Urban Agriculture in Cape Town & The City Of Cape Town
Urban Agriculture Policy 2007: To what extent the Policy contributes towards enabling the development of urban agriculture in the City

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Minor dissertation presented for the approval of Senate in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MPhil specializing in Climate Change and Sustainable Development in approved courses and a minor dissertation. I hereby declare that I have read and understood the regulations governing the submission of the MPhil specializing in Climate Change and Sustainable Development dissertations, including those relating to length and plagiarism, as contained in the rules of this University, and that this minor dissertation conforms to those regulations.

Signature:

Date:
I would like to express my gratitude to all of those who participated in this study and who were generous with their time and input. In addition thank you to Bradley Rink of the Environmental and Geographical Science Department at the University of Cape Town for helpful guidance. And many thanks to my supervisor Gareth Haysom of the African Centre for Cities for most useful comments and input throughout the process.
Abstract

Urban agriculture has been recognised by both an established, as well as bourgeoning body of research, as being able to contribute towards the reduction of stresses placed on spheres such as the socio-economic and urban food systems in the cities in which it occurs. This research paper takes as its focus the City of Cape Town in South Africa, and through qualitative research explores the extent to which the city’s urban agriculture policy 2007 has been able to create an enabling environment for the invigoration and development of urban agriculture in the City. A group of non-governmental organisations were selected as case studies through which it was possible to elucidate the intersection between policy and practice. The institutional landscape pertaining to urban agriculture in Cape Town was revealed through unpacking the role of the City’s Urban Agriculture Unit, created through the policy, and tasked with its implementation. It was shown that despite the policy possessing rigour in terms of its grounding in theory, a number of challenges encumbered its practical delivery on the ground. These pertained to the broader legislative and policy frameworks in which the Urban Agriculture Unit operates, as well as deficiencies in collaboration and common purpose existing between and amongst non-governmental practitioners. Ultimately it proved instructive to explore these challenges in terms of how they revealed a potential way forward for the establishment of enabling conditions for urban agriculture, and the roles and responsibilities needing to be fulfilled by both government and non-governmental entities in achieving this.
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Prologue

This research paper is grounded for the most part in the discussion of the institutional elements (legislation, policy, engagements between key stakeholders) of UA in the City. It is thus easy for the narrative to become dislocated from the activity of urban farming itself, and the sense of ‘place’ attached to it. Thus appended is a photolog of urban gardens of various sizes, located in such districts as Vrygroend, Elsies River and Lavender Hill (some of the areas which experience disproportionality high incidences of violent crime, poverty and other social stresses). This serves to provide the reader with a snapshot of the way in which food gardening is approached in the City, and the conditions pertaining to UA in Cape Town specifically. Equally important is that the findings and discussion of this research should be appreciated with the perspective that within the framework of a minor dissertation there are limits to which certain points of interest may be pursued. Thus it should be qualified from the outset that this research serves in the main to establish themes around which further enquiry can and should be developed, rather than appearing to have established comprehensive outcomes.
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1 INTRODUCTION, RESEARCH AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mounting pressure is being placed on urban systems in South Africa as a result of both internal and external forcing. Pressure is exerted for example through the increasing growth of urban populations relative to a cities capacity to sustain them (United Nations Human Settlements Programme [UN-HABITAT], 2003 & United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [DESA], 2008), the impact of global economic perturbations that inter alia inflate local food prices (Lang & Barling, 2012; Thu, 2009), and the impact (much less easily quantifiable) that will be experienced through future climate uncertainty across regional and global scales, and which will require of cities the application of a concert of adaptive measures (Parnell, Simon & Vogel, 2007). In this context the imperative to house, feed, and provide adequate services to urban citizens, especially the impoverished, requires proactive responses from city authorities. One of the sternest challenges faced by cities in South Africa, now and in the future, is how to provide basic services and infrastructural development needed by its citizens in a way that also recognises the limits imposed by the natural environment and recognises the threats posed by climate change. The urban food system and the issue of urban food security are fundamentally important discussions within this context. Of particular relevance in this regard is the theme of urban agriculture (UA). As this research will touch upon, UA initiatives may provide the opportunity for cities in South Africa to address the issue of food security, as well as cогenerating additional social and environmental benefits. Fundamental to this discussion is the role of city authorities, who shape the institutional environment in which the responses to these issues are located. It will be argued that the buy in of city authorities is essential if UA initiatives are to be successful. At the same time the role of civil society in furthering the development of UA outside of institutional frameworks is of equal importance. This research explores these themes
as they pertain to the City of Cape Town (henceforth the City). The discussion will be grounded in an exposition of the City’s UA Policy of 2007 (CoCT, 2007), and will develop the issues around the application of this Policy into practice, and whether the Policy has created an enabling environment for UA development in the City.¹

This research has been structured in the following manner. A literature review will expand upon the rationale for the research question posed and frame the relevant aims and objectives of the study. It will also serve to outline some of the complexities relating to the issue of urban food security and the various forms UA takes within cities of the developing world. The discussion will flesh out the factors adding to an ‘enabling environment’ for successful UA, through a discussion of the various constraints and challenges present in the literature. Subsequently, the results and discussion sections will develop the texture of two relevant contexts with regards to UA in the City. Firstly, the administrative or institutional context pertaining to the formulation and delivery of the CoCT (2007) and secondly, how UA is envisaged and undertaken by entities outside of government i.e. by UA non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The conclusion will note that what is encountered is a broad set of challenges pertaining to the undertaking of UA in the City, and reiterate the Policy’s relation to these challenges. Some modest assertions as to how the picture may develop going forward.

¹ Note, upper case ‘Policy’ refers to the City of Cape Town Urban Agriculture Policy 2007 (CoCT, 2007).
1.2 **Research Aim:**

To understand through the lens of case studies of established NGOs operating in the UA sector and through an assessment of the functioning of the City’s UaU, the extent to which the City of Cape Town Urban Agriculture Policy (CoCT, 2007) has created an enabling environment for the development of UA in Cape Town.

1.3 **Objectives:**

1) Unpack the key strategic interventions and guidelines contained within the CoCT (2007) and gain an understanding as to how these have been applied by the City’s Urban Agriculture Unit (UaU) including the current status as to the progress which has been made.

2) Through qualitative research create a textured understanding of the nature and extent of the engagements between established NGOs undertaking UA initiatives in the City (as recipients of the Policy), and the City’s UaU (as the Policy’s implementing body).

3) To explore through qualitative assessment the challenges related to the UaU’s implementation of the CoCT (2007) in the context of the City’s existing policy and legislative landscape, and additionally, in the context of the objectives and interests of non-governmental entities.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

For the purposes of clarity some definitions and qualifications will be made from the outset. Urban agriculture can be defined as the growing, raising, production and processing of a wide variety of food and non-food products, on land or water located within an urban environment or on the peri-urban fringe, undertaken using human and material resources, products and services from within the urban surrounds and supplying these services by and large to that urban area (definition adapted from Ellis and Sumberg, 1998; and Mougeot, 2005). Regarding UA, the practices of communities or individual growers fall under the umbrella of ‘urban agriculture’, and these practices may vary widely, however to avoid unnecessary definitions these differences will be extrapolated upon only where applicable.

2.1 RATIONALE FOR THIS RESEARCH

Increasing numbers of the world’s population are migrating to metropolitan areas, with the rural to urban ‘tipping’ point having being surpassed in 2007 (Frayne et al., 2009). There is increasing growth in and around Africa’s cities and by 2030 it is predicted that Africa will have 579 million urban dwellers, numbers in excess of its rural population (Crush & Fayne, 2011). Whilst urbanisation is transferring the concentration of poverty from rural to urban areas (Haysom, 2009; Battersby, 2011a) there has at the same time been a global upward trend in the prices of basic foodstuffs (National Agricultural Marketing Council [NAMC], 2012; Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations [FAO], 2007; 2012). With global markets determining the prices of food, there is a transfer of negative externalities on to urban poor, who are vulnerable to these market changes (Crush &

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2 The growth of urban centres in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is not solely due to in-migration, for example growth is also occurring endogenously (For a related discussion see Parnell & Walawege, 2011).
South Africa’s overall food prices and food inflation are amongst the highest in the world (NAMC, 2012) and the poor spend a substantial portion of their household incomes on food (Mkwambisi, Fraser & Dougill, 2010; Ruel & Garrett, 2004; Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999). Placing the situation in South Africa in sharp focus were the results from a survey conducted across the country in 2008. The household sample was drawn from around three cities, including Cape Town, and revealed a 70% incidence of food insecurity (Frayne et al., 2010).

