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17 Alexandra

PHILIP HARRISON, ADRIAN MASSON AND LUKE SINWELL

The Alexandra Renewal Project (ARP) was announced by President Thabo Mbeki in December 2001 as a massive state-led intervention to improve the quality of life of residents in Alexandra, Johannesburg (see Figure 17.1), and to transform the spatial form of this hundred-year-old township. The ARP has now been operational for over a decade and has attracted both accolades and criticism. On World Habitat Day, 2009, the ARP was awarded a United Nations' Scroll of Honour with the following citation:

> For helping thousands of poor people move into better homes and boosting health, water and electricity services.
>
> This renewal project has seen some 7,000 families relocated from the banks of a polluted local river to better settlements. Urban greening was incorporated in the project which led to development of parks and recreation areas. The project also saw the development of new housing, new schools and the refurbishment of many facilities. New clinics improved access to healthcare; while 46,000 hygienic refuse bins have been distributed, drastically improving garbage collection. More than 70 percent of the residents now have access to water and sanitation and 88 percent have safe electricity, a major milestone in a place once referred to as 'Dark City'.[1]

The ARP submission to UN Habitat claimed that 'the development of ARP over time has fundamentally transformed the physical, economic and social environment of Alexandra'.[2] Within the township, the Alexandra Development Forum has wide-ranging representation from community groupings across the township and provides broad support for the ARP.

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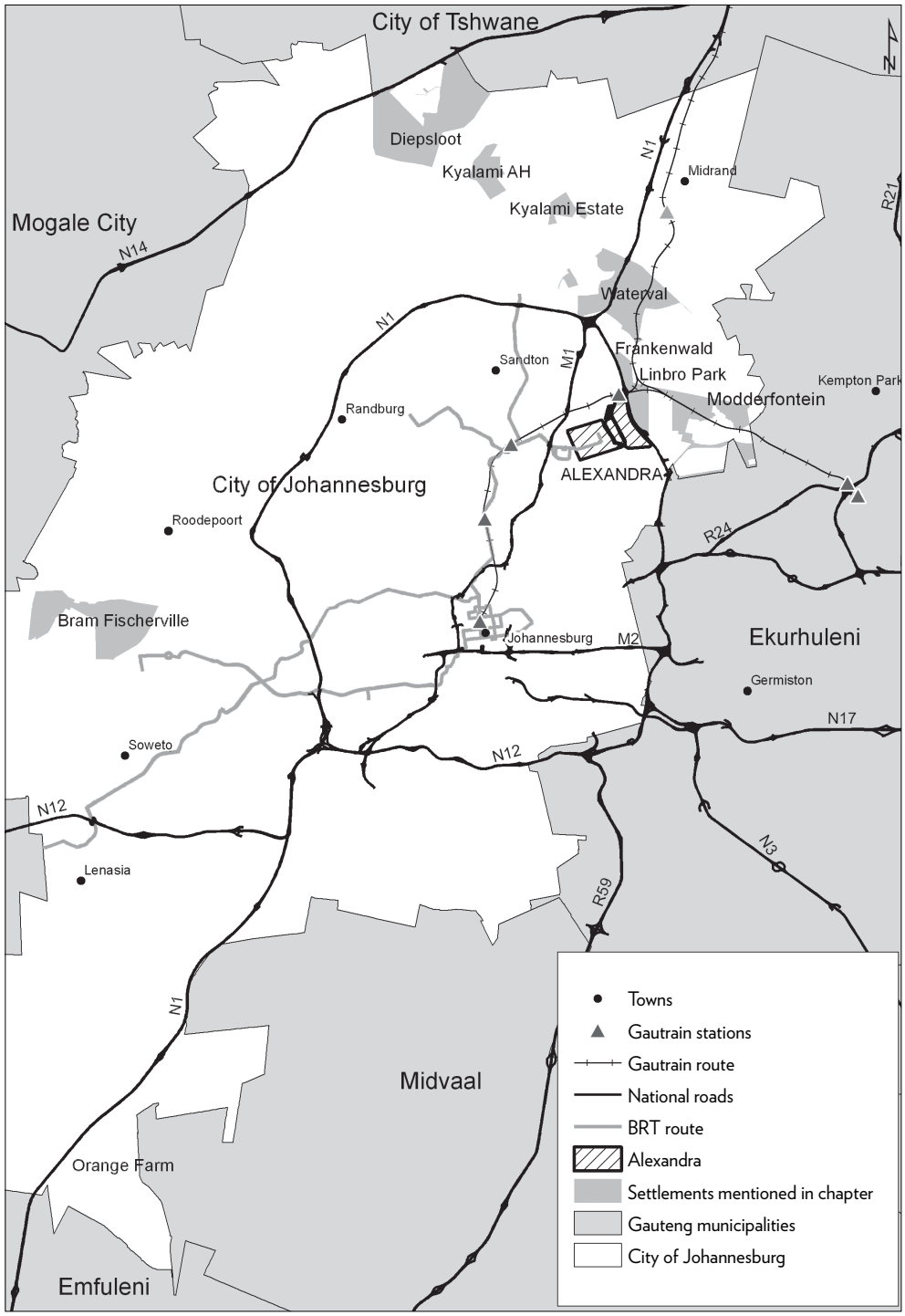


FIGURE 17.1: Alexandra within Greater Johannesburg, 2009

Data sources: GDED (2009); MDB (2010). Cartography by Jennifer Paul

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There are, however, bitter critics who claim that the ARP has failed. For example, the Marlboro South Industrial Organisation, which represents mainly white-owned industry on the northern edge of Alexandra, has set up a web page on the 'ARP failure'.[3] Within the township, the youth wing of the Alexandra Land and Property Owners Association (ALPOA) has demanded the disbanding of the ARP, a call endorsed by the chairman of ALPOA who described the ARP as having done 'a shoddy job with the renewal of the township'.[4] The Alexandra Vukuzenzele Crisis Committee, affiliated to the Anti-Privatisation Forum, has refused to join the Alexandra Development Forum and is deeply critical of the ARP, engaging in periodic protest action, including the unauthorised occupation of houses.[5]

Faced with these opposing views, the compelling question is whether the ARP has failed or succeeded in its objective to transform Alexandra. This is not merely an academic question as it speaks directly and profoundly to a critical concern with the impacts of state-initiated development in South Africa. The government of post-apartheid South Africa has focused much of its energy and resources on the delivery of housing and basic services to previously marginalised communities and individuals, yet it is now confronted with endemic service-delivery protests and deep scepticism about its capacity to deliver. As the largest area-based development urban project in the country, the ARP is arguably the government's most important intervention. The state has spent more than R2 billion on the ARP, and both the provincial and city governments have invested enormous energy in the project.

If the ARP has failed, what does this say about prospects for state-led development in South Africa into the future? If the ARP has succeeded, a valuable set of lessons will have been learned that could have implications for development elsewhere.

Determining success or failure is a hugely complex task. Do we, for example, evaluate the ARP in terms of its original stated objectives or in terms of its ability to adapt and reconfigure in relation to an evolving context? We can count the number of houses provided and calculate the expenditure on infrastructure but how do we determine the impact of the project on the lived experiences of people in the township, especially when the community is so segmented and interests are so divergent? How do we disentangle the effects of the ARP from the effects of other state policies and interventions, or the effects of macro processes such as the changing state of the economy?

With its official life coming to an end, there is arguably a need for a critical and independent assessment of the outcomes of the ARP. This would be a large undertaking and we do not attempt it here. What we offer is a limited assessment, focused specifically on the spatial outcomes of the project on the development of the township (while taking into account the relationship between the physical and its broader socio-political and economic milieus).

In considering spatial impacts and outcomes, it is impossible to separate the effects of the ARP from the long history of planning and development interventions in Alexandra. In fact, the spatial objectives of the ARP only make sense in relation to the spatial objectives

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of earlier initiatives. While the ARP does represent an important and progressive shift in developing thinking and practice, it also has elements of continuity with the past. This is most starkly represented in terms of its spatial objective of de-densification.

