



Our History

Welcome to the history of Stratford Gardens Estate.

Nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of what was once sprawling farmland, Stratford Gardens Estate stands as a testament to the rich tapestry of history and evolution. From its humble beginnings in 1997, when this area was predominantly agricultural, to its transformation into a vibrant community adorned with residential enclaves, commercial centers, and essential amenities, the estate has witnessed a remarkable journey of growth and development. Throughout its history, Stratford Gardens has been a witness to the ebb and flow of life, with each chapter marked by the footsteps of those who have called it home.

As we delve into the intricacies of its past, we embark on a journey that not only unveils the milestones of its evolution but also celebrates the enduring spirit of community and resilience that defines the essence of Stratford Gardens Estate.

But, before we begin on the trip down memory lane, we would like to take a moment to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Richard Spencer, for his dedication and hard work in compiling such a comprehensive history of Stratford Gardens Estate. Your meticulous attention to detail and thorough research have provided invaluable insights into the rich heritage of our community. Your efforts have not only preserved the past but have also helped us understand and appreciate the journey that has led us to where we are today. Your commitment to documenting our shared history is truly commendable and will undoubtedly serve as a lasting legacy for generations to come. Thank you for your time, passion, and expertise in bringing this project to fruition.

Warm Regards,
The Stratford Gardens Home Owners' Association



Our History

In 1997, a consortium of investors headed by the 5th Avenue Property Group "5th Ave", purchased Portion 1 and the remainder of the farm Plot 37 Broadacres A.H. from Barry Nel of Coalnet. Portion 2 of the farm was later purchased by Focse Property Developments and is now known as Umthunzi Gardens, Stratford Gardens' eastern neighbour.

Portion 34 Zevenfontein 407 J.R., alongside Plot 37 on the southern side, was owned by the late Nicholas Langley, who was also a property developer. 5th Avenue and Nic were to consolidate Plot 37 and Plot 34 and jointly develop the land from farmland into residential and commercial office freehold stands. Nic lived in the thatch house outside the entrance of Stratford and sadly passed away before the development of Stratford began. 5th Avenue later purchased Plot 34 from Nic's estate and undertook the development of both properties that is now known as the suburb of Stratford, which includes Stratford Gardens, Stratford Forest and Stratford Way Office Park as well as Valley Road from Cedar Road to the western boundary of Stratford Gardens. Valley Road then curves through Plot 47 Broadacres A.H. to Rosewood Avenue. See Annexure 1 and Annexure 4.

Around 1997, Cedar Road was a narrow, very quiet road through the numerous smallholdings in the suburbs of Kengies, Broadacres and Chartwell to places such as the Lion Park, Lanseria, Hartebeespoort dam and beyond. The road was so quiet that, on occasion, criminals would lay rocks across the road at night to try and force vehicles to stop and rob the occupants. See Schedule 2.

There were plans drawn up in 1982 for an east to west highway from Noodgedacht to Leeukop, known as the K56, to pass in front of Stratford Gardens along part of Cedar Road until Lombardy Road and then veer off behind Fourways Gardens to Leeukop/Sunninghill - this is the reason for the wide road reserve in front of Stratford Gardens where the fir trees are situated. The entrance to Stratford Gardens is from Valley Road with a right turn to the entrance of Stratford, as a result of the minimum distance that an entrance to an estate could be from a Provincial Road. The exit from the K56 was to be where Valley Road (north) is today, with a left hand turn to Rosewood Road and a right turn to Lombardy Road. Those plans were later amended so that Valley Road (north) would continue through Plot 47 Broadacres A.H. to Rosewood Road only, not Lombardy. Valley Road would then have been the only entrance into Broadacres A.H. as Rosewood and Lombardy Avenues would have been closed along K56. See annexure 3.

Parts of the K56 have been built near Sunninghill but it is doubtful whether the section in front of Stratford Gardens is ever going to be built as construction was originally scheduled to start in 1999 and since then, Cedar Road has been widened and now looks like the alternative. The road reserves for the K55 are, however, still in place.

