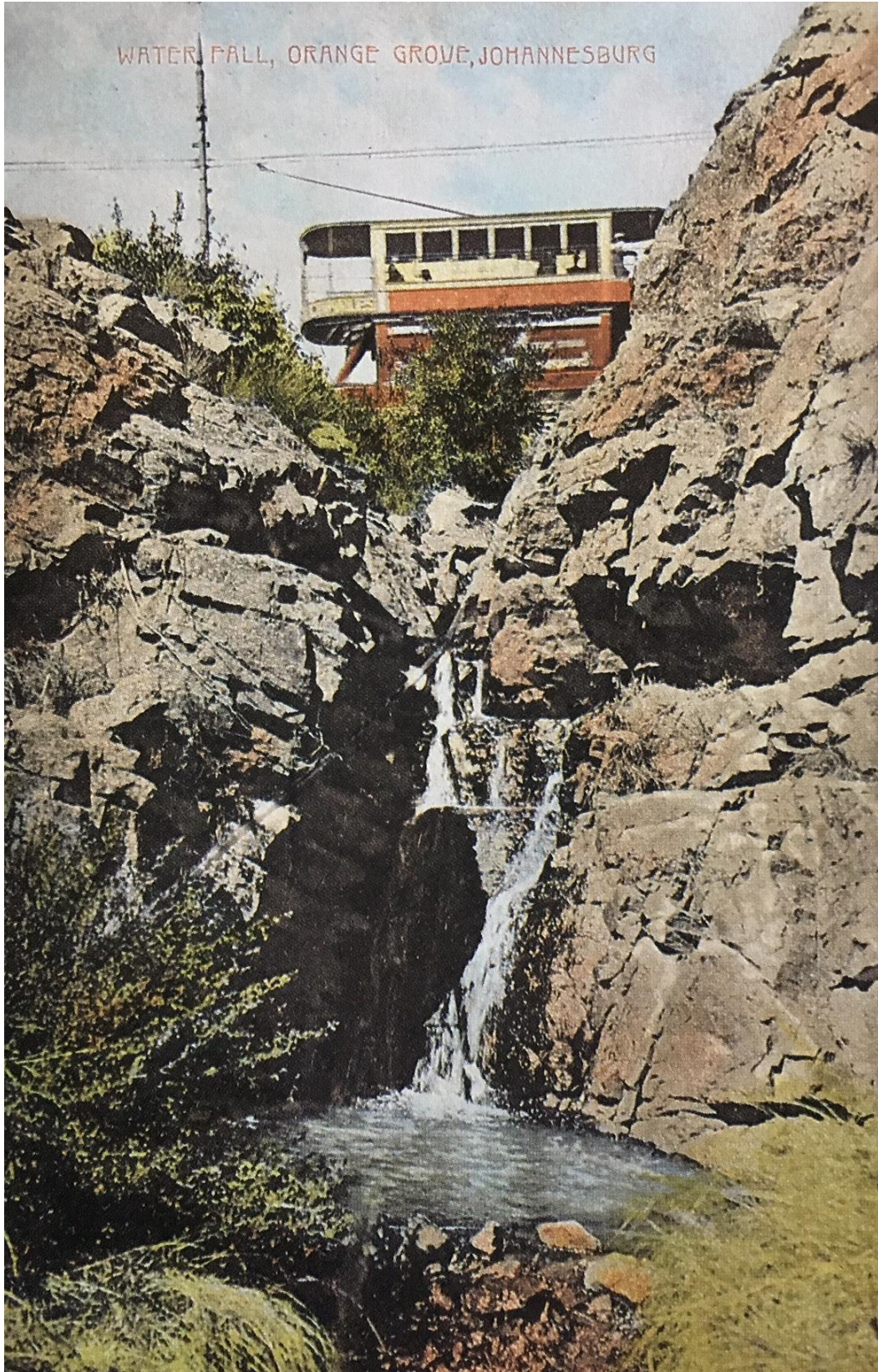


Heritage Study of the Orange Grove Waterfall and Surrounding Area

Author: Brett McDougall



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1. Purpose of the Study

This heritage study was commissioned by the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation, with funding allocated from the Johannesburg Heritage Trust bequest. The purpose of the study is to document the historical context of the Orange Grove Waterfall and surrounding area, and to determine its heritage and other value.

2. Geographic Area of the Study

The Orange Grove Waterfall (hereafter referred to as the Waterfall) is situated on erf RE/1075, Houghton Estate. Its location is marked in red on the map below:



For the purposes of this study, the surrounding area of the Waterfall has been defined by erven on the following roads in the vicinity of the waterfall:

- Louis Botha Avenue, from Acorn Lane to Osborn Road, Houghton Estate;
- Lloyds Ellis Avenue between Louis Botha Avenue and 2nd Avenue, Houghton Estate;
- and

- 2nd Avenue from Lloys Ellis Avenue to Osborn Road, Houghton Estate.

The study area can therefore be broadly grouped into the following sub-areas:

1. The Orange Grove Waterfall, House Bleloch, and the site of the blockhouse;
2. The site of the former Orange Grove Hotel;
3. The art deco apartment blocks on the Orange Grove escarpment; and
4. Erven north and south of Louis Botha Avenue between Acorn Lane and Houghton Drive.

The sub-areas are indicated on the following map:



The rationale for inclusion of areas (2), (3) and (4) in the study is as follows:

- For (2), the development of the Orange Grove Hotel is intrinsically linked to the Waterfall, as the presence of the Waterfall attracted leisure seekers to the area from the very earliest times.
- For (3), the presence of the Hotel resulted in the relatively early residential development of the surrounding area. This, and the resultant amenities, in turn resulted in it being an attractive area for apartment developments from the 1930s.
- For (4), the study motivates for the declaration of the Orange Grove Waterfall and the erven on which it is situated to be declared public open space. Part of the motivation is based on the City's densification policies on Louis Botha Avenue. These will ultimately result in the remaining Residential 1 erven surrounding the Waterfall (largely located on the opposite, south, side of Louis Botha Avenue)

being redeveloped into apartments. An understanding of the heritage value of these sites and their structures is provided to guide their development.

3. A Timeline of Events

1300	Bantu-speaking agropastoralists settle in the Johannesburg area
1400	BaFokeng people spread north across the Vaal into the vicinity of Johannesburg
1670	A drier climate results in depopulation of the Johannesburg area
1780	A wetter climate attracts Sotho-Tswana farmers to the Johannesburg area
1823	Mzilikazi conquers the region
1852	The Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek is established north of the Vaal on 17 January
1852	Klipfontein farm is first registered, in the name of Christoffel Snijman
1853	Klipfontein farm is inspected for Barend Christiaan Viljoen
1858	Ownership of Klipfontein farm passes to Frederik Jacobus Bezuidenhout
1886	Gold is discovered in Johannesburg
1887	President Paul Kruger is said to have met a delegation from Johannesburg at the Viljoen farmstead
1889	On 30 May the Digger's News advertises the Orange Farm on Klipfontein for lease as a hotel
1893	Professor Price establishes air balloon ascents near the hotel
1898	Franz-Josef Ziegler purchases the hotel and names it the Orange Grove Inn
1900	In June General Lord Roberts, General Baden-Powell and General Smith-Dorien camp at the Orange Grove Inn for three days prior to marching on Pretoria
1900	A blockhouse is built near the Orange Grove Waterfall
1902	The hotel is sold to Thomas Wallinger Lloys Ellis
1906	The electric tram is extended as far as the Orange Grove Hotel
1903	Extensive improvements are made to the Orange Grove Hotel
1908	Lloys Ellis constructs a new hotel building designed by Seton Morris
1910	The Orange Grove blockhouse is demolished
1913	Prime Minister Louis Botha, his deputy Jan Smuts, and leaders of the mining industry meet at the Orange Grove Hotel.
1922	The Orange Grove Hotel is used as the headquarters of the local Civic Guard
1922	Bertram Avery designs House Hill
1923	SV Mann designs House Bagley (later Mount Carmel)

1929	Lloys Ellis donates land to the municipality for the construction of Lloys Ellis Avenue
1929	The Grove Kinema (later the Victory Theatre) is built
1936	New Orange Grove Hotel building designed by Cowin & Ellis
1934	Lauriston Court, designed by Emley & Williamson, is built
1938	Houghton Heights, designed by John Shaw, is built
1940	Roxdale, designed by FO Muller, is built
1941	T Lloys Ellis dies
1942	Roy Martin and his orchestra take up residence at the Orange Grove Hotel
1947	Italo Bernicchi starts his long association with the Victory Theatre
1960s	Dan Hill takes up residence at the Orange Grove Hotel
1969	Orange Grove Hotel closes

4. Prehistory of the Study Area

About 1,800 years ago Bantu-speaking people settled in villages in Southern Africa, cultivating crops and herding cattle, sheep and goats. The Johannesburg area, however, was generally too open, dry and cold for subsistence farming. During the Middle Iron Age (AD 900-1300), the climate was warmer and wetter, but better land was available elsewhere, and agropastoralists did not settle in the Johannesburg region until the Late Iron Age (AD 1300-1840).

In the 15th century BaFokeng people spread north across the Vaal River and settled in the vicinity of Johannesburg until about AD 1670 to 1780, when the climate became cooler and drier. Conditions improved 100 years later, attracting Sotho-Tswana farmers to the area.

Oral history and tree-ring studies show that a period of high rainfall was followed by a severe drought at the beginning of the 19th century. This drought caused widespread famine and increased competition for resources that led to an abnormal period of strife. Sotho-Tswana control, and probably occupation, came to an end in Greater Johannesburg in 1823 when Mzilikazi conquered the area. Mzilikazi was a Khumalo leader who left Natal to avoid Chaka's wrath. Mzilikazi first established his headquarters near Heidelberg before moving to Pretoria. It was his policy to empty the border-land of people and to keep his followers close to the capital - including Sotho-Tswana who paid tribute.

It was Mzilikazi's warriors that the Voortrekkers met when they crossed the Vaal River in 1838. Within a short period, the Voortrekkers with the help of BaRoLong, forced Mzilikazi to leave South Africa, and the Boers declared a Republic. (South African History Online, 2019)

No evidence of pre-colonial settlement in the study area remains.

5. The Orange Grove Waterfall, House Bleloch, and the Blockhouse

5.1. The Sandspruit and the Waterfall

The Sandspruit originates from at least three small streams - the Orange Grove stream, an unknown source on Houghton Golf Course, and the one which starts somewhere in Marist Brothers (now Sacred Heart) School, and goes under Louis Botha Avenue and on to Houghton Golf Course. (Bodman, 1981)

The stream that starts under Sacred Heart School emerges just north of Louis Botha Avenue in the vicinity of Death Bend as the Orange Grove Waterfall.



The Waterfall. Photo by Brett McDougall (2018)

The water from the waterfall runs northwards in the concrete channel under Houghton Drive, probably under Lloyds Ellis Avenue to Second Avenue. From here is partially under Lloyds Ellis Avenue and partly under the two buildings on the east of Lloyds Ellis Avenue. In the 1950s it was open where North Berwick now stands. An owner of a flat in Roxdale Gardens informed Marian Laserson that the building uses the stream under the building for watering the gardens. Apparently, the gushing of the water can be heard in the elevator of the building. (Laserson, 2009)

According to Wendy Bodman, the water runs in a channel through Victoria and Norwood, under the playing fields of Paterson Park. (Bodman, 1981) It emerges north of Paterson Road in Paterson Park. From here it is open up to Orchard Road, and then buried under Cheltondale Park until it emerges after African Street near Norwood Mall.

In a 2009 report on the Waterfall, Marian Laserson provides the following description of the Waterfall: "The stream runs under Louis Botha Avenue... [it] has an attractive stonework flat arch [where it emerges as a waterfall]. The water then drops about 4 meters, through two pools and then it cascades another 4 meters down rocks to a larger pool. From the larger pool the stream runs in an open channel for about 20 meters, with an attractive stonework walling and concrete base."

The following photos are included in a report by Marian Laserson compiled in 2009:



Showing the stone arch where the Waterfall emerges under Louis Botha Avenue

Photo by Marian Laserson (2008)



Showing the cascade down to the larger pool

Photo by Marian Laserson (2008)



Showing the canalised portion beyond the larger pool

Photo by Marian Laserson (2008)

5.2. House Bleloch

The Orange Grove Waterfall is situated on RE/1075, Houghton Estate. This erf formed a single property with erf RE/1076, Houghton Estate from before 1946 (and most likely from the time of construction of House Bleloch in 1938).

A site ownership history has been constructed from the City of Johannesburg's valuation rolls:

Valuation Roll Date	Recorded Owner	Valuation
1913 - 1925	Township Owners	£10
1925	T.L. Ellis	£0
1931	Mrs F.L. Routledge (RE/1076) Mrs E.A. Bleloch (RE/1075)	£0 £0
1946	Mrs E.A. Bleloch (RE/1075)	£3,200

The main dwelling on the site comprises House Bleloch (also known as Glenartney), which was designed in 1938 by Theophile Schaerer for Mrs EA Bleloch.

Schaerer was born in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1874 and trained in Winterthur (Switzerland), Stuttgart, Milan, and the Ecole de Beaux Arts, Paris. He worked for some time in France, including on the Elysee Palace Hotel in Paris and Riviera Palace Hotel at Monte Carlo, and then on sites in Vienna, St. Petersburg, Moscow and Warsaw. He was on his way to Peking when the Boxer Rebellion broke out, and in 1903 he arrived in South Africa where he remained, working on and off for about forty years, mainly in Johannesburg. His work in Johannesburg includes the Liederkrantz Club, the Great Park Synagogue, and the Lutheran (Friedenskirche) Church. He died in Johannesburg in 1948. (Artefacts, 2018)



Theophile Schaerer.
Source: artefacts.co.za

Stylistically the house may be described as a simplified expression of Cape Dutch Revival, which was immensely popular in the 1930s.

The front, northern, elevation is broadly symmetrical. Two gables frame a verandah that is supported by three stone pillars. Taking advantage of the site's slope to the north, Schaerer built a substantial basement, in stone, underneath the house. A set of stairs placed next to the eastern gable provides access to the verandah.



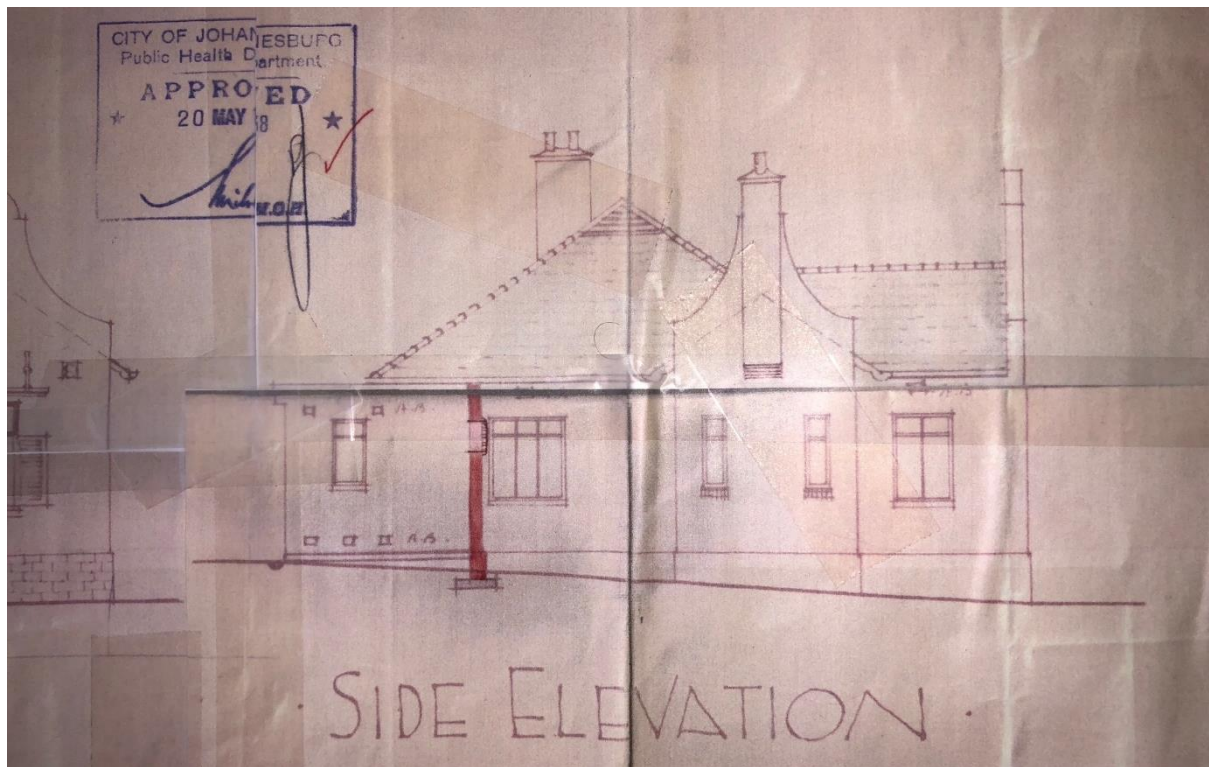
The as-built structure is faithful to the plans, except for the steps leading to the verandah, which project east. The basement itself is accessed via three arches under the verandah and a door below the east wing.



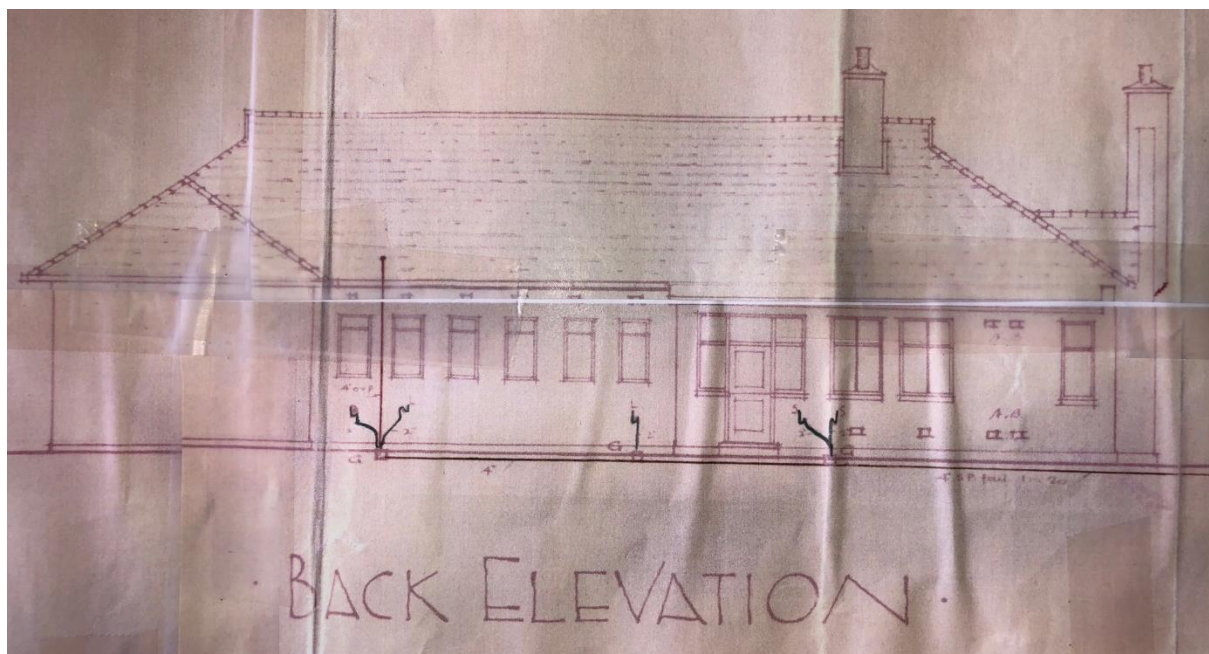
Photo by Brett McDougall (2018)

An interesting feature of the front elevation is the cantilevered sun protection over the windows on the gables.

