

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE ROSE VALLEY EXTENSION, OUDTSHOORN, WESTERN CAPE

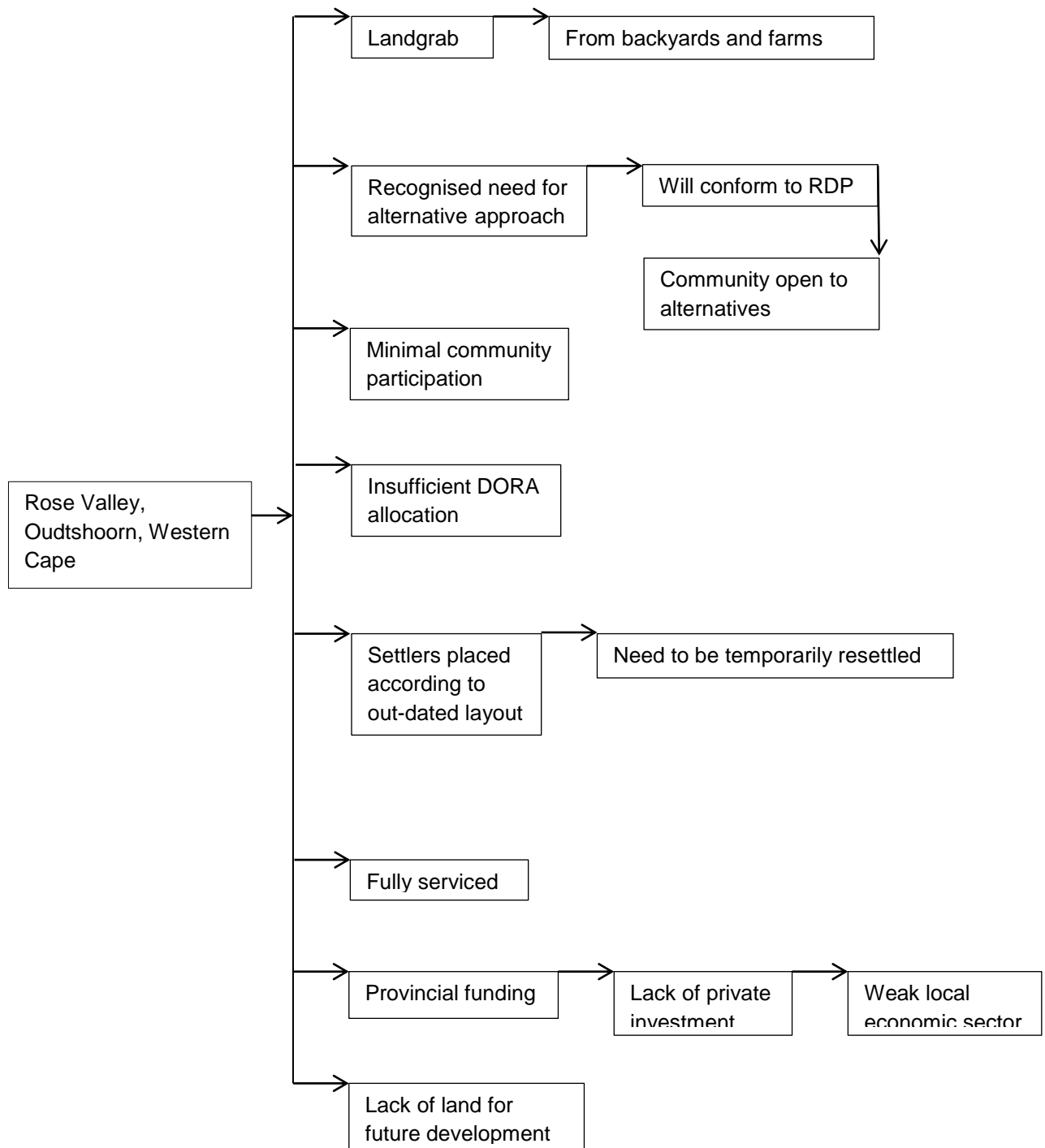


Figure 60: Summary of Rose Valley findings

Source: Own construction (2012)

The previous chapter discussed completed low-cost housing developments and strategies which already provide measurable evidence for discussion. Chapter 13 will discuss the future Rose Valley Extension which is located on the eastern border of Oudtshoorn in the Western Cape, as illustrate by Figure 61.

