

# PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF A PORTION OF ERF 10256, CULEMBORG, CAPE TOWN

Prepared for

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Prepared by

**Archaeology Contracts Office**

Department of Archaeology

University of Cape Town

Private Bag

Rondebosch

7701

Phone (021) 650 2357

Fax (021) 650 2352

Email [tjg@age.uct.ac.za](mailto:tjg@age.uct.ac.za)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was appointed by SRK Consulting to conduct a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment of 4.12 hectares of open land situated at the eastern end of Culemborg. Inspection of the site and an examination of historical sources have shown that redevelopment of the study area is expected to have a low to very low impact on heritage resources.

- Pre-colonial archaeological material is unlikely to be impacted by redevelopment of the site as much of the land is reclaimed and outside of the extent of the original shoreline.
- The historic fortification known as Craig's Tower was situated immediately south of the study area, which means that impacts to foundations of this are unlikely. However, rubble from the tower and other related artefacts might come to light during excavations.
- There is a possibility that fragments of shipwrecks may be impacted during bulk excavations.
- The study area lies immediately between the 1870 and 1920 shorelines of Table Bay. Acknowledgement of this in the planning of redevelopment will have a positive impact.
- It is recommended as a precautionary measure that bulk excavations on site are monitored by an archaeologist.

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# 1 Introduction

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by SRK Consulting to conduct a phase 1 heritage impact assessment of land (Portion of erf 10256) situated at Culemborg, Cape Town. The following report contains the findings, which are based on written historical sources, maps and a site inspection.

## 1.1 Current status of the Study Area

The land in question comprises 4.12 hectares of vacant land - a narrow strip at the extreme easterly end of Culemborg bounded by the N1 freeway to the north and the northern suburbs railway line to the south (Figure 1). The area is currently vegetated with grass while the land surface consists of a fill characterised by fragments of cinder and ash, possibly derived from steam locomotives that used the area in the past. There are no structures on the site apart from a concrete floor of a demolished building, an electrical substation and lamp-posts.

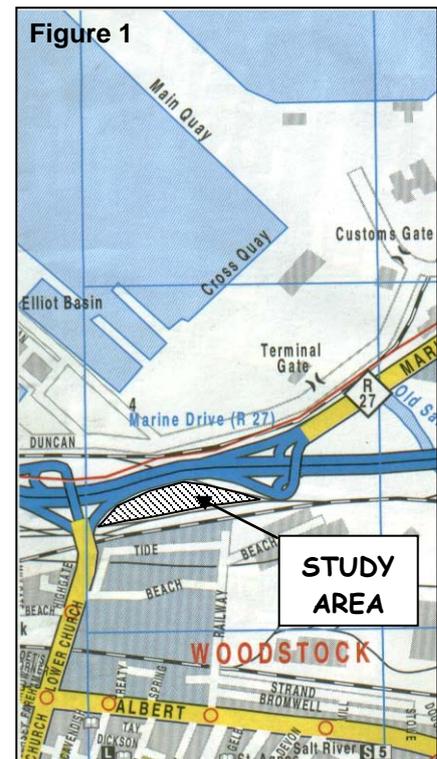
## 2 Potential Heritage Material in the Study Area

Before land reclamation operations began in 1870, this area would have formed part of the southeast shoreline of Table Bay. Documents and maps housed in the Department of Archaeology (UCT) have been consulted to establish what the potential heritage concerns in the area are.

### 2.1 Pre-colonial/Prehistoric archaeology

Before development of Table Bay during colonial times the study area would have consisted of a sandy beach with coastal dunes. Shell middens, open sites and human burials dating to prehistoric occupation of the Mid-late Holocene times characterise much of the archaeology of the Cape Coast, with several sites having been found within suburban Cape Town.

Prehistoric sites are highly sensitive to development activities in that disturbance of a site inevitably results in negative impacts to the context of the finds. If prehistoric sites did exist in or near the development area, 19th and 20th century development activities are likely to have destroyed or damaged them.



