

## Cape Southern Suburbs hit by a renovation boom

As a result of the concentration of good schools in the Cape Peninsula's central Southern Suburbs as well as the lack of open land for further development, hence and due to the unprecedented demand for homes in the area, there has been a rise in renovation activities throughout. Furthermore, "these renovations are almost always adding very significantly to the home's value," said Bill Rawson, Chairman of the Rawson Property Group.



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### Significant increase in value

"I came across a case recently," he said, "where a R400,000 renovation contract, in my view, added at least R1m to the home."

Homes in suburbs like Observatory, Rosebank, Rondebosch, Newlands, Claremont, Kenilworth and Wynberg are often very well suited to renovation because, dating from the 1930 to 1960 era, their designs are sound but often rather staid and stereotyped.

"Any review of the latest building contracts now on the go in the suburbs mentioned," said Rawson, "will, I believe, show that renovation activity has reached new levels."

"Such a review would also show that the changes, when supervised by reputable Cape architects, are bringing the houses into line with the value of the land in these areas. In some cases the discrepancy between the land value and the home on it have become so great that it would in fact pay to demolish the home entirely and rebuild it."

### Capitalise on the good features of older buildings

The good news, added Rawson, is that almost all the Cape architects whom he knows and with whom he has had dealings have proved sensitive to historic designs and adept at capitalising on the good features of older buildings, e.g. their large rooms and high ceilings, without destroying their innate appeal.

One of the big achievements of certain Cape Peninsula renovations, said Rawson, has been to create two or three smaller but attractive 'chic' homes where previously only one existed - and very often, in the process to improve the security of all the units.