



# Eco Route

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY**

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## SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

The Proposed Construction of a Single Residential Dwelling on Erf 1216 Sea Vista, St Francis Bay, Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape



**PREPARED FOR THE APPLICANT:**

**PREPARED BY:**

**AUTHOR:**

**DATE:**

Birdman Investments (Pty) Limited

Eco Route Environmental Consultancy

Joclyn Marshall (EAPASA Reg. 2022/5006)

13/12/2024

**EAP SIGNATURE:**

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## STATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

I, **Joclyn Marshall** of Eco Route Environmental Consultancy, in terms of section 33 of the NEMA, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended, hereby declare that I provide services as an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAPASA Reg: **2022/5006**) and receive remuneration for services rendered for undertaking tasks required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended). I have no financial or other vested interest in the project.

## (1) Introduction and Terms of Reference

As required to compliment a Basic Assessment application the national web-based screening tool was used to generate an environmental screening report. The screening report lists a variety of specialist studies to be undertaken based on the data informants of the tool at the study area. This site sensitivity verification report, following ground-truthing of the site, motivates why certain specialist studies will not be required or conducted for the proposed development application.



Figure 1: Location of Erf 1216 Sea Vista in the Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape.

## (2) The proposed development at the property

Eco Route Environmental Consultancy were appointed by the applicants, Birdman Investments (Pty) Limited, as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to conduct a Basic Assessment application process for the proposed development of a house on erf 1216 Sea Vista in the Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape.

Erf 1216 covers an area of approximately 985 m<sup>2</sup> and is located in a coastal dune landscape. Most properties in the area have been developed for residential dwellings, but some properties adjacent to Erf 1216 remain undeveloped and still host indigenous vegetation. Erf 1216 is vacant with a generally flat topography. The site is situated in an elevated position above the high-water mark, on an old coastal sand (aeolian) dune.

The proposal is for the development of a double storey dwelling with a footprint of 463m<sup>2</sup>. The total sum of the transformed area including driveway and landscaped areas would be 962m<sup>2</sup>. The dwelling will have an entrance driveway gaining access from Esmerelda Road. Bulk services have already been installed on the site prior to March 2006. The property is within 100 meters of the highwater mark of the sea.

### (3) Environmental screening results and assessment outcomes:

The following sections contain a summary of any development incentives, restrictions, exclusions, or prohibitions that apply to the proposed development footprint as well as the most environmental sensitive features on the footprint based on the footprint sensitivity screening results for the application classifications that were selected. The application classifications selected for the screening reports are: *Transformation of land* | *Indigenous vegetation*.

### (4) Relevant Development Incentives, Restrictions, Exclusions or Prohibitions:

The proposed site is within a South African Conservation Area (SACAD).

### (5) Proposed Development Area Environmental Sensitivity:

The following summary of the development site environmental sensitivities is identified by the Screening Tool Reports. Only the highest environmental sensitivity is indicated. The environmental sensitivities for the proposed development footprint as identified, are indicative only and must be verified on site by a suitably qualified person before the specialist assessments identified below can be confirmed.

Table 1: Identified Environmental Sensitivities.

Theme	Very High sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
Animal Species			X	
Aquatic Biodiversity				X
Archaeological & Cultural Heritage				X
Civil Aviation		X		
Defence				X
Palaeontology				X
Plant Species			X	
Terrestrial Biodiversity				X

### (6) Identified Specialist assessments:

Based on the selected classification, and the environmental sensitivities of the proposed development footprint, the following list of specialist assessments have been identified for inclusion in the assessment report. It is the responsibility of the EAP to confirm this list and to motivate in the assessment report, the reason for not including any of the identified specialist study including the provision of photographic evidence of the site situation.

Table 2: Identified specialist assessments for Transformation of Land Screening Tool Report.

No:	Specialist Assessment	Assessment Protocol
1	Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	General
2	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	General
3	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	General
4	Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Compliance Statement
5	Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Compliance Statement
6	Marine Impact Assessment	General
7	Avian Impact Assessment	General
8	Geotechnical Assessment	General
9	Socio-Economic Assessment	General
10	Plant Species Assessment	Compliance Statement
11	Animal Species Assessment	Compliance Statement

**(7) Results of the verification of the environmental sensitivity and specialist assessments identified of the proposed area:**

**(7)(1) Landscape/Visual**

The screening tool reports indicate that a Visual Impact Assessment is required. The property is located within a developed residential area and within the urban edge. A single residential dwelling is consistent with the surrounding land use and will fit into the character of the area. There are minimal visual impacts to surrounding properties other than those associated with an operational residential dwelling. The site does not look over any scenic areas or popular beaches or sites.



