

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT TO NOTICE OF INTENT TO DEVELOP (NID) IN TERMS OF SECTION 38(8) OF THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT, 1999 (ACT 25 OF 1999)

PORTIONS OF THE REMAINDER OF THE FARM ZANDHOOGTE 139 (TERGNIET), MOSSEL BAY DISTRICT AND MUNICIPALITY



ON BEHALF OF: IDEAL TRADING 301 CC

NOVEMBER 2019

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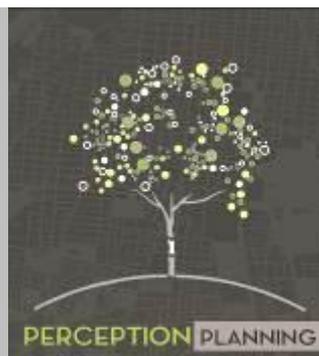
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URBAN & REGIONAL PLANNING- ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING- HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT- URBAN DESIGN

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REFERENCES and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Cape Town Archives
2. George Museum Archives
3. Kathleen Schulz, Southern Cape Historian
4. Specialist Planning report for NEMA Authorisation Purposes, Marike Vreken Urban & Environmental Planners, September 2019
5. Surveyor General Office

ABBREVIATIONS

1. HWC – Heritage Western Cape
2. NHRA - National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)
3. HIA – Heritage Impact Assessment
4. HWC – Heritage Western Cape
5. PHS – Provincial Heritage Site
6. NGSI – National Geo-Spatial Information, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mowbray

COVER: Collage of contextual panoramic images of the study area and its direct environs (Author)

1. INTRODUCTION

PERCEPTION Planning was appointed by Christo Spies on behalf of Ideal Trading 301 CC (being the registered property owner), to submit to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) a Notice of Intent to Develop (NID) in terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999) with relation to proposed development of a portion of the subject property. The Power of Attorney, a copy of the relevant Title Deed and S.G Diagram are attached as part of **Annexure 1**.

The cadastral land unit subject to this application is as follows:

- Remainder of the farm Zandhoogte 139, measuring 38.2309 ha, registered to Ideal Trading 301 CC, held under Title Deed T 17938/2019 and situated within the jurisdiction of the Mossel Bay District and Municipality, Western Cape.

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The subject property (Remainder of the farm Zandhoogte 139) is situated within Tergniet, ± 4 km southwest of Great Brak River and ± 20 km northeast of the Mossel Bay historic town centre as shown in **Figure 1**. The elongated property extends from ± 620 m north of the N2 National Road with the George-Mossel Bay railway line defining the southernmost boundary. Consequently it is traversed by various roads, including the N2, Sandhoogte Road, the R102 and Blesbok Street. However, the portion of the farm that is currently proposed to be developed extends northwards from the railway line up to the R102 as its northernmost boundary (hereafter referred to as "the study area") (refer to **Figure 2**).

