

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
PORTION OF ERF 2792
ST. HELENA BAY
SALDANHA - VREDENBURG DISTRICT**

Prepared for

BCD TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNERS

By

Agency for Cultural Resource Management

P.O. Box 159

Riebeeck West

7306

Ph/Fax: 022 461 2755

Cellular: 082 321 0172

E-mail: acrm@waccess.co.za

**AUGUST
2005**

Executive summary

BCD Town and Regional Planners requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management undertake a specialist Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of a portion of Erf 2792 St. Helena Bay, on the Cape West Coast.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the affected property is for the purpose of a residential housing development.

The extent of the proposed development (3.48 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

The aim of the study is to locate and map archaeological heritage sites/remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

Two very thin, discreet scatters of Later Stone Age tools were located during the baseline study, but these occur in a highly disturbed context and have been graded low local significance.

Stone tools were located over the rest of the affected property, but are very thinly spread over the surrounding area.

No old building or structures occur on the vacant property.

The Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment has identified no significant impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material that will need to be mitigated prior to development activities.

The specialist Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of a Portion of Erf 2792 St. Helena Bay has rated the potential impacts to archaeological material as being low.

With regard to the proposed development of Erf 2792 St Helena Bay, the following recommendations are made:

- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie @ 021 462 4502).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and brief

BCD Town and Regional Planners requested the Agency for Cultural Resource Management to undertake a specialist Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of a Portion of Erf 2792 St Helena Bay, Saldanha – Vredenburg District on the Cape West Coast.

The extent of the proposed development (3.48 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the affected property is for the purpose of single residential housing development comprising 50 units.

The aim of the study is to locate, identify and map archaeological remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, and to propose measures to mitigate against the impact.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the archaeological study were:

- to determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological sites of significance within the proposed site;
- to identify and map any sites of archaeological significance within the proposed site;
- to assess the sensitivity and conservation significance of archaeological sites within the proposed site;
- to assess the status and significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed development, and
- to identify mitigatory measures to protect and maintain any valuable archaeological sites that may exist within the proposed site

3. THE STUDY SITE

A locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of Erf 2792 is illustrated in Figure 2.

The highly disturbed property is located in St Helena Bay, on the Cape West Coast. Access to the site is via Harbour Lights Road, from the main road between St. Helena Bay and Hanna's Bay.

The vacant site comprises old agricultural lands on relatively flat west-facing slopes comprising highly weathered quartzite soils (Figures 3-6). An old track defines the eastern boundary of the property, while an old track defines the western boundary of the site. Dune mole rat activity is extensive across the site.

No old buildings or other structures appear on the affected property.

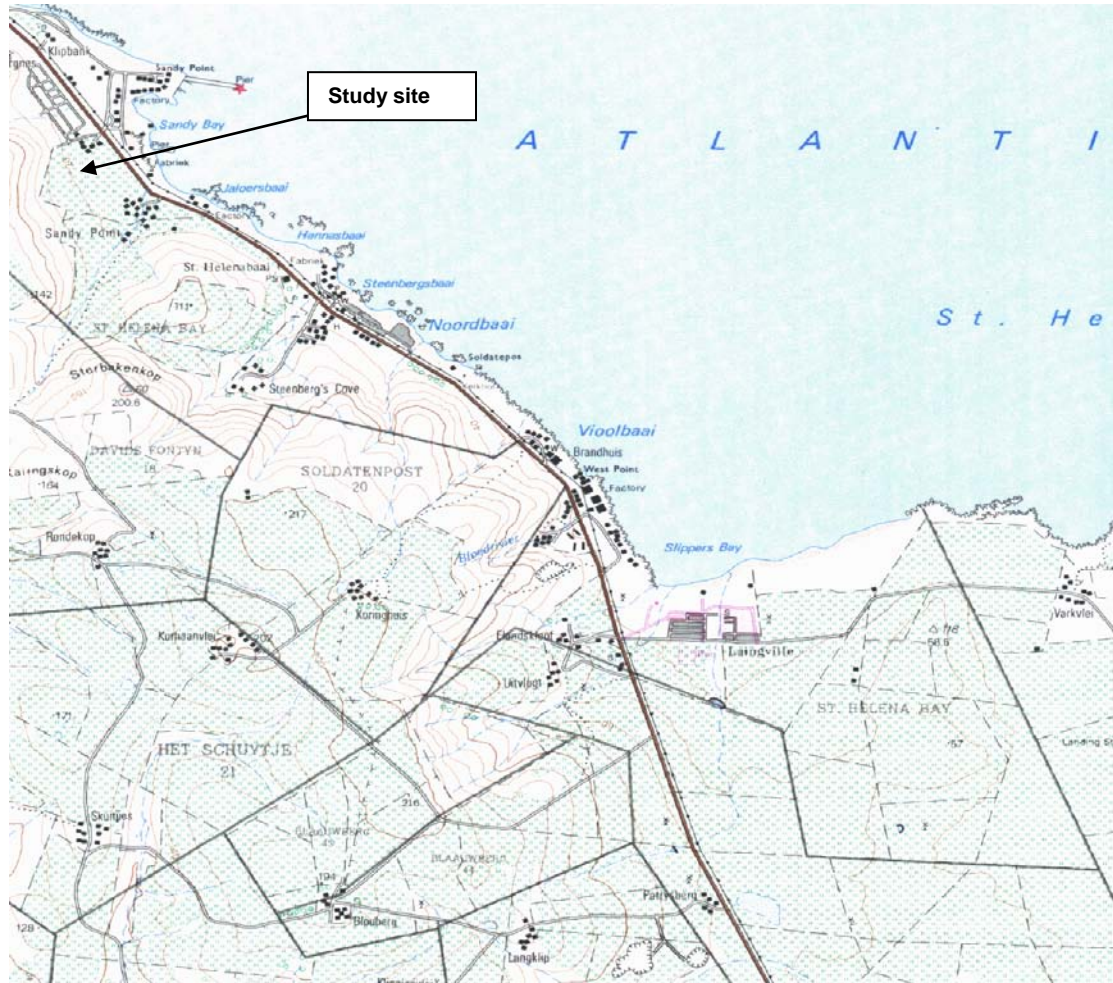


Figure 1. Site locality map (1:50 000 3218 CA & CC Veldrif).



Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the site.



Figure 3. Erf 2792 St Helena Bay. View of the site facing south west.



Figure 4. Erf 2792 St Helena Bay. View of the site facing north east.



Figure 5. Erf 2792 St Helena Bay. View of the site facing east. Harbour Lights Road is to the right of the plate.



Figure 6. Erf 2792 St Helena Bay. View of the site facing south east.

4. APPROACH TO THE STUDY

4.1 Method of survey

The approach followed in the specialist archaeological study entailed a detailed foot survey of Erf 2792 St Helena Bay.

The site visit and assessment took place on the 12th of August 2005.

More visible archaeological occurrences were recorded and given a co-ordinate using a Gamin Gecko 201 GPS set on map datum WGS 84.

A desktop study was also undertaken.

4.2 Limitations

There were no limitations associated with the study.

5. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PRECOLONIAL HISTORY OF ST. HELENA BAY

Large numbers of archaeological sites occur along the rocky shoreline in the St. Helena Bay area (Kaplan 1993; Halkett & Hart 1995). Rocky shorelines were favoured by both Later Stone Age¹ hunter-gatherers and Khoi herders in the past, as it offered greater opportunities for the exploitation of marine foods.

In recent years a number of archaeological assessments have taken place in St. Helena Bay, mainly as a result of the increase in the demand for residential housing and associated services (Kaplan 2005a, b, c).

An extensive scatter of fragmented shellfish remains and large numbers of stone artefacts (in quartz, quartzite and silcrete) were recorded in Erf 2081, while several low-density scatters of marine shellfish and stone artefacts were located during a study of Erf 2793 (Kaplan 2005a). Erf 2793 is located directly behind Erf 2792.

Several quartz flakes and fragments of shellfish were also noted on weathered quartzite soils during an archaeological assessment of a proposed pipeline and reservoir in nearby Hanna's Bay (Kaplan 2005b).

¹ A term referring to the last 20 000 years of precolonial history in southern Africa.

6. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)

...any development or other activity which will change the character of a site exceeding 5 000m², or the rezoning or change of land use of a site exceeding 10 000 m², requires an archaeological impact assessment in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

6.1.1 Structures (Section 34 (1))

No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), or Heritage Western Cape.

6.1.2 Archaeology (Section 35 (4))

No person may, without a permit issued by the SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, excavate, alter or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object.

6.1.3 Burial grounds and graves (Section 36 (3))

No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years, which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND DESCRIPTION

Two Later Stone Age sites were located during the specialist archaeological study.

272/1 (GPS reading S° 32 44 964 E 18° 00 434)

The site is located about 50 m south of Harbour Lights Road in the north eastern portion of the property.

The site comprises a very thin, discreet scatter of about 15 stone artefacts spread among loose highly weathered quartzite soils. The stone artefacts comprise all quartz flakes, chunks and a few chips. One small bipolar quartz core was also counted. No pottery was found on the site.

The site has been graded low local significance and no mitigation is required.

272/2 (GPS reading S° 32 44 90.3 E 18° 00 46.6)

A thin scatter of about nine stone tools and pieces of weathered shellfish fragments on highly weathered quartzite soils were located in the southern portion of the property close to the boundary fence of the site. All the tools are in quartz and comprise flakes, chunks and chips. Limpet (genus Patella) overwhelmingly dominates the shellfish, with a few fragments of Black Mussel (Choromytilus meridionalis) also present.

The site is of low local significance and no mitigation is required.

Stone tools, including a large silcrete core, a handful of quartz flakes and chunks, one miscellaneous grindstone fragment, several quartzite beach cobbles (manuports), a sharp edge quartzite flake, and two silcrete flakes were found on the remainder of the property, but these are mainly isolated finds spread very thinly over the surrounding area.

No stone chips or shellfish remains were found associated with any of the dune mole rat dumps over the property suggesting that below-ground archaeological remains do not occur on the property.

8. IMPACT STATEMENT

The impact of the proposed development of Erf 2792 St. Helena Bay on important archaeological heritage remains is likely to be low.

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

Human burials may, however, be exposed or uncovered during earthworks and excavations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The archaeological impact assessment of Erf 2792 St Helena Bay, has rated the potential impacts to archaeological material as being low provided that:

- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie @ 021 462 4502).

10. REFERENCES

Halkett, D. & Hart. T. 1995. A Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of Portion 6 of the farm Dyker Eiland, St. Helena Bay. Report prepared for Beyers, A.W. Land Surveyors and Township Consultants. Archaeology Contracts Office, University of Cape Town.

Kaplan, J. 2005a. Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment Erf 2793 St. Helena Bay Saldanha-Vredenburg District. Report prepared for BCD Town and Regional Planners. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 2005b. Archaeological assessment the proposed Hanna's Bay reservoir pump station and pipeline Saldanha – Vredenburg District. Report prepared for Aubrey Withers Environmental Consultants. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 2005c. Archaeological Impact Assessment Erven 1878 (Portion of Erf 20) and 4603 (Portion of Erf 1878) St. Helena Bay. Report prepared for Dennis Moss Partnership. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 1993. The state of archaeological information in the coastal zone from the Orange River to Ponta do Ouro. Report prepared for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.