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CAPE TOWN CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE: REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE: PHASE 2
PROPOSED FENCING AT THE CASTLE – HERITAGE WESTERN CAPE SUBMISSION

MOTIVATION

This motivation is to be read in conjunction with the attached letter of motivation from the Castle Control Board (CCB) where a summary of events leading to the request for fencing is given. The motivation is also submitted with drawing RM: PH 2/75 which identifies on plan the various portions and positions of fencing proposed.

Fencing on Strand Street

As discussed in the CCB's motivation, the Strand Street side of the Castle has experienced criminal activity and damage in recent years. Although the fencing seems the only practicable solution to this we are concerned with the visual and spatial obstruction that a fence will create. To mitigate this the fence is proposed to follow the back of pavement edge along Strand Street to be the furthest distance from the Castle walls possible and to keep its impact on the walls to a minimum. (Figs 1 and 2)

Fig 1 - Fence to the back of pavement line
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Fig 2 – Fence to end in Strand Street against the existing stone wall on the left

Towards Castle Street the Castle boundary is the edge of the moat. Having a fence hard up against the moat is not considered appropriate. Therefore the fence here is proposed to cross City land (erf 14889), away from the Castle and the moat. The land to be enclosed by the fence (see Fig 3), including palm trees and grass area will be leased by the Department of Defence who will maintain it along with the lawn in front of Buuren and Catzenellenbogen bastions.

Fig 3 – Castle Street on the left, Strand Street in the background, erf 14889 in the foreground, moat on the right

Apart from the more obvious benefits, the fence will also resolve concerns such as the security of archaeological investigations proposed around the original entrance to the Castle between Buuren and Catzenellenbogen bastions, and the theft of spot lights.

The construction of the fence is to be of 12mm ø steel rod to make the fence as visually permeable as possible, but with detailing in keeping with the context. Similar fencing on Darling street was taken as precedent for the design (Fig 4). The proposed fence will however be more transparent as it will not have the central overlapping rods and no diagonal bracing support (Fig 5). A similar height of 2200mm is proposed.

Fig 4 - Existing fence Darling Street

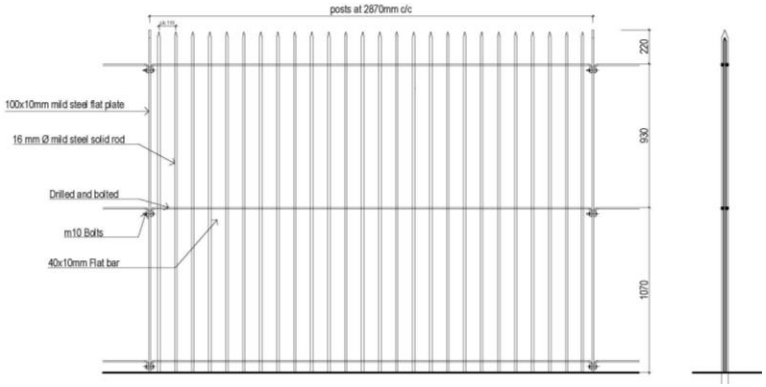


Fig 5 – Proposed fence design

It is considered that mesh fencing like "ClearVu" or standard palisade fencing made of angles or other formed sections will be too obstructive as well as being too contemporary in appearance.

Fencing at the moat

The point of the moat closest to the Strand and Castle Street intersection is the furthest from the Castle without the security of good surveillance by the public. The environment is predominantly vehicular with minimal pedestrian movement. It is therefore frequented by people using it to wash themselves and to draw water for car cleaning on the Parade and Strand Street. The result is excessive dumping into the moat as well as concerns for safety. (Figs 6 and 7)

The street here is close to the moat with the pavement forming the moat edge. There is no space on the pavement for fencing which already accommodates the cannon bollards and

chain barrier to the moat (Fig 6). Therefore continuing the Strand Street fence here cannot be considered. The height of the fence would also obstruct the view of the moat.

