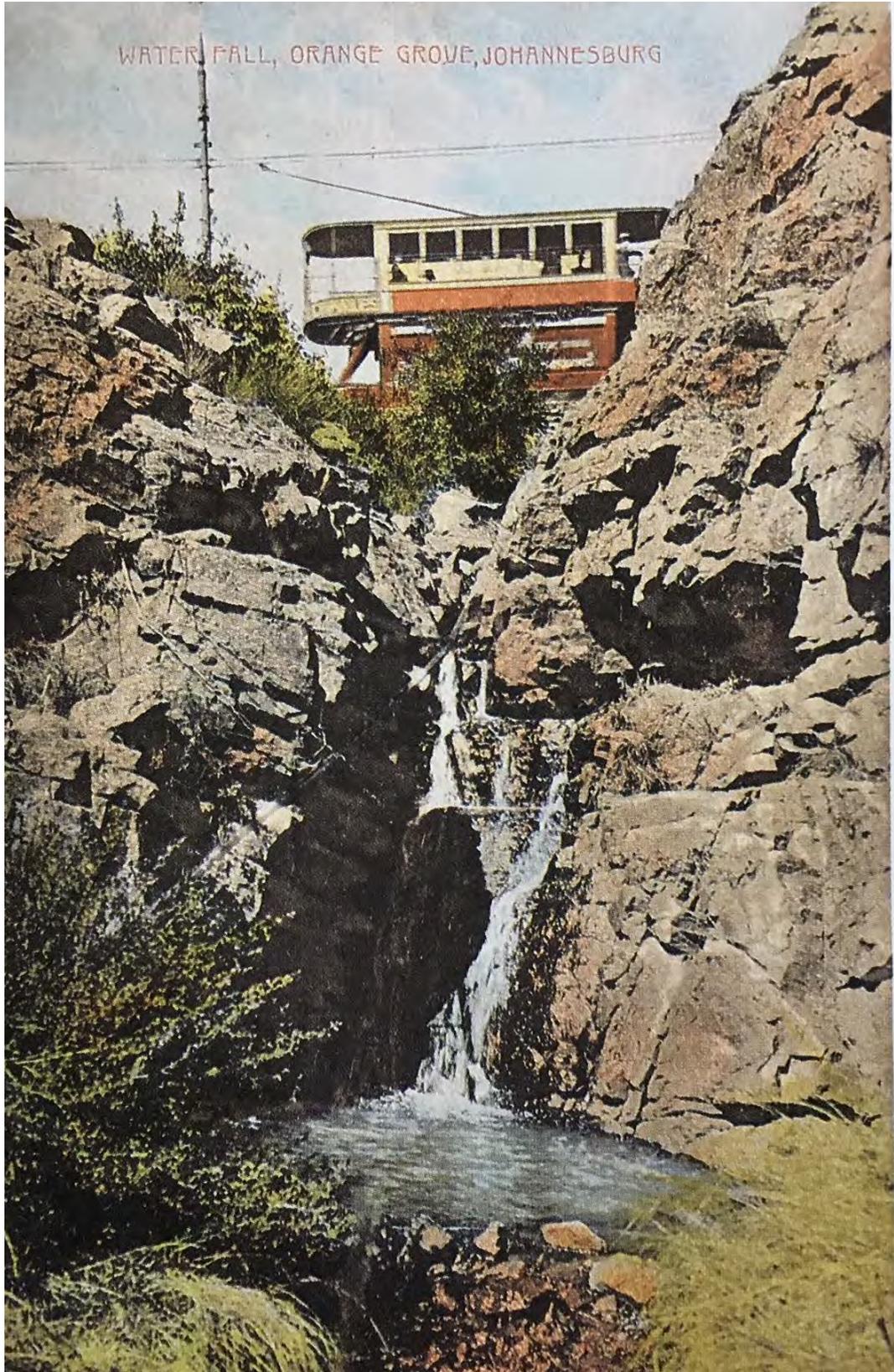


Heritage Study of the Orange Grove Waterfall and Surrounding Area

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 Osborne Road;
- Lloyds Ellis Avenue, to 2nd Avenue, Houghton Estate; and
- 2nd Avenue from Lloyds Ellis Avenue to Osborne Road, Houghton Estate.

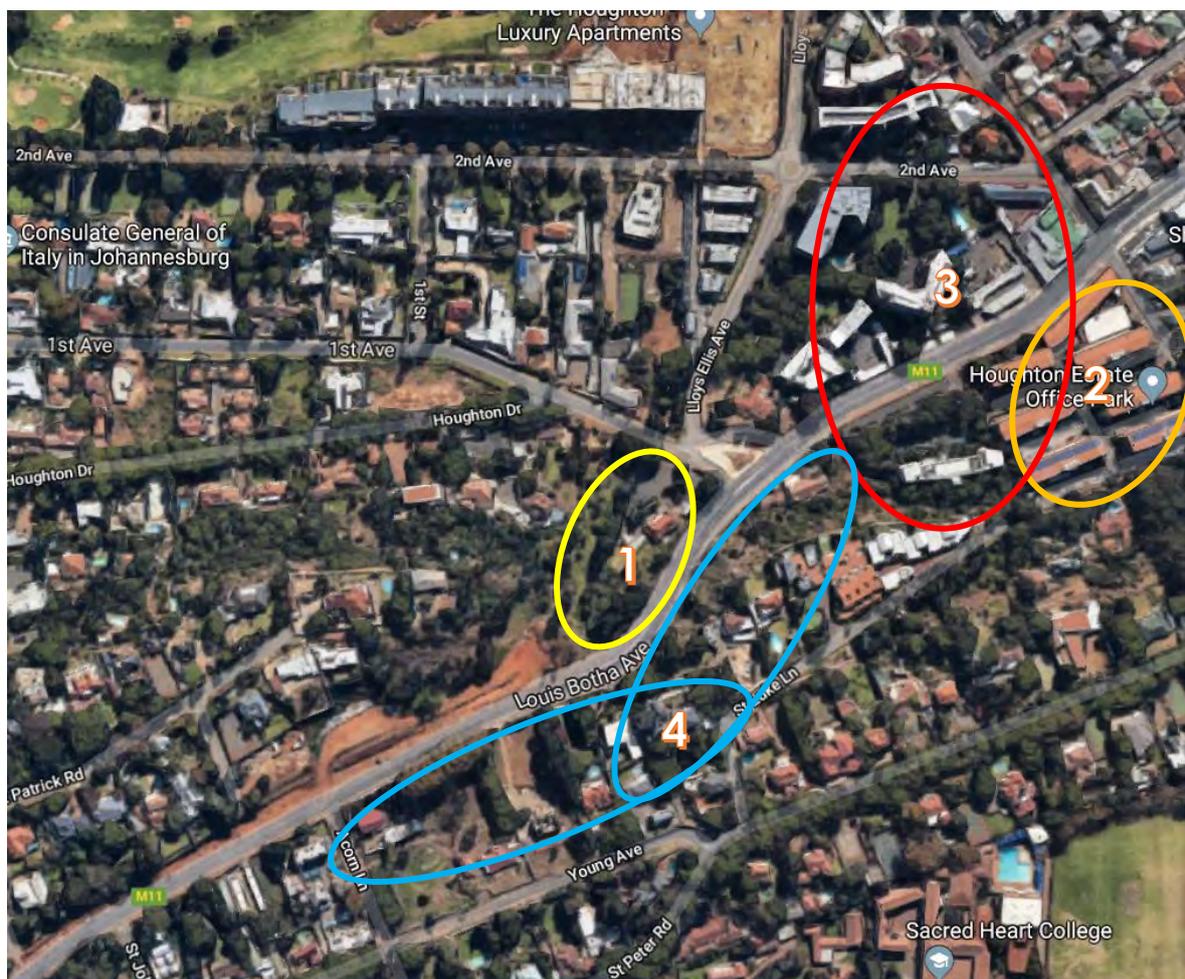
The study area can therefore be broadly grouped into the following areas:

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 south of Louis Botha Avenue between Acorn Lane and Houghton Drive.

