

RESTORING THE CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE

Urban Landscape Solutions is more than halfway through a 21-month project to restore The Castle of Good Hope's green areas to their former glory in time for this year's inaugural Cape Town Flower Show

The Castle of Good Hope was built by the Dutch East India Company between 1666 and 1679, making it the oldest existing colonial building in South Africa.

The heritage site underwent restoration in the 1980s, but Urban Landscape Solutions (ULS) is more than halfway through a 21-month contract to replace soil and lawns throughout the castle grounds, including the banks of its moat.

ULS started on the project in early 2015 by spraying all lawn areas with a broad spectrum herbicide to kill weeds and any *Cynodon* grasses. After a couple of weeks, when the herbicide had taken effect, ULS removed a 300mm layer of soil from all grassed areas, which are mostly positioned on the castle's bastions and parapet walls.

“**URBAN LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS HAS REMOVED AND REPLENISHED 2,600M³ OF TOPSOIL FROM THE SITE**”

It has been a labour-intensive project and, to date, Urban Landscape Solutions has removed and replenished 2,600m³ of topsoil from the site, using mechanical lifts and shoots. The soil in these areas is being replenished with compost.

In one area of the castle, the Buuren bastion, additional soil had to be removed to a depth of 700mm to allow building contractors access to the castle roof beneath so they could fix leaks.

New Horizon Farm Nursery, a sister company of ULS, is currently growing Buffalo sprigs, which will be planted from March. Alien vegetation and weeds are being removed from the castle's outside walls and, since the start



The Castle of Good Hope is the oldest existing colonial building in South Africa

of 2016, ULS has also been removing grass from around the moat and replanting all castle embankments with Buffalo sods.

After all the sprigs and sods have been planted, maintenance will consist of making sure the lawn areas are well watered and kept weed-free until sufficient grass coverage has been achieved.

The gardens are currently irrigated using turf valves and manual watering. However, most of the castle's irrigation system is not functioning and many sprinklers are missing. To make the system function more efficiently and keep the lawn in a better condition, ULS is investigating the possibility of installing an automatic irrigation system that would use water from the moat.

The project needs to be completed by September, when the castle will host the inaugural Cape Town Flower Show.

Wikus Jordaan, ULS contracts manager, said: “We are excited to be part of the renovations of such a historical icon.”



Removing topsoil has been a labour-intensive project



Alien vegetation and weeds were removed from the castle's outside walls



Moat banks had to be worked on



To start, all lawns were sprayed with a broad spectrum herbicide



There are wonderful views of Cape Town from the castle walls



A lift helped with operations



Embankments will be transplanted with Buffalo sods

ABOUT URBAN LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS

Under the guidance of Eric Cherry, a highly qualified horticulturist with 30 years' experience, Urban Landscape Solutions has succeeded on a range of prestigious challenges, including the fast-tracking of enormous projects such as the Green Point Urban Park and the One&Only hotel and resort on Cape Town waterfront.



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