

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

for the Proposed Subdivision, Rezoning and Residential Development on Erf 1772, Stanford Overstrand Local Municipality

HWC Case No: 2220300801AM0308E



Prepared for submission in terms of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act,
Act 25 of 1999

Client: Tude Guest Services and More (Pty) Ltd
(Reg No. 2021/721413/07)

Prepared by:



Antoinette de Beer

PrLarch (UCT) 20218

(t) +27 21 981 6104

(m) +27 83 232 6555

antoinette@arlaconsulting.co.za
www.arlaconsulting.co.za
Postnet Suite #24 Private Bag XI
Brackenfell 7561

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The town of Stanford falls within the region of the Overberg which has significant natural and rural beauty, and thus visual sensitivity. The region is characterised by rugged mountain ranges, fynbos, rolling wheat and canola fields, picturesque vineyards and coastal vistas. Stanford village, full of rural charm, is located 24km east of the town of Hermanus and was established as a farming community in 1857.

The site for the proposed development is located south of the R326 at about 250m from the R326 - R43 intersection at the entrance to Stanford Village. It falls inside the urban edge of the Overstrand SDF (2022); also refer to the legislative context below.

The site is currently surrounded by land used for agricultural purposes or land that has been used for agricultural purposes but has since been abandoned.

“This proposed development will consist of: 91 Residential Properties; 5 Private Open Spaces; and 3 Private Roads. Access to the development will be taken from the R326 through a controlled entrance gate. The rezoning and subdivision of the subject property will introduce a new type of residential opportunity into the housing market in Stanford” (NID, 2022:4).

The site is located on the valley floor of Kleinrivier Valley and, based on topography only, highly visible i.e. visible from several square kilometres. The site is not visible from the town centre because of existing buildings and vegetation. The site is visible from sections of the R43 & R326, especially where the road ascends up and out of the valley towards Hermanus, Caledon or Gansbaai. However, existing trees on the adjacent properties as well as along these “Routes of Regional Scenic Significance” provide moderate screening.

The visual absorption capacity of the broader landscape varies between the village and the rural landscape. Within the village or vineyards the VAC is moderate-high however, when covered with crops such as wheat or canola, used for pasture, vacant or abandoned fields have a low VAC. The site therefore has an overall **moderate VAC**.

Visually sensitive areas within the ZVI include the Stanford Village HPOZ as well as the Landscape of Significance. Visually sensitive receptors include residential area in and around Stanford, residents or visitors travelling on the R43 & R326.

Potential visual impacts include:

- Change from Agricultural Landscape to Residential Development,
- Visibility from Sensitive Areas & Receptors,
- Night light.

From a visual perspective, the development should be endorsed on the condition that the mitigation measures for the proposed development are implemented as per the Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Report prepared for this development.

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1. INTRODUCTION

A notice of intent to develop (NID) was submitted to Heritage Western Cape on the 28th of February 2022 and the response received on the 24th of March 2022 indicated that a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), assessing the visual impact of the proposed development, would be required in terms of Section 38(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999 (Refer Addendum A).

Antoinette Raimond Landscape Architectural Consulting, hereafter referred to as ARLA Consulting, was appointed on the 31st of May 2022 by WRAP Group to conduct a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) for the proposed development on Erf 1772 in Stanford, within the Overstrand Local Municipality.

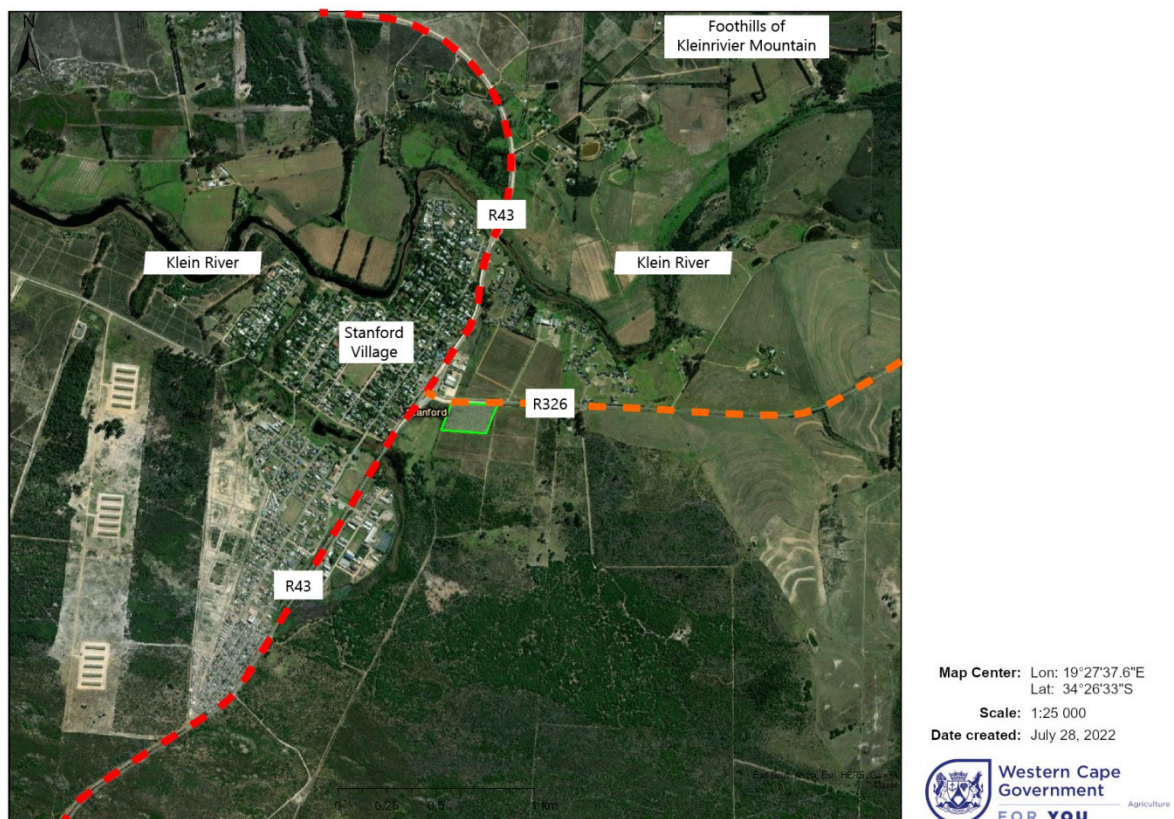


Figure 1: Site location
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

1.1 Background to the Study

The Site Context

The town of Stanford falls within the region of the Overberg which has significant natural and rural beauty, and thus visual sensitivity. The region is characterised by rugged mountain ranges, fynbos, rolling wheat and canola fields, picturesque vineyards and coastal vistas. Stanford village, full of rural charm, is located 24km east of the town of Hermanus and was established as a farming community in 1857.

The site for the proposed development is located south of the R326 at about 250m from the R326 - R43 intersection at the entrance to Stanford Village. It falls inside the urban edge of the Overstrand SDF (2020); also refer to the legislative context below.

The site is currently surrounded by land used for agricultural purposes or land that has been used for agricultural purposes but has since been abandoned. Birkenhead Brewery is located immediately opposite the site (to the north) and gently slopes down to Kleinrivier. A service station as well as the Overberg Agri is located west of The Birkenhead (and thus north west of the site) on the corner of the R43 and R326. A fairly new residential area is located east of the Birkenhead (thus north east of the site) called Stanhaven. The property to the west, immediately adjacent to the site, is zoned as industrial. The farms located north and east of the site are zoned as agriculture and used as such although, an additional approximately 35ha of the agricultural area surrounding the subject property is also included in the Overstrand urban edge (2020).



Figure 2: Site Context
(Source: Google Earth with adaptations)

1.2 Legislative Context

This study forms part of a Basic Assessment process undertaken in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999).

Following the submission of a notification of Intent to Develop (NID) Heritage Western Cape (HWC) requested a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in terms of Section 38(3) of NHRA as described in the introduction.

Cultural Landscape:

In terms of this VIA, cultural landscape will be defined as per the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention which states that: "*cultural landscapes are cultural properties that represent the combined works of nature and man*" designated in Article I of the Convention (ICOMOS 2009); are:

- *illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time,*
(in this case the cultural landscape of Stanford is of high significance in terms of its rich and dense historical layering dating to the 18th century: resources reflecting the use of the area for a wide range of farming activities, from the seasonal activity related to Khoisan herders (cattle grazing), to the market gardening associated with Stanford in the mid 19th century to the present-day wine, wheat and canola farming; Overstrand EMF. 2013:40)
- *under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment, and*
(in this case the high local significance in terms of its unique Klein River valley setting, relationship between the Stanford village and the surrounding farmland- Klein River Valley- and the natural features bisecting the town i.e. the Klein River & Mill Stream, the ecological corridor)
- *of successive social, economic, and cultural forces, both external and internal*
(in this case development pressure for a mix of residential housing within Stanford).

The following documents have been reviewed in terms of the visual aspects:

Overberg District Spatial Development Framework (2014) &

Draft Overberg District Spatial Development Framework (2022)

The frameworks refer to Stanford as an agricultural town on the coastal plain and highlight the link between its biophysical assets and the tourism economy which in turns places significant value on its heritage and scenic landscapes that must be protected. It refers to the Heritage and Scenic Resources: Inventory and Policy Framework for the Western Cape, a supporting study commissioned with the 2014 PSDF for more deal with regards to the scenic and heritage assets (2022:37).

Overstrand Spatial Development Framework (2020)

Stanford is described as "an increasingly popular tourist destination due to its historical character - the settlement dates from the mid-nineteenth century" (2020:88). "Stanford's more recent suburbs to the east of the" ... Klein River ..." are characterised by higher density more modern layout patterns, although informed to an extent by the historical grid layout. The eastern suburbs were laid out based on the garden city concept" (2020:89).

"The historical grid layout and Cape vernacular townscape is regarded as such a significant heritage resource, that the Overstrand Municipality delineated this entire area as an individual and unique draft HPOZ. In addition to the aforementioned, the area south of the natural spring (i.e. "Die Oog") and the area that connects to the non-perennial river that bisects the town have been included in one urban conservation EMOZ and is therefore protected in terms of the draft EMOZ regulations" (2020:89).

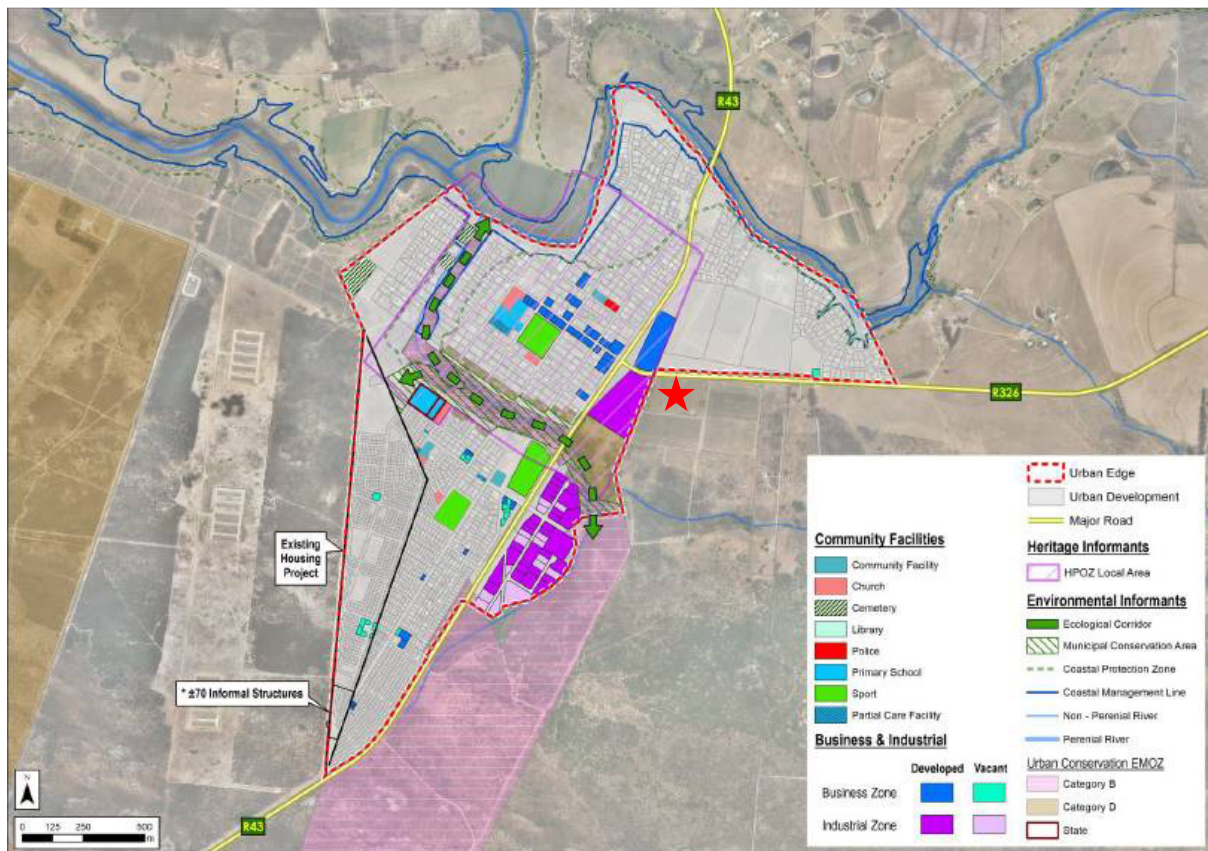


Figure 3: Stanford Status Quo
Source: Overstrand SDF 2020:90

The Stanford Draft HPOZ states "foreign or unsympathetic styles of site layout and buildings should be discouraged in urban settlements and rural areas so as to strengthen the local sense of place and minimise visual impact" (2020:132). This pertains specifically to the HPOZ however, due to the site's close proximity, it should be considered in the proposal.

