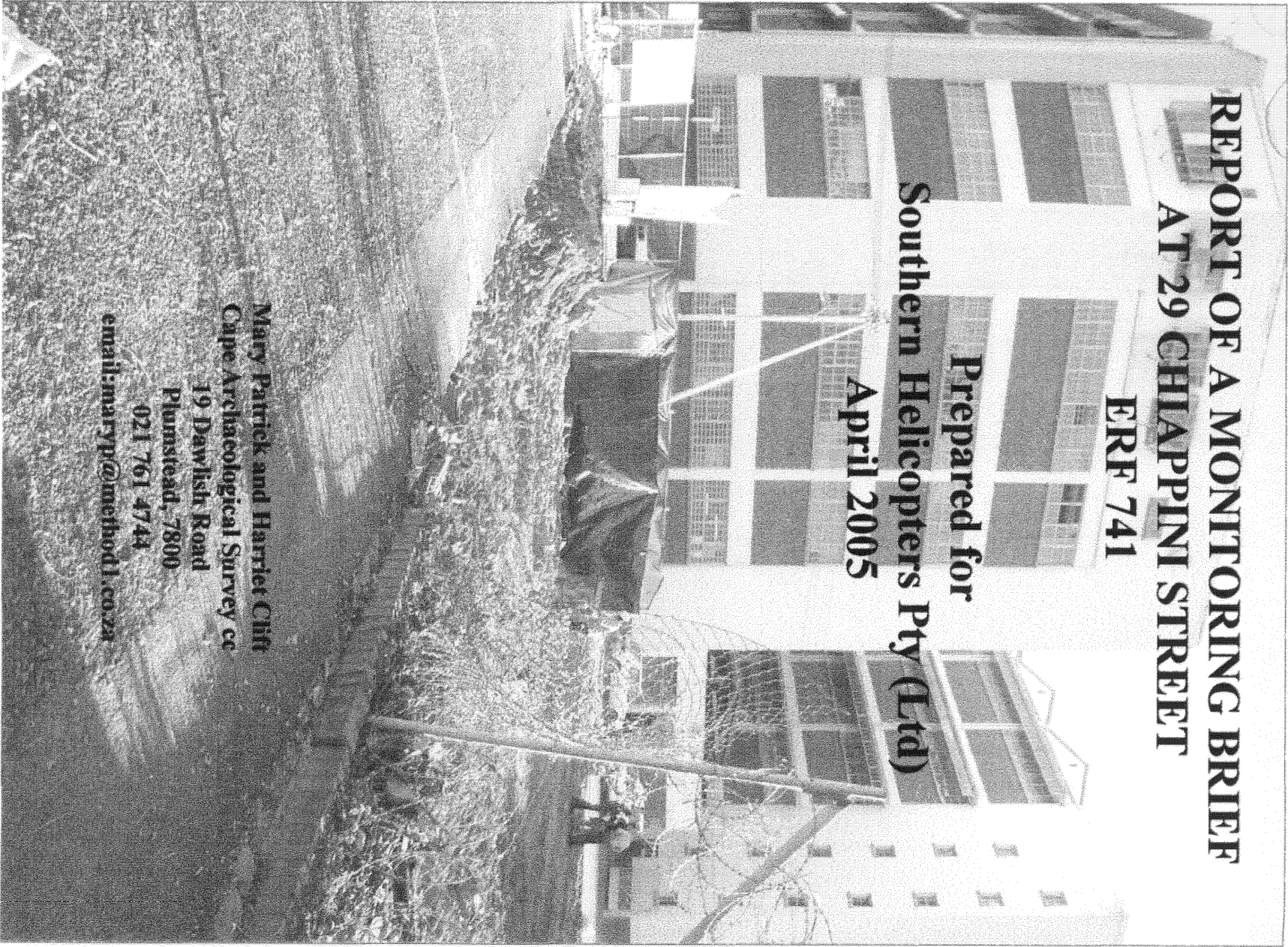


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**REPORT OF A MONITORING BRIEF
AT 29 CHIAPPINI STREET**

ERF 741

**Prepared for
Southern Helicopters Pty (Ltd)
April 2005**

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INTRODUCTION

This report, commissioned by Southern Helicopters (Pty) Ltd, is submitted to the Heritage Authorities in fulfillment of a Record of Decision set out by Heritage Western Cape (Ref: C13/3/6/2/1/1/1/A1¹) that requested that an archaeological monitoring brief be undertaken while the planned demolition of 29 Chiappini Street (Erf 741 Cape Town) was underway.

