

# Urban Infrastructure Redevelopments and the Loss of Public Commons.

## The case of Freedom Park and Zoo in Kitwe, Zambia

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### Abstract

The city of Kitwe experienced a surge in the construction of shopping malls between 2010 and 2020. Government's deliberate efforts for city making and restructuring policy in the built environment has resulted in increased commercial and tourism infrastructure and amenities in the previous decade. These have replaced the city's public spaces such as Kitwe Zoo and Freedom Park, while small community playing fields dotted around the city are continuously under threat of redevelopment. This paper seeks to explain the physical transformation of Kitwe and the failure by government and local authorities to conserve and protect urban public space in their bid to hasten the redevelopment of the city. Through qualitative case study research approach and purposive sampling, the study will illuminate on the emergence of large-scale shopping malls in Kitwe and their influence in and around the Parklands neighbourhoods and the city of Kitwe. Results indicate that there has been phenomenal urban growth in Kitwe following the construction of the malls. Private housing surrounding the malls have been replaced by high-end office parks and apartments, restaurants and coffee shops, private clinics and other commercial establishments as homeowners cashed an offer they couldn't refuse. Both Mukuba and Edgar Chagwa Lungu Malls are a result of a process systematically accelerated and facilitated by the state and its institutions. Inevitably, the construction of these spaces is not only changing the urban landscape but it is also changing the social dynamics, the history of the city and remaking the city as a whole.

**Keywords:** Kitwe, competitive infrastructure, shopping malls, circulating policy

### To cite this article:

Moyo Shoko, P. (2022) "Urban Infrastructure Redevelopments and Loss of Public Commons: The case of Freedom Park and Kitwe Zoo in Kitwe, Zambia", *The Journal of Public Space*, 7(1), pp. 131-156. doi: 10.32891/jps.v7i1.1554.

This article has been double blind peer reviewed and accepted for publication in *The Journal of Public Space*.



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## I Introduction

The shopping centre concept has become popular in African cities including Zambia. Lusaka's shopping mall success is considered the best in Africa outside South Africa (Frank Knight, 2009). It has been replicated in towns in the Copperbelt, such as Ndola and Kitwe as well as in Chipata due to the growing middle class (UN-Habitat, 2014). Shopping malls in Africa are a new phenomenon and a result of a range of factors that include population growth, increased urbanisation, a growing middle class, improved infrastructure and a desire to provide more convenience shopping experience to the people. Shopping malls are also seen as a means by which governments can attract investment and create jobs. Shopping malls naturally require large area of land to be developed and access roads, water and power supplies and communication networks to be available before they are constructed to enable their linkages with surrounding communities and to their global value chains. The emergence of shopping malls is expected to boost economic activities of an area and providing access to goods and services and also to stimulate economic growth, and attract new businesses while providing a platform for existing businesses to expand and modernise.

The Kitwe City Council Strategic Plan (KCCSP 2012-2016) was designed to guide development in Kitwe (KCC, 2011). As part of its aspirations for world city-ness, the KCC lined up various projects for investment and modernisation of the city<sup>1</sup>. The city of Kitwe and the Copperbelt have been in long-term economic decline since the late 1980s. The city's infrastructure had deteriorated and an infiltration of informal activities had taken over the city. The developmental aspirations were part of the larger National Vision 2030 that Zambia sought to become 'a prosperous middle-income economy by the year 2030' (Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry, 2006). Following the privatisation of mines, Zambia launched a National Development and Budgetary Framework that would guide sectoral development in the country. At national and local level, Zambia aimed at accelerated infrastructure development. This involved priority development of certain infrastructure and creating spaces that would attract investments into the country and also promote its own integration into the Africa region. Such a 'fit' of redevelopments would be guided by systematic five-year National Development Plans (NDPs), City strategies/plans as well as Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) at district level. Furthermore, urban regeneration and infrastructural development was key to delivering well planned and organised cities in Zambia (MNDP, 2017).

This paper seeks to investigate the emergence of shopping malls and consequent urban transformation experienced in Kitwe following the launch of the Zambia National Vision 2030 (Vision 2030). Qualitative case study research (CSR) approach was used to gain a deeper understanding of urban redevelopment in Kitwe and its impacts on urban public commons. Freedom Park and Kitwe Zoo are being used as the research case studies as they have been replaced with commercial shopping malls. Archival research, in-depth interviews, both face-to-face and virtual, google forms and Facebook and WhatsApp conversations were used to inform the study.

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<sup>1</sup> These projects included the development of shopping malls, re-development of modern office buildings, re-planning of urban markets, redesigning an ultra-modern bus station, construction of a sanitary landfill site, development of a housing project, facilitating and identifying land for the process of upgrading of informal settlements, upgrading of the city of Kitwe, as well as the maintenance of dilapidated road infrastructure (KCC, 2011).

## 2 Review of literature

Cities in developing countries, especially in Africa, have been redeveloping quite rapidly in the past couple of decades. Studies in Tanzania (Ondrusek-Roy, 2020) Zambia (Lane, 2012 in Datta & Shaban, 2016; Dittgen, 2015), Rwanda (Goodfellow, 2012) attributes these redevelopments to the role of the state and replications of circulating global and neoliberal urban policies as well as the rise in financialisation. Schindler and Kanai argue that the world has entered an infrastructure-led development era where nation states are creating competitive infrastructure that can be plugged into global infrastructure (Schindler and Kanai, 2019). Cities are expected to be engines of growth that stimulate the urban economy and raise investment capital. However, as African cities enter the urban age they are increasingly, under pressure to meet the needs of their citizens while facing the crisis of rapid urbanisation, uncontrolled migration and severe discrepancies in job creation, basic services such as power and water and sanitation. At the same time, they are expected to improve their physical attributes so that they can accommodate segments of the population with a high ability to pay. This entails building safe and pleasant environments for corporate employees – thus shifting the emphasis of cities from regulation and welfare issues (Sager, 2011).

The development of infrastructure has become complex and is being shaped by embedded, hidden and seemingly mundane and complex power dynamics which are beyond the state (Cirolia and Rode, 2019). Cities are, increasingly, at the centre of radical political and economic and planning solutions to crises they face (Datta & Shaban, 2016). Consequently, the development of urban infrastructure is being driven by circulating global urban strategies and the need to connect competitive space with global value chains (Schindler and Kanai, 2019). Connecting competitive space advocates for privatising infrastructure investments where they can have the most impact on growth and economic development, for example, where there is already agglomeration potential (Cirolia and Rode, 2019). Emphasis is on infrastructural alignment geared towards economic productivity; strengthening and prioritising high-density growth poles, accelerating economic growth and societal well-being in territorially more confined areas (Ibid). Thus creating intentional and temporal inequalities of infrastructure access for others, assuming that these will be mitigated over time. Graham and Marvin, in *Splintering urbanism*, indicate that new, highly polarised urban landscapes are emerging where 'premium' infrastructure networks, high speed telecommunications, 'smart' highways, global airline networks, selectively connect together the most favoured users and places, both within and between cities (Graham and Marvin, 2001). Due to the need to create competitive space, urban initiatives of all kinds are being implicated in the city. According to Ong (2011) these are experiments with metropolitan futures that draw upon disparate styles, actors and forms that circulate in and throughout the global south metropolitan centres. These experiments are driven by increasing mobility of capital which are leading states to pursue increasingly similar policies along the neo-liberal model or globalising policies (Brahm, 2002; Ong, 2011). As cities urbanise and modernise, neoliberal urban policies create a need for enormous investment in cities worldwide (Sager, 2011). Cities will continue to aim to become economic hubs and seek to build safe and pleasant environment for the corporate world, and construct shopping precincts for the sophisticated public (Iravabal and Chakravarty, 2007; Boyle McWilliams and Rice, 2008 cited in Sager, 2011). Schindler and Kanai add that there is a global coalition of multinational finance,

commercial concerns and strong countries are exercising their power on developing nations, directing them in financial and other economic policies (Schindler and Kanai, 2019). The result is the state acting strategically and using its power to intervene in order to secure and expand the influence of the market (Van Gent, 2013).

