

**Rapid Urban Development and Fragmentation in a Post-Apartheid Era:
The Case of Ballito, South Africa, 1994 to 2007**

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A short dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for admittance to the degree of Masters in Town and Regional Planning (MTRP) in the School of Architecture, Planning and Housing; University of KwaZulu Natal (Durban).

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Declaration

I declare that this research is my own work and has not been used previously in fulfilment of another degree at the University of KwaZulu Natal or elsewhere. Use of the work of others has been noted in the text.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J.W.A. Duminy', written over a horizontal line.

J.W.A. Duminy

Dr R. Awuorh-Hayangah (Supervisor)

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Abstract

Since 1994 a rapid rate of large-scale development in the region of Ballito, KwaZulu Natal, has generated significant urban spatial changes. This dissertation aimed to identify and examine the factors that have generated and sustained these changes. Qualitative information, sourced from interviews conducted with various professionals and actors involved in Ballito's recent development procedures, was utilized to this extent. The study focused on localised institutional, socio-economic, historical, physical/environmental, policy- and agency-based explanations of Ballito's spatial metamorphosis.

It was found that the town's resulting pattern of spatial growth reflects tendencies towards urban fragmentation that have been observed in many South African and international urban contexts. Whilst forces of globalisation have played a role in driving the urban changes of Ballito, many localised and region-specific trends have influenced the development process in unobvious manners. In particular, issues relating to local government incapacity have served to undermine state planning initiatives, which take as their focus the reversal of apartheid's socio-developmental discrepancies. Likewise, incongruencies within the South African developmental policy position have served to create uncertainty in the local urban management arena. As a corollary of these trends, the interests of private-sector and central government institutions have assumed the position of greatest power within Ballito's urban process, to the neglect of local governmental and communal concerns.

It is concluded that the representative capacity of local government and disenfranchised communities must be improved as a means of promoting the delivery of complex political concerns such as 'integrated' and 'sustainable' development. It is also suggested that urban analytical models involving institutional explanations of urban change are more effective in providing recommendations for the reversal of socio-spatial inequalities than traditional, economic-based analytical models.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Have we arrived at a radical break in the ways cities are developing? This tantalizing question, posed by Dear and Flusty (1998), carries with it an implication that we may have stumbled upon a novel urban era – a new-fangled context for residential and commercial settlement. For Edward Soja however, contemporary urbanisation – guided as it is by broad social, economic and political restructurings – does not constitute an obvious deviation from traditional modernist urban forms. Instead, he defines a *postmodern urbanisation process* as “a summative depiction of the major changes that have been taking place in cities during the last quarter of the twentieth century” (1995:125). That being said, many difficult questions remain: is ‘postmodern urbanisation’ theory exclusive in its scope of insight – does it only relate to the large financial centers of the developed world? Is it possible that small urban areas in far-flung places are also experiencing the spatial consequences of contemporary productive and technological changes? If so, how do macroeconomic and macrosocial trends negotiate with local or intra-national factors to produce the physical urban environment?

With such questions in mind, the development of Ballito is a worthwhile case study. It shall be explained why this is the case.

1.1 The Research Problem

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, Ballito existed as a small seaside village – one of many popular yet quaint holiday hubs located on South Africa’s eastern seaboard. It was, in many ways, an unremarkable place with a minute permanent residential base and few commercial facilities. Despite these limitations to large-scale development, the town did play host to a thriving ‘second-home’ property market and the 1970s and 1980s saw a steady increase in its degree of national investor attention.

Due to its popularity as a seasonal holiday location, Ballito would in subsequent years merge with nearby residential nodes, such as Shaka's Rock, Salt Rock and Sheffield Beach, to become one of the fastest-growing urban areas within the KwaZulu Natal coastal region. Yet the greatest incursion of investment in the built environment only materialized after the South African national democratic elections of 1994, following a period of considerable socio-political and economic unrest. The resultant rate of development has brought economic prosperity and numerous employment opportunities, yet not everyone is satisfied with the consequences of such development. To the outspoken dismay of the Ballito townsfolk, large sections of agricultural land situated adjacent to the urban region (used primarily for sugarcane agriculture), have been purchased and developed into high-income gated estates. In conjunction with this rapid process of upmarket development, low-income townships located within inland vicinities have become significantly enlarged. Furthermore, an entirely new central business district has materialized in Ballito, driving an alarming process of commercial relocation.

So, the spatial consequences of a post-1994 residential development boom in Ballito have been extreme; raising the ire of many permanent residents, who are often quick to find fault with their relevant local authority's capacity to manage urban development. This leads us to the core problem on which this dissertation is based; the fact that since 1994 rapid, large-scale development in the Ballito region has generated some highly-criticised spatial changes. It has been argued that these effects could have been controlled if an effective system for the management of urban development had been in place.

1.2 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

The broad objective of this dissertation is to *identify and examine the factors that have generated and sustained Ballito's post-1994 spatial changes*. Qualitative information, sourced from interviews conducted with various professionals and actors involved in Ballito's recent development procedures, has been utilized to this extent. By paying attention to *localised institutional, socio-economic, historical, physical/environmental, policy- and agency-based explanations* of Ballito's spatial changes, the study has

enabled a judgment to be made regarding whether or not a post-1994 process of ‘institutional restructuring’ has undermined the local government’s ability to control the town’s urban development processes.

The study’s primary research question asked, “*what are the forces that have driven Ballito’s urban spatial changes in the post-1994 time period?*” Here an assumption was made that ‘Ballito’ does not refer to an individual seaside village, but to an emerging urban region that includes several (formerly independent) townships. The answering of this question required that its researchable threads be differentiated and dealt with individually. These threads have been used to produce the dissertation’s subsidiary questions, as shown in table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Themes, Objectives and Subsidiary Research Questions of the Dissertation.

Theme	Objective	Research Question
<i>Ballito urban growth</i>	<p>To determine the primary ways in which the town’s land use characteristics have changed, with the aim of identifying the growth patterns that are represented by these changes.</p> <p>To contribute to an understanding of how the Ballito region has changed in terms of the flows and location of capital.</p> <p>To briefly reflect on whether Ballito’s growth shows evidence of international urban trends.</p>	<p>In what ways has the Ballito spatial structure changed since 1994?</p>
<i>Driving forces</i>	<p>To identify and examine the major factors that have driven or influenced the observed changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ways in which power was expressed in development procedures at national, provincial and local levels; - Shifts in the social, economic, political and institutional contexts within which Ballito’s post-1994 development occurred; - Those that have supported or undermined urban growth management attempts. 	<p>What socio-economic, historical, physical/environmental, institutional, actor and policy-based explanations can be found for these changes?</p> <p>How has a state of ‘institutional thickness’ (or lack thereof) affected Ballito’s development process?</p>

1.3 The Research Hypothesis

The post-1994 changes to the spatial structure of Ballito are attributable to a complex web of forces, with varying realms and degrees of influence, which have served to aggravate one another in space and time. The summative result of this ‘snowballing’ process has been a remarkable case of rapid, ‘fragmenting’ urban development, which reflects certain urban tendencies characteristic of postmodernism and globalisation. Furthermore, transnational forces of influence have been expressed through localised contexts in a manner that has produced discrete, idiosyncratic urban outcomes.

1.4 Research Methodology

A comprehensive breakdown of the study’s objectives, research questions, data sources and analytical perspective is provided by table 1.2, which may be found on page 7.

1.4.1 Sources of Data and Modes of Collection

Information used in this dissertation was gathered from May to September 2007. Qualitative data were predominantly sourced from semi-structured interviews with public and private-sector planners, local government decision-makers, representatives of property development and sales firms, individual developers and other knowledgeable professionals who have been active in the Ballito region. In total, ten interviews were conducted. Due to the fact that this dissertation has dealt with relatively sensitive political and institutional topics, most interviewees agreed to participate on the condition of anonymity. Depending on their area of familiarity, respondents were asked targeted questions regarding the consequences of localised and wide-reaching socio-economic and institutional factors for Ballito’s post-1994 process of spatial change. In particular, respondents were asked for information regarding the array of events and actions that may have influenced local property market dynamics or local government capacity to manage development. Relating to this line of inquiry, observations of reputable local

residents have also been gathered and utilised, if they were deemed to be insightful and relevant.

In addition, the author attended various local development-related forums, including a CSIR-run ‘strategic work session’ regarding the application of the National Spatial Development Perspective in Ilembe District Municipality (within which Ballito is located). The views and issues raised by the workshop participants (many of them being local government officials) have been utilised in the production of the study’s policy-based, socio-economic and institutional analyses.

Interviewee selection was based on a reputational method, whereby individuals were approached if they had been recommended as potentially helpful subjects. Generalisations were made only if the information supplied by individual subjects was concurrent.

Qualitative and quantitative data were also sourced from secondary sources such as economic, corporate, news and governmental reports, with the aim of contextualising localised socio-economic and political trends (including macroeconomic, agricultural, property and tourism market trends).

1.4.2 Scope of Study and Mode of Data Analysis

The subject matter of the dissertation is comprised of the contexts, events, strategies and actions that generated urban spatial outcomes in Ballito after 1994. Studies of this sort do not rely on pre-determined quantitative methodologies and are thus guided by a quest to identify ‘what matters’ in the production of a particular urban environment. The research methodology draws upon Fainstein’s (2001:19) analytical approach by asking “not what matters in general, but what matters when, for what results”. This mode of thought opposes the idea that all issues are equally important and instead seeks to determine which actions are more or less contributory according to the researcher’s intellectual framework and study objectives. In the context of this study, the quest to identify and

examine the complexity of processes and events that could have affected Ballito’s post-1994 urbanisation experience was conducted with physical-environmental, policy-based, socio-economic, and institutional determinants in mind (arranged in order of increasing emphasis).

It should be pointed out that localised explanations for Ballito’s urban spatial changes were examined in greater detail than international, national and provincial issues. The aim of this analytical detail is to answer recent calls for urban analyses that recognize the importance of local issues and dynamics in the development of urban areas (Jenkins and Wilkinson, 2003; Murray, 2004; Shatkin, 2007).

The study’s institutional analysis was devised as a two-stage process involving, firstly, the identification and description of the broad ‘structures’ that were discovered to be influential in the case study of urban development. This entailed the utilisation of primary source data (from semi-structured interviews, to provide specific information regarding Ballito) and literature dealing with the broad context of post-apartheid South African municipal and central government (to enable a contextualised understanding of observed forces of influence). Secondly, a discussion of ‘institutional thickness’ was undertaken in order to examine the relational characteristics of the local institutional network and how levels of inter-agency contact may have supported or undermined local government planning initiatives.

The following table and diagram (figure 1.1) provide succinct representations of the study’s research and data analytical processes:

Table 1.2: Objectives, Research Questions, Data Sources and Analytical Methods used in the Study.

Theme	Objective	Research Question	Primary Source	Secondary Source	Method of Data Analysis
<i>Urban growth in Ballito</i>	<p>To determine the primary ways in which the town's land use characteristics have changed, with the aim of identifying the growth patterns that are represented by these changes.</p> <p>To contribute to an understanding of how the Ballito region has changed in terms of the flows and location of capital.</p> <p>To briefly reflect on whether Ballito's growth shows evidence of international urban trends.</p>	In what ways has the Ballito region's space-economy changed since 1994?	Semi-structured interviews and observations.	Aerial photography; existing mapwork; Municipal IDPs.	Pictorial analysis (including GIS mapping); early modernist, globalisation and postmodern urbanisation theory.
<i>Driving forces</i>	<p>To identify and examine the major factors that have driven or influenced the observed changes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ways in which power was expressed in development procedures at national, provincial and local levels; - Shifts in the social, economic, political and institutional contexts within which Ballito's post-1994 development occurred; - Those that have supported or undermined urban growth management attempts. 	<p>What socio-economic, historical, physical/environmental, institutional, actor and policy-based explanations can be found for these changes?</p> <p>How has a state of 'institutional thickness' (or lack thereof) affected Ballito's development process?</p>	Semi-structured interviews and observations.	Local, Provincial and National Government legislation and policies; corporate reports; aerial photography; existing mapwork; development case study (Simbithi Eco-Estate).	Comparison to a model of institutional thickness; aspects of 'structure and agency' approaches.

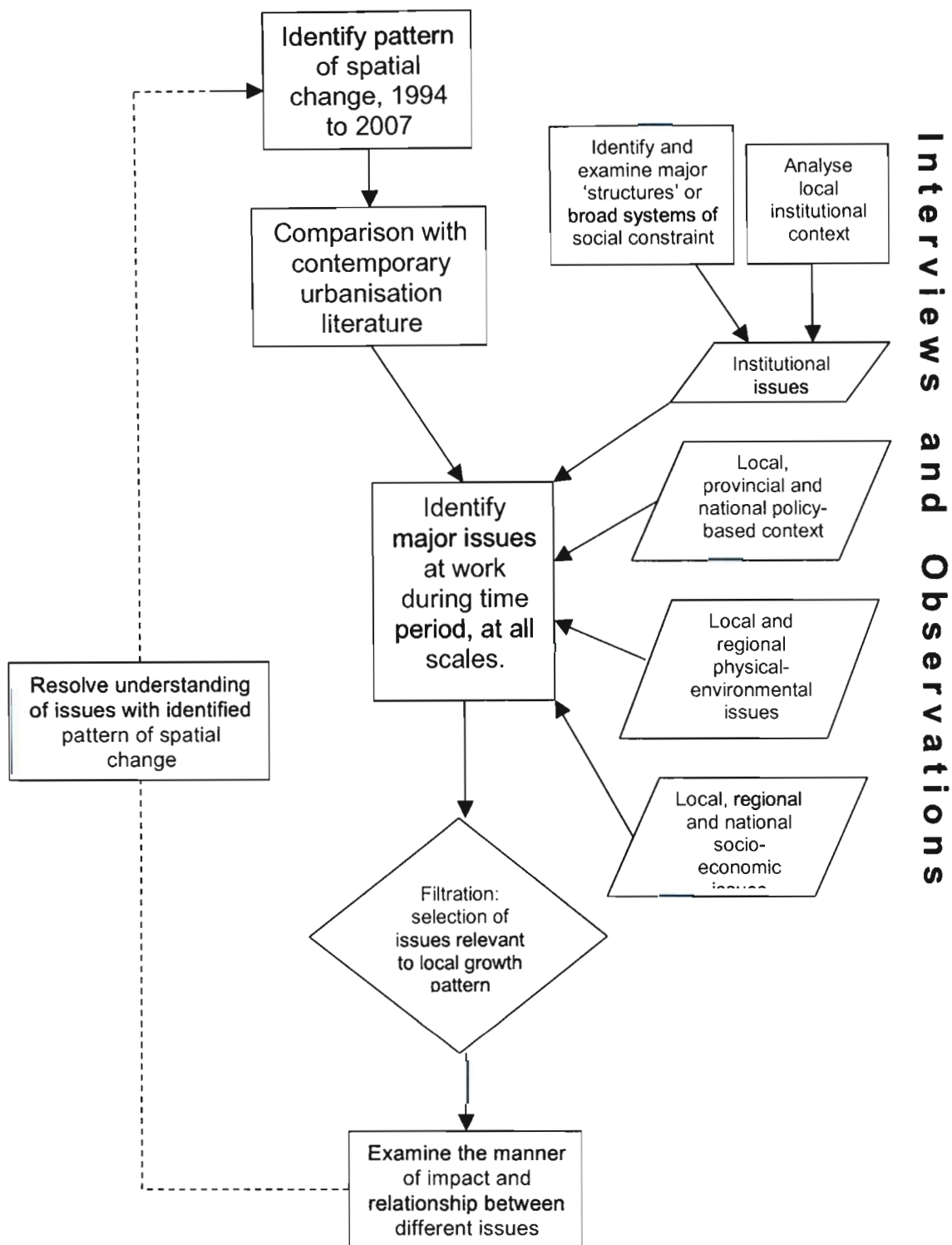


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Diagram of the Research and Data Analytical Processes.

1.5 Outline of Study

Following the introduction, chapter 2 shall discuss the various concepts, theories and models utilized in the analytical process. Definitions of the study's central terms will be provided here. Chapter 3 will illustrate the major spatial restructurings associated with Ballito's post-1994 growth before briefly relating these changes to urban literature regarding globalisation and postmodern urbanisation. Chapter 4 shall then present a comprehensive description of the policy-based context for urban development in post-apartheid South Africa. Chapter 5 deals with the socio-economic issues that have contributed to the case study's observed process of urbanisation – especially the factors that have framed the emergence of a residential development boom in the local property market – whilst chapter 6 goes on to briefly consider the physical or environmental determinants thereof. Chapter 7 exemplifies the greatest degree of analytical detail in its discussion of the institutional context for urban development in Ballito. The mini-case study of Simbithi Eco-Estate is then presented in chapter 8 as a means of resolving the study's various findings in a practical, situated example of urban development. A summary of the dissertation's major findings, as well as conclusions and recommendations relating to urban analysis and local institutional capacity, will then be provided in chapter 9.

1.6 Limitations to the Study

Fiscal and time constraints provided the principal limitations to the research process. A greater time and monetary budget could lead to enhanced research in this area by allowing:

- The expansion of the spatial analysis to include more detailed changes to land use patterns and urban form. The geographical area of study could be widened to include the effects of Ballito's growth on nearby urban areas, especially low-income townships.

- The incorporation of intensive local socio-economic analyses into the spatial analysis, in order to provide an enhanced understanding of how wealth has been distributed across the Ballito urban landscape.
- The intensification of the institutional analysis, entailing a greater focus on central government dynamics and their effects on Ballito's local institutional context. This, in turn, would allow for greater detail in the discussion of how political and economic structures have influenced the actions of local developmental actors.

Furthermore, any study dealing with a qualitative database or interpretive methodology is subject to “what informants are willing to express” (Zunino, 2006:1841), as well as the interpretative process of the research collector. In some ways a limitation, this is an inevitability of research dealing with the social production of space that should be recognized.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

This chapter will link ‘postmodern’ theoretical and philosophical trajectories with new imperatives for the study of urban development – in doing so the study’s analytical framework will be explained and situated within contemporary urban literature. Additionally, the theory of ‘postmodern urbanisation’ will be outlined with a view to its relation to the experience of Ballito.

2.1 *Locating the Present*

2.1.1 Modernism, Modernity and the Enlightenment

The concept of *modernism* refers to the ideological and philosophical vestiges of the European period of Enlightenment. As a mode of thought, it builds upon the notion that the human beings possess an unlimited ability to shape and create their environment, particularly through the application of reason and rational thought. Modernism is characterised by an acceptance of change, an embracement of the ‘present’ and a belief in the attainability of certain universal truths (in nature, society and the universe as a whole) through scientific and technological endeavour. Under this philosophical framework, knowledge is treated as an objective entity, which may only be clouded and obscured by lesser forms of ‘knowing’, as represented by tradition, religion and superstition. As part of the ideological aspiration of modernism, the elucidation of such intranscendental truths may be harnessed to promote the betterment, or progression, of mankind. In this regard technological development is equated to ‘progress’ (Graham and Marvin, 1996).

According to Graham and Marvin, ‘modernity’ may be considered as “a mode of spatial and temporal experience which promises adventure and self-transformation while threatening to destroy the familiar. It bisects geographic, ethnic, class, religious and ideological boundaries” (1996:176; citing Cooke, 1988). To be modern, then, is to actively participate in and embrace this ‘mode of spatial and temporal experience’. One

must unceasingly strive for progress and betterment of oneself and humanity by unlocking the ‘secrets’ of the observable universe. One must approach every situation with a rationalized viewpoint that stands the test of human reason and excludes ‘backward’ modes of thought. One must seek to resolve the chaotic; compartmentalizing it into order and homogeneity. One must operate within an objective, pure world that is untouched by relativity.

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these tenets of modernism gradually attained influence within the intellectual discourse of the Western World. However, by the 1960s the Western zeitgeist had begun to shift. The swell of philosophical opposition to the results and assumptions of modernism eventually became loosely categorised (in a typically modernist manner) as the notion of ‘postmodernism’.

2.1.2 Postmodernism, Postmodernity and Post-modernism

Postmodernism refers to a recent philosophical and epistemological divergence from the basic tenets of modernist thought and knowledge. It implies the rise of a new theoretical and conceptual position that draws heavily from the field of post-structuralism. Here one may point to increasing academic dissatisfaction with meta-narratives and grand theory, including the positivist nature of modern science and philosophy. It refers to a fundamental shift in Western society’s modes of ‘worldly interpretation’, including systems of knowledge and value; as well as to increasing emphasis on local issues, everyday life and socio-cultural difference as important sources of knowledge. Essentially, postmodernism is characterized by a suspicion of established forms and sources of knowledge, as well as an acceptance of disorder and disjuncture in all forms of life.

Secondly, there exists the concept of *postmodernity* as a historical epoch – a period of referring particularly to the latter half of the twentieth century. Debates continue to arise regarding whether or not there is some sort of definable interface between the modern and postmodern epochs. Some authors have chosen to suggest that postmodernity (as a

contemporary state of affairs) merely represents an advanced state of modernity, one that has been shaped by the dynamic, evolutionary nature of late capitalism (Harvey, 1989). Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that western social and productive organisations are increasingly subject to conditions of perturbation, agitation and uncertainty; that “dramatic sea changes” have engulfed the contemporary capitalist world (Davoudi, 1995:226).

Thirdly, the term *post-modernism* is generally used to describe a particular aesthetic style. Often used in reference to art and architecture, this concept entails a reaction to the aesthetic ideals of the modernist movement. Lastly, one should also appreciate the difference between *post-modern urbanism* (as an ideological and aesthetic reaction to ‘modern’ urban ideals and practices) and *postmodern urbanisation* (which refers to urban development trends during the ‘postmodern’ epoch).

The following section considers the manner in which the broad term of ‘postmodernism’ relates to urban studies and development.

2.2 The Broad Theoretical Context for Urban Development

2.2.1 Globalisation

The term *globalisation* has many different meanings and implications. Whilst often used in relation to the post-1970 transition from an international to a global economy – associated with the centralisation of fiscal credit systems and the resulting domination of productive systems by financial capital – it illustrates a multifaceted array of social, economic and political changes (Amin and Thrift, 1995). In the broadest possible terms, it refers to the extreme state of international ‘connectedness’ that has become apparent in recent times through the advancement of telecommunication technologies, as well as the consequences thereof for socio-economic and political processes and practices. It describes the phenomenal manner through which everyday events are increasingly directed by those of far-removed locations (Amin, 2002). It also makes reference to an

opposing tendency; one whereby local, territorially-specific actions are capable of resonating across and altering global ethno-, media- and ideoscapes (Amin and Thrift, 1995; citing Appadurai, 1990). In addition, the term expresses a process whereby the spatial aspects of social organisation and interaction are transformed – involving the emergence of intercontinental passages and networks of power, exchange and activity (Amin, 2002).

According to Marx, capital must seek to break down all spatial barriers to its accumulation in order to ensure its reproduction (Harvey, 1978). Furthermore, as systems that are plagued by inherent crises and contradictions, capitalist economies are incorrigibly engaged in pursuit of a ‘spatial fix’ (Ibid.). This implies that capital must spread geographically and colonise new, fertile grounds for production and consumption in order to alleviate localised instances of over-accumulation and hence devaluation (Ibid.). Thus if one understands the globalising economy as an extreme process of spatial and temporal compression – a drastic attempt to raze spatial barriers to capital growth – one will appreciate the propensity of Marxist geography to represent globalisation as the inevitable result of late capitalism’s quest to ‘annihilate space with time’ (Harvey, 1989).

2.2.2 Post-Industrialism

The theorizations of Marx were based upon the notion that social organisational change is dominated by the need for industrial production. He proposed that all aspects of social life are deliberately structured in order to create favourable conditions for the production of exchangeable goods, and hence the accumulation of capital (Harvey, 1978). However, with the rapid technological advancements of the twentieth century, academic fields related to economics and sociology have granted an increasing degree of attention to ‘knowledge-based structures’ and the development of ‘expert systems’ (Amin and Thrift, 1995). Here a common suggestion is that the collection and distribution of *information* and *knowledge* are progressively more important directors of productive organisation. Reinforcing this point, Kumar suggests that knowledge has become the “principle activity of the economy and the principle determinant of occupational change” (1995:11, cited in

Jordan, 2002:29). Associated with these suggestions is the premise that western capitalist societies have entered a 'post-industrial' epoch of social organisation. Rather than being dominated by conditions for industrial production, contemporary socio-economic functions are seen to be centred upon provisions for the attainment, use and administration of knowledge and information (Castells, 2000).

Amin and Thrift (1995) recognise that the debate surrounding post-industrialism is manifested in many contemporary dialogues, especially those involving the relationship between education, learning and efficient production; the communicative and social outcomes of new technologies (often depicting the formation of a 'digital divide'); as well as the significance of 'cognitive reflexivity' and intensive knowledge utilisation in modern business practice. However, the concept of post-industrialism, where it refers to a distinctive state or epoch of societal affairs, is by no means regarded as a certainty. Indeed, shifts towards knowledge and expert systems are regarded by Amin and Thrift (1995) as several of many consequences of globalising economic systems – themselves the products of information and communication technological advancement. Nevertheless, this general trend deserves some explanation, for it is a principal constituent of the changes associated with contemporary urbanisation.

2.2.3 Post-Fordism

The late twentieth century saw capitalist societies undergo significant alterations in terms of their organisational structures for the production of goods. These changes are often represented as a shift away from the Fordist mode of production, which was based on the formation of large firms, highly-organised mass production systems, the close proximity of primary production locations, the standardisation of goods and industrial centralisation (Soja, 1995). It has been argued that capitalism has shifted towards a more 'flexible', internationalised organisational structure, in accordance with the rise of new technologies (Graham and Marvin, 1996; Shatkin, 2007). In general, systems of production are increasingly mobile and geographically widespread; albeit less-regulated and seemingly 'disorganised' – often involving 'just-in-time' systems of stock delivery.

A principal trend of the international shift towards post-Fordist organisation is the broad process described by Shatkin (2007:12) as the “flexibilization of labour”. As the corporate world has gained access to international labour pools, increased competition has created demands for labour resources that are both malleable and inexpensive. In direct response to this demand, “practices such as outsourcing, employment of home-based workers, and contract work have become commonplace in the corporate sector, and increasingly the public sector as well” (Ibid.:12). Associated with these new practices is a significant change in the workplace characteristics of contemporary employment – something evidenced by the fact that people are decreasingly reliant on workplaces (as they are traditionally understood) and physical proximity thereto. The ‘work from home’ phenomenon of the 1980s and 1990s serves as a useful example of the tendency towards the integration of living- and workplaces, as driven by communicative technological advancement, in late capitalist society (Graham and Guy, 2005).

However, many academics refrain from depicting these changes as a drastic, revolutionary alteration of global social and politico-economic organisations and functions. Instead, they are often interpreted as being the offspring of the necessarily-unstable genetic makeup of late capitalism; an adjustment that opens up fresh grounds for efficient capital accumulation and social reproduction (Harvey, 1989; Allmendinger, 1998). That being said, it is clear that modern-day shifts towards a knowledge-based society, and a simultaneous restructuring of capitalist production systems, is significantly affecting the societal context for settlement, occupation and hence urban development.

2.3 Urban Analytical Trends

2.3.1 Space and Society

In so-called ‘Western’ societies the concept of ‘space’ is usually interpreted as an *absolute* entity; separate from time – a stationary, stable and homogenous container in which objects exist independently and constantly. This is a standard scientific

understanding that is predominantly based on Newtonian physical theory – space is deemed to be the neutral setting in which objects may interact with and affect one another (Lefebvre, 1990). Drawing upon this interpretation of space as a “white page” for the inscription of human action (Castells, 1977:115), modern social theory has tended to “comprehend the world primarily through the dynamics arising from the emplacement of social beings and becoming in the interpretative contexts of time” (Soja, 1989:10). In other words, the concept of time has been allocated a privileged position in the definition and theoretical representation of social lifeworlds. Where included, space was often interpreted as something of a bland entity linked with the material world – forming a physical backdrop to the temporal performance of social phenomena and thereby influencing their occurrences in one way or another (Ibid.).

The major impetus to the ‘spatialization’ of critical social theory may be traced back to the emergence of a Marxist geographical discourse in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey were instrumental in the development of a spatialized historical materialism – involving a ‘dialectised’ relationship between spatiality and social reproduction (Soja, 1989, 2000). The basic premise of a dialectical socio-spatial relationship is that spatial organisations are not only products of social change; they may also ‘feed back’ into systems of social reproduction to bestow upon them an ever-changing set of circumstances in which to operate; forcing them to evolve (Ibid.). With that in mind, space is necessarily something that plays an active, causative role in social processes, as opposed to acting “as a mere occasion for the deployment of [the] social structure” (Castells, 1977:115).

The epistemological shifts driving the reapplication of space in critical social theory have exacted major reforms on the theoretical basis of urban research. Since the early 1980s a “space-blinkered historicism” (1989:11) has gradually made way for an appreciation of ‘cityspace’ as an intrinsic dynamic of social processes, interactions and practices (Soja, 1989, 2000). Recent studies have also attempted to transcend the traditional, physical inference of geographical space to one that engages with the *abstract space* of philosophical, institutional and social relations (Soja, 1996). As will be pointed out,

postmodern urbanisation theory is partially inculcated by a desire to understand the ‘spatial specificity’ of contemporary urbanism – the geographical sphere of influence of the city’s activities, linkages and formations (Soja, 2000:8).

2.3.2 Making Sense of the ‘Urban’

The traditional, modernist understanding of a ‘city’ entails its conceptualisation as a physical and geographical entity – a *place* (Healey *et al.*, 1995; Soja, 2000). This interpretation suggests that one is only ‘in the city’ when one’s temporal and geographical position coincides with that of a particular built environment. As such, the ‘city’ does not exist unless it is both visible and measurable: an object that interacts with its subjects in a physical manner. However, shifts away from positivist intellectual frameworks, coupled with technological advancements (particularly with respect to information management and communication), have served to undermine the previously clean-cut understanding of what is ‘urban’ and ‘non-urban’. In particular, recent urban theoretical trends have given rise to an appreciation that various cultural, economic and institutional *spaces* of social practice are as central to the concept of ‘urbanity’ as the physical form of its settlements.

In general, postmodern intellectual trajectories have triggered a recognition of urban areas as infinitely complex, complicated and paradoxical things; “a recognition that urban life is the irreducible product of mixture” (Amin and Thrift, 2002:3). This has necessitated the creation of alternative theories of ‘reading’ the urban landscape. The field of urban semiotics, for example, seeks to understand cities as being constituted by ‘texts’ or ‘systems of signification’ and their relationship to particular socio-cultural, environmental and psychological contexts (Gottdiener and Lagopoulos, 1986). On the other hand, Amin and Thrift (2002) have chosen to examine a contemporary state of ‘everyday urbanism’, with its banalities, porosities and patterns of heightened juxtaposition.

In addition, there has been considerable academic impetus to determine and represent urban 'space' and 'place' as somewhat distinctive, yet interdependent entities. Much of this work has been centred on the urban consequences of information and communication technological (ICT) development and its socio-spatial impacts (see generally Castells, 1989, 1993; Graham and Marvin, 1996; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Graham and Guy, 2005). It is often suggested that elevated international connectivity has resulted in the creation of a so-called Global Village; a city with no physical objects, built of information super-highways and data sources instead of roads and buildings.