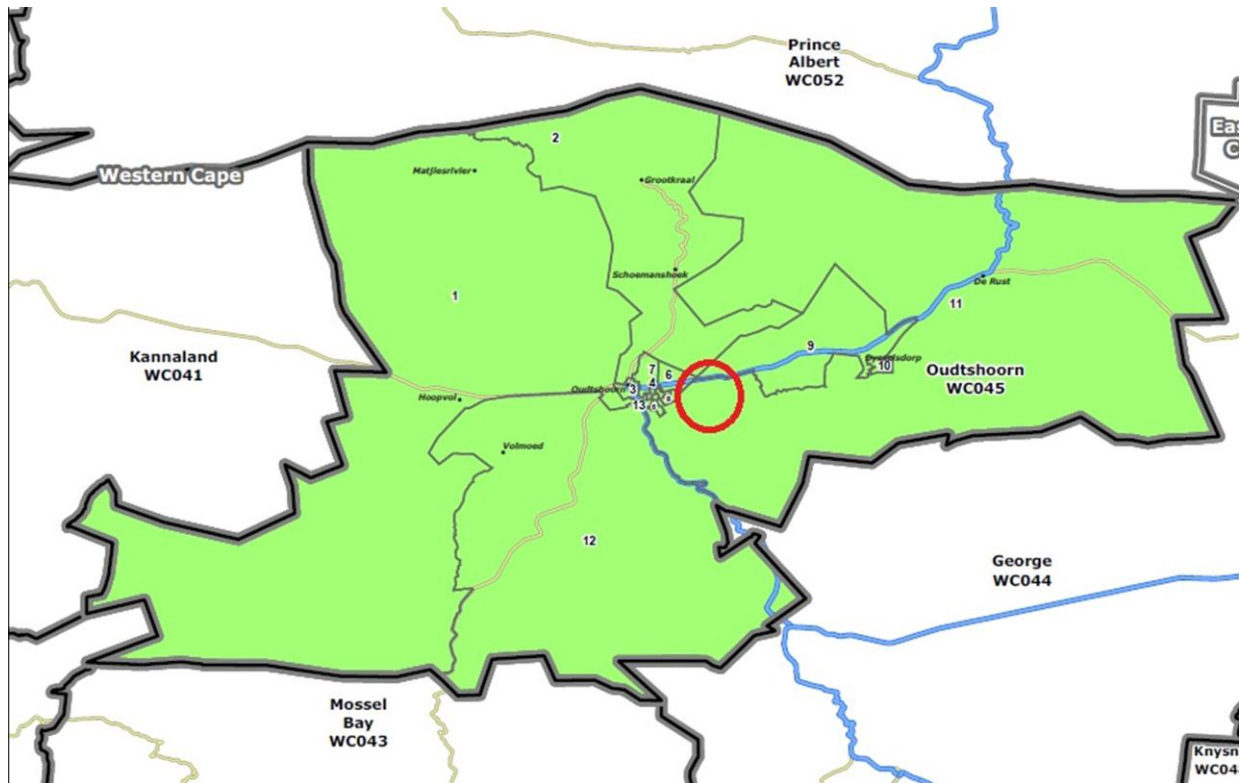


Figure 61: Rose Valley location in Oudtshoorn

Source: Municipal Demarcation Board (2012)

Rose Valley is still in its planning phase and is thus included as a separate case study chapter. This case study was specifically chosen because it provides insight into the approaches followed when planning a low-cost residential development. It was also used a case study to link the theoretical investigations, previous case study evaluations and interviews conducted to a practical project which is currently in process, in order to bridge the theory-practice gaps identified in this research This chapter was informed by interviews held with Ms Sheenagh Bruce, acting Town Planner, Mr Gavin Juthe, Director of Housing and also by the results of 100 questionnaires distributed in the Rose Valley Settlement. An example of the Rose Valley questionnaire is provided as Annexure A and results are provided as Annexure B. The following Figures (62 to 65) provide a graphic introduction to the area.



