

PHASE 2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: DROSTDY HOTEL, GRAAFF REINET, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

(Permit Number: 2/2/APM-PERMIT/13/08/002 issued by Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage
Resources Authority)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACO Associates cc was requested by Urban Concepts Pty Ltd, on behalf of the client, SA College for Tourism, to undertake a Phase 2 Archaeological Impact Assessment prior to the proposed revitalisation of the Drostdy Hotel complex in Graaff Reinet, Eastern Cape.

This report fulfils the requirements of the Permit (2/2/APM-PERMIT/13/08/002) issued by the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority dated 27 August 2013.

Test excavations behind No 5 Parliament Street and Kromm's Inn prior to the construction of new accommodation for the Drostdy Hotel revealed that:

- Very limited evidence for the dumping of 19th century material behind the Drostdy Hotel or Kromm's Inn and No 5 Parliament Street. Historical material was either dumped elsewhere, or during restoration of the Drostdy in the 1970s, material may have been cleared and moved elsewhere;
- Informal excavations by the contractor at the entrance to the Stretch's Court avenue uncovered a collection of late 19th century domestic refuse which is probably associated with the occupation of the cottages. This material is potentially of high significance as it may relate to the occupation of the cottages by the descendants of emancipated slaves.

Plaster Stripping in the Drostdy Hotel:

- Suggests that the red brick "lean-to" on the northern and southern wings of the Hotel were added during the Victorian period of alterations but possibly with earlier bricks?
- Some of the soft red bricks used in this addition are larger than standard bricks used elsewhere on site;
- Have supported the sketch map provided by May (2013) regarding the original walling and the addition of the "lean-to" adjoining the courtyard.

Plaster Stripping in the Stretch's Court cottages:

- Have suggested numerous alterations to the cottages over time, using different building materials and methods.

In general terms it must be stated that the building sequence at both the Drostdy and the Stretch's Court cottages is very complex in that numerous periods of change, alteration and addition are reflected. The building materials are highly variable. This situation begs us to question the concept of "originality" with respect to the site at large. The original or first phases of development of the site are significantly obscured and it would take a project considerably larger than what we have available in time to tease apart the details of the building sequence. Be that as it may, it would be best to celebrate the structure not as an original building, but rather a very old place that has become adjusted over the years to the needs, styles and aspirations of its owners and residents.

Recommendations for Monitoring

- It is possible that material may be recovered from the courtyard behind the Drostdy Hotel. Any landscape interventions which result in below ground excavations should be aware that material may have been dumped here in the past;
- Monitoring is required during the trench excavations (below the paved Stretch's Court avenue) to provide services for the cottages. Previous experience has shown that domestic refuse is frequently deposited near doors.

- Renovations to the cottages in Stretch's Court should take cognisance of previous alterations and attempt to preserve as much of the original brick work as possible. Already the previous changes have left a patchwork of small areas of original fabric which are at great risk during current and future renovations.

Plaster and Paint

- As a general rule plaster used on an historic building should be as close as possible to the texture and hardness of the original. Although the re-use of a mud (daga) based plaster is the best for the fabric, few owners find this acceptable. Given this, the best solution is to plaster with a weak mortar mix of 9:1 supplemented with 2 or 3 x lime. The danger of using a hard mortar is that it is inflexible and tends to use the softer underlying brick as the sacrificial point in the event of movement or expansion or contraction of the wall. Severe cracking can result over time;
- Renewed plaster can be painted with a good PVA. Traditional paints were lead oxide based oils (considered unacceptably dangerous today) limewash, or distempers (essentially limewash with a colourant and bonded with a glue). Traditional distempers are not readily available, and furthermore they are difficult to use as no other paint or glue will bond to them. Repainting involves removing the distemper. Lime wash is a good option for exterior walls, however are considered by many to be too coarse for interior use. This leaves little option but to use a modern PVA for interior walls.

Finally, it is recommended that copies of the plaster stripping records be kept both on SAHRIS (as is required by law) but also by the architects to inform on any future interventions at the Drostdy.

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Terminology

Brickwork is masonry produced by using bricks and mortar. The alignment of the brick with respect to the wall is described in various ways.

Stretcher: A brick laid with its long narrow side exposed;

Header: A brick laid flat with its width at the face of the wall, or parallel to the face of the wall.

Typically, rows of bricks, called courses, are laid on top of one another to build up a structure such as a brick wall. There are various ways in which the bricks can be arranged to build a wall. In the case of the Drostdy Hotel and Stretch's Court, at least two methods were used and they are:

English Bond involves alternating courses of stretchers and headers.

Flemish Bond involves alternating stretchers and headers in the same course with the headers centred over the stretchers in the course below.

There are many other permutations for the arrangement of bricks, for example American Bond may have from three to nine courses of stretchers between every course of headers.

However, by the 1930s the preferred bond comprises only stretchers.

Brick sizes vary within a small range today. For example in the United Kingdom, the usual size of a modern brick is 215 × 102.5 × 65 mm whereas in South African the usual size of a modern brick is 222 × 106 × 73 mm. However, bricks ranged considerably in the past, as they were made by private individuals in country locations without the benefit of a standardised template.

1. INTRODUCTION

ACO Associates cc was requested by Urban Concepts Pty Ltd, on behalf of the client, SA College for Tourism, to undertake a Phase 2 Archaeological Impact Assessment prior to the proposed revitalisation of the Drostdy Hotel complex in Graaff Reinet, Eastern Cape.

This report fulfils the requirements of the Permit (2/2/APM-PERMIT/13/08/002) issued by the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority dated 27 August 2013 which stipulates: “A final report on the work conducted and the findings must be submitted to ECPHRA not later than a year from the expiration of this permit”.

