

MNI

ARCHITECTS & PROJECT MANAGERS

Est. 1964

YOUR REF.: WCS: 045965
OUR REF.: 2023-Architectural Report-
Newcastle Justice Complex

SPARKS ROAD, SWINBURNE
752, HARRISMITH 9880
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
058-672 1070 / 087-150 7087
086-545 6646

Offices in:

Harrismith
PO Box 752
Harrismith 9880
058-672 1070

Vryheid
PO Box 1703
Vryheid 3100
034-983 2932

Cape Town
PO Box 46184
Durbanville 7551
082-829 9332

Associated Office:

Windhoek
PO Box 5043
Windhoek
Namibia

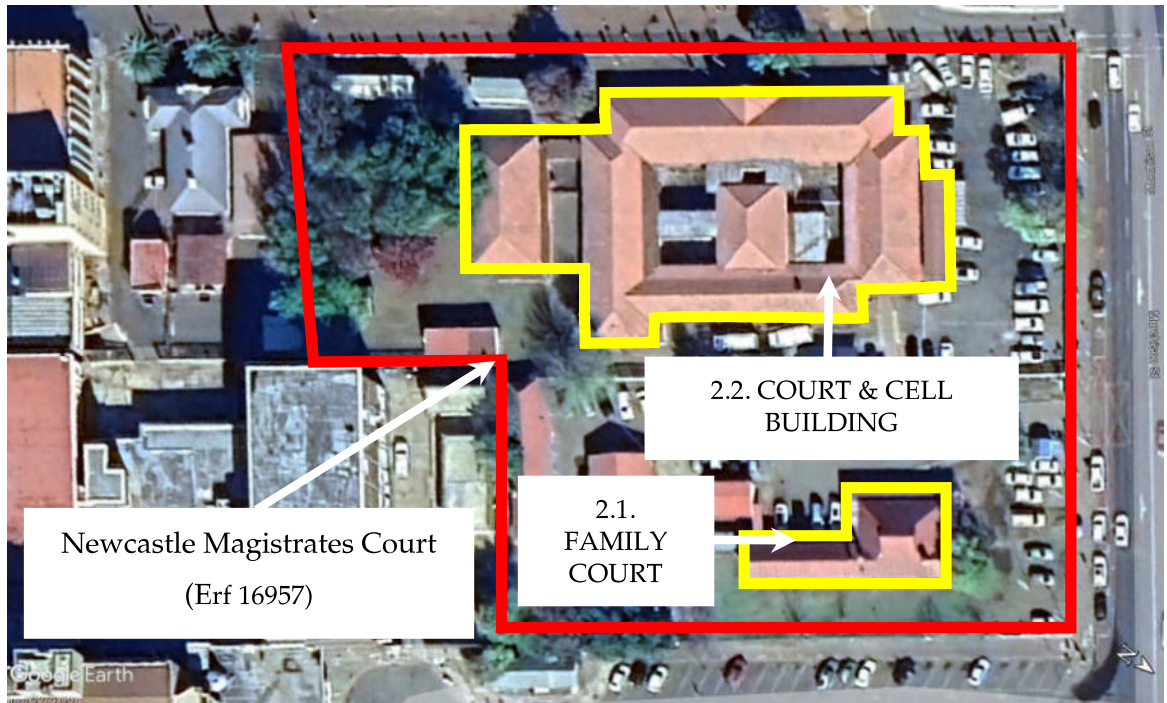
4 August, 2023

WCS: 045965: NEWCASTLE JUSTICE: HERITAGE BUILDINGS: ARCHITECTURAL REPORT

Supervising Heritage Architect: Christopher Sparks – SACAP Reg. : 4661

1 EXISTING SITE:

The site is known as the Newcastle Magistrates Court and is located on Erf 16957 (33 and 35 Murchison Street) in Newcastle, on the corner of Murchison and Voortrekker Street.



The property, Erf 16957 was consolidated on 2015/09/29, made up of:

- Erf 434,
- Ptn 6 of Erf 435 and
- Erf 437.

There are two buildings of Historic Significance, as depicted above, namely:

- 1) The Family Court building.
- 2) The Court building. This includes a Cell building within its footprint which is of no Historic Significance. For the purpose of this report we refer to the two separately identifiable buildings as the “Court & Cell Building”.

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2 OBSERVATIONS.

2.1 FAMILY COURT BUILDING.

2.1.1 CONDITION

2.1.1.1 INTERNAL.

1. The fire places along with the mantelpieces have been removed.
2. A new wall and door has been installed into the current Magistrates office.
3. The safe has been damaged and there was a new door added on the outside office. Some of the doors have retained the original ironmongery and we want to use this to match new door handles and locks.
4. Some parts of the skirting have been removed to fit electrical cables or power skirting.
5. Some of the ceiling panels will need replacement due to visible water damage.
6. Some door thresholds will need replacing as the timber is badly damaged.

All other elements such as the Oregon Pine Floors; the ceilings; the skirting to some extent and the doors are in a fairly good condition and will not need to be replaced; but will be cleaned and painted as described in the architectural specification for the restoration work.



Damaged skirting)

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(Fire Place)

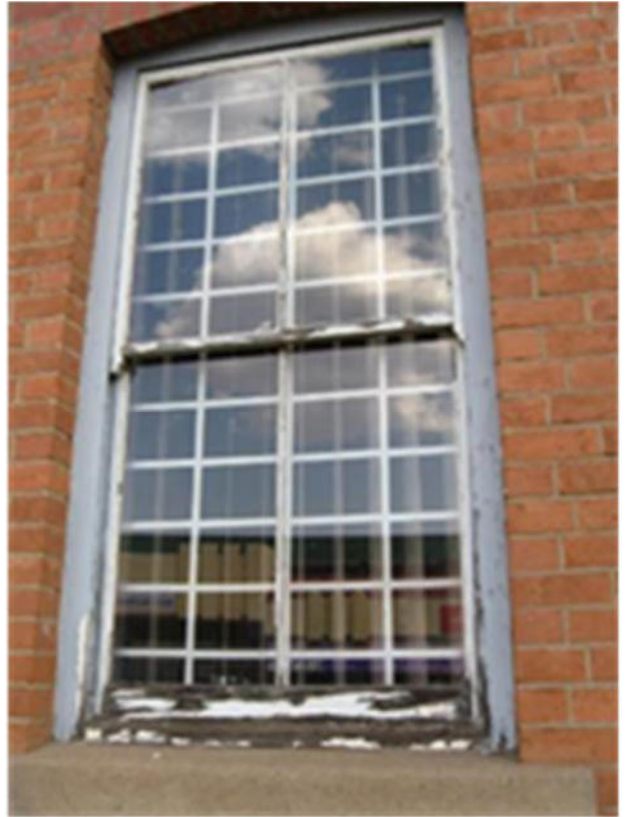


(Chubb safe)

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2.1.1.2 EXTERNAL.

Windows on the Western and Northern sides are severely damaged and weathered.



Steel Gutters and downpipes are damaged, removed or hanging loose. These will need to be replaced.



The timber fascias and bargeboards are badly weathered and will need to be replaced by timber elements to match existing.



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Sandstone cladding is in a fair condition and will only need cleaning.



The timber columns will need to be replaced as there are signs of weathering and in some instances the timber has splintered.



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The column bases should also be removed carefully, sanded down and repainted.



The veranda floor will need to be removed due to bad cracks in the concrete. Expansion joints should be kept in the same position when new concrete floor is cast.



All timber beams and purlins on veranda roof should be checked for rot and structural failure. On inspection these elements looked fine but should be rechecked as soon as the contractor is on site.



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Some of the brickwork on the outside is showing signs of disintegrating. These powdery bricks should be removed and replace with bricks to match existing building.



