

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF ERF 153692, LONGKLOOF STUDIOS PARKING AREA, CAPE TOWN

Project conducted under Section 38 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act
in response to the recommendations of a desktop AIA forming part of a
Heritage Impact Assessment.

Prepared for

Paramount Property Fund Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the results of a program of shovel test excavations on Erf 153692, Cape Town. The project was carried out after the initial desktop assessment (Seemann 2005) recommended that shovel testing should be undertaken. That study, in turn, was part of a Heritage Impact Assessment conducted by Baumann and Winter (2005).

The site is currently used as a car park and has no standing infrastructure. The surface is fully tarred. Several historical buildings dating to the late 19th and early 20th century surround the site but none will be directly impacted by the proposed development.

A total of 16 test excavations were conducted and coverage of the area is deemed to have been satisfactory. These showed that significant subsurface disturbance has taken place in the past with most holes showing disturbed material right down to bedrock. Two holes revealed possible floor surfaces and in one a memorial plaque was found. The possibility that further structural remains are present on the site is seen as being extremely small. No indication of *in situ* historical dump material was found.

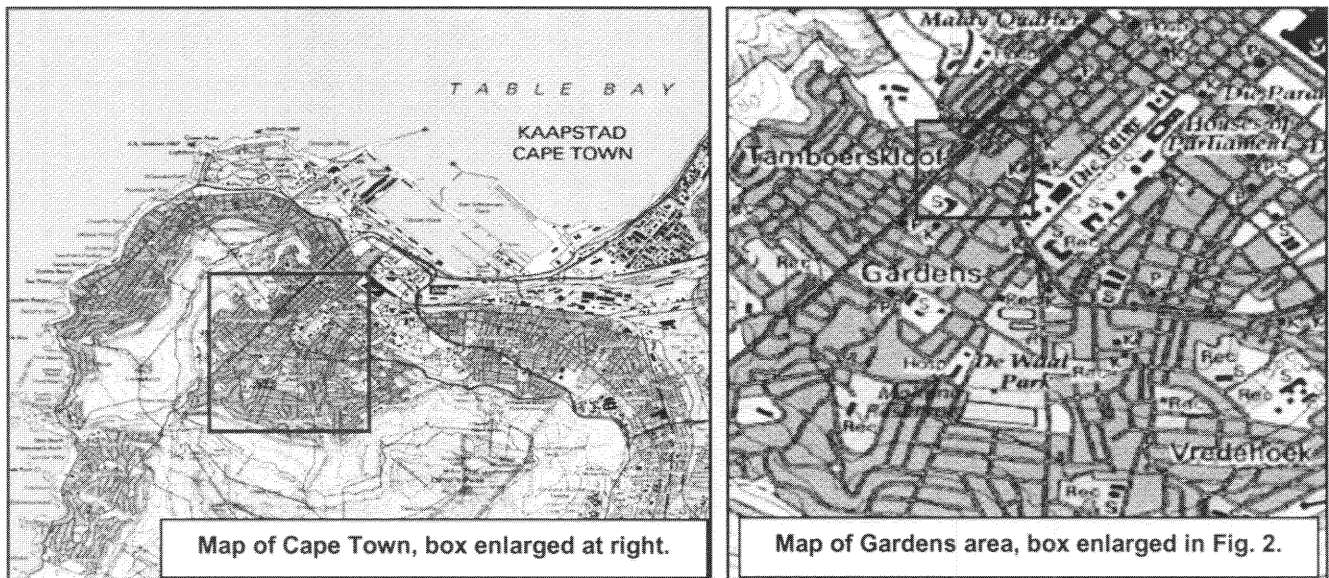
It is recommended that an archaeologist be asked to monitor the initial bulk excavations, perhaps directing a mechanical excavator to explore certain areas, in order to ascertain whether any further contextual information could be obtained. Also of concern is the possibility that the remains of some sort of memorial might be found, perhaps in the higher, northwest corner of the property.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT	4
3. METHODS	5
4. FINDINGS	7
4.1. Hole 1	7
4.2. Hole 2	7
4.3. Hole 3	9
4.4. Hole 4	9
4.5. Hole 5	9
4.6. Hole 6	10
4.7. Hole 7	10
4.8. Hole 8	11
4.9. Hole 9	12
4.10. Hole 10	14
4.11. Hole 11	14
4.12. Hole 12	15
4.13. Hole 13	15
4.14. Hole 14	16
4.15. Hole 15	16
4.16. Hole 16	17
5. CONCLUSIONS.....	18
6. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	18
7. REFERENCES.....	19
8. INVESTIGATION TEAM	19

1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office was appointed by Paramount Property Fund to undertake a shovel testing program on Erf 153692, Cape Town (Figure 1 & 2). This was in response to the recommendations of a desktop Archaeological Impact Assessment (Seemann 2005) which in turn was conducted as part of a Heritage Impact Assessment (Baumann & Winter 2005). The desktop AIA found evidence of several historical building episodes in the area and suggested that shovel tests be carried out to verify and support the documentary evidence. This shovel testing program was carried out between 18th and 23rd May 2006.



3318CD Cape Town (Mapping information supplied by - Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping. Website: w3sli.wcape.gov.za)

Figure 1: Location of Erf 153692 in the city of Cape Town.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

At present the entire surface of the site is covered with tarmac and is in use as a car park (Plate 1). It is bounded by historical buildings on three sides with the fourth also being car park (Figure 2). The neighbouring buildings are all late 19th (houses) or early 20th century (industrial and educational). The most significant of these is probably the building currently housing the Varsity College which was designed by Herbert Baker's architectural firm and built in 1914 (Seemann 2005). The historical buildings surrounding the site are indicated in Figure 2.

Currently the buildings are in use for various purposes including educational (Varsity College), television studios (eTV), small businesses (restaurant and clothing sales) and residential.



Figure 2: Aerial photograph of the site showing the surrounding structures and street names. Dotted red line indicates the site polygon.

