

PROPOSED UPGRADING OF THE N2 FREEWAY BETWEEN RAAPENBERG
INTERCHANGE AND RHODES DRIVE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL STUDY

DRAFT REPORT

Prepared for

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By

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Executive summary

No archaeological and historical sites or features were located during a study of the proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive.

The proposed upgrading has been identified as a priority construction project for the improvement of the public transport system for the 2004 Olympic Bid.

Rapid urbanisation and recreational development of the Liesbeeck River valley, the canalisation of the river after 1933, and the construction of freeway and road networks has severely modified the study area since the establishment of early Freeburgher farms in the mid - 17th century.

The probability of locating the remnants of any archaeological sites, or features of cultural-historical significance during the upgrading of the N2 between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive, is therefore considered to be low to negligible.

The proposed upgrading of Settlers Way (N2) may, however, impact on the historic farm Koorndoop (1678) situated adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway, should widening extend beyond the current road reserve of the freeway.

Any potential or envisaged impact would need to be closely assessed by the National Monuments Council (NMC) prior to any construction activities commencing. All detailed technical drawings and plans should be closely assessed by the NMC prior to final approval.

Some concern has been expressed that planned landscaping and rehabilitation adjacent to Settlers Way may impact on Mostert's Grave and the cemetery within the Valkenberg complex. Valkenberg is a declared National Monument. However, it is unlikely that any severe negative impacts will occur as a result of these activities.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and brief

The Agency for Cultural Resource Management (ACRM) has been requested by Crowther Campbell & Associates to undertake an archaeological and historical study of the proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive.

The proposed upgrading has been identified as a priority construction project for the improvement of the public transport system for the 2004 Olympic Bid.

The aim of the archaeological study is to locate, identify and map archaeological or historical remains that may be impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project and to propose measures to mitigate against the impact.

2. Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the archaeological and historical study were:

1. to provide a brief description of the archaeology and cultural history of the area;
2. to determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological or historical aspects of significance in the areas to be disturbed by the proposed upgrading;
3. to assess the significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed upgrading; and
4. to identify mitigatory measures to reduce the significance of any impacts.

3. Study approach

The approach used in the archaeological study is the standard procedure for a study of this nature. It entails a physical field survey of the proposed sites to be upgraded.

In addition, studies undertaken by the Archaeology Contracts Office, University of Cape Town within much of the 'affected area', were also reviewed, and have been the source for much of the historical background of the area reviewed in this report. Primary and secondary source material has not been reviewed by ACRM.

An examination of the existing records in the South African Museum (SAM) was also undertaken. According to the records of the SAM Archaeological Data Recording Centre, no archaeological sites have been recorded in the study area.

4. The study site

The study site for the proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 respectively. The sites for the archaeological and historical study include:

1. N2: Raapenberg Road to the M5 Interchanges;
2. N2: M5 to Rhodes Drive Interchanges.

5. Historic background

The Liesbeeck River was one of the earliest centres of Freeburgher settlement in the Cape. The first farms were granted shortly after the mid-17th century. The area is therefore considered to be of general historic importance.

According to Hart (1996), no precise history of the Liesbeeck River Valley has been written although several of the early farms and industrial structures along its banks have been the subject of research.

When the first settlers arrived at the Cape in 1652, the area stretching from Rondebosch through to Constantia and over Constantia Nek was covered by indigenous forest. The Liesbeeck, a fast flowing stream ran off the slopes of the mountain through this forest and eventually joined the Black River (where the Observatory is today). The Black River then flowed together with the Salt River into a large estuarine system with salt marshes and lakes. At times this estuary was deep enough to bring in fairly large ships which were careened on the mud flats (Hart 1996).

Within about 30 years of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) arriving at the Cape, the forests were cleared of timber and farms were established along the well-watered soils of the Liesbeeck River Valley (Hart 1966). Among these were Valkenberg (1661), Koornhoop (1678), and Raapenberg (1671). Two farms occupied land to the east of the Liesbeeck River in the triangle that made up the confluence with the Black River. These were Valkenberg and Liesbeeck (Figure 3). The farm Koornhoop was situated on the opposite bank of the Liesbeeck River.

