

MANDELA PRISON HOUSE; DRAKENSTEIN REPORT ON DECISION TO RETAIN THE PRESENT DEMARCATION OF THE NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

This submission relates to a request made by Mr Vusi Ndims, Deputy Director General, National Department of Public Works at a site meeting at the Nelson Mandela Prison House on 30th July 2013 for further motivation for the proposed revision of the boundaries for the area declared as a National Heritage Site. The submission is made to SAHRA who will be responsible for distributing the report to the relevant government departments, including the following ministers: Minister Mashatile, Minister Thembaleni T. Nxesi and Minister J.S. Ndebele as per an instruction from Alicia Monis from the Department of Arts and Culture, dated 31 July 2013.08.12

1. Government Notice No. 32403 dated 15th July 2009 included the Declaration from the Department of Arts and Culture, South African Heritage Agency, of "Madiba House", Farm Watervliet, Portion 2 of Farm 942, Drakenstein Correctional Services (formally known as Victor Verster Prison), as a National Heritage Site.

The Statement of Significance accompanying the Declaration includes the following statement:

"Drakenstein Correctional Services (Victor Verster Prison) seen as an isolated yet more 'comfortable place of imprisonment' was used as the vehicle to facilitate negotiations between the Apartheid Government and the liberation movement. In this controlled environment, the freedom of South African Society was facilitated, leading to negotiations around the Freedom Charter and a future democratic South Africa, which ultimately framed the basis of our current constitution".

This statement of significance, and further statements of significance included in the draft Integrated Conservation Management Plan, (ICMP), thus fore-grounded the political and symbolic role of the house as the location for negotiations. While the isolated nature of the house is significant it is not the primary component of significance.

2. A draft ICMP was compiled in December 2012 under the chairmanship of the National Department of Public Works with representation from the Departments of Arts and Culture, Correctional Services and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Relevant stakeholders who were consulted and to whom the draft ICMP was submitted included the following:

- The Nelson Mandela Foundation
- The Mandela Rhodes Foundation.
- The Ex-Combatants Association.
- The Robben Island Museum.
- Drakenstein Municipality.
- Cape Winelands Tourism.

A central issue raised in the Background Information Document (BID) distributed to all stakeholders and in the subsequent draft ICMP dated December 2012 was the need to re-

evaluate the extent of the declared area in terms of the identified nature of heritage significance.

The draft ICMP makes the recommendation for the reduction in size of the proposed National Heritage Site presently comprising Portion 2 of Farm Watervliet No. 942, currently 42.37 ha. in extent to an area of approximately 9.68 ha. to include the house and its immediate surrounds. The proposed rezoning from Authority Zone to Institutional Zone 1 to allow for the Visitor's Centre would only affect the reduced area, not the farm as a whole.

3. No objections to the proposed reduction in scale of the National Heritage Site were received from the stakeholders involved.

However, in response to a submission made to SAHRA's BELCOM (SAHRA Minute of 25th March 2013) the physical extent of the erf declared as a National Heritage Site was identified as a key heritage issue. The minute notes that only a small portion of the property, including the house and adjacent security office are of heritage significance. While the landscape supports the buildings, protection as a NHS is not necessary for the whole property.

In the minute SAHRA supports the approach and content of the ICMP in principle.

"In keeping with the current views of the landscape the declared area should be protected from any large and contextual developments that could negatively impact on the view and sight lines to the landscape. It is understood that the subdivision will allow the necessary land uses (Institutional and Agriculture) to exist harmoniously."

4. The site location and the existing declared area, and the proposed declared area, are illustrated on Figures 1, 2 and 3. Surveyor's diagrams provide the cadastral information for the revised area. The revised area amounts to 9.68 ha.
5. Subsequent to the completion of the draft ICMP and the initiation of the rezoning process, the implications of reducing the scale of the Declared Area has been subjected to further consideration. The planning process has revealed that the whole farm is included within the urban edge as defined in the Drakenstein Spatial Development Framework and is earmarked for tourism related activities (guest houses, function venues etc.). In a communication with the Manager: Land Use Planning, Drakenstein Municipality it is stated that over time residential expansion cannot be ruled out.

Therefore, in order to prevent development encroaching on the site and thus impacting on its contextual significance, and in order to retain the rural setting of the Mandela House, the Steering Committee for the ICMP has taken the decision that the Declared Area should not be reduced.

6. It is thus recommended that:
 - 6.1 That present demarcation of the declared National Heritage Site be retained.
 - 6.2 The existing wording on the Declaration to be adjusted to Nelson Mandela Prison House and not Madiba House as recommended by the Nelson Mandela Foundation.
 - 6.3 The proposed rezoning apply only to the adjusted declared area, not the farm as a whole.
 - 6.4 Consideration be given to the land to the west of the site, up to the Berg River, to be declared a Protected Area in terms of Section 28 of the NHR Act.
 - 6.5 Processes to be identified for the declaration of the area at the entrance gates to the Correctional Facility, where Nelson Mandela walked to his freedom as a National Heritage Site.

Nicolas Baumann
12 September 2013

ANNEXURES:

1. Figure 1: Nelson Mandela Prison House.
2. Figure 2: Existing Declared Area.
3. Figure 3: Site Plan: Area to be rezoned, (Institutional Zone 1).
4. Government Notice re Declaration of "Madiba House" as a National Heritage Site No. 32403, dated 15 July 2009.
5. Survey Diagram: Area to be rezoned, (Institutional Zone 1).
6. Cadastral image on aerial photograph. Area to be rezoned, (Institutional Zone 1).
7. Topocadastral plan. Area to be rezoned, (Institutional Zone 1).