

# DOCUMENTATION OF DISTURBANCE AT THE HISTORIC SLAVE LODGEVERGELEGEN ESTATE, SOMERSET WEST

Prepared for  
**Vergelegen Wine Estate**  
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Prepared by  
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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

During the process of laying telephone cables on the estate, Telkom dug a trench through the remains of the old slave lodge. Initially at the request of the National Monuments Council, Vergelegen Estate was requested to contact an archaeologist to document the damage and to see if at least by studying the exposed sections in the trench, some good could be derived from this unfortunate event. The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town (ACO) was requested by Vergelegen Estate undertake this task and to suggest ways to mitigate the damage. On visiting the site however, it was found that the trench had already been filled in.

It had been our intention to suggest that the trench be filled with clean white builders sand (after studying the sections) which would have marked the disturbance clearly. As this was no longer possible it was decided that a record should be made of the position of the disturbance by preparing a surveyed drawing.

The ACO was further requested to identify other archaeologically sensitive areas on the estate so that protective barriers could be erected to prevent similar problems from occurring in the future.

It should be noted that damage to sites such as these is in contravention of the National Monuments Act of 1969 (as amended).

## **2. METHOD**

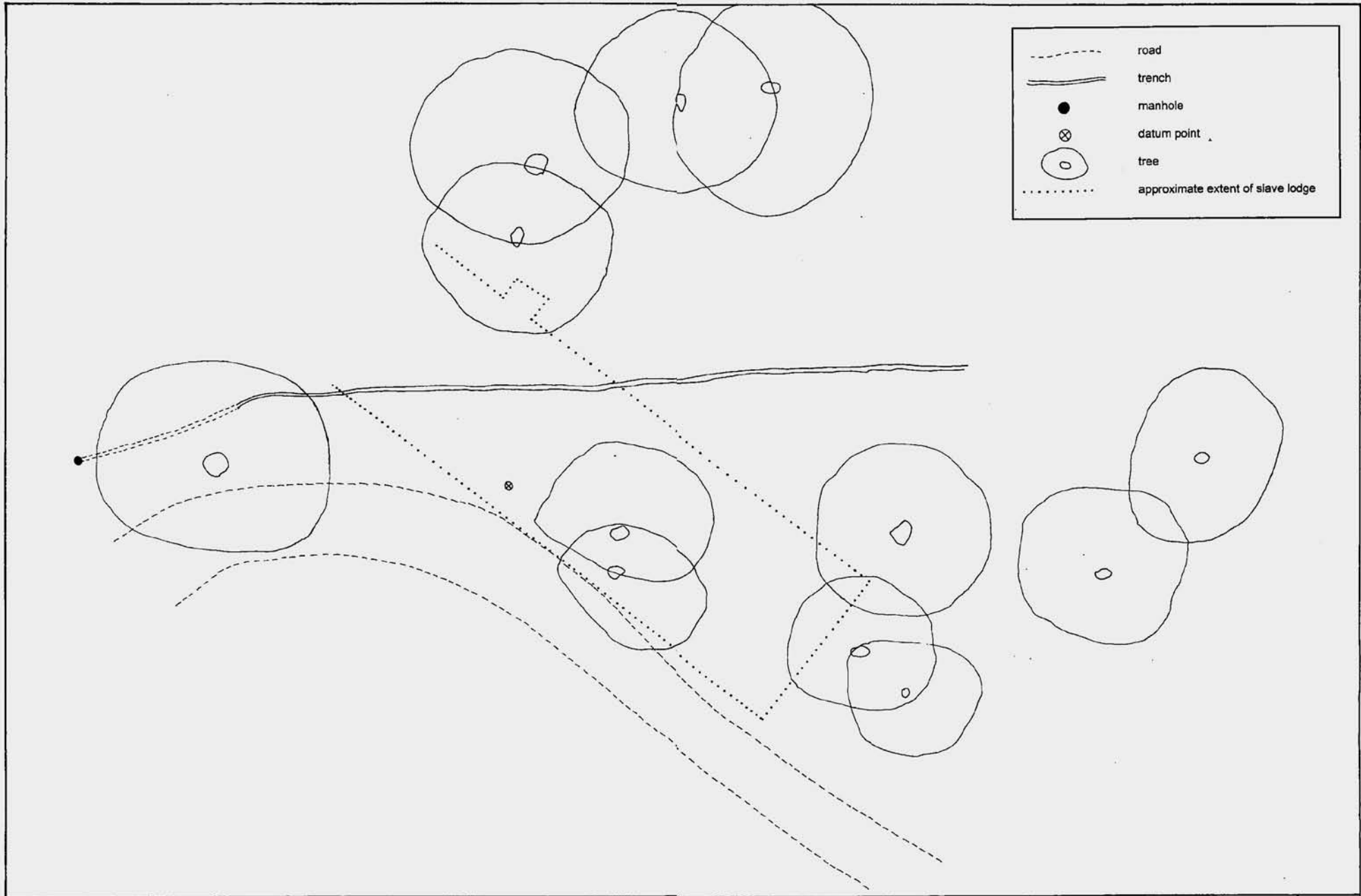
The area was surveyed using a *Leica* Total Station and a drawing prepared using the readings (Figure 1). Readings are presented in Table 1.







