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**AN INVESTIGATION OF ISSUES AND CHALLENGES  
THAT HAVE LED TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE  
CASE OF MELBOURNE ROAD AREA, DURBAN.**

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*BY*

*GERALD MUSA NDABA (B.A. & PGCE)*

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the Degree, Masters in Town and Regional Planning (MTRP), School of Architecture, Planning and Housing, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban.

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## **PREFACE**

This dissertation is entirely my own piece of work, has not been submitted in part, or in whole to any other academic institution for any degree purposes in another University. In places where the work is not mine, quotations have been provided.

*GERALD MUSA NDABA*

*MAY, 2007*

## DEDICATION

*To the memory of my mother: Masesi Mimmie Simelane without whom I would not have had such an opportunity in life, I am deeply indebted.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to the Lord Almighty for giving me the strength and prospect, the ability and His faithfulness in my life to go thus far, without whom nothing would have been possible. To my family, I love you all especially Nondumiso and Sabelo, I love you guys you are an inspiration; and thank you ever so much for your love and support in all the situations that I have gone through. To my mom, you are the best, and family at large I am humbled by your endless support and faith on me, I am deeply indebted.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and research problem

Urban renewal strategies have been used since the late 1940s with the aim of revitalizing city centres which were losing population and resources to the new post-war suburbs in Western Europe and North America. Until the 1960s, urban renewal was a government programme used to clear large areas of land to provide an improved urban lifestyle for the inhabitants (Couch, 1990). Examples of urban renewal include large-scale projects such as the building of hospitals, highways and civic centres and also residential development. The implementation of such projects was essential in achieving urban rehabilitation whilst at the same time, curbing the population and employment loss in central cities. More recently urban renewal programmes have focussed on renewing older industrial sites and abandoned industrial areas.

As time went by, there were numerous changes to the process of renewal. “The funding mechanisms and purposes of urban renewal changed in its early decades, but the term broadly referred to a set of programmes and policies meant to counter inner-city disinvestments and reinvigorate declining downtown areas”

(<http://www.renewal.net>).

Over the years, urban renewal has undergone a range of transformations, which include legislative changes and shifting governmental priorities and public initiatives. These have changed the focus and implementation of urban renewal programmes and, as a result, urban renewal has advanced from a programme in which sizeable tracts of land are cleared for new, large-scale projects to one that collaborates with residents to strengthen and revitalize their communities. Today, urban renewal agencies approach projects with broader revitalization goals and a more community-oriented mindset.

([www.pdc.us/pdf/about/urban\\_renewal\\_primer.pdf](http://www.pdc.us/pdf/about/urban_renewal_primer.pdf))

Current urban renewal initiatives in Durban include Inanda, Ntuzuma and KwaMashu (INK), Cato Manor, the Southern Industrial Basin as well as the Inner Thekwini Urban Management Programme (iTRUMP).

The aim of this dissertation is to examine an older, well located industrial area known as the Melbourne Road near the Durban city centre which ‘has undergone substantial transformation over the last years’ (Thaver, 2000) and is currently experiencing dereliction that can be attributed to both functional and frictional blight. This can be seen by the number of dilapidated or obsolete structures, poorly constructed buildings, vacant buildings and lack of open spaces, deteriorated properties, an incompatible mix of uses and improper utilization of land. As in the case of many industrial areas, de-industrialization in the Melbourne Road area has “resulted to the closing down of formerly profitable establishments which are now redundant” (Feinstein 1996, 173).

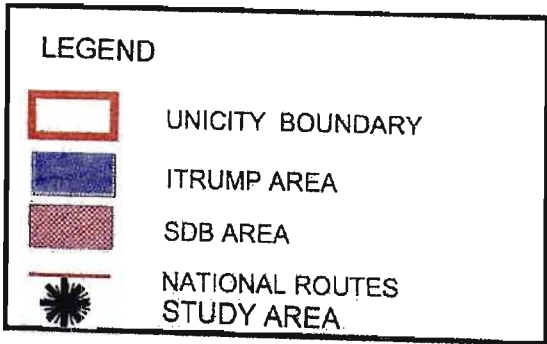
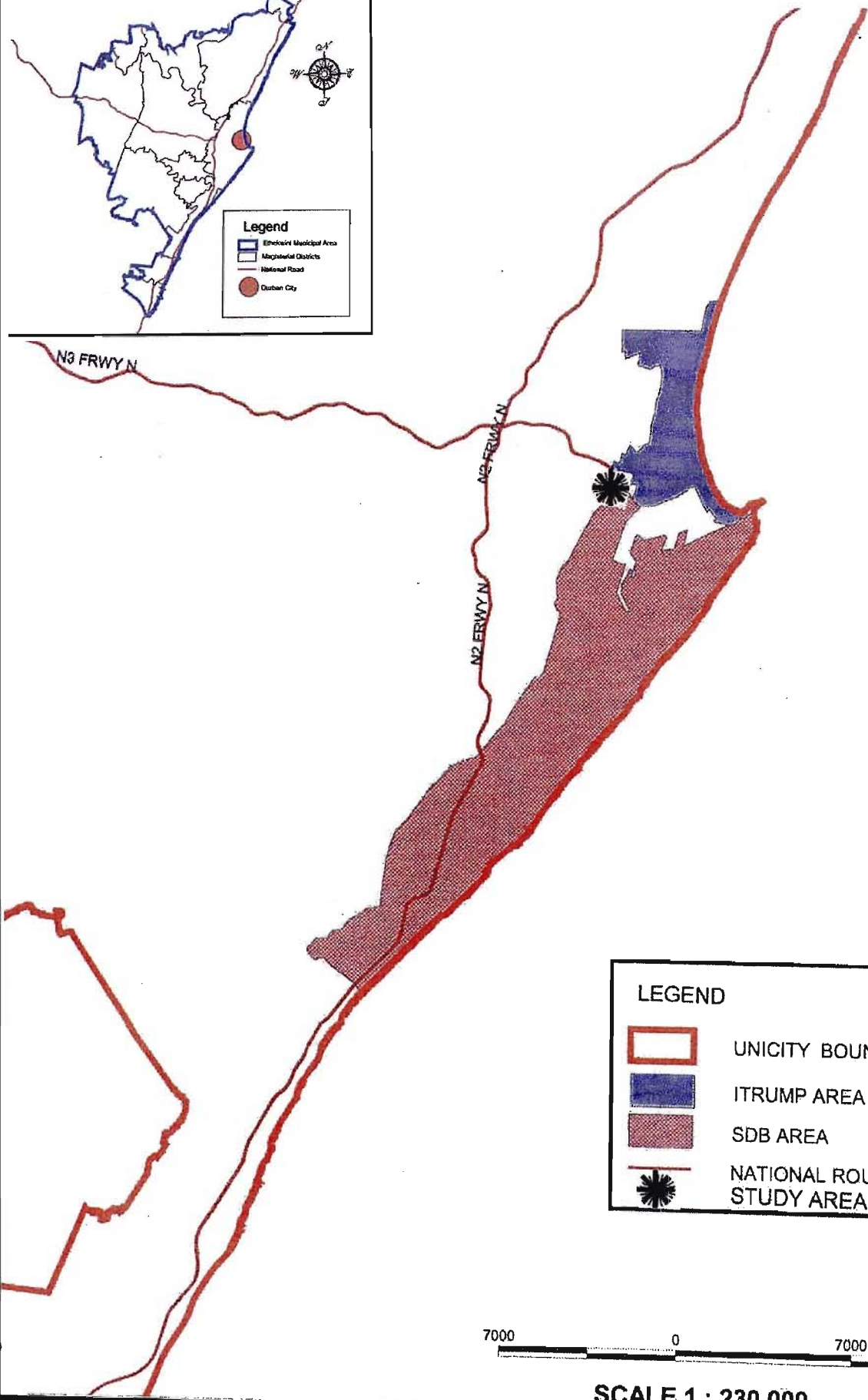
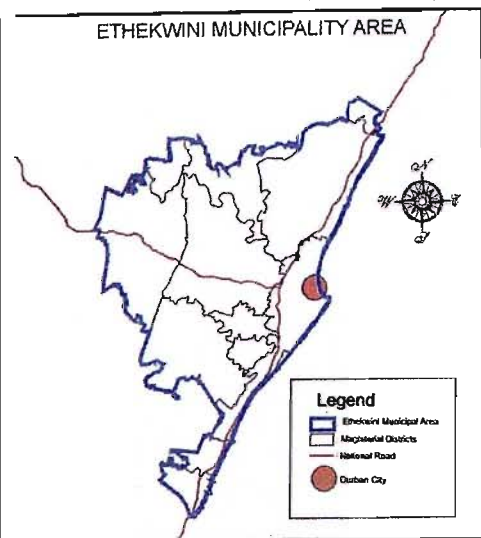
The area is old yet it is located in a competitive position. However, little has been done to ensure that the area remains attractive to business investment. Surprisingly, it has not been included in urban renewal initiatives such as the Southern Durban Basin (SDB) or in iTRUMP to which it is almost adjacent See Map 1. While iTRUMP and other programmes have been established to deal with central inner city areas, nothing is being done explicitly to rehabilitate Melbourne Road area.

As with other parts of the city, the Melbourne Road area has been affected by changes that have arisen in process of invasion and succession. As the industrial needs change over time, so too will the use of urban industrial spaces because industries will locate and relocate in accordance with their requirements. As a result, the land uses in industrial areas respond to new requirements in order to cope with the changes arising from economic or industrial forces. As industries have responded to the emerging industrial and market pressures, the Melbourne Road area has become more suited to retail activity rather than industrial activity. A range of conflicting land uses surrounds the study area shown in Map 1. Amongst these are activities associated with the Dalton Hostel and other informal activities that are often associated with industrial dereliction along Dalton and Canada Roads.

This study explores the factors that have resulted in changes in the Melbourne Road area and looks at interventions that may be necessary to revive the area, to make it more competitive and attractive for industrial investment. Accordingly, the study will examine the causes of vacancy, and the impact of disinvestment on the current land uses and other

# LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA IN RELATION TO ITRUMP AND SOUTH DURBAN BASIN

MAP 1



SCALE 1 : 230 000

Prepared by G.M. Ndaba

related factors. It will also examine the current industrial changes with the aim of determining the appropriate approaches for derelict industrial land uses such as the Melbourne Road area. Previous studies carried out in this area have focused on the locational dynamics, decentralization of industries and industrial change, but there has been no research on the challenges of transforming the Melbourne industrial area.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The research question is “What are the dynamics and processes that have caused the Melbourne Road area to decline and what would be the most effective and appropriate interventions to facilitate urban renewal there?”

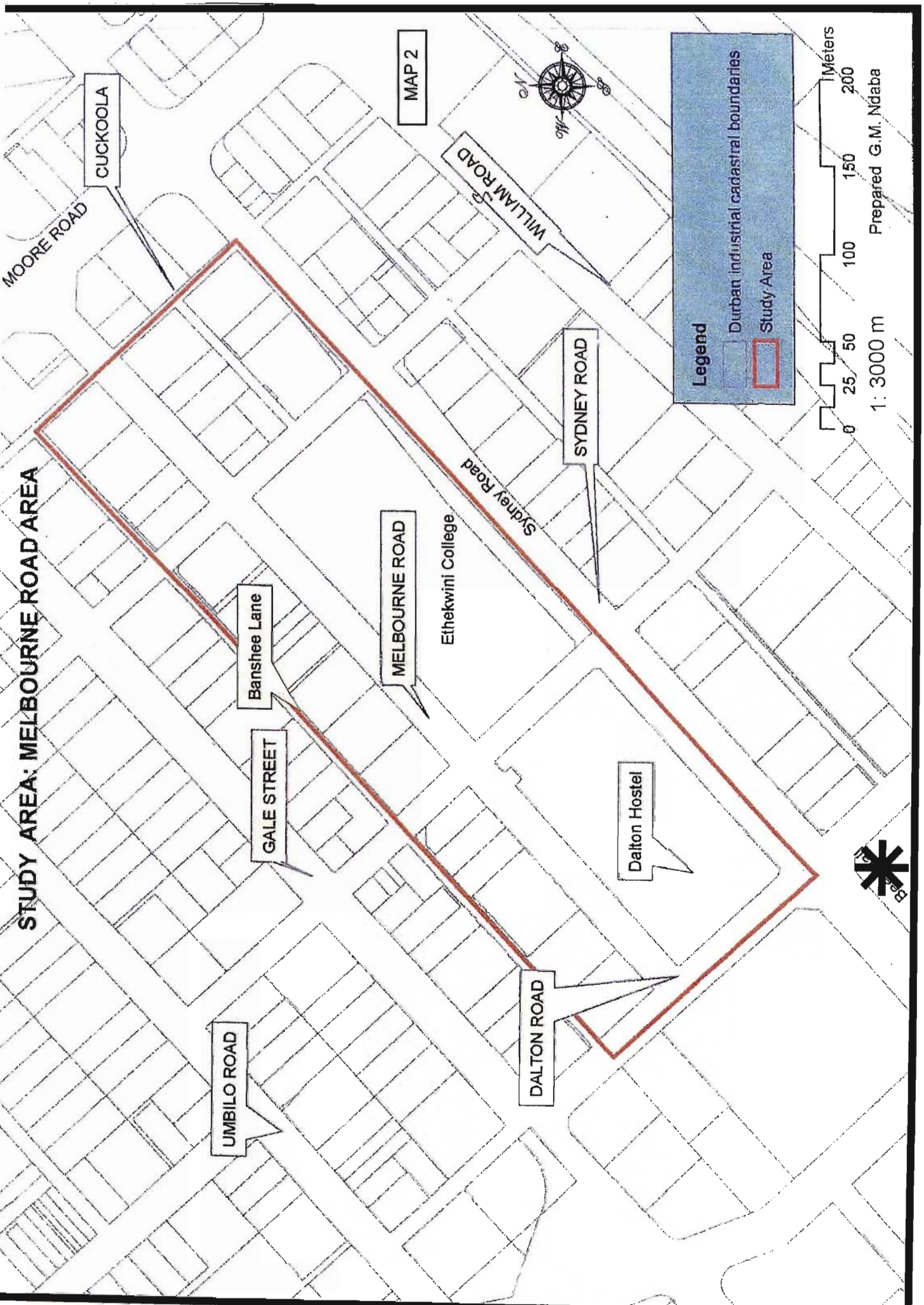
The subsidiary questions, which guide the study, are:

- What is the current land use in the area?
- What are some of the land use conflicts being experienced?
- How does the area fit into the broader inner city context?
- What are the causes of industrial exodus and change?
- What is the extent of current vacancies in the area?
- What are the challenges facing industrialists in the area?
- How do current residents of the area experience the changes that have occurred?