The roof vents have been closed at some stage apparently due to bird infestation and should be reopened. These timber vents are badly damaged and weathered and will be replaced by new timber vents (horizontal timber slats). Care will also need to be taken to ensure that birds do not nest in the roof.



The chimneys are structurally sound and will only need a good service, sand down and new coat of paint.



All floor vents will need to be checked and cleaned from any plant materials.



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Air-conditioning units and visible pipework.



Metal roof sheeting on the addition is in a good condition and will only need to be sanded down and loose roof nails; possible leaks and rust damage.

2.1.2 STYLES AND PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION.

The building has been previously restored but to date, no one has been able to tell us when this took place or who was responsible for the restoration. We also contacted Captain Amelia Heppal of the SAPS who is responsible for the facilities management. She was unable to assist us with any additional information.

Along with the restoration evident in new brickwork visible over the existing windows, another wing was added to the back of the building, evident in the use of different bricks, windows (steel instead of timber) window cills (tiles instead of sandstone/cement) Columns (steel instead of timber).

2.1.3 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.

The traditional use of red brick and sandstone construction as is seen throughout South Africa, is combined with a Victorian Style of Architecture which is present within and without the building, not only evident in the aesthetic look but also that construction of the building dates to the era of reign of Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901.

Some visible features of this Victorian Style can be seen in the steeply pitched roofs, ornate gables, rooftop finials, sliding sash windows, generous wraparound porches, high ceilings, decorative features and fireplaces.

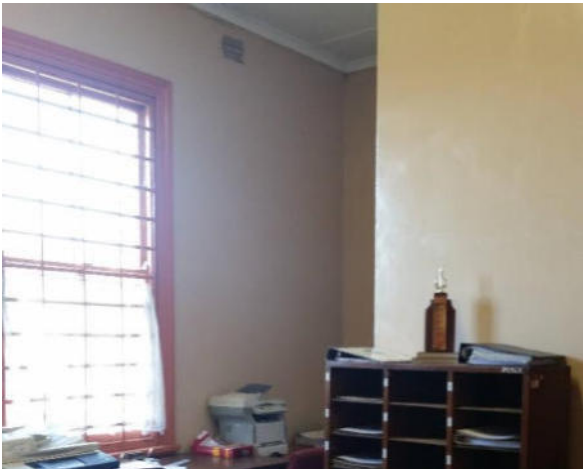
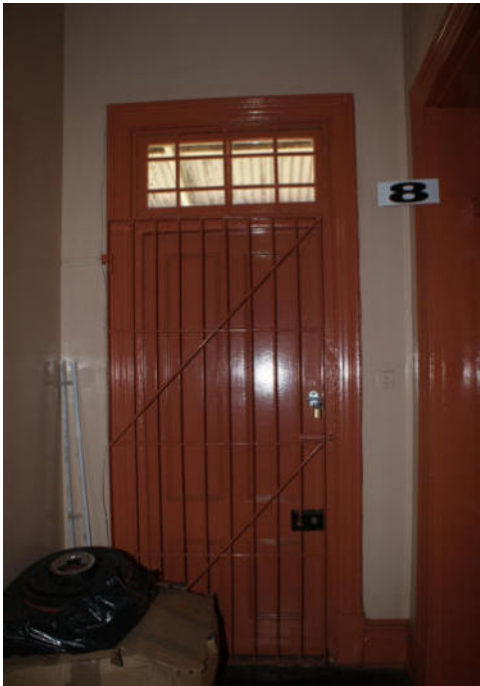
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2.1.4 PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING FEATURES OF THE STRUCTURES TO BE ALTERED AND/OR DEMOLISHED.

The position for the proposed toilet for the Magistrates Office is in the passage with new access directly from the Magistrates Office to the left of the photo.

The front door will be removed and replaced with a new window, to match existing.

The door to the right of the photo will be removed and the opening closed up.



A duct with a door will be built in the far right hand corner (Niche) of the Domestic Violence Officer Office to create the space required for the Mechanical Duct.

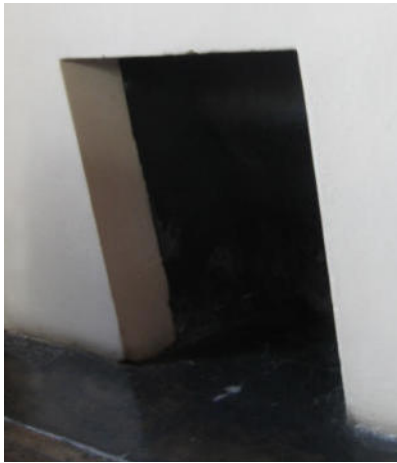


Remove existing stainless steel coat hooks and replace with brass coat hooks to match existing.

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Restore the fire places timber mantle pieces to match photographs. Architectural drawings indicated dimensions and correct position. Mantle pieces to be sourced from the National Museum in Bloemfontein for possible matching elements.



(Example)



Windows on the Northern and Western facade to be removed and replaced. All new timber windows to match the profile of the existing windows.



The threshold at the entrance door to the Court Room area is damaged. Repair by installing new pieces of timber floor planking and repairing the concrete step at the outside. Install a brass weatherbar strip at the connection between timber and concrete.

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Remove existing roofsheeting and replace with 0.55mm thick corrugated roofsheeting (To match existing). Chromadek Finish: Sunset Red. Roof structure (including beams and purlins) to be inspected by Engineer, for rot and damage, and replaced where necessary.



Remove metal sheeting covering existing roof vent. Install flyscreen on the inside of the roof vent. Remove badly damaged and weathered timber slats of the roof vent. All timber slats to be replaced with new timber slats (approved timber, e.g. Meranti), matching existing and primed and painted before installation.



The roof finial was found broken off and on the ground in front of the building. Remove all damaged and badly weathered timber from this structure. Replace all timber beams and posts with new approved timber elements.



Damaged Verandah beams and purlins to be measured, removed and replaced with appropriate hardwood timber beams (preferably Meranti beams).

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All fascias and barge boards will need to be replaced. These will be modelled on site and replace with new timber fascias to match the existing profile.



All gutters and downpipes to be replaced due to evidence of severe rust and weather damage.

To be replaced with seamless aluminium gutter and downpipes, with Chromadek finish on outside. Colour to match roof sheeting.



All doors to be fitted with (handles and locks) specified locks: Union 1448 Rim Lock & 5249PL Brass Knob to match original ironmongery. Some doors still have the existing locks and handles, condition to be assessed.



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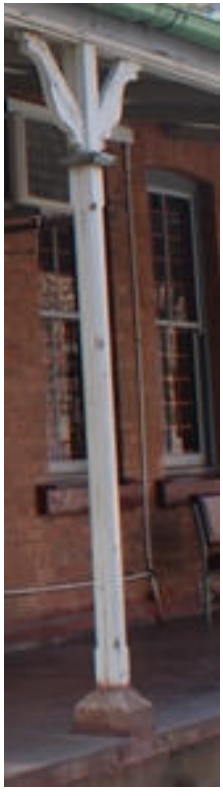
Remove damaged screed on floor of the veranda. Take care not to damage column footings and place formwork in place. Concrete to be cast on site and the finish to be smooth.



All steps along with the new veranda floor to be recast in the same position



All timber and steel columns to be replaced. The profile of the detail on the columns to be reproduced to match existing timber columns.



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All mechanical equipment such as air-conditioning units and piping to be removed from exterior walls. Holes and damaged bricks to be replaced with matching materials.

