

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)

PROPOSED URBAN DEVELOPMENT ON THE FARM VYFBRAKKEFONTEINEN 220/209), (AALWYNDAL) MOSSEL BAY DISTRICT AND MUNICIPALITY



ON BEHALF OF: NN BUSDIENS (Pty) Ltd

AUGUST 2022

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PERCEPTION Planning

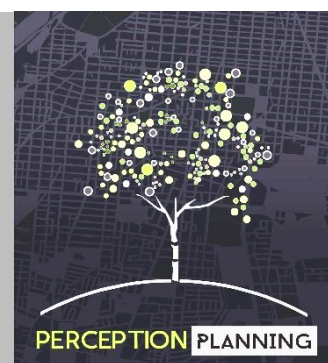
7 Imelda Court, 103 Meade Street, George
PO Box 9995, George, 6530

Cell: 082 568 4719

Fax: 086 510 8357

E-mail: perceptionplanning@gmail.com

www.behance.net/perceptionplanningSA



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REFERENCES and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Cape Town Archives
2. Mossel Bay Municipal Spatial Development Framework, 2022
3. Aalwyndal Local Spatial Development Framework, 2018
4. Kathleen Schulz, Southern Cape Historian
5. Surveyor General Office
6. Malan, L. 2022. *Draft Heritage Impact Assessment: Proposed Storage Facility Erf 21275, Aalwyndal.*

ABBREVIATIONS

1. DEA – National Department of Environmental Affairs
2. HWC – Heritage Western Cape
3. NHRA - National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)
4. HIA – Heritage Impact Assessment
5. HWC – Heritage Western Cape
6. PHS – Provincial Heritage Site
7. 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 Petrus Jacobus Pretorius (SA ID 840621 5057 085) on behalf of NN Busdiens (Pty) Ltd (being the registered 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 the subject property. The Proxy, Power of Attorney, as well as copies of the relevant Title Deed and S.G Diagram, is attached as part of **Annexure 1**.

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

- Portion 209 of the farm Vyfbrakkefontein 220, measuring 5,1618 ha, registered to NN Busdiens (Pty) Ltd, held under Title Deed T 23460/2022, situated within the jurisdiction of the Mossel Bay District and Municipality, Western Cape.

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The subject property is situated within the suburb Aalwyndal (formerly a smallholding area), located \pm 7km northwest of the Mossel Bay historic town centre, \pm 2,4km southwest of the Voorbaai natural coastline, \pm 4,3km southwest of Hartenbos and \pm 1,7km west of the local airfield as per **Figures 1 and 2**. Access is from local distributors, Aalwyn Way and Klipheuwel Road, via the R102 or the N2 National Road.

