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28th July 2021

To:

South African Heritage Resources Agency

Close-out report for the interior renovation to the west wing of the Old Fort Warder rooms at Constitution Hill, Johannesburg. The space is to be used as a meeting and event space.

CONSTITUTIONHILL

FOR THE MEETING AND EVENT PROJECT AT THE OLD FORT,
CONSTITUTIONAL HILL, JOHANNESBURG



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1. INTRODUCTION

These rooms have previously been renovated under heritage supervision and approval as a Coffee shop. The construction and interior fit-out work completed here are reversible and non-intrusive and allow these rooms to be used as a meeting, dialogue and events amenity.

This event space will work on a bookings basis. Events such as book launches and other dialogue sessions that are in keeping with the precincts principles of supporting social justice. This is an opportunity to get the public to engage and be aware of these historic sites and to create an inspirational dialogue and event facility at Constitution Hill.

The events facility will re-invigorate a unique, historical Old Fort space in line with long term Constitution Hill objectives and facilitate the ongoing integration of Constitution Hill with the surrounding communities of Hillbrow and Braamfontein.

This facility will benefit Constitution Hill for marketing and educational purposes and serve as a resource for the future.

The social justice and public nature of this program is fitting for a National Heritage site such as the Old Fort at Constitution hill.

2. SCOPE OF WORK EXECUTED

The area for this application is 129 m². The room are of a high volume.

The scope of work comprised:

- General maintenance
- Two new openings into internal walls
- Upgrade of ablution facilities to be paraplegic accessible
- Interior fit-out

3. CONSTRUCTION NOTES

General note for all Interior Rooms

Doors and windows have been repaired and painted. All electrical cables are surface mounted to the wall. The floor has been repaired where there were holes and has received a light sand and sealant. The metal ceilings and pine slatted ceilings have been painted, a trunking system suspended from the ceiling now allows for lights to be flexibly positioned along the length of the trunking. All walls, ceilings, trunking and exposed pipes have been painted white.



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3.1 Events Room

Through the making of an opening within an interior wall two rooms have been joined to form one larger functional space. The new wall opening has been demarcated with exposing the steel bottom face of the structural lintol, the horizontal lines are marked by decorative timber panels and the floor is demarcated with a glass panel in the area where the removed wall was. Please note that the floor had to be slightly raised here in order to achieve a level floor surface. The timber double doors and frame have been removed and stored safely.



Figure 1
Event room floor showing new opening,
during construction.



Figure 2
Event room floor with
Glass inset

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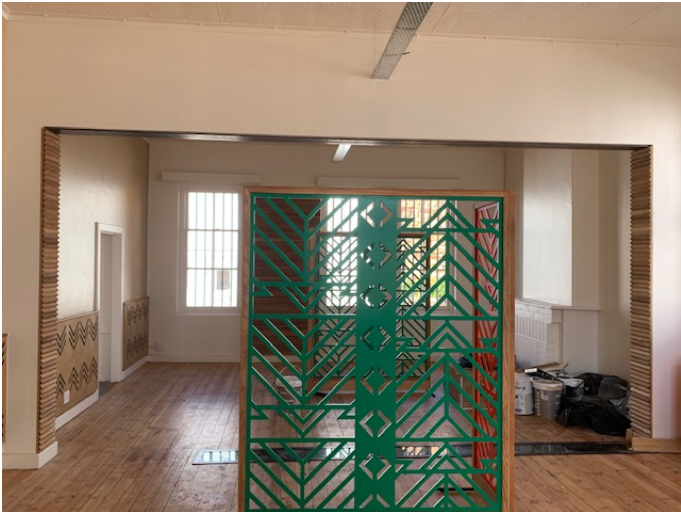


Figure 3
Event room, showing demarcation of new opening.



Figure 4
Detail.

3.2 Foyer

The main item of renovation was to make a new opening to the bathroom. This opening is not marked in anyway. There was no issue with patching the floor here as the bathroom floor is a concrete grano finish. The pressed metal fireplace backdrop has been retained. A new contemporary closed fireplace has been installed in front of this existing pressed metal backdrop. The ability to warm the space using the fireplace reaffirms the contrast between Warder and prison spaces. In order to use the existing flue and to comply with the flue height a new discreet opening has been made into the pressed metal.



Figure 5
Foyer, showing ceiling.



Figure 6
Foyer, showing new opening and fireplace.

3.3 Ablutions

The ablutions have been upgraded as per drawings to allow for a paraplegic bathroom. Tiling was done onto a drywall skin, making it easily reversible in the future.



Figure 7
Tiling onto drywall in the ablutions, during construction.



Figure 8
New freestanding panel and door system.

3.4 Meeting Room

This room was being used as a kitchen. All the kitchen equipment has been removed as have the tiles. The floor was a painted shutterply. This has been removed and replaced with matching salvaged Oregon pine floors. As this is a new floor, three floor electrical points have been installed to allow future flexibility of the space.

The arched door that used to go to the bathroom from meeting room has been re-installed incorrectly – it should have been recessed further into the reveal and flush with the bathroom wall, this has been left uncorrected as correction would cause damage to the reveal.

The wall panels were according to the specification meant to be hung on a gravity batten only, however the contractor has also incorrectly used glue to fix the panels in place. Remedial work was not recommended as it would only cause damage to the wall.



Figure 9
Meeting room, showing new
AC and floor points



Figure 10
Meeting room, installation of
new timber floor, during
construction.

