3

INVENTORY
The township of Kwazakhele was planned and built in the 1950’s. Like many townships, the physical structure, such as road system and public space, is underdeveloped. There is a lack of housing in the area and many people are on the waiting list for a house\(^3\). The most common housing type is the 40 m\(^2\) detached house on a 200 m\(^2\) plot. There is a lack of social services within the area as well as a lack of public spaces and recreational areas. The inhabitants are Xhosa\(^4\) and the average family has three to four children. Like many townships, the population in Kwazakhele consists of a large number of elderly and children, while the economically active generation is decreasing due to HIV/AIDS. \(^5\) 65% of the inhabitants are unemployed\(^6\) and 53% of the households in the area earn less than R1500 per month (NMMM 2006b, p.12).

The inhabitants take pride in owning their own house and having their own plot, therefore there is a general unwillingness towards densification and other housing alternatives, especially among the elderly population. The Xhosa traditions also play a role in the resentment towards densification. One important Xhosa tradition is to keep in touch with deceased relatives. To do so, a pole with a horn is set up in the yard to help the ancestors find their way back home. Although today this tradition is becoming less and less important for young people\(^6\).

We feel that the benefits of densification, such as better access to public transport and a better basis for business are unknown to the inhabitants. Due to bad experience of crowded conditions in the past many have a negative attitude towards multi-storey housing\(^7\).

Kwazakhele struggles with a bad reputation and is, we have found, seldom visited by anyone who does not have a connection to the area. By people not living in the area it is perceived as dangerous and the bad reputation can be a factor why private companies are unwilling to invest in the area.

\(^3\) Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Chancellor of Ward 22, 16th of November 2006.
\(^4\) Xhosa is a sub group of the Bantu people, primarily living in the Eastern Cape.
\(^5\) Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Chancellor of Ward 22, 16th of November 2006.
\(^6\) Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Chancellor of Ward 22, 16th of November 2006.
\(^7\) Meeting with Sibulele Diyodo, Town Planner at NMMM, 2nd of December 2006.
**Housing**

**Formal houses**
The most common housing in the project area is the one storey, 40 m$^2$ detached house, the so called Metro House or RDP-house. Most of the houses in the area are from the 1950’s and are made of concrete bricks which often have been painted in different colours. In KwaZakhele the RDP-houses were built on the old railway reserve 1999. The overall impression is that the plots are neglected.

The Matthew Goniwe Hostel Area was built in the 1950’s. The hostel area consists of single storey row houses painted in bright colours. The houses contain a mix of flats with their own kitchen and rooms accessing a common area with kitchen and toilet. The hostel area contains 1220 units which approximately hold 9000-10 000 people.

**Backyard shacks**
It is common to build an informal house in the back of the 200 m$^2$ plots of the Metro and RDP-houses. The shack can either be used by parts of the family who cannot be accommodated in the main house or rented out in order to earn some extra money.

These shacks become a problem when the municipality wants to expropriate land as people living in the shacks have no right to compensation as oppose to residents living in the formal houses.

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*Meeting with Schalk Potgieter, Assistant Manager, Housing and Land Department, NMMM 23rd of November 2006*
Informal housing
There are approximately 500 informal houses, also known as shacks, in Kwazakhele today\(^9\). Along Mavuso Road there are many informal houses built with material the residents can find or afford to buy, such as wood or corrugated steel. The largest informal area within our project area is located south of Khulti Street/Mblini Street (see page 41) on land used as storm water detention ponds and the area floods annually\(^10\). The kinds of areas used for informal housing are often not appropriate for housing.

According to South African law the municipality can not knock down a shack which has been standing for 48 hours or more on provincially or municipally owned land without providing alternative housing\(^11\).

Density
The housing density in Kwazakhele is one of the highest in Port Elizabeth, despite the houses being single story\(^12\). The official figure for formal housing is 20-25 units per hectare, or about 100 persons per hectare while in the informal housing areas the density is about 55 units per hectare. According to the SDF the municipal goal is to achieve a density of 60 units/ha for the low-income areas. The huge demand for housing in Kwazakhele is partly due to that the fact that area is located quite close to central Port Elizabeth\(^13\).

