

Report on Archaeological Test Excavations:

Remainder of Farm 26 Paternoster



Prepared for
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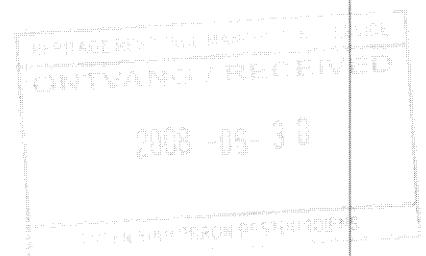


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Executive Summary

This report, commissioned by Paternoster Strand (Pty) Ltd, is an attempt to salvage prehistoric shell middens associated with a portion of the remainder of Farm 26, Paternoster. Heritage Western Cape instructed the developers to mitigate these archaeological remains outlined in a Record of Decision dated September 2005 (Ref: C13/3/6/1/1/1/1/C4: 22). In particular section 2 of the ROD stated: "*The area among Test Pits 1, 2 & 3 must be excavated and sampled before earth-moving activities and civil works can proceed near this shell midden. The specified area to be excavated by archaeological means is 4 x 3 metres*", and section 7, which stated: "*A permit application for the destruction of this archaeological site must be lodged with HWC after mitigation has been completed and before any earth-moving activities can commence*".

The cultural resource management of the site proved difficult, as construction had already started in the area ear-marked for archaeological investigation. Several administrative errors seem to have hampered the effective mitigation of the site. Firstly, the September HWC ROD was issued to DEA & DP and the Environmental Consultancy commissioned at that time, rather than the appointed archaeological consultant. A copy of the ROD seems not to have been provided to Paternoster Strand until late December 2007, at which time test pits 1, 2 & 3 had been destroyed. On receipt of the ROD Paternoster Strand, with immediate effect, stopped development in the areas specified and consulted a professional archaeologist from Cape Archaeological Survey (CAS) about how to mitigate the remainder of the site.

An alternative section of midden deposit was identified to salvage, however, this was subsequently partially destroyed while creating a structurally stable platform on which to conduct archaeological excavations. Only 5 bucket samples and a 1 x 1 metre excavation of the *in situ* deposit were rescued from this area. In addition, the partial remains of a human burial were also found, but before any excavation of the grave site could be accomplished, this was bulldozed during the construction work associated with the development of the platform. The controlled archaeological excavation showed a densely compacted shell midden with over 3 kg of shell/bucket, as well as animal bone and cultural material. The latter included pottery, so we conclude the site to be post 2000 years in age.

1. Preamble

Following a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of the Remainder of Farm 26 Paternoster for Paternoster Strand (Pty) Ltd by the Agency for Cultural Resource Management (ACRM) (Kaplan 2005), an ROD (Ref C13/3/6/2/1/1/1/1/C4 dated 22 Sept 2005) was issued by Heritage Western Cape to mitigate the prehistoric shell midden identified.

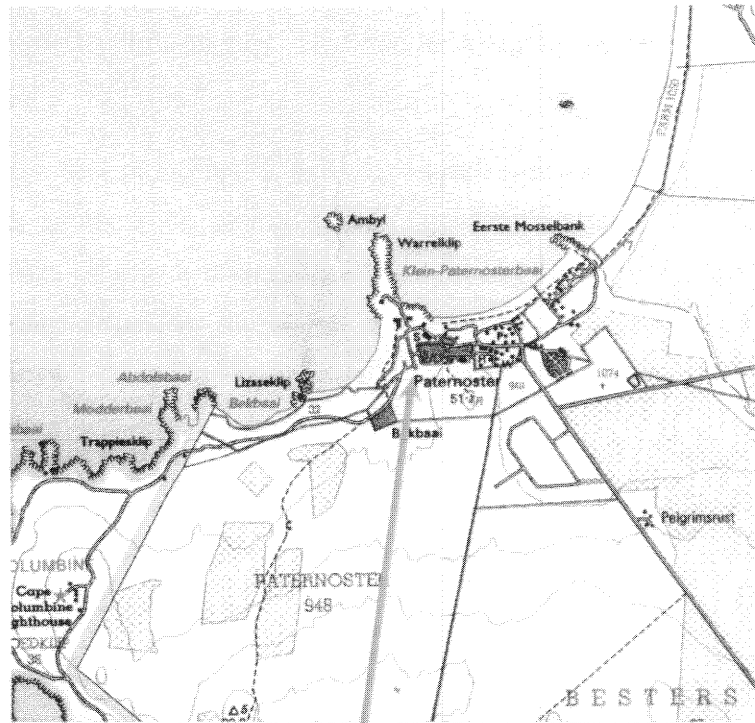


Figure 1: Location of site (Reference: 3217DB & DD Vredenburg, Google Earth 2008)

By shovel testing three test pits, ACRM had indicated that two stratigraphic levels existed. The top 30-40cm had a rich shell component, mixed with some modern material, while the underlying metre of deposit had a lower shell frequency. This midden deposit lay on sterile soil.

