
Conservation document for house 38 Church Street

Management: Site
Conservation
APMHS
University of the
Western Cape

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House 38 Integrated Conservation Management Plan

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Introduction

House 38 Church Street the attached building and the associated landscapes are located along Church Street next to the Garrison church opposite John Craig Hall. The site is in the village precinct on the south eastern part of Robben Island.

The Maximum Security Prison period is held by the Robben Island Museum Integrated Conservation and Management plan of 2007 – 2012 document as the lens through which other layers of Robben Island history must be seen.

The site has a long history in that it is associated with the old prison guards' house in the 1840's, the male hospital ward in the 1860's, dwelling place for staff in the 1890's, swans dwelling in the 1940's, primary school in the 1950's, dart hall, library, lecture hall, gym and staff dwelling. All these relate to the hospital period, the second Great War, Maximum Security Prison and the Museum periods.

The multiplicity of the layers of history of the site presents the researcher with difficulty as the different periods left marks on the buildings and the landscape. In fact the building and landscape get reconfigured to suit the needs of each period. The house in itself is a dwelling place for staff while the attached building is a poorly equipped gym for residents.

Methodology

The research includes document inquiry and site visits. The research is informed by consultation with the Robben Island Museum Integrated Conservation Management Plan, the SAHRA library documents and the RIM library. Over and above that, site visits have been undertaken and images of the site have been captured. The time that was given for the research was enough but was clouded by the range of other equally important tasks that are a requirement to the course.

The research material does not have images that were taken inside the building and the detailed images of the associated landscape. This is due to the amount of time that was taken to conduct the site visit and the adequacy of the resources that were at the researcher's disposal at the time.

All matters of costing have not been included in this exercise because it is the opinion of the researcher that the office of the CFO is better equipped to deal with the matter.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND STATE OF CONSERVATION DATA SHEET BUILDINGS

SITE NAME: House 38 Church Street and attached building

DATE: 14 April 2013

NAME OF SURVEYOR: Luvuyo Ndzozo

CONTACT DETAILS: 0836296319

GENERAL STATE OF CONSERVATION:

The building is situated in the Village of Robben Island next to the Garrison Church on the northern side, the WWII houses on the southern side and is opposite the John Craig Hall along Church Street. It is currently used as a dwelling place for Robben Island Museum staff. This small stone house is in a liveable condition generally. Its surroundings like the grounds, fences and the attached building need considerable attention. Apart from its small size that makes it unique among the buildings in its vicinity, it looks strikingly beautiful, original and intact.

The attached building is in a state of neglect even though part of it is currently used as a gym by residents. There are a number of things to be considered about it. It is divided into three areas, the gym, the hall and the small area behind a counter that is used as storage space of some sort. Both inside and outside the structure is generally intact in that walls are solid and can be improved if serious attention can be given to it.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher will focus on the small stone building, the attached building and grounds. Again the survey will be limited to the general condition of the two but attached buildings and their associated landscape, namely; fence, pathways, and gardens.

FACADES, FIXTURES, FITTINGS & FEATURES	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	DECORATION	CONDITION
EXTERIOR				
EAST ELEVATION				
ROOF	Pitch	Corrugated iron	Red paint	Good but needs attention (paint and structure)
GUTTERS	Intact fittings	asbestos	White paint	Good but needs attention (paint and cleaning)
WALLS	Solid stone walls	Stone	Stone & plaster	Good but painted plaster needs attention
DOORS	Solid modern door	wood	vanish	Good (might need to replace with Victorian door)
PLINTH	Not visible			
STOEP/PORCH	Small plastered veranda	RI brick	Painted plaster	Good but stoep and plaster need attention (patch and paint)
FOUNDATION	Not visible			