To summarize
- There is a large housing backlog in Kwazakhele.
- There are few housing alternatives offered in the area.
- People take pride in owning their own house with their own plot.

\(^9\) Interview with Grace, volunteer at Ward Office 20
\(^10\) Interview with Lourens Streicher, Engineer FST Consultants, 14 of December 2006
\(^11\) Meeting with Schalk Potgieter, Assistant Manager, Housing and Land Department, NMMM 23rd of November 2006
\(^12\) Meeting with Schalk Potgieter, Assistant Manager, Housing and Land Department, NMMM 23rd of November 2006
\(^13\) Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Ward Chancellor of Ward 22, NMMM 16 of November 2006
Social environment

Meeting Places
There are many places in Kwazakhele zoned as “public space” in the Port Elizabeth Zoning Scheme but few of them are developed for public use apart from a few small playgrounds and basketball courts. They seem to be used mostly by children living in the direct neighbourhood. Another type of public space is large gravel sports fields. The lack of lighting makes it difficult to use the sports fields and playgrounds after dark. There is a lack of street furniture.

There are no organized outdoor meeting places for grown-ups despite the fact that the crowded living conditions forces people outdoors. The only elements in the formal housing structure are the private plot and the public street. There are very few semi-private and semi-public spaces. There are no parks in the area for families to gather or large trees to offer a pleasant, shaded environment during the warm days. One factor which we believe drive people away from the open spaces is the dust blowing from the large plots of unused land which reduces sight and irritates the eyes. Most people are found at the taxi ranks and outside the large, formal businesses as well as where the informal business have clustered. There is little shade found in connection to the outdoor meeting places.

The spazas, small informal shops, are often used as meeting places. During the later hours, the taverns, or informal bars, are a more popular choice. Religion is important in peoples’ lives and the number of churches is high. Churches play an important social role within the area; they run crèches and organize different activities for different groups14.

Public Services
From our interviews with officials in Kwazakhele, from informal talks with the residents in the area and from our own inventory, we draw the conclusion that there is a lack of public services in Kwazakhele. There seems to be a limited variety of shops, there is no post office, no bank and only one set of public restrooms within the inventory area.

There is no public library in Kwazakhele today but there are well proceeded plans to build a public library with internet access at Njoli Square. Today the nearest library is the New Brighton Library, about 2 kilometres south of Njoli Square.

A Women’s Resource Centre is located on Daku Road. The Women’s Resource Centre was founded by local women in the late 1990s. It is a place for women to gather in facilities provided by the municipality. Today the Resource Centre contains a hair saloon, a bakery and a law firm.

Daku Community Hall is located on Daku Road. It is the place where pension is paid once a month. The Community Hall is also used for other social activities and festivities.

14 Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Ward Chancellor of Ward 22, NMMM 16 of November 2006
A number of help organizations are operating in the area, their work include home based care for HIV/AIDS patients as well as taking care of orphaned children.

Thirteen schools and crèches are located within the inventory area. The school plots are large and a main part of the plots appear unused. This is due to the standardised planning system in South Africa (x amount of pupils give y amount of school yard space) which looks at quantity much more than quality. There are no higher education above secondary school in Kwazakhele.
Sport facilities
The Sport Centre in Kwazakhele, called Lillian Ngoyi, was opened in 2000. According to the Director of the Sports Centre in Kwazakhele, Mr L. Moyi, there is a lack of sport facilities in the area, an opinion shared by the Chancellor of Ward 22, Mr S. Ntontela.

The public swimming pool in Kwazakhele is well used during the warm summer by the younger inhabitants.

Map 7. Schools, crèches and sport facilities

Fig. 28 Lillian Ngoyi Sport Centre

Fig. 29 Kwazakhele Police Station

Fig. 30 Clinic in Matthew Goniwe Hostel Area
**Health and Security**

One police station is located in Kwazakhele, it serves most of the project area. The north eastern part of Kwazakhele is served by New Brighton Police Station. Both police stations are severely understaffed according to Ward Chancellors and police officers working in the area.