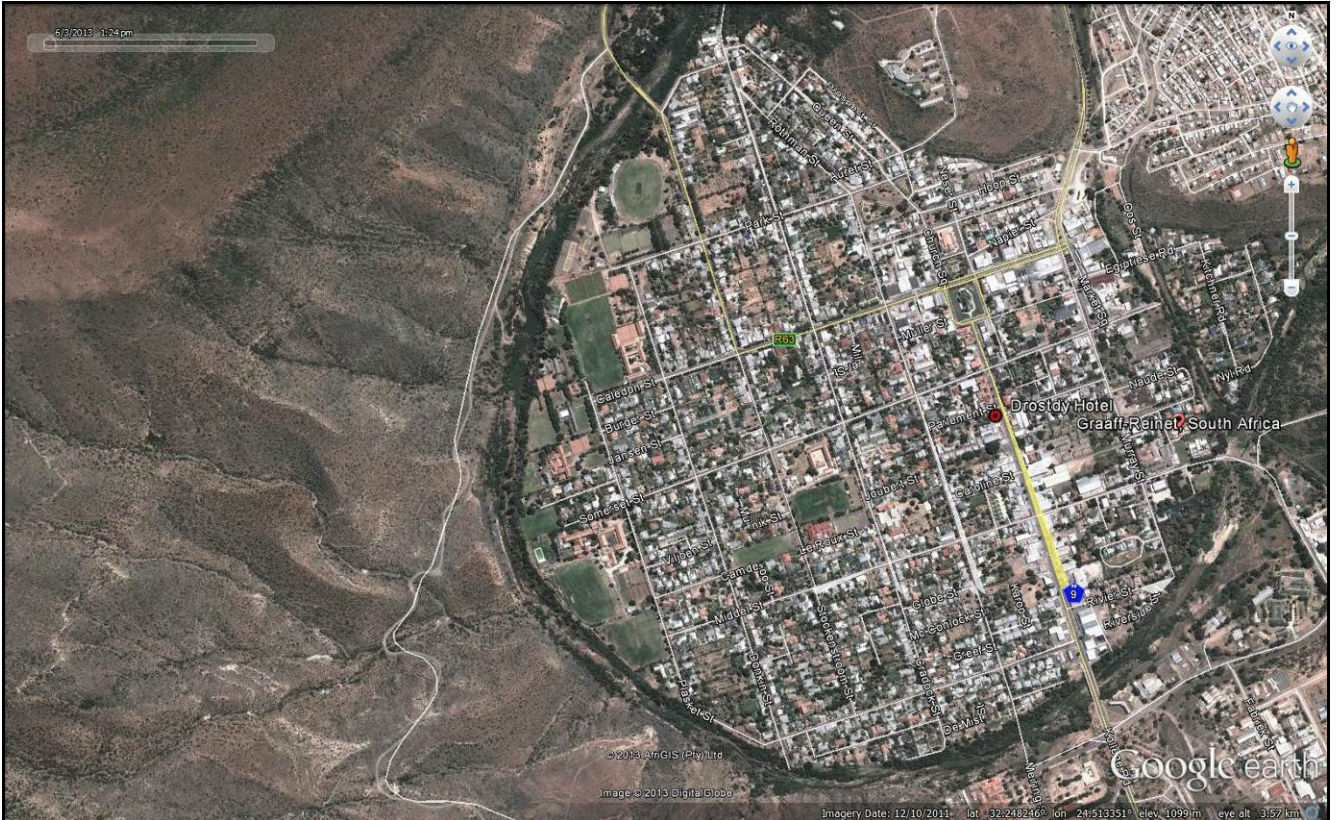


Figure 1: The location of the Drostdy Hotel in Graaff Reinet, Eastern Cape.

1.1 Historical Background

The Drostdy Hotel is located in Church Street, Graaff Reinet (Figure 1) and dates back to 1804 (Fransen 2004). The building was designed by the well-known French architect Louis Michel Thibault. It was used as a Magistrate’s Office until 1847. The Drostdy is a Cape Dutch style U-shaped building, with wings of equal width under thatch roofs, enclosing a gallery or ‘agterkamer’ under a flat roof.

The Drostdy became Kromm’s Hotel in 1876 and has been used as a hotel until the present day. During this period the building has experienced many changes, including its conversion into a double storey Victorian structure with decorative veranda under corrugated iron roof. It was bought by the Oude Meester Group in the early 1980s and restored back to its original design by the Historical Homes of SA. The restoration was undertaken by Munnik Visser Black & Fish Architects. Much time was invested into the restoration of the building with the material layering investigated and records kept of the changes that had been made over the years. The results of the fabric analysis have been retained and may be used to inform further renovations such as the current study.

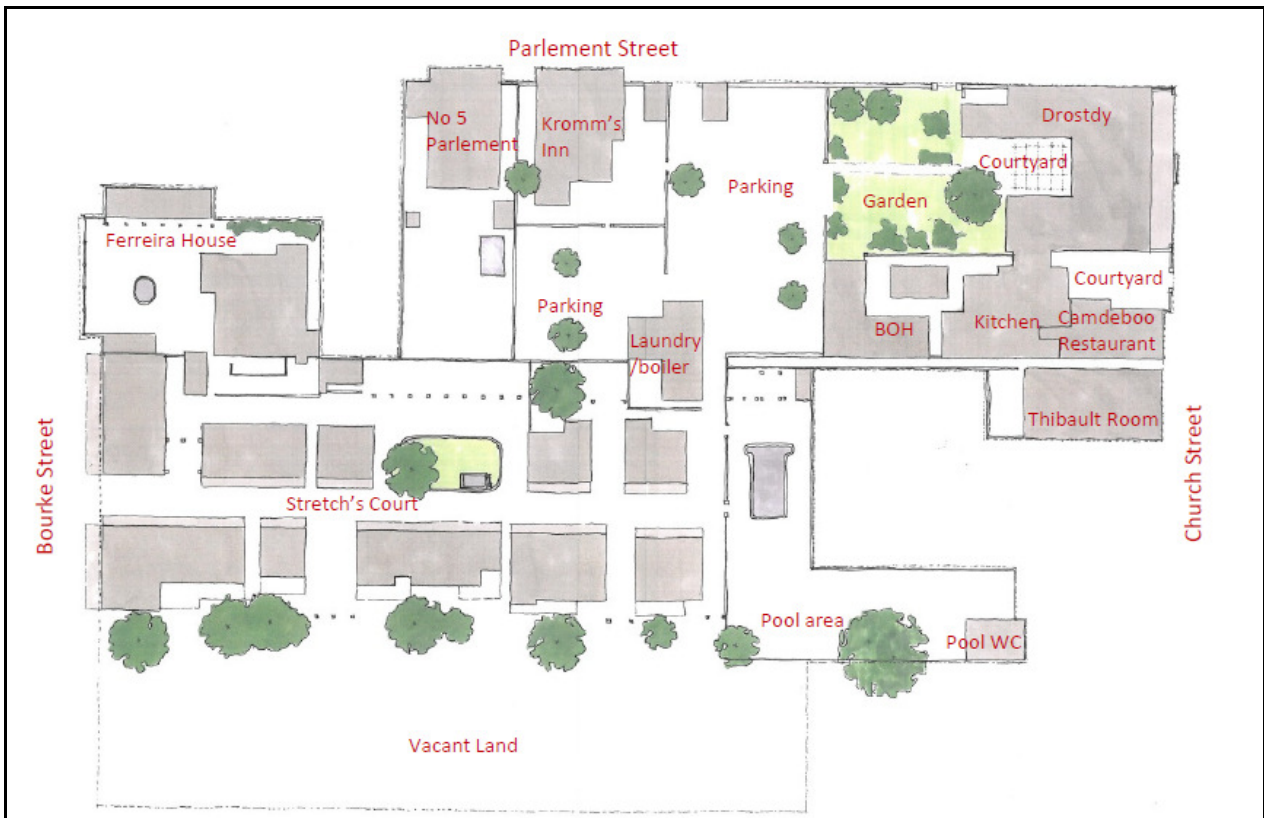


Figure 2: Existing site layout (Urban Concepts 2013) indicating location of buildings discussed in the text.

In addition to the Drostdy Hotel, the current property includes a number of other buildings (Figure 2) which were built after 1804 (Figure 3) and are briefly described below.

Kromm's Inn stands on a portion of the original Drostdy grounds along Parliament Street. It dates to approximately 1847 and ownership changed several times before it was acquired by De Oude Graaff Reinette Drostdy (Edms) Bpk in 1987 and incorporated into the Drostdy Hotel.

Ferreira house was purchased by the Oude Meester Group in 1990 and converted into hotel accommodation.

No 5 Parliament Street (Erf 1176) dates to around 1873 and has been recently acquired and will form part of the newly renovated Drostdy Hotel complex.

Stretch's Court (or Drostdy Hof) functions as an annex to the Drostdy Hotel. A large piece of land attached to the Drostdy was sold to a Captain Stretch in 1855. He divided the erven into allotments. Here he built cottages for his workers after the emancipation of slaves in 1834. The exact date of construction of each cottage is unknown. These properties were eventually transferred to the occupants. A public right-of-way which led from Church Street to the present Bourke Street through the Drostdy gardens was turned into a *cul de sac*, and later renamed Stretch's Court, and then Drostdy Hof. Over time, the cottages became neglected and the occupants moved to the coloured township. Historical Homes of South Africa acquired the properties in and about 1966, with the view to restoring the entire complex.

The cottages and street were renovated as upmarket rental accommodation in the late 1960s, then again in 1975 with the restoration of the Drostdy, as part of the overnight accommodation.



Figure 3: Site chronology (Urban Concepts) indicating the relative ages of the buildings discussed in the text.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION

The properties concerned are Erf 3476 (Drostdy Hotel), Erf 3477 (Stretch's Court) and Erf 1176 (No 5 Parliament St), Graaff Reinet. All three erven are in the process of being consolidated.

