

**CASE 14101510 GT1112E**  
**THE RETREAT, CAMPS BAY**  
 (FORMERLY KNOWN AS EARL'S DYKE, CAMPS BAY).  
 ERVEN 349, 351 & 352, CAMPS BAY

DEADP CASE NUMBER: **N/A**

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF HOTEL ACCOMMODATION:  
 PRELIMINARY SCOPING REPORT FOR HWC  
 COMMENT

## 1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBMISSION

This scoping report and spatial analysis is submitted to HWC for interim comment, the purpose being to obtain HWC's initial response before embarking on the expense of a full HIA as required in response to the Notice of Intent to Develop (NID) application for the property dated 12 November 2014.



FIGURE 01: Location of the site in Camps Bay south of The Glen public park and on the northern edge of the Camps Bay suburb also known as The Glen. North is at the top of this image.  
 (Portion of the SG 1:50 000 Survey Series: Ref: 3318CD Cape Town).

### 1.1. The Underlying Intention

The intention upon which this report is based, is first to prepare a spatial analysis of the property in order to better understand its opportunities and constraints/strengths and vulnerabilities; then obtain buy-in from HWC for the findings, i.e. as stated in this report, and consequently use these findings as basis for proceeding further with the HIA.

It must be noted that the owner has already embarked on a number of costly design exercises to add accommodation on the property, in the process of which an earlier NID application<sup>1</sup> was submitted to HWC. These exercises did not prove fruitful for various

<sup>1</sup> Refer to a Notice of Intent to Develop application prepared by CS Design Architects & Heritage Consultants (now ARCON) dated 8 June 2006 for tented accommodation in various parts of the property.  
 Preliminary scoping report for HWC comment:  
 The Retreat, Erven 349, 351 & 352, Earl's Dyke, Camps Bay.

reasons, hence this more cautious approach to the heritage and planning authorities including HWC before proceeding further. This report is therefore aimed at obtaining:

- i) HWC's response as to whether additional development on the site would be regarded as feasible in heritage terms; and
- ii) If indeed additional development would be acceptable in principle, then where such development could be sited.

This report makes recommendations in this regard.

## 1.2. The Proposals and Need for Expansion on the Site

The Camps Bay Retreat needs to change its status from that of a luxury guesthouse to small luxury hotel. The current guesthouse operation is not sustainable due to the high maintenance costs of the property. This is due to its topographical characteristics (steep slopes and embankments making accessibility difficult and maintenance extensive e.g. great lengths of garden retaining walls), a large maintenance-intensive and culturally significant manor house, and other garden structures including a unique natural swimming pool. Given that Earl's Dyke is a site of high heritage significance, it follows that any new interventions on its landscape will need to be handled with the utmost sensitivity, while at the same time providing the basis for its economic sustainability as a heritage resource.

The proposals are intended to include between 30 and 40 further guest rooms on the site. This will no doubt involve additional spatial/visual impacts on the site. In addition to this, accommodation is also sought for more parking including possible underground parking.

## 2. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The Camps Bay Retreat (formerly Earl's Dyke) is located at No 8 Chilworth Road, Camps Bay (**Figure 01**). It essentially comprises two ravines separated by a headland occupied by a fine 1930's Italianate manor house overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The property is 1,715 ha in extent and comprises three erven. Consequently, a development that would change the site's character would trigger Section 38 of the NHRA, thereby requiring an HIA. Illustrations of the property are contained in the Notice of Intent to Develop (NID) application submitted in 2014 (**Annexure A**) and on attached **Diagrams 02 & 03**.

The site can be divided into a number of distinctly different character zones, *viz*:

### 2.1. The Northern 'Wet' Ravine Precinct

The northern ravine is occupied by a continuously flowing stream, i.e. the Diepsloot River. This enters the property on its uphill end from the historic Camps Bay Glen, now part of a Provincial Heritage Site. From an overall landscape perspective, the property can, in fact, be considered a natural extension to the Camps Bay Glen both in terms of topography and vegetation along its northern (Diepsloot River) edge.

This area is the ‘wet precinct’ of the property and includes a large constructed ‘natural’ swimming pool in the ravine (**Figure 02** overleaf), which is fed by water diverted from the Diepsloot River, which runs alongside. The area is heavily vegetated due to the perennial presence of natural running water. The result is a localized environment and ecosystem that is lush, but which has changed considerably over the past 100 years from what would once most likely have been predominantly Peninsula Granite Fynbos, to a range of exotic species and weeds (refer **Section 4.4**).



