



**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING  
IN THE FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY**

**Prepared by**

**PLANNING PARTNERS**

**On behalf of the  
Stellenbosch Municipality**

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## CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	4
2.	BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE .....	4
3.	PREVIOUS INITIATIVES.....	5
3.1.	Social Accord.....	5
3.2.	The Commonage and Mooiwater .....	6
3.3.	Langrug .....	9
3.4.	Mooiwater Extension .....	11
3.5.	Erf 412 .....	13
3.6.	Dennegeur.....	14
3.7.	The Berg River Dam Housing .....	16
4.	PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION .....	17
4.1	How much housing should be provided and who should benefit?.....	17
4.2	Where should the housing be built? .....	17
4.3	Who is responsible for developing the housing? .....	18
4.4	What type of housing should be built? .....	18
4.5	What levels of affordability should be targeted?.....	18
5.	HOUSING OPTIONS .....	19
6.	DELIVERY MECHANISMS .....	20
7.	FUTURE POSSIBILITIES FOR HOUSING LAND .....	21
7.1.	LANGRUG .....	21
7.2.	DENNEGEUR.....	23
7.3.	MAASDORP.....	25
7.4.	LA MOTTE VILLAGE .....	27
7.5.	ROBERTSVALLEI .....	29
8.	A PRELIMINARY STRATEGY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY .....	31
8.1.	Conceptual Plan.....	31
8.2.	Phased Programme .....	33
9.	CONCLUSION .....	34



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The local authority and community of Franschhoek have been pro-active in the past about addressing the need for affordable and subsidized housing, and a number of initiatives have been successfully implemented. Many challenges however remain and a strategic framework is required to manage the process over the longer term. It is recognised that stability and prosperity in the valley depend on all citizens being able to live with dignity.

This document reviews past initiatives and investigates future options at a strategic level. A concise policy framework is presented which includes possible areas for development as well as recommendations about implementation. Some of these recommendations relate to low cost housing for the poor, while others concern medium cost houses to cater for people whose earnings exceed subsidy limitations, but who cannot afford market prices.

There is a proud record of housing delivery in the valley, with the social accord that was signed in 1998, and subsequent development of Mooiwater that was facilitated by cross subsidies from the sale of the Commonage. However some of the ideas generated at that time, including medium cost housing and land for restitution remain to be implemented. Changing socio-economic trends have generated urban inflows of people from the surrounding rural area and elsewhere, and an informal settlement at Langrug has emerged. Plans to upgrade Langrug have been formulated, but the project has not gained momentum. A related initiative at Erf 412 relocated squatters, but has also faltered, and needs to be revived.

The private sector has responded, including an initiative at Dennegeur where farmers have developed a high quality housing estate for their farm workers. This willingness to participate in the housing programme could provide further opportunities for partnerships between Council and the private sector.

It is important for Council to pursue a fair and rational policy in the delivery of housing. At a philosophical level issues are debated around how much housing should be provided and who should benefit, where the housing should be built, who is responsible for developing the housing, what type of housing should be built, and what levels of affordability should be targeted. The range of possible housing options and delivery mechanisms is briefly reviewed.

The report then looks at future possibilities for land to accommodate both low cost and mid-level housing. After completion of Mooiwater, Langrug provides the best short term option for subsidized housing, and an in-situ upgrading project is recommended. There are promising possibilities for some co-operation with the owners of the adjacent farm Dennegeur that could assist in unlocking the potential at Langrug. Some densification and infill could occur at Maasdorp and there is land next to this established area that could be used for mid-level housing. La Motte village provides the best long term opportunity, because there is an established settlement, which has been consolidated with recent housing built for contractors of the Berg River dam. The availability of land and proximity of bulk services make this a logical location. There is also benefit in expanding housing in this area from a spatial and linkages perspective. The tourist approach with a rural landscape on the southern side of the approach road is not compromised because La Motte village is not directly visible, and pressure is relieved from the historic core.

A conceptual diagram of possible sites is prepared which reveals that, despite appearances to the contrary, there is land in the valley that can be used for affordable housing. Recommendations are made for specific actions for each of the sites mentioned in this report,



## **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

A number of initiatives have been employed in Franschhoek over the last ten years to address the shortage of affordable housing. Some of these have been successful and some have fallen short of expectations for various reasons. However the need for affordable housing has not lessened and it is important that a realistic policy is put in place. This must ensure that delivery can be sustained to address the needs of the valley without compromising the qualities of the area and environment.

The aim of this document is to briefly review past initiatives and investigate future options at a strategic level. It is not intended to undertake new fieldwork or resolve long term regional issues, but rather to assemble a rapid and concise policy framework for consideration by Council. Not all of the recommendations in this document relate to low cost housing, because there is a real need for medium cost houses to cater for mid level employees of both the private and public sectors in the town. Figure 1 illustrates the Franschhoek Valley and places referred to in this report.

### **2. BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE**

During the apartheid era the need for affordable housing in the valley was modest. However the group area provisions, influx control and vulnerable situation of rural workers created an artificial situation. Most rural workers were accommodated on farms or forest stations in housing provided by their employers, and the town of Franschhoek experienced limited growth. The modest housing needs for urban workers were met at Groendal, where the sizes of plot and house were relatively generous. Land was available for expansion at Langrug and plans had been prepared for additional houses to be built over time.

The housing delivery programme of the Western Cape suffered during the 1980s and 1990s as funding became scarce, the mandate to local authorities changed and policy for subsidies and delivery mechanisms became less clear. After a democratic government was elected, new challenges emerged. Over time more people came to town looking for work, non essential farm labourers were asked to leave the farms and urban development picked up pace. These factors generated an increasing demand for affordable housing in and around Franschhoek.

In 2000 it was estimated that the backlog for affordable housing in Franschhoek was 1000 units. This included people living in shacks, backyard dwellings, those on the waiting list, and provision for some people moving off the farms and into town. A successful housing project was implemented at Mooiwater where 767 units were built, and another 300 plots are currently being serviced. However the backlog continues and it is estimated that another 400 - 500 housing units are still required. These are for people who are not accommodated in Mooiwater, unable to afford their own accommodation, and who have justification for living in the valley. A much greater need obviously exists in the region, but this is part of a bigger issue.

The valley must address its need for affordable housing in a humane and effective manner, but Franschhoek cannot cater for the housing needs of the district as a whole. Other parts of the district must also contribute to the supply of subsidized housing so that the region is able to retain a balance between economic growth, attraction to tourists, environmental sustainability and quality of life for all of its citizens. It is also evident that the Municipality has capacity constraints. The business and agricultural sectors have a real interest in a sustainable solution, and there are opportunities for these sectors to contribute through joint ventures.



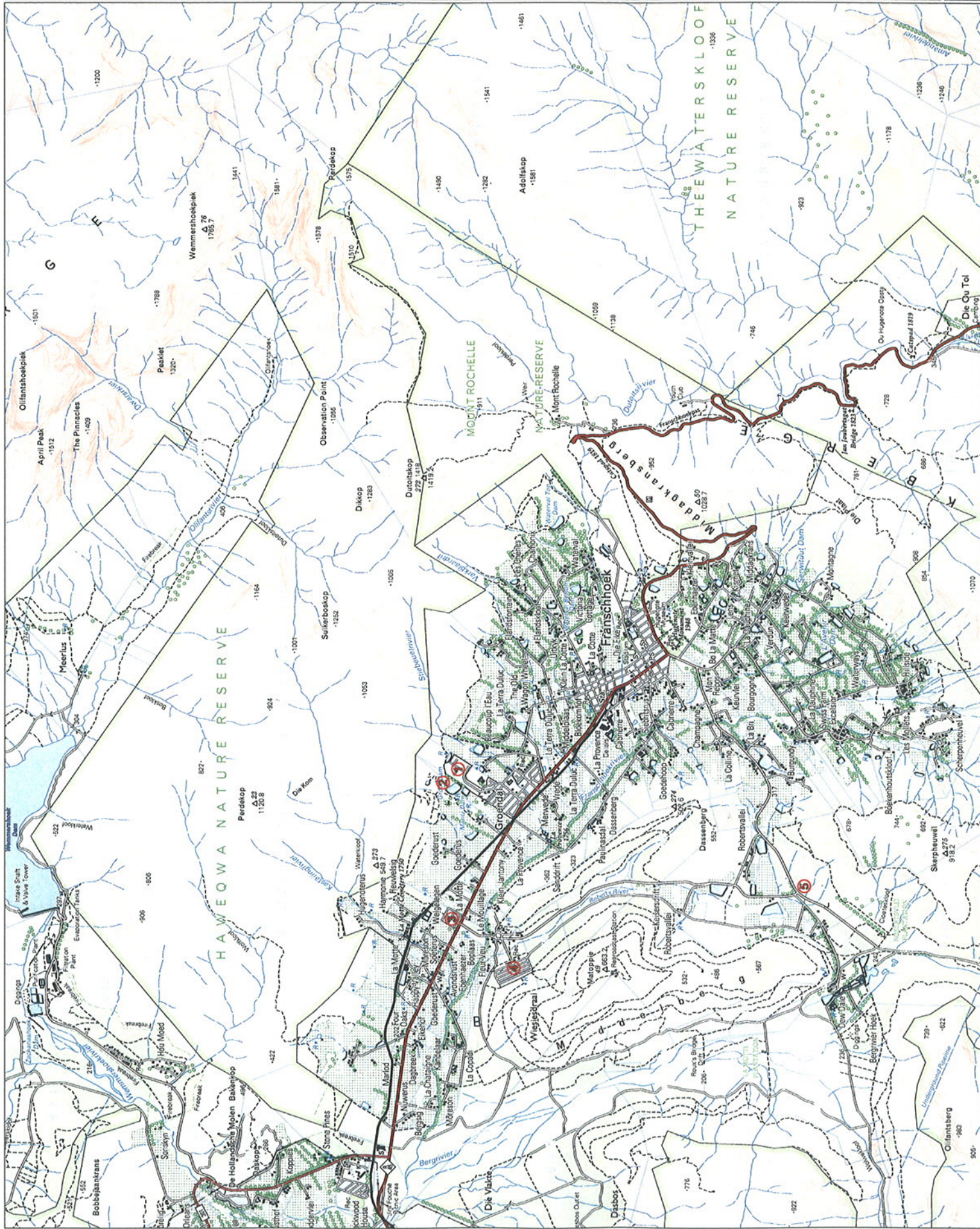
**FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY  
POTENTIAL SITES FOR  
SUPPLEMENTARY HOUSING**