The de-densification objective crossed over from apartheid to post-apartheid planning and from the designs of state planners into the internal politics of the township. Much of this complex politics of the current day has to do with who the various interest groups consider to be *bona fide* residents of the township and therefore who has the right to benefits such as housing.

A critical question for an evaluation of any development initiative in Alexandra is whether interventions have been geared towards addressing the specificities of the township. Particularly important is whether these interventions have recognised the spatial role of Alexandra as a place that is extremely well located in Greater Johannesburg and that provides established residents and new migrants with good access to job and livelihood opportunities.

In making our arguments around the history of planning interventions in Alexandra we draw liberally on the wonderfully detailed account of the township's social and political history in Philip Bonner and Noor Nieftagodien's *ALEXandra: A History* (2008), and also on a number of other contributions including Pauline Morris's critique of pre-2000 spatial planning (Morris 2000). Our assessment of the success or otherwise of the ARP comes from two angles. First, we use the official reports provided by the ARP and supplement this with analysis based on Statistics South Africa's national population Census, and on aerial photography and spatial data provided by GeoTerraImage (GTI). Second, we undertook a select number of interviews with residents of Alexandra to get a sense of local perceptions of the ARP, and with existing and previous officials of the ARP, as well as with consultants to the ARP.

'Insiders' and 'outsiders': a socio-spatial history of Alexandra

From the very beginning of Alexandra's history a distinction was made between insiders and outsiders – between those who could claim a right to be in there and those who, at best, were temporary sojourners. The divide between insiders and outsiders evolved over time and was often contested but it has remained a key element in the politics and spatial planning of the township.

Even today a complex layering of perceived rights of residence and occupation persists, and is intelligible only in relation to the township's convoluted history. Former stand holders and their descendants claim greater rights than residents living in irregular dwellings in the backyards of the large stands. Backyard dwellers in turn place themselves ahead of those living in free-standing informal settlements, such as those on the banks of the Jukskei River, and especially ahead of those who have a foreign nationality.

The history of Alexandra is well recorded by Bonner and Nieftagodien (2008) and need not be repeated here. In summary, Alexandra was proclaimed in 1912 for non-European

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(African and coloured) settlement with freehold ownership. It narrowly escaped the strictures of the 1913 Native Land Act and became one of few places where urban land could be owned by black South Africans. The township filled up gradually at first, reaching a population of only 7 200 by 1929. From the 1930s, however, the population increased rapidly, with an estimated 50 000 by the mid 1940s and 100 000 by the mid 1950s. This growth was fuelled by rapid rural–urban migration and by displacement of Africans from inner-city slums following the enactment of the Slums Act of 1934. A sharp distinction emerged between the relatively affluent propertied class in the township who had been in Alexandra from the beginning and the tenants who came later and who rented rooms in the yards.[6]

With its continued growth and densification, Alexandra required urban services but neither the Johannesburg City Council nor the Transvaal Provincial Administration was prepared to take responsibility for this. The Alexandra Health Committee, formed in 1921, included individuals who represented the stand holders but the Committee had few resources and was plagued by internal rivalries. It was eventually dissolved in 1958 when Alexandra fell under the direct control of national government through the administration of the Peri-Urban Areas Health Board.

In 1948 the National Party began the long process of developing and implementing apartheid policies. Alexandra presented a difficult dilemma as it was a 'black spot' within a white city but Africans were needed in northern areas of Johannesburg as factory and domestic labour. The government-appointed Mentz Committee (1952–1953) recommended that Alexandra remain to house individuals working in the northern parts of Johannesburg, but that densities should be significantly reduced. Between 1959 and 1963 the Health Board moved around 45 000 people from Alexandra, mainly to present-day Soweto.

In 1963 government adopted a plan to convert Alexandra into a city of single-sex hostels. The plan was frustrated by costs and by resistance from Alexandra's land owners who refused to move even though their title deeds were confiscated. Only three hostels (two for men and one for women) were actually built. The government did manage to reduce the population of Alexandra to around 40 000 by 1973, through ongoing relocations.

From the mid 1970s the community of Alexandra mobilised in active resistance to government plans and relocations. The government, reeling from the 1976 student uprising, was also gradually moving in a more pragmatic direction. In 1979 the Riekert Commission proposed granting permanent settlement rights to a section of the urban black population and promoting a home-owning black middle class to stabilise the townships. In the same year, the government announced a reprieve for Alexandra. It would remain permanently as a township and not just as a place of hostels.

From 1980, Alexandra was the subject of a series of plans and urban renewal initiatives (see Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008; Morris 2000; Sinwell 2009a). The 1980 Master Plan for Alexandra was an ambitious blueprint for the total reconstruction of the township. Alexandra would be rebuilt for a population that was not to exceed 60 000. It was to have a central business district together with areas of light industry, recreation and new schools.

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The Plan was a total failure. Not only was it absurdly ambitious but it was also embroiled in political crisis from its pronouncement. The Black Local Authority established in 1982 to govern Alexandra had few resources and little legitimacy. It collapsed spectacularly in February 1986 during what was termed Alexandra's Six Day War and the township fell under the effective control of the opposition civic movement.

In June 1986 President PW Botha moved to regain control of Alexandra and other townships by declaring a nationwide State of Emergency. He also set up a National Security Management System which managed a dual strategy of repression to contain political opposition and development to win the hearts and minds of the people. To achieve the latter, an urban renewal plan was announced in September 1986 which was to be implemented under the auspices of the Alexandra Joint Management Centre, the local wing of the Management System. The plan pragmatically accepted the existing layout of the township and proposed to cap the number of people at the then existing level of 120 000 by diverting new population growth to Orange Farm, a distant location south of Soweto.

Conditions improved modestly in some parts of the township with infrastructure projects funded by the Development Bank of Southern Africa, but the major impact of the plan was in promoting home ownership by the black middle class in an extension of Alexandra across the Jukskei River onto the 'East Bank' and 'Far East Bank' (see Figure 17.2).[7] Alexandra was now divided into the old township, with its historic land owners, backyard tenant and hostel dwellers, and a new Alexandra with generally younger and more affluent families.

The plan failed dramatically in one respect. From 1986, following the government's abolition of influx control, there was an urbanisation surge and an unprecedented increase in the number of people living in Alexandra. By the early 1990s the population of Alexandra was vaguely estimated to be somewhere between 200 000 and 300 000, but this may have been an overstatement (Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008, citing official reports). Most of these new residents found accommodation in shacks in the already overcrowded backyards, but also in new free-standing informal settlements and in invaded or disused factories on the edge of the township. The Transvaal Provincial Administration planned to move the shack dwellers to Orange Farm and set up Sejwetla (also spelled Seswetla) as a transit camp to facilitate the process. The relocation plan was abandoned in 1993, and Sejwetla became a permanent feature of Alexandra, developing into one of Johannesburg's largest informal settlements (Royston 1998).

The political transition of the early 1990s was fractious and conflict-ridden. The Alexandra Joint Negotiating Forum was established to represent civic organisations and local authorities but its work was bedevilled by high levels of political violence in the township and by intense rivalries between the participants. In May 1993 consultants completed a new plan for Alexandra but this was rejected by the government in 1994.

The 1994 elections raised expectations of a better life but little tangible progress was made during the 1990s. Families displaced during violent upheavals in 1993 were moved to a new development on the Far East Bank known as Riverside. An additional 1 700 housing

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units initially developed to accommodate athletes participating in the 7th Africa Games were also made available for housing in 1999.

The most important initiative of the 1990s was the introduction of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a low-cost housing programme supported by state housing subsidies. Central to the operation of the subsidy was the division of households into 'qualifiers' and 'non-qualifiers'. Qualifiers were given free houses but non-qualifiers – including foreign nationals without permanent residency – were unable to access housing through formal processes. These became the new 'outsiders' (Royston 1998).

In 1998 the Greater Alexandra Development Forum was established and the Greater Alexandra Development Framework was prepared. A R3 billion redevelopment of the township was proposed, with residents divided into 'authorised' and 'non-authorised' categorises, the latter including an estimated 150 000 who could not prove a long historical association with Alexandra and who would be moved out of the township to an undisclosed location. Authorised residents would be rehoused within Alexandra in superblocks with walk-up flats.

