

**Phase II Heritage Impact Assessment for the properties constituting  
Clairwood Turf Club on portions of the farms Dunns Grant 859 and  
Umlaas 873, southern Durban Region**



*Fig 1: Clairwood Turf Club Coat of Arms most likely conceived of by Woodrow (Photo Author 2012)*

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## **1. Introduction**

Debbie Whelan of Archaic Consulting was approached by Stephanie Williams of Kerry Seppings Environmental CC in order to carry out a Phase II Heritage Impact Assessment of Clairwood Turf Club following on that submitted by Frans Prins in August 2012. The intention was to investigate the history of the buildings in order to more accurately state their significance and motivate for their demolition or retention.

Clairwood Turf Club is situated in Southern Durban on portions of land which previously formed part of the early farms Dunn's Grant and Umlaas. It is bounded on the west by the railway line, which, in the past played a significant role in its social history, and on the east by the Southern Freeway. It is currently located in an industrial area. The intention is full demolition of all structures on this site, in order to redevelop within an industrial framework.

The terms of reference of this report is compliance with the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

## 2. Methodology

Debbie Whelan visited the site on 12 September and met with Mr Wayne Simpson who had worked at the Turf Club for many years. Mr Simpson provided Archaic Consulting with a site map, and assisted in the identification of structures and the location of old photographs. In addition, he was also able to provide a schedule as to when certain structures were constructed, which worked as an initial baseline for assessment.

Unfortunately, there was no information at the Provincial Deeds Office on the early farms of Dunn's Grant and Umlaas, and little information was to be found in the Provincial Deeds Repository on Clairwood Race Course, Turf Club or Hollis Park which it was known as for a time. Further to this, popular and academic literature was consulted, and little information on this Turf Club was found. The Alan Woodrow Papers at the Killie Campbell Collections were also scrutinised, and much valuable information gleaned from these, including a Site Survey Map of 1955 which showed all buildings extant at the time.<sup>1</sup> This became a tool to establish which structures were extant in 1953, and provided a baseline for their assessment. Furthermore, photographs in the Alan Woodrow Papers assisted further in providing timelines for the site and its structures.

Once a firmer set of empirical data had been obtained, the site was revisited and specific buildings photographed in order to be able to discuss them more fully.

## 3. History of the site

As noted, Land Registers for Dunn's Grant and Umlaas appeared not to be scanned in at the Provincial Deeds Office. However, their Survey Diagrams note a rough time period in which they were most likely granted, and the association with the name 'Dunn' has not gone unnoticed. However, it is known that the Clairwood Turf Club started at some point in the early 1920s.<sup>2</sup> Its founders were William Henry Hamilton, JG Hollis and R Ellis Brown, and their names have remained associated with the Club for many decades since. Its proximity to the railway line was important in its early days, as this was a vehicle for the transportation of racegoers. Its situation at the outset was relatively depopulated: the 1937 aerial photograph shows small plots of land on its eastern and southern edges, tenant plots for some 300 Indian market gardeners.<sup>3</sup> From the outset, it is clear that unlike its siblings at Greyville and Scottsville, it was situated in a very different economic suburb. It appeared to largely rely on people from other areas of Durban travelling to racedays there, given that in 1956 its Prospectus read 'Excellent transport facilities are provided for racegoers by way of special trains operating forward and return from Durban Central Station to the Club's private platforms on the Course, and a special service of the Municipal Motor Buses.' Indeed, this situation may have been the reason for its slow development. The 'History of Clairwood' as provided to Archaic Consulting by Mr Wayne Simpson notes that the first stables were only constructed in the 1930s, prior to which horses would be walked across from their stables in Montclair. The 1937 aerial photo shows the stable blocks immediately adjacent to the parade ring, and little else of any major structural interest on the site.

The architect Alan Woodrow appears to have only received his first commission in 1934, and that was for the now demolished Stewards Dining Hall (See Fig 3). From this point, a series of interesting, yet incoherent structures was erected, leading to a contemporary state of rather dislocated planning, with constant erection and demolition of buildings, as well as extensive reuse of old structures.

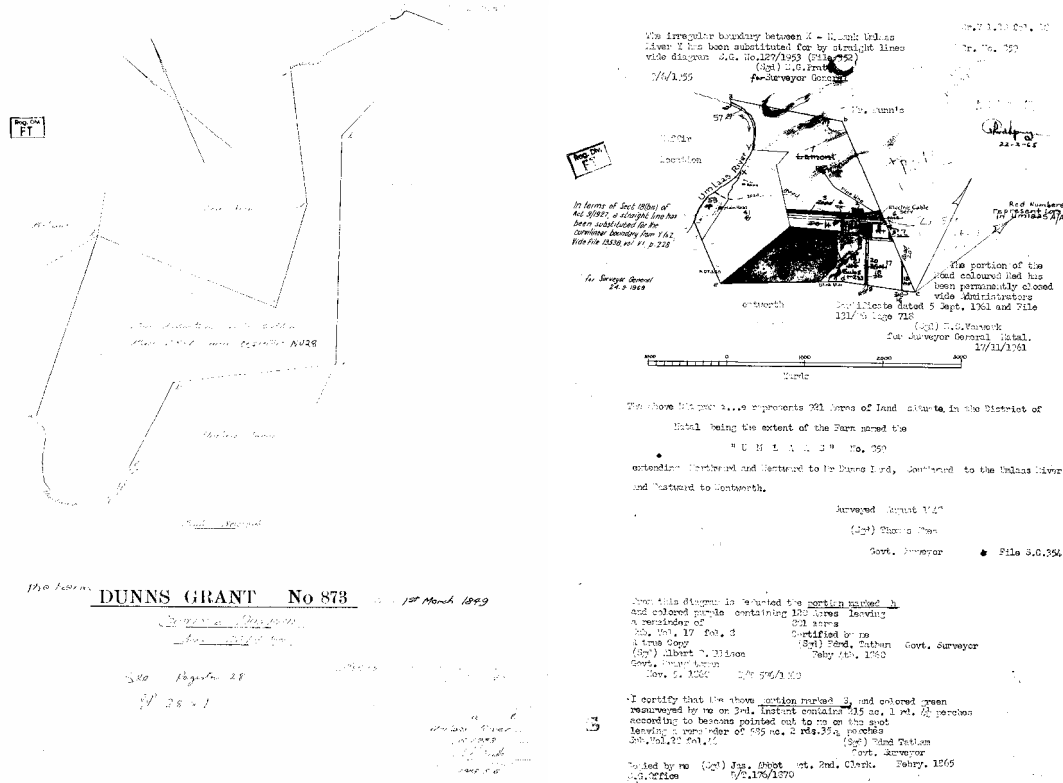
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<sup>1</sup> It does, however, exclude the four houses along the rail edge of the site, which appear to have been designed by Woodrow or his studio, but were constructed in 1953 making them of age to be afforded protection by Amafa.

