

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
FERNKLOOF NATURE RESERVE (FNR) ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)
HELD AT ELECTRICAL BOARDROOM, ONRUSRIVIER
ON FRIDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2015 at 09:00**

1. Welcome, Attendance and Apologies

Present: Duncan Heard (DH) [in the Chair], Glynis Van Rooyen (GvR), Heloise Fortune (HF) [PA-Onrus Office], David Beattie (DB), Anthony van Hoogstraten (AvH), Neville Green (NG) [Biodiversity Manager – Overstrand Environmental], Lee Burman (L.Bn), Linda Griffiths (LG), Edward Fisher (EF) [Law Enforcement], Muthama Muasya (MM), Cllr Kari Brice (KB), Andrae Marais (AM) [Cape Nature]

Apologies: Liezl Bezuidenhout (LB) [Senior Manager – Overstrand Environmental], Estelle Spaarwater (ES)

Welcome: The Chairperson welcomed everyone present. AVH commented that it will be nice to see LB at some of the FAB meetings as she hasn't attended in a while. DH thanked Cllr KB for attending. FAB will try to accommodate Cllr KB by setting meeting dates around her availability. DH acknowledged BOTSOC and the Cliff Path Management Group (CPMG) for their work and thanked them for their reports. HF will get annual report of CPMG from DB and distribute to all the board members.

DH suggested and FAB approved that today's meeting should concentrate on the FNR IMP comments received through the public participation phase and thereafter continue with the rest of the agenda if time allows it.

FNR IMP Comments

EMAIL 1: FAB – Duncan Heard:

Although each FAB member was entitled to submit their own comments, I hereby submit my comments on behalf of FAB as follows:

The Authorisation Page is not on Page (i) as per the Table of Contents.

Action: To be changed.

Authorisation Page

Where D. Heard's name appears on the top of the page, it is preferred that it is replaced with 'Fernkloof Nature Reserve Advisory Board'

Where P. Michaels appears, it should read - P. Aplon.

The new deputy-mayor's name needs to be inserted.

Action: To be changed.

Page VI & VIII: Definitions: Cultural and Natural Heritage definitions should start – Adapted from the definition defined in Article 1/2..... Then the words 'outstanding universal' which appears twice in each definition should be bracketed out [.....] as that does not apply to FNR.

Action: To be changed.

Page IX: Vision and Mission of FNR. The following words should be excluded from the definition – 'the 5-year lifespan of' as this is misleading and impossible to achieve. Without those words it does not indicate that all actions in the IMP must be achieved in five years.

Action: To be changed.

Page X: FAB needs to be described fully as the Fernkloof Nature Reserve Advisory Board.

Action: To be changed.

Page 15: B3: Declaration Status of FNR: There needs to be a short motivation here for the intention to motivate and submit an application (in collaboration with CapeNature) for FNR to be listed as a World Heritage Site, together with the corridor of conservation areas it adjoins, to be listed as part of the Cape Floral Kingdom World Heritage Site. An action must then obviously also be added.

Action: Addition supported by FAB. DH will in the mean time facilitate an exploratory meeting with CapeNature to see the way forward for FNR to be listed as a World Heritage Site.

Page 18: C2: To avoid confusion, the 5th paragraph should read – “The Khoekoen shell middens and the graves of Sir William and Lady Hoy on “Hoy’s Koppie” are historical cultural heritage features of considerable local importance. In addition, the AHC (established in 1908) and the HBS buildings including the herbarium (established in the 1950s) can be recognised as “living heritage” cultural heritage features of FNR.”

Action: Should the heritage grading by Heritage Western Cape for the AHC come through before the IMP is sent for approval, this fact needs to be added here.

Action: LBN noted that 1950s should be 1970s.

Action: AVH noted that in the last paragraph of Pg 18 C2 1919 should be changed to 1912.

Page 18: C3 and second paragraph should start – ‘Most of the southern boundary of FNR directly abuts the urban edge of Hermanus ...’

With reference to **Section E: Zonation** (Note in Paragraph 7) –The “in-principle” decision by the Overstrand Council back on 1st September 2009 to lease Portion of Erf 243, Rotary Drive to the Hermanus Astronomy Association for the purpose of erecting an observatory, etc., does **not** belong in this Management Plan and should be deleted. This and other possible future considerations will be evaluated under the guidelines, principles and vision of the IMP.