**Recommendations:**

The visual impact can be considered as low. A Visual Impact Assessment is therefore dispensed.

## (7)(2) Archaeological & Cultural Heritage

The screening report indicates that the receiving environment has a **LOW** Relative Archaeological & Cultural Heritage Sensitivity. There are no heritage resources that will be affected by the proposed development. No further action under Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) is required.

### Recommendations:

Should any heritage resources, including evidence of graves and human burials, archaeological material and paleontological material be discovered during the execution of the activities above, all works must be stopped immediately, and the relevant Heritage authority must be notified without delay. The Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority are registered as a commenting authority and will be provided with details of the application for their consideration.

## (7)(3) Palaeontology

The screening report indicates that the receiving environment has a **LOW** Palaeontology Sensitivity.

No further action under Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) is required.



Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely
GREEN	MODERATE	desktop study is required
BLUE	LOW	no palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	no palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	these areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map.

### Recommendations:

No palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required. Should any heritage resources, including evidence of graves and human burials, archaeological material and paleontological material be discovered during the execution of the activities above, all works must be stopped immediately.

## (7)(4) Terrestrial Biodiversity

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **LOW** Terrestrial Biodiversity Sensitivity.

A Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Compliance Statement dated 31 January 2023 was compiled by Dr B. Adriaan Grobler for Erf 1216 Sea Vista, St Francis Bay, Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The Compliance Statement concluded that, due to the historical clearance of vegetation and associated disturbance to topsoils and the low likelihood of plant SCC occurring here, the site is of LOW sensitivity for terrestrial biodiversity and LOW sensitivity for plant species, and the clearing of vegetation likely had NO impact on threatened terrestrial biodiversity or plant SCC. Furthermore, this compliance statement is not subjected to any conditions.

