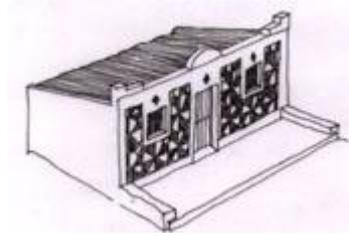


## CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

**INTRODUCTION** : The growing awareness of heritage conservation issues in South Africa reflects an international trend. Conservation of the cultural landscape has become a specialised field in its own right, guided by principles which have been set out in various conservation charters adopted by international and national conservation bodies.



As the organisation which is responsible for the protection of places of cultural significance in South Africa, the South African Heritage Resources Agency considers the adoption of a set of internationally acceptable principles which relate to South Africa's social, cultural and physical situation to be essential for the development of a sound conservation ethic and practice in this country. The precise usage of internationally standardised terminology also contributes to clarity and understanding in the discussion of heritage conservation issues. The South African Heritage Resources Agency has therefore used various international conservation charters as the basis for these principles. They are applicable to all places of cultural significance which are protected in terms of the National Heritage Resources (Act 25 of 1999). This legislation aims to promote good management of the cultural landscape, and to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy.

## FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

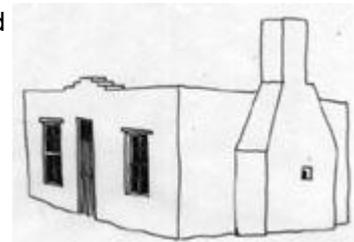
- The heritage is a valuable, finite, non-renewable and irreplaceable resource, which must be carefully managed to ensure its survival.
- Every generation has a moral responsibility to act as a trustee of the natural and cultural heritage for succeeding generations.
- South Africa has a rich heritage, both natural and man-made, which is unique and worthy of conservation.
- Numerous cultures, both past and present, have contributed to that heritage and all have the right to be protected. Conservation of the heritage is in the interest of all South Africans.
- Every person, community and institution has an obligation to ensure that significant elements of the natural and cultural heritage are not damaged or destroyed.

## CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

- **AIM OF CONSERVATION:** The aim of conservation is to preserve, retain or recover the cultural interest of a place, and must include provision for its maintenance and its future.
- **EDUCATION:** Education of the community regarding the value of the natural and cultural heritage and the purpose of its conservation should be promoted.
- **INVESTIGATION:** Conservation should be preceded by an investigation by an inter-disciplinary team into the history and the physical condition of the place to establish its age, previous phases of construction and archaeological significance. When applicable, socio-economic factors should also be investigated. There should always be precise, durable documentation in the form of reports, drawings and photographs, and the existing fabric should be recorded before there is any disturbance of the place.
- **DETERMINATION OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:** Cultural significance should be determined by analysis of the evidence gathered and as far as possible in consultation with a range of parties, including the public at large, local communities, cultural bodies and accredited experts on conservation and related issues.
- **CONSERVATION POLICY:** Before conservation is undertaken, a conservation policy should be prepared, in the form of a written statement setting out the cultural significance, physical condition and proposed conservation processes, together with motivation and supporting evidence including photographs, drawings and analysis of all appropriate samples.
- **USE:** Compatible uses will be determined by the conservation policy.
- **DOCUMENTATION:** The records required by Articles 3, 4 and 5 and a log of evidence found and decisions made during conservation should be placed in a permanent archive.



