

An investigation into land ownership patterns and land use in peri-urban areas surrounding the City of Johannesburg: A Case Study of Midvaal Municipality, in Gauteng Province, South Africa.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Industrial Sociology in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other University.

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Abstract

The study pursues the examination of transition in peri-urban areas through the case study of Midvaal Local Municipality. Peri-urban areas are experiencing a transition from rural urban coexistence to urban dominance. The peri-urban urban concept remains a complex one to define. Peri-urban concept has been accepted to mean the urban and rural linkages that are mutually reinforcing. Literature has reflected on urban bias developments of peri-urban areas with rural function being subdued. There is evidence of competing tensions between rural and urban functions. These tensions arise from competing interests such as residential estate developments and industrialisation of peri-urban zones. The study explores the urban bias extended to peri-urban zones that has potential to underscore rural functions, such as farming. Theoretical constructs assist to contextualise the transition in the peri-urban areas. There is convergence in the body of literature over transition of the peri-urban areas albeit not homogeneous. Unique country and within country transition of peri-urban zones make it difficult to forecast growth trajectory of peri-urban zones.

The study finds that peri-urban developments have taken an affluent development trend, redefining the peri-urban as zones of high consumption. It is established that ultra-rich people are attracted to Midvaal. Accordingly, there are exclusive upmarket estates, namely, Eye of Africa golfing estate and Blue Saddle Ranches equestrian estate. These affluent development trends fracture the conceptualisation of peri-urban areas as vulnerable, poor areas that are a consequence of urban sprawl. Some of the pro-urban developments in peri-urban areas results in irrecoverable loss of agricultural land. Often, urban bias functions influence the neighbouring farm portions through land use or even influence price of land in these zones.

There is an appeal of middle and upper class to peri-urban zones owing to country nostalgia, cheap land, security, recreation, ambiance, tranquillity and anti-urbanism. Peri-urban areas are being redefined along class lines in the South African socio-economic context. Racial property ownership patterns have been replaced by class patterns. The study establishes that ownership patterns within the estates under study are above the middle class income bracket of South Africa, rather a preserve of the affluent.

The study establishes that Midvaal Municipality consents to the development of estates. There is an underlying motivation for the local authorities to be amenable to the upmarket estate developments. The municipality is actuated by revenue linked to upmarket residential estate developments. Developments of these estates inject revenue growth in the area. Upfront, developers invest in the laying of bulk infrastructure which is later taken over by the municipality. This type of relationship, if not guarded may yield elite capture of peri-urban.

Development trends in peri-urban areas are not homogeneous. Some peri-urban zones still reflect a state of neglect, vulnerability and are homes of the poor.

Whilst the municipality boasts being premised on agriculture strategy in its objectives as an agri-tropolis local authority, there is little evidence to suggest vibrant agriculture and contribution of same towards the GDP of the municipality. Instead, the growth path is dominated by non-agricultural functions and activities. There are contradictions and tensions of agricultural pursuit over industrial and residential developments.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 A shift from poor rural to affluent peri-urban zones

Various studies in peri-urban areas have been conducted, as will be reflected in Chapter Two. Shifts under review by the study will be limited to the previous twenty years to the current year of residential estate developments in the chosen site. The time horizon parameter has been selected to give a concise observation of developmental shift over a twenty year period. This time horizon parameter excludes pending developments for approval in its analysis though reference to these will be made. Developed and developing countries' research has been able to provide longitudinal data on peri-urban developmental trends but it may not be easy to deduce South African trends, owing to history, varied contexts and material conditions of studies.

Peri-urban areas have been described as spheres of coexistence of the urban and rural activities (Douglas, 2006). Ideally, this coexistence is meant to offer unique opportunities for both rural and urban land use functions, therefore, mixed land use. The ratio of urban and rural use in peri-urban areas has not been absolutely defined. This coexistence is seemingly diminishing, giving way to urban forces which, in turn, give rise to a tension of urban over rural use of land in the peri-urban spaces (Buxton, 2006; Boume, et al., 2003). Arguably, where there was once coexistence, there is now a tension between the rural and urban forces. The urban rural tension over these zones may also be considered as an evolution of a new typology of peri-urban spaces; therefore, re-defining peri-urban areas currently and in the future (Keivani, 2009).

The interest of the study is to establish if there is a new typology of peri-urban emerging in the chosen research site. Although the study has narrow focus of Midvaal, it is anticipated that it will inform future studies within Gauteng region and greater South Africa peri-urban spaces. The study seeks to understand the direction of emerging trend, if at all. That is whether, there is urban, rural or coexistence of functions. Whatever the trend, it will have basis on certain motivational or repelling factors that give effect to the developmental trend. Given the trend and motivational factors, the study wants to establish function of agriculture as a feature of peri-urban spaces. This is concerned with establishing impact of shifts being placed in the areas.

Conventionally, peri-urban zones have been commonly conceptualised as being habited by the poor and are a consequence of urban-sprawl (Torres, et al., 2007). Therefore, association of peri-urban areas with squatter settlements, poor basic services and inadequate infrastructural provision are common features in literature (Shaw, 2005). To

some, peri-urban areas served as entry points into big cities, providing a dormitory to those who sell their labour in the urban areas who otherwise cannot afford to live in cities.

Juxtaposed to the urban sprawl, there is a notable trend of upmarket residential and business developments in the same zones (Busck, et al., 2006). It is argued that the upmarket developments peri-urban areas give rise to an uneasy coexistence that is characterised by class divide and social cleavages (Midheme, 2014). It is asserted that these developments exact exorbitant prices that almost exclude the poor and other land use functions (Atkinson and Marais, 2006). The affluent identity of peri-urban zones gives effect to peri-urbanisation and subsequent changes in land use. Land use policies and practices give effect to the future determination of spaces.

In South Africa, new large size country estates find affinity with peri-urban areas (Landman,2004). Development in the per-urban areas is driven by the availability of greenfield sites that enables vast developments and much sought after recreational activities such as golf courses (Landman, 2004). Land use determines the growth trajectory and advancement of particular goals in a designated area; for example, agriculture, residential developments or business use (Mcgregor, et al., 2006).

Owing to apartheid, South Africa had movement and settlement patterns that were racially defined and placed most of its population in peripheral spaces (statssa.gov.za). There is an appeal of residential sectional title developments intended for the ultra-rich in the peri-urban zones. Sectional titles developments are seen as post democratic living arrangements that have overcome apartheid divides (Chipkin, 2013).

South Africa is a society in transition from an apartheid era. The apartheid era in South Africa was characterised by, amongst other things, property rights restrictions to black people. Section 25 of the Republic of South Africa Constitution addresses issues of property rights. There are no restrictions to property ownership in post 1994 South Africa. Given the polarisation of spatial locations of people owing to history, inclusivity and integration are supposedly amongst the virtues aspired to in a democratic South Africa. Notwithstanding, the most heralded Constitution, the spatial patterns of the country are still reflective of the apartheid past (South African Cities Network, 2016). Arguably, these patterns continue to find expression in peri-urban areas owing to racialised income categories. Property ownership in South Africa remains skewed along class, consequently, racial lines.

It begs the question if estate development patterns in the peri-urban areas are a move towards integrated societies; or whether there may be limitations in the ownership shifts that further polarise societal integration. Assuming that prior to these developments, peri-urban areas were once habited; the question that follows is where have these people gone to? It may be argued that the poor people who once used peri-urban spaces as dormitories have been displaced or marginalised and suffer adverse socio-economic consequences. This research considers the outcomes of the uptake of the peri-urban areas by upmarket residential developments.

Urbanisation trends saw highest growth of black urbanisation trends at 47% in 2001 (Zuma, 2013). It is against this background that history of peri-urban needs to be understood in context. It begs the question if post democracy settlement patterns of peri-urban undo segregation history or perpetuates it. So, in South African context changes in peri-urban areas may be a correction of history or protection of apartheid legacy. In South Africa, job seekers and traders have taken up residency in central business districts that were previously restricted from them (Macagnano, 2002). This narrative suggests that out of the population explosion of cities, peri-urban areas were flooded by job seekers and immigrants (Macagnano, 2002).

1.1 Research Problem

1.1.1 A threat to rural functions of peri-urban areas

The upsurge of middle class and golf estate developments has fractured common understanding of how the peri-urban area has been theorised and understood. A common thesis has been of peri-urban areas as an over-flow of explosive urbanisation of cities characterised by surplus unemployment and often poor living conditions (Shaw, 2005; Saxena and Sharma, 2015; Torres, et al., 2007). In contrast, peri-urban areas are becoming zones of choice for high consumers (Buxton, 2006). This study is primarily concerned with the shifts in land use amidst the upsurge of estate developments. These in turn, formulate an urban fibre of peri-urban societies. The uptake of peri-urban developments by high consumers may be a consequence of design or an accident of unmitigated development policy and practice.

There is an unmitigated elite capture of peri-urban areas through upmarket residential developments that seek to bring back the nostalgia of rural living (Buxton, 2006). It questions the social costs of these developments and the diminished rural agricultural offerings of peri-

urban areas. Disputably, agricultural space has been eroded by residential developments without seeking land use balance as considered in the coexistence articulation of peri-urban areas (Samat and Elhadary, 2012; Busck, et al., 2006). The development trends seem to give deference to upmarket residential developments with disregard for agricultural functionality of land. The urban bias that bestows preference to urban developments over agricultural land may be considered a threat to food security (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). This study does not suggest that agriculture use of land has been without elite capture. It is through elite capture that wine farms and large commercial farmers are in the hands of few and have been so pre-and post-democracy.

At the core of this research problem is the shifts in land use of peri-urban areas, almost exclusive to upper class needs. Peri-urban areas are shifting to meet and respond to the needs of this class (Mcgregor, et al., 2006; Busck, et al., 2006). Development packages of peri-urban areas are exclusionist to the poor, consequently, do not foster integrated societies. The availability of land in large parcels at expensive prices without cheaper alternatives may be considered exclusive and equally a form of economic discrimination (McGregor, et al., 2006). The extent to which shifts in property ownership of peri-urban land is unfolding remains to be seen whether the shift is towards integrated societies and inclusive property ownership.

A response to the consumptive culture of the middle and upper class has coerced changes in land use management by local authorities. Foreseeably, some of the changes that occur in peri-urban land are irreversible, therefore permanently lost to the orthodox functions of peri-urban areas (Samat and Elhadary, 2012). It is unimaginable that manicured estate developments can one day be demolished to make way for agricultural production nor is it clear how many of these will be developed in the future. It seems deference to urban bias has given way to capital accumulation and trade liberation in peri-urban areas at the expense of other functions (Briggs and Mwamfupe, 1999).

The scale and magnitude of urban seduction of peri-urban areas seem extensive, albeit at various degrees and for various reasons. There are economic pursuits, environmental, residential, urban sprawl, population growth reasons, etcetera (Hudalah, et al., 2007; Keivani, 2009; and Saxena and Sharma, 2015). Notwithstanding these complexities, these areas are least understood with fragmented interventions that are geographic and country specific (Bourne, et al., 2003). Harmonisation of responses and interventions is required in these spaces to survive the urban bias of different kinds.

Certainly, the existence of peri-urban areas is under the serious threat of extinction. The move of urban edge to make space for expansion of metropolitans arguably diminishes peri-

urban areas (Tacoli, 1998). For example, in the state of Gauteng Province Address of 2015, the Premier announced the development of a new city along Lanseria Airport and Maropeng World Heritage; this area may have been considered peri-urban. While demographic projections indicate growth in urban areas, perhaps that growth is matched by diminishing peri-urban areas.

There are interventions being made from the rural and urban side while the peri-urban area remains a gap area. This suggests that the peri-urban areas are in a vulnerable policy and legislative development (Mattingly, 1999). There are few or no renowned peri-urban programmes and strategies that can be equated to the level of the South African Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). It is contested that the urban and rural focus has led to the disenfranchisement of the peri-urban areas. Inherently, the view holds that urban areas are cared for while anything beyond the city boundary remains poor.

Lack of legislation to protect agricultural land has almost allowed peri-urban shifts to occur without mitigation (Sharma, 2015). Through Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 and Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 South African municipalities enjoy a degree of autonomy consequently; they are entrusted with the role of overseeing land use management. This autonomy *de facto* gives local authorities veto power over land use patterns in their jurisdictions. Perhaps, the dominance of the urban force at the consent of municipalities in peri-urban areas has ushered in affluent residential developments and consequently shifted land use patterns.

Notwithstanding regulatory power, municipalities are reluctant to disincentivise developments that are not consistent with municipal growth plans (Pieterse, 2009). Instead municipalities are incentivising developer driven developments that in turn determine the trajectory of growth for municipalities without due regard of strategic plans. This research holds a view that there are underlying drivers and enablers of the developmental shifts in peri-urban areas that should be considered, each with its own merit. Perhaps there are positive and/or negative outcomes of these drivers and enablers, depending on the scholastic perspective. The interest of this study is to understand and contextualise these factors. Supposedly, enablers may include disregard of the policy, failure to anticipate the future of the decisions taken at present, pursuit of economic prospects over sustainability, thus underscoring agricultural use and inclusive society goals. The extent to which these drivers are shaping the current and future outlook of the peri-urban areas is of paramount importance to the study.

Studies of environmental degradation characterise peri-urban spaces (Shaw, 2005, McGregor, et al., 2006). Tools, like Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA's), are meant to protect environmental integrity. The challenge is, to what extent have these tools been used to safeguard the environmental conditions of the peri-urban areas in the shifts towards affluent class residential developments? Similarly, there are Social Impact Assessment (SIA's) tools. This research asks whether the SIA's serve as effective utility tools to safeguard social consequences in the development of the peri-urban areas. Arguably, community resistance and protests against forced removals or protests against certain businesses are Social Impact Assessment tools for the poor.

1.2 Aims and Objectives of the study

This study seeks to examine the impact of shifts and transition in peri-urban areas as it relates to the tensions of land use, specifically the tension amid upmarket residential developments over orthodox peri-urban functions such as agriculture. This research is premised on the elite capture of peri-urban areas which gives deference towards the urbanisation of these zones to affirm the high consumptive culture of middle class habitants. The study examines if affluent developmental trends are applicable in the Midvaal Local municipality peri-urban area by examining two upmarket residential developments, namely, Eye of Africa and Blue Saddle Ranches. In turn, the study examine if there has been an impact on rural and agriculture land use functions. The examination of paradigm shifts in land use seeks to account for developmental trends, causality and trade-offs therein.

The study also reflects on the secondary objectives, that is, an overview of property rights bestowed on the upmarket residential developments and therefore gives effect to a particular growth trajectory. Albeit considered secondary, these objectives are essential as they prove the test of the primary objective. Property rights in South Africa are infinite, therefore, once a typology of a property rights has been bestowed, it may mean that any other prospects and use has been eroded irrecoverably. Pre-democracy, ownership in apartheid was largely defined along racial lines. Post democracy, the study seeks to find a profile of ownership. Perhaps racial lines replaced by class lines.

1.3 Research Question and Subsidiary Questions

The main research and subsidiary research questions appreciate the global evolution of peri-urban areas; however, it seeks to discover pertinent trends in relation to Midvaal Local Municipality. The main research question is: What are the drivers of upmarket residential developments in the Midvaal Local Municipality area?

Notwithstanding the main research question, there are subsidiary questions that assist with reinforcement of the main question. The subsidiary research questions are the following:

- What is the degree to which developmental drivers represent developmental and ownership shifts in the Midvaal area?; and
- To what extent has agricultural land been taken over by residential developments?

1.4 Defining Key Concepts

This section seeks to define key frequently used terms in this paper. The definitions seek to contextualise concepts and bequeath meaning throughout the study.

1.4.1 Peri-urban

Peri-urban area is amongst the frequently used term in this paper. Defining the peri-urban is complex. The exact definition and location is reliant on the precise demarcation of urban boundaries. Some scholars have argued that peri-urban areas are “superficially rural” (Buxton, 2006:27). The definition of peri-urban is not a fixed one; it varies, depending on the country, source of data and scholastic focus (Tacoli, 1998). Areas have been defined to be rural, peri-urban or urban according to their offerings in respect of produce, densities and industrial activities (Tacoli, 1998) while some have placed emphasis on the distance or proximity to the city.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of the peri-urban area that is adopted is the one that considers peri-urban as a transitional zone of mixed use of both urban and rural activities, where these uses are subject to change by human activities (Douglas, 2006) Peri-urban areas have also been described as “formerly rural” localities that are now, due to the rapid expansion of South Africa’s metros and major towns, directly in the path of urbanisation (du Plesis, 2008). Some scholars have defined peri-urban areas as those regions that are on the urban periphery into which cities grow and exert their influence (Buxton, 2006).

1.4.2 Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act

The dissertation makes reference to Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013, (SPLUMA). This Act seeks to harmonise the practices of spatial planning across municipalities in South Africa while advancing a redress to apartheid spatial imbalances (cer.org.za). Significantly, this Act enjoins authorities to adhere to legislated spatial planning and land use management. The Act is in pursuit of inclusive and equitable spatial planning.

1.4.3 Land use management

The land use management concept is a common reference in this study. Various authorities define and appreciate land use management in different ways; however, the ethos remains same. The study relates to the definition sponsored by City of Johannesburg which defines land use management as a “system of legal requirements and regulations that apply to land in order to achieve desirable and harmonious development of the built environment” (joburg.org.za/index). This management of land is applicable to both rural and urban areas. The definition also includes peri-urban areas.

1.4.4 Urbanisation

Urbanisation as a concept has been used in the literature review to denote a process that has led to the influx to peri-urban areas and consequently exploitation of its natural assets. Defined scholastically, it is “the process in which a number of people living in cities increases compared with the number of people living in rural areas” (botany.uwc.ac.za).

1.4.5 Upmarket estate residential development

It has proven difficult to arrive at one concise definition of upmarket estate residential developments. This research uses features of these estates to embed an image of the estate developments under review. Upmarket estate residential developments have distinct features like high price tag of properties; it is not uncommon that an entry point of houses to be in the millions of Rands. Notwithstanding, the high price tags, these properties still get sold out. These estates are often for the ultra-wealthy with matching amenities. Upmarket estates development boast distinct locations, boom gates with security controls, golf amenities, others highlight country living, total seclusion from the greater part of the surrounding communities.

