GATED COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE OF FEATHERBROOKE

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ABSTRACT

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South Africa has seen a number of profound structural, social and political changes since the end of apartheid. One of the most profound changes to the urban landscape has been the proliferation of different forms of housing. These include the growth of gated communities. These forms of housing developments date back to the 1800s in America (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002:2) and have been part of the urban landscape in South Africa since the apartheid era. However, in the post-apartheid context, these housing developments have seen a rapid growth that reflect and complicate various processes in South Africa. Gated communities are seen as a reaction to the perceptions about the rising crime rate (Landman, 2002); citizens are attracted to these formations because they offer a greater sense of security. Populations that are attracted to these communities are largely seen as white and middle class in nature (Lemanski, 2004). These communities are thus seen as spaces that create a physical barrier between residents and the surrounding areas in an attempt to secure the safety of said residents. The physical barriers are seen to have a number of impacts on the manner in which residents thus begin to relate to surrounding areas. The literature on gated communities places emphasis on the fact that these physical barriers produce social exclusion in the sense that residents are not only purposefully excluding themselves from surrounding areas, but restricted access also socially excludes populations from surrounding areas from enjoying services located within these gated communities. The physical basis of social exclusion is reinforced by the perceived social homogeneity of residents. This social homogeneity is reinforced by a sense of community that regulates and governs social norms and behaviours within these communities. Governing bodies of gated communities are seen as playing an instrumental role in the creation and maintenance of these forms of social behaviour, by enforcing rules and regulations that uphold certain values. Furthermore, the literature on gated communities indicates that these urban formations also have several negative consequences for the developmental goals of integrated development. This study makes use of case studies to explore some of the key issues identified in the literature on gated communities. In depth interviews with residents of gated communities indicate that the process of social exclusion is far more variable and complex than proposed in the broader literature. This is particularly true in terms of how residents identify with other residents. The complicated nature of these social dynamics extends to the relationship between residents and governing bodies, as well as residents and the surrounding areas. These findings suggest that gated communities may not serve to negatively affect developmental goals in the manner proposed in the broader literature on this phenomenon.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation

Contemporary South Africa faces various developmental challenges in the wake of apartheid. This is particularly true in the context of the socio-spatial legacy of apartheid. Both urban and rural areas still face various developmental challenges in terms of integration, access to basic services and protection of basic rights as guaranteed under the Constitution. In urban areas differential development in cities poses a number of challenges to local governance structures. The urban geography of South African cities is rooted in various historical trends and policies, the most significant being the Group Areas Act of 1950, which racially
segregated urban formations in the city. While racial segregation in urban areas has been legally abolished, the segregated nature of urban neighbourhoods and communities persists.

Within this context, a new trend has emerged in urban formation; namely, gated communities. Although the existence of gated communities can be traced back to the 1800s in America (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002:2) the exponential growth of such communities in the past 15 years is unprecedented in the South African context. These changes in urban formation have been accompanied by a variety of significant social changes, including not only democratisation, but also state-sponsored social reformation. Policies such as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment are examples of such state-sponsored social reform and have served to accelerate changes in the economy and social life associated with democratisation. Accompanying these changes are changing patterns of crime rates, social delinquency and perceptions that the state is not able efficiently and adequately to meet the needs of all its people. The rise of gated communities has often been linked to these social ills and perceptions as people are moving into highly regulated communities that are secured by physical barriers and private security companies (Landman, 2002).

These gated communities are seen first not only to perpetuate the segregated nature of urban geography (Landman, 2003) but also to facilitate social exclusion by creating physical and symbolic barriers between those living within and outside of gated communities. This is linked to the notion that gated communities are largely a white middle class phenomenon (Landman, 2002; Lemanski, 2004). However, the research on these communities is relatively limited and tends to focus on the above-mentioned impacts without fully engaging the residents of gated communities. This is particularly true in terms of research methods that allow for a nuanced understanding of this phenomenon, as the majority of studies are quantitative in nature. Yet, international studies make use of qualitative methods and serve to question some of the basic assumptions around gated communities (see Salcedo and Torres, 2004). Therefore, this study aims to use qualitative methods to address some of the gaps in the literature on South African gated communities in order to generate and problematise some of the commonly held notions about this phenomenon by focusing on the internal social dynamics within a gated community.

1.2 Aims and Objectives
The purpose of this research is to explore the social dynamics within gated communities. This is done in order to question some of the assumptions and main views on gated communities in South Africa. The white middle class nature of gated communities in South Africa underpins these assumptions, in which racial homogeneity serves as the basis for social exclusion and a sense of community. However, the current research does not make use of qualitative methods to interrogate this assumption. The research thus aims to complicate the notion of social homogeneity within gated communities, particularly the manner in which being white serves as a unifying force among residents, and thus facilitates processes of exclusion. For this purpose a case study, the case of Featherbrooke Estate, has been selected. This allows for a more detailed exploration of social homogeneity and the manner in which social exclusion functions. Featherbrooke Estate was chosen for a number of reasons that will be explored below. However, it is worth noting that it was one of the first gated communities developed in the area where it is located and thus allows for a more historical perspective on the phenomenon. Its population is also relatively homogenous along racial lines, which allows for intra-racial tensions to be explored. Furthermore the research aims to contextualise the case study within the broader policy context of integrated development, to gauge, fully the manner in which these gated communities impact on broader society.

1.3 Methods and Ethics

This research makes use of a single case study design in order to understand and expand on the literature on gated communities. The case study is largely descriptive in order to highlight some of the important features of gated communities in South Africa. This is also done in order to gain a more meaningful understanding of the individuals that reside in gated communities, particularly motives and meanings that are largely absent in the current literature. As De Vaus notes, case studies “emphasize an understanding of the whole case and seeing the case within its wider context” (2001:234). He further suggests that by looking at parts within the context of the whole... [and] examining this context fully the researcher can gain a fuller and more rounded picture [...] To isolate the behaviour from this broader context and to strip it of the meaning given to it by actors is to invite misunderstanding(2001:235).

He does, however, warn that cases need to be strategically selected, such that the selection of a case “means that we know something of the characteristics of a case before the case study proper begins [...] because the case study meet particular characteristics”(De Vaus2001:239).
This is deemed to contribute to both literal and theoretical replication, hence enhancing the external validity of the study (De Vaus, 2001:238-239).

The method of sampling which was used to find interviewees is what Nieuwenhuis (2007) refers to as “chain referral sampling”. He notes that this is a “method whereby participants with whom contact has already been made are used to penetrate their social network to refer the researcher to other participants who could potentially take part in or contribute to the study” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:80). Maree and Pietersen note that this method is often used “where the research interest is in an interconnected group of people” (2007:177). Mouton further relates that this method of sampling forms part of a broader “contextual strategy” in research where the “aim of the investigators is to produce an extensive... description of the phenomenon in its specific context” (1998:133). This strategy stands in contrast to a “generalising strategy” whereby the “aim of the research is often to study a representative number of event[s] or people with a view to generalising the results of the study to a defined population or universe” (1998:133). This method of sampling was, therefore, chosen primarily to expose the social networks that exist. Although there is a risk that the sample may not be representative, the main aims of the research are advanced not by a representative sample as such, but rather through the exposure of the relevant social networks.

i. The Case Study
The case study that has been selected for this research is the case of Featherbrooke Estate. Featherbrooke Estate is a large gated community situated in the Mogale City Municipal District, below the Roodekrans Ridge and adjacent to the Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens and the Crocodile River (see Appendix A). The Estate was established in the mid-1990s, but it only became a popular residential area from the early 2000s when the population more than doubled within the space of a couple of years. The Estate has a total area of 145 hectares, 21 of which are allocated to communal gardens that are maintained by the Estate. There are a total of 1044 stands, most of which have free standing houses erected upon them, with less than 10% of the stands still vacant. The community is enclosed and has only one access point at the main gate. Security includes armed patrols 24 hours a day, registration of all visitors and strict regulations pertaining to contractors and other builders. A fingerprint identification system is used to gain access. Home owners and residents of the Estate gain access by registering their fingerprints with the security office.
Criminal activity is localised with very few incidents of robbery, while only one violent crime has been documented. However, petty crime is prevalent in areas of the community where construction is ongoing. Estate management ascribes this to the casual labourers that contractors employ. The Estate has a Home Owners’ Association, a regulatory body that facilitates and maintains communal areas. The Home Owners’ Association consists of a board of residents elected by other residents at the Annual General Meeting. The Home Owners’ Association employs a number of permanent staff members to enact decisions made by the Board. The Association also serves to regulate building and other aesthetic issues that are seen as essential in maintaining the ethos and architectural unity of the Estate. Although home owners are theoretically entitled to build in any architectural style, plans for building and alterations have to be submitted and approved by the Home Owners’ Association before formal processes can proceed.

The ethos of the Estate is encapsulated in the slogan: “Now this is Green Peace”, and it places strong emphasis on family values. The creation of communal spaces aims to facilitate social interaction. Such communal spaces include the Clubhouse, areas for children including a skateboard park, cricket net, soccer and netball practice area, squash and tennis facilities. The Estate also organises a variety of events on an annual basis in which residents participate. These include fun walks, wine clubs and other fundraising events. There is also a women’s association which meets regularly. The Estate is relatively racially homogeneous, with more than 90% of the population being white, although preliminary research indicates that this is changing. The white population is varied in terms of cultural and linguistic orientation and socio-economic class and the families living in the Estate include young and newly formed couples aged about 27 to grandparents. One of the most interesting characteristics of the white population is the variety of social origins, particularly the socio-economic origins. As such, the case of Featherbrooke Estate was selected for a number of reasons. Firstly, the author’s personal pre-existing ties to the gated community allowed for greater access to the participants. This extended not only to residents, but also to management structures. Although the ethical implications of these ties will be explored, it does allow for a more contextualised view of the gated community and a greater understanding that “behaviour takes place within a context and its meaning stems largely from that context” (De Vaus, 2001:235). Secondly, it minimises the reactive effects of the research. De Vaus describes these effects by noting that engaging in the research process can “produce changes in the case and we can confuse the effects of doing the study with the effects of other variables” (2001:236). These effects can be
very damaging to the data and hence pre-existing relationships minimise the likelihood that
such effects as the research will be largely unobtrusive. Lastly, this case study was selected
because it was one of the first gated communities established on the West Rand. Development
of the Featherbrooke Estate started in 1995 and a number of participants began living in the
Estate from the late 1990s. Consequently, developments, both internally and externally in the
nature of the Estate and the area at large can be mapped more accurately.

Featherbrooke Estate thus serves as a case study of a gated community in which the social
dynamics, particularly processes of social exclusion, are explored in more detail. The racial
homogeneity of the Estate allows for a detailed exploration of the character of social
homogeneity, and the integral role it plays in the process of social exclusion. The Estate
serves as a site in which these processes can be explored more vigorously. Over 20 interviews
were conducted in order to identify some of these dynamics.

ii. Data Collection Methods and Ethics
The research made use, primarily, of qualitative research methods in the form of life history
interviews. According to Banyard and Miller, the “thick description of qualitative methods
help[s] us to capture the details of multiple voices and perspectives” (1998.491). Although
there is an ongoing debate between proponents of quantitative- and qualitative research
methods, Banyard and Miller assert that

it is our view that each set of methods is uniquely suited to addressing certain kinds of
questions, certain aspects of whatever phenomena we choose to study. For example, whereas
quantitative methods permit the identification of specific patterns of behaviour, qualitative
methods reveal the subjective meanings that underlie and give rise to these behaviours [...] and
qualitative research methods [...] are ideally suited to helping community researchers counter

The form of interview chosen is the life history interview. According to Shopes, these types
of interviews “are typically structured around the life histories of individual narrators, rather
than around critical questions about broad themes of social life that cut across individuals'
experience” (2002:590). The life history interview thus allows the researcher to gain a more
contextualised understanding of the information that the interviewee provides. Shopes also
notes that typically “interviews with a scholarly provenance are narrowly focused inquiries,
shaped by the investigator's very specific research questions” and that “at times [researchers]
fail to perceive that their own frames of reference may be incongruent with the narrators' and
so ignore lines of inquiry that could get at the insider's view” (Shopes, 2002:592). Oral
history interviews thus provides the researcher with an “insider’s view” into a specific event or area of inquiry.

Banyard and Miller reinforce this by noting the following:

Qualitative researchers recognize that there may be a variety of aspects of a phenomenon that are missed if we restrict people to forced-choice answers. Instead, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, case studies, or focus groups promote the researcher's ability to capture the perspective of the research participant (1998:491).

Bennett further observes that “oral histories… can open up new concepts and interpretations of a subject” (1983:2) that may be lost in the use of more structured interviews. Thomson notes that this “provide[s] opportunities to explore particular aspects of historical experience that are rarely recorded” and that the value of oral history interviews is that they “offer rich evidence about the subjective or personal meanings of past events” (1999:291). In the South African context, the depth of understanding that can be gained from oral history interviews thus becomes necessary. Bennett further notes that inherent in this type of interview is a “[r]espect for the viewpoint of the individual” which “make[s] him or her not necessarily representative but, on the contrary, unique and worthy of respect as a human being” (1983:6). In the South African context, respect for the individual and representing the “voices from below” (Hamilton, 1987:67) in a way that is both respectful and dignified, is something that all social research has to take into account and the oral history interview provides a platform from which this can be done.

Although this type of interview thus seems appropriate for this study, it has to be noted that the oral life history interview has also been criticised. Thomson notes that the bulk of these criticisms were presented during the 1970s. He observes that critics of this method assert that “memory was distorted by physical deterioration and nostalgia in old age, by the personal bias of both interviewer and interviewee, and by the influence of collective and retrospective versions of the past” (Thomson, 1999:291), and the reliability of oral accounts was thus questioned. However, Portelli notes that “mistaken memory [is] a vital clue to understanding the meanings of these events for individuals and for the… community” (as cited in Thomson, 1999:296). As such, oral history interviews have value “not for what they tell us about the past [but] what it is they are seeking to represent and what they are seeking to suppress” (Bonner, 2009:16). This type of interview is thus deemed as the most appropriate for the research in Featherbrooke Estate because it allows for an understanding of the subtleties of the subject matter.
Furthermore, Thompson (2004) advocates the use of mixed methods. He notes that “surveys do of course collect and analyse information on the implications of their response rates, and many do look at incomplete interviews or the interviewer’s notes on the house and the context of the interview, in order to give some picture of non-response homes” (2004:246). Yet he also worries that “what is missing from survey samples is clearly a crucial issue which can only be effectively researched with a combination of methods” (2004:245). He thus argues for the use of both qualitative interviews and survey data in order to “reconsider each case as a whole” (Thompson, 2004:252).

There are, however, a number of methodological challenges in using this form of data collection. Firstly, it is important to note the subjectivity of the researcher. The case that has been selected is of particular personal interest because I have resided in this gated community and still have various personal and familial connections to the community. This complicates the relationship of “insider-outsider” because the researcher has a claim to both. The danger here is that common sense understandings of the social norms and social order may not become sufficiently explicit. Furthermore, an understanding of the prevailing social norms and social order may inhibit the ability to ask controversial questions pertaining to social exclusion and racial segregation. However, this also serves as a strength, as personal connection serves to expand the base of interviewees in order to gain a more representative sample. This also puts interviewees at ease as they are less likely to feel judged or discriminated against as they are talking to an “insider”. Being an “insider” does, however, also make it difficult to ask certain types of questions. This is particularly true when broaching subjects of race or apartheid, as this produces a strong defensive reaction from residents. White interviewees did not feel comfortable implicating themselves and the manner in which they live in broader historical and racial issues in South Africa. Black residents that were interviewed were also not comfortable discussing notions of race. This may be a consequence of the researcher being both an “insider” and white. This means that the findings do not adequately address issues of race, but rather place emphasis on how interviewees relate to fellow, majority white residents.

The potential challenges are compensated for by a strict and continual peer review process. This process involves explicit discussion about the quality of the data and the position of the interviewer critically analysed to promote a more objective understanding of the functioning of the gated community. As Banyard and Miller note:

Too often the researcher is treated as an invisible other, a neutral instrument whose personal characteristics do not significantly shape the responses of research participants. Recently, however, a growing number of researchers have questioned the validity of this view, suggesting
Instead that what research participants share in the course of data collection is fundamentally affected by their perception of the whole research process, including the person of the researcher (Banyard, 1994; Harding, 1991; Miller, 1994; Scheper-Hughes, 1991)(1998:492).

Secondly, social tensions, particularly racial and class tensions have the potential to be minimised by the interviewee. This is partially owing to the general socio-historical positioning of the population, but may also be a function of the pastoral ethos of the community as a whole, where emphasis is placed on the harmony.

This project is done in association with the NRF Chair in History: Local Histories, Present Realities, and the Public Affairs Research Institute. These two organisations provided funding, as well as research resources, as this research forms part of the broader project on Emerging Communities. The Emerging Communities project involves research on various gated communities on the West Rand of Johannesburg of which this particular project forms one part. This allows for greater interaction and support from colleagues, and a broader consideration of the methodological and ethical challenges which arise. It also allows for a greater understanding of the ethical issues pertaining to the study.

Ethical considerations pertain not only to informed consent and the identity of the interviewees, but also to how data is stored and accessed. Participants were contacted telephonically and after a brief explanation of the study, they were invited to participate. An appointment was set up during which the study was explained more clearly. Participants were also given an informed consent form in which the purpose of the study, as well as the nature of the interview, was explained. Furthermore, it was made clear that all interviewees were able to decline to answer questions without any form of penalty and that they were able to terminate the interview at any point. Following this, they were asked to sign the consent form which stated that they understood the above-mentioned information.

Other ethical considerations to take into account include anonymity and confidentiality. Firstly, anonymity will be guaranteed as the information about the participant is not recorded in audio files, but in an encrypted file electronically to which only the researcher has access. Data gathered, including audio files and field notes are encoded in such a manner that the data will not be linked to the participant in any way, and furthermore this encoding will not be known to the researcher, such that files are labelled alphabetically, and are in no way linked to the file containing details of the participant. Participants were made aware of this in a verbal form and it was explained that contact details or any information that could link the data and the participant would not be made available to anyone. Interview data is used in such a manner that no personal details are revealed; thus they are quoted in relatively vague
terms and no identifying characteristics of speech or identity are included. Owing to scholarship and funding requirements, raw data will become the property of the NRF Chair in Local Histories Present Realities, as well as the Public Affairs Research Institute for archival purposes. But these organisations will not have access to files in which participant information or contact details are stored. These files will be encrypted and kept on a digital storage device for one year following the completion of the study after which it will be permanently deleted. The data will be consolidated into a dissertation for degree purposes as well as a number of articles for publications. The University of the Witwatersrand makes theses and dissertations available electronically and, therefore, any person can access the report electronically. This was clearly explained to interviewees.

Other ethical questions pertain to the nature of the questions asked and the principle of privacy. The questions asked in interviews attempted to be as unobtrusive as possible. One of the most appealing features of the life history interview is that the interviewee is able to set the tone and pace of the information that is given. This allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the types of questions that can be asked in any individual case. Also, the nature of the research does not pose serious emotional or physical threats to residents, as questions are focused mainly on lifestyle and relations to space and people. However, it was made clear to each interviewee that a question posed need not be answered if it made them uncomfortable in any sense. Interviews were conducted in the interviewees’ homes and in the language of their choice, at the convenience of the interviewees.

1.4 Limitations of the Study
This Master's project was conducted over a two-year period. The focus of the project is limited to an exploration of the social dynamics and whiteness within one case study of a gated community. This limits the study in a number of ways. Firstly, using a case study allows for an in-depth analysis of the social dynamics, but does limit the generalisation of the findings. This is particularly true because the case study selected is one example of a variety of forms that gated communities take in the South African context. Secondly, the research does not place emphasis on racial issues within the gated community. This limits the manner in which findings can be used to explore inter-racial tensions among residents and the manner in which residents can be implicated in broader social issues of race and class. The project
does, however, put the focus on intra-racial tensions among white residents. Lastly, the range of interviewees is limited to residents of the gated community, thus defining residents as persons who own and rent property within the confines of the gated community as well as those who define the gated community as their primary residence. This excludes employees such as domestic workers and gardeners but includes those that reside within the gated community on a semi-permanent basis, and casual labourers. This implies that migrant labour systems and networks within the gated community are not explored. Despite these limitations, the study does provide some alternative insights into the social dynamics and the nature of said social dynamics within gated communities. This complicates some of the commonly held perceptions and assumptions on gated communities, particularly in terms of the key criticisms lodged against these new urban formations. The next section outlines the organisation of the paper and gives a brief description of the chapters.

1.5 Organisation of the Dissertation

In order to grasp the role played by gated communities, the dissertation first locates gated communities within the international and South African context to identify key themes within the literature in chapter one. Some of the key themes include notions of social exclusion, social homogeneity, a sense of community and the role that governing bodies plays in the maintenance or construction of these notions. Subsequent chapters then explore each of the themes mentioned above in the context of the case study.

