



LORNAY
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT (SSVR)

Proposed Residential development on Erven 597, 598 and 599, Stanford

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Compiled by:
Lornay Environmental Consulting (Pty) Ltd

INTRODUCTION

The consolidation, subdivision and rezoning of Erf 597, 598, 599, Stanford, is proposed, to create a residential estate development. The site is located inside the urban edge of Stanford.



Figure 1: Locality of subject property

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

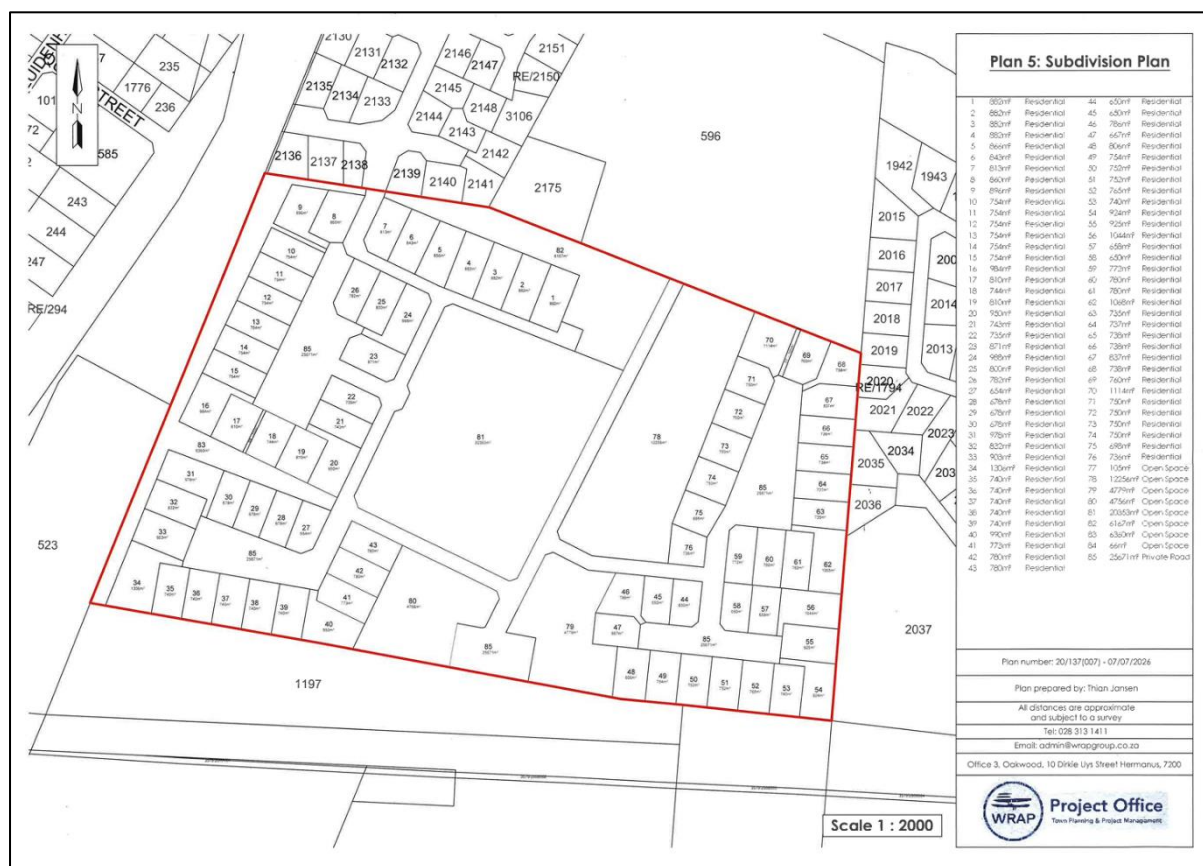


Figure 2. Proposed site plan for the residential development

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

Table 1: Environmental Sensitivities on the property

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			

Agricultural Theme – Very High Sensitivity – The property (Erven 597, 598 and 599, to be consolidated into a single erf of 14.1034 ha) is zoned Residential Zone 1: Single Residential and falls within the Stanford urban edge. It is currently characterised by vineyard blocks and fallow land. The proposal retains the existing working vineyards as an open space structuring element of the layout. Approximately 39.4% (55 570 m²) of the consolidated property is allocated to Open Space Zone 3 (Private Open Space), within which the vineyards are retained. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) undertaken for the study area supports this approach, as the retention of the vineyards maintains the agricultural character and open views of the forecourt to Stanford. Given the current zoning, the location within the municipal urban edge and the retention of a large portion of the vineyards, no further agricultural assessment or input is required.