For many contemporary urban researchers, a pressing question asks what might be understood by the term 'spatiality' in the context of extreme time-space compression. After all, many cities claiming to be 'global' define themselves in terms of their strengths and manifestations of trans-national socio-economic flows. Is one not 'in the city' whilst one exacts an Internet purchase, or engages with a social networking facility, albeit from a far-removed, distinctively rural location? Problematic inquiries such as this signify that the concept of urbanity may no longer rest upon an assumption of physical location. Everyday indications of "mixed spatialities" (Amin and Thrift, 2002:3) have necessitated that we view cities as manifestations of a new international urbanism; one that transcends traditional urban boundaries and expresses global and local processes with fragmented, diverse outcomes (Healey *et al.*, 1995). As Castells argues:

"[We are observing] the emergence of a *space of flows* which dominates the historically constructed space of places, as the logic of dominant organisations detaches itself from the social constraints of cultural identities and local societies through the powerful medium of information technologies" (1989:6, cited in Fainstein, 2001:209).

Globalisation theory has tended to depict these 'flows' as the linking mechanisms of a complex, supranational system of economic, social, political, institutional and infrastructural 'networks' (Amin and Thrift, 1995; Sassen, 2002; Coutard *et al.*, 2005). Actors, institutions and geographic pinpoints (i.e. urban areas) are seen to be woven and rewoven into these web-like fabrics, thereby providing a restless context for the intensive

exchange of people, ideas, capital and information. Urban places are thus interpreted as the robust containers within which global and local streams of information, capital and ideologies coincide with and affect one another (Amin and Thrift, 1995). Sassen's (1994, 2002) 'global city hypothesis' therefore, is built upon the notion that certain large cities exhibit a greater degree of *centrality* in the networked world politico-economy than others – a greater capacity to capitalise on global processes at a local scale.

Building on these ideas, Graham and Marvin (1996; also Graham and Guy, 2005) depict an urban relationship involving physical, 'tied-down' places – the realm of physical interaction and exchange – and abstract, 'floating' electronic spaces, which constitute the arena of showdown between global trends and local realities. In the contemporary city these symbiotic entities are seen to negotiate with each other and society to produce observable, yet fragmented outcomes. Significantly, they posit that extant processes of economic and social polarization are reflected in, and entrenched by the ongoing development of electronic spaces.

Amin and Thrift (1995, 2002) categorically state that recognition of the abstract reach of cities does not deny them a spatial characteristic. Their existence as place-based formations is ensured due to their concentrations of people, institutions and objects; their exhibition of extreme socio-cultural difference in close proximity; and their "siting of various networks of communication and flow across and beyond the city" (2002:2). They note that urban centres of agglomeration persist, albeit as the foci of social interaction, the exchange of knowledge and the formulation of new discourses as opposed to the traditional centres of Fordist industrial production.

These theoretical inclinations have affected significant changes on approaches to urban research. This is particularly evident within recent attempts to define the complex, rapid and wide-reaching processes of contemporary urbanisation and to understand "the city as a locus of overlapping webs of relations on diverse spatial scales, from the neighbourhood to the globe" (Healey *et al.*, 1995:4). Ultimately, new ways of

understanding 'the urban' necessitate that researchers deal with the complexity and differing spatialities of the forces driving urban change.

2.3.3 Recognition of Local, Cultural and Historical Issues

Urban studies over the past century have been inculcated by the structuralist treatment of space as a relatively passive entity, whose changes stem from the functioning of various socio-economic systems. Essentially, modern urban theory regarded urban development as a mechanistic response to the innate structural logic operating behind all social processes (Amin and Thrift, 2002). Assumptions such as these had the basic effect of privileging generalising analytical schema and sociological theories within urban studies and planning academia. Furthermore, the hegemony of modernist epistemological discourse ensured the popularity of "positivist methodologies which emphasised the application of rational decision-making techniques by utility-maximisers within a mainstream economics paradigm" (Guy and Henneberry, 2000:2399).

However, a dialectical understanding of space and society affirms that urban development is a process that is intricately and inexorably linked with localised sets of socio-cultural and spatial realities: "deeper trends," Freund and Padayachee write, which may be "shaping economic and political trajectories; cities are vortices" (2002:2). As such, it has been widely proposed that traditional Eurocentric models of urban study are too abstract and a-contextual to be of use in developing nations of the South and East (Robinson, 2006; Shatkin, 2007). Ball (1998) recognises that a popular response has been the adoption of urban analytical approaches recognizing the manner in which urban areas are "shaped by durable cultural practices" (Robinson, 2006:18), existing or emerging power relations (Saff, 2005; Zunino, 2006), as well as regional and local dynamics (Shatkin, 2007).

Based on these ideas, recent trends in urban research give greater recognition to alternative sources of knowledge (i.e. those not based solely on mainstream economic paradigms), cultural issues and – perhaps most importantly – local dynamics of urban

development. This dissertation's attempt to identify and examine the 'forces' that have driven a case of urban development certainly subscribes to these theoretical trends. In this sense, a 'force' has been allocated an expansive definition to include *any issue that may have influenced or shaped* (consciously or not) *the decision-making procedures* of Ballito's post-1994 development; in any sector or level of governance.

2.3.4 Institutional Approaches: Considerations of Discourse, Structure and Agency

As mentioned previously, modern urban developmental research has been dominated by grand theories rooted in sociological and mainstream economic discourses. Subsequent theoretical shuffles have given rise to the 'institutional'¹ turn' in urban research; most notably within the British academic field of property market research (Ball, 1998). This change arose out of the recognition that a comprehensive research approach should not exclude considerations of the roles, interests and actions of development agencies within a particular instance of urban development (Guy and Henneberry, 2000).

Ball (1998) has identified and described various methodological approaches to institutional analysis: mainstream economics, power, structure and agency, or structures of provision. Each differs with respect to data targeting and analysis, yet they all attempt to examine the manner in which socio-cultural, economic, political and legal development contexts guide the actions of (and in turn are shaped by) their participants. Indeed, a recurring theme within institutional approaches is the desire to consider how policy-based contexts may influence urban development; either through the control of economic markets or by guiding their operations towards the delivery of political agendas (Ibid.).

¹ In this dissertation the term 'institution' refers not only to some sort of formal organisation, but also to the sense that individual habits, when observed in aggregate within society, may take the form of 'socio-economic institutions' (Guy and Henneberry, 2000). Keogh and D'Arcy define institutions as the "rules, norms and regulations by which a society functions. They impart certainty and stability to social interaction, but they also change and develop over time as circumstances and experiences dictate" (1999:2407).

Within the past two decades the ‘structure and agency’ approach to institutional analysis – as called for by Healey and Barrett (1990; also Healey, 1991, 1992) – has gained some academic attention. They write,

“Any analysis of development processes... requires the development of an explicit approach to the relation between structure, in terms of what drives the development process and produces distinctive patterns in particular periods, and agency, in terms of the way individual agents develop and pursue their strategies” (1990:90).

Here the term ‘structure’ refers to the ‘organising ideas’, resources and institutional rules (including normative rules and codes of signification) that govern the interactions and strategies of individuals and institutions and through which power is expressed (Healey and Barrett, 1990; Ball, 1998; Zunino, 2006). Within this theoretical framework it is posited that developmental actors are inherently *contextual* with respect to their strategy formulations and perceived interests. As such, it is accepted that particular actors may exemplify differing manners of interpreting and operating within a developmental context; that their respective discourse environments influence the networks of rules, regulations, ideologies, strategies and power-relations in which they function. As a result, actors and agencies in urban development are seen to be *subjective* as they are both enabled and constrained by particular socio-cultural, psychological and material factors (Guy and Henneberry, 2000).

A principal aspect of structure and agency analyses is the consideration of power or – more specifically – how it is held, exercised and transferred between actors in order to create developmental outcomes and serve particular interests above others. Simply put, the term ‘power’ may be understood as one’s capacity to exert control over oneself, one’s environment and the actions of others (Albrechts, 2003). Following Foucault’s conceptualisation, power is not merely handed down from centralised, monolithic entities such as a government state; it is an unstable and “potentially reversible” element of all social relationships (Philp, 1985:75). In addition to its ability to exclude and oppress, power is also a ‘constructive’ or ‘productive’ force – something that can fashion new aspects of knowledge and discourse (Ibid.).

It would be prudent to direct some attention at the notion of ‘discourse’, for it is one that is closely linked to those of structure and power. In Foucauldian terms of reference discourses are best understood as “multiple and competing sets of ideas and concepts which are produced, reproduced and transformed in everyday practices, and through which the material and social world is given meaning” (Richardson, 2002). In essence, the concept refers to the manner in which those societal paradigms and ideas that are perceived to be ‘valid’ may frame one’s understanding of the world and interactions with others. This explains why a discourse may be described as a “system for the possibility of knowledge”: it provides a playing-field for the generation of legitimate knowledge or action, thereby creating overlapping fields of power and knowledge or ‘systems of signification’ (Philp, 1985:69).

As propounded by Albrechts, “each planning and/or decision-making process and practice is significantly determined by the distribution of power within a society or in a specific institutional context” (2003:907; also see Hoch, 1996; Yiftachel, 1998). However, approaches to the consideration of power in planning and development procedures vary noticeably. Giddens propounded that power is vested chiefly within “broader structures of domination” – wide-reaching, hegemonic systems of legitimisation and control (Zunino, 2006:1831). Indeed, Healey and Barrett’s structure-agency model is based on a Giddensian ‘relational’ interpretation, “in which ‘structure’ is established by the way agents operate: deploying, acknowledging, challenging and potentially transforming resources, rules and ideas as they frame and pursue their own strategies” (1990:90).

In contrast, others have chosen to recognise the “channels through which actors can wield power to reproduce or challenge existing power configurations and social structures” (Zunino, 2006:1832). To this extent much is drawn from Foucault’s work addressing the ‘duality’ of power; the idea that it may be exercised in a top-down manner, but over time this austere hierarchical expression may only exist if local power networks possess some autonomy from the broader context (Ibid.). From this point of view, subjects of power

are capable of altering their all-encompassing matrix of power and knowledge through collective action and the institutionalisation of common social rules.

In general, institutional and structure-agency analyses aim to understand urban development as a product of the interactions between a multiplicity of actors, each operating within their respective networks of rationality, power and action - their 'structures'. They seek to resolve "how external pressures are reflected in and affected by the way in which individual agents act" (Healey and Barrett, 1990:90). In order to do so, it is asked that researchers take stock of the 'structural phenomena' that may support or undermine the involvement and representation of different actors (Albrechts, 2003). The resulting understanding of the development process is thus highly complex – requiring a depth of analysis transcending that of mainstream economics (Ball, 1998).

Whilst Ball (1998) recognises that various authors have attempted to perform structure-agency analyses, he emphasises their conceptual shortcomings in terms of the assumed dichotomy between structure and agency. He argues that a failure to create precise definitions of what constitutes 'structure' and 'agency' may lead to an infinite regress of causality or a 'conceptual collapse'. He asks, for example, what qualifies as a relevant structure – an actor's particular strategy or the external forces that served to frame their strategic decision-making process. From this point of view, agency is inexorably structure and it is thus inappropriate to suggest that one aspect exemplifies a greater 'causative capacity' than the other. Conceptual difficulties also arise concerning how a structure-agency approach can avoid *ad hoc* explanations when dealing with specific, localised systems of social rules, interests and resources.

The analytical framework of this dissertation deals with the structure-agency dialectical dilemma by following Jessop's (1996) advice regarding the study of structure in strategic-relative terms. As put forward by Guy and Henneberry, the adoption of a strategic-relative viewpoint effectively "means that structural constraints are not [regarded as] monolithic, but operate selectively, while agents are 'reflexive' and are able to 'engage in strategic calculation about their current situation'" (2000:2412; citing

Jessop, 1996:124). Fainstein (2001) has similarly approached this problem by utilizing the concept of 'perceived interest', which propounds that a developmental agency's *interest* does not represent a structured, constant array of values and strategies. Rather, it is a temporary, volatile entity projected from a complex agglomeration of individual or common ideological, socio-economic and political discourses.

Yet in spite of the aforementioned difficulties, institutional and structure-agency approaches have been drawn upon in the 'situated' consideration of particular urban development procedures². The institutional methodology used in this dissertation is principally influenced by the approach of Hugo Marcelo Zunino (2006) in his examination of power relations and social rules in the development of Santiago, Chile. His study attempted to recognise both "structural forms of constraint and the differential capacity of actors to exert power" (2006:1825) via the formulation of a conceptual framework derived from Giddens' structuration theory and the Foucauldian 'duality of power'. For the purposes of identifying and examining the penetration of various currents of social constraint the development process was divided into three broad stages, which were analysed individually.

Having outlined the intellectual basis of the study's institutional analytical approach, attention is now directed at the meanings and concepts of 'postmodern urbanisation' theory.

2.4 Postmodern Urbanisation

If the term 'postmodern urbanisation' is to be understood as "a summative depiction of the major changes that have been taking place in cities during the last quarter of the twentieth century" (Soja, 1995:125) it is clear that it must incorporate the alterations to urban form that are associated with the following:

² A notable work includes Susan Fainstein's (2001) comparative analysis of property development in New York and London from 1980 to 2000.

- The rise of a knowledge-based society (associated with the formation of a ‘digital divide’ between technologically-included and -excluded population groups);
- The reorganisation of production systems within late capitalist societies and the ‘flexibilization’ of labour arrangements;
- The international prominence of neo-liberal economic development policies;
- The ascendancy of high-speed global information, communication, transport and economic systems (after Graham and Marvin, 1996; Rochlin, 2005).

The ensuing sections attempt to identify the international urban changes associated with these trends, as a means of developing a holistic understanding of contemporary urbanisation.

2.4.1 Globalisation and Urban Fragmentation

Under conditions of globalisation, cities have experienced a strengthening of national and international linkages, which are manifested in various flows of people, resources, information and capital (Robinson, 2002). As a result, urban areas and their relevant local authorities have been forced to compete directly with one another for the location of what is an increasingly mobile form of capital (Gospodini, 2006). In both First and Third World contexts, these changes to inter-urban synergies have had a profound influence on the approaches taken to manage urban development and its socio-spatial consequences (Robinson, 2002).

A popular thesis in recent urban literature relates globalisation with the intensification of institutional and spatial *fragmentation* in urban areas (Harrison, 2003). The term ‘fragmentation’ should be understood as the process by which various inequalities are produced and reproduced within the physical, socio-economic and political landscapes of cities. Shatkin (2007) recognizes that these inequalities can take the following generalized forms:

- *Social inequality* arises as the politico-economic conditions of the social classes become more acutely mismatched. Here one may point to rising numbers of the

well-connected global business elite, which is accompanied by shrinkage of the traditional middle-classes and massive swelling of the “serving underclass” (Harrison, 2003:15; Soja, 1995).

- The generation of *political inequality* refers to the restless, disproportionate transfer of power between actors and institutions involved in urban politics. Indeed, the ongoing ‘flexibilization’ of Fordist industrial regulatory modes and “the delivery structures of the universalist hierarchical welfare state” (Davoudi, 1995:226) has affected significant changes for the practical context of urban governance. Davoudi points out that even the recent popularity of the term ‘governance’ serves to express the “shift from provision by formal government structures to the contemporary fragmentation of agencies, and of responsibilities between public, private, voluntary and household spheres” (1995:226). Shatkin (2007) suggests that internationally, the ‘decentralisation’ of political power has occurred to the benefit of knowledge-intensive, pro-growth, globally-connected firms (especially trans-national corporations) and individuals. As such, urban political arenas have supposedly become increasingly dominated by the interests of such agencies.
- *Uneven spatial development*, entailing the socio-spatial segregation of urban residential groups and the ongoing generation of disparities in terms of communal access to urban space. This process is supposedly represented by the rise of an entirely new ‘urban spatial order’ involving the appearance of edge cities, fortified residential clusters and gentrified neighbourhoods (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000). In this regard, much contemporary urban literature of the developing world directs attention at the fragmenting effects of so-called ‘gated communities’ – large, upmarket residential complexes that promise their inhabitants a degree of security and exclusivity (see amongst others Choon-Piew, 2007; Geniş, 2007). Another common theme is that cityscapes are being transformed into “complex, decentred, sprawling, polycentric urban landscapes” (Harrison, 2003:17) as a corollary of information technological innovation (see Graham and Marvin, 1996; Dear, 1995; Soja, 2000).

Therefore, one may understand a process of *urban fragmentation* as being one constituted of distinguishable yet interrelated social, politico-institutional and spatial trends. Firstly, the term refers to the aggravation of socio-economic class differences in contemporary urban societies. Secondly, it expresses the ongoing reconstruction of the urban political landscape, whereby “...urban management has become the direct object of policy attention, with city governments becoming one of many actors in the governance arena, competing for the control of agendas and access to resources” (Williams, 1999:172). As shall be explained, this tendency has in many cases been accentuated by neo-liberal political shifts, which promote the role of the private-sector in guiding and financing

urban projects. Finally, in spatial terms it has been commonly suggested that urban places are being spliced into webs of well-connected, fortress-like enclaves – to host the wealthy – and excluded, vulnerable townships that act as the realm of the poor (Harrison, 2003).

2.4.2 Neo-liberalism, Urban Governance and ‘Splintering Urbanism’

During the last quarter-century many polities of the western capitalist world have undergone a shift towards market-based economic development strategies, which stress “the classic doctrine of comparative advantage and openness to trade” (Lofchie, 1997:34). Hence one may broadly understand ‘neo-liberal’ politico-economic approaches as those that consider “a healthy private-sector as the central mechanism for achieving national economic development” (Peterson *et al.*, 1991:5).

Neo-liberal political trends have had wide-reaching implications changes for the ideologies and practices of urban governance. For one matter, in nearly all western countries local politics have become a principal focus for proactive development strategies and this has often occurred in association with the subordination of social policy at the local level (Mayer, 1995; Rochlin, 2005). As a means of brief introduction, some of the generalised objectives and provisions of neo-liberal policy, where applied to urban development in Third World nations, are to:

- Promote and enhance city-wide or inter-urban development initiatives as a means of national economic growth, employment creation and poverty reduction (through the oft-cited ‘trickle-down’ effect);
- Facilitate the production and export of goods to attract foreign investment capital;
- Grant private-sector institutions a central role in the initiation, financing and management of urban infrastructural development projects – especially in the provision of so-called ‘network systems’ of telecommunications, transportation, energy and water services (Coutard *et al.*, 2005). This is often represented as a move away from ‘formal metropolitan governance’ and state interventionism towards a *laissez-faire* approach (Williams, 1999);
- Promote free market competition and choice as a means of sustainable development (also after Healey *et al.*, 1995; Halfani, 1997; Robinson, 2002).

As these policies have begun to dominate the macroeconomic discourses of late capitalist societies, attention has been drawn towards their effect on urbanisation processes. For example, Shatkin (2007) has dealt with recent changes to the realm of urban management and governance in the developing world, in relation to the rise of economic liberalisation policy. On one hand, he recognizes that because profitable and pro-growth private-sector actors are ever-growing in importance within urban politics, local governments have been increasingly inclined to formulate 'public-private partnerships' with such actors during developmental procedures – especially with respect to the provision of urban infrastructure.

On the other hand, Shatkin points to "the privatization of planning", defined as "the transfer of responsibility for, and power over, the visioning of urban futures and the exercise of social action for urban change from public to private-sector actors" (2007:10). He posits that this trend has arisen due to the perception that private institutions are more capable (than their public counterparts) of responding to the needs of international corporate actors and securing a competitive position in the global urban economy. Ultimately this typically neo-liberal attitude has promoted the emergence of urban spatial forms characterized by large-scale, privately-financed 'mega-projects'; as well as public spaces and gated communities that embrace fashionable and internationally-transposable architectural and urbanist themes (Ibid.).

Graham and Marvin's (1996, 2001) work regarding the influence of large-scale infrastructure networks on urban socio-spatial dynamics has also been of great influence in contemporary fields of urban research. These authors, along with Simon Guy (see Graham and Guy, 2005) have chosen to relate the 'unbundling' of modern urban infrastructural networks with exclusionary and divisive tendencies within local urban communities. Coutard (2005) recognises three key points emanating from this field of research. Firstly, the flexibilization and deregulation of traditional urban infrastructural systems is deemed to have aggravated socio-spatial inequalities in terms of access to network services. Secondly, the generation of these disparities is depicted as detrimental

to urban social cohesiveness. Thirdly, it is proposed that highly productive socio-economic spaces are invariably serviced by first-rate, privatised network systems to the neglect of other urban areas.

In sum, the works of Graham, Marvin and Guy focus specifically on how neo-liberal attitudes towards public space and infrastructure have led to a *splintered* urban condition. Graham (2001) suggests that the rise of privatized infrastructural systems (including deregulated water, electricity, telecommunication and transportation networks), enclave-like spaces, streets and gated communities symbolizes this splintering process. In many ways this tendency towards *splintering* is tantamount to the processes of urban *fragmentation* that are the subject of so much attention within globalisation literature.

2.4.3 Synthesis

With all these wide-reaching changes in social, political and economic structures taking place, it is a difficult task to make sense of contemporary urbanisation in late capitalist societies. Nevertheless, Soja (1995, 2000) has attempted to resolve these multifarious observations into a comprehensive set of processes. He suggests that contemporary urban development is characterized by:

- i. A shift from Fordist industrial organisation to a less rigid arrangement of diversified production centres – involving the emergence of ‘technopoles’ of knowledge- and transaction-intensive businesses;
- ii. The strengthening of inter-personal, international and inter-urban linkages under globalisation and its *fragmenting* effects on late capitalist economy, polity, and social structures;
- iii. A restructuring of urban spatial forms to create sprawling, fragmented, decentred urban landscapes;
- iv. A change in urban social structure, involving the rise of a well-connected global business elite, being accompanied by a swelling of the ‘serving underclass’ and a shrinkage of the blue-collar middleclass (Harrison, 2003);

- v. A general trend towards “ungovernability”, the “destruction of public space” and the rise of “architectonics of security-obsessed urbanism” (Soja, 2000:303). This is symbolized by the proliferation of gated communities and closely-watched semi-public spaces as new methods of ‘policing’ urban space;
- vi. The proliferation of ‘simulacra’ and a blurring between reality and non-reality in the creation of urban spaces – sometimes described as the rise of an “urban hyperreality” (1995:135) or the ‘deterritorialisation’ cultural meanings and ideologies (Amin and Thrift, 1995).

Accordingly, there have been various attempts to relate these generalised processes with particular urban analyses. Davis (1990), Dear (1995) and Soja (1995, 2000) have used Los Angeles (L.A.) as an empirical case. Dear argues that L.A. epitomises a postmodern urban condition whereby “a glittering First World city sits atop a polyglot Third World substructure” (1995:43). He identifies horizontally-opposed forces of ‘deconstruction’ and ‘reconstruction’ as pivotal elements of urban growth; suggesting that the thread-like vestiges of the modern urban region are slowly being unwoven and yarned into a new high-technology urban fabric.

Furthermore, proponents of postmodern urbanisation theories often point to reductions in urban density through processes of residential and commercial decentralization. To this extent a ‘polycentric’ aspect of contemporary urbanisation is supposedly represented by the appearance of ‘edge cities’ and new ‘downtowns’ (Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000). Finally, cities are seen to exemplify some degree of aesthetic *disorderliness* that stand in stark contrast to “the neat, tent-like density gradients” traditionally portrayed by modernist urban geographers (Soja, 1995:132).

Dear and Flusty state that the overall result of these processes is an urban area that is “characterized by acute fragmentation and specialization – a partitioned gaming board subject to perverse laws and peculiarly discrete, disjointed urban outcomes” (1998:66). Therefore, the spatial form of the typical ‘postmodern city’ is generally regarded as a sprawling, exclusive, multi-nodal and superficially chaotic entity; with these tendencies

also being reflected in its institutional and socio-economic structures (Dear and Flusty, 1998; Soja, 1995, 2000).

2.4.4 Post-Apartheid Urban Literature

Harrison (2003) notes that whilst the academic discourses regarding urbanisation under globalisation and, more generally, postmodernism were developed to explain changes in urban form in the North (the ‘developed’ world), these theorizations have been related to developing nations, including South Africa. Bearing in mind the highly segregated urban legacy of apartheid, many post-apartheid studies direct attention at the possible entrenchment of the apartheid city’s social and spatial inequalities (Mabin, 1995; Parnell, 1997; Todes, 1998; Williams, 2000; Pieterse, 2004). Harrison posits that a “principal issue” of contemporary South African urban studies is “the continuation of fragmentation after the end of Apartheid – in a sense, a market apartheid replacing a racial apartheid” (2003:12).

Murray (2004) has considered the city of Johannesburg from a theoretical vantage point of postmodern urbanisation, concluding that the South African city does indeed exemplify features in common with Los Angeles. He finds evidence of increasing polarization of the social classes; as well as the rise of fortified urban enclaves embracing an panopticon-like architectural style (resulting from a lack of faith in the efficacy of public policing services) and “the dwindling supply of public space” (2004:152). On the other hand, Bremner (2000) has analysed Johannesburg’s attempts to gain a competitive foothold in the world economy through measures such as the Rapid Land Development Programme. She concludes that “urban development in general, and in Greater Johannesburg in particular has, since 1994, reinforced rather than confronted apartheid geography” (2000:1).

With regard to other South African urban areas, Jenkins and Wilkinson (2002) have focused on the effects of the globalizing world economy on urban development in Cape Town. They too find evidence of increasing social fragmentation (the growing divide

between the *nuvo riche* and the poor) and the general reinforcement of apartheid urban geographies. Todes (1998) has identified remarkably similar trends in the post-apartheid socio-economic dynamics of Durban (eThekweni).

Also with reference to the port city of Durban, Freund (2007) suggests that the growth of Umhlanga Ridge on the city's northern interface represents the development of a typical 'edge city'; symbolising the 'privatisation of planning' due to the large degree of planning expertise and capital investment provided by Moreland Developments³ – a private-sector company. Yet he is quick to point out that such enclaves of wealth have arisen in great disproportion to the massive proliferation of low-income peripheral townships.



Image 2.1: Westward View of Umhlanga Ridge.

The piecemeal growth of Umhlanga Ridge, largely under the financial input and planning of a private development company, has been interpreted by Freund (2007) as typical aspect of urban development under conditions of globalisation.

Source: David Hall (2007) private collection

³ In the latter part of 2007 the company name changed from 'Moreland' to 'Tongaat-Hullett Developments'. For the sake of consistency, the firm shall be referred to by the former.

The gated community phenomenon in South Africa is another issue that has been afforded significant academic attention (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; Jürgens and Gnad, 2002; Landman and Schönteich, 2002; Saff, 2004). These studies focus on the manner in which the ideologies of post-apartheid middle-classes and a heightened fear of crime have lead to the generation of high-security, “recreationally self-sufficient” (Murray, 2004:149) gated residential estates and fortified suburban citadels in peripheral urban areas.

In almost all South African urban case studies it has been proposed that patterns of urban segregation are persisting, albeit through class-based modes of social exclusion as opposed to pure racial discrimination. As Murray writes, “new kinds of segregation – whether social or spatial, semiotic or symbolic – have become the visible signs of [South African] postmodern urbanism” (2004:140). These trends towards socio-spatial and economic fragmentation have been made despite the creation of various policies aimed at *integrating* the post-apartheid city (Maharaj, 2003). Pieterse (2004) has pointed out the most oft-cited explanations for this contradictory tendency, which are predominantly based on a proposed state of ‘institutional’ or ‘political fragmentation’; particularly with reference to issues of local government incapacity. These are listed below:

- Local institutional contexts may have been ‘overloaded’ by the operational implications of complex organisational and territorial reshufflings that took place after 1994. It is suggested that the resulting state of institutional paralysis, aggravated by lack of experience at the managerial level, have hindered the implementation of the highly complex aspects of integrated development policy.
- Widespread confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of governmental spheres and sectors (especially within local government), may have undermined municipal operational and strategic capacities.
- Various political pressures (provided by published sets of objectives, targets and specific indicators such as the Millennium Development Goals) to achieve numerical targets have influenced the prioritisation procedures of government; shifting them away from the promotion of complex normative concerns towards the efficient provision of bulk infrastructure.
- The inability of government to understand or engage with urban economic processes has allowed property market mechanisms and their spatial consequences to proceed

relatively unchecked. This has led to the exacerbation of socio-spatial inequalities in terms of race and class, which for historical reasons are closely interrelated in South Africa.

- Although development policy is strongly based on politics of consensus and participation, existing politico-economic power relationships inevitably serve to misrepresent competing interests during participatory procedures. As a result, urban development in South Africa has generally proceeded in accordance with the interests and priorities of a few key actors to the neglect of holistic social concerns.

2.5 Final Discussion

In order to succinctly represent the major concepts that will be employed in this dissertation, it is prudent to reconsider the study's subsidiary research questions (refer to table 1.1):

- *In what ways has the Ballito spatial structure changed since 1994?*
- *What socio-economic, historical, physical/environmental, institutional, actor and policy-based explanations can be found for these changes?*

The first inquiry involved relating the developmental experience of Ballito with 'postmodern urbanisation' theories of contemporary urban growth, in order to identify any broad concurrencies. However, recent urban analytical studies have been overly-eager to identify generalized international tendencies of urban growth and management, especially those that are deemed to result from a globalizing economy (Harrison, 2003). Murray proposes that "one of the ironies of scholarly debates in urban studies is a notable gap in the existing literature between grand, totalising theories such as 'global cities' and postmodern urbanism, on the one hand, and empirical studies of cities in the so-called less-developed world" (2004:158).

This dissertation has responded to the request of Jenkins and Wilkinson; that researchers should "move beyond generalised models and analytical schema to engage directly and in

an adequately nuanced way with the fluid and diverse complexities of each locality in its own right ... and the institutional implications of these” (2002:47). Therefore, in keeping with international research trends, the study has analysed Ballito’s post-1994 development whilst taking account of the following:

- Urban areas in different national and regional contexts may exhibit *diverging typologies and strengths of inter-urban linkages* and thus differ with respect to their degree of participation in the global economy (Shatkin, 2007). As expressed by Graham and Guy (2005), some places are ‘sticky’ in the context of global capitalism and its volatile, transcendental fluxes of capital.
 - Urban growth is a process guided by *complex interactions of forces that span from the global to the local scales* (Amin and Thrift, 1995; Robinson, 2006; Shatkin, 2007). Furthermore, any case of urban spatial development may be influenced by existing spatial forms, as well as localised preferences, social relations, cultural and class differences.
 - *Actors and agencies create development whilst operating within structures* (sets of ideas, rules and resources) that guide individual actions and, in turn, are reproduced by them. Hence there is a need for agency-centred understandings of urban development; approaches that recognise the power and interests of various stakeholders in the shaping of urban areas (Ibid.). To this extent the study draws on selective aspects of the ‘structure and agency’ approach to developmental research (Healey and Barrett, 1990), particularly the analytical perspective adopted by Zunino (2006), in the conduction of a local institutional analysis.
- *How has a state of ‘institutional thickness’ (or lack thereof) affected Ballito’s development process?*

Amin and Thrift (1995) have proposed a model of ‘institutional thickness’ in response to the proposition that “success at the local level in securing economic growth cannot be reduced to a set of narrow economic factors” (1995:101). Instead it is posited that social and cultural factors are tantamount to the attainment of such success. One may understand a ‘thick’ institutional context as one that shows a relatively great capacity to cope with global trends and processes in the delivery of local developmental objectives. Although an abstract, rather formless concept, such a state is deemed to arise from the following factors:

- The involvement of highly diverse and numerous arrays of institutions in development procedures – including firms; financial institutions; local chambers of commerce; training agencies; trade associations; local authorities; development agencies; innovation centres; clerical bodies; unions; government agencies providing premises, land and infrastructure; business service organisations; tourism associations; conservancy forums; marketing boards, etc. (“all or some of which can provide a basis for the growth of particular local practices and collective representations in social networks” [1995:102]).
- The presence of active interrelationships within the local institutional network, involving “high levels of contact, communication and information interchange” (Ibid.).
- The existence and operation of rigid and well-defined “structures of domination and/or patterns of coalition”, which can give recognition to minority interests and can “control rogue behaviour” in development scenarios (Ibid.).
- The formation of a common agenda, or universal goal amongst the involved institutions. This agenda does not need to take the form of a precise set of objectives, rather it can exist as a “loosely defined script” (Ibid.).