One of the local spatial development and growth management principles in the SDF is to promote "urban expansion in less sensitive areas" (2020:212). The site falls within an area that the Spatial Proposal highlights as "new urban infill: residential, mixed use, community facilities, etc." See Figure 4 below.

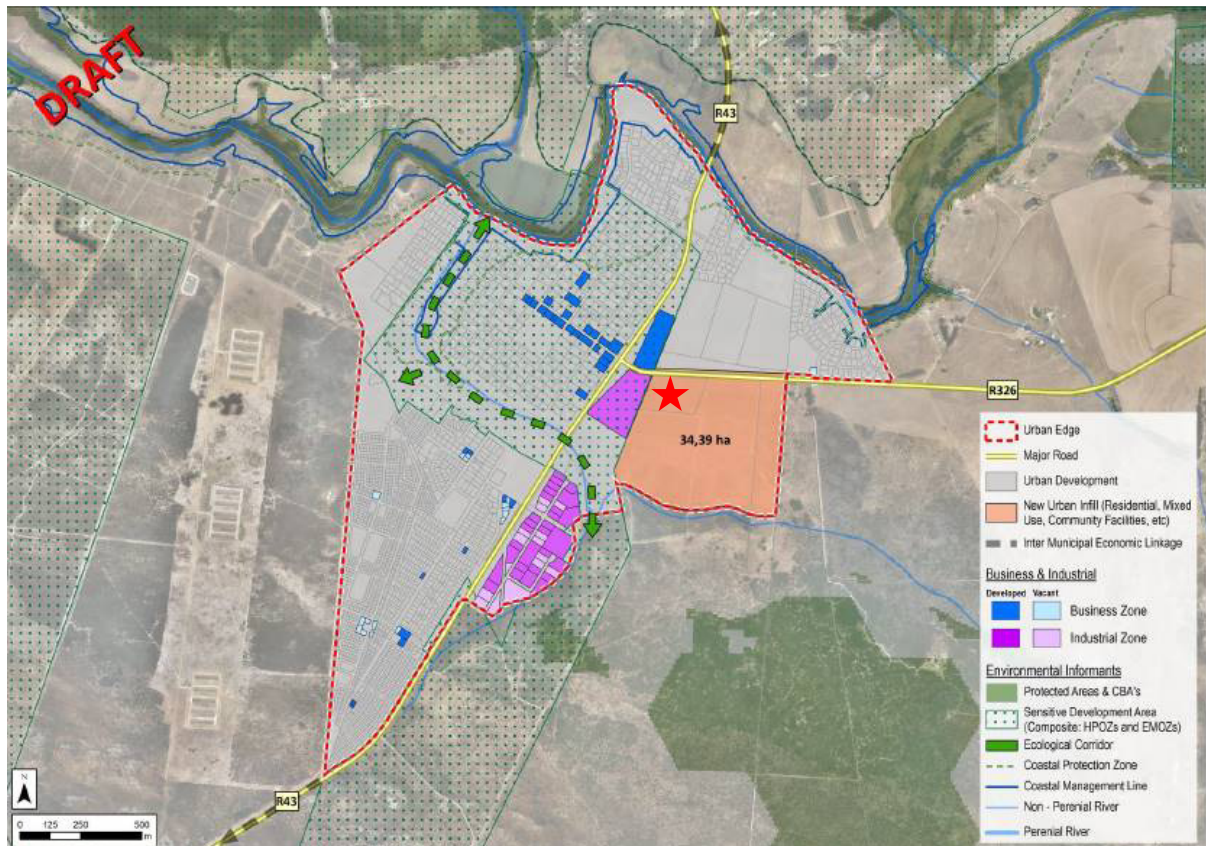


Figure 4: Stanford Spatial Proposal 2020
Source: Overstrand SDF 2020:213

Draft Overstrand Heritage Survey (2009)

The survey notes that Stanford is located at "the junction of the route to the coast and the link route from the Cape over the Hottentots Holland, through Botrivier towards Bredasdorp" (2009:23). It also notes that scenic and natural heritage significance typically increases where "mountains are in close relation to the coastline or lagoons" such as the Klein River Valley in which Stanford is located (2009:35). Heritage Significance for Stanford is described under five headings namely: architectural, aesthetic, social & historical, scientific and technological. Under Aesthetic Significance it notes that it "relates primarily to the natural setting of the village". Reference is made to the riverine corridor to the north (the Klein River), the Kraal recreational area to the south, the water from the spring in the south (Die Oog) which feeds the leiwater system and the way the buildings have been located close to the street boundaries (leaving the rear portion open for the planting of fruit trees and vegetables). It further states that "heritage management actions thus need to ensure the visual spatial interrelationship between settlement and nature" (2020:83).

One of the vulnerabilities it lists is the "inappropriate development at the entrance to the village which could impact negatively on its rural setting". It does not mention any specific development however; it can be assumed that reference is being made to the service stations at the entrance to the village.

The Survey notes that the Heritage Protection Overlay Zone proposed for Stanford relates specifically to the conservation of existing fabric as opposed to the control of building form (2009:5). It further recommends "that the existing conservation areas demarcated for Stanford, be consolidated and extended to include the river courses north and south, the area immediately to the east of the main route between Hermanus and Gansbaai to preserve the scenic qualities of this area, and Die Bron school and church area, and die 'Kraal' area to the south" (2020:84).

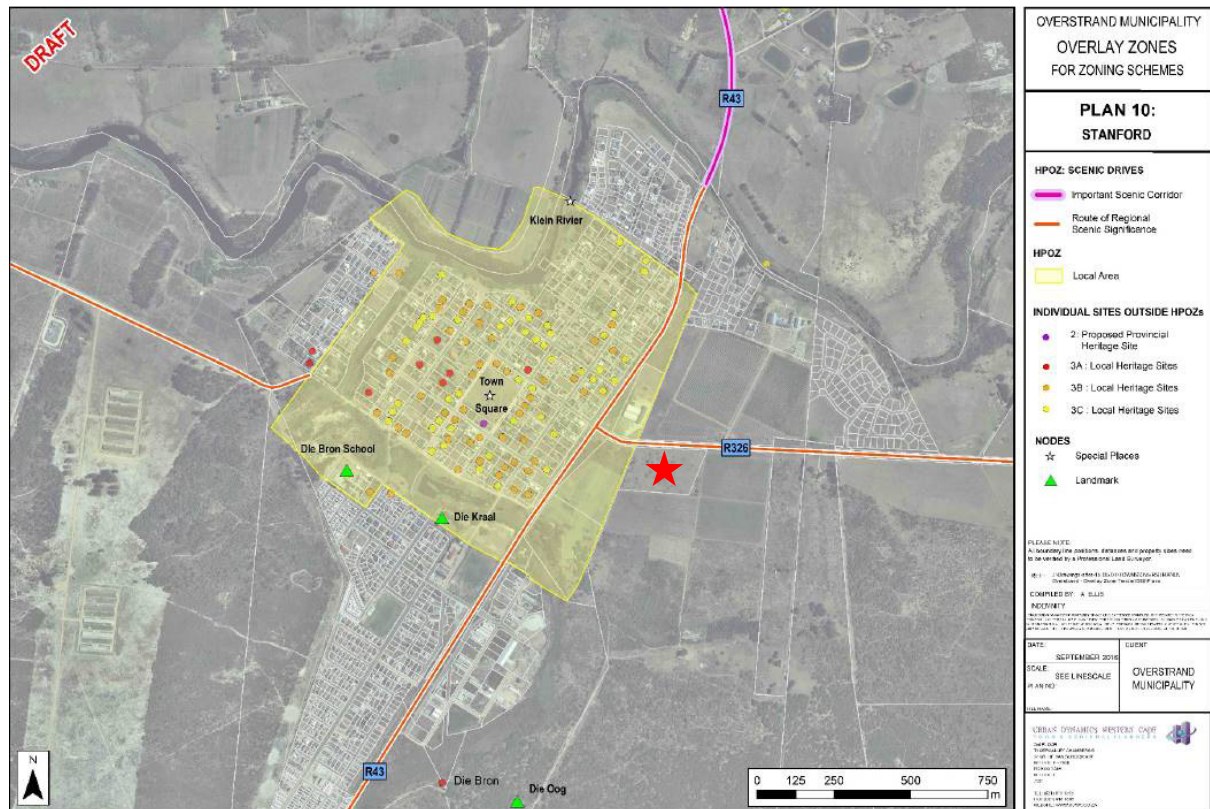


Figure 5: Overlay Zones for Zoning Schemes, Plan 10: Stanford
Source: Draft Overstrand Heritage Survey (2009:80)

NOTE: the HPOZ immediately adjacent to / west of Erf 1772, the important scenic corridor north of Stanford and the route regional scenic significance in close proximity to Erf 1772 (R43 & R326).

The Survey also includes Conservation and Development Guidelines for the Overstrand Municipality. Keeping in mind that it was developed in 2009 the following heritage, planning and design informants are relevant: "*consolidate development within the existing urban edge line*" & "*prevent further development of gated villages along the northern edge of the R326*". The former is no longer possible since the Overstrand SDF (2020) noted that approximately 34ha is required for new urban development by 2031 (2020:88). The proposed development will be a gated estate however, it is located along the southern edge of the R326.

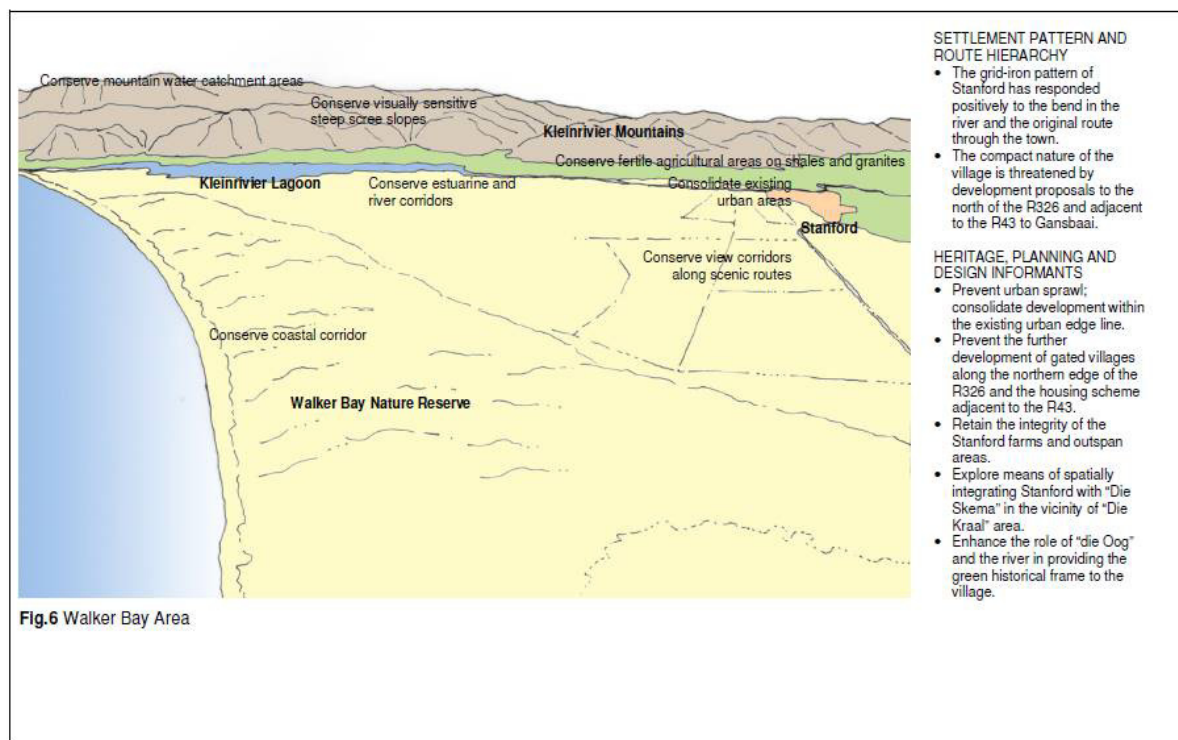


Figure 6: Heritage, Planning Design Informants: Walker Bay Area
Source: Draft Overstrand Heritage Survey (2009:290)

Heritage and Scenic Resources: Inventory and Policy Framework for the Western Cape (2014)

Appendix A of the Inventory gives a description and overview of each municipal district. The historical themes and layering relevant to Stanford are: landscape of high scenic beauty, historical architecture, place of recreation and its use for a wide range of farming activities. It lists Stanford as worthy of formal heritage protection (2014:42)

Appendix B (provides an inventory of each municipal district. It lists Akkedisberg Mountains as a Grade III Landscape, Kleinrivier Estuary as a Grade III Landscape, Kleinrivier Valley as a Grade III Landscape (rural landscape with scenic, cultural and biodiversity value), R326 as Grade III Route (Scenic route between Stanford and N2 through rural landscape/ cultural landscape), R43 Kleinrivier Valley as Grade III Route (Scenic route along Kleinrivier lagoon between Hermanus and Gansbaai) and Stanford as Historic Core III (2014:33-39). These would be categorised as visually sensitive areas in this VIA.