The ROD stated that in the area of the test pits (Figs. 2 & 3) 12 square metres were to be excavated, and samples collected for radiocarbon dating. It also specifically stated that "***A permit application for the destruction of this archaeological site must be lodged with Heritage Western Cape (HWC) after mitigation has been completed and before any earth-moving activities can commence***".

Attempts to mitigate the ROD on the 17th March 2008 were frustrated by the area identified by ACRM having been bulldozed flat. A building had already been erected on the site of TP3, and the area of TP1 and TP2 (Fig. 4) had the foundations of a second dwelling laid out.

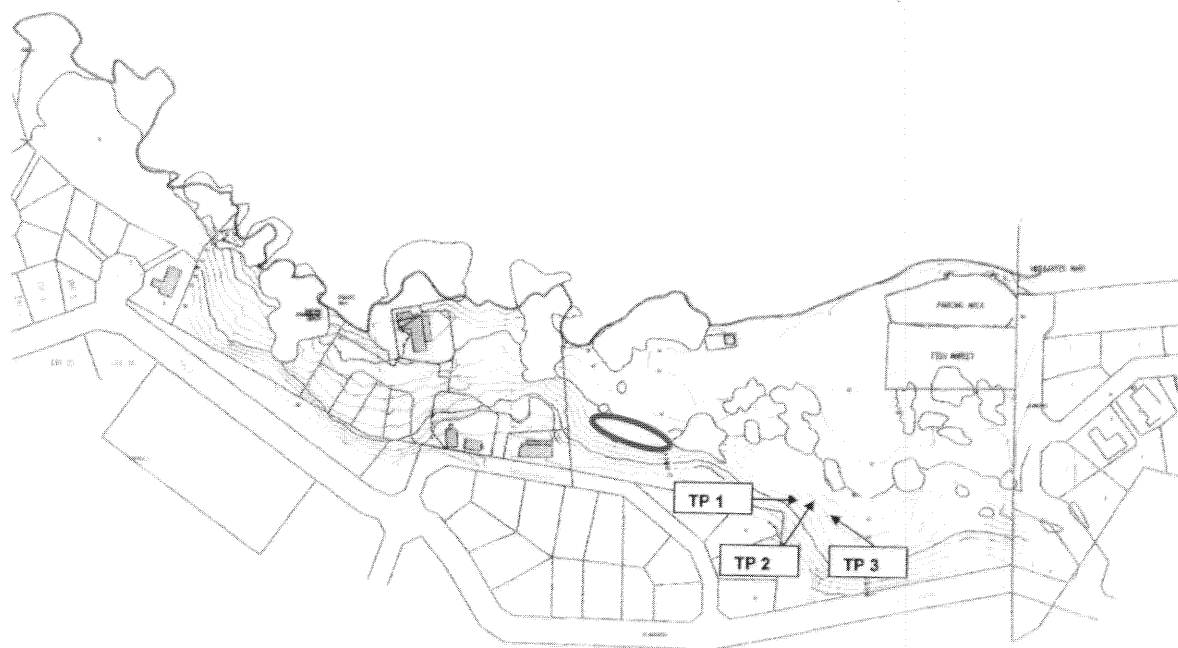
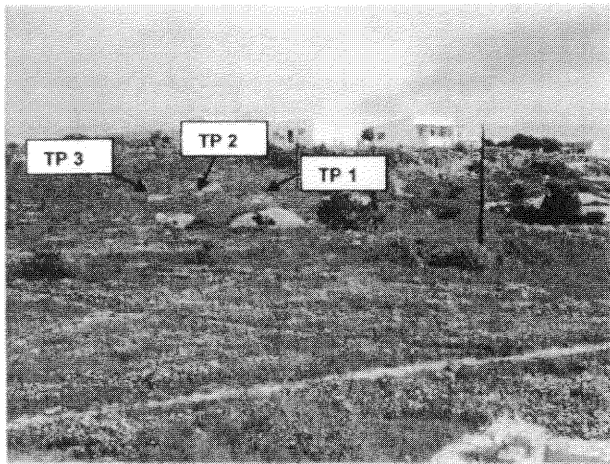