The scheme was enthusiastically received in the media but some observers were appalled at the echoes of the apartheid past in this post-apartheid design. Morris, for example, warned that the 'plan could only lead to massive community disruption and the breakdown of delicate social and economic systems' (2000: 18). The plan went nowhere but its key spatial principle of de-densification continued to inform thinking about the future of Alexandra.

In 2000 serious flooding occurred along the Jukskei River, affecting around 3 000 households living in shacks. The displaced families were to be moved to Leeukop near Kyalami in the far north of Johannesburg, and the Marlboro Transit Camp was built on the northern edge of Alexandra in anticipation of the relocations. The white residents of Kyalami obtained a court interdict against the relocations and the idea was dropped, leaving some families stranded in the transit camp for more than two years (LRC 2001).

The government came up with a new plan – shack dwellers in Alexandra were to be relocated to Diepsloot, also in the far north of Johannesburg, and to Bram Fischerville, between Soweto and Roodepoort. Even among those targeted for removal there was differentiation: those who qualified for the housing subsidy were to be relocated to RDP houses in Bram Fischerville and those who did not were to be moved to Diepsloot, where they would be given 'housing opportunities'.

Understanding Alexandra's socio-spatial profile and role

The profile of Alexandra, and the role of Alexandra in Greater Johannesburg, has evolved over time. At the beginning, for example, it was a place of relative privilege where a property-owning and relatively educated class had settled. Over time, a large transient population moved into the area, and in the 2000s there was a complex mix of permanence and transience, and of poverty and relative affluence.

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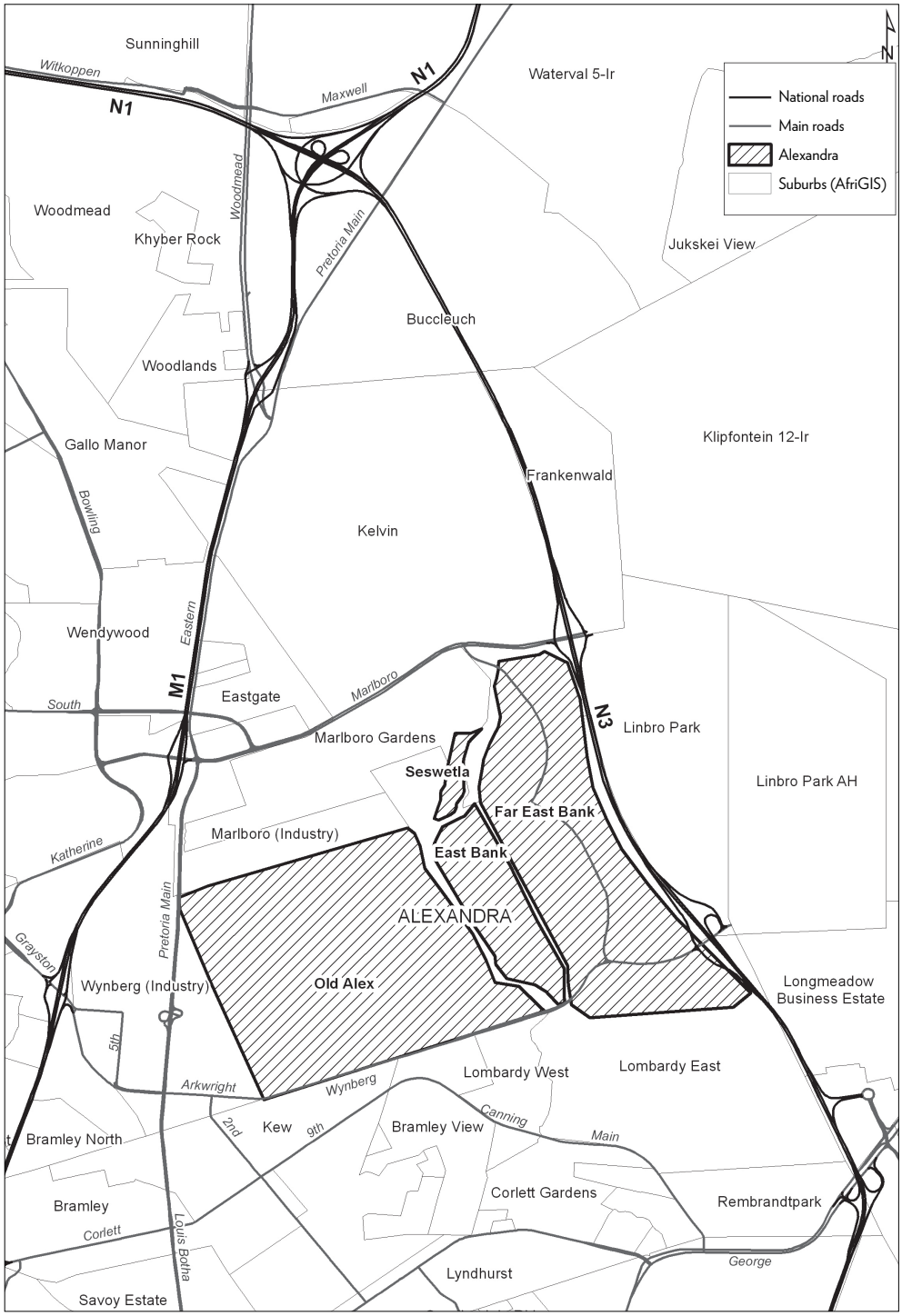


FIGURE 17.2: Alexandra and its component parts, 2010

Data sources: AfriGIS (2011); MDB (2010). Cartography by Jennifer Paul

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The size of Alexandra's population is not certain. Although there have been estimates of up to 300 000 people, the 2011Census indicated 180 000, of whom 139 000 lived in Old Alex, 36 000 in the East Bank and Far East Bank, and 5 000 in the Sejwetla informal settlement.

The Census reveals Alexandra to be a township of considerable social diversity. The population is linguistically mixed with the most prominent first language being isiZulu (26 per cent of the population), followed by Sepedi (23 per cent), Xitsonga (11 per cent) and Setswana (10 per cent). Across the township there is a patchwork of isiZulu- and Sepedi-dominant areas, but with a spread of other languages. The hostels are generally isiZulu-dominant. An exception is the Sejwetla informal settlement on the banks of the Jukskei River. Here the dominant language is Xitsonga (also known as Shangaan), which is likely to reflect a large number of Mozambican migrants, although the residents did not report their national origin in the Census.

The township is broadly divided into long-standing residents and recent migrants with one-half of the residents born outside of Gauteng. The majority of migrants have come from Limpopo province (52 per cent), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (17 per cent) and the Eastern Cape (14 per cent). The strong link with Limpopo is common to other townships in the northern parts of Johannesburg, including Diepsloot and Ivory Park, and has been confirmed in other studies (see De Wet et al. 2008).

The Census reported relatively few foreign migrants (7 per cent of total population),[8] significantly less than for Diepsloot (25 per cent) and Ivory Park (19 per cent), and even less than the overall for the city (15 per cent). It is possible, however, that foreign migrancy is significantly under-reported given the prevalence of xenophobia.

The class composition of Alexandra is a matter for debate. There is a perception that the poor live in Old Alex and the middle class on the East Bank and Far East Bank. The residents of the East Bank and Far East Bank are certainly better off than the average resident in Old Alex, but they can hardly be regarded as middle class. A mere 1.7 per cent of Alexandra's households would be categorised as middle class if we were to define middle class in terms of the Census range of household income of more than R307 201 per annum (2011 prices). More than 60 per cent (67.1 per cent) of Alexandra's households may be classified as 'very low income' (less than R38 400 per annum) and 31.7 per cent as 'low income' (R38 401 to R307 200).