2.2 COURT & CELL BUILDING.

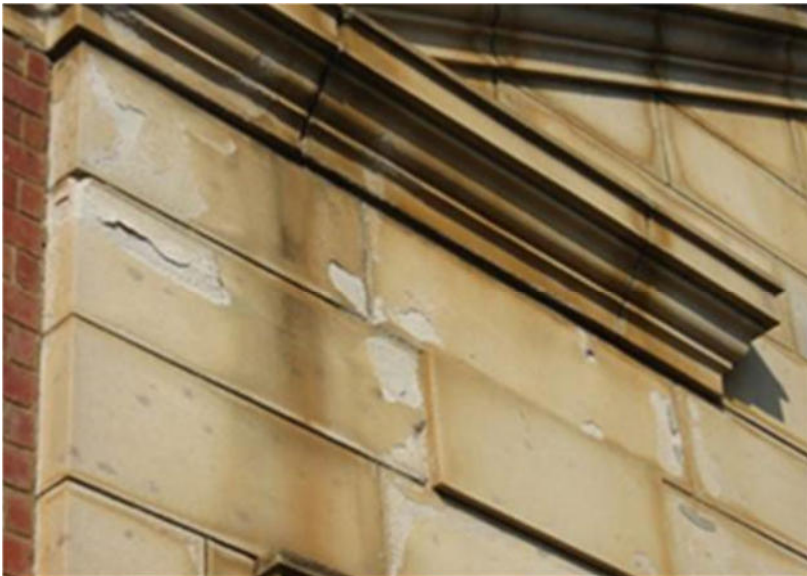
2.2.1 CONDITION.

The building is in a very good condition and only minor maintenance will need to be done. Cleaning of gutters, sanding down of doors and timber floors and replacing of some ironmongery is needed, some of the doors will need to be replaced and paraplegic ramp does not conform to the SANS10400 norms.

The public toilet facilities are in a very bad state and will need to be refurbished.

Some of the Sandstone cladding on the main entrance façade has eroded to some degree and will need to be restored. There are also some floor vents at the Cash Hall that have completely disintegrated. Although the Cash Hall's timber floor has been replaced with a concrete floor (presumably in 2002) these floor vents will need to be replaced.

Other maintenance items include the repair of ceilings and cornices, chipped and cracked tiles as well as damaged concrete channels and steps on the outside of the building.

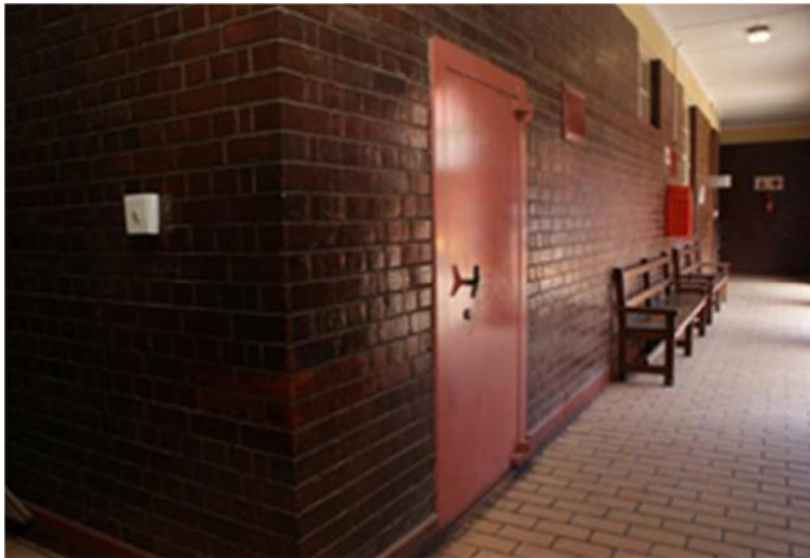


Sandstone

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Damaged floor vent



Door



Damaged ceilings

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2.2.2 STYLES AND PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION.

According to the National Department of Public Works, some additions and alterations were made in 1978 and again in 2002. This included the addition of a new Courtroom (at the Eastern side of the site) and the cell block in one of the courtyards.

The cell block is enclosed with palisade fencing and is easily accessible.

2.2.3 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.

The design of the building elements and the materials used in the construction depict the development achieved in the colony within this area as well the influence of what could be regarded as modernisation, 52 years after the introduction of rail transport in 1890.

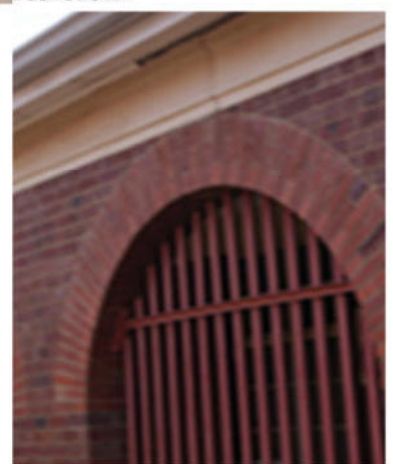
Although red brick and sandstone were also used and other than the grand entrance, the design is more modern than the original Court building illustrated by the lower pitch roof, plain windows and openings and the lack of decorative elements. The visible features, being different in style as the original Court building, seem to indicate the influence on the Architecture during Boer control.

2.2.4 PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING FEATURES OF THE STRUCTURES TO BE ALTERED AND/OR DEMOLISHED.

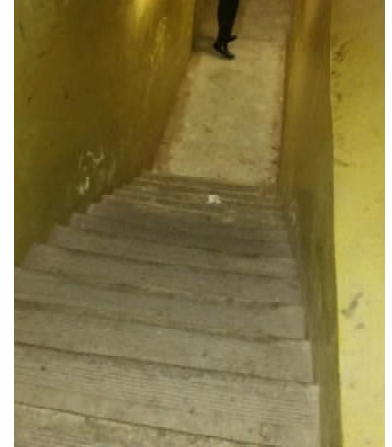


Cell Block:

- The cell block will be demolished.
- Both access staircases will be removed.
- The floors where the staircases are will be closed off and a concrete floor slab will be cast.
- Palisade infill will be removed.
- 2 x Arches will be restored.



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A new timber truss and steel sheeting roof will be installed for which the building was originally designed.



Remove existing ceilings, and replace with 12.5 mm Gypsum plastered ceiling and Provide 45x19mm Purpose-made Hardwood cornice.



Closed off entrance:

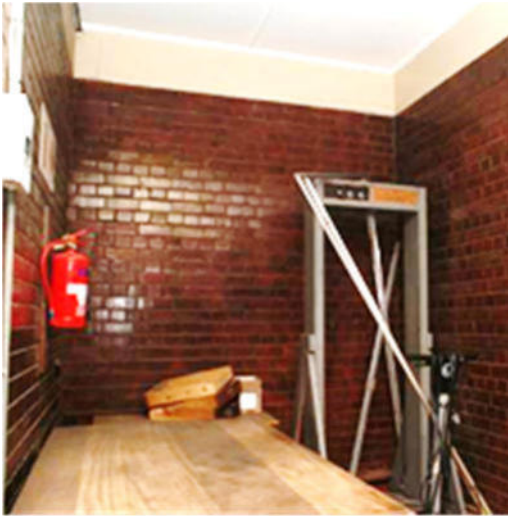
The North Eastern entrance which was previously closed up will be re-opened, a closed walkway will link the old and new Court at this entrance.

