

14/12/2022

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT METHOD STATEMENT (EMMS) Proposed Alien Clearing Erf 1058 Wilderness, George Municipality

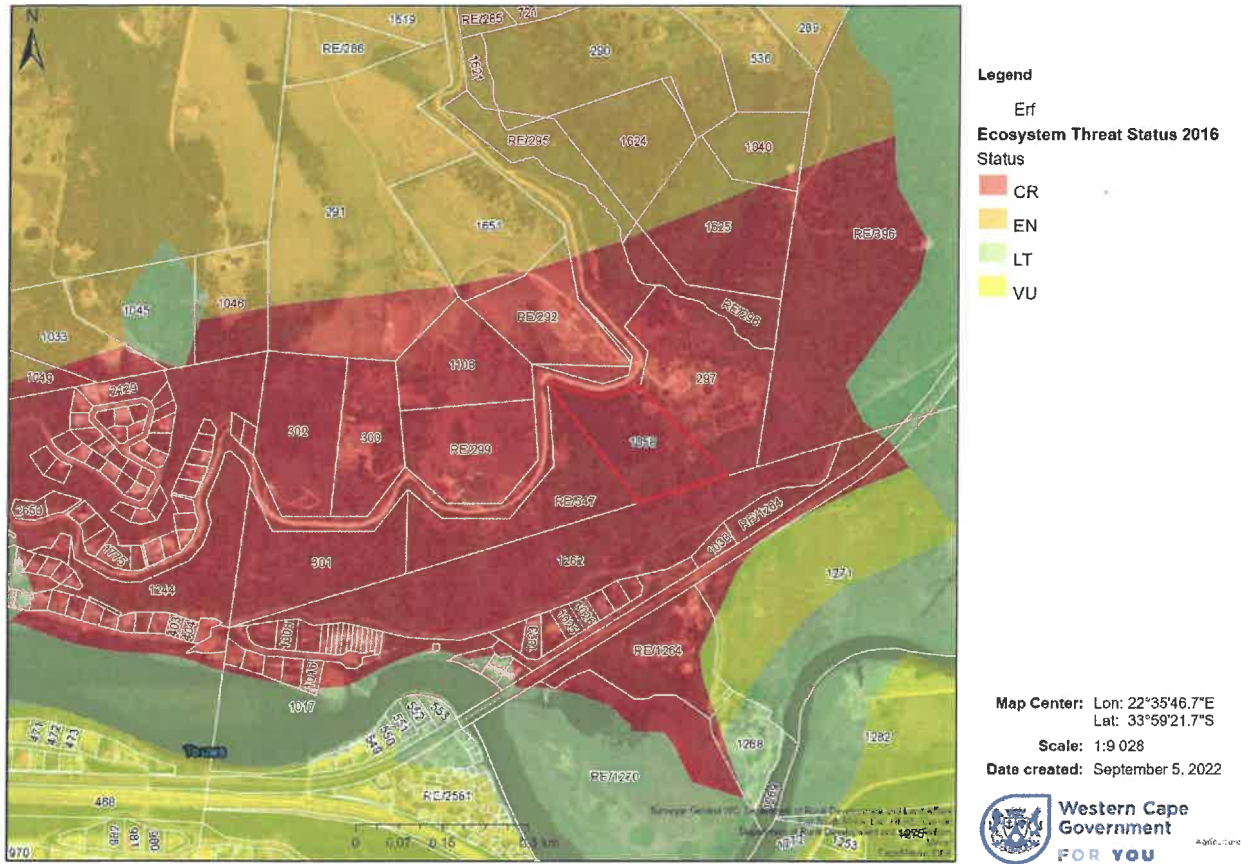
### Section 1: Background, project location and proposed actions

The property is approximately 3Ha and is situated on Erf 1058 Wilderness, George. (Lat: **33.59.21.5S** / Lon: **22.35.57E**). The previous owner has cleared much of the alien invasive vegetation, consisting mostly of wattle. The proposed alien clearing does occur within a Critically Biodiversity Area. The new owner, who has just purchased the property, plans to retire here as soon as the stand has obtained the necessary Oscae permit that will allow development of a residential home and one or more cottages that is still in the planning phase.