Figure 62: An aerial photograph of the Rose Valley Settlement in April 2011

Source: Own photograph (2011)



Figure 63: The Rose Valley Settlement in July 2012

Source: Own photograph (2012)



Figure 64: A streetscape which illustrates the formal nature of the current spatial format

Source: Own photograph (2012)



Figure 65: A typical South African scene, children playing soccer on a dirt sports field

Source: Own photograph (2012)

According to Bruce (2012) the Rose Valley settlement started at the end of 2010 as a landgrab by desperate and disgruntled Oudtshoornites who were left with no other option (see Figure 66: Reason settlers moved to Rose Valley). Housing delivery in Oudtshoorn has been slow in recent years. Juthe (2012) states that the current housing list for the Oudtshoorn area contains 14 0000 names. The high demand coupled with the Municipality's current Division of Revenue Act (DORA) allocation of only R13 million, has led to delivery which is less demand responsive than required. The sheer size and sudden expansion of the Rose Valley Settlement has left the Municipality with very little time to address the growing needs of Rose Valley's residents.

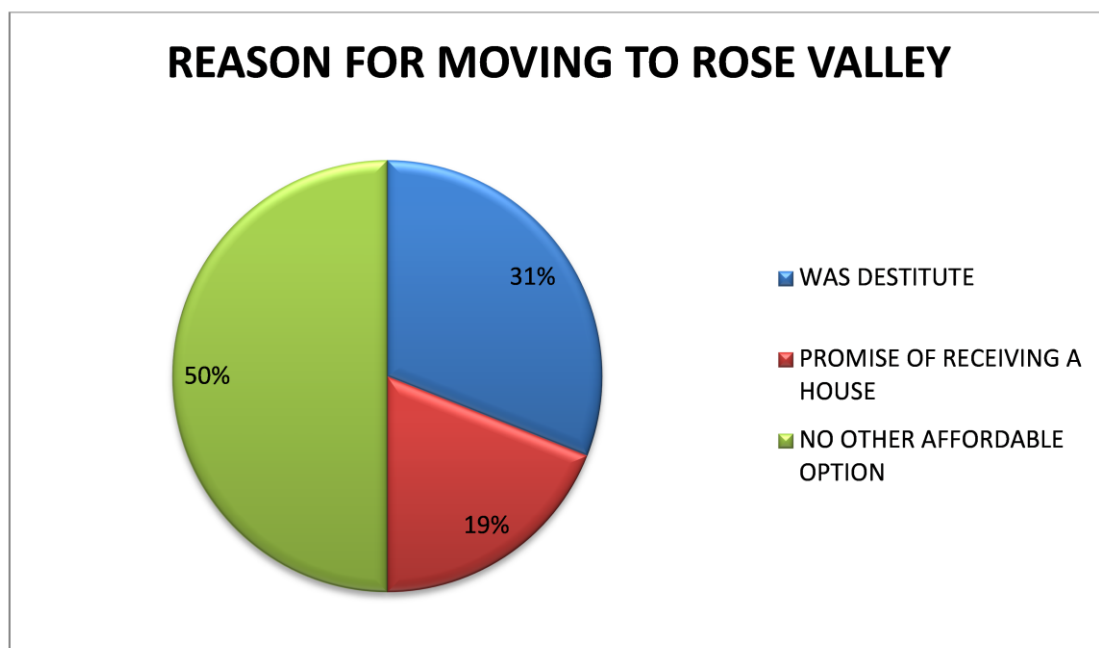


Figure 66: Reason settlers moved to Rose Valley

Source: Own construction (2012)

According to Bruce (2012) most of the Rose Valley settlers moved to the area from backyard structures in the Oudtshoorn district. These settlers were either asked to leave by landlords or chose to move to an area which offered some hope for individual home ownership in the future. Many others were also displaced after a downturn in the local ostrich industry forced local farmers to reduce their labour force.

