

Stellenbosch Conservation Strategy  
**DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

A study undertaken for  
The Department of Planning and Development  
Stellenbosch Municipality

Final Report  
July 1997

**KrugerRoos**

architects urban designers planners

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**KrugerRoos**  
architects urban designers planners  
501 earlgo building kloof street gardens cape town  
po box 16293 vlaeberg 8018  
tel: 021 24 1113 fax: 021 24 1222



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Stellenbosch and its rural surroundings constitute a unique Cape Environment which is part of the cultural heritage of South Africa. The historical town and the surrounding areas which provide its setting, such as Idas Valley, Jonkershoek Valley, Banhoek, Johannesdal, Jamestown, Stellenbosch Kloof and Devon Valley have special qualities which merit conservation.

The Department of Planning and Development of Stellenbosch Municipality has recognised the need to formulate a conservation strategy in order to ensure the protection and enhancement of the character of the area.

This report represents the second phase in the development of the Strategy. The first phase, by Piet Louw and Martin Kruger Architects, Urban Design and Planning Consultants in July 1995, focussed on the definition of the Assets of Stellenbosch: the special qualities and settlement patterns which represent the essential architectural and place-making qualities. In the absence of a comprehensive survey and documentation of all the assets (measured drawings, detailed surveys, etc.) the earlier report serves as a basis for this work.

### THE BRIEF

Central Stellenbosch is currently facing a variety

of development pressures, and its historical character is facing increasing erosion. The Stellenbosch Municipality thus resolved that, while the outlying areas are equally important in terms of a long term conservation strategy, the area which requires critical attention is the historical part of the town.

The brief for this phase of the work is therefore to formulate a comprehensive **Conservation Strategy for the Historical Core**. The report focuses in detail on the formulation of **Guidelines for new development, alterations to existing buildings and public actions** in the Historical Core (as a critical facet of the Conservation Strategy).

### METHOD:

A study was undertaken to understand the immediate needs of the Stellenbosch Municipality regarding the formulation and implementation of a Conservation Strategy.

Several meetings took place with officials of the Department of Planning and Development to clarify the problems experienced by the department in the process of plans approval. Case studies were investigated, complimented by site visits. The consultants also attended some meetings of the Aesthetics Committee to understand the process of plans approval and any problems experienced. Discussions were held with a variety of stakeholders and interest

groups, including historians and archaeologists at the Stellenbosch Museum, local professionals involved in development and conservation, professional consultants previously involved in planning in the Historical Core. The support of these and other role players will be essential if the Strategy is to succeed.

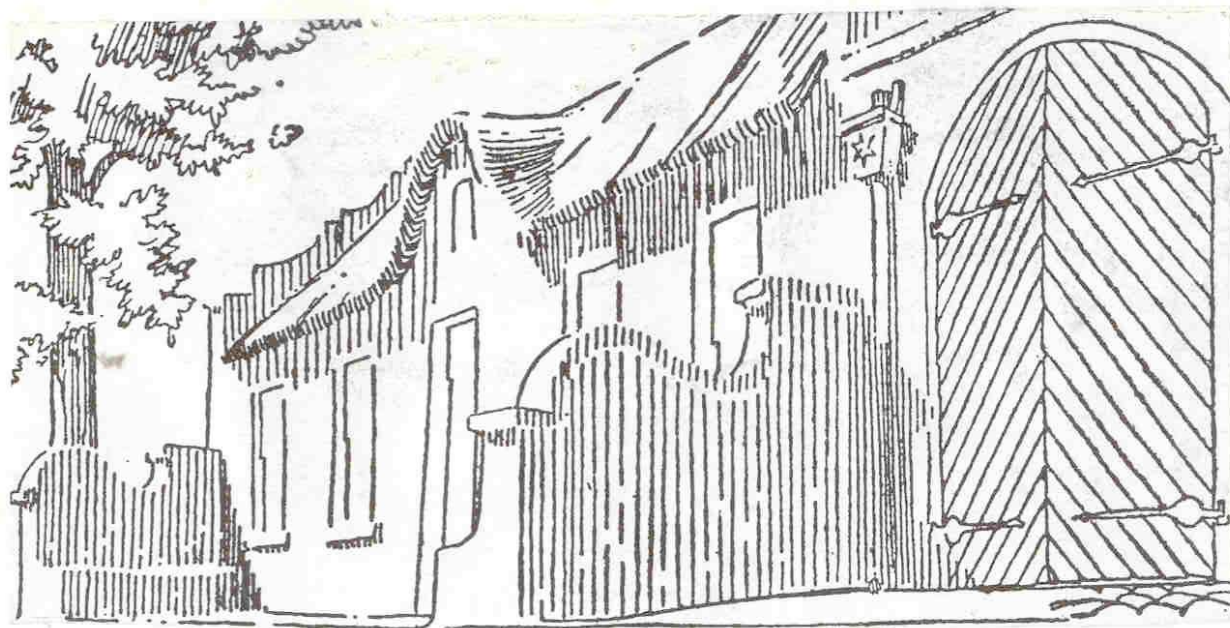
Existing information contained in the Phase 1 report and earlier reports for the Municipality served as a basis for the present work.

The report includes:

- an analysis of the settlement patterns and features which are worthy of conservation,
- the identification of the Historical Core, and the character precincts and key areas for intervention within it,
- an analysis of the factors which are contributing to the erosion of its character,
- a discussion of actions which may need to be taken in order for Conservation Strategy to succeed, such as the amendment of existing Town Planning Restrictions and Building Regulations in the Zoning Scheme
- recommendations concerning the preparation of planning and design frameworks,
- broad conservation principles and policies,
- Development Guidelines for the Historical Core.

In conclusion, the report recommends further steps to take the Conservation Strategy forward.





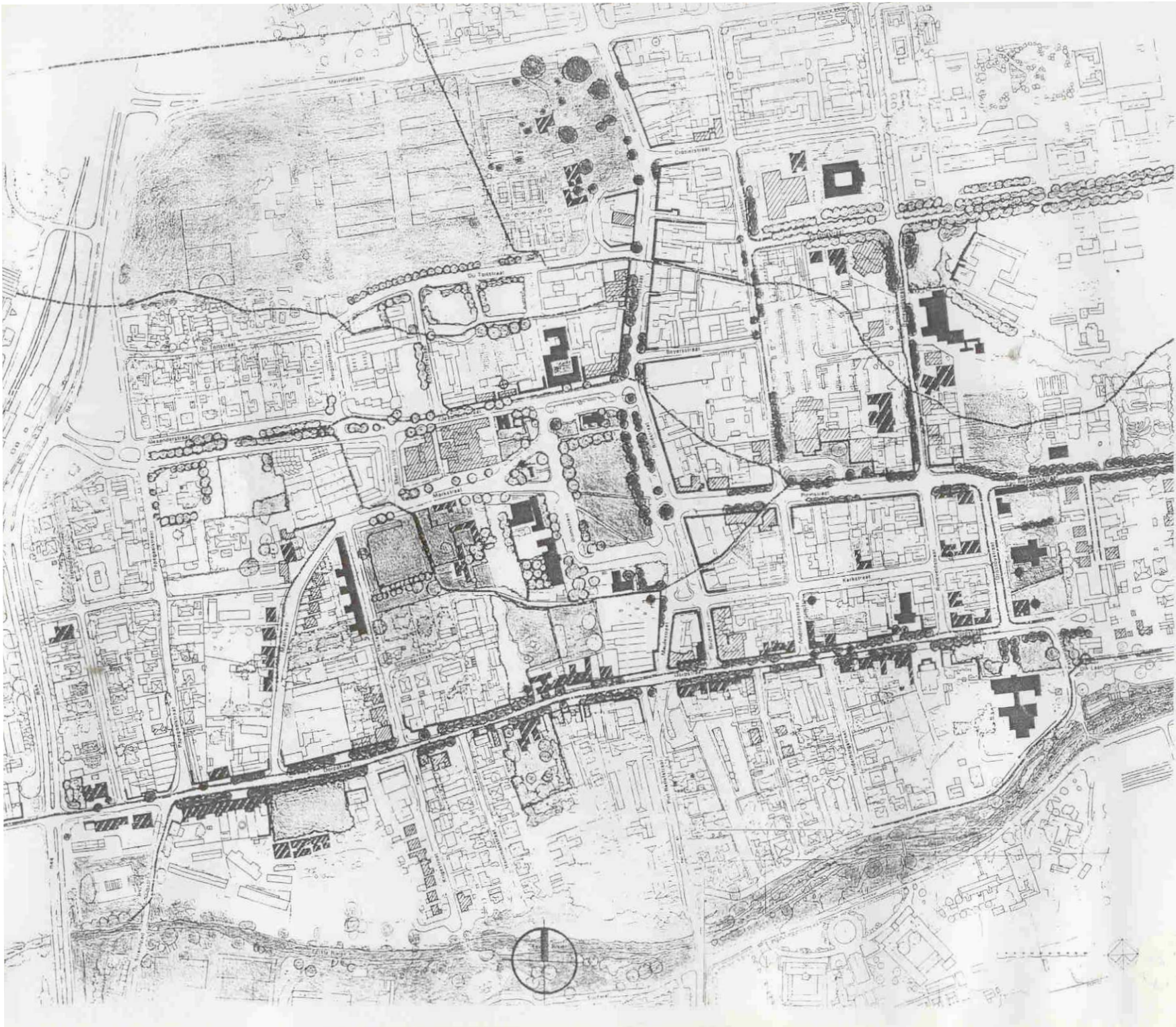
## 2. THE LEGACY: ASSETS WORTHY OF CONSERVATION

### 1. COMPOSITE ASSETS

The *Composite Assets* of the historical settlement are illustrated in Diagram 1 (from Louw & Kruger, 1995, p.66) as follows:

- The historical buildings of Stellenbosch, some of which have been restored to their original Early Cape Dutch or later Georgian or Victorian states, while others show an interesting *layering* of periods and styles.
- Institutional buildings, which are the foci of the public realm in Stellenbosch, defining public spaces and terminating visual axes.
- “Cape Village” character-elements such as *werf* walls, gateposts, platform stoeps and verandahs.
- The historical landscape framework, including green courts, vineyards and tree-lined streets.
- The Eerste River and the millstream-network, surviving from the original system of mills and millstreams.
- Archaeological sites, including excavated sites and those which have not yet been identified.
- Historical cadastral boundaries, which have respected the footprints of the past.





**COMPOSITE ASSETS WITHIN THE HISTORICAL CORE**

- National Monuments -Public Buildings
- ▨ National Monuments -Private Buildings
- National Monuments -Tree-lined Streets
- ▩ Contributing Buildings
- ▧ Public Green Spaces
- Private Green Spaces
- ▨ Vegetation of Stature
- Courtyards
- ▨ Millstreams
- ⊙ Mill Sites
- ⊙ Archaeological Sites

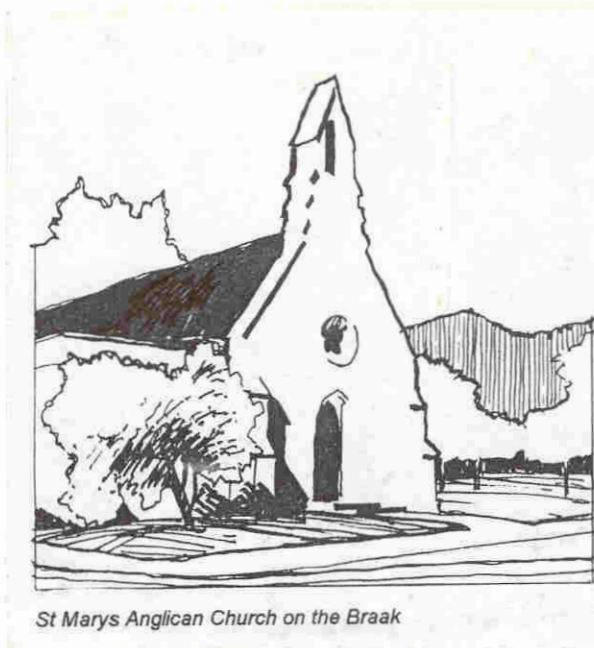
**STELLENBOSCH**



CONSERVATION STRATEG







*St Marys Anglican Church on the Braak*

## 2. HISTORICAL PUBLIC SPATIAL STRUCTURE

The historical public structure of Stellenbosch is an indication of the original village that was laid out by H.A. van Rhee in 1685 as the first formally designed regional settlement.

Lewcock (p. 390), describes the plan as a typical "baroque authoritarian grid pattern. The channelled course of a stream was made one boundary (which, probably later, became a street — Pine Street) and the wagon road to Cape Town (Dorp Street), the other. Forming a shallow cross in the centre of this space were two main

streets of the village, each terminated at the ends by major public buildings serving as foci — the landdrost's house, government offices, church and watermill. ... In the baroque tradition of controlled vistas he planted oak trees at carefully spaced intervals down both sides of the streets, so that the whole became a formal unity on the grand scale irrespective of irregularities or gaps in the buildings. Wherever the gaze wandered it was eventually channelled down an axis to one of the symmetrical facades framed by the perspective of the trees. Rippling water in the shadow of the oaks relieved the straight line of the furrows which ran the length of the streets, serving to lead water to the houses, and arousing nostalgic reminiscences of the canals in the towns of the Low Countries. No other town established under the Company's regime at the Cape achieved such an integrated character as this, and none appears to have been so carefully designed."

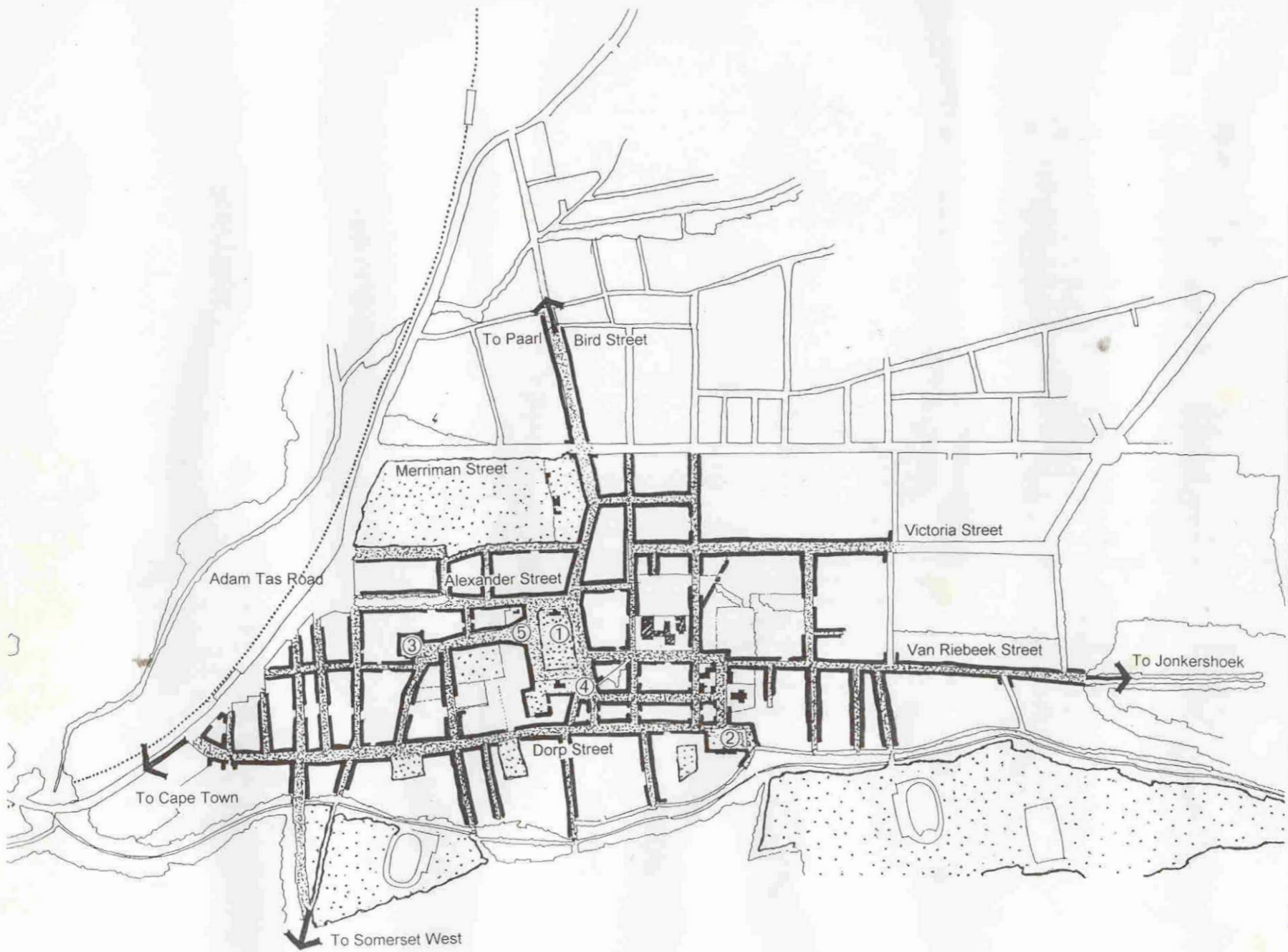
Over the centuries the original public spatial structure laid down by van Rhee has survived and been developed. The main historical public spaces are:

- The Braak as village focus
- Markplein (Market Square)
- Leerlooiersplein (Tanners Square)
- Meulplein (Mill Square)
- "De Beplante Plein" in front of the Drostdy
- The Bergzicht werf as forecourt from the north
- The village streets: Bird, Dorp, Alexander, Drostdy, Andringa, Ryneveld, Market, Herte, Bloem, Plein/Van Riebeeck, and Kerk Streets and the Avenue (formerly used as a square).



# HISTORICAL PUBLIC SPATIAL STRUCTURE

- 1. 'Die Braak'
- 2. 'Drostdy Plein'
- 3. 'Leerlooiersplein' (Tanners Square)
- 4. 'Meulplein' (Mill Square)
- 5. 'Markplein' (Market Square)



## STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY

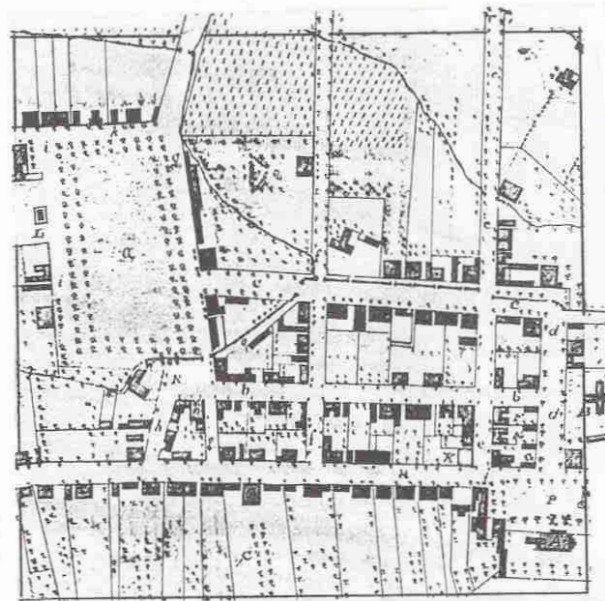


### 3. PATTERNS OF PLACE-MAKING IN STELLENBOSCH

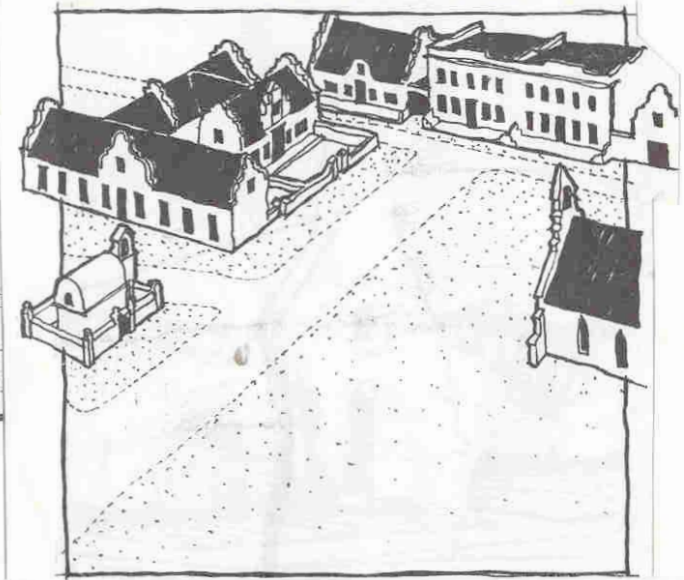
From the original settlement of 1685, Stellenbosch developed through the addition of successive layers of growth. Subsequent development over the next three centuries followed traditional rules of settlement-building and was, for the most part, sympathetic to the patterns laid down in the original layout.

However, after the Second World War, with the introduction of Modern Planning and International Style architecture, insertions into the Historical Core began to occur which departed from the patterns of place-making which are characteristic of the town. Many of these intrusions do not complement the historical character of Stellenbosch, and have a disturbing visual impact.

The following *Patterns of Place-making* contribute to the distinctive character of the town. They should be recognised as the basic rules of settlement-making in the historical core of Stellenbosch.

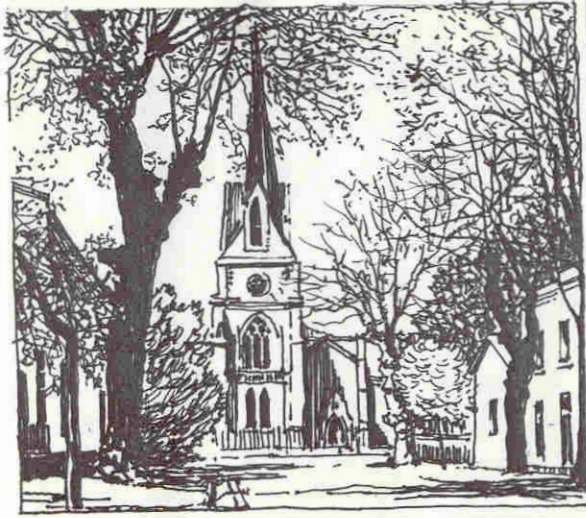


**Rectilinear geometry:** The original layout of the village followed the geometry defined by the Eerste River and, later, the millstream. The plan was laid out as a formal and rectilinear grid of streets, with some streets forming axes focussing on the main public buildings. The buildings were also arranged in a rectilinear (frequently symmetrical) pattern on the erven.