#### Property Location



## Ecosystem Threat Status

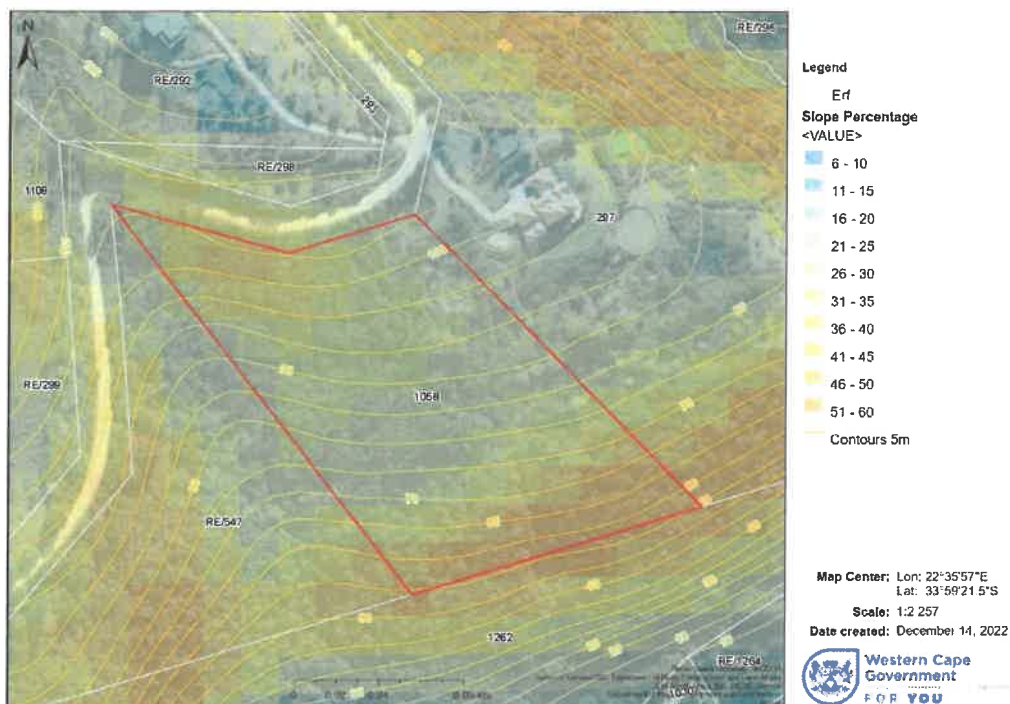


## SITE ACCESS

The site is accessed via an existing cleared track from Whites Road, on the northern side of the property.

## GRADIENT OF THE SITE

The site slopes southward towards the serpentine and has a steady downward gradient with a slope percentage of between 6-45%.