<sup>2</sup> The Racing Prospectus of 1956 in the Killie Campbell Collections notes on its first page that it was started in 1920. The History of Clairwood Turf Club is more specific, noting the date of its opening as Tuesday 24 May 1921. The discrepancy is most likely the difference between its constitution and its opening for business.

<sup>3</sup> 3/DBN 4/1/3/1053 180E Proposed New Military Camp at Clairwood

The original main grandstands were commenced in 1938, with the Native Grandstand being planned in 1952. These were all demolished to make way for successive grandstands, which, in the case of the main grandstand, was updated in the 1980s. It is also important to note that the edge of the racetrack has not always been in the same place: in the 1950s the Totalisator building was closer to the track, but with the construction of the new grandstands this took a back seat, and was reinvented as a workshop.



**Fig 1: Survey diagrams of Dunns Grant 873 and Umlaas 859 showing their respective surveys in 1849 and 1848.**



**Fig 2: Native Grandstands ca 1953 (Photo KCC Woodrow Papers)**

## 4. Specific site histories

### 4.1 Association with military in the Second World War

Clairwood Turf Club was closed as a racing venue from August 1942 to May 1945, having been commandeered by The Department of Defence.<sup>4</sup> Archival records note that the property adjacent was leased from the Durban Corporation to house an Imperial Forces Transit Camp, more specifically to accommodate Native Corps. Two particular groups of people are associated with it at this point, the Italian Prisoners of War and Polish refugees, both of which arrived by train from the harbour, and debarked at Clairwood. The Polish women were accommodated in the stables. An account by Perla Gibson notes that,

*'I helped on 11 February 1944 to cement the bonds of friendship with another of our Allies – the Poles, represented that day by a shipload of Polish women, 627 of them, who were being transferred from refugee camps in Karachi Kenya, Tanganyika and Rhodesia, to Britain, where they were to join the Polish wing of the WAAF. I did not realise until the ship drew opposite me that they were in a pitiful state, physically and mentally. What clothes they had were in rags and their spirit was so low that they just did not seem to want to react to my song of welcome....What a transformation had taken place by the time those women resumed their journey to Britain! Through the energy and drive of the Major of the Natal WAAS, Hansie Pollack, the Polish women were taken to Clairwood racecourse and soon were housed comfortably in converted stables; were having their morale restored by a small army of hairdressers whom Major Miss Pollack rounded up; and were fitted out with women's army uniforms..'* (Gibson1964:127-128)

Prisoners of war told different stories, suggesting that race meetings carried on during the war. Gregorio Fiasconaro describes his arrival in Durban as an Italian prisoner of war.

*'My arrival in Durban was one of stunned disbelief and intense interest. We disembarked and marched along the quay towards the cattle trucks which were waiting to take us to Clairwood. A most extraordinary thing happened to us on the short march. Many people sidled up to us and, glancing furtively round, hurriedly shook hands or patted our shoulders and congratulated us before melting away. Only much later did we learn that these were Afrikaners and other South Africans who had been totally opposed to the Union's entering the war on the side of the Allies. After a short but jolting journey we were unloaded at Clairwood on a site overlooking the race course . . . The camp itself was awful, consisting of tents and red dust. Next door was a camp of Indonesian soldiers. After five weeks at Clairwood, where the regular race meetings provided some consolation, the Italian prisoners were transferred to Oribi Camp in Pietermaritzburg.'*

### 4.2 Association with Alan Woodrow

Perhaps the most important aspect of the history of the Clairwood Turf Club is its long association with Alan Clement Carr Woodrow, an architect who recorded a prolific 28 separate projects for the Hollis family over a period of three decades, and most likely completed a number of others which are not recorded in his Project Register. Professor Walter Peters notes that he was born in King Williamstown at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and studied architecture both at the University of the Witwatersrand and abroad, before settling in Durban in the late 1920s. His studies in London must have been highly influential in his practise as a Revivalist architect, given the large amount of Tudor and Gothic Revival works that he completed in the early stages of his career. Significantly, he was apprenticed to the Public Works Department in Pretoria early in his adult life, and is believed to have worked on the Union Buildings.<sup>5</sup> He registered with the Institute of South African Architects initially in 1928 and began practise, with his first large commission in 1932 (Peters in HSRC 1981:898). His association with Clairwood Turf Club appears to have commenced with the design of the

<sup>4</sup> 3/DBN 4/1/3/1053 180E Proposed New Military Camp at Clairwood.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.artefacts.co.za/main/Buildings/archframes.php?archid=1929> accessed 04/10/12.

now demolished 'Stewards Dining Hall', in a neo-Tudor style, one with which he was associated with for some years. Professor Brian Kearney notes that Woodrow 'became the chief local architectural protagonist of the Tudor Revival during (this) period 1930's-1940's in Durban' (Revised List 1984: 16:68). However, Woodrow was a devout Catholic, and much of his more famous work is ecclesiastical. His fascination for the Medieval period is borne out also in his passion for heraldry: his papers at the Killie Campbell Collections bear this out and he is highly likely to have designed the Coat of Arms of Clairwood Turf Club (see Cover of report).