Animal Species Theme – High Sensitivity – The site is completely transformed by vineyards and an internal access road, which provides access to the Walker Bay Winery, the brewery and the Klein Rivier Estate. The natural habitat has been completely transformed. This is consistent with the HIA and the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment, which record that the site has been transformed by agriculture and that no natural vegetation or exposed bedrock remains. The following species are flagged:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
High	Amphibia-Sclerophrys pantherina
Medium	Amphibia-Sclerophrys pantherina
Medium	Insecta-Aloeides egerides
Medium	Reptilia-Bitis armata
Medium	Invertebrate-Brinckiella aptera
Medium	Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus

Amphibia-Sclerophrys pantherine – Western Leopard Toad – rated both medium and high – given the completely transformed nature of the site, with no natural habitat remaining, as well as the fact that the development area contains no wetlands or wetland indicators, the presence of these toads on site is not expected.

Insecta-Aloeides egerides – red hill copper butterfly – No natural vegetation on site and long-term agriculture precludes this species from using the site as valuable habitat.

Reptilia-Bitis armata – puff adder – no natural vegetation remains and no presence of rocky outcrops on site – therefore no natural habitat present on site for this species.

Invertebrate-Brinckiella aptera – Mute winter Katydid – bush crickets – this species is endemic to Fynbos and Succulent biomes and feeds on flowers and leaves of a very narrow range of species endemic plants. Given the completely transformed nature of the site, it is not likely that this species is present on the site.

Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus – yellow winged grasshopper – endemic to the Cape, associated with fynbos vegetation and prefers partly burnt stands of evergreen Sclerophyll in rocky foothills – the site does not present this habitat and therefore this species is not likely on site.

The landscape plan for the development further provides for indigenous planting and north–south biodiversity corridors, which will provide habitat value that the site does not currently offer. No further animal species assessment is recommended.

Aquatic Biodiversity Theme – Low – The site is completely transformed and does not show any watercourse or wetland indicators. The Klein River lies to the north of the adjoining Walker Bay Estate, and the Millstream Eye lies at a lower elevation to the south of the site. The development incorporates stormwater management by means of open swales and water-catching features, and the EMPr contains measures to prevent sedimentation of, and discharge to, these systems during construction. No further assessment is required.

Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme – Very high sensitivity – The site has been transformed through intensive agriculture. A Notification of Intent to Develop was submitted to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) in terms of Section 38(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA). Following assessment on 12 May 2025 (HWC Case No. HWC25042505EJV0505), HWC determined that the development may impact heritage resources and required a Heritage Impact Assessment in terms of Section 38(3) of the NHRA. HWC specified that the HIA must include a desktop palaeontological impact assessment, a townscape assessment and a visual impact assessment. In response, an integrated HIA with Cultural Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments was compiled by Cape Cultural Landscapes, and is submitted to HWC for decision in terms of Section 38(4) of the NHRA.

The HIA found that the site contains no significant built heritage resources, but that it forms part of the eastern forecourt to the historic village of Stanford, adjoins the Stanford Heritage Protection Overlay Zone, and contributes to the rural approach along the scenic routes. It also identified traces of the historic wagon route in aerial photographs and the potential for archaeological material, given the proximity of the Millstream Eye. The HIA concluded that the proposal demonstrates mixed compliance with the heritage indicators, and that it shows notable improvements over earlier layouts. It records the responses of the layout to the landscape, namely the retention of the vineyards, alignment with the existing roads and the historic wagon route, incorporation of the Ficus avenue, and a landscape plan with biodiversity corridors and stormwater swales. The HIA rates the intensity of visual impact as moderate for the adjacent scenic routes and sensitive receptors, and low beyond 3 km. It makes recommendations concerning the scenic route buffer, public access and pedestrian connections, the location of security at cluster level, and the development of an urban design framework for Stanford East. The HIA's recommendations and any conditions imposed by HWC will be incorporated into the EMPr, which also contains measures for the protection of archaeological material and graves in terms of Sections 35 and 36 of the NHRA. **The findings of the HIA will be considered by HWC, and the proposal will be implemented in accordance with its decision.**

Civil Aviation Theme – High sensitivity – the proposed activity is in line with the existing activities in the area. Therefore, no additional impacts are expected to this theme. No further assessment required.

