

**FOLLOW-UP REPORT**

**CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTHDOWNS IRENE  
COUNTRY ESTATE, IRENE, CENTURION**

COMPILED BY

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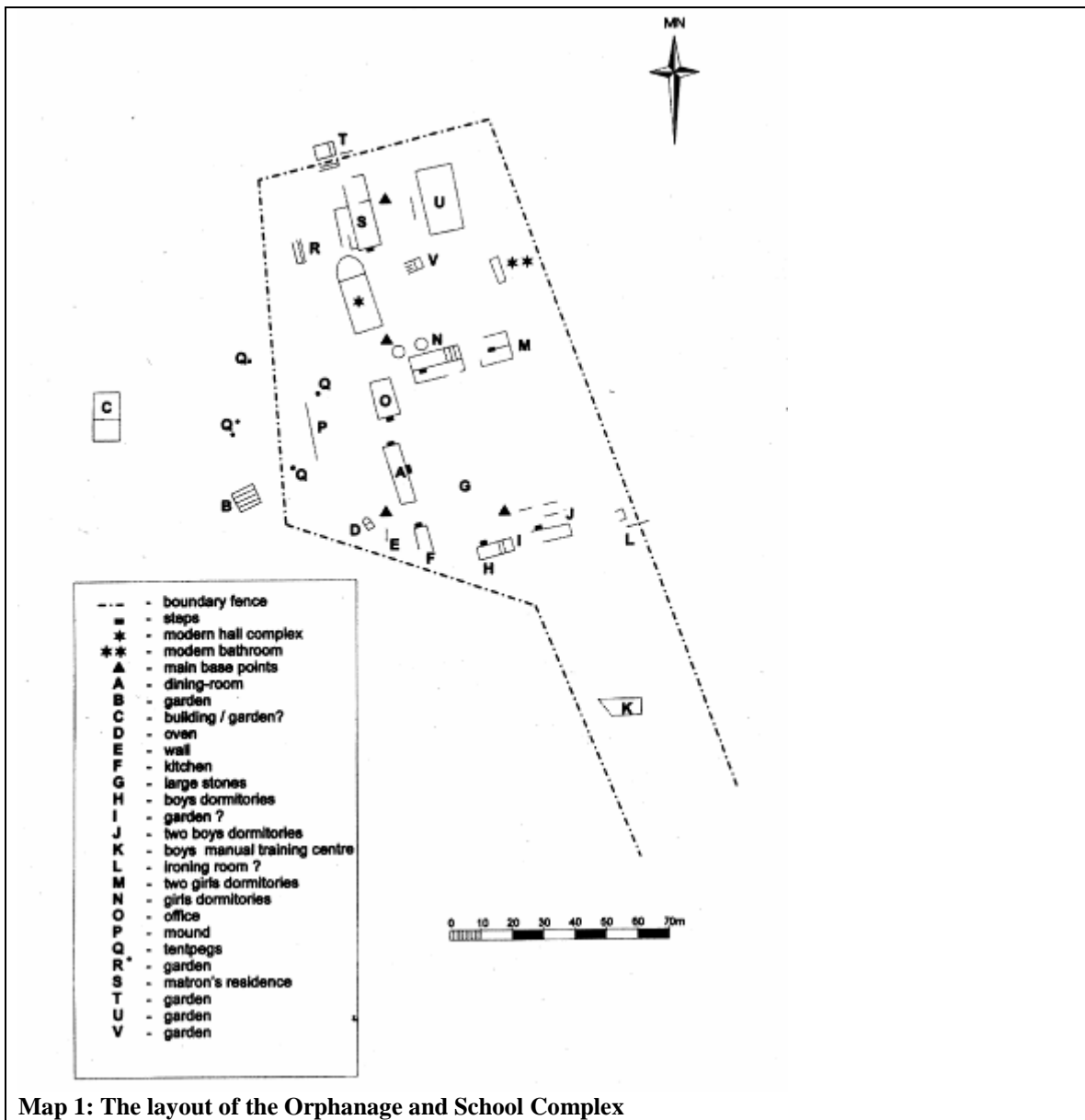
## Background

A Cultural Heritage Assessment of Southdowns Irene Country Estate (initially Irene Estate) was conducted as part of the Environmental Scoping Report for Van Riet and Louw Landscape Architects in September 2001. The assessment for the Scoping Report excluded the area known as the School or Orphanage, as it is situated on Agricultural Research Council (ARC) land and development in this area was then not part of the brief. The situation has changed since then and the land on which the Orphanage is situated has now been incorporated into the latest layout plan of the Southdowns development. The inclusion of ARC land (on which the Orphanage is situated) and the subsequent development activities have had a negative impact on the heritage resources associated with the site.