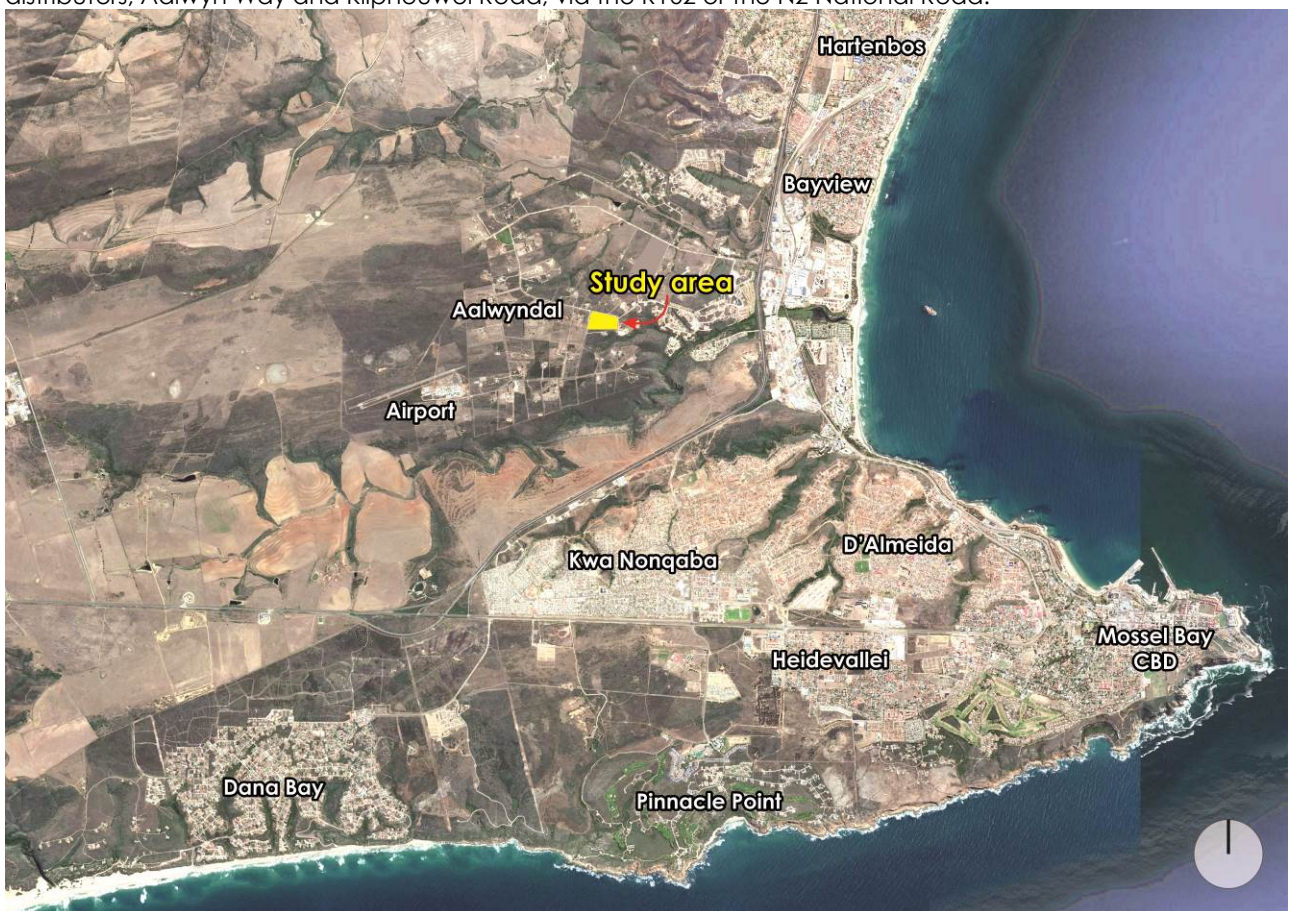


Figure 1: Study area location within regional context (Google Earth, 2021, as edited)

Aalwyndal forms part of an undulating landscape bound by rural/ agricultural land use to the north, west as well as southwards leading up to the N2 National Road. The area presently consists predominantly of large smallholdings, all of which are zoned for Single Residential purposes¹. The area has however been earmarked for urban densification by the planning authority (please refer to Section 4) and a number of recently developed residential estates, and several others currently in the process of being implemented (Figure 2).

The property is situated upon a plateau and very gentle east-facing slope as illustrated through the contours transposed on the current aerial (**Figure 3**). During fieldwork undertaken on 1st March 2022 it was noted that the property is primarily overgrown by low-growing indigenous vegetation though alien invasive vegetation occurs along the road verges along the northern and eastern boundaries (i.e. Klipheuwel Road). No structures or ruins were noted during fieldwork. Existing land use within the direct proximity of the property includes rural occupation, several tourism-orientated facilities (e.g. wedding venue, guest houses) and established residential estates to the east.

¹ Mossel Bay GIS Viewer, accessed 24th July 2022



Figure 2: Subject property within existing urban/ landscape context (Google Earth, 2021, as edited)



Figure 3: Existing features noted during field work (GoogleEarth, 2021, as edited)

There are no known structures or sites of local or regional cultural significant situated with its direct proximity. Photographs of the study area and its direct environs are attached as part of **Annexure 2** to this report.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

According to the conceptual site development plan provided (Hamilton Wessels Architects, 2022) the proposal is for development of the entire property as part of a new residential complex, which would include the following components:

- Commercial/ Retail use (1,600m²)
- Apartments (65 units, three storey building, building footprint 2,660m²)
- Cluster apartments (8 units, 2 x two storey buildings, building footprint 1,400m²)
- Row houses (24 units, 6 x two storey buildings, building footprint 2,340m²)
- Single residential (37 erven varying between 260m²-360m² each)
- Open space (natural vegetation) 9,837m²
- Ancillary services and infrastructure (incl. private roads, parking, pedestrian, circulation areas)

A land use planning application has not yet been submitted to the planning authority. The conceptual site development plan is attached to this report as **Annexure 3**.