The population is concentrated in the economically active age category, with a preponderance of youth (45 per cent of the population in the age 15–34 category and 25 per cent in the 35–64 category). The unemployment rate, as defined in the Census,[9] was 32 per cent, higher than the city average of 25 per cent, and similar to that of Diepsloot (29 per cent) and Ivory Park (34 per cent) but lower than Soweto (37 per cent) and Orange Farm (39.2 per cent). It is possible that Alexandra's location in the northern part of Johannesburg, where job creation is concentrated, accounts for the relatively lower unemployment rate than in townships in the south.

Nevertheless, 24 per cent of households reported living in informal settlements and/or

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backyard shacks,[10] with a huge differential between Old Alex and the East Bank/Far East Bank. In the case of the former, 29 per cent live informally; in the latter case, only 5 per cent do. Of shack dwellers in Alexandra, 63 per cent live in informal settlements and 37 per cent in backyards, which is somewhat different from Johannesburg as a whole where backyard shacks now predominate.

Densities also vary widely. If the Census figures are taken as accurate, the population density for Alexandra would be 25 978 persons/km^2 but with significant internal differences, ranging from around 7 000 persons/km^2 to 105 000 persons/km^2 in a few densely packed pockets in Old Alex.

The Census revealed that Alexandra has relatively high levels of formal services. For example, 95 per cent of the population had water provided through the formal reticulation system and 93 per cent of residents used electricity for lighting. The Sejwetla informal settlement was an important outlier where households still use candles and paraffin for lighting.

The Census figures broadly confirm the findings of De Wet et al. (2008). Alexandra was included in a comparative study of poverty and livelihoods in nine low-income settlements in Johannesburg.[11] In terms of wealth and income, Alexandra was average for the sample – better off than places like Diepsloot and Orange Farm but poorer than townships in Soweto and close to the inner city. It was similarly placed in terms of levels of informality and dependence on social support. Alexandra clearly cannot be placed in a category together with areas that are more homogeneously poor such as Diepsloot, but neither can it be categorised with the more socially stable townships such as in the core of Soweto.

While the study reveals the township to be at least average for a low-income settlement in Johannesburg, in many respects it suggests an alarming lack of social cohesion in Alexandra. On all indicators relating to social cohesion Alexandra performed worse than the average, and often worse than all other areas. Levels of societal distrust are high: only one-half of residents feel connected to their neighbourhoods, crime is high and very few residents are actively involved in community life.

Alexandra is a space of complexity and social segmentation. There are long historical divides between residents (for example, between owners and renters, and between long-established families and newcomers). For any intervention to succeed it must clearly deal with both the material challenges of Alexandra and the extreme levels of social segmentation and low levels of social cohesion.

The Alexandra Renewal Project

Targets and strategies

In 2000, the government was ready to implement an urban renewal programme which would target eight townships nationwide. There was intensive lobbying for Alexandra to be included as one of these townships and a business plan was prepared which was presented to the government and to local stakeholders in April 2001.

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When the announcement was made and the ARP formally constituted, there was great excitement and high expectations. The ARP was to run for seven years and be allocated a budget of R1.3 billion. It was intended to fundamentally transform the township by addressing physical, social and economic functions.[12] Bold promises were made by provincial politicians[13] but the management of the ARP was left largely to consultants. Nine functional areas were identified and expert consultants were appointed to support the convenor for each area.[14]

The primary spatial objective of the ARP was de-densification, and this established continuity with previous plans.[15] The housing backlog in Alexandra was estimated to be 45 000 units, and it was envisaged that 23 500 units would be developed in Old Alexandra and 21 500 units elsewhere, including in Diepsloot and Bram Fischerville. It was anticipated that the population in Old Alexandra would decline from the vaguely estimated 350 000 to about 270 000 (Gauteng Department of Housing 2008).

A change of strategy and new beginnings

There was a dual strategy for de-densification: the construction of new houses on the East Bank for qualifying residents from Old Alex and the relocation of households that did not qualify to more distant locations. The removals to Bram Fischerville and Diepsloot went ahead in February 2001 (when the ARP was in its formative stages) despite street protests and against the advice of a World Bank mission that relocations should take place only to the East Bank.[16] Provincial and local politicians defended the relocations as part of a broader de-densification strategy, with Bonner and Nieftagodien citing the Alexandra African National Congress (ANC) chair, who said that 'you cannot have development in Alex with the entire population living in Alex, it will not happen' (2008: 401).

In the final event, about 6 800 households were moved. This provoked strong criticism, including from the Human Rights Commission, and in a formal change of policy the ARP announced that in future, removals would only be tolerated if they were to locations less than 10 km from Alexandra (Ramutsindela 2002).

This change in spatial strategy came about at the same time that the ARP had to reconsider its entire organisational arrangement and revise its targets. By 2004, the ARP was in crisis. There was little to show in terms of visible development, with only 639 houses having been built in the township. The reasons for the retarded progress were varied and had to do with both the enormous complexity of the township itself – for example, the extremely confused layering of formal and informal property rights – and fundamental problems with the institutional arrangements for the RDP:

> Having the project managed by external consultants was seen by some (particularly the Alexandra Development Forum) as an obstacle to service delivery. Perceived underdelivery, poor communication and political infighting within the community contributed to a deepening antipathy between the community, developers and the consultants. Widespread mistrust and suspicion culminated in a de facto cessation of project activities by 2004. (COGTA 2010: Section 2.4.1.3, p.50)

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The consultants were effectively fired and a high-level summit was convened to chart a way forward for the project – it took place in October 2004. It was decided to place the project under more careful political scrutiny and so a joint political structure was established between the provincial Department of Housing and the City of Johannesburg. At the operational level, a joint management office was set up which was accountable to both the province and the city (COGTA 2010). Julian Baskin, a highly regarded development expert with international experience, was appointed as director of the ARP. With the new model of political and operational management, the structured ARP could be regarded as a positive example of 'joined up governance' but there were continued challenges in bringing different government sectors and departments together.

There was also a real attempt to make the ARP more participatory. The Alexandra Development Forum was set up as the key mechanism of liaison and consultation between the communities of Alexandra and the ARP office. It had wide representation but not all communities elected to participate, with the Alexandra Vukuzenzele Crisis Committee remaining a notable outsider, and the participatory process has been continually contested.[17]

Targets had to be revised. With the halt to removals, it was near impossible to achieve the initial target of 45 000 housing units. The target was revised down to 21 500 units in total, with 10 200 being provided in the immediate vicinity of Alexandra (mainly on the East Bank and Far East Bank), leaving about 11 300 to be provided on land outside of Alexandra but within the broader sub-region.[18] It was clear, however, that the de-densification objective remained in place. In 2008, the Gauteng Department of Housing emphasised again that 'the ultimate aim of the ARP is to de-densify the settlement to approximately 270 000 people, which is considered to be an acceptable density for the area, and ensure that these people reside in a formal, sustainable environment' (2008: 16). As recently as May 2010 the then executive mayor of Johannesburg, Amos Masondo, reiterated the need to reduce densities: 'Our aim is to de-densify Alex by buying land and re-demarcating the township. The problem is that people have been pushed together on one small piece of land.'[19]

Obstacles

Although there was a great improvement in the management and political oversight of the ARP from 2005, formidable obstacles remained. The ARP was enveloped in the complex politics of the ANC-led alliance and was also affected on a daily basis by the fractured interests within Alexandra. Julian Baskin was to say on his departure from the ARP that 'not a day goes by when there is not a curve ball … a problem to deal with'.[20]

One of the most devastating episodes in the history of the ARP, and of the township more generally, was in May 2008 when xenophobic violence erupted in Alexandra and then spread to other parts of Johannesburg and South Africa. The causes of the violence are still debated but it arguably had to do with the profound sense of the insider-outsider divide that extends deep into the history of Alexandra. Perversely, forced removals kept the outsiders at bay and protected the interests of insider groups. From 2005, however, the halting of removals may have led to growing tensions within Alexandra and to segments

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of the established community taking matters into their own hands, and forcing foreigners from the township.