- 1 LANGRUG
- 2 DENNEGEUR
- 3 MAASDORP
- 4 LA MOTTE VILLAGE
- 5 ROBERTSVALLEI



SCALE 1:50 000

4





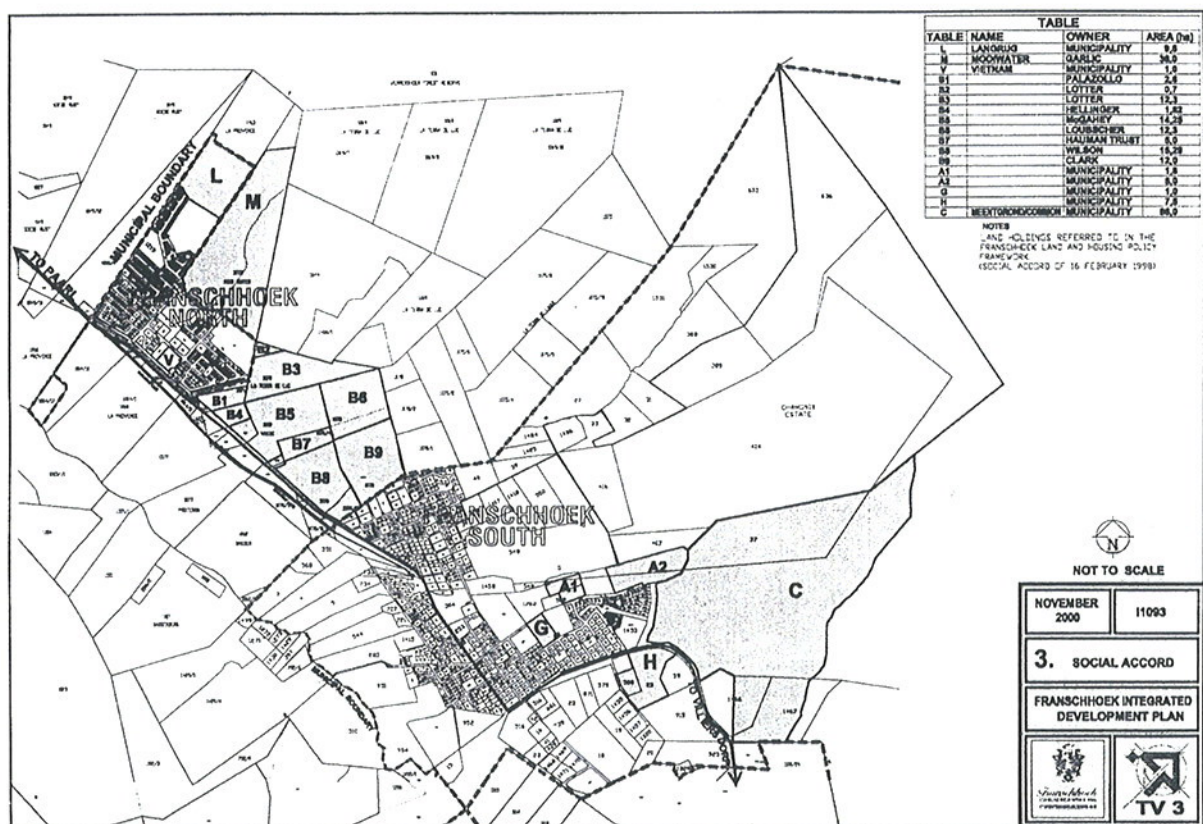
### 3. PREVIOUS INITIATIVES

The people of Franschhoek have a record of facing their problems squarely and trying to resolve them in a pro-active way. In the field of affordable and subsidised housing the following overview illustrates this point. Future housing strategies need to recognise the successes and shortcomings of these previous initiatives.

#### 3.1. Social Accord

During the period following South Africa's first democratic election, there was a degree of confrontation over land issues in Franschhoek. A remarkable process of negotiation between community representatives then occurred, with some assistance from professional facilitators. This culminated in a social accord which was signed in February 1998. A document called "Franschhoek Land and Housing Development Policy Framework Agreement" was produced. This dealt particularly with land and housing development, and one of the key provisions was an agreement to implement a subsidized housing project to address the housing needs at Franschhoek. Other provisions included strategies to unlock the potential of certain Municipal land holdings, such as the commonage, for economic development. The aim was to sell the commonage for private sector development and to use the funds to purchase land and finance a housing project next to Groendal.

**Figure 2 : Map Reflecting Spatial Aspects of the Social Accord**





### 3.2. The Commonage and Mooiwater

Based on the social accord, a proposal call was issued for the private sector to respond to the community's land and housing policy framework. This culminated in agreements to sell commonage land to a private developer for up-market development, and to purchase the farm Mooiwater for a subsidized housing project. The photographs show the Fransche Hoek Estate which was developed on the Commonage as a result of these agreements.

Development on the Commonage is now proceeding and serves as a good example of how upmarket development can leverage resources to cross subsidise affordable housing. However the Commonage does not offer further possibilities to address the low cost housing needs of the Franschhoek Valley.

Part of the Commonage development envisaged some medium cost housing. Unfortunately with the cost of construction, the price of this housing moved beyond the reach of many people living in Franschhoek North.

At this stage none of the proposed medium cost units have been built and the land remains undeveloped. There is still potential for this project, but it is of limited size and therefore will have limited impact on the housing need.

Negotiations relating to the release of the Commonage included an allocation of land for restitution. To date none of the land claimants have come forward, and this restitution land remains vacant.

**Fig 3:** The former Commonage looking up the valley to where future up-market houses will be built

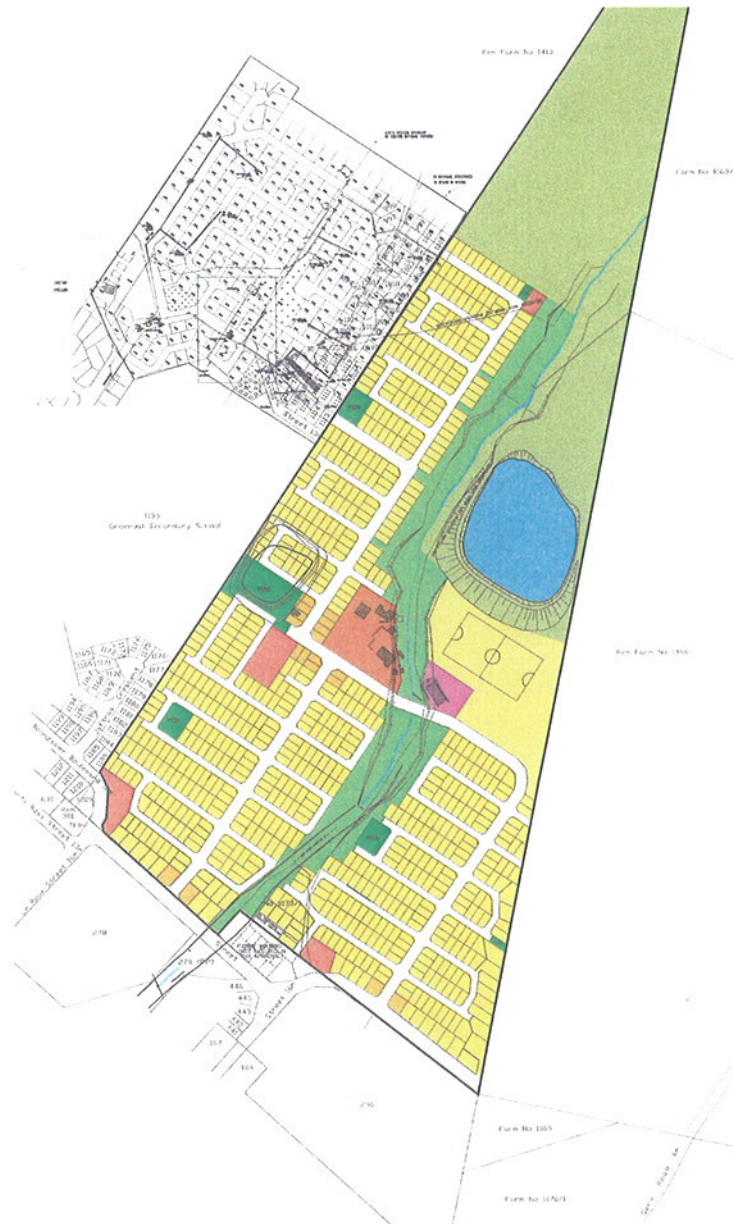


**Fig 4:** Existing development at Fransche Hoek Estate



Using proceeds from the sale of the Commonage, it was possible to purchase Mooiwater farm next to Groendal, where most of the affordable houses in the town were situated. Plans were drawn up, the statutory procedures followed and approval was granted in June 2000 for a new housing project. A plan illustrating the development is depicted as Figure 5. Construction of 700 houses ensued, and while there were some difficulties during the contract, these were resolved and a successful project was completed.