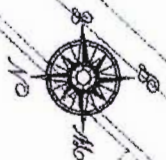
## **1.3 Selection of the study area**

Sydney Road, Cuckoo Lane, Banshee Lane and Dalton Road define the study area. See Map 2. It was selected mainly because there are a variety of activities there, the main ones being manufacturing industry, service industries, warehousing and low income housing. Not only has the area experienced certain amounts of change over the years, it also contains numerous activities which do not have the local authority approval. Examples of such include the illegal occupation of vacant industrial warehouses and the existence of traditional brewing spots and informal trading in the area. These activities impact on each other and by so doing, contribute to the transformation to the area. At the

**STUDY AREA: MELBOURNE ROAD AREA**

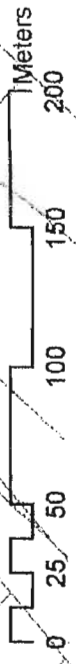


MAP 2



**Legend**

- Durban industrial cadastral boundaries
- Study Area



1: 3000 m

Prepared G.M. Ndaba



same time these informal activities, particularly along Dalton and Canada Roads and within the Dalton Hostel provides a source of livelihood to people living in the area. Although the study area is too small to provide any city-wide trends, its justification lies in its containing an interesting variety of activities which reflect several of the processes of industrial changes that have been taking place in the last decade or so.

## **1.4 Research methodology**

The study has used information from secondary and primary sources.

### **1.4.1 Secondary sources**

A number of secondary sources were used, including articles, and reports from BESG, iTRUMP, SDB and academic journals. These sources provided the researcher with an understanding of how urban renewal has been initiated in other areas and with what level of success. Books were used to gain an understanding of certain theories, for example the industrial location theories and how they relate to the study area. Journal articles on mixed land use development and industrial restructuring were also useful in answering certain questions raised by the study. In addition, unpublished articles and internet websites provided ideas on how industrial development is being undertaken internationally.

### **1.4.2 Primary sources**

The study used some quantitative, but mainly qualitative techniques, namely interviews; field observations and a land use survey; and focus groups. In-depth interviews with professionals from built environment disciplines that have recently worked in the area; local government officials and representatives of local businesses enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the area and the processes of change being experienced there. Interviews were also conducted with groups of local residents including hostel dwellers and street traders.

#### **1.4.2.1 Interviews**

Five professional town planners were interviewed. Their selection was based on the role that they had played in dealing with urban renewal and their ability to understand the reasons behind dereliction in the case study area. Their perspectives were complemented by similar interviews with a number of economic development practitioners who had an understanding of the dynamics of the Durban industrial area (Table 1).

These professionals were interviewed using similar questions. However, they were not all interviewed on the same day due their work schedules. Different appointments were made for specific times on which such interviews could be conducted. The researcher delivered letters of introduction and these were followed by telephonic confirmation of the appointments. The aim of these interviews was to establish what the respondents thought might have precipitated the exodus of industries from the Melbourne Road area, and also to try and find out what they thought the reasons behind the continued degradation of the Melbourne Road area were.

**Table 1 Respondents: Professional planners and Economic Development practitioners**

| NAME            | AFFILIATION   | PROFESSION                              |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Sibusiso Mkhize | Transport Department at eThekweni Municipality            | Traffic Department Manager/Town Planner |
| Themba Masimula | Land Division Department at eThekweni Municipality        | Town Planner                            |
| Ian Macintosh   | Zoning Department at eThekweni Municipality               | Town Planner                            |
| Laura Hunt      | Built Environment Support Group (BESG)                    | Architect                               |
| Nathan Iyer     | Consultant at Iyer Rothaug Collaborative                  | Town Planner                            |
| Julie Ellingson | Lecturer/ Consultant at ITRUMP                            | Town Planner                            |
| Lee-D'eathe     | South Durban Basin Manager                                | Town Planner                            |
| Tindall Kruger  | Economic Planner/Consultant at Iyer Rothaug Collaborative | Economic Planner                        |
| Danny Thaver    | Economic Development Unit at eThekweni Municipality       | Economic Planner & Researcher           |
| Fred Peterson   | Head of Economic Development Unit eThekweni Municipality  | Economic Department Manager             |

Source: 2004 interviews

Business representatives from the following firms located in the Melbourne Road area were interviewed:

- Natal Arts Crafts Industries
- Paramax Clothing
- Blue Chip Fuels
- Sunbeam Electro Plating
- OTIS
- Auto Polshine
- Noel Beath Motors

- Sugetex Textile Agents
- Globe Footwear Distributors and many others

#### **1.4.2.2 Observations and land use survey**

Field observations were conducted in the Melbourne Road area over a period of two months in 2004. These were systematically focussed to answer the sub questions and to bring together information about the study's objectives. The point of departure in the observation process was to establish the existing types of land uses. In the course of this, the researcher visited the site, recording land use and transport information. Specifically the fieldwork aimed to answer the following questions:

- What is the present land uses in the area? Which buildings are occupied and which are vacant?
- What is the traffic distribution pattern during peak and off-peak hours in the Melbourne Road area?
- What are the traffic flows into and through the area? The Melbourne Road area has a variety of traffic, some of it is passing by, whilst others are trucks that have come to deliver and collect goods from the manufacturing industries. A traffic count was done and photographs were taken.
- How are parking and loading managed? A block was selected to show that it is very difficult to find parking spaces and all the activities that take place within it were noted. Emphasis placed was on the availability of parking space and on observing where the trucks park, whether within the premises or along the side of the road.
- Which public transport serves the area and how effectively is it used? In order to observe public transportation, three periods of observation were conducted: in the morning at approximately seven o'clock, at midday, and then between four and five in the afternoon.
- What is the general condition of buildings and public spaces in the area?

A land use survey was done in order to determine whether the existing land uses corresponded with the Town Planning Scheme. This took into consideration other land use control factors such as building heights and coverage.

#### **1.4.2.3 Group interviews**

In trying to get opinions about problems faced in the Melbourne Road area, the study used four different groups who have lived in the area for two years and more (male and female hostel dwellers; street vendors; male group; female group). The aim was to gain an understanding of their perceptions about the area and of the changes that have taken place. Each group consisted of five to eight people. Open-ended questions were asked.

The choice of people was difficult and in the end people were selected in accordance with their activities and availability. People were grouped according to their activities were asked for their cooperation. Four attempts were made to get the focus groups/ group interviews started before it was accomplished. The reluctance to participate can be accounted for by the previous history of the country and people's suspicion of a political agenda. A set of questions was used to prompt the focus group and guide it to reveal what the researcher was investigating. A voice recorder was used to record the sessions.

The groups interviewed were the following:

- **Mixed group (males and females) residing in Dalton Hostel**

This group comprised people staying in the hostel, where there were both males and females. The aim was to get an aggregated opinion of the mixed gender residing in Dalton hostel. The group comprised of the men and women who agreed to participate in the study.

- **Street vendors group**

This group comprised people who were staying in the hostel and who conducted their small-scale business on the street selling sweets,

vegetables or fruit and hair trimming and running convenient telephone services. The questions asked of this group were similar to the questions for the other groups.

- **Male group**

This group comprised of who males stay in the Dalton Hostel. One significant feature was that all the participants in this group were employed. The main aim here was to find out whether males, when living alone, saw the area differently from the other groups.

- **Female group**

The aim of having a women's group, was to get the views of women staying in the Melbourne Road area. The reason for this was to ensure that the women could express their opinions openly since often their Zulu culture does not allow women to express themselves, especially in the presence of men.

## **1.5 Conclusions**

The methods employed enabled the researcher to obtain the necessary data. The self-administered interviews enabled the researcher to gain insight into what was happening in the area, while at the same time helped to develop an in-depth understanding of the area. The focus groups assisted in providing a deeper insight into the experiences of the residents, whilst the field observations were important in understanding the land use dynamics in Melbourne Road area.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with a conceptual framework for understanding the present situation in the Melbourne Road case study area. It therefore gives an overview of the main debates about industrial location and industrial change, tracing the evolution of thinking since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It goes on to discuss the impact of recent economic restructuring and globalization and then turns to a review of the debates about, and approaches to urban renewal.

### **2.2 Evolution of Industrial Location Theories – A Brief Overview**

#### **2.2.1 Industrial Location Theories**

The classical theory of industrial location, as formulated in 1909 by Alfred Webber, was based on minimizing the costs of labour, transportation and raw materials. Subsequently, Palander (1935) extended Webber's work with the inclusion of market area analysis while Losch (1954) was the first to describe the General Location Theory as a set of equations. Rejecting Webber's least cost assumptions, Losch based his model of industrial location on demand-side factors and on maximizing revenue. During the late 1960s other researchers such as Couch, and Hall criticized the pre-occupation with optimality citing that the realities of industrial location were suboptimal as they were not able to deal with changes in industrial organization; and ignoring the political economy.

By the 1970s the focus was on output oriented production function (Hamilton 1974). Much emphasis was on multiple products, substitution between outputs, and environmental interpretations. Later the emphasis shifted to focus on firms and specifically on their behavioural approach to decision-making. Linkages or agglomeration between firms were seen as central location issues particularly in organization, inter-industry, inter-connections and financing (Rees, 1981).

By the 1980s, in addition to the 'classical' location factors, aspects such as technological innovation and diffusion, and product life cycles were seen to influence location of

industry. Other factors, which affected industrial location decisions, were changing labour requirements and the emergence of more corporate ownership and control. Increasingly, internal factors relating to scale of operation and productivity were seen to guide industrial location decisions as much as characteristics of regions themselves (Smith, 1981). It was recognized that many other factors affected location decisions for example, land attributes, availability of finance and equipment, raw materials and power, labour and management, markets and price, agglomeration economies, linkages and external economies, public policy, planning, organizational behaviour, and even chance (Smith, 1981).

Although there may be variation in terms of industrial location in some countries, it is also important to note that even in countries like USA, the decision-making process is based on the premises of accessibility to market, transport costs and critical mass for support services and expertise. Technology, which involves internal factors, also determines what is important. This is also accompanied by qualitative factors, for example the non-cost factors such as labour and housing are also of critical importance together with incentives. In addition to the above, there are environmental requirements which include, supply capability of, for example special skills, information, prestige, production costs and industry self regulation (cited from Smith, 1981).

During the 1990s, industrial location was largely defined and determined by information technology (IT). Sohn (2002, 1) states, "the impact of information technology on industrial dispersion has reduced the significance of distance and also lessened the dependence on locational factors, so that it may work as an alternative to urban congestion problems or agglomeration diseconomies." Atkinson (1998) cited in Sohn (2002), noted that, IT has an influence on the urban form. The extent to which it alters the location of industry and employment is decided by three factors:

- Cost effectiveness in transformation of functions into electronic flows,
- Dependency on spatial proximity to suppliers and customers, and
- Significance of current urban advantages.

Atkinson (2000) also focussed on urban manufacturing and mentioned that the overall pattern will be dispersed from the urban core and inner core suburb and the exurban area due to transportation and communication technologies. This thought is further advanced

by Audirac (2000) cited in Sohn (2000, 3) by stated, "IT with automobile synergy rather than the sole influence of IT has been more influential and the expected urban form is more similar to polycentric rather than monocentric."

Still on technology, IT has been acknowledged as the facilitator of dispersion of the activities by some scholars, for example, Gordon and Richard (1997). They proposed that such technology leads to the dispersion of activities, possibly up to the stage where "geography is irrelevant." To substantiate this, Sohn (2002, 4), argued that geographic location becomes less important whereas transportation and, in recent years, telecommunication factors have become more significant.

Furthermore, some researchers like Capello (1994) tend to believe that a gap exists between the introduction of new IT and the changes in the spatial pattern of firms. The technological potential and analyses on the relationship between the new technology and spatial restructuring have led to some people ascribing to the notion that the new IT has impacted change on firms. The general expectation that IT induces dispersion cannot be realized due to several constraints amongst which are; industrial inertia, local market orientedness, advantage of flexible specialisation, closeness to consumers, and closeness to labour pool. The need for face-to-face communication seems to be another factor that restricts some types of firms to a closer location of production.

During the 1990s the focus of attention shifted to factors such as accessibility to markets, distribution patterns, backwards and forward linkages, critical mass for support services, access to expertise, technology, exchange rates/ tax (especially differential taxes on property,), extent of international orientation, human resources and proximity to universities (good reputation and development capabilities). In addition, the effect of qualitative factors was recognized. These included factors such as managerial life-style preferences and access to housing, health and education facilities; incentives; relative environmental requirements; image and industry self-regulation.

Technology and innovation have also had a significant impact on industrial location. These two factors have made it easy for industries to locate and relocate to almost any location as long as the investors' needs are met. This has led to the emergence of

industrial parks for footloose industries. Fainstein (1996, 173) notes “financial service firms have become increasingly footloose as they emulate industrial corporations by separating their routine processing functions from more complex operations and decentralizations to low cost areas.”

### **2.2.2 Effects of Changes in Manufacturing Industrial Restructuring**

At the same time, changes in manufacturing processes and the way firms are organized have had a profound impact on industries. In some cases these changes have forced industries to leave older industrial areas. Some industries have been gradually transforming from large scale to small scale oriented due to technology advances. Such changes in industry include the adoption of modern ‘*airtight*’<sup>1</sup> industries, which have different requirements compared to industries of the late 1950s and sixties. Most industries have moved away from their original locations, which are adjacent to city centre. While some industries have been downscaling, some industries have been leaving their premises which explains why most inner city areas have been getting more and more derelict as a matter of fact becoming “islands of renewal in seas of decay”, (Bridge and Watson 2000, 332).

