PROPOSED ECO TYPE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
PORTION 36 OF FARM 708, CALEDON ROAD, FRANSKRAAL

VISUAL IMPACT REPORT

June 2024

Prepared for:

Lornay Environmental Consultants
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Prepared by:

Megan Anderson Landscape Architect

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Executive Summary

An eco-type residential development is proposed for Portion 36 of Farm 708, Caledon Road, Franskraal.

HWC requested a Heritage Impact Assessment with specific reference to an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) and a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA).

Megan Anderson Landscape Architects have been appointed to undertake a Visual Impact Assessment.

The **Scenic resources** of the area site and its surrounds can be described as natural (undeveloped coastal plain (much heavily infested with alien vegetation), the Uillenskraals river/lagoon/estuary, Franskraal se Berge and nature reserves), rural landscape north of the R43 and residential (Franskraal). These are **Highly to Moderately** (recent urban development) rated.

The **View Catchment** of the site is up to 12km's to the east, 3,5 kms to the west, 2 kms to the south and 2,5 kms to the north.

The **Zone of Visual Influence** (ZVI) of the site is restricted to the **local** area, ranging from 0,5 km's to approximately 3,5 kms.

The **Receptors** within the **ZVI** are inclusive of those rated as **Highly** sensitive (R43 Scenic Drive, Walker Bay/Uilkraalmond Nature Reserve, HP&EMOZ's) and **Moderately** sensitive (rural development).

The **Inherent Site Sensitivity** includes areas of **low to high** sensitivity. Development needs to respond to the moderately and highly sensitive areas namely those visible from R43, along the Uilkraals lagoon.

The **Visual Absorption Capacity** (VAC) of the site is **moderate to low**, there is partial to little screening by topography and vegetation.

The **Visual Intrusion** of the proposed development will be **moderate - i.e it partially fits into the surroundings** (Uilkraalmond Resort and rural development)**, but will be clearly noticeable.**

The **Potential Visual Impacts** identified are will occur during the construction and operation phase and are tabled below including significance before and after mitigation.

	SDP as submitted with the NID(55 units)	
	Significance before mitigation	Significance after mitigation
a. Visibility of construction activities		
	Medium	Medium
b. Change in Visual Character from natural to resort/Loss of natural Scenic Resource and Sense of Place		
	High	Medium
c. Visibility from sensitive receptors		
	High	Medium
e. Visual Intrusion of night lighting		
	High	Medium
d. Cumulative Impact		
	High	Medium

Mitigation measures include:

- Reducing units to as few as economically viable
- Clustering the units with green areas surrounding them
- Screening the units from sensitive receptors - earthworks/landscaping such that units have views but receptors are not significantly affected, phasing removal of alien vegetation and adding quick growing trees to tree list (refer to Platbos Forest)
- Implementing design philosophy and guidelines

This report finds that the proposed site and development, is in an area that is:

- highly rated for it's Scenic Resources,
- within the Greater Gansbaai Urban Edge,
- in a sensitive environmental area.

Brief discussion

The proposed development is in a visually sensitive environment, very close to the Uilkraal Lagoon and R43 and if not mitigated could become visually intrusive. However the proposed philosophy does indicate the sensitive approach to the design and this development has the potential to visually enhance the site and its surrounds.

1. Name, Expertise and Declaration

1.1 Name

Megan Anderson, of Megan Anderson Landscape Architects, is a self-employed Landscape Architect who has been consulting in the Western Cape since 1991, to clients from the public and private sector.

1.2 Expertise

Megan Anderson's projects range from:

- visual impact assessments (VIAs) of proposed developments for EIA and HIA processes;
- environmental and landscape policy and planning;
- upgrading and rehabilitation of natural systems;
- planning and implementation in heritage and cultural precincts; and
- planning, design and landscape development in residential and urban areas and community projects.

PRINCIPAL AGENT: Megan Anderson (PrLArch) Registered Professional Landscape Architect BLArch (UP) 1983 MILASA

REGISTRATION OF PRINCIPLE AGENT

1994 South African Council for Landscape Architect Professionals (94063)
1992 Institute of Landscape Architects of South Africa (P217)

QUALIFICATIONS

1983 University of Pretoria Bachelor of Landscape Architecture

VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT EXPERTISE

Megan Anderson has been doing Visual Impact Assessments (VIA's)since 1989 when working for OvP and BOLA. Since then, she has completed more than 100 VIA's for a variety of developments including mining, harbours, wind and solar farms, communication towers, commercial and residential developments.

1.3 Declaration of independence

I Megan Anderson declare that I am an independent consultant and have no business, financial, personal or other interest in the proposed Residential Eco-Type Residential Project at Franskraal, Western Cape, application or appeal in respect of which I was appointed, other than fair remuneration for work performed in connection with the activity, application or appeal. There are no circumstances that compromise the objectivity of my performing such work.

MEGAN ANDERSON
Megan Anderson Landscape Architects
Professional registration number: SACLAP - 94063

2. Introduction

2.1 Background to this report

An eco-type residential development is proposed for ortion 36 of Farm 708, Caledon Road, Franskraal.

Heritage Western Cape (HWC) have requested that a Heritage Impact assessment (HIA) be submitted that must have specific reference to an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) and a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA).

Megan Anderson Landscape Architects have been appointed to undertake the Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed development.

2.2 Terms of reference

The Terms of Reference for this Visual Impact Assessment Report is as follows:

- Take cognisance of, and comply with, the substantive content requirements outlined within Appendix 6 of GN No. 326 , which outlines the legal minimum content requirements for specialist studies in terms of the 2014 NEMA EIA Regulations, as amended (amendments to the EIA Regulations were promulgated on 7 April 2017);
- Take cognisance of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning's (DEA&DP) 2005 Guideline for Involving Visual and Aesthetic Specialists in the EIA Process.

The PGWC's DEA&DP's "Guidelines for involving visual and aesthetic specialists in the EIA process" provides 'triggers' (i.e. characteristics of either the receiving environment or the proposed project), which indicate that visibility and aesthetics are likely to be 'key issues' and may require specialist input.

The following characteristics of the site (and it's surrounds) and project are probable triggers which suggest potential visual issues:

The nature of the receiving environment:

- *Areas with proclaimed scenic routes*
- *Areas with outstanding scenic qualities,*
- *Areas of important tourism or recreation value*
- *Areas with a recognised special character or sense of place.*

The nature of the project:

- *A change in land use from the prevailing use;*
- *Possible visual intrusion in the landscape.*

In terms of the Guidelines definitions of Categories, our interpretation is that the proposed development is a Catergory 3/4 development, low - medium density development.

According to Guidelines Document, the proposed development will have a potentially moderate visual impact. Moderate visual impact expected:
Potentially some affect on protected landscapes or scenic resources;
Some change in the visual character of the area;
Introduces new development or adds to existing development in the area.

The recommended level of Visual Impact Assessment is a Level 3.

A Level 3 Assessment includes the following:

Identification of issues raised in scoping phase, and site visit;
Description of receiving environment and the proposed project
Establishment of view catchment area, view corridors, viewpoints and receptors;
Indication of potential visual impacts using established criteria;
Inclusion of potential lighting impacts at night;
Description of alternatives, mitigation measures and monitoring programmes;

Herewith a breakdown of our proposed approach to the project:

a) Reviewing of existing information:
- Planning info regarding rights to development and local SDF/IDF's
- Heritage information
- Visual issues raised in discussions
- CFM plan of the site at 1:100(0) scale , 1 – 5m contours
- More detailed description of the proposed development

b) Site reconnaissance visit and photographic survey

c) Desk top study and draft Visual Impact Assessment:
- Describe and rate scenic character and sense of place of the area + site.
- Establish + map the viewsheds and zones of visual influence
- Establish visual exposure to viewpoints
- Establish inherent visual sensitivity of site by mapping slope grades, landforms, vegetation, special features and land use + assimilate a visual sensitivity map.
- Assess visual sensitivity criteria such as extent of visibility, the sites inherent sensitivity, visual sensitivity of the receptor's, visual absorption capacity of the area and visual intrusion on the character of the area.

d) Visual Impact Assessment Report
- Assess the proposed project against the visual impact criteria (visibility, visual exposure, sensitivity of site and receptor, visual absorption capacity and visual intrusion).
- Assess impacts based on a synthesis of criteria (criteria = nature of impact, extent, duration, intensity, probability and significance
- Establish mitigation measures and monitoring requirements
- Present draft report to project team for comment

2.3 Methodology

This Visual Impact Assessment will identify the potential visual impacts of the proposed development as follows:

- Undertake a Desktop study including:
  - a literature review of legal, policy and planning context,
  - mapping of View Catchment Area, Zone of Visual Influence, Receptors and Site Sensitivity.
- Undertake a site visit, including the area surrounding the site - this included
  - a photographic survey of the study area, and

- checking accuracy of the desktop mapping exercise.
  The site was visited in early May 2024.

- Compile a specialist report that addresses the following:
  - A description and assessment of the scenic and visual resources of the site and surrounding area;
  - Identification of landscape type, landscape character and sense of place, generally based on geology. landforms, vegetation cover and landuse patterns;
  - Identify viewsheds, view catchment area and the zone of visual influence, generally based on topography;
  - Identify important viewpoints and view corridors (scenic routes) within the affected environment as well as receptors;
  - Indicate distance radii from the proposed project to various viewpoints and receptors
  - Determine the visual absorption capacity (VAC) of the landscape usually based on topography, vegetation cover or urban fabric in the area;
  - Determine the relative visibility, or Visual Intrusion (relative compatibility or congruence), of the proposed project with the surroundings;
  - Determine the site's inherent visual sensitivity based on topography, slope gradient, landform, vegetation and special features. The mapping was done manually, as this assists with familiarising oneself with the site. A 1:5 000 Cape Farm Map/aerial photo with 5 m contour intervals was used to map the various criteria.