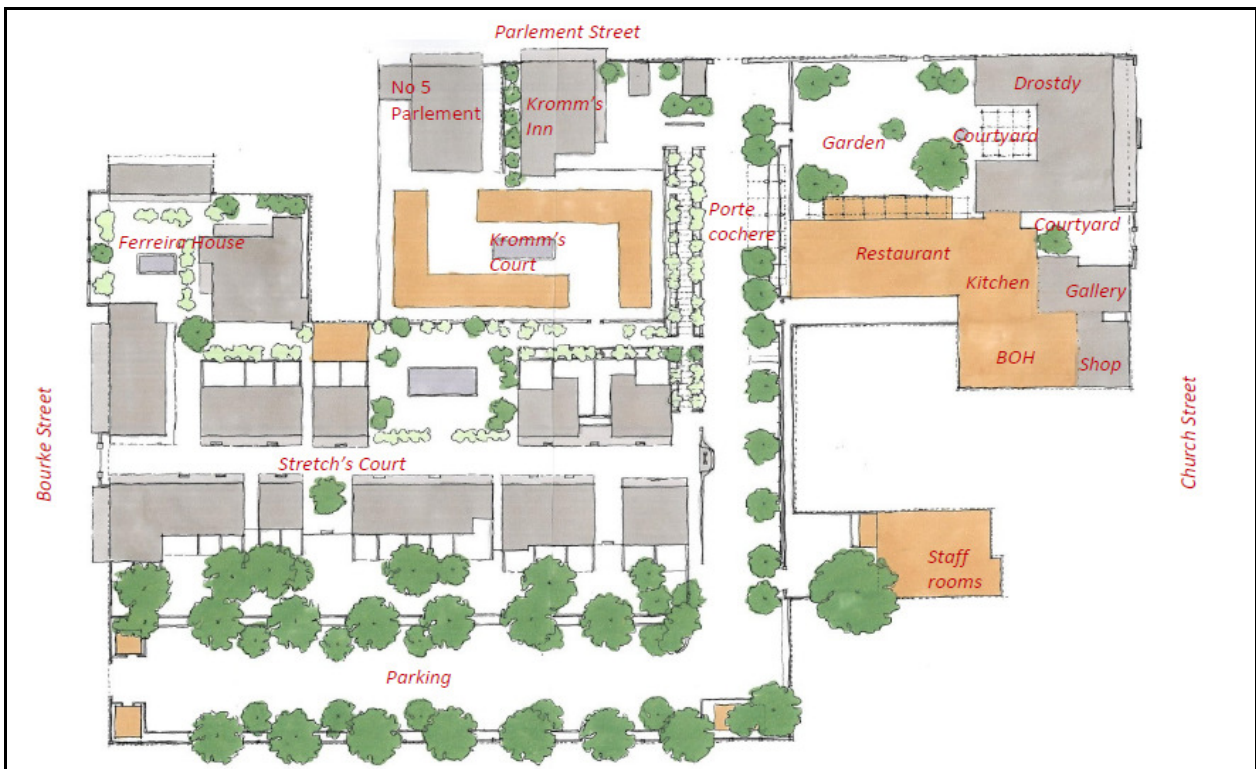


Figure 4: Proposed master plan for revitalisation of Drostdy Hotel complex (dhk Architects).

The client proposes to revitalise the Drostdy Hotel and associated buildings on adjoining erven. Significant buildings are to be either conserved and maintained with little intervention (Drostdy), rehabilitated to the needs of luxury accommodation (Stretch’s Court/Ferreira House) or other suitable uses (Camdeboo/Thibault Room); or reconfigured to suit a new use (Kromm’s Inn). The proposals also include the removal of buildings of no or low significance to allow for better spatial flow and to shift the functions such as back of house/stores to areas on the property where these functions are screened from the public.

2.1 Drostdy Hotel

The developer intends to remove inappropriate accretions along northern elevation of the Drostdy to return to the original U-shape. In addition he intends to create links from the wings of the Drostdy to the courtyard. It is intended that intervention should be minimal and based on fabric analysis undertaken during the initial restoration of the building in the 1980s.

- Selected plaster stripping was proposed to address specific problems, after discussions with the architect on site.

2.2 Kromm’s Inn and 5 Parliament Street

The proposed new accommodation will be located behind Kromm’s Inn and No 5 Parliament Street (Figures 2 & 4) in an area which is currently undeveloped (backyard and parking area). The excavation of new foundation trenches in this area may uncover historical archaeological material such as backyard middens relating to the Drostdy Hotel as well as Kromm’s Inn.

For this reason it was proposed that archaeological test excavations are undertaken in this area.

2.3 Stretch’s Court

The Draft HIA (Urban Concepts 2013) examined the degrees of intactness of each of the 15 cottages and assigned them an historical grading (Figure 6).

It was suggested that fabric analysis/plaster stripping of the historic wall fabric in particular of the interiors of cottages 1, 3, 12 and 14, which have been identified as having possible Grade III B status due to their degree of intactness, should be undertaken.



Figure 5: Stretch’s Court numbering and grading (Urban Concepts 2013)

3. LEGISLATION

Various portions of the Drostdy Hotel complex (namely the Drostdy Hotel, Kromm's Inn and Stretch's Court) were declared National Monuments (i.e. Grade 1 sites) between 1981 and 1992 under the old National Monuments Act (No 28 of 1969). Under the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999) they have reverted to Provincial Heritage sites (PHS) (Grade 2) and the heritage authority which is responsible for issuing comments and permits with respect to alterations to the Provincial Heritage sites is the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Agency (ECPHRA).



Figure 6: Heritage buildings protected by the NHRA (Urban Concepts 2013).

There are, however, buildings on all three the erven which are older than 60 years, but which were not part of the of the original PHS declarations (i.e. No 5 Parliament Street and Ferreira's House). There also newer buildings post-dating the 1960s which are of no heritage significance. Some of these buildings will be demolished as part of the revitalisation process.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Proposed Site visit

It was proposed that, prior to archaeological intervention, the architect on site Mr Peter Whitlock of Moffat Whitlock Architects undertake a detailed survey together with the archaeologists appointed to the project. This was to explain the proposed developments and indicate where additional information may be provided through archaeological methods. The aim of the archaeological excavations and plaster stripping would be to address specific problems. This site visit formed part of the fieldwork phase and did not constitute a separate site visit.

4.2 Test Excavations

The archaeologist applied for a permit to ECPHRA to conduct archaeological excavations at the Drostdy Hotel.

It was proposed that archaeological test excavations would be undertaken in the backyard/parking area behind Kromm's Inn and No 5 Parliament Street to determine whether any historical material

relating to the Drostdy Hotel, Kromm's Inn or No 5 Parliament Street have been dumped in this area (Figure 5). The archaeologists would also check for any potential built features which have since been demolished. The excavations would take the form of either test pits or trenches and would need to go as far as needed to establish the level of undisturbed soil. The exact location of these test areas would be determined during the site visit.

The excavations would indicate whether this area is sensitive or not and might inform the requirements regarding archaeological monitoring.

4.3 Plaster Stripping

Plaster stripping was proposed at the both the Drostdy Hotel and Kromm's Inn, depending on the requirements of Mr Whitlock.

Plaster stripping was also proposed for the interior of the Stretch's Court cottages 1, 3, 12 and 14 which have been identified as having possible Grade III B status (Figure 6) and which will be impacted by the proposed renovations.

The archaeologist might also be required to provide input regarding the intention to upgrade the *stoep* in front of the Stretch's Court cottages. This would involve examining the original ground level around the front of the cottages to determine possible appropriate materials. This action however, was not possible as the existing red brick raised *stoeps* were still in place at the time of the excavations.

4.4 Monitoring

It is possible that archaeological material (predominantly dump material but possibly also sub-surface ruins) might be uncovered during building operations. Any excavation below the soil surface has the potential to impact negatively on archaeological material. The method proposed was that Mr Peter Whitlock would immediately inform the archaeologist at the Albany Museum in Grahamstown if any historic material was uncovered. The archaeologist at the Albany Museum will be sub-contracted by ACO Associates and conduct monitoring under instructions from the Albany Museum.