**List of projects commissioned by Clairwood Turf Club**  
**(Alan Woodrow Papers, MSWOO File 2 KCC)**

<b>year</b>	<b>Project description</b>	
1934	Stewards Dining Hall	demolished
1935	Proposed entrance to the Course	extant
1935	Proposed treatment for external walling to the ground floor of the new Stewards Dining Hall	demolished
1936	Survey of site and site plans	
1937	Proposed statue and fountain (by Jack Hollis personal request)	Demolished
1937	Proposed lavatory building	Extant – now Oregon Inn
1938	Proposed building connecting the Members Dining Room and Stewards Stand and conversion of part of Members Dining Hall into Women's Lavatory	Extant- much altered
1938	Proposed Men's and Ladies lavatories in the Gold Ring next to the Members dining hall	demolished
1938	Proposed Grand Stand	demolished
1946	Proposed Weighing in building (administration)	extant
1946	Proposed Parade Ring shelter	demolished
1946	Proposed tower for Photochart camera – deciding position of future tower	Not known
1949	Proposed Silver Ring Bar	Extant- much altered
1951	Proposed glazing in of the downstairs to Stewards Dining Hall	demolished
1952	Proposed new Stand for Native Ring	demolished
1952	Proposed room for existing adding unit	Not known
1953	Survey of Silver Ring and Unreserved Enclosures	
1953	Proposed Members Ladies Lavatory block	extant
1954	Extensions to Stewards Position	demolished
1955	Gold Ring Stand <sup>6</sup>	demolished
1955	Comprehensive Site Planning	
1955	Tote Indicator Board	Not known
1956	Native Ring entrance Group comprising entrance styles, Indicator Board, Entrance Arch at 6 Furlong post and Silver Ring Entrance Building	
1957	Additions and Alterations to the north of Stewards Pavilion	demolished
1959	Kitchens and Service Bars at Member's Enclosure	Extant – much altered
1961	Proposed Metal badge Stand, Screen wall at Member's building	Not known
1964	Master Site Plan updated	
1965	Doubles Tote Building Members	demolished

Note in the above Register that many low profile structures are included, (such as the Tote Indicator Board) which highlights the anomaly of the structures known and suspected to have been designed by Woodrow not being included in his Project Register.

<sup>6</sup> By this point, Alan Woodrow was in partnership with Austin Collingwood.



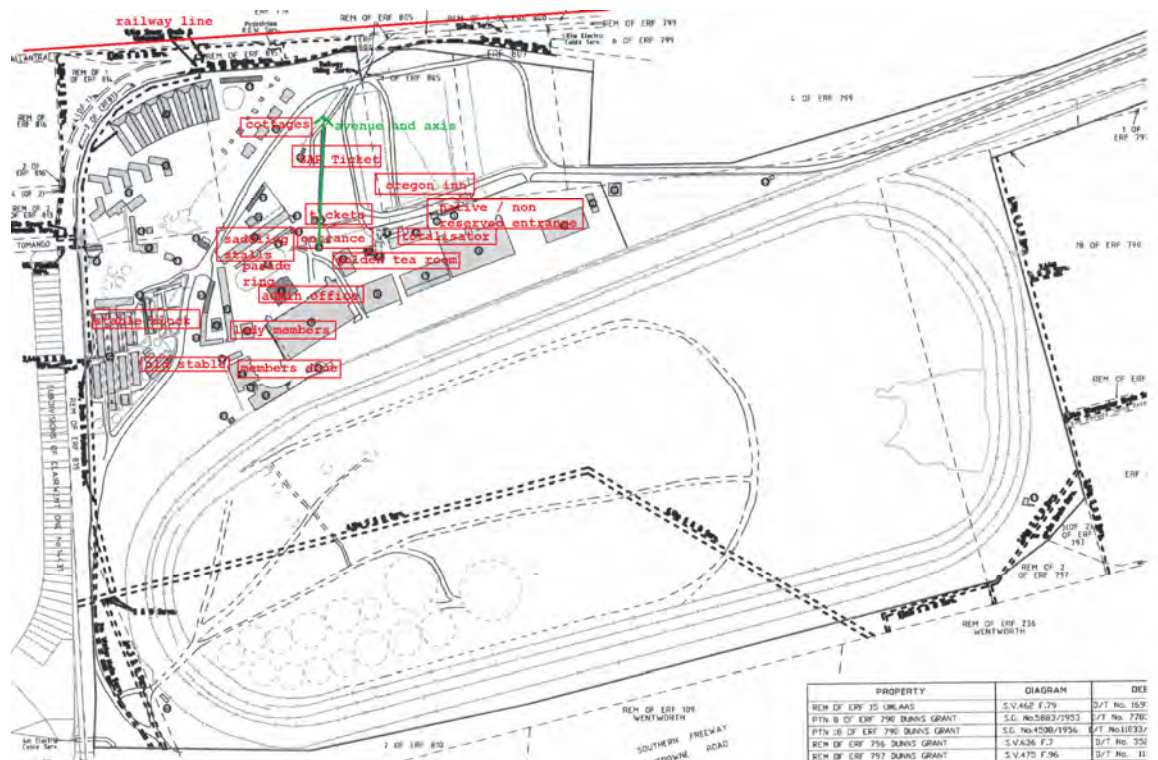
During the Second World War, the practise reveals a dearth of work, most likely due to Woodrow's active duty in which he achieved the rank of Second Lieutenant. After the war, much of his work at Clairwood involved large scale extension, such as the construction of new grandstands and towers. Photographs in his collection of papers show similar structures in Australia, suggesting that he cast far afield for precedent of these large concrete structures. Between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s he entered into partnership with Austin Collingwood. The last structure listed in his papers ends implausibly in 1964, although it is known that he was in active practise until 1972.

It is strongly believed that all of his work is not always entered into the Project Register lodged at Killie Campbell Collections (MSWOO File 2). This is borne out by the fact that his Site Survey of 1955 shows that the 'Lady Members Building', with a definitive Woodrow character, was built in 1953, suggesting a reason why the cottages on the site boundary (see section 5.11) do not feature in this listing. Also, there is no mention of the utilitarian structures such as the stables, which are highly detailed, and with even the more recent ones being constructed in English Bond, a strongly Anglicised tradition which fell out of fashion after the end of World War II.