Keivani *et al.* (2002) have utilised this model in their consideration of Warsaw, particularly with respect to the local government’s performance in the promotion of global city development. This dissertation has adopted a similar approach to understanding the strengths and shortcomings of Ballito’s local institutional context within development procedures of the post-apartheid era.

Chapter 3: Changes to the Ballito Spatial Structure

Due to the fact that this dissertation deals with the issues that have served to promote a particular case of urban spatial change, it is necessary to outline the urban growth trends that have materialized during the period of analysis. As such, this chapter will introduce the regional and local geographical contexts of the urban case study. Following that, a series of diagrams will attempt to demonstrate the general patterns of change that have been exemplified by Ballito from 1994 until mid-2007.

3.1 *Background and Geographical Context*

In 1953, when Doctor Eddie Rubenstein first laid eyes on the land that would subsequently play host to the highly prosperous coastal town of Ballito, his natural sense of opportunity must have immediately initiated a chain reaction in his mind. Despite his vocation as a Johannesburg-based dentist, he possessed an uncanny knack for successful township development; one that would enable him to create over 120 South African townships during his lifetime (Nash, 1994). It was the age of plush post-war extravagance and Rubenstein could easily recognize the financial promise offered by well-located coastal developments for ‘second-home’ residential use.

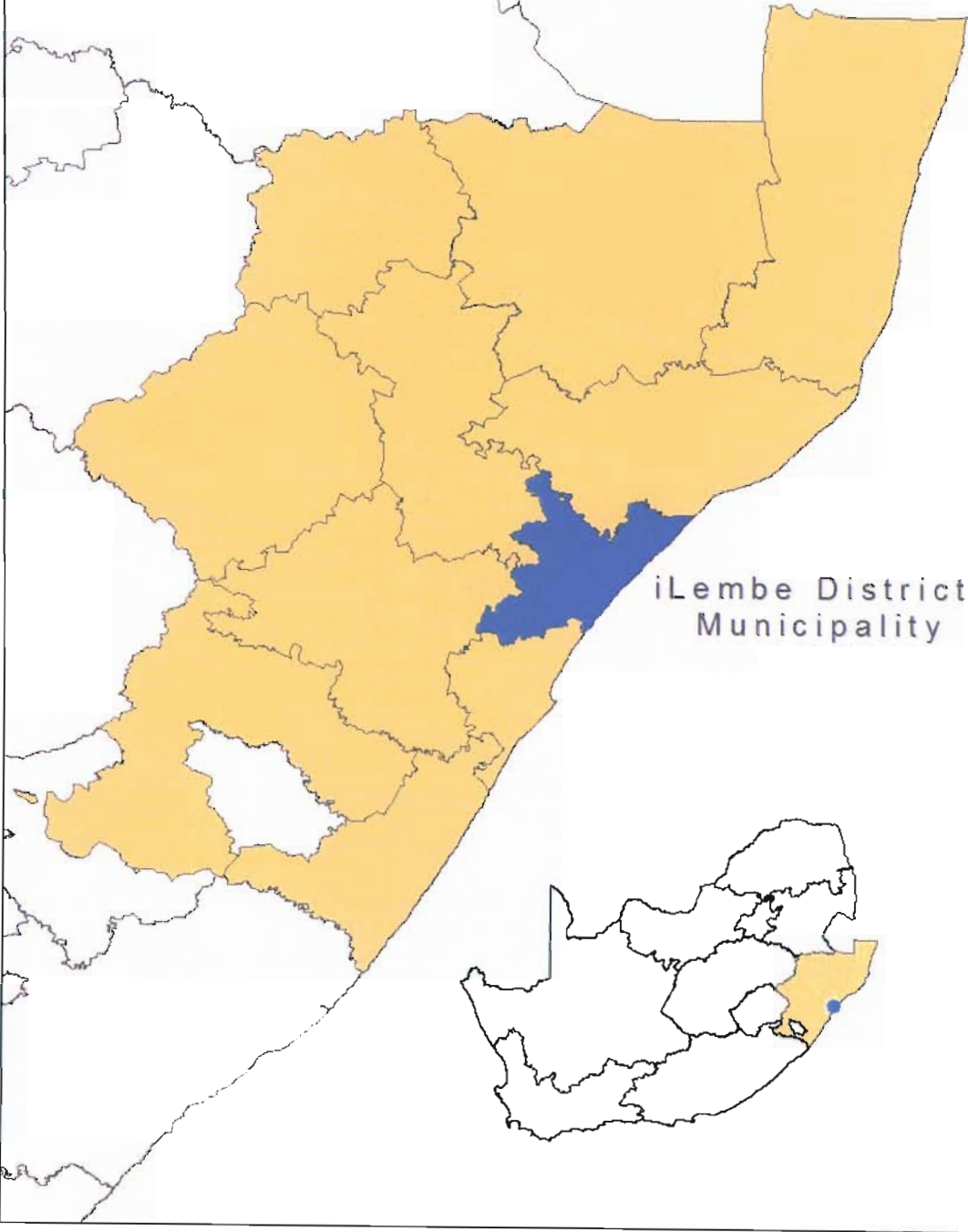
Nevertheless, at this moment in time his attention was sharply focused on the North Coast of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal, refer to figure 3.1, page 41). This region, long famed for its majestic beaches and immense aquatic and territorial biodiversity, was predominantly under the ownership of the province’s sugar farmers. Townships were scarce with the exception of agricultural service villages, which were invariably located alongside inland transportation routes. In most cases, coastal hamlets were constituted of farmers’ holiday cottages, which could only be constructed by striking private deals with the landowner. Apart from these clusters of under-utilised and poorly-serviced dwellings, the coastal strip was nothing less than a vast expanse of near-impenetrable indigenous bush, wetlands and forests.

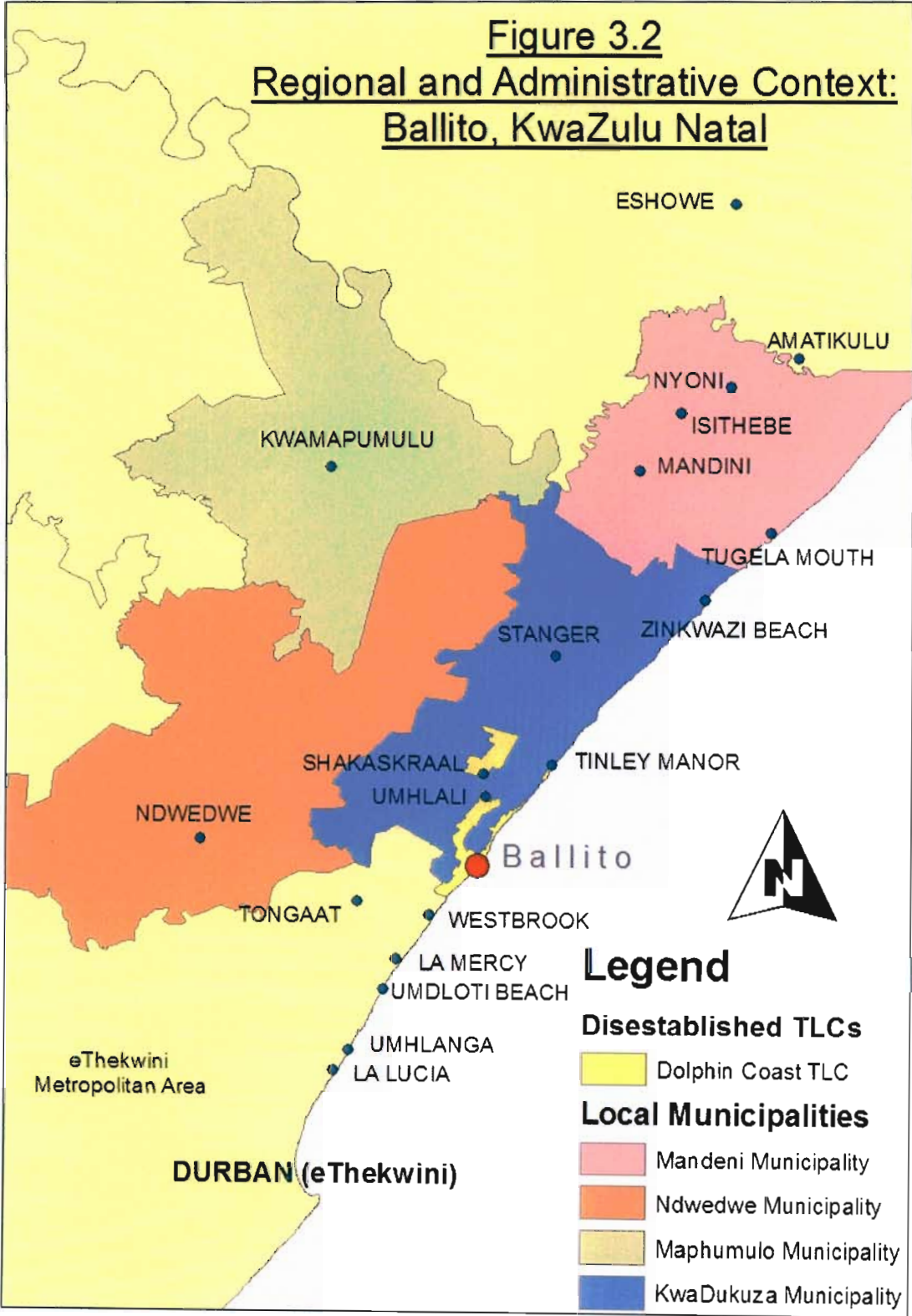
In this context, a deal was forged in 1953 between Rubenstein and a prominent local landowner, Mr. Basil Townsend, for the sale of a small land portion abutting the Indian Ocean (Nash, 1994). Minimal service infrastructure was promptly installed; cadastral pegs were laid out and the township named Ballito (after a brand of Italian hosiery) was born before the year-end of 1954.

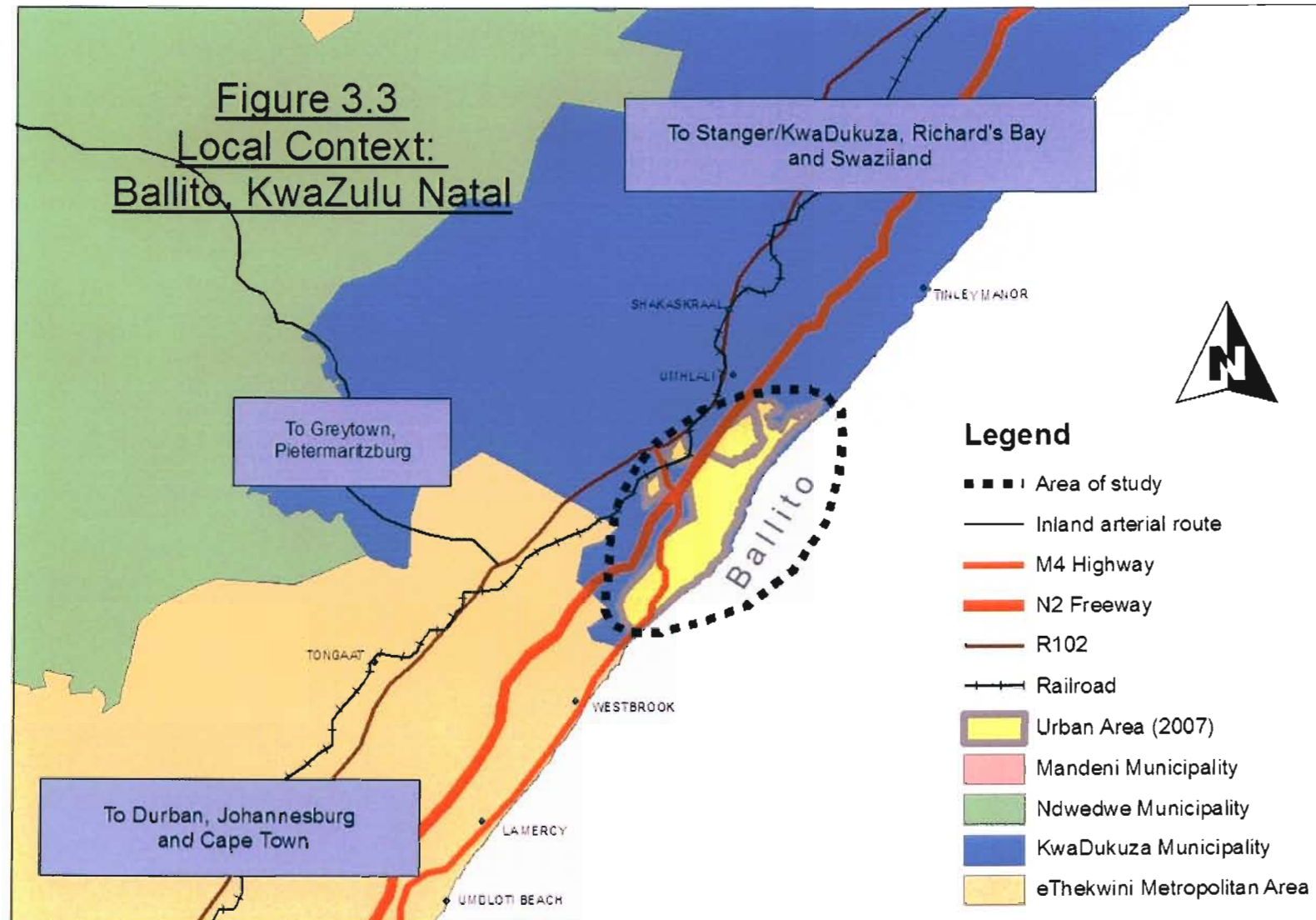
Following its foundation, Ballito's reputation as a convenient and idyllic vacation environment grew exponentially. It became particularly popular amongst tourists from the inland territories of South Africa – a fact that ideally positioned the town to capitalize on the 'second home'-owning phenomenon of the post-World War II epoch. In hindsight, its residential property market has been one of the most consistently active out of all South African coastal tourism-based towns (Nash, 1994). However, recent surges of development have forever altered the urban setting and these spatial alterations shall be discussed in section 3.3. First it is necessary to introduce the area of study in greater geographical detail:

Figure 3.1 (following) demonstrates the national and provincial location of the Ballito region (represented by the area shaded and labeled 'Ilembe District Municipality'). Figure 3.2 (page 42) provides a close-up of the Ilembe municipal region, showing Ballito's position in relation to other settlements and post-1994 regional administrative entities. Finally, figure 3.3 (page 43) provides Ballito's local geographical context, depicting the study area in the context of the regional movement system.

Figure 3.1
KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa







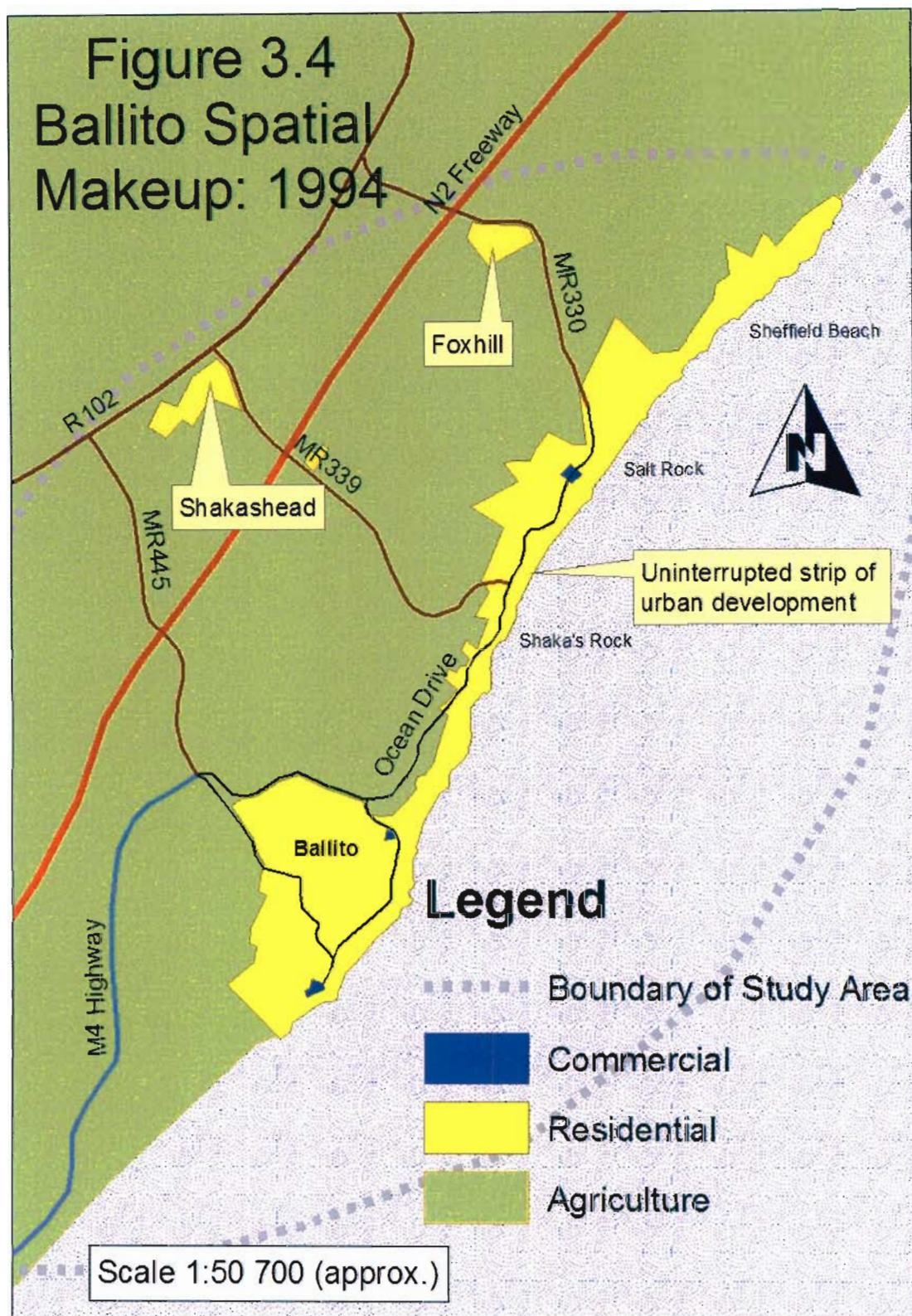
3.2 *Pre-1994 Spatial Structure*

Ballito's relatively rapid rate of urban growth during the 1960s and the subsequent two decades ensured that some time before 1994, it had ceased to exist as an independent coastal township. Instead, the formerly distinct series of Ballito, Shaka's Rock, Salt Rock and Sheffield Beach townships had merged to form 'new Ballito'⁴ – a linear strip of uninterrupted residential development (please refer to figure 3.4, following this page). The great proportion of this coast-hugging development served to provide holiday accommodation for middle-income population groups. Low- to middle-income residential precincts were inland-located at small housing clusters such as Foxhill and Shakashead (represented in figure 3.4) or the formal townships of Shakaskraal, Tongaat, Groutville and Stanger (now known as KwaDukuza, shown in figure 3.2).

The pre-1994 rate of residential development also served to enlarge the local threshold population for commercial development. This fact ensured that by 1994 three small commercial centres were in existence, providing a small variety of household and personal service-type facilities to the seasonally-burgeoned residential populace. Industrial enterprises were almost entirely absent from the area of study.

⁴ Hereafter referred to as simply 'Ballito' for the sake of consistency and clarity.

Figure 3.4
Ballito Spatial
Makeup: 1994



3.3 Post-1994 Changes to the Ballito Spatial Structure

Figures 3.4 through 3.10 have attempted to demonstrate the predominant spatial changes exhibited by the town of Ballito, from 1994 to 2007. Figure 3.4, briefly explained in the previous subsection 3.2, displays the spatial makeup of Ballito at the start of the study period. It served as the template against which subsequent spatial patterns were compared.

Table 3.1: Summary of Figures 3.5 to 3.9 and Notable Points Regarding the Spatial Development of Ballito; 1994 to 2007.

Figure (page number)	Year	Significant Spatial Alterations		
		Residential	Commercial	Industrial
3.5 (pp. 47)	1998	Significant residential expansion since 1994, especially along the southern coastline, and inland (encroaching on land previously used for agricultural purposes). Enlargement of the Shakashead semi-formal/informal settlement has occurred in conjunction with nearby industrial development.	Appearance of a new commercial centre (the Ballito Mall). This represents the first step towards the emergence of a new central business district.	By this time, significant industrial activity has appeared adjacent to major inland movement routes. A light-industrial initiative (located adjacent to Shakashead township) was specifically aimed at providing employment to inland-situated African populations.
3.6 (pp. 48)	2002	Since 1998 an alarming rate of residential expansion has occurred to the south of Ballito, involving the conversion of sizeable tracts of agricultural land into residential complexes.		
3.7 (pp. 49)	2004	Further expansion of the residential landscape, noticeably in the southern portion of the study area. By this time, the residential threshold is great enough to warrant the construction of a primary and secondary school.	Large-scale commercial development has materialized in the proximity of the MR339-M4 intersection. The great proportion of this development occurred as part of the erection of a 'lifestyle'-themed shopping centre.	
3.8 (pp. 50)	2005	Alarming degree of expansion of middle- to high-income residential activity along the coastal strip, as well as of inland townships (such as Shakashead) and the emerging central business district.		
3.9 (pp. 51)	2007	Patterns of rapid residential, commercial and industrial development persist. However, a noticeable degree of industrial development has appeared in close proximity to the Shakashead township.		

Figure 3.5
Ballito Spatial
Makeup: 1998

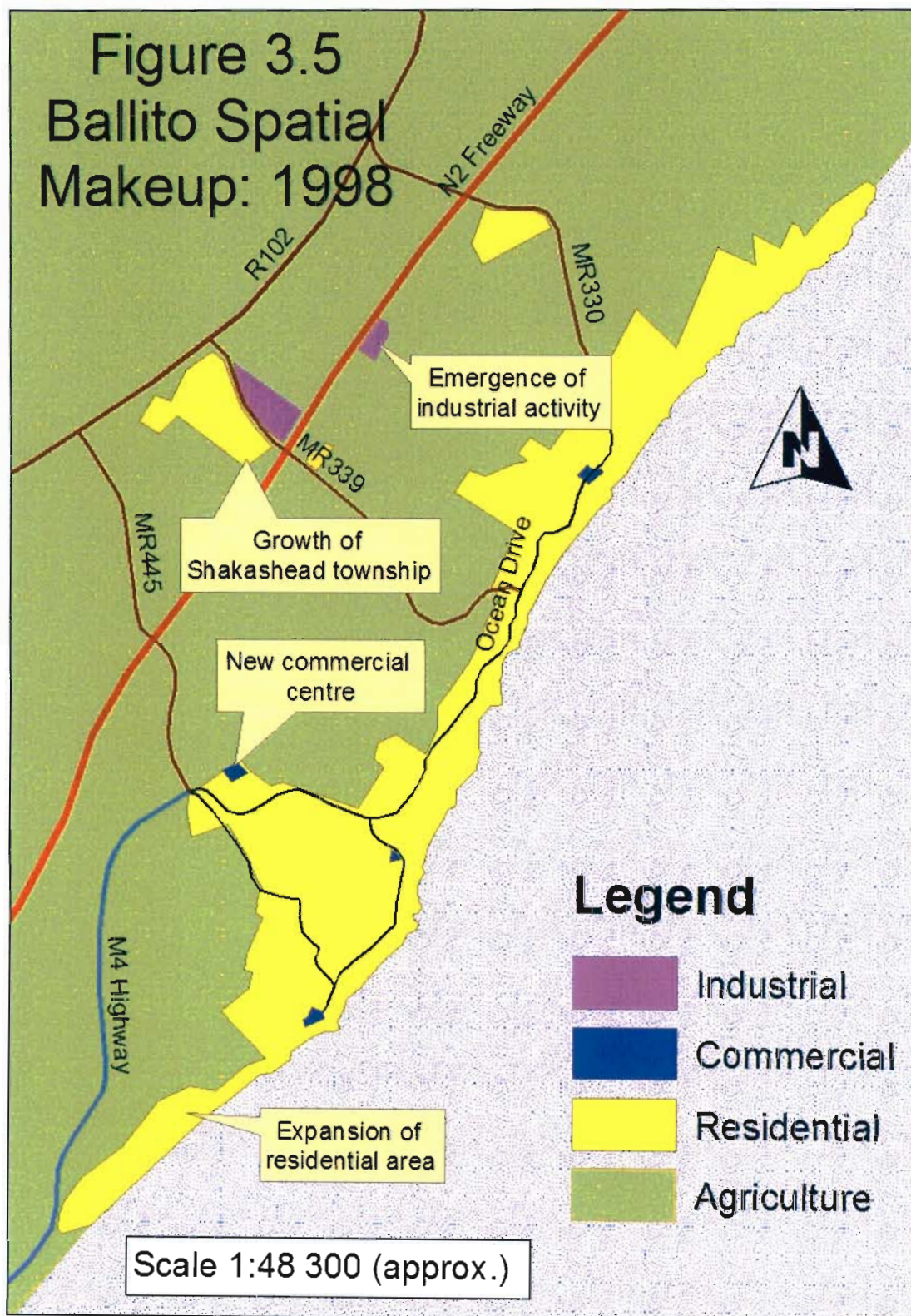
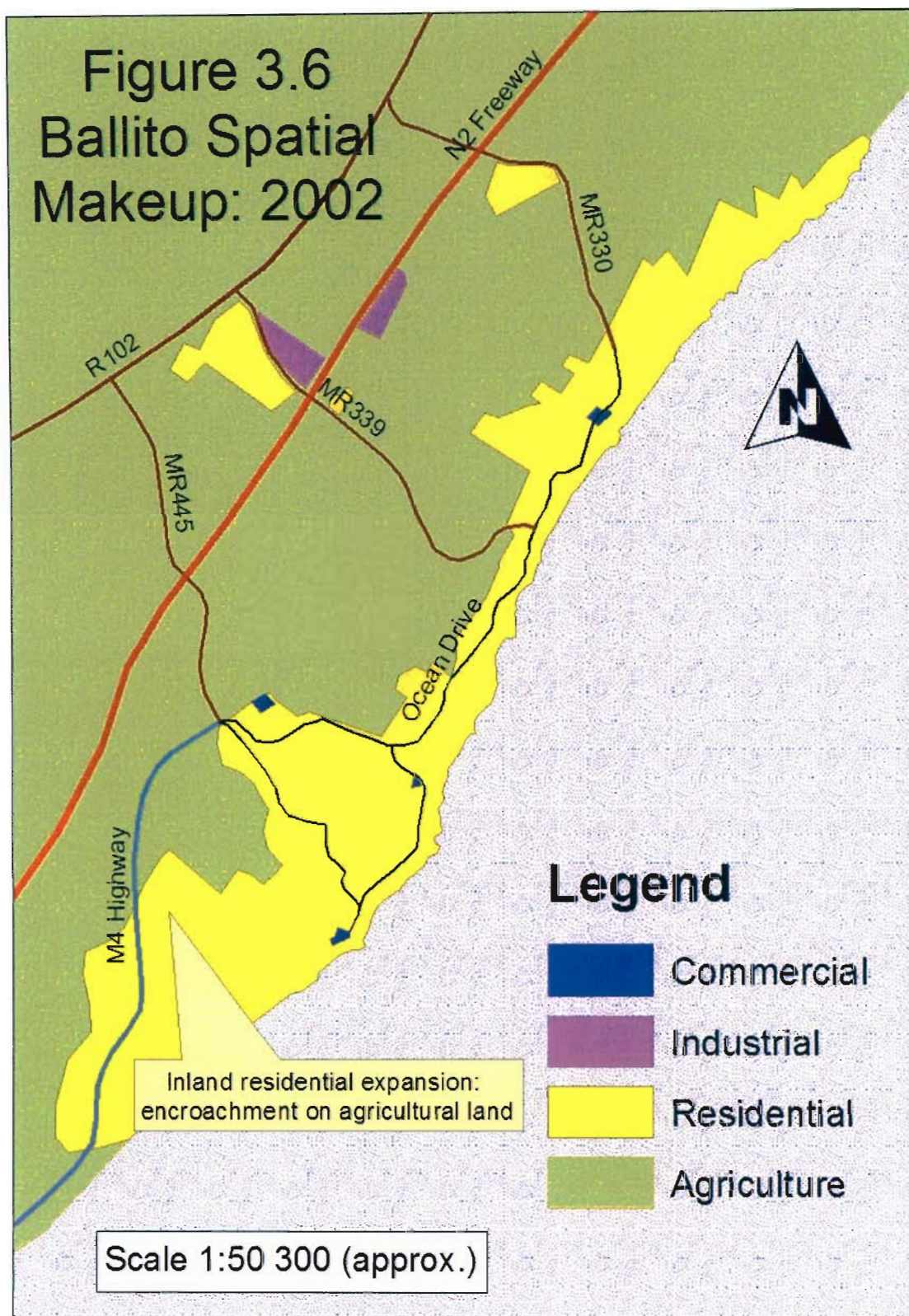
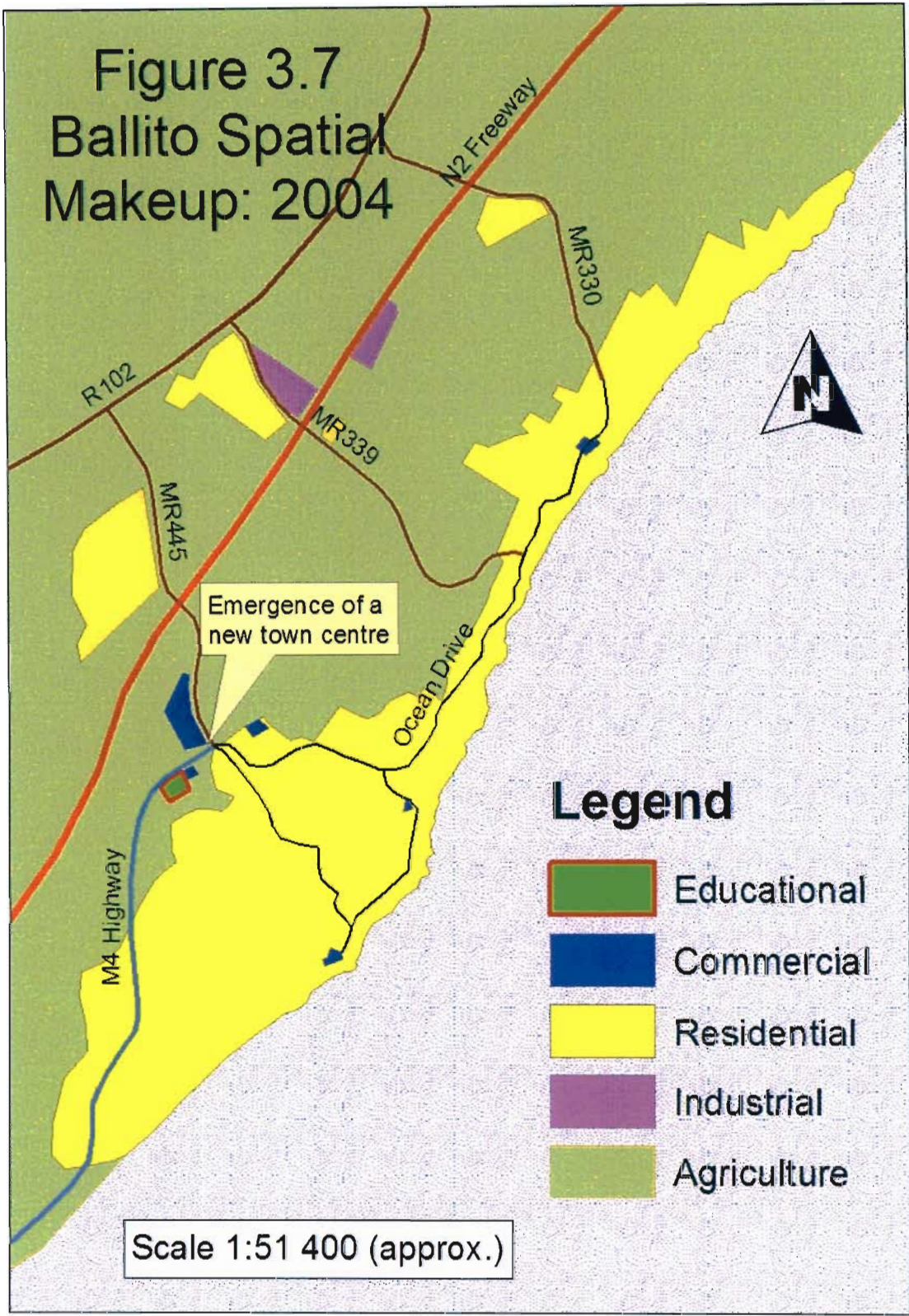