Monitoring would only take place if a specific need was identified. If significant sub-surface archaeological material is uncovered below the soil surface, then work may need to stop in that area while archaeologists from ACO Associates examine the area. Further archaeological excavations may be required, to the expense of the developer. Any reports which arise from the monitoring work would be sent to ACO Associates who will submit them to ECPHRA. Significant archaeological discoveries could be incorporated into displays at the Drostdy Hotel, subject to the approval of the Albany Museum.

Restrictions

Significant restriction were encountered in that the window of opportunity to conduct the required work was very limited – the archaeological team was put under some pressure to be off-site as soon as possible so that the building contractors could take over. Records of work that took place as a result of previous restorations were not available.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 No 5 Parliament Street

The building on this property is estimated to have been built in about 1873. The late Victorian single storey symmetrical three-bay residence was likely to have been erected as a flat or mono pitch, with stepped parapet, like the neighbouring Kromm's inn (Figure 2). The later "victorianisation" resulted in the pyramid roof structure and *stoep* addition which extends over the boundary line to the pavement.

A later lean-to addition to the back clips onto the pyramid corrugated iron roof. The walls are plastered brick and/or stone. The back *stoep* is covered in black slate tile, with small holes drilled in each corner. These tiles were previously roof tiles, possibly derived from the house itself.

A number of random test pits were excavated in the back garden to determine whether any historic material had been dumped there in the past (Figure 7).

Test Pit 1: was excavated right up against the raised back *stoep* which was covered in black slate roof tiles. It was excavated to a depth of 50 cm and was sterile except for a few pieces of metal (Figure 8).

Test Pit 2: was excavated in the middle of the lawn (Figure 8). It was dug to a depth of 40 cm and contained a few fragments of bone and a single cartridge case.

Both test pits were dug into sterile, red gravelly soil and contained virtually no artefactual remains.

Test Pit 3: was dug in the back garden close to the fence (Figure 9). It contained quite a bit of builders' rubble as well as evidence of a pole sunk into a concrete sleeve to a depth of 40 cm. A portion of a buried cat was found in the section wall at a depth of 40 cm and left *in situ*.

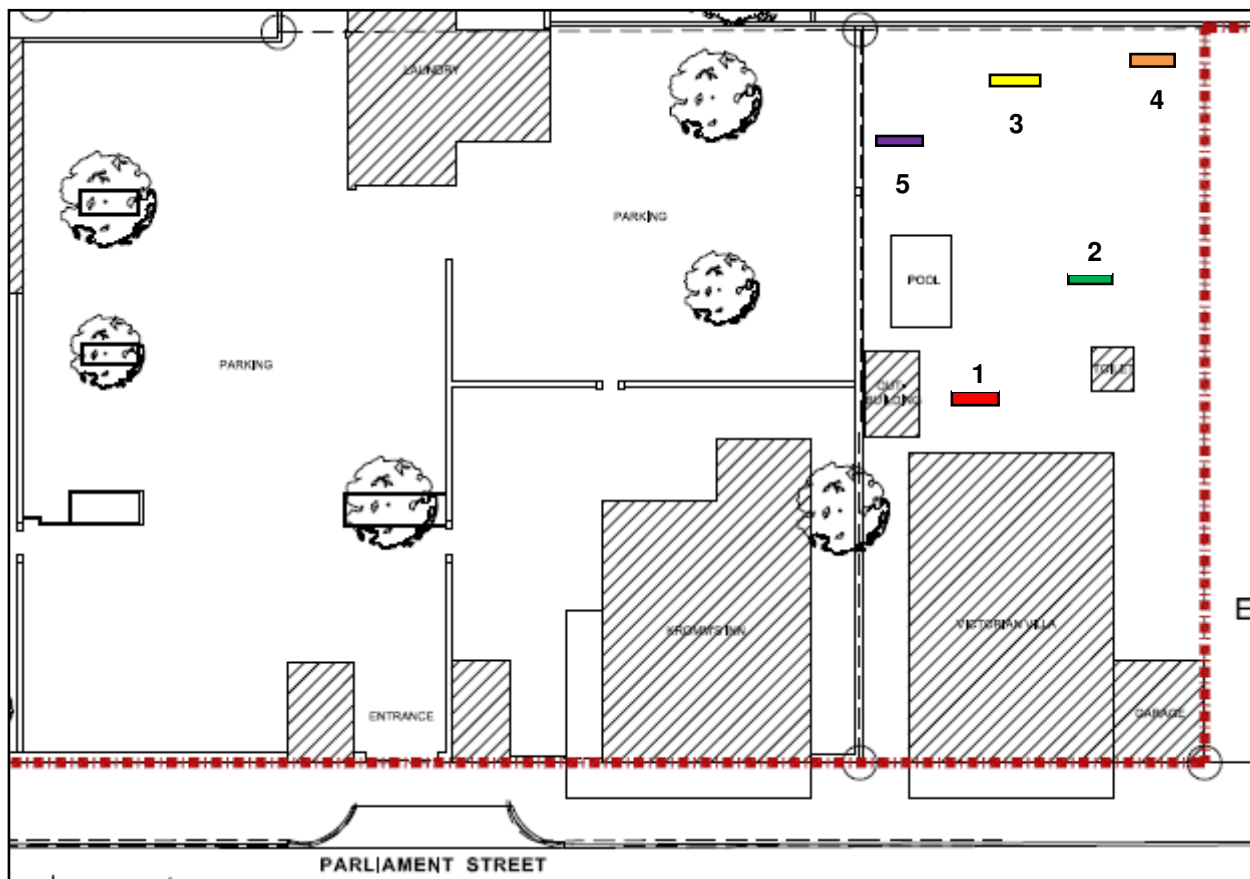


Figure 7: Location of test excavations in the garden behind No 5 Parliament Street.

Test Pit 4: was dug in the one corner of the property, in the flower bed. While similar to the other test pits, this one contained some black charcoal fragments, some fragments of bone and glass, and a marble. The ceramics included a piece of flow ware and industrial slipware. The artefactual density, however, is very low. The test pit was extended in size to understand the stratigraphy and get a bigger sample of material. The artefactual material was recorded in the top hard brown soil. Below about 40 cm, there is a large concentration of bone, mainly ribs, but also some long bones standing upright. The localised nature of the bone collection, including the apparent *in situ* jaw bone, suggested that this is another burial – probably that of a small ungulate (Figure 10 & 11). There is evidence for a domestic rubbish dump.



Figure 8: Excavating Test Pits 1 and 2.



Figure 9: Excavating Test Pit 3.



Figure 10: Mammal remains from Test Pit 4.



Figure 11: Archaeological remains from Test Pit 4.

Test Pit 5: was dug along the boundary fence with Kromm's Inn, close to the swimming pool. The pit was dug to 50 cm but only a few fragments of bone were uncovered.

5.2 Kromm's Inn

Kromm's Inn, described as an early Georgian styled Karoo-type residence, stands on a portion of the original Drostdy grounds along Parliament Street. It was built in approximately 1847, with the addition of the veranda in 1857. The property changed hands numerous times before it was acquired by De Oude Graaff Reinette Drostdy (Edms) Bpk in 1987, and incorporated into the Drostdy Hotel complex as a bar. The parking area behind Kromm's Inn is covered in red bricks. These were lifted in places in order to undertake test excavations. Care was taken to place the test pits some distance from the trees in the parking lot to avoid their roots.

Test Pit 1: Below the red brick paving is a hard grey loam which contains very little evidence of disturbance except for the occasional fragment of red brick. These brick pieces are found down to a level of 70 cm. Below the grey loam is a reddish clay soil which is completely sterile (Figures 15 & 16). The test pit was excavated to 90 cm and section drawings and photographs were taken. The total artefact sample from this test pit includes two fragments of refined earthenware with blue transfer (Willow Pattern) under glaze, two pieces of plain white refined earthenware, two piece of glass (one white and the other pale green) and four bone fragments.