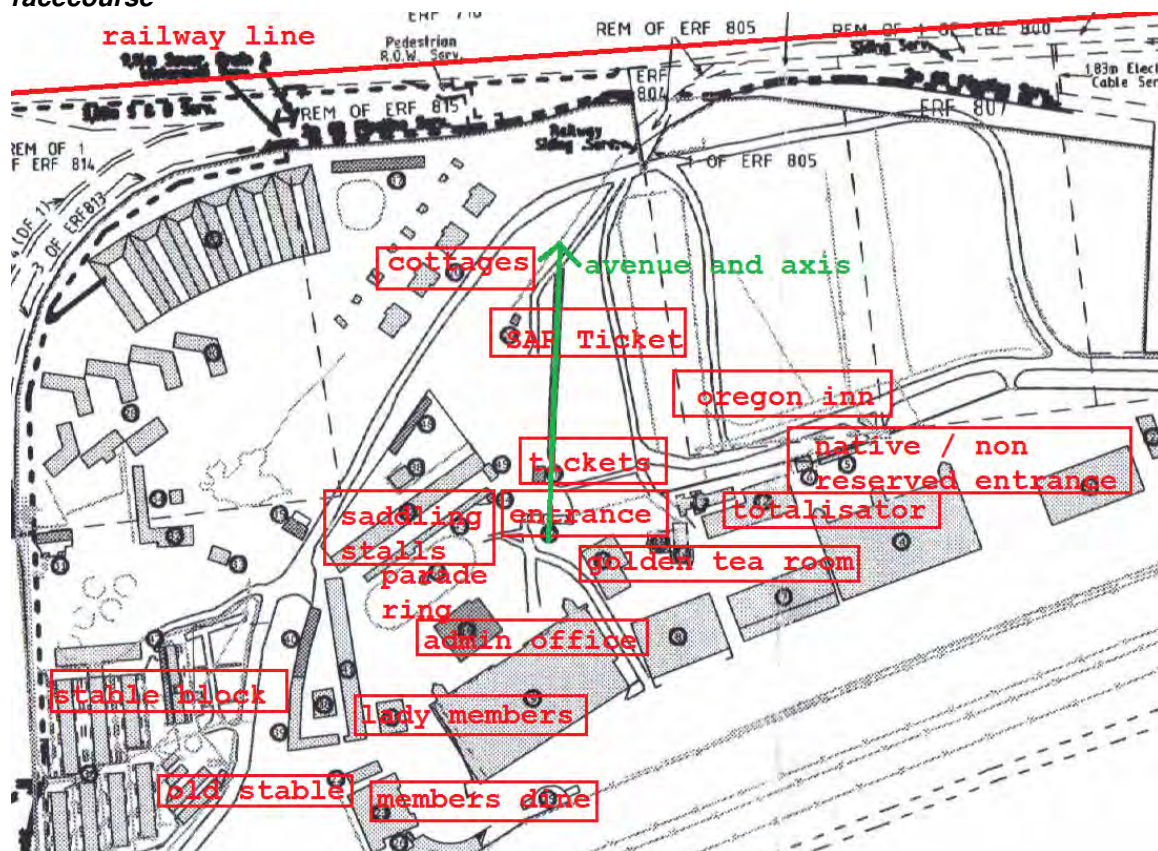


**Fig 3: Stewards Dining Hall ca 1934 – now demolished (Clairwood Turf Club Prospectus 1956)**

## 5. Assessment of structures



**Fig 4: General contextual layout showing buildings and their relationship to the racecourse**



**Fig 5: Detailed plan showing avenue and axis, and significant buildings discussed in this report**



## 5.1 Old Off Course Tote / Old Gold Ring Tea Room / Yellow Building



**Fig 6: Image of Gold Ring Tea Room ca 1956**



**Fig 7. Gold Ring Tea Room pre 1946 (photo on Boardroom wall, Clairwood Turf Club)**

It is not clear when this building was constructed or whether it was even designed by Woodrow. The 1937 aerial photographs show an indistinct structure in its place, which could place its existence to the 1930s. It is a large roof-dominated structure which originally served as a tea pavilion for the Gold Ring. The shingle roof was supported around its circumference by Doric columns. Today, all evidence of this airy space has been removed, with the Doric columns filled in all round with masonry and standard steel windows. In addition, it has had a cumbersome extension added to the north, which breaks the purity of the roof form.

Its siting as a Tea Pavilion has also been compromised over the years by structural encroachments: the new monumental Grandstand which has dwarfed it, pre-cast concrete walls cutting it off from public space and other sundry enclosures. Furthermore, it now sits with a fixed aspect towards the north, and has turned its back completely on the racecourse.



**Fig 8: Gold Ring Tea Room from the north- west** **Fig 9: Gold Ring Tea Room from east**



**Fig 10: Gold Ring Tea Room from the south** **Fig 11: Gold Ring Tea Room - north**

### **Significance:**

This building is much altered with the infill. It has lost its rather remarkable sense of space as a pavilion and currently is alienated and lost within its context, no longer forming part of the main public space of the Turf Club. It could have medium social significance from a local point of view but low from an architectural, historical, technical and scientific perspective.

It was in existence prior to 1952, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

<b>Gold Ring Tea Room</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	medium	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low



## 5.2 Old Non- Reserved and Native Entrance



**Fig 12: Old Non- reserved entrance**



**Fig 13: Old Non-reserved entrance**

The Old Non-Reserved Entrance consists of two small ticket offices in facebrick, separated by a columned space which has been enclosed with plastered and painted masonry and vertical timber slats. It has a double pitched asbestos shingle roof and timber sliding sash windows. It is disused and like the Old Gold Ring Tea Room in item 5.1 above, has been totally sidelined by both the construction of new grandstands replacing the old Native and Non-Reserved stands and the erection of new toilet blocks, and concrete