Defence Theme – Low sensitivity – the proposed expansion is in line with the existing activities in the area. Therefore, no additional impacts are expected to this theme. No further assessment required.

Palaeontology –Very high – According to Heritage Impact Assessment undertaken, the site is underlain by the Ceres Subgroup of the Bokkeveld Group (Cape Supergroup), which the SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity Map and the DFFE Screening Tool classify as having very high palaeontological sensitivity. The site has been transformed through intensive agriculture and no bedrock is exposed. A Palaeontological Desktop Assessment was accordingly compiled as part of the HIA required by HWC. A field-based assessment is normally required for very high sensitivity, but the specialist found it impractical because the complete transformation of the site leaves no accessible exposures, and verified through satellite imagery that conditions were unchanged since the EAP's site visit of 17 April 2025. The specialist found that excavations deeper than about 1.5 to 2 m may reach fossil-bearing sediments. The construction phase impact was rated as very high negative before mitigation, reducing to medium with mitigation, and the operational phase is not expected to have a significant impact. The specialist concluded that the development is acceptable from a palaeontological perspective and may proceed, subject to the strict implementation of a Chance Find Protocol, the appointment of a qualified independent Environmental Control Officer, integration of the measures into the EMPr, induction training of construction personnel, monitoring of excavations deeper than 1.5 m or that reach fresh bedrock, work stoppage within a 10 m radius if a fossil is found, notification to HWC within 24 hours, and compliance with Section 35 of the NHRA. These requirements are incorporated into the EMPr.

Plant Species Theme – Medium – A site visit by the EAP confirmed that the site has been completely transformed by agriculture, with no natural areas remaining. The HIA likewise records that the entire study area has been transformed through agriculture (mainly vineyards) and urbanisation, and that little of the original vegetation remains. Moreover, it is important to note that there are no mature milkwoods on the subject properties. No further assessment of this theme is required. The landscape plan restricts landscaping to indigenous, water-efficient species, and the EMPr requires an alien invasive plant management plan.

Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme – Very high Sensitivity – A site visit by the EAP confirmed that the site has been completely transformed by agriculture, with no natural areas remaining, and this is consistent with the HIA. No further assessment of this theme is required. The layout retains the vineyards and the *Ficus nitida* avenue, and the landscape plan provides indigenous planting and biodiversity corridors that support ecological connectivity.

PRELIMINARY SITE ASSESSMENT

Environmental Screening

According to national and provincial systematic conservation mapping including the South African Vegetation Map and the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (WCBSP) the subject property (Erven 597, 598, and 599, Stanford) is mapped as falling within Elim Ferricrete Fynbos (SAVEG MAP, 2024). Because Elim Ferricrete Fynbos is classified as an Endangered ecosystem, the DFFE National Web-Based Environmental Screening Tool assigns a Very High sensitivity rating to the Terrestrial Biodiversity theme and maps portions of the site as Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA 1) (WCBSP, 2023). However, this desktop sensitivity classification reflects the theoretical, underlying historical vegetation type rather than the ground-truthed ecological condition of the property.

