

PROPOSED AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: ERF 360 MCGREGOR



Figure 1: View along Buitekant Street with the vines of Erf 360 on the right and the Langeberg Mountains in the distance. The rooftops of dwellings in a small residential township built in the 1990s can be seen on the right hand side of the road

SUPPLEMENTARY HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT CASE NO: 130530JW35E

Prepared in compliance with **Section 38(8)** of the National Heritage
Resources Act (No 25 of 1999)

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February 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The recently revised Site Development Plan prepared by the project team for the proposed housing development, related facilities and infrastructure has responded positively to the heritage related design indicators set out in the report prepared by urban designer and heritage practitioner Andrew Berman. The McGregor Heritage Society has been closely involved in the formulation of the SDP.

The sustainable social and economic benefits derived from the development outweigh this moderate impact on heritage resources.

1. BACKGROUND

The Impact Assessment Committee (IAComm) reviewed a Heritage Impact Assessment report (HIA) for the proposed affordable housing development in McGregor on 13 November 2013. At that meeting IAComm noted that the design intentions were generally supported and the additional architectural material began to address many of the heritage issues concerns raised. In response to the report and the Site Development Plan (SDP) the following was resolved:

The Committee requests a refined layout with greater emphasis on:

- Village spatial hierarchy;
- Varying building grain;
- Addressing the issue of monotony/sameness;
- A layout based on urban design principles;
- A formal street lighting and planting plan.

It was also resolved:

That the McGregor conservation body be provided with a copy of the additional architectural material and given 10 days to respond to the consultants' revised proposals.

A workshop was arranged with members of the MHS and the project team. Consensus appeared to have been reached on the various amendments made. A revised SDP was then developed and presented to IAComm on 11 December 2013. A number of concerns were raised regarding the numbers of families to be accommodated and various urban design aspects. At the meeting Prof. Jan Glazewski representing the MHS stated that they were unhappy about a number of aspects of the latest SDP and called for further amendments. IAComm then by 4 votes to three resolved:

That in order to arrive at an acceptable and appropriate design, expertise in the field of urban design should be brought onto the professional team for the project and that such expertise include adequate experience in projects involving sensitive heritage environments. The Committee hence requires the names or names of the proposed urban designers be submitted to it for consideration and approval in terms of its policy on professional standards.

Aikman Associates submitted the names of Andrew Berman and Andre Pentz and at the meeting of IAComm on 22 January supported the appointment of any one of the urban designers. Andrew Berman was then appointed. He met with the project team and it was decided that it would be productive to hold a design workshop following his site survey and background research and conceptual analysis. The workshop was held on 23 February with urban designer Mathew Gray representing Urban Dynamics Western Cape and Prof.

Jan Glazewski representing the MHS. Andrew Berman presented a series of diagrams: heritage related design indicators (see Berman's report attached).

It became clear that while most of these indicators were strongly supported a key indicator was not: the retention of an agricultural edge to Buitekant Street. Andrew Berman argued that this indicator was one of the Phase 1 HIA indicators supported by the MHS. The retention of a strip of community food gardens would contribute to Buitekant Street remaining as the outer street of the village. It would also echo the vegetable garden, vineyard and orchard edges to blocks found throughout the village and provide a memory of Buitekant Street's current agricultural setting. The MHS argued that it would be preferable to line Buitekant Street with erven of the same size as those on the northern side which would create a transition zone between the existing erven on Buitekant Street and the smaller proposed GAP and Affordable erven within the development area. They were opposed to anything that could be seen as a "buffer strip".

A further workshop was held on 3 February 2014 involving the entire project team including representatives of the development company ASLA, the environmental consultants EcoImpact, Urban Dynamics and the MHS. Again the issue of the edge treatment of Buitekant Street became the central issue of discussion. Prof. Glazewski argued for a transition zone of residential properties as opposed to an agricultural edge. It was then resolved that as this issue had inter alia also been of concern to IAComm in December when it was argued that the agricultural edge was reminiscent of an Apartheid era buffer strip, that both proposals for the edge treatment by presented to HWC.

2. REVISED SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A revised SDP was prepared.



Apart from the Buitekant Street edge concern and some other minor edge concerns, urban designer and heritage practitioner Andrew Berman supports the revised SDP as being consistent with the analysis he carried out (see attached report).

3. CONCLUSION

The layout of the development has largely responded to heritage related design indicators. Some minor adjustments are required.

There are sustainable social and economic benefits to be derived from this development which incorporates food gardens and other community facilities.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is accordingly recommended that as the integrity of the 19th Century settlement pattern; the historic grid of the village has been conserved and that sustainable social and economic benefits are to be derived from the development, that HWC supports the development of Erf 360 McGregor as indicated in the revised SDP now presented with the adjustments recommended by Andrew Berman.