



LORNAY
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT (SSVR)

Proposed Residential Development on
Erf 1489 Vermont, Hermanus



June 2026

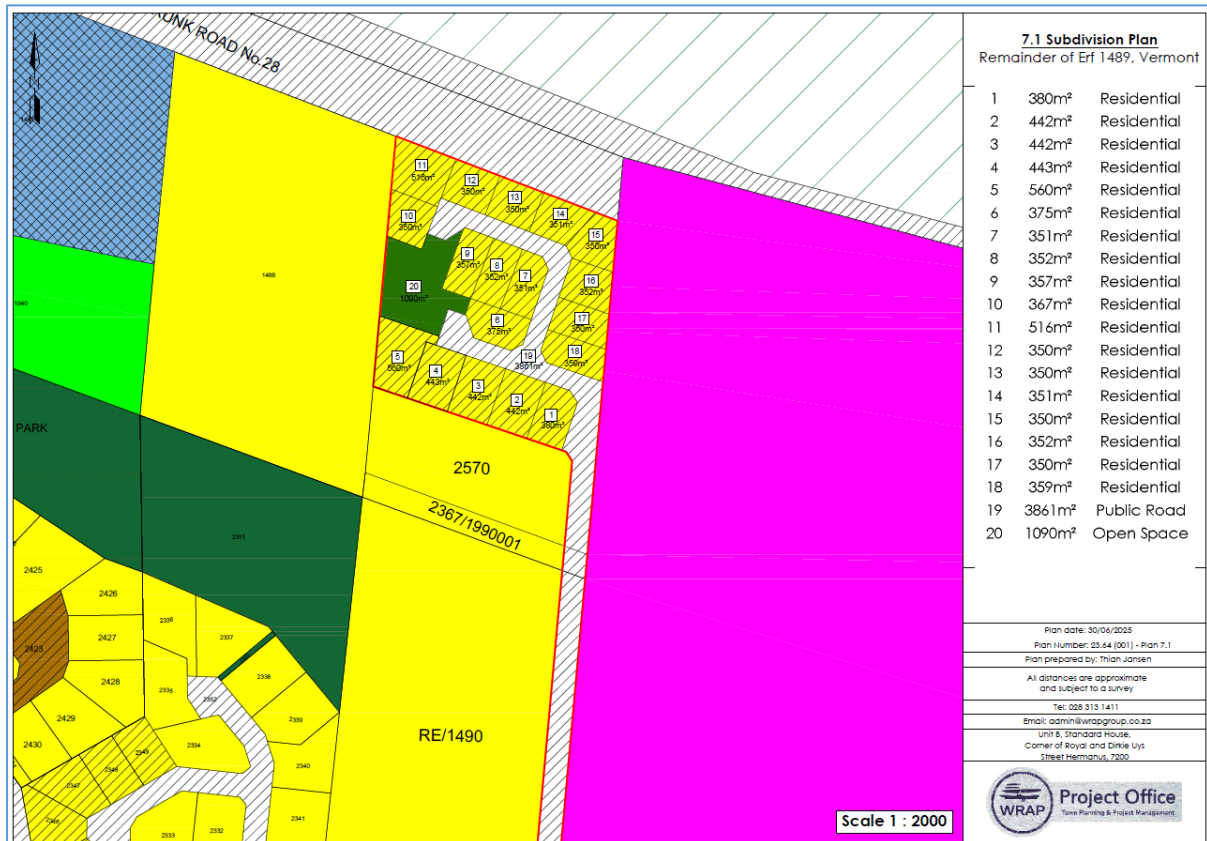
INTRODUCTION

The proposed activity involves the rezoning and subdivision of Erf 1489 and 1490 to create a residential development. The properties are located in the built-up residential area of Vermont, just south of the R43.



Locality of subject property

The development layout is as follows and this layout will evolve through the process in line with specialist comment:



Proposed site plan for the residential development

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Lornay Environmental Consulting (Pty) Ltd, was appointed to undertake the required Environmental Authorisation (EA) application process in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (No. 107 of 1998; NEMA), for the proposed project.

Based on the classification selected and the known impacts with the proposed development, the Screening Tool lists the following specialist assessments to be included in the BAR process and / or motivation as to why these specialists are not applicable to the site

- Landscape / Visual Impact Assessment
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Palaeontology impact assessment
- Terrestrial Impact Assessment
- Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
- Plant Species Assessment
- Animal species assessment

Theme	Very High sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
Agriculture Theme			X	
Animal Species Theme		X		
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X			
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				X
Civil Aviation Theme		X		
Defence Theme				X
Paleontology Theme				X
Plant Species Theme		X		
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X			

	assessment	
1	Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
2	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
3	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
4	Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Terrestrial_Biodiversity_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
5	Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Aquatic_Biodiversity_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
6	Socio-Economic Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
7	Plant Species Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Plant_Species_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
8	Animal Species Assessment	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Animal_Species_Assessment_Protocols.pdf

Agricultural Theme – Medium Sensitivity - the proposed development is in line with neighbouring developments and is included in the Overstrand Municipality urban area. It is not appropriate for agricultural development and therefore no further assessment is required.

