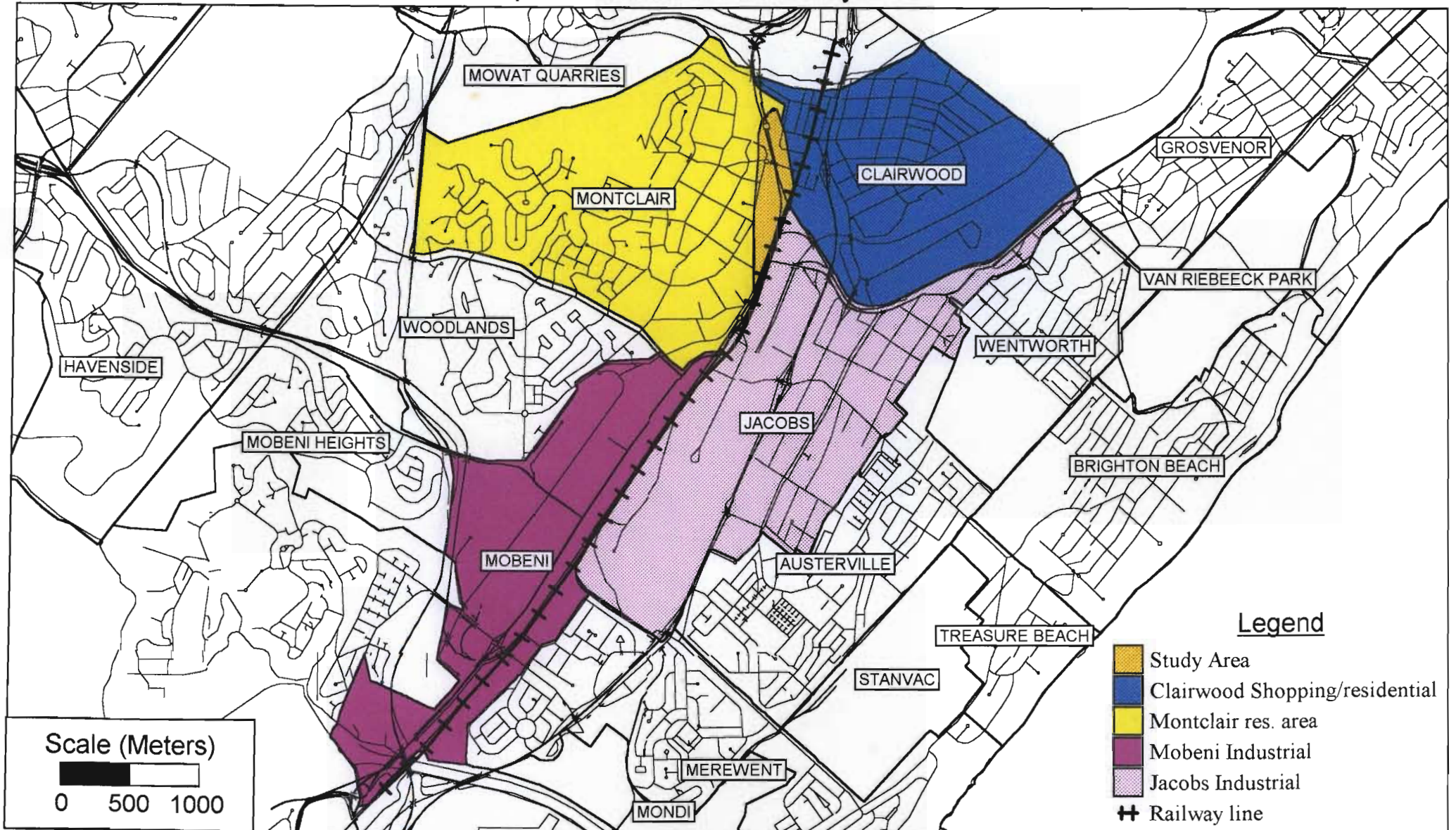
This is due to the fact all the people will have access to housing, because there is no profit sought after by the state. On the other hand the proponents of the private sector-driven delivery process argue that, the state does not have adequate resources to provide housing on its own with little or no assistance from the private sector companies. They further argue that "red tape" bureaucracy that exists in the government departments may continue, and the delivery of housing may be delayed whilst the housing backlog increases.

Therefore in the National Housing Forum, it was finally agreed that there should be a compromise between the private and the public sector in as far as delivery of housing is concerned, thus to formulate a partnership. "It is clear that future housing delivery may need a combination of public and private sector participation " (Stout, 1997). However, practically such a partnership has not been formulated, except in cases where the government has to provide subsidies.

Even then the role of the government is minimal, because most of the (private sector), developers only target the middle to upper income recipients. Even within the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the importance of the private sector involvement is also emphasised. At international scale, the World Bank has adopted a similar model with regard to the role of the state in the delivery of housing. Their policy recommends that, governments should play an "enabling" role and should move away from producing finance and maintaining housing delivery, and must shift towards improving efficiency and housing conditions of the poor. This is further made possible by the fact that the nature of our housing policy is reoriented towards the poorest section of the community.

At the moment in this country, there is a parallel provision of housing. That means, the poorest section of the community get their housing from the government, whereas the private sector targets the lower middle to upper middle income section of the

Map 1: Location of the Study Area



community. There is a widespread dissatisfaction with regard to the houses which are provided by the private sector. The source of that dissatisfaction stems from the fact that, the developers, in their eagerness to complete projects, are less attentive than they should be to the need to construct durable and long lasting houses. The nature of this study stems from such a dissatisfaction. The purpose of this study is to establish the same dissatisfaction levels by the residents using a case study in the Summerfields residential area.

### **1. 3. Summerfield residential area**

Summerfields area is a relatively new residential development which took place in the early 1990s. This area is located on the southern part of Durban in an area known as lower Montclair. There are 140 houses in that area, plus another 28 houses which belong to the Intersite (property division of the South African Railway Services SARS). These latter houses were built for the accommodation of the SARS employees. The area is well located in relation to transport services and facilities. On the eastern side, it is bounded by the South Coast road and then, there is a nearby Montclair railway station which provides railway transportation. On the eastern side, there is a secondary road known as the Roland Chapman Drive which links the area back to South Coast road and the Southern freeway.

The area is also well located in relation to employment opportunity areas. On the northern part of the area there is Clairwood shopping area, and to the south, there is Mobeni industrial area, and on the western side there is a Clairwood and Jacobs industrial areas. The South Coast road links the area to Mobeni industrial area, and there are some roads which branch from South Coast road and link the area to Jacobs and Clairwood industrial areas respectively. They also link the area to Mobeni-Congella industrial areas. There are no facilities directly provided in the area except one park in the middle of the area which is under-utilised, and is not properly maintained.

The residents in that area rely on the facilities such as schools and shops, which are provided for the Montclair residents. For example, there is the Montclair shopping centre and the Mowat Park Girls and Boys High schools, and there is Montclair primary and infants school. With regard to the sports fields there is a Mowat Park which has a Club House, bowling fields and a tennis court. All these facilities are located in Montclair. The area was developed by a private sector company called Condev which was linked to Murray and Roberts Construction Company.

#### **1. 4. The development process**

The Condev company bought a piece of land from Intersite ( The South African Railway Services property division). According to Condev, the Summerfields area was bought and developed because it was appropriately located in terms of the access to various facilities and services and had an appropriate topography. Condev therefore reached a land availability agreement with Intersite to make that piece of land available for development. So the houses were sold to everyone, and not only the SARS employees.

The interesting part about the development of that area is that, Condev (developers) wrote the zoning conditions for the development of that area as a Special Zone 29: Group Housing assisted by the consultants Rob Kirby and Associates. Initially there was a disagreement between the developers and the City Council over the zoning of that area. The City Council wanted the area zoned for Special Residential 180m zoning. In addition to that the Montclair Ratepayers Association were also dissatisfied with that Special Residential 180 meter square. Eventually, the Condev developers managed to go ahead with their conditions for the Special Zone No. 29 : Group Housing. The conditions of a Special Zone No. 29: Group Housing are as follows:

Special Zone No. 29 :Group Housing is specifically for grouped housing, in which only one dwelling house may be erected n any subdivision.

The following regulations will apply thereto:

Minimum plot size	- 180 square meters
Building line for dwellings	- 4, 5 m
Building line for garages	- 1, 0 m
Rear space	- 5, 0 m
Side space	- nil
Site coverage will not be greater than 40 %	
Plot area ratio will not exceed 0.8	

No dwelling units servants are to be accommodated on subdivisions less than 400 meter square in extent.

No building separate from a dwelling house shall be erected on any subdivision less than 400 square meters unless in the opinion of the Council such separate building will not be prejudicial to the amenity of the area, in which case a separate building with a floor area not exceeding 6 square meters may be permitted. Before development may proceed, sketch plans showing the layout of an entire "group housing" area plus an indication of the proposed dwellings, shall be submitted for approval by the Council.

No boundary walls shall be erected in advance of the building line except in accordance with the approved plans referred to above.

A play lot area shall be provided within such group housing area calculated on the basis of a 4 meter square per person of the population potential of the group housing area.

Once the area was completely serviced with such facilities as water, sewerage, street lighting, tarred road and so on, then the developers went on a marketing strategy. They advertised the area, and people who were interested were presented or shown

the layout plans of the area. They were also shown different housing design plans from which to choose the type of housing they preferred, and the site on which their houses would be built in the area.

After that process, the construction company hired by the developer, proceeded building the type of houses chosen by the recipients on the site. However, there was eventually a slight change in the development process. The developer just decided to build on the remaining sites the type of houses which they thought were mostly preferred by the buyers. There were 20 houses which were built in that way. Therefore, that means, some residents were never provided with the housing choice opportunity which was provided to others. This might provide an explanation of why some residents are satisfied and others are not, with their housing and the residential environment in general.

### **1. 5. Relevance of the topic**

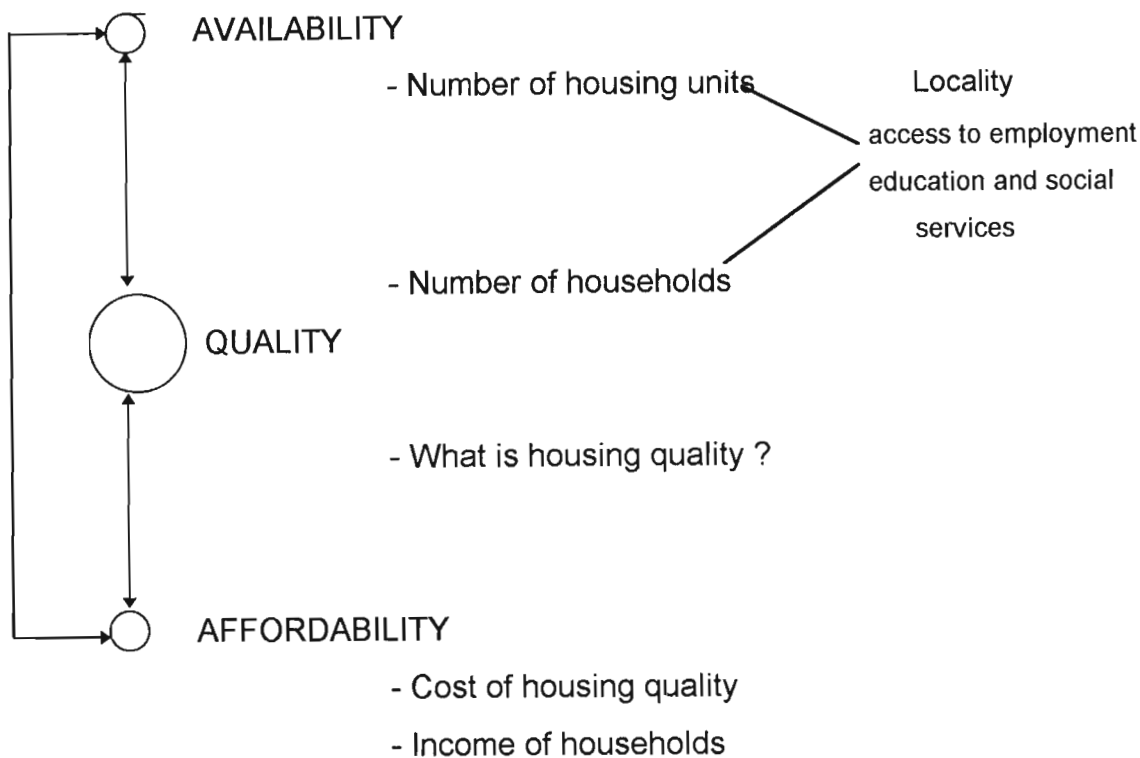
The demand for the type of housing delivery system which will hastily counteract the current housing backlog in South Africa is growing, more specifically in the urban areas. Therefore the concern for housing delivery in this country has narrowly focused on the provision of adequate housing in large developments (tract housing) in order to meet the housing backlog. However adequate housing is not the same as satisfactory housing (Chin-Chun Yi, 1985). Therefore in order to be able to balance the notion of adequate housing provision with housing satisfaction, there is, therefore, an unprecedented need for a study which will assist in linking housing satisfaction with the delivery of adequate housing. This study will therefore provide an invaluable findings on the extent to which our housing delivery approach leads to the delivery of housing.

In the literature on housing satisfaction, it is often assumed that the greater freedom of choice of housing automatically leads to the satisfaction with housing and the residential environment in general. However, practically the situation has proved to be

different where people have been presented with freedom of choice for housing but only to find that they are still dissatisfied with the quality of housing. For example, the effects such as the distinctive characteristics of the homeowners in the particular area caused by the spectrum of opportunities and constraints acting differently on those homeowners may increase or decrease their level of satisfaction with the current housing (Burnley, I. H and P. A Murphy, 1995)

Housing satisfaction normally refers to the satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment or the actual dwelling unit. This research also seek to unpack the concept of housing quality. It will also look at what constitute housing quality. "Housing quality is a complex concept because it is neither absolute nor static" (Roderick, J. L 1995: 1658). That means housing quality varies between specific groups of people, and is dependant on a particular context. Therefore there are no "objective" standards for measuring housing quality.

However, there are certain general standards which could be used to gauge housing quality such as its locality with regard to such things as access to employment, education and other social services, privacy and so on. The issue of housing quality strongly relates to the notion of affordability and availability of housing as it is shown in fig. 1.



**Figure 1.** Housing quality stems from recognition of the interrelated nature of housing affordability, availability and the qualitative aspects of residential environments. (After Broderick, J. L. 1995).

In the case of the unavailability of affordable housing, people are likely to buy houses which are of low quality to meet their income. Vice versa, those who can afford better houses due to their relatively higher income, and such houses are always available the poor homeowners are always satisfied with their housing. Therefore this dissertation paper will provide an in-depth analysis of what constitute a good quality residential environment and what are the people's perception of a good quality residential environment. the level of participation that the residents are xeposed to are crucial when they have to make the right choices. This dissertation will then focus on the type of housing choice that was afforded to the residents in the Summerfields residential area before they occupied the area.



This analysis will be done with a strong consideration of the effects of the availability and affordability of housing on the people's perception of what constitute good quality residential environment. This research renders itself relevant for the contribution in housing research in a sense that it directly addresses the often neglected issue of the effects of housing availability and affordability on the people's perceptions of a "good quality" residential environment.

## CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

### 2. 1 Introduction

**Housing satisfaction** has been fairly well researched, and different interpretations on what constitute or leads to housing satisfaction have been given. Previous research conducted show that, there are various factors which impact upon the homeowners for them to be satisfied or dissatisfied with their residential environment in general and housing or dwelling unit in particular. Housing choice procedure is one factor which determines the ultimate satisfaction of the home owners with their houses. Although some people have been presented with some choice in housing or the residential environment, they still do not all become satisfied with their houses. Some residents are satisfied and others are dissatisfied with their housing in various situations. Housing or residential quality is another concept that is loosely used when housing issues are debated on, yet it has an in-depth meaning , more specifically when used as a determinant of satisfaction.

It has been clearly stated that, there are various factors which are used to analyse housing satisfaction or dissatisfaction in general. A case study of Summerfields residential area will be used to analyse housing satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the residents, and the kind of housing choice procedure that was presented to them, to provide specific information on this issue. After that, an analysis of the residential environment and the residential quality will be undertaken to establish the extent to which the residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their housing is valid. Of particular interest in this dissertation is the nature of housing choice procedure that was presented to the residents in the Summerfields residential area. Questions such as:

- Did that housing choice procedure work (which could help explain why people were dissatisfied with their housing) or did not work ?

- If it did not work what were the reasons for that ?

With regard to the quality of the housing or residential environment, issues such as the perceptions of the residents of Summerfields residential area with regard to what a good residential environment is will be investigated. That information will be compared to the authors' understanding of residential quality, based on various studies and material on good quality housing and residential environment. This dissertation therefore seeks to address and investigate those dynamics.

The research question, therefore, is :

What worked and what failed in the housing choice or the decision-making process made by the Summerfields residents, which led to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their housing or the quality of the Summerfields residential area in general.

## **2. 2 Research subsidiary questions**

There are various subsidiary questions, that need to be addressed directly and linked to the research question. The sub-questions of this research can therefore be summarised as follows :

1. What was the precise procedure of choice and selection for housing which was presented to the residents in the Summerfields residential area?
2. What level of housing in terms of costs could they afford, and what other choices did they have?
3. Which factors lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with housing ?
4. What constitutes good quality residential environment in the minds of the residents in the Summerfields residential area ?
5. What are the lessons for future similar developments ?

