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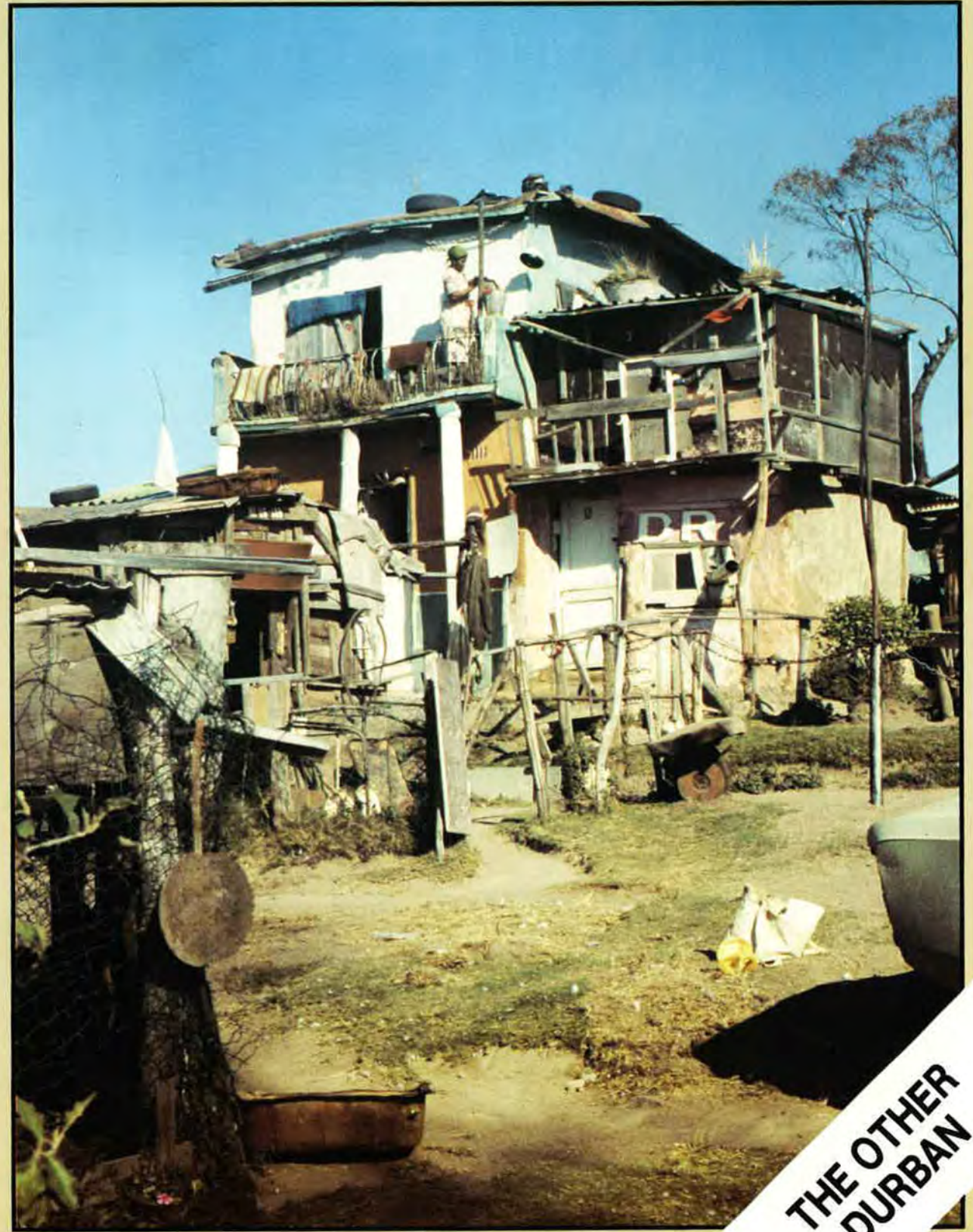
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THE OTHER DUBAN

EDITORIAL

Prevailing images of Durban are the glittering Golden Mile, tropical gardens and the busiest port in Africa.

This is largely the traditional domain of wealth, development, and — architects. For years we were vaguely aware that the masses were accumulating in shacks far behind the Berea, in the OTHER DURBAN. In fact we marvelled at how they were able to cope as the total population trebled in 20 years!

A typhoid epidemic came and went — even the consequences of the State of Emergency in June 1986 were hardly felt in the comfort zone. In 1987 Cyclone Démonia lashed the coastal area, severely damaging the fragile homes of 400 000 people — the self-help myth began to dissolve.

Thereafter the Natal Institute of Architects spearheaded a drive, between all fellow professionals and tiers of public agencies, to force responsibility in housing the poor. This initiative fizzled out in a bureaucratic labyrinth.

Today the lead-up is complete. The ANC is unbanned and we all talk of the New South Africa. The paradigm has shifted. Violence has become endemic with the struggle between opposing political ideologies, and vicious opportunists, ripping communities apart. Thousands have been brutally killed. The house on the front cover of this journal has been burnt, like hundreds of others.

The Golden Mile has already hosted a taxi gang shootout in the foyer of a five-star hotel, the tropical gardens are becoming littered and the port is merely ticking over, thanks to the effect of international sanctions. The collapse of the economy, over 20 years, is far more dramatic than the population increase. In 1970 the hourly chargeout rate for a principal architect was R8,40 — today it is R172,50!

It is a matter of boundaries. Municipality

pal Durban is a wealthy “debt free” city drawing labour from the desperately poor Metropolitan periphery.

The model is simply unsustainable. One-and-a-half million people with no services to speak of. A shortage of over 100 primary schools, in Inanda alone, is political suicide when 40 percent of the population is 14 years of age or younger.

The total Durban population is predicted to grow by a further two million by the turn of the century, with massive unemployment and current reports of 100 000 dead from Aids. The “per-square-metre” cost (R400/sq m) of the cheapest house in the recent Homes '90 Bonela low-cost housing competition, in Cato Manor, was the same as a complete four-roomed “umjondolo” (shack) in Inanda!

Architects have their scale of fees. Plandrawers in the black townships charge R40/habitable room or R3/sq m — whichever is the cheapest. (If a client is eligible for a bond subsidy the fee is one percent of the maximum subsidy — whatever the project size).