Figure 3.6
Ballito Spatial
Makeup: 2002





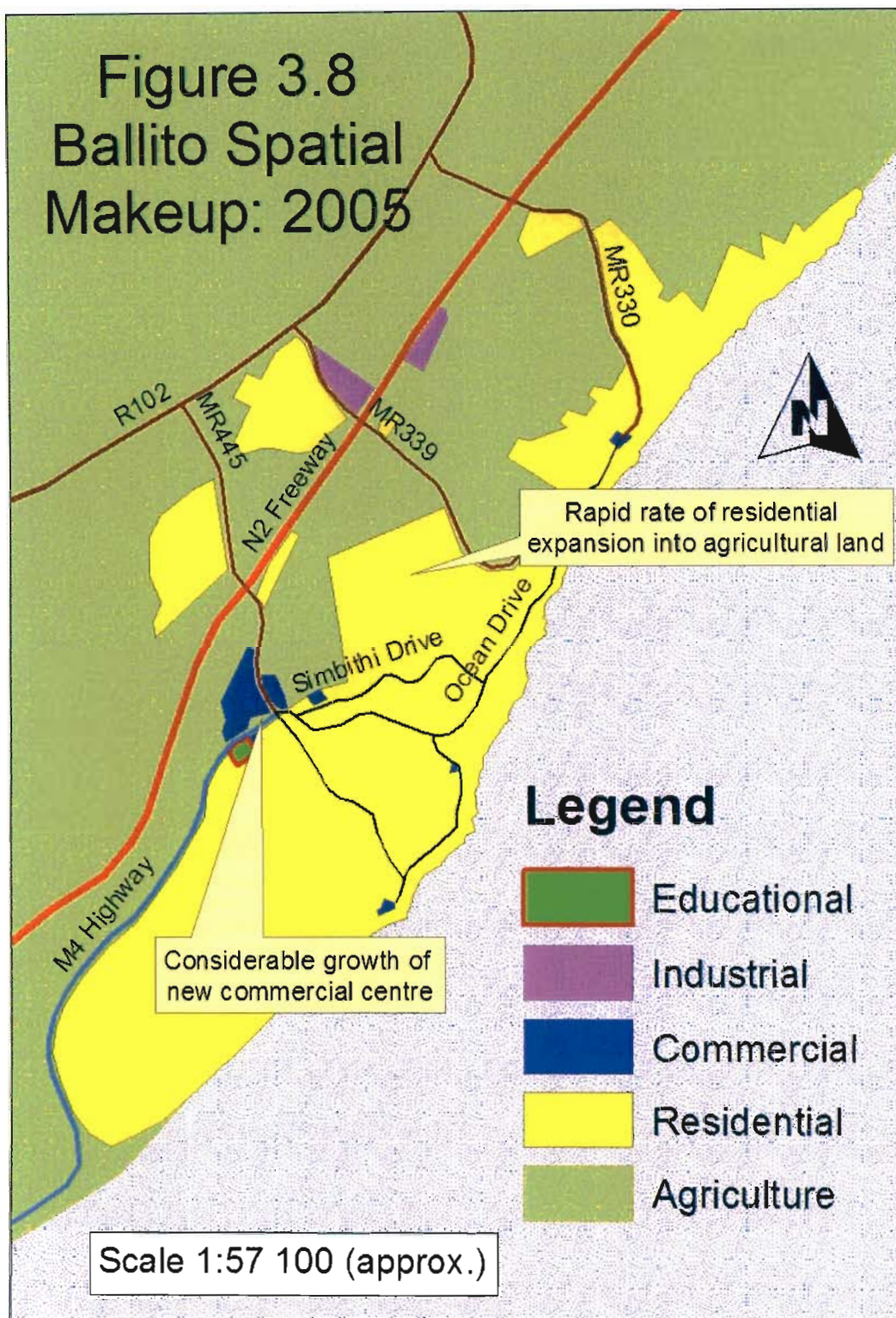
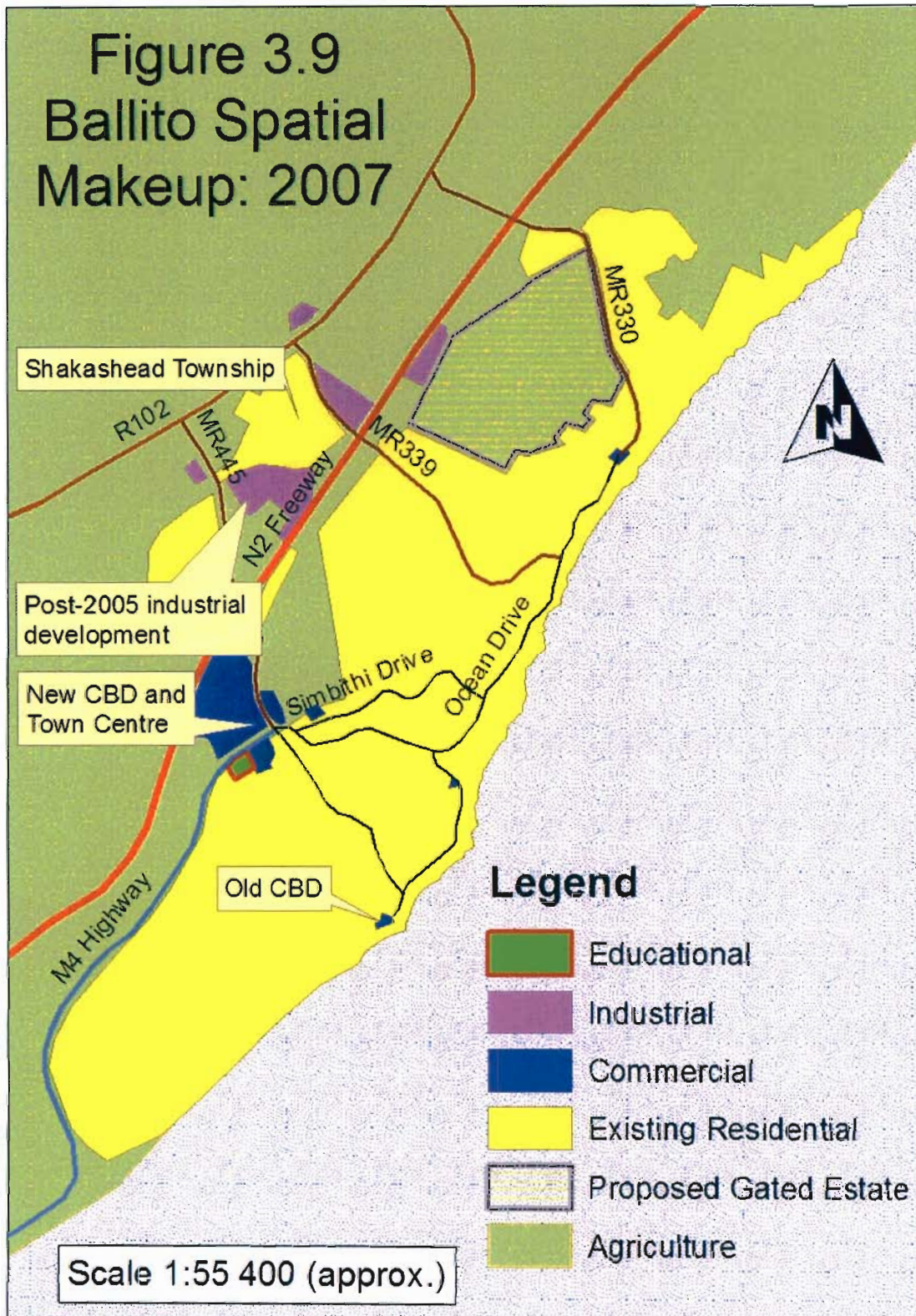


Figure 3.9
Ballito Spatial
Makeup: 2007

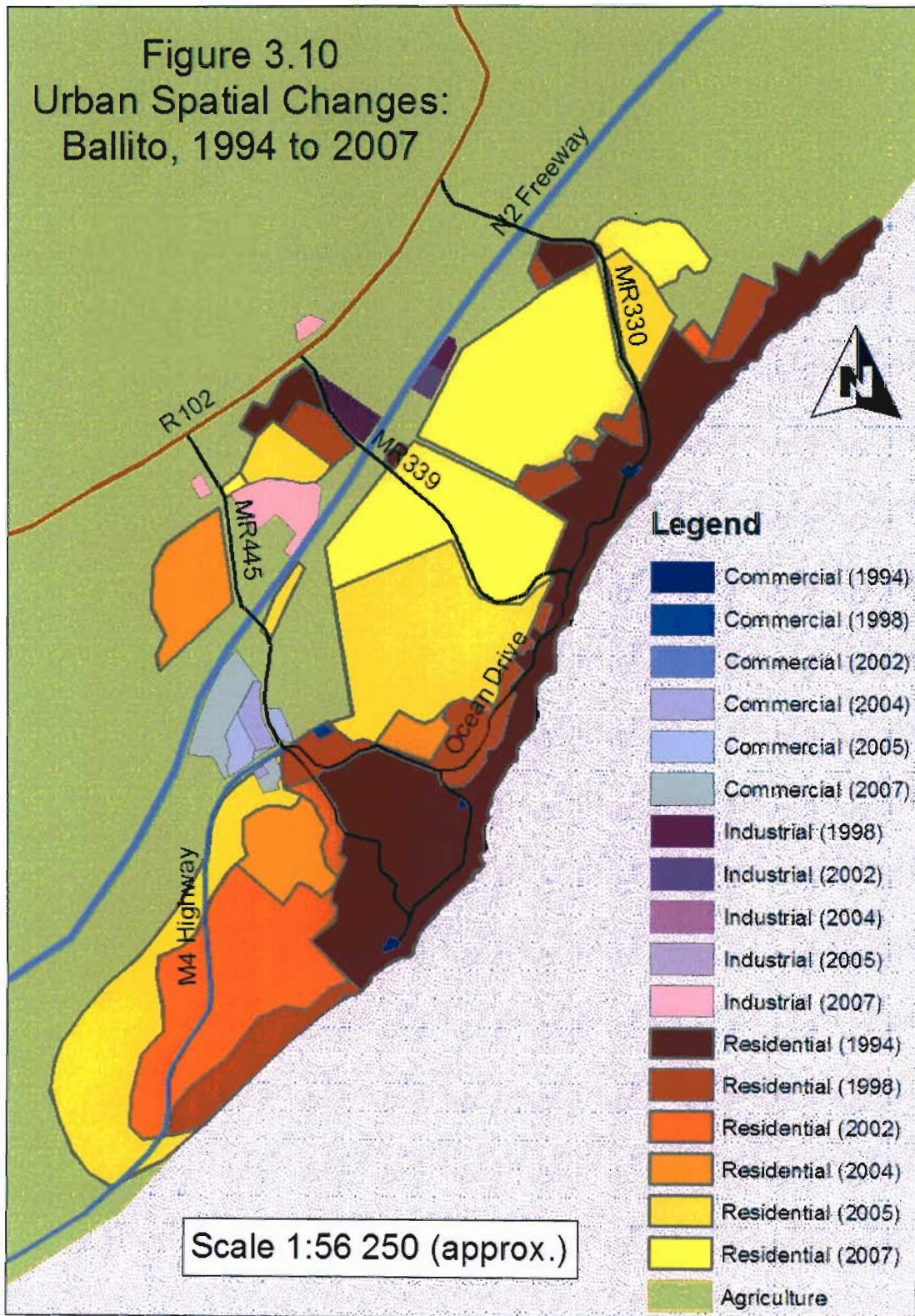


In essence, this diagrammatic series and the visual summary provided by figure 3.10 (page 53) show that in recent years (notably after 2002) Ballito has experienced extensive urban residential sprawl at the expense of vast expanses of agricultural land. Furthermore, the town has evidently played host to a series of rapid changes in terms of commercial location – resulting in the appearance of a new central business district (CBD) or ‘town centre’. Since 1994 industrial activity has materialized, with service-type enterprises locating within inland vicinities in close proximity to major transportation routes. A less obvious deduction from these images is the extent to which low- to middle-income townships have expanded alongside inland movement routes; yet the example of Shakashead township does indicate that such a process has unfolded.

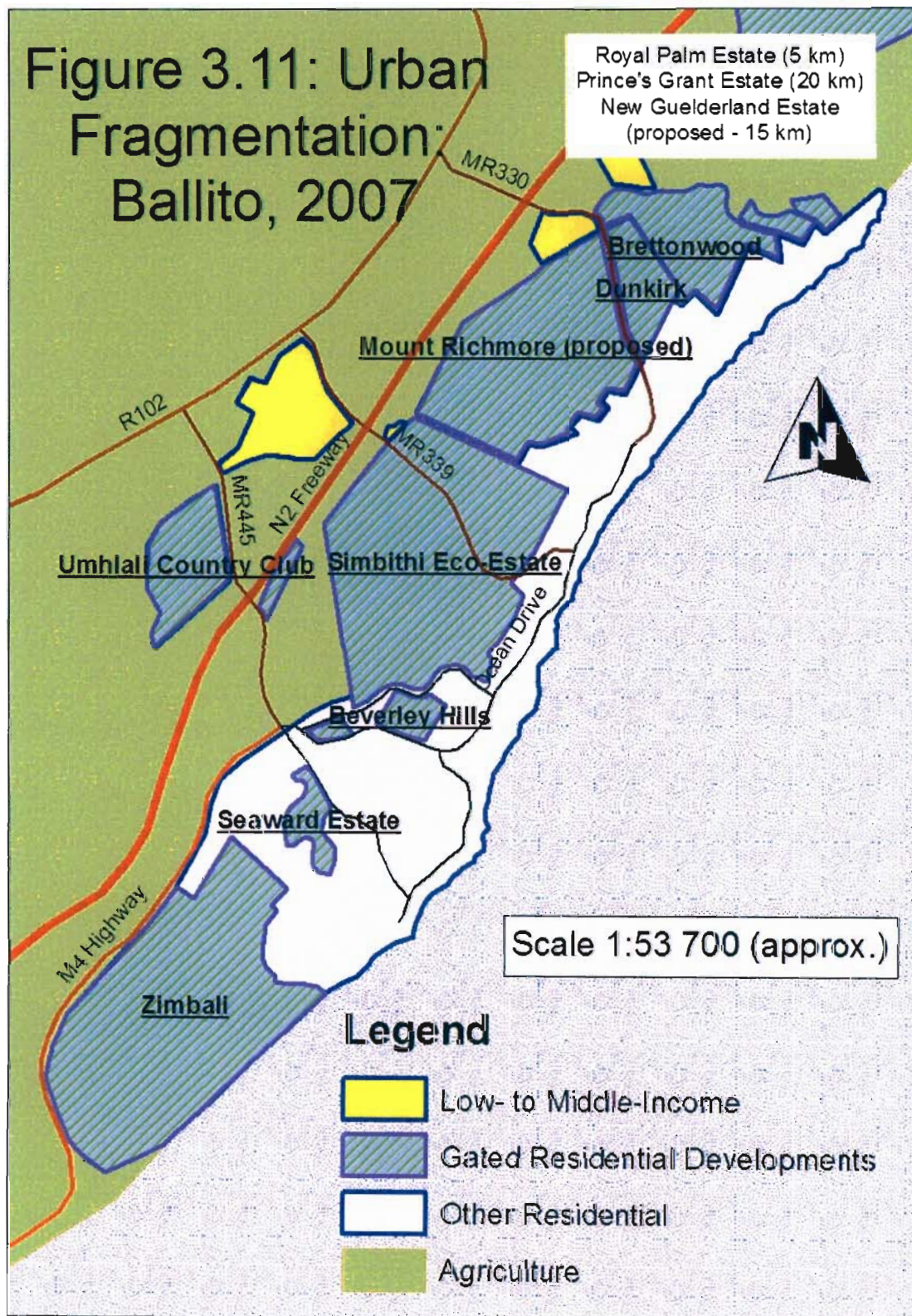
One of the defining characteristics of Ballito’s post-1994 restructuring is the proliferation of low-density, ‘gated’ residential developments, which in this case have acted as the main instigators of urban sprawl. In general, these estates provide upmarket accommodation and impose austere restrictions on the entrance and movement of non-residents.

The intention of figure 3.11 (page 54) is to show that Ballito’s residential growth has not occurred in a manner that exemplifies a seamless transition from expensive to low-priced land areas. At present, there are no distinctive zones of “working people’s homes” or middle-income housing in Ballito, which one might expect of a quintessential ‘modern city’. Instead, enclaves of wealth and security have arisen in juxtaposition to pre-1994 urban forms, significantly cramping the urban landscape’s degree of physical ‘permeability’ or accessibility.

Figure 3.10
Urban Spatial Changes:
Ballito, 1994 to 2007



**Figure 3.11: Urban Fragmentation:
Ballito, 2007**



One of the study's objectives is to consider Ballito's post-1994 spatial growth pattern with reference to those of contemporary international urban areas and specifically 'postmodern urbanisation' literature (refer to table 1.1, page 3). At first glance, the process of change represented by the aforementioned figures probably does point to the manifestation of some aspects of 'postmodern urbanisation'. For example, one could regard the appearance of the new Ballito central business district as an instance of commercial decentralization or polycentric development – a mode of urban growth that is readily apparent in many rapidly-growing suburban landscapes of South Africa (Mabin, 1995; Murray, 2004).

Ballito's contemporary urban form also entails a degree of aesthetic 'messiness' or 'disorder', which is another thesis of postmodern urban literature (Dear and Flusty, 1998; Soja, 2000). Granted, this is a highly subjective observation due to the fact that various individuals may have differing interpretations of what is visually pleasing or dissatisfying. However, the images and discussions to follow in this chapter will demonstrate the town's limitations in terms of architectural continuity and place legibility. In particular, image 3.14 (page 57) reveals the significant incongruity that exists between residential built forms within the urban fabric.

The principal suggestion of this section is that Ballito's pattern of growth represents a process of urban 'fragmentation' – involving the generation and sustenance of gross socio-spatial inequalities. This tendency has been principally driven by the appearance of large-scale, sprawling residential security estates (shown by figure 3.11, page 54) that have served to exclude low- to middle-income population groups from the great proportion of the town's urban area. These gated residential developments are typical of what Soja (1995, 2000) describes as a general shift towards an atmosphere of 'ungovernability', for their very existence implies a lack of faith in public security services and the rise of a 'security-obsessed' mode of urbanism. The following photographs (images 3.12 through 3.14) reinforce these observations:



Image 3.12: The Face of Fragmented Ballito.

The rapid post-1994 development of gated communities has resulted in an extremely inaccessible and impermeable urban landscape. Entry to vast portions of the urban area is austere controlled by security gates such as this. The pseudo-Tuscan architecture and landscaping also provides evidence of the rise of an 'urban hyperreality'.

Source: Author's personal collection (2007)



Image 3.13: Evidence of Urban Spatial Fragmentation: Ballito, KwaZulu Natal.

The typical gated residential development in the foreground is Simbithi Eco-Estate, the mini-case study to be discussed in chapter 8. Note the curvilinear street layout that does not link with the surrounding urban area – access is controlled through security gates on the MR 339 road, which snakes towards the coastline on the right.

Source: David Hall (2007) personal collection



Image 3.14: Further Evidence of Urban Spatial Fragmentation: Ballito, KwaZulu Natal

In the distance vast tracts of sugarcane agriculture frame the idyllic coastal environment. Pre-1994 Ballito is found on the left and bottom of the photograph and is characterized by 'open' street layouts and traditional grid-type planning. On the upper-right one may observe the aesthetic and spatial effects of the recent gated estate phenomenon – a relatively great proportion of the town area is rendered inaccessible to non-residents, driving a process of socio-spatial fragmentation.

Source: David Hall (2007) personal collection

Other aspects of postmodern urbanisation theory also deserve some degree of consideration with respect to Ballito. Is it, for instance, possible to identify localised shifts away from Fordism's rigid productive and employment arrangements, or some evidence of an enhanced inter-urban 'connectedness'? Indeed, chapter 5 will point out that the wide-reaching consequences of 'post-Fordism' – including the 'flexibilisation of labour' (Shatkin, 2007) and the onset of the 'work-from-home phenomenon' (Graham and Guy, 2005) – have played a role in determining the rate and scale of Ballito's post-apartheid development. Chapter 6, on the other hand, will briefly mention the manner in which the strengthening of regional inter-urban linkages (through recent motor-highway development) has acted as an imperative for the emergence of a post-2000 'boom' in

residential property development. Ultimately, these observations will inform the final discussion of Ballito and ‘postmodern urbanisation’ in section 9.1.

At this stage it will be appreciated that there are various – albeit superficial – congruencies between Ballito’s spatial changes and contemporary international tendencies of urban development. However, the remainder of this dissertation will show that local and regional dynamics have played a vital role in the emergence of a fragmented urban condition. Global forces, whilst acting as determinants of this case of urban growth, have been effective principally in their capacity to influence the decisions and actions of local investors, development agencies and institutions.

Chapter 4: The South African Policy-Based Context for Development

It is widely regarded within the ‘institutional’ tradition of urban analysis that all forms of state policy may impact on spatial development in one way or another (Ball, 1998). Although spatial planning, land use management and development control policies are specifically targeted at directing spatial relations; macroeconomic strategies, normative political undercurrents and institutional provisions may also exert significant control over social actions and economic operations. With respect to Ballito, this has certainly been the case. The post-apartheid political agendas and provisions to be outlined in this chapter have played a major role in determining the coastal town’s observed rate and scale of development.

4.1 *National Level*

The term ‘apartheid’ refers to a political system – based on a racial segregationist agenda – that dominated South African polity from 1910 (when the Union of South Africa was created) until the early 1990s. In general, the apartheid policy-based environment biased government spending towards the powerful white minority that occupied a disproportionately great land area. The demise of this political system during the late nineteen eighties and early nineties was brought about by various factors, including international pressure, economic regression, as well as the collapse of stringent mechanisms of social control (Freund, 2007). The various causes are numerous and complex and will not be discussed in any detail. What is important to realize is that after the national democratic elections of 1994 the new dispensation, headed by the African National Congress (ANC), faced many challenges with respect to policy creation and socio-economic development.

The most obvious challenge involved the need to transform apartheid South Africa’s highly segregated socio-spatial structure into a more equitable and integrated form

(Williams, 2000). This necessarily entailed allowing the majority of the population to gain access to an appropriate proportion of the national land area. Secondly, the pattern of national economic downturn that gripped South Africa during the 1980s had to be reversed (Harsch, 2001). Thirdly, there was a pressing need to uplift the socio-economically depressed populations that had been marginalized by apartheid policies (Weeks, 1999; Harsch, 2001). Lastly, multilateral changes to governance style and structure had to occur in order to democratize South Africa's state machinery.

Throughout its existence, the ANC had possessed an ideological position strongly rooted in Marxist theory. These ideas persisted to the early 1990s, when the national government legalized the ANC and various other political organizations. At this stage however, the government entered into negotiations with prominent resistance leaders. Here a major concern of the state was the 'toning-down' of radical left-wing politics that suggested, amongst other things, the nationalization of large-scale industry and sweeping inter-racial redistribution of wealth (Harsch, 2001). As such, the ANC approached the 1994 national democratic elections with a far more 'centred' political position than it had propounded in the past – although this certainly does not mean that all socialist agendas were sidelined. The suggested framework for South African development policy in the new political era was the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

In general terms, the RDP (for which the White Paper produced in 1994) sought to increase the rate of national economic growth; to increase the rate of foreign and national investment in order to stimulate growth and modernize production; and to achieve these goals whilst creating employment and promoting the equitable distribution of income and wealth (Weeks, 1999). A more comprehensive description of the objectives and implications of the RDP is provided in table 4.2.

4.1.1 The New Constitution

Drawing strongly on the concepts of social and environmental justice, the South African Constitution (passed in 1996) provides for a normative political environment. In very

broad terms it is based on the importance of civil rights, equality and ‘good governance’ (involving accountability, cooperation and participation). Under this over-arching political framework, a vast array of relatively progressive legislation has been created to address environmental management, socio-economic development and institutional reform.

Table 4.1: Summary of the South African Constitution (1996) where Relevant to National Socio-Economic Development⁵.

Chapter/Schedule Number	Section Number / Broad Objective	Relevant Implications for Development
Chapter 2: The Bill of Rights	24: Protection of the environment.	All South African citizens have the right to a safe and healthy living environment that should not adversely affected by development procedures.
	26: Access to housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people have the right to housing. • Made the confrontation of South Africa’s enormous housing backlog a constitutional imperative.
	27: Access to basic needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislated the RDP’s ‘basic needs’ approach to social development. • Made the provision of certain municipal services (e.g. water and sanitation) to underdeveloped areas a constitutional imperative.
Chapter 3	Promoting cooperative governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development processes should be undertaken in an accountable, efficient and communicative governmental context. • All spheres and organs of government should cooperate with respect to developmental strategies and priorities.
Chapter 7	Local government reform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced a ‘developmental’ role for local government: tasked local government with the provision of bulk infrastructure services, as well as the promotion of social and economic development. • Encouraged community participation in planning processes.
Schedule 4	Identifying concurrent areas of national and provincial legislative competence.	Enabled the creation of development and planning legislation at both the national and provincial levels.

⁵ Please note that all tables produced in this chapter have been developed by the author using the original legislative documents, copies of which were sourced from the internet, helpful respondents and academic libraries. Additional sources of information have been referenced individually, within the table text.

4.1.2 Macroeconomic Policy

After coming to power in 1994 the ANC-led government's macroeconomic policy approach began to shift significantly (Harsch, 2001). Coming under increasing pressure from domestic business, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the principle of 'trade liberalisation' gradually infiltrated the national political agenda (Ibid.). In contrast, the notion of regulating foreign investment slowly exited the policy realm.

Eventually, the change in political stance was expressed through the objectives and provisions of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) macroeconomic strategy (produced in 1996). As revealed by table 4.2 (page 63), the GEAR approach is characterised by strict monetary policies – particularly aimed at reducing national government spending and budget deficits – as well as a broad aim to secure South Africa a 'competitive' position in the world economy. As such, GEAR could certainly be described as the South African manifestation of a broadly 'neo-liberal' political agenda (Maharaj, 2003). It is a highly unpopular strategy amongst many left-wing and trade unionist movements in the national political arena; often regarded as a betrayal of the ANC's traditionally deep-socialist economic perspective (Weeks, 1999; Harsch, 2001). Weeks implies that these criticisms are not wholly unfounded:

"In contrast to the RDP document, the GEAR did not mention reducing inequality as a policy goal; rather, it stressed decreasing unemployment, which the RDP considered necessary but not sufficient... A careful reading of the GEAR suggests that its recommended growth scenario implied an increase in inequality" (1999:800).

Table 4.2: Summary of Macroeconomic and National Development Strategies in post-1994 South Africa.

	Policy Document / Legislation	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Relevant Implications for Urban Development
Social and economic development, institutional restructuring	White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing social, economic and political legacies of apartheid; • Human resource development, employment creation and poverty reduction; • Democratization of state and society; • Infrastructure and service delivery to meet basic needs; • Combating crime and violence; • Transformation of the state machinery and the civil service; • Economic development and restructuring; • Promotion of rural and urban development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDP Fund Act (1994) – Brought about the creation of the RDP Fund by means of government finance, donor aid, lottery and gambling revenues; • Designation of Presidential Projects to kick-start development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes vertical and horizontal integration in government, with the view of facilitating development planning and delivery; • Introduced first policy basis for land reform; • Entrenched a 'racial transformation' agenda within institutional reform; • Implied significant changes for future modes of government spending (less to military, more to education, health, housing, etc.).
Economic Development	Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (1996).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain a 4.2% GDP growth rate for 1996-2000; • Develop a globally-competitive, fast-growing economy; • Increase foreign and domestic investment; • Open the economy to international markets and competition; • Reprioritisation of public expenditure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Emphasised fiscal austerity: deficit reduction and pegging taxation and expenditure as fixed proportions of GDP" (Weeks, 1999:809); • Relaxed the regulations pertaining to the control of monetary exchanges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrenched 'trade liberalisation' as a major facet of South African economic policy; • In contrast to the expectations of GEAR, slow national economic growth after 1996 aggravated unemployment levels, thereby contributing to urban poverty (Harsch, 2001); • The strategy encouraged private-sector involvement in development, as well as more effective local spending to stimulate local economic development.

4.1.3 Land Development and Planning

Where post-apartheid South African national policy addresses the issue of development it is undoubtedly pro-growth – something evidenced by the adoption of numerical targets for infrastructural development such as the Millennium Development Goals (Pieterse, 2004). Legislation such as the Development Facilitation Act (DFA, passed in 1995) was specifically created in order to remove potential obstacles to development whilst the governance system underwent multilateral restructuring. Yet, as revealed by table 4.3 (page 66), a need for rapid provision of basic services and community empowerment attracts an equal emphasis.

South African planning policy has shifted considerably from apartheid-based approaches. In general, it seeks to frame planning practice as a means of creating development that is environmentally and socially ‘just’. The greatest policy-based impact has emanated from the idea of ‘people-driven development’, as well as the need to react to the ruthlessly autocratic nature of the apartheid state (Williams, 2000). Post-apartheid urban policy, for example, serves a ‘consensus-seeking’ political agenda broadly aimed at the decentralisation of power over development processes to provincial, regional and local institutions (Pieterse, 2004).

Importantly, post-1994 legislation confers responsibility for creating, planning and ‘enabling’ development on all spheres of government (national, provincial and local). In addition, various principles are provided for the conduction of development schemes, including the following:

- *Sustainability*, meaning that developmental decisions should take equal regard of economic, social, environmental and institutional issues.
- *Integration*, which Pieterse (2004) recognises as being a theoretical refinement of the broader notions of ‘urban sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’. Very broadly speaking, integration as a planning ideology seeks to consider social, economic and environmental issues with equal attention and to resolve these concerns within a holistic and balanced intervention strategy (Ibid.). As a set of

spatial objectives it is geared towards the deconstruction of the highly segregated apartheid urban form to one that offers equitable degrees of access to urban space and facilities. It entails the physical integration of socio-economic groups, transportation routes and land use activities in geographic space. However, the term is multidimensional, referring to a wide range of institutional imperatives; especially the coordination of governmental and sectoral activities (vertical and horizontal alignment) (Robinson *et al.*, 2003).

- *Participation*, referring to the involvement of local communities and stakeholders in decision-making procedures at all levels of governance.
- *Equality*, which may be understood as the consistent and unprejudiced allocation of developmental benefits and risks amongst all facets of society.

In general, the array of legislation outlined in table 4.3 stresses the importance of urban areas as the primary foci of national economic growth, as well as the need to confront outrageous socio-spatial inequalities that exist between urban population groups.