### **2. 3 Constraints and limitations of the study**

Housing satisfaction and choice raise an abundance of issues, some of which relate to income levels, social psychology, demographic characteristics, education levels and so on. There is a very wide literature on housing satisfaction and choice, specifically among the low income section of the community, but such a literature is beyond the scope of this dissertation. This is due to the fact that, the people in the Summerfields residential area fall within the income category of lower middle to middle income segment of the community. This income group unlike the lower income, has a particular level of choice in housing, and their expectations of a good quality residential environment are higher and different from those of the lower income group. The area of interest for this study is, therefore, on whether the demands for the low middle income group are met by the Summerfields residential area.

As previous research has shown that there are differences with regard to housing satisfaction between different income groups. This is informed by the fact that the higher income population groups can afford housing of higher standards, and which are located in areas where there are greater levels of accessibility and so on. These claims will be substantiated when the conceptual framework and the interpretation of findings from the case study is made.

By the same token, the lower - income groups usually cannot afford houses which are expensive. This in turn impacts heavily on their satisfaction, especially with the quality of the dwelling unit. That means, they are likely to be satisfied with housing conditions which are better than those they have been exposed to. This study, will however, concentrate on the lower middle income section of the population.

When a “green fields” residential development takes place, an impact of such a development on the nearby existing facilities such as schools, crèches and so on, is usually dealt with and managed. Summerfields development is a green fields development where there are no facilities provided. The extent to which the Summerfields residents impact on the nearby existing facilities such as the ones provided in the nearby upper Montclair residential area is also beyond the scope of this dissertation, and therefore will not be considered at all. For the purposes of manageability, this dissertation only focuses on whether the residents are satisfied or not with their area in relation to the unavailability of facilities within this area (site).

The reasons why they chose to buy those houses knowing that, there was no appropriate provision of facilities such as schools and crèches will also be investigated. Due to the fact that, the research partly looks at the effects of the accessibility to employment areas (Mobeni, Jacobs and so on) for the residents of Summerfields, and the extent to which those areas are accessible to those residents as one variable to measure their satisfaction levels will also be analysed. However, the overall emphasis will be on local factors.

The investigative study seeks to explore and add to current debates on the issue of housing choice and residential satisfaction. The study is relevant in a sense that, it covers the issue of housing choice and satisfaction in the midst of the dire need for massive delivery of housing, to meet the existing housing backlog. However, a strong limitation of this study is that, the empirical analysis is based on a relatively small residential development of 140 houses. Since it is based only on one residential development, it does not therefore allow a comparative analysis with other similar developments, which could have been useful in interpreting the existing situation in as far as housing satisfaction is concerned, but would also have helped in validating and verifying the conclusions and recommendations arrived at in this document.

Despite such limitations this study could be regarded as setting up the precedent for a more in-depth analysis in the form of other research, given adequate time and budget. Another possible limitation is that the case study area is fairly new (less than four years old). This might in turn negatively impact on the findings especially since housing satisfaction requires that, residents need to have occupied the area for adequately long time for them to realise the extent to which they are satisfied or not with it.

#### **2. 4 Assumptions**

1. Residents who bought houses in the Summerfields area, but come from the disadvantaged areas, for example, from the Black townships and areas affected by air pollution such as Merewent residential area, are more satisfied with their current housing and the residential environment. Since many residents in the area appear to come from the above mentioned areas, they are therefore likely to be happy with their current dwelling units and the residential area in general, except with regard to accessibility of facilities such as schools, crèches and so on.
2. Homeownership has a positive and significant impact on the residents' levels of satisfaction with housing and residential environment in general. This is due to the fact that in general "homeowners are thought to experience higher levels of life satisfaction than do renters" (Basolo, 1997). It is assumed therefore that, more residents in the Summerfields area are satisfied with their housing, since their tenure is full ownership..
3. The residents in the Summerfields residential area whose houses are located close to the railway line and the South Coast road are most likely to be dissatisfied with their areas of residence than those whose houses are located far away from the railway line and the South Coast road.

4. The housing choice procedure that was presented to the residents of Summerfields was not participatory enough. This is due to the fact that the residents were not satisfied with the conditions in the area

5. It is also assumed that differences in the levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the quality of housing and the residential environment are influenced by socio - economic and demographic factors, and previous experiences of the home-owners.

6. The constant increase in the housing bonds, due for most part, to the ever increasing inflation rate has in turn increased the levels of dissatisfaction of the residents with their housing. It is assumed that, the levels of dissatisfaction with the quality of the houses is likely to increase as people pay more in terms of bonds.

7. It is assumed that there is lesser public sector involvement in the housing needs of the lower to upper middle income sections of the community, especially with regard to housing choice and satisfaction. This issue of housing satisfaction is only left to the private sector (developers) and the home owners. This then results in a situation where the needs of the homeowners are not given full consideration by the private sector developers. That happens even though they do complain, but their complaints usually go unheeded.

8. It is also assumed that the lessons learnt with respect to this case study will be widely acceptable to other similar "tract" housing delivery schemes in general.

## **2. 5 Research methodology**

The purpose of this research methodology is to develop a clearer understanding of the concepts of housing choice and satisfaction, and the quality of the residential environment. The identification of relevant theories and existing literature which inform this study will be undertaken, to formulate the conceptual framework for this dissertation, has been made the first part of the research process. The formulation of the conceptual base has been imperative, in a sense that it has provided the base upon which to assess the case study.

In that process of formulating a conceptual framework, all the theories and concepts which attempt to explain the process of decision-making or choice when the households move from one place to another have been carefully analysed. Then the theories which explain the satisfaction of residents with their housing and the residential environment in general have also been carefully dealt with.

Once all these various ideas have been assessed and compared to each other, to establish the extent to which they explain the process of housing choice and satisfaction, then it became necessary to look at what exists in reality. This was done through gathering information from the case study, which is Summerfields residential area. The purpose of using the case study has been to establish the extent to which the existing situation in the case study area relate to the hypothesis and the research question of this dissertation, and to also look at how does the theoretical explanations of the process of housing choice and satisfaction compare or relate to what exists in reality.

This stage of research in the case study can be divided into a three-phase process:

1. Observational study or land use analysis - This was conducted with the purpose of establishing what was the existing situation. This was done by walking around the area, and taking photographs of the interesting features in the study area which could



be useful in the case study analysis. The framework of analysis that was also used is that of the "Responsive environments" approach as developed by Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlyn and Smith (1985).

2. Questionnaire surveys and the interviews with the key role-players in the study area was undertaken to establish the underlying factors for the existing situation. This step can also be referred to as the data collection or collation stage.

3. Finally, the step of explaining and comparing the theoretical base with what exists in the area was undertaken.

The data collection step warrants an extensive description here, since it forms the bulk of the research for this dissertation. The first step of this survey was to design a questionnaire which was made up of 22 questions. These questions covered all aspects of the research: Housing choice, housing satisfaction and the quality of the residential environment.

A sample of 40 houses was selected from the total number of 140 houses. A questionnaire was distributed in each and every one of those houses selected in a sample. Stratified and systematic sampling methods were used to select a sample. The method was to omit two houses and the questionnaire was distributed in each and every third house.

When the survey was undertaken, 20 of the questionnaires would be distributed to those houses which are located along the railway line and the South Coast road. Another 20 questionnaires would be distributed to those houses which are located far away from the railway line and the South Coast road, and are bounded by the houses which belong to the South African Railway Services (SARS). The motive behind such a division in the survey is to establish the difference in the levels of satisfaction with

the residential environment, especially with the effect of the railway line and the main road.

Qualitative analysis included discussions with various key stakeholders in the Summerfields residential area. Such discussions were centred around the issues of housing choice and satisfaction and other issues which are related to it. Among the planners consulted was Gavin Benjamin who works in the Development Control Department at the Physical Environment Service Unit, City of Durban and Dr D. P Smit who was interviewed in relation to the Metro Housing Authority's role in ensuring the greater housing choice and satisfaction for the homeowners. The Chairman of the Local Committee was also interviewed. All these people provided data and qualitative information with regards to the dynamics in the Summerfields residential area.

## **2. 5 Chapter outline**

This dissertation is divided into two main sections. The first section provides the introduction to the dissertation, the context and relevance of the study and the research methodology that has been pursued to get to the main findings of the study. The second section deals with the heart of the dissertation. Included in this section is the literature review, key concepts and the main processes underpinning the study. More importantly the synthesis of data, and the key research findings, recommendations and the conclusion of the dissertation will be dealt with in section. This dissertation is divided into six different chapters, and the information contained in this chapter is as follows :

Chapter One provides an analysis of the context within which the research takes place and the origins of the study. The relevance of a theme for the study will be discussed followed by a brief introduction into the study area and the nature of the development process which took place in the area thus leading to a current situation. Finally in this

chapter there will be a breakdown of chapters contained in the dissertation (Chapter Outline).

Chapter Two will comprise an analysis of the research question, and the discussion of the way in which it relates to the research. From there the outline of the research sub-questions will be followed by an outline of the hypothesis. The constraints and limitations of the research will be described and this will be followed by an explicit description of the main assumptions of the dissertation so as to provide the scope of this dissertation. The research methodology which will outline the manner in which the research methodology has been structured to elicit information that has been used in the study. For example, the type of survey undertaken and the sample size and how it has been chosen. Finally there will be a definition of concepts that have been used in the study.

Chapter Three deals with a theoretical and conceptual base of the dissertation and develops a conceptual framework. It deals with the key concepts theories that have been used in the study. These theories which inform the study will also be established and will be analysed to establish how they link up with the main questions and assumptions of the study. That means, they will be critiqued and the extent to which they fit in with the study will also be established. Both the South African and international literature will be analysed.

Chapter Four provides an analysis of the South African housing policy, and how it has evolved over time. Both our past and present housing policies will be analysed in order to establish how they impact on our current housing delivery system, more specifically in terms of choice and satisfaction with housing. The discussion will focus sharply on the Summerfields residential area context.

Chapter Five is the case study which includes the analysis and synthesis of information gathered from area to obtain meaningful information from it. It will also

attempt to establish how does that information compare to the information gathered from the literature.

Chapter Six is a final chapter which will include a brief evaluation of the main points from the study. Lessons for future similar developments and the recommendations will be done in this chapter. This will then be followed by the bibliography and appendices.

## **2. 6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has given a description of the research question and its sub questions in greater detail. the scope of the study has also been analysed which outline the constraints and limitations of the study. This was accompanied by a set of assumptions which inform the study. Finally, the research methodology was described which has spelt out clearly the research tools that would be used in obtaining information about the study area.

## **CHAPTER THREE : CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3. 1 Introduction**

There are wide differences in the land use patterns of different urban areas. Various features such as topography, history of development ,climatic conditions, past and present social and religious customs, legislation and legal decisions, demand for goods and services including varying consumer preferences, and the policy of local and central government in the supply of public utilities and social services all have an effect on land use (Balchin, Kieve, and Bull, 1988). All these features therefore provide different frameworks within which competition between different land uses takes place. It is this competition between land uses which necessitates a description and an explanation of the theory behind the location and distribution of various land uses, more particularly the distribution of residential land use.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a conceptual background to the location of different land uses within an urban area using the neo-classical approach. Of particular interest to this dissertation is the way in which the neo - classical view to the location and distribution of urban land uses fits in with the housing choice and satisfaction concepts. This is due to the fact that, the area of focus, for this dissertation is on satisfaction of the residents with their houses and the quality of the residential area in general, after they were presented with housing "choice" to buy in the area, with reference to Summerfields as a case study.

The theories underpinning the homeowners' satisfaction with their houses, and the residential environment will be unpacked. Also the theories behind the choice or decision-making effort to move to a particular location will also be dealt with critically. This will be done to counter-balance the relevance of neo - classical approach to land

use with the social theories of housing choice and satisfaction of the homeowners and the quality of their residential environment.

### 3. 2 The Neo - classical approach to the location of land uses

The fundamental point of departure for this theory is that profitability or maximum utility per unit in the urban area and sensitivity to transport costs are the key determinants of the bid rent curve, and ultimately patterns of urban land use (Smit, McCarthy, 1984). The bid rent curve operates in such a way that, it is only those land uses which can afford the higher rent can locate closer to the city centre.

Those land uses which cannot afford the higher rents associated with the location closer to the city centre, tend to locate a distance away from the city centre. It is argued that, the neo- classical economic approach deals with the choice process undertaken by the individuals (i.e. consumers and producers in the market) or public choices which are taken by the government institutions on behalf of the society. These choices between alternative types of commodities and services such as housing, land and other goods and services are necessary in the urban community in order to obtain maximum satisfaction of wants and an efficient use of resources.

The reason why the rents become high in the location closer to the city centre is that, the city centre provides maximum accessibility to the market for goods and services. This accessibility to the city centre is in turn affected by the availability and costs of transportation. It is important to bring this to the attention of the reader that, the dynamics in the location of land uses in an urban area show that, this theory is based on certain assumptions.

The first assumption is that, the city is monocentric. That means, it has a single centre of fixed size called Central Business District (CBD). It also assumes that the transport in the city is radial and dense in every direction, and is also free of congestion (Fujita, 1986). It further assumes that the only travel of workers is between residential areas

and the workplaces in the CBD. In this way travel within the CBD is ignored. It further assumes that the city is on a "featureless plain" where all land parcels are identical ready for residential use without any constraints or need for improvements.

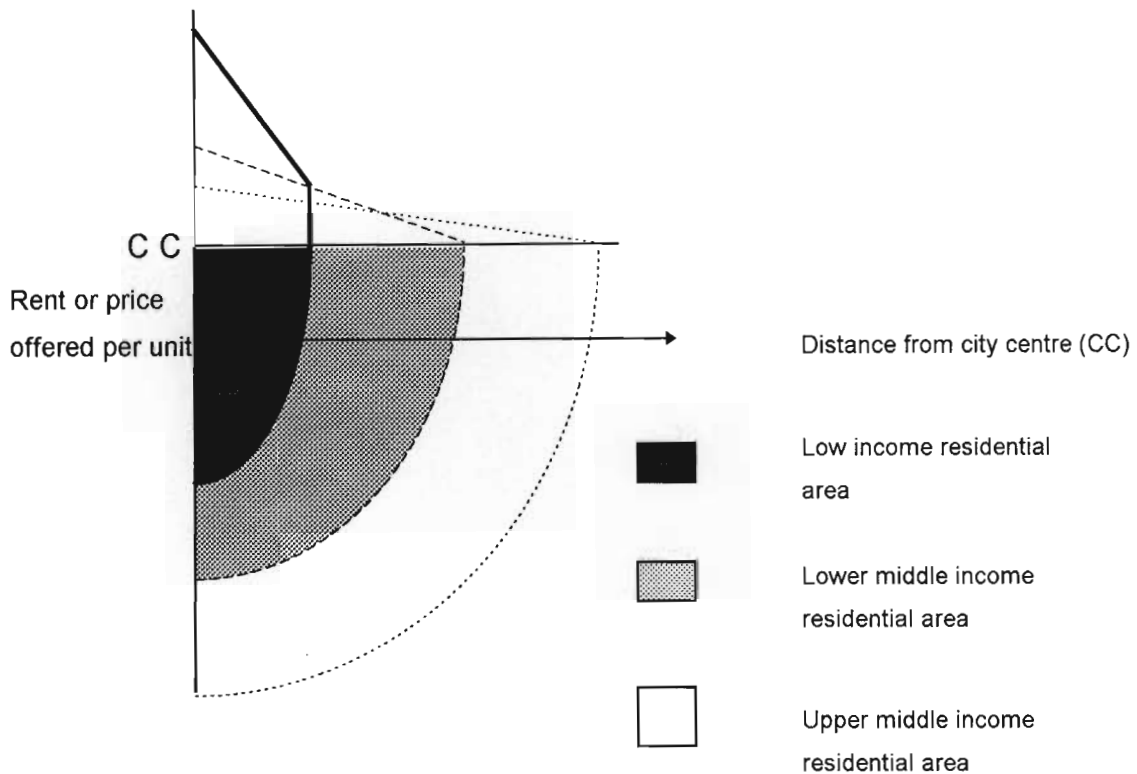
### **3. 2. 1 Resultant structure and urban form**

According to this theory, these processes aimed at profit or utility maximisation result to a "structure" of the city or the urban form. In other words, processes informing the decisions for various land uses to locate in various parts of the urban area manifest themselves spatially, and this gives a structure to an urban area (Urban form). The commercial land use (shops, banks and building societies) is the highest bidder in the rent curve for location closer in the CBD. Further out of the CBD there are wholesale and light manufacturing industries followed by the low income residential area. Further out is the high income residential area followed by the heavy industrial land use. These are connected to each other by the transport networks to ensure accessibility to the markets for goods.

### **3. 2. 2 Residential land use**

The focus in the discussion of the neo- classical approach to the location of land uses now shifts to the residential land use specifically. Similar processes with regard to the bid rent curve as it affects general location of all land uses takes place in housing location in an urban area. As it has been highlighted above that the issue of accessibility to goods and services plays an important role for the allocation of urban land uses, and that there is also a particular urban form discernible with regard to the location of urban land uses. In the residential land use, an urban form is influenced by varying income categories (see the diagram below).

Fig. 1: Location of various income households in relation to the city centre



The above diagram is the simplest version of the bid rent curve, which in this case shows the location of various income residential areas in an urban area in relation to the city centre. Closer to the city centre (CC), there is the location of the low income residential areas. This type of residential area is characterised by high densities, especially flats, and in the case of the single dwelling units there are small lot sizes. Most of accommodation available in this area is rented type of accommodation.