Chapter three explores the concept of social exclusion and how social homogeneity relates to this concept. The literature on social exclusion indicates that it is a multifaceted term. In the context of the case study the notion that gated communities form the basis of exclusion is problematised. Social homogeneity is also problematised, particularly in terms of how residents view themselves and the social cleavages they identify within their gated community.

Chapter four then explores the notion of a sense of community and its relationship to social exclusion. Of particular importance is the manner in which a sense of community is created and maintained in the context of the gated community. The case study suggests that the sense of community within this gated community may be far more ambiguous than indicated elsewhere. However, this needs to be seen in the context of the governing body, which is seen as the main mechanism through which a sense of community is forged.
Chapter five thus engages with the governing body of the case study. This is contextualised within the broader legal mandate of said bodies and furthermore within the literature on gated communities. The case study indicates that the governing body may play a far lesser role in generating and maintaining social values and norms than that indicated in the broader literature. The manner in which governing bodies are implicated in local governance structures is also explored, and the case study suggests that this relationship may be far more complex and inclusive than indicated elsewhere.

Chapter six places these findings within the broader policy context of contemporary South Africa. This is particularly true in terms of how the case study fits into the local integrated planning strategy, and whether gated communities can be seen as an obstacle to this integrated development.

Lastly, the study concludes with a summary of the key findings and suggests that gated communities are far more nuanced and complex than indicated in other literature. It also explores some of the limits of the research and suggests that further research is necessary to grapple fully with the complexities of gated communities in contemporary South Africa.
CHAPTER TWO: GATED COMMUNITIES

2.1 Introduction
The rise of gated communities has often been linked to social ills, such as the rise of crime rates, resulting in people moving into highly regulated communities that are secured by physical barriers and privatise security companies (Landman, 2002). These gated communities are seen, first, not only to perpetuate the segregated nature of urban geography (Landman, 2003), but also facilitate social exclusion by creating physical and symbolic barriers between those living within and those living outside of gated communities. This is often framed in terms of race, as gated communities are seen as a largely white middle class phenomenon (Landman, 2002). However, the research on these communities is relatively limited and tends to focus on their external effects. Furthermore, it does not account for the relations between residents and people placed in the surrounding areas. In order to appreciate the complexity within gated communities fully, and the manner in which they are currently viewed, this chapter explores some of the main international and South African arguments, assumptions and criticisms about gated communities. This contextualises the need for a more detailed understanding of the phenomenon, particularly the manner in which social homogeneity based on race is implicated in processes of social exclusion.

2.2 Gated Communities in an International Context
Blakely and Snyder have written one of the most influential pieces on gated communities entitled *Fortress America* (1997). Minton acknowledges that Blakely and Snyder are widely regarded as some of the most influential, objective and mainstream commentators on the subject of gated communities (2002:12). I will use this article as a reference point. Blakely and Snyder broadly define gated communities as

> residential areas with restricted access such that normally public spaces have been privatized. These developments are both new suburban developments and older innercity areas retrofitted to provide security... [i]n essence, we are interested in the newest form of fortified community that places security and protection as its primary feature... [but] go further in several respects: they create physical barriers to access, and they privatize community space, not merely individual space. Many of these communities also privatize civic responsibilities, such as police protection, and communal services, such as education, recreation, and entertainment. The new developments create a private world that shares little with its neighbours or the larger political system (Blakely and Snyder, 1997:1).
In *Fortress America*, Blakely and Snyder (1997) provide one of the first typographies on gated communities. It is one of the first studies to acknowledge that gated communities cannot be seen as a unitary phenomenon.

The three main categories of gated communities defined by Blakely and Snyder (1997) are lifestyle communities, elite communities and security zones. Lifestyle communities are defined as gated communities where leisure activities and the associated amenities within are separated and secure (1997:4). Examples in this category include retirement villages, golfing estates and country club leisure developments. Elite communities are differentiated from the lifestyle communities because residents in elite communities aim to secure their social status. Thus the “gates symbolize distinction and prestige” and are conceptualised as developments reserved for the rich and famous or very affluent sector of society who are intent on preserving their space on the social ladder (Blakely and Snyder, 1997:4). Blakely and Snyder further note that these two categories are motivated by a desire to invest in and control the future through measures designed to maximize the internal life of the residents. The intention is also in part to artificially induce community in an ersatz, homogenous neighbourhood, where physical security and social security are enhanced by both sameness and controlled access. (1997:4)

The last category they identify is the security zone, where the main motivation is the fear of crime. Such communities are often pre-existing communities which are gated for the purpose of “defensive fortifications” (Blakely and Snyder, 1997:4) thereby protecting both property and property values by keeping outsiders at bay and regaining control of the neighbourhood. Blakely and Snyder go further in their analysis by noting that these three categories all reflect four social dimensions or values (1997:5). These are identified as “a sense of community, or the preservation and strengthening of neighbourhood bonds; exclusion, or separation from the rest of society; privatization, or the desire to replace and internally control public services; and stability, or the need for homogeneity, predictability, and similarity” (Blakely and Snyder, 1997:5)

However, as Grant (2004) acknowledges, primary motivation for residence is but one factor or one dimension according to which gated communities can be categorised. In her analysis of Blakely and Snyder’s work, she states that their typology identifies four key features of gated communities. These are character of amenities and facilities, the level of affluence, and the type of security features and spatial patterns (Grant, 2004:917). However, she notes that
these characteristics “apply principally to a single function” such that “other investigations of gated settlements point to the need for elaborating and refining the simple classification they [Blakely and Snyder] presented” (Grant, 2004:917). For instance, she notes that discussions on the level of affluence are greatly emphasised in elite or prestige communities but are much less significant in discussion of the other two categories (Grant, 2004:917). Thus she proposes an additional four dimensions to capture more accurately the variety in gated communities; namely, tenure, location, size and policy context (Grant, 2004:917).

This serves to extend and diversify the social dimension or values that Blakely and Snyder (1997) identify. She notes that tenures may differ in terms of seasonal ownership, long-term or short-term rental or whether the owner occupies the house (Grant, 1997:925). These imply a different motivation, interaction with or perspective on the space. Location is also linked to a number of other factors, primarily the fear of crime as a motivating factor in areas where crime rates are perceived to be increasing but also access to public spaces, such as roads or parks, as in the case of security zones. Grant also notes that the “larger the settlement, the greater the chance that it reflects some level of social or economic diversity” (1997: 926) which has important implications for the motivation to live in these areas, sense of belonging and social networks. Lastly the policy context is important because it affects how communities are able to section themselves off and under what conditions this may or may not be allowed (Grant, 2004:926). These dimensions are extremely valuable in describing and analysing gated communities. However, the literature on gated communities does not sufficiently differentiate between different types of communities in practice. The manner in which these dimensions implicate social relations within gated communities is also not addressed within the literature.

Given that there are various types of gated communities, they have been criticised from a variety of perspectives. These include issues pertaining to urban planning, environmental impact and various social consequences of the phenomenon. Most relevant to this project are the interlinked notions of social exclusion through structural segregation and the artificial creation of a community identity, which often necessitate the creation of an “other” along economic, racial, or social terms.

Although Blakely and Snyder (1997) are generally seen as giving a balanced view of gated communities, Minton (2002) notes that they invariably link the gated community
phenomenon to the notion of social exclusion, noting that, on their terms, it is a “microcosm of America’s larger spatial pattern of segregation” (as cited in Minton, 2002:11). “Social exclusion” is seen as one of the main criticisms of gated communities. This position was made popular by Davis (1992) in his book *City of Quartz*. He states that

there is no doubt that they [gated communities with extensive security measures] are brilliantly successful in deterring unintentional trespassers and innocent pedestrians. Anyone who has tried to take a stroll at dusk through neighbourhood patrolled by armed security guards and signposted with death threats quickly realizes how merely notional, if not utterly obsolete, is the old idea of freedom of the city. (Davis 1992:175)

Lemanski (2004) notes that this spatial segregation in gated communities has several social consequences. Most importantly, it produces social differentiation between those living inside the community and those living outside. She notes that the gates and walls often produce physical separation, and that this is reinforced by private security and the inward facing self-contained nature of these communities (Lemanski, 2004:108). This often produces symbolic exclusion by enforcing perceptions of social homogeneity and simultaneously perceptions of those that are deemed “undesirable” (Lemanski, 2004:108). Although processes of class segregation can be historically embedded within the history of urban spaces in South Africa (Chipkin, 1999), Lemanski (2004) argues that gated communities are a new form of this historical pattern.

In a study on gated communities in the United Kingdom, social exclusion is often seen as a function of the “culture of fear and a ‘crime complex’ in contemporary society” (Minton, 2002:9), such that people are actively attempting to exclude themselves from a society riddled by crime. Minton offers an explanation for this culture of fear. She notes that “the media fuels and reflects the preoccupation with crime and violence and ensures the issue maintains its dominance in the public policy debate and the public mind” (2002:9). Coupled with a growing lack of confidence in the criminal justice system, those that have the economic means to segregate themselves thus choose to privatise security and actively exclude themselves from the rest of society in gated communities. Giddens, in his book *The Third Way* notes that this voluntary exclusion from society symbolises a “withdraw [al] from public institutions ... [living] separately in ‘fortress communities’” (as cited in Minton, 2002:11).

The other criticism of gated communities is that their governing bodies often aim to produce an artificial sense of community. However, as Grant indicates, this view is not supported by
those who inhabit these “communities” noting that they “often point to the sense of community they feel within” (2004:927). Although no distinction is made between a natural sense of community and an artificial sense of community, the literature indicates that a sense of community that is based on interactions facilitated by the governing bodies is in some sense artificial (Landman, 2004). This will be discussed more thoroughly in other chapters. Forrest and Kearns, do, however, note the importance of the neighbourhood in individual social identities (2001:2130). They state that

the neighbourhood may become more important as an arena for recreation and leisure. In a sense, the neighbourhood becomes an extension of the home for social purposes and hence extremely important in identity terms: ‘location matters’ and the neighbourhood becomes part of our statement about who we are. (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130)

They further explain that the neighbourhood cannot be seen exclusively as a territorially defined space, but rather, they advocate viewing the neighbourhood as a “series of overlapping social networks” (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130) in which leisure and recreation play an important role in the definition, entrenchment and expansion of these networks and, more importantly, in the formation of social identities. However, they also acknowledge that these social networks in gated communities may work to exclude people as the “cohesion of people with similar expectations, outlooks, levels of affluence or anxieties” may serve to exclude those who do not reside in said gated community; which is further entrenched by the rules and regulations that “guarantee conformity ... [by] substituting [the rule] for the informal social controls”(Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2135). Blandly and Lister also find that the nature of community life in gated communities often creates tensions among the residents within and outside resulting in the development of a “them and us” mentality” (2003:19).

Communities may serve as a space in which people learn tolerance, cooperation and acquire a sense of social order and belonging, as well as notions of well-being and social worth (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130). The “them and us” mentality may then produce different norms of tolerance, for example, for different sectors of the population which may have several far reaching consequences for society. As Blakely and Snyder acknowledge:

The forting up phenomenon has enormous policy consequences. What is the measure of nationhood when neighbourhoods require armed patrols and electric fencing to keep out the citizens? When public services and even local governments are privatised and when the community of responsibility stops at the subdivision gates, what happens to the function and very idea of democracy? (1997:12)
Salcedo and Torres (2004), however, complicate this negative view of gated communities. In a study done on gated communities in Santiago, they found that gated communities may serve as a positive urban formation, especially in poorer or underdeveloped areas (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:40). They note that gated communities often bring development to poorer areas and the “poor get from their new neighbours jobs, consumption in their convenience stores and, more importantly, the dignity of living in a district that is not stigmatized as a center of drug addiction, poverty or crime” (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:29). But economic relations and development do not serve to question the notions of social exclusion or a sense of community based on exclusionary principles, which are some of the main criticisms of gated communities in general. Thus Salcedo and Torres include the perception of both residents and those living in areas surrounding in their study, and find that in general, gated communities are viewed positively by those living in surrounding areas (2004:33). They observe that residents in surrounding areas “identify various features that have improved the living conditions of the population and have helped to integrate them more fully in urban modernity (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:33). However, they also note that residents of the gated communities “live their own lives and have very little interest in integrating pobladores [those living in surrounding areas] into their activities or their lifestyle” (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:35) except in the matters pertaining to religious activities. This indicates that the relationships between residents of gated communities and those living in surrounding areas may be more complex than suggested in other literature. Furthermore, it calls into question the notion of social exclusion because, as Salcedo and Torres note, the “existence of walls and barriers does not imply the existence of subjective walls that limit possible relationships between groups” (2004:36), even though the relationships may be based primarily on market relations (2004:35).

Salcedo and Torres also complicate some of the existing literature on gated communities by questioning the social homogeneity of residence. They note that there are significant price differences in the houses for sale, and this implies that some social heterogeneity exists among the new residents. In fact, significant social and cultural divisions exist. Thus, among our interviewees there are people from very different social and family backgrounds ranging from lower middle to upper classes. This social differentiation generates conflicts that were clearly expressed in the interviews. (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:36)
These findings clearly call into question the notion that residents of gated communities can be seen entirely as a homogenous population. They also note that many residents do not feel an expressed sense of community within the gated community and have little social identification with neighbours (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:39). Although the limitations of their study are explicitly acknowledged, such that the areas in which the gated communities studied are located is not seen as wholly representative, they also note that preliminary findings in another study they are conducting in a more representative area presents similar findings (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:41). Thus, this study aims to contribute significantly to the literature on gated communities, particularly in terms of complicating some of the notions of social exclusion and homogeneity in residents of gated communities.

Therefore, the literature on gated communities indicates that there may be different types that serve different purposes and may be inhabited by different people depending on the criteria used to categorise them. However, critics of these estates do not take these distinctions seriously and see gated communities as a unitary phenomenon about which most are sceptical. Grant notes that regarding gated communities as a “unitary set of urban forms” can be misleading (2004:914), as is reinforced by Salcedo and Torres (2004). Some of the main criticisms of these communities are that they promote social exclusion by reacting to a culture of fear by physically creating barriers between residents and non-residents. Coupled with a sense of community based on exclusionary principles, these gated communities are viewed as spaces which serve to entrench economic and racial cleavages in society. This may have very damaging social consequences in the South African context, and a growing body of literature on local gated communities has sought to analyse this.
2.3 Gated Communities in the South African Context

The literature on gated communities has expanded significantly over the course of the past ten years. One of the leading authors on this subject is Karina Landman from The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in South Africa. She has conducted a number of studies on gated communities in South Africa and written a number of papers on the comparative nature of gated communities in South Africa and Brazil.

Landman defines gated communities as

areas [which are] are physically walled or fenced off and usually have a security gate or controlled access point with a security guard. The roads (if there are any) in these developments are private, and in most of the cases, the management and maintenance is carried out by a private management body (2002:5).

Landman notes that there has been a huge proliferation of varying forms of gated communities in the landscape of South African cities over the past two decades (2002:2). She attributes this growing phenomenon mainly to the escalating crime rates and fear of said crime, but acknowledges that there are other reasons, including financial investment, lifestyle choice and a “lack of trust in governments to protect citizens from both crime and environmental decline” (Landman, 2002: 8). She further notes that they pose a number of challenges to South African society, including a lack of integrated development; social exclusion based on spatial fragmentation; threat to urban sustainability and private micro-governance (Landman, 2002:11). She expands this by noting that gated communities are transforming the face of the urban landscape in South Africa and that the transformation of space leads to social and institutional transformations (2002:8). She points to the fact that the transformations that gated communities pose are often social and economic exclusion, which is entrenched by institutional transformations where “territorial governance and initiatives from residents’ associations ... take over some of the traditional roles of local government”. This serves to fragment society further (Landman, 2002:8).

In a study done on four prominent gated communities in cities in South Africa, Landman finds that the spatial patterning which is produced by gated communities has a number of negative implications for the urban geography and functioning of residents in surrounding areas (2004:8). These include the creation of an inefficient economy, whereby scare resources such as land, energy and finance are localised; over-dependence on privately owned car-
based transportation, particularly in the case of gated communities located on the urban periphery, which has several environmental implications and linked to this phenomenon increased traffic congestion and the development of rapid transport roads that do not “lend themselves to small-scale economic operations” such as informal markets (2004:8). As Hook and Vrdoljak conclude “these divisions defer largely to the structural socio-historical opportunities left behind by apartheid, and serve to reify inequality in the old terms of a privileged white minority and a dispossessed black majority (2002:14). Although research done by the Public Affairs Research Institute challenges these notions that gated communities serve to break some of the urban segregation of the apartheid era, Landman’s proposition with regard to spatial patterning is currently the dominant view on gated communities.

In 2008 Landman conducted another study on gated communities in which she asserts that “gated communities are criticised for perpetuating apartheid’s Group Areas by enclaving whites (alongside a handful of wealthy blacks) into exclusive spaces and lifestyles which the vast majority of (black) residents are unable to access” (2008:14). This links the notion of gated communities to both class and race. Schendul and Heller (2011), in a study done on Durban, reinforce this notion. They note: “White neighbourhoods are indeed enclaves, but in some instances are what Marcuse (2005) calls ‘citadels’, elite areas fortified against intrusion by other groups”(2011:95). Furthermore they note that this is reinforced by a “class-stratified pattern” (Schendul and Heller,2011:101) in which race, particularly whiteness, and middle class are often interlinked in residential areas. Although they do not mention gated communities in particular, their findings indicate that class and race are important factors in residential choice (Schendul and Heller, 2011). The literature as a whole also tends to view these developments as inherently white and middle class. These two factors are seen to form the foundation for social exclusion.

Landman notes that social exclusion is reinforced by various subjective attachments to space, and the role that physical barriers play in creating a sense of community based on difference (2004:21). Furthermore she notes that the establishment of these gated communities is also accompanied by a comprehensive set of rules and regulations. These are enforced by a governing body in an attempt to create “harmonious living for like-minded residents within a demarcated area” thereby creating an artificial sense of community based on various forms of social controls (2004:21). Hook and Vrdoljak further note that this creates a “private world” in which differentiation from the world outside manifests in the internal control of civic
responsibilities such as policing services and communal services such as road maintenance (2004:13). Though the gated community forms a “physical foundation for living, it also becomes a stage for specific social behaviour” (Landman, 2004:21). Thus the “place” is not only geographically and physically defined, but forms the basis for a social order, including an identity and a sense of belonging (Landman, 2004:29). Landman also notes the various implications of the social identity of residents as they begin to view themselves as different from those that live outside. She notes that gated communities play an important role in influencing mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders” which can lead to growing tensions among town populations (2008:13). She also notes that it negates the idea of integrated development as the result is a retreat from public participation in city affairs and a negation of broader citizenship, while the neighbourhood ties are reinforced through the micro-governments taking the form of homeowners’ associations (Landman, 2006:70)

Landman suggests that this retreat is facilitated by the existence of governing bodies which often mediate between residents and broader governance structures, thus resulting in a retreat of residents from public participation (2006:70).

However, the research on South African gated communities often conflates various forms or types of gated communities. Hook and Vrdoljak, for instance, note that there are different types of communities, but note that these distinctions “often [break] down in practice” (2004: 6). Thus, in their research, they refer to “security parks” which they define as

walled-in “community” living space that accommodates the homes of a typically elite and homogenous group...combining the luxury amenities of a high-class hotel with paramilitary surveillance and protection technology in an effort to separate off exclusive and desirable living areas from the city at large (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2000:191, as cited in Hook and Vrdoljak, 2004:6)

Thus their definition encompasses all three categories identified by Blakely and Snyder (1997) and does not take any of the factors identified by Grant (2004) into account. Landman also acknowledges that there are different types and forms of gated communities both internationally and in the South African context that are interpreted in a number of different ways (2002:5) but does not take these varying forms into account in her research. She conflates the various types of communities into a single category; namely, “security villages” (Landman, 2002: 5) and notes that, the “emphasis is on the fact that these areas are purpose-built by private developers, with security being the uppermost requirement, although lifestyle requirements are also important” (Landman, 2002: 5). Furthermore, in a comparison between
gated communities in South Africa and Brazil, Landman conflates gated communities and what she terms “enclosed neighbourhoods” (2002:5). She defines enclosed neighbourhoods as follows:

Existing neighbourhoods are closed off through road closures, as well as fences or walls around the entire neighbourhood in some cases. The roads within these neighbourhoods were previously, or still are public property and in many cases, the local council is still responsible for public services to the community within. (Landman, 2002:5)

These types of gated communities resemble Blakely and Snyder’s (1997) “security zones”, in which the main reason for residence is crime or a fear of crime. However, in terms of the creation of a sense of community based particularly on social exclusion, these types of gated communities may serve very different functions. Furthermore, their relationship to surrounding areas, including roads and public spaces may have very different implications for the spatial fragmentations of cities and the forms in which social exclusion takes place. Lastly, the forms of governance within enclosed neighbourhoods have a different legal basis, and their implications of local policy are not the same as gated communities where developers build on amalgamated privately owned land that had little or no public infrastructure in place.