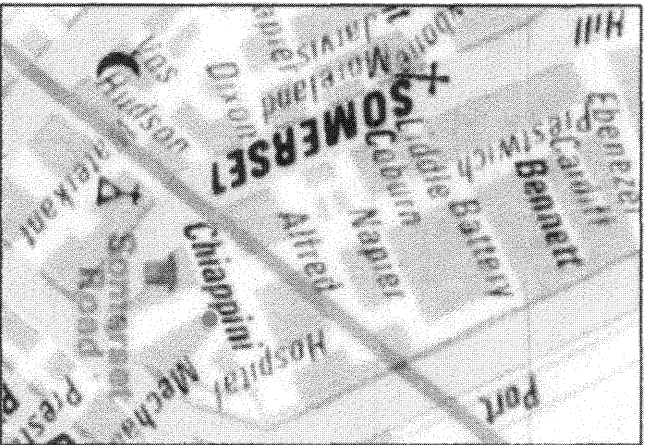


Figure 1: Red dot shows the location of the site in terms of the western city. Accidental discovery of burials have been found in the block bounded by Prestwich, Napier and Alfred Streets (2003 and 2004) as well as in the block bounded by Prestwich, Napier and Coburn Streets (1995).

RESULTS OF FIELDWORK

In the course of removing the rubble of the demolished building, which was built in the 1940's, the partial remains of at least two adult humans were uncovered. The bones were collected by Steven Harnsen of Skye Demolition and Mary Patrick, the Principal Investigator was notified. Demolition work ceased (Vide Appendix 1).

On Monday, 25 April 2005, after a site inspection, it became clear that the human remains originated from a patch of sandy white soil in the southwestern edge of the erf. Mary Leslie, the archaeologist of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) was notified of the findings. Mrs Leslie requested that the general context of the burials be determined and recorded prior to her visiting the site. It was agreed to continue monitoring the remainder of Erf 741, while the area where the human remains were found was cordoned and screened off from the rest of the site and the context of the remains determined.

¹ If any human remains are discovered, they must be treated with respect and SAHRA (Mrs Mary Leslie, 021-462 4502) and HWC must be notified immediately. An archaeologist will be required to remove the remains at the expense of the developer.

A 2x2m grid was laid out over the patch of sandy soil which effectively covered a surface measuring 6x4m. No articulated bone was visible on the surface. The white sand was carefully removed with spades and all the sand was passed through a 3mm sieve. Bone fragments were collected and the provenience recorded. In cases where articulated bones was found, sand was cleaned off using brushes, bones photographed and left in the soil (Figure 2).

