

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 DEVELOPMENT OF A RESORT ON A PORTION OF ERF 720 (DWARSWEGSTRAND) MOSSEL BAY DISTRICT AND MUNICIPALITY



ON BEHALF OF: Dwarswegstrand Aandeleblok Maatskappy Ltd

AUGUST 2022

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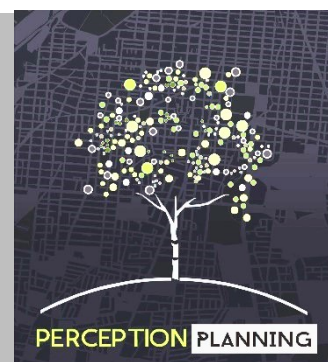
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA
3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
4. SPATIAL PLANNING CONTEXT
 - 4.1 Mossel Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework, 2022
5. BRIEF HISTORIC BACKGROUND
6. HERITAGE RESOURCES AND ISSUES
7. RECOMMENDATION

ANNEXURES

1. Power of Attorney, Title deed, SG Diagrams
2. Photographs
3. Site Development Plan

FIGURES

1. Locality, broader context
2. Locality, closer urban context
3. Site-specific aerial image
4. Extract: MB Mun SDF, 2022
5. Extract 1900 SG Mapping
6. 1851: Freehold farm Eigendomsgrond
7. 1940 aerial imagery
8. Extract: SAHRIS Paleo-sensitivity

IMAGES

1. Dwarswegstrand earthworks (1959)
2. Dwarswegstrand site (1964)

REFERENCES and ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Aalwyndal Local Spatial Development Framework, 2018
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10. Surveyor General Office

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 JC du Toit (SA ID 5306105084087) on behalf of Dwarswegstrand Aandelebokmaatskappy 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. Copies of the Proxy, Power of Attorney, as well as copies of the relevant Title Deed and S.G Diagram, are attached as part of **Annexure 1**.

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

- Erf 720, an unregistered portion of Erf 610, (Glentana), Mossel District and Municipality, measuring 3.9635 ha, registered to Dwarswegstrand Aandeleblokmaatskappy Ltd and held under title deed T 55638/94.

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

The subject property, being unregistered Erf 720, Dwarswegstrand (± 3.9 ha in extent), is located ± 515 m south of the N2 National Road, ± 5 km east of the village Great Brak River and ± 10.6 km southwest of the George Airport. The property forms part of existing linear development stretching along the coastline between Glentana and the village Great Brak River (**Figure 1**). It is bound by Morrison Road to the north and existing low density residential development to the east, south and west (**Figure 2**). The western cadastral boundary is defined by a steep, west-facing slope and a public road (HC Botha Street).



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

The property is undeveloped and densely overgrown by indigenous coastal thicket though isolated pockets of alien invasive vegetation was noted during fieldwork undertaken on 16th August 2022. The property comprises a relatively level (roughly triangular) northern portion whilst the southern section forms part of a steep south-facing slope, all of which are underlain by sandy soils.

The proposed development site ("study area") comprises a triangular portion of land (± 1.8 ha in extent) along the northern boundary of Erf 720 as illustrated with **Figure 3**. No structures, ruins or other heritage-related features were noted during fieldwork. Physical access to some portions of the study area was however limited by dense vegetation. There is no current vehicular access to Erf 720 (and by implication also none to the study area). Existing land use within the direct proximity of the study area includes vacant agricultural fields north of Morrison Road¹; a narrow and steep valley along the western boundary with low density residential

¹ Urban development consisting of, inter alia, 242 residential erven approved on this land (Nel & de Kock, 2021:28).

development beyond; a densely overgrown, steep south-facing slope to the south with low density residential development leading to the coastline and similar low density residential development to the east.



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



Figure 3: Existing features noted during field work (CFM, 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 site development plan and services layout provided (Element Consulting and Nel & de Kock, 2021) the proposal is for development of a portion of Erf 720, Dwarswegstrand (i.e. the study area) as a resort, which would include the following components (The site development plan is attached to this report as **Annexure 3**):

- 26 x residential units
- Pool and ablution facilities
- Conference room and lapa
- Gate house, refuse area
- Vehicular access off HC Botha Street
- Pedestrian footpath and staircase to HC Botha Street
- Sewer package plant
- Ancillary services and infrastructure (incl. private roads, parking, pedestrian, circulation areas)

A land use planning application has been submitted to the planning authority and comprise of the following:

- Subdivision of Erf 720, Dwarswegstrand into Portion A (± 1.8 ha) and a Remainder (± 2.2 ha)
- Rezoning of Portion A from Open Space Zone II (Private Open Space) to Resort Zone I
- Consent use for a conference facility

4. SPATIAL PLANNING CONTEXT

4.1 Mossel Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework, 2022

According to this spatial planning framework the study area is situated within the urban edge and, together with agricultural lands north of Morrison Road, are earmarked for "urban expansion" (MB MSDF 2022: 115). The Glentana area is classified as General Urban Area. The SDF does not specifically refer to the subject study area but does refer to an approved Urban Expansion Parcel 80 (Medium to High Density Residential) and proposed Urban Expansion Parcel 81 (proposed Business Node), situated directly to the north and northwest, respectively (MB MSDF 2022: 117). See extract from MB MSDF, **Figure 4**.



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

The proposal therefore appears to be consistent with the overall spatial planning policy and objectives outlined in the MB MSDF, 2022.

5. BASIC HISTORIC BACKGROUND

From a colonial perspective Erf 720, Dwarswegstrand forms part of an early "Lot 1389", reframed during 1851 as the farm Eigendomsgrond 251 and granted in freehold to Marthinus Christoffel Botha on 13th March 1852². The farm is also referred to as "Botha's Freehold" on some historic maps/ diagrams. The farm, measuring 488 morgen 488 square roads (± 317 ha) in extent, included the coastal strip stretching between the eastern bank of the Great Brak River and the western cadastral boundary of the early farm Hoogekraal as illustrated through **Figure 5**.

