

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON ERVEN 4404, 4405 & 2798  
ST. HELENA BAY  
SALDANHA -VREDENBURG DISTRICT**

Prepared for

**DENNIS MOSS PARTNERSHIP**

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By

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**JUNE  
2006**

## **Executive summary**

Dennis Moss Partnership, on behalf of Diablo Trade 198 (Pty) Ltd, requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for a proposed housing development on Erven 4404, 4405 and 2798 in St. Helena Bay on the Cape West Coast.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the affected property is for the purpose of a residential housing development consisting of 57 single residential erven, public open spaces and streets.

The combined extent of the proposed development (nearly 5.0 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

The aim of the study is to locate and map archaeological heritage sites/remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

The subject property is located in St Helena Bay, approximately 20 km north of Vredenburg on the Saldanha Peninsula on West Coast of the Western Cape. Access to the site is via the main road between St. Helena Bay and Hanna's Bay. The site is located directly behind (i.e. east of) Sandpiper Village.

The proposed site comprises old agricultural lands characterised by highly weathered quartzite soils on relatively steep west facing slopes. Dune mole rat activity is extensive over the property. There are no significant landscape features such as granite outcroppings on the property, although the surrounding hills are dotted with granite outcrops. The site is degraded and in a disturbed context.

A thin, surface scatter of bleached and weathered marine shellfish was located on the lower slopes of the subject property, during the baseline study of the proposed development. No cultural-heritage remains were found on the site.

Several Later Stone Age tools and one Middle Stone Age flake were also found scattered over the remainder of the property.

**The archaeological heritage remains have been graded low local significance.**

The Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment has identified no significant impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material that will need to be mitigated prior to proposed development activities.

The Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment has rated the potential impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material as being low.

With regard to the proposed development of Erven 4404, 4405 and 2798 in St Helena Bay, the following recommendations are made:

- Bulk earthworks and excavations are monitored by a professional archaeologist
- Should any unmarked human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie @ 021 462 4502), or Heritage Western Cape (Dr A. Jerardino 021 483 9692).

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background and brief**

Dennis Moss Partnership<sup>1</sup>, on behalf of Diablo Trade 198 (Pty) Ltd, requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for a proposed housing development on Erven 4404, 4405 and 2798 in St. Helena Bay on the Cape West Coast.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the affected property is for the purpose of a residential housing development consisting of 57 single residential erven, public open spaces and streets. The current zoning is small holding and Agriculture.

The combined extent of the proposed development (nearly 5.0 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

The aim of the study is to locate and map archaeological heritage sites/remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

## **2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The terms of reference for the archaeological study were:

- to determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological sites of significance within the proposed site;
- to identify and map any sites of archaeological significance within the proposed site;
- to assess the sensitivity and conservation significance of archaeological sites within the proposed site;
- to assess the status and significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed development, and
- to identify mitigatory measures to protect and maintain any valuable archaeological sites that may exist within the proposed site

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<sup>1</sup> Dennis Moss Partnership is represented by Mr Derek Moss. 17 Market Street, Stellenbosch, 7600. Fax (021) 886 5393

### 3. THE STUDY SITE

A locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of the proposed site is illustrated in Figure 2.

The subject property is located in St Helena Bay, approximately 20 km north of Vredenburg on the Saldanha Peninsula on West Coast of the Western Cape. Access to the site is via the main road between St. Helena Bay and Hanna's Bay. The site is located directly behind (i.e. east of) Sandpiper Village.

The proposed site is vacant and comprises old agricultural lands characterised by highly weathered quartzite soils on relatively steep west facing slopes (Figures 3-6). A drainage channel occurs alongside the northern boundary of the property, while the upper slopes are slightly terraced, exposed and sheet washed. Several small footpaths are also evident. Dune mole rat activity is extensive over the property. There are no significant landscape features such as granite outcroppings on the property, although the surrounding hills are dotted with granite outcrops. The site is degraded and in a disturbed context.

The property is situated within an area characterised by urban development of a residential, commercial and industrial (harbour, fish processing) nature.

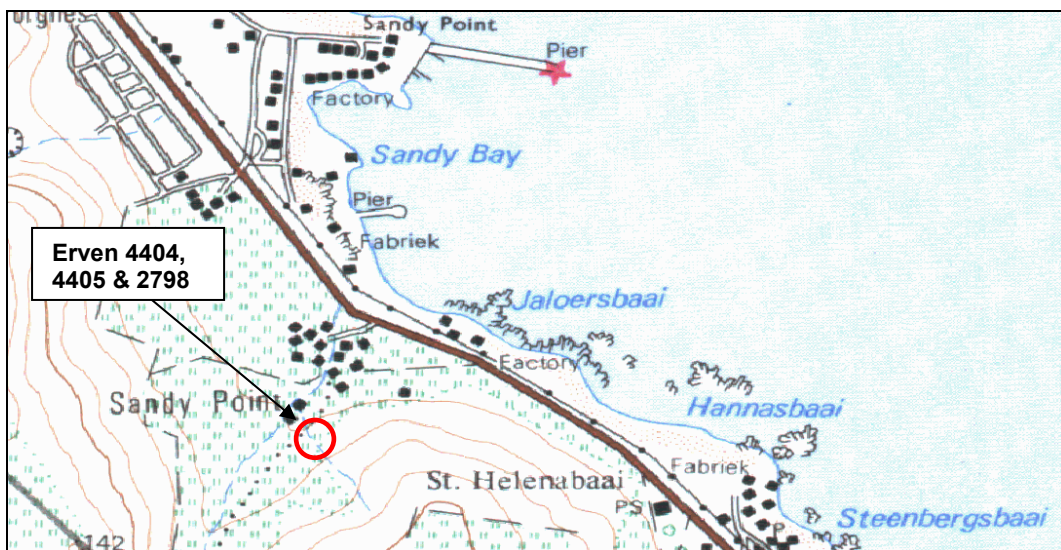


Figure 1. Site locality map (1:50 000 3218 CA & CC Veldriff).



Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the property



**Figure 3. View of the site facing north west**



**Figure 5. View of the site facing north east.**



**Figure 4. View of the site facing west.**



**Figure 6. View of the site facing east.**

## **4. APPROACH TO THE STUDY**

### **4.1 Method of survey**

The approach followed in the archaeological study entailed a detailed survey of the proposed site.

Archaeological heritage remains were recorded using a hand-held Garmin Geko 201 GPS unit set on map datum WGS 84.

The site visit and assessment took place on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

A desktop study was also undertaken.

### **4.2 Limitations**

There were no limitations associated with the study.

### **4.3 Results of the desk-top study**

Archaeological heritage remains do occur in the immediate surrounding area. Extensive scatters of fragmented shellfish remains and large numbers of stone artefacts (in quartz, quartzite and silcrete) have been recorded on the lower slopes of a property directly adjacent to Sandpiper Village (personnel observation), while several low-density scatters of marine shellfish and stone artefacts were located during a study of nearby Erf 2793 (Kaplan 2005a). Several quartz flakes and fragments of shellfish were also noted on weathered quartzite soils during an archaeological assessment of a proposed pipeline and reservoir in nearby Hanna's Bay (Kaplan 2005b). Some archaeological material was located during the assessment of Sandpiper Village (Kaplan 2005c)

It is well known that large numbers of archaeological sites occur along the rocky shoreline in the St. Helena Bay area, mostly around Duyker Eiland and Britannia Bay (Kaplan 1993; Halkett & Hart 1995; Thackeray & Cronin 1975). Recently, extensive scatters of shellfish, stone tools, pottery and reused colonial artefacts have been found in Britannia Bay, providing compelling evidence for possible herder sites (Kaplan 2006a, b in prep.).

With its rocky shoreline, the St. Helena Bay region acted as foci that attracted both LSA hunter-gatherers and later Khoekhoe herders as it offered greater opportunities for the exploitation of marine foods, particularly shellfish, while the local shales and granites provided vital nutrients for domestic stock. Shellfish meat was either cooked in pots or on open fires, but there is also evidence to suggest that meat was dried and smoked. Other marine resources exploited included sea birds, fish, crayfish, seal, dolphin, and even occasionally whales.

Research focussing on the Khoekhoe herder economy around 2000 years ago in the Vredenburg Peninsula has, significantly, identified large numbers of sites up to several kilometres from the shoreline (Sadr *et al* 1992). Many of these sites, comprising substantial shellfish deposits with pottery and stone tools, are centred round the many large granite outcroppings that are ubiquitous in Vredenburg, Paternoster and the St. Helena Bay area.

## 5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

### **5.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)**

...any development or other activity which will change the character of a site exceeding 5 000m<sup>2</sup>, or the rezoning or change of land use of a site exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>, requires an archaeological impact assessment in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

#### **5.1.1 Structures (Section 34 (1))**

No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), or Heritage Western Cape.

#### **5.1.2 Archaeology (Section 35 (4))**

No person may, without a permit issued by the SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, excavate, alter or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object.

#### **5.1.3 Burial grounds and graves (Section 36 (3))**

No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years, which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority.

## 6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND DESCRIPTION

### **Diablo 1 (GPS reading S° 32 45 315 E° 18 00 514)**

A thin, discreet, surface scatter of bleached and weathered marine shellfish, measuring about 4-5 m in extent, was located on the lower slopes of the property during the baseline study of the proposed development. The small shell fragments are dominated by Scutellastra and Cymbula sp, while one large S. argenvillei and one smaller C. granatina were also noted. Several whelks also occur. No Black Mussel shell was found.

No cultural remains such as stone tools or pottery were found. Some animal burrowing and dune mole rat activity occurs nearby, but no shellfish was noted among the heaps or in the burrows, suggesting that no below ground archaeological deposits occur over the site.

**The archaeological heritage remains have been graded low local significance.**

Several Later Stone Age tools were found scattered over the remainder of the property, including one utilised quartz flake, one possible quartz high-backed scraper, one quartz flake, one quartz cobble, one quartzite chunk, one shale core and one Middle Stone Age flake. A piece of blue glass and several pieces of modern white porcelain were also noted.

**The archaeological heritage remains have been graded low local significance.**



## **7. IMPACT STATEMENT**

The impact of the proposed development of Erf 4404, 4405 and 2798 in St. Helena Bay on archaeological heritage remains is likely to be low.

The probability of locating significant archaeological heritage remains during implementation of the project is likely to be improbable.

Unmarked human burials may, however, be exposed or uncovered during earthworks and excavations.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The archaeological impact assessment of Erf 4404, 4405 and 2798 St Helena Bay, has rated the potential impacts to archaeological material as being low provided that:

- Bulk earthworks and excavations are monitored by a professional archaeologist
- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie @ 021 462 4502), or Heritage Western Cape (Dr A. Jerardino 021 483 9692).

## 9. REFERENCES

Halkett, D. & Hart, T. 1995. A Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of Portion 6 of the farm Dyker Eiland, St. Helena Bay. Report prepared for Beyers, A.W. Land Surveyors and Township Consultants. Archaeology Contracts Office, University of Cape Town.

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