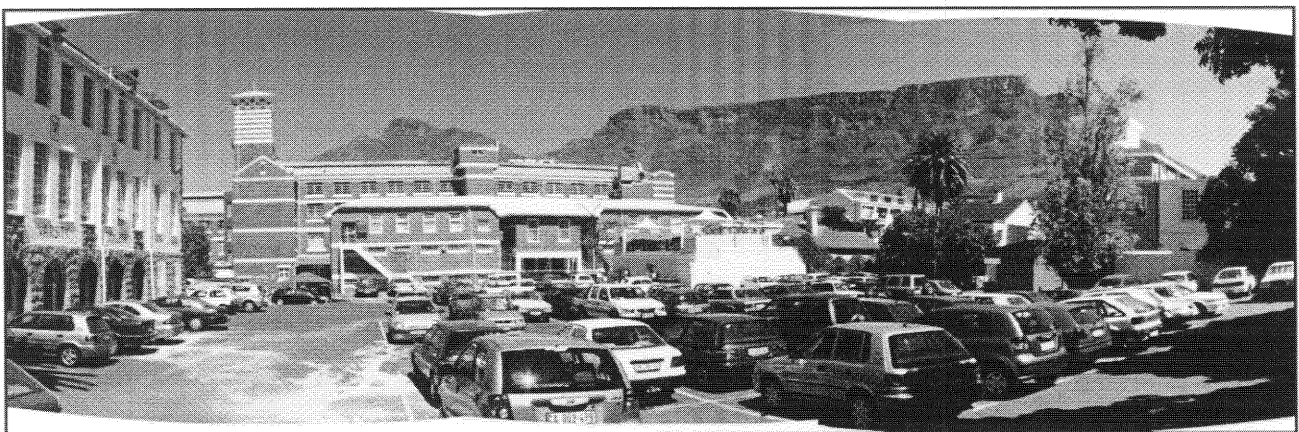


Plate 1: View towards the southwest. The MLT and United Tobacco Company buildings are the red buildings in the background and the Carisbrook School building is on the far left.

3. METHODS

Shovel tests were conducted by means of hand excavation and mechanical excavation equipment was not needed. The selection of locations to test was guided by three factors:

1. Proximity to neighbouring historical buildings;
2. Adequate spatial coverage of the property; and
3. Limiting disruption to the tenants of the car park.

Altogether 16 holes were excavated and I am satisfied with the degree of coverage attained. The approximate locations of these holes are shown on Figure 3.

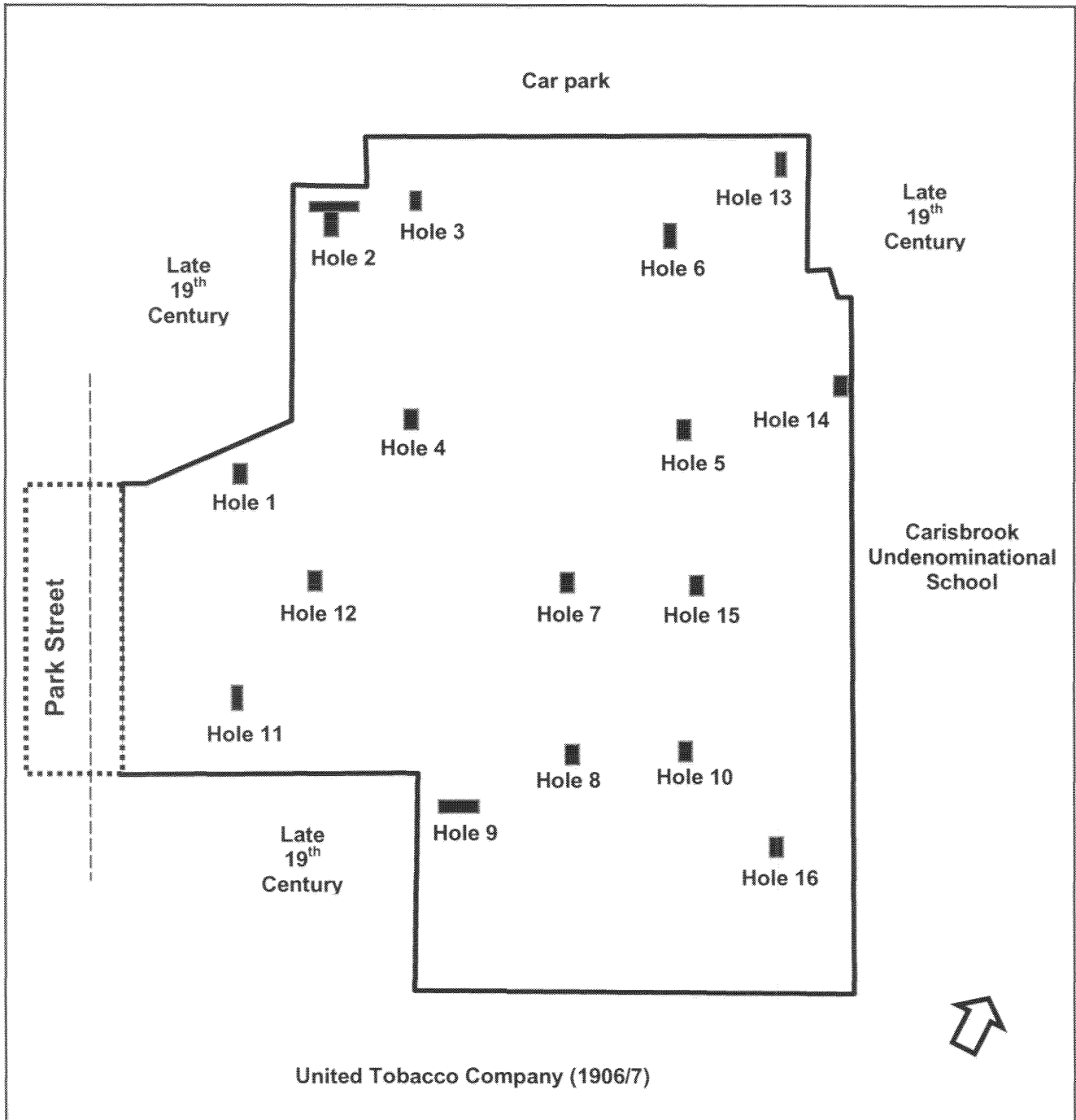


Figure 3: Plan of the site (traced from a survey diagram) with the approximate positions of the 16 test holes indicated. The surrounding buildings are also labelled. Note that the dotted line on the left side of the diagram indicates a small portion of the property that extends out into Park Street but this is unaffected by the development. The dashed line indicates the edge of the pavement.

4. FINDINGS

In this section each of the sixteen test holes is described individually and illustrated photographically as appropriate.