As one moves further from the city centre there is the location of the lower middle income residential area. In this area lot sizes are a bit bigger and densities a bit lower than in the inner city areas, for example, the older suburbs of Durban such as lower Umbilo, Montclair and so on. Further from that area, there is a location of higher



income residential area. This area is characterised by low density, large lot sizes, increased levels of privacy, tranquillity and so on. The houses in these areas are very expensive, and this is due to the fact that, these houses are located in an upper income market and are of good qualities.

The neo- classical theory shows that such a structure or form in the location of urban land uses is informed by the trade- offs that the households make when they choose the location in an urban area. This is the study about housing choice of residents in an urban area and the resultant satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment and housing. It is therefore important to spell out that individual households make decisions to locate in an urban area which are based not only on the quality of that area but also on whether they can afford to locate in that area.

According to this theory it is argued that, if the travel costs to work are very low, home-buyers will be prepared to pay the highest rents or prices for accommodation. Due to the low income people's budget constraints, they are unable to meet the high costs of transport, when they reside away from the city centre or from other important utilities. They therefore cannot afford expensive housing on large lots yet their incessant demands for satisfactory residential area remains. They then end up competing for high density housing on the land closer to the city centre, which is more accessible to the wide range of facilities. On the other hand those households with less budget constraints are prepared to expend some money in the form of transport costs or any other related costs for more spacious houses in the urban periphery

As income rises there has been a tendency for people to live further away from their work in areas of low density, and more expensive housing. If travel costs rise, there will be a migration to areas of lower priced housing. Vice versa, if travel costs fall, the movement will be to more expensive housing. This theory shows therefore that the social stratification discernible in most cities is largely due to income variations and

affordability levels which force various land uses to locate in certain areas within an urban area

(Balchin, Kieve and Bull 1988) argue that, the main reason why householders change residence may be due more to a change in the size of the family, a change of job and so on, than simply to a changing relationship between travel costs and the house prices. Therefore, they argue, it is unrealistic to assume that a household can just locate anywhere. In actual fact the house-holds have a fairly restricted choice. This choice is not only restricted by budget, but also by other factors such as unavailability of suitable land to build houses on, the immobility of the resources once they are committed, the slowness of the construction industry to respond to the changing demand and so on.

Besides budget constraints which play a key role in the distribution of residential land uses, the people's perceptions also play an important role in this process. People's perception of a residential area are influenced by various factors. Some studies have been conducted on the analysis of the spatial preferences. It has been found that independent variables such as age, experience, education, class income and occupation, and length of stay in the residence are important in the formation of spatial preferences by residents. An example of this is where there are no budget constraints and the households decide to move or stay in a particular area depending on whether they perceive that area to be of good quality residential environment or not.

People have a framework of personal attributes which they use to interpret information. This refers to the collection of data by human senses, and this data is used to code, store and recall information. Therefore, people have different interpretations of the residential environment which is informed by their experiences. For example, a planner may interpret a housing environment according to what he or she has been taught as constituting a "good quality" residential environment. This may

be found to be totally different from what the potential residents consider a good quality residential environment as influenced by their personal attributes as well.

Similar situation takes place among residents, where their perception of the environment differs between residents themselves. For example, what one resident considers as dissatisfactory privacy in the residential area, but the other residents may consider the similar kind of privacy as being satisfactory. There are various theories and concepts which attempt to explain the processes of housing choice and satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment. It is to these theories and concepts that the discussion now focuses on.

### **3. 3 Housing choice process**

Michelson (1977) argues that, there is a variety of ways with which one can measure the choice that people make in moving from one residential area to another. Some of those ways are based on the personal decisions made by individual households which are influenced by their personal experiences. Other decisions can be influenced by the processes taking place around those individual households, more specifically the type of participation that they are exposed to. In housing consumption decision-making or choice process is dependant on the level of participation that the home-buyers are exposed to before buying a house.

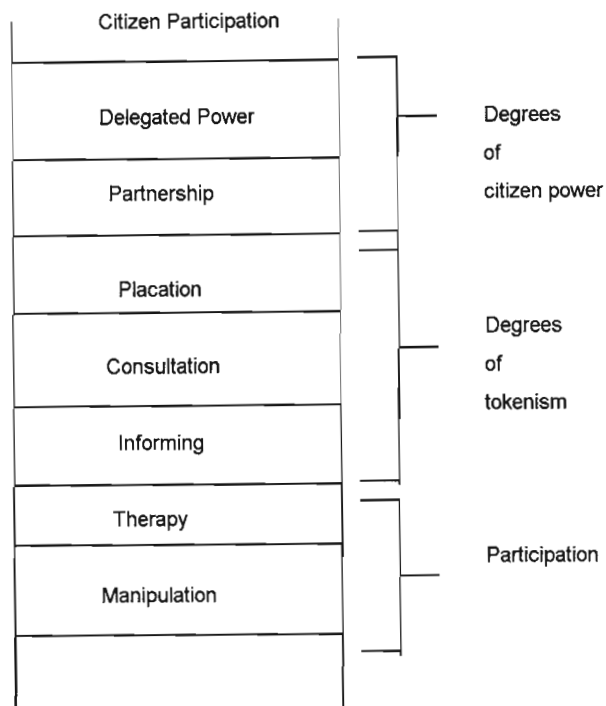
Participation is a “buzzword” that is often used loosely by everyone (the government, NGOs, planners, institutions and so on). Kahn (1982) acknowledges that participation is an emotional concept which has led to heated controversies over its nature. There have been a lot of projects which the developers have claimed to be participatory, but only to find that they prove not to have benefited all sides especially the citizens. Arnstein (1964) made a breakthrough in the analysis of the amount of participation, by developing what she referred to as a “ladder of participation”. This ladder has eight rungs which represent various degrees of participation. At the bottom of the ladder there are two processes known as manipulation and therapy. There is no participation

accrued with regard to these processes, only the powerholders or the authority can “educate” people about projects.

From that level there is another rung which deals with informing and consultation. This relates to the degree of tokenism in the participation process, where the residents are allowed to hear and make their voices heard. However, the problem with this process is that the residents lack the power to ensure that their views are heeded by the authority or the powerful. There is also another high level of tokenism which is known as placation. In this process the residents are given the right to advise, but still the authority or the powerholders retain the right to take decisions.

Further up the ladder the level of citizen participation increases. This rung is referred to as partnership. In this process citizens negotiate and engage in trade - offs with authorities and powerholders. At the topmost of the ladder there are processes of delegated power and citizen control. This is associated with the degrees of citizen power, which means, that citizens have a complete control over the majority of decision- making and have managerial power.

Figure 2 : The ladder of participation



Source: S. R Arnstein (1969)

The level of participation that is now common in South Africa in so far as housing delivery process takes place is the one which has the degrees of tokenism in the ladder of participation. This level of participation is characterised by consultation and informing. In most cases in the South African context such a participation process is a one- way communication where citizens' concerns are barely taken into account. The type of participation that people are introduced to greatly affect the housing choices they make.

In addition to the varying degrees of participation as a determinant of housing choice, there are also a number of factors which play a very crucial role in influencing the housing choice. These factors are as follows:

### **3. 3. 1 Push and pull factors**

The push and pull factors refer to those types of factors which make people move from their original area of residence to the new area. Normally, the focus under this is on both the forced and voluntary reasons for movement. They usually refer to such things as the size of house, job change, difficulty of access to places of work and so on.

With regard to the factors known as pull factors, the reference is made to those factors which "attract" people to the particular area. In this instance, the area to which the households move usually offer those factors which the place of origin could not offer. Large part of this research will be on the pull factors. The reason for that is, the focus of this research will be on environmental and other factors which made the people choose the Summerfields residential area. However, push factors will also be dealt with mainly for the purposes of comparing the previous area of residence to the new location ( Summerfields).

It is argued that, there are certain compromises that people make with regard to the quality of the residential area in order to get the type of housing that will meet their budgets. For example, although people may be aware of environmental drawbacks, such as the houses which are located close to the railway line, narrow streets and so on, but as long as the area has some features which are satisfactory to particular households, those households will buy houses in that area and they may feel satisfied with the area. This fits in neatly with the theory of neo - classical micro- economy approach in a sense that some of the factors such as accessibility to workplaces and budget constraints force households to locate in particular areas in the city.

### **3. 3. 2 Stage in the family life cycle**

Family life cycle refers to a changing demographic characteristics of a family from its formation to dissolution. Some writers in this field argue that the housing decisions that are made by households are in accordance with the household's composition in

its various stages of development (the family life cycle). That means, each stage in the life cycle is associated with different housing needs and aspirations.

In the previous studies a stage in the family life cycle has been regarded as the major factor in the residential mobility. The addition of children in the family is an example of that change, and these families with children require the change of the residential environment or a house which will be more spacious, big lot sizes, availability of facilities such as play lot and parks, an adequate storage capacity and so on. Therefore in terms of the choice for the location of land use, the families prefer to locate in different location in the residential area.

### **3. 3. 3 Symbol of status**

Some writers have argued that people choose a particular type of housing which will confer with their status. This is in line with an argument or an assumption that is put forward by the urban ecologists that, land values which accompany urban growth would sort people out into economically homogenous areas (Michelson, 1977). That means, the assumption was made that people would want to live in houses and neighbourhoods commensurate with their incomes. This process is referred to as *status conferring*.

There is another assumption that appears to be more linked to that of *status conferring*, and that one is called *self selection*. This assumption focuses on the life style and ethnic status. In this process it is argued that people evaluate themselves in terms of what they most want to do with their lives, and then they tend to select residential area where they will mostly be able to satisfy themselves (Michelson, 1977). For example, it has been shown in some studies that, people move away from the city centre to the suburban areas to escape from the increasing numbers of neighbours of dissimilar character and to gain a larger percentage of new neighbours as peers. After people have made certain choices, it then becomes interesting to find out whether they are satisfied or not with their housing and residential environment.

There are also various theories and concepts which attempt to explain satisfaction of the residents with their housing and residential environment.

### **3. 3. 4 On the Apartheid City**

The situation is different in the case of the South African city. This is due to the fact that the location of households in an urban area was not as a result of the varying levels in income or the preferences of some households. But it was organised along the racial lines where the Black households were forced to locate on the peripheries of major urban areas (Swilling et al, 1991). That means, even if certain households could afford the location closer to the city centre, but they were not allowed to buy houses in those areas. It is however, important to mention that, such an urban form is still the part of the Neo- classical differentiated city, in a sense that, the low income (Black) households were located further from the city centre, whereas the higher income (Whites) were located in the areas closer to the city centre.

In terms of housing choice and participation the residents were never given any choice to locate where they wanted. Therefore, all the factors which are crucial in the decisions that the households make about locating in a particular area such as the stage in the family life cycle, the symbol of status and so, are not applicable in the definition of the apartheid city. It is only in the recent years where the households are allowed to locate in any area in the city as long as their income allows them, for example, this is the case in the Summerfields residential area where most of the residents come from the Black townships which are far away from the city centre. They then decided to locate in the area which is closer to the city centre. Another factor which has informed their choice of Summerfields residential area is the possibility that the area is relatively better than the areas from which they come.

### **3. 4. Residential satisfaction or dissatisfaction**

The concept of community satisfaction has arisen as a realisation that objective indicators of housing satisfaction such as service provision were not adequate to



reflect the nature of the social change, and they do not represent the viewpoints of those people for whom they suppose to change.

There is a of conceptual problem that has been inherent with regard to the use of the concept of housing satisfaction. Deseren (1978) raises the question: what are the internal evaluative standards by which individuals judge housing satisfaction?. That means, there is a wide range of comparative standards from hypothetical conceptions of the "ideal" housing condition to reference to other specific housing circumstances known at first hand. There is also another problem associated with the individual differences based upon the combinations of their experiences, and satisfaction and they may be dependant upon specific dimensions of housing satisfaction, and therefore making it impossible to compare individual responses across multi-dimensional scale (Deseren, 1978).

Satisfaction can be viewed as an arena in which policy issues, major life events and general environmental factors become linked to individual perceptions. Satisfaction can be conceptualised as an individual's experience of whatever is in his or her environment. It is argued that with regard to the definition of housing satisfaction, it is not how the researcher redefines housing satisfaction that is essential, but how the members of the community or residents define their situation.

Some of the socio- economic factors as they affect the choice of a house or residential area as discussed above also apply directly to the way in which they affect satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the residential environment or the house. Those factors are stage in the family life cycle and economic constraints. Therefore, there is no need for definition of those sub - concepts as this may constitute repetition. But the manner in which they specifically affect housing choice is important.

With regard to the stages in the family life cycle, it is argued that for the families which are at the beginning of the family life cycle important motivating forces for relocation

are adjustment in housing costs and structure type of the house (Sulaiman, and Yahaya, 1987). For the family that is at mid - life point, adjustment in housing unit size and housing quality are important factors which affect satisfaction or dissatisfaction with housing. This is due to the fact that most of the families at this stage have children, therefore the size and the quality of the houses play an important role in their satisfaction with housing. Then for the oldest households housing adjustment is much less important in general. This implies that older households are likely to be more satisfied with current housing than the much younger households.

#### **3. 4. 1 Accessibility**

Accessibility is one determinant for the utility and profitability of a particular land use. The greater the accessibility of location (low transportation costs and convenience), the greater the comparative advantage and the greater the demand for property at that location. In the case of the residential land use, the importance of accessibility is illustrated when the utility of particular sites depends upon monetary factors such as travelling costs to work, schools, shops and private and public open spaces. Such a utility is also dependant on non-monetary considerations such as peace and quietness of the area, compatible neighbours, fresh air, less noise levels and a variety of less tangible amenities. Therefore, "the greater the accessibility of the area, and the greater the accessibility to the user of land in question" (Balchin, Kieve and Bull, 1988 : 16). The area which endures accessibility plays an important role in the satisfaction of the residents.

#### **3. 4. 2 Income levels**

With regard to the issue of economic constraints, different writers have approached the issue of housing satisfaction from various angles. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction varies with the levels of income. In studies that have been undertaken it has been proven that affluent households have higher levels of dissatisfaction. It has also been found that satisfaction decreases as personal income and aspired social class

increases (Loo, 1986). Those who are poor, and are not aspiring to a higher social class are the ones who are satisfied with their housing.

### **3. 4. 3 Lack of choice**

Clark and Onaka (1983) argued that in the absence of housing choice due to economic constraints the residents adjust or adapt through changes in their norms and standards otherwise stress and maladjustment may occur. That means, those residents who did not have a choice may tend to be satisfied with their housing due to the fact that, they tend to adjust to the conditions in the area. People who have been exposed for a long time to the negative environmental attributes may end up being unaware of them and have a less critical attitude towards them because they regard those situations as "normal".

### **3. 4. 4 Adaptation**

Another important point is that, people are prepared to tolerate certain stresses in the environment over time as long as they receive something positive in return. For example, people may tolerate noise made by the train if their houses are close to the railway line as long as their area ensures easier accessibility to the areas of employment. The people living near main roads or railway lines have often become accustomed to the noise level and do not notice it. "One man's level of satisfaction with his housing conditions may reflect a good quality housing environment whereas someone living in poorer circumstances may have become so accustomed to them that his aspirations are lowered and he or she pronounces himself satisfied" (Bentham, 1985).

### **3. 4. 5 Economic deprivation**

Another angle from which the notion of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with housing is viewed is that of economic deprivation. Bentham (1983) argues that, it is the presence of economic deprivation in the local population that provides the clearest indication of areas regarded as unsatisfactory by the residents. High rate of unemployment,

unskilled and lone - parent families and high levels of poverty closely link low income and dissatisfaction with area of residence. Another issue which is linked to this is the operations of the housing markets. The housing market concentrates people in the least desirable areas if they cannot afford housing in the more desirable areas. Another important point which relates to this concept is that, the residents who come from a relatively deprived residential area compared to their current residential area are likely to be satisfied with the conditions in the new residential area.

Goudy (1977) hypothesised that perception of local social dimensions are more strongly related to more general community satisfaction than are perceptions of services. By perceptions of social dimensions reference is made to such things as the distribution of power, citizen participation and commitment to the community. Services refer to observable features such as street, garbage collection, health care, shopping facilities and so on.

In other studies that have been conducted, it has been discovered that, proportion of friends living in the community and the more people known in the area account for satisfaction with that area. Other studies have linked relations between familiarity, length of residence and environmental perception or cognition (Moore, 1979).

#### **3. 4. 6 Home - ownership**

Home ownership impacts heavily on satisfaction in general, in a sense that, homeowners experience higher levels of satisfaction. It is argued in this theory that homeowners receive a variety of social and economic benefits including higher social status and wealth accumulation, and these benefits in turn result to greater levels of satisfaction. For example, other researchers have shown that, married people have greater levels of life satisfaction than single persons, and older individuals are generally more satisfied than younger individuals.

Home ownership has a significant impact on the home owners' self - esteem. The "self - esteem" can be defined as an individuals' personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individuals hold towards themselves. (Basolo, 1997). Due also to the fact that, home ownership is a goal for most people, if people have achieved it, it may well be an important indication of personal success leading to a greater levels of self - esteem and satisfaction. Owning a home of a relatively higher standard may lead individuals to consider themselves doing better than those who rent or own houses of lower standards. That means, home ownership may be used as evidence that they are doing better than other in their reference groups. " The results of the studies undertaken show that, home ownership has a positive and significant impact on both the life satisfaction and participation in neighbourhood activities" (Basolo, 1997: 793).