2.4 Assumptions and Limitations

NA

3. Policy and Planning Context

3.1 Overstrand and Greater Gansbaai Spatial Development Framework (SDF)(May 2020)

The following refers to the Greater Gansbaai area (inclusive of Franskraal) and the proposed site, as stated in the Overstrained 2020 SDF

Key policies directing future management and development of Greater Gansbaai (including Franskraal) (refer Plan 63)

LO 3 (i) Progressively ensure housing provision for different lifestyle choices, income groups, life stages, household sizes, including adequate provision of affordable housing options and opportunities for the aging.
LO 7 (ii) Encourage the development of natural open space systems within urban and rural settlements.
LO 8 (ii) & MO 3 (ii) & ECO 1 (i) Ensure that environmentally sensitive areas, significant cultural landscapes and heritage sites are protected and enhanced.
EO 2 (ii) Ensure that development is confined within urban edges and growth is managed based on sustainable densification principles.
EO 3 (i) & MO 2 (ii) Encourage and support the development of networks of open space that sustain and enhance eco-system functioning, connect fragments of vegetation, protect waterways and regenerate the natural environment.
EO 4 (ii) Encourage natural dune processes to occur where appropriate and pro- actively work towards reducing coastal erosion.
ECO 1 (ii) Ensure that tourism destinations are accessible, safe and attractive by means of maintaining and developing new facilities

Plan 63: 2050 Spatial Proposal Greater Gansbaai

Figure 1: Greater Gansbaai Spatial Development Framework 2020, site indicated in white

The Key Strategic Landuse Proposals for Development for Franskraal, which is predominantly focused on sensitive development related to unique biodiversity areas, include:

iii New Urban Development
No new development areas are proposed. In order to accommodate the housing need for Franskraal & Birkenhead, densification should take place in accordance with the OGMS.
It must be noted that the proposed property is within the urban edge
iv Sensitive Development Areas
The unique sense of place should be maintained by implementation of draft EMOZ and HPOZ regulations.
These areas are delineated based on environmental and heritage sensitive resources and should be protected as far as possible in its natural state. Limited development could be considered based on the proposed HPOZ and EMOZ regulations being promulgated.
In summation the heritage and environmental resources of the settlement should be protected with only carefully considered densification development being supported.
v. CBA's and Protected Areas
Franskraal and Birkenhead are surrounded by CBA and protected areas. These areas should be preserved and maintained as per the relevant statutory requirements (incl. the draft HPOZ and EMOZ regulations).

The site falls inside of the Greater Gansbaai 'Urban Edge' as indicated on the above Spatial Proposal 2020, it is on both a grey area referred to as Urban Development and a green area referred to as terrestrial CBA.

4. Proposed Development

4.1 Location

The proposed development will be located on Portion 36 of Farm 708, Caledon Road, Franskraal, which is located immediately north of Franskraal, in the Overstrand Municipality of the Overberg District(see Figures 2 and 3 below).

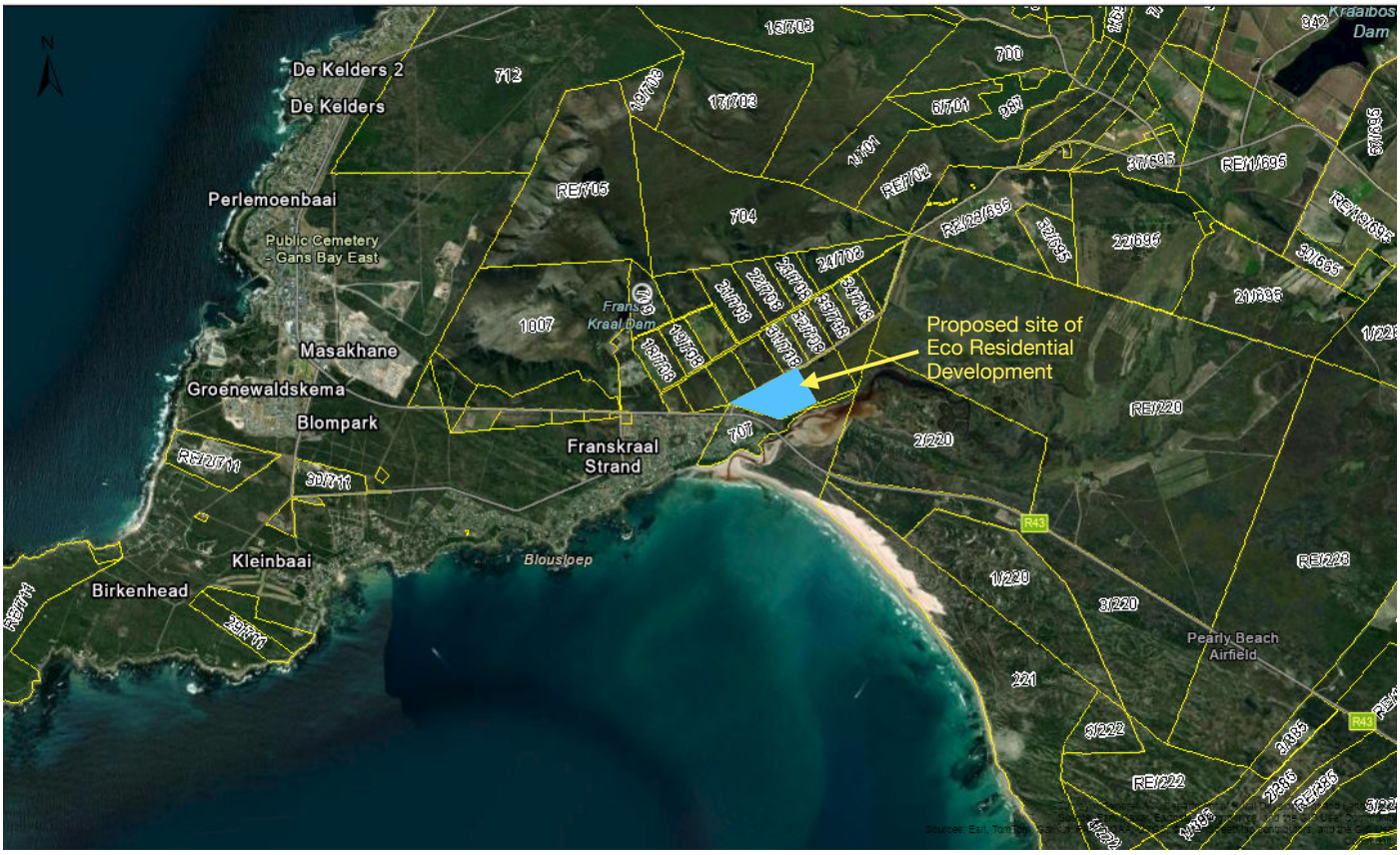


Figure 2: Site Location -

The proposed site is 33,9 ha, is vacant and is zoned Agricultural Zone 1. The predominant land use of surrounding areas is Urban Residential, Agriculture, Vacant, Tourism

4.2 Proposed Development

The proposed development will be a low density Eco Type Residential Development with the majority of the site remaining Open Space

Land Use	Total Area	Number of Erven	Average
Residential 500m² (25mx25m)	29600m²	35	846m²
Residential 625m² (25mx20m)	19175m²	20	959m²
Clubhouse	1600m²	1	1600m²
Road	24165²	1	24165²
Utility	147m²	2	74m²
Open Space	239089m²	12	19924m²
Total	313776m²	71	N/A

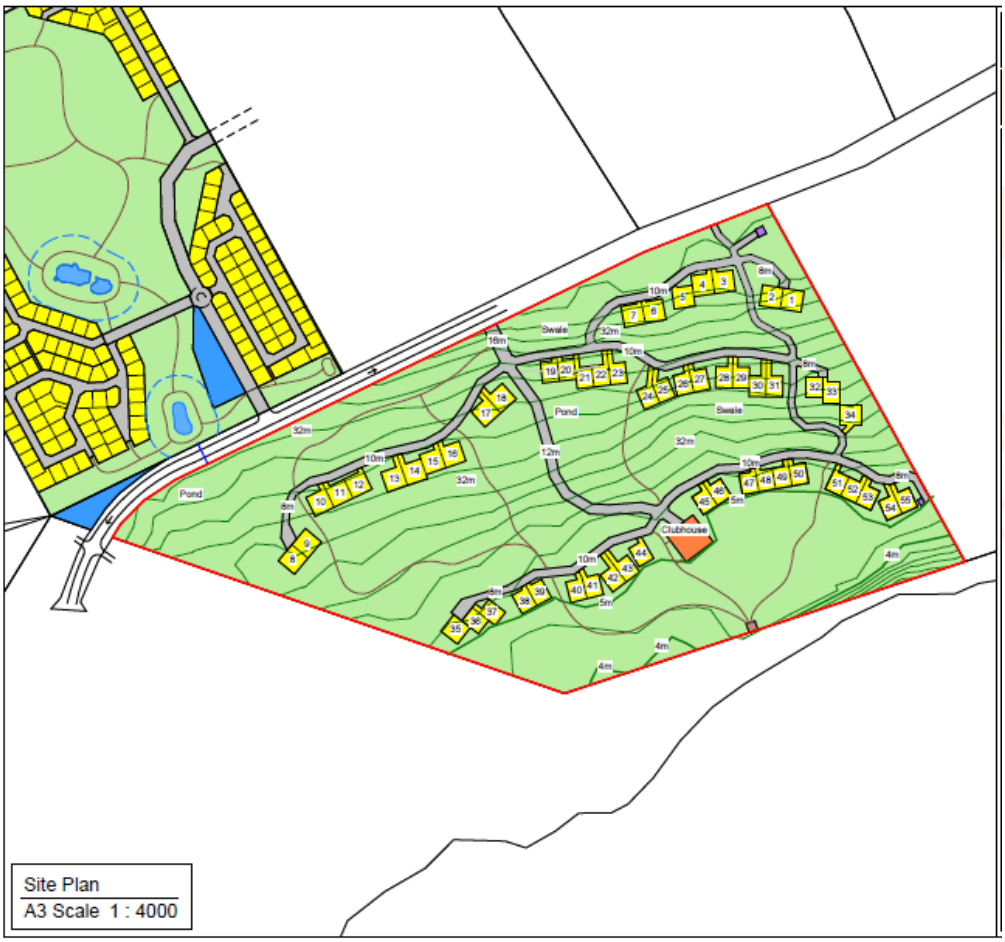


Figure 3: Site Plan from NID

The following is an extract from the Franskraal Beach Estate 'Design Guideline and Philosophy' Document provided by the Proponent..