This bipolar charade simply has to stop! The core city Durban must accept the responsibility. The possibilities of a fully democratic Tekwini are too profound to imagine.

The problem is manifest right now in Block AK, in Greyville, where the planners are helpless to turn the plight of Siphon Machi and his group of drumsellers into an opportunity. An estimated 2 000 people sleep in public in central Durban, every night, as the poor return to their central position.

Services are taking the strain — try visiting the oncology unit at Addington Hospital. Painful attitudinal changes are inevitable.

Tomorrow is already here. To survive, architects must now recognise their past and take a leading role in engineering the unification of our apartheid city.

Rodney Harber

Rodney Harber, BArch MURP, is a senior lecturer in the Department of Architecture at Natal University. He is a practising architect and town planner with Harber Masson and Associates, Chairman of the Architectural Heritage Committee and UNAHTU, and Director of the African Art Centre.

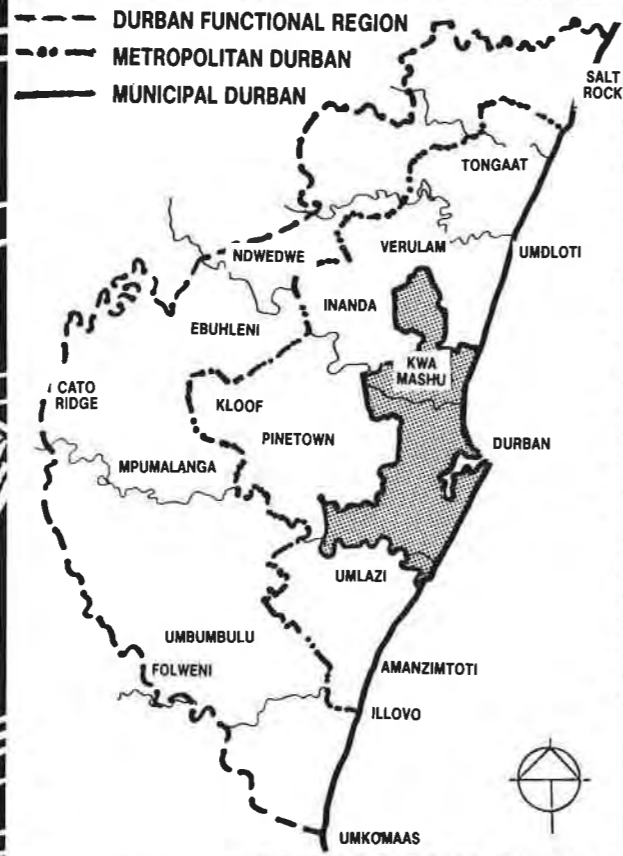


Massive unemployment.

Post-modernism and post-apartheid juxtaposed.



An African interpretation of a city.
Graphic by Cyprian Shilakoe entitled “Johannesburg”.
(Ngwenya Communications, Melville).



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THE UNUSUAL DOUBLE-STOREY DWELLING OF REV. DR DUBAZANA AT FOLWENI, SINCE RAZED.



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MEMBER HONOURED

At a function in the NPIA boardroom on Friday, 26 October, Derek Sherlock, President of the NPIA 1984-86 and long serving member of National Board and SACA was presented with a scroll “in recognition of his unstinted service to the profession of architecture over many years”. Well deserved! Editor

DURBAN CITY COUNCIL CONSERVATION AWARDS 1990

The Committee has completed its adjudication and has recommended the following as being worthy of receiving Conservation Awards:

- Cato Manor Hindu Temple, 588 Bellair Road. • Shri Poongavanma, 418 Bellair Road. • 97 Clark Road. • 633 Musgrave Road. • 2 Gordon Road. • Warriors Gate, 1 NMR

Avenue. • Temple of Shri Takudwara, 24 Somtseu Road.

PRACTICE NOTICES

CHANGES IN PRACTICES
C F Mouton is now practising under the style of Carl Mouton & Associates.

M J Boule and R J Farren, whilst still practising independently, have registered a practice under the style of Boule: Farren.

P C v B Gertenbach has registered a practice under the style of Gertenbach Boxhall-Smith & Associates, Suite 22, Grenada Centre, 16 Chartwell Drive, Umhlanga Rocks.

K R Breetzke is now a partner in E Singh Associates, 78 Julia Road, Overport, Durban.

CHANGES IN ADDRESSES
R F Williams to 142 Rouken Glen, 381 Musgrave Road, Durban 4001.

C A V Marinier to 37 Anerley Road, Morningside, Durban.

M R Hamlin (Malcolm Hamlin & Assoc CC) to 1301 Newspaper House, Field St, Durban.

B C de la Harpe to Umkomazana, Box 1, Himeville.
R G D Curtis to 6 Bella Vista, 12 Hesketh Drive, Pietermaritzburg.

G J H Combrink to 31 Fennemore Place, Ocean View, Durban.

J M Seirlis (Mrs) to 12 Foaty Gardens, 24 York Road, Gillitts.

TRANSFERS IN CLASS

A R Lees-Rolle — Ordinary to Retired.
P L Gordon — Ordinary to Retired.

R J Cooper — AnT to Ordinary.
B H Clark — Ordinary to Retired.

A M Ross — Ordinary to Retired.
M A Jackson — Ordinary to Retired.

D O Gray — Ordinary to Retired.

CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP
M G Moore from TPI to NPI (Gourlay, Moore & Assoc), PO Box 88, Durban.

J M Edgar from NPI to OFSPL.
L Cohen from TPI to NPI (Cohen Architects) 5 Ile Coco, 26 Newlands Drive, Umhlanga Rocks.

T N Baillie from TPI to NPI (Bill Martin & Assoc), PO Box 30, Umzumbe.

NEW MEMBERS
O Joubert (Ms) (Ordinary), Smit Fisher & Joubert, 3 Marine Terras, Marinerlyaan, Umhlanga Rocks.

K F T Faulconbridge (Mrs) (Ordinary), PO Box 1918, Pietermaritzburg.

DECEASED J A Cameron.

DURBAN — AS YOU KNOW IT?

PETER ROBINSON

It has been customary to refer to Durban as a "port-city" but this is no longer an adequate description.

By any international definition, Durban has become a metropolitan region. Evidence lies in its size (area and population), its rapid growth and in the complexity of the socio-political and economic networks that operate within and beyond the city.

