

Stanford East Urban Design Framework

This section has been prepared as an integral part of the
heritage and cultural landscape study within the larger context of
Stanford East

September 2025

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

1 Planning Background

Stanford East is important in that it is seen as one of the future growth areas of the town of Stanford, and is the subject of a number of development proposals within the extended urban edge.

The Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) provides broad policies for the overall Overstrand Municipal area. However, there is currently no Local Spatial Development Framework (LSDF), or precinct plan, to guide development in and around Stanford, and specifically Stanford East.

The downside of this planning vacuum is that both landowners and the community have no common vision for the future development of this peri-urban area at the gateway to Stanford heritage village. Added to this is the revered rural character that forms a frame to the village.

The purpose of this Urban Design Framework is to provide a vision and broad guidelines for the future development of the Stanford East precinct taking into account its heritage and cultural landscape aspects.

Policy documents such as the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF), MSDF of 2020 (currently under review) and the Stanford Growth Management Strategy of 2010 have been used as a basis, along with the Overstrand Heritage Survey Guidelines of 2014.

2 Planning Context

A number of relevant guiding principles contained in the **Western Cape PSDF** include the following (PSDF 2013, p.14):

- Spatially compact development, compatible with cultural and scenic landscapes, that avoids conversion of high potential agricultural land or compromising eco-systems.

- Spatial efficiency relates to compaction as opposed to sprawl; mixed-use as opposed to mono-functional land uses; and prioritisation of public transport over private car use.
- Prioritise the pedestrian, and provide routes for bikes and public transport. Offer a choice of routes supporting these modes and safe connections between places and communities.
- Quality of public space defines the liveability of a place - the living rooms to settlements where people meet. Safe and attractive public spaces - enabled by activity and surveillance.

The **Overstrand MSDF** includes the following (MSDF 2020, p.150):

- Appropriate densification specific to each urban area encouraged to limit unwanted sprawl into the rural hinterland.
- The diversity, health and productivity of natural eco-systems, throughout the rural, urban and agricultural areas maintained through an interlinked web of natural spaces and the protection of important and sensitive habitats.
- Prime and unique agricultural areas protected from non-soil based land use activities.

The **2050 'Vision for Stanford'** in the MSDF included the following policies (MSDF 2020, p.211) See also Figure 1.

- All housing developments planned within the context of creating sustainable human settlements - housing areas integrated with social and economic facilities.
- Mixed-use densification of land uses when managing urban growth.
- Development of natural open space systems within urban and rural settlements.
- Development of networks of open space that sustain and

enhance eco-system functioning, connect fragments of vegetation, protect waterways and regenerate the natural environment.

- Roads traversing the outstanding scenery of the Overstrand Municipality designated as scenic routes, with views and vistas from these routes protected from insensitive development.
- New development that reflects and enhances the distinct built and natural environmental and heritage context in which it is located.
- A network of well-designed public spaces that support participation in social recreational and cultural events.
- Improved comfort and safety of pedestrians and cyclists on main pedestrian and cycling routes, routes connecting schools and centres, by means of adequate road space allocation.

The current Overstrand Municipal Zoning Scheme for Stanford is indicated on Figure 2.

The **Overstrand Heritage Survey** (Baumann et al, 2009) contains a number of policy statements including the following, which have relevance to Stanford East:

- New subdivisions should only be permitted if there is a positive response to the historical context and pattern of development. Suburban type layouts, particularly “gated” villages should not be permitted in rural areas (pg. 300).
- Impose building set-backs and height restrictions along proclaimed scenic routes. Setback of 25m in urban areas, and 100m in rural and wilderness areas recommended (pg. 305).