Others were already on the housing waiting list and moved to Rose Valley in order to improve their chances of receiving a house. Figure 67 captures the origin of the 100 occupants of informal structures who completed the questionnaire.

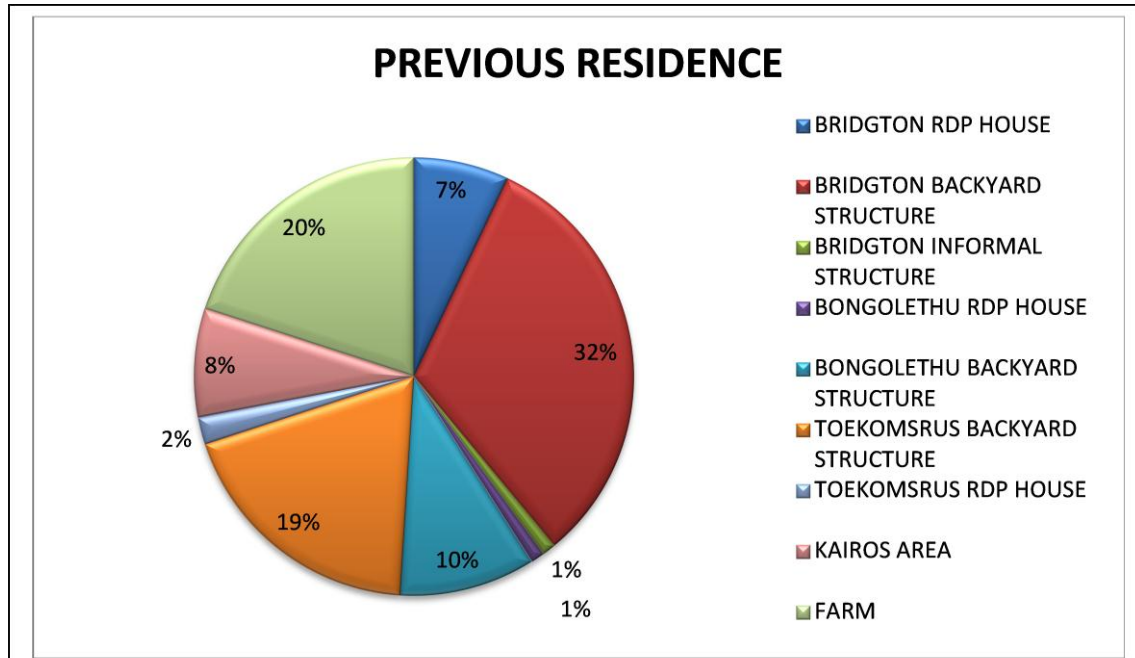


Figure 67: Origin of the Rose Valley Settlers

Source: Own construction (2012)

The Oudtshoorn Municipality is still uncertain as to how exactly the final list of beneficiaries for the Rose Valley Extension will be compiled. According to Juthe (2012) housing units will be allocated according to the greatest need and the mandate given to the Oudtshoorn Municipality by the Western Cape Province. This will definitely include a 10% allocation to the elderly, disabled and sickly. There is thus currently not a rigid or fixed housing recipient list for the Rose Valley development. Questionnaire results showed that 99% of community members questioned were on the housing list.

Bruce (2012) states that a sense of community was present in Rose Valley since the first settlers starting putting up shacks in the area. However, community participation processes received minimal attention from an urban planning perspective. The Oudtshoorn Department of Housing conversely hosted a few community meetings in which the status quo and stand sizes were discussed. According to Juthe (2012) the majority of community participation was conducted as part of the broader IDP process. Juthe (2012) states that ideally the needs of the community and their inputs would guide the design and delivery of the housing intended for them. The current backlogs and lack of funding from Province, however limits the extent to which community preferences can be accommodated. The community was engaged on the matter of the exterior colours used as well as the configuration of internal unit layout. As a result sanitation facilities will be moved from a location adjacent to living areas to a more appropriate location next to sleeping quarters.

