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DEPARTMENT OF RURAL AND URBAN PLANNING

LOW INCOME HOUSING IN ZIMBABWE
A CASE STUDY OF THE EPWORTH
SQUATTER UPGRADING PROGRAMME

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1. INTRODUCTION

The provision of domestic shelter is an important basic need to be met in any country(1). However this provision is a complex process involving issues not only of providing physical shelter in adequate quantities to house the population, but also of providing appropriate shelter types within a total urban environment i.e. shelters which are capable of meeting diverse physical, social and even psychological needs of households, bearing in mind that these needs change over time as a particular household's composition changes (as it forms, grows and then dissolves). Compounding these multiple concerns is the additional problem of how to provide sufficient, appropriate shelter types at levels which are affordable by all, particularly the urban poor who typically constitute fifty per cent or more of Third World city populations.

In section 2 of this paper I will attempt to examine these theoretical issues in some depth and in section 3 I examine shelter policies affecting low income households in Harare. Here I argue that whilst the physical standard of dwelling units and service infrastructure is high, there are serious deficiencies in the provision of adequate numbers of units, in the provision of choice in types of units available and, most importantly, that the housing provided by the authorities is well above the economic means of large numbers of urban dwellers. The emergence of squatter settlements in and around Harare's municipal boundaries, despite strictly enforced development control measures, must be seen as a response by the urban population to these inadequacies.

In Section 4 of the paper I present an overview of the growth of a large squatter settlement on the outskirts of Harare, at Epworth. The owner-built housing in this settlement has gone a long way towards providing, at affordable levels, flexibility in housing types and dweller participation in the housing process. However I point out that there are, nonetheless, many problems associated with the settlement - both for the residents living there and as a result of the impact of the settlement on the surrounding sub-region. Consequently there is the need for planned intervention to overcome these problems and I then describe some of the activities being undertaken as part of a government upgrading programme for the area.

In the concluding Section 5 of the paper, I make recommendations as to an appropriate planning methodology for intervening in a squatter area upgrading project using an organic, simultaneous, problem-solving approach located within a more structured, comprehensive, normative framework.

2. THE NATURE OF HOUSING - A CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The Conventional View

The most obvious material use derived from a house is that of "shelter" - the walls and roof which offer a household protection against the elements. Throughout time, people have made use of caves, trees, grass and poles, clay moulds, bricks, steel and cement to afford themselves this shelter.

In the two decades after the second World War, developing countries generally experienced a growth in urban manufacturing and incipient industrialisation, accompanied by substantial rural to urban population movements. In Zimbabwe for example, as illustrated in the data in Table 1 below, the urban population doubled from 1946 to 1956, tripled from 1946 to 1962 and had doubled again by 1975. Sandbrook (1982) has documented that in the 1930's only three cities on the African continent, Ibadan, Lagos and Omdurman, had populations of over 100 000 people but that during the post-War period all capital cities experienced rapid expansion. In the 1960's Lagos, Kinshasa and Ibadan all grew to populations of one million and many other cities reached populations of half a million during this period (Sandbrook, 1982:39). "Between 1940 and 1960 Africa's rate of urban growth - at about 5 per cent per annum - ranked with the world's highest" (Sandbrook, 1982:40).

Table 1
Total and Urban population of Zimbabwe,
1945-1982

	Total Population	Urban Population	Percentage Urban Pop.
1945/46	1 582 726*	254 819*	16.1*
1951	2 320 000	373 520*	16.1
1956	3 300 000	526 744	16.1
1962	3 618 000	593 352*	16.4*
1965	4 490 000	737 000	16.4
1969	5 099 000	841 335*	16.5*
1970	5 310 000	880 000	16.6
1975	6 310 000	1 264 000	19.9
1982	7 546 000	1 941 600	25.7

Note: * = own estimate

Sources: - Central Statistics Office, Census of population, 1951, 1956, 1962, 1969, 1982

- Whitsun Foundation, 1976

Public sector urban development and housing policy responses during these years were primarily concerned with providing, at the most, a minimum standard of shelter and services for the burgeoning urban populations so as to protect public health. This

was the era of standardised housing (the model type "F52" matchbox houses), making use of new building technologies and materials suited to mass production. Residential layouts were rigidly ordered (typically on grid-iron road patterns borrowed from the ancient Roman garrison plans) to minimise surveying and servicing costs and the prevailing aesthetic was one of control and order.