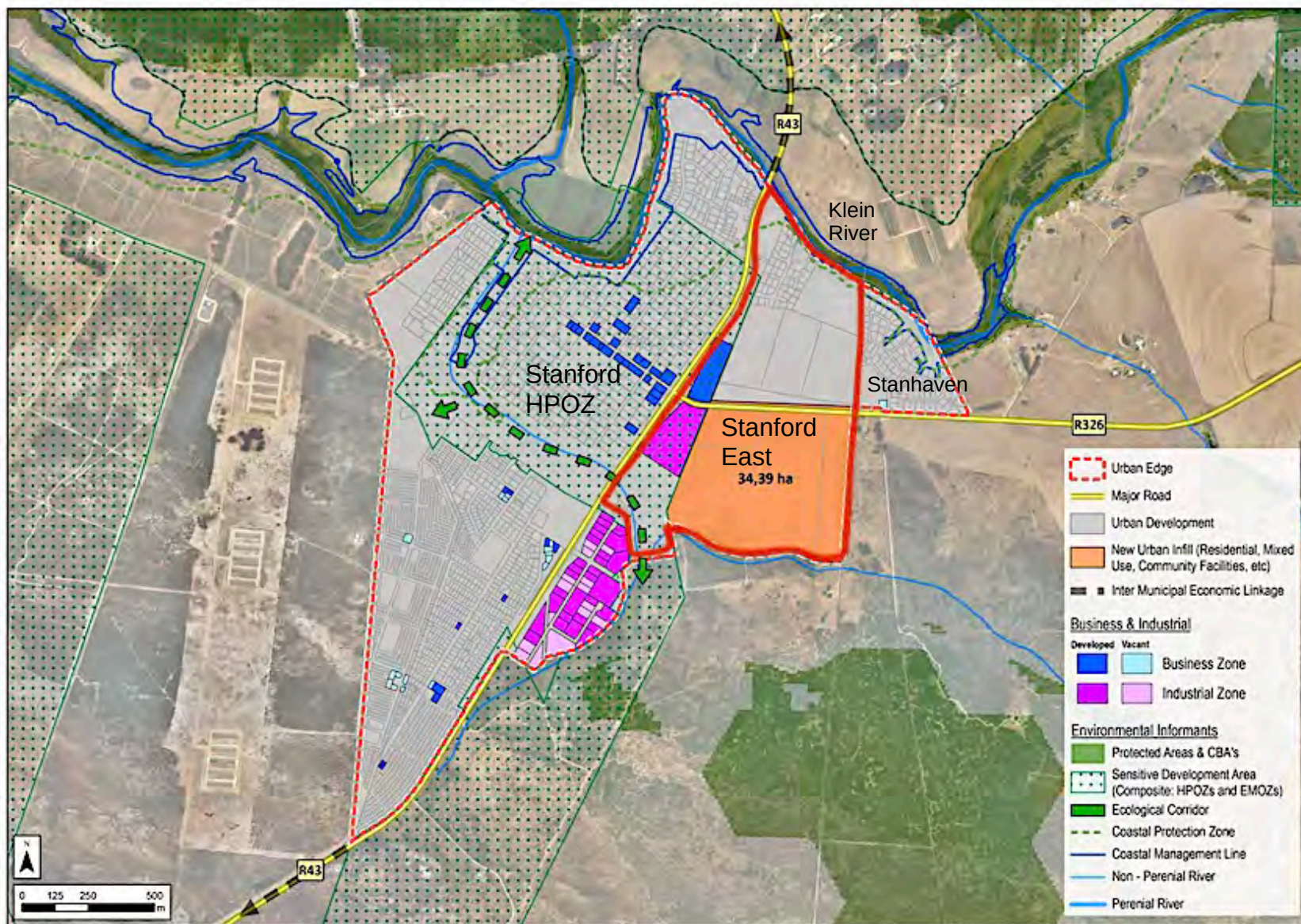


Figure 1: Stanford Spatial Proposal

Plan 62: Stanford Spatial Proposal 2020

The spatial proposal from the MSDF of 2020 indicates the relationship of Stanford East, in red outline, to Stanford heritage village. The orange block is indicated as new urban infill (residential, mixed use, community facilities etc.)



Figure 2: Stanford Municipal Zoning Scheme

The Municipal Zoning Scheme illustrates the difference between the old town of Stanford with its continuous corridor of public open space, and Stanford East, which except for a small fragment at Stanford Bridge, has no public open space system. The potential to extend the town's revered 'wandelpad' trail along the Klein River has been severely compromised in the absence of forward planning. Stanhaven was developed outside the urban edge at the time, with only private open space provided along the river.

3 Environmental Features

Some of the main environmental features of Stanford East are described below and indicated on Figure 3.

Geology and Soils: Stanford East is composed of the Ceres Subgroup of the Bokkeveld Group of rocks, (shale, mudstone and sandstone). The sandier coastal plain soils of the Bredasdorp Group are dominant to the south with some overlap of soil types.

Topography and Drainage: The topography is relatively flat, the land generally falling towards the Klein River in the north. There are no surface drainage features in the study area, except for localised wetlands or standing water in low-lying pockets on impervious clayey soils. A floodplain and associated wetlands occur along the Klein River on the northern boundary.

Vegetation and Land Use: The original vegetation of the study area is indicated as Elim Ferricrete Fynbos (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006), although Renosterveld species are common on the Bokkeveld shales. Agulhas limestone fynbos occurs to the south on the Bredasdorp Group limestone of the coastal plain (see vegetation map). However, the entire study area has been transformed through agriculture (mainly vineyards) and urbanisation, and little remains of these vegetation types in the study area.

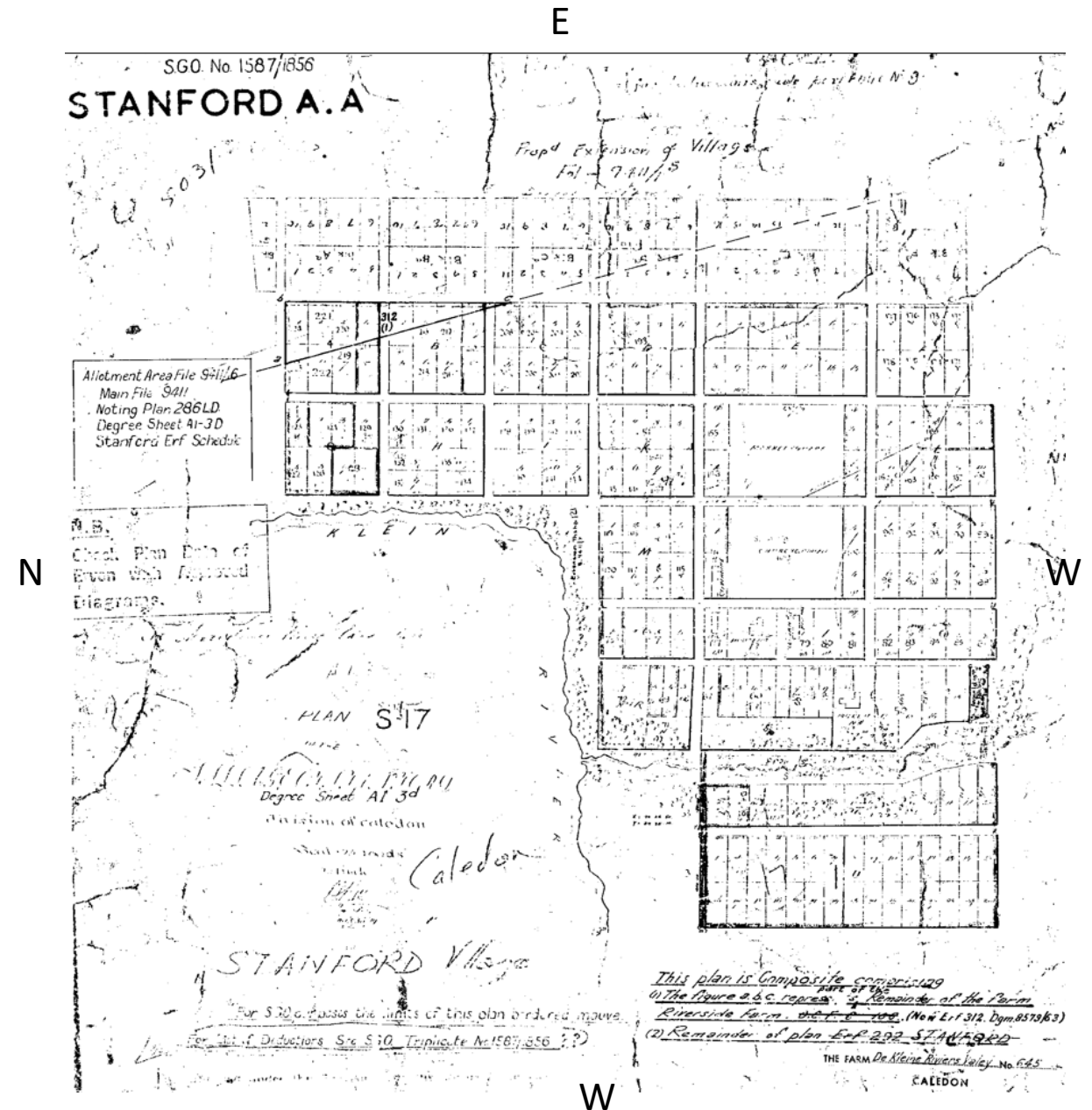
Fire-hazard: The surrounding veld is prone to wild fires, particularly in the summer. These