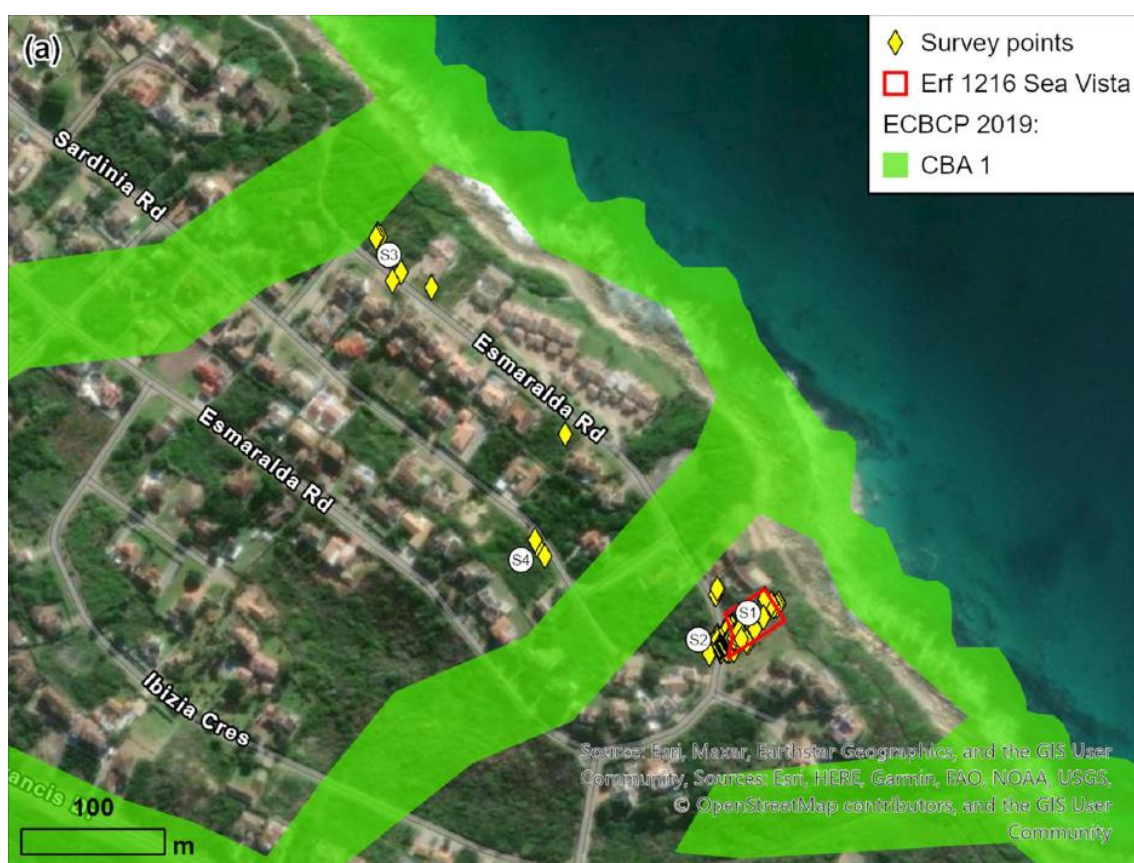


Figure 2: Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas.

### Recommendations:

It is confirmed in the Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Compliance Statement that the Terrestrial Biodiversity Sensitivity for the site is **LOW**. No further studies are required.

## (7)(5) Aquatic Biodiversity

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **LOW** Aquatic Biodiversity Sensitivity. There are no identifiable features according to the screening report.



Figure 3: Water resources associated with Erf 1216 Sea Vista.

There are no identified watercourses or wetlands on erf 1216, and none that will be impacted on by the development of erf 1216.

### Recommendations:

There will be no impact on aquatic features, therefore an Aquatic Compliance Statement is **disputed**.

## (7)(6) Marine Impact Assessment

The development falls within 100m of the high-water mark of the sea, however it is not within the seashore or littoral active zone and is buffered from the sea by a vegetated foredune. The property is also elevated approximately 17m above sea level. The development will have no impact on marine therefore a marine specialist assessment is **disputed**.



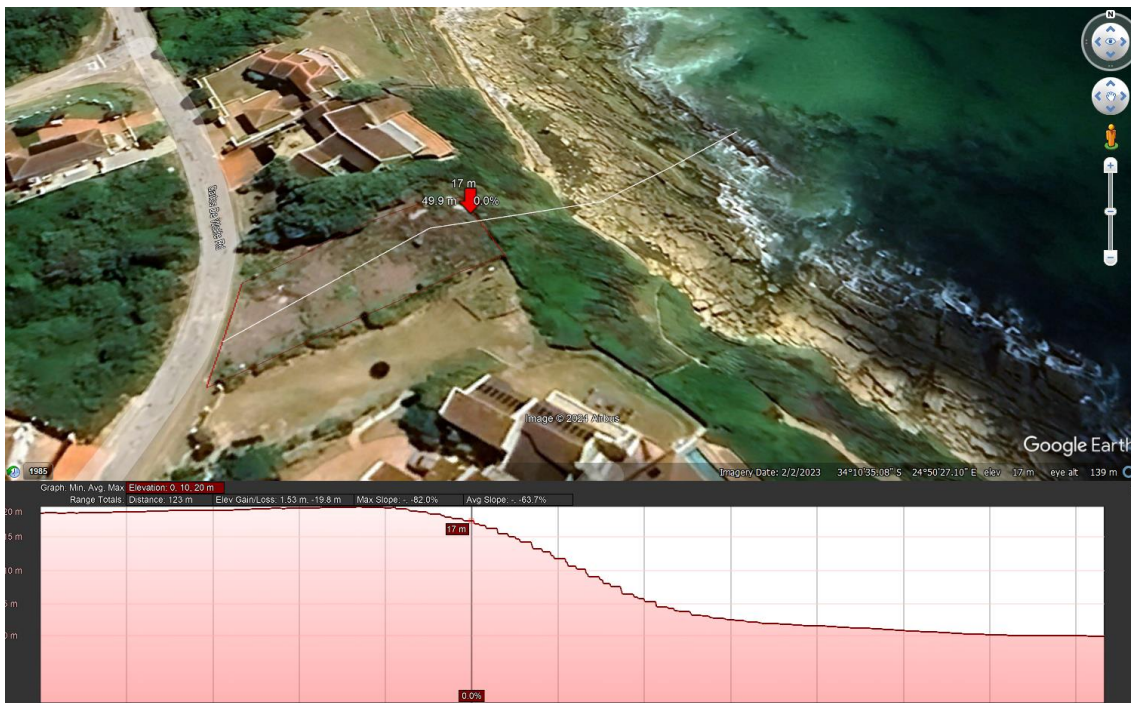


Figure 4: Elevation profile of erf 1216 Sea Vista (Google Earth).

