

**Johann Lanz**  
Soil Scientist (Pr.Sci.Nat.)  
Reg. no. 400268/12

Cell: 082 927 9018  
e-mail: johann@johannlanz.co.za

1A Wolfe Street  
Wynberg  
7800  
Cape Town  
South Africa

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**SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION  
AND  
AGRICULTURAL COMPLIANCE STATEMENT  
FOR A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ON ERF 6503  
PLETTENBERG BAY, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

**Report by  
Johann Lanz**

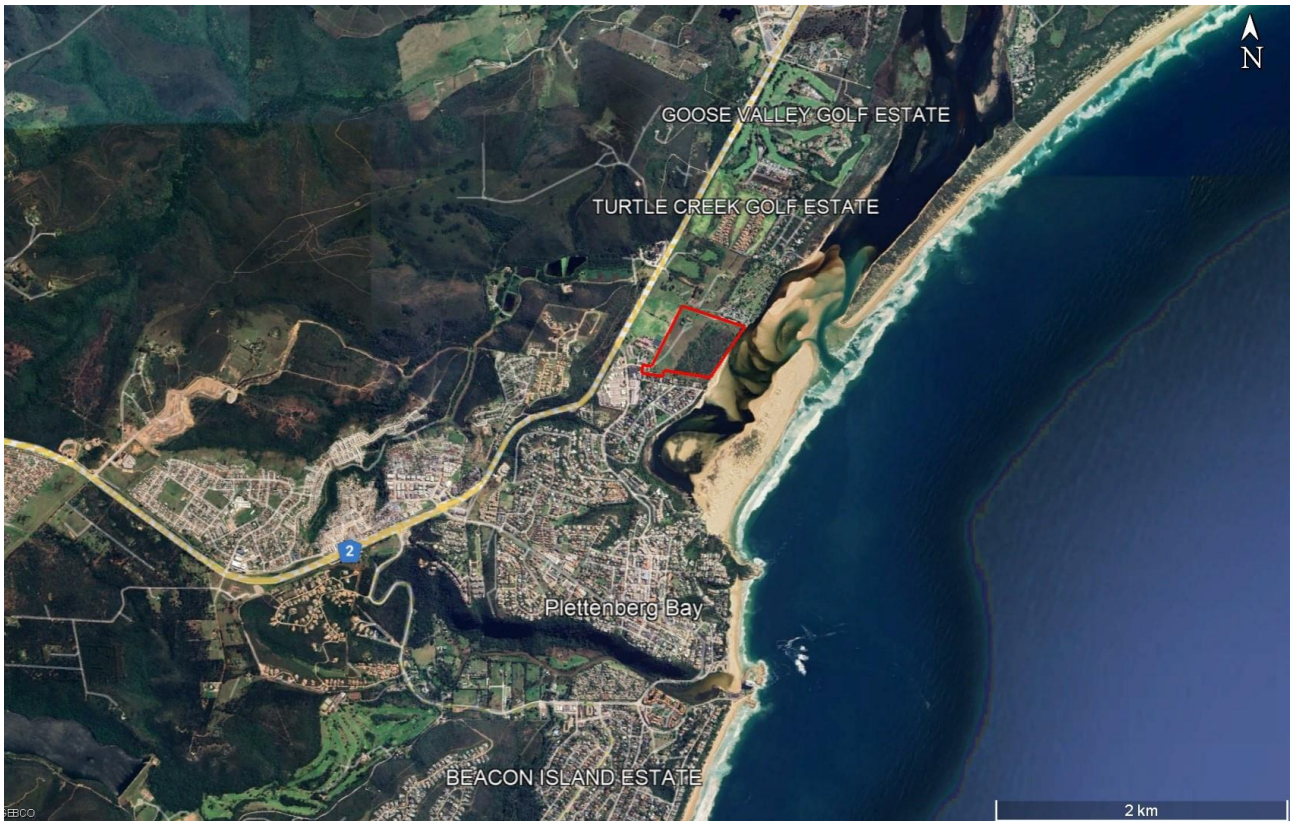
**6 September 2023**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Environmental authorisation is being sought for a residential development on Erf 6503 Plettenberg Bay, Western Cape Province (see location in Figure 1). In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998 - NEMA), an application for environmental authorisation requires an agricultural assessment. However, in this case, the site is on non-agricultural land, which does not need to be conserved for agricultural production, and a detailed agricultural assessment therefore has no value and is consequently not required.



**Figure 1.** Locality map of the property (red outline) north of Plettenberg Bay.

The purpose of an agricultural assessment is to answer this question:

Will the proposed development cause a significant reduction in agricultural production potential, and most importantly, will it result in a loss of arable land?