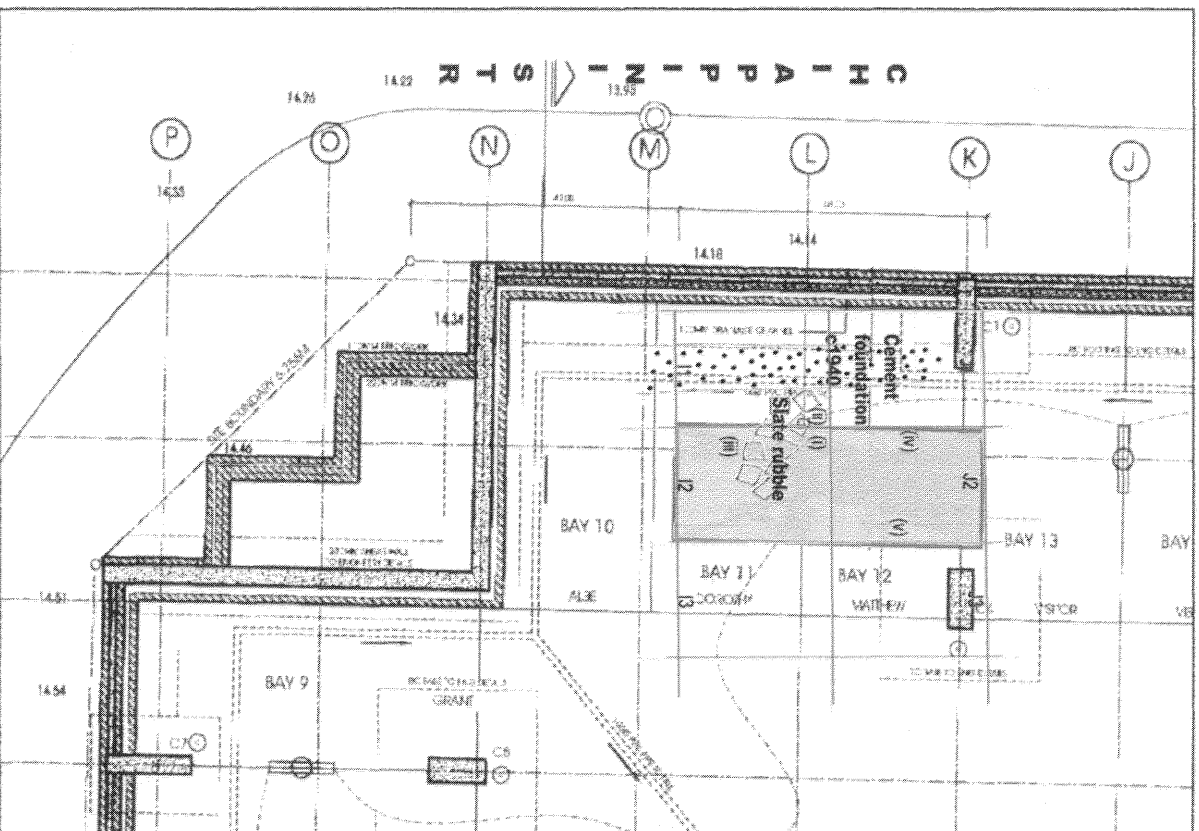
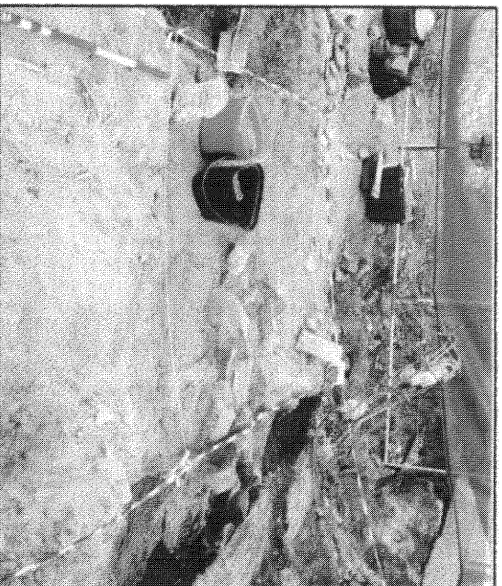
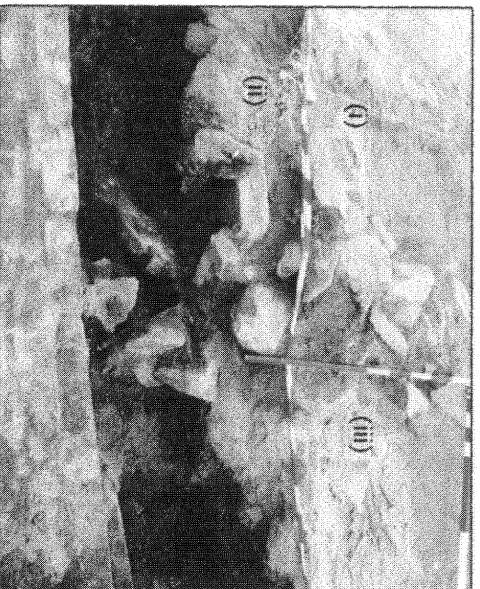


Figure 2: Site plan showing the location of the burials. Gridlines are shown in red. The shaded area shows location of articulated human skeletal remains which are further indicated by roman numerals and discussed below.



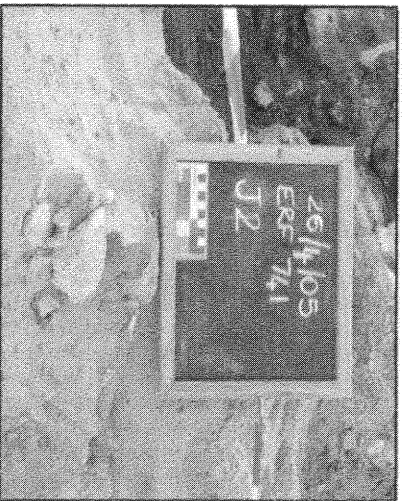
In Square II and J1, the 1940s foundation was uncovered, running parallel to Chiappini Street. The top of the foundation lay 68 cm below the present level of the pavement. The 1940s foundation cut into slate bock rubble, associated with the demolition of the 19th century tenement housing which stood on this site prior to demolition in the 1930s². The slate rubble lay across the centre of the grid. It later became apparent that this slate rubble cut into and through at least two burials (the partial articulated skeleton in the southwest of I2 and a cluster of phalanges towards the northwest of I2). (Photographer facing southwards).