*FIGURE 02: The northern ravine ‘wet precinct’ with heavy vegetation and swimming pool fed by diverted water from the Diepsloot stream.*

## 2.2. The Southern ‘Dry’ Ravine Precinct

The southern ravine possesses an entirely different character to that of the northern Ravine. It contains an effectively dry stream course<sup>2</sup> and is mainly populated by eucalypts and gums with little undergrowth on its upper contours. (**Figure 03** and **Diagram 03B**). Whereas the northern ravine is located immediately adjacent to the Camps Bay Glen, a public park, the southern ravine is situated directly alongside established Camps Bay suburbia. This area is therefore referred to as the ‘dry precinct’.

<sup>2</sup> The lack of running water in this ravine is due to the municipal diversion of a branch of the Diepsloot River in Chilworth Road, preventing it from flowing into the property, unlike on its northern side.





*FIGURE 03: The southern 'dry precinct' ravine with adjacent Camps Bay suburbia. The trees are gums with a largely bare, un-vegetated 'dry' floor. See also attached Diagram 03B.*



*FIGURE 04: The gatehouse, tennis court and portion of the parking area forming part of the manor house precinct. Chilworth Road is behind the gatehouse. See also Diagram 03A.*

### 2.3. The Manor House Precinct.

The manor house precinct is defined by the headland upon which it stands. It comprises two distinct halves: the Chilworth Road side with its gatehouse, tennis court, parking area (**Figure 04**); 20<sup>th</sup> century 'second' swimming pool and pool house; and the ocean side with its structured formal garden and spectacular ocean views (**Figure 05** and **Diagram 03C**). The manor house precinct is the most developed and ordered portion of the site both with regard to its structures, choice of materials and imposed landscape geometries.





*FIGURE 05: The sea-facing façade of the manor house with its ordered, formal abutting garden landscape. See also Diagram 03.A.*

#### 2.4. The Victoria Road Precinct.

The Victoria Road precinct is the portion of the property at the foot of the headland and immediately adjacent to busy Victoria Road, Camps Bay. This precinct is characterized by heavy tree canopies forming a miniature glen with its own sense of seclusion and tranquility despite the presence of heavy traffic on the other side of the boundary wall separating Victoria Road from the property (**Figure 06** overleaf).



*FIGURE 06: The Victoria Road glen with its heavy tree canopies and filtered light.*

A garden nursery is located on the southern end of this precinct. There is little else apart from an historical decorative concrete garden bridge and heavily vegetated natural stone retaining walls around the perimeter of the headland. This area can best be described as the ‘damp shaded’ precinct and is the most spatially contained of all the precincts on the property due to the heavy tree canopy and lush perimeter undergrowth.

### 3. PLANNING-RELATED ASPECTS

The planning application to convert the site to a small luxury hotel will require its rezoning from its current Consent Use as a bed and breakfast establishment to General

Residential Use to permit the operation of a hotel. Parts of the property may require departures in terms of the overlay zones promulgated as part of the new Cape Town Zoning Scheme. A removal of restrictions application will need to be granted to permit the use of the site as a hotel. The property is just within the boundary of the City of Cape Town urban edge.

#### 4. HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Camps Bay Retreat has high significance as a natural extension to the historic Camps Bay Glen, which falls within the old Table Mountain National Monument proclamation (GN 2096/1962), now a Provincial Heritage Site. Although the site itself is not a declared heritage site, the architecturally significant manor house and its surrounds are deemed worthy of being graded as Grade IIIA if not higher, in terms of Section 7 of the NHRA.

##### 4.1. Aesthetic Significance:

The site forms part of the historically surviving green belt extending from Kloof Nek down to Victoria Road, and is the largest portion of such land still in private ownership in the area. Although the property is not physically accessible to the public, it is visible from the Glen as part of this surviving green landscape. For this reason alone, any new interventions on the property would need to be very carefully considered to ensure that this overriding green character is not negatively impacted on, particularly as viewed from the public realm.