Table 4.3: Summary of National Land Development and Planning Policy in post-Apartheid South Africa: 1995 to 2003.

	Document/Legislation Name	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Consequences for Urban Development
Land Development and Planning	Development Facilitation Act (1995).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed up land-related RDP projects; Remove obstacles to the provision and development of land for residential and other uses (whilst the governance system undergoes significant restructuring); Promote security of land tenure during development processes; Provide the guidelines for any decision, in terms of any law, relating to land development and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets of objectives and principles to govern land development, including: integration; community participation; sustainability; enforcement of constitutional rights. Nationally uniform procedures for the layout and subdivision of land. Created provincial DFA tribunals with legal powers to speed up application procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically sought to confront patterns of rapid urban sprawl; Necessitates consultation with 'interested and affected parties' during any development procedure; DFA application process (through the tribunal) enables applicants to bypass the bureaucratic inefficiencies of traditional procedures.
	Urban Development Strategy (1995).	Promote people-driven, integrated and sustainable urban development in South Africa through the efficient and equitable allocation of existing resources/amenities.	Targeted urban compaction, township redevelopment, employment creation and the provision of housing as means of integrating the apartheid city (Maharaj, 2003).	The Urban Development Strategy's strong emphasis on social development and security represents the translation of the broad RDP objectives into urban planning and management strategies.
	White Paper on Housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confront South Africa's enormous housing backlog and its fragmented administrative mechanisms; Give rise to a housing delivery programme to realise the RDP's target of 1 million houses in five years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed a National Housing Strategy heavily based on subsidisation. Enabled the creation of the National Housing Board to advise on policy and strategic matters. 	
	Urban Development Framework (1997).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the objectives of the GEAR strategy (1996) with respect to urban areas. Reinforce the socio-spatial 'integrative' agenda of the Urban Development Strategy (1995). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasised the importance of public-private partnership creation in the delivery of municipal services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Urban Development Framework is often interpreted as a significant move away from the RDP's social agenda towards a firmly market-based urban management and planning approach (Maharaj, 2003); Implied a radical restructuring of local government roles and functions with respect to urban governance.

Table 4.3 Continued:

	Document/Legislation Name	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Consequences for Urban Development
Land Development and Planning	White Paper on South African Land Policy (1997).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse the state of socio-spatial fragmentation inherited from apartheid; • Coordinate and clarify land reform procedures; • Promoting security of land tenure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional transformation strategies for the national Department of Land Affairs; • Clarification of national and provincial competencies with respect to land planning and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested the creation of a national land use management system that is coordinated with other tiers of government. • Also sought to confront urban sprawl through the enforcement of the DFA's development and planning principles. • Aimed to decentralise service provision functions to local governments, in the long-term.
	White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management (2001).	Provide the basis for integrated spatial planning and land use management (LUM) in accordance with the land development objectives of the Development Facilitation Act (1995).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles for spatial planning and LUM procedures: aimed at promoting sustainability, equality, efficiency, fairness and good governance. • Recommended the creation of Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) by all levels of government, as well as the alignment of their respective strategic objectives. 	Reflects a strong normative political emphasis especially with respect to creating people-driven, integrated and sustainable development.
	National Spatial Development Perspective (2003).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse the state of socio-spatial fragmentation inherited from apartheid; • Define a spatial growth and development trajectory. • Make strategic choices in the allocation of developmental resources and effort, so as to provide optimal benefits. • Ensure that South African urban regions are globally-competitive. 	<p>A spatial development strategy that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is context-specific (assumes that urban dynamics are rooted in historical and cultural legacies); • Focuses infrastructure investment in places with high potential (i.e. metropolitan regions); • Social development spending in places with low potential. 	<p>The NSDP represents many neo-liberal political threads as applied to spatial development. It assumes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Even' distribution of social and economic development is impossible through trickle-down or trickle-out effects; • Different regions have more economic potential than others and their needs may vary as a result.

4.1.4 Local Governance

The major implication of post-apartheid policy, in terms of institutional and governmental reform, has been the decentralization of political and economic power; a trend in keeping with the politics of many other developing nations (Keivani *et al.*, 2002). In the South African context, local government institutions have been landed with a constitutional mandate to be ‘developmental’ (refer to table 4.1, page 61), which has necessarily entailed the reorganization of government structures. Whereas in the past municipalities were primarily concerned with providing bulk infrastructure services, the new legislative context necessitates that local government take an active role in the promotion and coordination of development.

With respect to enabling local government in the fulfillment of this role, the major tool is the integrated development plan (IDP); an all-inclusive statutory document that seeks to identify short-, medium- and long-term objectives, strategies and programmes for development in a municipal area. The integrated development planning process is intended to promote the alignment of the actions of all governmental sectors and spheres. In addition, IDPs are required to provide a ‘spatial development framework’ – which is essentially a geographical representation of how development is intended to unfold. An IDP should also provide a municipality with a basis for all decision-making; not only with respect to development planning but also to budgeting and institutional management procedures.

Post-1994 legislation has required that local government institutions undergo three phases of metamorphosis; involving pre-interim (1994 to 1995/1996), interim (1995 to 2000) and permanent (2000 onwards) stages (Pieterse, 2004). Prior to 1995 small urban areas such as Ballito fell under the jurisdiction of individual town boards. However, there were few regulatory criteria for the organizational structures and functions of these councils, including their planning activities. In 1993 the Local Government Transition Act (LGTA – refer to table 4.4, page 70) provided the first round of changes: transitional local councils were created to incorporate previously-independent town boards (as a result of

this Act, Ballito was included in the Dolphin Coast Transitional Local Council in 1995 – this administrative area is depicted in figure 3.2, page 42). The second LGTA Amendment Act, passed in 1996, introduced the ‘integrated development plan’ (IDP) as a mandate for local and district municipal councils.

Subsequent legislation has attempted to define the territorial boundaries, operational structures, criteria and competencies of all municipal entities in the post-2000 period. South Africa currently utilizes a two-tier, ‘wall-to-wall’ system of local government: the entire national land area falls under the jurisdiction of various local municipalities, two or more of which comprise a district municipality. Ballito, for example, falls within the KwaDukuza Local Municipality, which along with Ndwedwe, Maphumulo and Mandeni local councils constitutes the Ilembe District Municipality (please refer again to figure 3.2). The rationale behind the two-tier system stems from the idea that district municipalities should:

- Provide support for ‘weak’ or incapacitated local municipalities;
- Coordinate finances and development on a regional basis;
- Assist with the provision of bulk services;
- Perform a limited array of municipal-wide services (after Steytler *et al.*, 2007).

Various municipal service responsibilities are allocated to these respective levels or shared between them. Alternatively, large metropolitan areas may qualify for a single-tier system of local government. At present there are six metropolitan municipalities in South Africa, including Durban (now the eThekweni Metropolitan Area – shown in figure 3.2).

Table 4.4: Summary of National Policy, where Relevant to Local Government Reform and Environmental Management in post-Apartheid South Africa; 1993 to 2004.

	Document/Legislation Name	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Consequences for Urban Development
Local Government Reform	Local Government Transition Act (1993), First (1995) and Second (1996) Amendments; Repeal of Local Government Laws Act (1997).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructure local government in terms of its election, organisational structures, participatory mechanisms and developmental responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabled the establishment of local government demarcation boards, provincial committees for local government and forums to negotiate restructuring processes. Proposed a 'phased' process (involving pre-interim and interim stages). Designated powers and duties of metropolitan, district and local councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Transitional councils' were to operate during the interim phase (1995 to 2000). The Second Amendment Act (1996) necessitates the provision of local government in rural areas (i.e. the formation of district/regional councils), as well as the production of Integrated Development Plans by all local municipal entities. It also determined the provision of water and sanitation services to be primarily the function of district councils.
	White Paper on Local Government (1998).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that local governance (and hence the overall development process) is democratic, participatory and accountable. Promote the sustainable provision of services to disadvantaged communities. Enhancement of institutional capacity within municipal councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocates a 'developmental role' to local government, based on integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management and co-operative governance. Proposes new institutional and political systems involving different municipal categories and types. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages municipal entities to form public-private partnerships in development procedures. Heavily geared towards promoting vertical and horizontal integration, as well as efficiency of service delivery.
	Municipal Structures (1998), Demarcations (1998) and Systems (2000) Acts	Follow through on the recommendations of the White Paper on Local Governance (1998).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created 'wall-to-wall' municipalities in South Africa of three different categories: A. Metropolitan B. Local C. District (comprised of more than one local municipality). Necessitated that all categories produce IDPs (with spatial development frameworks) every five years, with annual revisions. 	Led to the reshuffle of municipal boundaries and authorities, possibly impacting negatively on institutional capacities (with respect to the management of development during and after the structuring process).

Table 4.4 Continued:

	Document/Legislation Name	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Consequences for Urban Development
Local Government Reform	Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations (2001) and Municipal Finance Management Act (no. 56 of 2003).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote municipal efficiency during institutional transformation processes. Enhance the alignment of municipal annual budgets and their IDPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plans (SDBIPs). Necessitated that IDPs entail an institutional framework for their implementation and that they specify investment opportunities, key performance areas (KPAs) and development initiatives. 	
	Municipal Property Rates Act (2004)	Reformation of municipal systems of levying property rates and property value rating.	Establishment of Provincial Project Implementation Steering Committees to assist local municipalities with implementation.	Necessitated the creation of General Valuation Rolls by all municipalities, which would lead to a major row between the KwaDukuza Local Municipality and its residents (see chapter 7).
Environmental Management	Ecological Conservation Act (no. 73 of 1989)	Enable the declaration of protected natural environments, special nature reserves and limited development areas (including coastal zones).		Identified coastal vicinities, wetlands and other 'high-risk' environmental assets for pollution-alleviation measures.
	WP on Environmental Management Policy; National Environmental Management Act (1998).	Provide for cooperative environmental governance that enforces the individual and communal environmental rights afforded by the Constitution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles for the making of any decision, in terms of any law, on environmental matters. These include people-centredness; sustainability; integrated management; social and environmental justice; Establishment of institutions to promote cooperative governance, including a National Environmental Advisory Forum; Procedures for coordinating the environmental functions of different organs of state. 	
	White Paper on Sustainable Coastal Management (2000).	Ensuring the careful planning and management of human activities within highly-sensitive coastal vicinities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-year action plan for the establishment of institutional structures and a regulatory framework for coastal management. 	

4.2 Provincial Level

The Constitution of South Africa affords provincial governments the power to produce legislation in various areas, including ‘provincial planning’ (table 4.1, page 6.1). Essentially, provincial development plans and strategies are intended to ‘plug the gap’ between national and local development strategies. In KwaZulu Natal, the first major policy to fulfill this role was the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS, passed in 1996 and described in the following table 4.5). Although this strategy did entail a spatial development framework, it was predominantly a ‘coordinator’ of regional development activities. Detailed spatial frameworks for governmental service provision were not produced within the PGDS; instead they were left for the attention of district and local plans.

With respect to Ballito, the PGDS propounded a spatial framework that was largely based on promoting ‘agro-tourism’ within the coastal strip, east of the N2 freeway. The strategy also specifically excluded certain types of development from the coastal vicinity: areas designated for future industrial development were afforded inland locations. These recommendations were intended to provide the ‘spatial scaffold’ for the formulation of local and district municipal integrated developments plans.

Table 4.5: Summary of Policy Context for Development in KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa; 1949 to 1998.

Major Policy Documents and Legislation	General Aims and Objectives	Provisions	Relevance to post-1994 Development of Ballito
KwaZulu Natal Town Planning Ordinance (no. 27 of 1949).	Provide the legal basis for the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of private townships; • Subdivision and layout of land for building purposes and urban settlement; • Preparation and implementation of town planning schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a provincial Town and Regional Planning Commission to advise provincial government on matters relating to land development. 	Unlike the national Development Facilitation Act (DFA), the approval of an application through the Ordinance requires that provincial government departments be notified of changes to town planning schemes. They must be allocated time to respond, thereby leading to costly bureaucratic delays in many development approval processes.
Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (1996); Provincial spatial economic development strategy (still in draft form).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-start economic development within KwaZulu Natal, in accordance with the principles of the RDP and other national development-related policies. • Promote an integrated mode of spatial planning to coordinate municipal development strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial development framework: primarily based on prevailing patterns of land use. Certain regions were earmarked for particular types of economic activity. 	Ballito falls within an 'agro-tourism and industrial' growth corridor (comprising most of the North Coast area): tourism- and agriculture-related development to be encouraged alongside the coastline, with industrial activity in the interior.
KwaZulu Natal Planning and Development Act (no. 5 of 1998)	Establish the nature of regional planning and responsibilities thereof.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional councils are responsible for producing regional development plans. • Defines regulations regarding the content of these plans. 	Necessitates that any regional development plan must contain original land development objectives, or must adhere to those of the Development Facilitation Act (no. 67 of 1995).

4.3 Regional and Local Level

The first strategic development plan for Ballito was commissioned by the Town Board during the early nineteen-eighties in order to deal with what, by the standards of the time, was a rapid rate of urban growth. The resulting Structure Plan (please refer to table 4.6, page 76) was typical of pre-1994 approaches to urban governance and management in South Africa. The following quote iterates that, at that stage, the local council did not surpass a role as development coordinator and service provider:

“It is difficult to make predictions and proposals regarding development direction and phasing because the Ballito Town Board isn’t a development agent. Development will take the form of individual entrepreneurs applying for need and desirability certificates to develop areas which will become incorporated into Ballito. The Town Board has no statutory power to influence such development direction and timing” (1984:29).

The plan envisaged the popular tourist destination as developing into a permanent residential and resort town, with a population of fifteen thousand. It proposed that the town be developed as two residential neighbourhoods of equal size, accompanied by a ‘holiday village’ on their northern interface. Interestingly, the plan proposes that an entirely new commercial and civic town centre be created, recognizing that the existing cluster of beachside shops and services would never have the service capacity for a projected seasonal population of thirty thousand. New commercial development was to be encouraged on the hilltop overlooking the town from the West. Today, that ‘new town centre’ is the relatively successful Ballito central business district – an entity that only materialized after 1994 (refer to the sequence of figures 3.4 to 3.9).

Subsequent strategic development plans to pay attention to Ballito – the IDPs of various local and district municipal entities that are briefly described in table 4.6 – propound a broadly congruous vision for the town’s development. Remembering that the post-apartheid political landscape had bestowed a ‘developmental’ role upon local government, they have recommended that the Ballito urban region capitalize on its ‘competitive advantages’ and enhance its linkages with inland urban settlements. In terms

of regional development strategies, the IDPs revolve around the need to promote infrastructural, low-cost housing, agricultural and tourism-related development. Yet whilst principles such as integration and sustainability are employed with great eagerness and regularity, the IDPs also stress the importance of public-private partnership formation and providing an 'enabling environment' for private development.

Local and district IDPs have represented Ballito's desired spatial growth pattern via the identification of various 'nodes' and 'corridors', as well as zones of 'need' and 'opportunity' where development is to be encouraged. 'No-go areas' for development were also recognized in the form of environmentally sensitive features. In sum, these strategic plans reveal that a linear or axial pattern of growth was envisaged for the town, involving an expansion of the existing coastal urban strip to the North and South (with some inland expansion into the farmland bordering the urban strip). Interestingly, this pattern of growth has indeed come to fruition since 1994. Yet it is obvious that Ballito's current 'messy', fragmented urban form would not have fallen within the integrative agenda of these strategic plans.

Table 4.6: Summary of Ballito's Local and Regional Policy Context for Economic, Land and Urban Development; 1984 to 2007.

	General Objectives	Spatial Development Strategy (Relevant to Ballito)	Relevance to post-1994 Development of Ballito
Ballito Structure Plan (1984).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to the problems of Ballito's 'rapid' growth during the early 1980s. Provide strategic guidelines for the future development of the town, along with a development implementation plan and a town planning scheme (to control land use). Determine the future role of Ballito as both a resort town and a place of permanent residence. 	<p>The Structure Plan proposed that the zoning schemes be adjusted in order to accommodate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two permanent residential neighbourhoods (7 500 people each) accompanied by a 'holiday village' on their northern interface; A new 'town centre' located on the hilltop overlooking the town from the west, to provide mainly office and shopping activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided the basis for the upgrading of the town's beach, road and shopping facilities, which greatly improved its attractiveness as a tourist destination. The proposed town centre only came to fruition as the new Ballito CBD during the 1990s. Land in the immediate Ballito area was purposefully not allocated for light industrial activity.
Dolphin Coast Transitional Local Council Integrated Development Plan (1998).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build upon the region's existing spatial structure in order to provide a network of opportunities for development and to integrate settlement patterns into a cohesive structure. Identify various zones (of upliftment, transition, stability and opportunity), activity nodes and corridors as a means of strategising development spending. Capitalise on intensive movement along the newly-constructed N2 freeway, between Durban and Richard's Bay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballito's 'new' CBD was identified as a major activity node, linked to the coast and N2 freeway by an activity corridor designated for commercial development, offices, civic facilities, information and tourism centres. Shakashead informal township (figure 3.6, page 54) is recognised as an 'upliftment zone'. Beverley Estate and other farms immediately inland of the coastal urban strip are designated 'zones of opportunity'. 	<p>The plan promotes linear-type development that follows the coastline and major movement routes (inland connector roads and the R102).</p>

Table 4.6 Continued.

<p>Ilembe District Municipality: Interim (2002) and Subsequent Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create sustainable development through a 'market niche' strategy, avoiding direct competition. • Capitalise on IDM's regional competitive advantages – especially its tourism potential, good transport infrastructure, close proximity to Durban/eThekwin and environmental assets. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both sets of plans propound a development strategy that draws upon the normative concerns of national legislature (notably those of 'sustainable' and 'integrated development'), as well as neo-liberal politico-economic objectives; • The lack of a lucid 'developmental vision' for Ballito's local and regional context would serve to undermine private-sector commitment to the IDPs (discussion to follow in chapter 7).
<p>KwaDukuza Local Municipality: Interim and Subsequent IDPs (1998 to 2007/2008).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote private capital investment development in urban areas whilst confronting poverty, HIV/AIDS and unemployment through local economic development (LED) projects in the hinterland. • Ensure that urban development adheres to the principles of accessibility, integration, compaction and legibility. • Capitalise on the 'N2 Development Corridor' (Durban to Richard's Bay) and the proposed Dube Tradeport. 	<p>Recommends that investment should be targeted in areas with existing potential, including the various nodes and corridors constituting New Ballito.</p>	

4.4 Conclusion

The comprehensive array of legislation produced by South African national government after 1994 has certainly affected Ballito's process of spatial growth by providing an entirely new context for urban development and governance. Certainly it is important to consider the influence of legislation aimed at accelerating land development procedures, especially the Development Facilitation Act (DFA, passed in 1995). Through the provision of efficient, well-defined structures for development approval procedures (refer to table 4.3, page 66), the DFA has undoubtedly contributed to the onset of a post-2000 national property boom, which will be discussed in the following chapter. This particular piece of legislation has raised the ire of Ballito's local government institutions, which claim that its provisions for development approval (via the state-independent DFA tribunal) have served to undermine localised control over the town's growth.

In addition, legislation targeted at local government reform has led to major implications for post-1994 development in Ballito by necessitating the conduction of two distinct local government restructuring procedures. Each occasion has seen the redefinition of municipal boundaries, responsibilities and organizational structures. Essentially, this statutory process served to create a confusing and 'fragmented' local institutional setup involving blurred competencies, unfunded mandates and incongruous municipal priorities. As a further corollary, Ballito's local municipal entities have been rendered vulnerable to the market trends and interests of private developers – a trend that was encouraged by the neo-liberal, market-orientated approach to socio-economic development propounded by GEAR and the national Urban Development Framework (refer to the afore-produced tables 4.2 and 4.3). Chapter 7 will go on to show that, in spite of post-apartheid measures to 'decentralise' government structures and functions, the various municipalities tasked with managing Ballito's development since 1994 did not act with a 'free hand'. Their actions and decision were severely constrained by political pressures from both the provincial and national levels.

It was also found that certain of the coastal town's major spatial changes – including the development of a 'new town centre' – were envisaged in pre-1994 local and regional development plans. This observation goes some way to dispel the idea that forces of globalisation have been the primary agents of a fragmented (or even polycentric) mode of urbanisation in Ballito. Indeed, the remainder of the dissertation will attempt to demonstrate that this spatial pattern has emerged in response to a complex array of issues and actions – constituting a snowball of structure, action and reaction – that spans from the local to the global scales.

4.4.1 The Local Government Dilemma – 'Between a Rock and a Hard Place'

As has been explained, South African economic development policy of the post-apartheid era broadly aims to internationalise the economy and create 'globally competitive' urban regions. With respect to land development, this policy position has placed extreme pressure on local politicians and planning agencies to fast-track national development priorities. Interviewed local government officials confirmed that since 1994 the overwhelming message obtained from central government has been '*development now; grow fast*'. For example, the geographical entity referred to as the 'Durban-Richards Bay corridor', which incorporates the Ballito urban region and the proposed Dube Tradeport (involving the construction of a new airport at La Mercy, approximately fifteen kilometres south of Ballito), has been identified as a region that has the potential to spearhead provincial economic growth and thereby contribute favourably to the national economy. It was clear that projects relating to the Dube Tradeport attracted special attention from local officials and bureaucratic obstacles were often timeously removed for their approval. In a similar manner, post-1994 development applications for the Ballito area were approved or promoted, in spite of severe infrastructural limitations, simply for their potential to inject capital into government coffers.

In addition to these requirements for rapid economic growth, cash-strapped local and district municipalities such as KwaDukuza and Ilembu have been required to fulfill their

constitutional duties with respect to social upliftment and bulk infrastructure provision – often in highly-constrained rural vicinities exhibiting low-density settlement patterns. Therefore, local institutions have been subjected to a two-pronged application of top-down political pressure. A discussion of ‘institutional thickness’ in chapter 7 will point out that this inconsistent political context coincided with an incapacitated state on the part of Ballito’s local municipal entities. Certainly, these facts have created major challenges for the management of development in Ballito. In sum, a struggle to meet political agendas (and their numerical targets) has denoted local government institutions little time or capital to strive towards the complex normative concerns of integrated and sustainable development planning.

However, a comprehensive understanding of the manner in which institutional pressures may have influenced Ballito’s spatial growth requires some knowledge of the local and national property market contexts. In particular, the socio-economic dynamics that gave rise to a post-2000 development boom should be considered, for it is these conditions that served to recast the Ballito region as a geographic focus for post-1994 public and private infrastructural investment. A discussion of these conditions and dynamics follows.

Chapter 5: Socio-Economic Forces

5.1 National Context

African cities, including those of South Africa, have played host to relatively high rates of urbanisation over the past half-century (Halfani *et al.*, 1997). Numerous general and region-specific causes could be identified for this tendency; including the prevalence of rural poverty, HIV/AIDS and natural population increase (Ibid.). With respect to South Africa however, a major contributing factor has been the socio-spatial implications of discriminatory apartheid policies. The Group Areas Act of 1913 designated the vast majority of the country's land area to the minority white population, whilst various 'homeland' (or traditional authority) areas were demarcated for inhabitation by African ethnic groups.

In general, these overcrowded homeland regions did not include major urban centres and were neglected in terms of the provision of physical infrastructure and services. Levels of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment were (and still are) extremely high in the former homelands (NALEDI, 2000). Therefore, after stringent measures to prevent rural-urban migration (such as pass laws) were repealed in 1986, South African urban areas experienced a major influx of poor African people, seeking access to employment opportunities (Freund, 2007).

In common with many other developing nations, a high rate of urbanisation in South Africa has, in most cases, exhausted low-income formal land and economic markets – and the spatial consequences have been tremendous. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, cities such as Durban have become the loci of burgeoning peripheral townships, informal settlements and informal economic sectors that are ever-escalating in importance (Freund, 2007). Todes argues that “in the late apartheid years, Durban's spatial form began to change, as rapid urbanisation and weakening apartheid controls led to a massive growth of informal settlements on the periphery... By 1994, informal

settlements accounted for about a third of Durban’s population, but less than four percent were in central areas” (1998:4).

Since the late 1980s South Africa has played host to an extremely volatile socio-economic context, so it is difficult to pinpoint the trends with the greatest implications for post-apartheid urban growth. The country’s engagement with the world economy during the 1990s has had many profound and diverse effects – for one matter, the domestic economy has become increasingly vulnerable to international political and economic events (du Toit, 2002). However, in order to illustrate how various macroeconomic and macrosocial trends have affected urban development in Ballito, the following generalized trends are identified:

Table 5.1: Broad National Socio-Economic Trends that have Impacted upon Urban Development in Ballito, South Africa (1994 to 2007).

	1994 to 2000	2000 to 2007
Demographic	Declining annual population growth rate (a relatively low average rate of 2.1% during the 1990s); increasing proportion of the population living in urban areas; increasing mortality rate.	Population growth rate continues to decline; urbanisation and mortality rates increase steadily.
Economic	Slower-than-anticipated growth (GDP increased by an annual average of 2.4%, way below GEAR’s prediction of 4.2%), which to a large extent this was due to the atmosphere of political uncertainty that served to undermine foreign and local investor confidence	The rate of national GDP growth averaged at 3.8% per annum – a significant increase.
Socio-economic	Substantial decline in formal sector employment; increases in poverty levels through the exacerbation of existing socio-economic inequalities (the incomes of the poorer half of the population were devalued by 21% between 1991 and 1996).	Improved national economic growth has led to increases in formal sector employment and real household disposable income.

Sources: du Toit (2002), Williams (2000), NALEDI (2000) and ABSA (2007).

The significance of the trends identified in table 5.1 stems from the fact that they have framed a period of massive growth in the South African housing and residential property markets after the year 2000. Contributing economic and political factors include the following:

- As mentioned in table 5.1, GDP-based growth after the year 2000 has led to elevated formal employment rates and improved household income characteristics. This has affected an expansion of the middle-class; thereby increasing consumer demand within the national housing and residential property markets.

- Bank lending rates (in terms of prime and variable mortgage interest) had risen in response to a sharp depreciation of the Rand at the end of 2001, but dropped from 17% to 10.5% between 2003 and 2005. This made it significantly easier for South African citizens to raise loan finance for property-related development (ABSA, 2006).
- Post-2000 fiscal policy has sought to grant significant personal tax relief. In addition, property transfer duties have been reduced annually since 2002 – representing a concerted effort by government to make low- and middle-income housing more affordable (Ibid.).
- Capital gains tax exemptions (emanating from the sale of primary residences) were raised by fifty percent in the National Budget of 2006 (Ibid.).
- Underperformance in the national equity market from 1998 to 2003 has encouraged property-related investment as a means of generating high returns (Ibid.).
- Measures to promote the nation's reintegration into the world economy have enabled an influx of foreign investment to South African property markets.
- Legislation aimed at promoting rapid land development, such as the Development Facilitation Act (see table 4.3, page 66) has served to remove many bureaucratic and political barriers to land development.

Certainly, there are many other issues that may be pointed to, including the effects of globalisation. The 1990s saw massive changes to the manner in which property deals were forged and products marketed. Even the relatively small market of Ballito came to be increasingly dominated by 'property giants': large agencies with strong connections to international branches and partners. Far from the traditional property trading scenario, usually involving a local agent and a personal buyer-agent relationship, agencies now construct large databases of potential buyers and their preferences with the view of identifying strong target markets and trends thereof. In addition, the Internet has revolutionized property trading by opening-up local markets and 'hidden gems' to a geographically-widespread consumer threshold. As such, the internationalization of property trading (as a response to globalised mechanisms of information-sharing) undoubtedly provided an impetus for the aforementioned South African residential property boom.

These vastly different national trends have all served, in one way or another, to fashion the post-1994 urban development process in Ballito. However, this chapter will go on to explain that such generalized trends, whilst very obviously able to influence urban

development patterns, can play out in intricate, unexpected ways when operating within local urban contexts. However, initially it is necessary to consider the town's socio-economic context from the regional and local scale.

5.2 *The Local Context*

Since the 1970s, Ballito's regional economic base has rested upon a tripod of lucrative manufacturing, agricultural and tourist activities. Industrial activity has predominantly taken the form of 'hubs' located at inland towns such as Isithebe and KwaDukuza (the positioning of industrial activities close to large labour pools – including the homeland areas – was common planning practice during apartheid) which are shown in figure 3.2 (page 42). Agricultural activity is based on the prevalence of high-intensity sugar farming along the coastal strip. Lastly, tourism-related enterprises have traditionally been found in close proximity to the area's impressive coastal environment.

However, the entity referred to as the 'North Coast Economic Cluster' (which includes Ballito and KwaDukuza) has been in a state of decline since the 1980s, although some signs of recovery were shown from 1992 onwards (KwaDukuza General Survey, 2002). One driving force behind this decline is the fact that the regional manufacturing base was largely involved in the production of textiles – an economic sector that has suffered significant downturn in recent years as a result of the influx of relatively cheap imports from the Far East (Ibid.).

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, levels of socio-economic development have been highly incongruous in the wider Ballito region. Apartheid legislation reserved the coastal strip for white occupation and agricultural activity (primarily sugar farming) and these areas subsequently attracted the greatest levels of infrastructural investment. As a result of these political interventions, relatively affluent urban precincts (with full services ranges) have risen along the coastal strip in stark contrast to the deprived inland settlements of the former traditional authority or homeland areas. These socio-developmental disparities, which are echoed by many other areas along the KwaZulu

Natal coast, have given rise to a high rate of rural-urban migration. This trend has ‘driven’ the appearance of low-income formal and informal settlements on the periphery of the core urban areas.

5.3 Forces

The sheer rate and scale at Ballito’s spatial changes have unfolded can be attributed to a property boom that gripped the area after the year 2000. This boom had many inputs, determinants and results; here the socio-economic factors that have had the greatest implications for the town’s post-1994 spatial development are identified and briefly examined.

5.3.1 Social-Cultural Considerations

Although general politico-economic shifts have undoubtedly served to promote the post-1994 rate of urban growth in Ballito, they are not wholly responsible for the onset of a property boom or its spatial implications. Certainly, various socio-cultural trends have served to ‘frame’ the national surge of residential property development. Indeed, ethno-ideological trends have been expressed through shifts in buyer preferences for residential properties, the most noticeable trend being manifested in elevated demand (predominantly from middle- and upper-income groups) for holiday homes located within so-called ‘lifestyle developments’ (ABSA, 2006). These often take the form of large ‘estates’ located on the urban periphery, involving a mix of residential and semi-private recreational activities – common examples are golf estates and ‘eco-estates’. A related consumer shift has increased demand for ‘gated’ or secure residential complexes that promise an escape from high urban crime rates and a remedy to an emerging South African middle-class culture of fear. In the case of Ballito these general trends have served to promote a fragmented urban form through the recent proliferation of large-scale, gated lifestyle developments (please refer to figure 3.11, page 54).

5.3.2 A Threatened Sugar Industry

Commercial sugar farming in all parts of KwaZulu Natal has been greatly hampered in recent years. Causes for this include the demise of apartheid's agricultural support policies; the industry's emergence into the competitive environment of the world economy and a severe drought that gripped most of South Africa from 1992 to 1996 (MacDonald *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, a significant obstacle to profitable farming enterprise in KwaZulu Natal has been provided by the rise of European Union sugar subsidies (especially the Common Agricultural Policy, which guarantees prices, import protection and export subsidies for European sugar farmers [Moneyweb, 16/04/2004]). The basic result of these wide-reaching threats has been the placement of pressure on sugar farmers to diversify their production, or abandon their agricultural activities altogether. In many South African cases this pressure has been intensified by large degrees of uncertainty regarding post-apartheid labour and land restitution policies.