The character of this part of the Liesbeeck River catchment remained semi-agricultural until well into the 20th century. Valkenberg was converted into a reformatory in the late 19th century but still functioned as a farm during this time. Shortly after this Valkenberg Hospital was established. By as recently as 1937, there were still extensive cultivated lands on the east side of the Liesbeeck River. On the west side, suburban development had encroached on the previously cultivated land (Hart 1996).

With the increasing urbanisation of the Liesbeeck River Valley, the river began to assume the role of a storm water drainage system. It was canalised to cope with seasonal flooding after citizens petitioned the City Council in 1933 (Hart 1996). This process continued in stages with the section between Rondebosch and Mowbray being canalised and straightened between 1955 and 1960. The result of this was that although the flooding problem was largely solved, the bio-diversity of the river was adversely affected. The portion of the river between St Georges Grammar School sports ground and the entrance to the Observatory is one of the few non-canalised areas supporting fish and a variety of fowl (Hart 1996).

Although many of the adjacent areas are covered with suburban development, structures relating to the early farms still exist. Those are located at the Courtyard Hotel (Valkenberg) and St Georges Grammar School boarding house (Bloemondal). Buildings that were once part of the Koorndorp werf still exist in the suburban areas adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway (Hart 1996).

6. Results of the impact assessment

No significant archaeological impact will occur as a result of the proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive.

A significant cultural-historical impact may occur, however, with the proposed widening of the M5 to Rhodes Drive Interchange. The historic farm Koorndorp also known as Molenvliet or the Kotzes is located adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway (Settlers Way) (Figure 2).

The construction of Settlers Way after 1968 has destroyed a portion of the farm buildings at Koorndorp as well as the prison building to the south of Valkenberg (Fransen & Cooke 1965; Hart 1996). Any substantial widening of the N2 beyond the current road reserve may impact further on the farm.

6.1 Impact description and assessment

- a) Extent: limited to site.
- b) Duration: short term.
- c) Intensity: low-negligible.
- d) Probability of occurrence: low.
- e) Legal requirements: National Monuments Act (Act No. 28 of 1969).
- f) Significance of impact: low
- g) Status of impact: negative.
- h) Degree of confidence in predictions: high.

7. Impact statement

Rapid urbanisation and recreational development of the Liesbeeck River valley, the canalisation of the river after 1933, and the construction of freeway and road networks has severely modified the study area since the establishment of early Freeburgher farms in the mid - 17th century.

The probability of locating the remnants of any archaeological sites, or features of cultural-historical significance during the upgrading of the N2 between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive, is considered to be low to negligible.

The proposed upgrading of Settlers Way (N2) may, however, impact on the historic farm Koornhoop (1678) located adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway, should widening extend beyond the current road reserve of the freeway.

Any potential or envisaged impact would need to be closely assessed by the National Monument Council (NMC), prior to any construction activities commencing, and all detailed technical drawings and plans should be closely assessed by the NMC prior to final approval.

Some concern has been expressed that planned landscaping and rehabilitation adjacent to Settlers Way (N2) may impact on Moeter's grave and the cemetery within the Valkenberg complex. Valkenberg is a declared National Monument. However, it is unlikely that any severe negative impacts will occur as a result of these activities.

8. Recommended management actions

With regard to the proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive, the following recommendations are made:

1. All detailed technical drawings and plans with respect to the upgrading of the M5 to Rhodes Dive Interchanges should be closely assessed by the National Monuments Council prior to final approval and commencement of upgrading. There is some concern that upgrading may impact on the historic farm Koornhoop located adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway.
2. Planned landscaping and rehabilitation adjacent to Liesbeeck Parkway and Settlers Way (N2) should be closely assessed by the National Monuments prior to any activities commencing.

9. References

Fransen, H. & Cooke, M.A. 1965. The old houses of the cape. A survey of the existing buildings in the traditional style of architecture of the Dutch-settled regions of the Cape of Good Hope. Balkema/Cape Town/Amsterdam.

Hart, T. 1996. Investigation of the archaeological potential of a portion of the Rhodes High School sports field Mowbray. Report prepared for Rabie Property Developers: Archaeology Contracts Office: University of Cape Town.