Furthermore, the research above views residents as a relatively homogenous population and does not account, firstly, for the different types of people that reside in different forms of gated communities, and secondly, the various differing social positions of people residing within a single gated community. As Salcedo and Torres (2004) have indicated, there may be different socio-economic groups residing within a single gated community and a sense of community may apply differentially to each. Background, culture and linguistic cleavages are not sufficiently addressed. The literature tends to focus on racial classifications to present a unified population. Thirdly, the various types of gated communities may attract different types of people. The populations of security complexes (popular in South Africa), gated estates and golfing estates may be drawn to these spaces for different social and economic reasons and this is often conflated into a fear of crime and economic ability to flee said crime. Lastly the networks, social relations and market relations of those residing within and outside of gated communities are framed primarily along exclusionary principles and do not take the mutually beneficial potential into account. Furthermore, the developmental challenges often overshadow the ways in which gated communities can contribute to developmental agendas by expanding infrastructure and centres of business.
The literature on gated communities in South Africa has contributed to a new understanding of the changing urban landscape. Although the subject is relatively new, research on gated communities has often focused on the urban geography and environmental aspects of these communities and very little research has been done on the social dynamics within gated communities. Some of the major gaps in the literature pertain particularly to the social aspects of these estates and the ways in which they foster social exclusion.

The term “gated communities” encompasses a variety of new urban configurations. These range from large lifestyle estates to smaller security complexes. Therefore, it is important to provide a detailed topology of gated communities and particularly classify the case study selected within this typology.

For the purpose of this study, gated communities will be broadly defined in the terms that Blakely and Snyder use (1997).

Social exclusion will be understood in both physical and symbolic terms, thus not only physical barriers and access control but also perceptions of who are deemed undesirable members of the community. Thus the concept of social exclusion will pertain to broader processes of exclusion and not be limited to the manner in which physical barriers produce social exclusion. The physical barriers that gated communities pose inherently exclude people from the gated community. However, the focus is on whether this social exclusion is further entrenched by other factors and perceptions of residents within the gated communities.

Furthermore, in analysing a sense of community, community will be defined “as a series of overlapping social networks” (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130). As Forrest and Kearns explain:

> residentially based networks which perform an important functioning in the routines of everyday life and these routines are arguably the basic building blocks of social cohesion — through them we learn tolerance, co-operation and acquire a sense of social order and belonging. Who and what we are surrounded by in a specific locality may also contribute in important ways to both choice and constraint and, less tangibly and more indirectly, to notions of well-being and social worth. (2001:2130).

Therefore, a sense of community will be understood not only in terms of a subjective identification with people, activities, social norms and shared background of the gated community, but also in objective terms pertaining to friendship and market relations within
the community, use of amenities, membership of committees and participation in organised events within the gated community.

CHAPTER THREE: SOCIAL EXCLUSION

3.1 Introduction
One of the main criticisms in the literature on gated communities against this urban formation is that they foster social exclusion in a variety of forms. This includes socially excluding residents from the surrounding areas, as well as the exclusion of other populations from public spaces within the gated community. The literature on social exclusion indicates that this concept is far more multi-faceted than is indicated in the literature on gated communities. This chapter explores the notion of social exclusion and uses the case study of Featherbrooke to complicate this concept in relation to gated communities. The case study highlights that
social exclusion is far more nuanced than indicated in other literature and problematises some of the fundamental negative assumptions around gated communities.

3.2 Social Exclusion and Gated Communities

As noted in chapter one, Blakely and Snyder (1997) invariably link the gated community phenomenon to the notion of social exclusion (as cited in Minton, 2002:11). They acknowledge that

> [t]he forting up phenomenon has enormous policy consequences. What is the measure of nationhood when neighbourhoods require armed patrols and electric fencing to keep out the citizens? When public services and even local governments are privatised and when the community of responsibility stops at the subdivision gates, what happens to the function and very idea of democracy? (1997:12)

This has been linked to the notion of “social exclusion”. The literature treats social exclusion in two different yet reciprocal ways. Firstly, gated communities are seen as a form of voluntary exclusion, as described above, in which residents of gated communities voluntarily exclude themselves from the surrounding areas, from public institutions and from broader local governance in both physical and symbolic terms (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002; Landman, 2008). This social exclusion is based primarily on geographical space, but Landman notes that this is reinforced by various subjective attachments to space (2004:21).

Linked to this notion, social exclusion is also addressed as a process through which populations from the surrounding areas are excluded from gated communities. This position was made popular by Davis (1992). However, various authors have noted the importance of this form of exclusion (Lemanski, 2004; Landman, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2008). Furthermore, relative social homogeneity within gated communities is seen to reinforce this form of exclusion as it produces a “them and us” mentality among residents of the gated community (Landman, 2003:19).

However, Salcedo and Torres (2004) complicate this view of gated communities in a number of ways. Firstly, they question the manner in which physical forms of exclusion produce other forms of social exclusion (Salcedo and Torres, 2004). Underwriting this notion is their argument that residents of gated communities are far less homogenous than is commonly assumed (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:33). This heterogeneity extends to economic, social and racial terms. They suggest that the role that social homogeneity plays may thus be far more
complicated than indicated in literature elsewhere (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:35). They also note that the impact of these gated communities on the surrounding areas is not always as negative as other authors indicate (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:35). Market relations and other forms of social networks are seen to complicate the manner in which residents relate to populations in surrounding areas (Salcedo and Torres, 2004:35).

Given these trends in the literature, the next section explores the concept of social exclusion (both in terms of voluntary exclusion of residents and in terms of exclusion of surrounding populations) and identifies some of the key arguments in the literature on social exclusion. Literature on gated communities does not adequately interrogate and describe this notion. This is particularly true in terms of the various dimensions of social exclusion and, in addition, the processes involved in social exclusion. The next section thus explores this term in order to place gated communities firmly within the complex processes involved in social exclusion.

3.3 Key Arguments in the Literature on Social Exclusion

The literature on social exclusion is both vast and contentious. The majority of literature on social exclusion views the phenomenon in terms of poverty and economically vulnerable groups. By and large, the literature does not place emphasis on the dynamics involved in persons who purposefully exclude themselves, as is the case with residents of gated communities. The aim of this section is neither to interrogate nor contribute to the debates surrounding social exclusion in general. Rather it aims to identify some of the key characteristics or dimensions of social exclusion to gauge more fully the manner in which these dimensions pertain to gated communities. The section then places the case study firmly within the context of these variables in order to understand the dynamics within gated communities more readily.

Defining social exclusion is a major point of contention in the current literature. Peace notes that social exclusion is often used as a “shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown” (2001:27) and she acknowledges that the concept as a whole has no consensual definition (Peace, 2007:26).
Miliband (2006) proposes that social exclusion should be seen in three ways: wide, deep and concentrated exclusion. Levitas et al. define wide exclusion in reference to a large number of people that are excluded on the basis of one, or a small number of indicators (2007:14). This is contrasted with deep exclusion whereby people are excluded on the basis of a number of factors that often overlap (Levitas et al., 2007:14). An example cited in the literature is the exclusion of people who are deemed poor. Poverty, lack of education, lack of resources, social ills, unemployment etc. are seen to overlap in such a manner that is deemed “deep”. Concentrated exclusion is defined with reference to an area of exclusion, or geographic concentrations of problems (Levitas et al., 2007:14). In the South African context, informal settlements are often seen as an example of concentrated exclusion whereby the geographic location is seen to embody a number of problems.

However, these views on social exclusion do not clearly define the contours of the term; rather the various forms it may take. Peace (2007), thus proposes two broad ways in which the term “social exclusion” can be defined and deployed, which encapsulates the majority of the definitions currently proposed. The first defines social exclusion narrowly. Thus the term becomes

a synonym for income poverty and refers specifically to either those people who are not attached to the paid labour market (exclusion from the paid workforce) or to those people in low-wage work. It is often used alongside the concept of “social cohesion” in the sense that a cohesive society is one in which (political, social and economic) stability is maintained and controlled by participation in the paid workforce (Peace, 2007:26).

Since narrow definition does not take other forms of social exclusion into account, she proposes a broader definition in which social exclusion is defined as more than income inequality, poverty or lack of employment (Peace, 2006:26). Social exclusion is thus seen as a multidimensional process which results in a number of deprivations, not merely lack or denial of resources. However, Levitas et al. note that defining social exclusion in this manner can be criticised for a variety of reasons. Firstly, they note that definitions tend to be empirically imprecise in that they are based on a level of abstraction that cannot provide an “operational definition that is amenable to measurement” (Levitas et al., 2007:22). Secondly they note that social exclusion is often formulated in terms of exclusion from “normal” activities available to the “average citizen” (Levitas et al., 2007:22). Framing exclusion in this manner can be seen as normative in that there is judgement on which activities are deemed important to the “average citizen”, which again complicates the empirical use of the definition.
Richardson and Le Grand (2002) frame social exclusion in this manner, referring to lack of access to “normal activities” (2002:12). Based on interviews with people deemed socially excluded, they break down the term “normal activities” in terms of consumption, production, political engagement, social interaction and other forms. In terms of consumption, normal activities include enough money for food; a decent home/affordable home; a home address; amenities for children, including general care facilities; access to public services; ability to obtain credit; proper education with the ability to be educated to the level required; proper health services, including medical emergency services; physical security, including enjoyment of home without fear of intrusion or noise pollution; affordable transport; and community facilities (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14).

In terms of production, normal activities are defined mainly with respect to employment and ability to access employment in a manner that is economically viable (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14). Political engagement is defined not only as the ability to be involved in the community but also that a person is “accepted as having useful ideas to contribute to a society” (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14) and information from local authorities to base such ideas on. Social interaction is linked to the notion of having community facilities, especially in terms of sporting facilities (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14). Other forms of “normal activity” include the ability to communicate verbally and in written form and, linked to education, the ability to learn new skills and access training (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14). Most importantly, interviewees of this study wanted not to be discriminated against in any form (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002:14). However, this definition is inherently problematic as normal activity is viewed from those who do not have access to it, as opposed to those who do. The question arises whether these activities are indeed defined as “normal” to those who are not socially excluded.

Linked to this is Levitas et al.’s third criticism of the current definition of social exclusion (2007:22). They note that often definitions refer to denial of access or an inability to participate when individuals have expressed a desire to do so (Levitas et al., 2007:22). This calls into question whether those that purposefully choose not to participate can be deemed socially excluded. This is particularly true in the context of capacity to participate, whereby individuals may choose not to participate owing to impaired capacity (Levitas et al.,
These distinctions have various implications for operationalizing and identifying socially excluded groups.

Lastly, Levitas et al. note that the distinction between characteristics of the process of social exclusion and the outcomes of this process is not absolute (2007:23). They use the example of labour market inactivity to illustrate that although this may be seen as an outcome of social exclusion, it can also be deemed as a risk factor in the sense that it contributes to the process of social exclusion.

As such Levitas et al conclude that

> The relationships between the dimensions and domains of social exclusion are complex. The very interactional processes recognised in the project of multivariate analysis imply that many, if not all, these dimensions are simultaneously exclusionary outcomes and causal factors for other dimensions of exclusion, although the strength and direction of causality will vary. The consequences of different forms of disadvantage, for different lengths of time, at different points in the life cycle, are likely to vary considerably.

As such they provide one of the most comprehensive definitions of social exclusion. They define social exclusion as

> a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole. (Levitas et al, 2007:25)

Peace asserts that using these broader and more “flexible” (2007:26) definitions of social exclusion allows more complex understanding of influences and factors associated with the phenomenon. In a discussion about the use of the term “social exclusion” in the policy context of the European Union, Peace identifies three main facets of social exclusion (2007:27); namely, economic, social and political. Peace defines economic exclusion as the deprivation of access to assets, in which those excluded are largely unemployed (2007:27). Secondly, social exclusion refers to the “loss of an individual’s links to mainstream society” (Peace, 2007:27). Thirdly, political exclusion is defined as the deprivation of human and political rights, or parts thereof, for certain categories of the population, such as women or religious groups (Peace, 2007:27).
Rodgers et al. (1995) further note that there is a clear distinction between social exclusion as “ongoing institutional arrangements within which individuals and groups” (1995) and social exclusion as an attribute of individuals whereby persons or a group of people are socially isolated resulting in “weak social relatedness”. Percy-Smith (2000) provides one of the most comprehensive definitions of social exclusion. She notes that social exclusion has a social dimension, as discussed above; a political dimension, as well as neighbourhood, group, spatial and individual dimensions. With regard to a political dimension, Percy-Smith notes that “individuals’ ability to participate in or influence decision making which affects their lives” (2000:9) is of importance in looking at social exclusion. She further relates that decision-making bodies are not limited to political organisations per se, but may include all community organisations that also make decisions that influence the quality of daily lives (Percy-Smith, 2000:7).

The neighbourhood dimension involves the relation of excluded communities to access to service. These may include access to basic services such as health, transport or housing, but may also include access to social networks (Percy-Smith, 2000:7). This is inherently linked to the spatial dimension, as areas which are spatially excluded may have differential access to services in such a manner that social exclusion is geographically located (Percy-Smith, 2000:8). What is interesting to note is the relationship between outcomes and causes with regard to the spatial dimension, such that deprivation of access to basic services in a geographically defined area may entrench the need for such services, thus further enhancing the deprivation (Percy-Smith, 2000:8). This dimension may also entrench other dimensions, such as the political dimension, or even the social dimension. Schönfelder and Axhausen (2003) provide an interesting perspective on the spatial dimension of social exclusion. They note that “socially excluded persons are also excluded from certain parts of the environment, mostly through the high generalised costs they face in reaching particular locations [...] and] the lack of exposure to certain places is linked to lower chances in the job markets, more restricted social networks” (Schönfelder and Axhausen, 2003:4). They link this notion to the idea of activity spaces, which they define as a part of the environment that a person uses in his/her activities (Schönfelder and Axhausen, 2003:4). Their premise is that the smaller the activity space, either through direct contact or indirect contact (in other words through friends and family), the less exposure a person has to various networks, either economic or personal, which is invariably linked to the notion of social exclusion.
The fourth dimension identified by Percy-Smith is the individual dimension. Although this dimension is inherently interrelated to other dimensions, Percy-Smith notes that the “form that this impact typically takes is in terms of increasing levels of physical and mental ill health, educational underachievement and failure to acquire or update skills, and low self-esteem” (2000:8). Lastly, she identifies the group dimension, in which social exclusion is based on difference from the dominant population or position relative to the dominant population (Percy-Smith, 2000:8). This difference may be based on values, language, religion or race. Percy-Smith notes that the importance of these dimensions is the “way in which they interrelate and reinforce each other”, but further notes that although “social exclusion cannot be reduced to economic factors, economic factors are undoubtedly a key aspect of social exclusion” (2000:8).

What the literature on social exclusion thus clearly indicates is that the term is multifaceted, encompassing a variety of dimensions affecting various aspects of daily life. Three important questions arise in this multifaceted definition of social exclusion: firstly, the question of what people are socially excluded from, in other words, how “normal activities” are defined; secondly, the relationship between causes of social exclusion and the outcomes thereof; and thirdly whether those that purposefully exclude themselves can be seen as socially excluded. What underlies these questions is the fundamental distinction between “in” and “out” groups; hence those that are socially excluded and those that are not. Du Toit criticises this notion by noting that social exclusion is oversimplified “by constructing narratives that depend on a simplistic counter-position of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, and suggests an unhelpfully monolithic and homogeneous conception of the nature of broader society” (2004:1005).

However, in terms of gated communities, social exclusion is often seen in terms of a physical exclusion which produces this form of an “us and them” mentality. The role that physical barriers play in the construction of symbolic exclusion in gated communities is widely recognised. Spinks, for instance, notes that walls and physical barriers in gated communities “actually deepen segregation and reinforce fear [of the other] by excluding difference” (2001:11). Bricocoli et al., provide a counter point to this, by noting that “the normative order they [the walls] introduce is more oriented to separation rather than to exclusion, more to setting a distance from individuals considered to be source of problems rather than to organizing control on them” (2001:7).
Although this notion of social control will be discussed more fully in subsequent chapters, it is worth noting that social control is often linked to a sense of community and to rules and regulations set by governing bodies. It is also linked to the notion of social homogeneity of residents, for as Barry notes, a “necessary precondition for the creation of a gated community is the existence of a large homogeneous neighbourhood: there is no point in barring the gates if some of the barbarians are already inside them” (1998:8). However, the social homogeneity of residents of gated communities has recently been challenged. In work done on gated communities in Johannesburg, the Public Affairs Research Institute found that residents of a large number of gated communities are not in fact socially homogenous. This heterogeneity extends to race, class, economic position, culture and linguistic variables. The next section interrogates the notion of social homogeneity, particularly within the context of the case study.

3.4 The Concept of Social Homogeneity

According to Gerhlein, social homogeneity refers to “how much the preference of individuals in a society tends to be alike” (1981:1). Social homogeneity has often been defined in terms of certain characteristics or factors such as race, class, religion, values, level of affluence or cultural background. There is little disagreement in the literature as to the definition of the concept. However, the importance of social homogeneity, both in terms of how a group of people comes to be seen as socially homogenous, as well as the effects thereof, remain prevalent in debates on the term. This section provides a description of some of the important arguments in the debates around the creation of social homogeneity, and then places the finding of the case study within the context of these debates.

Mizruchi notes that social homogeneity, but more specifically cohesion between actors, has become particularly important to sociological research in terms of how it informs research on networks (1993:277). The importance of these networks, especially in how they contribute to social well-being, but also other forms of community well-being, has led to a proliferation of studies on how social homogeneity within networks is created. Mizruchi provides an overview of some of this research and concludes that social homogeneity “is a result of influence between actors primarily owing to communication” (1993:278). The assumption underlying this research is that social pressure can influence another actor’s behaviour, particularly when an individual is faced with numerous actors exerting pressure in the same direction (Mizruchi, 1993:278). This social pressure is based on the continued contact
between actors, in which a system of social ties and its resulting obligations exert pressure on
a single actor to conform. This explanatory model of social homogeneity is referred to as a
structural cohesion model, first posited by Lorrain and White (1971). Friedkin explains that
these models assume that “social homogeneity is fostered by face-to-face interaction and
short communication channels” (1984:236). According to this model, larger networks are
sub-divided into smaller groups in which the likelihood of face-to-face interaction increases
in such a manner that these subgroups become more homogenous in terms of attitude and
behaviours, than others (Friedkin, 1984:237). According to Burt

[s]tructurally equivalent actors should have similar attitudes and behaviours because they tend
to interact with the same types of other actors in the same manner. Structurally equivalent
actors are similarly socialised by others. They should have similar attitudes and behaviours as a
result. (1978:199)

Mizruchi explains that Burt’s model of social structure consists of social position at which a
person occupies a particular level of “structural autonomy”, in other words the “ability to
pursue their objective without constraint” (1993:279). Occupants of given position (what Burt
refers to as “joint occupants”) are seen as competing with “one another for favour with
occupants of other positions”, and it is this competition that is similar to behaviours by
occupants of similar positions (Mizruchi, 1993:279).

However, as Friedkin points outs, this model rests on a number of problematic assumptions
(1984: 257). The first assumption is that homogenous persons will interact with others in
similar ways, and “use indicator[s] of persons’ attitude and behaviours that are relational in
character” (Friedkin, 1984:238). Thus structural equivalence is seen as a manifestation of all
forces that result in social homogeneity. However, as Friedkin points out, structural cohesion
is but a subset of all the forces involved in fostering social homogeneity (1984:238). The
second major assumption of these models is that structural cohesion directly affects
behaviours and attitudes. This is seen as the function of the continued face-to-face interaction
and short communication channels. But as Friedkin points out, following this argument “we
should expect homogeneity to occur [...] between subgroups when members of different
subgroups are in direct contact and/or connected by substantial numbers of short indirect
communication channels” (1984:257). Furthermore, as Mizruchi points out, Burt’s
conceptualisation of joint occupants and how competition for favour leads to similarities may
be related more to continued interactions with similar occupants in other positions than with
the competition for their favour (1993:279).
Other research on social homogeneity indicates the importance of goal attainment (Sherif, 1966; Aronson & Bridgeman, 1979; Gaertner et al., 1990; Johnson & Johnson, 2000). Drawing on the work of Forgas (1995) and Schwarz & Clore (1988), Levy and Freitas note that attachment to goal attainment and particularly the positive feeling associated with goal attainment may lead a person to attribute these positive feelings towards someone involved in this process (2002:1225). This is particularly true where goal attainment is dependent upon cooperation with such person. Secondly, they note that “sharing a goal with someone [...] can lead one to view greater similarity between oneself and the other person because of the salience of the commonality (the shared goal) between self and other” (Levy and Freitas, 2002:1225). They further posit that goal attainment cannot be seen in mere concrete terms, but may also involve abstract terms (Levy and Freitas, 2002:1225). They explain that people of all backgrounds generally pursue similar abstract goals (Stevens & Fiske, 1995) and generally assume that others’ abstract goals are similar to their own (Gollwitzer et al., 1990), hence it follows that people who chronically represent action in abstract terms are more likely to interpret others’ behaviours as reflecting abstract goals similar to their own. (Levy and Freitas, 2002:1225)

Abstract action representation is thus seen as a lens that blurs social differences. However, they note that this trend often results in stereotyping, which they define as exaggerating a group’s shared characteristics so as to promote expectation of similarity among group members (Levy and Freitas, 2002:1225-1226). Ultimately they conclude that a group will view themselves as socially homogenous in relation to stigmatised groups, through the abstract action representation of shared goal attainment.