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 site 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 site 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.

The study area is illustrated on the following map:

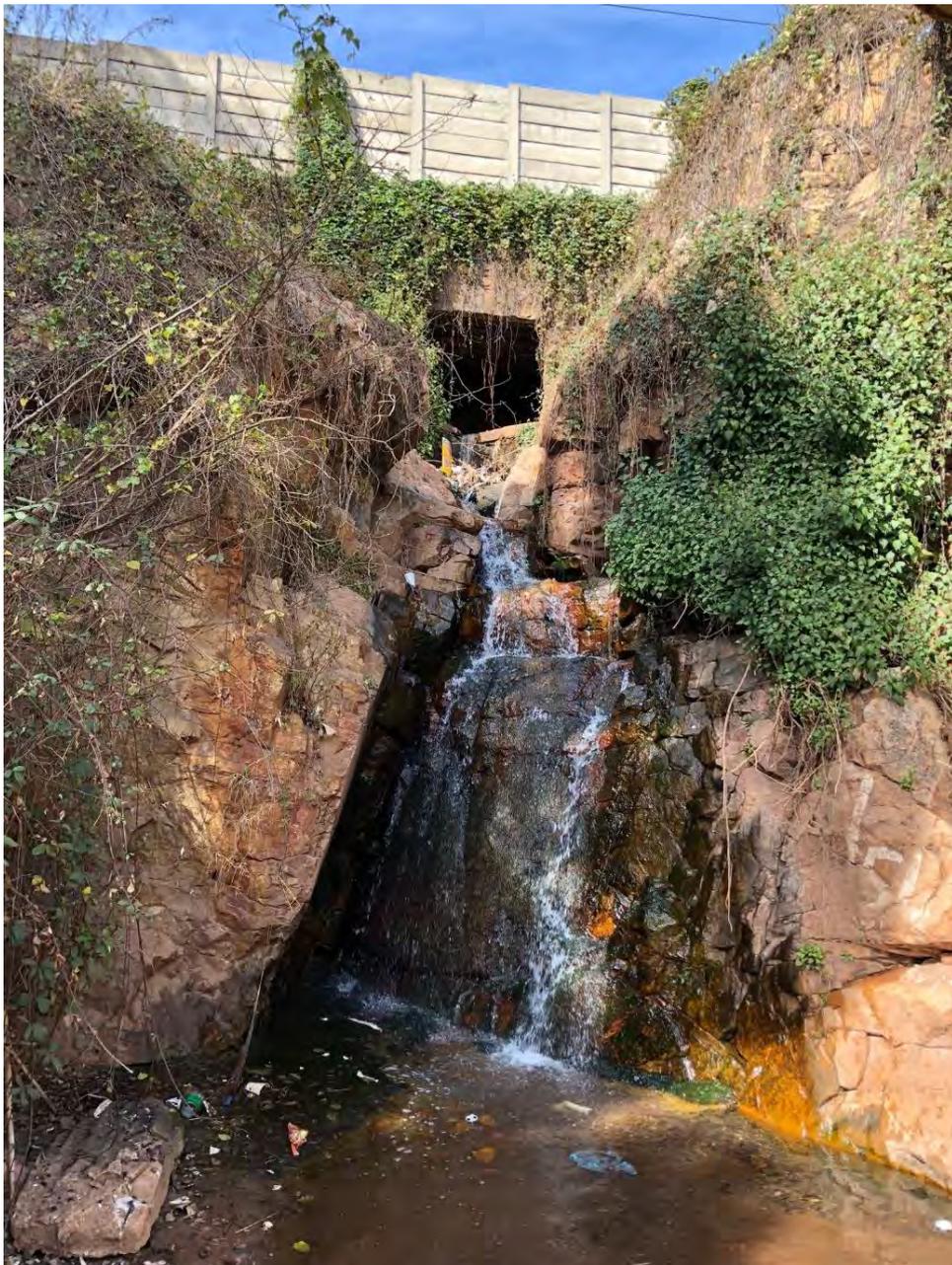


3. The Orange Grove Waterfall, House Bleloch, and the Blockhouse

- 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, 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 Lloys Ellis Avenue to Second Avenue. From here is partially under Lloys Ellis Avenue and partly under the two buildings on the east of Lloys Ellis Avenue. In the 1960's 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 and emerges in an open concrete channel on the north end of Paterson Park. (Bodman, 1981)

Here it is open up to Louis Road, then buried 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: Marian Laserson (2008)



*Showing the cascade down
to the larger pool*

*Photo: Marian Laserson
(2008)*



*Showing the canalised
portion beyond the larger
pool*

*Photo: Marian Laserson
(2008)*

- **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. (Unknown, Schaerer, Theophile, 2018)



Photo: artefacts.co.za

The style of the house takes its inspiration from Cape Dutch architecture, a popular style 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.



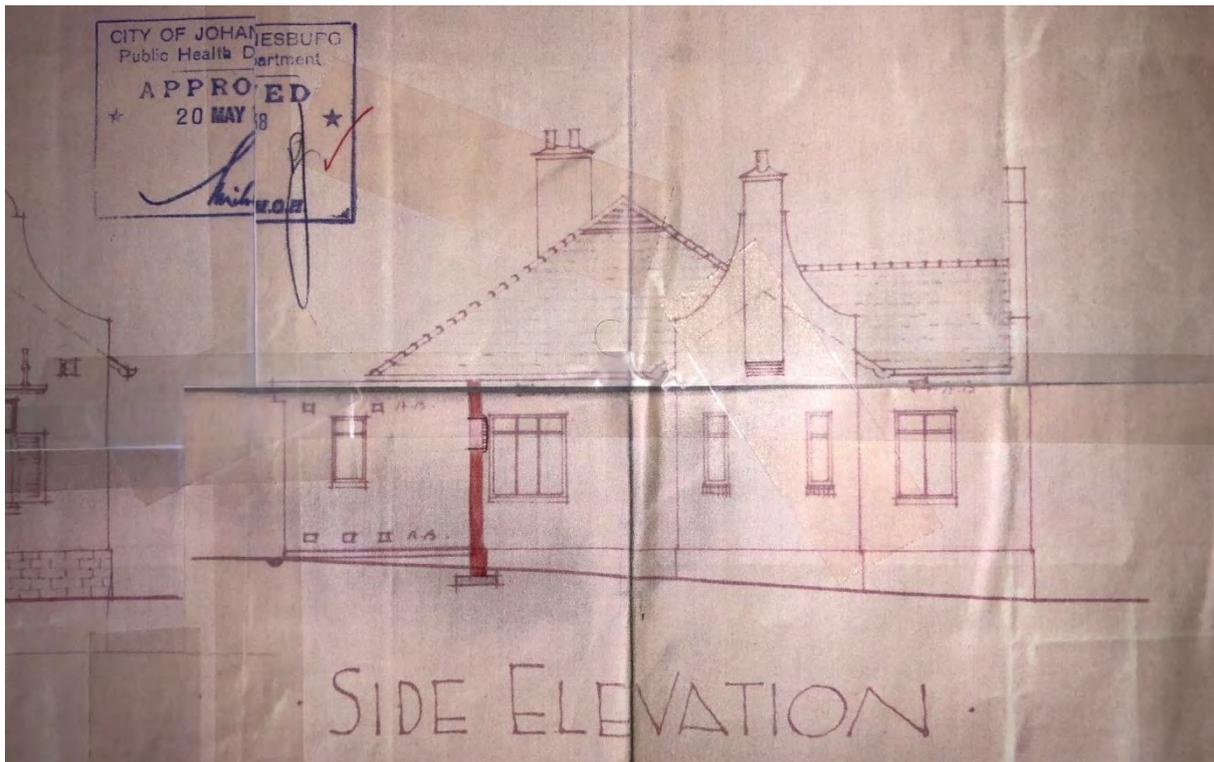
The as-built structure is faithful to the plans, except for the stairs which project east.



