

PHASE ONE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION: HOLBAAI

Prepared for

Inverdoorn cc

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Prepared by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	3
3. METHOD	6
4. RESULTS	6
4.1 HB 1	6
4.2 HB 2	6
4.3 HB 3	9
4.4 HB 4	9
4.5 HB 4/A	9
4.6 HB 4/B	12
4.7 HB 4/C	12
4.8 HB 4/D	12
4.9 HB 4/E	15
4.10 HB 5	15
4.11 HB 6	17
4.12 HB 7	17
4.13 HB 8	17
4.14 HB 9	20
4.15 HB 10	20
4.16 HB 11	20
4.17 HB 12	21
4.18 HB 13	21
5. OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES	22
6. CONCLUSION	22
7. RECOMMENDATIONS	22
8. PROFESSIONAL TEAM	23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by Inverdoorn cc. to survey a portion of land south of Cape Columbine on the Vredenburg Peninsula. A number of Late Stone Age archaeological sites were located within the boundaries of the property as laid out in the brief. Sites were found on both sides of the high dune cordon as well as in the deflated area adjacent to the bay. Two human burials with associated grave goods have been recorded. The area contains sites which will require mitigation in the event of development. Mitigation will have to include both excavation and collection.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by Inverdoorn cc. to conduct a Phase 1 archaeological assessment of an area south of Cape Columbine (Figure 1). The proposed development area consists of 21.1ha consisting of a portion of part II of Noodhulp #35 and farm #990.

After discussions with Mr W Loubser who represents the developers, the Archaeology Contracts Office undertook to:

2.1. Survey the development area and locate any archaeological sites

2.2. Assess the sites for their significance and the possible impacts resulting from development activities

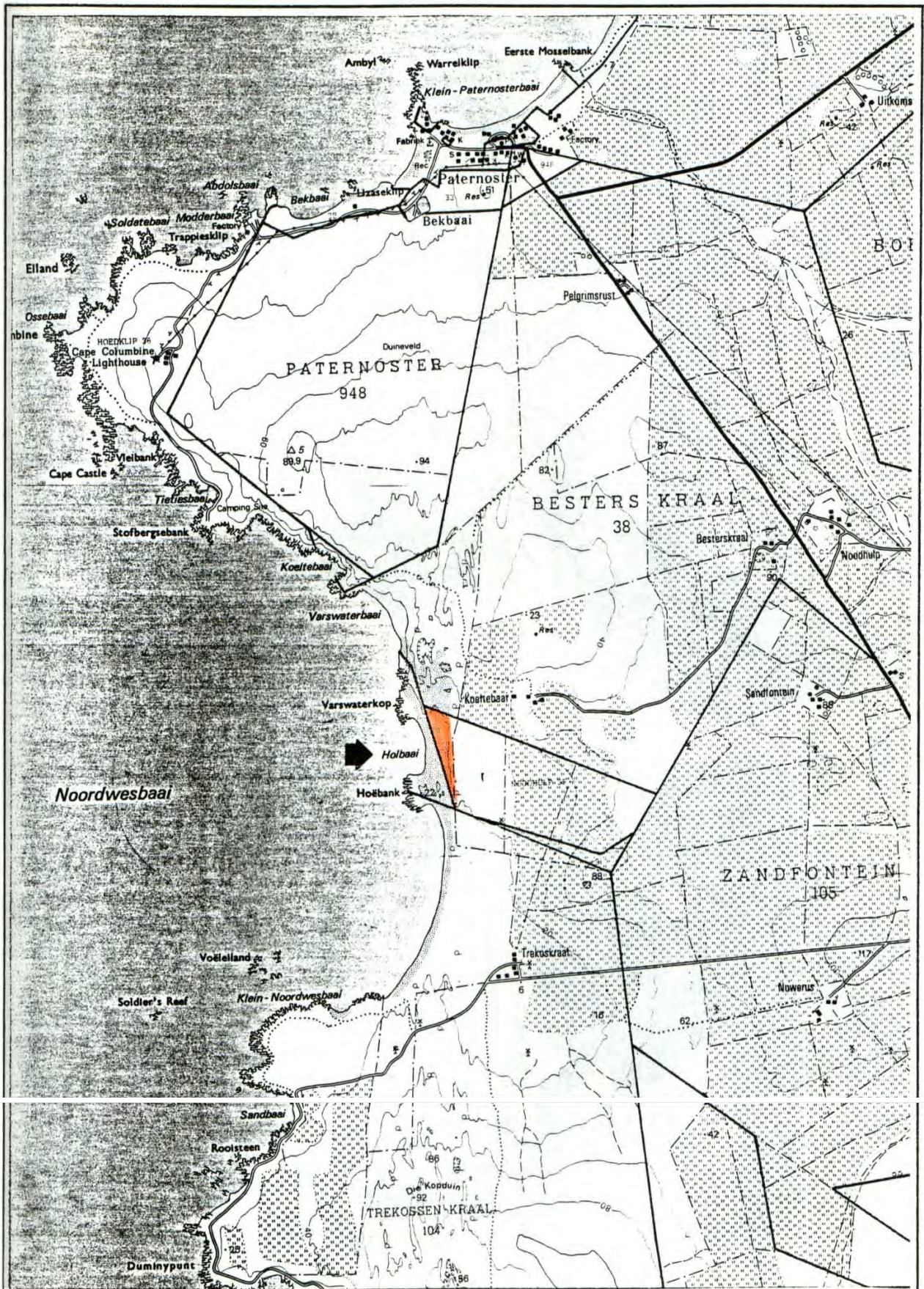
2.3. Produce a report detailing the findings and indicating the options for mitigating possible destruction of archaeological material should the need arise