##### 4.2. Architectural/Historical Significance.



*FIGURE 07: Earl's Dyke at what must have been shortly after its completion in the early 1930's. At that stage, the landscape around the manor house was much more open than is currently the case. (Photo courtesy of the current property owner).*

The site has high architectural significance, containing a manor house by the recognized master architect William Grant. This Italianate building with Cape Revival features is of high architectural quality (**Figure 05** and **Diagram 03B, C & D**) and was clearly constructed at considerable expense given the quality of the workmanship and materials. It is strategically positioned on the headland overlooking the sea; having

displaced a previous building that had stood there until demolished in 1929 to make way for the present structure.

Earl's Dyke, as the property was then known, was purchased from the Cape Marine Suburbs in 1911 by Thomas Earl (who may have constructed the previous house?) and thereafter acquired in 1920 by Friedrich Wilhelm Knacke, who built the present house. It remained in the family until the daughter, Trudi Knacke, sold the property to the present owner, Camps Bay Manor (PTY) Ltd. The house is particularly significant as Ms Knacke lived there her entire life, leaving the building substantially unaltered. The stylistically intact nature of the building has been retained by the current owners. The house is surrounded by substantial gardens ranging from the formal layouts integral to the manor house in its immediate vicinity, to the informal 'natural' areas within the north ravine and Victoria Road precincts. A number of noteworthy garden structures exist on the lower reaches of the property including a small neo-classical concrete bridge over the dry stream of the south ravine and the 'natural' swimming pool in the northern ravine. The latter, fed by the Diepsloot stream from the Glen, and with Italianate detailing linking to that of the manor house, is unique to the area (and possibly the Western Cape) and reminiscent of landscapes elements in the Italian and English Country Landscape Garden traditions.

#### 4.3. Archaeological Significance

Considering that the site is located at the juncture of two old stream courses, and not far from the historic trail connecting Camps Bay with Kloof Nek, the possibility of pre-colonial material being discovered on the property cannot be discounted. The fact that a pre-existing residence stood on the site of the present manor house suggests that there may also be historical archaeological potential. An archaeological investigation of the property has, however, yet to be undertaken.

#### 4.4. Other Aspects of Significance

The property has no known social or technological significance and is most unlikely to have linguistic or spiritual significance. A botanical assessment of the site conducted in 2009 (**Annexure B**) reveals the site to be in a highly altered state from the natural condition. From a purist botanical viewpoint, there is deemed to be no vegetation of any consequence, this having been displaced by a variety of exotic species over the past 100 years. Equally, the watercourses appear to have little value as far as natural habitat is concerned, except that they carry water (in the case of the northern ravine) and do provide habitat for frogs (MacDonald, 2009). A number of notable exotic trees do, however exist. These include a camphor tree (*cinnamomum camphora*) shading the entrance portico on the Chilworth Road side of the property and two large fig trees (*figus natalensis*) flanking the verandah on the ocean-facing side of the manor house. Consequently, the property is not considered to have scientific (biophysical) significance, although it does have cultural landscape significance with regard to its noteworthy landmark exotic trees.

#### 4.5. Concluding Heritage Statement

On the basis of the factors considered in Sections 4.1 to 4.4 of this report, including that the property is effectively an extension of a landscape already recognized as a

Provincial Heritage Site, the property is regarded as being of high aesthetic, and architectural/historical significance. It has been found to have no biophysical significance and may have archaeological significance, although archaeological investigations of the site have yet to be undertaken. However, should archaeological material be encountered, this is unlikely to pose an irresolvable impediment to future development provided that the necessary recording/recovery processes are embarked upon where necessary.

*Grading in terms of Section 7 of the NHRA:* The Camps Bay Retreat is provisionally considered to be a Grade 2 heritage site with a number of Grade IIIA structures, including the manor house, nested within.

## 5. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS

An opportunities and constraints analysis has been prepared in order to better understand the heritage-related sensitivities of the site with regard to potential new development. This analysis has been prepared in the form of a series of diagrams, i.e.:

- i) **Diagram 01**, which unpacks the signature landscape characteristics of the site;
- ii) **Diagram 02**, which identifies the significant elements, spatial relationships, opportunities and constraints of the property in plan form; and
- iii) **Diagram 03**, which identifies the significant elements, spatial relationships, opportunities and constraints of the property in terms of height, with reference to the four major outlooks from the manor house.

### 5.1. **Diagram 1:** Explanatory Notes.

5.1.1. *Figure A:* Tree cover pattern defined largely by the site's ravines and stream courses.

