
DRAFT FOR COMMENT

**APPLICATION FOR A PERMIT
SECTIONS 27/34 OF THE NHRA
DROSTDY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT
Erf 5357 STELLENBOSCH
JULY 2016**



VIEW OF THE EXISTING DROSTDY BUILDING FROM THE CORNER OF ALEANDER AND BIRD STREETS LOOKING NORTH

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Andre Pentz of Urban Design Services cc has been authorised by Eikestad Mall (Pty) Ltd., the registered owners of the property, to prepare and submit a Permit Application in terms of Sections 27/34 of the NHRA (National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999) to Heritage Western Cape, for the proposed Drostdy Centre development on erf 5357 Stellenbosch. Refer to Annexure A: Permit Application Form.

Erf 5357 is a business site on the corner of Alexander and Bird Streets within the historic core of the town. The Alexander Street façade is part of a many layered and altered historical building that has evolved over time to form an 'L'-shaped double story building on Alexander Street with the shorter wing of the 'L' on Bird Street. Additions in the form of a modern double storey shop and office complex link on to the rear of this building to enclose a courtyard space.

The Alexander Street façade of the historical building is a PHS (Provincial Heritage Site). There are also remnants of architectural fabric older than 60 years within the building, behind the façade. These include some floor, wall and roof elements associated with the façade and a timber staircase in the main entrance lobby. Apart from these, the heritage qualities comprise essentially an external shell containing modernised interiors.

The proposed development involves the retention and refurbishment of the existing historical double-storey building, the demolition of the existing modern shop and office additions to the rear, and in their place a new building incorporating basement parking, a hotel, and some retail facilities.

Erf 5357 Stellenbosch is held by Title Deed No. T32385/2008, and is 4579 sq. m. in extent. Refer to Annexure B for a copy of the Title Deed and Survey Diagram. The project managers are Abacus Asset Management, the architects are DHK, and the town planners are TV3.

1.2 Statement of independence and expertise

Andre Pentz of Urban Design Services cc and his associates have no financial interest in the property or development other than fair remuneration for professional services rendered. Andre Pentz is an architect, urban planner and heritage management consultant with 30 years of experience in disciplines involving the built environment, and is an accredited member of The Association of Professional Heritage Practitioners.

1.3 Locality

Erf 5357 Stellenbosch is located on the corner of Alexander and Bird Streets, within the historic core of the town, adjoining “Die Braak”, the main town square. Refer to Figure 1: Locality Plan and Figure 2: Aerial Photograph.



Figure 1: Locality Plan (source: Google Maps)



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph (Source: Cape Farm Mapper)

1.4 Application of the NHRA (National Heritage Resources Act) No. 25 of 1999

Section 38 of the NHRA is not triggered by the proposed development because the site is less than 5,000 sq.m. An HIA (Heritage Impact Assessment) is therefore not required. However Section 27(18) is applicable because the Alexander Street façade is a PHS and a permit to alter a heritage site is required.

The Alexander Street façade of the existing building together with the façade of the adjoining Cape Winelands District Municipality building (old Divisional Council building), is a former National Monument, proclaimed in 1967, and is therefore now a PHS (Provincial Heritage Site).

Section 27 of the NHRA applies to National and Provincial Heritage Sites and according to Section 27(18) of the NHRA: *“No person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site”*. The NHRA defines the term alter as: *“Alter means any action affecting the structure, physical appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or other decoration or any other means”*.

Alternatively Section 34 (1) of the NHRA is also applicable as: *“No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority”*.

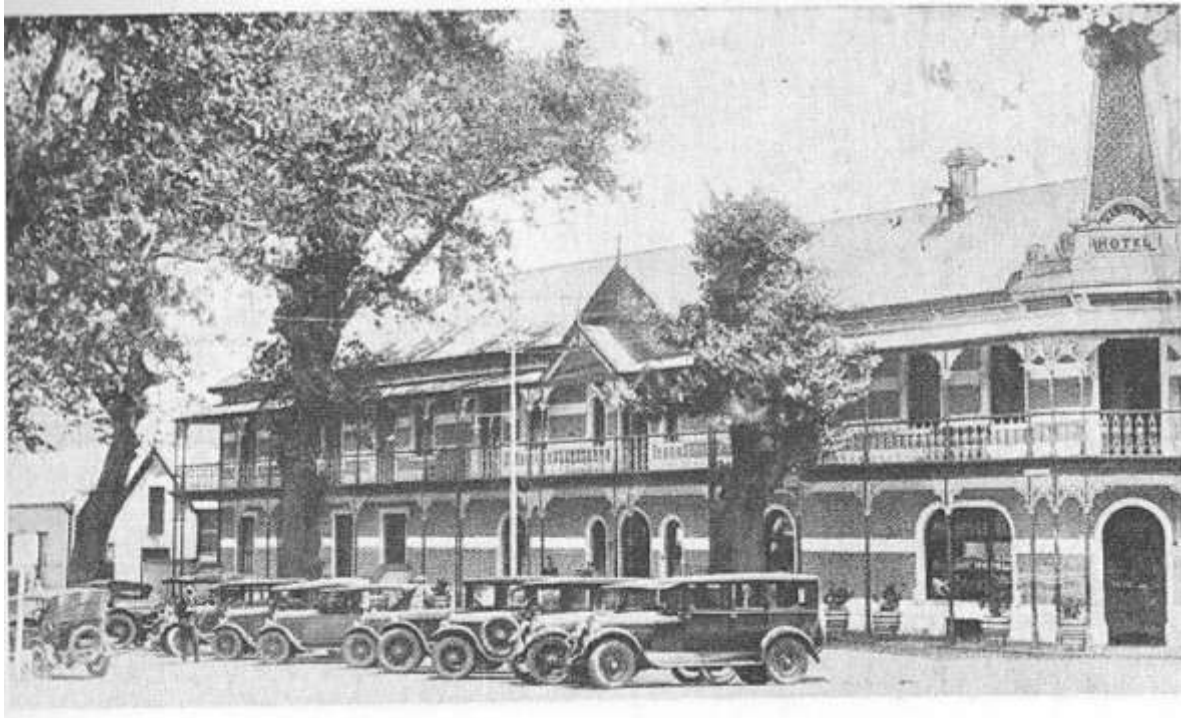
1.5 Brief history of the site (source: H.Vos- historian and archaeologist, refer to Annexure C)¹

The early history of the site has its origins in the network of irrigation canals and smallholdings established in the area north of the Braak from the late 18th C onwards. Over time various structures were erected by numerous owners. Between 1835 and 1870 Adrian P. Cloete built an imposing homestead on the site. His widow subdivided the property in 3 portions, and the homestead became known as the 'Royal Hotel'. From about 1880 the hotel gained a second storey and incorporated another building on the corner of Bird and Alexander Streets which had served as a brewery.

