

Draft Density and intensification policy in support of the structure plan: for discussion purposes

INTRODUCTION:

What is densification and why is it needed

- **Densification not only refers to the increase in intensification of residential activities, but also refers to the intensification of activities within certain identified areas**
- ***Higher density does not mean low income***
- ***Densification does not mean blanket densification of the entire town – it provides for densification in selected areas, to provide different density categories in a town which ultimately gives investors different choices. Do not want homogenous typologies.***

Large properties have been the norm in Namibia for many years. Unfortunately, large properties also means

- higher rates and taxes for the owners, making it unaffordable for large sections of the population
- higher maintenance costs
- higher water costs (if property has large gardens, it means large areas need to be watered and with Namibia being a dry country, this is simply no longer an option)
- Less security – bigger properties tend to mean higher security costs
- cost of engineering services – larger properties lead to urban sprawl and this leads to higher cost to service such neighbourhoods
- Unsustainable – all over the world the norm of having large properties are changing. Urban sprawl also leads to higher personal vehicle usage, which means that the low income person that does not have personal transport must make use of public transport, which are non-existent in Namibian towns. They then have to rely on taxi services which are expensive, not always safe and unreliable
- Longer travel distances between development nodes (places of employment) because of urban sprawl, with fragmented and dispersed urban activity patterns. Such a dispersed pattern makes it difficult for a viable public transport system
- Leads to lower social cohesion.

Urban sprawl is a term that describes the continuous low density development without a clearly defined centre, usually encouraging car dependency and the segregation of land-uses. Urban sprawl is seen not as environmentally sustainable as it increases distances between land-use activities, increase the dependency on cars, it increases the expense of providing a future public transport system and it increases the cost of service delivery to developments further away.

Low density developments are popular with many consumers and these can still be catered for within an urban development.

Densification definitions:

“The increased use of space both horizontally and vertically within existing areas/properties and new development accompanied by an increased number of units and/or population thresholds.

Incremental densification refers to small-scale densification which is almost invisible, e.g. the subdivision of a residential property or the construction of a second dwelling.

Densification is not an end in itself, but a means of improving the sustainability of public transport and improving the vitality of urban precincts” (City of Cape Town, 2012)

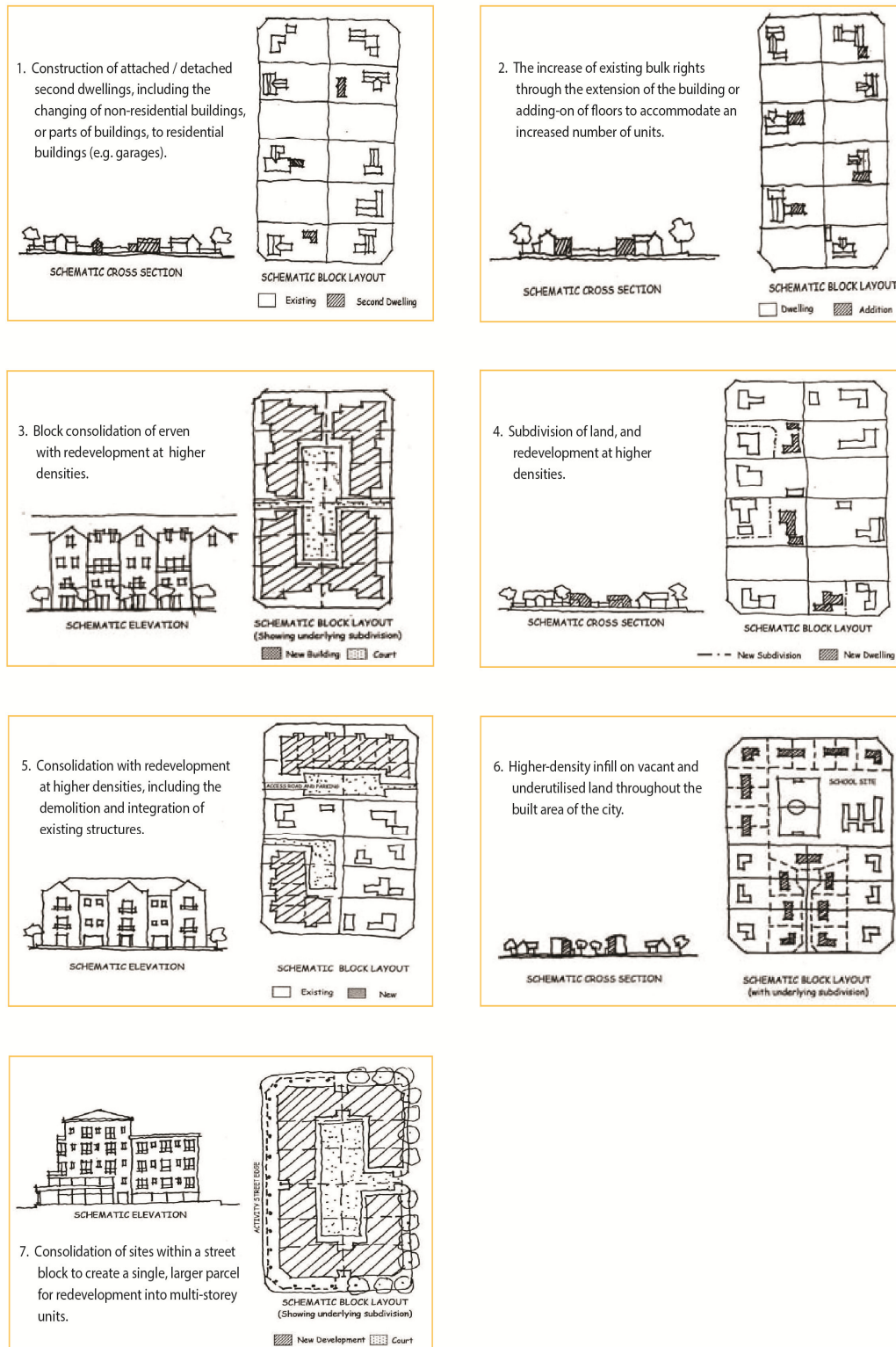
Densification in the Namibian context can refer to many different housing typologies and methods. It can mean:

