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South African Heritage Resources Agency
PO Box 4637
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Dear SAHRA

PROPOSED NEW FACILITIES AT KIRSTENBOSCH NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDEN, CAPE TOWN

I write to inform you of a proposed development that will take place in the declared “Cape Floral Region Protected Areas” World Heritage Site (WHS). It was unfortunately not possible to locate a detailed map (indicating cadastral boundaries) of the WHS. Sources consulted in this regard include:

- UNESCO: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1007/>
- South African National Botanical Institute (SANBI)
- South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS); and
- South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA; staff member consulted was Benedict Rodgers).

However, it seems that the proposed development lies within the WHS and thus it was deemed appropriate to notify SAHRA of the proposal and obtain their comment.

The Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden is located off Rhodes Drive (M63), Bishop’s Court, Western Cape. The land has a long history dating to the earliest years of colonial occupation, but it was only after 1913 that the garden was developed.

Existing buildings and infrastructure at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden

The development will occur on the Remainder of Farm 857, near its easternmost corner. In this area, adjacent to Rhodes Drive, is the Botanical Garden’s administrative area. There are several buildings currently present. Close to the road a prefabricated building is present. For the purposes of this application, this area is known as “Area 1”. To the west is a brick and mortar building, “Area 2”, while a third structure relevant to this proposal and located between the two is called “Fynbos Lodge”.

Proposed infrastructure developments for the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens

SANBI has been allocated funds by the DEA for the period 2013/14- 2015/16 for refurbishment, upgrading, repair and maintenance of existing immovable infrastructure, vehicles and equipment as well as the construction of new infrastructure.

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The DEA funded developments will address the needs of SANBI from an administrative research and educational and tourism perspective.

The proposed infrastructure upgrades for the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden will entail the following:

Area 1

- The existing prefabricated building will be removed.
- The site will be converted into a small parking area.
- The proposed parking area is within 32m of the Liesbeek River.
- Some of the existing garden located directly in front of the prefabricated building will have to be removed to accommodate the parking area. The architects have stated that they want to retain as much of this existing garden section as possible.

Area 2

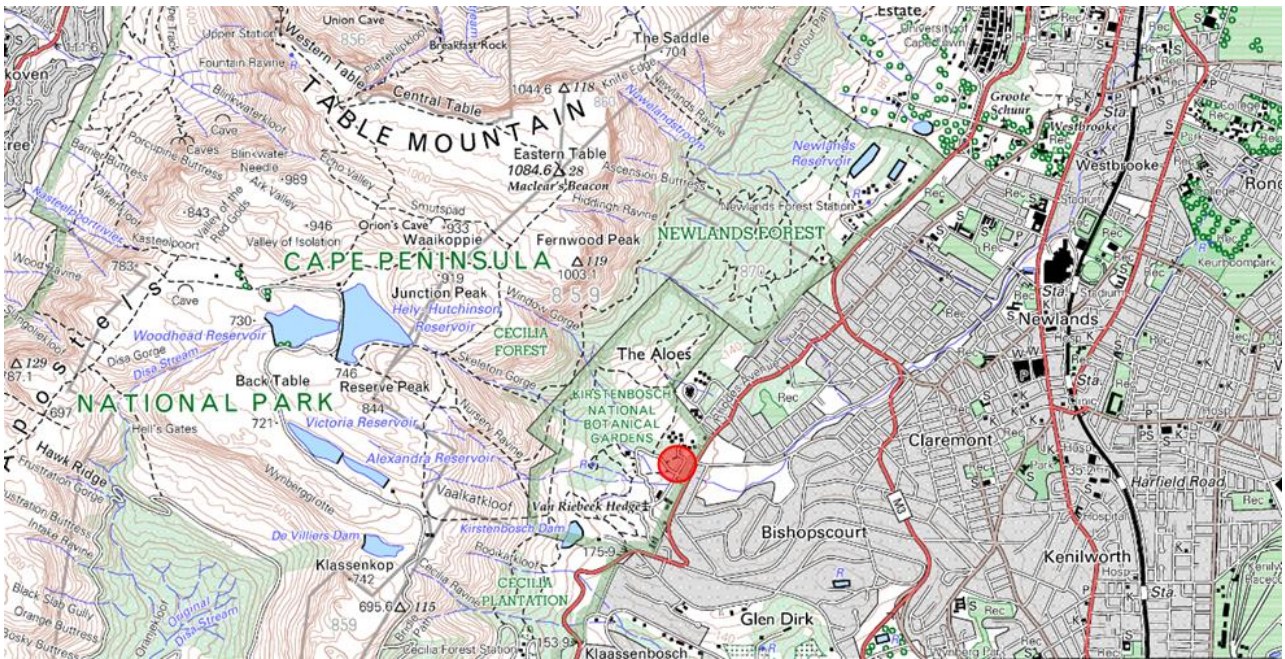
- The existing administration building (marked “Kirstenbosch Head Office” on the attached site plans) will be demolished. This building is c. 30 years old.
- A new administration building will be constructed in its place.
- The administration building will be approximately within the existing development.
- No new bulk services will be required as the site is already serviced.
- The administration building will have an additional storey to accommodate more people into the building.

