

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF A RUINED STRUCTURE ON REM ERF 329, NOORDHOEK, SIMONSTOWN MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT, WESTERN CAPE

(Assessment conducted under Section 38 (1) of the
National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) as a freestanding AIA)

Prepared for

William Robson

Weltevreden, Oranje Road, Noordhoek
P.O. Box 214, Noordhoek, 7979
Ph/Fax: (021) 7891165
bill@selwayrobson.co.za

15 January 2009



Prepared by

Jayson Orton

Archaeology Contracts Office

Department of Archaeology
University of Cape Town
Private Bag
Rondebosch
7701

Phone (021) 650 2357
Fax (021) 650 2352
Email Jayson.Orton@uct.ac.za

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses a small ruined structure on Rem. erf 329, Noordhoek. The proponent would like to reconstruct the building on its original foundations and this assessment serves to allow the appropriate decisions to be made by the heritage authorities. The site is zoned agricultural and is 8016 m².

A single small structure in poor condition was present prior to the mid-1980s and it has been incorporated into the modern dwelling. This dwelling and all other structures have been built in vernacular styles since the mid-1980s. Many trees are present including some older oak trees and a large blue gum tree used to lie in front of the main house but this was blown down in a storm. Many younger trees are present around the ruin. A stream flows down a channel along the eastern margin of the site and an irrigation furrow crosses the site adjacent to the ruin.

The general heritage context of Noordhoek relates primarily to its farming roots. Little prehistoric material exists but a good sprinkling of structures greater than 60 years of age are present. Historical material is regularly encountered in gardens testifying to the historic occupation of the valley.

Examination of the ruin revealed walls of approximately 35 cm thickness. Insufficient is exposed to indicate the full extent of the structure, although it seems likely that it was a traditional long house. Given the thin walls it is uncertain whether they represent foundations or actual walls. The existence of a few soft, orange clay bricks on top of the stones at one point must certainly belong to the actual walls. Many historic artefacts have been found on the property over the years and the majority appear to be standard late 19th century wares. Examination of historic maps and aerial photographs suggests the house was built after 1856 and demolished between 1932 and 1945.

It is suggested that the proponent be allowed to reconstruct the building, since the ruin, which lies at and below ground level, has little value as it is. However, it is recommended that the remains of the structure be archaeologically excavated so as to properly document it and reveal its original form. Associated artefacts could also be recovered which would help to further document the specific history of the site. It would also be useful to document the material found over the years as this would further add to the history of the site.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. HERITAGE LEGISLATION	5
3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT	5
4. HERITAGE CONTEXT	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5. METHODS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1. Limitations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6. FINDINGS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
7. CONCLUSIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
8. RECOMMENDATIONS	Error! Bookmark not defined.
9. REFERENCES	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. INTRODUCTION

The proponent discovered remains of what he assumed to be an historical structure on his property, remainder erf 329, Noordhoek (Figure 1). He would like to attempt reconstruction of the building and due to the obvious archaeological sensitivity of the site he contacted the UCT Archaeology Department in order to find out the best way to proceed. This contact resulted in the current assessment being undertaken and this report serves to provide the necessary information for Heritage Western Cape to make the required decisions.

The property is 8016 m² in extent and is zoned agriculture. It is located in Oranje Road, Noordhoek.