Aquatic Biodiversity Theme – Very High Sensitivity – Wetland Screening and Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment was conducted. This study delineated the wetland and confirmed that the residential area, Re/1489 Vermont is terrestrial, however it is within 100m of a wetland. The existing access road along the eastern boundary of Erf 1490 crosses a Unchanneled Valley Bottom (UVB) wetland that extends though Vermont from west of Lynx road to the Salt Pan in Vermont. The road is a strip of land (10m wide X 150m long) is severely disturbed with no possibility of rehabilitation.

Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme – Low sensitivity – in line with the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, a Notice of Intent to Develop was submitted to Heritage Western Cape

as part of the BAR process. They have confirmed that no further studies are required but the mitigation measures must be included in the EMP should artifacts or human remains be found during construction.

Civil Aviation Theme – High sensitivity – the proposed development is in line with neighbouring development and therefore no additional impacts are expected in terms of this theme. No further assessment required.

Defence Theme – Low. No impacts envisaged. No further assessment required. The proposed development is in line with the existing residential development in the area.

Palaeontology – Low – no further assessment required as stipulated by Heritage Western Cape. Mitigation measures to be included in the Construction EMPR in the event that materials are uncovered during groundbreaking and construction.

Animal Species Theme – High – The property is located within the built-up urban area of Vermont and flanked by the R43 to the north. The site has been disturbed over time and does not contain any Wetland habitat (Erf 1489). The following species are flagged in the Screening tool:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
High	Aves-Circus maurus
High	Aves-Circus ranivorus
High	Aves-Turnix hottentottus
High	Aves-Polemaetus bellicosus
Medium	Aves-Sarothrura affinis
Medium	Reptilia-Bitis armata
Medium	Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus

A Faunal SSV and Compliance Statement was undertaken for a similar nearby site in Vermont (Erf 1486) which is located 200 m west of the subject property (Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification Report and Species Specialist Assessment Report By Prof Jan A Venter, August 2024). The following comments are highlighted by the specialist in the above-mentioned report and from this recent data from the assessment, it is concluded that no further Faunal assessment is required for Erf 1489 and 1490:

- **Aves Circus maurus** – Black Harrier – Extract from Jan Venter Report on Erf 1486 Vermont: “*The species’ typical breeding habitat is Fynbos, particularly Strandveld and Mountain Fynbos. In fragmented Renosterveld habitat it is only found in high-quality, larger sized patches (Curtis et al. 2004). Foraging habitat includes montane areas, lower altitude Karoo scrub, semi-desert, floodplains and croplands (Curtis et al. 2004). Small mammals and birds (especially quail) are their main diet preference (Curtis et al. 2004). Both GBIF and iNaturalist data sets indicates sufficient records of this species in the general region of the property (Erf 1486)*”. Given the findings for Erf 1486, it is concluded, as with Erf1 486, that although there is a reasonable likelihood that the species would frequent the property for foraging purposes, the species range widely, and the minor loss of forage habitat would not have a significant influence on the species. The development site also does not significantly influence potential breeding sites or their prey species. The Black harrier *Circus maurus*, will therefore not likely be significantly impacted by the proposed development and potential impact are therefore classified as ‘low’. No further assessment required.
- **Aves Circus ranivorus** – African Marsh Harrier – Extract from Jan Venter Report on Erf 1486 Vermont: “*This species occurs along large water bodies and adjacent open vegetation (Simmons 2005). The species is classified as Endangered in South Africa (Taylor 2015b), with habitat loss and*

degradation being the most significant threat to the continued survival of this species. Both GBIF and iNaturalist data sets sufficient records of this species close to and in the general region of the property. There is therefore a reasonable likelihood that the species would frequent the property for foraging purposes. We did not observe the species during our field visit (Erf 1486). The species range widely, and the minor loss of forage habitat would therefore not have a significant influence on the species. The development site also does not significantly influence potential breeding sites or their prey species. The African marsh harrier *Circus ranivorus*, will therefore not likely be significantly impacted by the proposed". Given the findings here, no further assessment for Erf 1489 is proposed.