- **SUPERVISION**: Appropriate supervision and monitoring must be maintained at all stages of the work.
- **ASPECTS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**: Conservation of a place should take into consideration all aspects of its cultural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one at the expense of others.
- **CONTINUOUS HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**: All buildings and their environments should be recognised as products of their own time and as evidence of a continuous historical development. When a building has had work of different periods added to it, the contribution to the place of all periods must be respected. Revealing the fabric of one period at the expense of another can be justified only when what is removed is proven to be of slight cultural significance and the fabric which is to be revealed is of much greater cultural significance.
- **CONTEXT**: Historically valuable places do not consist of buildings alone. Conservation of such places requires the maintenance of appropriate visual settings and contexts. New construction, demolition or modification adversely affecting the setting, and environmental intrusions which adversely affect enjoyment or appreciation of the place, should be excluded.
- **MINIMAL INTERVENTION**: Conservation is based on respect for the existing fabric and should involve the least possible intervention. It should not distort the evidence revealed in the fabric.
- **DETERIORATED AND MISSING FEATURES**: Architectural features, elements or components which have deteriorated should be repaired rather than replaced. The replacement should match the original in composition, design, colour, texture and other visual qualities, but, on close inspection, should be distinguishable as new work, so that the alteration does not falsify the historical value of the building. Decisions regarding the replacement of missing parts of a building must be based on historical evidence, i.e. archival records, photographs, drawings and paintings.
- **TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES**: Conservation should make use of all the disciplines contributing to the study and protection of a place. Techniques employed should be traditional. In some circumstances, modern techniques for which a firm scientific basis exists and which have been supported by a body of experience, may be used.
- **REVERSIBLE INTERVENTION**: Whenever possible, additions and alterations should be done in such a way that, if they were to be removed in the future, the original fabric would again be visible.
- **CONTEMPORARY DESIGN**: Contemporary design for new buildings in an historical setting, and for alterations and additions to existing properties, is encouraged if it does not disfigure valuable historical and architectural fabric, and if compatible with the existing character and scale of the environs.
- **CONTENTS**: The contents of historical places forming part of their cultural significance should not be removed unless this is the sole means of ensuring their survival. If removed, such contents should be returned when changed circumstances make this practicable.
- **LOCATION**: A building or work should remain in its historical location. Translocation of all or part of a building or work is unacceptable unless this is the sole means of ensuring its survival.
- **OCCUPATION**: Culturally valuable buildings should be occupied and used at all times.



## **TERMINOLOGY**

- **CONSERVATION** means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.
- **CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE** is the aesthetic, historical, scientific and social value for past, present and future generations.
- **PLACE** means site, area, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, together with pertinent contents, surroundings and historical and archaeological deposits.
- **HISTORIC** means significant in history.
- **HISTORICAL** means belonging to the past.
- **PRESERVATION** means protecting and maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration or change, and may include stabilization where necessary. **PRESERVATION** is appropriate where the existing state of the fabric itself

constitutes evidence of specific cultural significance, or where insufficient evidence is available to allow other conservation processes to be carried out.

- **RESTORATION** means returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by re-assembling existing components. It is based on respect for all the physical, documentary and other evidence and stops at the point where conjecture begins. Restoration is limited to the completion of a depleted entity and should not constitute the major part of the fabric. **RESTORATION** is appropriate only if there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state of the fabric and if returning the fabric to that state recovers the cultural significance of the place. **RESTORATION** is appropriate where a place is incomplete as a result of damage or alteration and where it is necessary for its survival, or if it recovers the cultural significance of the place.
- **REUSE** means using a building for a use other than that for which it was designed.
- **COMPATIBLE USE** means a use other than that for which the building was designed and which requires the least intervention in the fabric.
- **RECYCLING** means modifying or adapting a place to suit a use other than that for which it was designed.
- **ADAPTATION** means modifying a place for a compatible use. **ADAPTATION** is appropriate where the original use cannot be maintained, and where the adaptation does not substantially detract from its cultural significance.
- **MAINTENANCE** means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place. It does not involve physical alteration.
- **REPAIR** means returning the fabric to sound condition and may involve the introduction of new or old material.
- **REHABILITATION** means returning a place to a state of utility through repair or alteration while preserving those features of the place which are significant to its historical, architectural and cultural values.
- **RECONSTRUCTION/RE-ERECTION** means re-erecting a structure on its original site using original components.
- **RECONSTITUTION** means re-erecting a monolithic structure on its original site using original components.
- **REPLICATION** is the act of reproducing by new construction the exact form and detail of a vanished building, structure, or object, or a part thereof, as it appeared at a specific period. **REPLICATION** is limited to the reproduction of fabric the form of which is known from physical and/or documentary evidence. It should be identifiable on close inspection as being new work. **REPLICATION** is appropriate in museum application as an illustration of an historical period or event. **REPLICATION** is appropriate when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived. **REPLICATION** is appropriate for indigenous or other non-permanent structures which it is not possible to preserve because of the nature of the construction materials, and where traditional building techniques themselves merit conservation.
- **TRANSLOCATION** means the dismantling of a structure and its re-erection on a new site, using original components. **TRANSLOCATION** should be considered only when all other conservation measures have failed.
- **CONJECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION** means returning a place as nearly as possible to some conjectured (and thus unproven) traditional state. **CONJECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION** is inappropriate.
- **RENOVATION** is the superficial renewal of a building in such a way that its character is respected in only a general sense. **RENOVATION** is appropriate only when the place has limited significance.
- **FACADISM** is the retention of only the facade of an historical building while the remainder is severely altered or destroyed to accommodate a new use. **FACADISM** is inappropriate except where the facade of the building is important as an element in an historical environment and where the remainder of the building cannot be saved.