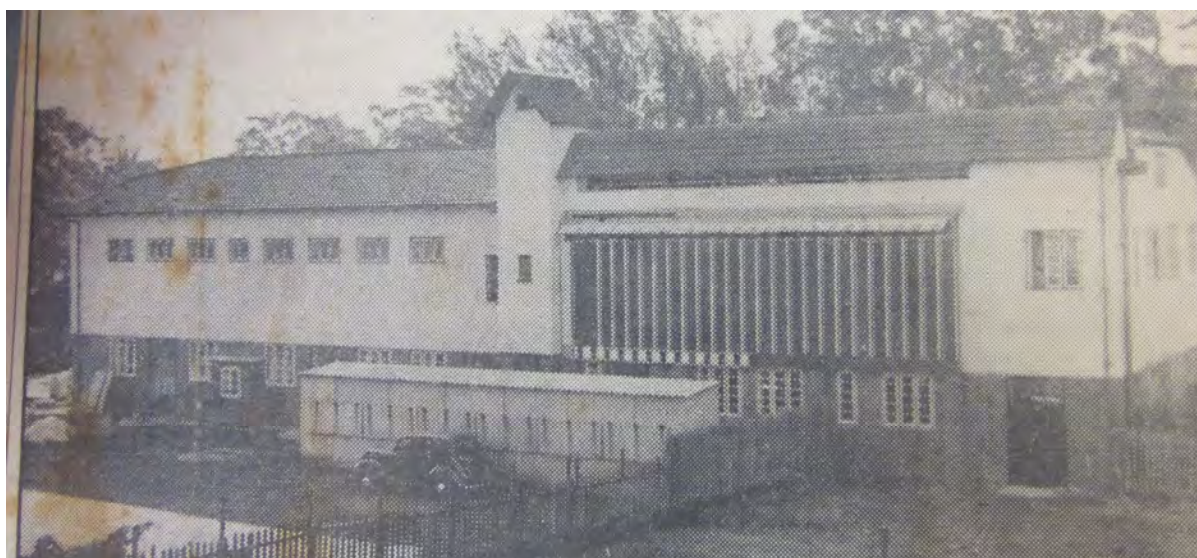
It is suspected that these conjoined buildings form part of the 1956 developments enumerated in Woodrow's Project Register as 'Native Ring entrance Group comprising entrance styles, Indicator Board, Entrance Arch at 6 Furlong post and Silver Ring Entrance Building'. This does not fall under protection of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act in terms of age, but it is noted since it does form part of a layer of history which deals with separation and Group Areas, with African and Indian race-goers a strong part of the Clairwood Turf Club's history.

### Significance:

It is considered to have potential medium social significance from a local point of view but low from an architectural, historical, technical and scientific perspective.

Non-reserved entrance	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	medium	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

### 5.3 Old Totalisator Silver Ring Building and / Current day workshop



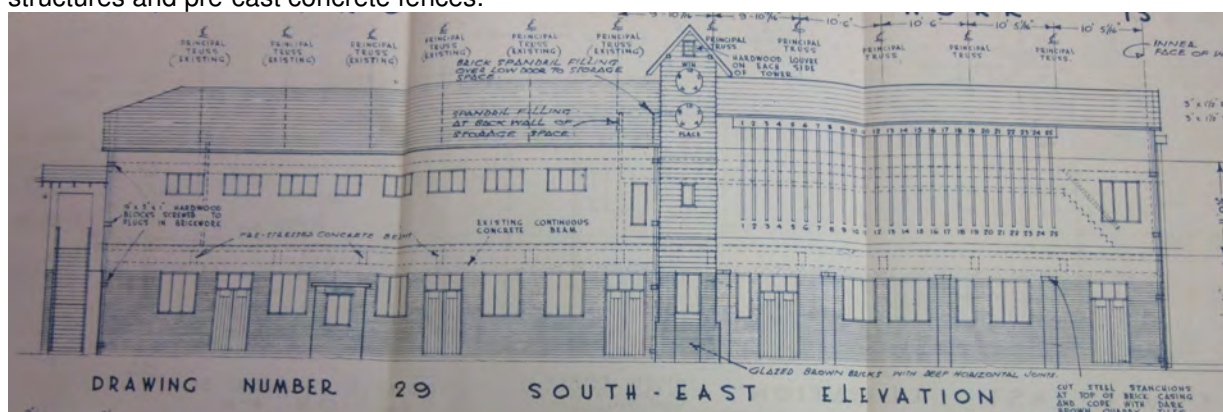
**Fig 14: Natal Mercury, 1953: Opening of new Totalisator (KCC MSWOO File 10)**

The Silver Ring Bar building was proposed in 1949, as recorded in Woodrow's Project Register, and one assumes that this point that it was constructed around this time. Certainly the extensive additions and alterations to it were carried out in 1953, as evidenced in the plans in Fig 15 below. It is suspected that the structure to the extreme right of the photograph in Fig 20 formed the basis of it, and that the alterations in 1953 involved the addition of a second floor. Nothing of the original building survives, except for elements such as the louvres in the gable which were reused.

It is constructed of 'Glazed brown bricks with deep horizontal joints' at ground floor level, and then plastered and painted at the first floor. It has timber casement windows and a Marseille Tile roof. A corrugated sheeting carport running the length of the building has been added on in later years. It is architecturally unremarkable, moreover for being recycled as a utilitarian building.

The opening of the Totalisator was groundbreaking: the mechanisms were imported from Australia, and the old Totalisator was sent up to Scottsville Racecourse. The ground floor housed Indian Bars and European Bars, whilst the first floor the Adding Room and Totalisator Stock room. The tower and the Totalisator was accessed by a Companion Way along the front elevation.

Today, this structure is ill-maintained and is used as a workshop. Like the structures above, it has been marginalised by the focus on the new Grandstand, and alienated by utilitarian structures and pre-cast concrete fences.



**Fig 15: Elevation of Totalisator and Silver Ring Additions (KCC MSWOO File 10)**





**Fig 16: View of Totalisator Building**



**Fig 17: Totalisator end of building**



**Fig 18: Totalisator from Non Reserved entrance**



**Fig 19: Totalisator from Toilet block**

### **Significance:**

Whilst in the opinion of the author, the building is unremarkable architecturally, alienated from the bulk of the site and also suffering from lack of maintenance in the last number of years, there is possibly value in the technical aspect of the Totalisator in terms of racing history. This aspect could be more fully investigated.

It was in existence prior to 1952, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

<b>Silver Ring and Totalisator</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	medium	Possibly medium	low	low
Social	medium	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

#### 5.4 Oregon Inn / Old ladies toilet block



**Fig 20: Old Ladies Toilet Block, current Oregon Inn pre 1946 (photo on Boardroom wall, Clairwood Turf Club)**

This little Arts and Crafts Revival building appears to have been constructed in 1937-8 as the Toilet Block. Certainly at the time of Woodrow's site Survey Plan of 1955, it was being used as the ladies toilet. Inexplicably, in more recent times it has been used as a public house (Simpson, Pers. Comm.) It is constructed of red brick in stretcher bond with teak casement windows glazed with leaded lights. It has a steeply pitched asbestos shingled roof. Gable ends have Gothic arched ventilators.



**Fig 21: Oregon Inn, Southern Elevation.**



**Fig 22. Oregon Inn, view from Car Park**

The orientation of the building facing south towards the Gold Ring Tea Room suggests that a association existed between the two buildings forming a discrete node within the Gold Ring demarcated area. As noted in the discussion on the Gold Ring Tea Room in Section 5.1 above, much of this spatial quality and relationship was destroyed with the construction of the new Grandstand in the 1980s, as well as physical alienation from the public areas by precast concrete fencing. A further issue is the addition in more recent times of a men's toilet block along the length of its north wall, destroying its position in space and its interpretation as a whole. It has been ill-maintained in recent years and is borderline dilapidated.