- **Aves *Turnix hottentottus*** – Fynbos Button Quail – Extract from Jan Venter Report on Erf 1486 Vermont: “an endangered terrestrial turnicid which is endemic to the Fynbos biome (Lee et al. 2018). Inappropriate burning frequencies and rapid urban development and agricultural expansion in lowland areas are the main threats to this species (Peacock 2015). This species avoids older vegetation (age since fire) and dense grass (or other vegetation) cover (Lee et al. 2018). The species preference for sparse drier vegetation has also been recorded by Lee (2013). There are iNaturalist and GBIF records in the vicinity but not in similar habitat types comparable to the development site. We did not observe the species during our field visit. The dense wetland vegetation that are found in the development site constitutes unsuitable habitat for this species. The likelihood that this species would occur at the site is therefore considered low. The impact of the development on Hottentot Buttonquail *Turnix hottentottus*, by the proposed development will therefore likely be ‘very low’. Given these findings no further assessment will be applied to Erf 1489 for this species.
- **Aves *Polemaetus bellicosus*** – Martial Eagle – Extract from 1486 Report “The Martial Eagle is found throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Amar and Cloete 2018). The species is an African endemic which is thought to be declining and was recently uplisted to globally Vulnerable, although data on population trends are almost entirely lacking (Amar and Cloete 2018). In South Africa the species is listed as ‘Endangered’ (Taylor 2015d). Their prey consists of small mammals such as hares, mongoose, genet and ground squirrels (Boshoff et al. 1990). These birds will occupy most habitats provided there are adequate tall trees or pylons for nesting and perching (Machange et al. 2005). There are a few iNaturalist and GBIF records for the species in the general area. We did not observe the species during our field visit. It is noted that the property does not provide good habitat for the martial eagle’s preferred prey species. The species range widely, and the minor loss of marginal forage habitat would therefore not have a significant influence on the species. The development site also does not influence potential breeding sites or their prey species. The Martial eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus*, will therefore not likely be significantly impacted by the proposed development and potential impact are therefore classified as ‘low’”. Given these findings for the adjacent site, no further assessment for this species will take place for Erf 1489 Vermont.
- **Aves *Sarothrura affinis*** – striped flufftail – Extract from Erf 1486 Vermont Report: The South African population of Striped Flufftail *Sarothrura affinis* is suspected to be undergoing a decline as a result of habitat loss (Peacock et al. 2015). More than 10 % of the regional population may have been lost because throughout its fragmented range, suitable grassland habitat is under severe threat from unsuitable burning regimes, heavy grazing, agriculture and afforestation (Peacock et al. 2015). In the Western Cape this species is often found in dense *Psoralea-Osmitopsis* Fynbos next to streams or near moist depressions (Graham and Ryan 1984, Kakebeeke 1993). There are a couple of records for this species on both the iNaturalist and GBIF databases with most of these are towards Kleinmond and Grabouw area about 20 km away. One GBIF record is closer to the property (within a 15 km radius) on the mountain slopes near the Klein River to the east. Stripe

flufftails did not respond to our playbacks at the development site (Erf 1486). High winds however could have hampered the effectiveness of call-ups during the site visit. We consider the habitat at this site to be marginally suitable for this species but also cannot rule out its occurrence with confidence. If they are present, it is likely that some of their habitat will be lost and the disturbance during construction phase will make them vacate the area temporarily. This would be possible because of the adjacent nature reserve and wetland system. The potential impact on Stiped flufftail *Sarothrura affinis* is classified as **'low'**. Given the findings above for nearby Erf 1486, no further assessment is recommended for the subject property.