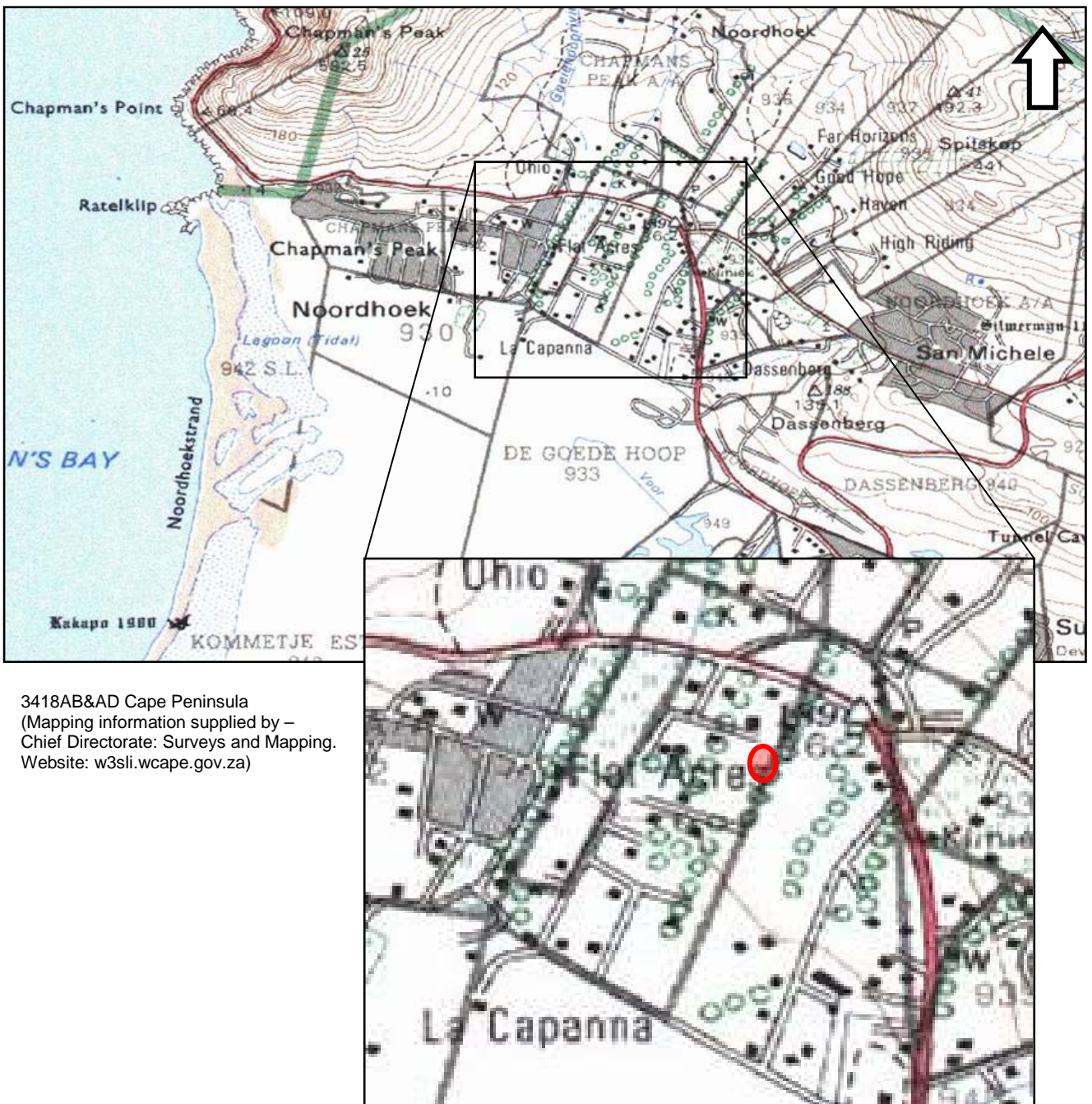


Figure 1: Map showing the location of the site.

2. HERITAGE LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) No. 25 of 1999 protects a variety of heritage resources including palaeontological, prehistoric and historical material (including ruins) more than 100 years old (Section 35), human remains (Section 36) and non-ruined structures older than 60 years (Section 34). Landscapes with cultural significance are also protected under the definition of the National Estate (Section 3.1d). Under Section 38 (1) of the act the subject property requires heritage assessment based on its size of greater than 5000 m² and also, given the known archaeological site which the proponent would like to modify, Section 35 is also invoked.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The property in question had one small structure in poor condition on it in the mid-1980s and all other structures are modern. These latter have been built in vernacular styles with the earlier structure having been incorporated into the main dwelling. Many trees occur on the property, particularly in the vicinity of the ruin, although much of this is relatively recent growth. A few old oak trees occur behind the main dwelling and a large blue gum tree used to be present in front of it but was lost in a storm during the 1980s. A small stream flows down a channel along the eastern margin of the property and an excavated irrigation furrow runs through the middle of it, immediately adjacent to the ruin.

Figure 2 shows an aerial photograph of the area and Figures 3 to 6 show the features of the property. The surrounding area is comprised of similar-sized residential erven.



Figure 2: Aerial photograph from Google Earth showing the boundaries of the property (in red) and the location of the ruined structure (in yellow). The end of Oranje Road is at the northern corner of the property.



