

# PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF WILDSCHUTSBRAND FARM 1404: CAPE PENINSULA

Prepared for

**Wildschutsbrand Farm cc.**

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Prepared by

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO) of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by Mr Ben Kopfer of Wildschutsbrand Farm cc. to conduct a Phase 1 archaeological assessment of a portion of farm 1404 on the Cape Peninsula (Figure 1). A section of the farm, namely the homestead area, comprising some 17 hectares is to undergo limited development for which rezoning is required. A detailed history of the property has not yet been written. Initial indications are that the property was not granted before 1750, the only farms existing on the Peninsula at that time being Poespaskraal and Imhoffs Gift in the Kommetjie area (University of Waterloo 1987). The architecture of the main house indicates that it was built in or shortly before the mid-19th century.

### **1.1 Terms of reference**

The ACO agreed to visit the development area and undertake the following:

1. Search the development area for sites of both pre-colonial and historical significance and make an initial assessment of any built structures.
2. Any sites found will be plotted on a suitable map of the area.
3. Sites will be assessed for significance in terms of tourist, educational or research potential.
4. A report will be submitted to the client and the National Monuments Council detailing the findings, any potential impacts and mitigation measures that may be required.

### **1.2 Restrictions**

Dense grass cover in the development area obscured ground surface visibility in some areas.

## **2. METHOD**

Mr Ben Kopfer, the owner, provided information about the history of the property, use of existing structures and showed members of the ACO around the site. Areas where the ground surface was visible were examined for artefactual material. Assessment of the built environment including the historic cemetery has been adequately covered by Rennie and Scurr (1998) and is therefore not commented on in detail in this report.

## **3. FINDINGS**

### **3.1 Pre-colonial material**

No open prehistoric sites, middens or rockshelters were observed in the development area. No impacts are expected to occur.

### **3.2 Historical material**

The site is important in terms of both architectural and historical significance. The main buildings and farmyard are largely in-tact and therefore constitute one of the last remaining vernacular *werfs* on the peninsula. In general the findings of the study undertaken by Rennie and Scurr (1998) are supported.



3418 AB & AD Cape Peninsula, Chief Director Surveys and Mapping.

1:50 000

**1** Location of Wildschutsbrand Farm (1404)



### 3.2.1 Main house - 19th century middens

The owner showed members of the ACO ceramic fragments found in the vicinity of the main house. Site inspection confirmed the presence of more fragments dispersed in surface soils in the area (Figure 2). These consisted mostly of English blue and white transfer printed refined earthenwares characteristic of the mid-late 19th century. One fragment of coarse oriental porcelain was observed. This archaeological evidence confirms a 19th century date for occupation of the main house. It is quite possible that archaeological material exists in the form of buried domestic middens near the main house. The area immediately adjacent to the kitchen on the east side is potentially sensitive as this is where people would have disposed of domestic waste.

*Importance: high.* Domestic midden material, particularly that which is associated with the mid-19th century is considered to be important by historical archaeologists involved in research in the social conditions of this period at the cape. Analysis of domestic middens can produce a wealth of information about the day to day lives of ordinary people living in the 19th century.

*Impacts: low-high.* Future building of services, excavations for building foundations and septic tanks in the vicinity of the main house may impact buried archaeological material.

*Mitigation:* Provided that re-landscaping and excavations for services do not take place, mitigation is not required. If excavations for building of services and foundations are to take place at the main house, an archaeologist should be contracted to excavate trial holes in areas that are to be effected. Any artefactual material found will need to be cleaned and curated, then stored in a licensed institution such as a museum or university.

Should the developers wish, archaeological finds may (subject to the approval of the NMC) may be housed on the premises in the form of site displays that will enhance the tourism potential of the development.