Test Pit 2: Below the red brick paving is a 10 cm thick layer of builders' rubble, similar to the rubble found in the garden in 5 Parliament Street, but not as dense. There are a few fragments of bone but they are sparse.

Test Pit 3: Below the red brick paving, the soil is extremely hard and almost completely sterile from about 40 m. At 90 cm red soil was observed to be quite sterile except for 2 fragments of bone and one sherd of refined earthenware with blue transfer (Willow Pattern) under glaze.

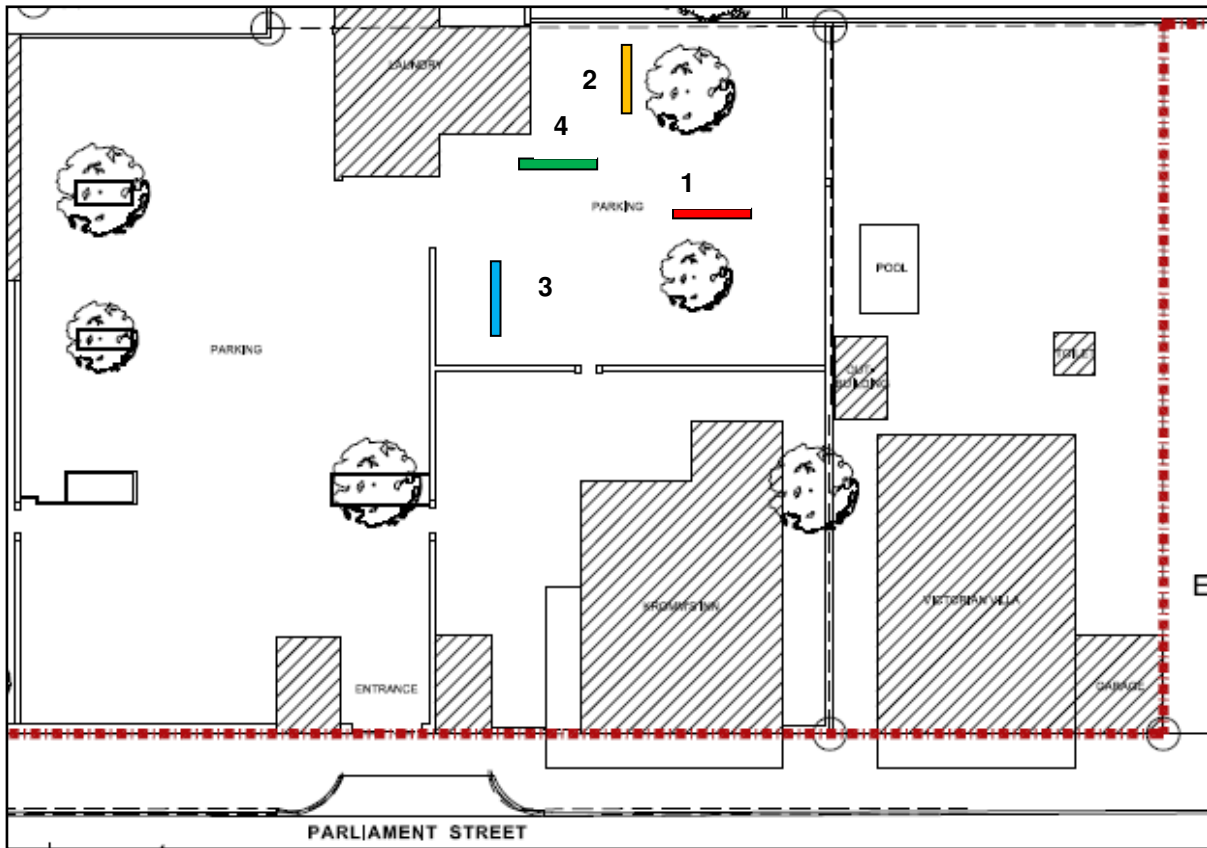


Figure 12: The position of the four test pits excavated in the parking area behind Kromm's Inn.



Figure 13: The rows of red bricks with V "frogs" from Test Pit 4 under the existing paving.



Figure 14: Profile of Test Pit 4 indicating the layer of building rubble under the brick paving and below this another layer of bricks. These lower bricks contain the V incised “frogs”.



Figure 15: Section of Test Pit 1.



Figure 16: Section of Test Pit 3.

Test Pit 4: is located in the centre of the paved area. Below the red brick paving is a dense layer of builders rubble, including bricks, fragments of hard grey mortar and some fragments with at least two layers of cream coloured paint/white wash. The rubble is clearly derived from previous renovations. In this rubble, and only about 10cm below the paving, is two rows of bricks. These bricks, when taken out and cleaned, include a V-shaped incised ‘frog’ (Figure 17) which according to Mr Whitlock (pers. comm.) are an identification mark of a brick company in Graaff Reinet. These bricks, when broken open, contain a white fleck which is also observed in a number of bricks during the plaster stripping.



Figure 17: The bricks with the V incised “frogs” found in Test Pit 4.

5.3 Stretch’s Court Spoil Heap

A public right-of-way which led from Church Street to the present Bourke Street through the Drostdy gardens (“wandelgang”) was turned into a cul de sac. When the Drostdy became a hotel, the street was renamed “Free Street” or “Vrystraat” (c. 1876), and again later renamed Stretch’s Court, and Drostdy Hof.

A large heap of soil containing 19th century historic material was recorded at the entrance to the brick road (or “Vrystraat”) between the cottages (Figure 18).

The soil heap was located between cottages 15 and 14. It was discovered that a number of test pits had been excavated by the contractor at various localities around the property to assess the substrate.

On investigation, it became apparent that the spoil heap contained a selection of 19th century archaeological material.

The collection includes British refined earthenware with predominantly blue transfer under-glaze, with the Willow Pattern in particular being preferred. There was only one fragment of industrial slipware. The green bottle fragments include one “kick-up”, there is a single fragment of a clay pipe stem and a small collection of bone (Figure 19).

The collection can be approximately dated to the second half of the 19th century and reflects the remains of domestic refuse. In all likelihood, these derive from the Stretch’s Court cottages.



Figure 18: The location of the spoil heap at the Bourke Street entrance to Stretch's Court.



Figure 19: Sample of material collected from the spoil heap.

5.4 Plaster Stripping in Drostdy Hotel

The Drostdy was restored to its original form as depicted in historical images of 1812 and 1880, with the addition of modern facilities by the firm of architects Munnik Visser Black & Fish. During the restoration process in the 1970s, the material layering was investigated and records were kept of the changes that were made through time.

The property is owned by the SA College of Tourism (SACT) and they have embarked on a new process of restoration of the Drostdy Hotel complex which includes the “long term sustainable economic viability” of the hotel.

Minimal intervention is proposed to the historic fabric of the building. This would include:

- Changes to the link between the kitchen addition and the southern wing of the Drostdy. The fabric analysis of this section indicates that the historic fabric has been severely compromised due to numerous alterations since the late 1800s;
- Removal of inappropriate accretions along the northern wing of the Drostdy, to return it to its original U-shape;
- Activating the courtyard and creating a link from the wings of the Drostdy into the courtyard through the creation of additional openings in the south and north wings of the internal courtyard walls (subject to fabric analysis). According to May (2013), these elements are an 1847 addition. The proposed openings create the opportunity for direct access into the courtyard;

The intention of the plaster stripping was to determine if there is any of the original fabric left along this internal courtyard walls. Limited plaster stripping was undertaken in the Drostdy Hotel on the 17th and 18th September. We concentrated on the internal courtyard wall along the southern wing as the northern wing contained a walk-in freezer wall and built in cupboards which made access to the walls difficult (Figure 21). Sections of walling were sampled with the guidance of Mr Whitlock.