The location of modern industries is far less dependent being close to the source of raw materials due to the availability of sophisticated means of transport. New industries are also less labour-intensive. Modern industries need a good communications systems and ready access to the motorway system, sea and airports, they are no longer tied by proximity to their area of production. For example the rise of computer manufacturing and communications technology has facilitated more effective communications for all industries.

South Africa has not been different from other developing countries, in that the traditional factors, which determine the location decisions of industry, have been greatly

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<sup>1</sup> Airtight industry- these are industries that are technologically advanced and have the ability to locate anywhere, even closer to the city centre due to their sophisticated levels of technology.

weakened by the rise in technology. The new demands in accessibility to information technology, capital and the change in the comparative advantage have also had a profound influence in the location of industry. Yeung and Lo, (1976) note that the location of industry is now based on a flexible mode of production situated at convenient points of information highways. This challenges the Fordist techno-economic paradigm that dominated manufacturing before the 1980s.

Huib and Meier (1992) noted that different types of industry tend to locate in particular localities within cities. For example, light industries that produce craft merchandise as well as the textile, furniture and jewellery may be found in two main types of locations. One is the inner city area in large metropolitan centres such as New York, Paris, London and Johannesburg, while the other coincides with old centres of craft or production like parts of Milan, Paris, Athens and Lisbon. Technological industries tend to locate within suburban areas that are non-industrialized areas. Financial institutions on the other hand are located in the central core of cities such as New York (Manhattan), Johannesburg (Sandton). This can be attributed to the advances in transportation and communication technologies which make it possible to disperse both the headquarters and the production operations of manufacturing activities to suburban locations, while cities become centres of 'information-intensive services'.

### **2.3 Industrial Location Dynamics in Durban**

The definitive work on industrial location in Durban was undertaken by Young as part of his doctoral thesis (1974) and by McCarthy (1993). On the basis of extensive surveys of industrial firms in Durban in the early 1970s, Young concluded that geographical patterns of industrialization in Durban were similar to those applicable to North America and Britain. Specifically, Young identified a prevailing market related trend towards the suburbanization of industry in Durban during the 1960s. The Melbourne Road case study area is typical of the older industrial sites close to the wharf and central city.

Young found that the main driving force supporting the suburbanization of industries was "the adoption of new, space-extensive production methods: in particular the production

line” (quoted in McCarthy 1993, 14). The shift was facilitated by new developments in transport technology, most particularly the advent of containerized goods shipped by sea. At about the same time, the use of rail transportation declined in relation to road transport of freight. The suburbanization trend was also consistent with pressures for more space as firms expanded.

Young (1974) formulated a conceptual model to explain how industrial firms expanded over time. It identified five stages: Infancy, Early Youth, Late Youth and Early Maturity and Maturity (McCarthy 1993, 115-16). According to the model, a firm in the Infancy stage is the one, which has recently started operating and is just beginning to show profit. These are the firms that usually rent in the fringe areas of the CBD.

While in The Early Youth Stage, firms are in need of space, and as a result try to expand either in-situ or to the nearest premises within the inner zone. In the case of Late Youth, firms have established themselves in the industrial world, are less dependent on their previously localized linkages and have accumulated adequate finance for buying more space. Such firms tend to buy land in the inner city as they also try to maintain their linkages, but they may also decide to relocate to other areas as they assume that they have built up a good reputation and their customers will accept a move away.

The fourth phase, Early Maturity, comprises consolidation, where expansion or alteration of the physical assets of the firm proceeds with the expansion of labour force, which is succeeded by diversification of product lines. This stage is succeeded by the Maturity stage, which is characterized by relocation, with the firm operating on a national level and employing more than 500 employees.

Applying this model to Durban in the 1970s, Young found that “the primary force behind the trend towards suburbanization was the adoption of new, space-extensive production methods: in particular the production line. This was also facilitated by new developments in transportation technology and exacerbated by containerized transportation of goods shipped by sea.” (cited in McCarthy 1993, 14-15). It is important to note that different industries have different locational requirements, and that industrial requirements tend to

change over time. In view of industrial requirements McCarthy (1993, 14), states that during the 1980s and early 1990s “many firms were relocating from their wharf dependent locations near to the central city to areas such Pinetown and Prospecton. Here land costs were cheaper yet rail and road transport facilities remained good, and the agglomeration advantages of metropolitan areas are still prevailed.”

Young’s Model predicts that smaller firms will relocate in the central city areas, while larger firms will relocate to suburbs due to their need for space. Bloch (1987), reports that in the First World, capital intensive and usually large enterprises have been moving from the central cities to the suburbs since the 1950’s. In view of these changes, Norcliffes (1984, 26) states that “ concentrating on the nature of production process itself, has facilitated change in terms of production systems bringing much change that occurs as the new system takes account of spatial variations in the cost of labour capital.”

In terms of the nature of production, there are two classes of firms that are distinguished. The first is the Large Capitalistic Intensive and Monopolistic Firm and the second is the Small Labour Intensive and Highly Competitive Firm, which tends to locate to the older core areas of the metropolis (Bloch, 1987). Such firms thrive well under agglomeration of economies linked and entangled in complex economic activities and these often face uncertain and changing demands for their products. In addition, Bloch (1987) points out that this makes it difficult for these firms to standardize inputs and outputs which in turn make the mechanization more difficult thus firms tend to be more labour intensive.

The Large Capital Intensive and Monopolistic Firms are usually sufficiently large in order to internalize agglomeration economies. These tend face relatively stable patterns of demand therefore standardization of inputs and outputs are possible, which in turn facilitates mechanization. Such firms are also able to dispose of functions and scatter their activities across the metropolitan area. They are not tied up to the central location like a set of firms. More importantly, large firms, which face uncertain patterns of demand find it difficult to mechanize and tend to require large amounts labour remains in the city.

Both Young (1974) and Scott (1982) agree that small industrial enterprises in metropolitan areas will by and large choose to locate in core areas. It is however, important to note that some of the firms may be filling a structurally determined gap in the market, which can only be filled in small labour intensive, and low profit margin firms, which are unlikely to expand. It should be noted that while Young (1974) and Scott's (1982) theories of intra-urban location patterns were based on the essential economic rationale, neither provides a particularly useful framework for assessing the effect of apartheid spatial planning practices on the nature and location of industrial activities. They are however, essential for providing an understanding of factors influencing industrial location decisions in the absence of political influences like apartheid.

Despite Young's emphasis upon 'natural' economic forces behind suburbanization, he may not have been aware of their context within the overall political economic restructuring of the metropolitan fabric of South African cities during the 1960s and 1970s. Young's analysis does not appear to be aware of the historical complicity of local government in engineering the removal of Black shanty towns, the planning of Group Areas and the extension of industry into areas previous dominated by residence and informal commerce and industry. He did not acknowledge the role of politics in his discussion of the four stages of Durban's industrial development.

In addition to the above, the discussion mainly concerns economic forces related to the transportation and the land market which essentially dominated in the first three phases (1825 - 1859), (1860 -1919) and (1920 -1959), while transportation related and urban land market forces are seen as a secondary political force in the fourth phase; (post 1960). The fourth phase is distinguished mainly by "the removal of non-white workers from the central inner areas and the establishment of large new townships for non-whites such as Kwa-Mashu, Chatsworth and on the reserves like Umlazi and Mpumalanga and the designation of certain places in the corridors as border industry areas such as Hammarsdale, Verulum and others. The forces generating drastic changes in the current are clearly associated with policy, planning and zoning decisions (Young, 1974, 181-

182). In Addition McCarthy (1993, 18), states, “politics nevertheless became an important locational reality for industrialists during the 1960s and the 1970s and it is worth recalling how much impact this had”. By forcing black owned business into the Black Group Areas, the agglomeration advantages of central locations were lost and black industrial entrepreneurs were destabilized.

There has been a tendency for the number of smaller sized firms to increase as one nears into the centre of the city, as there is continued suburbanization of industry. The southern and western areas of Durban have historically been over populated with industrial development while the north has experienced less industrialization. Within the Durban municipal area there is a wide range of industrial firms that congregate along the Umbilo Road and South Coast Road (adjacent to the Melbourne Road study area), Umngeni Road and North Coast Road and the perimeter of the CBD. This is the historical linear configuration that has provided the axes around which most especially smaller firms have concentrated in Durban in the past.

Vacant industrial property is fairly widely distributed in the Durban municipal area. The textile and leather industry is very widely distributed especially in the Congella/ CBD area. Paper and publishing industries are likewise found in the Mobeni-Jacobs’s area, while in the CBD and its surrounding areas there is a mixture of industries. Wood and furniture industries are widely distributed throughout the Durban municipal area, though they are mostly located in the south, especially in the Mobeni-Jacobs area and partly in Chatsworth Petroleum and chemical industries are pre-dominantly in the south while rubber and plastic industries are widely distributed in the Congella area.

Finally, the industrial location in Durban is a complex issue, varying with time and by size of industry and the type of industry. The most remarkable differences in locational requirements to be borne in the mind are those smaller labour intensive firms, which need to have accessible locations. There is also a new trend towards the construction of small-scale suburban industrial estates, which are smaller than those of the 1960s and 1970s. Of

importance to note is that mini and midi factories can be suitably located on the rolling topography, which has become characteristic of the Durban Functional Region, as there has been a growing shortage of flat land for industrial development, Young (1974).

Since the 1990s Durban has had some of the most expensive industrial land in the country. McCarthy (1993, 14) reported that in 1991 that unserviced land in Springfield Industrial Park, for example, cost R250 m<sup>2</sup>, which was twice the comparable rate in Johannesburg or Cape Town. McCarthy (2002, 15) regarded the price of land in Durban as a reflection of relative buoyancy of the industrial sector in the region, which therefore increased the demand for land. The supply constraints for land were a product of topography and historically restrictive controls exercised by planners on the industrial land use zones.

## **2.4 The Impact of Economic Restructuring and Globalization**

### **2.4.1 What is Globalization and how does it impact on industry?**

Globalization is a process, which seeks to promote relations and incorporation among the people, companies, and governments of different nations. The process of globalization is driven by international trade, trends and investment and is aided by information technology. “The process has effects on the environment, on culture, on political systems, on economic development and prosperity, and on human physical well-being in societies around the world”

([www.globalization101.org/globalization](http://www.globalization101.org/globalization)).

With the emergence of the globalization process, there has been a decline in the number of unskilled jobs globally. This has simultaneously led to a shortage of entry-level jobs for working class women which have gradually been lost due to the introduction of more sophisticated means of production. Bottom and mid occupational distribution are also both shrinking in all types of industry. Castells, (1994,119) noted that due to the shrinking restructuring process and globalization, “occupational changes are specified by gender, class and race; while machines are replacing ethnic minority and uneducated women at the bottom of the scale, white educated women are in general replacing white men in the upper clerical and

lower professional positions, yet for lower pay and reduced career prospects at a comparable level of skilled responsibility.”

#### **2.4.2 The Impact of Globalization**

There have been changes in the world economy such as new division of labour, fragmentation of production; increasing importance of over-production; better transport and communication. As a result, markets for goods and services are increasingly globalized. Key resources such as capital and know-how are free to move. Where they locate depends even more than before on the relative economic advantage of different regions from the viewpoint of producers. This has resulted in the emergence of ‘world cities’ where key functions concentrate (Rimmer, 1986).

Among the outcomes of globalization has been the loss of traditional manufacturing firms due to competition linked to foreign markets. This has, however, led to the relocation of manufacturing firms in some areas both abroad and locally to areas where there are sufficiently lower costs and a regulatory environment that makes competition easier. The impact of globalisation has come in the form of restructuring processes through which companies scale down the number of employees and rather invest in the machinery and technology.

The impact of restructuring varies from firm to firm though there have been quick differentiation of categories on the levels that restructuring has been taking place. Skilled clerical to insurance professionals positions have been moved from the Melbourne Road area to the new areas such as Umhlanga Ridge. As a result of restructuring process, a gap between the skilled and professional workers has widened as a result of eliminating of unskilled clerical works such as coding, sorting and mailing. The skills requirements for clerical workers have increased while the number of jobs available has declined. It is on this note that Castells (1989) states that office automation has also been responsible for the loss of thousands of jobs for lower skilled clerical workers and eliminated many

professional jobs that used to be a stepping-stone to more highly skilled professional jobs.

Some firms have combined the search for low-cost production with the move to new markets. In this case the type of product, the location of the new markets, and the amount of competition faced by the firm has influenced the location decisions. Computer manufacturers were among the earliest to move their operations overseas, and some looked for overseas markets with skilled labour inputs, even in their earliest location decisions, even though in case of South Africa they only assembled their products. Some giants companies such as Hewlett-Packard for example, established its first overseas marketing and manufacturing establishments in Europe in 1959, and only moved to Asian locations as production became more regular (Castells, 1989).

Although globalization is a positive process, especially in the more developed economies such as China, Taiwan and Korea, it appears that for most of the developing states it has a negative effect. This is attributed to the fact that most of the firms which have previously generated both employment and income (taxes) shut down due to the competition from cheap products that flooded local markets from the more developed states such United States of America, Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Taiwan and China and Malaysia. Many jobs in developing states have been lost due to competition, downscaling and advances in technology.

The increasing level of technologically advanced industries has somewhat changed from what the traditional theory of industrial location stipulates together with the 'product cycle profit model'. The development of a natural, international network of telecommunication and air transport enables firms to develop through dispersion in distant locations while maintaining the location of their headquarters and the key production facilities close to the area of high technology centres. In this way a network milieu of production is formed (Castells, 1989).

