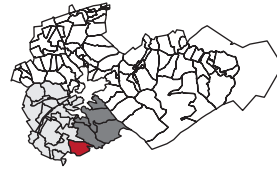
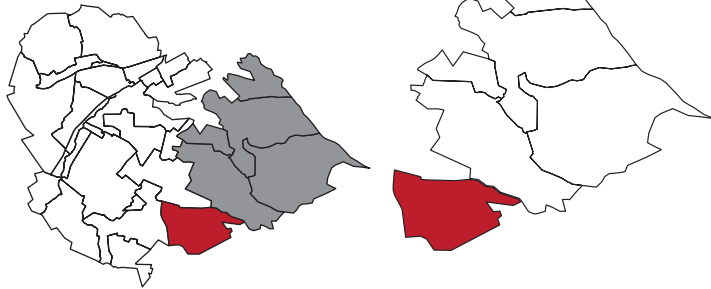


**EERSTE RIVER HELDERBERG
FOOTSLOPES**

C25 (8.05) Grade IIIa

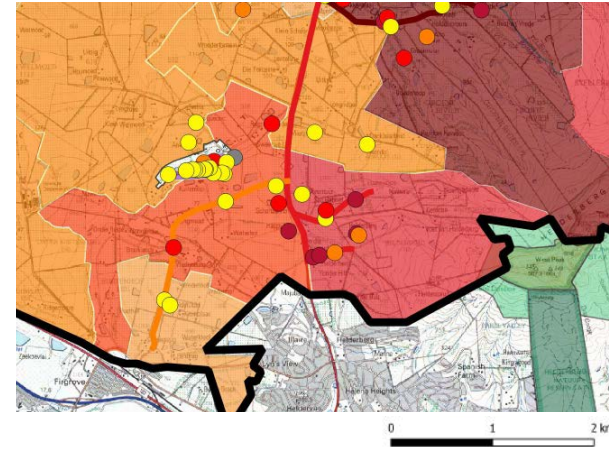


C25 Helderberg Foothills

This unit is flanked by the Helderberg to the east, with its apex being West Peak. The western boundary of the unit is the R44. Three fairly deep and well-vegetated drainage lines lead down the foothills of the mountain. Several critical biodiversity and ecological support areas are located along these drainage lines and on the upper to mid mountain slopes. The unit displays a fairly dense pattern of natural fingers interspaced with a finer pattern of crop fields and vineyards organised along the contours. Historical structures are located closer to the drainage lines, with newer residences positioned on the convex slopes between these vegetated streams. Most of the unit features high to moderate suitable soils for agriculture (viticulture). The upper slopes of the Helderberg are extensively used for running and cycling (see the Strava heatmap for intensity). Natural vegetation knits together edges of fields and vineyards, giving it a rugged character, and some of the roads and homes are overgrown. The upper slopes of West



Helderberg



Strava heatmap for running and cycling (Strava Labs 2015)

Peak of the Helderberg has a degraded quality as it is currently an old plantation in the process of being rehabilitated. Avontuur appears separate from the rest of the unit as the distinct white fence poles used for the uniform horse paddocks distinguishes it from the overall the typology, creating a unique pattern that has a landmark quality. Views from the upper reaches of the unit stretch all the way to Cape Town, but within the lower drainage lines, views are confined to the intimately spaced immediate surroundings, creating several view pockets in the unit.

One of the first freehold farms is located next to the R44, between the historic Helderberg and Klein Helderberg farms. The avenue of Eucalyptus trees along the Klein Helderberg Road creates a clear, visual threshold between the agricultural landscape of the Winelands, and the 'peri-rural' edge of Somerset West. Another special feature in the landscape is the mature Cypress avenue leading to San Gabriel (Klipheuwel). Hans Fransen (2004) describes Navarre (Nooitgedacht-Helderberg) as "matchless, and its facade one of the finest in the Cape".

