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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF  
PORTIONS 29 and 30 OF JACOBS  
BAAY No. 108**

A report prepared for

**Jacobs Bay Coastal Farm**

by

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## Executive summary

Development of Portions 29 and 30 of Jacobs Baay No. 108 will damage archaeological materials of minor importance. No mitigation is required. The developer must make provision for professional archaeological recovery of human skeletal remains should these be revealed during development.

## Brief

- 1) Provide an audit of archaeological resources on unregistered portions 29 and portion 30 (portions of portion 19) of the farm Jacobs Baay no. 108.
- 2) Identify possible impact of proposed development;
- 3) Recommend measures of mitigation needed, if any.

## Background

The archaeology of the Western Cape covers a period of around 1 million years. The earliest traces of human presence, mostly found within river valleys, consist of scatters of stone artefacts. From the perspective of archaeology, the time interval of 1,000,000 to 200,000 years ago falls within what is known as the Early Stone Age (ESA). This phase of human history is elsewhere as old as 2.6 million years. The lifestyle of this time-period consisted of hunting and scavenging animal foods and the gathering of plants to provide the bulk of the diet. Archaeologists associate two extinct human species, *Homo ergaster* and archaic *Homo sapiens*, with the ESA.

Dating from 200,000 to circa 30,000 years ago, the next phase of human occupation is the Middle Stone Age (MSA). In comparison to the ESA, the archaeological record for this time is substantially richer. One reason for this is better preservation of food debris as well as stone artefacts. In the Western Cape, the living and activity sites of the MSA often occur in carbonate rich sediments, usually located near the shoreline. This chemically basic environment generally preserves well the bones and shells thrown away in the preparation and eating of food. The lifestyle of the MSA was hunting and gathering and it is clear that the shoreline was an important source of food. Several of the animal species hunted by MSA people are extinct today.

International scientists know the MSA of South Africa very well. The reason for this is that at the time Neanderthals lived in Europe, modern looking people (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) populated southern Africa. Many scientists suggest that the immediate ancestors of all the modern worlds' populations emerged in Africa. From here, they later spread into the wider world. Arguments for and against this proposition, as well as intensive study of southern African sites and evidence, are extremely prominent in world archaeology today.

The final broad phase of human history in the Western Cape began 30,000 years ago. Archaeologists term this period the Later Stone Age. Sites dating to the last 8,000 years are common along our shoreline, particularly where abundant food is present in a rocky intertidal zone. Scatters of shells, the refuse of human meals, generally mark the presence of these sites. Beads of sea and ostrich eggshell, chipped and ground stone artefacts and the bones of fish, seals, birds, tortoises and antelope reveal coastal hunter-gatherer daily life. Dramatic change swept the Western Cape after 2,000 years ago. Sheep bones and potsherds

in sites mark a change from pure hunting and gathering to a mixed economy that included pastoralism. The pastoral lifestyle ultimately gave rise to the Khoekhoe, the society that resisted and then collapsed under the weight of the seventeenth century Dutch settlement at the Cape.

### **Audit of materials from Portion 29 and Portion 30**

#### **Observations**

Archaeologists have not made systematic study of sites on this property, or indeed, in the wider area. A few unpublished surveys conducted in the last twenty years reveal that many sites occur in the area.

Areas of Portions 29 and 30 containing archaeological materials are shown in Figure 1. A Global Positioning System fix on the general vicinity is 32° 57' 18.9"S; 17° 52' 59.7"E (pdop=2.6).

**Points A and B:** a large and very dense layer of shell caps a dune located 10 metres to the west of point A. This site falls outside the boundary of portion 30, but is likely to represent the focal point of much of the occupation debris described below. Points A and B consist of minor deflation surfaces or gullies lying between hummock dunes forming the upper heights of a larger dune mass. In these zones lie scatters of shells of limpets (*Patella* sp.) and the highly fragmented remains of black mussel (*Choromytilus meridionalis*). The limpet species are dominated by *Patella cochlear*, *P. argenvillei* and *P. granatina*, whilst *P. barbara* and *P. granularis* occur in smaller numbers. Bones remains occur in very small quantities and stone artefacts are equally scarce. At both points A and B, the shell lenses enter the dune hummocks to the south and appear buried at some depth.

At point A, highly scattered shells continue below the surface to 0.4m. Shell is absent at 0.7m depth, the depth limit of the test sounding. At point B, separated from point A by a dune hummock, numerous 1 to 3 cm size granite pebbles occur on the surface. Shells here are quite dense to 0.15m depth, and limpets appear relatively more common in the lower portion than on the surface. Shell is thinly scattered down to a maximum depth of 0.4m. No further shell was seen to 0.7m depth. The midden matrix at both point A and point B is pale dune sand.