1.5 Chapter Outline

1.5.1 Chapter One: Problem Formulation

The occasion of Chapter One is to share insight into the purpose and motivation of this research. Therefore, chapter one defines the research problem, research question and highlights considerations underpinning and that evoked the research. Additionally, a glossary of commonly used terms in this study is provided in this chapter.

1.5.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Two provides the literature review that has informed the study. This chapter contextualises the study within a theoretical perspective, provides conventional understanding to peri-urban areas and contrasts these to development trends in these zones. This chapter includes insight into the consensus and evidence of changes in peri-urban areas, highlights pertinent case studies, gives an appreciation of governance of the peri-urban areas through a legislative context, and enters into the space of appreciating land use management as a game changer of spatial use. The chapter highlights property discourse at play and its influence over peri-urban middle class identity. The chapter highlights the outcomes of developmental trends and a need for harmonisation of interventions for adaptation and safeguarding of peri-urban areas.

1.5.3 Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter is concerned about the scholastic prescripts of research methodology and lineage of this study therein. This chapter shares the methodology employed to conduct this research.

1.5.4 Chapter Four: Background and Context of the Research Site

Chapter four provides a snap shot historical background to the municipality and the selected two case studies. The chapter exists to embed a pictorial view of the municipality and chosen case studies in the readers' mind. This chapter also draws parallels of municipal planning against developments and agriculture intentions of the municipality.

1.5.5 Chapter Five: Findings Analysis

This section provides analysis of findings collected through interviews. This chapter identifies themes emerging from interviews as flash points for analysis. The chapter draws parallels of

its findings and the commonly shared narrative in literature review. Findings analysis chapter highlights distinctions of research findings and already existing knowledge.

1.5.6 Chapter Six: Conclusion

The chapter makes conclusions based on the research findings. This chapter captures key themes emerging from the study, literature and theoretical embeddedness of key findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

At the core of this academic pursuit is the transition taking place from conventional offerings of peri-urban areas to zones of high economic and environmental consumption. It begs the question of motivational factors behind the transition and a period in time in which the transition started. The exact period of this trend remains unclear. The post-apartheid, 1994, saw the beginning of the developments of country estates and some form of industrialisation in the peri-urban areas. This trend flows against the thesis of peri-urban areas as slums and a consequence of urban sprawl. The researcher suggests the transitioning of peri-urban areas almost blurs the line of urban and peri-urban. Additionally, there is fading of rural functions (Hudalah, et al., 2007).

The concept peri-urban itself is coined to imply rural-urban linkages (Adell, 1999). Peri-urban areas have the ability to mutually provide rural and natural resources yet provide infrastructure proximal to cities (Mbiba & Huchzermeyer, 2002). There are various interlocking themes in the transition taking place in peri-urban areas. This study considers peri-urban transformation to be a social, economic and agricultural sustainability challenge. This literature review seeks to explore the extent of this transition and underlying drivers towards this.

Firstly, this literature review provides a theoretical construct around the transition and transformation of peri-urban areas. Secondly, the literature review establishes consensus or lack thereof on the transition of peri-urban areas. Thirdly, the study departs from a premise that, before one contends that there is transition in the peri-urban zones, there is a conventional conceptualisation of peri-urban zones. This chapter deepens the understanding on how peri-urban areas have been conventionally understood and requisite land use management. Fourthly, given a degree of transition taking place, the study explores underlying factors for the transition. Fifthly, this chapter discovers the implications and future outcomes of the transition. The chapter considers outcomes of unanticipated, therefore, unmitigated peri-urban development trends. Implication may be contextual and thus have different consequential outcomes, ranging from positive to negative, depending on the unit of analysis being used. Finally, the chapter examines omissions and/or commissions in the

planning and development of peri-urban areas and looks at harmonisation solutions offered by different scholars.

2.1 A theoretical construct of peri-urban areas

Literature¹ converges (as expanded in the subsequent sections of this chapter) on the transformation taking place in peri-urban areas. There is admission that peri-urbanisation is a global phenomenon (Hudalah, et al., 2007). The universally understood² phenomenon about peri-urban areas is that they are geographically vast, fluid landscapes, heterogeneous, zones of high contestations and the fastest growing zones of development. Yet, the phenomenon of change in peri-urban areas is least understood (Bourne, et al., 2003).

Peri-urban is conceptualised differently. To some, peri-urban is merely a theoretical construct rather than an empirical concept (Buxton et al., 2006). It is against this background that there are varied country and regional responses. Sometimes, there are even differences within country's response towards these zones. Arguably, this construct yields utility engagement of peri-urban areas and denotes distinct planning or lack thereof.

Peri-urban zones are perceived as highly contested zones with a tension of urban and rural appeal at play (Boume, et al., 2003). Notably, the peri-urban areas seem to transform to urban areas. The depth and breadth of peri-urban literature has not once demonstrated changes wherein a peri-urban area has transitioned to be more rural than it was before. Consequently, there is an increasing urban-rural dichotomy in these zones.

Predominantly, literature uses two perspectives to examine peri-urban spaces, namely, a rural or urban perspective. The rural perspective regards the urban influence over peri-urban areas as invasive with rural zones are subservient to the urban dominance (Boume, et al., 2003). Urban bias has been blamed for slow and inequitable growth (Lipton, 1984). Slow and inequitable growth is given effect by resource allocation in developing countries that is bias towards urban priorities which in turn underscores investments rural functions (Lipton, 1984). There is a need to transform the rural sector such that it is poised for growth. This requires resource input and rethink of rural policy configurations (Lipton, 1977). In countries like Britain, there has been a deliberate intervention by government to curb "urban bias" through the strengthening of rural production by enhancing social and physical infrastructure necessary to increase rural production (Allen, 2003). These have meant consideration of the agricultural value chain through "rural industrialization programmes and integrated rural

¹ McGregor, et al., 2006; Tacoli, 1998; Boume, et al;2003;Hudalah, et al.,;2007;Busck, et al., ;2006;Saxena and Sharma,2015; Torres, et al.,2007;Samat and Elhadary, 2012

² Buxton, 2006; Boume, et al., 2003,;Mcgregor, 2006; Hudalah, et al.,2007; Shaw, 2005

development programmes” (Allen, 2003: 139). South Africa presents with unique urban and peri-urban constructs owing to racial and economic access as a legacy of apartheid. A problem of access by the underclass is real and requires government response to institutional exclusion (Parnell,2005).

The space economy of South Africa remains largely divided and unequal owing to past imbalances (Pieterse, 2009). Emergence of gated communities has raised concerns of spatial fragmentation and social exclusion. Notwithstanding, the move resembling apartheid spatial segregation crime has been linked with this trend (Landman, 2002). These developments upscale their security features the poor are left in neglect. Although a point of crime has been made to justify broad transition into gated communities, it is inconclusive if same rationale could be used to justify peri-urban transition. In the past era, peri-urban areas were perceived to be reserved for black people. “Middle class both as a real social fact and as an objective of government policy is said to be one of the major social phenomena of post-apartheid South Africa” (Chipkin, 2013:79). Whether in Africa or East Asia, there is a view that spatial progression of peri-urban areas is perpetuating the segregation of the colonial past (Hudalah, et al., 2007: 33). It has been advocated that the “colonial race based separation has been virtually replaced by the current socio-economic segmentation, although the two are in many cases still interchangeable” (Hudalah, et al., 2007: 34). It is highlighted that opulent gated estates, such as Featherbrook, at the time of the study only had less than 10% black families (Chipkin,2013). This by no means suggest racial integration but rather class.

The transition of peri-urban areas into high economic zones in South Africa will continue to be analysed, rightly or wrongly through the lens of economic disparities in the country. It is reported that “gated communities have created spatial separation by race, social group, and economic class in peri-urban areas of East Asian metropolitan regions” (Hudalah, et al., 2007:34). Poverty is a barrier to entry towards growth, development and industrialisation (Lipton, 1977). To complicate matters, South Africa, suffers a vacuum in peri-urban policies. This is matter requires reconstruction and implementation of rural policies to strive for economic growth of peri-urban areas.

The urban perspective suggests that densification of the peri-urban is ideal for the alleviation of urbanisation pressures being experienced by the urban areas (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). This perspective has nexus nexus in economics. In fact, cities’ expansion is considered distribution of wealth and income (Mabin, 2005). This thesis opposes the construct of growth of metropolitan cities as a consequence of failed cities with a resultant of

“slummification” thesis of peri-urban areas (Simone, 2004). Therefore, peri-urbans are not merely a dormitories.

Economic premise transformation theories in peri-urban areas attribute change to economic dynamics. Adell (1999) highlights growth pole model theories, which theories examine linkage between rural and urban interface. Rondinelli, (1985); Unwin (1989) (in Adell,1999: 9) said *“The growth pole theory is based on the belief that governments of developing countries can induce economic growth and welfare by investing heavily in capital-intensive industries in large urban centres or regional capitals. This growth is supposed to spread to the rural areas in a process of regional development”*. Arguably, peri-urban areas are viewed only as economic opportunities (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002). It is believed that there are genuine reasons of economic factors as an attraction and a causal effect of the transition in peri-urban areas. In China, for example, urbanisation was used by government as a deliberate strategy of poverty alleviation (Keivani, 2009).

The emergence of cities in peri-urban areas has also been considered a motivation to move towards peri-urban areas. In China, in the 2000’s, the country was planning to build new fifty large cities (Buxton, 2006). Out of urbanisation and the creation of cities, local governments in China were able to utilise the associated demands for housing and property development to massively boost their revenues through the sale of land use rights to private developers (Keivani, 2009). It begs the question if such espoused economic growth is sustainable. The urbanisation of peri-urban areas creates a different construct of economic systems, that is, a move from agricultural work to more urban typology of work (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). In turn, these underscore the prospects of agricultural economy.

The economic based theories are premised on the economic spread from urban to rural areas, yet have often had unintended negative outcomes (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002). It is noted that the economic direction is perceived to be from urban to rural. Economic prospects are often used as entry points to change the balance of urban rural linkages with the promise of job opportunities and economic prospects. This pursuit almost seeks to suggest that without urban influence, the peri-urban economy is modest and may not thrive on its own functions.

The outcomes of the growth pole theory have been criticised for urban bias. It is argued that notwithstanding the “trickle- down effect” in the rural urban linkages, the rural areas remain largely impoverished. Lipton (1977) (in Adell,1999: 10) provided an urban bias critique that *“the most important class conflict in the poor countries of the world today is not between labour and capital. Nor it is between foreign and national interests. It is between the rural*

classes and the urban classes. The rural sector contains most of the poverty, and most of the low-cost sources of potential advance; but the urban sector contains most of the articulateness, organisation, and power “. This signals that even the anticipated economic benefit is not realised by the rural functions of the peri-urban areas, yet they would have allowed the urban dominance with the linkage. The economic imperative skews the scale of urban rural linkages to give deference to urban dominance.

Neoclassical economic theory of urban structure is based on *“von Thunen’s agricultural land use model whose building blocks are economic rent, distance from the centre and individual decision making”* (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002: 123). Under this theoretical construct it is believed that the transformation of peri-urban areas is a consequence of the market condition that brings about the efficient changes in economic activities without interventions of humans. Mainstream economics would consider this theory favourable as it relies on the market led efficiencies. Proponents of a free market economy who espouse private property rights denounce the involvement of government in land markets with a view that the market will determine the best use and price of land. Consequently, this model gave rise to modernisation theory views of peri-urban transformation (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002). It is considered that modernisation is positive and carries economic prospects. Perhaps this theory does not question the consequences of tenure rights. Tenure rights discourse is discounted in the theory as it suggested that *“tenure conditions are considered ‘structural’ defects that have to be overcome before growth can be achieved. The theory argues that benefits to households will increase as their activities change from agrarian subsistence to modern ones integrated with the world economy. Western style individual title would increase security and credit worthiness”* (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002: 124).

There is also a dependency theory that is derived from a neo-Marxist perspective. This theory considers that the trail of poverty, despair and neglect is an exploitative nature of global capitalism. *“According to the dependency theory-derived perspectives, rapid urban growth, commercialization of peri-urban activities and land markets are considered destructive to local household livelihoods and institutions”*(Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002: 125). This theory suggests that regardless of intended economic prospects, there are unequal people in the transformation of peri-urban areas and some take advantage of the transformation owing to their power, resources and knowledge while others are not equipped to derive benefit from the transformation. The dependency theory is linked to human agency and structuration theory. Human agency theory suggests that *“groups such as ‘the working class’ and the peasants lose out to multinational corporations in areas such as access to land and productive resources, markets and information. Earlier Marxist works emphasized a*

global structural economic determinism at the expense of human agency” (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002: 126). The Structuration theory adds that benefit realisation of economic spread depends on the influence of the actors and how they respond to challenges (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002).

Whilst economic prospects are an easy appeal card to be used as a panacea of all economic problems, it is foreseeable that it may cause different social constructs for the peri-urban areas. This suggests that new competing interests of peri-urban areas may underscore the conventional farming economy of rural areas. There is an acknowledgement that the transition happening in the peri-urban areas is not independent of global forces. Undoubtedly, there has been an influence of global capitalism through Foreign Direct Investments looking for vast tracts of land, cheap labour and access to major cities (Hudalah, et al., 2007). Although these are said to generate economic growth, it may be argued that this affirms only a few and the elites of peri-urban areas, yet permanently changes the landscape of peri-urban areas.

This one directional force is compounded by demands of urban living such as residential properties, industrial zones, investors speculating for profits and global capitalism (Boume, et al., 2003). Often, large parcels of land in peri-urban areas are bought by the elite for speculation (Allen, 2009).

It is against this background that some scholars have crafted a concept of peri-urbanisation. Peri-urbanisation has been defined by Webster (2002) in Hudalah, et al (2007) as “a process in which rural areas located on the outskirts of established cities become more urban in character, in physical, economic, and social terms, often in piecemeal fashion”. It is said that the rapid uptake of peri-urban areas by urban forces is remarkably higher in developing countries (Buxton, 2006; Boume et al., 2003, McGregor, et al., 2006; Hudalah, et al., 2007; Shaw, 2005).

Tacoli (1998) suggested that there are push and pull models of transition across rural and urban boundaries. The push and pull model suggests that there are forces of migration that either push or pull people in relation to spatial locations, in this context, peri-urban zones (Tacoli, 1998). There are forces that are pushing the middle class away from the urban into the peri-urban areas. Literature (Tacoli, 1998; Buxton, 2006) states that the middle class is being pulled to the peri-urban areas by the quality of life choices; for example, leisure, nature and residential estates developments. While the ratios of the push and pull forces are not clearly articulated, migration to peri-urban areas is occurring.

The push-pull models of migration have assumed a one direction rural to urban pull (Tacoli, 1998). It begs the question if there is another “force” at play in the opposite direction, that is, urban to peri-urban direction. It is unclear if there is a force in the opposite direction that is attracting the poor to the urban areas or whether they are pushed furthest onto the fringes of the peri-urban areas, thus further marginalisation. Literature has found that lower income inhabitants tend to be placed in the pockets of peri-urban areas that are vulnerable to floods (Allen, 2009). This suggests the marginalisation of the poor in peri-urban areas. Ahmad, et al. (2010) suggests that cities like Johannesburg have become residential areas for job seekers, immigrants, etcetera, owing to urban decay and flight of business from city centres. The study is cautious not to extend Ahmad’s study to greater urban suburbs.

Systems thinking theoretical constructs of transformation in peri-urban areas consider interconnectedness of the spaces (Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002). Therefore, according to UNCHS, 1999 (in Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002), urban rural linkages are enjoined in a system by flows of goods, services, infrastructure and information. In the research conducted by Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, (2002) in sub-Saharan Africa, it posited that the systems theory as an account for transformation in peri-urban areas has been considered a neutral theory while its perceived neutrality conceals exploitation of natural resources.

This study acknowledges that there has to be room for both protection and adaptation. The aim should be to pursue the compatibility and adaptation, and at best, ensure that these are mutually supportive (Buxton, 2006). Individuated responses do not sponsor hegemony of global response and/or protection of peri-urban areas where necessary. As such, most countries have not been able to anticipate and plan for growth of peri-urban areas (Buxton, et al., 2006). Given the unpredictable and incoherent approaches and responses to peri-urban areas, it is not easy to predict manifesting changes in peri-urban areas. An analysis of Australian peri-urban areas suggests that it is important to anticipate the changes of peri-urban areas as a means of reducing “negative social, economic or environmental impacts that may result from future development” (Buxton, et al., 2006:21).

2.2 Consensus on Peri-urban area transformation

“Peri-urban areas are characterised by great heterogeneity and rapid changes of land use” (Busck et al., 2006:21).

There are common cause factors that are shared and understood about peri-urban transformation regardless of location in the globe. It has been argued that “the contemporary world is essentially an urban world” (Busck, et al., 2006:22). It said that the twenty first century is the urban century with 95% urbanisation expected in developing countries whilst

the majority of states will be urbanised by 2020 (Keivani, 2009). Admittedly, there is a sense that cities are growing at an alarming rate. It is reported that the urban population has increased dramatically from 200 million in 1900 to about 2.9 billion in 2000, and it is estimated to reach 5 billion by 2030 (Samat and Elhadary, 2012).

It is estimated that more than half of the world's population are living in urban areas and the majority are in the developing countries (Samat and Elhadary, 2012). Presumably, this places pressure on peri-urban areas as well. In India, already a third of the population lives in urban areas (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). In 2002, it was already predicted that about 200 million people, which constitute 40% of the East Asian population, will reside in peri-urban areas with anticipation that in coastal China, peri-urban areas may extend 300 kilometres (Hudalah, et al., 2007). Given this far reaching extension, it begs the questions if there a still boundary lines between cities and peri-urban areas.