Hand-in-glove with these policies was, and remains in many countries (not least in Zimbabwe), an official suspicion of squatter settlements(2), as "diseases of the urban structure" (Burgess, 1978:1115). Concerted attempts were and still are made to eradicate such areas for redevelopment of the land and to rehouse residents in "properly planned" housing areas.

The Autonomous View

Critics of conventional housing policies have pointed out that the quality of standardized housing areas is often typically "rigid, stultifying and depressing" (Turner, 1967:121). Furthermore, that costs of constructing and servicing new housing areas are high, rendering them outside the affordability levels of all but a relatively prosperous but small middle-class. These failings have been blamed on an "ignorance of residential needs and priorities and to the consequent misunderstanding of the urban settlement process" (Turner, 1968, :354).

In formulating an alternative approach to the urban residential structure, Smith (1971) has established a very broadly-based conceptualisation of "housing". He argues that in the lives of urban dwellers, housing encompasses numerous functional elements over and above that of physical shelter:-

(i) A house offers privacy: for a household - a form of shelter from social pressures. Thus the old saying that "an English-man's home is his castle" conveys a sense of defence and fortification against the outside world. A house provides a family privacy for the carrying out of its daily basic functions - sleeping, eating, preparing food, and sometimes even for economic activities.

(ii) A house is located within a wider neighbourhood and in this sense it offers the owner linkage to places of employment, community facilities and other environmental amenities - shops, recreation areas, neighbours for social interaction, etc.

(iii) An urban house ideally incorporates a clean water supply and access roads, thus fulfilling a number of basic living needs complementary to those of shelter. It also embodies environmental amenity (or lack of it) as measured by the surrounding landscape, vegetation, type of neighbours, etc.

(iv) The purchase or construction of a home is often one of the

major investments in the life of any family. As such it offers that family means of establishing social identity, financial security, social mobility, and of adaptations in lifestyle (as the family grows in size, and then declines) (Ibid: 3-10).

John Turner (1968,1972,1976) has effectively developed and popularised these and other complex issues surrounding the nature and value of housing. He argues that whereas the conventional housing policies focus on what housing is as a material product, it is more appropriate to understand what housing does for people. Policies should therefore concentrate on the provision of housing which is "appropriate and supportive" of the activities of individual user households (Turner, 1976:60-61).

Turner (1976) sees the solution to the housing problem as lying in co-operation between the individual householder (maximising his personal resources of savings and labour) and the capital resources provided by institutions (land, plant equipment, etc). However in order for this co-operation to be effective, the existing "highly institutionalized, professionalized, monetized and industrialized" systems need to be devolved to more "autonomous systems" in which householders are free to set their own methods of utilising available resources. (Turner, 1976:155).

Thus for Turner, an essential element of the housing process is the extent to which a household is able to exercise self-determination in selecting the type and location of its own accommodation. This is necessary because of the very different housing needs of different income groups and also of individual families.

A summary of Turner's findings when working in low income housing in Latin America over the past two decades is summarised in figure 1. Reading from the figure 1, Turner has found, for example, that a modern standard of shelter (a rectangular design, bricks, iron/asbestos roofing) fitted with modern utilities is of increasing importance to families as incomes increase, - possibly a reflection in part of the value to a family in establishing its social identity. Freehold ownership (or a specifically defined security of tenure which cannot be easily cancelled) is important to all income groups, but particularly so to low and low-middle income groups, reflecting on the one hand the importance of housing as a shelter against the pressures of society where perhaps job security is tenuous, and on the other, of the high investment costs of housing. Not surprisingly the importance of tenure tails off slightly with higher income groups which would have access to other securities in their daily lives. Also of great importance to low income groups is the proximity of housing to employment centres in order for a family to minimise its transport costs.

Turner thus concludes that the most important housing-related needs of low income households are access/linkages to the wider