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Vredenburg Peninsula has been the focus of research excavations by archaeologists over recent years. It is now accepted that the area with its unique granite geology and shoreline formations was favoured by prehistoric people, particularly herding groups, as the rich soils provided excellent grazing for both sheep and cattle, and prior to this had provided grazing to herds of wild game.

Prior to 1800 years ago the south western Cape was inhabited by hunter/gatherers (Bushmen) who's economy was based upon the exploitation of wild animals, indigenous plant foods and marine animals. This changed with the arrival of Khoi (Hottentot) herding groups who introduced domestic animals (sheep, goats, cattle) into the Cape resulting in a new economic order. The Vredenburg Peninsula subsequently became a center of the herding economy - the local shales and granites providing some of the vital nutrients for domestic stock that are not available on the Cape Peninsula or the sandstone mountains of the Cape Fold Belt. To this day unresolved questions about the origins, ecology and lifestyle of early pastoralists have attracted the interest of historians, archaeologists and anthropologists alike.

The Vredenburg Peninsula is considered to be particularly rich in cultural resources that need to be conserved or rescued - especially in the light of the increasing development pressure on land that is impacting the west coast at this time. The destruction and/or disturbance of an



1

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archaeological site can represent a loss of information about the past, which unlike other environmental resources, can never be renewed.

3. METHOD

The prospective development area was searched for archaeological material. The locations of archaeological sites were established using GPS (Global Positioning System) and plotted onto a 1:10 000 orthophoto (Figure 2). The scale has been increased (140%) for presentation purposes. The surface characteristics of the archaeological sites were recorded and included observations of the shell species, fauna, artefactual material, and other features such as hearths and burials. In instances where surface evidence was not clear, small test holes were excavated to establish if in-situ material existed below the surface.

4. RESULTS

This section presents summaries of the located archaeological sites in the development area. In some cases GPS locations will be assigned to a cluster of sites rather than to each individual site.

4.1 HB 1

GPS Location: 32°52.0955'S 17°53.1971'E

The site HB1 is one of a small linear cluster lying on the eastern side of the high dune cordon just inside the fence line. The site consists of a shell scatter with associated artefactual material located in a small deflation bay. A single limestone hearth is present. The scatter, which is approximately 10m in diameter, is limited to the surface. Spatial patterning exists.

Shellfish seen include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Burnupena* sp. *Patella argenvillei* and *Choromytilus meridionalis* appear to be the dominant species. Artefactual material consists of fragments of ostrich eggshell and some silcrete flakes. One silcrete scraper was noted.

Importance: medium-high

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Plotting and surface collection

4.2 HB 2

This site is very similar to HB1 and lies approximately 10m to the south of it. The context is the same in that the site also lies in a deflation bay and has a single limestone hearth present. The shell and artefactual material is limited to the surface and is approximately 8m in diameter. Spatial patterning exists.

Shell types observed include *Choromytilus meridionalis* and various whelk species. *Patella granatina* and *Patella argenvillei* are also noted. Artefactual material observed consists of several silcrete flakes, a silcrete core, a quartzite milled edge pebble (hammerstone) and fragments of ostrich eggshell.