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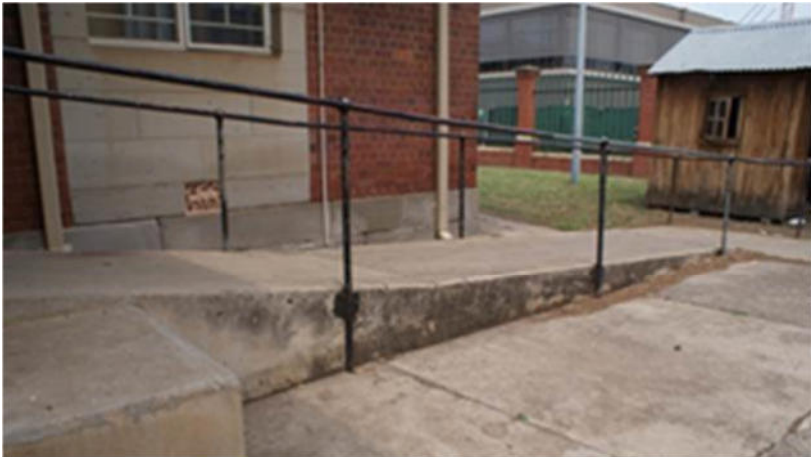


Exterior

Interior



- The window on the left will be removed and replaced with an access controlled door.
- A concrete floor will be cast.
- A secure Clearvu security screen cage will be fitted in position and will have a double door gate for access of the cash truck.



The paraplegic ramp does not conform to the SANS0400 requirements, the ramp will be removed and replaced.

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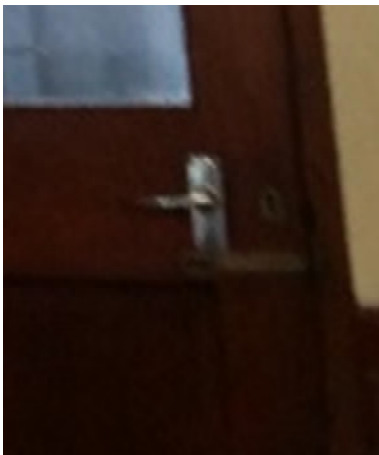
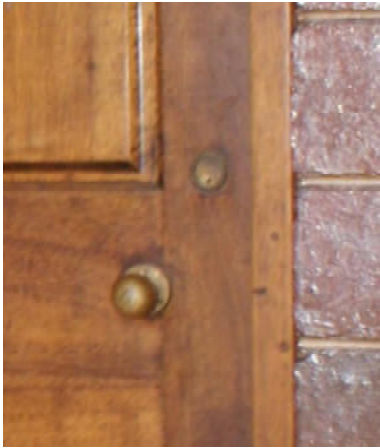


All mechanical equipment such as air-conditioning units and piping to be removed from exterior walls. Holes and damaged bricks to be replaced with matching materials.



Remove "safe" doors as indicated and replace with doors to match rest of the offices in the building. "Safe" doors to be reused at docket rooms.

All doors to be fitted with (handles and locks) specified locks: Union 1448 Rim Lock & 5249PL Brass Knob to match original ironmongery. Some doors still have the existing locks and handles, condition to be assessed.

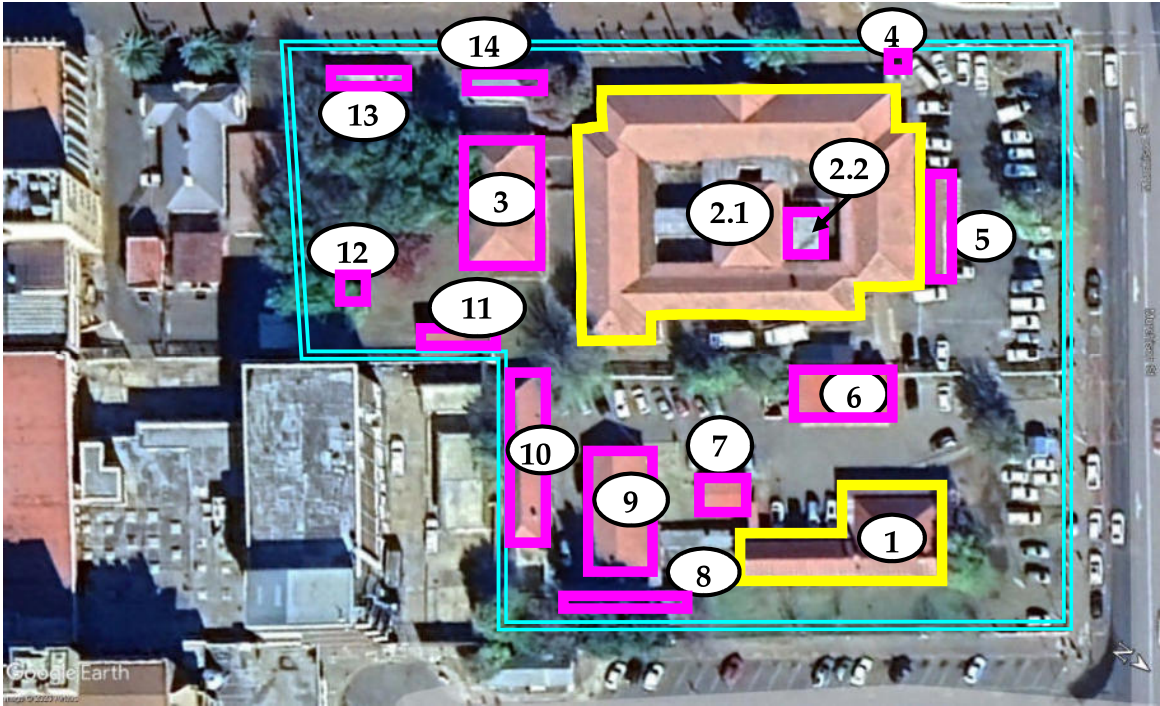


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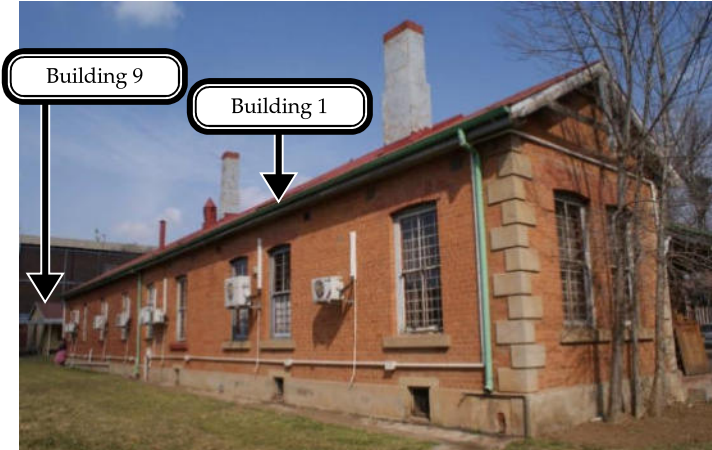
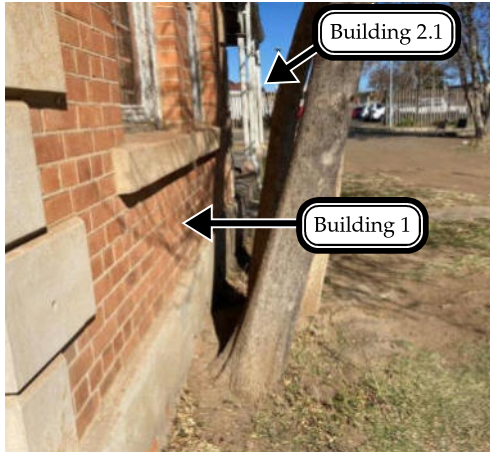
Remove all existing floor tiles in the passages. Replace with new non-slip tiles.