Figure 3: Environmental Features

Sense of Place: The dominant character is rural, with vineyards lining the R326 approach to Stanford, altered to some extent by the Stanhaven residential development. The brewery buildings complement the rural surroundings.

Roads: Note the route alignment in red, and the overlay of the current roads.



Heritage Guidelines (based on Statement of Significance)

- Public open space should be integral to the framework of new development, and the public walking loop must be safeguarded as a key amenity.
- Views over the low, open veld should be protected and integrated. In this framework, the 25m protected scenic route corridor is broader, focusing on conserving Stanford's rural character and maintaining an open feel. Low planting strategies should be used, with height only increasing around clusters of houses.
- Existing roads should be incorporated from the outset and respected as structuring elements where possible before introducing new roads.
- The old wagon route, still visible on aerial photographs, cuts across plots on the opposite side of the road to erf 1772. Any new planning should reflect this as part of the village's layering. The change in direction of the grid in this particular framework should be around this particular alignment. This alignment could also serve as the basis for pedestrian access on the Walker Bay side of the road.



- A 1938 photograph shows this as a radial convergence of multiple roads, a time when horse-drawn wagons and early motor cars enabled Stanford's role as a trading and export town. The Agrimark parking could serve both its current use and parking for a new neighbouring commercial node.
- New commercial nodes should extend Queen Victoria Street, the historic commercial axis, while respecting its alignment and adapting it in new ways, in this case at a distance away from the road.
- To maintain a village pattern, garages should be set back from the street front. Houses should be directly on the street, and the use of stoep encouraged.
- Vineyards should remain as open space structuring system.
- A mix of densities is needed: higher-density gated pockets that also include public open space. Single residential areas without security measures, emphasising gardens and clear building platforms to prevent oversized structures. Long, narrow plots in this area are preferable.
- A variety of plot sizes should be provided to support intergenerational living and long-term continuity within neighbourhoods, as well as encourage a diversity of buyers.



Alignments (diagrammatic at differing scales)

Image A: Wetland

Grid: The orthogonal pattern is extended to the east, with particular alignment of the grid tot that of the historic town. The POS/ square is situated over known wetland area.

Image B: Birkenhead alignment

Grid: The orthogonal pattern is aligned to the entrance road of Birkenhead. Note the interesting lining up of the road next to the Milstream eye, and the project site. The POS/square situated on the two block of vineyard on Birkenhead.

Image C1: Old wagon route 1

Grid: The orthogonal pattern is aligned to historic wagon route, with POS/square situated over scenic route corridor.

Image C2: Old wagon route 2

Grid: The orthogonal pattern is aligned to historic wagon route, with POS/square situated over scenic route corridor that extends along the R362.



5 Suburban Sprawl Scenario

A suburban sprawl scenario based on current zoning could develop over time, if *ad hoc* development applications were to continue, resulting in a loss of rural character for the area, as shown in Figure 4.

An urban design framework is proposed, taking into account Stanford's cultural landscape, providing an overall framework that includes public open space and community facilities.

