

PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF ERF 307 AND 644 BLAAUWBERGSTRAND

Prepared for

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Prepared by

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by Jonathan Holtmann and Associates (Town and Regional Planners) and Barry Louw of Coastec to conduct a phase 1 archaeological assessment of erven 307 and 664, Blaauwbergstrand, Cape Town. The area was searched on foot for surface indications of archaeological/historical material.

1.1 Restrictions

Restrictions to the study included dense ground cover in places and thickets of alien vegetation. This restricted surface visibility. The numerous foot paths and pits dug into the dune system however, permitted reasonable coverage of most areas.

2. PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY

A survey of the area has produced no surface indications of archaeological material. There is always the possibility that burials (San and Khoi Khoi) will be exposed during earthmoving operations as this is quite a frequent occurrence in the Melkbosstrand-Blaauwberg area. In the event of this taking place, skeletal material should not be moved until an archaeologist is contacted to excavate the remains. Shell middens are more common close to Melkbosstrand where the rocky shoreline supports marine foods which were an important component of prehistoric peoples' diet.

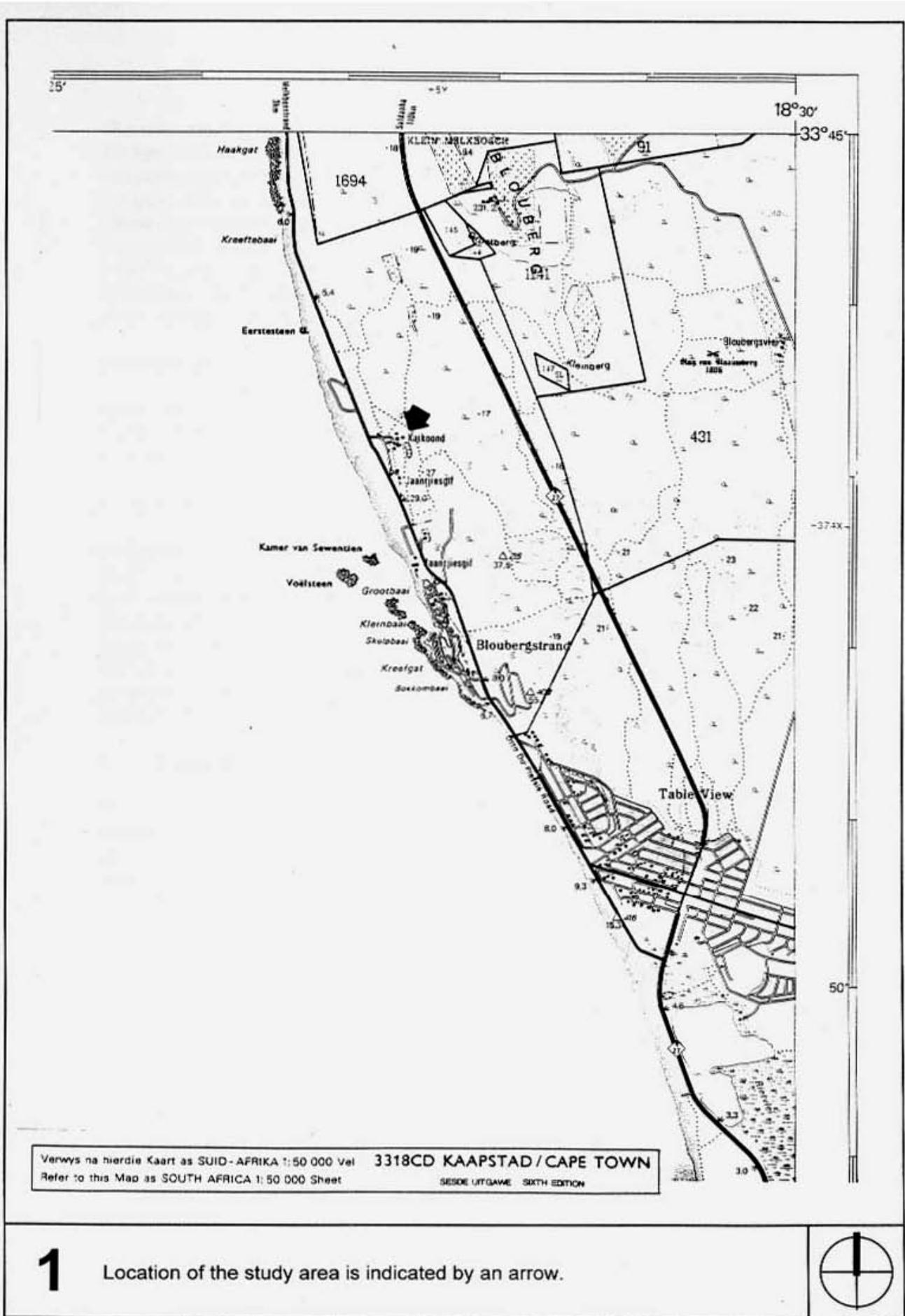
3. HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The major historical event that took place in this area was the Battle of Blouberg which involved the defeat of Batavian forces by a British invasion in 1806. The British landed at Losperds Bay and the battle was fought over a broad front, mostly behind Kleinberg. Although this area was very close to the action, it was not directly part of the confrontation. Impacts are not expected.

4. INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The most significant feature of the site is the old lime works itself. The three lime kilns are interesting in that they represent the last of their kind in recent operation in South Africa employing traditional methods of burning shell. This process was first brought to South Africa by Dutch Colonists who erected a number of lime kilns in various parts of the Peninsula including Robben island. The coarse shell lime cement produced by these kilns was used in the construction of most 17th, 18th and early 19th century buildings in the Cape including the Castle of Cape of Good Hope. Imported Portland cement only came into common use in the early 20th century.

The kilns themselves are built of modern fabric but are very similar in form to the few partially surviving historical examples that are visible at Cape Point, Muizenberg and Ysterfontein. The difference is that these particular examples are coke fired as opposed to charcoal which would have been used in the past. Efficient combustion has been assisted by an electrically powered forced draught into the base of the kilns. The main building on the site contains lime crushing equipment, wind separation and packing machinery (imported from Germany in the 1940s). Other structures on the site include the foreman's office, stores and staff housing which are not considered conservation-worthy.



Verwys na hierdie Kaart as SUID-AFRIKA 1: 50 000 Vel 3318CD KAAPSTAD / CAPE TOWN
 Refer to this Map as SOUTH AFRICA 1: 50 000 Sheet
 SESDE LITGAWE SIXTH EDITION

1 Location of the study area is indicated by an arrow.



4.1 Impacts

Demolition and closure of the lime works will constitute an impact on the historic record as this represents a potential loss of information about an historically significant process.

4.2 Mitigation

Mitigation could be achieved by appointing an industrial archaeologist to record the structures by measured drawings, photography and interviews of staff familiar with the process. Furthermore, on closure of the plant any plans, documentation or manuals pertaining to its operation should be housed in the Cape Archive or appropriate institution. There is no legal obligation to conserve any of the buildings in terms of the National Monuments Act. However, adaptive re-use or incorporation of the three kilns as a feature of interest into the development would be an option worth exploration.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has produced no evidence of prehistoric material that requires conservation prior to development of the site. Burials may be encountered in excavations, in which instance they should be left in situ and reported to an archaeologist immediately.

The lime works are considered to be an industrial feature of interest and will require recording before demolition or removal of any machinery is envisaged.

Fieldwork and report preparation by Tim Hart and Belinda Mufti