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A Survey of Conservation-worthy Buildings
and Sites in the Central Area of Durhamville
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A Report to the Town Council of
Durhamville by the National Monuments
Council

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INTRODUCTION

CONSERVATION IN DURBANVILLE



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Durbanville is a fast growing town and also a place of great character and quality. The object of conservation in Durbanville is therefore to retain individual buildings, sites, building groups and environments of aesthetic, architectural, historical, environmental and contextual importance and interest, without limiting the use of the central business district.

The buildings proposed for conservation in the town can be rehabilitated and restored in a compatible manner and reused for commercial purposes if so desired.

It is essential that the local authority acquires control of the environment it administers through the Town Planning Scheme and an appropriate clause should be included, which allows this control. The National Monuments Council would be happy to assist with advice in this regard if required.

Owners of buildings identified in this report should be informed of the fact that the creative conservation of their properties is desired in the interest of Durbanville and they should be encouraged to plan for the future in such a way that the character of their properties is retained.

Various fiscal and non-fiscal incentives for conservation are available to a local authority and the National Monuments Council would be happy to advise on this question as well if required.

A number of the buildings listed in this report have been identified for further investigation with a view to their possible declaration as national monuments. We consider that the declaration of the most important environmental elements in a town like Durbanville is of key importance to the protection of the character of the town, not only because of the protection the declaration provides, but also because of the recognition it gives to quality in an environment, as well as because of the tourist publicity accorded proclaimed buildings and areas.

The National Monuments Council would be pleased to advise on the development of a conservation strategy for Durbanville, based on this conservation potential survey.

1.0 BACKGROUND

This report is prepared at the request of the Municipality of Durbanville, who require the documentation for inclusion in their new Town Planning Scheme currently in course of preparation.

2.0 AREA SURVEYED

The survey was conducted in the area bounded by Queen Street, Church Street, High Street and New Street. This area was selected as it represents the region affected by the new Town Planning Proposals and it also incorporates the historic core of Durbanville.

3.0 BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE AREA SURVEYED

The original Pampoenkraal outspan was a meeting place for local farmers and the last outspan for the farmers coming from the inland via Roodezand to Cape Town. The fountain at the outspan, which for a long time provided the local community with water, is in the grounds of the D.R. Kinderhuis (Orphanage) between present Church and Vrede Streets and is at the historical core of Durbanville.

In 1824 a group of Tygerberg farmers requested permission from Lord Charles Somerserset to build their own church. The Dutch Reformed Church was commenced in 1825 and inaugurated a year later. A small village grew up between the church and the outspan and was called Pampoenkraal. In 1836 the inhabitants petitioned the Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, for permission to rename the village D'Urban. This was granted and the new name persisted until 1886 when it was renamed Durbanville to prevent confusion with Durban in Natal. A village management board was established in 1897 and a municipality in 1901.

The first mayor was John King. The village grew rapidly after the turn of the century and a local industry developed. The King Brothers Durban Waggong Works was the most important component in this industrial development and their carts and waggons were nationally known.

Despite the fact that Durbanville has grown tremendously in the past 20 years it retains a considerable individuality and character and the fact that industry is not allowed has assisted in the conservation of what character remains.

Durbanville had its own Court house, gaol and Magistrate from the 1870's and became a Magisterial district in 1970. At present it is a part of the magisterial district of Bellville. The Court house complex still exists

in altered form within the Rust-en-Vrede group of buildings, originally erected in 1850. This house was also at one time the home of the first registered doctor in South Africa, F.L.C. Biccard and the first mayor, Mr J. King. It is currently used as a cultural centre.

Among other old buildings in the central area are Victorian and Edwardian houses in Main Road, Church Street, Vrede Street, Gladstone Street, Queen Street and Oxford Street. These houses are core elements in the creation of Durbanville's character and their conservation would appear to be of considerable importance.

4.0 NATURE OF THE SURVEY

The survey of important items of character and interest in the built environment of Durbanville was raised with the National Monuments Council at a very late stage in the process of Town Planning Scheme revision and little detailed research has been attempted because of the lack of time.