## **2.2 Colonial period archaeology**

### **2.2.1 Coastal defences**

The bulk of Dutch East India Company settlement was situated in Table Valley some distance southwest of the study area. A complex of redoubts, walls and batteries designed to repel any invasions from enemy shipping protected the early city. The first evidence of any permanent structures in the study area dates to the late 18th century when French allies of the Dutch improved the coastal defences around Table Bay. Two small batteries were built by the French in the area between Fort Knokke and the Salt River mouth in 1782. Known as the Nieuwe and Intermediare Batteries, they were armed with Dutch 12 and 18 Pdr muzzle-loading cannons. In later years Governor Van de Graaf disassembled the batteries and deployed the cannons elsewhere. When the British took over the Cape in 1795 after the battle of Muizenberg, General Craig made improvements to the defences at the Cape. One of these measures was the building of a fortification of stone and mortar on the site of the Nieuwe Battery. Known as Craig's Tower this fortification was equipped with 18 pdr cannons transferred from the Imhoff Battery in Cape Town. Towards the end of the 19th century Craig's Tower was transformed into a substantial fortification, its armament including three 64 Pdr rifled muzzle loading cannons. The tower was demolished in the early 20th century.

An examination of historic maps of the area indicates that both the *Intermediare* Battery and Craig's Tower were situated close to, but outside the study area and were therefore identified as heritage issues that needed consideration in this study.

### **2.2.2 Shipwrecks**

Many ships were driven onto Woodstock beach by winter gales before the completion of the Alfred Basin in 1870. Most of these are now buried under the reclaimed lands of the Foreshore and Culemborg. Sceptre Reef, a substantial rocky outcrop, which is now buried under reclaimed land between Culemborg and the Small Boat Basin of Duncan Dock, was a particular hazard to shipping resulting in a number of notorious wreckings and loss of life. Unmarked graves, now identified as being victims of shipwrecks have been unearthed close to the site of Fort Knokke near Woodstock Station. Bodies tended to be buried close to where they washed up on Table Bay beaches.

The study area is directly down wind of Sceptre Reef and may therefore have acted as a catchment area for timbers, spars and cargo from shipwrecks. There is a possibility that bulk excavations may unearth artefacts of a maritime nature as the study area lies directly over the old shoreline of Table Bay. The possible presence of shipwrecks or material from shipwrecks is therefore identified as a heritage issue requiring consideration.

### **2.2.3 Historic landscapes**

The study area lies immediately between the 1920 and 1870 shorelines of Table Bay. In other words it is situated on the first land reclamation. The main bulk of the Table Bay land reclamations took place between 1933 and 1945 with the dredging and construction of Duncan Dock. For this reason the study area does have some immediate historic significance, albeit that the previous shorelines are buried and no longer visible.

### 3 Likelihood and Evaluation of Impacts

The heritage resources significance ratings (Table 1) and Impact ratings (Table 2) are summarised in the Appendix and described in detail below.

#### 3.1 *Evaluation of impacts on pre-colonial material*

Although prehistoric material is likely to have existed in the original shoreline dunes, It is very unlikely that any would have survived the land reclamation and construction of railways.

**Extent:** *Site specific.* Geographical extent of impacts is limited to those portions of the study area below ground level not impacted by previous development activities.

**Duration:** *Permanent.* Impacts by earthmoving and excavation on buried archaeological material are permanent. Archaeological material, once destroyed, does not regenerate and can never be replaced.

**Intensity:** *Low.* If any material has survived, it is likely to be in a secondary context.

**Probability of impact:** *Low.* It is expected that most pre-colonial archaeological material will already have been destroyed by previous development activities. Furthermore, any middens would have in all likelihood, been situated above the 1870 shoreline to the south of the study area.