Juthe (2012) states that in general the Oudtshoorn Municipality's Housing Department does recognise the need for deviation from the traditional RDP approach. However the units to be provided in Rose Valley will generally conform to the well-known RDP spec except for a few internal layout adjustments. Bruce (2012) states that the Rose Valley development will be a standard ASLA development, based on conventional RDP standards and principles. The new Rose Valley Extension will thus conform to the development approach followed in Oudtshoorn's past housing projects. In this regard only detached and subsidised units will be provided. Bruce (2012) states that the implementation of single residential units of a single storey will aid in integrating the new Rose Valley Extension with existing housing in the area. However an approach which delivers higher densities could improve the overall quality of the development. This is especially applicable since questionnaire results showed that 51% of settlers would consider living in walk-ups or apartments (see Figure 68). As a further deviation from the norm, Juthe (2012) states that it would be ideal to give beneficiaries a choice of different building placement options and configurations. Again the subsidy allocations from Province do not accommodate much deviation.

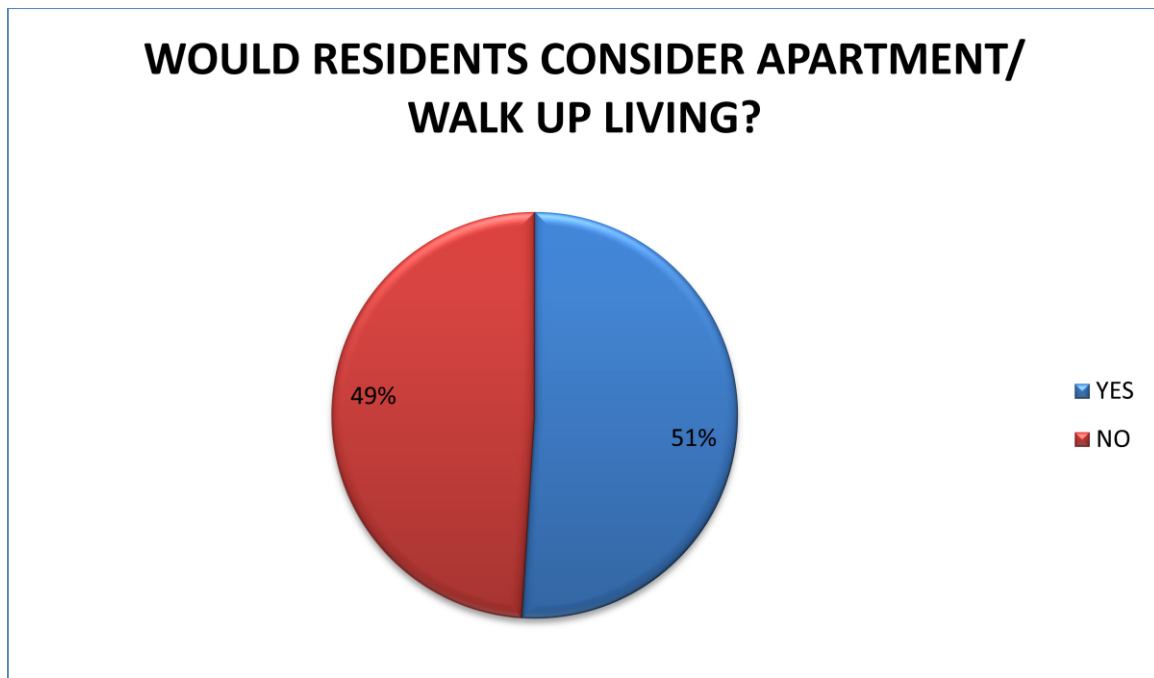


Figure 68: Would Rose Valley settlers consider walk-up/apartment living?

