

A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A PORTION OF LAND NEAR HARKERVILLE, KNYSNA

PORTION 6 OF THE FARM HARKERVILLE No 422

(As part of a Basic Assessment: Section 38.8 of NHRA)

Prepared for

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Details of the proposed development

Portion 6 of the Farm Harkerville No. 422 is situated in the Harkerville rural node, wedged between the existing N2 and the proposed Bypass road (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3). The site is 7ha in extent. During the upgrade of the Harkerville Intersection, the Roads Authority used the larger part of the site for a road camp where workers stayed during the construction period. The area was also used for the storage of construction materials, vehicles and machinery during the construction process. These activities destroyed the vegetation on site to such an extent that rehabilitation of the site will be difficult, if not impossible. Portion 6/422 is currently zoned as "Agriculture 1" according to the Section 8 Scheme Regulations applicable to the area. The remainder of the property has been utilized as a business premises, post office and for single residential purposes for decades¹. Application will be made for rezoning of the Remainder to "Business II" to allow the existing commercial activity.

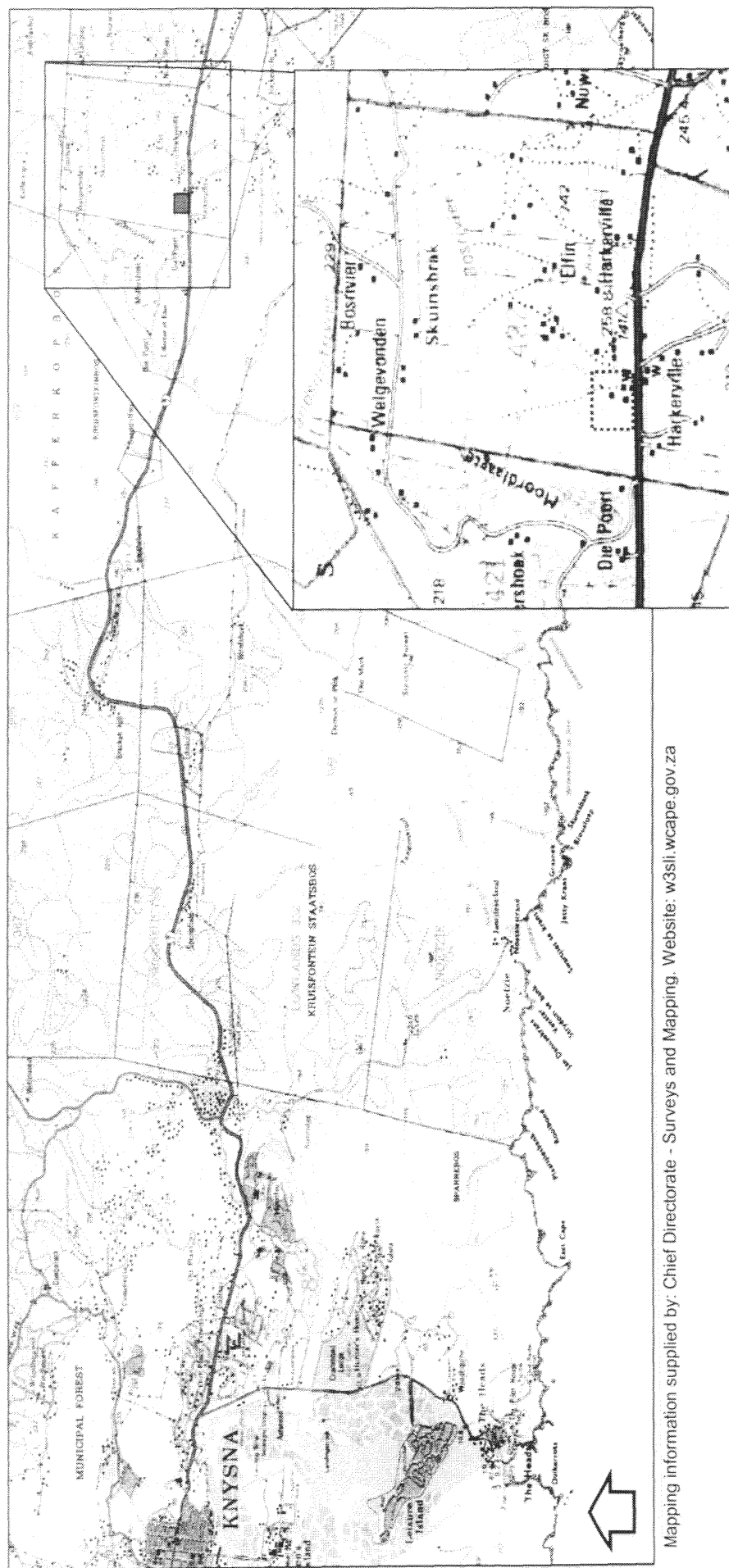
It is proposed that the development area and the existing business premises be cadastrally separated. Portion A is approximately 4.86ha in size and will contain the new development. The remainder is approximately 2.15ha and will include the existing shop, post office and dwelling house. It is the intention of the current owner to retain this portion. The remainder will be subdivided into 55 "Residential 1" erven of approximately 500m² each and a communal "Private Open Space II" Erf (Figure 4). A development density of 11 units per ha is proposed to ensure the financial viability of the project and at the same time to reach the affordability level of the target market.

The Knysna Wilderness Plettenberg Bay Regional Structure Plan earmarks this area for "Agriculture/ Forestry" purposes. To allow the development, application has been made in terms of Section 4(7) of the Land Use Planning Ordinance, 1985 (Ordinance 15 of 1985) for the Amendment of the Regional Structure Plan from "Agriculture" to "Township Development". Application is simultaneously made for the rezoning from "Agriculture 1" to "Sub-divisional Area" in terms of the Land Use Planning Ordinance (Ordinance 15 of 1985) .

1.2 Description of the site

Portion A was used in the recent past as a road camp during upgrading of the N2. As a result, little vegetation apart from grass remains. Remnant bluegum plantation is found on the north western side although scattered individual trees are found across the site. The southern edge lies parallel to the N2 and is currently marked by a line of bluegums. The site slopes gently to the north-east except where the slope becomes steeper around an informal farm dam lying in a natural depression in the northern-central portion (see Figure 5). Piles of rubble are noted in places and evidence of earthmoving (presumably to provide level areas) was also seen. At present, areas closest to the N2 are in use for storage and loading of bricks, and as a temporary campsite for Telkom sub-contractors. A small general dealer and Post Office are located on a portion of the site.

¹ The description of the proposed development is reproduced from: Guide plan amendment and rezoning application for Portion 6 of the Farm Harkerville no 422. Prepared by VPM Planning, July 2006.