2

3217 DD 13 TREKOSKRAAL



Importance: medium-high

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Plotting and surface collection

4.3 HB 3

GPS Location: 32°52.1244'S 17°53.2064'E

This site lies approximately 30m north of HB1. It consists of a shell and artefact scatter in a small deflation bay (very close to a recent borehole). The material is again limited to the surface. No hearths were observed and while spatial patterning may exist it was not as clear at the other two sites in this complex.

The shell tends to be more fragmented than at HB1 and HB2 but shows the same species to be present. These include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Burnupena* sp. One *Donax serra* with edge damage was also noted. Artefactual material consists of silcrete flakes, 1 silcrete boat shaped scraper (not backed), 1 silcrete backed scraper, ostrich eggshell fragments.

Importance: medium-high

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Plotting and surface collection.

4.4 HB 4

This consists of several discrete shell scatters and other features which occur in and around a large deflation bay on the western side of the dune cordon. While not all of the scatters may be contemporary, they seem to be focusing on the deflation feature and therefore we have treated them as a cluster.

4.5 HB 4/A

A surface shell scatter with a human burial eroding out.

The shell consists of *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei* and some *Patella granatina*. Human bone was observed on the surface and included a single cervical vertebra and several bones from the hand. 14 ostrich eggshell beads were scattered around the bone. These were the large type having external diameters averaging 6-7mm. Two manuports were also present on the scatter.

Importance: high

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.



Plates 1 & 2 Views of large deflation hollow in and around which the sites of complex 4 occur.

Suggested mitigation: Some deflation has occurred but the position of the burial should be recorded in relation to the shell midden, and the remaining bones excavated. Associated grave goods must also be collected.

4.6 HB 4/B

A dense patch of whole *Patella argenvillei* and *Choromytilus* shells eroding out of dune around the lower edge of the deflation bay. Much of the shell lies to one side of a stand of Port Jackson bush. Smaller amounts of *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, and *Patella barbara*. No stone artefacts were observed although bits of limestone and granite are present.

Importance: medium

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: The scatter needs to be plotted in relation to other sites and some surface collection to be conducted.

4.7 HB 4/C

GPS Location: 32°51.8943'S 17°16'70"E

A surface shell scatter resulting from erosion of a stratified shell lens at the edge of the deflation bay. A small test hole revealed a lens approximately 30cm thick below the surface with varying amounts of overburden.

Shell species observed include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Patella barbara*, *Burnupena* sp. Also present in the test hole is some mammal bone although this was not seen on the exposed surface. Stone artefacts consist of some limestone flakes and manuports and a quartzite hammerstone. Ostrich eggshell fragments are also present.

Importance: High. The shell lens is well defined and stratified. Bone is well preserved below surface.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: This site will need to be sampled by archaeological excavation if it is to be impacted.

4.8 HB 4/D

Several sub-scatters make up this cluster which runs around the lower outside edge of the deflation bay. Discrete patches of shell are noted and shell species seem to vary from scatter to scatter. No hearth features were noted.

Shell species observed include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Patella barbara*, *Burnupena* sp. While *P. argenvillei* and *C. meridionalis* are most often the dominant species, in some cases *P. granatina* seems to



Plate 3 Two limestone "hearths" on site 4/E.



Plate 4 Large pile of burned limestone at site 9.

dominate. Artefactual material includes a quartzite lower grindstone with shallow single groove, quartzite hammerstone/upper grindstone, quartzite multi faceted upper grindstone with pecked depression, ostrich eggshell fragments.

A GPS location was established on the southernmost shell scatter of the cluster.

GPS Location: 32°52.9108'S 17°53.1426'E

Importance: Medium. There appears to be duplication within the cluster and not much artefactual material or bone.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Some sampling should take place to characterise the shell from the different scatters.

4.9 HB 4/E

A small shell scatter associated with two limestone hearths. The shell consists of *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*. Ostrich eggshell fragments are also present.

Importance: medium

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Limestone "hearths" should be plotted in relation to surrounding middens. These limestone mounds need to be sectioned to determine possible use.

4.10 HB 5

GPS Location: 32°51.6821'S 17°53.0810'E

Shell scatter in a large open area at the southern end of the main dune sea. The deflated surface on which the shell lies is close to underlying calcretes. The size of the scatter is in the order of 20m diameter.

