

NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

Neighbourhood areas form the building blocks of the bioregion. It is, therefore, recommended that the planning and management of neighbourhood areas be undertaken in accordance with the bioregional planning approach illustrated by the figure below.

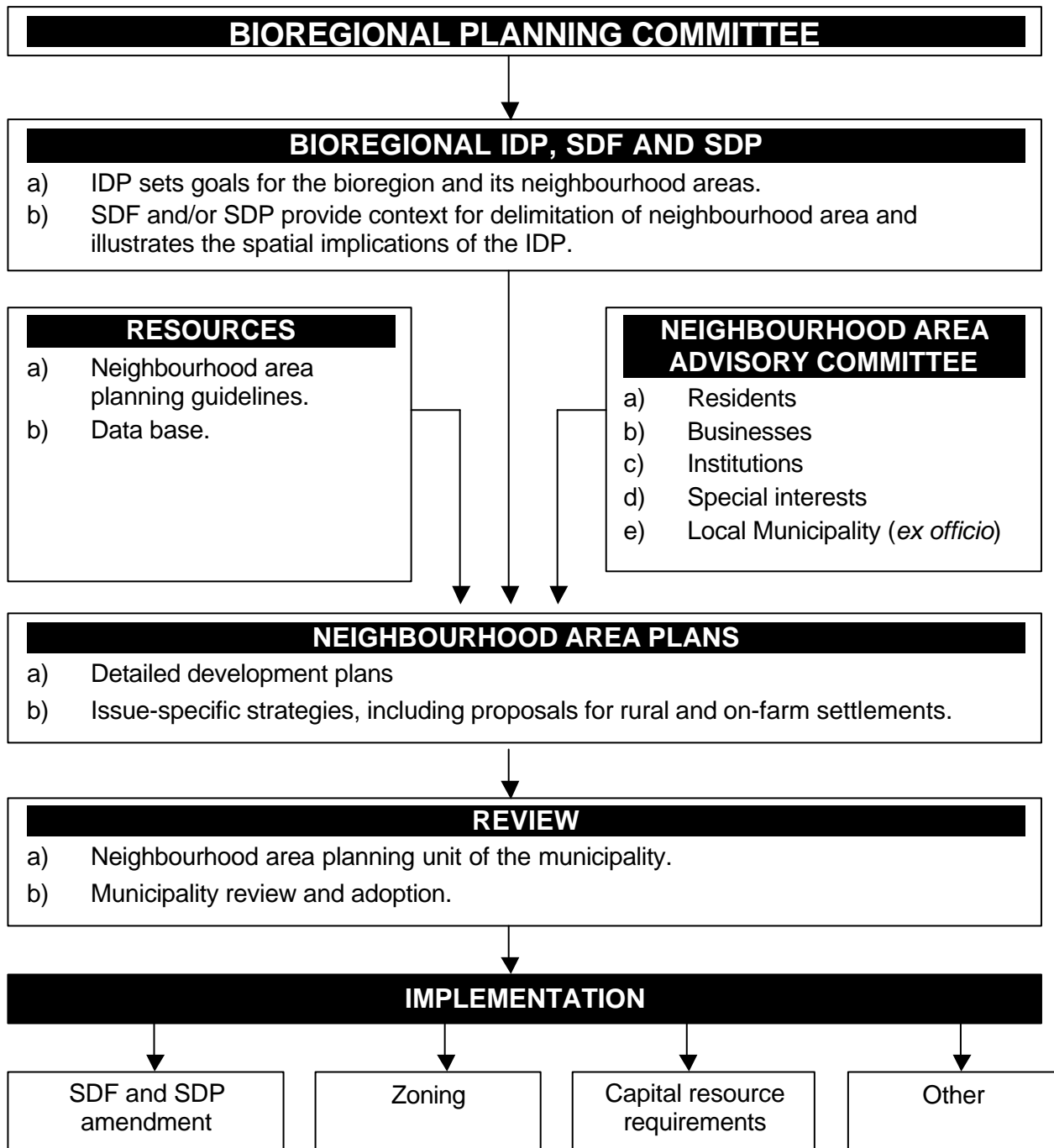


Figure 1: Bioregional and neighbourhood area planning.