**Figure 5: The First Township Plan for Mooiwater**



At the time that the Mooiwater project was commenced, the housing need was assessed at 1000 units. Approval was granted by the Provincial Housing Board for 1000 subsidies and it was intended to roll out future housing by developing a 3 phase programme. Phases 1 and 2 (totalling 700 units) were to be on Mooiwater, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of 250 units was planned to extend the housing onto Langrug.



**Fig 6:** Mooiwater Phase 1 looking up one of the main streets

The Mooiwater project has been very successful. The community has become established, homes are developing individual characteristics, local businesses and community facilities are emerging, and gardens are developing.

It was originally decided not to develop the top northern side and the eastern side of Mooiwater. Partly it was felt there was enough land elsewhere, and partly this area had constraints in the form of an existing dam and steeper slopes next to the mountain. Ideas for urban agriculture and recreation facilities were considered. The area below the dam was reserved for sports fields.

Fortunately the layout made provision for future linkages, even though no such links were originally intended.



**Fig 7:** Mooiwater Phase 1 looking along a side street





### 3.3. Langrug

The original plan was to move people from Langrug into Mooiwater and use the vacated land for a formal housing project. However as people moved out, others stepped in to occupy the vacated shacks, with the result that Langrug remained populated. The problem may have been compounded as news of the housing programme spread and additional people came to live in Langrug. This meant that a conventional housing strategy became difficult. In response to continuing pressures for affordable housing, proposals were prepared for an in-situ upgrading project at Langrug. The objective was to allow people to remain living in their shacks, but to install roads, sewers, water pipes and electricity along spaces between the houses. As a parallel initiative tenure would be given to the properties (i.e. a township will be established), and technical assistance was proposed for the upgrading of shacks to proper houses overtime. This system of upgrading squatter areas has many international precedents and would have been possible at Langrug.

**Figure 8: The Langrug Site**

The photograph opposite (which is now outdated) illustrates how a regular pattern of shacks and tracks has emerged at Langrug. In addition there are stable ground conditions, good drainage, proximity to services and the land is Council owned. These factors make an in-situ upgrading technically feasible.

Unfortunately the continued influx of new people adds to the complications of an upgrading project, but it remains a practical possibility.

During 2003 plans were prepared for an in-situ upgrading project, and discussions held with the community and authorities. A limited commitment was made to define a bus route and determine areas for development.





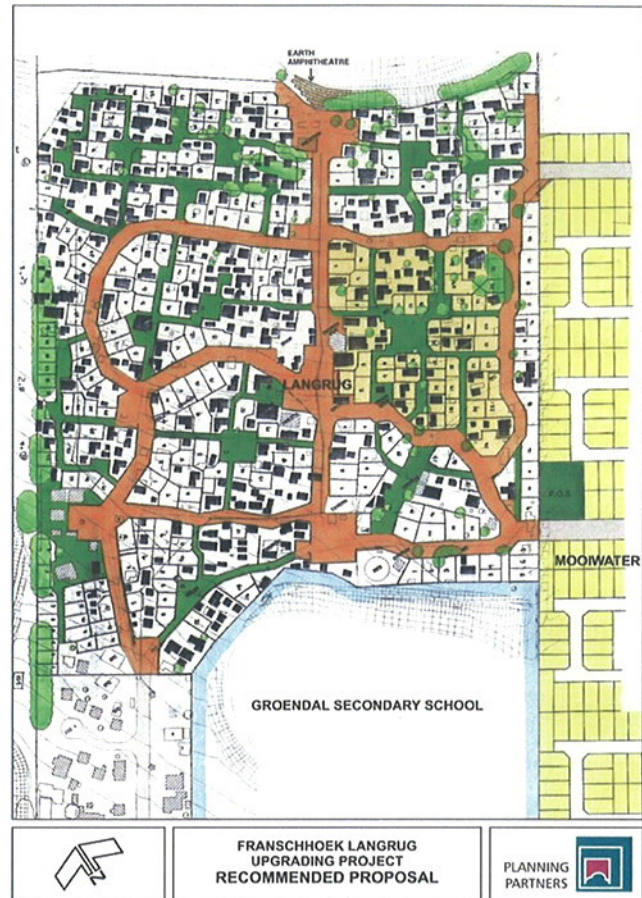
**Figure 9: Concept for In-situ Upgrading**

The plan opposite is a preliminary concept for the in-situ upgrading project. Main routes were identified and these would help to define community “blocks” for internal planning and development.

It must be said that both the community and some elected representatives remained skeptical about in-situ upgrading. People expected new houses, not just an improvement in services.

With the continued influx of people into Langrug, and uncertainty about who would be responsible for driving the project, the momentum was lost.

At this time Langrug remains an informal settlement, with many people uncertain about the future, but all expecting that the government should build them a “proper house”.

**Fig 10: Shacks at Langrug**



### 3.4. Mooiwater Extension

With uncertainty about how development should proceed at Langrug, and increasing numbers of people building shacks along the bus route and other open spaces in the proposed upgrading project, a decision was made to extend Mooiwater. This had the advantages of a green field site, and there was land available that had not been designated for development in the initial township establishment process. Planning commenced and extensions to Mooiwater were approved to accommodate an additional 300 housing units. As part of this plan it was accepted that the dam will be decommissioned, housing will be built below the dam and along the edges, and development will occur on the upper slopes of Mooiwater. A suggestion was made to use the former dam for sportsfields.

Associated with the extension of Mooiwater are proposals to develop a new school at the top of the property. A site has been created as part of the township process and discussions are in hand with the Department of Education to develop the site. This will hopefully help to secure the land and prevent further expansion of informal settlement up the hillside. Figure 11 illustrates the planned extension of Mooiwater.

**Figure 11: Planned Extension of Mooiwater**





Mooiwater has now been planned to its full capacity, and roads and services are in the process of installation. The construction of houses is planned to start in 2007. There are virtually no more opportunities to increase the yield and provide additional houses on Mooiwater in terms of a conventional process.

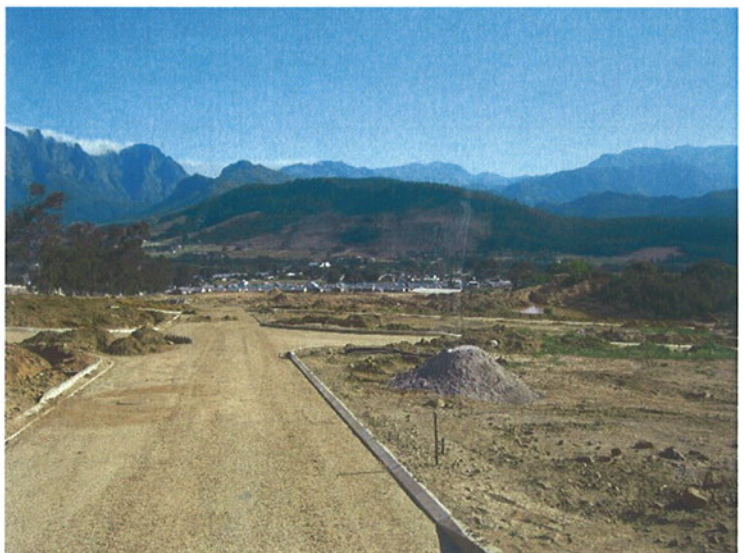
Planning has reduced the plot sizes as far as is considered practical, and the former dam site does not provide suitable foundation conditions. The Stiebeuls River corridor which flows through the site takes up a fair amount of land, but sound environmental planning principles and concerns about flooding, mean that this land should not be developed.

It would of course be possible to increase densities if walk-up apartments are developed instead of individual houses, but the site offers limited opportunities to do this, and this form of development has not proven to be cost effective in local conditions.

**Fig 12:** The main road through Mooiwater Extension



**Fig 13:** Roads being built above the old dam which is now empty





### 3.5. Erf 412

The development of Mooiwater provided an opportunity to relocate people who were living in an informal settlement on Erf 412, which is right next to the Main Road leading into Franschhoek.

Fortunately Council was able to control further influx after the shacks on Erf 412 were demolished. This is a strategic site because it is well located and very visible. Council undertook a study and prepared an invitation for development proposals from the private sector. The objectives of this development included the promotion of employment to previously disadvantaged people, and a contribution to the housing shortage for people living in Franschhoek North.

