

**A PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF  
FARM 1062 (PREVIOUSLY 967)  
PATERNOSTER**

Prepared for

**BCD  
Town and Regional Planners**

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Prepared by

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by BCD Town and Regional planners to undertake a phase 1 investigation of farm 1062 (formerly farm 967), Paternoster, western Cape Province (Figure 1). It has been proposed that the area be rezoned and sub-divided for future development with the result that heritage resources could potentially be negatively impacted.

The Archaeology Contracts Office undertook to:

1. Search the portions of land in question to locate archaeological and/or historical material or structures protected by existing legislation
2. Conduct small test excavations to establish the sub-surface extent and depth of buried archaeological material
3. Photograph any such finds if necessary
4. Prepare a report indicating if any material will be impacted as well as suitable mitigatory action if required.

The plans provided by the client contained sufficient detail to facilitate the plotting of sites without the use of GPS.

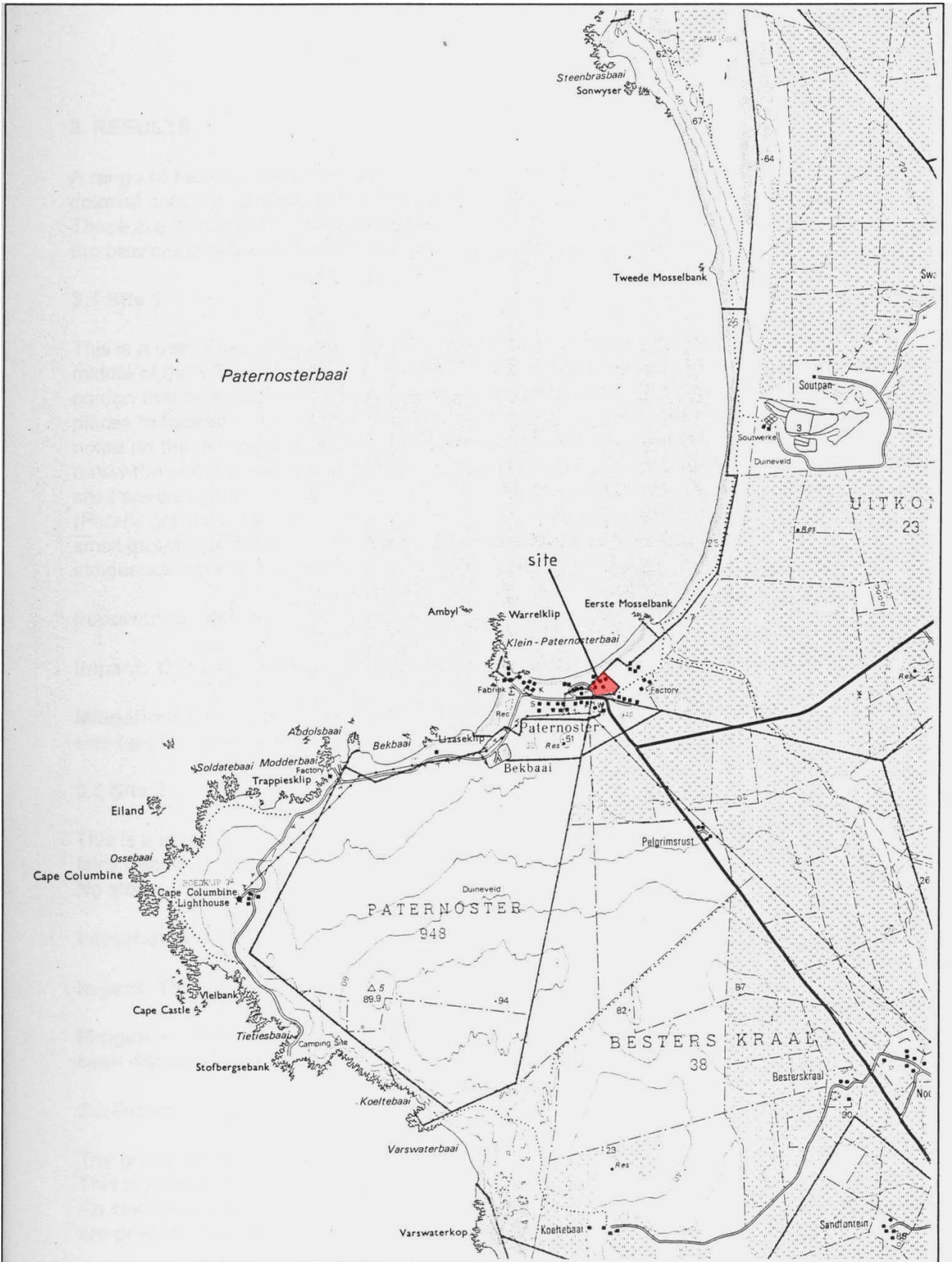
## **2. BACKGROUND**

Prior to 1800 years ago the south western Cape was inhabited by hunter/gatherers (San people) whose economy was based upon the exploitation of a wide range of terrestrial animals and indigenous plant foods. This diet was supplemented by marine animals, especially shellfish, when it was possible to make use of them. This changed after 2000 years ago with the arrival of the Khoi Khoi herding groups who introduced domestic animals (sheep and later cattle) along with the technique of making pottery to the Cape.

The Vredenburg peninsula subsequently became one of the centers of pre-colonial stock herding - the local shales and granites providing vital nutrients in the grazing 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 in southern Africa have attracted the interest of historians, archaeologists and anthropologists alike. The Vredenburg area is at present one of the few areas in the Cape where both pastoralist and hunter/gatherer sites have been recognised, making the preservation, recording and study of archaeological sites all the more important.