### **3. 5. Quality of the residential environment**

Dewar and Uytendboogart (1995) argue that the housing problem is not simply the one of ensuring the provision of adequate levels of shelter, but the real issue is that of urban qualities. This type of issue does not only accommodate the complex patterns of human needs and the activities that characterise urban life, but do so in such a way that these activities are enriched. Every individual has distinct personal aspirations and wishes, and the built environment plays an important role in enabling people's needs to be met (Chapman, 1996).

The debate over the relative merits of objective and subjective measures of residential quality respectively has provoked a healthy debate over which of these two measures best describe the quality of the residential environment. However, such a debate is beyond the scope of this chapter, and will therefore not going to be discussed.

The objective analysis refers to the analysis of the physical aspects of the residential environment in order to establish whether it is of good quality or not. Whereas subjective indicators describe the ways people perceive and evaluate conditions

around them. That means, it focuses on the residents' perception of what constitute a good quality residential environment based for most part on their previous experiences of residential environment and their socio - economic status (i.e. income, age, gender and so on).

Due to the fact that there is a risk that, the conclusions arrived at with regard to the quality of the residential environment may still be subjectively influenced to a considerable extent by the researchers or planners who are undertaking the study to measure the quality of the residential environment. Due also to the fact that it has been argued that, it is inappropriate to assume that some outside group of experts (decision - makers, politicians, researchers, planners etc.) can make decision on what is the good quality residential environment for the residents who actually experience it.

It has therefore been resolved in this chapter that both objective (physical elements) and subjective (perceptions of the residents) approaches are useful in analysing the quality of the residential environment. It is for the above mentioned reasons that this research is focused on both the objective and subjective approaches to the analysis of residential quality to be able to get views from the residents themselves and match them with the experts' knowledge of what constitute a good quality residential environment.

The "subjective approach" in this research constitute a questionnaire survey which will attempt to elicit information on the Summerfields residents' perceptions on how do they feel about their residential environment with regard to its quality. The "objective approach" relates to the physical elements that have been used to describe the "good quality" residential environment, for example, as it is described in the literature, and gathered through land use analysis. It is to this section now that, the focus of discussion turns to.

For the purposes of this dissertation “objective” indices will be limited mostly to design related issues with minor objective factors which are not design - related. It is the view of this author that any existing, functioning urban residential environment needs to have a structure and identity, even if that is not strong. In other words, urban designers need to ensure that the areas that they develop are not monotonous. The type of design for a particular residential area strongly affects the satisfaction of the residents with that area. For example, if the area is designed in such a way that there is no privacy, residents in that area are likely to be dissatisfied with it.

The design of a place affects choices which people make at various levels. For example, issues of utmost importance are issues such as the *permeability, variety, legibility, visual appropriateness, privacy, safety, surveillance and territoriality, and density levels* (Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn and Smith, 1985). The listed factors are not the end of what constitute a good quality residential environment. But they play a key role in making the residential environment liveable. A brief analysis of each of those factors will now be undertaken.

### **3. 5. 1 Permeability**

Permeability refers to the accessibility of the residential environment physically or visually. That means, a good quality residential environment will have a number of alternative ways for residents to move through their environment. Factors such as routes, open spaces and so on are the ones which ensure the accessibility of the residential area. This factor is so crucial in such a way that, it has to be considered early in the design. Therefore, if this has not been done during the design stages, there are few chances that the already existing residential environment can be altered to cater for this factor.

### **3. 5. 2 Variety**

This refers to the range of uses that a particular area offers for the residents. That means, the area needs to be developed in such a way that there are different forms,

uses and meanings. Variety of uses also need to be considered earlier in the design. This in turn increases the choice that the residents have within their area. Variety is closely linked to permeability. For example, easily accessible places are irrelevant unless they offer a choice of experiences, particularly the variety of uses (Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn and Smith, 1985).

### **3. 5. 3 Legibility**

This refers to the extent to which it is easy for the people to understand the layout of the area. According to Lynch (1960) legibility can be described as the ease with which parts of the area can be reorganised into a coherent pattern. He then outlined the recognisable symbols such as districts, landmarks, nodes, paths and edges. Analysing each of those symbols is beyond the scope of this chapter.

### **3. 5. 4 Visual appropriateness**

This refers to the interpretation that people make of the area. This concept includes all the above mentioned concepts, and change them into a meaning that people make of the area. Although visual appropriateness refers more particularly to the places which are frequented by people from a wide variety of different backgrounds, but also applies in the simple residential area such as Summerfields. This research will attempt to establish whether the area is monotonous or not. Similarity in the design of houses can also lead to monotony of the area.

### **3. 5. 5 Personalisation**

Regardless of the level of choice that has been given to the people before buying in a particular residential area, people will still need to live and work in places designed by others. Therefore, personalisation refers to the "way in which people can put their own stamp on their environment" (Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn and Smith, 1985 : 11). With regard to the residential environment personalisation of the dwelling unit can be seen when the home - owners change the appearance of their dwelling units.



### **3. 5. 6 Privacy**

This relates to the freedom that individuals have so that they can behave in ways appropriate to their particular purposes. This refers to the freedom of choice to perform such functions as carrying out tasks which require concentration, conducting socially disapproved behaviour, child raising and so on (Moore, 1979).

### **3. 5. 7 Safety**

This refers to the type of security that the individuals need to have from any criminal activities and hazardous environment.

### **3. 5. 8 Surveillance and territoriality**

This refers to the level of control over the space external to the dwelling unit.

### **3. 5. 9 Density levels**

It relates to the relationship between people and the amount of land they need for accommodation. Density levels are important in a sense that, they are used to estimate the land needs, and also help to gauge the quality of the living conditions.

## **3. 6 Conclusion**

This conceptual framework has given a thorough analysis of the neo- classical theory of urban land use distribution and location, and has established the extent to which this theory underpins the research on housing choice and satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment. This discussion of the theoretical framework started from broad (neo - classical theory) to specific theories and concepts underpinning the three key areas of the study. These areas are housing choice process, housing satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the quality of the residential environment. The extent to which this conceptual framework applies to the findings of the study will be the subject of the chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER FOUR : SOUTH AFRICAN HOUSING POLICY**

### **4. 1. Introduction**

South African housing policy represents one of the most unique housing policies in the history of housing, due to the fact that there were various policies for different racial groups. Even the unique nature of the contemporary South African city is strongly influenced by the evolving South African housing policy. This policy has also raised some hot debates among academia, and within the various ranks in our government.

The Summerfields residential area is undoubtedly one of the areas which have been strongly affected by our housing policy, and has now raised concerns with regard to the level of satisfaction for its residents. This chapter will assist in clarifying the origins of the current organisations such as the National Home-builders Registration Council (NHBRC), hence these organisations directly affect the choices that the residents have about their residential environment at policy level.

This chapter therefore offers a brief assessment of the South Africa's housing policy during the Group Areas Act era through to the contemporary era. It briefly describes the processes through which a housing policy has been formulated and examines key policy debates that have evolved . The central theme of this chapter will be to establish the extent to which our past and current housing policies have addressed the notion of satisfaction with housing and the residential environment in general. The purpose of this analysis of the housing policy is to assist in making policy recommendations, in a sense that when the recommendations are made for this study, are made in such a way that they become compatible with the existing housing policy. This policy will be analysed with a strong focus on Summerfields residential area as a case study. It will attempt to establish how current housing policy has affected the choices that the residents of Summerfields have made when they bought houses in the area.

#### **4. 2 South African housing policy prior to the 1994 election.**

South Africa's old housing policy has been well documented by various academics and researchers, (McCarthy and Smit 1984, Swilling et al 1991). These academics describe the key concern of the previous South African government as having only been to contain the influx of Africans into the urban areas which were only reserved for Whites. The government of that time ensured such a containment of Africans through imposing urban regulations such as influx control measures using the Group Areas Act (1950).

According to that Act, Blacks, mostly Africans, were only allowed in the urban areas when they would provide the much needed labour to the Whites' urban areas. Therefore they could only be accommodated in the hostels, and they were not allowed to stay along with their families. In the late 1960s and early to mid 1970s African, Coloured and Indian townships were established on the periphery of the major urban areas, for example, in Durban, townships such as Umlazi, KwaMashu and other townships were established during that period, and for the already mentioned motive. This type of housing delivery led to a massive housing crisis as more Blacks illegally flocked into those settlements in search of better living standards. Those houses which were built were the low cost four roomed detached houses which were for rental purpose on a 99 year lease basis.

This is an interesting part of the policy in as far as this study is concerned in a sense that, it brings to the forth the issue of tenure that the low income people had and housing conditions which were poor (high density, small lot sizes, small houses and so on). This is due to the fact that most of the residents in the Summerfields residential area come from these townships, and the legacy of that policy can be seen in the current conditions of those areas. These conditions include the overcrowded housing stock in the Black townships and the emergence of informal housing in both the backyards of existing township houses and in new free-standing settlement (Tomlinson, 1998). This is also well supported in the conceptual framework where it is argued that conditions and the

experiences in the previous residential area greatly affect satisfaction with the current residential area.

The mid 1980s saw the beginning of the demise of the apartheid era. Events such as massive uprisings in the Black townships, an increasing pressure exerted by the international community on the then government, to dissolve apartheid policies, a new ideology from the South Africa's business sector to see rational, economic forces determining the form and function of the city rather than the events imposed by the state and so on, led to the removal of apartheid racial control on residential location and the provision of housing.

In line with the ideology of "orderly urbanisation" as an acceptable form which began in the 1980s, the government in the 1990s funded the establishment of a development agency known as the Independent Development Trust (IDT). The motive behind such a development agency was to provide a sanitary and liveable environment for Blacks who were "illegally" flocking into the periphery of the South Africa's metropolitan areas. This development agency embarked on a programme to service 100,000 sites (Tomlinson, 1998).

That attempt to deal with housing crisis was totally rejected by the organisations which represented the urban poor as a mere servicing of the shack settlements. With regard to the lower middle to upper middle income homebuyers, the subsidy policy requires that the first time homebuyers needed to buy houses which were new. In other words they would not qualify for subsidies if they wanted to buy the second hand houses. Another constrain for that subsidy policy is that, it required that, in order for women to qualify for subsidy they needed to get married.

Those organisations such as NGOs and civic organisations called on the government to provide an appropriately developed genuine mass housing programme. That was a manifestation of the conflicting views on how to address the problem of housing crisis

between the representatives of the beneficiaries and the government views on what constitute appropriate housing. That conflict in the 1990s led to the formation of the National Housing Forum (NHF). The motive behind the formulation of this forum was to develop interim arrangements to ensure that the housing provision is appropriately undertaken. That would be done through the restructuring and rationalisation of the government departments, and the development of a new housing subsidy policy that would cater for the needs of the homeless masses.

Therefore the new housing subsidy scheme which was interim, and agreed upon in the National Housing Forum show a strong reorientation of the government priorities to cater for the needs of the poorest. This new subsidy scheme which was endorsed by the government of National Unity when its term of office began, ensured that beneficiaries of a new housing subsidy were allocated subsidy amounts based on their monthly income, with those homeowners who earned less allocated more in terms of subsidy amounts than those who earn more. The largest percentage of the South African homeowners earn less than R1500 a month. That means, large amounts of money are diverted towards the assistance of the poorest sections of the community in partial neglect of the lower middle, middle to higher income families. Most of the residents in the Summerfields residential area are lower middle income families who therefore gain very little from the governments' housing subsidy scheme. However, the current housing policy still has some constraints in the way of choice in housing, especially for the residents of Summerfields. The houses in the Summerfields area are relatively expensive, they range between R150 000 - R200 000. That means, the amount of subsidy they receive from the government does not make any significant impact towards the Summerfields' residents' housing.

The above discussion shows that although the interim housing subsidy scheme caters as much as possible for the poorest section of the community, but by its subsidy formula caters far too little for the residents such as the ones from the Summerfields residential area. In contrast the previous housing subsidy scheme prior to the IDT capital subsidy stimulated the demand for the larger or the more expensive houses. Therefore the

residents such as the ones from the Summerfields residential area would have been catered fairly well under that system. The above discussion on the nature of our housing policy bears testimony to the fact that the previous housing policy has had little if any concerns with the notion of housing choice and satisfaction of the beneficiaries.

The relevant key question is - what are the issues and the processes taking place within our housing policy which limit choice of housing for beneficiaries, and what can be done to remedy the situation. There are various key issues which are central to this problem of the lack of housing choice. The first problem is in regard to the lack of consensus by the housing authorities and the private sector with regard to the appropriate housing delivery approach. On the one hand the private construction sector argues for the government to provide massive rental housing in which they will act as contractors rather than developers to minimise risks and increase their profits (Tomlinson, 1998). This approach argues that the private sector developers need to carry out tasks such as applying for subsidies on behalf of the communities, identifying and servicing land and constructing a structure where possible.

On the other hand, there is an approach which favours a more proactive role of the government in the delivery of housing. They argue that the market oriented delivery system would ignore the needs of the poor and would provide no role for community organisations in their own development. Another set of debate relates to the notion of the standard of housing to be provided. As it became clear that the capital subsidy scheme came nowhere near to delivering a four room house. Therefore the idea was that for all those households who were formally employed and have some reasonable income could afford a mortgage bond which would provide an additional finance with which to build a four roomed house or more. Most of the Summerfields residents fall under this category.

All the deadlocks which had prevented the formal financial institutions from lending the end user finance to certain beneficiaries had been appropriately dealt with. That means a situation was formalised to ensure that lending process resumed well. There is also an

agreement known as the "social compact". This agreement was prescribed by the subsidy schemes regulations and was reached between the community, the developer, and other stakeholders. This agreement was aimed at securing community participation in the housing delivery process. This agreement came as a result of the demand from the NGOs during the formulation of a subsidy scheme when the housing policy was drawn. According to this agreement the private sector developers would act as intermediaries between communities and government.

Therefore they had to assist communities in applying for subsidies, planning and carrying out the actual development. As a means of ensuring community participation, developers would have to secure a "social compact" with beneficiaries which would specify the goal of the project and how it was to be carried out. That means in order for developers to receive the approval for subsidy allocation from the government, they need to have been engaged in a "social compact". However, in many cases this was not successful, in a sense that getting agreement amongst community members on what kinds of developments should occur proved extremely difficult (Tomlinson, 1998).

This was due to the fact that there were often some disagreements between the leadership and the community members on what kind of development should take place. In the case of Summerfields residential area, it would never have been easy to establish such agreements. The reason for this is the fact that, housing development took place on a greenfield site, and people who bought houses in that area came from different socio-economic backgrounds. That means, the housing policy in that regard did not make a meaningful contribution to the benefits of the residents in the Summerfields residential area. Another crucial body which forms part of our housing policy is known as the National Home builders Registration Council (NHBRC). This council was formulated as a result of the banks' concern that bond defaults were often a result of the responsibility of the developers involved in the actual development (Tomlinson, 1998).

They argued that the bond defaults were due to a lack of quality control in the construction industry which result in the poorly constructed houses. Generally even the homeowners themselves often felt it was the banks' responsibility to sort out problems associated with poor construction. The banks therefore put a condition that, before they make financial assistance available, there should be some form of a warranty for the contractors' work. Therefore each and every contractor had to be registered with the National Home- builders Registration council prior to being awarded a contract to build houses.

#### **4. 3 The extent to which the housing policy has or addresses housing satisfaction**

The housing policy prior to the transitional era (before 1994), paid less attention to the question of housing choice and satisfaction, at least to certain racial groups. This is clearly discernible where Blacks were not given a chance to choose the type of housing which suited their needs. They were forced to reside in the townships. The extent to which this experience of a lack of housing choice and residential satisfaction reminiscent of a former housing policy affects the current experience of housing choice, and residential satisfaction in the Summerfields residential area is beyond the scope of this chapter. Therefore, it will be thoroughly dealt with in a chapter which deals with the research findings.

With regard to the contemporary housing policy which has been revised and approved by the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 1994, there are certain key principles which underpin this policy. Those principles include:

- The immediate and visible delivery of housing. This is due to the fact there is dire need for the current housing delivery to address the housing backlog. That means "tract" housing delivery such as the one taking place in the Summerfields residential area is desirable according to this principle in a sense that, it ensures an immediate and visible type of delivery of housing.



- There should be a maximum community participation or at least the participation of the beneficiaries in the housing delivery process. This principle is accompanied by the principle of economic empowerment of the communities for which the housing delivery is being undertaken.
- Housing delivery should be a developer-driven process. This simply refers to the housing delivery that is driven by the private sector. This principle comes in the wake of the argument or the belief that the government cannot be the sole provider of housing, due to the limited resources at its disposal.

A careful analysis of the above-mentioned principles of the new housing policy show that, there is a serious consideration given to the notion of housing choice and satisfaction through, for example, such things as “social compacts” as a form of community participation in the housing delivery process, a warranty as aspect of the contractors’ work through the NHBRC and so on.

However, there are certain principles within this very same housing policy, which are contradictory to those principles which would ensure housing choice and satisfaction when housing delivery is eventually put into practice. The principle of immediate and visible delivery clashes strongly with the principle of economic empowerment of the communities. This clash occurs due to the fact that, while there is a dire need to deal with the current housing backlog through the immediate and visible delivery, economic empowerment relies on the unskilled and inexperienced builders to carry out housing delivery. This in turn slows down the process of housing delivery. That means, delivery will eventually have to rest with the big contractors and developers, which in turn limits consultation with the beneficiaries. If consultation is undertaken it could increase choice and satisfaction with housing for the beneficiaries.

