Hostel Re-development and Emerging Conflict for Housing Tenure within the Umlazi Tehuis in the eThekwini Muncipality – A Study of Key Social Polarization Indicators

Mxolisi Love Lace Ngcongo and
Mduduzi Nkosinathi Gladwin Mtshali

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Introduction

The history of urban landscape formation in South Africa accorded pariah status to hostel dwellers although this marginalized, politically volatile and transient community was central to South Africa's capital accumulation. Hostel dwellers in the city, just like their counterparts in mining compounds were socially polarized, isolated from their black township counterparts and alienated from their rural roots. The system of hostel dwelling was entrenched on a vicious and inhumane migrant labour system. It kept black Africans on a constant treadmill making them move in and out of their rural homestead. This resulted in the lack of social permanence, finding themselves in a state of cultural schizophrenia. Segal (1991), Zulu (1993), Ramphele (1993), Goldstone Commission of Inquiry (1993), Sitas (1996) and Elder (2002) have written extensively on the hostel community and the different facet of social polarization, conflict and violence. However, with the re-development of hostels, a new form of social polarization appears to be in the making. On the surface, it appears to be contained in the management of development processes, provision and identification of

viable housing opportunities within the hostel transformation agenda, but underlying these is a deep sense of unease amongst hostel dwellers on their future housing needs.

Housing in the post apartheid South Africa, constitutes an integral part of the government's reconstruction vision in order to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of those previously disadvantaged. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1994) and subsequently the Housing White Paper (1994) recognizes the fundamental housing rights of all citizens. Enormous emphasis exists on the upgrading and redevelopment of state and privately owned hostels in order to promote sustainable and humane living environments. It aims to re-integrate hostel communities into surrounding communities through active participation of hostel dwellers. By the close of 1990, the state set aside R4bn for the conversion of hostels into family centered housing through an independent trust. Despite such a magnanimous gesture from the state, the pace of re-development was blemished by the lack of clear policies both at central and provincial levels of government. In instances where such development was initiated, it was constrained by local leadership crisis, opposition to the privatization of hostel services, increased tariff in basic services and rental, corruption amongst officials, lack of commitment from local and provincial governments in providing alternative accommodation to displaced residents resulting from redevelopment and conflict over wider development programmes both within and outside of the hostel community. It is in this context, that the case study of Umlazi Tehuis provides much insight into the social dynamics of the hostel community, potential for development, and the inherent risk of social polarization. The socio-economic profile of residents and current development dynamics unfolding in the immediate vicinity of the hostel is analysed to identify potential social polarization indicators.

Brief Background to the Study

The South African Transport Service (SATS) established the Umlazi Tehuis hostel during the apartheid era primarily for purposes of accommodating its staff. In 1990 SATS was privatized to form Transnet, which became responsible for all operations of hostel management. Transnet Housing was established specifically to take charge of the different housing stock of the

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para-statal company. Changes in the national road transport landscape resulting in the booming mini-bus taxi industry, reduction in rail commuting and emerging privately owned bus monopolies, forced Transnet to reconsider its subsidized housing and hostel accommodation for its employees. Presently, Transnet is in the process of selling its housing stock to the public as part of its privatization agenda. It has committed itself to transform hostels into privately owned family centered dwellings in keeping with the government's social housing policies.

Tehuis is located at the entrance of Umlazi Township, adjacent to the South Industrial Basin, which is home to the cities main industrial node. The dwelling comprises sixteen self-standing units accommodating 4041 official tenants. Tehuis was the center of political rivalry in the 1980s and early 1990s between its predominantly pro-ANC residents and the neighboring IFP supporters' housed in the adjacent Glebe Hostel. During these political strife years, many older residents left the hostel to live either in neighboring townships and informal settlements. Some were forced to return to their rural homestead. After twelve years of democracy, the Tehuis continues to be inhabited by pro-ANC supporters. Even the ANC councilor for this part of Umlazi is himself a hostel resident.