1.1 DISTRICT AND BIOREGIONAL SECTORAL PLANS

The IDP lays down the vision for the future development of the district and bioregion as a whole, as well as strategies, proposals and guidelines for the achievement of this vision.

It addresses the various functions of a District Municipality in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998), namely the following:

- a) Integrated development planning for the district as a whole.
- b) Provision of a spatial framework for municipalities within the district.
- c) Provision of bulk water, electricity, sewage and solid waste removal.
- d) Provision of municipal roads that are an integral part of the area as a whole.
- e) Regulation of passenger transport services.
- f) The promotion of tourism in the district.

1.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

In terms of the proposed planning process (refer to Figure 1 above), Local Municipalities should, in co-operation with neighbourhood area advisory committees, be responsible for the preparation of more detailed development plans determining the future nature of neighbourhood areas. Such plans, referred to as spatial development plans in terms of the Western Cape Planning and Development Act, 1999 (Act 107 of 1999), should, accordingly, provide a vision and goals for the future development of the neighbourhood area, a policy framework according to which development decisions supportive of this vision should be made, as well as strategies for the attainment of this vision.

Neighbourhood area plans should, furthermore, provide development guidelines for maintaining the aesthetic quality and specific character of the neighbourhood area.

In addition, neighbourhood area plans should describe how IDP goals are to be achieved. Alternatives may also be proposed, based upon the demonstration that meeting the goals of the IDP is not appropriate.

The public can and should play an active role in generating these plans, although professional urban designers and planners are also essential.

1.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANNING RESOURCES

The IDP provides an overall framework, which should guide the formulation of neighbourhood area plans.

Guidelines for neighbourhood area planning, on content and technical analysis, should be provided in order to promote neighbourhood area plans of a consistent quality with sufficient information for council decision-making.

A database for each neighbourhood area should be established, and should continually be updated with information acquired during the analysis phase of various planning projects. This information source should provide a useful basis for future planning and development decisions.

This database should be developed by the relevant neighbourhood area advisory committee, drawing on local knowledge of the neighbourhood area's character, conditions, needs, etc.

Furthermore, in order for neighbourhood areas to be positioned effectively within the bioregion, they require access to information on the region as whole. It is, therefore, proposed that all available information pertaining to the region as a whole be put on to a website, from where it can easily be accessed by each neighbourhood area advisory committee.

1.4 REVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANS

Neighbourhood area plans and proposals are to be reviewed on a regular basis by the relevant Local Municipality.

It is proposed that such reviews be undertaken on the basis of the following:

- a) Satisfaction of, and compliance with, larger scale needs and priorities.
- b) Compliance with higher level development plans, e.g. IDP.
- c) Co-ordination with adjacent neighbourhood area plans.
- d) Application of IDP principles.
- e) Compliance with national and provincial laws, e.g. those relating to public participation.

The relevant Local Municipality (through its proposed neighbourhood area planning unit) should ensure the coordination of planning and development decisions on a bioregional and neighbourhood area level. In addition, it should undertake the review and amendment of the IDP's Spatial Development Framework (SDF) in accordance with neighbourhood area plans and *vice versa*.

1.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANS

It is recommended that the approval and adoption of neighbourhood area plans be the primary responsibility of elected ward representatives. Such neighbourhood area plans could then be adopted and implemented by the relevant Local Municipality.

Ward Councillors (as provided for by the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 {Act 117 of 1998}) should ensure that the interests of the various neighbourhood areas falling within their wards are communicated to the Local Municipality in order to ensure that neighbourhood area plans and proposals are implemented.

Ward Councillors could, accordingly, ensure that the proposals of their neighbourhood areas are included in the prioritisation processes of the Local Municipality for capital expenditures and other decision-making. The neighbourhood area plans could, in this way, be linked to the budgeting process of the Municipality.

