

# LANGA – MAIN BARRACKS / PSG SITE

## National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999

- General protection under Section 34: Approval of development proposals by HWC
- No formal declaration to date: Comment on development proposals by SAHRA

## SAHRA Nomination of Langa: National Heritage Resource

- Oldest remaining formally planned Black township in South Africa
- Town-planning and subsequent phases of expansion representative of Apartheid ideology and the dehumanisation of Black South Africans
- History of urban racial segregation
- Prominent role in the history of the Struggle for liberation
- Langa Heritage Foundation

## Nominated sites include:

- Street grid between Bitterhout, Jungle Walk, Ndabeni and Bennie Streets
- Married and Single Quarters
- **Main Barracks**
- Main Barracks Beer Hall
- North Barracks
- Administration block
- Migrant Passage
- Site of the former Dipping Hut
- Squares: Maragana, Mendi, Bhunga, Robert Sobukwe



# MAIN BARRACKS

## Original design

A unique complex designed to act as both residential accommodation as well as containment

Situated at the end of the Migration Passage

4 U shaped quadrants designed to allow for short-notice enclosure

84 dormitories, in blocks of 21 – accommodation for 2032 single men

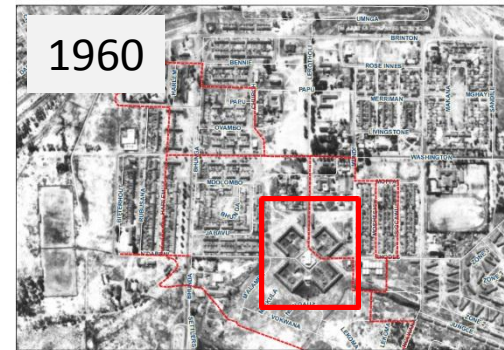
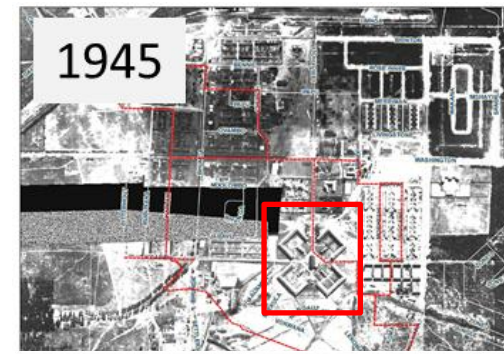
4 separate ablution blocks in each courtyard

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- Representative of a repressive system imposed on Black South Africans
- Significant in the Struggle for political freedom in South Africa
- Importance of remembering the patterns of the past in the endeavour to teach the present generation of mistakes made in order to avoid them being repeated in the future
- Has special meaning to the community in their quest to create a (better) living environment
- Unique and rare town-planning design

In terms of Section 3(3) of the NHRA:

- It's importance in the community and reflecting a pattern of South Africa's history
- Possession of uncommon or rare aspects
- Demonstrating the principal characteristics/world view of a particular group of South Africans
- Demonstrating a high degree of technical/conceptual achievement at a particular period
- Strong association with a particular community esp in terms of Struggle history



## HERITAGE/DESIGN INDICATORS

- The Main Barracks must be seen as holistically. The four quadrants were designed as four identical units
- Redevelopment of the Beer Hall as civic space, with commercial opportunities
- Retention of open courtyard concept
- Design to create communal as well as private space
- Avoid creation of 'left-over' space. Open spaces to add quality to the overall design e.g. areas of safety for children and women



Oblique aerial view of the Main Barracks, facing northward





Oblique aerial view of the Main Barracks, facing southward





Oblique aerial view of the Main Barracks, facing eastward





Oblique aerial view of the Main Barracks, facing westward





View southwards from intersection of Lerotholi Street and Washington Drive



View southwards from midway down Lerotholi Street









## Option 1: Minimal heritage impact

- Retain original footprint with straight conversion = 2 x 20 units
- No development within inner courtyards
- High density residential development outside the historic core:  
9 units per floor / 5 floors = 45 units  
3 units per floor / 3 floors = 9 units