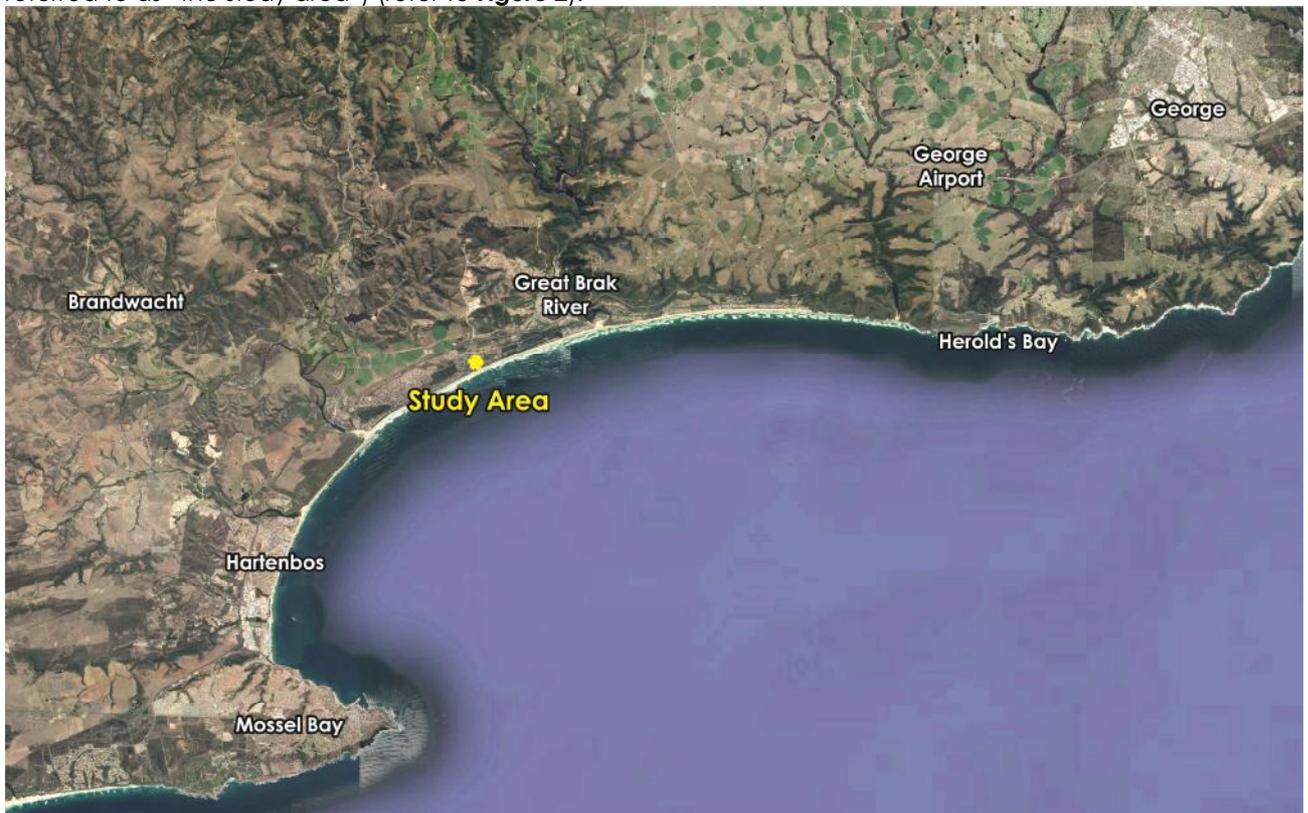


Figure 1: Study area location within regional context (Google Earth, 2018, as edited)

The study area forms part of a south-facing, undulating coastal landscape underlain by sandy soils and is vacant, save for one modern residential dwelling, situated along the western boundary and bordering onto Blesbok Street. It is bound by existing low density single residential development to the east, south and west. Essentially the study area comprises of the northern portion (between R102 and Blesbok Street) and southern portion (south of Blesbok Avenue up to the railway line). The area north of the R102 is mostly undeveloped and consists of rehabilitated areas formerly mined for building sand and agricultural fields. Recent years have seen an increase in medium-to-higher density residential development as well retirement complexes.

The higher-lying northern portion consists of an upper, relatively flat area and an increasingly steeper south-facing slope bound by Blesbok Avenue. The lower-lying southern portion forms part of a steeper, south-facing slope. While remnants of indigenous vegetation were noted on both portions during field work undertaken on 22nd October 2019, it was evident that it had been subject to a regime of cutting in the recent past. As a result no mature trees or shrubs were noted save for a narrow strip along the southern verge of Blesbok Street.

Apart from the aforementioned modern dwelling, no structures, ruins and/or were note during field work. There are no known structures of local or regional cultural significant situated with the direct proximity. Photographs of the study area and its environs are attached as part of **Annexure 2** to this report.



Figure 2: Study area shown within its closer landscape context, illustrating surrounding urban fabric and rural landscape north of the N2 (Google Earth, 2018, as edited)



Figure 3: Study area and its direct environs (Google Earth, 2018, as edited)

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

According to information made available¹ a total of three development alternatives were considered with relation to future development of the study as summarised below:

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative):

The proposal is for a residential development, incorporating a mixture of residential typologies, to be established on ±10,2 ha of land. These typologies would include medium density group housing, townhouses and higher density flats. The proposed development will take place on the two southern “thirds” of the overall farm and include, *inter alia*, the following components:

- 3 erven with 48 apartments in total;
- 146 x group housing units;
- Private open space, a public road and private roads;
- Storm water detention pond.

