

**HERITAGE STATEMENT
PORTION OF ERF 8343 AND REMAINDER
ERF 2224 HOUT BAY:
PROPOSED CONSOLIDATION
AND SUBDIVISION**



View over the Dairy from Blue Valley Road

June 2005

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1. BACKGROUND.

Aikman Associates: Heritage Management, independent heritage consultants have been commissioned by owners of the abovementioned properties, to undertake a preliminary heritage investigation. The purpose of which is to determine the vulnerability of Erven 8343 and R/2224 Hout Bay to development. It is proposed to develop the property for residential use in terms of existing land-use rights.

The application involves the following;

- The Consolidation of Portion A of Erf 8343 and the Remainder of Erf 2224 Hout Bay; and
- The subdivision of the consolidated erf.

J Paul van Wyk Urban Economists and Planners have made application, as set out above in terms of Section 24(1) of the Land Use Planning Ordinance, 1985 (No 15 of 1985).

A separate Phase 1 archaeological survey has been undertaken by the Agency for Cultural Resource Management. This revealed no surface evidence of archaeological material.

In terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999) the heritage authorities must be informed of a proposal of this nature. This report forms part of the *Notification of Intent to Develop* submission to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) and to the Heritage Resources Section of the City of Cape Town.

A limited programme has been undertaken. This involved a site survey to establish whether any heritage resources were present on the site. An analysis of historical maps and aerial photographs was also undertaken to establish whether any structures or heritage resources had existed in the past or whether any human activity had taken place on the property. Discussions were held with Mr. Alan Dorman whose family has farmed this property for many years.

Henry Aikman, the principal of the firm who carried out the survey and prepared the report is an accredited member of the Association of Heritage Practitioners: Western Cape.

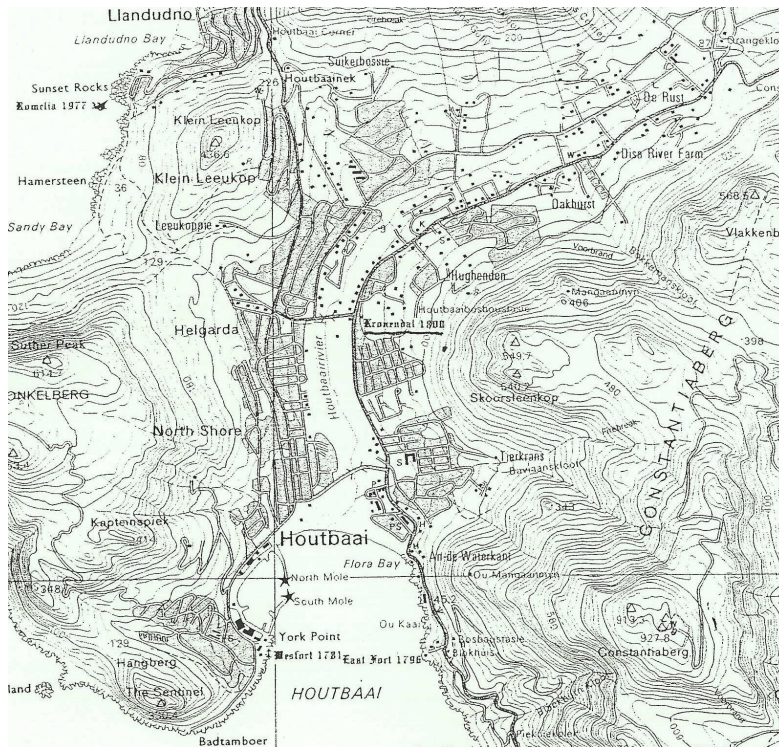
2. LOCALITY

The property is the last portion of Oakhurst Farm that is to be developed. It is on the northern slopes of Skoorsteenkop Mountain, straddling the Bokkemannskloof River, Hout Bay. It is one of the last remaining undeveloped properties in this area.

3. SETTING

The property is bordered on the south by the Table Mountain National Park and by existing residential development to the west and east.

The proposed arterial "High Level" road reserve traverses the property at an oblique angle and it is divided by the water pipe track.



Locality Plan: Oakhurst Farm is clearly shown south of the Constantia Main Road towards Constantia Neck

This is one of the last remaining large undeveloped pieces of land in the area, which has seen fairly rapid development over the last few years. There is no distinctive architectural character in the surrounding development, which is characterised by various post-modern expressions.