4.1. Hole 1

Size: 0.5 m by 0.5m

Total depth: 0.75 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0-150 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (150 – 750 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: One ceramic only.

Comments: Disturbed right down to base. No archaeological interest.



Plate 2: Section of Hole 1 showing the tarmac, gravel sub-base and mixed rubble, rocks and clay.

4.2. Hole 2

Size: 3.05 m x 1.85 m (T-shaped rather than a rectangular excavation)

Total depth: 2.2 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0- 80 mm)
Dark brown sand (80 – 250 mm)
Beige sand (250 – 340 mm)
Mixed rubble and clay (340 – 1290 mm)
Rocks & gravel 1290 – 1800 mm)
River gravel (1800 – 2200 mm)

Finds: A single row of stones was present at the same level as the beige sand and that sand occurred only on the southeast side of these stones (Plates 3 & 4).

Historical building rubble fragments present throughout. Occasional fragments of bone and ceramics throughout. Yellow-glazed earthenware fragments were noticeable near the base of the mixed rubble and clay layer. In the eastern portion of the hole a (probably) silver alloy memorial plaque was found (Plate 5). A layer of some sort of paper was adhering to its surface and this had to be rubbed off before it could be photographed. No further evidence of what the memorial may have been could be found but some of the building rubble and a brown ceramic decorative tile may have been related to it. Also in this part of the hole several other more recent items were found and the deposits indicated recent disturbance.

Comments: It is possible that a memorial of some sort was once located near this hole but aside from the brown ceramic tile which may have been related, no further evidence of this was found (besides the plaque). The plaque could also have originated elsewhere. An additional point to note is the presence of the historical wall to the northwest of the excavation. This wall appears somewhat unstable and has been strengthened recently by the addition of modern cement.

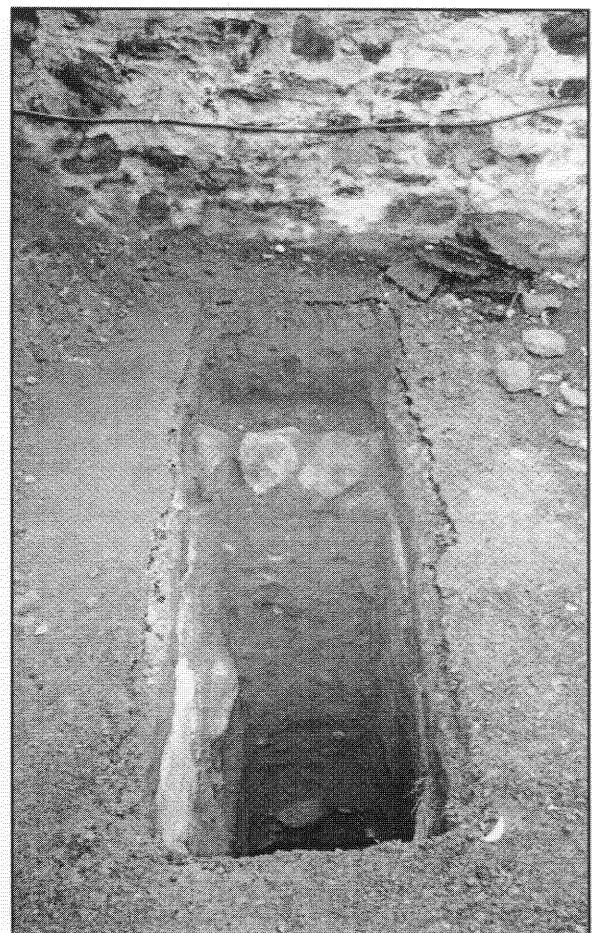


Plate 3: (left) The single row of stones found just below the surface in Hole 2. The beige sand occurring on the southeast (downslope) side of this alignment can be seen both here and in Plate 4.

Plate 4: (right) Hole 2 during the early stages of excavation. The stone alignment can be seen in the centre and a historical wall bordering the property of one of the late 19th century houses can be seen at the top. This wall has been strengthened with modern cement.

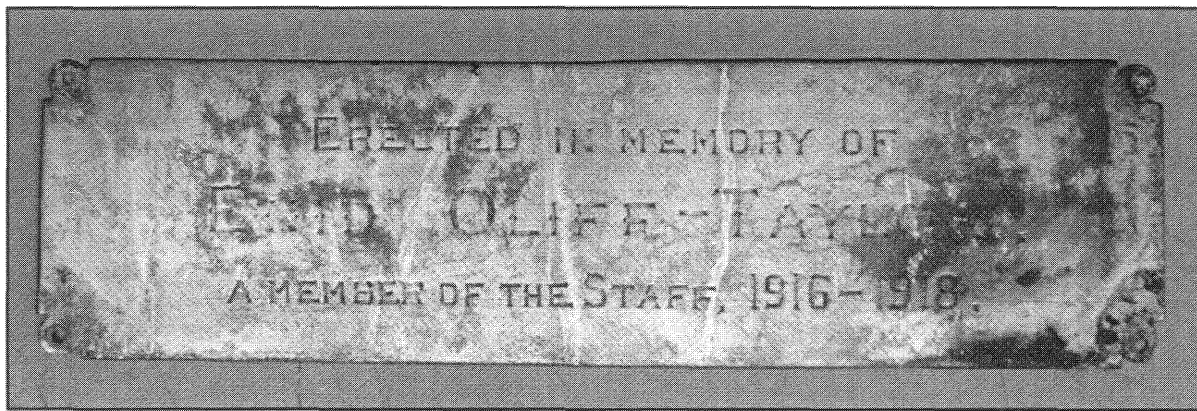


Plate 5: The memorial plaque found in Hole 2. It is presumed to contain silver and is probably an alloy. It reads: "ERECTED IN MEMORY OF ENID OLIFF-TAYLOR A MEMBER OF THE STAFF, 1916 – 1918".

4.3. Hole 3

Size: 0.3 m x 0.65 m
Total depth: 0.78 m
Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0- 60 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (60 – 780 mm)
Hole abandoned due to very dense shale rocks
Finds: Occasional fragments of rubble, ceramics and bone.
Deposits very similar to those in Hole 4.
Comments: Disturbed throughout excavated depth. No archaeological interest.

4.4. Hole 4

Size: 0.5 m x 0.8 m
Total depth: 0.8 m
Stratigraphy: Tar / red gravel / grey gravel (0 – 150 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (150 – 700 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)
Finds: Rubble was all modern. Only occasional ceramic fragments found. This hole intersected a modern service trench.
Comments: Disturbed right down to base. No archaeological interest.