Figure 3: View of the front of the main dwelling (right) and an outbuilding (left). All structures are just over 20 years old.



Figure 4: View of the rear of the main dwelling.



Figure 5: View of a modern outbuilding.

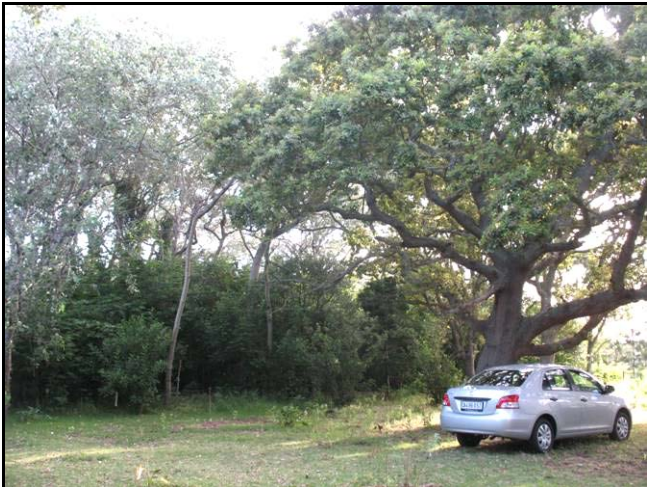


Figure 6: View of the bush and trees in which the ruin is situated.

1. HERITAGE CONTEXT

The Noordhoek valley has been used for farming and forestry for several centuries and due to the disturbance associated with these activities they now constitute the most important aspect of Noordhoek's heritage. The oldest known structures seem to date to the mid-19th century but many others dating between the turn of the century and the mid-1900s are also present. Figure 7 shows an aerial photograph of the area from 1945. Buildings visible in this photograph and neighbouring ones are marked on Figure 8. A few of these are not confirmed old and the possibility exists that newer structures may have been rebuilt on the original sites.



Figure 7: 1945 Aerial photograph of the central Noordhoek area with the subject property marked in yellow. The turquoise rectangle represents Lot C of Lot 1 of Farm 933 De Goede Hoop as mapped in Surveyor General drawing No. 534 of 1856 (see below). The U-shaped road in the centre of the photograph is Avondrust Circle and Chapman's Peak Drive runs out the left side. The original configuration of Noordhoek Main Road lies along the right edge of the photograph and extends into what is now Village Lane. The main road was later redirected south of Village Lane to run straight across to Chapman's Peak Drive.