Reducing the rates of hunger and poverty (those living on less than one US dollar equivalent a day) by half by 2015 are imperatives stipulated in goal one of the Millennium Development Goals [MDG] (Fan, 2010; Mougeot, 2005, United Nations [UN], 2010). However based on current trends the numbers of those going hungry will increase to over 100 million by 2015 (Fan, 2010). New approaches, or what Fan (2010: 4) terms ‘business as unusual’, will be needed to address this crisis and bring hunger rates in line with the Millennium Development goals set i.e., a reduction in the undernourished by around 400 million people by 2015. Provisional data from FAO (2012) indicates that in the developing world the percentage of undernourished during the period 2010-12 was at 14.9%. The percentage of undernourished is indicated in decline but is still above the 12% target set by the MDG. As there is going to be a greater proportion of people residing in cities than anywhere else urban centres, particularly those situated in SSA, have to start engaging internal mechanisms to feed their populations (Frayne et al., 2009). At the same time the environmental footprint of cities will intensify with increasing population growth, and greater pressure will be placed on the natural environment (Swilling, 2006; 2010). It has been widely suggested in the literature that urban agriculture is an important strategy for addressing the food needs of the urban poor, as well as

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\(^3\) In Sub Saharan Africa [SSA] the figure over the same period was at 26.8%, which was in fact an increase from 26.5% (an increase representing 18 million people) from the period 2007-09 (FAO, 2012).

However Shisanya and Hendriks (2011) balance these sentiments by citing some studies that conclude weaker links between household nutrition and home gardening, assessments that also appear in Ellis and Sumberg (1998) and Crush and Frayne (2011). It is worth unpacking these counterpoints to UA as a panacea for urban food insecurity at length, with a view to balancing the discussion to follow. A 2005 household survey which sampled households in the Khayalitsha and Nyanga informal settlements in Cape Town showed that livestock ownership was in fact rare in these dense informal settlements (11 per cent), and usually limited to poultry. It further showed that food gardening was undertaken by just 3 per cent of homes and only for subsistence purposes. Although there are limitations as to the conclusions one can extrapolate from these figures, it seems reasonable to surmise that UA activities, at least at that time, were rarely relied upon on an individual household basis to satisfy the food requirements of the City’s poorest (Swardt et al. 2005). Importantly however, this sentiment is also captured in the data emerging from the African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN) survey completed in 2008 (Frayne et al., 2010; Battersby, 2011b; Crush, Hovorka & Tevera 2011). The authors argue the view that the contribution of UA towards the alleviation of food insecurity and as a livelihood strategy for the poor is often overstated. Their view is that the linkages should be made cautiously, with an appreciation of the limits that may exist. As will be

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4 The results of the survey in question do need to be understood in the context of the survey having been conducted in 2005, prior to the rapid inflation of food prices in 2008.

5 AFSUN surveyed a sample of poor households from 11 cities across 8 countries in Southern Africa, simultaneously, and using a uniform methodology. The results provide the largest single database of households to have ever been compiled in the region.
shown, the context in which a given UA initiative is located is also crucial in terms of determining the scale of the potential socio-economic benefits possible.

According to the findings of the AFSUN survey the authors note that there were actually low rates of participation in UA initiatives amongst the urban poor, and furthermore that amongst those households which did cultivate gardens, few were more food secure as a result of these undertakings (Crush, Hovorka & Tevera (2011). What the findings showed was that the issue of household food security and the role of UA in addressing it is a complex issue, which is evident in the level of analysis that needs to be applied to the baseline data that emerges. The data also runs contrary to the sentiments of UA as a solution to food security. However, and this is a point made by the authors themselves, there are certain caveats to the findings of the AFSUN survey. For one, the sample was limited to the poorest of the urban poor, and as noted this is a factor relevant in determining how and if one undertakes urban farming. Secondly, as this paper has mentioned, it is accepted that a sample of an area within a city, and between cities, is not able to capture the high degree of variability that exists regarding the nature of UA initiatives, i.e. the ‘place specific’ details are highly relevant to the analysis (Crush, Hovorka & Tevera (2011: 298). There are also other ways in which the food requirements of the urban poor are met through extra-market initiatives. Frayne (2010), points out that there is a body of literature that outlines an important inter urban, and rural-urban link regarding the informal transfers of food products, which are important in providing for the food needs of those in cities. Thus it is evident that the question pertaining to what extent UA addresses the food needs of

\* For instance the frequency with which households obtained their food from a particular source varied from city to city, so while 79% of households state they obtain a portion of their foodstuffs from supermarkets, only 5% are able to do so daily. The same is also true of those households who obtain 22 % of their foodstuffs from home plots, but only 8% are able to do this weekly. See Crush, Hovorka & Tevera (2011): 291.
the urban poor is a complex one, resisting linear assumptions. However, there is nonetheless a considerable body of literature supporting the role of UA as an important means of producing social and environmental capital in the city (Bryld, 2002; de Zeeuw, 2004; Mougeot, 2005; Veenhuizen & Danso, 2007; Battersby 2011a).

2.2 **Urban Agriculture Functions**

Urban agriculture may connote the idea of small scale fruit and vegetable growing, or rearing of livestock, but the literature indicates that urban agriculture is often much more than this, including activities such as fish farming, permaculture and urban forestry (Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007; Veenhuizen & Danso 2007; Haysom, 2009; Haysom, 2010). It has been noted in the literature that UA can sometimes play an important role in contributing to the wellbeing of those involved (Koc et al., 1999; Satgé and Williams 2008). The initiatives may strengthen social support systems, as when produce is shared to support the vulnerable sections of communities such as those afflicted by HIV, or in some cases where gardeners establish savings mechanisms to assist community members in times of crisis (Satgé and Williams 2008). Thus, the involvement of communities towards garden projects is able to develop social capital i.e., skills and capacity development, empowerment, belonging and enhanced coping strategies for vulnerable individuals, or the ‘norms that shape the quality and quantity of social interactions’ (Western Cape Sustainable Human Settlement Strategy[WCSHSS], 2008: 60).

In addition, as Zerbe (2010: 7) correctly asserts, the food system is ‘embedded’ at every level within ‘broader political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental contexts’. There exists a line of argument within some literature that UA can play a significant role in strengthening the sustainability of a City. This point is best elucidated...
with reference to one of the fundamental requirements of a sustainable urban system, i.e. that an urban system should not produce more waste than its sinks are able to absorb (Goodland & Daly 1996; Haysom, 2009). Reese and Wackernagel (1996), through the hypothesis that cities impart an ecological ‘footprint’ on their surroundings, developed the argument that in terms of working towards sustainability, cities needed to reduce the amount of externally sourced energy and material passing into the urban system, as it most often exceeds the local ecological capacity to absorb it. Gasson (2002) furthered applied this analysis to the City of Cape Town, illustrating the unsustainability of the pattern of consumption to waste underpinning the City’s development. Urban agriculture can assist in this regard because it is able to offset a certain amount of inputs which are externally sourced into the urban system, for example fresh food, which then has to be absorbed into the city’s waste stream (Smit et al., 2001; Haysom, 2009; Aubry et al., 2011). This ‘open loop’ from production to consumption to waste disposal cannot be sustained. However urban agriculture can in part contribute to closing the loop by decreasing the quantities of food imported into the urban system, and recycling organic waste which is produced within the system, what Haysom (2009) terms the linking of the city with its environment. For example the wetlands around Calcutta in India take up the run off from the city’s sewers which in turn facilitates the farming of fish, producing 18 000 tons of fish a year and generating thousands of livelihood opportunities. At the same time the waste water is restored through natural processes by farming activities in the wetlands (Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007).

Urban agriculture therefore appears to be able to play a role in generating socio-economic benefits within its immediate vicinity. But it is also able, if the initiatives are sufficiently efficient, to export benefits to the wider urban area. This is reiterated by Veenhuizen and Danso (2007) who note that UA can be a ‘cheap producer of public goods’, this is with reference to the fact that UA may satisfy a number of roles.
simultaneously i.e., generate income for a labour force, produce food, and recycle organic waste which often forms over half of city waste production. In turn this decreases city waste disposal and treatment while at the same time enhancing the value of the cities (produced) natural capital (Veenhuizen & Danso 2007; Haysom, 2010). The following examples appearing in Halweil and Nierenberg, (2007) demonstrate the extent to which UA is able to provide inputs to the urban food system. The authors note that in Accra, Ghana, 200,000 people a day sourced salad from urban farms; whilst 60 per cent of the milk sold in Dar es Salaam was produced within the city, with 74 per cent of the inhabitants keeping livestock. According to the authors study, 90 per cent of the produce consumed in Havana, Cuba was sourced from urban farms. They also note that 20,000 households in Bamako in Mali kept livestock in the city, whilst in Harare over one third of households were shown to raise a variety of poultry including chickens, ducks and turkey (Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007). It is also the case that the climatic conditions experienced in some cities does not as readily facilitate the undertaking of UA. For example Kreinecker (1999) found that conditions in La Paz Bolivia, (which experiences dry summers and wet winters, with nutrient deficient soils and limited access to water in many of the city’s poorer areas) presented challenges to its growth as input costs and labour effort were substantial. This point speaks to similarities which are experienced by urban growers in Cape Town.

In sum it can be seen that UA is a dynamic undertaking and can play a substantial role in affecting the balance of a cities throughput from consumption to waste as well as making a positive contributing to a city’s socio-economic drivers. Thus far an attempt has been made to situate the subject of urban agriculture within the socio-economic context prevailing in the developing world, and South Africa in particular, as well as alluding to the multiplicity of roles as defined of UA in the literature. The following section will explore what appears in
the literature in terms of the key determinants of the success of UA initiatives.