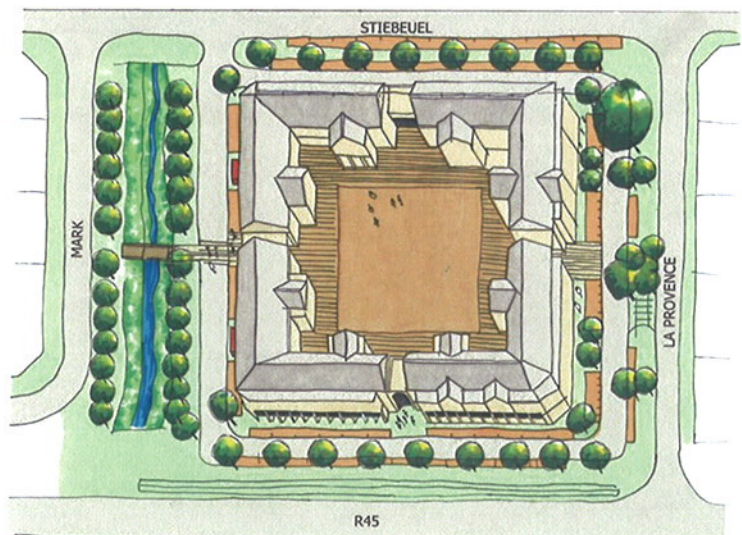
**Fig 14: The site of Erf 412**



**Figure 15: Preliminary Concept for Erf 412**

A preliminary concept, prepared on behalf of Council, is illustrated in Figure 15. The idea was to include affordable apartments on upper storeys above a "business hive".

A preferred developer was selected. To date however no development has occurred on the site.

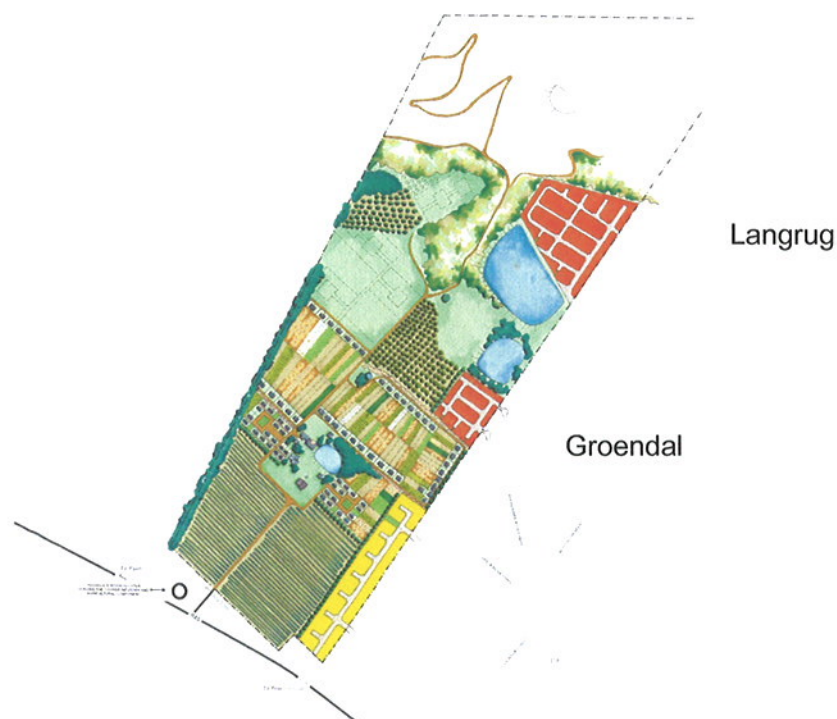




### 3.6. Dennegeur

The farm next to Groendal on the north west side is called Dennegeur. In 2005 the owner indicated an interest in developing this property, and Council officials suggested that Dennegeur may provide opportunities for a joint venture. In terms of this joint venture the owner could provide homes for farm workers, while some of the land adjacent to Groendal and Langrug could be used to alleviate the pressures there. A very preliminary concept plan (Fig 16) was prepared as an input to these discussions. This was politely received but no agreement was reached between the parties. However the owners of Dennegeur subsequently proceeded with their own project.

**Figure 16: Preliminary Concept for Dennegeur**



A private housing initiative is now underway at Dennegeur. This is intended to serve the housing needs for farm workers and their families from La Motte, L'Ormarins and Fredericksberg, which are owned by the Rupert and Rothschild families. A total of 78 houses are under construction at a reported cost of R 70 million (Weekend Argus 7.10.2006). The houses range in size from 75 m<sup>2</sup> to 110 m<sup>2</sup> and are located on plots of 360 m<sup>2</sup>, with generous areas of open space and associated communal and recreation facilities. It is also reported that workers will be able to stay on in their homes even after they retire. The long term vision is to plant lavender and other herbs on the lower, more fertile soils, thereby providing some local employment.

This is a remarkable contribution by the farmers, although the costs and development efficiency suggest that this solution may not be replicable or sustainable on a larger scale.

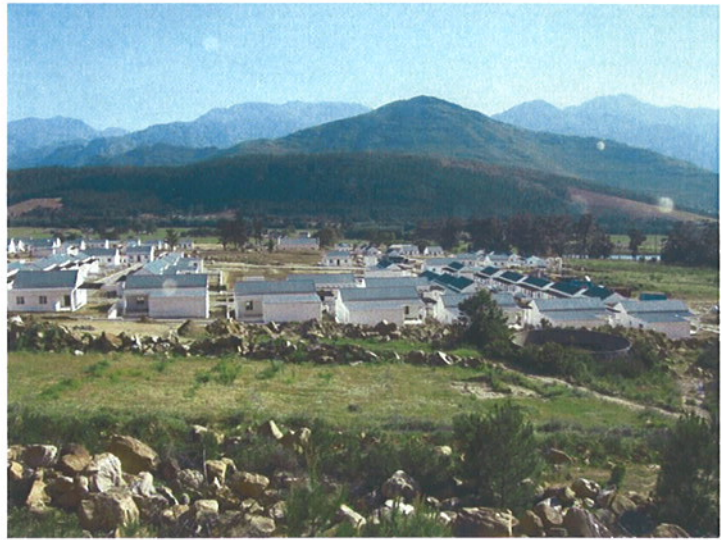


**Figure 17: Dennegeur Farm Worker Housing**

A photograph of the farm workers housing on Dennegeur is shown. There is even provision for access control! The houses are of a good quality and the spatial standards are generous.

Without detracting from the merits of this project, great care must be taken to use scarce land resources in the valley in an efficient manner. The need for affordable housing, for urban as well as agricultural workers is considerable, and it is difficult to curb this need, because the economic base of the valley continues to grow and attract residents and workers alike.

We believe there are still opportunities for co-operation between the Municipality and Dennegeur, with the aim of releasing land for more subsidized housing, and these opportunities should be pursued.

**Fig 18: The entrance to the Dennegeur housing complex**

The example of Dennegeur illustrates a principle which could have advantages for farm worker housing in other parts of the valley. If a number of farmers agree to co-operate, it should be possible to establish planned agri-villages where farm workers can live with decent houses and services. The Municipality could facilitate these projects by assisting with the necessary statutory approvals and management of the process. This will help relieve pressure on urban areas, help farmers to address the housing needs of their workers in a manner that does not affect the tenure of their main farm holdings, and contribute to the overall supply of affordable housing in the valley. For this concept to work, it will be necessary for the framers to make available land and finance, but the example of Dennegeur illustrates that this is not an unrealistic expectation.

This principle of properly planned agri-villages (with tenure) rather than the traditional on-farm settlements, is preferred because it contributes to more stable communities and a better standard of living.



### 3.7. The Berg River Dam Housing

Work is under way to build the Berg River dam about 5 km south west of Franschhoek. As part of this project a construction worker housing estate has been developed at La Motte, which is situated on the Robertsvalei Road. This has virtually doubled the size of La Motte village.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the Municipality and the Trans Caledon Authority (TCA) which is responsible for construction of the dam. In terms of this the TCA agreed to build 80 houses which will be used to accommodate construction workers until January 2008. Thereafter the houses will be transferred to the Municipality.

The Municipality intends to sell these houses at market related prices and put the proceeds into a revolving fund known as the Housing Trust Account. This fund can then be used to facilitate other housing projects in the Franschhoek valley.

**Fig 19:** New houses for Dam Construction Workers at La Motte Village



The type of housing constructed by the Trans Caledon Authority is of a higher standard and cost than the traditional low cost house. For the revolving fund to be sustained and have the greatest benefit, it is necessary that the projects are financially sustainable. As money from the fund is spent, new inflows of capital need to return to the fund. For this reason Council needs financial partners and needs to operate the fund on a commercial basis. It intends to use the fund for lower to middle income housing, rather than subsidised housing. There is a tremendous gap in the housing delivery system because the poor are catered for with government subsidies and the rich are catered for by the market, but those who earn too much to benefit from a subsidy, cannot buy a house. The market does not serve this category of buyer.

If financial partners, such as organized agriculture or business, can be encouraged to participate, then this fund could be used by the Municipality to facilitate mid level housing projects.



#### **4. PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION**

At a philosophical level the challenge to provide affordable housing evokes different responses. Some of these raise the following questions.

##### **4.1 How much housing should be provided and who should benefit?**

Some people may suggest that those who do not have houses should go back to where they originally came from. This denies socio-economic realities and the fact that many people who have been living on farms or forestry stations in the valley no longer have legitimate places to stay, but still make a contribution to the local economy. Others may suggest that a large scale and continuous roll-out of affordable houses is required until everyone has a house. This is not practical in Franschhoek because of space limitations, but also does not recognize human nature. If the Franschhoek valley is proactive about housing and other areas are not, there could be an influx of migrants towards the housing opportunity.

