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BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON REMAINDER OF FARM BRANDWACHT NO. 1049, STELLENBOSCH, WESTERN CAPE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

14 March 2025

GNEC Reference Number: **20976**

DEA&DP Reference No: ***16/3/3/6/7/1/B4/45/1202/24***

***Please Note: A copy of the document will be available on GNEC's website from 14 March 2025**

1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide stakeholders with information about the proposed residential development on Remainder of Farm Brandwacht No. 1049, Stellenbosch, Western Cape
- Introduce and explain the Basic Assessment Process and Public Participation process to be followed for the proposed development, in terms of applicable environmental legislation (National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), (Act No. 107 of 1998)) and Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (2014, as amended).
- Invite all stakeholders to comment on any aspect related to the proposed development; and
- Notify all stakeholders that the Interested and Affected Party registration period is from ***14 March 2025 until 16 April 2025***.

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2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION & PROJECT PROPOSAL

Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants (GNEC) has been appointed by *Brandwacht Land Development (Pty) Ltd,* hereafter, referred to as the applicant, to facilitate the Environmental Authorisation process required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) for the Proposed Residential Development on Remainder of Farm Brandwacht No. 1049, Stellenbosch, Western Cape.

The subject property is situated between Paradyskloof and Brandwacht (Brandwacht-Aan-Rivier and Brandwacht 'Proper'), Stellenbosch.

The subject property is currently not included in the urban edge and is zoned agriculture, however, is in the municipality's forward planning for development.

Conceptual alignments of the 'Eastern Link Road', of which a section is a proclaimed Provincial Main Road (MR 169), traverses the subject property, resulting in two portions – one to the east- and one to the west of the said link road. Please note that this EIA does not include application for the much discussed "Eastern Link Road" but does make partial accommodation for the possibility of its development in future.

The proposed development is residential in nature, with an accompanying commercial pocket on the remainder piece of the property abutting the existing *Brandwacht Office Park* to the one side and Ben du Toit Drive to the other. The proposed development will be constructed in two phases, with Phase I comprising of a total of 150 erven, which accumulates to a total of 18.43ha located on the western side of the erf, and Phase II of 10 erven which accumulates to 11.74ha located on the eastern side of the erf. The Basic Assessment is applying for both phases:

Phase I comprises of:

- A total of 146 Conventional Residential Housing opportunities of 7.21ha in size;
- A Local Business Zoned erf of 0.27ha in size;
- Private Open Space of 7.60ha in size;
- Private Open Space in the form of Private Roads of 3.09ha in size; and
- Public Roads and Parking of 0.26ha in size.

Phase II comprises of:

- A total of 9 Conventional Residential housing opportunities of 11.20ha in size; and

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- Private Open Space in the form of Private Roads of 0.54ha in size.

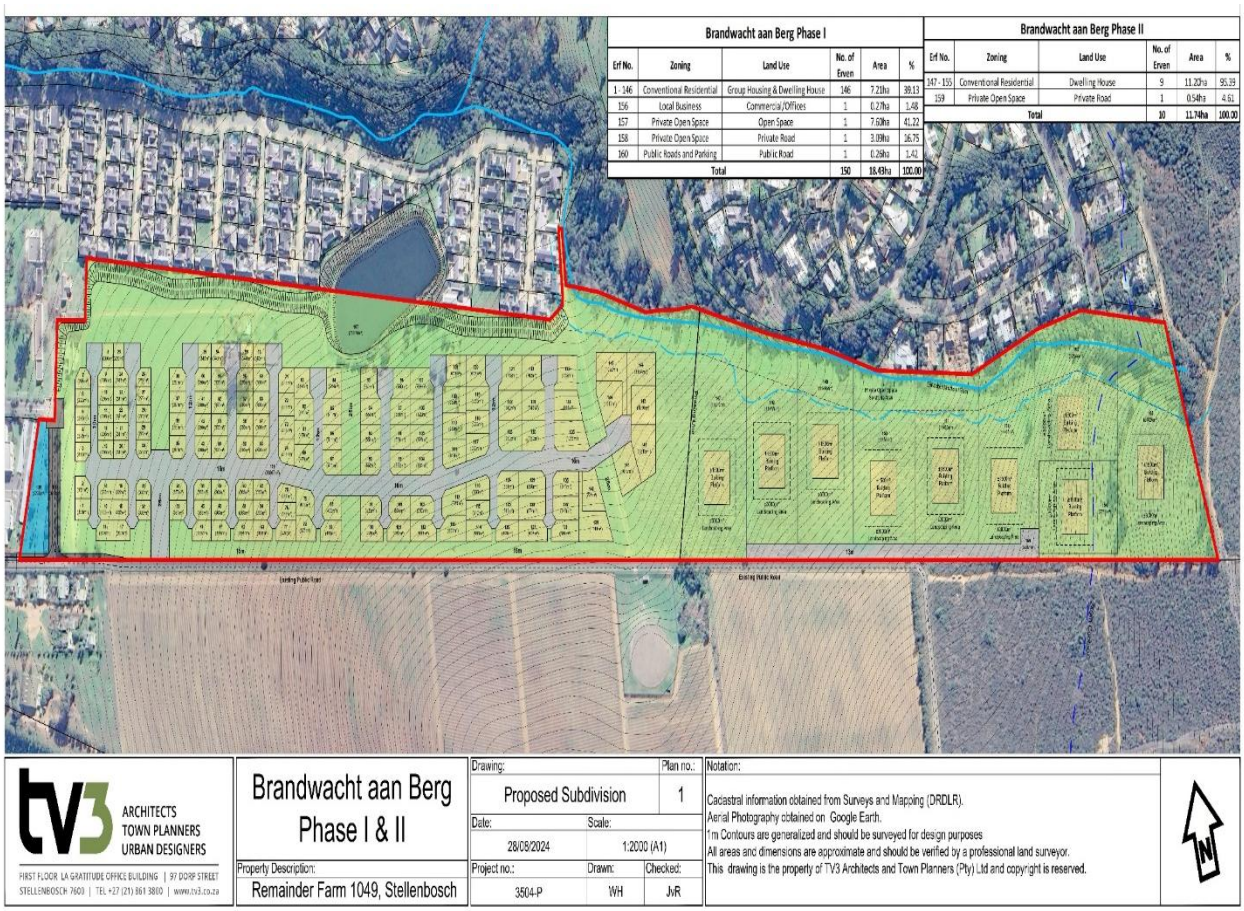

Figure 1: Preferred Site Development Plan

Table 1: Phase I Land Use Table

Brandwacht aan Berg Phase I					
Erf No.	**Zoning**	**Land Use**	**No. of Erven**	**Area**	**%**
1 - 146	Conventional Residential	Group Housing & Dwelling House	146	7.21ha	39.13
156	Local Business	Commercial/Offices	1	0.27ha	1.48
157	Private Open Space	Open Space	1	7.60ha	41.22
158	Private Open Space	Private Road	1	3.09ha	16.75
160	Public Roads and Parking	Public Road	1	0.26ha	1.42
Total			**150**	**18.43ha**	**100.00**