Source: Own construction (2012)

According to Bruce (2012) the location of the Rose Valley settlement was identified in the 1980's as a suitable location for residential development, as it is situated within the demarcated urban edge. In this regard a basic layout was constructed by municipal planners to be used when needed. Once people started settling on the area unlawfully in 2010, municipal planners had to use what was available in order to cope with the drastic daily increase in settlers. Planners decided to use the 1980's plan as a preliminary layout which provided some structure to the placement of new inhabitants. This provided the opportunity to appoint families to individual stands according to an ordered spatial format (Bruce, 2012).

However, various inaccuracies have been identified in the 1980's layout concept, which need to be rectified before building commences. On a site visit in the winter of 2012, it became clear that the 1980's layout did not take the topography of the area into account. Stormwater regularly floods lower lying stands due to the placement of a layout which ignores the contours of the area. The problems identified with the current, temporary, layout has led to the adoption of a new development plan.

According to Bruce (2012) the new layout plan, which was outsourced to a private planning firm, makes provision for 890 stands placed according to a layout which makes extensive use of cul-de-sacs. Aside from the use of cul-de-sacs, the new layout does deviate much from the traditional approaches followed in low-cost housing developments of the past.

Bruce (2012) states that the Rose Valley development will be fully serviced and the Oudtshoorn municipality had already applied for funding to cover the delivery of basic services at the time of the Bruce interview. Sub-surface electricity lines were considered but were abandoned in favour of above ground provisions, given the risk of theft. Two water pumping stations will also be provided, given the topography of the area (See Figure 69). The preliminary delivery of services may prove difficult, given that the current layout is only temporary. Municipal officials were at the time of the Bruce interview, still uncertain about the manner in which services would be delivered according to a layout which still needed to be implemented whilst settlers were placed according to another spatial arrangement.

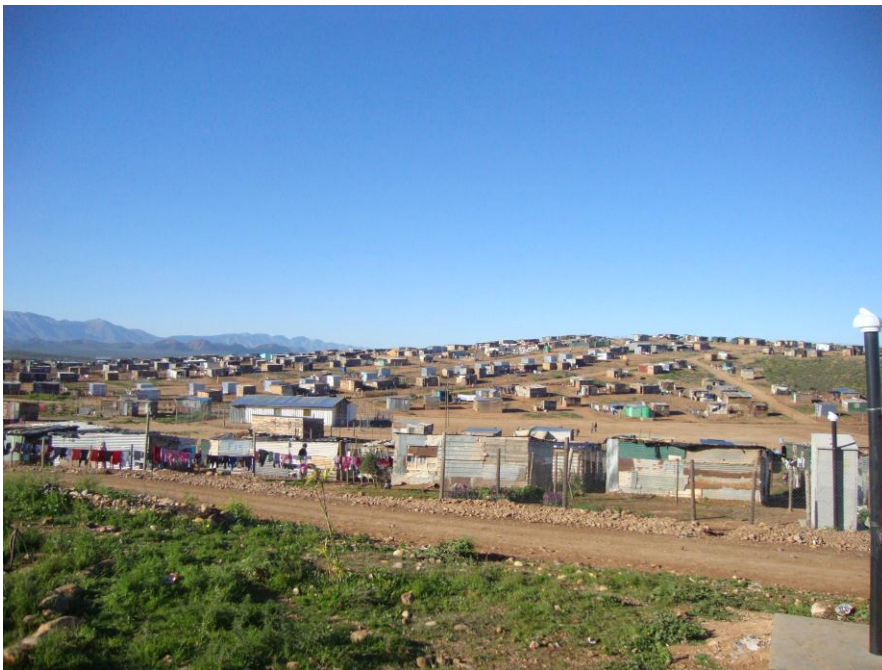


Figure 69: An example of Rose Valley's undulating landscape

Source: Own Photograph (2012)

Housing is a provincial mandate and in light of this, the Western-Cape government manages and assesses the housing processes which are put in place by the Oudtshoorn Department of Housing (Juthe, 2012). As an example the Housing Department, in conjunction with the Urban Planning Department, decided on the level of services to be provided in Rose Valley and launched an application to province for the instillation of said services as soon as possible (Bruce, 2012).