3 PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING SIDES AND THE STRUCTURES IN CONTEXT.

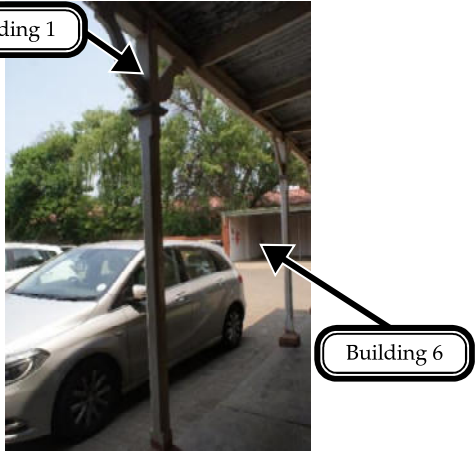
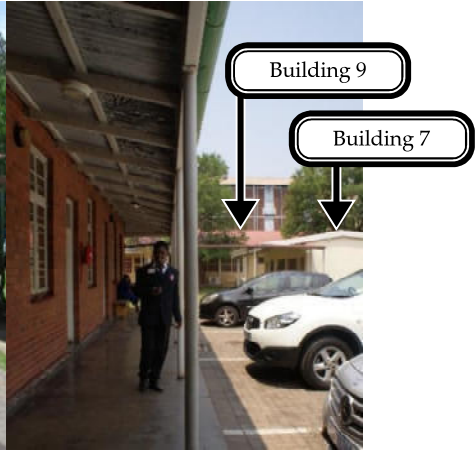
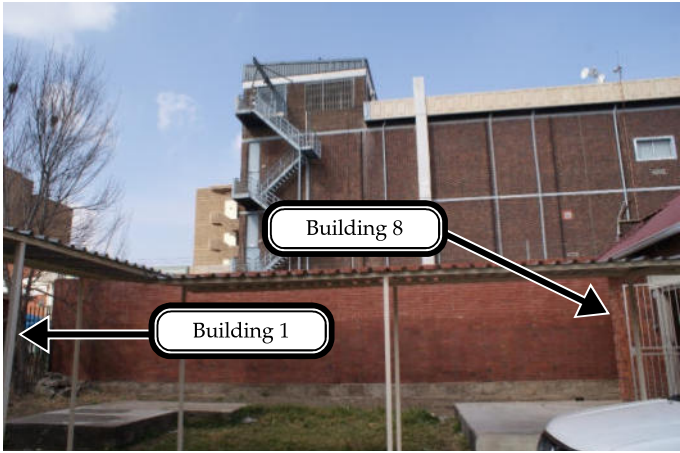
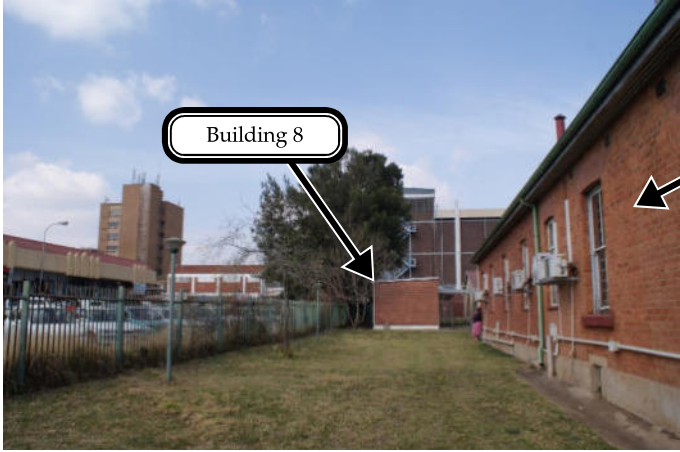


1. FAMILY COURT BUILDING.

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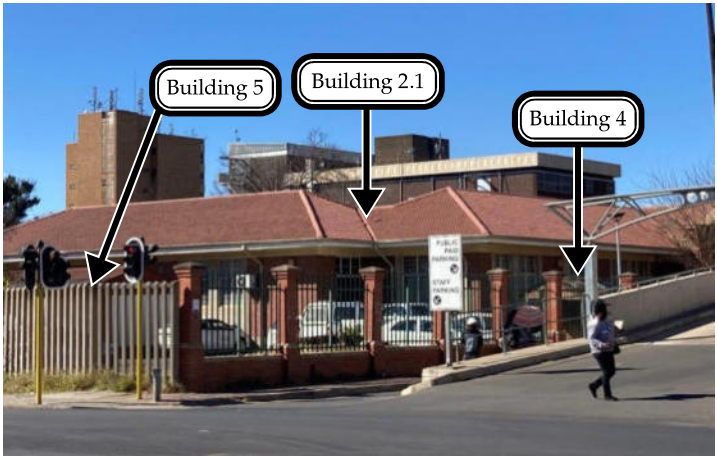
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2.1. COURT BUILDING.

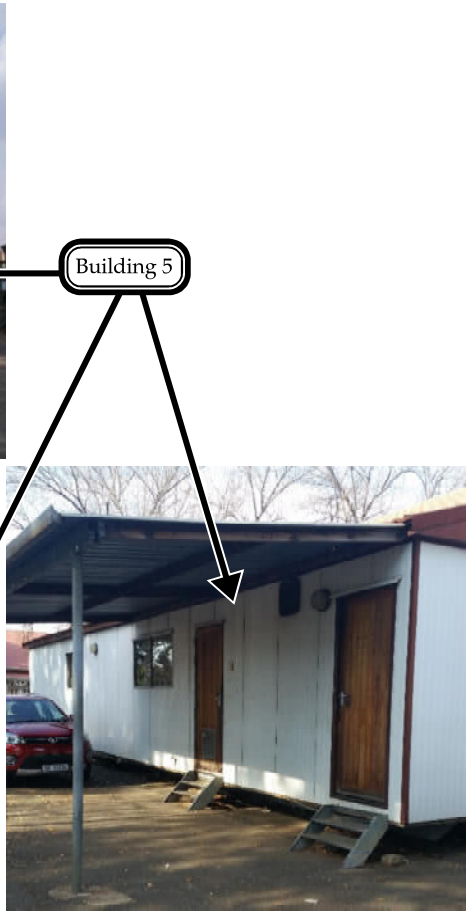


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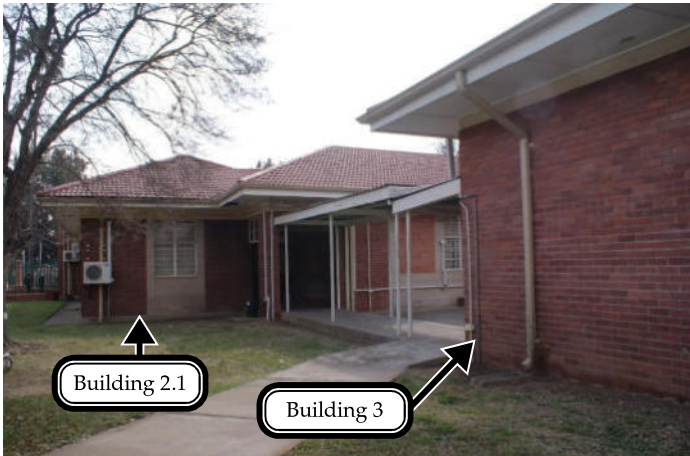