1.5.1 FINANCING IMPLEMENTATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANS

With the ever-increasing demands on the financial resources of Local Municipalities, innovative means of funding the implementation of neighbourhood area planning proposals need to be found. Such funding mechanisms could include the following:

(a) Matching Community Contributions

Programmes should be instituted whereby the Local Municipality will match community contributions towards neighbourhood self-help projects.

Such projects, which must be to the benefit of the public, include improvements to outdoor recreation areas, landscape projects (e.g. tree plantings and park design), transportation improvements, and resource and referral services for low-income and homeless people.

Funds awarded to these projects by the Local Municipality should be matched with the community's contribution of volunteer labour, donated professional services, skilled labour, donated materials or supplies, or cash donations.

(b) School Projects

School children could be involved in projects to uplift their neighbourhood areas, which would have some educational value. For example, river clean-up projects could assist in teaching children about catchment conservation and aquatic ecology.

(c) Trust Funds

It is proposed that the granting of additional land-use rights be subject to the establishment of trust funds. Such trust funds could be utilised for financing neighbourhood upliftment programmes emanating from neighbourhood area plans.

2 DELIMITATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREAS

It needs to be stressed that the demarcation and management of neighbourhood areas should always be considered in the context of the larger area, or region, within which they are located. Special attention should be given to the creation of institutional mechanisms to encourage public participation and active involvement of local governments in the planning and management of such neighbourhood areas and the region as a whole. Neighbourhood areas, therefore, need to be identified for the entire surface area of a district and/or bioregion.

It is proposed that the establishment of rural and on-farm settlements (i.e. Dd and Df areas) be considered on a neighbourhood area level and in accordance with the principles and goals of the IDP.

2.1 DELIMITATION CRITERIA

The following **criteria** are put forward for the delimitation of neighbourhood areas. These criteria are in accordance with the delimitation criteria for bioregions and comply with place-specific planning principles:

a) Local Municipality jurisdiction areas

Neighbourhood areas should fall within (not crossing the boundaries of) a Category B Municipality in order to simplify political responsibility for the implementation of plans and proposals.

Because the Ward Areas of the Category B Municipalities as determined by the Demarcation Board, are generally not consistent with the criteria for neighbourhood areas, and do not seem to follow any consistent logic, these boundaries need not be taken into account in the delimitation of neighbourhood areas.

b) Property boundaries

The boundaries of neighbourhood areas should follow cadastral boundaries in order to facilitate public participation (i.e. which property owners / tenants should belong to which neighbourhood area committee), planning and management.

c) Boundaries of ecological systems

Where applicable, neighbourhood areas should correspond with catchment area boundaries, which also represent one of the key bioregional delimitation criteria.

d) Natural and man-made barriers

Boundaries of neighbourhood areas should correspond with natural barriers (e.g. mountains and rivers) as well as built barriers (e.g. roads) in order for the area to form a functionally cohesive unit.

e) Common character

Neighbourhood areas should correspond with areas that have a common character and identity, determined by physical characteristics such as topography, space, form, detail, symbol use, etc. This is in accordance with the requirements of a place-specific planning approach, in terms of which people need to identify with a particular place for it to be regarded as their home and, therefore, for them to feel a sense of pride and concern towards it.

f) Manageable size of area

Neighbourhood areas should be of a size that has a manageable complexity of issues for the resources available.

g) Central places

In accordance with a place-specific planning approach, neighbourhood areas should, as far as possible, be centered around places, or development nodes (e.g. Dd areas), that function as the center of the particular area.

h) Functional areas

Neighbourhood areas should correspond with areas that function as a unit in terms of the sharing of amenities and infrastructure for logistical planning purposes.

i) Cohesiveness of communities

Neighbourhood areas should correspond, as far as possible, with relatively homogeneous community groupings. This is to ensure that the norms and values of communities, which guide their decision-making on the planning and future development of their neighbourhood areas, are relatively similar.

