HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

In terms of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 for

ERF 660
DE DOORNS
WORCESTER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT

Prepared for:
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by

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Heritage Impact Assessments, Heritage Statements (as part of EIA's), Heritage Evaluations of historic structures & sites, Oral History studies and evaluations, Socio-historic evaluations, etc.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a limited scope Heritage Impact Assessment for Erf 660, De Doorns, situated north of the N1 off the main access route into the town of De Doorns (Main Road), in the Hex River Valley, approximately 35km from Worcester.

1. Nature of the proposed development

It is proposed to subdivide Erf 660 into two portions, with portion A (4.15ha) to be rezoned to permit the development of 38 residential erven with private open spaces, associated infrastructure and internal roads. The historic De Doorns homestead (1796), situated on the remainder of the farm, as well as the land within its ring wall, was declared a National Monument (now provincial heritage site) in 1983. It (and its declared area) is situated approximately 100m from the core development area and will not be affected by the development proposal.


The proposed development is subject to the approval of Heritage Western Cape (HWC) in terms of section 38 (c)(i) & (d), in that it involves a development that will change the character of a site exceeding 5000m² in extent and involves the rezoning of a site exceeding 10 000m². A Notification of Intent to Develop checklist (attached) was submitted to HWC in September 2007 and an ROD dated 20 September 2007 (attached) was issued, requesting this study.

The terms of reference for the study will be outlined later in this report.

3. Statement of Heritage Significance

The heritage indicators applicable to Erf 660, De Doorns, and its environs, have been identified as follows:

- The manor house (although outside the development area)
- Social significance of the site

The impact on the manor house will be nil, and the social value can be regarded as having little significance in relation to the provincial estate.

4. Planning context

This development is compatible with existing planning policy frameworks.
5. **Nature of heritage impact**

Heritage impacts associated with Erf 660 relate to the visual impacts (marginal and of low impact) and to the manor house. The latter will not be affected by the proposal at all, and mitigation measures will be proposed in relation to possible visual impact.

6. **Recommendations**

That the proposed subdivision and development on Erf 660, De Doorns, be allowed to proceed with conditions, as listed under separate heading RECOMMENDATIONS in the main document.
SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

Ron Martin Heritage Consultancy was appointed by Boland Enviro on behalf of the owner, Grasmere Trust, to conduct and submit a Heritage Impact Assessment in respect of Erf 660, De Doorns, as per the requirements of Heritage Western Cape (HWC) in terms of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 (the Act).

The purpose of this report is to assist HWC in making a decision as to whether the development may proceed as proposed or whether the site has sufficient intrinsic heritage value to warrant its retention in its present under-developed state.

It is proposed to subdivide Erf 660 into two portions, with portion A (4.15ha) to be rezoned to permit the development of 38 residential erven with private open spaces, associated infrastructure and internal roads. The historic De Doorns homestead (1796), situated on the remainder of the farm, as well as the land within its ring wall, was declared a National Monument (now provincial heritage site) in 1983. It (and its declared area) is situated approximately 100m from the core development area and will not be affected by the development proposal.

A.1 The Site

Amoi can be accessed from the N1 between Worcester and Touws River. One enters along the main access route into the town, then left at the sign "Romanze estate", along a dirt road past the main farm dam. The manor house is accessed through the proposed development area.

The site is characterized mainly by the cultivation of export table grapes, with some wine production. Surrounding properties comprise the Hex Valley Secondary School, De Doorns Valley golf course, the De Doorns town and some agricultural land.

The farm (erf 660) is approximately 28.93ha in extent. The declared manor house and outbuildings within its werf wall are situated in the northeastern corner of the farm. The proposed development area (4.15ha) is situated in the southeastern corner.

Erf 660 is zoned agricultural, with export quality table grapes being the main crop. Some wine vineyards are situated in the area immediately south of the manor house.

The proposed development area is earmarked for the portion of the property that has been proven to have the least agricultural potential.
A.2 Terms of Reference

A proposed scope of work for this study was agreed upon by the staff of Heritage Western Cape, to include the following key components:

- Identification and evaluation of possible social significance
- Historical chronology of ownership and uses
- Mitigation of visual sensitivity, especially with regard to possible view corridor(s) from the entrance to the town.

SECTION B: APPLICABLE PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

B.1 Breede Valley Municipal Spatial Development Framework (SDP)

Erf 660 falls just outside of the De Doorns urban edge, according to the SDP, but this appears to be solely an administrative matter as the property is demarcated as a town plot (dorpserf), being linked to municipal water and sewerage supply. The residential development will spatially link up with the built edge of De Doorns, a mere 300m to the east. An application for inclusion in the urban edge is being considered by the local authority.
SECTION C: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

C.1 Chronology of Ownership & Uses

The historic De Doorns farm was granted to Gabriel Rossouw in 1759, measuring approximately 60 morgen. Rossouw built a modest home facing west, consisting of three rooms with the kitchen at the north end and centre gable dated 1769. After its first recorded transfer, this modest house was enlarged to its present H-shape by new owner Pieter Jacobus de Villiers in 1818 (see attached declaration notice 2179 dd 7 October 1983). The rear gable, dated 1823, bears De Villiers’ initials. Deeds records before 1902 are missing (Deeds Office, Cape Town). The earliest records show a certain A B Burger (Jnr) having possession of the farm at this time, transferring it to his son, Schalk Gerhardus Burger, on 14 August 1902. Burger sold off two portions in 1906 & 1907 to Charles Hugo and Thomas Douglas Colyn respectively. The remainder was sold to Johan George Bosch Swartz in 1911. Three subdivisions took place in 1926, presumably in favour of Swartz’s family members, but specific details are very sketchy. J G B Swartz, however, retained the remainder, but subdivided his portion extensively again between 1949 and 1950, before selling the (new) remainder to a Ernst Fouche Retief in 1959. In 1969, a portion (now known as Erf 515) was expropriated by the Dept of Water Affairs. On 30 July 1973 the property, now measuring 20.6323ha, was purchased by Sheila Southey. The remainder was consolidated as erf 660 in 1976.

