

MOSTERTSDRIFT

Mostertsdrift comprises many older, Victorian-era villa structures, as well as modernist and 21st century houses. The suburb was laid out in 1903, and the influence of the turn-of-the-century 'Garden City' approach to urban expansion is clear in its gridded layout, in the tree-lined streets that run through it, and in the expansive street-facing gardens that are so characteristic of the area. It remains an early, intact example of a 'proto-suburb' within the municipality. Its clear layout and 'openness' ensures a clear and sensitive transition between the built-up areas within the historic core of Stellenbosch and the unique landscape units of Jonkershoek.

Please also refer to the Kruger Roos report for guidelines within the historic core of Stellenbosch. (Kruger Roos, Stellenbosch Conservation Strategy: Development Guidelines, July 1997).

MAIN AIM: ENHANCE (MANAGE) - The main aim of the proposed Special Area for Mostertsdrift 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 largely common to the neighbourhood as a whole, or to specific parts of it. The intention is to improve land parcels in the area by strengthening or reinforcing these characteristic elements and features, most importantly the treelined avenues and positive, garden interfaces between building and street edge. This goes hand-in-hand with the protection of structures of historic significance, but the guidelines also look to ensure that new development remains in character with the Special Area as a whole.

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 avenues of trees, low-density residential environment, or compromise the interface between structures and the street, will threaten 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, cluttered properties, gated residential estates, high and solid boundary treatments, large parking lots, isolated shopping centre or petrol station.

A ECOLOGICAL

Significance: *The Mostertsdrift area is flanked to the north and south by two places of high ecological importance: JS Marais park to the north, and the Eerste River to the south.*

COMPONENTS: Pathways along the Eerste River, Mill Stream, JS Marais Park.

Development Criteria:

- Maintain ecological support areas (here associated with the Eerste River corridor and Mill Stream as well as JS Marais Park).

B AESTHETIC

Significance: *The strong, place-making elements present in the neighbourhood give this area its unique character. These include elements such as the gridded pattern of streets and subdivisions, the long, tree-lined avenues, and the presence of front gardens (often with mature trees) located between the street edge and the houses themselves.*

COMPONENTS: Grain (Consolidation, Subdivision, Density and Coverage), Street Grid, Tree-lined Avenues, Leivoor, Interface between Streets and Buildings: Verges/Pavements, Boundary Treatments, Gardens, Parking, Setbacks, Heights, Materials, Colour and Architectural Detail, Security and Modern Fixes, Street Elements.

Grain (Consolidation, Subdivision, Density and Coverage):

- The 1903 pattern of subdivision of Mostertsdrift still underpins the area, and is still highly evident. The consolidation or subdivision of land units may 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. For instance, the prevailing pattern of subdivision consists of a rhythm of long, thin, rectangular plots with their shorter sides facing the street edge. Subdivision that occurs within the depth of the plot (leaving the street-facing edge intact), and sharing a carriage-way-crossing and driveway between subdivided portions, would have lesser impact on the character of the neighbourhood.

Street Grid:

- The rectilinear street grid that goes hand-in-hand with the pattern of subdivision is characteristic of Mostertsdrift. It should be retained and reinforced, and the use of traffic circles is inappropriate in this environment.
- The scale of roads (especially those that align with historic wagon routes) should be the minimum possible. Insensitive, over-engineered, hard elements can compromise the character of a townscape as a whole.

Tree-lined Avenues:

- Traditional planting patterns should be protected by ensuring that existing tree alignments are not needlessly destroyed, but reinforced or replaced, thereby enhancing traditional patterns with appropriate species.
- Significant avenues should be protected as a heritage component. There is evidence of avenue planting along all the roads making up the Special Area.
- The felling of mature exotic or indigenous trees within residential areas should be avoided. Instead continuous tree canopies should be encouraged.
- 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.