Figure 2: Plan from Kaplan (2005) showing position of test pits 1-3 (TP 1-3). Area of 2008 excavation circled in red



Figures 3a & 3b: Position of TP1-3 (Kaplan 2005)



Figure 4: Location of area designated for trial excavations as in 3b above. Houses are clearly visible in the area of TP3 and foundations of an additional dwelling are visible in the area of TP1&2

A second midden deposit that had not been noted by ACRM was identified to the north in the wall behind the development area, below the main road. The stratigraphic sequence was very clear: A shell band above clean dune sands, below a thick loose overburden of building rubble (Fig. 5). This overburden may have obscured the midden deposit when the initial scoping survey was done by ACRM. In addition, while surveying the wall we noticed some broken bone which had been strewn by the digger-loader. This proved to be a human femur fragment, and closer scrutiny allowed us to locate a few phalanges (Fig. 6). We were not

certain that the whole skeleton had been disturbed, and rather than dig into the wall, we marked the place with a cairn for future work, while collecting the few bones on the surface.



Figure 5: Section of wall showing *in situ* midden

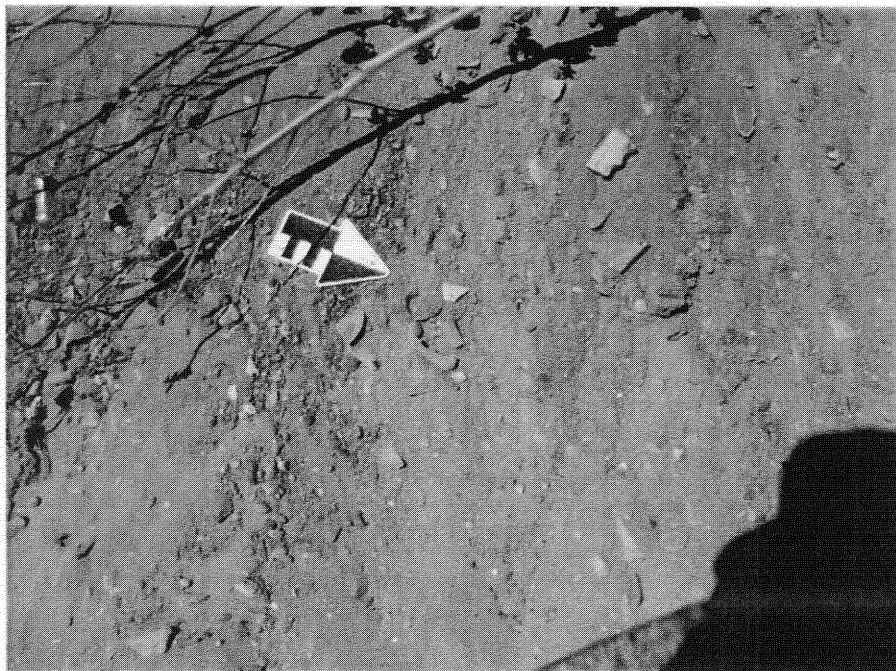


Figure 6: Human finger bones from disturbed burial (GPS reading 32° 48.528; 17° 53.312)

In consultation with the MD of Paternoster Fisheries, Mr Nico Lasky, it was agreed that we would try to salvage some prehistoric material from the site. The exposure in the wall indicated we could possibly remove almost 12 square metres, the area that had been required by the ROD, if a platform could be created above the shell midden so that we could excavate.