A challenge is how to balance the allocation of houses. Some people have been on the waiting list for many years and still have no house allocated to them. Others are new arrivals in the valley, sometimes living in shacks on inappropriate sites (such as the planned road reserves at Langrug). A balance must be found so that urgent needs are addressed in a humane way (relocating recent arrivals) without discriminating against those who have been on the waiting list for a long time. One solution which has been adopted in the past is to split the housing allocation in a new project on a proportional basis between those on the waiting list, new arrivals, and farm workers. This requires sensitivity and negotiations among the various role players.

A balance is clearly required because Franschhoek is a special but fragile place that should not become over-urbanised. The balance must be found between environment and development, and also between the economy and realistic needs for affordable housing. A sustainable housing delivery programme must be implemented, but this should be aimed at people who have a genuine stake in the valley in terms of family history or employment. Development and economic growth is necessary, and social housing is an integral part of this, but affordable housing needs to be of acceptable standards and developed in an orderly manner.

##### **4.2 Where should the housing be built?**

There is some logic in building new houses close to existing housing areas for reasons of community facilities, social cohesion and service connections. A pattern of land development, land value and social stratification emerges around areas of social housing as opposed to areas of upmarket housing. This is not just a South African phenomenon, but is found in most modern towns. To expand housing next to existing areas of social housing is consistent with this pattern. There are several problems with this approach in Franschhoek. One is that the apartheid system has definitely distorted the social and spatial fabric of the town, and another is that adjacent land is so expensive. However of greater significance is the fact that large areas of uniformly low-cost housing will affect the character of the valley and probably in a negative way.

An alternative approach may be to select a number of smaller sites at different locations, thereby dispersing the spatial pattern and allowing people to live closer to work opportunities which are spread throughout the valley. There is a danger of using this approach for social engineering, which must be avoided because it can undermine property values and the stability



of an area. However the valley already has a number of dispersed sites where affordable housing is established, and these sites need to be investigated.

#### **4.3 Who is responsible for developing the housing?**

In the past social housing in urban areas was provided by the local authority, and farmers provided for their own workers on the farms. Changing mandates and limited resources at local government meant that these authorities have not kept pace with the need. At the same time various factors, including farmers' insecurity about land tenure for farm workers, have resulted in fewer workers being accommodated on farms, and increasing influx into the town.

As a result of these trends, poor people have taken their own initiative. Some have built backyard shacks, some have squatted on available land and most have erected informal structures. Not only does this constitute a health and fire hazard, but it undermines human dignity as well as the beauty and therefore economic base of the valley. The solution does not lie with a single party, but should harness the public mandate and resources of the Municipality, the energy and initiative of individuals and the experience and resources of the private sector, including major stakeholders such as farmers and employers.

It is still necessary for overall co-ordination and management of the process, and that responsibility clearly lies with the Municipality. A multi-pronged strategy is needed to channel the resources and energies of the other stakeholders, and this document aims to continue the dialogue as to how best this can be achieved.

#### **4.4 What type of housing should be built?**

Franschhoek already exhibits a range of different housing types. The generous plots and houses of Groendal are clearly not sustainable because of cost and land limitations. Plot and house sizes were reduced in Mooiwater and these seem to work well. At Langrug individuals have taken their own initiative and built shacks from whatever material they find, with some large and many small shacks providing at least a roof and some privacy. Dennegeur is a very attractive project but not capable of being replicated on a large scale because of the high cost and generous space standards.

One option that has not been tried in Franschhoek is the walk-up apartment. This allows greater density and requires less land. Unfortunately such projects do not have a good record of success in the Western Cape. The Council flats in Cape Town are generally not well maintained and are affected by gangs. The recent N2 Gateway project presents an attractive design, but the costs are high and the level of subsidy required is very considerable.

There is no single house type that fits all needs, and a range is recommended. However care must be taken to ensure that these are affordable to both the Municipality and the beneficiaries, and special care must be taken not to squander scarce land resources in the valley.

#### **4.5 What levels of affordability should be targeted?**

There is a tendency to concentrate on the lowest levels of affordability because the plight of the poor is high on the national agenda. However there are many people who have some resources of their own, but still cannot obtain houses. A strategy to target different levels of affordability should be adopted with different housing options. This could range from a basic site and service scheme, to contractor built subsidized housing, and even include serviced sites for middle income people to build their own homes. The last option worked well in the past at Groendal, where the Council provided serviced stands to selected beneficiaries and the beneficiaries built



their own houses. The result is an attractive, stable, middle income housing area. The aim is to provide a home and dignity for all citizens in the valley within their respective levels of affordability. For some this may be a parcel of land that they own, with electricity and a toilet, and a weatherproof shack that can be improved over time. For others this may be a brick house that they have built on a serviced site purchased at an affordable price. In between this range there are many other options, some of which are described in the following section.

## 5. HOUSING OPTIONS

There are a number of different housing options that should be considered, depending on the site and target market. Franschhoek should not confine itself to one type, but should offer a range that can address the range of different needs. However there is an overarching duty to develop this housing in a responsible manner. This includes balancing the following issues:

- The need to make housing as **affordable** as possible, and therefore to keep costs down, while still recognizing the importance of environmental and structural quality.
- The imperative to use scarce land wisely and therefore achieve **higher densities**.
- The need to mobilise different **delivery systems**, which may include government subsidies and employer or private sector initiatives.
- The desirability of providing different **tenure options**, which may include owner occupied units, rental units and employer owned housing with a buy back option for employees.

The following housing options could be considered:

### a) Starter houses on small plots

This conventional housing programme involves the construction of core units on a serviced site by a developer making use of contractors. Finance is generally derived from the state subsidy system. This is probably the easiest option, provided finance is available, but can result in monotonous urban environments and is not the most effective in terms of density and land utilisation.

### b) Community saving and construction

An alternative to the contractor built house is sometimes referred to as the “people’s housing process”. The community is organized to save money and materials, and they arrange to have their homes built through small contractors or using their combined skills. Provided there is proper organisation in place, a government housing subsidy can be used. This method often enjoys community support, provides a sense of ownership about the process and can produce bigger houses. The main disadvantages are the organizational skills required and variable quality control. It is not clear if there are sufficiently motivated and organized community groups in Franschhoek to consider this option.

### c) Row houses

Row houses include the development of attached dwellings with narrow plots, and an emphasis on providing for open space in public places rather than on private plots. Row houses can include single or double storey developments. Problems include beneficiary resistance because party walls sometimes do not buffer sound sufficiently, and there are limited options for expansion of the dwelling. Row houses are urban in character, but they do provide opportunities to increase density which is an imperative in Franschhoek.



**d) Multi-family housing/flats**

Multi-family housing is usually in the form of a block or cluster of flats, with several families living in each block. They can extend to 3 or 4 storey walk-ups and yield higher densities than most other options. Among poorer communities this type of housing is usually rented because of cost and difficulties in managing a sectional title scheme. Flats require reasonably level ground conditions for efficient construction, and are very definitely urban in character. They are therefore not appropriate for the more remote sites under consideration. However for the medium cost sites, low rise flats or town houses should be considered as part of the product.

**e) Infill development**

Relatively large subdivisions can be found at Groendal and Maasdorp. There is no reason why additional housing cannot occur as infill development, with smaller subdivisions taking place. A policy to support such subdivisions should be promoted. This could even include the development of group or row houses if suitable sites can be found in these areas.

**f) Site and service scheme**

In cases where resources are really stretched, the top structures of a housing project have been left for later. Known as a site and service scheme, this involves the development of serviced sites and the beneficiary is left with the responsibility of building his own house. Often this means that shacks are erected on the sites and the resulting urban form appears similar to an informal settlement. For these reasons site and service schemes have been discredited. However there are successful examples where beneficiaries have been given technical and financial assistance and have built their own houses, so that over time the settlement evolves into a normal housing estate.

**g) In situ-upgrade**

Where there is an existing informal settlement, it is sometimes possible to install services without removing existing shacks. In this way the housing stock is not destroyed but health and welfare is improved. The infrastructural improvements and increased security of tenure often encourage people to improve their homes, and over time formal structures replace the shacks. This is a complex process requiring high levels of organizational skill, but remains an option for Langrug.

**6. DELIVERY MECHANISMS**

The organization of a housing project, securing finance and managing the construction and delivery is a complex process. For this reason most housing projects are undertaken by developers/contractors or by local authorities. The "peoples housing process" is an exception, but even this often requires external skills and management. One of the biggest constraints to future affordable housing in the Franschhoek valley is the scarcity of land at suitable prices.

However there are major landowners in the valley who need workers and who have for many years supplied housing for their staff. Part of the problem in the valley is due to the eviction of non essential staff from the farms. Unless the poorer residents of the valley can obtain suitable housing, the wealthy will face the insecurity of not knowing where the next informal settlement will occur. Not only will this affect property values, but it may also affect the tourist potential. There may be an opportunity to establish a dialogue with the farming community and other major employers to develop satellite housing areas or "agri-villages" on land parcels that are currently privately owned.



## 7. FUTURE POSSIBILITIES FOR HOUSING LAND

The following section contains a brief assessment of a number of sites in the valley which could make a contribution to the supply of housing.

### 7.1. LANGRUG

Langrug remains one of the most important sites for housing in Franschhoek, but its greatest problem is the large number of people living there, and the informal shacks that cover the site. An in-situ upgrading project still remains technically feasible, but the complexity of such a project, have delayed the programme.