1.3 Terms of Reference

The DEA&DP Guidelines (Oberholzer, 2005:11) determines the level of assessment according to:

- a. The type of environment where development is proposed, and
- b. The type of development that is proposed.

The type of environment is rated as "*areas or routes of high scenic, cultural, historical significance*" due to Stanford's ecological and heritage value and tourism potential due to the former.

The type of development is rated as Level 4 "*e.g. medium density residential development*, sports facilities, small-scale commercial facilities / office parks, one-stop petrol stations, light industry, medium-scale infrastructure.*"

* Medium density development is described as: "*generally 1 to 3-storey structures, including cluster development, usually with more than 25% of the area retained as green open space*" (2005:11).

Due to the above a high visual impact can be expected i.e.:

- Potential intrusion on protected landscapes or scenic resources;
(heritage protection overlay zone, mountain and agricultural views)
- Noticeable change** in visual character of the area;
(depending on architectural and landscape guidelines)
- Establishes a new precedent for development in the area (2005:12).
(new development south of R326)

** Noticeable change is described as: "*clearly visible within the view frame and experience of the receptor*" (2005:12).

However, the Overstrand SDF proposes new development in "*less sensitive areas*" and proposes new urban infill south of the R326 (2020:212-213). In addition new residential development such as Stanhaven has been developed north of the R326 and east of the Birkenhead Brewery. Due to the above it is our opinion that a Level 3 Assessment will be sufficient to evaluate the visual impact of the proposed development on the receiving environment (Oberholzer, 2005:19).

1.4 Methodology

The Level 3 Visual Assessment will be compiled as per the criteria, definitions and terminology as set out in the reference document: Oberholzer, B. 2005: ***Guideline for involving Visual & Aesthetic Specialists in EIA processes***. Edition 1. CSIR Report No ENV-S-C 2005 053 F. Republic of South Africa, Provincial Government of the Western Cape, Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning, Cape Town; as per our standard practice.

The method followed to produce this report has been to:

- a) A site visit / field survey, with Henry Aikman (HIA specialist), was undertaken on 22nd of June 2022. This site visit allowed us to:
 - Assess the scenic resources within the vicinity of the site, including *its context* and visual sensitivity,
 - Determine the actual or practical extent of potential visibility of the proposed development, by assessing the screening effect of landscape features (i.e. ZVI),
 - Conduct a photographic survey of the landscape surrounding the development, and
 - Identify sensitive landscape and visual receptors;

- b) A review of relevant studies & documentation available that contribute to the context and understanding of the anticipated visual impact, namely:
 - Notice of Intend to Develop submitted to Heritage Western Cape by Richard Kotze on 28th of February 2022,
 - Response to Notice of Intend to Develop from Heritage Western Cape dated 24th of March 2022;
 - Plans prepared by WRAP Town Planning & Project Management:
 - Site Development Plan (no date)
 - Elevation (double- no date)
 - Elevation (single- no date)
 - Erf 1772- Stanford: Architectural Design Guidelines. January 2022 by RISE Architects & WRAP Town Planning & Project Management.
 - Landscape Report and Plan dated December 2022 prepared by Megan Anderson Landscape architect.

1.5 Assumptions and Limitations

- The information and deductions in this report are based on information received from the client, as well as research and fieldwork by the specialist.
- This report assumes that the information provided by others is correct.
- This report is based on the information that was available at the time of writing.
- The perception of visual impact can be highly subjective. Unlike, for instance water quality, visual and scenic quality cannot be easily quantified as they tend to be abstract and relate to cultural values and perception.
- There is often a divergence of opinion on what constitutes 'acceptable' change, by the individual, the community or society in general.
- The report relies on a combination of 1:50 000 Topocadastral, 1:10 000 Orthophoto, Google Earth and CapeFarmMapper Images.

2. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Site Description

The site is located east and south of the developed edge of Stanford and is zoned for agriculture. It is bounded on the west, south and eastern side by farmland and by the R326 on the northern side. The Birkenhead Brewery, with its vineyards in the foreground, is located towards the north immediately opposite the R326.

The site and Stanford Village, located approximately 250m west of the site, falls within the Kleinrivier Valley on the foothills of the Klein River Mountain Range. Major routes within the vicinity are the R43, connecting Hermanus past Stanford to Gansbaai, and the R326 connecting the coastal route with the N2 national road via Caledon.

The site is 3.3ha in extent and fronts onto the R326 for approximately 230m. The site is very flat and falls in a north-westerly direction, towards Stanford. The highpoint at the south-east corner is approximately 25mamsl and the low point on the north-west corner approximately 22mamsl. This represents a total fall of approximately 3m over a mean distance of 230m, an approximate slope of 1:76. The site was used for agricultural purposes (vegetables and grazing) however it is currently not in use and has not been for some time.

As mentioned above the historic village of Stanford is located approximately 250m west of the site however, the proposed Heritage Protection Overlay includes Erf 594, the erf immediately west of the site. Both the R326 and the R43 are proposed 'Routes of Regional Scenic Significance'. There are no significant tree lines or clumps on the site but there are several within close proximity on the adjacent erven.

2.2 Development Description

"Erf 1772, Stanford (hereafter referred to as the subject property) is 33306m² in extent and is currently zoned as Agricultural Zone 1: Agricultural (AGR2). The subject property was included in the Urban Edge with the 2020 revision of the Overstrand Municipality Spatial Development Framework (OMSDF). This proposed development will consist of: 91 Residential Properties; 5 Private Open Spaces; and 3 Private Roads. Access to the development will be taken from the R326 through a controlled entrance gate. The current access to Erf 1772 Stanford is via a registered right of way servitude over Remainder of Portion 13 of Farm Riverside No 644, Caledon. Access to a development consisting of 91 residential opportunities via a right of way servitude is not desirable and it was agreed with the owners of the Remainder of Portion 13 of Farm Riverside 644, to exchange two portions of land on condition that the existing servitude is cancelled, and the Western Cape Department of Transport approves the new proposed access to Erf 1772 Stanford from the R326. The execution of this agreement, included in the land use application, entails the following:

Approximately 94m² will be subdivided from Erf 1772 Stanford and consolidated with the Remainder of Portion 13 of the Farm Riverside 644 Caledon and approximately 1909m² will be subdivided from the Remainder of Portion 13 of Farm 644, Caledon and consolidated with Erf 1772, Stanford. The rezoning and subdivision of the subject property will introduce a new type of residential opportunity into the housing market in Stanford. The proposed zoning and morphology are however aligned with development trends in other areas of the Overstrand Municipality. This development proposal combines a modern feel to the historic Stanford in an attempt to attract and satisfy a market that is not being catered for within the current urban context of Stanford' (NID, 2022:4).

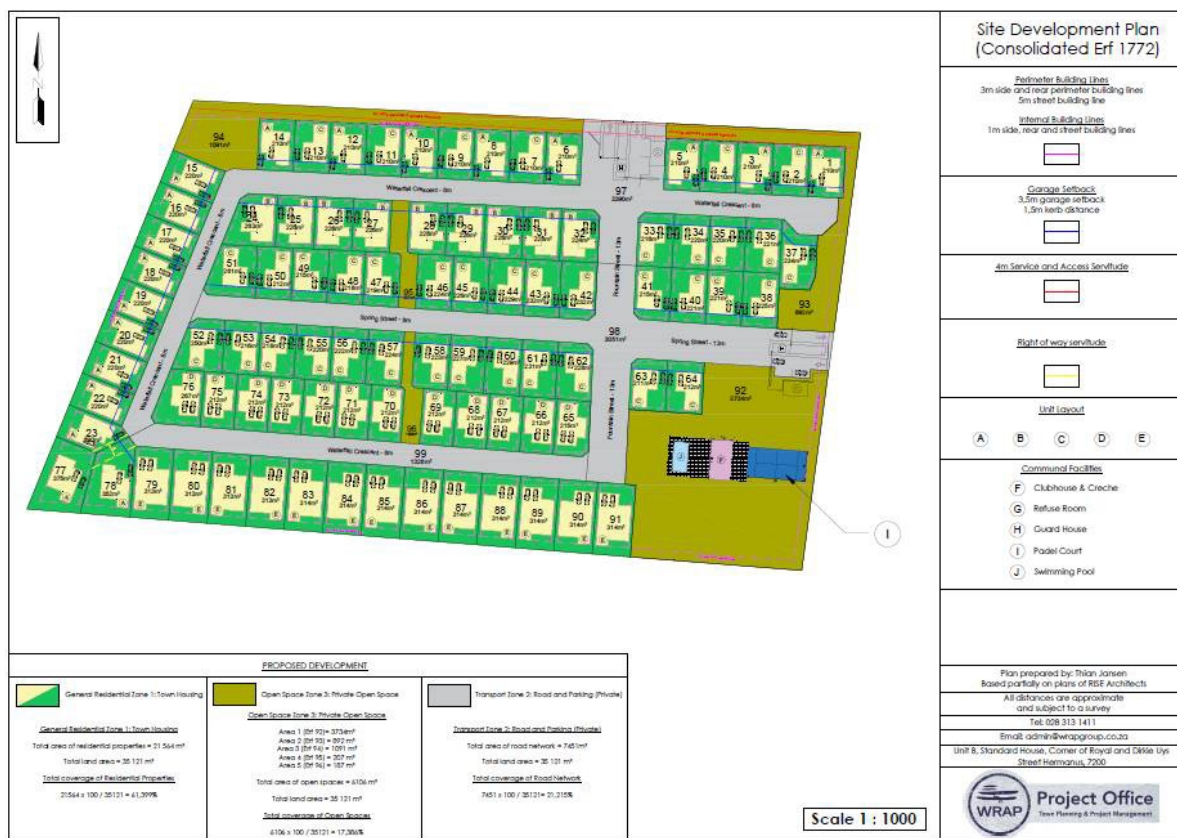


Figure 7: Site Development Plan (no date)
Source: WRAP Town Planning & Project Management

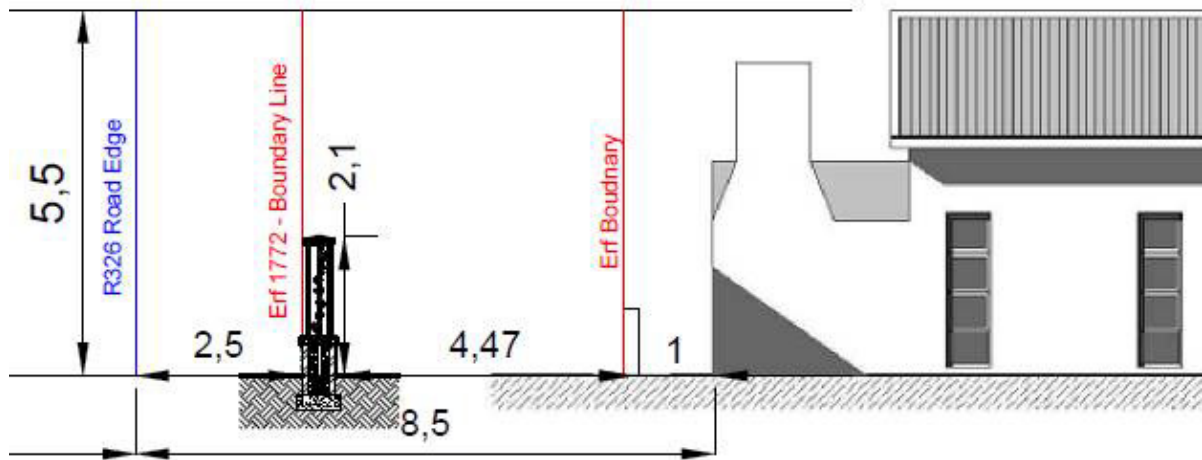


Figure 8: Elevation- single storey (no date)
Source: WRAP Town Planning & Project Management