**Fig 23: View of building from east**



**Fig 24: View of building from car park showing unfortunate addition of men's toilets**



**Fig 25: View from east showing encroachment of structure at rear**

### **Significance:**

The Arts and Crafts Revival is characteristic of Woodrow's nostalgic approach to buildings. It is well executed, and a good example of its oeuvre.

It was in existence prior to 1952, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

<b>Old Ladies Toilet Block</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
Architectural	medium	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.5 Entrance pavilion and ticket booth

These structures appear to be the second commission for Clairwood Turf Club that Woodrow received, being reflected on his Project Register for 1935. They are both Neo-Tudor, stone bases and half-timbered with slate roofs lending a sense of fantasy to the entrance to the course. Whilst in retrospect they both appear architecturally kitsch, their symbolism as entrance way at the end of a ceremonial pathway has significance, and of any structures on the site, they have perhaps the most embodied value. Furthermore, the Ticket Booth has a large fig growing close beside it, and between the Entrance Pavilion and the Ticket Booth are two symmetrically placed palms.



**Fig 26: Entrance Pavilion pre 1946 (photo on Boardroom wall, Clairwood Turf Club)**



**Fig 27: Photo of Entrance Pavilion taken sometime in the 1950s (KCC MSWOO)**



**Fig 28: Condition of Entrance today**





**Fig 29: Entrance Pavilion from north**



**Fig 30: Entrance pavilion from west**



**Fig 31: Ticket booth and fig tree**



**Fig 32: Ticket booth from south**

### **Significance:**

As noted, these two structures act in tandem, and have substantial trees in their proximity. These buildings possibly represent the heyday of the racecourse most, and have been least affected by the alienation and fragmentation of the site caused by the construction of the monumental grandstands. Although ill-maintained in recent years, the possibility exists for reuse in a new development given their position and context.

These two buildings were in existence prior to 1952, which places them under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

<b>Ticket booth and entrance pavilion</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
Architectural	medium	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	medium	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.6 Jockey Room/ Race Day Office/ Old Administration Block



**Fig 33: Weighing Room and Administrative Offices (Prospectus 1956)**

This building was designed in 1946 primarily as a 'Weighing Room'. By 1955 it was also being used for administration. It is an enigmatic structure, with a very steeply pitched shingled roof, and a mixture of neo-Gothic and tentative Modernism. Its primary outlook is onto the Parade Ring, thus turning its back to the course and the new Grandstand. This elevation has impractically low Gothic-arched openings. Again it is a nostalgic structure typical of Woodrow.



**Fig 34: Weighing Room and Administrative Offices Fig 35: Present day from west ca 1956**







**Fig 36: View from south-west**



**Fig 37: View from north west**



**Fig 38: View of north eastern corner**



**Fig 39: View of south eastern corner**



**Fig 40: View from south**



**Fig 41: View from north east**

### **Significance:**

This building is solid and well maintained, though not entirely practical for reuse. It was in existence prior to 1950, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

<b>Jockey Room/ Race Day Office/ Old Administration Block</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Regional</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>International</b>
Architectural	medium	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.7 Old Lady Member's Building / Clairwood Charlies Club House

This is another whimsical building of no particular style, with a dressed sandstone base to the front elevation, above which, at first floor level, the walls are plastered. A decorative wrought iron balustrade edges the balcony which runs the length of this first floor. Generous fenestration is nostalgic, partly with leaded lights. It was originally designed with a sheeting roof and copper gutters were specified. The building has had unfortunate alterations to the south east elevation, and a large meranti double door now graces the extreme left of the north-east elevation.

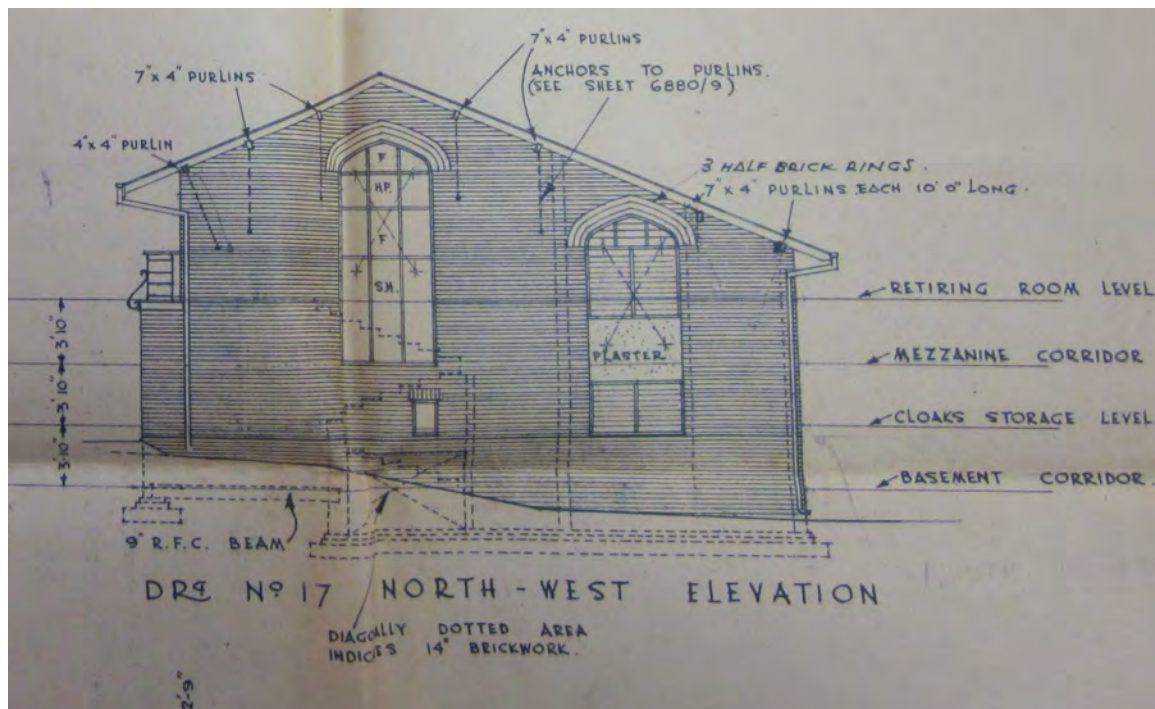


Fig 42: Lady Member's Building elevation (KCC MSWOO)