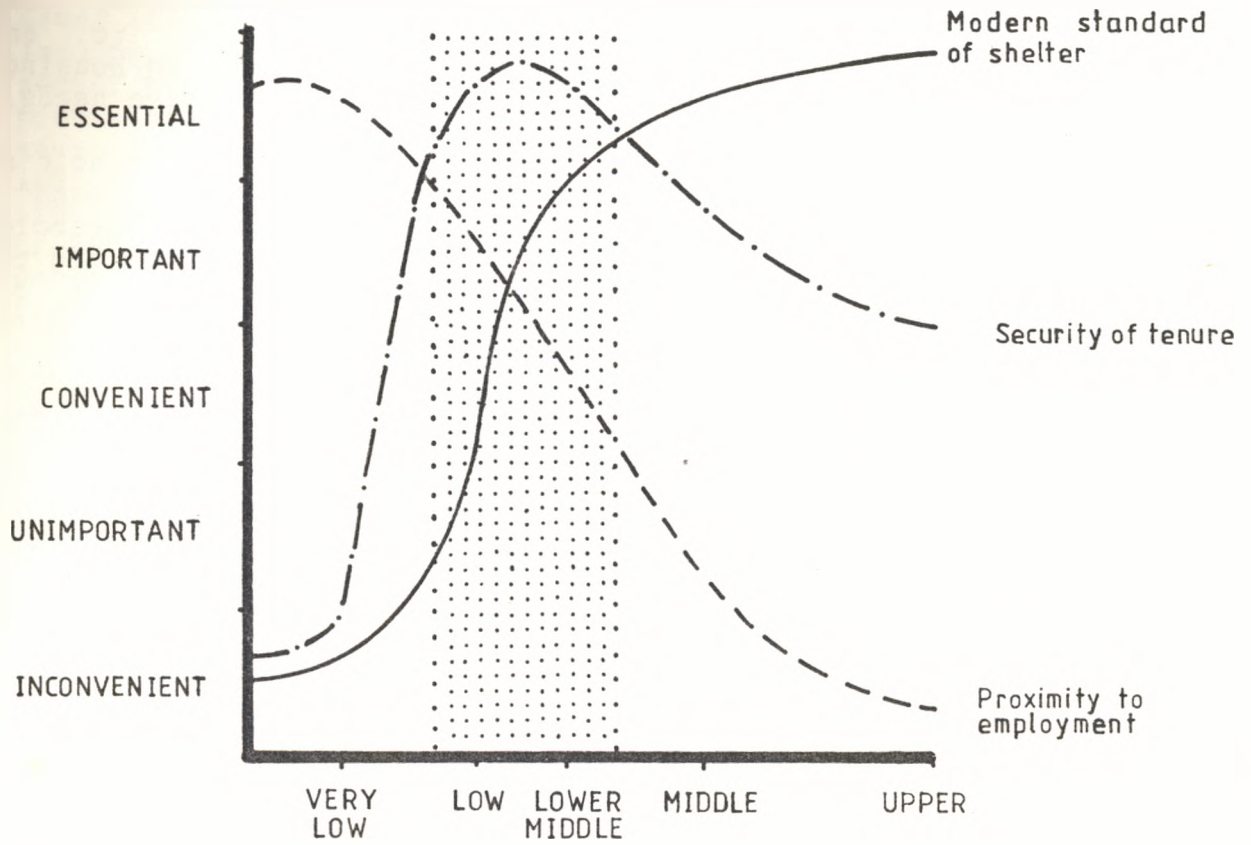


FIGURE 1:
HOUSING PRIORITIES AS A FUNCTION
OF INCOME LEVELS

(After JFC Turner & R Fichter, 1972)

urban environment and security of occupancy/tenure. However, in that these are highly personalised values specific to an individual household, centralised, formal planning/housing authorities find it difficult to appropriately match these needs.

Any housing supply programme must not only consider a household's housing aspirations but also the household's "effective demand". Grimes (1970) has stated that the effective demand of a household is a function of the ability and willingness of that household to pay for housing. It is therefore a more accurate reflection of the housing market and a household's needs than are aspirations alone. Effective demand is affected by:-

- (i) Income; the absolute income of a household and its relative income with respect to neighbours, co-workers and societal expectations.
- (ii) Constitution; the size of a household as the spouses have children who are born, grow up and then leave the household, thus affecting the physical requirements for shelter.
- (iii) Priorities; the value that a household places on housing as opposed to other needs (such as food, education, etc.)
- (iv) Individual and cultural tastes and preferences.

3. AN OVERVIEW OF HOUSING POLICIES IN ZIMBABWE

The Provision of Housing

In the past, construction of housing in Zimbabwe has been undertaken by both private and public sectors. Private sector involvement has generally been in the field of housing finance for individual purchases of existing stock offered by building societies (MPCNH, 1986:33) or, where it has been provided for the development of land and construction of new housing, this has tended to have been limited to high income groups (eg construction of townhouses). This has been so because of the lengthy amortisation period of housing (up to thirty years), so that private developers tend to finance only low-risk ventures. Only since 1985 have a limited number of building societies offered mortgage financing to low-income (Z\$1 800- Z\$5 400 p.a.) owner-builders under a World Bank-funded urban development programme in the four centres of Harare, Bulawayo, Mutare and Masvingo.

