

Planning Implications of Housing Redevelopment in High Density Areas in Ogbomoso, Nigeria: A Pilot Study

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KEYWORDS Redevelopment. Property. Ownership. Occupants. Modern Planning

ABSTRACT This paper examines the planning implications of housing redevelopment in high-density areas of Ogbomoso, Nigeria. It highlights the effects of the nature of such redevelopment on the adjoining properties, as well as assesses the perceived value of such redevelopment in the area. A total of 100 newly developed or redeveloped buildings were sampled from 5 selected high density areas of the town; and a questionnaire administered on each of the buildings on 20 per area basis, to obtain such pieces of information as the physical characteristics, history, ownership, use, and the attached value of the new development as compared to the initial property. The study observes a considerable degree of change of ownership, occupants, use, use intensity and juxtaposition of incompatible uses. With t-test for the perceived value of the new buildings however, the new development are appreciated by the people even when it is an aberration to physical planning guidelines. The paper therefore recommends a strict enforcement of development control with special emphasis on development permit before the commencement of redevelopment.

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the increasing knowledge of modern planning and number of planners, physical development in cities of less developed countries remains an array of chaos and disorder. This, as manifested in urban sprawl, poor access to dwellings, bad drainage, housing congestion, uncontrolled and increasing density of physical development, among many other problems, characterizes the high-density areas of Nigerian cities.

Although such measures of development control as the application of minimum plot sizes, standard on windows, doors, height of buildings, road widths, etc, have been introduced to control buildings and general appearance of cities (Olajuyin and Olayiwola, 1985), the problem of undesirable nature and pattern of development in high-density areas of our cities is still a serious one. The reason for the pattern may not be far-fetched. The areas do not only provide abodes for the poor natives who hold tight to extended family properties, but also provide locations of relatively high accessibility for businesses, cottage industries and services. For these, developers- individuals, corporate bodies, and even government tend to develop or redevelop properties in the area to the fullest, with the ultimate aim of maximizing the use of space regardless of the whether or not such an action is

in the interest of physical planning. Their actions are made more manifest in the process of conversion and redevelopment of properties to accommodate more businesses or less importantly more dwelling units.

Analysis of the categories of developers involved, people's perception as well as planning implications of such development are the main object of this paper. The paper examines the varying degree of desirability of such redeveloped buildings where they are. It is therefore hypothesized that such buildings in the aggregate, have no significant impact on their immediate environment. Two, the impact of such redevelopment does not vary with area or location.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Basic to this study are the concepts of "land use conversion/change", "housing modernization", "housing redevelopment" and "ind deliberate urban renewal". No doubt, with the exception of the little modification to the last concept, all of them have been flogged in the literature. It is the aim here, therefore to define and conceptualize them briefly enough to reflect their bearings with the theme of this work.

Generally land use refers to the use to which land and structure built on it is put. Hence, it refers to the various activities performed on units of land areas (Bourne, 1967). When the use of or activity performed on a given piece of land or

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in a building, ceases to exist either by the use of the same property for a different purpose or by making a structural change to the building, or redeveloping it to accommodate new use the situation is described as land use change or conversion. This land use change, which is attributed to urban growth, will, according to Lean and Goodhall (1973), alter the pattern of land use and land values within an urban area.

Housing modernization as a concept has been equated with rehabilitation (Sada, 1975; Adedibu, 1980). It involves bringing substandard structures or dwelling units to a prescribed standard (Adedibu, 2004). This represents the general view of the concept, even as a strategy of urban renewal (rehabilitation).

Housing redevelopment refers to the total demolition, and reconstruction of an entire housing unit to give room for its effective performance. This is what Olaore (1987) conceptualizes, as a strategy of urban renewal, as the demolition, clearance and reconstruction of an entire area; and it generates no controversy among other scholars too numerous to be listed here.

It should be noted that while in most cases, housing modernization or rehabilitation, and housing redevelopment are usually associated with a change of use either wholly or partly, or in use intensity due to increased property value, they are all components or strategies of urban renewal. However, in contrast to the conceptualization of urban renewal by Egunjobi (1985) and Grebler (1965) as an inescapable and deliberate efforts to change the decaying nature of the urban environment of aging cities, what obtains in housing redevelopment in most Nigerian cities are that such actions are not pre-occupied by correcting neighbourhood or housing environmental inadequacies. Rather, the actions of such developers involved are informed basically by economic consideration of investing and making profit in property development. If by so doing, the actions enhance the environmental value or quality of the immediate environment, or it is the other way round, it is non of the property developer's business. This is what is conceptualized here as "indeliberate urban renewal" whose implications to planning is the pre-occupation of this paper.