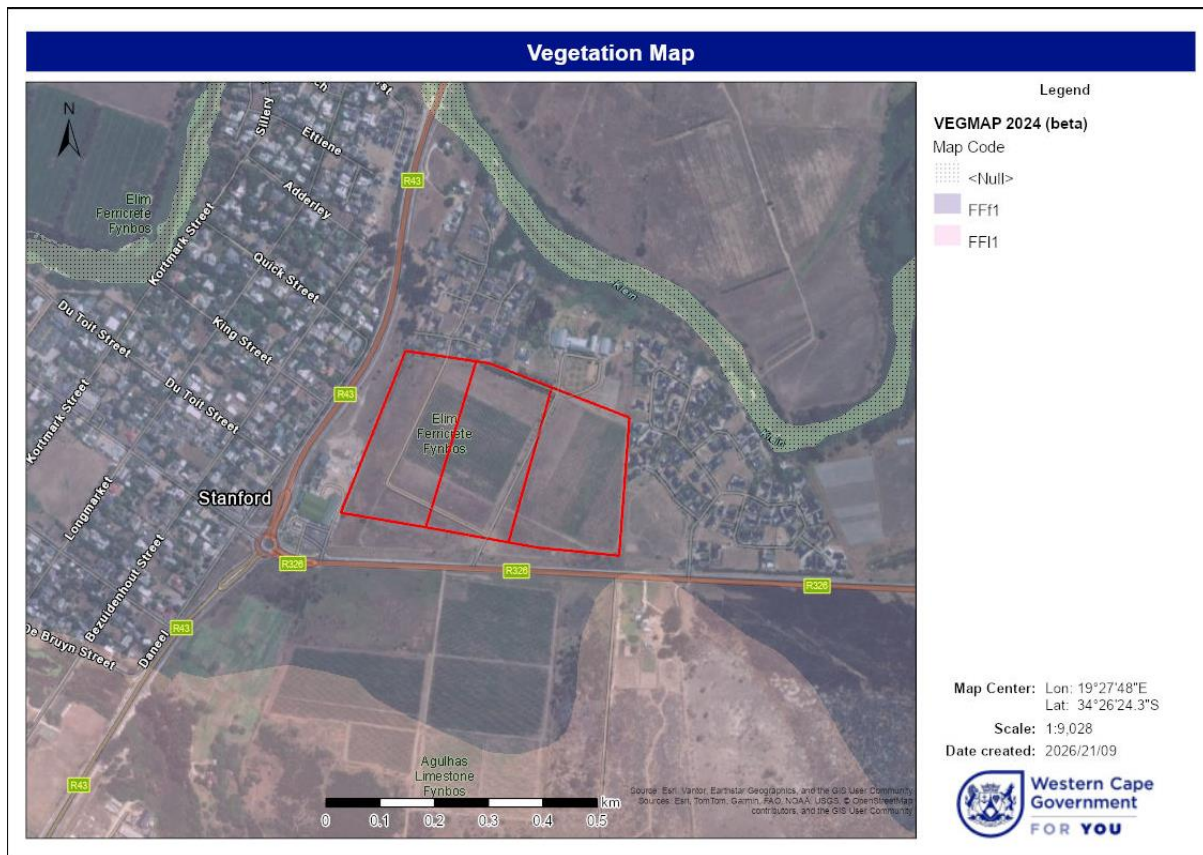


Figure 3: SA Vegetation Map (2024) shows that the subject property falls within Elim Ferricrete Fynbos.



Figure 4: The project site consists of areas falling within CBA1; terrestrial. However, the site is currently in a transformed state with no remaining vegetation associated with the Elim Ferricrete Fynbos.

