

# HONDEKLIP BAY ABALONE PROJECT: REPORT No. 1; HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROGRESS REPORT AND PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Science and Technology and the University of Stellenbosch have for some time been running an experimental abalone hatchery and farm at and inside the buildings of the now defunct Namaqualand Fishing Company. The US an DST are looking at expanding the programme by utilising the buildings at Hondeklip Bay. The expansion has triggered an EIA in terms of NEMA. All EIA's require that a heritage component be included.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Certain parts of the Main Building are older than 60 years with building having commenced in February of 1951. Any alterations to these parts prior to the Record of Decision terms of NEMA and the NHRA requires a permit from Northern Cape Heritage in terms of section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 [NHRA].
2. The Workshop and cold Storage date from pre ca 1950 and also require a permit in terms of section 34 of the NHRA.
3. The remains of the “Ou Lokasie” are still extant. These have already been impacted upon by the current phase of the project. The pump station and water tanks on the hill to the south east overlooking the Main Building are placed on top of the foundations and floor of one of the pre ca 1950 dwellings. The pipeline from the pump station to the sea has also been covered up with the debris from dwellings and runs past a number of features.

We were unable to ascertain as to whether an HIA had been conducted in terms of section 38 of the NHRA when the pump station and pipeline were laid out.

Although the impact has been minimal care should be taken not to disturb the remains.

4. The Police Station, Post Office, Shop and Pay Office were located approximately where the abalone tanks are currently situated. Care should be taken if any further excavation of this area is contemplated.
5. The “Wag Weg” [patrol road] ran through erf 64. It is not certain at this time what has happened to the road servitude.
6. Certain features are historically significant and should be retained as far as possible, especially the crayfish tanks and the old change rooms in section ‘B’ of the Main building.
7. Window openings on the seaward side of the main building are very vulnerable to storms. It is recommended that these be bricked up rather than repaired.

## **1. Methodology**

### **1.1. Interviews**

A number of interviews were held with both ex-managers and staff of NCC. The Company Secretary [retired], Jeremy Cole, of Oceana group was interviewed and supplied extracts from the minutes of the board meetings of the Namaqualand Crayfish Company [NCC] from July 1925 to December 1947. At the time of the interview we were also informed that a quantity of NCC material had been destroyed in June 2011 when Oceana moved their offices in Cape Town. The Area Manager, Johan Smith, was also interviewed. Further interviews were held with Cecil Cloete, Anita Cloete, Pieter Ducket and Johanna Adams.

### **1.2. Archives**

#### **1.2.1. Roeland str**

A large amount of material is available on Hondeklipbaai in this archive. Correspondence between the NCC and various government departments regarding their activities has provided invaluable information. Because of the quantity of material work at the archive is still in progress.

#### **1.2.1. SAHRA**

The SAHRA archive and Library assisted with background material for Hondeklipbaai village and the Messelpad.

### **1.3. Photo survey**

A photographic and on site survey was conducted between 14 and 23 November 2011. The Secure Store and the Garage could not be accessed.

### **1.4. Ortho**

Aerial photographs of the bay for 1942, 1957, 1965, 1976, 1985 and 1989 were obtained from National Geo-spatial information of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