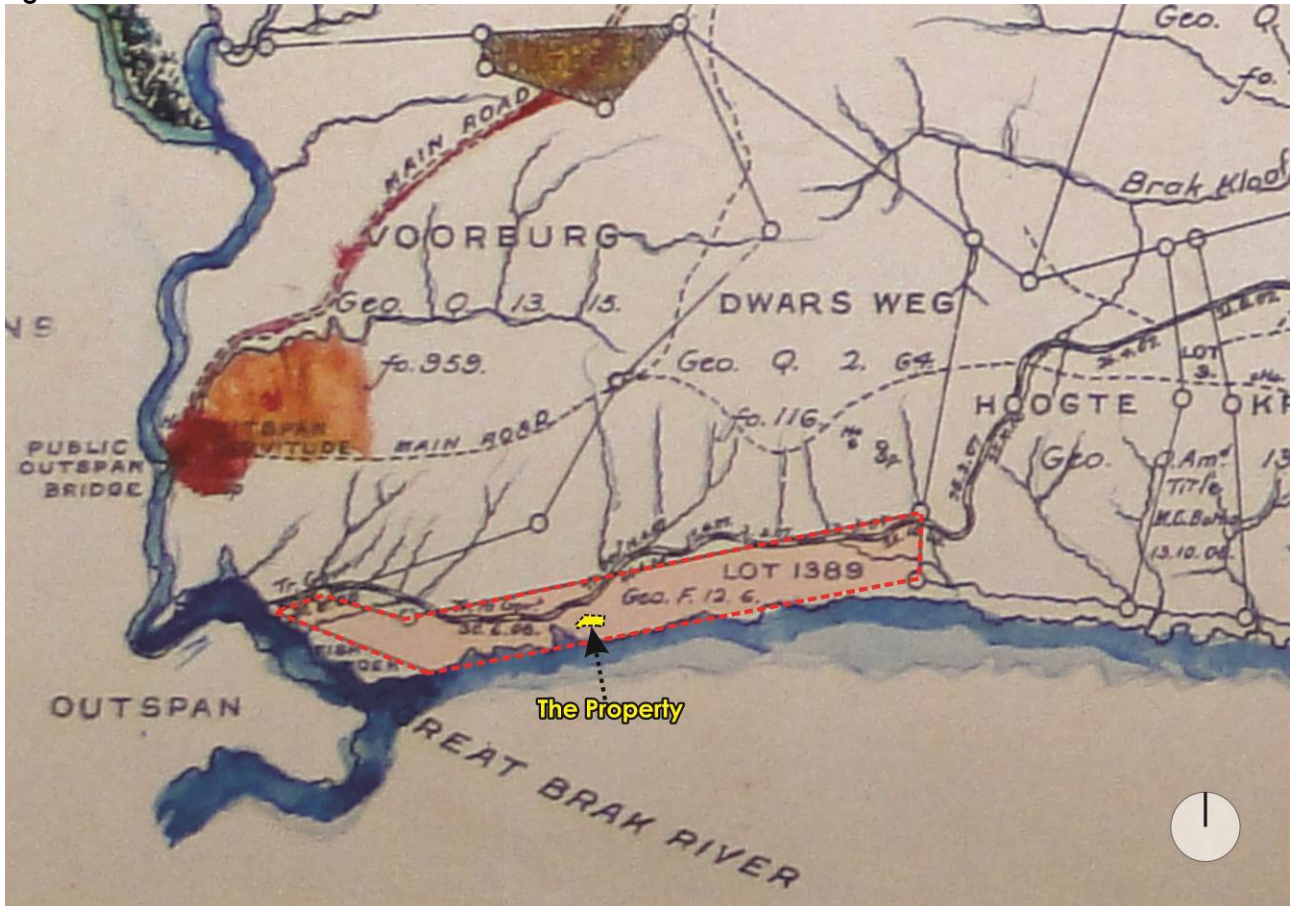


Figure 5: Approximate location of the study area within context of early (± 1900) SG mapping for the area (George Museum Archives, as edited)

Eigendomsgrond was bound by early farms Voorbrug (granted to Charles Searle during 1868) and Dwarsweg (also "Dwars in de weg"), the latter of which was originally granted to Hendrik Louis Boshoff during November 1818. Dwarsweg is recorded as also having been transferred to MC Botha on 29th October 1910³. The residential suburb Bothastrand remains within the urban landscape, situated ± 700 m west of the study area (refer to Figure 1 above). The earliest diagram for the farm Eigendomsgrond does not indicate any building on or within the direct proximity of the study area. The alignment of the current railway line is however evident of the diagram. (**Figure 6**).

The study is bound to the west by **Dwarswegstrand** (formerly known as the "SAOU⁴ standoord"), which was established on land purchased during the late 1950's at a purchase price of R8,600. During 1959 the coastal dunes upon which this resort was developed was excavated, levelled (**Images 1,2**) and construction of the first holiday homes commenced during 1966. "Ownership" of individual plots forming part of the resort continues to be managed through a share block scheme (admin, 2010).

The study area is bound to the south by a low-density residential housing "Nature on Sea" established following a subdivision during 1995⁵ and comprising of primarily of smaller timber units, originally intended as holiday accommodation. Today, much of the surrounding coast has already been developed an/or existing land use approvals are in place.

² SG Diagram 3063/1852

³ SG Diagram 2005/1909

⁴ Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysunie

⁵ General Plan 11239/1995

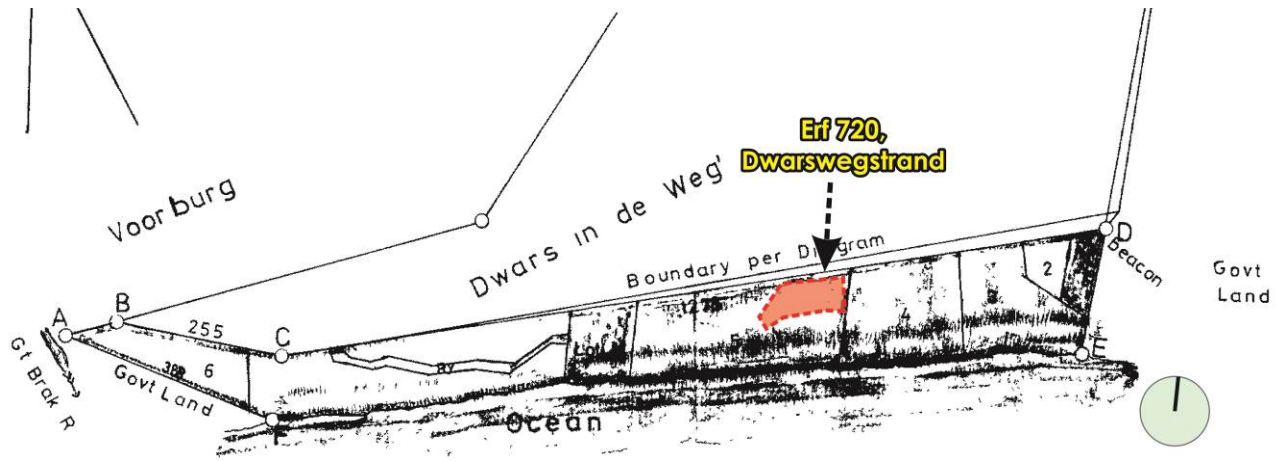


Figure 6: Approximate location of Erf 720, Dwarswegstrand transposed onto extract from 1851 diagram for the farm Eigendomsgrond 251 (SGO, as edited).