3.5 Exterior

The exterior timber work has been prepared and repainted as part of routine maintenance. Exterior exhibition panels are intended for both the warder rooms and the hospital courtyard. These will follow the Constitution Hill design template as is already configured on site.

The panel text as prepared by Lauren Segal:

THE PARADE GROUND (THE OLD FORT HOSPITAL)

Hospital buildings and a psychiatric detention block with padded cells for 'harmless lunatics' once stood in this courtyard. The hospital served black and white male prisoners and warders in separate 'European' and 'Native' sections, each with their own courtyards. Medical facilities were wholly inadequate. Black prisoners with less serious illnesses slept on mats on the floor. The doctor left at about 11.00 a.m.

A palm tree, growing in an old-corrugated iron water tank, provided shade for prisoners waiting to see the doctor. It was one of the few places where black and white prisoners would meet each other. Black prisoners also received lashings in the open space in front of the tree because a doctor had to be present when this punishment was meted out.



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The Old Fort was closed as a prison in 1983. In 1989, the Transvaal Scottish regiment acquired these premises and demolished the hospital to create space for a parade ground. In 1992, the Rand Light Infantry took over the space.

The brick demarcations show the foundation walls of the demolished buildings.



Figure 11
This image of the old Fort hospital by Chris Reilly is to be on the heritage panel adjacent to the text.



Figure 12
Exterior view of south facade and courtyard



Figure 13
Exterior view of newly painted timber door

3.6 Air Conditioner installation

In order to future-proof the event space the client two air conditioning units to service the two large rooms have been installed. It is felt that with larger numbers of people occupying the spaces for meetings and events that air conditioning will provide cool air in the summer and warm air in the winter making the spaces more usable.

In order to install the two split units, the following penetrations within the heritage skin have been made:

- Two 25mm diameter drilled holes through the North exterior wall for the 25mm drainage pipe. (see north elevation)
- Two drilled holes through the ceiling into the void for the refrigerant piping (50mm) (see section)

The Refrigerant piping goes through an existing defunct kitchen extraction duct that sits on the roof. The condenser units are placed on the inner face of the North Parapet, which is over a meter tall and conceals the condensers.



Figure 14
Exterior view of roof – showing hidden AC installation



Figure 15
Interior view showing AC installation in events room

3.7 Wall points

The contractor has made wall fixings to fix a single tv monitor in the Meeting room. This allows the room to function with audio-visual requirements. The monitor could have been



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on freestanding mobile device, but there was concern of theft and the monitor was mounted to the wall.

The contractor will make fixings to the wall for art works. One wall fixings per artwork will be made using an anti-theft system, These fixings will remain on all walls at ideal art heights and will act as infrastructure even if the art works change.

4. STORAGE OF HERITAGE BUILDING MATERIALS

As per discussion with SAHRA, the client is advised to form a system that holds an inventory of all Heritage architectural and building components removed during renovations. Such an inventory would contribute towards a development of a Conservation management plan for the precinct. Such an inventory should include a list of service providers and attic stock of products used during renovation and maintenance work.

4.1 Inventory of items removed and stored:

- Bricks removed have been cleaned and stored in storeroom in the Super basement.
- The timber double door and frame with handle has been stored in another storeroom.



Figure 16
Door that was removed from Event room, stored on site.



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Figure 17
Bricks that were removed from internal walls, stored on site.

5. PROJECT TEAM AND CONTACT DETAILS

Heritage Architect:

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Specialist timber flooring contractor:

I R E Services

Air Conditioning contractor: Midrand Air-Group

Phone: 012 661 2211
Email: bradley@midrandac.co.za



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6. ATTIC STOCK LIST

- PAINT
- FLOOR SEALANT
Existing timber: 2 coats primer and 2 coats sealant: Lobadur VIVA
New timber: 2-part commercial Lobadur WSK Duo
Deck: Rystix Armadek
- TILES

7. CONCLUSION

The two new openings have made the space functional for future use. The two rooms act as one larger room as a viable dialogue and event space. The other opening has made the bathroom paraplegic accessible. The principle around the making of the two openings is reversible. All removed bricks are safely stored away so that if in the future it is decided to reinstate these walls, they will be able to achieve this. The openings do not reach ceiling height and so do not affect the ceiling in any way and the separate identities of the two rooms are retained. The interior of the rooms are furnished and decorated to make the spaces function as an event and dialogue space. All furniture are loose pieces and not fixed.

8. PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD

The photographs are organized according to the four main rooms:

- Event Room
- Foyer
- Ablutions
- Meeting room

Each space is photographically documented, and the following items are checked:

- area of renovation work
- doors and windows
- walls
- features
- floor
- ceiling



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EVENT ROOM



Figure 18
Event room looking Southeast



Figure 19
Event room looking North



Figure 20
Event room looking West

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FOYER



Figure 21
Foyer, looking North-west, new fireplace fitted at original fire surround. Fire place specification: Nero by Hydrofire.co.za, 39.8 x 51.5 x 65cm 150mm flue diameter



Figure 22
Foyer, looking North-west, new fireplace fitted at original fire surround



Figure 23
Foyer, looking South-east

ABLUTIONS



Figure 24
Ablutions, Urinal cubicle



Figure 25
Ablutions, interior view of paraplegic stall



Figure 26
Ablutions, interior view of wall and stall panels



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MEETING ROOM



Figure 27
Meeting room, looking South-east