Mapping information supplied by: Chief Directorate - Surveys and Mapping. Website: w3sli.wcape.gov.za

Figure 1: The site of the proposed development shown some 15km to the east of Knysna

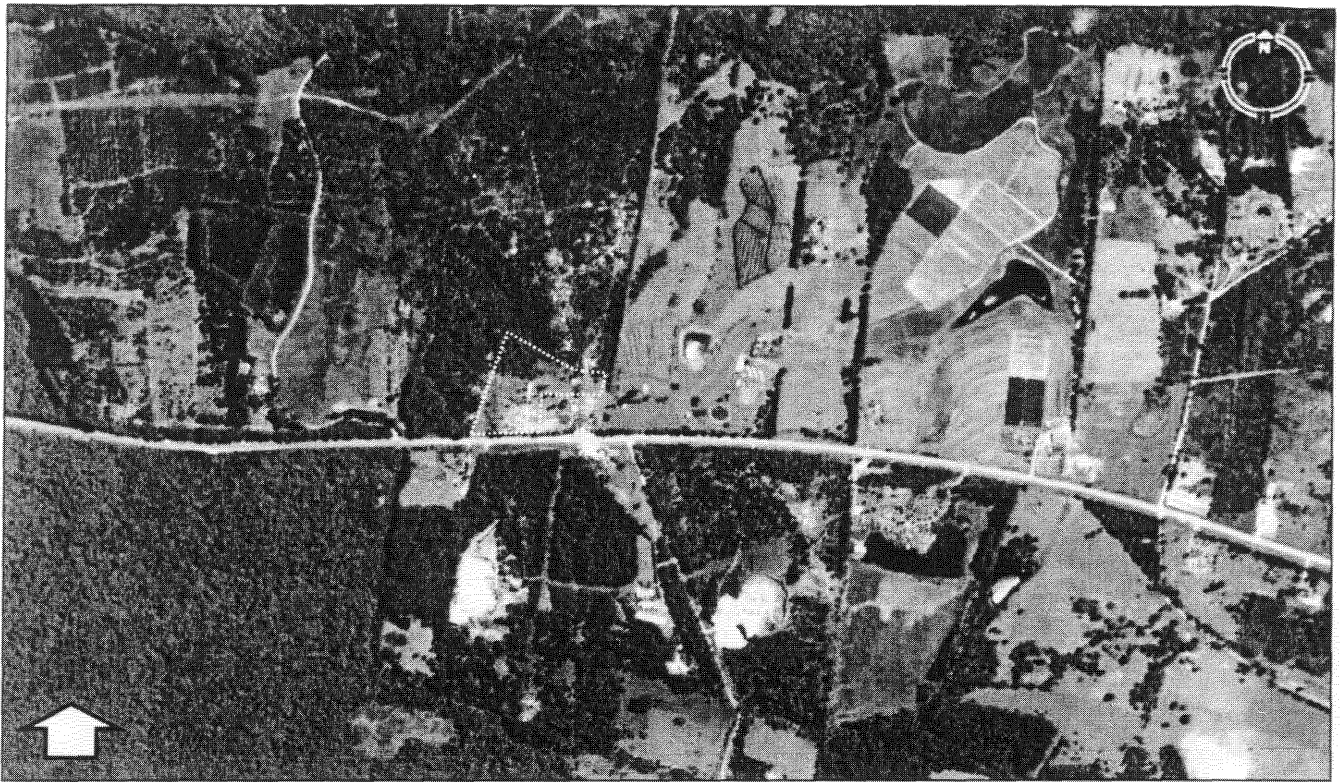
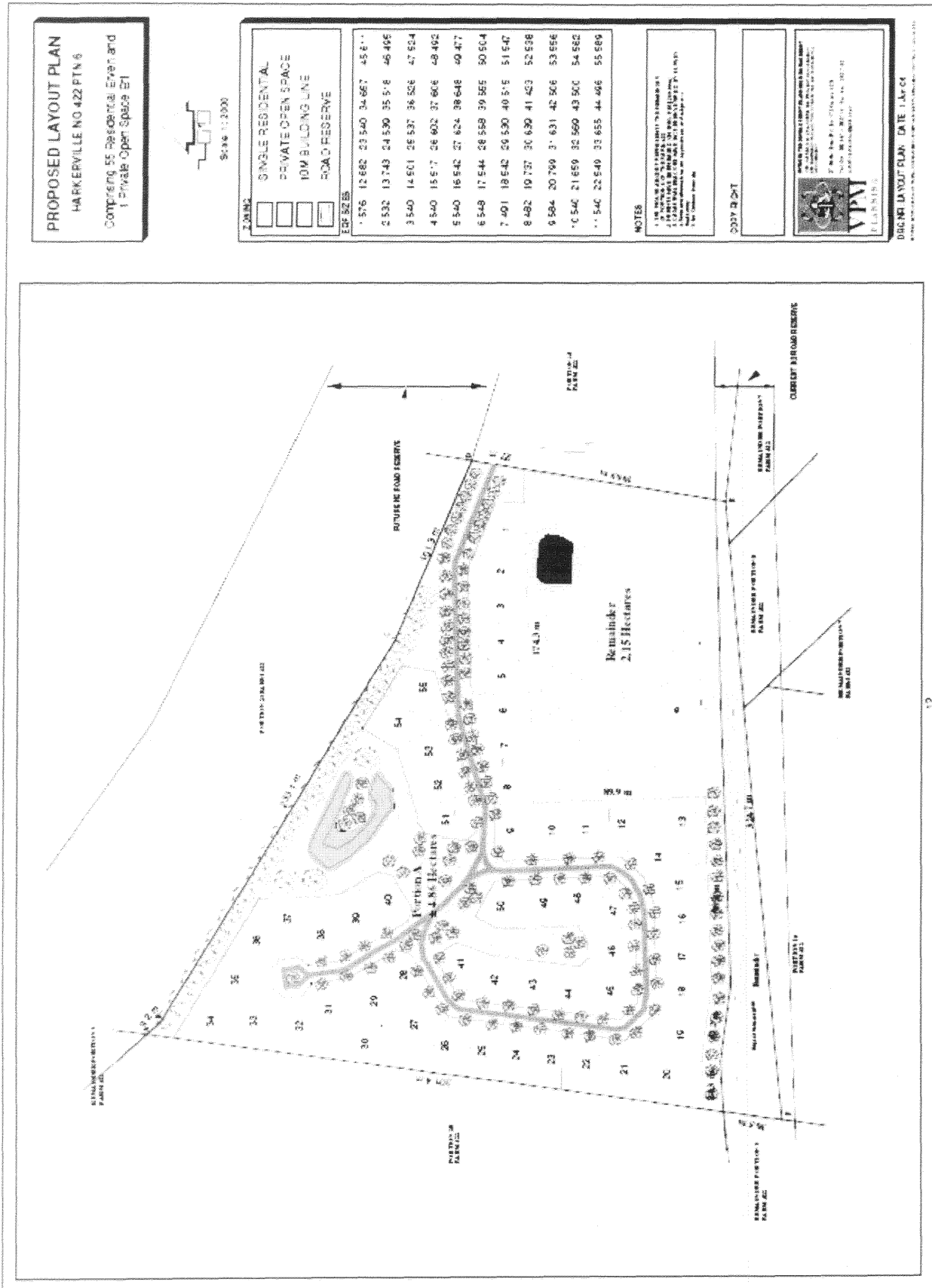


Figure 2: The site shown in broader context (source: Google Earth)



Figure 3: Detail of the site showing prevailing vegetation and structures (source: Google Earth). Vernacular building circled in yellow.