For these reasons, Durban needs to take stock of a wider range, a larger scale of issues and faster rates of change in facing the challenges of its future.

The extent of greater Durban, or the Durban Functional Region (DFR), can best be understood by considering four overlapping zones of influence. At the heart of the city-region is Durban's CBD covering an area of some 5 km². Surrounding this, the total built-up area, including formal settlements, embraces 750 km². Beyond lies the boundary of the so-called Durban metropolitan area (1 400 km² in extent and housing 85% of the population), and an outer zone including those areas and people that are, and will be, functionally linked to Durban on a daily basis.

The DFR boundary, a roughly defined outer edge, traces a semi-circle from Umkomaas in the south, to include Cato Ridge in the west and Salt Rock in the north. It encloses an area of 2 900 km² and, significantly, includes land that falls into both Natal and KwaZulu.

The DFR has experienced rapid population growth over the last two decades, mushrooming from less than 1,0 million in 1970 to some 3,5 million in 1990 with projections to increase to over 5 million by the year 2000. The main cause was an explosion in the African growth rate, caused largely by in-migration that peaked in the early 1980s. As a result, an increasing number of people are housed in shacks (more than 40%), vast numbers are unemployed or engaged in casual, informal sector jobs, and public services and facilities are under considerable pressure.

Clearly the implications of current and future urbanisation need to be addressed urgently. Durban, the second largest city in South Africa, cannot afford the proliferation of overcrowded, unserviced, informal settlements on its periphery, where two-thirds of its African population lives.

Looking ahead to the turn of the century and beyond, the DFR will continue to experience rapid population growth and about 2 million additional people will be found in the region by the year 2000. Given this growth there will be increasing demands on housing, job opportunities, services, education and training. The population is

relatively young (40% under the age of 14) but will age over the next decade so that an even greater proportion will be of working age (15-64 years).

With few exceptions, the DFR's economic growth rate was lower than the South African rate (under 2% pa) during the 1980s. Under present circumstances the national economy is unlikely to grow at more than one to three per cent in the 1990s and, in view of past trends, the DFR cannot anticipate higher growth rates than these.

The implications are that unemployment will increase, that per capita White-African income disparities are likely to widen, that absolute poverty among Africans (presently about 40% of shack and 13% of township households) will persist, and that the rate of economic growth will lag substantially behind the rate of population growth in the DFR. The situation will, in time, escalate the "insider-outsider" cleavage that characterises most facets of life in the DFR.

Another indicator of change is the rapid rate at which people and households are

Durban, the second largest city in South Africa, cannot afford the proliferation of overcrowded, unserviced, informal settlements on its periphery, where two-thirds of its African population lives.

becoming urbanised in a social and psychological sense, taking on urban values and adopting typically urban lifestyles. One aspect of this is changing African household structures, becoming more nuclear; another is that the sizes of households are starting to decrease. Literacy and education levels are rising, particularly among Africans entering the labour market.

Aspirations relate to owning a house, to having a job and discretionary income, and to the opportunity to improve one's lot — mobility in social, employment and residential terms. But in parallel with these hopes for the future, the overall socio-economic and political profile of the DFR is characterised by marked disparities between "haves" and "have-nots".

Two social issues of particular concern as DFR enters the 1990s are those of violence and AIDS. Reduction of violence in the short-term and in the longer term, erosion of what has been termed "a culture of violence" as a means of conflict resolution, are prerequisites if DFR is to have a bright future.

AIDS can no longer be overlooked as a "wild card" that could alter demographic trends. Although not widely in evidence yet,

the characteristics of the spread of AIDS (a sexually transmitted disease with a doubling time of about eight to nine months and whose symptoms may not appear for several years) mean that it is likely to have a catapult effect with the major impacts expected in a few years time. The impacts will be wide-ranging, affecting many aspects of the lifestyles of the DFR residents.

The two socio-economic groups likely to be most prone to the disease are, firstly, the labour force (and this will have an associated effect on skills levels — already a critical shortage in the DFR's economy) and, secondly, the socially, economically and politically deprived sector of the community.

Health care, social and community services will come under increased pressure from the burden of having to take care of AIDS patients and the growing numbers of families becoming destitute with the loss of their breadwinners. AIDS is also likely to become a labour relations issue with increasing pressure on medical aid and pension schemes.

And so the ripple effect runs on. It is likely to lower population projections into the 21st century and at this stage the scale of change cannot be quantified with certainty. In Durban with its extensive informal settlements AIDS will spread relatively rapidly but changes in behavioural patterns could reduce its impact.

The DFR's political/institutional picture is extremely complex. Until recently it was characterised by a distinction between two categories of actors: firstly, the constitutional, formal, state-created political bodies who operated in terms of the pre-1990 rules of the game and secondly, extra-parliamentary groups who, of necessity, operated by quite different rules. This distinction is presently changing and a new order has yet to emerge.

The dominant political questions facing the DFR revolve around whether national and regional negotiations will result in effective devolution of power to the DFR, and will facilitate a racially integrated local government institution.

Spatial patterns of development in the DFR have been very much influenced by topography and historical settlement trends. The most fundamental spatial issues relate to accessibility, land and integration of the disparate parts of the city region. The most striking differences between the formal areas (where most residents are "haves") and the informal areas (mainly "have-nots") are, of course, the type of housing, but also unequal access:

- to the urban core and its opportunities for jobs, shopping and recreation;
- to basic physical infrastructure (water, electricity, telephones, sewerage, refuse removal, etc);

• and to social facilities like schools, libraries, community centres, hospitals, clinics, creches, parks and sports fields.

Durban may be said to have an inside-out city structure where the poorest live furthest from work, shopping and recreation, all of which has a negative impact on quality of life and productivity. The need to knit the DFR's formal and informal areas into a more compact, better integrated city is self-evident.

One of the main obstacles to planned urbanisation in the DFR (as opposed to informal sprawl) is the shortage of available land, particularly for low income households. Release of land is constrained by a variety of factors: Group Areas restrictions, the Tribal Land tenure system, bureaucratic delays and the fact that substantial tracts along the coastal strip are prime agricultural land under sugar cane and have not been developed for urban purposes.