The 'current layout' shows a small gate house; a communal facility with a coffee shop/ residents ''clubhouse''; 55 residential erven, a utility erf, and road reserve areas. The balance of the site will be zoned private open space.

A small commercial site (±2085m2) is planned on a portion of the site which lies across the road from the site, on the other side of the Elim road. This erf is situated external to the fenced edge of the residential estate. It is envisaged that a small coffee shop/farm stall would be appropriate for this erf, but this erf would be sold off to another party and will be subject to its own building plan approval process.

The 55 erven are limited to mostly single storey homes, but some erven will be allowed to have a small (30 % of coverage) double storey element.

Erven are 600 m2 and 750m2 in size, with maximum 50% coverage allowed on all erven.

It is the intention of the



development that units be pre-designed by the project Architects, and that units will be erected using a dedicated construction team. This will ensure that units all adhere to the style and ethos of the development. It is the intention that all homes will be constructed using steel frame construction, lightweight, and sitting slightly above the natural vegetation.

Building heights above proposed floor levels (FFL is indicated on each plot) are to be maximum 4.5 metres for single storey homes, excluding chimneys, and 6.5 metres to the upper top of second floors (where these are allowed on some erven).

Side and lagoon facing erf edges will have a 2.5m setback line forming the erf ''footprint''. All development on the erf is to be limited to within the building footprint, including paving, tanks, decking, pools and landscaping. These 2.5 m edges are to be rehabilitated to natural fynbos from the approved list, after construction of a unit.

Boundaries of erven will not be fenced or demarcated in any way - other than within the building footprint. Note : only roof slabs may extend over the 2.5m edges, by maximum 300mm.

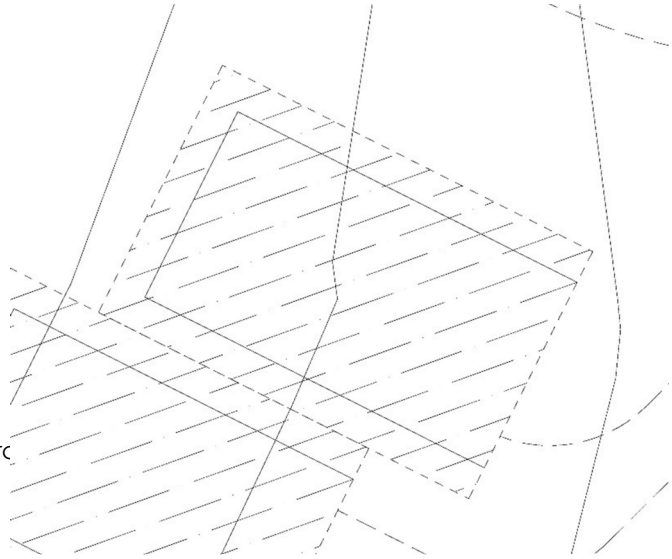


Figure 4: Typical Erf Diagram showing building footprint with 2,5m setback

The design of the buildings is intentionally recessive, to blend into the landscape, with light steel construction, flat roofs, and lightweight infill panels using dark greys and black and other naturally recessive colours.

Materials such as timber, stone, or other cladding, such as Rheinzinc, in dark colours, with glass areas that are shaded, and building elements broken up to add shadow lines. Stone will be limited to a small palette of stone.

Ground floor slabs to cantilever a minimum 500mm with posts and columns set back to create a floating effect. Decking will also be cantilevered, and natural unvarnished timber or equal approved products are to be used.

If raised decks are clad, cladding shall also be recessed by 500mm to create shadow lines.

Rain water tanks of maximum 5500 litre, in a black or dark charcoal colour, or clad in materials from the building palette, with maximum 2 per site, must also be located within the building footprint.

Figure 5: Precedent Images Architectural Style

Pergolas are encouraged to shield glass and create shade, these are to be steel and/or natural unvarnished timber , colours to be from the building palette.

Sheet metal roofs in dark charcoal or black will be allowed only on carport or verandah roofs, with concealed fixings, at max 3 degrees, and hidden behind approved fascias.

Glass areas larger than 2 m2, must be shaded with a minimum of 1500 deep verandah or pergola, or screening elements, to avoid glare.

Pergolas and wind screens, within the footprint in dark steel, timber or similar, will be encouraged. Stonework is encouraged as infill panels, from a limited palette.

Garages carports must be joined to the house and entrances to garages & carports to be at 90 degrees to the street. Number of garages or carports per erf : maximum 4.

Planted roof are encouraged. Where roofs are not planted, they shall have dark grey stone chip cover. Roofs with solar panels, must have planted vegetated edges with upstands providing a minimum soil area of 300x400 deep, along all edges, to hide (max 10 degree angle) mounted solar panels from view.

No other locations for solar panels will be allowed. No plumbing may be visible on building facades.

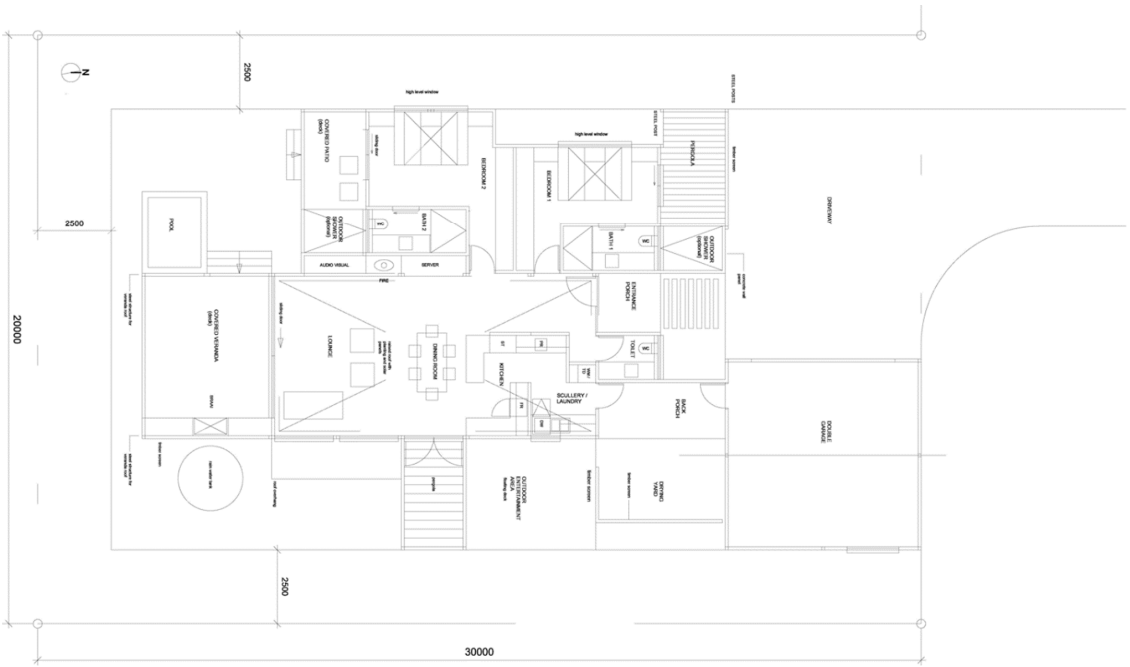
Pool pumps, gas tanks ,filters, water pumps or AC units etc to be fully hidden and enclosed, and must sit within the building footprint.

Roof lights must be flush with roofs, and are only allowed within or enclosed by planted roofs.
Balustrades – no glass or unpainted stainless steel will be allowed on handrails or balustrades.
Balustrades to be simple in design.
Aluminium colours for screens, louvred screens, window frames and doors will be specified (charcoals, greys, dark browns)

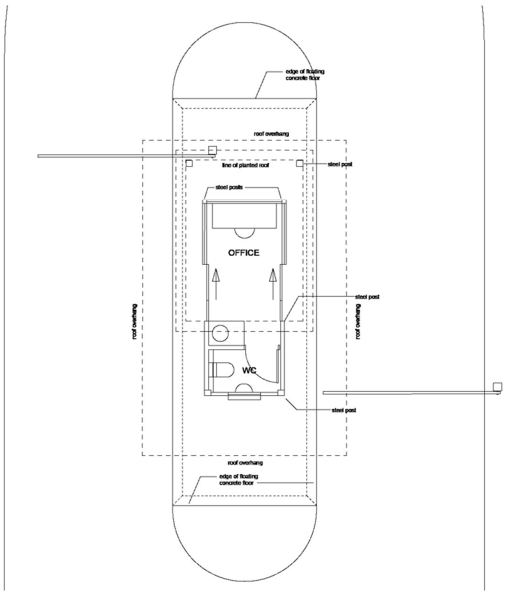
The following materials will not be used on the estate:
Facebrick
Ornate timber doors
Reflective glass
Stainless steel railings
Stainless steel braais or chimneys (they must be black)
Lighting on buildings – only downlighting, - no exterior lights other than within courtyards will be allowed.
No masts or antennae allowed, satellite dishes must sit below the roof line and must be painted to match the aluminium colour, or black.

