

HERITAGE REPORT FOR RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS; ROBBEN ISLAND – VILLAGE REGENERATION PROJECT - CHURCH STREET.

INTRODUCTION

A site visit was undertaken on 7 January 2011 with Ron Viney and Richard Whiting in attendance. The intention was to take photographs in preparation for drafting heritage statements for the permit application to SAHRA for the work that needs to be done.

The RIM specifications and tender notices, as well as the scope of work presented by the contractors, Indawo Painting and Waterproofing were also perused. The repairs and renovation project will be funded by RIM . Work is to be carried out on the Garrison Church, the Anglican Rectory [house number 40], houses 35, 36, 37, 39 and 49.

A number of issues around the treatment of historical fabric and its layering are not addressed by these documents. A number of discrepancies exist between the Indawo document of 26 November 2010 and the original RIM specs issued on 22 November 2010, especially related to the church.

The principle of “do only as much as necessary and as little as possible” must be adhered to.

This report and any recommendation is a provided to facilitate the project meeting scheduled for 10 January 2011. The short time within which this had to be produced has not allowed a thorough investigation on the possible impact of any work to be carried out, nor prepare best practice heritage statements.

A permit per building is required from SAHRA for all work that needs to be carried out.

VILLAGE PRECINCT SITE LAYOUT

House number 39 is situated in the perimeter of the Rectory between the rectory and the church. House number 49 is to the NE diagonally opposite the church next to the post office.

Houses 35 to 37 are situated to the south of the church on the same side of Church Street as the church. Between house 37 and the church is a small stone house not part of this project. Between the church and this small stone house is the old library also not part of this project.

GARRISON CHURCH

The church was constructed under the auspices of Capt. Wolfe ca 1841 as the Anglican Church. By 1993 it had become interdenominational. The church is small scale, faces east, has a square tower facing Church Street with the apse at the western end. The walls are buttressed with crenellated parapets.

The church was restored in 2004. More research is required to determine best practice for repairs and renovations.

INTERIOR

Water damage is evident on the inside north facing wall. This is as a result of the gutter on the outside of the north face being blocked. Rising damp can be seen in the entrance and has caused considerable damage to the interior paint and plaster. The plaster and paint on the NE corner may also be responsible for the interior damage because this has peeled away.

EXTERIOR

Plaster and paint has peeled in certain areas because of poor preparation and mixing of the plaster during the 2004 restoration. Moss has started growing on the turrets and crenellations. The gardens are in need of attention. Plants are growing in certain areas. The roofing material is corrugated iron and bitumen sealant. Gutters are an integral part of the parapet. Down pipes are sheet metal.

PERIMETER WALL

The perimeter wall appears to be the part of the original of 1858 on the north, east and south faces. More research is required on the materials. It is not clear at this time if the plaster of the wall was replaced with the 2004 restoration. A small section of the coping of the northern section is in need of repair but appears to be stable.

The water tank is asbestos on a painted face brick structure. A number of the bricks are rapidly deteriorating.

GRAVES

A number of graves are situated close to the western perimeter wall.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Under no circumstances should high pressure water jets be used on any walls or structures. A soft brush and bucket works best. Clean water [not sea water] must be used.
2. The church should be the last to be looked at and must not be worked on until SAHRA has issued a permit for the work.
3. Research is required on the plaster areas as it is not certain how much was removed during the 2004 restoration.
4. The paint layer needs to be researched. In certain areas the coating still appears to be lime wash.
5. The tin roofs and down pipes need to be left alone as far as possible as they appear to be in good condition. The bitumen roof seal requires a coat of silver roof paint.
6. The gutter on the northern face needs to be unclogged of debris.
7. Care needs to be taken with protecting the graves while work is being undertaken.
8. Plants and garden elements must not be disturbed.
9. Fungal wash may contaminate the environment if not applied properly. The fungal wash must also ensure that the moss on the parapet does not return.
10. All woodwork must be left alone.
11. The forged iron canons at the entrance must be properly assessed before they are worked on.
12. The bell metal work must be left alone until such time as a proper assessment can be made of the best means to deal with it.
13. The flagpole is wood and is in a reasonable condition. It should be left as is.
14. Under no circumstances should any work be done with a 3:1 cement:sand ratio plaster mix. The specifications set out by SAHRA of 6 parts sand, one part lime and one part Portland cement should be used.

15. Latex must not be used in any mixtures.
16. Inappropriate paints cause damage to the plaster and the brick work. Lime wash must be used in certain circumstances.
17. Under no circumstances should polyurethane sealant be used on any cracks between windows, doors and their walls, unless & until confirmed.
18. No wood stopper must ever be used without taking cognizance of the type of wood.

HOUSE NUMBER 40 CHURCH STREET; ORIGINALLY GARRISON CHURCH RECTORY

The original structure is contemporaneous with the church viz. ca 1841. It has however undergone some changes over time and each historical layer needs to be dealt with appropriately.