Rapid urbanisation has changed the "rules of the game" for planning in the DFR. The focus has shifted from a neat

"First World" city to the untidy informal areas where conventional rules and standards do not apply. A new approach to city planning is needed here — one that recognises that urbanisation is a positive force, replete with opportunities, one that should be facilitated rather than reversed or controlled.

In a recent study of the DFR, Tongaat-Hulett Group's Planning Forum synthesised the issues facing the city-region as it approached the 21st century in terms of four dimensions:

- "Rules of the game", which provide landmarks around which the future will evolve;
- "Key uncertainties" whose outcome cannot be predicted but which will, nonetheless, have a significant impact;
- "Main actors", being those organisations or interest groups who will play lead roles in the DFR's future; and
- "Drivers of change", which indicate where resources and energies should be directed.

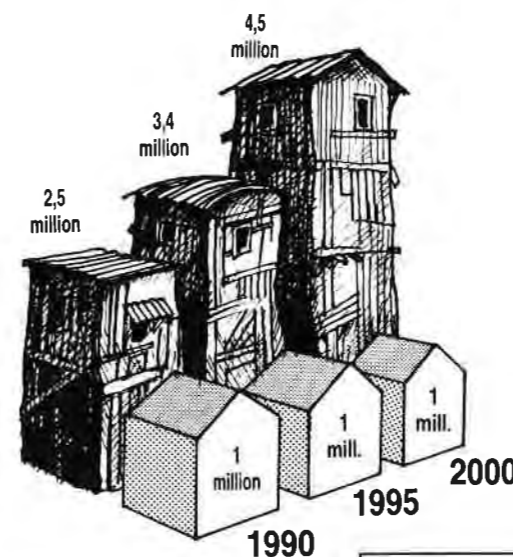
The message that emerges strongly is that greater Durban (ie the DFR) needs to accept a shared destiny and start harnessing its resources for the benefit of the region as a whole. There is room for manoeuvre at DFR level provided the key actors take the initiative rather than waiting for a national/regional solution to be handed down.

This will require a concerted approach to planning and development of the DFR around a unified vision of what a "better" future for Durban could involve; and this, in turn, will require a great many joint ventures between the DFR's main actors.

Note: This paper is based on Tongaat-Hulett Properties Ltd (1989) "The Durban Functional Region — Planning for the 21st Century. Report 1: The Current Situation".

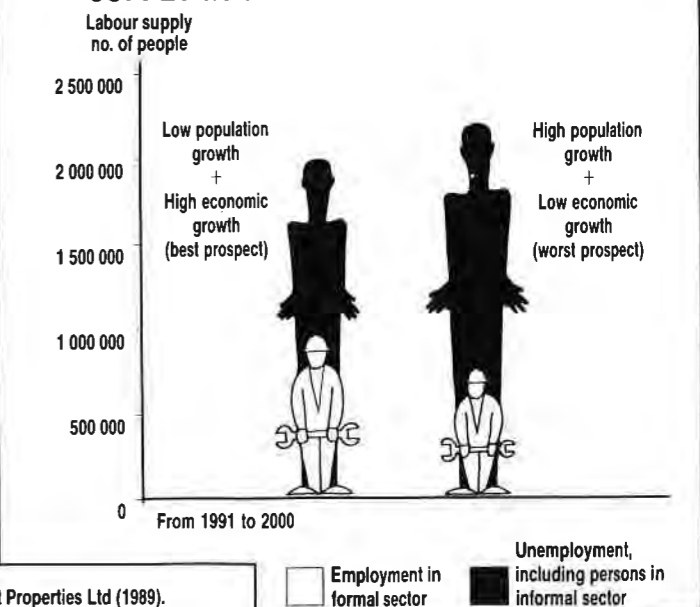
Dr Peter Robinson: Town and Regional Planner, and partner in the firm Vanderverre Apsey Robinson and Associates, Durban.

PROJECTED GROWTH OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS



Source: Tongaat Hulett Properties Ltd (1989). "Durban Functional Region — Planning for the 21st Century. The current situation".

PROJECTED FORMAL EMPLOYMENT & LABOUR SUPPLY IN THE DFR TO THE YEAR 2000



Legend: Employment in formal sector (white bar), Unemployment, including persons in informal sector (black bar).

RULES OF THE GAME



KEY UNCERTAINTIES

THREE AFRICAN CITY EXPERIENCES

RON KIRBY.

For the writer three urban experiences serve to weave the fabric of tomorrow's African city form, structures and ordering systems.

The fabric, which responds uncharacteristically to utopian and first world modelling, is heavily woven with the threads of Kenneth Galbraith's "tyranny of place and poverty", it is a dynamic "bridgeheader" weave, fleshed out to a multi-modal skein of access, framing egalitarian concerns for equity of opportunity.

The first such experience was in the late '60s, in Ibadan, Nigeria, then an accreted city agglomeration of over a million, where individual land holdings extended up to and included the centre of the roadways. There was no public land. Traffic moved — people, goats, camels, bicycles, cars, buses and taxis — in a normal manner apart from the necessity to detour around the odd vehicle, up on jacks for repairs in the centre of the only available hardstanding, the road, where an individual ownership right was being exercised.

Here was a city form which stood the standard city norm of hierarchies of public spatial ordering and planning systems on its head, not always conveniently, but certainly successfully, where individual citizens enabled the rights of access for the wider community, in a consciously interactive manner.

Importantly, the city structures were "underburdening" structures, agreed upon collectively by the citizens. Our squatter settlements have of course the same structure. The lesson learnt was that of the importance of minimal central authority intervention, the need to consciously underburden, the need to keep suburban public

land to a minimum, the need to enable citizen planning through individual land ownership and thence to enable sensible, affordable, prioritised planning actions.

By contrast, current South African neighbourhood space planning norms continue to seem a recipe for the overburdening extension of present city poverty, a condition affordable by none.

I dream a theatre, I dream an African experience, I dream an African city.

The second experience was a recent visit to Umlazi just as the workers were returning home. The spatial ordering systems were suddenly and vividly thrown into focus as streams of pedestrians made silly a plan predicated on private car ownership, which made the needs of the many palpably secondary to the "public rights" of the few.

Clearly current wasteful and unbalanced land use planning needs to be rigorously tested by an underburdening set of spatio-economic standards. The present imposition of "haves" solutions on "have-not" settlements brings into question the wisdom of the present planning norms, apparently frozen in comfortable bureaucratic models. Ibadan aside, other more sensible local models abound.

