

1925

KENYA

C.O.
35705
5 AUG 25

DATE

1st July 1925

Conf
99

P. Selham

Eastleigh Township

Refers to provision in First Supply Lists of an amount of £5050 for purchase of plant and to plan and report. Submits reasons

Previous Paper

O.A.C. 28438/25

MINUTES

It is possible that the question of the planning of this Township may be considered by Mr. Jameson in connection with his visit to the Colony. Also the O.A.C. has just ~~received~~ ^{sent home} a despatch raising the whole question of town planning in the Colony, with a view to consideration of the question of setting up machinery on modern lines.

The explanations of this purchase are satisfactory and the expenditure may now be approved. ~~which~~ ⁴ was withheld in the despatch on 2-438 pending the receipt of explanations. (We have still to get the report with regard to the Veterinary services in the Native Reserves, the other point mentioned in the despatch on that paper.)

Subsequent Paper

1046/27

11/7/25

W. S. 11.8.25

KENYA.

No 225 99,
CONFIDENTIAL.



GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
NAIROBI,
KENYA.

1st July, 1925²⁷¹

35705
5 JUL 25

Sir,

C.A.E.
78638
26

With reference to my Confidential despatch No.72 of 23rd May and the provision of an amount of £5050 for the purchase of a part of Kestleigh Township under Head XXV. Miscellaneous Services, I have the honour to transmit a plan showing the position of this Township from which the importance of its situation in relation to the future expansion of Nairobi will easily be seen.

It originally formed part of a freehold property of 2008 acres and having been converted by its owner into a residential area some years previously it was proclaimed a township in 1921, as it was found necessary in the interest of general administration to control its development: annual rates on property are levied to meet in part the cost of administration.

2. It is the case, however, that the original lay-out of this township was of a very faulty nature and when recently an opportunity occurred of acquiring a large area at a very reasonable figure, the same was taken by the trustees of the late Mr. Allister Misram, who the trustees for the purchase of a large area...

HONOURABLE

L.C.M.S. AMERY, F.C.S.,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES,
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.

of the Board of Health and the purchase was completed after consultation with Executive Council.

The total cost was £5050, of which £5,000 was paid to the National Bank of South Africa and the National Bank of India as holders of first and second mortgages for £25,000 each to which all the properties were subject: £50 represents legal expenses incurred in connection with the transfer. Against this may be set a sum of £666 owing to Government on account of the unpaid rates on the plots held in the name of the late owner.

3. For this sum Government requires 1702 plots totalling 1078 acres plus an additional 315 acres comprising roads and open spaces on the estate. Of these plots 151 are sold, 78 are subject to agreement of sale and on 61 of the latter full purchase money is due. In respect of these 229 plots Government should receive Sh.14,301 for purchase price and interest thereon. Conveyances of the plots so purchased must be issued by Government and if the money is not forthcoming the plots will be liable to surrender.

4. I am satisfied that a good return for the money now expended will accrue ^{when} ~~from~~ this area is properly laid out, roads constructed and a water supply provided. Of the 1078 acres at present divided into plots 50 will be devoted to compensating present owners of land for disturbance while 50 will be required for further roads, open spaces, etc., and there will remain for sale 948 acres valued conservatively at £5 per acre.

5. The problem of where to find suitable residential areas for the better class African and the Asiatic population of Nairobi is one which has long exercised the mind of Government /

Government. By this purchase Government has been ²⁷³ enabled to plan in adequate fashion and to provide for such residents an area considerably larger than that actually purchased. At the same time it has removed the chances of a future slum area growing up in this locality.

6. I enclose copies of a report by Dr. Carlyle Johnstone, Acting Secretary, Central Board of Health, with annexures, which will further explain the intentions of this Government.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,



ACTING GOVERNOR.

CONFIDENTIAL.

P. O. Box 205, 274

NAIROBI. 18th September, 1924.

To:-

THE HON., THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,
COLONY & PROTECTORATE OF KENYA.

Sir,

TOWNPLANNING OF EASTLEIGH.

I have the honour to forward herewith copies of a Report by the Superintendent of Suburban Areas on the re-planning of Eastleigh Township, together with a resolution of the Board on the subject.