Another clash of the housing policy principles occurs where the principle of developer-type of delivery does not coincide with the principle of community participation. The latter

requires a lot of time-consuming consultation with members of the community. This in turn negatively affects the developer in a sense that, it reduces profits and increases costs. This is a key reason why there is a lack of proper consultation between the developer and the community members or the beneficiaries before housing development could take place. Therefore dissatisfaction with housing results from such a lack of consultation between the developer and the people for whom the development is taking place.

#### **4. 4 The impact of housing subsidy on the housing choice of the Summerfields residents**

As it has been highlighted in the discussion above, that, there were certain conditions which were placed on the beneficiaries before they qualify for housing subsidy. The condition that the residents needed to buy new houses if they had to qualify for government subsidy, has clearly limited choice of first time homebuyers. For example, they were not allowed to buy houses in the area which they prefer but were only limited to buy in certain areas. This has obviously had serious impact on the satisfaction of the residents with their housing.

However, in the case of Summerfields residential area, since most of the residents bought the houses in that area after 1994 when most of conditions which had been placed had been removed, the situation is now different. Since it has been argued that the ownership of the houses is regarded as ensuring the higher status, most of the first time buyers decide to buy new houses on their own. It can therefore be argued that, the effects of the legacy of the past housing policy in as far as subsidies are concerned had certain effects on the perception of the first time homebuyers of a "good quality" house as being only the new one. Another factor is that the lending institutions such as banks and building societies are mainly prepared to make bonds available where the residents would buy in a new residential environment where there would be a warranty. This in turn limits the choice that the residents have.

#### **4. 5 Conclusion**

The process which led to the development of the Summerfields residential area, which is a small area, are national in origin. That means, they are informed by the processes taking place at national level such as the national housing policy. So the above discussion and analysis of the South African housing policy has been done in relation to the processes which take place in the Summerfields residential area.

It has also become clear in the above discussion, that the actual number of houses delivered does not necessarily provide the new housing policy with any chance of satisfying the needs of the beneficiaries. This is partly due to the fact that, there are various interests involved in the housing delivery process. For example, the crucial private sector interests which have proved that, the developers can abandon any project if it conflicted with their interests or if it does not seem to produce the rate of delivery they had hoped to achieve. In its attempts to satisfy all the key housing interests, the current housing policy has lost the capacity to satisfy the beneficiaries' desire for housing options which would improve their housing satisfaction. This chapter has also shown that, there are crucial differences between the former and the current housing policies. The extent to which each of those policies have tried to ensure that the current process of housing choice and the resultant satisfaction with housing does take place has also been examined.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the analysis of the findings from the research which was undertaken in the study area called Summerfields residential area. The findings were done through the land use analysis and questionnaire survey. Other information was gathered through interviewing some key people who were directly and indirectly involved in the development of the area.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to report on findings, interpret the findings, draw conclusions from those findings, and then establish how do they link up with the theories and concepts underpinning this study. Finally, the extent to which these findings agree or disagree with the hypothesis will be analysed.

The research methodology to elicit information about the area was done under different aspects. Firstly, the interviews with the residents to establish their perception of the area with regard to housing choice and satisfaction was done. Secondly, a series of interviews with the key people who are directly and indirectly involved in the planning of the area were conducted. The first interview was done with the Chairman of the Local Committee to establish the views of the local leadership with regard to the above mentioned issues. The second interview was done with a representative from Condev (developers). This was done in order to establish what is the developer's point of view with regard to the issues of housing choice and satisfaction. Finally, the interview with the Director of the Durban Metropolitan Housing Department was conducted to find out what their views are in relation to housing choice and satisfaction.

## **5. 2. 1 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

### **5. 2. 2 Introduction**

With regard to the survey of the residents, a sample of 40 houses from the existing number of 140 houses was selected from the area. Both systematic and stratified sampling methods were used. A stratified sampling method was used in a sense that, 20 houses which were selected from the sample of 40 were from the houses which are located along the railway line, and the other 20 was selected from the houses which are located away from the railway line. The systematic sampling method was used in a sense that every third house was chosen.

### **5. 2. 3 Analysis of responses from the questionnaire survey**

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections which are themselves intertwined. The first section deals with the personal profile of the residents. The purpose of this section was to establish the socio - demographic background of each of the respondents. The second section deals with the history of the residents. It focuses on the previous residential area or the dwelling unit in which the Summerfields residents come from. Comparisons between the previous and the current residential area will be made.

The motive behind such a section was to establish various reasons which made people leave their previous residential areas, and the factors which made people move to Summerfields. Included in this section is the part which deals with the nature of housing choice that was offered to the residents of Summerfields. The extent to which that housing choice procedure works for residents will also be analysed. The third and last section of the questionnaire focuses on the residents' perceptions of the residential area, and the dwelling unit. It also deals partly with the notion of housing choice.

The first question deals with the gender category, therefore male and female variables were used.

TABLE 5. 1: RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER DIFFERENCES

CATEGORY	NO. OF RESP.	PERCENTAGE
Male	21	52. 5
Female	19	47. 5
TOTAL	40	100 %

It is important to give a picture about the structure of the respondents which were surveyed, so as to prove that, the survey was balanced or not with regard to considering various types of respondents. According to the above table, the percentage of male respondents is a bit high compared to the female respondents. However, there is a slight difference in those percentages (52.5% and 47.5%). This analysis proves that the research was balanced in terms of proportionally considering all the respondents with regard gender.

The following set of the analysis of questions relates to the socio-demographic and economic section of the respondents as it has been highlighted earlier on.

TABLE :5. 2: Age, Marital status and level of education of the residents

AGE CATEGORY	%	MARITAL STATUS	%	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	%
< 25 years	7.5	Married	55	Primary	2.5
25 - 35 years	35	Single	32.5	Secondary	27.5
35 - 45 years	42.5	Widow/widower	0	Tertiary	70
45 - 55 years	10	Divorced	12.5	Other	0
> 55 years	5	Other	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

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 K.M.  
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 66 | 71  
 20 | 11  
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 ↑ Bayan

The above table includes three important issues about the profile of the residents of Summerfields. It includes all three aspects, which are social, economic and demographic data of those residents. From the sample undertaken with regard to age, it shows that 42.5 %, which is the majority of the residents in the area, are between the age category of 35 - 45 years followed by the age category of 25 - 35 years which has 35% of the respondents. These categories are in turn followed by the category of less than 25 years with 7.5 % and more than 55 years old with 5 %.

Furthermore, the table provides an analysis of the marital status of the residents. In the sample population, the married people make up the largest percentage (55%). This is followed by the 32.5 % of the single members of the community. There is also a few percentage of the divorced which is only (12.5 %) and there is nothing for the widowed and the "other" categories.

The question which relates to the composition of the heads of the households was asked from the residents.

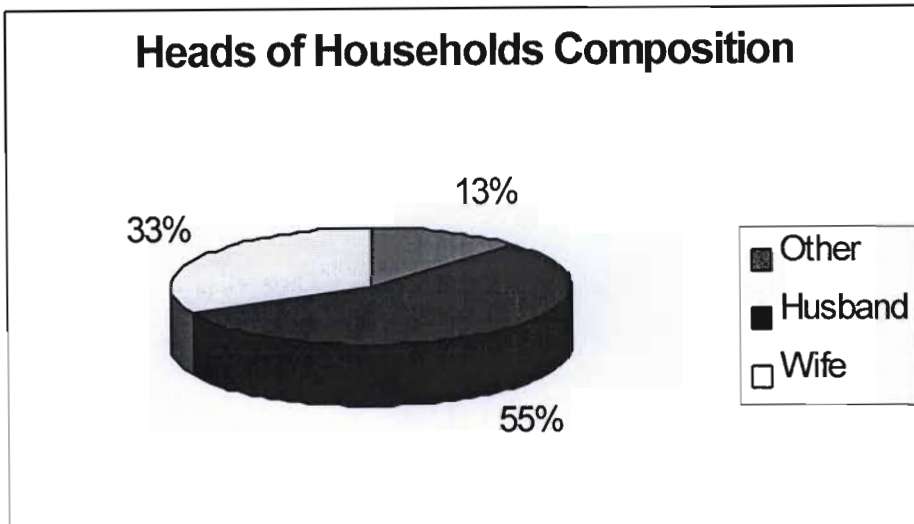


Figure. 1

This graph shows a composition of the households in the Summerfields residential area, it shows who are the heads of the household. There is a dominance of the male headed households in that area with 22 % followed by the female headed households with 13 %. The “other” category aggregates those respondents who were not the heads of the households, but are related to the heads of the households such as daughters, cousins and so on. Those respondents in the “other” category were interviewed in the cases where the heads of the households were not present in the houses, which were selected for the sample.

The question on the type of education that the respondents acquired was also asked in order to establish the literacy level of the Summerfields residents. The variables that were used to measure the level of education ranged from primary education, secondary education to tertiary education. There was also a category which dealt with the “other” in the case of the respondents who did not fit in the above categories.

To establish the level of education, the respondents who achieved tertiary education were distinguished from the residents who did not possess tertiary education. The 70% of the respondents achieved tertiary education. Then



those who had lesser levels of education comprised of secondary and primary education levels.

There was also a question which dealt with employment levels of the residents of Summerfields. Most of the people in the Summerfields residential area are employed. This is discernible in the research findings where 97 % of the residents are employed, and 55 % of those residents are professionals (see table 2 A in the appendix). Other types of jobs such as clerical and technical both have 12.5 %, each followed by the services which is 10 %, and finally labourer which is 7.5 %. Only 2.5% were retired people.

#### **5. 2. 4 Interpretation of findings**

The above analysis of the personal profile of the Summerfields residents is very useful in a sense that, it gives a background upon which to make an analysis of the responses with regard to housing satisfaction. This is further elucidated by the fact that, people's perceptions of their residential environment are informed by their experiences, and by who those people are in terms of their demographic and socio - economic backgrounds (Basolo, 1997).

The conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of the age structure shows that the population of the study area is neither too young nor too old. It is hypothesised at this stage that the results of satisfaction with quality of the dwelling unit and the residential environment in general are most unlikely to be influenced or affected by this age structure. Another explanation could be that, generally older people (above 55 years) are unlikely to move to another residential area. On the other hand, younger people are unlikely to move to another area too, simply because in most cases they cannot afford houses of their own.

There are also conclusions, which can be drawn from the analysis of the marital status. Firstly, the fact that, there is a large percentage of the married people in that area can be partly attributed to conditions which were placed on the civil servants before they could qualify for subsidy. This was in operation prior to 1994, before the adoption of the new housing policy. These conditions were that, it was only the women who were married would qualify for housing subsidy from the government. Therefore, this could have contributed in most of the people getting married before actually qualifying for the government subsidy. This finding also fits well with the concept of the stage in the family life cycle as it is put forward in the neo-classical theory, that this factor is an important one in influencing residential mobility. Large families when buying homes are largely interested in increasing their amount of usable space (Michelson, 1977). That means, high amount of usable space is specifically needed especially when the couples have to raise kids.

In the literature on housing choice and satisfaction, it is repeatedly argued that, the level of education plays a central role in the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the residents with their houses and residential environment. For example, in his research findings on the housing satisfaction of the residents of the Taichung city in Taiwan, Chin Chun Yi (1985), shows that higher education level is significantly related to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the location and the quality of the dwelling unit. That means, better educated respondents were found to be less satisfied with their residential environment if it is not of good quality, than would be, the less educated residents.

According to the findings, it is shown clearly that most of the respondents in the study area are better educated. This could be attributed to the fact that, most of the residents are civil servants such as nurses, teachers, policemen and so on. The fewer number of those residents who never afforded higher education are those residents who are mainly labourers.

### 5. 3. History of the development of the area

#### 5. 3. 1 Introduction

The following set of questions relate to the history of the residential area. That means, it focuses on how the area has developed in relation to such things as the housing choice process that was offered to the residents, the reasons which made the residents choose the area over the previous residential area and so on.

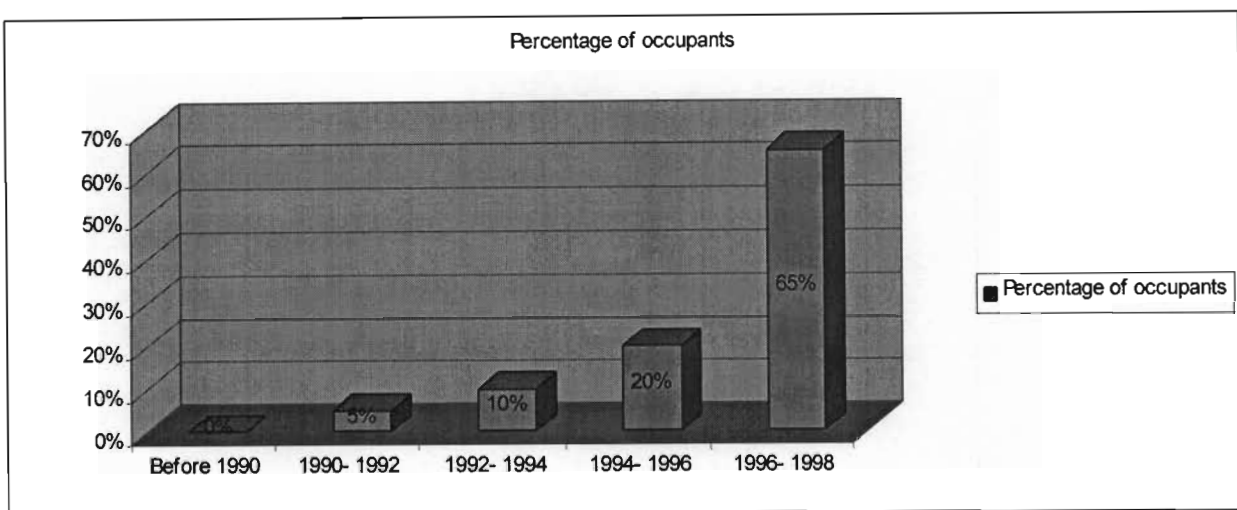


Figure. 2 : The period for the occupation of the area

The analysis of the history of the Summerfields residential environment started with the question: when did the residents first occupy the area. The responses show that, although the area was developed in the beginning of the 1990s and the first house was built in 1992 (Interview with John Clarke), but the largest percentage (65%) of the people who occupied the area, took occupation between 1994 and 1996 especially in 1996 (see figure 2).

Another question which was asked relates to the previous area from which the residents come. The residents were asked whether they came from the nearby Montclair area, Black townships or other areas. This type of a question was asked in order to establish whether the residents see Upper

Montclair as better than the Summerfields area, and how is the quality of their previous area compared to Summerfields area. The finding shows that most of the residents of Summerfields (72.5 %) come from the Black townships, and 27.5 % come from the other areas such as Newcastle, Pietermaritzburg, Port Shepstone and so on. Whereas, none of the respondents come from Upper Montclair. (see table 1 A in the appendices).

The type of tenure that the people were or are exposed to, plays a crucial role in the decision-making that the people make before moving from one area to another.

Table 5.3 : Tenure comparisons between previous residence and the current one.

(Previous Environment)			(Current environment)		
Type of Residents tenure	Percentage	Type of Residents tenure	Percentage	Type of Residents tenure	Percentage
Ownership	19	47.5	Ownership	39	97.5
Tenant	14	35	Tenant	1	2.5
Leasehold	0	0	Leasehold	0	0
Other	7	17.5	Other	0	0
TOTAL	40	100	TOTAL	40	100

The above table shows that the ownership tenure has always been high in both the previous and the current environment. The difference is that ownership type of accommodation in the current environment has increased compared to the previous environment. For example, it is shown in this analysis that in the previous accommodation, rental tenure was 35 %, and at the present location it has decreased to 2.5 %. Whereas ownership in the previous environment was 47.5 % and has increased to 97.5 % in the new residential environment. These changes are both substantial.

### 5. 3. 2 Condev's warranty

The focus of discussion will briefly deviate to the warranty that the developer gave to the residents on occupation of the houses in the area. Developers (Condev) gave the residents a warranty for their houses on occupation of the area. According to this warranty residents have got up to 5 years to report any structural failure of concrete foundation, and of structural timber or brickwork. The second condition is that for up to 6 months residents need to report any roof or gutter leaks, if there has been no rain in the first three months. The third and final guarantee is that for up to 3 months the residents need to report any defects in the water cylinders, electrical installation (excluding light fittings), glazing, plumbing, drainage, easing the cupboards hinges and catches, and fencing. These warranties are important in this dissertation because they include the time frames. Most residents in that area have occupied the area in less than four years as it has been alluded, but there are certain structural timber defects which are already noticeable in their houses (See photo 1 and 2).

Photo 1



Photo 2



The first photo shows the defects in the door frames. It is no longer easy to close the door because the door frames break up when the door is closed. The second photo shows in one of the houses, that, burglar guards had been totally removed from the house, due to the defect in the concrete or the brickwork. Other timber related problems that have been found in the area are that the door and windows are hard to close especially when it has been raining. The second condition of a warranty is the most controversial of them all, in a sense that, it is difficult for the residents to report roof or gutter leaks only if there has been no rain in the first three months (See Condev warranty paper attached in the appendix). This also means, that the residents' plight should only be dependant upon natural causes such as rain in the light of the fact that, it took some time for the residents to occupy certain houses, although they had already been built.