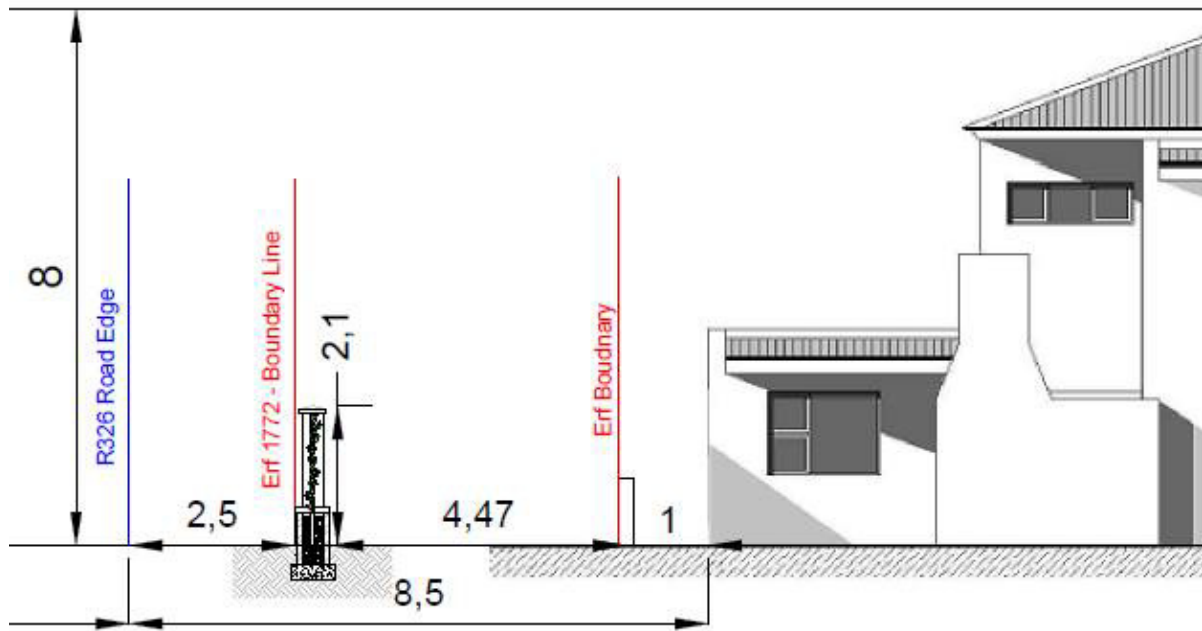


Figure 9: Elevation- double storey (no date)
Source: WRAP Town Planning & Project Management



Figure 10: Typical Detail: Boundary Wall (no date)
 Source: WRAP Town Planning & Project Management



Figure 11: Landscape Concept Plan (December 2022)
 Source: Megan Anderson Landscape Architect

3. RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Description of the Affected Area and the Scenic Resources

This section is a description of the existing visual environment that will be affected by the proposed residential development. It involves the identification of landscape types, landscape character and sense of place, generally based on geology, landforms, vegetation cover and land use patterns.

3.1.1 Geology & Landform

As mentioned under Item 2.1 the site is located within the Kleinrivier Valley on the foothills of the Klein River Mountain. The Overstrand Environmental Management Framework (2013:23) notes that *"due to the folded and resistant nature of the fractured quartzites of the Peninsula and Skurweberg Formations, the Table Mountain Group outcrops form steep, rocky mountains and the west-east trending topographic backbone of the Onrus, Babilonstoring and Kleinriviersberg mountain ranges..."*. However the site's geology consists of *"mudstone, siltstone, shale and feldspathic sandstone of the Gydo Formation, Bokkeveld Group, partly covered by alluvial and colluvial sand"*. This is due to the Klein River north of the site.

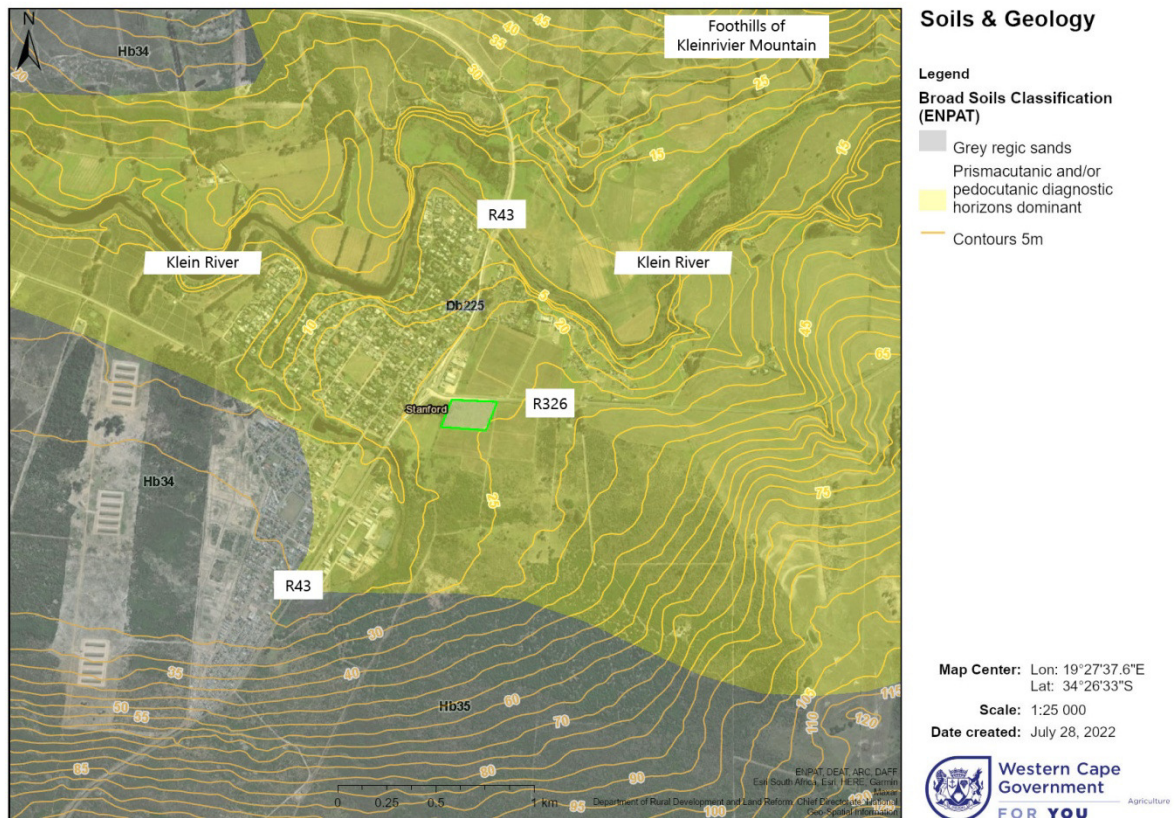


Figure 12: Geology & Landform
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.2 Topography and Drainage

As previously stated, the site and Stanford Village located approximately 250m west of the site, falls within the Kleinrivier Valley on the foothills of the Kleinrivier Mountain Range.

The site drains towards the north-west, towards the Klein River, and has a north-western aspect. The site is visually exposed towards the north, west and south and has a minor ridgeline towards the east. Development is generally more visible from higher elevations and less visible from lower elevations (such as the Birkenhead Brewery buildings).

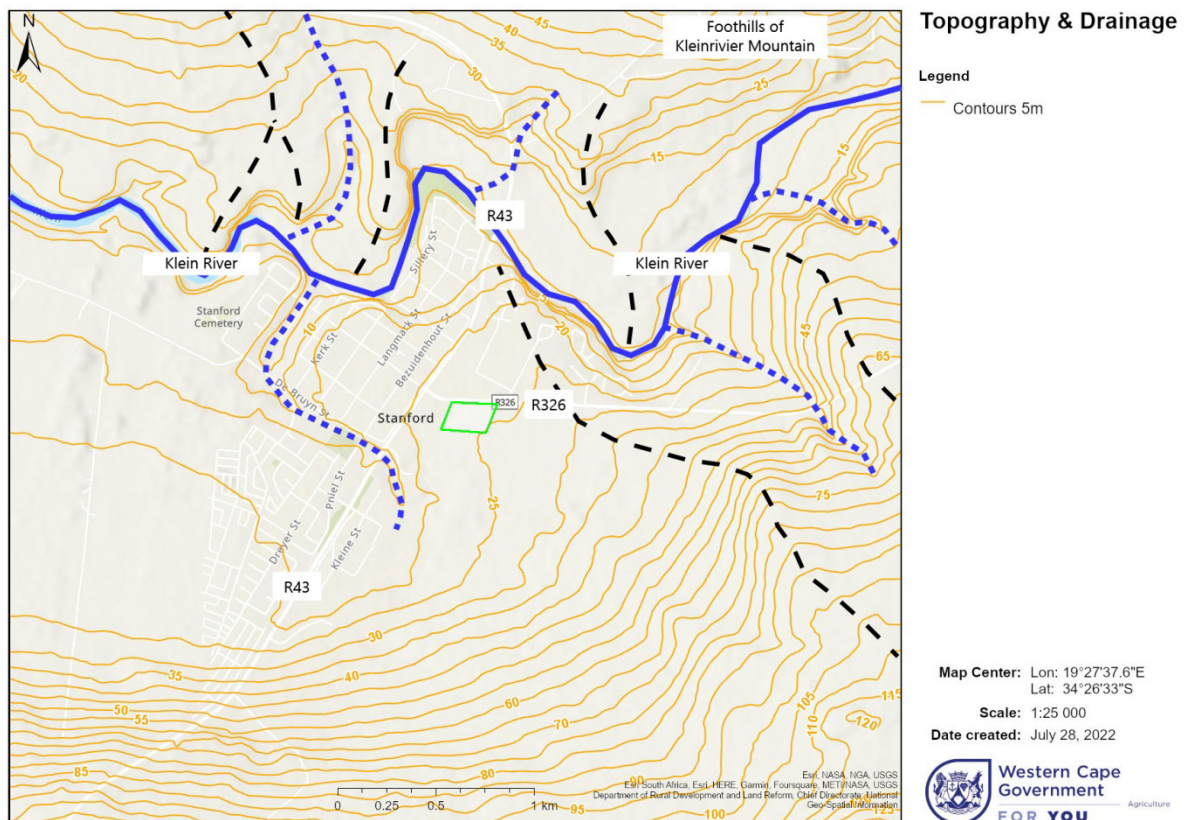


Figure 13: Topography and Drainage for Kleinrivier Valley (Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.3 Landscape Cover/Vegetation

The site itself was originally covered with Elim Ferricrete Fynbos but has long since been transformed by agriculture. "Elim ferricrete fynbos has been classified as critically endangered due to the high threats this vegetation faces from alien invasive plant species, land transformation and poor fire regimes. This vegetation originally used to dominate the low lying areas from Botriver to Agulhas" (Grootbosfoundation.org). Although zoned for agriculture it is not used, and has not been for some time, for agricultural purposes.