In relation to gated communities, the notion of goal attainment becomes of particular importance. According to Landman the establishment of gated communities is accompanied by a comprehensive set of rules and regulations (2004:21). These are enforced by a governing body in an attempt to create “harmonious living for like-minded residents within a demarcated area” (2004:21), which is deemed as one of the main goals of residents of gated communities. When the gated community forms a “physical foundation for living, it also becomes a stage for specific social behaviour” (Landman, 2004:21). Landman also notes the various implications of the social identity of residents, as they begin to view themselves as different from those that live outside. She notes that gated communities play an important role in influencing mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders” (2008:13), whereby the
“insiders” are perceived to be working towards the same goal, whereas “outsiders” do not share this abstract goal.

Furthermore, social homogeneity is seen as the natural consequence of this, as governing bodies play an active role in fostering face-to-face interactions and networks among residents. Levels of affluence of residents are also seen to foster structural equivalence and in turn contribute to the social homogeneity. Although the role that governing bodies plays in this regard will be discussed in later chapters, what the literature clearly indicates is that residents of gated communities are largely deemed socially homogenous as perceived by themselves, and also as perceived by non-residents. The following section draws on the literature of social homogeneity and places the case study within said context.

3.4 Social Homogeneity in Featherbrooke Estate

The literature on social homogeneity in gated communities raises two interrelated issues. Firstly, the extent to which residents of gated communities view themselves as socially homogenous. The second, in the manner in which this perceived social homogeneity is created and maintained among residents. With regard to creation and maintenance of social homogeneity, a sense of community, and governing bodies are seen as playing an integral role. Both of these issues will be addressed more rigorously in subsequent chapters.

However, it is worth noting that social homogeneity is seen as the basis for a sense of community fostered by governing bodies through the creation and enforcement of rules and regulations. In the case of Featherbrooke, residents do not view themselves as a cohesive or socially homogenous group. Residents view their cultural orientations, levels of affluence and linguistic backgrounds as some of the main factors that distinguish them as individuals from other residents. This calls into question the manner in which social homogeneity serves as a basis for social exclusion. Furthermore, it complicates the notion that residents of gated communities can be seen as a unified white middle class group.

In the case of Featherbrooke, the residents can be seen as relatively homogenous based on certain factors. Using the apartheid classifications of race, Featherbrooke Estate can be seen as a racially homogenous population. Interviewees as well as Estate management concurred that the majority of residents were white people (estimations of 90%). However, Estate management also noted that this pattern was changing, as more and more black families were moving into the estate. This was in part ascribed to the changing economic positions of black
people, but Estate management also related that this was related to changing perceptions of gated communities. Accordingly, management noted that gated communities have typically been viewed as “racist” communities that are socially not open to black families. However, black families that have moved into the Estate have not encountered said racism, and management related that there have been no incidents of racism in Featherbrooke Estate. There is reason to question the validity of this statement as racism may be far less overt than suggested by Estate management. According to management, the perception of gated communities as racist communities is thus changing as black residents are able to inform their social networks about the way in which gated communities actually function. Although this proposed argument remains unsubstantiated, what is, however, clear is that racial configurations of residents in Featherbrooke Estate are changing (officially figures are not available, but it is estimated that in 2000 black residents constituted less than 1% of the total population and in 2010 “black” residents constituted over 10% of the population).

One of the areas in which interviewees felt most strongly about a lack of social homogeneity was with regard to levels of affluence. The literature on gated communities indicates that most residents of gated communities share a similar level of affluence. This notion was deemed highly problematic by the majority of interviewees. Firstly, as noted, house prices in Featherbrooke Estate differ rather starkly. Property agents that work exclusively in Featherbrooke Estate agree with this. Properties that are currently for sale in Featherbrooke Estate range from R12 million to R 1.6 million, for a three-bedroom house. The Estate Management noted that this may be owing to different property types that are currently available in the Estate. The Estate consists of a number of cluster homes, as well as other freehold properties. Cluster homes are also legally freehold properties, as outlined in the Home Owners’ Association’s Constitution, but they are smaller plots of land, and the aesthetic codes that apply to these cluster homes are different. According to the Estate management, the property values of cluster homes are far less than those of some of the other properties. Although levels of affluence cannot be ascribed solely to property values, it is an important variable to consider.

Some interviewees made it very clear that the levels of affluence in Featherbrooke Estate are not uniform. One interviewee noted that “people automatically assume that you are wealthy if you stay in Featherbrooke”. She further related that as a woman living on the Estate it is assumed that “you are a ‘kept’ woman [...] they assume that you stay in a house which
belongs to another person like a husband and that you are available anytime of the day”. She further related: “I am single working person and I do not have a husband that supports me. That is also one of the perceptions here [...] But I am a working person and not one of the privileged housewives who just receive their husband’s credit cards.”

Another interviewee also noted the common misperceptions that residents of Featherbrooke are all well-off. She noted: “I really become weary when they ask me where I stay. It is as if they see immediately: ‘Ching! She has money!’ and it is not the case. [...] We also just live from month to month.”

One interviewee related how she and her family came to stay in the Estate:

Then one Sunday we were kind of driving out this way and we saw the boards and we came and had a look and we kept coming back here. Week after week, after week and we just kept thinking ugh, there’s no ways we’d ever be able to afford to be able to live here [...] Then we thought to buy a stand and maybe building, but to cut a long story short we ended up seeing a house that was on the market, that we loved and it was a kind of sad situation because the couple was getting divorced. So, they were quite desperate to get rid of it. So, we just happened to be in the right place at the right time and we picked it up for a really good price.

Another interview clarified this situation. She noted that there are two different types of [people]… On the one side you find “old money” [...] on the other hand you get people that… Yes, my parents had started a business, you know, but then I was still very small. They didn’t grow up dirt poor, but they couldn’t afford a grand house [...] And then they worked their way up and up, and their businesses grew, and in some way or another they went and studied with this money they had received [...] and eventually they made it to the top.

What emerges from these and other interviews is that levels of affluence are not uniform in Featherbrooke Estate. Although there are those residents who are well-off and come from “old money” and who are able to afford an expensive property and luxury cars, interviews indicate that there are also those residents who live more modestly. What this brings into question is the degree of structural equivalence among residents of the Estate, in the sense that structural equivalence can be understood in terms of levels of affluence. The relationship between structural equivalence and social homogeneity remains rather contentious in terms of the manner in which structural equivalence is causally linked to social homogeneity. However, what the research does indicate is that, whether causal or not, structural equivalence is related to the notion of social homogeneity. While an argument can be made that there is a degree of structural equivalence in Featherbrooke Estate when compared to broader sectors of the population at large (particularly the unemployed sector of society),
what the interviews indicate is that social homogeneity with regard to levels of affluence within gated communities is far more complex and varied than initially anticipated.

As has been noted, the matter of inter-racial issues is not the focus of this research. Rather, emphasis is placed on the manner in which intra-racial tensions arise within the white population. Thus, other ways in which residents of Featherbrooke Estate view themselves as socially heterogeneous relates primarily to linguistic background. This is not articulated in terms of race, but in terms of home language and linguistic heritage. In interviews with residents it became clear that linguistic heritage was of particular importance to residents in the context of relative racial homogeneity. This was coupled with other factors in the interviewees’ life histories, including the socio-economic position of parents, the area in which they grew up, and the values with which they were raised. What emerges is a number of categories, firstly background and secondly linguistic background. In the first instance, residents can be grouped into three distinct categories: those who were raised locally and come from “old money”; those who were raised locally but come from lower socio-economic groups; and those that were raised in other areas and come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. One interviewee related how she and her husband were only able to study because of bursaries. She noted that “both of us [were] poor, and coming from poor families [...] I did house-cleaning for pocket money every morning”. Another interviewee related how her father was a miner on the mines close to Krugersdorp. She related how she met her husband on the mines, as she had worked part-time in the mining office, but how he had used his knowledge of the mines to go into the sales industry. She noted: My husband “also works in the mines. He was trained as a mine captain but now he is in the selling game where they try to sell and buy things in the mine industry”. These two interviewees are examples of one of these categories; namely, those who grew up in the surrounding areas but came from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Other interviewees related how their parents had started a family business in Krugersdorp, and how they had then become involved in the family business. One interviewee relates:

My father opened up his own business here which has been open for twenty-five years [...] which is a company which does blasting and sanding for mines and my husband is working in the business with him. So it is really a family business.
Another interviewee related how her family had moved to Featherbrooke Estate during its early stages of development from Noordheuwel, a prominent suburb in Krugersdorp. She noted that her family had owned a local store, in which her husband still worked. These interviewees form part of the second category; namely, those who grew up in the area, but came from families of higher socio-economic position.

There are a number of other residents of Featherbrooke Estate who are not indigenous to the area. Interviewees include a couple from Poland; several people from Namibia and Zimbabwe; a number of others that came from other areas in South Africa such as Durban, and lastly people who were raised and who had resided in other areas in Johannesburg for most of their lives. Although these categories may have little significance in broader society, in the context of the gated community they are particularly salient to residents. In an interview with a member of the Estate management, it was noted that many conflicts within the Estate (especially in terms of non-compliance with rules) are among people who were raised in the area but come from different socio-economic groups. For instance, he noted that there have been numerous cases of non-compliance with aesthetics rules by what is referred to in the interview as “nouveau riche” residents. This is seen as related to tastes that are extravagant and flamboyant, which is deemed characteristic of the nouveau riche. Furthermore, the salience of linguistic identities has also been seen as a source of conflict. This is particularly true in the case of one interviewee who accused the Estate management of being racist. She noted that

Featherbrooke is a pretty kind of white community and a very kind of white Afrikaans community, how kind of bold are those values? Do you think they can’t try of enforce this kind of conservative value? […] I think if you’re Afrikaans it helps, if you’re not unfortunately… […] Look I do understand that a manager has to be strict but I truly believe that you have to do equal with everybody and I think that is where the problem comes and it’s not the same with everybody.

This particular interviewee further noted that she felt discriminated against because she was not an Afrikaans speaker, and noted that because the majority of the Estate management were Afrikaans speakers, they applied the rules differentially to Afrikaans speakers. Although no other interviewees viewed linguistic tensions as so pronounced, many noted the existence of various tensions between Afrikaans and English speakers.
What these findings illustrate is that the social homogeneity of residents of Featherbrooke Estate is not as simple as mere racial homogeneity. Various other factors in the absence of racial heterogeneity seem to play a significant role in creating distinctions among residents. This is particularly true in terms of self-identification. This resembles Freud’s notion of “the narcissism of minor differences” (1930:114). Freud notes that “[i]t is always possible to bind together a considerable number of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness” (1930:114). Freud articulates this phenomenon in terms of aggression and love; he argues that groups will identify differences that serve to differentiate them from others in order to distinguish themselves as a group (1930:114). These distinctions will, however, be of minor consequence in the context of a greater threat (Freud, 1930:114). Therefore, in the absence of racial heterogeneity, interviewees distinguished themselves from other white residents through factors such as language and the level of affluence. Consequently, the majority of interviewees did not feel that the population of Featherbrooke Estate as a whole was socially homogenous. While many related that non-residents of the Estate often view the population as socially homogenous, particularly in terms of levels of affluence, most interviewees felt that this was a misconception.

Given the literature on goal attainment and social homogeneity, residents of the Estate may be assumed to feel more socially homogenous. Most of the interviewees indicated a strong attachment to the goal of creating a safe, child-friendly, and peaceful environment within the Estate. Furthermore, many related the ways in which they personally contribute to this environment, either through participation in governing bodies or merely through adherence to rules. As such, it could be assumed the action representation, abstract or concrete, should provide a milieu in which residents would view themselves as more cohesive, or socially homogenous. This is not, however, the case.

What this indicates is that relationships among residents may be far more complex than suggested in the literature. Moreover, in terms of social exclusion, the lack of social homogeneity, particularly perceived social homogeneity may complicate the “us and them” mentality often referred to in the literature. This mentality is often seen as the foundation of social exclusion in the context of gated communities. However, social homogeneity is only one factor related to social exclusion. As such, the remainder of the chapter draws on the literature explored above to address two questions: firstly, whether residents of the case study...
exclude themselves from broader society in terms of factors other than social homogeneity; and secondly whether the existence of the gated communities socially excludes broader society.

3.5 Social Exclusion in Featherbrooke Estate

The literature on social exclusion brings to the fore two interrelated questions about the nature of social exclusion in relation to the case study. Firstly, whether residents of Featherbrooke are socially excluding themselves from broader society, and secondly whether Featherbrooke socially excludes surrounding populations. Given that the definition of social exclusion remains highly contentious in the literature, this section makes use of the definition of social exclusion of Levitas et al. Furthermore, it utilises the various dimensions of social exclusion of Peace (2007) and Percy-Smith (2000).

In terms of this definition, residents of Featherbrooke Estate cannot be seen as socially excluding themselves from broader society. All residents have access to rights, resources and services provided by local government and other local service providers. Although the role of the Home Owners’ Association (HOA) and their legal standing with regard to services will be discussed in subsequent chapters, it is worth noting here that all infrastructures within the Estate are the property of local government and the HOA plays no role in the maintenance or management of said infrastructure. However, public spaces, including sporting amenities located on the Estate are the property of the HOA. Access to these facilities is freely given to residents in the same way that local sporting and cultural amenities are available in other areas. Many residents make use of these facilities but a large number also make use of other amenities located within the area such as the Harlequins Rugby Club. As such, residents do not exclude themselves from surrounding areas in terms of a social dimension. In terms of the neighbourhood dimension, in which access to services is of particular significance, residents can also not be seen to be socially excluding themselves.

With regard to a political dimension, Percy-Smith notes that “individuals’ ability to participate in or influence decision making which affects their lives” (2000:9) is of importance in looking at social exclusion. Through the HOA, residents are able to influence and participate in decision-making bodies that affect the quality of their daily lives. The only manner in which normal activities are restricted is in terms of political campaigning within the Estate. Rules and regulations bar any political parties from entering and campaigning.
within the Estate. Estate management notes that this decision was taken to ensure the safety and privacy of residents.

Using the perspective of Schönfelder and Axhausen (2003) on the spatial dimension of social exclusion, the activity spaces of residents extend far beyond the boundaries of the Estate. The Estate does not offer any significant centre of economic activities such as a shopping centre and most residents travel widely in the larger areas. Some interviewees noted that they travel over 20 kilometres to engage in economic activities. Featherbrooke Estate also does not have educational facilities within the Estate, thus parents have to send their children to nearby schools. What emerges from the interviews is that the activity spaces of residents are far larger than the bounds of the Estate and they engage surrounding areas in a number of ways.

Lastly, Percy-Smith identifies the group dimension, in which social exclusion is based on difference from the dominant population, or position relative to the dominant population (2000:8). What becomes problematic in the analysis of Featherbrooke Estate in terms of the group dimension is the definition of the “dominant” population. The dominant population in South Africa can be seen from a variety of perspectives: economically, socially, politically, religiously and in terms of race. If the dominant population is defined in economic terms, Featherbrooke Estate can be seen as socially exclusive. Property prices are not accessible to most South Africans and as a result the majority of the population will be excluded. Furthermore, property prices within the Estate have also led to an increase in property value in the area as a whole. This poses various challenges for development of informal settlements in surrounding areas. In order to develop these areas, land has to be bought by the municipality from private individuals, but the rising property prices hamper the ability of the municipality to acquire these properties. This does serve to prolong the process of development of informal settlements, and in this manner Featherbrooke estate can be seen as fostering social exclusion.

The second issue that is identified in the literature on gated communities is whether gated communities socially exclude populations from the surrounding areas. Of particular importance is the manner in which gated communities restrict the use of public space. It is important to note here some historically important facts about the Estate. Prior to its development, the property on which the Estate was developed was two privately owned ostrich farms physically located in a cul-de-sac at the end of Eagle Road. The development of
the Estate included the creation of public spaces for residents. It can be argued that by gating this community and restricting access to these public spaces, Featherbrooke Estate is socially excluding populations from surrounding areas. However, it can also be argued that if the Estate had not been developed these spaces would have remained private property to which populations from surrounding areas would also not have had access. Furthermore, the location of the Estate, in other words that it is located at the end of a cul-de-sac, also means that it does not interfere with movement in the same way that enclosed neighbourhoods would. One dimension in which the Estate can be seen as fostering social exclusion is thus with regard to the spatial dimension. The gated nature of the Estate does spatially exclude populations from the surrounding areas from entering the Estate. This is not, however, linked to other dimensions such as access to services, as is indicated in the literature. However, in terms of the economic dimension, the Estate cannot be seen to be fostering social exclusion. All economic activities located within the Estate are open to the public. One example of this is an interviewee who runs a hairdressing salon from her house. Her clients come from the Estate as well as from surrounding areas. People who are non-residents are able to gain access through a resident, in this case the interviewee, and thus access her hairdressing salon. Furthermore, the Estate actually provides a number of economic activities for local residents. This is particularly true for domestic workers and other service providers in the area. Although broader processes of development are challenged by rising property values, as noted above, it also serves to stimulate economic activity.

3.6 Conclusion
What emerges from the case study is that processes of social exclusion with regard to gated communities are far more complex than the creation of an “us and them” mentality. The literature on social exclusion indicates that it is a multi-faceted concept. As such, in certain respects, the case study does illustrate that Featherbrooke Estate socially excludes populations from surrounding areas. This is particularly true in terms of the spatial dimension. However, in contrast to what the literature indicates, the multifaceted nature of social exclusion means that the relationship of gated communities to surrounding areas is far more complex. This is reinforced by the complex nature of social homogeneity within gated communities. Although residents are seen as homogenous by non-residents, and in certain respects they are, what the case study illustrates is that viewing social homogeneity in narrow terms can be misleading. This is particularly true in terms of self-identification with other residents. Most of the interviewees did not feel that residents were homogenous, except in
CHAPTER FOUR: SENSE OF COMMUNITY

4.1 Introduction
The notion of social exclusion in gated communities is deemed entrenched by a sense of community. The main vehicle through which this sense is forged has often been ascribed to the relevant governing bodies. This is done not only through the enforcement of rules and regulations but also through a variety of other activities organised and endorsed by the governing body which aims to produce a psychological sense of belonging among residents. However, the literature tends to view this sense of community unenthusiastically, as this is seen as a means of perpetuating or producing social exclusion on a psychological level. As has been noted in chapter three, social exclusion based on a sense of social homogeneity is complicated by findings in the case study. The literature on gated communities does not, however, interrogate the notion of a sense of community. This chapter explores the notion of a sense of community more rigorously and uses the case study of Featherbrooke to problematise some of the key arguments around the idea of community in gated communities. The findings illustrate that the notion of a sense of community in the context of gated communities is far more nuanced than the literature suggests.

4.2 A Sense of Community within Gated Communities
One of the main criticisms of gated communities is that they aim to produce a sense of community that is deemed artificial. The main vehicle through which this sense is forged has often been ascribed to the relevant governing bodies. This is done not only through the enforcement of rules and regulations but also through a variety of other activities organised and endorsed by the governing body which aims to produce a psychological sense of
belonging among residents. However, the literature tends to view this sense of community unenthusiastically, as this is seen as a means of perpetuating or producing social exclusion on a psychological level.

As has been noted above, the literature on gated communities discusses the importance of community or neighbourhood in individual social identities (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130). The notion of the neighbourhood cannot be seen exclusively as a territorially defined space. Rather it is employed as a system of social networks (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130). The South African literature on gated communities asserts that these networks in the context of a gated community produce an “us and them” mentality. Landman explains that gated communities foster a sense of community, collective identity and “strong cohesiveness” (2003:21). Although the link between these concepts and social homogeneity has been challenged in the previous chapter, the literature views a sense of community as fundamental in producing the white middle class nature of gated communities (Landman, 2008). The rules and regulations are seen as the main vehicle through which these values are articulated and enforced. Governing bodies play a crucial role in maintaining and enforcing rules and as such are seen as complicit in creating a sense of community.