TV dishes and aerials will need to be screened from view within allowable height limitations within the building footprint.
Swimming pools, in mid grey or darker grey, or an approved brown sand colour, will only be allowed within building footprints. Swimming pools to be limited to 12.5m x 4m maximum size.
Chimneys extending beyond roof lines are to be black pipes with turbo cowls. Chimneys may extend maximum 1m above the roof from which they are extending from.

Figure 6:



Conceptual Unit Design



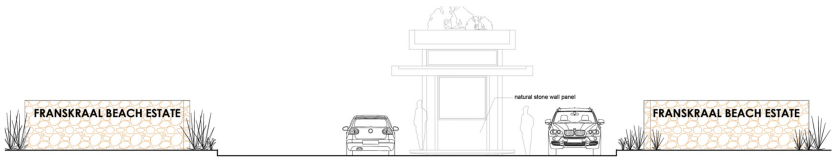


Figure 7: Conceptual Gatehouse Design

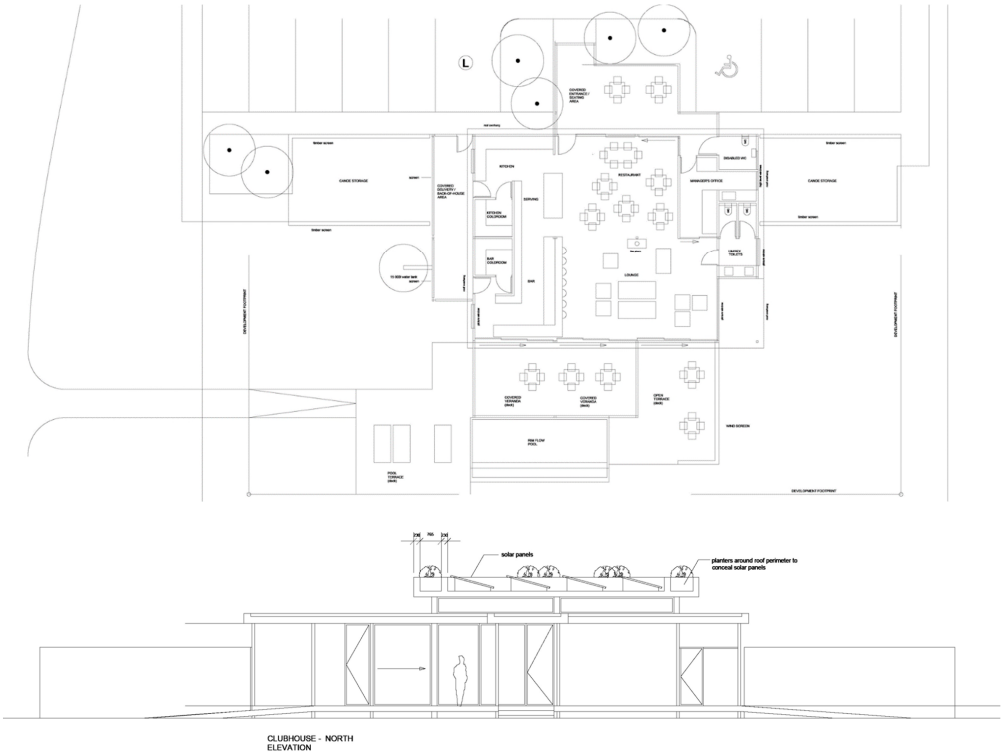


Figure 8: Conceptual Boathouse Design

The current site is infested with alien vegetation, some areas have little or no evidence of natural plants, possibly due to previous grading works.
The intention is to :

1. *Protect areas during construction that currently have good vegetation, or are designated core botanical areas/ wetlands, and to do alien clearing in these areas. These zones will be identified during the botanical and wetland studies, currently underway.*
2. *Do search and rescue and establish a nursery on site or close by(eg Grootbos or Platbos) to grow up and propagate some species rescued from the site.*
3. *Other areas are to be re-vegetated/rehabilitated, using locally indigenous vegetation, preferably propagated from plant material sourced on site, or sourced locally.*
4. *Erven will not have external lawns or gardens, other than within enclosed courtyards located within the building footprint. Lawns may only be from the approved list – no Kikuyu will be allowed on site.*
5. *All other landscaping on erven, must adhere to the plant list as approved by the botanist.*
6. *On going alien clearing and rehabilitation of open spaces, including any land leased by the HOA, if applicable, shall be undertaken by the HOA and will be contained in the rules.*

Roads and driveways:

Roads will be as narrow as practical, 6 metres on the main entrance road and then narrower (4.7 to 5 metres) on the smaller roads, with a ''natural'' look, such as exposed aggregate paving blocks that closely match the natural sand on site.

Kerbs and concrete channels will be avoided, so too engineered headwalls and culverts. Water will be encouraged to run directly off the edges of roads.

Figure 9: Precedents of materials

All storm water will be allowed to penetrate the soil at source, or led through swales in the landscape, into ponds before entering wetlands.
No piped or hardened (eg grass block or culvert) systems are proposed.
Where roads cross wetlands, a multitude of linking pipes under roads are proposed, to be determined in consultation with the wetland specialist.
Driveways are envisaged as maximum 3.5 m in width, either in the exposed aggregate, laterite gravel, or an acceptable stone / concrete cobble from an approved list

Pathways and trails
It is proposed that walking trails will be of a soft material, such as gravel, together with timber boardwalks over wetlands and swales.

Figure 10: Precedent imagery of pathways and trails

A pathway and timber jetty is proposed on the DPW land, and will be subject to a lease agreement. The path and jetty serves to avoid trampling and limit access over the lagoon edge, to direct residents over sensitive vegetation onto the sandy edge / waters edge of the lagoon.

The DPW land will be rehabilitated and cleared of alien vegetation, if the lease is approved, as part of the development and maintained by the HOA, but will not be fenced off.

Figure 11: Precedent imagery of boardwalk and jetty

Earthworks on site:

It is proposed that earthworks are to be extremely limited:
Excess spoil, such as to form swales or ponds, is to be used on site to form a maximum 2m high vegetated screening berm at the back (along public road) of the development.

Due to the nature of the architectural design cut and fill on erven will not be required, or will be very minimal, with buildings using lightweight construction methods, that sit above the ground.

Foundations are to be micro-piled, or be set on concrete stools, steel sub frames will be levelled on top of these micro-piles.

Construction activity on site:
Construction activities shall be kept to a minimum, only proposed road reserves are to be used for access to erven.

All erven will need to be cordoned off during construction using fencing and black shade cloth, with no construction activity allowed outside of the site.

This is possible as most of the manufacturing activities will be taking place off site. It is the intention to premanufacture steel frames, with precast wall and floor panels, combined with glazing elements and infill panels.

A variety of units will be predesigned, and will be designed as steel structures, set above the fynbos, allowing vegetation and underground water flow to be as unimpeded as possible.

During construction it is envisaged that there will be no workers' housing on site, and general construction containers will be limited to 5 containers, located close to the entrance, with maximum one container allowed per site (located within the building footprint).
All containers will need to be painted in a dark charcoal colour.

Fencing and other elements:

Fencing is proposed as light steel palisade or '' Beta fence/ Clearvu '' type fencing, in a black or dark charcoal colour, with electrification. Isolators to be black. Should cameras be installed, these should have a black housing, without flashing lights.

Figure 12: Precedent imagery of fencing

Firebreak:
A 5m strip on the perimeter of the site, will be mowed/cut fynbos to reduce fire risk, together with a 2.5m wide gravel pathway for access in case of a fire. These pathways will form part of the pedestrian/cycle tracks.

Signage:
Signage shall be designed as part of the estate. No colourful, neon , internally lit, or brightly uplit signage will be allowed. This includes the commercial erf.
Signage at the entrance walls/ gatehouse, will be designed as low impact signage, carefully down-lit so as to avoid light spillage.
Other signage, such as road signs will be low impact, in a colour and finish to adhere to the ethos of an eco-estate.

Figure 13: Precedent imagery of signage

A small gazebo structure is envisaged near to the lagoon edge of the site, as well as one over the central pond/ wetland. This would be constructed on stilts and would be light weight timber or steel and timber construction.

Figure 14: Precedent imagery of gazebo

Lighting and electrical kiosks

All lighting should be low level, and shielded, so that no light sources are visible. No bright security lighting will be allowed.

Roads and select pathways will have only low level 1.2 metre high bollard lights, shining only downwards (possibly solar-powered).

No lighting will extend past the site boundaries of the site.

Small custom-designed electrical kiosks will be in a dark charcoal colour, hidden from view. No above ground electrical infrastructure is envisaged.
An existing ESKOM line runs within the road reserve , on the upper edge of the site.

Civil and engineering services

It is the intention that most sewers and water services will run within road reserves, or along fence lines or within pathways, and must avoid damage to any core protected vegetation.

Grey water will be treated on site and re-used for irrigation purposes and possibly reused in eg toilet flushing, should this method be approved.

It is anticipated that sewerage will be either :
- *sewerage may be pumped to the DPW sewerage works located right alongside the site, if approved.*
- *stored in an underground conservancy tank and tanked ot the nearest municipal sewerage treatment works*
- *treated on site (if approved) in an on-site facility to special limits*

Electricity will be supplied from the ESKOM line running in the road reserve alongside the site.
Fresh water will be supplied from the municipal main.