EXTERIOR

The roof is corrugated iron and in reasonable condition. The roof height was raised at some time after its original construction as the present roof line is above the 1841 parapet. The Victorian corrugated iron verandah was replaced by asbestos. The verandah asbestos is painted in stripes of red and white. Moss has not penetrated or grown on the red sections but has proliferated on the white sections.

The walls need more research on the type of plaster and paint used.

Later additions to the western façade require different specs to the original structure.

The entrance door appears to be late Victorian with the familiar cross and open book motif. The bottom [bible] panels have been filled inappropriately with polyfilla, which is now flaking.

INTERIOR

The interior shows elements of late Victorian changes. There is rising damp in certain areas. This may be as a result of the impervious exterior. Fungus and damp is present but would be alleviated if the building was used and aired regularly.

PERIMETER WALL

The perimeter wall appears to be the part of the original of 1858 on the north, east and south faces. More research is required on the materials used.

The NW corner of the perimeter wall was replaced by a building with face brick during the 1940's. The bricks are painted and the building style is English/ Flemish bond. The paint is in good condition and should not be disturbed other than by soft washing. The SW corner has asbestos sheeting as the perimeter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The structures must be treated in a similar manner to the Church while bearing in mind the historical fabric and its layering of different materials.

HOUSE NUMBER 39

The house was built at a much later date inside the perimeter wall of the rectory. At best estimation it was constructed between ca 1972 and ca. 1994.

RECOMMENDATIONS

More modern materials of this era would be more appropriately dealt with by modern methods, but conservation best practice must still be observed. Such best practice would need to follow a similar route to that of the church viz. no high pressure water jet cleaning.

HOUSE NUMBER 49

The house was built during the Second World War along with the post office.

EXTERIOR

The roof consists of asbestos. Gutters and down pipes are polyurethane. The house shows the frugality of the exigencies of war. Simple and unadorned. There are outbuildings from a later date with a braai. An asbestos water tank is on the eastern side.

The steel window frames on the western [front] façade are in need of attention. The putty on the lower edges of each pane has weathered out and needs to be replaced.

INTERIOR

Severe water damage is visible to the ceilings and sections of the walls. It must be assumed that the roof is leaking and the leak must be repaired.

PERIMETER WALL

The wall is vibracrete. One top panel on the SW corner is damaged and no longer in place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

More appropriate methods similar to that of the church need to be followed when repairing the structures.

HOUSE NUMBER 35

The house was built between 1939 and 1948.

EXTERIOR

The roof is asbestos, as are the gutters and down pipes. Steel was no longer available because of the war and the use of asbestos is a historical architectural indicator.

The gutters and down pipes are asbestos but some sections are missing. Cleaning the remaining sections would be counterproductive if the missing sections are not replaced with matching fibre cement elements.

Window frames are wood with two sets of steel frames after the small verandah's were enclosed presumably during the prison period after 1962.

INTERIOR

Significant water damage can be seen on the ceilings and walls. The indications from the residents are that the roof leaks. This must be repaired.

PERIMETER WALL

The perimeter wall on the east is plastered and painted with inset diamond patterns. On the west it consists of asbestos sheeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Should be treated in a manner consistent with the materials used during WWII and the general manner in which the church is treated.

HOUSE NUMBER 36

The house is contemporaneous with house 35 and 37.

EXTERIOR

Similar features as house 35 but has landscaped features in the back yard that may be significant. Sections of guttering and down pipes are missing

INTERIOR

Significant water damage to the ceilings and walls has occurred. The cause again is a leaking roof according to the residents. This must be repaired.

PERIMETER WALL

Consists of Malmesbury shales cladding with piping, more than likely from the Blue Stone quarry and built by prisoner as also seen at the Maximum Security Prison.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Should be treated in a manner consistent with the materials used during WWII and the general manner in which the church is treated.

Under no circumstances should the stone facing be washed or in any other way be disturbed on the perimeter wall. The stone will have a protective patina that has developed over time. Removal of this patina may be counterproductive in the long term.

The piping on the perimeter wall needs to be closely inspected and areas repaired where it has peeled with the same ratio of 6:1:1 provided for the church.

HOUSE NUMBER 37

The house is contemporaneous with house 35 and 36.

EXTERIOR

Similar features as house 35 but has landscaped features in the back yard that may be significant. Sections of guttering and down pipes are missing

INTERIOR

Significant water damage to the ceilings and walls has occurred. The cause again is a leaking roof according to the residents. This must be repaired.

PERIMETER WALL

Consists of Malmesbury shales, with inlaid checkered beach pebbles, cladding with piping, more than likely from the Blue Stone quarry and built by prisoners, as also seen at the Maximum Security Prison.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Should be treated in a manner consistent with the materials used during WWII and the general manner in which the church is treated.

Under no circumstances should the stone facing be washed or in any other way be disturbed on the perimeter wall. The stone will have a protective patina that has developed over time. Removal of this patina may be counterproductive in the long term.

The piping on the perimeter wall needs to be closely inspected and areas repaired where it has peeled with the same ratio of 6:1:1 provided for the church.

2011-01-10