Fig 6 – Moat at Castle Street showing ledge

Fig 7 – Dumping in the moat

There is however a need for some restriction of access to the moat and it is proposed that a low fence be positioned on the ledge in the moat which is below the pavement level (Fig 6) . The fencing proposed is similar in detailing to that on Strand Street but approximately 800mm high with its height governed to that of the level of the street. Therefore, unless viewed from near the edge of the moat, the fencing will not be visible. The fence being positioned on the extreme edge of the ledge will make gaining a toe hold on the moat side difficult, so preventing the low fence from being easily stepped over. (Fig 8)

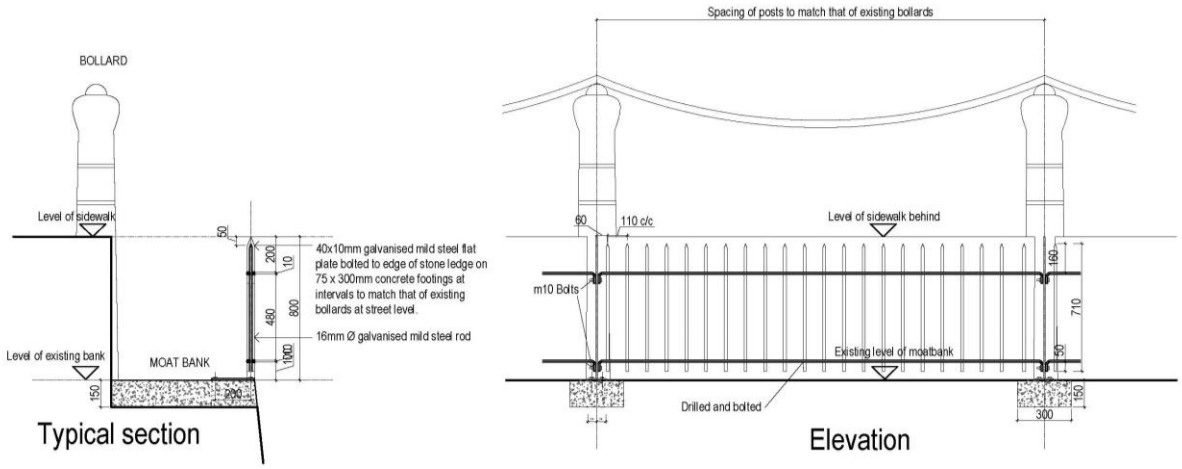


Fig 8 – Proposed fence on moat ledge

The space on the ledge between the fence and the vertical face of the moat will allow access for cleaning of the moat and, no doubt, the ledge. The fence will start at its junction with the Strand Street fence near the point of the moat, and end where the water inlet to the moat breaks the ledge, halfway towards the bridge at the Castle entrance. The CCB will be able to monitor the unfenced continuation of the ledge between the water inlet and the Castle because of its closer proximity to the entrance.

New gates at the Lion Gate

Being able to close gates proposed between the existing Lion Gate piers would prevent access to the public/private interspace between the moat and the Castle walls (Fig 9). The area is currently accessible during all hours and has no surveillance from the Parade side because it is behind the moat walls, and no surveillance from the Castle side where the security line at night is the main gate in the Castle wall. The area has experienced criminal activity because it is so well obscured from the surrounding spaces. A gate at the Lion Gates would impede access and delineate a line of trespass which is currently blurred.

There are no obvious old pintol marks on the piers but there is a recess on the Castle side of the piers where it is concluded a gate would have been housed (Fig 10). An early photograph of the Castle confirms that the access used to be gated (Fig 11). The gates appear to be timber with a simple framed, ledged, braced and battened format with the battens being slats. These will not be replicated as the exact detail is vague from the photograph, maintenance and longevity of a timber gate of this size is a concern, and the notion of reconstruction in this context is questionable. The gates will only be closed at night and when open will not be visible from the arrival side of the piers. They will be simple steel gates with spiked rod infills. The top of the gates will be appropriately aligned with the plaster mouldings on the piers. (Fig 12)