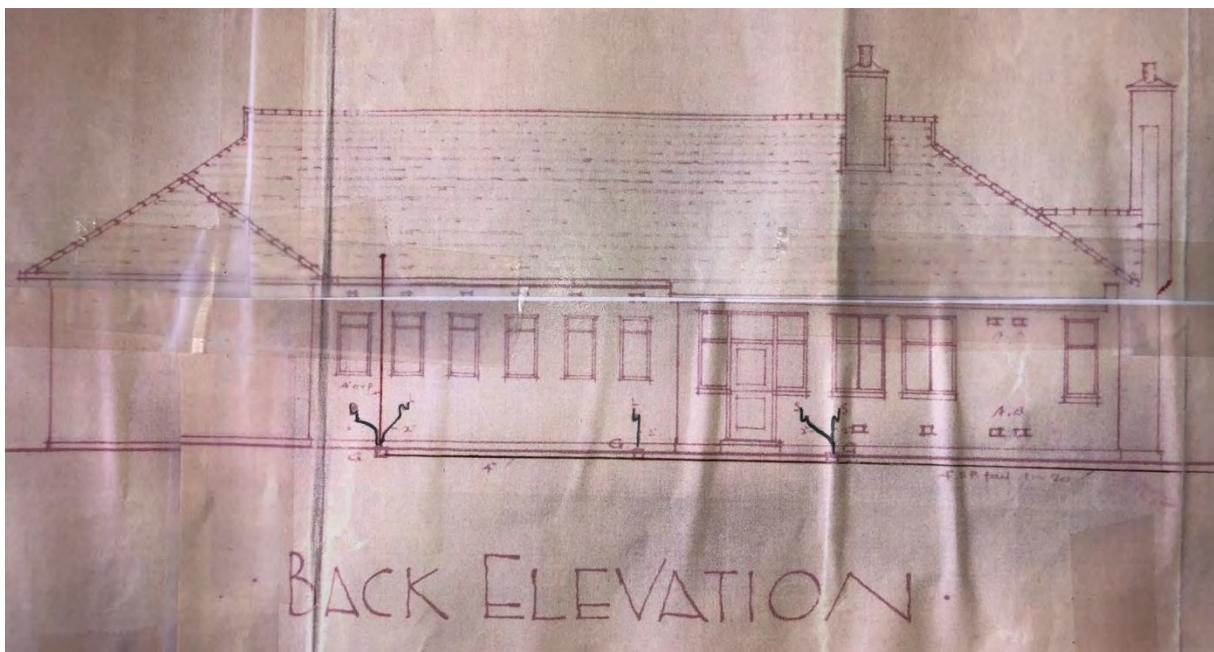
Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

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.

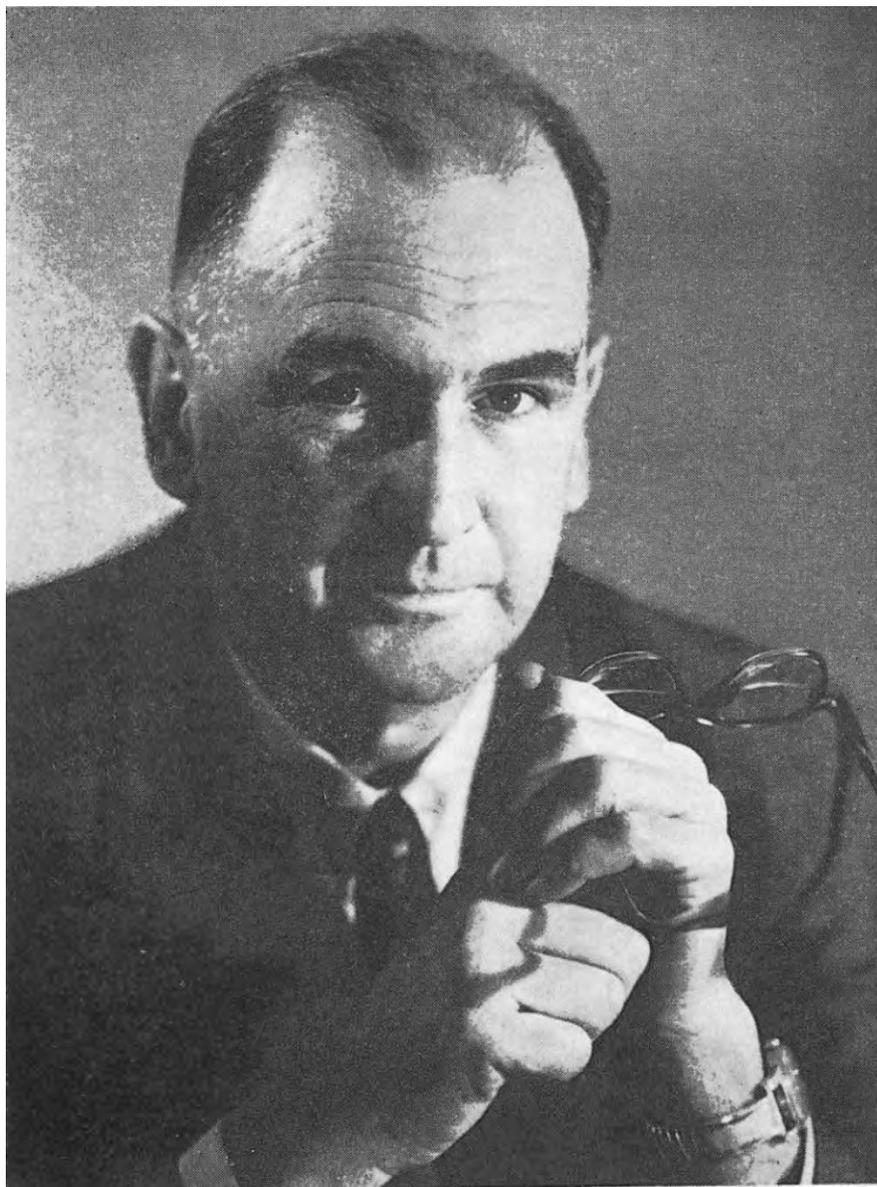
The site plan includes two outbuildings: servants' quarters and a garage:



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. Edith Adelaide Bleloch was the second wife of William Henry Bleloch, who was an amateur geologist and director of companies. He came to Johannesburg in 1894 and became 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. (Rosenthal, 1966).

Bleloch was President of the South African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy in 1956-1957.



Dr. Wm. BLELOCH
PRESIDENT 1956—1957

Photo: The Southern African Institute of Mining and Metallurgy

The Geology Museum at the University of the Witwatersrand was named for William Bleloch, and was created through a bequest made by EA Bleloch in honour of her husband.

Edith Adelaide Bleloch was born Edith Ironside in Edinburgh. Little else is known about her.

The property is currently owned by the City of Johannesburg, and is used by Police Reservists. It is in fair condition.

- **Orange Grove Blockhouse**

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 by A Troop for the defence of the 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 theatre of war 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 2-3 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. (Unknown, Lexicon: Blockhouse, 2018)

Photos of the Orange Grove blockhouse, which was situated just east of the Waterfall on a rocky promontory, 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



Photo: Museum Africa (date unknown)



Photo: Museum Africa (date unknown)



Postcard of the Orange Grove blockhouse

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

Natural or Cultural Value:	
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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.

4. The Site of the Orange Grove Hotel

- **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: one hour's horse ride in two perpendicular directions determined the boundaries of what would usually be a square or rectangle of approximately x square kilometres. Under the Roman 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.



Photo: Museum Africa (date unknown)

This photo, dating back to the 1930s, shows the considerable traffic that Louis Botha in the vicinity of Death Bend carried even then.