4. SPATIAL PLANNING CONTEXT

4.1 Mossel Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework, 2022

According to this spatial planning framework the subject property is situated within the urban edge and within the Aalwyndal area, which been earmarked as an intensification area to bring residential opportunities closer to the main economic activity areas (MB MSDF 2022: 87) (**Figure 4**). The western portion of the property form part of an area defined as a new "Business Node" within the Aalwyndal area. From a broader planning perspective, the rationale behind the need for urban expansion towards the Aalwyndal area are explained in the MSDF as follows:

"Mossel Bay as a whole and particularly this part of the town is showing signs of becoming stuck with densities that are too low to support public and non-motorised transport services and a land use pattern that creates an excessive need for travel. To support this improved functionality of Louis Fourie Road, a more intense and mixed land use pattern should be promoted. Gross average floor area ratios should increase to at least 1.0 and dwelling unit densities to 25 dwelling units per hectare. The proposed Aalwyndal development area will enhance this target."
(MB MSDF 2022: 84)

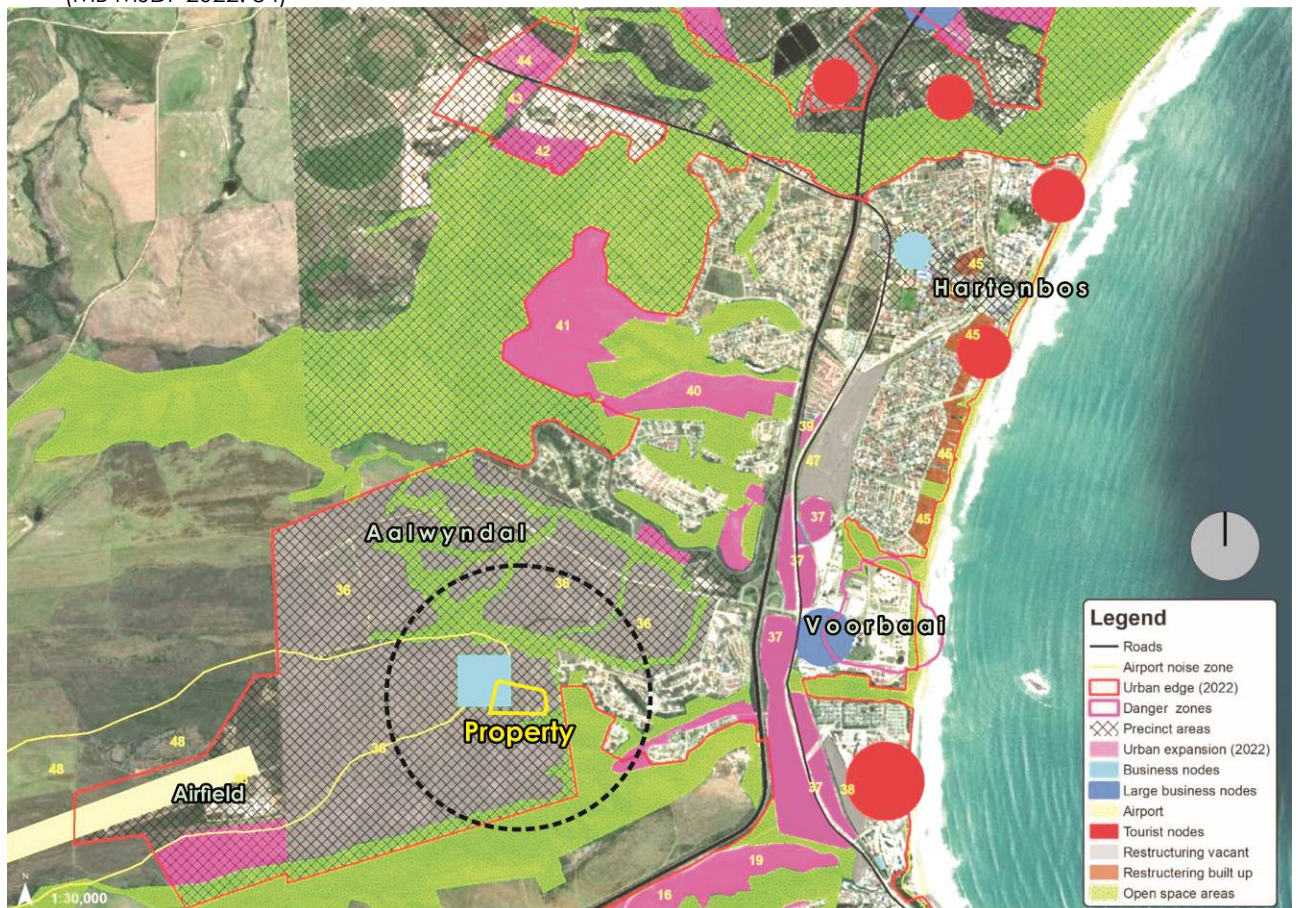


Figure 4: Subject property (yellow) shown within context of spatial planning proposals for Aalwyndal as reflected in the Mossel Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework (2022)

4.2 Aalwyndal Local Spatial Development Plan, 2018

One of the overarching spatial objectives for Aalwyndal as outlined in this local spatial planning framework is for future development in this area to allow for Residential Integration (Section 6.3) (MB Mun, 2018: 7). The Aalwyndal LSDF envisages residential integration to follow the principle of “mixed residential gradient” and argues that “Aalwyndal is more suitable to cater for the income groups from R3500 upwards”. Pertaining to Fragmented Development Section 16.5 of the LSDF that, “it is realistic to accept that fragmented development of the area could occur for a long time” (MB Mun, 2018: 21).

The LSDF earmarks the northwest corner of the property as a “Mixed Use Node” with the remainder as “Residential” (Figure 5).