As well as the K56, there was another highway proposed in 1982 known as the AR56 that would have crossed the K56, behind the Woolworths side of the Broadacres shopping centre along Cedar Road to connect Pretoria and Vereeniging.

The smallholdings in the area were mainly grasslands where horses and cattle roamed and the few trees that were there consisted mainly of Fir, Syringa, Wattle and Plain trees, probably planted by previous farmers in the area, mainly as windbreaks. Many of the farms had old passenger railway coaches standing on rails in their fields - some were used for accommodation and others were stripped for their teak wood, leather seats, exotic taps and basins to decorate farmhouses. It is a mystery how anyone managed to transport something the size and weight of a railway coach from a distant train line to a field, as the steel chassis was one piece.

In 1998, Richard Spencer, the Financial Director of 5th Avenue, moved into one of the two remaining dwellings in the suburb of Stratford, which was then situated on Plot 37. He became the project coordinator of the Stratford development as it was convenient for him to hold meetings with the professional team on site before going to the 5th Avenue offices in Rivonia, or in the evening on returning home. The other dwelling was the thatch house outside entrance of Stratford.

In 1997, until the development of Stratford started, Plot 37 was accessed from Lombardy Road and the farm was known as Millwood Estate. The Estate boasted a long driveway boarded by fir trees, past two thatch cottages and a very large swimming pool, through a magnificent rose garden then to the farmhouse. Next to the farmhouse was a tennis court and stables for horses and to the west were cow sheds. See annexure 1 and annexure 4.

In 1998, 5th Avenue assembled a team to undertake the development of Stratford:

- Richard Jones - town and regional planner
- Kevin Smith - land surveyor
- Jon Rosnovanu - Rosnovanu & Associates - consulting civil engineers
- Maans Fereirra - Consolidated Power Engineering - electrical engineers
- Connor Kinsella - AMA Architects for Stratford Gardens
- Mike Stockton - Stockton & Associates - architects for Stratford Forest
- Nick Buck and Mike Simmonds - Probuild Group - builders and developers
- Ben Mosuwe - builder
- John Dovey - Protech - civil engineering contractors

- Farrell Kreeve - 5th Avenue residential sales director
- Mike Clacey and Anton Theron - Tonkin Clacey, conveyancers, and attorneys

In about 2000, while the development team of Stratford were waiting for the town planning, land surveying then rezoning, consolidation and subdivision approval by the municipality, the Needwood Estate, over Cedar Road with its entrance in Lombardy Road, was being relaunched as Cedar Lakes. For those old enough, you may remember the very popular Star Homes Property Exhibitions that lasted two weeks and was annually hosted by the Star newspaper - the exhibition was always well attended. In this year, the venue for the exhibition was held at the re-launch of Cedar Lakes. 5th Avenue took advantage of this and had the land surveyor knock in a few pegs that indicated where the future roads, plots etc of Stratford Gardens would be and a large estate layout chart was displayed in a marquee. Huge advertising boards were erected on Cedar Road outside Stratford Gardens. Protech, the civil engineers, graded a road from a make-shift entrance off Cedar Road and continued with the crescent which was more-or-less where the roads in Stratford Gardens are today.

After leaving the exhibition at Cedar Lakes, loads of cars and people were ushered across Cedar Road into the property of Stratford Gardens where Farrell Kreeve and his sale agents were waiting to show them the property and have purchasers sign a land sale agreement. All the stands in Stratford Gardens were sold out within two weeks! A couple of famous people that have lived in Stratford Gardens include Andre Vos, Springbok rugby captain from 1999 to 2001, and the late Morgan Tsvangarai, leader of the MDC in Zimbabwe.

5th Avenue gave the task of naming the development to Farrell Kreeve, who prior to joining 5th Avenue residential properties had been the headmaster of Rivonia primary school for many years. He suggested the project should be of a Shakespearian theme and named it Stratford Gardens after Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace and home of the world-renowned author William Shakespeare. Farrell also saw it fitting to name the crescent in Stratford Gardens after the late Nicholas Langley and the two streets after Nic's two sons: Adam and Troy. Stratford Forest was developed a bit later but the Shakespearian theme was maintained: Shakespeare Drive after the author, Hamlet, (King) Lear, Othello and (Romeo and) Juliet, all of which were all after plays he wrote. Avon is the name of the river on which the town of Stratford is situated where Shakespear lived and Thine was one of the pronouns Shakespeare used in many of his plays instead of the word "yours". See annexure 6.