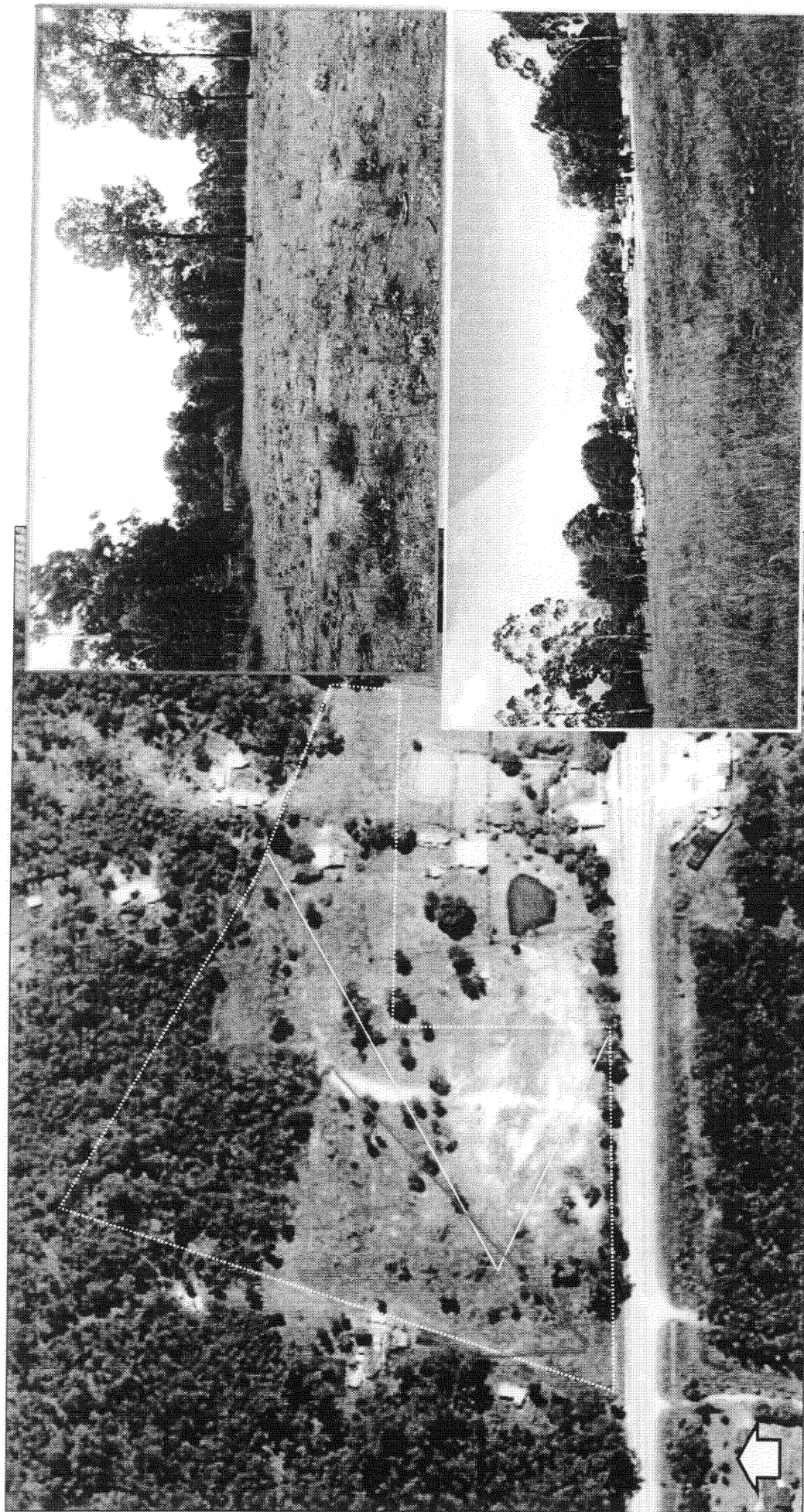


Figure 6: Views across the proposed development site

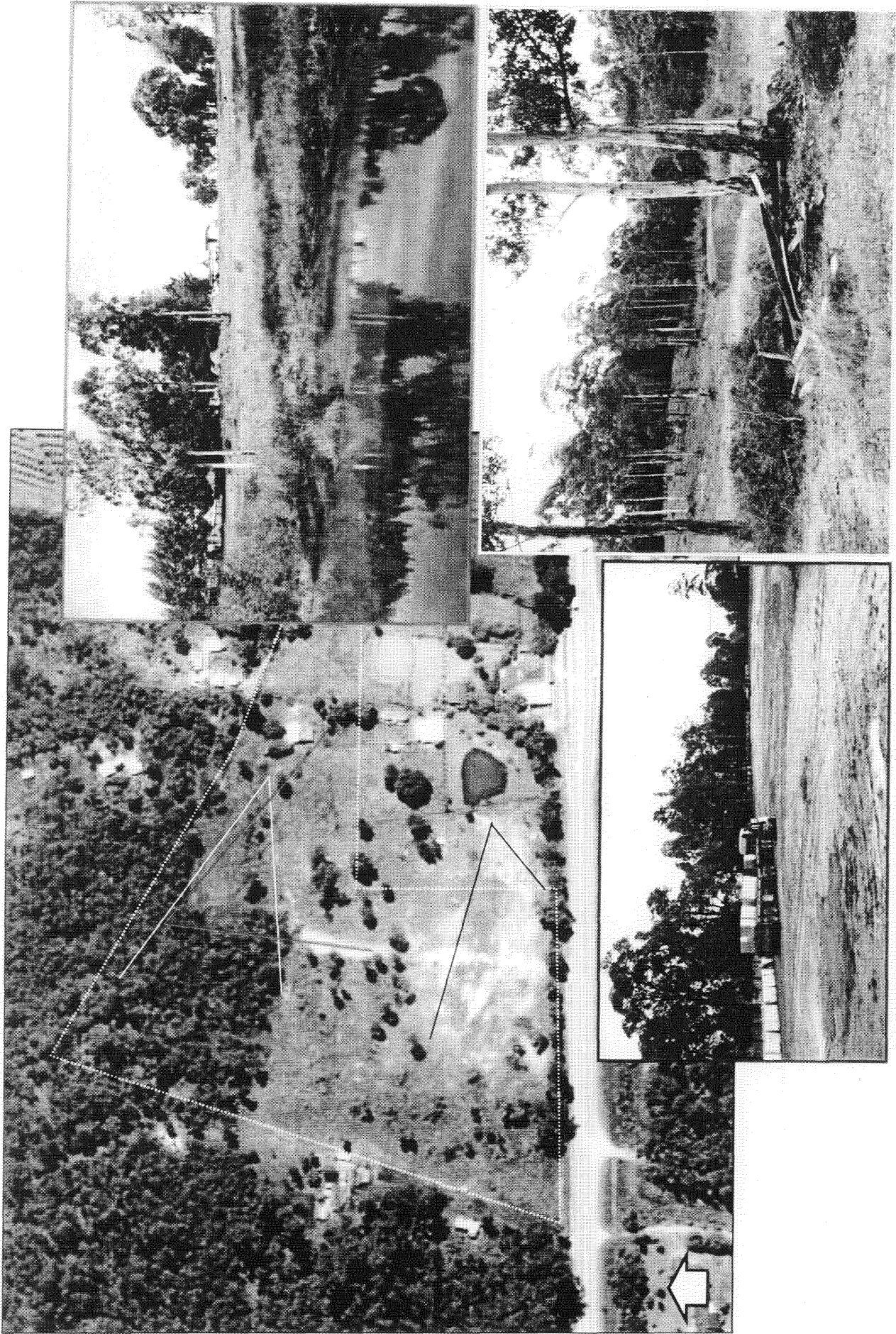


Figure 7: Landscape and use elements on the proposed development site