- **Reptilia Bitis armata** – puffadder – Extract from Erf 1486 report: *The Southern Adder Bitis armata is classified as 'Vulnerable' because of its severely fragmented distribution due to the reduction in the extent and quality of its habitat (Maritz and Turner 2023). This species has a small distribution in the southwest coastal margin of the Western Cape with three disjunct subpopulations, one from West Coast National Park to just north of Cape Town, the second near Hermanus and the third near De Hoop Nature reserve (Maritz and Turner 2023). The species occurs mainly in coastal lowland Fynbos on sandy and rocky substrates (Phelps 2010). It is known to shelter under rock slabs between dense shrubs on coastal plains (Phelps 2010). iNaturalist and GBIF records for this species is concentrated between Stanford and Struisbaai to the 20 km to the east of this property. We did not observe the species during our field visit. The dense wetland vegetation and associated strata that are found in the development site constitutes unsuitable habitat for this species. The likelihood that this species would occur at the site is therefore considered very low. The impact of the development on Southern Adder Bitis armata, by the proposed development will therefore likely be 'very low'. Given the findings for the adjacent Erf 1486 site, no further assessment will be undertaken for Erf 1489 Vermont.*
- **Invertebrate Aneuryphymus montanus** – Yellow Winged Agile grasshopper – Extract from Erf 1486 Report: *This endemic grasshopper species occurs on Western and Eastern Cape mountains. It is listed as 'Vulnerable'. It has been recorded from near Clanwilliam eastwards towards East London, associated with different fynbos types occurring on south-facing, cool slopes (Brown 1960). Brown (1960) mentions the species being collected "amongst partly burnt stands of evergreen sclerophyll in rocky foothills". Sites where the species have been documented include Graafwater, close to Lambert's Bay, De Rust, Suurbraak, Bot River, Kogelberg and Joubertinia. The species seems to show preference for rocky, mountainous areas. Its estimated extent of occurrence is ca. 170 000 square kilometres. No specimens were seen during a field visit. The proposed development is classified as 'very low' impact on A. montanus, due to an absence of species data from this area, no suitable habitat, no direct evidence of occurrence, the 20 limited size of the development relative to the surrounding vegetation and the species' regional occurrence, and the wide extent of occupancy of A. montanus. Given the information above, it is not likely that the above species would be encountered on the property."* Given these findings for the adjacent site, no further assessment will be undertaken for the subject property.

Plant Species Theme – (High) – These properties fall within an area which is considered a threatened vegetation type, Hangklip Sand Fynbos. However, RE/1489 was previously the garden of neighbouring Erf 2570, which has an existing home and shed. The erf is surrounded by high walls and fences and is within an established residential area. It is therefore no longer in a natural condition. There are existing vegetable garden and remnants of lawned area as well as infestation with alien invasive trees evident on site. A Botanical Compliance Statement was undertaken. The site investigation determined that the study area is highly degraded and transformed, with a virtual absence of characteristic and dominant species associated with Hangklip Sand Fynbos. As a result, the study area does not resemble the listed ecosystem

type in structure, composition, or ecological functioning, and therefore cannot be considered representative of this Critically Endangered vegetation type. Furthermore, no plant Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) were recorded within the proposed development footprint, and the likelihood of such species establishing on site is very low due to the highly degraded condition of the habitat.

Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme – Very High Sensitivity – According to the National Web-Based Environmental Screening Tool, the site is mapped as having Very High Sensitivity for the Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme. This classification is likely due to the underlying vegetation type mapped for the property, namely Hangklip Sand Fynbos, which is recognised as a Critically Endangered ecosystem type.

However, a detailed site investigation was undertaken by a botanical specialist to verify the presence of plant species associated with the mapped vegetation type. The investigation determined that the study area is highly degraded and transformed, with a virtual absence of characteristic and dominant species associated with Hangklip Sand Fynbos. As a result, the study area does not resemble the listed ecosystem type in structure, composition, or ecological functioning, and therefore cannot be considered representative of this Critically Endangered vegetation type.

Furthermore, no plant Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) were recorded within the proposed development footprint, and the likelihood of such species establishing on site is very low due to the highly degraded condition of the habitat.

In addition, no threatened ecosystems, Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs), or Ecological Support Areas (ESAs) occur within the proposed development footprint. Given that the study area does not conform to the characteristics of Hangklip Sand Fynbos, it is not considered eligible to contribute meaningfully to national ecosystem protection levels or conservation targets.



