

Agency for Cultural Resource Management

Specialists in Archaeological Studies and Heritage Resource Management

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Dear Ms Bezuidenhout

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSPECTION AND ASSESSMENT OF A HISTORIC LIME KILN ALONGSIDE DIVISIONAL ROAD 1131 MALMESBURY

1. Background and brief

Jeffares & Green Consulting Engineers¹ requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct an archaeological inspection and assessment of a lime kiln on the Farm Botmansdrift in the Malmesbury District.

Concern has been expressed by Heritage Western Cape (HWC), the Provincial Heritage Authority that excavations for a proposed borrow pit on the subject farm might impact negatively on the historic lime kiln, which is located alongside the proposed (borrow pit) site. HWC requested that an archaeological assessment of the kiln be undertaken in order to determine possible negative impacts resulting from the proposed project.

The site visit and assessment took place on 12 April 2006.

A 1:50 000 locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

2. The site

The site for the proposed borrow pit is located alongside the Divisional Road (DR) 1131, on the Farm Botmansdrift, which is situated near Hermon, about 10 kms south east of Riebeek Kasteel in the Western Cape Province (refer to Figure 1). The proposed borrow pit comprises old agricultural lands (wheat fields) (Figure 2). The surrounding land use is farmland, primarily wheat, but some vineyards, fruit trees and olive trees also occur.

¹ Jeffares & Green Consulting Engineers Fax (021) 532 0950

3. Description of the lime kiln and historical background

The lime kiln (S°32 28 789 E°18 55 722) is located on a small hillock about 50 m east of the DR 1131 (Figures 3-5). The large kiln is well preserved and relatively intact. Built from large, undressed blocks of shale, the entire structure has been dry plastered. The inner chamber of the four kilns comprises shale and heat-resistant bricks reinforced with metal supports. A large pile of processed lime is located to one side of the kiln (refer to Figure 4). Rubble from a demolished farm school is also located to one side of the kiln (refer to Figure 5). Two large Pepper trees (possibly planted around the time of the construction of the kiln), stand to one side. A plaque on the front of the kiln reads 1911. Older than 60 years, the kiln is a protected structure in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

According to Mr Karel Visser (pers. comm.), a third generation farmer on the Farm Botmansdrift, lime was extracted from a quarry located about 150 m west of the DR 1131 (Figure 6). After processing, lime was loaded onto small dumpers (or 'kokerpans') and then transported by rail to a low bridge over the Berg River (Figure 7). On the opposite side of the river, the lime was loaded onto ox wagons and then transported to the station at Hermon about 5 kms away, from where the product was railed either to Cape Town or further inland. According to Mr Visser (pers. comm.) mining ended around 1943.

4. The proposed borrow pit

Deposits from the proposed borrow pit will be used to provide a base topping for a 16 km stretch of the DR 1131. Measuring about 2.5 ha in extent, (shale) deposits will be taken from the proposed site which is located on either side of the DR 1131.

Several weathered and highly burnished Early Stone Age² (ESA) tools in locally available river quartzite's were located on the site of the proposed borrow pit, on both sides of the DR 1131, the larger portion being on the eastern side of the road (refer to Figure 2). The small quarry used to mine the lime deposits is located on the smaller portion of the proposed site, on the western side of the road.

A Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposed site was not undertaken by the consultant, but a brief scan of the fields located several large flakes, a large core, some chunks and manuports. No formal tools were found. The tools occur in a severely disturbed and degraded context. Several tools were also located in the road reserve, while tools were also noted on large piles of rocks on the Farm Botmansdrift, that were removed by the farmer during preparation of the surrounding fields for planting.

The archaeological heritage remains have been rated low local significance and no mitigation is required.

² A term referring to the period between 2 million and 200 000 years ago.

5. Impact statement

The proposed borrow pit will not impact negatively on the historic lime kiln on the Farm Botmansdrift. Figure 8 clearly indicates that the southern boundary of the footprint of the proposed borrow pit is located about 300 m from the kiln. A farm fence and wide drainage area also separates the proposed borrow site from the kiln, which is located on a small hillock.

6. Recommendations

With regard to the proposed construction of a borrow pit on the Farm Botmansdrift, the following recommendations are made.