This figure illustrates the strong natural canopy characteristics of the site, which is heavily populated by trees, being part of the same landscape as the historic Camps Bay Glen located immediately adjacent to the northeast. The site forms part of a landscape that has dramatically transformed over the past 180 years<sup>3</sup>, (compare with **Figure 08** below).

5.1.2. *Figure B:* Contour pattern and twin stream courses: northern course has perennial flow; the southern course is effectively dry for most of the year.

This figure illustrates the nature of the topography without the trees, revealing its twin ravines with their stream courses that converge at the bottom of the headland on Victoria Road. The northern stream is perennially flowing, supporting a wealth of vegetation, especially along its upper contours. This stream forms part of the Diepsloot system that runs along the southern boundary of the Glen before running into and through the Earls Dyke property. By contrast, populations of gum trees and eucalypts have heavily transformed the southern ravine. This latter ravine contains no flowing

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<sup>3</sup> By the early 1830's, the landscape as viewed from Kloof Nek looking over Camps Bay was characterized by open treeless slopes occupied by Cape granite fynbos and grasslands, with denser vegetation and trees mostly relegated to the kloofs and ravines.



stream course since its diversion on Chilworth Road by the municipality. It now serves mainly to drain the property during winter.

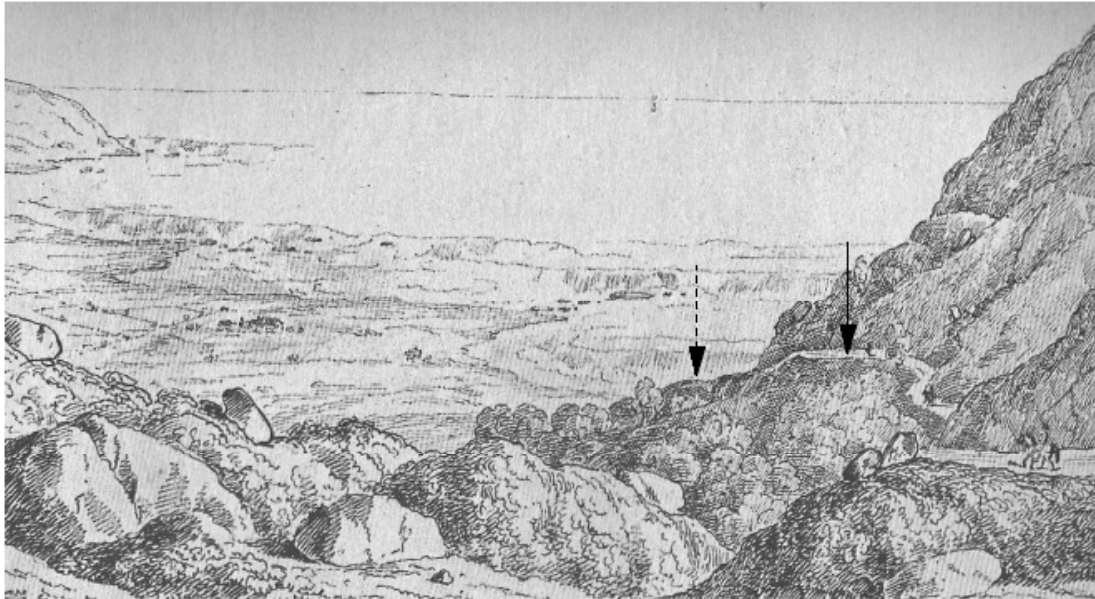


FIGURE 08: Drawing by Charles D'Oyley of 13 May 1832 showing the old trail from Kloof Nek down to Camps Bay (arrowed: extreme right) in relation to the approximate position of the property obscured by the ridge line (arrowed with broken line further to the left). (Gordon Brown, Plate 19).

#### 5.1.3. Figure C: Development pattern in response to the topography.

Illustrates the manner in which development has occurred at Earl's Dyke due to limited choices for placing buildings as a consequence of the site's pattern of steep slopes. The homestead therefore occupies a commanding position on the headland between the twin ravines. The only substantial structure on the lower contours of the property is the 'natural swimming pool, conveniently placed alongside the Diepkloof stream from which it obtains an uninterrupted supply of fresh water. The location of the swimming pool is further evidence that the northern half of the site has historically been the 'wet half'. This is in strong contrast to the southern ravine, which remains dry during summer months and serves to drain water from the site in winter.