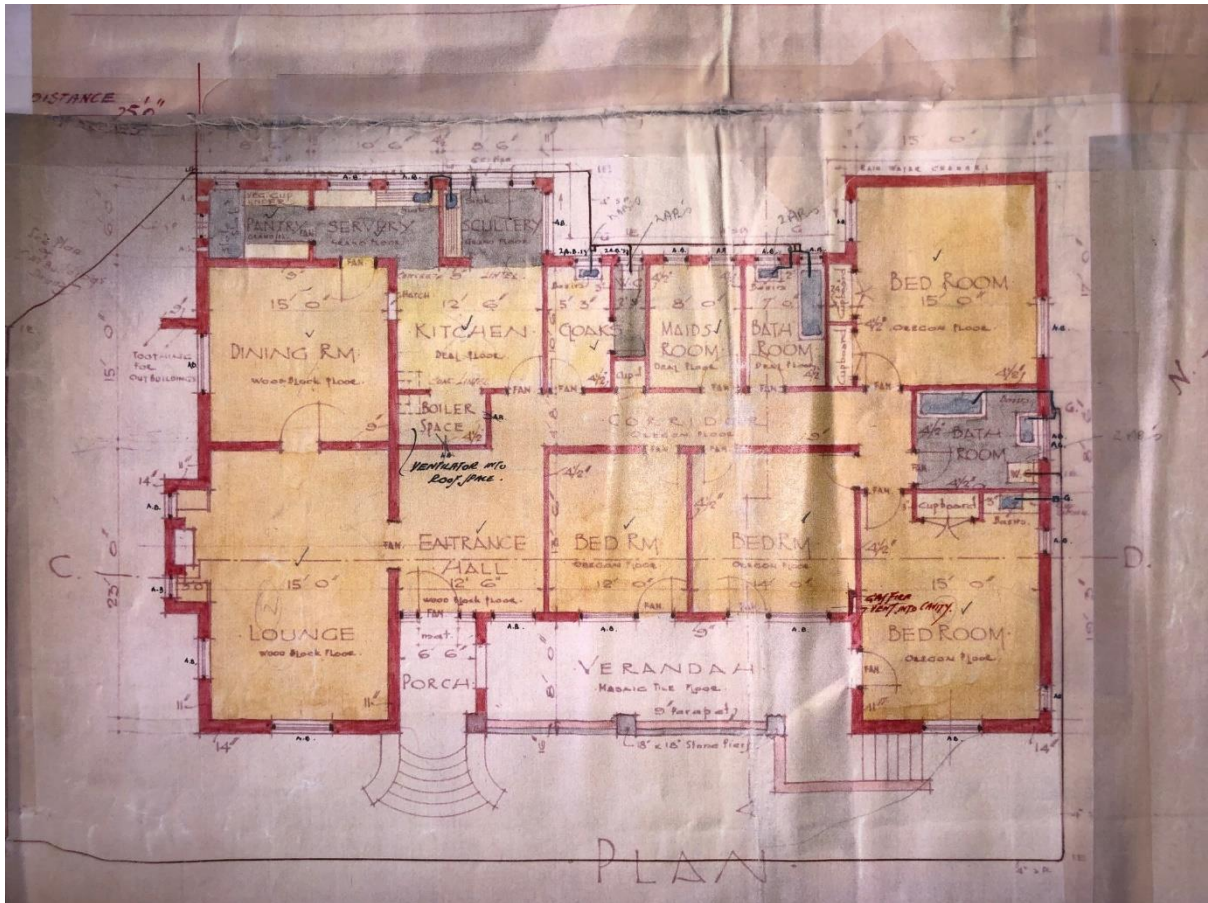
Another gable is placed on the eastern elevation:



The back, south, elevation is architecturally simpler and more rational:

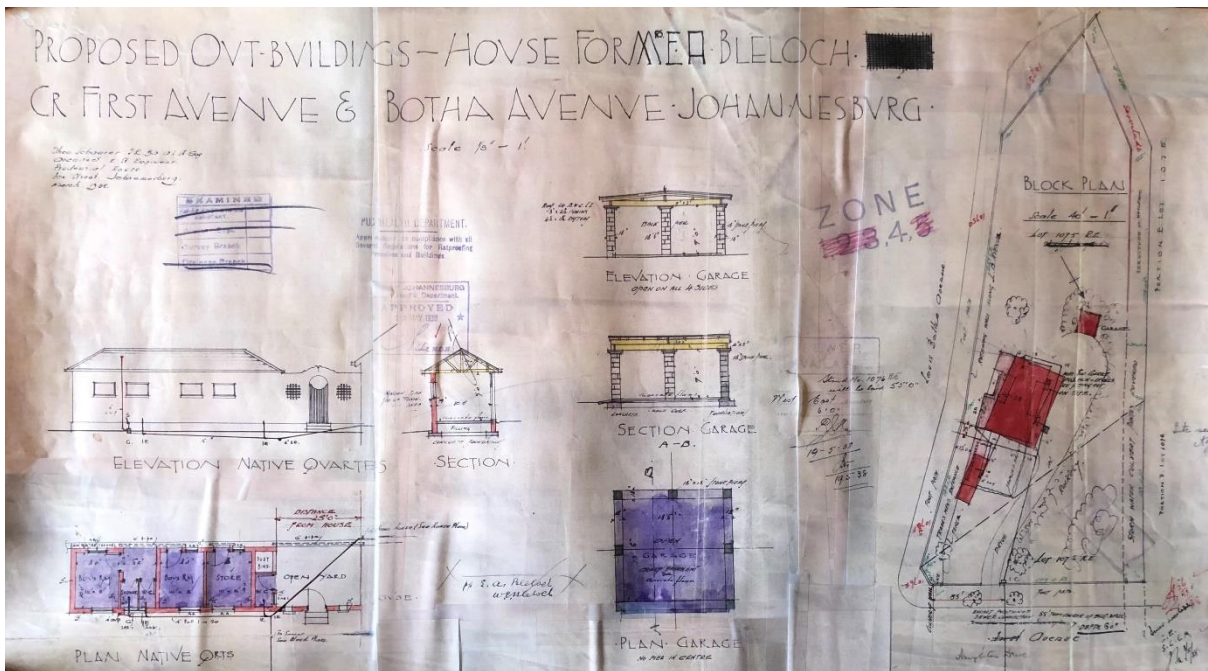


The floor plan indicates four bedrooms, two bath rooms, entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen with adjoining pantry, servery and scullery, a maid's room, and a cloak room. A comfortable but modest home in upper-middle class Houghton.



The house remains largely intact, with the only major change being the removal of the wall between the lounge and dining room. Many original fittings remain in the house, although the original floors are in poor condition.

The site plan includes two outbuildings: servants' quarters and a garage:



Though the site plan includes a servitude for the Sandspruit, the Orange Grove Waterfall itself is not indicated.

The house was built for EA Bleloch. Elizabeth Adelaide Bleloch was the second wife of William Edwin Bleloch, who was an amateur geologist and director of gold mining companies.



Born in 1863 in London, he came to South Africa in 1889 and settled in Johannesburg in 1894, becoming an authority on gold resources of the Transvaal. He later served as a war correspondent in the Boer War of 1899 to 1902, and was a participant on Milner's Gold Law commission in 1902. He authored the classic book, *The New South Africa* in 1901. He was also author of *A Thousand Million Pounds*, an anti-German tract, in 1917. (Donaldson, 1928).

Photo of William Edwin Bleloch

Source: South Africa's Who's Who 1927 - 1928

Though he had no formal training in geology, Bleloch joined the Geological Society of South Africa in 1896 and contributed significant ideas to a better understanding of the geology of the Witwatersrand. His first paper, "Rand Conglomerates", appeared in the society's Transactions in 1898 and described the banket as a series of sub-shore deposits banked up by waves and ocean currents against a sloping shore and introduced three important ideas. First, he questioned the generally accepted view that all the strata were completely conformable, arguing that gradual subsidence at times produced estuarine deposits with unconformities. Second, he was the first to suggest that repeated subsidence and uplifting must have caused reworking of earlier deposits by ocean currents. Third, he suggested that present outcrops were close to the original edge of the depositional basin and had therefore been little eroded.

He continued to contribute to mining knowledge, producing a geological map of the Witwatersrand strata in the southern Transvaal and northern Free State in 1910, and publishing his belief that the Main Reef was continuous between the Central and East Rand, and that there was no so-called "Boksburg gap" (*Mining and Industrial Magazine*, 1926, Vol. 2, pp.453-457). This was proved correct by later mining. His description of the geology of Heidelberg was published in a series of short contributions to the *South African Mining and Engineering Journal* in 1921. During the late nineteen-thirties and early nineteen-forties he practised as a consulting geologist.

In 1901 he married Edith Griffiths of Grahamstown, with whom he had a son. After her death in 1916 he married Elizabeth Adelaide Ironside. His son, Dr. William Bleloch became a well-known chemical and metallurgical engineer. Father and son together registered US Patent 1768307 in 1930 for improvements in safety razors. A bequest by Bleloch's second wife served to equip and name the W.E. Bleloch Museum of the Department of Geology at the University of the Witwatersrand. (Biographical Database of Southern African Science, 2019)

House Bleloch is owned by the City of Johannesburg, and is used by Police Reservists. It is in fair condition.

5.3. Orange Grove Blockhouse

The Orange Grove blockhouse was situated east of the Waterfall on a rocky outcrop on Louis Botha Avenue.

Blockhouses, small temporary forts, were initially constructed by the British Royal Engineers during the South African War as part of the defences for the railways and were later used as an instrument in the containment strategy. The first of the blockhouses were constructed for the defence of railway bridges in Natal during the advance for the relief of Ladysmith. Blockhouses were also built along the railway on Roberts' advance on Bloemfontein and then into the Transvaal.

In July 1901, blockhouses, as an instrument in the containment strategy, were erected across open country so that the area of conflict was covered by a network of defensible posts. They were usually sited at a distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ (0.8km) to $\frac{3}{4}$ (1,2km) of a mile apart. In the intervals between them wire entanglements and other obstacles such as spring guns and other forms of alarms were placed. By the end of the war about 8,000 blockhouses had been erected, dispersed over a total length of about 3,700 miles (approximately 6,000km).

Blockhouses were frequently built of masonry or concrete and 2 to 3 storeys in height, with machicoulis galleries and loopholes strengthened with steel plates. Later a simpler kind of building was devised to meet demand. It was made of upright wooden posts with a double sheathing of corrugated iron, the cavity between the two sheaths was filled with sand or shingle to render the building bullet proof.

In 1901 Major SR Rice, Royal Engineers, using the simpler method of construction, invented an octagonal blockhouse followed by a circular one which could be prefabricated. (Artefacts, 2018)

Photos of the Orange Grove blockhouse, indicate that it was constructed with a double sheathing of corrugated iron, and was octagonal in shape. It was constructed after the British took Johannesburg in May 1900, and quite possibly only in 1901. A

blockhouse was constructed here as it was on one of the two roads between Pretoria and Johannesburg, and thus strategically important.

The blockhouse was demolished in 1910. (Leyds, 1964) Numerous references to a commemorative plaque exist, but this is no longer in place. The hitching post next to the blockhouse survived its demolition, and is referenced in Knox and Gutsche's *Do You Know Johannesburg?* (Gutsche, 1947). It no longer exists.



Postcard of the Orange Grove blockhouse (circa 1905).



The blockhouse. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1903)



The blockhouse. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1906)



Postcard of the Orange Grove blockhouse (circa 1906).

ERF RE/1075 & RE/1076, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	Yes – one of the few waterfalls in Johannesburg, and a source of the Sandspruit.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – William Bleloch.
Associated with historic event or activity.	Yes –the site's association with the Anglo Boer War through the Orange Grove blockhouse; the Orange Grove Waterfall's association with leisure activities in early Johannesburg.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	Yes – House Bleloch represents a good example of the residential vernacular in Johannesburg in the 1930s.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes – House Bleloch is finely proportioned and well-built.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – Theophile Schaerer.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

6. The Site of the Orange Grove Hotel

6.1. Louis Botha Avenue

Louis Botha Avenue predates the city itself, being one of the two roads connecting the Boer homesteads on the Witwatersrand to Pretoria and beyond. As Louis Botha Avenue descends from Yeoville to Orange Grove it traverses a natural pass between the Mountain View and the Houghton ridges known as “Death Bend”. It is in this vicinity that the Waterfall is found. According to land surveyer Werner Kirchhoff, it is no accident that we find a water source just north of the road. The boundaries of the boer farms were determined by a set of simple principles: 30 minutes’ horse-ride from a central point determined the boundaries of what would usually be a square or rectangle of approximately 32 square kilometres (3,750 morgen). (Kirchhoff, *The Significance of Beacons and Boundaries*, 2019). Under the Roman-Dutch water laws applied by the Zuid Afrikaanse Republiek (ZAR), a landowner was only entitled to dam or divert a stream if that stream originated on his property. Practical application of this in the ZAR usually resulted in farm boundaries being situated on rises where water might originate, but not flow over. So it no surprise that Louis Botha Avenue is situated on the border of the farms Doornfontein, Klipfontein and Rietfontein. Firebreaks would usually be constructed on the borders of farms, and this cleared land would have created a natural path that would later evolve into a road.

As Louis Botha Avenue originated as one of the main routes connecting the Witwatersrand to Pretoria, it is no surprise that the original names of the road were: Pretoria Avenue through Orange Grove; Pretoria Main Road through Orchards; Pretoria Road through Highlands North; and Pretoria Main Road through Bramley. The road was called Morgan Road through Berea, Yeoville and Houghton Estate. The origins of the name Morgan are obscure, but may be connected to a clerk in Surveyor Pritchard’s office, or to the proprietor of the Halfway House Hotel. (Smith, 1971)

These road names were changed to Louis Botha Avenue in 1917, after a suggestion of the Federation of Ratepayers’ Associations was accepted by the Town Council. Louis Botha was honoured for his contribution to South Africa and the Empire during World War I.

The place at which Louis Botha Avenue descends from Houghton to Orange Grove, through a natural pass at which the Orange Grove Waterfall emerges, is known as Death Bend. The name no doubt originates from the number of accidents that have occurred there as a results of speeding vehicles and the curvature of the road.

As can be seen in this photo sourced from Museum Africa, the area was originally known as Orange Grove Hill.



Source: Museum Africa (circa 1906)

6.2. Klipfontein and the Viljoen Farmstead

The Viljoen Farmstead on the farm Klipfontein was located in the vicinity of what is now known as Death Bend.

The farm Klipfontein, situated south of farm Doornfontein and east of farm Braamfontein, was registered by Christoffel Snijman in 1852, but he soon disposed of the farm. In 1853 it was inspected for Barend Christiaan Viljoen (the then owner of Doornfontein farm), and in 1857 it was inspected for Frederik Jacobus Bezuidenhout (Barend Christiaan Viljoen's son-in-law) and granted to him in 1858.

Bezuidenhout would inherit the farm Doornfontein from Viljoen in 1861, and it was here where he would spend his remaining years, dying in 1900. Mrs Hester Robertson, Bezuidenhout's niece, described the vicinity of present-day Orange Grove as the Bezuidenhout/Viljoen family's *lemoenplaas* (orange farm). (Doucakis, 1997)

A photo, possibly from the 1880s, of the Viljoen farmstead shows rudimentary mud brick and thatch structures sited next to the dirt road that led to Pretoria (now Louis Botha Avenue) and against the ridge, in the vicinity of what is today Osborn Road.



The Viljoen farmhouse in the vicinity of Death Bend. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1880s).

6.3. Orange Grove Hotel

On 30 May 1889 an advertisement appeared in *The Digger's News* stating that Orange Grove was available on lease for a hotel business. In the advertisement WE Hollard noted that: "The place to be let is the homestead, garden and enclosed land..." (Smith, 1971) This clearly refers to the Viljoen farmstead and surrounding area. The approximate boundaries of the area to be let were: present-day 2nd Avenue in the north; the Houghton Ridge in the vicinity of present-day St Luke Lane in the south; present-day Houghton Drive in the west; and present-day Osborn Road in the east.

The hotel was first known as the Wayside Hotel. Paul Kruger, who detested Johannesburg, is recorded as having met numerous delegations at the hotel, the earliest of these was when he came to visit the goldfields on their first anniversary. (Norwich, 1986) An early reference to the hotel is found in the 1896 *Staats Almanak* of the ZAR, which records that the resort even boasted a collection of wild animals. The Orange Grove Tearoom was established opposite the Wayside Hotel, north of Louis Botha Avenue, and became a popular resort, especially over weekends. Some of the attractions offered by the Tearoom were Sunday concerts, a coach ride from the centre of town at one shilling per ride, and air balloon ascents which were started in 1893 by a Professor Price. (Norwich, 1986)



A postcard showing the Orange Grove Tearoom (date unknown).

Professor Price's air balloon rides captured the public imagination and were widely reported on. He suffered two near accidents - one when his balloon split and he made a hazardous parachute landing, and another when he rose to a height of 1,000 ft and came down badly shaken in Braamfontein. Miss K Cameron's reported to have made the first female balloon ascent and parachute descent in South Africa on 2 April 1893. She shot up to 5,000 ft and then detached the parachute and came down slowly, landing just behind the gardens. (Reporter, 1952) In August 1893 1,000 people watched a baboon named Jacko, owned by Mr Jacob Schulz, parachuted from a balloon at the height of 2,000 ft. Jacko was linked to the balloon by a trapeze with a swing seat. A time fuse was attached to the end of the trapeze connecting it to the balloon, and Jacko was meant to be released five minutes after take-off, with the parachute releasing instantaneously. This did not happen, and Jacko plummeted 200 ft before the parachute opened and, blown way off course, he landed in a Doornfontein garden, dazed but alive. (Godfrey, Baboon Jacko's epic adventure, 1974)

It is not known who the original proprietor of the hotel was, but by 1898 it was owned by Franz-Josef (or Franz Joseph) Ziegler and called the Orange Grove Inn. Ziegler's grand-daughter Gloria Evans recounts that General Lord Roberts, and the generals Baden-Powell and Smith-Dorrien camped at the Orange Grove Inn for three days prior to marching on Pretoria (in June 1900). (Goldman, 1991)

In 1902, ownership of the hotel had passed to Thomas Wallinger Lloys Ellis, commonly known as T Lloys Ellis. It was under his direction that a number of improvements were made. The stables of the Viljoen farmhouse were extensively altered in 1903. This building consisted of large rooms with a surrounding stoep, a dining room, lounge and bar.