**Significance:** *Low.* Any surviving archaeological material is expected to have been disturbed.

**Status of Impact:** Neutral.

**Degree of Confidence in predictions:** High.

**Legislation:** the South African Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 protects Pre-colonial Archaeological sites. Disturbance of such material may only take place in terms of a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

**Mitigation measures.** As a precaution it is suggested that monitoring by an archaeologist of the bulk earthmoving phase of site development take place. In the unlikely event of pre-colonial material being discovered this will need to be recorded and sampled to the satisfaction of the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

### 3.2 Evaluation of impacts on coastal defences

An overlay map demonstrating the position of the early shorelines indicates that the study area lies on reclaimed land immediately in front what used to be Craig's Tower/Battery (Figure 2). While it is unlikely that any surviving foundations of Craig's Tower would be directly impacted by activities within the study area, it is possible that related material (discarded cannons, stones and demolition rubble) may be found in the vicinity.

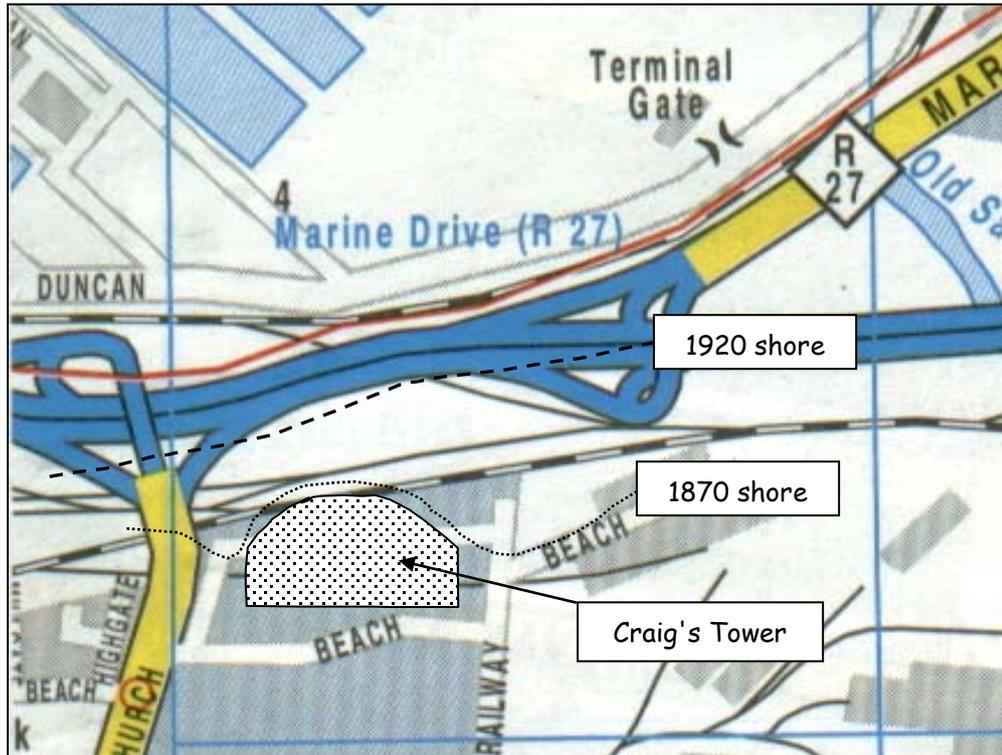


Figure 2

**Extent:** *Site specific.* Historic maps indicate that Craig's Tower lies south of the study area under a complex of warehouses and railway lines.

**Duration:** *Permanent.* Impacts by earthmoving and excavation on buried archaeological material are permanent. Archaeological material, once destroyed, does not regenerate and can never be replaced.

**Intensity:** *Low* It is not expected that *in-situ* remnants of Craig's Tower will be impacted.

**Probability of impact:** *Improbable.* While indications are that Craig's Tower is not in the study area, secondary archaeological material (cannons, artefacts, rubble) may be impacted in the study area.