- Intensification of larger residential properties by permitting a second dwelling on the property
- Intensification of larger residential properties by subdividing into an additional erf (creating attached row/ duplex housing
- Consolidation of properties for higher density developments
- Changing the density of residential properties for townhouse/ flat development

A function of increased density, buildings will need to be allowed to get taller, and to cover a greater bulk and allowed to offer a mixture of uses such as retail, office, institutional and residential uses. “In addition to increasing density, taller buildings have other passive advantages, such as the creation of shade and enclosure that can moderate the environmental conditions at street level, by cooling through shading and by providing a wind barrier” (SPC, 2015 Khorixas Structure Plan).

Figure 1 shows the different forms of densification that can be taken up in an urban area.

Figure 1 Examples of different forms of densification



Source: (City of Cape Town, 2012)

Caution: Densification in the Namibian setup does not refer to New York, Dubai or Hong Kong. Each country has to assess their own realities and situations and come up with a strategy that works for the particular situation. Densification in the Namibian context will take on different forms and typologies and will most likely refer to 2 to 4 storey developments and not necessarily to a 10 to 50 storey development. Figure 2 below shows how the same density can be applied, but with different housing typologies. This shows that a building does not necessarily have to be 10 storeys high to allow for higher density. Buildings can also be 2 to 3 storeys in height but spaced differently.

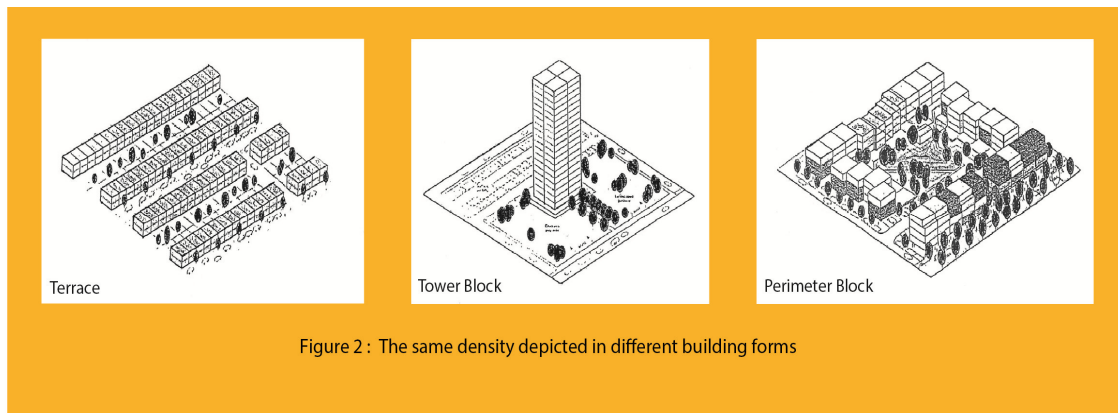


Figure 2 : The same density depicted in different building forms

Source: (City of Cape Town, 2012)

Densification is **feared by many** because of the perceived negative impact of density. Many see the unattractive, monotonous buildings being constructed under the auspice of densification. **Densification does not have to be unattractive** and should not be feared. One of the principles of densification is to ensure proper building form, ensuring that such developments makes provision for open spaces; ensure that the architecture and typology of the building is attractive. This is also where a Town Council have the responsibility when approving the building plans.