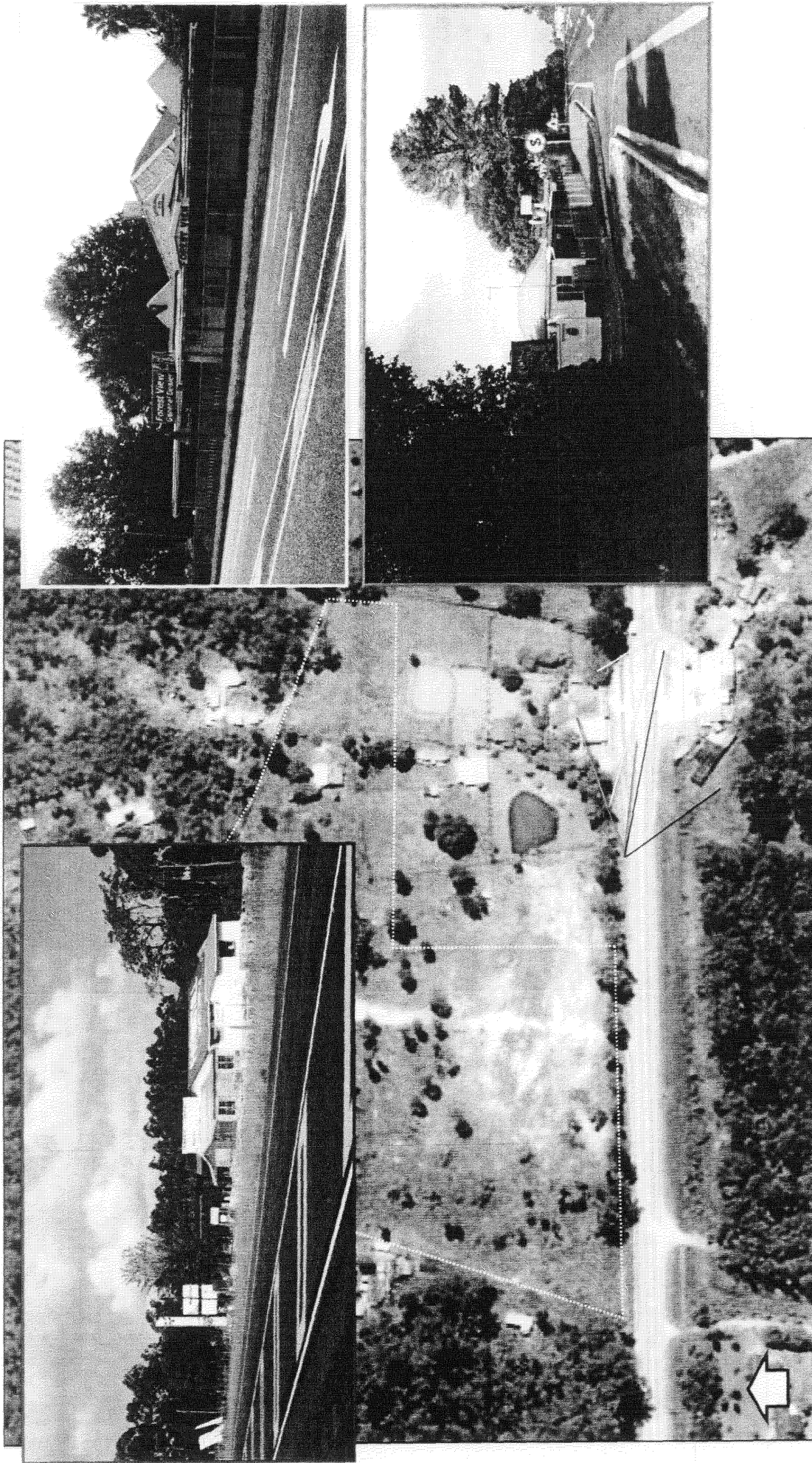


Figure 8: Views of activities in the vicinity of the proposed development site (purple - petrol station and convenience store, farm stall), Yellow and blue - general dealer and post office).