As recently as 1975 there were only three major cities, namely, Tokyo, New York and Mexico City, but in 2005 this figure increased to 20 with 16 being in developing countries (Keivani, 2009). India is experiencing high paced growth from a rural economy, rural and peri-urban habitation system. It is reflected that in India there were only 23 metropolitan cities in 1991 and 46 in 2011 (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). In Toronto, Canada, over 75% of new growth takes place in rural locations (Boume, et al., 2003). In São Paulo, cities are said to be losing population to the farthest suburbs of the metropolitan, from 19% in 1991 to 30% in 2000 (Torres, et al., 2007). Between period of 2001 and 2011 urban population increased from 57% to 63% (Zuma, 2013)

The World Bank (2007) study suggests that, in the South African context, peri-urban areas that were previously considered rural now experience rapid urbanisation. The developmental trends outlined above confirm the transformation of peri-urban areas towards urban influence. It has been argued that expansion of larger metropolitans and differential occupation of peri-urban land has transformed the rural hinterlands into semi-urban or peri-urban areas (Shaw, 2005). However, this does not suggest that some pockets of peri-urban areas have not remained constant.

2.3 Conventional understanding of peri-urban areas

There are key emerging themes of conventional conceptualisation of urban areas. New trends of urbanisation and urbanism need to be understood and contextualised without discarding conventional accounts (Soja,2010). This section highlights some of themes to be

considered. Conventional studies highlighted strong coexistence of rural and urban activities (Hudalah, et al., 2007; Boume, et al., 2003).

2.3.1 Despair and Neglect of peri-urban areas

Some literature possesses a narrative of despair and neglect of peri-urban areas. This conventional construct perceives peri-urban areas as being characterised by poor infrastructure, encroachment by displaced people, slum dwelling, inferior housing, absence of political systems, social problems and lack of clear local government system (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). The common narrative suggests that peri-urban zones are a reservoir of labour for the urban areas (Mcgregor, et al., 2006).

Peri-urban areas depict limited land use planning and consequently, investments (Mcgregor, et al.,2006). Additionally, peripheral location makes these zones vulnerable as jurisdiction is often unclear and impacts on land use and planning (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). Peri-urban transition is almost happening without great notice. Lack of urban status, being out of the political glare, peri-urbans suffer deficiency of “institutional capacities and governance structure to respond to the process of changes in a positive way” in these zones (Saxena and Sharma, 2015:15). This may imply investment, or lack thereof, that is provided to peri-urban areas. Consequently, spatial planning of these areas seems to have taken a *laissez-faire* approach, with development dictated by the dominant influential role players (Shaw, 2005).

This neglect gives way to “spontaneous settlements and haphazard subdivisions” with “non-compliance with the existing regulatory controls on land development” (Mcgregor, et al., 2006: 151). Local authorities are in charge of spatial planning and zoning; this raises questions of due consideration given to the land use of peri-urban areas.

2.3.2 Insecurity of tenure and Property rights

Urban social production which accounts for peri-urban transition is characterised by insecurity of tenure (Simone,2002). The vulnerability of peri-urbans is exacerbated by the prevalence of insecure tenure (Atkinson and Marais, 2006; Saxena and Sharma, 2015). For example, illegal occupation accounts for 43% of the population living in fast-growing peri-urban areas of the city of São Paulo (Torres, et al., 2007). Mulwanda (1993) (in Mbiba and Huchzermeyer, 2002) indicates that in Lusaka half the population live in illegal settlements

which are located in flood plains. This provides the location of the poor in peri-urban areas who live under insecure tenure.

“Land tenure rights often include the freedom to: occupy, use, develop or enjoy one's land; bequeath land to heirs or sell land; lease or grant land or use rights over that land to others with reasonable guarantees of being able to recover the land; restrict others' access to that land; and use natural resources located on that land.” (Knight, 2010: 19). The poor often lack security that gives a degree of comfort over their land; therefore, they are unable to enjoy this right in a classic sense of formal property rights system. Insecurity of tenure excludes the poor productively and consequently, economically.

The elites have taken advantage of the accessibility of the formal property rights system. The middle class considers peri-urban areas as investment zones for speculative, industrial, residential and commercial land development (Mcgregor, et al., 2006). “As land values rise, local elites are gaining land while the most marginalized community members lose” (Knight, 2010: 30). Invariably, the takeover of land and related natural resources by elites exacerbates class differences. This narrative suggests that land rights further inequalities. Security of tenure raises a problem constructed by class related privileges and deficiencies.

A case study of Ethembaletu by the World Bank (2007) attempts to highlight the South African socio-economic dynamics of forces at play in the ownership patterns of peri-urban areas. Caution is given against generalisation and over-simplification of developmental shifts in peri-urban areas premised on this one study conducted in 2007. Time location in history must be considered and viewed against the findings. The case study highlights the difficulties encountered by poor communities in accessing freehold rights to peri-urban land. The study covered experiences of people trying to acquire land in the Muldersdrift area, Mogale City Municipality, West of Johannesburg. The Ethembaletu community predominantly consisted of 250 families of laid-off farm workers. This community raised R125 000 as a fund to purchase land. The process towards land acquisition was marked by cancelled sales agreements, wrongful arrest, court proceedings and an out of court settlement of R250 000 in order to prevent poor black people from living in a wealthy white neighbourhood. This may be seen to be consistent with a “*not in my backyard syndrome*” (World Bank, 2007:19). The community was financially stretched from paying legal fees and consultants to conduct environmental impact studies. Eventually, the community gained the right to use land not ownership. Access to land problem is not unique to South Africa. In Namibia, people with limited resources and knowledge of navigating government's bureaucratic procedures find it extremely difficult to access land (Fuller, 2006). This is a

reflection of how individuals without social and economic capital pursue economic access in the existing spatial economy (Simone,2002).

The study's findings and recommendations include, but are not limited to, the bureaucratic bias by municipalities to favour affluent developments in the peri-urban areas due to potential in paying compliance costs and associated municipal rates and taxes. Authorities are actuated by a pursuit of rates base to promote certain developments (Buxton, et al., 2006). The researcher suggests bias is not scripted but may be evident in municipal approvals of developments over a period of time. Ultimately, bias lands at the Deeds Register wherein a certain profile of persons own properties and not others.

Furthermore, the World Bank (2007) study found that administratively, there is no single responsibility and accountability of development planning and land use. Fragmentation has been cited in international literature as having a direct effect on the development of peri-urban areas (Buxton,et al., 2006). Fragmentation of jurisdiction in development planning may be an additional burden for the poor to navigate towards obtaining formal rights over land. Bureaucratic and legal requirements towards property ownership restrict access and give dominance to the class with knowledge capital. Dominance influences rules and defines regularities (Bourdieu, 2005). Arguably, the dominance may extend to influence decision over municipalities, lenders, developers and consequently, estate agents. Property rights institutions establish a relationship between government and individuals (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003). This relationship extends to observable patterns of ownership patterns in society.

2.3.3 Growth is attributable to Urban Sprawl

Conventional discourse on peri-urban areas has attributed growth to urban sprawl. Urban sprawl has been cited as a major contributing factor to the development of peri-urban areas. Peri-urban areas are conceived to be a consequence of the population explosion of cities (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). Examination of the São Paulo Metropolitan has established a positive correlation between urban sprawl and land market dynamics (Torres, et al., 2007). Further, growth, migration and urbanisation is accounted for as contributory factors towards a move into peri-urban areas (Buxton, 2006). There is a correlation of population growth and need to accommodate people. This variable is often paired with urbanisation and expansive cities.

Whilst there may be a consensus on the general growth of peri-urban areas, the growth may not be attributable to same reasons and by homogeneous groups of people. The poor are said to pursue this move out economic necessities such as affordable housing, job

availability and being displaced urbanisation (Samat and Elhadary, 2012). In developed countries, like Australia, the opposite is true; there is a middle class move towards peri-urban (Buxton, 2006).

2.3.4 Availability of Cheap Land

Conventionally, land in peri-urban areas has been considered cheap, hence an attraction for poor people to move to these zones (Torres, et al., 2007). It is believed that cheap land may be beneficial in food security for both the urban and rural poor when used for agricultural purposes (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). A correlation of cheap land and poor people was developed and supported by vulnerability levels of tenure and inadequate infrastructure (Mattingly, 1999). For example, in the São Paulo metropolitan area, the city is losing population in the places where real estate investments had been developed in pursuit of areas where the price of land is low (Torres, et al., 2007).

While the initiation costs may be perceived as cheap, the poor carry associated burden such as transport and food costs. Inherently, the poor who rely on peri-urban areas as dormitory and still have to sell their labour in cities, the distance to travel may be long and costly (Torres, et al., 2007). Proximity to amenities, like schools and hospitals, contribute to the further marginalisation of the working class. In some countries, peri-urban areas show the worst socioeconomic indicators, with high levels of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment (Torres, et al., 2007).

2.3.5 Environmental Degradation

Environmental concerns are a common hegemony of the peri-urban spaces. Industrialisation of the peri-urban areas is synonymous with deforestation, pollution, changes in land use and poor waste management (Shaw, 2005). Peri-urban areas have been conceived as areas where the poor “suffer disproportionately the effects of adverse environmental conditions” (Mattingly, 1999: 2). Debatably, peri-urban areas are made more vulnerable and susceptible to environmental degradation owing to proximity to cities and servicing the needs of cities (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). However, there is comfort that, “better resource management in the peri-urban areas is possible, but requires a detailed understanding of the interests and asset base of the poor” (Mcgregor, et al., 2006:285).

Natural resources such as rivers and dams of peri-urban areas are also a major attraction (Buxton, 2006). The middle class regards these zones as an opportunity of interface between the consumer system and the natural environment. Water availability is beneficial for residential, agricultural and industrial purposes. It begs the question if the serene nature

of these resources is sustainable with the uptake of industry and residential developments in peri-urban areas. With proper management and planning of peri-urban areas, these spaces hold economic prosperity, social and sustainable stability (Saxena and Sharma, 2015).

2.4 Middle and upper Class in peri-urban areas

The reasons for middle appeal to peri-urban areas turn to be common among developing and developed countries with variances of economic reforms and characteristics of insecure tenure in developing countries (Wehrmann, 2008). There is capturing of peri-urban areas by ultra-rich residential and industrial developments (Buxton, 2006; Boume, et al., 2003; Busck, et al., 2006; Mcgregor, et al., 2006). Middle class has found peri-urban areas as potential residential zone for houses with golf courses and other recreational facilities (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). Developers spotted the lucrative business enterprise of feeding the middle class needs of country nostalgia and security concerns (Hudalah, et al., 2007). At face value, there seems to be contradictions from a much pronounced state of neglect and despair yet attracting the upper social class. The entrance of this class exerts degree of influence into future spatial developments and trends to service their needs.

Some of the transition is driven by enhanced “environmental consciousness, urban lifestyles and the rise of aging and leisure-oriented society, where farming is becoming one of the hobbies rather than economic reason. This lifestyle transition challenges the conversions of the predominant mono-functional agriculture. There is a general observation that there seems to be an increase in land within gated community projects as compared to the surrounding areas (Hudalah, et al., 2007). Perhaps, estates can coexist with agriculture to stimulate differential land tax base which in turn can be used to serve agriculture (Pearson, et al., 2010). For some urban residents, peri-urban can be equated to holiday homes and weekend farms (Mcgregor, et al., 2006).

Newcomers may be looking for residential alternatives in comparison to what is provided by cities and a pleasant living environment (Busck, et al., 2006). Choices of peri-urban zones for the middle and upper class are driven by the quality of life choices, namely, low densities, rural residential settings with luxuries, like golf courses and other recreational facilities (Mcgregor, et al., 2006). Responsively, the urban areas have had to transform to meet the consumptive culture of the upper and middle class. Additionally, network transports are a major attraction for industries, which may be referred to as a business pull factor.

Others found employment to be the single most important motive for what they define as a “counter urbanisation move” (Halliday and Coombes, 1995). Counter urbanisation concept is explained by migration to rural areas. As such, counter urbanism is considered a reversal of urban to rural trends (Halfacree, 1994). This phenomenon has seen resurgence of small towns in countries like Canada (Cloke, 1985). Therefore, to a certain extent, counter urbanism accounts for rural population growth.

This study views middle class uptake of peri-urban areas as economic transactions taking place in the development field with different stakeholders, including institutions. The use of institutions is extended to include policy, municipalities, lenders and developers. It has been argued that “when property rights institutions do not constrain elites; elites are more likely to violate the property rights of individual producers and expropriate their incomes or assets” (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003: 6). Furthermore, institutional will is necessary as “countries with greater constraints on politicians and elites, and more expropriation by these powerful groups, have substantially higher income per capita and greater investment rates” (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003: 3).

There is an apparent appetite for sectional title developments in peri-urban areas. In South Africa, the Sectional Title Act 95 of 1986 permits the “division of buildings into sections and common property and for the acquisition of separate ownership in sections coupled with joint ownership in common property” (Chipkin, 2013:17). Enclosures of gated communities lead to territorial governance which in itself is not bad if makes the role of local government easier (Landman, 2002). Whilst Sectional Title Act is welcome to sponsor high density developments, particularly in the cities, it would seem that the Act offers no parameters and limits, and therefore is extended to peri-urban areas. It changes the spatial development of peri-urban. It is not unjust to expect the government to regulate the use of land and as such to have foresight over future landscapes.

As a means to mitigate the practices of land use management, the government enacted the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (SPLUMA) and the Preservation and Development of Agricultural Land Framework (PDALF), which is still a Bill. This response is aimed at mitigating the encroachment into agricultural land by other land use interests. PDALF Bill attributes the diminishing rate of farms to the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act 70 of 1970). The Act sought to prevent divisions of farms into small parcel units that carried the risk of changes in land use from agriculture to other uses. A careful balance needs to be given to the subdivision of land in order to support agricultural activities but equally to enable new entries in the agricultural sector. The assertion by PDALF draft policy

document (2013) that small land parcels are necessarily unsustainable and non-productive may limit and undermine the role of small farming.

It can be argued that the middle class are able to access and enter into peri-urban areas through institutional backing and economic leverage. Juxtaposed to the institutional backing of land purchase by middle class, the working class requires government assistance to buy land. An estate development field has players like estate developers, lending institutions, municipalities and estate agents at varying positions of the value chain. The property owners would often rely on lending institutions to acquire properties. Some institutions enjoy influence owing to their power to bequeath rights, which can be referred to as property rights institutions. It has been argued that “property rights institutions have a more important economic effect on economic outcomes than do contracting institutions” (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003: 34).

A study, albeit European, asked “how do property rights institutions affect economic outcomes, are current players blocking entry by new groups and producers, or are they creating non-level playing field and a high degree of inequality?” (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003: 35). This may be extended to consideration of agricultural outcomes and societal integration in this study. It is asserted in the Field’s theory by Bourdieu (2005) that dominant agents like banks determine the extent of influence over who they fund and where. The Field’s theory is premised on a view that there is an economic field which is dominated by powerful players (Bourdieu, 2005). The uptake of peri-urban areas by the middle class has created a concentrated consortium of developers and occupies a powerful position in the peri-urban space. “This powerful position allows the private developers to build enduring patron-client relationships with financial sectors as well as the government, including the political elite” (Hudalah, et al., 2007:38). This dominant force enables “informal lobbying, the developers with the help of corrupt officials can simplify, can manipulate the established plans and development procedures so they can reduce the transaction costs of realising large-scale integrated urban land development projects” (Hudalah, et al., 2007:38). It is argued that in Indonesia this practice is evident in the issuing of development permits which is linked to land use management. As collaborated by the World Bank study (2007) in South Africa, the transaction costs and complex inter-organisational procedures, the issuance of land development and building permits has become a prime field of attraction for collusion and corruption, especially in large-scale urban development on conflicting land (Hudalah, et al., 2007). Arguably, the transitions of peri-urban areas occur at the weakening of government.

There is little regard given to national objectives of the country in the private property rights space. In the case of South Africa, there are bankable prospects contained in the National Development Plan; these are premised on the assumption of agricultural prospects. The National Development Plan is the long term plan that seeks to respond to the challenges of South Africa. Agriculture is perceived as a labour intensive sector that has value chain linkages with other sectors, therefore, has the potential of creating more jobs (NDP, 2011). The focus of the NDP is on land distribution and growing the rural economy. It begs the question if growth of the rural economy will not be hamstrung by market lead private property rights market. Reliance on private property forces may result in adverse effects of land use and undermine country objectives.

It is believed that there are genuine reasons of economic factors as an attraction and causal effect of the transition in peri-urban areas. In China, for example, urbanisation was used by the government as a deliberate strategy of poverty alleviation (Keivani, 2009). The emergence of cities in peri-urban areas has also been considered a motivation to move towards peri-urban areas (Buxton, 2006). In the state of Gauteng Province Address of 2015 in South Africa, the Premier announced the development of a new city along the Lanseria Airport and Maropeng World Heritage. Debatably, this area may have been considered peri-urban. It is cited that this trend is not limited to South Africa but prevalent in countries like China, where, in the 2000's, the country was planning to build new fifty large cities (Buxton, 2006). Out of urbanisation and the creation of cities, local government in China were able to utilise the associated demand for housing and property development to massively boost their revenues through the sale of land use rights to private developers (Keivani, 2009). However, it begs the question if such espoused economic growth is sustainable. The urbanisation of peri-urban areas creates a different construct of economic system, that is a move from agricultural work to more urban typology of work (Saxena and Sharma, 2015). In turn these undermine the prospects of the agricultural economy.

2.5 Outcomes of transformation in peri-urban areas

2.5.1 Contradictions of peri-urban agriculture and economic manifestations

Transformation and transition in the peri-urban areas has been viewed on the negative or positive strengths they contribute to the zones. The transformation of peri-urban landscapes results from a complex interaction of different functions including agricultural production, residential developments and recreation. It submitted that agriculture remains a significant activity albeit not necessarily the dominant function in peri-urban areas (Busck, et al., 2006).

Conversion of peri urban areas by urban forces have seen non-agricultural functions become relatively more important and exact influence over land use management owing to multiple competing functions (Busck, et al., 2006).

Transition has seen lack of investment and reduction in farm size or production intensity (Johnston and Bryant, 1987). Change in these zones is inevitable, adaptation strategies should not be frowned upon. Raddad, et al., 2010 (in Samat and Elhadary2012:180) highlighted that ‘the conversion of agriculture land into urban built-up areas reduces farmland that is available for food and crop production’. It is said that urbanisation and the takeover of peri-urban areas by urban influence has had adverse effects on socio-economic conditions of the communities (Samat and Elhadary, 2012).