Stratford Gardens consists of 87 residential freehold stands of an average size of 1000 square meters each. The internal roads (from the guardhouse), gatehouse, clubhouse, pool, courts, boundary wall and all the communal areas are all owned by the Stratford Residents Association, for which residents pay a monthly levy to the Association to maintain. The development included the construction and installation of all these assets. See Erf 91 on Schedule 4.

The large thatch house outside the Stratford Gardens gatehouse, being Erf 2, was sold to the late Gary Chemaly, founder of two restaurants - Lord Prawn and Montego Bay in Sandton Square. He then chose to be excluded from Stratford Gardens and his entrance moved to Valley Road. See Erf 2 on annexure 4.

On annexure 4, as part of the town planning procedure, the property description of the original portion 1 and the remainder of Plot 37 Broadacres A.H were amended to become Portion 305 and 304 Zevenfontein 407 J.R. and consolidated with portion 34 Zevenfontein 407 J.R. to become the suburb of Stratford. Stratford was then subdivided and rezoned accordingly. See land use table on annexure 5.

Each property was connected to electricity, municipal water, municipal sewer system, storm water and road access - "services". These services then had to be either brought into Stratford Gardens from the nearest external bulk connection, which was on Cedar Road (electricity, water, telephone and fibre conduiting pipes and road access) or taken from Stratford Gardens to the nearest connection which was about two kms away in the Dainfern Estate (sewer and stormwater). These services are all engineered into Erf 59 or in servitudes registered on various properties. Each homeowner was then responsible for connecting these services from their property boundary to their home. See Erf 59 on annexure 5.

Once all the Serviced stands were sold, the new owner could build the "home of their dreams" within stipulated architectural guidelines, that were closely monitored by Connor Kinsela of AMA Architects. Connor was a resident in Stratford Gardens since the outset and only recently sold his home and moved on. It was also amazing to see how each person's dream home was so different to the next!

In about 2001, the development of Stratford Forest started and a joint venture on Erf 59 Stratford between 5th Avenue and the Probuild Construction Group. 5th Avenue provided the 35 Serviced plots and Probuild built the homes, with the project managed and built by Nick Buck and Mike Simmonds, both directors of Probuild. There were about six different, but similar home designs to choose from as well as all various interior fittings such as tiles, kitchens, bathroom taps etc. Ownership of the roads and common areas in Stratford Forest were all transferred into the Stratford Residents Association for their common use. Stratford Forest was also sold within two weeks of it being launched. See Erf 59 on annexure 4 and the layout of Stratford Forest on Erf 59 on annexure 6.

In about 2002, a Probuild consortium purchased Erf 1, across Valley Road from Stratford Gardens and Forest, and designed, developed, and built seven stand-alone office blocks with basement parking and gradually sold them to individuals through the years. See Erf 1 on annexure 4.