This assessed development will not result in a loss of viable arable land and therefore poses no threat to agricultural production potential.

## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development is residential and it will cause the permanent exclusion of any

potential future agricultural production from the entire site. Once agriculture is excluded from the site, there can be no further on-site agricultural impact. There is also no off-site agricultural impact. The design and layout of the development within the property is therefore of no relevance to agricultural impacts and it is unnecessary to consider it any further in this assessment. All that is of relevance is the loss of the total site to potential agricultural production.

### 3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for this study is to fulfill the requirements of the *Protocol for the specialist assessment and minimum report content requirements of environmental impacts on agricultural resources*, gazetted on 20 March 2020 in GN 320 (in terms of Sections 24(5)(A) and (H) and 44 of NEMA, 1998).

The terms of reference for an Agricultural Compliance Statement, as stipulated in the agricultural protocol, are listed below, and the section number of this report which fulfils each stipulation is given after it in brackets.

1. The Agricultural Compliance Statement must be prepared by a soil scientist or agricultural specialist registered with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) (**Appendix 3**).
2. The compliance statement must:
  1. be applicable to the preferred site and proposed development footprint (**Figures 2 and 3**);
  2. confirm that the site is of “low” or “medium” sensitivity for agriculture (**Section 7**); and
  3. indicate whether or not the proposed development will have an unacceptable impact on the agricultural production capability of the site (**Section 10**).
3. The Agricultural Compliance Statement must contain, as a minimum, the following information:
  1. details and relevant experience as well as the SACNASP registration number of the soil scientist or agricultural specialist preparing the statement including a curriculum vitae (**Appendix 1**);
  2. a signed statement of independence by the specialist (**Appendix 2**);
  3. a map showing the proposed development footprint (including supporting infrastructure) with a 50 m buffered development envelope, overlaid on the agricultural sensitivity map generated by the screening tool (**Figure 2**);
  4. confirmation from the specialist that all reasonable measures have been taken through micro-siting to avoid or minimize fragmentation and disturbance of agricultural activities (**not applicable**);
  5. a substantiated statement from the soil scientist or agricultural specialist on the acceptability, or not, of the proposed development and a recommendation on the

- approval, or not of the proposed development (**Section 10**);
6. any conditions to which this statement is subjected (**Section 10**);
  7. in the case of a linear activity, confirmation from the agricultural specialist or soil scientist, that in their opinion, based on the mitigation and remedial measures proposed, the land can be returned to the current state within two years of completion of the construction phase (**not applicable**);
  8. where required, proposed impact management outcomes or any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr (**not applicable**); and
  9. a description of the assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data (**Section 5**).

#### **4 METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

The assessment was based on a verification of the lack of current agricultural land use on the site and the location of the site within a non-agricultural area. No other information is relevant to assessing the agricultural production potential of the site because the non-agricultural location is the limiting factor regardless of climate, soil and terrain.

#### **5 ASSUMPTIONS, UNCERTAINTIES OR GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE OR DATA**

There are no specific assumptions, uncertainties or gaps in knowledge or data that affect the findings of this study.