Private, company-built housing has also been constructed in the past, (particularly within the mining sector) but there is a dearth of data available as to the amount of dwelling units constructed (MPCNH, 1986:33) or the quantities of units actually sold to employees or retained by the company as tied-housing.

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Given the large costs of construction, servicing of stands and land purchase coupled to lengthy repayment periods, the public sector has, of necessity, been primarily responsible for the provision of low income housing in all of Zimbabwe's urban centres. Housing is financed through the National Housing Fund (which loans Central Treasury funds to local authorities for implementation) and the Housing Guarantee Fund (which guarantees private sector loans to individuals). Fundamental to all public sector housing provision has been the principle of cost recovery from the user group, i.e. the costs of land purchase, house construction and servicing of the stand is directly paid for by the consumer, albeit over twenty to thirty years. Thus all urban local authorities levy monthly rates and supplementary charges to recoup the purchase price of the land, the capital costs of developing roads and stormwater drains, water and sewers, the construction costs of the house itself (unless built by the owner him/herself) and construction costs of community facilities, as well as a charge for services actually consumed over the month. A pool rental system is occasionally applied so that one housing area might slightly subsidise another, but cross-subsidies of this kind are generally limited.

An Assessment of Low Income Housing

(i) The Housing Backlog

A recent paper prepared by the Ministry of Public Construction and National Housing (1986) estimated that the 1985 national population of 8,104 million people were living in an existing housing stock of only 749 000 dwelling units (both rural and urban). This meant that there was a shortage of approximately 965 000 dwelling units (assuming a mean household size of 4.727) of which 95% are needed by low income households (MPCNH, 1986:31).

Over and above the existing shortage is the annually growing need for more housing as the population grows. On the basis of the present population growth rate of 3,2% p.a. Zimbabwe will have a total population of 13,593 million in 14 years time (the year 2000). Thus, in order to house the population over the next 14 years, an average 146 000 dwelling units must be constructed annually.

Table 2 below shows the number of houses which have been built in urban areas in Zimbabwe over the past five years.

Table 2
Houses Built in Urban Areas of Zimbabwe,
1980/81-1984/85

Year	No. Units Built
1980/81	12 075
1981/82	14 143
1982/83	5 460
1983/84	3 054
1984/85	5 000 (est)

(Source: MPCNE, 1986:32)

Clearly the present system of housing supply is critically failing to meet the needs of households in terms of the quantity of units required. This in turn leads one to expect that the existing housing stock is accommodating a far greater number of households than planned for. Table 3 below illustrates this point by showing the average numbers of households per dwelling unit in Harare's high density suburbs.

Table 3
Occupancy Patterns in High density suburbs, Harare.

Suburb	Ratio of Main occupants/ No. of Lodger Households	Persons per room
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Dzivaresekwa	2,7	1,8
Highfield	1,5	1,9
Glen Norah	2,4	0,7
Kambazuma	1,0	1,7
Glen View	1,5	1,5
Mufakose	6,5	1,7
Mbare	5,6	2,4
Mabvuku	6,8	2,0

Source: Hoek-Smit, 1982:13

(ii) Standard of Shelter and Services versus Effective Demand

By all accounts, the physical standard of shelter and services provided in Zimbabwe's high density/low income housing areas is of a high level. The Ministry of Public Construction and National Housing has laid down a minimum standard of a four-room core structure (of plinth 50 m²) on a stand size of 312,5 m² with reticulated water and sewerage, electricity and road access. In Harare, approximately 90% of all dwelling units have water-borne sanitation and a reticulated water supply either in or immediately outside the house. 52% of dwellings have an electricity supply and all have road access (Hoek-Smit, 1982:14-16).

The cost of building and servicing a minimum standard house varies from one town to another. The Ministry of Public Construction estimated the cost to be Z\$7 580 per unit in 1984/85 (MPCNH, 1986:32). However a number of local authorities contacted by the writer in 1985/86 were working with a higher figure of Z\$ 9500 per unit. As already noted, in terms of national policy the costs of construction of the dwelling unit and of servicing it are borne by the direct consumer. If repayment charges are spread over the usual 25 - 30 years at prevailing interest rates (around 9,75%) a monthly repayment rate of anything from Z\$40 to Z\$80 per unit must be levied.

