

## JAMESTOWN

**Jamestown** would once have strongly resembled an the archetypal Cape Mission Settlement: a primary street running parallel to a river course; a church occupying a prominent position; cottages lining the road; long, narrow farming allotments running between each cottage and the river course; and an agricultural and wilderness backdrop to the whole.

Unfortunately in Jamestown, gentrification has meant that only the long farming allotments are still clearly legible in the townscape. The area south of Webersvallei Road has been entirely developed, with a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban pattern of streets compromising any village character that remains. The interface with the R44 has also been developed in an insensitive manner, with a "strip mall" and car outlets creating a buffer between the R44 and the historic village. More worryingly, development has begun to encroach to the north of Webersvallei Road, threatening the narrow farming allotments that run down towards the Blaauwklippen River – these being the last townscape element/settlement pattern that visually and symbolically connects Jamestown to the other 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Mission Settlements at the Cape.

The farming allotments are seen to be the most significant element within Jamestown, spatially and symbolically connecting it to the grouping of Mission Settlements, which are of significance in the history of the Cape and the Province. Webersvallei Road and the first row of plots facing it is included in the townscape character area: it is here that the key community and institutional sites are located (the church – sadly the general store was demolished during the course of this fieldwork), and where the historic scale of the cottages, and their relationship to the agricultural allotments, can still be discerned.

**MAIN AIM:** ENHANCE (MANAGE) - The main aim of the proposed Special Area for Jamestown is not to protect each and every structure (aside from those that have been identified as having intrinsic heritage significance) but rather to preserve those character-giving elements that extend beyond each individual property, and are common to the village as a whole. Special characteristic elements and features include the allotment gardens, the church, and the modest scale of the historic dwellings along Webersvallei Road.

**MAIN VALUE:** HISTORICAL – The appropriate use and renewal of heritage features is critical for their preservation. Any development that will result in the loss of the remaining agricultural plots or remnant historic buildings, will completely undermine the heritage value of this townscape unit.

**DEVIATED LAND USE/USES THAT WILL LIKELY ERODE TOWNSCAPE CHARACTER:** Over-scaled private dwellings (including multi-storey residential structures), change in land use to non-residential uses, construction on the farming/gardening allotments, cluttered properties, gated residential estates, high and solid boundary treatments, large parking lots, isolated shopping centres or petrol stations.

### A ECOLOGICAL

**Significance:** *The layout of Jamestown is orientated towards the Blaauwklippen River, that edges the allotment-style "water erf" properties.*

**COMPONENTS:** Stream course.

#### Development Criteria:

- Maintain ecological support areas (here associated with Blaauwklippen River).

### B AESTHETIC

**Significance:** *The remaining place-making elements present in the village are the long, narrow agricultural plots, the church and the scale of the historic houses facing Webersvallei Road. Importantly, it includes the visually clear to the mountains beyond the church and the cultivated slope leading down to the river, which provide visual containment and an agricultural context to the village as a whole.*

**COMPONENTS: Social Foci, Grain (Consolidation, Subdivision, Density and Coverage), Streets, Planting Patterns, Stream Course, Interface between Streets and Buildings:** *Boundary Treatments, Parking, Setbacks, Heights, Materials, Colour and Architectural Detail, Security and Modern Fixes, Street Elements.*

**Public Spaces and Social Foci:**

- The character of the Rhenish Mission Church and its siting within an open area at the top of Webersvallei Road must be respected. Negative impacts on its visual-spatial relationship (including to the broader setting) must be avoided.
- The agricultural allotments and church structure, as well as the pattern of the historic cottages (established by street and building interface, building setback, scale and form) have heightened heritage significance as the remnant elements of the historic settlement. Rezoning of the agricultural strip, and over-scaled new development between historic cottages should not be allowed.

**Grain (Consolidation, Subdivision, Density and Coverage):**

- The pattern of subdivision of narrow strips of agricultural land are associated with village houses, and are part of an increasingly rare typology still evident in Jamestown. The consolidation or subdivision of land units will impact the "grain" of the neighbourhood. Therefore, the potential impact on the character of the neighbourhood must be carefully considered before consolidation or subdivision is approved.
- Densification should only be contemplated where it respects the historical patterns of subdivision. The prevailing pattern of subdivision consists of a rhythm of long, thin, rectangular plots with their shorter sides facing the street edge (residential lots) and the stream course (agricultural lots).