Zambia and its cities are no exception to these circulating global strategies. The cities' transformations and emergence of shopping malls can be attributed to policy circulation and the drive to create competitive space. This is accelerated by the availability of devalued land that has lay unused and unmaintained; and has become attractive to such ventures. Government policy has been promoting the financing, organising and constructing of business districts as private solutions to urban problems of lack of employment, rising population and inadequate urban services.

### *2.1 History of public amenities on the Zambian Copperbelt*

Zambia's historical development and prolonged economic decline created conditions of urban decay that have attracted the development of new infrastructure and transformation of the urban areas. Zambia is a copper-dependent country that inherited a dual economy from colonial past. The country was a middle-income economy by 1969 and a darling of the West from the 1960s to the 1970s (Simson, 1985). Urban planning on the Zambian Copperbelt and Nkana-Kitwe can be traced to the 1930s up to the 1950s when Africans in the mining towns were beginning to acknowledge their role in Northern Rhodesia's copper mining industry

The African mine workers were housed in mine compounds and providing cyclical labour meaning that they could only be in the mines for a limited time and then go back to the villages. The compound system, imported from the Rand mines was a system used to control recruitment and maintain steady labour supply while controlling the whole production process as well (Rönnbäck and Broberg, 2019). Bole (2012) indicates that during the economic boom periods the miner worked, ate, lived and socialised in the mining compound. The 1930s to 1940s were a period of social instability in the Copperbelt mines as the African miners sought to be integrated into the mines and urban centres as a permanent population.

The African disturbances and rolling strikes motivated by the need for higher wages for native labour were key to Northern Rhodesia's housing policy and improving urban facilities on the Copperbelt. These disturbances paved way for improved housing, wages, living conditions and general welfare such as education and amenities for African mine workers and their families (Fraser and Larmer, 2010). The April 1940 strike at Nkana was a turning point to native housing policy, urban infrastructure and amenities development on the Copperbelt<sup>2</sup>. The strike-initiated conversation on the need for equality and better conditions of service and stabilisation of the African population. Protracted debates between government and mining companies resulted in on the responsibility of native welfare, companies agreed to increase wages and also offer recreational facilities on condition that government complied with provision of the

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<sup>2</sup> (ZCCM Archive File 10.1.4B), Northern Rhodesia: Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Disturbances in the Copperbelt in 1940, Summary findings).

Native Beer Ordinance<sup>3</sup>. The agreement was to allocate a certain percentage of beerhalls/canteen profits to the welfare committee for welfare services<sup>4</sup>. Also known as the Durban systems, it was a commercial liquor system developed in South Africa as a source of income/finance for African townships in the apartheid era (Rodgerson, 2001). The Durban liquor system was therefore introduced in the Copperbelt in 1945 and funded housing and all forms of urban infrastructure (Young, 1949). The beerhall system was run by the municipalities (Local Township management boards) with proceeds allocated to the native welfare department. Proceeds from brewing and sale of African traditional beer (made from sorghum and millet), was used to finance urban services for Africans. Following the agreements between government and mining companies, the beer hall system was also applied in financing infrastructural development on the Copperbelt towns from the 1950s until the 1970s. Housing, infrastructure and social services in all Copperbelt towns adopted this format of development with proceeds financing the construction and maintenance of infrastructure such as sports clubs, stadiums, public swimming pools, golf courses, children's playing fields among others. Rodgerson argued that through this liquor undertaking, traditional drinking practices were incorporated into urban administration and became one of the cornerstones of ruling class domination and urban control (Rodgerson, 2001).

While mining companies provided thousands of houses for their workers, much of the housing was also built by municipalities through this model and mining companies were able to lease for their staff (MacMillan, 2012). The liquor system contributed to stabilisation of labour and better housing because it enabled the city to fund services and infrastructure for the African workers (Mutale, 2004). In essence, the liquor system was a response to the needs of the large numbers of Africans and a means to provide them with public services. Eventually, the Copperbelt towns, Kitwe included grew quite rapidly in the 1950s resulting in the Copperbelt region being one of the most developed regions in central Africa. The mines and their services were central to people's lives and the Copperbelt became one of the most developed regions in Central Africa, during and after the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Phimister compares the Copperbelt's state of infrastructure and modernisation, and the lives miners lived to 'a paradise of the proletariat' (Phimister, 2011). The Optima magazine indicates that Kitwe was considered the 'shopping mecca of the Copperbelt and Northern Rhodesia, with shopping complexes, motorways and linkages to Johannesburg and the world (Phimister, 2011; Optima, 1961). According to Thus, the country was once the most urbanised country in the central Africa, with social welfare services provided by the mining companies between the 1920s and 1970s, and the most organised institutional housing systems (Mususa, 2010) The region had the most developed and organised road, housing and entertainment systems in Africa outside South Africa.

However, nationalisation and the global oil/economic crisis of the 1970s affected commodity prices including copper resource which Zambia was so heavily depended upon. Zambia's domestic political economy, poor policy choices – such as the 1970s nationalisation, poor copper prices and debt-servicing, regional wars and political

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<sup>3</sup> (ZCCM Archives File 10.1.4B ZCCM 10.1.4B, Report of African Disturbances in the Copperbelt, 1940-1955, R.M. Peterson, Luanshya RST (Letter No. NLT 763; 20 November 1940).

<sup>4</sup> (ZCCM Archives File 10.1.4B ZCCM 10.1.4B, Report of African Disturbances in the Copperbelt, 1940-1955, R.M. Peterson, Luanshya RST (Letter No. NLT 763; 20 November 1940).

instability in Southern Rhodesia and economic sanctions from South Africa, reversed all the economic gains (Simson, 1985). The 1990s signalled the end of the Kaunda era and the beginning of the multiparty democracy. It ushered in structural adjustment programme in order to end over a decade of economic downturn. Government institutions mainly Mining Development Corporation (Mindeco) and the Industry Development Corporation (Indeco)<sup>5</sup> were privatised. Privatisation of mining and industry was followed by reforms in the Land Act and Investment policy as well as the sale of housing. The privatisation of mines, being the most significant, saw the subdivision of Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM) into individual mines. The sale of the mines was considered the fastest ever sale in history of privatisation. State institutions and the local currency was also deregulated.

The implementation of structural adjustment policies in the 1990s attracted investments into the mines. However, the new mine owners mostly from the East, were not interested in employee welfare and corporate social responsibility. As a result, the mines withdrew welfare provisions from the mine workers and from the mining towns. The withdrawal of social services and fiscal budget cuts radically changed people's well-being and the character of urban areas. Mususa (2010)'s article "Getting By" gives grim a picture of life in the Copperbelt after the privatisation of the mines in 1997. Mususa observed that towns became like 'villages' in the sense that people lost their jobs (as the new mines employed less workers), informality grew rapidly, and life became a struggle for many, while infrastructure deteriorated (Mususa, 2010). Due to a lack of public financing, lack of maintenance of public infrastructure and housing, urban decay ensued. The Copperbelt province and its cities including the city of Kitwe which had been riding on the goodwill of the ZCCM spiralled down. Public commons like children's parks, which were part of the amenities provided by the mining companies for their employees' wellbeing and financed through the colonial and post-colonial liquor system, also suffered. They were left unmaintained and disregarded. An example of this is the grass at Freedom Park which was overgrown, while the pedestrian bridges on both the Park and Kitwe Zoo collapsed. Kitwe Stream running through these two commons also became a smelly dump due to pollution.