Alternative 2:

This alternative, proposed on the same development footprint would not include any apartments but focus on providing group housing and duplex units, including the following components:

- 46 semi-detached duplex units;
- 134 x group housing units;
- Private roads and limited private open spaces.

Alternative 3:

This alternative implies that no development takes place and the status quo be maintained.

The site development plan of Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) is attached as **Annexure 4** to this report.

4. SPATIAL PLANNING CONTEXT

4.1 Mossel Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework (2018)

The spatial vision for Mossel Bay Municipality include the need to achieve a long-term, sustainable land use pattern that would conserve the municipality’s significant rural resources (its rivers, wetlands, estuaries and coastline, natural vegetation, scenic landscapes, and extensive and intensive agricultural resources),so as to support rural tourism and agricultural economic growth and job creation. According to this policy guideline document the study area is situated within the urban edge and earmarked as a “new development area”. The proposal, which is for “infill development” therefore appears consistent with the SDF, 2018 (**Figure 4**).

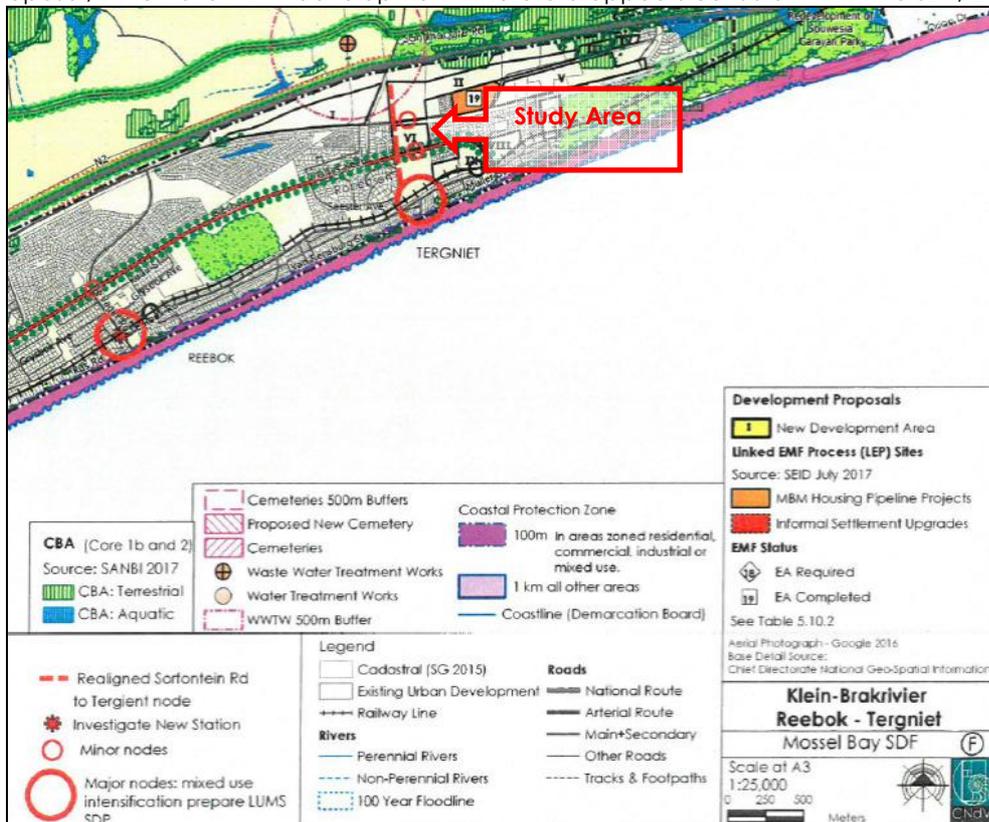


Figure 4: Location of study area within the context of spatial proposals for the Tergniet area (MB Mun, 2018)

¹ Specialist Planning report for NEMA Authorisation Purposes, Marike Vreken Urban & Environmental Planners, September 2019.