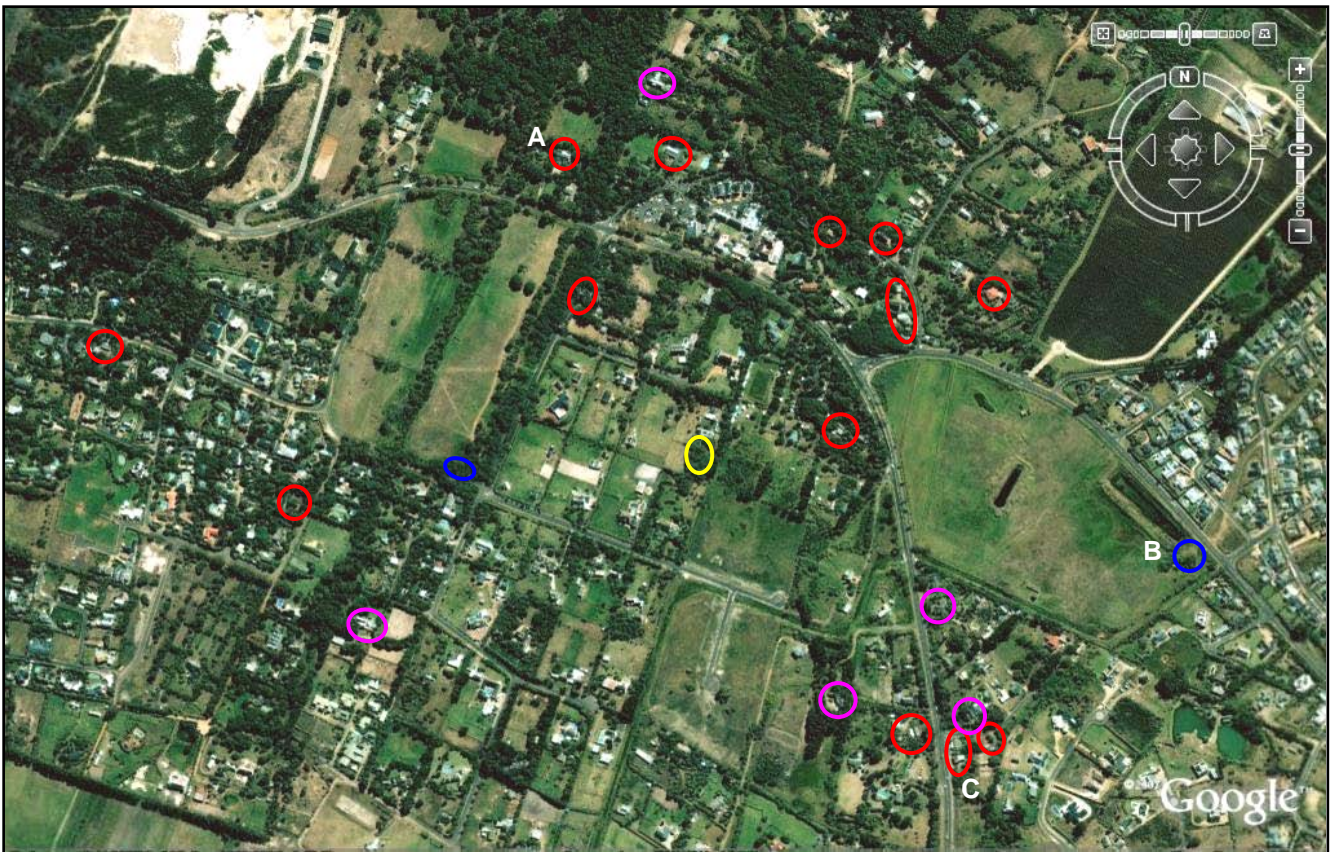


Figure 8: Modern aerial photograph of the central Noordhoek area taken from Google Earth and showing buildings identified to be older than 60 years. Those in red circles are visually confirmed older than 60 years, while those in purple have not been physically seen by the author but do match the 1945 photograph. The two blue circles represent ruins, although the right hand one is less than 100 years of age and is thus not protected. It was illegally demolished in 2004. The letters A to C refer to the following CRM reports: A – Orton 2007, B – Hart 2005, C – Finnegan & Orton 2008.

Historical archaeological material is commonly encountered in the valley with local residents reporting glass and ceramics in their gardens. A ruined structure is present at the south-eastern corner of Avondrust Circle and this most likely dates to the late 19th century. It is visible as a standing structure on the 1945 aerial photograph. This ruin is similar in appearance to that on Rem. erf 329.

Many Later Stone Age (LSA) archaeological sites have been documented in the Cape Peninsula with most located along the coast where shellfish served as the primary food resource. Rudner (1968) and Olivier (n.d.) recorded many shell middens in the dunes behind Noordhoek Beach and limited evidence of LSA occupation has also been recorded near the south-western end of Lake Michelle (Orton 2004; Orton & Hart 2005). MSA and LSA stone artefact scatters have been sampled by amateur collectors in the early 20th century with Colonel Hardy being the main protagonist in the Noordhoek area (Goodwin & Van Riet Lowe 1929). Unfortunately we do not know exactly where he collected his material from, but it is likely to have been in the area behind the beach where visibility and preservation would have been best. No prehistoric archaeological sites are known from areas away from the beach in the central Noordhoek valley, although a double burial dated around 3450 BC was recovered from the vicinity of the old Drive-in Theatre on Noordhoek Main Road (Sealy & Van der Merwe 1988). Other Stone Age burials have been recovered from Noordhoek (Morris 1992)

but most of these are likely to have been found close to the beach, possibly associated with shell middens.

2. METHODS

The property was examined on 2 January 2009 and the relevant features recorded photographically. Much of the property was only looked at superficially to establish the context and only the immediate environs of the ruin in question were checked in more detail.

Some examination of historical maps and aerial photographs was undertaken in order to help establish the age and context of the ruin under study. Overlays on Google Earth allowed identification of the appropriate site.

2.1. Limitations

Thick vegetation in the vicinity of the ruin reduced ground visibility but enough of the structure was visible to make a sound judgement.

