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***Cover illustration***

‘View of Cape Town’, from A. Hallema, *The Cape in 1776-1777: Aquerelles by Johannes Schumacher*, Plate 51 (AAM Stols, The Hague, 1951).

## Editorial

This issue of *VASSA Journal* is dedicated to the memory of Denis Verschoyle, whose wide-ranging intellectual and personal enthusiasms influenced a significant number of people involved in developing and conserving the city of Cape Town. Often a controversial figure in the City Council's Town Planning Branch, Verschoyle was also a dedicated teacher, entertaining friend and staunch Capetonian.

The complete Upper Table Valley District Policy Plan – Overview, Survey, and Policy Statement – was presented to the Council in September 1979 in four volumes. We reproduce here sections 1 to 3, plus section 12, of volume two, the Survey, and some extracts from volume three (parts I & II), the Statement. We have selected only those sections of particular interest to members of the Vernacular Architecture Society. There is substance enough in the rest of Verschoyle's report to provide material for many other specific interest groups. For instance, it would be an invaluable contribution to the history of the development of Cape Town in the twentieth century if the changes in legislation and town planning approaches were studied and the relationships between the various authorities and personalities concerned were further researched.

Sincere thanks are due to Johanna Steyn for transcribing the Verschoyle typescript and to Melanie Attwell for writing the preface, with acknowledgements to Stephen Townsend for his contributions.

For *VASSA Journal* readers who wish to have larger format versions of the maps, please leave a message on our Voicemail 088 122 6771 or write to PO Box 15347, Vlaeberg, 8018, giving your name, telephone number and address.

# Preface

*Melanie Attwell*

## **Denis Verschoyle and Policy Planning in the Upper Table Valley**

Policy Planning for the Upper Table Valley has been deeply influenced by the work of Denis Verschoyle. He was a planner and a planning historian schooled in the work of Patrick Geddes, Nikolaus Pevsner and others. His work relied on detailed analysis of a site and a thorough understanding of the dynamics of change. Although his research and policy recommendations were never officially adopted, his historical research, cultural landscape analysis, and understanding of the Upper Table Valley as a special place, have been available to a privileged few, including planners and urban conservationists within the city. They in turn have used his work to inform subsequent planning initiatives within the Upper Table Valley and elsewhere.

The Urban Conservation Unit welcomes the initiative of the Vernacular Architecture Society to make Denis Verschoyle's work on the Upper Table Valley part of the public record. We believe that it will be useful not only for its detailed content but also for the methodology used in the analysis of place and place making.

Denis Verschoyle was employed by the Town Planning Branch as a planner, and after his retirement as a supernumerary. During the latter years he undertook the collection of data and subsequent analysis in order to review and revise the Town Planning Scheme insofar as it affected the Upper Table Valley. His work, entitled Upper Table Valley District Policy Plan, was completed in draft in 1979. Its intention was to devise a strategy for the review of the Planning Scheme, in particular for the Upper Table Valley. It consisted of a review of the current planning system, a survey that was in essence a thorough analysis of the geographical, social and spatial forces that contributed to the growth and development of the Upper Table Valley. This survey is still today, after 30 years, the only full analysis of place and character that has been undertaken by the City.

Although the study is dated in parts and should be read as a historical document, there is much of contemporary value and interest

particularly in terms of historical and landscape analysis. There were two additional volumes, with drawings, which contained policy recommendations. The work was never finalised and because of a variety of contradictory approaches to planning which existed in the 1970s, none of the recommendations were ever accepted as official policy.

The motivation for the review of the existing Town Planning Regulations had its origins in the reactions to the systematic and widespread application of the existing zoning scheme on the Upper Table Valley and the subsequent loss of what was considered to be significant character in the area. More specifically, the increase in densities of Upper Table Valley as a result of high bulk factors had led to concern in planning circles that the educational system, road network and public open space system would be extended beyond their capacity to cope.

Denis Verschoyle's report went beyond these parameters and reinforced the special qualities inherent in an historical area like the Upper Table Valley. He analysed issues like scale, density, historical informants and topography. His analysis highlighted the concern that the high bulk factor in the Upper Table Valley was inimical to the retention of the area's special qualities. This was evident, for example, in the loss of fine-grained historical residential environments in favour of large blocks of flats, which were permitted in terms of the zoning scheme. While this is a matter of deep contemporary concern, in the 1970s, which was the period of a 'brave new world' in modern planning circles, Verschoyle's approach was nothing short of revolutionary.

Since the late 1940s, City and Provincial authorities had committed themselves to large planning projects, beginning with the establishment and development of the foreshore, continuing with large freeway projects, demolition of historic areas in the city in the name of slum clearance and the development of large building projects. These initiatives were encouraged by the established zoning scheme with attached substantial bulk rights. In the critical examination of the impacts of the zoning scheme on the scale and fabric of the Upper Table Valley, Verschoyle was ahead of his time.

### **Further policy development in the Upper Table Valley**

While the Upper Table Valley District Policy Plan was never officially adopted by the City as a guide for future planning decisions, it was

extremely influential in informing subsequent draft policy frameworks. In 1989 the Town Planning Branch produced a draft Policy Plan for the Upper Table Valley which drew extensively on Verschoyle's work. It was based on an earlier study produced in 1984 entitled 'The Upper Table Valley Policy Plan: Statement of Problems and Assets', which was undertaken by planners in the department with the direct involvement of Verschoyle. Policies arising out of plan of 1989 included the retention of the dominant residential and environmental qualities of the area, including the urban edge and public open spaces.

The draft Policy Plan of 1989 was not implemented but replaced by a further Upper Table Valley Policy Plan in 1993, which was also not adopted but replaced by an amended Policy Plan in November 1994. However, by 1994 the focus of planning had begun to turn to those areas which had previously received very little planning attention under the apartheid system and the planning attention on the Upper Tale waned.

Nonetheless, many of the draft policies developed in the earlier reports remained as guiding principles for planning. They included:

- the protection of residential use from intrusion by non-compatible non-residential use;
- the preclusion of development out of scale with the existing desirable built form;
- the promotion of an acceptable built form along the urban edge;
- the protection of the built heritage;
- the reinforcement of the pattern of open spaces;
- the abandonment of the existing road widening schemes inimical to the existing scale of the area (Upper Table Valley Policy Plan 1993).

Although none of the Upper Table Valley Policy Plans were officially endorsed, the Lower Gardens Policy Plan (also based on Verschoyle's research) was adopted by Council. It formed the basis for important urban interventions in areas of the Lower Gardens, such as the upgrading of Dunkley Square. This had been one of the areas flagged by Verschoyle for potential upgrading in the 1970's (Pat Lennox pers. com. 6.9.2000).

The amendments to the Zoning Scheme envisaged by Verschoyle did not occur at the scale of local areas. However, the Zoning Scheme was amended to include special controls on designated urban conservation areas. His historical understanding of the dynamics of change may be considered a contributing factor here too, although he was not a conservationist at heart. He was wary of over zealous control over

physical fabric and believed rather in the importance of the analysis of scale, use and character of a place and how such qualitative aspects could be enshrined in planning policy. He was more interested in the way dynamic cities changed and grew than in their conservation. Further, the period in which he was writing and researching marked only the beginning of the widespread and systematic use of planning controls for the conservation of designated areas in historic cities elsewhere. Nevertheless, some of the concerns raised by Verschoyle were accommodated in this amendment to the Zoning Scheme and gave impetus to the conservation consciousness in Cape Town in the early 1980s.

The City Council had agreed in 1979, and again in 1980, to amend the Town Planning Scheme to include a regulation to protect and manage designated conservation areas (Townsend 1998). Section 108 of the Zoning Scheme was the result of protracted negotiations between the City and Provincial Government. The amended regulation enabling the designation of conservation areas was finally introduced in 1990 (Gazette no.4649 of 29 June 1990). This regulation requires special consent from Council in the event of physical external alteration to buildings or other structures, as well as the control of mature trees and hedges, within the designated urban conservation areas. The Zoning Scheme (Section 108) was amended in 1992 to accommodate the Upper Table Valley Urban Conservation area, Long Street and smaller Central City areas.

As a result of the process of conservation studies and designation, 32 urban conservation areas have been declared in the Cape Town and South Peninsula Municipalities. The controls contained in Section 108 are intended to protect the special historical and environmental qualities of areas within the City, including the Upper Table Valley. The City's sensitivity to the historical and aesthetic qualities of these areas is partly the result of Verschoyle's pioneering studies of the Upper Table Valley.

## **Reference**

Townsend, S. 1998. 'Managing urban conservation areas in Cape Town: A case study in urban oriented urban management'. Unpublished paper presented at the International Workshop on Conservation, Nairobi, 1997, and in Port Elizabeth, 1998.

**Denis Verschoyle**  
**21.9.1910-27.11.1997**

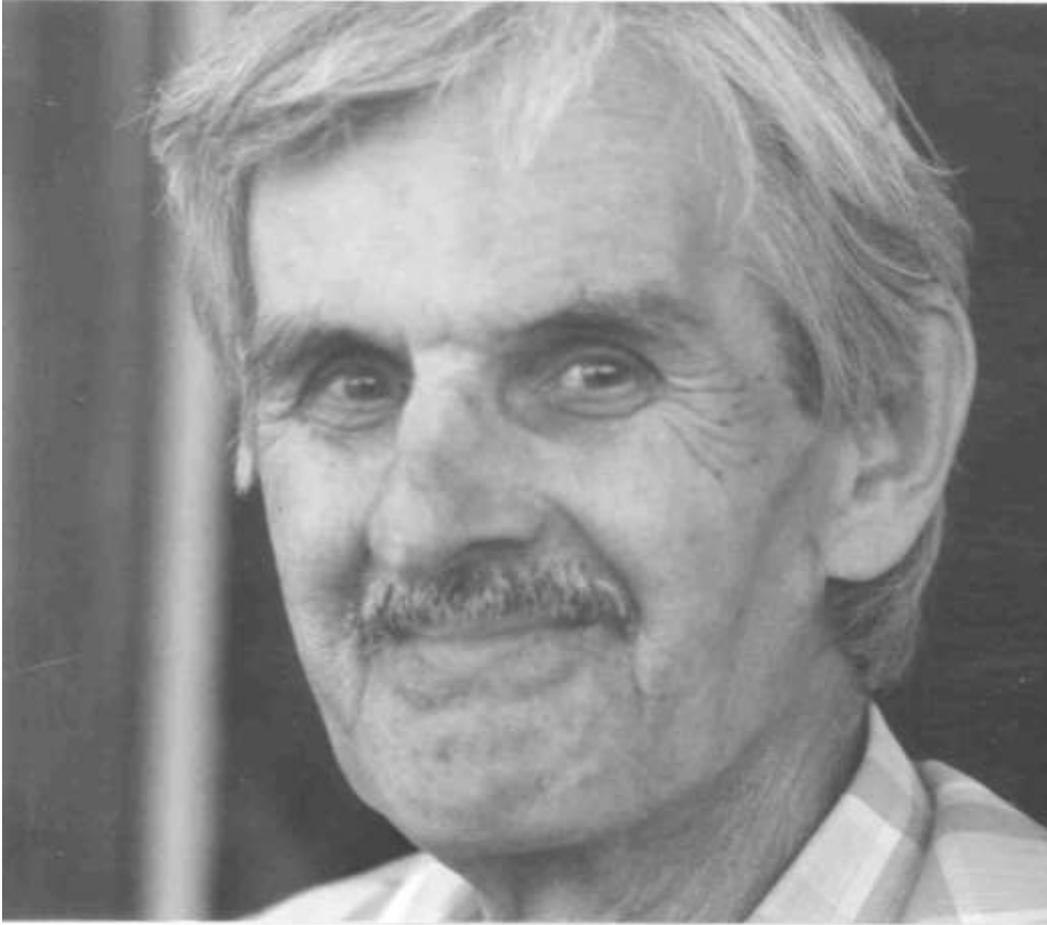
*Mieke Verschoyle*

Born in the village of Dunkineely, Donegal, Denis came from a family of craftsmen from Brabant, who settled in Dublin in the seventeenth century. The name Verschuyt was changed to Verschoyle. In 1802 John Verschoyle (great-grandfather of Denis) married the last member of the Nesbitt family of Tullydonnell, who had settled there in 1617. The grandson of this union was Frederick Verschoyle, BA Oxford, Barrister at Law, and Denis's father.

Frederick introduced his son at an early age to the wealth of Irish history, traditions, folklore and music and shared with Denis his deep love for Donegal, where the family lived – for most of the time – in the small village of Dunkineely. With his younger brother (in all there were five children), Denis was sent to a Dame School in Port Rush in northern Ireland, when they were very young. Then followed education at the Royal School of Portora in Enniskillen, also in Northern Ireland, where Denis matriculated in 1928.

There is a book about this period, written and illustrated by Sheila, Denis's sister, who recently died in her late nineties while living in Ireland. The illustrations give a very vivid and often humorous impression of what life was like for a fairly prominent family in a small village in Donegal. Outings in the model-T Ford, picnics, rowing and swimming parties, and dramatic happenings during the 'troubles'.

