

Public Participation document:

FISHERHAVEN

Overstrand Heritage Landscape Group:

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Prepared for the

Overstrand Municipality

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Site Description:

Ungraded

Fisherhaven is a settlement established in the mid to late 20th century as a holiday destination on the eastern bank of the Bot River Lagoon, immediately south of where the Afdakriver feeds into the lagoon. It includes Sonesta, which was established as a resort for coloureds in the 1970s.

Historical Background:

In 1674 the kraal of Captain Klaas/Dorha is recorded just west of the Bot River. The Hesseque people frequently camped on the banks of the Bot River and watered their cattle. They called the river Gouga, meaning "much butter", which was then translated by the early travellers into Botter and later shortened to Bot. The old Mill in the village of Bot River is the location of the cattle trading post, where VOC obtained cattle from the Khoekhoe (Aco 2005; Annandale 2001).

The Allied Forces' main supply line between Britain and Europe was via the Cape of Good Hope. Two separate U-boat packs were assigned by Germany to attack the route resulting in tremendous casualties due to the lack of aerial patrol. In 1943 Britain sent out RAF squadron 262 with Catalina flying boats, which were on lease from the USA. The main operating base was in Durban with subsidiaries at Langebaan and St Lucia. The Botriver lagoon was established as an emergency base for the landing and refuelling of Catalina flying boats. It was occasionally used as an advanced operating base. It was an essential link in the patrol, and when major convoys passed a number of planes would be stationed there. Landing ramps were built on the site of the present Lake Marina Boat Club in Fisherhaven. Other facilities included a slipway, workshops and stores. The RAF detachment comprising 14 men was accommodated at the Onrust River Hotel. As the RAF was only supposed to have training schools in South Africa, SAAF squadron 35 was twinned with them, and every flight carried both RAF and South Africans. The base was in full operation until February 1945, when both the RAF squadron 262 and SA squadron 35 were transferred to Britain. In 1944 the Bot River and Klein River lagoons broke open and the main road bridge at Onrust was washed away. Hermanus was cut off for by road and telecommunications were down for three days. Assistance was offered by the RAF of 262 squadron – their vehicles had Aldis Signal Lamps and were used to send messages until a rough walking bridge was erected between Hermanus and Onrust. No physical evidence of the Catalina flying boat base remains today (Annandale 2001).

Fisherhaven arose as a farm which was bought by the Walker Bay Investment Company. In 1959 it was subdivided into 758 plots. The Company liquidated in 1967 and scheme bought by Lake Marina Properties. Name changed briefly from Fisherhaven to Lake Marina and all the plots sold in 1968.

In 1968 Fisherhaven was proclaimed as a white Group Area. Proclamation of the town of Hawston as a coloured Group Area amended to include Middlevlei demarcated forest area (Farm 566) with controlled buffer area separating area from white area of Fisherhaven. Extension of coloured area boundaries towards lagoon (divided in half between white and coloured) greatly increased access to coast and deep waters of lagoon.

In 1976 the lagoon became important holiday camping site. Camping prohibited because of absence of sanitation. Following pressure to create coloured resort along coastline, Sonesta Holiday Resort established in 1976 as a 'luxury' resort for 'coloureds'.

Fisherhaven developed very slowly with only 40 permanent residents in 1990 (rising to 950 during holiday season) (Du Toit 2005)

Heritage Significance:

The visual-spatial quality of its setting on the banks of the Bot River lagoon
The role of the site of the Marina Yacht Club as a flying boat base during WWII

Constraints/Vulnerabilities:

No physical evidence of the Catalina flying boat base remains.
Inappropriate development adjacent to the Bot River lagoon.
Privatisation of the water's edge.

Proposed heritage conservation areas and special areas:

Heritage Management Recommendations:

Sources:

John Annandale (2001) Catalina Flying Boat Base at the Bot River Lagoon. 1943 – 1945 History and Events of the Royal Air Force Detachment Based at the Bot River Lagoon, Onrust River and Hermanus
Archaeological Contracts Office (2005) The Management of Archaeological Heritage in the Coastal Zone with Specific Reference to Overstrand. Prepared for the Overstrand Landscape Group as part of the Heritage Component of the Overstrand Spatial Development Framework
Cape Argus. 12.01.76
Cape Times. 20.3.76
Clift, H. (2003) Research Notes for the SDF, Overstrand; Section 3, Hermanus & surrounds. Prepared for the Overstrand Landscape Group as part of the Heritage Component of the Overstrand Spatial Development Framework
Du Toit, S.J. 2005. The Overstrand: Historical Anecdotes Cape Town, ABC Press
Maree, D. (with February, P. & Gillion, G.) (2003) Hawston Tussen Berg en See – Die geskiedenis van Hawston en sy Inwoners.
Thomson, Kirsten (2008) Overstrand Social History Report prepared for the Overstrand Heritage Survey