- The proposed project should be allowed to proceed as planned.
- The historic lime kiln, the immediate surrounding area and all associated material must not be disturbed or damaged in any way during the excavation of the borrow pit.
- A Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposed borrow pit is not required, since the site is already in a severely disturbed and degraded state.

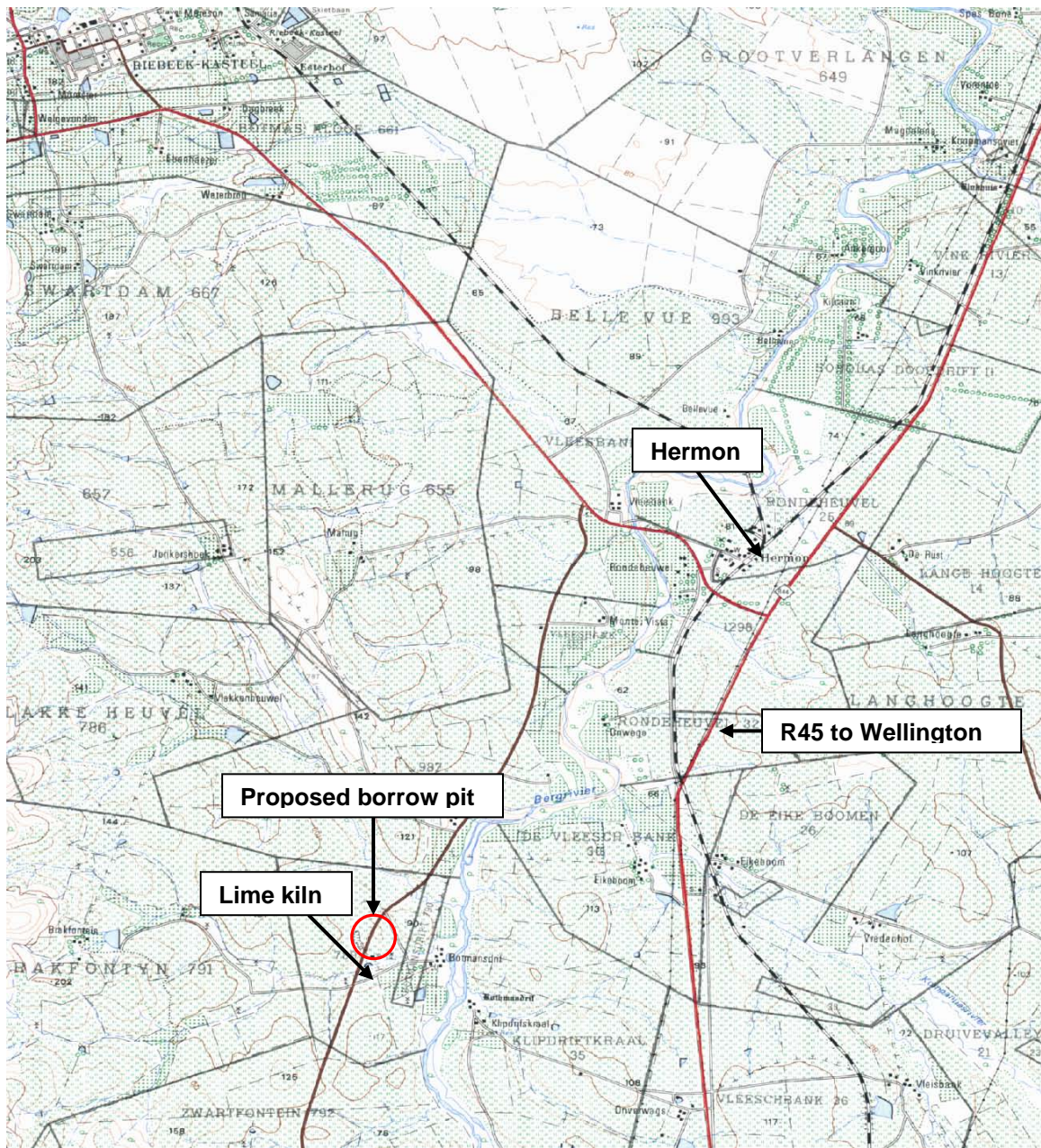


Figure 1. Locality Map (3318 BD Riebeeck Kasteel)



Figure 2. View of the proposed borrow pit facing south. Arrow indicates the lime kiln.



Figure 3. Frontal view of the lime kiln.