The hostel is located adjacent to a prime vacant site owned by Transnet. It comprises 14ha of land within close proximity to the Durban International Airport, major transport routes to and from other historically isolated residential areas and located at the entrance of Umlazi township which is home to some 600 000 people. In 2003 as part of the vision to promote local economic development in keeping with the cities Integrated Development Plans, a public-private partnership was entered into revitalizing the township through the construction of a Mega City (shopping mall). Facilitated by the municipality, Transnet entered into a 40-year lease agreement with Proprop, a subsidiary of the parent company and funded by SA Retrail Properties and Martprop to the amount of R150m.

The Mega City development is envisaged to be a one stop service centre with a combination of major retail outlets and municipal service points where people can pay water, electricity and rates bills, and deal with pension and education issues. One of the major rationale behind this development is to undo the historical isolation and marginalisation of townships from service centers and the costs attached to traveling long distances to meet such

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necessities. It is estimated that 69% of the residents of Umlazi earn less than R2000 per month and have to add an additional R10-R20 to the monthly grocery bill for travel costs. Working on the assumption that 60 000 households spent approximately R20 per month on travel to access essential items outside of Umlazi it amounts to R14m per annum spent on transport by the community (http://www.durbangov.za/ethekwini/Council).

The Mega City development is envisaged to promote sound economic returns on investment. With major chain stores taking up a vast majority of the 30 000m^2 of the surface area of the mall, the economic spin offs from such an investment holds great financial promise according to planners. It is projected that the residents of Umlazi will spend approximately R181.5m per annum at the mall once it becomes operational. With big business fully behind this initiative, the city fathers and mothers are optimistic that this project is a key lever in the creation of equitable access to economic and social facilities, and will generate many direct and indirect jobs within the community. It is anticipated that the mall development is to provide employment to some 1800 people in the locality. On completion of the project, a third of the ownership of this mall is expected to pass onto a black empowerment company. With this vision in hand, development progressed at an accelerated pace and phase one was opened early last year for trade.

At the hostel level, development processes lagged although it initially intended to complement the Mega City development side by side. The origins of development processes commenced with the establishment of a Steering Committee in 2003, comprising the leadership of the hostel community, the office of the local councilor and developers to set in motion future plans for the redevelopment of the hostel. Notwithstanding the complementary development intentions of Transnet, the pace of the Mega City development outstripped that of the hostel. Much time was dedicated in 2004 for a series of consultative meetings with the community to identify their housing needs with no tangible outcomes following these processes. The Mega City development has taken a significant amount of attention away from the plight of the hostel community to the extent that the upkeep of the premises is in a state of neglect and rapid deterioration. In 2005 Transnet and the steering committee undertook an extensive exercise to put in motion redevelopment plans for the hostel, which are on hold pending the provincial governments funding commitment. These delays have resulted in tensions beginning to manifest

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itself within the hostel community and anti-development sentiments are becoming more pronounced.

Methodology

This paper is informed by a reanalysis of a database compiled by Transnet, in preparation of transformation plans for the redevelopment of the Tehuis hostel. It contained data on 2389 hostel residents who responded to an applied research survey undertaken in 2004 on the future transformation of the hostel in to family centered housing units. The database was manipulated and reanalyzed by key social indicators that are likely to inform the emergence of social polarization within the Tehuis hostel community. A second set of database was reanalyzed containing qualitative information on the perception of residents on development dynamics on the transformation of the hostel and its surrounds. This database contained information from focus group studies undertaken by Transnet in sixteen hostel blocks. The authors independently undertook further in-depth interviews with sixteen block chairpersons in order to verify the focus group data and gain further meaningful insight on social polarization indicators within the hostel community.

Social polarization is known to result from any number of variables although in most studies income as a single variable is considered a very strong indicator. Income covers a wide range of social activities and is an important determinant of the extent to which people are excluded from these. In this study multiple variables are analysed to assess the potential sources of social polarization. The importance of a multi-variable analysis provides a clearer identification of the nature and degree of volatility to be expected as a consequence of interacting variables. In addition, a multifactor analysis provides a much stronger confirmation of the intensity of social polarization to be anticipated.