In the Ballito region, a reduction in sugar farming profitability broadly coincided with a strengthening of the local residential property market. Many owners of well-located land could simply not afford to turn down the monetary offers of developers. This is not to say that such decisions were purely economic functions, taken lightly. Farming is an activity inherently linked with familial legacies and personal attachments to land. One should consider that historically Ballito had only been able to grow through the decisions of local farmers to sell-off minor portions of land, in response to small-scale proposals or agricultural shocks. Yet as many landowners found their property values reaching unheard-of heights, some were tempted to part with larger sections whilst others decided to sell all. Often this was done in order to make way for the large, gated residential estates that satisfied the demands of the national middle- to upper-income residential housing market. Intriguingly thus, two distinctive economic market trends, of seemingly unrelated sectors, have intersected in a local urban context to promote a pattern of urban fragmentation.

5.3.3 Regional Economic Trends

The North Coast of KwaZulu Natal has always been an immensely popular destination for local and national tourists. This popularity has steadily increased since the demise of apartheid; yet it was the opening-up of the foreign tourism market that impacted most significantly on Ballito's developmental destiny. According to the Nonoti-Tugela Coastal Development Policy Report, by 1998 the province of KwaZulu Natal was consistently capturing 30% of the entire South African foreign visitor market. Ballito has been strategically positioned to capitalise on this significant tourism activity, with its close proximity to Durban and many of province's major attractions. However, an increased level of international tourism has not exerted a major influence on the post-1994 spatial changes of Ballito, apart from its contribution to 'opening-up' the local property market to an international audience.

Meanwhile, the regional manufacturing sector has suffered a massive decline over the past two decades, thereby undermining the region's labour absorption capacity and Gross Geographic Product (GGP). By the late 1990s it was apparent that the region's major competitive advantage lay in its capacity for tourism rather than industrial activity (KwaDukuza General Survey, 2002). As a result, tourism-related development has assumed the mantle of being the major emphasis of nearly all the regional and local development plans produced for the Ballito region. This fact has served to promote political and financial support for infrastructural development in the coastal vicinity, thereby enhancing the overall rate of private investment in the built environment.

5.3.4 The Ballito Development Boom and Permanent Residential 'Jump'

Harvey (1978) explains the occurrence of property market 'booms' in the context of Marx's primary and secondary circuits of capital. Through intensive periods of capital generation in the primary circuit, excess or 'idle' capital may be directed into the secondary cycle, which involves investment in the built environment. Occasionally, a

scenario of disproportionately-rapid property valuation and transaction – a ‘boom’ – materializes because a group of investors coordinates their actions in a particular geographical area that promises good capital returns. Booms are cyclical in nature because they eventually lead to market gluts (whereby supply out-streaks demand), which in turn bring about asset devaluation and decreased investor confidence.

In the case of Ballito, there was a gradual increase in property development activity throughout the 1990s. However, figure 5.1 (below) indicates that the major break of the market mould only occurred during the period 2002 to 2003.

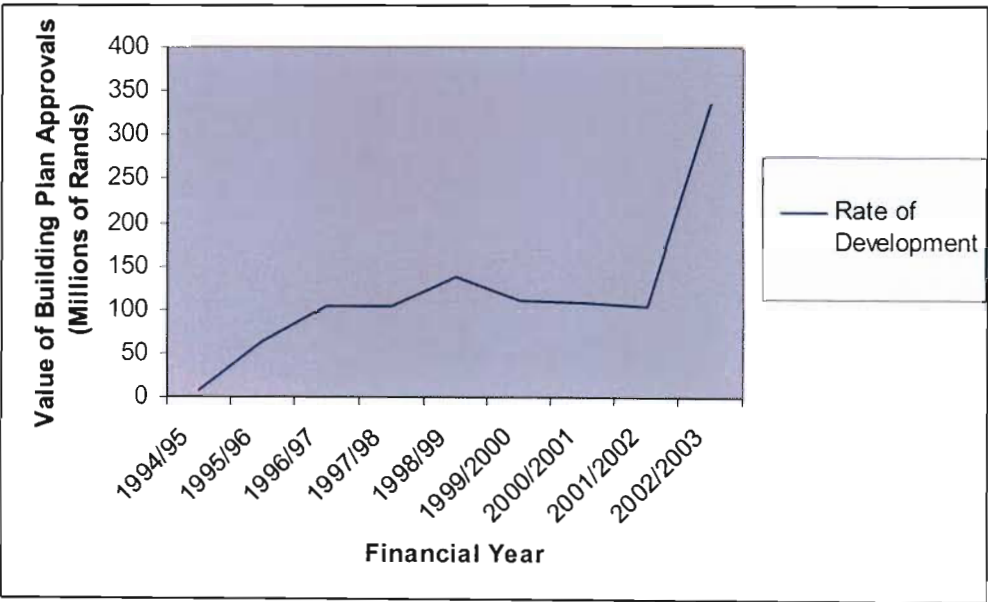


Figure 5.1: Graph Indicating the Rate of Increase of Annual Building Plan Approval Values in Ballito (1994 to 2003).

Data Source: KwaDukuza/North Coast Tourism and Development Initiative report (2000).

The timing of this rapid change in the rate of development coincides closely with the onset of favourable national economic conditions – including sharp reductions in bank lending rates (ABSA, 2006). As such, it is obvious that macroeconomic conditions and the availability of capital for investment in the built environment are important determinants of urban development activities. Nevertheless, the conditions that would result in a flurry of speculative investment had been ‘in the pipeline’ for some time. Regional socio-economic dynamics and interurban linkages have also had significant

implications for Ballito's growth – they have served to guide and frame the localised expression of over-arching political and economic trends.

The following property news article written in March 2001 paints an interesting picture of the emerging development boom on the KwaZulu Natal coast:

*As the first quarter of this year draws to an end, the only grumble you are likely to hear from estate agents is the lack of saleable stock in the marketplace. The **low bond rate** has helped stabilise the market and has boosted buyer confidence in established suburbs in and around Durban...*

Gordon Battersby, franchise managing director of Maxprop Countrywide, said January and February were record months...

He said all of Maxprop's franchises, from Amanzimtoti through to Ballito in the north and Hillcrest in the west, were extremely busy...

*"Buyers are looking for well maintained homes close to a wide range of amenities. **Good security** is also high up on their priority list." He said they were extremely upbeat about the months that lie ahead. "The mood in the marketplace is extremely positive" (IOLa, 19/3/2001; emphasis added).*

A common finding during the research process was that the recent development of Ballito, as well as nearby urban nodes such as Umhlanga Ridge, has been intimately linked with Durban and its economic cycles. Indeed, since the late 1980s the port city has experienced significant decentralization in response to technological, socio-economic and political changes (Todes, 1998). Many large, knowledge-intensive businesses have vacated the traditional portside central business district in favour of suburban office parks such as those of La Lucia Ridge (located on Durban's northern coastal interface – shown in figure 3.2, page 42). A similar process of residential decentralization has also unfolded, as shortages of centrally-located, secure, single-detached housing during the late 1990s drove property values sky-high – causing potential buyers to look 'out of town' for suburban-type housing that was affordable, yet commutable.

As a result of Durban's tendencies towards residential and commercial decentralization, Ballito was able to capitalize on the 'spill-over' of potential home-seekers and investors. Although the town is relatively far removed from Durban (a commuter in a motor vehicle would require approximately 45-minutes to travel to the city, whilst Umhlanga is reachable by a twenty-minute car journey) it was able to offer a small-town or semi-rural

lifestyle within a reasonable distance of the city's social and economic facilities. Here it is also important to consider the multifarious consequences of recent technological advancements and the 'post-Fordist workplace' – residential location decisions are decreasingly determined by the necessity for close physical proximity between places of residence and employment. In these contexts Ballito was certainly 'in the right place at the right time' to satisfy both socio-cultural preferences and economic demand. This is neatly demonstrated by the following news article, published in early 2000:

Sprouting businesses along the coast of Umhlanga and Ballito have resulted in a boom in real estate in the area, with several Johannesburg businessman having relocated to the area while still running their Gauteng-based companies. Mr. Colin Mitchell, the Chairman of the Dolphin Coast Chamber of Business, said the Dolphin Coast was ideally situated to become the "Northern Suburbs" of Umhlanga Rocks.

"There are an enormous amount of people coming out of Johannesburg to the area. These are mainly business people who have decided to live in Ballito and still conduct their businesses in Johannesburg," he said. Mr. Mitchell said this trend followed hot on the heels of the myriad of businesses which have moved premises to Ballito from Durban's shrinking CBD.

[He added that] the "frightening" growth in the area was reflected by the membership of the Chamber of Business which had doubled in two years and now stood at 200.

"Most of the businesses are small to medium-sized enterprises and mainly service businesses connected to tourism" (IOL: Adams, 25/1/2000).

The issues described above all point to a single conclusion; that since 1994 Ballito has evolved from a holiday village, driven by seasonal influxes of capital, to a place of permanent residence. It is suggested here that this metamorphosis is largely responsible for the socio-economic 'snowball' that has forever altered the urban landscape. Consider that, as a permanent residential area rather than a tourist destination, the town would possess a perennial flow of capital – thereby promising greater returns on commercial, office and business investments. Furthermore, people are generally prepared to pay higher prices for permanent residences than holiday homes, which led to increased residential values (and returns) in the Ballito area. Indeed, where returns are good, there are always eager speculators and employment-seekers. In this way, the actions of individual capitalists accumulated in space and time, gathering momentum as more and more investors were attracted by evidence of Ballito's profitability.

So, the town's jump from a holiday to permanent residential property market may have catalysed the escalation of land values and the proliferation of development for non-

residential purposes. Yet the hypothetical ‘trigger’ had been slowly brewing throughout the last decade of the twentieth century. The first and strongest initiator of this trend was offered by Zimbali Forest and Golf Estate, an exclusive gated-type development created by Moreland (the property arm of the Tongaat-Hullett Sugar Group) during the mid-1990s. Located on Ballito’s southern interface (refer to figure 3.11, page 54), Zimbali was one of the first developments in South Africa to target communal security and semi-rural lifestyle trends at both national and international markets. The huge economic success of this particular development served to represent Ballito as a place where, firstly, one can live permanently and secondly, where returns on property transactions are high. In addition, its marketing concepts and degree of international media advertisement set the mould for successful residential development in the Ballito region.

Following the success of developments such as Zimbali, Ballito experienced a steady rate of development activity (see figure 5.1) until a rush of speculation materialized after the year 2000. Indeed, by 2004 investors were buying off-plan and selling six months later for profits as high as 45% (Sunday Times, 16 May 2005). Prices for well-located agricultural land soared whilst sugar farming productivity dropped – thereby encouraging the conversion of farmland to residential land uses. The types of development that attracted the greatest degree of investor attention were those that, like the aforementioned example of Zimbali, satisfied strong consumer trends in terms of residential security and lifestyle choice.

It has already been pointed out that the rise of large-scale gated developments in Ballito has served to convert vast tracts of agricultural land area into a sprawling, fragmented, socio-economically imbalanced urban form. A less obvious deduction is that the onset of the development boom and its promise of employment opportunities have served to attract many migrants from socio-economically depressed areas of Southern Africa (especially rural KwaZulu Natal). So, with the spread of high-income development along the coastal strip, the greater Ballito region has also experienced significant growth of inland-situated informal and formal townships (represented by the massive enlargement of Shakashead township in the sequence of figures 3.5 to 3.9, pages 47 to 51).

It will now be appreciated that this boom played a major role in the post-1994 spatial changes of Ballito. If such a rush of local and foreign investment had not materialised, the observed rate and scale of development would never have been reached. Whilst macroeconomic and political forces have underpinned the onset of the boom, wide-reaching socio-cultural changes have exerted their own particular influences on its spatial side-effects. It has also been pointed out that regional socio-economic dynamics (especially with respect to Durban) and localised actions of development agencies such as Moreland have been vital in the initiation of a developmental 'snowball effect'.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explained that socio-economic dynamics have had a major effect on the rate and scale of development in Ballito. These dynamics are complex, interrelated and operate at varying scales, with differing intensities. They are expressed within multilateral political, institutional and physical contexts and hence their results vary in geographic space.

It was acceded that macroeconomic trends were important determinants of this particular case of urban development. The reader will recall that the town's localised development boom coincided with the onset of encouraging politico-economic conditions at the national level, including the lowering mortgage repayment rates. In addition, the decline of international demand for South African-produced sugar has created major difficulties for farmers in the Ballito area, directly influencing their decisions with regard to selling land for residential development. Yet economic forces have also been expressed at more localised scales, particularly with respect to Durban's tendencies towards commercial and residential decentralisation.

Contemporary macrosocial restructurings, including the flexibilisation of labour and economic systems, have played their part in the urban process by bestowing a relatively great permanent residential threshold upon Ballito. Prior to 1994 the town was simply too

far removed from centres of employment and commercial activity to warrant a large perennial residential base. However, wide-reaching changes to the manner in which businesses operate have enabled members of the well-connected business elite to savour a 'green lifestyle' whilst conducting their transactions. A place such as Ballito, with its relative proximity to Durban and an idyllic natural bioclimatic environment, has thus been well-suited to capitalizing on these changing work-home dynamics.

Socio-cultural or ideological issues (particularly those relating to South Africa's middle- and upper-classes) have influenced spatial development through their ability to frame and constitute property market trends. For example, the proliferation of gated estates in Ballito, which have driven a process of urban fragmentation, is intimately linked with wider socio-cultural trends involving middle-class ideologies and perceptions of social insecurity.

5.4.1 A Market Apartheid?

An interesting discussion that needs to be addressed here is idea that South African urban areas may be under the hold of a 'market apartheid' in the place of a political apartheid. With respect to Ballito, it is suggested that this is the case. Although segregationist legislation has been abolished, high property prices along the coast have prevented the poor from gaining access to these areas. They are relegated to inland regions where rent values are relatively low – usually in remote townships, or pieces of land abutting industrial parks. In fact, the disproportionately high rate of coastal property valuation has simply served to widen the margin for social exclusion, thereby reinforcing existing socio-economic disparities (which closely follow racial lines in South Africa for various historical reasons – Pieterse, 2004).

It is not suggested here that *only* white people are allowed to reside within the well-serviced residential neighbourhoods and gated communities of Ballito. Yet the scenario whereby "one is welcome *as long as one is white*" has changed into "one is welcome *as long as one has the money to buy-in*". The emerging scenario of residential exclusion in

Ballito mirrors precisely Murray's observation that "the power to exclude falls to those who can afford to purchase the privilege. The exorbitant costs of home ownership in gated residential communities ensures that these sequestered, sanitised places are the exclusive abode of only the high-earning upper classes" (2004:149). Access to urban space is increasingly determined according to economic status – despite the time and effort that has been expended on confronting apartheid's segregationist legacy. Yet it raises important issues regarding the inefficacies of post-1994 'integrative' urban management and planning practices. These will be discussed in chapter 7.

Chapter 6: Physical-Environmental Forces

The previous chapters have revealed that since 1994 a combination of wide-reaching and more localised political and socio-economic trends were responsible for the generation of a boom in the Ballito property market. This chapter will show that, by providing a physical context within which urban negotiations take place, the region's existing environmental features and settlement patterns have significantly affected urban development. In addition, it will be pointed out that changes in inter-urban accessibility (here considered as a 'physical force' as it refers to ease of physical movement between two or more urban areas) have also played a considerable role in this case of spatial growth.

6.1 *The Natural Environment*

For various reasons, the natural environmental context may determine the possibilities for urban development in any setting. A relevant example is the fact that the Ballito coastline is renowned for its sub-tropical climate, warm ocean currents, pristine beaches and immensely biodiverse natural environment. These natural assets have rendered Ballito an attractive holiday and residential location and have thus contributed to demand for property in the area. In addition, the region's high rainfall, soil and climate potential ensure that it is well-suited for agricultural activity, especially crop farming – which provided the major basis of regional economic activity throughout the twentieth century. Issues such as these, although not the focus of this study, deserve recognition as important determinants of urban development. After all, without such a bioclimatic context Ballito may never have existed; certainly not in its present form.

Another indication of how environmental issues can affect urban spatial growth is provided by the national drought that laid siege to most of the national land area from 1992 to 1996. In the previous chapter it was pointed out that this provided one of many obstacles to sugar cane agriculture in KwaZulu Natal. Many farmers with title to well-

located land were thus tempted to stem the tide of annual losses by selling their property to eager developers. As such, the drought is certainly a ‘force’ that has promoted the conversion of agricultural land into residential property – thereby contributing to a case of rapid, low-density residential sprawl.

It is also relevant to consider the impact of recent changes in environmental attitude and policy on the town’s spatial development. In Ballito’s early history (the nineteen-fifties to -seventies) sensitive environmental features such as swamp and dune forests were regarded as obstacles to human development. In his book describing his efforts towards the foundation of Ballito, Jack Nash (1994) writes with great satisfaction of his ability to drain a coastal wetland and burn-out an entire dune forest in order to make way for that most needed of items: a mashie golf course. Needless to say, in the contemporary ideological context this act would be considered as something approaching a socio-environmental travesty.

Spatial implications of South Africa’s shifting environmental management context (refer to table 4.4, page 71) are identifiable via the recognition of recent changes to the town’s residential layout characteristics. In many post-1994 cases of residential development, ruthless grid designs have made way for curvilinear layouts that bypass sensitive environmental features (as revealed by image 6.1, page 97). These realities are partly the result of market-based lifestyle trends, yet it is undeniable that legislative and attitude-based shifts regarding the natural environment have played a mentionable role.



Image 6.1: Urban Changes According to Environmental Policy: Ballito, KwaZulu Natal.

Changes in environmental attitude and legislation have necessitated that residential developments such as Simbithi Eco-Estate (visible in the foreground) protect existing ecological asserts such as the swamp forest on the left of the picture. On the far side of the road and security fence is the neighbourhood of Salt Rock, which was developed prior to 1994. The water stream flows from left to right – directly into a residential grid pattern that provides no measures for environmental protection.

Source: Author's personal collection (2007)

6.2 Physical Accessibility

An immensely important, physical determinant of the town's recent growth has been its high degree of accessibility; bestowed by various transportation routes that run adjacent to the coastline (for example the N2 freeway, M4 Highway, R102, railway line – all represented in figure 3.3, page 43). The N2, a high-speed national connector route, is particularly important in this regard. Completed in the early 1990s, it effectively halved the vehicular traveling time between Ballito and Durban; cutting the average journey length to forty-five minutes. Psychologically, Ballito now seemed a great deal 'closer' to Durban than ever before and the possibility of commuting to the city was created. The

town previously regarded as a secluded holiday resort now possessed a greater ability to capitalise on any 'spill-over' of residential and commercial investment from Durban – something which clearly happened and was discussed in the previous chapter.

In this regard however, improved physical accessibility was not the only factor at work. If that was the case, one would observe equally high rates of urban development in KwaZulu Natal's South Coast towns such as Scottburgh. There simply has not been the same rate of post-1994 development in Scottburgh, despite the fact that it lies an equal distance from Durban as does Ballito. A predominant explanation for this discrepancy was that Ballito falls within a 'development corridor' that has been targeted for infrastructural development by national and provincial government. Local government officials suggested that the North Coast region fetches more political and financial attention from these spheres of government. Consequently, development spill-over has leaned towards Durban's northern urban neighbours. Here the emphasis is that socio-economic and physical explanations of urban growth require a constant reflection on political and institutional considerations.

6.3 *Existing Regional Development Patterns*

During the twentieth century topographical realities, in conjunction with the socio-spatial consequences of apartheid development policies, served to create an imbalanced space-economy in the wider Ballito region. In general, the terrain of the coastal strip is less undulating than that of the hinterland; it is thus more accessible and less constraining to infrastructural and agricultural development. In addition, the coastal vicinity was predominantly under white ownership and attracted a financial bias in accordance with apartheid legislation.

The upshot of these realities is that prior to 1994 the regional 'competitive advantage' was firmly embedded along the coastline, and this has encouraged the persistence of a linear pattern of regional development and settlement. It should also be pointed out that because Ballito falls within the area with the greatest development potential, it has been a

natural target for post-1994 regional development policies, private investment and bulk infrastructure provision. Therefore physical realities of this sort have played a mentionable role in determining the rate and scale of the town's post-1994 development. For similar reasons, it also appears that a linear-type pattern of regional urban growth will persist as long as the topographical, transport-related and economic advantages of the coastal area remain.

6.4 Existing Urban Forms

A common understanding gained was that Ballito's recent pattern of spatial growth has been inculcated by the town's pre-1994 urban form and its consequences for property values and land development trends in subsequent years. Consider, for example, that the success of a particular type of development may cause developers, or neighbouring landowners, to realise the profitability of such an enterprise. Land areas similarly suited for that development type would then attract greater attention from investors, thus bringing about an increase in the value assigned to that land (assuming it was an available and attractive location for that particular use activity). In this way, that form of development may persist and proliferate in the region to the exclusion of other activities that cannot afford the elevated land value.

This scenario did indeed play out in Ballito. The previous chapter explained that the success of Zimbali Forest and Golf Estate did much to galvanise the Ballito property market and raise local property values – simply through the degree of investor attention and confidence it conferred on the town. Importantly, it served to encourage the development of other gated security estates in the area, consequently driving the value of well-located agricultural land upwards. Therefore, not only did Zimbali have a role to play as a developmental catalyst (speeding up the rate and scale of development), it also did much to drive the formation of a fragmented, sprawling urban form.

Existing urban forms may also provide physical limitations to future developments – whether through the incapacitation of bulk infrastructural networks or the lack of

available space for commercial development. Again, these issues played a guiding hand in Ballito's post-1994 growth. For example, by the mid-1990s the town's original central business district (CBD) had begun to offer severe service and spatial constraints to potential development activities. It was, after all, created as a small cluster of beachside shops rather than a potential node of intensive private investment. Electrical infrastructure was particularly incapacitated and this excluded certain types of businesses (especially knowledge-intensive firms dependent upon reliable telecommunication services) from locating in Ballito. This reality was intimately linked with the appearance of a new CBD, positioned on the town's western interface (please refer to figure 3.9, page 51), to provide suitable space and infrastructure for large-scale commercial investment.

6.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to briefly point out that localised physical and environmental conditions, or changes thereof, are inexorably linked with processes of urban development. So much so, that it seems unacceptable to consider the advent of the Ballito development boom without giving recognition to the manner in which property market forces may have been funneled through their physical context. It has been pointed out that natural environmental features; degrees of physical accessibility; as well as existing regional development and local urban forms may exact some influence on the generation of new urban fabrics. Some of these points will be returned to in section 9.1, wherein a final discussion of postmodern urbanisation takes place.

Chapter 7: Institutional Analysis

Although contemporary literature often links urban processes with the generation of a superficial chaos – an urban form likened by Dear and Flusty to “a partitioned gaming board” directed by “perverse forces” (1998:66) – these suggestions do not carry the implication that urban growth is ‘disordered’ or ‘random’. In fact, many argue that the ongoing ‘splintering’ of local and supranational politico-institutional networks has been a major driving force behind the generation of fragmented urban spatial forms (Graham and Marvin, 1996, 2001; Soja, 2000; Coutard *et al.*, 2005; Shatkin, 2007). The prime question of an institutional analysis should thus ask, who was (and is) best-positioned to utilise productive avenues of power in the emerging political context?

For the case of Ballito, it has been gradually shown that the actions of developers have been inherently linked with macroeconomic trends; social preferences; changes in degrees of accessibility; technological advancements; as well as localised, physical realities. From a structure-agency theoretical vantage point, the town’s fragmented urban form has materialised from a recursive array of negotiations between ‘the actor’ and their ‘context for action’. So, one should also ask, which wide-reaching ‘structures’ have been involved in the promotion or the marginalisation of certain interest groups?

This chapter will attempt to determine which actor-groups have wielded the greatest degree of power to order the town’s post-1994 growth. In doing so, some attention shall be devoted to the systems of social constraint, productivity or signification that have enabled them to do so. A discussion of ‘institutional thickness’ will then consider the developmental consequences of the relative ‘strength’ of Ballito’s institutional network.

7.1 A Discussion of ‘Structure’

At this point it is worthwhile to refresh our understanding of a ‘structure’, which is essentially a set of ‘organising ideas’, resources and institutional rules (including

normative rules and codes of signification) that governs the strategising processes of individuals and through which power is expressed (Healey and Barrett, 1990; Ball, 1998; Zunino, 2006). Drawing on Jessop's (1996) strategic-relative interpretation of structure, it is an abstract, transcendental force of influence that may be strategically and temporarily engaged with by reflexive actors.

Chapter 4 explained that post-apartheid developmental policy is based upon certain cross-cutting normative concerns. Indeed, nearly all the policies of any South African governmental sphere or sector are concurrent with their concerns for *people-driven development*, *socio-spatial integration* and *sustainable development*. However, the propositions of Pieterse (2004, refer to pages 35 and 36), as well as the observations of Ballito's post-1994 'fragmenting' development process, stand testament to the fact that normative political emphases can be lost at the level of local implementation. As a means of understanding this 'sidelining' process, the following discussion will represent the dominant reservoirs of rules, resources and ideologies within which Ballito's developmental negotiations took place. These have been identified as follows:

- *Economic liberalisation* – the ideas associated with the belief that the 'logic' of the capitalist free market and private-sector competition is the best means of promoting social and economic development. Such ideas are strongly reflected in the strategic output of national policies such as GEAR (1996) and the National Spatial Development Perspective (2003).
- *Normative concerns* – the array of 'progressive' principles and practices that, broadly speaking, are designed to promote sustainable, integrated and participatory modes of governance and development in post-apartheid South Africa.
- *Extant technocracy* – systems of operation and legitimisation (vestiges of pre-1994 structures of government) that rely on rationalised modes of decision-making and therefore give greatest recognition to knowledge and information routed from positivist science.

These 'structures' have served to guide the actions of Ballito's various development agencies and actors; albeit with varying realms and degrees of influence. For the purposes of deciphering and considering their respective *levels of impact*, the overall development

process has been cast as a composite of three generalised and overlapping stages. Following the approach taken by Zunino (2006), these have been devised as follows:

- *Policy-making*, describing the process involving the formulation of broad developmental mechanisms and objectives – termed “political plot lines” by Zunino (2006:1828);
- *Planning*, including the coordination and designation of spatial development priorities and strategies; as well as the conduction of participatory procedures such as public forums and meetings;
- *Decision-making and implementation*, whereby concrete decisions are taken regarding the expression of development plans and strategies.

These ‘levels’ refer to the actions of all spheres of government – national, provincial and local entities – although provincial and local observations refer particularly to those of KwaZulu Natal and Ballito’s local government institutions. As stated, these are highly generalised, hypothetical constructions that do not represent formalised, distinctive processes. However, in accordance with Zunino (2006) their formulation does enable a consideration of the extent to which structures of social action may guide or influence various aspects of a development process. For the case of Ballito it is thus necessary to show which broad systems of rationality, legitimisation and constraint were able to create a *space* – an opportunistic social or institutional moment – for the procurement or expression of power within development procedures. Table 7.1 does so:

Table 7.1: Predominant ‘Structures’ of Ballito’s post-1994 Development and their Levels of Influence (shaded areas represent avenues or ‘opportunistic spaces’ for the expression of power).

		Structures of Rationality or Constraint		
		Economic liberalisation	Normative concerns	Extant technocracy
Level of Development Process	Policy-making			
	Planning			
	Decision-making and implementation			

The discourse of *economic liberalisation* was found to permeate all levels of the development process. Clearly, policies from South African national government are heavily influenced by this paradigm; as are provincial and local policies (in the case of KwaZulu Natal and Ballito, as discussed in chapter 4). In addition, planning processes within all spheres of government were obviously dominated by the need to capitalize on regional ‘competitive advantage’ and to promote all forms of private investment. The most striking finding however, was the extent to which pressures for rapid economic growth were reflected in the ideologies and actions of local decision-makers and administrators. Some discussion of the strategies and tactics utilized by situated actors to further their interests will follow in this and the subsequent chapter. Here it will suffice to note that the politico-ideological interests associated with neo-liberal economic thought were particularly dominant with reference to the post-1994 development of Ballito.

At the implementation level it was clear that *normative concerns* were usually sidelined if a particular development offered to create a certain number of employment opportunities, or contribute a substantial amount to the local rates-base. Whilst ‘progressive’ ideological

trends such as integration constitute the backbone of land development policy and planning systems throughout the governmental spectrum, it was abundantly clear that the prioritization procedures of Ballito's local municipalities have, since 1994, been biased towards meeting numerical targets rather than complex political aspirations. Discussions of this tendency will follow in chapters 7 and 8.

Finally, it was evident that Ballito's development procedures were embedded in a *technocratic mode* of justification and approval, despite the steps taken by post-apartheid legislative authorities to promote cooperative governance and the decentralization of decision-making power. Both the planning and decision-making levels exemplified the privileging of positivist scientific findings and technical knowledge over localised knowledge and concerns. It was consistently found that both public and private-sector agencies would draw upon these systems of legitimization in order to further their own interests.

7.1.1 Power and Interest

The finding that various 'structures' were able to guide, with varying degrees and realms of influence, the actions of agencies involved in Ballito's post-1994 development raises many questions. For instance, one may ask who was (and is) best-suited to exploiting these avenues of power? The answer provided here is that central government and private-sector agencies were (and are) most capable of having their interests served by development. This has been to the exclusion of local government and communities, despite the organisational and operational requirements of post-1994 legislation.

In this case it was apparent that the expression of power within governmental systems remains in a top-down manner; a vestige of the autocratic apartheid machine. A common extraction from local municipal officials (who have been involved with Ballito) was that 'orders come from above', sometimes without recognition of local limitations, and local government simply has to follow suit. The impression gained was that local authorities are aware of this fact and are, in general, quite comfortable with it. In the words of an

official from Ilembe District Municipality, this hierarchical expression of power was “just par for the game”.

So, for all the post-1994 legislation directed at reforming governmental structures and powers, many aspects of centralized governance have proven remarkably stubborn and persist to this day. Admittedly in the case of Ballito, there are various opinions to this matter. Local municipal officials tended to adopt the view that power over development approvals emanated ‘from above’, expressed through actions of provincial approval committees or the DFA tribunal. However, outside commentators pointed out that since 1995 these procedures were poorly attended by municipal representatives; that perhaps more could have been done to assist or inform approval processes. Either way, it was certainly the case that local government was under immense pressure to clear all obstacles to development.

Private-sector agencies (especially large, well-connected development companies and investment groups) certainly exemplified a great capacity to promote their developmental interests above those of others, yet it is difficult to suggest how this capacity has changed since 1994. Some degree of this power may be attributed to the rise of neo-liberal thought within political and governmental echelons. Yet one may also appreciate that private organizations generally have access to a wider range of financial resources and technical expertise than entities of the public sector. In the case of Ballito, these facts ensured that the balance of power during approval processes was tipped in favour of developers. Indeed, the following chapter (dealing with the inception of Simbithi Eco-Estate) will demonstrate that private developers were capable of influencing and controlling approval processes through selective data procurement, enticement, as well as professional and technical domination.

7.1.2 Local Government and Communities: On the Margin Again

Despite legislation aimed at the ‘decentralisation’ of state power and integrated development planning, the ability of Ballito’s local government to represent itself as an important role-player in development was undermined by a wide-reaching state of incapacitation. The most obvious indication of this tendency is provided by the fact that many planning and engineering services have been consistently outsourced to private consultancies since the first round of local government restructuring, which took place in 1995.