In terms of spatial transformation, the reconstituted ARP came up immediately against the interests of the historical land-owning families (represented by ALPOA). These families had been deeply affected by the long struggle against dispossession, and were suspicious of government intentions. In December 2000, the Minister of Land Affairs offered each of these families R50 000 as compensation for their properties. The idea was for the state to retain ownership of the old yards of Alexandra, and then to remove the shacks and redevelop the yards.

The families accepted the money but refused to relinquish their claims, insisting that they understood the compensation to be for 'injustices suffered'. ALPOA then approached the courts and in June 2005 the mayor of Johannesburg was interdicted 'from demolishing, structuring or restructuring, developing or rezoning the applicants' offices, houses and any other property which is the subject matter of the dispute'.[21] In 2009 an application by the City of Johannesburg to have the order rescinded was refused. The hands of government were effectively tied and the ARP had to turn its attention away from the yards to free-standing informal settlements and hostels.

The biggest challenge in relocating residents from informal settlements to new housing as a means to de-densify Alexandra was the use of the 'housing waiting list' to manage the housing allocation processes. In terms of the waiting list, first constructed in 1996/1997, qualifying individuals gradually rise to the top of the list as houses become available. The system made it impossible for any particular informal settlement to be cleared. Darlene Louw, the deputy director and spokesperson of the ARP, called the waiting list the 'popcorn approach' because as soon as people were moved out of densely populated settlements other shacks would 'pop up' in the vacated space.[22]

There was also the problem of the non-qualifiers – including foreign nationals – who could not be allocated an RDP house, and without addressing this it was impossible to envisage the clearing of existing informal settlements. A community survey revealed that nearly one-half of all residents in Alexandra did not regard the township as their primary place of residence, and this too suggested that providing owner-occupied houses was not going to resolve the problem of shack settlements (CASE 2005).

The hostels also posed a challenge. The two men's hostels, Madala (M1) and Nobuhle (M2), and the women's hostel, Helen Joseph, were to be refurbished as family units. In the case of the severely deteriorated Madala Hostel, the existing structure was to be entirely demolished. Funding was a critical problem in all cases but in relation to the Madala Hostel there was an added complication – this was, historically, an isiZulu-speaking hostel and a stronghold of the Inkatha Freedom Party. Demolishing the hostel threatened political interests and there was resistance.

By 2011, the Nobuhle upgrade had been largely completed and the upgrade of Helen Joseph had been initiated, although the women in the hostel were very disgruntled at the slow pace of delivery.[23] No progress had been made with the Madala Hostel.

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Spatial strategies and innovations

The obstacles, including halting removals, provoked the ARP to introduce more innovative spatial strategies.

The first strategy was to find land in the broader sub-region (i.e. within a 10 km radius of Alexandra) for around 11 300 housing units. Finding this land was identified as the biggest challenge facing the ARP[24] although, ironically, there is more vacant and underdeveloped land in the vicinity of Alexandra than anywhere else in the city. The difficulty is that this land is privately owned and largely allocated for upmarket developments and therefore quite expensive to build housing on.

To the north and north-east of Alexandra are two massive development projects, happening on previously vacant land. The Waterval City Development has an estimated value of R25 billion, and includes a mix of activities and land uses including more than 20 000 middle- to upper-income housing units. Modderfontein is of a similar scale. It is a multi-year development on the 4 200 hectares of previously vacant land owned by AECI, an explosives factory founded in Johannesburg in 1896. Despite the scale of these developments and their location close to Alexandra, they have made little provision for affordable development. The ARP was, however, able to negotiate a deal with Heartland Properties, the AECI's property development arm, to include in their development around 3 200 affordable houses on a 40-hectare portion of land. This would provide about one-third of the estimated required housing units outside of Alexandra. A large Chinese company now has the option to purchase this property, and the extent to which it will make provision for affordable housing is still unknown (see Chapter 29).

With the land for more than two-thirds of required housing units still to be identified, attention focused increasingly on Linbro Park, which is an area of white-occupied agricultural smallholdings to the east of the Far East Bank, across the N3 (see Figure 17.2). Residents of Linbro Park enjoyed a country-style living which they had long defended against developers. After a long and bitterly contentious process of negotiation, the Linbro Development Framework was completed in 2008. The Framework was a compromise; a product of hard-won consensus. Rather than simply being an extension of the township, the plan offered business opportunities for the existing residents of Linbro Park by providing for a mixture of business, commercial, office and residential uses. In terms of the residential development, the area was eventually to accommodate around 81 000 people in 25 400 dwelling units, although the expected yield of affordable housing developments was only 4 000 (Gauteng Department of Housing 2008).

Between Modderfontein (Highlands) and Linbro Park, around 7 200 affordable housing units could be provided – a very modest figure in relation to the size of these developments. To meet its target the ARP had to identify opportunities for an additional 3 500 units in and around the neighbouring areas of Marlboro Gardens, Zandfontein and Kelvin.

These new developments offered medium- to long-term solutions for the de-densification of Alexandra. The immediate opportunities, however, were mainly on the Far East Bank and the ARP had to take advantage of this while visibly de-densifying Old

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Alexandra. While there was little that could be done with respect to the old yards, the problems posed by the housing waiting list were resolved by adopting a block-by-block approach to shack clearance and housing allocations. The approach allowed the ARP to clear shacks in a spatially ordered and systematic way – all residents of a particular block were removed to the transit camp, and then on to new accommodation, allowing the ARP to demolish the shacks and regulate to prevent further development. This was an important spatial innovation as it allowed for the visible transformation of space. Through the new approach the banks of the Jukskei River were cleared and redeveloped for parks and other recreational facilities, and land was also made available for the Pan-Africa Taxi and Retail Facility. The approach also allowed schools in Alexandra to reclaim the playing fields that had been covered by around 2 000 shacks. The key challenge that remained by 2011 was to use the block-by-block approach to clear the green lungs of Alexandra. Around 7 000 shacks had been built over the three tributaries to the Jukskei River that flow through Old Alexandra and this had stopped the natural flow of water and had caused flooding and insanitary conditions in the rainy season.[25]

The dilemma presented by non-qualifying households was addressed by strengthening the focus on rental housing. The ARP aimed to provide around 11 000 rental units with all housing projects including a component of rental accommodation. The most innovative were the K206 project and Far East Bank Extensions 9 and 10, which were to incorporate two rented rooms on the property of each owner-occupier, increasing housing yields but also providing owners with the opportunity for income generation. The project layout was a replication of the 'yards' that typify Old Alexandra, as the owner-occupied dwellings and rental units were arranged around a central courtyard.[26]

A related spatial innovation to economise on land and reduce infrastructure costs was to significantly increase the densities of new developments. Traditionally, RDP houses had sites of 250 m^2, yielding only 40 units per hectare. However, by reducing sites to 80 m^2 and by going double-storey, around 125 units per hectare could be achieved.[27]

With the limited land on the East Bank and Far East Bank the ARP had to creatively use leftover portions of land such as the historic buffer strips between white-, Indian- and African-occupied areas. The ARP also succeeded in de-proclaiming land designated for road use and so was able to launch its largest housing project to date, the K206. This project was to provide around 3 300 units – about 1 100 owner-occupied and 2 200 rental opportunities.

The final strategy to achieve the housing and spatial targets was to extend the life of the ARP. In 2008, it was extended to 2010, and when 2010 arrived the project was once again given a reprieve. By 2013, the ARP had been significantly downscaled and its functions were being integrated into mainline departments.

In the sections below we look at the extent to which these strategies have succeeded by exploring success from two different angles: using ARP reporting and Census and GTI data to explore the extent to which the numerical targets of the ARP have been met; and using interviews with residents of Alexandra to investigate subjective opinions on the outcomes of the ARP.

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Measuring success by numbers

We consider the success of the ARP in delivering housing and de-densifying Old Alexandra by using three datasets. First, the reports provided by the ARP on the number of accommodation units provided against set targets. Second, we use the national population Census. Third, we use point mapping of different forms of accommodation type by GTI for 2001 and 2009. There are limitations to all sets but together they provide an indication of key trends.[28] The period of study in relation to ARP reporting is up to 2011, as this coincides with the Census data.