Figure 4. View of the lime kiln facing west. Note the large pile of processed lime in the foreground.



Figure 5. View of the kiln facing north east. Note the rubble from the demolished school



Figure 6. Old quarry used to mine lime and later gravel. Arrow indicates the lime kiln.



Figure 7. Mr Karel Visser indicating a concrete block (the remains of the railway bridge) over which the railway line was built over the Berg River. Lime was loaded onto ox wagons and transported to Hermon Station.

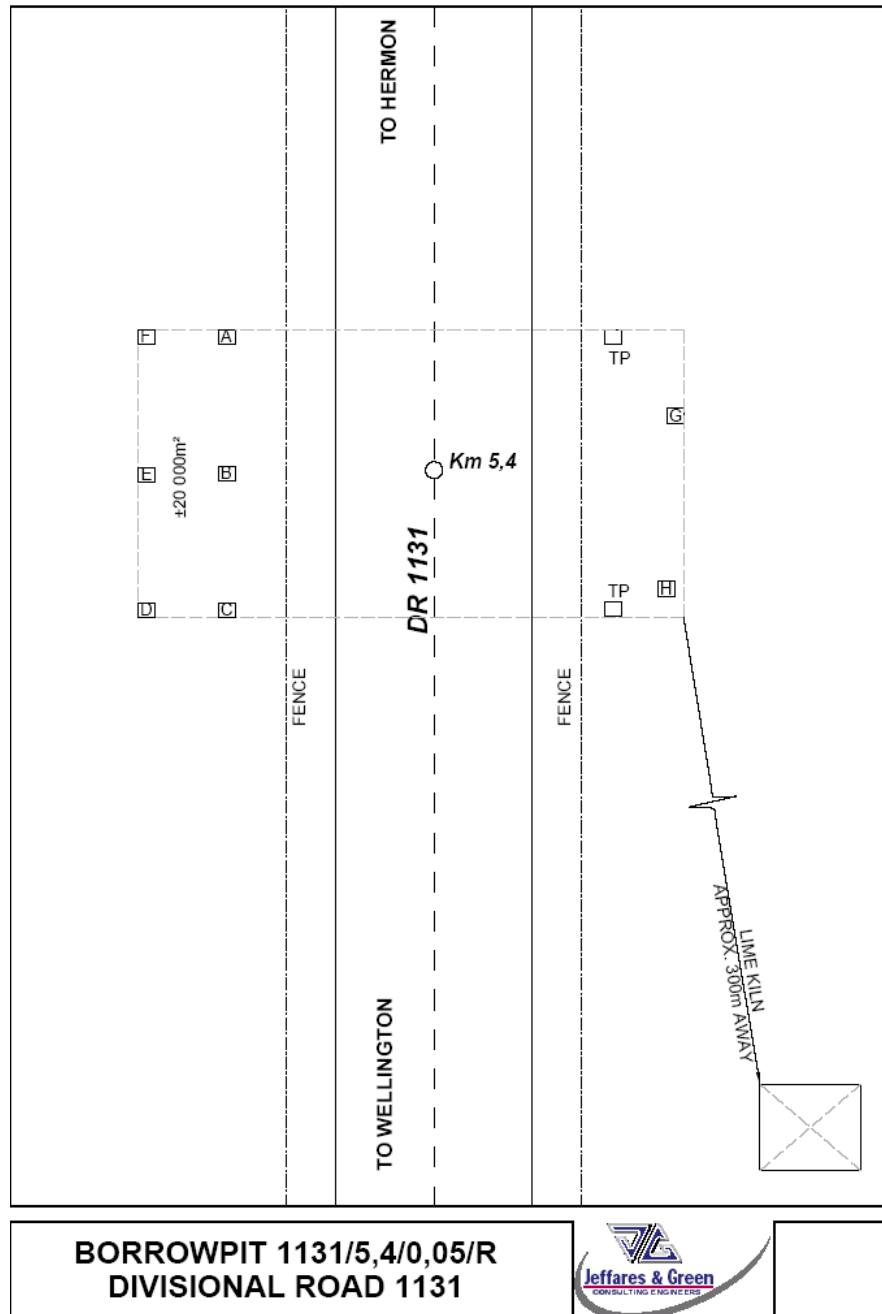


Figure 8. Plan of the extent of the proposed borrow pit.