The detrimental effects of the post-1994 local government metamorphosis on the decision-making and financial capacity of Ballito’s district and local municipalities can not be underestimated. Legislation such as the Local Government Transition Act (LGTA, 1993) and the Municipal Structures Act (1998), whilst created with the best of integrative intentions, served to delegate a number of unfunded mandates to local government. The LGTA and its subsequent amendments were particularly vague in terms of how internal municipal structures should be constituted and operated. Furthermore, municipal roles and responsibilities were delegated to Ballito’s district and local councils without adequate explanation of how these entities should coordinate their actions. Following the production of the Municipal Structures, Systems and Demarcations Acts (refer to table 4.4, page 70), there is still a palpable degree of frustration at the developmental obstacles provided by functional incongruencies between the two tiers of local government. Issues of financial and skills limitations have merely served to aggravate this scenario of uncertainty and inefficiency.

It must be iterated these are generalizations – KwaDukuza Local Municipality (formed in 2000) in particular has done a great deal to embrace its developmental mandate, despite the atmosphere of paralyzing ambiguity. Nevertheless, the local council’s state of relative incapacitation has certainly rendered it vulnerable to the politico-economic interests of central government and the private-sector. Practical examples of this tendency will be presented later in this and its ensuing chapter.

Switching the lens to consider local communities, it was apparent that participatory procedures were conducted in line with post-1994 legislative obligations, yet these seem to have remained as consultative exercises. Indeed, there was very little evidence to suggest that communal concerns were ever reflected in major governmental decisions. In the public forums held as part of development approval processes, issues of ‘quality of life’ and ‘sense of place’ were usually vanquished by the recommendations of professionals with specialist technical knowledge. Such procedures have gradually become more numerous and effective, yet it is obvious that since 1994 communal interests and concerns were often overrun by political agendas and economic interests. As such, the ability of communities to play a meaningful role in Ballito’s development has also been undermined by the neo-liberal and technocratic ‘information rules’ of South African government.

7.1.3 Consequences for Spatial Development?

In order to understand the implications of ‘structure and agency’ for Ballito’s spatial development, it must be recognised that the discourse of economic liberalisation provided the predominant politico-ideological framework within which local developmental decisions were taken. It was found that the local municipal entities responsible for management of Ballito have been far more constrained by pressures for local economic development, rapid growth and securing private investment than they have by concerns for promoting sustainable and integrated modes of development. Within an institutional context of financial and operational incapacity, certain types of development (including those giving rise to a fragmented, sprawling urban form) have been approved based on their contribution to regional employment and rates bases. It is fair to say that an inadequate degree of consideration was given to long-term socio-spatial impacts during these development procedures. The approval process of Simbithi Eco-Estate, which is the focus of the discussion in the following chapter, will provide a succinct example of and explanation for this wide-reaching trend.

Yet one must consider the duality of power with respect to development in Ballito; the notion that top-down structures of domination and local power systems are engaged in a reciprocal and productive relationship. Accordingly, the dynamics of the local institutional context must be examined in greater detail, with due consideration given to our discussion of structure.

7.2 Institutional Thickness

In Ballito, criticisms are often leveled at local government institutions for not possessing an adequate capacity to manage the town's growth. Residents widely regard their local council as being inefficient and isolated – existing in a world of their own where they are free to engage in rhetorical banter without any desire to communicate or coordinate their actions with the wider community. The following section will devote some attention to Ballito's local institutional capacity in an attempt to determine if such criticisms are justified and, if so, whether a state of incapacitation has affected the town's post-1994 spatial development. To this extent the institutional context will be discussed in terms of Amin and Thrift's (1995) description of the four main constituents of a state of 'institutional thickness' (see chapter 2).

7.2.1 Institutional Variety in Development Processes

On the local scale, it was obvious that since 1994 a limited array of institutions were capable of playing a *significant* role in Ballito's development procedures. The emphasis on the word 'significant' stems from the fact that local conservancy groups, business and ratepayers associations do exist, and communities occasionally unite around particular viewpoints, but such institutions have primarily been involved with contesting the decisions of council as opposed to discussing, planning and coordinating development in a cooperative manner. Here it will suffice to point out that Ballito has never played host to an extraordinarily comprehensive or diverse assortment of development-related institutions.

7.2.2 Institutional Relationships

A robust institutional setup is deemed to require the existence of an extensive and intensive network of institutional relationships (involving “high levels of contact, communication and information interchange” – Amin and Thrift, 1995:102). Unfortunately, very little evidence of such was uncovered during the research process despite constitutional obligations entailing ‘cooperative governance’. Since 1994 the planning and strategic budgeting processes of Ballito’s local government have predominantly occurred in a ‘neverland’ that is somewhat impermeable to input from the private-sector and community organizations. The plans of national and provincial service departments are often unshared with local government and this consistently serves to undermine integrated development planning processes.

Internal structures of local government have exhibited little in the way of active bilateral communication. Indeed, the formation of smooth structures of cooperative governance has been severely hampered by political volatility at national, provincial, regional and local levels. This is the case in much of the KwaZulu Natal province, where political allegiances are predominantly divided between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the African National Congress (ANC). To cut a long story short, supporters of these parties have experienced numerous violent clashes in the past and it is a euphemism to suggest that they have ‘bad blood’. This political showdown came to impact on Ballito after the local government reforms of 2000. The election results saw the town included in a local municipality that was ANC territory, which in turn fell within an IFP-run district entity. The result was a near-total shutdown of communication over infrastructural development and coordination thereof. The point being made here is that communication within local government and various sector departments has been significantly cramped by the existence of differing, yet firmly-entrenched political discourse communities.

Since 1994 minor channels of communication have indeed linked local government, members of the general public and community-based organisations. National legislation necessitates the conduction of public meetings, advisory and discussion forums during all

processes of integrated development planning and decision-making. Yet these passages of information may not be described as active or influential, for there is a general consensus that such participatory procedures remain operational requirements rather than valuable sources of knowledge or coordinative action.

During the period of study some degree of effort was made by local councils to consult and exchange information with private developers and investors. During the existence of the Dolphin Coast Transitional Local Council (1995 to 2000) a Ballito-based developers' forum operated to bridge the local public-private sector divide. The forum was subsequently disbanded, yet evidence suggests that these relationships were moderately effective – more appropriately envisaged as slow trickles of information as opposed to consistent bilateral passages of communication. However, there have been several encouraging instances that have involved close inter-sectoral contact. One such occurrence was in the late 1990s, when the Dolphin Coast TLC forged a ground-breaking public-private partnership for the provision of water and sanitation services (to be discussed later in this chapter). Another happened in early 2007 when a committed and sustained attempt was made by KwaDukuza Local Municipality to create a Ballito-based developers' forum to assist in the clarification and alleviation of obstacles to development.

Despite various moments of encouragement and a clear pattern of improvement since 1994, levels of institutional communication have been overwhelmingly inadequate. The following extract from a local newspaper article, entitled *'Mayor Shuts Down Rates Debate'*, puts it succinctly:

ANC KwaDukuza mayor S'du Gumede has again shut down an attempt by Inkatha Freedom Party members to discuss the KwaDukuza council's new system of rating North Coast property. Ratepayers are up in arms about the discrepancies in property value that have arisen after a new valuation roll was compiled. Using these high values, calculated on land and buildings, council has levied their rates for the next financial year translating into huge increases for some... A letter was sent to council in April from a top Durban attorney Norman Brauteseth who represents major North Coast Developers... In his letter Brauteseth warned of the impact such a policy would have for developers, saying it will kill any further economic development. DA [Democratic Alliance] member Trevor Thompson said the way the council has handled the issue "flies in the face of democracy" (North Coast Courier, 3/8/2007, pp. 3).

In the same edition, a frustrated resident writes:

Our government passed the new Property Rates Act in 2004 giving municipalities a five-year period in which to implement a new... system of property valuations and levying of rates. Instead of consulting the main stakeholders and working through different options, our municipality rushed ahead and implemented their own version. This new valuation and rates system has increased the rates budget by 88% compared to the country's growth rate of around 5%! How can this be? (North Coast Courier, 3/8/2007, pp. 11)

Complaints (such as these) from members of the local community and private-sector are but a minor indication of the lack of *effective* communication between government and other developmental stakeholders – an obstacle to integrated development planning that persists to this day. An unfortunate corollary of this communicative sluggishness is a high degree of disillusionment amongst Ballito-based communities and businesses. Perhaps unfairly, an atmosphere of inter-agency mistrust prevails; choking the possibilities of communicative consensus-building during participatory procedures.

7.2.3 Patterns of Domination and/or Coalition

The previous discussion of structure and agency in the Ballito context revealed that certain political discourses did enable the creation of recognisable and usually consistent patterns of domination. It was also noted that these ‘avenues of power’ served to promote an extremely rapid rate of development in Ballito, even when it ran the risk of exceeding local institutional capacity. To some extent, the positioning of central government and the private-sector as the primary role-players in development has provided a degree of institutional ‘stability’. It was mentioned that most local government officials regard the top-down function of government as being inevitable; something that must be catered for and worked around. As a result, there has been enough certainty at the level of local government to promote the creation of innovative solutions to difficult capacity constraints. An example involves the striking of a public-private partnership for the provision of water services in the Ballito region.

When Dolphin Coast Transitional Local Council was formed in 1995, the fledgling service department found itself facing a massive task of infrastructural development. The majority of the Ballito region's water network was created during the 1970s, at a time when individual holiday cottages lined the beachfront (rather than the high-density apartment blocks that may be found today). Early estimates found that the upgrading of water services in the wider urban region would cost the council millions of Rands per annum. Out of desperation for financial survival, local officials approached the relevant provincial service department and explained the predicament. A response was obtained suggesting that Dolphin Coast TLC assemble a study regarding the outsourcing of these services to the private-sector. At that stage, no regulations or procedures had been produced for the formation of such partnerships.

So, until 1999 the council gradually formulated an outsourcing business plan. All the while, pressures to provide social and infrastructural services to nearby poverty-stricken areas sucked-up the majority of the municipal budget. The water service system in Ballito remained incapacitated and a potential impediment to future development. Eventually, an agreement was created with SAUR, a French consortium, to undertake the provision of these services on a concession basis for thirty years. SAUR subsequently established a local company (Siza Water), which began to take over the water services on 1 April 1999. The following year the Dolphin Coast TLC was incorporated into KwaDukuza Local Municipality, but the concession agreement remained for the original area. It was a common suggestion that the post-2000 rate of development would not have been able to materialise had it not been for the conception of this affiliation.

The process whereby the agreement was created was incredibly fraught with difficulties, not least in the form of vehement high-level political opposition from SAMWU (the South African Municipal Workers' Union) and PSI (Public Services International), who claimed that such an accord would contravene a national framework agreement for service provision (Green Left Weekly, 16/3/1999). However, the privatisation process attracted the attention and support of the national Ministry of Constitutional Development and Provincial Affairs. The power carried by this national department was such that the agreement was formulated, finalised and announced to the press (in a rather glamorous ceremony involving the Minister himself) in the face of such stern – and subsequently bemused – union opposition. Conveniently, this provides a useful example of the wide-reaching dominance of economic liberalisation discourse at the decision-making and implementation level.

This agreement was the first of its kind in South Africa and its success has been used as a landmark for future procedures. Indeed, the drafting of Sections 78 to 80 (mechanisms of municipal service delivery) of the Municipal Systems Act (no. 32 of 2000) is reputed to have been based on the experiences of Dolphin Coast TLC.

It is argued here that such a process of 'institutional innovation' would not have been possible had it not been for the existence of a well-defined, hierarchical pattern of domination within government. There is little doubt that the privatisation agreement, for all its potentially negative implications, has protected the end consumer from increased service rates and has capacitated the KwaDukuza Local Municipality in terms of its 'developmental' mandate. Here we may observe, in practice, Foucault's ideas regarding the productive nature of power.

Patterns of domination were also evident in the actions of the private-sector. Development applications from the private-sector provide a particular realm for the

localised expression of power systems. Large-scale residential developments in Ballito have invariably been motivated in terms of their implications for growth of regional employment and municipal rates bases. Normative concerns (integration, sustainability and equity) are neglected and alternative techno-economic rationalities are employed as a means of signification.

In addition, developers active in Ballito, although competing for business, have formed close alliances with each other and members of the wider community in response to recent changes in the municipal rates system (briefly mentioned in the previous newspaper extract entitled '*Mayor Shuts Down Rates Debate*'). Their representation involves the usual collection of legal, technical and professional knowledge and they generally appeal to the idea that disrupting their activities amounts to 'shutting down economic development and employment creation'. Subsequent to the publication of that particular article, the municipality has backed-down, establishing a local developer's forum and making provisions to exclude developers from paying exorbitant rates on their unsold properties. As a corollary of these efforts, relations between local government and private developers are presently at an all-time high. Many public and private-sector officials expressed optimism with regards to the potential of the new forum to greatly enhance private development in the region – of course, these suggestions carry the dubious neo-liberal assumptions that firstly, rapid development is desirable and secondly, state regulatory processes are merely obstacles to regional socio-economic upliftment.

The actions of private developers in Ballito consistently provide such examples of the dominance of technocratic and neo-liberal systems of legitimisation at the local decision-making level, granted that the expression of these hegemonic structures has been fuelled by municipal financial and skills limitations. They also demonstrate that networks of power may have local manifestations, wherein individual actors may draw upon political, economic and material resources and 'rules' to further their own interests.

To return to our consideration of institutional thickness, it is proposed that well-defined patterns of domination and coalition did exist amongst (a small variety of) institutions

and were productive in the promotion of development within Ballito. The scenario involving privatisation of water services gives an indication that, despite post-1994 political and organisational changes, local government in Ballito possessed some degree of institutional ‘capital’ – a capacity to adjust and innovate in the face of power. Meanwhile, coalitions of power have played out at a localised scale as interests of individuals and institutions become loosely aligned, usually in response to the actions of local councils.

7.2.4 A Common Vision for Development?

Unfortunately this is another area that provided obstacles to balanced, integrated development in Ballito. It has been noted that since 1994 a limited variety of local institutions has been involved in the various levels of the development process (policy-making through implementation) with little effective communication there-between. The direct result of this has been significant incongruity within institutional aspirations or ‘visions’ for the spatial development of the town. This reality has considerably hampered local municipal procedures of integrated development planning and implementation.

To secure ‘buy-in’ to spatial development strategies from a wide range of agencies requires a great deal of time and effort, in any case of local government reform (Zunino, 2006). It is a natural tendency, in circumstances of political uncertainty, for individuals and organizations to remain somewhat wary of new policies that signify a ‘break from the past’. Indeed, very little buy-in from Ballito-based communities, non-governmental organizations and private companies was secured for local policies after the production of the first integrated development plans (IDPs) in 1998. There are many factors that have contributed to this, including a lack of effective participatory mechanisms and the absence of a lucid spatial developmental vision within the IDPs (refer to table 4.6, pages 78 and 79).

Furthermore, since 1994 national and provincial service departments have not participated meaningfully in the production of local and district IDPs. It was noted that

departmental projects would often ‘drop out of the sky’ and take local planners and officials by complete surprise. The process of refinement and adoption of a ‘common spatial vision’ has only recently started to proceed through efforts to improve inter- and extra-governmental communication. Apart from KwaDukuza Local Municipality’s recently-formed (2007) developers’ forum, an example of such efforts is provided by Ilembe District Municipality, which now conducts ‘sector forums’ three to four times a year in order to track the movements and plans of various line function agencies.

Political dynamics have also served to confound the creation of a widely-accepted spatial vision for Ballito. The research process revealed that certain developmental objectives are inexorably linked with broad political agendas. It has been explained that inter- and intra-party politics are very active in Ballito and have closed various governmental channels of communication. For one matter, neo-liberalism is a political discourse that is strongly linked with the provisions and supporters of current State President Thabo Mbeki. Yet policies such as GEAR (refer to table 4.2, page 63), which push for reduced government spending and the privatization of infrastructural networks, have been heavily criticized by ‘extreme left’ factions of the African National Congress (ANC). The Communist Party and trade union contingents of the ANC tend to adopt a political vantage point that propounds state interventionism and social service provision. Each stance carries its own particular ideologies and aspirations for how development in the Ballito region should be managed – and its fragmenting effect on local developmental politics is readily accepted by municipal officials.

Political (and for that matter developmental) ideologies are also strongly linked with individual cultural and historical backgrounds. It was interesting to note that African local municipal officials tended to give greater recognition to the potential of Zulu cultural tourism development (involving the use of Anglo-Zulu war battlefield, Albert Luthuli and Shaka Zulu legacies as tourism draw-cards) in the wider Ballito region than non-Africans. It was clear that differing ethnic or cultural identities did have implications for how these individuals interpreted their developmental role.

With that in mind, political stances/aspirations and cultural ideologies may affect the manner in which individuals in government/business interpret their roles and formulate their development priorities. Inevitably, these differences have hampered the elucidation of a 'common goal for development'. During interviews, local professionals involved in strategic development planning suggested broadly congruous arrays of development issues and trends. The issues received differing emphases in terms of their importance and potential impact, but an underlying rationale regarding the strategic basis for development in the region does appear to be emerging. However, this strategic vision for Ballito may certainly not be recognised as a common goal that permeates all levels of public- and private-sector decision-making and administration.

7.3 Conclusion

Drawing on this discussion it is suggested that Ballito's post-1994 developmental experience has unfolded within a 'vacuum' of local institutional incapacity. Without doubt the institutional context was one that served to undermine the implementation of post-apartheid South Africa's array of 'progressive' socio-developmental policies. These problems have largely been the result of an atmosphere of confusion regarding local government roles and responsibilities, which in turn is associated with the post-1994 reconstitution of governmental structures. However, socio-cultural and political differences have played their role in the vacuum; as have vestigial mechanisms of technocratic operation and legitimization that have been encouraged by the setting of numerical targets for municipal service provision.

Capacity constraints at the local level have been placed under even greater pressure through the hierarchical exercise of power within the tri-spherical mode of formal government. As a result, local municipal entities have been forced to scramble in the accommodation of hegemonic provincial and national developmental priorities. Development in Ballito was permitted to occur at an alarmingly rapid rate. Concerns over principles such as socio-spatial integration and accessibility were left by the wayside as the private-sector, waving a banner of neo-liberal justification and central state support,

assumed a particularly powerful role in the town's development process. Left in the hands of market demand (and the socio-economic determinants thereof), a fragmented urban state has arisen.

With this being the case, does the example of Ballito stand for other South African scenarios? In many ways, it does. Each of Pieterse's (2004) five reasons for the persistence of fragmented urban forms in South Africa (see the Conceptual Framework, pages 39 and 40) holds some ground in the case of Ballito. Yet a great emphasis of this dissertation has been the influence provided by local and regional dynamics on urban development. As such, it will suffice to point out that Ballito's local governance context has been undermined by politico-economic issues similar to those of other South African urban areas. Furthermore, accepting the dominant thesis of post-apartheid urban literature in terms of the emergence of new patterns of urban segregation, one will appreciate the town's valid description as a typical South African example of institutional and socio-spatial fragmentation.

Chapter 8: Power, Institutional Weakness and Urban Fragmentation in Action: The Case of Simbithi Eco-Estate

Consider the following article (originally published on page 1 of the Durban-based newspaper *The Mercury* on November 6, 2003):

The eLan Group - the developers of the KwaZulu-Natal-based R2-billion Simbithi Eco Estate development - have set a new South African record in property sales by having sold R470-million in the last month...

The managing director said on Wednesday... "The main reason behind the demand is the need for secure estate-style living and an environment which consists of game and dams within the development in Ballito," he said.

Sabelo Properties, one of the developers who purchased land from the eLan Group, had already sold 120 units off-plan, ranging from R1,25-million to R2,1-million... Dean Hunter, one of the directors of Sabelo Properties, said the remaining units would be sold within the next week as negotiations with purchasers were in the final stages. "For Johannesburg investors, there is little maintenance so they have a lock up and go facility, while foreign investors are attracted by the natural wildlife which is unique to any development. And Hluhluwe game reserve is on their doorstep," he said.

Taylor said 70 percent of the buyers were people who wanted to live in the area whilst the other 30 percent were speculators intending to sell at a later stage. The eLan Group, which was financed by Imperial Bank with an R80-million loan, was responsible for providing the initial infrastructure, including roads and community facilities such as restaurants, tennis courts and a club house.

Brett Webb, the property finance manager at Imperial Bank, said the project was chosen for its viability and the high demand for property in the Ballito area. Construction had already commenced and the first show houses would be completed by mid-2004, Taylor said. An estimated 5 000 jobs would be created during and after construction, he said.

Wilson Bayley Holmes Ovcon (WBHO), one of the biggest construction companies in the country, had acquired a 20 percent shareholding in the Simbithi development. Mike Simpson, WBHO's property director, said the company saw major opportunities for construction work at Simbithi (IOL: Ngobese, 6/11/2003).

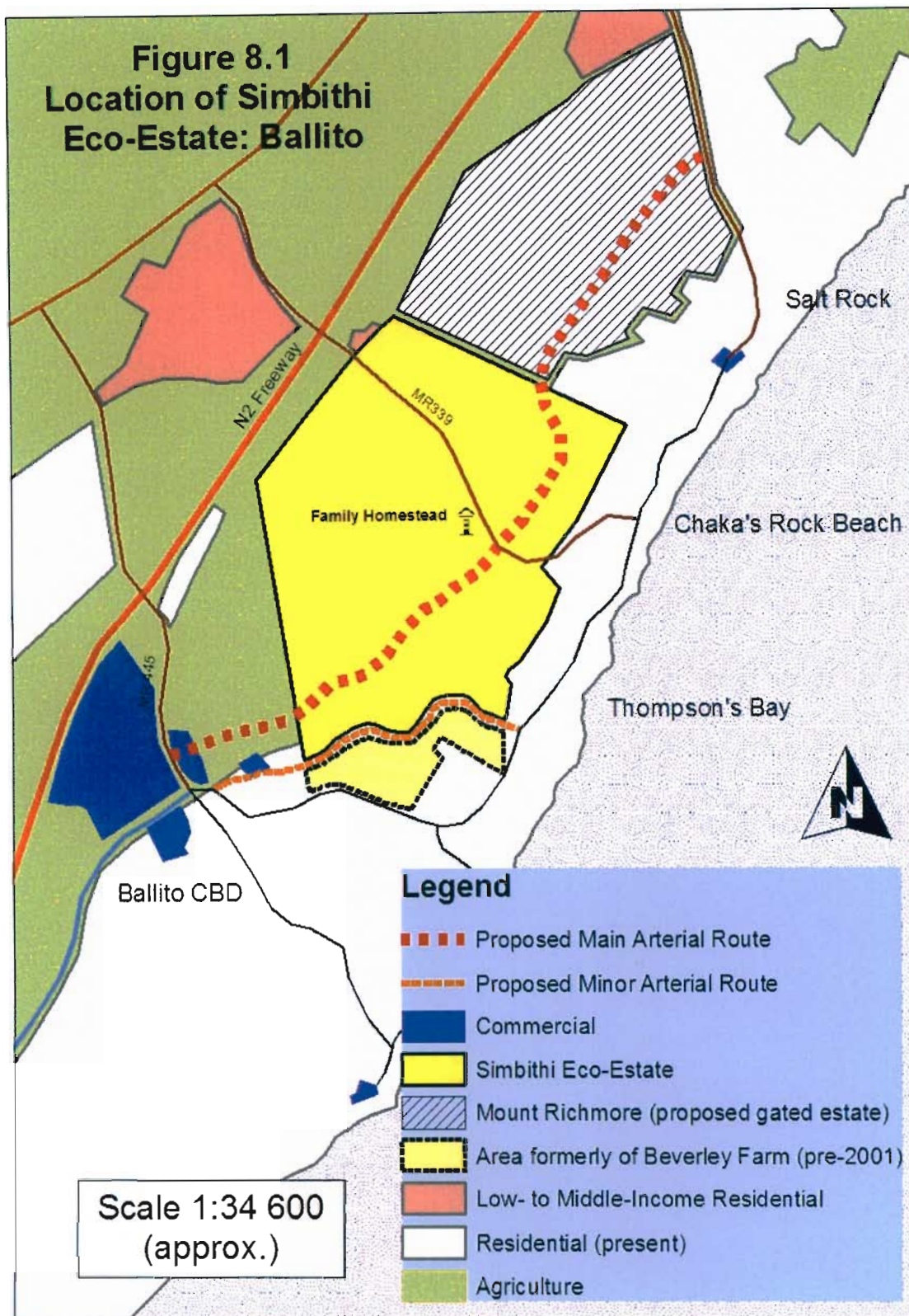
As shown in figure 8.1 (page 121), Simbithi Eco-Estate is located alongside the KwaZulu Natal coastline, in-between the old town centers of Ballito and Salt Rock and abutting the neighbourhood known as Shaka's Rock. Inland it is bordered by a thin strip of sugar cane agriculture and the N2 freeway.

It is worth considering as a mini-case study because it is accurately described as the microcosmic manifestation of Ballito and the town's overall *fragmenting* development

process. It is typical of recent developments and deserves a closer analysis for many reasons, including the following:

- As an upmarket development project, it was planned entirely by private consultants and thus provides a localised example of the “privatization of planning” (Shatkin, 2007:10) and its socio-spatial corollaries.
- It is an archetypal ‘gated community’: the entire estate is encapsulated by an electrified palisade security fence and access is nigh impossible for a non-resident or guest.
- It employed an aggressive multimedia marketing strategy that was centered upon ‘lifestyle’ trends in residential development – it has large open spaces, indigenous forests, sea views, an equestrian centre, a golf course, community centers and so on.
- It was developed during the early throes of the Ballito development boom, which sent the town into a post-2000 frenzy of speculative property trading.
- The planning and decision-making stages of the development were heavily influenced by local institutional power relations and their over-arching ideologies.

Figure 8.1
Location of Simbithi
Eco-Estate: Ballito



8.1 History

The area of land that is now Simbithi Eco-Estate was formerly a sugar cane farm named Beverley Estate, which had been owned by the family of Winston Ian Ladlau, a Second World War veteran and local community benefactor, since the beginning of the twentieth century. For many years the farm was a productive and successful enterprise – indeed it was often lauded as a ‘model farm’ by other farmers in the area and province. However, by the 1990s Beverley Estate’s financial capacity began to diminish rapidly in response to changes in the international and national context for sugar farming, such as those outlined in chapter 5. On a national scale, financial threats were posed by new legislature directed at securing minimum wages for farm workers, as well as incursions of cheap raw sugar from Southern African neighbours. The basic consequence was that throughout the 1990s sucrose market prices failed to increase in proportion to the operational costs of Beverley Estate. Meanwhile, the nationwide drought of the early nineties weakened the productivity capacity of the farm’s already-depleted soils to an even greater extent.

Within two decades of being highly profitable, the Beverley Sugar Estates company was teetering on the edge of bankruptcy. In response to these changes, the family of Mr. Ladlau (his wife Rosemary, three daughters and their husbands) made a decision in mid-1999 to sit together and discuss options that could be taken to bail the farm out of financial difficulty.

Over the years Mr. Ladlau had been selling land in a piecemeal fashion to developers, usually in response to demand for small-scale holiday apartment complexes on the farm portions abutting the existing Ballito township. Yet property values in the area had increased significantly since the mid-90s and the family recognized that their only real financial lifeline was the sale of well-located land for residential development. Therefore, to support the ailing company in the short-term, it was decided to part with seventeen hectares of land adjoining Ballito township. This land would later play host to the multi-million Rand gated-type development named ‘Beverley Hills’, which experienced a good

market reception and undoubtedly served to encourage the subsequent large-scale investment in Simibithi.

In addition to selling the 17 ha land portion, the family also decided to hand agricultural responsibilities over to a contractor, which entailed the retrenchment of most of the farm's labour force. Feeling betrayed, several long-serving staff members decided to take a motion of unfair treatment and financial under-reward to the CCMA court. The immense weight carried by this series of events may perhaps not be adequately described here. The farm had fulfilled a role as the extended family's 'epicenter' for three generations. Its lifestyle, natural beauty and operational processes provided the formative basis for each new familial generation. In addition, relations between the farm management and employees were of a caliber seldom seen in any South African context. Suffice to say that relationships often transcended the traditional employer-employee mode into genuine friendships. These factors ensured that the out-sourcing and retrenchment procedures were incredibly deliberate and emotionally testing. However, eventually the process was completed and the annual drain of financial loss ceased to flow.

After these initial measures of sustenance it was decided to contract the services of a team of consultants to assess the farm's various options as a development site. Eventually, the team came to be comprised of two town planners, an environmental consultant, a property economist, as well as civil, geotechnical and structural, electrical and traffic engineers. Soon after the procurement of these services in 2001, the first twist in the tale of Simibithi's creation arose. This took the form of the family's realization that the local government authority had embarked on their own planning procedures for Beverley Estate – involving several rounds of consultancy work – without the consent or knowledge of the farm owners.

8.2 Local Government Isolation

Early in 1999, the Dolphin Coast Transitional Local Council had commissioned a traffic engineering consultant to produce a ‘road infrastructure needs’ report for the municipal area. This was in response to various traffic congestion issues that had arisen along old Ballito’s main access road (the MR 455 – please refer to figure 8.1) after the construction of the N2 freeway. The consultants’ report recommended that two new link roads be constructed between the MR 455 and the MR 339 (the parallel route of access to Salt Rock, identified in figure 3.6), running directly through Beverley Estate. In addition, a planning consultancy had been appointed to produce a concept plan for the future development of the farm, based on the positioning of these two roads.

Considering the legislative requirement that all stakeholders be engaged with during development procedures, it is rather surprising that the local council did not even consider mentioning such plans to the owners of the land that was to be affected. After all, the proposed main arterial route (figure 8.1) ran close to the Ladlau family home and would obviously have raised serious concerns for resulting noise or air pollution. This example of ‘institutional isolation’ goes some way to demonstrating the inadequacies of inter-agency communication and contact in Ballito’s local governance context.

With these plans in mind, the family’s consultancy team decided to propose two main development options, both based on dividing the farm into multiple medium- to low-density residential developments. The proposed linking roads of the municipality were reconfigured slightly and motivated to the original traffic consultants, who acquiesced with the suggestions. It was posited that land areas should be sold to individual developers in various ‘phases’, with certain land portions to be retained for over half a decade.

Mr. Ladlau, in the meantime, informed the local council of his desire for financial compensation if a road servitude or reservation was to be created within Beverley Estate. The KwaDukuza council, unsure of whether to pay for a servitude or buy the land

outright, stalled their decision on the matter. Acknowledging that the second round of local government had taken place just one year earlier, it is appropriate to suggest that the issue was sucked into our hypothetical ‘vacuum’ of institutional incapacity (refer to the previous chapter). This scenario gives a neat indication of how a state of ‘institutional weakness’ affected the town’s spatial development process. Ultimately, the decision-making paralysis exemplified by the municipality would give rise to an entirely different urban form to that envisaged by the council’s planning consultants. Rather than promoting equity in terms of social access to facilities and resources, the future of Beverley Estate would serve to restrict it in severe manner.

8.3 *Simbithi Approaches*

By the onset of 2002 however, the family was by no means certain of an acceptable value for the entire area of Beverley Estate. As explained, the planning consult entailed the idea that relatively small segments would be ‘carved off’ and sold over a number of years, in response to market demand. However, there was a general consensus of what should and shouldn’t happen to the farm area in the future. Priorities of the family included the following:

- Not being rushed into a ‘quick deal’ – in other words the family were prepared to be patient in order to secure a considerable offer;
- Long-term protection and management of the farm’s environmental assets such as indigenous forests, swamps and springs;
- Formulating a deal that would enable Mr. and Mrs. Ladlau to remain in their home, the original farmhouse on the estate;
- Ensuring that medium- to high-density developments would only occur along the farm’s coastal interface, with low-density residential activity situated inland.

Numerous approaches were made by developers and entrepreneurs, but the financial offerings or proposed land use activity were invariably deemed inappropriate by the family. Nevertheless, in 2002 they were approached by a private developer⁶ who, having invested previously in Ballito, was seeking an opportunity to create a large-scale, up-market residential development that would capitalize on strong property market trends.