ARP reporting

In 2001, the ARP was given the ambitious target of delivering 45 000 housing units within seven years. By 2004, only 5 per cent of the target had been met and only four years remained of the project. By 2005 a revised target of 21 500 had been set. By 2011 the ARP claimed to have produced 15 196 'housing opportunities'. It is a figure that requires some critical examination as it includes 1 900 RDP houses located in Bram Fischerville (west of Soweto) and 6 400 serviced residential sites provided at Diepsloot (where the Gauteng housing department had committed to providing houses but never did). Within Alexandra itself (including the Far East Bank), the ARP developed 6 896 accommodation units, comprising 3 371 houses and 3 525 flats.[29]

In evaluating the ARP, the issue is whether to accept the figure of 15 196 accommodation units (in Alexandra, Diepsloot and Bram Fischerville) or simply the figure of 6 896 for Alexandra alone. The housing conditions in Diepsloot especially remain sub-standard with most of the relocated residents still living in shacks, so the claim of providing 15 196 units must be questioned. If we were to accept this figure, the ARP would have resolved 34 per cent of the backlog as calculated initially in 2001, and would have achieved 71 per cent of the revised target. If we were to exclude Diepsloot and Bram Fischerville, the figures would be 15 per cent and 32 per cent. The further challenge, of course, is that the ARP is chasing a *moving* target.

Census data

In the section below we use both Census figures and GTI point mapping to explore the extent to which ARP interventions have made an impact on settlement in Alexandra.

The residential structure of Alexandra has changed since 1996, and again since 2011. According to the Census, the number of households in Alexandra has increased by 60 per cent since 1996, although this growth has slowed markedly since 2001. In addition, growth has been uneven in terms of housing type and in terms of the Old Alexandra/East Bank divide.

In 1996, 45 per cent of households were living in shacks (20 per cent in informal settlement and 25 per cent in backyard shacks). By 2001, this had reduced to 32 per cent (19 per cent in informal settlement and 13 per cent in backyards) and by 2011 to only 24 per cent (15 per cent in informal settlement and 9 per cent in backyards). A progressive

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Dwelling type	Old Alexandra (including Sejwetla)			East Bank/ Far East Bank			Total		
	1996	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
Shack in informal settlements	6 534	11 197	9 758	1 300	302	119	7 834	11 499	9 877
Shack in backyards	9 273	7 603	5 235	773	88	512	10 046	7 691	5 747
Rooms or units on larger properties (e.g. formal backyard, flatlet)	7 672	6 742	3 900	463	153	768	8 135	6 895	4 668
Unit in multi-unit building (e.g. cluster house, flat)	3 305	3 019	3 781	48	207	2 169	3 353	3 226	5 950
Stand-alone house on separate property	8 914	22 447	28 704	856	3 507	7 999	9 770	25 954	36 703
Other (e.g. street sleeping, caravans) and unspecified	701	4 124[a]	752	88	54	44	789	4 178[a]	796
Total	36 399	55 132	52 130	3 528	4 311	11 611	39 927	59 443	63 741

TABLE 17.1: Types of main dwellings in Alexandra for 1996, 2001 and 2011 as per official Census reports

Source: Stats SA (various)

Note: a. The 2001 Census had a section on 'living quarter which is not a housing unit'; this may refer to temporary housing provided to residents who were to be relocated to Diepsloot.

formalisation has taken place in Alexandra, with proportionately about half of the informality that was evident in 1996 still present in 2011. In absolute numbers, there has been a slight decline in informality, with around 2 200 fewer families in shacks. That is, if the 1996 proportions still held, 13 000 more families would be living in shacks than was the case in 2011.

The structure of informality is also changing. While there has been a slight absolute increase in the size of informal settlements, there has been a significant decline in the number of shacks in Alexandra's backyards.[30] This is counter to the trend in Johannesburg overall, where there has been an increase in backyard shacks. While backyard accommodation has declined steadily since 1996, informal settlement continued to grow until 2001, but declined after then.

The increase has come largely from newly constructed stand-alone houses (the most common form of which is the 'RDP house'). There has been an increase of nearly 27 000 stand-alone units, or 275 per cent. There has been a much smaller increase in households accommodated in multi-unit accommodation (e.g. flats and cluster homes), with an increase of 2 600 units. There was, in fact, a decrease in the rate of formal housing provision after 2001, but proportionately more households were accommodated in multi-unit structures.

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Dwelling type	Old Alexandra (including Sejwetla)			East Bank/Far East Bank			Total Alexandra		
	1996–2001	2001–2011	1996–2011	1996–2001	2001–2011	1996 – 2011	1996–2001	2001–2011	1996–2011
Shacks in informal settlements	+4 663	−1 439	+3 224	−998	−183	−1181	+3 665	−1 622	+2 043
Shacks in backyards	−1 670	−2 368	−4 038	−685	+424	−261	−2 355	−1 944	−4 299
Rooms or units on larger properties (e.g. formal backyard flatlet)	−930	−2 842	−3 772	−310	+755	+305	−1 240	−2 227	−3 465
Units in multi-unit buildings (e.g. cluster house, flat)	−286	+762	+476	+159	+1 962	+2 121	−127	+2 724	+2 597
Stand-alone house on separate property	+13 533	+6 257	+19 790	+2 651	+4 492	+7 142	+16 184	+10 749	+26 933
Other and unspecified	+3 423[a]	−3 373[a]	+51	−34	−10	−44	+3 389[a]	−3 382[a]	+7
Total	+18 733	−3 002	+15 704	+783	+7 300	+8 083	+19 516	+4 298	+23 814

TABLE 17.2: Change of main dwellings per household, 1996 to 2011

Source: Stats SA (various)

Note: a. The 2001 Census had a section on 'living quarter which is not a housing unit'; this may refer to temporary housing provided to residents who were to be relocated to Diepsloot.

The spatial distribution of housing within Alexandra has also changed. There was a 229 per cent increase in housing provision in the East Bank/Far East Bank, although this was off a low base. The increase in Old Alexandra was only 43 per cent. In 1996, about 9 per cent of households were accommodated on the East Bank/Far East Bank, rising to 18 per cent in 2011. A big change occurred after 2001. Before this, growth was still concentrated in Old Alexandra (51 per cent increase) and change on the East Bank/Far East Bank was minimal (22 per cent). In the Census period, 2001–2011, this situation reversed. The number of households accommodated in Old Alexandra declined in absolute terms (–5 per cent) and growth in the East Bank/Far East Bank surged by 169 per cent.

As indicated, the overall picture is of formalisation, although informal settlements are more persistent than backyard accommodation. The growth has been largely in formal stand-alone houses, but with more variation after 2001. Especially after 2001 the focus of growth has been on the East Bank/Far East Bank. The validity of the Census figures in relation to housing type is largely confirmed by the GTI point mapping indicated in Figures 17.3 and 17.4.[31]

The data allow us to make provisional conclusions on the possible impact of the ARP. The nearly 7 000 housing units provided through the ARP between 2001 and 2011 accords

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FIGURE 17.3: The expansion of Alexandra through formal development, 2001–2009
Data sources: AfriGIS (2011); GTI (2011). Cartography by Jennifer Paul

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FIGURE 17.4: Trends in informal housing in Alexandra

Data sources: AfriGIS (2011); GTI (2011). Cartography by Jennifer Paul

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closely with the Census figure of a 7 200 increase in formal accommodation on the East Bank/Far East Bank for the same period.[32] It should be noted, however, that this increase came together with the destruction of existing accommodation – the shacks and other backyard accommodation – so that *net gains* in terms of accommodation provision as a result of ARP activities were even smaller, around 4 300.

The decline in backyard accommodation across Old Alexandra, and the modest decline in Old Alexandra's household numbers since 2001, could be attributed to the block-by-block clearance of shacks by the ARP. The reversal of informal settlement growth since 2001 may also be attributed to the ARP, and especially to relocations to Diepsloot and Bram Fischerville. Overall, the Census suggested a small decline in households and household densities in Old Alexandra since 2001.