4. STATUTORY CONTEXT

The current zoning of both constituent properties is Subdivisional Area (approved on 13 July 1994) for the purposes of:

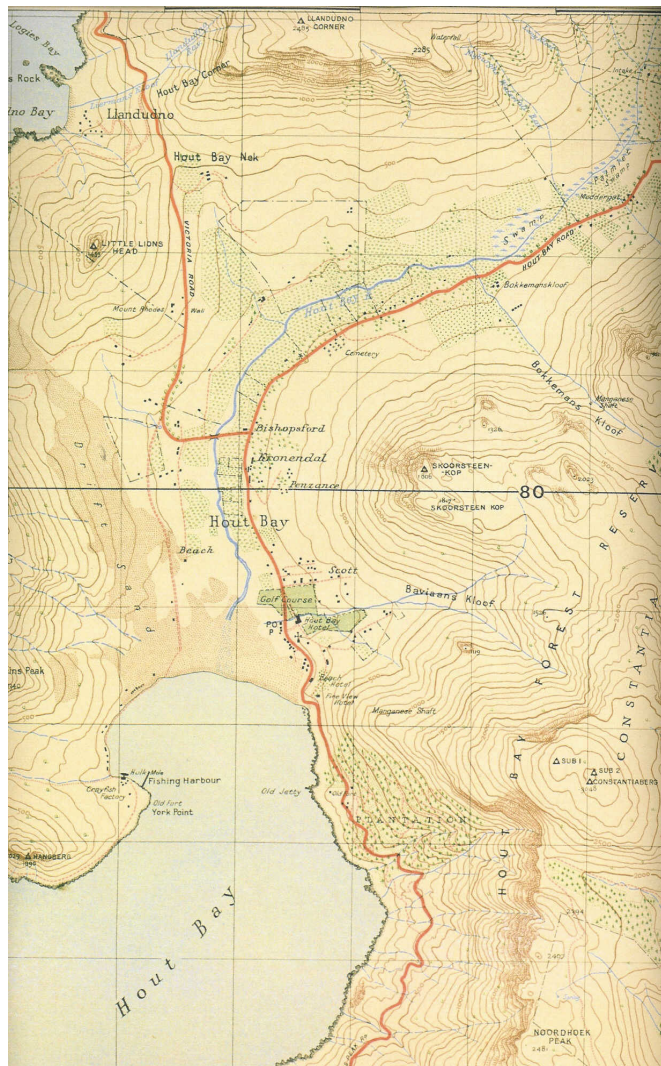
- Portion A of Erf 8343 (0,3073 hectares)
Single residential, roads and open space;
- Remainder Erf 2224 (77,9524 hectares)
Single, Special and rural residential, open space (public and private), roads (public and private).

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site is one of the last remaining undeveloped properties in the Hout Bay valley. The properties were once part of an extensive estate farmed by the Dorman family from the early 20th century until the 1980's when the farm was first subdivided for urban development. As outlined above the local authority has approved the rezoning of the entire property to permit further development.

5.1 Historical development of the area

This area has been farmed since the 18th Century. Stock was grazed on the mountainside and along the river corridors. As the settlement at the Cape grew agriculture diversified. Hout Bay's fertile soils and abundant water and proximity to Cape Town led to it becoming an important area for the production of wine and vegetables. Vineyards were established on the lower slopes during the 19th Century and vegetables were produced along the Disa River and its tributaries like this, the Bokkemanskloof. The Dorman family put the area under intensive use from the early 20th Century growing vegetables for the Cape Town market, table grapes and olives. They also had a dairy. The centrepiece of the farm was the Edwardian style manor house and its outbuildings close to the historic Constantia Road. It may have been built on earlier foundations, as the old oaks around the house are well over 100 years old. Because of the complex topography of this area, the landscape is fragmented. The 1945 aerial photograph shows a mosaic of small fields, vineyards, olive groves and windbreaks. The farmstead complex still remains but is sited on a separate property, Erf 2958.



Portion of 1934 Trig Survey map showing Bokkemanskloof stream
Oakhurst vineyards and a group of cottages.



1945 aerial photograph with the dairy and stables ringed. The vineyards and olive grove to the west of the Bokkemans River can be seen. The oak tree canopy obscures the farmstead, cottage and dwelling

By the 1980's Hout Bay was being rapidly urbanised and farming was no longer viable. Large areas of the farm were left fallow and a process of subdivision commenced. Several portions of the farm were developed as residential townships.