**Significance:** *Low.* Since it is unlikely *in situ* remains of Craig's Tower will be impacted by development activities, loss of material of scientific or social value is not expected.

**Status of Impact:** *Neutral - positive.* The uncovering of any military remains will be a positive impact provided that the material is not discarded, looted or illegally sold. Such finds will contribute to the growing body of information.

**Degree of Confidence in predictions:** *Medium.* The potential impacts discussed above are based on predictions made in terms of available knowledge and literature only.

**Legislation:** The South African Heritage Resources Act protects "features, structures and artefacts associated with military history which are older than 75 years and the sites on which they are found." Removal or destruction of such material requires a permit issued by SAHRA.

**Mitigation measures:** As a precaution it is suggested that monitoring by an archaeologist of the bulk earthmoving phase of site development take place. In the event of material being discovered this will need to be recorded and sampled to the satisfaction of the South African Heritage Resources Agency. Cannons and other artefacts will need to be moved to a place of safety for long term storage and/or eventual display.

### **3.3 Evaluation of impacts on shipwrecks and graves of victims**

The position of the study area on what used to be the shallow waters of the near shore zone of Table Bay raises the possibility that shipwreck material could be exposed during excavations for development purposes. Graves of victims are likely to be above the high watermark, which according to the evidence available, lies outside the study area. The likelihood of finding human remains is low.

**Extent:** *Site specific.* Historic maps indicate that the study area lies immediately east of the 1870 shoreline and would have been the shallow waters of Table Bay - the eastern shores of which claimed many a shipwreck before 1870. The precise location and condition of individual shipwrecks is unknown.

**Duration:** *Permanent.* Impacts by earthmoving and excavation on buried archaeological material are permanent. Archaeological material, once destroyed, does not regenerate and can never be replaced.

**Intensity:** *Low.* If any shipwreck material has survived, it is not expected that it will take the form of large hull portions as ships that lay in the surf zone will have broken up. Heavy metal items and ballast will be buried in the sand.

**Probability of impact:** *Probable.* The historic records are not accurate enough to provide precise information on the location of shipwrecks or the graves of victims of shipwrecks, however, most excavations that have taken place on reclaimed land in Cape Town have produced evidence of shipwreck material.

**Significance:** *Low.* Potential impacts to shipwreck material are mitigateable.

**Status of Impact:** *Positive (with mitigation), Negative (without mitigation).* The uncovering of any maritime material will be a positive impact provided that the

material is not discarded, looted or illegally sold. Such finds will contribute to the growing body of information.

**Degree of Confidence in predictions:** *Medium.* The potential impacts discussed above are based on predictions made in terms of available knowledge and literature only.

**Legislation:** The South African Heritage Resources Act protects wrecks which are defined as "wrecked in South Africa, whether on land, in the internal waters, the territorial waters or in the maritime culture zone of the Republic, as defined respectively in sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Maritime Zones Act, 1994 (Act No. 15 of 1994), and any cargo, debris or artefacts found or associated therewith, which is older than 60 years or which SAHRA considers to be worthy of conservation."

The Act also protects graves markers and remains of people buried more than 60 years ago.

**Mitigation measures:** As a precaution it is suggested that monitoring by an archaeologist of the bulk earthmoving phase of site development take place. In the event of shipwreck material being discovered this will need to be recorded, systematically excavated and the finds transported to, and stored at a suitable facility such as the National Maritime Museum. Human remains will need to be exhumed under a permit issued by SAHRA and housed at a licensed institution such as the South African Museum or UCT Medical School.

### **3.4 Historic landscape**

At present there are no physical indications on the site of the alignment of the early shoreline, apart from the naming of "Beach Road" in the industrial area to the South. It is expected that shallow beach deposits from the old beach will be found under the recent fills of the study area.