### **2.4.3 Globalization and Industrial Location Changes in South Africa**

The process of globalization has had a significant impact on the South African economy, and particularly clothing industry. Prior to the advent of globalization, businesses, cities and regions flourished under isolation and the government's protectionist policies. Since the early 1990s, competitions from markets, which have flooded the world with their products, have impacted on local producers. The clothing industry, in particular, has suffered as a result. Globalization of the manufacturing function is a result of labour costs, driving location decisions. However, advanced manufacturing skills and lower professional labour costs can generate distinct competitive advantages. Basic industries with high raw material usage or energy costs prefer to have close access to low cost sources or efficient transport networks. Access to important markets drives many location decisions ([www.cpbs.apana.org.au](http://www.cpbs.apana.org.au)).

Globalization has not only affected the markets, but also the location of industry. There has been a development towards the decentralisation of shopping malls, industrial estates, as well as the expansion of work places into residential environment.

The rise of the information economy has had the effect of lessening the importance of boundaries, including national boundaries so much so that an almost borderless global economy has emerged (Ohmae, 1991). As a result external products, forcing struggling South African textile industries to either close down or make structural adjustments in order to compete with incoming challenges, have invaded local markets. The global economy has generated enormous pressure on the economy of the South African cities by compelling businesses to become globally competitive, in the process forcing the struggling ones to shut down.

## 2.5 Urban Renewal

### 2.5.1 Origins of Urban Renewal

The exodus of many firms from the city centre is not a new issue. Authors such as Couch (1990, 17) noted, “the industrial revolution and the imperatives of capitalism had profound effects on development of urban areas and upon urban renewal.” Within these urbanization processes, market forces began to result in significant internal urban restructuring and the renewal of large areas. As the size of urban areas grew, so did competition for the best located, usually the most central sites.

Couch (1990) also points out that, “the effect of competition was to push up the price of land, as land prices rise, the intensity of land uses increases, whether for production or housing purposes and this is necessary to maximize profits” Couch (1990, 17). This reasoning can be applied to industrial and commercial areas where small workshops have been replaced by larger multi-storey premises. In The Melbourne Road area, large industries have moved to new industrial sites, thus leading to a high level of vacancy and dereliction in the area. This in turn has had profound effects on the area, which has become a zone of criminal activities. Futwa (1998, 60) argues that, “the change towards smaller industrial units is gradually emerging as a popular phenomenon, in global industrial trends”.

As far as state intervention, is concerned, Couch, (1990) notes that prior to the 1860s there had been very little concern with urban renewal. Urban renewal was left to the goodwill of industrialists such as Sir Titus Salt in Bradford, founder of Saltaire in Bradford England and the Wilson Brothers, founders of the Prices Candle Company, Bromborough Pool Village in England 19<sup>th</sup> century (1854). These industrialists had to initiate and subsidize good quality housing for their workers, thereby initiating the urban renewal process without any state intervention.

When a building is new, generally the case is that the income from that building will be high in relation to the operating costs Harvey (1992, 93). As time passes,

there is a tendency for the real level of income to fall. As the buildings become obsolete in relation to modern needs and patterns of building use, other more appropriate buildings are being built elsewhere in the market. At the same time the operating costs of older buildings rise. This may be because as the building ages, maintenance costs rise and so refurbishment may be necessary. At this point, the current use of the building may cease. The building may then be turned over to another more profitable use or it may be demolished and replaced if the returns on the redeveloped building exceed the costs of demolition and reconstruction. If none of these possibilities is financially viable, then the building may be abandoned and left vacant. In these circumstances there will be no financial reason for the owner to invest money in the premises and dereliction will follow.

There is extensive literature on how urban renewal measures have been used to respond to urban decline. Couch (1990), Harvey (1992), Healy (1992), Medhurst (1969), and Wilson (1966), have all done studies on the phenomenon and their work is instructive for inner city redevelopment in South Africa.

Couch (1990) explains that if nothing is done to curb the decline of urban areas there is a likelihood that industries will relocate to better industrial areas where they will not have constant threats from delinquency. Market forces propel significant internal urban restructuring and the renewal of large areas and also precipitate the competition for the best-located sites, especially among those that are centrally situated. As a result of the competition, the scale of urban dereliction in older industrial areas has risen. In response to these processes, the focus of urban renewal must be, "to regenerate a tired, worn out town" in an endeavour to create "a sense of spatial identity which is mostly fundamental to human functioning" (Wilson 1966, 365).

Inner cities and older declining areas are those environments that are distinguished from other areas by their negative qualities such as the high rate of delinquency and urban blight (Couch 1990). It is evident that, there is a link between urban renewal and economic growth. It is important to note that; "brownfields and older declining industrial areas frequently occupy prime

commercial land, driving out developers to the city's fringe. Developers tend to opt for '*greenfields*' far removed from the downtown areas which are far cheaper to develop compared to older industrial areas" Whitney (2003, 68).

Industrial relocation processes take place slowly, over time as a result of a number of factors. Huib and Meier (1992, 12-13) note that, "the specialization of different geographic zones in the production and assembly components of final outputs," contributes to the industrial relocation processes. These events ultimately bring into question the industrial periphery theory of regional development, with its key assumption that core zones were immune from absolute decline because of the restructuring processes, which involve flexible production systems.

There has also been a focus on post-industrial economic growth as catalysts that benefit older industrial areas. Formerly derelict sites, which have been subjected to regeneration, have led to a positive transformation of the general urban environment. Examples of such areas are: Quincy Market and the redevelopment of central Boston, Convent Garden in London and the '*Les Halles*' redevelopment into the Forum and Pompidou Centre in Paris (Herbert and Thomas, 2004).

### **2.5.2 Factors Leading to Urban Renewal**

There are various factors that lead to renewal. These may be linked to the emergence of 'urban blight', which is often associated with numerous problems such as crime, suburban flight, the diminution of economic opportunities, unsafe public spaces, drug problems and so forth. In the case of The Melbourne Road area, two types of urban blight that are present: frictional blight and functional blight, which Bennet, (1991) defines as follows;

- Frictional blight can be defined as a condition, which results from the coexistence of two or more disagreeable types of land use.

- Functional blight can also be regarded as a condition, which emerges from an area being used for purposes other than those for which it was originally intended.

### **2.5.3 Different Types of Urban Renewal**

Successful remediation entails that this process of cumulative decline be replaced with a self-sustaining 'virtuous circle', in which the interaction between economic activity and social behaviour on the one hand, and a city's physical infrastructure on the other, becomes mutually beneficial. This calls for the introduction of various forms of urban renewal interventions. The types of urban renewal are Pure Private Partnerships, Pure Public Partnerships and Semi Private Public Partnerships (Bennet, 1991).

Urban renewal initiatives cannot be adequately achieved without operating in a partnership. This means the cooperation between different coordinated factors is essential key players have to be brought together to ensure a successful and sustained urban renewal (Bennet, 1991). Also important is that though the term 'partnership' is used, it does not imply that all the stakeholders are equally trusted with responsibility in the urban renewal processes in order achieve a sustainable development mechanism. There are numerous forms of joint venture partnerships, which are useful in the development of run-down urban areas. The role players in partnerships include the following:

- Business organisations
- Individual firms
- Voluntary groups of business interest
- Community groups
- Local government
- Provincial government
- National government

These role players can form partnerships in different combinations. The most common forms of partnership, which are essential in the achievement of development initiatives, can be defined as:

**a) Private Public Partnership**

This is collaboration between the government and the private sector, which in this case can be regarded as the businesses venture. Under this collaboration, it is usual that the government provides (public) funds for certain development phases of the urban renewal project such as the preliminary stages and then the private sector takes over the rest of the development initiatives. Government may provide comprehensive plans for those areas, including the marketing of plots, the provision of high quality infrastructure, facilities for social services and advice on buildings and financing.

**b) Pure Private Partnership**

This is the kind of development process that is initiated by the private sector. This may be the case when certain specialist companies redevelop a site that may be subjected to dereliction or any other form of blight. Through this process, there is usually no intervention from government except in terms of by-laws, which will determine where development has to be undertaken.

**c) Pure Public Partnership**

This type of development is undertaken by the government from the preparations up to the implementation of the whole project. There is no collaboration between government and the private sector. The government will initiate all the categories of development from the preliminary stages such as designing and marketing the whole project through to the implementation and completion of the project.

#### **2.5.4 Mechanisms for Urban Renewal**

Various mechanisms have been used to achieve urban renewal. In Britain for example, in peripheral areas where there were no government policy initiatives,

there was continued urban dereliction. To deal with the problems of urban decline, policies were adopted focussing on inner city redevelopment such as the following (adapted from Herbert, and Thomas 2004, 72):

- Inner city partnerships between local authorities and government departments were established under the Inner Urban Areas Acts 1978. Cities, which participated, were Liverpool, Manchester, Salford, Birmingham, Newcastle-Gateshead, Hackney-Islington and Lambeth.
- Urban development corporations were created in 1980 for the London and Merseyside docklands and similar schemes have been initiated subsequently in all the major cities. These have adopted a commercial orientation and aim to work closely with the private sector.
- Enterprise zones were also established in 1980 in derelict inner city sites throughout the United States, offering a relaxed planning regime and financial incentives designed to attract new investment. In the peripheral regions these appear to have mainly redistributed development rather than attracted significant new investment, while, and in the absence of investment from the manufacturing sector, retail developments have been a common response.

### **2.5.5 Approaches to urban renewal**

Urban renewal has previously been the product of governmental initiatives, where most of the development was centred on the provision of houses. This was commonly the case in many Western countries such as Britain and the United States where such programmes were aimed at curbing the deplorable conditions that developed after World War 2. In order to alleviate these conditions, government programmes were implemented and most of these only involved the provision of houses. One example of these in Durban is the Kenneth Gardens complex of Municipal flats in the Umbilo Road and Stamford Hill Road area.

There are five main approaches to urban renewal.

**a) Preservation**

This is a process of urban renewal under which the buildings are not demolished. There is continued use of the buildings. Usually what happens is that, if the building is found to be a listed or historically significant, it is therefore protected and then renovated with minor alterations being allowed onto that building.

**b) Rehabilitation/ Revitalization**

This is another process of urban renewal where the buildings are transformed but there are greater challenges in taking this route. The rehabilitation of previously industrial areas demands a reconsideration and re-thinking of living and housing considerations. The process of rehabilitation involves the citizens, the experts and the administrators, as they work together to modify the whole environment.

**c) Gentrification**

This is often referred to as 'chelseafication'. The first, supply-side explanation was put forward by Bridge and Watson (2000), who saw gentrification essentially as a product of the urban land and property market. More specifically, they view the process in terms of the emergence of a growing 'rent gap' between the current value of property on a site and the underlying value of the land. In their view, suburbanization and subsequent inner city decline leads to the existence of depreciated inner-city property on potentially valuable land, which opens up the potential for profitable reinvestment.

The process of gentrification involves renovating buildings that are run-down and these are marketed to a higher class of people who see the area as 'up and coming' and fashionable. Eventually, the poor people are subtly

forced to leave the area because properties become too expensive, as the standard of the area has improved. In Durban, this is happening in Point Road and the surrounding areas where because of the increase of value of land due to other development previously derelict houses are being sold for way in excess of their previous value prices.

**c) Up-grading**

This concept differs from the other forms of renewal. This process refers to an area that was never fully functional. Informal settlements, which are provided with facilities and infrastructure to transform them into formal residential areas, are examples of this process.

**d) Industrial urban renewal**

This type of renewal is usually is meant for the older industrial areas which are often called 'Brownfield'. This process usually targets to prime commercial land (Whitney, 2003), where an individual area of very old properties could be dealt with in its entirety by a complete redesign of roads which would allow it to be resuscitated in a modern way with considerable economy of space Webman (1982, 14).

### **2.5.6 Summary**

It is crucial to realise that urban renewal is a costly process and has a long gestation period before its benefits show. In some countries, for instance, Marthur (2003) noted that, "budgetary provisions will unquestionably be needed to kick-start the process ensuring that urban renewal is a success". Meanwhile, there is no reason why the private sector should not be invited and encouraged to invest in this programme. This does not only benefit the private sector but also the citizens and the society. Indeed, it may be a unique opportunity to develop and showcase public-private partnerships in financing redevelopment of inner-city areas" Mathur (2003, 17).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

It is acknowledged by a number of theorists that industrial and urban decline affects the human activities and functions in the declining area. It is quite important to note that attracting industry and centralising industry is no longer as crucial as it was in the case of traditional communities, which were required to attract industries as the key to economic development. The next chapter will deal with The Melbourne Road area case study, starting with an in-depth look at secondary industries located in the Melbourne Road area in the early 1920s and the changes which have occurred since that time, resulting in the present level of degradation and mix of secondary and service industries.

## **3. THE MELBOURNE ROAD AREA CASE STUDY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section sets the scene for the case study by providing a brief and history of the Melbourne Road area and its links to the harbour. A synopsis of the present situation will be given including, land use and zoning. Following this will be a report on the built environment, based on the land use survey undertaken by the researcher. The sections, which follow, will discuss the problems facing Melbourne Road area, the reasons for increasing dereliction and will offer possible solutions from four different perspectives. The four groups interviewed were business owners, professional town planners who have worked in the area, economic development practitioners active there; and four groups of local residents. On the basis of these surveys, a summary of the key issues is presented in section.

### **3.2 Background and history**

The Melbourne Road area is situated on the southern edges of the Durban's inner city industrial zone. It is adjacent to The Umbilo and Congella residential areas. See Figure 1. The area has a good transportation network as it lies in what McCarthy and Smit (1984) would call a transitional zone. The South African Railways and the Durban City Council originally owned most of what today is industrial land in Umbilo. At the beginning of the 20th century, most of this land remained undeveloped, but as time passed the area developed fully from the harbour at Maydon Wharf through to Umbilo Road.

The Melbourne Road area is an extension of the Durban harbour, which is the busiest port in the on Africa's east coast. The harbour of Durban handles in excess of 80,000 containers each month and is the second largest economic hub in South Africa after Gauteng. The Melbourne Road area is part of the Southern Durban Basin "which generates 10% of manufacturing jobs in the country and about 9% of the GGP (Thaver 2000, 3). It is home to major South African and multi-national firms. However, the past decade has been characterized by a severe decline in the socio-economic performances with the loss of more than 40% of formal jobs in the area Thaver (2000). The rate of

building vacancy levels in the area has been estimated at 20-25 % (Thaver, 2000). Some of the reasons for these changes are that companies such as those in the textile industry have merged and others have lost their market share, which has resulted in them downsizing to smaller premises.