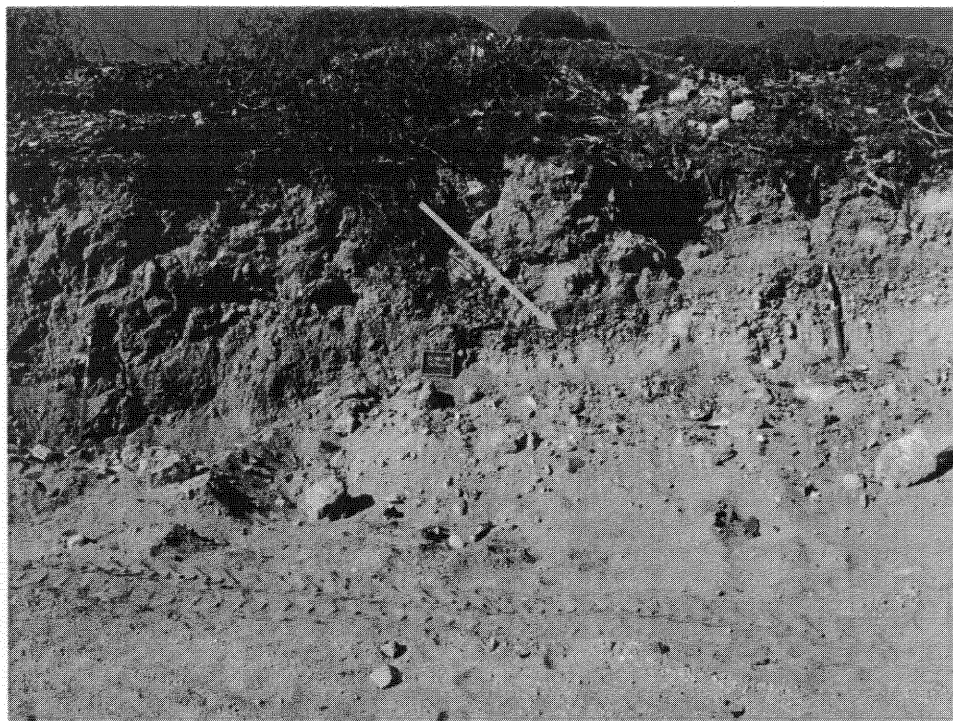


Figure 7: Remaining shell midden in section

This decision, however, was not passed on to the site foreman, and on our return to supervise the platform creation, we found that the digger-loader had pushed further into the wall, virtually removing the area we had ear-marked for the platform. The wall was now much higher, and though we could still see remaining shell *in situ* (Fig.

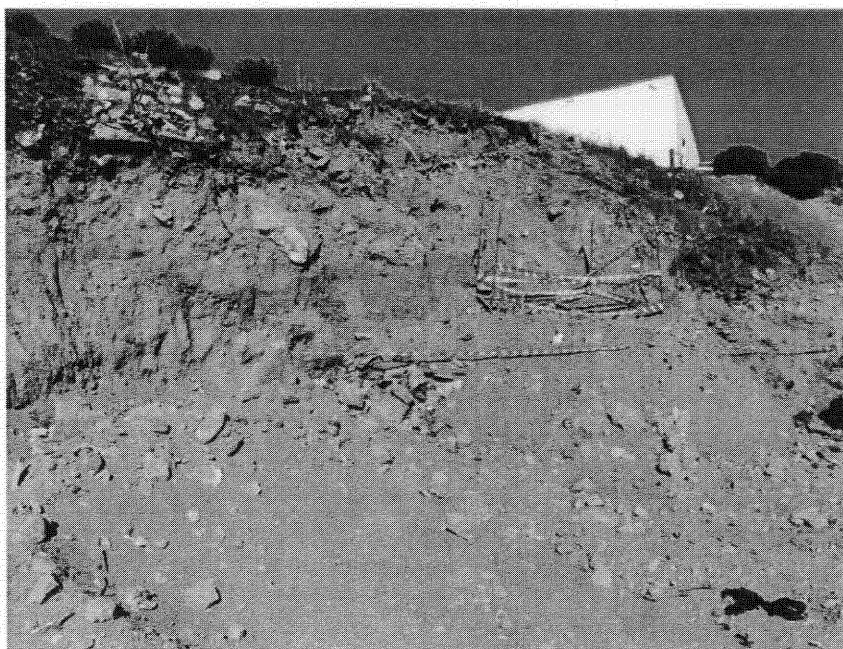


Figure 8: Area where platform was later cut

7), the height of the wall and the precarious nature of the

unconsolidated rubble overburden made it now impossible to safely excavate a platform over much of the wall.

Only in the north corner, where the wall was not quite as high, could we see a chance of creating a small platform. This was duly experimented with, and the skilled digger-loader operator was able to achieve what we had previously envisioned, but could only create a platform of less than 2 square metres (Fig. 8). Our cairn marking the place of the skeleton had also been obliterated.

In order that we might at least get a sample of the midden, our strategy then devolved to taking single bucket samples every two metres along the midden exposure in the wall, and excavating a single square metre in stratigraphic levels on the platform (Fig. 9). We thus ended up with 5 section bucket samples, and an excavation of shell deposit 35cm deep.