2.3 The Role of City Authorities in Determining the Success of Urban Agriculture Initiatives

While UA initiatives may operate independently, it should also be recognised that the farmers who operate successfully in the UA initiatives discussed are enabled to a varying extent by the city authorities. City authorities and the policy frameworks that are implemented regarding UA can play a key role in defining outcomes (Hubbard & Onumah, 2001). Schmidt (2012) alludes to the fact that despite UA playing an integral part in the food system of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, it is poorly regulated by city authorities, leading on occasion to deleterious outcomes. These include growers being unsure of which types of farming are permissible as by-laws are applied inconsistently, and a lack of security of land tenure (a theme to be picked up on shortly). In the South African context Thornton (2008) points out that existing policy frameworks, such as the social grant system, are potentially counterproductive in that they can undermine the initiative to cultivate subsistence gardens by offsetting food needs. Apart from the production aspect, authorities can also promote UA from the demand side, such as through the application of value added tax reductions on locally grown produce (Vandermeulen et al., 2006).

UA is not necessarily accorded value, for instance when authorities destroy plots due to the perceived health risks of the activities. There is also an issue with respect to how local or national government institutions interact with each other in terms of developing UA. Often

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Battersby (2011b) does however note that if the social welfare received is marginal, little impact is realised regarding the alleviation of food insecurity.
efforts to address nutrition or poverty prevention are dealt with in a fragmented manner by looking at the issues in isolation, which can undermine the formulation of dynamic solutions (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999). Hubbard & Onumah (2001: 442) note that it is important, given the growing influx of people into urban areas, that ‘cross-department policy initiatives’ are adopted, especially in reviewing the status quo with regards to regulations/policies relating to the sustainable development of open land within the city.

To this point much of the literature on policy interventions available to municipal actors locates issues around land as a key area of focus (Hubbard & Onumah 2001; Bryld 2002 Veenhuizen & Danso 2007; Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007; Haysom, 2009; Crush, Hovorka & Tevera, 2011). For instance the authorities in Beijing, China, recognized as early as the 1990s that urban agriculture could make a significant contribution to the city’s food needs as well as aid in securing land and water resources. Urban agriculture was included in the long-view of city development - stock was taken of existing land usage and the capacity of candidate farmers was developed (Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007). Haysom (2009) argues that integrating urban agriculture into future land use planning is important in terms of optimizing the limited space available, and optimizing the benefits that can be gained from these initiatives. Urban agriculture has been successful in Havana Cuba because there has been extensive government buy-in through the allocation of state lands for agricultural purposes, the subsidising of production inputs and the dissemination of knowledge through dedicated appointments (Premat, 2005). Crush, Hovorka and Tevera (2011: 288) note with regards to user rights to land, that it is often the case that access to land is not formally recognised. People do not own the land on which they cultivate, which is more often ‘borrowed’ or ‘squatted’. This has negative implications for output efficiency and the capital investments that farmers are willing to make, mostly due to the uncertainty surrounding their occupation of the land. Thus people
choose crops with a quick turnaround time and this negatively feeds back into the overall sustainability of farming practices.

This issue of land tenure and the ‘gate keeping’ of available land has direct implications for the potential success of UA initiatives and may directly link to the inflation of land prices and the security of urban farmers. This is especially relevant in instances where UA is not legally recognised and farmers have no recourse to the law for unfair evictions or crop destruction (Bryld, 2002: 83). It may often be the case that land is available but underutilised due to inefficiencies in the demarcation or zoning of the land. Haysom (2009) and Hubbard and Onumah (2001) note that there is often land that could be used for urban farming that would not detract from land needed for infrastructure development and there is therefore a need for municipalities to revise by-laws in order to facilitate multiple uses of city owned land, such as by authorizing the leasing of vacant spaces. This would then allow for the productive use of vacant land in urban areas.

To illustrate the value in considering the sustainability of city development and the role that UA might play, note the example of Howorth, Convery and O’Keefe (2000). The authors draw attention to the costs of developing urban infrastructure on ‘hazard lands’, which they define as land in low lying areas which are susceptible to flooding, terrain with steep gradients as well as marsh and wetlands. (2000: 285). The authors point out that in the long run the opportunity costs of constructing infrastructure such as housing on these land types will be greater than if they were utilised for an activity such as urban farming. This is not to ignore that certain urban land poses genuine risks to safety (contaminated areas for instance), but rather that there are opportunities present for land in urban areas to be utilised alternatively, such as for agricultural purposes which the authors argue increases the economic value of these lands (Howorth, Convery &
O’Keefe 2000). Thus city authorities are able to either enable or undermine UA initiatives through the policies they implement, and have a clear role to play in determining the extent to which these initiatives are allowed to find success.

2.4 The City of Cape Town Urban Agriculture Policy 2007 (CoCT, 2007)

Appreciating that which has been outlined thus far, the discussion to follow will now direct the focus towards the City of Cape Town. Initiative was taken in 2001 to develop an UA policy for the City, which culminated in the promulgation of the CoCT (2007) (Visser, personal interview, 2012b 12 December). The research and preliminary formulation of the Policy was initiated by Stanley Visser, the section head of Development Facilitation in the Directorate for Economic and Human Development (EHD), in 2001. As part of the process that went into drafting the Policy Visser attended a UA policy formulation workshop conducted by the Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security (RUAF) in collaboration with the Municipal Development Partnership Eastern and Southern Africa (MDP-ESA) in Harare in 2005 (Visser, 2012b). Additional research to underpin the Policy included the construction of a baseline document for UA in Cape Town, which provided inter alia a broad overview of the institutional framework, opportunities, and challenges pertaining to undertaking of UA in the City (Visser, 2006).

It should be noted that a support program was already in place for UA prior to the implementation of the Policy, which included the provision of basic inputs (seeds, compost) to establish gardens (Hewett, personal interview 2013, January 15; Visser, 2012b). The main objective envisioned for the Policy was not simply to bolster the existing support package, but to create formal recognition of UA across the strategies and mandates of various City line functions (City departments such as
the Department of Housing or Spatial Planning). Another key outcome envisaged by the Policy was the establishment of the UaU, to serve as the Policy’s implementing body and as a technical support team for UA in the City (CoCT, 2007).

2.4.1 Key strategic interventions of the Policy

The policy envisages amongst other imperatives, the addressing of household food security, provision of skills training, enhancement of economic opportunities, and the redistribution of land for agricultural development in line with the governments Land for Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme (LRAD). These interventions recognise the necessity to align and include (mainstream) UA across a range of approaches used to address a city’s developmental needs (Haysom, 2010), and that UA must form part of a concert of coping mechanisms utilised by the urban poor (Ellis & Sumberg, 1998). The CoCT (2007) also recognises the need to include UA in the long term view of the City with regards to urban development (as per Smit et al., 2001; Haysom, 2009). More specifically, that the City’s urban spatial planners will recognise the ‘formal status’ of urban agriculture in the formulation of land use planning and land zoning (CCT, 2007: 5). This highlights the recognition taken by the CoCT (2007) of the importance UA can play in the sustainable development of cities, and thus the need to engage with a broad range of stakeholders such as the city planners (Howorth, Convery & O’Keefe 2000; Halweil & Nierenberg, 2007; Haysom, 2009). The Policy also notes that success can be leveraged in the creation of linkages and partnerships within provincial and national departments, as well as with extra-governmental institutions such as

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* Formalising UA implies official recognition within local government, i.e. UA will be included in zoning plans, and in the spatial development of the City for example. However it does not imply that UA will be offered any preference.

* Situated within the department of Agriculture, this policy is concerned with the allocation of grants to the previously disadvantaged to be used in agricultural endeavours. See http://www.info.gov.za/issues/govtprog/agric.htm#ira
the private sector and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
Engagement with communities as affected stakeholders and ways in
which to facilitate this engagement are noted in the Policy as
fundamental to identifying key challenges and generating feedback, in
order to enhance the stated aim of poverty reduction and economic
development for the City’s ‘poorest of the poor’ (CCT, 2007: 2).

2.4.2 Review of the Policy in the literature

The way in which UA is defined in the Policy has been criticised by
some authors for not including a broad enough scope in terms of what
can and is being achieved by UA initiatives (Frayne et al., 2009;
Haysom, 2009), particularly with respect to the fact that non-food items
are ignored in this definition. The Policy has also been criticised for
not appreciating the extent to which UA is able to provide human and
material resources to the urban surrounds in which initiatives are
located (Frayne et al., 2009). This is problematic given the complex
socio-economic dimensions at play in the City’s poorest areas, and as
previously discussed, the potential benefits which can be realised
through establishing UA successfully. These criticisms are expounded
upon in greater detail in Haysom (2009; 2010), Frayne et al., (2009) and
Satgé and Williams (2008), who highlight the potential and existing
obstacles faced in applying the CoCT (2007) to invigorate UA in the
City. These range from human resourcing constraints in delivering on
Policy interventions, to City departments not communicating
effectively and working at cross purposes (for instance spatial planning
imperatives focusing on housing infrastructure development in
isolation, without the inclusion of urban space for farming (Satgé
&Williams 2008). It is also argued that the exact detail of how the policy

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10 Incidentally this has been recognised by the UaU, and the definition is a feature of the CoCT
(2007) which is undergoing alteration under the current revision, and will include non-food
items as per the definition of UA provided at the start of this paper.
is to be implemented on the ground still begs clear definition (Frayne et al., 2009; Haysom, 2009).