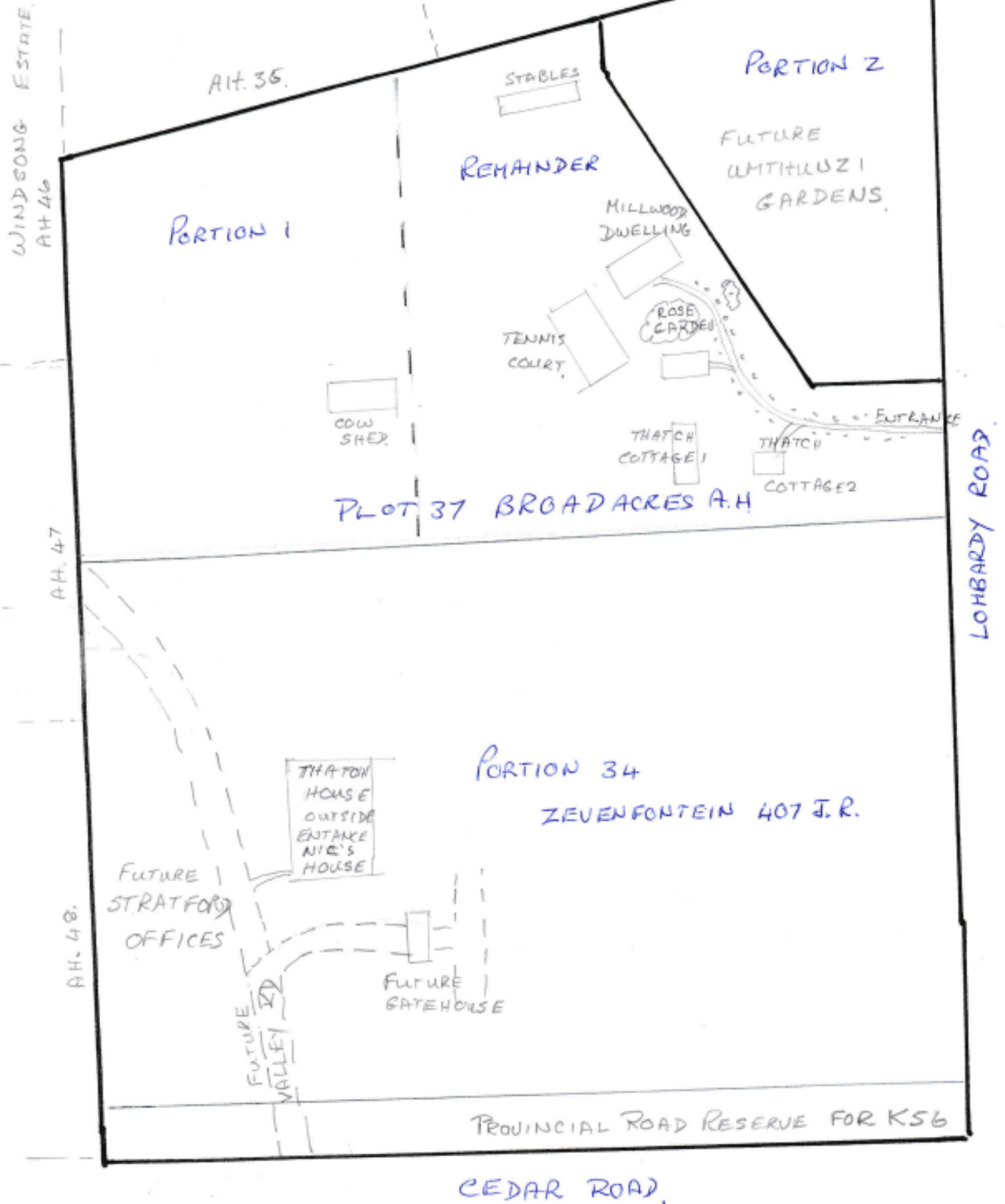
At that time, Chris Harris of Syndev Properties purchased the land across Cedar Road and built the Broadacres Shopping Centre. As part of the development process of Stratford Gardens and the shopping centre, municipal and provincial roads from entrances to new estates and shops had to be upgraded by, and at the cost of, the developers, to a given specification provided by the Provincial Road's Department. The requirements were there to accommodate the extra traffic that was expected to and from these new developments. 5th Avenue and Syndev shared the cost of upgrading the intersection of Valley and Cedar road into a double lane road both ways along Cedar from Rosewood Road to Lombardy Road, together with having the traffic lights installed. Cedar Road then became a mish mash of single and a double lane road until Steyn City development arrived and they upgraded the whole road from their entrance to Witkoppen Road. See annexure 3 for the shared intersection.