Apart from the fact that this “in principle” decision was taken almost six years ago, long before the development of this IMP, by people who, with respect, were not *au fait* with environmental law governing development and proper planning procedures in a proclaimed reserve (and not in line with a management plan in terms of NEM:PAA), was also made without consultation with the FAB or EMS. *Ad hoc development* in a nature reserve is inappropriate. The inclusion of this paragraph also runs counter to **C.9.4.4.** “No significant further Reserve infrastructure is envisaged at this stage in this (Rotary Drive) area or at the communications tower/radio mast ...” Furthermore the vision and mission stress the showcasing and protecting of “natural assets and cultural heritage resources of the FNR ... in order to conserve and ensure the continued existence of its rich biodiversity” and the biodiversity main goals do not include the development of non-related activities but rather focus on conserving the ecological integrity, natural character... etc. ...of FNR. This section also flies in the face of the Concept Development Plan that the IMP requires that will guide future appropriate development at each development node.

Action: If council made a decision, it should have been minuted. This point should be revisited and needs to be explained if this isolated in-principle decision is to be included in the IMP. DH noted that he will take this matter up with NG, LB and Stephen Muller. Cllr KB requested that she should be cc’d in on correspondence.

Page 36: G.3.3.3: Informal Public Participation: It needs to be stated in this paragraph that the EMS will arrange the annual public meeting.

Figure 4: Map: Walker Bay Nature Reserve is incorrectly shown – the map should be adapted so that it clearly shows that the Conservancy overlays a Provincial Reserve. Is it correct that the Conservancy only overlays part of the Walker Bay Nature Reserve?????

Action: AM to provide NG with the correct shape files with regards to the Walker Bay conservancy.

EMAIL 2: Dru Martheze (Dept of Transport and Public Works):

The Provincial Department of Transport and Public Works comment on the draft Fernkloof Nature Reserve Management Plan was tabled. There was difficulty with some of the statements made.

Action: The legality of the statements needs to be interrogated. NG will draft a response.

EMAIL 3: Mike Walters:

The comments below are not the result of comprehensive or intensive study of the draft of the document involved as it only became available to the commentator at a very late stage. However it is trusted that the comments will not be construed as overly critical but as a genuine, perhaps deficient, attempt to contribute to the future improvement of management of the Fernkloof Nature Reserve (FNR).

An introductory comment is that while Withers Environmental Consultants and Urban Dynamics Western Cape are identified as the drafters of the Plan the role of Mr D Heard is somewhat uncertain. Indeed the note (p33) that “ The general format and much of the content of this section was sourced and adapted from the Matatiele Nature Reserve Integrated Environmental Management Plan 2008-2012, which was compiled by Mr D Heard for the Matatiele Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa” raises the issue of whether the approach of the consultants was original and considerate of all local factors influencing the FNR in its Overstrand context. The fact that Mr Heard is now the Chairperson of the Fernkloof Advisory Board (FAB) could indicate a predisposal by the consultants to influence the FAB’s acceptance of the proposed Plan. The relevance of the Matatiele situation to that of Hermanus is not addressed in the Plan.

Response: FAB had made a recommendation to guide the consultants. The Matatiele Plan was used as a guideline only and was agreed to by Mr Paul Olden (Principal Consultant – Urban Dynamics). The Matatiele Plan was recognized by the Department of Environmental Affairs and the World Bank Oversight Committee for the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Project. The Matatiele Plan was used as a guideline with the full knowledge of all FAB members – the relevant FNR information was used.

The Plan requires editorial attention.

Lists of tables, figures, appendices, definitions and abbreviations should not dominate the reader’s entry to the Plan but should be transposed to the rear of the document.

A concise introduction to the FNR is essential with some early indication of the role of the Municipality, the Province and the FAB and the necessity for the Plan. The present Section A does not do this and a more reader-friendly introduction should precede it.

The treatment of tables in section L instead of within the text where reference is made to the tables does not facilitate reading and evaluation as the reader has constantly to page to a removed part of the Plan. This is also applicable to figures. An executive summary to provide the reader with easy access to a concise oversight of what is intended would also be desirable.

Response: An Executive Summary/ Introduction is inappropriate and not required in a management plan of this nature as it cannot adequately deal with the amount of detail contained in the document. This is not only a normal concept planning document but an operational guideline document too which guides management and a management tool for the Reserve manager.

B3, third paragraph should read “however if the Municipality plans to extend or amend-----existing nature reserve.

The draft Plan tends to be overly repetitive e.g. A1.3 and C1.