Fig 9 – Existing opening at the Lion Gate

Fig 10 - Existing recess for gate

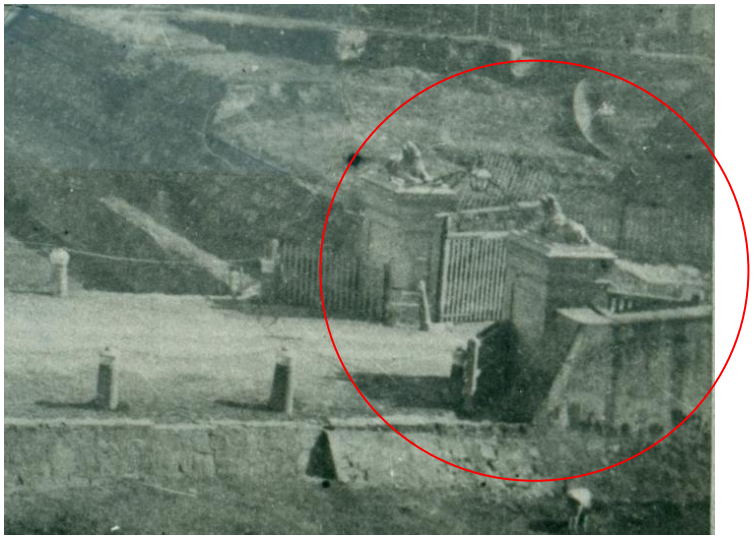


Fig 11 – Old gates circa 1900

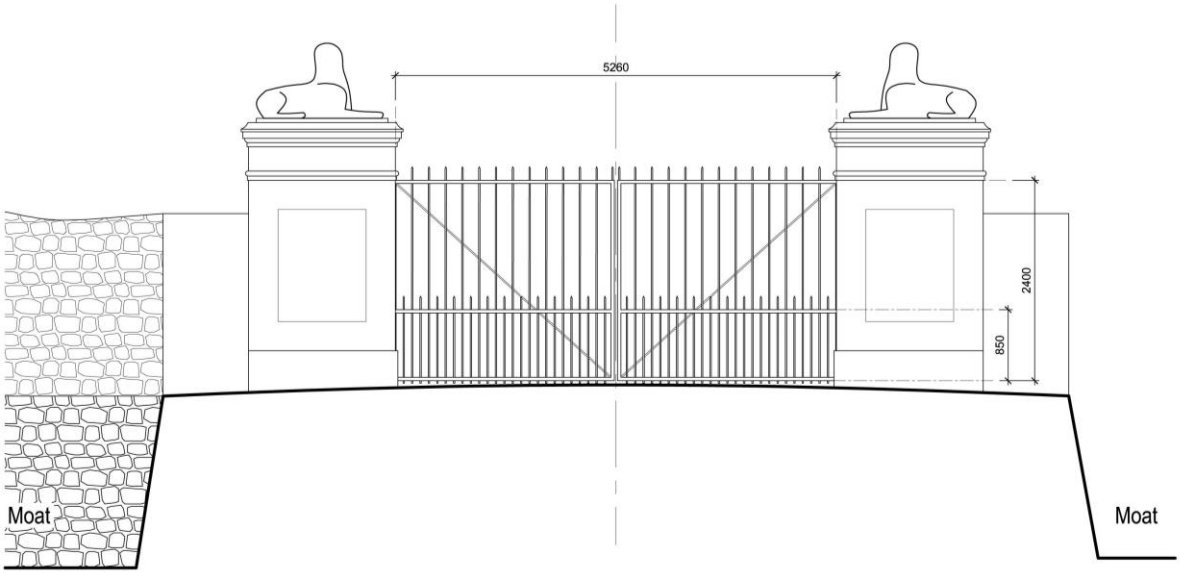


Fig 12 – Proposed gates at the Lion Gate (cannon spurs removed for clarity)

Fencing under the Christiaan Barnard Street bridge on Strand Street

This area is currently fenced by rolls of barbed wire (Fig 13) which is undesirable. It is proposed to formalize this arrangement by fencing with a contemporary palisade fence to match the existing on to which it will link (Fig 14). Existing fencing to be repaired and repainted. The fencing will not impact visually on the Castle as this area, at the back of the Transport Park precinct of the Castle, is removed from it, with no direct visual relationship.