5. Visual Assessment of the Site and Proposed Development

5.1 Scenic Resources

(Excerpts from Overstrand Landscape Character Component of Overstraned Heritage Survey, BOLA, 2008)

The proposed development is situated north of Franskraal and the R43 but within the Urban Edge of the Greater Gansbaai area, in the Overstrand Municipality of the Overberg District of the Western Cape.

The Landscape Character and Landscape Types, defined by the underlying geology of the area, provide the scenery of the greater area i.e.View Catchment Area, these are:
- Sandstones and shales of the Table Mountain Group. Scree and colluvium at the base of steep slopes. Skeletal soils. Mountainous, with cliffs and steep scree slopes in places. Deep kloofs where incised by rivers, usually along fault lines. Predominantly mountain fynbos. Important as recreation and water catchment areas.
- The coastal terrace, ranging from a wave cut platform to wider coastal plain, comprised of Quaternary deposits including marine and aeolian sand, generally flat with localised coastal dunes and dune fields. Estuaries and lagoons at river mouths. Mainly residential

development and recreation along the coast responding to amenity value, flat buildable land and sources of water

Figure 15: Landscape types of the study area based on the underlying Geology (Source: BOLA Landscape Character Analysis, Overstrand Heritage Survey)

The Landscape Features include:

- *mountain ridges which are the dominant features of the landscape particularly in relation to their juxtaposition with the coastline, together with the visual importance and sensitivity of the skyline, such as in the Kogelberg.*
- *Mountain cliffs and steep slopes, which can be seen as buttresses in the landscape, forming an impressive scenic backdrop for the coastal landscape, and which at the same time tend to be visually sensitive.*
- *The coastal estuaries and lagoons, being water bodies with exceptional ecological, scenic and recreational value, and which are visually sensitive because of their open nature. These include the Kleinmond Bot River.*

- *Coastal dunes and dune fields form interesting landscape features, particularly in the scenic and recreational context of the Overstrand coastline.*

Figure 16: Landscape Features of study area (Source: BOLA Landscape Character Analysis, Overstrand Heritage Survey)

Scenic Resources

'Besides natural landscape features, there are a range of factors which add to the cultural significance of the resources, including the following:

Areas of scenic value, where the juxtaposition and combination of the natural features in relation to each other increases their scenic and natural heritage significance.

***Nature reserves**, which because of their protected status, increase the significance of the natural and scenic resources of those areas. These include Walker Bay and Duinefontein Nature Reserves and some terrestrial and aquatic CBA's*

Figure 17: Local Nature Reserves - Duinefontein and Walker Bay

***Scenic corridors** occur along scenic routes, and have particular significance where these interface with areas of high scenic value. The routes tend to have regional or local significance, and include the **R43, also known as the Whale Route**.*

Towns and settlements contribute to the heritage value of the area at a more local scale. Settlements tend to have started as small nodes but in some cases are coalescing in ribbon-type developments.'

Figure 18: Scenic Resources of study area (Source: BOLA Landscape Character Analysis, Overstrand Heritage Survey)

'The juxtaposition of rugged sandstone mountain ranges with coastlines and estuaries, much of it in a pristine state, constitute a natural heritage resource with significant tourism, and therefore economic value for the region. The ecological value of endemic fynbos vegetation types has led to the formation of a number of reserves in the area.'
'The historical settlement pattern of coastal towns, country villages, resorts and small fishing harbours have resulted in attractive living environments, many of which are being eroded by sometimes unsympathetic infrastructure development and suburban sprawl.'

5.2 Scenic Resources of the Site and Surrounds

The proposed site sits on the gently undulating coastal plain close to the Uilkraals River and Lagoon.

Figure 19: View northwest across the site (position approximately indicated by red dotted area), from the bridge of the R43 crossing the Uilenkraals River and Lagoon towards the Franskraal mountains.

To the north west and east the landscape is predominantly rural and natural up till the range of mountains.

Figure 20: View southeast from mountains towards coastline with Uilenkraal Estuary in centre and approximate position of site indicated by red dotted line

The R43 Scenic Route, known as the Whale Route, runs along the coast between Rooiels in the west and Die Dam in the east, and is a much used tourist route. It currently divides the residential and urban development of Franskraal to it's south, from the rural and natural landscapes to it's

north. While tourist need to leave this road to see the coastline along Franskraal, the massive

mountains and rural landscape is clearly visible to the north from the road.

Figure 21: View east from R43 of the more recent development of Franskraal to the south and rural to the north

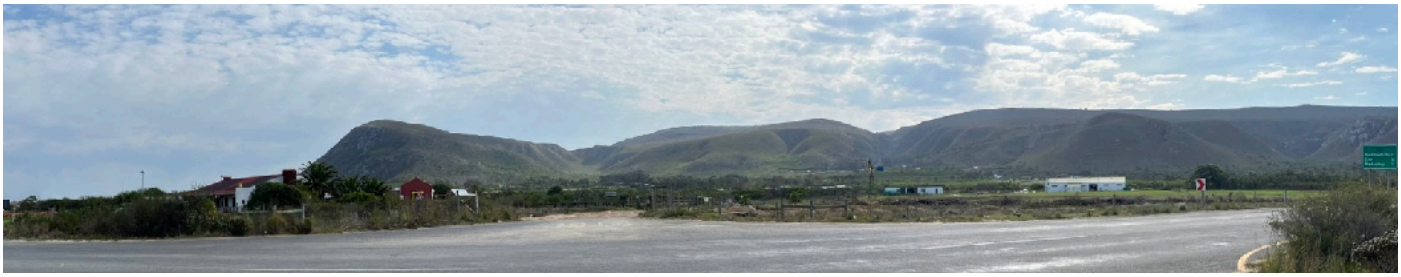


Figure 22: View north west from R43 of the rural landscape

The Uilenkraals river is the eastern extent of Franskraal and urban development with the Uilkraalmond Resort being adjacent to the river, south of the R43. This development is well concealed from the river side and R43, particularly when travelling west. A band of natural vegetation screens the development successfully.

Figure 23: View south from R43 to Uilkraalmond Resort.
Figure 24: View south from R43 to Uilkraalmond Resort which is well screened.

The site itself is north of the R43 and west of the Uilenkraals River, within the Urban Edge Line, on a gently undulating site currently covered by invasive alien vegetation, although remnants of the original fynbos is well evident on closer inspection. The site slopes gently from the west to the Uilenkraals River in the east.

Figure 25: Looking north, from the R43, across the gently undulating site covered in dense alien vegetation

Wedged between the site and R43 to the south, is a narrow strip of land that has what seems to be the local Waste Water Treatment Works.

Figure 26: Looking north, from the R43, across the ponds of the Waste Water Treatment Works to the site covered by invasive alien vegetation.

The **Scenic resources** of the area site and its surrounds can be described as natural (undeveloped coastal plain (much heavily infested with alien vegetation), the Uillenskraals river/lagoon/estuary, Franskraal se Berge and nature reserves), rural landscape north of the R43 and residential (Franskraal). These are **Highly to Moderately** (recent urban development) rated.

5.2 View Catchment Area and Zone of Visual Influence(ZVI)

5.2.1 View Catchment Area

The geographical area from which the project will theoretically be visible, or view catchment area, is dictated primarily by topography.

The view catchment of the proposed site of development is defined by the Franskraal se Berge in the west and north west (3,5 kms), Tafelberg (2,5 kms) and Byneskranzkop (5 kms) in the north and Spitskop (8 kms), Grootkop (9 kms) and Wolfhuiskop (12 kms) in the north east and east and coastal dunes in the south east (3 - 8 kms).