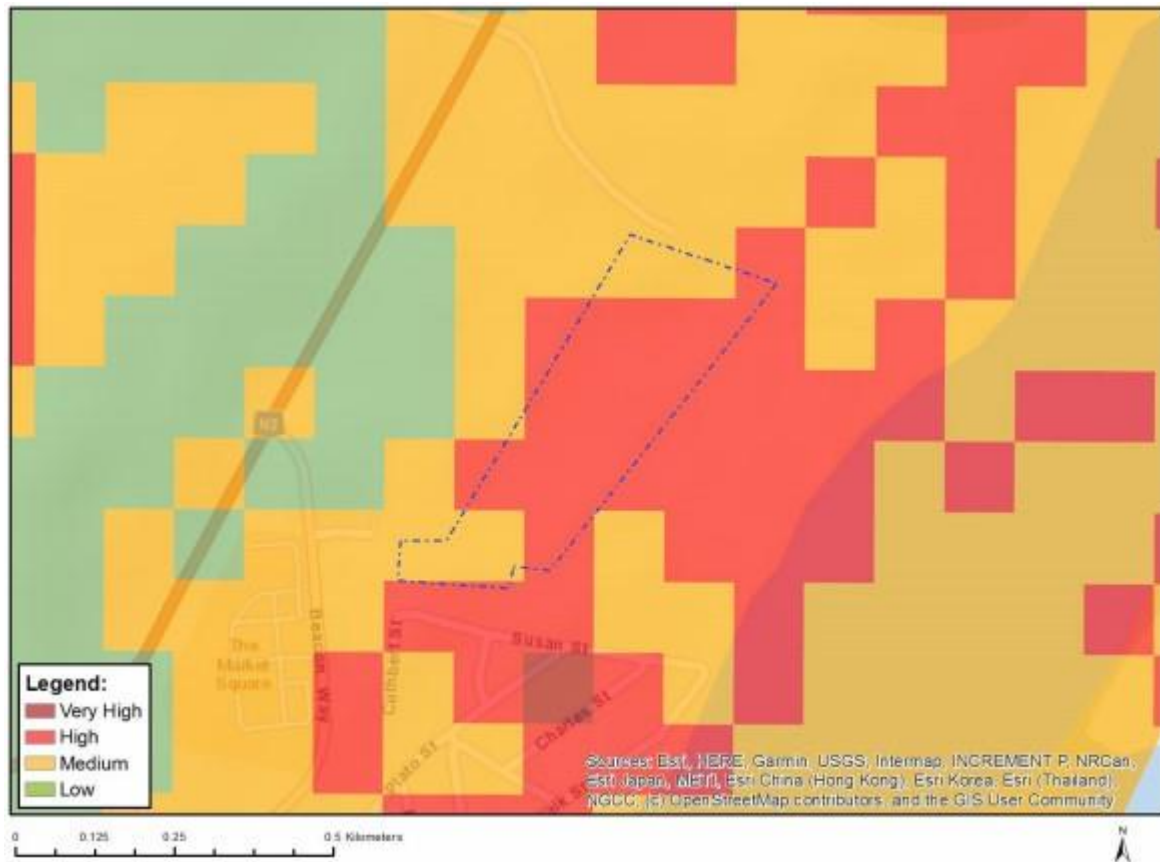
#### **6 APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS**

The project may require agricultural approval (or at least comment from Department of Agriculture) as part of the required approval in terms of applicable municipal land use legislation, as well as in terms of the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act 70 of 1970 - SALA), if the property is currently zoned for agriculture.

#### **7 SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION**

A specialist agricultural assessment is required to verify the agricultural sensitivity of the development site as per the sensitivity categories used by the DFFE's web-based environmental screening tool. Agricultural sensitivity is a direct function of the capability of the land for agricultural production, based only on its climate, terrain and soil capabilities. The agricultural sensitivity of the site, as given by the screening tool, is shown in Figure 2. However, the agricultural sensitivity and its verification is irrelevant in this case because the site's capability to practically deliver an agricultural product is not determined by its climate, terrain and soil capabilities. The site is located in an area that is not and is highly unlikely to ever be utilised for agricultural

production and it therefore effectively has no agricultural production potential, regardless of what its climate, terrain, and soil capabilities might be.



**Figure 2.** The proposed development site overlaid on agricultural sensitivity, as given by the screening tool (green = low; yellow = medium; red = high; dark red = very high). Note, however that the screening tool's sensitivity is irrelevant for this assessment.

## 8 BASELINE DESCRIPTION OF THE AGRO-ECOSYSTEM

The purpose of this section of an agricultural assessment report is to present the baseline information that controls the agricultural production potential of the site so that an assessment of that potential can be made. Agricultural production potential, and particularly cropping potential, is one of three factors that determines the significance of an agricultural impact, together with size of footprint and duration of impact.

As discussed above, The site is located in an area that is not and would never be utilised for agricultural production because the agricultural isolation of the property, surrounded by urban and residential land uses, would prevent any practical production of an agricultural product. The land, therefore, effectively has no agricultural production potential, regardless of what its climate, terrain, and soil capabilities might be. No other information is relevant to assessing the agricultural production potential of the site because the non-agricultural location is the limiting factor.



**Figure 3.** *Satellite image map of the property.*

## **9 ASSESSMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL IMPACT**

An agricultural impact is a change to the future agricultural production potential of land. In this case, as identified above, the land effectively has no agricultural potential, regardless of whether the proposed development goes ahead or not. The development cannot therefore cause any reduction in agricultural production potential. The agricultural impact of the development is assessed as being of no significance and therefore as acceptable.

## **10 CONCLUSION: AGRICULTURAL COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

An agricultural impact is a change to the future agricultural production potential of land. In this case the land has no agricultural production potential regardless, of whether the proposed development goes ahead or not, because the site is located in an area that is not and is highly unlikely to ever be utilised for agricultural production. The development will therefore result in no change to the agricultural production potential of the land.

The agricultural impact of the proposed development is therefore assessed as being of no significance and as acceptable. From an agricultural impact point of view, it is recommended that the proposed development be approved. The conclusion of this assessment on the acceptability of the proposed development and the recommendation for its approval is not subject to any conditions.