Potential for HWC, SAHRA and City Heritage approval – HIGH

Feasibility for development – LOW

145 family units required to be rehoused

Only 94 units created





## Option 2: Moderate heritage impact

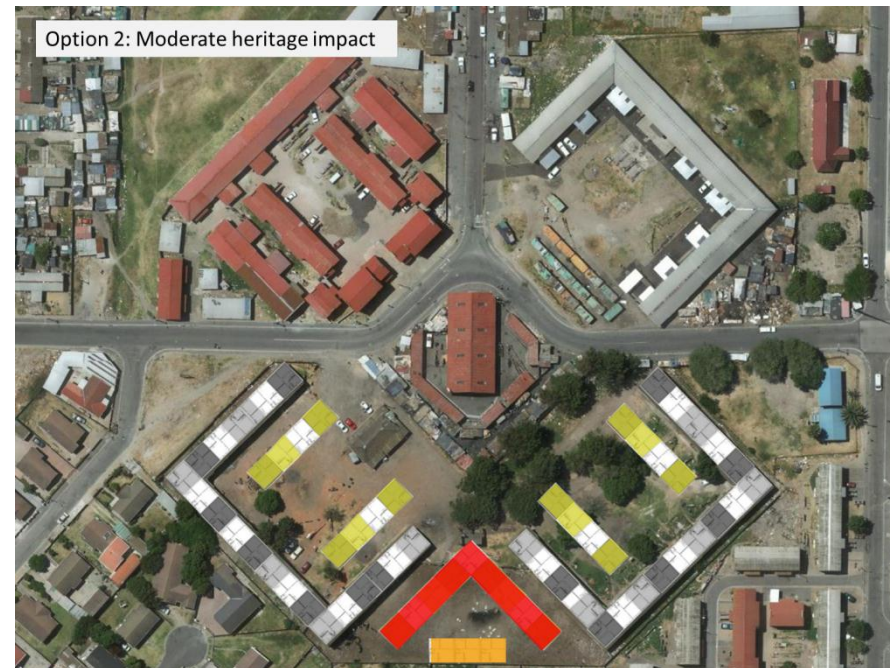
- Retain original footprint with straight conversion = 2 x 20 units
- Development of inner courtyard, similar pattern to Welcome Zenzile  
4 x 4 units per floor / 2 floors = 32 units
- High density residential development outside the historic core:  
9 units per floor / 5 floors = 45 units  
3 units per floor / 3 floors = 9 units

Potential for HWC, SAHRA and City Heritage approval– HIGH

Feasibility for development – LOW

145 family units required to be rehoused

126 units created





### Option 3: Moderate high heritage impact

- Retain original footprint with straight conversion = 2 x 20 units  
Option of mezzanine within the original envelope to be investigated
- Development of inner courtyard, similar pattern to Welcome Zenzile  
4 x 4 units per floor /3 floors = 48 units
- High density residential development outside the historic core:  
9 units per floor /5 floors = 45 units  
3 units per floor /3 floors = 9 units

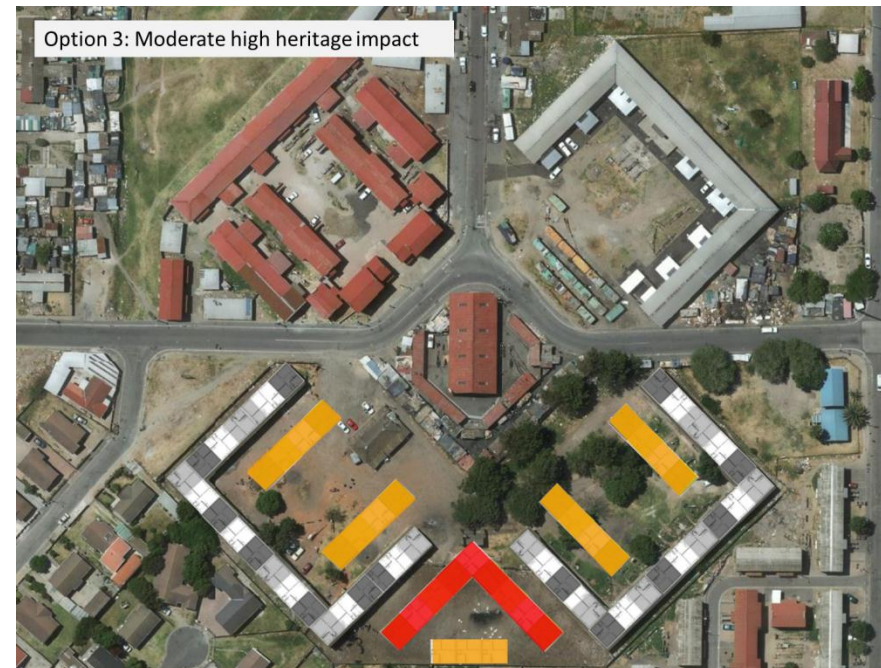
Potential for HWC, SAHRA and City Heritage approval– MODERATE