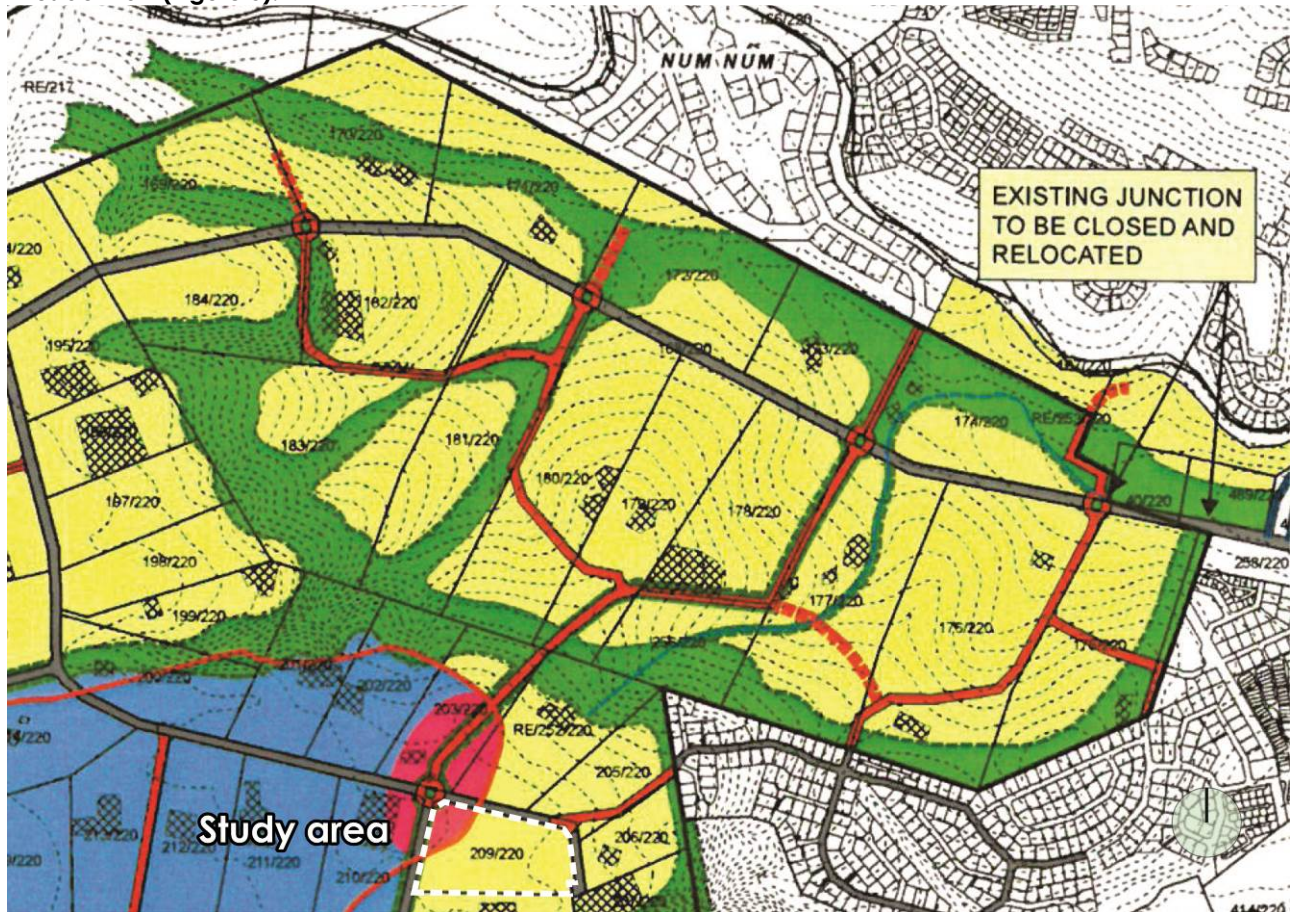


Figure 5: Subject property (white) shown within context of spatial planning proposals for Aalwyndal as reflected in the Aalwyndal Local Spatial Development Framework (MB Mun, 2018)

The proposal therefore appears to be consistent with the overall spatial planning policy and objectives for the Aalwyndal area.

5. BASIC HISTORIC BACKGROUND

From a colonial perspective the subject property is situated upon land that formed part of the early freehold farm Vyfbrakkefontein (also “Voorbaai” or “Zevenfontein”), first surveyed by surveyor Sgt. Petersen during 1815² (Figure 6). The farm Vyfbrakkefontein originally measured $\pm 1,859$ morgen ($\pm 1,592$ ha) and was first transferred to John Murray on 7th July 1815. To provide further historical context, the farm Hartenbosch directly north of Vyfbrakkefontein was first granted during 1734 (i.e. 81 years prior) to Cape burgher Esais Engelbrecht Meyer³ by the then Governor Jan de le Fontaine. As a side note – Sgd. Petersen was also responsible for compiling the earliest town layout plan for the nearby town of George in 1811.

The farm Vyfbrakkefontein 220/209 was surveyed and framed in 1996 when Portion 192 of the farm was subdivided though it had not been assigned an erf number as with several other properties within Aalwyndal. It was first transferred to Joao Da Nova Investments during 1997 but sold to Graeme Errol McCarthy later the same year. The property changed hands again in 2000 when it transferred to Kathleen du Plessis and again to Gracelen Inv 341 CC/ (Pty) Ltd from 2001 onwards. The property was transferred to the current landowner earlier this year.