Fig 42: North West Elevation





**Fig 43: View from north**



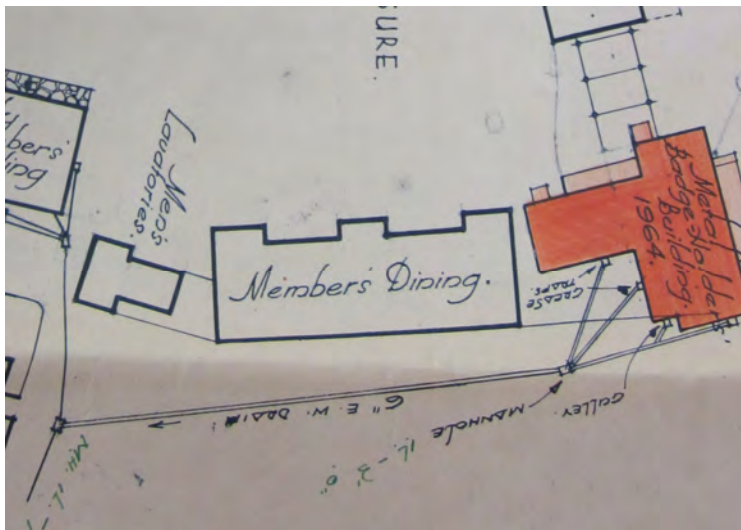
**Fig 44: View from south**

This building also fits within a loosely described and mildly unconvincing 'Revival' framework. It has been altered, with the addition of inappropriately proportioned doors, is cumbersome and has little architectural merit.

It was in existence prior to 1952, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

Old Lady Member's Building / Clairwood Charlies Club House	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.8 Old Members Dining Room



**Fig 45: Woodrow's Site Survey (1955) showing Member's Dining Room (KCC MSWOO)**

The original parts of this building are very early, given that in 1936 Woodrow noted as a commission the 'Proposed building connecting the Members Dining Room and Stewards Stand and conversion of part of Members Dining Hall into Women's Lavatory'. However, what is left of this is scant: flat arches testify to an earlier past in what is currently a clumsy and inarticulate building. It has a conventional Marseille tile roof, below which is a pavilion enclosed by brutal fenestration, with dominant mullions and transoms. A symmetrical ceremonial entrance portal is flanked by eight blue painted Doric columns, four to each side.



**Fig 46: Members Dining Room from north**



**Fig 47: Members Dining Room from east**

**Significance:** The core of this building certainly existed in 1938, although the exact date of its construction is not known at this point. However, little of its original state remains. Over the years it has been much altered and these accretions have been carried out quite badly.

In its current state, it has little merit, and little significance. However, it was in existence prior to 1950, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008.

Old Members Dining Room	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.9 Utilitarian Structures: Stables, Loose Boxes, Saddling Stalls

Being a turf club, many utilitarian structures exist which act functionally in the background, particularly stable blocks. There is no record, oddly enough, of any stable blocks in Woodrow's Project Register, although it is highly suspected that he built the more recent ones, given the level of detailing and their construction in English Bond brickwork.



**Fig 48: Horse stalls flanking parade ring**



**Fig 49: Saddling stalls flanking parade ring**

Furthermore, a leaflet on Clairwood Turf Club supplied by Mr Wayne Simpson notes that the first stables were only built in the 1930s. Certainly, the saddling stalls and loose boxes that flank the parade ring would have been part of this development, and, perhaps, the large stable block in which, it is suspected, the Polish refugees were housed during the Second World War.





**Fig 50: Saddling stalls and loose boxes flanking parade ring pre 1946 (photo on Boardroom wall, Clairwood Turf Club)**

The saddling stalls and loose boxes flanking the parade ring are elegant examples of utilitarian buildings.



**Fig 51: Main Stable Block from north**



**Fig 52: Main Stable Block from south**

It is suspected that the main stable block in Figs 51 and 52 above was where the Polish Women refugees were housed for a time.



**Fig 53: Inside main stable block**



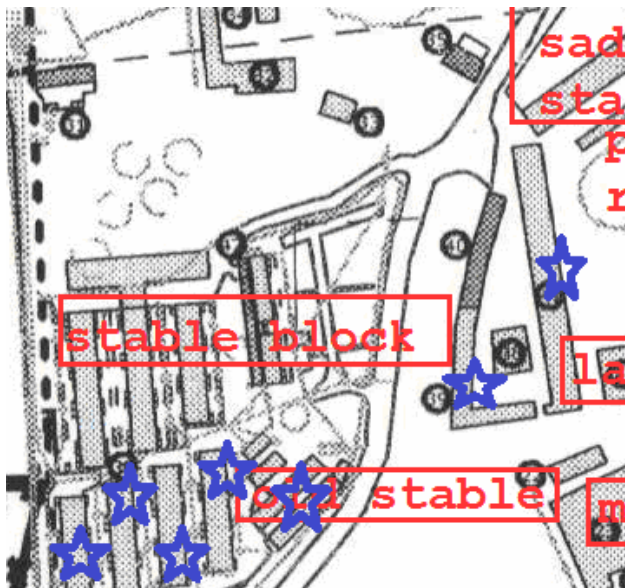
**Fig 54: Typical stable yard**



**Fig 55: General view stables**



**Fig 56: General view stables**



It is suspected that most of these stables were in existence prior to 1950, which places them under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008. Certainly, the stables annotated with blue stars in Fig 57 were extant at the time of the 1953 aerial photograph.

**Fig 57: Blue stars indicate stables extant in 1953**

### **Significance:**

As far as stable yards and stable blocks go, these provide commodious accommodation for horses. However, they have also suffered from lack of maintenance in recent years, with one stable block, in particular, suffering very badly from exfoliated brickwork. They are good examples of utilitarian buildings, of which many still exist in KwaZulu-Natal. More importantly, it is vital to follow up on the social history involving the Polish refugees.