Fynbos Lodge

- The building titled “lab” on the attached site plan is the Fynbos Lodge
- The current roof will be removed and replaced with something that will have a similar appearance, probably a Nu-Tec product (fibre cement).
- There will be small interior renovations to the building - painting, replacing of counter tops etc.
- No structural changes will occur to the building.

All proposed development works will occur within the existing developed area of the site. The figures below illustrate the location of the proposed development as follows:

1. Map of the Bishop’s Court area showing location of site (red circle);
2. Aerial view of the easternmost part of Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden showing location of existing structures and work to be carried out; and
3. Architect plan of site showing location of the current structures (1 = Area 1; 2 = Area 2; Lab = Fynbos Lodge).



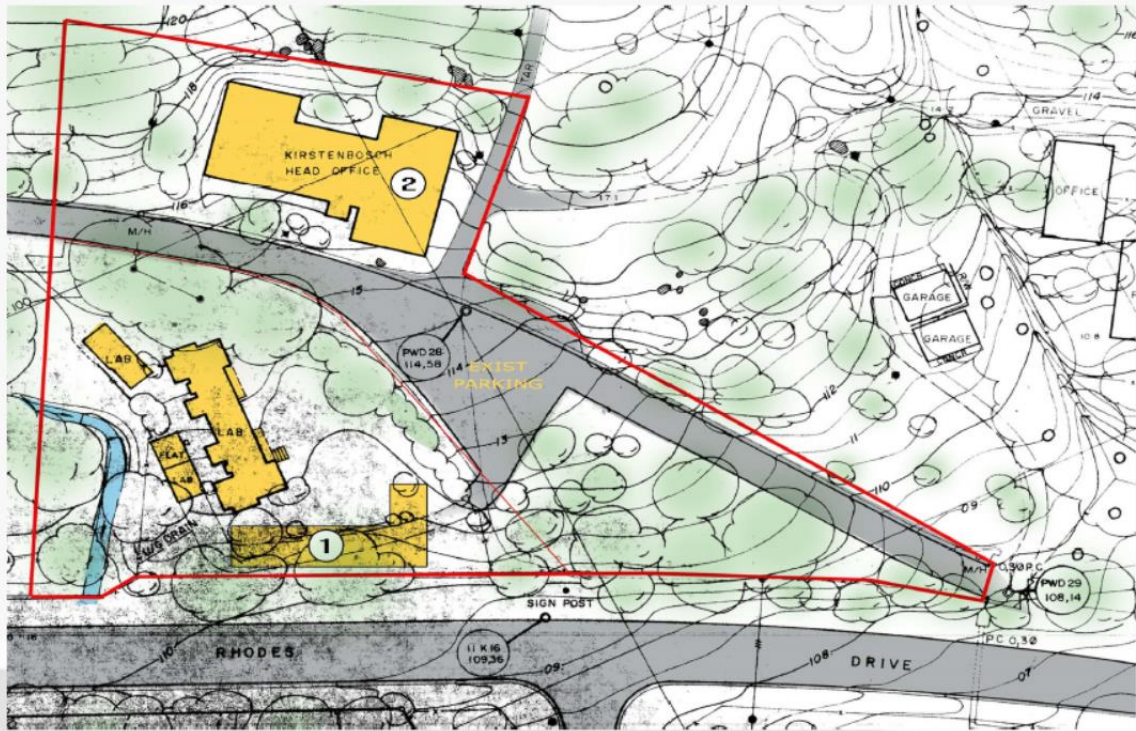
Although the site (Rem Farm 857) is greater than 5000 m² (it is 149.8941 ha), there is doubt as to whether section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) is triggered because the site is already partly developed and there will not be a change in character. However, because it appears to be located inside the WHS, all heritage authorities are being informed of the development. In addition, the Fynbos Lodge is greater than 60 years of age and a Built Environment application to HWC will be required.

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The present writer believes that, although the development is within the WHS, there will be no significant negative impacts to the WHS. In fact, through the provision of improved administrative facilities, there is likely to be a small positive impact (benefit) to the WHS. It is thus deemed an appropriate development and, because no significant negative impacts will be experienced and the land use is to remain unchanged, it is recommended that the project be allowed to proceed with no further heritage studies being required, with the exception of the Built Environment permit application for the minor alterations to Fynbos Lodge. SAHRA is thus hereby requested to issue a positive comment (if in agreement with this conclusion) that may be used in fulfilment of the heritage requirements of the development proposal.

Heritage Western Cape has also been informed of the proposed development through their Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) form and it is anticipated that no further studies will be required by them.

Yours sincerely

Jayson Orton