5.2 Topography and vegetation

The municipal pipe track traverses the property, effectively dividing it into two portions. The property is very steep at the southern end with sandstone cliffs and rocky outcrops. There are steep scree slopes of more than 1:3. The middle portion of the property which falls from the scree slopes towards the pipe track has slopes of between 1:3 and 1:6 with shallow soils and isolated groups of granite and sandstone boulders, some of which are very large. Below the track it falls evenly towards the Main Road with slopes of less than 1:6. The Bokkemanskloof Stream enters the property at the southeast corner and traverses it from south to north. The banks of the stream are steep as a result of soil erosion. A large culvert has been built to carry the water of the stream under the pipe track.

When farming was abandoned many years ago on the upper parts of the property it was colonized by invasive alien vegetation including acacias. Regular veld fires on these slopes aggravated the situation and by the end of the 20th Century most of the upper parts of the property were inaccessible with an impenetrable barrier of long leaf wattle, (*Acacia longifolia*). An extensive

clearing programme was undertaken in 2004 and most of the acacias have been removed.

A large stand of sugar gums straddles the pipe track in the central section of the property. These trees were extensively planted from the end of the 19th Century. The sugar gum, (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) was one of the many eucalypts introduced by Joseph Storr-Lister for the Cape Colonial Government. He headed the forestry service from 1875. It had been found that there were few indigenous trees that could be used in commercial forestry at the Cape and he consequently introduced hundreds of species of exotic trees, which were grown in trials at Tokai (The Arboretum dates from this era).¹ Farmers were encouraged to plant them.

The sugar gum comes from South Australia, which has a similar Mediterranean climate to the Western Cape. It has become the most widely planted of all the gums. Its abundance of nectar made it the ideal tree for the production of honey. It was also used to produce fence poles as they respond well to coppicing and it was used to provide firebreaks. It is thought that these trees were originally planted for this purpose.

The sugar gum is considered to be an invasive alien tree in terms of the Regulations of the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (No. 43 of 1983)(CARA). It is classified as a Category 2 invasive alien and may only be grown under controlled conditions.



Stand of sugar gums close to the pipe track



Palmiet survives in places along the river

There are many oak trees in the area from the old labourer's cottage to the Main Road. These are part of the oak woodland setting of the Oakhurst farmstead.² They appear to be at least 100 years old and are probably successors to trees planted in the 18th Century. Oaks were planted in their thousands by the VOC as the indigenous forests were felled. Although the timber from Cape oaks proved to be poor, they were planted by the free burghers to provide shade and for their generous crop of acorns, which were

¹ Ackerman, D P, Immelman, W F E, Wicht, C L. 1973. Our Green Heritage. Tafelberg, Cape Town.

² Concise Oxford Dictionary. 1992. Clarendon Press. Oxford. Pg 577. Hurst, a wooded eminence. Old English *hyrst*.

fed to pigs.³ The Oakhurst oaks are somewhat of a landmark on the Hout Bay Main Road.

Some indigenous shrubs and trees have survived. There are stands of palmiet, (*Prionium seratum*), at several places along the river, obvious relics of the past. There is a magnificent grove of Klipkershout trees, (*Maytenus oleoides*), high up on the property. They have suffered from fire damage because of the presence of the acacias but they are showing signs of recovery.⁴



View towards the farmstead and the oaks



Grove of Klipkershout trees.

5.3 Structures

There are four buildings on the eastern side of the property; a dwelling about 70m from the Main Road, a small semi-derelict labourers cottage against the boundary at the end of Conifer Road and stables and the old dairy at a higher level. A gravel road that winds up from the Main Road provides access to them all. There are no records/plans of these buildings but the 1945 aerial photograph indicates that they were already in existence at that stage.

The dwelling is U-shaped with a central veranda, (now enclosed) and an external hearth and chimney. This was a common form in the first half of the 20th Century. It has steel framed windows and a 30° 'Big 6' asbestos cement roof, probably a replacement of an earlier corrugated iron one. It is currently unoccupied but is in good condition. It is undistinguished architecturally and is not considered conservation worthy.

The labourer' cottage is a simple rectangular 4m x 12m structure with a 30° double pitch corrugated iron roof and small steel framed windows. It is in poor condition and has been unoccupied for some years.

The stables and old dairy are sited on a broad level platform. The stables are of concrete block construction with a mono-pitch roof. They are in poor condition and are used as storerooms.

³ Ibid. Pg. 213

⁴ Coates Palgrave, K. 1977. Trees of Southern Africa. Struik. Cape Town. Pg 499. S A tree no. 400.