4.5. Hole 5

Size: 0.45 x 0.55 m
Total Depth: 0.7 m
Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 140 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (140 – 600 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)
Finds: Tar, asbestos and modern bricks in top 350 mm. One yellow frog brick was found near the base (Plate 6).
Comments: Disturbed right down to base. No archaeological interest.

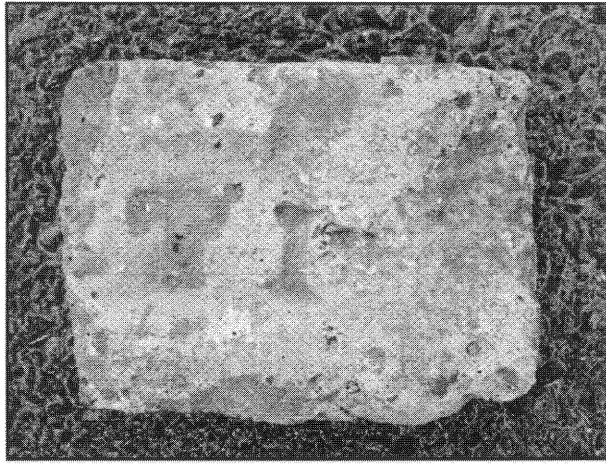


Plate 6: The yellow frog brick found in Hole 5. It measures 13 cm wide and its remaining length is 17 cm.

4.6. Hole 6

Size: 0.9 x 0.45 m

Total depth: 1.25 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 120 mm)

Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (very rocky) (120 – 900 mm)

Brown sand (900 – 1250 mm)

Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: Many ceramic sherds and a few bones were found in the mixed rubble, rocks & clay layer. Almost all were willow pattern, but a few white fragments with gold trim, some cream ware and one porcelain fragment were also present. One bottle base was also noted.

Comments: Disturbed down to the top of the brown sand at 900 mm. Although this excavation produced the greatest number of artefacts, they have no archaeological context and are clearly derived rather than in a primary dump context. As such it is of little archaeological interest.

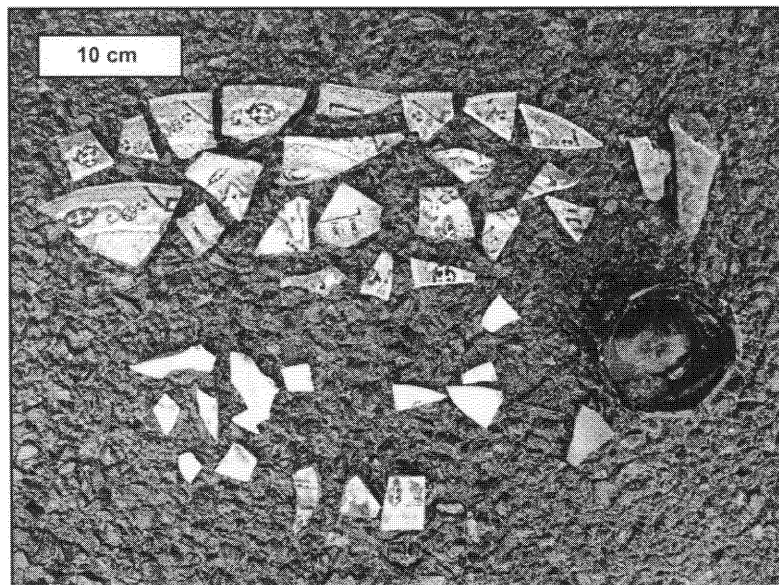


Plate 7: The ceramics, bone and glass found in Hole 6. The blue Willow Pattern ceramics were by far the most common. These date to the late 19th century.

4.7. Hole 7

Size: 0.6 x 0.45 m
Total depth: 0.8 m
Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel / red gravel (0 – 150 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (150 – 580 mm)
Red bricks & sand (580 – 780 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: Disturbed down to the top of the red bricks and sand at 580 mm. A large shale block was present at 500 mm depth. This was probably dressed. Occasional bones and one ceramic were seen in the mixed rubble, rocks and clay layer. Although the red bricks are probably undisturbed since deposition, they are merely demolition debris and are of no further archaeological interest.

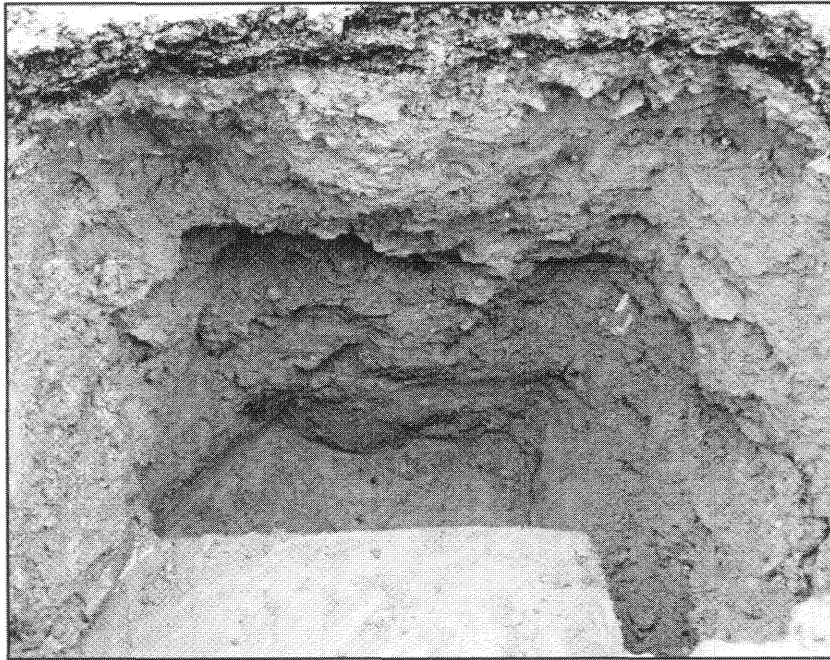


Plate 8: Profile in Hole 7. The shale block can be seen in the foreground and the layer containing a high density of historical brick fragments is visible at the base of the section in the middle of the photograph.

4.8. Hole 8

Size: 0.45 x 0.45 m
Total depth: 0.6 m
Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 180 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (180 – 600 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: No bones or ceramics were found and the bricks present were of variable age with both modern and older bricks being present.