Date	Event	Reference
17 th century	<p>In 1674 the kraal of Captain Klaas/Dorha is recorded just west of the Bot River.</p> <p>The Hesseque people frequently camped on the banks of the Bot River and watered their cattle. They called the river Gouga, meaning “much butter”, which was then translated by the early travellers into Botter and later shortened to Bot. The old Mill in the village of Bot River is the location of the cattle trading post, where VOC obtained cattle from the Khoekhoe.</p>	<p>ACO 2005</p> <p>Annandale 2001</p>
1943-1945	<p>The Allied Forces’ main supply line between Britain and Europe was via the Cape of Good Hope. Two separate U-boat packs were assigned by Germany to attack the route resulting in tremendous casualties due to the lack of aerial patrol. In 1943 Britain sent out RAF squadron 262 with Catalina flying boats, which were on lease from the USA. The main operating base was in Durban with subsidiaries at Langebaan and St Lucia. The Botriver lagoon was established as an emergency base for the landing and refuelling of Catalina flying boats. It was occasionally used as an advanced operating base. It was an essential link in the patrol, and when major convoys passed a number of planes would be stationed there. Landing ramps were built on the site of the present Lake Marina Boat Club in Fisherhaven. Other facilities included a slipway, workshops and stores. The RAF detachment comprising 14 men was accommodated at the Onrust River Hotel. As the RAF was only supposed to have training schools in South Africa, SAAF squadron 35 was twinned with them, and every flight carried both RAF and South Africans. The base was in full operation until February 1945, when both the RAF squadron 262 and SA squadron 35 were transferred to Britain. In 1944 the Bot River and Klein River lagoons broke open and the main road bridge at Onrust was washed away. Hermanus was cut off for by road and telecommunications were down for three days. Assistance was offered by the RAF of 262 squadron – their vehicles had Aldis Signal Lamps and were used to send messages until a rough walking bridge was erected between Hermanus and Onrust. No physical evidence of the Catalina flying boat base remains today.</p>	Annandale 2001
1959	<p>Fisherhaven arose as a farm which was bought by the Walker Bay Investment Company. In 1959 it was subdivided into 758 plots. The Company liquidated in 1967 and scheme bought by Lake Marina Properties. Name changed briefly from Fisherhaven to Lake Marina and all the plots sold in 1968.</p>	Du Toit 2005
1968	<p>Proclamation of Fisherhaven as a white Group Area.</p>	Proclamation No. 158. See map (Figure 7)
1972	<p>Proclamation of the town of Hawston as a coloured Group Area amended to include Middlevlei demarcated forest area (Farm 566) with controlled buffer area separating area from white area of Fisherhaven. Extension of coloured area boundaries towards lagoon (divided in half between white and coloured) greatly increased access to coast and deep waters of lagoon.</p>	Government Gazette No 3476) Proclamation 103/72
1976	<p>Lagoon became important holiday camping site. Camping prohibited because of absence of sanitation. Following pressure to create coloured resort along coastline, Sonesta Holiday Resort established in 1976 as a ‘luxury’ resort for ‘coloureds’.</p>	Argus 12.01.76 & Cape Times 20.3.76; Maree 2004
1990s	<p>Fisherhaven developed very slowly with only 40 permanent residents in 1990 (rising to 950 during holiday season).</p>	Du Toit 2005

Site name: WWII Catalina Flying Boat Base Marina Yacht Club
Type of resource: Intangible
Location: 3419AC: 34 21' 16.72" S, 19 7' 21.75" E Google Earth 2009
Erf/Farm : /
Address: Fisherhaven

Description:

Situated on the site of the present Marina Yacht Club. No physical fabric remains today.

The present site consists of a landing ramp, slipway, workshops and stores.

Materials:

Associated landscape features:

Original use: Military

Current use:

Landscape type: Relic

Design/Style:

Construction date: 1943

Historical period in which constructed: WWII

Theme: Surveillance and defence

RAF



Historical information:

The Allied Forces' main supply line between Britain and Europe was via the Cape of Good Hope. Two separate U-boat packs were assigned by Germany to attack the route resulting in tremendous casualties due to the lack of aerial patrol. In 1943 Britain sent out RAF squadron 262 with Catalina flying boats, which were on lease from the USA. The main operating base was in Durban with subsidiaries at Langebaan and St Lucia. The Botriver lagoon was established as an emergency base for the landing and refuelling of Catalina flying boats. It was occasionally used as an advanced operating base. It was an essential link in the patrol, and when major convoys passed a number of planes would be stationed there. Landing ramps were built on the site of the present Lake Marina Boat Club in Fisherhaven. Other facilities included a slipway, workshops and stores. The RAF detachment comprising 14 men was accommodated at the Onrust River Hotel. As the RAF was only supposed to have training schools in South Africa, SAAF squadron 35 was twinned with them, and every flight carried both RAF and South Africans. The base was in full operation until February 1945, when both the RAF squadron 262 and SA squadron 35 were transferred to Britain. In 1944 the Bot River and Klein River lagoons broke open and the main road bridge at Onrust was washed away. Hermanus was cut off for by road and telecommunications were down for three days. Assistance was offered by the RAF of 262 squadron – their vehicles had Aldis Signal Lamps and were used to send messages until a rough walking bridge was erected between Hermanus and Onrust. No physical evidence of the Catalina flying boat base remains today.

Heritage Status:

Previous status under National Monuments Act:

Current status under National Heritage Resources Act:
Responsible heritage authority:

Approved grading:

Suggested grading: 3C

Significance: Historical value in terms of the role of the Bot River lagoon as a RAF Catalina flying boat base during WW II.

Historical value in terms of its association with the role of SA in WWII, an event of international significance.

Historical value in terms of its association with the essential role of Catalina flying boats in the patrol and defense of the main supply route via the Cape of Good Hope of during WW II. The base at Bot River being the one within a network of flying bases around the country, i.e. also at Durban, Langebaan and St Lucia.

Some historical linkages with Onrust and Hermanus in terms of the members of the RAF squadron being accommodated at the Onrust River Hotel and social interactions with the communities of Onrust and Hermanus

Constraints and Opportunities: No physical evidence of the Catalina flying boat base remains

Heritage Management Recommendations:

Ongoing repair and maintenance

Formal protection in terms of zoning scheme regulations (Grade 3C)

- Conserve wherever possible
- Retain historical fabric wherever possible (exterior only)
- Conserve and enhance contribution to overall character and streetscape (predominantly public/private interface)
- HWC permit of approval required for any demolition, alteration or change in planning status
- Demolition only to be considered if appropriate adaptive reuses cannot be established

Proposed conservation/Special areas:

References/Sources:

Site name: Botrivier Lagoon/Estuary Type of resource: Natural feature
Location: 3419AC: 34 20' 37.15" S, 19 6' 58.15" E Google Earth 2009
Erf/Farm : /
Address: Fisherhaven

Description:

Lagoon/Estuary fed by the Bot and Afdaks Rivers. Surrounded by gated communities, resorts and rural farmlands. Vusually sensitive in terms of its open landscape character

Materials:

Associated landscape features:

Original use: Lagoon/Estuary

Current use:

Landscape type: Natural

Design/Style:

Construction date:

Historical period in which constructed:

Theme: Biodiversity

Fishing/Recreation

Resort development

Gated communities

Vineyard/Orchard cultivation

Historical information:

An emergency base was set up on the Botrivier Lagoon in the 1940s. It was operational until 1945. The lake Marina Boat Club at Fisherhaven incorporates some of the base. The landing ramp was built in 1943. While the RAF men stationed at the base had accommodation set up at the Onrus Hotel, they spend most of their time at Hermanus

Heritage Status:

Previous status under National Monuments Act:

Current status under National Heritage Resources Act:

Approved grading:

Suggested grading: (3C)

Responsible heritage authority:

Significance: Of exceptional ecological, scenic and recreational value of the lagoon area

Social-historical significance ito the role of the lagoon and its importance as a fishing resource for the Hawston community from the mid to late 19th century.

Social-historical significance ito the role of the lagoon as recreational/holidaying destination from the mid 20th century onwards.

Historical role of the lagoon as military base for the RAF Catalina flying boats druing WWII

Role of the lagoon area during the Apartheid era with Fisherhaven being designated as a white area and spatially separated from Hawston (coloured area) by a controlled buffer zone. Access to the lagoon divided between two areas

Constraints and Opportunities: Inappropriate development adjacent to the Bot River lagoon
Privatisation of the water's edge

Heritage Management Recommendations:

Proposed conservation/Special areas:

References/Sources:

Burman, J. 1989. Hermanus. A guide to the 'Riviera of the South'. Cape Town: Human & Rousseau
Burrows, E. 1994. Overberg Odyssey. People Roads & Early Days. Swellendam: Swellendam Trust.
Slingsby, P & Coombe, E. 2001. Fynbos Coast: Betty's Bay- Kleinmond Pringle Bay – Rooiels. Muizenberg: Baardskeerder cc.