THE STUDY AREA/PROBLEM

Ogbomoso is a typical traditional city in the

South Western geo-political zone of Nigeria. With her urbanization process dating back to the pre-colonial days, she has passed through several stages of urban development brought about by demographic changes. Her population rose from 80,000 in 1911 to 84,900 in 1921 and 227,471 in 1963 and it was estimated to have increased to 225,057 in 2001 (Ajao, et al, 2002; federal Government, 1963; Oyo State Government, 2002).

It is disheartening to note that these demographic changes were not matched with a patterned areal expansion, leading to unguided increasing density and intensity of development around the city centre and along major roads, as well as creating urban sprawl in different directions to the outskirts of the town. It is more appalling to note that in their attempts to create more commercial and residential apartments as well as offices and other land uses, different categories of developers have resorted to pulling down of old buildings, including family houses as well as making use of available open spaces for different forms of housing development with no regard for planning implications of such actions, thereby increasing the existing levels of housing congestion, over-crowding, stress on infrastructures, among other problems. This is the trend of development in high-density areas in Ogbomoso including Sabo, Ojagbo, Takie, Ijeru and Caretaker. The effect of this on the immediate environment and more importantly implications to planning call for a serious concern.

RESEARCH METHOD

Data was obtained from a survey of high-density areas of Oja'gbo, Takie, Sabo, Ijeru and Caretaker. In each of them twenty (20) relatively new and/or redeveloped buildings were randomly selected, making a total of one hundred (100) distinct buildings identified based on such criteria as relative newness, architectural design, heights, materials of construction/finishing, which distinguish them from other buildings in the vicinity.

On each of the selected buildings, a questionnaire was administered making a total of one hundred (100) questionnaires. However, only 82 of them were considered good enough. Such categories of information as history, socio-economic characteristics including ownership and conditions of the selected buildings were

obtained. This was in addition to personal observation of the physical characteristics of the buildings and their conditions.

Given the sample size, descriptive statistics/analysis including percentages, tabulations and cross-tabulations shall be used to describe and compare the buildings' characteristic in the selected areas to reflect the categories of developers and planning implications of such development. With Likert scale, people's reactions to and assessment of the conditions of the new buildings as compared to the former property shall be weighted and compared with one another to reflect the impacts of such developments (based on the people's attached value) on their immediate community. The score for the assessment ranges from 5-1 for very good, good, fair, bad, and very bad, respectively; T-test is used to compare the mean assessment scores for the former property and present buildings while chi-square is employed to compare the weighted assessment scores of the new buildings among the selected areas.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the Characteristics of properties before and after redevelopment, the perceived impact of such redevelopments on the immediate environment; end more importantly the implications of such developments to planning are the concern.

Table 1 reveals that although most of the developed properties before and after redevelopment (84.5% and 86.59% respectively) are family-owned, government owned ones which were hitherto next to nil sprang up, though with a small proportion (8.54%) as observed in the redeveloped properties. The implication of this is that redeveloped properties were mostly family houses occupied mainly by members of extended families.

Table 1: Property ownership

Ownership	Before redevelopment		After redevelopment	
	No.	%	No.	%
Family	69	84.50	71	86.59
Corporate body	07	8.54	0	0
Government	-	-	7	8.54
Others	06	07.32	4	4.88
Total	82	100	82	100.00

Source: Authors field survey, 2005

However as obtained in Table 2 below, with the redevelopment in place, just a small proportion of the old occupants are catered for. Table 2 shows that while a very low proportion (6.1%) of the occupants of the redeveloped property are old occupants, the lion's share of 65.85% are new set of people.

Table 2: Occupants of the redeveloped properties

Occupants	No.	%
Former Occupants	05	6.10
New set of people	54	65.85
Both of them	16	19.51
Others	07	8.54
Total	82	100.00

Source: Authors field survey, 2005

The reason for the pattern above may not be unconnected with the fact that redevelopment usually goes with value enhancement and change of use that make properties unaffordable or unsuitable for the old indigenous poor users. The change of use is illustrated in Table 3.

It is obvious from Table 3 above that while the proportion of commercial property increase appreciably from 21.95% before redevelopment to 47.56% after redevelopment, residential use decreases from 31.7% to 28.05%. Besides the little open space (1.22%) becomes nil with new development, while combination or juxtaposition of uses (either compatible or incompatible) becomes apparent after redevelopment. The implications of this especially for the adjacent properties are considerable. While most of the redeveloped properties are mainly commercial and with appreciable proportion of complex uses, majority of the adjacent buildings are residential. This in a way, implies that housing redevelopment in these areas encourages incompatibility of uses.