Densification can be done either through **a) infill** or **b) compaction**. Infill is when open, vacant areas are developed. Compaction refers to the redevelopment of the existing properties to higher densities (densification) and may include subdivision and development of large properties within urban areas.

Densification does not mean blanket densification of the entire town. Densification is to allow for choice and is to allow for the investor the choice of choosing high or low density properties. It is important to allow for variety and choice within an urban context and to take into account aspects of recreation, agriculture, ecological, sensitive areas, conservation and low density and identify areas accordingly.

Densification and intensification Policy for Keetmanshoop:

Densification should typically take place in target areas such as

- Town centres; development nodes; activity spines, proximity to major transport roads, areas where higher residential density development should be promoted. Typically higher densities will be placed in proximity to shops, offices and public transport routes.

Densification and intensification should be discouraged in high priority agriculture areas, identified rural areas, conservation and sensitive areas and areas earmarked for low density development.

Density in Namibia is controlled by town planning schemes through the allocation of densities to residential land. Densities can vary from high density 1:100m² to lower densities of 1:900m² or 1 per Erf. Business and office activities are regulated by prescribing a bulk factor/ floor area ratio for each of the properties. This bulk can vary from as low as 0.4 to as high as 3.0. For single residential zoned properties the densities are not allowed to go lower than 1:300m² due to the restrictive government measures put in place that prohibits single residential erven being smaller than 300m². Currently the only way to allow for residential properties to be smaller than 300m² is through rezoning to General Residential and creation of sectional title ownership.

Objectives of densification

Broadly the densification guidelines are to ensure

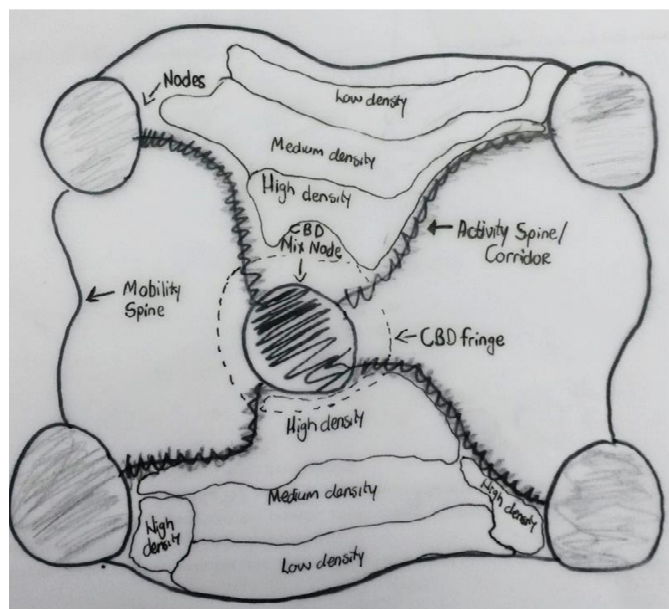
- Higher levels of densification and intensification of different land uses in highly accessible localities, central business areas; commercial nodes
- Higher levels of densification and intensification along activity streets and corridors
- Densification in civic and institutional nodes
- Mobility access roads is to remain for mobility purposes
- Incremental small densification in areas away from these nodes

For clarity purposes the following concepts are defined

CBD – Central business area where the highest intensity of retail activities to be permitted.

National Corridor/ Mobility spine – (B1 and B4) is a road linkage between activity spines and the main function is to ensure mobility. On such a spine office and business activities are to be restricted as this will impact mobility.

Local Corridor is a main street/ road within town such as the B1, that enters the urban



development area. This corridor will have fewer restrictions than the national corridor with reduced speeds, traffic circle, four-way-stops, street lights and so forth.

Activity Corridor refers to the main street within Keetmanshoop and Krönlein. The activity corridor is a mixed use area along a major street. Typically this street should be pedestrian oriented with slow moving traffic. The activities are to incorporate a mixture of retail, offices, and residential uses with higher density than the surrounding area, but lower density and intensity than that of the mixed use nodes. Corridors are to link development nodes/ activity nodes and other areas of activity. Typically an urban area will have higher intensity corridors and lower intensity corridors.