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Table 2: Phase II Land Use Table

Brandwacht aan Berg Phase II

Erf No.	Zoning	Land Use	No. of Erven	Area	%
147 - 155	Conventional Residential	Dwelling House	9	11.20ha	95.39
159	Private Open Space	Private Road	1	0.54ha	4.61
Total			**10**	**11.74ha**	**100.00**

Alternative Layout

The alternative layout also proposes the proposed development to be constructed in two phases, with Phase I comprising of a total of 174 erven, which accumulates to a total of 18.34ha located on the western side of the erf, and Phase II of 63 erven which accumulates to 11.83ha located on the eastern side of the erf. The Basic Assessment assesses both phases:

Phase I:

- A total of 167 Conventional Residential Housing opportunities of approximately 7.2ha in size;
- A Local Business Zoned erf of 0.27ha in size;
- Private Open Space of 6.17ha in size;
- Private Open Space in the form of Private Roads of 3.74ha in size; and
- Public Roads and Parking of 0.96ha in size.

Phase II:

- A total of 61 Conventional Residential Housing Opportunities of approximately 5.13ha in size;
- Private Open Space of approximately 4.58ha in size; and
- Private Open Space in the form of Private Roads of approximately 2.11ha.

This Alternative is not preferred, mainly due to the visual implication addressed by the Visual Impact Assessment.

The project site borders a variety of natural and culturally rich landscapes. Each have their own unique characteristics which have inspired the proposed landscape framework design of the project.

The landscape design seeks to integrate the development within the surrounding context, while also providing diverse internal open spaces. The varied landscape typologies will improve the local biodiversity across the site, providing opportunities for mixed recreational use, provision of shelter, screening, and buffering of new and existing built elements.

The following key Landscape Typologies are identified:

Riparian corridor: A natural riparian corridor lies along the northern boundary of the site that follows the existing water course. The steep embankments provide a sheltered habitat for tall and dense riparian trees. This vegetation pattern will continue eastwards along a proposed drainage channel linking the existing dam and thus serving as a continuous green screen between the housing developments.

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Fynbos and grass meadow gardens: Local endemic Fynbos and Renosterveld vegetation is to be reintroduced to most of the open landscape spaces, to form continuous threads of natural gardens that link spaces and frame open grass meadows. Species will be selected that best represent the natural vegetation types of the area, accentuating seasonal characteristics. Pedestrian footpaths will meander throughout the landscape to ensure accessibility, and active and passive recreation.

Fruit tree groves: Along the southern edge of the project site, the visual connection to the adjacent agricultural landscape is evident. Low growing fruit trees are proposed in formal patterns along this edge to complement the existing landscape running alongside. The narrow buffer of fruit trees will screen new housing from the public road, while still maintaining views above and over in either direction.

Street trees: Along all internal streets, mixed indigenous trees are proposed to provide shade and softening to the internal development layout. Smaller trees will be informally positioned to mimic natural clustered patterns, while taller trees will be evenly planted along the central linear avenue to provide more formality, complementing the structure of the development plan.

Figure 2: Landscaping Plan

Information regarding the proposed road; sewage -; electrical -; stormwater -; and water infrastructure upgrades are described in full detail in the Basic Assessment Report, as well as appendix B which contains the full infrastructure reports.

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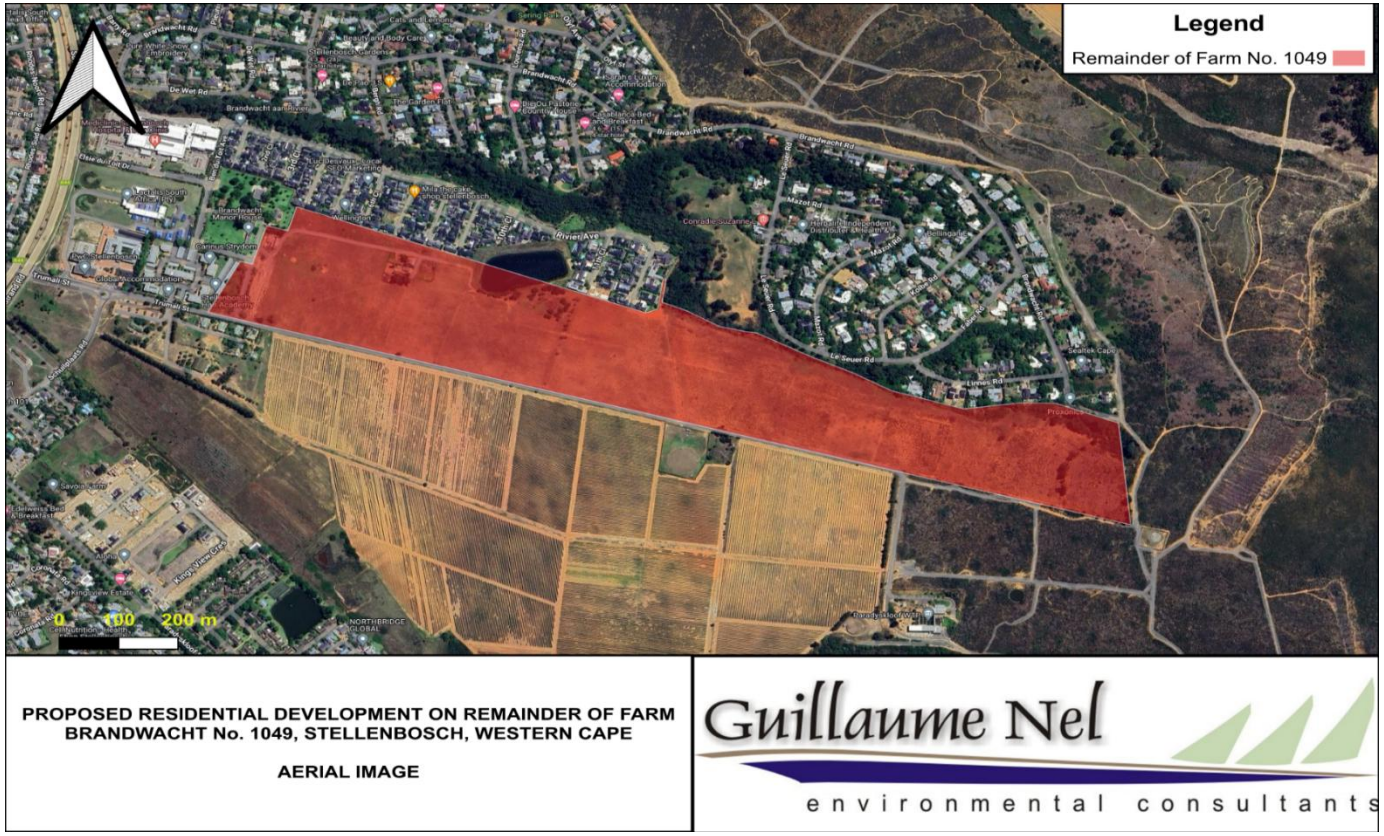