² SG Diagram 242/1815

³ Cape Town Deeds Office (CTDO); Stellenbosch Freeholds II 203, dated 7th September 1734

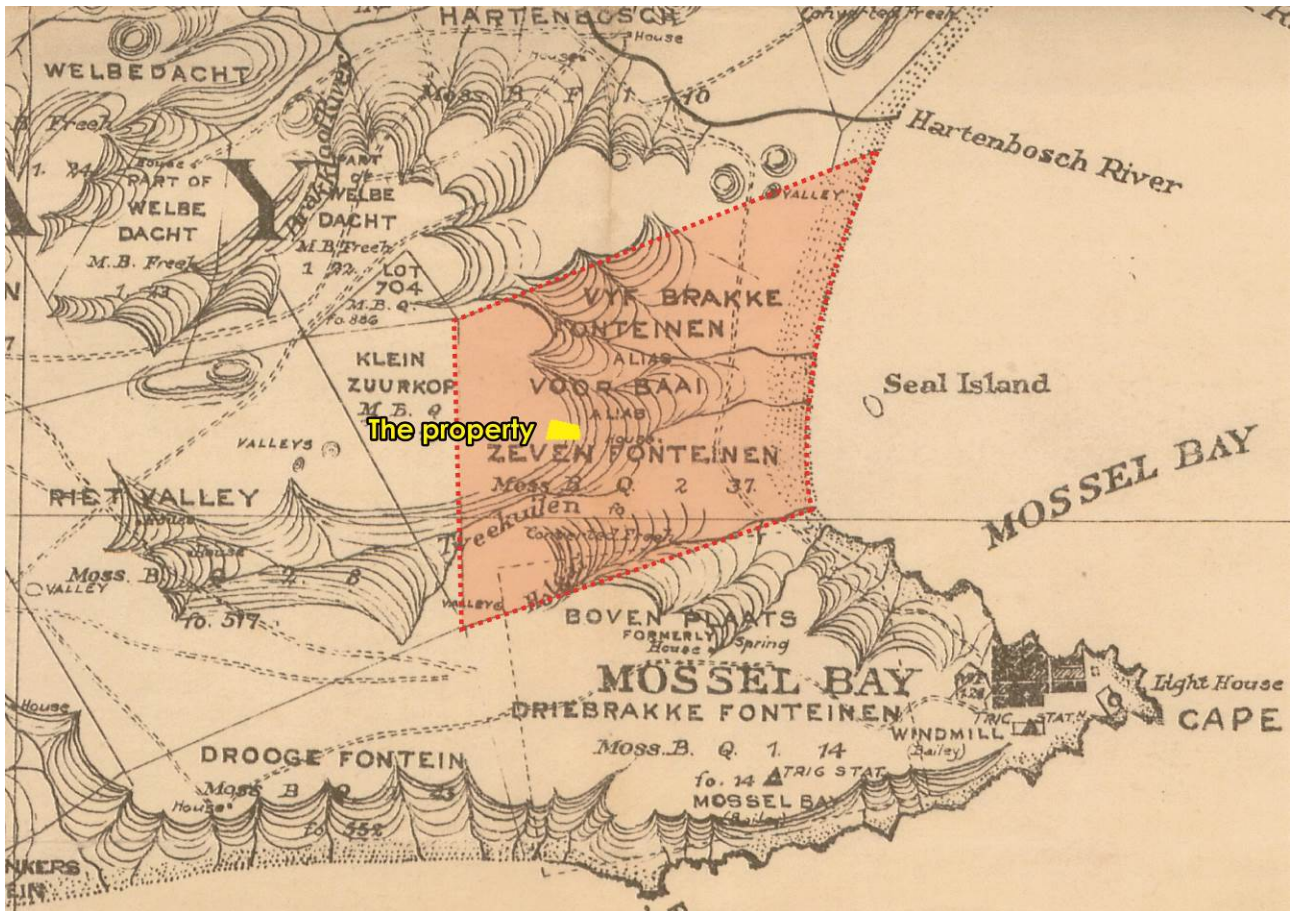


Figure 6: Approximate location of the property in relation to (±1880) boundaries of the early freehold farm Vyfbrakkefontein (NGSI, as edited)

Basic historical background research did not identify or highlight any other significant heritage-related aspects related to this particular portion of land. It is unlikely that detailed archival research would provide further meaningful insight into former use and/or broader understanding of heritage-related themes of the area.