Response: This statement is not viewed as being overly repetitive.

The latitudinal and longitudinal figures on page 17, as determined by UDWC, must be reversed.

Response: Noted - will be changed.

The time difference between declaration in 1957 and naming in 1958 and opening only in 1985 needs to be more clearly explained.

Response: These are facts and further explanation is not possible from the historic record.

C4 refers to the climate of the FNR. The FNR cannot “normally “receive 450 to 830mm of rainfall per year. These figures are not sufficient. Long-term averages per month and average temperature figures per month allow the compilation of a climadiagram (Walter & Lieth) for the FNR, which will facilitate the identification of similar reserves in other parts of the globe.

Response: The rainfall range is sufficient for the purpose of the IMP and should be left as is. The paragraph should however refer tonorth westerly winds (cold wet winters).

C5. It is difficult to grasp how the geology and soils of the FNR (1800 ha) could be derived from Musina & Rutherford 's study on The Vegetation of Southern Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland without a formal soil survey having taken place locally .

Response: A broad description as described in the publication was deemed adequate for the IMP.

C5. In C5 no mention is made of Peninsula Formation quartzite while in C6.2 it is mentioned as a source of potable water. The relevance of the exhaustive treatment of the various aquifer compartments and the Gateway well-field to the FNR is also not set out. If this is not done it is superfluous to the Plan. The Hermanus Fault is also referred to without explanatory notes on its relevance.

Response: NG to revise this point (C5).

C7. In C7, Vegetation, the herbarium information is again repeated. It is a pity that reference is not made to actual and incipient IAS dangers such as Hakea spp, Spanish broom, pampas grass and kikuyu which need constant attention and vigilance.

Response : All invasive alien species have been included in G.7.4

C7(iii). The Hermanus Botanical Society (HBS) is to monitor known populations of rare species and vegetation types while not being a formal part of the management structure of the FNR. What support is to be given to the HBS to undertake this and how is this to be formalised? Will the Municipality's EMS oversee the HBS?

Response: Refer to the conservation agreements section as well as the permitting system and approval for the research / monitoring applications.

C7(iv). Will the compilation of plant lists be undertaken by the HBS and in terms of which agreements?

Response: Refer to sections on conservation partnerships and the revision of agreement with HBS.

C7.3. It is first stated that Hangklip Sand Fynbos occurs in the FNR but in the same paragraph it is said that representative samples do not occur to the east of the Palmiet River. This requires explanation.

Response: Comment concerning Hangklip Sand Fynbos is noted and supported – explanation will be added.

C7.6. Curtisia probably also deserves a mention.

Response: Comment noted and supported. *Podocarpus* will be replaced with *Curtisia dentata*.

*C8.2. The removal of alien fish species should be a priority if present, while the introduction of *Galaxias*, *Sandelia* and *Gilchristella* be considered if absent.*

Response: If the survey indicates that the *status quo* indicates that there is merit in the introduction of indigenous species, this will be done in collaboration with Cape Nature – The Action will be adjusted.

C8.3. While rinkhals does occur in the Southern Cape its preferred habitat is grassland and perhaps marshy situations. Do we have definite records for rinkhals from FNR, as a spitting snake has certain implications for those who encounter it?

Response: Rinkhals have been sited. Specific records have been collected by the members of the board.

C8.4. Where independent bodies are to undertake surveys, incentives should be provided and formal agreement arrived at.

Response: Refer to the section on partnerships.

C9.3. It is uncertain who bears responsibility for the maintenance of the cycle track. Access from Second St in Voelklip is already showing signs of serious erosion.

Action: Overstrand municipality bears the responsibility for the maintenance of trails.

C9.4.4. It is stated that no significant FNR infrastructure is envisaged in the Rotary Drive area. However in Section E (page 31) par 7 it is stated "Note that an "in principle" decision has been taken by the Overstrand Municipal Council on 1 September 2009 to lease Portion of Erf 243 Rotary Drive to the Hermanus Astronomy Association for the proposed development of an observatory and small amphitheatre ". This anomaly needs to be rectified.

Response: Agreed.

Section D. It is usual for Vision, Mission and Goals to be introductory statements before descending to actions. Rectification needs to be considered.

Response: This is a management document and for that reason it does not appear right up front – the Vision and Mission are better understood once the background information has been read.