5. BASIC HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Basic historic background research focussed on primary sources obtained through the Deeds Office, Surveyor General's Office, relevant secondary sources as well as as research previously undertaken by local historian Kathleen Schulz.

5.1 Brief account of early history of Great Brak River

From a broader colonial perspective it is important to understand reasons behind the Dutch East India Company's (DEIC) establishment of a woodcutters post in 1777 within the vicinity of George. According to research (Schulz, K: 2016) the reason for establishing the post was twofold. Illicit harvesting from the Outeniqua forests warranted monitoring and timber required for construction in Cape Town was in short supply. Transporting timber by wagon for shipping was problematic due to the many river crossings that had to be made in order to get to the harbour in Mossel Bay. One of these problematic river crossings, the Groot Brak River, spanned some 800ft and was often swollen during the rainy season. The Groot Brak weir or crossing area must have accommodated wagons waiting to cross the river since the time of colonization of the area. Consequently an "outspan" was developed on the eastern banks of the Groot Brak River, opposite the early farm Wolvedans.

5.2 Early farm Wolvedans

The land on which the westerly portion of the village of Groot Brak was established was deducted off the farm "Wolvedans", granted to 'Heemraad' Cornelis van der Watt in 1815². It is stated on the quitrent grant that C van der Watt had been occupying the farm previously on loan via the Dutch East India Company loan system. The extent of Wolvedans was 2,632 morgen (\pm 2,254 hectares). The Groot Brak River formed the easterly boundary of the farm. The location of the outspan mentioned in Section 5.1 is shown on the earliest (1814) diagram for Wolvedans³ as well as subsequent mapping such as the 1900 series (Figure 5).

