

Heritage Report

of 32/34 Buiten Street, Erf 3114, Bokaap, Cape Town

22 January 2013



Buiten Street looking north east towards the city

compiled by Till Manecke - Architect

1. Introduction

It is the intention of the current owners to fix up the existing building & restore the facades to a more context friendly design. The current submission is for a single family home, but the owners long term plan is to convert the building into two separate apartments, both accessed via the alley to the right of the building.

2. Location, zoning & ownership

The property comprises Erf 3114, 141m² and is located at 32&34 Buiten Street, Bokaap.



The property is zoned as single residential and the zoning scheme does not enforce a bulk value for this category.

It is owned by J.Feigelson & S.Goodman and stands empty, while waiting for building plan approval.

3. Heritage status and statutory context

The building is older than 60 years and falls within the proposed Bokaap conservation area. The following applications are therefore required:

- * For a permit to alter a building older than 60 years (Section 34 (1) of the National Resources Act to the Heritage Authority, Western Cape)
- * An application to the City of Cape Town (Section 108 of the zoning scheme) for special consent to alter or demolish a building in a conservation area.

This report has therefore been prepared to establish the level of significance (if any) of the building or site and to motivate both the above applications.

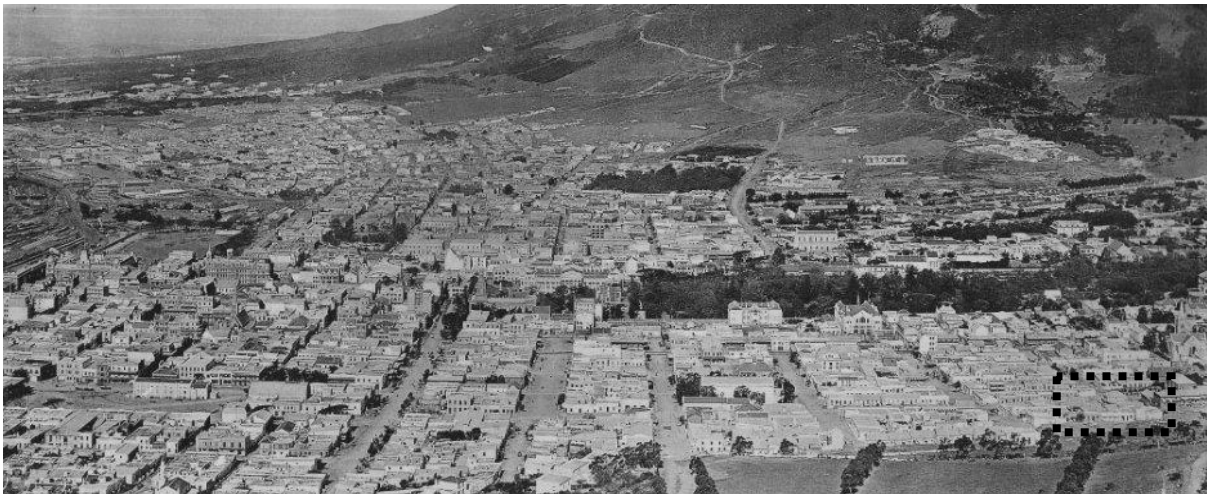
4. History

The property is a portion of municipal land, as seen on the 1862 Snow survey, transferred to J.A.H Wicht on 13 April 1852.

The property was subdivided into the current erf & sold to G.W. Spengler on October 22, 1885.

The Thom survey of 1898 shows the lot to be undeveloped.

The City of Cape Towns records show a building plan submission in 1900, but no plans remain. It is likely that the double storey structure was built at this time, as there is a double storey visible on G.Budricks panorama photograph of 1902 (see below).



The surveyor general diagram, #A1706 of 1925 shows the building outline as it stands today.

The City of Cape Towns records show a building plan submission in 1954, that links the outhouse to the main building.