Neighbourhood area advisory committees should, in co-operation with one another, advise the relevant municipality on the refinement of the boundaries of their respective neighbourhood areas.

In addition to the above delimitation criteria, the boundaries of existing church wards and farmers' associations should also be taken into account.

j) Neighbourhood Area precincts

One of the fundamental purposes of establishing a neighbourhood area is to create planning units which people would relate to on a personal and neighbourhood community level.

Whilst the neighbourhood area is probably the smallest practical planning unit a Local Municipality would establish for integrated development planning purposes on the bioregional level, it seems advisable to provide for even smaller units for internal neighbourhood planning purposes.

In the latter regard it is suggested that each neighbourhood area be divided into a number of *neighbourhood precincts* that are consistent with specific physical characteristics such as topographical features, areas demarcated by main roads, small settlements etc. The *neighbourhood precincts* could then also serve as a basis for electing the members of a neighbourhood area advisory committee.

3 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANNING GUIDELINES

In accordance with the place-specific and bioregional planning approaches, the establishment of rural and on-farm settlements should be guided by neighbourhood area development plans. Such plans would, *inter alia*, comprise the following three main components:

- a) Establishing a role / vision for the neighbourhood area.
- b) Identifying neighbourhood area issues and the formulation of policies.
- c) Drafting a spatial framework for the neighbourhood area.

3.1 VISION FOR THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Development plans of each neighbourhood area need to be drafted in accordance with the roles of the surrounding neighbourhood areas. The envisaged role of each neighbourhood area should determine the kind and intensity of economic activities that should operate in the area and, accordingly, the appropriate size of the community, infrastructural and public facility needs.

The role of neighbourhood areas needs to be determined on both the bioregional and the local level.

3.1.1 BIOREGIONAL PLANNING INFORMANTS

On a bioregional level, the IDP provides for the designation of Spatial Planning Categories (SPCs), consistent with UNESCO's Biosphere Reserve concept, to manage development so that sustainability is promoted and the set goals and objectives for the district are achieved.

The SPCs determine specific purposes and appropriate activities for each geographic area of the district. The various SPCs have been determined on a provincial level and are proposed for the designation of land use across the entire geographic area of the Western Cape Province.

The SPC designation will largely determine the roles of the various neighbourhood areas by determining the predominance of conservation, agricultural, recreational and settlement areas, and associated social and economic activities.

Further factors determining the roles of neighbourhood areas on a regional level are IDP proposals for community facilities and industrial and commercial centres.

3.1.2 REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS

The following characteristics of neighbourhood areas that are of regional significance should also determine, or verify, their regional role as defined by the IDP:

- a) **Environmental suitability** of the neighbourhood area for conservation/recreation/development and, thus, its suitability for various economic activities. This could be determined from, amongst others, soil surveys, assessments of biological resources and historic features, as well as visual assessments.
- b) **Community facilities** provided by the neighbourhood area, e.g. schools, community centers, etc.
- c) **Infrastructural capacity** of the neighbourhood area, i.e. the availability of sewage disposal, water and electrical infrastructure.

3.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA ISSUES, POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

The neighbourhood area level of planning provides an appropriate level for identifying and addressing a number of developmental needs, or issues, in conjunction with the local community.

Development issues specific to a neighbourhood area, in terms of the vision for its future development, as well as district-wide issues, which could be addressed on a neighbourhood level, should, accordingly, be identified for each neighbourhood area.

Amongst others, the following issues and types of actions could be addressed on a neighbourhood area level:

- a) **Minimising resource use.**
This includes the following:
 - (i) Community-level recycling, i.e. the reclamation and re-use of wastes (e.g. composting, use of waste water, etc.).
 - (ii) Maximising people's access while minimising the use of fossil fuel and other non-renewable resources.
 - (iii) Promoting the establishment of fuel-efficient, movement-minimising living environments.
- b) **Creating employment that reduces poverty and supports resource conservation.**

The creation of jobs from recycling should improve the lives of poorer groups, whilst also promoting resource conservation. Provision should be made for market gardening (or small-scale agricultural production) which could be central to the livelihoods of poorer households.