### **3 Methodology**

Kitwe district has a population of 661 901 according to the latest (2020) census report (Zambia Statistics Agency [ZSA], 2022). While the district posted the highest population in the province, the Copperbelt province in general, experienced the lowest growth nationally at 39.8% below the national average in the past decade (ZSA, 2022).

However, city managers estimate the daily population, to be over 800 000, taking into consideration daily exchanges and commuting from neighbouring towns. This research concentrated on the development of Mukuba and ECL malls are located in the residential suburb of Parklands. These two have replaced simultaneously, a greenbelt of over 3kms of the Kitwe Stream valley which was formerly made up of a zoo and a children's park.

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<sup>5</sup> Mining Development Corporation (Mindeco) and the Industry Development Corporation (Indeco) were the major parastatals in the country, formed through the nationalisation of mining and industry respectively in the early 1970s.

### 3.1 Research design

This study used a qualitative Case Study Research (CSR) Approach. Merriam and Tisdell (2006) state that case study research provides an intensive, holistic description and analysis of single or multiple instances, phenomenon and social units. Creswell describes CSR as the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (ie a setting or context) ... for *developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases*” (Creswell, 2006, 73). Sauro’s description of CSR aligns with this argument that CSR provides a deeper understanding of the research problem through multiple data sources (Sauro, 2017). The paper aimed to bring information from various sources through people’s experiences with redevelopment in the city. Since this research was carried out during the covid-19 pandemic, it benefitted from using diverse qualitative data sources which included in-depth interviews (both face-to-face and virtual), archival material, observational data using photographs, local social media contribution through WhatsApp and Facebook conversation, as well as use of google forms. Use of social media and virtual tools enabled the researcher to reach a dispersed sample while providing contributions, discussions, memories and files from over five to six decades ago.

### 3.2 Sampling techniques

The population of interest was purposefully selected through deductive and inductive approaches. A purposive sample is a sample of interest that is deliberately selected by the researcher on the basis that it will be typical and representative and will yield favourable results (Kothari and Garg, 2017). Deductive approaches relied on information from existing literature in Kitwe such as the Kitwe City Strategy (KCCSP 2012-2016) and Yearly plans which indicated a selection of stakeholders who took part in replanning the city of Kitwe. Inductive approaches were a result of snowballing. The research participants were recruited based on their work experience or involvement in redeveloping the city of Kitwe. Such stakeholders included a former mayor and deputy mayor, town planner civil and software engineers, real estate developers, mall management, civil servants and civic organisation representatives, former business owners, and various local residents.

### 3.3 Data collection and analysis

In total 31 respondents were interviewed through face-to-face in-depth interviews, virtual interviews, google forms, and social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook messenger.

Interviews were aided by an interview guide. Comments were also sought from Kitwe Past and Present Facebook group on the state of infrastructure and the people’s perceptions of the urban redevelopments. Two Facebook posts were used and they elicited 42 comments. Data was obtained through user-generated textual data e.g. posts, comments and messages. Interviews were recorded using an android device and uploaded to Otter.ai tool for transcription and further exported to Atlas.ti v9 for qualitative analysis i.e. thematic content analysis (TCA). Anderson (2007) refers to TCA as a descriptive presentation of qualitative data. Atlas.ti a digital tool for managing, analysing and presenting qualitative data. Using deductive and inductive codes, transcripts were analysed using TCA, grouping the data into potential themes, categories and code. The codes were defined and used to design a code framework.

Data from Facebook comments and posts was analysed manually (Franz, Marsh, Chen, & Teo; 2019) to supplement information obtained from interviews especially of the historical state of infrastructure and the impacts of the shopping.

## **4 Discussion of findings**

### *4.1 Regenerating the city of Kitwe*

Zambia has now, as a result of economic restructuring, taken a neoliberal turn in urban policy at both national and local level. Individual cities are repackaging the cities into ideas, dreams and possibilities to remake the cities. In 2006, President Levy Mwanawasa launched the National Vision 2030 together with subsequent national development plans (NDPs) that would guide both infrastructure and economic development in the country. Government also came up with national, regional and local level priority areas whose development will be facilitated and stimulated by the government through various neoliberal urban policies implementation. Those implied in policy include accelerated development of infrastructure and services, diversification from copper mining and the development of priority sectors that are key to growth of the economy and poverty reduction such as manufacturing, agriculture, mining and tourism. Government would utilise Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), deliberate state involvement (or state-led development), infrastructure economic development, refurbishment and new built projects, as well as venturing into multi-facility economic zones and corridor developments that would enable the country integration into the African region. Gentrification, an increasing phenomenon in the global south, though not explicit in policy, is also occurring as an outcome of the process. By 2017, the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP 2017-2021) indicated that Zambia aspires to be "...a modern country with cities and towns and provincial areas that are secure, well-planned, providing basic amenities and linked by good roads and accessible by other road transport systems" (Ministry of National Planning and Development [MNDP], 2017 p. 67). This would be achieved through accelerated development without leaving anyone behind.

The city of Kitwe City Strategy (KCCSP 2012-2016) referencing Lusaka stated that the city aspired for urban regeneration like that of Lusaka. This is because of the successes of Lusaka's shopping centres in the continent (Frank Knight, 2009; UN-Habitat, 2014;). Lusaka's regeneration is attributed to city making policy (Lane, 2012). During the reintroduction of national development planning in 2006, the FNDP (2006-2010) emphasized the role of Lusaka as a capital city that should be renewed to international standards. Such infrastructure developments would enable Lusaka to compete for and attract headquarters of companies, foreign and non-governmental missions as well as embassies, high commissions and consulates. As a result, between 2010 and 2020, Kitwe had to play catch up and today is busy and continuously evolving. The city cannot afford to stand still due to the global processes taking place. Change is ongoing in the city, and with change there are bound to be losers in the system. The whole cycle of urban redevelopments has been completed and the highs and lows are being experienced. Already, there has been an influx of gentrified places, foreign food retailers, and global multinational businesses and shopping centres. Affluent spaces of consumption have also developed, with some around race and class identification, while it is too early to see whether and how Kitwe's cultures will be affected.



The KCC promoted the regeneration of the city centre for various reasons which included decongesting the city by attracting people to shopping malls, office and business parks such as Lyness House (Former Adriatic Court), Saturnia and Mudzi Houses among others. The city also aimed to improve the outlook of Kitwe (appeal and aesthetics) and bring in diverse services such as international retail outlets which were previously only available in Ndola and Lusaka. Furthermore, new infrastructure created new forms of recreation for family and youth. Mukuba Mall a stone's throw from the city centre was built on land which was previously Kitwe Zoo while Edgar Chagwa Lungu (ECL) Mall is sitting on what was formerly Freedom Park, a piece of green belt which was a public and children's park stretching a couple of kilometres. Freedom Park also served as a public gathering place for political rallies, public holidays celebrations like International Women's Day, Independence Day and Labour Day related commemorations. Both these new spaces are symbols of accumulation by displacement of public commons and unnoticeably lost to the people of Kitwe who are still relishing the modernization brought into the city.