Social Polarization Indicators within the Hostel Community

Gender

The general perception of hostel communities is that it is male centred. In the Umlazi Tehuis, 5% of the sample population was females. However, inspite of the poor presence of females in the hostel it is more than likely to pose enormous challenges in the future transformation agenda in finding

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gender redress especially in light of being historically excluded from tenancy arrangements. Considering the fact that 73% of the female residents earn less than R500 per month and 14% between R501 – R999 suggests that cumulatively 87% will be excluded from financing and securing permanent accommodation in the hostel in the future. Hence they will be compelled to consider renting housing options and this is likely to be influenced on the extent to which they will be eligible to qualify for accommodation based on the new rental tariffs to be implemented once the hostel upgrade is completed.

Age

A very youthful population inhabits Umlazi Tehuis. A total of 52% of the sample population are 35 years and below. More than half (54%) of respondents in this category indicated that they would consider long term housing opportunities within the hostel when it arises. This suggests that younger people have a significant interest in securing their long-term accommodation needs in the hostel. However, a deeper interpretation of whether younger respondents present themselves as potentially reliable entrants into the permanent housing market may be viewed skeptically. Generally younger people tend to be more socially mobile compared to the older. Educational advancement, career opportunities and income levels are some of the factors that are likely to influence younger people to be on the move. On the other hand, working on the assumption that younger people are more likely to use their present residential status as a stepping-stone to advance their social and economic status, it is more than likely for them to make varying demands on the hostel housing market resulting in the exclusion of prospective older and married residents. There is a further likelihood of them inflating the demand for renting flat type accommodation compared to family centered ownership housing.

Older persons (50 years and over) made up 20 percent of the sample population. This constitutes one fifth of the total number of potential entrants into the hostel housing market. More specifically, 12% of this population indicated that they would take up long-term accommodation opportunities within the hostel compared to 8% who did not wish to. Considering the fact that this category of respondents constitutes future

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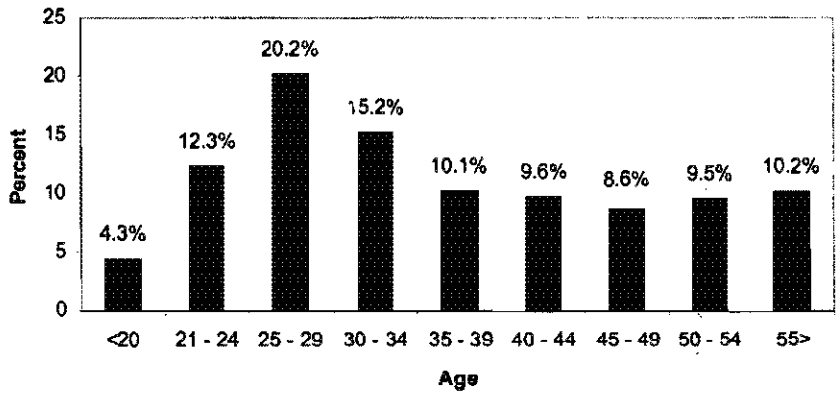
retirees, the likelihood of post retirement type of accommodation making a demand on the hostel housing market is likely. Hence any form of mixed housing development catering for different needs is likely to pose enormous competition on a limited housing stock within the hostel. Given this scenario, it is inevitable that conflict will permeate the older and younger generation hostel dwellers.

Graph 2 Age distribution of respondents



Educational Status

Cumulatively, 34% of the sample population has acquired educational qualifications below junior primary school level. Of this, 27% of the respondents expressed an interest in pursuing a long-term opportunity for housing in the hostel. Clearly, this category of respondents will be disadvantaged in maximizing their future income potential through well paying jobs given their current educational status. This reduces the prospect of them being potential investors in long-term accommodation in the hostel and the extent to which they could sustain such an investment is precarious. It is likely that this category of hostel dwellers will be excluded from competing in the hostel housing market due to the lack of potential opportunities to maximize their income status.

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Occupational Status

A large proportion (75.5%) of the sample population is gainfully occupied with a definitive source of income. Of the remaining, 11.9% of the respondents were unemployed, 10.3% comprised students, and 2.3% were either pensioner, disabled or chronically ill. It is this latter 25% of respondents that are likely to be marginalized in securing long-term accommodation within the hostel community. The chances are that they are at potential risk of being displaced in other alternate forms of accommodation suitable to their peculiar social needs in the city. Nonetheless, the nature of accommodation and its locality will have a bearing on the extent to which they are likely to be socially polarized.