Comments: Disturbed right down to base. No archaeological interest.

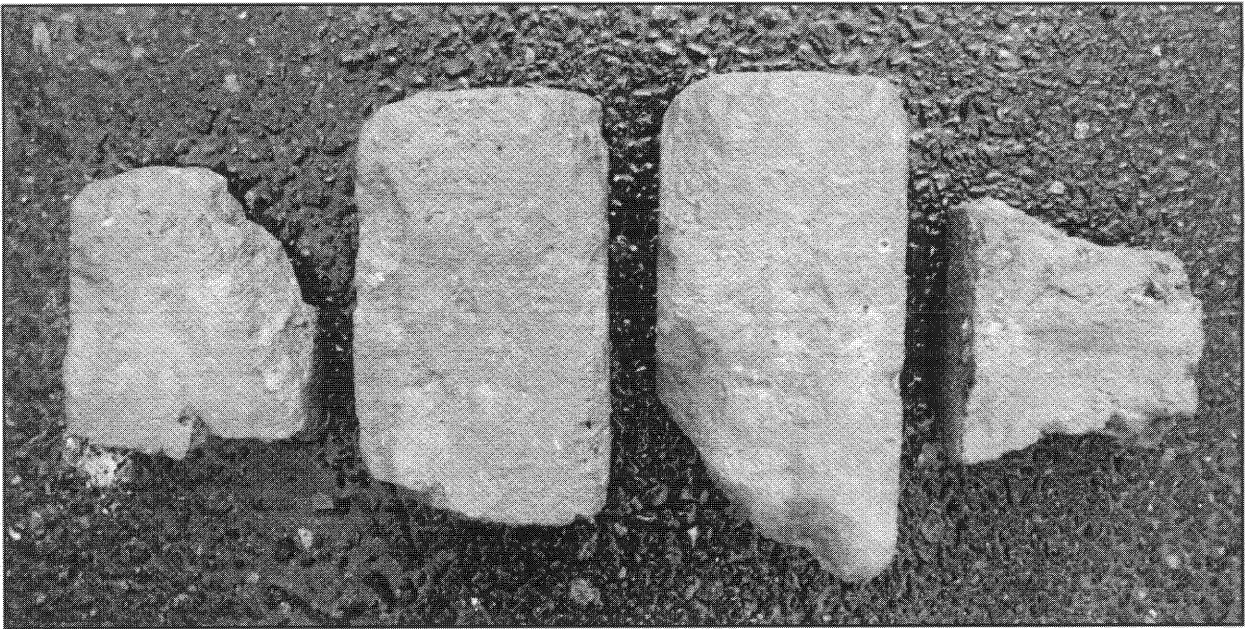


Plate 9: A selection of older bricks from Hole 8. The brick on the far right has a frog and the second from right measures approximately 12 cm by 25 cm.

4.9. Hole 9

Size: 1.9 x 0.6 m

Total depth: 1.62 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel / white sand (0 – 150 mm)

Modern rubble (150 – 450 mm)

Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (450 – 1050 mm)

Modern cement floor and sandstone foundation (600 – 1050 mm) (in west end of excavation)

Orange brown sand (1050 – 1480 mm)

Malmesbury clay mix (?) floor (grades into Malmesbury bedrock)

Finds:

The cement floor is undoubtedly modern and of no interest. It is constructed on top of a foundation of uncemented, rough, yellow sandstone blocks (Plate 11). It could possibly relate to the kitchen addition on the restaurant some 2 m away to the west. In the eastern part of the excavation at the same level (i.e. 600 – 1050 mm) there were several British frog bricks with sandy white cement attached to them (Plate 13). Modern rubble fragments and occasional plastic fragments were present right down to about 1.2 m. A few animal bones were found, predominantly in the mixed rubble, rocks and clay layer. The possible floor surface appeared to have been made of heavily compacted Malmesbury clay with flecks of red brick and charcoal compressed into it (Plate 12). It may, however, just be a cleared surface with the upper Malmesbury clay having been compacted *in situ* and the brick and charcoal fragments being incidental inclusions during this process.

Comments: This hole is located in an area where the ground surface has been built up a little to level the car park. Although there is no *in situ* material above the floor level (with the possible exception of some of the orange brown sand), it is likely that the floor may relate to some sort of structure that may have been present on the site.