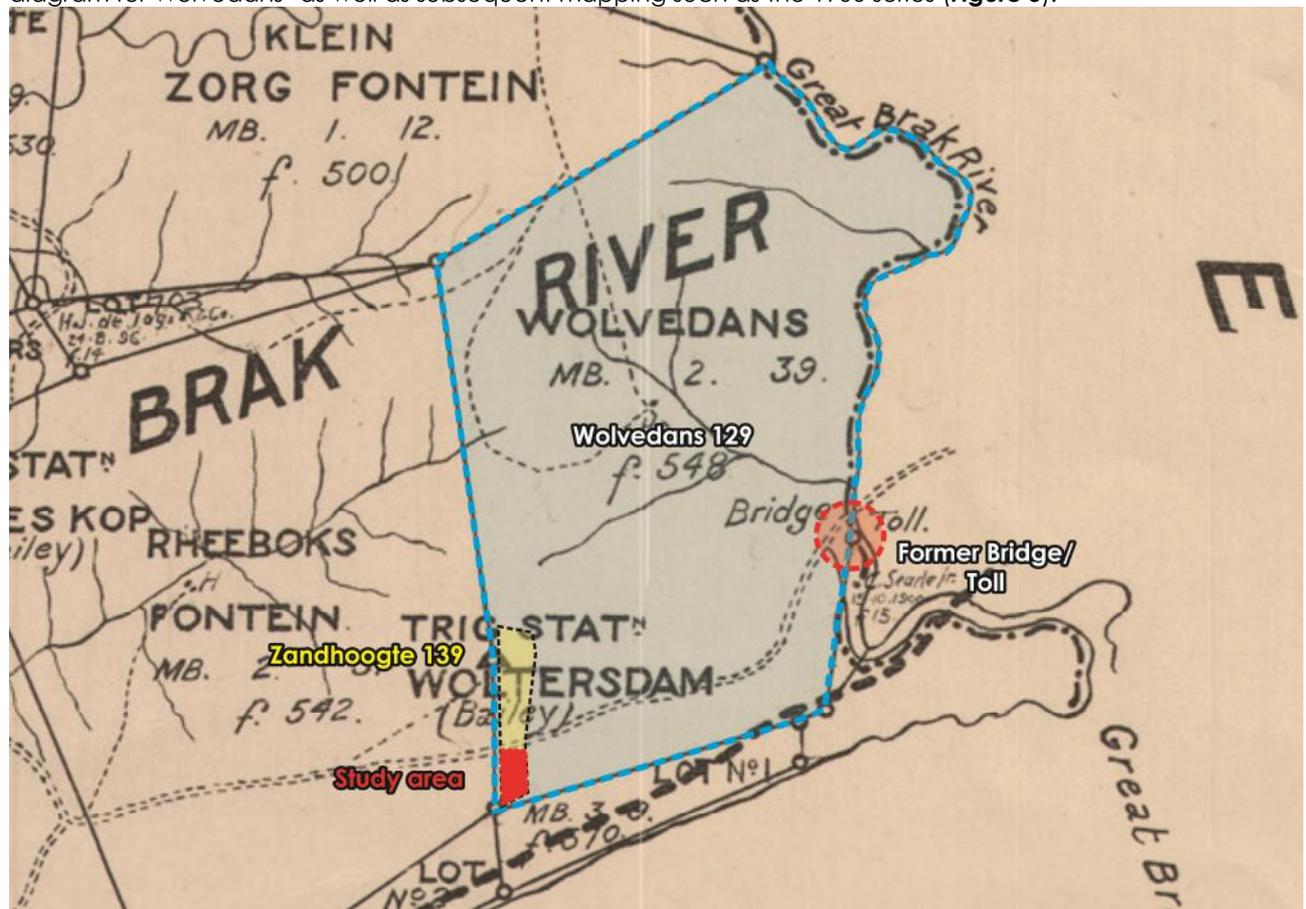


Figure 5: Approximate location of the farm Zandhoogte 139 and the subject study area in relation to boundaries of the early farm Wolvedans as depicted on 1900 SG Mapping. Note location of the Great Brak River bridge and alignment of the "weg na het Outiniqualand" (sic), as described on the 1814 diagram (Source: NSGI).

Between 1852 and 1902 members of the Terblans family owned and occupied the farm Wolvedans. Deeds records show that by the year 1902 Wolvedans was held in 160th shares, indicating that there must have been several cottages on the farm accommodating these family members. The position of family homesteads was unfortunately not recorded on early Surveyor General diagrams (Schulz, K: 2014). **The farm Zandhoogte 139 formed part of the early farm Wolvedans 129** as illustrated in Figure 5.

² Cape Town Deeds Office (CTDO): George Quitrents 1/9 dated 3rd January.

³ SG Diagram 328/1814

5.3 The farm Zandhoogte 139

This farm was framed during 1924⁴ through the consolidation of two portions of land, a portion of Lot B (38 morgen 46 sq. roods) and a portion of Lot 1 (16 morgen 1 sq. rood) of the farm Wolvedans, after having been transferred to JJ van Rensburg 28th January 1871 and 7th February 1876, respectively. According to the diagram the new farm measured 54 morgen 47 sq. roods at the time (± 46.32 ha). The newly-created farm was transferred to EOJ van Rensburg on 31st December 1926.

Lot 1, also cited as "Farm 136, Mossel Bay", formed part of crown land and measured 200 morgen 500 sq roods (± 171.604 ha). Surveyed during c. 1874, this coastal farm was also granted to JJ van Rensburg. This grant excluded land within 200ft of the high water mark. The positions of early structures/ dwellings were unfortunately not recorded on early Surveyor General diagrams for this farm. Detailed records pertaining to the early known as "Lot No. 1" could not be located, though the opposite is relevant to the early farm Wolvedans. Both properties have been subdivided substantially since its original survey though their footprints remain evident within the current subdivision pattern. Early records do not show the location(s) of significant structures on or within the proximity of the proposed development site (Schulz, K: 2014)

Subsequently, numerous servitudes (water, sewerage, electrical) had been registered across the subject property and it is also traversed by the Sandhoogte Road, N2 National Road and Blesbok Road.