- c) **Providing minimum basic services to all.**
The public participation opportunities provided by neighbourhood level planning should facilitate more accurate determination of the service requirements and priorities of a particular local community and how these needs can best be addressed in that particular context.
- d) **Generating finance for sustainable development.**
Neighbourhood level planning should promote the mobilisation of community resources for low-income housing and neighbourhood area development (e.g. finance for community, or neighbourhood level, services and infrastructure such as water provision, sanitation, health care, etc.). Innovative community actions to meet development needs and reduce resource consumption should be supported.
- e) **Meeting citizen's health needs and ensuring a healthy environment.**
Communities should investigate means of providing health care and emergency services within limited municipal budgets. Domestic violence could be prevented through community mobilisation.
- f) **Transport-minimising** (especially private car use).
This could be promoted through bringing employment opportunities close to public transport nodes and residential areas.

3.3 DISTRICT-LEVEL ISSUES, POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

District-level development issues identified in the IDP, which could be addressed on a neighbourhood area level, should be investigated. Examples of such development issues include the following:

- a) Maintenance of extensive unmodified areas retaining their primeval character and biodiversity. The resources for nature conservation of a group of farms that form a neighbourhood area could be pooled, through the establishment of a conservancy, to form an extensive continuous tract of conserved land.
- b) Maintenance of the primordial quality of the district's mountains and hills that contribute to its character and sense of place. Members of a particular neighbourhood area could co-ordinate their efforts in ensuring the maintenance of the wilderness qualities of the visually prominent mountain / hill slopes of their neighbourhood area, e.g. collaborating in establishing fire control programs, alien plant removal programmes, etc.
- c) Conservation of natural habitats and life supporting natural processes. In response to the above objective, property owners of a particular neighbourhood area could collaborate with one another to establish corridors of conserved land, e.g. a conservancy along a river course.
- d) Maintenance of the potential of the soils to sustain agriculture.
- e) Protection of the visual quality and ambience of rural areas. A problem cited in this regard is the suburbanisation of rural areas through scattered development (i.e. homesteads, farm-worker and tourist accommodation). This problem could be addressed on a neighbourhood basis through members co-operating in centralising development in nodes. Accordingly, farm-worker housing of various farms of a neighbourhood area could be located in a single node as opposed to being dotted across the neighbourhood area. In this regard, it is to be noted that, in terms of IDP policy, new farm-worker housing on undeveloped land is not to be permitted.
- f) Maintenance of significant features of the rural landscape. Members of a particular neighbourhood area could collaborate in protecting and maintaining important heritage features of their neighbourhood area, e.g. lanes of trees along access routes.

- g) Ensuring that communities have access to a full range of community facilities that support their development, health and welfare. Members of a neighbourhood area could collaborate in ensuring that everyone has access to necessary community facilities, through combining resources, sharing facilities, or other means appropriate to that particular neighbourhood area.
- h) Expanding the range of tourist facilities and recreational opportunities. For example, adjoining land-owners of a particular neighbourhood area could co-operate in establishing a network of hiking and mountain biking trails within their neighbourhood area.

3.4 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA ISSUES, POLICIES AND ACTION PLANS

The following issues, policies and action plans can be addressed on a neighbourhood level:

a) Provision of essential services, i.e. water, sewage and refuse disposal infrastructure

Groundwater extraction (e.g. the use of boreholes) could be appropriately managed on a neighbourhood area basis, for example by ensuring that the tapping of water resources on adjoining properties is sustainable. In addition, the sustained yield and quality of the water source, as well as the allowable extraction volumes for each property within the neighbourhood area, can be determined. Furthermore, the various members of the neighbourhood area could collaborate in ensuring that the aquifer, or catchment, is carefully monitored so as to ensure the sustainability of the yield.