Building 5

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Building 3



2.2 CELL BUILDING.



Building 2.2

Building 2.1



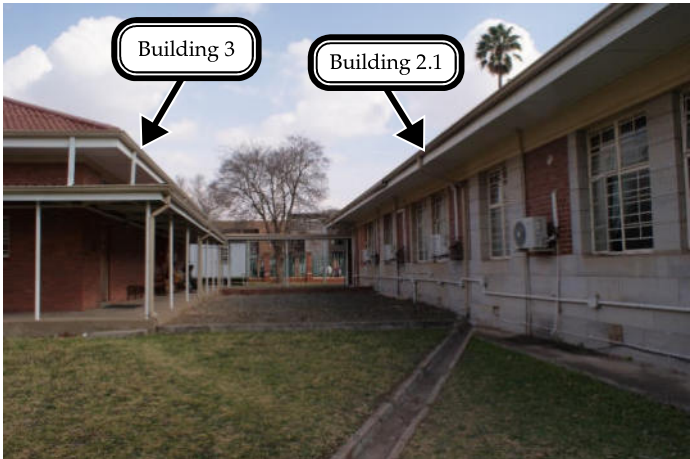
Building 2.1

Building 2.2

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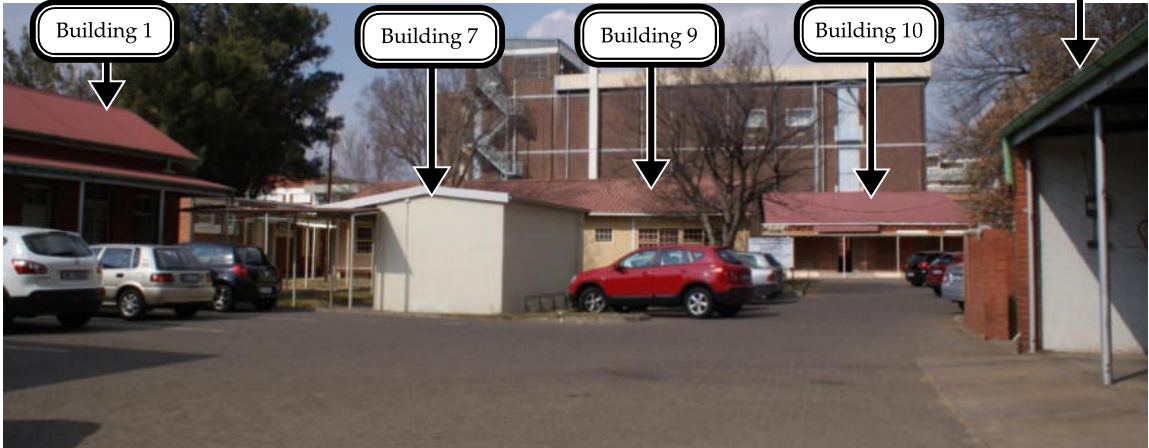
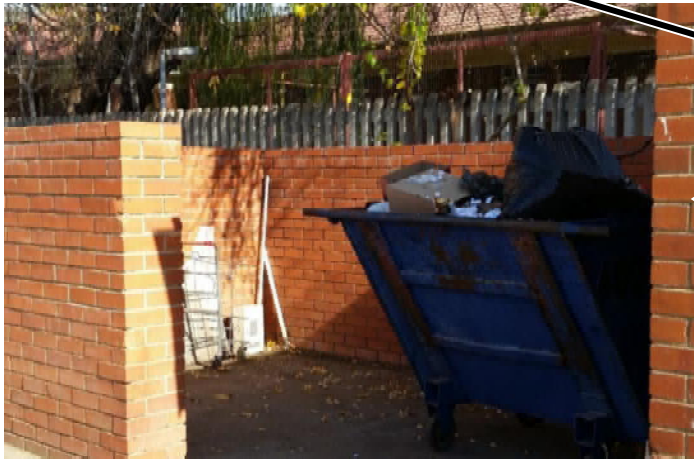
3. ARCHIVE BUILDING.



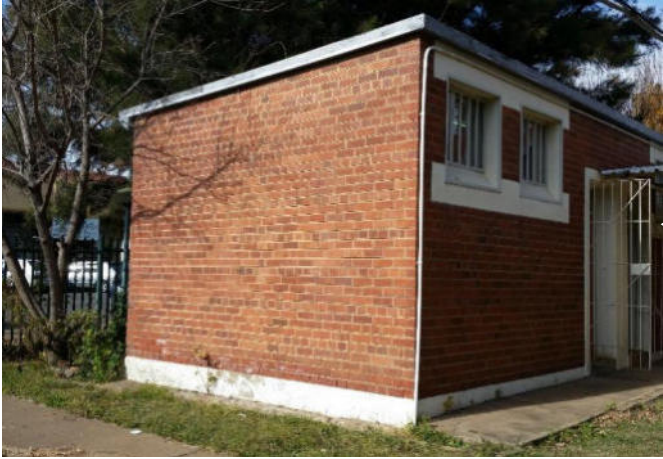
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OTHER BUILDINGS



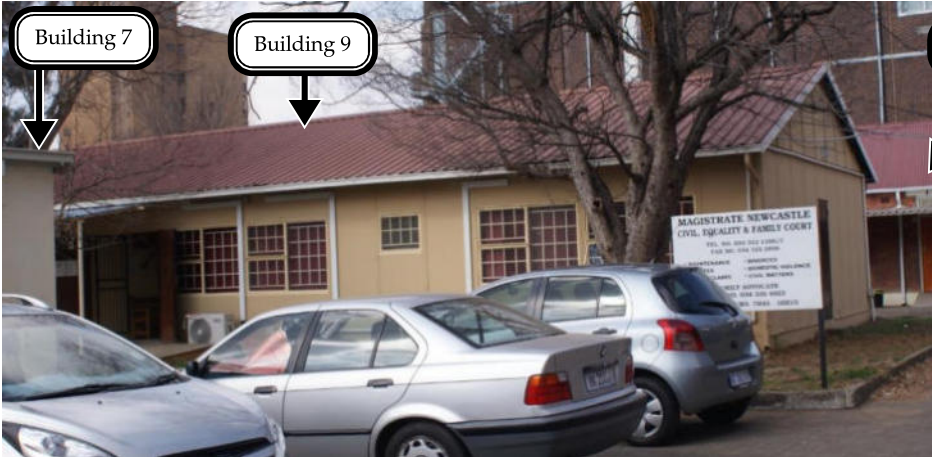
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Building 8