The most recent experience was in Lilongwe, Malawi, where garden city planning has located the low income housing some two hours walk from the CBD.

Few can afford the bus ride so, as at Umlazi, morning and evening throngs move along unplanned, spatially underdesigned road verges, often barefoot, with their hard-earned

Bata shoes laced over their shoulders for further economy. Perhaps the planners' "sole" intention?

I was visiting the low income shopping area which evoked the final powerful spatial response. The cloth shops in particular were packed shoulder to shoulder with women, swaddled children and the young, out shopping certainly, but for the women and young, with time on their hands, here was urban theatre made out of a necessity.

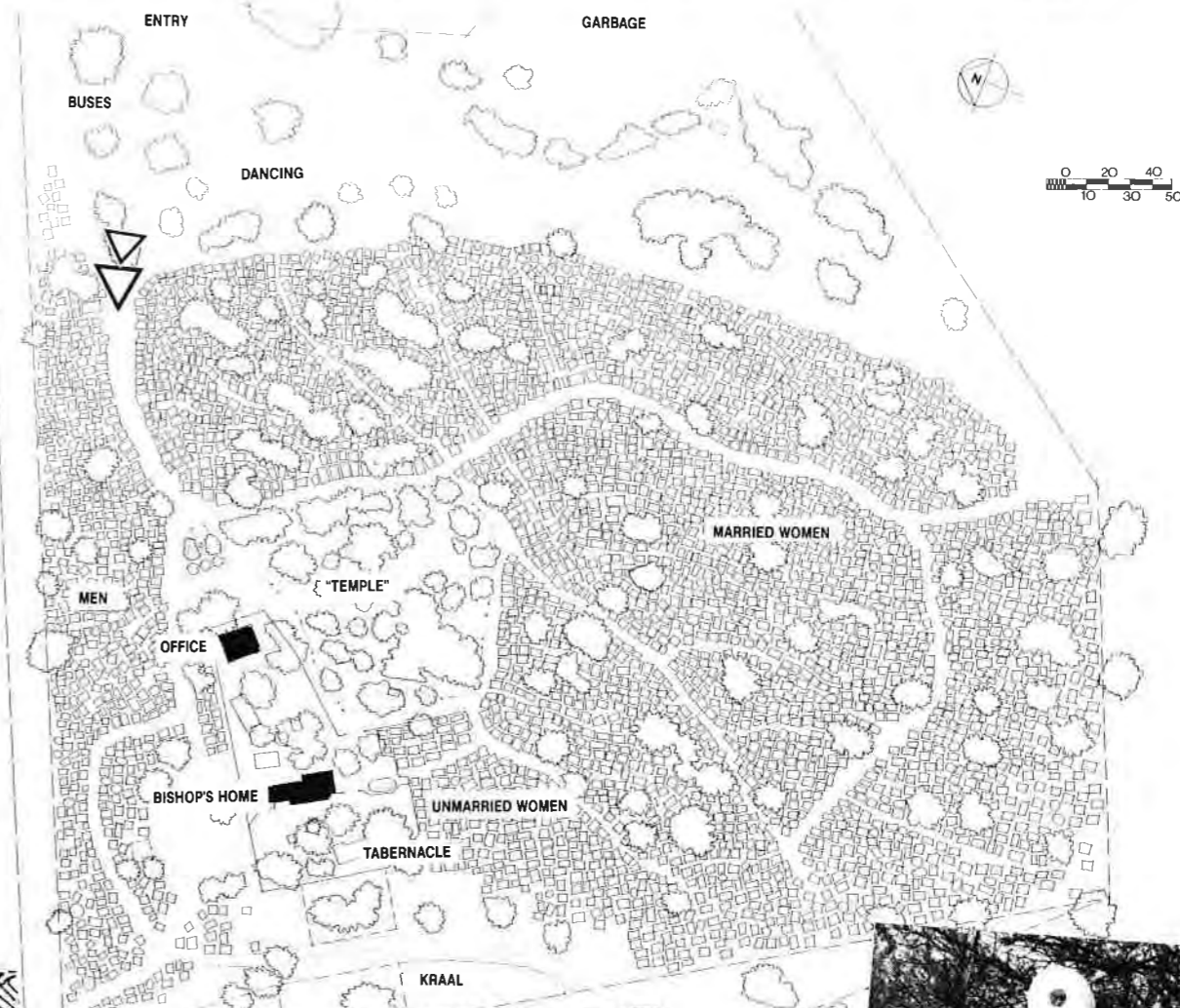
Once more, conventional models proved both inappropriate and inadequate. Shops designed around European models, with single entry security systems, exacerbated the crowding, exasperating and frustrating the theatre potential at every cramped turn. The mind and memory turned to "souk" experiences in North Africa which make such a physical, visual and experientially exciting process of everyday mundane shopping necessities for those captured in the tyranny of place and poverty.

Typologies emerge when human acts give over a form and face, expressive of those acts. Enabled through minimalist underburdening planning and design acts, tomorrow's city has the potential for once more richly contributing to the theatre of urban man in our time and place. We, the designers, need to look at every city action for its African urban potential, with eyes that want to see, as a means, if not the only means, to tomorrow's African city. I dream a theatre, I dream an African experience, I dream an African city.

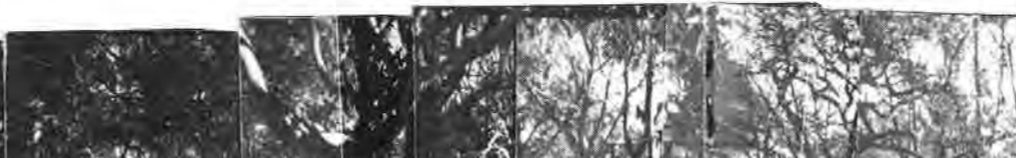
Ron Kirby: Architect, Urban Designer, and partner in Pentagraph Architects, Johannesburg. PS: Ron Kirby has in the meanwhile been appointed to a chair in Architecture at the University of the Witwatersrand. Congratulations! Editor

EBUHLENI SHEMBE SETTLEMENT

A "celebration in architecture" was explored by Frank Reitz in his Design thesis (1989), *Ibandla lamanazaretha (A Religious Complex for the Nazareth Baptist church at Ebuheni)*. The Nazareth Baptist church, under Bishop A.K. Shembe, has established a unique settlement at Ebuheni, on a plateau in the "other Durban". We all have so much to learn from this rich mixture of images and layout which is the antithesis of the suburb. It is deceptive, being highly organised, even to the extent of separating men and women. Note the single controlled entrance, the very compact form, tapering footpaths and the open "temple", defined by white stones, where the worshippers congregate in the shade.