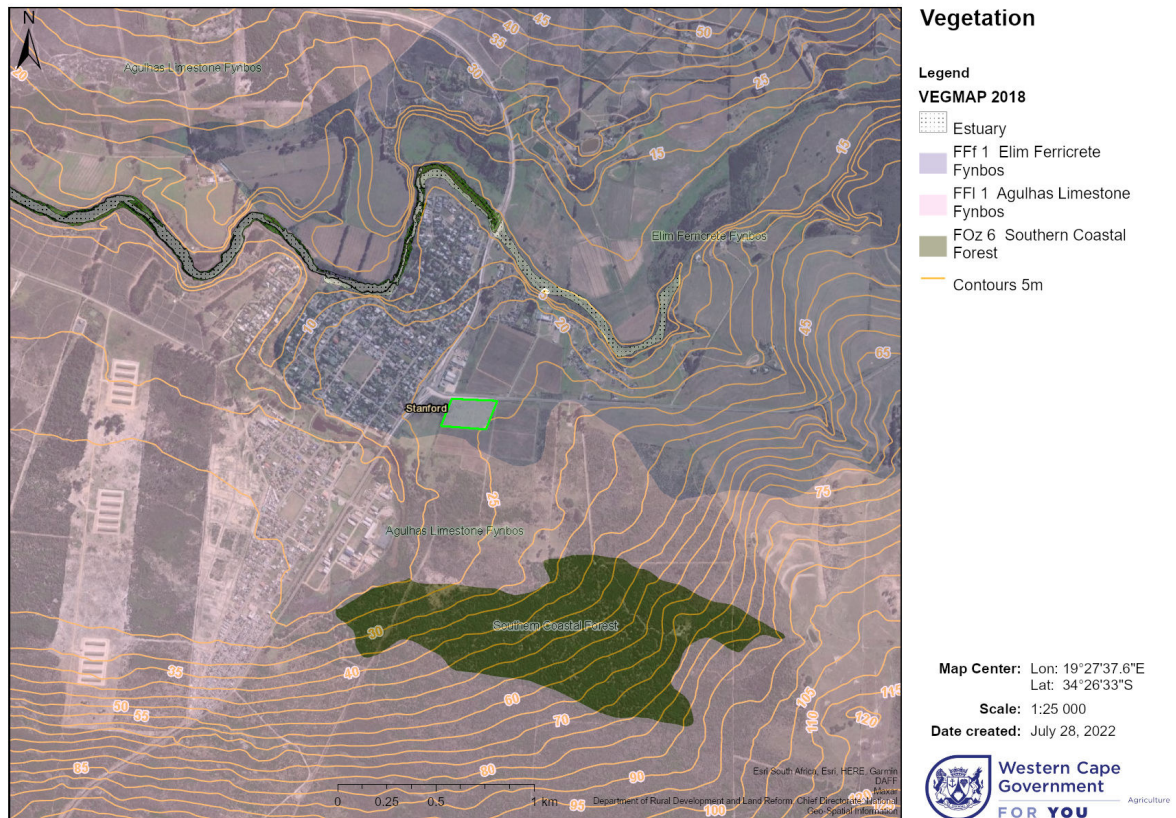


Figure 14: Vegetation for Kleinrivier Valley (Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

Large swaths of Ecological Support Areas (ESAs) located west, south and south-east of the site but none on or in close proximity to the site.

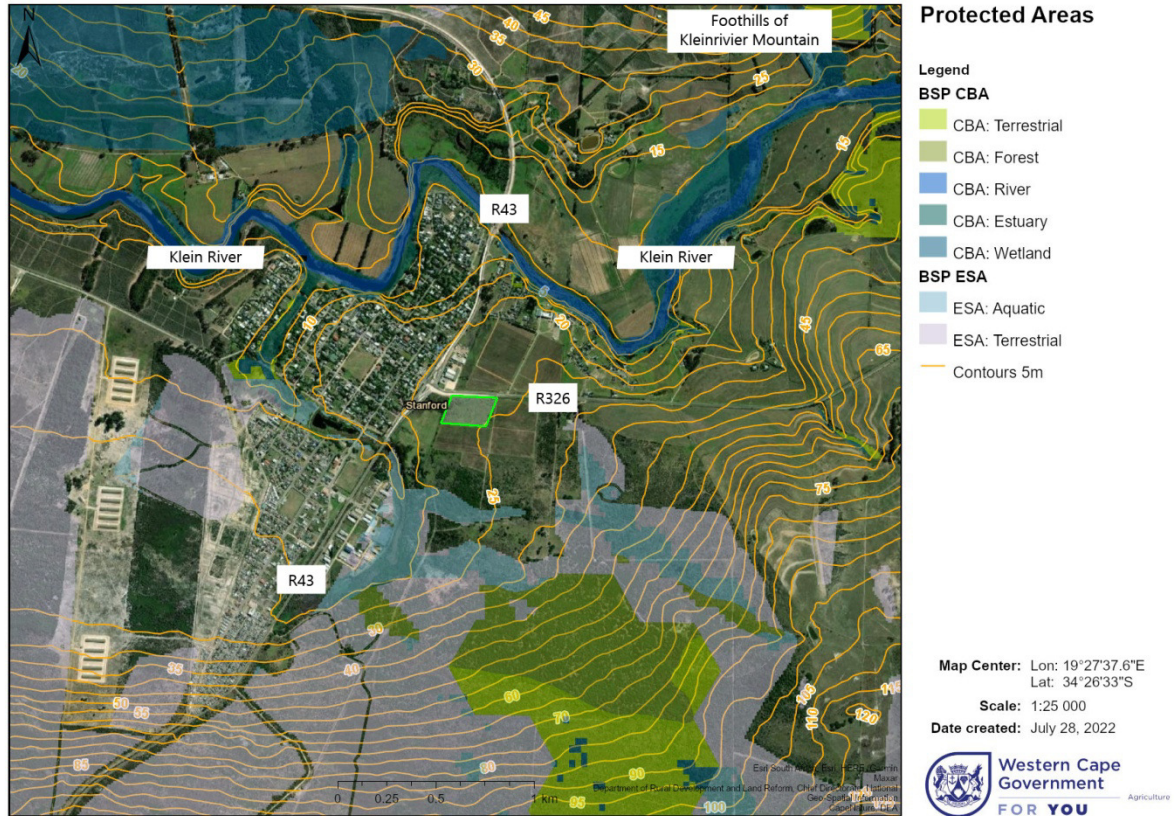


Figure 15: Critical Biodiversity Areas & Ecological Support Areas for Kleinrivier Valley (Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

The Kleinrivier Valley is characterised by its rectangular patterns of vineyards and fields of wheat or canola. Tree lines are often associated with property boundary lines or windbreaks and tree clumps often with homesteads.

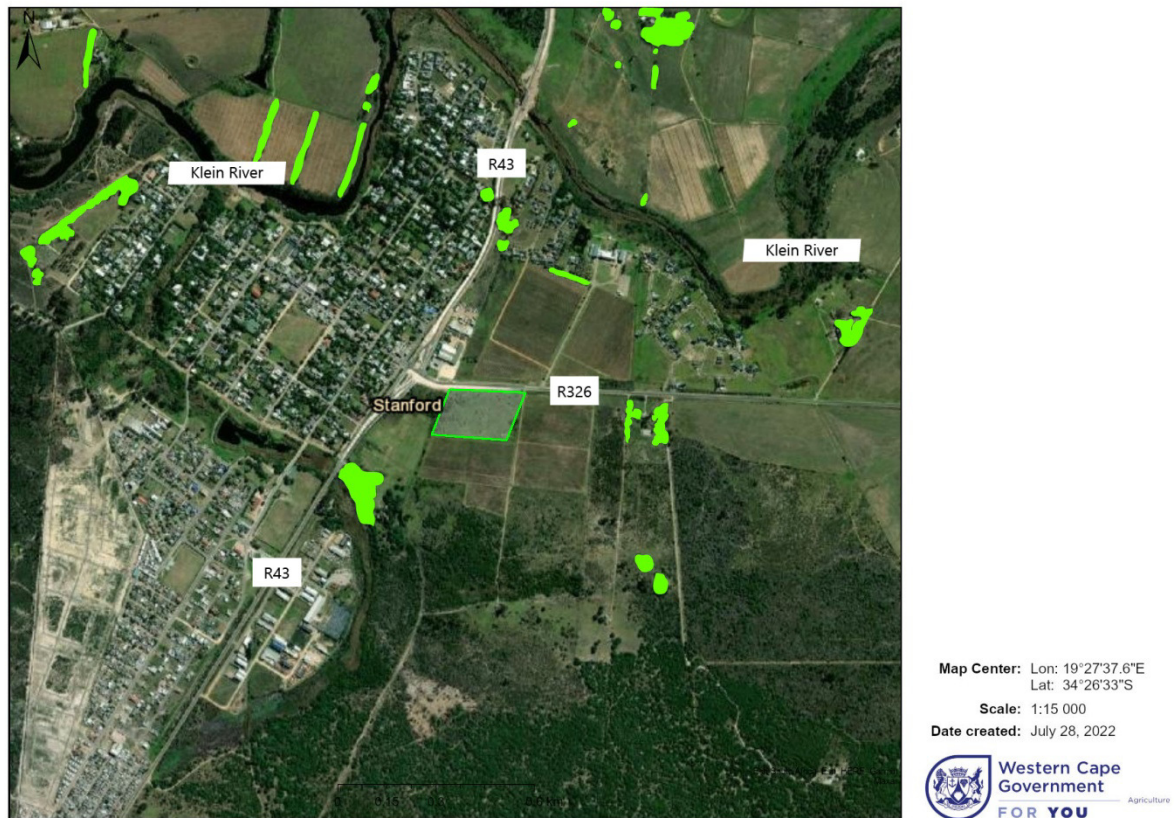


Figure 16: Trees within the Klein River Valley
NOTE: not all significant tree lines, clumps or specimens have been highlighted.
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.4 Settlement Patterns

"The majority of the farms in the Overberg during the mid 18th century were owned by farmers who had their residential farms in the Cape district, but ran cattle and stock farms in the outlying regions. Mostly these farms were manned by Hottentot servants or slaves who acted as shepherds. Farms dating to the 18th century are: Zilwermynbosch, Kleinriviersvallei, Springfontein, Middleberg. As well as Modderrivier, Wortelgat which were granted in quitrent in the early half of the 19th century.

Captain Robert Stanford acquired the farms Springfontein, Zilwermyn and Middleberg, previously owned by Johannes Andreas Trutter, as well as Kleinriviersvallei where he lived. He built a watermill on Kleinriviersvallei and started market gardening. The vegetables were transported by cutter from de Kelders to Cape Town. Capt Stanford returned to England in 1849 and Kleinriviersvallei was leased to Capt Smailes. In 1855 Kleinriviersvallei was sold to Phillipus de Bruyn and a town was laid out in 1857: Stanford. The town is laid out on a grid" (2009:82).

As mentioned under Item 2.1, the historic village of Stanford is located approximately 250m west of the site however; the proposed Heritage Protection Overlay includes Erf 594, the erf immediately west of the site. Both the R326 and the R43 are proposed 'Routes of Regional Scenic Significance'. There are no significant tree lines or clumps on the site but there are several within close proximity on the adjacent erven (refer Figure 15 below).

As per the Overstrand Heritage Survey (OHS, 2009:5) the Heritage Protection Overlay Zone proposed for Stanford relates specifically to the conservation of existing fabric as opposed to the control of building form (2009:5). The site also falls partially (the section along the R326) within HPOZ Landscape Significance.

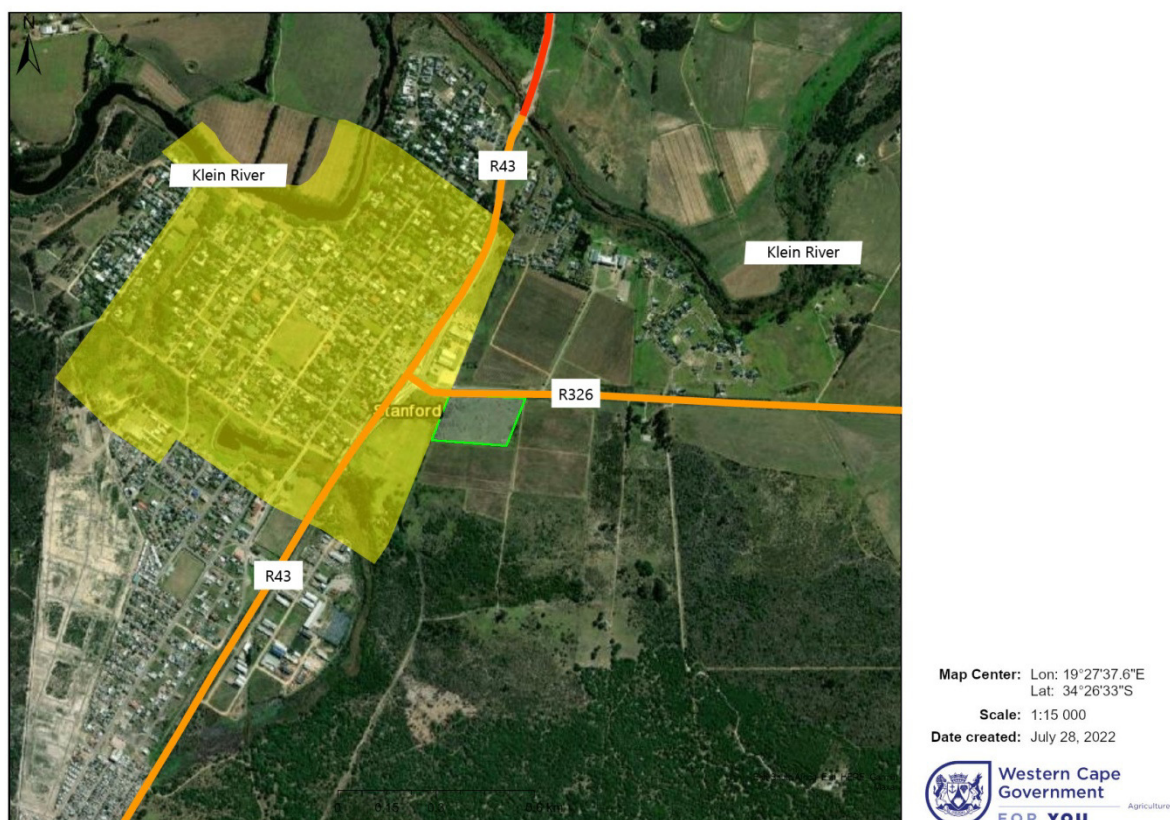


Figure 17: Heritage Overlay Zone & Scenic Routes in relation to Erf 1772
(Source: CapeFarmMapper & OHS, 2009:80)

3.1.5 Visibility

3.1.5.1 View Shed

The visibility of the project is based on the geographic area from which the project will be visible, or view catchment area. However, the actual zone of visual influence of the project may be smaller because of screening by existing trees and buildings.