The area surrounding the shopping malls has since experienced rapid transformation residential homes have been renovated into smaller shopping complexes, offices, gated upscale apartments and retail enterprises. A variety of policies are being implicated in the city and are articulated in various forms around the city and also in the midst of high informalisation of the economy and unemployment. The KCC is convinced that urban renewal and regeneration makes sense for various reasons which include Kitwe's old façade that requires a makeover so that it becomes eye catching and modern in order to change the outlook of Kitwe and also attract retail and tourism business to cater for the new middle and creative class taste. The change is not only a facelift and appearance but the need to migrate infrastructure of the colonial and postcolonial period like art décor cinemas, markets, general dealers and department stores to the present and be compatible with today's global value chains.

#### 4.2 *The state of infrastructure in Kitwe*

Kitwe is an old mining town whose mines historically provided some of the best urban infrastructure, housing and services to mine workers including advanced Africans. A local engineer stated that the first mine owners that invested in the first mining industry in Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) wanted to create a haven in which they could bring employees from Europe to come and live comfortably in Zambia. Hence infrastructure *'like swimming pools or education facilities, the cricket clubs, flying clubs were all meant for someone that was young and looking forward to starting a life... there was a whole system set up from the moment they arrived to retirement.'* (Interview with Engineer, Virtual Storyteller, 4 November 2021).

He together with the former mayor, SC Nyirenda further expressed that Kitwe's developmental trajectory was disturbed by nationalisation and the economic downturn. Their assumptions were that had it continued on the same track that the colonialists left, the country would have gone far, in terms of development in the city, the country and general well-being and infrastructure. The local engineer criticised nationalisation as being a drawback and that after nationalisation, many amenities and apprenticeship programmes were put off without looking at the social implications. As a result, Kitwe was riding on ZCCM's goodwill, eventually spiralling down from 1991 following Zambia's democratic election and the sale of the mines (Interview with Local Engineer,

Virtual Storyteller, 4 November, 2021). Kitwe's infrastructure decayed and was inadequate for its growing population (Informal conversation with Former Mopani Copper Mines Engineer, 28 October, 2022). Zambia's cities suffered much urban decay as council resources were withdrawn and housing was sold (Ndeke, Chitembo and Dauskardt, 1999). Today, Kitwe's dependence on the mines is still felt as the survival of the new infrastructure still requires a viable and active copper mining sector. Another respondent, a former deputy mayor describes the state of infrastructure in Kitwe follows:

*“From independence up to 2011, as a nation, we still depended on infrastructure from the [the pre] Independence era, built in the colonial days. [Now], ...we have hospitals, the road network, schools, universities, and everything that is dilapidated. Hence the new government that came in 2011, their main mandate was to improve infrastructure.”*  
(Interview with Former Deputy Mayor – 11 November, 2021)

The former deputy mayor explained that when the government of Michael Chilufya Sata came into power in 2011, they had the mandate to improve the country's infrastructure. The PF government had come into power with an election manifesto of 'more money in your pocket'. With foreign reserves and projects already secure by the Mwanawasa government, the PF government replaced the existing Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) with the Revised Sixth National Development Plan (R-SNDP) to enable its developmental agenda to steam forward. This way, President Sata and his government were able to rapidly rollout large scale infrastructure developments, road infrastructure refurbishments linking various corners of Zambia. Large scale shopping malls, housing complexes, hotels, as well as multi-facility economic zones also surfaced as government promoted PPPs and private sector participation, with a new relationship with Chinese developers sprouting.

The former deputy mayor further explained that Colonial urban planning of the 1930s to the 1950s in the city of Kitwe had left aside much land as public parks (Interview with Former Deputy Mayor of Kitwe, 11 November, 2021). As a result, this old planning was perfect for the times then, giving an example of these many parks in one area in Riverside, a suburb in Kitwe:

*... You know Zambezi Way, when you branch off Freedom Way, there is a big park there. Then as you come down to Valley View School, you turn into Congo Way; there's a big park. As you come to join Jambo from Congo Way, there is a big park. You are getting it. So if you look at the distances, they are just too close. They may have played the role at that time. However, now, if we maintain the Zambezi Way Park, someone in Congo will walk five minutes to Zambezi Way. So those are now the things that people are looking at. This is the planning of 100 years ago, but then dynamics have changed.*

The former deputy mayor explained how the planning of the 1930s and 1940s is being affected as the dynamics and priorities of urban areas change today. Colonial planning left aside vast pieces of land for public commons such as public parks, playgrounds and other public amenities, which the council has not been able to maintain for the past few decades. Following privatisation and the withdrawal of council resources, these have

become desolate eyesores in the communities as indicated by the various network of quotations in the diagram below.

Therefore, in their state, they are attractive to developers as affordable prime land to construct shopping complexes and housing. An interview with an employee of Habitat for Humanity, also revealed that most infrastructure was built in the colonial era.

However, there is a push now to upgrade these pieces of land as they are seen as 'passive space' harbouring crime and vice. On the other hand, as city councils deal with the rising urban population and demand for land for commercial purposes, they are relocating these commons to other uses. An architect involved in the development of ECL Mall on Freedom Avenue Children's Park echoed the same sentiments. He said that Freedom Park was in a dilapidated state and neglected; it was now overgrown and harbouring thieves. He argued that the city could not manage to have such public parks in such decay. In their decayed and un-kept status, public commons attract developers looking for prime land suitable for regeneration into large attractive infrastructure in the inner city, where there is a ready market. He reiterated that these parks are an asset to the town, and the perception would be to put up something substantially better than keeping them in a dilapidated state.

A retired high court judge who moved into Kitwe in 1989 and took up residence across Kitwe Zoo gives this description of the state of public infrastructure then,

*"I moved to Kitwe when it was the third largest city in the country, the Zoo was a bush, the roads were bad, they were very few hotels, notably Edinburgh Hotel, but now many lodges have opened up, people are buying houses and building lodges, clinic. Of late private clinics have mushroomed everywhere, private hospitals...and it is turning the place into a city". (Interview, 4 November, 2021)*

A decade later, another family moved into the same street as the judge, and opened up a membership pub. They also indicated that their neighbourhood, located next to the zoo was in dilapidated state, and the roads were impassable (Interview with former Pub owner, 04 November, 2021). However, they needed a house to start a pub.

Unfortunately, these vast urban spaces left unmaintained have now been transformed into large shopping complexes as international capital landed into the city, preferring degenerated built-up areas that could be renewed or regenerated into world-class malls, hotels and industries that offer a one-stop shop in prime locations. These parks left in close proximity, such as the Freedom Park, Kitwe Zoo, and so many parks in Riverside and Parklands, are subjected to a cost-benefit analysis where commercial developments supersede sentimental value.

#### 4.3 Kitwe city transformation

Most respondents indicated that the most visible developments had been the shopping malls, road infrastructure, and the renovations of residential homes into commercial and retail enterprises like shops, offices and office apartments, restaurants and clinics and the rise in industries and active participation of the private sector. One particular resident expressed that everyone has been motivated somehow to improve their homes or sell, especially around shopping malls and newly refurbished roads (Interview with local resident, 3 November 2021). She noted that Kitwe had experienced a rise in artsy infrastructure like Saturday markets, which have started appearing and are upscale

and encouraging small-scales entrepreneurship. She observed that people have been coming up with these initiatives independently and not waiting for council but instead finding ways to make things work for themselves. She further indicated that the most visible infrastructure had been shopping malls, and road infrastructure. However, she believes that because accessibility has improved so does the houses located along the newly tarred roads, the value attached to the properties and increase in attention that such properties get (Interview with local resident, 3 November 2021).