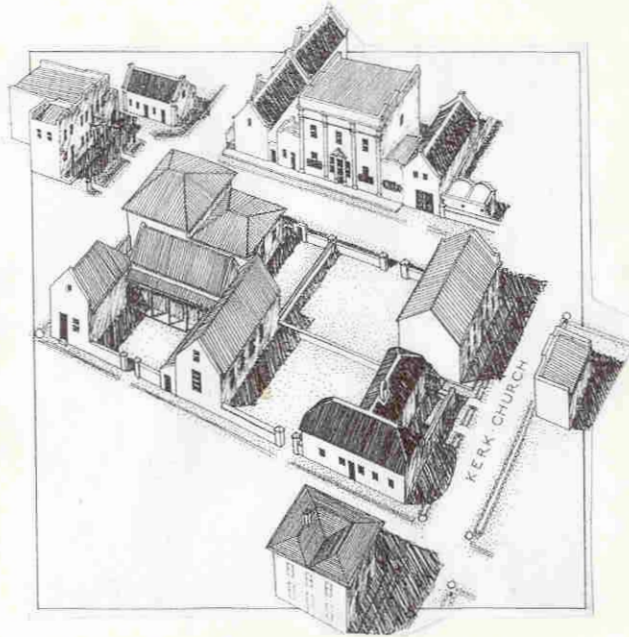


**Public spaces and public buildings:** There is a hierarchical order of public squares and places in Stellenbosch. In the early settlement: the Drosty Square, The Market Square and the *Braak* were the most important. A number of other spaces existed, playing similarly important roles, including *Leerlooiersplein* (Tanners Square), in front of the Van der Bijl Residence in Market Street, and *Meulplein* (Mill Square), which faced the old Mill (where the OK Bazaars Complex is now). The Braak and Bergzicht were *outspans* (where draught animals were rested) in earlier years. On early plans, it can be seen that many of these spaces were originally lined with double rows of trees around the edges





**Focus on public buildings:** Traditionally, public buildings were usually treated differently from the remainder of the architectural fabric, so that they become the prominent public focus. They may form the end point of an axis (e.g. the Dutch Reformed Church as the focus of Church Street), or, instead of lining the streets like the remainder of the buildings, they may be treated as freestanding buildings in space. They are often associated with public spaces.



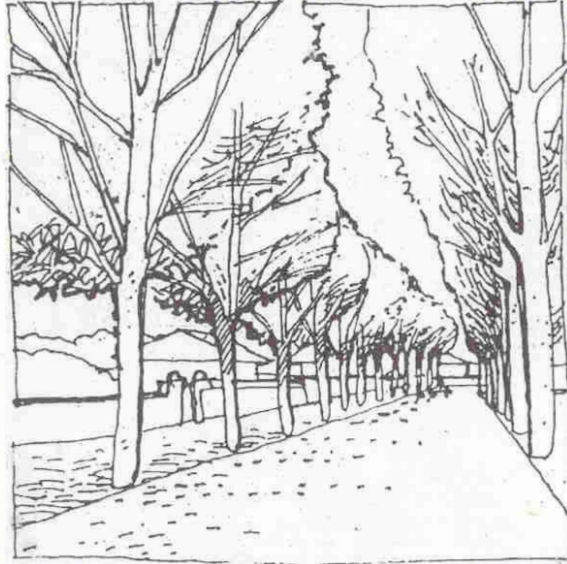
**Small scaled, simple architectural fabric:** The architectural fabric is made up predominantly of small-scaled, single or double storey buildings. Early Cape, Georgian and barn-type Victorian buildings were long and narrow, and were typically placed parallel to the street. The Early Cape buildings are of typical H, U or T plan forms.



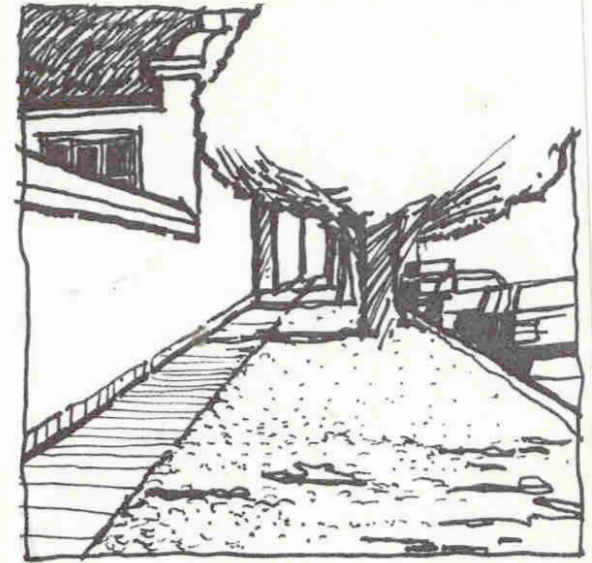
**Streets enclosed by buildings:** Several streets follow the traditional pattern of a building line directly on the boundary of the erf; buildings therefore enclose the street and define it as public space. Dorp Street is the best example, but others such as Herte Street, Ryneveld Street and Bird Street also illustrate this pattern.



**Building and street interface:** The traditional pattern is that of buildings lining the street; access to the centrally placed front door is via a semi-private stoep — earlier uncovered, later a Victorian verandah — linked to the street by a symmetrical entrance stair. Dorp Street is an excellent example of buildings of different styles and periods which nevertheless follow the same pattern of interface with the street.

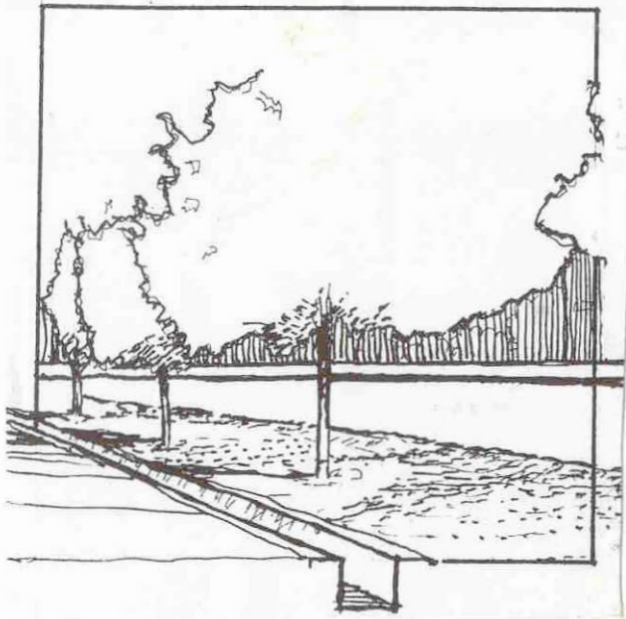


**Avenues:** Oak and Plane trees planted along the sides of the streets and (traditionally) around public squares contribute to the homogeneity of the streetscape. Together with the buildings, they help to define and enclose the street. By providing shade in summer and allowing the sun to penetrate when they lose their leaves in winter, they provide a natural form of climatic control and help to make the public realm comfortable.

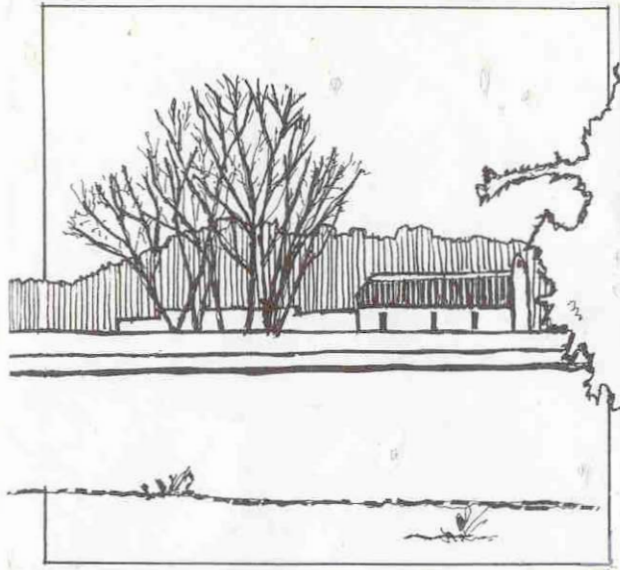


**Street and paving surfaces:** The earlier settlement had dirt roads, which have in time been replaced by tarred streets. Originally sidewalks were stabilised laterite, a gravel and sand finish typical of the Western Cape region.

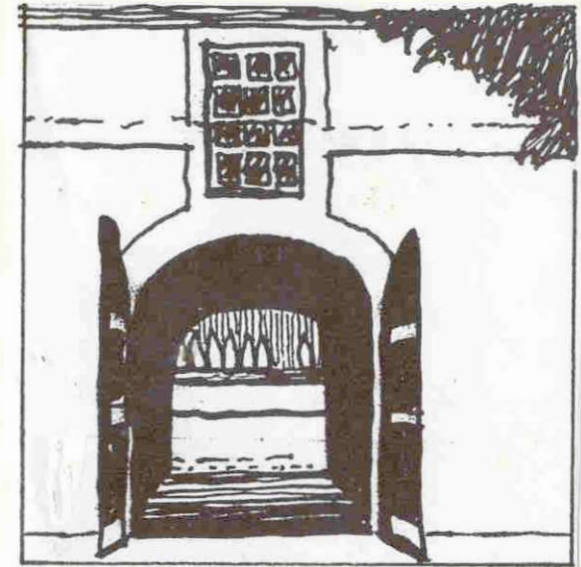




**The millstream system:** The network of millstreams originally defined the parameters of the historical settlement, and conformed to the street grid. The millstreams became *leiwater* furrows, some of which are still in operation. The water running down these furrows is part of the special character of many rural Cape towns. Southwest of Plein Street, the millstream cut diagonally through a block and created a lane which was previously residential, and is now commercial.

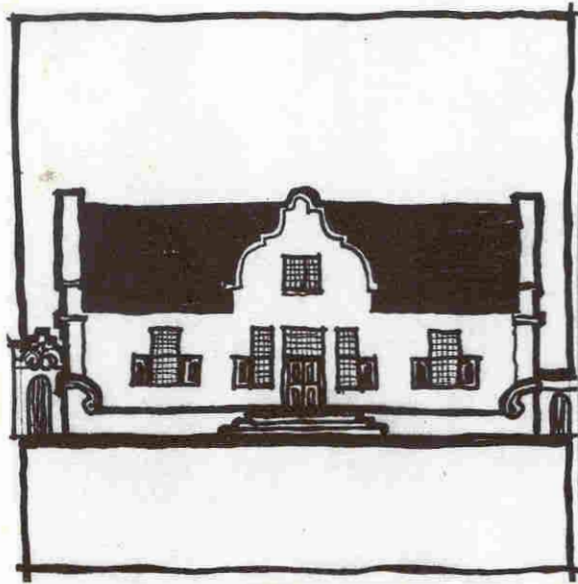


**Rural quality:** The historical pattern of farms and smallholdings in the early village laid down a rural quality in the town, which has survived to date. Large open garden courts, such as the Wilgenhof Court and the Voorgelegen Court, represent remnants of historical farmsteads.



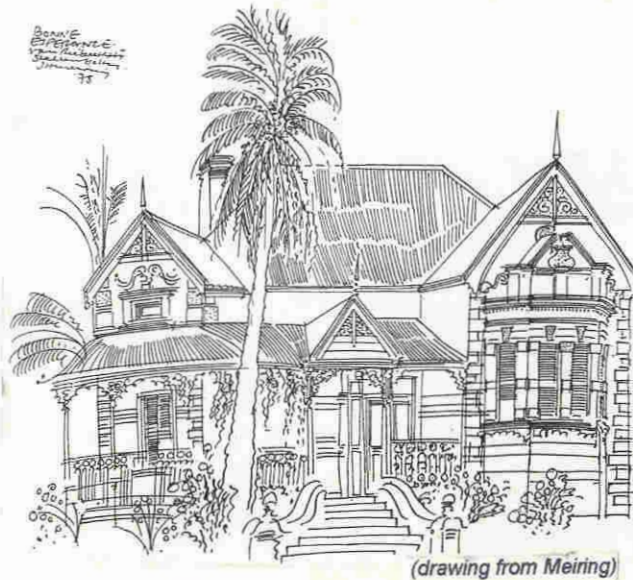
**Gateways to rear courtyards:** The presence of openings or gateways (often arched) in facades is a typical Dorp Street pattern. Such thoroughfares provide access to screened courtyards behind the buildings, earlier used as wagon yards, now for parking.





**Architectural legacy:** The styles of several periods are represented in the architecture of Stellenbosch. Early Cape, "Cape Dutch", Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian styles often coexist in close proximity. These styles are discussed in greater detail in the following section. While the different stylistic features add richness and variety, the common features of the architecture contribute to the harmonious character of streetscapes in Stellenbosch. Typical architectural characteristics include the following:

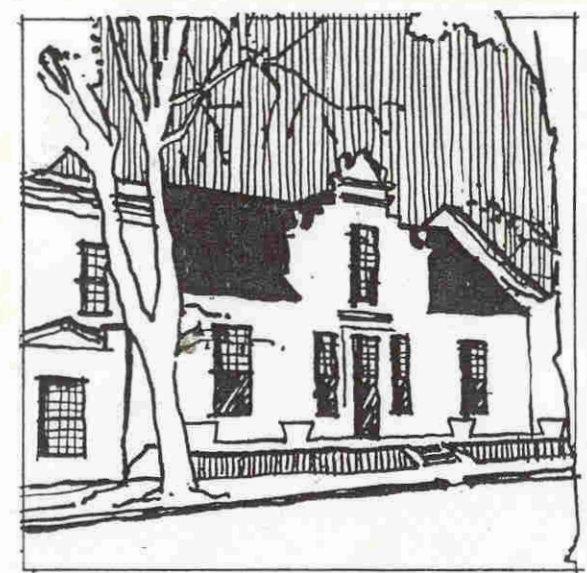
**Symmetry:** Symmetrical front facades are characteristic of all the architectural styles and building types represented in Stellenbosch, although there is some variation. The elements of symmetry include:



(drawing from Meiring)

- the central entrance, in some cases emphasised by architraves, pilasters, brow mouldings and other decorative elements;
- the stoep, with central stairs to the entrance and benches at each end, or the verandah which may have a decorative gablet over the entrance;
- the symmetrical arrangement of windows flanking the entrance;
- features such as gables and pediments.

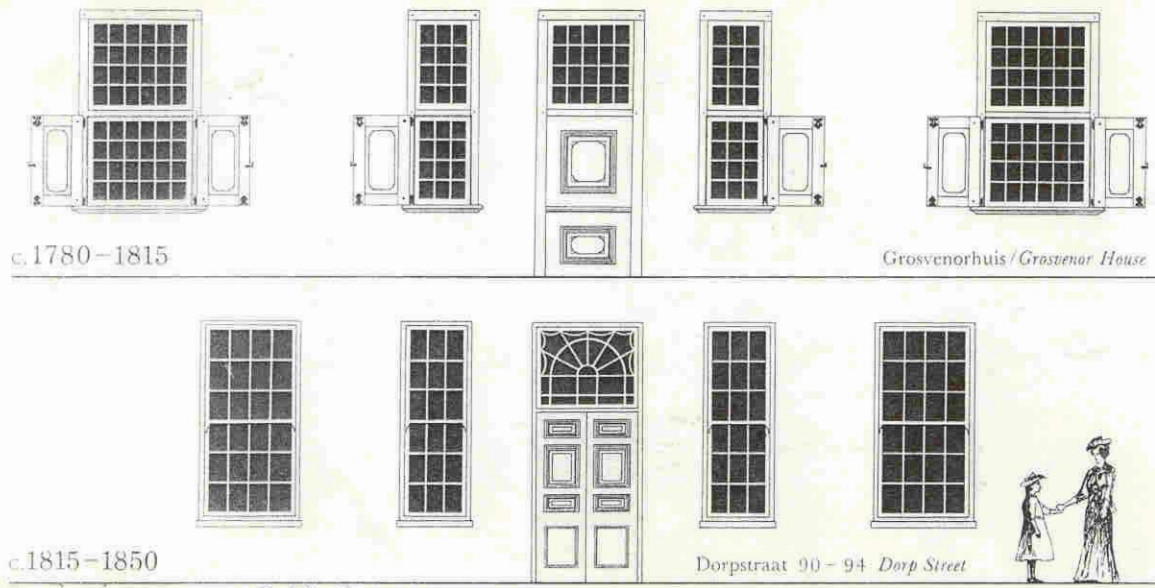
In the Victorian period freestanding, asymmetrical villas were also introduced. These characteristically have a protruding gable on one side (sometimes elaborated with a bay window) with an adjacent verandah, which may wrap around the facade on two sides.



**Walls:** Stellenbosch has come to be known as a town of white walls, because of the traditional use of limewash and the solid, walled architecture, penetrated by carefully proportioned openings. Recent research has indicated that the use of colour tints in the limewash was prevalent from an early date, and Victorian buildings were frequently painted in strong colours.

**Roofs:** Thatched roofs are typical of early Cape architecture. These were sometimes later replaced with corrugated iron, with the eaves lifted to accommodate the lower pitch. Flat *brakdak* (clay) roofs were also used. Parapeted, low-pitched roofs are characteristic of the Georgian period. Corrugated iron (35-40° pitch) was used in Victorian and Edwardian buildings, often painted dark green or charcoal/black to imitate the dark grey of the earlier thatch.

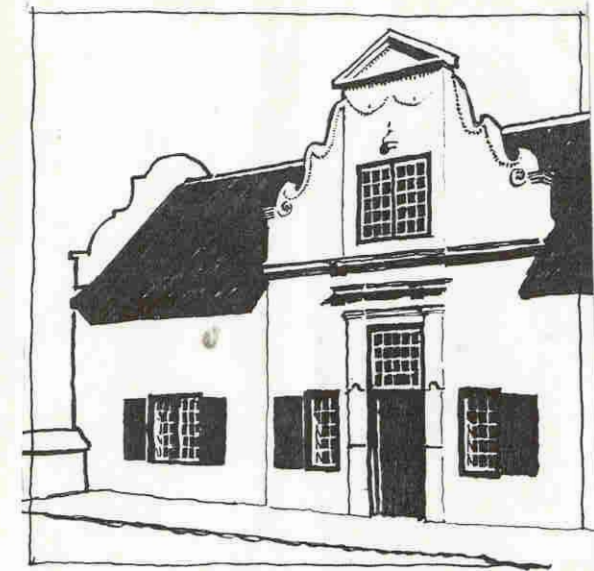




(drawing from Stellenbosch 300 Action)

**Windows and shutters:** Early Cape buildings had casement windows with solid shutters. Vertically-proportioned sash windows are characteristic of "Cape Dutch", Georgian and Victorian buildings, and internal folding shutters and louvred shutters were introduced from the 18th Century onwards.

**Doors:** The front door was usually centrally placed in the facade. Stellenbosch has a rich variety of doors and fanlights representing the range of architectural styles, including stable doors (some of which are elaborately panelled), single and double-leaf doors with bolection mouldings, and glazed French doors.



**Decorative elements:** A rich variety of decorative elements enriches the period architecture of Stellenbosch. Features include the central gables and pediments of the Cape Dutch period, moulded cornices, end gables and covered gables of the Victorian era, pilasters, architraves, quoins, rustication and other plaster decoration, and the prefabricated elements which became prevalent in the Victorian period.



#### 4. THE LEGACY OF FARMSTEADS IN STELLENBOSCH

Stellenbosch was developed as a regional centre to serve the existing farms and smallholdings in the surrounding area, and farming activities continued inside the boundaries of the original village. As the town grew, it absorbed more farmsteads. Subsequently, farmsteads endured as part of the built fabric of the village, adding to the richness of the village character and lending it a rural quality.

The approach to siting buildings on farms was different from that in an urban area, although the farmsteads were built in the same architectural styles as the houses in town:

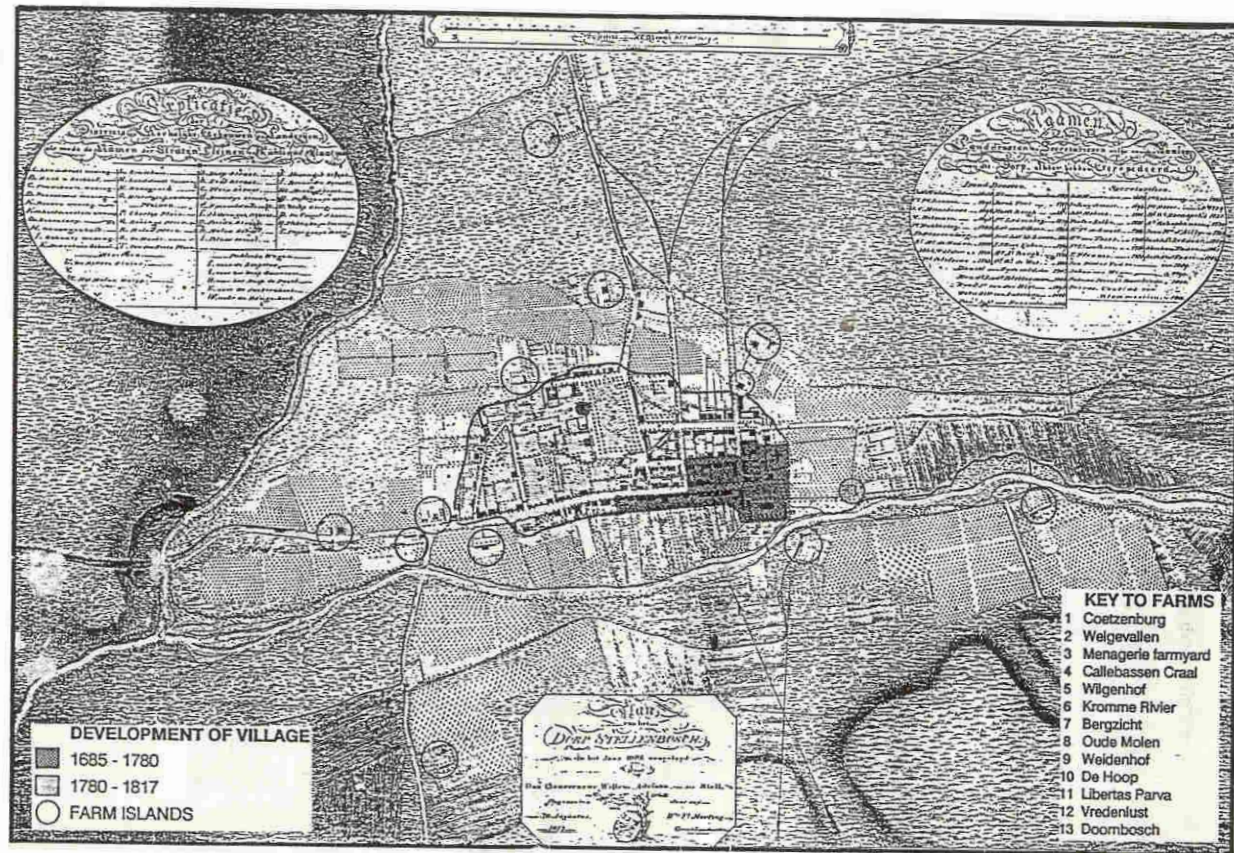
"In a village, it was believed, the houses had to stand tightly packed, right on the street, with large gardens behind them. A farmhouse, on the other hand, had to stand back, with a spacious yard in front of it. It is from these large yards, often surrounded by . . . walls . . . that we can in many cases deduce where the smallholdings used to be".