The site is located on the valley floor of Kleinrivier Valley and, based on topography only, highly visible i.e. visible from several square kilometres.

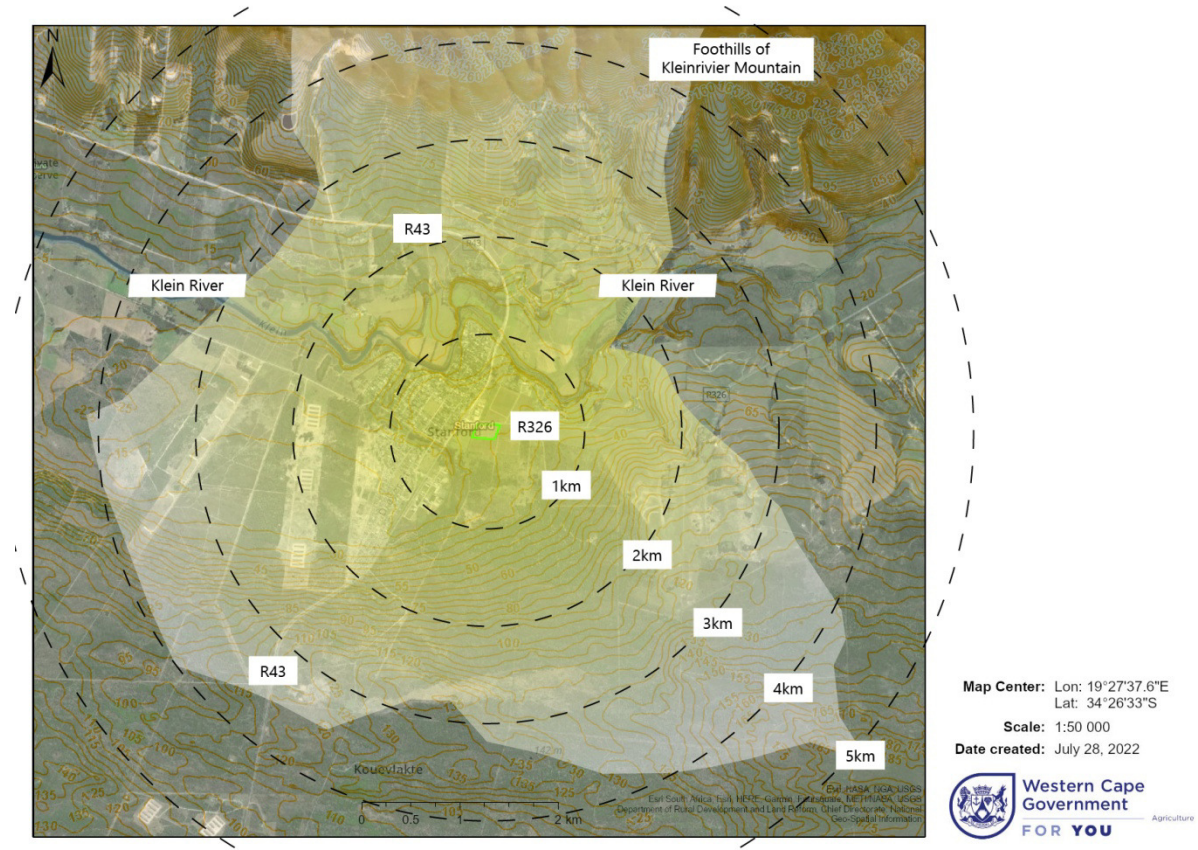


Figure 18: View catchment based on Topography
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.5.2 Zone of Visual Influence

The actual zone of influence is limited due to:

- Flat topography, any structures or vegetation would immediately screen the development (unless viewed from an elevated position),
- the existing trees on the adjacent properties.

The site is not visible from the town centre because of existing buildings and vegetation. The site is visible from sections of the R43 & R326, especially where the road ascends up and out of the valley towards Hermanus, Caledon or Gansbaai. However, existing trees on the adjacent properties as well as along these “Routes of Regional Scenic Significance” provide moderate screening.

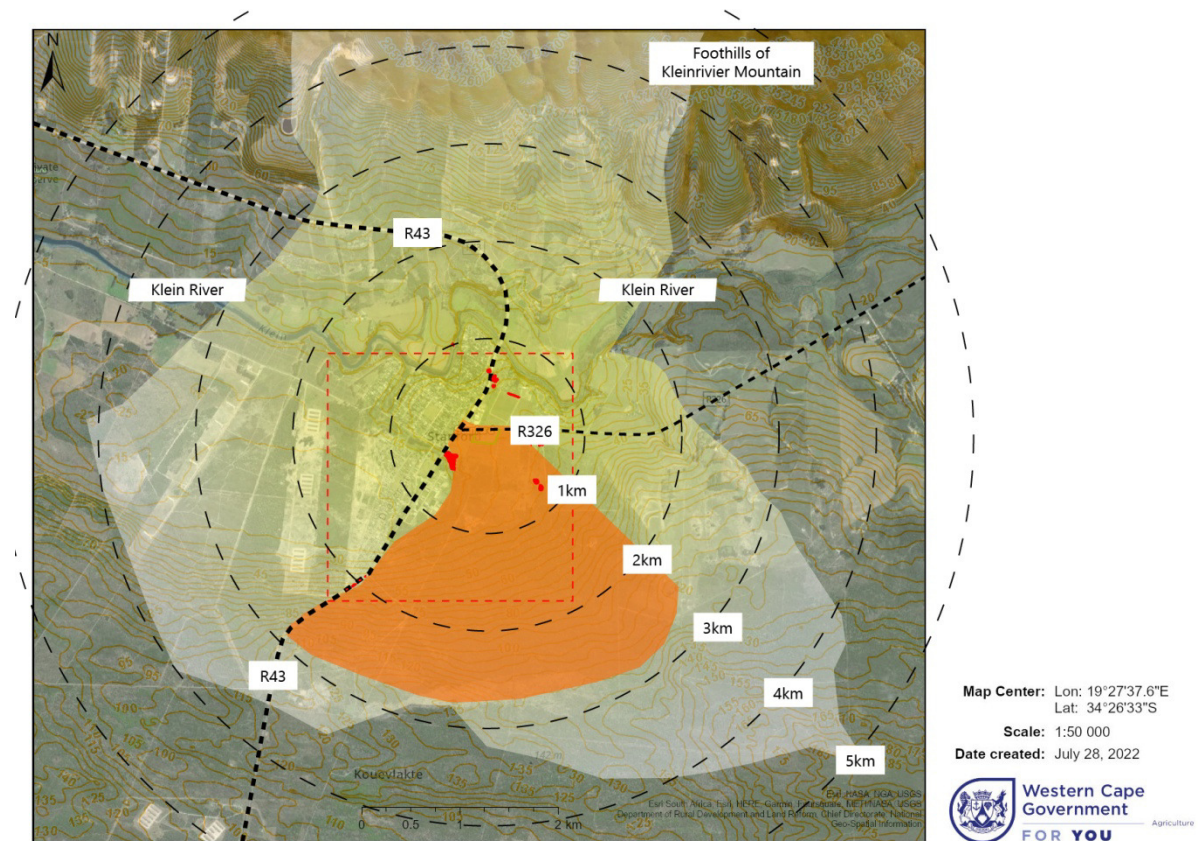


Figure 19: Zone of Visual Influence
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.5.3 Visual Absorption Capacity

Visual Absorption Capacity (VAC) is defined as the landscape's ability to absorb physical changes without transformation in its visual character and quality. This depends on the following characteristics of the environment:

- The density and distribution of similar developments in an area;
- The similarity between existing features and the new feature to be introduced;

Other factors that may also influence VAC relate to the proposed development setting in the landscape. A landscape may offer VAC on the grounds of colour, texture and topography, where the background against which the development is set may assimilate the development to a certain degree. The foreground, which is formed by the distance between the observer and the development, plays an important role in screening the development or creating a visual buffer.

For example, grassland and croplands have a low visual absorption capacity (VAC), whereas parkland and plantations have a high VAC. Similarly, rural areas generally have a low VAC, whereas urban areas have a high VAC (refer to Figure 18).

The visual absorption capacity of the broader landscape varies between the village and the rural landscape. Within the village or vineyards the VAC is moderate-high however, when covered with crops such as wheat or canola, used for pasture, vacant or abandoned fields have a low VAC. The site therefore has an overall moderate VAC.

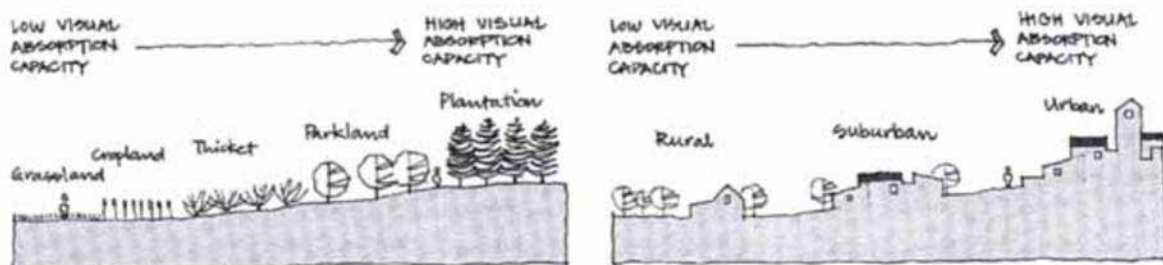


Figure 20: Degrees of Visual Absorption Capacity
(Source: Oberholzer, 2011:88)

3.1.6 Receptors

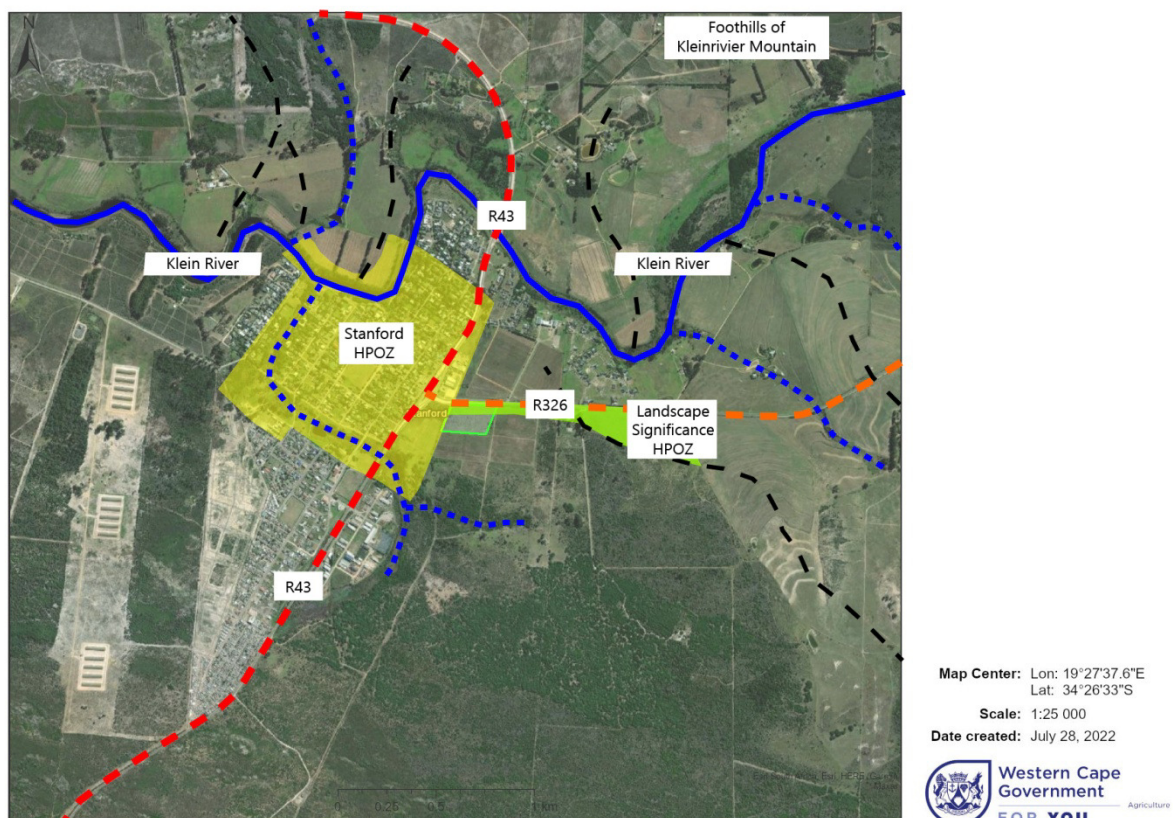
The level of visual impact considered acceptable is dependent on the type of receptors.