There is one fire station in Kwazakhele and small fires are common, especially in the informal areas where there is no electricity and the residents use candles and gas.

There is a place of safety in Kwazakhele which offers protection for abused women and children and also functions as an orphanage.

The area has two clinics. We assume that there will be a need for more health facilities when HIV turns into AIDS. Homes for orphaned children may also be needed.

The inhabitants in Kwazakhele protect themselves from crime and vandalism by putting up walls and fences around their plots. Fences are also erected around schools and other public facilities. In small spazas the customer is separated from the cashier by bars. For the visitor, the fences and bars enhance the feeling of being unsafe in the area.

**To summarize**

- There is no library, bank or post office within the project area.
- Public meeting places for various uses are needed.
- The large, mainly unused school plots could be used for other purposes.
- New sport fields are wanted.
- Replacement of the fences and barbed wires around school yards and other public facilities could open up space for public use. The fences can for example be embedded in greenery to create a more welcoming feeling.

Map 8. Safety and security

Fig. 31 Place of Safety
**Economic activity**

Economic activity is often gathered as small clusters of formal or informal businesses containing a spaza, a funeral parlor, a liquor store, a florist and a butcher. These businesses are small but seem to benefit from one another. There are also many home based businesses in the area, such as taverns, spazas and hair saloons.

**Formal businesses**

Most formal business is located in small clusters on residential streets or at the nodes along Njoli Street and Daku Road. In additions to the nodes and clusters, businesses are located mainly on Njoli Street and Daku Road.

The most important node is the Daku Road Shopping Centre. The Shopping Centre contains cash machine, supermarket, fast food restaurant, a building materials store, a clothes store, clothes’ accessories store, liquor store, public toilets and an electronic store. The Shopping Centre offers no out door public spaces with seating arrangement or trees to give shade. The only outdoor public space is the parking lot. The Shopping Centre is well visited and there are always a lot of people within the centre and on the connected streets.

There are two large grocery stores in Kwazakhele, although one is located just outside the project area. Other formal stores, mainly in the food and related trade, have been established in Kwazakhele, such as a KFC. There are also some entertainment related businesses, such as taverns/braii outlets.

![Fig. 32 Formal business](image)

![Map 9. Businesses](image)
Informal businesses
Self employed businessmen/businesswomen is a common sight in Kwazakhele. These informal businesses are supported by the municipality since this is the way many people in less affluent areas make their living. Many hawkers are operating in dangerous and unhealthy places such as intersections and road reserves, usually using makeshift tables and sometimes containers to display their goods. Most of the business occurs at taxi ranks and bus stops and by Daku Road Community Hall.

Another common form of business accommodation in Kwazakhele is the home based businesses like spazas, hair saloons, florist, take away food, car washes and “knowledge based business” such as plumbing, sawing and tire repair. These businesses illustrate the creativity which exists in the area.

The hawkers’, such as the barbers and food salesmen, lack access to basic sanitary facilities and clean water, this makes their business unsanitary. There is a need to provide the hawkers with better conditions, such as setting up containers and structures protecting their goods from weather and wind, and to provide them with facilities to meet basic health requirements, e.g. potable water, ablution facilities and electricity. There appears to be a demand for a vegetable market in the Kwazakhele area to supply the large number of vegetable hawkers.

Today the NMMM is working on a policy for informal business to fill the gap which exists between the informal and formal sector. In South Africa, like in many developing countries, there is a gap between the low-activity informal sector and the medium- to high-activity formal sector. An establishment of a semiformal sector which can help businesses to grow and develop while moving towards the formal sector is considered necessary.

The large stores compete with the smaller businesses and put pressure on the spazas and hawkers.

To summarize
• Many hawkers operate in dangerous and unhealthy conditions.
• A market place meeting sanitary needs is lacking in Kwazakhele.
• A vegetable market is needed.
• There range of formal shops is poor.
• There is a gap between the formal and informal business sectors.