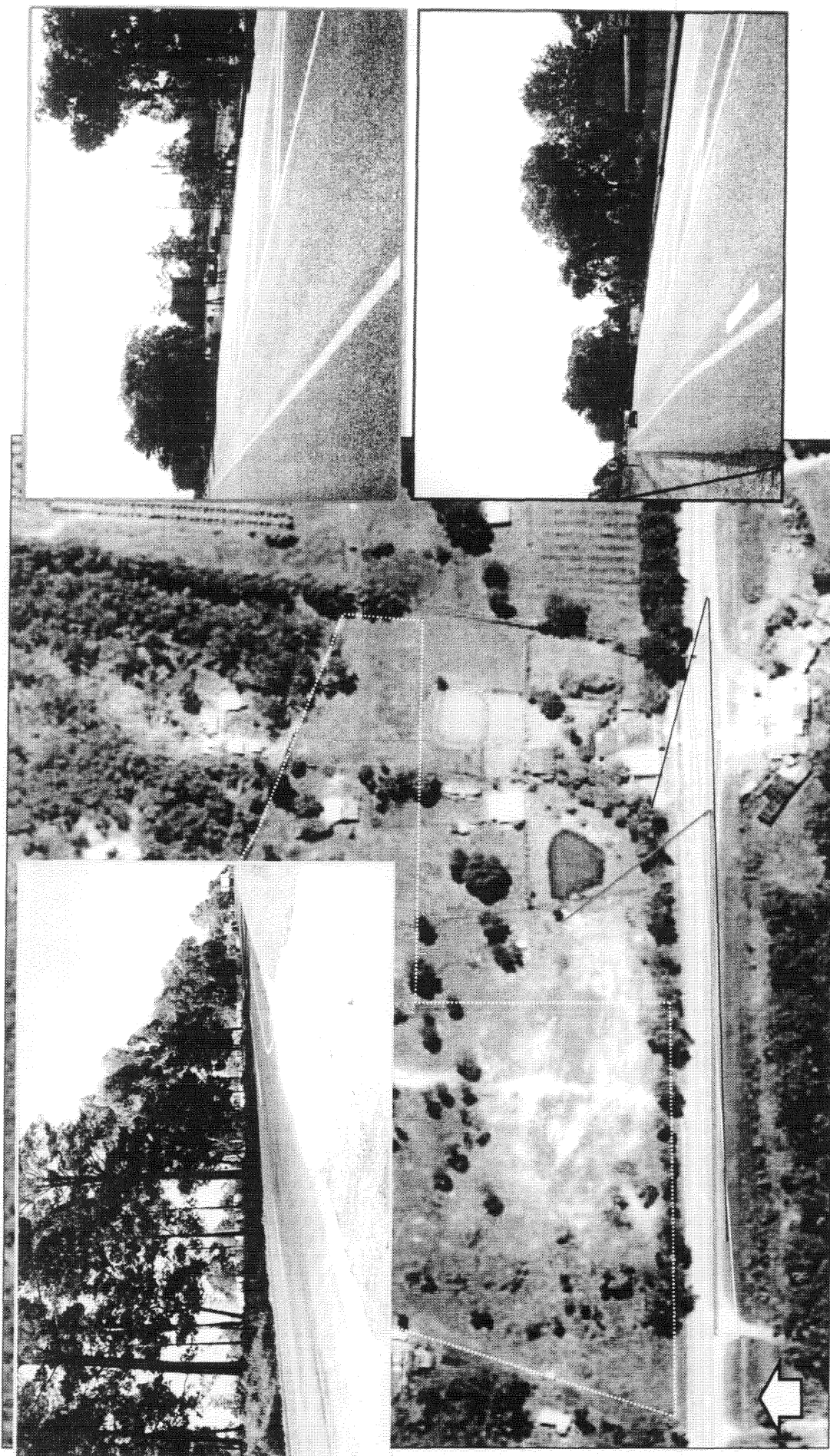


Figure 9: Site edge as seen from the N2

2. HERITAGE LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) of 1999 protects the items in sections 2.1 - 2.4, amongst other heritage resources. Furthermore section 38 of the Act requires that heritage impact assessments (HIA's) are required for certain kinds of development such as rezoning of land greater than 10000 sq m in extent or exceeding 3 or more sub-divisions, or for any activity that will alter the character or landscape of a site greater than 5000 sq m. Standalone HIA's are not required where an EIA is carried out as long as the EIA contains an adequate HIA component that fulfils section 38 provisions. Heritage Western Cape (HWC) is responsible for the management and protection of all Provincial Heritage sites (grade 2), generally protected heritage and structures (grade 3a-grade 3c). The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is responsible for the protection of National Heritage Sites (grade 1 sites), graves and human remains.

2.1 Section 35

"Archaeological" means - material remains resulting from human activity which are in a state of disuse and are in or on land and which are older than 100 years, including artefacts, human and hominid remains and artificial features and structures. This means that an archaeological site is any area where there are artefacts (objects made by human hand) and ruins that are over 100 years of age. An archaeological find is therefore any object or collection of objects or structures in disuse made by human hand that is over 100 years old. This can range from ancient stone tools and ruins to the contents of historic rubbish dumps containing ceramic shards and bottles.

"Palaeontological" means - any fossilised remains or fossil trace of animals or plants which lived in the geological past, other than fossil fuels or fossiliferous rock intended for industrial use, and any site which contains such fossilised remains or trace. The term fossil means mineralised bones of animals, shellfish, plants, marine animals. A trace fossil is the track or footprint of a fossil animal that is preserved in stone or consolidated sediment.

2.2 Section 36

"Graves and human remains" are protected by not only the NHRA but also provincial ordinances, local authorities and provincial health departments who apply the Human Tissues Act.

2.3 Section 42

"Structure" means - any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith. Protected structures are those which are over 60 years old. Such structures may only be altered or demolished under a section 42 permit issued by Heritage Western Cape.

2.4 Section 48.2

"Cultural landscapes" are protected by the Act. Section 48.2 permits the compliance authority to intervene and comment on the design and aesthetic qualities of any development that forms part of or is within sight of a heritage place or site.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1 The historical context of Harkerville

European expansion along the southern Cape coast picked up pace during the late 18th and 19th century. Settlement of Knysna and Plettenberg Bay began around 1760. This occurred at the expense of the Khoekhoen, whom were displaced with the arrival of settlers. Their widespread presence on the landscape, however, is indicated by the numerous indigenous place names still in use today. The indigenous names 'Outeniqua' to 'Knysna', describe the splendour of the thick forests, deep gorges, lagoons and rugged sandstone cliffs. 'Knysna', for example, is derived from the words *Xthuys Xna*, meaning 'the place where the wood is'. Many early European travellers remarked on the region's natural beauty, and botanists, such as Carl Thunberg, Carl von Linne and Anders Sparrman, were particularly enthusiastic. However, this had the adverse effect of calling attention "to the forests as an asset to be commercially exploited."²

As timber sources around the Cape became scarce, the high demand pushed forest exploitation along the southern Cape coast. In the late 18th century, woodcutters' posts were established at George and Plettenberg Bay. According to Arthur Nimmo, author of *The Knysna Story*, the enormous trees came right down to the edge of the George post "and this small squad of men must have felt like pygmies pecking away at resources that would last forever."³ Nearer to Plettenberg Bay "the few inhabitants...eked out a living by quietly 'white anting' the forests and hauling the timber to Plettenberg Bay."⁴ Although the numbers of settlers were initially few, their impact upon the natural resources of the area was severe. The enormous indigenous yellowwoods and stinkwoods were being felled in such large numbers, that as early as 1778 Governor van Plettenberg was reportedly "horrified at the condition of the forest around Keurbooms River and recommended Government control."⁵ By the late 18th century, the forests around George through to Knysna were declared closed and woodcutters were urged to move to the east.⁶

The depletion of indigenous trees became an urgent concern in the 19th century as the forests were nearly exhausted. By 1847 "the devastation of the coastal plateau was complete", expedited by the unprecedented demand for timber during the Great Trek.⁷ J. Storr Lister was appointed as the first Superintendent of Plantations and the first of these, consisting of pine and eucalypts, were planted in Worcester, Cecilia and Devil's Peak and plantations along the southern coast followed shortly thereafter.⁸ In 1913 the Forest Act was promulgated to protect 'Crown Forests'. This ushered in a new era of forest management in the Knysna region, which included phasing out the woodcutter system.⁹

² Nimmo, Arthur 1976: *The Knysna Story*, Juta & Co. Ltd, South Africa, pp. 15.

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Nimmo, 1976: 86

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ Van der Merwe, Izak 2002: *The Knysna and Tsitsikamma Forests: Their history, ecology and management*, DWAF Publication

3.2 The founding of Harkerville hamlet

Harkerville is a small hamlet along the N2 National Road, approximately 11 km east of Knysna. It was named after Robert Charles Harker, who was born in Swinford, Ireland around 1780. In 1824 Major Harker (152nd Regiment), his wife Maria, and their seven children arrived at the port of Knysna. He bought Woodville Farm outside of George, but it soon became a financial liability for him. In the year following his arrival in Woodville, Harker had a son, Henry Adolphus, by a coloured servant. The child was only acknowledged and baptized after Harker's wife Maria died ten years later. According to Ian Uys, "From him [Henry] are descended the large family of Harkers, who have made great contributions as leaders of the coloured community in the Plettenberg Bay area."¹⁰

Major Harker's appointment as Government Resident at Plettenberg Bay in 1826 was a welcome change from his farm-based financial woes. Harker was commended for his 'humanity and kindness' in aiding various shipwreck victims during his tenure. He died in 1859 aged 78 years and is buried in the small cemetery at the eastern entrance to Plettenberg Bay alongside his wife.¹¹

The small hamlet named after the Harker family was in a region of forested land between Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. The 'Harkerville Forest Station' was established during the late 19th century to control timber extraction as the industry moved east towards Plettenberg Bay, a concentration point for timber shipments to Cape Town." The original forest station cottage may have been a rather ad hoc affair, as a letter dated 3 October 1894 describes it as a "a sod building on stone foundation erected in 1887, which is in a dangerous condition and is fast becoming a ruin in spite of the wall being shored with timber and all other practicable precautions being taken".¹² A proposal was put forth for the sale of materials from the cottage, although "it is possible that a higher price may be given for the cottage by some farmer wishing to build a house, than it would be worth to the Department if demolished". This cottage required ongoing renovation (i.e. "substantial masonry"), indicating the need for a more permanent structure for management of the surrounding Crown Forests.