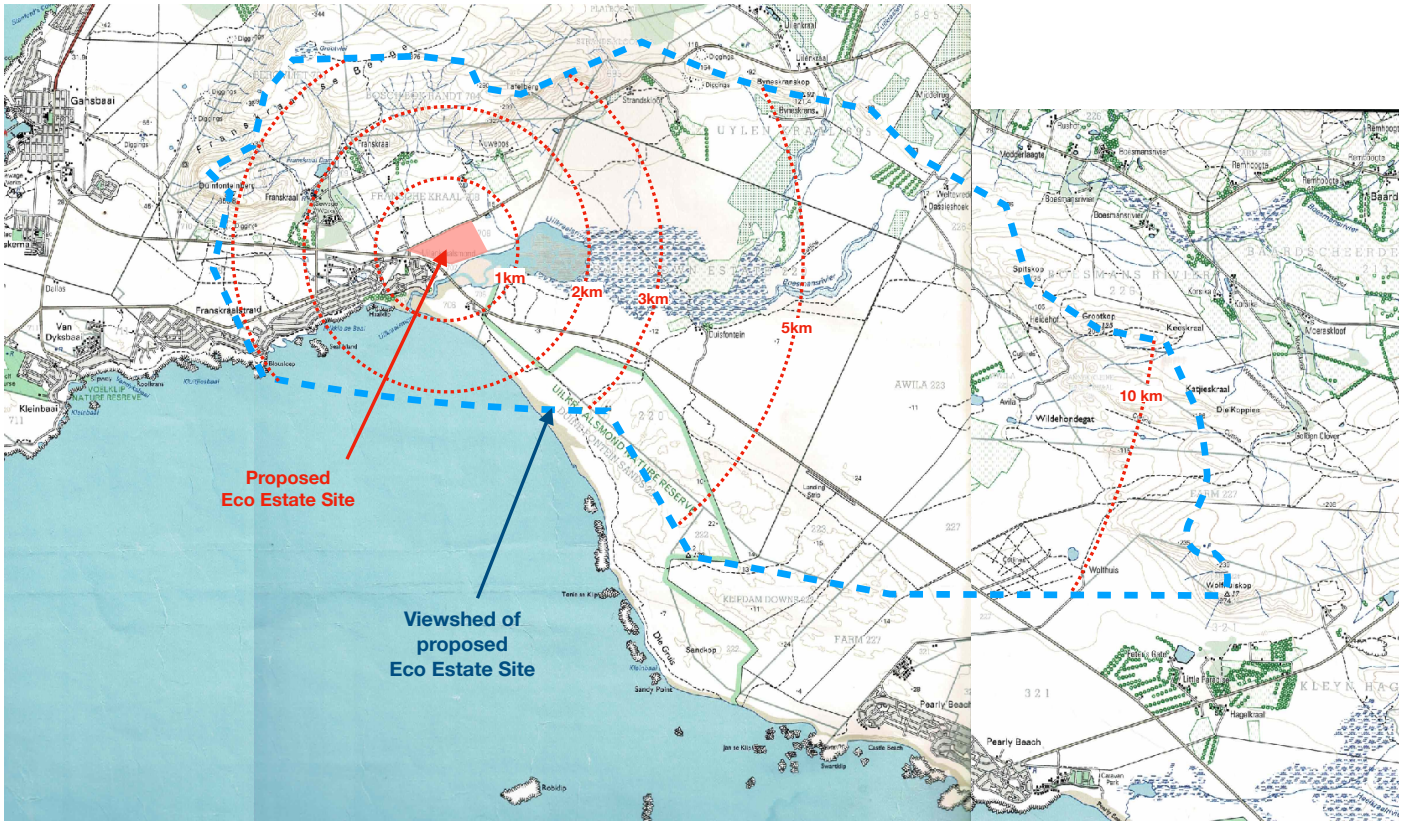


Figure 27: View Catchment Areas of the proposed site indicated by red dotted line with 1,2, 3, 5 and 10km radii as red dotted circles or part of circles.

5.2.2 Zone of Visual Influence

Local features such as vegetation and landforms, and distance will reduce the extent of the area from which the proposed site and development will be seen, to an area known as the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the site.

The ZVI of the site will be between 3 kms to the north west and 2 kms to the north, from higher lying areas than the site itself. To the east the site is seen from areas that are clear of tall vegetation and approximately 1,5 to 3kms from the R43, travelling west.

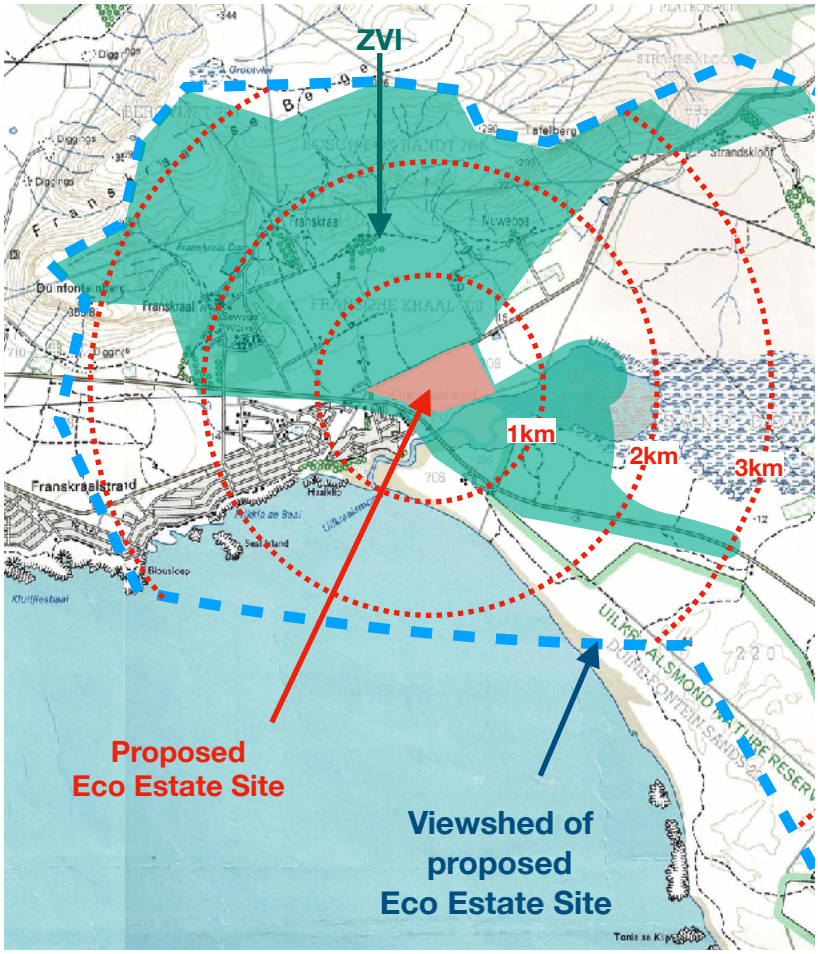


Figure 28: Zone of Visual Influence of the Site shaded in green (radii from approximate centre of site)

5.3 Receptors

The Guideline for involving Visual and Aesthetic specialists in EIA Processes categorises receptors as follows:

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.***

The following receptors have been found in the **ZVI area** of the proposed site of development:

5.3.1 Highly sensitive receptors include:

- Uilenskraalmond Nature Reserve;
- Combined Heritage Protection and Environmental Management Overlay Zones;
- R43 Scenic Drive and Corridor.

5.3.2 Moderately sensitive receptors include:

- Surrounding rural area

The sensitivity of receptors within the ZVI are inclusive of those rated **High**, as defined and identified above and moderate - balance of area in ZVI. These are indicated on the Figure below.

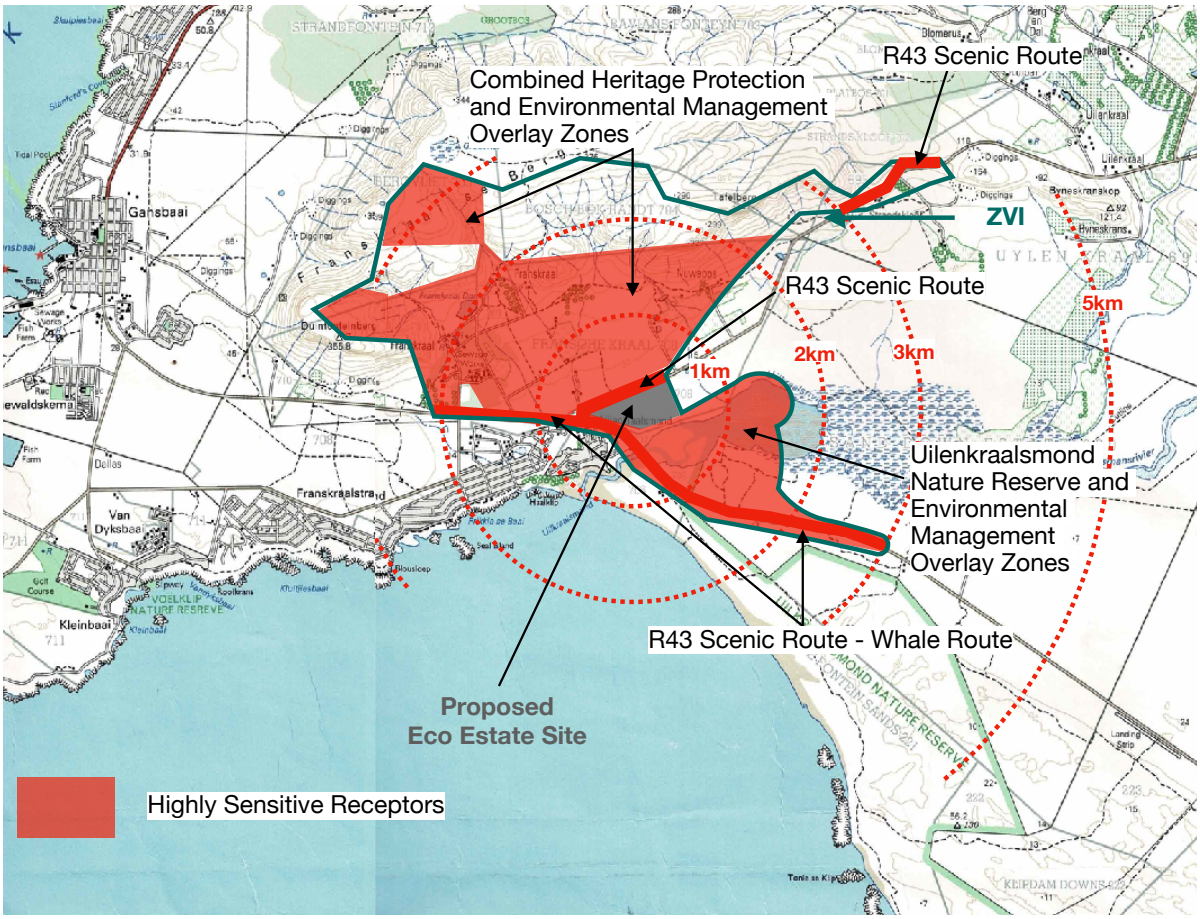


Figure 29: Receptors of the proposed site of development

5.4 Visual Sensitivity of the site

The inherent visibility of the sites' landscape is usually determined by a combination of topography, slope grades, landform, vegetation cover and surrounding landuse. This translates into visual sensitivity.

High visual sensitivity – highly visible and potentially sensitive areas in the landscape,
Moderate visual sensitivity – moderately visible areas in the landscape,
Low visual sensitivity – minimally visible areas in the landscape

These aspects include:

- Topography - relatively low lying resulting in the site having a Low Visual Sensitivity
- Landforms - flat - gently undulating coastal plain resulting in Low Visual Sensitivity
- Slope Gradient - less than 1:20 resulting in Low Visual Sensitivity
- Landuses - wilderness, rural and residential - High Visual Sensitivity,
- Special Features - R43 Scenic Route, Uilkraa Estuary/Lagoon

All these aspects are combined to produce a composite visual sensitivity map of the site which is then overlaid on the proposed site plan. Areas of the development that will have a High, Moderate - High, Moderate or Low Visual Impact are identified, as seen on the figure below.