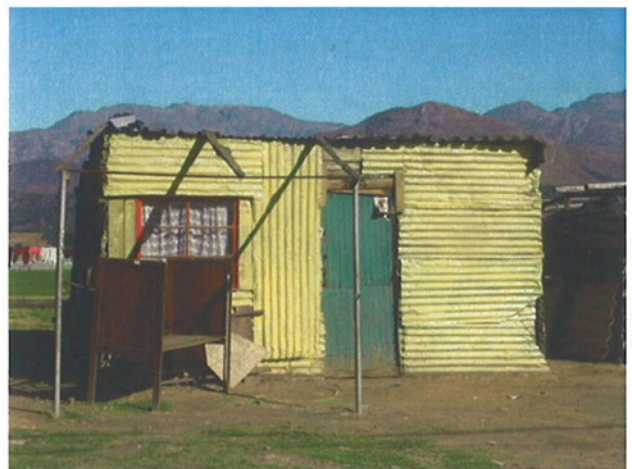
As the next phase of Mooiwater is completed, it will be possible to move some people out of Langrug, but unless there is a very concerted policy of influx control, there is a danger that vacated shacks will simply be re-occupied by others.

As an alternative to upgrading, a phased programme of shack clearance and construction of new houses could be considered. At a minimum this could include a site and service scheme, where compact serviced plots are provided and the beneficiaries build their own houses, even if these are only shacks to start with. Alternatively core houses could be built, with technical advice provided to the beneficiaries on how to extend these, or subject to available finance, complete houses such as occurred in Mooiwater. Due to cost and affordability constraints, it is unlikely that the quality of the Mooiwater houses can be repeated.

Given the strategic location of Langrug it is recommended that innovative solutions to provide housing at higher densities are implemented. These could include "row houses" which comprise a number of dwellings in a row with narrow plot frontages, and open space provided in public places rather than private plots. Another option is the walk-up apartment which could extend several stories. Unfortunately the cost of construction often counts against such options, but the price and scarcity of land may make such developments unavoidable.

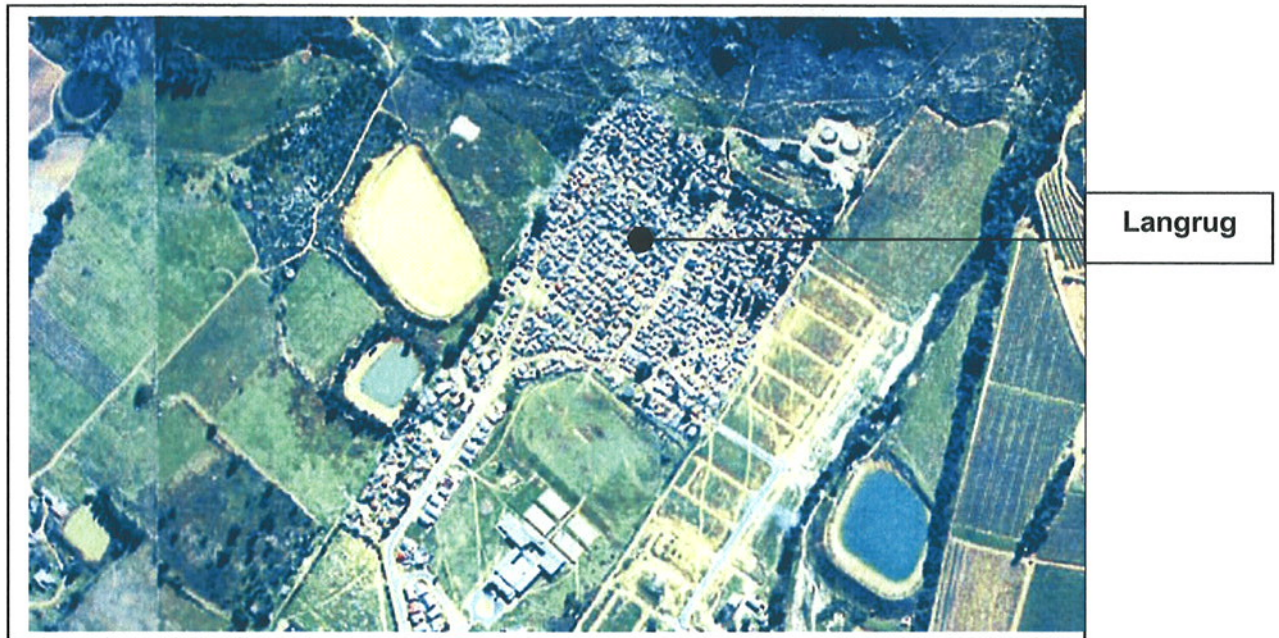
The Langrug site measures approximately 10 ha, and at a density of 40 du per hectare, which is achievable with an efficient design, the site could yield 400 units. With higher density housing options it may even be possible to achieve 500 units.

**Figure 20: Shacks at Langrug**

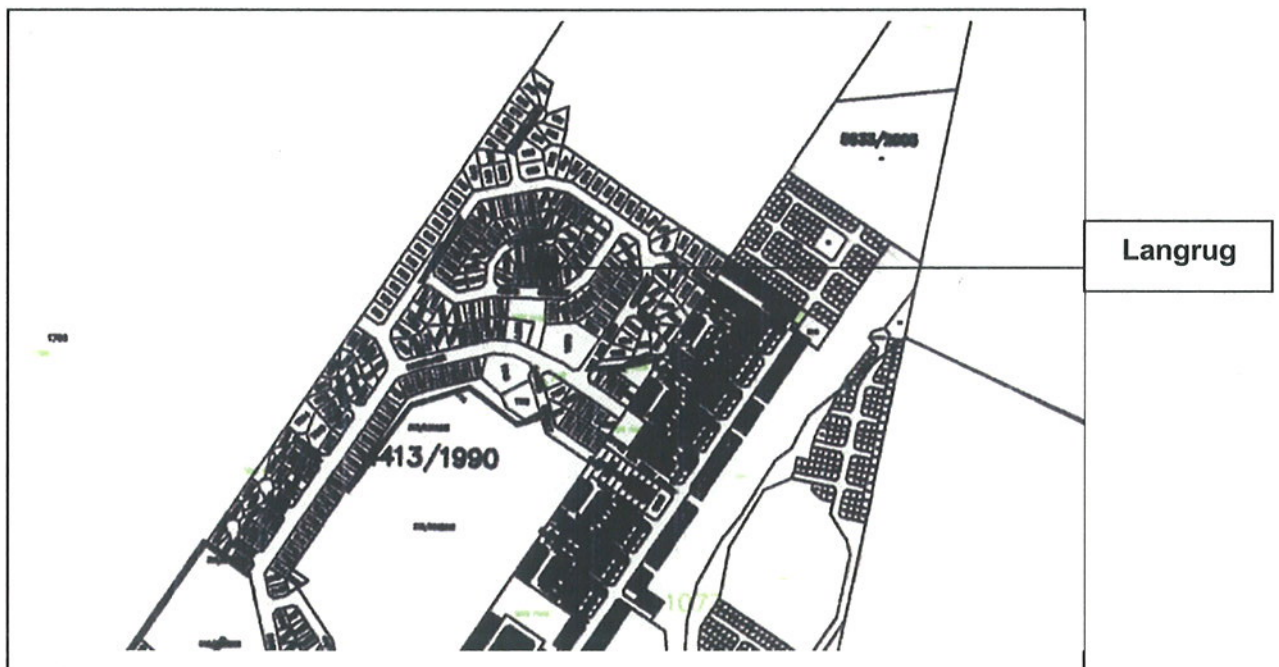




**Fig 21**  
**Langrug Context**



**Cadastral Boundaries around Langrug**





## 7.2. DENNEGEUR

Dennegeur is in private ownership and is the site for a private sector initiative to build housing for the workers of three farms owned by the Rupert and Rothschild families.

A very nice, but expensive project is under construction on the lower and mid sections of the farm.

While there may be some sensitivity on the part of the owner, this property offers a practical opportunity to extend Langrug and even a small section of Groendal. The land next to Groendal is not yet developed, and the township roads and services could very easily be extended as illustrated in Figure 16. This would not compromise the amenity of the Dennegeur project and would contribute to the housing supply of the town. The area in question is shown in the distance in Fig 22.

In addition the upper part of the farm, next to Langrug, contains a level area above a disused dam as shown in Fig 23. There is a physical separation between the new development at Dennegeur and this area, and it would greatly assist Franschhoek if this land could be made available for affordable housing.

It is recommended that negotiations are initiated with the landowner to see if these land portions can be acquired.

**Fig 22:** Dennegeur looking towards the lower edge of Groendal



**Fig 23:** Looking across the upper dam towards Langrug



As an alternative to land acquisition and development, by the Council, it may be possible to involve other farmers in a joint venture with the owners of Dennegeur, in order to provide housing for farm workers. It would certainly be of great service to the valley as a whole if this could be used to fulfill the housing needs of a larger number of families. What is of vital importance however is that the affordability of the houses must be appropriate for the families concerned. It is not sensible to build houses on scarce land that does not relate to the affordability levels of people who need the houses.