The whole matter was considered fully at a recent meeting of the Board and I am instructed by the Board to draw the attention of Government to the present state of this township and to the urgent necessity of replanning the area.

Eastleigh is in a most insanitary condition, the majority of the buildings are in a dilapidated state, and a large number of the inhabitants have left the township.

Eastleigh is undoubtedly one of the finest available sites in the neighbourhood of Nairobi for development as a township, and if proper roads of access and a water supply were provided and the present undesirable lay-out re-planned there would appear to be no reason why development should not take place. A well laid out suburban area of this type would provide accommodation for a large number of Asiatics and the better class of African.

I am to point out that there is an excellent opportunity at the present time of acquiring a large interest in the land, namely the plots owned by the late Mr Allidina Visman, at a very reasonable figure.

(Cont. over)

The Board is convinced that the cost quoted in paragraph 12 of Mr. Ridout's Report of August 7th would be more than counterbalanced by the immense advantages accruing from the scheme, and is also of opinion that the 1425 small plots could probably be purchased at a much lower figure than that quoted.

The Board, however, has asked me to impress upon Government the absolute necessity of carrying out all negotiations in the most confidential manner and the importance of coming to a decision immediately, otherwise the opportunity is liable to lapse.

The Board is of opinion that negotiations are more likely to be successful if undertaken by an individual acting on behalf of Government and in this connection suggests that Mr. T. A. Wood be empowered to act. I am authorised to state that Mr. T. A. Wood is willing to act in this capacity.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. G. G. G.

Acting Secretary.

CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH

Copy to The Hon.,
The P. M. O.,
NAIROBI

Health Office,
P. O. Box 205,

270

To:- NAIROBI. 16th September, 1924.
The Hon., The Colonial Secretary,
NAIROBI.

Sir,

TOWNPLANNING OF EASTLEIGH

I have the honour to transmit herewith for disposal a resolution adopted by the Central Board of Health at a meeting held on the 11th of September, 1924. The Board asks that the resolution be treated as a recommendation to Government under the Provisions of Section 9 of the Public Health Ordinance 1921.

Resolution adopted by the Central Board of Health at a meeting held on the 11th of September, 1924:

"That the Board considers that the replanning of Eastleigh Township is a necessary and urgent matter and draws the attention of Government to the scheme prepared by the Superintendent of Suburban Areas. The Board further points out to Government that the present is a most opportune moment to purchase a large interest in the land on very favourable terms provided the matter is arranged in an expeditious and confidential manner."

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Acting Secretary,

CENTRAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

Copy to The Hon.,
The P. M. O.,
NAIROBI.

Encl (2)

July 25th, 1924. 277

The District Commissioner,
Nairobi.

Nestleigh Townplanning.

I have the honour to submit for consideration designs for the replanning of Nestleigh Township.

2. The necessity for a new lay out of the area has been apparent ever since the land was cut up and the plots put on the market in 1911. In fact the Public Health Ordinance of that year was a direct result of the nuisance presented by the present town plan although the ordinance, designed to regulate future schemes of subdivision, was of course too late to affect the mischief already done in respect of Nestleigh.

3. The nuisance to the health of the community in Nestleigh and the inhabitants of the capital, arising from the condition of that township, has never been lost sight of and, in 1920, the District Committee petitioned Government to take steps to safeguard the health of the district by the application of rules.

4. The fact that, in the event of the township being built over to any great extent, the danger would remain, in spite of the most stringent rules, is apparent from a study of the present township plan. The township consists of 3728 plots which vary in area from .11 of an acre upwards and, of these, over 900 plots, of the average dimensions of 50 ft. x 100 ft., have frontages only upon roads twenty feet in width.

5. When these plots are built upon to the full extent, allowed by the rules, the streets will compare with River Road, as far as the type of houses and the class and density of population

population are concerned, but with the disadvantage of a 20 ft. instead of a 60 ft. frontage street and the effect will be anything but conducive to the health of the inhabitants 278

6. In the case of the remaining plots, most of which front upon 50'.0" roads, the layout of long unvarying streets, flanked by small plots, is bad if only from an aesthetic point of view.

7. The sanitary lanes also, where they exist, are only 10'.0" in width: too narrow, as has been proved in Nairobi, to be anything more than insanitary alleys.