The survey therefore represents a series of visual impressions interpreted by experts. Inspections have also been largely limited to those areas of buildings visible from the street and only in exceptional cases has any attempt been made to survey interiors, some of which are likely to be of importance.

5.0 STATUS OF THE BUILDINGS LISTED IN THE SURVEY

The listing of buildings in this survey indicates that the National Monuments Council considers that they should have special planning protection in terms of the Town Planning Scheme because of their character and interest. Listing does not indicate that any building may be worthy of declaration as a monument. There are however a number of buildings and sites included in the survey which may well justify declaration, but further investigation is required before any firm recommendation can be made. Certainly all buildings listed deserve conservation.

6.0 BUILDINGS RECOMMENDED FOR SPECIAL PLANNING ATTENTION

The following buildings are of character and importance in the urban fabric of the area surveyed:



SPIRO'S STORES : 21-23 Main Road, c/o Wellington Rd., Durbanville

Victorian type shop with hipped iron roof and verandah with round pillars and a low parapet above with a small gable in the splayed corner. The original shop facade in teak still remains.

This building, standing as it does on a prominent corner at a cross roads, is a character determinant in the area surrounding it.

It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



35 Main Road, Durbanville

High character U-shaped Victorian house with two front wings and a stoep with pergola between. The roofs are saddle-shaped and steep with ornamental wooden gable ends and barge boarding. The gables have louvred ventilation slits. The walls have plaster quoins with drip moulds above the windows which are Victorian sashes with external louvred shutters. The stoep has French windows also with shutters. The central door has a fanlight. There is an original fence with brick pillars and cast iron railings.

This forms an important group with the adjoining Spiros stores and is of great importance in the urban fabric of Durbanville.

It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated



LAWN AND GARDEN CENTRE, 43-45 Main Street, Durbanville

A high character late Victorian house with low pitched, saddle roofs covered by corrugated iron and a wing on the right side which has a roofed bay windows. There is a verandah on two sides with cast-iron ornamental pillars, brackets and lace work. The walls have plaster ornamentation at the corners, doors and windows. Originally probably bargeboard decor on gable ends, at present plain fascias. Main door double (2 x 2 panels) with fanlight of coloured glass. Inside there are good quality 4 panel doors and matchboard ceilings with central ceiling roses which are original. Fire places and fireplace recess in kitchen still exist. This fine quality house should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



21 Vrede Street, Durbanville

Single-storey house with saddle roof covered in corrugated iron and a small triangular front gable with a louvred cartouche ventilator. The end and front gables have bargeboard ornamentation. There are two high Edwardian chimneys. The house is extended at both ends and has a verandah extending the length of the front facade on the street side in brick and concrete. The windows are large Victorian sashes and original. The front door has 2 x 3 panels and a three panelled fanlight.

This is a late Victorian house of considerable quality and character. It also plays an environmental role in the area in which it stands.

It is recommended that the house be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



RUST-EN-VREDE (Meneely House), Wellington Rd, Durbanville

A T-shaped main building with 1920's modern replacement Cape Dutch gable and a thatched roof. The entrance has wooden grooved pilasters and double doors (2 x 3 panels) with an attractive Georgian sunburst fanlight. The windows are small paned sashes (3 x 4 panes) with solid half shutters and inside folding shutters. The original building was built in 1850 to serve as a Magistrate's court and gaol, for which purpose it was used until about 1926. It was rehabilitated in 1983. Floors, ceilings and grooved beams are of pine. At the back there is a semi-detached extension with two stepped parapets and a verandah. Another restored house at right angles to this part has been linked to the complex at the back.

Parts of this complex are of great age and the building group itself exercises an enormous influence on the quality of Wellington Road which it abuts. It is already a declared monument.