While surveying the trench and other objects such as the trees and road posed no problems, no structural features of the slave lodge are exposed to allow the building remains to be accurately plotted onto the drawing. By using an earlier drawing of the lodge (Markell 1993) we have approximated the location of the trench relative to the slave lodge to give some sense of what damage has occurred (Figure 2).

Archaeologically sensitive areas around the slave lodge and the old mill site have been identified and indicated by tying yellow tape around trees. If some form of barrier is erected using these markers as guidelines, the sites should be protected from similar disturbances in the future. It may be necessary to install signage on such a barrier indicating that no digging should occur within.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 We presume that the reason for filling in the trench is because cables have been laid in it. This raises a problem in the sense that if any problems are experienced in the future someone will have to dig up the cable. Since the trench has not been clearly marked it may be difficult for the average contractor to relocate it without some exploratory digging. This could result in more damage. To avoid this problem it is recommended that some form of marker pegs be placed at intervals on the surface along the course of the trench. Short lengths of white PVC conduit may be an option.



	road
	trench
	manhole
	datum point
	tree
	approximate extent of slave lodge

**1** Surveyed diagram - trench through slave lodge

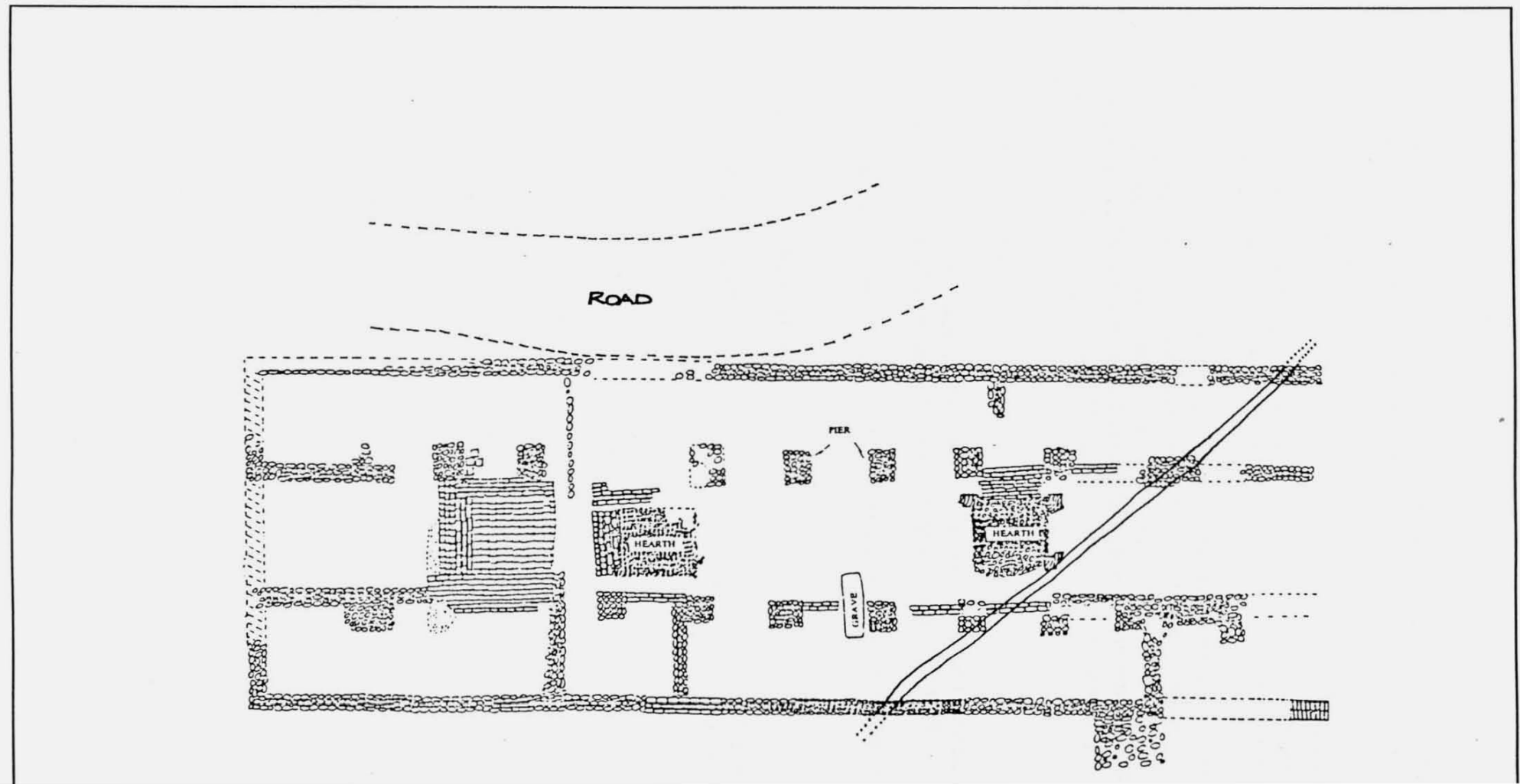