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16 Interview with Amelia Büchner, Assistant Manager, Economic Development Department, NMMM, 27th of November 2006.
17 Interview with Amelia Büchner, Assistant Manager. Economic Development Department, NMMM, 27th of November 2006.
In the Port Elizabeth Zoning Scheme there are many areas marked as public open space. But there are in fact very few parks and recreational areas in Kwazakhele today. The small, open spaces between the metro houses, so called “gap taps”, are in reality often gravel fields, sometimes used for illegal dumping of garbage. Others have a hard concrete surface and are used as basketball courts.

The most popular sport in Kwazakhele is soccer with over 20 active clubs in the area\(^{15}\). There is a soccer stadium located east of the project area. Most of the soccer fields in the project area are located on school yards.

Undeveloped sites are often fenced to keep informal settlers out. This makes them more difficult to use for the public and the fences give an unpleasant feeling to the area.

The earth is dry and many residents cannot afford to maintain their garden, which makes it even more important to create green public spaces.

**Tree planting**
Along both sides of Njoli Street White Stink Wood trees were planted in 2005. These are still very small. There are also fully grown trees, although small, on the north side of Merele Street and on Mblini Street. Overall there are very few trees in the area. In general the trees have had problems growing in the area due to the dry weather, vandalism and lack of maintenance. During the warm months Kwazakhele is dry and still and full size trees would create a much needed shade.

**To summarize**
- There is a need for well maintained public open space.
- Dry climate makes it difficult for trees to grow.
- There is a need for more trees in the area to create shade.

\(^{15}\) Interview with Songezo Ntontela, Ward Chancellor of Ward 22, NMNM 16 of November 2006.
**Road structure**

Kwazakhele, located 10 km north of central Port Elizabeth, is easily accessed by the N2 (National Road Nr 2) which is of good standard.

**Main Roads**

Daku Road is a wide, two-lane street with concrete sidewalks on both sides.

Njoli Street is a dual carriage way which was upgraded in 2005.

Seyisi Street is a dual carriage way feeding the eastern residential parts of Kwazakhele. It has a concrete sidewalk on the north-eastern side and large, unused gravel strips.

Mavuso Road is a poorly maintained gravel street. The road reserve is wide and there are plans for upgrading. A newly built bus stop with three separate bus lanes is located at the intersection of Mavuso Road/Njoli Street. There are new, unused hawkers’ facilities in connection to the bus stop.

Most of the small streets in Kwazakhele are paved but some of the small streets between the detached houses are graveled. The large streets are busy and the road reserves are wide. The wide road reserves often result in wide gravel strips between the paved street and the plot.
Fig. 40 Njoli Street

Fig. 41 Mavuso Road

Fig. 42 Street section
Cars
Only 15% of households in Kwazakhele and Motherwell own/have access to private vehicle compared to the metropolitan average of 60% (NMMM, 2006b, p. 12). Never the less this there is a lot of motorized traffic on the busier streets within the area, especially along Daku Road and Njoli Street and in some extend along Mavuso Road.

Parking
There are few public parking lots. Instead parking occurs on road reserves and in front of stores. Due to security reasons people do not leave their car unattended in public parking spaces at night.

Public transport
Buses and minibus taxis are today the predominant public transport providers within the NMMM, this is also true for the Kwazakhele area (NMMM, 2006b, p. 16). The minibus taxis have no formal stops but follow a taxi route. The minibuses are allowed to carry 14 passengers but often take up more.
The average cost of taxi fares 2006 was R4.50 per journey, which means that the households in Kwazakhele spend over 20% of their income on one member travelling by public transport to and from work. Minibus taxis run only when it is economically beneficial for the drivers. It is not possible to change minibus taxi without once again paying the fee.

The contract buses operating in the area are in poor condition and the bus stops often lack any kind of sign, benches or weather protection. The buses run mainly during the mornings and afternoon to take people to/from work. Buses are not much used, people seem to prefer minibuses which are faster and run more frequently.

The municipality’s plan is to incorporate the minibus taxis in the official public transport. The idea is for the minibuses to feed the main bus stations. It should be possible to use only one ticket when switching from one form of public transport to another.