The midden deposit had a highly compacted shell component, along with cultural material and a few animal bones.

2. Previous Work Done in the Paternoster Area

The first sampling of shell middens in the Paternoster area was done by Robertshaw (1977). While work was going on at Kasteelberg, a small 2 x 1 metre excavation was done by Smith in 1986 at the Eerstemosselbank. Five radiocarbon dates showed the large midden there dated between 2590 and 2860 BP (Smith 2006: 56-57).

Several CRM projects have been carried out around the bay (Halkett & Hart 1998): More recently a large excavation took place to remove a sample of the mega-midden previously sampled by Smith in 1986 (Yates 2004). The development work has been hard on human skeletons. A number have been disturbed during excavation by heavy earth-moving equipment (Smith et al 2008).

3. Methodology

The shell lens existed across roughly 18 metres of the wall (Fig. 9). GPS readings were taken at the south end: 32° 48.533S: 17° 53.315E, and the north end: 32° 48.528S: 17° 53.312E.

RUBBLE OVERGARDEN

SHELL LENS

SECTION 2
3790.6
g/buried

SECTION 3
3788.1
g/buried

SECTION 2
4577.5
g/buried

SECTION 1
5407.6
g/buried

SECTION 5
3516.1
g/buried

DUNE SANDS

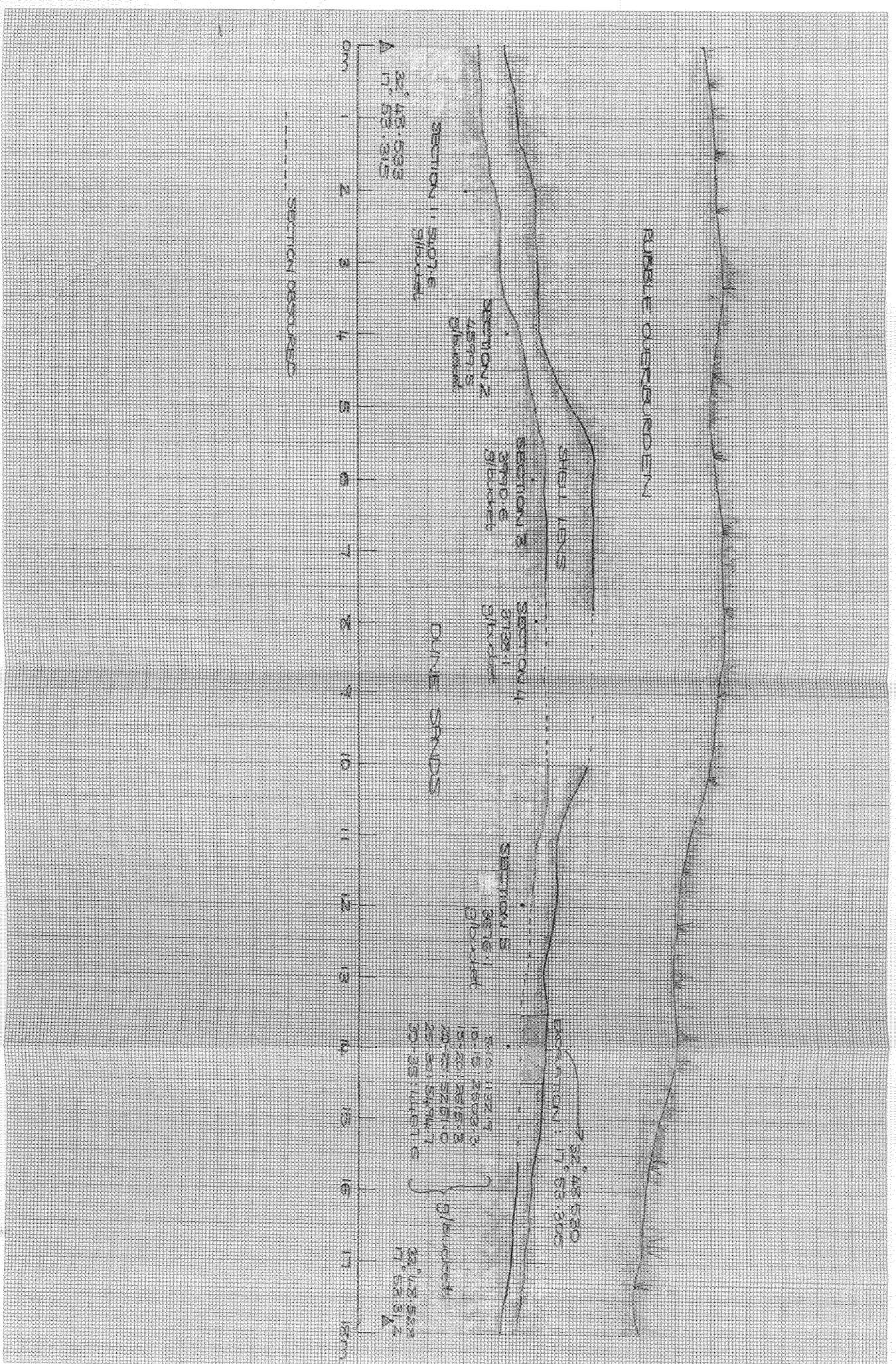
EXPLANATION: 7 32° 48' 53.0
17° 52' 30.0