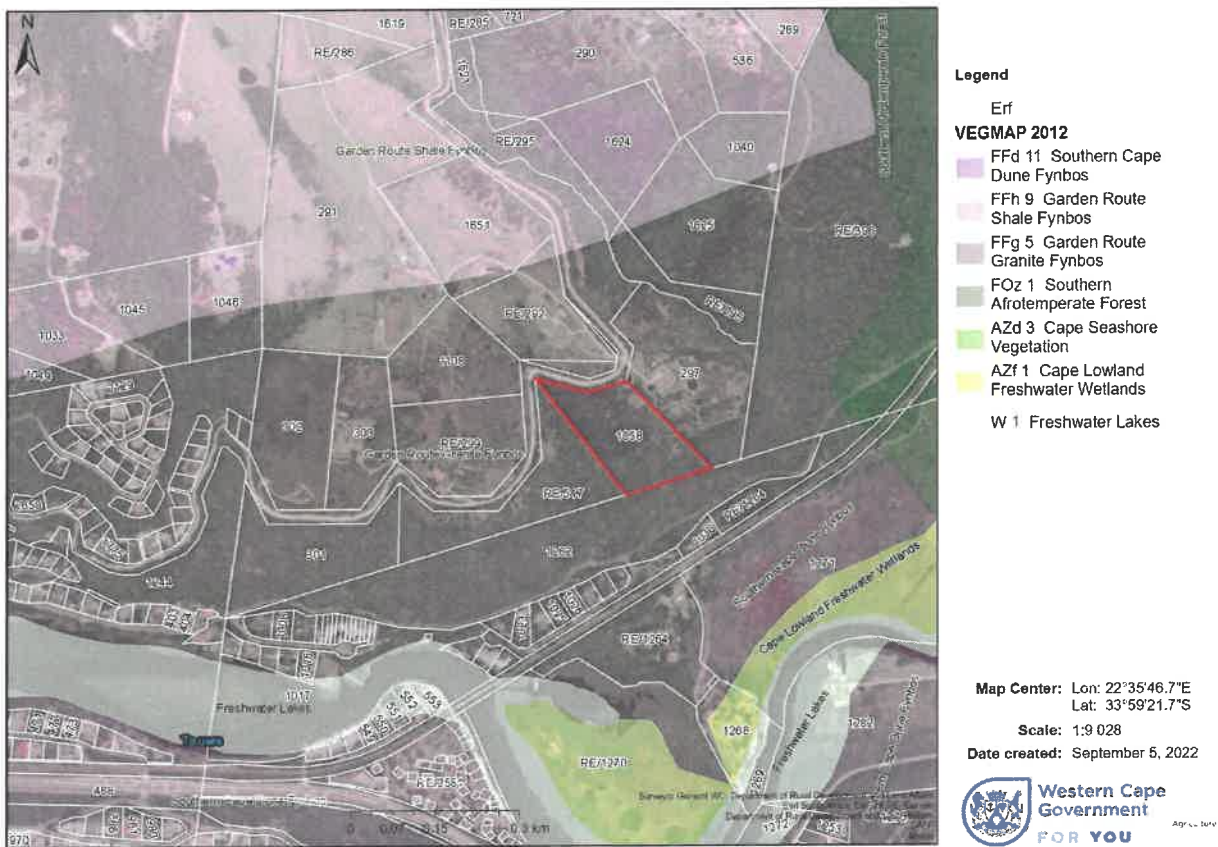


## LOCATION IN LANDSCAPE

Plain	Plateau	Side slope of hill/mountain	Closed valley	Open valley	Ridgeline	Undulating plain/low hills	Dune	Sea-front
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### Section 2: Current Environmental status of the property

The vegetation on the property as per VegMap 2012 is classified as Garden Route Granite Fynbos with an Ecosystem Threat Status of **Critically endangered**.



## PHOTOGRAPHS



**Damaged entrance area prior to the new owner buying the property**





### Section 3: Potential Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### A) Impacts that may result from the alien clearing.

<b>Potential impact on biological aspects:</b>	
<b>Nature of impact:</b>	Loss of vegetation as a result of alien clearing
<b>Extent and duration of impact:</b>	Short term
<b>Probability of occurrence:</b>	High
<b>Degree to which the impact can be reversed:</b>	High
<b>Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:</b>	Low
<b>Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:</b>	Loss of alien vegetation
<b>Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	High
<b>Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:</b>	High
<b>Proposed mitigation:</b>	Brush cut will be placed on cut areas, to allow for regrowth of pioneer species, and allow for fauna and birds to have protected areas where they could help spread indigenous seeds. Protected trees and indigenous vegetation will be introduced to replace removed alien vegetation.
<b>Cumulative impact post mitigation:</b>	Improvement of ground water and reduction of fire risk.
<b>Significance rating of impact after mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	Low

<b>Potential impacts on geographical and physical aspects:</b>	
<b>Nature of impact:</b>	Loss of topsoil, if exposed to elements after removal of vegetation. Runoff causing erosion.
<b>Extent and duration of impact:</b>	During removal of alien vegetation
<b>Probability of occurrence:</b>	Low
<b>Degree to which the impact can be reversed:</b>	High

<b>Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:</b>	Medium, if not managed properly.
<b>Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:</b>	Low
<b>Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	Low
<b>Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:</b>	High
<b>Proposed mitigation:</b>	Brush cut will assist and in sloped areas, onion bags or hessian sausages can be used to reduce erosion. The method of removal will allow for cutting of bigger trees and using an approved herbicides, which will not require removal from ground or disturbance of soil
<b>Cumulative impact post mitigation:</b>	None
<b>Significance rating of impact after mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	Low