Photo: The Star (circa 1930s)

- **The Viljoen Farmstead**



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

A grove of Orange Trees on the Viljoen portion of the farm Klipfontein was found near the Viljoen farmstead, close to the intersection of what is today Osborne Road and Louis Botha Avenue. The area was known as 'Lemoen Plaas', and would later give the Orange Grove Hotel its name, as well as the suburb of Orange Grove.

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 and against the ridge.

Who was Viljoen and how did he come to possess the farm?

- **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) The hotel was first known as the Wayside Hotel, but by 1906 was known as the Orange Grove Hotel.



Photo: Museum Africa (circa 1890s)



Postcard of the original incarnation of the Orange Grove Hotel (circa 1906)

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 in 1887. (Norwich, 1986)

The Orange Grove Tearoom was established opposite the Wayside Hotel, at the top of Lloyds Ellis 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 (with varying degrees of success!). (Norwich, 1986)



A postcard showing the Orange Grove Tearoom (date unknown)

A pool below the Orange Grove waterfall, facing the Tearoom on Lloyds Ellis, was used as a swimming bath and even boasted a corrugated iron change room. The change room is clearly visible in this postcard:



A postcard showing the Orange Grove Hotel on the left, and Change Room on the right, date unknown

The Staats Almanak of the ZAR for 1896 records that at that time there was even a collection of wild animals at the popular resort.

A new hotel was built in 1908 on the corner of Louis Botha and Osborn. 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') and soon become a popular landmark in the rapidly developing suburb. In this photograph, the 1908 building is visible next to one of the original Orange Grove Hotel buildings.



Photo: Museum Africa - the original hotel next to Seton Morris's 1908 building (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 effected 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)

Lloys Ellis and the Orange Grove Tea Gardens?



Photo: Museum Africa (circa 1908)



Photo: Museum Africa - looking west, Seton Morris's 1908 building dominates (circa 1920s)

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



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



Changes continued to be made to the hotel in the 1940s and the 50s.

JOHANNESBURG **Orange Grove Hotel**

58 bedrooms, including 14 with suites; remainder with h. and c. running water. Telephones in every bedroom.

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 1930s building next to the 1908 building.

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.

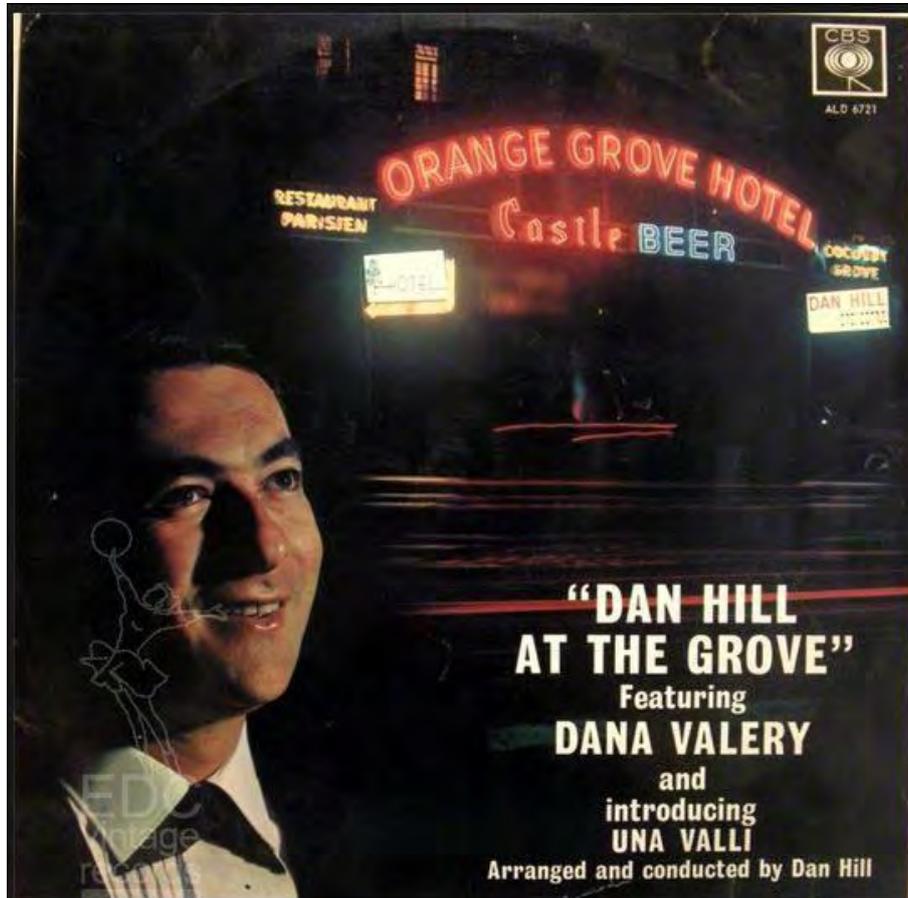
Just about every top musician in the country played in his bands including Bobby Chalker, Bez Martin, Art Heatlie, Boris Cohen, Don Storer, Hymie and Ralph Baleson, Freddy Nausbaum, Andy Johnson, Les Kelly, Leon Cohen, Eddie Heydenrych, Joe Marais and George Hayden. His lead singers were Eve Boswell, 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

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. (Unknown, 2013)



Record cover, "Dan Hill at The Grove", source Soul Safari

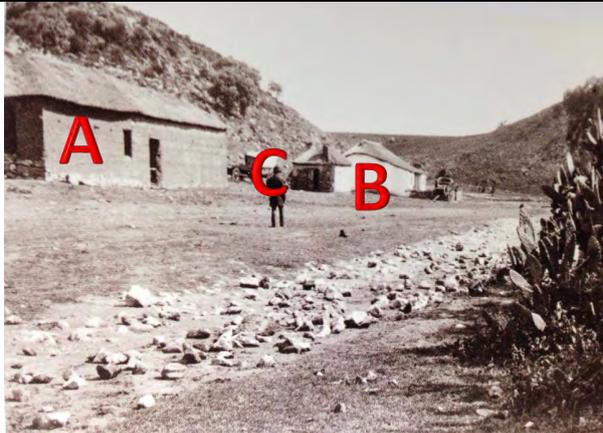


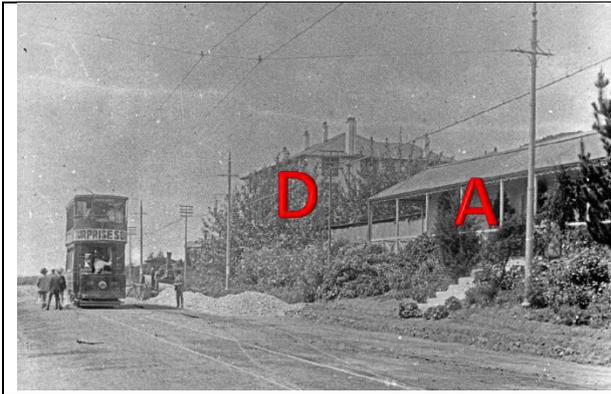
Detail of record, "Dan Hill at The Grove", source Soul Safari

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.