Since the initial assessment in 2001 several re-assessments were conducted in the footprint of the Southdowns development. During the instillation of the services pipeline a paved trench was described and assessed (10 February 2006) and the verification of the location of Camp2 (an additional section of the main Irene Concentration Camp) was completed (20 March 2006).

A concise report was compiled of the Orphanage and School Complex site in March 2006. The report stipulated the following:

- The Orphanage and School Complex was occupied between October 1902 and September 1907.
- The Complex is highly significant and older than 100 years and is therefore protected as a historical and archaeological site under the National Heritage Resources Act (Act no 25 of 1999).
- Development plans should be revised to such an extent that no further impacts will take place on the site.
- The site has been surveyed (see Map 1) and the extent and layout of various structures and features include the following:
  - a dining room
  - various gardens
  - an open air oven
  - a kitchen
  - several boys and girls dormitories
  - an ironing room
  - a training centre
  - an office
  - the matron's residence
- Several years ago two intrusive structures namely a shed and ablution facilities were erected within the compound. These are used during gatherings and camping activities by the Voortrekker Commando.
- The Orphanage and School Complex is securely fenced.



### Impacts on the Orphanage/School Site

A site investigation was conducted on 23 November 2006 which revealed the following:

- A trench was excavated and back-filled for an electrical cable to service the borehole pump (Figure 1). The trench cuts through the site (see Map 2) and caused damage to the north-western corner of the foundation of the dining room (structure A). The trench also went through foundations of the office building (structure O) (Figure 2).

- The eastern fence was removed. This coupled with the fact that a tap was erected close to the borehole increased traffic on the site. A new access road was scraped which proved easy access to the tap (Figure 3).
- A large hole was recorded in the north-eastern corner of the site. The pipe for storm water drainage is still visible (Figure 4). Notwithstanding the severe damage to the area, no damaged was caused to any heritage structures.
- An additional access road was scraped along the eastern periphery of the site (Figure 5). Notwithstanding the surface damage to possible deposits, no damaged was caused to any heritage structures.