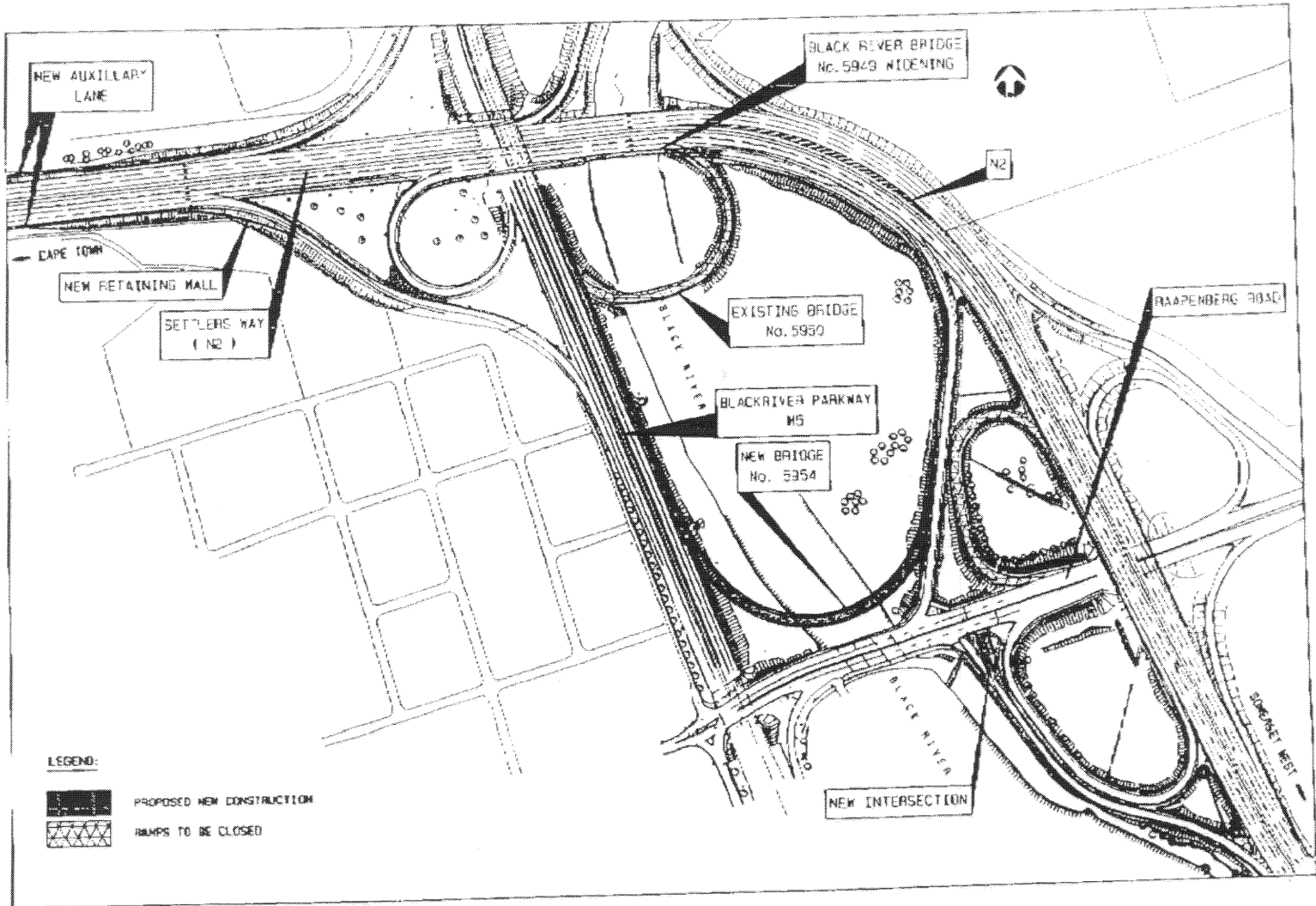


Figure 1. Proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive - archaeological and historical study: Raapenberg Road to M5 Interchanges.