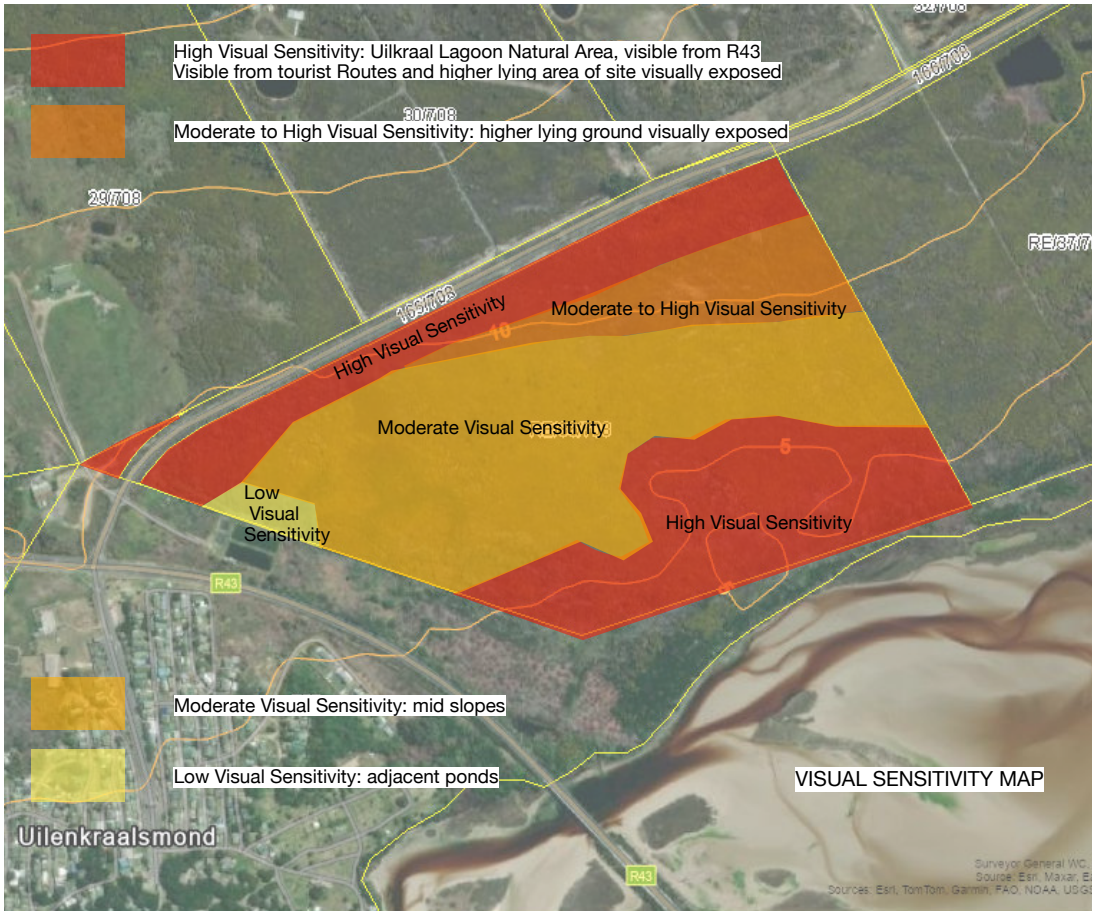


Figure 30: Visual Sensitivity of the site and proposed development

Most of the site will have a moderate visual sensitivity. Development in these areas will potentially have a Moderate, negative visual Impact.

Some areas of the site, namely the areas adjacent to the R43 Scenic Route and Corridor and the Uilkraals Estuary/Lagoon, and their buffers, identified on site, will have a high visual sensitivity and any development in these areas will potentially have a high, negative visual impact. See figure below.

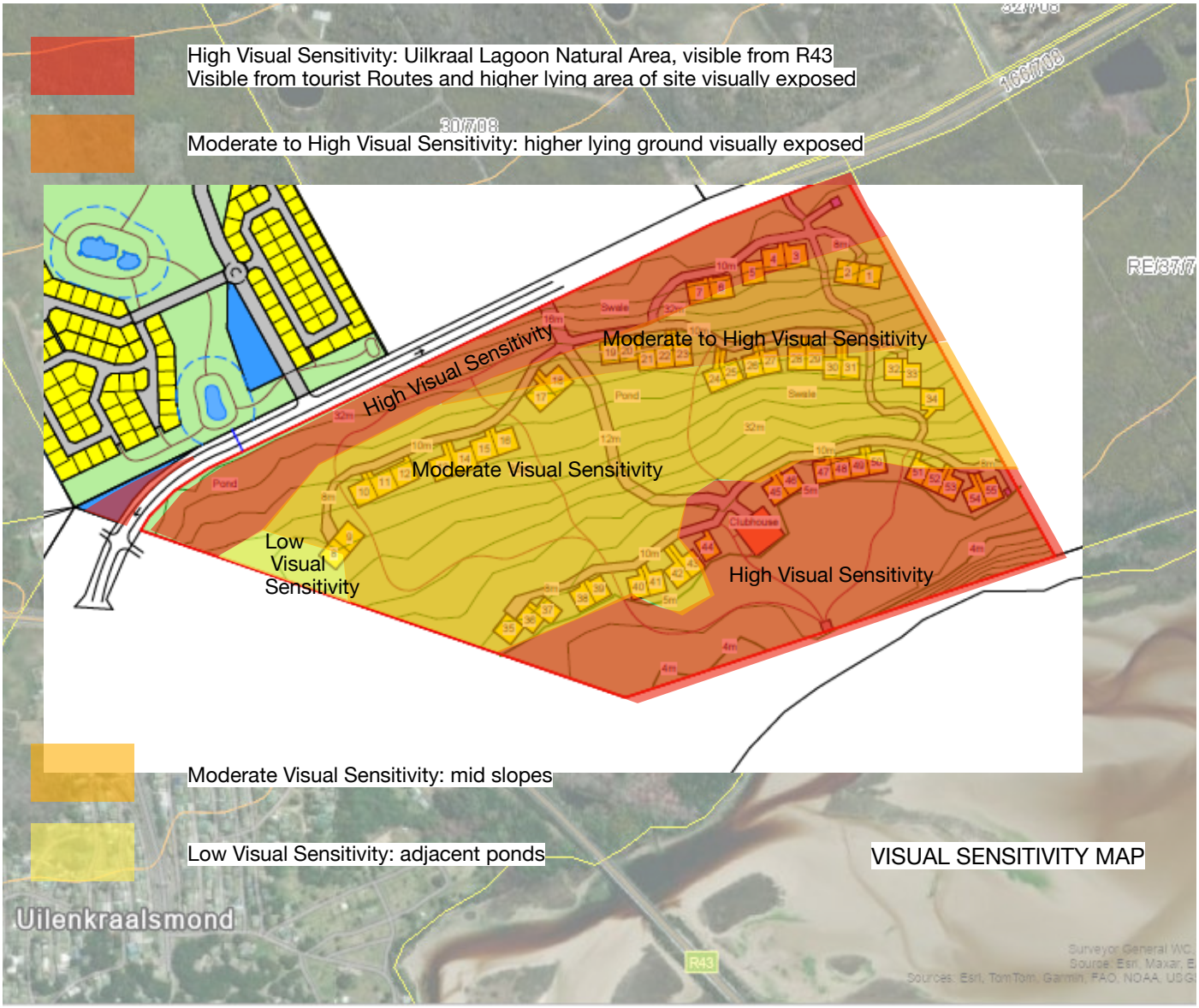


Figure 31: Proposed development overlaid on the Visual Sensitivity plan highlighting areas of visual concern

Units 3 to 7 and 44 to 55 and the communal facility are within the high visual sensitivity areas and will result in a high visual impact and will need to be mitigated.

5.5 Visual Absorption Capacity

Visual Absorption Capacity is the potential of the landscape to conceal the proposed project

- ***High VAC* – e.g. effective screening by topography and vegetation;**
- ***Moderate VAC* - e.g. partial screening by topography and vegetation;**
- ***Low VAC* - e.g. little screening by topography or vegetation.**

The proposed site of development is on the relatively flat - gently undulating coastal plain. The vegetation is predominantly invasive alien vegetation with remnants of fynbos. When cleared of the invasive vegetation, the remaining fynbos will provide little screening.

The **VAC** of the site is **moderate to low,** there is partial (low lying, some undulations) to little screening by topography and vegetation.

5.6 Visual Intrusion

Visual Intrusion is defined as the level of compatibility or congruence of the project with the particular qualities of the area, or its 'sense of place'. This is related to the idea of context and maintaining the integrity of the landscape or townscape.

- ***High visual intrusion* – results in a noticeable change or is discordant with the surroundings;**
- ***Moderate visual intrusion* – partially fits into the surroundings, but clearly noticeable;**
- ***Low visual intrusion* – minimal change or blends in well with the surroundings.**

The proposed site of development is situated on a predominantly undisturbed site. The site is very close to the Uilkraals Estuary/Lagoon which is partially protected and a EMOZ and the R43 Scenic Route is immediately adjacent to the western border of the site.

The site is within the current urban edge line of the Greater Gansbaai area and is indicated for development. The Uilkraalmond Resort is close by to the south and to the west and north there is rural development.