Therefore using the rule of thumb repayment criterion of a maximum of 25% of household income being spent on housing, such monthly repayments require that a household earns between Z\$178 and Z\$355 per month. Clearly such repayments are beyond the means of the country's 58% of the workforce who are engaged in domestic and semi-skilled commercial/industrial employment. (The minimum wage in these sectors in the first half of 1986 was Z\$75 and Z\$143 per month respectively.) In consequence many of the smaller local authorities have stopped building programmes altogether because they do not think that their residents are able to afford these high monthly repayments. (Data illustrating the low national construction rates was shown in Table 2 above.)

(iii) Location and Linkages:

The history of the Land Apportionment Act and its consequences on the location of low income housing is apparent in all of Zimbabwe's urban centres. The most extreme example of the Act's effects has been the development of the dormitory town of Chitungwiza (population: 300 000) at a distance of 30km from the employment centres in Harare.

However the abolition of the Act in the post-independence period has not of itself provided a simple solution to the location costs facing low income urban households. Land costs tend to increase as one approaches the centre of a city and therefore even today, many municipalities are continuing to build their high density housing on large tracts of land at some distance from the city centres to minimise land purchase costs. Also, in many centres the bulk supplies of infrastructure are already well established in particular areas and the costs of developing new systems to service new areas are exorbitant.

Therefore for the foreseeable future, it seems an inevitable fact of economic life that many of the low income housing areas will continue to be built distant from the city centres and distant from central places of employment, shopping and recreation facilities, and so on.

(iv) Financial Investment

I noted previously that the purchase of a house is one of the major investments made by a household in its lifetime. However the public sector built programmes offer very little flexibility to individual households with respect to the location and sizes of dwelling units available. Stands are small (minimum of 312,5 m²) in order to keep down unit servicing costs and therefore have limited space for house expansion. Also, due to the great shortage of dwelling units, a household is forced to remain in one house, even if it is unsuitable, because it will not easily find a new house available.

In summary then, as long as there is an acute shortage of the housing stock in toto and particularly of housing at affordable levels for low income households, such households are severely restricted in their choice of shelter type. Thus, whilst in strictly physical terms the quality of shelters and services provided by the Zimbabwean housing supply sectors for the urban low income groups are of a high standard, the quality of housing with respect to the housing "process" as a whole (viz. environmental amenity, linkages, social mobility and psychological needs,) is severely constrained and offers individual households little flexibility or choice.

4. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE EPWORTH SQUATTER SETTLEMENT

Origins and Development

A household looking for accommodation and faced with a waiting list of a number of years or with an offer of shelter but at unaffordable levels, will generally resort either to lodging (40% of households in Harare are lodgers) or to informally/illegally building its own house in an unplanned area. However, in Zimbabwe, neither pre- nor post-independence policies have tolerated urban squatters. In 1980/81 for example, the squatter settlement of approximately 30 000 people at Chirambahuyo (on the outskirts of Harare) was bulldozed and residents were relocated to a planned site and service scheme. Similarly in 1983, shanties of a further 10 000 people were bulldozed at Russeldene (between Harare and Chitungwiza).

The government's policy on urban squatters was clearly spelt out by the President in his opening address to Parliament in June 1983:- "it is government policy to remove urban squatters and accommodate them in properly planned residential areas" (Hansard; June 1983).

The only autonomous settlement to have been tolerated in the post-independence period has been that of Epworth. It has been made a major policy exception due to the fact that a large number of residents there have a long history of settlement in the area

and claim that their fathers paid for the land. The decision was therefore made to upgrade the settlement in situ rather than to demolish it and attempt to rehouse residents elsewhere.

The Epworth settlement is located approximately ten kilometres south-east of Harare city centre and lies just outside the urban municipal boundary. Until it was recently transferred to the state, the land used to belong to the Methodist Missionary Trust and since the turn of the century, Mission-associated households have lived there. After the Second World War the population at Epworth swelled with rural migrants. Equally, during the recent war for independence, large numbers of families sought refuge from the fighting in the rural areas in towns and many came to Epworth where the Mission permitted them to stay on a temporary basis. After independence many more households migrating to the city found their way to Epworth and today the population stands at 27 400 people (1986).