Sewage disposal could also be dealt with on a neighbourhood area basis. Particularly where site-specific conditions, i.e. the geology, soils, slope, water table, etc., are inappropriate for soak-away sanitation systems (e.g. septic tanks), members of a neighbourhood area could collaborate in instituting alternative innovative sewage disposal methods.

The disposal of refuse is another service that could be managed on a neighbourhood area basis. While it is proposed that municipalities should investigate regional waste disposal facilities, refuse could be collected and transferred on a neighbourhood area basis. Accordingly, transfer stations could be established for each, or a number of, neighbourhood areas for the temporary storage and subsequent transport of refuse to the envisaged regional reuse disposal site. In this way, the disposal of refuse on farms, which can have several detrimental impacts (e.g. negative visual impacts, or pollution of groundwater by leachates washed from landfill sites during heavy rains), can be avoided.

As in the case of sewage disposal, there is an urgent need to investigate alternative methods of waste disposal. Landfill sites are generally not sustainable in the long term, and through recycling programmes, composting of biodegradable wastes etc., the bulk and weight of waste can be significantly reduced, thereby reducing the need to establish new landfill sites.

b) Local economic development

Neighbourhood areas constitute appropriate social and physical units for the promotion of economic development on a local level.

Through developing their sense of pride and ownership for their neighbourhood area communities could be encouraged to work together to generate employment opportunities and economic development. For example, for the tourism potential of a neighbourhood area to be promoted, all residents need to be involved in making it attractive to visitors, e.g. by cleaning up litter, welcoming visitors, establishing activities of interest, etc.

Furthermore, the promotion of economic development requires a cross- or inter-sectoral approach. Neighbourhood planning would be an ideal vehicle for promoting economic development, in that it essentially focuses on place-making, and thus concentrates on the inter-connection between different sectoral issues, and their connection to physical infrastructure, and to place.

Municipalities, which, in terms of the constitution, have the responsibility to promote local economic development, could collaborate with neighbourhood area advisory committees in creating local employment opportunities and promoting economic development.

It is important that local municipalities are allocated sufficient funding and capacity to facilitate local economic development. A help desk could be set up within municipalities to provide assistance and advice on the drawing up of business plans, and on sources of funding and training opportunities. Furthermore, a suitably qualified official could be charged with identifying and selling business opportunity ideas to larger businesses / farms.

Larger businesses and farms could, thus, be encouraged, in terms of their social responsibility, to create employment opportunities within their neighbourhood area. Farming, or business activities, could, for example, be outsourced to public agencies. Partnerships could be established between big business and small, medium or micro enterprises, and / or venture capital could be supplied by big business.

Housing provision should also, through self-help schemes, be used to generate income and employment opportunities.

Local Municipalities need to ensure that small business entrepreneurs obtain sufficient support to be appropriately empowered. They also need to provide appropriate training programmes, monitoring, etc.

c) Transportation and access

More detailed aspects relating to transportation infrastructure could be addressed on a neighbourhood area level. For example, road finishes, landscaping of verges, traffic calming measures, public transportation shelters, etc. could be addressed. These aspects should be designed in accordance with the specific community needs and character of the neighbourhood area.

In addition, provision for more localised forms of transit, i.e. walking and cycling, should be addressed on a neighbourhood area level. Accordingly, the design and management of a

system of bikeways and pedestrian paths should be undertaken on a neighbourhood area level with the participation of the local community.

The provision of transportation infrastructure supportive of recreation and tourism should also be addressed on a neighbourhood area level. Accordingly, public access to specific areas such as nature areas, streams and fine viewpoints should be determined on this level.

d) Aesthetic control

In maintaining the character of the district, it is important that the character of its individual places be preserved. Aspects contributing to the character of individual neighbourhood areas should be ascertained in collaboration with the local community.

Based upon these findings, manuals and guidelines to inform developers and owners of the valued qualities of the neighbourhood area, appropriate development patterns, and the appropriate siting, form and treatment of new buildings, should be prepared.