The history of the Melbourne Road area is intrinsically linked to the history of Durban. In the 1920s Durban was a small city of 3644 hectares with a population of 76,000. At this time Durban did not have a developed manufacturing industry except for the localized small industries along Point Road, near the harbour and in the area of Brickfield and Ordinance Roads. The Durban City Council undertook land reclamation scheme in 1928 with the plan to facilitate speedy growth of the manufacturing industry but more importantly, to provide a bulk storage facility for the harbour.

From the late 1920s until about the 1940s, the city authorities began to release land for the further industrial development in areas closer to the city centre. The position of the harbour played a deciding role in the positioning of the manufacturing sector. The area of Congella-Melbourne Road area was identified and subsequently zoned for the development of industry in 1927. Katzen (1961, 2) states that, "land owned by the South African Railways and City Council was made available (on favourable terms) for industrial development." At Congella for example in 1927, Durban City Council land along Gale Street and Sydney Road was allocated to the manufacturing industries that had been specifically designed to solve the problems of storage for the harbour. The existence of transportation infrastructure such as the railway linkage between industries and the inland market played a central role in speeding up the growth process. More large-scale manufacturing plants were located along the railway line in the 1930s.

During the post war period after 1945, the Melbourne Road area grew rapidly as a centre for large-scale industries. This resulted in the area becoming congested and there was a need for immediate intervention. Because of competing land uses in the inner city, industrial usage reached its maximum capacity (Katzen, 1961), especially around Maydon Wharf and Congella, as there was no room for extensive expansion. By 1961, manufacturing land use further increased to 27, 5% of the total land available in and around the Maydon Wharf - Congella area which is still part of the Melbourne Road area.

### **3.3 Present Situation**

#### **3.3.1 Location**

The Melbourne Road area is situated on the southern edge of the inner city. It is surrounded by three important areas, namely Maydon Wharf (harbour and container terminals), Warwick Triangle (a significant centre of informal business with a large taxi and bus terminus), and the Southern Durban Basin (an area of large scale industries which has been in decline for some time). The Melbourne Road area acts as a link between the three. Routes that cut across the area, linking the northern and southern parts of Durban and the port, traverse it. Sydney Road, Cuckoola Lane, Banshee Lane and Dalton Road demarcate the study area.

#### **3.3.2 Existing Infrastructure**

The area is served with the full range of physical infrastructure expected in a traditional industrial area: roads (arterial and internal access roads), rail, storm water drainage, electricity, and telecommunications. It is well connected to both the harbour and the hinterland. The rail network also makes it highly accessible for industrial activity. Its proximity to the harbour makes it accessible for external trade.

#### **3.3.3 Current Zoning, Land Use and Processes of Change**

The Melbourne Road area is zoned for general industrial uses, which excludes noxious industries, but permits a certain degree of residence such as the Dalton Hostel and a few flats that are situated along Banshee Lane. The area is occupied by a variety of land uses, dominated by manufacturing industries and warehousing, but with some office, residential, educational and small scale commercial uses. Many of the buildings are in a dilapidated state. The existence of a residential component makes the area an interesting case study at a time when mixed use is coming back into vogue.

The Melbourne Road area shows evidence of changes brought about the widely encountered processes of invasion and succession. Some of the more important

forces of change are the emergence of new technologies (particularly for textiles), globalization and industrial transformation (as discussed in the previous chapter), and the shortage of housing for low-income persons and households. Another change has been the replacement of older, traditional manufacturing industries by service industry, such as automobile repair and other electronic appliance repair companies. Futwa (1998, 72) in his study of Congella noted the emergence of “multipurpose production”.

The Melbourne Road area is also characterised by blighted flats and the Dalton hostel, both of which accommodate the some of the inner city working population. Industrial buildings, some of which are non-operational, flank the flats. Certain former industrial premises in The Melbourne Road area have been converted to other uses such as funeral parlours, schools and trading sites. The flats themselves have been subject to change with conversion of some to small business enterprises such as welding, retailing and printing concerns.

In addition, some of the office buildings have had their upper levels been converted to private schools, while on the ground floor level, the automobile repair businesses are found. For example, certain sites in Banshee Lane were previously used as a manufacturing industry now being occupied illegally by homeless workers while, on the other far end it is used as a car repair. There are also some flats that have since become partial accommodation and partial offices while the ground floor an automobile spray painting and panel beating business. Some of the buildings have been sub-divided illegally through the use of dry walling. A number of the buildings are being occupied by homeless individuals (often work seekers) and street children.

To sum up, the area has been gradually transformed from light/ general industrial to a mixed-use development corridor. Significantly, most of the changes in use have taken place without planning permission from the city. For instance Picture 1 indicates a building that was previously used for industrial purposes (trading), but has transformed partially into a school.

**Picture 1, A building that has since been converted for learning purposes.**



Picture 1 (Source: survey 2004)

### **3.4 The Melbourne Road Area – Built Environment**

#### **3.4.1 General Character of the Area**

The landmark of the area is the Dalton Hostel, since this is the focal point of human activities and is also dominated by pedestrians. Sydney Road is a high order road through the area with industries spread on both sides and various activities taking place. To the east of the hostel is eThekweni College Melbourne campus (what was previously referred to as a coloured school) and adjacent to the school are few buildings with mixed uses. It emerged from observation that certain buildings have been subdivided to accommodate several activities, which may not have been previously envisaged by the town-planning scheme.

Among the most common activities are automotive firms performing services such as spray painting and mechanical repairs. Upper floors of buildings are being used as small offices, while others are used for academic purposes such as school.

Banshee Lane has quite a few businesses in operation. There flats along Banshee Lane, which appears to be in the process of being renovated, with certain buildings being partially empty. Along the same lane is a morgue, which is adjacent to a block of flats and there are small firms side by side with the morgue. There is a light industrial company called Paramex that specializes in textile production.

There are a number of significant activities that are outside the study area. For example there is a Police post, a bank along Dalton Road. Although other activities such as the Beer Hall are outside the study area boundary, activities that arise from it have an immediate impact on the Melbourne Road area.

#### **4.4.2 Land Use Survey**

The land use survey aimed at identifying the range of land uses and the conditions of the buildings. To do the land use survey, a table was designed. From the table the site numbers (obtained from the deeds office), street addresses and use of the buildings were noted. The table contained a list of issues, which were to be surveyed such as the condition of the buildings including the appearance of the windows, appearance of the paint, roof quality and also the age of the buildings. Amongst other things that were surveyed, was the street frontage, quality of the road, surveillance, accessibility to the area, circulation within the area and current use of the space. The conditions of the building were then rated according to their appearance, ranging from bad to fair or excellent or if the condition did not fit into these categories a specific comment was made, see Table 2 shows this.

**Table 2 Land uses found in the study area.**

| <b>LAND USES &amp; ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES</b> | <b>NO. of LAND USES IN THE AREA</b>                         |
|--|---|
| Hostel                                     | 1   |
| Flats                                      | 3   |
| Morgue                                     | 1   |
| School/ Academic                           | 2   |
| Commercial                                 | 5   |
| Manufacturing                              | 7   |
| Automobile Repairs and relevant uses       | 7   |
| Multi-used Buildings                       | A number of these buildings are multi use                   |
| Informal Trade                             | Mainly found on the Sydney Road, Melbourne and Dalton Roads |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>25</b>   |

(Source: Interviews, 2004).

In terms of land tenure, it emerged that the commercial firms were operating where the land was previously set aside for light industry. The service sector is the main occupier of the area and is mainly operating where the space had been previously been used as residential or Flats. Such space is now being characterised by automobile repairs and offices. Lastly, there is also a light industrial sector, which is the second largest space occupier in the study area.

It emerged from the survey that less established firms have been moving into the area recently, many of them in the automobile industry. There are few sites operating as flats, but most premises have been converted to accommodate small firms or operate as offices. It was difficult to determine exactly how many businesses operate within the offices because it was easier to get access to some premises than others. Even more important is that some of the buildings that are no longer used for industrial purposes have been illegally occupied by homeless and unemployed people (see Picture 2).

**Picture 2 A former light industrial building, which is now occupied by homeless people**



Picture 2 (Source: survey 2004)

Picture 2, also indicates a site that has become used for multi-purpose activities in Melbourne Road area.

### **3.4.3 Condition of the building stock**

This part of the research focussed mainly on Banshee Lane, Melbourne Road and Sydney Road. Overall, the area has a run down appearance and shows signs of blight. No less than 30% of the sites were vacant. The condition of the buildings was measured according to the following categories: worst, bad, fair and excellent.

**Picture 3 A rundown building, which is an indication of bad condition**

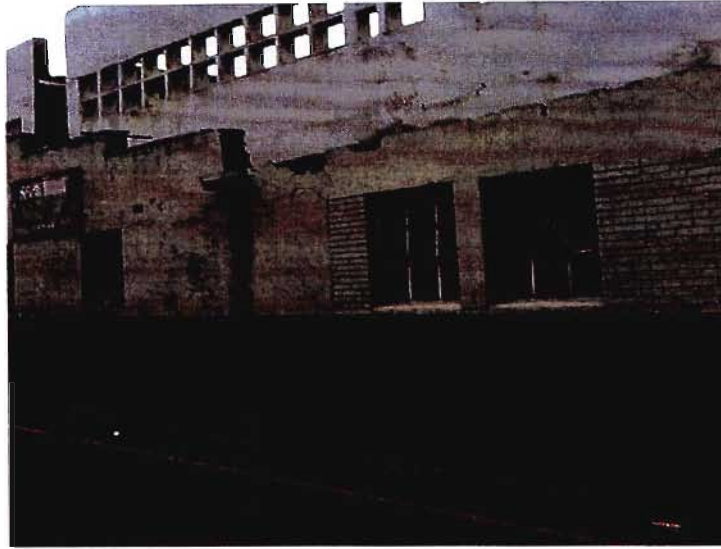


Picture 3, (Source: survey 2004)

Most of buildings are older than 30 years. Only 10.5% were found to be in a good condition, while 26.3% were classified as “fair”. The remaining 63.2 % of the buildings showed signs of aging and lack of maintenance. It was clear that the landlords do not maintain their structures sufficiently. A contributory factor is that most of the businesses rent the premises from landlords who are then expected to maintain the buildings. However this is not being done adequately in most cases.

The windows of approximately 30% of the buildings were dirty or broken. Some of the firms, especially the plastic producing businesses had dark tinted windows to ensure that their production processes were not affected by excessive sunlight. Figure 4.6 shows a building that has not been properly maintained.

**Picture 4 A rundown old building that was previously used for industrial purposes but has ceased to function, which needs to be revitalized**



(Source: survey 2004)

Only 10, 5% of the buildings have been renovated. Of the rest, 26.3% needed to have the walls repainted; 31.6% were classified as needing serious attention; and 31.6% were totally run-down. The building below is a good example of one in need of repair.

**Picture 5 One of the oldest building in Melbourne Road area, which needs to be rehabilitated.**



(Source: survey 2004)

Although the researcher was not able to do detailed inspections of the roofs, it was estimated that about 63% of the roofs were in a satisfactory condition, given

that 63 % of the businesses interviewed did not complain about any form of leakages.

#### **3.4.4 Public Environment**

The municipality does not provide sufficient services to the area especially in regard to waste collection. Partly because this form of neglect, the public environment is always dirty especially along Dalton Road and certain sites along Melbourne Road and Banshee Lane.

As in many transition areas in the city, this area experiences security problems. As a result most businesses employ private security firms to patrol the area day and night, and car guards are in evidence. The following security firms are active in the area: Chubb Services, Magnum Shield Services, Khulani Services, Enforce Services, Impi Yethu 'Our Battle' Services and ADT Services. There is also a Community Policing Forum.

#### **3.4.5 Access Roads**

The two main roads that provide access within the area and link it to adjacent areas are Sydney and the Melbourne Roads. Narrower roads such as Banshee Lane, Dalton Road and Cuckoo Lane provide another network. However, these do not have parking on both sides. Most of the industrial sites can be accessed easily.

**Picture 6 A car parked along the Banshee lane, which lack of parking and loading zones**



Picture 6 (Source: survey 2004)

### **3.4.5 Firms and economic activities**

The range of economic activities that were found in the study area can better be explained by the table, which indicates the type of economic activity, which was surveyed in Melbourne Road area.

**Table 3 List of the land uses (economic activities) in the study area**

| TYPE OF LAND USE       | NO. OF LANDUSES IN THE AREA |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Commercial (Retailing) | 2                           |
| Service                | 16                          |
| Light                  | 7                           |

(Source: Interviews, 2004)

It also emerged from the survey that the Melbourne Road area is characterised by three main land uses with traces of informal sector that manifests itself as pavement traders. These are mainly found along Sydney Road and Dalton Road, as well as Melbourne Road and Canada Road. In addition, these are mainly found on pedestrian nodes such corners of Sydney, Dalton and the Melbourne Roads. In the multi use buildings it emerged that even though a building was operating, it

was not used at its maximum level thus part of some buildings were vacant while are being used.

#### **3.4.6 Operational Times**

The operating times of the firms varied, but; 80% started at either 07:00 or at 08:00 then close at 16:00 or 17:00. Only a few started at 06:00. The main reason given for not operating longer hours was that many firms have a large number of female employees whose safety is at risk if they arrive very early or leave very late in the night.

### **3.5 Business Owners and Managers**

#### **3.5.1 Profile of the Businesses**

In total 25 business owners or managers were interviewed. Others were approached but declined on account of time constraints and some did not specifically give reasons for their refusal. In some cases the owners or managers delegated the task of responding to the interview to their personal assistant. While this was not entirely satisfactory, the responses provided by the latter seemed to be well informed and in all probability accurately reflected the views of the owners and managers.

The businesses were classified as light industry, service industry or commercial. See Table 4.