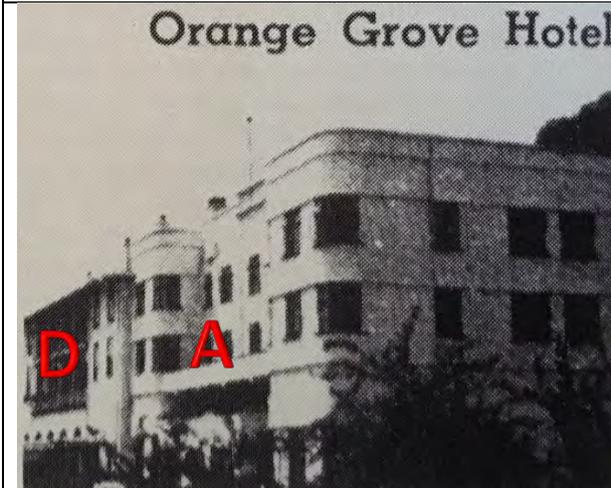
- **Architectural Evolution of the Site**

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

	<p>The earliest known photo, circa 1880s, of the site and facing west shows two distinct structures:</p> <p>A – a mud-walled rectangular building with thatch roof. The lack of windows suggests a use for animals.</p> <p>B – a square white-washed building with thatch roof. Most probably a dwelling. A rondavel next to the building is possibly an outhouse.</p> <p>C – an open area between the two buildings.</p>
	<p>A later photo from the same position, circa 1890s, of the site:</p> <p>A – the building has possibly been extended westwards, the roof is now corrugated iron, windows and doors have been added and it has been painted.</p> <p>B – a corrugated iron roof has been added.</p> <p>C – part of the open space has been taken up by the addition to A. The remainder is obscured by planting.</p>
 <p>In Johannesburg's Suburbs. Orange Grove Hotel. Feb 4th 1906. Love from Cousin Jack</p>	<p>A postcard from 1906, facing east.</p> <p>A – no noticeable changes.</p> <p>B – no noticeable changes.</p> <p>C – a small dwelling has been built in the remainder of the space between A and B.</p>



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 1930s hotel.
 Seton Morris's 1908 building is visible to the east of the 1930s hotel.

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 – Paul Kruger, Louis Botha, Jan Smuts, Roy Martin, Dan Hill and others.
Associated with historic event or activity.	Yes –the site's association with 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.
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5. The Art Deco Apartment Blocks on the Orange Grove Escarpment

- **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. (Unknown, South Africa abandons the Gold Standard, sparking a period of economic expansion, 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.

- **Art Deco Houghton**

By the 1950s, the following notable buildings existed in the vicinity of Death Bend:



1. Orange Grove Hotel (1908 -)
2. Victory Theatre (1929)
3. Fairway Mansions (1931)
4. Roxdale (1932)
5. Houghton Heights (1938)
6. Lauriston Court (1934)
7. Grosvenor Court (1952)
8. Houghton Golf Course Club House (1926)

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.

Info on Erf 2343 (Orange Grove Tea Gardens?) and Erf 2342?

- **Victory Theatre**

The Victory Theatre was built as the Grove Kinema in 1929, but was renamed the Victory after World War II. It started its long association with Johannesburg film maverick Italo Bernicchi in 1947, when IW 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. (Unknown, Italo Bernicchi, 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.

- **Fairway Mansions**

Designed in 1931 (architect unknown) Fairway Mansions had a view over the Houghton Club for a mere year before Roxdale was built in front of it. Stylistically, the building belongs 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.



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

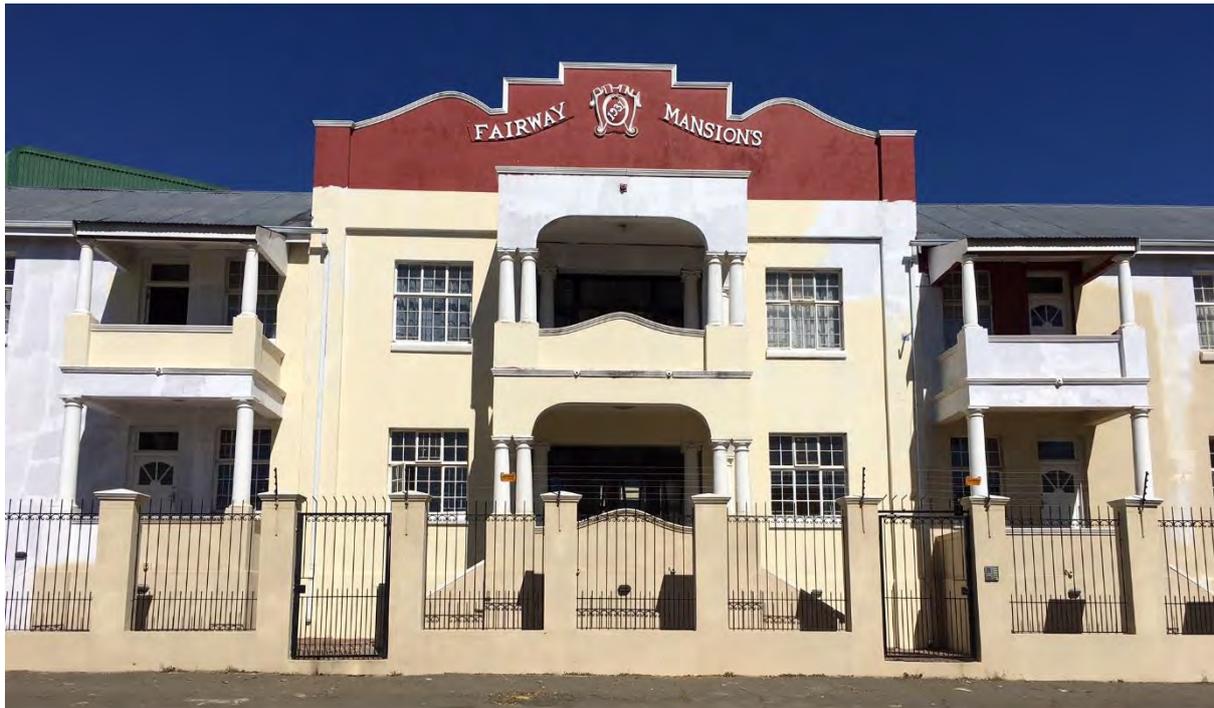


Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

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.

- Roxdale



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

Roxdale was designed in Angus Greig Stewart in 1932. Stewart studied Architecture at the University of the Witwatersrand, graduating in August 1934. As a student he was also a member of the Alpha Club, a proposed society of twelve students of Architecture at the University of Witwatersrand, constituted for the discussion, creation and publication of original works in the 'contemporary spirit'. Besides for Stewart, members included Rex Martienssen, David Haddon, Norman Hanson, James Wilson, Monte Bryer, David Clark, Gordon McIntosh, W Howie, John Fassler, and Eric Lucke. After graduating Stewart worked in the office of DM Sinclair in Johannesburg. In 1936 he entered into partnership with his father. (Unknown, Stewart, Angus Greig, 2018)

Stewart would later become a pioneer of Le Corbusier-inspired modernism in Johannesburg, and in 1937, together with Bernard Cooke, would design the seminal apartment block Aiton Court in Hillbrow, but the architectural language of Roxdale is 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 port-cocheres that lead into the vestibules. The building is in a gently sloping U shape, and has three staircases lift shafts, emphasising its 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.