(Meiring & van Huysteen, p.109)

The surviving green courts in parts of the village thus often indicate the remnants of the agricultural origins of Stellenbosch, and contribute to its rural character.

The remnants of farms and smallholdings still evident in the Historical Core are:

- De Hoop, Vredelust and Libertas Parva, at the western entrance to the village



The Hertzog map of 1817, showing the growth of the village and the surrounding farmsteads (from Vos, 1993)

- Bergzicht and Kromme River, on the northern periphery.

The farms which have survived in the areas surrounded the Historical Core are:

- Ida's Valley, Schoongezicht and Rustenburg, on the way to Helshoogte and Franschoek.

- Coetzenburg, Welgevallen, Doornbosch and Libertas, south of the Eerste River;

- Mostertsdrift and Schoongezicht (now Lanzerac), on the way to Jonkershoek;



## 5. THE ARCHITECTURAL LEGACY OF STELLENBOSCH

Stellenbosch has an extraordinarily rich and varied architectural heritage, reflecting the distinctive cultural imprint of early European settlement on the Cape landscape.

Dorp Street, the old wagon route from the Drostdy to the Cape, contains a great number and variety of important period style buildings. A number of architectural historians considered this the best example of an unspoiled village street in South Africa (for example, see Fransen: 1980, p. 140 and Picton-Seymour: 1989, p.66).

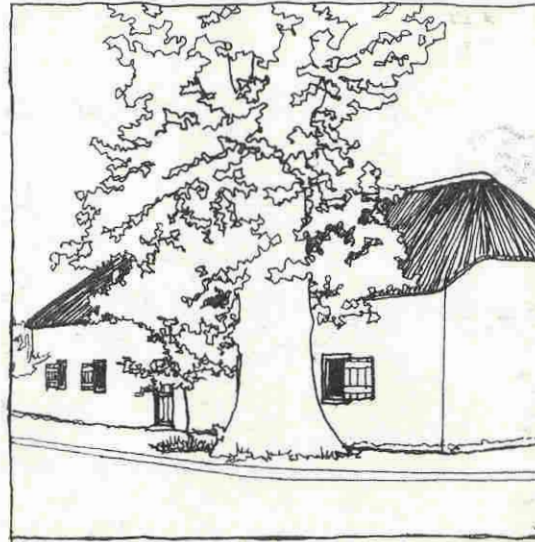
The Historical Core includes examples of a variety of period styles, showing the development of architecture in the Western Cape from an early period. A brief description of the characteristics of the different period styles is given below.

### Early Cape Vernacular

The first buildings were modest, single storey thatched cottages, sometimes with "leg-of mutton" gables over the front door. They were usually simple rectangles in plan, with one room leading into the other and the kitchen at one end. Later the T, H and U forms evolved from this plan.

The characteristic of Early Cape Vernacular buildings include:

- the use of available materials in construction;
- narrow plans, dictated by the short length of timber available (hewn from forests or retrieved from shipwrecks) and poor quality of the walls.



Schreuder House (Early Cape)



Libertas Parva has a pre-1790 Baroque gable (Cape Dutch)  
(drawing from Meiring)

- walls of adobe bricks, finished with mud plaster and whitewashed;
- roofs thatched with reeds obtained from vleis and swamps (the natural wetland systems around rivers and on the Cape Flats were not yet overexploited), or flat roofs with simple parapets;
- ceilings (if any) of mud on *sparretjies*.

Only in more prosperous times during the latter part of the 18th century were more spacious, grander houses erected. The Cape vernacular survived, however, well into the nineteenth century (Lewcock, 1963), and even later as self-built housing by the poorer inhabitants.

Examples:

Schreuder House (part of the museum complex) survived a disastrous fire in 1710 and is the oldest restored house in Stellenbosch.

### Cape Dutch

The architecture of the Dutch period, known as "Cape Dutch" style, is a unique vernacular, with features derived from a number of European countries and adapted to local conditions.

Some architectural features, such as dormer windows and gables can also be seen in other Dutch Colonies: similar buildings existed in Nieu Amsterdam (New York), and Willemstad, the capital of Curaçao in the West Indies (Biermann, 1955, p.4). Portuguese and Indonesian ("Malay") craftsmanship also played a role, as buildings were often constructed by slaves trained in the Portuguese colonies.



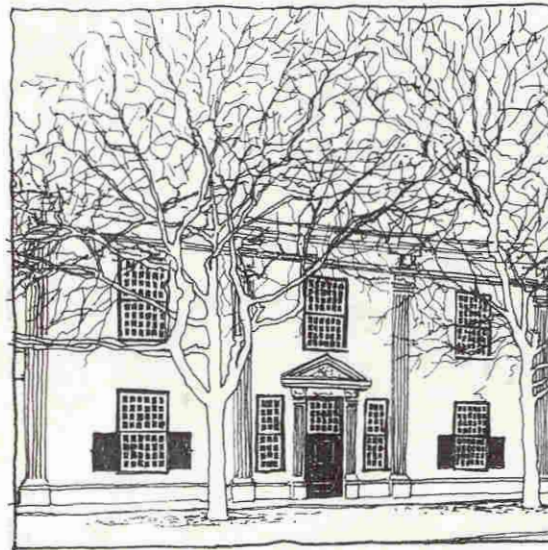
The Cape Dutch Style has been called "a Baroque vernacular" (Biermann, 1955). Buildings are carefully sited in the landscape, in the manner of Baroque manor houses or villas in Europe. The formal geometry of this siting expresses the dominance of the architecture over the natural landscape (Biermann, 1955, p. 18). Some aspects of this can be seen in Stellenbosch, for example *Libertas Parva*, *La Gratitude* and *Bergzicht*.

Some of the characteristics of Cape Dutch buildings are:

- Within a similar pattern of architectural expression (such as symmetry, gables, thatched roofs, window and door types and whitewashed walls) each building has a unique quality, bound to its immediate context and enhanced by the setting.
- Early houses were single storey, thatched with a central gable in the Baroque, Rococo or neo-Classical style.
- Double storey town houses with parapeted flat roofs (sometimes with neo-Classical pediments) were also built.
- Because of the shortage of long timber, buildings remained only one room deep.
- The buildings generally conform to standard T, H or U plan forms. The U-shaped plan was common on the Peninsula, while T and H forms were built in the Boland, including Stellenbosch.



*Ackermannhuis, 30 Dorp St, has a Neo-Classical gable (drawing from Meiring)*



*Grosvenor House, a double-storey Cape Dutch townhouse*

- Facades were symmetrical, with the central front door flanked by windows half the width of the other windows.
- The front door opened directly into a *voorkamer*, which was often separated from the *agterkamer* by an ornate screen.
- Earlier buildings had casement windows, while sash windows with a fixed upper and sliding lower sash were later standard. Windows were flush with the outside wall, with small panes, and solid exterior shutters.

The Neo-Classical influence came to the Dutch via Italy. Pattern books expounding Classicist theories were reconciled with the Dutch lifestyle, climate (in the colonies), building materials and techniques. Examples of later Cape Dutch styles with Neo-Classical features are more abundant than others, as many earlier gables were changed to Neo-Classical ones. (Fransen, 1981, p.33)

Examples:

The only remaining pre-1790 Baroque-style central gable in Stellenbosch is on the farmstead *Kromme Rivier*.

The earliest surviving neo-Classical gable is on the *Burgerhuis* (1797), facing the *Braak*. *Vredelust* in Dorp Street has a Neo-Classical gable dated 1814.

*Grosvenor House* is a good example of a neo-Classical double storey townhouse.



## Georgian Style

After a fire in 1803, in which many buildings were destroyed, new houses began to be built with the influence of the Georgian style introduced by the English.

Georgian buildings were restrained and elegant, with carefully proportioned facades. Many of the new buildings were double storeyed, with low-pitched roofs concealed behind straight or stepped parapets.

The Georgian style was entirely compatible with the existing buildings of the Cape, as it was still a carefully proportioned, symmetrical, walled architecture. Apart from the introduction of an entrance hall (discussed under the previous section), some of the characteristics of Georgian buildings are:

- Roofs had lower pitches with plaster, slate, or corrugated iron covering, and were often concealed behind parapets.
- Gutters were introduced; they were not used in the Dutch period. (Fransen, 1981, p.99)
- Covered verandahs and balconies began to be used, with delicate supports of wood or iron, sometimes decorated with trellis.
- Windows were tall and narrow in proportion, and recessed into the facade (a precaution against the spread of fires), with the frames recessed into the brickwork; both sashes were sliding, and the panes of glass were large with slim, deep glazing bars.



*The Transvalia Group, Dorp Street (Georgian)  
(drawing from Meiring)*



*Utopia, Drostdy Street (Cape-English transition)*

- Internal folding shutters and louvred shutters (usually teak) were used.
- Shuttered French doors were introduced, opening onto the stoep.

Examples:

Dorp Street 108-112;

## Cape-English transition

After the British Occupation of the Cape, many buildings which were still essentially "Cape Dutch" nevertheless began to show the influence of English architectural ideas and features. In some cases, existing houses were anglicised. After the 1803 fire, a parapeted second floor in the Georgian style was added to many previously thatched buildings. Other changes included the use of Georgian windows (discussed above) and the introduction of a narrow entrance lobby giving access to a private parlour, instead of the front door opening directly into the *voorhuis*. The central front door was in some instances changed to a window flanked by two doors, (Fransen, 1981, p. 99), a pattern which can also be traced to the influence of the French Huguenots (Lewcock, 1963, p. 414n).

Examples:

Leipold House, Rhenish Complex.  
Stellenbosch Hotel, Dorp Street 142-146.  
Libertas Parva, Dorp Street.



## Victorian Style

Towards the middle of the 19th century, restrained Georgian elegance began to give way to a new, exuberant style with much more detailed decoration. New, machine-made prefabricated materials such as corrugated iron, cast iron, standard Oregon Pine windows, doors and mouldings were ordered through catalogues. Decorative elements such as turrets, balustrades, cornices, architraves and plaster mouldings were used lavishly. Revivals of architectural styles were common, and neo-Gothic was particularly popular.

The essential attributes were:

- The use of decorative elements (many prefabricated, and selected from catalogues).
- Prefabricated and moulded plaster decorations were applied to facades, including plasterwork "brows" over the windows.
- Six and four pane sashes with larger panes were standard, often with louvred shutters.
- Etched and coloured glass were used.
- Roof forms were frequently complex and hips were common.
- Verandahs with cast-iron or timber decoration became common.
- Freestanding "villas" were introduced.
- Asymmetrical villas with a bay window in the projecting gable and verandahs on two sides were common.

Example :

Saxenhof, Oom Samie se Winkel, and no. 100-116 Dorp Street are typical.



Coetzenberg, the Braak (Victorian) (drawing from Meiring)



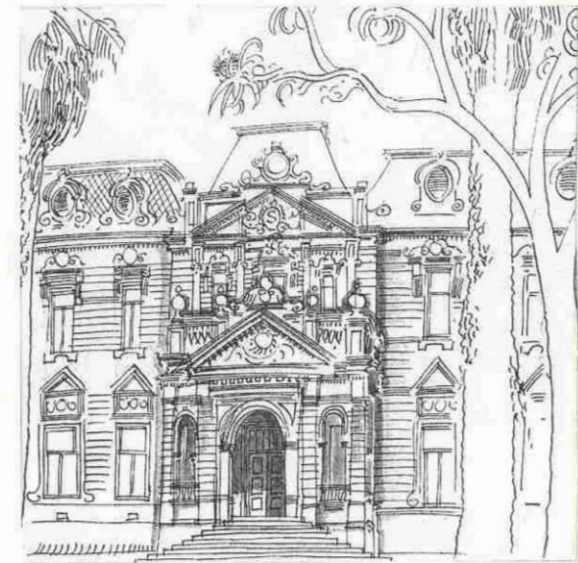
"Oom Samie se Winkel", Dorp Street (Victorian)

## Edwardian Style

The Edwardian Style was rooted in the Late Victorian style, but decorations (especially plaster work) became increasingly heavy. Revival styles continued, with architectural elements introduced from "exotic" countries, such as Egypt, Greece and France, and a resurgence of Neo-Classical Revival styles.

Example:

The Theological Seminary (Kweekskool) on the site of the old Drostdy is an amalgamation of several styles, and with a Mansard roof, baroque and Classical elements.



Theological School, Drostdy Street (Edwardian)  
(drawing from Meiring)



### The 1930's Period

The 1930s saw a continuation of the standard forms of Victorian buildings, but with cast-iron and timber decoration replaced with precast concrete elements. Casement windows began to replace sashes and leaded glass (often with decorative emblems and coloured glass) was fashionable.

The Cape Revival style, with holbol gables, stoeps and timber casement windows with teak shutters became popular.

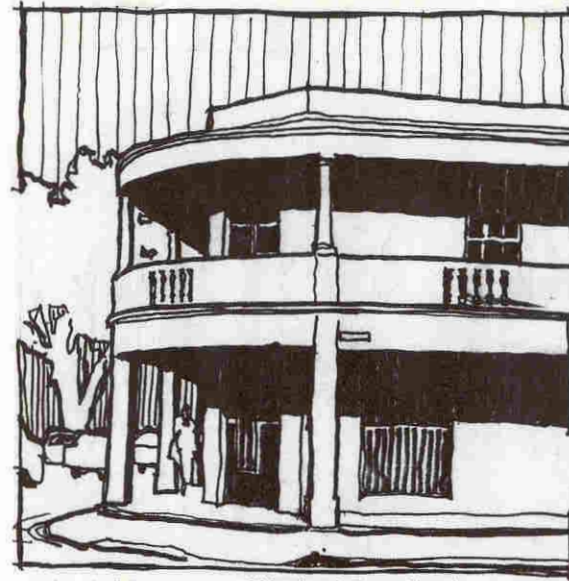
Several buildings display Art Deco touches, with stylised geometric decorations and massing.

Houses were mass produced between 1920 and 1940, and are characterised by:

- Balconies and stoeps with precast concrete columns and balustrades.
- Houses tended to be set back further from the street than previously.
- Roofs were hipped galvanised iron or clay tile, and walls were plastered.
- Windows were timber casements, often with fanlights and leaded panes.

Example:

The double storey building on the corner of Dorp and Bird Street is an example of this period style.



1930s building, corner of Meul and Dorp Streets



Saxenhof, Dorp Street (a layering of Cape Dutch, Georgian and Victorian styles)  
(drawing from Meiring)

### The Layering of Styles

Many buildings in town have been added to and adapted in time, so that a complex layering of period styles is evident. This adds to the richness of the architectural heritage of Stellenbosch, as the buildings show the development of lifestyles and technology through different periods.

For example, the original thatch of many houses was replaced with corrugated iron at a lower pitch, so the eaves were raised and small, horizontally-proportioned windows added above the original eaves line to admit more light to the loft space. This has become a characteristic building type in Western Cape towns

Saxenhof, Dorp Street was originally a Cape Dutch H-plan house, which later became a Georgian double storey with a pitched roof. In the Late Victorian period a gable and protruding verandah were added.

Smithuis in Dorp Street is another example of an amalgamation of styles, now revealing a Neo-Classical Cape gable, a Victorian corrugated iron roof and an addition in the 1930's-style of precast concrete elements.

### 3. REDEFINITION OF THE HISTORICAL CORE

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An analysis of the contributing structures and elements has led to the redefinition of the Historical Core to include areas which were previously excluded (Diagram 3).

The Historical Core, as defined, is enclosed by the large public open spaces which are remnants of the footprints of farms surrounding the original village.

The open spaces defining the Core are:

- The Eerste River as a large green element to the south of the town.
- The Van der Stel sports complex on the north western edge.
- Jan Marais Park on the eastern perimeter, including the Mostertsdrift Estate.

The Historical Core includes the original village as well as outlying areas such as Doornbosch to the south, the northern extensions of Bird and Ryneveld Streets, the Avenues, and Mostertsdrift to the east. The inclusion of Welgevallen and Coetzenberg as part of the Eerste River complex is also important.



Du Toit Station

Banhoek Road

Bird Street

Merriman

Victoria Street

Jan Marais Park

Adam Tas Street

Die Braak

Mostertsdrift

Stellenbosch Station

Dorp Street

# HISTORICAL CORE REDEFINED

 Delineation Of Historical Core

STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY



## 4. CHARACTER AND LAND USE PRECINCTS

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### 1. CHARACTER PRECINCTS

Character Precincts, reflecting the different character of areas within the Historical Core, were determined by the predominant architectural characteristics of, and the major public spaces which structure each precinct (Diagram 4). The historical access routes were also taken into account. Dorp and Bird Streets still serve their traditional roles, and link to the Braak (Common), which is the heart of Stellenbosch.

#### Bergzicht / the Braak Precinct

This Precinct encompasses the following historical routes, spaces and places:

- Bird Street, the northern access route from Klapmuts, Paarl and the Swartland, has always been a village street. Although the character of the buildings has been eroded, it still reflects the characteristics of a village street because of continuing compliance with the traditional setbacks.
- The Braak, with its public buildings and the Rhenish complex, is the heart of the village. As the village square or common, it is the focus of town. The panoramic views from Simonsberg to Helderberg, notable.
- The Bergzicht "werf" and farmstead serve as

the northern forecourt of the village. This is the traditional Saturday morning market place for farm labourers from the rural environs, a traditional ritual of the village. The success of its recent conversion to a taxi rank is questionable. The Van Der Stel sports complex is connected to Bergzicht, and serves to anchor the village to the north.

#### Dorp Street / Eerste River Precinct

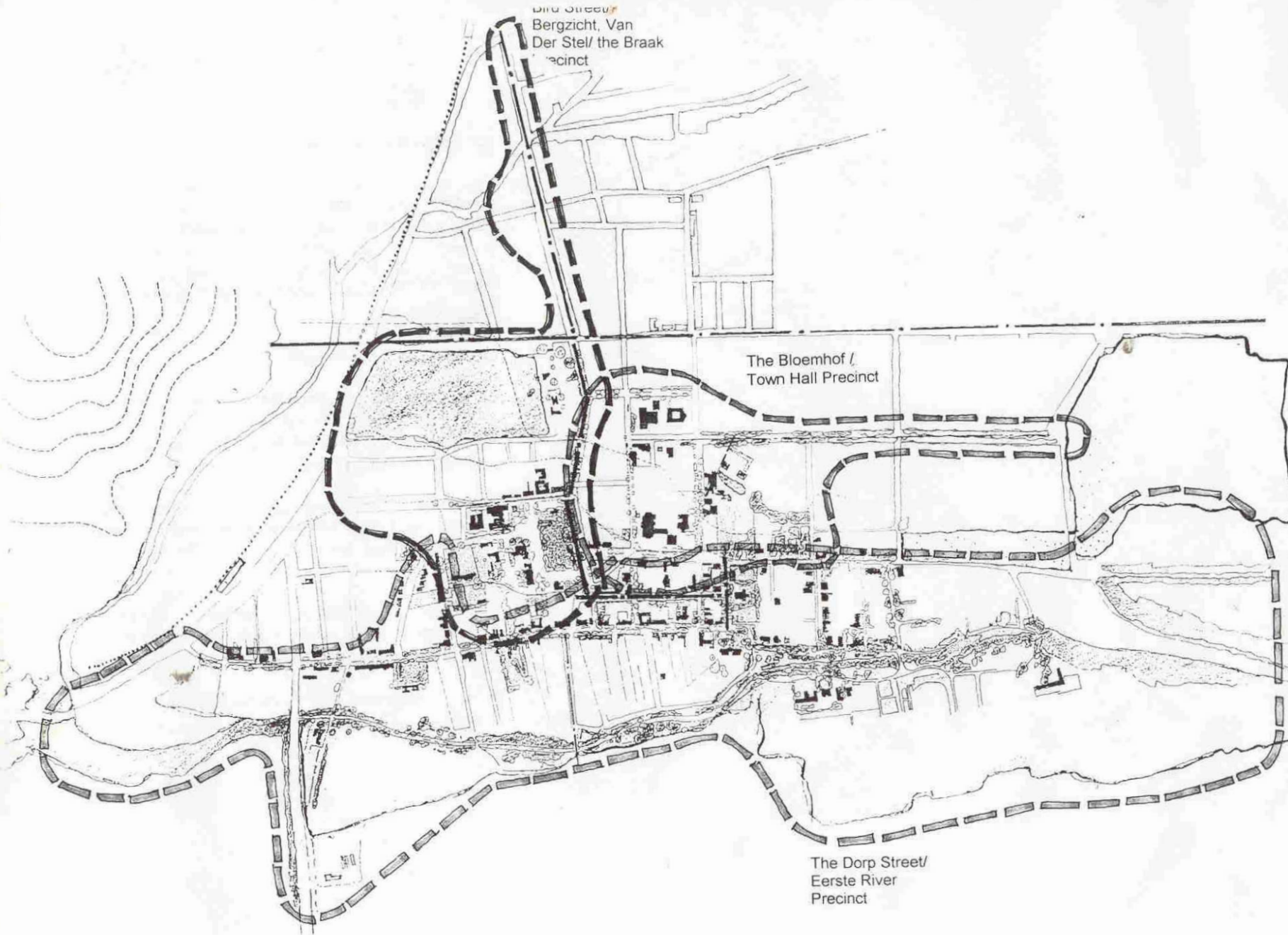
- Dorp Street is the access route from the south, linking to the Braak via Market, Herte, and Mill Streets, of which the first two have a distinct village character. Dorp Street is deservedly renowned. It contains the most valuable and comprehensive historical architectural stock of the village, with excellent examples of period styles and a village street character comparable to the best in the world.
- The Eerste River is the southern edge of the historical village. The remnants of the original long, narrow erven, give access to river frontage and provide a crucial connection to Dorp Street.
- The historical entrance from Somerset West and the Overberg via Strand Road, with Doornbosch and the cottages which have been converted to a restaurant, are an important link from the south.
- The Avenues is a residential area, follow or lead to the Eerste River.

