



## PROJECTS OF DUBRUTO URBAN PLANNING

### **Project: Die Hoewes x 309**

Dubruto Town & Regional Planning has lodged a township application on behalf of the owners and developers on land situated in the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings as indicated in this report. In February 2016 this application is still running after some adjustments have been made to the township layout plan on request of the municipal traffic engineers.

#### **Background**

The Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings (LAH) are situated in the heartland of development of the eastern Centurion area situated in the south of the Tshwane Metropolitan City. The subject of many strategic development plans since 1976 the area has developed steadily into a medium density housing precinct with a prominent mix of office and retail development. Together with some other abutting residential areas the LAH is situated in between several freeways with up to 5 traffic interchanges providing a high level of private vehicle access from the regional freeway system.

The LAH's main strength is that it is situated in between the historical neighbourhood of Lyttelton Manor and the Centurion Metropolitan Node consisting of a regional shopping centre and a mix of office, business, commercial, distribution and high technological manufacturing land uses. For planning purposes the municipality regards the LAH as part of the above mentioned Centurion Metropolitan Node.

The municipality initiated development on the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings (LAH) since the mid nineteen seventies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time a development plan was put forward that mainly dealt with the problems of dolomite and the provision of services within context of reaching economy of scale of development as was reflected by the housing typology demanded by the housing market of the day. Initially single storey dwellings in group housing format with a density of up to 15 dwellings per hectare of the property size were foreseen to be the development trend. Dwelling units were later allowed to be concentrated on part of the land regarded as safe for development with a housing typology as dictated by the market.

Since the nineteen eighties of the previous century the market demand for housing allowed change for housing typologies to increase densities in line with always rising development costs. The presence of dolomite rock near the ground surface caused services to be extremely expensive in relation to the level of property prices at the time. This reflected in the ever increasing densities until a density of 30 dwelling units per hectare for single storey dwelling units were reached. Thereafter the buildings become typical walk up 2 storeys and later walk up 3 storeys. The market demand for bachelor flats increased total flats per building and higher densities per development were achieved up to 90 and sometimes 120 dwelling units per hectare. This was the development trend in the LAH area until the 2009 property development recession.

#### **The Municipality and the Spatial Development Framework**

The Tshwane municipality recently published a development framework study that was conducted by the Royal HaskoningDHV on behalf of the Tshwane Metro. Royal HaskoningDHV is a leading, empowered South African based, independent, international consulting engineering and project management group.

The brief for the planning exercise was to inter alia produce an urban design framework and a services framework plan for the area.

One of the discernible districts of the study area is the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings. In the report it is described as an old agricultural small holdings area that displays a very mixed, irregular and suburban pattern of development indicating a precinct in significant transition with significant potential for further rezoning, upgrading and development to occur.

Strategically the report indicates - among many other things - that the districts on the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings be consolidated into high density mixed use, but primarily residential districts.

The report indicates that the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings – as far as residential use is concerned - should accommodate high impact residential use as well as medium impact residential use. Higher residential densities should be accommodated on the movement system to facilitate an induced shift from a car dominated environment to one that is Transit Orientated. As the LAH is situated in between the existing rail network between Pretoria Station and Johannesburg and the Gautrain rail and station and is bordering the redevelopment scheme of the Centurion Lake area – the whole area is regarded to be aggressively transformed into a transit dominated transport district.

Unfortunately the main feature of the LAH development landscape is that there is not much land left to be developed into high density housing estates. Also that the housing market has faltered to make the transition from 3 storey buildings to 10 storeys and more – a move that it should have done and did not because of the depressed economy following the 2009 financial disaster. In place of that the only 2 developments on sale right now is 5 storey developments. (Other developments than Die Hoewes x309)

Another negative aspect is the fact that the municipality is hesitant to approve the Centurion CBD Development Framework study by Haskoning as policy because of its lack of dynamic strategic elements especially in regard to the municipality's Symbio City Project (redevelopment of Centurion Lake into tower blocks offices and flats) and other urban design shortcomings. (Most urban design elements are for areas that are already developed and are static in its land use and buildings for the next 40 years.) Because of this the marketing and branding of a new high density development trend is lacking.

Development on the LAH is therefore not reflecting true potential because of the present state of the residential market and the financial realities of the day. The market is more deflated as expected because of the limited total of buyers that qualify for loans from the bank due to the stringent set of rules and the high levels of credit that people have already. There should be a huge need for housing in the corporate and public service sector that is the dominant market sector in the Centurion / Pretoria area. However there is a 40 year trend of many young professionals working in Midrand, Sandton, Johannesburg North, and Roodeport areas choosing to live in the Pretoria area and especially in the thousands of townhouse schemes of the Lyttelton Agricultural Holdings. The market is therefore much specialised but apparently the developments already in the market are getting their units sold.

### **The Proposed Township Die Hoewes x309**

Because of the new development goals around a Tshwane Metropolitan Node and the transit transport model the land use model of Die Hoewes x309 was formulated. The developers decided for a development as follows:

<b>Zoning erf 1:</b>	<b>Size 1,7487ha:</b> “Residential 4”, with shops and offices limited to 750m <sup>2</sup> and a clubhouse and social hall limited to a floor area of 250m <sup>2</sup> .
<b>Height :</b>	6 Storeys.
<b>Coverage :</b>	50%.

**FAR :** 1,2  
**Parking :** According the Town Planning Scheme 2008, and according the Site Development Plan.  
**Zoning erf 2:** **Size 0,0265ha:** "Special" for a telecommunication mast.

The above zoning rights produced a total of 155 dwelling units at a density of 113 dwelling units per ha. Of the total dwellings 119 will be 2 bedroom flats and 36 will be 3 bedroom 2 storey town houses. There will be at least 20,2m<sup>2</sup> open space per dwelling unit on the site. (Some open space areas and facilities will be on the rooftops of buildings.) There will be basement parking for the flat dwellers.

**The Site:**