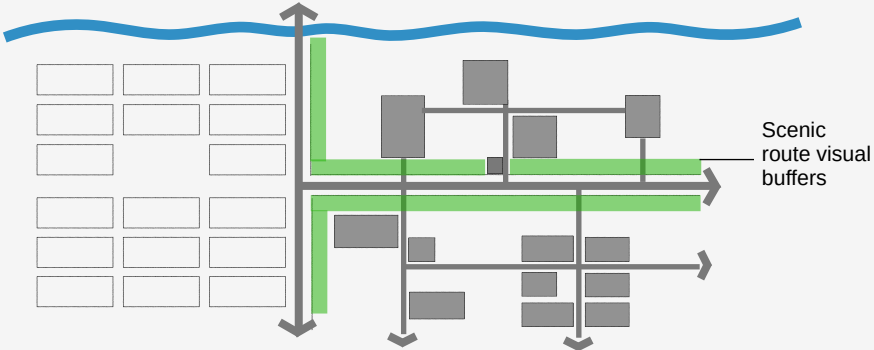
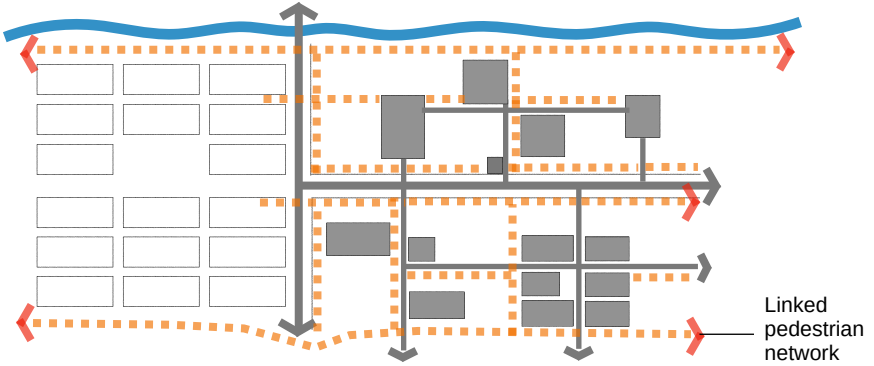
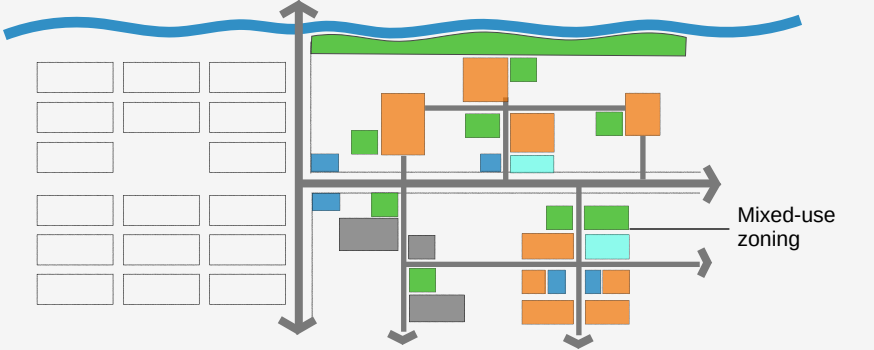


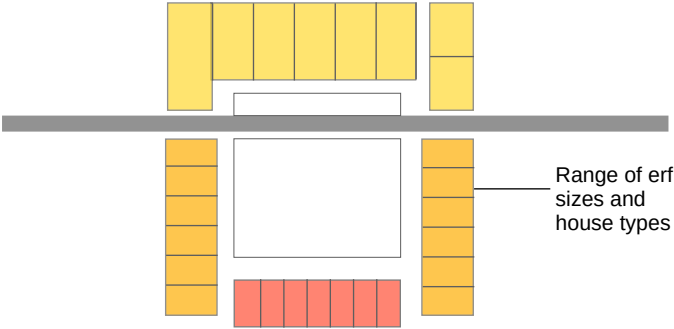
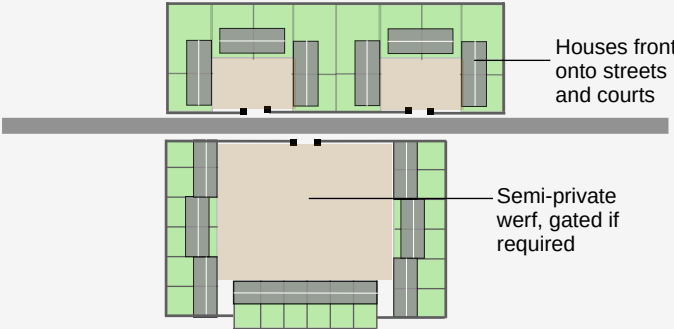
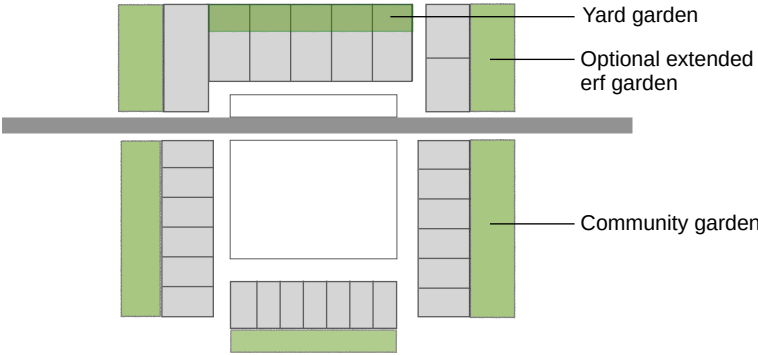
Figure 4: Suburban sprawl scenario

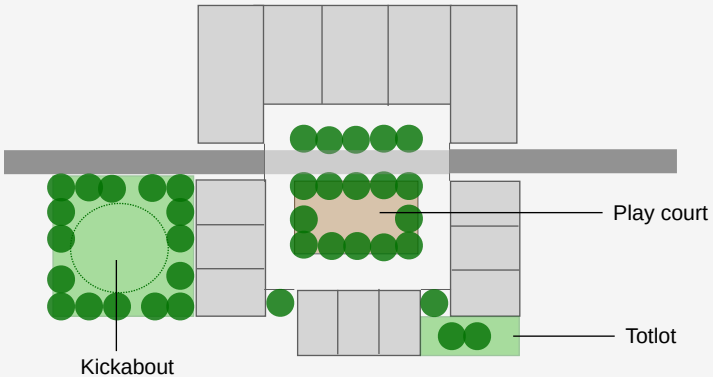
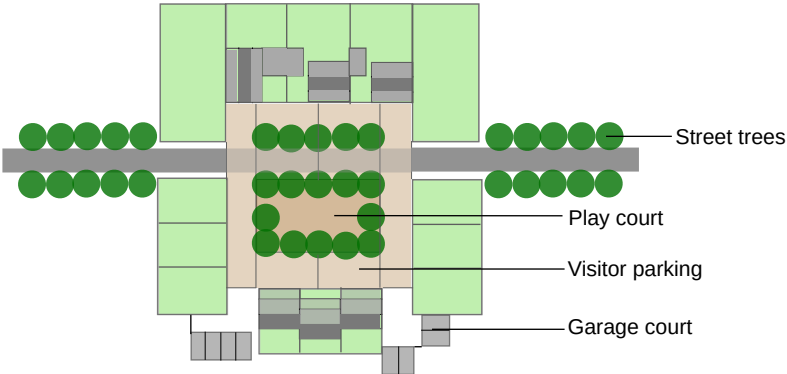
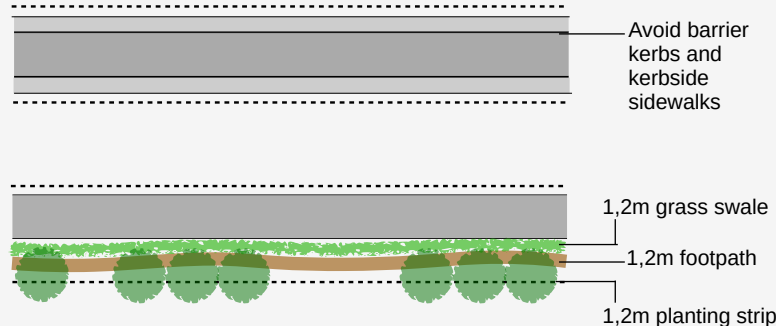
6 Design Guidelines