	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	medium	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low



## 5.10 Cottages along railway edge:

These 4 cottages numbered simply 1 through 4, have associated outbuildings and are situated along the railway edge of the site. It is understood that they were constructed in 1953, and are in the oeuvre of Woodrow, yet there is nothing mentioned in his Project Register which refers to them. They are loosely neo-Tudor /Arts and Crafts, with an asymmetrical façade; projecting bay window with standard steel windows, and a 'half timbered' projecting gable above the veranda which has battered sandstone columns and unmatched triangular arches. All four houses are identical.



**Fig 58: Typical cottage**



**Fig 59: Typical cottage**



**Fig 60: Typical cottage**



**Fig 61: Typical Cottage**

These cottages were built in 1953 which technically exempts them from provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008 at the time of writing this report. However, given this borderline construction date, commentary with regard to heritage should be made.

These cottages, although a group, have no urban reference and are isolated on the general site. They are typical examples of domestic buildings in a Tudor /Arts and Crafts Revival style, and many of this type exist in suburbs around Durban.

### Significance:

Cottages along railway edge	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	low	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.11 Old SAR Ticket Booth

Clairwood Turf Club is inextricably tied to the railway, since this was the vector for many visitors in its past. Access from the railway is provided for in its planning (see section 6). Situated some distance off the raised causeway linking the Turf Club and the railway line, is a small brick building of indeterminate age, which apparently was the South African Railway Ticket Booth (Simpson pers. comm). It is indistinct on the 1953 aerial photograph. It is of red face brick with a corrugated asbestos roof, and what remains of timber windows.



**Fig 62: Old SAR Ticket Booth**



**Fig 63: Old SAR Ticket Booth to right**

### Significance:

It is suspected that this building was in existence prior to 1952, which places it under provisional protection in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2008. However, it is of little architectural merit and possibly has some social merit borne out of nostalgia. The practicalities of reuse are small.

Old SAR Ticket Booth	Local	Regional	National	International
Architectural	low	low	low	low
Historical	low	low	low	low
Technical	low	low	low	low
Social	medium	low	low	low
Scientific	low	low	low	low

## 5.12 Other structures



**Fig 64: Shelter in parade ring**

In addition to the stable blocks, other buildings exist on site, which are not recorded such as the shelter in the parade ring (fig 64). What looks undeniably like a Woodrow building, this is inscrutable on the 1953 aerial photograph, but is possibly in existence in Woodrow's 1955 site survey. Further investigation into these should form part of a greater study into the history of Clairwood Turf Club.



## 6. Memory and site

Most of the older structures on this site are dislocated. In the past, one would arrive at the railway halt (of which nothing remains) then disembark and walk along an axial, raised platform flanked by trees, to the main entrance. This was the feeder section for the Members, Gold and Silver Rings, all of which had associated tea rooms or bars,<sup>7</sup> toilet blocks, totes and grandstands, whilst the Unreserved and Native Entrance was located to the north east of this. With the dissolution of segregated planning, as well as the construction of the new and monumental grandstands, any evidence of this planning has been erased, and, indeed, the Silver Ring and Unreserved section as well as the Gold Ring Tea Room are derelict and ill-maintained. All of the above, through their sectioning in zones, had direct reference to the grandstands and the track itself.



**Fig 65: View along raised causeway to Turf Club**

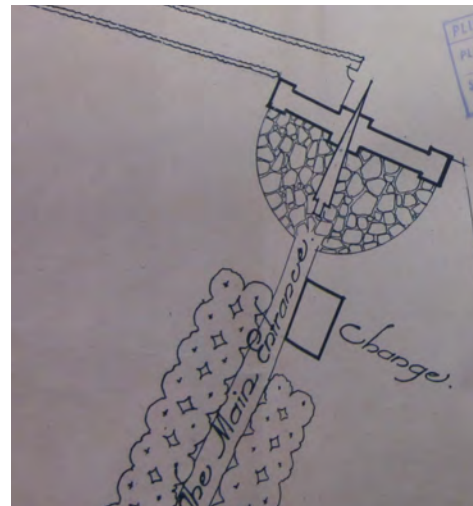


**Fig 66: Looking back along raised causeway**

Thus, the buildings today are alienated from their original function, and the rationale of the original site planning by Woodrow has been lost. However, much of the Turf Club was built out of nostalgia, in Revivalist styles, possibly intended to evoke for the patrons some sense of fantasy. Memory of process and event are the important features that have to be retained.



**Fig 67: Entrance to Course**



**Fig 68: Woodrow 1955 Survey showing entrance node and axis (KCC MSWOO)**

<sup>7</sup> The Members had a Dining room, the Gold Ring had a Tea Room and the Silver Ring had a bar



## 7. Conclusion

Clairwood Turf Club is possibly unique in that most of the structures on its site, with the exception of the new Grandstands, were possibly designed by a single architect. However, given the scale of the site, and the extent of the works, retention of these structures in their entirety is both impractical and irresponsible, given the condition of some of them. Isolating structures or features with both meaning and significance, embodying memory and archetype, is thus the solution, at the same time bearing in mind the constraints of new development on the site and its practical requirements.

Furthermore, although there is little documentation to reinforce this, Clairwood Turf Club, being largely a working man's race course, has little history recorded in the public domain. It would be tragic that a venue which had such pomp and fanfare at its opening would disappear into obscurity so quickly.

## Recommendations:

Demolition of all structures on the site is possible in order to make way for new development in line with the current industrial context. However, the following is recommended for preservation.

- *In order to preserve the links between the railway line and the turf club, it is recommended that the raised causeway be retained in the new development, as well as its current planting of trees*
- *In order to preserve the fantasy of the space and the event, as well as to recognise the architectural contributions of Alan Woodrow, it is recommended that the ticket booth and the Fig tree currently associated with it, and the Entrance pavilion together with the palm trees currently associated with it, be retained in the new development, for reuse as a central canteen/ coffee shop.*
- *In order to preserve the memory of the racing event, and highlight the space in which every horse at Clairwood Turf Club had its day, it is recommended to retain the memory of the parade ring as a planted garden/ traffic island and interpret it in a suitable fashion. The Shelter in the centre would be able to stay.*
- *It would be highly acceptable if the Administration Block could be reused, although priority is given to the above points.*
- *It is considered vital that the research commenced in this report be fleshed out by a suitable researcher to form a more comprehensive history of the race course and Turf Club, incorporating more archival information, if available, as well as oral histories and a full documentation of the works of Alan Woodrow on the site.*

## 8. References

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