Activity street is a local street where pedestrian activities are important, where higher intensity uses and higher densities are to be encouraged.

Lower order Activity Street is a street that has the potential to become a major activity street in the future. Until such time lower order activities such as home based shops, resident occupations, bed and breakfast establishments can be encouraged.

Mobility spine is a road that is reserved for the future for a major activity corridor. This road is not essential at this time, but once the urban development reaches this point it will become a necessity.

Lower mobility spine refers to the existing district roads giving access from the surrounding hinterland to the town of Keetmanshoop. Access points onto this road will be necessary but will still be restricted in terms of distance of between 300 to 500metres between access points.

Pedestrian link refers to areas over or under the railway line that needs to be formally created by the Council. There are two such areas in Keetmanshoop that is to be beautified, street lights provided and generally made safer for pedestrians.

Mixed Use Nodes/ corridors are areas with a unique mixture of land uses having higher intensity of activities and high density. These nodes are usually situated on major crossings which is well served by pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Nodes will be linked with each other by means of activity streets. Intensity and density should be higher than those of the activity street/corridor.

Speciality nodes are areas with specific functions such as industrial node; institutional node etc

Shop-house: term that refers to a building where the front or lower level is used for a shop and the back area or first floor used for residential purposes. A shop-house ensures that there is a link with the pedestrian world outside and brings vibrancy to a traditional business/office area that closes down after 5'o'clock.

The corridors must be beautified through creating streetscapes that are attractive, safe, accessible (pedestrians, vehicles and cycling), providing shelter and shade in harsh climates. It is the responsibility of the Town Council to ensure that developments also make provision for amenities such as open spaces, and beautification of streets when applying for approval of building plans on these corridors. Land uses on the ground floor along corridors should be promoting activity and vitality of the area.

Recommendations for Keetmanshoop:

Objective:

The objective of the Keetmanshoop policy is to bring back life to the central business district of the town; to expand the business area; to allow for more mixed used activities and opportunities.

Table 1 Categories of business and office policy

Area and number on map	Description of the area	Density and Intensity Guidelines
A	Noordhoek mix use area	Mix use area with bulk of 0.5 and residential density of 1:250. Residential component ideally to be on first floor with office or business on ground floor. Pavements to be landscaped. Buildings to create shade for pedestrians. Area to support UNAM and NTA campuses with provision of student accommodation.
B	Noordhoek mix use area	Mix use area with bulk of 0.5 and residential density of 1:250. Residential component ideally to be on first floor with office or business on ground floor. Pavements to be landscaped. Buildings to create shade for pedestrians. Area to support UNAM and NTA campuses with provision of student accommodation.
C	Expansion of CBD area	Business and office with bulk of 2. Higher densities of 1:100. To support the CBD area. Pavements to be landscaped and buildings to provide shade for pedestrians
D	CBD expansion area	Business and office with bulk of 4. Higher densities of 1:100. To support the CBD area. Pavements to be landscaped and buildings to provide shade for pedestrians
E	Noordhoek mix use area	To support the Noordhoek community with business and office rights. Bulk of 0.5. Pavements to be landscaped and buildings to provide shade for pedestrians
F	Historical CBD	Historical buildings within area. Historical buildings to be preserved. Bulk of 2.0.

Area and number on map	Description of the area	Density and Intensity Guidelines
G	Expanded CBD	Business and office with bulk of 4. Higher densities of 1:100. To support the CBD area. Pavements to be landscaped and buildings to provide shade for pedestrians. Cycling and bus routes to be encouraged.
H	Mix use area	Mix use area with bulk of 0.75. Office and residential to be encouraged. Ideally residential to be on first floor while offices on the ground floor. Sufficient open spaces to be provided and landscaping of area.
I	Mix use area (Krönlein)	Mix use area with bulk of 0.75. Office and residential to be encouraged. Ideally residential to be on first floor while offices on the ground floor. Sufficient open spaces to be provided and landscaping of area.
J	Local business node (Krönlein)	Local business node in Krönlein with bulk of 1.0
K	Krönlein mix use area	Mix use area with bulk of 0.5 and residential density of 1:250. Residential component ideally to be on first floor with office or business on ground floor. Pavements to be landscaped. Buildings to create shade for pedestrians. Area to support business area of Krönlein
L	Business area of Krönlein	Extension of the CBD to Krönlein. Bulk of 2. For business and offices. To support the CBD area. Pavements to be landscaped and buildings to provide shade for pedestrians. Cycling and bus routes to be encouraged.
M	Mix use area (Tseiblaagte)	Mix use area with bulk of 0.5. Office and residential to be encouraged. Ideally residential to be on first floor while offices on the ground floor. Sufficient open spaces to be provided and landscaping of area.
N	Mix use area (Tseiblaagte)	Mix use area with bulk of 0.5. Office and residential to be encouraged. Ideally residential to be on first floor while offices on the ground floor. Sufficient open spaces to be provided and landscaping of area.