The principles and guidelines below are distilled from the PSDF, OMSDF, OGMS and Overstrand Heritage Survey. The principles are also derived from the Smart Growth Manual (Duany et al, 2010).

Principle	Stanford East Guideline	
1. Retain the historical compact form of Stanford with its well-defined edges, set in a rural farming frame.	The urban form of new development in the rural frame should avoid suburban sprawl and retain the overall rural character by clustering development. This could take the form of small clusters embedded in farmland, or through the development of hamlets in a differentiated settlement structure. A key MSDF policy is that of ensuring that cultural landscapes and heritage sites are protected and enhanced.	
2. Create a linked system of public open space.	A continuous system of public open space (POS) with walking and cycling trails should be created within Stanford East, with links to the town and surroundings, particularly along the Klein River, extending Stanford's <i>wandelpad</i>. Ecological corridors enhance ecosystem viability, connect habitats and protect drainage lines. The POS should also connect with the Millstream corridor to the south. The development of a network of open space is a key policy of the MSDF.	
3. Employ principles of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).	The stormwater drainage system should be integrated with the open spaces to form a blue-green system that uses overland swales and stormwater attenuation ponds. The SUDS approach is particularly suitable in a rural setting, being more environment-friendly, minimising flooding and having major cost savings compared to conventional piped systems. The blue-green system should be the first step in the layout process.	

Principle	Stanford East Guideline	Examples
4. Protect scenic routes with visual buffers.	The R43 and R326 scenic routes are seen as gateways to Stanford heritage village and should have adequate visual setbacks (min. 25m from the road reserve) and screen planting, with views through to vineyards, to retain the rural experience from these routes. Minor exceptions would include roadways, gateposts and possibly farm stalls, depending on actual designs for these.	 Scenic route visual buffers
5. Ensure permeability and accessibility by avoiding cul-de sac type layouts found in suburban and gated estates.	The road and open space network should promote walkability, and designed to be pedestrian and cycle-friendly, including access to shops, schools and recreation areas, particularly for the elderly, physically impaired and children who don't have cars. Ensuring the comfort and safety of pedestrians and cyclists is a key MSDF policy.	 Linked pedestrian network
6. Encourage mixed uses to avoid dormitory-type suburbs.	The zoning should allow for mixed uses of residential, recreation, day-care / nursery school and business, providing amenities close by and minimising car trips. Mixed use densification is a key policy of the MSDF.	 Mixed-use zoning

Principle	Stanford East Guideline	Examples
7. Include a range of erf sizes and house types.	The layout should allow for a range of family sizes and incomes, such as single parents, retired couples or large families. Life-cycle housing allows families to up-size or down-size within the same community. A diversity of options also allows developers to tap into a range of residential markets. The 'Orange Block' to the south of the R326 is intended for higher density development and should include affordable housing.	 Range of erf sizes and house types
8. Avoid gated housing estates in rural areas which results in privatisation of the countryside.	Security should be provided through the appropriate design of streets and semi-private spaces. Doors and windows of houses should front directly onto streets to providing natural surveillance, through 'eyes on the street'. For this reason, building setbacks should not be more than 2m from the street boundary. Front porches on the street should be encouraged. Courts and <i>werfs</i> can be used to create controlled semi-private communal spaces.	 Houses front onto streets and courts Semi-private werf, gated if required
9. Create opportunities for food gardens	Rural housing in particular should make provision for food gardens in addition to the vineyards and olive groves. These could take the form of yard gardens within the erf, or optional community gardens that can be leased adjacent to the residential clusters.	 Yard garden Optional extended erf garden Community garden

Principle	Stanford East Guideline	Examples
10. Provide play areas close to home.	Hard play surfaces, playstreets, small pocket parks and kick-about areas should be provided within, or close to, the residential clusters. Play areas for young children need to be visible from the houses. larger areas for ball games would form part of the POS system.	
11. Design residential streets to be safe and pedestrian-friendly.	Streets within the residential clusters should have traffic-calming features, such as changes in paving texture and varied widths to accommodate visitor parking and play courts. Garages tend to create blank facades with a negative impact on the streetscape, so should be set back 6m from the street boundary. Alternatively, garages could be located in garage courts or service lanes. Street tree planting provides shade for pedestrians and increases real estate value.	
12. Ensure that road verges have a country aesthetic.	Vertical barrier kerbs on estate roads should be avoided, as these have an urban character and result in road-kill of frogs and other small critters. Kerbless road edges and grass swales are more appropriate for estate roads in rural areas. Footpaths should be separated from the roadway with planting. Paths need to be a minimum of 1,2m for wheelchairs, 1,5m for cycling, or wider if flanked by high walls or fences. (3m for two-way cycle lanes).	