The Buildings of Cape Town : 1983 has following excerpt on the site:

53.87, 32, 34 Buiten Street
53.88 Dwellings and LEATHER WORLD SHOE REPAIRS

erf : 3114
prop. ref. : WC 22A 33
inspected : May 1983
record : 432, 1901–R Esdon for Mr H Bennett

Double storey, 2-bay. Plastered brick.
Ground : early timber shop trim, ovolo mould door frames.
First : modern steel windows, evidence of balcony and verandah now removed (shown in 1901 proposal with cast-iron columns, balustrade), hipped corrugated iron roof.



500.3

5. Description

The walls are constructed with raw clay bricks, plastered and painted. The floors are timber, although the ground floor is now mostly screeded concrete. The roof is corrugated sheeting on timber trusses (main roof) pitching in 4 directions, with mono pitch corrugated sheeting roofs on beams on the lean-to back section and outhouse.

The windows would have been timber sash windows, but only one with cottage pane subdivision remains in the stairwell. It doesn't seem like an original window either, given its good condition. The rest have been replaced by steel & timber windows and the original window proportions have not been kept.

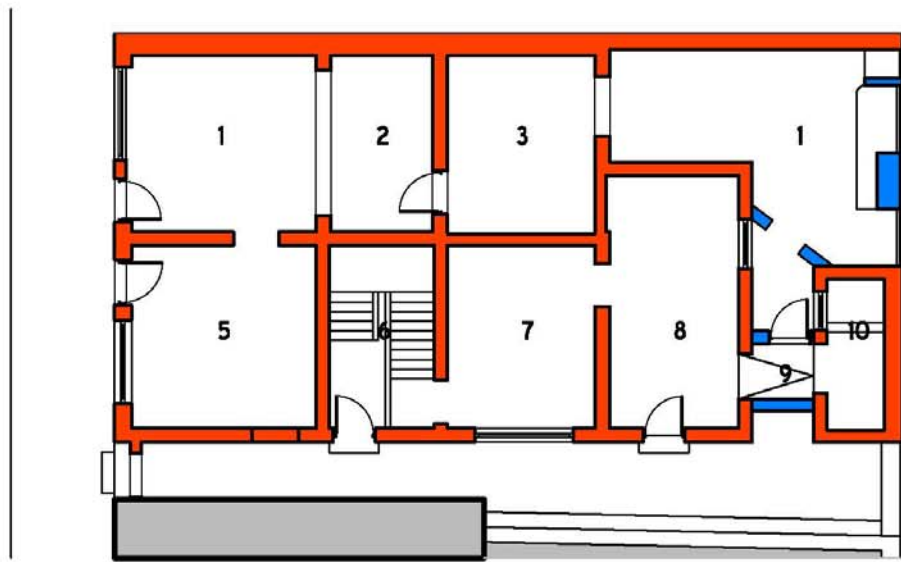
There is a courtyard at the back of the building and an alley to the right.





Buiten Street looking west, up from Buitengragt Street

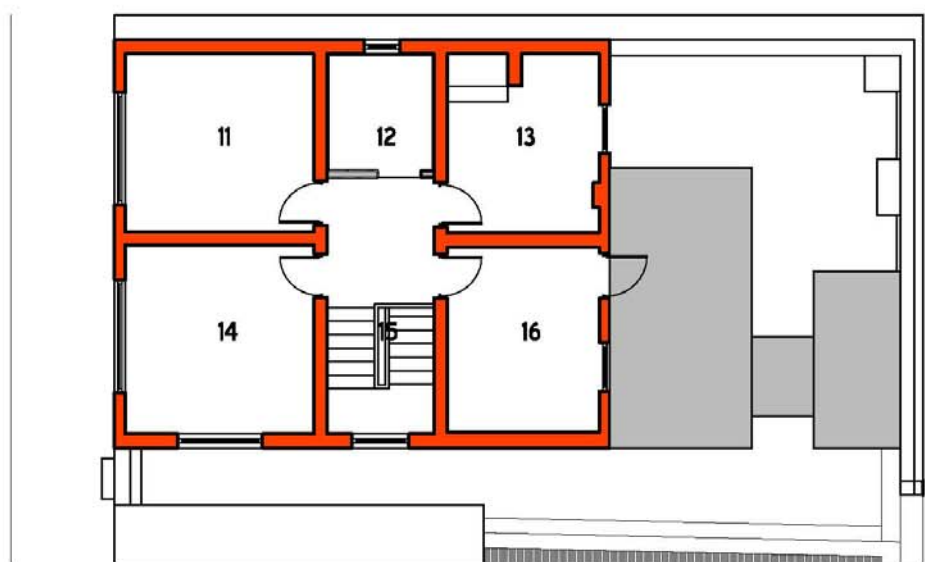
The building is not really in keeping with its immediate context in terms of shape, scale and style. It was likely a Georgian design and its the only double storey building on its side of the city block. There is a similarly proportioned Georgian building on the corner of Buitengragt and Upper Leeuwen Streets.