In terms of its own spatial objectives, the ARP has been a partial success. It has had some impact on the spatial form of the township. The more difficult question is whether these impacts are positive for the households of Alexandra, and for the people of the city as a whole. Is the de-densification of Old Alexandra an appropriate spatial objective, given the enormously favourable location of this area relative to areas of job growth in the city? Was the division of Alexandra between poorer, more informal Old Alexandra and the more formal, higher-income East Bank/Far East Bank a positive outcome? The debates are complex. On the matter of densification, for example, the question relates to when densification becomes congestion, or rather how high densities might be better managed to properly realise the benefits of density.

The spatial impacts are not only in relation to housing. To be fair to the ARP, there are other physical changes which include road upgrades, parks, pedestrian bridges, a police station, new sports facilities and a large shopping mall near the entrance to the township. These need to be taken into account in a more comprehensive assessment of the success or otherwise of the ARP. There are also the upgrades to the underlying infrastructure – water, sewer and electricity – which are not necessarily visible. The economic and social impacts of the ARP are beyond the scope of this chapter but must take central place in a more comprehensive assessment of the initiative.

Community perceptions

The residents of Alexandra have a wide array of perspectives on the ARP's physical development interventions. These range from overall satisfaction and a very positive attitude towards the ARP, to complete dissatisfaction and even direct opposition. This has resulted in a substantial degree of conflict between various stakeholders in Alexandra, in particular between civic organisations that vie for access to limited resources as well as to control the spatial development of Alexandra – including the process by which shacks are cleared and residents are allocated houses.

Thandi Mthombeni,[33] who owns a small funeral parlour business in a temporary shop outside the Pan-African Shopping Centre, expressed her support for the ARP and pointed to a mistaken perception among some residents that because people can't see the changes

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in Alexandra directly in front of them, it has not changed for the better: 'It's things that you don't physically see like houses, so they forget about the things they have received.' She says that electricity, water and sewerage has in fact improved: 'I think we were one of the first townships to have prepaid meters and they work well because they work according to your budget and the city power was going ward by ward educating people about saving electricity, and … there was [also] the campaigns with water.'

Dumisani Mabula also spoke of improvements. He remarked that 'though there are a lot of complaints, 80 per cent of the work is visible'.[34] He added that the ARP has increased both the water pressure and the supply of electricity. Referring to the previously overcrowded banks of the Jukskei, he celebrated the success of the ARP in transforming it into 'a park by which people and children can sit and relax, so I see it as a massive success'.

Rachel Phasha, who was born in Alexandra in the late 1970s and now operates a small tourism project inside Alexandra, sees many changes that resulted from the ARP. Previously, she says, Alexandra was 'a notorious township, and many people were afraid to visit, even the whites, the neighbours around Alexandra were afraid to drive along the major freeways and highways, and the main streets, but as I'm speaking now, I can witness that crime has decreased 60 per cent here in Alexandra, and I'm sure it's because of the new policies'.[35]

However, many residents are far less optimistic. One young female named Lucinda Mtsha, who had recently moved to Alexandra because she couldn't find cheap accommodation in Johannesburg, says that 'I have been mugged four times coming back from school and the area is really not safe. They should get patrolling on the streets'. She points out that the water is clean, but that the sewer system is inadequate 'because most of the time people don't have proper toilet facilities and people have to throw their shit outside'.[36]

A male resident who did not want to be named called the ARP a 'dismal failure'.[37] Referring to the upgrading of London Road, he stated that the ARP did not take seriously the congestion in Alexandra:

> They improved London Road before they improved the internal of Alex, because London Road, it connects Sandton with the freeway … The thing is … they have not changed the infrastructure of apartheid … the infrastructure of Alex as a dormitory, they designed Alex not only to serve the factories, and the white properties around … they designed Alex to control it, for uprisings and service strikes … but ARP has not reconfigured Alex.

Some residents referred to the gap between expectations and delivery. Although broadly supportive of the project, Rachel Phasha pointed out that 'people are furious, because Alexandra Renewal Project was supposed to deliver more than what they delivered now'.[38] Respondents also referred to the failure of the ARP to clear shacks. One resident, referring to the power cuts that occur in the township, said of the ARP that 'if you had dealt with the housing crisis you would not have shacks. If you had dealt with the shacks, you would not have the power cuts'.[39]

Thabo Mopasi, a member of the ANC and actively involved in the implementation and designing of the ARP, pointed out what was intended to happen in the ARP:

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> The people have agreed that there is going to be a shackless society in Alexandra, ok? [In] Gauteng, by 2015, we are going to do away with shacks. That was the approach … and [more recently] people also agreed that as soon as we completed removing shacks in the tributaries or any other area, then we should approach development of Alexandra block by block.[40]

However, as Dumisani Mabula pointed out in relation to the block-by-block approach:

> it's working, but not really working … Those people who are going from the block to the new housing, it's service to them, but to the people who are left in there, still they have been living in the same old conditions … it means they must still use the same toilet, the same tap.[41]

Linda Memela confirms the problems with the waiting list approach and discusses the ARP's logic behind the new approach:

> … there was the feeling that the approach that the ARP is doing is not working because it does not make a difference. For instance, up until now, the new houses that have been built in Alex, people who were allocated, there are more than 6 000. But you can't see that vacuum in Alex. So, people cannot see that visibility, that there have been about 6 000 families that have moved out of Alex … So the new approach that has been adopted is that we must have a block-by-block approach in terms of development … So in that way, we would be able to see exactly that something is happening around development.[42]

Adding further complication to the block-by-block approach is the ALPOA, which has sought to disband the ARP completely. ALPOA claims to represent the interests of about 2 900 property owners in Alexandra whose families have featured prominently in the township's history. Property owners clearly believe they not only have preferential rights over new development, but also that their particular interests have been marginalised. In fact, since at least the mid 1980s when their hopes for the restitution of property rights were raised, these property owners have felt increasingly excluded. This disappointment deepened considerably when it became evident the new government was unlikely to meet their minimum for a return of their historical property rights. One elderly woman who was born in Alexandra and has been a member of ALPOA states simply that 'we are trying to get our properties back in Alex and there is a conflict between us and the ARP'.[43] While ALPOA does not wish the government to interfere in their properties, it would like the shack dwellers in the informal settlements to be removed.

ALPOA's interests are, however, contradictory to many of the shack dwellers in the township. The Alexandra Vukuzenzele Crisis Committee primarily represents shack dwellers desperate to retain a foothold in the township. Among the shack dwellers themselves there are tensions, with foreigners often being seen as competition for jobs and other scarce resources. As Thandi Mthombeni said:

> The people they end up taking this into their own hands. Because we don't know, if you go to Extension 7 there is foreigners. And if you check them they even have IDs. These

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people they are just occupying houses and that is why people who are originally from Alex [are angry].[44]

The housing allocation process is complicated in many respects. The use of the Marlboro Transit Camp as a staging post between shacks and new housing attracted adverse comment. One resident in the camp claimed to have been there for seven years waiting for a house: 'Nothing has changed, it's the same as the shack, maybe even the shack is better. The water is coming through these roofs and you know during the winter it's going to be worse … the electricity box is also not safe.'[45] Another resident asked, 'How can I stay with my family in one room?'[46] There was also reference to the K206 housing development, with a complaint that the shacks were often larger and sometimes better built than the small houses provided in this project.

The block-by-block approach, supported by residents who want to see the de-densification of the township, works to the disadvantage of individuals who may not be living in a prioritised block but may be high up on the waiting list. Although residents we interviewed favoured the approach, it is likely that others will have different opinions.

With more interviews we would have surely uncovered further diversity of opinion and interest, and this would have reinforced our conclusion that an objective answer to the question of the ARP's success is impossible. At best we can ask what interests are being served by the various interventions of the ARP.