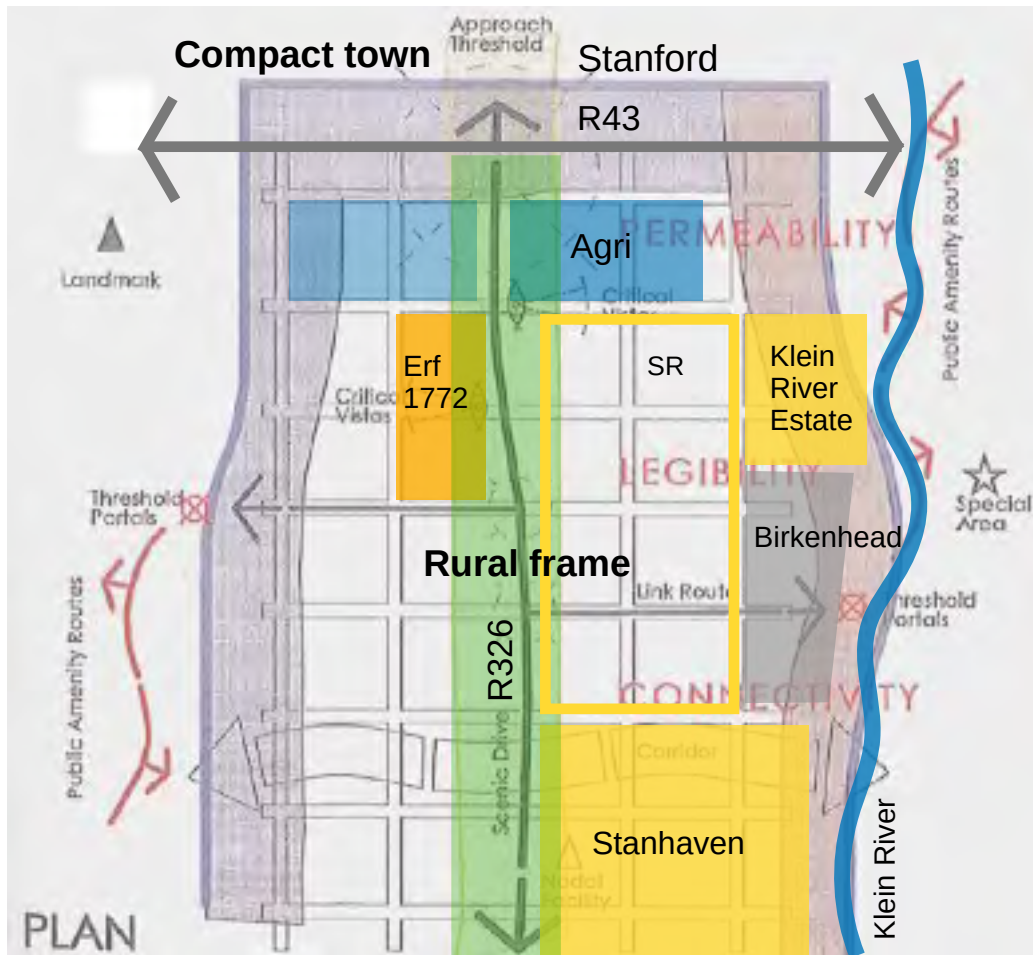


Figure 5: Conceptual Structuring Diagram A

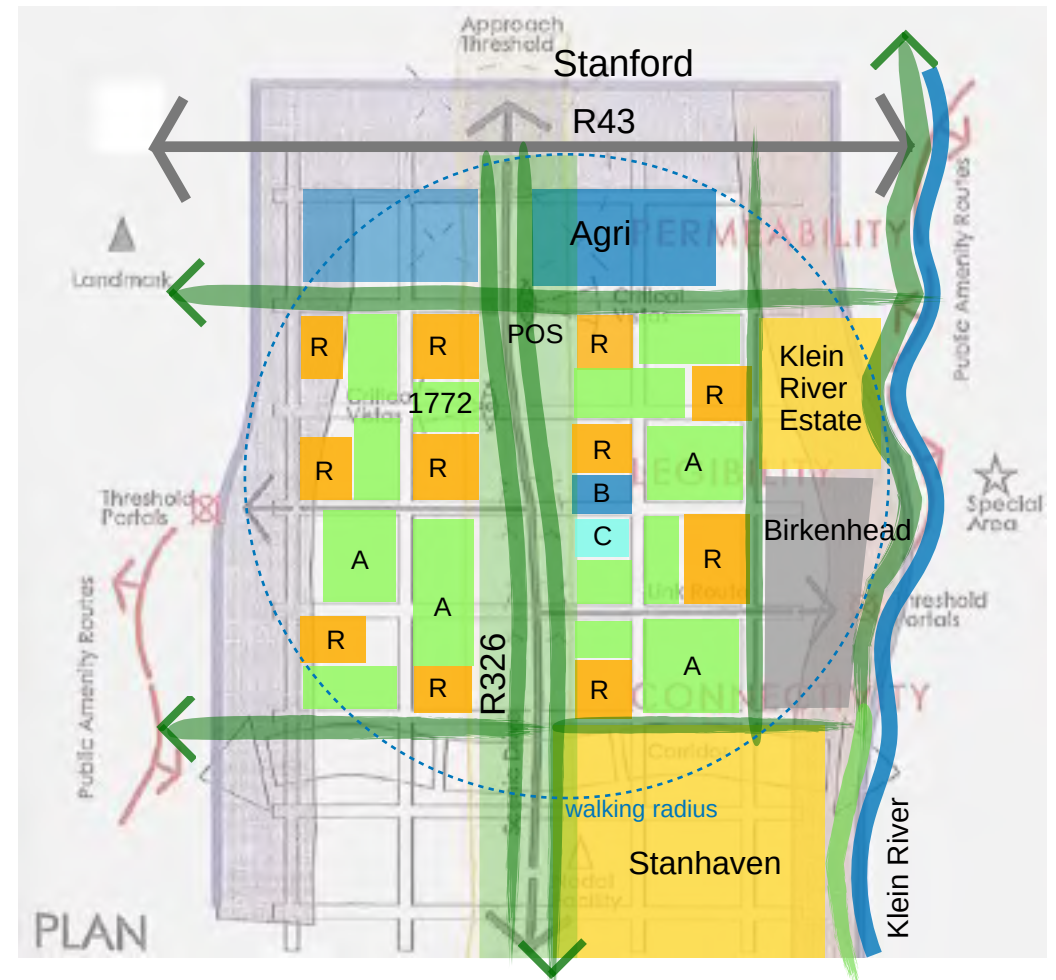


Figure 6: Conceptual Structuring Diagram B

7 Conceptual Structure

The 'Conceptual Structuring Diagram' (Figure 5) in the **Growth Management Strategy (GMS)** for the Overstrand illustrates heritage and urban design principles. Stanford East has been overlaid on the diagram, including Erf 1772 and the Birkenhead land parcels currently zoned Single Residential (SR). A distinction is made between the compact town (Stanford) and the rural frame. The GMS principles indicate permeability, legibility and connectivity.

The Conceptual Structuring Diagram (Figure 6) illustrates the heritage and urban design principles including the R326 scenic corridor and the agricultural grid (A) with embedded residential clusters zoned Residential (R), and a small business (B) and community facilities site (C) to serve the local community, the purpose being to retain the rural character of the area. An integrated network of public open space with walking and cycling trails is also indicated.

The Conceptual Structuring Diagram shown in Figure 6 has been transposed to the Stanford East study area to give an indication of a possible road and open space network that would link with the surrounding areas, as shown on Figure 7.

The road network has a grid layout reflecting the existing historical farm patterns. These could be reinforced with tree shelterbelts.

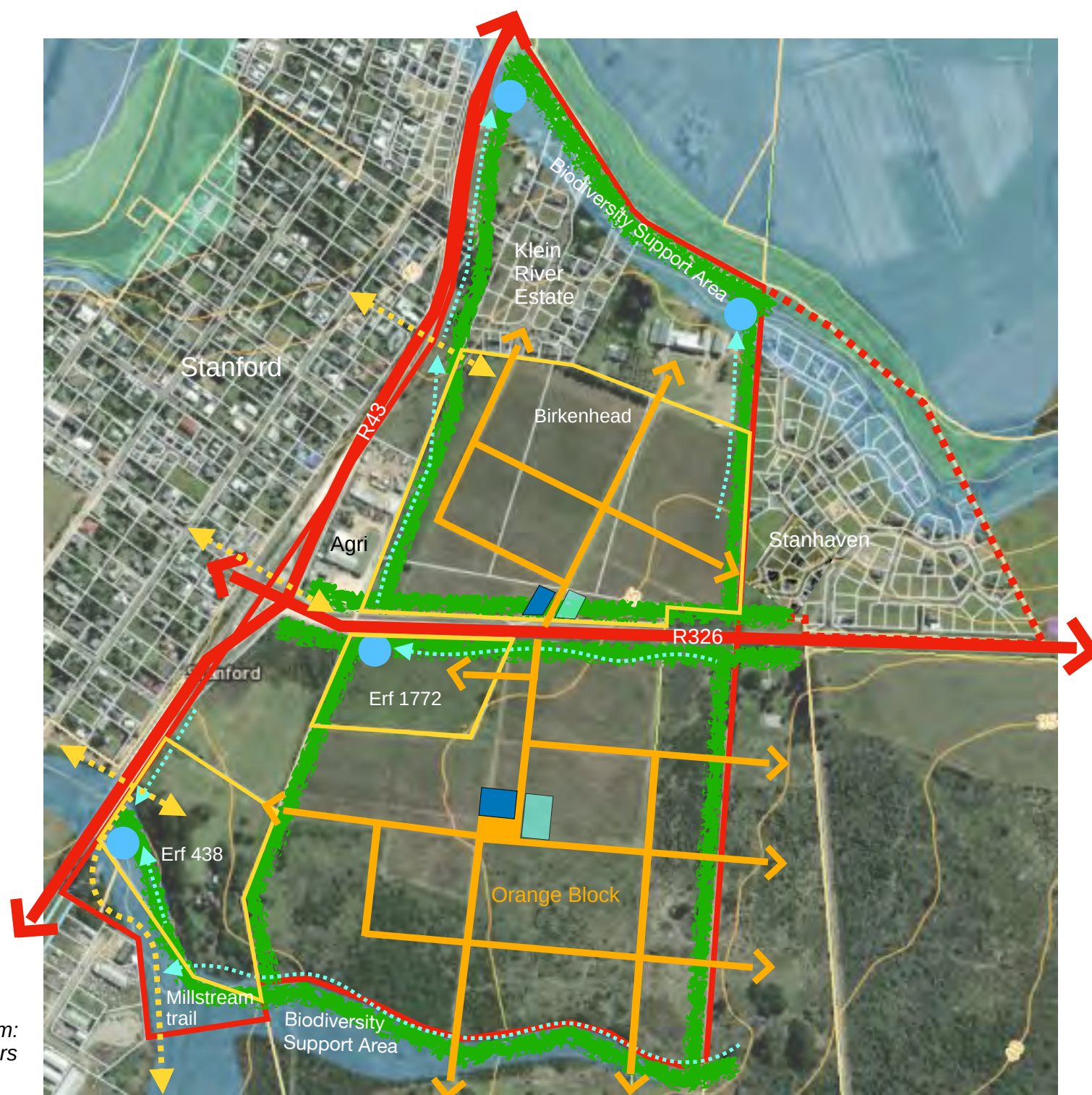


Figure 7: Stanford East Structuring Diagram: Routes, Open Space and Drainage Corridors

A possible layout of residential clusters has been added to the road and open space framework on Figure 8.