Around 1900 a Masonic lodge was established within the building, which gave rise to the name Masonic Hotel. The building was given a Victorian makeover with arched openings and acquired an ornamental cast iron double storey verandah lining the Alexander and Bird Street elevations, with a fish-scale turret on the splayed corner to Alexander and Bird Streets. A 1920's photograph shows

¹ The Drostdy Centre – A Survey of Historical and Structural Fabric 1994, updated August 2011: A Survey of its owners (1789-2010) and assessment of its historical context and structural fabric by H.N. Vos

the façade painted red with white bands. In the 1950's the building (which by then had been stripped of its balustrading) was whitewashed, and its name was changed to the Drostdy Herberg.



The Masonic Hotel, Stellenbosch c1920 (source: Stellenbosch Three Centuries, Stellenbosch Town Council in collaboration with the Oude Meester Group, ed. F Smuts. October 1979).

In the 1970's the Drostdy Herberg was sold and various alterations and additions were undertaken including the redevelopment of the site in 1984 as the Drostdy Centre. Vos notes that *“dramatic alterations and demolitions on the premises of the Drostdy Herberg were necessary to make the new shopping complex viable. Since restoration was not a consideration, the building was not treated with sensitivity”*.

This statement should be read in context with the substantial alterations and rebuilding that had already taken place on the site over the past 100 years, including the demolition of various buildings in the backyard and on Bird Street from the 1970's on. When the Drostdy Centre was developed in 1984 all that remained of earlier fabric was a 'L' shaped complex extending along Alexander Street and the corner of Bird and Alexander Street. Within the Drostdy Herberg, many interior walls were also demolished and / or replaced with steel girders. This was done on such a scale that there is now little resemblance of the ground plan interior layout to that of the earliest structures. An exception is the present entrance portal in Alexander Street, with its arched openings (circa 1905) and circa 1880 staircase.

In 1996 a section of the façade of the remaining building at the end of the 'L' on Bird Street collapsed and was rebuilt to form a free-standing double storey portal with pierced openings (now referred to as the Heuer façade).



View from Alexander Street looking north



View from Bird Street looking west



Close-up views of entrances, left: Alexander Street; right, Bird Street



Street context: Looking north-east along Alexander Street (the 1930's Cape Dutch Revival Cape Winelands District Municipality building is on the left)



Existing modern shop and office complex to the rear



Interior of the west wing; steel beams and stanchions supporting the floor



The timber staircase



The Heuer building façade on Bird Street

1.6 Town Planning context

The town planning context includes the existing zoning of the site, the “Rules for the control of Building construction in the historical core of Stellenbosch” and the document “Stellenbosch Conservation Strategy Development Guidelines Final Draft 1997, (Kruger Roos Architects, Urban Designers and Planners)”.

Zoning

Erf 5357 Stellenbosch has a General Business Zoning with a number of approved consent land uses for a pub/tavern and a gathering place (theatre).

Refer to Figure 3: Extract from the Zoning Map.

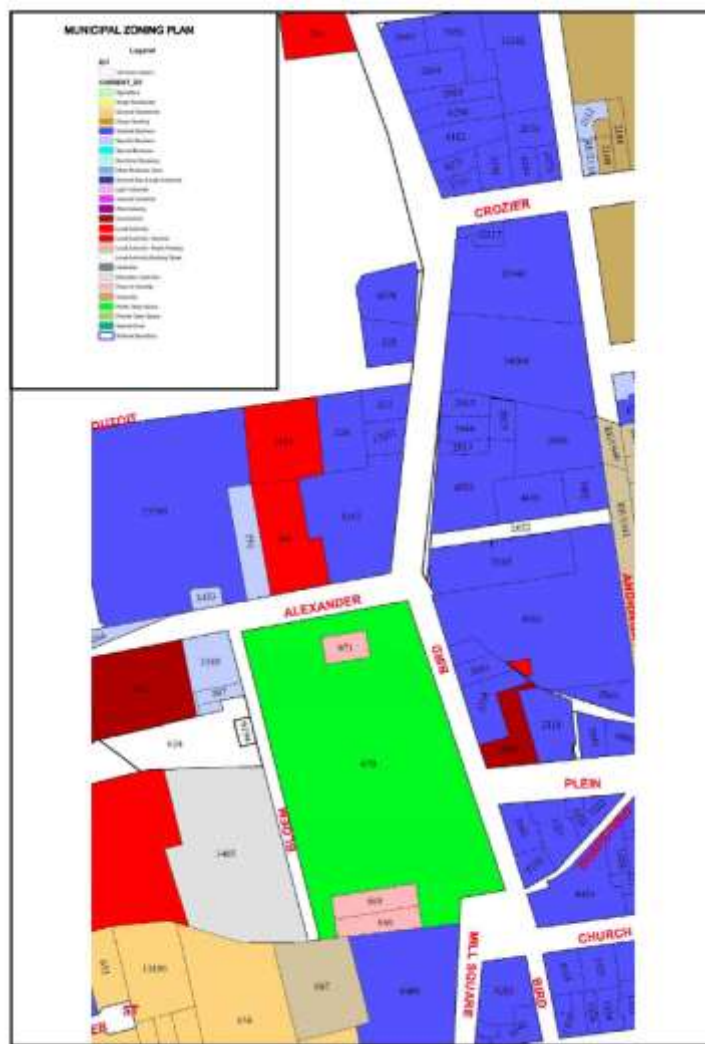


Figure 3: Extract from the Zoning Map (Source: TV3 Urban Planners).

