

# **HERITAGE STATEMENT: PROPOSED UPGRADE OF THE BAYSIDE CANAL**

Prepared for

**CCA Environmental**

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## **Executive summary**

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was appointed by CCA Environmental Pty Ltd to compile a heritage statement on the proposed upgrade of the Bayside Canal, Table View, Western Cape Province.

A site inspection was carried. The findings are summarized as follows:

- o No heritage of any kind will be impacted by the proposed activity.
- o The proposal will have a positive impact on the aesthetics of the surroundings.

No further action is required, other than to report unexpected finds including human remains to an archaeologist.

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# 1 Introduction

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was appointed by CCA Environmental Pty Ltd to compile a heritage impact statement for the proposed upgrading of the Bayside Canal (A City of Cape Town project), which runs alongside the R27 for 1.5km before exiting into Rietvlei. The location of the proposed activity is indicated on Figure 1. The canal needs to be upgraded to accommodate 1:50 years flood events and generally ensure that drainage is adequate and that water quality is maintained.

The canal is fed by the Sunningdale storm water system as well as runoff from Parklands, Blaauwberg and Table View. The canal commences at Link Road then runs along side the R27, through three culverts under Blaauwberg Road then empties into the wetland on the northern side of Rietvlei. In places the canal takes the form of a lined concrete culvert, in others an open ditch. It has a generally dilapidated appearance and traps a large quantity of litter.



**Figure 1** The location of the study area (from background information provided by CCA Environmental Pty Ltd)

## 1.1 The need for the project

Provision has to be made for expansion of suburbs and increased surface hardening in the areas that form the catchment area of the canal. The canal itself would have potential restrictions or choking areas removed, landscaping and widening of the unlined portions of the canal is a key element of the proposal, which along with encouragement of appropriate wetland vegetation (reed beds) will result in a generally more eco-friendly and effective facility. It is also proposed that an additional culvert be installed at the Blaauwberg Road crossing (See Figure 2 in Appendix).

## **1.2 The receiving environment**

The receiving environment consists of a highly modified landscape between the R27 and recent Table View suburbia, including the Bay Side Mall and Pick and Pay. This narrow sandy strip of land takes on the appearance of non-descript open space, badly maintained and overgrown. The canal in its present form is illustrated on Plates 1 – 3 in Appendix A.

## **1.3 Archaeological background**

Not much is known about the local archaeological background of the area, although the regional landscape is well described and understood. Historically the Rietvlei – Soutrivier estuary was an enormous fluctuating wetland which was so transformed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – 20th century that historical maps bear hardly any resemblance to the situation today. It is highly likely that the study area formed part of this extensive wetland system. Historical and archaeological material is unlikely to be present under these circumstances.

## **2 Method**

The study area was subject to an inspection by an archaeologist and a general heritage assessor with a view to identifying and recording any generally protected heritage as defined by the National Heritage Resources Act (25) of 1999. The presence of numerous mole hills assisted visibility of the ground surface and sub-surface which would otherwise have been obscured by dense grass growth.

## **3 Findings**

### **3.1 Structures**

No generally protected structures were identified in or adjacent to the study area.

### **3.2 Archaeology and artefacts**

No protected colonial period archaeology, pre-colonial archaeology or fossiliferous material was identified anywhere in the study area.

### **3.3 Intangible heritage**

There are no indications that the study area has special significance in terms of traditional activities.

## **4 Assessment of Impacts**

The proposed activity will result in a neutral impact to generally protected heritage. Impacts are summarised in Table 1 below.



CRITERIA	IMPACT			
	CONSTRUCTION		OPERATION	
	without mitigation	with mitigation	without mitigation	with mitigation
Extent	local	local	n/a	n/a
Duration	Short term	Short term		
Intensity	Very low	Very low		
Probability	Very low	Very low		
Significance	medium	medium		
Status	neutral	neutral		
Confidence	high	high		
Legal		Retrospective or emergency excavation permit to be obtained from HWC in unlikely event of finds. Human remains require HWC/SAHRA exhumation permit		

**Table 1** Summary of heritage impacts

## 5 Sources of risk

No sources of risk have been identified in heritage terms. There is a remote possibility that human remains and unexpected archaeological finds may be uncovered during the course of earthmoving. A procedure for handling such an eventuality is outlined below.

## 6 Future requirements

There are no specific future requirements. The following general provisions apply:

- Any unexpected archaeological or paleontological finds should be reported to Heritage Western Cape provincial archaeologist: Phone 021 4839685.
- In the event of human remains being found, the following procedure applies:
  - 1) leave the remains in place, nothing should be moved
  - 2) Cordon off the area
  - 3) Call Ms Mary Leslie at SAHRA (021 4624509)
  - 4) Contact an archaeologist
  - 5) Once an archaeologist has examined the find, the archaeologist/SAHRA should contact SA Police services and the state pathologist to report human remains
  - 6) If the human remains are found to be a legitimate burial or a pre-colonial burial, an emergency exhumation permit will be issued by SAHRA or HWC
  - 7) If a crime is suspected, a police docket will need to be opened.

## 7 References

City of Cape Town Contract Number Q07/91 Upgrading of the Bayside Canal Background information document.

**Declaration by author:**

I, Timothy James Graham Hart (BA hons, MA) declare that I am an independent heritage impact assessor and archaeologist employed at the Archaeology Contracts Office, c/o Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7701.

**Member:** Southern African Association of Professional Archaeologists. PI accreditation.

**Member:** Association of Heritage Assessment Professionals. Specialist and Generalist member.

Signature:

TJG Hart.