It has been expressed that there is a negative correlation between peri-urbanisation and the economic value of agriculture. In East Asia, evidence suggests that with new developments in the peri-urban areas, there has been a fall in agriculture value (Hudalah, et al., 2007). This transition has shifted agriculture as the major income contributor in the peri-urban areas. The outcomes of economic pursuit over agriculture include destruction of the farming economy (Mattingly, 1999). The dynamic processes leave peri-urban areas in an in-between situation, neither city nor countryside and home to a range of functions, spanning from agricultural production to residential and recreational areas (Busck, et al., 2006).

Farming communities attract prospective buyers looking for a countryside residence without consideration of its agricultural potential (Busck, et al., 2006). Equally, there is economic growth attributable to the transformation of peri-urban areas (Hudalah, et al., 2007). As a matter of fact, there is a school of thought that peri-urban developments have affirmed the built environment industry although it may lead to unequal landscapes as driven by inequality and consequently affordability (Boume, et al., 2003) (Boume, et al., 2003). This is evident in “the proportion and growth rates of industrial and agricultural production, retail sales and foreign investment in peri-urban areas, which are high and in some cases outstripping those in the designated urban areas” (Hudalah, et al., 2007:32). So, economic propensity of peri-urban areas has advanced at the expense of the environment.

Changes in land use management have been cited as the common threat to farming in peri-urban areas. Changes in land use often underscore food production and protection of farmland (Busck, et al., 2006). Urbanisation pressure on peri-urban areas has given way to changes in land use management with results of reduction of agriculture land size (Saxena

and Sharma, 2015 and Samat and Elhadary, 2012). The outcome has been decline in conventional agricultural production (Busck, et al., 2006). Where agricultural land use has continued largely unaffected by the processes of urbanisation concentration of production is limited to a few full time large farmers (Busck, et al., 2006). Notwithstanding this resilience, it is feared that at some point non-agricultural functions will take over (Busck, et al., 2006).

2.5.2 Case studies to reflect contradictions of peri-urban growth trajectory

2.5.2.1 International Case study

Land use maps in the case study of the Gampaha District in Sri Lanka indicate rapid change in land use in the peri-urban areas. Predominantly, the Gampaha district farmed coconuts and over time there was a decline in coconut farming. In 1980, 14 coconut portions of land were converted into housing districts, in 1990, the number had increased to 199 (Mcgregor, et al., 2006). Arguably, changes of this nature diminish agricultural prospects. It may be that the reductionist change of peri-urban agriculture is not limited to this region. This research asks how much of peri-urban land is being taken over by the extension of residential developments.

The question of sustainability and food insecurity then comes to the fore. There is an easy appeal to underestimate the role of peri-urban agriculture. Yet, “of all the needs of the urban poor, food is among the most fundamental” (Mcgregor, et al., 2006:155). Evidence of research conducted points to the industrialisation of the peri-urban zones. “Some municipal officials consider urban agriculture to be a backward step” (Mcgregor, et al., 2006:21). A view that undermines urban agriculture from officials may be giving way to the takeover by other non-agriculture functions. It asks which indicators are used to calculate economic, social and environmental impact. To some, industrialisation is a better economy than agriculture. Changes in land use functions happen at the municipal level. It may be concerning that EIA’s have been unable to deter industrialisation at the expense of farming. Literature shows that land use management can be a means rather than an end, and that significance should be placed on the management of “developmental values, virtues and attitudes of authorities” (Buxton, 2006:8).

2.5.2 South African Case study

In South Africa, a vacuum in the legislation space has caused a contradiction in practice. To this end, this chapter highlights a case of Blue Crane Development versus Minister of the

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, case number 3925/2014. This case fell under jurisdiction of Kungwini Local Municipality, peri-urban, under City of Tshwane (saflii.org). The property was incorporated into the municipal boundary of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality in 2011. This incorporation goes to the heart of the extension of the urban edge that may cause peri-urban areas to be extinct as highlighted in the research problem section of this report.

This case highlights two significant areas, namely, the policy space on agricultural land. This gap can be extended to imply a vacuum in policy space with regards to peri-urban areas and inconsistencies of government spheres in its response to the preservation of agricultural land. The Blue Crane Country Estate sought to establish a rural eco-estate. The property is situated 15km to the south east of the metropolitan area of the City of Tshwane. The property is 405.6752 hectares in extent. In 2010, the Minister of Agriculture objected to the development of Blue Crane Country Estate. The Member of Executive Committee (MEC) for Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development issued a positive Record of Decision on the Development of Blue Crane Country Estate (saflii.org). The Minister later objected to the development of Blue Crane Development and the respondent appealed the matter. One may argue that if the provisions for the protection of agriculture were scripted in law, it would have enforced the consistency of practice and enjoined government spheres with a common vision towards agricultural land. This reflects a vacuum of legislative reference, with resulting contradictions.

The gap in policy is evident between the Minister's decision and that of the MEC. The view of the minister was that the agricultural land in question is an irreplaceable natural resource, and as such, plays a major role in the supply of food. The Minister's objection sought to protect the agricultural node. Moreover, it was considered that change in land use of one portion of the farm may have land use causal effects to the general area thus create a new development node. The Minister considered that the Blue Crane Estate development will have a negative impact on the surrounding agricultural farms and will create a change of the land use in the farming area where the future activities will not be supportive of agricultural activities.

Perhaps caution is required in land use conversions that may result into non-recoverable agricultural land. It begs the question of how much arable land has been taken over by other land uses and is not recoverable anymore. In 2011, DAFF indicated that the "surface area of arable agricultural land that had been converted to non-agricultural uses through urban and mining developments equals the size of the Kruger National Park" (PDALF discussion paper, 2011:10). The total converted hectares amounted to 121 924 881, of which 3 385 343

is permanently converted and only 118 539 538 remains (PDALF discussion paper, 2011). This size refers to agricultural land permanently converted to non-agricultural uses. These figures do not account for further developments post 2011. In the case of estate developments, it may be said that these establishments have been growing unmitigated. Responsively, the urban areas have had to transform to meet the consumption culture of the upper and middle class. In East Asia, in a period of 20 years, 16 600 hectares of rural land had been transformed into 25 large residential areas and new towns ranging from 500 to 6,000 hectares by private (Hudalah, et al.,2007,).

Presumably, shifts in land use, in South Africa, has not been guided by any common principles across municipalities that sought to match land use against the country's objectives. There has been a *laissez-faire* policy approach in land conversions depending on the municipality of jurisdiction. Preservation and Development of Agricultural Land suggests that township establishment of middle class residential estates are a threat to agriculture. Given the history of litigation, as was seen in the abovementioned case of Blue Crane Country Estate, it is important that the policies are precise and literal in providing guidance for developmental processes. Criticisms have been levelled against vaguely written policies that are essentially not effective (Buxton, 2006).

2.6 Harmonisation of Peri-urban Zones

Amidst the competing tensions of peri-urban activities, a line is needed to discern good value use peri-urban areas. The question is what is the best proposition for peri-urban areas? A measured longitudinal view of peri-urban areas is warranted. There is a need to negotiate the fine balance of activities of the peri-urban areas (Buxton, 2006; Mattingly, 1999). There is a need to create a balance between the formulation of long-term, cross-sectoral and dynamic strategies and the development of short-term interventions in peri urban areas (Allen, 2003). When examining policies and strategies that affect the peri-urban interface, it is necessary to take a broader perspective, considering not only policies that have more immediate impacts on peri-urban areas, but also those which affect a variety of flows between rural and urban areas (Allen, 2003). Long-term strategies for the peri-urban interface should be based on an understanding of the current policies that affect directly and indirectly the processes of change taking place in peri-urban areas. Possibly, the composition of peri-urban areas is even too fluid to be held firm by a structure of accountability, therefore requires a structure. A structure should exist to construct and predict the future landscapes and governance of peri-urban areas.

The weak governance infrastructure to manage peri-urban areas is not limited to developing countries. This requires sets of skills which maybe in short supply due to urban bias flight of skills (Lipton, 1977). It is reported that in advanced economies like Toronto, Canada, there is no administration to guard and guide the development of the periphery (Boume, et al., 2003). The lack of governance over the peri-urban regions is often attributable to fragmented political and administrative authorities (Boume, et al, 2003; Metsweding research; Buxton, etc). This across the globe fragmentation gives way to lack of strategic planning and coherent response to peri-urban areas. The fragmentation of planning has been a limitation (World Bank 2007; Saxena and Sharma, 2015). Shortage of skills, particularly policy process skills pose serious challenges in certain municipalities (Simone,2002). Especially, rural and peri-urban based municipalities. There is weight placed on institutional arrangements on peri-urban areas (Hudalah, et al., 2007).

The jurisdictional and political fragmentation of peri-urban areas make them vulnerable to transformation that may have unintended outcomes. In South Africa, municipalities enjoy autonomous power and authority with varied institutional capabilities (du Plesis, 2008). Similar to South Africa, findings show Thailand and Bangkok experience deficiencies in integrated institutional adaptation (Hudalah, et al., 2007). Multinationals and developers are quick to fill the gap of local authorities, however, in a manner that is actuated by self-interests (Hudalah, et al., 2007).

Urban Land Mark and Metsweding District Municipality sought to discover challenges surrounding effective management of peri-urban areas using Metsweding District Municipality as a case study (du Plesis, 2008). The study pointed to the omissions in addressing matters such as land for the poor and prospective peri-urban land development. Furthermore, the study revealed that there were inconsistencies in policies that compromised alignment (du Plesis, 2008). It is these inconsistencies that may open up municipalities to litigation.

In South Africa, peri-urban local government is under the jurisdiction of District Municipalities. Peri-urban local governments almost succumbed to this urban force dominance owing to resources and political power (Mattingly, 1999). Accordingly, calls have been made for strategies to respond to the transitions taking place in the peri-urban areas, especially with the experience of urban impacts on these zones (Mattingly, 1999).

Any negotiation is premised on strong governance and institutional capabilities which seem to be lacking in peri-urban areas. Some advocate for environmental management discourse

whilst others seeks to negotiate the balance of economic share whilst urbanists are concerned with the conversion of peri-urban areas to cities or towns (Mattingly, 1999). These changes give effect to land use changes. There is a need to protect production of agricultural produce, therefore, a need to implement zoning regulation which prevents conversion of paddy fields to other usage. Given the dynamic and complex nature of peri-urban areas, co-operation between all stakeholders, such as urban planners, farmers and decision makers, is crucial in planning for sustainable agriculture development (Samat and Elhadary, 2012).

The discourse on peri-urban has consider matters of food security. It is considered that transformation of peri-urban zones has jeopardized food security since the existing land might not be able to produce enough food to satisfy the demand for the growing population (Brown, 1995). To protect peri-urban areas as food source requires reappraisal of the management of the imbalances or urban-rural forces that extends to the production of peri-urban areas. Farming activities in the peri-urban areas should be focused on multiple products, that is, multifunctional agriculture (Samat and Elhadary, 2012). Multifunctional suggests generating different businesses by adding new enterprises to the existing one with or without increasing the area (Meert, et al., 2005). This requires consideration of the entire agriculture value chain.

2.7 Literature Gaps

Contradictions may not be easily deduced from longitudinal studies of developed countries, owing to differences in causality and speed of change in these areas. Literature is not explicit about the genealogy of transition in peri-urban areas though it has been noted that they start from rural and move towards urbanisation. This gap takes away a degree of predictability of transition of peri-urban zones. Therefore, one is blindsided over predictability of uptake and pace. Admittedly, it may be difficult to place a generalised genealogy owing to differences in countries and pace of urbanisation. It is concerning that without scientific indicators of evolution; peri-urban areas may perish. There is no sense of when the urban force assumes dominance and when it remains dormant.

A common thesis in peri-urban literature is policy gaps in guiding peri-urban development's trajectory. There does not seem to be a cohesive and integrated policy to manage peri-urban development trajectory, respond to the moving urban edge, discern urban and peri-urban developments and create predictable growth of these areas. This implies

incongruence in the ability to anticipate transformation patterns. This vacuum is not limited to developing countries. Advanced economies like Australia and United States of America as recently as 2006, did not have a national policy on the protection of peri-urban farmland and other peri-urban land from development (Buxton, 2006).

The body of literature offers theoretical accounts for transition taking place in peri-urban areas. Some of these accounts are economically based whereas others suggest natural order and responsive change that eventually impacts on peri-urban areas. Notwithstanding the utility value of theories, there are limitations of theories that consider socio-economic aspects of the transition in peri-urban areas. The aspirations of inclusive and integrated peri-urban communities in the wake of the uptake of peri-urban areas by middle to ultra-rich class are not pronounced in literature. If peri-urban areas are new economic zones, the anticipation of displacing the poor that reside in these areas has not been fully exhausted or extended to policy space. Neither does this discourse appear in economic consideration of planning.

The literature reviewed shines light on the conventional conceptualisation of peri-urban areas as vulnerable and marginalised zones. Similarly, the literature outlines burgeoning interest of the middle class on the same zones. The literature begins to offer pull factors to the peri-urban areas yet is limited in giving exact basis for “slummification” or gated developments of peri-urban spaces.

2.8 Conclusion

Instrumental changes are happening in the peri-urban spaces. This chapter has highlighted the paradox of conventional conceptualisation of peri-urban areas. The conventional understanding of peri-urban areas conceived of peri-urban areas as neglected and lacking infrastructure and as a hub for the poor. The chapter provided key areas of neglect; as pointed out in most literature these include, but are not limited to, urban sprawl, environmental degradation, insecurity of tenure, poverty, cheap land and inadequate land use management. Subsequently, it has been highlighted that transition happening in peri-urban areas includes uptake of peri-urban areas by the middle class. Accordingly, the chapter outlined the forces of attraction for the elites into peri-urban areas. It was outlined that these forces are not without positive or negative outcomes, dependant on scholastic grounding. Additionally, the chapter outlined that development trends in peri-urban areas are not homogenous. It may differ within country and across country.

The negative outcome of encroachment into peri-urban areas includes loss of agricultural land. The literature outlines the gravity of the compromise of agricultural land over other uses. Protection and adaptation should be weighed against protection of agricultural land, in particular non-recoverable changes in land use of agricultural land. Additionally, this chapter outlined ways that can be employed towards harmonisation of functions in peri-urban zones; these include governance control tools that can be employed towards preservation and protection of agricultural land amidst the competing land use interests.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research has been used for the purposes of gaining access to the social context of the developmental trends in the peri-urban areas. This methodology examined transition taking place in the peri-urban area of Midvaal municipality. "Qualitative research lays its claims to acceptance by arguing the importance of understanding the meaning of experience, actions and events as these are interpreted through the eyes of particular participants" (Richardson, 1996:25).

3.1 Sampling

This study engaged purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is "the deliberate choice of an informant due qualities the informant possesses" (Tongco,2007 :147). Purposive technique is a typology of non-probability sampling. Non-probability is a collection of methods including purposive sampling. This method enables researcher to select respondents they are interested in from the population (Kothari, 2004). Purposive sampling has been selected for its enabling abilities to choose respondents that would be most likely to give information that is relevant to the study. This sampling method is highly dependent on the judgement of a researcher hence it is bias laden. To this end, the researcher eliminated bias through selection according to reliability and competence of the respondents. The study made certain assumptions in its sampling criteria to arrive at relevant people for interview purposes. Purposive sampling is highly recommended in research about area or community (Tongco,2007). Sampling criteria have therefore focused on participants that may assist in the examination of the research question and secondary research questions.

The study has undertaken a purposive sample; twenty one interviews were conducted at two estate development sites within Midvaal Municipality. Interviews were conducted over the January and February 2016 period, each according to availability of respondents. The sampling criteria sought to select relevant persons for the purposes of the research study. This research has specifically targeted Real Estate Agents, Estate Workers, Municipal Officials and Community Representative in the area as key informants to this study.

To permit for the purposive sampling effect, the researcher introduced herself through emailing one municipal official³³. The snowballing sampling technique was also used wherein one respondent referred the researcher to another respondent within the municipality. Snowballing technique entails identifying respondents who in turn refer the researcher to other respondents (Atkinson and Flint, 2001). This technique made it easier to access the next respondent. The researcher then requested contact details of councillors in respective wards to establish contact. Estate agents were approached using telephone numbers displayed on websites and billboards at the entrance of the estate developments. Workers were approached whilst waiting for transport to go to work in the mornings and afternoons. Purposive and snowballing sampling proves beneficial for this report.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Interviews

Interviews were used for the purposes of this study. Interviews are deemed a method of choice to establish the insight and perception accorded to these developmental shifts. The researcher has also preferred interviews in an attempt to harmonise conceptual understanding and close any misunderstandings that may arise. Furthermore, the study seeks to obtain information from persons who may have time limitations to respond through alternative methods and thus delay the response rate. A total of twenty one interviews were conducted. Six interviews were conducted with municipal officials, five interviews with estate agents, one interview with a councillor, eight interviews with estate developments workers and one with a contractor. Pseudonyms have been used in interviews conducted to protect identity of respondents.

This study is conscious that a balance is required in order to establish an objective truth. Scholars have warned that interviews may not offer an objective truth and, rather, they are a narrative account of how people construct their own world (Hammersley, 2003). As such, the use of interviews was paired with document analysis to deepen the account of all ideological positions and to harness the fullness of the variables that this study examined. Document analysis entails combing of Municipal and estate developments related documents that may provide already available information. Caution on the use of interviews was extended to data analysis.

³³ Official's name has not been used.

Interviews with municipal officials sought to gain insight into the developmental consideration of estate developments. This study was able to establish municipal response and strategies to land use. Municipal officials work and represent the views of the municipality. Midvaal municipality is the custodian of policy that gives effect to desired developmental trajectory in its jurisdiction. Municipal officials assisted to give an account of the developmental trends and shifts in the area. Interview questions revealed that albeit there was one interview instrument for municipal officials, it had to be subdivided according to the various departments that are best suited to respond to certain questions. Officials from Town Planning, Building and Land Use Control and Economic Development and Agricultural Strategy were also interviewed.