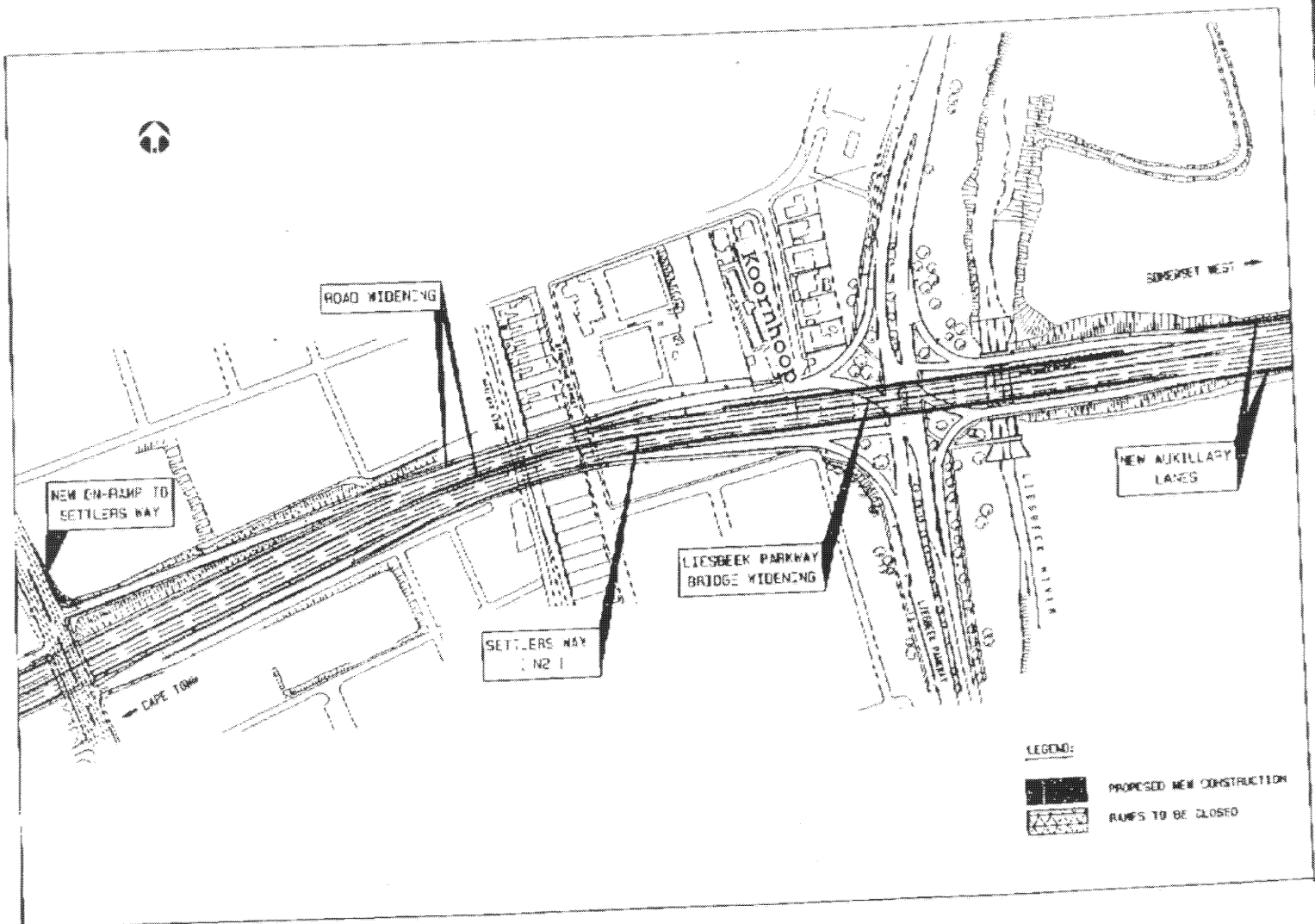


Figure 2. Proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive - archaeological and historical study: M5 to Rhodes Drive Interchanges.

Small market random properties of the margin of bias are not shown.