Front of dwelling close to the Main Road



Cottage east of the farm road



Stables in central part of the property



Front of old dairy with gable dated 1939

The old dairy is currently used as a pottery factory. The original building envelope has been retained but new wood fenestration has been introduced to provide light for the pottery works and lean-to extensions have been made. It has also been re-roofed. Apart from the outer walls little of the original fabric remains. None of the buildings can be considered conservation worthy. Nevertheless allowance has been made for their retention.

There are a number of derelict stone weirs, ponds and cemented water channels feeding water from the river to the dairy area and the dams. These were part of the farm's now defunct irrigation system built at the time that the dairy was constructed in the late 1930's. They have not been in use for many years and are in poor condition.

A concrete bridge has been built to cross the river. This is of recent construction and is not of any heritage significance.



Remains of stone lined pond close to the river



Derelict masonry water intake

6. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The heritage or cultural attributes of a site can be grouped into four categories: aesthetic, historic, scientific and social. Significance for this property can be found in the historic, aesthetic and scientific categories.

The map and aerial photographic analysis and site survey showed some evidence of historic development on this portion of the property in the form of the four remaining buildings dating from the first half of the 20th Century. These are fairly typical examples of buildings dating from this era and are not considered to be conservation worthy. The archaeological survey found that the site was not sensitive to development. There is no evidence that this portion of the property has any social significance.

- **Historic significance**

The Oakhurst farmstead is set in oak woodland. The trees are probably successors to trees planted in the 18th Century. A section of this woodland is sited on Erf 2224. The oaks of the Hout Bay valley are of undoubted historic heritage significance and should be given a Grade 3A status.⁵

- **Aesthetic significance**

Genius Loci

The spirit or sense of place is that quality that is imparted by the aspects of scale, colour, texture, landform, and in particular, land use. According to Lynch, *"it is the extent to which a person can recognise or recall a place as being distinct from other places as having a vivid or unique or at least a particular character of its own."*⁶

The oak woodland of Oakhurst is an important cultural landscape element of undoubted significance. It is an intrinsic part of the experience of the Hout Bay Main Road. Accordingly the trees should be given a Grade 3A status.⁷

⁵ Interim System of Grading, Annexure 1

⁶ Lynch, K. 1992. Good City Form: The MIT Press. London.

⁷ Ibid. Interim System

The Bokkemanskloof riverine corridor, which crosses both Erf 8343 and 8293, is an important structural element in the cultural landscape of Hout Bay. The corridor and its vegetation should also be given Grade 3A status and protection in terms of its aesthetic significance.⁸

- **Scientific Significance**

The Bokkemanskloof stream and corridor, although largely degraded by urbanization, agriculture and forestry along almost each reach of the system, is undoubtedly ecologically important and is therefore of heritage significance. There is still some relic palmiet, riverine bush and trees. Since the removal of the invasive acacias the corridor is showing signs that it is recovering. In order for it to reach its at least some of its potential, a landscape rehabilitation plan will be needed.

These ecological corridor areas should be given Grade 3A status and protection in terms of its scientific significance.⁹

7. THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

As mentioned above, provision has been made in the plan of subdivision to accommodate all four of the buildings described in Section 5.3 of this report.

A plan of the proposed subdivision is attached. (Plan Number ER /2444 HBAY SUBDIV/1). This indicates that the property is to be subdivided into a total of 86 units, with 73 being Single Residential Units (the single residential erven are to vary in size from 650m² to 4000m²). One Special Residential unit (group housing) is proposed. There are to be two Rural Purposes erven and the balance is to be Roads, Private Open Space or Open Space.

The scheme is consistent with planning policy for the area and subdivisional approvals granted in 1994.

A design manual has been developed to ensure that the residential development on the site is appropriate in scale and has an overall design coherence.

8. CONCLUSION

The scheme provides for the protection of all three categories of the property's heritage/cultural significance, historic, aesthetic and scientific.

- **Historic significance**

The oak trees are to be accommodated on a series of Single Residential erven. While some trees may have to be removed to accommodate new dwellings, most trees can be retained within the proposed layout. Provision must however be made for their protection and succession.

Although the four buildings on the site (all of which are more than 60 years old and are not considered to have any historical or aesthetic significance) allowance has been made to accommodate them within the proposed layout.

⁸ Ibid. Interim System

⁹ Ibid. Interim System

- **Aesthetic significance**

The layout makes provision for the retention of the oak woodland on the property. Again, provision must however be made for their protection and succession.