	SOUTH ELEVATION				
	ROOF	Pitch	Corrugated iron	Red paint	Good but needs attention (paint)
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Asbestos	White paint	Good but needs cleaning and repainting
	WALLS	Solid stone wall	Stone	Stone and painted plaster	Good but needs attention (paint)
	DOORS	Solid modern door	Wood	vanish	Good but might need replacement with Victorian door
	WINDOWS	Two 6X6 panes sliding	Wood	White paint	Fair but need extra care filling and painting
	STEEP/PORCH	Unpainted cracked side stoep	Plaster with pebble stones	Stone plaster	Needs attention
	FOUNDATION	Not visible			
	WEST ELEVATION				
	ROOF	Pitch	Corrugated iron	Red paint	Good and needs repainting
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Asbestos	White paint	Good but needs cleaning and repainting
	WALLS	Solid wall	Stone	Painted plaster	Good and needs repainting and minor crack repair
	WINDOWS	1 1 pane & 6X6 pane	Steel & wood	White paint	Good but need repainting
	STOEP	Plastered stoep	plaster		Good
	WATER GUARD	Cracked floor gutter	Stone & plaster	Stone & plaster	Need attention
	NORTH ELEVATION				
	ROOF	Pitch	Corrugated iron	Red paint	Good but needs repainting
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Asbestos	White paint	Good but needs cleaning and repainting
	WALLS	Solid plastered walls	Stone	Painted plaster	Good
	INTERIOR				
	ROOM 1	Lounge			
	Ceiling	Old high, probably Victorian ceiling	Wood	White painted wood	Needs attention (reinforce and repainting)
	Light fittings	Modern with three globes	Brass and glass	Flower design	Good
	Walls	Thick solid and probably 2 meter length partition	Plaster and wood	Light green paint	Good

Floors	Vanished wooden floors	Wood (pine)	Vanished	Fair but need light sanding and vanish
Skirting	Intact fitting about 15 cm high	Wood	Light green paint	Might need to repaint the skirting with a colour breaking paint
Pelmet	Curtain rails	Metal	White	Good but might need to reintroduce pelmets
Window frames	Victorian 4X4 pane	Wood	White paint	Good
Doors	Solid modern	Wood	Vanish	Good but might need to replace with Victorian design
ROOM 2	Bedroom			
Ceiling	Old probably Victorian	Wood	White paint	Good but needs attention
Light fittings	Modern	Metal	White	Good might need to replace with Victorian design
Walls	Thick Victorian & partition	Plaster and board	Light green paint	Good
Floors	Plastic tiles	Wood	Faun tiles	Good
Skirting	Intact	Wood	Light green	Good. Might need to use different colour
Pelmet	Curtain rails	Metal	White	Good but might need to reinstall pelmets
Window frames	6X6 sliding	Wood	White paint	Good but need attention
Doors	Modern solid door	Wood	Vanish	Good
ROOM 3	Bedroom			
Ceiling	High probably Victorian	Wood	White paint	Fair and need painting and reinforcement
Light fittings	Modern	Metal	White	Good
Walls	Thick and partitioned	Plaster & board	Light green paint	Good
Floors	Tiled	Wood	Tiled	Good
Skirting	About 15 cm intact fittings	Wood	Light green paint	Good
Pelmet	Curtain rails	Metal	White	Good
Window frames	6X6 pane sliding probably Victorian	Wood	White paint	Good
Doors	Modern solid	Wood	Vanish	Good
ROOM 4	Toilet			
Ceiling	8 panel pitching	Board	White paint	Good
Light fittings	Modern plastic	Plastic	white	Good
Walls	Painted plaster	Plaster	Light green	Good