As the following plans indicate, the structure of the building is largely intact and it is the wall openings for windows & doors that appear to have been changed on a number of occasions.



GROUND FLOOR nts

-  probably built 1900-1902, but definitely in place by 1925
-  additions of 1954



FIRST FLOOR nts



Room 1 & 2



Room 5

The interior of the ground floor has been modified and changed and apart from the staircase, one door frame/architrave, some ceilings and the position of the main walls, not much of the original fabric is obviously apparent. Only room 7 still has timber floors.



Room 3



Room 7

The window & door openings have mostly been changed and in some cases the previous positions are partly visible (see Room 3 door above).

The first floor, on the other hand is in relatively good condition and the interior reflects the common Victorian style. Wide Oregon pine floorboards & skirtings, Oregon architraves & door frames as well as t&g ceiling boards & cornices. Only the facades and window openings have been altered and changed in an unsympathetic manner.



Room 6 stairwell



Room 16



Room 13



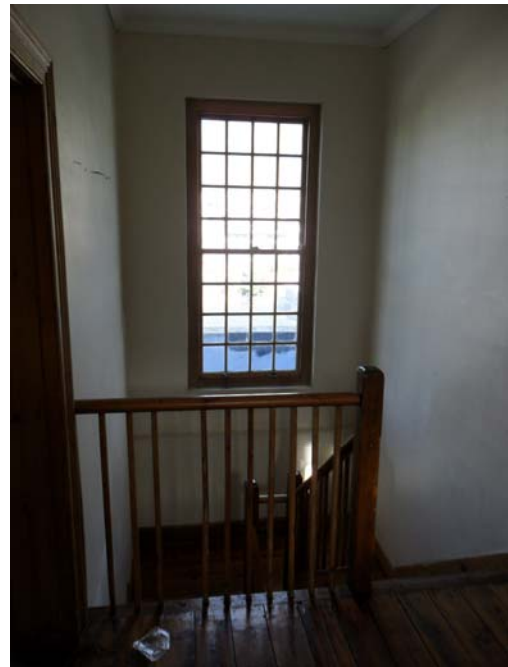
Room 15 Landing



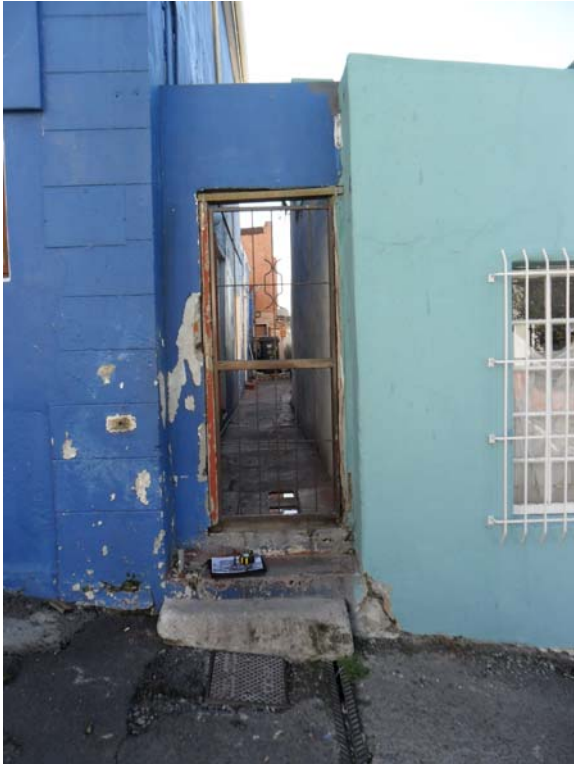
Room 14



Room 12 bathroom



Room 15 stairs & remaining sash window



Alley to right of building



East & part North elevation



Part North elevation



Out house connected to rear of building



Back courtyard with out house



Courtyard & building seen from first floor

6. Context

Buiten Street was at the edge of the town, at the time the building was constructed. The buildings opposite are mostly of an industrial nature and of another time. There is a terrace of Victorian double storeys opposite along Jordaan Street, the side of which faces the building (see below).



Jordaan Street with terrace opposite looking South



Jordaan Street above looking North



Buitengragt Street & slip road below our site looking North



Buitengragt slip road looking South with a mix of terraces and modern buildings

7. Consultation & public participation

The Urban Conservation Unit at the City of Cape Town was consulted and the proposal has received their support.

The Bokaap Civic Association will be consulted once the proposal has received the blessing of SAHRA.

8. Significance

As the building itself is ungraded, it is officially significant only in terms of its being situated in the proposed Bokaap Conservation Area.

Even though it is old enough to have cultural significance, the unsympathetic changes made to the building over the years, especially the facades, leave nothing to be restored. The most obvious traces of its time, come in the form of the timber floors, door frames, ceilings and the staircase, which are only apparent from the inside. These are however of limited significance, as they reflect the interior of most Victorian houses in Cape Town, of which there are a significant number.

9. Proposed development