Provision has also been made to accommodate the entire riverine corridor within Private Open Space or within two erven zoned for Rural Purposes. This would meet heritage requirements outlined in Section 6 above.

- **Scientific Significance**

The riverine corridor is to be protected in the proposed layout. A landscape management plan will be needed to ensure that it is rehabilitated.

The Klipkershout grove is to be accommodated within one of the large Rural erven. Provision should be made for its protection.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following detailed recommendations arising from this assessment are made:

- Provision must be made for the protection and succession of the oak woodland. A landscape plan should be prepared in this regard.
- Provision must be made for the protection and rehabilitation of the riverine corridor vegetation. A landscape management plan should be prepared in this regard.
- Provision should be made for the protection of the Klipkershout grove on the Rural Purposes erf.
- No further Heritage Impact Assessment is required.

Henry Aikman
June 2005

ANNEXURE 1

An Interim System for Grading Significance **(After Baumann and Winter, 2004)**

The NHR Act makes provision for a three-tier system for grading heritage resources, namely:

- Grade I: Heritage resources with qualities so exceptional that they are of special national significance.
- Grade II: Heritage resources with special qualities, which make them significant in the context of a province or region.
- Grade III: Heritage resources worthy of conservation or within a local context.

In terms of the NHR Act, heritage resources declared National Monuments in terms of the National Monuments Act (Act of 1969, amended in 1989) automatically become Grade 2 heritage resources or provincial heritage sites.

Detailed criteria for determining Grade 1, 2 and 3 heritage resources are still to be formulated in terms of regulations of the NHR Act. These criteria have thus been broadened for the purposes of this study.

While this grading system implies a hierarchical order of significance, it should rather relate to varying contexts to which significance may apply, namely national, provincial or local context or to appropriate levels of heritage management, namely national, provincial or local authority level. Local significance does not imply that heritage resources are relatively unimportant or that they should be afforded less protection than a provincial or national heritage resource.

Most heritage resources in South Africa are to be designated as Grade 3. In terms of the broad range of heritage resources included in this category and their different heritage management requirements, various sub-categories of Grade 3 have been formulated, namely Grade 3A, 3B and 3C. The criteria included under each sub-category are based on a combination of the three sets of criteria outlined above.

GRADE 3A

INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Historical fabric is mostly intact (past damage is reversible)
- Fabric possesses very strong evidence for historical layering
- Most elements of construction are authentic
- Fabric dates to the early origins of a place
- Rare or excellent example of its type or form
- Fabric clearly illustrates an historical period in the evolution of a place
- Fabric clearly illustrates the key uses and roles of a place over time.

ASSOCIATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Highly significant association with an historic person or social grouping
- Highly significant association with historic events or activities
- Highly significant association with the key uses or roles of a place over time
- Highly valued in terms of its association with public memory
- Highly valued in terms of its association with living heritage

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Historical and/or visual-spatial landmark within a place
- Contributes significantly to the environmental quality of a Grade 1 or 2 heritage resource

GRADE 3B:

INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Historical fabric is partially intact (past damaged is reversible)

- Some evidence for historical layering
- Some elements of construction are authentic
- Fabric dates to an historical period in the evolution of a place
- Typical or good example of a type and form
- Fabric illustrates an historical period in the evolution of a place
- Fabric illustrates the key uses and roles of a place over time

ASSOCIATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Some association with an historic person or social grouping
- Some association with historic events or activities
- Some association with the uses or roles of a place over time
- Some association with public memory
- Some association with living heritage

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Contributes significantly to the historical, visual-spatial character of a place
- Contributes significantly to the quality of setting of a Grade 3A heritage resource.

GRADE 3C:

INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE

- Historical fabric is significantly altered (scale and form still intact)
- Limited evidence for historical layering
- Few elements of construction are authentic
- Remaining fabric has historical value (older than 60 years)
- Remaining fabric contributes to understanding of uses and roles of place over time

ASSOCIATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Limited association with historic person/s or social grouping/s
- Limited association with historic events and activities
- Limited association with the uses or roles of a place over time
- Limited value in terms of public memory
- Limited association with living heritage

CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Contributes to the broader historical, visual-spatial character of a place
- Contributes to the environmental quality of a Grade 3A/B heritage resource

Where appropriate this broadly defined grading system has been used in this heritage study. In some cases it is difficult to define heritage significance in terms of the abovementioned grading system. In this regard, the following levels of significance have been used.

- Highly significant;
- Significant;
- Limited/low significance;
- Contributing; and
- Potentially significant