"MILTON HOUSE", 32 Main Road, Durbanville

This is a V-shaped house with the two wings facing the Main Road. The house was originally built for Dr. Ziesenberg about 1890 and was later owned by Dr. Mills. It is now owned by the United Building Society and has recently been rehabilitated for office use. The Victorian gables on the wings have been altered to Cape Dutch holbol gables and the plaster quoins have been removed. The opening between the two wings has been roofed and doors and windows behind it have been replaced by a modern wood and glass wall. The building is much altered, but still has consider=



20 Church Street, Durbanville

This is a late-Victorian gentlemen's residence of interest. It has a hipped roof, with recent tiled finish, and a wing to one side with a bay containing sliding sashes. The house has been somewhat altered over the years but retains a great many period features.

It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme.



27 Church Street, Durbanville



A double-storey Edwardian building from about 1900, with two projecting wings and a double-storey verandah on two sides. The verandah has fine cast iron columns and brackets and has been recently restored.

The walls have plaster ornamentation such as quoins and elaborate window surrounds. The broad main door has six panels and side and fanlights. The windows are narrow, high Edwardian sashes.

This is one of the best remaining Edwardian buildings in Durbanville and probably built by the same builder as Kings Court in the same street.

The present owner has signified his intention to restore accurately and the retention of this house is essential.

It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



KING'S COURT, 4 Church Street, Durbanville

This is a double-storey Edwardian building which dates from about 1905. The first owner was a Mr King, the next Andrew Murray. The present owners are Dr. and Mrs J. Smook who have restored the building with the advice of the National Monuments Council. The Building has an iron roof and two projecting gabled wings with bargeboard ornamentation and finials. One wing has a double-storey bay window. The walls have plaster quoins and window surrounds. There is a double-storey verandah on two sides with cast-iron columns, brackets and railings. The windows are Victorian sashes (2 x 2). There are four fireplaces of which two have marble surrounds and two have wooden ones.

This is possibly the best remaining Edwardian gentleman's residence in the Northern Suburbs and has been subjected to restoration of high quality by the present owners. It cannot be lost or subjected to risk.

It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and is one of the places the National Monuments Council has decided deserves declaration as a monument.



POLICE STATION, Church Street/Louw Str./Main Str., Durbanville

The Police Station was built in 1919 and is typical of the Cape Dutch revival architecture of its period. A single storey, U-shaped building with wings and tall, Flemish gables and with arched verandahs between the wings. There are also classical Byzantine pillars and arches. The building has large sashes with small panes (24 x 24), as well as round vents and louvres. There are a number of good quality 6 panel double doors and a distinctive tall chimney. The Police Station is prominently placed and a landmark in the Durbanville built environment. It is also in a distinctive and indigenous architectural style and should be protected.



"BUY RITE", 3 Upper Church Street, Durbanville

Next to a corner shop is a small house with saddle roof under corrugated iron and a verandah with closed ends, brick ballustrade and round classical pillars. The front door is four panelled with a fanlight above of 2 panes. Windows are small sliding sashes (6 x 6 panes). The walls are of crudely plastered stone. The loft has a gable door. At the side the window has a rounded head. Lean-to with chimney at the back.

This vernacular house retains much of its simple character and might have been a part of King's Bros. Waggon Works on which the prosperity of Durbanville was for many years based.

It should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme as a group with Nos. 5 and 7.



5 Upper Church Street, Durbanville

Small abandoned cottage adjacent to 3 Upper Church Street and set back from the street. Saddle roof at 45° with corrugated iron. A stoep with iron roof, round pillars and open ends. New steel windows in front and also on sides. Loft window. Lean-to back. Probably originally a thatched cottage which could have been part of the King's Bros. Waggon Works. It retains considerable vernacular character and should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme as a group with Nos. 3 and 7.



7 Upper Church Street, Durbanville

An L-shaped house with iron roof and a front verandah which has closed ends and simple round pillars and brick ballustrade. New iron windows. Glazed door with small pane fanlight. Small-panes sash windows on side (6 x 6). This house originally belonged to King Bros. Waggon Works. It is included in Mr S. Bolnik's priority list of historic buildings.