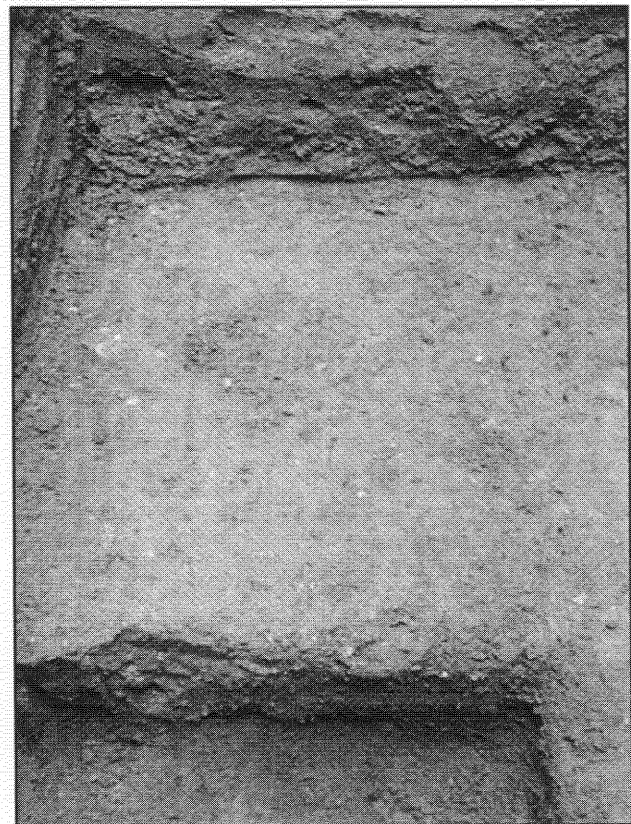
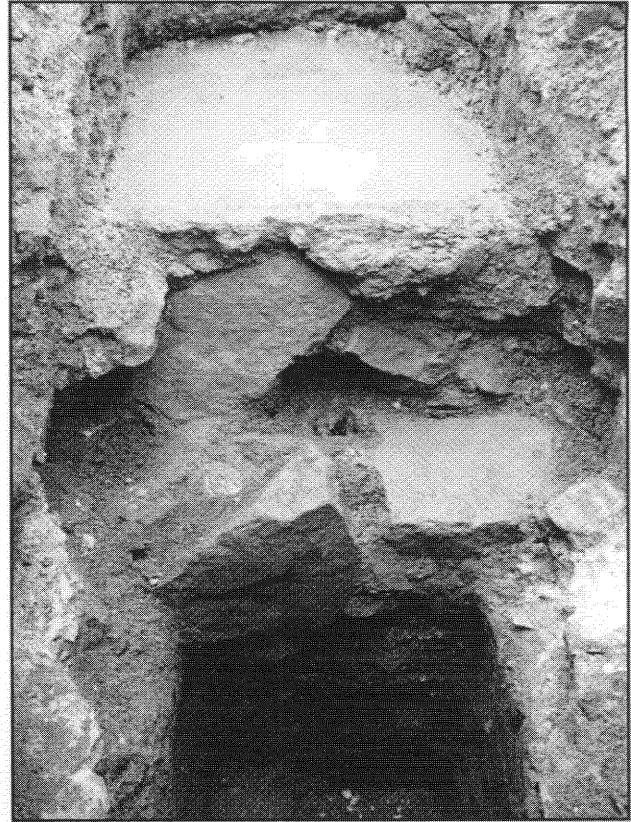
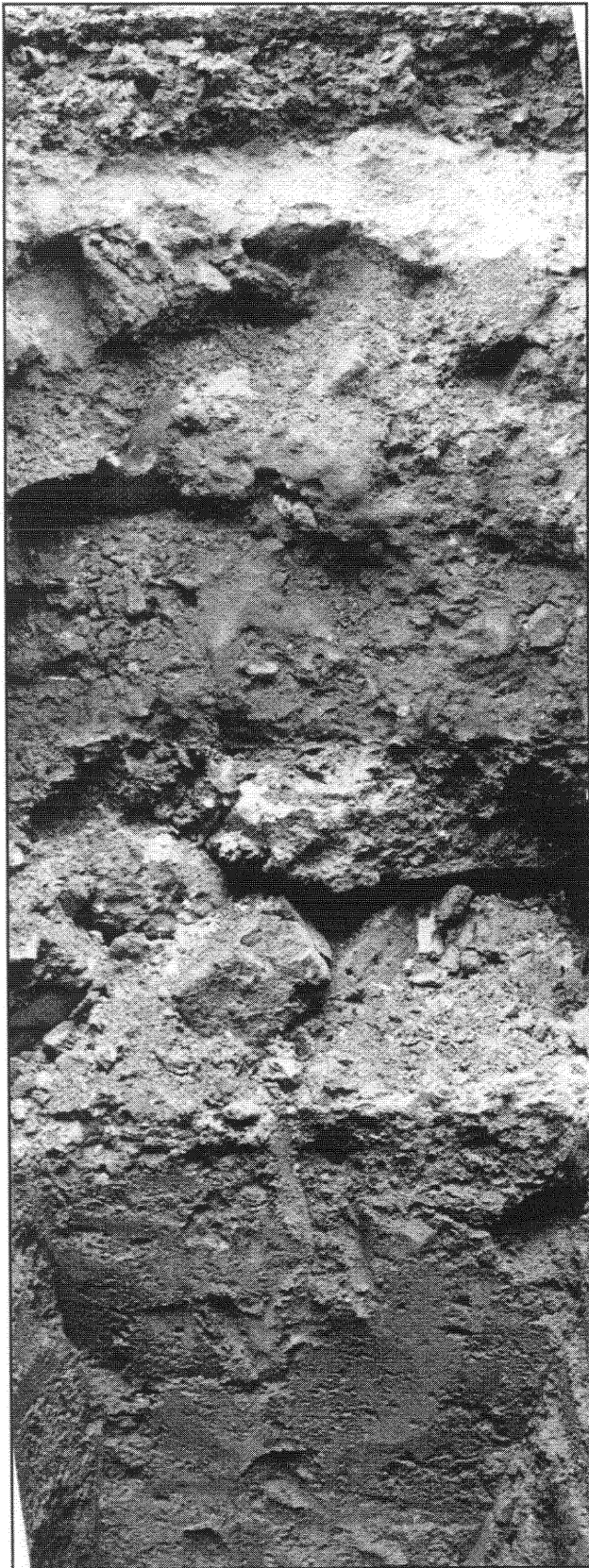


Plate 10: (left) Photograph of the section through the upper 0.6 m showing the modern rubble fill above the older mixed rubble, rocks & clay layer.

Plate 11: (top right) The modern cement floor in the western part of the hole with its sandstone block foundation.

Plate 12: (lower right) The possible clay floor at the base of the excavation (1.48 m). I cut through this to reveal the slightly greener Malmesbury bedrock at the very bottom of the picture.

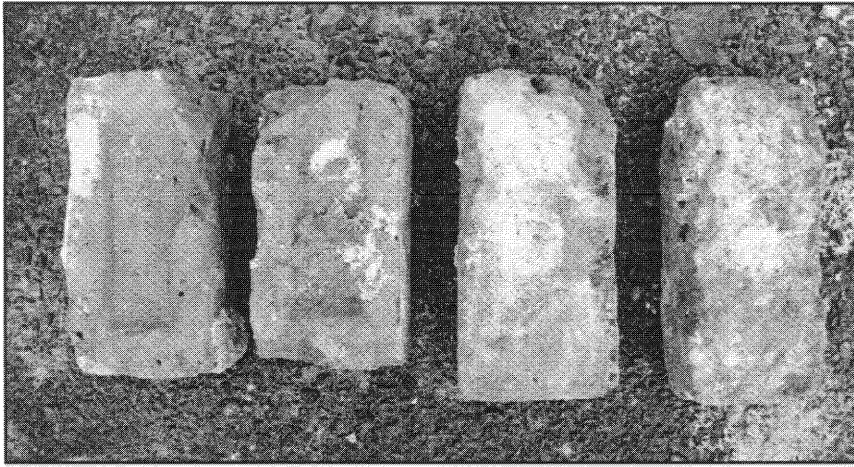


Plate 13: A selection of the British frog bricks recovered from Hole 9.