Income Levels

The income distribution of the study population varied significantly with 25% earning below R500 per month compared to 23% who earned above R3000 per month. The remaining 52% are located in between this distribution. Taking all income categories into consideration, the mean income for the total study population amounted to R1 750 per month per respondent. In applying the state subsidisation criteria as qualification for formal housing, 44% of the respondents are unlikely to be eligible since their monthly earnings fall below the national qualifying norm of R1 500 per month. Given the enormous variation resulting from the application of the qualifying criteria for state subsidized housing, it is anticipated that a significantly large number of residents will be excluded from housing ownership opportunities within the hostel.

Marital Status

More than half (52.5%) of the sample population is single. Common law marriages (legal and traditional marriages combined) constitute 45.9% of the sample population whereas 1.6% was either divorced, widows or widowers. Given the almost even split in the distribution between single and married respondents, the likelihood of competition for diverse accommodation types is a potential source for social polarization. Although at face value it might appear that married persons are more likely to consider family centered

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accommodation within the hostel compared to their single counterparts, it may be to the contrary. Married persons tend to maintain a much stronger social link with their rural homestead due to family commitments and consequently may prefer single and rental form of accommodation within the city for reasons of proximity and access to their place of work. Hence, a potential exists for both single and married dwellers to compete for non-family centered type of accommodation within the hostel.

Family Composition

The respondents' family composition range between zero to thirteen members and over. The mean number of dependents per household amounts to 5.1 persons per respondent, which is higher than the average household size of 4.2 for the province as a whole. Although it is not possible to conclude on possible pressures that this might exert on the demand for housing type within the hostel given the limited space for expansion, a significant 37% of the respondents indicated that they had other members of their family living with them in the hostel. Given the inaccuracy of records as to who is an official and unofficial tenant resulting from the illegitimate transfer of beds by corrupt officials, it would be a daunting task to ascertain which family member would be entitled to make an official stake for long term accommodation in the hostel. Competition from and among illegitimate occupants (siblings, fathers and sons, uncle, nephews, nieces and other family members) in securing accommodation is likely to bring them into direct confrontation with legitimate occupants.

Employment Proximity

An analysis of the profile of respondents' proximity to employment opportunities revealed that 69.1% were employed in a total of 440 companies distributed in different parts of the study locality. The finding suggests the importance of the hostel location in meeting resident's occupational needs in respect of access to neighboring employment centres. However, a more in depth analysis suggests that just a few companies employ a large number of residents. Of the 440 companies, 11 employed more than half (55.9%) of the hostel population. Hence it can be expected that a strong labour solidarity will permeate the living space of respondents.

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These social bonds are further strengthened by ethnic, cultural and biological relationships, promoting a strong sense of community amongst hostel dwellers. Given these complex sets of social factors, an enormous potential exists for high levels of social polarization emerging over future accommodation needs from competing and rival groups. Currently, a quarter (25.3%) of the hostel residents are employees of different Transnet subsidiaries in the vicinity. These are well-paid employees enjoying superior level company benefits and are better placed to compete on the limited hostel housing market. The extent to which this group will be accorded preference for accommodation can be expected to be yet another source of social polarization emerging especially from those who find themselves in a less viable financial situation.

Employment Tenure

More than half (57%) of the respondents are in permanent employment. Respondents on full time contract employment make up 9% of the study population compared to 4% on part time contract. A total of 30% of the respondents engage in employment activity without a formal contract. This has enormous implication for employment tenure and their ability to commit themselves to any form of investment in permanent housing within the hostel unless they are given an opportunity to compete for other forms of social housing within the city. Given the rate of housing delivery in the city and the high levels of backlog, the likelihood of them securing permanent forms of social housing in the immediate future appears remote.