Phase one of the Rose Valley extension was planned by the Oudtshoorn Department of Housing, and was presented and accepted by the Provincial housing budget as part of the municipalities broader housing delivery plan. All funding for development was sourced from province according to the development phases planned. No attempts were made to involve the private sector in either additional funding procurement or the involvement of development concepts from external sources. Public/private partnerships could greatly enhance the end products delivered in terms of the quality of units and public spaces provided.

According to Juthe (2012) the rural location of Oudtshoorn and the lack of big industry associated with this, reduces the possibilities for public/private partnerships. As an example he names the PetroSA Group, who is very involved in the delivery of housing in the Mosselbay area, in the adjacent Eden District Municipality. If Oudtshoorn was located in an area which provided a broad and varied economy the Municipality would grasp every opportunity for collaboration. In fact the Oudtshoorn Municipality has put programmes in place to accommodate public/private partnership, but these programmes have not been viable in the area.

Juthe (2012) states that in general Municipalities should play a more active role in funding procurement for housing delivery. As an example he states the implementation of a tax structure which will enable Municipalities to generate funding for residential development in their areas. Where Municipalities have made a more intensive contribution to housing delivery, development of a higher standard has been the norm.

Although Oudtshoorn struggles with a declining economy largely due to a downturn in the ostrich industry, the housing need continues to increase. This indicates a need for proactive planning in terms of identifying suitable land and adopting innovative housing strategies.

According to Juthe (2012) other housing projects are already in the pipeline for development after the Rose Valley Extension has been concluded. The identification of a suitable location for expansion has proven difficult. Expanding housing development to the South of the Rose Valley extension would be virtually impossible, given the ecologically-sensitive nature of the region and the large sum the current owners want for the land. Expanding to the South would facilitate a natural progression in the current development pattern, but would also contribute to urban sprawl and place the inhabitants too far from traditional areas of opportunity, such as the town centre (Bruce, 2012). Juthe (2012) states that expanding future housing projects to the South of the Rose Valley settlement will only continue to duplicate the Apartheid city structure which prevents socio-economic and cultural integration. In Oudtshoorn a focus on integration and shared economic growth will guide future development. Prospective housing projects will thus take the provision of access to the town's economic nodes into account. The provision of housing too far from existing amenities will also not comply with guidelines for the procurement of provincial funding as a stand-alone project. (Bruce, 2012) Province has clear guidelines on what they will fund and proposing housing development too far from town will not be accepted.

The erection of backyard structures is notoriously difficult to prohibit and manage. Bruce (2012) states that there is no definitive policy which will manage illegal backyard structures in the Rose Valley development, as no such strategy exists for the Oudtshoorn district. Housing recipients are however informed of the fact that the erection of temporary structures will be deemed illegal, but the enforcement of this principle has not proven to be effective in other areas of Oudtshoorn.

Bruce (2012) acknowledges that a backyard strategy may need to be formulated which regulates the backyard sector in a manner which still provides the opportunity for housing to be used as an asset and capital growth instrument. Figure 70 illustrates the attitude of Rose Valley settlers to backyard renting.