Plaster Strip A

A strip of plaster about 145 cm in length and 30 cm in width was removed between the window and the door on the north facing courtyard wall on the southern wing of the Drostdy Hotel (Figure 22). Both the window and door surrounds comprise standard-sized (machine made) red bricks with grey cement mortar. However, between these two recent insertions is a section of walling which comprised of a soft red brick cemented together with a red clay mortar. Since only a small section of walling was exposed, only a few bricks could be measured. It appears that some broken bricks were used in the construction of the wall and this also makes determining the bond difficult. The bricks vary in size but there are at least three bricks (out of the five which could be measured) which are 260 mm in length by 65 mm in height. These are bigger than the standard brick used elsewhere on the property (see Terminology above).

Plaster Strip B

A further 40 cm strip of plaster was removed next to the window (Figure 23). The bricks are a standard size (varying between 200 mm and 220 mm in length and 65 mm and 70 mm in height), and are bonded with a grey cement mortar. The section exposed by the plaster stripping comprised of only stretchers.

Plaster Strip C

A strip of plaster was removed around the corner of the northern wall and the door to the back room of the Drostdy (Figure 24). The combined length of the plaster strip is 70 cm (50 cm and 20 cm). The bricks are a standard size (see Plaster Strip B above) and bonded with a grey cement mortar.

Plaster Strip D

A plaster strip was removed around a corner of the southern wing, from the northern wall to the eastern wall (Figure 25 & 27). The combined length of this strip is 120 cm (80 cm and 40 cm in length). There is no clear evidence for direct bonding between the northern and eastern walls – the joins are uneven and filled with cement. The modern insert in the corner has the smaller, hard red brick with the same white flecks as the bricks recorded in the courtyard behind Kromm's Inn containing the V frog. The bricks in the northern wall, before the corner, are a very soft red with red clay mortar.

Plaster Strip E

Mr Whitlock inspected Plaster Strip D (Figure 25) and suggested that the strip be extended along the eastern wall of the southern wing to determine whether the “lean to” is more recent or part of the original structure. Since all electrical power had already been switched off because of the demolition of the kitchen buildings attached to the southern wing of the Drostdy, the plaster stripping for Plaster Strip E was undertaken by hand.

The total length of plaster stripped from the corner (thus incorporating the section initially stripped as part of Plaster Strip D) is 3 m.

A section of the eastern wall from the corner, for a distance of about 140 cm, comprises only machine made red brick with grey mortar (Figure 28). This inserted section of the wall consists of only stretchers. From 140 cm to 300 cm, the bricks in the wall are extremely soft and crumbly (Figure 29). Some bricks have lost their shape and resemble lumps of clay. These bricks are arranged in English Bond (i.e. alternating rows of stretchers and footers). There are sections where the mud brick is covered in thin layers of white pigment which could be lime wash or lime plaster (Figure 30).

Conclusions

Our findings at the Drostdy would appear to support the sketch plan provided by May (2013) for the original walling still present in the Drostdy Hotel (Figure 29).

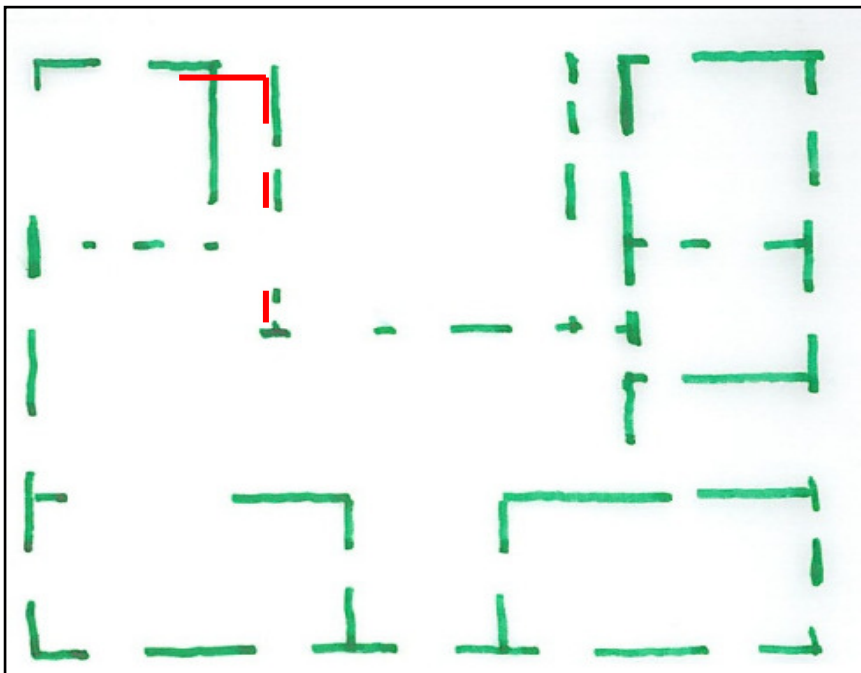


Figure 29: View of the remaining sections of original walling as provided by May (2013). The red sections were sampled during this study.

5.5 Plaster Stripping Stretch’s Court Cottages

May (2013) traced an undated document written by an unknown author prior to the restoration in the 1960s. This document highlights certain aspects of the character of the cottages before restoration, including the fact that only two cottages were in their original condition. Another document notes that there were thirteen two-bedroom cottages, and three one-bedroom cottages. These typical Karoo-style cottages have flat roofs, stepped or pitched parapets with face brick *stoeps* (added in the 1960s). The fronts of all the cottages have similar four or six panel doors with fanlights. The houses had tiny doors and windows, mostly crooked and mostly original. Ceilings were low and rafted, with

reed in some of the kitchens. Backdoors were stable doors, with old hinges. Some floors were yellowwood, but most were about six inches above street level.

May (2013) utilized three sets of plans dating to 1968, 1975 and 2012 in her fabric analysis.

Three degrees of intactness have been identified and assigned to the cottages, along with their proposed heritage grading:

- Wall fabric 70 to 90% intact. Some internal finishes significant to the character of the building.
- Wall fabric 50 to 70% intact. Internal finishes not significant but authentic to the character of the building.
- Wall fabric 20 to 50% intact. Internal finishes not significant, nor authentic to the character of the building.

The aim of the plaster stripping was to determine whether the cottages identified by May (2013) as being of potential Grade 3 B significance retained sufficient original wall fabric to be placed in this category. The aim was also to assist the developers with understanding the sequence of changes which have taken place inside the cottages since they were constructed.

Cottage 1

This cottage was initially selected for sampling of interior walls, but during fieldwork this decision was changed because Cottage 1 has no new intervention, except for 2 minor new walls on the 1st floor which will be demolished. There is therefore no need for plaster stripping.

Cottage 3

In her analysis of old plans, May (2013) concluded that the shell of this building is largely original and the majority of the internal walls are intact and therefore a substantial amount of historic fabric exists, with the exception of the dividing wall between the existing bathrooms.

May (2013) therefore assigned this a Grade 3B status.

Two areas were sampled, one in the front room and one in the back room (Appendix 1). A small area at an internal doorway had been plaster stripped by dhk Architects.

Strip 3A: A 3 m strip along the interior wall (Figure 31) was found to consist of a soft red brick with a clay mortar. The brick appears to be unfired mud brick and is friable. Some bricks crumble to the touch. Interspersed with the unfired mud brick is a more regular (machine made) red brick flecked with white. The older section of the walling is apparent to the right, closer to the door frame, while there is a clear break and more recent bricks with a grey cement mortar to the left (Figure 31). Construction bonding is not very clear due to the disturbance affected by the insertion of the modern door frame, and the closing of a previous entrance – it appears to be English Bond.

The brick sizes vary between 220 and 230 mm in length and 60 and 70 mm in height.

Strip 3B: was sampled in the back room, interior wall (Figure 32) facing the two bathrooms. The bricks are a standard fired red brick with grey cement mortar the construction is in English bond. The brick sizes in 3B are a standard 220 mm in length and 70 mm in height.

Cottage 4

Cottage 4 is a flat roof building. Additional rooms existed to the west, which were demolished in 1968. The shell and dimensions of the walls of the north-west room suggest that these are intact and therefore historic fabric exists. The remaining internal walls may retain a little historic fabric, but they are mostly new walls.