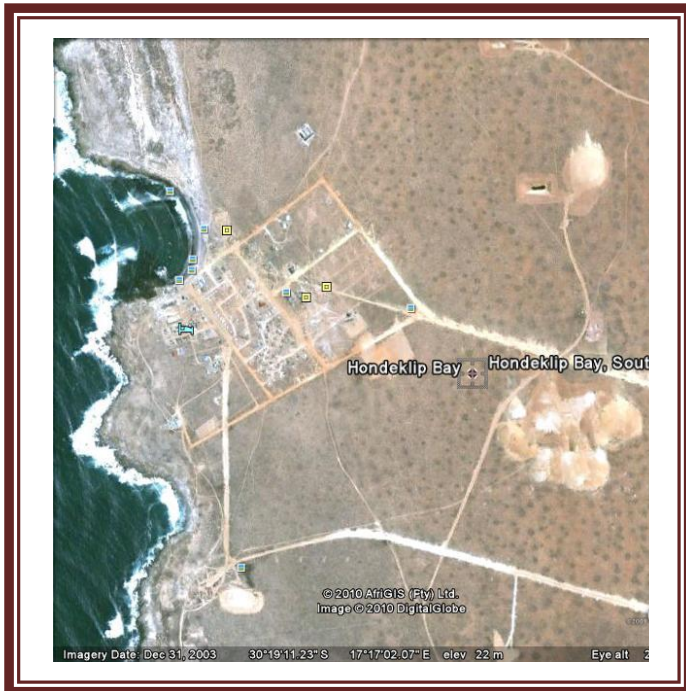
### **1.5. Buildings and physical fabric**

The on site survey tried to assess the provenance of the buildings by looking at the fabric.

## 2. Preliminary findings

Our preliminary findings are based on a reasonable interpretation of the physical fabric and historical material. These are summarized in the executive summary.

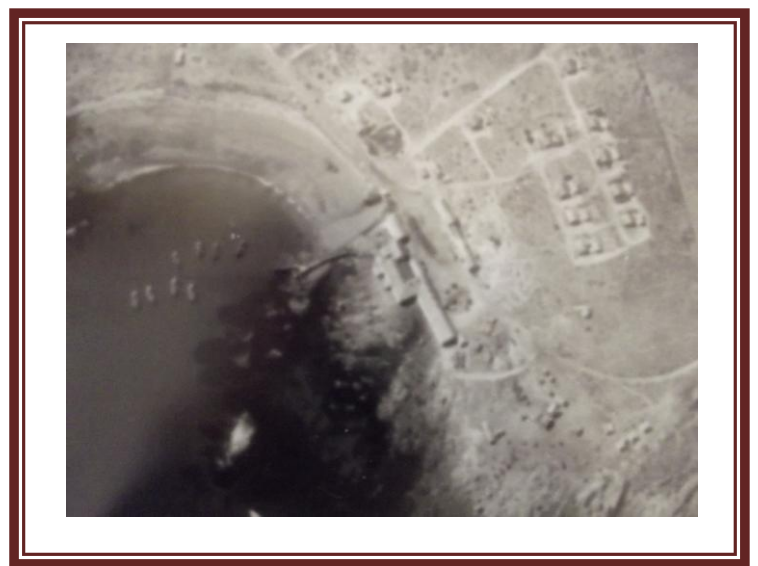
## 3. Location and historical mapping



1943



1957



1965



1976



1985

#### **4. Historical**

A broad overview only is provided. A more detailed timeline is available.

##### **4.1. The crayfishing industry**

Crayfishing was first mooted in 1916 by Dr Gilchrst who described and experoimented with the hatching and feeding of the crayfish. In June of 1916 the then Fisheries advisory board appointed Mr Cripps to set the standards and future for the Crayfishing industry around Pater Noster.

##### **4.2. The Namaqualand Crayfishing Company**

An application by Messrs Austin and company to establish a Crayfish Factory at Hondeklipbaai was made to the Department of Mines in 1923. By April 1925 the NCC was established and purchased and leased property at Hondeklipbaai. Formal operations started in September of 1925. By 1931 the factory employed approximately 45 people, both as fishers and as factory workers. Most were housed in an area referred to as “Ou Lokasie”

In 1947 the Board of Directors of NCC approved the commencement of construction. The first housing was started in 1948 and completed in 1954. Construction on the Main building started late ca 1950 by requesting permission from the Department of Mines to collect gravel and sand. Strict limitations were

set for this because of the diamondiferous soils. Construction would continue for the next five years as new housing and other facilities were provided.

Crayfishing expanded exponentially until by the early 1990's the industry all but collapsed. The NCC had come under the flag of The Oceana group, who tried to provide alternatives. Processing of potatoes and fish from Lamberts Bay was tried but proved to be uneconomical.