32° 48' 53.0
19° 52' 31.2
30-35' WREN'S
25-30' SIA
20-25' SIA
15-20' SIA
10-15' SIA
g/buried

32° 48' 53.0
17° 52' 31.2
A

0m 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18m

SECTION OBSERVED



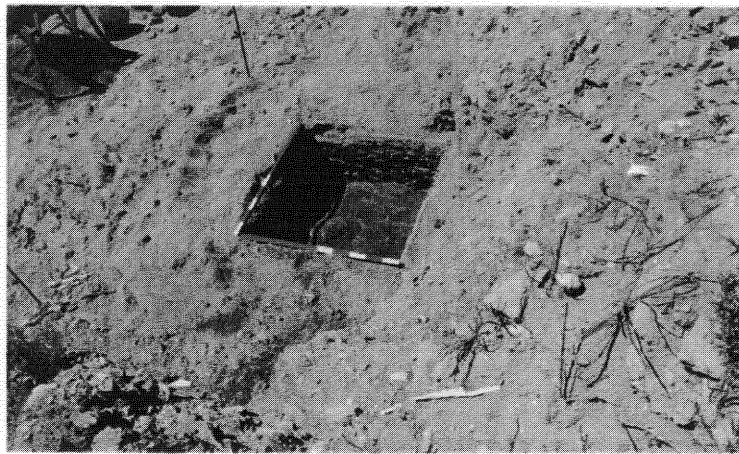


Figure 10: Excavation (1mx1m)

The one square metre excavation (32° 48.530S: 17° 53.305E) on the platform created between the 13 and 15m points along the wall, was done in 5cm spits, and passed through a 2.5mm mesh sieve. The first bucket of each level was kept separate, and weighed for total shell. The remainder was separated and only identifiable shell species kept, along with the cultural material, etc. The bucket samples from the section were sieved, cleaned of stone rubble, and the cultural material extracted. The total shell samples were then weighed.

From our experience elsewhere (Smith *et al* 2007a; 2007b; 2007c) we use shell weights as a proxy for the density of human occupation close to the shore. Any density greater than 1000g/bucket represents a highly significant heritage value.

4. Results

Shell density was very high. In fact the midden deposit was almost pure compacted shell (Fig. 11), with some stone artifacts and bone. Shell densities from the five single bucket collections along the section wall (Table 1) are reflected in the variability seen in the different levels of the excavated sample (Table 2).



Figure 11: Detail of section

	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5
Weight (g)/bucket	5407.6	4599.5	3990.6	3738.1	3676.1

Table 1: Shell weights (g) per bucket removed from exposed section

Depth (cm)	Weight (g)
5-10	1432.9
10-15	2503.3
15-20	2615.3
20-25	5251
25-30	5494.7
30-35	4467.6

Table 2: Shell weights (g) per bucket removed from the excavation

The raw material for stone artifacts was a local silicified calcrete, which is variable in quality. Very few silcrete or quartz pieces were found (see Appendix A), however the single formal tool was a silcrete backed scraper. The other stone fragments suggest a technology of simple expedient tool use of local material. From the few undecorated potsherds found throughout the excavation we might infer that the midden was laid down within the last 2000 years. Other cultural material includes a small (<4mm outside diameter) ostrich eggshell bead, as well as a couple of unfinished beads. The latter indicates local manufacture of the beads.

The incidence of historic artifacts (bottle glass, European transfer ware and metal fragments) in the top 15 cm of the excavation may predate the modern rubble overburden on top of the ancient shell midden, as there was no plastic included. The bottle glass was also highly leaded, suggesting it was older than what was to be found in the more recent overburden event. Thus trampling into the dune surface probably took place earlier.