Rules for the control of Building construction in the historical core of Stellenbosch

The Municipality has devised a by-law to control development within the historical core of Stellenbosch, within which the site is situated.

These rules are applicable to all sites up to a depth of 15 metres measured from the street boundaries (in addition to any other requirements of the by-law).

The main provisions are to control height (10m max), appearance (including design, materials and finishes), provision of parking, and signage.

Stellenbosch Conservation Strategy Development Guidelines Final Draft 1997, (Kruger Roos Architects, Urban Designers and Planners).

The Braak is the heart of Stellenbosch and is one of the main 'character precincts' of Stellenbosch, encompassing Bird Street, The Braak and the Bergzicht "Werf". The Braak is also an important open space land use precinct.

The site, together with the Braak forms part of the Historical core of Stellenbosch. It is a part key site in terms of the strategy of "Bird Street Infill Opportunity Sites".

Problems affecting the conservation of the historical core include the erosion of village streets and loss of urban character through commercialisation, and parking and traffic problems within a confine of narrow tree-lined streets.

The problems identified include buildings out of scale with the historical core, buildings with inappropriate materials, breaks in tree-lined streets and unscreened parking areas.

Precinct Guidelines for the Braak provide for, where applicable:

- Significant buildings to be retained (this includes the existing building on Alexander / Bird Streets and the other heritage buildings in and around the Braak).
- Enhance historical axis (this includes Bird and Alexander Streets).
- Address traffic congestion problems (this particularly applies to the Bird / Alexander Streets intersection).
- Reinststate and complete avenue of trees (Alexander Street).

Development Guidelines:

New infill should not try and imitate the historical architecture, but should be simple and modern. The aim should be to conform sufficiently to the characteristics of the historical urban fabric (scale proportions and materials) so that the new buildings blend harmoniously into the environment.

The conservation strategy also makes provision for general guidelines as to: setbacks, street-building interface, boundary definition, (walls, fences and gates), parking, scale and proportion, height, materials and finishes, signage, security and fixtures.

2 HERITAGE RESOURCES

2.1 Heritage Resources on the site

The principle heritage resource is the 2-storey Drostdy building lining the street boundary on Alexander Street, facing the Braak, and turning the corner on Bird Street. The main façade is on Alexander Street. The building forms an 'L' shape with its façade 'built to line', defining the street edge and set behind a wrap-around stoep at ground level, with the Alexander-Bird Street corner further defined by a roofed lean-to verandah.

The main entrance is situated on Alexander Street through an entrance door with a half-round top fanlight, and half-round topped side lights. This pattern is repeated on the 1st floor façade with a half-glazed French door and flanking half-width 6 over 6 sash windows. The composition is further accentuated by the lifting of the pitched roof over the entrance to form a hipped barge-board gablet, symmetrically placed in line with the entrance door.

The plaster façade is broken up into 3 parts by means of an incised plaster groove at a horizontal lower level with above that a plaster stringcourse moulding indicating the former balcony level. The facade is further expressed by the painted black-green dado.

The main entrance is asymmetrically placed in the Alexander Street façade with the west wing longer than the east wing. The French door at the upper level indicates the former existence of balconies at this level. The west wing façade contains French door openings (with fanlights) and sash windows on the lower level with both full-width and half-width sash windows on the upper level, not necessarily lining up with those below. This pattern is repeated on the east wing and on the Bird Street façade.

There is also a modern clip-on verandah to the lower level on the east wing to Alexander Street which wraps around the building to Bird Street. Timber balustrading and period cast iron light standards have been added to the stoep, which is divided into sections by means of plastered "book-end" benches, placed at right angles to the façade.

The exterior comprising the Alexander and Bird Street frontages (including paving, woodwork, ironwork etc.), requires maintenance.

Internally, at the ground floor level, there is little remaining fabric of heritage value besides the existing 19th Century timber staircase within the Alexander Street entrance lobby. Unfortunately this too has been insensitively altered, with

the timber balusters removed and replaced with metal bars. The entrance lobby also provides access through to the internal courtyard.

The interior of the west wing is now basically an open space with a service core and fire escape on the far west side. Internal partitions and support walls have been removed and replaced with steel stanchions and beams, supporting the upper timber floor. The east wing is occupied by the Dros Restaurant and pub, clad in modern themed pub décor, with its main access from the splayed corner on Alexander and Bird Streets.

The upper level of the west wing comprises a theatre venue, with now exposed 20th Century timber roof trusses, and a raised mezzanine inserted in one of the bays, accessed by means of a street spiral stair. The upper level to the two east wing and Bird Street sections is occupied by a gym and boxing club. This section includes some Victorian sash windows with internal timber cills and jamb linings.

Adjacent the building on Bird Street is the reconstructed and stand-alone Heuer façade (more of a post-modern gesture to conservation than a meaningful heritage resource as such). The character of Bird Street is essentially commercial.

The northern part of the site is occupied by the modern two-storied shop and office complex. Together with the older Drostdy building this forms a “U”-shaped building enclosing a courtyard space off Bird Street. The shop frontages at ground floor level face the courtyard and a walkway at first floor level provides access to the offices above, linking onto the older Drostdy building at the upper level. This section of the complex has no heritage value.