Figure 3: Aerial Image

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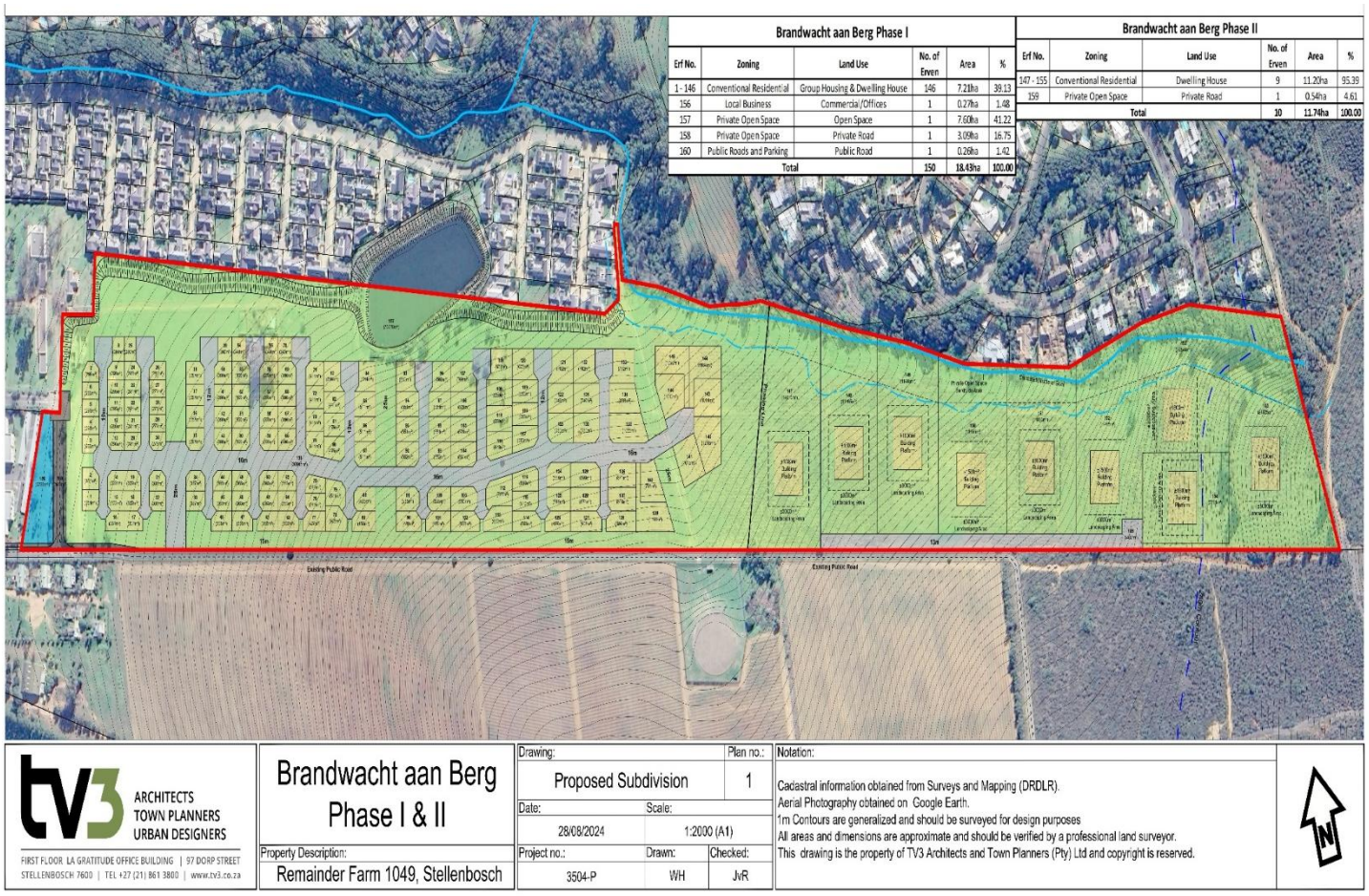

