

Annexure One

Heritage Statement/motivation

Section 34 application (resubmission) and additional work

Erven 10773 and 10772 Woodstock

Historic Jewish Cemetery corner Albert and Lower Church Street: Rebuilding and repair of collapsed boundary walls on the eastern and northern lateral boundary

1. Introduction

A section 34 (NHRA) application was submitted to Heritage Western Cape in 2019 and a permit to undertake the necessary repair work granted on 21 June 2019 (see annexure 11). As the permit has now lapsed, the application is resubmitted in its entirety for the re-granting of a permit to undertake the work set out.

In addition the condition of the wall has further deteriorated with collapse on the northern edge in the interim. It is proposed that repair work to this portion of the wall be undertaken at the same time. Proposals for the east and north portions of the wall are submitted as Annexures 4.1 and 4.2 respectively. The application thus is both a re-application and an application for new work that has subsequently become necessary.

The boundary wall on the eastern lateral section of the historic Jewish cemetery collapsed due to structure and damp penetration problems after heavy rain in 2018. The collapse of the northern portion of the wall followed. The proposal for the east wall (which is a re-submission) is to remove the plaster from the walls, demolish, waterproof and rebuild according to the existing pattern of stone. Stone and cement bricks are to be cleaned and rebuild as per the original. The work will be undertaken subject to the supervision of a structural engineer and a heritage consultant.

The plan for the north wall falls into three parts. The first affects the remaining portion of the wall. The plan is to remove the masonry wall and rebuild the stone wall with existing stones and place a clear View fence behind it. The proposal for the collapsed portion is to rebuild the collapsed portion using the existing stone and place a clear view fence behind it.

The site covers two erven i.e. 10773 and 10772, originally part of the farm “Belle Alliance” and is registered in the name of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation (Hope of Israel). It is an old site on of the earliest in Woodstock with an unbroken ownership record of some 160 years.

The site is also increasingly vulnerable to security issues. The repair and the historic boundary walls and improved security through clear view fencing will solve both the collapse of the historic walls and the security issues at the same time.

2. Location (see annexure 5)



Fig 1. Google map showing the position of the cemetery in relation to the road network and railway bridge at Woodstock (see also Location: Annexure 5)

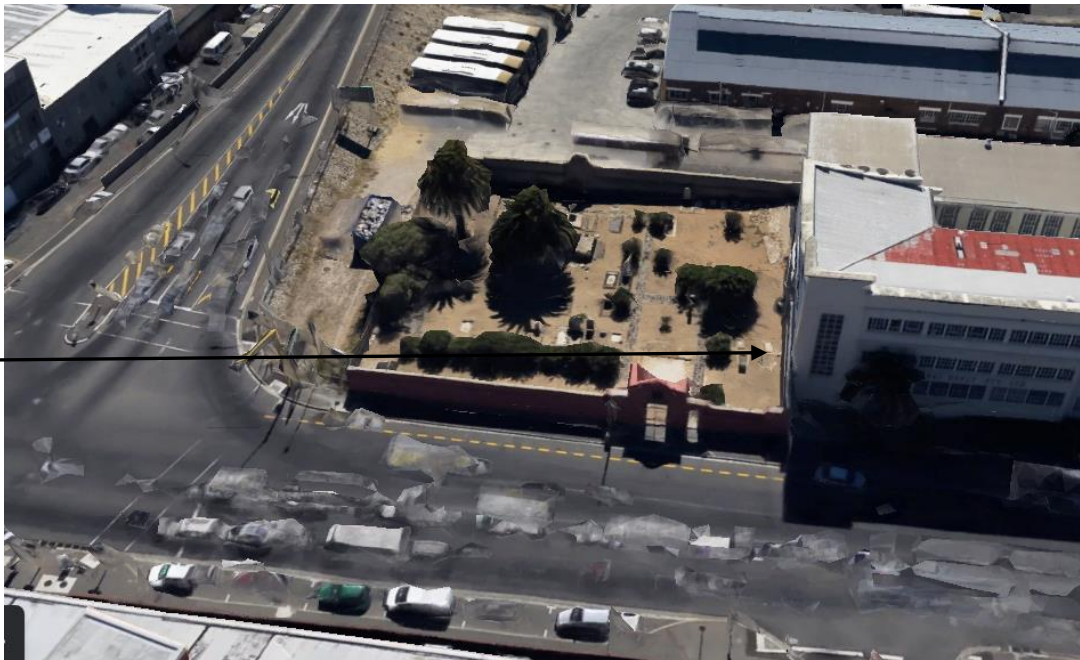


Fig 3. The eastern lateral boundary wall (arrowed) at the historic Jewish cemetery Woodstock which requires repair and rebuilding (See also Location: Annexure 5).