To this point the research conducted by Satgé and Williams in (2008) concluded at the time that with respect to UA in Cape Town, a disjuncture existed between policy and practice. They mention out of the farmers interviewed for their study, none were aware of how the CoCT (2007) may be able to benefit them, and in addition were also unaware of the City’s large scale Philippi horticultural project. Research unpacking the disjuncture between policy and practice in this regard can assist in highlighting those areas where the UaU, other City departments and non-governmental entities may better be able to collaborate on developing an enabling environment for UA going forward.

The forgoing indicates that the CoCT (2007) has not been without critique, but it has also shown that its formulation was not pursued without the application of appropriate due diligence, and the Policy’s theoretical grounding appreciates a number of key factors pointed out in the literature as having a bearing on the success of UA (the directives of the Policy will be expanded upon in further detail in Table 1 of Section 4).

2.5 Summary

This section has highlighted the complexity of the issue of food security and of the role of policy in addressing it. Although the extent to which

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11 Satge and Williams (2008) conducted a study of the some of the community gardens supported under the umbrella of Abalimi Bezekhaya. The Philipi Horticultural area is technically considered as constituting commercial agriculture (Visser, personal interview 2012a, 21 November), but is located on the urban fringe.
UA is able to fulfil the food security needs of the urban poor in Cape Town has been questioned in some quarters, it was also noted that UA is able to generate valuable economic and social capital, and contribute towards a city’s sustainability. Overall there is thus value in applying research in the sphere of UA. Satgé and Williams (2008) allude to a disjuncture between policy and practice, and it is thus instructive to ascertain in the current context, the extent to which the CoCT (2007) has been utilised and implemented, for it potentially constitutes an important leverage point in addressing socio-economic and environmental concerns within the City. As the CoCT (2007) is currently under review\textsuperscript{12}, there also exists an opportunity for the modest findings of this research to provide useful input to the Policy revision as the process moves forward.

\textsuperscript{12} The details of which to be expanded upon in due course.
3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN & DATA COLLECTION

This research explored both the institutional (City department level) and non-governmental spheres of UA. In terms of addressing the non-governmental sphere the use of a selected group of NGOs was used as a collection of case studies, which served as a lens through which to explore their insights and experiences relating to the CoCT (2007) and the undertaking of UA in the City. A defining feature of case studies is that they attempt to understand the ‘unit’ of study in terms of how the unit is influenced by a variety of systems, including social, economic or systems of governance. The logic of the analysis in case study research is that a comprehensive understanding of the unit of analysis can be formulated by understanding the context in which this unit exists (Yin, 2009). Although not without contestation, it has been strongly argued that a researcher is able to make valuable generalisations from case study research, entrenching its importance as a methodology in the social sciences where value is placed on validity, objectivity and generalizability (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 220; Tracy, 2011). Through case studies it is possible to focus in on real situations and this allows the researcher to make assessments on particular views or features of a research question directly in relation to how things play out in practice. The value in case studies is also derived from the fact that they facilitate developing context specific knowledge (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The research conducted falls within the qualitative research paradigm, which relies heavily on description and understanding framed in the ‘emic’ perspective, i.e. from the perspective of the participants or key actors involved in the area of investigation (Babbie and Mouton, 2005). The methods have been informed by the criteria established for sound qualitative practice, including the application of self-reflexivity through an awareness of my influence in the research. As well as having taken care, through thick description, to establish the complexities and
textures of the context in which to locate UA in Cape Town (Tracy, 2010). The primary data for this research was sourced largely through semi-structured interviews with key informants in the NGOs, and from within the UaU. Semi-structured interviews were favoured over structured questioning as the open-ended nature of semi-structured interviews allowed informants to address questions in such a way that motives and beliefs were also conveyed, adding texture and depth to their responses (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008).

The interview process was carried out using an interview schedule informed by the research of relevant literature uncovered during the literature review process. The predetermined interview schedule was used to guide the interview process and ensure that insights were brought to bear on certain themes which were identified as having the potential to make significant contributions towards the research question. However, participants were also provided the agency to lead the conversation on discussion points they felt pertinent, which was clearly necessary in order to avoid the risk of pre-determining outcomes. Interviews were conducted both telephonically and in person, notes were taken during the interview process and permission from the informant was requested prior to any recordings made (recordings were made with the use of a Dictaphone). When ‘grey’ literature such as unpublished documents, kept records or reports were provided to me, it was first established whether it would be permissible to make reference to these in my study, and this secondary data was a further contribution to the data utilized for the purposes of this research. To this Jones (2004: 99) makes the point of ‘grey’ literature being highly useful for the ‘inclusionary’ dimension it brings to qualitative research. This is because ‘alternative’ documents may reveal in certain instances more direct expositions on a given subject (the voices of marginalized informants for example) than may have been

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13 The interviews were conducted in English, which was spoken fluently by all informants.
possible through the broader body of peer-review literature (Jones, 2004).

It should also be noted that simple observation was also undertaken (through participating in the garden tours offered to the public by *Abalimi* and *Soil for Life*). This component of the research allowed a means to gain initial exposure to the perspectives, values and methods of operation employed by the organisations and develop insights into the context which underpinned and shaped their testimony (Mack et al., 2010). An appreciation of this context was valuable prior to commencing the formal interview process, as it added nuance to the particular interview schedule applied.

### 3.2 **DATA ANALYSIS**

Content analysis was applied to the data gathered. Content analysis refers to the practice through which verbal or textual material is categorised and evaluated (Rosenthal and Rosnow, 2008). Once observations and interviews were transcribed and organized, the body of data that emerged was ‘coded’ according to the thematic categories to which it was felt they were suited. The content was also analyzed to unpack patterns, cross scale linkages, and continuities from existing and additional themes that emerged from the data. Key thematic patterns were organised in table format in order to establish a frame of reference for the discussion on the interaction between the CoCT (2007) and UA initiatives in the City.
3.3 **Subjects of Study**

3.3.1 **Non-Governmental Organisations**

The NGOs selected as case studies are sufficiently disaggregated both spatially and at depth of operation to provide a balanced snapshot as to the general nature of the interactions occurring between themselves and the City on issues related to the undertaking of UA. The UA practitioners chosen for this study included:

- **Abalimi Bezekhaya** (henceforth Abalimi)

  Abalimi’s efforts within the sphere of UA have typically been directed towards addressing the issue of food security amongst the impoverished communities living on the Cape Flats, with the program having its origins in 1983. The impetus is towards establishing community gardens, and more recently Abalimi has begun to assist farmers in accessing the food market through their *Harvest of Hope* program which was established in 2008. Through this program surplus vegetables remaining after the subsistence needs of farmers are met, are packaged, and then distributed to members who have signed on and pre-paid to receive these boxes on a weekly basis (*Abalimi Bezekhaya*, 2012).

- **Green Grow**

  The *Green Grow* project is located amongst City council housing on Adriaanse Estate in Elsies River and was started in March of 2012. The project represents collaboration between a local youth forum, the residents of the Adriaanse estate and the City. Amongst the UA initiatives selected for this study this is the project most closely connected to the City in terms of the assistance and contact which is maintained. The project is in its
fledgling stages with only one large plot having been cultivated. Plans are in motion to lease a further 5.5 hectares from the City to facilitate the project’s expansion (UaU, 2012; Green Grow, 2012).

- **Seed**

  The *Seed* organisation is based in Mitchells Plain on the Cape Flats, where it has established the Rocklands Urban Abundance Centre on the premises of Rocklands Primary School. The centre serves to address the need to greater resource schools, and provides instruction on the tenants of sustainable land use through permaculture. A permaculture garden has been established on the school and the organisation also works within the surrounding community (*Seed*, 2012).

- **Soil for Life**

  *Soil for Life* are engaged in home garden training programs, focused primarily on individuals who live in the informal settlements of Lavender Hill, but also including Delft and Khayalethsha on the Cape Flats (*Soil for Life*, 2012). The organization’s focus is on imparting the knowledge of how to practice organic farming with the use of inexpensive inputs, with training designed to instill responsibility on the individual to sustain their own gardens without ongoing external assistance.

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14 Contact was also made with the *Sozo Foundation*, a group that has been in operation for two years, and whose home garden program has been assisted through mentorship from Soil for Life. The *Sozo Foundation* has initiated home garden programs in the informal settlement of Vrygroend, and Lavender Hill.
3.3.2 Government

With respect to participants from the City of Cape Town, testimony was gathered from members of the UaU (which falls under the City’s Directorate for Human and Economic Development), as well as the Provincial Department of Agriculture (DoA) and Spatial Planning Department (SPD).