4.10. Hole 10

Size: 0.85 x 0.5 m

Total depth: 1.23 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / red gravel / grey gravel (0 – 170 mm)

Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (170 – 700 mm)

Orange brown sand (700 – 1230 mm)

Big rocks and very hard clay (hole abandoned due to difficulty of excavation and flooding due to rain).

Finds: The mixed rubble, rocks and clay layer contained several willow pattern ceramic sherds as well as one porcelain fragment and one pipe stem.

Comments: Disturbed throughout the excavated depth. No further archaeological interest.

4.11. Hole 11

Size: 1.5 x 0.5 m

Total depth: 1.35 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 90 mm)

Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (90 – 1050 mm)

Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

(?)Post-hole in Malmesbury shale bedrock (down to 1350 mm)

Finds: Occasional ceramics (plain white only), glass and bone were found. A few fragments of shell lime plaster were present as well as some white cement and non-modern grey cement. Significantly, there was no modern material found in this excavation at all. All bricks were relatively old with no frog bricks being found. The impression was that the rubble in this hole was older than that located in any other part of the site.

Comments: This area contains what seems to be the oldest building fabric on site with no modern material mixed in. It is likely to have not been disturbed in recent years and could thus be the remains of a long demolished structure that once stood nearby. The hole does, however, indicate disturbance right down to the start of the Malmesbury bedrock at 1050 mm. The possible post-hole seemed to be filled with brick material which was likely not the original filling (Plate 15).

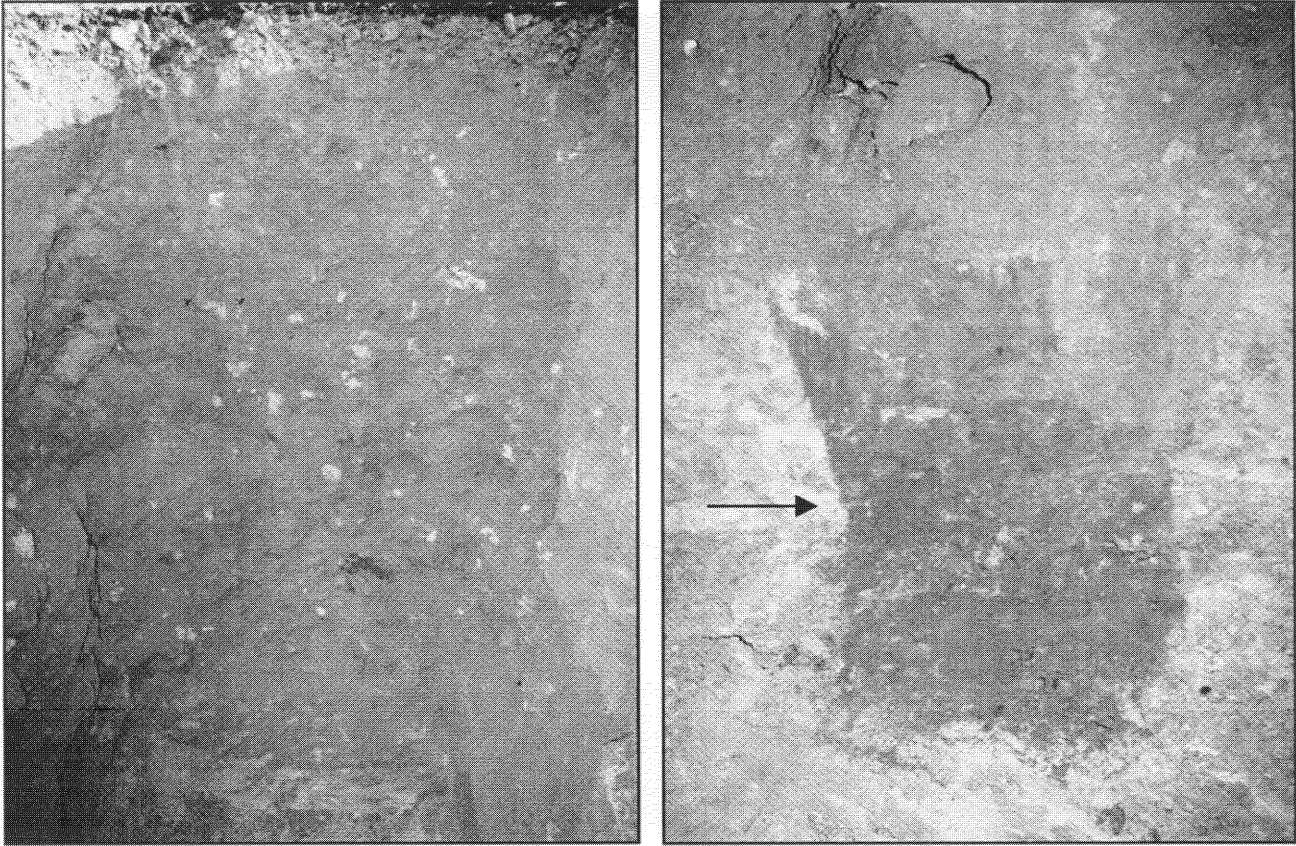


Plate 14: (left) Section through the deposits of Hole 11. Small fragments of red brick and white plaster can be seen through almost the entire depth of this hole.

Plate 15: Section through the (?) post-hole found at the base of Hole 11. The arrow indicates the break between the side section and the base of the excavation.

4.12. Hole 12

Size: 0.85 x 0.45 m

Total depth: 0.68 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / red gravel / grey gravel (0 – 150 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (150 – 650 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: Lots of shale rocks, no cement, almost no brick fragments. Significantly, no modern rubble was present at all. No bones or ceramics were seen.

Comments: Although undisturbed in recent times, there is nothing here to suggest any further archaeological interest.

4.13. Hole 13

Size: 1.3 x 0.6 m

Total depth: 1.46 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 80 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (80 – 550 mm)
Mixed rubble, rocks & clay (very rocky) (550 – 1130 mm)
Brown sand (1130 – 1460 mm)
Malmesbury shale (bedrock)

Finds: Glass and ceramics from the early 20th century were present within the first 550 mm and a white ceramic marble was found in the brown sand.

Comments: The very rocky mixed rubble, rocks and clay appears to have been a specific fill in this area as it seems just the same as that in Hole 6 immediately to the southwest. The ceramic dump intersected in Hole 6 was not present here. No archaeological interest.