Personal Investments

Contrary to the perception that hostels are characterized by low wage earners resulting in poor personal savings and the absence of employment benefits, the findings in this study suggests that 40.1% of respondents enjoy some form of company benefit and are able to commit themselves to different forms of personal savings. These range from membership to pension funds, group life schemes, medical aid and subscription to company housing subsidy schemes. Nonetheless, within this group, only 9.6% of the respondents enjoyed the benefit of a housing allowance, which is already

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committed elsewhere. Personal savings on the other hand exceed company benefits. A total of 55% of respondents have some form of investment either in personal insurance, savings accounts, stokvels and income from property. When one combines the employment fringe benefits to personal savings, the average percent of respondents with some form of long-term personal investment amounts to 47.5% of the study population. This suggests that more than half (52.5%) of the hostel population are likely to be marginalized if personal investment or savings is used as a criteria to secure private housing loans in order to qualify for future accommodation in the hostel.

Preferred Housing Type

Preference for ownership and rental type of housing amongst respondent's was almost equal. In so far as actual housing preference is concerned, 42.4% of the respondents favored family centred homes compared to 39.1% for single sex accommodation. The remaining favored group mixed, individual mixed, group single sex rental and ownership housing types. Given the diversity of preferences it is more likely to impose tremendous demands on the number of housing types possible from the already structurally restricted hostel design. The extent to which housing preferences can be accommodated will be largely dependent on technical possibilities within the existing physical structure of the hostels.

Duration and Nature of Stay in the Hostel

The duration of stay in the hostel range less than a year to more than eleven years. A total of 37.2% of respondents lived in the hostel between 1 – 4 years compared to 32.2% for 5 – 10 years. However, 23.5% of the respondents have lived at the hostel for more than 11 years. The average decline in tenancy per year amounted to 5% per annum as no new tenant was admitted. When one interrogates the duration of stay in the hostel and the potential for social polarization, it is more than likely that each category of residents brings with itself certain elements of inter-generational dynamics. Those who have stayed at the hostel for a longer duration are more than likely to stake a stronger claim for accommodation compared to the younger generation of dwellers. It is expected that older generation dwellers would be

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more settled in their working environment, have formed stronger social links with adjacent communities, enjoy greater social bonds and solidarity within the hostel population, and have better access to financial resources due to a longer duration of job security. Compounding the intergenerational dynamics is the added problem of ethnicity. A vast majority (77.2%) of the respondents are Zulu speaking compared to 20% who speak in Xhosa.

Current Home Ownership Status

The study reveals that 41.45% of the respondents already own a house outside of the city compared to 58.55% who don't. Despite this, when respondents were requested to indicate whether they would be interested to secure long-term accommodation within the hostel, an overwhelming 70% confirmed that they would. This suggests a strong level of social polarization emerging from both within the ranks of the homed and homeless for a limited housing stock within the hostel. Considering that the location of the hostel offers lucrative economic opportunities to residents around the South industrial basin, it is likely to be a well sought after social resource. Hence, it will invite strong competition from various contenders for housing, even those that are not technically homeless. This competition if not managed adequately could easily degenerate into conflict of varying proportions between the have and the have nots.

Development Dynamics and the Perpetuation of Social Polarization

The analysis of quantitative data provided a strong indication of potential indicators of social polarization emerging within the hostel community. Further analysis of qualitative data on the perception of hostel dwellers on the Mega City development confirms the emergence of growing antagonism and tensions amongst the community of hostel dwellers towards this project. In this section, these dynamics are examined in some detail to support the quantitative findings.

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General Physical Condition of the Hostel

This issue was raised in all fifteen blocks interviewed. Comments such as: *'we will be neglected because the mega city enjoys greater priority'*; *'we will be dumped on the backyard of the mega city'*; *'they (Transnet) is not interested in us, they want to make money only'*; *'things are falling apart here and they want to talk about the future'*, goes beyond the cynicism expressed by respondents. It illustrates people's frustrations about their living conditions in the hostel and as evidenced, negative perceptions is being formed about the Mega City development project. Of the fifteen blocks interviewed, only four welcomed the mega city initiative and felt that it could impact positively on their future quality of life.