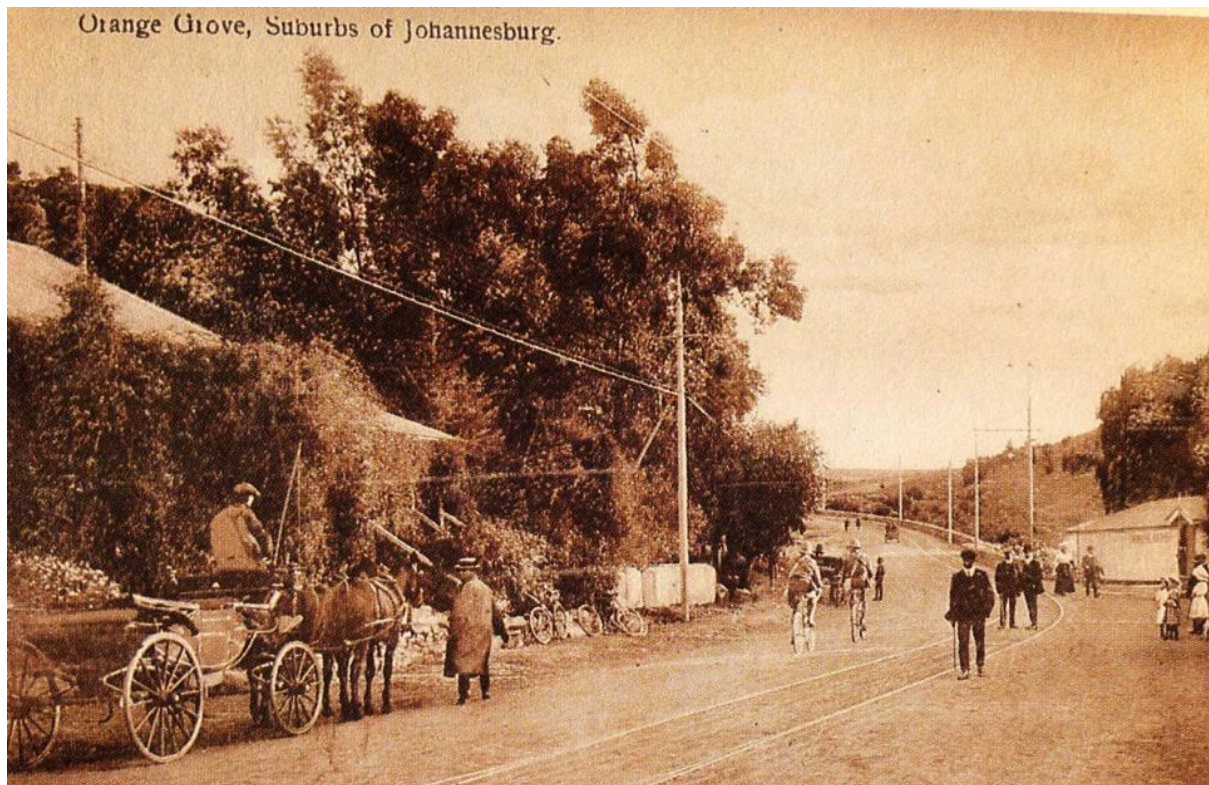


The Orange Grove Hotel, with the 1903 building in the foreground. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1903)



Another view of the Orange Grove Hotel from a postcard (circa 1906)

A pool downstream from the Orange Grove waterfall, facing the Orange Grove Tearoom and close to what is today the intersection of Louis Botha Avenue and Houghton Drive, was used as a swimming bath. Lloys Ellis constructed the 50 ft by 23 ft swimming pool in corrugated iron, including the changing rooms, and built a wooden floor around the pool. It even boasted a corrugated iron change room. (Godfrey, 1974)



A postcard showing the Orange Grove Hotel on the left, and Change Room on the right. Note the extension of the electric tram-line down Louis Botha Avenue (photo taken between 1906 and 1908)

The Orange Grove Tea Gardens were situated north of Louis Botha Avenue (in the area currently defined by Osborn Road, 2nd Avenue and Lloyds Ellis Avenue). They were very popular over weekends and served homemade scones and cream, fruit and strawberries. The hotel also boasted eight tennis courts. (Godfrey, 1974)

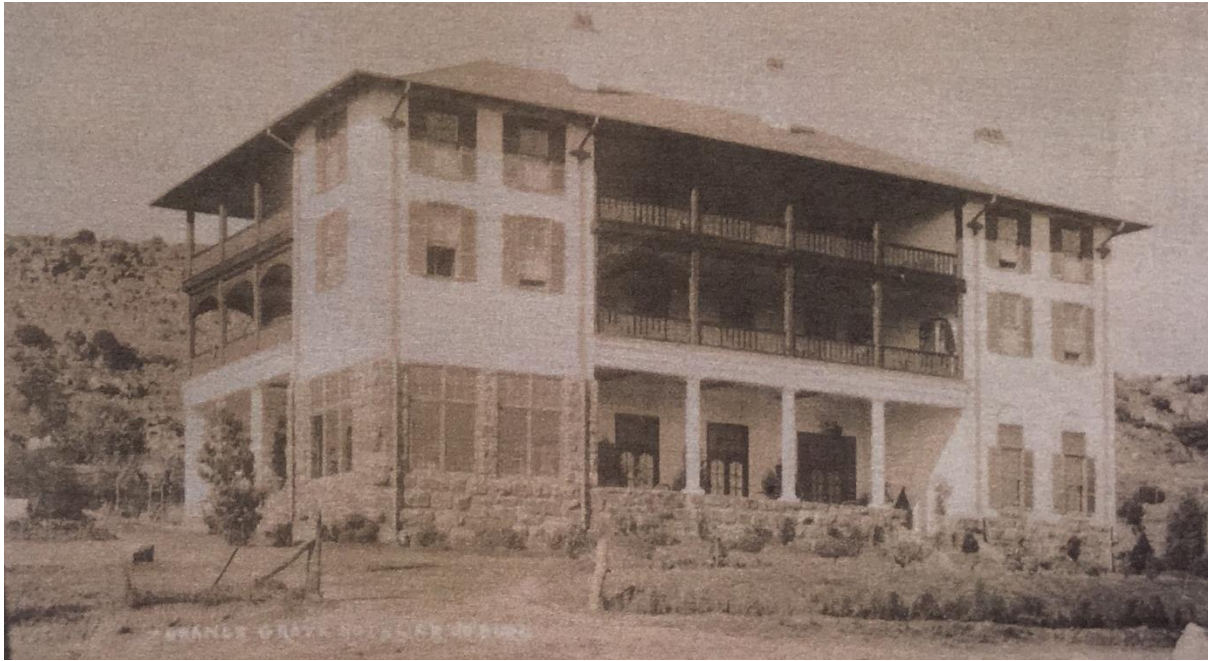
A new hotel was built in 1908. This attractive three storey building was designed by Seton Morris (described as 'a lovable character...very keen on Dramatic Art and [who] took part in several plays at the Standard Theatre') (Artefacts, 2020) and soon become a popular landmark in the rapidly developing suburbs surrounding it. In this photograph, the 1908 building is visible next to one of the original Orange Grove Hotel buildings.



The original hotel next to Seton Morris's 1908 building. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1908)

The Orange Grove Hotel was in 1913 the site of an historic meeting between Prime Minister Louis Botha, his deputy Jan Smuts, and leaders of the mining industry. The 1913 Miners' Strike had escalated to the tragic events of July 5th, where a striker was shot dead outside the Rand Club. Realising that the entire Rand was on the point of insurrection, Smuts and Botha called the meeting with the mining industry where Smuts angrily demanded to know how a settlement could be reached if the mining industry refused to meet strikers at the conference table. At the meeting the mining industry agreed to accept any settlement secured by the Prime Minister and his deputy, who then continued their journey into Johannesburg to meet strike leaders at the Carlton Hotel. (Shorten, 1970)

During the 1922 Strike the Hotel was used as the headquarters of the local Civic Guard. (Godfrey, Orange Grove had first beer garden, 1974)



The 1908 hotel. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1908)



Looking west, Seton Morris's 1908 building dominates. Source: Museum Africa (circa 1920s)

The 1903 building was demolished in 1930, and replaced by a large new extension in 1936. (Godfrey, 1974). Though original plans for the 1936 hotel have not been found, site plans dating back to the same period were compiled by Cowin & Ellis, so it is a reasonable assumption that they were the architects of the 1936 hotel. The senior

partners in the firm were Thomas Gordon Ellis (born 1887) and Douglas Maurice Cowin (born 1911), but Douglas Cowin appears to have been responsible for most of firm's work in the 1930s, and was one of the most prolific and influential architects of the period.

A fire caused significant damage to the 1908 building in the 1930s, after which additions and improvements were made.



Two photos of the fire of the 1930s at the 1908 (below) and 1930s (left) buildings, photographer unknown



In the 1930s Lloys Ellis opened a Beer Garden, adding to the attractions of the hotel which already included weekly dinner dances and a cocktail bar. The German band of Hans Reuter entertained patrons. Theatrical patrons of the hotel included Gracie Fields and Leslie Henson. Entertainment was provided the Jazz Maniacs, Taffy Griffiths and others. (Godfrey, Orange Grove had first beer garden, 1974)

After the death of T Lloys Ellis in 1941, ownership passed to his son, Thomas Ellis. During this period it was home to South Africa's leading swing band, Roy Martin and his orchestra. Broadcasts were made every Saturday night live from the hotel's Coconut Grove nightclub. Although there were various changes in personnel over the years, the band remained at The Grove for a decade and a half from 1942 to 1957.

Just about every top musician in the country played in his bands including Bobby Chalker, Bez Martin, Art Heatlie, Boris Cohen, Don Storer, Hymie and Ralph Baleson, Freddy Nausbaum, Andy Johnson, Les Kelly, Leon Cohen, Eddie Heydenrych, Joe Marais and George Hayden. His lead singers were Eve Boswell, Butch Kilpatrick and eventually Julia Mann, and his vocal group, the Melodears, included Betsy van Rooyen. After a while he started broadcasting with an 18 piece big band and a 35 piece symphonic orchestra and "Music In The Martin Manner" was born. (Albert, 2013)



Roy Martin and his orchestra at the Orange Grove Hotel. Source Artslink.co.za

Changes continued to be made to the hotel in the 1940s and the 50s, and a 1955 hotel guide shows that ownership had passed to M Bianchi. The hotel at this time boasted 58 bedrooms, including 14 with suites, and telephones in every bedroom.

<p>JOHANNESBURG</p> <p>58 bedrooms, including 14 with suites; remainder with h. and c. running water. Telephones in every bedroom.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Tariff</td> <td>From</td> <td>To</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B.B.</td> <td>22/6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Daily</td> <td>25/6</td> <td>32/6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weekly</td> <td>135/10</td> <td>190/-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Proprietor - -</td> <td>M. Bianchi</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Tariff	From	To	B.B.	22/6		Daily	25/6	32/6	Weekly	135/10	190/-	Proprietor - -	M. Bianchi		<p>Orange Grove Hotel</p>
Tariff	From	To														
B.B.	22/6															
Daily	25/6	32/6														
Weekly	135/10	190/-														
Proprietor - -	M. Bianchi															

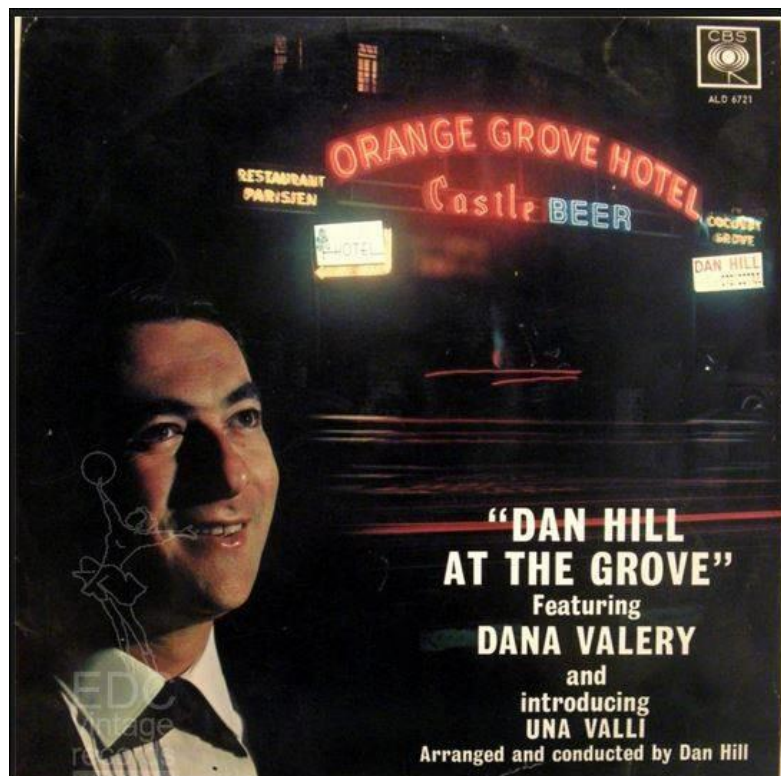
An extract from a 1955 hotel guide, showing the 1936 building next to the 1908 building.



Detail of record, "Dan Hill at The Grove"
 Source: soulsafari.wordpress.com

Dan Hill, South Africa's top bandleader, got a residency at The Orange Grove in the 1960s. His music was described at the time as 'instant night club' and consisted of his own material and new arrangements of popular hits of the day, mostly in the style of the Bossa Nova, Cha Cha, Fox Trot, Baion and the Twist. Shortly before taking residency Dan Hill had made an extensive trip to Britain, Europe and the United States to study the latest recording techniques and observe the current trends. He worked with artists as eminent as Louis Armstrong, Stan Kenton, Andy Williams, Eydie Gorme, Steve Lawrence and Barbara Streisand during this time. (Soul Safari, 2013)

Record cover, "Dan Hill at The Grove". Source: soulsafari.wordpress.com



The hotel closed in 1969, being unable to qualify for a Hotel Board rating and too costly to renovate. It was demolished in the early 1970s, and replaced with a bland office block in the early 1980s, now known as Houghton Estate Office Park.

6.4. Architectural Evolution of the Site

The architectural evolution of the Orange Grove Hotel may be illustrated as follows:



The earliest known photo, circa 1880s, of the site and facing west shows two distinct structures:

A – a mud-walled rectangular building with thatch roof. The lack of windows suggests a use for animals.

B – a square white-washed building with thatch roof. Most probably a dwelling. A rondavel next to the building is possibly an outhouse.

C – an open area between the two buildings.

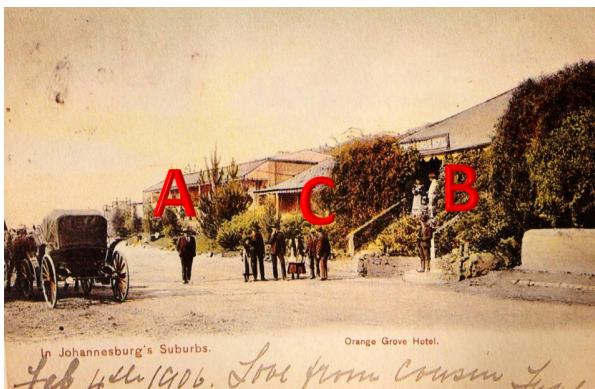


A later photo from the same position, circa 1903, of the site:

A – the 1903 hotel building is a westward extension of the stables, the roof is now corrugated iron, windows and doors have been added and it has been painted.

B – a corrugated iron roof has been added.

C – part of the open space has been taken up by the addition to A. The remainder is obscured by planting.

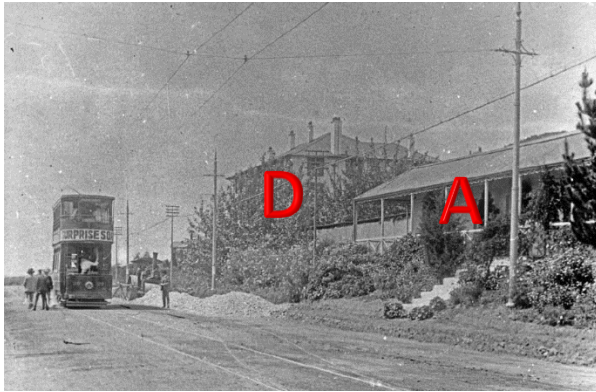


A postcard from 1906, facing east.

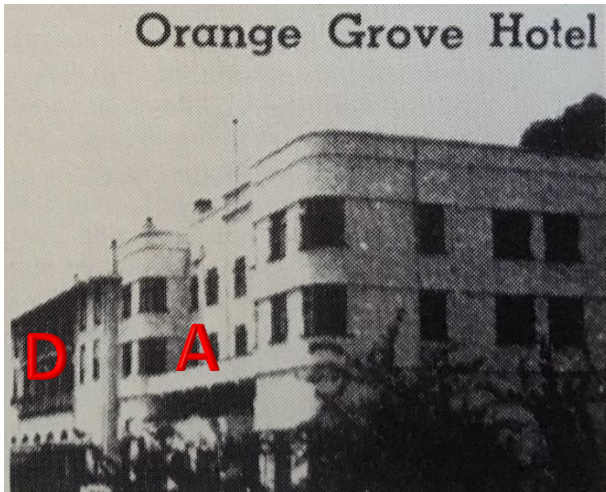
A – no noticeable changes.

B – no noticeable changes.

C – a small dwelling has been built in the remainder of the space between A and B.

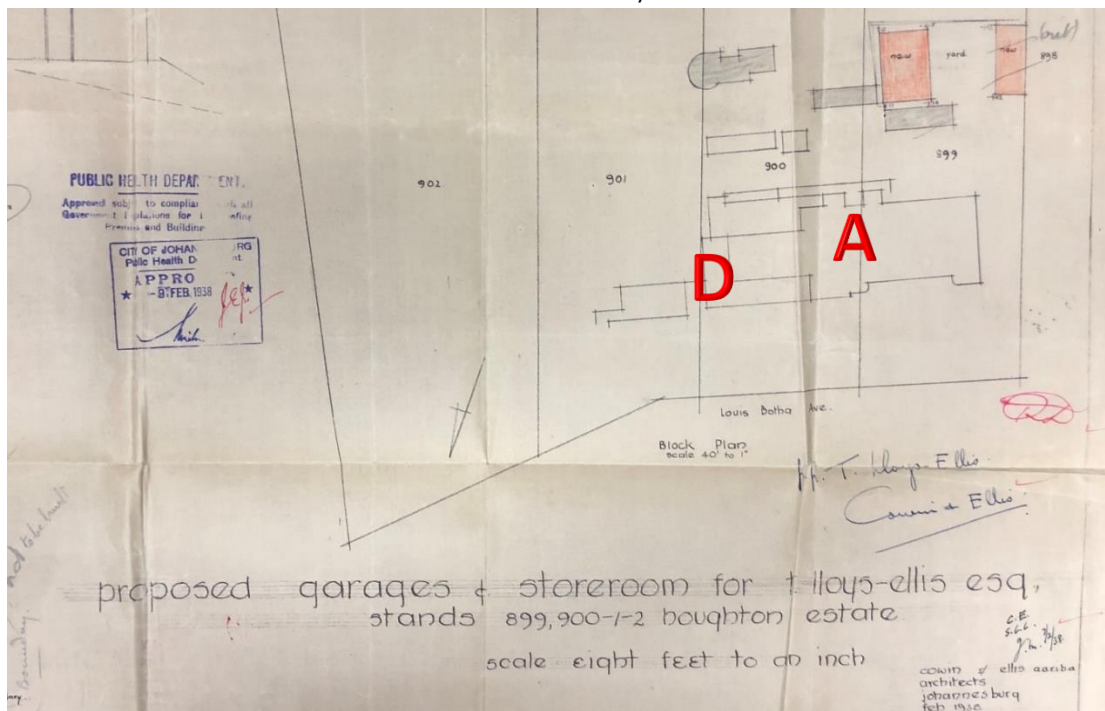


A postcard post-1908, facing east.
 A – no noticeable changes to the original building, but Seton Morris's 1908 hotel building has been erected to the east of the structure (D).
 B – not within the image.
 C – not within the image.

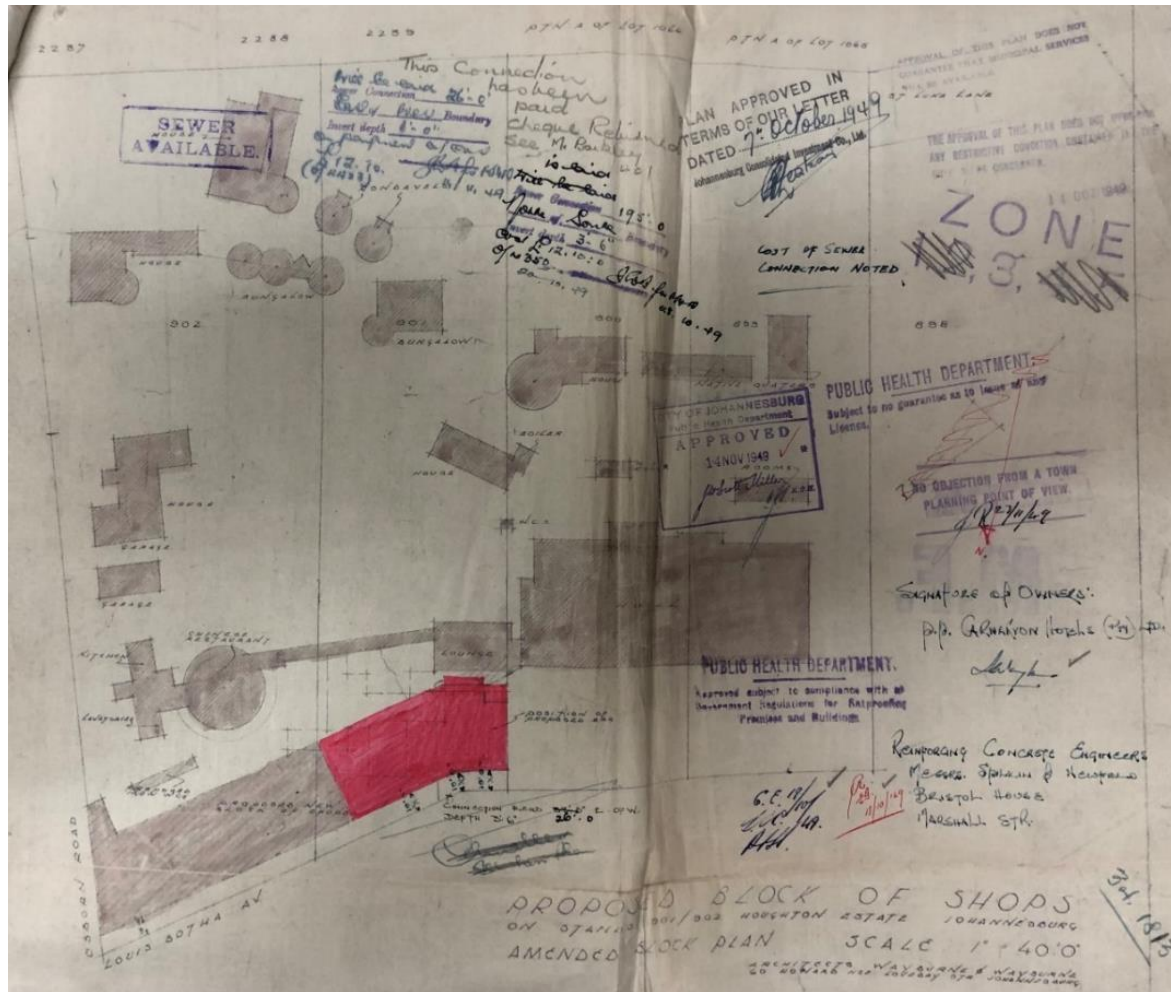


A photo from the 1950s, facing east:
 A, B and C has been replaced by the 1936 hotel.
 Seton Morris's 1908 building is visible immediately to the east of the 1936 hotel.