Figure 4: Preferred Alternative Layout

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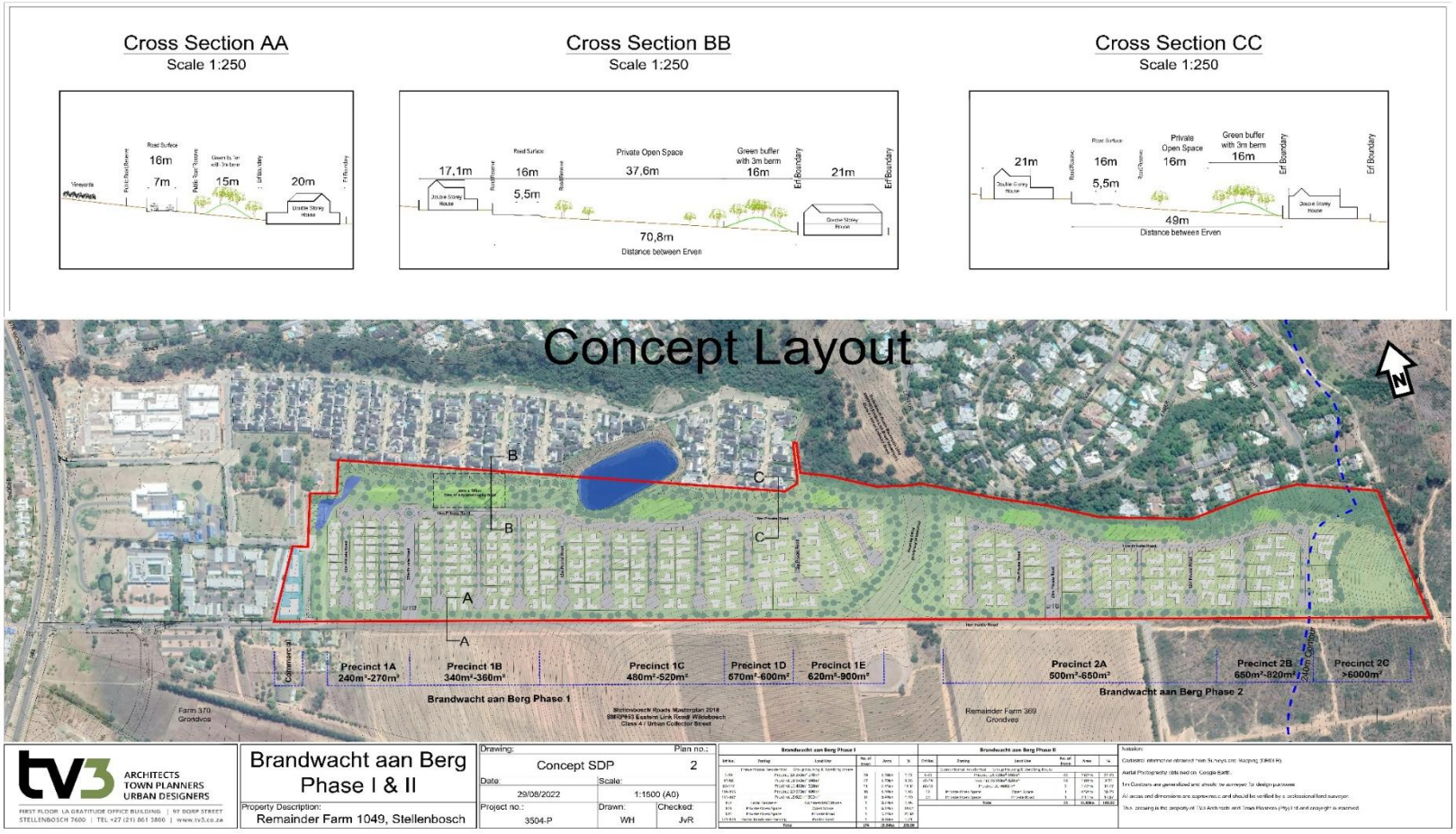

Figure 5: Alternative 1 (Not Preferred Layout)

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Freshwater

Freshwater Ecological Network (FEN) Consulting (Pty) Ltd was appointed to conduct a specialist freshwater ecological assessment as part of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) and Water Use Authorisation (WUA) processes for the proposed Brandwacht-Aan-Berg Residential Development on the remainder of Farm 1049 in Stellenbosch, Western Cape Province.

During the site assessment conducted in April 2024, an unnamed channelled valley-bottom wetland (CVBW) originating from the Stellenbosch Mountain, located along the northern cadastral border of the property and bordered by the existing Brandwacht-Aan-Rivier Residential Development, was identified within the regulatory investigation zone (i.e. 500 m radius from the study area in accordance with GN4167 of 2023 as it relates to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) as amended (NWA)). Additionally, an existing irrigation dam was also recorded that will be utilised for stormwater attenuation by the development proposal.

The artificial system(s) are not deemed to be natural freshwater systems as they are clearly anthropogenic in nature and directly associated with stormwater attenuation and/or irrigation dams storing water for agricultural irrigation purposes. Given the anthropogenic nature of these features, they are not deemed to be natural freshwater ecosystems as defined in the NWA and hence have not been assessed further in Freshwater Impact Assessment.

The presence of a channelled valley-bottom wetland system, associated with a mountainous catchment area, located along the northern cadastral border of the remainder of Farm No. 1049 in Stellenbosch, within the study and investigation area as well as the assessment of the ecological condition of this system, has led to the classification of the area as being of High Aquatic Biodiversity Significance. The author thus disputes the classification of the DFFE's Environmental Screening Tool classifying the entire study area to be of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Sensitivity and recommends that the area should rather be classified as being of High Aquatic Biodiversity Significance.

Assuming that strict enforcement of cogent, well-developed control/mitigation measures takes place (and the implementation of general construction management and good housekeeping practices), the significance of impacts arising from the proposed development can be adequately managed. Furthermore, with implementation of the proposed Landscaping Plan and long-term management of alien and invasive plant species, the overall PES of the freshwater ecosystem is unlikely to be negatively impacted by the proposed development. The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), as custodians of the water resources in South Africa, must be consulted in this regard to decide on the required WUA process for this proposed development considering the motivations contained in this document together with the results of the DWS Risk Assessment Matrix.

The ecological assessment modelled a Moderate Ecological Importance and Sensitivity (EIS) with an overall Low Ecoservice Provision. The seep wetland areas were collectively assessed to be in a Moderately Modified Present Ecological State (PES C). The CVBW was assessed to be in a Largely Modified (PES D) ecological condition.

The presence and ecological assessment of this natural freshwater ecosystem within the study/investigation area has led to the classification of the area as being of High Aquatic Biodiversity Significance.

The outcome of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Risk Assessment Matrix (2023) indicated a Low-Risk Significance for potential impacts during the construction and operational phases of the proposed Brandwacht-Aan-Berg Residential Development for both Spatial Development alternatives. Assuming that strict enforcement of cogent, well-developed control/mitigation measures takes place (in addition to the implementation of general construction

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management and good housekeeping practices), the significance of impacts arising from the proposed development can be adequately managed.

Based on the findings of the Freshwater Ecosystem Assessment and the result of the DWS Risk Assessment, it is the opinion of the author that the proposed development may proceed and that an overall **Low Risk Significance** can be achieved for the proposed development, provided that there is adherence to cogent, well-conceived and ecologically sensitive construction plans, where applicable, and that the control measures provided in this report as well as general good construction practice are strictly adhered to. Therefore, the proposed development is considered acceptable from a freshwater ecological and resource management perspective.

Botanical

From a botanical perspective, according to Cape Farm Mapper, the site is mapped to have been an application for a residential development is underway at Farm Remainder 1049, Stellenbosch. The proposed development, if approved, may lead to loss of indigenous vegetation and requires a botanical assessment to be submitted as part of the application. Capensis Ecological Consulting Pty (Ltd) (Capensis) was commissioned by Guillaume Nel Environmental Consulting to carry out the study.

