



# GROTTO BAY

PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE

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## GROTTO BAY 30 YEAR AESTHETICAL REPORT AND REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide a short review of Grotto Bay's aesthetical journey after the project began. The original concept for the project, the conditions governing its approval, a reference to current legislation and policies affecting its management and short overview of the comparative coastal property markets.

Approximately 30 years ago, Grotto Bay's original developers were seeking a weekend getaway opportunity in a wilderness environment at a convenient distance from Cape Town. Around this time, conservation groups and the South African National Parks, recognised the importance of preserving the West Coast's Strandveld and its unique wetland habitats. They started assembling land around the Langebaan Lagoon. The original vision was to have a National Park from the Berg River estuary in the North to Bokpunt in the South, to conserve the coastal, marine, aquatic and terrestrial habitats. However, it soon became clear that there were insufficient public resources to acquire the land between Yzerfontein and Bokpunt. This provided the opportunity for the private sector to acquire the farms along this strip of the coastline to form Private Nature Reserves, contributing to the overall conservation vision.

A thorough, "design with nature" site analysis done at Grotto Bay resulted in the sensitively laid out housing clusters behind the fore dunes along the intersection of the coastal dune veld and Strandveld behind. A similar "design with nature" approach resulted in the housing units' "finger" layout with the coastal Strandveld fingers in between the double banked housing clusters. Observations from the environmental design and urban planners was that houses on the Western ends of the clusters would have the best sea views but all the plots were angled towards the coast so that everyone should get some sea views.

Discussions on the architectural and landscape guidelines were that the buildings would not be visible from the shore line, but in the landscape. The charcoal roofs and sand or white colour walls would result in a harmonious fusion between the built-up and the natural environment. The project was approved by the Provincial authorities in 1993.

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Key aspects of the approval included zoning of the plots containing the houses to Resort Zone 2 to which permitted freehold title, with the remainder of the farm zoned to Open Space 3 (Private Nature Reserve). 220 units were permitted. An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) had to be prepared, access had to be provided to the public and there had to be acknowledgement that the property could one day be acquired for the West Coast National Park.

An important condition of the approval was the requirement for a Design Manual to guide the design of the original houses and subsequent alterations and extensions. It was intended to promote a typical West Coast character, using an interpretation of the vernacular fisherman's cottage and manifesting an environmentally conscious attitude to the development. Key aims of the Design Manual were to manage colour of roofs and materials, avoid "overbuilding" by minimising the footprint and height of the buildings, and generally ensure that the buildings and their occupation had as little visual and physical impact on the natural environment as possible.

At the SGM the concern of homeowner's was the impact of the current deviations and departures from our Design Manual on our estate and their properties. An overview of the asking prices of properties in similar coastal resorts and settlements along the West and Southern Cape Coasts, revealed that Jakkalsfontein was the second-best performer after Romansbaai Beach & Fynbos Estate in Gansbaai. As a general rule, it could be expected that properties should command higher prices the closer they are to Cape Town but yet Jakkalsfontein's asking prices were higher than Grotto Bay's. A trend was apparent that properties in Nature Reserves with design guidelines had higher values than equivalent nearby properties where any type of building style and materials were permitted. It was clear that higher levels of exclusivity, privacy, and security also contributed to higher property values.

### **BACKGROUND**

Grotto Bay was conceived in the late 1980s by a group of property developers who found the Southern Cape around Kleinmond and Hermanus inaccessible mainly due to high land values. Attention was drawn to the West Coast by The Mykonos project which had commenced in the mid-1980s. However, Saldanha Bay, although extremely attractive at the time, was rapidly industrialising and losing its attractiveness as a holiday destination.

The property developers' focus then turned to the Langebaan Lagoon and the West Coast, closer to Cape Town. Although the land along the West Coast was affordable, moves were already afoot by the SA Nature Foundation to buy up farms to consolidate them into the West Coast National Park. Indeed, initial site visits were made to the farm Abrahamskraal around 1988 with a view to establishing a Coastal Nature Reserve there, but within a couple

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of months this property was acquired by the SA Nature Foundation for inclusion in the future park. The need to conserve the coastal, marine, aquatic, and terrestrial habitats wilderness landscape and the core sense of place around Saldanha Bay and the Langebaan Lagoon had already been identified by a wide range of powerful conservation organisations inside and outside of government. This concern extended to wanting to conserve the West Coast Strandveld from Langebaan to Bokpunt, see Figure 2.1. There was particular concern about the coastal strip which was heavily invaded by Port Jackson and Rooikrans alien vegetation. It soon became clear that the SA Nature Foundation did not have the resources to purchase all of the land. The idea of Private Conservation Nature Reserves between Yzerfontein and Bokpunt arose with Jakkalsfontein being the first, followed shortly afterwards by Grotto Bay and Tygerfontein. Thus, around 1989, options to purchase were acquired for Grotto Bay. (CNDV Africa (Pty) Ltd)

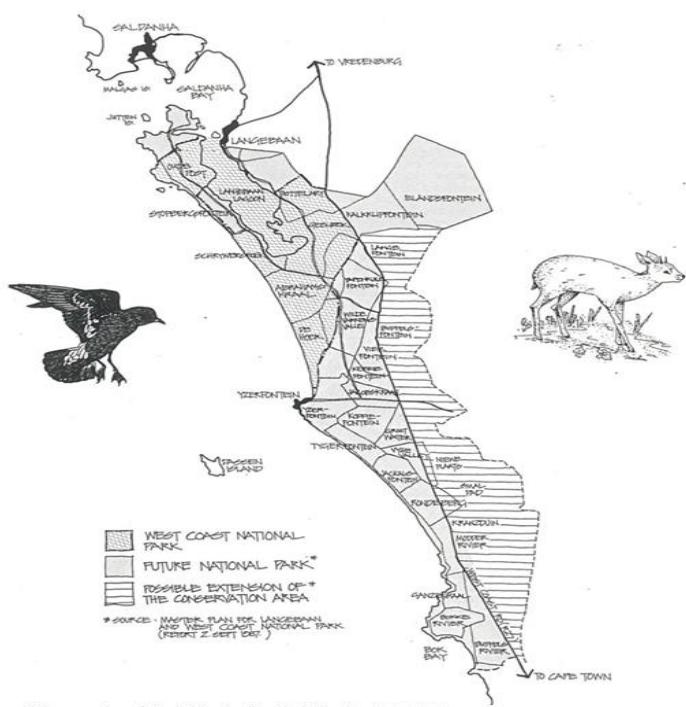


Figure 2.1 The original vision for the West Coast (ref: DCA, 1989)