More clarity is provided by a site plan dating to 1938. The architectural practice of Cowin & Ellis were asked to provide plans for garages and a storeroom for Lloyds Ellis, and their submission provides an idea of where the existing buildings were positioned. The curvature of east and west wings clearly identifies the 1936 hotel, and this is marked A. The 1908 hotel is situated immediately east of this, and is marked D.



Another site plan, dated 1949, shows extensive further development of the hotel site, including several new houses and bungalows, and a round Chinese restaurant.



6.5. Thomas Wallinger Lloys Ellis

The larger-than-life personality of Thomas Wallinger Lloys Ellis – known as T Lloys Ellis – is inextricably bound with the Orange Grove Hotel.

T Lloys Ellis arrived in South Africa from London in the 1890s, and first lived in Durban before moving to Johannesburg. In *Seven Lost Trails of Africa* by Hedley Chilvers, Lloys Ellis's hunt for the lost treasure of Lobengula in then Rhodesia is described in exciting detail. Lloys Ellis embarked on seven expeditions between 1926 and 1931. (Chilvers, 1932)



T Lloys Ellis – date unknown. (The Star)

His expeditions were ultimately unsuccessful, but they did provide opportunities for memorable photos!



Lloys Ellis in a memorable hunting pose – date unknown. Source: eroluys.com



Lloys Ellis in hunting regalia – date unknown. Source: erroluys.com



Lloys Ellis at the Orange Grove Hotel – date unknown. Source: erroluys.com

A review of the Valuation Rolls for Houghton Estate reveal that Lloys Ellis did not own the erven on which the Orange Grove Hotel and its facilities were built until sometime between 1922 and 1925 (and leased them from the Township Co. prior to then). In the 1922 Valuation Roll, Erf 900 Houghton Estate (owned by the Township Company)

shows a Buildings value of £8,500. In 1925, the owners of Erf 900 are recorded as Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes. Erven 899 to 902, situated south of Louis Botha Avenue and west of Osborn Road, would form the core of the Orange Grove Hotel property, even as Lloys Ellis disposed of his other property from the 1930s.

Erf	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
899	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis & Mrs RL Ellis
900	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis & Mrs RL Ellis
<i>Buildings value:</i>		£8,500	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£23,000	£24,000	£24,000	£28,050
901	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis & Mrs RL Ellis
902	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis & Mrs RL Ellis
<i>Buildings value:</i>		£500	£1,750	£1,700	£1,650	£1,600	£2,200	£2,700	£3,200	£4,000

The Orange Grove Tea Gardens were situated on unsurveyed erven until the early 1920s, and first appear on the Valuation Roll of 1925 under the ownership of T Lloys Ellis as erven 1223, 1224, 1225 and 1226, Houghton Estate. By 1931 these erven, with the exception of erf 1226, had been resurveyed as portions of Erf 2343, and would be disposed of by Lloys Ellis in the 1930s.

In 1929 Lloys Ellis is recorded as having donated the ground on which the Municipality would construct Lloys Ellis Avenue, linking Second Avenue and Houghton Drive. The naming of the road after him is recognised in the minutes of the Works Department on 4 December 1934. This was later extended to Osborn Road. The donation of this land to the Council for the purposes of constructing Lloys Ellis Avenue was a canny move, as it opened up this part of Houghton Estate to development, increasing Lloys Ellis's land values, and several substantial apartment blocks would soon be built here. Lloys Ellis died in 1941, and is buried at Braamfontein Cemetery.



Lloys Ellis's grave. Photo source: eggsa.org

SITE OF THE ORANGE GROVE HOTEL, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – Lloys Ellis, Paul Kruger, General Lord Roberts, General Baden-Powell, Louis Botha, Jan Smuts, Roy Martin, Dan Hill and others.
Associated with historic event or activity.	Yes –the site's association with the General Lord Roberts's march to Pretoria, and the 1913 Miners' Strike.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	No.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	No.
Work of a major architect or builder.	No.
Illustrates an historical period.	No.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

7. The Art Deco Apartment Blocks on the Orange Grove Escarpment

7.1. Art Deco Johannesburg

The economic impacts of the Great Depression forced many countries to abandon the pegging of their currencies to the gold standard, therefore devaluing their currencies. South Africa under General JBM Hertzog maintained its gold standard for longer than most, resulting in the South African currency being relatively overvalued. This negatively affected the competitiveness of South African exports, devastating South African farmers and mineral exporters. Hertzog finally abandoned the gold standard on 27 December 1932. The move returned South Africa's fortunes - gold prices increased and sparked a phase of economic expansion. (South African History Online, 2018)

Johannesburg, centre of the gold mining industry, was perhaps the greatest recipient of this boom. Economic expansion coincided with the arrival of a new architectural style in Johannesburg – art deco – and the city centre and many of its suburbs were soon dominated by its architectural hallmarks. The boom made the development of apartment blocks, 'flats', more viable than ever before, and Hillbrow and nearby suburbs of Berea and Yeoville soon had substantial blocks of flats in the art deco style. Two suburban clusters of luxury apartments, and both connected in some way to businessman extraordinaire Isidore Schlesinger, were developed at the same time: Killarney, and Houghton close to the Orange Grove Hotel.

7.2. Art Deco Houghton



1. Orange Grove Hotel (1908 -)
2. Victory Theatre (1929)
3. Fairway Mansions (1931)
4. Roxdale (1940)
5. Houghton Heights (1938)
6. Lauriston Court (1934)
7. Grosvenor Court (1950s)

By the 1950s a number of notable buildings, illustrated on the aerial from the period above, existed in the vicinity of Death Bend.

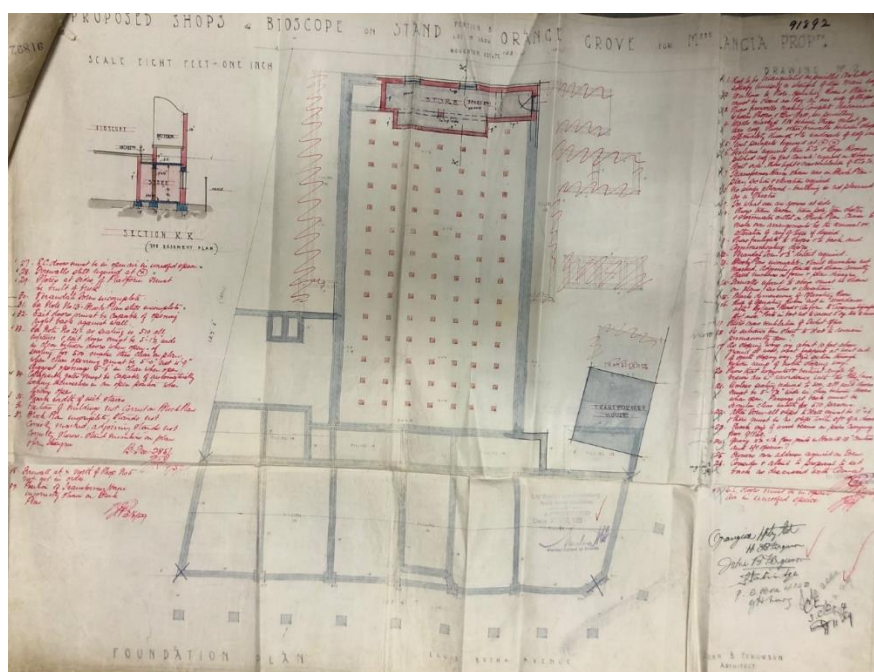
Why were apartment blocks developed on the Orange Grove escarpment? The area was well served by public transport, as the tram had been running along Louis Botha Avenue since the first decade of the 20th century. The Orange Grove Hotel provided bar and restaurant facilities, and the Coconut Grove at the Hotel live entertainment. The Grove Kinema, later the Victory Theatre, was a substantial suburban movie house. The Houghton Golf Club provided facilities for those inclined, or simply the promise of open, undeveloped vistas. And, perhaps most importantly, the ridge site offered glorious views to the north and was wedged in between attractive and well to do Houghton and Mountain View, and bustling Orange Grove.

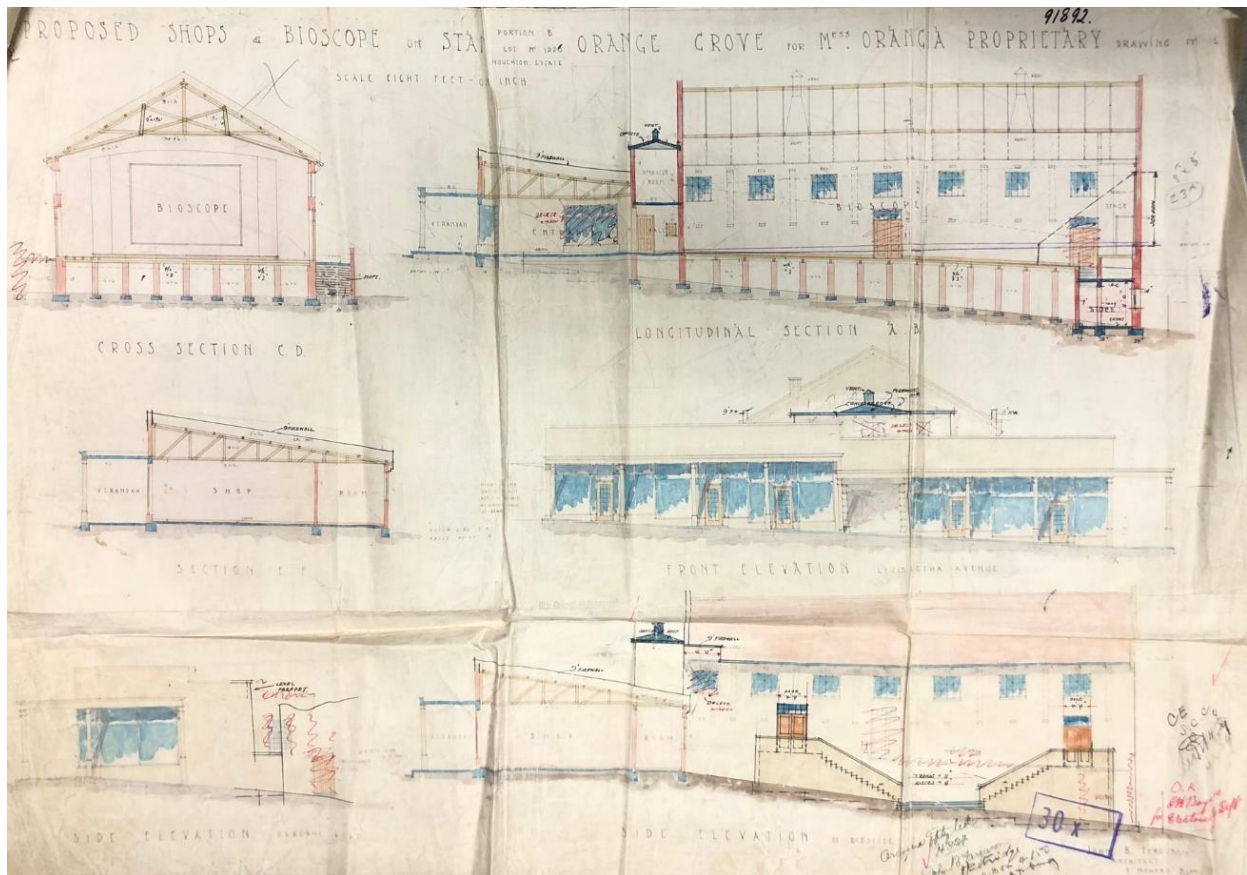
7.3. Victory Theatre

The Victory Theatre is situated on Erf 1226, Houghton Estate, and was once part of the Orange Grove Tea Garden property. It was sold by Lloyds Ellis after 1928 to Orangia (Pty) Ltd, and the theatre itself was built in 1929.

Erf	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
1226	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Orangia (Pty) Ltd	Orangia (Pty) Ltd	Orangia (Pty) Ltd	Orangia (Pty) Ltd	Orangia (Pty) Ltd	Orangia (Pty) Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>			£6,500	£5,750	£5,750	£5,670	£5,670	£7,000

The original plans identify the architect as John Bryce Ferguson.





Ferguson was born in Swansea, South Wales, and was living in South Africa by 1915, working in Johannesburg, and a member of the Association of Transvaal Architects. (Artefacts, 2020)

The plans show a simple design for this suburban cinema: a shed houses the bioscope, which is entered via a passage off Louis Botha Avenue that is flanked by attractive shopfronts shielded from the sun and dirt of Louis Botha Avenue by a colonnaded verandah. Place for an orchestra is provided below the projection screen.

Originally built as the Grove Kinema it was renamed the Victory after World War II. In an article in The Star published in 1974, Mr George Matthysen remembers visiting the Grove Kinema to attend the matinees on Saturday afternoon. The admission fee for children was sixpence, and all children who attended the Saturday afternoon matinee were given free tickets for the Wednesday afternoon matinee. (Godfrey, The growth of Orange Grove, 1974)

The theatre started its long association with Johannesburg film maverick Italo Bernicchi in 1947, when Isidore Schlesinger approached him to screen his films at the Grove Kinema. Bernicchi continued to run it for 35 years, until the competition from chains like Nu Metro and Ster Kinekor eventually forced him to close down. (ESAT, 2018) The cinema was resurrected as a theatre for a period of time, but is no longer functioning as one. Unsympathetic alterations over the decades have erased any architectural value it may have had, but the association with Bernicchi remains important and should be commemorated.

VICTORY THEATRE, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – Italo Bernicchi
Associated with historic event or activity.	No
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	No.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	No.
Work of a major architect or builder.	No.
Illustrates an historical period.	No.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

7.4. Fairway Mansions



Photo by Brett McDougall (2013)

Fairway Mansions is situated on a portion of what was originally the Orange Grove Tea Gardens, and was sold to its developers by Lloys Ellis before 1937. Oddly, the building bears the date 1931 – did it take six years to develop? It is impossible to tell because original plans have not been found.

Erf	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
2342H	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	Mrs D Levy and Mrs N Watson	Mrs D Levy and Mrs N Watson	Mrs D Levy and Mrs N Watson	Mrs D Levy and Mrs N Watson
<i>Buildings value:</i>			£18,000	£18,000	£22,500	£26,000

Fairway Mansions belongs stylistically to the early 1920s. Though the central gable is awkward, the building's design responds to the street, and the rhythm of balconies, doors and windows is attractive.



Fairway Mansions in 1974. Source: The Star

FAIRWAY MANSIONS, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	No.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	No.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	No.
Work of a major architect or builder.	No.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – a good example of late-1920s/early 1930s apartment

	design in suburban Johannesburg. The building's contribution to the streetscape is important.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

7.5. Roxdale

Roxdale is situated on Erf 2342 Re, Houghton Estate, which was perhaps originally a part of the Orange Grove Tea Gardens property, but was only surveyed as an erf in the late 1920s. It appears under the ownership of T Lloys Ellis in the 1931 Valuation Roll, but by 1937 had been disposed of by Lloys Ellis to DHC Properties (Pty) Ltd.

Erf	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
2342 Re	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	DHC Properties (Pty) Ltd	DHC Properties (Pty) Ltd	DHC Properties (Pty) Ltd	DHC Properties (Pty) Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>	£100	£100	£25		£100,000	£100,000

Roxdale was designed in 1940 by FO Muller, about which little is known except that he studied at the University of the Witwatersrand (Spec. Qual. Exam. ad DipTP.), and that his address in 1940 was 611 Fatti's Mansions in Johannesburg.

The architectural language of Roxdale is monumental art deco. A circular driveway is entered through the original deco gate posts in orange brick. Roxdale is written in attractive art deco script on the two port-cocheres that lead into the vestibules. The building is in a gently sloping U shape, and has three service towers, and the two outer towers emphasise the building's verticality with parallel lines that run to the roof. The later addition of a building on the western end of the erf, Roxdale Gardens, resulted in Roxdale being renamed Roxdale Mansions.



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

Externally the building remains remarkably intact, with the only noticeable change being the replacement of the original lights on the gate posts.



A 1943 photo showing the original lights on the gate posts of Roxdale.

Source: Marian Laserson



Photo by Brett McDougall
(2018)

The building contains many felicitous details: curved garden walls in warm, brown brick, sculptural capitals on the southern façade, and lion head gargoyles on the northern balconies.



Photos: Brett McDougall (2020)

ROXDALE, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	No.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	Yes.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes – 1940s streamline moderne.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	No.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1940s streamline moderne.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

7.6. Lauriston Court

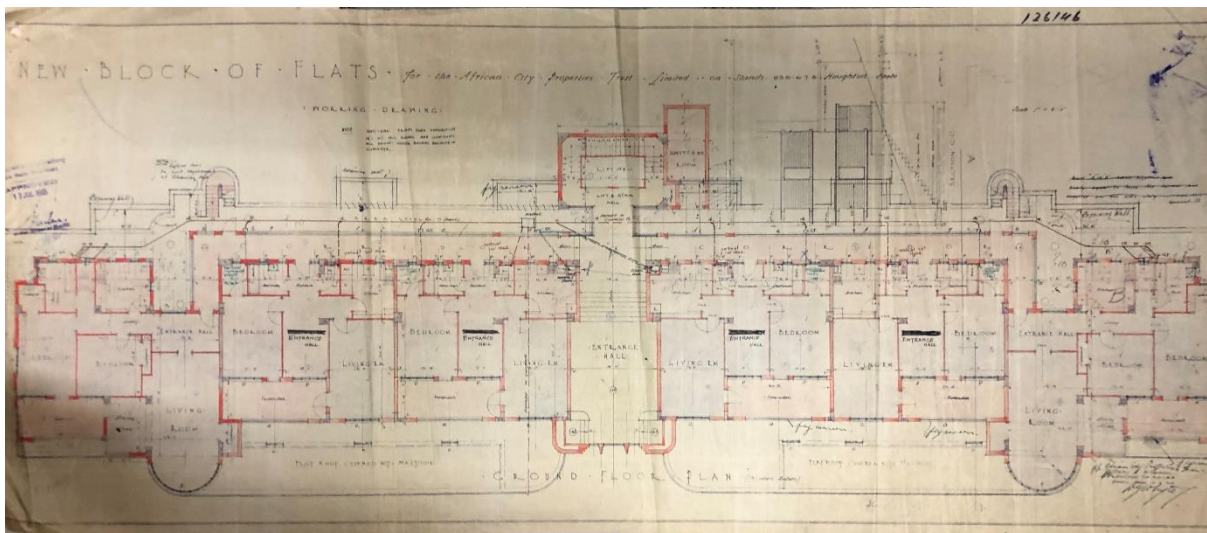
Erven 895 Re, 896 Re, 897 Re and 898, Houghton Estate, were sold to African City Properties Trust, Ltd by T Lloys Ellis sometime between 1931 and 1934, and they would construct Lauriston Court here in 1934.