This land unit is diverse with a variation of vineyard sizes, vegetable farming and smaller 'lifestyle' plots. These are mainly arranged along the three main drainage lines, which are densely vegetated and lead down from the Helderberg. Several historic farmsteads with associated landscape elements are located within this land unit. Land units such as this one, situated in close proximity to urban nodes, are valuable resources for recreational use.

C25 HELDERBERG FOOTHILLS

The unit displays a fairly dense pattern of natural fingers interspaced with a finer pattern of crop fields and vineyards organised along the contours. Land use is diverse, with a variation of vineyard sizes, vegetable farming and smaller 'lifestyle' plots. Historical structures are located closer to the drainage lines, with newer residences positioned on the convex slopes between these vegetated streams.

MAIN AIM: ENHANCE (MANAGE) AND INTERVENE (CHANGE): Improve land parcels by strengthening or reinforcing agricultural use and its characteristic elements and features, most importantly the tree-lines and windbreaks between properties, as well as vineyards and farmstead/werf areas.

MAIN VALUE: AESTHETIC AND HISTORIC - Appropriate use of heritage features is critical for their preservation. Development that will result in the loss of the sense of "openness" of the space, as well as its historic use as agriculture, and established planting patterns (including mature trees and tree lines) will threaten the heritage value of this landscape unit.

CONSERVATION SYSTEM: Three scenic routes exist within this landscape unit. The visual impact of proposed developments must be carefully considered. This landscape unit also forms part of the green transitions conservation system, so maintenance of its green and open agricultural character is important.

DEVIATED LAND USE/USES THAT WILL LIKELY ERODE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER: Overscaled private dwellings (on ridgelines), gated residential estates, large-scale industrial structures, business parks as well as isolated shopping centres and their associated parking lots will likely pose a threat to the character of the landscape unit. Suburban "creep", particularly from the Cape Town Municipal Boundary (Somerset West), must not be permitted.

Grade IIIa	
Foothill CS	✓
Green Transition CS	✓
Scenic Route CS	✓

DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

Please refer to the Conservation Management section of the CMP for general guidelines, explanatory text/terms, and the process behind developing the Development Criteria. The Development Criteria sheets are based on Landscape and Townscape typologies found within the Stellenbosch Municipality. The focus is on the current heritage elements and character of the landscapes, and the criteria are discussed under the five value lines (ecologic, aesthetic, historic, social and economic). They should also be read in conjunction with the Heritage Inventory (individual sites) and the Conservation Systems (Appendix 3 of the CMP).

A ECOLOGICAL

Significance:

Several critical biodiversity and ecological support areas are located along the drainage lines and on the upper to mid mountain slopes.

Development Criteria:

- Protect biodiversity by not allowing development in areas of ecological sensitivity such as wetlands, drainage lines, steep slopes, floodplains, areas with a high water table, areas with high biodiversity, and areas with threatened species.

B AESTHETIC

Significance:

This unit is flanked by the Helderberg to the east, with its apex being West Peak. The western boundary is the R44. Three fairly deep and well-vegetated drainage lines lead down the footslopes of the mountain.

The unit displays a fairly dense pattern of natural fingers interspaced with a finer pattern of crop fields and vineyards organised along the contours.

Natural vegetation knits together edges of fields and vineyards, giving it a rugged character, and some of the roads and homes are overgrown.

The upper slopes of West Peak of the Helderberg has a degraded quality as it is currently an old plantation in the process of being rehabilitated.

Avontuur appears separate from the rest of the unit as the distinct white fence poles used for the uniform horse paddocks distinguishes it from the overall the typology, creating a unique pattern that has a landmark quality. Views from

the upper reaches of the unit stretch all the way to Cape Town, but within the lower drainage lines, views are confined to the intimately spaced immediate surroundings, creating several view pockets in the unit.

The avenue of Eucalyptus trees along the Klein Helderberg Road creates a clear, visual threshold between the agricultural landscape of the Winelands, and the 'peri-rural' edge of Somerset West. Another special feature in the landscape is the mature Cypress avenue leading to San Gabriel (Klipheuwel). Hans Fransen (2004) describes Navarre (Nooitgedacht-Helderberg) as "matchless, and its facade one of the finest in the Cape".