Another difficulty with this warranty is that, Condev excludes itself from being responsible for repairing the leaks in the plasterwork. These cracks they argue are caused by the natural shrinkage of materials in the first twelve months after completion, therefore, Condev feel that they cannot be held

responsible for repairing cracks of that nature. The author feels that such a situation plays a considerably important role in the higher levels of dissatisfaction of the residents with their residential environment. This is partly due to the fact that when people buy houses, they never expect to repair houses using their own money.

Most residents feel that the construction company which built houses in Summerfields used the cheapest material to build those houses, and that is the reason why they have to constantly maintain their houses using their own money. On the other hand Condev claims to have used "the gold class material". Condev also argues that they cannot cover damage or loss caused by misuse, neglect, negligence or abuse.

In reality it has become difficult to establish whether some of the structural defects in the houses were actually caused by misuse, abuse, neglect or negligence of the occupants. In the situation where complaints have been put, Condev claims to send their inspectors to assess the nature of the defects in the houses. Residents complain that those inspectors hardly come and when they have happened to come, their assessment of the defects usually favours Condev against them.

In most cases when residents put in their complaints on time, Condev do not send inspectors immediately whilst the damage continue to worsen. Once they arrive late they claim that such a defect was due to negligence when occupants continued to use facilities while the defect had already been noticed (interview with Raffique Moodley). In other cases, residents complain about the poor renovation the houses which happens after the inspectors had been sent into the area (See photo 3 below ).

(7.5 %). Closer to employment areas plus better local facilities was the fourth highest reason (15%).

In as far as the reasons for moving away from the previous location, the residents were asked to choose from the following reasons: the previous area was far from employment areas, far from social facilities, wished to live in a better residential environment, convinced by friends to move and the "other" where they were given a chance to specify any reason if it is different from the above mentioned reasons.

The respondents were also allowed to choose more than one reason, which is why a combination of reasons sometimes have the higher percentage than one reason (see table 5 A in the appendix). The most common reason which was expressed by the residents as the one which made them leave the previous location is that, they wished to live in a better residential environment (40%). The second most common reason is the combination of the area being far from employment areas plus the fact that they wanted to live in a better residential area (20%).

There is an interesting contradiction between the reasons for living the previous area and the reasons for choosing the new residential area. In the former only 5 % of the respondents gave the reason that the previous area is far from employment areas. Whereas when it comes to the reason for choosing the new location, only (17.5%) of the residents gave the reason that the area is closer to employment areas.

At the dwelling unit level, the respondents were also asked to choose the reasons for moving away from the previous dwelling unit. The reasons they had to choose from, included the previous dwelling unit as having had the high rental, small lot size and the "other" category. The finding is that 35% of respondents gave the reason that the previous dwelling unit had a small lot size (see table 6 A in the appendix). The "other" reason accounted for 22.5%



Photo 3



There are various reasons which make people choose a particular residential area over the others. In this questionnaire survey, the questions which dealt with both the reasons for living the last residential area and the reasons for moving to the new residential area were asked. It was then realised that the reasons for choosing the residential area in general (location) and the reasons for choosing the dwelling unit are different. Therefore the questions were asked separately for choosing the residential area and for choosing the dwelling unit.

The most common reason which was given by the residents for choosing that location is that, the new location has better local facilities such as schools, creches and so on (42.5 %). The second most common reason is that the area is closer to employment areas (17.5 %). However, since the residents were allowed to make more than one choice, the combination of the proximity to employment areas and better local facilities (16%) was the third most common reason which made the residents choose the new residential area. The large sites in the new residential area was another reason from which the residents had to choose as having made them prefer the new residential area

followed by high rental which accounted for 20 % of the responses. Then the high rental plus the small lot size accounted for 12.5 %. There was also another 10 % of the respondents who just never responded to this question.

### **5. 3. 3 Interpretation of findings**

It is argued in the conceptual framework that the length of stay in the area affects the levels of satisfaction of the residents. According to the analysis of the time in which the area was occupied, most of the residents in the area occupied it in a less than four year period. The complaints that people from Summerfields put forward about the quality of their houses seriously question the original quality of the houses, since the area is fairly new. It can also be concluded at this stage that the concept of deprivation as it is outlined in the conceptual framework is useful in interpreting this analysis. People tolerate certain poor conditions in their houses and residential environment as long as they receive something positive in return. For example as long as the area ensures easier access to employment area, people may be prepared to tolerate certain structural defects in their dwelling units.

There is a vast literature dealing with the importance of tenure in the housing satisfaction of the residents. It is also shown in this piece of work that : there is a theory which deals with housing ownership as an important indicator of life satisfaction of the residents ,and differentiate between those who own and those who rent. It is for the above mentioned reason that this piece of work considers tenure as being of utmost importance in the analysis of residents' satisfaction with their residential environment.

In the above analysis, it is shown that the ownership tenure is very high in the new residential environment than in the previous environment, and renting has drastically decreased. The main conclusion which can be drawn from the above analysis is that, the residents are likely to be satisfied with their residential area, due to the fact they have been given the opportunity for ownership. This is in line with the concept of housing ownership as discussed

in the conceptual framework that, home owners receive higher levels of satisfaction.

It has been highlighted earlier on, that the satisfaction of the residents with their new location is strongly influenced by their experience of the previous residential environment or the dwelling unit. For example, if the residents come from a historically disadvantaged residential area such as hostels and most Black townships, they are likely to be satisfied with the new residential environment if it is relatively better than their previous one in terms of such things as accessibility to employment opportunities and facilities, service provision, low crime rate and so on. Another conclusion that can be drawn from this is that, the concept of economic deprivation as discussed in the conceptual framework with regard to housing satisfaction also fits in fairly well with the effects of the previous environment in the housing choice and satisfaction of the residents. According to this concept, the presence of economic deprivation in the local population provides a clearest indication of the areas regarded as unsatisfactory by the residents.

It can be further concluded that the, the previous residential environment in which the residents come from is not of good quality compared to the Summerfields residential area. This is due to the fact that most of the residents in the sample responded to the question on reasons for leaving the previous residential area as having been that, they wanted to move to a better residential environment. The new residential area (Summerfields) is regarded as better by the residents due to the fact it has better local facilities such as schools, and creches, it is closer to employment areas and so on.

## 5. 4 HOUSING CHOICE AND SATISFACTION WITH THE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENT

### 5. 4. 1 Introduction

There was also a series of questions, which were aimed at eliciting information about housing choice and satisfaction from the residents of Summerfields. The residents in the area were first asked a question in relation to the improvement of the area. There were four different types of categories of improvement in that question from which people had to choose. Those categories ranged from: improved, still the same, worse, and not sure.

Forty percent (40%) of the respondents saw the area as still being the same (see figure 3). That means, they saw no improvement in the area, and the quality of the residential environment.

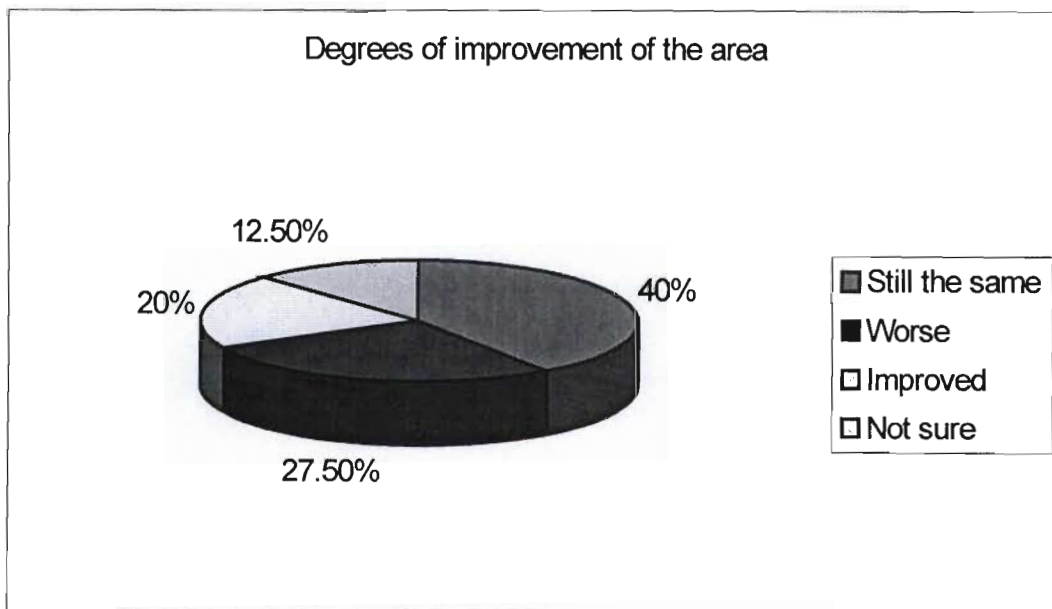


Figure 3

Those respondents who opted for “worst category” situation in as far as the improvement of the dwelling unit is concerned constituted 27.5 % of the total number of respondents. Some of the residents (20 %) regarded the area as

having improved and this in turn was followed by a 12.5 % of the residents who chose the “not – sure” category.

The other questions which directly dealt with the residents' satisfaction with the quality of their residential environment. In these questions the residents were expected to respond to questions on satisfaction with various characteristics of the dwelling unit and the residential area in general. The residents were therefore presented with the dimension to choose from. These dimensions ranged from very satisfied, satisfied, average, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied. The residential quality that people had to choose from included privacy, size of the dwelling unit, layout of the area, lot size, roads, housing design, quality of the dwelling unit and the size of the dwelling unit. For the purposes of manageability of this analysis the distinction between those who responded “average”, “dissatisfied”, and “very dissatisfied” from those who responded “satisfied” and “very satisfied” was made. The responses in the first category were regarded as belonging to the unsatisfied group while those in the latter category were regarded as the satisfied group.

The analysis shows that, the largest percentages fall in the category of the very dissatisfied, except in the variable of privacy where the highest percentage falls in the category of the “average”. Another exception can be seen in the satisfaction with the roads where there are three percentages each falling in the categories of “satisfied”, “average” and “very dissatisfied” respectively. This therefore means, that the respondents have shown to be satisfied with the quality of the roads.

In this survey people were asked some questions with regard to the type of housing choice that was presented to them. As it has been discussed earlier on, that some of the residents were never presented with the housing choice, therefore the question was asked whether the residents were contacted by the developer or not. There were two categories from which they had to choose. They had to choose either “yes” or a “no” category. It has been

discovered that 57.5 % of them responded to a “no” option against 42.5 percent who responded to a “yes” option.

Table :5 . 4 Consultation of the residents by the developer .

CATEGORY	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	23	57
No	17	42.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

With regard to the housing choice procedure (subsidies) which was presented, 60 % of the residents got the government subsidy, whereas 22. 5 % of the residents received the housing allowance scheme. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents had the “other” forms of financing their houses such as buying them in cash.

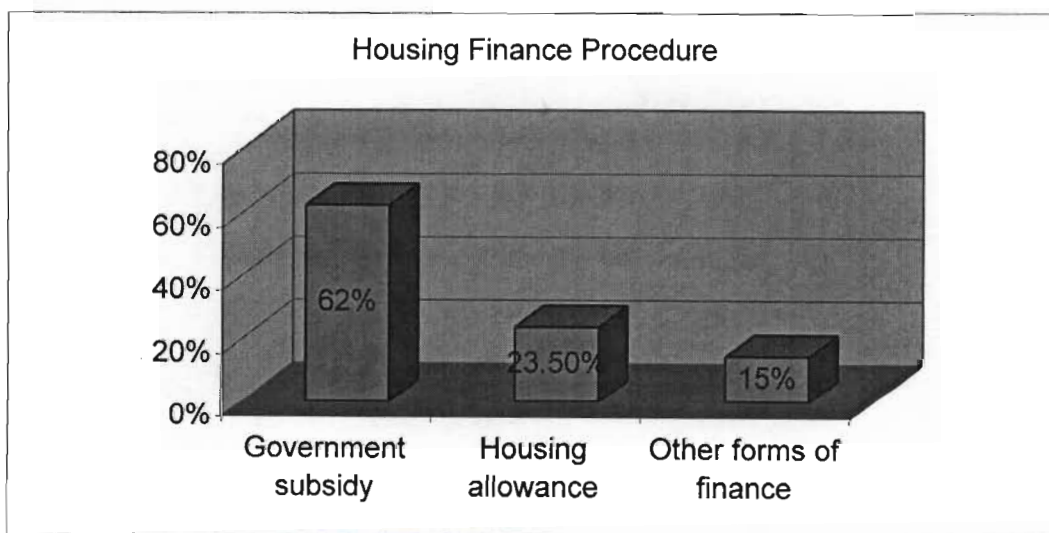


Figure 4

It was theorised at the formulation of the questionnaire for survey that, the residents would prefer to move to another location in the same area in search of better conditions. A question was formulated to ask them whether they would prefer to move to another location in the same area or not. They were

asked to choose between the "yes" or "no" options. The findings proved this theory wrong in a sense that 75 % of the respondents chose a "No" option. This means, that they were never prepared to move to another location as compared to the 25 % who preferred to move to another location in the same area.

Table:5 5. Percentage of the respondents who wished to move and those who wished to remain in the same location in the area.

CATEGORIES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Yes	30	75
No	10	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 5. 4. 2 Interpretation of findings

The conclusion which can be drawn from the responses of the residents with regard to the improvement of the area is that, the relatively high percentage of the respondents who feel that the conditions in the area are still the same represent either of the two causal relationship. It is either that the respondents are of higher income category who had expected a lot from the area before occupying it; or that the quality of the dwelling units and residential area in general was originally low.

However, the latter reason prove to be more valid in the light of the fact that, most of the respondents have shown to be dissatisfied when they were asked about the quality of the dwelling unit and the residential area in general. This in turn implies that, people in the Summerefilds residential area are generally not happy with the quality of the residential environment and the dwelling unit.

It has been theorised earlier that, there might be some variations in the level of satisfaction between those households whose houses are located closer to the railway line and the South Coast road, and those households who are

located far away from those. It can now be concluded that all parts of the area are of the same conditions. This is due to the fact that, most of the residents have expressed that they would not be prepared to move to any other location in the area. The most common reason which the residents expressed is that, if they move to another location in the same area there will be no improvement. That means, the conditions would still be the same. They actually feel that the dwelling units in the Summerfields residential area are all the same. Therefore moving from one area to another will not serve any purpose.

The process of housing choice is a very important one in making the residents choose the type of residential area which meets their needs. So it has been shown in the theoretical framework that, there are various factors which impact on the homebuyers when they make decisions to choose a particular type of a house and the residential area. For example, the type of subsidy that the respondents are exposed to may have an impact on where they buy houses. This finding supports the notion that, most of the residents in that area might have been forced by the nature of the government subsidy scheme which required them to buy houses only in the new area, which in turn means the lack of choice in the housing delivery process. This is further elucidated by the fact that, more than half of the respondents had the government subsidy.

## **5. 5 OBSERVATIONAL STUDY**

The observational study of the area was undertaken at the same time as the questionnaire survey. Once the questions were distributed to all the sampled households, the observational study was undertaken by walking around the area from one point to another. As part of the observational study, and to better illustrate some points made about the area, photographs of the area were taken (See the visual analysis section in the appendix 2). The "Responsive environments" approach as developed by Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlynn and Smith (1985), were mostly used as the guideline for



assessing whether the residential area meet the qualities of a good residential environment or not.

#### (a) Permeability

This is a crucial element in making the environments responsive. As it has been highlighted in the conceptual framework that, permeability refers to the accessibility of the residential environment physically or visually. A good quality residential environment will have a number of alternative ways for residents to move through it. The Summerfields residential area provides such an element fairly well, because the area is well served with the road system, which ensures that all parts of the area are accessible (See map 3). There is also a park in the middle of the area which is also accesible from all parts.

Another factor which ensures easier accessibility to all parts of the area is the fact that the area was designed in a curvilinear pattern, with cul-de-sacs which service the whole area. This type of design ensures that all parts of the area are accessible without travelling long distances as it would have been the case in the grid iron pattern (See map 2 in the appendix). The layout of the area shows that there are two entrances into the area which cross through the houses which belong to the SARS, and these houses have bigger lots. There are also some pedestrian paths which join the lots into the road system and into the available facilities such as parks, surgery, telecommunication, postal services and so son.

#### (b) Variety

This element is closely linked to the above one, and it refers to the range of uses that the area offers to its residents. That means, the area needs to have different forms, uses and meanings. The uses such as the local park, postal and telecommunication services, tuck shop and a surgery (see photos 7 and

8 in the visual analysis- appendix 2). The view of the author is that, the respondents in the questionnaires did not understand what was meant by the availability of the social facilities (schools, creches etc). This is due to the fact that, they highlighted the availability of those facilities as having been the reason which made them choose the area. But what happens is that there is none of those facilities available in the Summerfield area, except in the nearby Montclair area and most of those facilities are unaffordable for use by some of the Summerfields residents because they are expensive.

#### (c) Legibility and Visual Appropriateness

This refers to the extent to which it is easy for the people to understand the layout of the area. Whereas, visual appropriateness refers to the interpretation that people make of the area. The authors' opinion with regard to the availability of both of those elements in the Summerfields is that there is a lack of these elements. Although there are certain noticeable features such as the local park, the surgery and the tuck shop, but the layout of the area can still confuse strangers. Another factor which leads to the lack of legibility in the area is that, the houses are all the same design especially in colour. Such an area is referred to as the monotonous area.