## 5. Building history

For ease of reference the Main building is divided into sections starting from the southern end toward the northern end; three main sections, 'A', 'B' and 'C' are used with subsets of these. Buildings named 'Cold Storage', 'Workshop', 'Secure Store' and 'Garage' on the GPA plans of 2010-11-22 are marked 'D', 'E', 'F' and 'G'.

The original building was a corrugated iron structure erected ca 1927 and stood partially on the same area and alignment as 'F'. It formed an L shape towards the jetty. 'H' is the one leg of the L shape with the workshop as the other facing North East.

The oldest building still extant is 'E'. According to Peter Duckett this was the boiler house that provided the steam for canning from ca 1945. At some time after the completion of the Main Building these were decommissioned and the building was then converted into the work shop.

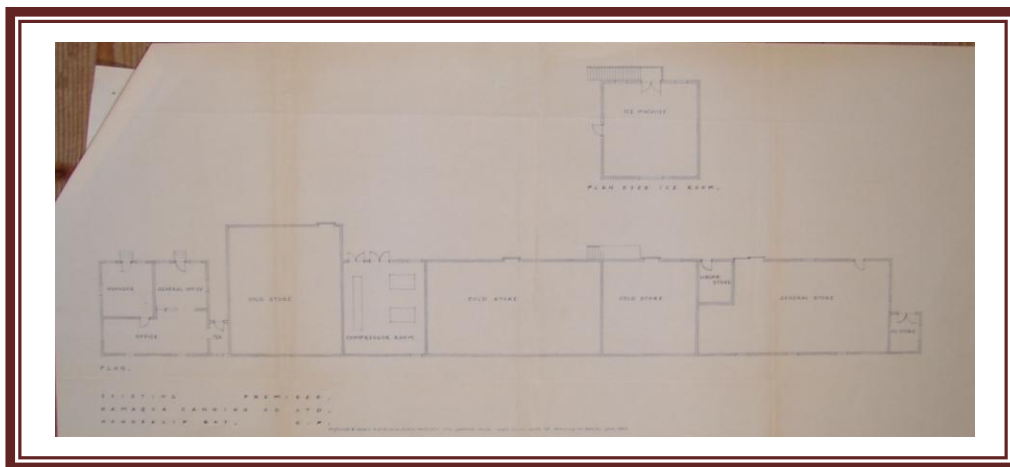
Evidence suggests the building 'D' was built ca the late 1940's to provide the first re Fridgeration and power plant to the factory.

Sections 'C' and 'B' of the Main Building were constructed from late 1950. Section A2 then followed in ca 1954. By 1957 the whole complex had been built. The roof had dormer windows on the eastern side [square evenly spaced black dots on 1957 aerial photo no longer visible in 1976] until the early 1970's when they were replaced with corrugated asbestos sheeting.