Erf	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
895 Re	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>							£57,000	£57,000	£60,000	£66,000
896 Re	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>	£400	£500	£550	£600	£450	£400				
897 Re	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd

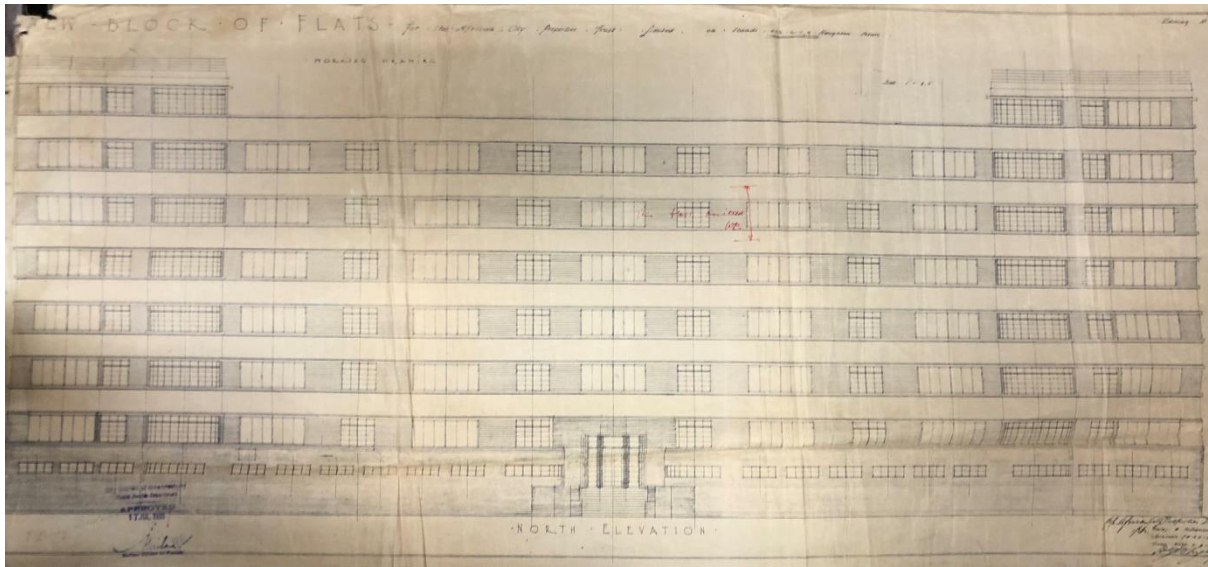
Erf	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
			CR Daynes							
<i>Buildings value:</i>	£400	£600	£600	£550	£450	£400				
898	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr TL Ellis and Mr CR Daynes	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd	African City Prop. Trust, Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>	£60	£90	£200	£180	£145	£145				

Lauriston Court is designed in the streamline moderne style, and is replete with semi-circular bay windows that soak up northern light and views over the northern suburbs.

The building was designed in 1934 by the famed architectural practice of Emley & Williamson for Schlesinger's African City Properties Trust.

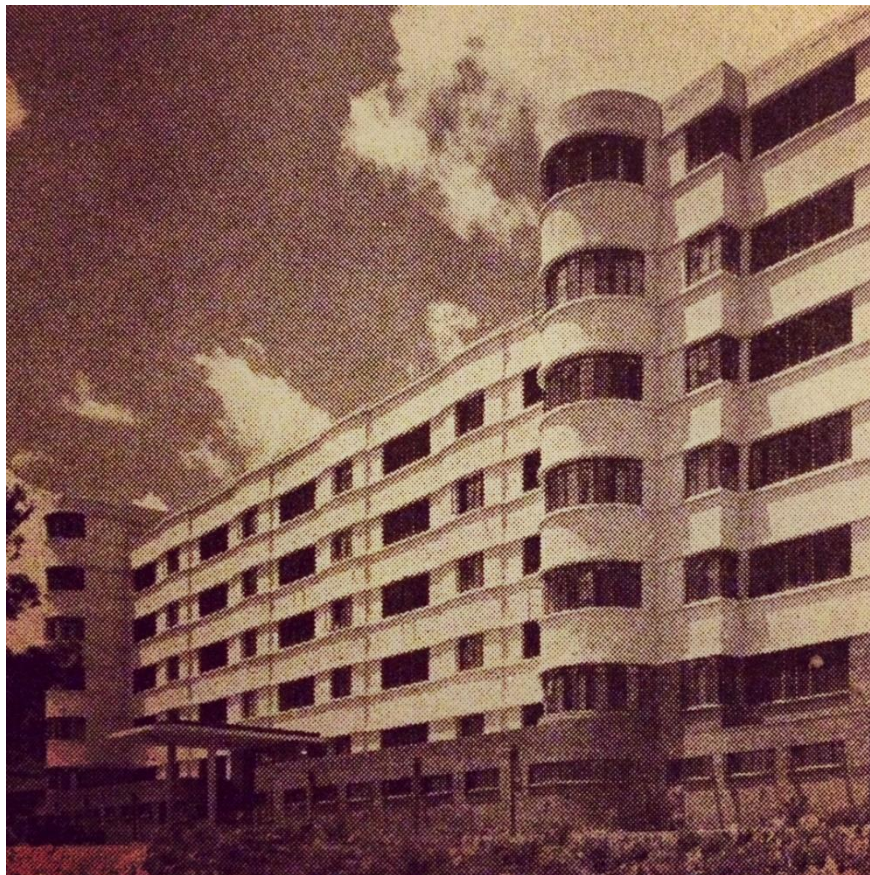


The architects appear to have wanted contrasting bands of brick and plaster finish on the building, which would further have enhanced its sleekness.



The garages, designed at the same time and abutting Louis Botha Avenue, are now situated on Erf RE/2437, and form the base of a new block of apartments.

Lauriston Court has been awarded a blue plaque.



*Lauriston Court
photographed
soon after
construction.
Unknown
photographer,
circa late 1930s*



Photo by Brett McDougall (2018)

LAURISTON COURT, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	No.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	Yes.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes – 1930s streamline moderne.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – Emley & Williamson.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1930s streamline moderne.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

7.7. Houghton Heights

Houghton Heights is now situated on Erf 17/2343, Houghton Estate, but it was originally part of the Orange Grove Tea Garden property owned by Lloys Ellis.

Erf	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
2343F	Mr TL Ellis	Mr TL Ellis	PDH Investments (Pty) Ltd	PDH Investments (Pty) Ltd	PDH Investments (Pty) Ltd	PDH Investments (Pty) Ltd
<i>Buildings value:</i>				£80,000	£82,500	£90,000

The building was designed in 1938 by John Shaw. John Shaw Graduated with a Diploma in Architecture from the University of Witwatersrand in March 1931, and apparently worked at the important practice of Cook and Cowen in 1930 and 1931 in Johannesburg. Shaw was in practice on his own account in Johannesburg by 1934, and was responsible for some important art deco apartment block, including Helvetia Court in Bellevue. (Artefacts, 2018)

It is designed in a U shape that turns its back on Louis Botha Avenue and embraces very generous gardens. The alternating bands of red and orange brick emphasise its sleekness. The vestibule is richly decorated. In contrast to the rich palette of materials used on the northern façade, the southern façade, facing Louis Botha Avenue, is in unadorned concrete. It has been awarded a blue plaque.



Photo by Brett McDougall (2018)



Photos by Brett McDougall (2018)



HOUGHTON HEIGHTS, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	No.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	Yes.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes – 1930s streamline moderne.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – John Shaw
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1930s streamline moderne.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

8. Erven North and South of Louis Botha Avenue between Acorn Lane and Houghton Drive.

8.1. Introduction



The south of Louis Botha Avenue between Acorn Lane and Houghton Drive comprises 158 Louis Botha Avenue to 184 Louis Botha Avenue. Most erven fall steeply to the north, and many are characteristically rocky ridge sites. This has resulted in low density development, largely dating from the 1930s, with

structures situated on the southern edge of the erf. Most have stone walls on the Louis Botha Avenue boundary.

These properties were largely developed between the early 1920s and mid-1930s, and from the late 1920s onwards were owned by eminent members of the Jewish community, including Isidore Block (OBE), MJ Harris, and Bruna Zacks.

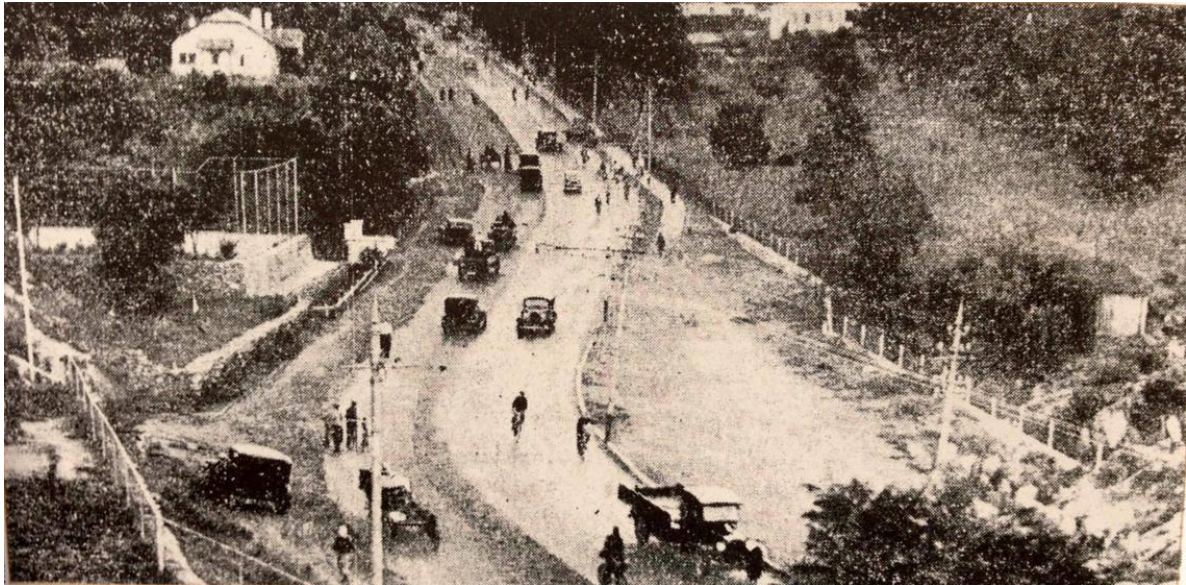
8.2. 1 - Erven 883 and 884, Houghton Estate

The valuation rolls indicate that this property was purchased by Mr CF Hill between 1919 and 1922, and the plans are dated June 1922.

Erf	1913	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
883	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr CF Hill	Mr CF Hill	Mr CF Hill	Mr CF Hill	Mr MIC Kaplan	Mr MIC Kaplan	Mr MIC Kaplan	Mr MIC Kaplan	Mr S Solomon
<i>Buildings value:</i>					£2,700	£2,700	£2,600	£2,300	£2,200	£2,200	£2,900

The architect of the house is Bertram Richard Avery. Avery was born and trained in Nelson, New Zealand. He came to South Africa in 1900 during the Anglo-Boer War with the New Zealand Mounted Rifles, and later served as a Lieutenant in the Central South African Railway Engineer Corps. After the war, he remained in the country to practise in Johannesburg, where he designed a number of houses. Avery acted as an Honorary Representative of the New Zealand Government Departments of Tourist and Health Resorts and of Commerce and Industries. He lived at 3 Urania St, Observatory, and died in Johannesburg. (Artefacts, 2020)

The house is clearly visible in the top right corner of this photo from The Star (circa 1930s) showing "Death Bend".

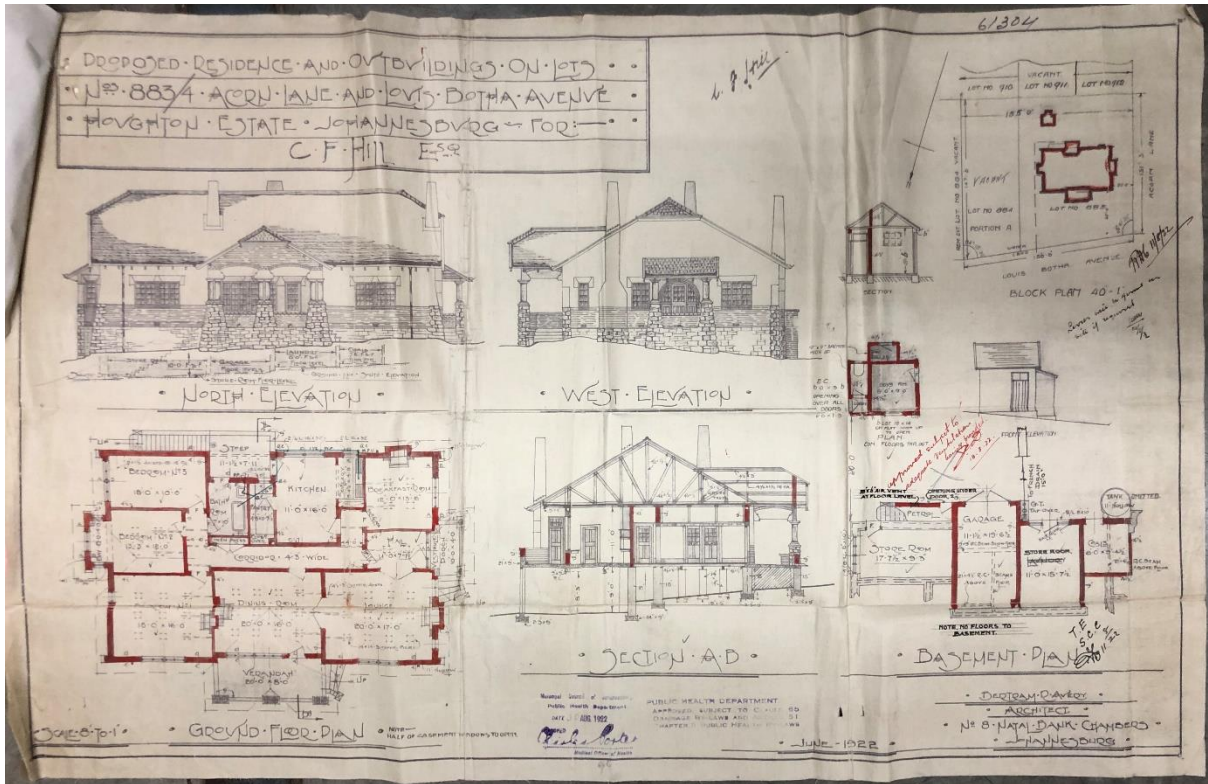


The house is situated on the north-western boundary of erf 883, close to the busy intersection of Acorn Lane and Louis Botha Avenue.

Though largely intact, the radically altered context of the house has substantially reduced its heritage value.

Of importance, though, are the mature trees on the northern edge of erf 883 and 884.

The plans of the house are magnificent: Bertram Avery presents a beautifully detailed arts-and-crafts house annotated in art nouveau script.



ERVEN 883 & 884, HOUGHTON ESTATE: ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	No.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	No.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	No.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – Bertram Richard Avery.
Illustrates an historical period.	No.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

8.3.2 - Erven 884 Re, 885, 886 Re, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, and 912, Houghton Estate (“Mount Carmel”)

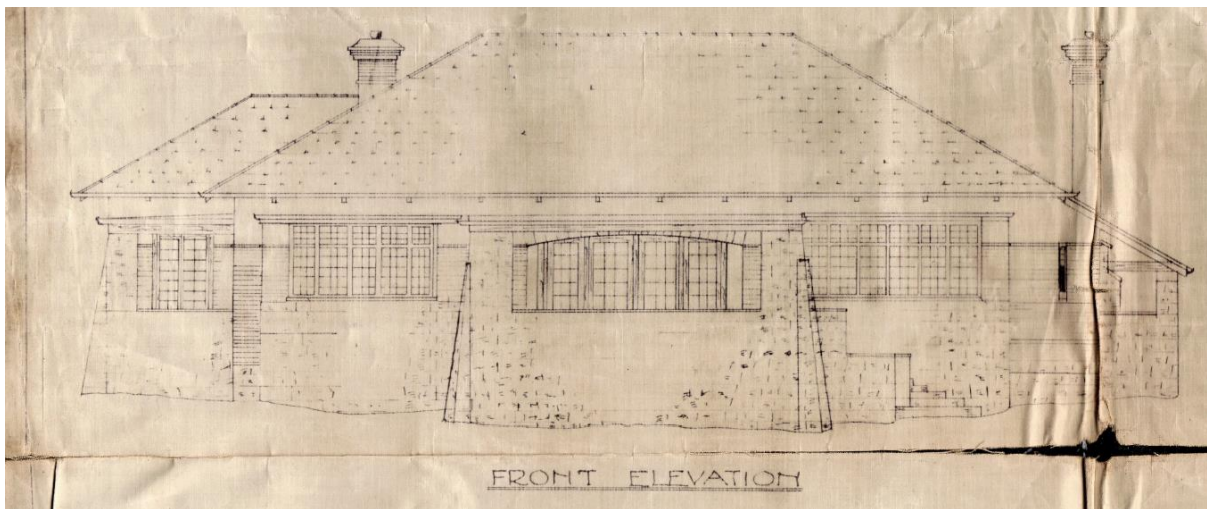
This large property, consisting of ten Houghton erven (or part thereof), was consolidated by Mrs FM Bagley, with the main dwelling being built in 1923 on erf 906.

Erf	1913	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
906	Township Co.	Township Co.	Mr EEJ Lezard	Mrs FM Bagley	Mrs A Block	Mrs A Block	Mrs A Block	Mrs JI Hepker	Mrs JI Hepker	Mrs JI Hepker	Mrs JI Hepker
<i>Buildings value:</i>				£3,250	£3,600	£3,600	£3,600	£3,200	£3,500	£3,500	£4,400

The plans identify the architect as SV Mann. Samuel Victor Mann was born in Armagh, Ireland and educated at the Academy in Armagh, Queen's College, Galway and the Royal University of Ireland where he qualified in engineering. He arrived in Johannesburg in 1901 and entered into partnership with JS Donaldson. The partnership ended in about 1906. Mann retired in 1937. (Artefacts, 2020)

Mann was responsible for a number of memorable buildings in Johannesburg, the most notable being the Alhambra Theatre, which was completed in 1921.

The plans show an arts-and-crafts -influenced design, with two bay windows and a large verandah supported by buttresses dominating the northern façade.



What was eventually built was altogether grander: two storeys, with monumental buttressing.



North elevation: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)

Even in its diminished state, the house is impressive, as is evidenced in these photos:



Louis Botha Avenue entrance and stone wall: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)



Details of the north facade, including the impressive stone quoining and buttresses: photos by Brett McDougall (2019)



Upstairs loggia: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)



South facade, and exposed koppie on the southern boundary: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)

Besides the house, other important elements on the property include the attractive stone wall and gates on Louis Botha Avenue, the row of plane trees on the northern boundary, and mature jacarandas on the Acorn Lane and eastern boundaries, as this aerial photo shows.



No details of the original owner, Mrs FM Bagley, have been found, but the name appears against a number of Houghton Properties in the Valuation Rolls of the 1920s and 30s, so it is possible that Bagley was a property speculator.

Mrs A Block, who owned the house from the late 1920s to the mid-30s, was born Ann Hillman. She married Isidore Jack Block in 1924.

Isidore Block was born in 1893, and educated at St John's College, Houghton, and at Edinburgh University where he studied Medicine. He distinguished himself in the First World War, serving in East Africa in the 4th SAF Ambulance, and was mentioned in Despatches and later received the Order of the British Empire (Military Division).

He practised as a surgeon at the Hospital for Women, Soho Square, London, Chalmers Hospital in Edinburgh, and Queen's Hospital in Birmingham, before settling in Johannesburg. In Johannesburg he was a Member of the Honorary Visiting Staff at Johannesburg



Hospital, and a lecturer in Clinical Medicine at the University of the Witwatersrand.

*Photo of Isidore Jack Block
Source: South African Who's Who,
Social and Business, 1931-32*

Block named 162 Louis Botha Avenue "Mount Carmel". (Donaldson, South African Who's Who, Business and Social, 1931-32, 1932)

Mrs JI (Johanna) Hepker, the owner from the mid-30s and until at least the late-40s, was the wife of the successful timber merchant, Julius Hepker. Is it possible that the impressive interior wood panelling dates to this period of ownership?