- *High sensitivity – e.g. residential areas, nature reserves and scenic routes or trails;*
- *Moderate sensitivity – e.g. sporting or recreational areas, or places of work;*
- *Low sensitivity – e.g. industrial, or degraded areas.*

An area, viewer or viewer group can be affected by visual change. In this section we distinguish between visually sensitive areas (i.e. a landscape with a particular character) and visually sensitive receptors (i.e. a node or route affecting a viewer or viewer group).

3.1.6.1 Visually Sensitive Areas & Receptors

Visually sensitive areas within the ZVI include the Stanford Village HPOZ as well as the Landscape of Significance. Visually sensitive receptors include residential area in and around Stanford, residents or visitors travelling on the R43 & R326.



From the above it is clear that the interface of the site with the Stanford Village HPOZ and the R326 will need to be carefully considered.

Figure 21: Visually Sensitive Areas & Receptors
(Source: CapeFarmMapper with adaptations)

3.1.7 Viewpoints

The following viewpoints have been established:

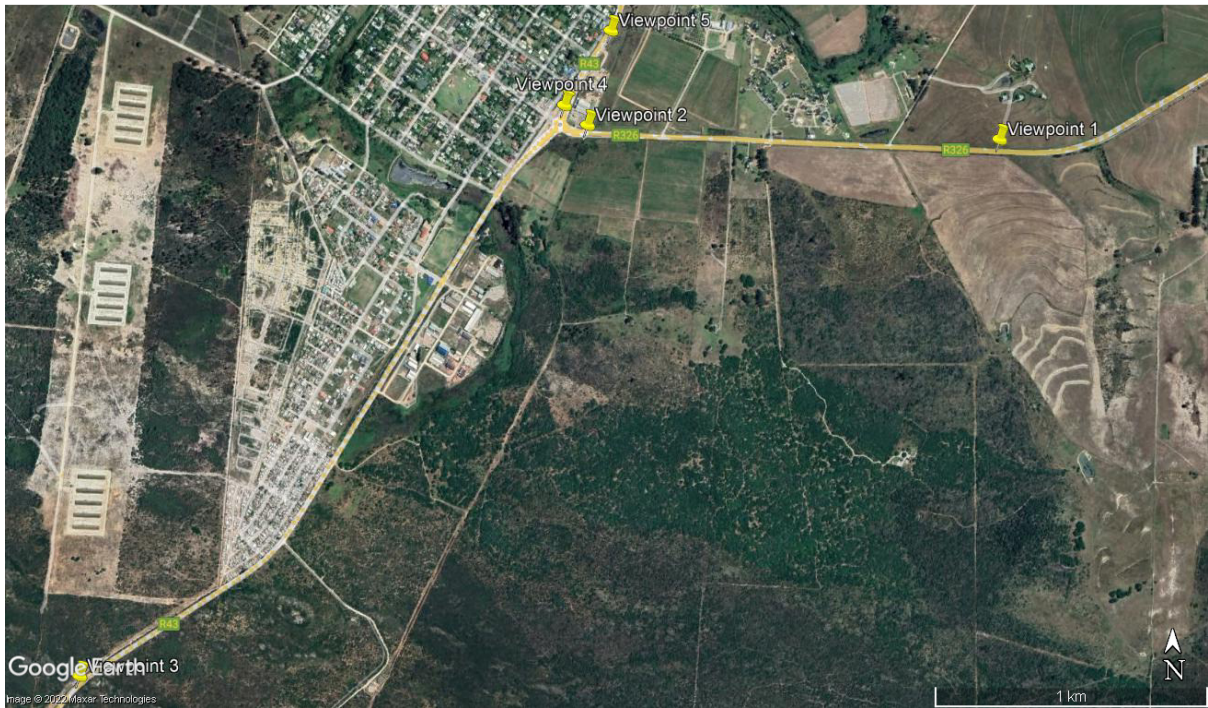


Figure 22: Viewpoints based on Google Earth (2022)



Image 1: Viewpoint 1 (taken by author:2022)

Viewpoint 1 was taken from the R326, approximately 1.3km from site, travelling towards Stanford.

Visual Exposure

Due to the distance of this viewpoint from the site and the existing mature gum trees between the viewpoint and the site the visual impact is expected to be low / minimal.

Visual Intrusion

The visual intrusion is expected to be low because the development will most probably cause limited change i.e. not particularly noticeable within the view frame and experience of the Receptor.



Image 2: Viewpoint 2 (taken by author:2022)

Viewpoint 2 was taken on the north-western corner of Erf 1772 along the R326. This viewpoint is located opposite the entrance / exit to the service station & Overberg Agri.

Visual Exposure

This viewpoint is situated on the northern corner of the proposed development and the visual exposure is expected to be high due to its proximity to the development.

Visual Intrusion

The visual intrusion is expected to be high because the development will cause a noticeable change to the landscape (change from agriculture to residential).



Image 3: Viewpoint 3 (taken by author:2022)

Viewpoint 3 was taken along the R43 when travelling from Gansbaai towards Stanford. It is located approximately 2.6km from the southern boundary of the site.

Visual Exposure

Due to the distance of this viewpoint from the site and the existing mature gum trees along Mill stream, between the industrial area and the south-western corner of the site, the visual impact is expected to be low / minimal.

Visual Intrusion

The visual intrusion is expected to be low because the development will most probably cause limited change i.e. not particularly noticeable within the view frame and experience of the Receptor.



Image 4: Viewpoint 4 (taken by author:2022)

Viewpoint 4 was taken from the corner of the R43 & R326 at the entrance to Stanford Village. This viewpoint is located approximately 110m away from the north west corner of the site.

Visual Exposure

This viewpoint is situated within close proximity to the proposed development however, there is a lot happening at this intersection i.e. visual clutter. It is therefore expected that the visual exposure will be moderate.

Visual Intrusion

The visual intrusion is expected to be moderate i.e. partially fits into the surroundings, but clearly noticeable within the view frame.



Image 5: Viewpoint 5 (taken by author:2022)

Viewpoint 5 was taken along the R43 when travelling from Hermanus to Stanford approximately 350m away from the site. The Birkenhead vineyards are located in the middle ground view.

Visual Exposure

Due to the distance from the site and the vineyards, trees and other structure in the fore and middle ground the visual exposure is moderate-low.

Visual Intrusion

The visual intrusion is moderate-low i.e. recognisable feature within the view frame and experience of the receptor.

4. POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

These visual impacts will be assessed based on a synthesis of criteria (nature of impact, extent, duration, probability, intensity, level of significance and significance after mitigation) as defined by the NEMA regulations. The nature of the visual impacts will be the visual effect the activity would have on the receiving environment. These visual impacts are:

4.1 Change from Agricultural Landscape to Residential Development

The proposed development is to take place on lands used for agricultural purposes. It will result in a visual change from an agricultural landscape to a residential development.

The Architectural Guidelines for the estate states that: *“The architectural topology (look & feel) of the town of Stanford is one of established design and implementation. In saying this, the developers want to take inspiration of the existing town’s architecture and incorporate it into this development; embracing the existing culture and lifestyle of the immediate surroundings and the town”* (2022:03).

EXTENT	National	Regional	Local <3km	Site
DURATION	Permanent until landscaping mature	Long-term	Medium-term	Short-term
INTENSITY	High	Moderate – High the scenic resources will be affected	Moderate	Low
PROBABILITY	Definite	Highly Probable most likely that the visual impact will occur	Possible	Improbable
SIGNIFICANCE	High	Moderate – High mitigation must be implemented	Moderate	Low
SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	High	Medium – High	Medium	Low

4.2 Visibility from Sensitive Areas & Receptors

Visually sensitive areas within the ZVI include the Stanford Village HPOZ as well as the Landscape of Significance. Visually sensitive receptors include residential area in and around Stanford and residents or visitors travelling on the R43 & R326.

The interface with the HPOZ's as well as the R326 Regional Route of Significance needs to be carefully considered.

EXTENT	National	Regional	Local < 3km	Site
DURATION	Permanent	Medium – Long term until landscaping matures	Medium-term	Short-term
INTENSITY	High	Moderate – High the scenic resources will be affected	Moderate	Low
PROBABILITY	Definite	Highly Probable most likely that the visual impact will occur	Possible	Improbable
SIGNIFICANCE	High	Moderate – High mitigation must be implemented	Moderate	Low
SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	High	Medium – High	Medium	Low

4.3 Night Light

The proposed development will require additional lighting on and in buildings and possibly across the site. This will change the night-time landscape from rural to suburban. Limited mitigation measures are available to counter-act this. Trees would only partially screen night light and berms will have a limited effect therefore the type and amount of lights are important factors.

However, the proposed development is located immediately adjacent to an existing residential area and therefore additional lighting will most probably be seen as part of the town of Stanford.

EXTENT	National	Regional	Local <3km	Site
DURATION	Permanent	Medium – Long term until landscaping matures	Medium-term	Short-term
INTENSITY	High	Moderate – High	Moderate some scenic resources might be affected	Low
PROBABILITY	Definite	Highly Probable most likely that the visual impact will occur	Possible	Improbable
SIGNIFICANCE	High	Moderate – High	Moderate mitigation must be implemented	Low
SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION	High	Medium – High	Medium	Low

6. VISUAL INDICATORS

The following has been addressed by RISE Architects and WRAP Project Office in the [Erf 1772, Stanford Architectural Design Guidelines](#) dated January 2022 and Megan Anderson Landscape Architect in the [Erf 1772, Stanford Landscape Report](#) dated December 2021.

6.1 Development Design Considerations

6.2.1 Height and Scale of Buildings

Articulated, simple rectangular forms are characteristic of rural buildings, and this typology should inform the development proposal. Building heights should therefore be limited to maximum 2 storeys along the north and western boundaries of the site, but preferably single + loft type accommodation (6m height).

6.2.2 Massing and Aggregation of Buildings

The architectural significance of many of Stanford's conservation worthy structures lies in their authenticity with regards to massing, form and house – street relationship. If the developers want to take inspiration of the existing town, it should continue this house – street relationship which *"contributes substantially to the character of the town"* (OHS, 2009:83).

6.2.3 Landscape and Building Integration

The aesthetic significance of Stanford relates primarily to the natural setting of the village. *"This sense of green is reinforced by the way in which buildings have been located close to street boundaries, contributing to place-making qualities along the street while leaving the rear portion of the erven open..."* (OHS, 2009:83).

Establish traditional patterns of planting where appropriate with suitable species. The underlying purpose must be to weave into the existing landscape pattern, rather than to displace it with a new pattern.

A Landscape Plan must be developed at building plan submission stage to anchor and settle the buildings, shelter the outdoor spaces, frame views and vistas, provide a backdrop for feature elements, mitigate against windy conditions, provide shade in summer, and provide graded visual transitions between erven edge landscaping and road landscaping. To this end a Registered Landscape Architect is to be appointed to prepare a landscape plan and is to be retained to ensure this landscaping is implemented to standard.

6.2 Development Detail Considerations

6.2.1 Texture & Colour

Structures within Stanford are generally white or muted tones / 'earth colours'. These are more subtle and are more easily absorbed (visually) than bright or highly reflective surfaces. For suitable colours refer to the existing built fabric and to on-site geology/rock/soil and vegetation types for reference. Rough/textured surfaces are preferable to shiny/highly reflective surfaces in terms of visual absorption (minimize reflection/ glare/shine).

6.2.2 Edge Conditions

Buildings should be 'dissolved' into the landscape through a subtle transition from building platform to landscape context, at the dwelling scale. No retaining walls higher than one (1) meter should be allowed.