	Victorian and altered walls			
Floors	Plastered	Plaster	Dark green	Good
Skirting /Plinth	Visible plinth	Plaster	Light green	Good
Pelmet	None			
Window frames	1 3pane & 1 3pane	Steel	White	Good
Doors	2 solid doors	Wood	1 white 1 vanished	Good
Step	One step	Plaster	Dark green	Good
Passage	Partitioned between two bedrooms			
Ceiling	High probably Victorian	Wood	White paint	Good but needs attention
Light fittings				
Walls	Partition	Board	Light green	Good
Doors	2 bedroom doors one door leading you outside with glass on top	Wood and glass	Vanish	Good
Floors	Tiled	Wood	Tiled	Good
BATHROOM				
Ceiling	Low 2 panel	Board	White paint	Damaged. Paint peeling off from hot water leakage
Light fittings	Modern	Plastic	White	Fair
Walls	Thick Victorian and altered section	Plaster	Light green paint	Good
Floors	Tiled	Plaster	Tiled	Light damages
Plinth	Visible	Plaster	Light green	Good
Pelmet	None			
Window frames	One 1 pane & one 3 pane windows	Steel	White	Good
Doors	Solid modern	Wood	White	Good
Tub	Built in tub	Metal	white	Good needs attention
Sink	Hand sink	Ceramic	White	Good
KITCHEN				
Ceiling	High probably Victorian	Wood	White paint	Good but need attention
Light fittings	Modern	Metal	White	Good
Walls	Thick Victorian and partition	Plaster and board	Light green	Good
Floors	Vanish	wood	Vanished	Good

	Skirting				
	Pelmet	Visible	Wood	White paint	Good
	Window frames	One back window	Steel	White	Good
	Doors	One leading to bathroom	Wood	White	Good
	Cupboards	Built in	Wood	Vanished	Good
	ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE				
	GARDEN	Uncultivated patterned	Sandy soil, plaster, stone and tar		Need a lot of cultivating and maintenance
	FENCES/WALLS	Properly fenced yard	Plaster, wire, hedge and asbestos	Paint, green and grey	Back fence, hedge and painted plaster need attention. Might need to get rid of asbestos for health reasons
	PATHWAYS	Plaster and stone	Plaster and stone	Patterned pathways	Good condition but need maintenance
	ENTERTAINMENT AREA	Fenced with asbestos with face brick on the floor	Asbestos and face brick		Need attention might need to get rid of asbestos for health reasons.

SITE NAME: Attached building to house 38 Church Street.....

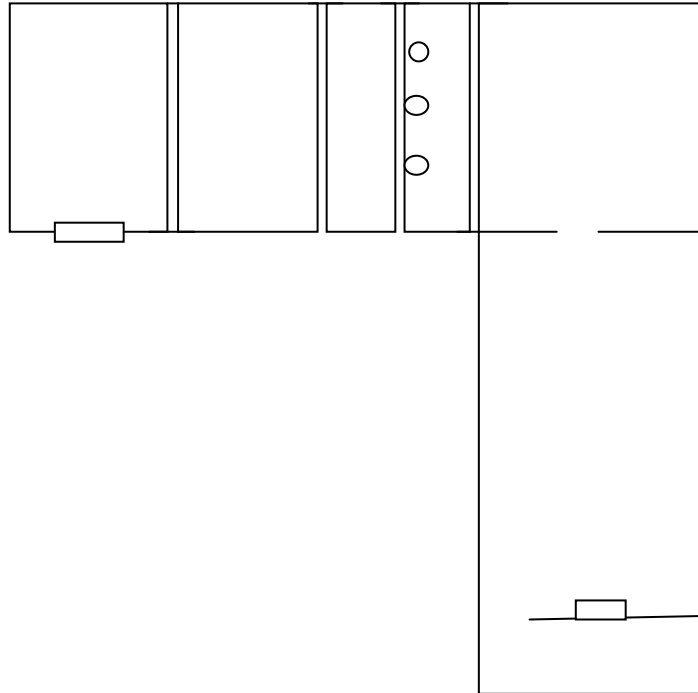
	FACADES, FIXTURES, FITTINGS & FEATURES	DESCRIPTION	MATERIAL	DECORATION
	EXTERIOR			
	EAST ELEVATION			
	ROOF	Pitch	Asbestos	Unpainted
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Plastic	White
	WALLS	Solid painted plaster	Plaster	Faun
	DOORS	No doors		
	PLINTH	Not visible		
	STOEP/ PORCH	Pathway from the entrance	Plaster	Unpainted
	FOUNDATION	Not visible		
	SOUTH ELEVATION			
	ROOF	Pitch	Asbestos	Unpainted
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Plastic	White
	WALLS	Solid thick plastered walls	Plaster	Faun
	DOORS	Solid painted door with big rusted	Wood	White paint