The sensitivity of the site was predetermined using the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) Screening Tool (https://screening.environment.gov.za/screeningtool/). The site contains areas rated as Very High terrestrial biodiversity sensitivity and Low for plant species sensitivity. A Very High level of sensitivity for terrestrial biodiversity, if confirmed during the study, requires a Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment to be submitted as part of the application for Environmental Authorisation (EA). A Medium level of sensitivity is confirmed for a portion of the site and a botanical impact assessment is thus provided. A Low level of sensitivity is assigned for plant species, if confirmed, requires a Plant Species Compliance Statement. In this instance no sensitive or threatened species were found and a species compliance statement is provided.

The Vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland (VEGMAP) (SANBI 2018), assigns two vegetation types to the study area, including (1) Swartland Shale Renosterveld (SSR) and (2) Cape Winelands Shale Fynbos (CWSF), (2). The two vegetation types purportedly merge at the eastern side of the site. If this historical boundary is accurate then the vegetation would have supported an ecotone with a transitional vegetation type over much of the site. The eastern side is likely to have supported CWSF since the vegetation type is evident on the adjoining property immediately to the east. The dominance of renosterveld over much of the site supports renosterbos, a species characterising SSR.

The study area was found to be in a heavily modified state due to historical farming that has included ploughing and removing the original vegetation cover over most of the site. The only area to escape farming impacts, although not entirely, is the ravine at the north-eastern corner. This feature and the associated watercourse are too steep for cultivated crops, but invasive species have become problematic. Apart from the ravine and associated watercourse, which support the most intact habitats, the vegetation in the historically cultivated lands generally decreases in condition in a downslope direction.

Degraded Habitat

This habitat, located on the uppermost (eastern side) is in slightly better condition than the remainder of the cultivated lands since it has been left fallow for the longest period of time. *Monterey pines Pinus radiata* define the eastern and western limits of the habitat along the contours. The dominant species include tall flowerseed *Anthospermum aethiopicum*, renosterbos *Elytropappus rhinocerotis*, honey everlasting *Helichrysum patulum*, slangbos *Seriphium plumosum*, and willow karee *Searsia angustifolia*. Additional species include (* = exotic): *black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*: NEMBA category 2), three-tooth kaniedood *Athanasia trifurcata*, *bull thistle *Cirsium vulgare* (NEMBA category 1b) ,

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stinkwort *Dittrichia graveolens*, Cape starapple Diospyros glabra, sand olive Dodonaea viscosa subsp. angustifolia, balloonplant *Gomphocarpus physocarpus*, *Metalasia cf. acuta*, cluster renosterbos *Myrovernix gnaphaloides*, lazybush *Oftia Africana*, bitou *Osteospermum moniliferum*, common *gonna Passerina corymbosa*, cf. *Pentameris ariroides*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, hairy dottypea *Psoralea hirta*, Gardenroute ragwort *Senecio pterophorus* and ridgestem ragwort *Senecio pubigerus*.

Semi-Intact Ravine and watercourse

The ravine supports some of the original plant communities, which, historically, would probably have been characterized by *Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata – Searsia angustifolia/Kiggelaria africana* community. Invasive species have outcompeted the original communities in places, due to historical disturbances and seed dispersal mechanisms. The outer edges of the ravine are dominated by a high density of black wattle *Acacia mearnsii* (NEMBA category 2) and to a lesser extent bugweed *Solanum mauritianum* (NEMBA category 1b), bleeding heart *Homalanthus populifoius* (NEMBA category 1b), English ivy *Hedera helix* (NEMBA category 3), Benghal dayflower *Commelina bengalensis*, bramble *Rubus sp*. and tall umbrella pine *Pinus pinea* on the northern side. Several large pines have recently fallen over the ravine and cause severe erosion of the ravine slopes at waypoint. Indigenous understorey species include African boxwood *Myrsine africana* and *Juncus effusus* (along the stream).

Highly degraded and transformed habitat

This area represents the majority of the site. As stated, the area is severely modified due to farming and repeated removal of vegetation. The area supports only a few indigenous species that have persisted and are typical of fallow lands with clay soils. These include renosterbos *Elytropappus rhinocerotis*, wild rosemary *Eriocephalus africanus* and common hare grass *Tribolium uniolae.* A single plant, *Erepsia bracteata* was also found in this habitat.

All of the impacts associated with loss of vegetation would occur during the construction phase. This involves clearing all existing vegetation in the old fields but not the ravine or watercourse. The overall impacts are expected to be Low Negative considering the aforementioned sensitivity context. Impacts could, however, be reduced to Very Low Negative with mitigation.

As with loss of vegetation most of the impacts associated with loss of ecological processes and species would occur during the construction phase. Loss of ecological processes and species is likely to be similar to loss of vegetation since these are interdependent. Apart from what is considered to be a valid ESA2 ecological corridor along the ravine and associated watercourse (an area that has not been identified for development) – the ecological processes associated with the existing habitats is likely to be Low Negative due to the severely modified ecological state. If the vegetation condition and species diversity had been higher, loss of ecological processes and species would have been higher

The operational phase impacts are likely to be Very Low negative to Negligible for loss vegetation and loss ecological processes and species, since most of the impacts would occur during the construction phase and the ravine and watercourse are likely to be improved from an ecological perspective.

The proposed development, if approved, would impact secondary and severely modified areas that would most likely have supported Cape Winelands Shale Fynbos and Swartland Shale Renosterveld, including an ecotone. The only developable portion of the site that supports Cape Winelands Shale Fynbos (no Swartland Shale Renosterveld remains) is heavily modified (degraded) and only supports a few disturbances tolerant and pioneer species. This area, on the upper slopes abutting the western boundary, could be restored but at significant effort and cost (medium restoration potential), which is not justified in my opinion. Effort should rather but placed on restoring the ravine and watercourse. This should include (1) stabilization of the ravine slopes, where large pines have caused severe erosion, (2) removal of

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invasive and exotic species, and (3) reintroductions of key species such as wild olives and wild peaches. If this condition can be met the development is supported from a botanical perspective.

Socio-Economic

Dr Jonathan Bloom of Multi-Purpose Business Solutions was commissioned as an independent consultant to prepare a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of the proposed development. Dr Bloom (PhD, Corporate Finance) is the principal member of Multi-Purpose Business Solutions and was a professor of real estate at Stellenbosch University until 2013. He has conducted more than 100 socio-economic impact and other assessments as an independent consultant for real estate and other Southern Africa developments. Jonathan has research skills in designing and implementing research projects from a qualitative and quantitative perspective. He majored in statistics and business economics, and his background in statistical modelling of economic aspects and cost-benefit assessments has been used to assist clients with evaluating socio-economic impacts associated with projects.