### ORIGINAL APPROVAL

The original approval and the conditions therein remain in force. It is important to reflect on these to ensure that there is still compliance. The approval process was not an easy process as The National Parks Board, The Wildlife Society of SA and the other organisations opposed and reasoned that proposals for development in environmentally sensitive areas do not start with the selection of a site and rightly so. To get the approval, professional consultants from various universities and associations were consulted over the period from 1989 to 1993. (Archaeological investigations, Botanical and Geological studies, Engineering and district planners, development and

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environmental planners) These reports were a condition of preapproval by the director general and handed in with the application for rezoning of Modderivier No. 721 (some of these original documents were found at the Malmesbury archives and the others in the Grotto Bay archives).

In 1991 the Executive Council for Land Development and Co-ordination approved the application subject to certain conditions. The original agreement was signed and approval received in 1993. The agreement and letter of approval also refers to the need to comply with the document "Guidelines: Langebaan to Bokpunt". This document was prepared to regulate development on all of the coastal farms between these two points, including Grotto Bay.

### GUIDELINES: LANGEBAAN TO BOKPUNT

- Land use and human activity should be aimed purely at nature-oriented conservation, education and recreation – no “artificial attractions” (squash court, tennis courts and pool debated)
- Facilities provided should be reconcilable with conservation
- Supports private participation in nature conservation on this section of the coast
- Class I IEM Process as proposed by Council for the Environment required (precursor to EIAs – this was completed for Jakkalsfontein – NB for response to DEAD&P letter)
- All development should be purely resort oriented and should function independently without any costs to the broader community
- Every farm has its own unique characteristics and a “McHargian” design process should be followed to protect these
- The long term vision is for all of these farms to be managed by a single conservation agency and ultimately to become part of WCNP.
- An environmental analysis should be completed to identify the following to be excluded from development; frontal dunes, windblown sand pans, vleis and watercourses sensitive biotic habitats
- Development should be located on previously disturbed areas where possible as indicated by an ecologist
- A year round plant growth study should be conducted
- An archaeological study should be conducted and buffer zones around middens etc identified if need be
- Initial excavations should be supervised by a botanist and an archaeologist
- Rehabilitation should start as soon as possible and form part of the management plan whose costs should be borne by the developer
- All proposed access roads should be walked by a botanist before construction
- No power or telephone lines should be visible overhead
- Water run-off from roofs should be returned to the ground
- All vehicle and pedestrian traffic routes should be suitably surfaced

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- Physical development should fit in with the site and the typical historic West Coast settlement pattern of small hamlet or village clusters. Clusters should not have more than 20 units. Any buildings should not be visible from the beach
- The principle of day visitors is acceptable but norms will have to be developed in due course
- Income from day visitors and levies from owners should fund further rehabilitation work
- Education and research programs are considered essential

## THE ORIGINAL IDEA AND DESIGN CONCEPT

Derek Chittenden the designer of our Design Manual, was involved from the beginning with the developers in 1988 with rezoning of plots and clusters as well as designing the Design Manual for Jakkelsfontein.

A few years later when the developers were ready for Grotto Bay's Design Manual, he was asked to assist after VKE Engineers had done their assessment and proposal on rezoning and processes, where the green belt fingers instead of a township scheme was born. The constraints were more loose than the adjacent Jakkalsfontein where the developers insisted on the bent, green roofs and white walls for all homes, almost designing each home themselves. The focus was on the GUIDELINES: LANGEBAAN TO BOKPUNT which includes Grotto Bay, was Cape West Coast Vernacular Architecture.

Karien Collins-Ondendal met with Mr Chittenden and told him some members insisted that Cape West Coast Vernacular does not exist to which his reply was, *"What a load of rubbish, West Coast Vernacular is described in the Design Manual with all its characteristics and dominated architectural fisherman's cottage styles and forms. Trying to change the design manual would be looking for trouble as it forms part of a suite of legally binding documents. It's not a case of changing the Design Manual or relaxing regulations. Applications to amend the conditions of the subdivision of the deed of sale would need to be done and no sound minded council official will entertain that."*

The challenge of Grotto Bay was the design methodology to appropriately insert sufficient dwelling units into this wilderness landscape to make the development viable, (see photos from 1989), without destroying the core sense of place that made it attractive to begin with. It was also essential to provide sufficient amenities (views, comfort) to make it attractive to future residents. These departure points required that the plan layout and 3-dimensional design of the buildings should defer, and be guided by the vertical and horizontal geometries of the land and vegetation on the site as well as responding to changes in micro-climates. To do this a very sincere "design with nature" approach was adopted. It was inspired by:

- Ian McHarg's "Design with Nature" philosophy (McHarg, 1969)

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PLAAT 4 :



PLAAT 1 :

A design with nature approach implies a very rigorous site analysis with the natural systems' opportunities and constraints providing major informants to layout and unit design. This was provided by a detailed environmental analysis that clearly showed the relationship between the underlying, geological and soil profile, micro-climate, and vegetation.