The intention is that the residential clusters are embedded within an agricultural framework in order to retain the rural character

Although all of the clusters are indicated as General Residential (GR), densities and erf sizes could vary within each cluster, or from cluster to cluster. The average density would be approximately 25 dwelling units per hectare within the cluster.

The layout is variable, but should conform with the principles and guidelines in Section 6 above.



Figure 8: Stanford East Structuring Diagram: Scenario A

An alternative scenario is illustrated in Figure 9, indicating varying densities and erf sizes for each cluster within an historical grid pattern.

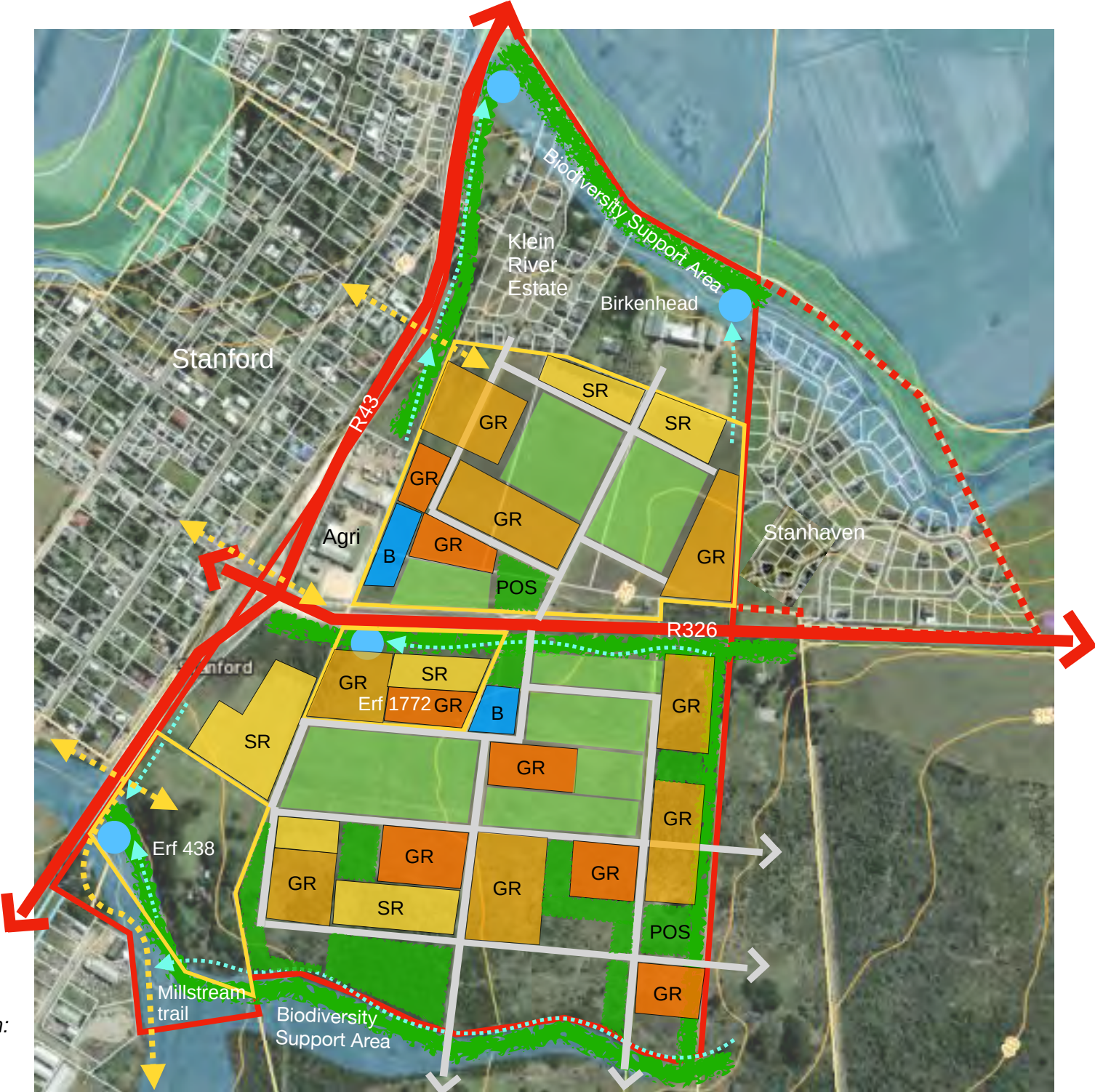


Figure 9: Stanford East Structuring Diagram: Scenario B.

8 Urban Design Concept

Figure 10 illustrates the possible application of a structuring diagram scenario to Erf 1772 and to the Birkenhead land parcels north of the R362.

Erf 1772 could be seen as one or two clusters with approximately 60 erven depending on erf sizes (average 350 sq. m.).

The shape and size of the Birkenhead clusters could vary, with each cluster having around 20 to 25 erven in this scenario, again depending on the number of clusters and on erf sizes (ranging from 600 to 800sq.m.).

The residential clusters could be arranged around a playstreet, werf or court that could also accommodate parking and hard play areas.

Each cluster could potentially have a security gate, but the land parcels as a whole should not be privatised. With good design, houses would overlook the street or courts providing visual surveillance.

A small community hub (indicated in blue) could have business and community facilities to allow for a farm stall / coffee shop, creche or nursery school to serve the surrounding community (FS and C). Recreational open space should be provided for ball games (Rec).

The balance of the land would remain as vineyards or orchards, as well as provide opportunities for food gardens that can be leased. An essential feature of the layout is that the vineyards/ orchards are visible from the R326 to retain the rural charm of the area.

Figure 11 indicates the footprint of the cluster model with the outline of the original WRAP proposal overlaid.