Several socio-economic impacts of the proposed development were identified. The Preferred Alternative 1 will add 155 high-end residential units to the Stellenbosch housing market with an estimated initial investment of R1,85 billion over five years in nominal terms. The latter could generate R4,8 billion in new business sales, adding R366 million (net of import leakage) to the Stellenbosch economy annually over the envisaged construction period of five years. The project could sustain about 6 743 direct, indirect and induced employment opportunities during construction, with a net movement of 1 011 employment opportunities, while increasing household incomes by R790 million over the 5 years of construction. An unknown number of new opportunities will also be created during operations, mainly linked to direct employment by households and small business opportunities such as garden services, electricians, plumbers and handmen.

Alternative 2 (255 residential units) will generate R781 million (R156 million per annum on average) more in production output than Preferred Alternative 1, R297 million more in local economic income during construction, and R128 million more in household income. Furthermore, Alternative 2 will create a net number of 164 more jobs during construction, and an estimated R18,6 million more in property rates revenue for the Stellenbosch Municipality over the first 10 years of operations in nominal terms.

Potential negative impacts include traffic flows, sense of place, nuisance factors, crime and construction workers who may impact local communities. However, if the site is properly managed and mitigation measures are implemented, the significance of these impacts will be low to moderate. Alternative 2 will have a higher density than Preferred Alternative 1, resulting in a higher impact on the sense of place to surrounding residents based on the Visual Impact Assessment and assumed increase in traffic (no Traffic Impact Assessment was available). However, the significance of both Alternatives' residual impact will be medium based on the impact assessment criteria.

The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment indicates that the socio-economic benefits of the preferred development alternative outweigh the potential -costs, and no fatal floors from a socio-economic perspective are identified or envisaged whether the preferred or alternative development option is considered.

Agriculture

OABS Development (Pty) Ltd is a company that specialises in agricultural business solutions and has been approached by the directors of Brandwacht Land Development (Pty) Ltd to assist them, as the owner of the Remainder of the Farm Brandwacht No. 1049, Stellenbosch, with an agricultural input on the Stellenbosch Municipality's proposed Municipal Spatial Development Framework.

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Studying the past performance of the Stellenbosch area the assessment is that the soil is conducive for wine production and probably a range of other cash crop varieties, however other site-specific factors result in utilizing the property for agricultural activities being unviable. These factors include the current limited available water supply, which makes the production of cash crops unviable, along with the black southeasterly winds, further inhibiting economic viability of crops, with the exception of vineyards and wine grapes. The size of the property, however, relinquishes economic vineyard production, being too small.

The black south easterly's potential harm can be mitigated using windbreakers, wind nets (which is visually undesirable) as well as the planting of trees (taking a lot of arable land due to its wide root structure and being a nesting place for birds).

The property has no water allocation of any volume from any irrigation scheme. A letter from the Helderberg Irrigation Board dated, 26/10/1995, stated clearly that:

- *The farm Brandwacht is located outside the borders of the Irrigation scheme and that the farm therefore, cannot be incorporated into the scheme.*

The property relies on the existing storage dam with a holding capacity of 34 000 m³ litre of water. The dam feeds from storm water and rainwater downflow during the winter months and runs (occasionally) dry during the summer months. Without a consistent reliable water supply (like from an irrigation scheme) the prospects for long term crop production (e.g. vine orchards) or cash crop production (e.g. vegetables) is very limited and not advisable. Even if the dam is at full capacity during the summer months (which is highly unlikely) the prospects of an economically viable entity are in question. The current drought conditions in the Western Cape emphasises the dilemma, where water supply from irrigation schemes cannot longer be guaranteed.

In summary

The general accepted rule for a financially viable wine production unit (2016) is in the order of 40 – 50 ha unit. This number is disputable and can be argued lengthily. The point is that if a producer has to establish 30 ha (size of the property) of orchards at R250 000+/ha and has to wait 3-4 years until full bearing, he will not survive financially. The wine industry commodity organization, Vinpro (2016 statistics) elaborates extensively on the subject.

Given the unfortunate water situation on the farm, such an enterprise is not advisable at all. The Department of Environmental – & Water affairs (Worcester) allocated a water requirement of ± 6500 m³/ha/annum. The unreliable inflow of water into the storage capacity of 34 000 m³ water will allow for 5.23 ha of vine orchards, which is much less than the 40+ ha requirement for an economically viable entity.

Cash crops (vegetables) can be an option during the winter rainfall months, however it would be impractical and economically challenging, as these crops would not be an option at all during the summer months, which would result in unproductive months and high seasonal unemployment for farm labourers. Vegetable crops require regular irrigation/ water, which could also be challenging given the current drought conditions. Further factors reducing the viability of vegetable crops on the subject property include the use of fertilizers (unwanted odours), probable theft being in close proximity to residential environments

Low density livestock/cattle farming could be used for keeping the grass short to prevent possible veld fires but would not be considered an economically viable farming practice. High density livestock farming (dairy, piggery, broilers and layers) is also in serious doubt due to environmental impacts and water shortage.

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The potential division of the property into two portions (due to the proposed eastern link road) will hamper farming activities to a large extend. Daily farming activities will cross the road on numerous occasions, causing traffic hazards and potential loss of life. A farming subway will be a requirement for the town planners and civil engineers at additional public expenditure.

Conclusion

Considering the abovementioned analysis of the "current situation" the following can be concluded as an opinion on the agriculture potential of the farm:

Due to its location and water constraints, no active farming activity takes place on the property, a part of a small herd of cattle grazing on weeds and natural grazing. The fencing seems to be in good condition, keeping the animals at bay.

The property has no farm infrastructure and irrigation equipment which is of agricultural significance, however, does contain irrigation equipment, which is out of service, two houses which were used as housing for the farm workers, and a roofless barn. However, according to the agricultural assessment, it has no agricultural significance.

Brandwacht is already succumbed by Stellenbosch over the past years. The expansion developments actually defined Brandwacht's future to be part of the local authority

From a pure Agriculture perspective – as piece of land without any water allocations and stripped from its location and neighbourhood environment – the agricultural value will be low.

Dividing the property into two portions will escalate the inability to execute farming practices successfully.

Finally, the assessment is that Brandwacht farm is a prime property stripped from its original purpose as a productive farm with financial viability. City expansion / urbanisation onto the farm's borders – on three sides – accompanied by a proposed road across the property define (logically) its future to become an integral part of Stellenbosch Municipality.

It is OABS (Pty) Ltd recommendation that the owners and their advisors proceed with all possible actions to be incorporated into the Stellenbosch Municipality's urban edge.