However, the literature neither interrogates the notion of a sense of community nor the manner in which this is forged. It also does not take the relative impact of this concept on psychological constructions of social identities into account. These terms are employed broadly and the artificially created community or sense of community is not analysed in terms of a naturally evolving sense of community. Hence the remainder of this chapter introduces some of the contemporary debates within the literature regarding communities, or a sense of community, and then places the case study within this context.

4.3 Interrogating a sense of community

The literature on community formation, and more specifically, a “sense of community”, finds its roots in various academic disciplines. These range from anthropology to community psychology, and there are ongoing debates regarding the defining features, the creation and the perpetuation of a sense of community within this literature. Furthermore, the implications or potential consequences, both negative and positive, of a sense of community are also contentious. The purpose of this section is not to settle these debates nor engage fully with the nuances presented in the literature. Rather this section aims to provide a framework of the

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main arguments and debates around a “sense of community” in order to analyse the case
study critically.

The notion of community can be dated back to the work of Aristotle, Cicero, Augustinian and
Burke (Weisberg, 2003: 346). The defining characteristics, implications and importance of
community as an analytical tool thus date back thousands of years, with many competing
definitions about the nature of the concept. Radicchi et al. note that the concept of
community is general, observing that it is linked mainly to categorising objects for the “sake
of memorization or retrieval of information... and, depending on the context, can be
synonymous with module, class, group, cluster, etc. (2004:2658). However, the literature as
whole problematises this notion of community. Hence the main debates within the literature
on communities, and more specifically a sense of community, hinge on the lack of a
definitional consensus of the term “community”.

Bellah et al., in their book *Habits of the Heart*, define community as follows:

A community is a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in
discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both define the
community and are nurtured by it. Such a community is not quickly formed. It almost always
has a history and so is also a community of memory, defined in part by its past and its memory
of the past. (1985:333)

This definition clearly illustrates that the concept of community goes far beyond a
geographically defined area in which people are located. McMillan and Chavis (1986) make a
similar point. They define community as “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling
that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs
will be met through their commitment to be together” (1986:9). Blanchard and Markus note
that the study of communities or, more importantly, a sense of community have often been
dominated by “place-based theorist(s)” (2004:66) whereby the community is geographically
defined. However, drawing on the work of Wellman (1996), they note that this tendency is
highly problematic as community “feelings and behaviours, such as the giving and receiving
of help and emotional support, do not always exist in place-based neighbourhoods”
(Blanchard and Markus, 2004:66). They further explain that communities of interest, such as
stamp collectors, or even cyber communities, have brought the notion of place-based
communities, and the importance thereof, into question (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:66).

Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) also note the lack of a comprehensive definition of community.
However, they propose three important “markers” or core components in identifying
communities, placed-based or otherwise. Firstly they note the presence of “shared rituals and traditions” which serve to entrench and perpetuate a community’s shared culture and history and reaffirm social practices that celebrate certain behavioural norms and values (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413). The second component is a “sense of moral responsibility” which engenders in members a sense of duty and obligation towards the community as a whole and its individual members (2001:413). This is expressed during times of crisis or threat that necessitate collective action (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413). The third marker identified by Muniz and O’Guinn is importance of a sense of community, or what Gusfield (1978) refers to as “consciousness of kind” (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413). Drawing on Weber (1978) they define consciousness of kind as

the intrinsic connection that members feel toward one another, and the collective sense of difference from others not in the community. Consciousness of kind is shared consciousness, a way of thinking about things that is more than shared attitudes or perceived similarity. It is a shared knowing of belonging (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413)

This third marker is deemed most important in their analysis and it forms the basis upon which the other components rest.

Blanchard and Markus note that there are a number of definitional problems with regard to a sense of community and that no consensus over the definition has been reached, despite the fact that community research has been focused on this since the 1960s (2004:67). The first definition issue that is pertinent relates to the “conceptual confusion” (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:66) of a sense of community. They contend that a sense of community is often seen as the natural outcome of living in a community (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67). However, the term “community” and the concept of a sense of community are often conflated. This poses various conceptual challenges, particularly in the realm of place-based communities (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67).

Secondly, they note that “subjective quality of the experience” which is colloquially used in relation to a sense of community is often very localised and particularised (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67). They remark that researchers have thus sought to describe the different manifestations of a sense of community in particular communities. They draw on McMillan and Chavis (1986) for such a descriptive framework which is widely accepted as the most influential framework for the study of a sense of community in both place-based communities and communities of interest (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67). This framework includes the manner in which these feelings are created.

The first dimension identified by McMillan and Chavis is a “feeling of membership”. This can be defined as “feelings of belonging to, and identifying with, the community” (as cited in
Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67), which arise from community boundaries, perceptions of emotional safety, members’ sense of belonging to and identification with the group, and most importantly, personal investment of time into the group. The second dimension identified is “feelings of influence”, hence having and being influenced by the community (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67). In the case of gated communities, the governing bodies are seen as playing a leading role in this regard, as the origins of the feeling have been ascribed to the processes whereby norms are maintained within the group (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:68).

The third dimension is an “integration and fulfilment of needs” through which members feel support and provide support for other members in the community. McMillan and Chavis see the origins of this in a system of rewards, whereby members’ needs are met either through status within the group or competence in functioning in the group, and in turn in meeting others’ needs (as cited in Blanchard and Markus, 2004:68). This is reflected in the reinforcement and maintenance of shared values. The fourth dimension is identified as a “shared emotional connection”, which entails feelings of a shared history, feelings of relationship, and the “spirit” of community, although this is not clearly defined (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:67). This develops mainly through frequent interactions, investment of time and resources, high quality interactions, spiritual bonds and discrete events (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:68).

One of the main criticisms that have been laid against this framework is that the model was never tested by McMillan and Chavis themselves. Although other researchers have tested the model and found that some of the dimensions hold true [García et al. (1999) note the importance of the community’s history; Zaff and Devlin (1998) find that the frequency and quality of interaction both between members and with the physical environment play an important role; Burroughs and Eby (1998), in attempting to define a sense of community within organisation, find that only intrinsic motivation, or “relational contracts” make any real positive contribution], the salience of certain dimensions and the importance of factors or the origins of the four dimensions were never fully addressed (Blanchard and Markus, 2004:68). However, Rovia notes that the framework provided by McMillan and Chavis (1986) is one of the “few integrative theories of [... a sense of community] to date [... and] currently provides the best foundation on which to build our understanding of this construct” (2002).
Wilson-Doenges notes that, historically, the study of a sense of community has often been addressed in relation to a “decline of community”. She notes that social scientists have been concerned with what they view as the declining relevance or importance of local neighbourhoods and community involvement as a whole (2000:598). This decline has been linked to increasing levels of diversity, accompanied by what Clark (1993) refers to as intolerance in the form of stereotyping which seems to erode rather than reinforce a sense of community (as cited in Wilson-Doenges, 2000:598). As such, the assertion McMillan and Chavis that “[i]t is clear that sense of community is a powerful force in our culture now” (1986:2) has often been questioned by social scientists that assert that the importance of community and a sense of community are diminishing.

Thus, some of the primary debates in the literature on community and a sense of community centre, firstly, on the lack of a cohesive definition. This pertains to both the terms “community” and sense of community. Furthermore, as Wilson-Doenges (2000) relates, the salience of a sense of community for individual members of said community is the basis for another main point of contention in the literature. Whether a sense of community is in decline, or whether it continues to be a salient dimension of the study of community forms is prominent in the literature.

However, several studies indicate that the role of a sense of community is vital. Sarason notes that “the absence or dilution of the psychological sense of community is the most destructive dynamic in the lives of people in our society” (1974: 96). Riger and Lavrakas also indicate that a sense of community in which people perceive themselves as both providing and gaining support from the community lowers individual emotional stress and may also play an important role in preventing the development of stress (1981). Poplin also asserts that “the answer to many of our deepest problems is to restore the common bonds which seem no longer to typify the social life of modern communities” (1972: 7). Therefore, the importance of the study of a sense of community remains vital to the study of communities. As has been noted, the continued existence of a sense of community is seen as being beneficial to society. This notion is not, however, universally held, particularly in the context of gated communities.

McMillan and Chivas warn that in exclusive communities, people are “fencing themselves in “and that the sense of community that develops “drives people closer together [... thereby] polarizing and separating subgroups of people” and thus the potential exists for increased social conflict (1986:20). Blandy and Lister also assert this (2003:19). Given that
communities may serve as a space in which people learn tolerance, cooperation and acquire a sense of social order and belonging, notions of well-being and social worth (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2130), the “them and us” mentality may have several far-reaching consequences for society. In the South African context, Landman also notes that gated communities play an important role in influencing mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders” which can lead to growing tensions among these town populations (2008:13). She further notes that it negates the idea of integrated development (Landman, 2006:70).

Therefore, the literature on communities and particularly the notion of a sense of community is highly contentious. One of the major contentions relates to the definition both of community and of a sense of community. Within this framework, the second major contention in the literature arises; namely, the importance of a sense of community and whether a sense of community is deemed to have negative or positive implications for a community. With regard to the first point of contention, competing definitions of community often stem from the differential disciplinary groundings in which the research takes place, such that anthropological studies and psychological studies may not share a unified definition of the concept. Furthermore, as Muniz and O’Guinn, (2001) have indicated, the definitions of community may vary, but there are certain elements that are inherent in most definitions. The most important of these is the sense of community felt by members or the “consciousness of kind” (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413) which is deemed an important component in communities.

This leads to the other major contention in the literature; namely, the importance of a sense of community and the related implications. The importance of a sense of community remains highly contentious, with many arguing that the community as a salient variable is declining. However, others suggest the importance of a sense of community, particularly the study of a sense of community in the context of changing urban landscapes. This is deemed of increasing necessity in light of the proliferation of gated communities in which the consequences of a sense of community are deemed problematic. The next section analyses some of the key arguments identified in the literature on a sense of community within the context of the case study.
4.4 Featherbrooke and a sense of community

For this case study the definition of community proposed by Bellah et al. (1985:333) will be employed. Furthermore, a sense of community will make use of the framework of McMillan and Chivas as described above. This section places the case study of Featherbrooke within these frameworks and aims to illustrate the needs for a more nuanced understanding of both community and a sense of community in the face of gated communities.

Some of the key characteristics defined by Bellah et al. (1985:333) are social interdependence; active participation of members of the group, especially in terms of creation and perpetuation of certain practices; a shared history and memory; and active participation or engagement in decision-making processes. Although there is a temptation to view gated communities as “place-based” communities, the literature above suggests that community cannot be defined merely in terms of place. Furthermore, adopting the definition proposed by Bellah et al. (1985:333) allows for a greater appreciation of the roles played by social networks, or “socially interdependent” persons. In interviews conducted with residents of this gated community, many referred to the social networks that exist within the estate. One interviewee related that “[w]hat has happened now is that my whole family has moved to Featherbrooke” as well as many other members of her social group. Although the notion of overlapping or pre-existing networks will be addressed further on in this section, what does emerge from the interviews conducted is the sense that people who live in Featherbrooke form part of a series of overlapping social ties, or social “interdependen[ce]” which Bellah et al. (1985:333) propose as a defining characteristic of a community. Furthermore, the nature of decision making (to be addressed more fully in the next chapter) within the gated community, rests on the principle of participation and engagement of residents with governing bodies, which is also seen as one of the defining characteristics of a community. What can, however, be considered a point of contention in terms of defining this gated community as a formal community, relates to the notion of a shared history or memory. Muniz and O’Guinn (2001) note the importance of shared tradition and a shared history as one of three components of a community. Many residents have lived in Featherbrooke for fewer than five years although the community is over 15 years old. Memories of the past and celebrations to commemorate certain critical events within its history do not take place. Some interviewees who have been residents for over ten years did have certain stories to tell about the past and the way in which the gated community looked back then, but these recollections were few and far between,
with many residents relating more recent activities or future endeavours as a cohesive force or reaffirmation of social practices. Muniz and O’Guinn also identified a “sense of moral responsibility” (2001:413) as a defining component. In the case study at hand, these moral responsibilities find articulation in compliance with the rules. One interviewee noted that:

I am a firm believer that when you come and live in a place that you abide by the rules. You are coming to a place where there are rules and if you want to have your fifteen dogs and ten cats then you must go and live on a farm. If you do not want to live by the rules then you must go and stay on a plot.

There are, however, exceptions in which moral responsibly is delegated to an informal social network. As one resident explained:

If your neighbours were to have a party, and they let you know, “we will be having a party tonight, and we’ll be a bit noisy…” but it’s all right, because it doesn’t happen every weekend, and the people are very peaceful.

Lastly, Muniz and O’Guinn note the importance of a sense of community, or “consciousness of kind” (2001:413). Most interviewees referred to this sense, albeit in colloquial terms. As such, to fully grasp some of the important dimensions of this sense of community, the framework of McMillan and Chavis (1986) becomes a useful tool for analysis. The first dimension identified by McMillan and Chavis is a “feeling of membership” (1986:9). Blanchard and Markus explain that this is related to a feeling of belonging or identification as well as personal investment into the community (2004:67). Most of the interviewees related that they did feel some sense of belonging within the community. As one interviewee explained:

As you walk along the dams on the front and I walk with Grease [her dog] and as I walk past people and say good evening or good morning and they say good evening or good morning and then (pauses), it’s just nice.

Others explained that:

I think there is a sense of community, although I’m a bit of loner, my sister in law and brother are more outgoing, I’ve just had some not so nice life experiences so I tend to keep to myself that’s a difficult one for me to answer I do find people are friendly I go for walks and I run, you know always greet everybody and it is, It is friendly I feel safe here I live alone but I feel safe.

However, this is not universally true. One interviewee noted: “No, I will not say that there is a feeling of community here in Featherbrooke because I do not even have the faintest idea who my neighbours are.” Another interviewee related her experience of what she called “racism” of her neighbours actively seeking to halt their building plans because they disliked her Portuguese family. Although this seems to be an isolated incident and no other interviewees related similar experiences, what this does bring into question is the universality
of sentiments expressed by residents. This indicates that the notion of membership or feelings of belonging are much more nuanced than indicated in the literature. This is also true in terms of investment of personal time and resources. In an interview with the Estate manager, he remarked that there were a number of individuals residing in Featherbrooke that actively participated in the management of the Estate. But he also noted that this was neither universal nor consistent. This is linked to the next dimension identified by McMillan and Chavis (1986).

The second dimension identified is a feeling of influence (McMillan and Chavis, 1986:10). Although access to management of the estate is open to residents both in terms of participation and influence, most interviewees do not actively participate in the day-to-day running of Featherbrooke. One interviewee, head of the Social Committee, explained that she had not known about the management or even the relevant portfolios until she was asked to join by a friend. Most residents share this relative ignorance of the various spheres of influence with the community, and the processes involved. This may account for the relative lack of a feeling of influence among most interviewees. However, as one interviewee noted: “The Home Owners' Association organises itself the way that the majority of people in the Estate want to live”.

The third dimension identified is an “integration and fulfilment of needs” through which members feel support and provide support for other members in the community (McMillan and Chavis, 1986:10), which in turn reinforces and maintains shared values. One interviewee related:

I also love it like if my neighbour goes away they know when I’m away because the lights are off and my neighbour over there, I might go and talk to them once a month maybe every six weeks or two months but occasionally we will chat and then I know when they are not there and I said to her ‘You’ve been away and I’ve missed you, all your lights… too dark…’and I love to see, I know that they are there and they are there and my neighbors lights are on and it’s just so comfortable you just know that everyone is around you and it gives you that added security as well.

Other forms of integration also exist, such as a book club to which many interviewees belong, as well as a mountain biking club:

There are a whole bunch of guys here in Featherbrooke who cycle […] you join the club here, and then they… every weekend they do rides from the Magaliesberg, and […] if you are in that community, and you have your own bike then you will find that every weekend you can go ride with other people.

Some interviewees tell stories about the classical “borrowing a cup of sugar from your neighbours” and others relate how neighbours give their condolences when someone dies. What this indicates is that interviewees feel a strong sense of integration as well as emotional fulfilment of needs by people within the community. This is also linked to the fourth
dimension identified by McMillan and Chavis; namely, a “shared emotional connection” (1986:13) in which the “spirit” of the community is upheld through interaction and investment of time.

Ultimately, the sense of community in Featherbrooke as one interviewee related is as follows:

The possibility of choice makes it so much easier because someone can make a choice of living in a place where he would walk into his neighbour’s front door when he exits his own and they can have the situation which we have here [...] So in my opinion it depends where you stay and how you would like to live. You can always decide and your choices are endless. You can decide how you would like to live and how much part you would like to be of a certain case.

The sense of community in Featherbrooke thus brings to the fore the nuanced nature of this concept, which is not often acknowledged in the literature on gated communities. This is particularly true in the South African context. As noted earlier, Landman (2003) remains highly critical of the sense of community within gated communities. She notes that gated communities play an important role in influencing mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders” which can lead to growing tensions between these town populations (2008:13). However, this view is not substantiated by interviewees.

This is particularly true in terms of the social networks that exist within Featherbrooke. In an interview with the Estate management, the interviewee noted that there were numerous pre-existing social networks that are often imported into Featherbrooke. As has been noted earlier, interviewees relate that various family members as well as pre-existing friends have moved into Featherbrooke. This does not imply that the networks become exclusively bound to the gated community, as these networks still include a number of people who reside outside the Estate. Furthermore, a number of interviewees have noted the role that schools play in the creation of social networks. Parents who have children of similar ages often tend to form a network, which may include a number of residents from Featherbrooke (as is the case with Muldersdrift Primary and Maragon Private School, two prominent schools in the area), but is not exclusively bound to the estate. This nuanced understanding of a sense of community and the manner in which networks work within gated communities questions the manner in which this sense may create symbolic forms of exclusion through mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders”.

4.5 Conclusion

The definition of communities, as well as the importance of a sense of community, may be far more nuanced and individualised than most of the literature on gated communities suggests.
Furthermore, the role that a sense of community plays, particularly in creating “insiders” and “outsiders” may be far more complex than indicated in the literature. As has been noted in the previous chapter, the “us and them” mentality is complicated by social homogeneity and other facets of social exclusion within the case study. What the case study further illustrates is how this mentality is also complicated by the sense of community within Featherbrooke Estate. McMillan and Chavis recommend that “[w]e must learn to use sense of community as a tool for fostering understanding and cooperation” (1986:20). Governing bodies have often been seen as instrumental in this manner. The next chapter thus addresses the notion of governing bodies in the context of gated communities and places the Home Owners’ Association of Featherbrooke Estate within this context.

CHAPTER FIVE: HOME OWNERS’ ASSOCIATIONS

5.1 Introduction
The role of governing bodies within the literature on gated communities has often been viewed from a legal standpoint, for example, the manner in which these governing bodies interact with the state. This is particularly true in respect of how residents relate, firstly not only to the governing bodies, but also to the changing character of relations between residents of gated communities and the state given the existence of governing bodies. The chapter on social exclusion and a sense of community suggests that governing bodies play a lesser role than has hitherto been indicated in the literature on gated communities. However, the notion of governing bodies often conflates various forms of governing bodies and how they are able to regulate residents of gated communities. Furthermore, the findings of the case study suggest that governing bodies may play a far more ambiguous role in gated communities, particularly in terms of the how residents relate and engage with such governing bodies. This chapter firstly locates governing bodies within the literature on gated communities. It then distinguishes between different forms of governing bodies and places the case study within this context. And finally it locates the perception of residents within this context to problematise some of the key assumptions about gated communities in the literature.

5.2 Gated communities and Governing Bodies
The governing bodies of gated communities have often been criticised for not only creating an artificial sense of community but also for practically functioning as a form of “mini-
government” which removes residents from broader local governance. The notion of an artificial sense of community has already been discussed. Therefore, this section places emphasis on the manner in which governing bodies presumably regulate relations between residents and broader local governance structures.

Cashin, notes that Residents of CIDs [gated communities] tend to view themselves as taxpayers rather than citizens, and they often perceive local property taxes as a fee for services they should receive rather than their contribution to services local government must provide to the community as a whole(2001:1677).

Giddens, in his book *The Third Way* also notes that this voluntary exclusion from society symbolises a “withdrawal from public institutions ... [living] separately in ‘fortress communities’” (as cited in Minton, 2002:11). Governing bodies are seen as instrumental in this process. However, governing bodies cannot be seen as a unified phenomenon, particularly in the South African context where different types of governing bodies have different legal mandates. The next section makes use of the typologies mentioned above and places the different forms of governing bodies associated with each within the context of their mandate.