Student years at Trinity College, Dublin, followed, during which Denis studied Forestry & Agriculture for one year. He left Trinity in 1932 with a BA. This was the time of serious economic depression and so it was arranged for Denis to go to the farm of Miss Kathleen Murray in Elgin, South Africa. Kathleen Murray was the daughter of Dr Murray, whose wife was a Molteno. Dr Murray owned most of the land in what is now Kenilworth, which was so named because he was an admirer of Sir Walter Scott, who wrote a novel called 'Kenilworth'.



*Denis Verschoyle*

Denis, however, very soon left Elgin for a position that interested him far more, that of architectural draughtsman with the company of master-builders, McCarthy & Flegg, and then with Chris Wegerif MIA. In 1938 he joined the Town Planning Branch of the City Engineer's Department, Cape Town, and in 1940 he passed the examination for associate membership of the Town Planning Institute, London, winning a prize for the best set of papers. In 1946 Denis became Associate Member of the Town Planning Institute, South Africa. He officially retired in 1970, but was twice invited to return for specific projects.

In 1960, whilst visiting Donegal, Denis was elected as President of the Donegal Historical Society, to which he had contributed several articles since its foundation in 1946. From 1961 to 1972, Denis lectured on the history of town planning in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Cape Town. This was very enjoyable and stimulating for him. He drew up a set of maps to illustrate his lectures that are still extant. Among his students were his first wife, the painter Anna Verschoyle, Graham Binckes, Peter de Tolly, Hugh Floyd, Revel Fox, Dudley Welch, John Rennie, Arthur Black, Ken Sturgeon, Kevin Wall, and many others.

Denis's love for and interest in South Africa was profound. When South Africa became a Republic, he chose to become South African instead of remaining Irish. He had a good understanding of Afrikaans and took up Xhosa in his early eighties. Working as a town planner for the Cape Town City Council gave him ample opportunity to study the Cape and Cape Town in all its facets. In particular, he studied the relationship between its past history and the present conditions and, arising from that, the planning for future developments. The Upper Table Valley Policy Plan was perhaps one of his most comprehensive pieces of work.

His passion for truth and accuracy, and a keen memory, stood him in good stead. There were few details that escaped him and his curiosity kept him forever young. Having been his companion for twenty-five years, I am delighted that Denis's study of Upper Table Valley will enjoy a wider exposure through this publication.

# Upper Table Valley A Survey 1979

*Denis Verschoyle<sup>1</sup>*

## **Introduction**

### Situation of Upper Table Valley

Upper Table Valley is an inner suburb of the City of Cape Town immediately adjoining the central city area. Its setting in relation to the Metropolitan Area is shown in Figure 1 and its urban setting in relation to its immediate surroundings is shown in Figure 2.

### Bounds of the Planning District

For the purpose of this Survey the bounds of the district of Upper Table Valley include all the developed urban area to the south of Carisbrook Street, Buitensingel, Orange Street, Roeland Street and de Waal Drive extending as far as the mountain slopes. The western, eastern and southern boundaries coincide with those of the defined area of Table Mountain except where they are extended to include Erven 944 and 956, Tamboerskloof, Erf 2453, Oranjezicht, and the portion of Van Riebeeck Park below Bridle Road, these being either allocated as Township Public Place or zoned under the Town Planning Scheme as Public Open Space for park or recreation purposes.

For the purpose of studying the needs of passive recreation the Survey has paid some attention to the lower mountain slopes as far as Signal Hill and Tafelberg Roads since these have long been natural recreation areas for the people of Upper Table Valley and are zoned under the Town Planning Scheme for Public Open Space without being clearly defined.

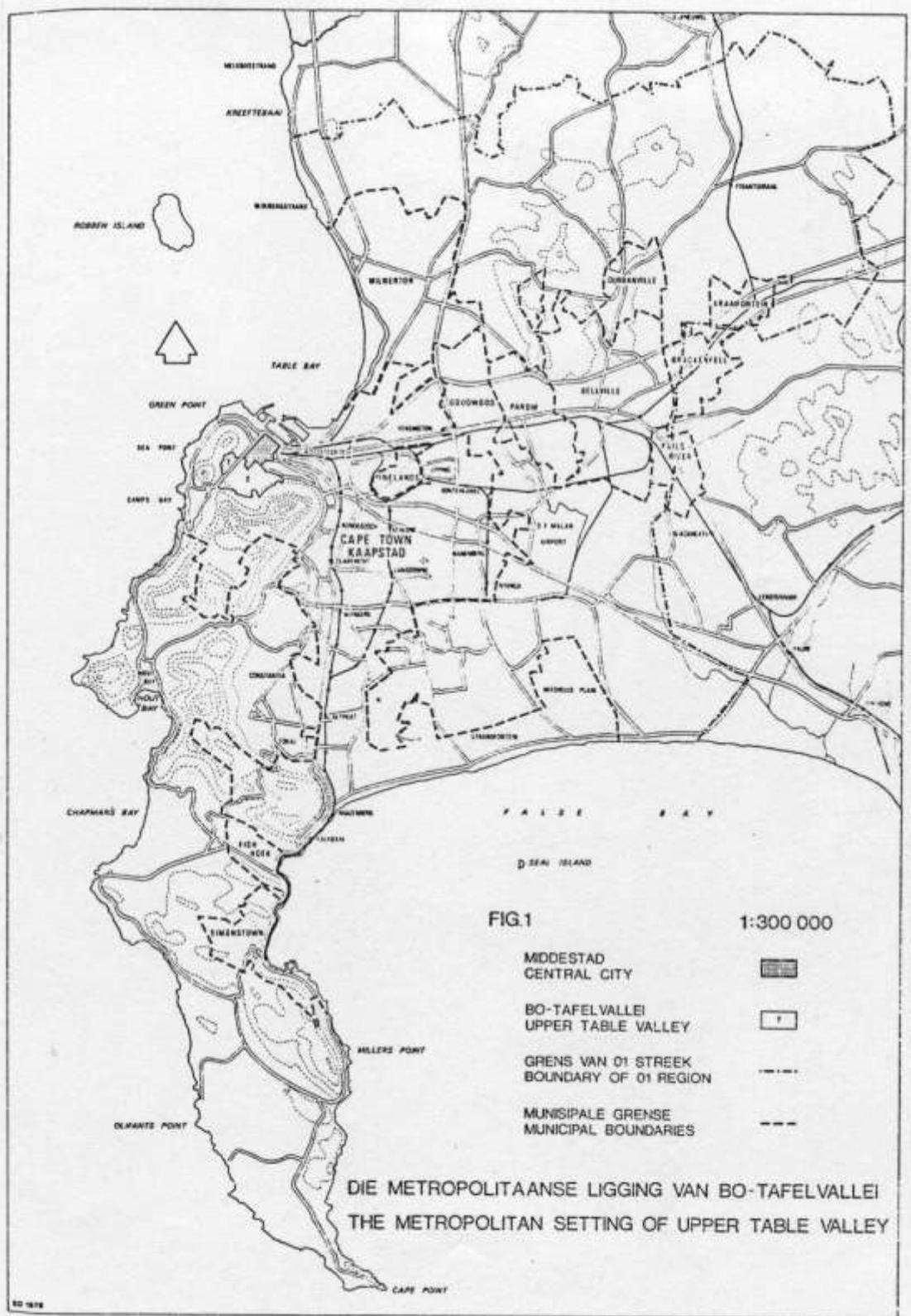


Figure 1. The metropolitan setting of Upper Table Valley



## Outer and Inner Districts

At an early stage in the Survey it was found convenient to distinguish between two well-defined areas within the district each characterised by its special land use pattern, social and economic structure and relationship to the Central Business District. They are described as the Outer District and the Inner District. The former was considered to be the essential core of Upper Table Valley which should be analyzed in more detail as a residential suburb in its own right whereas the latter was found to have all the characteristics of a transitional area lacking unity in itself and overlapping with the central city.

The Inner District consists of two sub-districts A and B, which although functionally similar are geographically detached. They are shown in Figure 3.

## Planning Sub-Districts

For descriptive purposes and the correlation of data the Outer District has been further subdivided into eight planning sub-districts. These are groupings of the 1970 Census enumerators' sub-districts. They have no social significance but are based on observed general characteristics of physiography, surface geology, main period of development and predominant dwelling types. They are shown in Figure 3 and are as follows:

1. Tamboerskloof: Medium to steep slopes; Malmesbury clay; 1892-1910; houses and flats.
2. Kloof Street: Gentle slopes; granite and Table Mountain sandstone; 1860-1938; flats.
3. Leeuwenhof: Steep slopes; granite; 1918-1970; houses.
4. Oranjezicht: Medium to steep slopes; granite and TMS; 1903-1958; houses.
5. Breda Street: Gentle slopes; TMS; 1860-1910; houses and flats.
6. Devil's Peak: Medium to steep slopes; Malmesbury clay and TMS; 1930-1958; houses.
7. Vredehoek: Gentle to steep slopes; Malmesbury clay and TMS; 1920-1958; houses and flats.
8. Highlands: Medium to steep slopes; TMS; 1938-1970; houses.

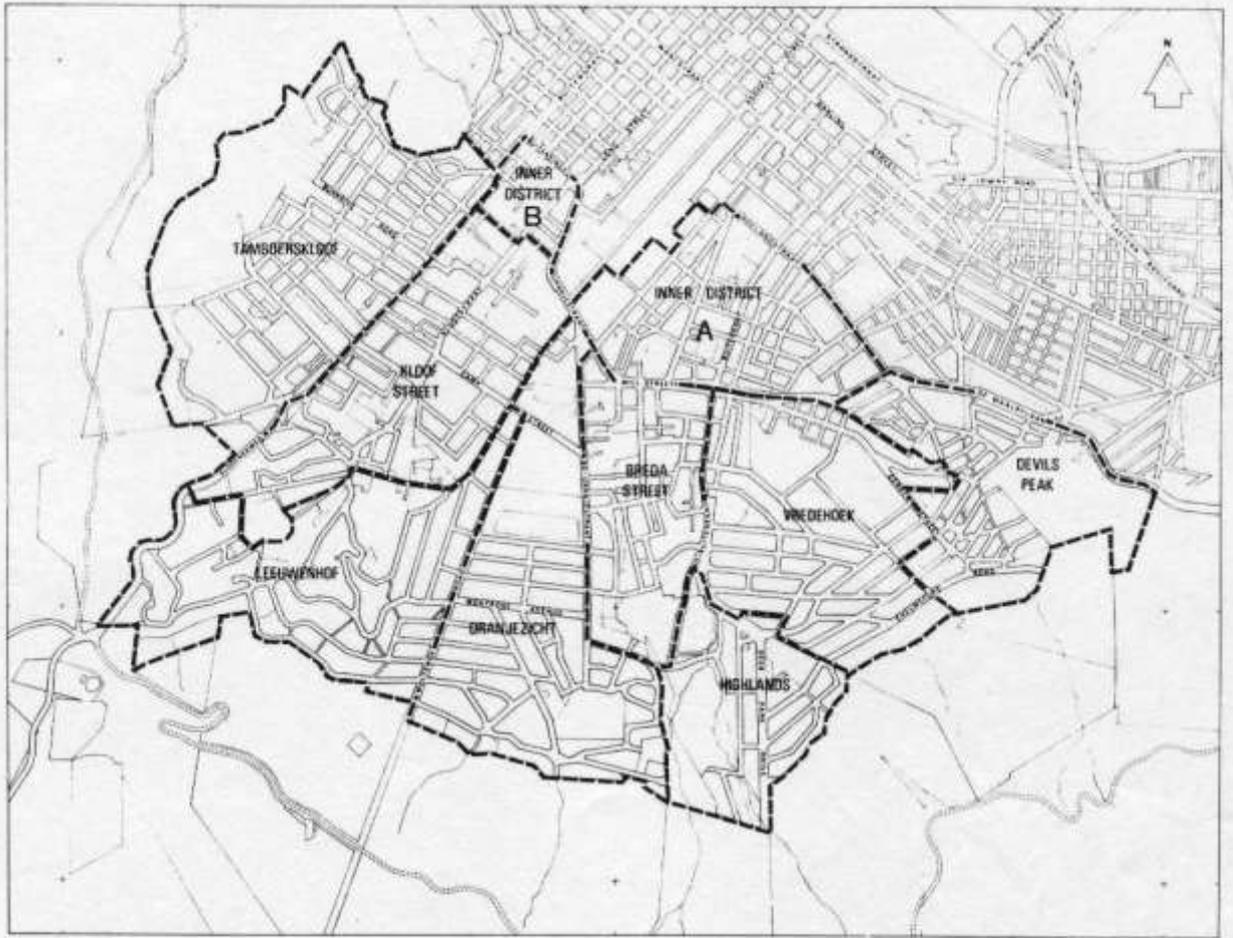


FIG.5

1:25 000

*Figure 3. Planning sub-districts in Upper Table Valley*

The first and last four of these sub-districts may be taken as rough approximations of the tributary areas of the shopping concentrations in Kloof Street and Mill Street respectively.