8. There are certain open areas provided but no provision has been made for sites for the erection of public buildings, town depots, conveniences or works of refuse disposal.

9. A better occasion than the present, for rectifying the plan of the town, has never arisen. Up to the year 1922 the township had been making some progress but, from then, it has been in a state rapid decline until the present time when, it is to be hoped, the bottom stage of depression has been reached. Within the past eighteen months the total assessed value of plots and houses has fallen from £ 160,645 to £ 92,438 and plots put on the market recently have failed to realize more than about 75% of their present assessed value.

10. No less than 26 buildings have been demolished by their owners during the past 12 months, rather than allow them to remain vacant and, in a great many cases, where plot-holders have not completed the purchase of their holdings, they have abandoned the plots and forfeited the instalments paid to the vendor.

11. The extraordinary number of cases in which plots have been abandoned after being partly paid for may be gauged by the areas coloured pink on the map which represent the plots held by the executors of the late Mr. Allidina Vieras whereas at the beginning of 1924 his agents reported that not more than 750 remained vacant.

12. Mr. Viaram's estate is now in the hands of the receiver in bankruptcy and the sum of £763 is due to Government in respect of the plots held in his name. It is evident therefore that government is in a most favourable position to negotiate the acquisition of any of his land required in the process of replanning the township.

13. In any case it is a great deal easier and less expensive now to alter the town plan, which to a certain extent exists only on paper, than to be compelled to perform surgical operations upon fully developed streets and buildings in the course of a few years.

14. The small print illustrates the position of Eastleigh in relation to the Capital. It is evident that if attractively replanned and provided with the essential amenities the township would provide accommodation for a great number of middle and better class Africans and eliminate the necessity of cutting up the open areas between the Ngara and forest lands in Nairobi which, in my opinion, is far more essential to retain as "lung" to Nairobi than to be sold in small lots for residential purposes.

15. In Eastleigh too should be found very suitable accommodation for the housing of African clerks: the distance from the centre of the town being little more than the site of Pangani Village.

16. In my suggested plan of the township I have endeavoured to illustrate a scheme approaching the requirements of an attractive and healthy area.

17. The arterial roads entering the township should be laid out to a width of 100 feet.

18. As shown on the plan these 100 ft. roads will interfere with no existing buildings. The road commencing at the Nairobi boundary, opposite plot 194, continuing around over the sites of the present reserves of First and Seventeenth Streets and back to the Nairobi boundary at the Race Course,

19. The J shaped road shown to run from North to South is intended to connect with main Fort Hill Road, to the East of Mathari Asylum, for the use of traffic travelling from the Kyambu District to Nairobi Station, K.A.R. lines and Mbagathi. This road would in fact be a bypass relieving the Residential and Commercial Areas of Nairobi of some of the unnecessary heavy traffic.

20. It may be pointed out that, whereas there are three main inlets shown on the Nairobi side only one outlet is provided at the Eastern end of the town. I have purposely avoided main outlets south of the Juja Road inasmuch as the farms lying to the S.E. of the town will be adequately served with roads along the Nairobi River.

21. The M. 22. road between Heronscath Street and Pwani is merely an extension of one of the existing roads in that area.

22. The expenditure upon roads in the township during the past three years has not exceeded £2100. Their total abandonment therefore would not be, comparatively speaking, a great loss but no doubt some portions of them could be made use of in the subdivisions.

23. I have shown two belts of trees to be planted as a means of diminishing the dust nuisance. I suggested a similar method for dealing with dust to the Nairobi Municipality in 1918, proposing a belt of thickly planted and high growing trees along their Eastern boundary. While the proposal was favourably received it was considered at that time to be too late to adopt it.

It is easy to see that a very great proportion of the dust in this town is not created in the streets but blows in from the plains and no strictly local treatment by watering or oiling the roads will prevent it.

The belts of suitable trees arranged on the alignments shown on the plan, I am convinced, would have some good effect.

24. The South Eastern corner of the township would

make a suitable addition to the existing native location of Puzos and, immediately East of this, is a good site for a Township Depot, Incinerators etc.

23. The market gardens along the left bank of the ²⁸¹Maireh River will no doubt be extended and continue to serve their present purpose for many years to come.