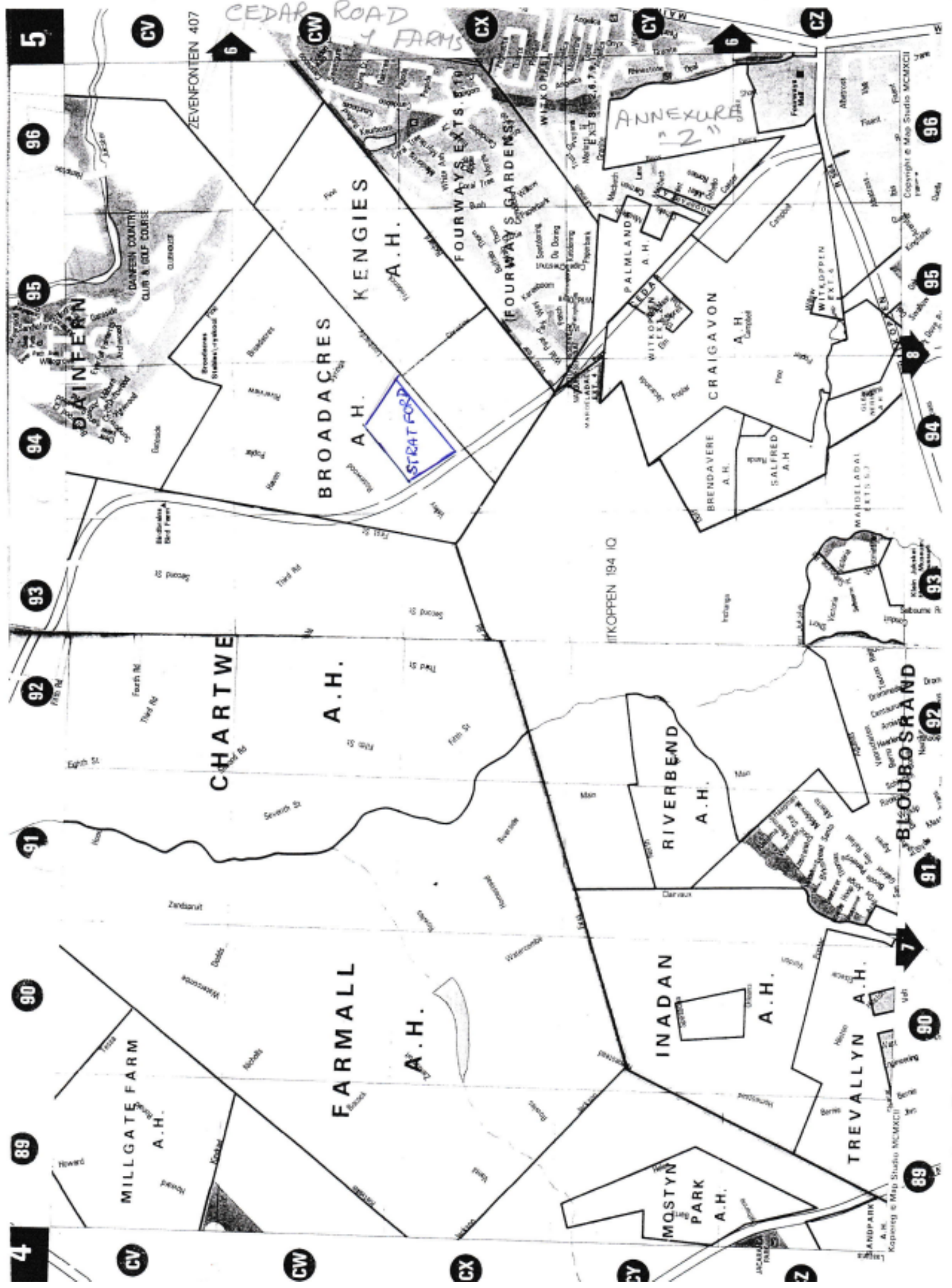
From 1997, this whole area where Stratford Gardens is now situated, was mainly farmland and gradually changed to become housing estates, shopping centres, hospital and offices, until present. Since then, there has been a major change in vegetation, bird and animal life. What used to be grassland now has hundreds of thousands of indigenous trees, shrubs, flowers, lawns planted by the new owners together with feeders and water sources. Added to the collection of grassland birds that were originally here are now the usual township species, and the arrival of bushveld birds like Grey Hornbills, Grey-headed Bush Shrikes, Glossy Starlings, Woodland Kingfishers, Gymnogenet, Gabar Goshawks, Ovambo and Little Sparrow Hawks, to name a few. This shows how nature evolves with the change in food and water sources. Sadly, some of the grassland birds have also moved off to greener pastures. There were also hundreds of small hedgehogs in the fields, Black Backed Jackals were heard calling every night, Leopard and Caracal tracks were seen and Rinkhals cobras were best avoided. More recently, roaming male Vervet Monkeys and Spotted Gennet have been sighted in Stratford Gardens Estate.