3.3 Farm 422

Farm 422 was granted to Thomas Shields in 1849 (Figure 10). The title deed states that Thomas Shields applied to become purchaser "of a piece of *Forest Land*"¹³. There are no structures or buildings marked on the surveyor's diagram, merely the adjacent properties belonging to C. van der Watt and M.H. Kapp. Large swathes of forest, a system of roads, and streams are indicated (Figure 10).

The prevailing character of the area may be inferred from a letter dated July 1893 from the Assistant Conservator of Forests regarding the status of Lot No. 17, land that borders Farm 422. The issue is over whether the property that had been previously granted could be reclaimed for plantation purposes by the Office of Forest Conservation. To this end, the Assistant Conservator asserts:

"Lot No. 17, in front of the Harkerville Forest Station...should never have been

¹⁰ Uys, Ian 2003: *Knysna & Plett: A Journey Through Time*, Fortress (Pty), South Africa. pp. 61

¹¹ Uys, 2003: 61

¹² CA AGR Vol. 228, ref. 2076

¹³ My emphasis.

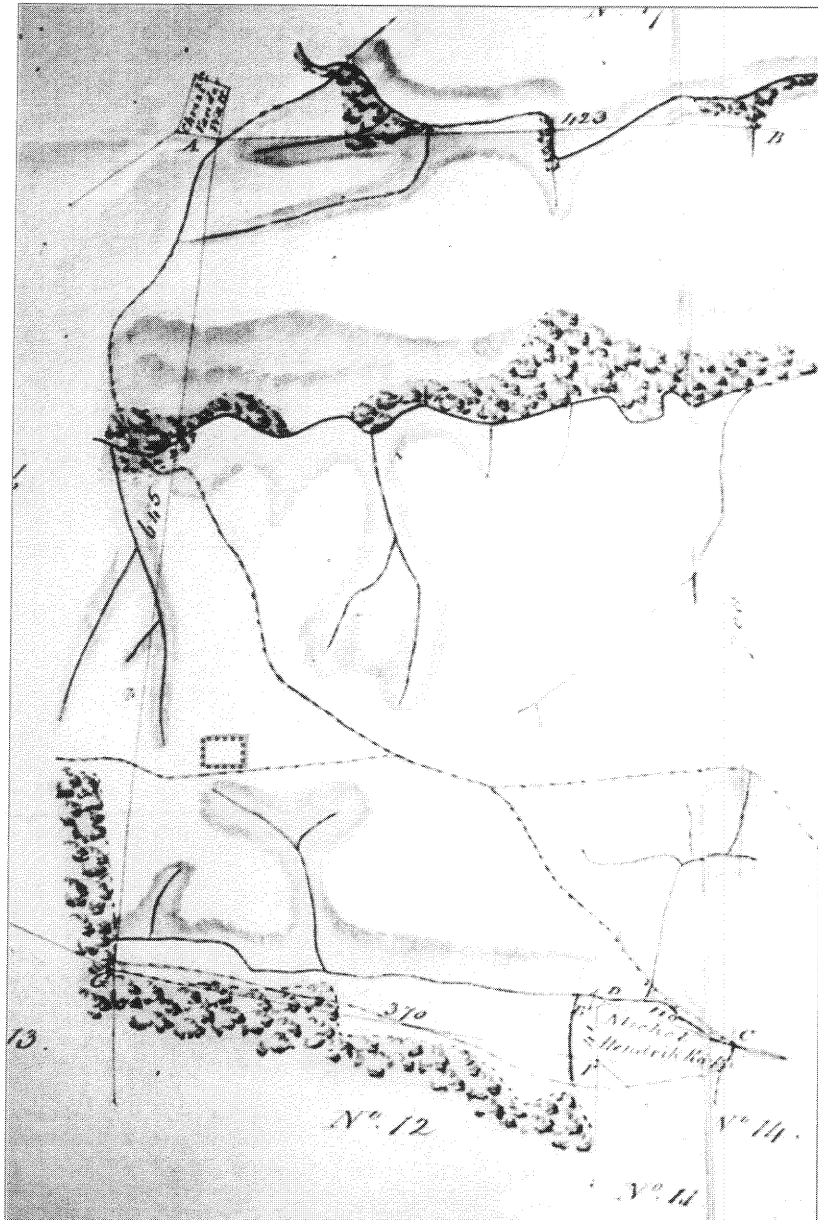


Figure 10: 1849 grant, Farm 422 Harkerville - DO 7210/1947 (approximate position of proposed development site shown by red outline)

Table 1: Transfer Deeds History: Harkerville Farm 422, (for Portion 6)

Deed	Date	From	To	Size
George F/hold V.10.781	6.12.1849	Government grant	Thomas Shields	509 M, 225 S.R.
5	1.3.1886	Est. Theron (?)	Owen Johnes Rawland Mundie	509 M, 225 S.R.
104	12.4.1887	O.J.R Mundie	Michael Hendrik Kapp	509 M, 225 S.R.
6484	14.09.1908	Est. Late Mr. H. Kapp	Cornelius Johannes Kapp	508 M, 525 S.R
3536 (portion 4)	14.05.1923	M.J.Kapp & another	Edwin Benjamin Van Rooyen	50 M, 88 S.R.
48099 (portion 6, of portion 4)	25.09.1984	E. E. Reed	Doreen Cross (born Van Rooyen)	42,9522 ha
46693	18.12.1985	D. Cross	Andries Frederik Steyn	42,9522 ha

(*Between 1908 and 1923 the property changed hands several times within the Kapp family.)

granted. Should any woodcutter ever have built a hut or reside on Lot 17, the present pleasing appearance of the Harkerville Station would be spoilt. Besides, a great nuisance would be certain to be...caused by the fowls, pigs and general uncleanly habits of any probable occupier of Lot No. 17."¹⁴

This supports the assumption that the adjacent properties to Farm 422 not only remained forested until the late 19th century, and that very few structures were erected in the vicinity of the Forest Station. A vernacular building exists on the Portion 6 of Farm 422 (see section 5.2), and while its precise date of construction is unknown, it is suggested that the building is unlikely to date prior to the later part of the 19th century.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 Methodology

A site visit was undertaken on the 17th March 2007. A foot survey was made of the proposed development area. Numerous photographs were taken to document the prevailing landscape and surroundings.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Pre-colonial material

A small amount of flaked stone was observed in the south west corner of the property. Consisting mostly of quartzite and sandstone, the material is likely to have its origins in the Early Stone Age (ESA). The material is in a disturbed context and is generally of low archaeological significance.