#### (d) Privacy and Density

Privacy relates to the freedom that individuals have so that, they can behave in ways particular to their appropriate purposes. On the other hand density relates to the relationship between people and the amount of land they need for accommodation. The area has a relatively high density because the houses are close to each other (see photo 5 in the visual analysis- appendix). On the other hand this limits privacy in the area.

#### (e) Surveillance and Territoriality, and Safety

Surveillance and territoriality simply refers to the level of control over the space external to the dwelling unit. Due to the fact that the houses are close to each other, there is a greater surveillance, which in turn should lead to higher levels of safety at least against criminal activities. Safety can be defined as the type of security that the individuals have from any criminal activities and hazardous environment.

However, according to the interviews conducted among the residents, it has been discovered that crime levels are very high in the area. This takes place in spite of the existence of the Montclair police station near the area. Another factor which leads to high levels of crime is that, most residents in the area are often not around during the weekdays. Most of the residents whose houses are close to the railway line complain more about the criminal activities especially burglary and theft. This is due to the fact that the thieves jump over the concrete wall which separates those houses and the railway line, especially during the weekdays when there is no one or there are fewer people in the area (see photo 10 the visual analysis – appendix 2).

### **5. 6 INTERVIEW WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE LOCAL RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE: SAM PILLAY**

#### **5. 6 .1 Introduction**

Due to the fact that, when the residents in the area complain as individuals to Condev, their complaints usually are not heeded. Therefore the residents of Summerfields formulated a crisis committee which would deal with all the problems which relate to the quality of the dwelling units and the residential area in general. For the purpose acquiring information about the nature of complaints that the residents put forward to them about the area, and the

nature of the responses from Condev and Local Authority, the Chairman of the Local Committee (Mr S Pillay) was interviewed.

### **5. 6. 2 Analysis of findings**

Responding to the question of whether is there still a communication between Condev and the local residents through that committee, the Chairman responded by saying that the communication still does exist to a lesser extent. This is due to the fact that, the area is now under the jurisdiction of Montclair, and Durban corporation is responsible for the provision of services in the area. Condev is only linked to the area in as far as dealing with the complaints on structural defects until the end of 5 years “live in” warranty. He further clarified the fact that, the services provided by Durban corporation are poor despite high rates with regard to solid waste collection, cutting the grass on the edges of the sites and so on (See photo 9 in the visual analysis-appendix).

He also brought to the fore the fact that, the housing choice process that was presented to the people in the Summerfields residential area was not participatory enough. For example, there are some households who were never given the opportunity to choose houses they liked from the various housing plans. Instead they bought houses which had already been built, and this he regarded as having limited the choice that those residents had. He also talked about what he referred to as “cheating” on the part of Condev. He argued that the residents were shown big lot sizes but when the development or the construction took place, people discovered that those lots were actually small.

When asked about whether Condev responds properly to the complaints that the people make, he maintained that there is no proper response from Condev. He also added that once the houses were fully occupied Condev distanced themselves from the area. This makes it difficult for the residents’ complaints to be heeded by Condev. Another question asked was the one

related to whether are there any attempts by the Local community to ensure that the residents' complaints are heeded by both Condev and the Durban Corporation. The response was that, there were forums which the Committee organised wherein the Mayor of Montclair, representative from Condev and the Summerfields residents could discuss issues which affect the residential area and housing.

When asked about other complaints that the people have besides the one which relate to the quality of the residential area and the dwelling unit, the Chairman responded by saying that, crime rate is the major problem facing the area. He further added that, it is for this reason that most of the residents want to move away from the area. In as far as crime rate is concerned the Chairman of the Local committee said that there is a proposal that, the security guards need to be hired who will patrol the area especially on weekdays.

### **5. 6. 3 Interpretation of findings**

There are various conclusion which can be drawn from the above analysis of the interview with Sam Pillay (Chairman of the Local Committee). The first conclusion is that there is an exaggeration on the part of the Chairman in as far as the servicing of the area is concerned. The area is not as poorly serviced as the Chairman has complained. The area is relatively clean, it is only in some parts of the area where the solid waste had not been collected (also see photo 5 in the visual analysis- appendix)).

Secondly, the Local Committee does not seem to be effective in ensuring that the needs of the community which they are representing are met. This is due to the fact that, given the extent of the damage in the houses, there has not been any strong response from Condev. Finally, the proposal they made on crime that there should be some security guards patrolling the area which will be paid for by the residents is too simplistic. This is due to the fact that

residents will not have money to pay for those security guards since they are faced with huge bonds for their houses.

## **5. 7 INTERVIEW WITH JOHN CLARKE (CONDEV)**

### **5. 7. 1 Introduction**

John Clarke is currently the Project manager at Murray and Roberts, he was the director of Condev at a time when the Summerfields area was developed. A number of questions were asked from him which relate to the housing choice process that they offered to the Summerfields residents, when they were buying houses in that area. Another set of question was asked in relation to the nature of complaints from the residents and how do they respond to them, and finally, in relation to what are their plans for improving the future similar housing development schemes.

### **5. 7. 2 Analysis of findings**

With regard to the first set of questions which relate to the housing choice process, John Clarke regarded their housing choice as having been the most participatory. This was due to the fact residents were permitted to choose from various housing plans, the type of houses which would be commensurate with their income and needs. Responding to the question on the layout of the area, he responded by saying that the layout of the area met all the qualities of a “good quality” residential area. He referred to the idea of the park in the middle of the area, as “superb”, and that the road system ensured access to various facilities which are nearby the area including the park itself which is in the area (see map 2). He further added that the area is located in a good position in relation to accessibility to various facilities and employment areas.

At the time when Condev developed the area it was registered with National Home-builders Registration Council (NHBRC) he maintained, and this is the reason why their warranty for “live in” period extend to 5 years. A question on

how do they respond to the complaints that the residents have, John Clarke argued that, the residents usually have a difficulty in distinguishing between defects caused by plaster cracks which is “normal” for any building and the defects in the brickwork or the structure of the house itself. Otherwise all other complaints which relate to the structural defects are attended to after inspectors from Condev have assessed whether the nature of the defect is due to negligence or not on the part of the occupants.

However, with regard to the future intentions for improving similar housing development, he responded by saying that, Condev has ceased to operate. Therefore, they no longer have plans for such similar developments. According to him the area still represents one of the well organised “greenfield or tract” housing developments.

### **5. 7. 3 Interpretation of findings**

The general conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that, for obvious reasons the representative of Condev has given responses which are partial and in favour of Condev. This is due, for example, to the fact that he openly regards their housing choice process as having been more participatory, which is in total contradiction to what the Chairman of the Local Committee says about it, and the responses from the residents with regard to it.

## **5. 8. INTERVIEW WITH DAN SMIT (DURBAN METRO HOUSING DEPARTMENT).**

### **5. 8. 1 Introduction**

Most of the housing development projects which take place in the Durban Metropolitan area are administered or monitored by the Durban Metropolitan Housing department, more particularly the low income housing development projects. However, due to the fact that Summerfields residential area was developed in the earlier part of 1992 prior to the adoption of the new housing

policy which led to the new institutional arrangement in housing development, it therefore falls out of the scope of such administration. But the members of Durban Metro Housing department have some knowledge about the process which unfolded when that area was developed.

Dan Smit is the Director of Durban Metro Housing Department and has an extensive knowledge in the field of housing development. The interview with him took place after all the other interviews had been conducted. There are various reasons which made the author decide to interview someone from Durban Metro Housing Department. The first one is to elicit information on the extent to which housing satisfaction and choice can be ensured when future similar housing developments take place. Secondly, to establish whether there is any role that the Metro Housing Department can still play now that the project such as Summerfields was completed and the residents are still dissatisfied. Finally, to establish the extent to which our current housing policy caters for the housing choice and satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment.

### **5. 8. 3 Analysis of findings**

With regard to the first set of questions which relate to housing satisfaction, the response from the Director was that, now that the NHBRC has been set in place, it will assist in ensuring housing satisfaction of the home buyers by checking on the quality of the product (houses) that the developers produce. All the developers will need to obtain membership of the NHBRC before they are engaged in any housing development projects.

In the case of Summerfields where the project had already been completed, the Director responded by saying there has not been any complaints that they have directly received from Summerfields residents. But in such cases the complaints need to be sent directly to the NHBRC since the developer of the area was registered with that organisation.



Dan Smit acknowledges that the housing policy caters for the issue of choice in housing provision in a sense that, residents can buy anywhere in the city as long as their income allows them. However, when it comes to the general subsidy provision other income groups have a limited choice, in a sense that their income does not allow them to qualify for substantial assistance from the government even from their employers.

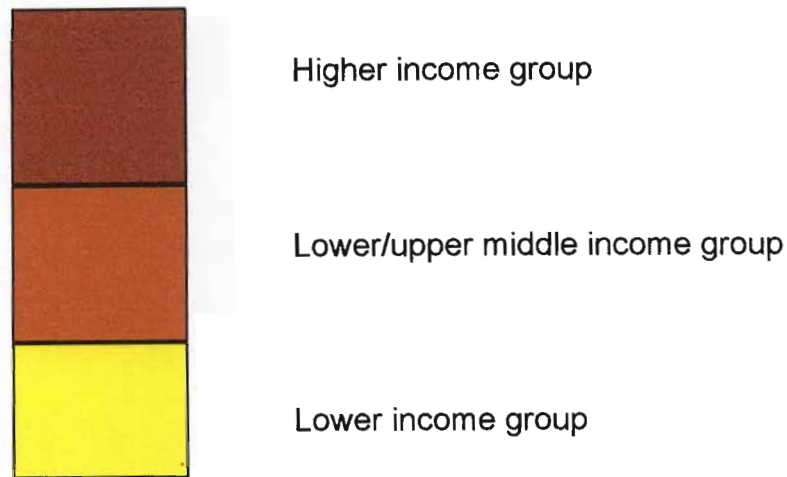


Figure 5. Income strata in the housing market

The above diagram shows the income strata of the households as they qualify for government subsidy. According to Dan Smit the recent tendency has been that while the housing policy targets the low income groups for subsidy provision (R15 000), the developers have also targeted the very same income group. This is due to the fact that in the project - linked subsidies (where the developers service the sites, and sometimes provide the basic structure in particular projects), the developers are ensured that the housing authorities will pay them as soon as they have completed the job.

On the other hand the lower / upper middle income group which qualify for lesser amount in terms of subsidies from the government is not targeted by the developers. This market is regarded as too risky by the developers. These risks are associated with the defaults in payments, which in turn lead to the lack of interests for the lending institutions (banks and building

them to make bonds available for this income group. Whereas the upper income group does not have problems with accessing finance for housing, and the property developers also operate in this market.

With regard to the notion of housing satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment, the Director responded by saying that, at the moment the housing policy does not directly deal with the issue of satisfaction with housing. Therefore this is the field which still needs to be developed.

#### **5. 8. 4 Interpretation of findings**

The first conclusion which can be drawn from this interview is that, there has not been any liaison between the Summerfields residents and the Durban Metro Housing Department with regard to residents' complaints. The second conclusion is that, what is implicit in our housing policy is that, it concerns itself more with the massive delivery of housing especially among the low income consumers than on ensuring satisfaction of the residents with their housing.

Thirdly, the income strata in the housing market shows that the housing choice is limited not only among the lower / upper middle income group (both government "once off" subsidy and the employer-provided subsidy), but also among the low income group when they buy where the sites have been serviced in the project- linked housing subsidy schemes.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6. 1 Introduction**

The focus of this research has been to study factors related to housing choice and satisfaction with the quality of the residential environment among the residents of Summerfields. The purpose of this research has been to address the research questions and the hypothesis set up with regard to the nature of the study. The conceptual framework of the study, the analysis and interpretation of findings have also been successfully unpacked in the preceding chapters.

The conclusions and recommendations form another crucial part of this study and are also yet to be discussed. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to provide conclusions and recommendations of this study. The extent to which this study addresses the research question and the extent to which it agrees or disagrees with the hypothesis will be explained.

### **6. 2 Major conclusions of the study**

In as far as housing choice in the “tract” housing delivery process is concerned, this study provides an interesting and unique conclusion. In the discussion made in both the conceptual framework and the analysis of findings from the case study, the issue of participation of the residents in the housing delivery process has become a central theme. The results from the case study show that, the housing choice procedure that was presented to the Summerfields residents was not participatory enough. The housing choice procedure as explained in the case study for the Summerfields residents were limited to those residents who were shown housing plans and

a certain percentage of the residents were never allowed such a choice at all. This was due to the fact that the developer decided to build houses of the type that they thought were popular among the home-buyers. So the home-buyers who bought houses which had already been built never had a chance of choosing the type of houses that they would like from the plans. Another factor which exacerbated the conditions is that most of the residents never found what they had been promised. This type of choice falls in the *informing* and *consultation* stages in the "ladder of participation" described by Arnstein. This level of participation known as the degree of tokenism is not satisfactory in a sense that, the views of the residents of Summerfields were never considered. Some of the residents complain that the changes that, they suggested in the housing plans were never considered when the houses were built.

Notwithstanding the above criticism of the housing choice procedure that was presented to the Summerfields residents, a different conclusion can be drawn. Now that we are in the new dispensation, for the first time those residents had a choice to buy type of houses that they wanted. For the first time as well they were allowed a choice to locate in the area close to the city centre. Whereas previously they were only allowed to locate in the areas out of the city centre. It is against this background that a conclusion counter to the above one is drawn that, that type of housing choice for Summerfields residents was adequate at least to the majority of the Summerfields residents who were never allowed such an opportunity before. This discussion helps to answer the research question posed earlier and a variety of sub questions which relate to it, in as far as the nature of the housing choice procedure is concerned, whether it worked or not and if it did not work what are the reasons for that.

With regard to the issue of housing satisfaction after that choice was made, it has been alluded earlier that most of the residents were dissatisfied with quality of the area and the dwelling units specifically. Most of the residents are dissatisfied with the quality of the dwelling units. They complain about the number of the structural defects in their houses, and much less about the conditions external to the dwelling units such as the facilities provided in the area, the services provided by the municipality and so on. There is a very interesting conclusion that can be drawn from this. Due to the fact that most of these people come from relatively disadvantaged areas, they therefore had big expectations from the area more specifically when it comes to the quality of the dwelling unit. Therefore it is concluded that, if the quality of the dwelling units in the area can be improved, the satisfaction of the residents can also just improve regardless of the level of improvement in the space and other conditions external to the dwelling unit.

Another important factor which needs to be emphasised with regard to the satisfaction of the residents is that the conditions in the residential area of the low income group can never be improved in such a way that they reach the standard of the high income residential area. This is influenced by various factors such as the density levels between these areas which are not the same, the costs of the houses are also not the same and so on. It is therefore concluded in this dissertation that with the exception of the structural defects the dissatisfaction levels of the residents in the Summerfields residential area are overstated. According to the observational study undertaken the area meets most of the standards of the lower middle income residential area and therefore cannot be compared to the standards typical of the high income area, because the area itself is lower middle income area.

In the Summerfields residential area, it has been discovered from the research that the sales representatives from Condev showed people big lot sizes but when the development or the construction took place, people discovered that those sites were actually small. That means they were no longer big as they were shown when they were about to buy in that area. The conclusion that developers do cheat home-buyers can inevitably be arrived at. This has also been shown in the attitude that people have expressed about Condev.

With regard to the quality of the residential environment, the land use survey that was undertaken shows that the area does not have the variety in terms of land uses such as shops, nursery schools and so on. There is only one park in the middle of the area, the tuck shop, the surgery, and the postal and telecommunication services. The houses in the area are very much close to each other which in turn limits privacy, surveillance and territoriality. As a result of this it can be concluded that the area does not meet the "responsive environments". Although some of those responsive environments are hard to meet given the housing backlog which requires that houses need to be built in large quantities in partial neglect of factors such as ensuring that the residential environment are responsive. But basic factors such as surveillance and territoriality, safety, privacy and so on which need to be met whenever the "tract housing" delivery takes place, have not been met in that area.

Finally, it is important to mention that the area is fairly new, therefore, as the time goes on, people are going to personalise the area and will start to identify themselves with it. This process of personalisation as it is described by Bentley, Alcock, Murrain, McGlyn and Smith (1985) is that people personalise the area by "putting a stamp" on it. This they can do by making some renovations in their houses and the area in general. It is therefore

concluded that, as soon as this process starts to take place among the residents of Summerfields their satisfaction levels will increase.

### **6. 3 Policy recommendations**

- Among the reasons which have been put forward by the residents in that area for wanting to relocate are that, there are no adequate provision of facilities such as the schools, crèches and so on. This coincides with the fact that the nearby schools are unaffordable to the residents of Summerfields. In the cases where they become affordable their capacity intake for additional pupils is limited. For future similar housing developments, the developers and town planners need to ensure that the existing facilities cope with the additional population. Due to the fact that, there are financial constraints from the government in providing such facilities each and every time the new development takes place, the requirement should be that the developers pay a particular amount of money to meet the government half way in making the existing facilities cope with the additional population. This should take place more particularly when massive “green fields” housing developments take place.
  
- At the moment the policy requires that, the government employees need to be buying a new house for them to qualify for the subsidy. This unfairly limits their choice only to the houses which are new, even if they are satisfied with them. It is recommended in this study that the residents must be allowed to buy in any area of their choice, and must be covered by the subsidy whether they are buying the newly built or existing houses.
  
