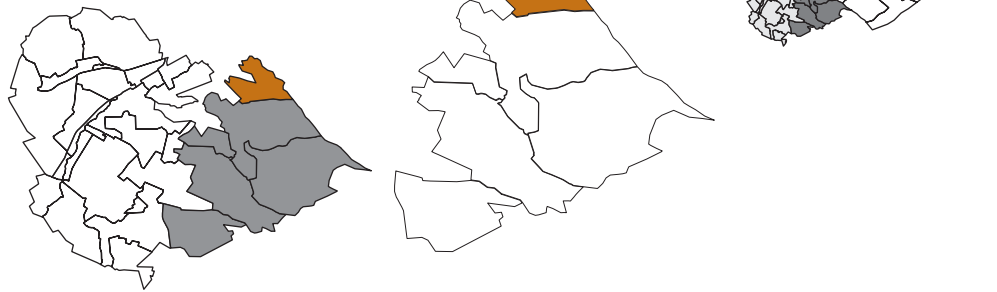


C30 (7.85) Grade IIIb

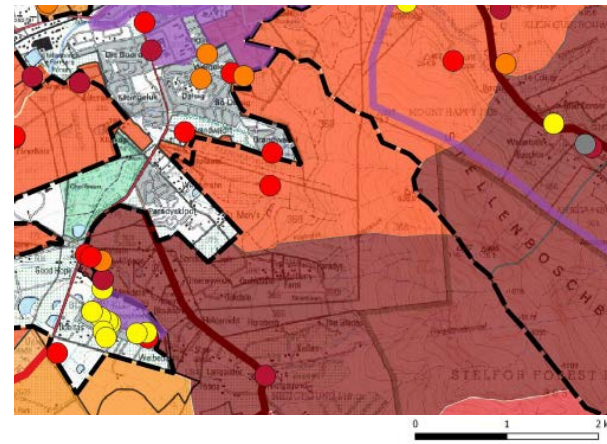
EERSTE RIVER HELDERBERG FOOTSLOPES



C30 Stellenbosch Berg

The upper slopes of the Stellenbosch Mountain provide a striking visual backdrop and scale to this landscape unit. The footslopes of the mountain extend into neighbourhoods such as Bo-Dalsig, Brandwacht and Paradyskloof which form the edge on the lower slopes. Four non-perennial streams run down the foot of the mountain. Most of this land unit is regarded as a critical biodiversity area with two ecological support areas. Open fynbos and remnant plantations are found with a few vineyards on the lower slopes. The lower slopes have high quality soils for the cultivation of vines. The vineyards present a regular pattern in the landscape, whereas the plantations create visual 'blocks' that contrast in colour, texture and scale to the vegetation surrounding them. Open fallow agricultural land and a few leftover windbreaks are also located within the landscape unit. The toe of this land unit extends into the urban fabric along with the Coetzenburg dairy farm. This farm reads as part of the rural character, and its proximity to the town adds a special rural character to Stellenbosch and a gateway for the recreational use of the mountain. This entire land unit formed part of the historic commonage and is still aligned in its function to allow communal access into the mountain for the people of Stellenbosch. The Strava heatmap indicates extensive use of the mountain for running and cycling, and although it presents a degraded visual character on the mountain slopes it is in fact a palimpsest of commonage, plantations and current recreation. Rights of access to medicinal plants on the mountain, as expressed in public forums, needs to be maintained. The Eerste River forms an historic and appropriate boundary to the town of Stellenbosch, and the Coetzenburg sports fields are an appropriate transition from suburb to wilderness.

This layered landscape has historic, scenic and high social significance under threat of excessive development. The eastern bypass threatens the inherent character of the land unit, and access via the dairy farm is significant for maintenance of this rural and recreational edge to town.



Strava heatmap for running and cycling (Strava Labs 2015)



Remnant plantation



Pasture land



Coetzenburg

C30 STELLENBOSCH BERG

This layered landscape has historic, scenic and high social significance under threat of excessive development. The Eastern Bypass threatens the inherent character of the land unit, and access via the dairy farm is significant for maintenance of this rural and recreational edge to town.

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. Non-agricultural development should be located along the R44, and not be allowed to spread up the mountain slopes.

MAIN VALUE: ECOLOGICAL – This landscape unit exhibits pockets of critical biodiversity, in natural condition, as well as historic tree copses and ecological support areas around the river. Access to the mountain should be at all times be valued and displayed in any development proposal. The threshold of agricultural fields between the mountain and the edge of town is an important element to enhance and maintain.

CONSERVATION SYSTEM: This landscape unit forms part of the green transitions conservation system, so maintenance of its green and open agricultural character is important. It also is part of the foothill system around protected areas. It also has a coverage of more than 70% visibility from a grade II scenic drive.