Fig 4. The northern boundary wall which requires repair rebuilding and a security fence.

The historic Jewish Cemetery at Woodstock is situated at the corner of Albert Road and Lower Church Street Woodstock, at the corner where a widened Lower Church Street crosses the railway bridge and enters the road grid at Woodstock. Lower Church Street handles high volumes of traffic and the area is affected both in terms of noise and congestion by the high traffic volumes.

Albert Road consists of offices factories and shops, with the cemetery being a unique feature of the early history of the area.

To the north of the site lies the railway lines and to the north-west lies the historic landmark of the Castle Brewery. Otherwise the area consists of buildings between 2 to 5 stories in height but with little heritage significance. The character is industrial and commercial and dominated by transportation infrastructure.



Fig 5. The western corner of the historic cemetery on the corner of Albert Road and Lower Church Street. The Castle Brewery is visible to the left. The traffic dominated and hostile character of the streetscape is illustrated here.

An office building abuts the cemetery on the eastern boundary and nearby is a petrol station. To the south lies the high-density residential areas of Woodstock situated in tight grid road patterns. Buildings to the south of Albert Road date from the early 1900's although the commercial strip development is mixed. Although much of the detail of the residential structures has been altered the residential environments contain a tight grain and a sense of scale. There is a considerable difference in scale, density and road patterns in Albert Road to the north and to the South.

The northern boundary is at the back of the cemetery and abuts a roadway and empty space.

The corner of Albert Road and Lower Church Street is a hostile place for a cemetery and the high walls are necessary for security and to keep out traffic noise and potential vandalism.

3. Site description (see annotated photographs annexure Six)

3.1. Exterior (see annexure 6.2.)

The Jewish Cemetery is a walled historic graveyard with an entrance on Albert Road. The notion of walling follows Jewish traditions of ensuring the graveyards are protected and places of reflection and meditation. The entrance consists of a portico with a gable and entrance gate with steps leading to the cemetery. The gable feature is repeated on the eastern wall and on the southern wall. The eastern wall would have contained a washing or water feature required within the graveyard.

The entrance in Albert Road is surmounted by a gable and a plaque dating the graveyard to the period 1854 to 1888, when it was closed. There are steps leading to the graveyard from the street. There is evidence historically of a second entrance (see fig 5).

The early walls appear to have been about a metre in height set on a stone plinth and, constructed largely of stone which was later plastered. The walls enclose the entire cemetery and

at the centre of each of the interior walls is a gable mirroring the Albert Road entrance. The early walls have subsequently been raised, plastered and painted.

The height of the wall on both the eastern and northern edges were raised at one point using cement bricks thus affecting the structural integrity of the historic wall.

Both historic portions of the eastern and northern walls are in an advanced state of decay. The southern section of the boundary wall containing the cemetery entrance has been painted and maintained although the south eastern corner has cracked and collapsed in parts.

An inspection of wall surfaces show cracks which appeared over time and which have been filled. There is evidence of moisture penetration which may have weakened the structural integrity of the walls. It is this later walling along the Albert Road lateral boundary which has collapsed due to the heavy rains ofc2018.

Additional height is necessary to ensure for the privacy, security and protection of the graveyard in what has become an increasing hostile, busy and noisy intersection.



Fig 6. Entrance of Jewish Cemetery Albert Road Woodstock showing the entrance and evidence of the old walled surrounds. The plaque (arrowed) above the gate reads Cape Town Hebrew Congregation: Old Albert Road Cemetery 1854-1888



Fig 7. The cemetery walls with a stone base plastered early walls and raised height. Also shown is a potential earlier entrance.