3. FINDINGS

After initial discovery, the ruined structure was revealed at two points only. One is a corner (Figure 9) and the other a sidewall (Figure 10). Insufficient walling was visible to be able to determine the overall extent of the structure. The walls are approximately 35 cm thick.

Two possibilities exist:

1. The stone walling present could represent the foundations of the original structure, since there are soft, orange clay bricks present above the stone work in one area which must relate to walls; or
2. The visible stone work could represent the lower parts of the walls with the foundations still being buried. This latter interpretation is supported by the fact that an irrigation furrow was dug past the site in the mid-20th century and the excavated soil was dumped over the ruin. As such there is no clear indication of original ground height.

No old artefactual material was noted although a few fragments of more recent-looking window glass were seen. The proponent has in the past found various bottles, ceramic fragments and other historical items on his property. Most of this material appears to be of late 19th century age and I suspect that it may relate to the ruined structure, although a 19th century farmhouse is also located within a few hundred meters of the property. A survey diagram dating to 1856 shows no structures present on Lot C of Lot 1 of Farm 933, the historic land parcel on which the ruin lies (Figure 11). Taken together, this suggests that the ruin dates to some time during the latter half of the 19th century. Although one cannot tell from the limited exposed parts, the structure may have been a traditional Cape longhouse. This would need to be verified through excavation.

The 1932 topographical map of the area shows a building in the correct position to be the ruin on rem. erf 329. It thus seems that the structure was demolished sometime between 1932 and 1945.



Figure 9: The corner of the ruined structure.



Figure 10: The exposed sidewall with clay bricks.

1. CONCLUSIONS

Inspection of the site has shown that a historical ruin is indeed present on the property. The following conclusions are drawn:

- The ruin is almost certainly greater than 100 years of age and is thus protected as an archaeological site under Section 35 of the NHRA. This means that a permit would need to be obtained for any excavation, modification or alteration to the remains;
- Insufficient walling is currently visible to determine the overall form and extent of the original structure;
- It has limited heritage value in and of itself but its study would contribute to the overall history of development in Noordhoek; and
- As it stands it will slowly be destroyed by the action of tree roots if no remedial action is taken.