Male worshippers arriving.



The assembled congregation in the shade of the trees in the "temple".



Organ accompaniment during open-air service.



Cross particular to the Shembe religion.



KWA MNYANDU STATION MARKET SYSTEM

DAVE DEWAR

The scheme for the Kwa Mnyandu station market system raises a number of issues which are highly relevant to planning in South Africa.

1. The generation of maximum opportunities for small business should be one of the primary objectives of all urban planning and management action in developing countries. The debate about whether or not informal sector activity is positive is largely irrelevant. Like it or not, structural economic change is occurring in South Africa and in terms of this an increasing number of people will have no option but to seek survival in self-generated employment. They should be given maximum assistance to do this.

2. Urban markets — defined as the physical agglomeration of small traders and producers — are powerful instruments for stimulating informal sector activity. If appropriately handled, they increase the sense of security of operators (an essential condition for rational economic behaviour) and, through their cumulative mass, they make it possible for small traders to compete, in terms of drawing power, with larger economic units such as supermarkets. The intention in a positive market programme should be to enable as many small operators as possible to use the genuinely viable locations within the city for economic purposes at little or no cost.

3. Viable locations are defined by significant concentrations of pedestrians. Note from the drawing that traders do not locate in relation to places of movement (the roads) but to places of stopping (the pedestrian paths).

4. By definition, therefore, the spaces around transportation terminals are places of considerable economic potential. This potential is reinforced where there is a coincidence of different modes of transportation (in this

case, the station and Kombi taxis). Significantly, only a few years ago there was no economic activity around this station.

The reason was, that given the low dwelling unit densities in this part of the city, the station was too remote for most people and the rail link was only lightly utilised. The factor which changed this was the explosion of Kombi taxis, which, almost overnight, made the rail link accessible.

Two points are underlined by this observation. First, a precondition for vibrant small-scale economic activity is a large proximate market and this is optimised when densities are relatively high. Second, the integration of different modes of public transportation is not only of the highest priority in its own right, but it also creates a

The more complex the web, the greater the opportunities for small business. Such a web can and should be consciously created in the planning of new areas.

hierarchical web of opportunities (the bus stop, the taxi rank, the station, etc) to which small operators can respond. The more complex the web, the greater the opportunities for small business. Such a web can and should be consciously created in the planning of new areas.

The market shown here is a spontaneous one, in that it has evolved organically. However, conflicts and problems frequently occur in markets (particularly in intense inner-city locations) and there is a need for creative market design. This market raises some issues which are relevant to such design.

5. Small traders require direct access to pedestrian flows. A few yards can make the difference between success or failure. Note how abruptly trading terminates away from the dominant flow in the section marked "A" on the drawing. The problem of spatial marginalisation (the relative disadvantage of some traders in terms of access to intense flows) is a major problem in the design of markets.

6. In this regard the best situation pertains when the market orientation is coincident with the major directional flows (as is the case here): the worst occurs when major selling runs are at right angles to those flows.

7. Significantly, Kwa Mnyandu is not one market but a market system: each of the selling runs operates as a relatively independent entity. Frequently, in situations of this kind, specialisation occurs. Different products (e.g. fruit and vegetables, offal and other forms of meat, clothes, household goods, etc) concentrate in different runs.

There are three main reasons for this specialisation. Firstly, consumer behaviour is probabilistic: consumers orientate towards those places where they feel they have the

best chance of making a purchase. Secondly, in poorer communities, comparative buying is extremely important: intensive selection goes into the smallest items. Thirdly, different products have different environmental requirements to optimise trading.

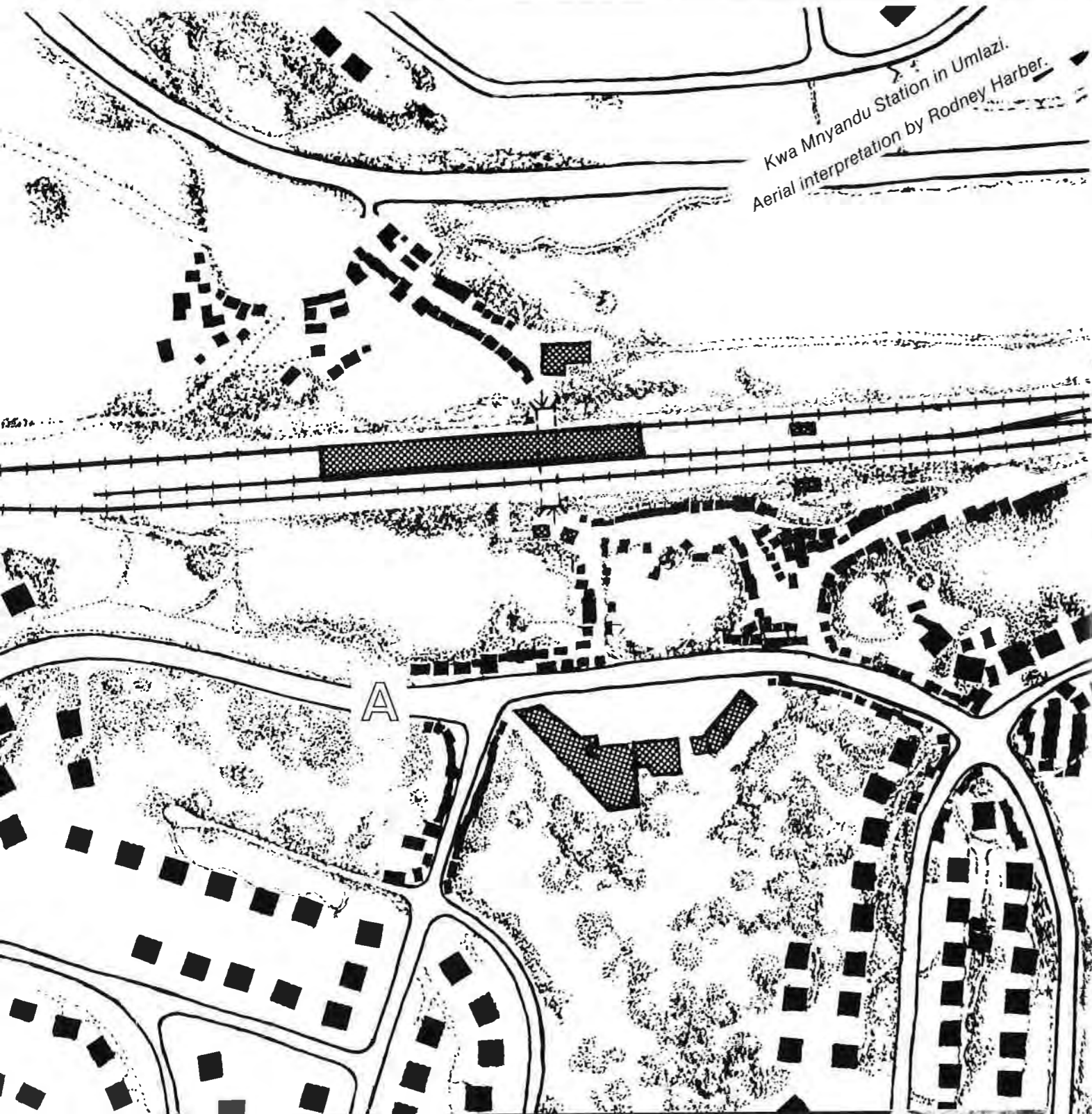
8. Markets such as this are periodic: they intensify around the morning and evening peaks. When stalls are permanent, there is again a potential problem of marginalisation. As the market shrinks, certain traders who may wish to continue operating are stranded well away from the heart of activity. This is particularly the case when the market is proximate to, but not directly on, external movement channels (when access to the market requires a conscious decision). As a general principle, markets should be designed so that they operate as a totality at all scales of expansion.