## APPENDIX 1: SPECIALIST CURRICULUM VITAE

### Johann Lanz Curriculum Vitae

#### Education

M.Sc. (Environmental Geochemistry)	University of Cape Town	1996 - 1997
B.Sc. Agriculture (Soil Science, Chemistry)	University of Stellenbosch	1992 - 1995
BA (English, Environmental & Geographical Science)	University of Cape Town	1989 - 1991
Matric Exemption	Wynberg Boy's High School	1983

#### Professional work experience

I have been registered as a Professional Natural Scientist (Pri.Sci.Nat.) in the field of soil science since 2012 (registration number 400268/12) and am a member of the Soil Science Society of South Africa.

#### **Soil & Agricultural Consulting      Self employed      2002 - present**

Within the past 5 years of running my soil and agricultural consulting business, I have completed more than 170 agricultural assessments (EIAs, SEAs, EMPRs) in all 9 provinces for renewable energy, mining, electrical grid infrastructure, urban, and agricultural developments. I was the appointed agricultural specialist for the nation-wide SEAs for wind and solar PV developments, electrical grid infrastructure, and gas pipelines. My regular clients include: Zutari; CSIR; SiVEST; SLR; WSP; Arcus; SRK; Environamics; Royal Haskoning DHV; ABO; Enertrag; WKN-Windcurrent; JG Afrika; Mainstream; Redcap; G7; Mulilo; and Tiptrans. Recent agricultural clients for soil resource evaluations and mapping include Cederberg Wines; Western Cape Department of Agriculture; Vogelfontein Citrus; De Grendel Estate; Zewenwacht Wine Estate; and Goedgedacht Olives. In 2018 I completed a ground-breaking case study that measured the agricultural impact of existing wind farms in the Eastern Cape.

#### **Soil Science Consultant      Agricultural Consultors International (Tinie du Preez)      1998 - 2001**

Responsible for providing all aspects of a soil science technical consulting service directly to clients in the wine, fruit and environmental industries all over South Africa, and in Chile, South America.

#### **Contracting Soil Scientist      De Beers Namaqualand Mines      July 1997 - Jan 1998**

Completed a contract to advise soil rehabilitation and re-vegetation of mined areas.

#### Publications

- Lanz, J. 2012. Soil health: sustaining Stellenbosch's roots. In: M Swilling, B Sebitosi & R Loots (eds). *Sustainable Stellenbosch: opening dialogues*. Stellenbosch: SunMedia.
- Lanz, J. 2010. Soil health indicators: physical and chemical. *South African Fruit Journal*, April / May 2010 issue.
- Lanz, J. 2009. Soil health constraints. *South African Fruit Journal*, August / September 2009 issue.
- Lanz, J. 2009. Soil carbon research. *AgriProbe*, Department of Agriculture.
- Lanz, J. 2005. Special Report: Soils and wine quality. *Wineland Magazine*.

I am a reviewing scientist for the *South African Journal of Plant and Soil*.

## APPENDIX 2: DECLARATION OF THE SPECIALIST

**Note:** Duplicate this section where there is more than one specialist.

I, **Johann Lanz**, as the appointed Specialist hereby declare/affirm the correctness of the information provided or to be provided as part of the application, and that I:

- in terms of the general requirement to be independent:
  - other than fair remuneration for work performed/to be performed in terms of this application, have no business, financial, personal or other interest in the activity or application and that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity; or
  - ~~◦ am not independent, but another specialist that meets the general requirements set out in Regulation 13 have been appointed to review my work (Note: a declaration by the review specialist must be submitted);~~
- in terms of the remainder of the general requirements for a specialist, am fully aware of and meet all of the requirements and that failure to comply with any the requirements may result in disqualification;
- have disclosed/will disclose, to the applicant, the Department and interested and affected parties, all material information that have or may have the potential to influence the decision of the Department or the objectivity of any report, plan or document prepared or to be prepared as part of the application; and
- am aware that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 48 of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations.

Signature of the specialist:



Date: **6 September 2023**

Name of company: **Johann Lanz – soil scientist (sole proprietor)**

**herewith certifies that**

**Johan Lanz**

Registration Number: 400268/12

**is a registered scientist**

in terms of section 20(3) of the Natural Scientific Professions Act, 2003  
(Act 27 of 2003)

in the following field(s) of practice (Schedule 1 of the Act)

Soil Science (Professional Natural Scientist)

Effective **15 August 2012**

Expires **31 March 2024**



Chairperson

Chief Executive Officer