While in Section B1 it is stated that the Overstrand Municipality is the designated Management Authority for the FNR and is to report annually to the Western Cape MEC, in D2 (1) it is stated that an annual APO should be submitted to Cape Nature for submission to the MEC each year. This is an anomaly because municipalities and provincial governments are separate independent spheres of government. Submission should be made to the MEC, who could employ his entity, Cape Nature, for comment should he so desire.

Response: MEC is informed annually in terms of Section 41[4] of the NEM: PAA (which deals with subsidiary plans). Just keeping the relevant authority informed.

D2. The goals in D2 are overly ambitious and require reformulation, eg D2.2 to protect people, property and the coastal environment from risks arising from dynamic coastal processes including the risk of sea level rise. Such protection would require national and provincial action rather than FNR activity.

Response: This is a Co-operative governance responsibility that will be informed by the Overber Coastal Management Programme.

Accessing GEF funding and World Bank support for FNR is a tall order as its 1800 ha pales into insignificance when weighed against other claims. Such requests should be included in combined proposals with other entities such as Kogelberg.

Response: A project to have FNR and neighbouring reserves listed as a WHS has been included in the IMP to ensure the conservation of unique species and ecosystems.

G1.2 Human Resources Management. The proposed HR structure for the FNR is completely inadequate if the 72 actions associated with management goals are taken into account. One reserve manager, an administrative assistant, one senior field ranger, four field ranger units, a foreman and four general assistants will barely be adequate to efficiently maintain the status quo, even if one assumes that some support will be forthcoming from the Environmental Management Services Section of the Municipality, which has a myriad of responsibilities beyond the FNR. Effective execution of the 72 actions, many of multi-year nature, required to achieve management goals, will be impossible with the proposed structure. Re-assessment of the HR needed to successfully implement the Plan is essential.

Response: Agreed. The proposal is however a great improvement on the present capacity and is also a long-term action attempt to rectify the matter.

G3.5 Research. It is an oversight that the opportunities that the FNR presents for fire succession research are not mentioned for the different vegetation types.

Response: The point will be added to the research section.

Concluding Remarks. While the draft Plan contains much interesting information and identifies diverse needs and challenges, it tends to be repetitive and requires redesigning. The Plan requires redrafting with the resources that the municipality is able to dedicate to the Plan being taken into careful consideration.

Response: The IMP sets out the required management actions for the achievement of the stated Mission, Vision and Objectives. The IMP actions will be implemented in order of strategic priority according to the available resources at that time.

EMAIL 4: Pierre de Villiers (Hermanus Astronomy Centre):

Two very brief comments regarding the “Integrated Environmental Management Plan for the Fernkloof Nature Reserve”:

The words “No significant further Reserve infrastructure development is envisaged at this stage in this area or at the communication tower / radio mast, which is located just off (south of) Rotary Drive.” In paragraph C.9.4.4 on page 28 of the report could possibly be interpreted as being contradictory to the paragraph on page 31 referring to the “in principle” decision of Council to lease a portion of Erf 243 to the Hermanus Astronomy Centre. Should this possible contradiction be rectified or am I over-sensitive?

Response: The mention of the ‘in principle’ decision is inappropriate and out of context. The Rotary Drive lookout site first requires a concept development plan to avoid *ad hoc* development of the node.

In both these places there is reference to the communication tower / radio mast as potential development sites. It is correct that David Beattie did point this site out as a potential site which was duly considered in the initial evaluation in 2009. However, there is no reference to the site adjacent the Preekstoel water purification plant pointed out to us by yourself and which we did quantitatively and objectively compare with the Lookout Point site

in our revised development proposal submitted to you last year. Should there be reference the Preekstoel site at all?

Please accept my apologies if I'm being over-sensitive, but the Hermanus Observatory & Amphitheatre is very important to us.

Response: There is no requirement for the Preekstoel site to be mentioned in the management plan as it is not in the reserve. The communication towers are located in the nature reserve and a development node is indicated for existing towers. The shape file for this development node will be adjusted to include the road to the towers.

EMAIL 5: Mike Green:

As a new member of the Fernkloof Horticultural Society, I have read the plan in detail and support it in full.

Many thanks for providing the opportunity to reading the plan.

Furthermore, I am available at any time to provide vigorous vocal support for this excellent initiative.

Mike Green [082 212 5116](tel:0822125116) Anytime 24/7

EMAIL 6: Jack Bold (Fernkloof Indigenous Nursery):

Refer page 27 C.9.2 MOSSEL RIVER DAMS. It should be noted here that the Fernkloof public gardens and Fernkloof Indigenous Nursery utilize water from the Three Dams.

