

**Report: 10 Jan 2011 - G. Stacey for R. Viney.**  
**Phase I of the Robben Island Regeneration Project.**

**10 Jan 2011 Meeting** with:

Richard Naidoo from INDAWO painting and waterproofing.

Howard Smith, Architect.

Mr De Williers from INGOZI construction.

Mr Paul Lubbe, Health and Safety officer for RIM.

Mr Sabelo, environmental officer for RIM.

**Proposed work on House #39 Church st, #35, #36, #37 Church st, as well as house #40, the old rectory, the Garrison Church, and house #49 in phase I of the Robben Island Village Regeneration Project.**

**Order of Work**

House 39 is to be worked on first of all the houses, followed by houses 35, 36, and 37. The Garrison Church and House 40, the old Parsonage, are to be worked on last, as a permit is needed for the renovation of these buildings. Maintenance needs to be done on the gardens of the above buildings, which is the responsibility of RIM's maintenance crew. INDAWO painting and waterproofing will not be working on the gardens.

**To consider during phase I:**

- The budget given to RIM for phase I.
- Environmental conservation during renovations and the preservation of the surrounding area.
- As little damage as possible to the buildings and walls of the renovated buildings.
- High pressure hosing should not be used on areas with damp damage to plastering. Instead, light brushing should be done.
- Bear in mind the different specs used on different walls and materials.
- The area must be kept tidy after renovations have been completed.
- The labourers must always be vigilant about safety and wear the proper safety gear for the job.
- In case of minor injury to a worker, there will be a first aid kit available.
- In case of major injury, a worker will be taken to the medi-clinic centre on the main road of the island.
- An injured worker may have to be sent back to the mainland and will not be paid for the work they have done.
- There are two different groups of workers on the island for phase I and II of this project.
- Workers must be aware of the potential hazard of asbestos on roofing, gutters, and water tanks.
- Workers must be aware that tourist buses drive by regularly and that they must work quickly and efficiently.
- No shortcuts are to be taken by any contractors or workers.

A Ms Gillian Castle compiled a photo album of Robben island in 1983, which included photos of the Garrison Church, House number 39, and the old parsonage.

**House 40 Church Street, The old Parsonage.**

The old parsonage has a monotone asbestos roof in the 1983 photographs by Ms Castle, rather than a two-tone red and white roof as it does today. The IBR sheeting on the parapet had already replaced the original roof in 1983. There is a steel window frame visible on the left of the front door of the parsonage, which has been bricked up since 1983. There is a balcony railing present in 1983, which is no longer there today. House 40 has Metal window frames which are beginning to rust, and should be

replaced or repaired. There is an electricity box present on the right side of the front door, which shows that electricity was not available at the time of building the house. There are built-in cupboards in the bedrooms and kitchen of house 40, which do not need repairing or removing. There appear to be four different blocked up fireplaces, one in each room in the passageway, which were probably there when the house was first built, and blocked up when the original parapet was replaced. The chimneys no longer exist on the roof from the view from the church steeple. For this reason, it would be pointless to restore the fireplaces, even though they are historically significant. It would also be very difficult to find out exactly what the original fireplaces looked like.

### **House 39 Church Street.**

House 39 has a tin or IBR sheeting roof in the 1983 photos of the church. Today it has metal window frames, some of which are beginning to rust, and asbestos roof sheeting, gutters, down pipes and water tanks. The boundary wall is made of stone and lime mortar. It was built c. 1973-1983. Today, House 39 has mould on its asbestos roof and water tanks. A number of the window frames have rusted with age, and must be sealed with a rust prevention sealant. The boundary walls have peeling paint, probably limewashed, and show signs of moulding and peeling. They are probably contemporary with the Garrison Church and parsonage boundary, and should be treated with the same care as the Garrison Church. It is suggested that they be limewashed again. The bricks that were made on the island are beginning to decay, and should be replaced with a similar modern alternative. RIM should also remove the braai place from the rear of house 39, as it encroches on the historical wall of the churchyard.