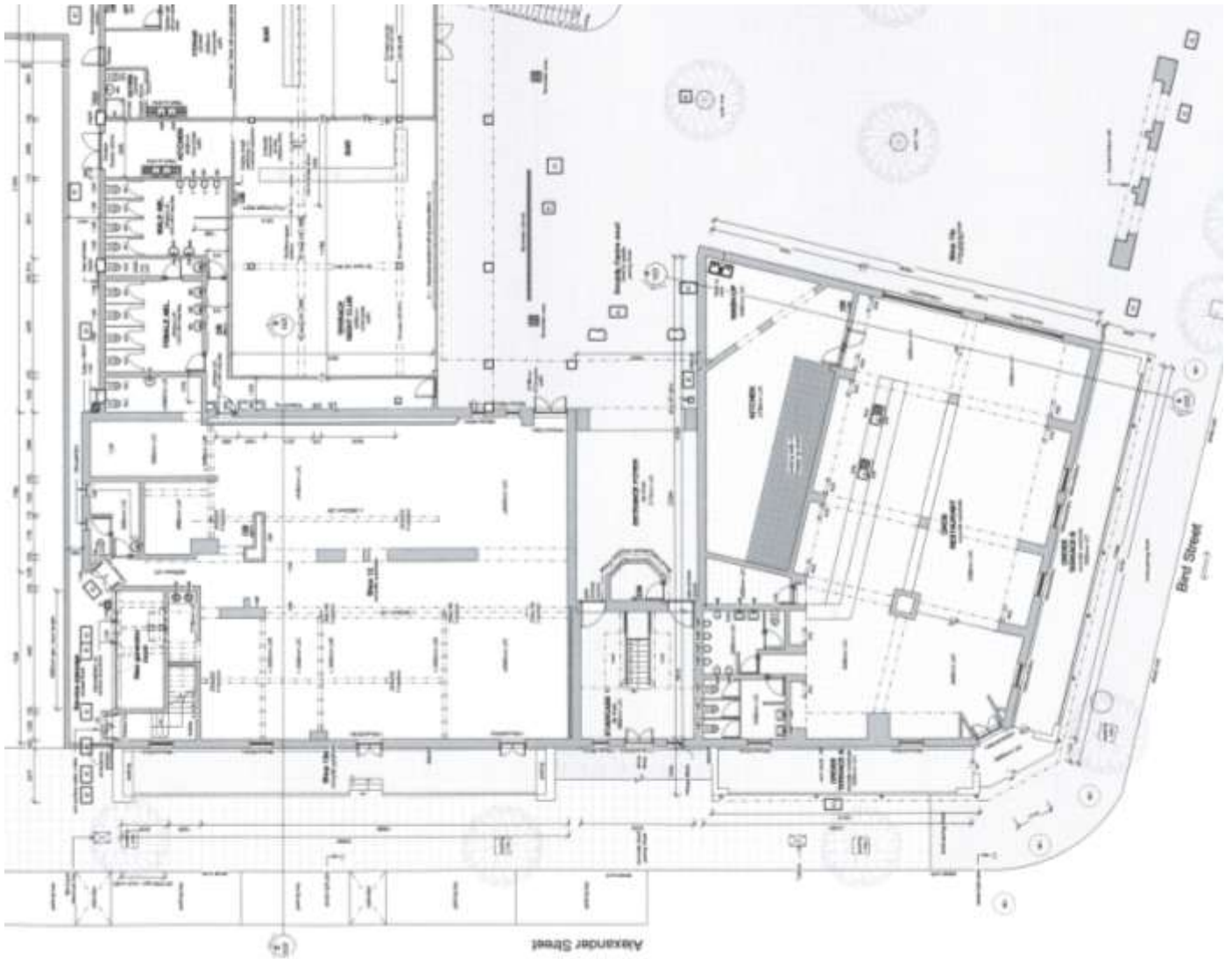


Figure 4: As Built Ground Floor Plan (DHK Architects)



Figure 5: As Built Alexander Street Elevation (DHK Architects)

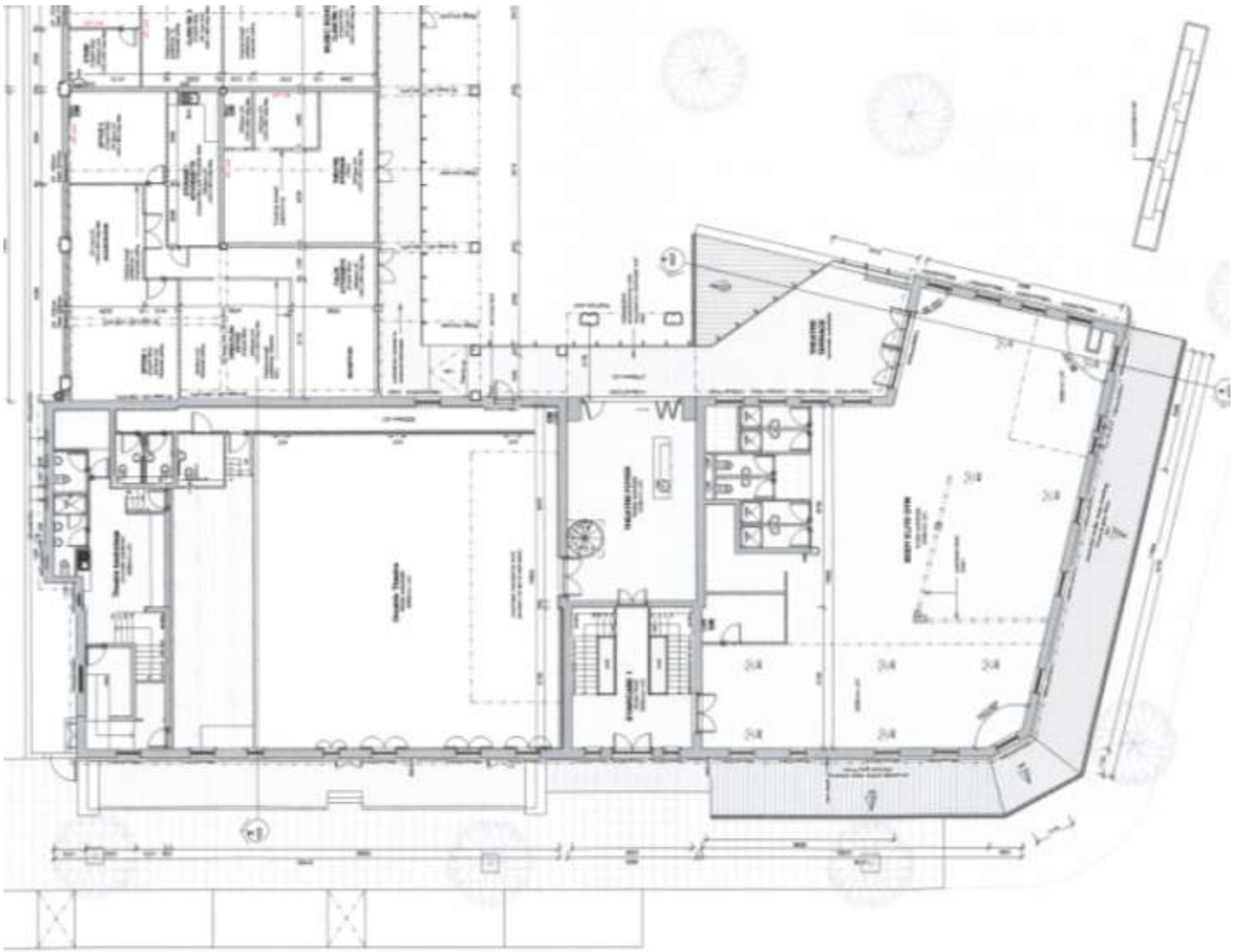


Figure 6: As Built First Floor Plan (DHK Architects)



Figure 7: As Built Cross Sections north-south (left) and east-west (right) (DHK Architects).