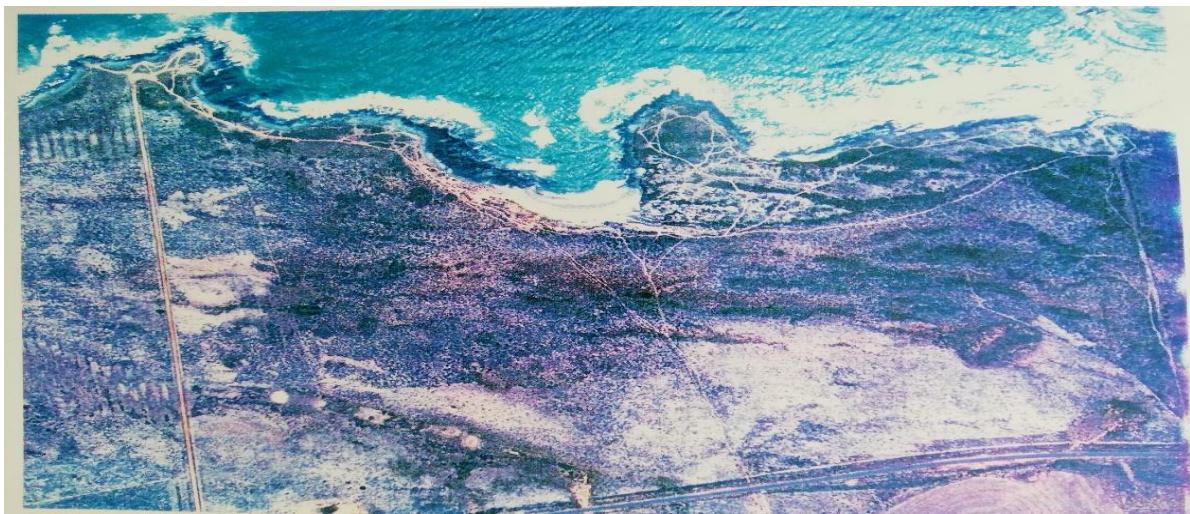


Photo from the original Archaeological and Botanical reports February 1993 *Van Niekerk, Kleyn & Edwards*

This formed the starting point for deciding on the best location for the future housing clusters. Architectural and landscape guidelines was that the buildings would not be visible from the shore line but in the landscape, the charcoal and green roofs and sand and white colour walls would result in a harmonious fusion between the built-up and the natural environment.

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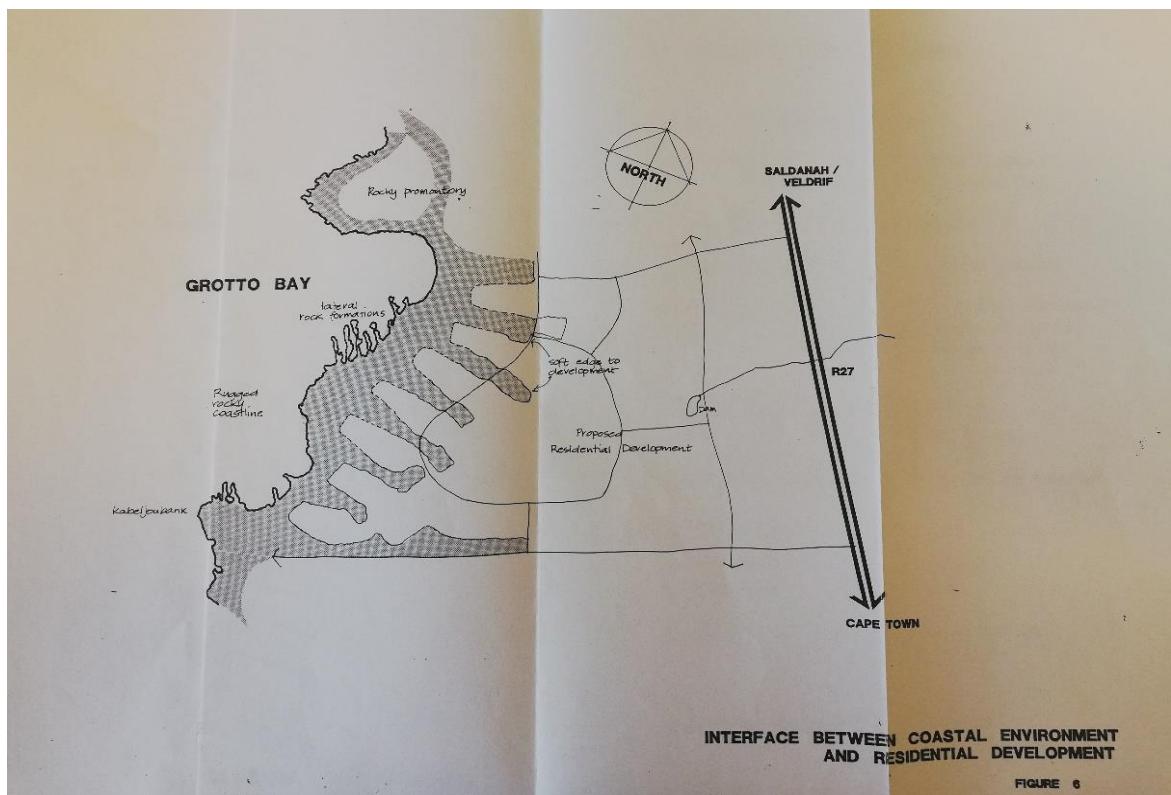
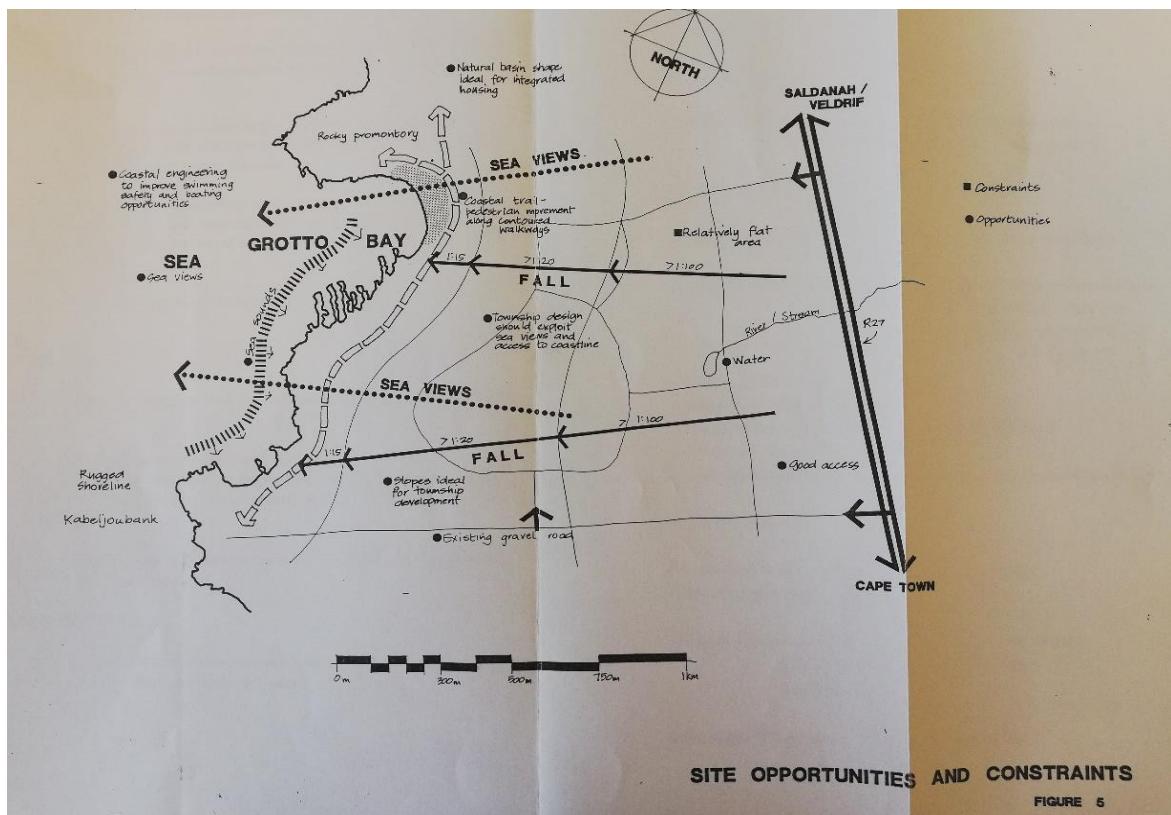
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## GOVERNMENT POLICY REVIEW