Development Criteria:

- The high mountains in the study area are landforms vital to its overall landscape character. They enclose the valleys and settlements of heritage significance. Prevent development on visually sensitive mountain slopes and ridgelines in order to preserve the continuity of the mountains as a backdrop.
- Prevent fragmentation and rezoning of wilderness or 'natural' areas within the municipality, to ensure that the important contribution of wilderness areas to the character of a variety of heritage sites is maintained.
- Maintain the balance of Urban, Rural and Wilderness areas. It is the interplay and relationship between these that give the study area its unique character (refer to the Conservation Systems).
- It is recommended that visual permeability should be maintained towards mountains, valleys and across open, and cultivated fields. (a) Discourage the use of solid walls

around vineyards and agricultural areas in public view and along scenic routes. (b) Views should be framed and enhanced by development wherever possible.

- Limit cultivation and development on upper mountain slopes greater than 1:4 to protect scenic resources and water catchments, and to minimise visual scarring and erosion. Propose 'no-go' development areas above the 380m contour line for cultivated fields, and 300m for any built structures.
- Avoid development or infrastructure (such as buildings, wind turbines and power lines), on crests or ridgelines because of impact on the visual sensitivity of skylines.
- Prevent construction of new buildings on visually sensitive, steep, elevated or exposed slopes, ridgelines and hillcrests. Retain the integrity of the distinctive and predominantly agricultural landscape character.
- Land use related to agricultural use but with large visual intrusions /clutter (such as timber yards and nurseries)

should be carefully assessed. Mitigation measures should be put in place before any development or rezoning is permitted to allow such use.

- Encourage mitigation measures (for instance use of vegetation) to "embed" existing over-scaled structures (such as large agricultural sheds) within the surrounding agricultural landscape.
- Traditional planting patterns should be protected by ensuring that existing treed avenues, tree alignments and copses are not needlessly destroyed, but reinforced or replaced, thereby enhancing traditional patterns with appropriate species.
- Suburban development of the 1930s eroded the cultural landscape and changed its character as a result of mono-functional planning principles that advocated the separation of working, living, and recreation. Any proposed development that continues in this fashion should be discouraged.

C HISTORIC

Significance:

One of the first freehold farms is located next to the R44, between the historic Helderberg and Klein Helderberg farms.

Several historic farmsteads with associated landscape elements are located within this land unit.

Historical structures are located closer to the drainage lines, with newer residences positioned on the convex slopes between these vegetated streams.

Development Criteria:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE & FREEHOLD GRANTS

- Handaxes and cleavers, etc. are found throughout the area, and their heritage significance is clear. All archaeological material is protected in terms of the NHRA.
- Any remaining structures or fabric associated with the first freehold land grants should be protected, and included as part of the heritage inventory.

MOVEMENT SYSTEMS AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

- The scale of roads (especially those that align with historic wagon routes) should be the minimum possible. Insensitive, over-engineered, hard elements can compromise the rural character of a landscape as a whole.
- Respect the distinctive settlement patterns along stream courses. Proposals should be carefully considered in relation to potential impacts on the heritage significance of these settlements and the historic riverine corridor.

HISTORIC WERFS

- Respect traditional werf settlement patterns by considering the entire werf as the component of significance. This includes the backdrop of the natural landscape against which it is sited, as well as its spatial structure. Any development that impacts the inherent character of the werf component should be discouraged.
- Interventions on the werf must respect the layout, scale, massing, hierarchy, alignments, access, landscaping and setting.
- Historical layering must be respected and protected. Alterations and additions to conservation-worthy structures should be sympathetic to their architectural character and period detailing. Inappropriate 'modernisation' of conservation-worthy structures and traditional werfs should be prevented. Inappropriate maintenance can compromise historic structures. Heritage expertise is required where appropriate.
- Distinguish old from new but ensure visual harmony between historical fabric and new interventions in terms of appropriate scale, massing, form and architectural treatment, without directly copying these details.
- Encourage development that prolongs the longevity of historic family farms as an increasingly rare typology.
- Any development that threatens the inherent character of family burial grounds should be discouraged.