- Anticipation of resistance to high bulk within the courtyard from heritage authorities

Feasibility for development – MODERATE

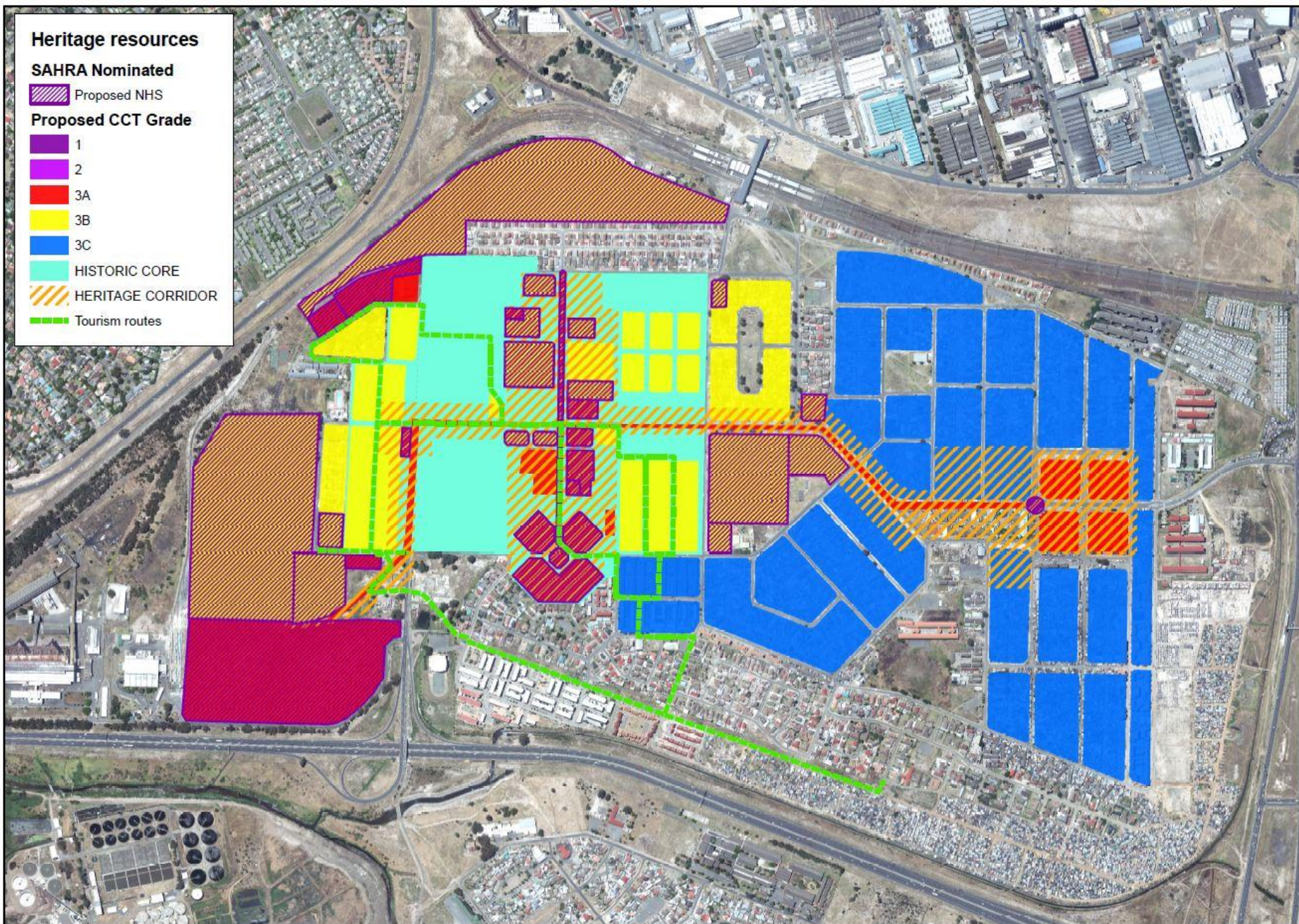
145 family units required to be rehoused

142 units created





# Identified heritage resources in Langa









## ALTERNATIVE APPROACH:

- Implementation of the City of Cape Town's Problem Building By-Law to force the maintenance and upgrade of the complex at the expense of the existing owner
- Develop sites within Langa where the required housing density would be within one of the proposed exemption areas and would not trigger the NHRA
- Costs of acquiring the private sites versus being more effectively spent developing large holdings of land that the City already owns, e.g. Athlone Power station site