6. HERITAGE RESOURCES AND ISSUES

Given the limited nature of available primary and/ or secondary archival sources pertinent to the particular property, analysis of early (1957) aerial photography was found useful to inform our understanding from a cultural landscape context. From this analysis the following traditional (i.e. Pre-Modern) cultural landscape patterns emerge, as summarized below:

Aerial survey 403 of 1957 (Figure 7, overleaf):

- The property is situated within a largely undeveloped rural landscape set well back from the coastline whilst the pattern of intensive urban development is evident from a number of large structures at Voorbaai;
- A narrow track leads inland from Voorbaai in a NW direction (roughly parallel to the natural drainage line), following which it becomes illegible within the landscape;
- The railway line connecting the coastal line with the interior is seen meandering the landscape directly north of the natural drainage line, the latter of which defines the Aalwyndal valley floor;
- The subject property and land directly contiguous are vacant and does not appear to contain any structures;
- In contrast, well-established road connections already occur along the coastline (R102 and railway line);
- Patterns of intensive agriculture/ cultivation within the valley appear to have been limited to a relatively small area situated within the confluence of two tributaries to the natural water course (i.e. north of the property) and larger cultivated fields directly south of the Blinde River, directly south of Aalwyndal.

From the above it is therefore our contention that, while the proposal would transform the landscape, it would not impact on a cultural landscape of high local significance. No structures, ruins or possible burial grounds were noted during fieldwork. Archaeological visibility across the property is limited as a result of relatively dense vegetation cover. A recent HIA undertaken for the proposed development of Erf 21275, Aalwyndal (HWC CASE: 21072111SB0722E), ±1km west of the subject property, reports as follows (sic):

“Jonathan Kaplan undertook a field assessment of archaeological resources on the site, as well as a desktop study to understand the heritage context of the site. Finds of some significance of ESA, MSA and

LSA resources were recorded on properties in the Hartenbos area and further north, but closer to the site only isolated ESA and MSA artefacts were recorded on the Remainder of Vyf Brakke Fontein, in 2002, by Niilsen. A few isolated, weathered MSA quartzite flakes and chunks were recorded during the field work. According to Kaplan these are mostly likely to be discarded flakes and flake debris. No settlement sites, evidence of human occupation, ESA or LSA resources, graves or typical grave features were identified on the site.

Based on these findings, Kaplan has graded the site as **Not Conservation Worthy.**"

(Malan, 2022:10,11)



Figure 7: Location of subject property transposed onto 1957 aerial imagery for the area (Aerial survey 403, Flight Strip 11, Image 3420, NGSi)

According to SAHRIS Paleo-sensitivity mapping the property is situated within an area earmarked as being of "High" palaeontological sensitivity where, "[a] desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely"⁴ (Figure 8). The aforementioned HIA undertaken for Erf 21275, Aalwyndal (HWC CASE: 21072111SB0722E), ±1km west, reports as follows (sic):

"Although the SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity Map would suggest that the site is located in an area of high palaeontological sensitivity, this map is based on the 1: 250 000 Oudtshoorn geological map which has since been revised. Originally it was thought that the area was underlain by the Peninsula Formation, but, according to Pether, the site is located on the Skurweberg Formation Bedrock, of which the palaeontological sensitivity is rated as LOW.

As the site is located in southern zone of the Cape Fold Belt, the low sensitivity is further exacerbated by strong folding and deformation and then even further by the weathering of the mudrock units where fossils could possibly be found. The site is most likely covered by rubbly soil, similar to that found in a heap on a site across the road from Erf 21275. As the excavations to accommodate the proposal will mainly affect the soil profile formed on the weathered Skurweberg Formation bedrock, it is unlikely that well-preserved fossils will be found on the site, and the palaeontological sensitivity of the site is indicated as **MARGINAL.**"

(Malan, 2022:11)

⁴ <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/map/palaeo>, accessed 28th July 2022

