

CHELSEA / REDHOUSE INTERCHANGE - SHERWOOD

Site Visit 5 June 2012

Some personal comments with respect to the development site visit to the area beyond Walker Drive and neighbouring Sherwood suburb follow.

1. The road traverses an area identified and described in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Open Space System as Lorraine Transitional Grassy Fynbos. This fine scale vegetation type is a mosaic and merging of other described vegetation types. The landscape is made up of calcareous sandstone / sand with poor drainage. Quartzitic conglomerate soils with sandstone “rocky outcrops” form low elevations extruding the sandy soils.
 - The first portion of the roadway (ahead of Walker Drive) that we inspected was made up of sandy aeolianite soils covered in a grassy vegetation with a low species diversity. Poor drainage has created these conditions. The vegetation has been invaded with alien plant species such as *Acacia saligna* and *A. mearnsii*. It is my opinion that the natural vegetation would persist if sensitive construction were to pass through it.
 - After passing over the sandy soils, the stable quartzitic soil type with emerging rock outcrops was encountered. Few alien plants were present on these soils. A true grassy fynbos vegetation was encountered. This area of merging soil / vegetation types with these emerging rock outcrops is the last remaining habitat for two Critically Endangered plant species. They are *Agathosma gonaquensis* and *Corpuscularia lehmanii*. A population of +- 100 *Agathosma* and a small group of *Corpuscularia* were seen.
 - The suggested road development would dissect this stable area and create two distinct islands of this vegetation on either side of the road. This may affect the pollination ecology necessary to maintain the CE plants. Sensitive forward planning will have to be done so as to maintain a sensitive ecological system.
 - I believe that it would be least destructive to create a road through the sandy / grass dominated area which can be easily recognized by the alien vegetation domination on the site.
2. The Klein Kabega drainage system is a tributary to the Baakens River and is a long stable wetland / filter / sponge, dominated by *Phragmites* reeds. The road development is planned to traverse this wetland.
 - An inspection of this wetland revealed a stable healthy ecosystem with the edges being invaded by alien trees.
 - Past experience has suggested to me that due to the unique growing conditions in a wetland, it would be unlikely to destabilise the system. It was suggested by me that Mr. Japie Buckle (0828207083) be contacted for professional guidance wrt the impacts of a bridge being constructed there.
 - It should be considered that drainage into the stream may adversely affect homeowners living on the edge of the wetland.