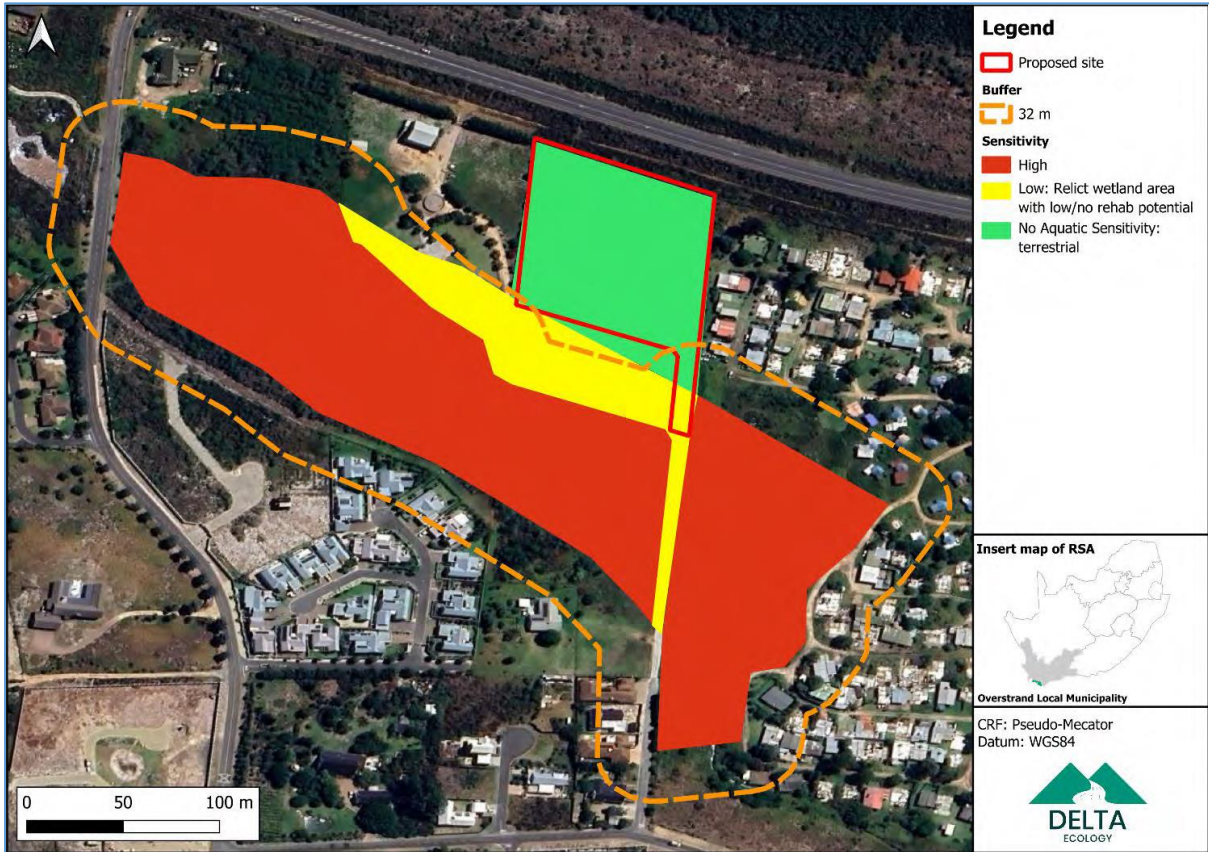


PRELIMINARY SITE ASSESSMENT

The site is located within the built-up suburb of Vermont. The R43 Flanks the site to the north and other residential development elsewhere. There is an existing access servitude (as indicated in yellow below) on erf 1490, which will be upgraded in line with municipal specifications. The vegetation type is originally classified as Hangklip Sand Fynbos, however the site is highly disturbed and comprised of a mix of domestic grasses and alien vegetation as per photos above.



A Freshwater specialist has conducted the Freshwater Impact Assessment, and the wetland delineation is as follows:



The most recent BSP maps the site as being characterised as sections of CBA – Although this is questioned relative to the site conditions:



CONCLUSION

The Site Sensitivity Verification Report for the proposed residential development on Erf 1489 and Erf 1490, Vermont, has assessed the site against all applicable environmental sensitivity themes as identified through the National Web-Based Environmental Screening Tool. Based on the findings of this report and the specialist assessments undertaken, it is concluded that the proposed development can proceed subject to the mitigation measures outlined in the Basic Assessment Report and the associated Environmental Management Programme.

While the screening tool initially classified several themes at high to very high sensitivity, most notably the Terrestrial Biodiversity, Aquatic Biodiversity, Plant Species, and Animal Species themes, the detailed site investigations and specialist assessments have demonstrated that the actual on-site conditions are substantially less sensitive than the mapped classifications suggest. The botanical specialist investigation confirmed that Erf 1489 is highly degraded and transformed, bearing virtually no resemblance to the Critically Endangered Hangklip Sand Fynbos vegetation type in terms of structure, composition, or ecological functioning. No plant Species of Conservation Concern were recorded within the development footprint, and the likelihood of such species establishing on site is considered very low.

With respect to the aquatic environment, the Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment confirmed that the residential development area on Erf 1489 is terrestrial and located outside the delineated wetland boundary, although it falls within 100 metres of the wetland. The existing access road on Erf 1490 crosses an Unchanneled Valley Bottom wetland that extends through Vermont from west of Lynx Road to the Salt Pan. This road is an existing structure occupying a severely disturbed strip of land with no realistic rehabilitation potential, and the proposed development activities are limited to the upgrading of this road within its existing footprint. Appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that all construction activities remain strictly within the demarcated road reserve, thereby preventing further encroachment into the adjacent wetland.

Kind regards,



MICHELLE NAYLOR