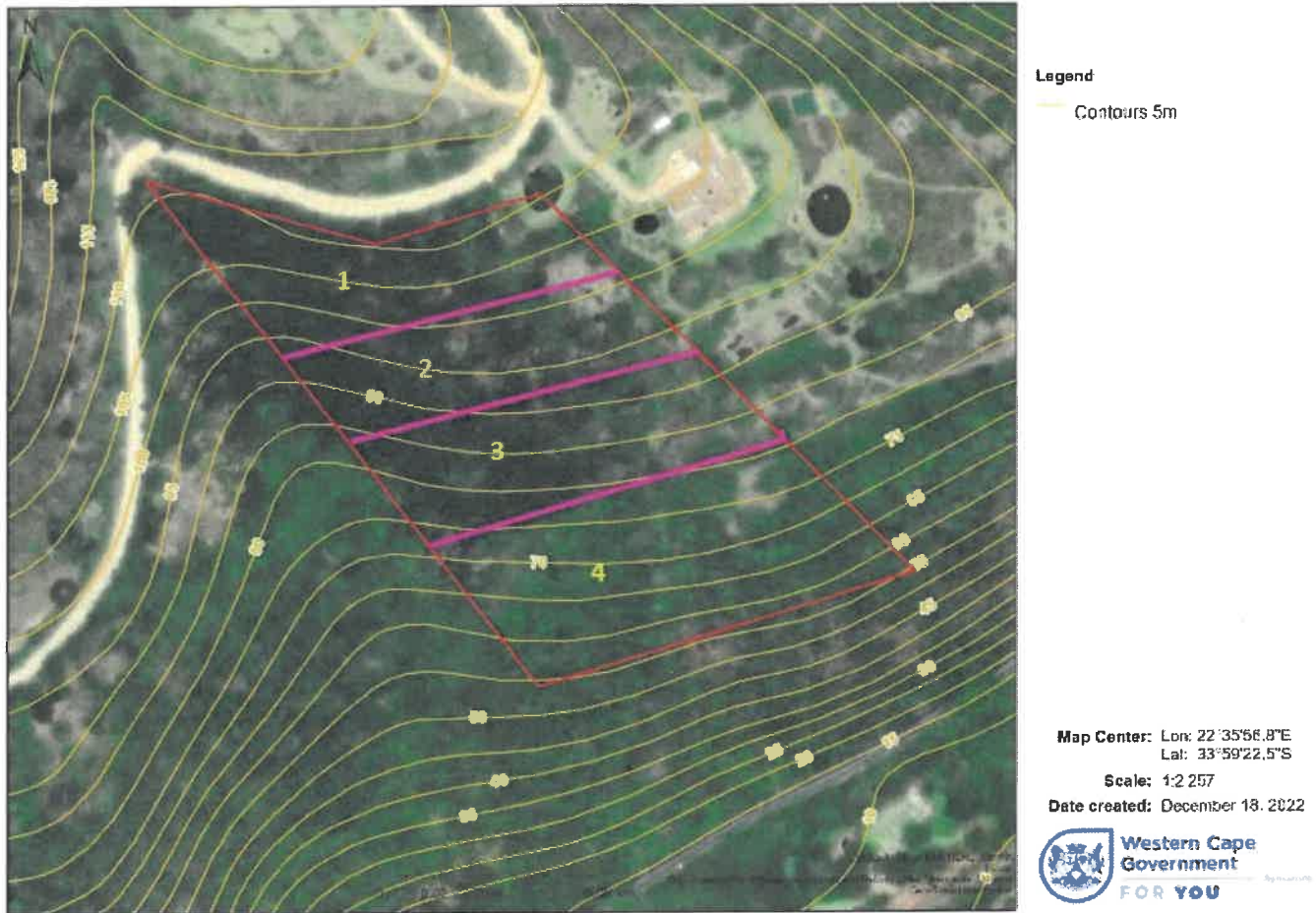
<b>Potential noise impacts:</b>	
<b>Nature of impact:</b>	Impacts associated with chainsaw using and chopping
<b>Extent and duration of impact:</b>	Throughout alien removal phase and occasional during operation as part of alien management on property.
<b>Probability of occurrence:</b>	High
<b>Degree to which the impact can be reversed:</b>	None
<b>Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:</b>	None
<b>Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:</b>	No cumulative impact foreseen
<b>Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	High
<b>Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:</b>	Low
<b>Proposed mitigation:</b>	Noise generation only allowed during weekdays from 7am – 5pm

<b>Cumulative impact post mitigation:</b>	No cumulative impacts are foreseen after mitigation measures are mitigation are implemented
<b>Significance rating of impact after mitigation (Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)</b>	Low



# ERF 1058 : Alien Clearing Site Layout Plan

December 2022



## 1. Alien Clearing as done to date.

Alien Clearing as at the present has been extensively undertaken by sawing down Wattle and Pine trees. Much of the usable wood has been removed by theft and this was presumably driven away by tractor pulled trailer that has damaged the Jeep track access to the property. The remaining branches that have been left on site now need to be cleared or chipped on site to reduce a fire risk.