There are several acts, policies and guidelines that impact on Grotto Bay.

<http://www.swartland.org.za/pages/english/home.php> here you will find them all.

**WEST COAST DISTRICT SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK, 2014** The West Coast District Spatial Development Framework (DSDF), sets out the vision of the West Coast District as follows: To Promote Sustainable Development, prioritise development in highest growth potential areas, encourage and facilitate development along the key corridors within the West Coast District.

**OUTCOME OF DESIGN MANUAL** - The DM was intended to ensure that, notwithstanding the very low carrying capacity of the Coastal Strandveld with its low average height and flat coastal terrain and, therefore, buildings will be visible, they should harmoniously blend into the landscape. This concern turned out to be even more critical than originally contemplated due to the successful alien vegetation eradication. This lowered the average height of the vegetation reducing its visual carrying capacity. The key component in achieving this harmonious relationship is the roof pitches that align with the dunes and wind scoured vegetation's natural slopes. The prevailing south-east wind determines these slopes. It is why the angles of the dunes coincide with the angles of the vegetation.

Wherever, this relationship is ignored by incorrect roof pitches, colours and protruding oversized dormer windows, a disjointed, jarring effect results. Environmental psychologists point out that even if an observer does not explicitly note this disharmony they will feel a subconscious discomfort. The most obvious challenges, are buildings ignoring the "design with nature" ethos which is a key component in the Coastal Nature Reserve ethos of Grotto Bay.

"The most obvious challenge relates to the oversized dormer windows which ignore the "design with nature" ethos of the roof planes and, instead, insert a conventional cottage attic window character into the roofs. This is particularly jarring when viewed from outside of the clusters. This is clearly driven by a need for more space. While all efforts should be taken to avoid the overbuilt holiday house syndrome" CNDV Africa JAKKALSFONTEIN NATURE RESERVE (19.2681) 25

YEAR REVIEW 11 November 2019

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## Grotto Bay Design Manual

A.3.2 External wall Colours White or colours to match "Plascon Paints" VEL 82, VEL 2 or similar exact colour to be specified on drawings and approved by the GBHOA.

A.3.3 Roofs Double pitched. Maximum 45° pitch Minimum 30° pitch Verandas and "affdakkie" Minimum 5° Mono-pitched only on outbuildings

A.3.4 Roof ends Simple vernacular style gables, Hipped ends,

A.3.5 Roof finishes Natural thatch Natural slate, Cement tile equal to "Coverland Elite" Galvanised corrugated steel or fibre-cement sheeting with standard profile, 17-18mm height

A.3.6 Roof colours Green, charcoal or grey. Exact colour to be specified on drawings. On each erf all roof colours are to match

Roof pitches between 30' and 45' refer to the dune and vegetation wind scour lines where oversized dormers break roof ridge lines



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### HOW ARE WE DOING IN THE PROPERTY MARKET