The Kitwe town planner, revealed that the city of Kitwe was modernising and wanted to make a reality of its vision and aspiration, to be a smart city, a city that is inclusive, sustainable, and adopting technology in the running of the city, managing itself, the needs of its people, its health and education integration in line with the city's integrated plan (Interview with the Town planner, 18 January 2020). He also stated that the country had experienced rapid population, in general, owing to infrastructure disparities that cannot adequately cater to the increasing population needs. Furthermore, he said that the then mayor, Mr Christopher Kang'ombe, had spearheaded many developments that included cleaning up the city (Interview with the Town planner, 18 January 2020). An interview with a former deputy mayor of Kitwe also affirms the mega infrastructure developments that the city of Kitwe and Zambia at large has experienced in the past decade as he noted that, *'Zambia and Kitwe have changed drastically, such that someone last in the country in 2010 will get lost'* (Interview with Former Deputy Mayor, 11 November, 2021) To support this, the city of Kitwe has seen an explosion of infrastructure over the years as the city reacted in various ways to this call for redevelopment.

The cityscape experienced a significant urban transformation between 2010-2020. A local engineer and virtual story teller commenting on the rapid transformation of Kitwe, a city he spent much of his formative years, expressed that *'in the village where one grows nothing remains the same'* (Interview, with local engineer and virtual storyteller, 4 November 2021). Further discussion with a local property developer and engineer revealed that besides the large infrastructure projects most visible in the city, the government, has been involved in targeted infrastructure development like road construction and rehabilitation in high-density areas [townships and compounds] (Interview with software engineer turned - real estate developer, 9 December 2021).

This has helped open townships like Chimwemwe and Kawama for further development, creating enough traffic required to generate business opportunities and demand for services like fuel stations. He added that such initiatives are pushing people to build further away, attracted by the amenities and the opportunity to build new styled-homes and leaving the old Soweto-style colonial houses in areas like Chimwemwe and going further away from the city, causing sprawling settlements as many of them can afford cars, and good roads enable them to commute.

The former high court judge who moved to Kitwe in 1989 and settled across Kitwe Zoo also attests to this phenomenal growth. He stated that the city had grown significantly as compared to the late 1980s when it was the third largest city and going through the economic downturn and the 1990s when it offered so few amenities; when he narrates the state of infrastructure then:

*"Most of the areas [here] were bush, but today we are seeing mushrooming lodges, hospitals everywhere, private clinics, malls, restaurants, and this place is turning into a city. The roads were bad in the 1990s. Kitwe's residential areas have now expanded*

*along Ndola Kitwe Dual Carriageway; the city has expanded in terms of residential areas going over the Kafue River, to New Kitwe [Kafue Park] ..., and as far west as Kalulushi [Kitwe West]. The place has expanded, which is a great improvement compared to what it was" (Interview with retired High Court Judge, 4 November 2021).*

Growth around the country is phenomenal too as people are building beyond their usual spaces, along the highways and city periphery, according to State Counsel William Nyirenda (Interview 3 November 2021). Former Kitwe mayor, lawyer and property developer, State Counsel (SC) William Nyirenda, indicated that the economy was buoyed and boosted by mining activities of the previous couple of decades but is now on the wane (Interview with SC Nyirenda, 03 November 2021). At the turn of the century, Kitwe homeowners invested in physical infrastructure following the replanning of Kitwe in the 1990s and heeded the call for residential and commercial business district (CBD) development; hence development is phenomenal within the city, in suburbia and spreading in all directions, consuming previous bushland going in all directions along Ndola road, Chingola road merging Chimwemwe and Garneton, Ndeke into Presidential guest house, Riverside crossing over the Kafue River into Kafue Park, spreading west to Kalulushi, into what is now Kitwe West – leaving the whole place interlinked for the first time in the history of the city (Interview with SC Nyirenda, 03 November 2021). Chingola and Ndola highways have experienced significant developments. The former mayor also added that there is phenomenal growth, too, as industries and commercial spaces have come and are growing, which indicates a good local economy.

Secondly, is the emergence of large scales shopping complexes commonly referred to as shopping malls. Every town in Zambia today has a mall, while more prominent cities like Lusaka, Kitwe and Ndola would have multiple mega-shopping malls. Research participants indicated that Zambians have been travelling to neighbouring countries like South Africa and abroad to other countries like Dubai and China to shop and have been exposed to these facilities which offer recreation and safety for families and businesses<sup>6</sup>. A retired high court judge further added that Zambians want the same amenities when they come home.

Within the city of Kitwe, there are five large shopping malls: Copperhill, Mukuba, Edgar Chagwa Lungu (ECL), Nkana (which is yet to open) and Westlands, a newly opened shopping mall in Nkana West (Fig 4.1). At the same time, Riverside and Parklands shopping centres have also seen some significant renovations, while the China Mall, a new kind of stand-alone massive shop owned by Chinese nationals has also emerged and posing an economic threat to the shopping complex business and all other traders. Many people have followed suit and invested in the city's physical infrastructure by building houses, factories and warehouses. According to SC Nyirenda, all these developments in the city show that the local economy is doing well, but this is only the private sector, and not government investments. Thus, indicating the disconnect between the thrust by the private sector in contributing to infrastructure development in Kitwe, vis-a-vis government's failure to provide public services.

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with representative of Herriott Properties, a company which specialises in building shopping malls (17 November 2021); Interview with former deputy mayor of Kitwe (4 November 2021)

A local engineer expressed that bringing these developments to Zambia and Kitwe was like bringing a product to a ready market (Interview, 3 November 2021) while an employee of the UN-Habitat also uttered the same sentiments, stating that stakeholders have been actually crying for such developments (Interview with Employee – UN-Habitat, 11 November 2021). Most stakeholder respondents indicated they were happy with what happened in Kitwe, with the local engineer indicating that in terms of physical aesthetics, it is worth giving credit where it is due because there has been a considerable transformation of the physical landscape. Other stakeholders also indicated a variety of shopping spaces with ample parking and family recreational services. These developments are welcome as the availability of shopping malls and good roads have decongested the city centre and brought shopping spaces near and in residential areas. The availability of banking facilities and government services is also decentralised everywhere (Interview with local engineer and Virtual Storyteller, 3 November 2021). A few respondents applauded the availability of shopping malls for minimum impact on smaller businesses as they have continued to thrive. However not everyone agreed to this as the former pub owner had to closed shop when the mall opened and brought in foreign franchises which attracted her customers and was not able to complete with (Interview with former pub owner, 4 November, 2021). Local engineer was of the idea '...Africans have a tendency of falling in love with something new and do not maintain that momentum and soon go back to their ways and their usual retailers' (Interview with local engineer and Virtual Storyteller, 3 November 2021). Thus, indicating that the shopping malls are a fad that people rushed too at first and then eventually reverting to their traditional ways of shopping and not offering as much competition to local businesses as was anticipated.