3.3.3 Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted in line with the University of Cape Town’s policy on research on human participants. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science prior to research commencing.
4  RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of this research have been organised according to a set of discernible themes which emerged during the course of the interview process. The pertinence of these themes in addressing the aims of this research will be explored fully in the discussion (Section 5). The key findings are presented in Table 1 below, which serves to organise the testimony of the participants into relevant thematic elements, whilst at the same time also elucidating the manner in which the testimony correlates to certain components of the CoCT (2007). The purpose is thus to provide a comparative view of the current issues and challenges identified in terms of conducting UA in the City, in relation to key strategies and commitments contained in the CoCT (2007). This imparts further texture to the context in which the discussion is located, and serves as a point of reference for the testimony that will be referred to therein.
Table 1: Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Element</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Land Zoning</td>
<td>UA is seen as a second order land use after housing and roads. Land zoning is not in the control of the UaU (there needs to be a motivation as to why UA should be favoured over other land uses). There is a need for zoning changes to allow for 'productive open spaces'. A key question is how to protect open spaces from being developed for purposes besides UA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Access to Land</td>
<td>'Biggest problem we have is getting access to land. Gaining access to land (municipal commonage) is difficult due to bureaucracy that makes the application process lengthy and tender processes are costly. Thus the lists for those requesting land are very long. The Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA, 2003) is a particularly problematic piece of legislation in terms of the complexity it adds to the process of municipalities procuring/selling land. 'Process (application for land) takes over 18 months'. 'There is too much 'red tape' and too many departments to deal with...city parks, property...'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Land Tenure</td>
<td>Those farming on land they don't own or without the consent of the land owner are disqualified from assistance by the City (especially problematic for livestock farming). When using church or school land for gardens, if tenure agreements are not in place there is the possibility that the landowners may decide to stop garden projects, or take them over themselves when the land becomes lucrative or if conflict arises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Delivery of UA services</td>
<td>Regarding human resourcing there is only one person in the UaU (Godfrey Domingo) to carry out the delivery of inputs, training, follow up site visits and technical assistance. Thus the UaU is 'reactive' rather than proactive. Stanley Visser has responsibilities aside from those within the UaU (as he sits in the Directorate for Human and Economic Development). Sometimes he is not able to get feedback from the other (the city)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Visser (2012b), Domingo (2012)*

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*Visser (2012a)*

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*Soil for Life, Small, Personal Interview, (2012 September 28)*

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*October, Personal Interview, (2012 December 20)*

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*Visser (2012b)*

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*Soil for Life (2012)*

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*Hewett (2013)*

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*Small, Personal Interview, (2012 September 28)*

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*Soil for Life (2012)*

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*Hewett (2013)*

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*Small, Personal Interview, (2012 September 28)*
and he is not always able to attend meetings. Thus delays occur as he is required to assess and sign off on deliverables. 'We give out things with very little monitoring of the effect, we are reactive'.

The UaU has no established resource centres for UA farmers in the City. They make use of Abalimi's resource centres.

Fowley, Personal Interview, (2012 December 7)

Visser (2012a)

5. Dearth of robust data on the status of UA in the City. UaU does not have data on the extent of UA in the City and this makes it difficult to quantify the success of services delivered (such as survivalist food kits). Do not know the exact numbers of people engaged in farming and the status of projects. There is a need to argue for UA in terms of how it contributes to City's food system (on the production side) but this information needs to be researched.

Visser (2012a)

The Policy states at 3.3.2. (CoCT, 2007: 6) that an 'appropriate intelligence and research database will be maintained',

But the Policy does not detail a specific strategic intervention regarding the construction of robust baseline data for UA in the City and the role of UA in the broader food system.

6. Disparity between role players regarding the 'vision' for UA in the City.

Organic farming is not the only form of sustainable farming. The responsible use of fertilizers can also be effective. Organic methods of farming should be applied for gardens to be sustainable.

There needs to be a focus on sustainable job creation through UA (ideally gardens to work towards increasing levels of commercial viability)

The 'vision' for UA in the City is not always shared. There are different ideas about what the 'end product should be' and 'endpoint'. UA needs to be environmentally friendly not just about food security 'value system varies hugely'.

'Urban agriculture is about addressing food security…UA is food security.' Food security is a constitutional right in South Africa

Visser (2012b), Domingo (2012)

October (2012), Soil for Life (2012), Small (2012)

Mentani, Personal Interview, (2012 December 5)

The Policy will create a ‘common vision’ for UA. Through UA work towards addressing household level food security and promote economic possibilities through job creation.

The Policy will guide and align stakeholders, including encouraging co-operation amongst authorities across national, provincial and local levels. Create links with a range of City strategies (local economic development and poverty alleviation for example).

The Policy will guide and align stakeholders, including encouraging co-operation amongst authorities across national, provincial and local levels. Create links with a range of City strategies (local economic development and poverty alleviation for example).

1. Engagement between stakeholders

Communication between departments is often poor, especially between key strategic partners such as the DoA who do not always honour meetings. Imperatives at the end of the financial year centre around spending budget allocations, partnerships fall away as departments become focused on their own budgets. 'Problem with all intergovernmental cooperation and communication…sometimes it works good, other times it just doesn’t work.'

6. Disparity

In the City, the need to have a common vision for UA is important. However, the City does not have a common vision for UA.

5. Engagement

The City's lack of engagement with the UaU is crucial. The City does not engage with the UaU to foster relationships and create a common vision for UA.

3. Dealing with a range of City officials and key role players' perspectives

The City needs to engage with a range of City officials and key role players to foster relationships and create a common vision for UA.

2. Dealing with a range of City officials and key role players' perspectives

The City needs to engage with a range of City officials and key role players to foster relationships and create a common vision for UA.

1. Engagement between stakeholders
To be quite frank I think there’s very little engagement…engaging with other departments is very small’. Getting everyone on the ‘same page’ is a challenge. It’s very seldom that we have a meeting with another department and we can’t work together, and that would be because of budgetary limitations and regulatory limitations. Soil for Life is seen as a competitor as funding is contested from similar donors. At the non-government level there is the issue of groups being in ‘direct competition’ with each other, with ‘very strong determined people’ leading organisations which can lead to disagreements. ‘In terms of actually interacting with agencies and working together, not a huge amount happens at all.’

“We have strong relationships with Abalimi. Abalimi sells some of the vegetables grown by Seed. Amongst the NGOs ‘we all have a common approach…Soil for Life have engaged with us (Green Grow) on UA training.”

Fowley (2012)  
Hewett (2013)  
Old John, Personal Interview, (2012 December 21)  
Soil for Life (2012)  
Old John (2012)  
October (2012)  
Green Grow has had to take the initiative to engage the council because of this. ‘Hidden agendas, mainly political agendas...self interest’ are problems related to the establishment of multi-stakeholder forums. UaU works within established structures and with people who approach them directly and express a genuine interest in starting UA projects. People want ‘assistance on the ground’ as opposed to ‘talk shops’. No particular precedent exists of such partnerships (such as farmer associations) being established by the UaU. People want attendance on the ground, not process, to the shops. ‘People want attendance on the ground’ is opposed to this proposal. There is deep and expressed anxiety in attendance of UaU forums within sector-based structures and with people who approach them in order to develop them into multi-stakeholder forums. The workshops are very small and people are apprehensive with the development of political agendas that influence the problems. The workshops are very small and people are apprehensive with the development of political agendas that influence the problems.
because the scale of UA in the city is not too big at the moment.


Have the impression that there is poor collaboration between (City) departments. They are also suspicious of making contact with the provincial DoA and UaU as they feel that they have different values regarding UA, and that the possibility exists for interference with their projects, or for credit to be taken for their work. The DoA sometimes utilise an Abalimi project when they need to demonstrate progress or showcase a successful UA initiative.

The handing out of inputs without sufficient follow up or training is a ‘perpetuation of the culture of expectation’, or the creation of ‘disabling conditions’ for UA development, as no responsibility is being instilled and projects unlikely to be successful or sustainable over the long term.

The UaU unit and CoCT (2007) ‘doesn’t comply with the changing times’ or ‘new challenges’ i.e not applicable to what is occurring on the ground. ‘Problem with the City is that the people in top management are not familiar with the conditions at a grassroots level… Stanley and Godfrey who understand conditions better are restricted in their work… this particularly problem at the EHD.’ The DoA do not have a clue, issues around BEE prevent many projects from getting funding. Getting in contact with the DoA is difficult. Have not engaged with the UaU or other City departments (in terms of consultation, training or work being outsourced to Soil for Life).

Have not had engagements with City departments as past applications to the Social Development Department for funding were unsuccessful. There is a general perception that there is too much red tape (working with government) and projects take too long to materialise, making it difficult to work with government and projects lose the funding they need. There are barriers to work (which lose funding) pass in the draft CoCT 2007. Have not noticed a change in how they are able to conduct their work (which focus on UA programmes based in underprivileged schools) after the formalisation of UA, i.e. post the CoCT (2007). The CoCT (2007) was useful in terms of placing UA on the map. Prior to the formulation of the policy it was more difficult to engage the necessary City departments in order to request land for UA for instance. Things have gotten more ‘flexible’ with regards to UA in the City since the formulation of the policy.
5 DISCUSSION

5.1 MANDATE OF THE URBAN AGRICULTURE UNIT

The CoCT (2007) defines a modest mandate for the UaU with regards to the delivery of Policy objectives, stating specifically that the CoCT (2007) does not set out to challenge the City’s existing by-laws or regulations and that UA objectives will not ‘encroach’ on other spheres of government. Visser notes that a modest mandate was necessary if it was to be expected that the Policy would get the approval of City Council (Visser, personal interview, 2013 January 15). A key question to examine is whether the mandate defined by the CoCT (2007) provides the UaU with the requisite agency to successfully deliver on the range of strategic UA objectives outlined in the Policy. This question can be unpacked by looking at one of the most fundamental objectives stipulated in the Policy, namely the need to facilitate access to, and the provision of, land for UA purposes. However, as Table 1 illustrates, there have been difficulties with respect to how policy is manifested into practice in this regard.