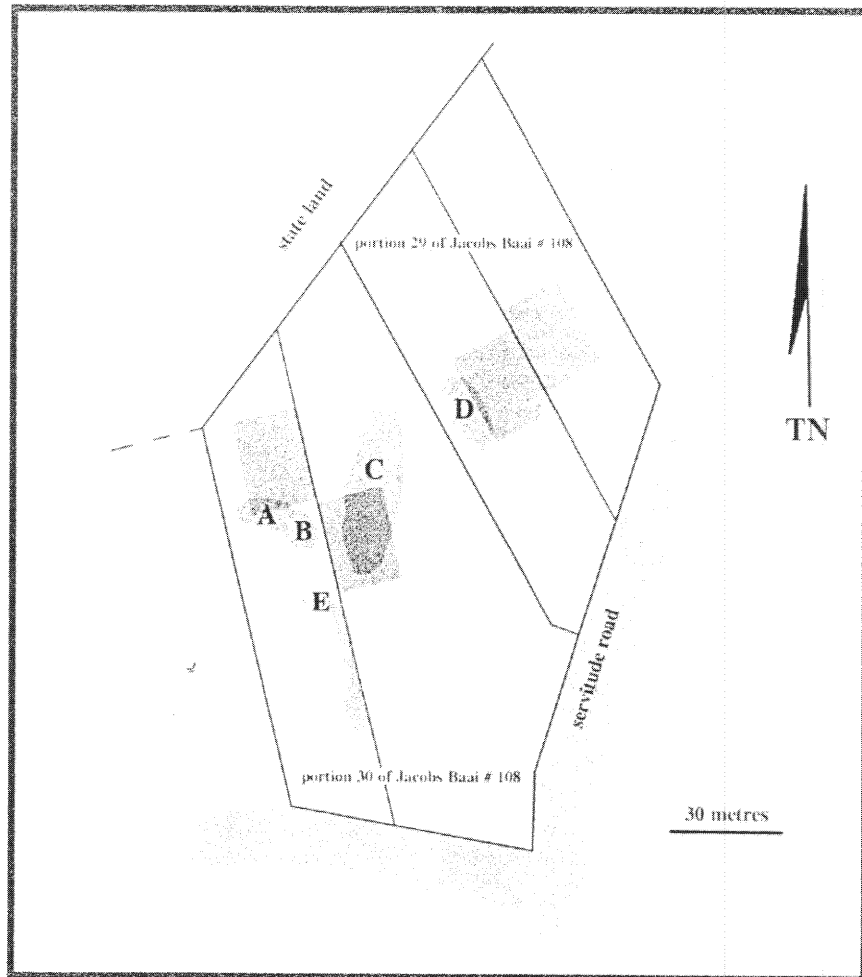
**Point C:** comprises a large surface scatter of shell, clearly deflated from original position, and transected by an old, sandy "road". Dimensions of the scatter are 22 x 9 m. The shell rises upslope to the west, and enters a dune ridge. Point C may well be an extension of the general midden of which points A and B are part. The shellfish species are the same as at points A and B. There is no depth to the accumulation. Some ostrich eggshell, a few silcrete artefacts and granite cobbles and pebbles occur.

**Point D:** separated by a tongue of dune sand, point D is most likely an extension of the scatter at point C. As at point C, there is no depth and the shell is deflated.

**Point E:** whole *Patella argenvillei*, *P. granatina* and *P. barbara* lie loosely scattered on the surface, with a patch of fragmented black mussels and limpets a short distance away.

Shell continues below the surface in a series of thin shell lenses separated by sandy partings to a depth of 0.7m. The bottom of the midden lies below this point. The matrix of the midden is pale sand throughout the depth and no charcoal was observed. The midden at point E continues below the dune to the southwest.

The scatter of shellfish at point E continues up-slope to the south where exposed in the banks of an old vehicle track. This is likely an extension of the same midden, and the shell lens appears to penetrate the roadside dune to the west. Shellfish species in this area are similar to those observed elsewhere on the property, with perhaps less black mussel. Silerite artefacts are seen more commonly than elsewhere, but numbers nonetheless are still low. Bone is seldom seen.



## Assessment

Profoundly disturbed by wind and vehicles, points C and D contain very little material of use to archaeologists. Shell material entering the dune west of C is ephemeral and unlikely to form a noteworthy deposit.

Materials at points A and B are also derived and, in the immediate area, of little importance. Where the shell layer enters the dune it is in-situ and thus has greater significance. However, the accumulation is slight with a maximum depth of less than 0.2m, and bone and stone artefacts are very rare.

The materials at point E are the best of those seen during the survey reported here. The deposit is in-situ and has a depth greater than 0.7m. The density of shell remains is however, modest and finds other than shell are scarce.

The major concentration of shell midden materials occurs outside of the boundaries of Portions 29 and 30.

## Impacts of development

Development of Portion 29 will only impact insignificant archaeological materials (point D).

Development of Portion 30 will impact some archaeological materials. None of these are of particular significance. Damage resulting from development should in any case be limited, as the dune south of points A and B and west of point E will remain in place (D. Morkel, Developer, pers. comm.). Further, materials immediately influenced by development occur in areas of deflation.

The presence of buried archaeological materials is always a concern. Apart from normal living debris and features, **human burials also may occur below the surface**. Trenching and other activities may uncover skeletal material.

## Recommendations

No further archaeological work is recommended on Portion 29 and Portion 30 of Jacobs Baay No. 108.

Please note that developer must allow for mitigation in case of the exposure of human burials. The National Monuments Act of 1969, as amended, directly protects human remains from the pre-colonial period.

## Acknowledgements

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