## 2. Continued Alien Clearing as per Oscae permit

- The longer term plan as applied for in the Alien Clearing permit for this site will comprise a continued and thorough plan by the owner to remove the still existing alien growth of predominantly Wattle and Pine by
- Weeding of new growth or sprouts of Wattle and Pine of pencil thickness by pulling them out
  - Alien vegetation that has already grown to a broomstick thickness will be sawn down by hand and then the recommended poison will be applied to the stump to discourage further growth.
  - Any remaining Alien vegetation on site that is thicker than the broomstick size, will be sawn down by hand or chainsaw. The few mature Wattle and Pine trees that are still remaining on site will be very selectively removed. This will predominantly be done to allow shade for the development of indigenous plants that need to be established first before mature Alien trees are then removed.

Once the Alien vegetation has been removed, due care will be taken to prevent erosion by rainwater run-off by chipping and mulching of the removed vegetation. If necessary onion bags that are filled with a mix of sand and organic material will be applied along the contours to prevent rainwater gulleys from forming that could lead to erosion.

The new growth of indigenous trees and vegetation will be encouraged by identifying the new sprouts of indigenous plants and preferentially allowing them to strengthen, thereby encouraging their continued growth. The new owners are knowledgeable on indigenous species, and passionate about allowing these plants to successfully re-establish themselves on site.

## 3. Site Layout Plan for the following 24 months

As per the 5m contour map of the site, there will be 4 sections each representing a six-month period of thorough clearing of Alien vegetation. These sections are systematically set out from the top of the site, flowing down the contours until the bottom of the site is reached. The 4 sections will be chronologically set out as follows:

Section 1	Jan 2023-Jun 2023
Section 2	Jul 2023-Dec 2023
Section 3	Jan 2024- Jun 2024
Section 4	Jul 2024-Dec 2024

<b>APPROVED</b> ..... Full Name: <b>STIAAN KOTZE</b> Control Biodiversity Officer: Competent Authority Directorate: Oceans, Coast & Biosecurity Compliance Department of Forestry, Fisheries & The Environment 14 Loop Street, Cape Town Date: <u>23/03/2023</u>
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**STIAAN KOTZE** CONTROL BIODIVERSITY OFFICER: COMPETENT AUTHORITY  
REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND SECTOR MONITORING  
14 Loop Street, Cape Town  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: 23/03/2023

Mr. Alexander Polson  
C/O ECOROUTE Environmental Consultancy  
P.O. Box 1252  
**SEDGEFIELD**  
6573

EMAIL: [info@ecoroute.co.za](mailto:info@ecoroute.co.za)

**REMOVAL OF VEGETATION / EARTHWORKS ON ERF 1058 HOEKWIL, DIVISION GEORGE, ALIEN CLEARING WITH APPROVED ALIEN CLEARING PLAN FROM DFFE**

The above application for the clearing of alien vegetation refers.

1. An endorsed alien clearing plan From Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has been submitted (Dated 14/12/2022, Addendum B) and permission to carry out the work is needed in terms of Government Gazette No. R. 1526 dated 27 November 1998, Environment Conservation Act, 1998 (Act No. 73 of 1989, Outeniqua Sensitive Coastal Area Extension (OSCAE)).
2. As per agreement with DFFE as the competent authority with regard to alien clearing in this area and the George Municipality (as defined in terms of Government Gazette No. R. 1526 dated 27 November 1998, Environment Conservation Act, 1998 (Act No. 73 of 1989)), as the issuing authority for permits in terms of the Outeniqua Sensitive Coastal Area Extension, the clearing of alien vegetation in this OSCAE area is supported.
3. With due regard for the considerations above, this Department **GRANTS THE CLEARING OF ALIEN VEGETATION AS LAWFUL** on Erf 1058 Hoekwil, Division George, provided all clearing occurs in accordance with the approved alien clearing management plan.
4. Duration of the clearing will take place over a period of eight years as stipulated in the approved alien clearing management plan.
5. **Please note** that clearing species other than alien plants or degradation of natural resources and offences in terms of NEMA or Outeniqua Sensitive Coastal Area Extension (OSCAE) will not be condoned. Failure to comply and the forsaking of "Duty of Care" will result in prosecution.
6. This letter of support does not authorize the owner to undertake any construction activities or other activities listed in the OSCAE Regulations in terms of Government Notice No R.1526 of 1998, such activities are subject to compliance with the regulations and is it the owner/s responsibility to ensure compliance.
7. A copy of this letter, the approved alien clearing management plan and the approval letter of the alien clearing plan issued by DFFE, must be kept on site for the duration of the authorized activity / activities and be presented to officials when needed.
8. Municipal officials shall be given access to the property/ site referred to above to assess and monitor compliance with the conditions of this letter at all reasonable times.