In the first instance the challenge revolving around the question of land must be situated in the policy and legislative space occupied by the various City departments. Specifically this refers to the mandatory processes which must be submitted to in terms of applications to make use of City owned land (land under the ownership of government departments such as the Housing Department or City Parks for instance). The manner in which UA is addressed in key policy documents, such as the City’s Spatial Development Framework (SDF, 2012) and City of Cape Town Zoning Scheme (CoCT ZS, 2007), has been cited by the UaU and Spatial Planning Department (SPD) as particularly relevant with respect to influencing the disposal of land for UA in the City (Visser, personal interview, 2012a November 21, Rabe, personal interview, 2012 December 12).

The challenge of UA on City owned land contains two dynamics:
Firstly, as evidenced in 1. & 2. of Table 1, the land lease/sale application process has been cited as too lengthily and too complex.

Secondly, the UaU is not furnished with the power to control the release of City land, a function which is overseen by the Property Management Department (PMD) (Hewett, personal interview 2013, January 15). At the same time, the fact that the aforementioned statutory documents formally recognise UA as a land use type does not imply a necessary stimulus for UA development on City land.

Visser (2012a) cites the MFMA (2003) as a part cause for why the requisite processes for the sale or lease of land are so involved. The MFMA stipulates that municipalities must follow a strict process when disposing of goods (such as land), including for instance a competitive public tender process (MFMA, 2003: 112). The process is often timeous and costly as necessary advertisement and consultation are required (Visser, 2012). Electronic mail correspondence provided by Rushard October of Green Grow (Appendix A), an example of how the lease or sale of land is approached by the PMD, is illustrative of the administration involved.15

The CoCT (2007) envisages the ‘leasing’ and ‘disposal’ of municipal land identified for the development of UA through a permit system (CoCT, 2007: 7).16 However, in reality this has emerged as a major

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15 The correspondence shows the requirement of competitive tender, environmental impact assessment, and rezoning processes, and need to obtain the comment of relevant council members.

16 The permit system which the CoCT (2007) envisages for the leasing of land has in fact not yet come to fruition, and the UaU is in negotiation with the City’s Legal and Property departments in order to find a way to better address this in the revision of the Policy (see EHD, (2012a); Hewett, (2013)).
challenge, which speaks to the critique of the CoCT (2007) outlined in Frayne et al., (2009) and Haysom, (2009), noting the dearth of detail in the Policy as to how strategic interventions would actually be executed on the ground. It is worth expanding briefly upon the manner in which UA is recognised across some of the government departments with whom the UaU must engage in terms of delivering UA services in the City, in order to further elucidate the constraints pertaining to the functioning of the UaU.

Key Strategy 2 and 3 of the SDF (2012) state the need to protect areas where UA might be developed in the future, and protect current UA lands and identify land suitable for UA land reform. A closer inspection of the policies however reveals that the ‘location factors’ stipulated as a guide for the identification of land for UA include ‘availability and affordability of water’ and ‘good soils required for plant production’ (SDF, 2012: 72). The conditions in areas where much UA occurs in the City (such as the Cape Flats) are however characterised by severe challenges regarding access to water, and nutrient deficient soils (perhaps need a ref). That the SDF’s guidance with regards to locating suitable land for UA is detached from conditions on the ground begs the question as to the meaningfulness of the recognition of UA by spatial planners. Furthermore the SDF does not recognise the practice of animal husbandry in urban spaces, and without the relevant by-laws in place for such practices the UaU will not be able to establish a permitting system to regulate an activity which currently occurs in essence illegally across the City (SDF, 2012; EHD, 2012a). It was remarked by Schnackenberg (EHD, 2012a: 2) of the PMD at the City, that a ‘land reservation route’ between line functions and the PMD could serve as a means to expedite land access (note also Appendix A). That is to say a temporary management agreement could be established and land set aside for UA. The undertaking of such arrangements was not noted in conversations with the UaU. This is a likely indication that as with permitting this system has not as yet been put into practice.
These factors substantiate Visser’s (2012a) comment that conditions pertaining to land are ‘restrictive’, and highlights that the conversations between line functions and the UaU required to make land available for UA on either a permanent or temporary basis are not straightforward ones.

In terms of land zoning UA is considered a ‘consent’ land use, i.e. requiring the approval of council for all but one type of residential zone under the 2007 regulations (CoCT ZS, 2007). The awareness that there are limitations placed on UA as a result of ‘narrow’ zoning regulations (Ellis & Sumberg, 1998, Satgé &Williams 2008) is evident in Visser’s (2012b) statement that there is a need for ‘productive open spaces’, as well as reflected in the City’s strategic agenda for UA and the revision of the current Policy (CoCT, 2012). In addition spatial planners have recognised the benefit of a ‘flexible’ framework for land zoning, which has been established under the November 2012 promulgation of the City’s zoning regulations which will come into effect in March 2013 (Rabe, 2012). Under this scheme UA will be listed as a primary land use, which will expedite the process of land applications as the approval of council for consent will not necessarily be required (EHD, 2012). However as it has stood, applications to utilise the majority of land zones has required the UaU to engage with council and other departmental stakeholders, which lengthens the time it takes to make land available and limits the agency of the UaU to manage land for UA in the city.

These challenges do not of course apply to UA on private owned land, however as expressed by Soil for Life and Seed (see Table 1), UA on private owned land carries with it a specific set of difficulties in relation to security of land tenure, testimony which presents in the literature.

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17 Zoning schemes have historically been differentiated across the City (with varying implications regarding flexible land use), under the new zoning scheme a single set of zoning rights for the City has been established (Rabe, 2012).
In this regard the UaU has a limited role in terms of creating enabling conditions for private entities as it does not possess the mandate to settle disputes which might arise in private matters (Visser, personal email correspondence, 2013 January 17).

The foregoing illustrates that the UaU operates within a network of City departments which all, to varying degrees, bring influence to bear on UA in the City. Despite UA having ‘formal’ recognition in statutory documents discussed, the UaU must still motivate to City Council why UA should be developed over competing land uses. This is not to suggest that a platform for dialogue has not been established as a result of the CoCT (2007), for example Visser (2013) emphasised that they now have the right to ask for a ‘space’ to be made available for UA and there needs to be sufficient reasoning offered for the refusal of such a request. Hewett (2013) also remarks that the CoCT (2007) has given UA a ‘better profile’ and that UA is being appreciated more earnestly now than it was prior to the Policy. From an NGO perspective October (2012) stated that engaging with the City on UA was more challenging prior to the CoCT (2007), and he has subsequently noticed, with UA being placed ‘on the map’, more flexibility in terms of City departments entertaining UA concerns.18

Current socioeconomic conditions in South Africa necessitate that a number of fundamental development imperatives must be pursued, meaning UA will in certain instances lose out. To this Visser (2012) mentions the advocacy of UA as being a key task, noting that as yet the UaU has not outlined how best to make the case for the need to develop

18 The negative sentiments offered by Old John (2012) regarding changes wrought by the Policy, see 8 of Table 1, evidences an implications of the heterogeneity that exists amongst UA practitioners, i.e. the efficacy of the Policy will differ from one scenario to another, thus reiterating the need for the UaU to engage with as broad a representation of UA stakeholders as possible (this to be discussed in the following section).
UA in the City. Part of the challenge he says relates to a lack of quantifiable data to characterise the finer detail of UA in the City and the role it plays in the City’s food system. An inspection of the UA baseline document prepared by Visser (2006a) as part of the process in formulating the Policy reveals that despite a thorough explication of the ‘high’ level socio-economic and institutional detail, there was a gap regarding the site specific detail of how UA was occurring on the ground. The baseline notes the results of two surveys (in 2000 and 2002)\(^\text{19}\) which make a modest attempt to quantify aspects of UA in the city, but the limitations of such results in the formulation of a broad policy are recognised by Visser (2006:15) who states a ‘big gap in terms of empirical information on inputs, outcomes and impacts’ still remains. As discussed this gap persists in 2013 and is an important line of enquiry to be addressed by future research.\(^\text{20}\)

5.2 **Multi-stakeholder Engagement**

The CoCT (2007) states specifically that consultative forums for UA will be established in order to ‘share experiences, identify and analyse problems and challenges and to re-assess the vision for UA in the City’ (CoCT, 2007: 6). This recognises good practice as identified in the literature in relation to UA policy formulation (Koc et al., 1999; Hubbard & Onumah, 2001; Bryld, 2002; Wilbers & de Zeeuw, 2006; Haysom, 2010). Multi-stakeholder platforms thus contribute towards the creation of an enabling environment for UA development. To this Visser (2012b) remarks however, that the processes in his experience

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\(^{19}\) The sources of the survey data is not stated, which makes it difficult to make judgements as to its quality, one assumes the information emerges from consultation undertaken by a City department.