The staircase, leading off the vestibule: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)



Living room off the vestibule: photo by Brett McDougall (2019)

The house is currently owned by the Department of Public Works, and is slowly being stripped of wood panelling, light fittings and any other saleable material.

ERVEN 884 Re, 885, 886 Re, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, & 912, HOUGHTON ESTATE (“MOUNT CARMEL”): ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – Isidore Jack Block.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes – an impressive example of 1920s residential architecture.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes – impressive stone masonry, and wood panelling.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – Samuel Victor Mann
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes - 1920s arts-and-crafts.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

8.4.3 - Erven 886, 887, 903, 904, and 905, Houghton Estate (House Harris)

The valuation rolls indicate that this property was purchased by Mr EEJ Lezard between 1919 and 1922, and developed between 1925 and 1928. It comprises five erven, but the main dwelling is constructed on erf 903.

Erf	1913	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
903	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr EEJ Lezard	Mrs MJ Harris	Mrs MJ Harris	Mrs MJ Harris	Mrs MJ Harris	Mrs MJ Harris	Mrs MJ Harris	Mr EV Alexander	Mr EV Alexander
<i>Buildings value:</i>					£4,000	£4,000	£3,800	£3,900	£3,800	£3,800	£4,700

The property was owned by MJ Harris from the mid-1920s to the early 40s. Morris (Morrie) Jacob Harris was born in London in 1875 and educated in England. The family came to settle in Kimberley in 1889, moving later to the Witwatersrand where his father would serve as the first Rabbi on the Rand. Harris served architectural articles with WH Miles in Kimberley before opening his own practice there. At the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War he moved to Mafeking, where he held the position of Municipal Surveyor from 1901 until 1905. During this time he acted as supervising architect for Baker & Masey in the execution of the Siege Memorial Church at Mafeking, and as supervising architect for Rogers & Ross of Kimberley in the execution of Mafeking Town Hall and of the Mafeking Wesleyan Church. He would go on to design several mission churches in Bechuanaland about this time, before moving to Johannesburg in 1905 where he set up practice as an architect.



Morrie Harris

Source: South African Who's Who, Social and Business, 1931-32

His first major commission was the design of the great Lion Synagogue in Doornfontein (1905). Harris served as examiner in architectural practice at the Transvaal University College, Johannesburg from 1905 until 1912, and in 1913 Harris acted as the assessor of the competition for the design of the Presbyterian Church in Boksburg. In the same year he married May Cohen. In 1918 Harris was elected the president of the Transvaal Institute of Architects and councillor for the Judith's Paarl Ward, Doornfontein. His keen interest in municipal and civic affairs had matured by 1918 and it was he who was largely responsible for establishing a free municipal library in Johannesburg in 1924. He would serve as mayor of Johannesburg in the 1923/1924 period. Harris returned to architectural practice at the end of his term of office in March 1924. His involvement with public life caused him to be among the delegates chosen to present the Architects and Quantity Surveyors (Private) Act before Parliament in 1927. In 1928 Harris entered into partnership or associateship with Emley & Williamson. Harris founded the Johannesburg Jewish Guild and was its president for many years. He died in Johannesburg in 1950. (Artefacts, 2020)

Built on the southern edge of the property, the house has commanding views over the northern suburbs.



View from the property of House Harris (on the left). House Zacks is on the right.

Photo: Brett McDougall (2019)

In 2016 a fire destroyed the property. It has subsequently been rebuilt under the supervision of Mayat Hart Architects. Some original features have survived.



Stone fireplaces in the downstairs living area: photos by Brett McDougall (2019)



The eastern and northern facades: photos by Brett McDougall (2019)

Of interest is the high water table on the property (the Orange Grove Waterfall breaks ground close to here), which results in a continuous trickle of water into a stone pond.



Photo by Brett McDougall (2019)

ERVEN 886, 887, 903, 904, & 905, HOUGHTON ESTATE (HOUSE HARRIS): ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – Morris Harris.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	No.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	No.
Work of a major architect or builder.	No.
Illustrates an historical period.	No.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

8.5. 4 - Erf 888, Houghton Estate (House Zacks)

The valuation rolls indicate that this property was purchased by Mrs R Jacobsen between 1925 and 1928, and developed between 1928 and 1931.

Erf	1913	1919	1922	1925	1928	1931	1934	1937	1940	1943	1946
888	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	T'ship Co.	Mr J Henry	Mrs R Jacobsen	Mrs R Jacobsen	Mrs R Jacobsen	Mrs R Jacobsen	Mrs D Cohen	Mrs BL Zacks	Mrs BL Zacks
<i>Buildings value:</i>						£5,000	£4,600	£4,400	£4,000	£4,000	£4,125

Nothing is known about the owners Henry, Jacobsen or Cohen, but Bruna Lydia Zacks, who purchased the property in the early 1940s was the daughter of the immensely talented and successful businessman Elie Susman family.

Elie Susman was born in 1880 to Jewish parents in Rietavas, western Russia, now Lithuania. Susman immigrated to South Africa with his older brother Harry in the late 1890s. From Francistown, they took a wagon loaded with trade goods and crossed the Zambezi at Kazangula where they traded. Elie and Harry founded Susman Brothers, an African business partnership. Through this vehicle Elie was a director of approximately 50 companies and chairman of the Rhodesian Mercantile Holding Co. He held the first mining license over what became the Rhokana mine. In 1930, he was one of the original directors who set up Northern Caterers Ltd., based

in Kitwe, which operated hotels and bakeries in Luanshya, Nchanga, Nkana, and Mufulira.

In 1934, the Susmans made their most important investment yet, taking a share in a new business in South Africa called "Woolworth". Their partner was Max Sonnerberg, a successful Cape Town businessman, politician and community leader. Max had bought a department store in Cape Town in 1929, changed its name to "Woolworth" in 1931 and started expanding in Cape Town.

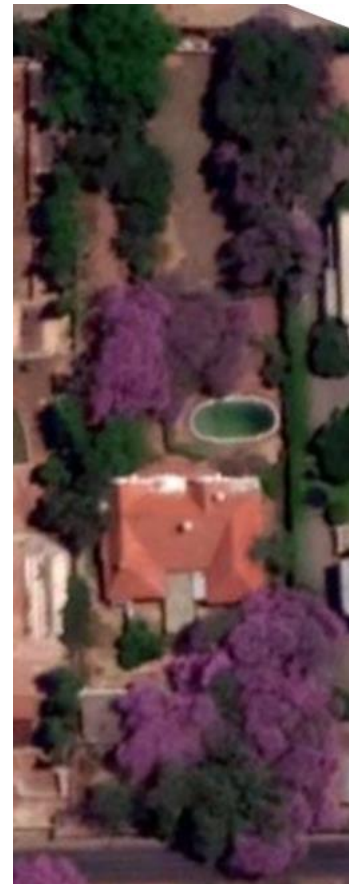
An agreement was concluded in December 1934 in which Susman Brothers invested \$25,000 in Woolworth and took shares in the business. Susman Brothers invested over \$50,000 in Woolworth in the next two years. Elie Susman moved his family from Cape Town to Johannesburg and became a director in June 1935. Max Sonnenberg controlled Cape Town stores, and Elie Susman controlled Transvaal stores. Woolworth was formally launched as a public company in 1935. Elie Susman was 55 years old when he began to work on a more or less full-time basis for Woolworths. (Macmillan, 2005)

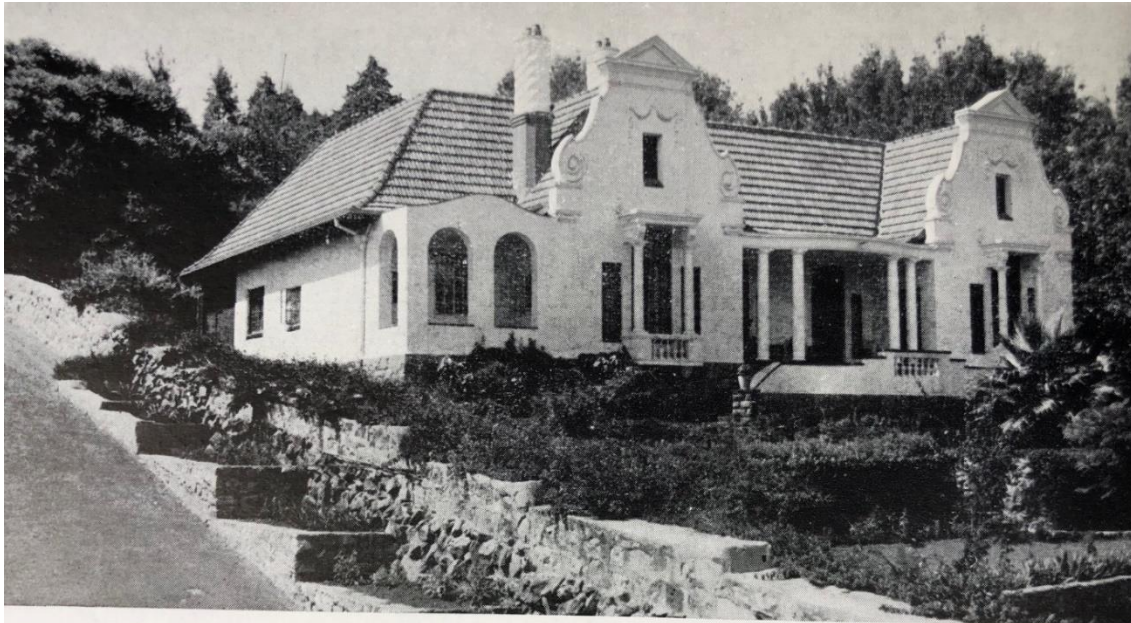
Elie's daughter, Bruna Lydia, married Sidney Zacks in 1938, and they purchased House Zacks in the early 1940s. House Zacks, built in the Cape Dutch revival style, is situated in the centre of an erf that slopes steeply to the north. Plans for the property have not been found.

Notable architectural features include the hipped roof and barley-twist chimneys.

A number of mature jacarandas are found on the property.

House Zacks is included in Allister Macmillian's Homes of the Golden City.









THE HOME OF MR. AND MRS. S. ZACKS IN LOUIS BOTHA AVENUE.

Source: *Allister Macmillian's Homes of the Golden City*

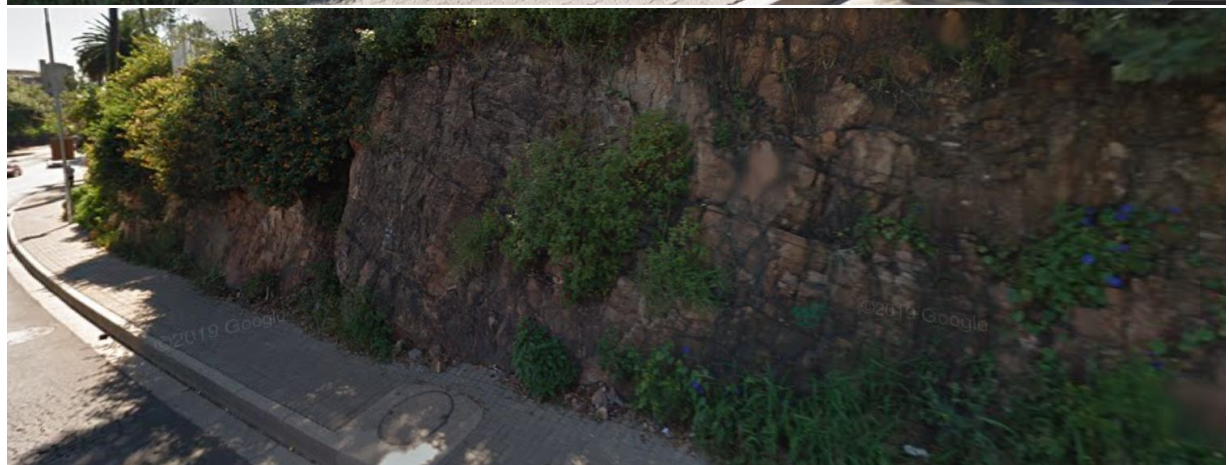
ERF 888, HOUGHTON ESTATE (HOUSE ZACKS): ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Natural or Cultural Value:	
Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	No.
Historic Value:	
Associated with historic person, group or organisation.	Yes – Bruna Lydia Zacks, daughter of Elie Susman.
Associated with historic event or activity.	No.
Architectural/Aesthetic Value:	
Important example of building type.	No.
Important example of a style or period.	Yes – superb example of Cape Dutch revival that is remarkably intact.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Unknown.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – late 20s / early 30s Cape Dutch Revival.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.


8.6. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 – 168 to 184 Louis Botha Avenue

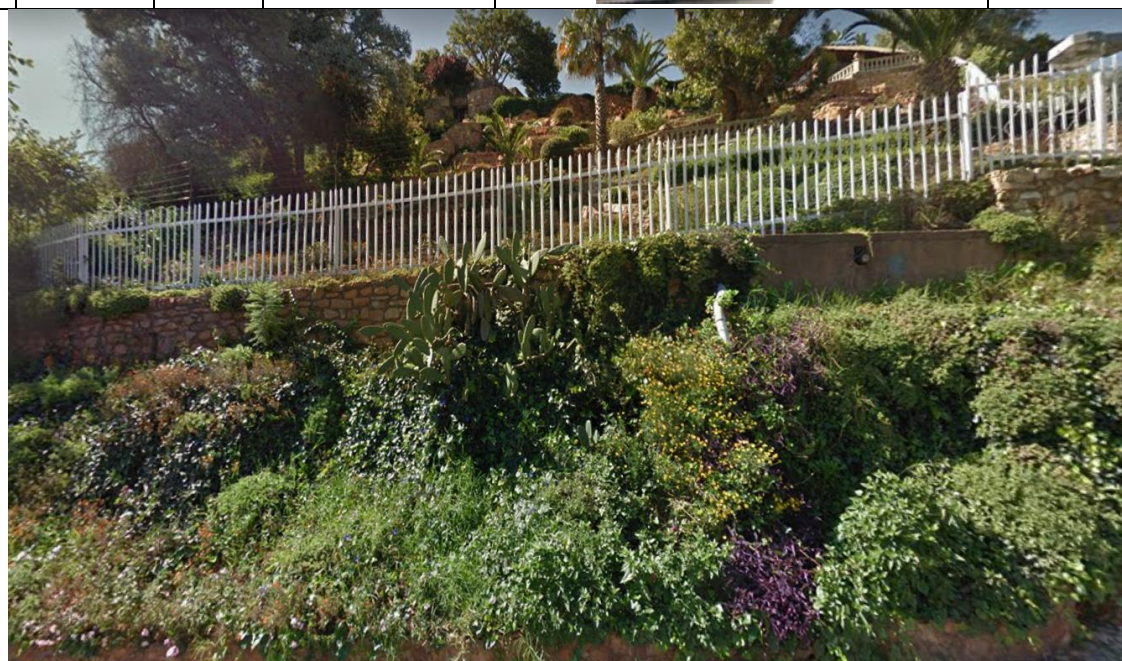
No	Erf No and Address	Date, Architect, Other Details	Google Maps Aerial Photo	Heritage Value
5	Not available on Windeed – possibly a portion of Erf 889	168 Louis Botha Ave. Modern, flat roofed dwelling. Does not appear on this 1950s aerial of Johannesburg: 		Low, but has attractive stone wall.
 <p data-bbox="284 1429 1358 1458">Views of the property boundary from Louis Botha Avenue - photo by Brett McDougall (2019)</p>				
6	3/890 891	172 Louis Botha Ave. 174 Louis Botha Ave.	Constructed between 1922 and 1925, with the owner being Mr RG Lucas at the time. No other details known.	 <p data-bbox="1249 1458 1441 1827">Low, except for mature jacarandas and other trees on Louis Botha boundary, and stone walls and exposed rock face along Louis Botha Avenue.</p>

No	Erf No and Address	Date, Architect, Other Details	Google Maps Aerial Photo	Heritage Value
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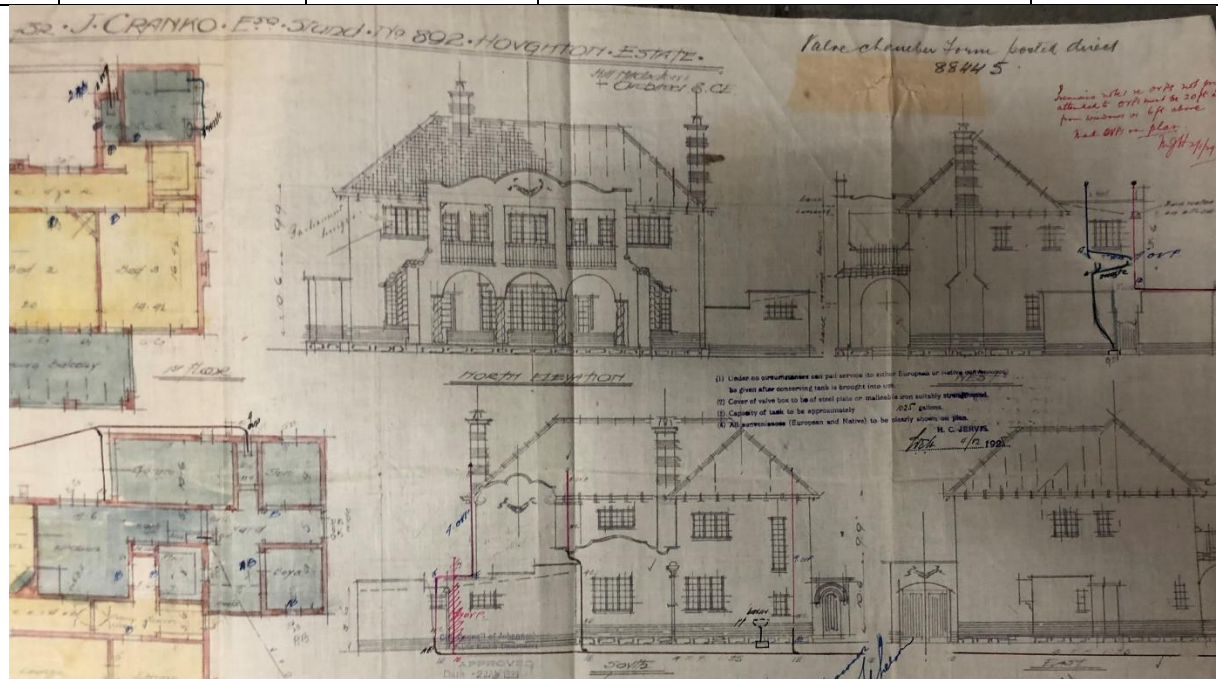
Views of the property boundary from Louis Botha Avenue - photos by Brett McDougall (2019)

No	Erf No and Address	Date, Architect, Other Details	Google Maps Aerial Photo	Heritage Value
7	892 178 Louis Botha Ave.	<p>Constructed in 1928 for J Cranko (Mrs E Cranko is listed as the owner of the erf, but no other details about the Crankos are known). Architect: Hill Mitchelson.</p> <p>English-born Sydney Percival Hill Mitchelson was recorded as working in Johannesburg from about 1904 until 1935. A civil engineer, quantity surveyor and architect, he was responsible for a number of apartment buildings and houses in Johannesburg. (Artefacts, 2020)</p>		<p>Current condition unknown, but aerial photo of the site indicates the footprint of the house is largely intact.</p> <p>Original stone wall along Louis Botha Avenue still intact, as are the extensive stone retaining walls on the northern part of the property.</p>

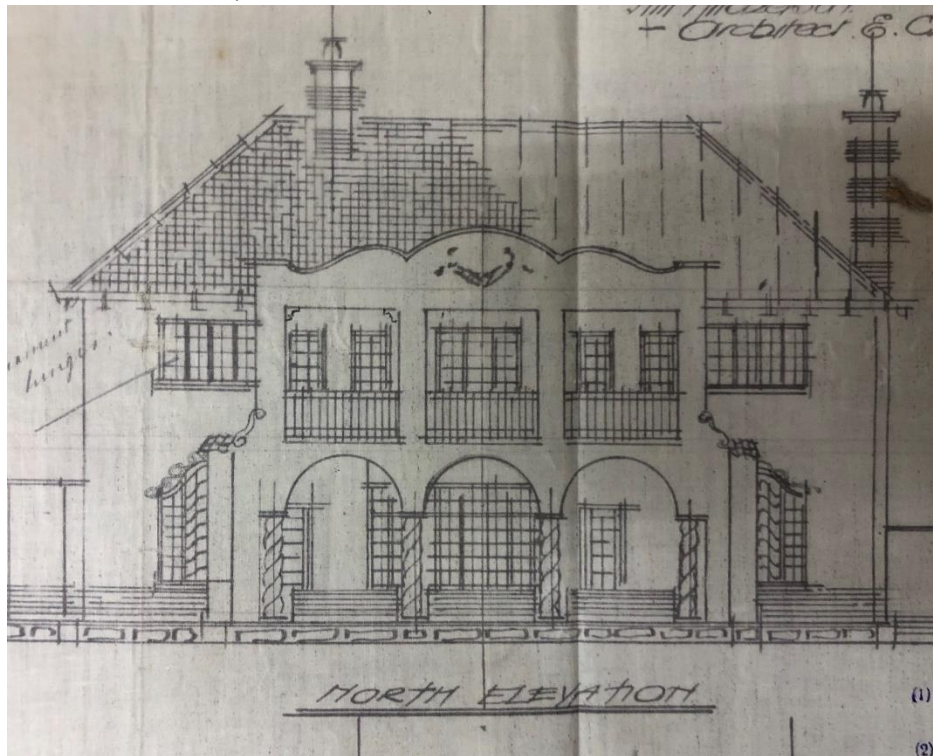


Stone Wall from Louis Botha Avenue - photo by Brett McDougall (2019)




No	Erf No and Address	Date, Architect, Other Details	Google Maps Aerial Photo	Heritage Value
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Elevations and site plan – dated 1928 with architect identified as Hill Mitchelson



Detail of the northern elevation

No	Erf No and Address	Date, Architect, Other Details	Google Maps Aerial Photo	Heritage Value
8	2/893 1/894	180 Louis Botha Avenue 182 Louis Botha Avenue	Modern construction. 	Low, except for stone wall and gate posts along Louis Botha Avenue at 180 Louis Botha Avenue.
 <p>Stone Wall from Louis Botha Avenue - photo by Brett McDougall (2019)</p>				
9	2437	184 Louis Botha Ave. 2018, architect Jason Berchowitz		Medium – modern apartments built on the 1930s garage of Lauriston Court.

