

Surveying and Land Administration Complexities in High Rise, Mixed-Use Sectional Titles Schemes - Lessons from The Pearls of Umhlanga

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Key words: Bridge surveying; Cadastre; Positioning; Professional practice; Real estate development; Standards; Sectional Titles

SUMMARY

The growing popularity of high-density, mixed-use developments in urban coastal environments has brought renewed attention to the intricacies of Sectional Titles Schemes. In South Africa, where land tenure and cadastral systems must accommodate increasingly complex forms of property ownership, the Surveyor's role in ensuring spatial clarity is critical. This paper examines the Pearls of Umhlanga, a flagship luxury sectional title scheme in KwaZulu-Natal, as a case study to explore the practical challenges and legal ambiguities that arise in the surveying and land administration of such developments.

Through detailed analysis of the scheme's sectional plans, exclusive use areas, and cadastral integration, the paper highlights systemic issues in interpreting and registering real property rights in vertical, mixed-use contexts. Key themes include the demarcation of common property versus private sections, the legal and spatial implications of exclusive use allocations, and the limits of current legislation namely, the Sectional Titles Act (Act No. 95 of 1986) and the Sectional Titles Schemes Management Act (Act No. 8 of 2011) in addressing evolving urban realities.

The authors, both practicing professionals in land administration and surveying propose practical recommendations for improving spatial justice, administrative transparency, and the quality of sectional plan preparation. The case study reveals how surveyors are uniquely positioned to bridge technical precision and legal clarity, especially in urban environments where land value, tenure complexity, and governance tensions intersect. This paper aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 8 and 9, being Decent Work and Economic Growth as well as Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.

By drawing on real-world data and spatial documentation, this paper contributes to ongoing

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discourse on modernizing land administration frameworks in support of inclusive, resilient, and efficiently governed cities—an objective that aligns closely with the core aims of FIG 2026.

Suggested FIG Themes this paper aligns with are as listed below:

- o Commission 1: Professional Standards and Practice
- o Commission 7: Cadastre and Land Management
- o Commission 10: Construction, Economics and Management

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