Aesthetics committees could also be formed within neighbourhood areas to provide inputs regarding the conformance of development applications with the specific aesthetic quality of their neighbourhood areas.

Types of development that should be subject to aesthetic control and scrutiny include structures such as buildings, signage, service infrastructure (i.e. maintenance of roads, electricity and telephone cables), etc.

e) Community facilities

Needs for localised community facilities (e.g. primary schools, crèches, clinics, sport and recreational facilities) should be ascertained on a neighbourhood area level by user-groups.

The provision of community facilities can be prioritised according to the specific needs of a particular neighbourhood area. Neighbourhood communities should be encouraged to develop innovative means of addressing community facility needs, e.g. multi-functional use of certain buildings or areas.

Consideration could also be given to public facilities required to unleash the recreational and tourism potential of neighbourhood areas, e.g. information centers, picnic sites, parking areas, ablutions, etc.

f) Protection of natural and man-made features

Neighbourhood communities should have the best knowledge of built and natural features contributing to the character of their area. Furthermore, being most affected by their maintenance, they could be motivated to become involved in their protection. Accordingly, they would be best placed to ensure the protection of such features.

Aesthetics committees could, for example, assist in scrutinising development applications to check whether the developments are likely to adversely affect the integrity of any natural or built features of their neighbourhood area.

g) Rehabilitation and enhancement of environments

The rehabilitation of degraded environments and the improvement of the aesthetic quality of environments could also be appropriately tackled on a neighbourhood area basis. Property owners of a neighbourhood area could collaborate in, for example, eradicating alien vegetation, cleaning up polluted areas and rehabilitating indigenous vegetation in areas of common concern, e.g. water-courses traversing a number of farms, or hill-sides visible from several farms.

Furthermore, tree-planting or other landscaping programmes could be designed and implemented on a neighbourhood area level with the participation of local communities.

Rehabilitation measures and landscaping projects could be funded through trust funds, established as a result of development rights being awarded to certain farms within the neighbourhood area.

h) Safety and security

neighbourhood area communities could collaborate, in co-operation with the South African Police Services (SAPS), in ensuring their own personal safety and the security of their property, e.g. through the establishment of neighbourhood watches, etc.

3.5 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA PLANS

Besides the basic needs and aspirations of local communities, consideration should also be given to the so-called '*sensory*' quality of the neighbourhood area when considering development issues pertaining to that neighbourhood area.

According to Lynch (1988)¹ the '*sensory*' quality of a place refers to the degree to which it is tailored to human experiential needs. It embraces the following four issues, namely:

- a) Support for human bodily functions.
- b) Accessibility of places.
- c) Landscapes and communication.
- d) Sense of living / liveliness.

According to Lynch (1988) a region should be assessed in terms of these issues. Standards or guidelines should be set for them, and future modifications should be programmed to accommodate them.

3.5.1 SUPPORT FOR HUMAN BODILY FUNCTIONS

A whole set of environmental concerns cluster around the functioning of our bodies. Climatic conditions, for example, have an important effect on the feeling of well-being. Some environments protect us from climatic discomforts, whilst others reinforce the discomforts.

The following examples illustrate how many concrete issues there are concerning human bodily functions. According to Lynch (1988) norms and standards could be proposed for such things as:

¹ Lynch, K (1988) **The Theory of Good City Form**. MIT Press Oxford Massachusetts.

- a) The prevention of reflected sunlight glare, and the encouragement of building surfaces that modulate strong light.
- b) Maximum sound levels that preserve the ability to converse outdoors, to hear natural sounds, to allow sleep and study, or for the blind to orient themselves by hearing.
- c) Prevention, or masking, of disagreeable odours, fumes, and dust.
- d) Availability of places to sit and to lie down in public.
- e) Provision of rain shelter, wind shelter and shade, and the prevention of wind tunneling or the dumping of heat into public spaces.

3.5.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF PLACES

Access to places has an influence on how easily people are able to accomplish their daily chores and pleasures of life. Accessibility is not only affected by transport facilities, but also by social norms, and so places are perceived as accessible or barred, open or closed, free or controlled.