Interviews with estate agents, while likely to yield a biased point of view, sought to understand the settlement patterns and land use shifts. These cohorts of the respondents are not part of the inception of the estate development value chain yet are critical in property transactions. The rationale behind these interviews was to ascertain, amongst other things, a catalogue of reasons for inward or outward movement in the chosen peri-urban area, assuming that buyers and sellers share their reasons. While one may deduce the socio-economic status of buyers into peri-urban developments, interviews may reveal pull factors for this class of people. Moreover, the estate agents may be aware of general appeal by the buying class of people in the estate developments. Furthermore, estate agents may be aware of development prospects of the area; therefore, having implications for the longitudinal view afforded to the chosen peri-urban area.

Given the study's focus on the transition of the area, it was deemed beneficial to conduct interviews with a community representative. The purpose was to establish views on estate developments, their role on the SIA's and broader land use shifts in the area, if at all. Furthermore, to gain insight into the community plans that have been successful or not, attributions given to the same assisted this research.

Likewise, this study interviewed workers employed in these upmarket developments. The aim of these interviews was to ascertain workers' perspective on the developmental shifts of the area. This study also sought insight into the residential location of the workers and established where they lived before and after these developments. This aided in the determination of their relation to estate developments.

3.2.2 Research Protocol

Core questions that sought to guide interviews were established by the researcher as a protocol to measure responses across the same principles. In order to harness the benefit of interviews, the researcher permitted deviations from scripted questions; an approach that would not prohibit the expression of the reality as perceived by the participants was permitted. A limited number of interviews deviated from the protocol. Protocol deviation was beneficial to harness insight. The methodology choice sought to enable participants to draw from undocumented observations that they encounter and allow social expression of people in the peri-urban spaces. The aim was to reach underlying meaning and concepts that are used in the land use and spatial shifts in the peri-urban areas. The open-ended nature of some questions in the interview protocol allowed for competency based interviewing. This serves to fill in some of the gaps not earlier realised during the construction of the interview instrument.

3.2.3 Documents Review

Research used data that was already available. This area of investigation included land use maps, census data, Integrated Developments Plan (IDP), Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF), Spatial Development Framework (SDF), Municipal and Estate Developments websites, etcetera. For example, census data offers some relevant variables to the study, such as income and population size. Using census data, one was able to extrapolate the profile of residents. In turn, these were contrasted with pull factors and assist with establishing the class category of the area. It must be noted that census data available was from 2011 census and does not provide recent figures nor allow for recent trend analysis of growth in the area. Similarly, the study examined land use maps. The land use maps were used to track official land use and spatial location. Arguably, there may be unofficial land use. This method was used to cross check the authenticity of the interviews.

3.2.4 Findings Analysis

The researcher scripted notes during interviews. These notes have been used when the data was analysed. The researcher began the process of data analysis through observing emerging common themes across segments of respondents. Subsequently, the researcher located these themes into categories of emerging factors. Categories enabled the transition to data coding.

As far as possible, coding has been established without compromising the original data from respondents. Data coding is “a systematic way in which to condense data sets into smaller analysable units through the creation of categories and concepts derived from the data” (Hernon, 404: 2004). The data coding analysis approach has been chosen for ease of location of common themes. The quality of data collected during interviews enabled the researcher to respond to some of the questions established in the research protocol. During data editing, it became apparent that some data may not be used, albeit useful to gain insight. Notably, some questions raised by the research protocol as separate and distinct were responded to jointly in some questions.

3.3 Limitations of the Study

The study is limited in generalisation. The case study is based in the South of Johannesburg, in Midvaal municipality, South Africa. In South Africa, spatial trajectory and pace differs, depending on the geographical location. Some pockets of the country are generally affluent and experience high paced developmental trends while others trail behind. Additionally, the chosen municipal area may be considered small to make inferences. Therefore, it may not be easy to generalise the results across different geographic locations.

While the study was able to examine transition between rural and urban linkages, the study was limited in quantifying in real terms the exact scope of transitioning of the area. Therefore, the study was limited to account for the impact and actual contribution to agriculture.

This research examined the previous twenty years to date in respect of estate developments. This time horizon excluded developments prior, if at all and any pending developments. This report narrowly focused on affluent estate developments with disregard to other forces at play informing transitional trends, including gated communities of lower to middle class. Consequently, the study focused only on two estates. Therefore, it was limited to predict future peri-urban form.

Conceptualisation and understanding of peri-urban is individuated by country and within country forces. Literature is limited in sponsoring policy direction and reviews of peri-urban spaces. Instead there is a peri-urban policy gap. As a result it has been challenging to hang transition in Midvaal within parameters of policy provisions.

Perhaps an added limitation of this study has been to conduct interviews in a municipality during a heightened period of focus in municipalities owing to forthcoming local government elections on 3 August 2016. It is not considered that this may have effect on the results of this research. It is highlighted that the general municipal atmosphere is conscious and guarded.

3.4 Conclusion

The chapter has engaged with research methodology and intended outcomes of employing qualitative research methodology. The sampling design and data collection methods employed in the study were highlighted. Subsequently, the chapter alluded to data analysis approach used in this study.

Chapter 4: Research Site and Background

4.0 Introduction

This chapter embeds a picture of Midvaal Local Municipality in the reader's minds. The chapter brings closer location, development aspects and other offerings of the Midvaal Municipality in order to enable readers to relate to the subsequent findings of this research. Additionally, the chapter highlights the socio-economic and political dynamics in the municipality.

4.1 Research Site

The chosen site for this research is the Midvaal Local Municipality. This municipality is under the Sedibeng District of Gauteng. This municipality is under the leadership of the Democratic Alliance (DA) led by Mayor Cllr BM Baloyi . DA is an official opposition political party in South Africa. DA in the Midvaal has enjoyed majority votes to govern the municipality since 2001 local government elections (mg.co.za). Post 1994, the municipality was led by the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party. DA has placed fighting fraud and corruption as its blue print.

DA prides itself with Midvaal as hallmark of effective and efficient local government. The municipality has achieved 11 clean audits since taking over in 2001 (mg.co.za). The Municipal Financial Sustainability Index (MFSI) ranked Midvaal a top municipality in Gauteng (mg.co.za). Midvaal has lowest municipal debt and attracts top investments (da.org.za). The list of investments in Midvaal includes the golfing estate, Eye of Africa, Heineken Brewery, Oprah Winfrey leadership academy and others (mg.co.za). Some of the companies in Midvaal are international companies⁴. Webster in Buxton (2006) suggests that peri-urban areas are zones where global and local factors that impact on the transition of peri-urban zones come into play sponsored through foreign direct investments (FDI). This can be considered loss of sovereignty of African land, owing to international ownership. In many parts of Africa, land is released into the hands of elites, investors and developers who in turn, do not share in the country objectives (McAuslan, 2013). Developments, businesses and industries seek unfettered access to public land, at best ownership. Once ownership has been bestowed, little can be done to encourage public use and country objectives. The extent of an unfettered market is again a flash point in the context of the Eye of Africa. A farm, now known to be Eye of Africa, used to be owned by three different South African

⁴ Names of companies are not mentioned.

farmers before it was later sold to an Australian developer who is renowned for the development of golf estates. Subsequently, it was sold to David Negal who is one of the current developers.

Midvaal's strategy for creating employment is attracting investment into the area. The Integrated Development Plan of the municipality boasts that unemployment in the area is below 12%. In addition, the municipality prides itself with service delivery record that has seen access increase in sanitation, water and electricity (mg.co.za). Notwithstanding these reports, the community engaged on service delivery protest before 2016 local government election demanding access to same services. ANC has blamed DA in the Midvaal for being racist and pro-capitalist (mg.co.za).

Different documents of the municipality have described the local authority as semi-rural. Perhaps, this is a careful choice from semi-urban or even peri-urban description. Midvaal has been found to have consistencies to the definition of peri-urban in respect of location, densities, offerings and produce. Midvaal is situated in the South of Johannesburg and is surrounded by two metropolitans of the Gauteng Province, namely, Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni. The municipality owes its name to being located between the two metropolitans. Midvaal is linked to the metropolitans through the North of R59 (midvaal.gov.za). Midvaal has road links to the N1, N3 and R82 freeways (midvaal.gov.za). RSDF of the municipality has earmarked R59 as corridor of economic growth. The Midvaal municipality occupies approximately 1 722 square kilometres.

4.2 Midvaal municipality development

According to the 2011 census, the Municipality had 95 301 population size from 60 000 residents in 2001. The municipality's IDP indicates that total population grew from 52 679 in 1996 to 95 300 in 2011. It is said to be the fastest growing municipality with rapid economic growth. Within the context of this research, it may be postulated that residential developments have grown consistent with the population size. Municipality has approximately 29 965 households out of which 4 172 families reside in informal structures (midvaal.gov.za).

The vision of the municipality is "Midvaal will be renowned for robust economic growth and high quality of life for all" (IDP, 2015/16). This vision spells out the economic growth aspirations of the municipality. The major employment sector is services, that is financial business services at 18.5% and general government services at 9.4% followed by manufacturing at 29.5% (midvaal.gov.za). Agriculture does not feature as an employment

sector. Contradictory, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2015/16 of the municipality provides that 50% of the area is rural and consists of extensive farming. Findings analysis of this research could not reconcile extensive farming instead uncovered minimal GDP contribution of agriculture. The municipality espouses to deliver on the mandate of being an agri-tropolis. The foreword given by the Mayor of Midvaal in the IDP (2015/16) document stipulates that the small-holder farms must be grown for purposes of supporting the objectives of agri-tropolis and job creation in the area. The IDP conceptualises agri-tropolis as giving effect to the vision of Midvaal of economic growth.

The question that follows is; what is the exact meaning of this concept of agri-tropolis? Agri-tropolis has been defined by Andrew Barker (2014) as the “creation of an urban agricultural hub over an extended area, where organic agricultural practices will stimulate a primary economy and value chain. Tourism, agri-tourism and eco-tourism, along with their associated economic value chains, are integral parts of the agri-tropolis” (Landscape SA, 2014:43). An Agri-tropolis status implies that Midvaal undertook an analysis of its area and realised that it has an agriculture comparative advantage in Gauteng, therefore, can be a primary provider of Gauteng’s agricultural needs (IDP, 55, 2015/16). Subsequently, this status was endorsed by the Gauteng Premier indicating that Midvaal agricultural potential must be unlocked so that it is the food basket of the province (IDP, 2015/16). This means, Gauteng City Region pins its agricultural prospects in Midvaal Local Municipality.



Map 1: Location of Midvaal within broader context of Gauteng Province.

Source: Interactive Maps of Johannesburg South Africa

Midvaal has ten spatial development principles. Development principle number two says “To facilitate and enhance agricultural production in the municipal area by actively protecting all land earmarked for agricultural purposes” (IDP, 2015/16: 54). Notwithstanding all these strategic intentions, agriculture only contributes less than 1% of Midvaal’s economy. Agriculture showed a decline in the period 1996 to 2011 (IDP, 2015/16: 54).

The development trends in the Midvaal area follow the R59 freeway in the east and the R82 freeway in the west. Consistently, the RSDF highlights growth plans along the R59. Accordingly, business developments in the area are concentrated along the R59. West of R59 is occupied by extensive agriculture (RSDF). A total of 3 562 hectares of land is earmarked for industrial developments as compared to the 1 533 hectares of land which the Midrand corridor between Brakfontein and Buccleuch occupies (RSDF, 2011). This suggests that the RSDF foresees outstripping the Johannesburg corridor in industrial growth. Accordingly, there are short to long term plans to strengthen these nodes.

In the RSDF there is growth of economic expansion nodes. These economic nodes may be an attributional factor to population growth in this municipality. The municipality has experienced growth in industrial nodes, along the same period as population growth. Perhaps the strategic intent of the Midvaal Central Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) is the industrialisation in Midvaal. There has been development of businesses along the R59 corridor such as the newly established Klipriver business park, New Hope, Nampak and Everite. It does not seem like emerging businesses are meant to support the agricultural value chain. The RSDF proposed clustering of uses along R59 to permit for multiple uses including service industries for agriculture. Notwithstanding the industrial growth in the specified corridors, Midvaal boasts primary nature features such Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve and the Vaal River (Midvaal.org.za). Secondary nature features include Klip River, Suikerbosrand River and Vaal Dam (Midvaal.org.za).

4.3 Residential Estate Developments under Research

Upon investigation of the area, this research discovered that while there is a general trend of growth in residential developments, there are two notable upmarket estate developments in Midvaal, namely, Blue Saddle Ranches and Eye of Africa. Blue Saddle Ranches lies along the R59. The Eye of Africa growth is projected towards R59 but leaning more towards R82. There is growth of gated communities through town house developments which may imply a densification trend in the municipality but do not neatly fit the category of upmarket estate developments. Combined hectares of the estates are 1 177ha. Majority of the country estates differ in size yet bigger than ones in the urban areas (Landman,2004). This suggests that these hectares of land are being held by people in infinite property rights and therefore land use may never change. Arguably, this is a small portion in comparison to the size of the municipality.

4.3.1 Eye of Africa

Eye of Africa is a golf estate located 17 km outside City of Johannesburg yet boasts tranquillity, bush lifestyle and nature. The design boasts eco-living and wonderful Afropean architects. The estate is designed by Greg Norman which makes it a signature golf estate (playmoregolf.co.za). The golfing estate is meant for people who seek residence in natural surroundings yet can still be proximal to the City. The golf estate occupies 678.4 ha (RSDF). It has hills that meticulously display the homes on the estate. The Eye of Africa boasts advertisements of stands priced from R830 000. Vacant land of 727 square meters sells R1 449 000 and an average stand-alone 3 bedroom house retails at R4 500 000 (property24.com). The price range suggests a class and affordability bracket. Price does not seem to be a deterrent for current and future residents and as such, the golf estate is said to be a daily growing estate development. Eye of Africa is a sectional title development consisting of different villages within the estate consisting of townhouses, simplex and duplexes.

The Eye of Africa was once a farm portion known as Alewynspoort (eyeofafrica.co.za). During the colonial era, the British built a School House with a purpose of providing education to the community which, even at the time, was considered to be growing. Today, the small school house and restored historic family graveyard provides a heritage feature to the place. It was noticed that there is a school near the estate. The Elethu-Themba school does not cater for the ultra-rich market distance situated at approximately 4 kilometres from the gate of the estate. It is a public school, for communities near the estate. There are private schools that have since developed near Eye of Africa, such as the Covenant and Waterstones schools.

Current land use of Eye of Africa is for a private residential estate and golf course. It is listed that there was no previous land use recorded (able.wiki.up.ac.za). History suggests that there was farming happening at the farm albeit frustrated by cyclical weather conditions. The farm during period of 1950 and 1970 had abundant growth of agricultural produce, such as fruit orchard and large crops of maize, barley and Lucerne (able.wiki.up.ac.za). The surrounds of Eye of Africa suggests some pockets of farming. There are common scenes of grazing animals and plantations. There is also a Red Ants farm at distance near to the estate. Red Ants farm grows crops around the area. Red Ants company have been associated with force removal of people in building or land illegally occupied. Similarly, there are business nodes around the area albeit at small scale like a hardware, conference venues and corner shops. The surrounds of the Eye of Africa are unassuming. It is a busy

site in the mornings with workers at hiking spots leading to the estate. Eye of Africa has Homeowners Association concerned with not only security and rules but aesthetics guidelines for development (eyeofafrica.co.za)

4.3.2 Blue Saddle Ranches

According to the RSDF, Blue Saddle Ranches is a rural residential estate. Blue Saddle Ranches is located to the west of the R59 freeway near Drumblade Agricultural Holdings. The estate is built on Nooitgedacht farm. Blue Saddle Ranches is a rural estate that offers its residence large parcels of land, enough to stable horses. According to RSDF, the estate is 498.6 ha. The estate has 273 stands (bluesaddleranches.co.za). As such, its advertisements boast being an equestrian estate. Blue Saddle Ranches offers a quasi-American farm lifestyle for its residents which can be seen in the street names which have been adopted from American names. This equestrian estate is situated along R59 in Midvaal. The estate prides itself on country living. Similar, to Eye of Africa, the draw card is offering tranquility “away from the hustle and bustle of the city” (bluesaddleranches.co.za). It is listed that the estate is approximately 32.7 kilometres from Gold Reef city in Johannesburg.

The country living estate is equally not modest in prize. The municipality indicates that this estate is not growing at a fast rate like Eye of Africa. An average 3 bedroom house in Blue Saddle ranches costs R4 900 00 (property24.com). Vacant stands in the estate are available in bigger sizes. An agent pointed out that a vacant stand of 2 000 square meters can costs R1 200 000 depending on the location. There are cheaper stands but sizes turn to be smaller and may need greater capital to build because of the stand location. There is a neighbouring school called Michael Rua; the school caters for the surrounding population that does not necessarily reside in Blue Saddle Ranches. The school is approximately 3 kilometres from the gate of the estate. Presence of the school suggests that there is a population of families with school going children in the area.

The narrative of Blue Saddle Ranches informs that the estate is fairly old. It suffered a setback when a developer mismanaged the funds of the estate. Owing to this history, Blue Saddle Ranches is no longer developer driven. The estate agent that mainly operates on the estate, Raphael highlighted that

“twenty years ago Blue Saddles Ranches was under Tolgate Holdings which was later liquidated. This resulted in buyers losing confidence in the estate. So, for a period of about

fifteen years, the estate has been dormant and has only recently spiked again” Estate Agent in Blue Saddle ranches.

The management of these estates and broader sectional title living has become new sites of governance (Chipkin, 2013). Developers, like body corporates, are at the core of facilitation and management of estates. Body corporate may well be “the most important disciplinary apparatuses’ given the number of people under their jurisdiction and proximity to people” (Chipkin, 2013:74). Blue Saddle Ranches has homeowners association which oversees orderliness, security and makes rule (bluesaddleranches.co.za). Blue Saddle Ranches uses a security weekly report to track security concerns, these include alarm, panic and false alarms. Estate has 24 hour security with restricted main gate access on Elizabeth Street (bluesaddleranches.co.za).

4.4 Conclusion

It is believed that this chapter enables readers to appreciate Midvaal Municipality geographical location and inherently the two residential estate developments under this research. The chapter makes an attempt to provide a succinct background and historical overview of the chosen residential estate developments.

Chapter Five: Finding Analysis-A transition or not?