#### 5.1.4. Figure D: Primary slope characteristics with figure ground on the site and immediately surrounding area.

Indicates the pattern and density of development both on the property and immediately surrounding areas, and the manner in which development within the immediate context has been historically influenced by the site's major slope pattern. This figure also illustrates the differing spatial characteristics of opposing halves of the site, viz:

- i) The northern half: Effectively an extension of the Glen landscape with its vegetation and tree canopies, as opposed to:
- ii) The southern half: The 'dry half', which is also adjacent to the much finer-grained development pattern of present day Camps Bay suburbia. Suburban development

clearly does help to define this half of the site, as opposed to the northern half where this is not the case.

#### 5.1.5. *Figure E*: Composite diagram indicating areas of greatest human intervention up to the present.

Indicates the site in context with a contemporary satellite image of surrounding development, and indicating the areas of the site where most human development interventions on the landscape have taken place. Not surprisingly, most of the human interventions, with the possible exclusion of the gums planted in the southern ravine, have occurred on the central headland overlooking the rest of the property.

### 5.2. **Diagram 2:** Explanatory Notes.

Diagram 02 illustrates the spatial relationships between the manor house and its surrounds, together with suggested areas where new development could be located. These areas, which are highlighted in red, are not to be considered potential development footprints but merely an indication where some appropriately configured development could occur.

- i) *Structures to be substantially retained*: Identifies the structures on the property that should not be demolished, although minor alterations would probably be permitted subject to a permit from Heritage Western Cape in terms of Section 34 of the NHRA.
- ii) *Structures that could be altered*: Refers to the mid-late 20th C pool house and the front boundary wall facing onto Camps Bay Drive. In both cases, limited remodeling of the external envelopes of these structures could be permitted, but subject to a permit from Heritage Western Cape in terms of Section 34 of the NHRA.
- iii) *Structures that could be removed*: Identifies the mid-late 20th C 'second' swimming pool adjacent to the pool house and the service building built into the slope of the southern ravine immediately to the south of the manor house. The tennis court (indicated in broken lines) could possibly be removed to accommodate new development.
- iv) *Watercourse to be retained and to remain unobstructed*: Identifies watercourses on the property as signature features to be retained. This includes the 'dry' southern watercourse.
- v) *Primary scenic outlook*: Identifies the outlook from the manor house to the sea as the principal scenic outlook on the property. It has signature qualities, i.e. being the major contributor in defining the sense of place of Earls Dyke. It presents clear and spectacular views of the sea over the tree canopies within the Victoria Road precinct below. This outlook must not be negatively impacted on by possible new development. This means that any potential new development in this area will need to be contained below the tree canopies as viewed from the manor house.

- vi) *Axial alignment*: Highlights the strong axial relationship between the sea-facing façade of the manor house and the formally laid out upper garden. This axial alignment is to be respected and retained.
- vii) *Unrealized Axial Alignment*: Identifies an alignment that would be reinforced by re-positioning the entrance gate. The present gateway is offset closer to the gatehouse. This would require cutting into an existing embankment, which is responsible for the current offset position.
- viii) *Secondary scenic outlook* (contained): Identifies the outlook from the north side of the manor house and spa over the northern ravine. This view is contained by the tree canopies of the Glen along the northern and eastern boundaries of the property. Given the scenically sensitive nature of the northern ravine and its location adjacent to an historical green space, opportunities for new development in this area are minimal.
- ix) *Outlook* (contained): Identifies the outlook from the southern side of the homestead looking south. This view is contained and strongly filtered by the well-established clusters of gums and eucalypts within and around the southern ravine. This outlook has no particular scenic qualities, although the gums in this area help to screen views of adjacent suburban development along the southern boundary.
- x) *Green/green interface*: Highlights the northern and eastern edges of the property as part of a green continuum with the adjacent Camps Bay Glen, which serves as primary green space for this portion of Camps Bay.
- xi) *Suburbia/site interface*: Highlights the pronounced suburban development character of the southern boundary of the site.
- xii) *Area for potential new development on manor house headland level* (not a suggested building footprint): Identifies part of the existing tennis court as an area for potential new development subject to conditions. (This could include excavations for parking below the present ground level). Such conditions would need to include height, massing and building line constraints to prevent the manor house being visually overpowered by such new development. A suggested maximum building height is indicated on Diagram 03. For this reason, the highlighted area in Diagram 02 should not be interpreted as a building footprint.
- xiii) *Area for potential new development below manor house headland level* (not a suggested building footprint): Identifies areas where new development excavated into the slope could potentially be supported subject to conditions. Such conditions would need to include roof treatment massing and building line constraints, as well as constraints to ensure that roof heights remain below ground level as prevailing around the manor house. Suggested maximum extents for such possible development in the vertical plane are indicated in Diagram 03.
- xiv) *Area for potential new garden service-related development below tree canopy level* (not a suggested building footprint): Identifies a possible location for a garden service nursery on the property subject to conditions. Such conditions would need to