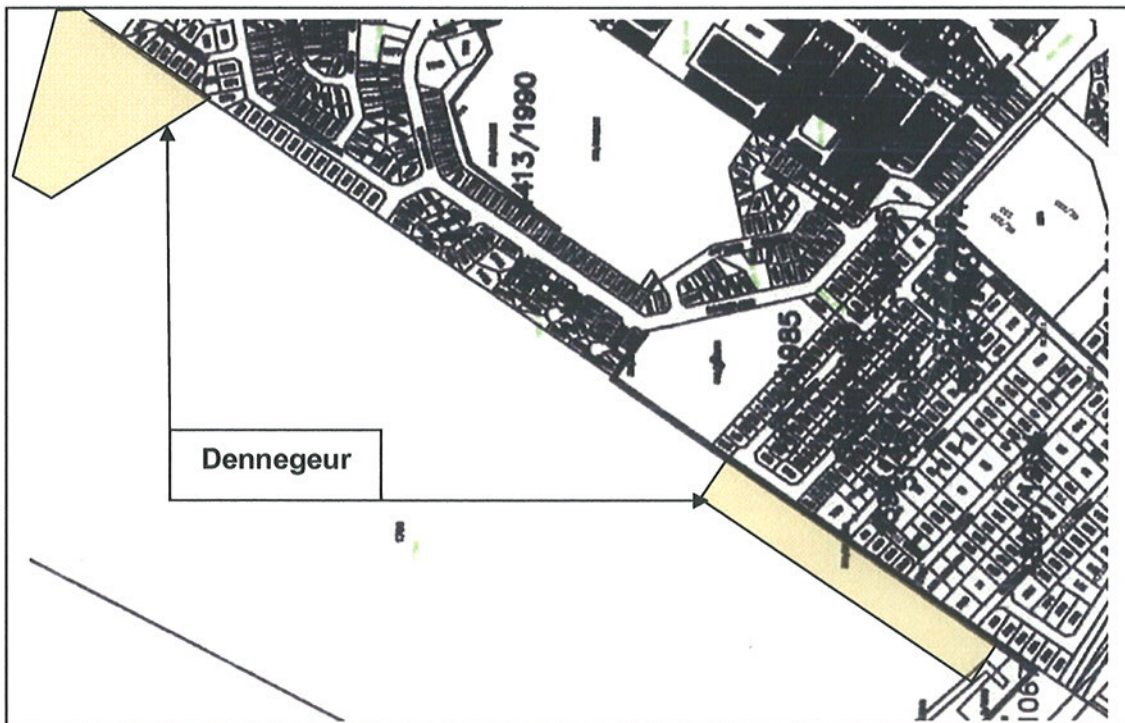


**Fig 24**

**Dennegeur Context**



**Cadastral Boundaries around Dennegeur**





### 7.3. MAASDORP

Next to the main road leading into Franschhoek and 4 km west of the village centre, lies a group of residential properties developed by SAFCOL. Known as Maasdorp, this is a low density residential area with single dwelling houses on relatively large plots. The houses are old fashioned but sturdy, and the area is well treed, with roads laid out in a regular grid.

Future areas for expansion exist to the north and south of Maasdorp on land owned by the Government and the Municipality. With increased linkages in the future from La Motte Village to Franschhoek, the land to the south of Massdorp may become very suitable for housing.

This area has potential for expansion and increased densities. It is not suggested that low cost houses are built here, but there are certainly opportunities for medium cost houses to be integrated within the existing layout.

While the area is relatively small, it can still contribute to the housing need in the valley.

**Fig 25:** The entrance to Maasdorp from Main Road



**Fig 26:** Maasdorp



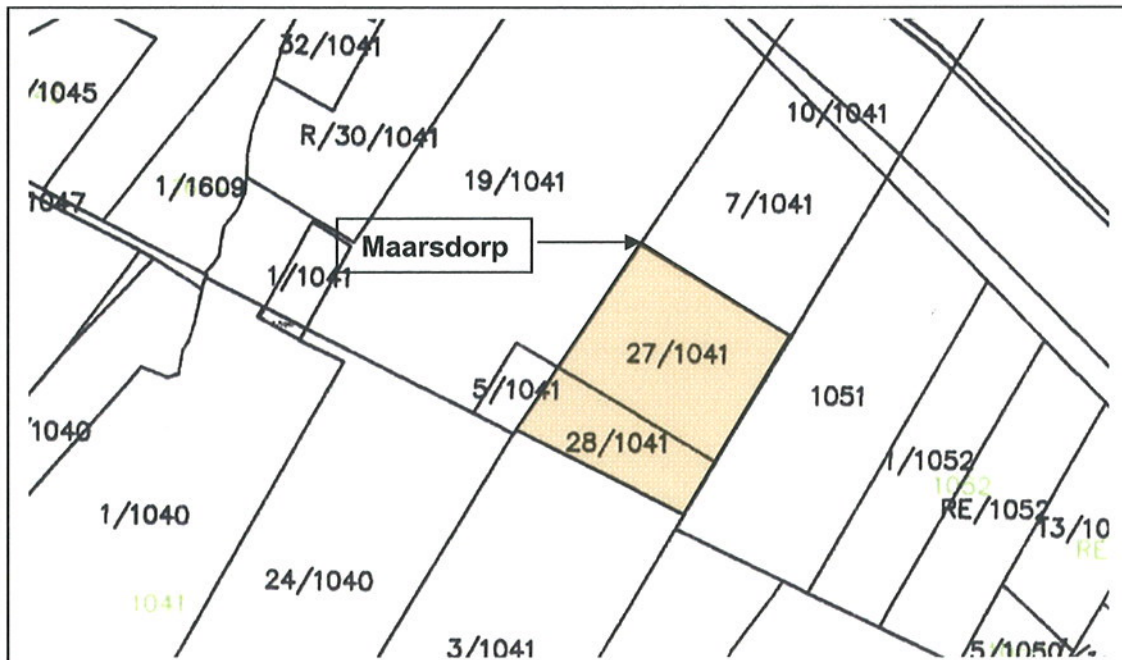


Fig 27

Maasdorp Context



Cadastral Boundaries around Maasdorp





#### 7.4. LA MOTTE VILLAGE

The village of La Motte is situated to the west of Franschhoek, on the Robertsvalei Road, close to where it intersects the R45. Originally built for SAFCOL workers, the village contains houses and a range of community facilities. With commencement of the Berg River Dam project, new houses have been built for construction workers. At the end of the contract these houses will be available for occupation by families who live permanently in the valley.

There is more land at La Motte Village which can be developed for affordable housing, and it would be sensible to expand this area. An economy of scale could be achieved for services, and the impact of the development will be dispersed.

There is land available to the north between La Motte village and the sewerage works, which could be suitable for subsidized housing. To the south of the TCA houses, there is land which is owned by the Government, and which could be used for both subsidized housing and mid-level housing.

The existence of rivers and hills around La Motte will clearly need to be respected, but sensitive planning can yield significant areas for housing without compromising these environmental features.

**Fig 28: New houses at La Motte (Dam Project)**



**Fig 29: Older houses at La Motte Village**

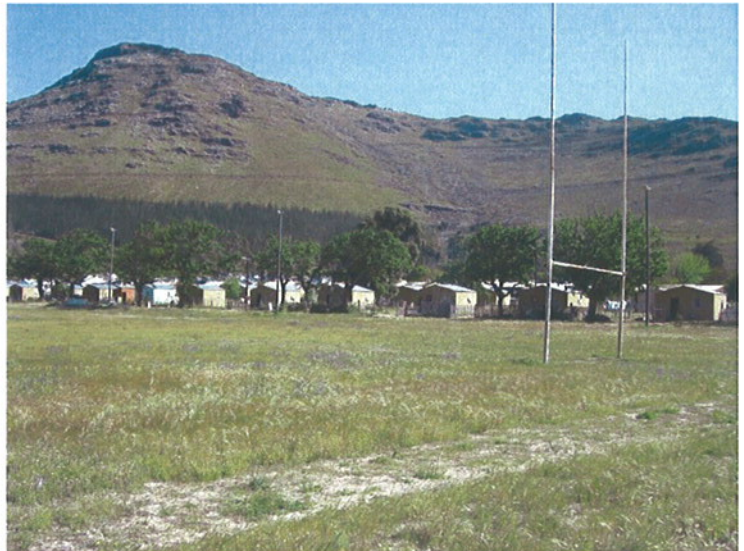




Fig 30

## La Motte Village Context



## Cadastral Boundaries around La Motte Village





## 7.5. ROBERTSVALLEI

Robertsvallei is located south west of Franschhoek at the end of Robertsvallei Road. The Mountain range of Skerpheuwel forms the eastern boundary of the site.

The site contains a large community facility, which in its current condition does not seem actively utilized. A few dwelling units exist in the area.

There is currently no registered deed for the Farm 1659 but it is believed to be owned by Council. There is extensive land available but due to location and distance from services it is not recommended that this area is used for housing.

At this stage there is land available at other more appropriate sites to assist in providing suitable homes. Consideration could be given to selling Robertsvallei and using the funds to assist with housing programmes on other more suitable sites in the valley.