### Purpose of Survey

The Survey, together with the District Policy Statement and the District Proposals Map forms part of the District Policy Plan for Upper Table Valley. It presents the essential information on which the Policy Statement was based.

### Method of Survey

The questions raised by actual planning problems which have arisen from time to time in Upper Table Valley dictated what information would be needed to elucidate and answer them. The main problems have been set out in the Overview<sup>2</sup> but the Survey itself revealed other matters on which information would be needed for the preparation of the Policy Statement. The present Scheme Map and the Schedules of the Final Statement were examined for inadequacies, inconsistencies and omissions with a view to recommending adjustments or amendments. In assembling information for review of the Scheme a clear distinction was made between its two aspects - as a master plan for proposals to be implemented by the Council on publicly-owned land and as a zoning plan for control of land use on privately-owned land.

### Content of Survey

The present report, which presents the findings of the Survey, commences with an inquiry into the physiography and environmental history of the district. This is followed<sup>3</sup> by studies of land use, land ownership and demography. The activities of the inhabitants are considered under the headings of residence, work, shopping, education, recreation, culture, health and movement. Special environments of unique architectural, historical and social significance are identified and examined in some detail. The report of the Survey also includes a scrutiny of title conditions in the district and their effect on planning control.

## **Physical landscape and natural resources**

### Site

Table Valley is bounded on the north by the shore of Table Bay and is enclosed on the other sides within a semicircle of high land of which the great mass of Table Mountain dominates the scene and closes the vista to the south flanked by Devil's Peak and Lion's Head. Natural routes into the valley from east and west are confined to strips of flat ground between the high land and the sea. From the south there is one steep pass through the Kloof between Table Mountain and Lion's Head. On the shore line at the centre of the semicircle is the level ground on which the settlement from which Cape Town grew was situated. From here the bottom of the valley rises gently towards the south but more steeply immediately to the east and west. Here is Upper Table Valley which is the subject of the present study.

### Geology

Rock of the Malmesbury Series and the mantle of fine clay soil which derives from it form the lower ground of the valley as well as of Signal Hill and the lower slopes of Devil's Peak giving rise to a landscape of undulating and light relief.

A mass of intrusive granite takes its place as bedrock in the upper part of the valley, and cuts across beneath Lion's Head towards the saddle between Table Mountain and Devil's Peak. The familiar cuboidal granite blocks which reveal themselves on the steeper slopes produce sheer faces and the strong relief of the landscape which can be seen behind Leeuwenhof and in the neighbourhood of Higgs Vale. The soil formed from the decomposition of this rock is coarse and gritty and particularly favourable for the growth of woody vegetation.

On the foundations of these bedrocks lies the sandstone of the Table Mountain Series which derives its name from the mountain which towers above the valley and also includes its much-eroded neighbours Devil's Peak and Lion's Head. The sandstone forms a scanty grey soil which, when washed below together with rockfalls, collects in hollows, on ledges and at the base of the mountain to build talus slopes. In places this debris often overlays the Malmesbury and granite clays below and so contributes

to the great diversity of soil types scattered in pockets throughout the valley.

### Climate

Although the climate of the Cape Peninsula is of the Mediterranean type in its general features, there is much variation in different localities. In Table Valley the general weather habits of warm dry summers and mild winters of moderate rainfall prevail. Mean monthly temperatures vary from 16°C to 27°C in the summer and from 10°C to 18°C in the winter. The mean annual rainfall varies from 545 mm near sea level to 463 mm on Signal Hill and 1907 mm on the top of Table Mountain. Although no comparative figures are available, observation suggests that the rainfall is higher in the area just below Kloof Nek than elsewhere in the valley. The south-east winds are strong in the summer and appear to reach their greatest violence on the lower slopes of Devil's Peak where they have a marked catabatic effect.

### Water Resources

The valley is well provided with natural supplies of water. Table Mountain forms a high platform upon which the greatest precipitation of the Peninsula takes place and gives rise to many perennial and intermittent streams. The chief of these is the Platteklip stream. In addition to these are the abundant supplies of fresh water from underground sources which issue in springs along the lower slopes of the mountain to form streams which flow through the valley to discharge into the bay. These springs have their origin in water from the upper slopes which percolates through the joints and bedding planes of the sandstone, along the zones of contact between the Malmesbury beds and the intrusive granite and from the natural underground storage afforded by the accumulation of talus which is the produce of the weathering of the mountain face. Neither Signal Hill nor the slopes of Devil's Peak have the same precipitation, run-off or natural storage characteristics to provide a perennial source of water supply and consequently its streams only flow in the rainy season.

## Flora and Fauna

From the earliest days of the settlement of Europeans at the Cape it was realised how rich was the flora and how luxuriant the vegetation of Table Valley and this played no small part in the decision that it was ideal for the cultivation of garden produce. On sandstone and granite soils the mountain slopes were covered with large bushes with tough leathery leaves of the type known as sclerophyll. In the sheltered ravines of Platteklip and the Kloof small trees may have eked out an existence but nowhere the high forest trees which covered quite large areas on the eastern and southern slopes of the mountain. On the fine Malmesbury clay of Signal Hill the slopes were covered with low shrubs, among which the rhenosterbos predominated, which afforded grazing of limited capacity.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the fauna of the valley was as varied as its flora. The larger wild animals included lions, hippopotami, zebra, red hartebeest, grysbok and duikers. As late as 1785 spotted hyenas still scavenged round the slaughter house in Plein Street, but most of the others had disappeared from Table Valley before the end of the seventeenth century. Eland and leopards survived in the Peninsula to the middle of the nineteenth century but it is unlikely that they had visited Table Valley for a very long time.

## Habitat of Man

Such was the habitat of early man and his successors in Table Valley before the first settlers from Europe arrived to exploit its resources and change its face in the process of founding a provision station which eventually grew into a large city of the industrial age.

## **Environmental history**

### Purpose and Method of Inquiry

*Behind the physical form and outward appearance of the city are the economic and social forces which have brought the streets and buildings into existence. Any discussion on design must recognise this at the start, or remain purely subjective.*

Sir William Holford

Even where there has been no planning control, there is in the settlement of uses on land a certain orderliness of pattern and growth behind which lie social forces which give rise to them. In the preparation and implementation of a plan it is essential to comprehend the existence of these tendencies, to detect, analyse and explain them. Since they are continually changing over time and give rise to successive adaptations of the physical environment to produce existing land use patterns, inquiry into the past will be necessary to bring them to light. The purpose of the present study has been to trace within three frameworks - the physical, the institutional and the economic - the process whereby the present land use pattern in Upper Table Valley came into being.

The study set out to assess how much the physical environment of the district, which was adapted for certain needs over a period of time, meets the needs of today and, where it does not, to gain an understanding of changing needs and of how best to provide for continuing adaptation in the future; to find out to what extent, if any, the ideas, values and activities of people who were involved in the settlement and development of the area in the past have influenced directly or indirectly the ideas, values and activities of the present inhabitants; to define and substantiate the abstract notion of uniqueness or special character of the area; to identify the historical significance and age of buildings, groups of buildings and places of special interest within the district as facts that will be needed in the consideration of conservative policies; and finally, to engender an awareness of urban growth as a continuing voyage from the known past and present into the uncharted future.

The method employed was one of inquiry into how the man-made environment of Upper Table Valley and the activities of its inhabitants came to be what they are today. Although the results of the study are presented in some chronological order, nevertheless they were arrived at by an examination of problems rather than periods. The problems were posed by continual questioning going back in time from the situation as it is today. The answers to questions posed further questions at each stage going further back until the earliest activities and the physical bedrock were reached. The study was kept within the bounds of its purpose by asking only those questions which would be relevant to the land use planner. The inquiry sought out the physical, institutional and economic influences which lay behind changes in development, not only those of

local import to the early town and later city but also those which had their origins at the national and supranational level.

### Early Human Settlement

Table Valley has been the home of man since the earliest times and Stone Age sites have been reported within its bounds. At the time of Jan van Riebeeck's arrival in 1652 it was visited annually by the pastoral Khoi-Khoi people who sought grazing, wild game, edible plants and water. When the Netherlands East India Company looked for a most suitable location for a provision station on the route to the East, these same resources were important determining factors.

### The First Gardeners

The new settlers introduced for the first time cultivation of the soil, which was the central purpose of their enterprise, and the use of water both for irrigation and as a source of mechanical energy. At first it was intended that the Company's own garden worked by free labour should raise fruit and vegetables for victualling the ships but, as production did not meet the demand, the Company decided in 1657 to import slaves to work its garden and to grant land to free burghers who would sell their surplus produce to the Company. Some of these burghers were granted garden allotments of from one to eight hectares in Table Valley and these gradually spread fanwise from the embryo town towards the mountain, their location determined by the pockets of rich granite and sandstone soil, the contours of the terrain and the perennial streams from which water could be led for irrigation. At first the gardens were detached or grouped in clusters with wide spaces of waste land between them. Clay for brickmaking and reeds for thatching were available in the valley for the construction of homesteads. As the natural vegetation was reduced by overgrazing, veld burning and cutting for firewood so new species such as oaks, stone pines and poplars were introduced to form the basis of a new landscape which survives in places to this day.

After the building of the Castle and a new jetty in 1686 water was led off from the Platteklip Stream to service reservoirs lower down from which it was distributed to the town, the Castle and the jetty. From this time onwards for close on two centuries the competition between the

growing town and the gardens for the available water runs like a continuous thread through the history of both.

Before the close of the century the line of some of the present streets had been determined. A wagon road followed the old path from the town to Kloof Nek along the line of Kloof Street, and another known as the Molenweg on the line of modern Mill Street gave access to the Government's water mill at the top of the Company's Garden. The headrace to this mill fixed the future line of Annandale and Orange Streets which form the present ring road. As new gardens were laid out, reservations were retained between the allotments to allow unimpeded movement on the wagon roads.

The boundaries of Table Valley were defined by an ordinance in 1687 and it remained a distinct administrative unit successively under the Burgher Council, the Burgher Senate and the Municipality of Cape Town until 1913 when it was absorbed in the unified City of Cape Town. The district outside the town itself became known as the Gardens and included Upper Table Valley which is the subject of the present study.

### Development in the Eighteenth Century

After the fall of the van der Stel administration in 1707 a period of political rest and prolonged economic recession supervened. Previously the Company had been faced with a production problem which the free burghers had helped to solve. The latter were now faced with a market problem and found difficulty in disposing of their surplus produce. A petition from the Burgher Council to the Government referred to the general poverty of the residents of Table Valley. Though they had won a measure of political freedom they were still constrained by the Colbertian mercantilism which directed the policies of the Company, restricted private trading and prevented the growth of local manufacturers.

The inhabitants of Upper Table Valley were fortunate in living so close to the port and managed to trade direct with the crews of passing ships as well as supplying the townspeople daily with the produce of their gardens. Otto Mentzel who lived at the Cape between 1732 and 1741 described these activities: "An account of the Cape inhabitants would not be complete without mentioning the vegetables and fruit gardeners. These gardens are situated outside the town but in Table Valley, within the shadow of Table Mountain, more especially in the vicinity of Flaggeman's

Kloof (Kloof Nek). There the soil is good and water is plentiful; the streams that run down from the mountain are led by regular furrows to these gardens. In addition to vegetables, grapes are successfully cultivated because there is an abundance of sunshine and the warm rays that concentrate on the slopes of the mountain cause the fruit to ripen well and early. The owners of these gardens dispose of their products by sending their slaves into town with baskets and supplying regular customers or casual buyers.”

Most of the seventeenth century agriculturists in Table Valley were Company servants who did not strike deep roots. The free burghers who now acquired gardens proved to be more permanent settlers and in some cases their descendants remained there for upwards of four generations. From time to time new gardens were laid out, the choice of land being determined by the quality of the soil and the possibilities for irrigation. Doordrifts or thoroughfares were reserved for the driving of livestock to rough pastures on the mountain slopes. Such were the origins of Buitenkant, Molteno Road and Kloof Nek Road. In addition to these thoroughfares there evolved an irregular secondary system of wagon ways traversing private property and linking the various homesteads. Such were the origins of Prince Street and Hof Street. So it was that in the centre of the valley there came into being an intricate network of property boundaries, doordrifts, wagon roads, irrigation furrows and windbreaks, overlaying but combining with the natural landscape to meet the needs of a purely agricultural community.

At the sides of the valley on the lower slopes of Devils Peak and Signal Hill the light Malmesbury soil and the absence of perennial streams deterred the establishment of small gardens. Here the land was used mainly for grazing and dairy farming and was consequently laid out in larger units. These were the farms of Vredehoek, Leeuwenvoet and Tamboerskloof. The development pattern was such that, when urban settlement eventually took place, considerable areas unencumbered by numerous property boundaries were available for the layout of large townships with few constraints other than the steepness of the higher slopes.