Conclusion

A May 2008 article by Rowan Philip in the *Sunday Times* referred to the ARP as 'both a staggering failure and a remarkable success'. Describing the ARP as both a success and a failure seems appropriate. In its wider objective of transforming the lives of residents there have clearly been successes but as ARP director Julian Baskin put it, 'We as the ARP may be satisfied with all the work we have done so far, but it may not be appreciated by someone who is still living in a shack.'[47] It is possible to point to many achievements but it is equally apparent that Alexandra presents a 'moving target' and that, with the resources at hand, its transformation is necessarily a long-term project. Our calculations suggest that expenditure of around R7 billion is required to address the *existing* needs of Alexandra. This is far in excess of the R2 billion provided to date, and even were the R7 billion made available success could not be guaranteed.

The ARP has made limited progress towards the objectives of de-densification and new housing provision set in 2001. The reasons for the slowness have been discussed, including the enormous complexity of Alexandra and the difficulties of acquiring land for housing in the vicinity of the township. The focus on numbers of houses built is, however, an inadequate measurement of success as this says little about whether these houses are creating sustainable communities that will allow present and future generations to live better lives. This question requires further careful investigation.

Also of deep concern is whether the spatial objectives set for Alexandra are appropriate

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for a post-apartheid city. In the apartheid era, the debates on the future of Alexandra were framed largely by the interests of the white middle class in the northern parts of Johannesburg. The tension between white fears of large numbers of black people living in close proximity to white neighbourhoods and the need to house the workers needed in white homes and white-owned industries was never resolved, leading to an uneasy acceptance of the permanence of the township and a strong push for de-densification.

In the post-apartheid era, the earlier concern with densification has persisted, reflecting powerful interests within the township. There is no evidence that post-apartheid planning has been informed by a deep analysis of the role of Alexandra in the wider city, and of the contribution that Alexandra as a place makes to the lives of its people. If density is the issue, why are people prepared to put up with the conditions in Alexandra? Why do they move to Alexandra and remain in Alexandra? Why did households that were provided with formal houses in Bram Fischerville return to live in shacks in Alexandra?[48]

The answer, in part, is that Alexandra is an area where low-income households can gain access to urban opportunities at relatively low cost in terms of accommodation and transport. In this context, it is likely that proposals for the expanded development of Alexandra through block-by-block relocations may end up spoiling the opportunities that the township currently offers to its residents.

What is needed now is both a comprehensive review of the ARP and careful reflection on how state intervention should respond to the advantages of having a densely populated and affordable location close to urban opportunities. Beyond the spatial, such reflection should also address the deep concerns around the lack of social cohesion in Alexandra.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1 See UN Habitat's World Habitat Day 2009 Scroll of Honour Award Winners (online document).
2 'Alexandra urban renewal: The all-embracing township urban renewal programme', a submission to UN Habitat.
3 See ARP Failure, Marlboro South Industrial Organisation (online document).
4 *Alex News*, April 2011.
5 See the various reports on Alexandra on the APF's website at http://apf.org.za/spip.php?rubrique30.
6 Although owners had an interest in keeping their tenants they resisted the emergence of free-standing shack settlements. They successfully agitated for the removal of around 7 000 squatters who occupied public spaces in Alexandra in the 1940s.

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7 This started in 1986 when the government granted development rights to construction firm Murray and Roberts to build 800 homes on the East Bank.
8 Defined in the Census as those 'not born in South Africa' plus 'unspecified'. The 'unspecified' are included as they would seem to mainly represent a category of individuals not willing to indicate country of birth and so are most likely to be migrants. However, because of the vagueness of this category, the figures must be taken as indicative only.
9 The unemployment rate is calculated here as the number of 'unemployed' as a percentage of the economically active population.
10 This compared with 17 per cent for Johannesburg overall, 64 per cent for Diepsloot, 35 per cent for Ivory Park and 14 per cent for Soweto.
11 Alexandra, Diepsloot, Ivory Park, Riverlea, Doornkop, Phiri/Senoane (in Soweto), Doornkop (on the edge of Soweto), Jeppestown and Orange Farm.
12 Interview with Carien Engelbrecht, ARP area manager, 12 April 2011.
13 Paul Mashatile talked of building more than 50 000 houses and flats while Premier Mbhazima Shilowa pledged 66 000 houses (Bonner and Nieftagodien 2008).
14 Although the ARP was never intended as a housing project, it did have a strong emphasis on housing provision, and many individuals came to see the ARP primarily in terms of housing. (Interview with Carien Engelbrecht, ARP area manager, 12 April 2011)
15 The urban renewal programme nationally had spatial objectives such as reduced travel times, integration of townships into neighbouring areas, and regional open-space systems.
16 See Project Spotlight; Alexandra Township, a case example on the Urban Upgrading website hosted by the World Bank and MIT.
17 Co-author Luke Sinwell has written critically and extensively on the participatory institutions and processes around the ARP, showing how the different agents – collaborating and in opposition – have shaped development practices in the township (see for example Sinwell 2009a,b,c, 2010, 2011).
18 9 500 RDP houses, 5 700 affordable rental units, 2 500 upgraded hostel flatlets, 2 850 social housing units and 950 bonded and credit-linked houses (Gauteng Department of Housing 2008).
19 Cited in Lynley Main, 'Alex pensioners get homes', 4 May 2011, on the official website of the City of Johannesburg, www.joburg.org.za.
20 City of Johannesburg's exit interview with Julian Baskin, ARP director, 4 December 2008.
21 Referred to in Section 2 of the judgment handed down in *ALPOA and Others v Department of Land Affairs and Others* [LCC82/04] [2009].
22 Interview with Darlene Louw, deputy director and spokesperson of the ARP, interviewed by Luke Sinwell, 2007.
23 Delays infuriated the women in the hostel who felt that their needs were secondary to the needs of the men in M1 and M2 and there were several delegations of angry women to the office of the executive mayor and also a number of angry protests.
24 Interview with Neels Letter, ARP deputy-director, 10 March 2011.
25 Interview with Neels Letter, 14 February 2012.
26 See 'Unique RDP "flats" planned for Alex' (undated online document) on the City of Johannesburg's official website.

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27 See 'Alex project leader counters criticism' (undated online document) on the City of Johannesburg's official website.
28 The ARP, for example, includes units provided for relocated households in Bram Fischerville and Diepsloot in its reporting, despite the fact that formal houses were not provided in the case of Diepsloot.
29 The major completed developments are River Park (880 houses); Far East Bank Extension 8 (181 houses); Far East Bank Extension 7 (1 400 units); East Bank rental accommodation (520 rooms); Marlboro (52 flats); Old Alexandra social housing (350 units); Old Alexandra hostel conversion (298 rooms).
30 There has also been a decline in formal backyard accommodation.
31 The one difference between the Census and GTI figures is that the Census suggests an absolute decline in informal settlement in Old Alexandra since 2001, but the GTI point mapping suggests a modest increase. The data do have to be interpreted carefully though, as it would appear that the 2001 GTI baseline figures were calculated after the removals to Diepsloot and Bram Fischerville.
32 The ALPOA injunction on development in Old Alexandra meant that the ARP was largely confined to housing development on the East Bank/Far East Bank.
33 Interview with Thandi Mthombeni, businesswoman, 11 May 2011.
34 Interview with Dumisani Mabula, Alexandra resident, 11 May 2011.
35 Interview with Rachel Phasha, tourism project operator, 10 March 2011.
36 Interview with Lucinda Mtsha, Alexandra resident, 11 May 2011.
37 Interview with Anonymous 1, 10 March 2011.
38 Interview with Rachel Phasha, 10 March 2011.
39 Interview with Anonymous 1, 10 March 2011.
40 Interview with Thabo Mopasi, ANC member and stakeholder in the implementation and designing of the ARP, 24 February 2011.
41 Interview with Dumisani Mabula, 11 May 2011.
42 Interview with Linda Memela, Secretary of the Alexandra Development Forum, 8 June 2007.
43 Interview with Anonymous 2, 26 February 2011.
44 Interview with Thandi Mthombeni, 11 May 2011.
45 Interview with Anonymous 3, 25 February 2011.
46 Interview with Anonymous 4, 25 February 2011.
47 See 'Alex renewal needs a lifetime' (undated online document) on www.joburg.org.za/
48 Information provided by Julian Baskin.

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