## 5.3 Different types of governing bodies and their legal mandate

Blakely and Snyder (1997) identify different forms of gated communities. In the South African context these different types of gated communities are governed by different bodies. Elite and lifestyle communities are governed by a Home Owners’ Association. Home Owners’ Associations (HOAs), are not governed by a national statute which regulates the formation and operations of the body. Instead, in Homeowners’ Associations developments, the owner obtains a registered title to a conventional property held under a title deed... [and] each owner of an individual property in an HOA development is automatically a member of the home owners’ association that is usually the registered owner of the development infrastructure. In this case, each owner has indirect rights to the HOA's property as well as the other rights and obligations that are associated with that membership. (Paddock, 2010:1)

Given the absence of national statute to govern the formation of these bodies, many HOAs register as non-profit organisations under the Companies Act of 1973. These are known as Section 21 Companies. However, the Companies Act of 1973 has recently been amended so
that Section 21 Companies no longer exist, and as such HOAs now have to reregister as Non-Profit Organisations. These legal changes will be discussed more thoroughly below.

The last category identified by Blakely and Snyder (1997) is security zones. In the South African context these security zones include cluster homes or Sectional Title Schemes. Sectional Title Schemes, “involve ownership of common property in undivided shares”, and “provide for ownership in different levels or strata on one piece of land that forms part of the common property” (Paddock, 2010:2). According to Paddock, these governing bodies are different in a number of ways, particularly with regard to the legal status of these bodies (2010:1). Body Corporates of the Sectional Title Schemes are governed by the Sectional Title Act:

a national statute that applies to the formation and operations of all sectional title developments, also makes provision for ‘exclusive use rights’ in terms of which the owner of a section, who is also the co-owner of all of the scheme's common property, may enjoy the benefits of an arrangement with the other co-owners that s/he alone will have the right to use a specified part of the common property. The fundamental concept that underlies this title type is an abstract division of buildings into some parts that are owned in undivided shares by all participants (referred to as 'common property') and other parts that are exclusively owned (referred to as 'sections'). (Paddock, 2010:1)

The legal mandates for governing bodies of Sectional Title Schemes differ vastly from the legal mandate of “enclosed neighbourhoods”. In fact, enclosed neighbourhoods have yet to be addressed in the legal forums and as yet there is no legal statute that governs their creation or the manner in which they function.

The differences, both in terms of the legal mandate and structure of governing bodies, is particularly important as HOAs or Body Corporates are deemed the main mechanism through which gated communities are able to protect and advance communal interests, particularly in terms of the manner in which they are empowered to enforce certain physical and social norms (Landman, 2004:18). Therefore, the structure, duties and legal standing of these differentiated governing bodies are essential to understanding gated communities in South Africa. Of particular importance is the distinction between Home Owners’ Associations and Body Corporates of Sectional Title Schemes. The next section engages with the distinctions between these forms of governing bodies, particularly in terms of their legal standing.

5.4 Legal Standing of Body Corporates and Home Owners’ Associations
Body Corporates and Home Owners’ Associations are created, maintained and empowered in terms of different legislation and policies. The differential policies for Body Corporates and Home Owners’ Associations impact on the role that these governing bodies play in terms of governance within gated communities. This section provides an overview of some of the most important legislation that governs Body Corporates and Home Owners’ Associations.

The formation of Body Corporates is governed by the Sectional Title Management Act of 2011. According to this Act:

> With effect from the date on which any person other than the developer becomes an owner of a unit in a scheme, there shall be deemed to be established for that scheme a body corporate of which the developer and such person are members, and any person who thereafter becomes an owner of a unit in that scheme is a member of that body corporate. (ibid, section 2(1))

The Act also stipulates the duties of owners, the functions of the body corporate, the fiscal function of Body Corporates and a number of other roles and responsibilities of all involved in Sectional Title Schemes. Although a full description of these can be found in the Act, the next section provides a summary of the most important aspects of Body Corporates in terms of the Act.

Firstly, Body Corporates are “responsible for the enforcement of the rules and for the control, administration and management of the common property for the benefit of all owners. (ibid, section 2 (5))”. As a legal entity they are empowered to take legal action and be legally implicated in terms of Section 2 (7) of the Act. They are also empowered “to do all things reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the rules and for the management and administration of the common property”.

The rules of Sectional Title Schemes, both the creation of and procedure relating to amendments are stipulated under Section 10 of the Act. The rules comprise of management rules and conduct rules. Both the management and conduct rules are established by the developer, to be taken over and amended by the Body Corporate. These rules take effect from the date of establishment of the Body Corporate as prescribed by developers and “bind the body corporate and the owners of the sections and any person occupying a section” to such rules. The Act further stipulates that such rules should be made available to each person who occupies the section (owner and renter alike) at any meetings (trustee or Body Corporates) or on request from any owner.
Secondly, the functions of the Body Corporates include maintenance and administration of a fund that would cover costs related to the repair, maintenance and administration of the common property but also payments of rates and taxes, electricity, water and sanitation (section 3). Furthermore, the Act stipulates that it is the responsibility of owners to contribute to this fund and that such amounts are to be raised or established by Body Corporates. Common property is to be “[kept] in a state of good and serviceable repair” (section 3) and Body Corporates are empowered to “control, manage and administer the common property for the benefit of all owners”. Furthermore, they are to “ensure compliance with any law relating to the common property or to any improvement of land comprised in the common property” (section 3).

In order to fulfil some of these functions, the Body Corporates are entitled by Section 4 of the Act to appoint managing agents or employees. As has been mentioned, membership of the body corporate is deemed compulsory for all owners of units or “exclusive use areas” within the Sectional Title Scheme. The functions of the Body Corporate are to be “performed and exercised by the trustees of the body corporate holding office in terms of the rules” as prescribed in Section 7 of the Act. However, trusteeship is deemed voluntary and is not remunerated. Thus it is common practice among most Body Corporates, to outsource some of the functions of a Body Corporate to managing agents as approved and managed by the trustees.

Lastly, the Act also provides a detailed description of the duties of owners in Section 13. These include permission by authorised personnel “to enter his or her section or exclusive use area for the purposes of inspecting it and maintaining, […] or for the purpose of ensuring that this Act and the rules are being observed”. The Act also stipulates that exclusive use areas should be maintained in a state of good repair and be kept in a “clean and neat condition”.

Sectional Title Schemes are thus managed by the Sectional Title Management Act of 2011 which legally defines and empowers Body Corporates and owners in a number of ways. One of the contentions around Body Corporates and more specifically Sectional Title Schemes is the legal standing of infrastructure, particularly which entity is responsible for the maintenance of such infrastructure, the state or the collection of private individuals under the Body Corporate. In many case, developers of Sectional Title Schemes bought land with little
or no infrastructure in the past and built much of the infrastructure possessed by these schemes today. Infrastructural development includes the installation of sewage and water pipes, electricity and in most cases roads. These are seen by Body Corporates to be the responsibility of the state but the state often views it as common property under the Sectional Title Scheme. The legal standing of these forms of infrastructure is yet to be determined. This being said, the Sectional Title Act makes provision for a number of roles and responsibilities of Body Corporates, which stands in firm contrast to the legal mandate of Home Owners’ Associations.

Homeowner’s Associations (HOA), on the other hand, are not governed by a national statute which regulates the formation and operations of the body. Given the lack of national statute to govern the formation of these bodies, many HOAs previously registered as non-profit organisations or Section 21 Companies under the Companies Act of 1973. This act stipulates that

the main object of promoting religion, arts, education, charity, recreation, or any other cultural or social activity or communal or group interests... [and] income and property of the association whence so ever derived shall be applied solely towards the promotion of its main object, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred, directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus, or otherwise howsoever, to the members of the association or to its holding company or subsidiary; Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable remuneration to any officer or servant of the association or to any member thereof in return for any services actually rendered to the association. (ibid)

However, recent amendments to the Companies Act of 1973 have led to the dissolution of HOAs under Section 21 of this Act. Paddock explains that in terms of the establishment of the new Companies and Intellectual Property Commission, HOAs will now be forced to register as Non-Profit Organisations (NPCs) with the Commission (2011). This requires submission of annual reports and the rendering of an annual return to the Commission, as well as fees due to them. Paddock further explains that the main functions of the new commission, in terms of HOAs are to

[k]eep registers of information on companies; [k]eep company law under regular review and make recommendations to the minister for changes; [p]romote education and awareness of company law by public education; [r]eceive complaints about and investigate alleged contraventions of company law; [p]romote dispute resolution through the Companies Tribunal; [p]romote compliance with and enforce company law”(2011).

However, unlike Sectional Title Schemes, the formation, functions, duties and management of HOAs are not described under any law or legal mandate. The regulations that govern HOAs are thus founded on the Constitution of each of these HOAs which is often created, at
least in part, by developers of gated communities. The lack of clear legal guidelines in the establishment of these constitutions has led to the development of organisations such as the Association of Residential Communities (ARC). According to their website, ARC “proactively supports the members of Homeowners Associations (HOAs) and Bodies Corporate [...] in the achievement of their vision which classically is to protect, maintain and enhance the value of the property as well as the lives and lifestyles of their residents. [...] ARC practically engages with members and offers a wide range of supporting services, dynamic networking opportunities, access to best practice and provision of policies, procedures, tools and templates for the effective management and leadership of the communities they serve.

ARC provides a range of policy options and templates of constitutions to members, and also provides training courses for management. ARC is based on the principle that “80% of HOAs share similar issues and challenges and that there is a great opportunity for increasing efficiencies through sharing information and collective networking” (ARC website).

However, organisations such as ARC do not negate the fact that HOAs have no legal mandate upon which to base their existence as residential communities and that the roles and responsibilities are not as clearly set out as in the Sectional Title Act and the Sectional Title Management Act. As such there is much larger variation among the structure and form and duties of HOAs in gated communities. In order to fully comprehend the difference between HOAs and Body Corporates, Paddock (2010) provides an interesting comparison between the two entities. According to him, Sectional Title Schemes and HOA developments share a number of characteristics (Paddock, 2010). Firstly, membership of both governing bodies is obligatory for property owners; secondly, both are able to enforce certain standards of behaviour and aesthetics codes; thirdly, any funds raised by the bodies are used for the purposes of enhancing and maintaining the general functioning of the community and lastly, individual property cannot be transferred without the knowledge and approval of the governing body. However, they also differ significantly in terms of the ownership of the infrastructure of communal areas. In HOA development, communal areas are managed by the HOA, and the infrastructure therein is owned by the HOA, including roads, sports amenities and other communal amenities such as the club house. In Sectional Title Schemes, infrastructure is not owned by the Body Corporate, although it is managed by it.

However, given the relative lack of national statute to govern the formation of HOAs, the variations present in gated communities have important implications, especially in terms of their relationship with local government. The case study will illustrate this more clearly in the next section.
Therefore, the literature on gated communities views the governing bodies of gated communities as the main mechanism through which the norms and values of these “private cities” are established, normalised and enforced. The mandate of these governing bodies is in part to manage the functioning of these gated communities, and in terms of generating social values and norms, it plays an active role in their creation and maintenance. Residents are encouraged to participate in activities within the gated community such as “fun walks” and “camp outs”, which often produce social networks that serve as the basis of a sense of community. As has been noted in the literature, this sense of community is often linked to social exclusion, as residents are encouraged to foreground the relationships, values and functioning of the gated community, rather than the local area as a whole. However, the case study complicates these assertions. The findings challenge these views in a number of ways. The next section places the case study within the context of the broader legal mandates of governing bodies. It then proposes to challenge notions that governing bodies exert influence over residents in such a way that they foster a certain form of social values and norms.

5.5 The Home Owners’ Association of Featherbrooke Estate

The HOA of Featherbrooke is governed by a set of Articles in which functions, roles, responsibilities and procedures are clearly outlined. An interview with the Estate management outlined both the structure and content of the Featherbrooke HOA.

The HOA consists of a Board of Directors, headed by a Chairman. Each of these Directors heads a committee under a portfolio, of which there are nine, including the Board of Directors. The portfolios include: Finance Committee, Compliance Committee, Park Committee, Communications Committee, Security Committee, Social Committee, Planning Committee and Aesthetics Committee. The members of these committees and the Board are based on nominations from residents. A vote is taken at the Annual General Meeting, and elected by majority vote. All committee meetings, including notes, are made accessible to residents and meeting schedules are duly published in the Estate Newsletter (which is provided to residents on a monthly basis).

Furthermore, the estate employs four permanent staff members. These include an estate manager, an administrative assistant, and a security executive. The estate manager sits on every committee as the executive director tasked with enacting the decisions made by the various committees. This is seen as providing continuity among the various committees, as
the estate manager is informed about all decisions made, and may intervene where competing processes are at work. The security executive manages all security matters, which include upgrading of security facilities and the management of security issues as reported to the HOA or the estate manager. Where appropriate, committees are able to outsource maintenance or management of their respective portfolio duties. For instance, the security committee outsources the management of security to Fidelity Security Group. Hence security guards, vehicles which transport such guards both within and outside of the Estate and all equipment that is used to ensure safety (guns, tranquiliser guns, and taser guns) are the property of Fidelity Security Group. However, the rules, general conduct and mandate of the security remain the responsibility of the security committee, and resolutions adopted are to be executed by the estate manager. One of the other portfolios that make use of outsourcing is the Parks Committee. The Parks Committee has employed Sonke Plantscapers to maintain communal parks around the Estate. Any and all decisions which are deemed as having financial implications are subject to approval by the Finance Committee, and the Board of Directors.

The HOA is financially supported by the payment of compulsory payment of levies by residents. Residents pay a monthly fee of one thousand two hundred rand (during the year 2011, due to increase in 2012). These levies are compulsory and residents who do not comply may face legal action against them. In order to sell a property within the Estate, the Constitution dictates that a clearance certificate issued by the HOA is required. Residents who owe the HOA in lieu of levies will not be issued a clearance certificate and hence will not be able to sell their property. Levies are calculated on the Annual Budget which is discussed and presented at the Annual General Meeting. Approval of the budget is subject to voting by residents present at the meeting. The collection of levies due to the HOA has been outsourced, in the case of Featherbrooke, to a property management company. Owing to recent discrepancies in the appointed company’s financial documents, the HOA Board of Directors voted to dismiss the current management company and has employed another. In the months following this decision, the company originally employed by Featherbrooke Estate was charged with fraud.

As has been noted above, all meetings and membership to committees and the board of directors are open to all residents subject to vote at the annual general meeting. Meetings are held regularly and a feedback mechanism to residents, managed by the Communication
Committee, ensures that members are aware of all proposed changes, decisions and other resolutions taken by various committees. Reports by directors are also presented at the annual general meeting, along with full disclosure of the financial statements of the HOA for the year. Attendance at annual general meetings is deemed compulsory for all residents.

Rules and regulations pertaining to conduct, management and aesthetics are provided to each potential resident on arrival. Estate agents that work in Featherbrooke often provide copies of these documents to prospective buyers, as buyers are expected to sign a copy of the rules which is to be placed on file by the HOA before approval of the sale can proceed. Where non-compliance to rules is observed, residents are provided firstly, with written warnings, and subsequently with penalties. General non-compliance which is observed will be communicated to residents either via the Newsletter or other feedback mechanisms to remind residents of certain rules. Furthermore, the HOA has recently taken to “naming and shaming” non-compliant residents within the Estate.

Most of the interviewees noted that they had no problems with the way the HOA maintained and managed the Estate. Although some did note that the Aesthetics Committee was particularly harsh in its non-discriminate application of the rules in terms of building and amending houses, the HOA was viewed as successful, responsive and approachable in all matters relating to the management of the Estate. One interviewee noted that “the Home Owners [Association] here in Featherbrooke [...] they are open to new ideas”. Another interviewee observed that the “Home Owners' Association organises itself the way that the majority of people in the Estate want to live.” This notion of a “common goal” was also referred to in other interviews, although the substance of said goal was never fully articulated.

As has been mentioned above, one of the main criticisms of HOAs in the literature on gated communities is that it creates a “private world” (Blakely and Snyder, 1997:12) or “private micro-governments” (Landman, 2002:11). Landman further notes that by embodying a “new form of collective local power that facilitates innovative mechanisms of local control” (2008:6), gated communities are transforming the face of the urban landscape in South Africa and further that the transformation of space leads to social and institutional transformations (2002:8). HOAs are seen as playing an active role in the creation and maintenance of social values and norms by fostering a sense of community that forms the basis of social exclusion,
as residents are encouraged to foreground the relationships, values and functioning of the
gated community rather than the local area as a whole.
Cashin reinforces this, and views the HOA as the main role player in the mitigation of
relations between residents and the state (2001:1677).
However, the literature fails to take into account the different degrees to which HOAs may
play this role. One example of this is the ownership of infrastructure. According to the
constitution, the infrastructure within Featherbrooke is owned (and hence needs to be
maintained) by the state. This infrastructure includes roads, electricity, sewage pipes and
main water pipes within the Estate. These do not include public spaces, such as parks, which
are owned by the HOA. In many of the Sectional Title Schemes, infrastructure is not deemed
the responsibility of the state to maintain. Although this may be a current point of contention,
by and large infrastructure present within Sectional Title Schemes is seen as common
property which is to be maintained by the body corporates. In Featherbrooke, the fact that the
infrastructure is owned by the state implies that the HOA has a diminished role to play in the
provision of services. Although the HOA is empowered as a representative of the residents to
lodge complaints of damaged roads and other maintenance issues, it does not act as a “micro-
government” in that it cannot provide these services themselves. The HOA thus plays more of
a role as a civil society, especially in terms of the production of “public goods” (Beito et al.,
2002:12). Beito et al. note that physical urban infrastructure, including roads and social
infrastructure such as education, social service and conflict resolution, are often produced by
civil society organisations and can thus “restore a ‘civic voice’... [and] foster a set of
connections that enhances the economic as well as the non-economic sides of life” (2002:12).
Although the literature on civil society remains contentious over the defining characteristics
of civil society, Rollin suggests that current definitions of civil society include “grouping[s]
that assume[s] representation of collective interests can be claimed as part of civil society, or
civil society may be defined as the totality of civic engagements citizens commit to join in the
polity” (2007:363).

Other ways in which the HOA provides a number of “public goods” is by allowing residents
to run a variety of businesses from their homes. These include estate agents, insurance
brokers and massage therapists. Most of these businesses are small, but it has also allowed
one resident to run a Montessori Pre-Primary School from her home. This school is open to
members of the public that live outside of the Estate. These businesses are all subject to
approval from the HOA, especially in terms of assessing whether the proposed businesses
will negatively affect the flow of traffic or inconvenience other residents in any other way. However, in an interview with Estate management, they noted that the majority of business proposals are accepted. The HOA also promotes these endeavours in Newsletters and other forms of communication. In this way, the HOA can also be seen as instrumental in the establishment of both economic and other educational services that enhance not only the lives of residents but also those of the broader community as a whole.

The other main criticisms that have been prevalent in the literature and which were briefly discussed in the previous chapter, relate to the role that HOAs play in actively creating and maintaining a sense of community that generates forms of social exclusion based on those that live in the Estate and those that live outside (Landman, 2008:13). Fundamental to these criticisms is the fact that residents value and comply with rules uniformly; and secondly, that these rules are an expression of a socially homogenous population.

With regard to the notion that residents value and comply uniformly with the rules, an interview with the Estate management revealed that rules and regulations are not complied with by a large portion of residents. For instance, speed limits are often not respected by residents. Despite a campaign to enforce adherence to speed limits (this includes “naming and shaming” violators as well as financial penalties), this remains a big problem. Furthermore, many residents treat stop-signs as yield-signs, which are deemed both dangerous and in violation of the rules by the HOA, but the HOA has yet to curb this trend. Non-compliance with rules is also prevalent in terms of the Aesthetic Code. The Aesthetic Code and Rules (as enforced by the Aesthetics and Non-Compliance Committee) clearly stipulates that all new houses and building alteration plans are to be submitted to the Aesthetics Committee prior to the start of the project. These plans have to be approved before any contracting can commence. However, as an interview with Estate management suggests, these rules and processes are not often adhered to by residents. Often residents alter existing buildings and commence the building of new homes before approval has been given by the committee. The HOA responds by issuing fines and refusing access to contractors, but the problem persists. Other forms of non-compliance relate to noise and the hours during which certain levels of noise are deemed acceptable. Residents often circumvent the HOA by using social networks to alert neighbours that noise levels will be high after 22h00 (according to which the HOA prescribes that noise levels should be lowered). All these forms of non-compliance suggest
that the rules and regulations as put forward by the HOA are not uniformly adhered to or even respected.

According to one interviewee, “The Home Owners' Association organises itself the way that the majority of people in the Estate want to live”. This implies that there is a relative sense of homogeneity among residents as to the manner in which they want to live. This homogeneity is seen as being reinforced by the HOA, particularly in terms of the rules, norms and regulations that govern social life in gated communities. As has been noted, Landman views this as the main mechanism through which HOAs are able to form a sense of community (2004:21). Articulated differently, as a “cohesion of people with similar expectations, outlooks, levels of affluence or anxieties” entrenched by the rules and regulations that “guarantee conformity … [by] substituting [the rule] for the informal social controls” (Forrest and Kearns, 2001:2135). This view does, however, infer the notion that gated communities cater to a socially homogenous group, which in the case of Featherbrooke may be misleading. As has been noted, racial homogeneity in the case study does not serve as a cohesive force among residents. Furthermore, the notion that the HOA enforces certain types of behaviours and values through enforcement of rules and regulations is complicated by this lack of social homogeneity. Thus the salience of certain values as they are represented in the rules and regulations is not uniform. This is often articulated through non-compliance with such rules and regulations. As has been noted, non-compliance remains one of the main challenges faced by the Estate.