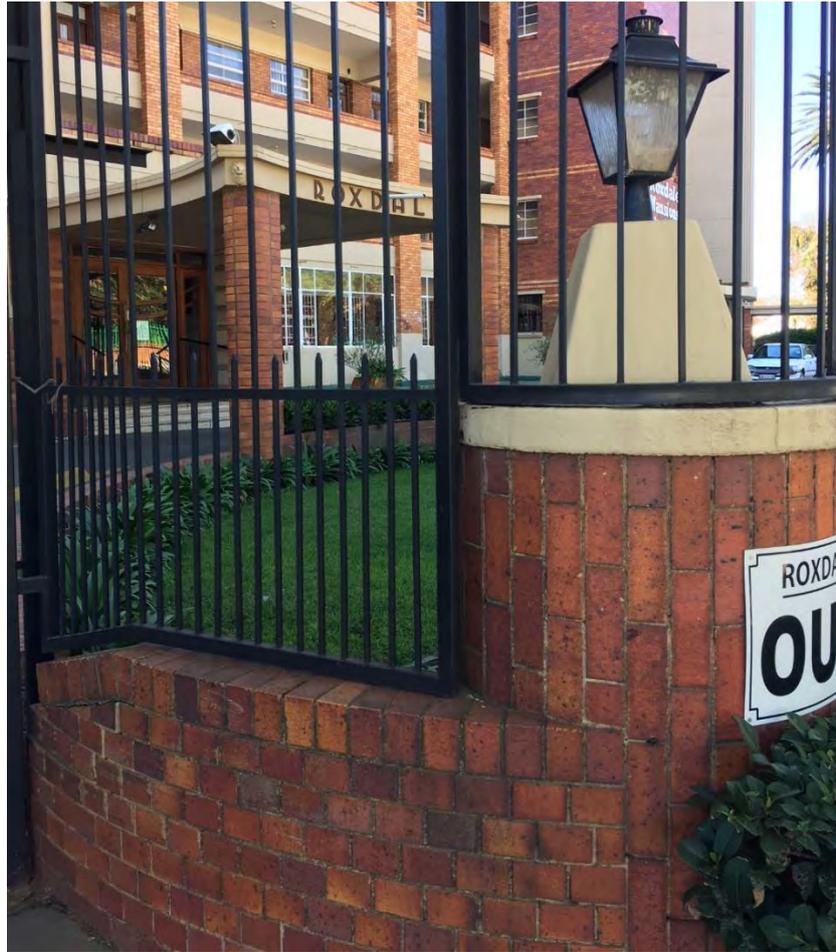


Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)



A photo dating back to 1943 showing the original lights on the gate posts of Roxdale, source Marian Laserson



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)

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 – 1930s art deco.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – Angus Greig Stewart
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1930s art deco.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

- **Lauriston Court**

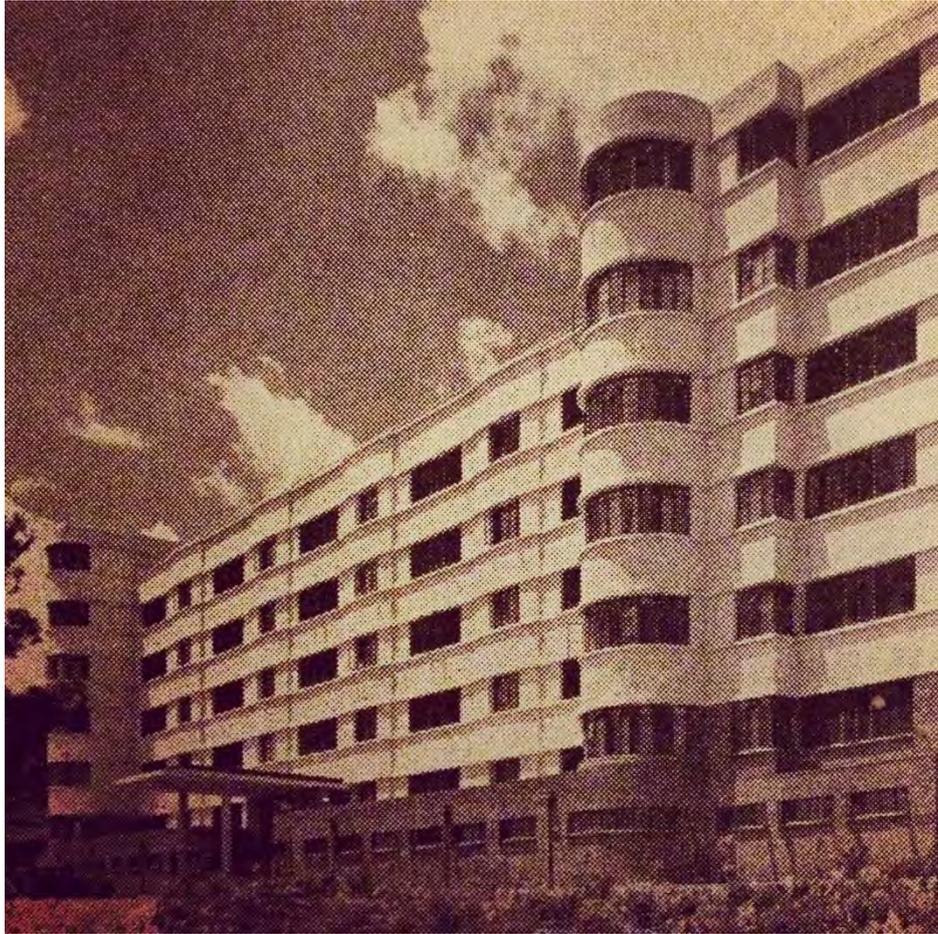
Lauriston Court is situated on Erf 1/2437, Houghton Estate, and was designed in 1934 by the famed architectural practice of Emley and Williamson for **African City Property Trust (Schlesinger?)**. The garages, designed at the same time and abutting Louis Botha Avenue, are now situated on Erf RE/2437, and form the base of a new block of apartments. Lauriston Court 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. It has been awarded a blue plaque.



Photo: Ian Preston (date unknown)



Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)



Unknown photographer, circa late 1930s

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 and Williamson.
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1930s art deco.

Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

- **Houghton Heights**

Houghton Heights is situated on Erf 17/2343, Houghton Estate, and 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 1930/1931 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. (Unknown, John Shaw (Snr), 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: Brett McDougall (2018)

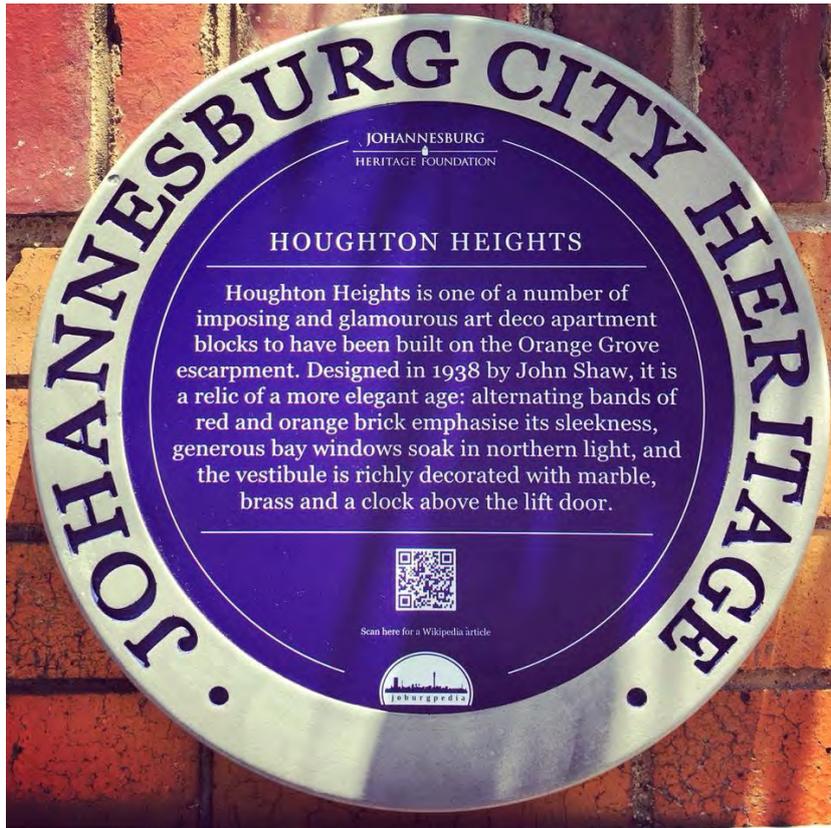


Photo: Brett McDougall (2018)



Photo: 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 art deco.
Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics.	Yes.
Work of a major architect or builder.	Yes – John Shaw
Illustrates an historical period.	Yes – 1930s art deco.
Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement.	No.
New, rare or experimental building techniques.	No.