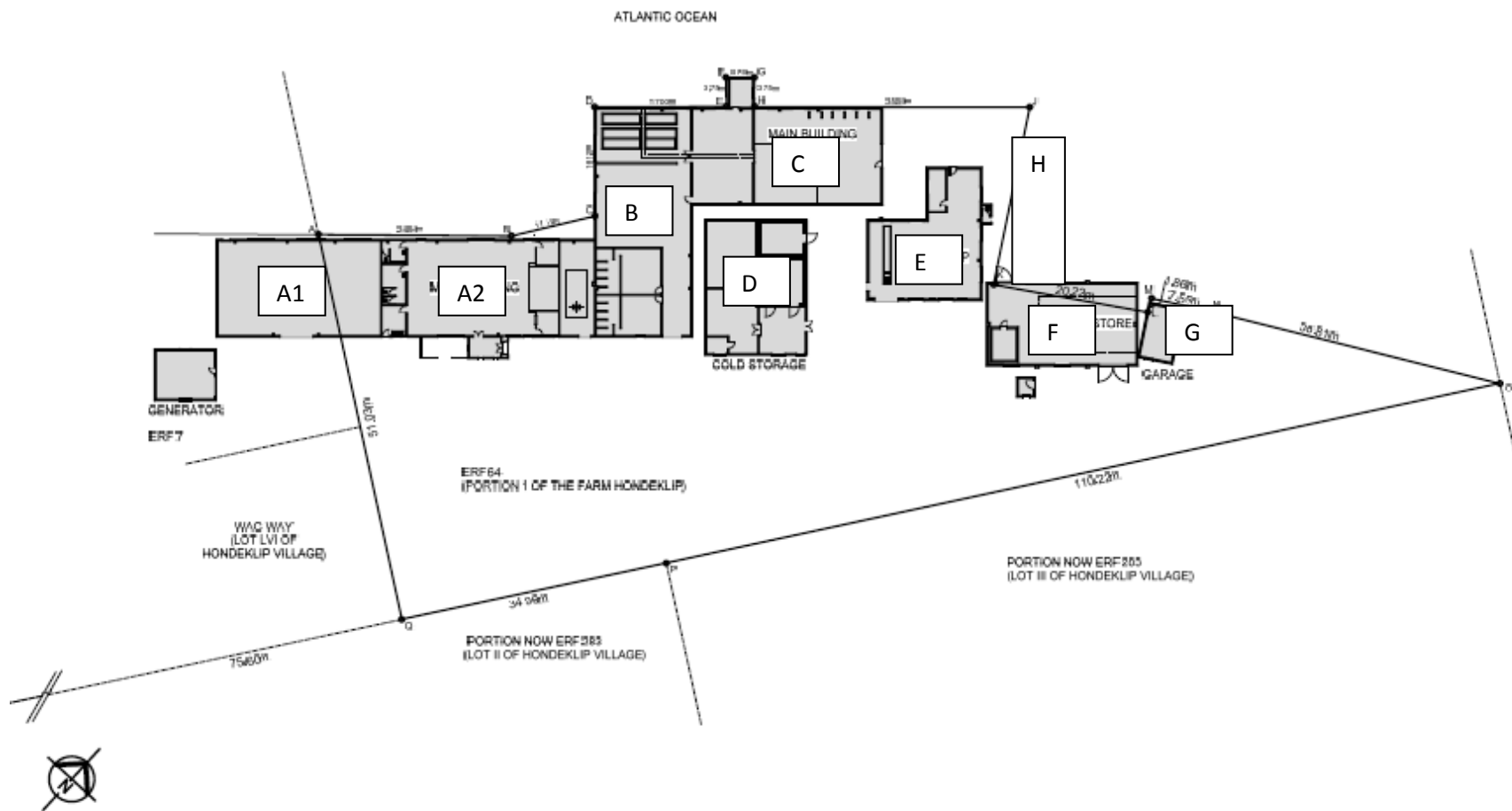
The secure store ['F'] was built sometime in the late 1970's as the carpenter's shop, which was run by Mr Peter Duckett. The Garage [G] was built for the mechanic who worked on the fishing boat engines.