By the mid-century the town's water supply had not kept pace with its growth but Michiel van Breda of Oranjezicht voluntarily ceded to the Burgher Council the use of a very abundant spring which he had previously opened on his land. This spring became known as Stadsfontein

and is now called the Main Spring. In 1960 it still yielded 2 273 000 litres per day. As compensation the Government in 1769 granted van Breda a further piece of land unencumbered by conditions restricting the use of water which might be, and in the event was, found on it at a later time.

There was also competition for the water from the remaining springs and streams. The garden owners depended on them for irrigation, the Company for the watermills and the town for fire-fighting and flushing its grachten. In addition, a spot on the upper reaches of the Platteklip Stream had become the chief washing place of the townspeople and the garrison and was sometimes a source of nuisance to other users. In 1774 and 1787 the Government drew up precise regulations to distribute the available water supply equitably among the various users and adjust the water rights of each garden. They remained in force until the reorganisation of the Town's water supply in 1811.

Before the middle of the century most of the garden houses were simple long buildings one room in width with steep thatched roofs and end gables. It is possible that a building which survives in Flower Street is one of these and that it was the original homestead of the garden Schoondergezicht. Later in the century additional wings were sometimes added to the long houses forming L-shaped or U-shaped plans, and projecting stoepkamers were occasionally built at either end of the front facades many of which had central gables. Zorgvliet is an example which contains all these elements. In some cases U-shaped houses were built from the start in the manner of houses in the town itself. At the end of the century flat roofs constructed of grouted bricks laid on timber beams and waterproofed with train oil made their appearance so that the addition of upper storeys, the roofing of courtyards, and the introduction of less restricted plan forms became possible. These roofs were common in Upper Table Valley until about 1830 when the importation of Welsh Slate made low-pitched hipped roofs possible. A typical arrangement for siting was to build the homestead facing north with the end gable hard up on or very close to the boundary of the nearest north-south access road, presumably in order to leave the maximum amount of garden land free for cultivation. This accounts for the pattern of houses at right angles to Buitenkant, Breda Street, Upper Orange Street, Hof Street and Kloof Street which can be seen even to this day.

During this period the economic policies of the Company and the institution of slavery inhibited the possibilities for the local development

of commerce and industry. This held back the growth of the town and consequently its expansion into Upper Table Valley was delayed for some time. Market gardening remained the economic base for its activities, and did not reach its zenith until the second quarter of the nineteenth century.

### Closely-Knit Community

In the first half of the eighteenth century property in the Gardens had changed hands fairly frequently, often because their owners found that the agricultural possibilities were too restricted and sought scope for extensive farming further from town. It is not surprising that an area of small holdings close to town should have provided a convenient nursery for newly-released Company officials who wished to take up farming. Some who made use of this opportunity before moving on were to become the founding forefathers of well-known South African families. Such were Olaf Bergh at De Hoop, Jacobus Steyn at Welgemeend, Willem Versfeld at Nooitgedacht and Jan Jacob Swanevelder at Zorgvliet.

There were three burghers who owned their first land in Upper Table Valley and whose families remained inseparably associated with it for many generations. They were Michiel Cornelis Smuts of Groenewoud or Buitenzorg (1700), Pieter van Breda of Oranjezicht (1731) and Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr of Welgemeend (1772). In 1810 those three families between them owned over ten of the gardens in Upper Table Valley, and there were few of the remaining owners who were not connected with them by marriage. Consequently by the turn of the century they formed a closely-knit community of inter-related families. Their main source of wealth was in agriculture but they had at all times close economic, social and political links with the town.

Most of the heads of families had served at one time on the Burgher Council or its successor the Burgher Senate. Many of their sons studied at European Universities, distinguished themselves in the professions after their return and formed the core of an intellectual elite which was later to have great influence in Cape Town.

Because of their common heritage of language and agriculture they had close ties with Stellenbosch, the Swartland and the Overberg. These circumstances placed the inhabitants of the Gardens in a position of leadership in the wider community of the South Western Cape especially

after the introduction of newspapers and representative government had strengthened the links.

### The early Years of Free Trade

The period from 1795 to 1806 was a time of many changes and great activity in Table Valley. The days of uneventful expansion and consolidation which had been quietly taking place since the beginning of the eighteenth century were now over. Most of the Burghers of Upper Table Valley managed to weather the winds of political change and to make the most of their opportunities in the new climate which favoured free trade and led to unprecedented economic activity.

The years from 1806 to 1815 were ones of decided prosperity in the Cape Colony. The expenditure of the garrison and naval establishment during the Napoleonic Wars had improved internal markets and a considerable export of wheat and wine had developed. It is certain that the agriculturists of Upper Table Valley benefited directly or indirectly from the se conditions. By 1820 there were six private watermills operating along the stream from Platteklip to Orange Street, and there is evidence that they supplied much of the meal for the bakers of the town and the garrison. Former taxes on winemaking were now removed and preferential tariffs in England encouraged the export of wine to that country. Many of the gardens including Oranjezicht, Leeuwenhof and Welgemeend were enlarged at this time by grants of land from the Burgher Senate, and new vineyards were laid out for the production of wine.

Fruit and vegetable gardening, however, still remained the main activity in the Gardens and marketing methods had hardly changed over a period of ninety years. Wilberforce Bird, writing in 1822 states: "The private gardens between Cape Town and the mountains, from which the inhabitants are plentifully supplied with fruit and legumes are of exquisite beauty." He refers to "the celebrated gardens of Mr. Zorn called Leeuwenhof" which he considers "is what in England would be called a good estate, yielding to its owner ample means of living like a gentleman. The rents arise from the daily sale of every description of fruit and vegetables to the population of Cape Town; this is done to a great extent by slave boys, who go with two large baskets twice a day, backwards and forwards, filled with whatever is seasonable, from the garden, and with eggs and milk from the farm. From some gardens five or six slaves are

constantly so engaged, and, at particular seasons each will bring home twenty or thirty rix-dollars per day.”

### Municipal Planning

The Burgher Senate was not inattentive to municipal affairs in Upper Table Valley. Between 1811 and 1819 it re-organised the water supply of the town. It roofed over the Main Spring at Oranjezicht and led out the water in iron pipes to a covered reservoir or waterhouse at the bottom of Hof Street. This undertaking did not seriously affect the amount of water available for irrigation of the gardens and vineyards since the improvements eliminated waste and increased the yield of the Main Spring from 609 700 litres to 1 045 300 litres per day. These works included the well-known pump in Prince Street which has survived to become a National Monument.

Mention has already been made of land transferred to private individuals by the Burgher State. This came about after 1810 in which year the Government granted to that body all the remaining waste land in Table Valley. In order to raise funds for municipal purposes the Burgher Senate began to sell off portions of this land. This had the effect of infilling the spaces of ungranted land between the clusters of gardens and of narrowing the existing doordrifts which had been reserved for through access. The result was that the town was deprived of commonage for future public purposes, and was ultimately left without sufficient reservations for future through road requirements. The old doordrift of twenty-two metres which had formerly been reserved on the line of Kloof Street was now reduced in places to less than ten metres. Subsequently the Town Council and later the City Council who succeeded as the municipal authorities had to buy back from private owners for the purposes stated some of the land which was alienated at this time. This circumstance underlines not so much the shortsightedness of the Burgher Senate, who acted conscientiously enough in the context of their time, as it does the problem of contingency and the pitfalls of prediction in any period which face those who plan for the unknown future.

Nevertheless the tidying up of the boundaries of the old wagon roads and the laying out of new streets such as Camp Street and Upper Orange Street which the Burgher Senate carried out at this time on the basis of a general plan did not give the district a coherent road framework which

imposed some sort of order on the discontinuous pattern of straggling gardens. This general plan, commissioned in 1818, forms the basis of the cadastral map of 1820 which has been compiled to accompany the present study (Figure 4). It shows clearly that the man-made boundaries which formed the framework for later urban development had now finally crystallised. It now remains to examine how this settlement pattern was adapted to meet changing needs as agriculture gave way to residential development.

From 1806 to 1820 there had been some subdivision of garden land for urban purposes at the bottoms of Hope Street, St. John's Street and Kloof Street. New subdivisions along the south side of Orange Street, although still described as gardens were in fact large residential plots. This period of relative prosperity soon came to an end and the impetus for further urbanization was delayed till later in the century.

### Prelude to Urbanization

The period of prosperity which came to an end in 1820 was succeeded by one of political and economic uncertainty at the Cape. The abolition of the Burgher Senate in 1827, the emancipation of slaves in 1834, the decline in the export of agricultural products and wine and the growth of the wool trade all had implications for the garden owners of Upper Table Valley.

From 1827 to 1840 the inhabitants of Table Valley had no say in the conduct of local government which was now taken over by the central government and administered by magistrates who neglected the municipal services which had hitherto been carried out with some concern by the Burgher Senate. Michiel van Breda who was at this time the undoubted leader of the Gardens community lost his position as President of this body and although he was appointed as a member of the newly-created Legislative Council in 1834 this did not compensate for the loss of his effective position as leader of a grass-roots body with traditions going back to the first Burgher Council of 1657. In 1840, however, when local government was restored to Cape Town with the creation of a municipality van Breda became Chairman of the elected Board of Commissioners and the first of a distinguished succession of civic leaders who later represented the Gardens.



The reduction of the British garrison and the naval establishment after the death of Napoleon in 1821 removed a lucrative local market for garden produce. It also cut off an outlet for the meal ground in the watermills of the Gardens which now had to work with an intermittent source of power in competition with the constant power of recently-introduced steam mills nearer the town centre. Between 1844 and 1851 a small steam mill was constructed at Twistniet to supplement the existing watermill but successive owners were faced with insolvency. The withdrawal of preferential tariffs in England and the lack of control of the quality of Cape wine led to a decline in the export of this product with harmful results for the recently enlarged vineyards in Upper Table Valley.

The abolition of slavery was expected to be a severe blow to the economy of the Gardens but in the event it was softened by the payment of compensation which was found easier to collect by those who lived close to banking facilities in town and provided ready capital for alternative investment made necessary by the concurrent decline of the wine trade. Moreover, the long-settled character of the gardening community had produced a benign relationship between masters and slaves which predisposed the latter and their descendants to remain in the service of their former owners as free labourers and even to feel attached to the gardens on which they were born.

Neither the economic development of the country as a whole, nor the need for expansion of the town was such that it stimulated urban settlement in the direction of Upper Table Valley where market gardening still continued as the main activity. The spread of urban developments into what later became District Six catered for the less affluent immigrant population. Some sub-division for residential purposes occurred between Roeland Street and Mill Street, and in 1839 the old garden De Hoop between Mill Street and Vriende Street was laid out for building lots. Deduction for residential lots continued here and there along Hof Street and Kloof Street.

Most of the new houses were for the first time distinctively English in character though local building practice and the addition of wooden lattice-work verandahs or balconies often imparted a strong colonial flavour. These late Georgian houses were simple and dignified. Their distinguishing features were low-pitched hipped slate roofs, large twelve-paned windows with thin glazing bars and internal shutters, and eight-paneled front doors with narrow sidelights and oval fanlights. Many

survived into the twentieth century to become nursing homes, boarding houses and students' hostels, but because of their large grounds were magnets for the flat developer and most of them were demolished between 1930 and 1950.

Although new residential development was slow in upper Table Valley, it was during this period that the advance in wool production laid the foundations for an expanding economy accompanied by an increase in population and a rapid urban growth in the Cape Colony. Michiel van Breda of Oranjezicht had as far back as 1812 invested in the first serious venture to breed sheep from imported merino rams and so can be considered a founder of the export trade in wool which soon outpaced the export of wine and other agricultural products. The effects of these new economic conditions were soon to be felt in the urban expansion of Cape Town and its suburbs.

### Occupations in 1856

The Cape Almanac of 1856 throws light on the occupations of the inhabitants of Upper Table Valley immediately prior to the leap forward to urbanization. The owners of ten of the older gardens appear to have been full-time agriculturists. The owners of a further ten followed professions in town but probably engaged in agriculture as a part-time occupation or by employing a manager. Brewing was carried on at two of the gardens where there were good springs and eight millers worked at the five mills above Mill Street. Servants and labourers made up the rest of the agricultural population.

The highest proportion of those listed were people in the learned professions, senior clerks and civil servants and made up a quarter of the total. Many of these were the sons of garden owners who earlier in the century, as already mentioned, had embarked on professional careers and had now inherited their family properties. Some continued to reside as part of an extended family on the garden where they had grown up and others lived on residential plots which had been deducted from a garden. This group formed a suburban elite more loosely-knit than before but augmented by newcomers as well as by natural increase.

Craftsmen such as masons, blacksmiths, carpenters, cabinet makers, coopers, bookbinders and tailors now made up one fifth of the occupations. A few who were connected with the building trade lived at the top of Kloof

Street but the majority were located in St. John's Street. Very few merchants or businessmen lived in Upper Table Valley at this time since most of them still resided at their place of work in town and the great move to the suburbs had not yet begun. There were nine small retail shops in the district, all located in St. John's Street or Hope Street.