In considering issues pertaining to accessibility a neighbourhood area committee might, for example, develop norms for the following:

- a) The perceived safety of being alone at any hour in various areas.
- b) The availability of orientation information.
- c) The clarity of movement, connection, and approach that should be achieved along routes.
- d) The 'imageability' of spaces.

In addition, the following investigations, or actions, should be considered:

- a) Designing a system of bikeways, pedestrian trails and footways, and ensuring their management.
- b) Suggesting how public access can be provided to specific areas such as nature areas, streams, and fine viewpoints.
- c) Developing information centers where current changes and future possibilities are displayed.

3.5.3 LANDSCAPES AND COMMUNICATION

Any inhabited landscape is a medium of communication. The multiple messages of the environment affect our performance, cognition, development, and emotional and aesthetic satisfaction. The consideration of landscapes as communication mediums should, therefore, extend far beyond conventional sign control.

Examples of possible regional norms, or guidelines, for communication include the following:

- a) Limits to the number of words (or other measures of information density) that are to be visible from any public location.
- b) Restriction of explicit visible information to that which is related to its site, except for specified purposes and in certain areas.
- c) Making available generally desired information (as determined by public inquiry).
- d) Location of information centers and communication facilities that are to be accessible to the public.
- e) Availability of places to meet, sit, and talk in comfort, as well as places for large outdoor meetings, celebrations, and displays.

3.5.4 SENSE OF LIVING / LIVELINESS

The deepest meaning of any place is its sense of connection to human life and indeed to the whole web of living things. Many of the qualities noted previously contribute to this sense. Such contributions occur, for example, when a setting visibly supports biological and social functions, or when it has a local identity and a clear temporal structure, or when it is rich in information. Some places seem cold; others vibrate with life.

To help create the ideal environment within a neighbourhood area, the municipality should, with the assistance of the neighbourhood area advisory committee, develop norms in respect of the following:

- a) The desirable mix and intensity of activity in and around the public domain.
- b) The ability of groups and individuals to display symbols of their own values (as by permitting or encouraging street decorations, or the prominent location of symbolic community buildings).
- c) The preservation and enhancement of existing topography and ecology.

Whilst certain development needs or issues, identified on a neighbourhood area level, can be appropriately addressed on that level, other aspects may need to be addressed on a regional level, for example:

- a) Issues that can best be considered holistically at a larger scale of totality (e.g. catchment management).
- b) When the spatial element being considered crosses jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. regional roads).
- c) When the impact of decisions transcends jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. sources of air pollution).

District level proposals put forward in the IDP may, subsequently, need to be amended, or modified, on the basis of a neighbourhood level investigation.

4 SPATIAL PLANS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD AREAS

Spatial plans should be drawn up according to the envisaged roles of neighbourhood areas, whilst giving physical form to policy proposals.

Neighbourhood area spatial plans should be guided by higher level development plans, e.g. the IDP and municipal SDF.

The spatial plan of the IDP indicates the spatial implications of policy proposals and strategies. It provides for the designation of SPCs to regulate development so that the goals and objectives set for the district may be achieved. These SPCs designate land-use across the entire geographic area of the district.

The SPCs that have been designated on a bioregional level should be refined and fine-tuned on a neighbourhood area level. Neighbourhood plans could also put forward alternative proposals, where it can be demonstrated that IDP proposals are inappropriate.

In the drafting and refinement of neighbourhood area plans it is important that spatial plans of adjoining neighbourhood areas be coordinated and reconciled with one another.

The following aspects need to be addressed in spatial plans for neighbourhood areas:

- a) A green system where development should not be allowed, or will be more tightly controlled for a variety of reasons, including ecological, hazards, production, recreation and place-making reasons.
- b) Location of settlement areas in accordance with development pattern characteristics of the neighbourhood area.
- c) Nature and configuration of the transportation system.
- d) Location and nature of social community facilities.
- e) Location and nature of utility and emergency services.