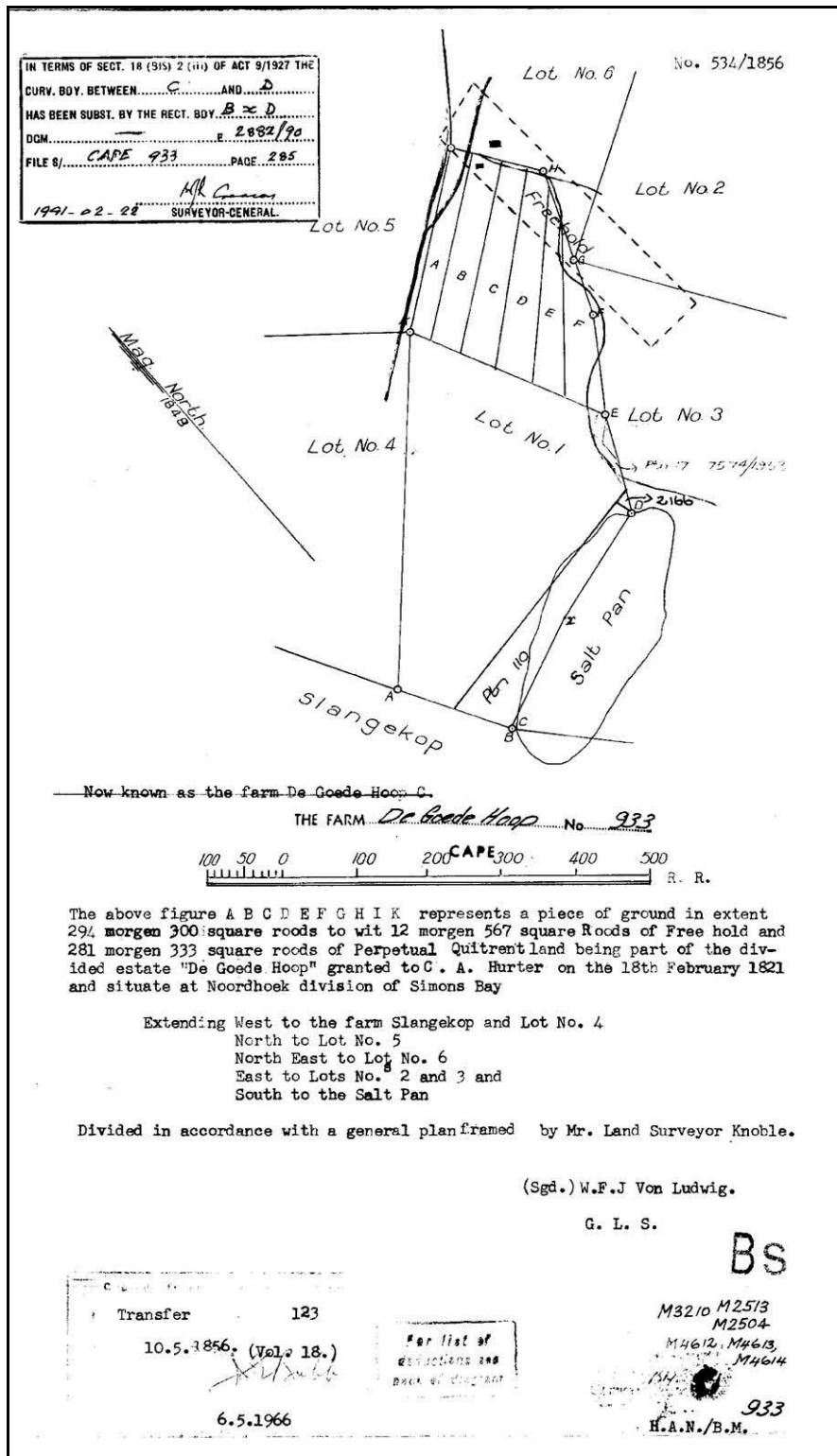


Figure 11: Survey diagram from 1856 showing subdivision of Lot 1 of Farm 933 De Gode Hoop into seven parts denoted in the diagram by Lot No. 1 and Lots A to F. Rem. erf 329 falls within Lot C.