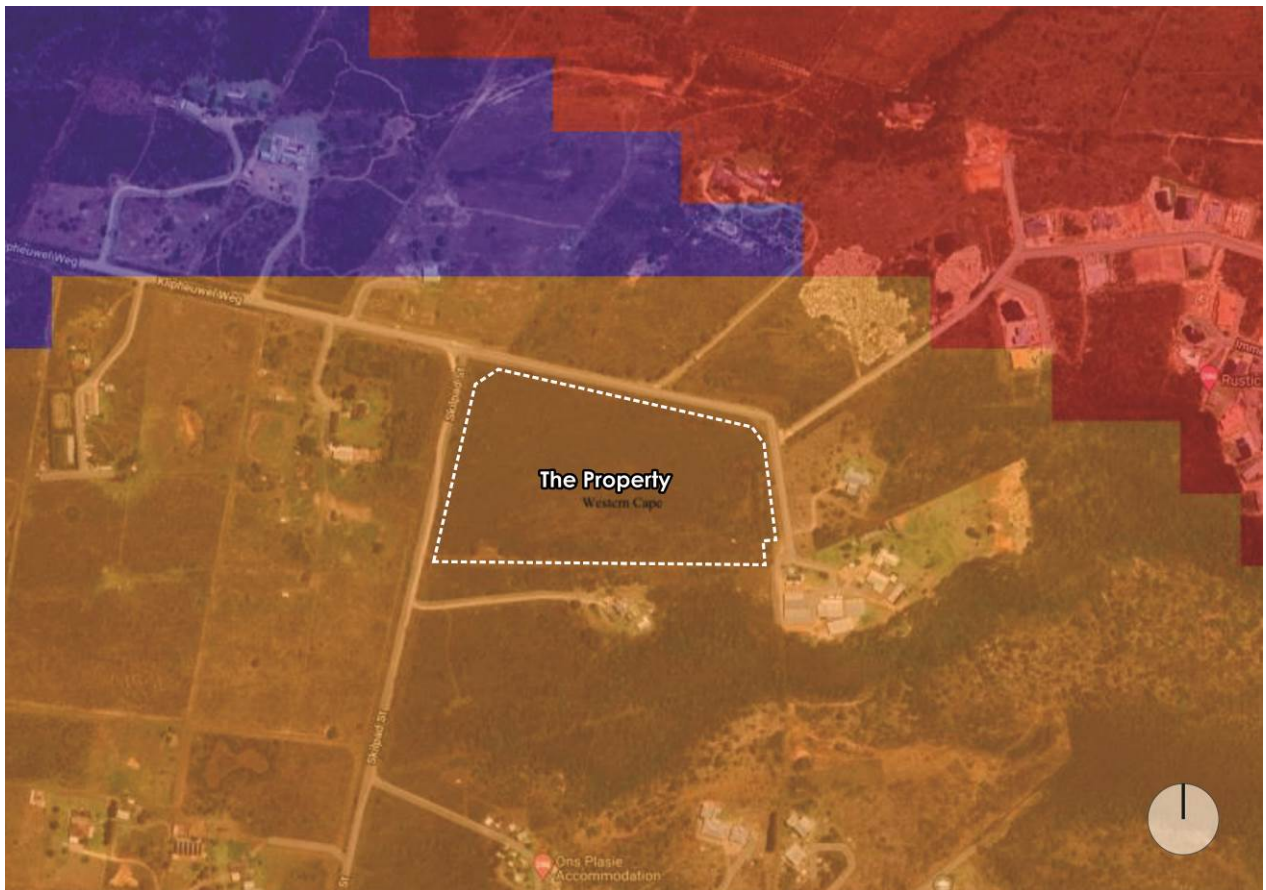


Figure 8: Property boundaries within context of SAHRIS paleo-sensitivity mapping for the area (SAHRIS, 2022)

The subject property is located within an area earmarked for urban expansion in the Mossel Bay MSDF, 2022 and $\pm 300\text{m}$ west of a recently approved residential estate (Island View Village). Although the proposal would transform the landscape it is therefore likely to be viewed within context of the above spatial proposals and aforementioned development. Based on fieldwork, historic background research and the literature review undertaken as part of this assessment it is therefore our view that no heritage resources of cultural significance are likely to be impacted through the proposed development.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Findings and recommendations from recent heritage-related specialist studies on nearby properties rated archaeology as "Not Conservation Worthy" and palaeontology as "Marginal", respectively. Following from the aforementioned as well as the findings emanating from this 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 be warranted in this instance.

PERCEPTION Planning

5th August 2022

STEFAN DE KOCK

Hons: TRP(SA) EIA Mgmt(IRL) Pr Pln PHP