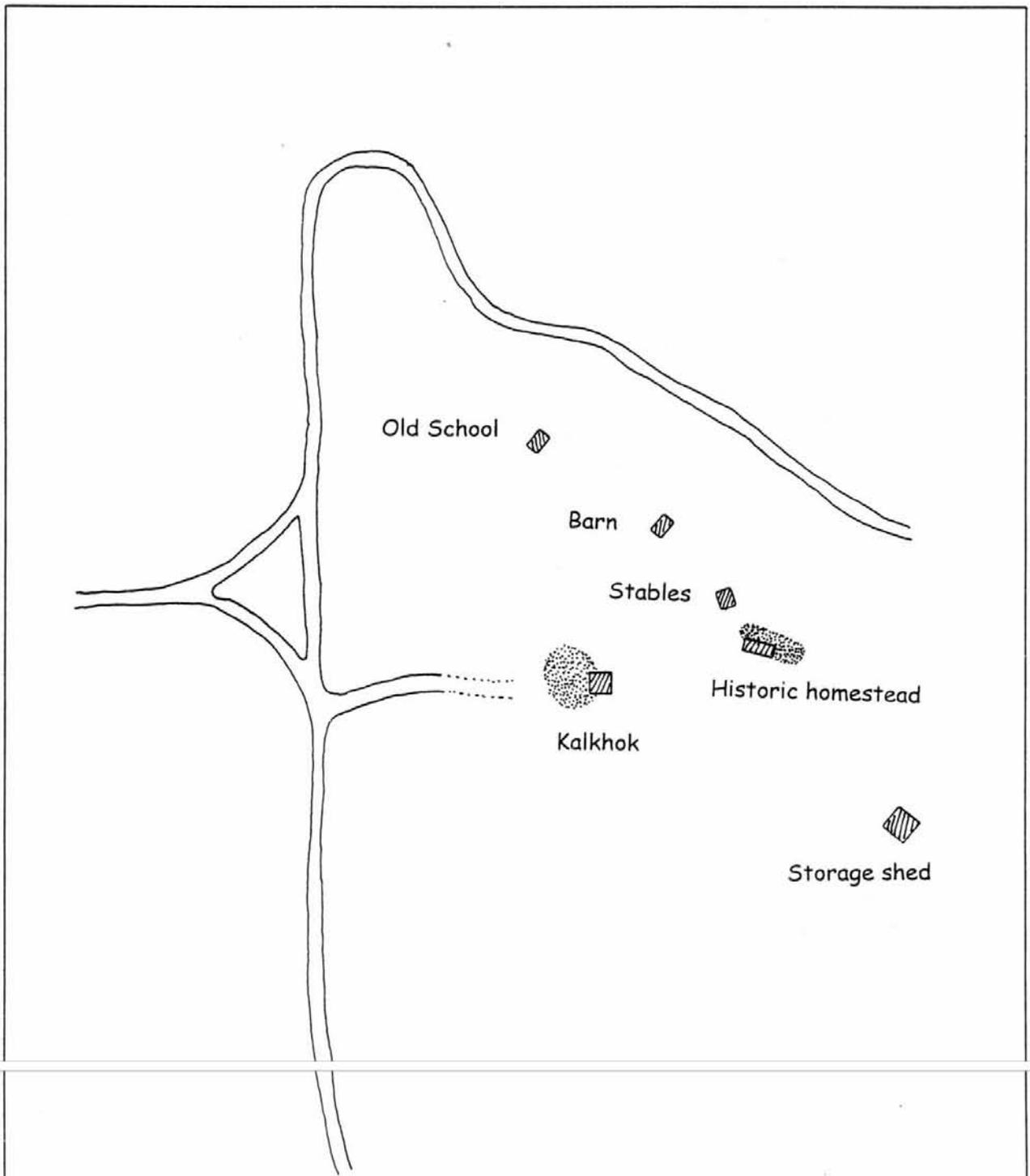
### 3.2.2 Kalkhok precinct

Oral history indicates that the Kalkhok (Figure 2) was once used for the storage of lime. A lime kiln is said to have existed in front of the kalkhok but has since collapse or been demolished. Large quantities of burned marine shell and charcoal fragments in the vicinity confirm that lime burning took place. At present there are no indications of the existence of a lime kiln, although there is a strong probability that the foundations of such a structure are buried below the surface.

*Importance: Unknown.* The site has potential educational and local history importance depending on the state of preservation of any buried remains.

*Impacts: None.* The site is unlikely to be impacted by future development activities.

*Mitigation:* No mitigation is required unless the area is to be subject to landscaping. If landscaping is to take place, trial excavations will have to be conducted to locate the foundations of the lime kiln. The owner may, at his own discretion commission an archaeologist to excavate the site should he wish to expose any historic fabric to enhance visitors' experience of the area.



 Areas where archaeological material has been observed.

**2** Farmyard: areas of potential archaeological significance.



### **3.2.3 Dry stone walls and other features**

Rennie and Scurr have commented on the presence of the stone kraal, *ringmuur* and other field or stock control walls on various parts of the farm. Other features that are likely to exist buried below the surface are old irrigation furrows. It is important that a policy of minimal intervention is followed with respect to these structures. Walls should not be restored or rebuilt without careful prior recording and investigation, preferably carried out by a conservation architect or archaeologist.

## **4. LEGAL ASPECTS**

Archaeological and historical sites and structures are protected by the National Monuments Act of 1969 (as amended). It is an offense to damage or disturb such sites without a permit from the National Monuments Council. Permits are normally issued to professional archaeologists only.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The homestead area at Wildschutsbrand Farm is historically significant in terms of its vernacular architecture and possibly associated archaeological material. The main house precinct and Kalkhok area have the potential to contain buried archaeological material in the form of domestic middens and a lime kiln which may be impacted by development activities such as excavation of service or foundation trenches and landscaping. No pre-colonial archaeological sites were found within the 17 hectare development area.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

A policy of minimal intervention in the landscape and structures will go a long way to minimise impacts on the historic fabric of the area. In order to accommodate visitors to the site, the development proposal indicates that some upgrading of facilities and extensions to the main house will be necessary. It is possible that buried archaeological material may be impacted. In this case trial excavations by a professional archaeologist will be necessary. Although the Kalkhok area may also be archaeologically significant, mitigation will not be necessary provided no earth moving takes place.

## **7. REFERENCES**

Rennie, and Scurr 1989. Wildschutsbrand (Farm1404) Cape South Peninsula: Existing structures: Cultural/historical appraisal. Unpublished report prepared for Wildschutsbrand Farm cc.

University of Waterloo, 1987. Dept of Geography. The South West Cape Colony. Land Grants 1657-1750.

## **8. PROFESSIONAL TEAM**

**Fieldwork and report**

Tim Hart  
Belinda Mütti

I would like to thank Dr Antonia Malan (Historical Archaeology Research Group) for her comments and thoughts.