\(^{20}\) One caveat must be noted here in that the UAU has developed (since August of 2012) a stakeholder database detailing UA practitioners operating at a range of scales (household to community), as well as government/ non-government entities, the private sector and the media (EHD, 2012b).
have had the tendency to be overtaken by forces looking to drive agendas to suit personal or political interests, rather than deliver on UA goals. It is also suggested in the Policy that an urban agriculture summit would be established as an annual plenary forum for UA in the City. In reality only three UA summits have taken place, namely in 2002 and 2003, which served to facilitate the development of the UAP 2007 and as a means to educate the participants on the potential benefits of UA (Visser, 2006b; Hewett, 2013), and a third summit held in August of 2011. The chief purpose of the third UA summit was to gain feedback on the Policy, and included farmer groups from districts across the City as well as NGOs and other stakeholders (Visser, 2013). However in light of the accounts relayed in the course of this research by participants not affiliated with government, the third UA summit was not seen as successful in creating a platform for stakeholder participation and input on a way forward for UA (7. of Table 1). In particular the main issue seems to have arisen out of the fact that the summit was too ‘top down’ in its approach, with an academic focus on the results of current research, which did not allow for the sufficient voicing of issues as seen by the farmers themselves, as well as not elucidating the objective of the summit for the participants (October, 2012; Soil for Life, 2012).

These views are significant as the UA summit constitutes the only recent and substantive forum for stakeholder engagement established by the UuU. The negative perceptions of the summit can also be located within a tendency of the participants interviewed to negatively perceive the functioning of City departments in general (see 8. & 9. of Table 1).21 The promotion of partnerships with relevant stakeholders is a conspicuous element of the CoCT (2007), and the building of such partnerships can reasonably be expected to contribute positively towards an enabling environment for UA in the City. Thus it is worthwhile unpacking further the negative perceptions held of the UaU

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21 A common perception is that engagements with the City are likely to be characterised by delays and frustration due to ‘red-tape’ (previously discussed in Section 5.1).
as a City department, with a view to evaluating their basis and through exploring the context in which they are located, and determining whether they undermine relationship building between local government and UA practitioners on the ground.

### 5.2.1 Inter-departmental co-operation

The perception that the UaU and other City departments operate in ‘silos’, without an aligned agenda towards UA, was to an extent borne out in my conversations with the UaU regarding the challenges which impact government service delivery (7. of Table 1). Fowley (2012) and Visser (2012b) note that communication between departments on UA matters has not been optimal.22 One of the reasons cited for this is the difficulty in getting the relevant actors ‘round the table’. In this regard the meeting minutes from a November 2012 EHD workshop on the UA Policy review indicate a large number of apologies from the City (EHD, 2012).23 Another feature of the EHD workshop which can be related to the perception that the City has not aligned its UA initiatives across departments are the action points emerging from a discussion session on ‘Inter-Departmental co-operation’ (EHD, 2012: 2). These include clarifying the nature of current cross-departmental support for UA, and the establishment of forums for departmental engagement (a strategic objective which has been explicit since the formulation of CoCT 2007).

The fact that these deliverables have yet to come to fruition despite the Policy having been in place since 2007 indicates that there are clearly challenges around the ability of departments to communicate and co-operate effectively on UA deliverables.

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22 It was remarked that this also applies to internal departments, such as communication between the UaU and Local Economic Development (both branches of the EHD). This illustrates the extent to which the challenge of departmental communication applies.

23 This research acknowledges that caution should be applied in terms of the conclusions drawn from this single meeting, however the importance of the workshop in the context of UA, and relatively high number of absentees, exemplifies a feature of the challenges faced by the UaU regarding inter-departmental communication.
5.3 A SHARED 'VISION' FOR UA

One of the primary objectives stated by the Policy is the creation of a ‘common vision’ for UA in the City (CoCT, 2007: 2). Firstly it is necessary to clarify what the term ‘vision’ connotes in this regard. This research understands the term to include inter alia, the defining characteristics of UA, the practical and theoretical approaches adopted in the undertaking of UA projects (including the values which underpin UA endeavours), and the end goal or objectives which aim to be achieved through UA. The discussion to follow will argue that the Policy does not appreciate the extent to which the ‘vision’ for UA is fragmented across the various role players (both governmental and non-governmental) who operate in the City (6. of Table 1). Differences in approach regarding UA must be expected across a diverse range of actors, especially given that government and non-governmental entities operate under varying mandates and constraints (insert ref on challenges re NGO/govt collaboration?). However the disparate views with respect to a ‘vision’ for UA is a factor which has in certain instances proved an impediment to the creation of enabling conditions for positive UA development in the City.

One such divergence regarding a vision for UA is grounded in value systems, specifically whether non-organic methods can or should facilitate sustainable farming practice24. Visser (2012b) argues against the view that the sustainability of UA in the City can be achieved solely through the application of organic methods, a belief cross-cutting the non-governmental actors interviewed (Abalimi, Soil for Life, Green Grow, Seed), arguing that the responsible use of non-organic inputs can be

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24 The term ‘organic’ in this case refers specifically to the use of natural fertilisers and pesticides and a specific avoidance of the use of chemically derived agricultural inputs.
equally effective. The significance of this particular example can be demonstrated by exploring the implications for partnership building that this ideological disjuncture was found to carry with it.

Although there was a general aversion regarding the application of non-organic methods amongst NGOs, one testimony in particular explicated that it was felt that collaboration with the UaU or Provincial DoA would compromise a value system underpinned by the tenants of sustainability and organic practice (Soil for Life, 2012). Due to this, it was relayed that they avoided raising awareness during their community engagement with regards to the UaU or DoA as potential avenues of technical support. The view was expressed that the UaU was perpetuating a ‘culture of entitlement’ by simply delivering inputs without imparting the skills and responsibility required for the sustained development of UA. Interestingly, there was also an added suspicion that the organisation’s involvement with City departments may undo progress already achieved, or that credit might be taken for their project work (Soil for Life personal communication during site visits 2012, November 30). To illustrate a subsequent discussion with a fieldworker from the Sozo Foundation, and NGO engaged in food gardening and who are partnered closely with Soil for Life, revealed that there was no knowledge of the UaU despite them having been in operation for two years (personal communication, Sozo Foundation tour 2012, 3 December). This research does not of course try to represent this example as typifying the perspectives of the NGO community in general. Rather it is argued that the forgoing exemplifies the way in

25 Responsible use is crucial given that the use of agro chemicals in UA has been shown to carry specific risks, see Smit et al., (2001).

26 The fact that ‘survivalist’ start-up kits (basic gardening inputs) are issued with little follow up consultation is acknowledged by the UaU (see Table 1).

27 Small (2012) makes a similar remark on this theme (see 8 of Table 1), and Dubbeling and De Zeeuw (2007) on the significance of trust and respect in successful multi-stakeholder engagements.
which the disparity of views with regards to how UA ought to be practiced in the City can have implications on the willingness for UA practitioners to participate collaboratively.  

A further texture to this discussion relates to the interactions between non-governmental actors. The testimony received indicates diverse attitudes towards the way organisations perceive each other and their approaches to UA (see 7 of Table 1). Thus certain groups identify others as partners (*Abalimi and Seed*), and others as competitors (*Soil for Life* in relation to *Seed and Abalimi*). This is either because it is felt groups are operating in the same space (‘doing the same thing’) and competing for similar funders (Old John, 2012), but also because differing objectives make collaboration unfavourable, i.e. training focused at homegrower level (*Soil for Life*), job creation and commercial viability (*Abalimi*), or gardens operating in a particular niche (*Seed’s permaculture gardens on school grounds*). This relatively small cross section of UA practitioners serves to develop the complexity of the circumstances in which to locate the Policy’s objectives of stakeholder alignment and partnership building. An appreciation of the texture of the stakeholder environment is important given that the UaU must attempt to facilitate constructive dialogue between, on the one hand the City and non-governmental entities, and on the other, between the various entities themselves if it is to be successful in working towards the collaborative environment necessary to enable UA in the City (and which is envisioned by the Policy).

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28 The active avoidance of publicizing the UaU is also noteworthy given that the UaU does not possess the capacity to proactively seek out public agents who are interesting in undertaking UA projects, and to a large extent relies on approaches made to their office. This point will be expanded upon in due course.
5.4 **The Delivery of UA Services**

Testimony from the UaU (Visser, Fowley and Domingo) revealed a recognition that one of the limitations of the UaU is that they operate ‘reactively’ in the delivery of UA services (4. of Table 1). Human resource constraints are cited as the justification for this, in particular Domingo as the sole technical consultant having to divide his time across the whole of the City. Visser (2012, 2013) also remarks that the current modus operandi of the UaU is to work through established channels and intermediaries (NGOs such as Abalimi for example), given that the UaU has not established its own UA resource centres and does not have the capacity to seek out those interested in undertaking UA projects. As was the case for the establishment of consultative fora for UA, this is another instance where policy has not manifested into practice i.e. the CoCt (2007: 14) states the imperative to bring UA services as ‘close as possible’ to the poor through the establishment of UA resource centres.