**Figure 1: Excavated trench causing damage to one corner of Structure A**



**Figure 2: Damaged caused by the trench to Structure O**



**Figure 3: Access road to the borehole and tap**

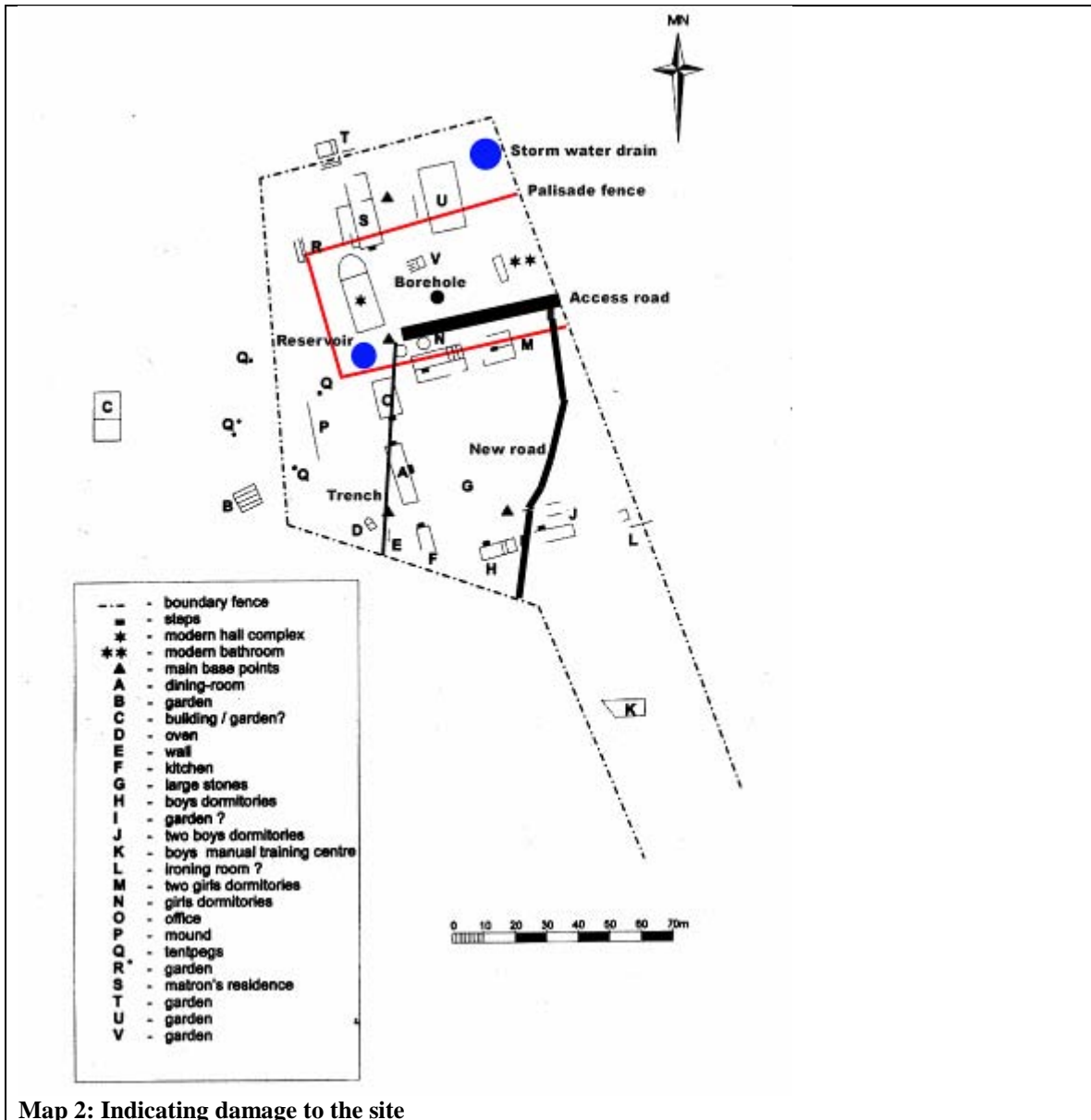


**Figure 4: Large hole for storm water drainage**



**Figure 5: New access road**





A further site investigation was conducted on 5 December 2006, which revealed the following additional impacts (Map 2):

- An extensive palisade fence was erected in the middle of the site. The supporting poles were cemented in place, with the result that foundations of several structures were damaged (Figure 6). In several places foundation stones were moved to make way for the palisade sections.
- An area was levelled and a large circular reservoir constructed on the site (Figure 7). Additional pipelines will then provide irrigation to the various sports fields of the new school.