In the area below Mill Street market gardening had disappeared. Here the professions and business accounted for a quarter of the occupations of the residents and the crafts accounted for another quarter. One fifth were unclassified and the remainder consisted of cab drivers, carters, porters, labourers and servants. The Chief Justice who was the highest-paid civil servant in the Colony resided on one of the old gardens and almost on his doorstep were the workshops of craftsmen and the humble homes of porters and labourers.

The social structure of Upper Table Valley at this time was distinctly pre-industrial in character. At the top of the hierarchy was a patrician land-owning class closely associated with a professional elite. Both were sharply differentiated from the craftsmen and labourers who occupied the lower rungs of the hierarchy. In spite of this differentiation there was little or no geographical separation of their places of residence. However, a change was now taking place in that the professions were displacing agriculture as the primary occupation of the inhabitants in the process of adaptation of an agricultural area for the development of a residential suburb.

### Gardens without Water

The first glimmer of South Africa's coming industrial revolution appeared in 1852 with the opening of the first copper mine in Namaqualand. Prospecting for minerals was stimulated by the discovery of gold in California and Australia and countless mining companies sprang up overnight in Cape Town. A local gold rush to Platteklip Gorge in 1855 disturbed the peace of Upper Table Valley and the discovery that it was a hoax did nothing to curb the impulse to speculate which had set in on every side. The short copper boom collapsed, but the real prosperity of South Africa was being built upon the phenomenal increase in wool production which led to the founding of new towns and the marked growth of the older centres such as Cape Town which in 1854 became the seat of representative government. The results of this economic growth began to

be felt in Upper Table Valley between 1855 and 1865 with a spate of land subdivision for residential development when parts of the gardens Roodehek, Krynaus Hof, Zorgwyk, Zorgvliet and Weltevreden were broken up and the lots sold by public auction.

With the growth of Cape Town its water supply became inadequate and the Municipality now embarked on a programme to purchase the water rights of the garden owners. This forced the pace of change from agricultural to residential land use. The first move came in 1852 with the construction of a new reservoir above the old waterhouse in Hof Street and the improvement of the Main Spring at Oranjezicht by leading water from other springs nearby. In 1860 a third reservoir was built above the second. In 1863 the Municipality acquired the rights to two thirds of the output of the Waterhof Spring which had hitherto been used exclusively for irrigation and for turning the Hope Mill and the following year it purchased Kotze's Spring above Leeuwenhof. In 1868 it expropriated the five water mills above Mill Street in order to secure the full water rights of the Platteklip Stream. But at each stage the solution of the source problem created a storage problem and conversely. Two Acts of Parliament in 1877 and 1882 enabled the Municipality to expropriate a portion of the entailed Oranjezicht Estate as a site for a new reservoir and to impound the water from its remaining springs. The Molteno Reservoir on the newly acquired land was finally completed in 1886 but the water sources were still insufficient to fill it and in the following year it was found necessary to start work on the Woodhead Tunnel to obtain water from the streams at the back of Table Mountain.

Although the expropriation of the water rights in Upper Table Valley only nibbled at the problem of the City's water supply it certainly rang the death knell of market gardening. The fine estate of Oranjezicht was crippled by the loss of its springs and high urban rates on top of it. Only those who possessed rights in the residual water from Waterhof Spring were able to carry on and one of them, Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr III of Welgemeend, was able to continue farming until his death in 1892 after which that garden was also subdivided for residential purposes.

A general decline in the character of the area was noted in a newspaper comment of 1877 - "Surprise is often expressed at the liability of residents in the apparently healthy Gardens to those ills to which flesh is heir in the more crowded parts of the town. There is no reason for surprise, when the condition of the Gardens residences is examined. Many

are so buried in trees that the walls of the house never receive the sunshine which is one of the first sanitary requisites. In others vile drainage and penurious landlords combine to multiply discomfort and danger.” But rapid changes were on the way.

### First Stage of Urbanization

The pace of general economic expansion which was associated with wool production in the fifties and sixties accelerated with the development of diamond mining in the seventies and gold mining in the eighties and nineties. Each period brought a corresponding increase in population and urban growth followed by speculative development in urban land. The mass-produced commodities of the industrial age were now available for use in building, drainage and roadmaking thus greatly facilitating the rapid development of housing estates.

An unprecedented expansion of housing development took place in 1892 and 1897 with the establishment of new townships on the large Leeuwendvoet and Tamboerskloof estates which had formerly been dairy farms. About the same time subdivision into building lots took place on further portions of Zorgwyk and on the gardens Uitkyk, Buitenzorg and Rheezicht. Further land was subdivided between Derwent Road and Upper Union Street and infilling by piecemeal subdivisions took place below Mill Street and Weltevreden Street.

Housing development kept pace with subdivision at this time partly due to the sudden influx of Uitlanders from the Transvaal in 1896 and 1897 on account of political uncertainty on the Rand following the Jameson Raid and economic uncertainty arising from technical difficulties in gold extraction at the deeper levels in the mines. Until about 1880 the small, single-storeyed villas which were springing up here and there continued to be built in the late Georgian tradition characterised by low-pitched slate roofs often with bracketed eaves, twelve-paned windows with full-length louvred shutters and exposed woodwork of varnished Burma teak. A few of these survive in Hope Street, Glynville Terrace, Vriende Street and Upper Union Street. Some terraced and semi-detached cottages which appeared at this time were still in the Cape tradition with corniced façades concealing low-pitched roofs of corrugated iron which had first become available in Cape Town in 1860. Examples of these may be seen today in Nicol Street and King Street where renovation has taken place.

It was only after 1890 that the houses became intrinsically late Victorian in form and appearance. They lacked the dignity and serenity of their late Georgian precursors but reflected the excitement and exuberance of a booming economy. Of all styles and no styles they were unfettered by traditional canons of form and proportion. Each building was a congeries of projecting gables, heavy quoins, rusticated base courses, bay windows and recessed porches. In the larger houses turrets and gazebos appeared. Fenestration tended to be capricious in arrangement and proportion but the four-paned sash window was ubiquitous. Imported standardised corrugated iron sheets and cast iron hardware provided the material for roofs, balconies, verandahs and railings at low cost. The delicate tracery of the ornamental ironwork often imparted a touch of gaiety to an otherwise sombre building. These houses continued to be built in the first decade of the twentieth century and they form the greater part of the older housing stock which has survived in Upper Table Valley to the present day.

Granite quarries opened below Kloof Nek in the seventies supplied much of the stonework for these houses. A patent kiln, capable of producing 40 000 hard bricks per day, which was installed above St. Michael's Road in 1897 insured a better quality of brick than had hitherto been obtained from the excellent clay which had always been available in the locality.

The introduction of public transport was essential for the daily journey to work from the new housing estates. In 1885 a horse tram began running from Mill Street via Long Street to link with the existing Sea Point line, but this form of traction was not feasible on the steeper gradients in Upper Table Valley. In 1897 an electric tramway was introduced on the same route and continued down Buitenkant, Roeland Street and Plein Street to the Parade. A branch line ran up Kloof Street from Overbeeck Square to a terminus above Camp Street. Between 1900 and 1905 lines were laid to Brownlow Road via both Kloof Road and Buitengracht, along Kloof Nek Road to Camps Bay and along Upper Orange Street to Montrose Avenue. This marked the final development of the tramway system in the Gardens and the peak of its efficiency.

At first the tram routes followed existing housing development and later they induced rapid infilling. The Camps Bay and Oranjezicht lines, however, were laid ahead of development in order to promote it. The latter line came into existence somewhat fortuitously. Michiel Alexander van Breda was the life owner of both Oranjezicht and Oudekraal which, due to

an entail, could not be sold or leased to anyone outside the family. He was on the verge of bankruptcy as a result of a recent doubling of municipal valuation of Oranjezicht which he could neither subdivide for residential purpose nor cultivate since its water rights had been expropriated. Oudekraal which could only support a few head of cattle had water in abundance running to waste. A development syndicate needed this water for a projected marine suburb at Camps Bay to meet the demand occasioned by the great influx of refugees during the Anglo-Boer War. In 1899 van Breda obtained an Act of Parliament to break the entail. This enabled him to lease the water rights of Oudekraal and sell Oranjezicht outright to the syndicate in accordance with a prior agreement. In the event, the syndicate decided to develop Oranjezicht as a housing estate concurrently with the Camps Bay project and constructed both tramways in order to promote them. Michiel Alexander van Breda represented the seventh generation of the family which had lived and farmed at Oranjezicht for a hundred and sixty years.

With the growth of new residential areas came the need for shops to serve them. In 1885 only two retail shops, both located in Kloof Street, had appeared in the area above Mill Street. By 1904 there were 39 shops between Mill Street and Roeland Street, 12 in Mill Street itself and 57 in the Kloof Street area. In all cases food shops predominated. It is clear that the new tram routes had influenced their location and the growth of shopping ribbons in Mill Street and Kloof Street.

At the end of the century industry still remained on a craft basis in the area below Mill Street with typical pre-industrial diversity of occupations and mixed land uses. The only large concern was a steam flour mill in Mill Street on the side of the old watermill.

This period comes to an end with the Anglo-Boer War and the short-lived boom of 1902 and 1903 which immediately followed it in Cape Town. A fresh burst of land speculation and projected housing development was stimulated by the build-up of evacuees from the Transvaal during the war and the flood of immigrants just after it. Upper Table Valley with its efficient public transport and municipal services attracted a large share of the new development but by 1904 the post-war boom had given way to a prolonged depression and many housing projects were abandoned or delayed.

## Municipal Services

In 1867 Cape Town attained full municipal status with a Town Council and Mayor in place of a Board of Commissioners presided over by a Chairman. This provided an administrative body which, with additional powers granted to it as the need arose, was capable of handling the increased responsibilities of a city which was rapidly approaching a post-industrial stage in its development. Public health was the most urgent problem, brought to a head at intervals by epidemics of typhoid caused by local unsanitary conditions and smallpox or bubonic plague introduced from outside. In 1885 the Council appointed its first Medical Officer of Health and successive reports from his department drew attention to the need for energetic action to prevent these epidemics.

The unsanitary conditions in Upper Table Valley to which attention had already been drawn in the seventies became a more serious danger to health in the nineties after the spate of new residential development had begun. The problem was mainly due to the increase in water closets which had first been introduced to the Mill Street area in the fifties. These discharged into open sloots leading to the main stormwater drains which connected with the primitive system of covered sewers in the town below. Many of these main drains were former watercourses and irrigation channels which had not been constructed to carry domestic sewage. In 1894 the Medical Officer reported that the clay subsoil in many places was permeated with liquid putrescence which was the cause of typhoid and other diseases. The raw sewage in the open drains often got dammed up by uncontrolled building alterations or by the dumping of rubbish. As late as 1898 the Medical Officer attributed an outbreak of typhoid in a row of cottages in Upper Kloof Street to defective water closets and the seepage of sewage into the surrounding soil. These conditions called for improved standards in municipal services, health regulations and building by-laws.

In 1893 the Council embarked on a scheme to provide the City with a completely new system of sewers from each house connection to the outfall of the main interceptor. In the following year pipes were laid in Mill Street, Buitenkant and De Lorentz Street. The Medical Officer reported on sewage disposal in Tamboerskloof and emphasized that it was “important that this healthy part of town just springing up should not be allowed to be indiscriminately polluted as other parts of the town have been.” Here, a bucket system of collection was employed in the interim

until the new sewers were laid. The latter work went ahead rapidly during 1895 and pipes were laid in most of the areas below Camp Street and Prince Street. In 1897 the sewerage of Tamboerskloof was completed and the construction of the Mocke Reservoir at Kloof Nek made development possible in most of the higher areas. By 1899 the new sewers extended to the tops of Upper Buitenkant, Sir George Grey Street, Hof Street and Kloof Street.

As the new sewers were completed house connections were diverted into them from the old combined sewers. In 1898 the City Council adopted a complete scheme for storm water drainage in which many of the old sewers were retained, suitably reconstructed where necessary, and arched over. New stormwater pipes were laid in other places such as Tamboerskloof and Leeuwenhof. By 1903 most of the open drains in Upper Table Valley had been bricked over, and so the old watercourses, irrigation canals and mill streams which had played such an important part in its history disappeared from sight forever.

No major change in the road system took place after the abolition of the Burgher Senate in 1872 until the middle of the century when the present Kloof Nek Road was constructed to take the place of the old steep road from the top of Kloof Street to Kloof Nek. In 1894, as part of a street improvement programme, the Council opened its own granite quarry at Kloof Nek to provide materials for footways and gutters and by 1896 many of these had been laid in the lower Gardens area. An Act of 1897 empowered the Council to make, channel and sewer new streets at the cost of abutting owners and a further Act authorised it to advance loans to assist owners for this purpose. New by-laws in 1896 laid down a minimum width of forty feet for new streets used for vehicular traffic, and up to eighty feet for streets "likely to form part of an important line of communication". The effect of these regulations may be seen in the forty foot streets of Oranjezicht and Gardens Estates which were laid out shortly after they came into force, as compared with the earlier thirty foot streets of Leeuwendvoet and Tamboerskloof Estates.

