

## **RAITHBY**

**Raithby** is the settlement within the Municipality that most strongly retains its characteristic "Mission Town" structure and pattern. Raithby Road runs parallel to the river course, with long, narrow "water erf" plots still occupying the space between them. Houses are set hard up against Raithby Road (and Hendricks Street, which encircles the commonage) and their back gardens are open, cultivated areas leading down to the stream. A steep rise beyond the stream course creates a green, cultivated and agricultural backdrop against which the garden allotments are viewed.

The two key institutional buildings are located above Raithby Road: the Methodist Church and the school. These are set against the gentle rise of the hill beyond. Between these buildings and the houses is the commonage, which is an open area where the community can literally, and spatially, "come together".

It is rare to find a 19<sup>th</sup> century Cape Mission Settlement with such a clear, intact and discernable spatial structure, and therefore this spatial ensemble is deserving of the highest level of heritage protection. Already, gated housing developments are encroaching on the town to the north-east – it is critical that they do not erode the clear structure, pattern and context of the settlement.

The special and rare character of Raithby as a townscape unit is created by the juxtaposition of the riverine corridor, the "water erf" plots, the cottages lining Raithby Road and Hendricks Street, the commonage and the school and church precinct. Importantly, it is also the visually clear rise of the hills above the school and church, and the cultivated slopes on the other side of the river, which provide visual containment and an agricultural context to the settlement as a whole.

**MAIN AIM:** ENHANCE (MANAGE) - The main aim of the proposed Special Area for Raithby 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 "civic core" of church, school and commonage, the modest scale of the dwellings, and the positive, garden interfaces between building and street edge. This goes hand-in-hand with the protection of structures of historic significance, but the guidelines primarily look to ensure that new development remains in character with the Special Area as a whole.

It is noted that Raithby is a developing community, with a need to improve the circumstances of its members. This must be balanced against the sense of history and "rootedness" of the community, and the potential burden to individual property-owners of maintaining a heritage resource. Therefore, the criteria have been judged to be the minimum necessary to maintain the character of the Special Area.

**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 layout of Raithby is orientated towards the stream course, that edges the allotment-style "water erf" properties.*

**COMPONENTS:** **Stream course.**

**Development Criteria:**

- Maintain ecological support areas (here associated with stream course).

**B AESTHETIC**

**Significance:** *The strong, place-making elements present in the village give this area its unique character. These include the stream corridor, the "water erf" plots, the cottages lining Raithby Road and Hendricks Street, the commonage and the school and church precinct. Importantly, it includes the visually clear rise of the hills above the school and church, and the cultivated slopes on the other side of the river, which provide visual containment and an agricultural context to the settlement as a whole.*

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

**Public Spaces and Social Foci:**

- The character of the church and school precincts (established by their werf-like qualities and building pattern) must be respected. Negative impacts on visual-spatial relationships (including the broader setting) and buildings of architectural and historical significance must be avoided.
- The strong character and patterns of the village precinct (established by street and building-patterns, including building setback, scale and form, and dwellings on thin agricultural strips) must be respected. Over-scaled new development should not be allowed.
- Work on public spaces of historic significance should only be undertaken by professionals who are sufficiently trained and experienced.
- The School, Commonage and Church structures and sites have heightened heritage significance as the "civic heart" of the community. Their conservation is important as they perform an anchoring role, and structure the village as a whole.

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

- The pattern of subdivision of narrow strips of agricultural land associated with mission village houses are part of an increasingly rare typology, but is still highly evident in Raithby. The consolidation or subdivision of land units will impact the "grain" of the neighbourhood, and could threaten one of the most intact examples of these types of erven (and their agricultural strips) within the municipality. 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 and the stream course, and with the cottage/dwelling located on the street edge.

**Streets and Infrastructure:**

- The single road that "forks" around the commonage space is characteristic of the village. It should be retained and reinforced, and 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 mission village houses are part of an increasingly rare typology. Preferably no development should be permitted on productive land, 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.
- 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 settlements must be respected. Stream courses are often founding 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.

#### **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 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.
  - **Verges/Pavements:** The verge areas within Raithby are largely grassed or hard-packed earth. This is important to the character of the area, and either planting or laterite pavement should be reinforced and preserved on pavements/verges.
  - **Boundary Treatments:** While a range of boundary treatments are evident within Raithby, 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.
  - **Gardens:** Front gardens are characteristic of Raithby, 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 is highly consistent within Raithby. 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 Raithby 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 church, school and commonage are key to establishing the character of the Special Area. In addition, several cottages have heritage significance.*

**Development opportunities in Raithby 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 Raithby.**

### **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 nibs 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 Raithby:**

- 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 gated villages to the east of Raithby.

**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>3</sup> features and values of these sites.

**E ECONOMIC**

**Significance:** *Mostertsdrift 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.
- Prevent over-engineered and insensitive infrastructural upgrades within historical settlements.
- Encourage integrated planning for extensions and densification, allowing new typologies that reinterpret historic settlement patterns. Inappropriate suburban and affordable housing, that does not follow the massing and integrity of the settlement pattern as a whole, should be discouraged.

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<sup>3</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.