The marine faunal material, other than shellfish, includes crayfish, seals and fish, while the terrestrial component is represented by tortoises, small bovids (cf. *Raphicercus* sp.) and small rodents. There are several birds also represented, which include penguins.

5. Conclusions & Recommendations

As we were unable to mitigate the area recommended in the ROD, the samples retrieved and analysed are an attempt to salvage something from the development site. We have no way of knowing the relationship between the sampled shell midden to that of the area in the ROD recommendation, as the remaining midden was not continuous across the entire development area when we arrived on site.

The sample retrieved came from an area not identified in the original scoping report (Kaplan 2005), so might have been otherwise lost, as no archaeological monitors were on site when the area was being prepared for construction by heavy excavation equipment. By the same token, the partial remains of the human skeleton retrieved were not seen by the digger-loader

operator, so we cannot provide any contextual information from where it was originally located.

It would appear that the midden excavated would date within the last 2000 years and this is an important example of what existed around the bay at Paternoster, and will be comparable to that found at the other end of the bay at the Eerstemosselbank and other sites found on the farm (Halkett & Hart 1998).

We conclude that every attempt was made by the developer to mitigate the site, in spite of the many difficulties that were incurred during the ongoing management of the construction company and the heritage specialists. We have advised that any opportunity to rescue additional shell samples would be of value to this project and recommend that an archaeological monitor be present on site when all new earthmoving activities occur.

6. References

- Halkett, D. & Hart, T. 1998. Phase 1 Archaeological Assessment of a Portion of Farm 28, and Portion 1 of Farm Paternoster 26, Paternoster, Western Cape Province. Archaeology Contracts Office, UCT.
- Kaplan, J. 2005. Archaeological Shovel Testing Remainder of Farm 26 Paternoster, Vredenburg-Saldanha Municipality, Western Cape Province. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.
- Robertshaw, P.T. 1977. Excavations at Paternoster, south-western Cape. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 32: 63-73.
- Smith, A.B. 2006. *Excavations at Kasteelberg and the Origins of the Khoekhoen in the Western Cape, South Africa*. Oxford: BAR International Series 1537.
- Smith, A.B., Mütti, B.J. & Manyapelo, T. 2008. Report on the Exhumation of Human Skeletal Remains from Portion 37 of Farm Uitkomst 23. Smith & Mütti Consultants, Cape Town.
- Yates, R. 2004. *Interim Report to HWC on excavations conducted on Portion 1 of Farm 1050 Paternoster on behalf of Rapidough Properties*. Unpublished report South African Museum

7. Appendix A:

Table A1: PN Fish (0-5) Cultural

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	15			15
Chunks	12	1	1	14
Flakes	2	1	1	4
OES bead	1 unfin			1
Metal	9			9
Glass	3			3
Transfer ware	1			1
Crystal	1			1
Total				48
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	7			
<i>Jasus landii</i>	2			
Small mammal femur frag	1			
Small bovid long bone shaft frag	1			
Small bov pelvis frag	1			
Small bov tympanic frag	1			
Unidentif. Vertebra	1			
Unidentif frag	2			
Bird	1			
Fish	7			

Table A2: 5-10

	Calcrete	Silcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	2			1	
Chunks	14			1	
Flakes	4	1	1	1	
Blades	2				
Flaked cobble				1	
OES bead					
Metal					
Glass	1				
Transfer ware	4				
Crystal					
Khoe pottery	1				
Bone button	1				
Copper vial cap?	1				
Bone:					
Tortoise carapace	6				
Tortoise long bone	1				
<i>JasusLandii</i>	16				
Small mammal femur frag					
Small bovid long bone shaft frag	5				
Small-medium Bov astragalus	1				
Small-medium bov distal humerus	1				
Small-medium bov distal tibia	1				
Small-medium bov femur frag	2				
Small-medium bov incisor	1				
Unidentif. Vertebra	1				
Unidentif frag	7				
Small rodent incisor	1				
Small rodent mandible	2				
Seal tooth	1				
Bird	3				
Fish vertebra	14				
Fish	143				

Table A3: 10-15

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	6	3		
Chunks	14	1		
Flakes	9	2	1	
Blade	2			
Flaked cobble			1	
OES bead				
Metal	3			
Glass	2			
Transfer ware	4			
Crystal				
Khoe pottery	2			
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	9			
Tortoise long bone	1			
<i>JasusLandii</i>	11			
Medium bovid skull frag	1			
Unidentif. Vertebra	11			
Rib frag	3			
Unidentif frag				
Cetacean	1			
Bird	11			
Fish vertebra	16			
Fish	190			