Heritage

ARCON Conservation Architects & Spatial Heritage Consultants were appointed to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed Brandwacht Residential Development. The heritage impact assessment evaluates the proposals for a new residential development prepared by TV3 Architects & Planners on behalf of Brandwacht Land Development (PTY) Ltd. The development is to be known as Brandwacht Aan Berg located on Brandwacht Farm 1049, Stellenbosch. The property is situated to the south of the residential suburbs of Bo-Dalsig and Brandwacht, and alongside the more recent residential development known as Brandwacht-Aan-Rivier.

Heritage resources impacted by the HIA have been identified using the following categories established Section 3(2) of the NHRA:

a) *Places, Buildings, Structures and Equipment of Cultural Significance:*

Although the property does contain a few individual buildings, none of these are regarded as having sufficient significance to warrant consideration as noteworthy heritage resources.

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b) Places to which Oral Traditions are attached, or associated with Living Heritage:

There are no known places with such associations on the property. On the off-chance that such associations do come to light during the stakeholder engagement process, such submissions will be considered and, where necessary, taken into account when the report is finalized for HWC's Final Comment prior to submission to the provincial Department of Environment & Development Planning (DEA&DP) as part of the environmental application process.

c) Historical Settlements and Townscapes:

The historic Brandwacht farm werf with its double storeyed homestead and adjacent wine cellar lie immediately adjacent on the northwest side of the property. Although this werf has since been separated from the property, a tenuous historical association with this werf obviously remains. At the same time, it needs to be noted that the architectural/historical significance of the werf setting has been eroded by a palisade enclosure and sterile landscaping which has transformed what was once a working farm werf into a gentrified environment. The nearest other historic farm complexes are those of Blaauwklippen, approximately 2km to the southwest, the historic Groote Zalze werf, approximately 4,5km to the west/southwest and the remains of the Doornbosch werf approximately 1,5km to the northwest beyond which lie Aan-denWagenweg and Rhodes Cottages. However, in all of these cases, these historic sites are totally obscured from the subject property as a result of intervening landforms, vegetation and suburban development.

d) Landscapes and Natural Features of Cultural Significance:

Erf 1049 (the subject property) forms part of a landscape recommended by Albertyn (2003) as having high heritage value. That was, however, before the werf was separated from Erf 1049 and heritage significance was incrementally eroded by subsequent office blocks, medical complexes and more recent residential development; all of which now obscure views of the site from the R44 from which the property was once visible (the R44 is a Scenic Route). Despite this, the property does form part of a rural landscape that remains of overall high scenic value, being part of the Cape Winelands greater landscape. Being agricultural land, the subject property must also be considered a heritage resource. While natural features can qualify as botanical heritage, such features on the property have been found to be heavily degraded and not worth the cost of restoration (Emms p35). Large parts of the property are also extensively transformed by agriculture.

e) Geological Sites of Scientific or Cultural Importance:

There are no known sites of such significance on or near the property.

f) Archaeological & Palaeontological Sites:

There is always a possibility that archaeological material could come to light during the development of the property. However, an examination and walkdown of the site by an archaeological specialist indicates that it is not a sensitive or threatened archaeological landscape with overall impacts assessed as LOW, (ACRM, p3) notwithstanding some archaeological material of minor significance being encountered.

g) Graves and Burial Grounds:

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There are no known graves or burial grounds on the property

h) Sites of Significance Relating to the History of Slavery:

The site is a former part of Brandwacht Farm which contains a surviving historic werf adjacent to the subject site that in all likelihood was constructed using slave labour. However, Erf 1049 itself has no known historical associations of that nature. There may be a possibility that such associations could be identified during the stakeholder engagement process, although unlikely. On the off-chance that such associations do come to light during the stakeholder engagement process, such submissions will be considered and, where necessary, taken into account when the HIA report is finalized.

i) Moveable Objects of Cultural Significance:

The only moveable objects that could potentially be applicable would be unexpectedly encountered archaeological objects. However, given that the property is not considered to be a sensitive archaeological landscape, the chances of encountering objects of cultural significance appear to be minimal.

Conclusion

Heritage resources identified in this study and potentially impacted by the proposed development therefore constitute the following:

I. The agricultural land embodied by the site itself forming part of a wider landscape of rural scenic significance.
II. The surrounding rural landscape itself, which has scenic significance, and within which the site is located.
III. Archaeological and palaeontological heritage resources (albeit that the prospects of uncovering such resources are low).

The following are not considered to be heritage resources likely to be impacted by the proposed development:

- Buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance;
- Places to which oral traditions are attached, or associated with living heritage;
- Historical settlements and townscapes;
- Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance; and
- Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery.

Visual

Terra+ Landscape Architects (Professional Landscape Architects) was appointed as consultant Visual Specialist to undertake visual impact assessment (VIA) of the proposed development upon visual/ aesthetic resources; toward fulfilling the further requirements of the HWC BELCom.

As the site falls outside of the urban edge of the Stellenbosch DSDF and is part of an established Cultural Landscape of rural character, the proposed development needs to fit within established patterns of settlement and place-making for the continuation of the rural landscape. In terms of the general integration of the development in this landscape it is imperative that the different character areas of the site be recognised and the proposed development respond to minimise the impact and possible change of sense of place.

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Although there is a moderate level of visual exposure due to the proximity of the adjacent suburban development, and the change in the character of the site, this is lessened by the proposed buffer planting along the edge of Trumali street and the proposed landscape intervention of increased hedge and tree planting along the northern edge. Ironically the proximity of the suburban development and the position of the proposed development on the site allows for a greater degree of visual absorption capacity as a result of the continuation of the built fabric and residential context. Should the placement of the proposed buildings not obscure view lines across to the rural landscape be balanced with significant tree planting, the development is certainly achievable without compromising the rural quality of the site and broader context.

This being said the success of the development and the impact on the rural character of the site is dependent on the proposed landscape interventions with increased tree lines and clustered tree planting to provide visual screening and the retention of the central green space in a N-S direction to provide an important green connection and visual buffer.

The preferred layout as illustrated by the architects and urban designers is a response to visual indicators and has been carefully planned to maximise the visual absorption capacity of the site as far as it is possible, in order for the proposed development to become as visually recessive as possible the landscape intervention must be planned to form part of the overall implementation of the site development.

Overall, the preferred alternative of the development proposal is assessed to have a visual impact of medium/high significance, reducing to medium significance with mitigation in the form of the landscaping and architectural controls as proposed and an integrated site landscape character.