Characteristics and Problems of Epworth

Contrary to the notion that "people are their own best planners" the ad hoc settlement of such a large number of people has given rise to a number of serious problems:-

(i) Land Speculation

Unsuspecting rural migrants and families desperate for any accommodation have often fallen prey to illegal land speculators and con-men at Epworth. These con-men have posed as "land owners" and illegally sold plots of land for large sums (up to Z\$ 1000) to unsuspecting victims. The family has then built a house on the stand only to later discover that it has no legal tenure over the property and that in terms of a government development freeze in the area it has to demolish the house. By that time it is too late to trace the illegal land seller and retrieve the money paid for the stand.

Typically a household in Epworth has at least one lodger staying with it on its stand which serves to supplement the owner household's income (as well as providing accommodation for the lodger). Increasingly however absentee owners of large stands are building substandard "stable" type accommodation and letting out rooms to families. In some areas there are up to 40 people per stand living in such poor conditions. Absentee landlords are therefore able to make huge profits out of the uncontrolled situation. Clearly some form of control over land tenure and the sale of property in the area needs to be enforced.

(ii) Subregional Pollution Threat

Surface and groundwater drains through Epworth in a south-easterly direction and flows into the Henry Hallam Dam and the Prince Edward Dam-take-off points of some of the City of

Harare's bulk water supplies. Internal testing at the City's water purification plant has shown the presence of human and animal faecal waste, some of which may well have originated in Epworth. The waterworks are also sporadically overloaded by algae-bloom caused by high concentrations of nitrates and phosphates in the water. Again some of these chemicals are thought to have derived in Epworth probably from washing powders used by women who wash clothes in the streams in the area.

In order to prevent an escalation of this subregional pollution threat adequate sewage and waste disposal facilities are required to drain the settlement.

(iii) Lack of Services and Community Facilities

Epworth residents have no publically supplied utilities such as water, sewerage, electricity or rubbish collection. A survey carried out by the Department of Physical Planning (in the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development) and the Central Statistical Office in December 1983 found that 71% of residents used unprotected wells or stream water for their domestic water consumption and 94% used unimproved pit toilets or the veld for personal sanitation. The serious risk of well water being polluted by nearby pit toilets and, more particularly, by surface runoff, is obvious.

Epworth also has very few community facilities. The residents have built two primary schools and a secondary school, but these are inadequate for the needs of the population of 27 400. There is also a small, ill-equipped clinic and a Zimbabwe Republic Police post. A number of businessmen have established general dealers and other low order commercial enterprises but residents generally travel into Harare city centre to purchase higher order goods and services.

(iv) Site Characteristics

Physically, much of the land at Epworth is unsuitable for built development. The area is underlain in many parts by large granite extrusions (including the nationally famous Balancing Rocks) and many surface streams drain the land resulting in large tracts of waterlogged soils. Approximately 700 existing houses are situated on such unsuitable land.

Compounding the difficulties of the topography, Epworth is located on the south eastern side of Harare, across the city from other major high density/low income housing areas. As such, bulk supplies for water, electricity and sewerage required to improve living conditions in Epworth are not available on this side of the city. Extending these services in the quantities needed to supply Epworth will further add to upgrading costs.

- To control further settlement in the area;
- To improve the quality of the existing settlement.

a) Measures to Control Further Settlement

Given the constraints posed by the topography at Epworth and the costs of providing bulk infrastructure supplies to the area, (water, sewerage and electricity), government policy is that no further residential settlement be permitted in Epworth. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to establish from Mission records who had been given permission in the past to stay in Epworth, in May 1983 an aerial photograph of the whole settlement was taken and a building freeze simultaneously imposed. There is now ongoing enforcement of this freeze on the basis of only permitting buildings which appeared on the 1983 aerial photograph and demolishing those that do not.

Registration of all residents has also been undertaken and it is proposed to issue a lease on residential stands with option to purchase the stand to all sitting tenants.

The overall land use plan for the area further attempts to reinforce the residential freeze by zoning all as yet undeveloped land to specific uses, for example school grounds, afforestation woodlots, administrative centre, civic and commercial uses and so on. No land has been left uncommitted and therefore open to further illegal settlement.

b) Measures to Improve the Quality of the Existing Settlement

A comprehensive multi-disciplinary upgrading package has been proposed and costed, including the provision of water reticulation, sewerage systems, road networks and bus routes, home improvement loans, employment generation activities, construction of community facilities and training local residents and committees. A package of this nature would require a large financial commitment (approximately Z\$ 16 million in 1984) and a three year implementation period.