C.2 Built Structures

The built structures consist of the manor house, a barn structure, werf wall and a stable, declared a national monument in 1983.

C.2.1 Main Dwelling

Between 1759 and 1769, Gabriel Rossouw built a modest home facing west, consisting of three rooms with the kitchen at the north end and centre gable dated 1769. After its first recorded transfer, this modest house was enlarged to its present H-shape by new owner Pieter Jacobus de Villiers in 1818 (see attached declaration notice 2179 dd 7 October 1983). The rear gable, dated 1823, bears De Villiers’ initials.
The house boasts some fine yellowwood doors, with stinkwood inlay and elaborate yellowwood architraves. The house was Victorianised during the mid-nineteenth century, although retaining its thatched roof.

As the manor house and outbuildings will not be affected by the development, no analyses of these structures are necessary for the purposes of this study, but recommendations will be made with regard to its future management as a heritage resource at the end of this report.

**C.2.2 Barn**

This structure was constructed c1880’s. It has fairly thick (480mm) plastered masonry exterior walls, is rectangular in form with a thatched roof and straight end gables.

Fenestration is modern, with a mixture of steel and timber framed windows and modern doors, with little remaining proportion.
C.2.3 Stable and werf wall

The stable appears to be a modern structure in relation to the rest of the built complex and is built as a lean-to to the barn.

The werf wall encloses the declared area.

C.3 Social History

One of the requirements of the scope of works determined by Heritage Western Cape was to identify any significant socio-historical indicators pertaining to the site. Specific focus was placed historic access patterns and its contribution to the evolution of the settlement pattern of De Doorns.

C.3.1 Historic Access Patterns

Unfortunately, no evidence relating to the historic access to de Doorns exists today due to a fairly unorganized series of subdivisions that took place over the years. The front view of the manor house (see photo) would have bordered onto the historic entrance road to De Doorns from the southwest, but now is accessed from the historic "rear" of the property. The main view of the homestead is the rear gable (1823) by De Villiers.
It is unfortunate that the farm has lost this valuable link with the past, as it would have contributed significantly to its increased value as a heritage resource. If this access route had been maintained, De Doorns homestead could still have been seen today as the entrance to the historic town.

All this, however, is academic, as the proposed development is situated a significant distance away.

**C.3.2 Settlement Pattern**

The farm is the oldest in De Doorns and one of the oldest in the Hex River Valley. By association, it would have played a role in the evolution of De Doorns as a settlement since its first grant in 1759.

It would also have served as a pioneer farm with regard to the establishment of agriculture in the valley, until then characterized by limited stock farming and as a "trek" route to the rest of the interior. Although I could not find records of the Rossouw or De Villiers families’ involvement in the slave trade, they could very well have been slave owners.

Many founding families of the Hex River Valley (eg. the Rabe and Kloppers families) were known slave owners.

**SECTION D: VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

As the proposed development is situated near the entrance to the settlement of De Doorns, the proposed development, cognizance should be taken to minimize any possible visual effect on the manor house and rest of the declared area. Although it may be argued that the main view on the manor house is its rear façade, this is still a recognized visual element of the valley and should be respected as such. Other factors already detracting from the visual prominence of the homestead are the locations of the structures associated with both the neighbouring high school and golf club.

Some mitigation measures will be recommended to lessen any possible visual impact.

**SECTION E: CONCLUSIONS**

The factors in favour of development on Erf 660, De Doorns, are as follows:

- The limited heritage value of the development area
- The conformance of the development to its local planning and spatial context
- Its minimal visual impact
- The overwhelming demand for housing within its economic bracket in the area.

It has to be noted that no further development will be proposed on the site.
SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS

That the proposed development on Erf 660, De Doorns, be approved, with the following conditions:

F.1 VISUAL

- A Visual corridor to the declared heritage resource be retained at all costs in the development proposal.
- No development is to take place on any ridge lines.
- With regard to those units situated behind the farm dam, care should be taken that the roofs do not protruding above the edge of the dam wall, if at all possible.
- Phased planting of suitable mature trees should take place where appropriate to further screen the development. These factors should be incorporated into a landscape design guideline for the construction phase.
- Outdoor lighting should be as unobtrusive as possible and fitted with reflectors to avoid spillage. Illuminated signage should be avoided at all costs.
- Massing, proportions and scale of buildings as well as use of colour of walls and roofs should be sympathetic to the rural character of the local area.

F.2 STRUCTURES

- Although not affected by the proposed development, a heritage management plan for the future management of the homestead should be compiled and implemented. This may be done over a determined period (five years?)

F.3 SOCIO-HISTORICAL

- That a tangible form of memory associated with the social history of the local area be incorporated into the development, e.g. street names – Rossouw Street, etc.

COMPILED BY:

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22 October 2007