#### Bloemhof/ Town Hall Precinct

The Bloemhof/Town Hall Precinct is the transitional zone between the University, the Historical Core (represented by Ryneveld Street and the Bloemhof site) and the relatively recent Town Hall complex. It includes:

- Ryneveld Street, with the elegant old Bloemhof School (now the Sasol Art Gallery), Erfurthuis, the Skuinshuis and the intimate avenue leading to the Bloemhof site and the Botanical Gardens.
- Plein Street, an important historical route leading to the Edwardian houses in Van Riebeeck Street and Mostertsdrift, and to Jonkershoek.
- The Town Hall complex, "Cape Dutch modern, blended with Classical Revival" (Hans Fransen) and the forecourt to Plein Street, and the open parking area behind the complex.
- The Bloemhof site, which is the link between the University and the Historical Core, is lined with shops on the west, and linked by a lane to the Botanical Gardens in the east.





Bird Street/  
Bergzicht, Van  
Der Stel/ the Braak  
Precinct

The Bloemhof /  
Town Hall Precinct

The Dorp Street/  
Eerste River  
Precinct

**CHARACTER  
PRECINCTS  
WITHIN THE  
HISTORICAL  
CORE**

-  The Dorp Street/  
Eerste River  
Precinct
-  Bird Street/  
Bergzicht, Van  
Der Stel/ the Braak  
Precinct
-  The Bloemhof/  
Stadshuis precinct

STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY



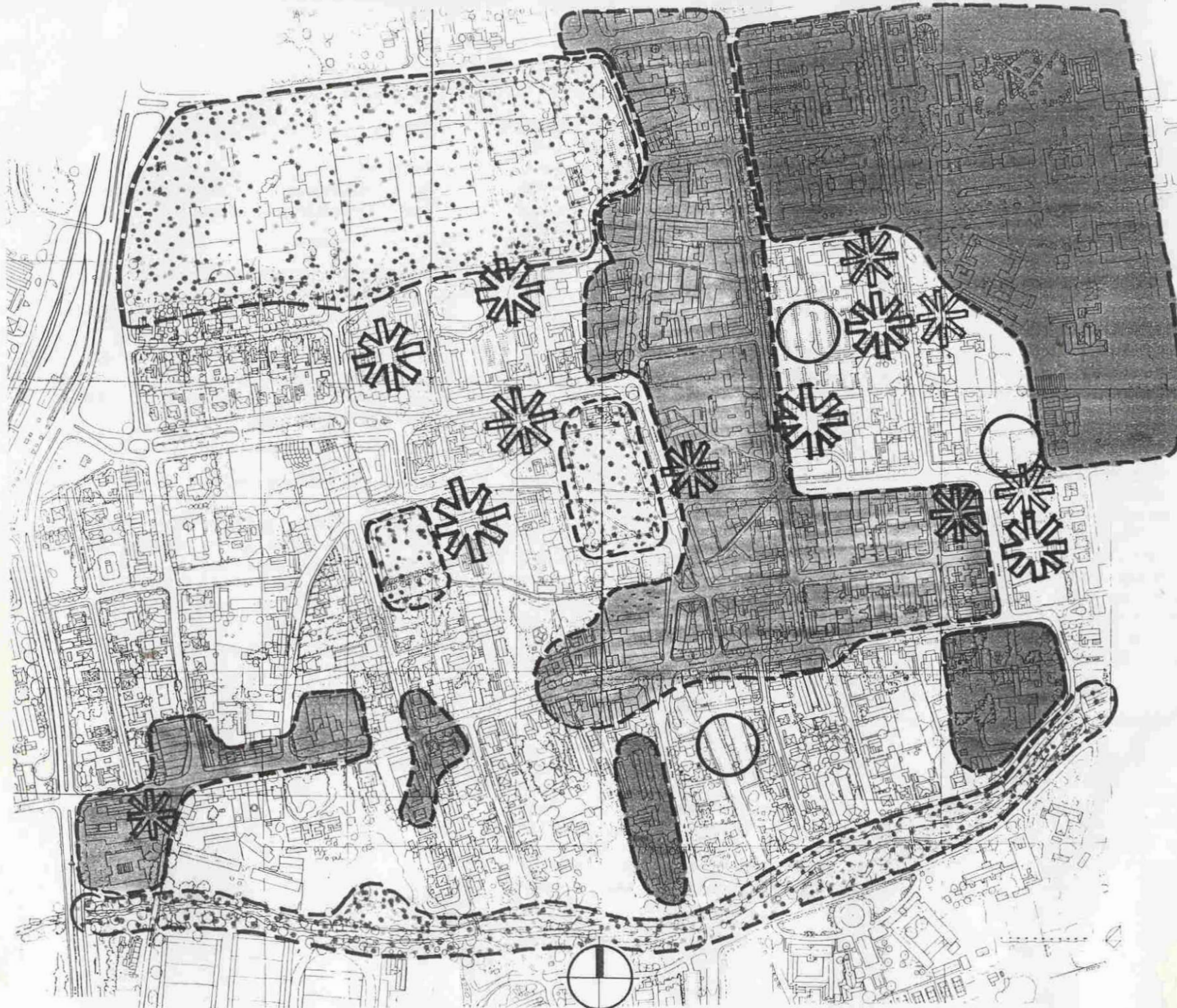
## 2. LAND USE PRECINCTS

The current pattern of land uses reflects the natural development of the village through time (Diagram 5). Land use is not necessarily related to the rights and restrictions in the Zoning Scheme, which reflects a particular idea of "orderly development" which was part of Modern Town Planning.






Land use patterns include:

- the University precinct north east of the Core;
- a commercial precinct, which includes Dorp Street and Bird Street;
- extensive public open spaces, including the Braak and the Rhenish complex, the Eerste River corridor and the Van der Stel sports complex;
- social foci, including public facilities, civic and cultural facilities such as the Town Hall, art galleries and museums;
- concentrations of parking serving the historical core.





### LAND USE PRECINCTS

-  Commercial Precincts
-  Public Open Green Spaces
-  University Precincts
-  Social Foci
-  Parking

### STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY





## 5. PROPOSED CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

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It is proposed that an integrated conservation strategy be developed for the historical part of Stellenbosch which provides protection for the historical village environment and the conservation-worthy buildings within it, as well as giving direction for future development and actions to enhance the town.

The strategy recommended for immediate implementation consists of three parts: the designation of a conservation area and the promulgation of regulations for its protection, the development of design frameworks for key precincts around the historical core, and the development of design frameworks for key sites in the historical core. These components are discussed more fully below. Guidelines for the development of the design frameworks for the identified precincts are set out in Section 7. General Guidelines for Development in the Conservation Area are in Section 8, and proposals are made regarding longer-term actions in section 9.

### 1. CONSERVATION AREA

In terms of section 5 (9) of the National Monuments Act (Act 28 of 1969) the National Monuments Council (NMC) may, after consulting the local authority, designate an area of land of *historic, aesthetic or scientific interest* to be a Conservation Area.

The National Monument Act also makes provision for the publication of by-laws to protect the designated area against "damage, disfigurement, alteration, destruction or defilement" (section 18). Such by-laws can be developed by the Local Authority in consultation with the NMC. It is recommended that Stellenbosch follow this route, as it will facilitate the development of an effective *Conservation Control System* with the backing of national legislation.

The proposed Conservation Area is illustrated in Diagram 6. The area consists of three parts:

- **The Historical Core**, which includes the areas in Stellenbosch with the largest number of significant structures, buildings and landscape-elements. These elements are non-negotiable in terms of conservation. In the Historical Core existing buildings, trees and other environmental elements should not be altered or changed, and new development should not proceed, without the special consent of the Council. Policies and guidelines should provide clear guidance for new development and alteration or restoration of existing structures. Only appropriate development, which conforms to the settlement patterns of Stellenbosch should be permitted (see the following section: Development Guidelines for recommendations in this regard).
- **A Special Area**, which is important because of its relationship to the Historical Core, and in which some development controls — particularly relating to height, bulk and materials — should be implemented in order

to protect the context of the Historical Core.

- **Public Open Green Spaces**, which provide the setting and context of the Historical Core and which should not be developed.

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*It is therefore recommended that the Council approach the NMC to discuss*

- *the preparation of a motivation for the designation of a Conservation Area in central Stellenbosch, in terms of the National Monuments Act, and*
  - *the publication of by-laws for the protection of the area.*
- 

### Future Conservation Areas

It must be emphasised that other Special Areas exist in outlying parts of the Stellenbosch Municipal area. It is equally important to conserve these, but due to the lack of proper surveys, historical data and site information, further work will have to be undertaken to identify and define them, and to develop a conservation strategy for them.





**PROPOSED  
CONSERVATION  
AREA**

-  Historical Core
-  Special Area
-  Public open Green Spaces

STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY



## 2. DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR KEY PRECINCTS

The development of a detailed Urban Design Framework for the following key precincts would facilitate proactive development, enhance the context of the conservation area and provide opportunities for both public and private investment (Diagram 7):

**The Bergzicht / Van der Stel Precinct:** This area anchors the Historical Core to the north and serves as the entrance forecourt to the village when arriving from the N1, Klapmuts, Paarl and the Swartland. The inherent opportunities are:

- The Van der Stel sports complex lends itself to perimeter development in a traditional manner, to enable sports activity on the inside of a large green court. The provision of small public "parking courts" as part of the development could relieve congestion in the Core.
- Consideration should be given to the restoration of the Bergzicht "werf" as a managed public space, serving its traditional function as a Saturday morning market, and the relocation of taxi facilities.

**The Adam Tas "Gateway" Precinct:** This district includes the historical bridge entrance and cemetery, the industrial area west of the railway line, the railway station and Adam Tas Road which is a modern by-pass linking Somerset West to Helshoogte, Franschoek and the N1. Opportunities include:

- Adam Tas Road has a monotonous quality, and does not provide a positive public

entrance to Stellenbosch from the west. It would be greatly enhanced by landscaping in a Cape manner, with an avenue of trees.

- The provision of a linkage for pedestrians from the station to the Core is an important objective. The avenue of trees along Station Road, Heynike Walk, and Market Street should be extended, to enhance pedestrian access to the Braak.

**The Dorp Street / Eerste River Precinct:** The Eerste River - analogous to the Bergzicht van der Stel site - serves as the anchor of the Historical Core to the south. The opportunities are:

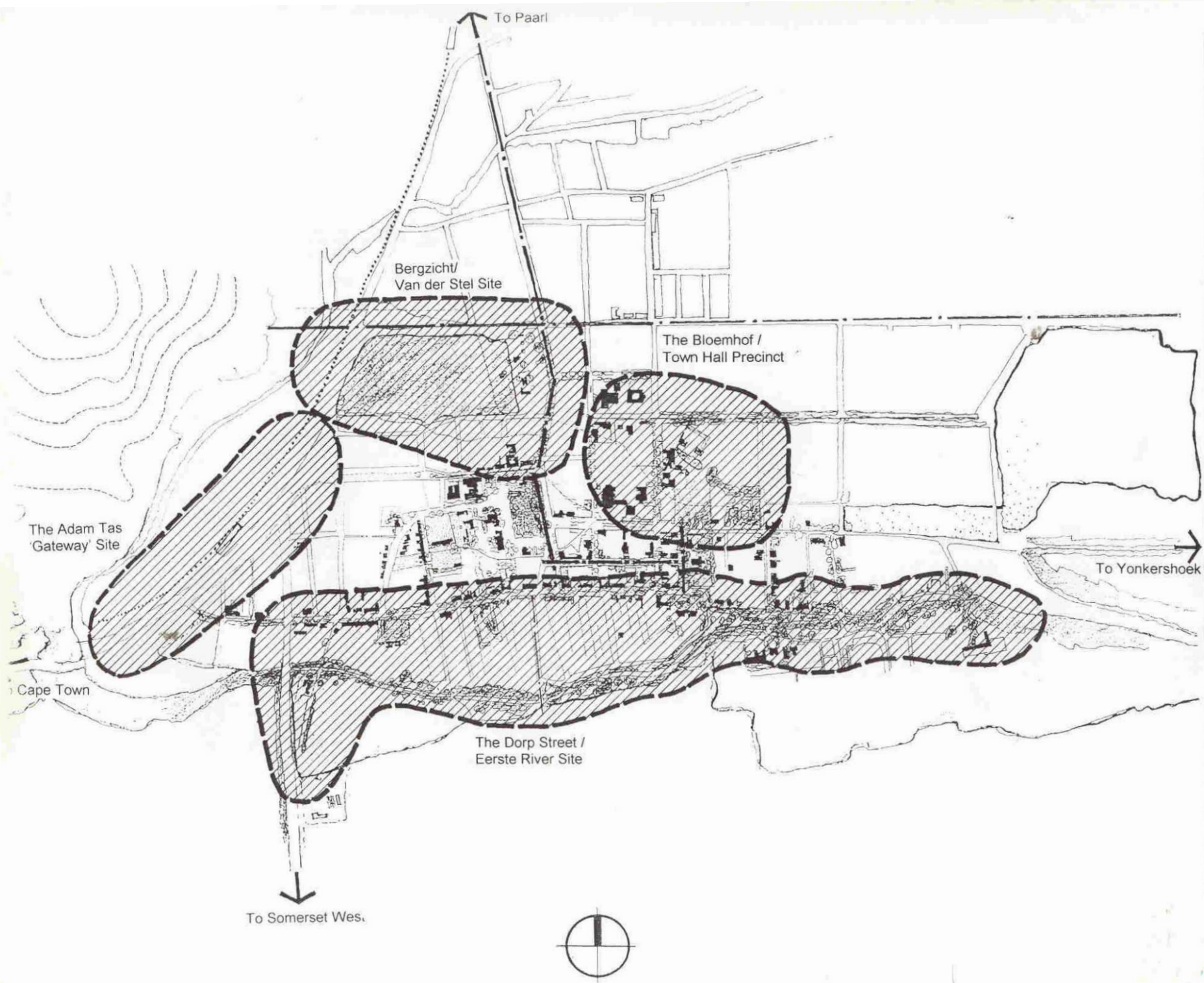
- Dorp Street is the most famous and valuable street of the village, and serious attention should be given to enhancing and improving the environment. The traditional intimate relationship between Dorp Street and the river (expressed in the long narrow cadastral divisions giving the erven access to river frontage in the early years of the village) should be restored where possible.
- The Eerste River is a major environmental asset. Public access to the river and its presentation as a public green space should be improved wherever possible. Public access via the long narrow erven between Dorp Street and the river should to be safeguarded in any future development of the area. The public front adjacent to the Avenues is a positive environment, and the objective should be to similarly develop the entire river frontage as a positive public environment.

**The Bloemhof / TownHall Precinct:** This is the transitional zone between the University and the Historical Core. It contains significant historical building stock, such as the Ryneveld Street buildings, the Wilgenhof Forecourt, the Sasol Art Gallery, and the row of shops linked by an arcade to the open parking area adjacent to the Botanical Gardens, as well as relatively recent developments such as the Town Hall complex and parking area, and the pedestrianisation of Beyers Street. The inherent opportunities in the precinct include:

- The provision of a pedestrian link from the University to the Core.
- The conversion of the Bloemhof parking area into a positive public space and cultural centre.
- The possible conversion of the parking area at the rear of the Town Hall as a public space, which could still accommodate parking.

Guidelines for key public actions and general development in these precincts are set out in the following section.





**KEY  
PRECINCTS**

**STELLENBOSCH**



**CONSERVATION STRATEGY**



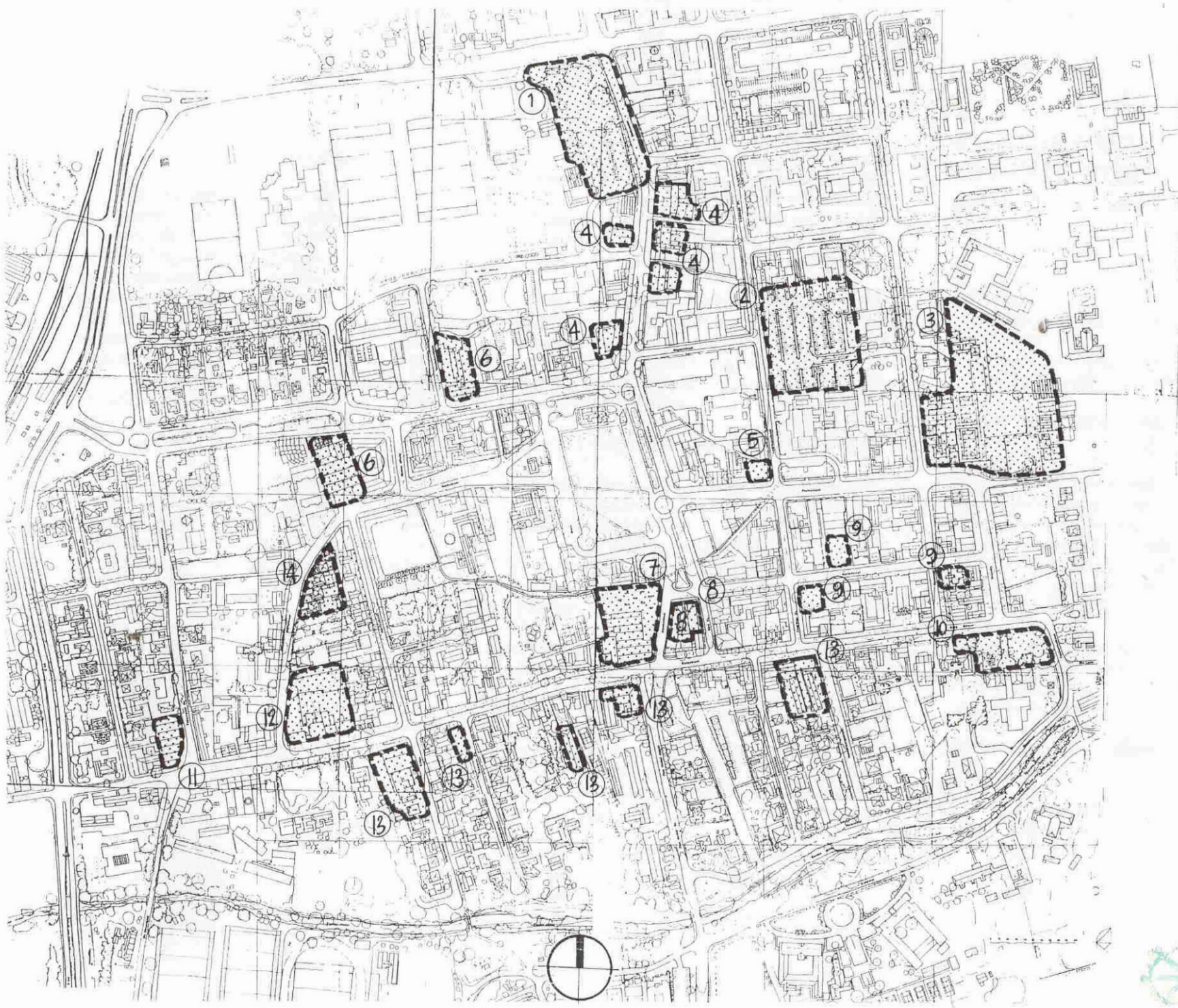
### 3. DESIGN FRAMEWORKS FOR KEY SITES

Diagram 8 shows key sites in the proposed conservation area which present strategic opportunities for restoration or redevelopment of public spaces, public buildings, appropriate infill and the development of commercial, retail or social foci.

Appropriate work on these sites could make a significant contribution towards regaining the village character of Stellenbosch.

Design Frameworks should be prepared for these sites, in order to guide future interventions and ensure that the opportunities they present are not lost.





## KEY SITES

- 1 Bergzicht Site
- 2 The Stadshuis Site
- 3 The Bloemhof Site
- 4 Bird Street Infill Opportunity Sites
- 5 Plein Street Infill Opportunity Sites
- 6 Alexander Street Infill Opportunity Sites
- 7 The O.K. Bazaars Site
- 8 The Meulplein Site
- 9 Kerk Street Infill Opportunity Sites
- 10 The Drostdy Site
- 11 The WPK Site
- 12 Federated Timbers Site
- 13 Dorp Street Infill Opportunity Sites
- 14 Market Street Infill Opportunity Sites

## STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY





## 6. PROBLEMS: THE EFFECT OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORICAL CORE

Diagram 9 (from the first report) is a composite of negative environmental aspects which are spoiling the village character of Stellenbosch. These problems have arisen as a result of a variety of factors, which are discussed below.

### 1. CHANGING LAND USE AND URBAN STRUCTURE

Traditionally, Stellenbosch was a town in which housing predominated, complemented by institutional buildings facing onto public spaces and commercial buildings lining the main access routes, namely Bird Street and Dorp Street. Later commercial areas were developed close to the centre of town, within reach of pedestrians.

In recent years the traditional land use pattern in the Historical Core has been disturbed and the structure of the town has changed, resulting in a variety of problems which are discussed below.

#### Commercial Development: Erosion of the Village Streets

Residences in the Historical Core are increasingly being displaced by commercial uses. Commercial development along the main access routes, Dorp and Bird Streets, as well as Andringa Street and to a lesser extent Church

and Plein Streets, has caused the erosion of the historical building stock. This is particularly evident in Bird Street, which is becoming a modern, bland and monotonous street lined with facades consisting of large fascias, inappropriate signage and over-scaled glass shopfronts, interspersed with petrol stations.

These changes in the land use pattern, together with increasing development of tourist facilities such as hotels and guest houses, have resulted in ever more traffic being generated. This in turn leads to the need for more parking, which results in further erosion of the character of the streets.