Shell species observed include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Patella barbara*, *Patella cochlear*, *Oxystele* sp. Ostrich eggshell fragments are also present. A rim herd of a pot was found. No decoration was evident. Quartz temper was used in its manufacture. Stone artefactual material included a broken bored stone, a quartzite hammerstone and flake, a silcrete flake (re-used MSA).

Importance: medium-low.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: The shell should be sampled and artefactual material collected.



Plate 5 View of small site complex 8, showing shell middens in association with limestone "hearths".



Plate 6 View of stratified shell lens in the larger midden of site cluster 8.

4.11 HB 6

GPS Location: 32°51.6708'S 17°53.0526'E

A discrete shell mound in the open area at the southern end of the dune sea. Bone found on the surface of the mound could be human. The presence of several manuports and a grooved lower grindstone, as well as several beads, are further suggestions that another human burial is present here. The scatter is approximately 3-5m in diameter.

Shell species observed includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*. Ostrich eggshell fragments are also present. Other artefactual material includes a quartz flake and chunk, a fragment of an unfinished bored stone, a hammerstone and some limestone flakes.

Importance: high.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: The position of the burial should be recorded in relation to the shell midden, and the remaining bones excavated. Associated grave goods must also be collected.

4.12 HB 7

Deflated pile of shell approximately 25m south of HB6 approximately 5m in diameter.

Shell observed includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*. One quartzite hammerstone was observed.

Importance: low

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: none suggested.

4.13 HB 8

GPS Location: 32°51.6372'S 17°53.0540'E

The site consists of two discrete piles of shell with associated limestone hearths. This site also lies in the main dune area.

Shell observed in the piles includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*. The larger of the two scatters contains one stratified lens of shell. Some bone, probably seal, is present. Large fragments of a clay pot base were observed adjacent to one of the hearths.

Importance: medium-high.



Plates 7 & 8 Two views of site cluster 11 showing damage resulting from off road vehicles. The small midden has been damaged in addition by unlawful digging.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: The features should be plotted and shell sampled.

4.14 HB 9

GPS Location: 32°51.6254'S 17°53.1288'E

Small shell scatter, approximately 6m in diameter, lying on a partly exposed limestone shelf on the eastern side of the main dune area. Two limestone hearths although some distance away, seem to be associated with the shell scatter. The site lies just inside the northern boundary of the search area.

Shell observed includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*.

Importance: low

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Features should be plotted.

4.15 HB 10

GPS Location: 32°51.5573'S 17°53.0146'E

A thin shell scatter at the nw corner of the search area, adjacent to the wooden post (beacon).

Shell consists mainly of *Choromytilus meridionalis* but small amounts of *Patella granatina*, *Patella cochlear*, *Patella barbara*. Artefactual material consists of a quartzite hammerstone.

Close to the scatter although just outside the boundary is a pile of limestone with a grooved lower grindstone on top.

Importance: low.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: None suggested for the midden.

4.16 HB 11

GPS Location: 32°51.7868'S 17°53.0771'E

A discrete shell scatter which at present is raised on a slight mound as a result of deflation of surrounding dunes. Evidence exists that this midden has recently been disturbed. Tyre tracks are still visible on the mound and the center of the midden has been cratered by digging away the shell. This has probably been used for stabilising a road. A substantial amount of shell remains although context has been compromised. The presence of a limestone hearth in the vicinity suggests that a small site complex with spatial patterning is present.

Shell observed includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis* and *Burnupena* sp. Also observed were a number of *Patella cochlear* shells. Some *Haliotis midae* and *Donax serra* is present. A small amount of bone and some crayfish mandibles were recorded. Other artefactual material includes a grooved lower grindstone, 2 quartz chunks, a quartzite hammerstone, a silcrete chunk, a small ostrich eggshell bead (diameter approximately 3-4mm) and parts of a clay pot.

Importance: medium-low.

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after. Damage has already occurred here and is exactly the problem which is going to occur in the future.

Suggested mitigation: The integrity of the midden is disturbed through unlawful digging. A sample of shell should be recovered along with bone and stone. The hearth and midden should be plotted in relation to one another.

4.17 HB 12

GPS Location: 32°52.0025'S 17°53.1249'E

According to the GPS locations sites HB 12 and HB 13 lie just outside the boundary of the development area. If any access roads are planned here mitigation will have to take place.

HB 12 is a small shell scatter between low dune hummocks close to jeep track. Shell is not very dense and quite widely dispersed. A limestone hearth is found in association.