Thus, the findings of the research indicate that the HOA in Featherbrooke does set rules and regulations within the Estate, but that these rules only generate social values and norms in so far as residents comply with said rules. Furthermore, the infrastructural arrangement within the Estate questions some of the commonly held notions about governing bodies as “mini-governments”. What this indicates is that the role that HOAs play, both within the gated community and in terms of linkages between the gated community and local governance structure, may be far more complex and relegated than indicated elsewhere.

5.6 Conclusion

The case study at hand problematises a number of assumptions that pervade the literature on gated communities. The notion that governing bodies function similarly is problematised, firstly, by the legal mandate according to which some governing bodies are created and
function. Moreover, differential legal mandates have led to a lack of standardised regulations among gated communities. Although organisations such as ARC have attempted to fill this void, membership is voluntary and thus not enforceable. This implies that different gated communities of similar size and aims may function very differently. Thus gated communities and specifically HOAs cannot be seen as a uniform phenomenon. Secondly, the notion that rules and regulations form the basis of a sense of community or a means through which HOAs can prescribe certain forms of social behaviours rests on the notion that residents comply uniformly with said rules. This is not, however, seen to be the case. Therefore, HOAs may serve to function far more like a civil society actor than a form of “mini-government”. However, the role that the HOA plays has to be contextualised within the broader policy framework on gated communities. Of particular importance is the manner in which gated communities serve spatially to fragment society. The next chapter explores some of the main legislation and policies that govern spatial planning in contemporary South Africa and places the case study within the broader context of the municipal planning strategy.

CHAPTER SIX: URBAN AND SPATIAL PLANNING

6.1 Introduction

The literature on gated communities in South Africa has often criticised gated communities for interfering with and hampering integrated development in terms of the “democratic project”. Most of the literature implicitly links this notion of “democratic project” to spatial, social and economic development in the context of the socio-spatial legacy of apartheid (Landman, 2002). This chapter contextualises these arguments, firstly in the policies and legislative frameworks of various tiers of government, and secondly argues that municipalities play an integral role in integrated development. The chapter then contextualises the case study within this framework by exploring some of the key policies.
and documents of the municipality in which the case study is located. It concludes by noting the complex relationship and tensions among various facets of integrated development.

6.2 Gated communities and Integrated Development

Gated communities are seen as a form of the urban landscape that perpetuates the apartheid socio-spatial configuration and hence stand in opposition to some of the developmental goals and strategies that have been given prominence in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, the huge proliferation of varying forms of gated communities is often linked to the escalating crime rates and fear of said crime, whereby residents of gated communities display a “lack of trust in governments to protect citizens from both crime and environmental decline” (Landman, 2002: 8). This has often been articulated in terms of the tendency of residents to exclude themselves socially from broader society. Although the notion of social exclusion has already been discussed in previous chapters, it is worth noting that Landman often links this notion to the concept of democracy (2002). Therefore, gated communities are serving to fragment and challenge the democratic project in the South African urban landscape: gated communities are creating barriers to democracy on a variety of levels, both spatially, institutionally and socially (Landman, 2002:9).

Landman notes that the spatial patterning which is produced by gated communities has a number of negative implications for urban geography (2004:8). For the purposes of this chapter, the term “democratic project” will be employed in the same manner as it has been articulated in the literature, and will not be critically interrogated. The term “democratic project” is employed as a means to denote integrated development, social integration, and ideals such as equality. Instead, the chapter gives an overview of some of the most important legislation and procedures in relation to land usage, urban development and the roles of various tiers of government in the management and designation of land for development purposes. This is done in order to contextualise the case study within the broader policy framework and hence critically to assess criticisms lodged against gated communities in the literature.

6.3 The Urban Setting and the Importance of Integrated Development

According to Landman, “political transition in 1994 paved the way for the development of a range of new planning and development policies to address the imbalances of the past and pave the way for the integration and socio-economic upliftment in South African cities”(2004:7). It formed part of a broader strategy of redistribution and development;
Theunissen notes that the RDP’s main objectives were the provision of basic needs, elimination of poverty, economic growth and the upliftment of the population (2003:125). This involved six basic principles; namely, people-driven processes; assuring peace and security; integration and sustainability; reconstruction and development, and democratisation (Landman, 2004: 7). In accordance with these principles, local governments were tasked with the establishment of meaningful community participation in decision-making processes in order to build capacities within communities (Zybrands, 2003:215). Subsequent to the development of the RDP in 1994, the government adopted a macroeconomic strategy named Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme (GEAR). This policy aimed to foster economic growth through the achievement of a “competitive fast-growing economy” (Landman, 2004:8) and “sought to put economic growth before redistribution of wealth” (Pottinger, 2008:69). These two strategies formed the backdrop for policies relating to socio-spatial transformation in South Africa. In terms of the challenges posed to this transformation, Landman notes that these are two main challenges; namely, the integration within cities (as well as the integration of cities into their broader surroundings), and secondly, developing previously disadvantaged areas in such a way that they are able to resemble previously advantaged areas (2004:8).

Watson notes that the post-apartheid government in South Africa has shown a clear commitment to the transformation of South African socio-spatial characteristics in such a way that integration and development are key concepts in the new policies (2003). Smit notes that the first comprehensive policy statement in post-apartheid South Africa on urban development was the Urban Development Strategy (1995) and in 1997 the Urban Development Framework (2004:3). The Urban Development Framework reflected three prominent urban development discourses prevalent during the transition period (Smit, 2004: 4). These have been identified as spatial restructuring, social and economic development and institutional restructuring.

The National Development and Planning Commission, in a draft green paper on Development and Planning notes that
the function of spatial planning is of considerable national importance. [...] The development of more efficient and enabling settlement systems, which is necessary to improve the quality of life of all South Africans, requires creative thought and bold, purposeful action (ibid, 1999:20).

The necessity of an efficient planning system is clearly indicated in this draft green paper. The reasons include providing direction for practical and desirable outcomes of spatial planning; protection and respect for rights and obligations of people; protection of the natural environment through minimisation of large-scale environmental degradation; efficient use of resources; higher quality of service delivery; the coordination of resources to ensure optimum use of such resources; prioritising developmental needs; and avoiding duplication of actions and effort by different spheres of government, (National Development and Planning Commission, ibid, 1999: 20-21).

One of the first urban development strategies was articulated in the form of a discussion document entitled the Urban Development Strategy (1995). This document firstly highlighted some of the major challenges facing urban development in a post-apartheid context and secondly proposed a set of strategic goals to guide urban development. The document envisioned cities based on integrated urban and rural development strategies that would allow cities to be centres of economic and social opportunity, free of racial segregation or gendered discrimination, providing good infrastructure and services to the population as a whole, managed by democratic local governments such that these cities would be leaders of a globally competitive national economy (Landman, 2004:10). Furthermore, it outlined seven strategic goals in order to achieve this vision, which highlighted the need for urban development, reconstruction and upliftment.

In terms of spatial restructuring, Hervé (2009) notes that the Development Facilitation Act (1995) was one of the only Acts that aimed to implement the Urban Development Strategy. This Act recommended principles that aimed to prevent urban sprawl, optimise resources, proposed housing and nearby or rapidly accessible employment solutions, and encouraged the mixed use of land (Hervé, 2009:43). Landman notes that the main purpose of the Act was to act as an interim measure to “bridge the gap between the old apartheid planning laws and a new planning system” (2004: 9). Smit further comments that key to the principles upon which the Act was based was the idea of an “integrated city” which aimed at redressing the spatial fragmentation and segregation of the apartheid past (2004).
Key features of the Development Facilitation Act include the principles for land development which reject low-density segregated “monofunctional development”; Land Development Objectives, which were established by every municipality to facilitate strategic and integrated land use planning; and development tribunals at a provincial level which would process applications for land use change and land development speedily. The Act explains that

settlements that arise through uncontrolled individual self-interest are usually not equitable or efficient. In more equitable settlements, more advantaged individuals and groups do not benefit from development at the expense of less advantaged ones. Conflicts may arise between the activities in a settlement. Efficient planning requires that any such conflicts are resolved. The primary focus and responsibility of planning is the issues affecting the public good (such as health, safety and amenities), rather than the good of any one individual…(p. 5).

The Act also clearly notes “the central significance of integration” (p. 12). It posits that all elements or parts of the settlement should complement or reinforce one another in such a way that integration between rural and urban landscapes, land uses, new and old developments and integration of different classes are possible. According to Landman this Act “introduced a new paradigm for planning and development by providing the basis for a coherent framework for land development according to a set of binding principles” (2004:8).

The Urban Development Strategy was redrafted in 1997 and released as two separate documents; namely, the Urban Development Framework and the Rural Development Framework. This redrafted framework outlined four key programmes. The first related to the integration of the city.

According to Smit, spatial integration was key to the concept of integrating the city (2004: 5). The Framework notes that

the spatial integration of our settlements… will enhance economic efficiency, facilitate the provision of affordable services, reduce the costs households incur through commuting, and enable social development. Spatial integration is also central to nation building, to addressing the locational disadvantages which apartheid imposed on the black population, and to building an integrated society and nation (RSA, 1998: 24).

Other key concepts were related to the rebuilding or upgrading of informal settlements; strategic planning for high density land-use and developments; and a reformulation of the existing planning system, including the management of the environment and transportation.
Secondly, the Framework outlined the need for improved housing and infrastructure. As part of this programme, housing and infrastructure would be upgraded and expanded, but it also involved other factors. These included social development, fiscal development particularly in the form of access to finance and investment, and the maintenance of safe, secure and habitable communities. Linked to this was the third programme which was related to the promotion of economic development in urban areas. This included capacity building in urban areas to generate and promote local economic activity which was sustainable. Furthermore, this development was seen as key to the alleviation of poverty as it aimed to “maximise direct employment opportunities” (Landman, 2004:9). Lastly, this Framework outlined a programme for capacity building in all tiers of government. This programme also involved a description of the roles and responsibilities of all the spheres of government. (Landman, 2004:9). The Framework emphasises the establishment of “critical new relationships and patterns of engagement between the newly elected local governments and civil society” (Department of Housing, 1997:11).

Following this Framework, the White Paper on Spatial and Land Use Management (2001) aimed to “rationalise and integrate an existing plethora of planning laws and policies into one national system that will be applicable in every province” (Landman, 2004:11). This Paper affirmed the “integrated planning for sustainable management of land resources” (ibid, 2001:2). Landman notes that this Paper displayed a progression from other planning policies (2004:12). Positive aspects included a holistic focus on integrated development and urban sustainability. This was done primarily through improvements on integrated planning in terms of processes, particularly the streamlining of processes such as the IDPs and relationships between different tiers of government especially roles and responsibilities (Landman, 2004:13).

6.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Different Tiers of Government

Hervé (2009) notes that the Urban Development Framework set out specific spheres of influence for government departments regarding urban development, which was further entrenched in the White Paper. She describes the roles and responsibilities of a number of national and local government departments. In terms of National Government, Hervé identified three departments that were key to city planning (2009:64). These were the Department of Housing, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the Department of Land Affairs. The Department of Housing was deemed to be “behind most
public spatial development actions in favour of the poorest” (Hervé, 2009:64). As one of the main authorities on public contracting in the field of urban development, the Department of Housing has seen its focus as more than providing housing, but rather the “production of integrated urban spaces” (Hervé, 2009:64). This was articulated in the Comprehensive Housing Plan for the Development of Integrated Sustainable Human Settlements in 2004. The document acknowledged that despite continued commitment to urban development, “the inequalities and inefficiencies of the apartheid space economy has lingered on” (ibid, 2004:11).

Thus it stated that a

new plan envisages the expansion of the mandate of the Department [of Housing] to encompass the entire residential housing market. This expanded scope is required to address increased integration between the primary and secondary housing market. The impact of this expanded mandate is reflected throughout the plan, but is manifested most strongly through the expansion of the existing state-assisted housing scheme to support lower-middle income groups. (ibid, 2004:7-8)

The second key national department is the Department of Land Affairs. Hervé notes that the primary role of this department is to “re-balance the national territory and return (mainly rural) land to historically disadvantaged populations” (2009:65). As such it is in charge of land regulation. Of particular importance is the role that it plays in zoning mechanisms. The Department of Land Affairs has drafted the Land Use Management Bill to identify authorities and zoning mechanisms clearly. This bill proposes that most of the responsibilities on land regulation and development principles should be entrusted to the municipalities. Hervé notes that this bill has not yet been passed and has been notably “accused of not being sufficiently elaborate and of overturning other laws in use without taking into account practical modalities” (2009:87). It does, however, indicate the need for a more integrated system of planning which clearly sets out roles and responsibilities for each level of government.

The last key department identified by Hervé is the Department of Provincial and Local Government (2009). Hervé notes that the role of this department is to create and apply all regulations that define local and provincial governments’ “intervention modalities” (2009:64). This department has two important programmes in terms of urban development; namely, the integrated strategic planning programme for local governments and the Urban Renewal Programme. As part of the Integrated Strategic Planning Programme, localities must produce strategic and budgetary documents that “allow municipalities to plan and implement
their development programmes” (Hervé, 2009:65). These are referred to as Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The second policy pertains to the reintegration of “under-developed zones” as identified by the department. It is with respect to the IDPs that local government becomes of particular importance. According to Hervé, the Municipal System Act of 2000 has made municipalities responsible for setting development objectives. These objectives are then approved by provincial structures before they can be enacted (Hervé, 2009:67). In terms of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000, each municipal council must adopt a single, inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality [...] and must reflect … a spatial development framework which must include the provision of basic guidelines for a land use management system for the municipality.

However, Hervé acknowledges that many of the roles, responsibilities and powers of urban planning were entrusted to provinces in 1995, as various municipalities were unable to fulfil this mandate (2009:73). Although Hervé notes that municipalities and local governments are being given extended responsibilities, provinces still have overriding powers in urban planning (2009:74). Even in the context of IDPs municipalities have little jurisdiction over planning policies, as IDPs are required to fit into the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy. Municipalities do, however, retain key responsibility in terms of zoning and general land regulation. However, the lack of a national strategic framework to address city development hampers the efforts of municipalities to coordinate “local actions aiming to plan urban landscapes” (Hervé, 2009:81). This is particularly true in the context of capacity-related constraints on the use of IDPs for constructive planning by municipalities. Hervé notes that most municipalities, with the exception of metros, “call on private consultants to produce their IDPs. In this way, the municipalities fulfil their legal obligations but do not take advantage of this mode of strategic management” (2009:81).

What emerges from this discussion is that the different tiers of government are inserted into the integrated development process in a number of ways. What also becomes clear is that these different tiers do not always function in synergy and that legislation and policies do not always translate into practical terms in the same manner as they were envisioned. What does, however, become clear is the important role that municipalities play, particularly in spatial planning. This in turn implies that municipalities play an important role in the zoning and development of gated communities. The next section engages with the IDP of importance to the case study of Featherbrooke, to contextualise the gated community within the integrated
development goals of the municipality.

6.5 Integrated Development Plan of Mogale City

Featherbrooke Estate is located in Ward 28, which lies on the eastern edge of Mogale City Municipality. This ward forms part of the areas known as the Muldersdrift area, which is adjacent to the municipal boundary of Mogale City. The following section describes some of the main developmental objectives and challenges of this particular area as are articulated in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) for Mogale City. This section then locates some of the developmental challenges within the context of integrated development and the tensions between these challenges and gated communities.

According to the IDP, Mogale City is known as the City of Human Origins. It is named after Chief Mogale- Wa-Mogale, the young heir to the Po Chiefdom of Batswana. The Po-Tribe (the Ndebele migrant Group) was among the early groups to occupy the Mogale City area. Later, surrounded by the Batswana – Bafokeng and Bakwena people, their Nguni culture and language were gradually replaced by that of the Batswana. The Po occupied the region from Magaliesburg and extended as far east as the present day Northcliff Ridge, and Hartebeespoort to North-West. Chief Mogale–Wa–Mogale is recognised as one of the first South African freedom fighters. Generations have been inspired by his bravery and tireless attempts at restoring ancestral land to his people. He was: “A true son of Africa, who is rightfully honoured by naming the city after him’ (2010:6).

The IDP and SDF for Mogale City were formulated in 2010/2011 and seek to “arrange development activities, land uses and the built form in such a manner that they can accommodate the ideas and desires of people without compromising the natural environment and how services are delivered” (2010:6). Furthermore these documents are used to ensure “the development of a sustainable urban and rural environment while at the same time creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the developmental agenda of national government” (2010:6). The aims and objectives of the SDF and IDP are thus aligned with both national and provincial policies and legislation, most notably the Gauteng Spatial Development Perspective and the Growth and Development Strategy for the Gauteng Province. As has been noted above, all spatial planning and development strategies of municipalities are subject to approval of the province. As such the Gauteng Spatial Development Perspective made a series of recommendations for Mogale City in terms of its SDF and IDP. These include that the Muldersdrift and Krugersdorp areas show significant links to the Gauteng core” and furthermore that this area “form[s] part of a series of loose standing decentralised, stagnating activity areas that are scattered throughout the province” (2010:19). According to these recommendations, Mogale City should focus on “infrastructure, transport solutions and subsidies, information technology and education and skills development” (2010:19).
In accordance with these recommendations, the SDF for Mogale City articulates these goals as follows:

- The integration of various areas in Mogale City to form a well-functioning space economy
- The development of sustainable human settlements and urban renewal of existing settlements
- The promotion and facilitation of economic development
- The sustainable management of the natural environmental assets and heritage
- The promotion of tourism development
- The promotion of sustainable rural development
- The development and improvement of linkages with Johannesburg, Tshwane, Madibeng, the rest of Gauteng and the broader region
- Service delivery, specifically focusing on providing sufficient capacity in development priority areas (2010: 88).

In contextualising these objectives, the SDF provides an overview of the key characteristics of the municipality. These characteristics include the relations of Mogale City with other municipalities; the physical environment of the municipality, particularly in terms of how it relates to development; environmental aspects of the municipality; demographics and spatial characteristics; socio-economic profile of the municipality; access to services and resources; social services; and current developmental trends and pressures. The next section will summarise some of the key characteristics identified.

Mogale City is deemed largely rural with specific urban complexes. These complexes are found in Krugersdorp, the Muldersdrift area, and Kagiso and form part of a “virtually continuous band of development from Johannesburg” (2010:34-35). In fact, Mogale City is seen as integrally linked to a number of metropolitan areas, including Tshwane and Johannesburg (2010:33). The SDF identifies that “Mogale City’s strongest functional urban linkage is with the City of Johannesburg” (2010:33). In accordance with this, the Muldersdrift area is seen as an extension of the “band of development” as development from Johannesburg is already extending past the municipal boundary into Mogale City. This puts developmental pressure on this area, creating a tension between preserving the rural character of parts of the area and accommodating development from Johannesburg. As such, the report notes that the “Muldersdrift area is probably the area that will in future experience the greatest level of conflict between various planning and development agencies” (2010:83). Furthermore it notes that
While on the one hand this area lies in the path of urban development and as such shows the mixed-use typology of a typical urban-rural transition zone, parts of this area fall within areas earmarked for conservation or at least very limited development. The clash between pressure for urban expansion and the conservation requirements results in conflict between the various agencies responsible for planning and development in the area (2010:35).

This is particularly true in the context of the 2007 Urban Edge demarcation by the Gauteng Province. According to the Regional Spatial Development Framework of 2011/2012, an urban development boundary is demarcated in order to strengthen the existing urban areas and nodes, to contain urban sprawl, to promote more compact urban development and to protect the agricultural and ecological potential of the rural hinterland within the district. Future urban development should consist primarily of infill and densification within the current urban edge (2011:62).

This is done in order to create to promote integrated efficient urban areas, so as to maximise use of resources within urban areas, to minimise commuter distance, and to protect agricultural, cultural and natural environments (SDF for Mogale City, 2010:93). Peripheral areas such as Mogale City and in particular the Muldersdrift area are seen as the main perpetrators of the urban sprawl and have thus been tasked by the province actively to prevent further developments. Around Mogale City this edge is defined as thence northwards along the boundary of Randfontein and Krugersdorp around the Krugersdorp Nature Reserve, and following the Krugersdorp Ridge to the N14, thence following the R28 in a northerly direction up to the R512 meeting the boundary of the WGSC and following it around Lanseria and the Diepsloot Nature Reserve (Gauteng Spatial Development Framework, 2000).