## (7)(7) Socio-economical

The development is for a single residential dwelling within an urban area. A socio-economic study is not required for such a small-scale development which will operate as a private dwelling. A socio-economic study is therefore **disputed**.

## (7)(8) Plant Species

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **MEDIUM** Relative Plant Species Sensitivity and indicated the following features for the theme in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Plant Species Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Low	Low Sensitivity
Medium	Aspalathus recurvispina
Medium	Lebeckia gracilis
Medium	Sensitive species 308
Medium	Hyobanche robusta
Medium	Erica chloroloma
Medium	Erica glandulosa subsp. fourcadei
Medium	Sensitive species 588
Medium	Sensitive species 657
Medium	Centella tridentata var. hermanniifolia
Medium	Rapanea gilliana
Medium	Sensitive species 1192
Medium	Sensitive species 1032
Medium	Syncarpha sordescens
Medium	Sensitive species 78
Medium	Agathosma stenopetala
Medium	Cotyledon adscendens
Medium	Capeochloa cincta subsp. sericea
Medium	Sensitive species 448
Medium	Erica glumiflora

A Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Compliance Statement dated 31 January 2023 was compiled by Dr B. Adriaan Grobler for Erf 1216 Sea Vista, St Francis Bay, Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The Compliance Statement concluded that, due to the historical clearance of vegetation and associated disturbance to topsoils and the low likelihood of plant SCC occurring here, the site is of LOW sensitivity for terrestrial biodiversity and LOW sensitivity for plant species, and the clearing of vegetation likely had NO impact on threatened terrestrial biodiversity or plant SCC. Furthermore, this compliance statement is not subjected to any conditions.

### Recommendations:

It is confirmed in the Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Compliance Statement that the Plant Species Sensitivity for the site is **LOW**. No further studies are required.

## (7)(9) Animal Species

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **MEDIUM** Relative Animal Species Sensitivity and indicated the following features for the theme below.

Table 4: Animal Sensitivity Features.

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Medium	Sensitive species 8
Medium	Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus

A Terrestrial Animal Species Assessment dated February 2023 was compiled by Dr Marietjie Landman for erf 1216 in St Francis Bay, Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The report concluded that animal habitats in the project area were fragmented and transformed before the unauthorised activities occurred, which reduced the suitability of the site for indigenous animal species (amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds) and particularly species of conservation concern. No sensitive animal habitats would have occurred in the past. This means that the present unauthorised clearing of vegetation has not affected any important animal habitats or animal communities.

### Recommendations:

It is confirmed in the Terrestrial Animal Species Assessment that the Animal Species Sensitivity for the site can be considered as **LOW**. No further studies are required.

## (7)(10) Avian Impact Assessment

The project area is not located in any of South Africa's Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (Marnewick et al. 2015).

A Terrestrial Animal Species Assessment dated February 2023 was compiled by Dr Marietjie Landman for erf 1216 in St Francis Bay, Kouga Municipality, Eastern Cape. The study included avian species.

The report concluded that animal habitats in the project area were fragmented and transformed before the unauthorised activities occurred, which reduced the suitability of the site for indigenous animal species (amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and birds) and particularly species of conservation concern. No sensitive animal habitats would have occurred in the past. This means that the present unauthorised clearing of vegetation has not affected any important animal habitats or animal communities.

No further Avian Assessments are required.

### **(7)(11) Civil Aviation**

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **HIGH** Sensitivity for this theme as the proposed development property is within 8km of a civil aviation aerodrome.

#### **Recommendations:**

The development will not have any impact on civil aviation as it is a residential dwelling. Aircraft should be restricted from flying low over residential areas. The South African Civil Aviation Authority will be included in the I&AP Register. The sensitivity should be **LOW**, and no further assessments will be required.

### **(7)(12) Defence**

The screening reports indicate that the receiving environment has a **LOW** Sensitivity for this theme. As no specific protocol exists for this theme, the General Requirements Protocol is assigned to this sensitivity.

#### **Recommendations:**

The EAP confirms that the Defence Sensitivity of the proposed development property is **LOW** and no further assessments will be required.

### **(7)(13) Geotechnical Assessment**

A Geotechnical Soil Test Report dated 5 November 2023 was compiled by Dave Hall.

The study concluded that the site was considered suitable for the proposed development with conventional construction methods but there were some geotechnical constraints, mainly compressible sands, which required consideration by the structural engineer and contractor.

Preliminary recommendations were provided to improve founding conditions, but all information should be verified on site during construction.

Further Geotechnical Assessments are therefore not required.