Despite alterations the house retains a simple, traditional character and should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme as a group with No.s 3 and 5.



2-4 Gladstone Street, Durbanville

A pair semi-detached Edwardian houses with a high corrugated iron roofs and two protruding wings with a verandah between. The wings have holbol-gables typical of the 1920's Cape Dutch revival. The walls have plaster quoins and window surrounds. Windows are modern 3 element units with small panes. Gables have ventilation slits with louvres. Verandah has classical pillars and brick balustrades with precast elements. The doors are glazed and have 4-panelled fanlights.

These houses are typical of their period and in an indigenous architectural style. They have considerable environmental value and should be protected as a group with other houses in this block in terms of the Town Planning Scheme.



SYNAGOGUE, 6 Gladstone Street, Durbanville

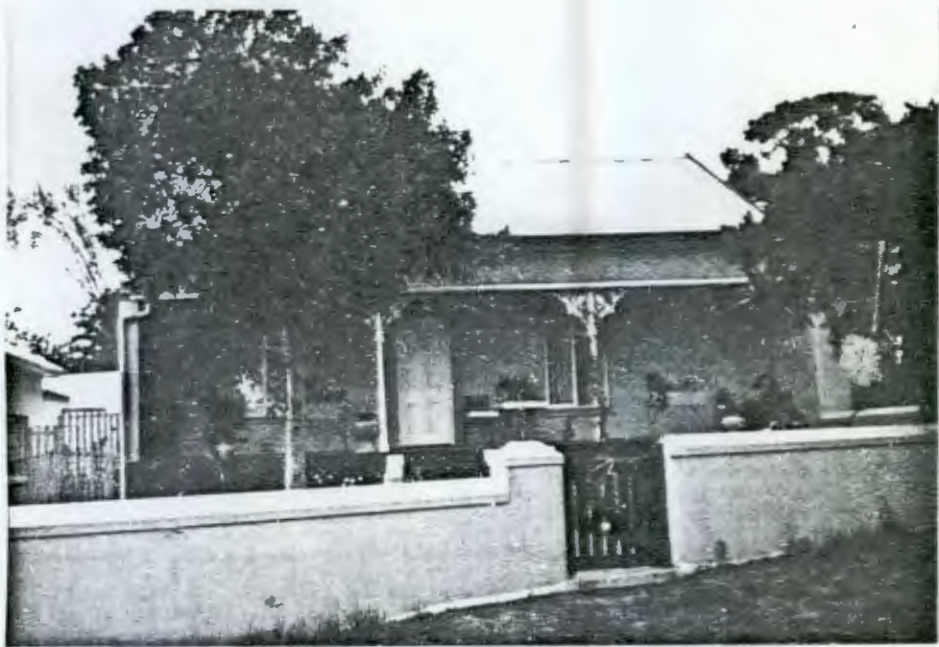
A simple, double storey building ornamented in the Byzantine Revival manner with straight iron roof and a triangular front gable. The side windows and upper floor front windows have rounded heads and small panes. The sidewalls are buttressed. The front wall has rusticated plaster work and the set-back porch has side pillars. Double front doors with glazed, circular windows. The original building dates from about 1875 and was a D.R. Church hall of which only the walls and roof structure remain. It was rebuilt as a synagogue about 1927 and was leased to the Jewish Community until 1954, when they purchased the property.

This building is a landmark of high-character. It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme for possible declaration as a national monument.



12 Gladstone Street, Durbanville

A L-shaped single storey house with a iron covered saddle roof at 45° and a high moulded chimney. The front verandah has been built-in later with face brick. The windows are also of recent vintage. The walls have plaster rustication with quoins and window surrounds. The gable end has a circular, louvred vent with plaster surrounds. The back wing retains its late-Victorian sash windows. This house and other buildings between Gladstone Street and Main Road were parts of the King Brothers Durban Waggon Works and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme because of their historical importance and traditional character.