**Traffic Safety**

There are few streets with paved sidewalks in Kwazakhele. These sidewalks are often in bad condition with bumps and holes. Where there are no sidewalks the leftover land from wide road reserves is used as sidewalks by the residents. Sometimes the pedestrians are forced to walk on the street.

Njoli Street used to top the annual accident statistics and due to this the street has been upgraded. The improvement of the street is reflected in the decrease of accidents on the street, from 44 in 2000 to 11 in 2003.

There are speed bumps present at Daku Road, Seyisi Street and Salamantu Street. Traffic is hectic and there are few traffic controlled intersections. Even at a properly marked zebra crossing, the drivers tend to take no notice of the pedestrians trying to cross.

**Pedestrians and bicyclists**

Walking is the main mode of transportation within Kwazakhele. Over 50% of the journeys are done by foot (NMMM, 2006b, p. 12) resulting in a busy street life on the main roads. Despite this the conditions for the pedestrians are poor. The pedestrians are un-prioritized with few zebra crossings and missing links in the organized pedestrian street structure.

There are no bicycle lanes present in Kwazakhele and a cyclist is a rare sight. But since the topography is flat there are good opportunities for bicycling.

**Lighting**

The main source of lighting is provided by 20 meter masts. They cast a bright light but leave strange shadows while some areas remain dark. Only Njoli Street has conventional street lights on both sides of the road while Daku Road and Seyisi Street have street lights on one side.

The overall impression is that the area is badly lit which creates unpleasant and scary environments resulting in reluctance towards using the streets during the dark hours.

**To summarize**

- Pedestrians need to be better prioritised.
- Many streets lack concrete sidewalks and there are few zebra-crossings.
- Mavuso Road needs upgrading.
- Opportunities to use the unused parts of often large road reserves.
- Introducing bicycle lanes creates a great opportunity for getting around Kwazakhele in a cheap and fast way.
- Lack of street lights.
Technical infrastructure

Water and sewage
Most of the houses in Kwazakhele have some kind of access to water. The formal houses have running water while the informal housing areas rely on rudimentary infrastructure such as the water taps located within the area.

Formal housing has sewage access while informal housing does not. Once a week the sewage waist from the informal settlements is picked up by the municipality.

Storm water
Kwazakhele is located on lowlands and it rains about 600 mm a year (NMMM, 2004, p. 13). Two storm water ponds are located within the area. Both areas are today inhabited by squatters. To stop the water from filling up the pond and damage the informal houses, the main pipes have been plugged. This is now causing flooding problems for the neighbouring formal houses. The construction of additional detention facilities within the area has been suggested. The storm water is often polluted by leaking sewages and garbage. The storm water ponds also function as refuse dumps and during warm days the smell is intense.

Electricity and telecommunication
The large majority of the formal houses in Kwazakhele are provided with electricity through a prepaid system.

Few people in Kwazakhele have phones in their homes. Also cell phones are a rarity. As a result of this there are a large number of public phones available. There are several containers placed on the streets where the telecommunication companies provide their services as well as slot telephones.

Waste
Despite that the waste is collected by the municipality once a week much of the unused, open land is used for illegal garbage dumping. There are few public trashcans to be found accept for in the newly upgraded Njoli Street. According to the Integrated Waste Management Plan (NMMM, 2003, p. 16) the municipality strives to reduce the waste produced. Today there are no recycling stations in Kwazakhele.

To summarize
• Formal houses have access to water, sewage and electricity.
• The informal houses have no direct access to technical infrastructure.
• Storm water ponds need to flood properly and the ponds are unsuitable for housing.
• Unused land is often used for illegal garbage dumping and there are no recycling stations in the area.

18 Interview with Lourens Streicher, FST consultants, 14 of December 2006.
Main attractions in the area

Fig. 49 Daku Road Shopping Centre

Fig. 50 Njoli Square

Fig. 51 Sport Centre

Fig. 52 New Brighton Library

Fig. 53 Pick ‘n Pay Supermarket

Map 14. Main attractions
Land available for future development

We have found a number of plots which can be developed. These sites are today vacant land or land inhabited by squatters. Large, unused schoolyards and wide road reserves can also be used for future development.