Fig 8. Cracks at the south eastern edge appearing before June 2018 Sections of this wall subsequently collapsed (see Fig 9)



Fig 9. The collapsed lateral portion of the wall off Albert Road

3.2. Interior (see Annexure 6.3).



Fig 10 The cemetery interior showing its walled nature the entrance and the regular nature of the grave arrangement. The eastern and northern portions of the wall are arrowed.

This is a very early Cape graveyard, established in 1854 and closed in 1888. No gravestones postdate that period and the closing of the graveyard in 1888 means that not further changes have been effected other than to the boundary walls. As such it is a unique place representing the early Jewish history of Cape Town. Its walled nature contribute to the character of calm despite the traffic and noise outside the wall. However, the height of the adjacent buildings does create an intrusive element.

A series of steps led to the graveyard with has a central path leading to a pergola. There are palm trees and towards the south a number of oleander bushes. The gable feature of the entrance is replicated within the cemetery walling with a gable feature at the centre of 3 of the four walls. The wall and gable to the south contains the remains of a water/washing feature. The slate of the walkway may have been re-used from another site.

The graves and gravestones have been photographed and catalogued and are available to visitors, relatives and researchers. They date from the early period of Jewish settlement in Cape Town (see history) Many gravestones are worn. In accordance with Jewish traditions and norms no burial site may be disturbed in any way. Consequently, there will be no change to the burial area and archaeology will not be permitted. Historical investigation will relate to the walls only.

The maintenance and care of the graveyard is undertaken by the Jewish Board of Deputies.



Fig 11. The avenues of old slate and the gravestones of the early Capetonians. June 2018.



Fig 12 Wall along the eastern lateral boundary showing proximity to the adjacent building for the July 2018 collapse. June 2018



Fig 13. The fountain, a traditional feature of a Jewish cemetery, which is to be retained as part of the restoration proposal. June 2018

No changes to the interior of the cemetery are proposed and there is to be no disturbance of soil.

4. Deterioration of building fabric and related security concerns

4.1. July 2018 collapse of lateral boundary wall.

During July 2018 heavy rains caused a lateral portion of the wall, after showing signs of cracking and subsistence, to collapse (see Fig 4 and fig 5). This was on the eastern edge of the site against the common boundary with the office building. Water and damp had collected rendering the wall particularly the extended portion, unstable. The collapse revealed the present of the old stonework and the clay and sand mortaring. Temporary hoarding was put in place to protect the

cemetery of vandalism and illegal ingress. As the collapse resulted in bricks falling on the graves, they were cleared collected and packed away on site, awaiting the new proposals. HWC was informed on 1 August 2018 with a request to conduct a site visit.



Fig 14 July 2018 wall collapse of eastern boundary wall.



Fig 15 temporary boarding in place July 2018.

4.2. Deterioration of northern boundary wall

The northern boundary wall is showing signs of severe deterioration. Because of its isolated position it is vulnerable to access to the interior of the cemetery.

5. Site archaeology

No archaeology or disturbance of any burial ground is permitted within the graveyard according to Jewish custom. Of interest however are the paving stones on the central walkway indicating previous use – possibly from the nearby (demolished) Craig’s Tower. The collapsed walls reveal early stone walls with early clay-based mortar. (See Fig 12).

Such porous qualities have contributed to the collapse with water penetration.

No graves will be affected by the repair process.