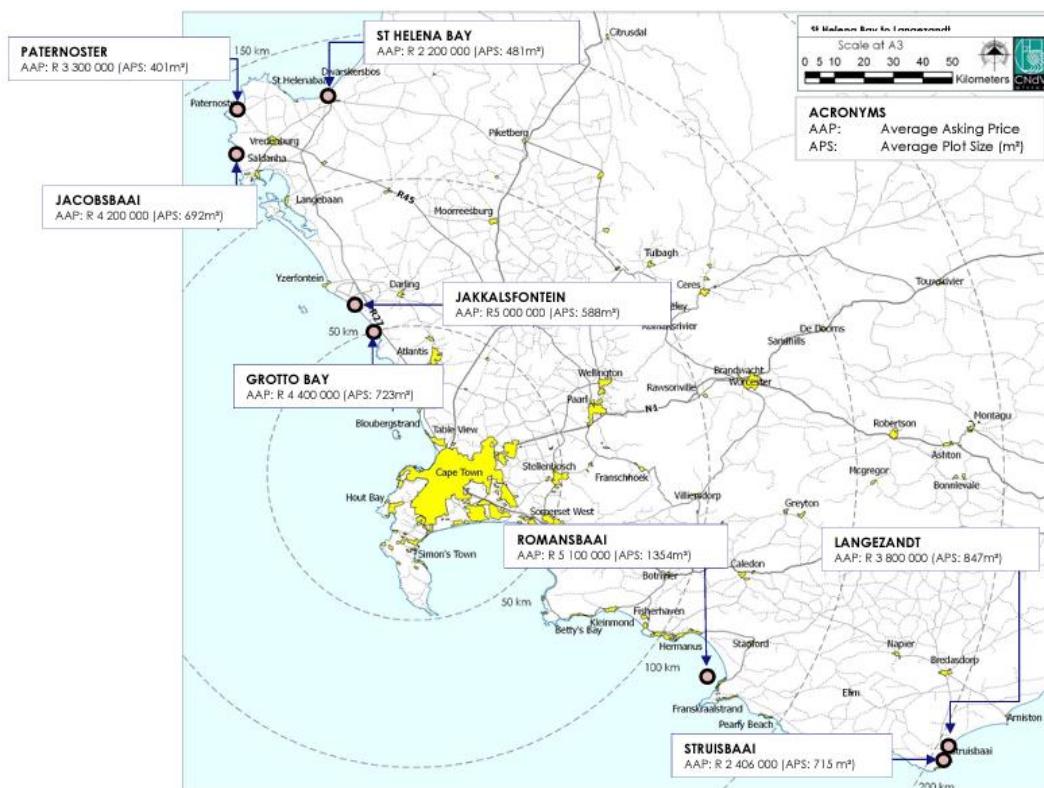


Figure 6.1 Property Price Scan: Selected Western Cape Coastal Settlements

CnDv Africa (Pty) Ltd

JAKKALSFONTEIN NATURE RESERVE (19.2681)

25 YEAR REVIEW

11 November 2019

Properties and nature reserves whose values have coped best comprise a mixture of:

- \*very strong Unique Selling Propositions ;
- \*excellent management; and,
- \*closer proximity to fast growing metros although not always

The location of a home, whether outside of urban or suburban areas, and within the 50km. 100kms or 150kms and further 'magic circles' of large urban or metropolitan areas, has a major bearing on how it is used and, therefore, as a general rule, also on its property values "Bid Rent Theory Model" (Alonso, 1964) is a model that states that property prices increase closer to the CBD, sometimes exponentially, and decline with properties that are located further away. However, local factors can cause values to deviate from this model, for example, an exceptional scenic setting, well-managed Nature Reserve (estate), higher than usual levels of security.

Jakkalsfontein has the highest average property prices. Its prices are almost R1 million higher than Grotto Bay, also on the coast, but approximately 15 kms closer to Cape Town

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There is often a debate as to whether strictly applied architectural guidelines enhance or undermine an estate's property values. It is interesting to note that Jakkalsfontein and Jacobsbaai, which have some of the strictest guidelines of the coastal settlements reviewed, have higher property values than other nearby coastal settlements who allow almost anything and everything with little design control.

property24 Property Type ▾ Min Price ▾ Max Price ▾ Beds ▾ More Filters + Save Search Search

**R 7 700 000**  
3.5 Bedroom House  
**Jakkalsfontein**  
63 Sandpiper, Jakkalsfontein Private Nature Reserve  
Jakkalsfontein Private Nature Reserve is probably the best kept secret on the West ...  
🛏 3.5 🚧 2 🚙 3 ⚡ 569 m<sup>2</sup>

**R 6 500 000**  
4 Bedroom House  
**Jakkalsfontein**  
125 Stonechat  
The remarkable setting of an unspoilt West Coast beach is very much a defining feature ...  
🛏 4 🚧 4 🚙 2 ⚡ 623 m<sup>2</sup>

**R 7 500 000**  
3 Bedroom House  
**Jakkalsfontein**  
This beachfront property in an exquisite setting has sweeping views of the sea, Table Mountain and Dassen Eiland and offers a unique ...

**HOME LOANS**

Start your home finance journey today

Get Pre-Approved

**Jakkalsfontein Trends**

Average Property Price

More Trends and Statistics

Add Surrounding Suburbs

Jakkalsfontein (8)

**Jakkalsfontein Property for Sale**

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## GROTTO BAY PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE

### Annual Sale and Listing Trends

### Properties for Sale in Jakkalsfontein

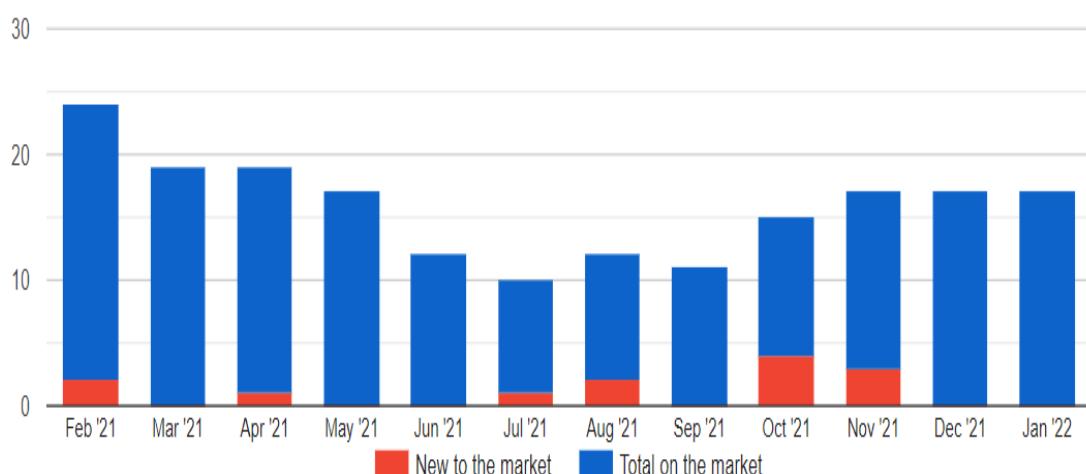
### Sold Prices in Jakkalsfontein

This graph shows the annual number of Sales registered in the deeds office, as well as the average selling price and asking price of all Property24 listings for the same time period.