During this period the City Engineer experimented with many types of road surface. In Upper Table Valley the streets of new townships were surfaced with waterbound macadam but granite setts were often laid on steep gradients for the benefit of horse-drawn traffic. In 1909 tar was applied for the first time to the macadamised surfaces of the new streets in

the Welgemeend Estate. By that time the motor car had arrived and was already being used extensively for deliveries from the retail shops.

The Council was not unmindful of the recreational needs of the district and in 1894 it opened De Waal Park which had been laid out, planted and provided with seats on a piece of land previously acquired for waterworks purposes. In 1897 it was already described as being a popular resort - "On Sunday afternoons every seat taken up and hundreds of people walking about". In 1898 a fountain was placed in the centre. In 1906 a bandstand was built and the following year band performances were given during the summer months. In order to open up the mountain slopes for walking and horse riding the Council, in 1897, employed convict labour to cut paths from Kloof Nek to Platteklip Gorge and to the summit of Signal Hill. In 1905 unemployed workers extended these paths to Devil's Peak and round Signal Hill and Lion's Head.

A street planting programme was carried out doggedly in the face of the south-easters. Starting in 1895 oak trees planted along the whole length of Annadale Street and Lower Orange Street were well established by 1908. This avenue became known at this time as the Orange Street Boulevard, but has subsequently come to naught as an environmental casualty of Upper Table Valley in the interests of modern motor traffic.

In 1895 Cape Town's first power station, the Graaff Electric Light Works, was built in Molteno Road. The dynamos were driven by turbines turned by water from the Table Mountain pipeline and in 1897 this system was augmented by steam power. Within a few years electricity was used for street lighting in the Gardens, one of the first lamps being set up at the corner of Gladstone and Sir George Grey Street. The power station building still exists and is an outstanding example of the industrial architecture of this time.

### Building and Planning By-laws

Public health measures of necessity led to the introduction of the City's first comprehensive building regulations in 1896, made under the Cape Municipal Act of 1893. Hitherto the municipal by-laws were chiefly concerned with protection against fire and other controls were rudimentary. The new controls now contained detailed provisions for sanitation and the safety of structures, but in addition included provisions which today would be classed under town planning. These dealt with the

sitting of buildings in relation to one another and to abutting streets. They embodied provisions for minimum street widths, building lines, height of buildings, party walls, rear space, passageways and class of architecture. It was under these by-laws that many terraced and semi-detached houses were built between 1896 and 1910 to meet the demand for housing during the periods of prosperity and rapid population increase. Most of them were built for landlords as investments and let to tenants many of whom were recent immigrants.

A close scrutiny of the 1896 Regulations shows that many of its clauses were identical with those of current British local authority by-laws which were drawn up in terms of the famous Public Health Act of 1875 and subsequent amendments to it. The purpose of this Act was to contend with the unsanitary conditions which had arisen in British cities as a result of the Industrial Revolution, and to prevent their recurrence. A modern planning historian has written - "Sanitary legislation was the direct precedent of modern planning legislation", and the Act of 1875 was the forerunner of the later British town planning acts. Although the Cape Town Regulations of 1896 were modeled on the British by-laws of the time, they were nevertheless, as has already been shown, in direct response to local unsanitary conditions. But the sanitary legislation in Cape Town did not turn out to be a direct precedent for subsequent planning legislation and the evolution which was apparent in Britain did not occur here. The Town Planning Scheme of 1941 replaced all the planning controls of the earlier building regulations with the exception, in limited cases, of those dealing with building lines.

In 1920 a new set of Building Regulations, made under the Cape Municipal Ordinances of 1912 and 1917, came into force. These retained the older town planning controls with some minor amendments but introduced a new set of provisions for the subdivision of estates and the laying out of new streets.

The use of the "established building line" as a planning device has a well-documented history going back to the twelfth century or earlier in the cities of Western Europe and to van Riebeeck's time in Cape Town where it appears as the *rooilyn*. Subsequently it was the subject of deliberation of the local authorities in several specific cases. Explicit provision for the establishment of building lines was contained in a Cape Ordinance of 1794. In the Cape Town Regulations of 1896 the established building line appears as the "general line of building frontage" beyond which no

building could be erected without the written consent of the Corporation. This line was to be decided by the City Engineer whose decision would be final. Under the Regulations of 1920 the general line of building frontage could be decided in three ways - as determined by the Corporation and marked upon a plan of subdivision, as established by the Corporation where no building lines had been laid down on an approved plan of subdivision and as established by fact where building already existed.

It will be noticed that in the 1920 Regulations no provision was made for the laying down of a building line where there was no approved subdivision or existing buildings and in this respect they fell short of the 1896 Regulations and earlier custom in Cape Town by which the local authority or its authorised official was empowered to fix a building line even where there were no existing buildings.

Since much of the earlier development in Upper Table Valley owes much of its form and character to these by-laws, some understanding of their influence, drawbacks and advantages is essential in reviewing the effects of the Town Planning Scheme on that development.

### Second Stage of Urbanization

The depression which lasted from 1903 to 1909 was a time of great uncertainty in Cape Town. Population movements were complex. There was a large migration outwards mainly due at first to army personnel returning overseas and wartime evacuees going back to the Transvaal, but as the depression reached its nadir many young European men left the City to seek their fortune elsewhere, and many Coloured men left to look for work in South West Africa and the City continued at a decreasing rate and was chiefly sustained by immigrants from Eastern Europe. The number of births in 1908 was twelve and a half percent less than in 1904. A local population movement within the Peninsula was the result of the withdrawal of railway concessions to commuters which caused a number of families to move from the suburban municipalities into the City.

The nett result of these occurrences was an 11,5 percent decrease in the population within the City boundaries and a 4,2 percent decrease in the suburban municipalities between Sea Point and Kalk Bay between the census years of 1904 and 1911.

Other consequences of the depression in Cape Town were a decline in the City revenue, the restriction of municipal activity to maintenance

and a drop in properties values estimated by the City Treasurer at 50 percent between 1903 and 1908.

In Upper Table Valley the building of houses ground to a halt but it is probable that there was not as much vacancy as elsewhere due to the influx of families from the outer suburbs. In the Gardens and Oranjezicht Estates which were laid out at the turn of the century, a few opulent houses were built just before the depression had set in. After the revival some smaller houses were built in the district and one of the few developments at this time was a further subdivision of the gardens Uitkyk where Flower Street was constructed and several cottages were built in 1910. After the unification of Greater Cape Town in 1913 the district lost its position as the City's only elite suburb but it still retained the advantages of an efficient sewage system and well-constructed streets which were not yet possessed by the Southern Suburbs. Henceforward, the Council's civic energies were diffused over a much wider area. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 put a further brake on building activity which did not revive until 1920.

By 1921 a severe shortage of houses had become apparent in the City. Previously, most of the occupants of the smaller houses had been rentpayers and they were now faced with stiff rent rises due to the shortage. This led the Government to introduce rent control which induced the landlords to sell to their tenants chiefly on hire purchase. To help overcome the housing shortage the City Council advanced building loans to prospective owner-occupiers. The result was a trend towards ownership and small detached dwellings with gardens. The leveling up of income within the White classes after the First World War was accompanied by new preferences in accommodation. The older landlord-owned terrace houses became less popular. On the other hand there was not little demand for the larger houses of the Victorian period which had belonged to the professional and business elite and were expensive to maintain. Many of these were now sold at prices much below the current cost of construction. In Upper Table Valley many of them became boarding houses, nursing homes and institutions.

Landlords now turned to flat development for investment and in 1924 some fairly large blocks were built at Sea Point. In Upper Table Valley the majority of the early flats were in blocks of two or four dwelling units but after 1933 larger blocks appeared. In 1938 there were 124 blocks of flats in the area above Mill Street containing in all 593 dwelling units.

The earliest flats in the district were confined to the older subdivided areas and were chiefly built on the larger vacant lots or on properties with large gardens which had been found difficult to maintain in the new economic climate.

Between 1918 and 1938 single dwelling development first picked up again on the Oranjezicht and Marks Estates and continued on new townships at Vredehoek, Firdale Avenue and Bay View Avenue. In 1930 the City Council embarked on a housing scheme at Devil's Peak for which twelve new streets were constructed. Over 300 small houses were built. This helped to offset the slowing down of house building during the depression years of 1931 and 1932.

Home ownership and the resulting swing to the small, detached dwelling affected architectural fashions. Already before 1914, wooden casement windows had begun to replace the sliding sash in the smaller houses. In the twenties mass-produced steel casement windows became available for low-priced houses but teak of which there was still a plentiful supply was preferred for its status value.

Stoeps and porches with roofs or canopies supported on pre-cast Tuscan columns took the place of cast-iron verandah's and balconies and clay tiles supplanted corrugated iron as a roofing material. The first blocks of flats were often in the style then known in America as "Californian" with loggias and archways supported on tuscan columns. These soon gave way to blocks decorated with applied jazz motifs in which the arch was replaced by the concrete lintel the soffit of which was often moulded in a zigzag pattern. These were generally the work of speculative builders without the employment of architects but from 1938 onwards the understanding of flat construction and the use of modern materials gradually improved.

In spite of the many shops reported to be vacant in Cape Town in 1909 at the depth of the depression, there was actually an increase in the number of shops in Upper Table Valley between 1904 and 1911. In the Mill Street area the increase was 66,6 percent, in the Kloof Street area it was 15,8 percent but in the Roeland Street area it remained the same. During the First World War the number decreased slightly. The depression of 1931 to 1932 appears to have had no effect on the overall increase in shops between 1911 and 1936, during which period in the Mill Street area the increase was 130,0 percent, in the Kloof Street area it was again 15,8

percent and in the Roeland Street area it was 12,8 percent. The main shopping areas were now firmly established along the main tram routes.

This period is distinguished from the previous one by the growth of large scale manufacturing industry which started in South Africa after the turn of the century. The first signs of this in Upper Table Valley appeared in 1907 when the United Tobacco Companies (South) submitted plans for a large cigarette factory in Kloof Street. In the same year the City Council began to supply electric motors on hire purchase to encourage the use of the power which was now available from the new generating plant in Dock Road and to help alleviate the unemployment caused by the depression. In 1909 the City Treasurer reported that this had contributed to the growth of industry by “enabling the small man to commence business without being crippled by borrowing capital at high rates of interest”. The old craftsmen’s quarter between Mill Street and Roeland Street now possessed three domestic industries - a laundry, a mineral water factory and a speciality bakery - as well as a wagon building works. Labour difficulties in Europe and freightage problems during the First World War gave South Africa a further opportunity to develop local manufacture and by 1918 two furniture factories had opened in Wesley Street and Upper Canterbury Street close to the existing wagon works.

In 1935 trackless trams made their appearance in Cape Town and one of the first routes was opened in Tamboerskloof at the end of that year. Early in 1936 they superseded the old trams on Kloof Street, Oranjezicht, Mill Street and Buitenkant routes. Routes to the newly developed areas of Devil’s Peak, Vredehoek and Warren Street which had never been served by trams were opened a little later. In 1964 this form of public transport, though unsurpassed for passenger comfort and extremely efficient on the steep slopes of Upper Table Valley, gave way to motor buses in the interests of flexibility and standardisation.

### New Communities

During the nineteen thirties all vestige of the old familial Gardens community had disappeared and the last direct link was broken in 1944 when Dr. Harold Hofmeyr sold the Welgemeend homestead to the Provincial Administration for school purposes. Upper Table Valley had now become a typical middle class suburb of a city of the industrial age many of the inhabitants of which had come from other parts of the country

and from abroad to find opportunities for personal achievement in the professional and business life of the central area. Yet there are still indirect links with the past which derive from the district having been the nursery garden for so much pacemaking in the cultural life of South Africa.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century the ministers of the Grootte Kerk invariably lived in the Gardens and many of them had great influence in the fields of theology, education and pastoral work. In 1841 the first Jewish religious service in South Africa was held in a house in Hof Street and shortly afterwards the first synagogue was opened in St. John's Street. Continuing from this time many religious denominations have built churches and founded orphanages, old people's homes, youth centres and a hospital all of which still play an important part in the life of the whole community.

In the sphere of education the district was closely associated with the founding of Tot Nut van't Algemeen and the South African College which together formed the seedbeds for university education in South Africa. The campus at Hiddingh Hall still maintains the link. Two of the first teachers' training colleges started in the district. Today eight high schools have inherited these legacies and make their influence felt far beyond the bounds of Upper Table Valley.

In the early period the district was the home of many who made history in the legal world including the first three Chief Justices of the Cape. Among its inhabitants were many who distinguished themselves in the field of statescraft as well as countless generations of civil servants. Today many whose professions demand their attendance at the courts or government offices still find Upper Table Valley a convenient and pleasant place of residence.