### **Houses 35, 36, 37.**

These houses have identical floor plans and were built at the same time, thus the treatment done on them should be identical to one another, except for the boundary walls. Each house can be characterised by its boundary walls, each slightly different from the next, and quite ornate and decorative. These walls are not to be cleaned, at this might damage or change them, and these walls have both historic and aesthetic significance.

### **House #49 Church Street**

was probably built around WWII. There is a low vibracrete boundary wall surrounding the street-facing facade of the house, which should be left as is. The two outbuildings were probably built during the 1980s as servants' quarters or wash rooms. The stairs leading from the back door are detaching from the house, as they do not have the same foundations as the main house. they should be re-attached and repaired to look the same as they did when the house was first built. The screen door of the back door is in a state of disrepair, and should be fixed, by taking the wooden frame off the door, revarnishing it, and refitting the wire mesh.

### **The Garrison Church**

was refurbished in 2004, by fixing and cleaning the bell and clock, replacing window frames, replastering damaged walls, and cleaning the exterior and interior walls. A Mr ..., retired clockmaker, was responsible for repairing the bell in 2004, and can be contacted on ... . As the window frames were replaced in 2004, they do not need to be repaired, replaced, or redecorated during this project. Limewash from the lime quarry was used to limewash the church in the past, but as the quarry is a protected heritage site today, one will have to find a modern alternative to the original limewash.

In 1983, there are some notable differences to the exterior appearance of the church compared to the way it looks today, in 2011. There was a lantern hanging above the main door of the church in 1983, which is now no longer there. There was one cannon on a stand on the right of the main door. Today,

there are two cannons, one on either side of the door, neither of which are on cannon stands. There is an old cannon stand behind house #39 which may be the cannon stand pictured in the 1983 photographs. There are no steel cables holding the flagpole secure in 1983, as there are today. They were probably erected in the 2004 renovations to ensure the security of the flagpole in high winds.

There are two fire extinguishers located in the church, one in the vestry, and one under the stairs leading to the gallery. These may or may not be in working order. The maintenance of these extinguishers is the responsibility of either RIM's Maintenance crew or the Department of Public Works.

There is rabbit and tortoise activity in the churchyard of the Garrison Church. Preventative measures might have to be taken to ensure that they do not cause damage to this historical buildings.

The renovations in 2004, while beneficial to the church, were not done properly in all areas. They used the wrong mix of plaster to replaster the exterior of the church, and it is for this reason that there is so much damp damage and plaster peeling on these walls today. In the 2004 renovations, the South-side doors of the vestry were re-varnished, and one was replaced.

There are not enough funds on this project for complete stripping and re-plastering of the church. The perimeter wall should not be re-plastered, but should be cleaned and limewashed. It may be possible to re-mount one cannon on its stand, but if not, both cannons should be put into SAHRA's objects bank.

To the west of the church, in the churchyard are 8 Graves. Five of these appear to be children's graves, and two of these children's graves' engravings have worn away, and are no longer legible. From left to right, the graves are marked as follows:

1. John Baslin, Son of Mr Jno Strike. Died March 1, 1848.
2. Child's grave, worn markings.
3. Child's grave, worn markings.
4. Mary Jane Murray. Died 13 April 1859, aged 1yr, 8mo, 4d.
5. Rev. John Taylor, Moravian Missionary. Born Sept 17, 1825. Died May 27, 1866
6. Rev. Joseph Lehmann, Moravian Missionary. Born June 21, 1795. Died Aug 20, 1855.
7. Wm [*William*] Edmunds M.R.C.S. [*Member of the Royal College of Surgeons*] Surgeon Superintendent from 1862-1872. Died 8 June 1872. Aged 43.
8. Mason Joseph Flack. Died 8 June 1972, aged 5yrs 9mo.