Table A4: 15-20

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	2	2		
Chunks	8	1		
Flakes	5	1		
Ochre	1			
OES frag	1			
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	8			
Tortoise limb	3			
<i>JasusLandii</i>	2			
Small mammal femur frag				
Small – medium bovid long bone shaft frag	1			
Unidentif. Vertebra	6			
Unidentif frag	8			
Bird				
Fish vertebra	5			
Fish	84			

Table A5: 20-25

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	17			
Chunks	42			
Flakes	5	1		
OES frag	2			
Khoe pottery	1			
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	19			
Tortoise limbs	5			
<i>Jasus Landii</i>	9			
Small mammal femur frag				
Small bovid phalange	1			
Small – medium bov phalange frag	1			
Rodent mandible	1			
Rodent limbs	5			
Unidentif. Vertebra	8			
Unidentif frag	26			
Bird	11			
Penguin	2			
Fish vertebra	2			
Fish	1			

Table A6: 25-30

	Calcrete	Quartz	Silcrete	Other	Total
Chips	19	2	1		
Chunks	32			1	
Flakes	7				
Core			1		
Flaked cobble				1	
OES frag	1				
Metal					
Glass					
Transfer ware					
Crystal					
Bone:					
Tortoise carapace	10				
Tortoise limb	8				
<i>Jasus Landii</i>	13				
Small mammal femur frag					
Small bovid long bone shaft frag	3				
Small bov distal metapodial	1				
Small bov distal humerus	1				
Unidentif. Vertebra	7				
Rib frag					
Unidentif frag	36				
Small rodent	2				
Seal	1				
Seal tooth	1				
Penguin					
Bird	9				
Fish vertebra	1				
Fish	2				

Table A7: 30-35

	Calcrete	Quartz	Silcrete	Other	Total
Chips	31	1	1		
Chunks	20				
Flakes	4	1			
Core	1	1			
Flaked cobble				1	
Side scraper			1		
OES frag	1				
OES bead small	1				
Khoe pottery	1				
Bone:					
Tortoise carapace	9				
Tortoise limb	5				
Tortoise atlas vertebra	1				
<i>JasusLandii</i>	20				
Small mammal femur frag					
Small bovid distal metapodial	1				
Small bov pelvis	1				
Small bov astragalus	1				
Unidentif. Vertebra	7				
Unidentif frag	24				
Carnivore small femur frag	1				
Small rodent	3				
Seal tooth	3				
Bird	14				
Fish vertebra	1				
Fish	7				

Table A8: Section1

	Calcrete	Silcrete	Other	Total
Chips	11			
Chunks	2			
Core	1	1		
Flakes				
OES bead	1 unfin			
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace				
<i>JasusLandii</i>	1			

Table A9: Section 2

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	2			
Chunks	2			
Flakes				
OES bead				
Metal	13			
Glass				
Transfer ware				
Crystal				
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	15			
<i>JasusLandii</i>	2			
Unidentif frag	20			

Table A10: Section 3

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	8			
Chunks	6			
Flakes				
OES bead				
Metal				
Glass				
Transfer ware				
Crystal				
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	7			
Tortoise limbs	3			
Tortoise atlas vertebra	1			
<i>JasusLandii</i>	1			
Unidentif. Vertebra				
Unidentif frag	5			
Bird	1			
Fish vertebra	2			

Table A11: Section 4

	Calcrete	Silcrete	Other	Total
Chips	6			
Chunks	4	1		
Flakes	1			
OES bead				
Metal				
Glass				
Transfer ware				
Crystal				
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace	1			
<i>JasusLandii</i>	4			
Unidentif. Vertebra				
Unidentif frag	5			
Fish	4			
Fish vertebra	3			

Table A 12: Section 5

	Calcrete	Quartz	Other	Total
Chips	2			
Chunks	1			
Flakes	1			
Flaked cobble			1	
OES bead				
Metal				
Glass				
Transfer ware				
Crystal				
Bone:				
Tortoise carapace				
<i>Jasus Landii</i>	6			
Small mammal frag	3			
Small bov tympanic frag				
Unidentif. Vertebra				
Unidentif frag	15			
Bird	3			
Fish vertebra	6			
Fish	6			