**Table 4. Firms included in the survey of businesses**

| SECTOR           | NAME OF FIRM   | NO. OF FIRMS |
|------------------|--|--------------|
| Light industry   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natal Arts and Craft</li> <li>• Tower Clothing</li> <li>• Paramax clothing</li> <li>• Sagetex, Textile and Clothing</li> <li>• Afro Pack Trading Company</li> <li>• Jumbo Pre-packers</li> <li>• Flexible plastics</li> </ul>   | 7            |
| Service industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OTIS</li> <li>• Vela rading Company</li> <li>• Blue Chip Trading Company</li> <li>• Date Line Company</li> <li>• Brus Spares</li> <li>• EThekwini Motors Spares</li> <li>• Gear Box Specialists Gorge</li> <li>• Adendorff Machinery,</li> <li>• Woodwork and Engineering</li> <li>• Sydney Auto Centre</li> <li>• Noel Beath Auto</li> <li>• Globe Footwear Distributors</li> <li>• Sunbeam Electroplating</li> <li>• Melbourne Fish and Chips</li> <li>• Bongumusa Passenger Service Holdings Pty Ltd</li> <li>• Ethos Trading Company</li> </ul> | 16           |
| Commercial       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William Morgan Designs</li> <li>• Exquisite Interior Shop Fitters and Specialists</li> </ul>  | 2            |
| <b>Total</b>     |  | <b>25</b>    |

(Source: Interviews, 2004)

Most of the products made in the area were for the local market, although there were some, such as Kwa-Zulu Natal Crafts Industry, which specializes in the producing of picture frames for export.

Most of the managers said that they had been in the area for more than more than 30 months. Some firms in the printing industry were fairly new to the area, but other firms such as OTIS had been there since 1975.

### 3.5.2 Satisfaction with premises

While most of the managers interviewed did not have any problem with their site and premises, they complained about their external areas. They stated that they had inadequate parking because of the narrow roads, which did not promote smooth and quick traffic flow. Many deliveries have to be made along the streets outside the premises. They also complained that the area immediately surrounding their businesses was dirty, and dangerous in terms of health and crime. They also reported these conditions had a negative effect on their production as they could not have their employees coming to work for nightshift and overtime.

### 3.5.3 Problems encountered in the area

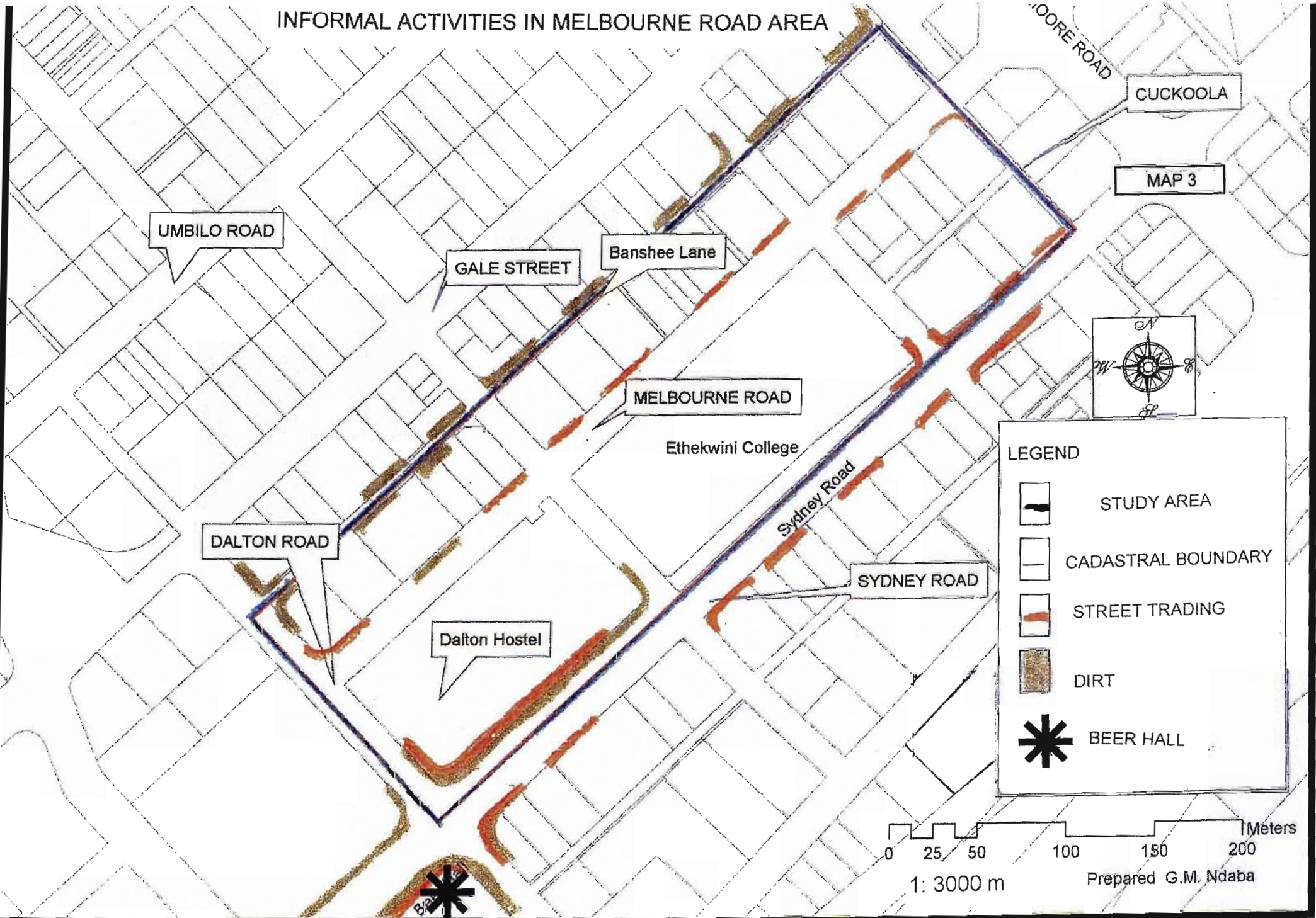
The managers were very open about the problems that they encountered in the area. All stated that crime was the greatest problem. The types of crime that were mentioned included industrial break-ins, car hijackings, and the increasing level of graffiti on the walls of their premises. Other problems related to lack of space for expansion, the dilapidated condition of buildings, escalating rental and limited local accessibility, See Table 5 and Map3.

**Table 5 Perceptions of the main problems in the area**

| PROBLEM                | NO. OF FIRMS | PERCENTAGE |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Crime and Grime        | 7            | 25         |
| No space for expansion | 4            | 16         |
| Dilapidating buildings | 5            | 20         |
| Escalating Rents       | 4            | 16         |
| Limited accessibility  | 5            | 20         |
| Total                  | 25           | 100        |

(Source: interviews, 2004)

# INFORMAL ACTIVITIES IN MELBOURNE ROAD AREA



UMBILO ROAD

GALE STREET

Banshee Lane

MELBOURNE ROAD

DALTON ROAD

Dalton Hostel

Ethekwini College

Sydney Road

SYDNEY ROAD

MOORE ROAD

CUCKOOLA

MAP 3

## LEGEND

-  STUDY AREA
-  CADASTRAL BOUNDARY
-  STREET TRADING
-  DIRT
-  BEER HALL

0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

1: 3000 m

Prepared G.M. Ndaba

### **3.5.4 Satisfaction with the levels of service in the area**

The managers expressed satisfaction with the levels of service provided by the municipality. There were no complaint about issues such as storm water drainage, the sewerage system, electricity, and water. The major complaint was about the extent of grime, dirty streets and a lack of adequate cleaning of the public areas, and insufficient public toilets.

### **3.5.5 Reasons for firms leaving the area**

The managers reported that a number of firms had closed down or moved out of the area due to problems related to high rents and crime. When these interviewees were asked about the reasons behind the closure of many firms they made the following observations:

- There is a steady deterioration of the Melbourne Road area and apparent lack of concern about this on the part of the municipality
- Increased levels of crimes
- High rents and rates
- Inability to operate beyond 17:00 hrs during winter and after 18:00 hrs in summer.

### **3.5.6 Improvements made by the business owners**

When these managers were asked if they had carried out any kind of improvements with regards to either refurbishing or rehabilitating their sites, most them admitted to having done nothing. However, some had taken the initiative to improve their sites. Among the improvements listed was painting the buildings and cleaning their street frontage on a regular basis. They had also increased the level of security in the area both day and night by signing up with security companies and also burglar proofing their windows. In addition, some managers stated that they had moved away the street traders who were selling informally in front of their premises.

### **3.5.7 Improvements needed**

On the subject of what improvements were needed, it transpired that most of them felt that some of the roads such as Melbourne Road, Canada Road, Banshee Lane and Cuckoo Lane needed to be widened to facilitate better accessibility for delivery trucks. However, some of these roads are narrow and have buildings on either side, so they cannot be widened. Another point that was made was that the Dalton Road area is overcrowded due to the existence of informal activities and businesses that are conducted on the pavements despite the dirt found along the roads. As to what could be done in the area the respondents came up with following suggestions:

- Cleaning of the streets as a joint venture with unemployed people from hostel.
- Increasing surveillance and a more active policing forum in an attempt to prevent crime.
- Increasing the number police patrols in the area.
- Providing other safety measures for workers and increasing the level of cleanliness in the Melbourne Road area and surroundings.
- Providing streetlights and beautifying the area.

### **4.5.8 The Municipality's role**

The managers were asked what they thought would be a positive role which the municipality could play in terms of area's development and reduction in the number of derelict and vacant buildings in the area. Among the responses that were given the following were the most common:

- The municipality should reduce the rates in the Melbourne Road area in order to attract new investment.
- Melbourne Road area needs to be cleaned regularly because it is dirty and this acts as a deterrent to customers.

- It was important for the municipality to work closely with the police. This would be an essential tool for ensuring that The Melbourne Road area has adequate levels of safety for both workers and residents.
- The Health Department needs to get involved in order to maintain the levels of hygiene and conditions.
- The municipality needs to upgrade certain roads.
- Building structures need to be maintained properly as they are becoming more dilapidated every year. Owners need to think clearly about responsibilities. Unless the municipality owns the buildings it is not responsible for their upkeep.
- Some of the respondents said, that there should be an increase in the level of services in terms of infrastructure.

### **3.5.9 Street vending and its impact on investment in the area**

The study area has many street vendors. However for the purpose of the study, there were twenty street vendors, which the researcher spoke directly to try to get some insights to the area and to understand their needs. There were 4 bovine traders, 2 traditional brewers, 3 public phone operators, 3 hair trimmers/ barbershop operators and 6 fruit and vegetable sellers (see FIGURE 4. 5). The bovine traders are mostly stationed near the hostel, however those who offered cooked meat for sale often move closer to the other businesses during lunch hour to be close to potential customers. In addition to that, the traditional brew sellers are found along the corner of Sydney Road and Dalton Road near to Dalton hostel. The 3 public phone operators, 3 hair trimmers, both of these categories of traders were stationed near the entrances of the hostel, while the fruit and vegetable traders were scattered everywhere starting from the hostel to almost all parts of the study area (See Map 1), and also see picture 7.

**Picture 7 Street vendors on either sides of the road in Melbourne road area.**



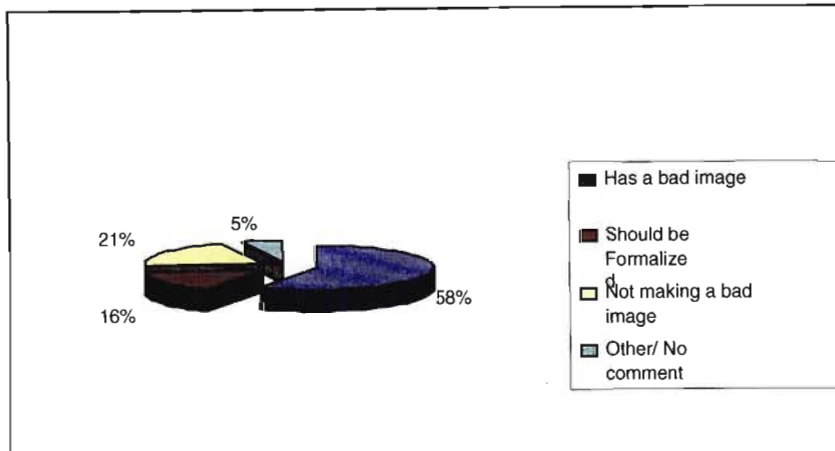
(Source: survey 2004)

Furthermore, there were numerous feelings towards street vending, what transpired from the responses by the management with regard vending, and these could be summed up into the following:

- It has a bad image
- These activities should be formalised
- Street vending does not have a bad image

The responses, shown in Figure 1, reveal that over half of the people surveyed (58%) believed that street vending gave the area a poor image, while 21% thought that it did not.

**Figure 1 Management's feelings towards street vending**



(Source: interviews, 2004)

### **3.5.10 The location of the Dalton Hostel and its impact on businesses**

All the respondents agreed that the Dalton Hostel has a negative impact on investment in the area. They reported that the presence of the hostel increased the levels of crime due to internal and external activities at the hostel. However, they also stated that if the frequency of police patrols were improved, that would be a good way of curbing illegal activities that discourage investment in the Melbourne Road area.

## **3.6 Professional Town Planners**

Interviews were conducted by the researcher with a sample of five professional town planners all of whom have worked in the study area and its surrounds.