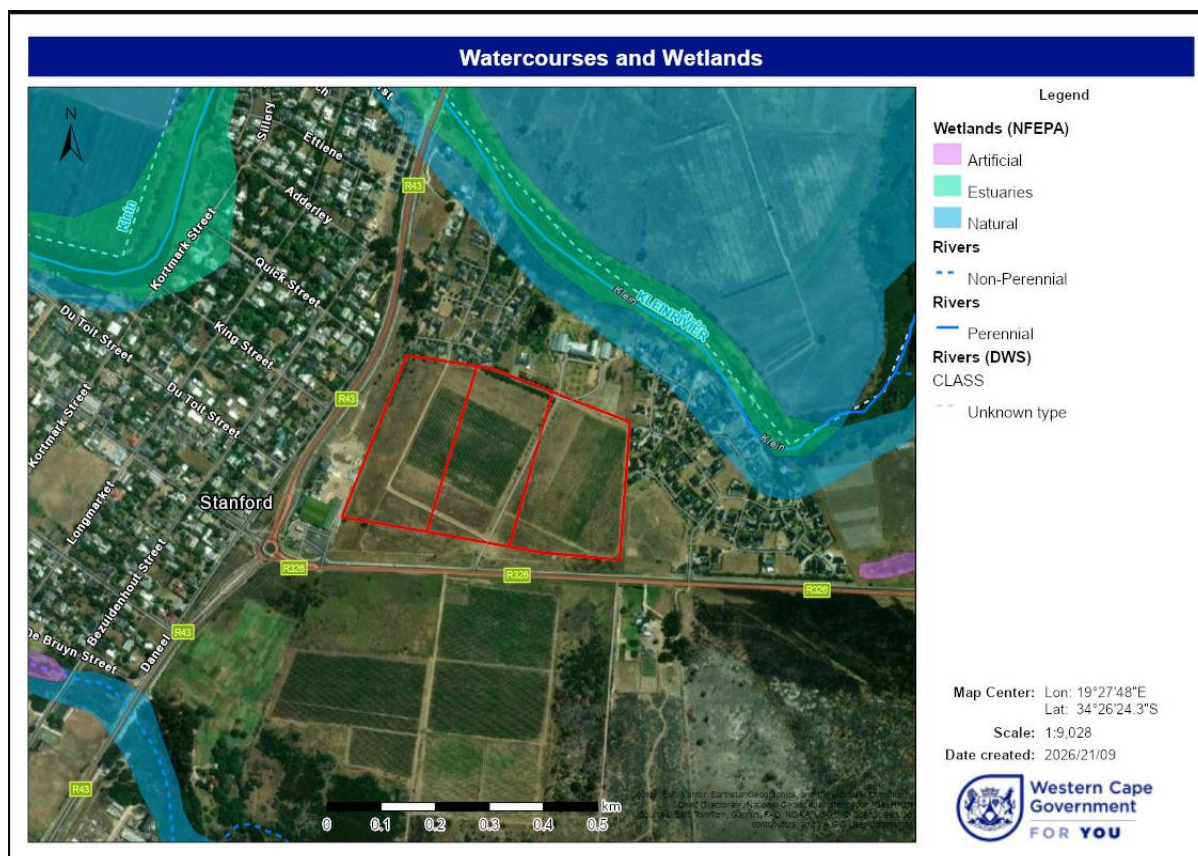


Figure 5: No wetlands or watercourse mapped for the subject property.

The condition of the property has been verified from several independent sources. Aerial photography shows that the site has been transformed by agricultural activity and is characterised by vineyard blocks, fallow land where vineyards have been removed, a remnant avenue of *Ficus nitida* trees, and right-of-way access roads serving the Walker Bay Winery, the Walker Bay Estate and the Klein Rivier Estate. A site visit was conducted by the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) on 17 April 2025, which confirmed that the site is completely transformed by agriculture, with no natural vegetation and no exposed bedrock. Satellite imagery reviewed in April 2026 as part of the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment (Banzai Environmental, April 2026) confirms that these conditions have not changed, and that no new ground disturbance has occurred. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) with integrated Cultural Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, which included fieldwork in 2025, is consistent with this finding. It records that the site has been transformed by agricultural practices over the past 50 years, and that the entire Stanford East study area has been transformed through agriculture and urbanisation, with little of the original vegetation remaining. The site is predominantly flat and has no mapped surface drainage features, wetlands or wetland indicators.

The HIA identifies the landscape features of ecological and cultural value in the surrounding area, namely the Klein River, the Millstream Eye and its associated milkwood trees to the south of the site, the wetland and ecological support area on the neighbouring property at the corner of the R43 and the R326/R362, and the potential ecological corridor to the Walker Bay Nature Reserve. These lie outside the development area. The proposed layout retains the existing vineyards as open space and incorporates the *Ficus nitida* avenue. The landscape plan also provides indigenous planting, north–south biodiversity corridors and stormwater swales, which contribute to ecological connectivity that the site does not currently offer. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) includes measures for the protection of these features, for stormwater management, and for the management of alien invasive plants during construction and operation.



Aerial view of the site shows that it has been transformed by agricultural activities and characterised by vineyards and the access roads.





Originally classified as Elim Ferricrete Fynbos – no longer characterised as such.

Site visit was conducted by the EAP in April 2025 – the site is completely transformed by Agriculture.

CONCLUSION

The Terrestrial Biodiversity sensitivity rating and the CBA 1 mapping reflect the historical vegetation type and not the present condition of the site, which has been completely transformed by agriculture and contains no remaining Elim Ferricrete Fynbos, no wetlands and no watercourses. It is therefore the opinion of the EAP that no further biodiversity specialist input is required to inform the Application for Environmental Authorisation. Specialist input has, however, been obtained for the heritage, cultural landscape, visual and palaeontological aspects, as required by Heritage Western Cape, and the findings and recommendations of those studies have been incorporated into the EMPr.