#### *4.4 Kitwe's Shopping malls*

Kitwe has five big shopping malls: Mukuba, Edgar Chagwa Lungu (ECL), Nkana, Copper Hill and Westlands in Nkana west (Figure 4.1). Of these only two Mukuba and ECL Mall, will be covered extensively as they are located on what was previously a zoo and children's park, respectively and also because of the significant physical impact they have had on the Parklands suburb and the whole of Kitwe in general. A retired judge who also sold his home for over 30years after the opening of Mukuba mall, (for an unrelated reason) indicates that these two malls have increased properties values in the area attracting developers who are looking for prime area in the commercial zone where they can convert their houses to industrial activity (Interview with retired Judge, 4 November, 2011). A local engineer also shared that a relative of his old his house in the Martinsdale area in exchange for two houses in Nkana East because it is a prime zone near ECL mall (Interview with Local Engineer and Virtual Storyteller, 03 November 2021). The former green belt in Parklands has turned out to be a lucrative prime area for homeowners, where developers are hunting for residential housing that they tear down and plant new commercial buildings. This area as an old suburb offers big pieces of land that are easily converted to upscale apartments, office parks, lodges, restaurants and clinics. Below is a description of the selected mini-cases of Mukuba mall and ECL mall.



Figure 4.1. Kitwe Mall - A-Copperhill, B- Mukuba, C-ECL, D ECL-Garden Court and Office Park view, E Nkana, F-Westlands

#### 4.4.1 From Kitwe Zoo to Mukuba Mall

Kitwe Zoo was a public zoo located in the heart of Kitwe's Parklands suburb, bordered by Chiwala Avenue on the right and Freedom Avenue on the left (Figure 4.2). The zoo was run by the municipality and fully functional in the 1980s and early 1990s. It was home to a diverse species that included lions, vervet monkeys, a crocodile pit, monitor lizards, snakes/ reptiles and bird species, included Marabou Stocks and, according to a local engineering professional. A local engineer said he saw his first ever Marabou Stock (Interview with Local Engineer and Virtual Storyteller, 03 November 2021).

Respondents on my Facebook post (Kitwe Past and Present [Status update], 21 January 2022) expressed that they grew up in the surrounding neighbourhood of Parklands and did confirm hearing lions roar in the mornings and evenings. During my interview with Paul Gee he gave a mental re-enactment of Kitwe Zoo (Virtual Interview, 3 February, 2022). The zoo was a big part of his life and he spent most of his childhood there. Hence, he gave me a walk-through the zoo recalling memories of the place and how he interacted with it. Figure 4.3 below is an Artistic impression of our virtual tour of the zoo. Most of them were also regulars at the zoo, while others served as boy scouts







During the interim period, after animals were removed the zoo also became an entertainment place hosting weddings and other conference area as the community tried to keep the remaining animals and the place afloat. Today, Kitwe Zoo has been replaced by Mukuba Mall, one of the five big shopping malls built in Kitwe in the last decade. It is located a stone's throw from another colossal shopping mall, ECL Mall, on Freedom way (Figure 4.3).

Mukuba Mall is the second mall to be opened in Kitwe after Copper Hill, in Mindolo, on Chingola road. Copper Hill Mall flourished for a while until the opening of Mukuba, which turned it into a ghost mall as tenants like the Keg and Coppersmith left and anchor tenants like Pick n Pay closed down. According to SC Nyirenda, Mukuba Mall should have been built in the 1990s as the first mall in Zambia. He said that the city had signed an agreement with Stocks and Stocks (Stefanutti and Stocks) to build a shopping complex with a nine-hole golf course. Unfortunately, the then President, Mr Chiluba, requested that the mall be moved to Manda Hill (as Lusaka did not have a shopping mall), availing land for its construction. Two decades later, Mukuba Mall was built and became one of the iconic features of the city of Kitwe. Mukuba Mall is owned by Heriot Properties<sup>7</sup>. The company has investment portfolio for shopping malls in the country at an estimated US\$ 105 million, with Mukuba Mall at US\$ 38 million alone (Anonymous email content, 17 August 2022).

Most of the land that Herriott Properties has developed into shopping malls around the country and on the line of rail on repurposed land (Virtual Interview with Herriot Properties Country representative, 17 November, 2021). Hence, this is an organisation with vast experience investing in brownfield opportunities, regenerating some of the urban areas' de-valorised sites. De-valorised or disinvested sites in urban areas are sites that have fallen into disrepair and become undesirable places to live. These sites can include abandoned buildings, vacant lots, and other areas that have become blighted over time. These sites often experience higher crime levels, poverty, and social problems, creating a cycle of disinvestment and neglect.

Thus, Mukuba Mall has been built on a former public space, Kitwe Zoo. Formerly owned by the city council, this land was sold to Pridwin properties and, in partnership/shareholding agreement with Heriot Properties was developed into a mall (Virtual Interview with Herriot Properties Representative, 17 November 2021).

Following privatisation of state enterprises in the 1990s and the withdrawal of funding to city councils, the SINPA paper, advised the Kitwe City Council to do away with areas which are not core business encouraging the sale of public commons to reduce public spending (Ndeke et al., 1999). Kitwe zoo fell into disrepair and animals were relocated, leaving only the tuckshop functioning for a while (Ndeke et al., 1999; Virtual interview with Paul, 3 February 2022).

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<sup>7</sup> Heriot Properties, is a South African property holding and investment company with a diversified portfolio of retail, industrial, commercial and specialised properties in South Africa valued at R4,155 billion (Heriotreit.com). In South Africa, Herriott Properties owns shopping malls and warehouses. At the same time, the company has invested in five shopping malls in Zambia, Kafubu Mall in Ndola, Mukuba Mall in Kitwe, and Cosmopolitan Mall in Lusaka, Kabwe and Solwezi malls since they arrived in the country in 2012 (Virtual Interview with Herriott Properties country representative, 17 November 2021; Anonymous email contents received 17 August 2022).



Figure 4.4 Mukuba Mall. Source Google Earth.

The Heriot Properties respondent added that the investment company was attracted to develop Mukuba Mall due to the availability of prime land and an existing gap in shopping malls in the Copperbelt. The construction of Mukuba Mall, a one-stop shopping mall in Kitwe, started in 2014 and it was opened in 2015. Mukuba Mall benefits from its prime location near residential areas and the Kitwe Central Business District (CBD) as well as being the first mall to be built, with strong South African influence in terms of the shops and merchandise available.

Mukuba mall came in as a bigger mall with a wide variety of retail shops, some of which are well-established regional chain shops like Game, Shoprite, Pick 'n Pay, Truworths, Edgars etc... that had been attracting customers to Lusaka and South Africa. While Copperhill, on the hand, being of moderate size and having a limited number of shops, and far from the market, in terms of residential areas like Riverside, Parklands, Nkana East and West and the city centre, was greatly affected by the new mall. Today, Kitwe Zoo is a much flourishing Mukuba Mall, and attracting custom from the Copperbelt region, Western Province, and across the border into the Democratic Republic of Congo.

#### 4.4.2 From Freedom Avenue Children's Park to ECL Mall

Originally known as Kent Avenue Park, Freedom Avenue Children's Park, or Freedom Park, was a public children's park located at the heart of the city of Kitwe. Its history goes back to the early 1950s and possibly beyond. Its original length was about 2.43 kilometres, and below are two maps of the original park (Figure 4.2). The park gets its name from Freedom Avenue, a road that runs from Independence Road/Chingola Road to the deep Nationalist Avenue in Parklands (by Kitwe Zoo). It continues for several kilometres into the suburbs of Parklands, Riverside and Riverside Extension. Social media accounts noted that it was a park where kids could swim in Kitwe Stream from the 1950s to 1980s, or play on swings. It was family-friendly park where families went

for walks, and to have picnics. During the festive season, Christmas carols could be enjoyed from a huge C-shaped podium while children enjoyed playing on 'one of the largest and scariest slides' as one contributor indicated (Kitwe Past and Present (04 November 2019 [Video] Facebook).