#### The Suburban Structure of Stellenbosch

Traditionally, Stellenbosch had the character of a rural town, allowing safe pedestrian and bicycle movement. From the 1930s onwards, Stellenbosch developed rapidly under the influence of the Modern Planning principles. One of the cornerstones of the new ideas was the development of separate areas for working, living and recreation (discussed more fully in the following section). Under the influence of the *Garden Cities* and *Neighbourhood Unit* concepts, new monofunctional residential suburbs were built on the outskirts of town, consisting of single houses on individual plots. The development of these space-extensive suburbs has changed the urban structure of Stellenbosch and placed pressure on the Historical Core, with the following results:

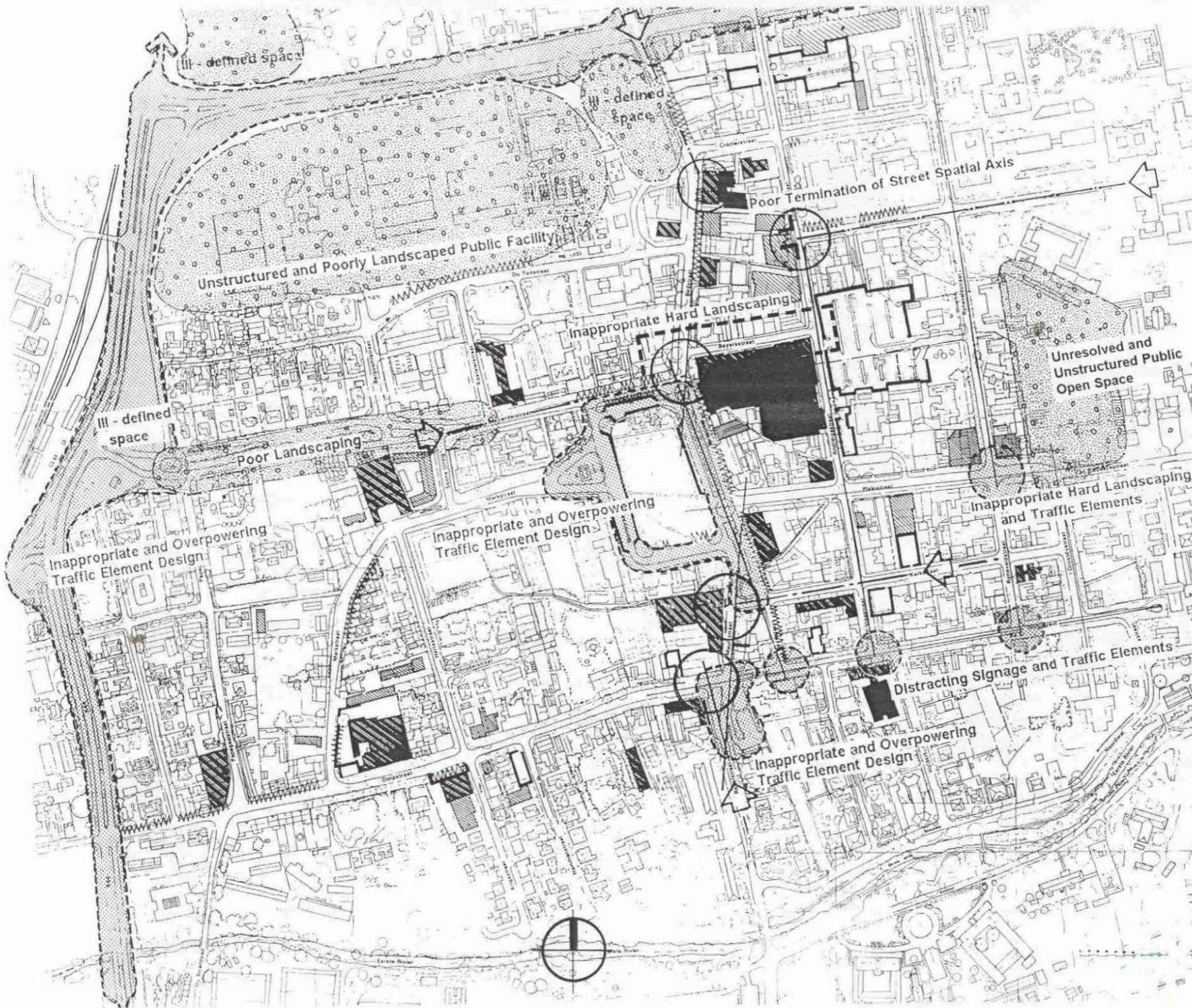
- **A rapid loss of the cultural landscape** of the rural hinterland: farms are subdivided for suburban housing and their orchards,

vineyards, farmsteads and labourers' cottages are lost under urban sprawl.

- **The loss of urban character.** The low density, sprawling development of suburbs makes all South African towns look alike. The suburbs are monotonous and badly defined, both spatially and in relation to the countryside. The focus on the street is lost, with individual "villas" randomly scattered in space and fronting onto wide roads with kerbed pavements and paved driveways. Convenient neighbourhood shops are replaced by shopping centres on the edges of limited access freeways, and petrol stations serving private motor cars.
- **Dependency on private transport** is caused by the low density suburban structure which cannot be efficiently served by conventional public transport. People without cars become isolated, or have to spend large amounts of money on transport.
- **Parking and Traffic Problems in the Historical Core** result from residents commuting from outlying suburbs. Parking and traffic (exacerbated by minibus taxis, large tourists busses and delivery vehicles) is a serious problem in the narrow, tree-lined streets of the Historical Core. With the additional traffic, pedestrian crossings have become unsafe.



# COMPOSITE PROBLEMS WITHIN THE HISTORICAL CORE



- Building out of Scale
- ▨ Buildings with inappropriate materials
- ▩ Buildings with both of the above
- ▭ Breaks in tree lined avenues.
- ▭ Unscreened Parking areas

REF:  
PIET LOUW MARTIN KRUGER,  
DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES  
FOR THE HISTORIC CORE OF  
STELLENBOSCH (DRAFT 1995)

## STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY





## 2. THE ZONING SCHEME

The Zoning Scheme is a planning tool which specifies permitted land uses and prescribes the form of development allowable on specific erven within a land use zone. The pattern of land uses in the Zoning Scheme is very coarse and bears little resemblance to the land uses which have developed naturally over time. Similarly, the rights granted under the Zoning Scheme (and Title Deeds) to property owners in the Historical Core result in development which is inappropriate to the character of Stellenbosch.

The Zoning Scheme prescribes the following:

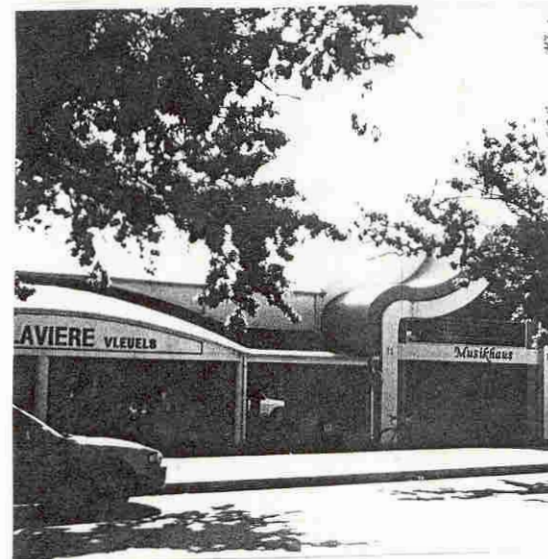
- Building heights;
- Building lines (setbacks);
- Maximum permissible coverage;
- Maximum development opportunity in terms of square metre area, expressed as Bulk (or the Floor Space ratio).

The setbacks, parking requirements, bulk, coverage and height prescriptions promote inappropriate "Modern Movement" volumes and forms. Large, free-standing, multi-storeyed buildings set back from the street can be (and are) constructed in sensitive historical areas with a tradition of single and double storeys lining the streets. The Zoning Scheme does not control other elements which are crucial to the character of historical Stellenbosch, such as materials, texture, colour, symmetry or the proportions and spacing of openings.

New buildings conforming to Zoning Scheme requirements bear no relationship to the traditional architecture of Stellenbosch.



Stellenbosch Motors, Bird St



W Heuer Building, Bird St

If it becomes Council policy that the Historical Core be preserved, it will be essential for new buildings to conform to the traditional place-making patterns of Stellenbosch, and the effect of the current Zoning Scheme regulations will need to be urgently addressed.

### Large-scaled modern intrusions

The construction of large-scaled modern buildings is out of character with the small-scaled fabric of the village and has resulted in the erosion of the environment in parts of the Core.

Some of these are indicated on the Composite Problems Map (Diagram 9), including:

- the Ok Bazaars building facing the Braak
- the Trust Bank Centre on the corner of Beyers and Bird Streets
- the WPK building, Federated Timbers, and several modern blocks of flats and petrol stations in Dorp Street
- several modern buildings along Alexander Street
- modern commercial structures and petrol stations along Bird Street.

### Inappropriate modern buildings

The Modern Movement in architecture and recent Post Modern buildings have had a profound impact on certain parts of the village. These include recent Post Modern interpretations of historical buildings which have, in the opinion of the consultants, had a negative impact.

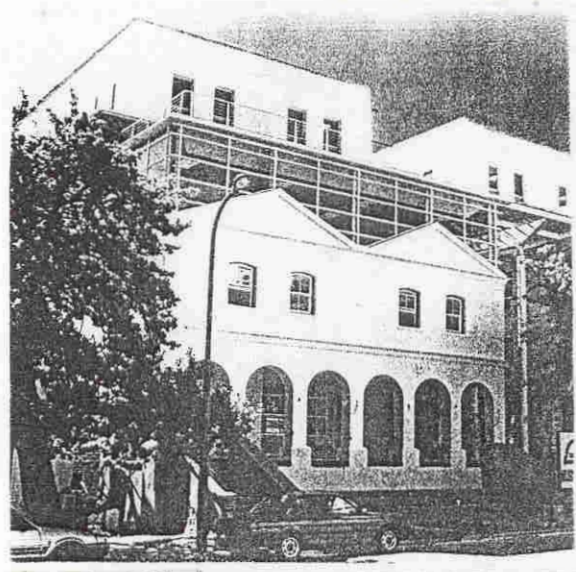


These buildings include:

- The ABSA building, which is an attempted reinterpretation of the historical buildings previously on the site. However, the interpretation of Classical elements and the design approach are questionable.
- The block of flats adjacent to the Roman Catholic Priory does not respect the “werf” of the priory building, is too close to the Cape Dutch style building, and the introduction of a Mansard roof is stylistically inappropriate.
- The development of a new pseudo-Victorian shopping complex adjacent to the Mosque is also unfortunate.
- The recently completed Drostdy and Trust Bank complexes and the pedestrianisation of Beyers Street have been controversial. Several of the detail elements such as balustrades, staircases, paving surfaces and kiosks are alien to the traditional “language” of Stellenbosch architecture and it is questionable whether they are appropriate in the context of an historical environment. character.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

In the absence of appropriate development control regulations and design guidelines for development in the Historical Core, it has often been difficult for the Municipality’s Aesthetics Committee to prevent the construction of buildings, even when it has been clear that they are ill-suited to an historical environment.



The ABSA Building



Beyers Street shopping mall

Although many developers (and their architects) are aware of the sensitivity of the context, they are legally entitled to construct any building which conforms to the existing development rights granted in terms of the Zoning Scheme and Title Deeds. Thus, although plans must be submitted to the Aesthetics Committee, there is little that can be done if a developer is determined to proceed with the proposals. The only recourse is to refer the plan to the National Monuments Council — but as this only applies if the proposals affect a building which is older than 50 years and/or protected under the National Monuments Act, in many cases this course of action does not apply. Even when it does, there have been several cases where the NMC and the Aesthetics Committee have found it difficult to come to an agreement about the most appropriate requirements, which is counter-productive and confusing for developers.

In some cases, even when a developer has agreed to the modification of the design in accordance with the requirements of the Aesthetics Committee, the development has not been completed in accordance with the approved plans. The “policing” of these developments has often been difficult; legal action is in most cases too costly to contemplate and of minimal use as the damage has already been done.

If the special character of the Historical Core is to be protected and enhanced, it is essential that effective development control mechanisms and clear procedures be introduced, supported by educational material to assist developers and architects to understand the traditional architecture and patterns of place-making.



## 7. PRECINCT GUIDELINES

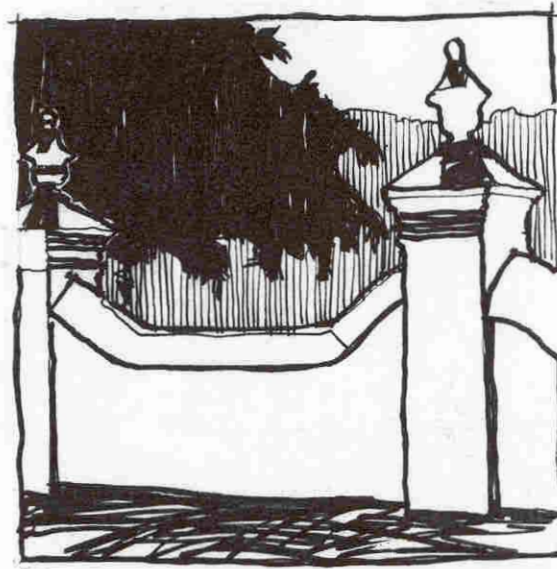
Guidelines for each of the precincts identified in Section 6 are illustrated graphically in the following pages. The aim of these guidelines is to identify the features which form an essential part of the historical environment and contribute to the special village character of Stellenbosch. Diagrams 10 - 12 show suggested strategic actions which would contribute to the restoration, reconstruction and enhancement of the village quality of each precinct. The actions indicated would help to transform them into positive environments.

These guidelines should provide the basis for the Urban Design Frameworks which it is proposed should be prepared for precincts in the Conservation Area which require attention.

The following environmental elements are crucial to the character of the proposed conservation area, and thus of each of the precincts, and should be restored and enhanced:

- millstreams
- public spaces (both historical and new)
- tree-lined village streets
- axes and their focal buildings
- werf walls and perimeter fencing
- green open spaces
- key buildings of significance.

Traffic congestion is a major problem in all of the areas, and should be addressed urgently.



*The debate . . . is that of urban morphology as against the zoning of planners. The restoration of urban space as against the wasteland which is created by zoning. The design of urban spaces, both traffic and pedestrian, linear and focal is, on the one hand, a method which is general enough to allow flexibility and change and, on the other, precise enough to create both spatial and built continuity within the city."*

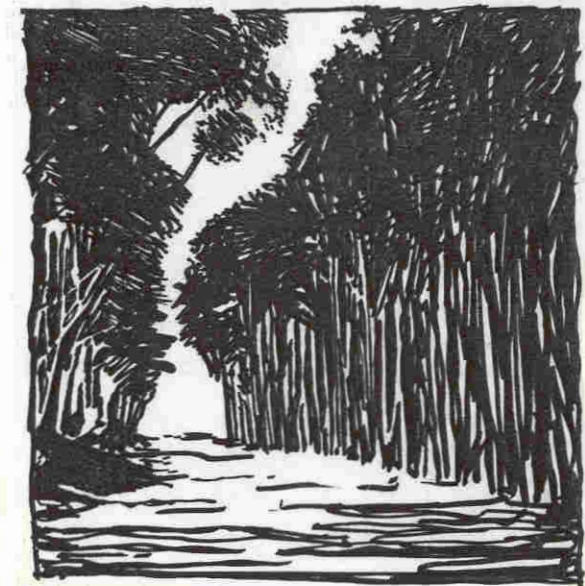
Leon Krier, 1976, p. 298

### PRECINCT GUIDELINES: BERGZICHT / THE BRAAK

The strategic actions necessary to restore and reconstruct the village quality of this precinct are shown in Diagram 10.



In addition to the general Urban Design Framework for the precinct as a whole, detailed design frameworks should be prepared for the following key sites in the precinct:

- the Braak
- Bergzicht/ Van der Stel
- the area adjacent to Adam Tas Road, which is the entrance to the village from the south west.





# BERGZICHT/ THE BRAAK PRECINCT GUIDELINES

-  Existing millstreams
-  Millstreams to be reinstated where possible
-  Development opportunity (with Design Framework)
-  Public space opportunities
-  Urban Design Framework required
-  Existing village streets and linkages
-  Significant buildings to be retained
-  Axial focus opportunity
-  Enhance historical axis
-  Address traffic congestion problems
-  Restore historical "werf" walls or fencing
-  Historical Public Space to be reinstated
-  Reinststate and complete avenue
-  Existing green open space to be retained



## STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY



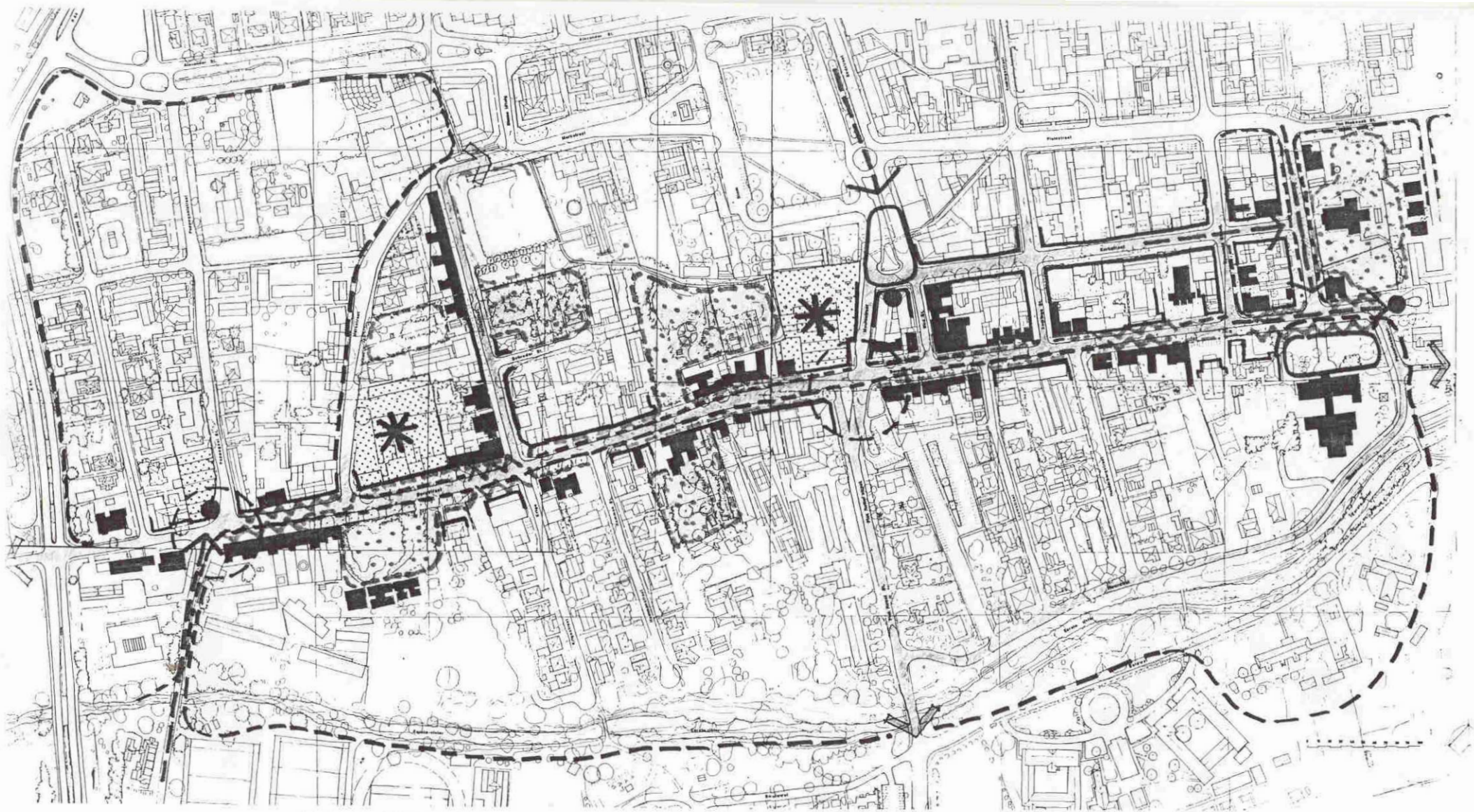
## **PRECINCT GUIDELINES: DORP STREET / EERSTE RIVER**

The strategic actions necessary to restore and reconstruct the village quality of this precinct are shown in Diagram 11. The actions indicated would help to transform this precinct into a positive environment.

In addition to the general Urban Design Framework for the precinct as a whole, a more detailed design framework should be prepared for the area between Dorp Street and the Eerste River. The objective here should be to retain the integrity of the historical cadastral boundaries, which established a pattern of long, narrow erven between the river and the street (since subdivided). The retention of public access from Dorp Street to the Eerste River frontage is crucial in any development of the area.

Consideration should be given to a strategy for the management of tourist busses, which should preferably be diverted from Dorp Street where they have a disruptive effect. Possibilities include the provision of a special parking area for busses, from which visitors would have easy access to Dorp Street on foot, or the provision of points where tourists could be dropped off and picked up by the busses after a guided walk.



















STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY

	Existing millstreams		Existing village streets and linkages		Restore historical "werf" walls or fencing
	Millstreams to be reinstated where possible		Significant buildings to be retained		Historical Public Space to be reinstated
	Development opportunity (with Design Framework)		Axial focus opportunity		Reinstate and complete avenue
	Public space opportunities		Enhance historical axis		Existing green open space to be retained
	Urban Design Framework required		Address traffic congestion problems		

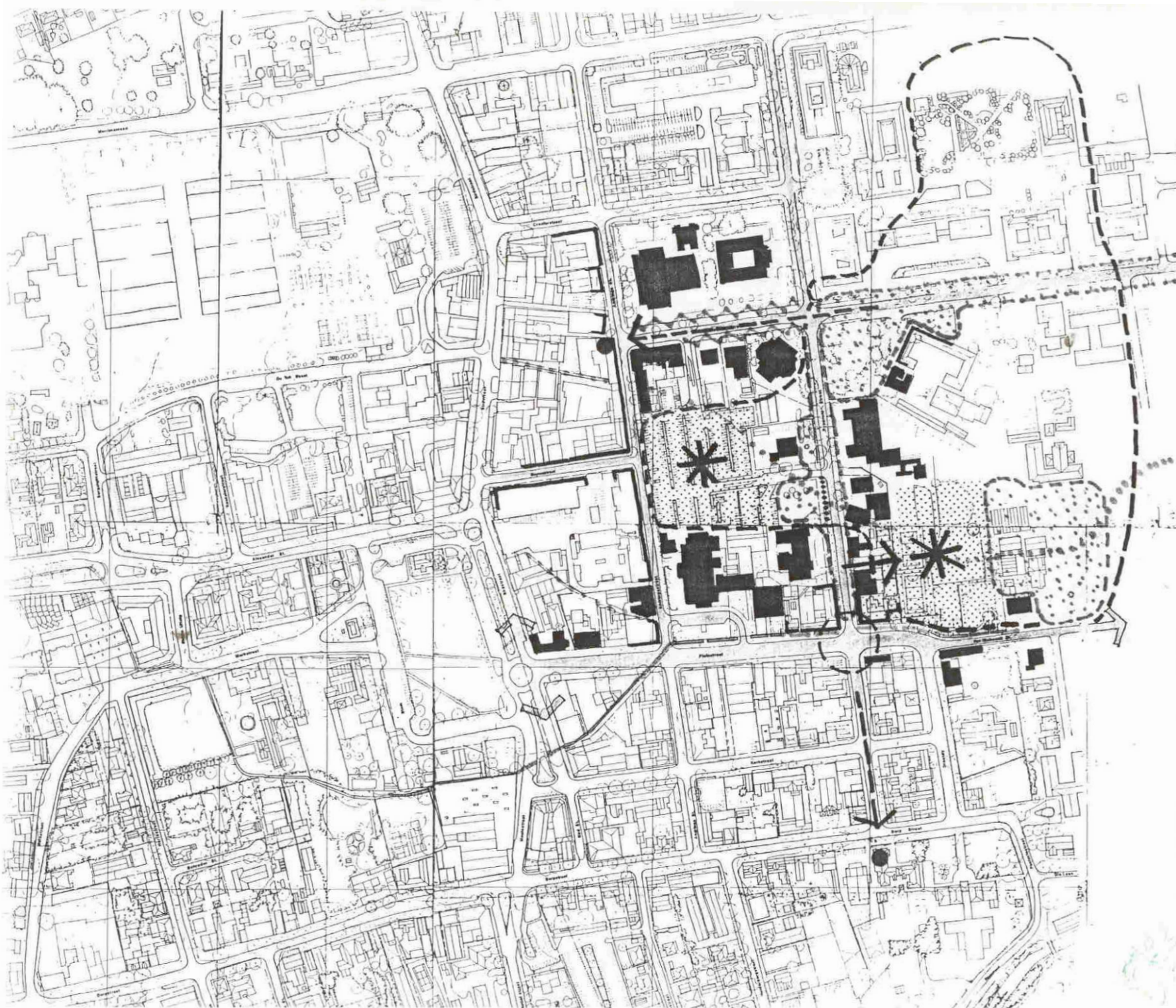
**DORP STREET/  
EERSTE RIVER  
PRECINCT  
GUIDELINES**

**PRECINCT GUIDELINES:  
BLOEMHOF / THE TOWN HALL**















Diagram 12 shows suggested strategic actions which would contribute to the restoration and reconstruction of the village quality of this precinct. The actions indicated would help to transform this precinct into a positive environment.