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

- Introduction

xxx

- Erven and their Heritage value



xxx

No	Erf No	Address	Date of Construction	Architect	Heritage Value
1	883	158 Louis Botha Avenue	Circa 1930	Unknown	Low
2	1/884	160 A Louis Botha Avenue	Unknown	Unknown	Low
3	884	160 B Louis Botha Avenue			
4	885	160 C Louis Botha Avenue			
5	886	162 Louis Botha Avenue			
6	1/886	162 A Louis Botha Avenue	Brendan Naicker	Unknown	Low
7	887	164 Louis Botha Avenue			
8	888	166 Louis Botha Avenue	?	?	Medium?
9					
10	3/890	172 Louis Botha Avenue	?	?	?
11	891	174 Louis Botha Avenue	?	?	?
12	892	176 Louis Botha Avenue	?	?	?

No	Erf No	Address	Date of Construction	Architect	Heritage Value
13	2/893	178 Louis Botha Avenue	Unknown	Unknown	Low, except for stone wall
14	1/894	180 Louis Botha Avenue	Unknown	Unknown	Low
15	2437	184 Louis Botha Avenue	2018	Jason Berchowitz	Medium – built on 1930s garage of Lauriston Court

+remaining stone walls and gates along LBA

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

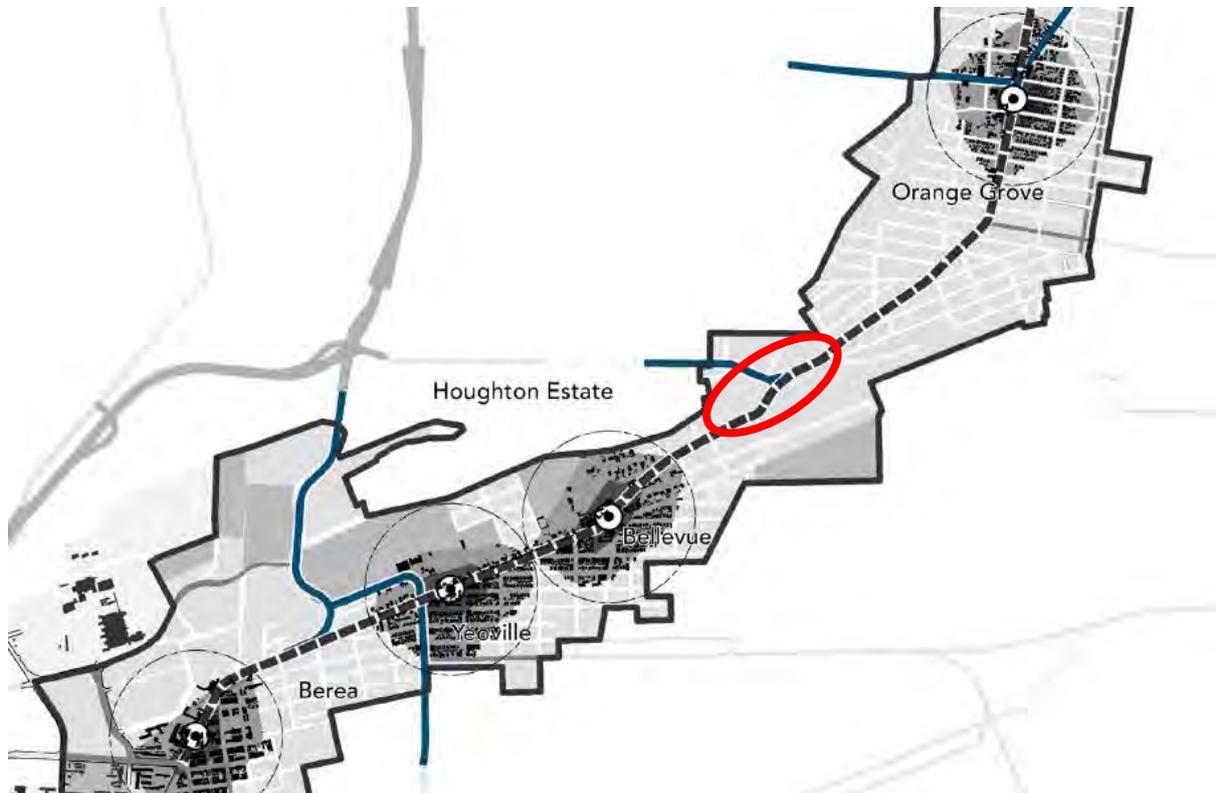
- **Introduction**

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)

- **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 falls 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.

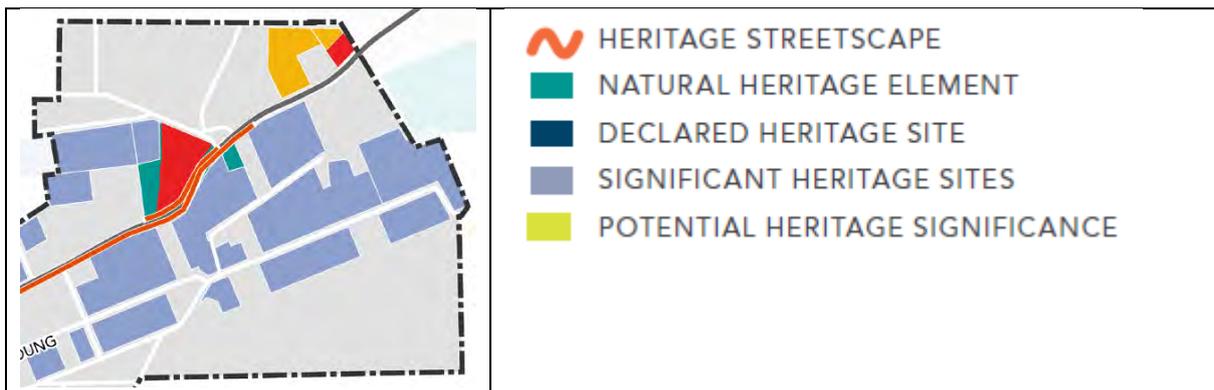
- **General Guidance**

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 even south of Louis Botha Avenue, the density proposed is less than 100 dph, in buildings between 4 and 6 storeys high.

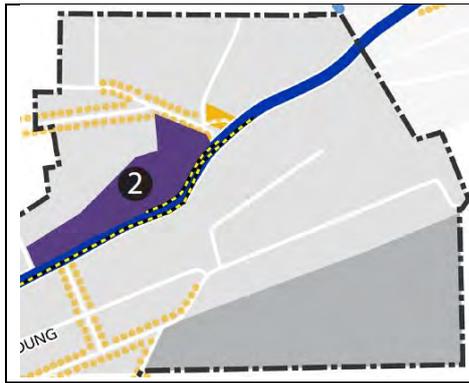


- **Specific Guidance**

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."



2 Possible PPP Initiative to unlock/facilitate the development of vacant land between Louis Botha Avenue and First Avenue / Houghton Drive. (Context reflected in images below)

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



NAME	HA	TARGET DENSITY	HOUSEHOLDS
B1	6.706022	45	302
B2	5.258059	45	237
B3	13.1211	45	590
B4	10.15413	45	457

- 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.

8. 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.