Shells observed include *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Burnupena* sp. Some *Patella cochlear* also noticed. Stone artefacts include some hammerstones.

Importance: Low

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Mitigation in the form of shell sampling should take place if this site is to be directly impacted by the building of houses or roads.

4.18 HB 13

This shell scatter is very similar to HB12 and in fact may be a continuation of it. The shell is rather sparse and occurs between small dune hummocks.

Shell observed includes *Choromytilus meridionalis*, *Patella argenvillei*, *Patella granatina*, *Patella granularis*, *Burnupena* sp and some *Patella cochlear*. Artefactual material includes a quartzite heavy edge damaged piece, quartzite flakes and a silcrete chunk.

Importance: Low

Impact: The site will be destroyed if the area is landscaped or built on. Secondary damage could occur through increased pedestrian or vehicular access both during the development and after.

Suggested mitigation: Mitigation in the form of shell sampling should take place if this site is to be directly impacted by the building of houses or roads.

5. OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Besides those in the immediate development area, the rocky points, coastal zone and dune seas in the vicinity of Holbaai are rich in well preserved archaeological sites that will be negatively impacted as development pressure on the coast increases.

6. CONCLUSION

A number of interesting archaeological sites exist in the area of the brief. From the types of artefacts that we have observed there appear to be two broad time periods represented. Firstly, there are sites which are in excess of 2000 years old. These do not contain any ceramics and seem to be located on the edges of the dunes. Secondly, there are sites which date to within the last 2000 years recognisable by the associated ceramics.

The presence of at least 2 burials has been noted with an additional one being located just outside the boundary. These burials are clearly associated with the artefactual and food debris.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. The area that has been examined in terms of the brief contains archaeological sites which will require mitigation in the form of a program of excavation and collection before development can take place. The purpose of such a program is to obtain a representative sample of material to characterise the different kinds of archaeological sites in the area and so establish an archive that can be used by interested persons in the future.

7.2. Mitigation of shell midden material requires that the site is subject to controlled excavation by a qualified and an experienced archaeologist and assistants working under a permit issued by the National Monuments Council. All shell middens are explicitly protected by the National Monuments Act of 1969 (as amended).

7.3. Human remains, besides providing a great deal of information to scientists are also protected by the National Monuments Act and other legislation. It is important that they are

removed under controlled circumstances so that the context of the remains can be noted. The remains will have to be housed in an institution licensed for this purpose.

7.4. The presence of active dunes over a large part of the area would suggest that the site for potential housing development will have to be carefully selected and will probably tend to be along the dune cordon or on top of it. If this were the case it may be argued that only sites that are directly impacted by construction need to be mitigated. The broader implications of development are that serious indirect damage will occur through pedestrian and vehicular activities. This is already demonstrated by the illegal destruction of a shell midden close to an informal campsite in the dune sea. We are particularly concerned about the use of 4x4 vehicles which do a tremendous amount of damage to both the archaeological sites and the environment of the dunes. There will have to be a commitment on the part of the developers to ensure that vehicular access is limited to specific areas. We are also concerned about the secondary impacts on the archaeological sites that will occur as a result recreational activities and people collecting artefactual material from archaeological sites. There seems to be no effective way of preventing this from occurring and therefore mitigation needs to take place beyond the immediate area where housing is planned.

7.5. Both the authorities and the developers must take cognisance of the fact that there are important archaeological sites on private and state land bordering the property and that these will also be subject to serious impacts as result of the opening of the area to recreation. Use of state land such as the beach, and areas adjoining the beach, need to be taken into account and the authorities responsible for administration of these areas should be drawn into negotiations to determine how this sensitive zone is to be managed given the increased impacts that will occur. The public should be given access to the shore line by way of established paths or walkways which avoid the archaeological sites. In this way the interests of conserving both coastal vegetation and archaeological material can be served.

7.6. It is suggested that the developer approaches the Cape regional manager, National Monuments Council (Ms L. Robinson). The measures that need to be taken to mitigate the archaeological sites will require the approval of the Archaeology Plans Committee of the National Monuments Council. It is suggested that a meeting should be arranged with this committee to negotiate a suitable program for the mitigation of archaeological material in the development zone.

7.7. These recommendations are subject to the approval of the National Monuments Council (NMC).

8. PROFESSIONAL TEAM

Fieldwork and report preparation

Tim Hart
Dave Halkett