Date: 17 September 2008

## Appendix A

### CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE DESIGN FOR THE BAYSIDE CANAL

The landscape design strives to create a stormwater system which is as close to a natural system as possible, within the existing site constraints.

The present canal is typically narrow with very steep sides and very little natural vegetation. Portions of it are canalized (with concrete channels) and some side slopes are infested with kikuyu grass.

The design allows for re-grading of side slopes, where space allows for this, as well as the planting of the slopes with indigenous vegetation.

Newly planted areas will be irrigated and maintained for at least two years prior to being handed over to council.

Where possible, the canal will be widened, the concrete channel removed and the channel planted with indigenous sedges/reedy species (eg *Scirpus*, *Cyperus* species)

Just south of Link (Park) road, the larger public open space area makes a retention pond possible. It is proposed that an attractive, deep (approximately 1.5m) off-channel pond be constructed, possibly clay lined (with clay from site) in order to create a semi-permanent pond and some habitat for birdlife. This is intended to function in a similar way to the pond alongside Dolphin beach. This has been designed to take into account existing services, as well as access to these services, which will remain. The pond edges will be planted with indigenous short reedy species to take into account dry spells and fluctuations in water levels.

It is proposed, that where there is an informal pathway, south of Link road, that this is formalized as part of the channel upgrade.

Alongside the sports fields, south of Blaauwberg road, a widening of a portion of channel is proposed. This will create a shallow reeded habitat and act as a natural silt trap. Access to this area to mechanically remove silt build-up is allowed for in the design.



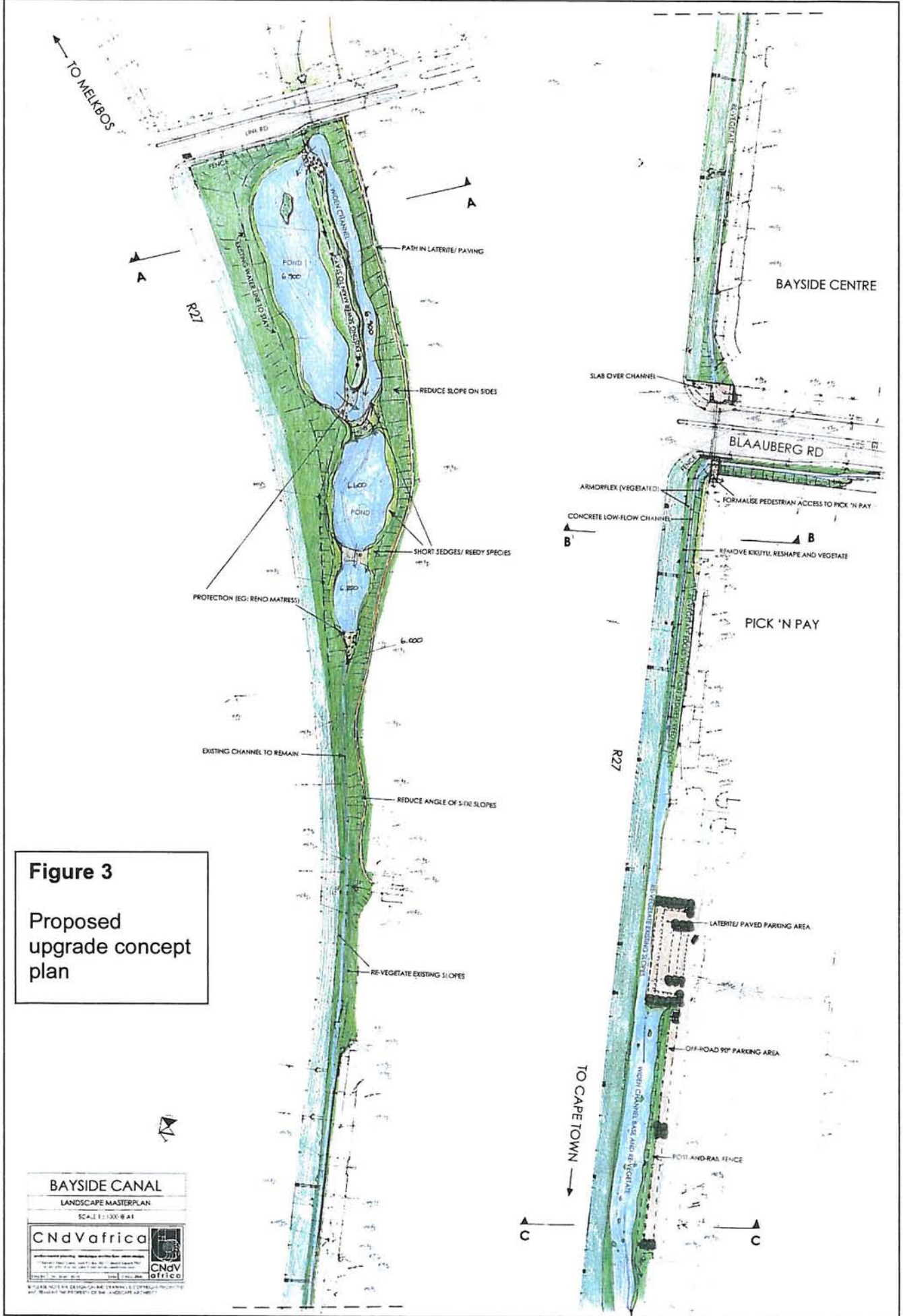


UPGRADING OF  
BAYSIDE CANAL

LOCALITY PLAN

FIG 2









**Plate 1** Canal is situated in open Land adjacent to suburbia close to Link Rd



**Plate 2** The canal just before it enters Rietvlei. R27 is to the right





**Plate 3** Concrete lined section of the canal