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No	Description	E	N	Height
	Base point	0.000	30.456	-0.694
1	Oak Tree	1.216	20.635	-0.333
2	Oak Tree	18.481	-1.376	0.331
3	Oak Tree	24.059	-2.889	-0.100
4	Oak Tree	28.856	-13.659	-0.200
5	Oak Tree	30.117	-20.469	-0.080
6	Oak Tree	-3.955	-9.174	0.137
7	Oak Tree	-6.784	-9.290	0.122
8	Oak Tree	-15.956	-30.745	-0.369
8.1	Oak Tree	-12.840	-27.254	-0.188
9	Oak Tree	-3.770	-30.332	0.088
10	Oak Tree	-6.878	-45.130	-0.430
11	Oak Tree	2.122	-52.653	-0.425
12	Edge of Road LHS	-2.416	24.481	-0.502
13	Edge of Road LHS	-0.641	15.828	-0.292
14	Edge of Road LHS	-0.625	7.256	-0.086
15	Edge of Road LHS	-3.693	-1.403	0.095
16	Edge of Road LHS	-9.154	-8.755	0.123
17	Edge of Road LHS	-16.877	-16.396	-0.068
18	Edge of Road LHS	-28.271	-33.478	-0.250
19	Edge of Road RHS	-6.418	7.273	-0.206
20	Edge of Road RHS	-5.449	13.963	-0.344
21	Edge of Road RHS	-6.626	19.599	-0.548
22	Edge of Road RHS	-9.686	-0.426	0.014
23	Edge of Road RHS	-13.428	-5.579	0.000
24	Edge of Road RHS	-27.280	-23.379	-0.338
25	Trench	5.356	18.973	no ht.
26	Trench	5.952	15.834	-0.328
27	Trench	6.448	12.076	-0.328
28	Trench	6.866	8.780	-0.200
29	Trench	6.893	5.444	0.045
30	Trench	7.024	1.525	0.015
31	Trench	6.995	-2.449	0.150
32	Trench	7.058	6.913	0.051
33	Trench	7.337	-10.515	-0.015
34	Trench	7.887	-15.669	0.015
35	Trench	8.214	-19.087	0.392
36	Trench	8.486	-22.640	0.024
37	Trench	8.657	-25.852	0.253
38	Trench	8.683	-29.706	0.149
39	Trench	8.720	-32.853	-0.357
40	Trench	8.650	-35.012	-0.287
41	Burial Sign	2.015	-8.816	0.026