As we reflect on the remarkable transformation of Stratford Gardens Estate from farmland to a vibrant community hub, it becomes evident that alongside the development of modern infrastructure and amenities, there has been a profound impact on the local ecosystem. The shift from grassland to a diverse landscape teeming with indigenous flora and fauna showcases the resilience and adaptability of nature in response to human habitation. While the introduction of new species has enriched the biodiversity of the area, it's also important to acknowledge the changes that have led to the migration of certain bird and animal populations. Despite these shifts, the spirit of Stratford Gardens remains rooted in a harmonious coexistence with the natural world. As stewards of this evolving ecosystem, let us continue to nurture and preserve the diverse tapestry of life that defines our cherished estate.

ANNEXURE - "I"

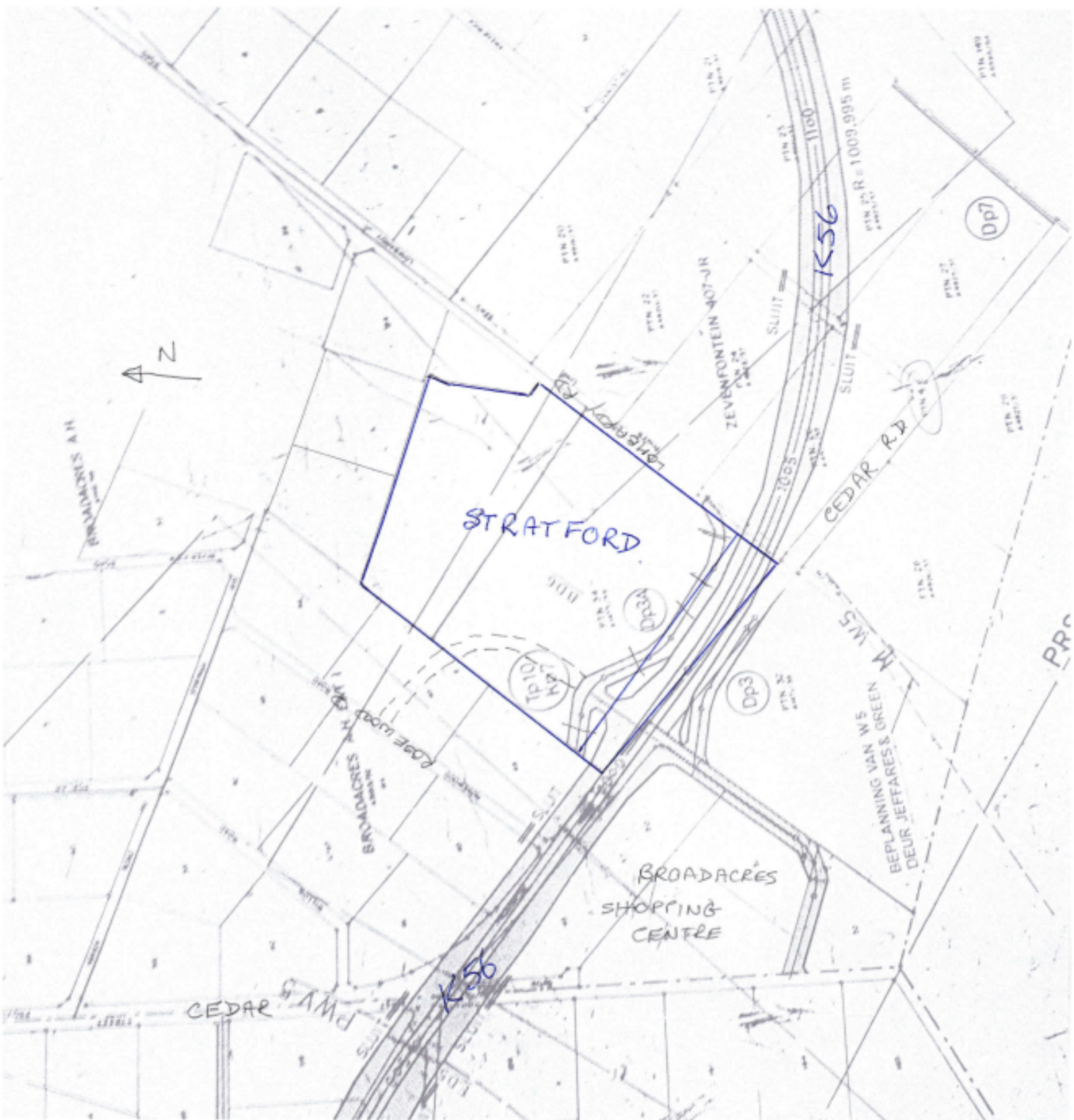
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K56 ROAD PLAN - 1982