8.7. 10 - Erven North of Louis Botha Avenue and the S-Bend Wall

The erven south of Louis Botha Avenue between St Patrick Lane, Houghton Estate, and the Orange Grove Waterfall have been cleared of all structures and most trees. A 1950s aerial shows at least two houses in this vicinity, and then a large expanse of undeveloped and south-facing ridge.



A recent aerial photo from Google Maps shows a cleared and undeveloped site.



The erven on the site have been consolidated, and the zoning is Residential 4, allowing for high density residential development. This zoning is consistent with the City of Johannesburg's intentions for the Louis Botha Avenue Corridor of Freedom.

More peculiar, though, is the City's building of a massive wall along the southern boundary of the site. The wall is over 2m high, and built with reinforced concrete. It has a substantial foundation and strengthening buttresses.



The wall. Photos by Brett McDougall (2019)

A wall no doubt benefits the (private) owner of the consolidated erven, but it appears at odds with the City's own policy on activating Louis Botha Avenue with architecture that engages and serves the pedestrian.

Perhaps in response to this, the City commissioned a massive public art project along the wall. In a press release dated August 2019, the Johannesburg Development Agency proudly claims that this is the largest mural in Johannesburg, and was created by 14 artists. The mural celebrates the history of Louis Botha Avenue: Ndebele cattle traders from Zimbabwe who travelled along the road in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Alexandra bus boycotts of 1957, and key heritage sites such as The Doll House and Fire Station.

But the many ironies cannot be lost on the City. Here is a high and forbidding wall on a corridor that was promised to improve the pedestrian experience. Here is a mural celebrating public transport, when a working public transport system has not materialised. Here a mural celebrates “heritage”, when one of the City’s most important natural heritage sites, the Orange Grove Waterfall, lies derelict and unloved next door, and when the wall itself has caused drainage problems that may destroy it.

How did that happen? Two pieces of work have been undertaken on the site: levelling, and the construction of the wall. In its engagement with the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA), who had undertaken the work, the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation highlighted concerns that levelling had pushed soil to the edge of the Orange Grove Waterfall, and that even a relatively minor storm would result in vast quantities of soil being deposited on the waterfall and in the silting up of the Orange Grove Spruit. More worryingly, the wall has been built without any drainage, besides for tiny weep holes about a meter up the wall. This means that storm water will flow in a southerly and easterly direction, carrying soil with it, and prevented from entering the Louis Botha storm water drains, will be channeled toward the Waterfall, the lowest point on the site. The site in question, Erf 2372, is privately owned, and until it is developed, no plans will be in place to attenuate and direct storm water.

After several engagements, the Johannesburg Development Agency acknowledged in late 2019 that a solution needed to be found to the problems highlighted, and funding has been committed to water attenuation measures.

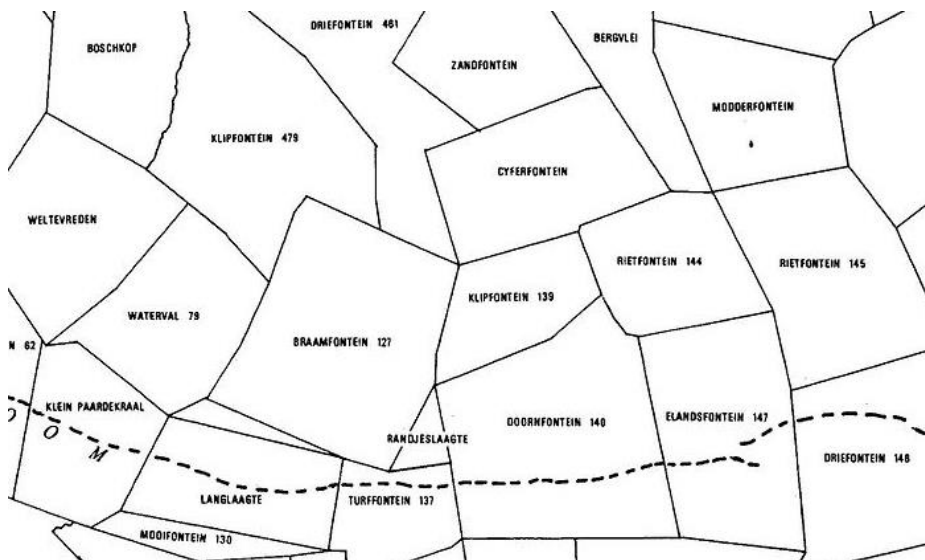
8.8. Conclusion

Increased traffic and poor urban management of Louis Botha Avenue have reduced its attractiveness for those able to afford to stay in large houses on large properties. This is evident in the stretch of erven south of Louis Botha Avenue between Acorn Lane and Houghton Drive. The study has identified two dwellings of medium heritage value that warrant retention: the dwelling on erven 884, 885 and 886, and the dwelling on erf 888. These dwellings are both sited on the southern edge of their erven, so there may be potential to densify the erven along Louis Botha Avenue without impacting the houses. Again, densification may be achieved without removing stone walls along Louis Botha Avenue, and we recommend that all stone walls are retained and incorporated into any new developments. Mature trees should be retained wherever possible.

9. History of the Study Area Illustrated in Maps

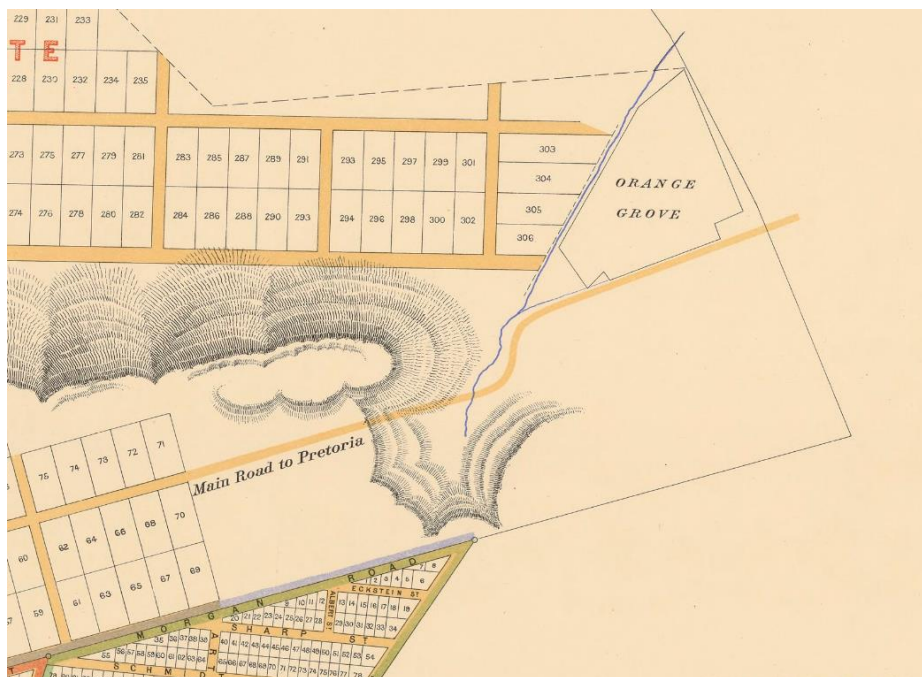
These five maps illustrate the development of the study area from 1853 to 1946.

9.1. An extract from the Registrar of Mining Rights, 1905



The position of the farms of the Witwatersrand is indicated on this 1905 map. Klipfontein 139, registered in 1852, is found between Doornfontein, Braamfontein, Syferfontein and Rietfontein.

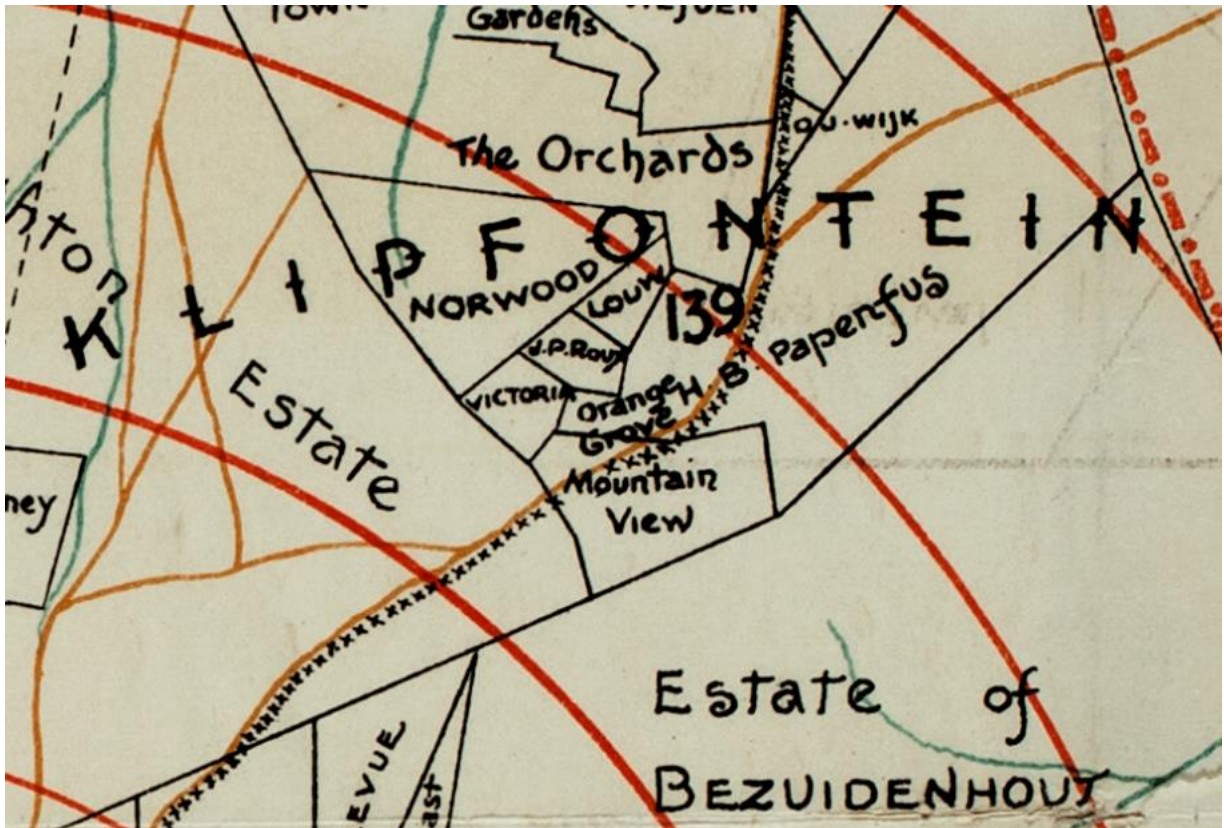
9.2. An extract from Pritchard's Commercial Map of Johannesburg and Suburbs, 1896



This map clearly indicates the source of the Sandspruit at the Orange Grove Waterfall, and that the northern boundary of the Orange Grove site was demarcated by the Sandspruit. A fork in the Sandspruit to

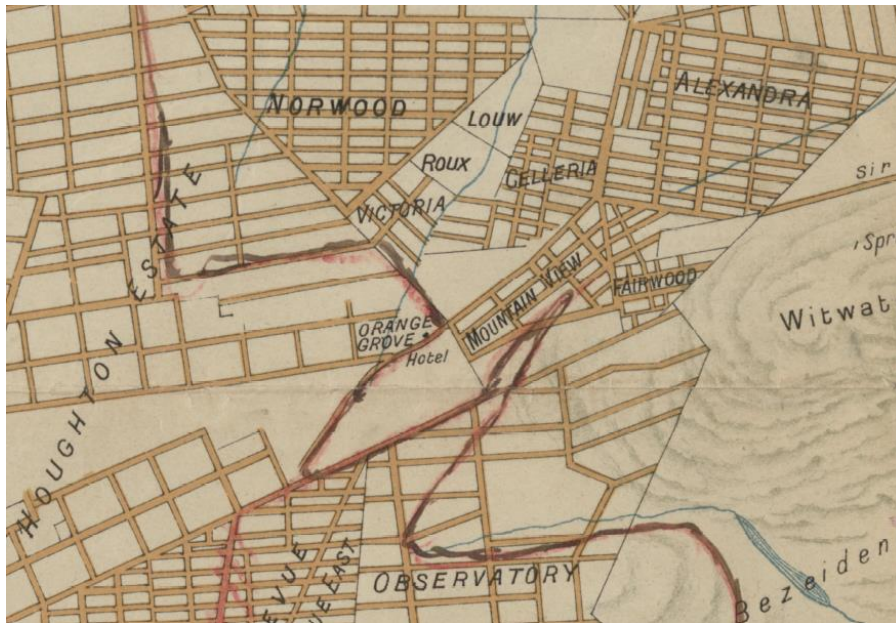
the top end of the Orange Grove site perhaps indicates a deliberate diversion for irrigation purposes. Was this perhaps the water source for the pool built by T Lloys Ellis? It does not show the vicinity of the Viljoen Farmstead which would form the basis for the Orange Grove Hotel, and which was situated south of the orange grove and the Main Road to Pretoria.

9.3. An extract from James A Cundall's Pocket Map of Johannesburg and Suburbs, 1903



Cundall's map clearly indicates the Orange Grove Hotel, though it sites it too far east. The line of crosses on Louis Botha Avenue indicates a "projected new tram route", which was eventually constructed after 1906.

9.4. An extract from MA Zoccola's Map of the North Eastern Suburbs of Johannesburg, 1904



Zoccola's map shows the recalibration of Louis Botha Avenue to meet Morgan Road in Bellevue. Houghton Drive and 1st Avenue, Houghton Estate, are shown to terminate at the Sandspruit boundary of the

Orange Grove Hotel grounds. The position of 2nd Avenue is less clear. Osborn Road exists to Grant Avenue, but not any further. The hotel is indicated in the correct position.

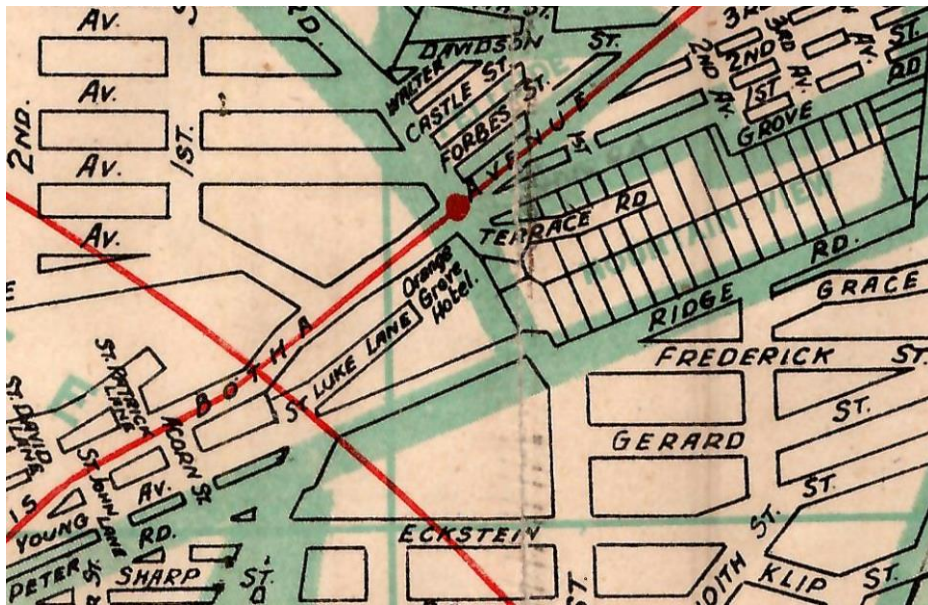
9.5. An extract from the Municipal Council Map of Johannesburg, 1910



Osborn Road has been extended across Louis Botha Avenue, Houghton Drive. The correct positions of Houghton Drive, 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue, Houghton Estate are indicated. St Luke Lane is

now visible. The dotted line indicates that the Yeoville tram had been extended as far as the Orange Grove Hotel.

9.6. An extract from Holmden's Street Map of Johannesburg and Suburbs, 1929



The Orange Grove Hotel is clearly indicated. It was at about this time that T Lloyds Ellis disposed of the Tea Gardens site north of Louis Botha Avenue, and donated a portion to the City Council to

construct Lloyds Ellis Avenue, but this has not yet been built.

9.7. An extract from the City Council of Johannesburg Road Map, 1946



Lloyds Ellis Avenue between Houghton Drive and Osborn Road is now indicated.