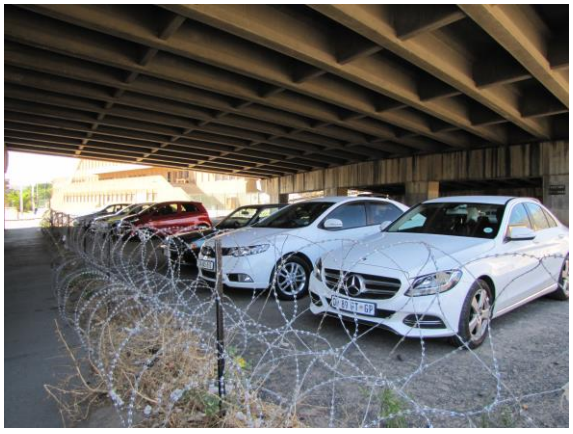


Fig 13 - Under bridge parking

Fig 14 – Contemporary fencing onto which the new will link

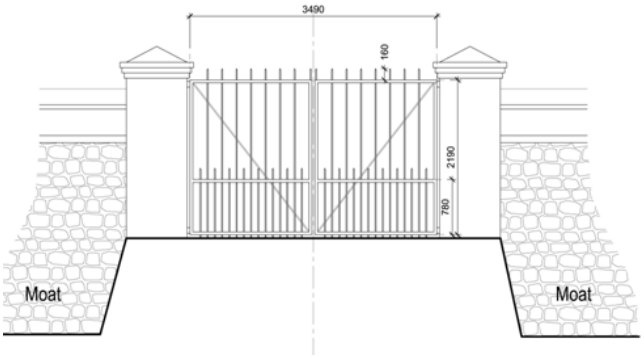
Fencing along the bridge at Christiaan Barnard Street towards Darling Street

The Castle boundary on this part of the erf is delineated by the wall of a double storey building on the Castle erf. A community of vagrants uses the Council land between the building and the bridge/Christiaan Barnard Street, setting fires against the building and erecting temporary structures against it (Fig 15). It is therefore proposed to fence along Christiaan Barnard Street, enclosing the Council land into the Castle erf, which the Department of Defence will then lease and maintain.

Fig 15 - Building as boundary. Christiaan Barnard St on the left

New gate at the entrance to the Darling Street car park

Currently access to the external perimeter of the Castle can be gained from the car park. It is proposed to install a gate, similar to that suggested for the Lion Gate, between the piers at the car park entrance to alleviate this problem.



Repair and additions to contemporary fencing not directly impacting on the Castle

These are indicated on the attached plan and noted as follows:

- Repairs to two parts of the contempory fencing on Strand Street damaged by vehicles.
- Addition of a gate linked to the contemporary Strand Street fence across an internal road in the Transport Park precinct.
- Installation of a gate into an existing opening in the contemporary fence adjacent to the Sally Port in the Transport Park precinct.
- A short piece of fencing from the existing Darling Street fence to the berm wall of the Castle.

Conclusion

There is a variety of fencing with differing impacts on the Castle as a heritage resource. The greatest impact is along Strand Street where the fencing forms both a visual and physical obstruction into the current open space between the road and walls. However, the type of fencing proposed and the positioning of the fence as far from the walls as possible, including building part of the fence on leased City land, is thought to mitigate this concern considerably.

Positioning the fencing at the moat below pavement level is also thought to reduce possible visual impact on the Castle and surrounds significantly.

The proposed gates at the Lion Gate and the Darling Street parking entrance will be simple additions which will however fit into the context.

The remaining new contemporary fencing and repairs to existing has little or no impact on the Castle and surrounds as a heritage resource and in most instances will be a considerable improvement.

It is therefore requested that Heritage Western Cape approve the submission for the erection of:

- Fencing along Strand Street
- Similar fencing along a portion of Castle Street
- Fencing in the moat below pavement level along Castle Street
- A new gate at the Lion Gate
- A new gate at the Darling Street parking area
- New fencing under the Christiaan Barnard Street bridge
- New fencing along Christiaan Barnard Street joining with Darling Street
- A new section of fencing joining the existing Darling Street fence to the fortification berm at Darling Street
- Various repairs and two additional gates to existing contemporary fencing in the transport park precinct.

All as indicated on Gabriel Fagan Architects' drawing RM: PH 2/75