



CONTRACT MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGIST

Vanessa Maitland

082 490 4066

277 Main Road, Hout Bay, 7806

vanessa@cocojams.co.za

vanessa.maitland@gmail.com

Skype: vanessa.maitland1

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Re: Statement on Maritime Structures at Gansbaai and Still Bay Harbours

According to the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) Section 34. (1), “*No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.*”

To this end SAHRA has requested the ages of the maritime infrastructure in the harbours of Gansbaai and Still Bay that will be affected by the Maintenance Management Plans developed by the Coega Development Corporation on behalf of the National Department of Public Works (2017).

Therefore, any structure that was constructed prior to 1957 will bring into force the above-mentioned act.

Any structure below the low-water mark fall under SAHRA’s Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit. All structures above the low-water mark fall under Heritage Western Cape.

Note: I read the MMPs for these two harbours and note that dredging the harbours is part of the plan. Has an Underwater Heritage Impact Assessment been undertaken on these areas? They are both well-known shipwreck trap areas and there are several recorded shipwrecks in the areas.

Still Bay Harbour:

Construction on the harbour started in 1933 and ended a few years later (Carter and Brownlie 1990). These structures therefore require a permit.

Gansbaai New Harbour:

Repair slipways are to be built at Hermanus and at Kalk Bay.

Gansbaai harbor, which has become too small for the growing fishing industry of the town, is to be greatly enlarged at an estimated cost of R1 million (\$1.4 million).

To further encourage the development of the fishing industry on the Cape south-west coast, investigations will be made into the possibility of building a new harbor at Stilbaai, south of Morris Point. (The South African Shipping News and Fishing Industry Review, July 1963.)

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According to the above article (Gibbs 1963) the New Harbour in Gansbaai was not yet constructed. Ergo it does not require a permit, as it is younger than 60 years old.

Old Gansbaai Harbour

Although fishing has been an integral constituent of Gansbaai life since 1811, when the first reed-and-daub fishermen huts were built in the area. It was only in the early 20th century that harbour development was undertaken.



Figure 1: The original landing place in Gansbaai. Rocks have been cleared and there is some formal structure to the right of the image.

In January 1919, the “landing place” was improved by provincial authorities and rocks were removed to make place for ten boats. These were small fishing boats that were manned by 4 oarsmen and a pilot. In 1923 the provincial government proclaimed Gansbaai a Small Harbour. This paved the way for more development, funded by the government. Between 1934 and 1935 a concrete wall was laid, I believe this refers to the quay wall at the landing place.

Breakwater 1 and 2 were built in 1939. Slipway 1 (mechanised) and Slipway 2 were built in 1947.

These structures therefore require a permit.

In conclusion, the Still Bay Harbour and the Old Gansbaai Harbour maritime structures are older than sixty years and therefore require a permit to enable the MMP to go forward. Perhaps, before any work is done, a full photographic survey and proper mapping of the structures should be undertaken, in order to preserve the structural information.

Please contact me should there be any further queries.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maitland', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Vanessa Maitland

References:

Barnard, Elizabeth. 1986. 'n Kultuurhistoriese Beeld van Gansbaai en Ongewing. MA Thesis: University of Stellenbosch.

Carter, R.A. and Brownlie, S. 1990. Estuaries of the Cape: Part II: Synopses of available information on individual systems. Rep. no. 34. Kafferskuil (CSW 24) and Duiwenhoks (CSW 23). Heydorn, A.E.F. and Morant, P.D. (eds) Stellenbosch: CSIR Research Report 433.

Gibbs, Robert H. 1963. Commercial Fisheries Review. 25 (7). US Dept. of the Interior. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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