**Figure 6: Damage caused by fence**

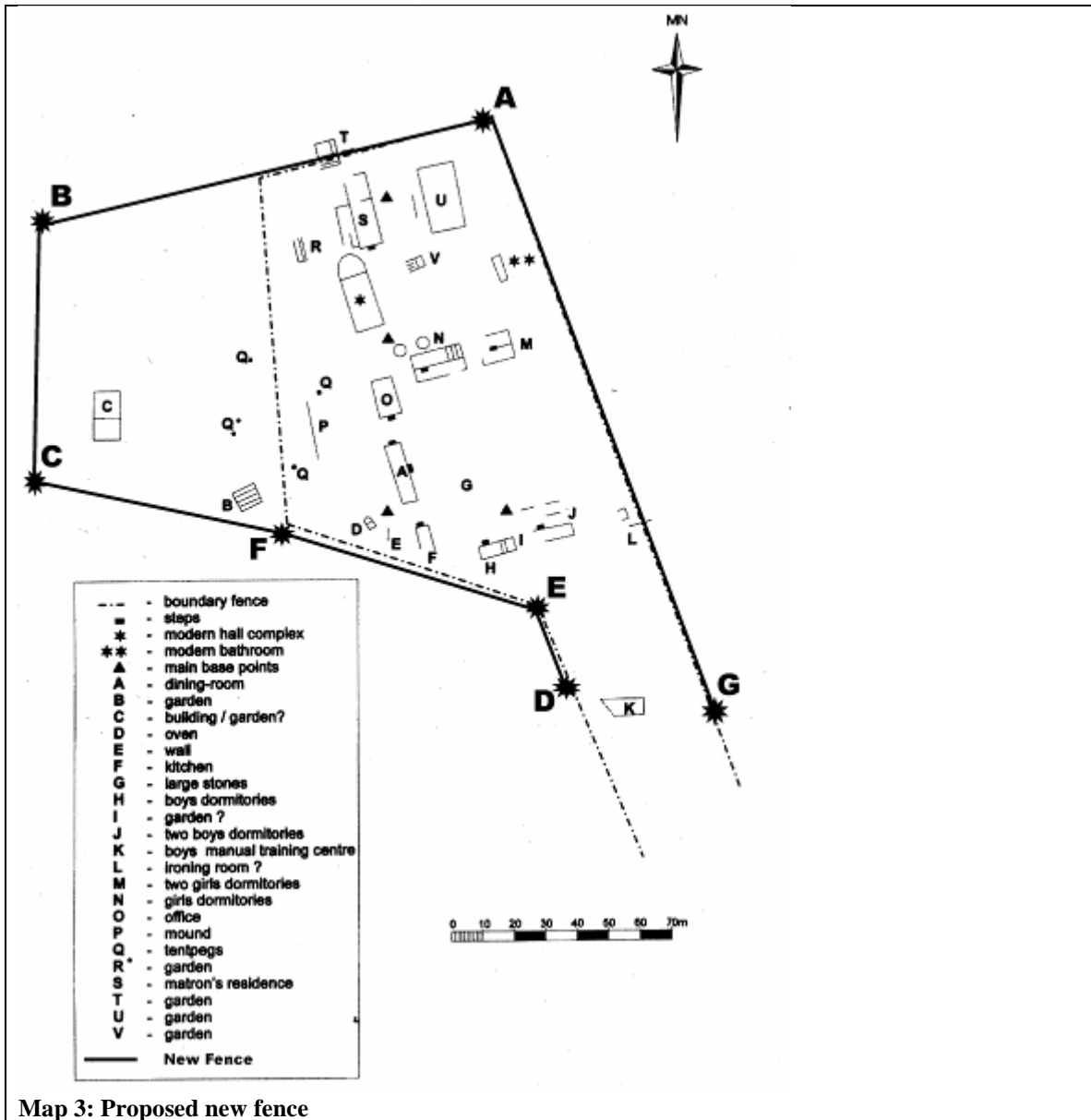


**Figure 7: Cleared area for the construction of the reservoir**

## Site Meeting

Due to the cumulative impacts by the development on the site, a meeting was held on 12 December 2006, which was attended by the various parties concerned. After the importance of the Orphanage and School Complex was reiterated and the various impacts discussed the following actions were sanctioned (also refer to Map 2):

- The eastern section of the original fence (which prohibits access to the area) will be restored to prevent further activities on the site.
- The palisade fence will be removed. However, the main poles that have been cemented in place will only be cut off above ground level. They will not be removed as this will cause further damage to some of the structures.
- The trench for the electrical cable providing power to the borehole is stable. Any further rehabilitation of the damaged structures must be conducted in consultation with the archaeologist.
- The large hole associated with the storm water drainage pipeline will be closed off and rehabilitated.
- The tap that has been installed will be closed off.
- The new road along the eastern periphery will not be used further and the surface rehabilitated.
- The reservoir will be moved behind the main shed (used by the Voortrekker Commando). An additional reservoir is also planned, which will also be erected in the new location.
- It was agreed that a corridor through the middle of the site will be provided for to minimize further impact. The corridor will run from the reservoirs past the borehole towards the new sports fields along the existing access road.
- To prevent any further damage it was also proposed that a new extended fence be erected around all the structures associated with the Complex. Please refer to Map 3 for a proposed layout plan of the new fence (including coordinates). It is advised that an archaeologist be present during the planning and erection of the fence.



Point Number	Coordinates	Comments
Point A	25°53'36.4"S 28°12'37.4"E	Existing fence post
Point B	25°53'39.4"S 28°12'32.8"E	New post
Point C	25°53'41.5"S 28°12'33.6"E	New post
Point D	25°53'42.1"S 28°12'40.6"E	Existing fence post
Point E	25°53'41.5"S 28°12'40.1"E	Existing fence post
Point F	25°53'41.6"S 28°12'36.9"E	Existing fence post
Point G	25°53'42.3"S 28°12'42.7"E	Existing fence post

## References

Coetzee, F.P. March 2006. Follow-Up Report: Heritage Assessment of the Proposed Residential Development Southdowns, Irene, Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality: Orphanage and School Complex. Unpublished Survey Report. Archaeology Contracts Unit, UNISA For EcoAssessments Pty (Ltd).

Coetzee, F.P. & Miller, S. September 2001. An Archaeological Investigation of the Irene Rural Residential Development, Irene, Centurion District, Pretoria, Gauteng. Unpublished Survey Report. Archaeology Contracts Unit, UNISA for Van Riet & Louw Landscape Architects.