Today as in the past proximity to the central city and good access to its cultural, administrative, judicial and commercial facilities tends to impart a certain social cohesiveness to the community. Within the district itself the religious and educational institutions which have developed gradually since the early nineteenth century still contribute to the unity in diversity which makes for a balanced and stable society.

The most enduring link with the past, however, is the built environment in which the community lives. The two-dimensional framework of wagon roads, watercourses and gardens which had already crystallised by 1820 (Figure 4) now forms the basis of the present physical infrastructure of streets, sewers, water reticulation and other channels as

well as the adapted spaces for living, cultural and recreational activities. Only in the third dimension of vertical development has there been a marked change in the form of the built environment.

### New Town Planning Legislation

Although town planning in many of its particulars had always been practiced by municipal authorities in the Cape under various Acts, Ordinances and By-laws, it was only in 1925 that it became the subject of special legislation. In that year the Central Government delegated powers for town planning to the Provincial Council who in 1934 adopted the Townships Ordinance which was considered at that time to be a comprehensive planning instrument. By this Ordinance the City of Cape Town was obliged to prepare and submit a town planning scheme to the Administrator of the Province.

In October 1934 the City Council formed a Town Planning Branch in the City Engineer's Department and appointed a Town Planning Assistant to take charge of the work entailed by the coming into operations of the Ordinance. In March 1935 the Council delegated to a Special Committee *in re* Town Planning the authority to consider all matters involving the Ordinance and powers to control interim development pending the submission of a town planning scheme. In October of the same year work started on the Civic Survey which was a statutory requirement in the preparation of a scheme. This comprised the collection and mapping of information on land use and residential buildings and was completed for Upper Table Valley in 1938. It has proved of value for comparison purposes and review in the present study. In November 1936 the Council adopted interim restrictions to control flat development and in particular the space about buildings. In 1941 the Council approved a Proposed Town Planning Scheme for the areas from Bakoven to Woodstock, including the Central City and Upper Table Valley, which was then submitted to the Administrator.

### Restrictive Conditions of Title<sup>4</sup>

Since the earliest days of land registration at the Cape certain restrictive conditions which are binding to the owners of land have been registered against the title deeds of such land. They may be imposed by owners, the

Administrator or the local authority. The conditions of the Town Planning Scheme which came into operation later are not always concordant with the restrictive conditions in respect of land to which they both apply.

Conditions of title imposed by the Administrator first appeared in townships established under Ordinance No.13 of 1927. In these townships erven were allocated for industrial, business or residential use and the relevant restrictions were registered against the title deeds. Under Ordinance No.33 of 1934 the Administrator's township conditions became more specific and, after submission to him in 1941 of the First Section of the Town Planning Scheme, were based on the zoning provisions of the Final Statement (which lays down what may or shall not be carried out on such land but cannot prescribe what shall be carried out). Consequently the conditions imposed by the Administrator on a township established since 1941 has become in effect provisions of the Town Planning Scheme. Under the Removal of Restrictions Act of 1967, the Administrator was empowered to remove any of the restrictive conditions.

#### Implementation of Policies for Preservation<sup>5</sup>

At the present time the powers of a local authority to implement policies for the preservation of places and buildings of historical and architectural importance on privately-owned land are virtually non-existent. Under the Second Schedule of Ordinance No.33 of 1934, "the preservation of places of natural beauty and of local or national historical interest" was included as a matter to be considered in the preparation of a Town Planning Scheme. No attempt was made to act on this in the preparation of the Scheme for Upper Table Valley adopted in 1941. Even if this had been done, the only practical action possible would have been the negative control of zoning areas, as opposed to specific sites, of historical interest in such a way that only the least intensive use of land would be permitted. It would not have solved the main problem of financing the preservation, restoration and maintenance of designated buildings in private ownership.

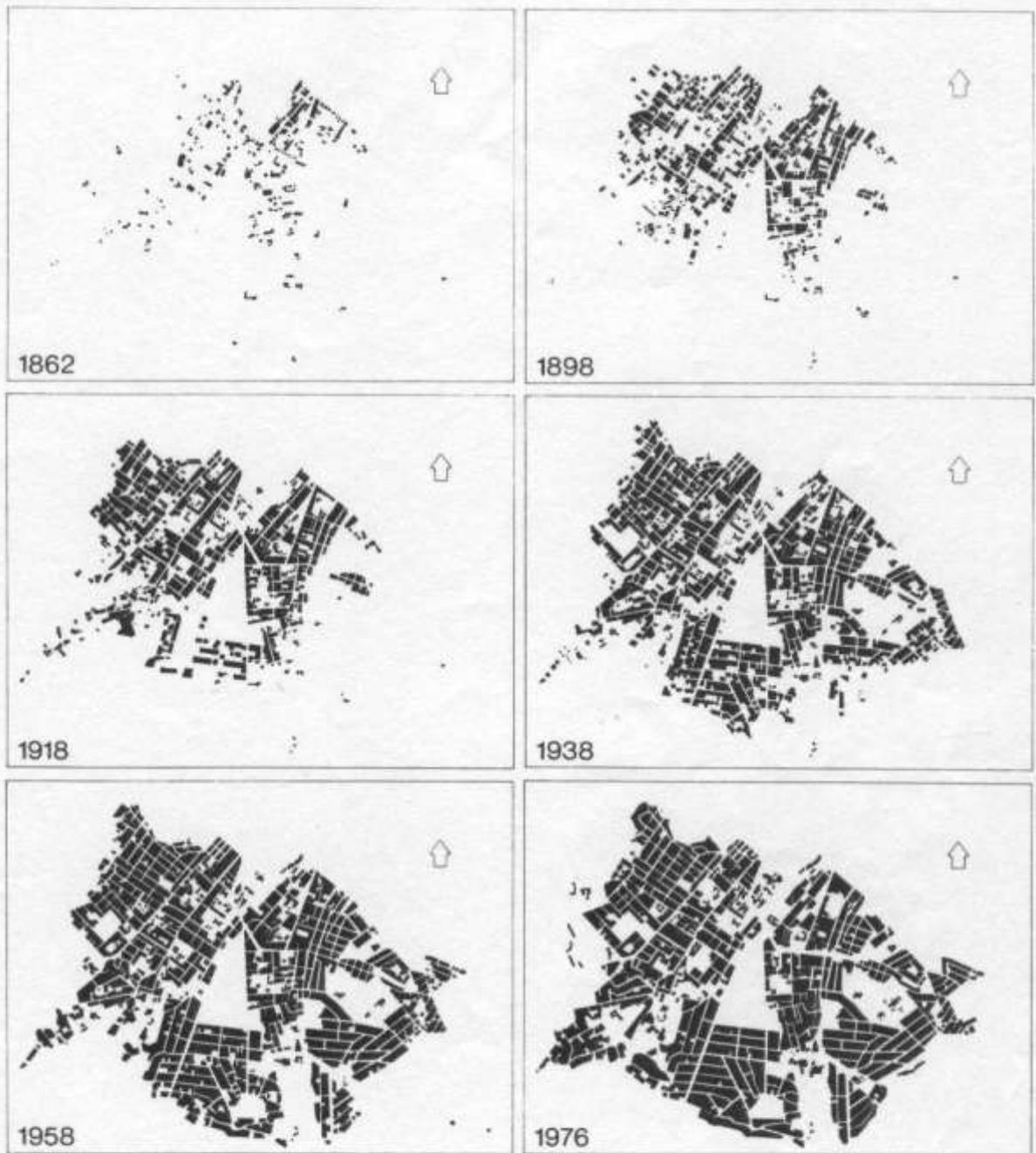


FIG.4

1: 50 000

*Figure 5. Building development in Upper Table Valley, 1862-1976.*

## **Landscape**

### Purpose of Survey

The purpose of the Survey was to conduct a broad exploratory inquiry into the given form or natural identity of Upper Table Valley, that is the characteristics of the intrinsic site as it was before its exploitation by men, and the made form or created identity that exists today as a result of successive cultural adaptations.

Only by examining the basic character of the given form and tracing the sequence of adaptations which have modified it would it be possible to reach an understanding of the unique quality of the district as composed of discrete elements some of which derived from the natural identity and others from artifacts of the introduction of exotic plant forms. It would then be possible to determine to what extent the creations of men had contributed on the one hand to preservation or enhancement and on the other to erosion or obliteration of the basic qualities of the given form.

### Scope of Survey

The main preoccupation of the present study was with form. The environmental history has already dealt with the locational factors as they presented themselves at each stage when choices had to be made in order to meet the exigencies of a new situation and make the necessary adaptations. The study of the landscape was confined mainly to the urbanized area up to the limits of building development, but included within its scope the Platteklip and Silver Stream ravines in Van Riebeeck Park. There, many of the constituents of the given form have survived but these have been inextricably interpenetrated with elements of the made form as part of the urban settlement process in Upper Table Valley. The rest of the mountain slopes do not have the same direct and intimate relationship with the suburban district and consequently have not been dealt with in any depth in the present study. As part of the proclaimed area of Table Mountain they are the subject of special ecological studies and policies.

## Given Form of Upper Table Valley

The general physiography of the district has already been described. The dominating mass and lofty rockface of Table Mountain immediately provides a dramatic setting for the site which occupies its lower slopes.

The relief of the site itself displays little irregularity except where it is broken up by granite outcrops, blocks and rockfaces above Leeuwenhof. In the upper parts of the valley small ravines caused by denudation by perennial streams occur, and dongas caused by the intermittent onslaught of winter streams. The ridges between are nowhere distinctive by here and there minor escarpments caused by erosion occasionally break the uniformity of the surface.

The original natural vegetation consisted mainly of evergreen shrubs, undershrubs and tuberous plants. Owing to the dominance of shrubs, the tufted habits of the smaller plants and the general absence of grasses, the soil was nowhere completely covered. This made it particularly vulnerable to the subsequent exploitation by men. The landscape had a sombre tone when viewed from a distance, due to the predominance of blue-greens and grey-greens. The great variety of plant life was not immediately apparent to the eye due to similarities of form and growth habits. Grasses played a very subordinate part in the natural landscape in spite of their variety. Few of them exhibited a social habit and none appear to have been widespread in the original veld. Coarse and fine kweek were found in the occasional marshy spots near springs and streams.

Trees were generally absent. Small trees and shrubs of the forest type were confined to the higher ravines and some have survived to this day in favoured spots in spite of the encroachment of vigorous alien invaders. On the ridges between the streams only those of the proteaceae family appear to have flourished. Here and there along the lower stretches of the streams melkhout, wild peach and wild olive may have grown.

## First Adaptation: Market Gardens

The transformation of the given landscape began in 1652 with the development of market gardens and the consequent clearance of the natural vegetation in the centre of the valley. Early attempts were made to make use of indigenous trees such as the silver tree and wild peach for shelter

belts and shade but it was soon found simpler to plant exotic oaks, stone pines and poplars. The first two have remained characteristic of the made landscape of Upper Table Valley ever since.

Another major modification to the landscape was the alteration of the courses of the perennial streams that flowed free from the mountain to the sea, and the cutting of numerous furrows to lead water to the gardens.

The richest soil was exploited first in two groups of small gardens extending up the stream valleys, one group from the top of Long Street to the homesteads of Belvedere and Leeuwenhof and the other from Stal Plein to the homesteads of Oranjezicht and Nooitgedagt. A broad belt of scree along the watershed between the two main catchment areas separated the two groups of gardens. The slopes above these gardens remained natural veld until 1811 after which date they were granted to the owners of the adjoining gardens with which they were consolidated to form quite large farms. In this way the waste veld, already much despoiled by cutting for firewood, was brought under control, but the subsequent establishment of pine plantations modified the landscape still further. The first adaptation, for market gardening, was now complete. Figure 4 shows the land settlement pattern as it was in 1820 and from it the location of the two early groups of gardens, described above, may be traced.

### Introduction of Exotic Trees and Plants

The eighteenth century was a period in which many European botanists were busy collecting specimens of the Cape flora for classification in herbaria or for study in botanical gardens. They soon stimulated the interest of the many residents of the Cape who had helped them. One of these in the early nineteenth century was the progressive Michiel van Breda of Oranjezicht who has already been mentioned. He collected for his garden rare plants from other parts of Southern Africa and from all over the world (Bird, p.158). Among these were coffee bushes which produced a beverage to the liking of his family, but others had their reservations. It is possible that van Breda planted the cycad which may still be seen in Belmont Avenue on land which once formed part of his garden.

An enthusiastic collector was Baron von Ludwig, a Cape town tobaccoist, who was one of the creators of the later suburban landscape of Upper Table Valley. He began by collecting specimens of Cape plants for a natural history collection in his native Württemberg, but soon devoted his

spare time to importing trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants from other countries. These he planted in his own botanical garden laid out in Kloof Street where Jan van Riebeeck Laerskool stands today. It was also a nursery garden from which he distributed trees, plants and seed which he had been successful in acclimatizing (Bradlow, *passim*).