In later years a small settlement arose at Paternoster with inhabitants engaged in the fishing industry and agriculture. The erection of dwellings in different parts of the town recounts in part the social history of the area and like the older archaeological sites form an important part of the history.



**1**

**Site location**

217DB&DD Vredenburg



### 3. RESULTS

A range of heritage resources were located in the surveyed area. These include 2 pre-colonial middens, a grave with a headstone, and a number of vernacular buildings. These are discussed in more detail below. All of the above are technically protected by the provisions of the National Monuments Act of 1969 (as amended).

#### 3.1 Site 1

This is a Late Stone Age shell midden located on top of a prominent mound in the middle of the village (Figure 2, Plate 1). This mound is a remnant of the old dune cordon that originally ran through the Vaalplaas settlement. It has been flattened in places to facilitate the building of houses in the past. Three dense areas of shell were noted on the mound. A small test excavation at one of these patches revealed that below the surface the lens of deposit was approximately 200mm thick. The dominant shell species on the site is *Choromytilus meridionalis* (Black mussel), while limpets (*Patella grantina*, *Patella granularis* and *Patella cochlear*) occur in lesser quantities. A small quantity of flaked quartzite was observed and bone was also present. No indigenous ceramics were seen.

**Importance:** Medium

**Impact:** This site is likely to be destroyed by development.

**Mitigation:** Each of the dense areas should be sampled. Samples should be of suitable size (approx. 4m<sup>2</sup> each) to adequately document the content.

#### 3.2 Site 2

This is a small patch of midden between existing houses (Figure 2). While the shell is fairly dense it has been disturbed. The shell component is much the same as at Site 1. No stone or bone was observed.

**Importance:** Low

**Impact:** This site is likely to be destroyed by development.

**Mitigation:** Given that it is likely that the material is similar to that of Site 1, and has been disturbed, no mitigation is recommended.

#### 3.3 Grave

The grave is that of Gert Pharo, the owner of the farm at one time, who died in 1945. This is located on the eastern side of the site away from most of the houses (Figure 2). An elaborate marble headstone (now collapsed from its plinth) and a border of marble are present. The area around the grave was obviously covered by beach shingle originally and traces of this are still evident. There do not appear to be any other graves on the site and local residents of the village had no knowledge of any.

**Importance:** High

**Impact:** The grave may be impacted by development.



062 (formerly farm 967), Paternoster.  
 Scale: 1:500 (reduced)



**2**

Area of investigation - Farm 1  
 Reference: BCD plan 2.249

**Mitigation:** While the grave marker is subject to the National Monuments Act, human remains are subject to other regulations. If the remains are to be moved it is necessary to enter into a legal process which, amongst other things, requires that relatives are traced and permission to exhume is obtained. It is our understanding that tracing the relatives in this case would not be a problem and that they are probably aware of the development proposals.

The relevant local transitional council could be contacted for more information on this process.

### **3.4 Vernacular buildings**

The cluster of buildings on the western side of the site are mostly modern and consist of both residential and either agricultural, or factory sheds. One of the sheds (building A on Figure 2) is visibly older than the others. It is built out of dressed limestone blocks and originally probably had a thatched roof. A set of steps on the one end leads up to a *solder* (Plate 2). It is likely that this was part of a farm complex, the other buildings of which have either disappeared or been subsumed within existing structures. It is clearly in excess of 50 years old.

The origin and age of the small settlement (called Vaalplaas by the locals) is unclear, but original inhabitants may have worked for the owner of the farm and have lived in houses that were built for them. It would appear that all the dwellings (excluding those made from wood) are in excess of 50 years old. More than one style of building is evident suggesting that construction took place at different times (Plates 3 & 4). At least two of the houses are built with dressed limestone blocks (buildings B & C on Figure 2) and may represent some of the earlier buildings on the site. Most of the other buildings (particularly those around point D on Figure 2) are built from brick. In these cases plaster is peeling and structural detail is visible.

**Importance:** Medium - high

**Impact:** High - if demolition is intended.

**Mitigation:** All buildings which are older than 50 years are subject to the 50 year clause of the National Monuments Act of 1969 (as amended). Briefly, any building which is subject to this regulation may not be demolished or altered without permission from the NMC. The demolition of any of the above buildings will need to be sanctioned by the NMC, Regional Plans Committee.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Pre-colonial archaeological material probably existed in more abundance on the site prior to the establishment of the Vaalplaas community. Traces of early material are still found on the mound on the eastern side of the site. A number of the existing buildings are older than 50 years and in themselves give some clues to the history of the area.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 Archaeological material at Site 1 must be sampled prior to any form of development.

5.2 Any intention to move the marked grave must be preceded by the necessary legal process.

5.4 If any pre-colonial human remains are uncovered during development, an archaeologist should be called to site to document and remove the material.

5.3 Development plans must be submitted to the Regional Plans Committee of the National Monuments Council for a decision on the buildings subject to the 50 year clause.

## **6. PROFESSIONAL TEAM**

Fieldwork and report

Dave Halkett  
Belinda Mütti



**PLATE 1:** Pre-colonial shell midden capping the dune in the center of the village. Despite the proximity to modern occupation, some portions of the site have remained undisturbed.



**PLATE 2:** Shed (A on Figure 2). Built with dressed limestone and with structural features which suggest that originally the roof would have been thatched.



**PLATE 3:** One of the vernacular housing styles in the village with lean to roofs and end chimneys. These all seem to be constructed with a combination of brick types but some stone is also present.



**PLATE 4:** A second style of house which is found in the village. Also constructed with a combination of brick types. These tend to be on the eastern side of the site.