No. 2 off Gladstone Street, Durbanville

A small Victorian house with iron roof at 45° and raised front verandah with cast iron pillars and ornamented brackets. New steel windows have been added. The front door is of 4 panels with 3 paned fanlight. Verandah has closed ends and concave iron roof. The house was originally built in 1901 as the D.R. "Kosters=woning". It was purchased by the Hebrew Community in 1954.

This is a house of considerable character, which should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme.



No. 4 Gladstone Street, Durbanville

A small Edwardian cottage with a half-hipped under iron with ridge ventilator roof. It has a front verandah with classical pillars, end walls and a set-back entrance porch. The big windows are modern. The door is also modern with 3 side windows. The balustrade is of brick. This cottage was originally part of King Bros. Waggon Works and, despite many alterations, it retains its traditional proportions and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme.



(prob.) No. 8 Gladstone Street, Durbanville

A straight single-storey house on the street. It has an iron saddle roof at 45° and a loft door on the end gable wall. The street front has been somewhat modernised. It may possibly have once had a long verandah. The front facade has recent large steel windows and modern doors with single fanlights.

This is a building of traditional proportions and probably also a part of King's Bros. Waggon Works. It should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme.



Semi-detached house, 12 Queen Street c/o Gladstone Str., Durbanville

An elongated semi-detached house with Baroque type end gables and two smaller gables on the front facade, which also has a verandah with round columns and solid brick plastered balustrades. The roof and the verandah are covered with corrugated iron.

This building probably dates to the turn of the century and it should be listed and has considerable character. It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme because of its environmental importance.



Semi-detached house, Gladstone Str. c/o Queen Street, Durbanville

A single-storey, semi-detached house with hipped corrugated iron roof and a simple covered stoep with end walls and pipe supports. The windows are 2 x 2 panel sashes and the doors have three paned fanlights.

This house probably dates to the turn of the century and has been much altered. It should, however, be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme.



3 Queen Street c/o Beck Street, Durbanville

A large Edwardian gentleman's residence, now divided into two units. It has a modern tiled roof which retains its traditional shape. The roof also covers a verandah on two sides. There are two large wings with 3-bay windows with the bays extending to the roof. The facades have plaster ornamentation, quoins, window surrounds and shell ornaments on the gable ends of the wings. The verandah has classical pillars. There is a new lean-to extension with a large window on the Beck Street side of the house. The main door of teak is double and glazed. This is a house of considerable character which is relatively unspoilt. It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



Between Vrede and Queen Streets, Durbanville

This is a very fine Victorian house. The original building on the site, it is now an office. It is a small, symetric 3-bay house with hipped iron roof and a tall Georgian chimney at each end. It has a verandah on two sides with corrugated iron roof and round pillars. The front facade has a central double door with fanlight and is flanked by bays containing each three double sash windows with external louvred shutters. The erf was part of the property of Huis De Rust, which was purchased in 1860. The other buildings were erected in 1929.

This is a house of some distinction and quality. It should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible proclamation as a national monument.

Die Kinderhuis, (D.R. Orphanage), between Upper Church Str. + Vrede Str.

This building was purchased by the D.R. Church in 1919. It is not known how old the original building is but it must have been extensively modernised at the beginning of this century. The basic L-shaped house has two short protruding wings and a long tiled verandah on two sides connecting the two wings. The roof is hipped with three high chimneys and the wings have ornamented wooden gable ends of High Victorian type. The entrance door of oak is glazed and has side windows and a fanlight with stained glass decoration. The windows are Victorian double sashes 2 x 2 panes with plaster surrounds. The walls are rusticated and have plaster corner quoins. The verandah is covered with corrugated iron and has cast-iron supports, railing and brackets. The entrance hall has a pressed ceiling and tiled floor. There are three Victorian fireplaces with marble and tile surrounds. The house was rebuilt in 1929. New buildings on the site were completed in 1971.