The intention of the development is to renovate the building, which is currently semi derelict, and use it as a single family home. Once the proposal receives the go ahead from the various conservation bodies and the city, it is the intention of the clients to submit an application to divide the building into two separate apartments (top & bottom). This future change will not have any externally visible impact on the building.

10. Motivation for the changes

The most significant changes to the existing building are the proposed demolition of the outbuildings and part of the lean to ground floor back of the house. The intention is to reduce the width of the lean to back section of the house and incorporate it into the living area, that is going to be created out of the rooms 3 and 7 and part of 8. This creates a external courtyard and an internal living area that are wide enough to function properly. Both room 8 and the out house room 10 have no externally visible features that show their age and any significance. Their removal (and that of the other elements in the courtyard from 1954) will reveal the packed stone wall/foundation that forms the northern boundary of the courtyard, which is both attractive and part of the character of the area.

Where the walls between room 3 & 7 and towards 1 & 8 are to be removed, their previous existence will remain evident, by brick down stand 'beams' coming down from the ceiling, under which steel beams will carry the structure to a central steel column. This way the original structure of the building will remain evident. The timber floors above remain intact and are not affected by this change.



Room 8 (to be partially demolished) shows no traces of its age or time



The out house (room 10 to be demolished) similarly shows no traces of its age or time

The proposed new facades take the current ground floor street facing subdivision of two doors and two windows (ie: 4 bays across) and changes this to windows only and then repeats this in the first floor facade with Juliette balconies. Consideration was given to fewer windows, but given that the building plan splits the facade in half, only even numbers of windows are possible ie: two or four. The windows fenestration pattern has been adjusted to a cross, so that they bear resemblance to Victorian sash windows, prevalent in the area. The proportions of the openings are in line with the typical openings found in the area.

The existing entrance at the side of the house, into the stairwell via the alley, has now become the sole entrance to the building, as it is not practical to have doors off the street enter straight into bedrooms. The plan layout of the building suggests that this was likely always the main access to the first floor.

It is the intention of the proposal to keep and fix up all the old elements (timber floors & skirtings, door frames & architraves, the staircase) and add to them (eg: finding 4 panel doors to match the existing frames), as the owners see the remaining character of the building as an asset.



The packed stone wall that will be revealed after the proposed demolition