Building 8



Building 7

Building 9

Building 10



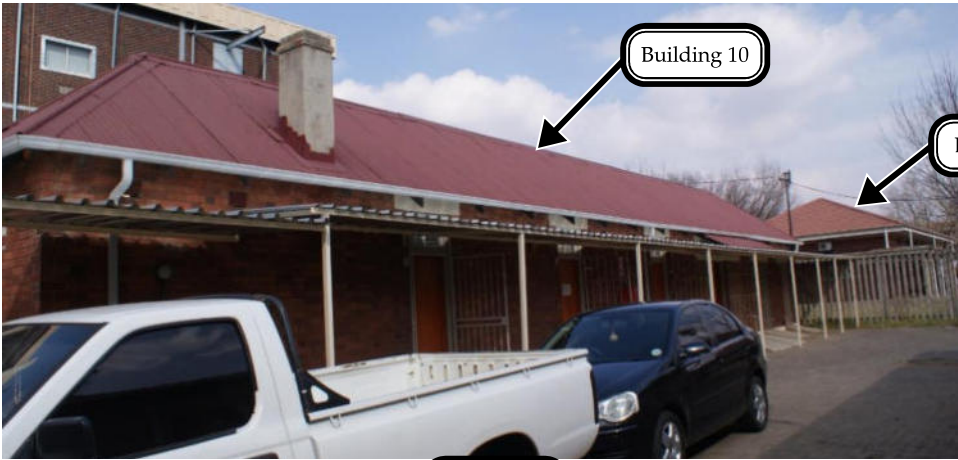
Building 8

Building 9

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Building 9



Building 10

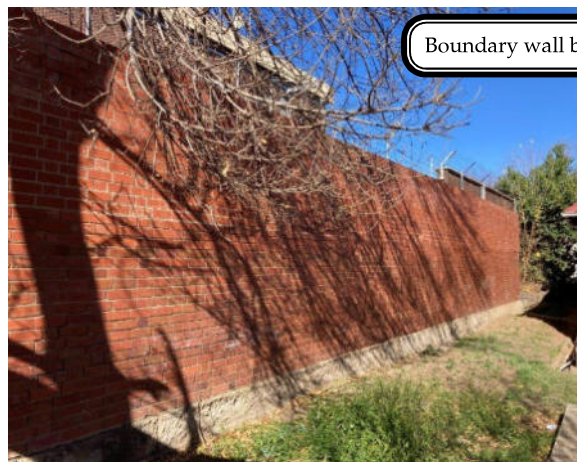
Building 3



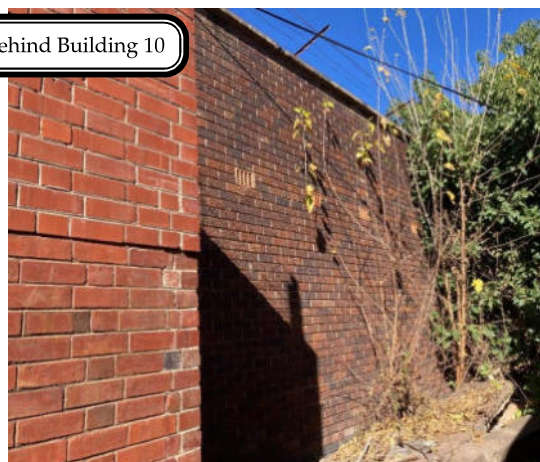
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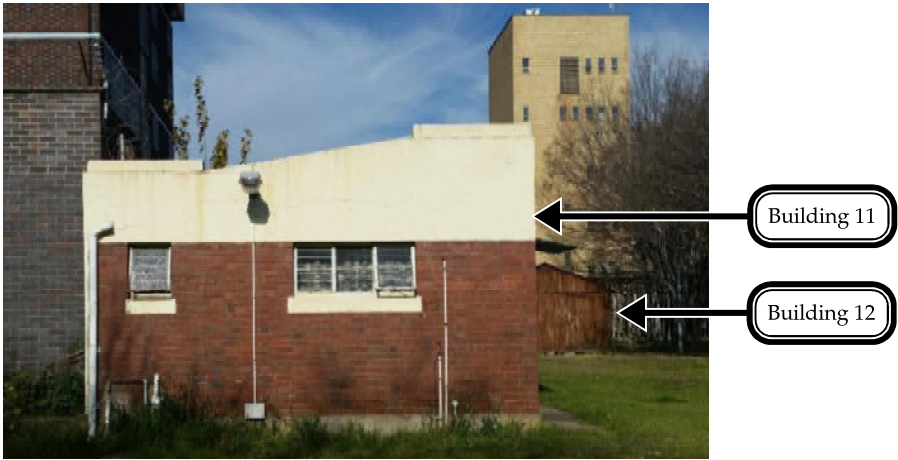
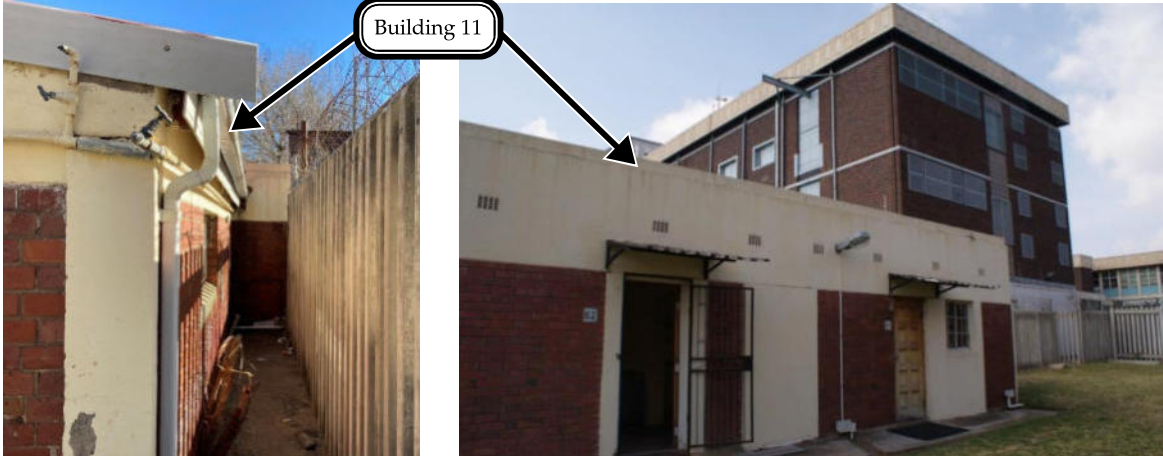
Building 3



Boundary wall behind Building 10



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Building 13



Building 13



Building 14

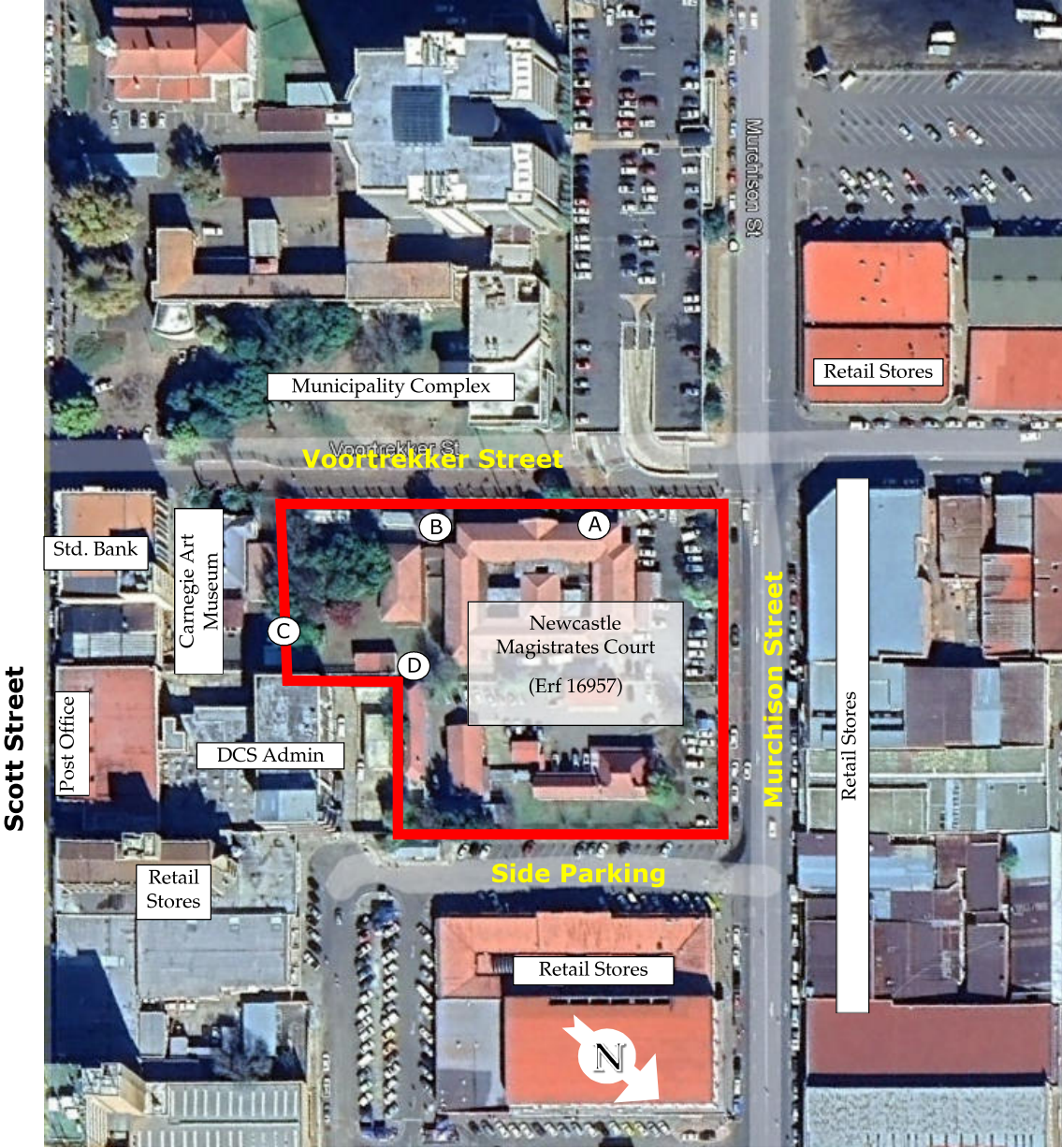


Building 2.1

Building 14

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4 PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING URBAN
SETTING & ADJOINING PROPERTIES.



