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**AN INVESTIGATION OF AN HISTORIC WELL ON ERF  
1878 (PTN OF ERF 20) AND ERF 4603 (PTN OF ERF 1878),  
ST. HELENA BAY**

Prepared for

**Nations Hero Investments (Pty) Ltd**

January 2006



Prepared by

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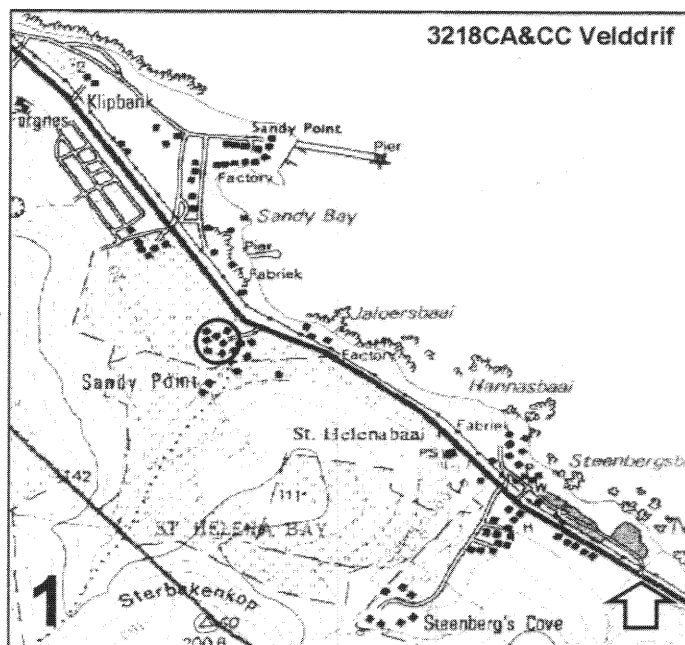
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

As a prelude to development, a Heritage statement<sup>1</sup> and Phase 1 archaeological assessment<sup>2</sup> of the above property was prepared in 2005. The location of the property is shown in Figure 1. While no pre-colonial archaeology was observed, the heritage statement noted the presence of a number of buildings of varying ages, the earliest of which is a dwelling house dating to the late 19th/early 20th century. The presence of a well was also noted and it was recommended that an archaeologist should assess the likelihood of archaeological deposit existing at the base prior to any impacts occurring. The location of the well on the property is shown in Figure 2. A letter from HWC BELCOM to Aikman and Associates<sup>3</sup> indicated that they would endorse the heritage statement provided that *inter alia*, the well be inspected and a report prepared for submission to the APM committee at HWC (letter reproduced in Appendix 1. The Archaeology Contracts Office was appointed by Dennis Moss Partnership<sup>4</sup> on behalf of the client to undertake that assessment. The fieldwork was completed on the 27th January 2006.



Mapping information supplied by: Chief Directorate Surveys and Mapping.  
Website: w3sli.wcape.gov.za

## 2. METHODOLOGY

It was proposed to the client that the project take place in two phases. The initial phase would consist of a site inspection to quickly assess the nature of the well construction, and to determine if there was any archaeological deposit at the base. If we found that there was a substantial, and potentially historically significant deposit, a second phase to remove those deposits would be undertaken.



The initial inspection required descending to the base of the well and determining if any deposit was present, or if a solid base existed. Estimating the depth of the deposit was

<sup>1</sup> Aikman, H. 2005. Erf 1878 and 4603 St Helena: Proposed rezoning and subdivision. Heritage statement prepared for Nations Hero Investments (Pty) Ltd by Aikman Associates.

<sup>2</sup> Kaplan, J., 2005. Phase 1 archaeological impact assessment of erf Erf 1878 and 4603 St Helena.

<sup>3</sup> 19-10-2005 ref: C13/3/6/2/2/1/1/C4

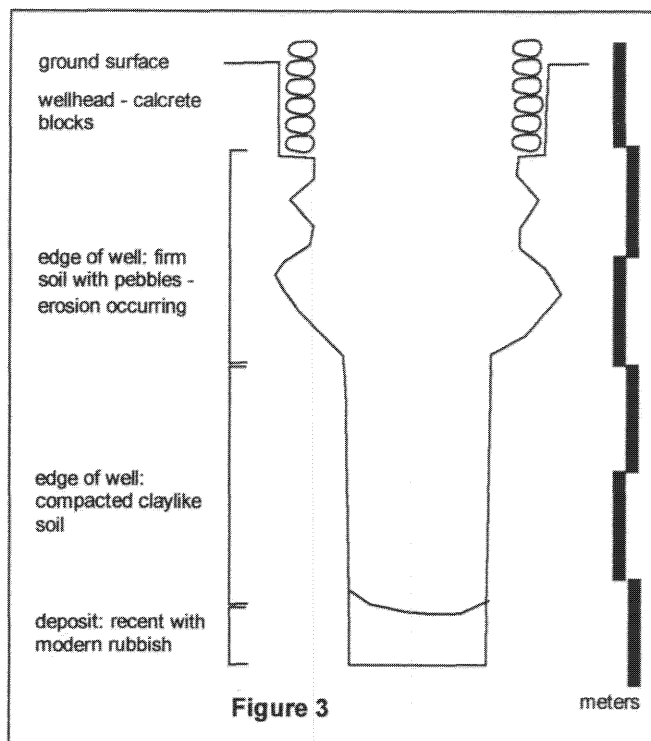
<sup>4</sup> Derek Moss - Derek@dmp.co.za

achieved by hammering in metal spikes of various lengths at various points until a solid base was detected.