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:

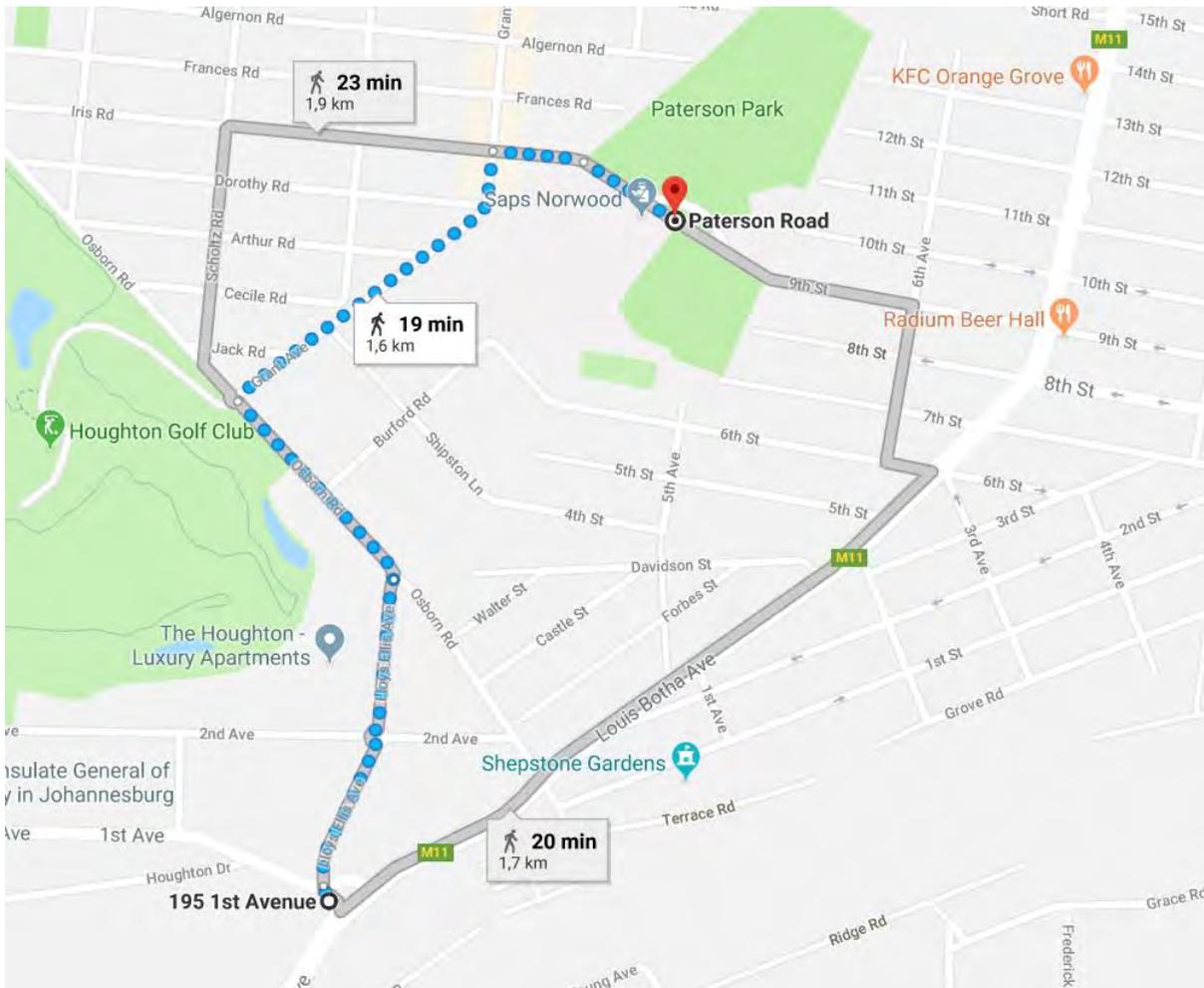
- The site of the Orange Grove Hotel;
- House Bleloch;
- The Orange Grove Waterfall;
- Roxdale; and
- Italo Bernicchi, at the Victory Theatre.

Celebrate the Orange Grove Waterfall

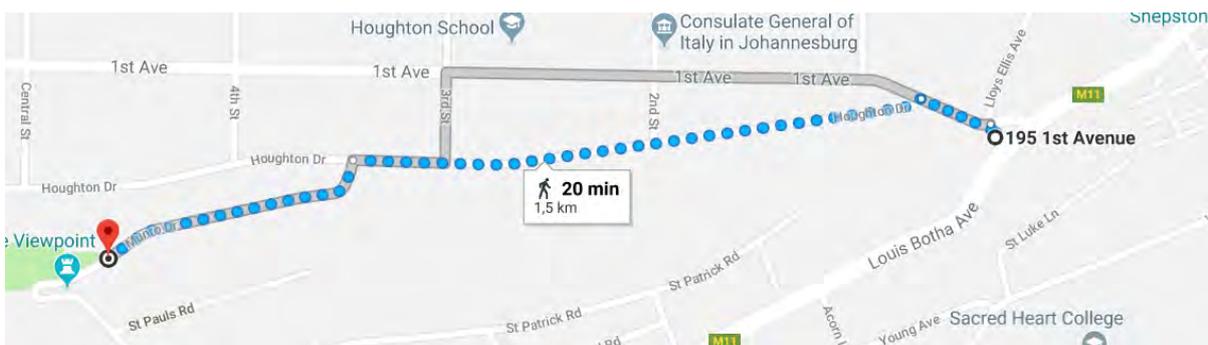
The area falls within the ambit of the City's Corridors of Freedom spatial development policy. The policy aims to reduce carbon emissions and provide economic opportunities to marginalised residents in the city by densifying key transit nodes, including Louis Botha Avenue. The Strategic Area Framework 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



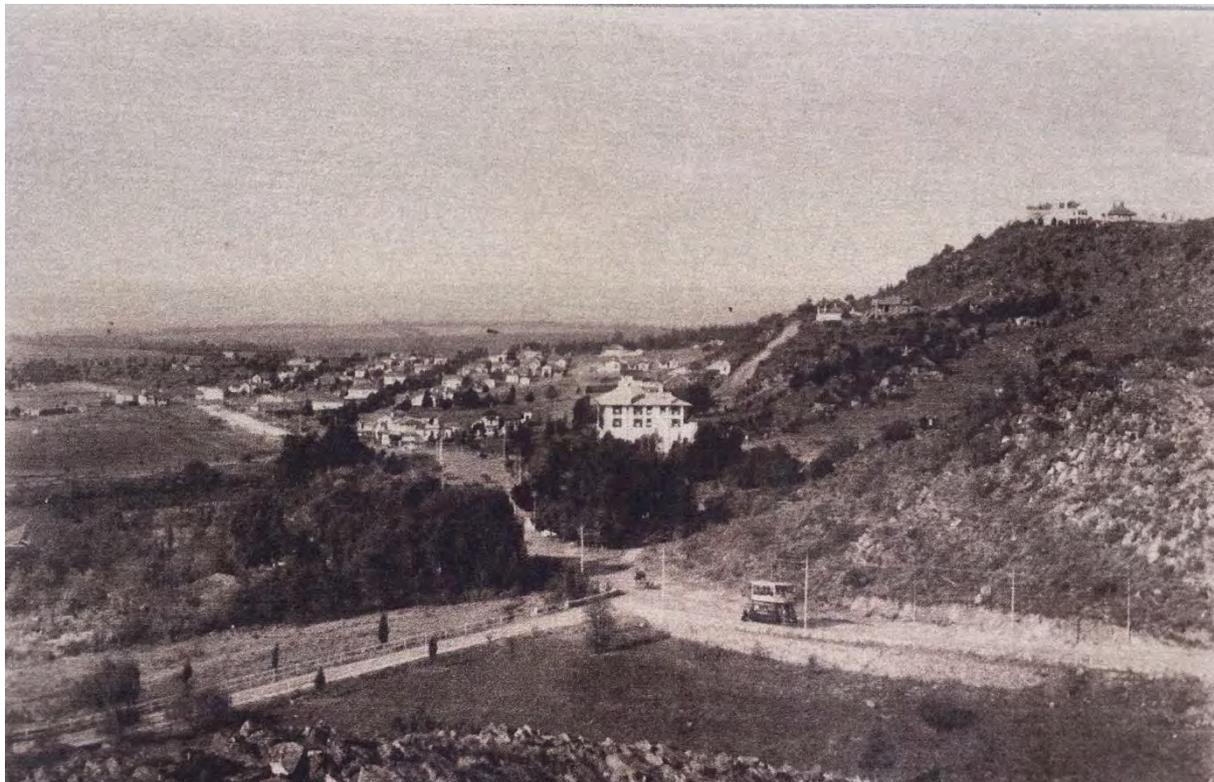
Extract from Google Maps, showing walking time to The Wilds

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.

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 1920s)*

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