5.0 Introduction

This study sought to respond to the peri-urban developments that have taken an affluent development trend, redefining the peri-urban as zones of high consumption. This view flows against the dominant literature narrative of peri-urban areas as neglected pockets inhabited by the poor. There is consensus in the body of literature that there are tensions and competing interests in peri-urban spaces. In pursuit of tracking this transition, the study pursued a research question of: What are the drivers of upmarket residential developments? Furthermore the research raises subsidiary questions of: what is the degree to which developmental drivers represent developmental and ownership shifts in the Midvaal area? And, to what extent has agricultural land been taken over by residential developments? Through an analysis of findings, this chapter seeks to respond to these questions.

Findings analysis chapter is premised on the interviews and documents reviews conducted. Pseudonyms will be used in this study for interviews conducted. The chapters cover common themes emerging from the study, underlying drivers for the transition and motivational factors. The choice of pseudonyms has been made to protect identities of participants in the study.

5.1 Common Themes emerging from the study

This chapter draws themes from the key variables that emerged from the research. Data analysis was conscious of contradictions and inconsistencies that may arise. Data analysis extrapolated themes emerging from interviews and document analysis. These themes emerged from interviews and document analysis. There are broad themes and sub-themes that are highlighted hereunder.

5.1.1 Municipal agricultural based strategy versus Competing Interests

This theme locates the transition in Midvaal municipality in relation to agriculture functions. The aim is to examine the rural-urban functions within the municipality. There is a prevailing official view of a predominantly agricultural based municipality. The underlying basis of agricultural focus is echoed through interviews and planning documents of the municipality

such as the Integrated and Development plan. Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) of Midvaal indicates that 93% of the land in the municipality remains agriculture. The municipality identifies itself as being semi-rural. Agriculture is considered an economic game changer by the municipality. An interview with a manager, who operates within the area of local economic development, housing and agriculture, revealed that the municipality anticipates that the agricultural value chain spin offs will create jobs through, amongst other things, light manufacturing and actual farm work. An excerpt from the manager:

“Agriculture in Midvaal is a game changer. This is one sector where we foresee job creation and economic empowerment. The municipality plans to involve an existing farming community and new people in the farming sector to stimulate farming in Midvaal. We are not short of farming land, ours to do is to inject stimuli towards growth of agriculture⁵” Manager, Mr Lebelo.

This narrative suggests the significance of agriculture yet on the contrary, estate agents admitted to a shift from predominantly a *“rural feel to more residential settlements”*. It must be noted that the shift is not considered urban. Estate agents confirmed a demand for residential and industrial properties in the municipality as reflected by the RSDF and interviews with officials. Chapter 4 alluded to the aspirations that have reserved 3 562 hectares of land for industrial development as compared to the 1 533 hectares of land which the Midrand corridor between Brakfontein and Buccleuch occupies (RSDF, 2011). Evidently, the area is growing its residential base across class segments. Similarly, the area is also growing the industrial base along the R59 and R82 corridor. These contradictions between the RSDF aspirations, interviews with officials and estate agents indicate a gap between strategy as contained in the RSDF, long term view and practice. It would seem that development trajectory of the area is consistent with the RSDF yet departs from a view of agriculture as a game changer upon which all other developments are channelled.

According to a Municipal official, Primrose, within town planning, an urban development boundary can be open for purposes of estate development provided that the application is consistent with the Spatial Development Framework (SDF) of the municipality. It was emphasised that the municipality had long term planning and that the developments were consistent with planning. Arguably, although the municipality remains firmly resolved that agriculture remains a priority of the municipality as an agri-tropolis municipality, it is taking place at a slow pace, perhaps lacking drivers like other developments. Business Parks and residential developments are developer driven. In fact, similar to a response given by a Town Planning official, a Councillor indicated that they allow developers to provide bulk

⁵ Interview conducted on 25 January 2016.

infrastructure which is later handed over to the municipality instead of developers paying for bulk services. Upfront laying of bulk service can be seen as infringing of spatial democracy through bequeathing development rights to developers.

Perhaps, agriculture does not have such sponsorship. It is perhaps against this background that agricultural land is the under risk of elite capture.

The Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF) further indicates that there is a demand for housing units in the area and as such, seeks to meet and surpass demand. Consequently, the RSDF expressed the need to make more accommodation available; however, it does not expand on the typology of developments. It was indicated that there are corridors like the R59 that are regarded as urban development boundaries. Debatably, the parallel growth of both residential and business nodes suggests that the municipality is not a dormitory or only an agriculture hub but may be urbanising.

Debatably, increases in residential developments changes land use of the area, most often to irreversible land use as highlighted in the literature review. It is expressed through this research that Midvaal is a municipality under construction with residential offerings of different categories. A reference of mixed income residential offering is Savannah City development. The researcher believes shifts in development begin with land use management which is a prerogative of municipal government. Land use management allows authorities to confine use of specified land for particular purposes. Whilst there is nothing wrong with the provision of residential accommodation, it begs the question to what extent does change in one use influence use of surrounding land.

The workers that were interviewed said that they had observed a shift, an area transcending from a *“plot like area”* to a more modern area with restrictions. All excerpts have been translated from vernacular languages, namely, Zulu and Sotho⁶. Below are excerpts from interviews with workers:

*“We used to walk past the area before it was fenced and gated. Now that they have gates you cannot even enter the place unless you work inside”*⁷, December, Estate worker

This extract from the interview is selected as a highlight of a change and a shock in the use of space. Gated communities are a challenge to spatial democracy and privatisation of public spaces (Landman, 2002). It expresses a sudden reaction to restrictive access. It highlights the redefinition of space interactions pre and post development of estates.

⁶ All interviews with workers have been translated.

⁷ Interview conducted on 29 January 2016.

*“I did not even know this place existed prior to getting job here. When I first saw the place, I was in disbelief that people live in places like these. The place is very nice but it must be boring, it is too quiet”*⁸ Siphso, Estate Worker.

Consistent with the assertion made by the municipal building control official, that the Eye of Africa is the fastest growing estate and consequently, there are more workers on the Eye of Africa golf course than in Blue Saddle Ranches. Similarly, workers suggested that the estates seem to be growing faster in the recent times. One worker on the Blue Saddle Ranches estate said he has worked on the Estate for fifteen years.

*“I started working in this estate when the houses in the estate were still very few; there was no gate at the entrance now the place is growing and all security measures are growing. First owners in the estate used to buy big plots, now they are selling half of their plots to others”*⁹. Francis, worker in Blue Saddle Ranches

This interview is significant to the study owing to its location of the growth patterns of Blue Saddle Ranches estate. It expresses not only the growth patterns but land use management in relation to subdivisions that in turn allows residents to subdivide. Subdivisions change the character of the place and have impact on densities. Perhaps estates can coexist with agriculture to stimulate differential land tax base which in turn can be used to serve agriculture (Pearson and Pearson, 2010). It would have been conceivable to have coexistence of upmarket houses with agriculture, however, as stands shrink in sizes the coexistence also diminished.

*“We use to go to Alberton when it used to be a huge farm; we used to pick peaches and other fruits when we were children. Now it’s (houses are) coming to Midvaal. Very soon there will be no vacant spaces it will just be one house joined to another. I have lived here all my life. All these developments happen in front of me. This area used to be a strong farming community, the farmers were generous; they would give mealies and other produce. They all started selling one by one. Now it is only my farm left and other two left that still farm actively”*¹⁰.” Sitiba, a worker in the Eye of Africa Estate.

At the core of this interview is the observation of transition. The researcher notes that it is limited to generalise about the viability farming premised on this one interview and similar ones. The significance points to a longitudinal observation. Debatably, transition is not an

⁸ Interview conducted on 2 February 2016.

⁹ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016.

¹⁰ Interview conducted on 20 January 2016.

event, it happens over time. It begs the question if is noticed and taken into consideration by officials. Furthermore, these transitions do not enjoy reference in peri-urban policy space to can set parameters and guide projected growth.

“I have seen estate developments being established even back home in Zimbabwe. They all start small and before you know it, it is town full of same houses. It is better here because there are still fields in between houses at home houses can be squeezed into a small place just to fit the house and have no garden¹¹”. Sweetone, a worker in Blue Saddle Ranches.

Interviews and observations revealed that there are still families who keep livestock such as pigs and cattle. In the case of Eye of Africa, there is neighbouring family that keeps pigs by the construction gate. Notably, there is a lot of horse stabling in these two areas. Blue Saddle Ranches is surrounded by fields of plantations. Niceone, who is a worker in Blue Saddle Ranches, stated that people in these estate developments have land but they do not farm.

Perhaps the forces of competing interests are exacerbated by limitations of policy over governance of peri-urban areas. Municipalities have to be perceptive to these demographic and business patterns. This research study suggests that protection and adaptation finds expression in policy and legislation. One may argue that there is an individuation of perceptiveness by the municipality in a policy vacuum that should equip municipalities to respond to growth in a legislative manner. A national strategy for peri-urban areas is needed.

5.1.2 Urbanisation trends and Governance

This themed examined urbanisation trends and governance protocols around estate developments in Midvaal. Regard has been given to developments against municipal planning, community engagement, developer driven developments and anticipated development patterns of the area.

As It was submitted by the municipal official within town planning that all developments are fully compliant with Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It was indicated that there are sometimes objections; however these do not pass the test of prohibiting developments as due care is given at inception. As part of the project application and implementation, there is community participation. The municipality prides itself on the fact that they facilitate an intensive and vigorous public participation process.

¹¹ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016.

“All developments in the municipality are an integral part of planning. If a project is not consistent with municipal aspirations, it is not approved. The municipality has a well-developed approval process that includes community participation¹²”. Primrose, Manager, town planning.

This interview expresses accountability and community participation in the planning process within municipality. Notwithstanding the transparent approach, it begs the question of who is the final arbiter of these development projects. The interview was limited to provide rate of community participation suffice to express civic engagement of communities.

The researcher pursued the urban bias growth effect given the approvals of residential estate development project. The Councillor indicated that the municipality is not urbanising, however it allows for growth. Conversely, the interviews revealed that there is a cautious submission that Midvaal is facing competing interest from land uses other than agriculture. Interview with the councillor shared the following:

“Some residents have concerns about the development trajectory of the municipality. Some residents are scared the area is becoming too urbanised with mushrooming non-agriculture functions. There have been objections to developments but we have managed to allay fears because at the core of this municipality is an agriculture foundation. But as government we should respond to the needs of people. If people want houses we must provide those houses. If people want to do business we must provide opportunities to do business¹³”
Community Councillor.

Evidently, residents of Midvaal have from time to time raised fears over the growth of non-agricultural developments. For example, it was further noted that with regards to the Eye of Africa estate, residents were concerned about the amount of water that is consumed by the golf courses, as well as the densities, general fauna and flora concerns. Concerns over consumption of water were allayed concerns of residents. Pragmatically, the Eye of Africa estate had to put money into conservancy initiatives. As highlighted in literature review, peri-urban areas do not only become zones of high material consumption, but also the consumption of natural resources.

There seems to be two categories of residents. There are those who have moved to the area for farming and are therefore concerned with changes in the area. Consistent with literature¹⁴ on the transformation of peri-urban areas, there are those who have moved for

¹² Interview conducted on 12 January 2016.

¹³ Interview conducted on 28 January 2016

¹⁴ Buxton, 2006; Boume, et al., 2003; Busck, et al., 2006; Mcgregor, et al., 2006).

residential purposes and are beneficiaries of estate developments. This suggests that trends observable elsewhere are true in Midvaal Municipality.

Similarly, residents were concerned about the industrialisation of the area. The Councillor shared that near the Blue Saddle Ranches estate, residents were particularly concerned about the Ferrero Chocolate factory that is not within an industrial designated corridor. Below is an extract from the interview:

“Residents were particularly concerned about the factory (Ferrero Chocolate Factory). They said they did not want to live in industrial zones. We moved swiftly to assure them that the environmental impact of the factory is minimal and will therefore not affect residents”.
Community Councillor

Arguably, today, this factory may be considered an exception to the rule. However, it is uncertain if the exception will prove to be precedent setting. Given these accounts of the shift in land use, contrasted with municipal strategy, it begs the question of whether the agricultural based strategy has not yet manifested itself on the ground or other competing interests have dwarfed the strategy. It is unclear as to how many estate developments or factories the municipality is likely to be amenable to. There is a cautious view of elite capture by developers who can afford to pay for bulk services and therefore gain a favourable position in the estate development field.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned exception to the rule, the community representative and municipal official concur that all developments occur at demarcated areas as envisioned in the planning of municipalities. As such, there is no encroachment into the spaces of other uses. Whilst credit must be given to the municipality for the clear demarcation of development zones, one is cautious of encroachment in unassuming ways. This raises the question of how an agri-tropolis municipality apportions its land distribution such that deference is given to pro-agriculture developments. Infrastructure outlay has to support agriculture value chain. Caution must be given as a lesson derived from changes in land use that caused encroachment into coconut farms in the area of Sri Lanka (Mcgregor, et al., 2006). Premised on the Sri Lanka case study, it is apparent that encroachment over agricultural land takes place incrementally often with irreversible land use changes.

There is a case for making land to be available for residential developments to accommodate growth; equally, there is a case to protect agricultural land. Adaptation and protection strategies are essential to harmonise coexistence of functions in the peri-urban spaces (Samat and Elhadary,2012). Reviewed policy and interviews conducted in Midvaal have been limited in the articulation of coexistence, adaptation and protection strategies.

This limits the predictability of growth plans, economic drivers, future neighbourhoods and land use ratio of agricultural land in peri-urban areas.

Arguably, where residential estate developments are deemed permissible, consistent with municipal planning, a carrot and stick approach in the approval of estate developments may be ideal. These should seek to instil agrarian practices within these developments. These may be delineated using a methodology that seeks to balance the land size of the estate development against the agriculture contribution. This may institute paring of developments and agricultural activities, perhaps not so much recreational agriculture. While this recommendation may seem punitive, it may also serve both agricultural and non-agricultural uses.

Notwithstanding the alignment to long and medium term planning, interviews revealed that the establishment of the upmarket estate developments is developer driven. Developers inject investment and open up land for services. The Councillor said:

“Developers pay bulk service contributions. In this municipality we prioritise provision of infrastructure prior to developments taking place unlike other municipalities. The plan is to keep services ahead of development. Midvaal has taken an approach of infrastructure outlay before any development” Community Councillor.

This is admittedly ideal and efficient. Arguably, the capital investment ability of developers may determine the pace of developments with an incentive infrastructure investment. Notwithstanding the meticulous planning, it seems the infrastructure outlay is designed for activities other than agricultural activities and is developer driven. Developments that cater for the ultra-rich turn to have privatized high quality services whilst the poor do not enjoy the same (Saxena and Sharma,2015).

The manager for local economic development, housing and agriculture outlined a challenge of general lack of institutional support to sponsor agriculture and to stimulate appeal towards same. Realistically, the anticipated backwards and forward linkages of the agricultural economy require institutional support and a degree of readiness. One may argue that institutionalisation of agriculture and farming is linked to other variables such as land restitution and reform.

The following is taken from the interview:

“The absence of agriculture-based colleges to support agricultural intentions is a gap. There is lack of appetite for youth towards agriculture, so, there is lack of farmer and financial

*support to pursue agricultural interests. Agriculture is not seen as an economically viable sector*¹⁵ Mr Lebelo Manager.

A municipality that has been identified as an agri-tropolis, and has agriculture based strategy does not have an established institutional base to develop and grow farmers. As an agri-tropolis one can assume that there is deference given to agriculture. Notwithstanding the agricultural intent by municipality, there are institutional and structural challenges that remain. The agriculture strategy base should be matched by skills set and consideration of access. It begs the question if, the institutional readiness is correctly poised to respond to the agriculture strategy.

“An average age of the farmer is sixty three years and there is a need to bring on board more young farmers” Community Councillor.

This assertion strengthens a case for institutional capacity building required to support agriculture. If agriculture strategy is to be realised, due consideration should be given to industries that promote backwards and forward linkages of agriculture. Similarly, the municipality may use tariff structures to sponsor development of agri-business from businesses that are not agriculturally inclined. It is not the assertion of this study that estate development field must be weakened; it may be made level in a way that does not dwarf agricultural prospects. An unmitigated price spike in estate developments may have unintended consequences to farming.

The challenge concerns the accountability and responsibility of the agricultural function. What emerged from interviews is that agriculture is competing with the municipality's other core mandates, such as the provision of basic services. The interview highlighted the following:

“Agriculture is not a municipal mandate. Midvaal like all other municipalities still has the responsibility to provide basic services. We are reliant on the provincial and national government for sponsorship on agriculture. Our budget limitations do not allow us to implement some of the things we would like to do as an agri-tropolis” Mr Lebelo Manager.

Perhaps the embeddedness of agriculture as a basic service is lost in its classification and consequently its location. People live in municipalities and agriculture is their livelihood. Therefore, the discourse and accountability of agriculture should be proximal to people.

It is acknowledged that there seems to be plans outlined in the IDP and RSDF albeit not matched by actual investment. One is cautious that unfunded mandates in a sea of

¹⁵ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016.

competing interests may be reduced to a wish list without a time horizon. The bureaucratic riddle has had a tendency to undermine good state interventions. The National Development Plan (NDP) envisions that the agricultural sector may contribute over one million new jobs by 2030 (NDP, 2011). Yet in an interview with a municipal official, it was revealed that agriculture contributes only 0,7% to the municipal GDP. This interview further revealed that the municipality seeks to increase the revenue contribution of agriculture by eliminating some of the barriers in agribusiness. Accordingly, the municipality has identified barriers to harnessing the fullest agricultural potential such as training and development, farmers support and access to markets. An interview with Local Economic Development Manager and Agriculture indicated the municipality has both active and inactive farmers. In turn, a pocket of active farmers consists of subsistence farmers and commercial farmers. Busck, et al., (2006) pointed out that reduction in the number of full time farmers gives way to residential growth in otherwise farming areas. Interview excerpts:

“The aim of the municipality is to assist small and subsistence farmers while not undermining growth prospects for commercial farmers. We envision assistance in the form of infrastructure and institutional support” Mr Lebelo, manager.

5.1.3 Planning versus agricultural aspirations

The RSDF indicates the sponsorship of clustered land use. Clustered use has the potential of underscoring agriculture, dependent on the uptake of other activities. Arguably, there is a case to pronounce the significance of the agricultural economy in South Africa. Agriculture has declined in relative terms as an employer and contributor to exports and GDP (Ashley and Maxwell, 2001). The review of the RSDF of the Municipality indicates the aspiration to keep agricultural, residential accommodation and industrial interests.