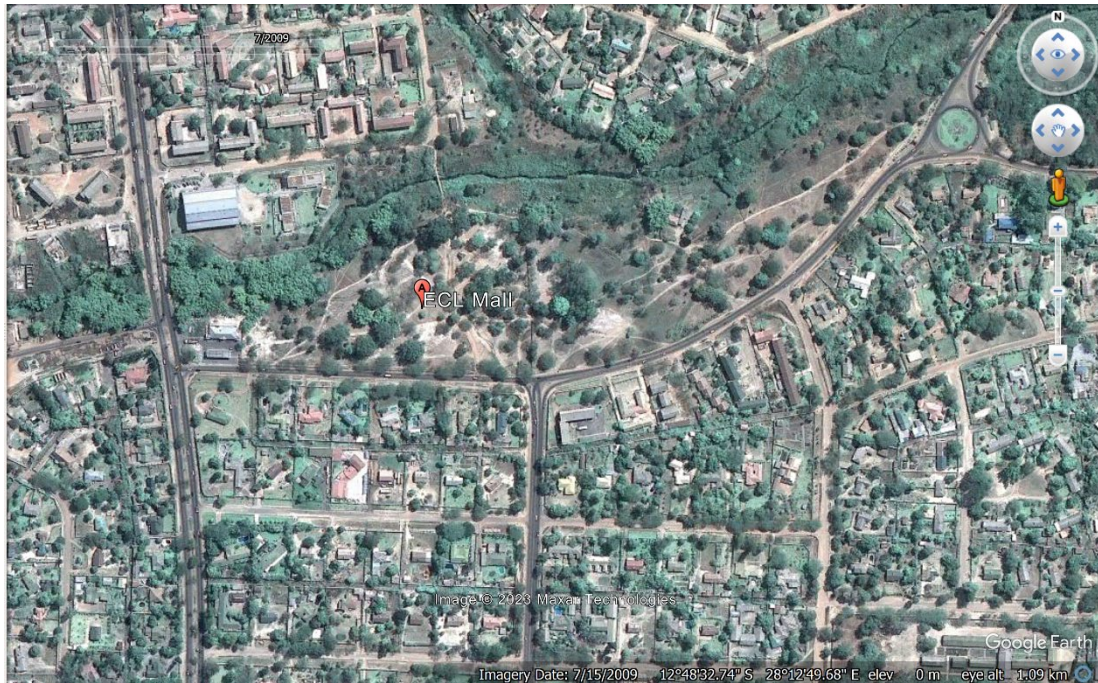


Figure 4.5. Freedom Park 2009. Source: Google earth, 2023.

#### 4.4.2.1 The Development of ECL/Ownership

Edgar Chagwa Lungu Mall (ECL) is a mall that now stands where Freedom Park stood for over seven decades (Fig 4-3 below). It is owned by the National Pension Scheme Authority of Zambia (NAPSA)<sup>8</sup>. The Authority has built malls, hotels and business Parks around the country under its subsidiary, the NAPSA Hospitality Investment Limited (NHIL). In Kitwe, NAPSA took over Freedom Park after the first development failed. An architect who worked with NAPSA indicated that the pension fund used independent realtors, Pam Golding, and through a market study, they opted to do the mall. NAPSA has invested in shopping mall, Garden Court Hotel and Office Park and conference centre at Freedom Park and also a residential complex outside Kitwe in Kalulushi. This way they are using *patient funds* to invest in real estate in response to market demands.

<sup>8</sup> NAPSA was established in 2000 by the National Pension Scheme Act no. 40 of 1996, which repealed the Zambia National Provident Fund (NAPSA, 2023). It was formed to provide income security against the risk arising from retirement, death and invalidity, ensuring that members get adequate benefits and monthly receipts of their pension (ibid.). Following the revision of its investment guideline in 2017, (by the Investment Guidelines Statutory Investments (SI) Number 19 of 2017), NAPSA is allowed to invest funds that are not immediately required for payment of benefits into its investment portfolios which consists of ten asset classes among which are infrastructure, real estate, green field investments etc...



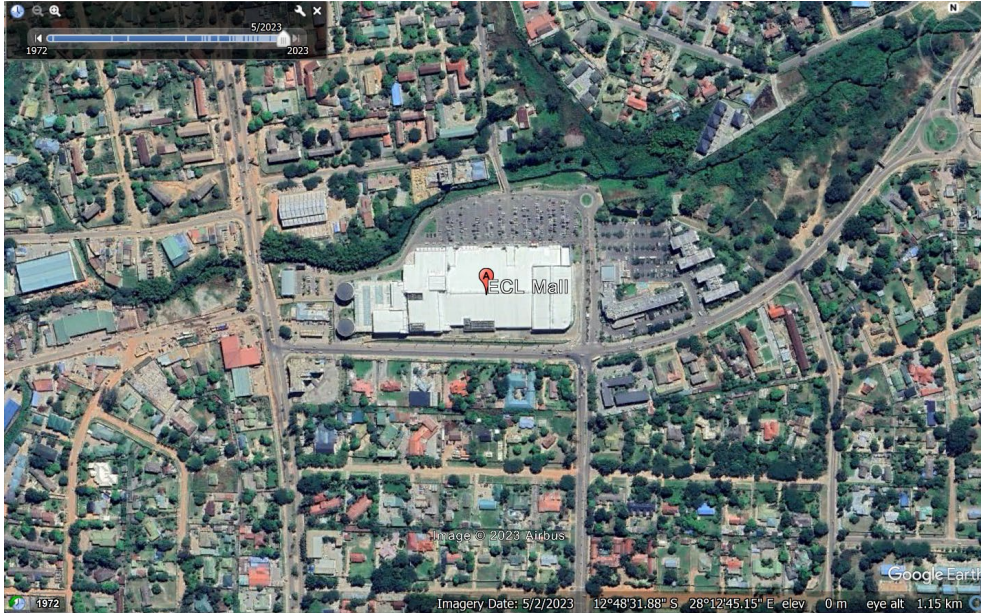


Figure 4.6. ECL mall now. Source: Google Earth 2023.

The Freedom Park mall as it was originally called was supposed to be the first mall in Kitwe in the mid-2000s. However, construction stalled as the promoters ran out of capital (Interview with Former Deputy Mayor, 23 November 2021). Therefore, it took too long to have a mall in Kitwe. The former deputy mayor stated that the initial construction of Freedom Park Mall had a restrictive clause, which restricted any mall developments within a 300-400m radius of the park (according to the former mayor). He explained how the city council found itself in a situation where the next piece of land they could build a mall was the zoo, but it was 200m away from Freedom Park and within the area covered by the restrictive clause. This legal wrangle slowed the development, while the promoters of Freedom Park mall went bankrupt and could not continue with the development. Construction stalled for more than a decade. Whatever had been built could neither be completed nor sold. Once the legal aspects of the development were sorted, Mukuba mall was built, and became the main centre of attraction and brought powerful anchor tenants, attracting even tenants from Copperhill. It was the best mall in Kitwe, and everyone rushed in and Copperhill became a ghost mall (Interview with Former Deputy Mayor, 23 November 2021). Commenting on the first development at ECL that failed, the architect who worked on ECL Mall does not know exactly where they went wrong as they could not progress much in the project. They could not complete the project in time and had to sell to NAPSA and his organisation were the construction architects and responsible for redesigning the mall into what it is today, with a hotel and office park. The architect directed that due to the time taken with the previous developer, it was important that with the new developer, the redesign was imminent because market trends had moved and/or changed as he noted that, “Quite several things had changed. So, a fresh design needed to be done and a new layout done to conform with the new trends.” (Interview with Architect, 18 May, 2021).