9. There is no direct correlation between levels of infrastructure provided and a market's commercial success. Generally, the higher the level of infrastructure provided, the higher the trading overheads. Nevertheless, elements of infrastructure can improve the trading environment and hygiene conditions. Potential elements of market infrastructure include hardened floor services; water; metered electricity; shelter (for producers, sellers and consumers); selling surfaces; toilets; storage; and garbage removal. The importance of each element varies with context and appropriate decisions about mix result from a trade-off between contextual conditions and affordability.

10. Traders frequently display considerable ingenuity in meeting their own requirements in terms of shelter and selling surfaces. Their propensity to do this, however, is directly related to security of trading conditions (absence of harassment) and the length of trading operations (the shorter the trading time, the less energy and resources invested).

For a detailed exploration into issues relating to the design and administration of markets, see D Dewar and V Watson, *Urban Markets: Developing Informal Retailing*, Routledge, London, 1990.

Professor David Dewar: Director, School of Architecture and Planning, University of Cape Town; and Director, Urban Problems Research Unit.



Informal traders selling recycled industrial waste in central Durban. They are forced to pay 20 times the tap value for water.



Shelter for producers, sellers and consumers.



Market orientation is coincident with the major directional flow.



Specialisation occurs.

INTERVIEW WITH ALAN LIPMAN

What sort of Durban did you leave and what have you come back to?

The Durban I left in 1960 was a sweet provincial town, hot as hell but nice to be in. I now find it a city I really can't find my way around in. I'm not sure if the city matters that much to me any longer, it's what's around that seems to me to be terribly important — the most frightening shanty towns I have seen. I have been to India, and they're pretty bad there!

Is this a threat or a challenge?

Can architects adapt?

One of the things I like about Durban, and particularly about this socially aware School of Architecture, is that others share my view. I've not had any impression that this view is widely shared amongst the profession in Durban. I get the impression that most are still working for the old corporate clients and private individuals — that shakes me about South Africa generally. After working in Britain, at least before Thatcher, we did have an architecture that you could call socially conscious. I'm not suggesting that most of the architects practised that architecture but we had it; in the Local Authority offices, the London County Council being the best known example. Whereas here it seems to me that the architectural profession, like so many whites, has copped out of the real issues facing architecture.

I love architecture but perhaps we should make a distinction between architecture and building. Architecture has become a somewhat suspect term because it represents High Art, whereas building represents what people do. Architecture has become corrupted to mean the sort of thing produced by the Great Stars. That seems to be the death of creative architecture.

You have obviously returned at an interesting time, in terms of your political feelings.

I've arrived at an incredible time, at a time when some of my oldest friends and some of the people I learnt most from and loved dearest are now out (of prison). I'm delighted but I also carry a guilt that I have been free for 27 years and they have been inside. Now they're free and doing good work. I notice that before African

people kept out of Whites' way when they walked in the street, now they do the very opposite!

How did you return?

I went to do a two-year stint as visiting professor at the Copperbelt University at Kitwe and discovered a country that is corrupt, authoritarian, bureaucratic and demoralised. I came back to South Africa by accident and was hurt to be allowed in — not as a dangerous subversive!

On the other hand there are things happening in Europe that I would find just as exciting — in Eastern Europe the overthrow of corrupt and degenerate regimes that were holding back the people. The important thing is that those were people's movements.

Don't these "corrupt and authoritarian regimes" create image problems for the ANC?