24. The whole plan being merely a preliminary design I have not shown the whole of the areas, formed between the 100 ft. roads, subdivided in detail but, in three of the blocks, I have shown types of subdivisional schemes, the two central blocks laid out as small residential and business plots and the triangular block on the N.E. in larger residential plots of $\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 acres.

25. It will probably be desirable to limit the smaller plots to the areas lying between the Maireh boundary and the bypass road and reserve the areas East of that road for larger residential plots. That of course is a matter of detail to be dealt with when the main principles of the scheme have been approved.

26. In the central blocks the small plots are intended to be laid out with minimum dimensions of 60ft. frontages x 120 ft. depth - large enough for the small man of limited means. As under the township rules not more than half the area of a plot may be built over congestion will be avoided. Shop plots as are necessary will be confined to plots fronting upon the 100 ft. roads and the residential plots will front upon 50ft. streets while each plot is shown to be served by a 30ft. sanitary lane.

27. Instead of grouping all the open areas in one or two large recreation grounds, which would probably be used only on public holidays, I propose that the open spaces should be distributed among the various blocks i.e. in the most convenient position for children and others likely to make use of them.

For instance an open area such as the Jeevanjee Garden is of far more value as a city lung than a green space

times its area in the City Park and open areas among small plots will attract many more children off the streets than large gardens or parks situated a quarter of a mile away. 282

30. The areas coloured green on the plan, where not required for public buildings, are intended to be laid out as gardens, motor stands etc. with portions, well set back from the main roads, fenced off as playgrounds.

31. The small islands surrounded by 50ft. roads would look well laid out on the lines of the garden plot cultivated by Messrs. Whiteaway Laidlaw & Co. in VI Avenue.

32. The other island areas coloured blue, having access only from sanitary lanes, would serve for town depots, public conveniences, electric transformer-stations etc. provision for which, screened from the main streets, is sadly lacking in many towns. These plots being unsuitable for residential buildings might even be let out as allotment gardens.

33. In the triangular subdivisional scheme for larger residential plots no provision is made for sanitary lanes.

Experience in Nairobi has taught me that sanitary lanes in the better class quarters of the town are not worth the waste of the land they take up. They entail an unnecessary expense in upkeep and in almost every case they are used only for the dumping of garden refuse.

34. My suggestions for the lay out of the roads are illustrated on plan "D". In section the 100ft. roads would have two carriage ways of 20 feet each divided by an area 20 feet in width along the middle of the road reserve. This central strip, to be used for tree planting etc. would be intersected at convenient points for vehicles to cross from one side to the other and be well set back from main road junctions. In the first instance of course and until circumstances permit one track only would be constructed.

35. Where business plots abut upon these roads I think plot owners should be encouraged to construct colonnades and extend the first floor of their buildings over the footwalk

on the lines of "Ikea Buildings" and Messrs. Jacobs & Co's premises in Government Road and the Theatre Royal in Sixth Avenue. A street of such buildings would be far more pleasing than the ranges of business premises in Government Road the facades of which, in the majority of cases, are disfigured with the typical verandah.

36. The planting of trees in the middle of the road has a better effect in the case where buildings are erected close to the road and where the trees, if planted on the roadside, either become a source of annoyance to the property owner or are sadly disfigured.

37. Ample margins remain for road widening, drains, and electric light poles although the last named should, as far as possible, be confined to the sanitary lanes until the time for underground conduits arrives.

38. In the case of the 50 ft. road reserve, serving only the residential plots, I propose a single 20ft. drive, in these roads the same objection to the trees on either side does not arise inasmuch as the houses may be set back from the road.

39. I have no doubt that it is possible to suggest many improvements upon my scheme of replanning and I trust that, if not adopted as it stands, it will at least give rise to some constructive criticisms as a result of which Eastleigh will be converted into something of the nature of a model township instead of the disgraceful locality it bids fair to become if the present opportunity is not seized to rectify past errors.

W. J. ...

Superintendent,
Suburban Areas.

7th. August, 1964

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encl(3)

The Most Senior Commissioner,
Thru' The District Commissioner,
Nairobi.

KASTIJILO TUMBE, MURURU.

With further reference to the above town planning scheme, submitted with my No. 1120/S 16 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to put forward the following details as regards costs.