May (2013) assigned this cottage Grade 3C status.

Two sections of walling were sampled. Plaster Strip 4B in the entrance hall and 4A in the back room.

Plaster Strip 4A crosses the corner of the room and is 26 cm plus 39 cm in length and 40 cm in width. The bricks are a standard fired red brick with white flecks and bonded with grey cement mortar (Figure 33).

Plaster Strip 4B is located in the entrance passageway, on the right, under a support beam constructed of wood (Figure 34). The bricks to the right of the strip are a friable red clay bonded with a red clay mortar laid in English Bond, while the left section of the strip comprises a harder, standard brick (bonding difficult to determine) with a grey cement mortar. This aperture in the wall was probably inserted during the 1970s and a false walling above the aperture made of wood.

Only two stretchers could be measured and they have a length of 230 mm and a height of 75 mm. Three headers could be measured and they have a width of between 100 mm and 110 mm, and a height of between 70 mm and 75 mm.

Cottage 5

This cottage had a pitched roof with single gable end and possibly a mono-pitched roof to the south room. The majority of the shell is intact. The dimensions of the walls of the north-west room and room east of the passage suggest that these are intact and historic fabric exists. The remaining internal walls are all narrower and therefore assumed to be newer. The south east corner of the shell was rebuilt in 1968.

May (2013) assigned this Grade 3C status.

Three plaster strips were removed from Cottage 5.

Plaster Strip 5A: is located inside the front door on the right, in the approximate location of a newly proposed opening. It would appear from the plaster strip that an opening/doorway existed here in the past. The left section of the plaster strip comprises standard fired red bricks with a grey cement mortar, while the right section comprises the older, friable red brick with white flecks, and a red clay mortar (Figure 35). Both the older and newer brick masonry was constructed in English Bond.

Plaster Strip 5B: Only a small portion of the original strip was sampled. This is because when the plaster was removed, it uncovered a layer of chicken mesh which had clearly been placed over the mud brick wall to provide some grip for the plaster. The unfired olive-greenish coloured bricks seem to have lost all their cohesion (Figure 36). They are crumbling and cemented with a red clay mortar. It was not possible to assess the bonding because the bricks appear unformed.

Plaster Strip 5C: is located on the interior wall of the room to the left of the front door (Figure 37). This is a recently constructed wall of standard fired red brick and grey cement mortar.

Cottage 8

The 1968 plan illustrates that the shell of this cottage is intact. The dimensions and positions of the pre-1968 internal walls suggest that all of these walls are newer. It is highly likely that historic fabric exists in the walls dividing the passage and the two front rooms.

May (2013) assigned this Grade 3 C status. However, Mr Whitlock was of the opinion that this cottage retained a substantial portion of intact internal walls.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to undertake any plaster stripping of Cottage 8 because the floor boards of both the front left and right rooms had been removed when we wanted to access the building (Figure 38). This did allow an examination of the walls underneath the floor joists. The floor beams were resting on a newly built brick wall constructed inside of the original walling. Of interest is the fact that behind the supports for the flooring, the outer walls of the cottage are of regular red brick and red clay mortar.

However, this differs substantially from an interior wall. The right front passage wall is composed of very soft olive brown brick, with mud mortar (Figure 39).

Cottage 12

The 1968 plan reveals that the entire shell is intact, with the exception of a small portion of wall built to fill in the north-west corner. Internally, little has changed. It is likely that historic fabric exists for the entire length of the wall dividing bedroom A from the passage and bedroom C; the south western and middle of the western wall of bedroom C, and the wall dividing bathrooms B and C (originally part of the shell).

May (2013) assigned this Grade 3 B status.

Three sections of walling were sampled:

Strip 12A: Is in the room to the right of the front door. A 1.5 m long strip of plaster, 30 cm wide was removed (Figure 40). The wall was constructed of a fired red brick with a grey cement mortar in English bond.

Strip 12B: In the back room (Figure 40), a 1 m long strip of plaster, 30 cm wide was removed. It revealed a wall of fired red brick with grey cement mortar in English bond. The plaster stripping is situated some 1 m from the present door. There is some evidence for cutting into plaster to insert electrical wiring.

Strip 12C: Comprises a 2 m strip of plaster, 30 cm wide. It revealed a wall of fired red brick and grey cement mortar with the bricks laid as stretchers (Figure 40).

All three sections of walling sampled contained standard fired red brick with cement mortar and there is no evidence for older walling.

Cottage 14:

The façade of this building faces onto Bourke Street, with a covered *stoep* clipped to the stepped gable. Cottage 14 is actually two separate attached cottages, with separate entrances (Figures 41 & 42). The entire shell is intact, with the exception of the garage which was a 1968 addition. Internally, minor alterations have been made to shift the functions of the rooms. The north wall of bedroom and bathroom A is intact. The north and south walls of bedroom B are intact. Very little historic fabric remains in the walls of bedroom C. Bedroom and bathrooms D and E are mostly intact, except for some infill where openings were closed. Cottages 14 A&B and 14 D&E have access from Bourke Street and have inter-leading rooms. Cottage 14 C has an entrance off Stretch's Court.

May (2013) assigned Grade 3 B status to this.

Cottage 14 E: Strips 14A and 14B have clay mortar (Figure 43), but the bricks all appear to be of uniform size and shape. They are fired and regular in shape. The bricks from 14B have an average length of around 220, 225 and 230 mm. Their height varies between 65 and 70 mm and their breadth from 100 mm to 105 mm. These two strips have brick courses consisting of headers and stretchers. Strip A is 80 cm by 30 cm. Strip B is 100 cm by 30 cm.

Strip 14C is a short section in the passage between the bedroom and the bathroom. Strip C is 100 cm by 30 cm. It has regular sized bricks (22-23 cm in length), they are fired red brick with white flecks and they are bonded with grey cement mortar (Figure 44).

Strip 14D is located inside the built in cupboard (Figure 45). It is 100 cm by 30 cm. There are clearly two different bricks. The older bricks are unfired, pale brown and very soft. There is a clear division in the wall between them and a section with new bricks (Figure 46). There is no clear evidence of alternating headers and stretchers; the headers and stretchers are interspersed with broken (3/4) bricks. The size of the olive brown bricks is around 220 mm by 70 mm. They appear to contain small fragments of grit.

Strip 14E is also inside the built in cupboard (Figures 45 & 46). It is 60 cm by 30 cm. These are the same bricks as in 14D. Pale, olive coloured they appear unfired with a very rough exterior texture and a clay mortar. The bonding is composed of predominantly headers, but there are occasional stretchers in between.

Sections 14D & E are inside the bedroom cupboard and the wall appears to be the oldest interior wall. They comprise olive brown bricks. They lack straight edges and appear to be unfired. Then 14 A & B appears to be next oldest, the bricks are hard and rectangular but are bonded with mud mortar. Section 14C is the most recent, with modern red brick bonded with grey cement mortar (Figure 44).

Plaster strips 14F and 14G are on the same wall in the other bedroom (Cottage 14D). Even before commencing plaster stripping, it was apparent that there was clear evidence of cracking under the plaster suggesting an old opening in the walls (Figure 47). Both these plaster strips are 80 cm in length, and 30 cm in width. The bricks are red with white flecks and they have a clay mortar. The bonding consists of alternating rows of headers and stretchers, i.e. an English bond. There was probably a door in this wall which has been closed in.

Plaster Strip 14H is one metre long (Figure 48). It is placed slightly higher than other plaster strips to avoid an electric plug. The plaster was stripped to reveal hard red bricks and grey cement mortar which is identical to 14C. While 14F and 14G are comprised of headers and stretchers, 14H is only composed of stretchers, there is no alteration.

Plaster strip 14I is located in the bathroom. It uncovered a wall of fired red brick with grey cement mortar and is identical with 14C.