### Monthly Properties For Sale

This graph shows the monthly number of properties and properties new to the market in Jakkalsfontein, as listed for sale on Property24.com.



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# GROTTO BAY

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R 3 450 000

Vacant Land



Grotto Bay

4 Sand Plover Crescent

Imagine sundowners on the wooden deck overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, late night swims ...

650 m<sup>2</sup>

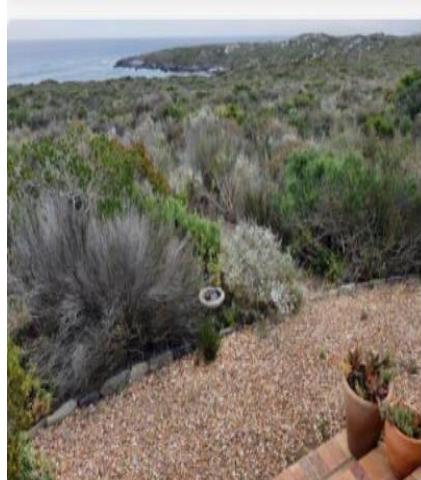


Vacant land / plot for sale in Grotto Bay - Malmesbury

Home Loans

Start your home finance journey today

Get Pre-Approved



R 4 995 000

2 Bedroom House



Grotto Bay

100 Pelican Close

Price reduced! This beachfront beauty in Grotto Bay Includes All Furniture! Just bring ...

2 2 897 m<sup>2</sup>



Grotto Bay Trends

Average Property Price



Listed by 2 Estate Agencies



R 7 250 000

4 Bedroom House



Grotto Bay

5 Sand Plover Crescent

Perfectly located within the Grotto Bay private coastal estate, this unique contemporary ...



More Trends and Statistics

Add Surrounding Suburbs

Grotto Bay (12)

Grotto Bay Property for Sale

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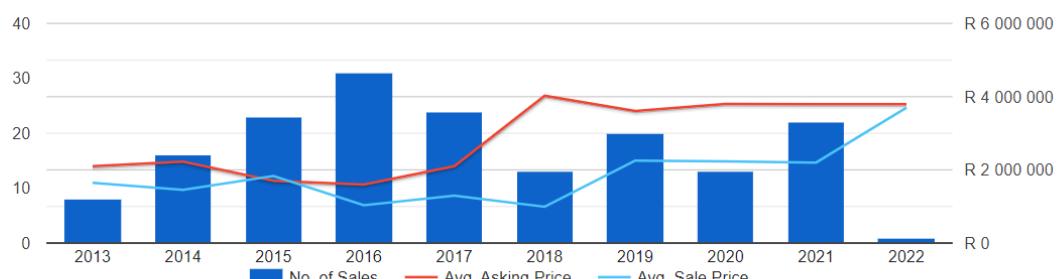
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## Annual Sale and Listing Trends

### Properties for Sale in Grotto Bay

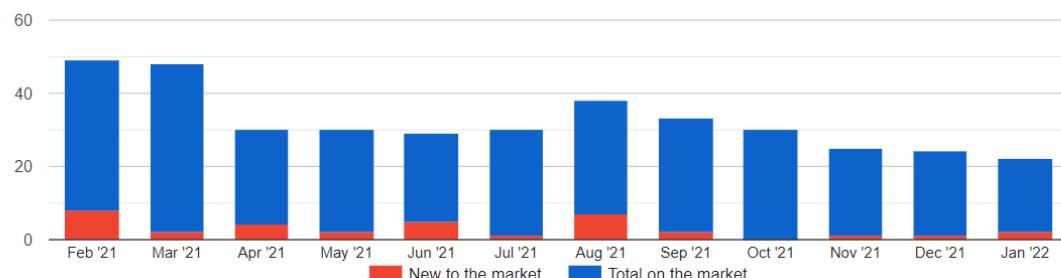
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This graph shows the annual number of Sales registered in the deeds office, as well as the average selling price and asking price of all Property24 listings for the same time period.



## Monthly Properties For Sale

This graph shows the monthly number of properties and properties new to the market in Grotto Bay, as listed for sale on Property24.com.



"Grotto Bay Nature Reserve has a number of similarities to Jakkalsfontein. It is located on a coastal farm with a large area also operating as a Private Nature Reserve promoting biodiversity conservation. It is governed by the same Langebaan to Bokpunt guidelines as Jakkalsfontein. One would expect them to be higher given the "Bid Rent Curve" property pricing model. This maybe the result of the suburban appearance of Grotto Bay. It has an unconventional layout comprising a number of "fingers" containing double sided rows of plots with narrow areas of coastal Strandveld in between. These "fingers" are set out perpendicularly to the coastline resulting in relatively few units enjoying prime sea frontage. Although the Nature Reserve began with strict guidelines on a West Coast "langhuis" theme these have been relaxed in recent years to the extent that almost any type of building material and house design appears permissible. Interestingly, although Grotto Bay is closer to Cape Town than Jakkalsfontein and has little control on its design guidelines, property prices appear to be 10 to 20% lower than those of Jakkalsfontein". CNDV Africa JAKKALSFONTEIN NATURE RESERVE (19.2681) 25 YEAR REVIEW 11 November 2019

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## **CONCLUSION**

It is clear that the standard Bid Rent Curve property pricing model, which states that all things being equal, properties further from a major urban centre will be of a lower value can be contradicted.

