

# INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON HOUSING



NAIROBI 1987

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## NOTES ON RUIRU TOWN

by

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## RUIRU TOWN

### LOCATION:

Ruiru Urban Centre is positioned roughly on  $0.5^{\circ}$  s. Latitude Line and  $37^{\circ}$  E Longitude line. The Town stands on the Nairobi Thika highway, which is part of the A 2 Nairobi - Addis - Ababa trunk road. Ruiru is about 16 Km from the City Centre and hardly 3 Km. from the City boundary.

Administratively, Ruiru is in the Thika Division of Kiambu District, and is within the medium potential zone of the district.

The area of Ruiru Urban Centre is 3 sq Km.

### ORIGIN OF RUIRU TOWN

The development of Ruiru Town owes much to the building and construction of the Nairobi - Nanyuki Railway Line which was completed in 1913 and a substation established in Ruiru. Another factor contributory to the development of Ruiru Town is the Nairobi Nyeri road which was constructed in 1908 to link the administrative centres of Thika, Muranga and Nyeri the town as elsewhere mentioned stands on this road.

With the development of the above mentioned Communication systems, the area around Ruiru became open to settler farming and as a result and depending on the suitability of Land, Tea, Coffee, Sisal and reincling estates were established. Therefore from a substation town, Ruiru grew into a service centre providing services not only to the settler population but also to some parts of Githunguri and Gatundu Division.

### TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE:

Ruiru Town is Located on the transitional zone of what is called the Upper Athi Basin and the Kikuyu dissected Plateau. The Town is generally 15,000 m. above sea level. The town gradually slopes on both sides towards the centre forming a rough in the middle. Gradual slopes are also envisaged in the areas traversed by Mukuyu and Ruiru Rivers respectively.

The temperatures are generally high, mean maximum temperature being 26<sup>o</sup> C while the corresponding minimum temperature is about 14<sup>o</sup> C. Rainfall averages about 1,000 mm p.a.

POPULATION:

Population of Ruiru Town given by the 1979 National Census was 1,718 people. The population trend is as represented in the table below:

Table I

CENSUS YEAR	1948	1962	1969	1979
POPULATION	612	1,624	1,674	1,718

From the above table the intercensal annual average growth rates is as follows;

1948 - 1962 = 7.2%  
 1962 - 1969 = 0.4%  
 1969 - 1979 = 0.3%

Thus the population growth rate of Ruiru Town has been declining. This can be attributed to the fact that, many people who work in Ruiru Town reside in the rural areas or elsewhere outside the town.

The current population of the town is about 3,000 the rapid increase being due to the subdivision and subsequent settlement of the Githunguri Ranching farm. (See pop. pyramid Pg 3)

LAND - USE:

From the physical development Plan of the town, Land use in the town is roughly indicated in the table below: (Table II)

A major observation is the Residential Land use which is generally the largest Urban Land user in most towns. In Ruiru  
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BRIEF NOTES ON KARIOBANGI