On the issue of service delivery October (2012) remarks that despite his impression of Domingo as a knowledgeable and skilled technical supervisor, he did not feel that he was able to dedicate sufficient time during site visits and additionally felt that the UaU has not followed through in terms of the commitment made at the third UA summit to provide subsequent platforms for stakeholder engagement, as such he remarks that *Green Grow* has had to instigate this themselves. The forgoing indicates that there has been limited progress made by the UaU to establish an institutional framework regarding consultation and engagement with UA practitioners both inside and outside of government. There has been a misalignment between the Policy and practice in this regard. However this must be appreciated in the context

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29 October (2012) conveyed that *Green Grow* have attempted to develop a broader conversation regarding UA in Elsies River by channelling the views they want the City to hear via sub-councillors who they have motivated regarding the socio-economic benefits of UA.
of the limitations discussed. Visser (2012a) makes a reasonable point when arguing that in the context of limited resources, the UaU is acting prudently in terms of its reactive approach, as those who approach the UaU are likely to be those who have a drive to pursue UA projects (hence more likely to be successful). However the example of Green Grow demonstrates in fact that the vacuum resulting from the UaU’s capacity constraints has enabled the invigoration of UA undertakings from the ‘bottom up’. Such an example outlines the complexity of the question as to what is defining of enabling conditions for UA and how these relate to derivatives of the CoCT 2007.

The preceding section has illustrated a number of dimensions regarding the issue of stakeholder engagement. In the first instance it has shown that there are various strata which are pertinent to the effectiveness of these engagements.

- At one level sit the internal and external government departments within which the UaU is located, and must promote the inclusion of UA across a range of (sometimes competing) departmental mandates and policy.

- Sitting below this level are the non-governmental entities, which include organisations, communities and the private sector. The UaU in accordance with the CoCT (2007), and as its implementers, must establish frameworks for robust engagement between itself and these groups, and indeed supply a platform for the various stakeholders to engage with each other.

- Lastly there is the additional dynamic relating to the engagement, between the non-governmental entities themselves
(which is not directly under the control of the UaU or necessarily recognised in the mandate of the Policy).

All three of these strata have a bearing on the cohesiveness of the collective effort towards developing UA in the City, and thus are inextricably tied to the question of conditions which enable UA in the City. As noted there are challenges which cross-cut all three, and to a greater or lesser extent undermine collaboration amongst the various stakeholders. From one perspective, the UaU is seen to have failed to establish a cohesive ‘vision’ and relevant and effective fora for UA, and as such has not been able to create productive relationships with stakeholders on the ground. However from another perspective it may be argued that to a certain extent NGOs are also taking the top down approach of which the UaU is accused, in terms of the strict delivery of UA according to their own principles of good practice. This in part has resulted in less collaboration taking place, and potentially a missed opportunity to contribute towards the creation of enabling conditions for UA in the non-governmental space.
6 CONCLUSION

In the final analysis this research has demonstrated that a disjuncture exists between that which is acknowledged in the CoCT (2007), and by the testimony and strategic documents (CoCT, 2012; EHD, 2012a) emerging from the UaU, and that which is occurring in practice. To recall this was a similar conclusion to emerge from Satgé and Williams in (2008). Moreover the 2006 baseline document used to inform the Policy reiterates many of the same challenges discussed in this research some 7 years down the line. For instance, the document notes an existing lack of ‘synergy’ and co-ordination within city administration, ‘no common vision’, ‘cumbersome administrative requirements associated with applications for land use’, and a ‘lack of alignment and linkages with outside policies’ (Visser, 2006a: 17). As much as these factors point to inadequacies on the part of the City to deliver on its UA Policy interventions, they also evidence the fact that successful implementation in reality is not guaranteed despite understanding or strategy having been grounded in theory. As the results of this research indicate, the UaU recognises some of the key challenges currently impeding the development of UA in the city, and the need to address these in the revision of the Policy going forward (CoCT, 2012; EHD, 2012a). The lack of progress is not due to a wholly inadequate Policy, or careless policymaking, but rather on factors such as a fragmented vision for UA existing amongst the various stakeholders, the UaU’s limited operating mandate and a general breakdown in communication within the broader UA movement. To reiterate these are challenges highlighted in the local (Thornton, 2008), as well as international literature (Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999; Hubbard & Onumah, 2001; Shmidt, 2012). The point being that the task required of the UaU should be appreciated for the ubiquity of pressing challenges.

The establishment of the UaU as a result of the Policy, and formalising of UA across the strategies and mandates of the various City line functions are examples of positive progress having been made towards
the creation of an enabling environment for the development of UA. The research has also emphasised that for this to be developed further it is fundamental that a robust and quantifiable understanding of the status of UA in the City is established, which in turn will ensure that the strategic interventions put forward in the future are relevant, and that UA can be better advocated for in terms of its role in contributing towards the food system. A more collaborative effort is also needed amongst the various role-players in the City, and together with the contributions of further research on the status and potential of UA, will bolster the development of an enabling environment.

Through a close examination of the CoCT (2007) and based on testimony from NGO case studies, this research has illustrated some of the complexities pertaining to the development of UA in Cape Town. Ultimately, as it is put forward in this research and reflected in the literature, (Hubbard & Onumah, 2001; Dubbeling, & de Zeeuw, 2007; Haysom, 2010;) initiatives undertaken by city authorities and the public towards developing an enabling environment for UA must be inclusive, and engage with the context and challenges contingent on given scenarios. In addition the process is requiring of a motivated civil society and government. Despite the inadequacies discussed in this research, it is suggested that the Policy has created a platform, both within local government, and amongst non-government entities, for discussions and action on UA to proliferate. To this extent, the Policy can at the least be said to have instigated the nascent development of an enabling environment within which to further the growth of UA in the City.
LIMITATIONS

The scope and limitations of this minor dissertation are such that certain questions must remain for the consideration of future studies. One particular question of interest related to certain contradictory views that emerged on the nature and extent of cooperation between various entities (governmental and non-governmental). These are details which may prove useful in addressing with the use of methodology applicable to research less constrained by time. For example participant observation conducted from within the various groups might reveal how testimony is shaped by roles and responsibilities, and the manner in which various actors perceive their roles and duties as compared to how these responsibilities are developed in practice. This speaks to the limitations of self-report data, as one does not necessarily have insight into the nuances of day to day functions.

With respect to the participants, the groups chosen to explore the impact/interaction that NGOs have had with the CoCT (2007) were selected with consideration. It is suggested that exploring their experiences offers a worthwhile point of departure in terms of developing the discussion on how these two groups may collaborate towards the development of enabling conditions for UA in the City. However it must be acknowledged that there is a limit to the extent to which the data gathered for this research can be extrapolated to form comprehensive conclusions about the experiences of the wide range of entities conducting UA in the City. Naturally there are gaps within the research that must be borne in mind when assessing the discussion of the results which have been presented.

30 This coupled with the fact that, as will be discussed in due course, qualitative research on the status of UA in the City has yet to be fully undertaken.
8

REFERENCE LIST

8.1 SECONDARY SOURCES


Bryld 2003. Potentials, problems, and policy implications for urban agriculture in developing countries. Agriculture and Human Values 20: 79–86.


8.2 **PERSONAL COMMUNICATION**


Small, R. 2012. Personal Interview, September 28


Visser, S. 2012b. Personal Interview, December 12.

Annex A

Selected correspondence from informants
Dear Martin

Your e-mail dated 25 November 2010 in the above regard refers.

The delay is regretted. Be that as it may, in response to your questions, the following:

In terms of legislation all viable land can only be sold or let by means of a public competitive process, i.e. tenders. The properties you identified no doubt fall within this category. To determine whether the land is surplus, I first need to follow a circulation process to all Council’s internal service branches to solicit their comments. If supported, in other words not required for minimum basic municipal services, certain statutory processes will need to be complied with, i.e. EIA and rezoning process. Only then tenders can be invited.

An alternative option to consider is that the land be reserved for a department who deals with food garden projects. In some areas it is Economic Development and in other areas Social Development. I suggest you liaise with these departments to determine who will oversee such a project. I will then arrange that the land be reserved for say the Social Department, who in turn can enter in a management agreement with such an organization.

I trust the aforementioned comments will enable you to further the matter.

Kind Regards

Kobus Coetzer

Regional Head : Property Holding

Tygerberg Region
Appendix B

Photolog
B1 PHOTOGRAPHS OF URBAN GARDENS IN CAPE TOWN

This collection of photographs from various sites around Cape Town serves to create a modest idea of the forms urban agriculture takes in the city. Note in particular the unsuitable conditions from which certain gardens, through ingenuity and labour, have emerged.

Figure 1.1  Green Grow community garden in Elsies River

Figure 1.2  Seedlings growing in a makeshift nursery at Green Grow
Figure 1.3  Empty municipal land surrounding the Green Grow project
Figure 1.4  Typical soil conditions for many urban gardeners on the Cape Flats

This picture illustrates the inventive methods which are used to adapt to the nutrient deficient soils. As well as being inexpensive, these old tyres would otherwise have gone to landfill sights. These methods are typical of the training provided by Soil for Life.

Figure 1.5  Vegetable plot reclaimed by sand & seed boxes from recycled material