		locking mechanism.		
	WINDOWS	Three 6X6 panes sliding windows	Wood and led	White paint
	STOEP/ PORCH	Water tank stoep	Plaster	Faun & Grey
	FOUNDATION	Not visible		
	NORTH ELEVATION			
	ROOF	Pitch	Asbestos	Grey
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Plastic	White
	WALLS	Solid plastered walls	Plaster	Faun
	DOORS	No doors		
	PLINTH	Not visible		
	STOEP/ PORCH	Water tank stoep on RI brick	RI brick	Grey
	WINDOWS	Four 6X6 panes sliding, one 20 pane & one 15 pane	Wood and steel	White paint
	WEST ELEVATION			
	ROOF	Pitch	Asbestos	Unpainted
	GUTTERS	Intact fittings	Plastic	White
	WALLS	Solid thick plastered walls	Plaster	Faun
	DOORS	Modern degeneration solid door	Wood	White
	WINDOW	One 6X4panes & one 6X6 panes	Steel & wood	White
	STOEP/ PORCH	Stone, plaster and red brick	Plaster & Brick	Grey & red
	FOUNDATION			
	INTERIOR			
	ROOM 1	Gym		
	Ceiling	High, probably Victorian pine	Wood	White paint
	Light fittings	Modern florescent light fittings	Metal	white
	Walls	Solid thick walls	Plaster	White
	Floors	Plastered solid floors	Plaster	Dark green
	Skirting	Not visible		
	Pelmet	Blind rails	Aluminum	Grey
	Window frames	Intact fittings	Steel	White paint
	Doors	Unpainted and painted doors	Board	Unpainted and white paint
	platform	Small painted platform	Stone	White paint
	ROOM 2 Hall			
	Ceiling	High fitted probably Victorian	Wood	White paint
	Light fittings	Modern florescent light fittings	Metal	White
	Walls	Solid painted plaster	Plaster	White paint

	Floors	Intact vanished floor	Wood	Vanish
	Skirting	15 cm visible and painted side skirting	Wood	Grey paint
	Pelmet	5 painted pelmets	Wood	White paint
	Window frames	5 sliding windows	Wood & led	White paint
	Doors	One ½ painted door & one painted solid door	Wood	White paint
	Counter	Open but closable counter	Wood	Vanish
	ROOM 3 Small partitioned room			
	Ceiling	High fitted probably Victorian	Wood	White paint
	Light fittings	modern florescent light fittings	Metal	White
	Walls	Solid painted plaster	Plaster	White
	Floors	Intact fitted vanished floor	Wood	Vanished
	Skirting	15 cm high painted skirting	Wood	White paint
	Pelmet	Two painted pelmets	Wood	White paint
	Window frames	Two 6/6 sliding windows	Wood & led	White
	Doors	One painted ½ door	Wood	White paint
	Other			
	ROOM 4 Side storeroom			
	Ceiling	High fitted, probably Victorian	Wood	Faun
	Light fittings	Modern florescent light fittings	Metal	White
	Walls	Solid thick painted plaster	Plaster	Faun & white
	Floors	Vanished floor	Wood	Vanish
	Skirting			
	Pelmet	No pelmets		
	Window frames	No window frames		
	Doors	One solid door	wood	White paint
	Other			

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FLOOR PLAN



SITE PLAN

See attached pages

PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 1 EAST ELEVATION OF HOUSE 38 & ATTACHED BUILDING



Figure 2 SOUTH ELEVATION OF HOUSE38



Figure 3 WEST ELEVATION OF HOUSE 38 & ATTACHED BUILDING



Figure 3 EAST ELEVATION OF BUILDING ATTACHED TO 38 CHURCH STREET



Figure 4 NORTH ELEVATION OF BUILDING ATTACHED TO HOUSE 38



Figure 5 WEST ELEVATION OF BUILDING ATTACHED TO HOUSE 38 CHURCH STREET

Statement of significance

House 38 was built in the 1890's for the purposes of dwelling nursing staff of the hospital

Primary significance

The house has social significance in that it has been used for dwelling purposes over the decades. That house was home to nursing staff during the hospital period of the island.