The balance and integration of agriculture and non-agriculture use is unclear. During the fieldwork of this research, the agriculture strategy for the municipality was still being drafted and was therefore not available for perusal to ascertain the potential figures of agricultural yield and economic benefits. Furthermore, it was not easy to establish the future potential agricultural aspirations. It is conceivable that when the appetite for an agricultural economy becomes heightened, there will be no land to sustain the agriculture sector. Interviews conducted suggested that agriculture has not been halted by the absence of a strategy.

“In the meantime, there is work being done on profiling farmers for integration into the Local Economic Development Strategy and Agriculture” Manager for local economic development, housing and agriculture.

It is anticipated that work underway will find basis in the strategy or is at least helping to formulate the strategy. Common course suggests that strategy informs practice. Perhaps, agriculture strategy of the municipality is framed on the label of Agri-tropolis and is entrusted with the responsibility of being “the food basket of the Gauteng province” (IDP 2015/16), with further detailed response yet to be established. The actual investment of the municipality in agriculture remains vague and unclear. Noticeably, it has been easy to forecast non-agricultural developments yet same could not be easily done for agricultural developments. It may be important to discern the strategic focus and actual practice of the municipality using a simple measure of growth rate of agriculture and other interests. Interview conducted with managers in the areas of agriculture signposted that the Department of Agriculture remains supportive of the agri-tropolis status of the municipality.

Against firm official view of agriculture based strategy development, estate agents are knowledgeable and precise about at least three other estate developments in the pipeline in the area, namely, Mt View, Wood Acres and the Grace. Pipeline developments are collaborated by the Councillor saying, “*these developments are in the same estate category as the Eye of Africa and Blue Saddle Ranches*”. Similarly, interviews with municipal officials indicated that there were developments underway in the near future which suggests that there is an of estate development in the Midvaal Municipality. One may conclude Midvaal is becoming a residential zone of prime estate developments? Development of more estates is an indicator of growth in number of these estates in area and services to meet the demand. As argued in the case of Blue Crane versus Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, these development have tendency to change land use of greater farm portions.

5.2 Underlying Drivers for pursuit of peri-urban areas

The main research question sought to discover drivers of upmarket residential developments in the Midvaal Local Municipality. Accordingly, this section tracks motivational factors of estates development in Midvaal. The literature review chapter reflected on an international account of factors of attraction.

5.2.1 Location

“Proximity to the metropolitan region is just one of many factors influencing development in peri-urban landscapes” (Buxton, 2006: 262).

Location has been cited consistently across interviews as a major attraction for the establishment of upmarket residential estate. By definition and description given in the

definition of concepts in Chapter 3, peri-urban areas provide a proximal location to cities. This location has been cited as having an appeal to the estate developments. Location has been associated with time and distance when residents of peri-urban areas need to access cities or work. Arguably, location may not be motivational factor given the globalisation and technological changes. Residents are able to work from any corner and companies can be situated anywhere, including peri-urban areas. Estate agents echoed the location of Midvaal as one of the attraction points;

*“The buyers like the idea of going in and out of cities like Joburg and Ekurhuleni, airport etcetera and still retreat to their tranquillity. I believe that location is the selling point because some people still want to straddle between cities and Midvaal”*¹⁶ Rena, Estate agent

Councillor added that people who move in the area are people who can afford to travel. His words were:

“I live thirty-five kilometres from Joburg yet spends less time getting into Joburg compared to a person who lives within Johannesburg yet spends two hours for a lesser distance owing to traffic” Community Councillor.

These responses suggests country living is a choice for people who can afford to straddle between urban setting and country living offered by this chosen peri-urban area. This pull force is linked to the location and time of travel. This dispels the notion of peri-urban areas as zones for the poor. Councillor indicated that people were attracted to area of Midvaal, in particular by ease of traffic flows. It is believed that business and residents express wishes to escape being stuck in traffic for an extended period of time. One estate agent said when people are buying residences, they appeal for places where “they can live, work and play”.

Councillor said:

“In the past a prime address was in Sandton and Bryanston but today people want to escape traffic jams and influx of people, therefore escape to country living.” Community Councillor.

Whilst this is a case of escaping metropolitan traffic jams, it is also a shift on income and wealth away from metropolitans to peri-urban. The councillor’s view is, people seek to escape urbanisation congestion in the city and therefore start to look outwards. This suggests the country estates’ address situated away from urban settings is the new sought after address by counter-urbanists.

¹⁶ Interview conducted on 3 February 2016.

The discussion with estate agents did not indicate any buyers who may have wanted to move in the area for purposes of farming. This means buyers have not associated their buying choices with agricultural activities either than recreational agriculture and business. An estate agent revealed that most sellers consider farming to be a doubtful business. Instead some buyers linked their residential choices with business premises within Midvaal. Conceivably, this view motivates farmers around the area to sell at a once for profit gain. The analysis herein draws on existing literature on the elite capture of land (Acemoglu and Johnson, 2003). Arguably, the South African environment is prone to elite capture owing to its design of property market and rights associated with ownership. The property markets perpetuate ownership by those who can afford to buy. It may be argued that private sale of properties is actuated by self-interest without due consideration to the agrarian strategic focus. Indeed, the property market of South Africa permits individual property owners to sell at will. McGregor (2006) asserted that peri-urban areas depict limited land use planning and consequently, investments.

5.2.2 Price of Land

Price of land is also a factor of financial investments and market trends. Buying in country estates is also seen as a form of investment (Landman,2004). According to estate agents, residents seem to be impressed with the availability of land in large parcels at a seemingly affordable price. This trend is also driven by market speculations with an anticipation of good returns. According to Torres, et al. (2007), land is considered to be cheap in peri-urban areas and this factor may be a point of attraction.

In one interview, an agent revealed that people are not passive buyers because they study trends. One agent attributed the shift to the road networks leading to the Midvaal. Estate agents seem to have consensus that the Midvaal is the next big corridor of development, stating that the investment on road networks suggests that even government recognises this corridor of development. Her words were:

“People look at investments in road networks and business developments and therefore choose to invest in a particular area based on the research that they had done. I mainly deal with purchase sales and not lease agreements. There does not yet seem to be an appetite for letting because these buyers are investors. People bought stands for investment

*purposes in the first place and never really built on them they are just waiting to sell*¹⁷
Francisca, Estate agent.

Councillor concurs price of land is point of attraction for this class of people moving to the Midvaal municipality. Estate agents added; prices in other peri-urban areas are more expensive than Midvaal offering. It was reported that buyers are willing to pay the price as it is perceived to be cheaper. Interview with estate agent reflected:

*“Buyers considered the area to be generally cheaper considering what they will get elsewhere. Some golf estates elsewhere are already priced at almost R10 million, whereas here buyers could still find prices in the ranges of R5 million. There are other estate developments far more expensive than these ones yet offering less value and desirability of location. Price makes Midvaal municipality appealing. Buyers are from all parts, some from the Northern suburbs of Johannesburg and were very pleased to move to bigger and better spaces. Literally, buyers would say we lived on top of each other at a higher premium*¹⁸
Terry, Estate Agent.

Exodus from metropolitans and cities is changing the class profile. Inner cities have become zones for predominantly black job seekers within and beyond South African borders (Ahmad, et al., 2010). Southern African Development Community (SADC) region have experienced flights of investment and urban decay (Ahmad, et al., 2010). Although efforts are made to revitalise cities, same has not managed to be attractive as a residential area of choice for the ultra-rich. Peri-urban living arrangements under review are considered highly priced yet affordable by this pocket of people. Some leafy suburbs of metropolitan areas remain insulated from decay and remain exclusive.

Arguably, people who move into the Midvaal municipality weigh options of property rates against the cost of travel and luxury living. Presumably, the cost of land and comparative property rates outweighs the travelling. The councillor explained that this segment of people make trade-offs with petrol and time spent commuting.

It was added that estate developments have strict rules for building yet this is not a deterrent to buyers. On average a buyer is given two years to build and an extra one year for ultimate completion. An estate agent, who operates within Eye of Africa, indicated that:

¹⁷ Interview conducted on 20 January 2016

¹⁸ Interview conducted on 2 February 2016.

“It is mostly cash buyers who buy in Eye of Africa. Buyers rarely took mortgages. Those who took mortgages took small mortgages just to see them through building process”¹⁹
Raphael, Estate Agent.

This is indicative of affordability. Researcher also believes its indicative of speed of change. When funding is not an object, a place could be open land and a well-built area in a short period of time.

Contradictory, residents outside estates are concerned over price of land for different reason. There are people who live in this area because they have made active choices associated with costs of property ownership. Councillor captured the concerns as follows:

“Residents outside of the estate development are concerned about land value changes induced by non-agricultural developments. They also concerned about the appreciation of their properties that will result in them paying high rates” Community Councillor

The Municipal Property Rates Act (MPRA) maintains that rates are equitable to the property prices. The literature review chapter painted the case of the Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry versus Blue Crane Estate wherein the Minister sought to protect agricultural land from a development of an estate with a view that it will spike land prices such that it is no longer attractive to farm.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) in its discussion document outlines that “other uses can also lead to increased property values in rural areas, increasing pressure to develop the land for urban purposes, making it more attractive for the farmer to sell, or casting doubts about the advisability of new or continued farm investments” (DAFF, 2011:11). The case of Blue Crane Country Estate versus the Minister outlined in the literature review bears testimony to the equal importance of supporting land use of neighbouring farm portions. The Minister brought to the fore the influence of change in one land use over other existing farm portions.

When the issue of expensive land within these estate developments was raised, officials and community representatives explained that developers add value to the land like golf courses which in turn increases the value of land. Whilst value addition may be valid, it begs the question if it is commensurate to the input. It does not account for the net effect of price increases in the area that are induced by surrounding estate developments.

¹⁹ Interview conducted on 14 January 2016.

5.2.3 Elitism of ownership

Estate developments strive on a sale of elitism (Landman, 2004). Exclusivity of location and price affirm status of residents. The researcher regards that the market price of the estate allows people of particular social class to form exclusive communities. “High-powered people prefer to socialise with like-minded people, and need a private and secure space to do so” (Landman, 2004, 25). The move towards Midvaal because of ownership estate developments is characteristic of affluent ownership patterns in the area, possibly growing with more pipeline projects. The economic class profile of the inhabitants fractures the common narrative of the social character of peri-urban (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2014). This profile of the peri-urban resident is not the one painted by conventional literature that is suggestive of people living in slum-like conditions. Additionally, this highlights the agency and the skills base of the inhabitants. The social character is not consistent to the labour reserves highlighted by literature. Instead, it points to the captains of industries and executive management taking ownership into these areas. Invariably, this changes the profile of ownership of the area. Perhaps this trend of affluent owners transitioning to the peri-urban of Midvaal finds lineage with the view of expansion of cities as a matter of distribution of wealth and incomes (Mabin, 2005).

An interview with a community councillor assisted to profile the category of people who transition to live in the estate developments of Midvaal Municipality. The councillor profiles inhabitants as follows:

“Eye of Africa, being the only golf estate in Midvaal, has attracted affluent people. It has attracted executive directors and owners of companies. The Blue Saddle Ranches has attracted managerial to senior level directors of companies. Predominantly, these estate developments have managed to pull professionals and affluent into the area”²⁰ Community Councillor.

Additionally, the councillor noted that the class of people who move into estate developments seek luxury living. An extract from an interview with the Councillor:

“These people are drawn by big houses and gardens with country lifestyle. Our area is redefining luxurious pursuit of high end consumers” Community Councillor.

²⁰ Interview conducted in 20 January 2016.

Perhaps, it is in the context of this redefinition that encroachment towards agricultural land should be guarded. Farm portions are often bought in large parcels which is almost exclusionist owing to affordability. The likelihood is that once the property has been sold, the owner determines the land use rights and may change the same through application to relevant local authority. The estate developments suggest that land use may never be reversed into agriculture owing to investments and defined land use. The research problem of this study made reference to the pursuit of nostalgia by the affluent class. Councillors seem to have confidence that the emergence of residential areas in the municipality will not encroach into agricultural land. It was indicated that the South Eastside corridor of the municipality is dedicated towards farming.

Researcher considered that Midvaal peri-urban is developing with a bias towards the rich. Councillor dismissed exclusive rich led growth of residential properties and instead highlighted developments such as Savanna City, currently under development and Gauteng Highlands Project, still in the pipeline, that cover a range of classes otherwise not covered in the two estate developments under review. Savanna City and Highland projects are meant to accommodate the lower to middle class. These developments are also within Midvaal Local Municipality. According to an economist Visagie (2016) cited in Rossouw (2016), a category of middle class in South Africa is from R5 600 to 40 000 per month after direct income tax in a household of four persons. These incomes will not afford a home in Eye of Africa and Blue Saddle Ranches.

An estate agent said, *“Preoccupation when dealing with these buyers is not about bond approval, is about the location of the stands, best architects and construction companies. As an agent you change your sales pitch for this market”*.

Ownership of the area is taken over by people whose needs for shelter are guaranteed the only worry is the aesthetics. This redefines the class profile of the area. Estate agents viewed the estate residential developments as beneficial for the upliftment of the property market in the area. The two developments are perceived to be increasing the stature of the Midvaal as a municipality. The definition of growth and development for this segment of respondents means an increase in properties and the emergence of more upmarket residential developments. The estate agents have marvelled at the increase of property sales in the area not only limited to the two projects. One agent signalled that while some people do not buy any of the estates owing to affordability, they liked the idea of buying property that was close to the estate developments for speculative reasons or as a choice of residence. The subtle view amongst the estate agents is that each estate development is better than the other.

The elitist nature of these residents demands efficiency and proficiency. Residents of estates are driven by the need for greater efficiency and quality of services (Landman,2004).The councillor alluded to the view that people move to Midvaal because of the efficiency of the municipality. It is believed that the Midvaal municipality is efficiently managed and residents have confidence in the municipality as per the study conducted by the National Department of Local Government in 2014. The officials pride themselves offering an efficient application to approval process for developers and would be residents of the area. They cited that stakeholders have commended them on the speed and efficiency of their processes. It is indicated that residents marvel at the municipality's building control standards that encourage them to use energy efficient building techniques. According to the words of the Councillor:

“Our residents like our speed and efficiencies. We are doing well compared to other municipalities in our turnaround times. People do not want to move to areas where they will have headaches from their local authorities” Community Councillor

Notwithstanding the provision of speed and efficiency of municipality as part of service delivery, there is an element of attracting this class and developers to invest in Midvaal.

Estate agents and community representative carry enormous history of these developments. However, they did not know the extent of farming which took place in these areas. They did not seem to have knowledge of people who might have lived in these farms before, other than that, they were owned by individual farmers prior to being sold to the developers. Therefore, the study is limited to assume displacement of people or suggest move of same in a particular direction.

5.2.4 Socioeconomic integration of human settlements and social impact

Owing to the apartheid history of South Africa, it is important to enforce the integration of settlements so that societies are not divided like they once were during apartheid. Yet a trend of gated communities perpetuates apartheid trends, through using crime to justify the urban design divisions (Lemanski, 2004). It is apparent that only the affluent live in the estate developments. The price categories of gated communities exclude the poor on the test of affordability.

Workers who are employed on these residential estates were quick to mention that these areas are not for poor people. An interview with one worker highlighted the following:

“We do not even dream of living in these areas, these are for very rich people. Rich people come and buy the land from the struggling poor and turn the area to be only for the rich”²¹
Iris, worker at Blue Saddle Ranches.

“It would be a joke to even express the intention to buy around this area. I like this area it is quiet and peaceful”²² Abel, worker in Eye of Africa.

Workers feel separated from their areas of work on the test of affordability. Although this assertion is a view by workers, it is not far distant from the view expressed by Acemoglu and Johnson (2003) that if property institutions do not constrain elite capture, it is likely to expropriate assets of the poor. Few workers indicated that they are clear that they are in these estate developments to serve their employers and fulfil contractual obligations. This perception by workers suggests elite capture of certain areas or indeed reflects the nature of South African property markets. Integrated societies exist elsewhere not within the boom gates of the estate developments. A case study of Ethembelethu (World Bank, 2009) referred to in the literature review indicated an attempt to maintain the exclusive seclusion of those who are wealthy. Access is restricted by elites, sometimes vested in the investments of property developments by private property developers (Pieterse, 2009). From the responses given by estate workers, one may deduce that there is an invisible segregation line that has been drawn as to who can live or not live in these estate developments.

The natural order of the South African markets is that anyone can buy provided they can afford. It begs the question if affordability is the new filter of residential segregation. This finding links to the field’s theory and the field position of the estate workers. Furthermore, any price intervention by the state may be said to upset the property market. Perhaps it is the same price that is an epistemology of capture of peri-urban areas by non-agricultural activities.

The workers mentioned that they would like to live near work in order to save money on travelling costs and possibly find additional work opportunities. An interview with worker revealed:

“The area is attractive to provide jobs but transport to the area proves to be a challenge yet it is almost impossible to find a place to live next to these estate developments. Those who are lucky find accommodation in neighbouring farms, especially near Blue Saddles Ranches at Drumblade. It is easier to live in the farm if you have a relative who works in the farm. But

²¹ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016

²² Interview conducted on 19 January 2016

*farm owners now do not want us to squat even when you have relatives*²³ Anthony, a worker in Blue Saddle ranches.

Some male workers indicated that they are restricted to walk around in the Eye of Africa estate. The estates makes regulations and controls that seek to preserve the ideals of an estate (Landman,2004). One respondent perceived restriction to be suspicion that they may steal or disturb golfers and home owners. However, one respondent who works as a domestic worker said even when home owners have to go for a run they need to notify the office. The respondent indicated that quietness is enforced through limiting workers walking on site.

5.2.5 Changes in Demographics

The Census of 2011 indicated that there is southward migration in Gauteng. Midvaal municipality has seen growth owing to this migration. Accordingly, the municipality included these migration patterns as part of their Spatial Development Framework (SDF). It begs the question if the growth only attracted middle and upper class or other classes have also grown in the municipality. An official within Town Planning echoed the view that Midvaal has experienced the fastest and highest growth. Interviews with officials within building control indicated that Eye of Africa is the fastest growing estate development, followed by Blue Saddle Ranches. It was indicated that there are daily inspections in these estate developments.