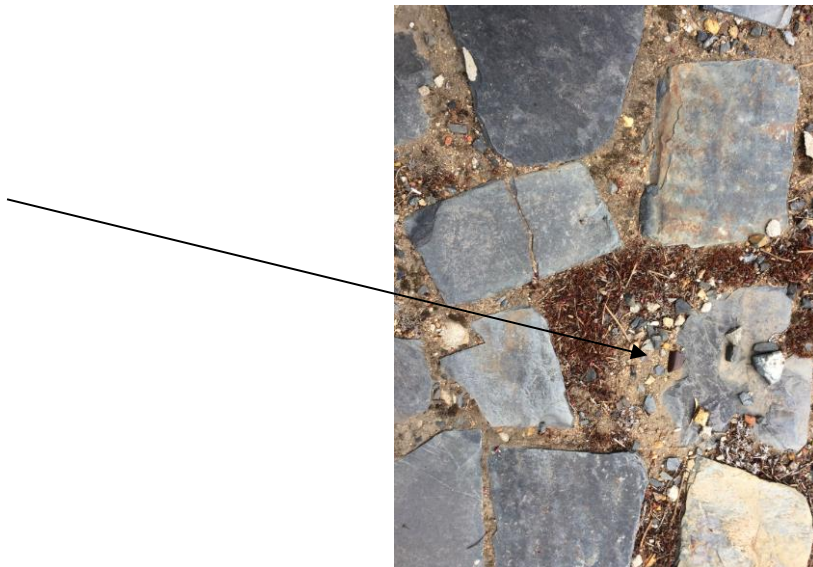


Fig 16. Archaeological remnant Woodstock cemetery used as paving. They may be related to Craig’s Battery

6. Historical background

6.1. Cape Town Jewish pioneers

The Jewish community has contributed significantly to the life of the City in cultural, civic and economic development. Saul Solomon established the printing industry and became a parliamentarian while men such as Aldermen Hyman Liebermann, Abe and David Bloomberg and AZ Berman distinguished themselves in public life. South African struggle history is replete with Jewish stalwarts who have contributed to the struggle against oppression.

Early Jewish pioneers in Cape Town are associated with the Woodstock cemetery notably Benjamin Norden, Raphael Joseph and Aaron de Pass. They were men who formed part of an early group of Jewish settlers forming part of the British settlers who settled at the Cape in the early nineteenth century and who played a key role in the development of the Cape. The early group of Jewish settlers were commercial pioneers in the 1830’s and 1840’s, with brothers Julius Adolph and James Mosenthal for example introducing the mohair wool industry to the country; and the de Pass brothers opening the Namaqualand coastline in terms of whaling and fishing. The Norden brothers, particularly Benjamin Norden travelled extensively in the interior of the Cape. When he settled in Cape Town, Norden established the first Hebrew congregation – the Tikvath Israel and when the first synagogue was built in 1849, he became its first president.

6.2. Acquisition of the site for the Jewish cemetery

One of the roles Norden undertook in January 1849 together with Aaron de Pass and Raphael Joseph was to acquire two erven of land (erven 10773 and 10772) formerly part of the farm La Belle Alliance” identified as “certain lot of ground marked as Lot 15 in the Cape District at Papendorp being part of the property transferred to the Honourable Henry Cloete Lourens...on the 14th December 1835. The conditions of the sale relate to the fact that the site was “to be used and employed as a place of burial or internment of the Dead of the members of the Jewish persuasion departing this life in the Municipality of Cape Town and its vicinity”¹. The 58 graves at the cemetery were those of the early Jewish residents at the Cape and included members of the Abrahams, the De Pass, Lewis, the Solomon, and the Alexander families.²

At the time of the closing of the cemetery in 1888 the Jewish population in Cape Town had grown and by 1910 it was increased to about 40 000 people with immigrants from Lithuania³

It has remained in the same ownership since 1849. The boundaries of the site and the presence of the graves have remained the same since then. The major changes which has affected the context of the cemetery have been the extension and expansion of the Church Street Bridge and the Albert Road intersection, and the fact that a commercial and residential area to the south have grown up around it (See Fig 14 aerial photograph of changes to the context)



Fig 17. Early changes to the context of the cemetery 1945 showing the Church Street Albert Road intersection newly built. The cemetery is shown as walled with the current entrance in place. The office block to the east is present.

7. Grading of site

¹ Deed of sale and Deed of Transfer

² Graves are numbered and identified See TKLA 2018.Grave location and identification plan

³ <https://www.geni.com/projects/South-African-Settlers-Jewish/9736>

The site consisting of two erven including historic walls and graves is graded grade 111A in terms of its heritage significance (See Fig 16).

Grading of the site by the City of Cape Town has taken into account its proximity to the old (now demolished Craig's Battery and Tower which was situated like the cemetery closer to the historic werf (now demolished) of Belle Alliance.