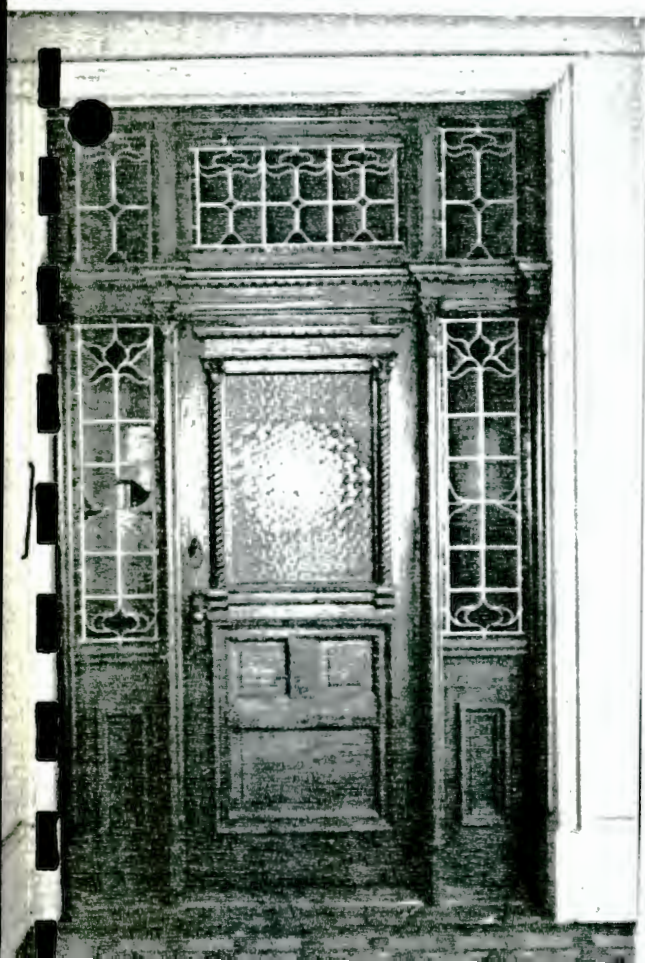
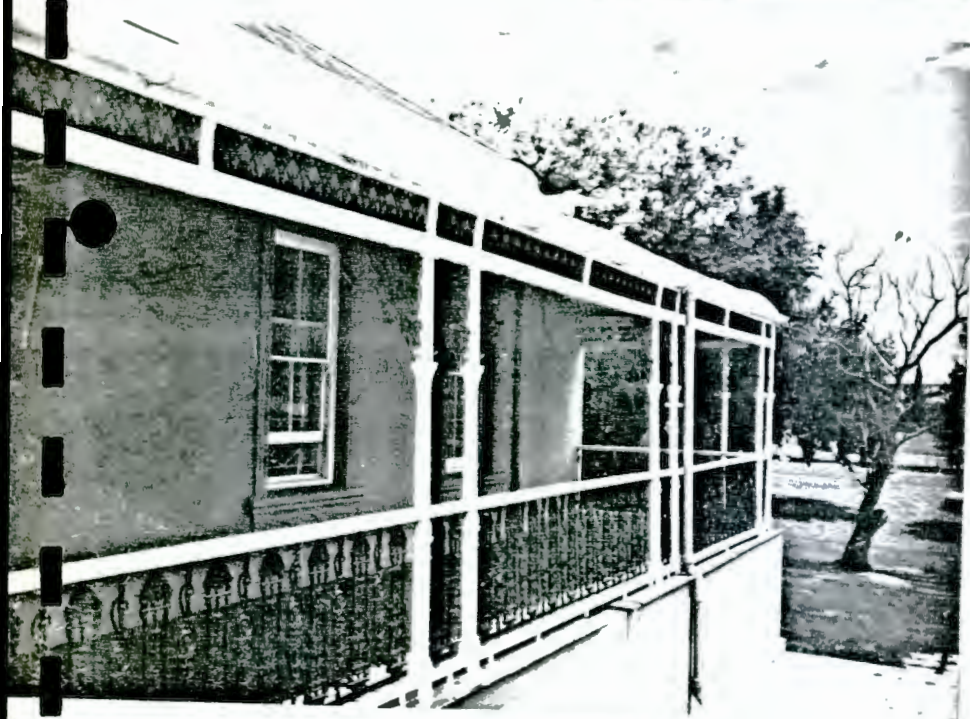
There is a later, prob. Edwardian, house with a half hipped roof, at the back of the original house connected to the latter.