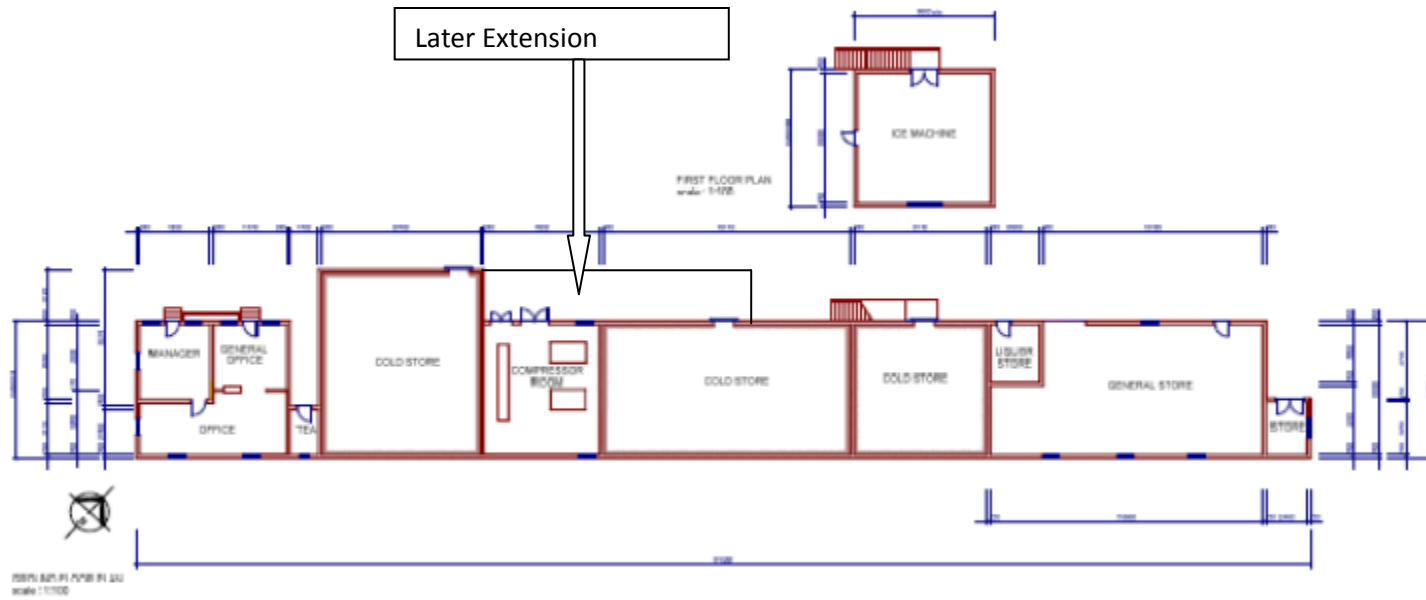
The 'Oceana' building also dates from the mid 1950's and was altered at a later stage by extending the Compressor Room and cold store to the north in line with the west wall of the cold store to the south.