Unclear Perception of the Mega City Development

Not all residents were clear on the nature of development taking place at the Mega City and the impact this will have on the hostel community. In four blocks, the residents perceived that the mega city development would involve SMMEs originating from the hostel community. Six blocks were excessively preoccupied with the issue of space within the immediate locality of the hostel. Residents stated that they '*cannot imagine how this place [hostel] can be transformed. All the valuable space is taken away and there is hardly any land left around the hostel*'. In one block a resident wanted to know whether *'Checkers will be right by block 9'*, seemingly shocked at the proximity, which is only a few metres away from the hostel. In another, a vendor complained that he would be out of business if his *shebeen* had to compete with a bottle store in the Mega City.

Much confusion exists about who will be responsible for the hostel redevelopment and what would be the role of different stakeholders (Transnet, local government, department of housing and the private sector). Residents in all blocks interviewed were unclear as to who will promote development within the hostel.

Another area that caught the resident's imagination was the pace of the Mega City development. Some of them were surprised to note that a vacant land '*existed yesterday and the next day it was transformed into a concrete jungle*'. This suggests that the pace of physical development was faster than the ability of residents to grasp what the future holds for them.

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They have little sense of the impact that this development will have on their lives, and the uncertainty accompanying it. In fact, a fence line dividing the hostel complex and the Mega City construction site is the only appreciable reality that exists in the world of the hostel dwellers. Within months, the world of the hostel dwellers has shrunk into a small backyard amidst the mushrooming concrete buildings of the Mega City.

Financial Uncertainty and Future Accommodation Needs

At the different block meetings, residents widely expressed anxiety about the cost of accommodation escalating in the future. Several reasons may explain the source of this anxiety:

- the potential of the Mega City development inflating the price of properties within the hostel area and its immediate surrounds; and
- whether the long term cost of maintaining the hostel infrastructure will be passed onto tenants or prospective property owners.

The community perceives that they would have to pay for services such as electricity, water, and rates and towards sewerage costs. A widespread confusion exists as to how the cost of bulk services will be determined on an individual consumer basis considering the fact that historically they were accustomed to sharing the costs of communal services.

Concern also exists on whether the unemployed and those in low-income categories will be excluded from qualifying for accommodation. Widespread anxiety was noted on the possibility of evictions and homelessness once the hostel redevelopment project commences. Residents complained about the lack of direction on future relocation plans, the distances they have to travel to their workplace; the type of housing that will be on offer and the indirect costs attached to it.

The lack of information on the nature of housing subsidies that will be available for residents to consider future housing opportunities in the hostel is noted to be a major source of concern and insecurity. Residents are

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uncertain as to whether they will qualify for housing subsidies and the criteria that will follow.

Clearly, the community has little information about what to expect about their future, resulting in them not bracing themselves adequately for the inevitable. This must cause the residents untold anguish on their future accommodation stability, leaving them marginalized from the development dynamics and processes unfolding in their living space.

Perceptions on Family-centered Housing Opportunities

Although most residents welcomed the concept of family centered housing, concern was expressed on the actual size of accommodation taking into account the restrictions imposed by the present hostel design and layout. Residents were unable to conceptualise how it will be technically possible to convert the existing dwellings into family centered units. They could not fathom how the limited space in the hostel complex could promote family centered housing, including the benefit of private parking space, drying area for laundry, recreational space for their children and personal toilets and bathrooms. The lack of information on the form that the re-development of the hostel will take clearly leaves residents feeling alienated and helpless about their future.

Relocation within the Hostel Complex

Residents expressed a strong sense of anxiety on the prospect of being relocated to either another block or alternative housing site in the city to meet their accommodation needs in order to make space for the upgrading of the hostel.

The source of this emotional state originated from one or more of the following:

- fear of breaking up long established dependability ties within a block level;
- severance of long established ethnic and cultural relationships;
- fear of coming into contact with other ethnic groups;
- fear of being separated from other members of family living in the same block or within the hostel complex,
- vested interest in the block such as informal business, and

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- breaking up of political power bases, labour solidarity and leadership allegiances that have been established over the years at a block management level.