### **3.6.1 Problems facing the Melbourne Road area**

What transpired from this group was that the migration of the industries was the result of a variety of problems that are encountered by the businesses. The following factors were mentioned most often:

- Lack of enforcement by the municipality with regard to maintaining standards. According to the professional planners, there are rules regarding maintenance of properties and buildings that are not being adhered to by the owners. At the same time the municipality itself has failed to keep the streets and pavements clean.
- Another problem was the spill-over trade that is carried out on the pavements. According to the professionals, regulations are needed to manage this and the regulations must be enforced.
- Some people are moving in and living in areas set aside for industries. In some cases, these people are occupying unused buildings within an industrial site.
- The buildings in the area are old and therefore do not meet the modern technology standards needed by service and light industry.
- An older industrial area like The Melbourne Road has to compete with the newly established industrial areas, which offer better services and infrastructure, are more up to date and more suited to the modern industrial operation. Furthermore the new industrial areas offer a generally cleaner environment.
- The planners felt that investors and businesses could be attracted to the area (and existing businesses retained) if the municipality were to offer incentives such as free water.
- They all commented on the problem of crime and grime.
- The buildings have not been properly maintained. Besides being outdated, they are on sites, which have been fully developed, leaving no space for parking or deliveries. One response to this problem was for a firm to buy an adjacent site to create additional circulation space.

- There is insufficient parking both on street and off street. In the case where there is on street parking it is limited to the main road, Sydney Road. As a result some streets like Cuckoo Lane have to have delivery transport parking along the street.

### **3.6.2 Changes in the area**

Many of the buildings in the Melbourne Road area have become derelict. At the same time many of the factories there are struggling to remain viable. The combination of these factors makes the area unattractive for potential incoming businesses. Some of the well established firms in area like OTIS are not affected as they travel out of the area to their customers. In its present condition, the area is only attractive for firms whose products and services are not dependant on market-oriented factors such as the appearance of the area or the availability of customer parking.

The area has experienced an influx of small scale printing firms, electrical repairs and businesses in the motor industry such as spray painting and panel beating. However, the textile industry has largely left the area.

The common trend in the area was that with number of industries leaving, this opened opportunities for smaller and not so successful industries to move into the Melbourne Road area, just as Young (1974, 184) cited in McCarthy (1993) predicted.

### **3.6.3 Factors considered to have contributed to the dereliction**

When asked what factors had caused firms to leave the area, the town planners identified the shift in the main mode of transport from rail to road and the associated necessity of good local and metropolitan access; crime; lack of maintenance of buildings and the public environment; and the availability of other

more attractive options with reasonable rentals (such as Pinetown and New Germany). These responses confirm the theories proposed some years ago by Young (1974) and McCarthy (1993, 14).

#### **3.6.4 The suitability of Melbourne Road area industrial as an industrial area**

On the question of the area's continued suitability for industrial use, the town planners confirmed that the availability of industrial infrastructure, its location close to the harbour and on the fringe of the inner city, and the main access roads running through that area, combined to make it suitable for industrial use. However, buildings would need to be adapted to meet contemporary technology requirements. The area's competitive advantage lay in its suitability for emerging and start-up firms.

The Melbourne Road area acts as a buffer zone between residential areas of Congella and Umbilo and the harbour. It is also a zone in transition, to use traditional land economics terminology. For these reasons it has become something of a no man's land, and there has been a tendency for municipal officials to treat it as the 'remainder of the city', without a sense of ownership. This makes the area prone to blight and crime.

One anomaly is that the Melbourne Road area falls within the Southern Industrial Basin redevelopment initiatives yet there seems to be no initiatives that are put forward to revive the area. All the planners felt this should be addressed although there was no agreement as to which Area Based Management zone it should be included within.

There was also some discussion about alternative land uses, such as changing the area into a middle and low-income residential area. This would cater for the shortage of housing partially solving overcrowding at Dalton Hostel. This option would depend on the municipality playing a major role or possibly engaging in a public-private partnership to drive the development.

enforcement of municipal regulations are factors, which contribute to this situation. Narrow roads make it difficult for delivery vehicles to gain access to businesses in for example Canada, Banshee, Cuckoo Lanes and this causes traffic congestion.

The removal of trade tariffs has led to the invasion of local market by foreign products, particularly in the textile industry. As a result of this there is a less market for locally produced goods in the Melbourne Road area. This has also negatively affected investment thus leading to the closure of many light industries in the Melbourne Road area.

The professional advisors also noted that the area has not kept up with the demands of industrial investment. The opening of other industrial areas such as the River Horse Valley Business Estate has worsened this with facilities for cluster development. They also stated that that the opening of the Dube Trade Port and the new King UShaka national airport near Tongaat might increase the level of vacancies in The Melbourne Road area and other older industrial areas.

### **3.7.2 Changes in the Melbourne Road area over the past two years**

Some of the firms from the area have been migrating to the neighbouring industrial parks such as Springfield, Umngeni and Prospection. Service and wholesale trade appear to be the main forms of businesses, which have emerged. Certain institutions such as private schools and colleges (EThekwini College) within the education sector are situated in The Melbourne Road area. Many small and medium scale enterprises and craft industries have also established in the area. Buildings, which used to be flats, are now used as offices. Increasingly, crime has had an impact on investors and business owners' confidence. They are very concerned about the safety of their employees themselves, and their premises and products.

When asked about the reasons behind these changes, the respondents reported that the current market consumer index seems to favour the products of the industries,

which are moving into the area. Therefore, the number of automotive repair and after S.M.M.E's is increasing.

Industrial change and shifts in market preferences have caused certain industries to relocate. This has been precipitated by the fluctuation of the South African economy. This may have caused some of the industries to close down in the Melbourne Road area. Certain site being occupied by automobile industries this is growing even though it hires only a few individuals as compared to the light industries.

### **3.7.3 Reasons for vacancies and dereliction**

The professional advisors again confirmed the views of the business managers and town planners about the reasons for vacancies and dereliction. These were:

- The lack of proper management structures and policies governing street trading.
- Inadequate cleaning and removal of waste from the area by the municipality and the improper disposal of industrial effluents by the investors on the streets.
- The influx of heavy-duty trucks in the area that are not controlled causes congestion as they block the roads for other vehicles while delivering or loading up products.
- The unemployed and homeless people who set up homes on the streets or invade one of the vacant buildings and stay illegally. These people are seen to contribute to the levels of crime in The Melbourne Road area.

The issue of escalating rents in the area also needs to be addressed if the exodus of firms is to be reversed. Due to inflated rents many would rather settle in the newly developed industrial parks as they cater better for modern industry's needs.

### **3.7.4 Suitability of Melbourne Road area for industry**

All five of the professional advisors agreed that the area still has a degree of capability to house industry and they alluded to the fact that the area is found in a commercial corridor which is well connected in terms of infrastructure and other forms of services. The Melbourne Road area offers specific opportunities for investors in the type of industry, which needs proximity to the city centre, or the port, or nearby residential areas. Market forces will determine whether it is cost-effective for industries to locate in the area. These also stated that, the area needed to be revitalised if it is to operate effectively. Again the municipality was seen as needing to drive such a process.

The Melbourne Road area is busy during the day and deserted in the evening. This makes the area more suitable for service industries which link closely with the needs of those frequenting the CBD and the harbour. They suggested that the area could be used for S.M.M.E's, transforming it into more of a commercial corridor. It could also be utilized for some kind of office development by renovating some of the buildings; and it could provide accommodation for low and middle-income households. However, they were wary about the capability of the area to be converted to accommodate high tech industries easily. A related factor is that a large proportion of the resident population is poorly educated, especially those who stay at the Dalton hostel and the surrounding area. These people will not find jobs in technologically advanced companies.

The consensus among this group of professionals was that any option for revitalising the Melbourne Road area would need to involve a wider range of uses including light industry, service industries, commerce, residential and education. Market forces should be allowed to determine the development mix.

### **3.7.5 Ways in which the municipality could improve conditions in the area**

From the responses of the Professional Advisors, it transpired that they clearly thought that there was a need for a closer relationship to be forged between the

business owners, the hostel dwellers and other interested parties, which would help in fighting crime and restore the business owners' confidence. Another point that emerged was the need for a certain amount of planning and guidance by the municipality if investment is to be attracted back to the area. Consideration would also need to be given to global competitiveness and to the identification of clusters of suitable industries, which might be viable. Again the need for incentives to encourage development and investment was raised. For example, if a property owner refurbished his site, there should be a rates rebate, or some other form of tax exemption for a limited period of time. On the question of where the area should be placed institutionally for redevelopment, the Professional Advisors all felt that the area should be part of the SDB.

This group also pointed to the need for the infrastructure to be upgraded because it was designed for the previous industrial era and is unsuitable for modern industrial practices. Another issue was the need for better housing for the workers to curb the issue of people squatting in Melbourne's vacant buildings.

### **3.8 Local Residents and Workers**

The final set of perspectives on the area came from four local groups of residents and workers, made up as follows:

- Traders: this group comprised vendors (bovine sellers), hair trimmers, and public phone operators.
- Women: this group comprised women workers who were staying in the hostel.
- Men: these group-comprised men who stay in the hostel.
- Couples: this group comprised mixed gender couples, both of which stay in the hostel.

The methodology used was similar to that of focus group interviews in which a group is assembled and interviewed collectively. Each group, comprising between 5 and 8 people, was interviewed only once. The names of the individuals interviewed were not used to ensure that they remained anonymous. The findings from these group interviews have been combined and are reported on below. An attempt was made to interview a fifth

group, namely the youth who were staying in the hostel. However, this was unsuccessful as they were not interested and most of them wanted to be compensated for participating. The researcher judged this as a factor that might lead to bias as they might answer questions untruthfully. .

### **3.8.1 Profile of the local residents and workers**

The group members were not from around Durban but had come to the city to seek employment. Their homes were in the rural parts of the province like Nkandla and Kranskop, South Coast and Zululand. All those interviewed live in the Dalton Road Hostel. The women stayed with their husbands while the men stayed either with relatives or others in their compounds since the hostel offers also accommodation to people who are both single and married, all of them hoping they would find themselves jobs in the city.

Most of the respondents stated that they had been staying in the area for more than five years though they often visited home at month ends and during the holidays. The length of time they had spent in the hostel enabled them to observe what had been happening in The Melbourne Road area and they have views about the factors, which led to the decline of jobs. Nonetheless, there were some (7) who were new in the hostel having spent only seven months there.

### **3.8.2 Sources of income and employment**

Some of the women stated that their spouses supported them, although they conduct informal trading on the streets to assist their husbands who work in the area.

In men's the group of men who were employed some worked on a part-time basis (contracts), while others were street vendors, selling bovine products, traditional beer, fruits and vegetables. They use tables and umbrellas and they also had shelters along the pavement. Others ran barbershops and telephone booths.

Some of the older men stated that they were affected by the closing of firms and they ended up being forced to work as security guards. This forced their wives to sell on the streets to ensure that there was an income. Even the women conceded that they were affected as closure of firms' impacts on them because they lost their markets. The younger and better-educated men inevitably got better paying jobs and often moved with the firm when it moved to another area.

Most of the men reported that jobs were lost as firms were closing down, while those firms coming into the area hired young people for better positions. The women added that most of the new firms were using mechanised processes and thus were hiring less people.

Increasingly jobs are offered on a contractual basis, but permanent employment is available to the educated and qualified people.

### **3.8.3 The hostel and other residential options**

The group members responded that they did not have a problem living in the hostel. Some even stated that staying in the hostel could now be regarded as their second home. They were comfortable there, it was close to work and so they could save on transport costs. To them, the hostel brought them closer to work opportunities and that was why they do not mind staying there. At the same time they stated that staying in the area enabled them to conduct small-scale businesses. For the women the only source of discomfort was the high level of crime around the area. The area was previously male dominated, however there are now women staying with their husbands.

When questioned about residential preferences, most of the men stated that they did not mind where they stayed as long as the area was next where they work. Both men and women traders felt that life in hostel was satisfactory.

Most of the men felt that a degree of renovation of the hostel was necessary, but added that they were quite comfortable with the current situation except that there was a lack of permanent job opportunities within the area.

Interestingly, this group also commented on the negative impact of crime, making the area unpleasant and dangerous, and reducing the opportunities to work overtime. They were unhappy about the growing rate of neglect of the public environment and drinking on the streets in the area.

The respondents felt that the hostel still served the purpose of housing people, though what seemed to happen is that most of the people stay there for a long time. This means that space does not become available for new people who want to move in. Although they are satisfied living in the hostel, they complained about the crime levels, which made them uneasy especially at night.

The respondents felt that the only way to clean up the area was by cooperation with the business owners. However, they felt that there was little chance of this working unless the municipality played a facilitating role to promote cleanliness in the area. They also expressed the need for a community-policing forum and suggested that businesses could employ local residents to provide security for their premises.

### **3.9 Summary and Key Issues**

The pressing issues, which dominate the Melbourne Road area, are the following:

The buildings are decaying and the area is not properly managed especially in terms of waste disposal. The new industrial parks offer better choices thus investment is declining in the area.

The lack of proper security and surveillance has also led to many industries leaving the Melbourne Road area for newer or better-maintained industrial areas. This increases the number of vacant buildings. The Melbourne Road area used to have a police post near the corner of Dalton Road and Gale Street, but this was removed, leaving the area vulnerable to crime.

The dirty environment is a health hazard to the people who work and stay in the area. The dirt has discouraged investors from investing in the area; this can be attributed to the fact that most industries are conscious about the appearance of their premises.

The increasing numbers of vacant premises have attracted some of the homeless people who in turn may contribute to crime, as they are unemployed. Some of the people who are attracted to the area are looking for jobs while others are seeking accommodation.

The findings reported in this chapter about the recent changes in the Melbourne Road area and the impacts of these changes; provide the basis for further analysis and recommendations for intervention in the next chapter.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

This section of the research will draw the dissertation together by returning to the question and the sub-questions and will then reach conclusion and recommendations.

### **4.1 Dynamics and processes of change in the Melbourne Road area**

#### **4.1.1 Current Land Use**

The Melbourne Road area is currently zoned for general industrial, which excludes noxious industries. The buildings in The Melbourne Road area are currently used for a variety of uses, namely warehouses, manufacturing firms, convenience shops, and residential and educational facilities. However, the most dominant use is light industries, textile firms and arts and crafts.

Although The Melbourne Road area was zoned for light industries and general industrial activities such as textiles, the changes in technology and basic industrial production together with changes in the economic space have led to the transformation of the area to the current status of land uses.