4.14. Hole 14

Size: 1.0 x 1.0 m

Total depth: 0.65 m

Stratigraphy: We reopened a hole dug by the geo-technical people to examine and record the foundations of the Herbert Baker building. Due to the muddiness, no stratigraphy could be recorded here. The hole was not dug deep but rather just enough to show the foundations.

Finds: No finds.

Comments: The building is constructed on top of a concrete foundation. The lip extending out from the base of the stones is 280 mm wide and the size and shape of the underlying concrete appears to be quite variable. The concrete continues down below the excavated depth of 0.65 m.



Plate 16: The concrete foundation at the foot of the wall of the Varsity College Building.

4.15. Hole 15

Size: 0.4 x 0.4 m

Total depth: 0.9 m

Stratigraphy: Tar (0 – 70 mm)

Brown sand & rubble (70 – 900 mm)

Clay (?) floor (900 mm)

Hole was not excavated below the floor surface

Finds: One ceramic and one pipe-stem were found. A chunk of tar at 340 mm indicates recent disturbance down to at least this level. The possible floor surface appears to be made of heavily compacted Malmesbury clay with stone chips pressed into it.

Comments: Although there is nothing of interest above the (?) floor level, this surface may relate to some sort of structure that could have been present in the past.

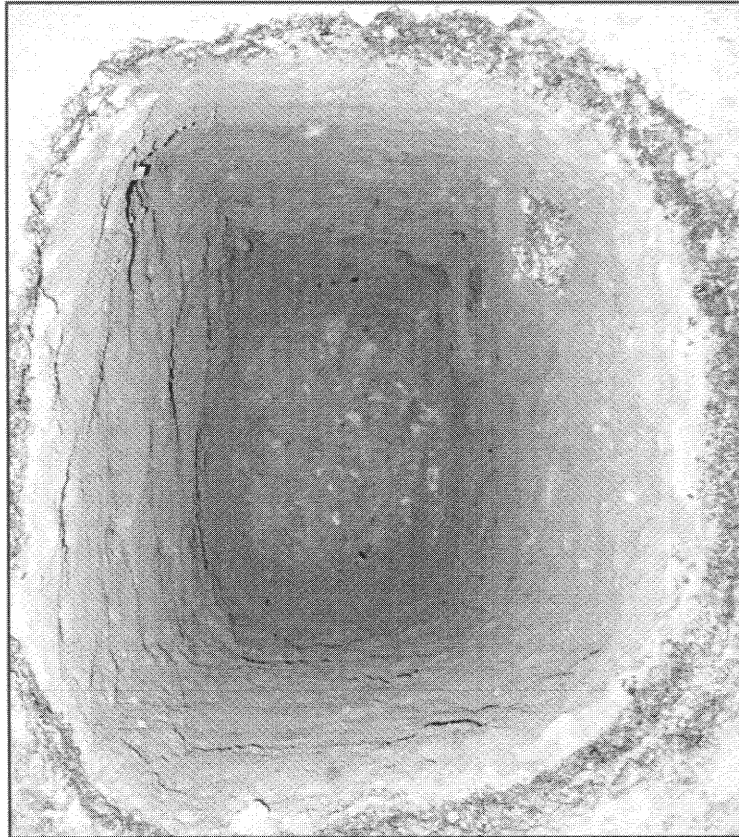


Plate 17: View directly down into Hole 15. The possible floor surface of compacted clay and stone chips is visible at the base of the excavation. The chunk of tar at 340 mm can be seen at the top right of the photograph.

4.16. Hole 16

Size: 0.75 x 0.65 m

Total depth: 1.01 m

Stratigraphy: Tar / grey gravel (0 – 150 mm)
Rubble & concrete (150 – 1010 mm)

Finds: This hole revealed only modern building rubble and concrete blocks.

Comments: This corner of the property appears to have suffered the greatest amount of recent disturbance and has no archaeological interest.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the program of test excavations on Erf 153692, Cape Town, has indicated that the entire area is disturbed, almost all of it right down to bedrock. The presence of building rubble of varying ages suggests that disturbances have taken place at varying times through at least the last 200 years and that some parts of the site may not have been disturbed within the last century. The variably aged rubble also supports the contention made by Seemann (2005) that several historical building episodes have taken place on the site in the past. Although Holes 9 and 15 revealed the presence of some sort of floor surfaces, it is thought to be very unlikely that any walls relating to them are still present on the site.

Only one hole (Hole 6) produced a reasonable quantity of ceramics suggesting that very little domestic, artefact-rich fill was ever introduced to the site and there is unlikely to be an *in situ* domestic dump relating to any historical structure. The plaque found in Hole 2 suggests that some sort of memorial to a teacher at the Carisbrook Undenominational School may have been erected on the site, perhaps in the school garden. There is, however, no further evidence of this. Note that this school has also been referred to as the Westcliffe School (Baumann & Winter 2005).

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The high degree of disturbance evident on the site suggests that further archaeological excavation would be pointless. It is recommended, however, that an archaeologist monitor the initial earthworks for the following reasons:

1. Further traces of a memorial may be evident in the vicinity of Hole 2;
2. It may be possible to ascertain further contextual information with regards to the floor surfaces found in Holes 9 and 15;
3. The location of further features in the vicinity of Hole 11 may help identify the origin of the possible post-hole found there;
4. The examination of any further artefactual material and building fabric uncovered during earthworks may help to refine the ages of the buildings represented by the rubble; and
5. Any remaining features associated with the river (marked by the gravel in Hole 2) may be revealed by a larger excavation.

It is suggested that a mechanical excavator be made available to an archaeologist on site at the start of the bulk earthworks. With direction from the archaeologist, the excavator could probably carry out sufficient excavation to satisfy the above requirements within a single day. This work should focus on the areas around Holes 2, 9, 11 and 15.

7. REFERENCES

Seemann, U. 2005. Archaeological / Historical Impact Assessment Erven 153692 and 152767, Longkloof Studio Development, Park Road, Gardens, Cape Town. Unpublished report prepared for A. Maresky (Paramount Property).

Baumann, N. and Winter, S. 2005. Longkloof, Kloof Studios (erven 153692, 152676 and 94453, Cape Town) Heritage Specialist Assessment (undertaken to fulfil the requirements of NEMA and Sections 34 and 38 of the NHRA). Unpublished report prepared for Paramount Property Fund Ltd.

8. INVESTIGATION TEAM

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