2.2 Heritage Resources in the Environs (refer to Figure 4: Heritage Resources in the Environs)

The Braak

The Braak comprises the rectangular open space defined by Alexander Street to the north and Bird Street to the east, with buildings lining these streets forming a strongly defined urban edge. Blom street wraps around the south and west sides of the Braak, which are punctuated by historic buildings set within park-like grounds. Within the Braak space on the northern side is St. Mary's Anglican Church, forming a focal point. The space is further defined on its perimeter by rows of oak trees, lining the central grassed space.

Historic Structures in and around the Braak

These include within the Braak space, St. Mary's Anglican Church (PHS), and on the perimeter, the following sites, (clockwise from the corner of Alexander Street and Blom Streets:

- Burgher House, on the south side of Alexander Street, (PHS)

On the north side of Alexander Street;

- No. 40, Coachman's Cottage (PHS)
- No. 42, a 3-bay double storey building
- No. 44 , Laetitia, a 5-bay double storey building (PHS)
- No. 46, Cape Winelands District Municipality building (PHS-former Divisional Council Offices)
- The subject property, The Dostdy Inn, Erf 5657 (PHS)

On the south and west sides of Blom Street , the following PHS's;

- The Rhenish Mission Church on south side
- The Rhenish Complex
- The VOC Arsenal

On Bird Street the built to line edge defines the Braak on the eastern side. There are also early 20th Century buildings that contribute to the historic character, including the Old Mutual Building, the Post Office and the Standard Bank Building.

Trees

The trees within and around the Braak particularly the oak trees and those lining Bird and Alexander Streets are also heritage resources.

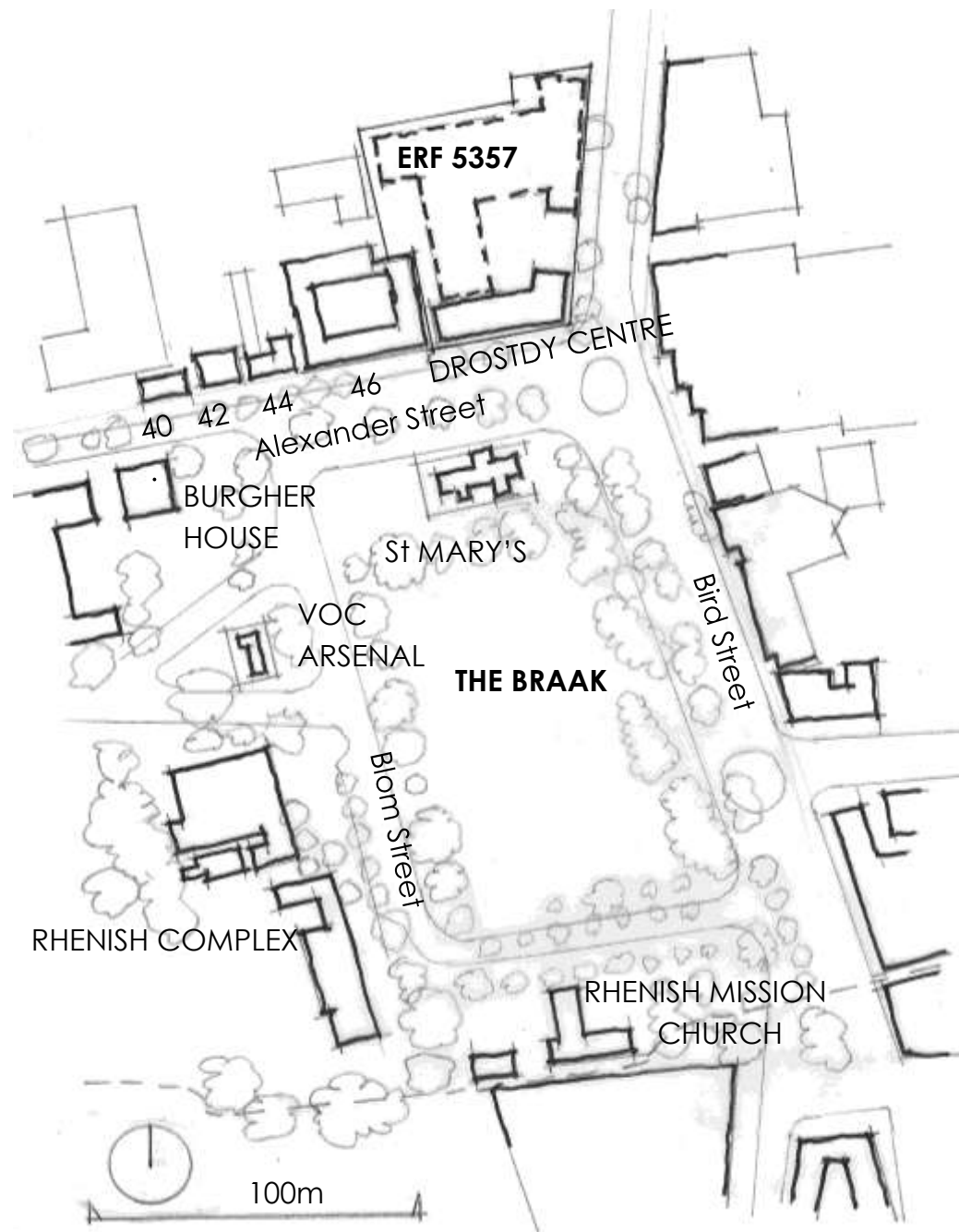


Figure 8: Heritage Resources in the Environs

2.3 Streetscape

Streetscape has been defined as “the visual elements of the street, including the road, adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees and open spaces etc. that combine to form the street's character”.²

The built-to-line condition with the whitewashed building frontages forming a continuous built edge, particularly on Bird and Alexander Streets, and which

² Source: Wikipedia

define these streets and the space of the Braak, is a heritage resource. This condition, as illustrated graphically in the outline of buildings on Figure 4 and which applies to both historical and more recent contributing buildings, plays a pivotal role in shaping the streetscape.