The current alignment of the R102 across the farm appears to coincide with that of the former coastal road between Mossel Bay and Greak Brak River (also referred to as *(sic)*, "weg na het Outiniqua land" in the 1814 diagram pertaining to the farm Wolvedans. Other than this, **preliminary research undertaken did not highlight heritage themes of of historic or social cultural significance that would require further focussed research.**

6. HERITAGE RESOURCES AND ISSUES

6.1 Archaeology

During the field work it was found that the northern portion of the study area (i.e. north of Blesbok Street) had recently been cleared mechanically and no mature trees and/or significant shrubs remain. Similarly, it was evident that the southern portion of the study area (i.e. north of the railway line) had been cleared/ subject to landscape transformation in the past, albeit perhaps not as recent. Mole heaps occurring throughout the study area was investigated but none seemed to contain potential subsurface material such as shells or other archaeological material (see photographs, Annexure 2).

6.2 Cultural landscape patterns

Analysis of the earliest available (1940, 1957) aerial photography was found useful to inform our understanding of the cultural landscape context in that it enabled us to identify various traditional (i.e. Pre-Modern) cultural landscape patterns pertinent to the study area and its direct environs.

Aerial survey 140 of 1940 (Figure 6):

- The image shows the farm Zandhoogte and subject study area within the context of the (former) main coastal route between Mossel Bay and George (now the R102) and the railway line. The image precedes construction of the N2;
- Agriculture/ cultivation is primarily focussed within the valley north of the R102 (i.e. position of current N2) though limited agriculture is also visible south of the R102, directly east of the study area;
- The study area appears to be untransformed and devoid of any structures and/or ruins. With the exception of a narrow footpath crossing the upper portion and following the eastern boundary of the study area no significant human imprint(s) on the landscape are evident.
- Natural vegetation cover seems to primarily be coastal shrub as opposed to dense coastal forest;
- A number of holiday cottages already the coastline south of the railway line (southeast of the study area).

Aerial survey 403 of 1957 (Figure 7):

- Broader landscape patterns around the study area appear similar to that evident 17 years before – for the most part, patterns of agriculture/ cultivation are the same except for more intensified land use and numerous new buildings on smallholdings directly to the east/ south of the R102;
- Within the study area several land use changes are evident: These include a rectangular-shaped newly-cleared area along the R102 in the northeast corner and approximately 4(?) new structures directly south together with a number of access tracks meandering across the adjoining property to/from the R102. Another track meanders southward from these structures to the southern portion of the study area bound by the railway line, which here is intensive cultivation as evident from the patchwork of fields visible.
- The footprint of intensive cultivation on the southern portion of the study area is roughly similar to the southern portion of the study area defined by Blesbok Street and the railway line in present day;
- There appears to have been limited expansion of holiday housing along the coastline south of the railway line over the 17 year period.