In the garden of the house is the original Pampoenkraal Outspan with a fountain and some large trees. The fountain was earlier the town's water supply and there is still a pumphouse there.

The Edwardian house is of the best quality and high character. The site is also historical, as it is the place of origination of Durbanville.

The two houses mentioned in this report, together with the fountain and the outspan surrounding it must not be lost and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.

DE KINDER HUIS
DURBANVILLE





HOUSE AND CHAPEL, 32 Queen Street, Durbanville

A single-storey house with a hipped iron roof and two bay-windows on one short end. The windows are small pane sashes (3 x 4). The entrance door is set back in a porch (probably modern detail). There is a high chimney.

Next to the house is a small Chapel with a hipped corrugated iron roof.

This house and Chapel should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme.



STAX VIDEO CLUB, 26-28 Oxford Street, Durbanville

A single-storey, semi-detached house with two gabled wings and a verandah between them. The high-pitched roof, possibly originally thatched has corrugated iron, as has the verandah. One of the roofed gables has a finial but both certainly earlier had ornamental bargeboards. The walls have plaster ornamentation - corner quoins and window and door surrounds, as well as decorated circular ventilators on the gables. The verandah has cast iron supports and brackets. Part of it has been glazed. The windows are small pane sashes (6 x 6).

This is a high-character building of environmental importance and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible proclamation as a national monument



20 A & B Oxford Street, Durbanville



This elongated semi-detached house with corrugated iron roof may, according to available literature, be the oldest surviving house in Durbanville and date to about 1835. It probably had thatch and gables. It has a fine 8-panel double front door with an arched fanlight and Georgian sash windows (12 x 12 panes). The verandah is under corrugated iron and has modern steel pipe supports and railings.

This is one of most historical houses in Durbanville and is well deserving of conservation. It should be protected under the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible proclamation as a national monument.



22 Oxford Street, Durbanville



An elongated single-storey house with a saddle roof under corrugated iron and a long verandah under curved corrugated iron with end walls. The end walls are enclosed with traditional diamond-shaped windows. The support and railings are modern. The doors are double (2 x 3 panels) with 3 paned fanlights. The windows are either Georgian (12 x 12 panes sashes) or Victorian (2 x 2 paned). There is a wing at the right side back also with a verandah and double glazed doors.

This house is important from the historical, architectural and environmental viewpoint. It forms an interesting group with no. 20 and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme and investigated for possible declaration as a national monument.



OXFORD STREET, DURBANVILLE

A pair of semi-detached, elongated, Victorian cottages with a corrugated iron saddle roof at 45° and a separate rounded corrugated iron roof for the long front verandah, which has end walls with diamond-shaped windows and cast iron ornamental pillars and brackets. The gable has a loft door. The windows are Victorian sashes (2 x 2 panes) and the entrance door have four panels with single fanlights. The raised stoep has steps.

This pair of cottages have architectural merit and traditional character and should be protected in terms of the Town Planning Scheme.



23-25 Oxford Street, Durbanville

A much altered large late-Victorian or Edwardian double-storey, semi-detached house (now block of flats). A brick double storey verandah and staircase has been added recently. It has two slightly projecting wings with vents on top. Big Victorian sashes (2 x 2 panes). Narrow sashes (1 x 1 paned) on wings. Fine plaster ornamentation with quoins in corners and decorated frames around the windows. Old 9-panel doors in new frames with side lights and fanlighting.

This is a an early 20th century building which retains some of its traditonal forms. It is worth protecting under the Town Planning Scheme.