4.2.2 Structures

A single vernacular building is present on the site (see Figure 11). Such external characteristics that are visible, suggest that it was built in the late 19th or early 20th centuries. Although not very clear, there is a suggestion of a feature at this location on a 1942 aerial photograph (Figure 12). The placement of informal wooden additions on the northern and southern sides make it difficult to fully document by photographs. The placement of an opening high up in the eastern wall suggests that a *solder* is/was present. The roof presently consists of pitched corrugated iron but was originally probably thatched. An external chimney stack is found to the west of the vernacular structure but is not physically connected to the core structure and is offset to the south in relation to the permanent structure. A large opening in the western wall (also covered by informal methods) suggests that the building may originally have been a barn. The external chimney stack either served as a forge, or perhaps represents the remains of a structure that was built with less permanent materials and stood adjacent to the permanent building .

Grading: 3c (Local significance but not worthy of conservation)

Action: Any building older than 60 years is generally protected by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (NHRA). A permit is required for its demolition.

¹⁴ CA AGR Vol 193, 1211

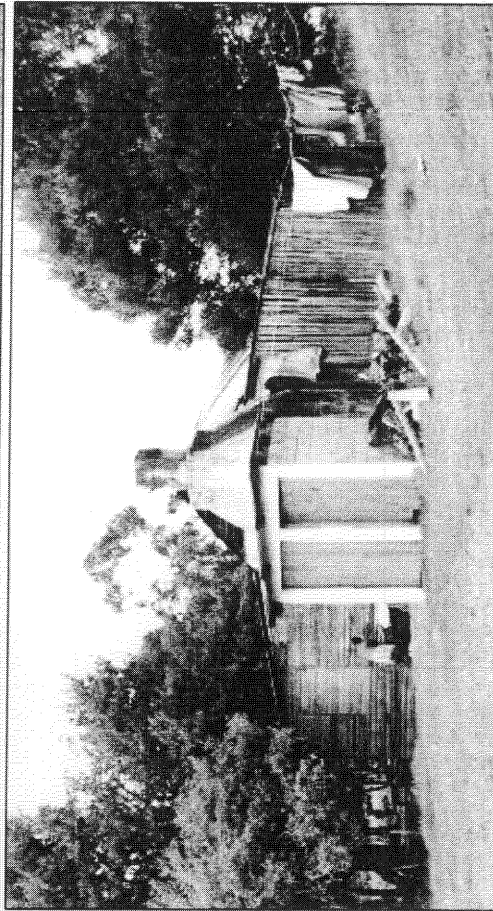
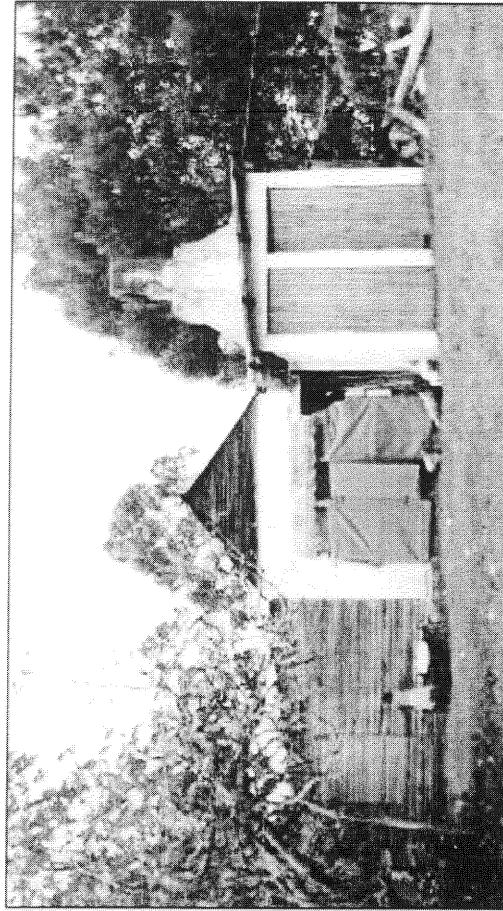
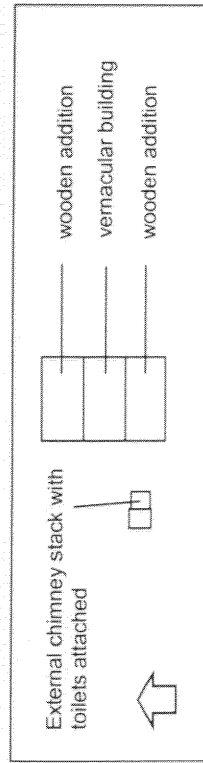
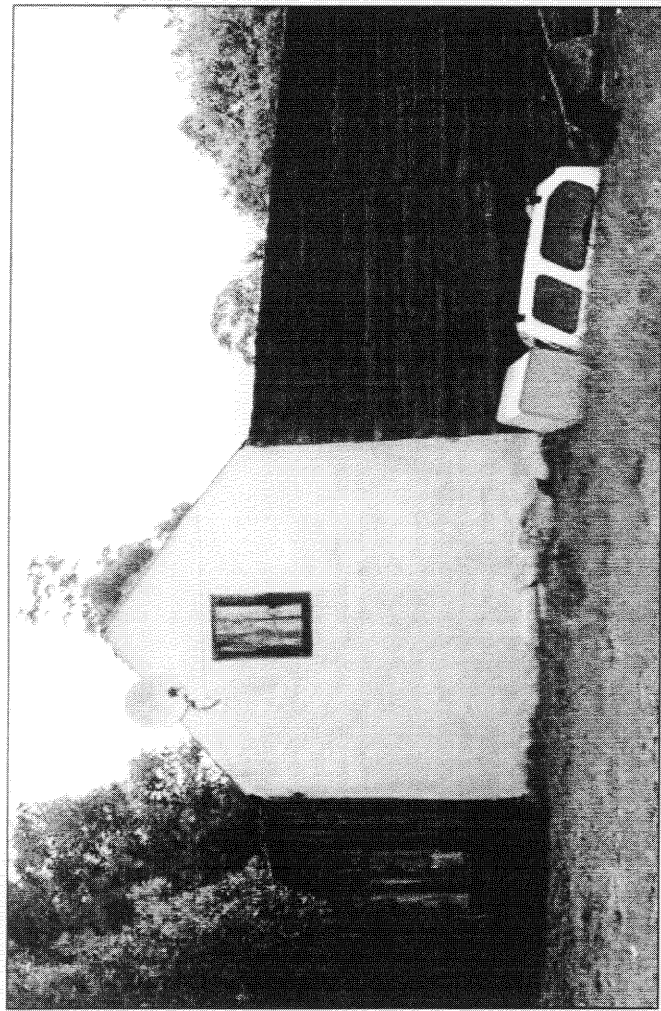