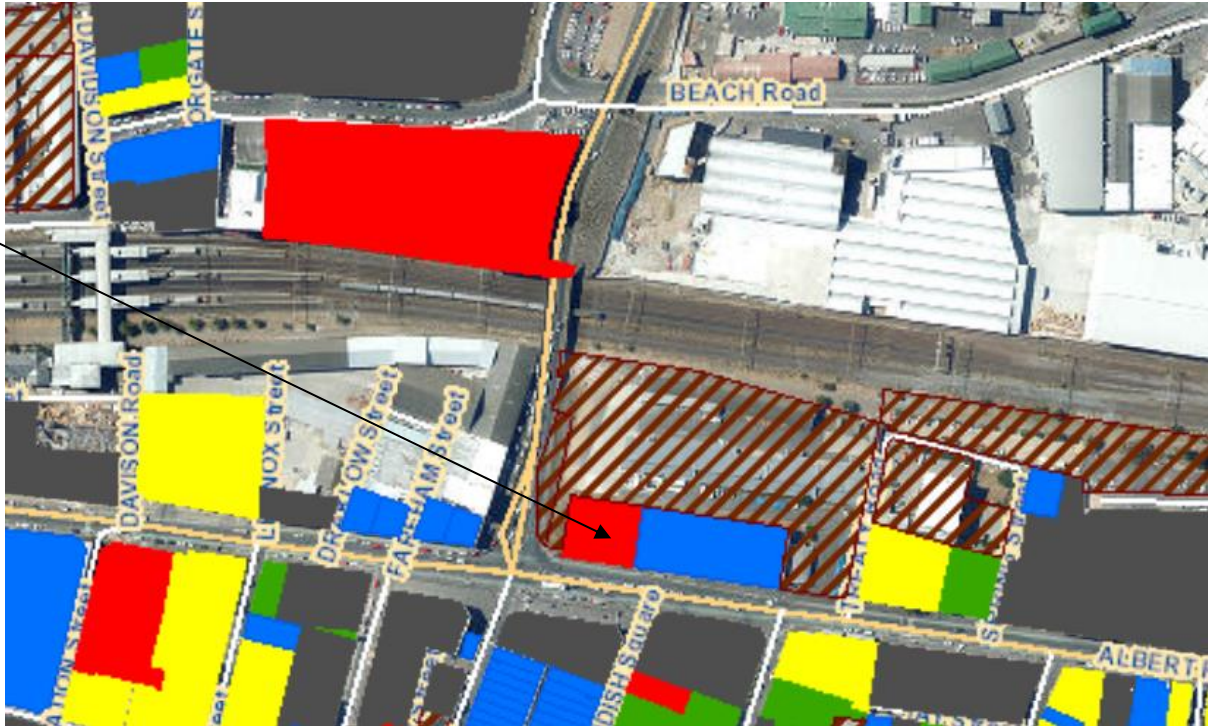


Fig 18. The cemetery itself is graded 111A or of outstanding local significance no doubt on account of its historical and associational significance and its condition of intactness within a changing landscape. The area around the cemetery to the west and north is identified as requiring further research.

This report agrees with the 111A grading although points out that the archaeological assessment should include the sites north of the railway lines where Craig's Tower is likely to have existed.

8. Statement of cultural significance

The Jewish cemetery is situated at a busy intersection – the corner of Lower Church Street and Albert Road – which has developed around the historic cemetery and affected its sense of calm. The higher walls have to some extent mitigated this issue and are therefore necessary.

The site is of outstanding local significance because of the following

- Its associational links with the early history of the Jewish Community in Cape Town extending to the mid nineteenth century and earlier.
- The contribution made by the Jewish community to the civic cultural and political life of Cape Town.
- Its age and intactness extending from 1849 and unchanged since its closure in 1888.
- Its role as a contextual and physical remnant of the early historic of Woodstock and District Six where some of the early Jewish settlers lived.

- The complete nature of the historical record of those who are buried there allowing such information to be accessed to descendants
- Its value as a historic cemetery to the Jewish community in Cape Town.

The proposal to restore and repair the lateral wall on the southern edge would assist in the retention of the site's cultural significance.

9. The Proposal to stabilise and reconstruct the collapsed walls. the walls (see annexure 5 and 6)

The proposal for the eastern and northern boundary wall is in two parts.