Other visual elements that “combine to form the street's character” include the stoep frontages, pedestrian walkways and transitional spaces, water furrows, walls, gateways, and street trees. There is a sense of continuity through the corresponding scale, height, grain and massing of the buildings relative to the streetscape, and the use of repeated elements, materials and finishes.



Streetscape looking east along Alexander Street showing built-to-line condition

(The Drostdy building follows on from the Cape Winelands District Municipality building, on the left foreground.)

3 SIGNIFICANCE AND INDICATORS

3.1 Statement of Significance

The Drostdy building on the corner of Alexander and Bird Street Stellenbosch is of heritage significance because of its landmark status as an entrance building to the business centre of Stellenbosch, as well as forming part of ensemble of buildings defining the space of the Braak. The site has had buildings on it since the late 18th C and was initially a dwelling and then a hotel for a lengthy period. The current structure is from the late 1800's with the verandah (now much altered and modern), doors and windows (some replaced) from the early 1900's. The building was much altered internally in the late 20C (All that remains of the historical interior is a timber staircase), and the complex to the rear is recent. The Alexander Street façade is by virtue of its scale, architectural treatment and detail typical of Stellenbosch. It contributes to a site of significance (The Braak) and is of architectural, aesthetic and cultural significance. This façade is protected (Previous National Monument, 1967)



The façade viewed from the corner of Alexander and Bird Streets

3.2 Provincial Heritage Site status

According to the SAHRA (South African Heritage Resources Agency) website⁴: *'The Divisional Council offices and the Drostdy Hotel stand just above the so-called "Coachman's Cottage". The former is a comparatively recent building, while the Drostdy Hotel is older and has its own history. Although it may be difficult to justify the proclamation of these buildings on strictly historical grounds, they have considerable architectural merit and are of such a character that they fit in well with the Braak and the surrounding buildings. For these reasons and to ensure the harmonious appearance of this area the facades of these buildings facing the Braak have been proclaimed'*.

⁴ SAHRI Archive Import 9/2/084/0070 post date 07/08/2012.

3.3 Grading

The SHF (Stellenbosch Heritage Foundation) has graded the site, The Braak and buildings around it⁵. The site is graded a 3B (local significance). We would concur with this grading, mainly because of the contextual attributes of the site and the contribution the Alexander Street façade makes to the significance of the Braak. The SHF has recommended that The Braak be accorded a Grade 1 status. Refer to Figure 5: Grading Map (Stellenbosch Heritage Foundation).



Proposed Grading: Purple =Grade 1, Red= Grade 2, Orange=Grade3

Figure 9: Grading Map (Source: Stellenbosch Heritage Foundation website).

⁵ Stellenbosch Heritage Foundation Survey

3.4 Heritage Indicators

These heritage indicators are based on the attributes extracted from the statement of significance.

1. Retain the main building as is, especially the Alexander Street Façade. Apart from the timber staircase, much of the fabric to the rear of the façade is recent and of little heritage value and can be altered.
2. Late 20C buildings on the site have no heritage significance and can be demolished.
3. Build to line along Bird Street, keeping in character with existing buildings along this street. Employ continuity as a strategy. Maintain local scale, massing, rhythm, proportion materials and level of detail. Retain existing freestanding landmark façade element on Bird Street.
4. Develop tall building/s to the far rear, as far back from Alexander and Bird Streets as possible. A visual assessment is to be undertaken to assess impacts and mitigation for views from the Braak and Alexander and Bird Streets. The new building is to be a 'background' building to lessen potential visual impacts. There are possible options such as flat roofs, using the roof or attic space, or having a lightweight top-level to reduce the impact of additional bulk. Ensure a restrained simple outline so as 'not to catch the eye'.
5. Employ an appropriate architectural strategy where new buildings connect to existing. A transitional element is recommended to resolve geometries and to act as a 'gasket' link between new and old fabric.
6. Ensure archaeological monitoring during clearing of the site and for excavations.

4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS (Refer to Annexure D)

Details of the proposed development are set out in the attached report prepared by DHK Architects: Drostdy Centre, Erf 5357 Stellenbosch, June 2016. The report provides an overview of the development, its context and site information. It sets out the concept including the proposed site development plan and sketch plans of the building. It also provides a number of 3D views and elevations.

It should be noted that since June 2016 there have been several changes to the proposals as outlined in the DHK Architects report, which are discussed in this report. These changes include the moving of the timber staircase and changes to two Alexander Street façade openings.

5 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Potential impacts on heritage resources that need to be examined include the following:

5.1 Visual impact

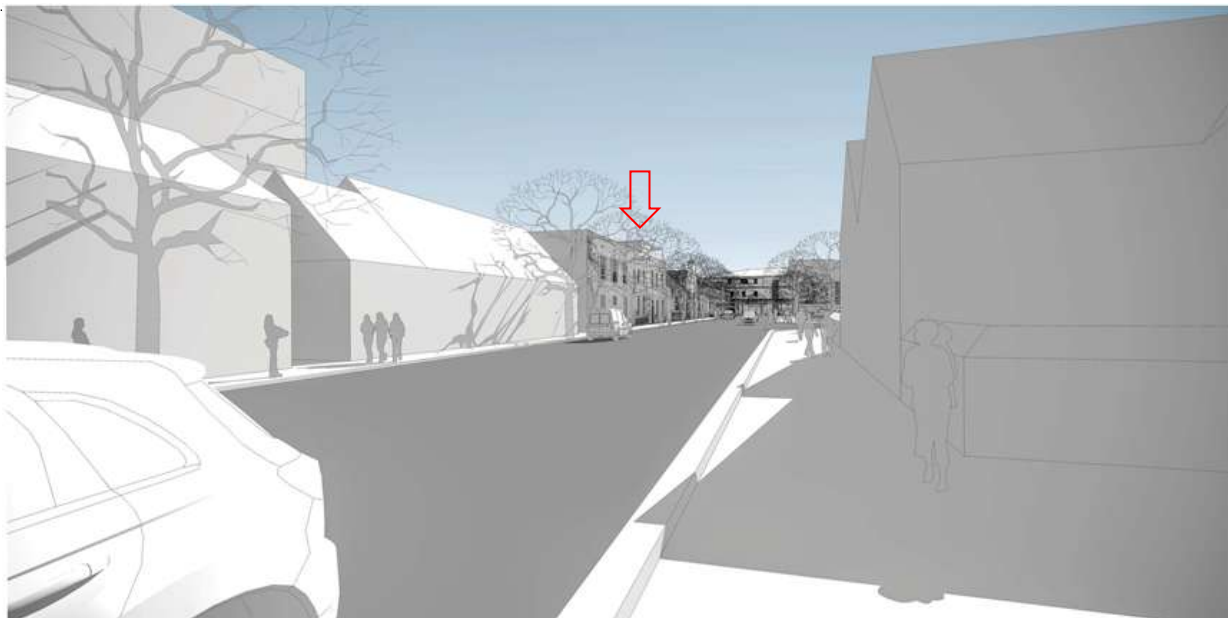
The visual impact of any new development, and in terms of its height, scale and massing in relation to The Braak and Alexander and Bird Streets requires examination. Three dimensional impressions of various view corridors towards the site (without tree foliage) have been prepared by DHK Architects and are examined below:



View Corridor 1: Looking north from the Braak (DHK Architects)

St Mary's Church (situated on the Braak as a free-standing building) interrupts the view towards Alexander Street with much of the western side of the old Drostdy building hidden from view. One and a half storeys of the new development is visible behind the east side of the old Drostdy building and the top third of the fourth storey is visible above the ridge line of the Church.

The visual impact is low, taking into account the minimal scale of the impact, and in relation to its context of existing views, including other buildings in the field of vision.



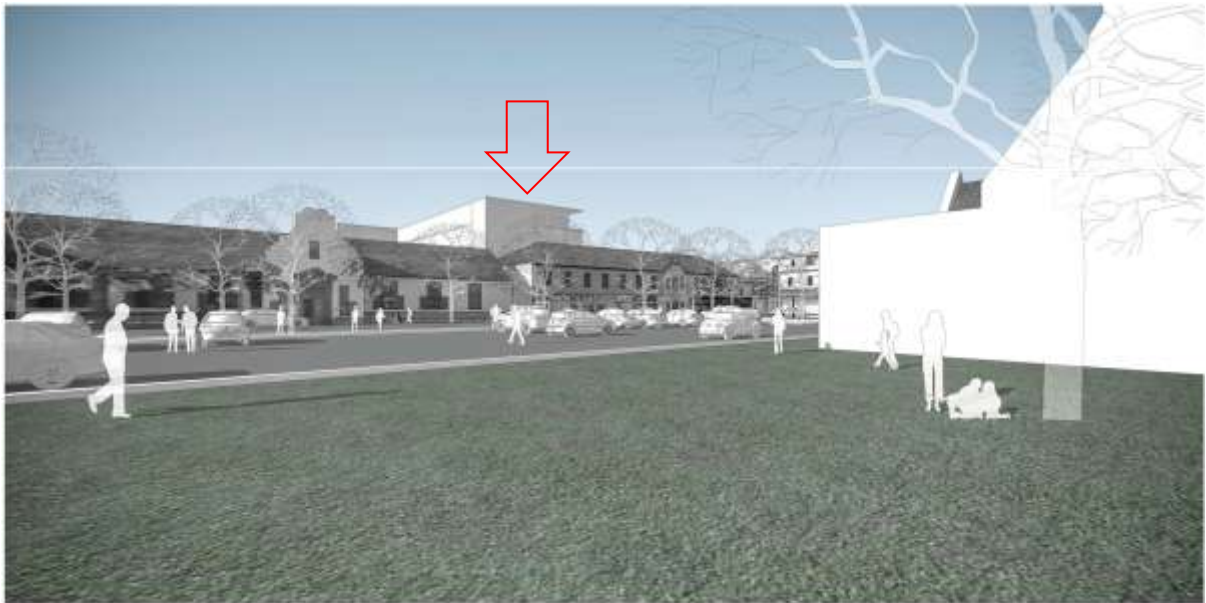
View Corridor 2: Looking east along Alexander Street (DHK Architects)

The top section (less than one storey) of the proposed new development is just visible above the leading edge of the Alexander Street façade silhouette. The visual impact is therefore very low.



View Corridor 3: Looking south along Bird Street (DHK Architects)

This shows the proposed new development on Bird Street providing a contemporary interpretation of an active edge to the street, with retail shopfronts at street level and hotel accommodation on the 2 levels above. Additional hotel accommodation on the 3rd and 4th stories is set back from the street edge.



View Corridors 4 and 5: Looking north east from the Kruihuis-Blom Street and From St Mary's Church (DHK Architects).

These are basically the same views with the one from the Church a close-up version. It indicates that the closer one approaches the site, the more the upper levels of the new development appear to recede behind the façades of the older buildings on Alexander Street. On the other hand, the further one moves away from the site, the overall impact reduces due to the widening of the field of vision with views of other buildings and newer developments of similar height coming in to play.

Although the new building is visible it does not detract from the principle of historic buildings built to line on Alexander Street and presenting their facades to

the Braak as a unified foreground. The new building reads as a separate entity sited behind the existing old building, and when viewed in context with other new buildings similarly sited behind older buildings elsewhere around the Braak, it has an acceptable low impact.

It should also be mentioned that the contemporary yet understated appearance of the new building has a contrasting aesthetic to the older historic buildings and this also make it appear as a new layer, appropriately distanced from its immediate heritage context.

5.2 Impacts of proposed alterations

Proposed alterations that impact on heritage fabric include new or altered openings to the Alexander and Bird Street facades of the older Drostdy building and the removal of the existing timber staircase from its current position. Refer to Figures 10 to 12.