Considering the fact that the survey finding highlights that 37% of the residents have other members of their immediate family living in the hostel, another 55.7% of residents lived in the hostel for the duration of 5-11 years and a further 20% originate from the Eastern Cape, suggests the prevalence of strong social differentiation and solidarity issues likely to emerge within the hostel community. When one considers these factors, the potential for heightened levels of conflict in the future, cannot be ignored. Special concern was also expressed by disabled residents as to whether the re-development will take into consideration their peculiar needs, both physically and financially, which is likely to compound levels of social polarization.

Leadership Credibility

The exact forms of governance structures that will emerge from the transformation of the hostel are another source of potential conflict. It is unclear as to who will be responsible for the management of the hostel community as a whole once it was redeveloped and the form of governance structure that will exist at a block level. Considering the fact that leadership structures exist at each block level, the extent to which future leadership has a role to fulfill, is precarious. Over time, these leadership structures have matured and strong credibility is expressed in their governing capability. Strong confidence is expressed in the leadership of the local councilor and the current block chairpersons. The community is concerned that changes in governance structures is at risk of corrupt practices encroaching onto their social space especially in light of a new value being attached to the hostel and its locality through the re-development process. .

Job Creation Opportunities

Generally residents doubt whether the Mega City development will provide job opportunities for the unemployed within the hostel community both in the immediate and long term. Comments such as *'big developers will take away all the money'*; *'outside contractors will benefit the most'*; *'we will*

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have to compete with the whole of Umlazi for a job although the Mega City is on our doorstep'; '*we have lots of skills here in the hostel, why don't they want to use it'* suggests a sense of desperation from residents to be the primary benefactors of employment opportunities arising from the Mega City development.

Given the unemployment levels in the hostel, it is not surprising that a survivalist economy has already emerged around the development site in the form of scavenging raw materials (copper, aluminium, steel and other valuable construction materials). One needs to be mindful of the fact that these survivalist modes can expand into the Mega City once it is completed. The hostel environment is already engulfed by social deviance and by virtue of its physical location in the backyard of the Mega City the potential for serving as a nursery for nurturing potential burglars, thieves, informal traders, beggars and other reprobates to ply their activities in the neighboring complex.

Space in the Hostel and its Surrounds

The soccer stadium, which was once home for many local sport personalities, was demolished to accommodate the Mega City. So was the canteen area and administrative blocks. The demolition of the soccer stadium evoked widespread outcry from younger residents. It was the only recreational space that they had and unceremoniously destroyed by the developers. Older residents felt that a strong piece of history has been razed without recognizing the enormous contribution that this played in the culture, recreational and social life of many generations of hostel dwellers. It was felt that it was a symbol of both oppression and struggle for freedom and destroyed without any form of acknowledgement. One young resident aptly commented that '*in this dormitory, there is nothing we can do after hours and the soccer ground was something that made us forget about the poor living conditions here... it not only kept us healthy to sell our labour to the neighboring capitalists, but also kept us as a community*'.

Mounting concern about the remaining space within the hostel residential area, which has been drastically reduced in size emerged during the interviews. Prospects for developing social infrastructure in the form of crèches, places of worship, open space for children and a recreational field appears remote given the limitation imposed by the present size of the

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property. Given the restricted land space, conversion and expansion to family centred housing is unlikely to enjoy much room.

The fact that resident's attention now focuses on the need for outdoor open space as compared to their previous preoccupation with overcrowding within the hostel is an interesting dynamic in need of further analysis. Reasons for this change in shifting perception may be may identified as follows:

- Firstly, before the demolition of the administrative buildings, canteen and soccer stadium, it added enormous dimension of vastness to the hostel complex and its surrounds, which psychologically compensated for the single, overcrowded rooms in which people lived.
- Secondly, after the commencement of the Mega City construction site, a set of safety fence borders the immediate surrounds of the hostel complex resulting in a major reduction in the vastness of open space previously enjoyed by the residents. This has redefined space for the hostel residents resulting in a feeling of restriction and being closed in by rapidly emerging massive concrete structures of the Mega City. In essence, physically the hostel is now located in the back yard of the Mega City.