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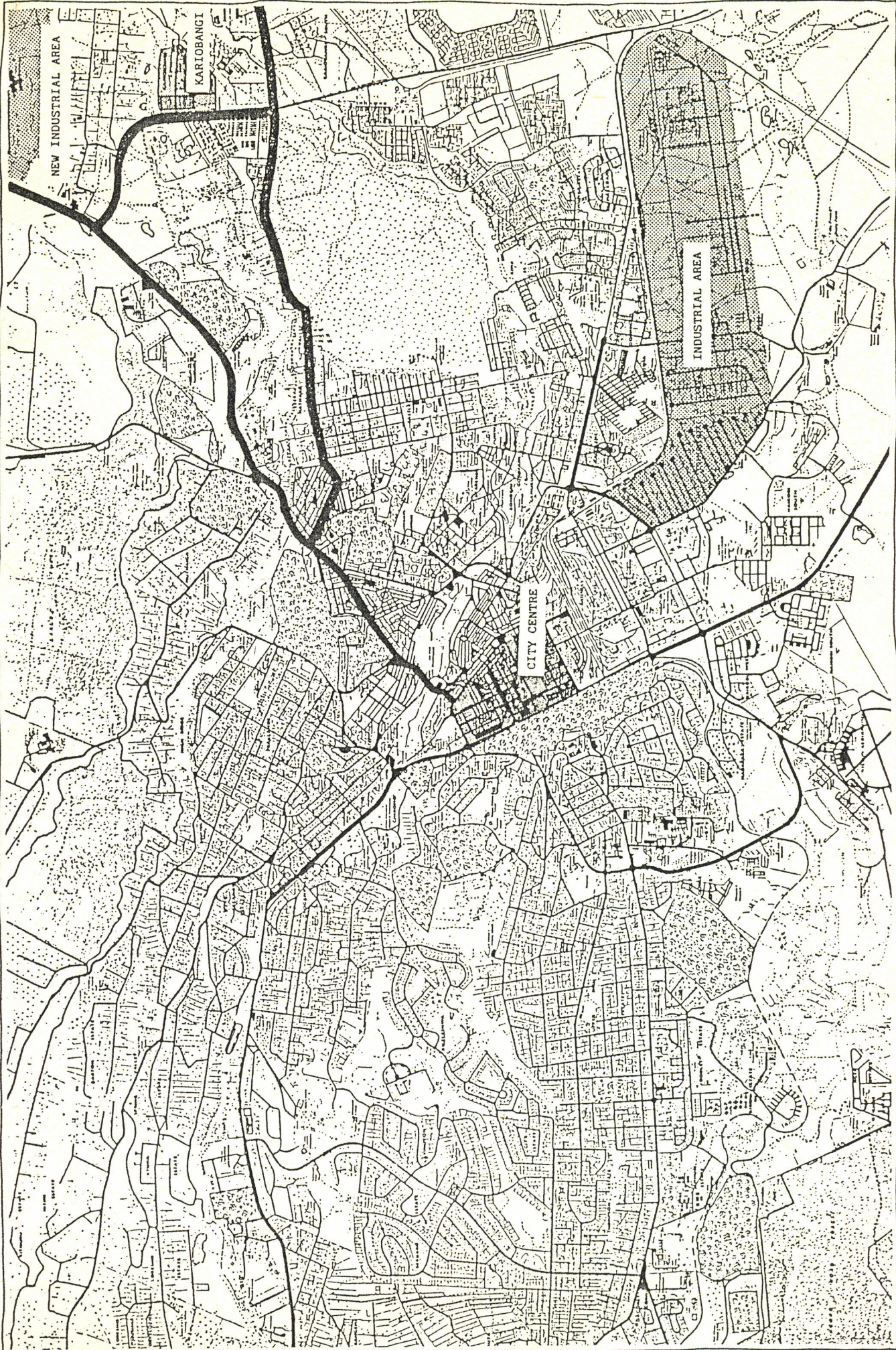
L.U. SHIHEMBETSA

Architect/Planner (Research Fellow)

University of Nairobi - HRDU - FADD

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NORTH KARIOBANGI SITE AND SERVICE HOUSING SCHEME:

1. Background

Kariobangi is situated to the North-est of Nairobi city at a distance of about 10 km from the City centre and industrial area. It is located within the low-income residential area. Kariobangi was the first site and service scheme in Kenya which was a resettlement scheme for the squatters who were living at Pumwani/Gikomba which is too near the City centre. The land was formally public land and was leased to the Nairobi City Council (now Nairobi City Commission) on a 99 year lease to develop a low-cost housing project based on the site and service schemes concept. This concept is at present very common in Kenya. The Council provided plots, the infrastructure, services and community facilities.

2. Socio-Economic Factors

In 1964, the Nairobi City Council (NCC) and the Kenya Government initiated a housing redevelopment programme to aid squatters living just a few hundred yards from the modern central areas of Nairobi. This rehousing schemes involved pulling down the squatters' illegal shacks and thus improving what was felt to be an unhealthy, dangerous and unsightly birght on the capital of newly independent Kenya. Every household was to be given a plot of land, fully prpared with essential services and water to build a new home. There were two reasons why there was a resettlement scheme:-

i) safety and security

It was felt by the authorities that with overcrowding of squatters near the City, there could be problems of thuggery