The requirements for the new hotel are such that the existing entrance and timber staircase are not deemed suitable. The existing entrance does not provide sufficient light and is not a strong enough indicator of the hotel's identity. The proposal for the new entrance conforms generally to the geometry and proportions of the existing building and will be one of a number of interventions over time to its façade. Similarly an existing sash window on the Alexander Street façade serving the office function of the hotel is to be replaced with a double door and fanlight.

The existing staircase is also deemed inadequate because the stairs start too close to the entrance and are too domestic in scale. They are also narrow and steep with worn treads and timber balusters replaced with metal bars.

5.3 Mitigation

The proposed new development will have some visual impact on heritage resources in the environs but this has been found to be an acceptable low level.

There will also be some changes to the existing appearance of the Alexander and Bird Street facades but given the building's highly altered state these changes are also acceptable. Moving the existing timber staircase is an unfortunate necessity but in mitigation it can be argued that the staircase has to some extent lost its context due to the substantive internal alterations that have taken place over time.

The re-establishment of a hotel on the site is highly valued from a heritage perspective and the proposals can in principle be supported.

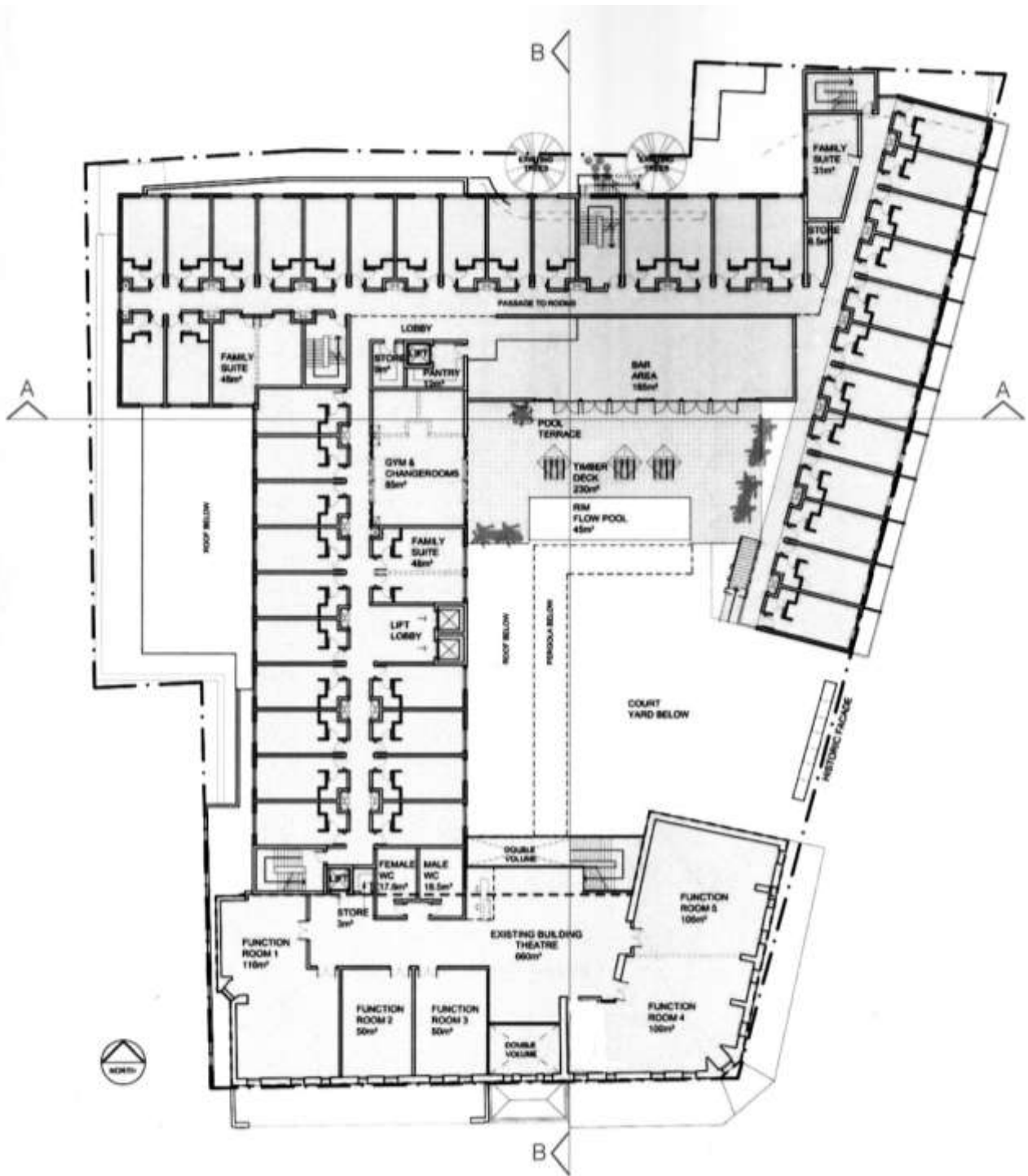


Figure 11: Proposed First Floor Plan (DHK Architects)



Figure 12: Proposed Alexander Street elevation: existing (above) and proposed (below) (DHK Architects)



Figure 13: Proposed Bird Street elevation (DHK Architects)

6 COMMENTS FROM IAP'S (to be concluded)

This draft for comment is to be circulated to registered heritage bodies in Stellenbosch for comment. Comments received are to be incorporated in the permit application to the heritage authority, Heritage Western Cape.

The proposals have been submitted to the Stellenbosch Municipality's Planning Advisory Committee and their comment is included as Annexure E.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the heritage authority grant a permit for the proposed alterations to the façades and interior of the old Drostdy building on condition that:

1/ The existing timber staircase may be moved but must be reinstated elsewhere on site as a working public stair. The component parts of the stair e.g. timber balusters are to be restored.

2/ New openings (door, window frames etc.) to the old Drostdy building and in relation to the Alexander and Bird Street elevations are to be formed of timber painted to match existing.

3/ Where not replaced with new, existing doors and windows are to be conserved i.e. refurbished or replaced with similar.

4/ Archaeological monitoring should take place during excavations.

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