Secondary significance

It also has educational significance because it was used as part of the school in the 1950's.

Attached building was built in the 1840's

Primary significance

The building has social significance in that it was used as a dwelling place for the prison guard in the 1840's, a mental health ward in the late 1850's – early 1900's. After the hospital period the building was used to house the SWAN's that came for training on the island during the second Great War of the 1940's. During the prison period the building was used as Dart hall by the prison warders.

Secondary significance

The building has educational value since it was used as the primary school in the 1950's. In the 1990's it was a library and a lecture hall for RITP.

Applicable policies

Robben Island Museum Integrated Conservation Management Plan takes into account all applicable conservation policy documents. These policy documents are recognised internationally, regionally and locally. In themselves the policies were developed by local, regional and international bodies respectively for application in the respective demarcations. Minimal intervention seems to have taken a significant part of RIM ICMP consideration as a pivotal policy statement for the management of the site.

Maintenance management plan

The maintenance plan might need to be factored into the institutional budget with specific focus on the needs for the building and its future use(s) and it might need to consider the following:

Long term maintenance

This is a five years and longer plan that takes into account the needs of the building and its associated landscape. Major structural work like renovations for a new interpretation centre

Mid-term maintenance

A five years and longer maintenance work like renovations and upgrade of the site. This relates to issues of structural reinforcement and refurbishment.

Short term maintenance

- Biannual: This is a two to five years plan where matters like waterproofing of roof, painting of roofs, windows, doors and walls. Repairs and replacement of structurally damaged features are done. Checks, repairs and replacement of signs
- Annual: routine check of systems like fire and disaster readiness kits.
- Semester and or seasonally: cleaning of gutters before and after the rain season
- Quarterly monitoring of all systems.
- Monthly all round checks for defects and malfunctions.
- Weekly
- Daily opening and closing of doors and windows, switching on and off of lights. Cleaning.

Risk Management to the heritage site

The site and its associated landscapes and building need to be protected from any potential danger that can erode the heritage significance of the site and or its associated landscape and the attached building. Considering that house 38 is among the oldest intact houses in the village precinct, which date back to the Victorian era, and is surrounded by other houses and buildings of similar age and those that are modern, is at risk of a number of hazards. Therefore consideration should be given to the number of possible risks and how to manage the risks. Some of the risks considered applicable are outlined below.

1. A tornado eventuality can cause the two tall trees on the site; one is on the eastern side of the house and the other one is on the western side of the associated building, to damage and erode some or other significance of the site. In case a tornado strikes the island the trees can fall and damage the site. Flying objects from the surrounding environment might cause damage to the site especially that it is in a residential block with buildings of varying sides. In the event of this happening on site evacuation procedures need to be in place. Post tornado excavation priorities should be considered.
2. Fire poses a threat to the site especially if it starts inside the building. The floors, windows and roof are mostly wooden and are easy to catch fire. If fire starts from the associated building, which has wooden floors, wooden windows, furnisher and old wooden ceiling, it can spread easy to house 38 because of its proximity and the connection in the roof area. The site needs to have clearly marked signs for fire escape, good fire rescue procedures and adequate fire fighting equipment. But better still the whole island needs a fire truck that has good capacity to extinguish a house on fire using latest fire extinguishing chemically worked liquid or foam. A strong relationship needs to be activated with the City of Cape Town's Fire and Rescues unit.
3. Floods are a challenge for the building and the associated building and landscapes. The doors that face to the west have little barrier to floods because they are not built with a visible plinth of foundation that rises above the ground. The water can cause erosion of the top soil and the movement or destruction of the plastered pathways, stairs and wall fences. The flow of water inside the building might cause damage to the floors and the contents of the house. Noting that the house is situated on a semi sloppy area in the surrounding of other houses, the water can move other items from the surrounding houses and damage the walls or windows of the house and some of its other features. Understanding that the site is on an island, clearly marked signs for flood escape, evacuation procedures and adequate equipment like life jackets, buoys and life rafts might need to be considered. Residents must be trained how to conduct it should it happen. A close relationship with Sea Rescue, SANCOB and City of Cape Town's Disaster Management unit needs a lot of consideration.
4. Earthquakes are a possible risk to the site and its associated landscapes and attached building. The extent of the damage can affect the two buildings by either collapsing them completely or destroy part of them. The associated landscapes might be moved or completely destroyed as a result of direct or indirect effect of the earthquake. The quake can cause some of the structures that are close by to move or fall on the site and its associated landscape and attached building. The one thing the cultural institution can do is to think readiness in such an eventuality. It might need to train members on the issues of readiness and evacuation procedures should this happen. A close working relationship needs

