

Agency for Cultural Resource Management

Specialists in Archaeological Studies and Heritage Resource Management

PO Box 159 Riebeeck West 7306 Phone/Fax 022-461 2755

E-mail: acrm@wcaccess.co.za Cellular: 082 321 0172

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Mr Neville van der Westhuizen
Settlement Planning Services
PO Box 3405
Cape Town
8000

Dear Mr van der Westhuizen

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT METROPOLITAN CEMETERY STUDY PHASE II – VAALFONTEIN OUTSPAN

The site visit and assessment took place on the 17 December 2004.

The affected property is located alongside the railway reserve, between the R102 and Old Main Road; about 10 kilometers west of the town of Somerset West in the Western Cape Province (refer to attached Figure).

The proposed site is 6.7 ha in extent.

A site locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of the site is illustrated in Figure 2.

The Terms of Reference for the specialist archaeological assessment are to:

- Identify and map archaeological heritage resources on the proposed site;
- Determine the importance of archaeological heritage resources on the proposed site;
- Determine and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on the archaeological heritage resources, and
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimise impacts associated with the proposed development.

The property is severely disturbed and degraded. An old tar road cuts through a section of the site in the south-eastern portion of the property. The site is also infested with alien vegetation, mainly Port Jackson and stands of large Blue Gum trees. An old fill site covered in Kikuyu grass is located alongside the Transfer Station in the far western portion of the site. The surface deposits across the property comprise mainly hard gravels and clay (Figures 1-2).

An old farm labourer cemetery (on the Farm Eendrag) occurs in the extreme eastern portion of the site, which will be incorporated into the proposed new Vaalfontein cemetery. The private farm cemetery will not be disturbed in any way.

The foundations of some recent buildings and the ruined remains of one or two small structures were noted close to the old cemetery, among a thick stand of Blue Gums.

The building foundations and ruins (stores and accommodation units) are possibly related to a decommissioned Public Works facility (Mr Neville van der Westhuizen pers. comm.) and comprise modern clay bricks, cement blocks, concrete bits and broken plastic piping. The ruins/structures are not considered to be historically significant.

No pre-colonial archaeological-heritage remains were located during the assessment of the site.

The probability of locating significant archaeological heritage remains during implementation of the project is likely to be improbable.

The study has shown that the proposed site is suitable for development.

The assessment of the proposed project has rated the potential impacts to archaeological material as being low.

The site is not considered to be archaeologically sensitive, vulnerable, or threatened.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jonathan Kaplan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jonathan Kaplan

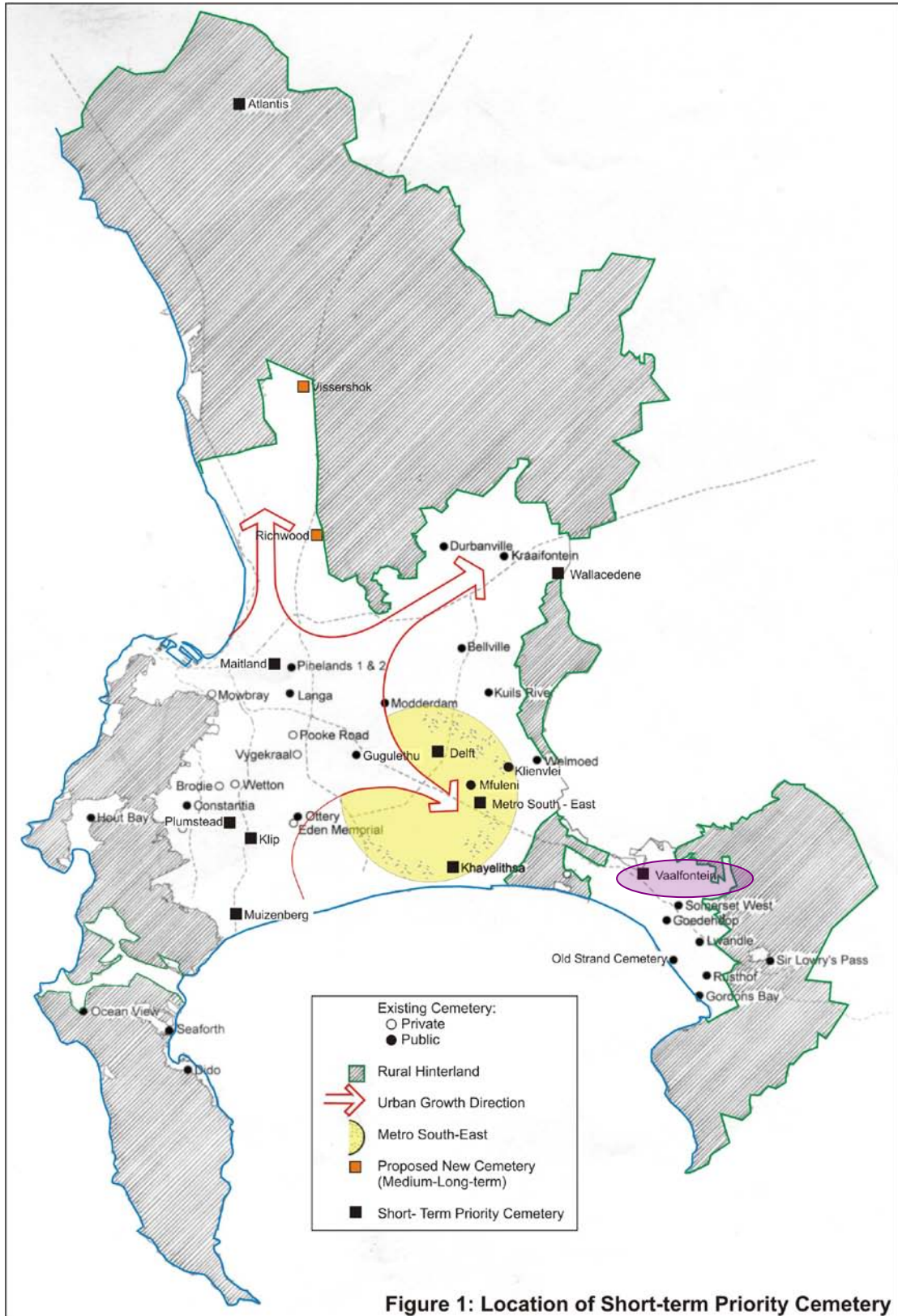


Figure 1: Location of Short-term Priority Cemetery



Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the affected property.



Figure 3. The site facing east.



Figure 4. The site facing west.