Also of importance, is the effect of housing redevelopment on density or land use intensity.

It is evident from Table 4 that redevelopment increases the number of multistoried buildings among the sampled properties by 16, as well as decreases open space by 13 parcels. This implies that while most of the redeveloped buildings stand out above the buildings around to replace the initial compound houses of relatively low heights or open space, they increase the density or land use intensity of the area.

To ascertain whether these redevelopments have any significant (positive or negative) impact

Table 3: Property use before and after redevelopment

Property use	Before redevelopment		After redevelopment		Main use of adjacent properties	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Residential	26	31.71	23	28.05	29	35.37
Commercial	18	21.95	39	47.56	23	28.05
Recreation/ open space	17	20.73	-	-	-	-
Public	01	01.22	-	-	-	-
Combination of uses	0	0	12	14.64	25	30.49
Others	20	24.40	8	-	5	6.10
Total	82	100.00	82	100.00	82	100.00

Source: Author's field survey, 2005.

on the people; their assessment and assigned weights are considered via t-test (Table 5).

It is obvious from the t-test (Table 5) that with the calculated t value of 4.6782 which is significant at 0.01 (i.e greater than critical value at 0.01) redeveloped properties are perceived by the residents to have more significant value than before the redevelopment.

This value, as also attested to in the interaction with the people, is reflected in the socio-economic importance and aesthetic value of most of the redeveloped properties, which the people so much appreciate.

It should be noted, however, that the enhanced value brought about by redevelopment, when subjected to chi-square analysis, reflects no significant difference among the selected high-density areas. Care should be taken, however not to interpret this as meaning that redevelopment

in the areas are equal. Rather, it means that the perceived enhanced value brought about by redevelopment in the area does not differ significantly among the high-density areas.

However, to physical planners, this alone does not translate to viability and environmental sustainability of such redevelopment. As observed earlier, the increased density brought about by multistoried building and inadequate set backs among other planning guidelines or development control standards and insufficient infrastructure in several locations of these redeveloped buildings may make them less suitable where they are.

CONCLUSION PLANNING IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is no more a news that redevelopment of properties in high-density areas in Ogbomoso is taking a phenomenal dimension to satisfy property developers in their quest to benefit from the property market. This study shows, however, that the manner in which such development takes place has both advantages and disadvantages. It should be noted however that the advantages, which are observed in the perceived enhanced socio-economic and aesthetic values, are allowed to blindfold the affected communities who fail to identify that in most cases such developments are aberrations to physical planning interest. This is evident in incompatible uses juxtaposition and

Table 4: Number of floors of properties before and after redevelopment

No. of floors	Before redevelopment		After redevelopment	
	No	%	No	%
1 floor	37	67.27	57	75
2 floors	5	9.09	3	3.95
More than 2floors	0	0	16	21.05
Open space	13	23.64	-	-
Total	55	100.00	76	100.00

Source: Author's field survey, 2005.

Table 5: t-test of average assigned weights of properties

	Sabo	Takie	Ijeru	Care-taker	Ojagbo	X	S.D.	T
Before Redevelopment	2.20	3.00	2.00	2.82	2.78	2.56	0.4338	
After Redevelopments	4.0	3.42	4.5	4.33	4.42	4.13	0.44 22	4.6782

NB: The weight ranges from 1 to 5(i.e from V. poor, poor, fair, to good and very good).

Source: Author's field survey, 2005.

undesirable increasing density or land use intensity brought about by building on open spaces or redevelopment of bungalows and compound houses into multistoried buildings. Besides, the disruption of socio-cultural value that may be associated with conversion of family houses may not be too acceptable to the poor and powerless inhabitants of the area.

The argument of this paper is not to totally frown at redevelopment of old and dilapidated structures. However, care should be taken not to protect the interest of the rich property developers alone at the expense of the general community. Rather, redevelopment of properties should follow the legal procedure of seeking development permit or approval before such actions are taken.

To achieve enhanced socio-economic value of properties without prejudice to the socio-cultural and general interests of the community the following conditions are offered to be met (if integrated to development control guidelines) before approval of a proposed redevelopment or new development in high density built up areas:

i) Exiting open space, if it cannot be expanded, should not be built on.

ii) The proposed redevelopment should be seen as a means of promoting not only the socio-economic but also the interest of the community. This can be achieved by discouraging incompatible land uses and dislodgement of the existing inhabitants.

iii) Certain categories of properties like filling stations and those of obnoxious industries like perm kernel, among others, should not be

permitted within urban residential neighbourhoods.

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