Figure 2 Categories for residential densification

NUMBER ON MAP	AREA	Density and Intensity Guidelines
A	Westdene	Low density residential neighbourhood with densities of 1:900. Hospitality activities such as bed and breakfast and guest house activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed
B	Westdene	Medium to Low density residential neighbourhood with densities of 1:750. Activities such as bed and breakfast and guesthouse activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed.
C	Westdene	Medium density residential neighbourhood situated on one of the minor activity streets. Subdivision of erven to be encouraged, supplementary dwelling units for rental encouraged and resident occupations also encouraged. activities such as bed and breakfast and guest house activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed
D	Noordhoek higher densities	The expansion of the CBD area and encouraging higher densities of 1:100 in the area. Sufficient open spaces to be provided within the high density development.
E	Noordhoek	Medium density residential development. Subdivision of erven to be encouraged, supplementary dwelling units for rental encouraged and resident occupations also encouraged. activities such as bed and breakfast and guest house activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed
F	Noordhoek	Low density residential neighbourhood. Densities of 1:900. Hospitality activities such as bed and breakfast and guest house activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed
G	Noordhoek	Medium density residential neighbourhood. Subdivision of erven to be encouraged, supplementary dwelling units for rental encouraged and resident occupations also encouraged. Activities such as bed and breakfast and guest house activities can be encouraged in this area as long as the character of the area is not disturbed. Creation of student accommodation encouraged.
H	Medium density	Medium Density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:450 with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Activities such as guesthouses and bed and breakfast to be encouraged. These activities not to change the character of the area
I	Town	Higher residential node of 1:100. Expansion of CBD area

NUMBER ON MAP	AREA	Density and Intensity Guidelines
		to the south and higher densities to be encouraged. Close to workplace. Sufficient open spaces to be provided within the high density development.
J	Krönlein	Medium density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:450 with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Activities such as guesthouses and bed and breakfast to be encouraged. These activities not to change the character of the area
K	Krönlein higher density area	Higher density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:300with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes
L	Krönlein high density node	In support of the activity street and business node higher densities of 1:100 can be encouraged. Sufficient open spaces to be provided within the high density development.
M	Tseiblaagte higher density	Higher density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:300with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Shop-house, resident occupation and home base business to be encouraged on erven next to the activity street .
N	High density node	High density node with densities of 1:100 within the small neighbourhood business node. Sufficient open spaces to be provided within high density development
O	Tseiblaagte higher density	Higher density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:300with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Shop-house, resident occupation and home base business to be encouraged on erven next to the activity street .
P	Tseiblaagte higher density	Higher density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:250. Shop-house, resident occupation and home base business to be encouraged on erven next to the activity street
Q	Medium density Tseiblaagte	Medium density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:450 with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Activities such as guesthouses and bed and breakfast to be encouraged. These activities not to change the character of the area
R	Medium density Tseiblaagte	Medium density residential neighbourhood. Densities of up to 1:600 with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Activities such as guesthouses and bed and breakfast to be encouraged. These activities not to change the character of the area
S	Tseiblaagte higher	Higher density residential neighbourhood. Densities of

NUMBER ON MAP	AREA	<i>Density and Intensity Guidelines</i>
	density	up to 1:300with supplementary dwelling unit for rental purposes. Shop-house, resident occupation and home base business to be encouraged on erven next to the activity street .

General Conditions

- The town planning scheme remains the statutory document. This means that whether an erf falls within a policy area or not – the applicant/ developer must still undertake the statutory rezoning process. This policy is merely to assist the Council with decision making matters. When applying for a rezoning within the policy area, the Council can give consent for the developer to start construction while the rezoning is in process. As the rezoning process can take up to 2 years, this conditions is included to fast track development. However – no consent is to be given if there are any objections from the neighbours or public. In a case where objections have been received the full statutory process must first be completed before the developer can start with the construction. This is to prevent Council from being held legally responsibly by the public and the developer.
- Higher residential development has to provide open space amenities within the developments as well as undertaking the paving of the pavement on the street front and landscaping of the pavement adjacent to the development.
- The Open spaces included into the policy areas do not mean that these are to be closed down. They have been included but these open spaces are not to be used for infill or densification purposes.