**Fig 31:** View entering Robertsvallei



**Fig 32:** Shacks at Robertsvallei



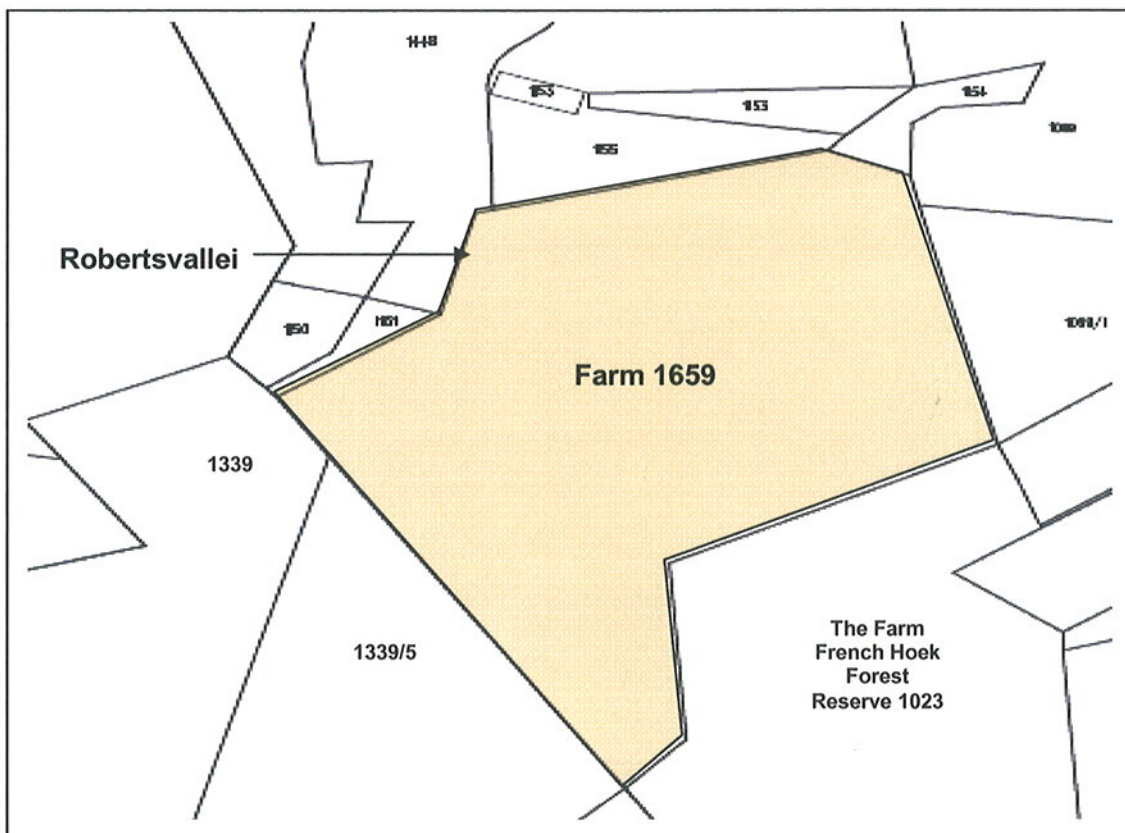


Fig 33

## Robertsvallei Context



## Cadastral Boundaries around Robertsvallei





## 8. A PRELIMINARY STRATEGY FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY

The housing strategy must identify sufficient land and a range of realistic delivery mechanisms, to address the medium term needs for housing in the Franschhoek valley. This housing should offer different levels of affordability. Mid-level housing is required for people whose income makes them ineligible for a state subsidy, but who cannot afford prices of the open market. Low income housing is required to address the needs of the poor. It is anticipated that the beneficiaries of both categories will require assistance. This may include a state subsidy, assistance from the local authority or from employers.

Figure 34 illustrates conceptual proposals for a housing strategy, and these are briefly described below. It is assumed that land owned by the Government as well as land owned by the Municipality can be considered for this housing strategy.

### 8.1. Conceptual Plan

In the short term housing delivery can be achieved with the completion of Mooiwater, upgrading of Langrug and resuscitation of the mixed use proposals for Erf 412. If co-operation is forthcoming from the owners of Dennegeur, then the short term pressures are likely to be relieved. The restitution land and medium cost housing originally planned in association with the Commonage development could also offer some opportunity. Excluding Mooiwater, all of these sites combined offer a range of mid-level and low income housing which could yield approximately 700 dwelling units.

When construction of the Berg River Dam is complete and the contractors' houses are vacated in 2008, approximately 80 mid-level units will become available. Capital inflows to the revolving fund of the Housing Trust Account could be used to facilitate other mid-level housing projects. The land on the opposite side of the river to La Motte Village is a possible area for sensitively planned sites. Development is already established in this area, the sewerage works are in the vicinity which makes service connections easy, and activity along Robertsvalei Road will inevitably increase. There are also infill opportunities at Maarsdorp and adjacent land to the north which could be used for mid-level housing. Including the TCA houses, approximately 450 dwelling units could be provided from these sites.

In the longer term, more land can be released for both mid-level and low income housing on either side of La Motte Village. To the north west there is land suitable for low income housing, while to the south the village could extend with both low income and mid-level housing along the foothills. The concept proposals of Figure 34 depict land that could accommodate 900 dwelling units.

Table 1 contains a summary of the sites depicted in Figure 34, and potential yield of these sites.



**Table 1: Summary of Possible Housing Sites**

<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Proposed Extent of Land for Housing</b>	<b>Possible Housing Numbers</b>	<b>Possible Density</b>
Langrug	9 ha	±400	45 du/ha
Erf 412	-	±20	-
Dennegeur: Site A	3.4 ha	±150	45 du/ha
Dennegeur: Site B	2.5 ha	±40	15 du/ha
Land Claim & Medium Cost Housing	-	±90	-
TCA Housing	-	±80	-
Site opposite La Motte	10.5 ha	±210	20 du/ha
Maasdorp Infill	3.5 ha	±70	20 du/ha
Adjacent Site to Maasdorp	5 ha	±90	20 du/ha
Low Income Homes North West of La Motte Village	6.8 ha	±306	45 du/ha
Low Income Homes South East of La Motte Village	6.4 ha	±288	45 du/ha
Mid-Level Homes South East of La Motte Village	13 ha	±300	23 du/ha

These recommendations will affect the spatial pattern of development in the valley. Figure 35 illustrates this point. It must be stressed that Figures 34 and 35 are not approved development frameworks or structure plans, but merely concept plans for discussion purposes at this stage.

From Figure 35 it is evident that these concept proposals do not compromise the historic core of the town, or the cultural landscape of farms to the south of Main Road, which is part of the tourist experience. It must be recognized that development is established at Maasdorp and La Motte, these areas are relatively easy to service, and in the medium to longer term there will be increased linkages and activity here. An additional factor is that the land is owned by the State or Municipality. They are therefore appropriate sites for housing.



## 8.2. Phased Programme

The following steps are recommended in order to implement this strategy.

### a) Mooiwater

- Completion of the current Mooiwater project will supply an additional 300 housing units.
- The beneficiaries should be drawn from those on the waiting list as agreed by Council.

### b) Langrug

- As people move from Langrug to Mooiwater, it is vitally important to control the influx of new people.
- An in-situ upgrade is recommended on Langrug, with the first phase to establish distributor roads through the area and main services following these roads. Some relocation of shacks will be inevitable, and this could occur by moving people into shacks vacated by beneficiaries of the Mooiwater project. Subsequent phases can involve internal access roads, the definition of individual housing sites and assistance with top structures.
- There is a fair amount of work to prepare the land for an upgrading project because of existing statutory constraints, and the necessary project subsidy applications must be made. These tasks need to start urgently.

### c) Dennegeur

- Negotiations with the owners should resume to try and secure land for limited expansion of Langrug and Groendal.
- Of particular importance is agreement on the construction of a road along the Langrug boundary in order to facilitate service connections into this informal settlement from the west. This will benefit Dennegeur since services in Langrug will help alleviate pollution problems.
- Possibilities for other farmers to participate in communal housing programmes for their workers could be discussed.

### d) Erf 412 and Housing near the Commonage

- Attempts should be made to resuscitate the mixed use project on Erf 412, and ensure that it includes a housing component.
- The medium cost housing project near the Commonage, which formed part of the original negotiations, should also be restituted.
- Efforts should be made to contact the land claimants so that the restitution land can be properly planned and settled.

### e) Maasdorp

- A policy to promote smaller subdivisions and increased densities for medium cost housing should be promoted.
- Negotiations with the relevant stakeholders and planning should be programmed for mid-level housing in the area.

### f) La Motte Village

- Plans should be prepared for the expansion of this settlement for low income and mid-level housing. Higher density options should be considered.



**g) Housing Strategy for the Region**

- Similar strategies need to be adopted for other towns in the region. It would be unfortunate if people were attracted to Franschhoek because of its progressive housing policy, while other towns lagged behind.
- In particular it is important to promote towns in the district with a strong economic base or physical characteristics where urbanization and employment can be accommodated more easily.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

In tackling the housing problem of Franschhoek, we must not confine ourselves to a single solution, nor limit our definition of the problem by focusing on shelter provision only. Rather housing should be considered within a broad context as a process that includes community development, not just the building of structures. The process needs to include different housing types, delivery systems, tenure options, financial arrangements, community facilities and employment opportunities.

Despite appearances to the contrary, it is evident that there is land in the Franschhoek valley that can be used for affordable housing. However land is scarce and these opportunities must not be squandered. Finance and expertise are also limited, and this is where the private sector from agriculture and business can assist. The wellbeing of all landowners in the valley depends on a stable community where people can live with dignity and feel that they have a stake and sense of belonging. Partnerships with the Municipality to deliver appropriate housing to legitimate residents will be an important part of the strategy.

There is a need to increase densities and to involve the broader community in contributing to a solution. There is also a need to recognize the limits to urban growth in the valley and find ways to manage this growth. As part of this growth management strategy it may be necessary to consider other sites in the long term further afield where urbanization can be accommodated more easily.

The annexures which follow contain some additional information about the land portions considered in this report.

**GC UNDERWOOD  
PLANNING PARTNERS**