(i), (ii) The partial skeleton in the southwestern part of I2 consisted of articulated vertebrae, ribs and partial humeri. A broken cranium is associated with the articulated vertebrae. The cranium was clearly disturbed when the slate rubble was deposited in the area, prior to the construction of the 1940s foundation. (Photographer facing eastwards).



(iii) In the northwest of I2 is a cluster of phalanges. The position of a coffin nail as well as a change in soil texture and colour, indicates that this is the foot-end of the coffin. The slate rubble has destroyed the remainder of this burial. Another cluster of phalanges in the adjacent II may be associated. Burial appears to be facing South. (Photographer facing northwards).



(iv) A partial cranium with vertebrae was found in J2. (Photographer facing northwest).



(v) The only relatively undisturbed burial was located along the eastern edge of J2, laying in roughly a north-south orientation. Coffin nails indicate that this too was a coffin burial. The cranium (crushed) as well as the phalanges had been present, but was (erroneously) collected when the square was cleaned. The position of the burial suggests a Christian burial with the deceased lying in the prone position, hands crossed, facing North. (Photographer facing southwards)

No articulated bone was found in squares I3 and J3. Bone fragments were collected and labeled.

Underneath the white sand, was a yellow sand with gravel, which became progressively more gravelly. No remains or cultural material was found in this layer. Immediately underneath the gravelly yellow deposit was a yellow/black compact clay layer. The clay layer is undisturbed *in situ* soil and lay 87 cm beneath the surface of the existing pavement. During the trial excavations of 2004, it was determined that this *in situ* clay layer lay 120-130 cm beneath the then existing floor surfaces. The 19th century slate foundations sat on top of this compact clay layer².

² Patrick, M & Clift, H (2004) Phase One Trial Excavations at 29 Chiappini Street (Erf 741), Cape Town. Unpublished report submitted to Aquacore Property Developers (Pty) Ltd. Cape Archaeological Survey cc.

CONCLUSIONS

The exposed burials on the corner of Chiappini Street suggest a single layer of burials confined to a small section of the overall development area. It is very likely that the burials date to the late 18th century as they are located beneath foundations dating to the 19th and 20th century. In 1814 land in the vicinity of Erf 71, described as wasteland, was sold to a private individual. By the mid 19th century, the business premises of *A Chiappini and Co* were located on Erf 741. Between 1880 and 1890 low income housing was built on the site.

Erf 741 lies to the west of the Dutch Reformed Church burial ground, which was officially closed in 1894. This burial ground, as well as a number of other denominational burial grounds were overly full and were considered to be a health risk. According to common practice, when a portion of burial ground was full, it could be reused after 12 years; the decomposed bones would be buried deeper and the new grave placed on top.

When the cemeteries were originally laid out in the 18th century, they were well outside the boundaries of the village of Cape Town. By the start of the 20th century, the boundaries of the city had expanded to such an extent, that these burial grounds were surrounded by residential and small business premises. After 1906, after much negotiation with the affected church authorities, it was decided to move the cemetery to Maitland.

In 1934, an Act of Parliament made provision for the clearing of slums that were situated within the Municipality of Cape Town. This action was direct result of the Plague epidemic which broke out in Cape Town at the start of the 20th century. The entire block on which 29 Chiappini Street was situated, was bought by the Cape Town City Council and the structures demolished³.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A senior representative from SAHRA should formally evaluate the burials on site before the next permit committee meeting and provide feedback to committee members on the context of the burials.
- The developer, Southern Helicopters (Pty) Ltd, and their appointed agent, should be allowed to exhume the burials and continue the development of the site without a 60 day public participation process, as it is the opinion of the archaeologist that these burials are over 100 years old and that there is no history of sacred memory associated with this site.
- The site archaeologist should apply for an emergency permit to remove the skeletal remains under Section 35 of the National Heritage Act as they constitute an accidental discovery of skeletal remains that are older than 100 years old. The burials are therefore archaeological finds and should be treated accordingly.

³ Only the Shakespeare Bar escaped demolition.