- The National Home-builders Registration Council (NHBRC) requires that, all the developers need to register with this Council before they are allowed to build houses or are awarded tenders in the case of the low income housing schemes. The purpose is to ensure that the developers construct houses which

are guaranteed and are of good quality. However it has been discovered in this research that this Council does not put enough pressure on the developers to be abide by their warranties they had put. It is recommended in this dissertation that the NHBRC should not only require that the developers register with it , but must also keep a constant assessment of whether the developers are still responsible for the warranties they put on housing, until the end of those warranties. Residents need to be told that, they can report to this body in the event that developers do no respond.

- It is difficult to measure the qualitative type of factors which account for satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the people about their residential environment. But quantitative measures such as privacy, security and so on should be catered before the development can take place. It is recommended in this dissertation that as a long term goal the national housing department must consider setting up minimum standards which the developers need to consider in as far the satisfactory housing environment is concerned. However, due to the fact that, other developers may complain that the standards are high.
  
- The idea of making the residents choose the type of houses which are in line with their income is a good one. But as it has been argued in the theory that households' needs vary depending on the stage in their family life cycle. Therefore irrespective of the fact that households chose a particular type of housing at any one stage, the structure and needs of that households will change. Given this fact, it is suggested in this dissertation that, those houses which are suitable to the income of the particular households must be built in such a way that, when the residents have more financial power at a later stage, they are able to extend their houses to meet their needs and standards commensurate with their stage in the life cycle.



- It is also recommended in this piece of work that the local departments of housing or the existing Provincial Housing Boards (PUB) need to set up an institution which will educate the first time home- buyers about good choices that they need to make when buying houses. This arises in the light of the fact that some of the first time home-buyers usually make wrong decisions to buy houses based on the imperfect information provided by the sales representatives of the developers.

#### **6. 4 The extent to which the dissertation achieves its purposes**

The purpose of this dissertation has been to establish whether the “tract” housing delivery process offers an adequate degree of choice for the home- buyers and satisfaction with housing and the residential environment in general. A case study of Summerfields residential area was used to provide empirical findings with regard to this research. The hypothesis that this study had to prove is as follows: Some residents of Summerfields are not satisfied with their housing and the residential environment in general after they have had a certain level of choice.

This dissertation has achieved its purpose in a sense that, from the analysis and interpretation of findings, it has been proven that the “tract’ housing delivery process offers a minimum choice to home-buyers. This in turn leads to lesser degrees of housing satisfaction particularly with the quality of houses and the residential environment in general. This study has also proven the hypothesis, in a sense that, some of the residents were satisfied, while others were dissatisfied.

#### **6. 5 How can the study be extended**

This study still needs to be further extended to include an in-depth analysis to include the “tract” housing delivery system among the low income group. This is due to the fact that, the current study has only concentrated on the lower- middle income section of the population. With regard to the interviews, it is suggested that the interviews need to be extended to include the following people; the

representative of the National Home-builders Registration Council (NHBRC). The motive behind such an interview will be to establish the role of this institution in the midst of the failure of the registered developers or companies to deliver the "good quality" houses which will satisfy the home-owners.

Secondly, the representatives from the banks and or building societies will also need to be interviewed. This will be done in order to elicit information on the rate of the defaults in bond payment by the residents of Summerfields. This will assist in finding out whether the people really afford houses which are assumed to be affordable to them. This emanates from the fact that, the households usually have other responsibilities which require that they use money, which in turn negatively impacts on their bond payments. The planners who plan the area for the " tract " housing to take place, need to be interviewed to establish the criterion which they have used to plan the area.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDICE 1: RESIDENTS' RESPONSES TO A SURVEY

Table A. 1: Previous place of residence

Previous residential area	Residents	Percentage
Upper Montclair	0	0
Black Township	11	27. 5
Other	29	72. 5
TOTAL	40	100

TABLE A. 2 : The types of occupation for the Summerfields residents

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Professional	22	55
Clerical	5	12. 5
Technical	5	12. 5
Services	4	10
Labourer	3	7. 5
Unemployed	0	0
Retired	1	2. 5
Households	0	0
Other	0	0
TOTAL	40	100 %

Table A .3: Variables of a good quality residential environment

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Privacy	12.5	20	<b>17.5</b>	7.5	12.5	7.5
Size of the d/u	5	20	15	20	<b>35</b>	2.5
Layout of the area	7.5	15	12.5	25	<b>35</b>	5
Lot size	2.5	10	17.5	25	<b>37.5</b>	7.5
Size of the dwelling unit in rel. to my needs	7.5	7.5	22.5	22.5	<b>35</b>	5
Roads	7.5	22.5	22.5	20	<b>22.5</b>	5
Housing design	0	12.5	25	25	<b>30</b>	7.5
Quality of the dwelling unit in general	0	2.5	17.5	2.5	<b>47.5</b>	5

1. Very satisfied      2. Satisfied              3. Average  
 4. Dissatisfied        5. Very dissatisfied    6 No response

Table. 4 A: Reasons for moving away from the previous residential area

<b>REASONS FOR LAST RESIDENTIAL MOVE</b>	<b>RESP.</b>	<b>%</b>
Far from employment areas	2	5
Far from social facilities and wished to live in a better environment	3	7.5
Wished to live in a better environment	16	40
Convinced by friends to move	0	0
Far from social facilities plus other	3	7.5
Far from employment areas and wished to live in a better environment	8	20
Far from employment areas plus far from social facilities plus wished to live in a better residential environment	2	5
Far from employment areas plus other	3	7.5
Other	3	7.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5 A: Reasons for choosing the new residential area

<b>REASONS FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL LOCATION</b>	<b>RESP.</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Closer to employment areas	7	17.5
Better local facilities	17	42.5
Large sites	1	2.5
Other	3	7.5
Closer to employment areas plus better local facilities plus large sites	2	5
Closer to employment plus other	1	2.5
Better local facilities plus large sites	2	5
Closer to employment areas plus better local facilities	6	15
Closer to employment areas plus large sites plus other	1	2.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>



Table 6 A: Reasons for leaving previous dwelling unit

<b>Previous dwelling unit</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High rental	8	20
Small lot size	14	35
Other	9	22.5
High rental plus small lot size	4	10
No response	5	12.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7 A : Reasons for choosing the current dwelling unit

<b>REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE CURRENT DWELLING UNIT</b>	<b>RESP.</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
An opportunity to own	24	60
Large lot size and dwelling unit	8	20
Low rental	0	0
Other	2	5
An opportunity to own plus large lot size and the dwelling unit	5	12.5
No response	1	2.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

## APPENDIX 2

# VISUAL ANALYSIS

Photo 4



The above photo shows the closeness of the railway line from the houses in the Summerfields residential area. There is the South Coast road which runs parallel to the railway line.

Photo 5



Photo 5 shows how houses are close to one another in the area, and this is the crucial factor which affects privacy. This also shows that there is no clear distinction over the area where the individual sites end.

Photo 7



Photo 8



There are also other crucial facilities which are provided in the area such as postal and telecommunication services. This adds to the variety of the area.

At the back of the postal services it can be seen that there is the local park. That park is the only one existing in the area, and it is shown clearly from the photo that the park is not well maintained. Photo 8 shows the provision of the facility such as the surgery. There was the conversion of the normal house into a surgery. Other houses have been converted and used for renting, for example, in one case the house was converted for renting by five different people who share a bathroom and kitchen. The lounge and the dining room was converted into a rooms for renting.

Photo 9



The above photo shows that there is a lack of provision of services such as the solid waste collection by the municipality. This has led to the higher levels of dissatisfaction of the residents with their residential environment.

The photo below shows that some of the residents do personalise their residential environment as this term is described in the Responsive Environment developed by Bently, Alcock, Murrain, McGlyn and Smith (1985). This is clearly shown in this photo where some homeowners have fenced their houses. Note the concrete wall behind the houses which was provided by Condev for those houses which are closer the railway line.

Photo 10



# Appendix 3

Questionnaire and Condev's warranty paper

**DEPARTMENT OF TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNING**

Please assist in this survey by completing the following questionnaire. The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the process of housing choice and the resultant satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the quality of the residential environment in the Summerfields residential area. Your responses in this questionnaire will be treated in the strictest confidential sense.



**QUESTIONNAIRE****(A) PERSONAL DATA**

Please put an X in the appropriate box e.g.

**1. In which gender category do you belong ?**

Male  Female

**2. In which age category do you belong ?**

< 25 years

25- 35 years

35-45 years

45-55 years

>55 years

**3. What is your marital status ?**

Married

Single

Widow/ Widower

Divorced

Other (specify).....

**4. Please indicate who is the head of the household.**

Husband

Wife

**5. Please indicate who is completing the questionnaire.**

Husband

Wife

**If you are not the head of the household, please indicate which of the following are you in relation to him/her.**

Father

Mother

Sister

Son

Daughter

Other (specify).....

**6. What is your level of education ?**

Primary school

Secondary school

Tertiary

Other (specify ).....

**7. Please indicate to which category of occupation do you belong, whether you are employed or self-employed and whether you are in the formal or informal sector.**

	Category	Employed	Self-employed	Formal	Informal
Professional					
Clerical					
Technical					
Service/sales					
Labourer					

Unemployed

Retired

Housewife

Other (specify).....

**(B) Residential history**

**8. When did you occupy the present dwelling ?**

Before 1990

1990- 1992

1992- 1994

1994-1996

1996-1998

**9. What was your previous place of residence ?**

Upper Montclair

Other (specify ).....

If you are from any African, Indian or Coloured township please specify which one.....

**10. In your previous place of residence what type of tenure did you have?**

Rented

Owned

Other (specify) .....

**11. What are the reasons for the last residential move ?. Please fill in more than one where applicable. (Location)**

**(a) Previous location**

Far from employment areas

Far from social facilities

Wished to live in a better residential environment

Convinced by friends to move

Other (specify).....

**(b) New location**

Closer to employment areas

Better local facilities (i.e. schools, crèches etc.)

Large sites

Other (specify).....

**12. What are the reasons for present location?. Please fill in more than one where applicable. (Dwelling unit)**

**(a) Previous dwelling unit**

High rental

Small lot size

Other (specify).....

**(b) Current dwelling unit**

An opportunity for ownership

Low rental

Large lot size and the dwelling unit

Other (specify).....

**13. Were you consulted by the developer about your housing needs prior to occupying this place ?**

Yes  No

**14. What type of housing choice procedure was presented to you ?**

Government subsidy

Housing allowance scheme

Other (specify ).....

**15. What type of tenure do you currently have ?**

Ownership

Tenant

Leasehold

Other (specify ).....

**16. In what form do you pay for accommodation ?**

Rental

Bond

**(C) Can you please answer each of the following questions which relate to housing choice and satisfaction with the present dwelling unit and the residential environment in general.**

**17. Were you presented with the housing plans prior to buying a house in the Summerfields area ?**

Yes

No

**18. If the answer is yes, were you satisfied with that housing choice procedure?**

Yes

No

Please give reasons for your answer.....

.....  
.....  
.....

**19. Did you find in this area what you were promised during the presentation of the housing plans ?.**

Yes

No

**20. Please rate your satisfaction with the following dwelling unit's characteristics and the area in general.**

Satisfaction criteria

1. Very satisfied      2. Satisfied              3. Average  
4. Dissatisfied        5. Very dissatisfied

Privacy	1	2	3	4	5
Size of the dwelling unit	1	2	3	4	5
Layout of the area	1	2	3	4	5
Lot size	1	2	3	4	5
Size of dwelling unit in rel. to my needs	1	2	3	4	5
Roads	1	2	3	4	5
Housing design	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of the dwelling unit in general	1	2	3	4	5

**21. Do you think that your neighbourhood has improved, remained the same or become worse since you moved in ?**

Improved

Still the same

Worse

Not sure

**22. Would you prefer to move to another location in the same area (Summerfields)?**

Yes

No

Please give reason(s).....

.....

# WARRANTY

Congratulations on your decision to purchase a Condev Home. Your new Condev Home has been constructed by experts backed by Murray and Roberts' years of experience: It is a home that both Murray and Condev can be proud of because we have taken great pride in building it.

Condev we know that there is only one way to get to know your home and that is by living in it. That is why you will discover any minor defects that you feel could be rectified.

Condev then gives you a range of time limits to report any of these minor defects. When you have reported any we will then come and repair it for you. Taken from the date of completion or occupation (whichever is the sooner), we give you the following "live-in" periods.

**UP TO 5 YEARS** to report any structural failure of concrete foundations, structural timber or brickwork.

**UP TO 6 MONTHS** to report any roof or gutter leaks, if there has been no rain in the first three months.

**UP TO 3 MONTHS** to report defects in your hotwater cylinder, electrical installations (excluding light fittings), glazing, plumbing, drainage, easing of cupboard hinges and catches, and fencing.

Also remember that the local Council require a deposit before they will turn on your lights and water.

Report emergencies immediately to Condev to prevent further damage like leaking water cylinders etc.

Help us to help you by reporting problems as soon as they happen!

## IT PAYS TO LOOK AFTER YOUR NEW HOME

Your new home is the biggest investment you are ever likely to make, so it pays to protect your investment by making sure your home receives proper care and maintenance.

As much as Condev can ensure that you move into a quality home of style and elegance, we cannot cover damage or loss caused by misuse, neglect, negligence or abuse. Condev cannot cover accident or any risk insured against in terms of the insurance policy normally used by Building Societies in respect of the mortgage bond over a residential property.

Your Condev Warranty specifically excludes:

- Touch-up painting of any nature.
- Hair cracks in the plasterwork

Despite using gold class materials, these cracks are inevitable. They are caused by the natural shrinkage of materials in the first twelve months or so after completion. When you next paint the affected walls, the hair cracks should disappear and not return. This is why Condev cannot be held responsible for repairing cracks of this nature.

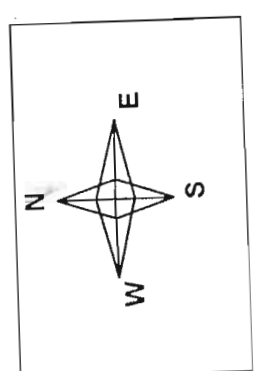
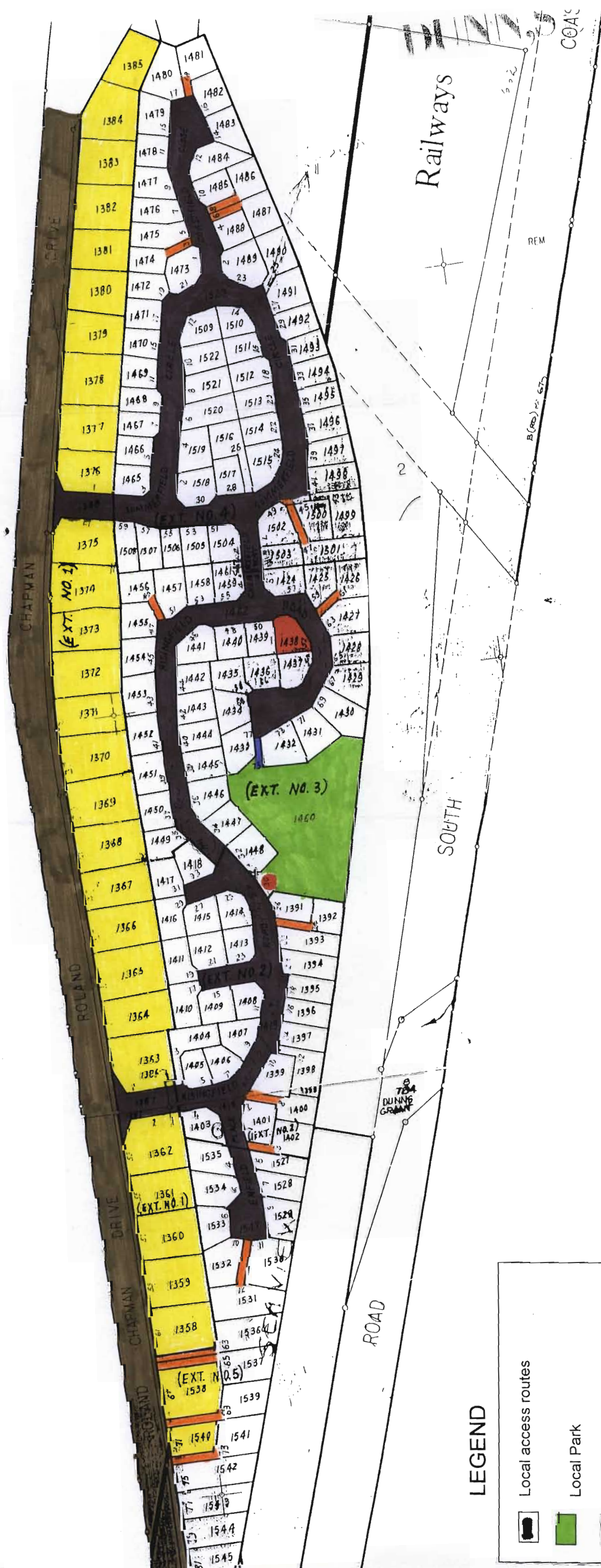
Please do study the three month maintenance contract which we will provide you with on taking occupation of your new home.

**AT CONDEV WE ARE DEDICATED TO HELPING YOU - HELP US TO CEMENT YOUR FUTURE!**













Map 2 : The layout of the area



LEGEND

-  Local access routes
-  Local Park
-  Pedestrian pathways
-  Surgery
-  Postal/telecommunication services
-  SARS houses
-  Pan Handle
-  Minor arterial