Your co-operation in the protection and guardianship of the natural environment is appreciated.

Yours Faithfully



D. POWER

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR: PLANNING**  
Contravention Erf 1058 Hoekwil, GEORGE

DATE: 27 MARCH 2023



## ADDENDUM A

### Conditions of permit

1. This permit is only applicable to the proposed activities as per the OSCAE application and shall not be construed to comply with any other requirement or legal provision. (approved plans pursuant to this permit attached as **Addendum B**.)
2. The applicant shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions of the permit by any person acting on his/her behalf, including employees, the consultant, the contractor and any person rendering a service to the applicant in relation to the activity.
3. **Municipal officials shall be given access to the property/ site referred to above to assess and monitor compliance with the conditions of this permit at all reasonable times.**
4. **A copy of this permit must be kept on site for the duration of the authorized activity / activities and be presented to municipal officials when needed.**
5. No substantive deviations from this OSCAE permit relating to additional earthworks or clearing may take place prior to a revised OSCAE application being submitted to the George Municipality for consideration and approval. Deviations will be determined internally within the planning department.
6. Any other or new activities on the site are subjected to the OSCAE Regulations in terms of Government Notice No GN. R. 1526 of 1998 and is it the owner/s responsibility to ensure compliance with these regulations.
7. All areas outside of the development footprint should be maintained in a natural state for biodiversity conservation.
8. The clearing of alien invasive vegetation on the erf must be addressed and should take place in terms of Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983 (CARA) general duty of care to combat weeds and invader plants, using acceptable methods of cutting (hand-cutting), chipping and ongoing removal of emerging seedlings. Alien invasive vegetation removal must be managed and recorded. Alien plant species that are either prohibited or listed as requiring a permit in terms of the Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 2014, should be removed.
9. Only locally indigenous vegetation must be used for landscaping and the rehabilitation of the disturbed areas, this includes rescued indigenous/ protected seedlings which must be used for post-construction landscaping and rehabilitation of the property. We note that a number of indigenous trees have been planted on the property. This is strongly supported and more can be planted.
10. No gardening is permitted outside the development footprint area; and all worked areas **must be rehabilitated to a near-natural condition**, where possible using indigenous plant species.
11. No fires may be permitted on site. Adequate fire-fighting equipment must be available on site in good working condition (at least one type ABC-all-purpose 12, 5 kg extinguisher). If in a fire-prone area it is advised that the owner must join the Southern Cape Fire Protection Association Management Unit for the area; with an approved fire management plan compiled in conjunction with the Fire Protection Association.

**ADDENDUM B**

Alien clearing plan for Erf 1058 Hoekwil, George, endorsed by DFFE



## Letter

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**REFERENCE:** 14/1/1/E3/5/2/3/L1281/22  
**ENQUIRIES:** Raheem Dalwai

**BY EMAIL:** [janet@ecoroute.co.za](mailto:janet@ecoroute.co.za)

Ecoroute  
PO Box 1252  
Sedgefield  
6573

Attention: Ms. Janet Ebersohn

Dear Madam

### **ALLEGED UNLAWFUL CLEARANCE OF VEGETATION ON ERF 1058 WILDERNESS, GEORGE**

1. The above matter, your letter dated 29 November 2022 received by the Department's Directorate: Environmental Law Enforcement (this Directorate), and the meeting with Messrs Johan Oelofse and Raheem Dalwai has reference.
2. This Directorate wishes to provide you with feedback regarding the way forward on this matter.
3. On 30 November 2022, Environmental Management Inspectors from this Directorate conducted a site inspection to determine the nature of the alleged clearance of vegetation. Based on the observations made on site,

this Directorate could not find any evidence suggesting that the topsoil had been disturbed.

4. Considering the above, you are hereby advised to proceed with the submission of the application for Environmental Authorization for the clearance of indigenous vegetation to be conducted on the site.
5. In light of the above, kindly be advised that this Directorate's investigation into this matter has been concluded and the file will be closed.
6. I wish to thank you for your concerns and interest in preserving our environment.



**Nicholas Kearns**

**Grade 1 Environmental Management Inspector**

**Acting Director: Environmental Law Enforcement**

**Date: 12/01/2023**

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