However, the SDF for Mogale City notes that in subsequent revisions the urban edge has been articulated in terms of the Johannesburg municipal boundary according to which the Muldersdrift area falls beyond this edge (2010:94). This does not, however, take the development pressures in the Muldersdrift area into account. The SDF for Mogale City has thus proposed an expansion of the delineated edge, in terms of which the Gauteng Provincial Government “agreed that the [proposed]urban edge [...] is an ideal long term development boundary for the province in general and Mogale City specifically” (SDF for Mogale City, 2010:36). However, the current delineation does not make provision for resources and services on a provincial level and thus poses a developmental challenge to the municipality.

One of the major threats identified by Mogale City is that rural populations are often displaced by developmental pressure (2010:85). This is particularly true in the context of
“[u]ncoordinated and unmanaged development in the Muldersdrift area” (2010:85). However, these developments have also led to the creation of urbanised areas. These urban areas have higher rates of employment, which stand in contrast to the rest of the municipality. High levels of unemployment in other areas “restrict[s] the ability of the municipality to address issues of transformation and spatial integration simply due to a lack of resources” (SDF, 2010:62). This is compounded by levels of income. According to the SDF very few areas in Mogale City report higher levels of income. Areas that do boast said incomes include Muldersdrift and Krugersdorp (2010:62). This implies that the resources base in the municipality is severely limited, and thus Mogale City has a “very limited ability to make a significant impact on development in general” (2010:62). The tension between extending development in areas such as Muldersdrift as a means for generating a greater resource base, and adhering to provincial policies around the urban edge, has thus been one of the main focuses of the municipality.

In terms of developments such as gated communities, the SDF notes that these urban formations pose various developmental challenges to the municipality. Although these gated communities provide higher population densities, provide employment and help to extend the resource base, these communities are “very difficult to manage from a land use point of view” (SDF, 2010:65). The municipality also notes, for instance, that gated communities (referred to as “country estates”) not located around the urban areas create permanent residential areas that are not integrated into “main activity areas” (SDF, 2010:113).

Furthermore, these estates are leap-frog developments that require the extension of services to areas where services should not be a priority and further result in greater commuting distances for the residents of these areas to places of work, education, social facilities and business opportunities. These estates could therefore in fact contribute to an inefficient spatial form and could be considered to be against the principle of integrated and sustainable development (SDF, 2010; 113).

The SDF thus proposes that said gated communities “should only be permitted around and contiguous to existing urban areas” (2010:113).

Featherbrooke Estate falls within this contentious relationship between gated communities and the integrated developmental goals of municipalities. The Estate falls within the “band of development” in Muldersdrift, as identified in the SDF and IDP for Mogale City. Therefore, it does not form part of the country estates identified in these reports, but rather forms part of the urban areas which provide a resource base as well as employment opportunities for the municipalities. This was, however, not always the case. In 1995 when the development of
Featherbrooke Estate was initiated, the band of development had not yet reached the Muldersdrift area. As such, the Estate did serve to divert limited resources to a scarcely populated area and in this manner hamper integrated development. Currently, however, this is not the case, as the areas surrounding the Estate have seen various economic and residential developments in the course of the past ten years. The Estate contributes to these developments in the forms mentioned above; namely, by creating job opportunities for local residents of surrounding areas as well as a resource base for the municipality. The relationship between the Estate and the municipal context is thus far more complex, both historically and currently, than indicated in the literature on gated communities.

What the Spatial Development Framework and the Integrated Development plan for Mogale City indicate is that there are various tensions and competing processes within the municipality. Although some of these can be managed, particularly land use zoning mechanisms, the development pressures, and the tension between rural and urban development is evident within Mogale City. The tensions illustrated in these two documents are exemplified by gated communities. On the one hand, the development of gated communities is accompanied by the development of infrastructure, housing and employment. The IDP, for instance, notes that one of the major contributors to employment within the municipality is households. Furthermore, these gated communities attract higher income earners that serve to expand the resource base available to the municipality. On the other hand, however, these communities place higher demands on infrastructure, with particular reference to “country estates” which divert resources to areas outside of the urban centres. Furthermore, these communities often contribute to the “urban sprawl” negating the delineation of the urban edge. This in turn complicates the notion of integrated development, as the urban sprawl diverts resources, extends commuter distance and infringes on natural environments. Viewed from this perspective, gated communities pose a real threat to the creation of integrated cities. However, the contributions that they make in terms of providing employment and expanding the resource base serve to complicate this view. Gated communities thus pose a challenge but also enable the municipality in terms of its integrated development plan.

6.6 Conclusion

The literature on gated communities indicates that they pose a serious threat to integrated development in a post-apartheid context (Landman, 2004). The findings on Mogale City affirm this notion. However, this simple affirmation is not as simple as indicated in the
literature on gated communities. Gated communities do contribute to the urban sprawl, which has various implications for integrated development. However, the gated communities also contribute to the resources base within municipalities, which enables municipalities to address other developmental goals. As such, a complex relationship between municipalities and gated communities persists. In the case study, these are complicated by the notion of the “urban edge” whereby the Muldersdrift area is caught between furthering the developmental objectives and negating the notion of integrated cities. The manner in which municipalities are able to manage these processes is mainly through zoning mechanisms. These mechanisms form the basis for land allocation to development, which balances the various tensions described above. What is, however, clear is that gated communities in and of themselves do not serve to hamper integrated development; rather it is the context in which they are embedded that is significant.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

The rise of gated communities has often been linked to social ills such as rising crime rates, as a result of which people are moving into highly regulated communities which are secured by physical barriers and private security companies (Landman, 2002). These gated communities are seen to facilitate social exclusion by creating physical and symbolic barriers between those living within and outside of gated communities. This impacts not only on the ability of local governments to produce integrated urban residence, but also poses various challenges to the “democratic project” currently underway in South Africa (Landman, 2003). However, research on these communities is relatively limited and tends to focus on the above-mentioned impacts without fully engaging the residents of gated communities themselves, or comprehending the heterogeneity and complex social relations both within such communities and also with people and places in the surrounding areas.

In order to comprehend the complexity within gated communities fully, a distinction between different types of gated communities needs to be made. The three main categories of gated communities defined by Blakely and Snyder (1997) are lifestyle communities, elite communities and security zones. Grant proposes an additional four dimensions to capture more accurately the variety in gated communities (Grant, 2004:917). The literature on gated communities indicates that there may be different types that serve different purposes and may be inhabited by different people depending on the criteria used to categorise them. Grant notes that regarding gated communities as a “unitary set of urban forms” can be misleading (2004:914), as is amplified by Salcedo and Torres (2004). However, critics of these estates tend not to take these distinctions seriously and see gated communities as a unitary phenomenon about which most are sceptical. Some of the main criticisms of these communities are that they promote social exclusion by reacting to a culture of fear by physically creating barriers between residents and non-residents. Coupled with a sense of community based on exclusionary principles, these gated communities are viewed as spaces which serve to entrench economic and racial cleavages in society.

This may have very damaging social consequences in the South African context, and a growing body of literature on local gated communities has sought to analyse this. One of the leading authors on this subject is Karina Landman from The Council for Scientific and
Industrial Research (CSIR) in South Africa. She has conducted a number of studies on gated communities in South Africa and written a number of papers on the comparative nature of gated communities in South Africa and Brazil. This literature on gated communities in South Africa has contributed to a new understanding of the changing urban landscape. Research on gated communities has often focused on the urban geography and environmental aspects of these communities, as well as on the possible impacts on democracy but very little research has been conducted on the social dynamics within gated communities.

The purpose of this research was to explore these social dynamics within gated communities. Of particular importance is the manner in which social dynamics within gated communities complicate some commonly held perceptions about the white middle class nature of residents. Social homogeneity based on race and class is seen as an important factor that binds residents in a sense of community. This sense of community is integrally linked to the role that governing bodies play in maintaining this sense of community. The purpose of this sense of community is to foster social exclusion. This research makes use of a single case study design in order to understand and expand on literature on gated communities. The case study is largely descriptive and aims to highlight some of the important features of gated communities in South Africa. This is also done in order to gain a more meaningful understanding of individuals who reside in gated communities, particularly motives and meanings, which are largely absent in the current literature. Furthermore, it aims to contextualise the case study within the broader policy context of integrated development.

The case study selected for this research is Featherbrooke Estate. Featherbrooke Estate is a large gated community situated in the Mogale City Municipal District. The Estate was established in the mid-1990s, but it only became a popular residential area from the early 2000s when the population more than doubled within the space of a couple of years. The community is enclosed and has only one access point at the main gate. Security includes armed patrols 24 hours a day, registration of all visitors and strict regulations pertaining to contractors and other builders. Within the typology identified by Blakely and Snyder, this gated community can be classified as a lifestyle estate. The research made use, primarily, of qualitative research methods in the form of life history interviews. In total 25 interviews were conducted for the purpose of this study. One of the main criticisms in the literature on gated communities against this urban formation is that it fosters social exclusion in a variety of forms. This includes socially excluding
residents from the surrounding areas, as well as exclusion of other populations from the public spaces within the gated community. However, the literature treats social exclusion in two different, yet reciprocal ways. Firstly, gated communities are seen as a form of voluntary exclusion, as described above, in which residents of gated communities voluntarily exclude themselves from the surrounding areas, from public institutions and from broader local governance in both physical and symbolic terms. This social exclusion is based primarily on geographical space, but Landman notes that this is reinforced by various subjective attachments to space and the role that physical barriers play in creating a sense of community based on difference (2004:21).

Residents within the case study did not identify with socially excluding themselves from the surrounding areas along most dimensions. The only dimension in which they felt they were excluding themselves was in terms of the spatial dimension. Secondly, gated communities are seen to socially exclude populations from surrounding areas. The findings indicate that apart from the spatial dimension, the gated community does not serve to exclude populations from surrounding areas socially. The literature on gated communities advocates that the physical exclusion or spatial dimension of social exclusion often produces an “us and them” mentality. Spinks, for instance, notes that walls and physical barriers in gated communities “actually deepen segregation and reinforce fear [of the other] by excluding difference” (2001:11). This mentality has often been linked to the socially homogenous nature of populations within gated communities. However, the findings of this study clearly call into question the notion that residents of gated communities can be seen entirely as a homogenous population. In accordance with Freud’s “narcissism of minor differences” (1930:114), residents identify other factors that distinguish them from other residents. The literature tends to focus on racial classifications to present a unified population; however, in the case of Featherbrooke whiteness is not seen as a cohesive force. Residents view factors such as levels of affluence and linguistic backgrounds as some of the main factors that distinguish them as individuals from other residents. Furthermore, the literature on social homogeneity and goal attainment suggests that protecting and maintaining the environment within the gated community fosters social homogeneity among residents, but the findings suggest that this is not the case. The role that social homogeneity plays in various forms of social exclusion may thus be far more complicated than indicated in the literature.
What this indicates is that relationships among residents may be far more complex than suggested in the literature. Moreover, in terms of social exclusion, the lack of social homogeneity, particularly perceived social homogeneity, may complicate the “us and them” mentality often referred to in the literature. This mentality is often seen as the foundation of social exclusion in the context of gated communities. What emerges from the case study is that processes of social exclusion are far more complex than the creation of an “us and them” mentality. Furthermore, the literature on gated communities indicates that social exclusion is entrenched by a sense of community created within gated communities.

The main vehicle through which a sense of community is forged has often been ascribed to the relevant governing bodies. This is done not only through the enforcement of rules and regulations but also through a variety of other activities organised and endorsed by the governing body which aim to produce a psychological sense of belonging among residents. The literature on gated communities does not, however, interrogate the notion of a sense of community. The term is employed broadly without a clear definition of the features of a sense of community. Although the definition of this concept is highly contentious, what the literature on a sense of community brings to the fore is that the importance of a sense of community, and whether a sense of community is deemed to have negative or positive implications for a community are also highly contentious. Muniz and O’Guinn, (2001), however, note that there are certain components of a sense of community that are inherent to most definitions. They propose three important “markers” or core components in identifying communities; namely, the presence of “shared rituals and traditions” which serve to entrench and perpetuate a community’s shared culture and history and reaffirm social practices that celebrate certain behavioural norms and values (Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001:413); a “sense of moral responsibility” which enables members to feel a sense of duty and obligation towards the community as whole and its individual members (2001:413); and a “consciousness of kind”. These markers are reinforced by McMillan and Chavis’s markers of a community. They identify the following as important dimensions: a “feeling of membership”; a “feelings of influence”; an “integration and fulfilment of needs”; and a “shared emotional connection” (as cited in Blanchard and Markus, 2004:68).

In terms of these markers, the case study reveals that a sense of community is far more ambiguous than anticipated in the literature. In terms of “feeling of membership” (1986:9), most of the interviewees declared that they did feel some sense of belonging within the
community, although not universally true. In terms of a “feeling of influence” (McMillan and Chavis, 1986:11), most interviewees did not actively participate in the day-to-day running of Featherbrooke, although access to management of the estate is open to residents, both in terms of participation and influence. Most residents share a relative ignorance of the various spheres of influence with the community and the processes involved. This may account for the relative lack of a feeling of influence among most interviewees. However, interviewees did feel a strong sense of integration as well as emotional fulfilment of needs by people within the community.

This is also linked to the fourth dimension identified by McMillan and Chavis; namely, a “shared emotional connection” (1986:12), in which the “spirit” of the community is upheld through interaction and investment of time. These ties are often seen as the consequence of the creation and maintenance of social networks within gated communities. These networks are seen to foster these feelings of a sense of community, which entrench the mental constructions of “insiders” and “outsiders”. The case study illustrates that this may not be as simple. Interviewees noted that there were numerous pre-existing social networks that were often imported into Featherbrooke. This does not imply that the networks become exclusively bound to the gated community as these networks still include a number of people who reside outside the Estate. What this brings to the fore is that a sense of community may be far less important to residents than anticipated. This expanded understanding of a sense of community and the manner in which networks work within gated communities questions the manner in which this sense may create symbolic forms of exclusion. Therefore, what the case study illustrates that the manner in which social exclusion and a sense of community are implicated in the literature is importance of this sense of community is complicated.

Furthermore, the relationship between a sense of community and governing bodies was also explored in the research. The role played by governing bodies within the literature on gated communities has often been viewed from a legal standpoint, hence the manner in which these governing bodies interact with the state. This is particularly true in terms of how residents relate, firstly to the governing bodies, but beyond that, the changing character of relations between residents of gated communities and the state given the existence of governing bodies. The findings of the case study suggest that governing bodies may play a far more ambiguous role in gated communities, particularly in terms of how residents relate and engage with said governing bodies. Moreover, governing bodies of gated communities are
treated as a unified phenomenon. However, in the South African context, different types of governing bodies have differential legal mandates. The case study is governed by a Home Owners’ Association. Home Owners’ Associations are not governed by a national statute which regulates the formation and operations of the body. Given the lack of national statute to govern the formation of these bodies, many HOAs register as non-profit organisations under the Companies Act of 1973.

This allows HOAs to create their own constitutions or Articles of Association which are not governed by a legal mandate in the same manner that body corporates are. The HOA of Featherbrooke is governed by a set of Articles in which functions, roles and responsibilities, and procedures are clearly outlined. This allows them greater freedom to set rules and regulations that entrench and enforce certain norms and values. However, the findings of the case study complicate and challenge some of the assertions regarding the role that governing bodies are able to play. The findings of the case study indicate that the HOA in Featherbrooke does set rules and regulations within the Estate but that these rules only generate social values and norms in so far as residents comply with said rules. The notion that rules and regulations form the basis of a sense of community, or a means through which HOAs can prescribe certain forms of social behaviours rests on the notion that residents comply uniformly with such rules. This is not, however, seen to be the case. Furthermore, the infrastructural arrangement within the Estate questions some of the commonly held notions about governing bodies as “mini-governments”. What this indicates is that the role that HOAs play, both within the gated community and in terms of linkages between the gated community and local governance structure may be far more complex and variable than indicated elsewhere.

One of the most fundamental and important criticisms of gated communities is that they interfere and hamper integrated development in post-apartheid South Africa in terms of the “democratic project”. Most of the literature implicitly links this notion of “democratic project” to spatial, social and economic development in the context of the socio-spatial legacy of apartheid (Landman, 2002). Gated communities are seen as a form of the urban landscape that perpetuates the apartheid socio-spatial configuration and hence stand in opposition to some of the developmental goals and strategies that have gained prominence in post-apartheid South Africa. Various government policies and legislation, stemming from all tiers of government, clearly identify integration as one of the key developmental objective in South Africa. This integration is deemed necessary on a national, provincial, regional and
local level.

This is seen as particularly important in urban areas, where the socio-spatial legacy of apartheid has hampered service delivery and development in a number of ways. Municipalities are thus tasked with a number of developmental objectives in order to combat this legacy. It is on a municipal level that gated communities are seen as one of the greatest challenges to these developmental goals. The case study explored this in the context of the local municipality of Mogale City.

The case study is geographically located on the eastern edge of the Mogale City boundary (see Appendix A). It falls under what is commonly referred to as the Muldersdrift area. The municipality’s developmental objectives pertaining to the Muldersdrift area and the municipality as a whole are articulated in two key policy documents; namely, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) for Mogale City. Although these two documents are embedded within a larger framework of regional, provincial and national policies, they articulate some of the key tensions and competing processes of development as they pertain to the case study.

What these two documents illustrate is the various forms of tensions within the integrated development process. One of the key tensions in Mogale City is the development tensions between rural and urban development within the municipality. According to the Urban Edge Delineation Policy drafted by the Gauteng Province, the Mogale City Municipality falls outside the zone that has been targeted for urban development. As such, urban development and integration are to be encouraged within the delineated boundary in a manner that promotes integrated efficient urbanisities, so as to maximise use of resources within urban areas, to minimise commuter distance, and to protect agricultural, cultural and natural environments (SDF for Mogale City, 2010:93). However, as the SDF for Mogale City notes, this does not take current trends along the “band of development” into account. Gated communities such as Featherbrooke estate form part of the developments that serve to contribute to the “urban sprawl” and hamper the urban integration process.

Yet, the development of gated communities within the municipality of Mogale City also contributes to the ability of the municipality to fulfil its integrated development plans. On the one hand, the development of gated communities is accompanied by the development of infrastructure, housing and employment. The IDP, for instance, notes that one of the major contributors to employment within the municipality is households. Furthermore, these gated
communities attract higher income earners that serve to expand the resource base available to
the municipality. On the other hand, however, these communities place higher demands on
infrastructure, with particular reference to “country estates” which divert resources to areas
outside of the urban centres. These communities often also contribute to the “urban sprawl”
negating the delineation of the urban edge. This in turn complicates the notion of integrated
development as the urban sprawl diverts resources, extends commuter distance and infringes
on natural environments. Viewed from this perspective, gated communities pose a distinct
threat to the creation of integrated cities. However, the contributions that they make in terms
of providing employment and expanding the resource base serve to complicate this view.

What these findings indicate is that gated communities do pose a serious threat to integrated
development in a post-apartheid context. However, this challenge is not as simple as
indicated in the literature on gated communities. Gated communities do contribute to the
urban sprawl, which has various implications for integrated development. However, the gated
communities also contribute to the resources base within municipalities, which enables
municipalities to address other developmental goals. As such, a complex relationship between
municipalities and gated communities persists. In the case study, these are complicated by the
notion of the “urban edge” whereby the Muldersdrift area is caught between furthering the
developmental objectives and negating the notion of integrated cities. The manner in which
municipalities are able to manage these processes is mainly through zoning mechanisms.
These mechanisms form the basis for land allocation to development, which balances the
various tensions described above. What is, however, clear is that gated communities in and of
themselves do not serve to hamper integrated development; rather it is the context in which
they are embedded that is significant.

What thus emerges from the case study is that some of the fundamental assumptions and
assertions about gated communities in the South African context are far more complex and
variegated than indicated elsewhere. This extends to the notion about social exclusion,
integrated development, a sense of community and the governing bodies of gated
communities. One of the fundamental assumptions about gated communities is that they are a
white middle class phenomenon. Whiteness is not interrogated or questioned in the literature.
The findings of the case study, however, indicate that whiteness is far more complex and
varied, particularly in the manner that it is articulated by residents. Whiteness thus does not in
and of itself represent a unifying force among residents of the case study. Although the study
is limited in a number of ways which limit the findings in a number of ways, a number of
general conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, social dynamics within gated communities are far more variable than indicated in the literature and serve to question the manner in which these internal dynamics reinforce issues of social exclusion. Secondly, the role that governing bodies plays as both enforcers of values, and as “mini-governments” relies on the attitudes and perceptions of individual residents. Governing bodies can provide a framework within which certain values are prominent, but adherence to and the salience of this framework are not universal. Lastly, the manner in which gated communities may serve to challenge integrated development plans is contentious, as they both contribute to and hamper these plans. What does become evident is that research on gated communities needs to be expanded to incorporate a more nuanced understanding of these urban formations as well as to address the varying typologies that have been conflated under the term “gated community”.

Furthermore, the manner in which these communities fit into the broader urban context, in the light of integrated development goals also needs further exploration, as the consequences of these communities may be more positive and complementary than is currently proposed.

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