DEVIATED LAND USE/USES THAT WILL LIKELY ERODE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER: Overscaled private dwellings, cluttered properties, gated residential estates, large-scale industrial structures, suburban development, mining, landfill or sewage plant, parking lot, business park, isolated shopping centre. **Large-scale business-park development and suburban expansion, together with increased transport infrastructure, threatens the character of this landscape unit.**

Grade IIIb	
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:

Most of this land unit is regarded as a critical biodiversity area with two ecological support areas.

Four non-perennial streams run down the foot of the mountain.

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.
- Maintain ecological support areas to sites of heritage significance, specifically the stream courses running through the valley. Only permit development that responds to the heritage sensitivity of the river corridor, and that will not dominate, or irreparably damage the environments adjacent to this natural element.

B AESTHETIC

Significance:

The upper slopes of the Stellenbosch Mountain provide a striking visual backdrop and scale to this landscape unit.

The footslopes of the mountain extend into neighbourhoods such as Bo-Dalsig, Brandwacht and Paradyskloof which form the edge on the lower slopes.

The Strava heatmap indicates extensive use of the mountain for running and cycling, and although the mountain slopes are visually degraded, the unit is in fact a palimpsest of commonage,

plantations and current recreation.

Development Criteria:

- 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).
- Avoid development or infrastructure (such as wind turbines, communication towers and power lines) on rocky outcrops, because of their high visibility and the visual sensitivity of the skyline.
- Avoid the visual cluttering of the landscape by intrusive signage, and the intrusion of commercial, corporate development along roads.
- 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.
- Respect the natural landscape as the setting within which settlements (towns, hamlets, farm werfs) are embedded. Avoid insensitive 'dominating' developments that erode the natural-agricultural continuum found on the rolling foothills of the study area. Dominating development include sprawling suburban development, over-scaled private dwellings etc.
- Encourage mitigation measures

(for instance use of vegetation) to “embed” existing over-scaled structures within the surrounding agricultural landscape.

- 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.

RECREATION TRAILS

- 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.



C HISTORIC

Significance:

This entire land unit formed part of the historic commonage and is still aligned in its function to allow communal access into the mountain for the people of Stellenbosch.

The Eerste River forms an historic and appropriate boundary to the town of Stellenbosch, and the Coetzenburg sports fields are an appropriate transition from suburb to wilderness.

Development Criteria:

- An additional guideline is for edges of the town to remain permeable to the larger natural landscape. Edges such as Coetzenburg should allow movement to the Stellenbosch mountain for all members of the public, according to its historic and current function (refer to Green Transitions and Commonage for more detail).

COMMONAGE

- Maintain traditional movement patterns across rural landscapes or to places of socio-historical value. (a) Avoid privatization or creation of barriers to traditional access routes. (b) Retain old roadways, which have been replaced by newer roads, for use as recreation trails.
- Commonages and outspans were located at water points, and these places were likely gathering points before the arrival of colonists and continued to provide communal resources. In the mid-20th century many old commonages came under the ownership of the Municipality, and have since been rented out to private individuals or organisations.
- The Municipality should facilitate the use of common land in a way that promotes the well-being and quality of life of the public. These sites can play a restorative role within the community, for instance for those who have limited alternative opportunities for recreation.
- No residential or industrial structures should be permitted on commonage land.

WERF

- 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.

D SOCIAL

Significance:

The toe of this land unit extends into the urban fabric along with the Coetzenburg dairy farm. This farm reads as part of the rural character, and its proximity to the town adds a special rural character to Stellenbosch and provides a gateway for the recreational use of the mountain.

Rights of access to medicinal plants on the mountain, as expressed in public forums, needs to be maintained.

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.

E ECONOMIC

Significance:

Open fynbos and remnant plantations are found with a few vineyards on the lower slopes. The lower slopes have high quality soils for the cultivation of vines.

The vineyards present a regular pattern in the landscape, whereas the plantations create visual 'blocks' that contrast in colour, texture and scale to the vegetation surrounding them.

Open fallow agricultural land and a few leftover windbreaks are also located within the landscape unit.

Development Criteria:

- Developments that promote the continuity of the core function of agriculture (viticulture) within the Stellenbosch winelands should be promoted.
- Commercial farming, although it has transformed land use, continues to uphold large areas of uniform agrarian character associated with vineyards.
- 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 and windbreak trees form distinctive strong lines in the

landscape. In cases where an 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.

- The subdivision of farms into smaller uneconomic 'lifestyle' plots fundamentally erodes the agricultural character of the landscape and should be discouraged. Rather, maintain larger unified land areas to protect larger landscape continuums that display a unified scenic character.
- 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.