### 3. RESULTS

On arrival, we determined by measurement that the depth from top of the wellhead to the infilled base to be 5 meters (Figure 3). The wellhead was constructed from dry packed calcrete blocks (rim skimmed with cement) while the lower part of the shaft was unlined natural substrate. No water was present. The diameter of the shaft at surface measured 1.8 meters, while at the base of the erosion zone, diameter was measured at 1.5 meters. A selection of photographs can be found at the end of the report.

Approximately 1.5 meters of substrate immediately below the stone lining showed concave erosion recesses suggesting less compact soils (decomposing granite) in contrast to the lower shaft, which although unlined, showed little sign of erosion or collapse probably due to a higher clay content at this depth.



We further determined that the thickness of deposit at the base to be approximately 600 - 800 mm thick. On the surface of the deposit was an accumulation of modern rubbish. Other rubbish protruded from the deposit and additional soft material could be felt during depth testing. A solid base was detected by probing at approximately 600 mm below deposit surface (approx 5.6 meters below the top of the wellhead) in the southern portion, while on the northern side, no solid base was detected. Instead, the "base" here was firm and yielding and distinctly different to the deposit above. We believe that this indicates a partial base of rock on the south and natural clay substrate on the north.

The deposit was damp indicating proximity of water table. A modern well point approximately 20 meters to the south east of the old shaft, is probably the reason no water is present in the well at present. A section of PVC pipe protruding through the wellhead suggests that rainwater is diverted into the well at times. A timber beam across the western portion of the wellhead, and the slots from another across the eastern section, suggest that a formal cover was in place in the past while at present the cover is ad hoc. It is possible that some form of pump (wind or electric) brought water to the surface to feed a drinking trough that is found adjacent to the wellhead. This is no longer in use.

### 4. CONCLUSION

The investigation has shown that the well most likely dates to a similar period as the main dwelling house. There is nothing in terms of the structural elements to suggest an earlier date. In our opinion the deposit at the base has no heritage significance and we believe that

ate XIX  
early XX Century

the information provided in this report should constitute sufficient documentation of the feature.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In our opinion, no further mitigation of the feature is required.