include constraints on height and roof treatment applicable to all related structures, and restrictions relating to the permanence of such structures. Note that the southwestern corner of the property is one of the few portions of the property on its lower contours that is not shaded by existing tree canopies, and therefore suitable for plant propagation.

- xv) *Area for potential new lightweight/non-permanent development* (not a suggested building footprint). Identifies areas where development that would ‘touch the ground lightly’ could be established. This would include possible accommodation on the northwest corner of the site, and a lightweight viewing facility at the upper end of the northern ravine, which is of high aesthetic quality but currently not easily accessed.
- xvi) *Entry/parking area*: Identifies the entrance area, which is most suited for, and currently used for parking and defining the approach to the manor house. Part of this area would also be investigated for potential underground parking.

### 5.3. **Diagram 3:** Explanatory Notes.

Diagram 03 is to be read in conjunction with Diagram 02. It illustrates the height relationships between the manor house on the headland and the flanking ravines, together with areas where potential new development could be located. These areas, which are highlighted in red, are not to be considered potential development massing sections but merely an indication of where some appropriately configured development could occur.

This diagram indicates paired images labeled A to D showing the varying spatial natures of the areas abutting the north, west and south faces of the homestead, and the east and west faces of the gatehouse. The purpose is to underscore the different environments on each of the four sides of the property as viewed from the manor house.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the spatial analysis depicted in Diagrams 01 to 03, the following is concluded:

- i) The areas of greatest sensitivity to new development are on the northern and western sides of the property. These areas therefore have lowest prospects for future development.
- ii) There is however a prospect for limited development of an impermanent nature within the ‘glen’ area adjacent to Victoria Road near the northern boundary. A lightweight timber framed structure elevated just above ground level but contained below the existing tree canopy comes to mind.
- iii) The current location of the garden nursery is supported, although the current nursery structures would benefit from modification with particular regard to views from higher ground on the site, and entry views through the Victoria Road gate.

- iv) The ravine area at the head of the stream entering the property is a closed environment with high visual appeal. However, it is currently inaccessible without walking up the stream itself. A walkway along the contour line above the stream terminating in a lightweight timber deck over-sailing this area is therefore supported in principle, bearing in mind that the site has no particular environmental significance.
- v) The southern half of the property reveals the greatest potential for future development, given the degraded nature of the 'dry' stream course and proximity of existing suburban development. Another area supported for potential new development is the tennis court given its set back location in relation to the manor house and Chilworth Road entrance.
- vi) The reconfiguration of the parking area off Chilworth Road is supported in principle on the basis of this providing the opportunity for re-landscaping this area in a manner more befitting the significance of the Chilworth Road entrance area to the manor house. This could possibly include some underground parking. For this reason, the relocation of the Chilworth Road gates on axis with the front entrance to this house would also be supported in principle.

It is therefore recommended that:

- i) Additional development of the property be supported in principle; provided that:
- ii) Such development be located and contained within the areas identified in Diagrams 02 and 03 of this scoping report; and that
- iii) The development indicators contained in this report be used as a basis for preparing the relevant architectural and landscaping design proposals yet to be submitted to HWC for approval in terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act.

GRAHAM JACOBS  
5 March 2015.

## 7. REFERENCES

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| Gordon-Brown, A. (Intr)                             | The Cape Sketchbooks of Sir Charles D'Oyley depicting Cape Town, the Countryside and Neighbouring Villages. A.A Balkema, Cape Town, 1968.                        |
| MacDonald, David:<br>(Bergwind Botanical Surveys)). | <i>Botanical Assessment of Erven 351 &amp; 352, Camps Bay, City of Cape Town, Western Cape.</i> Prepared for Aurecon SA (PTY) Ltd. December 2009. November 2014. |