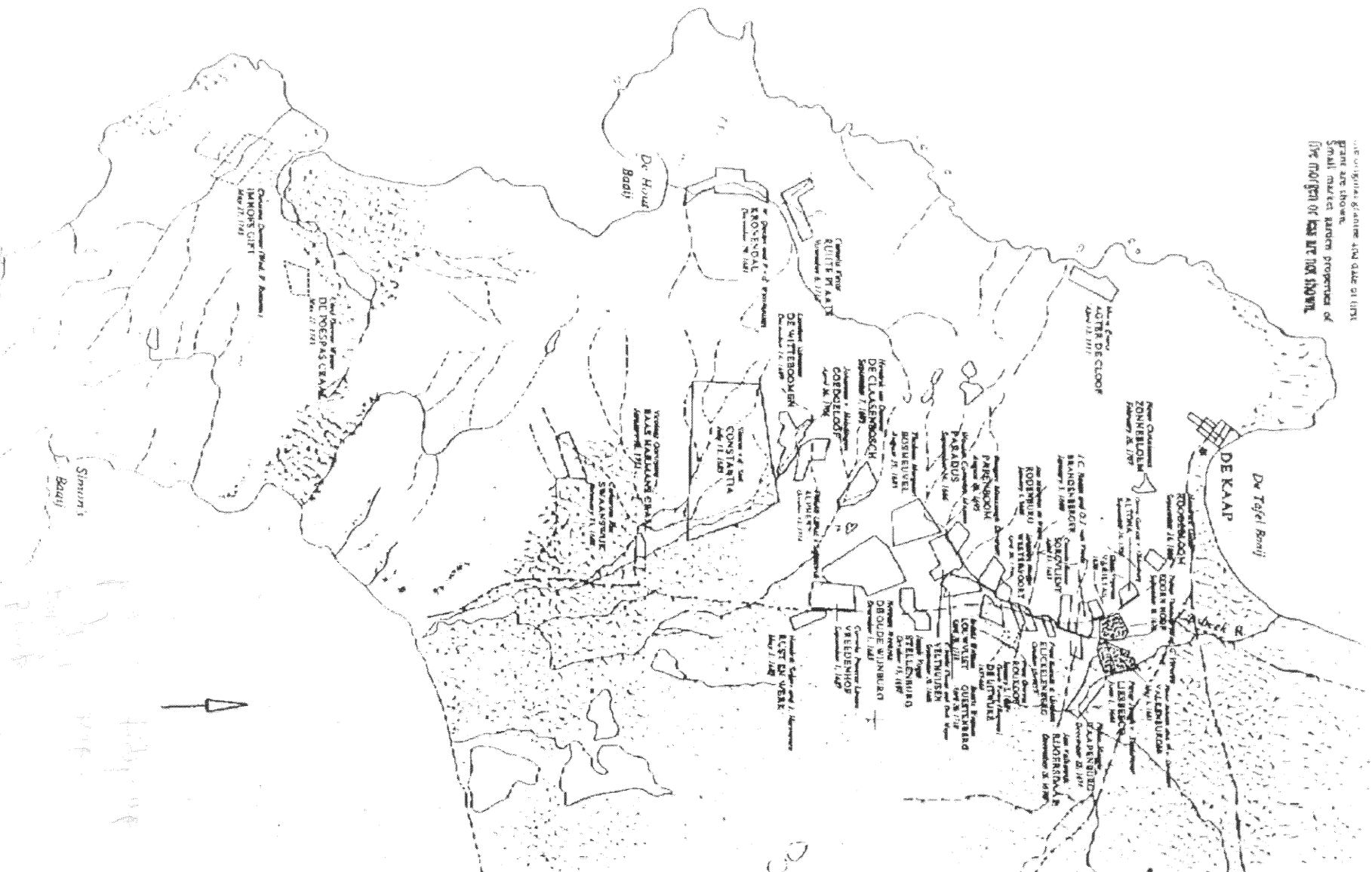


Figure 3. Proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive - archaeological and historical study: Liesbeeck River Valley - early farms established in the study area.

Figure 1. Proposed upgrading of the N2 freeway between Raapenberg Interchange and Rhodes Drive - archaeological and historical study: Raapenberg Road to M5 Interchanges.