Plaster strip 14 J tests the wall in the entrance. It is composed of hard red bricks and a grey cement mortar and is composed of only stretchers. The plaster strip is 80 cm long.

Plaster Strip 14K is located in the room to the right (Figures 49 & 50). The plaster was removed onto a chicken wire which has been placed over the wall to protect it (Figure 51). The bricks are an unfired pale, olive brown brick that looks the same as 14D & E. They are cemented together with a red clay mortar. The mortar is a different colour from the mortar in the cupboard. The wall is composed of alternating rows of stretchers and headers.

Plaster Strip 14L (Figure 52) is a similar wall made of olive brown bricks with red mortar under chicken wire. However, the corner contains some fired red brick and grey cement mortar, probably added later.

Plaster Strip 14M (Figure 53) comprises a fired red brick with grey mortar. There is however, a tiny square of mud brick in the middle of this wall and evidence of considerable re-modelling of this room.

Cottage 15:

This building façade also originally faced Bourke Street with a covered *stoep*. The entire shell is intact. Internally, only the west section of the south walls in bedroom B and C are intact. The

remaining walls are all newer. As with Cottage 1, to which it is attached, changes were made to the layout during construction in 1975. The main entrance from Bourke Street was moved to the north façade, off Stretch’s Court.

May (2013) assigned a Grade 3C status to this cottage.

Only one section of walling was tested, namely along the back wall between a window and an outside door (Figure 54). It has revealed the original wall of fired red brick and clay mortar with the recent insertions of the window and door.



6. DISCUSSION

A variety of walling was uncovered at the Drostdy Hotel and in the cottages at Stretch’s Court and they are illustrated below.

The pale olive brown bricks, lacking shape and structure, appear to be hand-made and are probably unfired. These bricks are found in some internal walls in the Stretch’s Court cottages and they are the most vulnerable in terms of conservation.

The soft red bricks found at the Drostdy and elsewhere in the cottages at Stretch’s Court also appear to have been hand-made but their red-orange colour suggests that they were fired, but probably at a fairly low temperature.

Table 1: Wall construction revealed by plaster stripping

	<p>This is the walling from the exterior back wall of the Drostdy Hotel and represents the oldest section of the wall. The red bricks are soft and bonded with a red clay mortar.</p> <p>These bricks appear hand made as they are irregular in size and shape. Their orange-red colour suggests that they were fired, but possibly at a low temperature which would explain why they are so soft. There is some evidence at the Drostdy for a mortar or a plaster of lime.</p>
	<p>The red bricks in this courtyard wall of the Drostdy Hotel are larger than the current standard brick size. They are bonded with red clay mortar.</p>



Walling from plaster strip 5B in Cottage 5. The bricks are an “olive/brown” colour and appear unfired. They are bonded with thick red clay mortar and held together with chicken wire.

These bricks are hand-made and unfired – they may have been sun dried.



Walling from plaster strip 14E in Cottage 14. The bricks are similar to those above, they are a pale “olive/brown” colour and contain small gritty admixture. They are bonded with a red clay mortar.

Similar walling recorded from plaster strips 14D; 14K and 14L (the latter two are behind chicken wire) in Cottage 14.

They are also hand-made and unfired.



Walling from plaster strip 3A in Cottage 3. Friable red brick with a white fleck, bonded with red clay mortar.

Similar walling recorded from plaster strips 3B, 4 A, 4 B, 5A, 14F and 14G (Cottages 3, 4, 5 and 14).

The interior walling in cottages 12A, 12B and 12C consists of friable red brick with white fleck, but they are bonded with grey cement. The walling of cottage 14M is similar to 12 above.

These red bricks with white flecks resemble the bricks with the V-incised “frogs” recovered from Kromm’s Inn courtyard.



Walling from plaster strip 14A in Cottage 14. Standard red brick in good condition with red clay mortar.

Similar walling recorded at from plaster strips 14B and 15A in Cottages 14 and 15.

These bricks are machine made and they are fired.



Walling from plaster strip 5C in Cottage 5. Standard red brick with white fleck in good condition, bonded with grey cement plaster.

Similar walling was recorded from plaster strips 14C, 14 H, 14I and 14J (Cottage 14).

These bricks are machine made and highly fired.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Archaeological Impact Assessment has investigated the area behind No 5 Parliament Street and Kromm's Inn prior to the construction of new accommodation for the Drostdy Hotel.

Test excavations have revealed:

- Very limited evidence for the dumping of 19th century material behind the Drostdy Hotel. Fragmentary remains were found to a depth of between 50 to 90 cm. There is no evidence for any early 19th century material and the assumption is that either material was dumped elsewhere, or that during restoration of the Drostdy in the 1970s, material may have been cleared and moved elsewhere;
- Informal excavations by the contractor at the entrance to the Stretch's Court avenue uncovered a collection of late 19th century domestic refuse which is probably associated with the occupation of the cottages. This material is potentially of high significance as it may relate to the occupation of the cottages by the descendants of emancipated slaves. Very little is known of the lifestyle of slaves even less is known from in the Eastern Cape.

Plaster Stripping in the Drostdy Hotel:

- Suggests that the red brick "lean-to" on the northern and southern wings of the Hotel were added during the Victorian period of alterations but possibly with earlier bricks?
- Some of the soft red bricks used in this addition are larger than standard bricks used elsewhere on site;
- Have supported the sketch map provided by May (2013) regarding the original walling and the addition of the "lean-to" adjoining the courtyard.

Plaster Stripping in the Stretch's Court cottages:

- Have suggested numerous alterations to the cottages over time, using different building materials and methods. The following styles were described:
 - Walls with bricks that appear to be unfired and irregular in size and shape. They are an olive brown colour and they are bonded with red clay mortar;
 - Walls with a fired red brick bonded with red clay mortar;
 - Walls with a fired red brick with a white fleck, with red clay mortar;
 - Walls with a hard red brick with a white fleck, with grey cement mortar.

In general terms it must be stated that the building sequence at both the Drostdy and the Stretch's Court cottages is very complex in that numerous periods of change, alteration and addition are reflected. The building materials are highly variable. This situation begs us to question the concept of

“originality” with respect to the site at large. The original or first phases of development of the site are significantly obscured and it would take a project considerably larger than what we have available in time to tease apart the details of the building sequence. Be that as it may, it would be best to celebrate the structure not as an original building, but rather a very old place that has become adjusted over the years to the needs, styles and aspirations of its owners and residents.

Recommendations for Monitoring

- It is possible that material may be recovered from the courtyard behind the Drostdy Hotel. Any landscape interventions which result in below ground excavations should be aware that material may have been dumped here in the past;
- Monitoring is required during the trench excavations (below the paved Stretch’s Court avenue) to provide services for the cottages. Previous experience has shown that domestic refuse is frequently deposited near doors;
- Renovations to the cottages in Stretch’s Court should take cognisance of previous alterations and attempt to preserve as much of the original brick work as possible. Already the previous changes have left a patchwork of small areas of original fabric which are at great risk during current and future renovations.

Plaster and Paint

- As a general rule plaster used on an historic building should be as close as possible to the texture and hardness of the original. Although the re-use of a mud (daga) based plaster is the best for the fabric, few owners find this acceptable. Given this, the best solution is to plaster with a weak mortar mix of 9:1 supplemented with 2 or 3 x lime. The danger of using a hard mortar is that it is inflexible and tends to use the softer underlying brick as the sacrificial point in the event of movement or expansion or contraction of the wall. Severe cracking can result over time;
- Renewed plaster can be painted with a good PVA. Traditional paints were lead oxide based oils (considered unacceptably dangerous today) limewash, or distempers (essentially limewash with a colourant and bonded with a glue). Traditional distempers are not readily available, and furthermore they are difficult to use as no other paint or glue will bond to them. Repainting involves removing the distemper. Lime wash is a good option for exterior walls, however are considered by many to be too coarse for interior use. This leaves little option but to use a modern PVA for interior walls.

1. REFERENCES

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