Compounding the restriction imposed by the Mega City development on the living space of hostel residents is the rapid degeneration of the hostel and its surrounds. Overgrown grass, inadequate street lighting, occasional water disconnections emanating from the construction process, collection, storage and processing of building materials retrieved from the demolition sites for recycling, water leaks, poor waste disposal systems are signs of emerging residential blight.

Safety and Security

Since the commencement of the Mega City development, residents complain that security measures in the hostel have been compromised resulting in them feeling unsafe. Intruders tend to have easy access to the hostel through the poorly secured Mega City development site resulting in the frequent theft

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of personal belongings. This is in contrast to the previous management of the hostel in which residents lived under strict security conditions. Considering the fact that many of the residents are migrants to the city, it further compounds their feelings of insecurity.

Lack of Development Feedback

Enormous anger and a sense of insecurity exist amongst residents resulting form the lack of clear feedback on when the hostel redevelopment programme will commence. It is two years since Transnet informed residents about plans to develop the hostel and to date no progress has been noted. Instead, the Mega City development has advanced to near completion stage without any concrete plans for the re-development of the hostel complex. The only concrete outcomes noted in the re-development initiative were the setting up of a series of consultative processes and the establishment of a steering committee to advance the development initiative. Comments such as *'how much consultation needs to take place before development starts?'; 'are the relevant stakeholders really committed to develop this place?'; 'how do we know that we can trust Transnet?'; 'are these not vague promises just to kick start the Mega City development?'*; are illustrations of anger and frustrations prevalent within the hostel community..

Conclusion

The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data provides a good measure of the potential for increasing levels of polarization emerging within the TeHuis Hostel. Placing the interest of economic development at the expense of investment in social capital has fueled this. In the absence of decisive and clear directions on the future development of the hostel, negative perceptions on development are beginning to manifest itself strongly amongst residents. The Mega City developments enjoys little or not support from hostel residents and there is little or not evidence to support the prospect of this development impacting positively on their quality of life. Given the restructuring dilemmas faced by Transnet, the likelihood for it to transform its hostels into family centered living quarters including TeHuis appears remote. For the moment the residents of TeHuis are more than likely to be confined to the backyard of the Mega City. The close proximity of the

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TeHuis hostel to the Mega City is likely to negatively impact on this ambitious multi-million rand development project although developers, investors and local government perceive differently. The Mega City project is viewed as the panacea to rid Umlazi and its adjacent hostel communities of its economic and social woes. On the contrary, the study illustrates the enormous potential for increasing levels of social polarization emerging both within the TeHuis Hostel, surrounding hostels and the Umlazi Township as a whole. It is only over time that the broader effects of polarization are to be felt.

Social polarisation can be further exacerbated by economic factors both within the hostel and the Umlazi Township as a whole. With big businesses seizing economic opportunities at the doorstep of the Township, small business enterprises are likely to experience major setbacks with capital flowing outwardly into the coffers of multi-national business houses. The effect this will have on formal and informal businesses both in the hostel and the township communities is anticipated to be profound. Considering the type of businesses that will locate in the Mega City business centre and the negligible number of jobs that this will generate, compared to the amount of wealth that will be extracted from the surrounding communities, the poverty gap is expected to widen. The fact that the vast majority of businesses are to be concentrated in the retail and service sector, the skill base of the hostel labour force is unlikely to be in great demand for the Mega City. Competition for markets from informal/small traders both within the hostel and the Township is likely to escalate.

Apart from the anticipated risk of social and economic polarization, the prospect of political polarization cannot be under emphasized. Currently, Umlazi and its surrounding areas generate much of the cities African National Congress votes and it has been a haven for political faction fights. In the past, this community was ravished by political rivalry of unprecedented proportions resulting in many deaths arising from politically related violence. Sections of the community were displaced and many were forced to flee the township. In the post apartheid era, this township has risen to political stability and has made significant development advancements. Considering the fact that service delivery, especially the provision of housing in the city is a strongly contested one by different homeless social

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movements, it is only a matter of time that hostel dwellers will also lay claim to their basic right.

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Sociology Programme
School of Sociology and Social Studies
University of KwaZulu-Natal

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