to be strengthened with SANCOB, Sea Rescue, Koeberg nuclear power station and the City of Cape Town's disaster management unit.

5. People can vandalise the site and damage some of the elements that contribute to the heritage significance of the site. They might decide to dig or construct some structures which might alter the site. In that way they might temper with some or other landscape that contribute to its significance. The institution might need to raise awareness about the site and how it contributes to the overall significance of the entire cultural landscape of Robben Island. The importance of the site might need to be highlighted through a story board so as to locate its significant role in the making of Robben Island history. Additional security can also be considered.
6. Armed conflict can cause unpredicted damage to property depending on the type and size of ammunition used. The island was identified as one of the hot spots for military operations during the second Great War. It provides a good geopolitical advantage during the time of conflict because it is sea based. It can provide a weak link should it fall in the hands of the enemy. During conflict the island and the site, in particular, are exposed and can be targeted. The island is made vulnerable by the fact that it epitomises the cultural capital of the new South African order. This means it will need to be covered by the national government as a strategic feature of the country. Its properties will need to be protected at an international via the national database of important heritage properties. The South African National Defence might need to consider it for its sea advantage activities as well. But as a cultural property the cultural site management might want to consider how the use of this cultural property might serve the military priorities and weight its options as a cultural capital. This places everything that is on the island at great risk from biodiversity to built environment, meaning that all important property and objects need to be registered in the national database for protection. A working relationship with the National Defence Force and the National Department of Arts and Culture, in relation to applicable National and International policies during a time of conflict might need to be given more thought.
7. Leaking roofs can cause damage to the fabric of the building and can take a long time before they completely damage or destroy the building and the contents thereof. Constant checks need to be scheduled and waterproofing work needs to be done as needed. A complete building workshop that is sensitive to all the heritage material that have been used in this building might need to be reopened to be strictly under RIM management where appropriately skilled personnel are placed. Or that a working relationship with the Department of Public Works be revitalized under close guard of an appropriately qualified RIM manager.

In conclusion these risks have a potential of destroying the national heritage property if they are not considered. It is important to note that while they might not happen they need to be considered and managed and even be avoided in good time. Establishing a risk alert and management unit to monitor climate change its related risks and other risks might be of good help. For the purposes of RIM, this unit will have to be interconnected with the Koeberg power station, the international Airport, national weather unit and the City of Cape Town's disaster management control rooms and participate in the broader risk management activities. The cultural institution needs to actively participate in risk management of the site to keep it in a good and attractive shape. Local, regional and international bodies like SAMA, AFRICOM, ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM and UNESCO can help the

institution to get up to speed with risk management programmes. It is imperative though that the institution pursue this area with determination.

Visitor management

The house is one of the rear attractions on the island. A small stone house that was built in the 1890's but continues to be inhabited even now. Its minute intact structure among bigger plastered and painted houses and surrounding buildings leaves questions in the mind of an observant visitor. Explained away as the bus goes by can cause more curiosity. A small house attached to a long building does not make much sense if explained as part of other many layers of the village precinct.