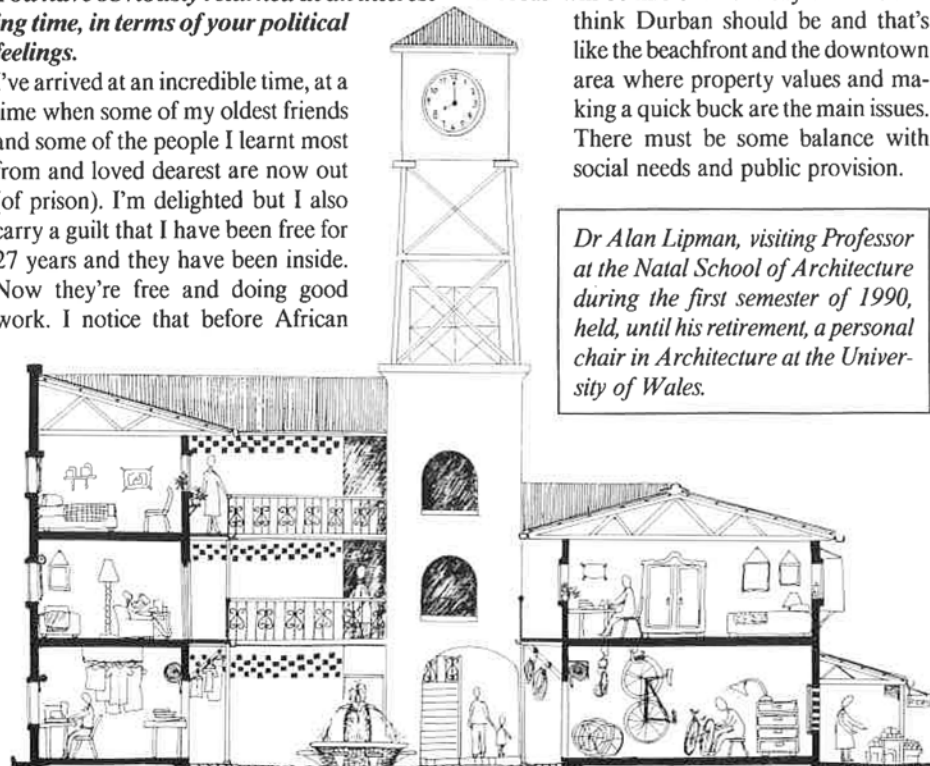
The people in South Africa on the Left, like people everywhere else on the Left, have got to come to terms now with what were our finest dreams that have been twisted and contorted. I hope there is going to be a tolerance in South Africa for people who are critical of, say, the SACP. I am put out by some of the intolerance I have encountered by criticising Joe Slovo's paper, "Has Socialism Failed?", which I consider to be dishonest. I have said this publicly and been accused of being a critic of the People's Movement. In that case we could well go back to a Stalinist censorship of people's views. What happens to that in the long run is that you go down the slippery path where you are busy telling people what they can do or think.

And the future?

I can't even begin to guess. A great big throbbing place in which there are contesting groups? It would be presumptuous of me to say what Durban will be like but I can say what I don't

think Durban should be and that's like the beachfront and the downtown area where property values and making a quick buck are the main issues. There must be some balance with social needs and public provision.

Dr Alan Lipman, visiting Professor at the Natal School of Architecture during the first semester of 1990, held, until his retirement, a personal chair in Architecture at the University of Wales.



Student design for pavement dwellers, by Jane du Rand. A project set by Alan Lipman to confront some problems of disadvantaged people.



"... balancing on platforms at such a low density." Inanda.



Mixed Use Activity Corridor. Ekuphakumeni, Inanda.



"Very dense spontaneous housing." Claremont 'Kamers'.



Chandra Lee's petrol filling station, RIBA Student Competition joint winner, 1988.

QUO VADIS?

Solutions to many of the problems in Durban, the African City, already exist if architects and fellow professionals will only look "with eyes that want to see".

In regard to housing, for example, the prevailing image is the relentless spread of individual formal houses, balancing on platforms at such a low density that the viability of further development is suffocated — a final blueprint. Planners now extol the "Mixed Use Activity Corridor", yet such very dense spontaneous housing developments have clung to the sides of access roads for 40 years, expanding continually with the range of services offered on the edges of the busy roadway.

Groups of architects and others are presently meeting at regular Urban Design Workshops to unlearn previous norms and explore the opportunities that lie beyond apartheid — Warwick Avenue, Block AK, Isipingo Rail, The Bay... it would be a social disaster if the vacuum of Cato Manor were to be invaded and crammed, like Inanda, by shacks without a framework.

Architects need to engage with communities at all levels to explore their aspirations. The ANC Freedom Charter states, "Slums shall be demolished and new suburbs built where all shall have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, crèches and social centres". This is a massive mission when 60 percent of blacks presently have no money to contribute to their housing. The core house versus the shell house, the "American Flat", the "Jo'burg Roof"...

There are no indications that the economy can ever recover. Simple buildings need to be rediscovered, buildings that host pleasant spaces between them: buildings that are ecologically sound, that

recognise that the Umgeni River won't cope after 2005, and are modestly assembled from generally understood techniques like load-bearing masonry. This will allow greater numbers to participate in the construction process. (In this instance our Victorian remnants are very informative).

The course structure at the Natal School of Architecture is evolving to meet these demands. Projects based on development issues have tended to push the skyscrapers out of the limelight. It is now necessary to know about six methods of disposing of sewerage rather than presuming that a pipe is available at the foot of every site.

Contemporary students are fortunate to participate in numerous well sponsored competitions organised by agencies such as the Development Bank and the South African Housing Trust. Commercial concerns, such as Corobrik, Murray and Roberts and Perm also offer inducements and the opportunity to compete nationally. Natal students have distinguished themselves with development issues including joint first prize and several mentions from amongst hundreds of entries in the RIBA International Students' competition, two years ago.

Other important innovations have been the establishment of Faculty-based community agencies, such as the Built Environment Support Group (BESG) and the University of Natal Appropriate Housing Technology Unit (UNAHTU). Projects range from odourless pit latrines to cement-reinforced hessian, stilt housing and stabilised mud blocks.

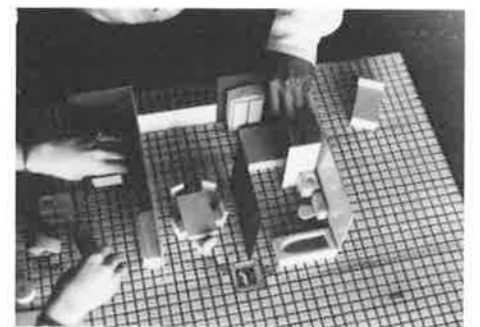
These professional and educational initiatives are available to all who recognise the need to be updated in order to operate in the changing theatre of the REAL DURBAN. Rodney Harber



"Simple buildings need to be rediscovered." Clinic by John Royal.



"... rather than presuming that a pipe is available at the foot of every site."



"... engage with communities at all levels to explore their aspirations."



Stormwater control experiments by UNAHTU.

Stilt housing by BESG on the western campus of the University of Natal, Durban.