⁴ A1632/1924

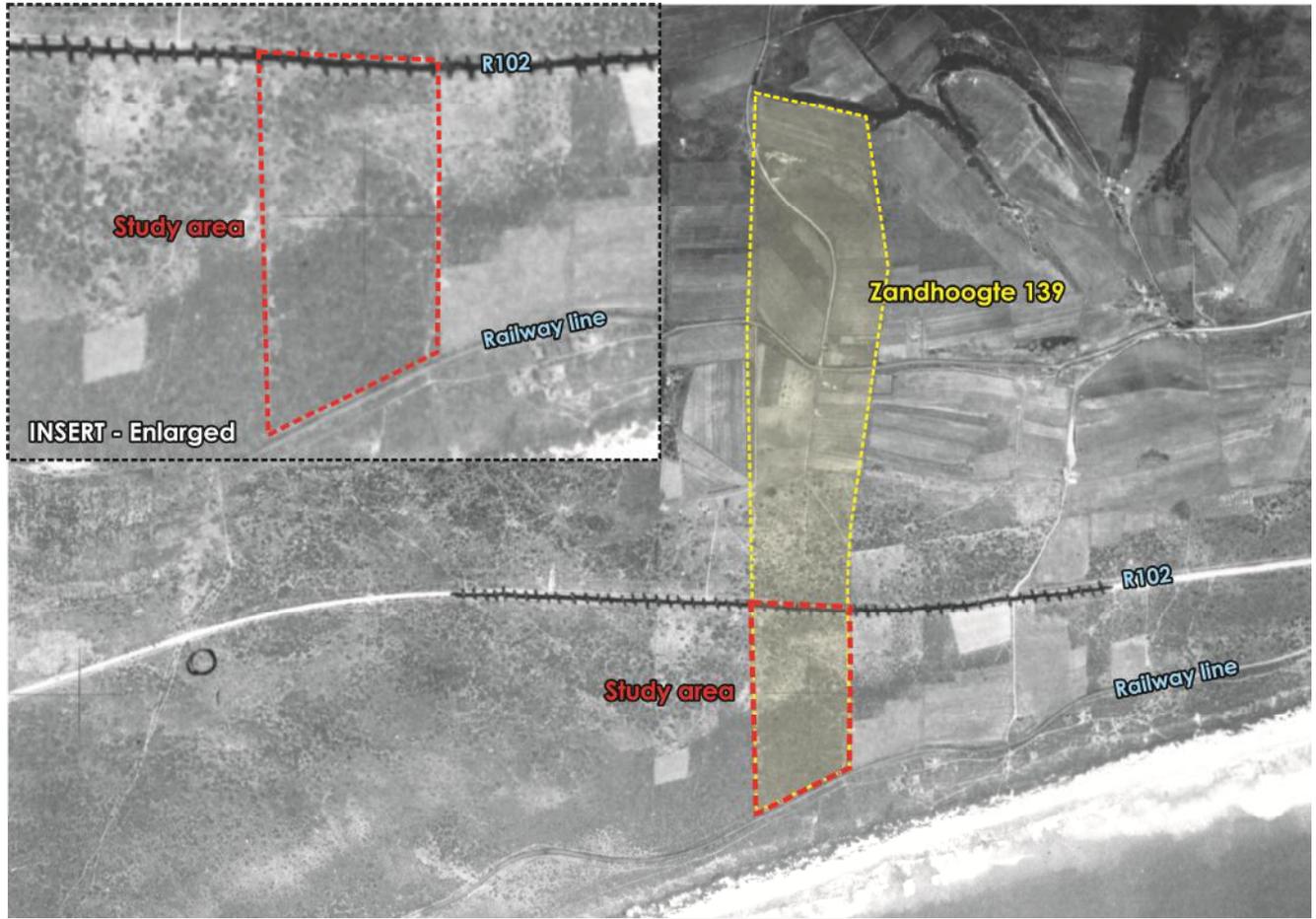


Figure 6: Boundaries of the farm Zandhoogte 139 as well as the study area transposed onto 1940 aerial imagery for the area (Aerial survey 140, Flight Strip 39, Image 34224, NGSi)



Figure 7: Boundaries of the farm Zandhoogte 139 as well as the study area transposed onto 1957 aerial imagery for the area (Aerial survey 403, Flight Strip 9, Image 3394, NGSi)

6.3 Conclusions

Despite recent vegetation clearing on the northern portion of the study area, no evidence of several small structures (presumably residential cottages) visible on early 1957 aerial imagery could be located. No historic structures, ruins and/or gravesites were noted on or within the direct proximity of the study area. Similarly, no archaeological occurrences were noted. Of interest is the fact that 1957 aerial imagery shows the southern portion of the study area – much of the current area between Bosbok Street and the railway line – as having been transformed through intensive cultivation.

The study area is traversed by a public road (Blesbok Street) as well as an array of servitudes relating urban-related engineering services (water pipelines, electrical and sewerage). Importantly, it is situated within an established urban area bound by existing low density residential properties to the east, south and west. The proposal put forward allows for a mix of higher density residential typologies and would consequently, when taken within the context of existing built form, translate to more efficient use of urban land through "infill development".

Taken in conjunction with the above assessment we are therefore of the view that the proposal would not impact on heritage resources of cultural significance and that the development may therefore proceed.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Having regard to the above assessment, it is our view that the proposal would not impact on any heritage resource of cultural significance and that no further heritage-related studies would therefore be warranted in this instance.

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13th November 2019

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