Unless explained in the context of a particular layer of Robben Island's history, namely; the Victorian era where there is evidence of the Georgian, Victorian and Herbert Barker's architectures. A tour that is mainly focused on architectural designs of the era can somehow do justice to a tour of house 38 Church Street. Preparing for such an offering might even encourage the museum to take a different glance at how the house is conserved by looking at what help it to tell a story of that era with its associated landscape and attached building.

Up to this point the house has survived a number of Robben Island occupations from the Leprosy hospital, the second Great War and the Maximum Security Prison spanning over 100 years. Its distinctive features of size, the fabric of stone walls and led weighed sliding windows are striking. It surely has lots of generational stories to tell. However it cannot tell that story if not given a chance.

A sign for a village precinct visitor centre can be mounted outside house 38 Church Street. The visitors, of up to 10 at a time, can be given **30 minutes of a self guided** to spend walking in and around the house looking at its distinct features. This will help them absorb the story that is related to the house. Of particular interest might be the associated landscape which left the marks of each occupation.

A storyboard of the house with text, maps, floor plans, drawings and photographs can help to show how the stone house survived over time. It might show how it was altered to suit the needs of each occupation. These might help trace some of the interesting episodes about the house and its associated landscapes and attached building.

The tour will need to have **clearly marked routes** on the site and its brochures. Route 1 can start from the Church Street through the small front gate along the plastered pathway to the veranda and around the house if it is still occupied for dwelling purposes. This route will lead visitors to the back and out of the yard through the back gate to the attached building. On entering the attached building they may enter the gym with the plastered and painted floor. Then from the gym visitors can go through the hall and exit from the hall. Route 2 from the exit point of route 1 and finish at the front gate of house 38.

The gym and the hall can be used as the **exhibition spaces** that can tell the story of prison guards, the leprosy patients, the swans, school children and the RITP alumni. The exhibition can be used as a

way of linking the site with other sites. Different installations audio, visual and video can be used in building to tell the story of the village. In this way the buildings will help the museum to tell the other story of the island.

Continued research on these layers of the history of the island will need to be conducted and exhibited. House 38 and the attached building can give the museum the opportunity of maximizing the use of their buildings and to fulfil its mandate of bringing balance to the other voices. More research will help to interpret the site more accurately. The exhibition can attempt to cater for a **variety of languages, learning abilities and ages**. In a sense the buildings will serve as a new interpretation centre for the museum without constructing from scratch on the island.

The entire landscape will need to be revitalised to cater for gardens walkways and easy access. While all caution must be taken to retain the significance of the site, the site must be made accessible. This will mean the introduction of wheelchair ramps, rails and colourful signs. The buildings will also have to be safe for the visitors and the collection inside it.

In conclusion the visitor management of house 38 Church Street might introduce yet another new offering possibility for the museum. Since the whole island is a national monument and the therefore a museum, the village visitor centre can help answer the tourist who ask if there is a museum on the island. But for the museum it will help diversify the its products and cater for different audiences. The exhibition installations can overlap time from the infirmary days to the museum days.

Site Developmental impact

The conservation management of the site will need to consider a few interventions before it is opened for the suggested use. Considering the state of neglect and the extent of damage on the building, much work needs to be done on the building in order to bring it to a safe and working state for staff and visitors alike.

I have tried to outline the aforementioned interventions as follows:

Roof and painting

The building needs to be thoroughly inspected for structural defects and reinforcement or replacement of some of the structure might need to be considered. The roof must be checked for leaks and must be sealed or replaced. The roof might need to be painted or coating to minimise the harmful effect on human health to protect people from ailments like asbestosis.

Gutter maintenance

It might be good to maintain the existing gutters by cleaning them and reinforce them. Or that safer gutters that can give the identical to the Georgian or Victorian whichever one suits the best architectural design of the building be considered as replacement of the plastic gutters.