In addition to the general Urban Design Framework for the precinct as a whole, a more detailed design framework should be prepared for the transitional area between the University and the Historical Core, including the Town Hall and Bloemhof sites.





# BLOEMHOF/ THE STADSHUIS PRECINCT GUIDELINES

-  Existing millstreams
-  Millstreams to be reinstated where possible
-  Development opportunity (with Design Framework)
-  Public space opportunities
-  Urban Design Framework required
-  Existing village streets and linkages
-  Significant buildings to be retained
-  Axial focus opportunity
-  Enhance historical axis
-  Address traffic congestion problems
-  Restore historical "werf" walls or fencing
-  Historical Public Space to be reinstated
-  Reinststate and complete avenue
-  Existing green open space to be retained

## STELLENBOSCH



CONSERVATION STRATEGY





## 8. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

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It is recommended that these development guidelines be applied in the Historical Core and, to a limited extent and with greater leniency, in the adjacent Special Area, which should also form part of the Conservation Area. They should be backed up by suitable by-laws, developed in consultation with the NMC and published under the National Monuments Act (or new heritage conservation legislation).

The Guidelines are structured as follows: first is a discussion of the various kinds of architectural solutions which may be appropriate for particular sensitive sites in the area. Opportunities may exist for conservation, new infill buildings, new public or focal buildings, or the redevelopment of existing intrusive buildings. The various design approaches and options available are set out.

Second, guidelines are given for the Municipality and its different departments, to assist them in contributing to the improvement, upgrading and enhancement of the public structure of the Historical Core.

Finally, general guidelines are presented which apply equally to public and private actions in the conservation area.

### 1. APPROPRIATE APPROACHES FOR ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTION IN THE HISTORICAL CORE

In order to assist architects and other professionals designing buildings in the Historical Core, this section gives an overview of the design opportunities available in a sensitive historical context and the appropriate principles applicable. Depending on their nature, some sites may be more critical than others.

Design opportunities in the historical core fall into four categories:

- Opportunities for conservation (including repair, restoration and renewal) of existing historical buildings
- Opportunities for new infill buildings and additions to existing historical buildings
- Opportunities for the development of new public buildings, or buildings of public significance because of their focal position
- Opportunities for the redevelopment of intrusive buildings in order to reduce their disruptive effect on the area.

It is important for the design process to be monitored by a committee consisting of professionals of stature in the fields of archaeology, architectural conservation, town planning and urban design, as well as community representatives. Designers working in the historical core and owners considering doing any building work should consult the committee at the earliest possible stage to discuss their intentions.

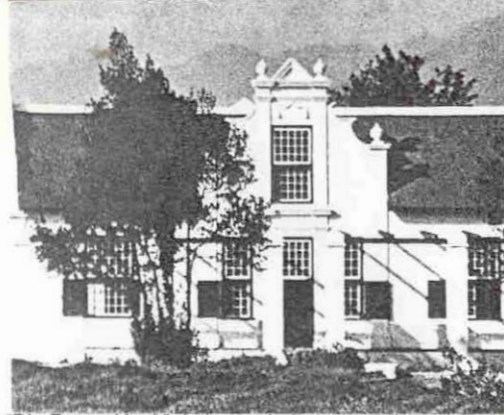
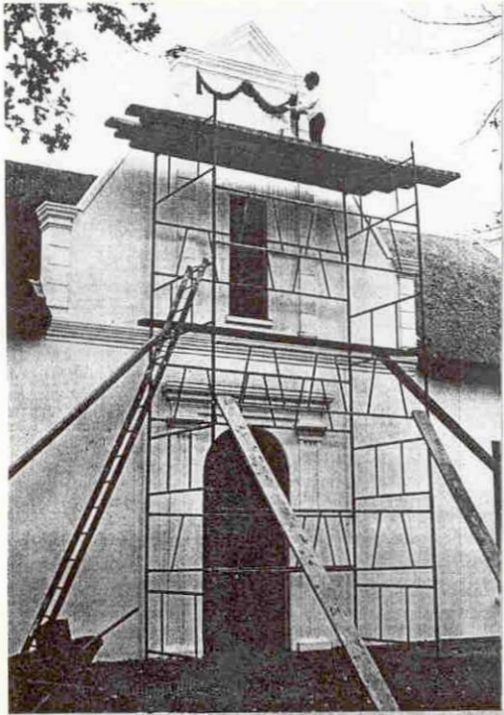
#### a) CONSERVATION

The appropriate approach when work is to be done on an existing conservation-worthy building will be directly related to its level of significance and contribution to the streetscape. Ideally, an up-to-date catalogue with a conservation grading of all the historical buildings in the core should be available so that owners, developers and designers are aware of the reasons for the significance of each property and the degree of care which will have to be taken when any intervention is considered. Some of the different actions which may form part of a conservation project are defined below and their appropriate application is briefly discussed. Most projects will involve interventions of more than one type.

**Preservation** involves the minimum intervention necessary to retain a structure in its present state (including maintenance and stabilisation). It is appropriate for all significant buildings which are in good condition. It is essential as a holding action in emergencies (e.g. after a fire) while further investigation is done to determine what decisions should be taken.

**Restoration** is returning a building to its known appearance at a particular time, using appropriate materials and techniques. It is only recommended if one date in the history of the building is of overwhelming importance, and there is sufficient evidence (restoration should *never* involve guesswork). Generally, it is important to realise that buildings have developed over time, and to respect the contributions of different generations.





"Die Rynse Hoek" during and after restoration  
(from Stellenbosch 300 Action)

**Rehabilitation** means changing a building so that it can continue to be used constructively. It may involve repair of the fabric, the introduction of new services and alterations, but the features of the building which contribute to its significance are retained. It is appropriate in most cases, provided it is done with sensitivity and sufficient knowledge.

**Renovation** is superficial renewal of a building in a way that respects its character only in a general sense. It is appropriate for historical buildings of limited significance, which nevertheless contribute to the character of an historical area.

**Reconstruction** means to rebuild a structure (or part of it) which no longer exists, on its original site. The reconstruction may be categorised as:

- an *anastylosis* : an exact reconstruction using the original materials and components, to the identical craftsmanship and detailing. Purists maintain that anastylosis only applies to dry construction;
- a *copy or replication*: an accurate reconstruction of the original structure, using new materials;
- a "*fake*": a building pretending to be historical, but which is not accurate and which gives a false impression of history.

Reconstruction is seldom appropriate in South Africa except in a museum context, and should generally not be considered to be conservation.

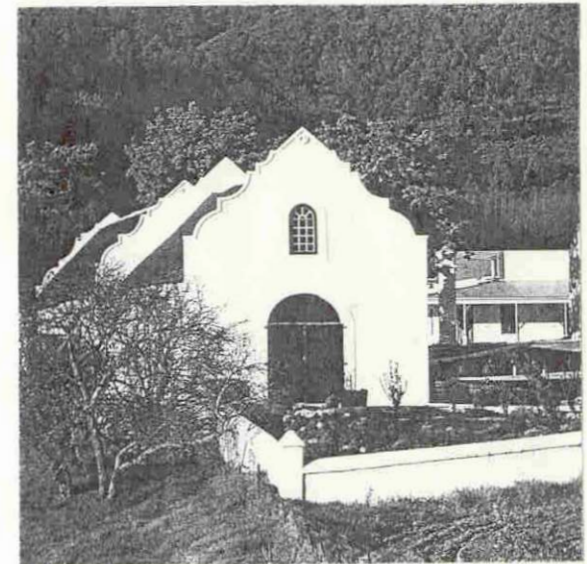
#### Examples

Morgenhof estate outside Stellenbosch is a copy of a Cape Dutch "werf", which replicates essential

Cape place-making qualities but is not a reconstruction of a previously-existing complex. Recent additions are in an imitation French Chateau style. It may be considered a *fake*.

The Officers' Mess in the courtyard of the Castle, Cape Town is a new building which was reconstructed on the original foundations. Although some physical and archival evidence was available and it is considered a *copy*, its appearance is largely conjectural.

The Greek archeologist Balanos' reconstruction of the north colonnade and part of the south peristyle of the Parthenon in Athens (c. 1930) is a well known example of a true anastylosis.



Morgenhof (from Balfour & Barker)



**Facadism** involves retaining only the facade of an historical building and constructing a new building behind it (or severely altering the remainder). It may be the only possible solution when the whole building cannot be saved and the facade is an important part of an historical environment, but it is not recommended. It is particularly inappropriate when the structure behind the facade is unrelated to its original purpose, e.g. a parking garage behind a commercial facade, where the new floor levels cut across openings in the facade, and where the building behind is so out of scale that the retained facade looks like wallpaper pasted onto a modern building.

#### *Examples*

The facades of the Victorian buildings on the corner of Waterkant and Bree Streets, Cape Town were retained as an important part of the streetscape, with new buildings behind them.

#### **b) NEW INFILL BUILDINGS AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING HISTORICAL BUILDINGS**

In the traditional pattern of place-making, public spaces and buildings were given prominence and the rest of the built fabric formed a harmonious, quiet "background" to them. Towns and villages celebrated for their beauty (such as Sienna, Avignon, Bruges and Rothenburg am Tauber) consist mainly of such "background buildings", highlighted by the occasional more elaborate civic structure.

The insertion of a modern structure into historical



*This example in Bird Street is facadism at its most extreme.*



*Aldo van Eyck's Unmarried Mothers' Quarters, Amsterdam (from The Architectural Review, CLXXI, No. 1021, p 26)*

urban fabric, within a homogenous streetscape such as Dorp or Bird Street, is termed infill. The design intention should be to "fill in" the space available between existing buildings in the same way that private buildings traditionally filled in the spaces between public buildings. A similar "well-mannered" approach is appropriate for extensions to historical buildings.

The intention should be that the new buildings or additions should not stand out, but rather be quiet background buildings, allowing the focus to be on the surrounding historical architecture. Infill buildings and extensions should not try to 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 (such as scale, proportions and materials — discussed in more detail in the following section) so that the new building blends harmoniously into the environment.

#### *Example:*

In the design of the Unmarried Mothers' Quarters in Amsterdam, Holland (1977), Aldo van Eyck reinterpreted the predominant characteristics of the classic Amsterdam row house in a modern way. The modern building respects the proportions, the modular width and height of the existing contiguous facades, but utilises materials, technology and colour in a contemporary manner. His building thus "completes" the streetscape and blends in with the pattern of neighbouring row houses.



### c) NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND BUILDINGS IN FOCAL POSITIONS

In the design of public buildings and buildings with an important public role because of their prominent positions, the opportunity exists to restore the "village" character of the historical core. This applies particularly to new buildings on the designated key sites, which have been identified as especially sensitive.

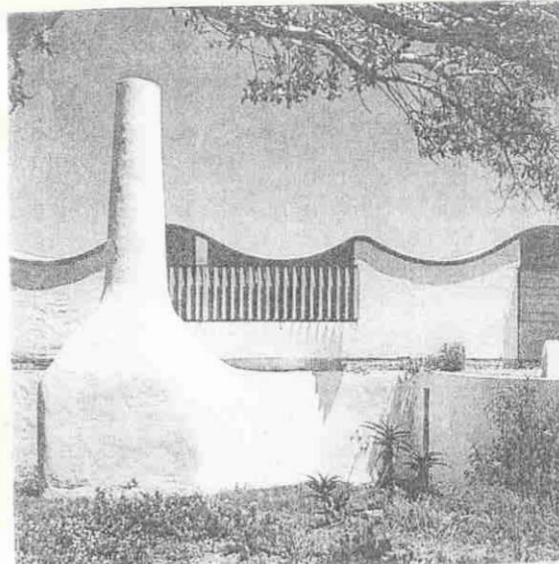
When building on a sensitive public site, it would be preferable to call for proposals based on the Urban Design Framework applicable to the site, or to hold an architectural competition so that the best solution can be selected.

There are many possible architectural solutions to the challenge of building sympathetic, appropriate new public buildings in an historical environment.

Regardless of the approach, however, it is essential that the designer have an understanding of the context, particularly the traditional patterns of place making and the historical architecture which is characteristic of Stellenbosch. Some of the approaches which may be appropriate are discussed below.

#### Regionalism

Regionalism was initiated by Modern Movement architects such as Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Louis Kahn, Giancarlo de Carlo and Carlo Scarpa. It involves a reinterpretation of the traditions of place-making, and a revival of the crafts and materials used in the specific context.



House Fagan, Camps Bay



Interior of Castelvecchio, Verona

*"Critical Regionalism.....manifests itself as a consciously bounded architecture, one which rather than emphasizing the building as a free-standing object places the stress on the territory to be established by the structure erected on the site. This 'place-form' means that the architect must recognize the physical boundary of his work as a kind of temporal limit - the point at which the present act of building stops"* (Frampton, p. 327)

Recent Regionalist work includes that of Aldo Rossi, Giorgio Grassi, Victorio Gregotti, Mario Botta and Luigi Snozzi, Luis Baragan, Jorn Utzon, Alvaro Siza Veira, Rafael Moneo, Renzo Piano and Oscar Tusquets.

Locally, the influence of Regionalism is visible in some work by Gawie Fagan (Mossel Bay, Cape St Francis, Cape Town), John Rushmere (Eastern Cape), Roelof Uytenbogaardt (Hout Bay and Steinkopf), Bannie Britz (Potchefstroom and earlier Mmabatho work), Rodney Harber (Natal) and Pancho Guedes in Mozambique.

*Example:*

Carlo Scarpa's work on the old castle (Castelvecchio) in Verona involved restoration and the revival of traditional plaster techniques, and is simultaneously a modern building with references to the work of Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright and a reinterpretation of Romanesque and Art Deco styling. The building has a timeless quality, with reference to the past, the present and the future.



### Neo-rationalist or Minimalist buildings

These can be categorised as 'quiet' background buildings, which interpret regional vernacular in an abstract way. The Rationalists have a preference for a neutral, elemental architecture which can be interpreted in different ways. Examples include the work of Aldo Rossi, Vittorio Gregotti, Giorgio Grassi, Reicin & Reinhardt, Rob and Leon Krier and Alvaro Siza Veira (who may also be classified as a Regionalist).

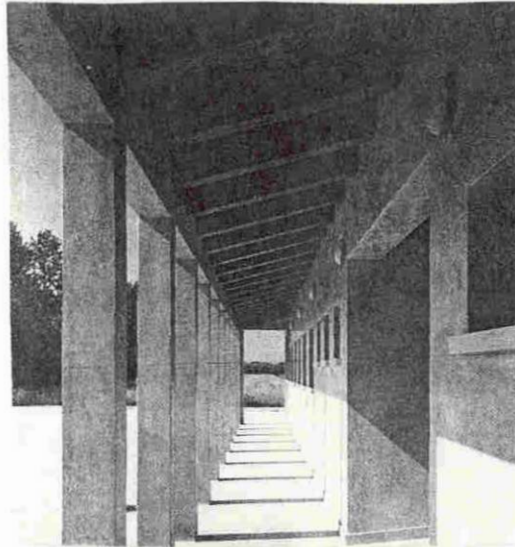
Both Rationalist and Regionalist architects are interested in expressing and interpreting the local vernacular culture.

### Modern technological interpretations

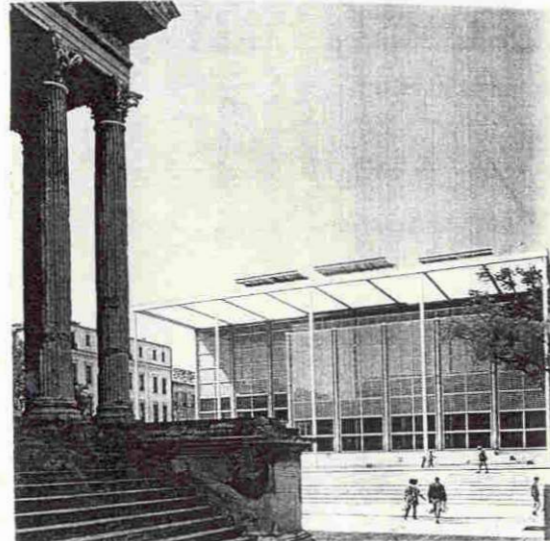
On public sites, buildings reflecting contemporary technological preoccupations may be appropriate, if designed with care and sensitivity.

An example in an historical context is Norman Foster's library, which is directly opposite the Maison Carrée (a Roman temple) in Nîmes. The library is a simple glass form which reflects the old urban environment. Another example is Piano & Rogers's Centre Pompidou in the Marais quarter of Paris. Whereas with Foster the design emphasis is on the "skin" of the building, in the Pompidou Centre the dominant mode of expression is the structure and services.

This approach calls for careful consideration. The examples given are simple, shed-like buildings, which are understated and without superfluous



Aldo Rossi, Town Hall, Borgoricco, Italy (from Adjmi, p. 59)



Norman Foster, Library and Museum of Modern Art, Nîmes, with the Maison Carrée in the foreground (from Nîmes Tourist Office brochure)

decoration, bearing out Foster's philosophy that "modern architecture can and should be nothing more than elegant engineering." (Frampton, p. 303.)

### Post-modern architecture

The Post-modern movement in architecture, initiated through the writings of Robert Venturi (*Complexity and Contradictions in Architecture*), Charles Jencks (*Post-Modern Architecture*), Paolo Portoghesi (*Venezia Biennale 1980*) and others, has had a profound influence on the built fabric in this country (including Stellenbosch).

The core of the movement is the rejection of "Modernism" and the revival of historical styles and elements of architecture. There are many variations on Post-modernism, some of which are sensitive to historical environments and regional culture.

Unfortunately, it is the superficial aspects of the movement which are most prevalent in this country. In this "style", Classical architectural features are imitated, often in an exaggerated, over-scaled and mannerist way, and are used out of context (e.g. gables which have no purpose as there is no roof behind them). The resulting buildings caricature classical proportions and elements and tend to dominate their surroundings, bearing no relationship to their architectural context.



#### d) REDESIGN OF INTRUSIVE BUILDINGS

Wherever possible, existing buildings which are intrusive because of their scale, style, materials or siting should be redeveloped to minimise their disruptive effect.

This does not necessarily imply enormous financial outlay or major building work: depending on the nature of the building, relatively minor changes can make a significant difference. Renewal of finishes with more appropriate colours and textures, replacement of intrusive cladding, even repainting in more subdued shades, can in some cases transform an intrusive building. The aim should be to "tone down" or disguise features that do not conform to traditional patterns. Even sensitive landscaping can contribute by screening or softening the effect of disruptive features.



Lutz Building, off Andringa St

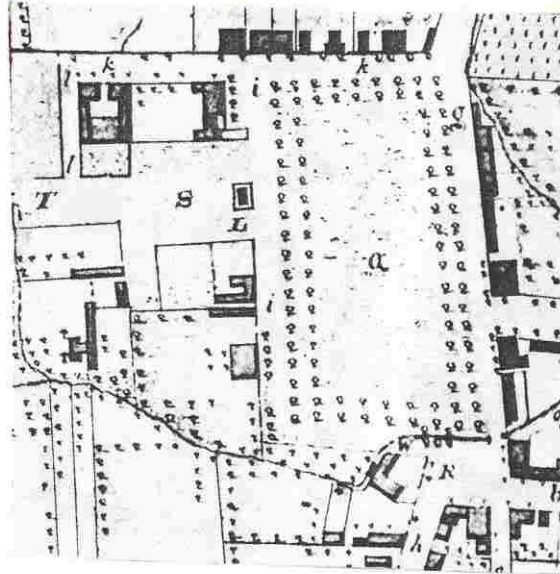
*"...Architects nowadays are pathologically addicted to change, regarding it as something one either hinders, runs after, or at best keeps up with. This I suggest, is why they tend to sever the past from the future, with the result that the present is rendered emotionally inaccessible, without temporal dimension. I dislike a sentimental antiquarian attitude toward the past as much as I dislike a sentimental technocratic one toward the future. Both are founded on a static, clockwork, notion of time (what antiquarians and technocrats have in common), so let's start with the past for a change and discover the unchanging condition of man."*

Aldo van Eyck in *Forum*, quoted in Frampton, p. 300

## 2. GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTIONS

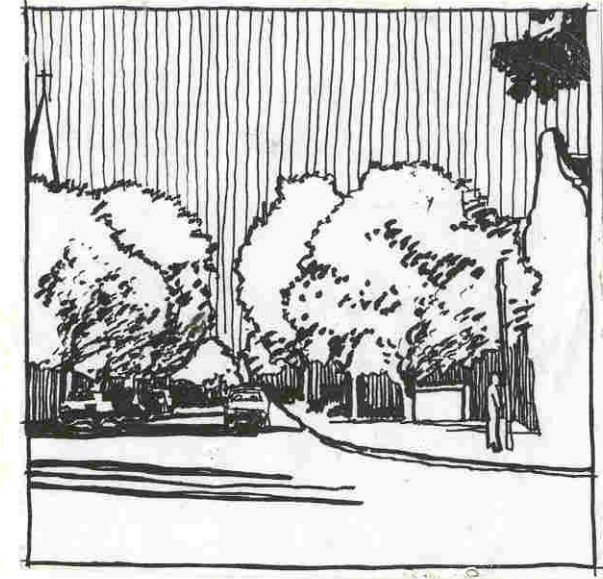
These guidelines apply to actions by the local authority itself in the management and improvement of the public spatial structure of the Historical Core.