From the lists of upwards of 500 species of trees which von Ludwig planted, we can detect those which could not adapt to the Cape climate, such as the horse chestnut, alder, birch and lime which came from northern Europe.

The trees which adapted and have now become part of the made landscape of Upper Table Valley included the Norfolk Island pine, plane, evergreen oak, syringa, casuarina, rubber tree, Senegal date palm and blue gum. Less common are the liquid amber, ailanthus and prickly paperbark. The landscape possibilities of the latter trees may be seen from a full-grown specimen in the grass verge of Orange Street where it forms part of a group with Norfolk Island pines and palms in the grounds of Disa House.

The shrubs which are now so common in the gardens of the suburb included hibiscus, viburnum, cassia, laurustina, camellia, berberia, pyracantha and cotoneaster. A very old specimen of the latter may be seen in the school grounds on the site of von Ludwig's garden.

### Second Adaptation: Residential Suburb

The change from an agricultural landscape to a residential one was gradual at first. During the eighteenth century the only man-made forms to appear were those necessary for the harvesting and processing of the products of the soil such as farmsteads, wagon roads and water mills. In the first half of the nineteenth century residential villas with large grounds appeared and with them the planting of ornamental trees most of which had been introduced from abroad at that time.

In the last decade of the century the functional succession from agricultural to residential use had become irrevocable. The new landscape was now essentially that of a residential suburb. Building development became more compact with subdivision into small erven and the building of semi-detached and terrace houses. In places, large clay pits and quarries were excavated for building material. These added minor irregularities of the even land surface. Most of the scars have now healed and the cavities adapted for playing fields and other purposes.

Running water disappeared from the scene as the streams were culverted to become stormwater drains. Here and there the tree-lined avenues to the old homesteads were preserved as streets in the new subdivided estates. Active municipal tree planting programmes and the laying out of parks played a major part in the creation of the new townscape. The preservation and maturing of older trees combined with new planting produced a more dominant green canopy than had ever existed before. Oaks and stone pines still maintained primacy in the landscape but the more recently introduced cluster pines now made their rather forbidding presence felt.

### Third Adaptation: Multiple Dwellings

The new suburban landscape remained unchanged until 1930 when flat development began. The man-made forms of multiple dwellings took over the sites of large houses many of which contained mature trees which had been planted for their fruit or for ornament. In the process of flat development many of these trees disappeared.

From 1945 onwards flat blocks of up to seven stories broke through the green canopy. On certain irregular sites where tall mature trees were preserved these blocks did not disturb the identity of the place, but may actually have enhanced it by providing points of reference in the overall landscape. In other places the flat blocks have formed a solid mass of buildings without the relief of trees and so detracted from the identity of the place as it was before they were built. This was further accelerated after new parking requirements led to the increase of hard surfaces at the expense of garden space. The introduction of tower blocks to the district had a far greater impact on the total landscape than any of the more traditional multiple dwellings. The lack of consonance derives more from the extreme length and massiveness of the horizontal element at its base and from the monumental scale and rigid symmetry of the whole complex than from the height of the three towers. The other tower at the Gardens Centre does not obtrude in the made landscape to anything like the same extent due to its lower and central situation. It stands out as a single feature of community importance and has some meaning as a reference point to a central meeting place of the inhabitants of the district.

This final period in the evolution of the made form of Upper Table Valley has seen renewed activity in municipal tree planting programmes

and the landscaping of open spaces. Many of the more important roads and some which were formerly rather characterless have been given an identity each with its own distinctive tree planting. Examples are the jacarandas in Leeuwenhof Crescent, the plans in Montrose Avenue, the cork oaks in Culver Street and the yellowwoods in Derry Street. These provide references for human orientation and contribute the interest of variety in the total landscape.

### Genius of place

From the foregoing brief description of the intrinsic site or given form in Upper Table Valley and from the outline of the sequence of cultural adaptations that have brought the made form into being, it is possible tentatively to draw up an inventory of those elements which in sum and combination now make up the unique quality of the district or the genius of the place:

1. Dramatic site. This derives from its setting below the dominating mass and sheer rockface of Table Mountain and its flanking peaks, necks and ridges.
2. Enclosure. There is an ever-present sense of enclosure due to the steep slopes which confine the district on three sides and the high buildings of the central city on the fourth side.
3. Detachment. The district is physically isolated from other suburbs with the exception of Camps Bay to which there is road access at a single point.
4. Homogeneity of relief. The whole district occupies a sloping site in the form of a single amphitheatre or semi-bowl with only minor irregularities in the land surface.
5. Street pattern. The basic street pattern is congruous with the form of the land surface due to its framework of radial avenues spreading fanwise upwards from the centre of the semi-bowl. In the centre of the valley a finer network of cross streets articulates with the radials to serve the older adapted living spaces. On the western and eastern slopes, variations in formal grid and contour planning reflect the ideas and needs of the later periods in which the residential streets were laid out.
6. Buildings. The dominant pattern of man's development is a light-toned texture of separate shapes formed by dwellings and other buildings

which are blended and articulated over the district. In some of the lower areas undifferentiated masses of flat blocks rise above the canopy of trees. In the higher areas the predominant red tiled roofs of single dwellings are set in a matrix of dark green foliage. In two places tower blocks obtrude above the generally uniform building envelope and one of these identifies a centre of community importance.

7. Green spaces. Belts of trees ring the district and penetrate it in fingers along the main avenues and down the ravines and gullies from the mountain. Where there are public open spaces the pattern of trees broadens into wide belts but tapers out where intensive flat development has taken place. From the Molteno Reservoir down through the Public Gardens a belt of trees links the suburb with the city.
8. Exotic trees. Most of the trees of Table Valley are introduced species which with the passage of time have become accepted as characteristic of the genius of the place. Foremost among these is the stone pine introduced by van Riebeeck and early accepted as a well-behaved guest. The oak was until recently an essential element in the street scene of the Gardens but has suffered from the inroads of building development and road widening projects. The trees introduced by pioneers such as van Breda and von Ludwig add variety to the palette which forms the basis of the district's characteristic treescape. The majority of the trees are evergreen and form a dark green canopy which makes a rich setting for the lighter-toned patterns of the building development.
9. Neighbourhood variety. Although Upper Table Valley and the Outer District in particular exhibits an essential unity, its component neighbourhoods have characters of their own. These derive from variations in the intrinsic site and the sequence of historical periods in which the particular area was adapted to meet changing functional needs. Each neighbourhood has its own small-scale visual quality which identifies it from the others. Within the district, the neighbourhoods offer a wide range for choice of living environments. The immediately recognizable character of each neighbourhood gives coherence to the district as a whole and engenders an awareness of locality and orientation.
10. Historic places. Despite the continued loss due to demolition which it has sustained over the last forty years, the district still possesses many places, buildings, groups of buildings and structures of outstanding historical interest and distinctive character. They include the original

garden homesteads, late Georgian residences, early waterworks, streets of Victorian houses, rows of Edwardian cottages and later which reflect the particular flavour of their period. Eleven of these enjoy protection as proclaimed national monuments. All contribute towards the unique quality of Upper Table Valley.

11. Relation to central city. The district enjoys a closer and more direct relationship with the central city than any other suburb with the exception of Schotsche Kloof. All the radial roads feed directly into the central city and the Public Gardens provide a direct landscaped pedestrian link. Awareness of the presence of the city is all-pervasive.

### Opportunities for Restoration and Enhancement<sup>6</sup>

In the adaptation of artifacts to the site certain elements of the given form have been obliterated and are irretrievably lost. Others have been impaired or partially obliterated but could in some measure be recovered. At the same time new elements of importance have been introduced and will certainly continue to be introduced in the future.

Elements which have been irretrievably lost in Upper Table Valley are the natural vegetation of the veld which once covered the lower part of the valley and the use of the rich soil on the site of the older gardens which are now covered with intensive flat development and hard surfaces.

There are still, however, opportunities for the recovery, restoration and enhancement of the natural identity. Trees indigenous to Table Mountain could be planted in the ravines. With judicious landscaping and maintenance the natural identity of the place could in some measure be restored. Since the amount of water available from the original sources now comprises an infinitesimal proportion of the city's total water supply and requires a disproportionate amount of maintenance for its use in the reticulation, a reversion to its original use would be practicable. A programme for bringing the water above ground again and letting it flow in open channels and streams could partially restore the intrinsic genius of the place.

### Values, Objectives and Policies

By examining the intrinsic qualities of the given site and by explicating the adaptations by which the made site has come into being, the study

attempted to select those elements of the natural identity and those of the created district that are most expressive and hence valuable. Such values will affect the objectives and policies to be pursued.

Agreement on what constitutes the unique quality of the district or the genius of the place would, if made explicit, enable the formulation of a value system. If accepted, this value system could form the basis for the setting out of objectives to the attainment of which policies could be directed.

Programmes and projects initiated and carried out in furtherance of the policies would be provided with a palette to work from in re-creating or enhancing the components of the natural identity.

Continuing evolution of the made form will involve the introduction of new artifacts. These will include new buildings, structures and channels. The changes which take place will depend on building regulations, provisions of the Town Planning Scheme, amendments to and waivers from the latter, consent to subdivide, recommendations for removal of restrictions and many other controls on which decisions must be made. Other changes will take place as a result of works and projects undertaken by the Council and other public authorities. New development and its control can be evaluated in the light of whether they add to or detract from the summation of elements which make up the unique quality of the district and the genius of the place which have been explored in the present study.

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### **Notes**

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<sup>1</sup> The title page of the "Upper Table Valley District Policy Plan: 2 Survey" acknowledges the following contributors. The document was prepared in the Town Planning Branch, City Engineer's Department, Cape Town, with assistance from the branches of Land Survey, Parks & Forests, Technical Management Services, Waterworks, and Health and Town Clerk's departments. The Survey was compiled by Denis Verschoyle, assisted by Neville Thornton (Town Planner), Frik van der Merwe (Town Planner), Liesel Mostert (Town Planner), Colin Maxwell (Sociologist), Michael Brown (Architect & Town Planner), Claire Patten (Professional Assistant). The plans were prepared by Susan Duguid, Claire Patten, Vera Sokol, Denis Verschoyle and Miranda Zannos.

<sup>2</sup> "Call for Review of Town Planning Scheme"

The initiation of moves towards a review of the Town Planning Scheme for the City as a whole originated as a result of the findings of the Diemont Commission in 1962. On 12 December 1962 a Special Committee of Council resolved to direct the City Engineer "to prepare a modernised and simplified Town Planning Scheme".

About the same time, various representative bodies drew attention to the need for review and revision of the Scheme and on 23 November 1964 the City Engineer wrote to various interested chambers, institutes and societies announcing the publication of a Revised Final Statement and a proposal to embark on a second stage of revision to comprise "an exhaustive and comprehensive review of the entire Town Planning Scheme, including the basic underlying ideas and approach to be employed in its

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formulation; it could even result in a system of control completely different in every particular from that presently existing”.

#### Review in Upper Table Valley

The district of Upper Table Valley comes into the picture in 1967 stimulated by press coverage of residents’ concern about the type of development which was taking place and particularly about rising densities in relation to public amenities and school facilities. Following these expressions of public opinion in the area, on the 28 August 1967 the Director of Local Government of the Provincial Administration wrote to the Town Clerk stating that the Administrator felt that “there is a genuine need for the whole zoning map of the Town Planning Scheme to be reviewed as a matter of urgency” . . . . The Gardens and Tamboerskloof areas . . . are good examples of planning in the early days without a clear picture of the final results when the scheme has been implemented to the full. A frightening picture comes to the fore of a solid mass of flats covering this large area without the necessary public amenities for the inhabitants.

#### Survey of 1968

In 1968-1969 the Town Planning Branch undertook a survey of Upper Table Valley covering population, existing zoning, open space, educational facilities and traffic. The results of this survey were contained in a draft Report which concluded with a statement that a stage had been reached when certain policy decision would have to be made in respect of educational facilities, open space standards, parking requirements, limited rezoning, and ways of securing public participation.

The foregoing Report in its conclusions points to some of the problems to be dealt with in a review and revision of the Scheme for Upper Table Valley, but it was not followed up with a policy statement of defined goals and proposed objectives for action within the district, nor was any lead with recommendations given for the guidance of those who would ultimately be required to make the policy decisions asked for.

There is no doubt that the data from the Survey and Report of 1968-1969 has proved valuable in dealing with *ad hoc* decisions since that year, but unfortunately it lacked standing by not having reached acceptance by the Town Planning Committee or by not having been followed up by revision of the Scheme for this district.” (Pages 1-3 in volume one, Overview.)

<sup>3</sup> Only Sections 2. Physical Landscape & Natural Resources, 3. Environmental History and 12. Landscape, are reproduced here.

<sup>4</sup> This section has been abridged (pages 157ff in volume 2, Survey).

<sup>5</sup> Extracted from volume 3 (part 2): Statement (pages 195-196).

<sup>6</sup> This section has been abridged (pages 147-149 in volume 2, Survey).