The first part is for the eastern boundary wall submitted to HWC and approved in 2019. It is now resubmitted and expanded (See Annexures 4.1. and 4.2.).

The proposal is to reconstruct the collapsed portion of the wall within the zones identified. The strategy is also to re-instate the lower stone wall taking into account its historical value and to make some of the stone walls a memorial to the historic stone wall that surrounded the cemetery. The proposal is to re-instate the historic stone wall where it exists once waterproofing has occurred and re-instate the cement wall in zone D once waterproofing has occurred. Both are on either side of the fountain. In full the following is proposed:

- Sort clean and re-use the cement bricks which were part of the wall which collapsed
- Remove plaster from walls identified A-B on either side of the fountain (washing feature) in diagram, photograph the stone walls so that the pattern can be replicated in the reconstruction of the walls
- Demolish walls on either side of wall areas A-B, clean concrete bricks and stones on site
- Waterproof site A-B to engineer's specification.
- Once waterproofed commence construction in stone wall area C. This wall is to reflect the significance of the historic stone walls
- Restore fountain
- Footings of stone walls to be to engineer's specifications
- Further discussion to be undertaken and advice sought regarding the pattern and type of stone which will be informed by analysis of the stone wall on either side of the fountain currently plastered (Zone C)
- Balance of wall identified as D to be constructed out of the salvaged concrete blocks.

The second part consists of repairs to the northern boundary wall. (See Annexure 4.2). This is an area of particular concern from a security point of view as it allows access to the cemetery from the back which generally has little surveillance.

The proposal is for the collection of the collapsed stone and retention for re-use; and the rebuilding of the historic stone wall on the boundary with careful attention paid to the character of the mortar used. The proposal involves the placement on a security fence behind the stone wall for security purposes.

10. Public Consultation see annexures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

10.1. Salt River Heritage Society (Annex 8.2)

Prior to the submission to HWC in 2019 the proposal dated 23 November 2018 was submitted to the Salt River Heritage Society who agreed (verbally at the time) that the matter was urgent and supported the application to upgrade the condition of the site. The proposal was now resubmitted to the Salt River heritage Society in terms of HWC requirements. See Annexure 3A

10.2 Woodstock Residents Association (Annex 8.3)

A proposal was submitted to the Woodstock Residents Association for comment which they supported.

10.3. The Woodstock Aesthetics Advisory Board (Annex 8.1.) endorsed the proposal and pointed out that they had reviewed and endorsed a similar proposal previously.

10.4 The City of Cape Town (Annex 7)

The site does not fall within the Heritage Protection Overlay Zone of the City of Cape Town. It is however identified as a site of outstanding local significance (Grade 111A). The application was submitted to the City of Cape Town's Heritage Resource Section in 2022 and the comment is attached as Annexure 3D. The City of Cape Town's Heritage Resources Section (Ms Elize Mendelsohn) endorsed the resubmitted proposal.

11. Conclusions

The site is of high heritage value not only for the Cape Town Jewish Community but for the early history of Salt River and Woodstock, of which it is an important surviving early relic.

Repair is urgent for security reasons and to arrest further damage. The security of the site requires urgent attention. The wall will further deteriorate if left untreated causing further damage to the periphery of the site and the environs.

The damp problem in the lateral boundary wall is causing considerable concern to the owners of the adjacent property.

The application has been approached with the advice of the heritage consultant to repair rather than rebuild and to ensure that as much of the historic fabric to be reinstated as possible.

12. Recommendations:

- That the proposal called Report 1 dated 23 November 2018 updated 6 March 2023 "Albert Road Jewish Cemetery Cape Town East Wall Reconstruction Proposal by Tarna Klitzner Landscape Architect be endorsed by HWC in terms of S 34 NHRA and a permit in terms of S 34 permit application, together with;
- That the Report called "Document 2. Albert Road Jewish Cemetery Cape Town North Wall Proposal" dated 6 December 2022 by Tarna Klitzner Landscape Architect
- The recommendation is to be subject to the following condition:
 - That advice be sought from HWC on the issue of whether the stone wall in Zone C should be constructed with a 1.4 mortar.

Melanie Attwell

Heritage Statement/motivation updated March 2023.