Leivoor/Millstream:

- The role of water as a structuring system within settlements must be respected, particularly in terms of improving the functioning of leiwater systems. These are significant elements in 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.
- The leivoor/drainage channel, laterite pavement and large oaks aligned alongside Jonkershoek Road are key to the character of this avenue. Any development that threatens this character should be discouraged.
- The Millstream to the north-west of the Special Area is a national monument and must be conserved. The dense planting along this mill stream creates a sense of containment and transition of this area from the Historic Core of Stellenbosch.

Interface between Streets and Buildings:

- The interface between streets and buildings is a key character-giving component of the Special Area. Pattern of interface should be followed/interpreted in new developments, 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.
 - **Verges/Pavements:** The verge areas within Mostertsdrif are largely grassed or planted, with the carriageway crossing often comprising the only hard landscaping between street edge and property. This is important to the character of the area, and at least 70% of the verge of each property should comprise soft landscaping. Along Jonkershoek Road, the wide laterite pavement provides a distinctive edge as well as a pedestrian and bicycle movement route, and should be reinforced and preserved.
 - **Boundary Treatments:** While a range of boundary treatments are evident within Mostertsdrift, high and solid walls that obscure views to the building 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.

- **Gardens:** Front gardens are characteristic of Mostertsdrift, and should be retained. New development should reinforce the pattern of front gardens in this area.
- **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:** The prevailing setback of building from street edge differs for each street within Mostertsdrift. 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 Mostertsdrift are seldom higher than two storeys. 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. Electric fencing must necessarily be installed on the street-facing edge, and where this is unavoidable, a recessive colour for the fittings must be selected. Barbed wire, spikes (except where part of the fencing) and similar are not 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: *Mostertsdrift is "anchored" by the historic Mostertsdrift werf as well as the Mill Stream (both Grade II Provincial Heritage Sites) to the west, and the old Lanzerac gate posts to the east. The avenue of oaks along Jonkershoek Road connects these elements to the north. The residential fabric between these elements comprises many structures of local heritage significance. These are key to establishing the character of the Special Area.*

Development opportunities in Mostertsdrift 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 Mostertsdrift.

Development Criteria:

- References to the first freehold land grants in the area include the old Mostertsdrift farmstead, the Mill Stream (both Grade II Provincial Heritage Sites) as well as the Lanzerac gateposts. The avenue of oaks along Jonkershoek Road also comprises a conservation-worthy historical element. All of these elements pre-date the residential area, informed its layout, and should be conserved.

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.
- Historical layering should be respected and protected – historic additions may have heritage significance in their own right. The removal of later fabric should only occur in instances where it has minimal significance or detracts from significance.
- Alterations and additions to conservation-worthy structures and elements should be sympathetic to their architectural character and period detailing, including their layout, scale, proportion, massing, alignments, access, landscaping and setting. Inappropriate 'modernisation' of conservation-worthy structures and elements should be prevented. Similarly, detailed elements such as windows and doors should respond to the historic elements in composition, proportion, colour, material and other visual qualities, but it should not be a pseudo-historical replica of the older elements. New additions should also be a true reflection to their own time. Heritage expertise should be sought.
- 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 architectural 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 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 Mostertsdrift:

- 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-20th 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.

D SOCIAL

Significance: *Access to the Eerste River Corridor and Mill Stream. Non-motorised and recreational movement routes.*

Development Criteria:

- Ensure physical permeability to communal resources such as rivers and mountains for the enjoyment of all members of the public. Existing footpaths and routes for walking, hiking, running and cycling should be reinforced and extended where possible. Jonkershoek Road, with its wide laterite pavement area, provides an easy pedestrian and cycling link between the Historic Core and the Jonkershoek/eastern residential areas of Stellenbosch. Similarly, the Eerste River corridor has a footpath that connects the neighbourhood to the Historic Core to the west. Better public connection to JS Marais Park should be promoted. Refer to the conservation system of ‘green transitions’ and ‘commonages’ for more detail.
- 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.

E ECONOMIC

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

Development Criteria:

- Promote sensitive urban densification to protect the rural landscape as the main communal asset.
- Prevent over-engineered and insensitive infrastructural upgrades within historical settlements.