Wall painting

The walls need to be treated using appropriate plaster and paint material. Both inside and outside the right paint that is sensitive to the building material of the age be used. Adhering very closely to the chemical reaction of the building material, will help in the restoration of the building's aesthetics and integrity.

Window repairs

All the wooden windows need intensive care and the appropriate skills will be needed to treat them. Or they might need to be replaced with new look alike wooden windows. A fitting paint needs to be used to bring the building back to the era of its origin.

Door replacement

The doors of the building might need to be replaced with the ones that can better depict the eras of the building. Where there is little damage on the doors repair work can be considered. But most importantly the door must reflect one or the other period of the building's history.

Floor painting

All the floors need to be revitalised and be painted with appropriate required paint.

Health and safety

It is of paramount importance that the building be equipped with health and safety features while retaining its cultural significance. Some of these might relate to add-ons on the building fabric itself while others might be portable. The features might relate to structural matters like insulation material, escape routes, clearly marked signs to escape routes. Gear and first aid equipment might be needed as well.

Fence

The fence needs to be reinforced and the walls might need to be given some attention as well. When properly maintained they can help keep out some of the unwanted visitors on site like wild animals.

Gardens revitalisation

Gardens will beautify the place and bring back the attraction the site deserves. Constant work on the gardens can help make the space appeal more to the visitor. Some indigenous plants might be brought back by way of reintroducing them in the gardens for an example. A closely guarded and maintained garden might take into account the attraction of the wild animals that are on site like the deer and rabbits.

Pathways revitalisation

There are noticeable patterns on some of the pathways of the site. Some are beautifully decorated with pebble stones and other materials. The cracked parts of the plastered pathways can be repaired and altered to accommodate universal access as well.

Storyboard installation

While guarding issues of the integrity and authenticity of the site very closely minimal intervention principles might need to be implemented and monitored very closely, this is for the purposes of future educational and visitor management use. It might be important to install storyboards around the associated landscape of the site to provide information about the layered history of the site.

Exhibition development and installation

Carefully constructed exhibitions might be developed for the site. These exhibitions can help narrate the story of the village precinct. Wherein the life in the village can be developed as a means of bringing the silenced voices in the current narrative of the museum.

Visitor signage

There might be a need to clearly mark the village visitor centre for the benefit of visitors with sight impairment and also for the purposes of clear identification of the centre. These signs should take into account the heritage sensitivity of the space and should be consistent with municipal bylaws while effecting principles of inclusion.

Waste management

A carefully thought waste management plan that include signage and bins needs to be considered for such a site. The increase of the flow of visitors will inevitably bring waste along with it. In this regard a simple but effective plan of managing waste is essential.

Disaster readiness

It is of paramount importance to be ready for all disasters should they occur. An active disaster management unit is of absolute importance.

Universal access

The space and its exhibitions will need to be ready for universal access purposes. The universal access principles that take into account the sensitivity of the space will have to be implemented. A multi disciplinary team with universal access representation should be involved in the plans and implementation of the development of the site.

Security

Security should not be an after thought. In fact security experts should be involved from the beginning of the site development. The security of information, the property, exhibitions, personnel and visitors might need to be at the fore front.

Storage

The building should incorporate a storage facility with proper shelving and spaces to secure important material. All the exhibition and related material should be considered for storage even before the building is redeveloped.

Waiting areas

There should be consideration for waiting areas in the site. This will help reduce pressure inside and around the site. The waiting areas should consider extreme heat, bitterly cold and wet weather of the island.

Technology

Exciting and involving technology needs to be used for the exhibitions and the security of the site. While it is useful to have state of the art technology that adds educational value and enhance the visitor experience, it is important to consider local availability of such technology for repairs and replacement purposes.

List of sources

1. Le Grange L et al, 'Robben Island: survey of the built environment', *Robben Island Museum*, 1998
2. 'Robben Island conservation survey', *National monuments council*, 1993
3. 'Robben Island Museum Intergrated conservation management plan', Robben Island Museum, 2007