Whilst attempting to procure such financing, an administrative structure has been established to implement the programme. This consists of elected Area Development Committees who represent residents' needs and priorities to the authorities. Also a small Local Board, with full statutory municipal powers, has been appointed to initiate upgrading tasks.

A number of interim measures have been undertaken to solve immediate problems. These have included the construction of 300 protected tube-wells to ensure a clean water supply for all households; the lifting of the development freeze in four main civic/commercial centres to allow for the building of shops and community facilities by residents; the building of a third primary school by parents; maintenance work on internal access

roads; and similar.

In practice, all of these interim measures have been carefully planned so that they will dovetail in with longterm development in the area and will not have to be replaced in the future.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The decision by the Zimbabwe government not to bulldoze Epworth but to upgrade the existing settlement in situ has major policy ramifications for the future with respect to the development of planning methodologies in Zimbabwe and increasing the national housing stock. This is elaborated in further detail below.

Although squatter upgrading is a well established and accepted principle elsewhere in Africa (viz. the examples of Lusaka and Nairobi), it is the first time that such an exercise has been attempted in Zimbabwe. Possibly for this reason, the project is being approached extremely cautiously by both government policy-makers and the field staff. The programme as a whole has moved extremely slowly from the time that the upgrading decision was first announced (early in 1983) to date. As yet no firm proposals for financing the programme have been finalised and Epworth residents are becoming impatient to see improvements in their settlement.

After three years of an enforced building freeze, residents are not permitted to rebuild structures which may have fallen down or to invest in improvements to their shelters by making them more permanent or by extending them. Many of the short term measures which have been undertaken by the authorities to date have been mainly precipitated by critically poor health conditions.

It is too early in the programme to attempt to evaluate the effects of measures undertaken to date but monitoring is extremely important in the future to ensure that government intervention in the area has a positive impact on the quality of life of residents and not a detrimental effect.

The Epworth experience has however provided for the elaboration of an innovative planning approach in Zimbabwe. Planners have adopted an approach which makes use of simultaneous, problem solving activities within a wider but more normative comprehensive planning framework. The method also attempts to respect existing patterns of development whilst making use of immediately available finances (from local authority and residents' sources) and in this respect it might be termed an organic approach. In the short term it attempts to provide immediate and visible results in critical areas. At the same time however, it has the advantage over a purely ad hoc approach in that it has a future, long term vision of a total upgrading programme which provides a co-ordinating framework for land use

proposals, personnel and financial expenditures and an implementation timetable.

Within this environment, planners are moving away from their traditional rather limited advisory role to that of project management/implementation. Working in an environment where the long term future of an area is not entirely predictable, blue-print approaches are rapidly being overtaken by incrementalism.

If successful, the upgrading programme will be able to improve the quality and amenity of the residential environment as a whole at Epworth whilst recognising and building upon the initiatives of individual residents who have built their own shelters (with a range of sizes, designs and quality), and have already planned and are living in their own settlement patterns.

Therefore, if successful, the programme may well lend weight to the upgrading of other similar settlements elsewhere in the country (albeit smaller) on the grounds that:-

(i) By allowing individuals to build their own houses (with the public sector's role being primarily in tenure regularisation and ensuring public health and amenity in the environment,) the economic costs of housing thus provided are kept to a minimum. This in turn means that not only can more housing of this kind be provided but also that households of low incomes can afford their own individual shelters instead of having to lodge in overcrowded accommodation in the high density suburbs as is presently the case.

(ii) By recognising the role played by individual home builders who have had the "freedom to build" within public amenity limits, a wide range of shelter types have been constructed, within which the wide range of different households' specific needs can be matched.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author only and unless otherwise indicated do not necessarily reflect the views of any institution, firm or organization with which the author may have been associated.

) In that "squatter" has become a highly emotive term, literature on the topic makes use of a variety of nomenclatures: "Irregular settlements" (Ward & Milligan, 1985); "autonomous housing" (Turner, 1978); or, "the artisanal form" (Burgess, 1985). Such areas are initially illegal in that they are outside the formal planning and housing supply systems. However, different settlements show marked internal variation in the degree of illegality of land tenure, the ratio of owner to employed labour used in shelter construction, permanence and quality of shelters, services, facilities, densities, and so on.

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