- A forensic audit should be undertaken as a matter of urgency by a physical anthropologist and feedback provided to the community at large concerning the social history of the people buried there. Failure to undertake analysis would deprive communities access to their history, and ensure that the archaeological record is written and informed solely by recollections of trans-generational grief rather than by multi-disciplinary research.
- A further motivation for applying for a Section 35 permit is borne out by the results of previous research undertaken on this site by Patrick & Clift (2004) that the burials fall outside the formal boundaries of the consecrated burial grounds set out by the VOC (1755) and the Dutch Reformed Church (1755-1894) nor are they administered by any Local Authority.
- Exhumation of the burials should be allowed on the basis that there appears to be no community memory of sacred landscape, nor a memory of visiting the study area for the purpose of ritual celebration of the dead. There does, however, exist a community memory of forced removals under apartheid. The burials represent an early 19th century occupation of the landscape, while the memory of forced removals represents a 20th century occupation of the landscape. In the ongoing debate on exhumation and reburial in the Green Point area it is clear that the two occupations have been juxtaposed. It is unclear how this can be reconciled against the criteria set out in the National Heritage Act which defines with whom the public participation process should be conducted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors of this report would like to thank the following people for their support while undertaking archaeological monitoring work in Chiappini Street:

Mr Matthew Quinton & Mr Michael Morris from Southern Helicopters (Pty) Ltd
 Mr Steven Harmsen from Slye Demolition and Earthworks, and
 Ms Belinda Mutti, Cape Archaeological Survey for site photographs.

Appendix 1

**SUMMARY OF EVENTS REGARDING THE DISCOVERY OF HUMAN BURIALS AT
29 CHIAPPINI STREET, CAPE TOWN**

Mary Patrick, Cape Archaeological Survey cc
April 2005

23 April - Steven Harnsen from Skye Demolition calls in finds of bones on site while the demolition process is underway to Mary Patrick Cape Archaeological Survey.

24 April - Mary Patrick receives message and arranged to meet Stephen on site at 7.30 am on Monday morning. No further work was undertaken by Skye Demolition on the 24 April.

25 April - Mary Patrick identifies the finds. Large collection of domestic animals bones, as well as the partial remains of at least two adult humans, now removed and out of context and stored in the contractors site store. Skye personnel locate the position of finds on site and this is sectioned off from the rest of the site and streetscape on Chiappini and Prestwich Streets, by wire fencing and shade cloth. Mary Patrick informs Mathew Quinton of Southern Helicopters (SH) of the presence of human burials on site and he conducted a site visit. The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) archaeologist, Mary Leslie, is informed of the find and invited to visit the site. She requests that the general context of the burials be determined and recorded prior to a site visit. An archaeological monitoring brief is undertaken on the remaining extent of the site and small concentrations of domestic animal bones are found randomly distributed on the site but no evidence of human burials.

The human remains accidentally exhumed by Skye Demolition are removed from site and taken to the Department of Human Biology, University of Cape Town for safe keeping, and to comply with the SAHRA permit regulations while undertaking archaeological investigations at this site (SAHRA Ref: 80/04/11/011/51).

26 April - A 6 X 6 meter square is excavated by archaeologists, Mary Patrick (Principal Investigator) Harriet Clift (Field Supervisor) and Belinda Mutti (Field Assistant). One adult burial and two partially in-situ burials are exposed during fieldwork. The burials are located on the South West section of the site in shallow graves approximately 30 cms from the surface of the site. The SAHRA (Colette) is informed of the context of the burials. Mary Patrick also reports the burials to Inspector Todd of the South African Police (021) 4576354 in order to fulfill the requirements set out in the National Heritage Act (25) 1999. A site visit from Captain Wolhuter (0824693132) of the SAP is undertaken to record the antiquity of the burials and rule out death by misadventure. A forensic detective, Captain Truter also visited the site and contacted the State Pathologist. Both the State Pathologist and the police record that they have no interest in the site as it is older than 60 years and falls under the protection of the Heritage Act. A photographic record of the burials was undertaken by the police for their file.

Mary Patrick attends a meeting with Colette at SAHRA to provide feedback on the excavations and is advised to apply for a new permit (section 36) to exhume the skeletal remains, as well undertake a 60 day public participation process before the exhumation occurs. Mary Patrick informs Mathew Quinton of the SAHRA record of decision at an office meeting at Arthur Quinton Architects. This is followed by a telephonic discussion between Mary Patrick (CAS), Mary Leslie (SAHRA), Mathew Quinton and Michael Morris (SH) regarding the ongoing management of the site. The archaeological site is close down, covered and protected by fencing and an on duty security guard employed by Southern Helicopters is posted on the boundary of the site until a permit committee decision is given.