**Extent:** *Site specific.* Historic maps indicate that the study area lies between the 1870 and 1920 shorelines. The original 1870 shoreline would have run roughly along the northern side of the cluster of railway lines.

**Duration:** *Permanent.* Impacts may result in disturbance of non-renewable beach deposits

**Intensity:** *Low.* Original shoreline currently forms no social or scientific function.

**Probability of impact:** *Highly probable.* Physical impacts to buried beach deposits will occur during bulk excavations.

**Significance:** *Low.* Impacts are of no particular social consequence

**Status of Impact:** *Positive (with mitigation), Neutral (without mitigation).* Incorporation of the shore alignment within the planning of the area will have a positive impact in terms of illustrating the historical development of the city.

***Degree of Confidence in predictions: High.***

***Legislation:*** Landscapes and natural features of cultural significance are considered to be aspects of the National Estate in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999.

***Mitigation measures:*** The Culemborg Development Framework advocates the inclusion of a "Heritage Thread" which roughly follows the alignment of the historic seawall and Woodstock Beach. Planning of any new development in the study area could incorporate continuity of this concept to acknowledge the historic shoreline of Table Bay.

## 4 Conclusion

In terms of a current knowledge of the study area, redevelopment is unlikely to impact *in-situ* archaeological finds. There is a possibility that some artefacts derived from both maritime and military origin will be encountered if the study area is subject to bulk excavation. These will need to be properly recorded, collected and curated. We believe that the foundations of Craig's Battery are directly to the east of the study area and are unlikely to be impacted, however rubble derived from this feature may be included in the land reclamation material.

## 5 Recommendations

- Before development activities commence, it would be advantageous for a consulting archaeologist to inspect any geotechnical excavations that may take place in the study area. This would present an opportunity to verify the possible impacts that may occur as well as provide information about the depth of marine deposits relating to the old shoreline.
- A consulting archaeologist must monitor bulk excavations for development purposes. The archaeologist will be responsible for checking the deposits for maritime or military artefacts or any other material considered to be part of the National Estate. In the event of a find, an archaeological team (which should be on standby), will need to remove any such material in terms of the required permits and conditions issued by SAHRA. Such material will need to be curated in a regional museum or suitable storage facility.
- Acknowledgement of the original shoreline in the planning of any new development (as per a "Heritage Thread" will enhance the social value of any development. This could be achieved through use of a landscaped path, road alignment, garden features and or/signage.

## **6 Sources**

### **Aerial Photographs**

Director General, Survey and Mapping 498/304/1992.

Director General, Survey and Mapping, Woodstock Beach 1926.

### **Maps**

Bird, WW. 1822. Map with soundings of Table Bay. State of the Cape in 1822. City Planners Dept, Map showing defences at Cape Town.

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Cape Archives M1/1404 1882 Navigational chart, Table Bay.

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M23/1 Plan of the Sea Line with section drawing.

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Turner, M. 1988. Geographical list of Shipwrecks In Shipwrecks and Salvage in South Africa. Cape Town: Struik.

### **Websites**

National Heritage Resources Act. 25 of 1999. Legislation section. Parliament of the Government of South Africa.

## 7 Appendix A

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Extent</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Probability</b>
Pre-colonial	Local	Permanent	Low	Improbable
Craig's Tower & associated material	Local	Permanent	Low	Improbable
Un-marked graves	Local	Permanent	Low	Improbable
Shipwrecks	Local	Permanent	Low	Probable
Historic landscape	Local	Permanent	Low	Probable

Table 1 Significance rating

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Significance</b>	<b>Without mitigation</b>	<b>With mitigation</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Confidence</b>
Pre-colonial	Low	Negative	Positive	Positive	High
Craig's Tower & associated material	Low	Negative	Positive	Positive	Medium - Low
Un-marked graves	Low	Negative	Positive	Positive	Low
Shipwrecks	Low	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Medium
Historic landscape	Low	Neutral	Positive	Positive	High

Table 2 Impact rating