ANNEXURE "3"



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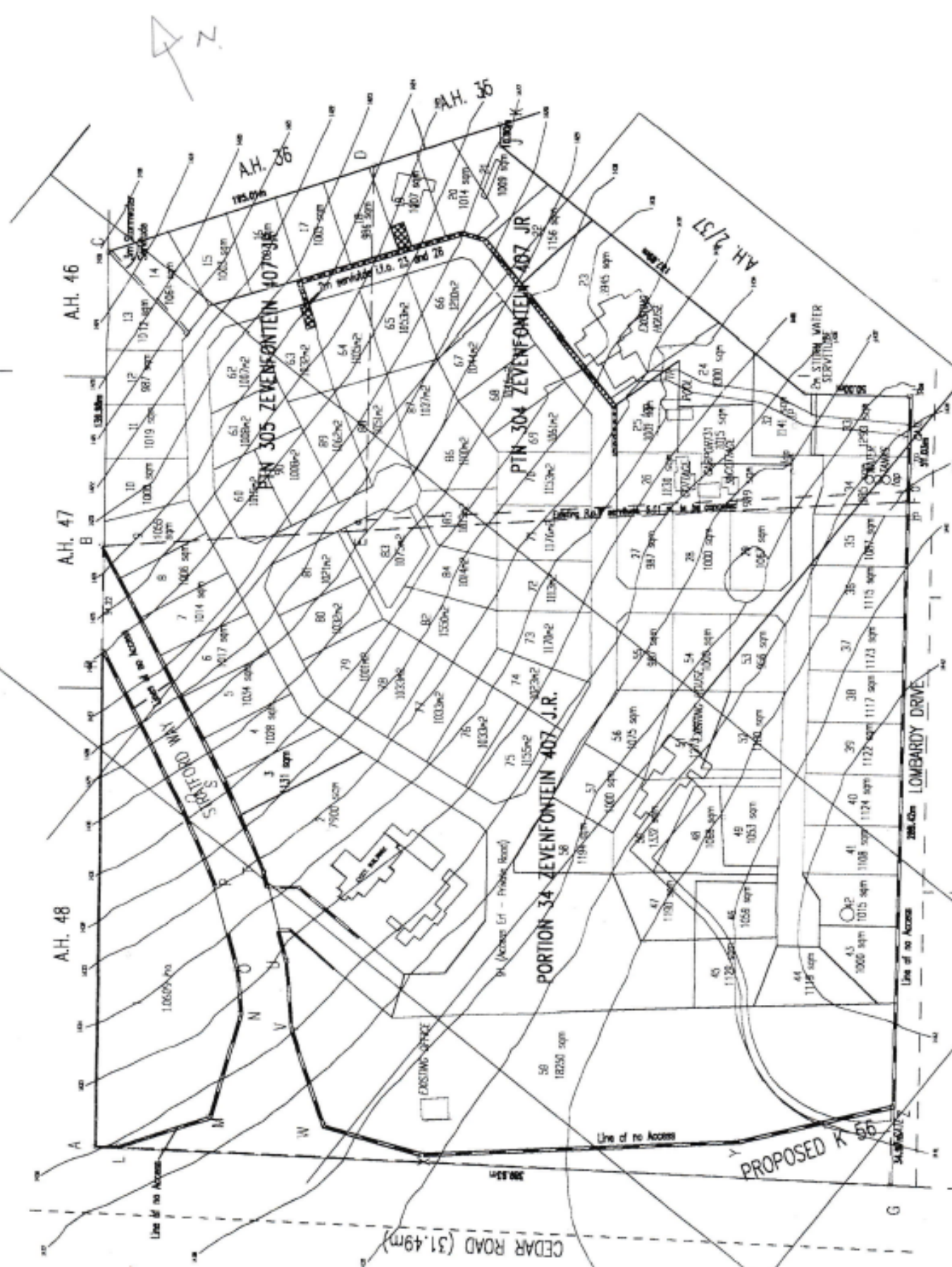
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BUILDING SIZE OF 11