Response: Agreed

Application received from Town Planning: Reserve Management Boundaries and Component Properties:

Overstrand Municipality has received two offers to purchase Erven 9901 and 9899, subsequent to the advertisement of the FNR IMP for public comment.

Response: The Environmental Protection Section does not support the application for sale of the properties at present as the properties are (i) part of the proclaimed nature reserve, (ii) adjacent to the Southern Coastal Forest which is the smallest and probably the most sensitive ecosystem on the reserve. (iii) The sale of the properties will promote disturbance and increase fire risks. FAB agrees with EMS. *DH noted that a reinvestigation of the site will have to take place; a working group will be formulated to do a site visit.*

Annual Hermanus Camp:

The Overstrand Municipality acknowledges the Heritage status of the Hermanus Scout Camp facility and supports the annual camp. A detailed agreement is required between the Overstrand Municipality and the Annual Camp to determine the rights and obligations of each party. It must be noted that the camp is located in an isolated position and that key municipal infrastructure is located on the site. As such, a degree of disturbance will occur and cannot be avoided (maintaining pump stations). **NG will arrange with Penelope Aplon to do an information session with the interested parties of the advisory board.**

2. Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of the FAB held on 28 Nov 2014.

2.1 Confirmation of Minutes and Public Availability

Corrections to the Minutes

H. Fortune

2.2 Comments from Council on FAB Minutes dated 20 May 2014

N. Green

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Workshop to Market FNR Internationally (Item 3.1)

DH will discuss at next meeting.

D. Heard

3.2 Amendment of By-laws relating to FNR and FAB

NG will discuss at next meeting.

N. Green

3.3 Provincial By-Pass Road & Stanford Trunk Road Upgrade

DB/NG will discuss at the next meeting.

D. Beattie/ N. Green

4 Administration

4.1 FNR Integrated Management Plan (IMP) Progress – Comments

Will be discussed at the next meeting

4.1.1 Hermanus Astronomy Centre and future of the Rotary Drive Lookout Point

Will be discussed at the next meeting

N Green

4.2 FNR 2014/15 Budget

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

4.3 FNR Management Reports

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

5 Standing Items

5.1 Enforcement

Will be discussed at the next meeting

N. Green

5.2 Hoy's Koppie

Will be discussed at the next meeting

N.Green / D. Heard

5.3 Ecological Issues

5.3.1 Baboon Electric Fencing

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

L. Bezuidenhout / N Green

5.3.2 Burning of Coastal Corridors

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.3.3 Event Applications

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N Green

5.4 Research

5.4.1 Research Applications

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

5.5 Land and Infrastructure

5.5.1 Fernkloof Village Drainage Report

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

5.5.2. Scout Camp Lease

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

5.5.3 Replacement of Signboards

NG will discuss at the next meeting

N. Green

5.6 Klein River Estuary Management

To be discussed at the next meeting.

L. Bezuidenhout

5.7 Report from Hermanus Botanical Society

LG will discuss at the next meeting.

L. Griffiths

5.7.1 MoA with Overstrand Municipality i.t.o. FNR

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N Green

5.7.2 Accuracy of Signboard in FNR Gardens.

MM/LG will discuss at the next meeting.

M. Muasya / L. Griffiths

5.7.3 Nursery

N. Green

5.8 Reports from Cliff Path Management Group

DB will discuss at the next meeting.

D Beattie

5.8.1 Upgrade of Piet se Bos Area-Progress

NG will discuss at the next meeting.

N. Green

6. General

6.1 Grotto Parking Embankment (BAR)

DH will discuss at the next meeting.

D. Heard

6.2 Hunting with dogs & Illegal Plant harvesting

DH noted that this point must be treated very seriously and that law enforcement should assist the EMS section with this. He mentioned that once there is a market available for this sort of thing it will become a huge problem. LG commented that a woman and a man has been sighted on the cliff paths with dogs and that photographs will be made available to law enforcement and EMS.

6.3 Access control on Rotary Drive.

LBN noted that denying access is illegal. DH commented that the records of the road are needed. They will find out what the status of the road is and take it from there.

6.4. Walkerbay Xtreme, Hermanus

DB the event is taking place on 4 May 2015. NG to give the application form to DB so that they can apply. FAB has no objection.

7. Date of Next Meeting:

17 April 2015