The local authority can make a significant contribution to conservation by applying the best standards to the conservation of its own property and ensuring that public works are done in a manner appropriate to the character of the historical area. It can serve as an example to private property owners, and by maintaining high standards of workmanship and introducing improvements it can encourage private investment.



### Special Places: Public Space & Social Foci

Policies must be formulated for the management of public buildings, social foci and public spaces. The local authority should prepare conservation management plans for historical properties under its control. Design Frameworks should be developed for each of the public spaces identified in this report, and consideration should be given to appropriate and positive uses (such as periodic and permanent village markets, parking, commercial and restaurant edges) and developmental opportunities, which could potentially lead to projects being undertaken as public-private partnerships.



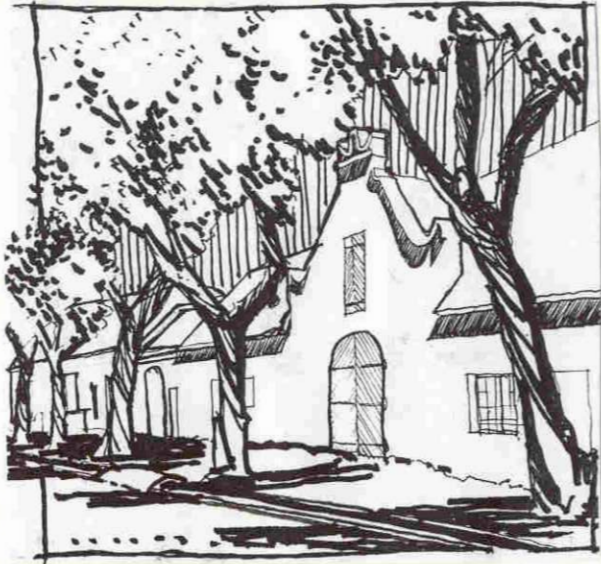
### Public planting: trees, planting and landscaping in public spaces

Existing avenues of trees along the streets and trees in public spaces must be regularly maintained. Trees which die or become diseased should be replaced with similar types. The avenues should be extended wherever possible, and new ones established where appropriate.

Large garden courts and public green spaces should be retained and enhanced.

Public landscaping should be appropriate to the village character.

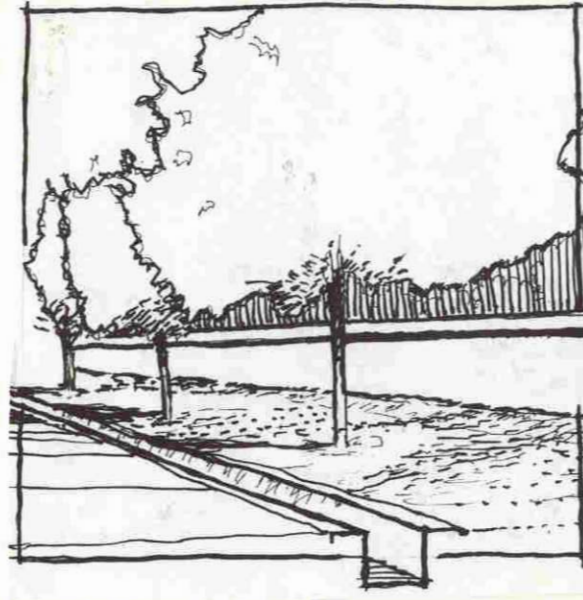




### Millstreams

Existing millstreams and water furrows should be retained and restored. Where practically possible, previously existing mill streams should be reinstated.

Bridges over the millstreams should be simple stone or concrete slabs. Avoid covering long lengths of the furrows (for example, to enable parking over them).



### Paving Surfaces

Stabilised laterite or a suitable paving material of a similar colour should be used wherever possible for public sidewalks. Avoid laying brickwork in patterns which were not traditionally used, cobblestones or coloured paving, unless appropriate in the particular context and compatible with traditional paving use in Stellenbosch.



### Street lighting

Street lighting should be understated, allowing the historical structures and spaces to be lit as focal objects. Coloured light should be avoided; white light is preferable. Existing lampposts should be retained wherever possible (and may be reproduced when appropriate). New lighting standards in the Historical Core should be simple and modern, rather than pseudo-historical, and should be proportioned appropriately in relation to the existing buildings and trees.





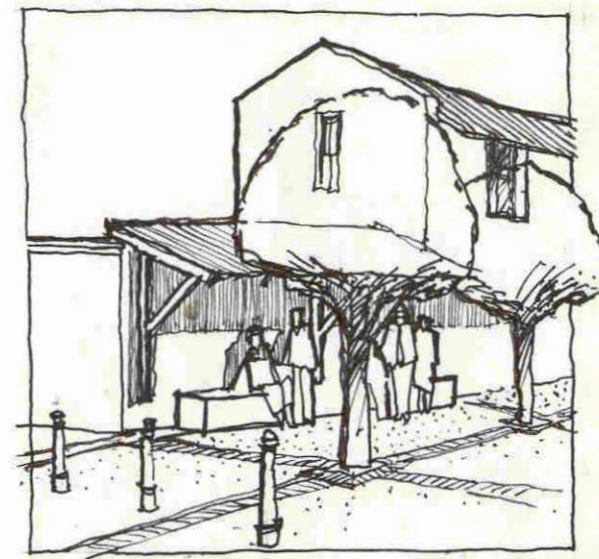
### Traffic Control

Generally, every effort should be made to minimise the visual disruption of traffic control (without compromising safety) and, where possible, to adapt standard designs (e.g for kerbs and traffic islands) to fit in unobtrusively with the historical character of the town. Roads should be treated as simple elements in the townscape, with the minimum of painted traffic marks on the surface. The use of small traffic circles is not appropriate in the Historical Core and less intrusive junctions such as 4-way stops should be used in preference.



### Parking

The local authority can play a crucial role in relieving the pressure to provide parking on properties where the consequences to existing buildings would be destructive. One way is to consider relaxing parking requirements under the Zoning Scheme for historical properties. The other is by providing public parking. The provision of parking on the perimeter of the historical core should be increased (private enterprise could also be encouraged to build parking garages). In the core itself, small, discreet parking areas should be provided wherever possible, with suitable planting providing screening and shade.

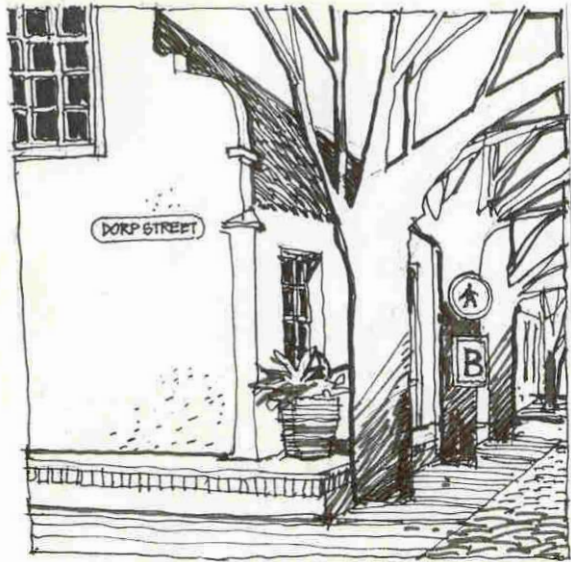


### Street Furniture

Street furniture — rubbish bins, benches, planters, bus stops, drinking fountains, bollards, cycle racks, etc — should be modern, neutral elements which do not detract from the village character. The use of alien materials such as exposed-aggregate concrete and shiny metals should be avoided, and paint colours should be subdued.

It is recommended that a design manual be commissioned for street furniture in the historical core.





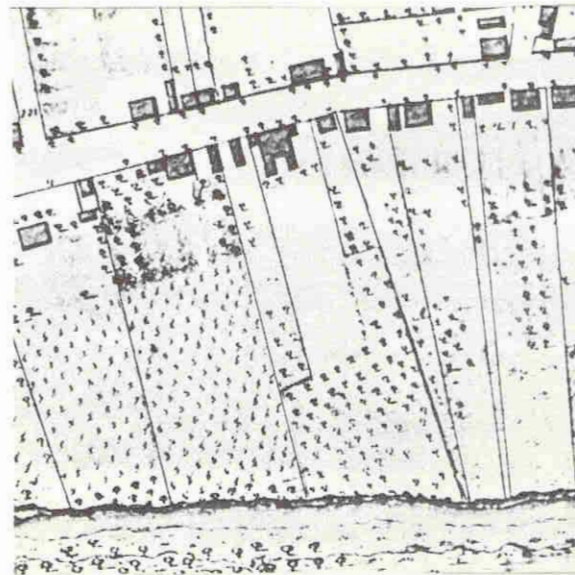
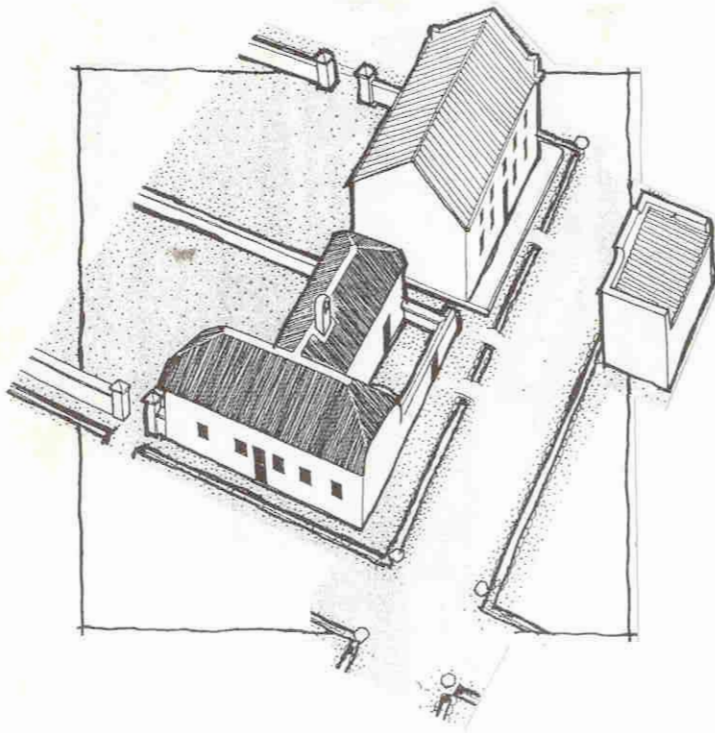
## Signage

The erection of signage for traffic direction and control, street names and general information should be coordinated. Where possible, signs should be sited so as not to obscure important buildings or views. Ideally, standard designs should be developed for information signs in the Historical Core, in order to enhance the public realm and the area's identity.

- Traffic signage should be kept to the minimum required by legislation and necessary for safety. Signs should, where possible, be attached to buildings or trees, instead of poles.
- Street names should be attached to buildings wherever possible, or could alternatively be incorporated into kerbstones. The simple black and white signs which have recently been erected on buildings in Dorp Street are successful and their use should be continued.
- Where possible, coordinate the erection of information signage by consolidating information so that fewer signs are necessary, and group several signs on a single pole.

### 3. GENERAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

These guidelines are intended to give planners, architects, designers and other professionals a clear understanding of the appropriate response to the characteristic patterns and features of the conservation area.



1817

#### Consolidation, Subdivision, Density & Coverage

The consolidation and subdivision of erven in Stellenbosch may impact on the character of the village, and careful consideration must be given to the implications before such actions are allowed.

- The historical patterns of subdivision and public rights of access must be respected.
- The increased coverage and bulk permissible under the Zoning Scheme when two or more

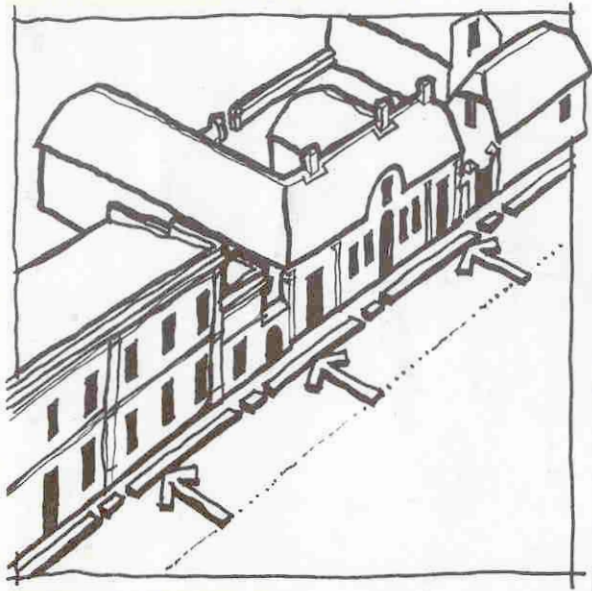


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erven are consolidated can result in the construction of buildings which have a negative impact on the character of the area. Careful consideration must therefore be given to the physical and spatial implications of consolidation.

- Densification should be permitted only if it is done in a way that respects the historical context and patterns of development.

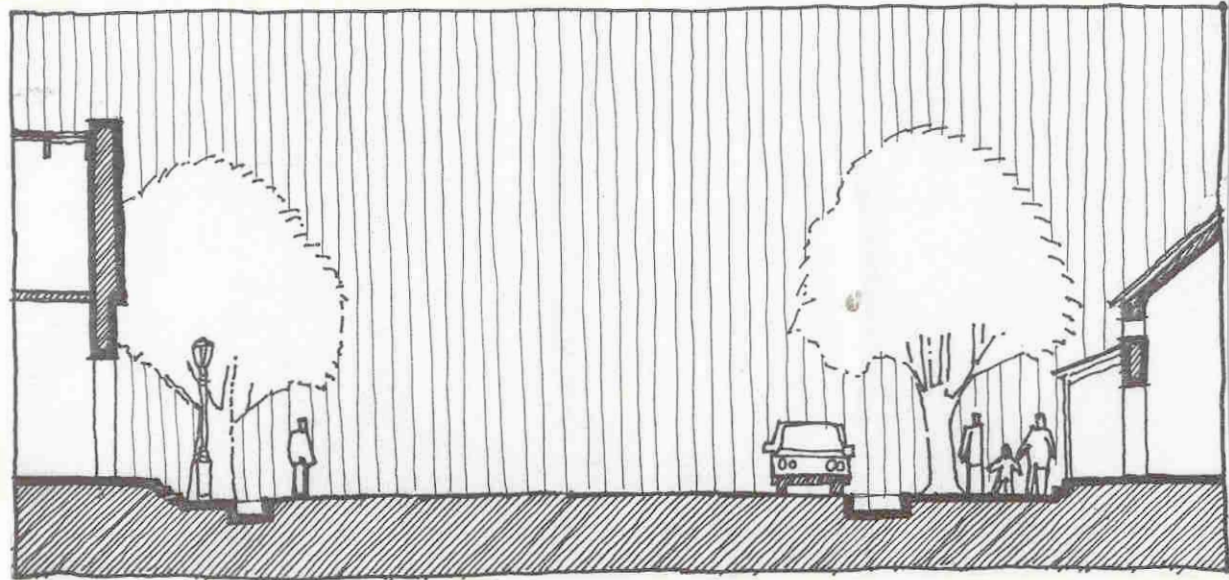




### Setback

Traditional building lines in the historical core vary from street to street. For example, in Dorp Street buildings tend to be on the front boundary, whereas in residential areas developed during the Victorian era, houses are set back behind a front garden.

- New buildings should be set back the same distance as the existing historical buildings on either side.
- An extension to the side of an historical building should preferably be set back slightly from the original facade.



### Interface between Streets and Buildings

The interface between buildings and the street is an important component of the character of historical Stellenbosch. Patterns of interface in the neighbourhood should be followed in new developments (without slavishly copying details). Traditional patterns and elements of interface which could be reinterpreted in a modern way, depending on the context, include:

- uncovered, raised stoeps, with stairs leading to the entrance and built-in benches at each end;
- verandahs and balconies (with modern decoration);

- front gardens with appropriate walls, fences or other boundary elements
- in commercial buildings, colonnades over the pavement.

***Do not remove historical elements of interface from existing buildings.***



### Boundary definition: walls, fences and gates

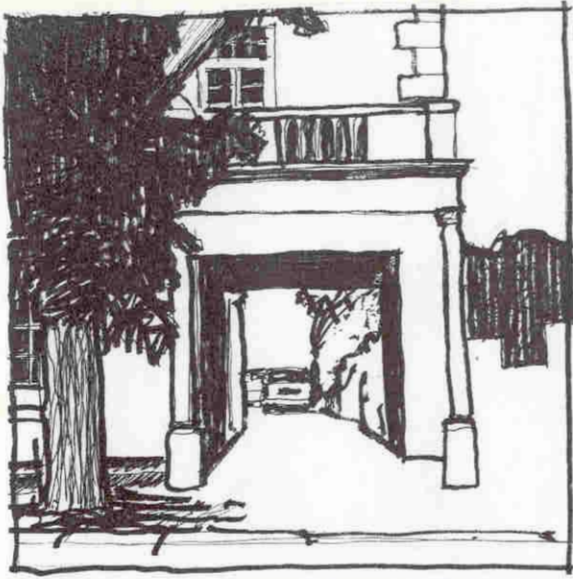
There are many traditional ways to define the street boundary in Stellenbosch, so there is considerable leeway in the design of new boundary elements. Traditional elements which can be reinterpreted in a modern idiom include:

- plastered, whitewashed “werf” walls with piers and copings — which vary from very simple to ornate and curvilinear in style
- low walls with piers and cast iron railings
- simple painted timber or wire fences
- hedges.

Avoid the following if visible from the street:

- any form of precast concrete
- facebrick or unpainted concrete block
- high walls which obscure the building
- removal of existing historical boundary elements (if an opening for vehicular access is required, remove the minimum length possible and make good with piers and gates).





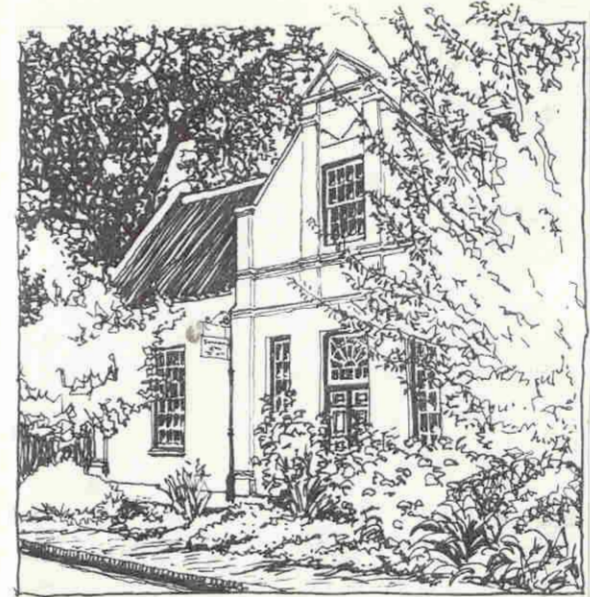
### Parking

Off-street parking should generally not be provided in front of historical buildings if it involves the demolition of elements such as stoeps or verandahs, the destruction of front gardens by paving or the erection of structures which would obscure the facade. If visible from the street, parking should preferably be screened with planting. If possible, it should be behind the building or in a courtyard. Owners in the same block could cooperate in providing shared parking areas behind perimeter buildings.



### Covered ways to rear courtyards

The provision of access to the rear of the site by arched openings through or between buildings is a useful Stellenbosch tradition. Covered ways can serve as entrances to additional buildings behind the main building, or provide access to courtyards used as gardens or for parking purposes.

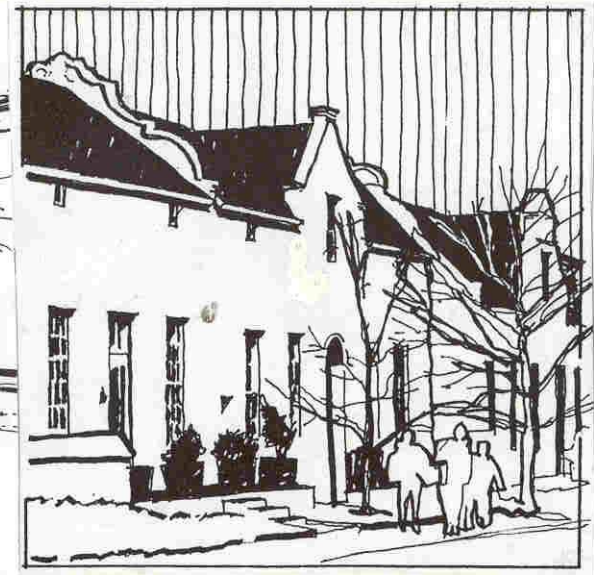
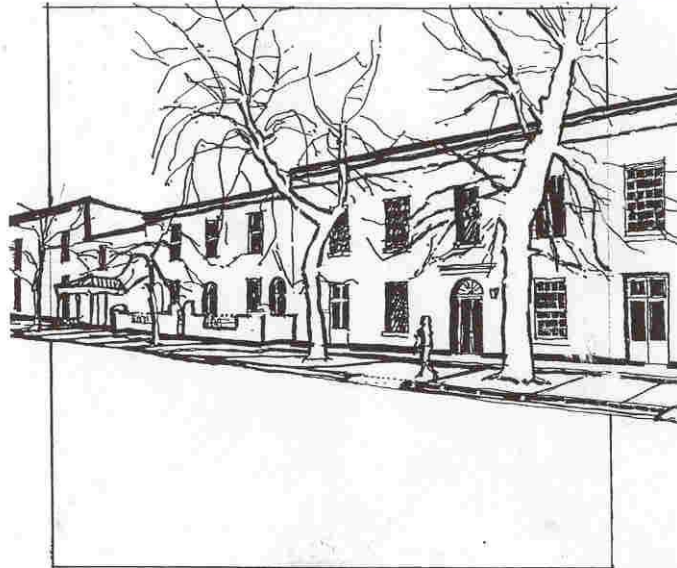
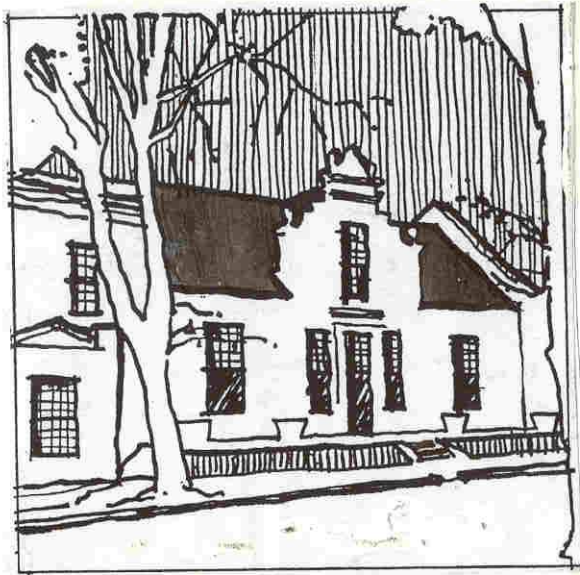


### Gardens

Existing gardens should be maintained and traditional patterns of layout and planting respected.