10. The Impact of the Corridors of Freedom Policy on the Area of the Study

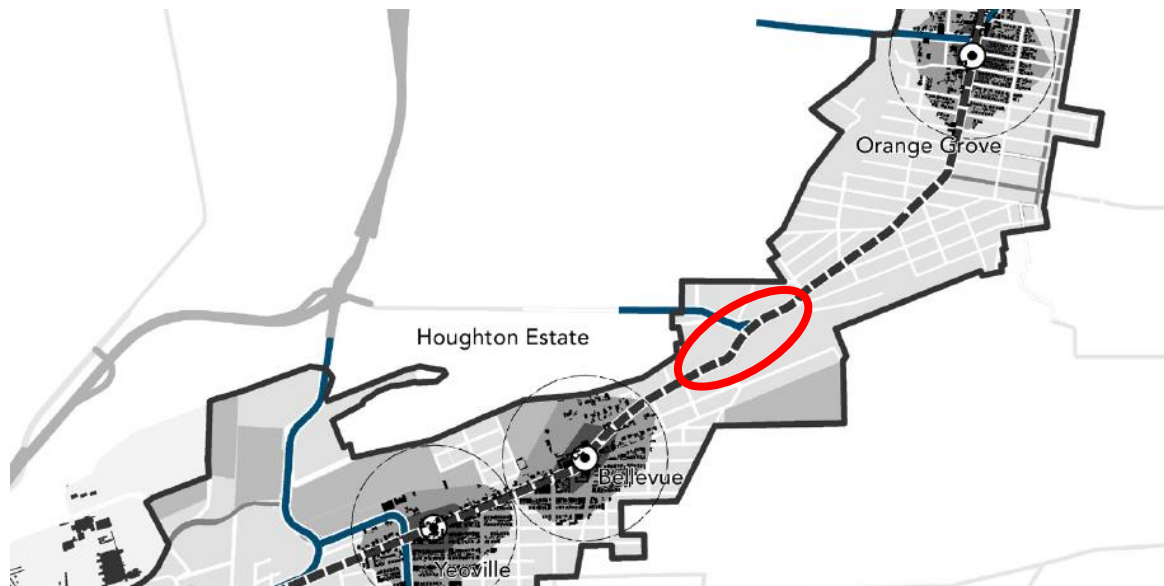
10.1. Introduction

In comparison to most other cities, Johannesburg has low densities and is characterised by urban sprawl. Its public transport systems are uncoordinated and inefficient. The majority of working class and poor citizens still live on the fringes of the city, commuting long distances daily, often at considerable cost, to access work and economic opportunities. Private car use is a significant driver of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in the City. In response to these challenges the City of Johannesburg has adopted the Corridors of Freedom spatial development policy. It aims to transform entrenched settlement patterns that have kept many marginalised communities at the outskirts of the City, away from economic opportunities and access to jobs and growth. Future growth in and around these Corridors is envisaged as medium to high-rise residential developments growing around the transit nodes, and gradually decreasing in height and density as one moves further away from the core. Social infrastructure, schools, clinics, police stations and government offices will be strategically located to support the growing population. (Johannesburg, 2016)

10.2. Louis Botha Avenue Development Corridor Strategic Area Framework

The published Strategic Area Frameworks (SAFs) provide the basic mechanism for planning and implementation of the Corridors of Freedom. The SAFs outline the desired spatial response to the intent of the Corridors of Freedom vision, and the projects and programs required to realise this spatial vision. In short, the SAFs provide spatial context for future development, guide investment decisions, and identify requirements and opportunities for transformation. (Johannesburg, 2016)

The geographic area of the Louis Botha Avenue Development Corridor extends along Louis Botha Avenue and Pretoria Main Road, from Hillbrow in the south to Marlboro in the north. The boundaries of the SAF in the context of this heritage study are indicated on the map below – the SAF boundary is in black, and the study area is in red:

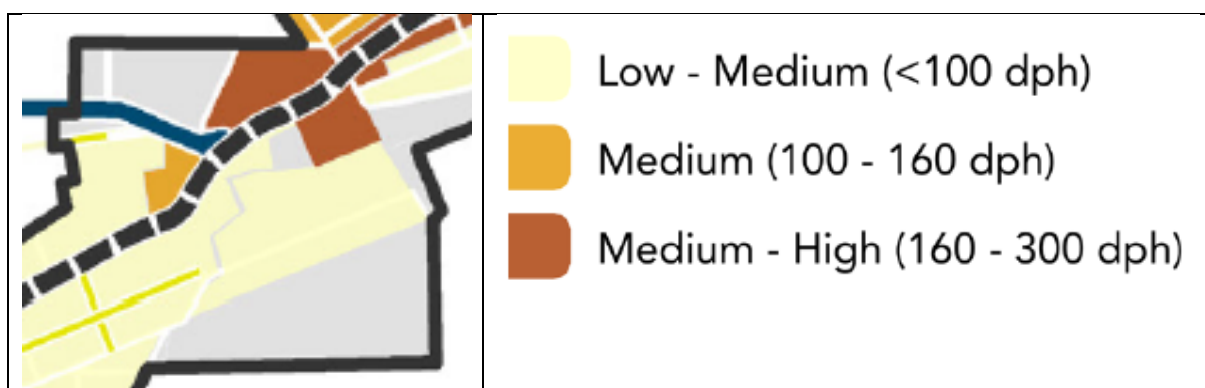


Thus, the entire area of this heritage study fall within the ambit of the Louis Botha Avenue Development Corridor SAF.

What, then, are the City's plans for the study area? The following extracts from the SAF, showing the study area, provide some guidance.

- **General Guidance**

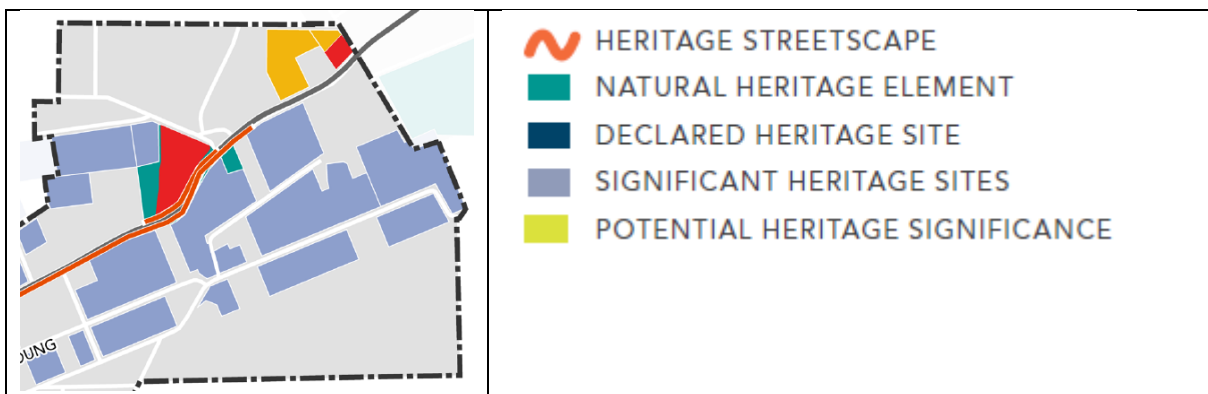
The SAF proposes between 100 and 160 dwelling units per hectare (dph) in buildings between 4 and 6 storeys high for the site of the Orange Grove Waterfall and House Bleloch. For the site of the Orange Grove Hotel and the art deco apartment block cluster, the density is designated 160 to 300 dph in buildings between 6 and 8 storeys high, which is presumably the density already obtained through existing developments. For erven south of Louis Botha Avenue, the density proposed is less than 100 dph, in buildings between 4 and 6 storeys high.



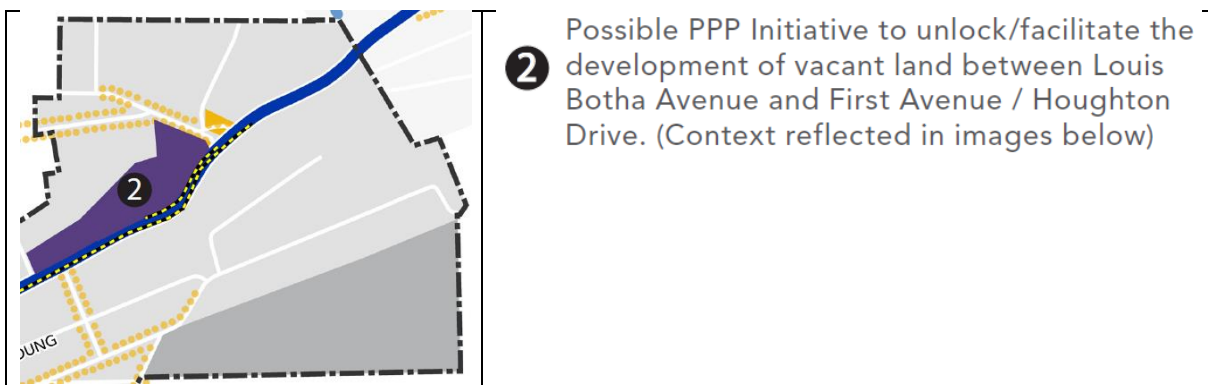


• **Specific Guidance**

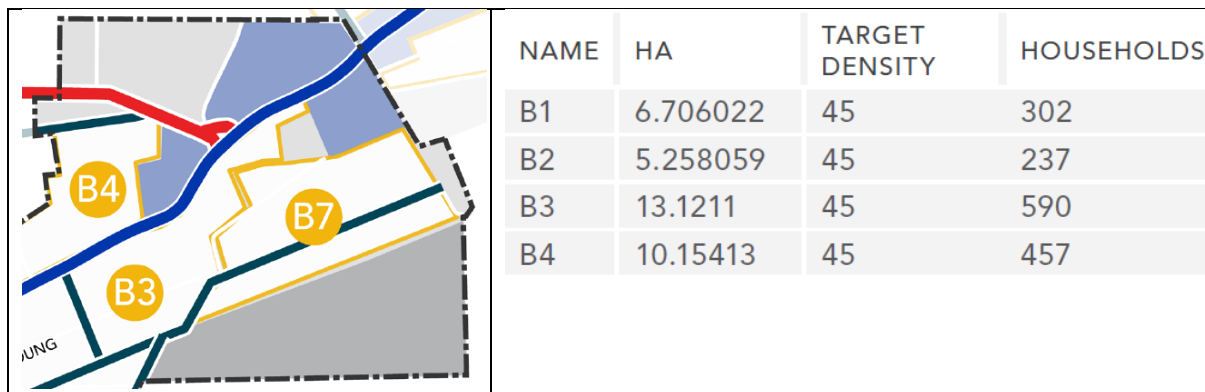
Three other maps in the SAF provide more specific guidance. In the first, the site of the Orange Grove Waterfall, and the undeveloped ridge next to Lauriston Court are marked as natural heritage elements. Most of the erven south of Louis Botha Avenue are marked as significant heritage sites, as is Lauriston Court, but then, curiously, the other art deco apartment blocks are not marked as heritage sites, and House Bleloch is ominously coloured red without an explanation being provided.



In another map, House Bleloch and the site of the Orange Grove Waterfall, and the cleared erven to the west of the Waterfall are all labelled 2, with the explanation that this is the site of a possible Public-Private Partnership (PPP) “to unlock/facilitate the development of vacant land between Louis Botha Avenue and First Avenue/ Houghton Drive.”



In the last extract, even south of Louis Botha Avenue are labelled B3, with a key indicating a targeted density of 45 dph for the area.



10.3. Conclusion

It is the intention of the City of Johannesburg that the Louis Botha Development Corridor SAF provide the blueprint for development of the Corridor, including the geographic area of this heritage study. The SAF acknowledges the importance of heritage, in that it states:

“The Strategic Area Framework for the corridor area will ultimately lead to increased growth and development within existing areas, a number of which are characterised by heritage resources of different kinds. Heritage conservation must thus form an integral part of a broader planning process in order to preserve key historic elements within the new development.

In the shorter term, the existing processes and applications relating to heritage properties must be respected and supported as growth moves forward. A priority of the city in the context of the corridors, however, is to undertake a more comprehensive heritage study and strategy. The aim of such a study would be to identify, document and assess heritage resources within the survey area.”

Unfortunately, the SAF is inconsistent in its identification of heritage resources, and subsequent heritage studies conducted by the City have not clarified the situation. This in turn has led to dubious and contradictory development recommendations in the SAF for the area in question.

In conclusion, in the SAF as it stands, the City has not adequately identified heritage resources within the area of this study, and the City's development guidelines for the study area will result in a loss of precious, non-renewable heritage resources, and ultimately degrade the quality of life of future residents of this area of the Corridor.

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

Few suburban enclaves in Johannesburg have as rich and important cultural heritage as the area of the study. It possesses one of the few waterfalls still in existence in the city, in itself a source of the Sandspruit. It has a unique concentration of architecture from the 1930s, including several important art deco apartment blocks, and houses by notable architects. The site of the Orange Grove Hotel is perhaps among the most important in the city, having been the chosen spot for leisure seekers in the earliest years of Johannesburg, a meeting place for President Kruger, Prime Minister Louis Botha and Deputy Prime Minister Jan Smuts at various times, and the home of some of South Africa's most important bands including Roy Martin and his orchestra, and Dan Hill and his band. Though the Hotel has been gone for almost 50 years, its memory still lingers in Joburgers' collective consciousness. Across the road, the Grove Kinema and its later incarnation the Victory Theatre have a powerful association with Italo Bernicchi, one of the city's most important film personalities.

11.1. Make heritage visible

This heritage needs to be made better known through the continuation of a blue plaque programme, already started by the City of Johannesburg and the Johannesburg Heritage Foundation. In addition to the blue plaques already awarded to Lauriston Court and Houghton Heights, blue plaques should be awarded to:

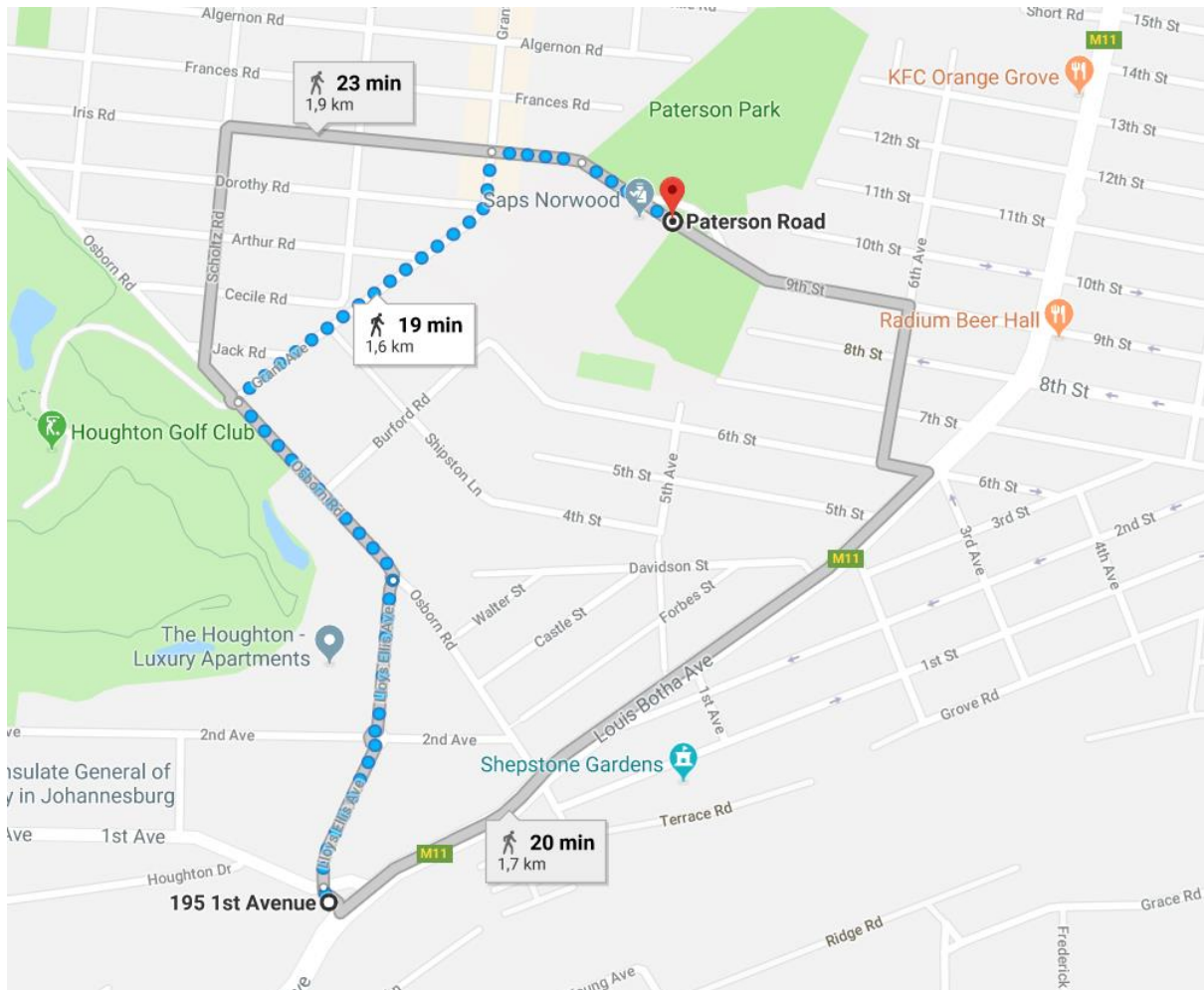
- The site of the Orange Grove Hotel;
- House Bleloch;
- The Orange Grove Waterfall;
- Roxdale; and
- Italo Bernicchi, at the Victory Theatre.

11.2. Celebrate the Orange Grove Waterfall

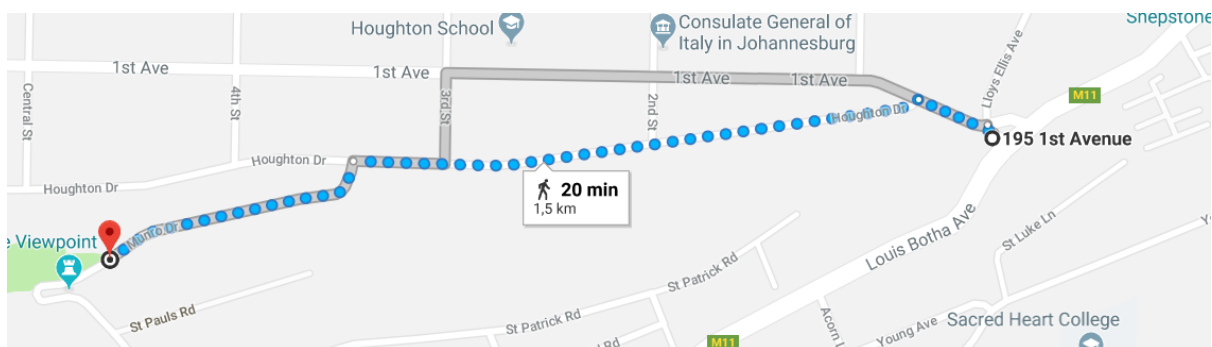
The area falls within the ambit of the City's Corridors of Freedom spatial development policy. The policy aims to reduce carbon emissions and provide economic opportunities to marginalised residents in the city by densifying key transit nodes, including Louis Botha Avenue. The Strategic Area Framework for the Louis Botha Avenue Development Corridor provides general and specific guidance for the study area, but it is unfortunately inadequate and inconsistent in its identification of heritage resources, and if its recommendations with regards to density are implemented, many heritage resources will be destroyed.

The City's Corridors of Freedom policy make specific reference to providing enhanced amenities to the Corridors, including access to municipal services and

recreation facilities. This will become particularly important as the area densifies. The City anticipates that the population on the Louis Botha Avenue Corridor will grow from 33,438 to 205,257 – a more than six-fold increase. These residents will be living in apartments, with little access to private gardens and leisure spaces. Some parts of the Louis Botha Avenue Corridor are close to parks, but the study area has no parks within less than a 20 minute walk (Paterson Park is 1.6kms away from the study area, and the Munro entrance to The Wilds is 1.5kms away). And with a huge increase in population and decrease in private gardens, these parks are likely to be hopelessly oversubscribed.



Extract from Google Maps, showing walking time to Paterson Park from the Waterfall



Extract from Google Maps, showing walking time to The Wilds from The Waterfall

But the City already owns the erven on which the Orange Grove Waterfall and House Bleloch are situated. Conversion of erf RE/1075 and RE/1076 Houghton Estate into a public park would solve this challenge. It would also provide the City with an opportunity to rehabilitate and celebrate the Orange Grove Waterfall, and ensure that it is properly managed for future generations. House Bleloch could either serve as a restaurant or tea garden for the new park, or it could house the offices of a vital municipal service for the area.

11.3. Partnerships to promote density while preserving heritage

With regards to the erven south of Louis Botha Avenue, the City has already recognised the heritage importance of many of these properties, and has recommended a density of 45 dph (in itself not insubstantial). Densification of these erven will have to be carefully considered to avoid the unnecessary loss of mature trees, the destruction of remaining stone walls and gates, and the loss of the relationship between heritage homes and their gardens.

Ultimately, the heritage of the study area provides more opportunities than challenges. Opportunities for the improvement of the public realm, provision of recreation space, and opportunities to unlock the significant cultural tourism potential of the area. The Johannesburg Heritage Foundation looks forward to working with the City of Johannesburg in crafting solutions that meet the development requirements of the City while complying with the City's Heritage obligations.



Death Bend with the Orange Grove Hotel visible in the centre. Photo: Museum Africa (circa 1910)

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