2. Apart from 33 Mamba plots of 1/4 to 5 acres each, abutting upon the two rivers, there are 3334 plots in sections 1, 2 & 3 of the township; nearly all of an area of about 2/3 of an acre.

Of these 1425 are registered in the name of A. Allidina Nivram and the remaining 1907 small plots have been sold to various small owners.

3. As a preliminary measure it will be necessary to acquire Nivram's 1425 plots.

If the purchase price is fixed on my assessment for the current year they would cost K.12400/- but I have reason to believe that the National Bank of Kenya Ltd, to whom they are mortgaged, would be prepared to accept a far smaller sum - probably about K.6000/-

4. In Ngerton estate plots 63 to 66, 68 to 71 and 73 - 74 will be required for subdividing into small plots, assuming that the smallest sized plots are located, as I think they should be, on the east side of the town.

5. The owners of the above Ngerton plots might be compensated by the allotment of small plots of equal value (approximately 50 plots of about 1/8 of an acre each) and I would suggest exchanging the 1907

plots owned by the small holders for plots of equal area in the rearranged plan. 285

6. The southernmost plots in the Ngerton estate i.e. plots 67, 71-72 and 75 to 100 would form a useful extension to Ruwani and, if reserved for this purpose, the cost of their acquisition would probably be borne by the Nairobi Corporation.

7. The foregoing arrangements dispose of 2757 small plots of about 60' x 120' each in the New plan - a number far in excess of what will be required for many years to come particularly, as I would now suggest, that the small plots as a general rule need not exceed 45'0" x 20'0".

8. These 2757 small plots could be arranged within the areas numbered 2,3,4,5,6, and 7 i.e. all on west or Nairobi side of the "bypass" road with the exception of area No.7.

9. No portion of the present sections of the township need be acquired but, when laid out as a better class residential area on the lines of area 10, the road area will exceed that of the present lay out by approximately 30 acres. Compensation for this and the additional open space may be given from the remaining portion of sections 1,2, and 3 situated East of the "bypass" road.

10. The next result of this replanning would be that Government would be in possession of approximately 60 acres in Sections 1,2 & 3 (i.e. East of the bypass road and a portion of area 9) as well as the land required for open area tree planting, public buildings and the lay out of roads upon an improved plan.

11. The replanning of the township could not affect the liability of Government as regards the provision of a water supply. Whether these planning proposals are carried out or not I think it is recognised that it is incumbent upon Government to provide the capital cost of the service when the Nairobi Corporation is in the position to extend its mains to the township.

The present position as regards the Corporation is that steps are being taken to ensure a constant instead of an intermittent supply to its consumers, including the inhabitants of Fawcett.

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It is expected that the work of providing additional storage accommodation and the extension of a 9" main in Whitehouse Road will be got in hand within the next twelve months and from this main it is intended to furnish Fawcett with an ample supply both for household and sanitary purposes.

When this is accomplished it will be possible to extend the benefit to Hestleigh.

12. The cost of the replanning scheme would therefore work out as follows:-

Purchase of 1625 plots	4,8000
or 2.5 acres of building land @ 2.9 per acre	480

5280

13. I have not included the cost of road making as this will proceed as the areas develop and, if the present policy is pursued, will be met by the rates now levied.

14. The existing buildings in the township will prove no obstacle to the plan and no expense in removing and rebuilding need be incurred.

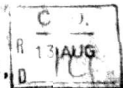
A great many of the structures can of course be fitted into the subdivisions and, where buildings disagree with projected layout, they are of such nature that in the ordinary course of events will be demolished voluntarily in the course of a very few years.

Sd/ W. H. H. H. H.

Superintendent,
Suburban Areas.

Enclosures of

Sec
35705/1925 Kenya



Downing Street,

15 August, 1925

Sir,

I have, etc., to ack.

the receipt of your Confidential
despatch No. 99 of the 1st July,

and to inform you that I approve
Supplemental

of the provision of ~~25,050~~ *for the*
under head 25 of the Estimates ~~for the~~
purchase of part of the *land* ~~East~~

Township under Head 25 Miscellaneous

~~Services of the Estimates.~~

I have, etc

RAFT.

YA

Conf (3)

M.S.