Image 1 (left): Coastal dunes being bulldozed (1959) in preparation for construction of Dwarswegstrand resort (Truster Family)
Image 2 (right): Same transformed area (1964) prior to commencement of construction of Dwarswegstrand resort (Olivier, F).

Basic historical background research did not identify or highlight any other significant heritage-related aspects related to the study area specifically. 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

Analysis of earliest available (1940) aerial photography was found useful to inform our understanding of the study area from a cultural landscape perspective. From said analysis the following traditional (i.e. Pre-Modern) cultural landscape patterns emerge, as summarized below:

Aerial survey 140 of 1940 (Figure 7):

- The image predates construction of the N2 National Road, however the alignment of the coastal railway track connecting Mossel Bay and George is seen meandering the landscape directly to the north;
- Note the series of undisturbed coastal dunes occurring along the coastline directly south of the study area. The outlines of these dunes are defined by denser vegetated, narrow valleys visible;
- Extensive patterns of cultivation and vegetation clearing (likely associated with agriculture) are evident within the landscape north of the study area and south of the railway line;
- The outline of the study area is shown directly above (north) of the densely vegetated south-facing slope/narrow valley;
- The image shows the study area largely cleared and lacking dense vegetation growth as with the south-facing slope directly to the south;
- A single modern building is noted directly north of the study area. A narrow track leading to the coastline follows the narrow valley along the western study area boundary.

During an archaeological survey⁶ undertaken Nilssen (2007) on a nearby property (Eigendomsgrond 251/4), situated directly northwest of the study area it was noted that a comprehensive archaeological impact

⁶ SAHRIS Map ID 01892

assessment could not be undertaken as a result of impenetrable vegetation (Nilssen, 2007:2). The location of this particular property in relation to the subject study area is shown in **Figure 7**.



Figure 7: Location of archaeological survey undertaken on the nearby farm Eigendomsgrond 251/4 (Nilssen, 2007) in relation to study area (SAHRIS, 2022 as edited)

Findings and recommendations outlined in said report are as follows (sic):

“Archaeological traces occur as low density scatters and isolated Stone Age artifacts in the adjacent property. Similar archaeological traces may be present in the study area, but the steeply sloped and densely vegetated ravine – if latter similar in the prehistoric past - makes this an unlikely environment for human occupation. Consequently, it is anticipated that the affected area is not archaeologically sensitive.

There is no indication that the study area contains any heritage-related resources. Residential developments in the surrounds of the study area are already underway and the proposed development is unlikely to negatively impact the archaeological record. Nevertheless, since an archaeological impact assessment could not be conducted at this time, it is recommended that vegetation clearing and earthmoving activities be monitored on a part-time basis by a suitably qualified and/or trained person so as to avoid or minimize damage to archaeological material. If archaeological materials are exposed through vegetation clearing or earthmoving activities, then they must be dealt with in accordance with the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) and at the expense of the developer(s) and/or property owner(s).”
(Nilssen, 2007)

Following from the above findings; the pattern and intensity of existing urban development within the direct proximity, which include earthworks undertaken during construction of Morrison Road and former vegetation clearing as evident from 1940 aerial imagery, it is considered unlikely that the proposed development would impact on archaeological resources of significance.

According to SAHRIS Paleo-sensitivity mapping the northernmost portion of the study area (and small portion along western boundary) form part of an area earmarked as being of “Very High” palaeontological sensitivity where, “a field assessment and protocol for finds is required”⁷ (**Figure 8**). The remainder of the study area is cited as being of “Unknown” paleontological sensitivity, where according to SAHRIS, a minimum of a desktop study would be required. However, as with archaeology, we are of the view that, given the pattern of existing

⁷ <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/map/palaeo>, accessed 19th August 2022

urban development and former earthworks and vegetation cleared undertaken on and within the sandy soils underlying the study area and its environs, the proposal is not likely to impact on palaeontological resources.



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

From the above assessment 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. Furthermore the proposal is unlikely to impact on archaeological and/or palaeontological resources of high local significance. No structures, ruins or possible burial grounds were noted during fieldwork.

The subject property is located within an area earmarked for urban expansion in the Mossel Bay MSDF, 2022 and directly southeast of a recently approved residential estate. Although the proposal would transform the landscape it is therefore likely to be viewed within context of existing urban development within its direct proximity as well as 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 indicated that said proposals are unlikely to negative impact the archaeological record. Following from the aforementioned as well as the findings emanating from this assessment, it is our therefore 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.

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26th August 2022

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