The **visual intrusion** of the proposed development will be **moderate - i.e it partially fits into the surroundings** (Uilkraalmond Resort and rural development)**, but will be clearly noticeable.**

6. POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The potential visual impacts will occur during the construction and operation phase of the development. The nature of the visual impacts will be the visual effect the activity would have on the receiving environment.

The visual impacts will be assessed based on a synthesis of criteria (nature of impact, extent, duration, probability, intensity, status, degree of confidence, level of significance and significance after mitigation) as defined by the NEMA regulations.

The visual impacts are discussed below:

6.1. Construction phase:

During the construction phase of the development it is assumed that the site will be cleared of the invasive alien vegetation and the installation of services, roads, units and fencing areas will be cleared of all vegetation.

The clearing of the alien vegetation will result in the site being visually exposed to the adjacent areas namely the R43 roads and the Lagoon while the construction activity will also change the activity levels of the site as well as the vegetation clearing for construction will also result in exposed substrates being more visible to the surrounding areas.

6.1.1 Change in relatively passive scene, to that of a very active construction works site.

In order to install services, construct roads, dwellings and facilities, the once predominantly undeveloped site will be cleared for development.

Potential Visual Impacts	
Nature of the impact:	Change from a rural/natural area to a very active construction site – negative
Extent of impact:	Local
Intensity (magnitude) of impact:	High, where the affected environment is altered, but cultural and social functions and processes continue, albeit in a modified way.
Duration of impact:	Temporary
Probability of occurrence:	Definite
Level of Confidence:	High
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	Low - moderate
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	Moderate - High
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	Medium
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation:	**High - negative**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	Moderate
Proposed mitigation:	Clear invasive alien vegetation selectively such that the areas being developed can be screened by vegetation from receptors Have a phased revegetation/clearing approach Minimise clearing to small areas - ie phased development Ensure a construction EMP is in place
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	Medium
Significance rating of impact after mitigation:	**Medium — negative**

6.2. Operation Phase

- Loss of Scenic Resources - Change of visual character and Sense of Place, from a passive rural and wilderness site to a site with a residential character;
- Visibility from sensitive receptors;
- Visual intrusion of night lighting.

6.2.1 Loss of scenic resource - Change of visual character and Sense of Place from a predominantly undeveloped site to a low density residential development.

The rural and wilderness character of the site will be replaced by residential buildings, facilities and amenities, paved roads, boundary walls/fences.

Potential Visual Impacts	
Nature of the impact:	**Change of visual character and Sense of Place from rural/ wilderness to low density residential – negative**
Extent of impact:	Local - Regional: limited to the local surroundings
Intensity (magnitude) of impact:	High - Medium, where scenic resources are significantly affected/affected to a limited extent
Duration of impact:	Long Term (e.g. lifespan of the project)
Probability of occurrence:	Definite
Level of Confidence:	High
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	Barely/Partly reversible – the impact is unlikely/partly to be reversed with intense mitigation measures
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	Marginal to Significant loss of rural/wilderness land visual character
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	High - the impact would result in significant cumulative effects
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation:	**High - negative**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	Can be partly mitigated
Proposed mitigation:	Limit number of units and implement guidelines as provided by the developer with low planted roofs etc. Provide enough area/buffers along edges of site to provide suitable screening such as vegetated berms and indigenous trees Ensure a construction EMP is in place
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	Medium negative – the impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation
Significance rating of impact after mitigation:	**Medium - negative**

6.2.2 Visibility from sensitive receptors

The proposed development will be visible, in varying degrees, from the highly sensitive receptors in the Zone of Visual Influence, namely Uilenkraal Lagoon, EM&HPOZ's and the R43 Scenic Route.

Potential Visual Impacts	
Nature of impact:	**Visibility from Sensitive Receptors**
Extent of impact:	Local: including neighbouring properties and wider municipal area to the north west.
Intensity (magnitude) of impact:	High - Medium, where scenic resources are significantly affected/affected to a limited extent
Duration of impact:	Long Term (e.g. lifespan of the project)
Probability of occurrence:	Highly Probable, it is most likely that the impacts will occur at some stage of the development. Plans must be drawn up to mitigate the activity before the activity commences.
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	Partly - The impact is partly reversible but more intense mitigation measures
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	Marginal - Significant loss of rural/wilderness scenery
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	Additive and High to Moderate - the impact would result in significant cumulative effects
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation:	**High negative**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	Moderate
Proposed mitigation:	Limit number of units and implement guidelines as provided by the developer with low planted roofs etc. Provide enough area/buffers along edges of site to provide suitable screening such as vegetated berms and indigenous trees Ensure a construction EMP is in place
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	Medium negative – the impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation
Significance rating of impact after mitigation:	**Medium negative**

6.2.4 Visual intrusion of night lighting

The current rural/wilderness site is unlit. Lighting for the new residential units and streets will extend the Franskraal settlement into the rural area.

Potential Visual Impacts	
Nature of impact:	**Visual Intrusion of night lighting**
Extent of impact:	Local: from immediate surroundings (10km radius) till view catchment extent
Intensity (magnitude) of impact:	High - where scenic resources are significantly affected
Duration of impact:	Long Term (e.g. lifespan of the project) - Permanent - where time will not mitigate the impact
Probability of occurrence:	Highly probable, where the impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	Partly reversible – the impact is reversible but more intense mitigation measures are required
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	Marginal - Significant loss of rural/natural scenery
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	Additive and Moderate - the impact would result in a combined impact of moderate significance on the scenic resources and Scenic Route
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation:	**High - negative**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	Can be partly mitigated
Proposed mitigation:	Limit outdoor street and path lighting to bollard height and low spill with limited outdoor lighting on buildings Electrical Engineer to design for appropriate lighting for a Natural area and alongside a Scenic route
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	Additive and Low - the impact would result in a combined impact of low significance on the scenic resources and Scenic Route
Significance rating of impact after mitigation:	**Medium - negative**

6.3. Cumulative impact

The proposed development falls within the Greater Gansbaai Urban Edge, in the area identified in the 2020 SDF for Urban Development Area. The potential cumulative visual impacts would be:

- Additive - sprawl effect of development along the R44 Whale Route Scenic Drive; and

7. MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed development plan, indicating 55 units, and the 'Franskraal Beach Estate (portion 36 of Farm Franche Kraal) Design Guidelines and Philosophy' Draft document dated 6 March 2024, provide for a number of design elements that assist in the mitigation of the potential visual impacts.

These include recessive buildings with flat, planted/dark chip roofs, use of dark colours on walls and roofs, stone and wood, shaded windows, broken up building elements to add shadow lines, cantilevered floors and decks, dark rainwater tanks, raised berms along the southern and western borders of the site, low level lighting, no bright security lights.

Other mitigation measures that should be implemented include the following:

- Phased removal of the invasive alien vegetation such that the construction activities are screened. Where the berm is along the southern and western areas, the construction and revegetation, including some large indigenous trees, should form part of the initial phase of construction and between this berm and the most western proposed roads and eastern units, some larger alien trees should be retained to screen the proposed units and roads from the R43 sections until the revegetated berms are established and can screen the development.
- Similarly along the eastern boundary - some of the larger alien trees should be retained to screen development from the R43 Scenic Whale Route. The effectiveness of trees screening development is seen to the south of the R43 where there is a strip of vegetation between the lagoon and the resort, screening buildings well. Once the indigenous trees and shrubs are established, the remaining trees can be removed.
- Quicker growing indigenous pioneer tree species such as *Virgilia* spp. *Olivia ventosa*, *Kiggelaria africana, Buddleja* spp., *Euclea racemosa,* and other quick growing trees from local area - (refer to Platbos Forest and vegetation specialist)
- The linear arrangement of units need to be broken, with either more space between units or some being set back so that the 'line' is broken. Additional landscaping can also assist with the breaking of the line.

7.1 During Construction:

- Limit extent of damage, keeping cut and fill to a minimum. Minimise disturbance through fencing off construction areas, thereby protecting and retaining vegetation in the areas that will not be built on.
- Revegetate service areas and public street verges immediately after construction and continue maintenance eternally.
- The site must be kept tidy at all times

- Building material stockpiles must be protected from dispersion into the surrounding area by wind or water
- A concerted effort must be made to minimise dust generation and its effect on the surrounding areas.

7.2 During Operation

It is of importance that the Visual Mitigation measures provided are carried through into the operation phase of the development - responsibilities shift from Developer to Home Owners Association. To this end it must be ensured that the:

- Home Owners Association (HOA) have an Operational Plan that clearly states their obligations in terms of ongoing maintenance of buildings and landscaping and that the maintenance actions comply with the architectural and landscaping guidelines provided for this Visual Impact Assessment and this VIA's mitigation measures
- HOA monitor the building and landscape guidelines
- HOA maintain buildings and landscaping to a high standard
- HOA continue minimising light pollution - keep outdoor lighting as bollard lighting, height to maximum 1.2 m, low spill type lights to minimize light spill and pollution, external lighting on buildings must be minimised or completely omitted etc.

8. DISCUSSION

The proposed development falls within the Greater Gansbaai Urban Edge as defined in the 2020 SDP. Furthermore the area is allocated for urban development. Plans provided indicate residential development to the west of the site.

The proposed development is low density and as such is appropriate development for this site which is visible from Scenic routes and is adjacent to the Uilkraals Lagoon. The proposed development guidelines indicates that much consideration has been given to the sites visual sensitivity and if development is to go ahead, the site can be visually enhanced from the alien infested character now presented.

Additional proposed mitigation is imperative to further reduce the visual impact of the proposed development. The highly rated Scenic Resources must be retained and enhanced.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

We are of the opinion that if these recommendations and mitigation measures are implemented, the proposed development could have a moderate visual impact on the highly rated scenic resources of the surrounding environment, and could enhance the visual character of the site and its surrounds.

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