#### 4.4.2.2 *Impact of the malls*

The city of Kitwe has experienced rapid transformation and a replacement of its public spaces in the past decade. In-depth interviews, google forms, social media and observation all collectively and evidently support that Kitwe has experienced massive transformation and expanded rapidly in the past decade. While the google forms had a low response rate, 91.7% of the responses did indicate that Kitwe's infrastructure had changed in general while 58.3% felt that their neighbourhoods had significantly changed in the last 10 years. A further 66.7% of the respondents expressed that this was good for the city and the people.

#### 4.4.2.3 *Social impacts*

Respondents indicated that there were more options available for shopping as well as places to go with children over weekends and school holidays and the city in general was growing. Others noted that driving had become easier (with the road rehabilitation) and there was a wider range of medical facilities as well. The former pub owner provided a different insight into living within the inner radius of such a commercial entity. She states that a mall is a nice place, but it's shops, restaurants, and other activities it attracts produce a lot of noise pollution. She classified the noise as boy races, promotion activities from the shops, night noise from music in the restaurants and bars, music from activities in the car park, and fireworks associated with events like New Year's Day and other celebrations. The former pub owner also felt that accidents had become more prevalent around the Mukuba mall area, sometimes twice or three times a week before the speed humps and traffic lights were installed on Chandamali and Chiwala Avenue. There were complaints on social media of people being followed from the bank, isolated cases of break-ins into the car and valuables like stolen laptops and interactions with con-men. The Heriot Properties representative indicated that there had been isolated cases and complaints.

#### 4.4.2.4 *Economic impacts*

In Kitwe, the development of the shopping mall concept has brought some economic opportunities for some businesses and the community. A local architect expressed that for a mall to be successful, it should achieve many things in terms of design and aesthetics and, secondly, leasing and finding good tenants for the establishments (Interview with Architect). However, the challenge has been shops, especially international chains, downscaling before and during the covid-19 pandemic and the job losses associated. The Heriot Properties representative stated that malls increase neighbourhood values, attracting other developers and businesses into an area. She echoed that when you put up malls, you add value to the neighbourhood. This attracts other businesses and increases demand for land and properties resulting in people selling off to developers who convert these properties into commercial entities. Areas surrounding Mukuba and ECL have since become prime areas and lured in developers of all sorts to buy out almost all homeowners on Freedom Way and Chiwala Avenue leaving a few if any original homeowners. Interview respondents showed that the shopping malls have also increased revenues for public and private utilities and businesses for example, the city council, power companies, water utilities and waste management companies as the demand for these services increases. The increased land values also translate into increased rates, ground rent collection, trading,

and fire licences, among others. The town planner specified that the city council benefits from various taxes being charged before and after developing a parcel of land, such as the business levies and occupancy licences.

While most stakeholders indicated that the shopping mall infrastructure had not affected local businesses and markets, one respondent refutes this. For the pub owner who bought her house in 1998-1999 and is now a retired senior citizen, Mukuba mall killed her business and other small restaurants and drinking places. Due to the international chain shops brought by the mall, she lost her clientele, and business slowed and suffered losses, eventually closing down and letting go of her staff who had been with her for 15-16 years. Dirty Dickies or DD's as it was affectionately known, was a pub located across Kitwe Zoo, now Mukuba Mall.

The respondents revealed how the community and stakeholders have been viewing the job opportunities created by the urban redevelopment process. One of the city's mall centre managers indicated that the malls had created jobs and, in a way, have helped the government in its drive to create employment. Concerning the retailers like Shoprite and Pick n Pay, he believed that they have pushed the numbers up a bit. Furthermore, he believes that the Zambian people have high expectations for the malls; and expect their children to be employed in the shopping malls. Thus, the shops are employing Zambians and have contributed to employment, in their own way, and as mall management, he noted that they have created an avenue for the employment of local people (Interview with Mukuba mall centre manager

Responding to the contribution of malls to employment creation, the former deputy mayor specified that infrastructure development had created opportunities for locals through road and construction tenders as well as the supply of materials used in the roads and in turn these create employment opportunities. While there are some positive gains of malls, albeit infinitesimal to the layperson, malls have created jobs and increased revenues for the service providers. However, there are negatives as well, and from an operating point of view, it is sourcing materials for maintenance, as malls are not built from local materials; hence the replacement of products is a challenge (Interview with Heriot Properties Rep).

Another local resident felt that the construction jobs created were for a short period as construction *'happens and ends'* – meaning it has a fixed time and space and now has died down (Interview with local resident). Some people may gain experience and move to other fields, but these jobs come and go. In terms of jobs within the malls, she does not believe they are that labour-intensive to require the employment of large numbers of people; as these are shop attendants and cleaners. However, she brings out one crucial aspect, that; *'...In malls, women feel safer and happier working there than your other usual places. The jobs are the most basic, but at least at the end of the day, this is a job which wasn't there at first.'*

While this research identified a lower representation of women in infrastructure developments, she indicated that the malls are creating jobs that are female oriented and in a physical environment that is safe for them to work. However, still on employment a local architect explains that *'with the current employment deficit, I will definitely go with a plus for such developments.'* He believes that the development of malls has probably brought into the economy another 500-600 people within the city of Kitwe alone, people who would otherwise be on the streets and unemployed. Apart from direct employment, the architect argues that these developments create indirect

employment, the businesses that supply the malls, farms and other supplies. The architect also added that in terms of the quality of the jobs vis-à-vis the urban space and the infrastructure decay.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper aimed at explaining the transformation of the city of Kitwe and loss of public commons as the country redevelops and modernise its urban centres. The city of Kitwe has had challenges maintaining and rehabilitating these spaces and parks, and as long as they looked unkempt, they have attracted prying investors. Accelerated development and the demand for commercial establishments have threatened the existence of public commons. The rapid growth of urban centres indicates that such areas are experiencing increasing naturally and otherwise, and subsequent population demand is also resulting in the loss of public space. As more and more people come into urban areas to pursue socio-economic opportunities and several urgent needs in certain areas have been ignored, parks become targets as they are seen as passive open spaces that attract crime and vice and, therefore, should be developed into affluent areas.

While both shopping malls have not contributed any meaningful employment as was envisaged through the political rhetoric preceding their construction developments, they have resulted in convenient and diverse shopping for the city. The new city formations have stimulated the gentrification of the surrounding areas. Freedom Way and Chiwala Avenue Road frontage have experienced significant gentrification and land use changes that have replaced residential houses and apartments into office parks, upmarket residential apartments, offices, lodges, clinics, to mention a few. Similarly, the stretch of Kitwe Stream from the back of Freedom Park to the former Zoo were once upon a time stood residential houses and the park greenery, has been replaced by an array of new developments and land use. Many homeowners including some respondents have sold out their homes responding to the high demand for land and the increased land values.

Zambia's urbanisation phenomenon, coupled with natural population increase on the backdrop of municipality infrastructure mostly inherited from the colonial era, has city councils quite rightly trying to push in some new agendas. Available passive land will continue to be under threat for as long as local authorities do not see past the best value for money and into sentimental value for urban communities and the environment. Zambia's redevelopments are evolving and will require further understanding of this phenomenon and its impacts and the role of various actors, including mapping of the city.

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