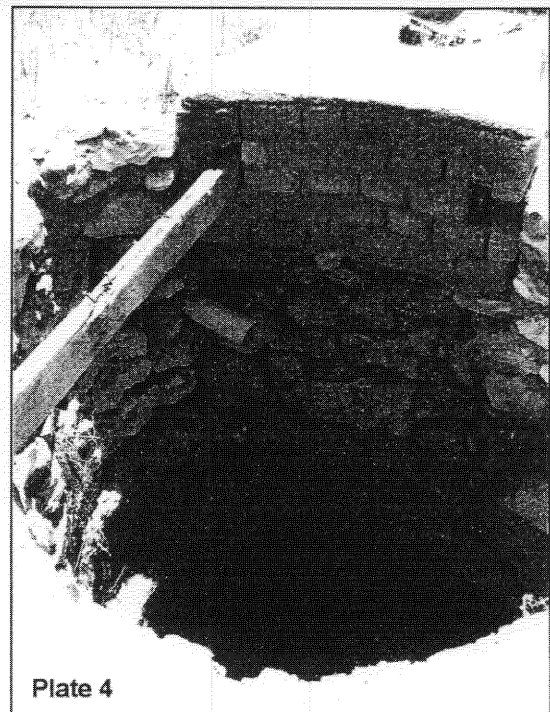
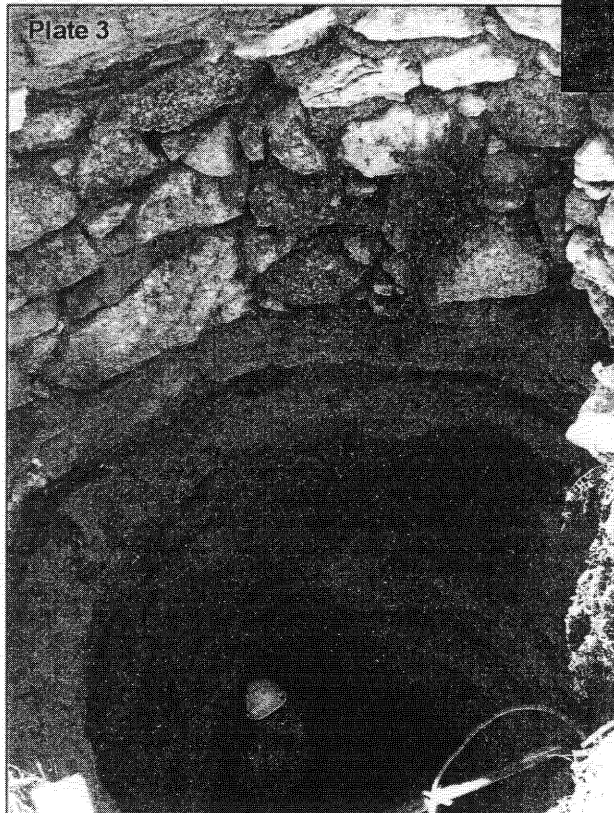
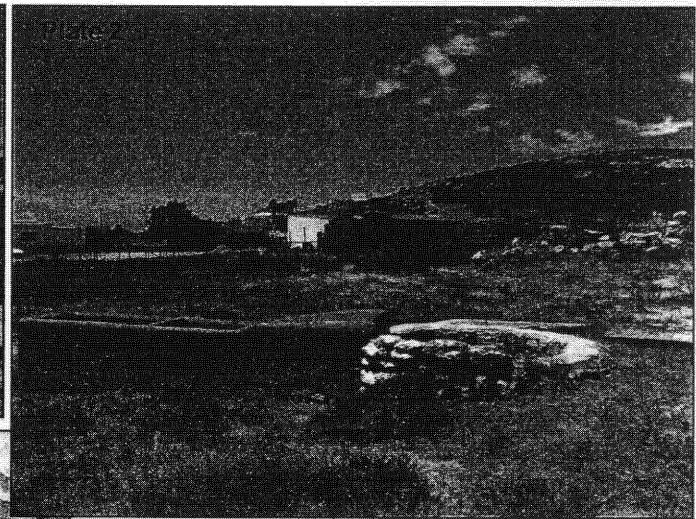
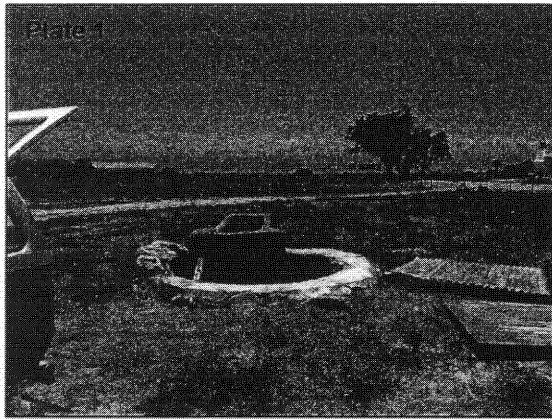
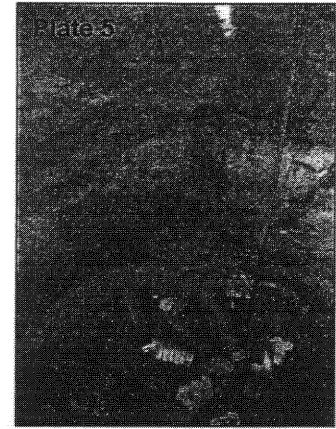
## 6. PHOTOGRAPHS

Plates 1&2: Two views of the well head and attached drinking trough

Plate 3: View of stone lining of the upper shaft and unlined lower shaft with erosion recesses

Plate 4: Detail of well head showing beam and beam slots and PVC outfall pipe

Plate 5: Base of the well showing unlined shaft wall and accumulated rubbish



**Fieldwork:** Dave Halkett and Isabel Schmidt  
**Report:** Dave Halkett

*Recommendations supported*

# Appendix 1

## HERITAGE WESTERN CAPE

Provincial Heritage Resources Management Authority of the Western Cape

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CAPE TOWN

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Email: [Cvanwijk@pgwc.gov.za](mailto:Cvanwijk@pgwc.gov.za)

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19-10-2005

Our Reference: C13/3/6/2/2/1/1/C4

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FOR ATTENTION OF: Mr HENRY AIKMAN

Aikman Associates  
18 Iey Road  
ST JAMES  
7945

Dear Mr Aikman

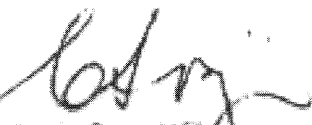
HERITAGE STATEMENT: ERF 1878, 4608, ST HELENA BAY, DISTRICT SALDANHA BAY

You are herewith informed that the heritage statement re the matter above had been endorsed on the following conditions:

1. That the plans for the renovation of the existing structures are to be submitted to the Built Environment and Landscapes Permit Committee (BELCom) for final approval / disapproval
2. That the well on the site be investigated by an approved archaeologist and the report submitted to the APM for approval / disapproval

Should you need any further information, do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours faithfully



Calvin S van Wijk  
For Accounting Officer: Heritage Resources Management Service  
p.p. Heritage Western Cape  
Copy to: Saldanha Bay Municipality, Private bag X12, Vredenburg, 7380