Ike, an estate agent expressed the following:

*“I have been operating in Midvaal for the last 28 years and we have seen a change in property buyers. I have sold more new properties in the last 10 years than I have ever done in my career. In the past property sales were with older farm properties now more new and modern. This area now has more houses then it has ever had and more people are enquiring. If you want to see, check R59 and see the cars that are driving in and out of Midvaal in the morning and in the evenings. That tells you people live here*²⁴. *In the past traffic in Midvaal was three cars following each other” Ike, Real Estate Agent.*

²³ Interview conducted on 2 February 2016.

²⁴ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016

No doubt the growth of estate developments has correlation with growth in densities. Growth in densities cause changes land use and business provisions to meet the demands of higher population growth.

In South Africa, wall to wall construct of municipalities by the demarcation board has extended boundaries into the peri-urban space. When this extension happens, it is not responded to by a policy framework governing the edge of peri-urban spaces.

5.2.6 Economic Nodes

Peri-urban growth remains complex and is linked to other economic growth nodes and these are responsible for migration into peri-urban areas (Ford, 2001). Respondents have tended to link of the upsurge of residential developments with industrial growth of the municipality. Municipality acknowledged growing trends of business in the area. The R59 corridor has seen the development of Klipriver industrial park, Heineken Brewery, New Hope and many other factories. It is asserted that owners within gated communities are business people following business trends in the municipality.

An interview with the estate agent said:

“Development of businesses in the area brought with it new residents. People move into the area because they have changed jobs and would like to be near work” Raphael, estate agent.

Perhaps the bourgeoning of economic nodes is the reason the municipality boast in its IDP about the lowest unemployment rate of under 12% according to its 2015/16 IDP.

5.2.7 Nature, Recreational Activities Tranquillity and ambiance

Tranquillity and ambiance have been cited by officials as other reasons that attract people to the Midvaal. Tranquillity and quality of life is amongst the sought after characteristics of country estates (Landman,2004). These reasons are considered good for raising children. The brochures and appeal to country estates place forward the appeal of rural leaving yet closer to the city centres (Landman,2004). Arguably, these are some of the traits that attract counter-urbanists. An official in building control related that:

“Some people have attributed their move to an attempt of getting away from the concrete jungle of the city to the bush”²⁵ Mr Pringle, Municipal official.

With counter urbanism, residents reject “metropolitan life and values” (Buxton, 2006:259). Counter urbanisation is a movement to small settlements and townships, as well as to rural locations (Buxton, 2006). Counter urbanists are attracted to small towns with decent amenities and services. Arguably, some of the people attracted to Midvaal are counter urbanist who reject city living.

“Buyers want a balance of peace and affordability”²⁶, Scott, Estate agent.

The buyers seek peace and have the financial means to pursue it, hence retreat to Midvaal. Common consensus amongst estate development workers seemed to be that property owners are attracted to the area because of the love for nature. Interview with worker provided that:

“My employers would stop me from working if I am chopping wood and it disturbs bird sounds! These are people who have made a lot of money elsewhere and are here to enjoy life. People with money like to live in isolated areas where they can just do their hobbies”. Sitiba, estate agent worker.

A significant number of residents who move to peri-urban areas place a high premium on nature and environmental protection. Proximity to the Vaal dam and Suikerbosrand Nature Reserve are amongst the features sought after by the residents. For some, it has a resemblance of the United States farm life.

“Residents fall in love with look and feel of American life in Blue Saddles. Some residents say it reminds them of home (America)”, estate agent

Some buyers are pulled by the recreational activities that estate developments offer, such as the golf course in the case of Eye of Africa and a soon to be tennis court. In the case of Blue Saddle Ranches, the major attraction has been stabling and horse rides. Manager in building control department said recreational events like bicycle races add to the quality of life that residence pursue. This is a coming together of a cohort of buyers are mainly interested in the quality of life. It did not emerge that any of the buyers were persuaded by the likelihood to farm or even live near farming communities. The nostalgia of future planned provisions

²⁵ Interview conducted on 19 January 2016

²⁶ Interview conducted 26 January 2016

within these estate developments seems to resonate well with residents and buyers, according to the estate agents. Future provisions include residential Sanus Per Aquam (SPA's), club houses and shops inside the estate developments. The nostalgia of future planned provisions within these estate developments seem to resonate well with residents and buyers, according to the estate agents. Future provisions include residential spa's, club houses and shops inside the estate developments. As Midvaal becomes a region of high consumption to sustain its offerings, it begs the question if natural supplies of resources will be able to sustain the growing demand of peri-urban areas.

Estate agents gave insight that some people have down-scaled their jobs in order to spend quality time with their families. When probed, the agent mentioned that this is relative down-scaling of people who otherwise can still afford the life of gated communities. This is not a move to poverty. This constitutes people who are referred to as "sea changers" (Buxton, 2006). These are moves in pursuit of quality of life over other material gains of metropolitan life. Eye of Africa with its mixture of developments, some people buy smaller unit as a retirement home to move away from cities.

A big question is, will these developments continue to support the pull factors as the land use changes? It may be that land use changes redefine the developments of the surrounds. One may also argue that there is no harm in seeking a combination of factors like tranquillity, nature, industrial growth and yet afford proximity to the cities. There may be a case in protecting and sustaining the factors of attraction.

5.2.8 Security

Security is another major point of attraction. Majority of South African urban residents are pulled into estate living by perception of safety associated with gated communities (Landman,2004). Gated communities have been conceived to be a response to the fear of crime in post-apartheid South Africa. So, these communities are architectures of fear (Lemanski, 2004). Estate Agents concur that residents like "estate living" as opposed to "freehold" owing to sense of security that communal estate living provide. Security is associated with orderliness offered by gated living (Chipkin, 2013). In the United States, a move to peri-urban areas is motivated by a need to escape crime, drug use, urban schools and poverty (Buxton, 2006).

The estate agents that were interviewed highlighted that security is amongst the first questions that would-be buyers often ask about. Estates are known for use of private security and restricted access to non-residents (Landman,2004). Accordingly, both these two

developments are well invested in security measures. An interview with an estate agent indicated that

“There have been no break-ins, in the last six years in Blue Saddles Ranches. I recall one buyer saying if your child is out of sight for two hours where we lived, you file a missing person’s report. The buyers want children to play freely without being under watch” Rena, Estate agent

5.3 Motivational Factors for Municipality and Economic Prospects

At a particular point in municipal planning, the researcher considers that a municipality will have reasons for being amenable to estate developments. Municipalities have an obligation to provide residential accommodation for its citizens. Accordingly, it was indicated through an interview with the Councillor that there is a need to balance social and economic impact. Municipalities are driven by tax base income to advance certain urban forms and not challenge forms that threaten the revenue base (Pieterse, 2009). Interview referred:

“Municipalities are sustained through revenues. Therefore, municipalities have to manage a fine balance of social and economic existence. If Midvaal rejects one development in its jurisdiction, it may be accepted by another municipality which is revenue lost”. Community Councillor.

It is against this background that policy harmonisation on the management of peri-urban areas is warranted. The community representative highlighted that as a municipality they rely on rates and taxes for financial sustainability. These are rates and taxes from business and residential developments. Councillor indicated that there is a need of *“good mix of income to make the municipality viable”*. If there was standardisation of land use management and protection of agricultural land, municipalities will not be in fear of the flight of revenue to other municipalities. A challenge with revenues as located in capitalism is, they will never be enough. Natural order will be to keep accepting more developments to derive revenues.

Councillor appreciates revenue increases from gated communities. He further emphasised that the Midvaal has highest revenue growth rate. He pointed out that income revenue growth is above and beyond inflationary growth. The IDP (2015/16) of the municipality indicates that 16% of operating revenue income is generated from property rates, 4% and 18% refuse removal and sewerage respectively. This implies that 38% of operating income is generated from property related sources.

Notwithstanding, the revenue account provided, municipal officials and community representative sought to underscore the preference of estate developments link to revenue optimisation by the municipality. Instead, emphasis was given to revenue collection to meet basic services like refuse collection. Evidently, with 0.7 % GDP contribution from agriculture in the municipality, the revenue baseline growth is attributable to industrial and residential revenue (IDP 2015/16). Interviews with the councillor revealed that Savanna City alone will double the population size of Midvaal. Interviews suggest that an increase in demand will lead to growth of other business. As such, business to support the population size will grow. It is also believed that estate developments have brought job opportunities to the area. Municipalities are under pressure to reduce unemployment in their jurisdictions. As indicated in Chapter 4, Midvaal boasts unemployment that is below 12%. It is believed that residences provided jobs for people in the area. Ike, an estate agent said:

“Work opportunities are far wider, from professionals at inception, to construction and post building. Then there are people to work at these developments. Estate developments provide a handsome revenue line for the municipality” Ike, Estate agent.

It is not only the local authority looking at the revenue, workers are equally pleased with the job opportunities that the estate developments provide to them albeit complaining about wages. Interviews with the Estate workers highlighted that some are contracted employees who work with contractors on site. The jobs that workers do range from painting, electricity wiring and cleaning of houses before would-be owners move in, gardening and domestic services. At the time of the interview, some respondents signalled disappointment that their contracts were coming to an end and would have wished to continue working.

The estate workers believe that estates developments are good job opportunities to enable them to provide livelihood for their families. Sipho said, *“the more the place grows, the more jobs we would have”*. Some workers say they had not been working prior to working in these estate developments. Niceone, a worker, expressed that he likes the jobs that the estate developments offer. Women were particularly happy that contractors appoint them in jobs that were previously regarded as male dominated. Sweetone, a female worker, said *“I paint houses and earn what men earn”*. Some female respondents felt it was good to earn a man’s wage.

The common response from domestic workers was that they have been imported to the area. They have been with the employers and as such moved with them. Some indicated, they live in the surrounding farms and found work as more people moved into the area. Newly appointed domestic workers suggest that the estate residents pay better wages and are generous. Some of the male workers on the Blue Saddle Ranches estate worked on

horses. One of them mentioned that *“keeping horses in good shape gains you favour with the family and means more money”*. One worker said, *“residential estate jobs are better because they work throughout the year as I used to work seasonal jobs²⁷”*. Benson said, *“I have managed to start a tree felling company because of the estate developments”*. For Benson, this is an extraordinary business opportunity, however, it is an opportunity not weighed against sustainability of natural resources.

On social and economic impact, one agent pointed out that other markets are being revitalised by new residents in the area. The agent said *“surely schools, shops etcetera must react to what is happening in the area”*.

Councillor mentioned that revenue is also generated through businesses and factories in the area. Perhaps the immediate injection of revenue from other developments dwarfs agricultural prospects. Admittedly, municipalities need to grow revenue so that they are financially sustainable. Prescripts governing local government such as the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) and Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) outline the guidelines of management of municipal finances and charges that may be levied. Realistically, municipalities are under pressure to meet the standards of audit processes which are often financially based and assessed. The focus on financial sustainability and resilience may obscure pursuit of certain goals that do not realise immediate benefit and may not be quantifiable to appease the audit process.

5.4 Conclusion

There are only two estate developments that matched the criteria of upmarket residential estate development as conceived by this study notwithstanding others in the pipeline. Interviews discovered that at least three developments of a similar kind are in the pipeline. Interviews with workers and building inspectors indicated that there has been an uptake in these developments in the recent past. Recency of the uptake is limited to deduce future uptake and what will happen once these two developments are fully occupied. One may not speculate about the future of residential developments but can be cautious about the increasing interest in the area.

Midvaal is a careful and cautious municipality in the affairs of zoning and consequently land use management. The RSDF indicates a need to meet the residential accommodation needs of a growing municipality. Whilst a careful approach has been displayed thus far, an area of

²⁷ Interview conducted on 14 January 2016.

future consideration may be a determination of the maximum limits of growth. Similarly, a contrast of an agriculture based municipality could not be supported by practice and implementation on the ground. This research indicated increase in competing interests within the municipality. These competing interests include residential estate developments and economic nodes. Estate developments have been able to place ahead provision of infrastructure which may have otherwise been a deterrent to the approval of similar developments.

Chapter 6

6.0 Conclusion

The pursuit of this study has been to investigate the transition taking place in peri-urban areas using Midvaal Local Municipality as the case study. The research has been motivated by transition trends in peri-urban areas that seem to give way to upmarket gated residential developments. Research problem of the study considered uptake of peri-urban zones by middle class consumption culture as detrimental to other functions of peri-urban zones, especially agriculture. Owing to the new built of peri-urban areas, the transition of peri-urban to upmarket residents is irreversible.

The study employed qualitative research methodology through using interviews to discover transitional trends in the municipality. Interviews were conducted with municipal officials, councillor, workers in the estates developments and real estate agents. The findings analysis of these interviews suggested that there is indeed transition in the Midvaal Municipality due to the appeal by upper class for upmarket estates. To this extent, the study was able to determine the ownership levels by class.

Upper class has found residency in the Midvaal Local municipality in the estate developments of Blue Saddle Ranches and Eye of Africa. At the inception of this report, the literature review provided an analysis of peri-urban areas as vulnerable areas that mainly accommodate poor people. Shaw (2005) suggested peri-urban areas are vulnerable since they do not enjoy the status of urban settings. Common understanding of peri-urban areas as an over-flow of explosive urbanisation of cities characterised by surplus unemployment and often poor living conditions has been fractured. Motivational factors for this group can be summarised as a combination of factors including location, price of land, nature, recreational activities, tranquillity and security. South African literature on gated communities established security as a primary concern and drive for gated communal living. Security concerns have also been confirmed by this study. Perhaps, security is a motivational factor for gated living as opposed to peri-urban attraction or a perfect match of both peri-urban living and security.

Although study was able to establish inception of projects and hectares taken by estates developments, it was limited to establish agriculture size before or after estate developments. Furthermore, this study has not proven beyond doubt the feasibility and vibrancy of farming in these estate sites. So, the study has not established encroachment of estate developments into agricultural land. An official view insists, there was no farming and

no communities in the estates under research. Notwithstanding, an official point of view, workers recalled areas being smallholdings with generous farmers. Background chapter to these sites highlighted historical ownership yet limited in determining extent of farming. Accordingly, two estate developments under research do not happen at the cost of agriculture or the poor. Instead study points to the under-utilisation of agricultural land. Whilst encroachment could not be proven, it does not take away irreversible land use.

This research discovered through documents perusal and interviews that the municipality has set out clear demarcations for each typology of development. Midvaal is a municipality on a residential development trajectory. A hold onto the rural identity persists in certain areas. This mixed character of rural and urban is consistent with the peri-urban identity of coexistence of rural and urban functions in peri-urban zones. The municipality prides itself for being a focal point of agriculture for the Gauteng province. Yet, this research indicates that non-agricultural activities are ahead of agricultural activities which is purported to be the anchor point of the municipality. Midvaal municipality responded to this study through the articulation of well-designed spatial discourse as an agri-tropolis municipality of the Gauteng Province.

Literature review chapter provided theoretical constructs that give an account towards the transition of peri-urban areas. These theoretical constructs are evident in the underpinnings of transition in Midvaal municipality ranging from economics, demographics, systems thinking and counter-urbanism.

This study has set out to examine shifts in land use patterns owing to the predisposition of estate developments in peri-urban areas. Evidence indicated that the Midvaal is a municipality experiencing a high growth rate. There is an uptake of estate developments in the area of the Midvaal local municipality within Blue Saddles Ranch and Eye of Africa estates. The common thesis of impoverishment of the peri-urban areas has changed. Instead, country living has become a choice for the high end consumers. This may lead to encroachment of non-agriculture activities. This research concludes that some pockets of peri-urban areas may no longer be considered transitional zones as was conceived in the earliest definition, but rather these have become permanent zones for high end consumers. These zones are consequently becoming zones of high human consumption of resources.

Chapter 5 documented underlying factors behind the attraction of the middle class to the municipality. Findings revealed that it is not only the interest of the middle class to move to the municipality but the municipality welcomes the move. In the findings analysis chapter, it was argued, municipality is actuated by revenue and bulk infrastructure investments that are laid upfront by a developer. In turn, the municipality inherits the infrastructure investments.

The interviews conducted for this study highlighted that, at the consent of the municipality, developers lay bulk infrastructure that in return, is taken over by the municipality. Perhaps, there is deference given to estate developments owing to inward municipal motivational factors. The interview with the community representative indicated that the municipality has to be mindful of the revenue line.

The study concludes, there is a reciprocal relationship wherein the municipality gains revenue and residents satisfy their needs for country living. Developers are willing to invest in infrastructure and make value addition, such as golf course. In return, a local authority is willing to open its development boundaries and seeks to be financial sustainable and a buyer who seeks the frills of country living and can afford. It begs the question if there would have been similar infrastructural investment had it not been for the developers that are driven business interests. Infrastructural developments within gated communities are for exclusive use of residents. This shines light on the inequalities embedded within development.

Caution is given against the elite capture of properties and the operations of related property institutions. Arguably, owing to capital investment, developers become partners of local authority in the determination of the trajectory of growth. Perhaps, as suggested by Acemoglu and Johnson (2003), there is a need to constrain elites. The Blue Crane Estate Developments versus Minister of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has indicated that changes in land use may affect land use of surrounding farms. Similarly, non-agricultural activities may result into property spikes that may dwarf agriculture.

The municipality indicated that its core basic strategy is embedded in agriculture as an agri-tropolis municipality albeit agriculture only contributing only 0.7% to the municipal income (2015/16 IDP). Forecast of magnitude and production of agriculture given the status of the municipality as an agri-tropolis has been undetermined. However, it is anticipated that future studies will ascertain the depth and breadth of the municipality being Gauteng's food basket.

Notwithstanding the need for peri-urban areas to adapt to changes that are occurring, there is an urgent need for adaptation and protection of coexistence of functions in the peri-urban. This may find expression in the establishment of peri-urban policies that seek to guide future planning and developments of same. The study finds that there is a need of predictable growth of peri-urban areas. Currently, planning and legislation is preceded by developer driven developments. A longitudinal view of these development trends is warranted. This study cited limitation of peri-urban policies to formulate cohesive growth strategies.

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