Consider incorporating indigenous vegetation consistent with (but not exclusively of) the original vegetation unit (Elim Ferricrete fynbos); especially along the R326. Informal clusters of trees and large shrubs should be considered to anchor the buildings into the landscape and to create "*places within clumps of trees*".

Due to R326 status as a "Route of Regional Scenic Significance" the boundary treatment should be carefully considered. Solid walls should be located at key points and these sections should not be more than 40% of the entire northern boundary wall. The boundary wall should be softened and screening / privacy created with appropriate planting.

The boundary treatments must be visually permeable, using fencing for the most part and walls to accentuate the entrances and key points only. No precast concrete walls unless used in combination with visually permeable fencing such as 'ClearVu' or similar, including steel palisade (similar to Stanhaven).

6.2.3 Lighting Conditions

Avoid light 'pollution' by reducing lighting to the minimum necessary. Lighting is to be discrete, and well-integrated into the design proposal.

- Naked light sources must not be visible outside the area of the site
- Light sources must be shielded to reduce light spillage
- Up-lighting onto the outer sides of the buildings must be used sparingly
- Shielded down-lights must be used on all open public areas
- Neon or unshielded bright security lights may not be used
- No spotlights should be allowed (only motion sensor security lighting where absolutely necessary)

Along the site boundary, lighting may be permitted at the entrance gateways only – but not along the length of the R326. To preserve the rural quality, no freestanding lamp standards are to be installed within the development. Rather lighting should be provided by low level bollards (i.e. not exceeding 900mm height) or via luminaires affixed to the buildings themselves - subject to the normal cautionary regarding naked light sources.

6.4 Mitigation

To accompany the building plans a Landscape Development Plan (prepared by a SACLAP-registered Professional Landscape Architect) should be submitted, showing the following:

- indicating suggested plant species list for trees, shrubs and groundcovers (including total areas, planting-out sizes and planting-out ratios),
- details of proposed security / boundary treatment
- details of proposed footways (including suggested materials),
- indication of lighting – positions to be included on plan,
- stormwater strategy (open, planted channels and swales recommended), and
- details of parking including screening.

The below describes mitigation required during the various phases of development in addition to the aforesaid:

Construction phase: careful environmental management measures should be enacted to prevent damage to surrounding soil, vegetation and drainage lines. Dust control measures should be put in place. The use of heavy machinery should be minimised to prevent scarring and erosion of the site, and cut and fill operations should be minimized.

Operational phases: when the site is handed over to the client / HOA the landscape architect needs to provide them with a landscape maintenance manual for both the hard and soft landscape as well as the irrigation system. The soft landscape section needs to specifically deal with the maintenance of new trees.

The continuation of the town character and the recognition of the heritage resources adjacent to the site are imperative, as this will contribute significantly to the beauty, uniqueness and tourism potential of the Klein River Valley.

7. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed development is located on the built edge of Stanford within the town's revised urban edge. The development is compatible with the Overstrand SDF and allows a 5m development buffer on along the R326- a *"Route of Regional Scenic Significance"*.

The visual impacts include a change from agricultural landscape to a residential development, visibility from sensitive areas & receptors and night light. The sensitivity in layout and design towards the Landscape and Architectural HPOZ's are key element within this development.

The visibility of the development will be restricted to mainly the area south of the site for approximately 3km from the site. There will be additional lighting in the area, visible to receptors around the site. Visually sensitive areas within the ZVI include the Stanford Village HPOZ as well as the Landscape of Significance. Visually sensitive receptors include residential area in and around Stanford and residents or visitors travelling on the R43 & R326.

From a visual perspective, the development should be endorsed on the condition that the mitigation measures for the proposed development are implemented as per the Architectural Design Guidelines and Landscape Report prepared for this development.

REFERENCES

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Oberholzer, B. 2011. *Reading the Landscape*. 2nd Ed. Landscape Notebooks.

South Africa. Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (2013) *Heritage and Scenic Resources: Inventory and Policy Framework*. Prepared for the Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework. Cape Town: Provincial Government of the Western Cape.

UNESCO- World Heritage Convention (2009) *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. [Online] Available from: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/> [Accessed: 4 November 2014]

Addendum A

CURRICULUM VITAE: ANTOINETTE DE BEER

Antoinette de Beer graduated as a landscape architect from UCT in 2010 and started her own business, ARLA Consulting, in 2012. She aims to design integrated, multi-functional, resilient yet stimulating SPACES for PEOPLE that capture the expression of culture within a community and that celebrate its CONTEXT. To this end, she regularly collaborates with and is inspired by, other professionals, specialists and NPO's. She often teaches on a part-time basis at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and enjoys mentoring students.

She is a registered professional landscape architect with the South African Council for the Landscape Architectural Profession (SACLAP) and has fifteen (15) years of landscape architectural experience (of which 10-years post-registration experience). She has been a member of the Institute for Landscape Architecture in South Africa (ILASA) from 2010 and the elected president of the institute from 2013 – 2015. During her term as president she represented the institute at the 2nd International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) Africa Symposium in Abuja, Nigeria. She has been a member of the Society for Architects, Planners, Engineers and Surveyors+ (APES+) since 2012 and enjoys the collaborative nature of the association.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Certificate Fundamentals of Project Management (UCT), 2011

Master of Landscape Architecture (UCT), 2010

Certificate Architectural & Urban Conservation (UCT), 2010

BL(Hons) Landscape Architecture (UP), 2004

BTech Environmental Management (CPUT), 2003

REGISTRATION

(SACLAP) South African Council for the Landscape Architectural Profession

Professional Landscape Architect: No. 20218 (Registration Year: 2012)

EXPERIENCE

2012 – PRESENT Director:

ARLA Consulting Pty (Ltd): private landscape architectural and environmental planning practice

2011 -2012

Candidate Landscape Architect: EPLA Consulting CC: sub-consultant to a landscape architectural and environmental planning practice

2007 – 2010

Senior Landscape Architectural Technologist at OvP Associates CC: Architects, Landscape Architects & Environmental Planners

2005 Junior Landscape Architectural Technologist at De Villiers Turner CC: Landscape Architects

MEMBERSHIP

- Immediate Past President of the ILASA (2015 - 2016)
- President of the ILASA (2013 - 2015) – NEC Chair
- ILASA 2014 Conference LOC Chair – Organising the National Conference (2013 – 2014)
- ILASA President Designate (2012-2013) – NEC Vice-chair
- ILASA Treasurer (2011-2013) - ILASA Financial Management
- International Federation of Landscape Architects 2012 World Congress LOC member (2009-2012) – International Liaison
- Member of APES (Architects, Planners, Engineers & Surveyors Society; 2012 - current)
- Member of ILASA (2010 – current)

TEACHING & EXTERNAL EXAMINATION:

Part-time Lecturing at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT):

External Examiner:	various subjects (1 st year to 4 th year) from 2014- current.
First Semester 2021:	Construction Drawing 1 st year
Second Semester 2018:	Draughting Software and Construction Detailing 2 nd year
Second Semester 2017:	Integrated Design Studio 1 st year
First Semester 2016:	Landscape Technology & Plant Material Studies 3 rd year
Second Semester 2015:	Applied Mathematics & Introduction to Design Foundation Year AutoCAD and Construction Detailing 2 nd year

Mentorship of several 4th year students during the design development stages of their mini-thesis.

Part-time Lecturing at University of Cape Town (UCT):

Second Semester 2013:	Teaching Landscape Design to Landscape Architecture Conversion year students.
Guest Landscape Architect for MLA Presentations at University of Cape Town (UCT):	
Second Semester 2019:	Guest landscape architect for review of MLA work prior to final hand-in.

OTHER:

Assurance Reviews: Part of panel that reviews tender documents prepared by the City of Cape Town to ascertain if they are compliant with all legal aspects and professional standards (2020- current)

Regional Judge for the 2020, 2021 & 2022 SALI Awards of Excellence
Evaluate and adjudicate entries for the annual SALI Awards of Excellence (November 2019, 2020 & 2021).

Adjudicator for the 2017 ILASA Awards of Excellence
Adjudicate entries and select winners for the bi-annual ILASA Awards of Excellence (June 2017).

Adjudicator for the 2016 Concrete Manufacturers Association Awards of Excellence
Adjudicate entries and select winners for the bi-annual Concrete Manufacturers Association's Awards of Excellence (November 2015).

Adjudicator at CPUT: CPUT Landscape Technology Vertical Garden Challenge February 2014
CPUT Landscape Technology Recycled Bench Challenge February 2013
CPUT-Corobrik Landscape Technology Construction Week July 2013

Cape Town World Design Capital: Co-design Workshops:

- 7 November 2014: Participated in workshop as lead designer for the Dunoon cul-de-sacs (Developing a Tree Planting and Infiltration Strategy for the Dunoon cul-de-sacs). Presentation available on request.
- 14 May 2014: Participated in workshop at Rylands Civic Centre as designer. Re-visioning the Gatesville CBD.
- 23 April 2014: Participated in workshop as designer for the Bonteheuwel Civic Precinct Upgrade (as part of the Mayoral Urban Regeneration Programme (MURP)).
- 13 November 2013: Participated in workshop as designer for the Upgrade of Public Open Space at Doordekraal Dam in Welgemoed.

RECENT VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**VIA's for Mixed-use Developments:**

- VIA for Proposed Mixed Use Development Lucullus Gardens, Joostenbergvlakte
- VIA for Proposed Mixed Use Development on Remainder of Cape Farms No. 1529 (Imhoff's Gift), Kommetjie
- Confidential VIA for Proposed Mixed Use Development, Durbanville
- VIA for the Proposed Mixed Use Sence de Lieu Development on a portion of Farm No. 845/3, Paarl
- VIA for Commercial development Cecilia Junction, Paarl

VIA's for Waste Services:

- VIA for Proposed Amendment to the Highlands WDF Waste Management Permit, Malmesbury
- VIA for Proposed Amendment of the Worcester WDF Waste Management Permit, Worcester
- VIA for Proposed Amendment to Waste Management License, Vissershok WMF
- VIA for Proposed Amendment to Waste Management License, Tulbagh WDF
- VIA for Proposed Caledon Waste Transfer Station, Caledon
- VIA for Proposed Waste Recovery, Beneficiation and Energy Project, Wellington

VIA's for Residential Developments:

- VIA for the Proposed Residential Development on Waterval Farm, Franschhoek
- VIA for the Proposed Die Eike Residential Development on Erf 3476, Franschhoek
- VIA for the Proposed Medium Density Drakenzicht Residential Development, Paarl South
- VIA for Proposed Kanonberg Residential Development, Oude Westhof
- VIA for Proposed De Fortuijn Housing Development, Somerset West

VIA's for Renewable Energy Projects:

- VIA for Proposed Klipfontein Solar Farm & Energy Storage Facility, Hopefield
- VIA for Proposed Zoutekloof Solar Farm, Hopefield

Other:

- Confidential VIA for Proposed Tourist Facility, Franschhoek
- VIA for Proposed Petroport, Wolseley
- VIA for Proposed Van Wyks River Business Park, Paarl
- VIA for Proposed Micro-brewery, Le Fut, Paarl

Addendum B

Criteria used for the Assessment of Impacts

The assessment of impacts is based on a synthesis of the following assessment criteria (2005:28):

Nature of the impact –

An appraisal of the visual effect the activity would have on the receiving environment. This description should include visual and scenic resources that are affected, and the manner in which they are affected, (both positive and negative effects).

Extent – the spatial or geographic area of influence of the visual impact, i.e.:

- *site-related*: extending only as far as the activity;
- *local*: limited to the immediate surroundings;
- *regional*: affecting a larger metropolitan or regional area;
- *national*: affecting large parts of the country;
- *international*: affecting areas across international boundaries.

Duration - the predicted lifespan of the visual impact:

- *short term*, (e.g. duration of the construction phase);
- *medium term*, (e.g. duration for screening vegetation to mature);
- *long term*, (e.g. lifespan of the project);
- *permanent*, where time will not mitigate the visual impact.

Intensity – the magnitude of the impact on views, scenic or cultural resources.

- *low*, where visual and scenic resources are not affected;
- *medium*, where visual and scenic resources are affected to a limited extent;
- *high*, where scenic and cultural resources are significantly affected.

Probability – the degree of possibility of the visual impact occurring:

- *improbable*, where the possibility of the impact occurring is very low;
- *probable*, where there is a distinct possibility that the impact will occur;
- *highly probable*, where it is most likely that the impact will occur; or
- *definite*, where the impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures.

Significance – The significance of impacts can be determined through a synthesis of the aspects produced in terms of their nature, duration, intensity, extent and probability, and be described as:

- *low*, where it will not have an influence on the decision;
- *medium*, where it should have an influence on the decision unless it is mitigated; or
- *high*, where it would influence the decision regardless of any possible mitigation.