#### **4.1.2 Changes in land use**

The increase of automobile industry presence has led to many of the sites being used for such SMME's and automobile and other related industries, even to the extent that some of the buildings which were previously used as flats are now used as partially for industry and partially for residential.

The shortage of accommodation that can be accessed with ease by the working population and which is also close to the places of employment in study area, has led to a number of people who are without accommodation invading the premises once used for warehousing and utilizing them as their homes. Hence this situation has led to the transformation of the area into some kind of mixed and non-

conforming land uses. The popularity of the area in terms of employment has however declined even though some people are still flocking into the area with the hope of being employed. Those that do not find employment may find themselves involved in crime in the area, at the same time increasing the levels of crime and other negligent behaviour in the area.

The increasing rate of industries either closing down or relocating from the Melbourne Road area to the other industrial areas has led to a number of vacant buildings thus some of which end up being used illegally by homeless people while also being used for multipurpose. For example, there are a wide variety of automobile repair units and other forms of repairs such as electronic appliances. The rising number of automobile repair businesses in the Melbourne Road area seems to be becoming a norm as they are seen to be gradually filling the premises, which had been evacuated by other industries.

## **4.2 Reasons for Changes and Vacancies**

Among the many reasons for change and vacancies, it is clear that the area lacks proper management structures. If proper management structures and policies were in place it would be easier to manage the increasing level of decay, along with which industrial transformation is a major cause for vacancies.

The inadequate cleaning and removal of waste from the area by the municipality and the improper disposal of industrial effluents by the businesses on the streets was mentioned as a source of discontent in so far as industries are concerned.

The influx of heavy-duty trucks to the area that are not controlled causes inconvenience as they block the roads for other vehicles while delivering or loading up goods.

The unemployed and homeless people on the streets usually end up invading vacant buildings and stay illegally on the unutilized structures. These people contribute to the highest levels of crime in the Melbourne Road area. The lack of suitable housing in the area is another factor forcing people to occupy the industrial premises. Lastly, the increasing

pressure from globalization has precipitated the transformation, leading to a number of firms closing down due to competition or being taken over by other firms.

### **4.3 Current Land Use and Conflicts**

The area comprises of four main land uses, which are residential, commercial, service, and light industries, with light and services industries dominating the area. The conflict in the area has been caused by people who move into an area that was previously used as warehousing and utilizing it as residential. The flats or offices are also being used for academic purposes, SMME's, automobile repairs and other related activities.

### **4.4 Challenges for Industrialists**

It transpired that from an investment perspective, industrial decline and the resulting derelict areas imposes two additional barriers to redevelopment. Firstly it imposes the potential of contamination, which is reason enough to discourage companies from developing and reusing the older inner city. Also even if the companies are willing to invest in the clean up and redevelopment of the inner city, financial institutions, insurance companies and other creditors are unlikely to be willing to provide loans and funding for such projects out of fears of hazard liability.

Furthermore, the proximity of the study area to the beer halls, taxi ranks and the hostel is one of the causes of the inability to govern the area properly. This perpetuates the level of dirt in the in the area and also makes the area a hive of illegal activities. The volume of traffic on internal routes causes traffic congestion and it becomes impossible for delivery vehicles to enter the inner sections.

The economic development practitioners all agreed that urban decay is most urgent problem in the Melbourne Road area. Solutions would involve looking at the possibility of expanding limited accessibility to the sites while at the same trying to find solutions for the limited parking and expanding the space available.

There is also, a lack of cooperation with the landlords, who tend to be more concerned about the monthly rents paid by their tenants, than in maintaining their dilapidating structures. This may in due course promote the out-migration of many firms from this area.

The lack of adequate space discourages expansion of any industry. The area has relatively small sites, which make it difficult to expand unless a firm expands to a site that has been vacated by another firm.

In addition the dilapidating infrastructure and lack of government intervention in the area has an impact since the municipality could be the proactive stakeholder in spearheading a whole process of urban renewal here.

Moreover, in an updated spatial plan for Melbourne Road area, it necessary that urban planners and developers should design ways to reduce traffic and parking problems. Traffic calming measures must be taken into consideration, as these will assist a smooth traffic flow.

Like any other area, the Melbourne Road area is affected by crime. This not only affects the residents of area but has also become a cause of concern to the business owners. In Melbourne Road area, this is evident in their employment of various security companies such Magnum Shield, ADT and many others to safeguard their premises and products.

Lastly, the municipality does not seem to be involved in any initiatives that may have a positive influence of the area. It is recommended that a mix of renovation, selective demolition, commercial development, and tax could be introduced as incentives are could be introduced as often used to revitalize urban neighbourhoods.

#### **4.5 Challenges for Residents**

It emerged that the residents of the Melbourne Road area, are facing a number challenges, ranging from crime to break-ins and mugging. There are break-ins at the flats as a result of crime and lack safety within area.

The positioning of area in the city and the availability employment makes it suitable for locating low income, working class who in turn consider it a better option compared to other neighbouring areas. Consequently a shortage of adequate housing has arisen. This is of concern to residents as their numbers are increasing, while no additional accommodation is being provided. In addition SMME's and the automobile sector are increasingly using some of the flats, which were once used for housing the working population.

The high levels of dirt that is accompanied by a high level of negligence and drunkenness among the people who either stay in the hostel or who have illegally occupied some of the former industrial premises are of concern. This has not only become a problem to residents but also industrial owners some of wanting to move away to cleaner and better-maintained areas.

The declining levels of employment have become a challenge to a number of people as they facing being jobless. As a result the of the decline in employment, some of these have resorted to conducting various informal street trading activities in order to earn a living, while they are waiting for employment opportunities within and around Durban. In addition the increased closure of firms has led to an increased level of desperation among the working class, in the process increasing the levels of 'urban poverty' and unemployment.

The industrial change and globalization in the area have affected the levels of employment leading to decline of blue collar jobs and increased levels of contract posts for older workers while the young and educated becoming the target group for employers.

#### **4.6 Recommendations**

In a context of industrial change, the concept of clustering and mixed used development leads to easier conversion of building structures while at the same time, it enables the accommodation of any form of development that may take place in the future. Such an adaptable approach is necessary in a situation where firms are leaving the area. This has

a direct negative influence on the levels of employment, and at the same time an increase in the number of vacant premises attracts jobless people, some of whom engage in illegal activities. This factor is exacerbated by Melbourne Road's favourable location in the city, but the concentration of an increased level of desperation among the working class in the area calls for an urban renewal programme with explicit social and economic dimensions.

The inter-sectoral linkages with programmes of SMME development will enhance the impact of urban renewal on job creation and poverty alleviation. It seems that in the case of Melbourne, the SMME's are thriving even without much support from the municipality. Indeed, the potential of the combination between SMME and industrial rehabilitation can lead to greater spin-offs for economic development. This potential can also be maximized through careful planning that can be accompanied by training programmes and subcontracting for SMME entrepreneurs.

The effective mobilization and monitoring of private sector involvement in the industrial rehabilitation initiatives are crucial for any urban renewal programme to be a success. Monitoring is important, as it will help to check that contract conditions are being respected and fulfilled in the course of the programme.

All street lights need to be repaired and maintained at all times, as they are essential especially in fighting the level of crime. Providing street lights in the area would be essential in reducing the levels of crime as that would help the Community Policing Forum and South African Police in working together, hence people won't be able to find niches of committing crime.

The increased levels of grime on the streets have an effect on the levels of investment. In dealing with elements of dirt either by the firms or the informal traders, the eThekweni municipality must also initiate and practice effective control of effluents that are disposed of in the public environments. This control will ensure that whoever disposes of any effluent on the street or along the pavement is fined certain penalties. Penalties may be as harsh as having their operational licenses revoked so that illegal trade can be curbed.

As for the urinating on the street pavements and walls, what the municipality needs to do is to reduce the number of taverns in the area. This would discourage people from buying alcohol and drinking on the streets, since they run the risks of being knocked off by vehicles along the streets.

Landlords need to be encouraged to become more responsive to the needs of their tenants by maintaining the structures. This however, will require some forms of incentive to stem the levels of disinvestments in the area. The industrial decline also has a profound impact on the levels of external and major company investments thus promoting S.M.M.E's together with automobile industry, which has influenced the change in the employment patterns in the area.

To sum up a carefully managed urban renewal programme is needed to address the range of urban blight found in Melbourne Road area. Rafson (1999, p337) cautions that brownfields are “ a result rather than a cause, and our efforts should not only be directed toward correcting the blight of Brownfield's, but towards limiting causes that create them.” The most obvious short-term intervention would be for the municipality to include Melbourne road area under the relatively well-resourced and highly effective iTRUMP programme.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted critical issues in industrial transformation especially on inner city areas. It is evident from the analysis and discussion that the industrial change process is far from a static process, rather a course that is in constant process of adaptation, which is based on the needs of the individuals and communities who are affected. However, the dissertation has served to re-enforce the need for diversities of approaches to urban renewal and industrial decline.

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## **APPENDIX**

1. Field work checklist Research Industrial Area analysis scheme
2. Interview questions with businesses
3. Interview questions for Planners and Professional Advisors all based in Durban Municipal Area.
4. Questions for group interviews.

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Part 1: *Master of Town and Regional Planning in Melbourne Road Area case of Durban.*

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**INDUSTRIAL AREA ANALYSIS**

|   |            |             |                  |                 |
|---|------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Site Number</b>                          |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Land Use</b>                             |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Street Address</b>                       |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Use of Buildings</b>                     |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Function of the Building(24/12/6hrs)</b> |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Age of the Building</b>                  |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>BUILDING STOCK</b>                       | <b>BAD</b> | <b>FAIR</b> | <b>EXCELLENT</b> | <b>COMMENTS</b> |
| <b>Quality of the Windows</b>               |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Appearance of the paint</b>              |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Quality of road /street frontage</b>     |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Roof Quality</b>                         |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Security/ Surveillance</b>               |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Circulation</b>                          |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Accessibility</b>                        |            |             |                  |                 |
| <b>Current Occupation of the Space</b>      |            |             |                  |                 |

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Part 2: *Master of Town and Regional Planning Interview Questions for Business Owners/Managers in Melbourne Road Area case of Durban.*

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**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES LEADING TO INDUSTRIAL TRANSFORMATION IN DURBAN: THE CASE OF MELBOURNE ROAD, DURBAN.**

1. How would you describe your business?

- i. Heavy industry
- ii. Light industry
- iii. Service industry
- iv. Commercial

2. What does your firm produce? / What services do you provide?

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

3. Who are your clients/ customers?

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

4. Where do they come from?

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

5. How long have you been operating your business in this area?

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

6. When did you arrive/start operating you business?

- i. Less that 6 months
- ii. Approximately 18 months
- iii. 30 months
- iv. More than 30 months

7. Are you satisfied with your premises, why (for you and your clients)?

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

8. Are you happy with your location (for you and your clients)?

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

9. If not why, and where would you prefer to locate and why?

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

10. Do you find the area safe from criminal activities?

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

11. What kind of problems have you encountered within the past 2 years with regards to this location?

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

12. Are you happy with the kind of services that are rendered in this area?

i.

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

ii. Please indicate why?

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

13. Has there been any change in the last years?

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

14. What do you think needs to be done to improve the area, if anything?

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

15. Within the time that you have spent here what kind of changes that you have seen taking place?

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

16. What do you think the municipality must do to impact positively on the transformation on the area in order to reduce the increase in vacancies & dereliction in the area?

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

17. Do you think the street vending has an impact on investment?

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

18. Has the location of the hostel impacted your on your business?

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

19. What improvements have you made?

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

20. Any other general comments would you, like to add?

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

.....The end

---

Part 3: *Master of Town and Regional Planning Interview Questions for Town Planning Professionals and Economic Developers in Durban Metropolitan Area.*

---

**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES LEADING TO INDUSTRIAL TRANSFORMATION IN DURBAN: THE CASE OF MELBOURNE ROAD, DURBAN.**

1. What do you think the problems faced by industrialists/ investors in the area in Durban inner city?

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

2. There is a high degree of dereliction and vacancy in inner city areas such Melbourne road?

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

3. What do you think are the factors that have contributed to it?

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

3. What do you think can be done about it?

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

4. Do you think the inner city industrial areas such as Melbourne road still fit to house industry?

i.

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

ii. Please indicate why?

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

5. If not, what do you think would be more suitable uses for the area?

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

6. What have the recent trends in terms of industry (business) investment in the area has been?

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

7. What do you think have been the reasons behind these trends and transformations?

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

8. Do you think there is something that the municipality can do to try and improve the situation?

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

10. Do you think crime has an impact on the decline of investment in the area?

i.

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

ii. Please indicate why?

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

11. Do you think a decline in investment in infrastructure has an influence in terms of vacancy/derelection?

i.

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

ii. Please indicate why?

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

12. Do you think the current zoning of the area is still suitable?

i.

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

ii. Please indicate why?

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

13. If no what should it be?

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

14. How do you think economic restructuring at a Metropolitan scale, has impacted on areas such as this locally should be?

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

15. Do you think this area should be part of the ITRUMP initiative?

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

The end

---

Part 4: *Master of Town and Regional Planning Interview Questions for Focus Groups in Durban Metropolitan Area (Melbourne Road Area).*

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**Focus Groups**

1. Where do you come from/ area of origin?
2. Where do you stay/place of residence?
3. How long have you stayed here in Durban/ hostel etc?
4. How do you earn a living?
5. Where do you work?
6. How long have you worked in here?
7. Does the closure/emigration of firms affect you?
8. How does it feel to stay in the hostel?  
    If pleasant; explain why?  
    If not pleasant also say why?
9. What problems do you encounter because of staying in the area?
10. Do you think there are still jobs opportunities in this area?  
    If yes which types?  
    If no which type is common?
11. Do you think the area still offers a highest number of employments?
12. Where would you rather stay if you were not staying in the hostel/area?
13. If there was a way what would you do to make life pleasant in the hostel?
14. Do you think hostel still serve their needs?
15. How do you think you can work together with the investors in fighting crime?
16. How do you think you can help in the ensuring that the area is clean?

The end