### How do you make this happen?:

- Achieving an attractive, cohesive building and natural environment appearance. It is clear that this can only be achieved through strictly implementing a design manual
- Providing good security;

### Foot Note:

Since researching and writing this report for the interest of the members, Karien Collins-Ondendal has spent many more hours researching and digging for more information to come to a more conclusive report to answer the questions asked at the SGM.

When the GBHOA archives were moved from Browmann to Pam Golding she took the opportunity to search for the very first documents from 1989 to 1993. She also spent an entire day in the “stadsaal” room at Swartland Municipality’s archives to find the original development documents. Not an easy task, Karien had to go through strict protocols to get access. It was a 2-month application process.

In 2018 Jakkelsfontein Private Nature Reserve had a 25-year review done by CNDV Africa. She made contact with the managing member of CNDV, who is also the founder of the company in 1988 specialising in commerce, architecture, urban design and planning. Simon Nicks came to visit her and the Estate Manager where they had an exceptional and interesting afternoon. He was very pleased with the way the Grotto Bay has developed. Karien is still in contact via email with both Simon Nicks and Derek Chittenden who was part of the development process since 1989 and designed our Design Manual.

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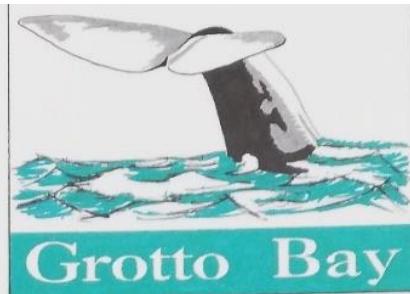
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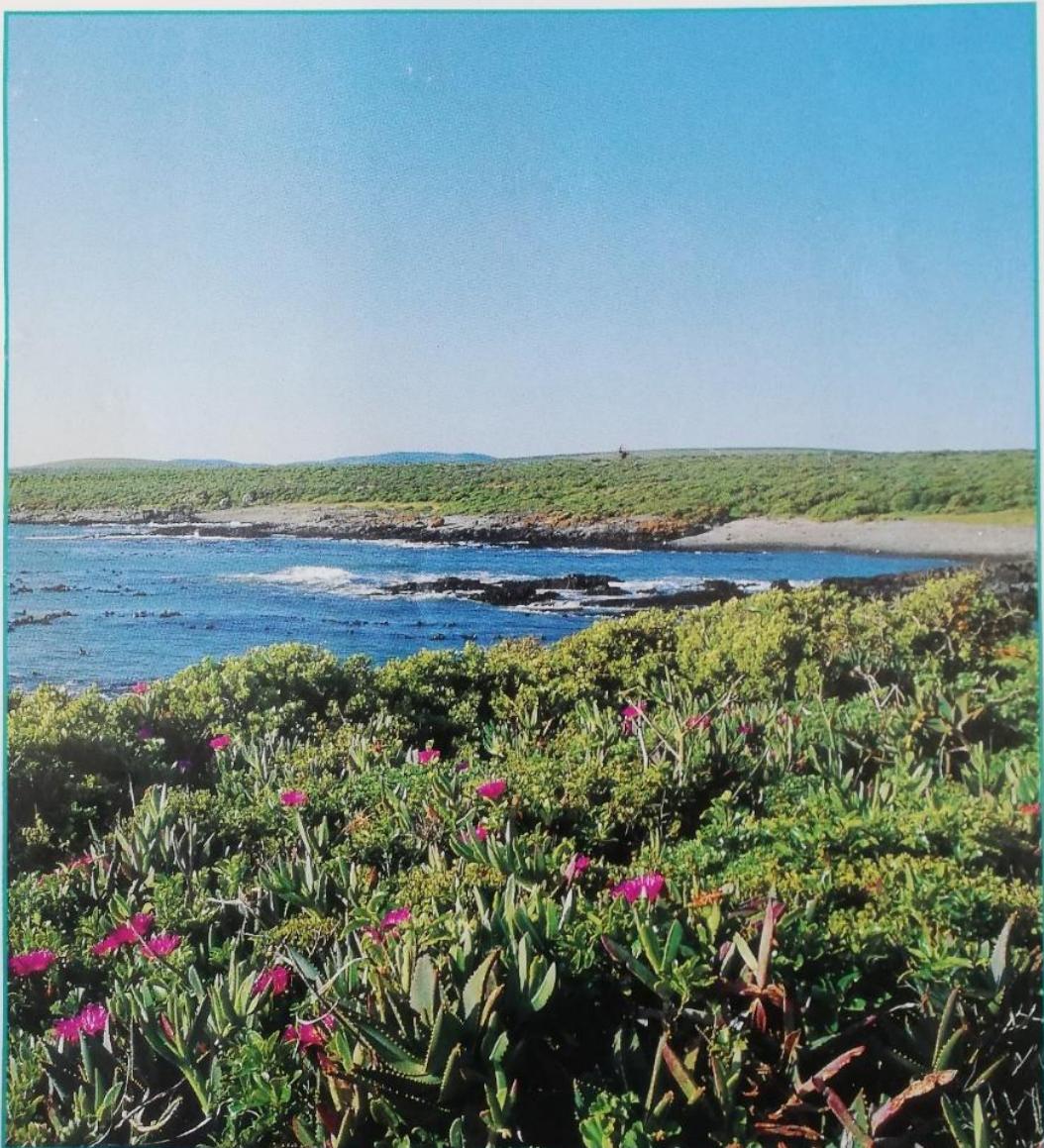


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*Where the whales play*



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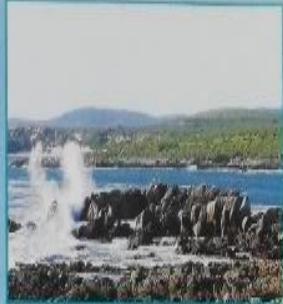


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30 minutes easy drive from Cape Town  
Sea views from every plot  
Views of Table Mountain  
Freehold Title plots from 750 m<sup>2</sup>  
Security and safety  
Unspoilt beaches and safe swimming  
Prime strandveld vegetation  
Abundant Flora and Fauna  
Exterior design control but home layouts unrestricted  
Hiking trails, crayfishing and fishing  
Rates at municipal levels  
Closest seafront plots to Cape Town  
Superb investment opportunity