Gardens, even if relatively narrow, can provide screening to soften the effect of existing unsympathetic buildings or parking areas. With traditional boundary elements, gardens can re-introduce a sense of continuity in a street with modern interventions.





### Scale and proportion of buildings

The buildings in the historical core are generally small-scaled. They provide the background for public and institutional buildings, which are larger and more imposing. Modern commercial and residential buildings should continue this pattern, respecting the dominance of public buildings as the social focus of the village.

### Height

Historical buildings in Stellenbosch are seldom higher than two storeys. The height of new infill buildings should not vary by more than 10% from the height of historical buildings in the vicinity.

With careful design, greater height can be acceptable towards the rear of the site, with the extra floors are set back from the facade so that they are not visible from the street.

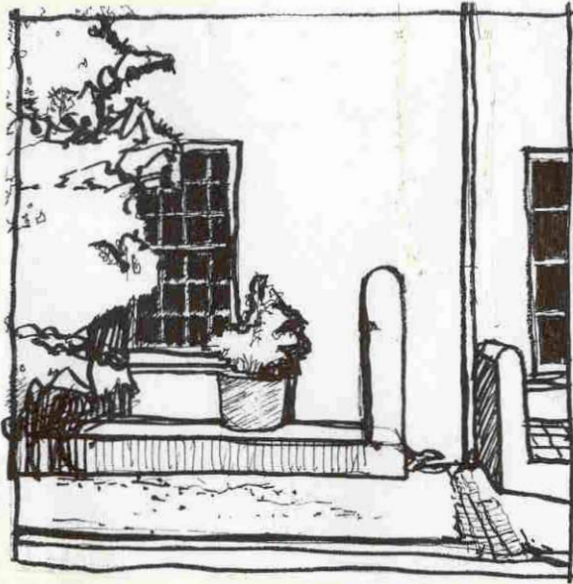
### Length of facades

The length of historical buildings is proportional to their height. If a new building is considerably longer than the buildings in the area (e.g. if even are consolidated), the facade should be articulated to form bays of an appropriate length.

### Proportion of walls to openings

Stellenbosch has a "walled architecture", in which apertures are read as interruptions in the continuous, solid surface of the walls. The openings themselves are vertically-proportioned (ie. taller than they are broad). It is essential that these relationships between solid and void, and length and height, are respected in new buildings and additions to existing buildings in the historical core.





### Materials and finishes

Building materials used in the historical core should be compatible with traditional materials in terms of scale, colour and texture. Materials which should be avoided (or used only with great sensitivity) include:

- facebrick, textured concrete blocks, exposed aggregate concrete, unpainted prefabricated concrete, "Mediterranean" textured plaster;
- large profile roof sheeting, steel tiles, metal cladding.



### Colour

Colour should be used judiciously in the historical core. Prior to the Victorian era buildings were limewashed. Natural pigments were frequently added to the lime to give subdued pastel tints (usually in earth shades) which were less blinding in sunlight. Woodwork was almost invariably painted green and white. The Victorians introduced a much wider colour palette. In restoration projects, where there is evidence of the original colours they should be reinstated. In most other cases, it is preferable to use white or pale tints within the range of colours used in the immediate area.



### Architectural details and decoration

Period detailing and decoration (gables, pediments, plaster mouldings, cast iron, timber fretwork, etc) is specific to its era. Decoration and detailing on existing buildings should be retained and maintained, but should not be exactly copied in modern buildings and extensions. Indiscriminate use of these elements leads to falsification and *pastiche* which detracts from the value of the originals. The "Post-modern" use of exaggerated, over-scaled architectural elements should also be avoided. It is preferable to reinterpret historical detailing and decoration in an understated, modern idiom which is appropriate to the present.

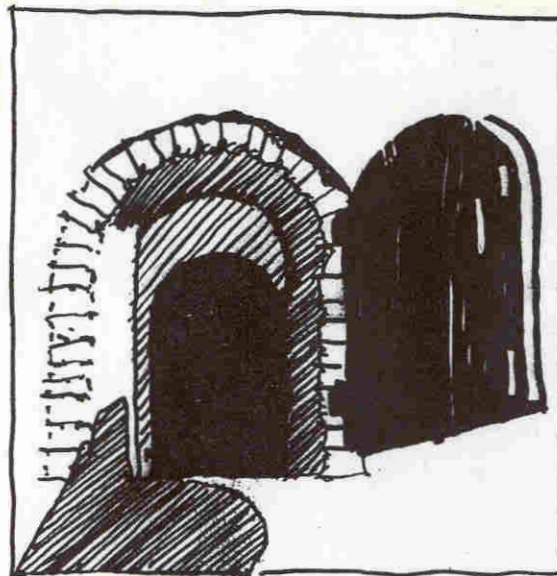




### Signage

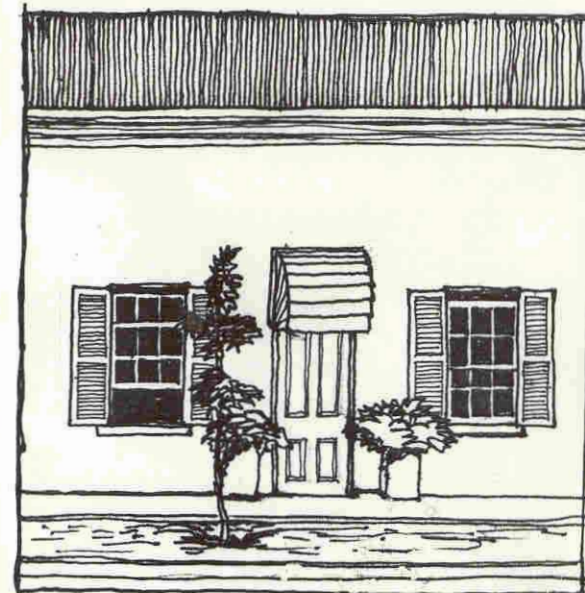
Signage in the historical core should be unobtrusive and compatible with character of the building. Signs should be scaled in proportion to the building and should not obscure architectural elements. Colours and typefaces which are appropriate to the period, or which are simple and inconspicuous, should be used. Particular care must be taken in erecting signage on houses which have been converted to commercial use.

Simple, self-illuminated signs or subdued white lighting is acceptable. Neon should be avoided or used with great caution.



### Security

The use of unobtrusive security systems (such as alarms) is recommended for historical buildings. If burglar bars are essential, they should be installed on the inside of the window, where they are less visible, and should be designed to line up with the glazing bars. Shutters are an excellent and appropriate means of securing windows, as well as providing climatic control. Security gates should be avoided, but if unavoidable they should be painted in the same colour as the door.



### Modern fixtures on historical buildings

Modern fixtures such as TV antennae, satellite dishes, air conditioning, awnings, roof lights and solar heating panels should preferably be installed where they are not visible from the street.



## 9. THE WAY FORWARD

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To enable the implementation of a successful **Conservation Strategy** for Stellenbosch, the present brief for the formulation of Development Guidelines must be understood in the context of broader policy objectives.

### THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

As stated at the beginning of the report, the brief for this study was to formulate guidelines for development in the Historical Core.

In Section 7, guidelines are given for the strategic actions necessary to restore the environmental quality of several precincts in the proposed conservation area. It is proposed that these guidelines be incorporated into Design Frameworks for these precincts, which will direct and guide both public and private actions.

General guidelines are formulated in Section 8, which provide the local authority, property owners, developers and professional consultants with a range of options for the conservation and design of buildings and elements in the Historical Core.

The role of the Guidelines is:

- to provide the local authority, property owners, developers and professionals with information about the traditional patterns of place-making, historical architecture and environmental features which give Stellenbosch its special character;

- to give guidance about appropriate conservation and development actions in the proposed conservation area;
- to assist the Municipality's Department of Planning and Development and its advisory committee to make consistent decisions about applications affecting the conservation area;
- to guide the Council in the development of key sites in the Historical Core (diagram 8) .

Development Guidelines are an important educational "*tool*" which will contribute to the conservation and future development of the historical core. Guidelines encourage appropriate action. However, they cannot stand alone. They need to be part of an integrated strategy for the conservation and development of the Historical Core, which should include adequate development control measures and urban design frameworks.

### THE NEED FOR AN INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

As was stated in Section 5, an integrated strategy is necessary to ensure that the historical character of Stellenbosch is retained in the long term. There is increasing development pressure in the town, and the historical core in particular, and resources are scarce. To be really effective, conservation must be recognised as a *form of development* which will provide benefits for the town as a whole (e.g. through increased tourism and the revenue and jobs it brings, and the improvement of the quality of the environment of the inhabitants), as well as for individual and

corporate property owners. A successful strategy for conservation and development combines education (for which the guidelines are a key tool), protection (through adequate legislative controls), incentives to encourage conservation and positive development, and proactive measures (involving both public investment and private development).

### PROPOSED CONSERVATION STRATEGY

It is recommended that the Stellenbosch Municipality consider the implementation of the following components of a Conservation Strategy:

#### 1. Policy for Conservation and Development: The preparation of Urban Design Frameworks

Policies for the conservation and development of the historical core should be formulated and, after a process of public consultation, adopted by the Council and publicised.

A key component of the Policy for the conservation and development of the Historical Core is an **Urban Design Framework**. This should operate at a range of scales, and should include:

- A Public Spatial Framework which will guide the development of:
  - Historical public spaces
  - New civic spaces
  - Key sites
- An Urban Design Manual, including designs for public landscaping, signage and street furniture.

The Public Spatial Framework will focus on the public realm, ie. public squares, streets, public buildings and "green" spaces such as parks and the river. An important component will be an appraisal of the potential uses and restoration of historical spaces and patterns, as well as potential new public urban spaces.

The importance of restoring historical public spaces to their former distinction should be recognised. These are:

- The Braak
- Meulplein
- Leerlooiersplein
- The Bergzicht "werf" and Van Der Stel sports fields
- The Drostdy site as a civic square.

It has already been recommended that an Urban Design Framework be prepared for each of these five sites, to guide and encourage both public and private investment in the restoration process.

Urban Design Frameworks should also be prepared for the development of the following new public spaces:

- Du Toit station precinct
- Bloemhof site
- The Town Hall precinct.

The following are also essential components of the Policy Framework for conservation and development of the Historical Core:

- A Traffic Management Plan, including:
  - public parking (including provision for tour busses)
  - traffic control
  - signage policy
  - the development of safe, pleasant cycle networks and pedestrian pathways.
- The identification of appropriate areas outside the Historical Core for the possible decentralisation of commercial development, in order to relieve the pressure on the Historical Core.

## 2. Essential Actions

### *Protection of the Conservation Area*

In Section 5 it was recommended that the Historical Core (as delineated in Diagram 6) should be designated as a Conservation Area under the National Monuments Act (or the new National Heritage Resources Act, which is currently being drafted). As demarcated, this core incorporates most of the buildings, public spaces and streets of historical and cultural interest in Stellenbosch. The Council should approach the National Monuments Council about the steps to be taken for this legislative protection to be applied.

The surrounding Special Area should be included in the conservation area and/or zoned as a "Special Area" under the Zoning Scheme (this is an overlay on other zoning, which remain in place). The Special Area also contains particular buildings of interest, and provides the context for the historical core.

### *By-laws or Building Regulations for the conservation area*

The Development Guidelines are advisory: appropriate *controls* should be introduced to manage development in the conservation area. Section 18 of National Monuments Act makes provision for the publication of by-laws "safeguarding conservation areas from damage, disfigurement, alteration, destruction or defilement". Alternatively, suitable controls can be introduced as part of the Zoning Scheme if the conservation area is designated a "Special Zone".

By-laws or regulations should specify that the special consent of the Council is required for any building work in the conservation area (including minor works which would normally not require Council approval), and establish the procedures for plans approval (see below). They should be explicit about permissible:

- building 'envelopes'
- maximum heights of buildings, platforms, stoeps and boundary walls
- proportions of openings
- setbacks
- materials
- finishes and colours.

### *Incentives for conservation*

The introduction of a system of incentives for conservation, in the form of relaxation or waivers of other Zoning Scheme requirements, and specific rates rebates (ie. for a specified period of time) for certain categories of conservation work, should also be considered.



### **Updating of Conservation Survey**

The survey of buildings in the Historical Core should be updated as a matter of urgency. An up-to-date catalogue (preferably in the form of a computerised data base with accompanying maps) is an invaluable tool for both education and conservation and development planning. It will also enable the Department of Development and Planning at the Stellenbosch Municipality to swiftly detect the context of buildings which are the subject of applications and assess the likely effect on the conservation area.

A thorough and up-to-date survey contributes to:

- the identification and assessment of conservation-worthy sites and buildings for additional legislative protection under the National Monuments Act; this may include the reassessment of existing protections (in consultation with the NMC);
- precise mapping of aspects such as age, significance, building type, use, height and condition of buildings;
- understanding by owners and developers of the controls applicable to particular sites;
- understanding of the period style, or type of architectural solution appropriate to a site;
- giving a basis for the application to UNESCO for the declaration of a World Heritage Site.

### **Approval Procedures**

The Special Consent of the Council should be required for any work in the conservation area. The present system, whereby proposals are submitted to an advisory committee which makes recommendations to Council should be continued. Several recommendations regarding the procedures to be followed are set out below.

#### *Appointment and functioning of Advisory Committee*

Scrutiny of the design and conservation-related aspects of plans is presently the responsibility of the Aesthetics and Planning Committee of the Department of Planning and Development.

It is recommended that a more appropriate name for this Committee would be the *Conservation Area Committee* or the *Historical Core Committee*, which more accurately reflects its role with respect to conservation. The mandate of the body and its modus operandi should be set out in the regulations and/or by-laws for the conservation area.

The approval process should be seen as fair and transparent. Public nominations for members of the Committee should be invited by press advertisements and notices at public buildings. In appointing members, the Council should ensure that it is sufficiently representative and includes the necessary professional competence.

The Committee should consist of professionals in the fields of architectural conservation, urban design, urban planning, and archaeology, as well

as representatives of the community and, where appropriate, sectoral interests (such as the Chamber of Commerce). The Council should consider remunerating professionals for the time they spend on Committee meetings.

If possible, the number of persons serving on the Committee should be reduced, to facilitate efficient decision-making and streamline the process for applicants.

#### *Plans Approval Procedures*

The recommended procedure for plans approval is as follows:

- Applicants should be encouraged to approach the Committee at the earliest possible stage to discuss the proposals.
- Sketch plans should be submitted for approval in principle before final drawings are prepared.
- Sufficient information should be submitted to indicate clearly the nature of any existing building/s on the site, the context and the effect of the proposals on the immediate environment of the property. Depending on the nature and scale of the proposal, a scale model with the neighbouring buildings included, or a super-imposition of the proposal on a photograph, showing the street facades, may be required.
- Professionals doing design work in the Historical Core should either be registered Architects or Architectural Technicians with a B-Tech (or equal qualification) and with a proven record of design in sensitive areas.

- Closed competitions or proposal calls should be introduced for projects on public land or which are publicly-funded. It is important that only experienced professionals in the field of architecture be allowed to work in particularly sensitive areas (such as the Key Sites).
- The Committee must co-ordinate plans scrutiny procedures and issues with the Plans Committee of the National Monuments Council, especially concerning National Monuments (over which NMC has final jurisdiction). Ideally, a representative of the NMC should be a member of the conservation area Committee.
- In certain cases, sufficient time must be allowed before building commences for archaeological investigation of the site. This will enable excavation and recovery of material, or avoidance of archaeological sites by design revision.
- Sites should be inspected after approval to ensure that work is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

#### ***Repeal of the Zoning Scheme and Transfer of Development Rights***

The problems associated with the incompatibility of developments rights under the Zoning Scheme and the existing historical environment were discussed in Section 6. Under Provincial planning legislation, all zoning rights will fall away early next century and properties will then be deemed to be zoned in accordance with existing development and use. However, in the meantime

it is recommended that the implications of repealing the Zoning Scheme in the proposed conservation area should be assessed.

As owners could potentially claim compensation for the loss of existing development rights if this is done, *Transfer of Development Rights* should be considered. For example, as less bulk would be permitted in the conservation area than is currently the case, suitable land would have to be identified outside the Historical Core to which owners could transfer the surplus.

#### ***Nomination as World Heritage Site***

It is recommended that the Council investigate the possible nomination of the historical core of Stellenbosch (or a specific part of it, such as Dorp Street) as a World Heritage Site.

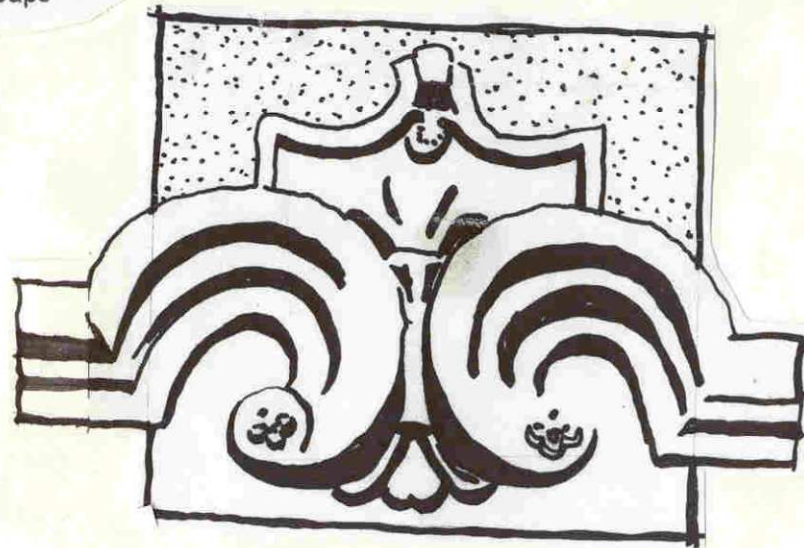
World Heritage Site status would increase awareness of the value of the architectural heritage of Stellenbosch and place it on the international tourist map. Very importantly, it would also add momentum to the proposed Conservation Strategy. The implementation of the strategy will be essential for such an application to succeed.

The Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism is the authority responsible for coordinating South Africa's moves towards becoming a signatory to the World Heritage Convention. The DEAT should be approached regarding the requirements for Stellenbosch to be included in the preliminary list of potential World Heritage Sites, which will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO after the convention is signed.

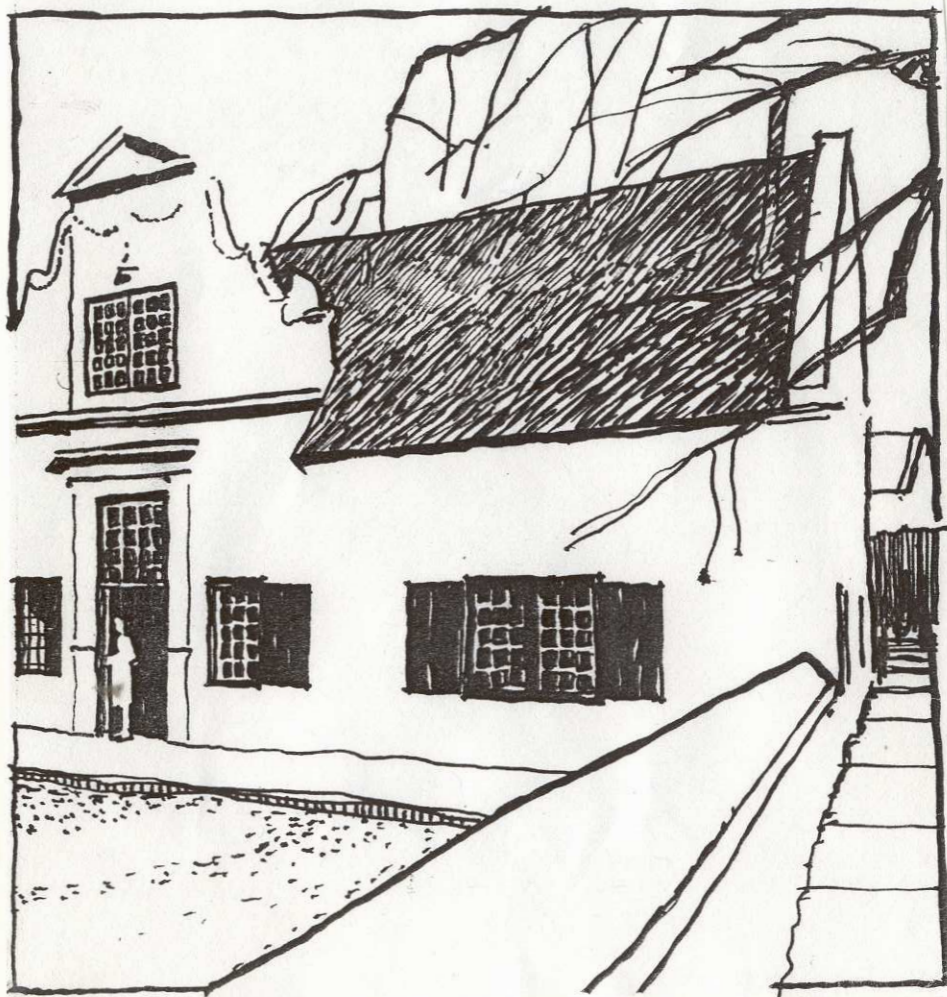


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*The Burgher House, on the Braak*

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## PROJECT TEAM

- Martin Kruger, Pedro Roos, Gus Gerneke, Penny Pistorius, Michael Borgstrom, Nicky Behrens, Andre Gabriel and Marco Bezzoli.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

- Illustrations not by the project team are acknowledged on the relevant page.