Archaeological

ACRM was instructed by Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants (GNEC) to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for a proposed housing and office development on Remainder Farm 1049 Brandwacht, on the outskirts of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape.

A walk down survey of the proposed development site was conducted on 20 November 2023, and again on 22 January 2025.

A low-density scatter of Early Stone Age (ESA) tools was recorded on the lower slopes of the proposed development site. These comprised a few discarded flakes and flake debris including chunks, broken chunks and several round and worked out cores. One Large Cutting Tool (LCT) and a handaxe were also recorded. Isolated tools, including a small biface, chunks, and a core, were found on the middle slopes, while a few pieces of modified stone were recorded on the steep, heavily terraced upper slopes. A handaxe was also found in the steep and eroded gravel access road the runs alongside the eastern boundary. All the tools recorded are in weathered quartzite and occur in a severely degraded and transformed context (i. e. previously cultivated vineyards). ESA tools, such as those described above, have been recorded on numerous farms in the Stellenbosch area by this archaeologist, in a similarly transformed context.

The overall impact of the proposed Brandwacht housing and office development on Re Farm 1049, on archaeological resources, is assessed as Low. Therefore, there are no objections, on archaeological grounds, to the development proceeding.

A proposed housing and office development on Remainder Farm 1049 Brandwacht, outside Stellenbosch does not pose a significant threat to local archaeological heritage resources.

No archaeological mitigation is required prior to construction excavations commencing.

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No archaeological monitoring is required.

In the unlikely event that any unmarked human remains are uncovered or exposed during excavations, work must immediately stop, and the finds reported to Heritage Western Cape (Att Ms Stephanie Barnard 021 483 59 59). Burials must not be removed or disturbed until inspected by the archaeologist.

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3. NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT (ACT NO. 107 OF 1998), AS AMENDED

The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act No. 107 of 1998) identifies the proposed application for the proposed residential development as an activity that may have detrimental effects on the environment with the following listed activities (in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended)) being triggered by the proposed development:

Listing Notice 1 (GN No. R. 983): Activity 12, 19, 27 & 28.

Listing Notice 3 (GN No. R. 985): Activity 4 & 12

4. DEFINITION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a good planning tool to assist in the identification, evaluation and assessment of potential positive and negative impacts of a proposed development/project on the environment. It also recommends ways to avoid or reduce negative impacts and ensure that developments are sustainable without affecting people's livelihoods and the environment adversely. As mentioned, an EIA in the form of a Basic Assessment is undertaken in terms of the NEMA, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and the NEMA EIA Regulations.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In terms of the NEMA, Public Participation forms an integral part of the environmental assessment process. The Public Participation Process provides people who may be affected by the proposed development with an opportunity to provide comment and to raise issues of concern about the project or to make suggestions that may result in enhanced benefits for the project.

Comments and issues raised during the Public Participation Process will be captured, evaluated and included in a Comment and Responses Report (CRR). These issues will be addressed and included in the Final Basic Assessment Report which will be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP), to make a decision on whether to approve the application (provide Environmental Authorisation) or not.

6. DELIVERABLES

The environmental assessment will culminate in the compilation of a Basic Assessment Report (BAR) and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr). The Basic Assessment Report will be submitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP), the regulatory authority responsible for the review of the report. The DEA&DP has to reach a decision as to whether, and under what conditions, the project may proceed, based on environmental considerations. An Environmental Authorization (EA) may be issued based on the information provided in the Basic Assessment Report. Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) who have registered will be notified of the Environmental Authorisation (EA).

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7. TIMEFRAMES

The table below provides an **indication** of the proposed timeframes for the project.

Activity	Estimated Timeframe
Compilation of 1st Draft Basic Assessment Report	February 2025
Submission of 1st Draft BAR to Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning (DEA&DP)	14 March 2025
1st Public Participation Process (30 Days)	14 March 2025 – 16 April 2025
Possible amendments and Compilation of 2nd Draft BAR & Environmental Management Plan (EMP)	April 2025
2nd Pre-Application Public Participation Process (30 Days)	May 2025 – June 2025
Compilation of Formal Application	June 2025
Amend 3rd Draft BAR & EMP	June 2025
Submission of Formal Application and 3rd Draft BAR to DEA&DP	July 2025
3rd Public Participation Process (30 Days)	July 2025 – August 2025
Amend Final BAR & EMP	August 2025
Submit Final BAR & EMP	August 2025
DEA&DP Review of Final BAR & EMP	September 2025 – December 2025
Authorisation	December 2025
Notify all interested and Affected Parties	January 2026

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8. INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants (GNEC) was appointed to facilitate the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Public Participation Processes for the Brandwacht Residential Development proposal. We would like to invite and encourage all stakeholders to complete and return the enclosed registration sheet and submit it together with any comments to:

GNEC

Attention: Mrs. Euonell Visagie or Mr. Steve September

P.O. Box 2632

Paarl

7620

Tel: (021) 870 1874

Fax: (021) 870 1873

E-mail: eg@gnec.co.za / steve@gnec.co.za

DEA&DP REF NO: *16/3/3/6/7/1/B4/45/1202/24*

Additionally, please note that a copy of the 1st draft Basic Assessment Report (BAR) will be made available on GNEC's website, **https://www.gnec.co.za** from the 14th of March 2025.

Please refer to the "Documents of Review" tab and select the **20976__Brandwacht_1st Draft BAR_2025.03.14** folder. All project specific documentation will be available within this folder for download and viewing purposes. A hard copy of the report can be made available at a location accessible to the general public, if requested. Please complete and submit the registration sheet together with any comments to GNEC by no later than: ***16 April 2025***

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NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON REMAINDER OF FARM BRANDWACHT NO. 1049, WESTERN CAPE

REGISTRATION SHEET

14 MARCH 2025

Title _____ **Name and Surname** _____

Company Name/Interest _____

Postal-or-Residential Address _____

Area _____ **Postal Code** _____

Tel: _____ **Cell Phone** _____

Fax: _____

E-Mail Address

Please indicate you preferred method of communication (Please indicate with an X)					
Fax		**E-Mail**		**Post**	

Comments (You are welcome to attach more sheets if necessary (Your comments will be considered in the EIA (BAR) process)

_____

_____

_____

Please provide details of any other person/company whom you would like us to add to our mailing list

Title _____ **Name and Surname** _____

Company Name _____

Tel: _____ **Fax No:** _____

E-Mail

Please complete and return to GNEC by no later than **16 April 2025**

Attention: **Mrs. Euonell Visagie / Mr. Steve September**

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Thank you for your participation!