Table 1: Survey data

Instrument height 1507mm  
Instrument height 1507mm



**2**

The approximate position of the trench superimposed on an earlier drawing of the slave lodge.  
Reference: Markell 1993.

Scale: 1:200



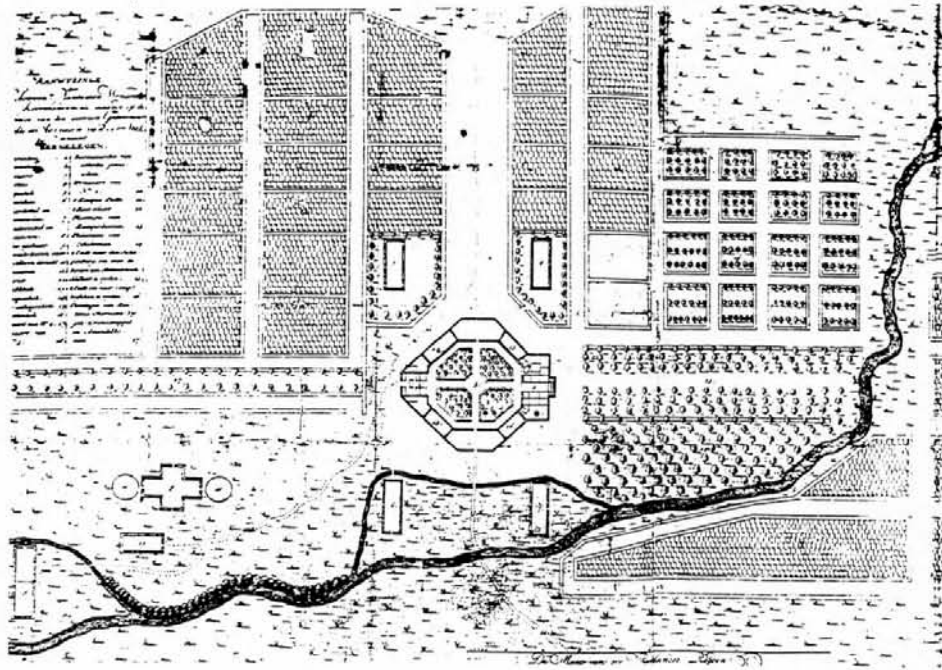
3.2 Barriers should be erected around archaeologically sensitive areas to prevent a recurrence of this problem. The type of construction should be of a type that will leave no doubt that something is being protected. Additional signage may need to be added forbidding any digging, either manual or mechanical within the demarcated area.

3.3 While the mill, slave lodge and winery have been easy to identify, locations of some other buildings are not clear as they have never been excavated. The buildings in question appear to the east of the slave lodge on an old plan of 1712 (Figure 3). Vergelegen Wine Estate should take note of this and ensure that no large scale trenching or earthmoving occurs here without an impact assessment first being conducted.

#### **4. PROFESSIONAL TEAM**

Fieldwork and report

Dave Halkett  
Belinda Mütti



Plan of the Vergelegen estate from the *Contra Deductie* (Tasman and Van der Heyden 1712)



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