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Photo 1.
Photo of the Northern side
of the site taken from the
side parking in a Southerly
direction.



Photo 2.
Taken on the Corner of
Voortrekker & Murchison
Street in a Southerly
direction.
The Northern corner of the
site is in the right hand
side of the photo.



Photo 3.
Taken from the Northern
corner of the site in a
North Easterly direction.

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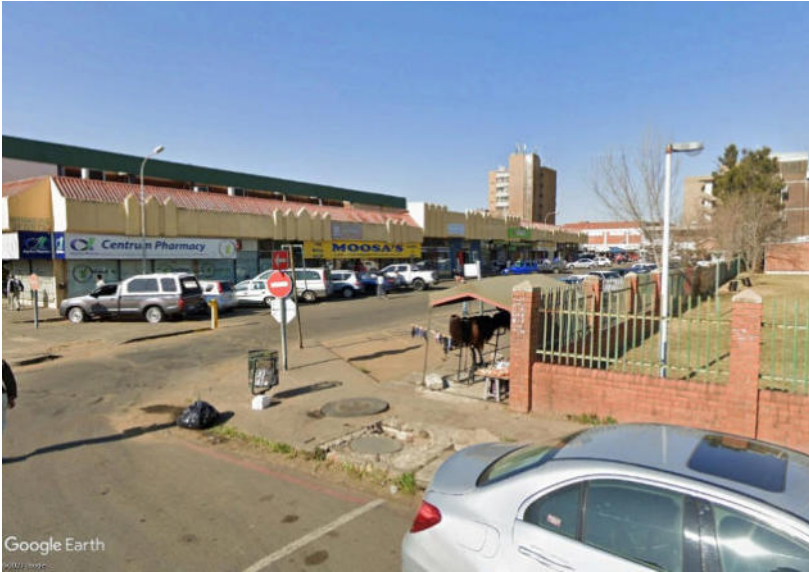


Photo 4.
Taken on the Corner of Voortrekker & Murchison Street in a North Easterly direction.
The Northern corner of the site is in the right hand side of the photo.



Photo 5.
Taken on Murchison Street in a North Easterly direction away from the site which is to the bottom right hand corner of the photo.



Photo 6.
Taken on Murchison Street in a South Westerly direction.
The site is in the left hand side of the photo.

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Photo 7.
Photo of the front of the site taken on Murchison Street in a South Easterly direction.
The Northern corner of the site is in the bottom left of the photo.

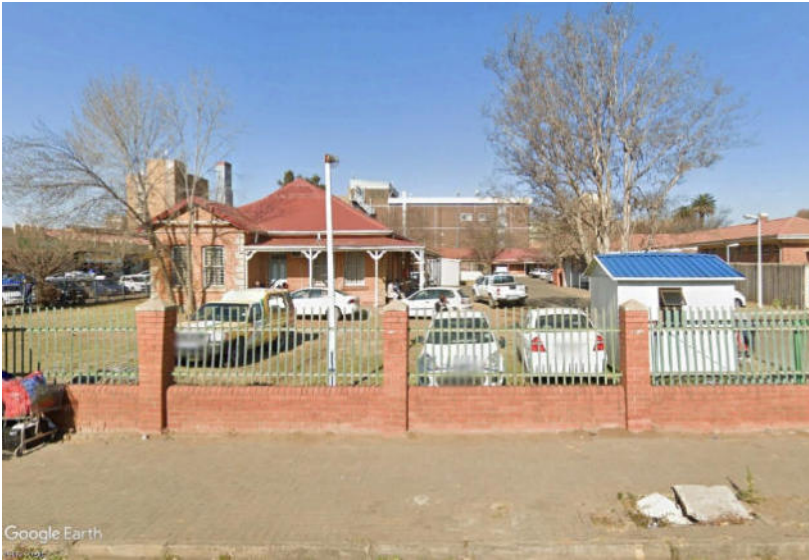


Photo 8.
Photo of the front of the site taken on Murchison Street in a South Easterly direction, to the right of photo 7.

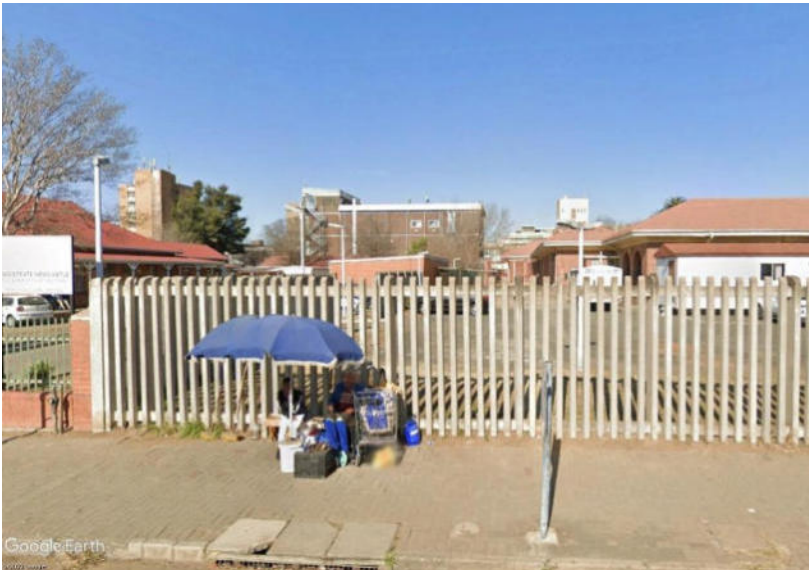


Photo 9.
Photo of the front of the site taken on Murchison Street in a South Easterly direction, to the right of photo 8.

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Photo 10.
Photo of the front of the site along the boundary taken on Murchison Street in an Easterly direction, to the right of photo 9.



Photo 11.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker & Murchison Street in a Southern direction.
The Western corner of the site is in the left hand side of the photo.



Photo 12.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker & Murchison Street Westerly direction away from the Western corner of the site.

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Photo 13.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker & Murchison Street in a North Easterly direction. The site is in the top right hand corner of the photo.



Photo 14.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker & Murchison Street in an Easterly direction. The site is in the top centre of the photo.



Photo 15.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker and Scott Street in a Northerly direction showing the street view of buildings along the rear of the site.

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Photo 16.
Photo taken on the corner of Voortrekker and Scott Street in a Westerly direction, into Voortrekker Street showing the buildings behind the site at the southern corner of the site in the right hand side of the photo and showing the municipal building complex at the Western corner of the site in the top left hand corner of the photo.



Photo 17.
Photo taken from Point A on the site in a South Westerly direction over Voortrekker Street.



Photo 18.
Photo taken from Point B on the site in a Southerly direction over Voortrekker Street.

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Photo 19.
Photo taken from Point C on the site in a South Easterly direction, showing the Carnegie Art Gallery in the foreground and the high rise buildings behind the site on the corner of Voortrekker and Scott Street.



Photo 20.
Photo taken from Point D on the site in a South Easterly direction.

5 ORIGINAL OR LATEST APPROVED CONSTRUCTION PLANS.

According to the Newcastle Municipality they have no record of any building plans or any other relevant information about this specific building. The buildings are State owned and the National Department of Works in Pretoria has also confirmed that they have no building plans of this building.

C.D.H.Sparks
MNI Architects and Project Managers