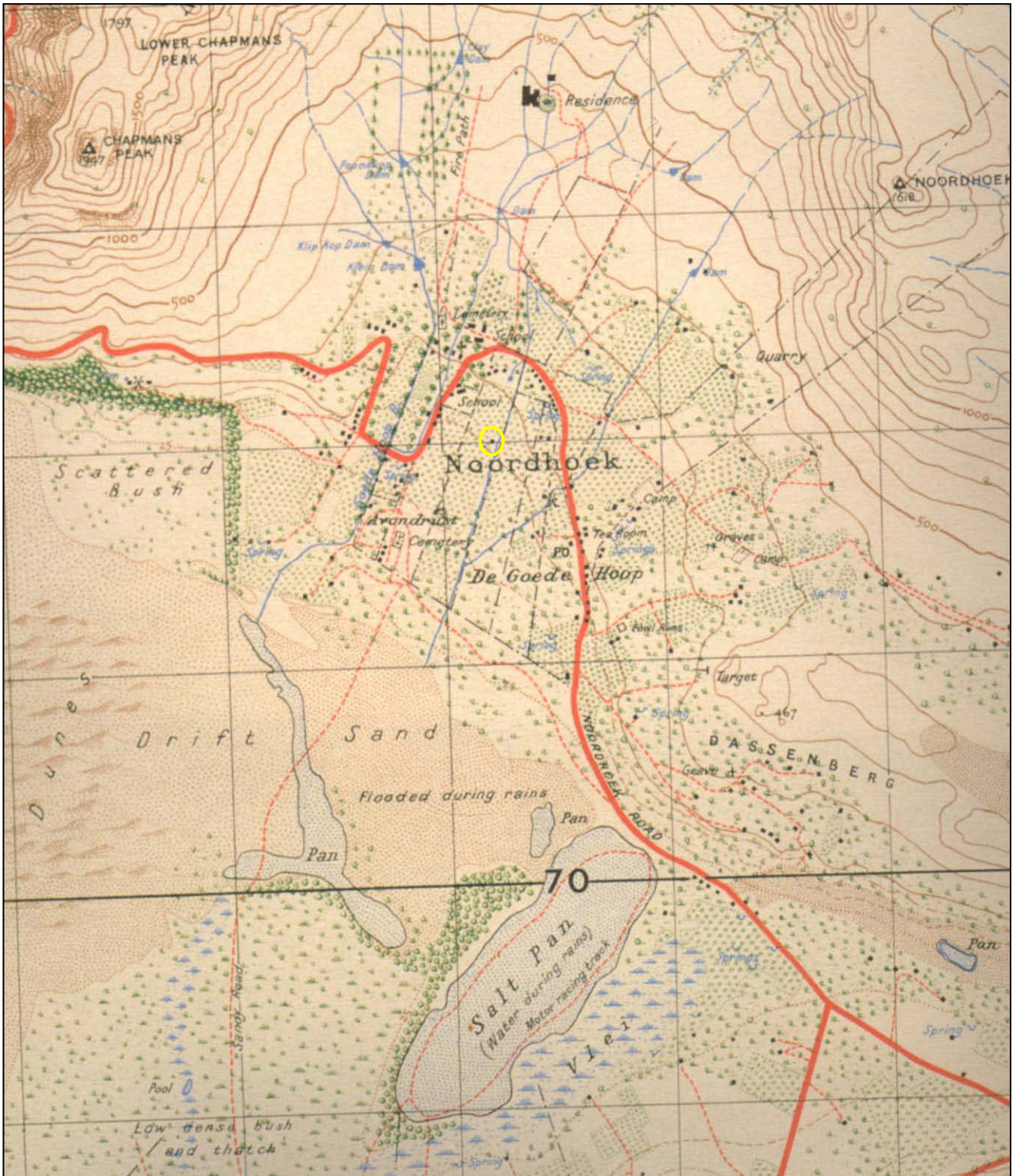


Figure 12: Extract from the 1932 1:25 000 topographical map of the Noordhoek area. A building is shown which corresponds exactly with the location of the site in question (yellow circle).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The proponent would very much like to reconstruct the building, as far as possible using materials similar to those that would have been used in the original structure. He has suggested reusing the original foundations. An alternative possibility exists in that the foundations could be conserved as is and a reconstruction be situated immediately adjacent to them. HWC will need to state their favoured approach.

The following recommendations are made:

- Reconstruction on the original foundations may be carried out provided that archaeological excavation and suitable recording of all extant structural material is undertaken beforehand; and
- An inventory of artefactual material found on the property should be made in order to determine more precisely the date of occupation of the structure and hence document some of the history of the site.

3. REFERENCES

- Finnegan, E. & Orton, J. 2008. Heritage Impact Assessment of the Remainder of Farm 938, Noordhoek. Unpublished report prepared for Nkoi Place of the Leopard Resort (Pty) Ltd. University of Cape Town, Archaeology Contracts Office.
- Goodwin, A.J.H. & van Riet Lowe, C. 1929. The Stone Age cultures of South Africa. *Annals of the South African Museum* 27: 1-289.
- Hart, T. 2005. Stage 1 Heritage Impact Assessment of Portion 68 of Farm 934 Goede Hoop, Noordhoek. Unpublished report prepared for Planning Partners (Pty) Ltd. University of Cape Town, Archaeology Contracts Office.
- Morris, A.G. 1992. A master catalogue: Holocene human skeletons from South Africa. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Olivier, A.M. n.d. The archaeological survey of the Cape Peninsula. Unpublished Honours project, University of Cape Town.
- Orton, J. 2004. Initial heritage impact assessment of small areas at Lake Michelle, Noordhoek. Unpublished report prepared for Andre van der Spuy Environmental Consultants. University of Cape Town, Archaeology Contracts Office.
- Orton, J. 2007. Supporting documentation for Notification of Intent to Develop, Portion 6 of Farm 933, Noordhoek, Simonstown Magisterial District. Unpublished report prepared for CCA Environmental. University of Cape Town, Archaeology Contracts Office.
- Orton, J & Hart, T. 2005. Heritage statement and AIA Masiphumelele Extension Erf 4198 Sunnydale. Unpublished report prepared for Chand Environmental. University of Cape Town, Archaeology Contracts Office.
- Rudner, J. 1968. Strandloper pottery from South and South West Africa. *Annals of the South African Museum* 49:441-663.

Sealy, J.C. & Van der Merwe, N.J. 1988. Social, spatial and chronological patterning in marine food use as determined by ^{13}C measurements of Holocene human skeletons from the south-western Cape. *World Archaeology* 20: 87-102.