**Streets and Infrastructure:**

- While the streets in Jamestown have been "engineered", they remain fairly simple, and adhere to a rectilinear grid. This should be retained and reinforced: the use of traffic circles, signalled interchanges and so on is inappropriate in this environment.
- The scale of roads (especially those that align with historic routes) should be the minimum possible. Insensitive, over-engineered, hard elements can compromise the character of a townscape as a whole.
- Prevent over-engineered and insensitive infrastructural upgrades within historical settlements.
- Existing footpaths and routes for walking, hiking, running and cycling should be reinforced and extended where possible.

**Planting Patterns:**

- The narrow strips of agricultural land associated with the original village are part of an increasingly rare typology. No new development should be permitted on these productive land units, especially in the form of permanent built structures that are unrelated to the agricultural use.
- The felling of mature exotic or indigenous trees within residential areas should be avoided. Instead continuous tree canopies and longer-term replacement planting with suitable species should be encouraged. While "gardens" are not a characteristic feature of the historic cottages in Jamestown, most historic buildings are surrounded by mature trees.
- Many of the strongest planting patterns that contribute to the historic character of landscape and townscape units, are within road reserves and on public land. A maintenance and (re)planting plan should be developed. Trees must be regularly maintained.

**Stream Course:**

- The role of water as a structuring system within the settlement must be respected. The Blaauwkippen River is a significant element in the historic agricultural and gardening activities. Water often serves as a place-making and social element within the settlement fabric, and this role should be preserved and strengthened where possible.

**Interface between Streets and Buildings:**

- The interface between streets and buildings is a key character-giving component of the Special Area, abutting Webersvallei Road. Pattern of interface should be followed/interpreted in new infill buildings, and reinforced when re-developing existing properties.
- Where historical fabric and elements make up a street interface, they must be conserved.
- Ensure that new buildings within the Special Area are generally in sympathy with the scale, massing, layout and idiom of the surrounding buildings.
  - **Boundary Treatments:** While a range of boundary treatments are evident within Jamestown (some houses have no boundary enclosure), high and solid walls that obscure views to buildings should not be permitted, as well as pre-cast concrete fencing, exposed blockwork, and facebrick walling. Historic boundary elements must be preserved as far as possible.
  - **Parking:** Off-street parking should not be located in front of historical structures, but should rather be located alongside or behind the structure. Parking areas and structures should preferably be screened with planting. The Municipality should not unreasonably withhold relief for on-site parking departures where existing requirements will likely result in a degradation of the character of the Special Area.
  - **Setbacks:** While there is no prevailing setback of buildings from street edge within Jamestown, the historic cottages typically abut the street edge quite directly, with only a small setback. New buildings should be set back the same distance as the existing historical buildings to either side (and within the streetscape as a whole), and the Municipality should not unreasonably withhold relief for setback departures, or may impose measures more restrictive than those that may typically apply within the applicable zoning category, where existing requirements will likely result in a degradation of the pattern and character of the Special Area. An extension to the side of an historic building should be set back slightly from the original façade.
  - **Heights:** Buildings within Jamestown are seldom higher than one storey. New buildings should look to adhere to the same heights as the existing historical buildings to either side (and within the streetscape as a whole). Greater height may be acceptable towards the rear of the site, when not visible from the street edge. The Municipality should not unreasonably withhold relief for height departures, or may impose measures more restrictive than those that may typically apply within the applicable zoning category, where existing requirements will likely result in a degradation of the pattern and character of the Special Area.
  - **Materials, Colour and Architectural Detail:** Building materials should be compatible with traditional materials in terms of scale, colour and texture. Historical architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced wherever possible, and alterations that seek to copy an earlier style should be avoided. Rather, the underpinning principle should be that new additions and new buildings must be sympathetic to the architectural character of the Special Area, but should also be of their own time.
  - **Security and Modern Fixes:** The use of unobtrusive security systems on historic buildings is encouraged: beams and shutters are preferable to burglar bars, trellidoors and security gates. If gates and bars are unavoidable, they should be painted the same colour as the element they enclose. Satellite dishes, airconditioning condensers, roof windows and solar panels should preferably be installed where they are not visible from the street. Solar panels should be mounted flush with the roof, rather than having their own framing element. Where electric fencing is unavoidable, a recessive colour for the fittings must be selected. Barbed wire, spikes (except where part of the fencing) and similar should not be permitted along the street frontage within the Special Area.
  - **Street Elements:** Street lighting and street furniture (benches, bins, bollards and so on) should be understated, modern (they should not be pseudo-historical) and neutral in colour and form. Street kerbs, raised zebra-crossings, speed bumps, street signs and so on should be the minimum possible to meet safety requirements, and should again be neutral.