*If your dream has been to move closer to the sea...*

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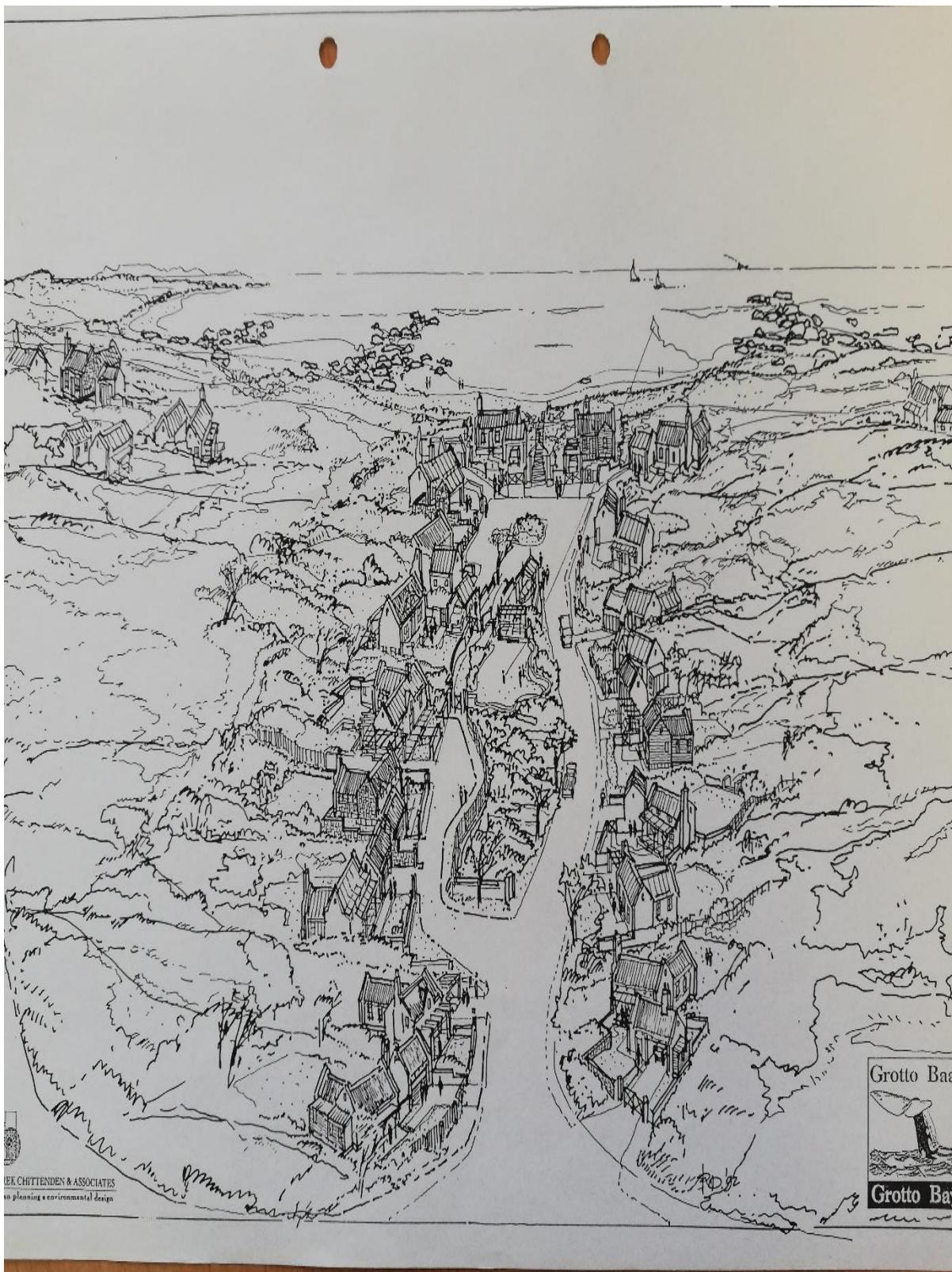
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BLADSY 4

BYLAE BY NASIONALE KOERANTE

31 AUGUSTUS 1994

# GROTTOBAAI

**BESIGTIG DAAGLIKS 11-5**

**'N VEILIGE LEEFWYSE TEEN 'N BEKOSTIGBARE PRYS**

**SLEGS 30 MINUTE VAN KAAPSTAD**

**ERWE VANAF R60,000**

**MAKLIKE FINANSIERING**

**ALLE PAAIE  
EN FASILITETE  
REEDS VOLTOOI**



- Jou eie private dorp (geen heffings – lae erfbelasting) met afgesonderde strande.
- Elke erf met see-uitsig. ■ Woon op die Strand, werk in die Stad. ■ Erwe ongeveer 750 vkm.
- Grotto bay is 'n rustige natuurreservaat omring deur private plase. ■ Erf-en-plan beskikbaar.
- Los argitektoniese riglyne. ■ 'n Residensiële en vakansietuiste in een.
- Moenie hierdie geleentheid misloop nie! Belê in 'n veilige tuiste aan die kus – teen helfte die prys.

*U veilige leefwyse is ons prioriteit by Grotto bay.*

Tel: Marius Keuler by (024) 852-3842 of Henry Pitman by (021) 22-2424.



KAAP EN GOEIE HOOP BANK

TRANSKAAP EIENDOMME

PROPCOR  
PROPERTY CORPORATION  
OF SOUTH AFRICA LIMITED

Directors:

M Punt (Chairman), J van Dyk, K Collins-Ondental, R Bailey, A Marais, T Gouws & J Miller  
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# GROTTO BAY

PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE



After 30 Years



Directors:

M Punt (Chairman), J van Dyk, K Collins-Odendaal, R Bailey, A Marais, T Gouws & J Miller  
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# GROTTO BAY

PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE

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