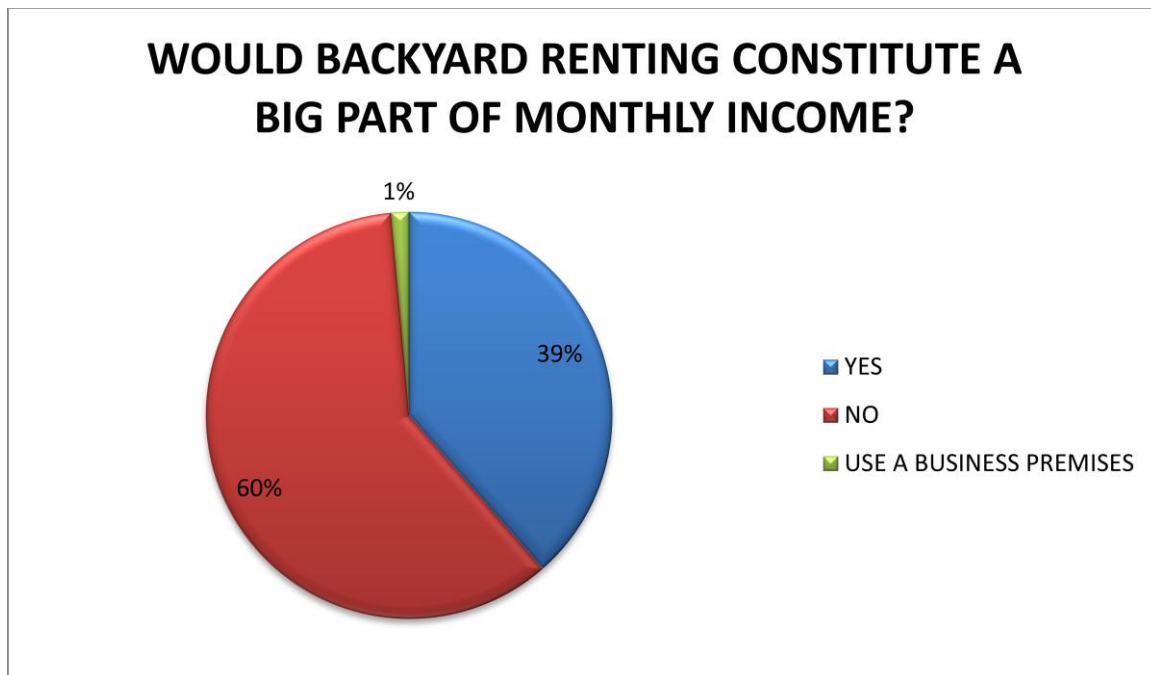


Figure 70: Would Rose Valley settlers consider constructing backyard structures after they have taken up residence?

Source: Own construction (2012)

12.1 Conclusion to the Rose Valley case study

The Rose Valley development is still in an early developmental phase. The ultimate success of the project, which one could measure by community satisfaction and the economic use of resources, will only become apparent once beneficiaries have taken up residence. The Oudtshoorn Municipality has to be commended on their efforts to provide a temporary state of formalisation, but this approach may provide many obstacles as physical development commences. It thus remains to be seen whether or not the Rose Valley settlement can be transformed into an asset and showcase of positive reactive planning.

Table 19 is provided as a summary of the findings related to the case studies examined in Chapters 12 and 13 in order to capture best practice lessons learnt to improve future housing development.

Table 19: Summary of case study findings

	Cosmo City	Olievenhoutbosch	N2 Gateway Project	The Ethekewini Municipal Study	Rose Valley
Appropriate location identified	✓	✓	✗	N/A	—
BNG objectives realised	N/A	✓	✗	N/A	—
Community Participation well established	✓	—	✗	N/A	—
Deviation from traditional layout approaches	✗	—	—	✓	✗
Public/private partnerships established	✓	✓	—	N/A	✗
Increased densities	—	—	—	✓	✗
Socio-economic integration realised	—	—	N/A	N/A	—
Development and implementation strategies well-developed	✓	✓	✗	N/A	—
Proactive development with regard for future needs	—	—	✗	✓	✗
Design interventions advocated	—	—	✓	✓	✗

Source: Own construction (2012)

Legend

✓	Recognised/Realised	✗	Failed to Recognise/Realise
—	Partially Recognised/Realised	N/A	Not Applicable

It should be noted that prominent development recommendations under possible planning, management and design approaches will be provided for Rose Valley in Chapter 14. However it is important to identify the conclusions to be drawn from both the literature study and the empirical investigation conducted in order to identify the principles according to which recommendations are to be made. In this regard Chapter 13 will provide the main conclusions to be drawn from this study.