PLANTING PATTERNS

- Traditional planting patterns should be protected by ensuring that existing tree alignments and copses are not needlessly destroyed, but reinforced or replaced, thereby enhancing traditional patterns with appropriate species.
- Significant avenues should be protected as a heritage component.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

- Ensure that new developments within rural contexts are in sympathy with the topography and unique *genus loci* of the place/landscape unit.
- Observe the siting of traditional farmsteads and settlements along the stream course. Similar principles should be followed in the placement of new development, as this will inherently strengthen the character of the landscape units as a whole.
- Ensure that new buildings within historical precincts or werf contexts are in sympathy with the scale, massing, layout and idiom of surrounding buildings.
- Avoid the loss of rural character due to suburban development that engulfs rolling foothills and severs the agricultural continuum that encircles settlements. (a) Avoid inappropriate suburban extensions to rural villages and hamlets, in order to retain their sense of scale, civic structure and rootedness (development pressure from Somerset-west should not sprawl into this landscape unit).

D SOCIAL

Significance:

The upper slopes of the Helderberg are extensively used for running and cycling (see the Strava heatmap for intensity).

Land units such as this one, situated in close proximity to urban nodes, are valuable resources for recreational use.

Development Criteria:

- It is recommended that physical permeability to communal resources such as rivers and mountains is maintained and enhanced, for the enjoyment of all members of the public. This is particularly true when considering any new development proposals. (a) Promote public footpaths across the cultivated landscape. (b) Restore areas of recreation, especially where the public has traditionally enjoyed rights of access. Action might include the removal of fences and walls, where it is appropriate. (c) Prevent

privatisation of natural places that form part of the historical public open space resource network. (d) Allow for sustainable, traditional use of natural places for recreational, spiritual and resource-collection purposes.

- Where practical, encourage managed access to wilderness areas on the higher slopes. This will allow residents and visitors to the winelands opportunities to experience the wilderness domain, which is a key component within the cultural landscape as a whole, and to experience the sense of interconnectedness of the wilderness, agricultural and urban domains through views from the upper slopes. (See Green Transitions and Foothills Conservation Systems).
- Always use existing roads and pathways, such as old forestry service roads, before any new routes are established. As much wilderness area as possible must be left intact.
- The principle of 'tread lightly' must be applied for any activity (and associated development requirements e.g. toilets for major events) in this domain should be emphasised.
- Make sure the required provision for the rehabilitation and maintenance of the slopes used for traditional and recreational purposes is in place.
- Mountain slopes have been used for traditional practices for many years, and care should be taken that any significant cultural sites, such as burials and veldkos/medicinal plant resources, are not disturbed.

E ECONOMIC

Significance:

Most of the unit features high to moderate suitable soils for agriculture (viticulture).

This land unit is diverse with a variation of vineyard sizes, vegetable farming and smaller 'lifestyle' plots. These are mainly arranged along the three main drainage lines, which are densely vegetated and lead down from the Helderberg.

Development Criteria:

- Care should be taken that vineyards are not needlessly destroyed, and replaced by non-agricultural development. The potential agricultural use of the land should be retained for the future.
- Fruit orchards are associated with windbreak trees, which form distinctive strong lines on the landscape. In cases where the orchard has lost its function, to retain its heritage values the windbreak trees should be kept and new development could be included within existing blocks.
- Land-use and infrastructure that is not one of the core agricultural systems (vineyards and orchards), could have a negative visual effect in the landscape (greenhouses, black plastic ground cover, shade netting, chicken batteries). The placement of these agricultural elements should be carefully considered.
- The proliferation of non-agricultural uses, particularly in visually prominent locations, should be avoided. This is in order to protect the predominantly agricultural character of the landscape.
- The subdivision of farms into smaller uneconomic 'lifestyle' plots of less than 3 hectares fundamentally erodes the agricultural character of the landscape.
- Maintain larger unified land areas to protect larger landscape continuums that display a unified scenic character.