⁶ Hereafter referred to as ‘the developer’.

The developer was impressed by the land area and sensitive to the ideals of the family. Negotiations over the purchase of the farm proceeded slowly yet productively as the buyer-seller relationship proved to be remarkably amicable. Eventually, the concept of a secure residential estate, with large open spaces, dams, a possible golf course and a variety of residential options, was forged. The formulation of this ‘lifestyle’ residential concept was undoubtedly encouraged by the financial success of Zimbali Estate (discussed in chapter 5), which a remarkable capacity to attract capital investment from other parts of South Africa (particularly the Johannesburg area) and the world.

The end result was that an agreement was reached for the sale of the southern farm section (that adjoining old Ballito), with an option placed on the remaining area. The offer was subject to the approval of various development applications and rezoning procedures, which were to be lodged in accordance with the Development Facilitation Act (this route of approval was specifically chosen for its capacity to save time and money via the avoidance of bureaucratic obstacles associated with the provincial planning Ordinance – please refer to table 4.5). Here it should be recognized that the developer’s initial capacity to raise loan finance was undoubtedly enhanced by national interest rate reductions in prime and variable mortgage repayments (see chapter 5). The money-lender, on the other hand, was prepared to grant a loan based on the promising nature of prevailing local and national property market conditions. So, whilst macroeconomic forces did play a role in guiding the developer’s decision, the assets of the local land area and the promise of the local property market were of tantamount importance.

8.4 *Power to the Developer*

Alas, the issue of the local council’s plans for new roads to pass through Beverley Estate remained. These plans created issues for the development proposal with respect to its conceptual emphasis on security through the restriction of access. In a classic play of local power relations, the developer contracted the consultants, whom had originally proposed the road alterations to the municipality, to act on his behalf.

Intriguingly, the consultancy now propounded that only one of the proposed roads (the ‘minor arterial route’ shown in figure 8.1) was necessary and an avalanche of techno-scientific knowledge was posited in order to discredit plans for a bisecting road. As a means of co-opting support from the local municipality, the development plan was backed-up by estimates of permanent employment creation (these hovered around the eighteen-hundred mark). Eventually, the developer even offered to cover the costs of constructing the smaller linking road. The unsurprising result was that KwaDukuza Municipality came to regard the Simbithi proposal as ‘highly desirable’ and with their support the development application was passed by the DFA (Development Facilitation Act) tribunal with few problems.

A key determinant of this power-play was the skill shortages of local government, especially with respect to long-term planning and specialized technical services. KwaDukuza council had the services of a small planning department of relatively young, active professionals; yet they were faced with a development proposal of epic proportions, justified with an overwhelming array of economic and technical ‘information rules’. This was an obvious and deliberate act of power on behalf of the developer – it was known that the local council was under immense pressure to create employment and that it lacked the capacity to counter scientific arguments of legitimization. The entire proposal procedure was thus carried out in a manner that, in this context, expressed as much power over the council’s actions as possible. With the weight of the proposal, the council’s significant financial constraints and immense pressure from upper-levels of government, it was practically impossible for municipal planners to criticize or question the scheme. In hindsight, little attention was given to the possible long-term, holistic socio-spatial effects of such an investment.

Meanwhile, local communities led by the Ballito Environmental Conservancy had certainly not adopted a *laissez faire* attitude towards the Simbithi proposal. Public meetings for the Environmental Impact Assessment process were characterized by the voiced concerns of white, middle-class residents with regard to the new development’s

possible impact on the natural environment. Interestingly, very few residents questioned the socio-environmental ‘integrative’ basis of the proposal – an indication that few people knew of the existence, objectives or normative bases of local integrated development plans. In almost all cases, communal concerns were met with rational-scientific justifications, presented by engineers or environmental consultants in the employ of the developer. Communal issues raised at public meetings did not play an influential role in the subsequent planning and approval process.

This scenario serves as a fantastic example of how ‘progressive’ normative political concerns can be sidelined at the level of developmental decision-making and implementation. It also shows that local institutional relations, although relatively autonomous, are inherently linked with broad structures of legitimization, domination and control (refer to the discussion of ‘structure’ in the previous chapter). Indeed, it is these underlying currents of knowledge, stratagem, rationality and signification that frame the performance of local development-related negotiations and dominations.

Above all, the case study shows that Ballito’s various rounds of institutional change have ultimately rendered its development management processes open to the investment decisions of the private-sector. Yet issues of institutional or political fragmentation merely constitute one facet of the process (albeit a major one); political provisions, individual decisions and socio-economic trends with innumerable degrees and scales of influence have fed into developmental ‘melting pot’. Even the decisions and interests of local agencies, such as the Ladlau family, have been influential for the town’s spatial growth pattern.

Chapter 9: Findings and Conclusions

Having reached the end of this journey, it is necessary to clarify the study's findings before recommendations may be presented. First of all, it was suggested in chapter 3 that Ballito's mode of spatial growth after the democratic elections of 1994 may, to a certain extent, be described as a process of 'fragmentation'. This argument was based on observations regarding the emergence of a physically-impermeable urban landscape characterized by large-scale gated residential developments. It was also proposed that Ballito does exemplify certain urban changes that are characteristic of postmodern urbanisation, although these findings were of a generalized socio-spatial and aesthetic nature.

Chapter 4 pointed out that South Africa post-apartheid legislation has been structured upon a normative basis, with a particular concern for promoting 'people-driven', 'sustainable' and 'integrated' development. Simultaneously, national macroeconomic strategies are strongly routed in neo-liberal theory and broadly aim to target government spending at regions exemplifying a competitive advantage; promote the role of the private-sector in development procedures; and create employment opportunities. With particular reference to Ballito, it was shown that both of these political undercurrents are reflected in ongoing local government planning procedures. Since 1994 the local political vortex of pressures for social development, the promotion of 'progressive' normative concerns and rapid economic growth has led to the absence of a clear vision for spatial development in the town and its surrounding region.

The discussion of the national policy-based context and its implications for development in Ballito also signified a detrimental, practical reality of South African local urban governance: that municipalities are relentlessly subjected to a two-pronged application of pressure from upper echelons of government. On one hand the KwaDukuza and Dolphin Coast councils were pressed by their mandate to provide bulk infrastructure services in order to meet the basic needs of those who were marginalized under apartheid. On the other, they have been required to promote private development initiatives; generate

independent revenue bases; become 'developmental' in nature and meet numerical targets in terms of employment creation and gross geographic production. In a context of an incapacitating institutional restructuring process, the long-term socio-spatial concerns of integrated development planning were inevitably sidelined as Ballito's local council 'scrambled' to accommodate the aforementioned demands whilst remaining a financially viable entity. As a corollary of this hypothetical fight for financial survival, development legitimization and approval processes have been pinned in a technocratic mode of justification and approval.

Chapter 5 showed that existing socio-economic realities and unfolding trends at national and regional levels have exerted a complicated agglomeration of forces on Ballito's development. With particular reference to the local property market, it was suggested that the socio-economic cycles of Durban played a major role in determining the extent of the 'property boom' that emerged after the year 2000. Yet it was made clear that this boom was only possible as a result of macroeconomic trajectories, influenced as they are by political provisions. A suggestion was made that local socio-economic contexts acted as the 'mold and mirror' through which broader socio-economic forces were expressed.

Chapter 6 attempted to show that socio-economic and political forces are only conveyable through complicated negotiation with existing physical contexts. Bioclimatic and environmental features, as well as pre-1994 urban and regional settlement patterns, were shown to be capable of shaping urban development trends via the dictation of property market trends. This section also explained how changes in a degree of physical accessibility have affected enormous implications for Ballito's development process.

With the various policy-based, socio-economic and physical-environmental issues dealt with, it was possible to embark on an 'institutional analysis'. Therefore, in chapter 7 attention was directed at whether, as suggested by many Ballito residents, a state of 'institutional weakness' has affected the local government's ability to control the town's spatial development. It was suggested that both grand and local mechanisms of power were expressed through the town's post-1994 development procedures. Broad structures

of rationality and constraint framed the processes whereby local negotiations took place and actors sought to uphold their particular interests. It was found that the majority of power over Ballito's development was vested in the political agendas of central government and the economic interests of the private-sector.

Findings indicated that there was indeed a state of institutional affairs that could be described as 'weak' and that this context served to marginalise local government and communities as powerful developmental role-players in Ballito. Certainly one could suggest that post-apartheid institutional reforms have undermined local spatial management attempts. Various rounds of organisational and territorial reshuffling have created a vacuum of municipal incapacity – involving financial constraints, competing political agendas and confusion over service delivery roles and responsibilities. Coupled with the top-down expression of power over developmental procedures, municipalities such as KwaDukuza have had very little room to manoeuvre in the production of desired urban spatial forms.

Finally, the case of Simbithi Eco-Estate was presented as a succinct example of the complex manner in which local developmental decisions are framed and taken. The chapter showed that urban development is inherently linked with multifarious interests and power relationships, which can serve to misrepresent such interests within urban political procedures. It gave a clear example of how Ballito's weak institutional setup was vulnerable to the manipulations and aspirations of private developers.

The basic conclusion that may be drawn from these observations is that Ballito's post-1994 pattern of growth has, in effect, been dictated by property market trends and entrenched politico-economic ideologies and power relationships. Although a focus of post-apartheid legislation, the ability of local communities and government to exert a meaningful influence on development procedures has remained inadequate. Partly the result of these issues, the growth of Ballito has reflected a persistence of socio-spatial inequalities in terms of race and class, which for historical reasons are closely interrelated in South Africa.

9.1 A Return to Postmodern Urbanisation

Ballito is simply too small and young an urban area to show categorical evidence of the major tenets of postmodern urbanisation – those of polycentrism, the emergence of *technopoles* of knowledge-intensive industries, and so on. The various points made regarding the emergence of a new CBD – which on a superficial level could be interpreted as an instance of polycentric urban development – reveal that this process has primarily been the result of local planning procedures and infrastructural limitations rather than forces of globalisation. Indeed, it was pointed out in chapter 4 that a new town centre was envisaged as early as 1984, with the production of the Ballito Structure Plan. On the other hand, chapter 6 showed that infrastructural and floor-space (the area of land available for commercial activity) constraints at the original CBD were important determinants of efforts to develop a new geographical focus for commercial development.

This is not to suggest that recent technological advancements did not play a role in this process – the original CBD was particularly limited in terms of electrical infrastructure and was thus incapable of accommodating extensive information and communication technology (ICT)-related development. So, technological progress did, in some way, influence the need for a new, larger and better-serviced business district; yet this was certainly not a mechanistic local reaction to global trends. Regional patterns of consumer demand and localised physical contexts were engaged in an intricate negotiation with over-arching trends in the generation of this spatial alteration.

To engage with a slightly different train of thought, it is posited that Ballito has indeed exemplified basic trends towards the fragmentation of urban form that have arisen in conjunction with fragmented social, political and economic contexts in other parts of South Africa (Harrison, 2003; Pieterse, 2004) and the world (Dear, 1995; Soja, 1995, 2000; Marcuse and Van Kempen, 2000; Shatkin, 2007). In physical terms, this pattern has been manifested in the proliferation of sprawling gated residential developments. Socio-spatially, the exclusion of low- to middle-income groups from prime property

locations is an all-too-familiar scenario in many of South Africa's leading local markets. As such, it must be admitted that global technological, political, ideological and socio-economic shifts in late capitalist societies have produced similar urban outcomes in Ballito and far-flung geographic contexts.

However interesting these observations may be, these generalized theories provide little insight into the 'grassroots' of urban development – the strategies and interests of multiple actors that are employed in everyday life and may, in turn, serve to redefine their behavioral context. For that reason, they are incomprehensive as explanations of urban change.

9.1.1 Place and Space

The discussion of section 5.3.4 revealed that linkages between the post-1994 development of Durban and Ballito are undeniable. In some ways, these two areas are the constituents of an urban symbiosis; a reciprocal relationship of two, apparently distinctive, living entities. To many people this idea would be slightly confusing. After all, the two *places* fall within the jurisdiction of different municipal entities and there is a 'psychological gap' that separates them. When residing in Ballito, one certainly does not feel 'in the city', or part of Durban in any way. *The city* lies elsewhere and to enter and engage with its facilities requires a special effort: a journey *into town*. Indeed, one has to travel for half an hour (by motor vehicle) to Durban, passing through expanses of sugar cane and sub-tropical forestation. However, whilst Durban and Ballito may not be connected by an urban strip, they certainly fall within the same *space of flows*. Their cycles of development are intricately linked; both being determined by restless shuffles of people, money and information.

Here it is important to recognise that the rapid post-1994 development of Ballito coincided with a massive strengthening of existing town-city linkages, from the local to global scale. On a general note, recent advances in the field of communication technologies have practically razed all geographical barriers to information exchange,

meaning that close physical proximity (between businesses, institutions or individuals) is increasingly a peripheral issue with respect urban development. At a localised level, the construction of the N2 freeway (refer to figure 3.3, page 43) during the late 1980s and early 1990s served to significantly reduce traveling times between Durban and Ballito. Suddenly, Ballito was no longer a remote and peaceful resort town; instead it found itself closer to the city than ever before.

It is interesting to imagine this scenario as one whereby the two places have been encapsulated and drawn together by a shrinking space-time continuum. Squeezing of the space between Durban and Ballito has occurred at varying rates of intensity throughout the latter half of the twentieth century: speeding up with the construction of new transportation routes, as well as with the advent of breakthroughs in communicative technologies. As a recent result, Ballito has effectively become the ‘spatial fix’ for the city’s internal inefficiencies – a role that the town has been able to fulfill only through the enhancement of their inter-urban linkages.

These findings grant some validity to claims that urban areas are constituted by physical *places* and abstract *spaces* involving the intensive exchange of information. Indeed, the ‘annihilation of space by time’ through information technological advancement has significantly expanded the urban realm of influence or, as Soja (2000) terms it, the ‘specific spatiality or urbanism’. We may no longer confidently state that the city of Durban ‘stops’ at the boundary of the eThekweni Municipal Area. As the economic centre of eastern South Africa, it is everywhere – its processes resonate across an abstract landscape of exchange. To this extent we might suggest that it is impossible to distinguish between Durban and Ballito; are they not part of the same symbiotic mechanism? Shall the independence of urban areas as place-based entities be disregarded? Certainly not; it has been shown that, for all the over-arching trends that have impacted upon Ballito’s development, urban growth is still dependant on local contexts, individual decisions and physical realities.

Drawing on this study's findings, it is argued in agreement with Graham and Marvin (1996), as well as Amin and Thrift (2002) that accepting the potential influence of global trends on local urban outcomes does not constitute a rejection of urban place-centeredness. There is a sense in which one should regard the 'local' in terms of the 'global' – a dialectic of multifarious influents and effluents. After all, the small coastal town of Ballito has engaged with the global economy (the simplest indications of which are provided by its popularity as an international tourist destination and property investment market) and its development process has been affected as a corollary. Nevertheless, the findings of this dissertation give credence to Amin and Thrift's proposition that:

"There is no logical connection between recognizing the local as 'in and of the global', and abandoning a sense of the local as bounded geographic space, as places with their own distinctive attributes, as recognizable cities and regions with their own 'physicality' and 'territoriality'. If we accept a definition of territoriality as the basis for living in, assimilating and making sense of the world, then there is no reason why globalisation constitutes a threat to 'place' identity" (1995:97).

9.2 Recommendations

9.2.1 Institutional 'Capacitation' and Integrated Development

Recently, South Africa has played host to a wave of violent community protests – the most intensive of the post-apartheid era – in response to inadequate municipal performance, especially in terms of basic service delivery (de Visser, 2007). The national Department of Provincial and Local Government reacted by launching a policy review of provincial and local government in July of 2007 (Ibid.). Eventually, this review procedure will result in the production of a White Paper on Provinces and a discussion document regarding local government. These events and responses serve to express a widespread degree of concern over the present capacity of local and district municipalities to fulfill their politico-developmental mandates. Certainly, the experiences of the Dolphin Coast and KwaDukuza local councils indicate that much is to be realized with respect to inter-agency communication and the relation of local government activities to the multifarious

interests of urban regions. Yet what may be done to enhance the formulation of institutional capital and the promotion of the integrated development planning in the new local governance context – one of social, political and economic fragmentation?

Over a decade ago the editors of the book *Managing Cities: The New Urban Context* wrote the following words: “the new urban management is not about capturing power understood as *control* back from economic and political forces which have taken it away. It is about reconstituting the bases for power, understood as *opportunity*, in a world of open, dynamic and diverse relational webs” (Healey *et al.*, 1995:286; emphasis in original). They go on to argue that consensus-building, particularly the possibilities for innovation within dialogical argumentation, is the most appropriate response to institutional and socio-political fragmentation. Simultaneously they stress the need for accountability, “...not in *who* makes decisions, but in what decision-makers take account of when making decisions” (1995:288; emphasis in original).

Following these trains of thought and those of Robinson *et al.* (2003), it is argued here that we urgently require a wide-reaching ideological shift within the arenas of urban governance and research. On one hand, actors must distance themselves from traditional modes of decision-making and legitimization – ones that represent urban politics as a showdown between central and local governments; public and private-sectors; communities and developers. Instead urban actors have to contextualize *themselves* within power-knowledge matrices, socio-technical networks and fragmented institutionalism; whilst embracing the constructive possibilities of discussion or argumentation. On the other, planning practices require a greater depth of reflexive thought, involving a constant awareness of long-term impacts and a resolve to accommodate penetrating structures of control in the implementation of local spatial priorities.

It may well be asked how simple changes in mindset could help to balance-out the uneven power geometry of contemporary institutional networks, both in South Africa and elsewhere. After all, power is an abstract, volatile force that will never be completely

removed from developmental procedures and in many respects it should not be – it has the capacity to innovate and create when uncertain circumstances preside. How may towering forces of political and economic legitimacy be overcome by the discourse-aware yet seemingly disenfranchised participant? The answer is that if local actors develop a greater understanding of how their interests are steamrolled by those of large growth-driven institutions, they will be more capable of mobilising and creating effective counter-arguments within those contexts.

The imbalanced landscape of power over development should thus be levelled from within, not only through relatively ineffective, superficial measures such as organisational reforms of local government. Granted, individual citizens or small public institutions may not have access to the same fiscal or political resources as large private entities. Yet the productive capacity of participatory planning procedures would undoubtedly be enhanced should they be populated with reflexive, discourse-aware individuals. Here support is given to Richardson's suggestion that:

“...one of the essential steps in changing things is to start by analyzing what is going on, to reveal how power relations have created conditions in society, or in the micro-politics of planning, that reinforce certain ways of thinking and exclude others” (2002:359).

However, adherence to recommendations such as these urgently requires a narrowing of the ideological and philosophical gap between the realms of planning theory and practice. This is a trend that has been resisted by the widespread persistence of technocentric or rational-scientific practical planning ideologies in South African local government (Pieterse, 2004). Personal experience testifies to the fact that power, discourse and communicative theory is often disregarded entirely, or is viewed as an unnecessary burden, by the low-level planning practitioner. Generally, operational knowledge is deemed to be more useful than complex theoretical frameworks.

One might counter this point of view by noting that planning is an immensely complex and challenging task, especially considering the normative bases of post-apartheid

development legislation. With this in mind, interpreting the role of local public planning as that of an unrelenting battle to deliver operational requirements – in the face of central government pressure – amounts to an unsatisfactory excuse for indolence. If planning and development is inherently political, as was shown in this dissertation, then why should reflexive action emanating from a firm grounding in critical social theory not be a useful skill to the professional planner or public representative?

Chapters 7 and 8 went on to point out that institutional uncertainties and incongruencies can undermine the implementation of even the best-intended urban policies. As such, it is further argued here that coordinated, efficient and equitable urban development can only be achieved through *consistency* – of context, objective, stratagem, decision, action and reaction. The delivery of ambitious planning goals such as socio-spatial integration requires a solid institutional bedrock; a persistent yet adaptable system of negotiation and decision-making. With this in mind, it could be suggested that South Africa's near-simultaneous restructuring of its planning and governance systems was too ambitious; if a longer time frame had been envisaged for promoting institutional stability in local government contexts, perhaps subsequent planning and development approval processes would have been less vulnerable to political and economic manipulation. The remaining question, then, is how to encourage consistency in a practical manner for the years to come.

The first and most obvious manner of promoting consistency is through the improvement of local government administrative capacity. The study revealed that issues of sheer bureaucratic inefficiency and narrow-mindedness (such as those that inhibited the creation of an accurate property valuation roster for KwaDukuza Local Municipality, refer to the article extracts in section 7.2.2) can foster mistrust between local government, communities and private organisations. Consequently, initiatives to promote integrated development planning may not be afforded an adequate degree of consideration from non-governmental actors. In this sense, capacity-building entails administrative staff-training and investment in qualitative performance management systems.

However, ‘capacity-building’ should also entail measures to enhance and diversify the planning expertise available to municipal departments. Here the term ‘expertise’ is not used as a synonym for ‘experience’ or ‘efficiency’; instead it refers to those complicated skills of reflexivity and foresight that often accompany a professionalized, critical view of society and polity. Certainly, this means the formulation of educational initiatives, regular focus sessions and discussion forums to critique the roles and methods of the public planner.

A second and less obvious suggestion involves the recognition that urban processes can transcend geographical boundaries to an ever-increasing extent, which begs many changes of contemporary municipal organization and boundary demarcation practices. There is little doubt that the existence of different municipal entities within a particular geographic region can provide an obstacle to integrated and sustainable development planning on a regional scale. Different municipal contexts entail their own power relationships, financial limitations, value systems and political ideologies that can hamper the implementation of such strategies.

Considering the intense degree of connectedness between Ballito and Durban, it may serve the interests of sustainable urban governance to include the town within the eThekweni Municipal Area. For that matter, if the national and provincial governments wish to promote the integrated development of the Durban-Richard’s Bay corridor, the entire north coast of KwaZulu Natal should be treated as a single municipal entity. Granted, much time and money has been spent on the previous rounds of local government reformation and further alterations would probably serve to reduce institutional capacity on a short-term basis. Yet in the medium- to long-term, such a scenario would remove many barriers to the difficult process of integrated development planning.

Thirdly, the abolishment or reform of a two-tier system of local governance, involving district and local councils, may improve institutional capacity to manage development in urban areas such as Ballito. Indeed, a major debate has emerged regarding the merit and

efficacy of district municipalities in South Africa (Steyler *et al.*, 2007). In most South African cases it has been noted that ‘districts’ fail to fulfill their statutory requirements – in terms of bulk infrastructure provision and an intended role as a communication ‘link’ between local and provincial entities (Ibid.). District municipalities do provide some useful support to heavily incapacitated local municipalities in rural areas, yet they remain as non-entities within many ‘secondary’ urban areas (Ibid.). With respect to Ballito, local government officials predominantly regarded the existence of Ilembe District Municipality as a hindrance to governance: an extra set of bureaucratic and political obstacles to development and intra-governmental communication.

Again, complete disestablishment of all district municipalities would entail a massive waste of resources, a disruption to local governance in the short-term and a failure to recognize the value of these councils in certain contexts. It is proposed here that a two-tier system of local government should be limited to non-urban areas, where their supportive functions are, at present, most effective. In doing so, a far greater degree of certainty and clarity would be bestowed upon the developmental competencies and functions of local municipalities responsible for secondary urban areas.

Fourthly, more time, money and effort can be spent on building avenues of communication and trust between developmental actors. This dissertation has argued that the ‘isolation’ of local planning processes has been a major obstacle to integrated urban development in Ballito. It is, after all, difficult to buy-in to a developmental ‘vision’ if one has no knowledge of the existence of such. In addition, Ballito’s experience has shown that ineffective participatory procedures can foster an atmosphere of disillusionment that subsequently discourages political involvement.

The experiences of Curitiba in Brazil, where multimedia campaigns highlight the city’s progressive, environmentally-friendly management strategy, suggest that widespread buy-in is possible and hugely beneficial to the implementation of progressive municipal management policies (Fragomeni, Luis: academic presentation, 20/9/2007). Yet securing support for spatial plans and policies is largely dependant on concrete action. In

particular, local communities require indications that their voiced concerns are subsequently reflected in practical governmental action; not simply steamrolled by technical and economic pressures. These demonstrations of responsiveness need not be elaborate, large-scale initiatives; they might involve the simplest of reassuring actions such as the re-laying of a pavement or the erection of a public landmark.

Recently, an extensive collaboration process has commenced over the recreation of the Ballito beachfront promenade (the original structure was destroyed by a period of freak high-tides in early 2007). Comprehensive surveys were distributed in local newspapers and regular public forums were conducted in the evenings – so that working people might attend. As with the recently-created Ballito developer's forum (refer to section 7.2.3), an obvious result has been the creation of institutional and social trust; an increased willingness from local residents to engage with urban politics; as well as a style of governance that is more consistent and 'in touch' with the interests of local communities.

An urban developmental vision also requires a degree of 'marketability' – an innovative premise or root concept that draws attention from 'the person on the street' to the high-flying business executive. To this extent local IDP plans have to move beyond the usual aggregation of developmental principles, 'market niche' strategies and backlog analyses. The generation of an inventive vision would attract both support and criticism, yet the inevitable result would be argumentation, consideration and reflexive action. Strong visions also require committed, opportunistic figureheads. It could be argued that the role of the administrative municipal manager is defunct; instead consensus-building requires apolitical and personable agents to drive development strategies into all areas of public and private life.

The need for consistency also applies to high-level political objectives and interests. The simultaneous application of pressures for rapid economic and social development certainly does not constitute a favourable environment for the realization of complex developmental concerns. Municipalities are generally caught in a 'Catch 22' scenario – whereby neo-liberal policies such as GEAR restrict local government funding and

encourage the generation of local revenue bases; but in doing so the fiscal resources that are needed by municipalities to capacitate themselves for revenue generation and public service delivery are withheld. Furthermore, top-down inconsistencies in terms of politico-developmental priorities only create room for local political squabbling, governmental paralysis and manipulation. Considered action at the local level is thus dependant on clarity of priority and objective at over-arching levels.

South Africa's constant political tug-of-war between watered-down socialism and neo-liberalism has to make way for a committed, lucid stance. Admittedly, this is something that will be incredibly difficult to achieve considering the diversity of political agendas even within the ruling African National Congress, but this is no excuse for wallowing in a muddy pool of inaction and self-pity. At all levels and spheres of government new communicative procedures have to be created; existing ones enhanced and previous examples scrutinized for possible avenues of productive intervention.

9.2.2 Directions for Urban Research: Institutional Approaches

Ball's (1998) criticisms of the 'structure-agency' approach (as recommended by Healey and Barrett, 1990; Healey, 1992) are centered upon the conceptual differentiation of 'structure' and 'agency' that is implicit in this model. As explained by Pratt (1994), the principal difficulty of this analytical framework is the preservation of the notions of voluntarism (the reflexive action of agency) and determinism (the existence of structural constraints that guide social action) without compromising the structure-agency dualism (a recursive relationship between *two separate elements*). Further in this regard, Guy and Henneberry suggest that "the key difficulty is to define and name the structure and agency aspects of the dualism without at the same time dichotomizing them" (2000:2412).

Partly in response to these criticisms, this dissertation employed a two-stage model of institutional analysis based on considerations of both 'structure' and 'institutional thickness' as influences of Ballito's post-1994 spatiality. In doing so it was acceded that

wide-reaching systems of rationality and signification are not the only explanations for institutional or individual action – there are also volatile relational issues of local governance that may render the local institutional network more or less vulnerable to these hegemonic structures (which certainly change, albeit over longer timescales as entrenched macrosocial practices are eroded and reconstructed by shifting *zeitgeists*). This approach effectively avoided some of the conceptual difficulties associated with the voluntarism-determinism debate – simply by understanding the relationship between structure and agency as a ‘strategic-relative’ one (refer to section 2.3.4 of chapter 2). It lent an understanding of how the decision-making processes of certain situated actors may be more constrained at *particular times*, as they may function in *different specific institutional contexts*.

Structure-agency analyses and their strategic-relative interpretation may also be enhanced by adopting a theoretical vantage point based on the ‘duality of power’, as propounded by Foucault and initially suggested by Zunino (2006). Such a resolved approach would appreciate that power, whilst vested in broad, abstract structures, is also expressed through local procedures and interactions. It would recognize the causative relationship between these scales of power inasmuch as each has a capacity to impact on the other through hierarchical control (top-down expression) or the institutionalisation of common social rules and strategies (bottom-up).

A practical example of this tendency (and hence the usefulness of such an analytical outlook) was provided by Ballito’s water service privatization process (refer to section 7.2.3) – local municipal actors were capable of considering their politico-economic context and making a reflexive, considered decision. In doing so, an entirely new discourse for municipal service provision was created – involving new systems of institutional rules, rationality and legitimisation. Hence it is argued in agreement with Jessop (1996) and Zunino (2006) that researchers should not deal with ‘structures’ as intranscendental, monolithic forces of control; instead the analytic focus should be how governing decisions are made by reflexive actors situated within common structural conditions. Consequently, any structure-agency analysis must entail a degree of

flexibility; enough to appreciate the manner “whereby one layer of agency can become, in *another context*, the next layer of structure and so on” (Guy and Henneberry, 2000:2412; emphasis added).

As such, the aforementioned conceptual criticisms do not deny a useful, insightful aspect to the structure-agency approach adopted by this study. Granted, its applications are probably better suited as situated theories due to the structural ambiguities that inevitably arise from local specificities. Yet examination of the dominant structures operating at different ‘levels’ of the development process may help to elucidate veiled power relations that penetrate all arenas of governance – revealing specific points of weakness and potential capacity-building in local institutional networks. Alas, this approach cannot hope to encapsulate the vast array of informal, ‘in-house’ or ‘backstage’ rules that operate within particular institutional contexts (Zunino, 2006). Nevertheless, the theoretical basis of structure – its constitution by systems of formal and informal social rules – is a useful tool to explain why urban outcomes differ across diverging institutional and structural contexts.

As suggested by Ball (1998), this does make structure-agency methodologies susceptible to *ad hoc* explanations of development in local contexts; but in some ways this is a necessity. Intensive studies are needed to deal with the diverging interests and actions of local agencies, so that amongst other things we may understand how development occurs ‘at the coalface’ – how progressive policies are overcome by the situated reality of information rules and power-plays. Analytical frameworks such as the institutional methodology used in this study are not intended to be entirely transposable, they are designed and employed as malleable tools that “can help in signaling the most noticeable points at which power relationships are established and/or reproduced” (Zunino, 2006:1841).

9.2.3 Final Thoughts

All of the points raised in this dissertation substantiate recent calls for urban analyses that recognize the complex manner in which various forces, operating in different scales of influence, underpin urban processes. It is further posited here that balanced and reflexive consideration of local and regional issues, legacies, actions and their complex negotiations with global trends can add massive depth to such studies. In addition, these approaches may reveal avenues for specific intervention, innovation and improvement of urban planning and management practices. Far from proposing an exclusive focus on local issues to the neglect of extensive dynamics, the approach argued for here encourages their mutual recognition and constant resolution. As propounded by Guy and Henneberry, urban analyses should “utilize and test both extensive and intensive research methods, benefiting from the insights of different research traditions in an iterative process” (2000:2411).

With regard to further research into the development of Ballito, section 1.5 outlines the various areas of potential expansion. This particular developmental experience reveals much about the manner in which long-term urban concerns may be overrun by the heat of the economic moment. In order to drive the formation of more ‘equitable’ or ‘integrated’ urban landscapes, South African policy-makers require information weaned from cases such as this in order to manipulate and optimize legislative and institutional structures. In addition, local governments and communities need to understand how it is that their localised concerns are quelled by the interests of the powerful. Learning from examples such as Ballito, development-related institutions can do much to confront the harrowing spectre of apartheid urbanism.

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