Figure 11: The vernacular structure

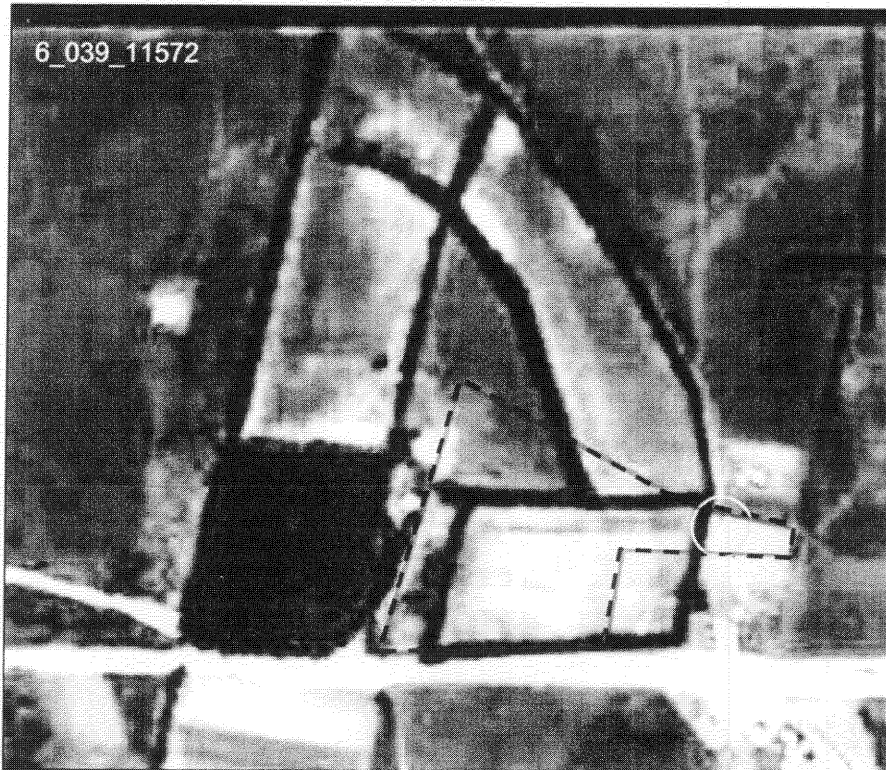


Figure 12: Excerpt from a 1942 aerial photograph (proposed development site shown by red outline, the location of the vernacular building shown in yellow)

5. PROJECT PROPOSAL AND ALTERNATIVES

5.1 The Proposed Development Project

The PDP (Preferred Development Proposal, Figure 4) proposes fifty-five single residential erven, accessed from the newly constructed Harkerville intersection off the N2 immediately to the east of the proposed site.

5.2 Other Alternatives

No official alternatives have been presented, and an exemption from putting forward alternatives has been applied for.

5.3 Heritage comments/concerns

Potential concern in terms of heritage would be the scale, density and style of development inserted into an existing rural settlement pattern and style possibly resulting in a distinct visual contrast deviating from the prevailing character of the local landscape. This must be seen in context of a changing landscape as far as the rural agricultural and forestry aspects are concerned. An example of the changing landscape is the recent addition of a petrol station and related commercial activities on an adjacent site.

The site lies outside the defined urban edge of both Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. There is no defined 'urban edge' for Harkerville.

The potential impact is based on design and planning concerns: the effects of edge hardening, excessive contrast, and visual impact along an important 'activity' corridor (N2 National Road). ***It is felt, however, that with a supplemental planting of the existing tree lines along the stretch of both the existing N2 (and future bypass), the foliage would act as an appropriate 'green screen' and would mitigate these concerns.***

The ground slopes down from the N2 toward the north. Although gentle, the inner portion of the development would be shielded by the outer ring thereby reducing the bulk as far as any visual impact from the N2 is concerned.

6. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON IDENTIFIED HERITAGE QUALITIES

Heritage qualities or 'indicators' are those aspects of a site that need to be acknowledged in the design of any proposed development activity. Heritage resources have different spatial manifestations and scale, from broad natural or cultivated landscapes or townscape, to individual places, such as buildings, or artefacts. Recognized heritage resources "may have significance in their own right, and contribute to the heritage value of a broader area, or have linkages to other places."¹⁵ The heritage landscape features existing on the proposed site fall into the following categories:

- Planted and productive landscape (human modification to the landscape in the form of tree plantations);
- Significant tree groups and alignments;
- Forestry related infrastructure

Sylvan management of the southern Cape coast from the late 18th century represents an important period in South African history. The growth and development of the area from George to Plettenberg Bay is in large part due to rampant timber exploitation, clearing of land, and the need for related infrastructure. Subsequent attempts at natural resource management (indigenous forest conservation coupled with plantation establishment) has created a dominant landscape, where the exotic species of tree such as eucalyptus and pine, are as common as fynbos in certain areas of the Western and Southern Cape.

While the 'story' of Farm 422 is certainly embedded in this historical period, its degree of significance is rated as low¹⁶. There are no conservation-worthy structures or buildings on the property. The site does not present a measurable level of 'intactness', that is, it does not retain any original features of the timber industry. As a 'place', the site also has not retained any marked associations related to timber-industry settlement or exploitations patterns, except for a few bluegum trees, that are evidence of regional plantation establishment. It may be stated that the quality of the setting relative to the 'period of association' (being the timber industry) lacks integrity. Furthermore, the site is severely degraded as a result of road works crews and does not possess an 'evocative' quality of place.

¹⁵ Table Mountain National Park Heritage Resources Plan December 2004, p. 8

¹⁶ Kerr's Criteria for Assessing Significance' has been found to be very useful in understanding the heritage significance of a place in terms of its "physical evidence, associational links, relationships and experiential/interpretive (non-visual and visual) qualities. It has been used to assess other heritage places of value in South Africa, and was central to the Table Mountain National Park Heritage Management Plan. Kerr, J.S. 2000: Conservation Plan, Fifth Edition, The National Trust of Australia (NSW).

The only heritage concerns are outlined in section 6.4. The planting of a dense green screen along the section of the N2 is both in keeping with the historical land-use (replanting of trees), and will also be harmonious with the verdant setting of the area.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed residential development is aimed at lower and middle income earners in the Knysna/Plettenberg Bay region. The recently upgraded Harkerville intersection has been identified as an 'Activity Node' along the N2, an important activity corridor. This intersection is perhaps part of the envisioned Knysna N2 bypass route, which will skirt the property's northern edge. According to the Bitou Spatial Development Framework (dated 2005), new development planning must be encouraged at these nodal points to 'contain' growth, rather than allowing development 'islands', which increases the likelihood of intensified sub-urban sprawl.

No archaeology of significance was located. An existing vernacular building on the property has been graded 3c meaning that it is of local significance but not conservation-worthy. The site does not present any important or 'intact' historical associations, nor are there significant cultural landscape issues to consider.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this heritage assessment is to flag initial concerns and identify constraints to the proposed development, as defined by potential impacts to heritage resources. It is strongly urged that the following recommendation be considered:

- Maintain and supplement existing tree line/s - a dense arboreal alignment along the length of the development adjacent to the existing N2 corridor, and the future bypass route, would screen any hard edge resulting from development and lessen visual impact.

9. REFERENCES

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Table Mountain National Park Heritage Resources Plan December 2004

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Van der Merwe, Izak. 2002. The Knysna and Tsitsikamma Forests: Their history, ecology and management. DWAF Publication