## **C HISTORIC/ARCHITECTURAL**

**Significance:** *The churches and several cottages have heritage significance.*

**Development opportunities in Jamestown fall into 4 categories: (1) Opportunities for conservation of historic buildings and elements of heritage significance; (2) Opportunities for alterations and additions to historical buildings and elements of heritage significance; (3) Opportunities for new structures within environments of historical significance; and (4) Opportunities to redevelop intrusive buildings, elements and sites in order to better reflect the character-giving elements of Jamestown.**

### **Development Criteria:**

#### **Opportunities for conservation of historic buildings and elements of heritage significance:**

- Work on historic buildings and elements of historic significance should only be undertaken by professionals and builders/tradesmen who are sufficiently trained and experienced. Heritage expertise should be sought: it is in the interest of the property owners to have their plans prepared by advisors who have recognised experience and standing in their field of heritage conservation.
- Where the historic function or use of a building is still intact, the function has heritage value and should be protected. Where a new use is sought, every effort should be made to find a use that is compatible with the heritage significance of the element/site, and will require the minimum extent of alteration to historic fabric.
- Distinguishing original features, examples of craftsmanship and so on should not be falsified, destroyed or removed. These elements should be repaired rather than replaced as far as is possible.
- Where repair necessitates replacement, the replacement should be the minimum necessary, and the new material should match that being replaced in composition, design, colour, texture and other visual qualities, but its newness should be apparent on close inspection (its age should not be faked). Traditional materials should be used in repair work.

#### **Opportunities for alterations and additions to historical buildings and elements of heritage significance:**

- The basic plan of the historic core of the building should always be retained. Where internal walls are removed, the extent of removal should be the minimum necessary and ribs should be retained to reflect the historic layout of spaces.
- Any intervention should be the minimum necessary to meet the new requirements, reversible when possible, and designed not to prejudice future interventions and/or restoration. For instance, if the addition or alteration were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic structure would remain intact.
- Alterations and additions to conservation-worthy structures and elements should be sympathetic to their architectural character and period detailing. Distinguish old from new but ensure visual harmony between historical fabric and new interventions in terms of appropriate scale, massing, form and architectural treatment, without directly copying these details.

#### **Opportunities for new structures within environments of historical significance:**

- New structures should respect and respond to traditional settlement patterns and siting by considering the entire Special Area as the component of significance. This includes its spatial structure, layout, scale, massing, hierarchy, alignments, access, and landscaping setting. Any development that departs from the inherent character of the Special Area should be discouraged.
- Designers of new structures must have an understanding of the context, traditional patterns of place-making and historical elements that are characteristic of the Special Area. New elements must respond to and interpret these character-giving aspects of the neighbourhood.
- Contemporary designs for infill buildings should not be discouraged, provided they do not destroy significant fabric and are compatible with the size, scale, material, layout and architectural character of the property and Special Area.

#### **Opportunities to redevelop intrusive buildings, elements and sites in order to better reflect the character-giving elements of Jamestown:**

- Wherever possible, existing buildings that are intrusive because their scale, style, materials or siting departs from the strong character-giving patterns of the Special Area should be redeveloped in order to minimize their disruptive effect. This can be done gradually as part of general maintenance – for instance repainting in more

sympathetic colours, or replacing mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century roof tiles with corrugated sheeting or “finer” roof tiles.

- Encourage mitigation measures (for instance use of vegetation) to “embed” existing intrusive elements and structures within the townscape. This includes the modern houses that have been developed within the agricultural “zone”, to the north of Webersvallei Road.

#### **D SOCIAL**

**Significance:** *Established community, with deep roots within the village.*

#### **Development Criteria:**

- Encourage and support the establishment of local heritage conservation bodies, particularly within Special Areas, as is envisioned in the National Heritage Resources Act. Such bodies can assist with heritage resource identification, assessment and decision-making.
- Proposed development should recognise the relationship of communities to their land and communal facilities. Any development proposal should show a clear understanding of the ‘intangible’<sup>4</sup> features and values of these sites.

#### **E ECONOMIC**

**Significance:** *Jamestown comprises a desirable residential area within close proximity to the Historic Core of Stellenbosch.*

#### **Development Criteria:**

- Prevent gentrification from threatening the distinctiveness of this unique settlement within the Stellenbosch winelands.

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<sup>4</sup> This study is limited to the compilation of a tangible heritage inventory. A formally commissioned intangible heritage study is encouraged, and therefore we only have limited capacity to operate within this principle and merely point to these associations encountered whilst out in the field and during public engagement. Please refer to the online map for a reference to these sites.