USE ZONE
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STRATFORD ESTATE

ANNEXURE "4"



A PART OF PORTION 34 AND PORTIONS 304 AND 305 PORTIONS OF PORTION 100 OF THE FARM ZELEN PONTÉ, MAP 7, R.



LOCALITY PLAN

ERVEN	STREETS
MINIMUM SIZE OF ERVEN : 656 sq.m.	MINIMUM GRADIENT OF STREETS : 1:30
RULING SIZE OF ERVEN : approx 1000 sq.m.	MAXIMUM GRADIENT OF STREETS : 1:50

LAND USE TABLE

USE ZONE	NUMBER OF EVEN	AREA (sqm)	% OF TOWNSHIP	EMP NUMBERS	REFERENCE
RESIDENTIAL 1	87	95286	60	3-58, 60-90	
SPECIAL -- OFFICES AND RESIDENTIAL	1	18250	12	59	
SPECIAL -- HOTEL	1	8210	6	2	
SPECIAL -- SHOPS, OFFICES AND FILLING STATION	1	10529	7	1	
SPECIAL -- ACCESS	1	24208	15.5	91	
TOTAL	92	156601	100		

NOTES :

1. The township is denoted by the figures KLANDORA and BCOUKHFZYDOWUTSR.
2. The figure ABFG represents Portion 34 of the farm Zeventahtain 407 JR, wide SG A 1437/39.
3. The figure BCDE represents Portion 1 of Holding 37 Broodcorse AH wide SG A 4912/89.
4. The figure DEFHMD represents the Remainder of Holding 37 Broodcorse AH, wide SG A 1533/50.
5. The line cd represents the boundary of a right of way servitude over RE Holding 37 in favour of Portion 1 of Holding 37 (to be cancelled).
6. Contours are at 1 metre intervals and are in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations to Ordinance 15 of 1986.
7. All dimensions and areas are in metres and are approximate, being subject to final survey.
8. The property falls within the jurisdiction of the Peri-Urban Areas Town Planning Scheme, Northern M.C.
9. Erf 91 is to be owned by a Resident's Association.
10. Erven 19, 63 and 91 are subject to servitudes in favour of erven 23 and 26 for private water (borehole) purposes.

AMENDMENTS

1. Amended layout from PlanPractice layout approved in December 1998. Amendment in March 2000
2. SG Erf Numbers - 18/5/2000
3. Property descriptions amended RE 37 Broadacres AH now Ptn 304 Zeevfontein, 1/37 Broadacres AH now Ptn 305 Zeevfontein - 14/6/2000

LOCAL AUTHORITY REFERENCE NUMBER :
15/3/378



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Fax : (317) 862 8309

MARCH 2011

Colours: 10

DETROIT — FBI

SCALE 1:2500

PLAN : 9090/LAY/2

Original floodline certificate by J. Rosnivano, Pr Eng.
Refer to PlanPractice layout : 500/186/1102.

Registered Town and Regional Planner
R.S. JONES, Reg. No. 677

STRATFORD FOREST

ANNEXURE "6"

ERF 59 STRATFORD TOWNSHIP : STREET NAMES AND NUMBERS

"STRATFORD FOREST"