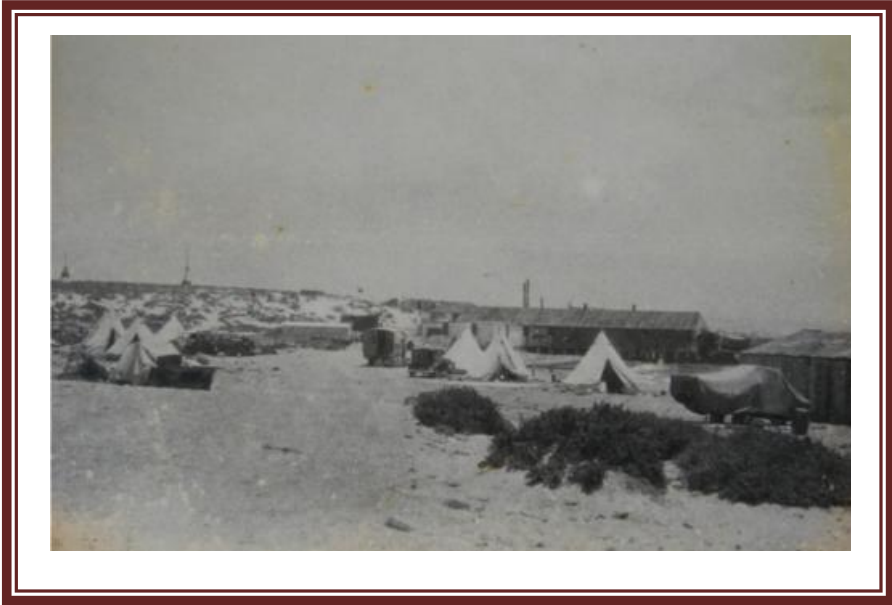
Floor plan ca mid 1960's









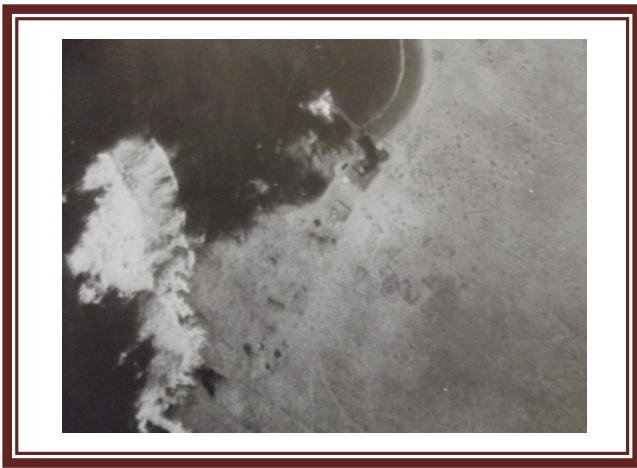


Corrugated iron building ca  
1930's

## 6. Associated Landscape

### 6.1. Homewood cottage

Homewood cottage appears to have been erected for the use of the customs official ca 1912. It would appear that the cottage may have been moved to its current position in the 1950's to accommodate the expanded building programme. The building was modified from a simple 3 room corrugated iron building with added on brick work. The cottage is immediately adjacent to the Main building and below the spring tide mark. It is particularly vulnerable to storms and the tides.



1943



1985

### 6.2. Police Station, Post office and Trading Post

The old Police Station, Post Office, Shop and Pay Office stood approximately here the current abalone tanks are placed in front of the Main Building. Care should be taken when excavation for services is done in this area as the foundations may still be extant.

### 6.3. "Wag Weg"

The "Wag Weg" or sentinel road stretched from Alexander Bay in the north to the mouth of the Olifantsrivier in the south. The route was patrolled by the Cape Mounted Police after the Anglo-Boer south African War [1899-1902] until their duties were taken over by the Fledgling south African Police in 1910. They patrolled on camel on the lookout for smugglers of contraband, mostly Brandy

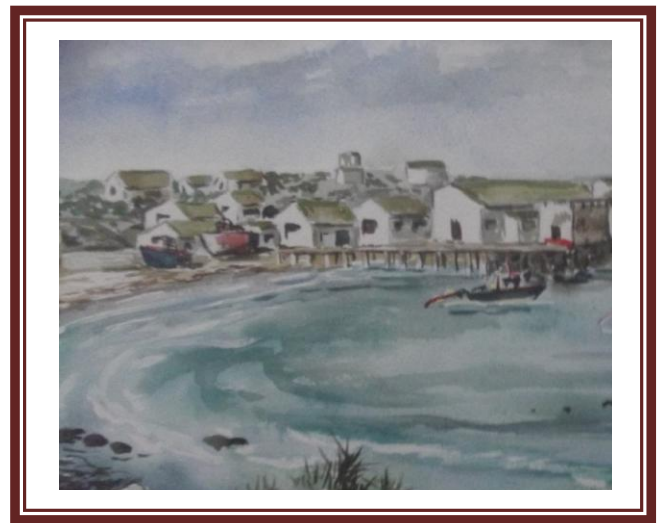
subject to customs duties, and illegal diamond smuggling. The Wag Weg bisected the property on which the Main Building and the Oceana Building currently stand viz; erf 64. The route can clearly be seen on the 1943 and 1957 aerial photographs. The remnants of the servitude are shown as Lot LVI Hondeklip Bay Village “Wag Way” on fig. ....

#### 6.4. Jetty and Ice House

The jetty was first built in 1925 from wood. It was later replaced in the 1970’s after a bad storm. The NCC took the opportunity to build on an ice house at the end of the jetty to supply the boats. Crayfish was placed on ice while the boats were at sea until they could be off loaded. The ice house was used until the early 1990’s with the decommissioning of the factory. By 1995 the top floor of the ice house had been destroyed in a storm as was the jetty. In ca 2005 the jetty washed away in a storm.



Jetty and ice house ca 1990



Jetty and ice house ca 1995.



Ice house ca November 2011

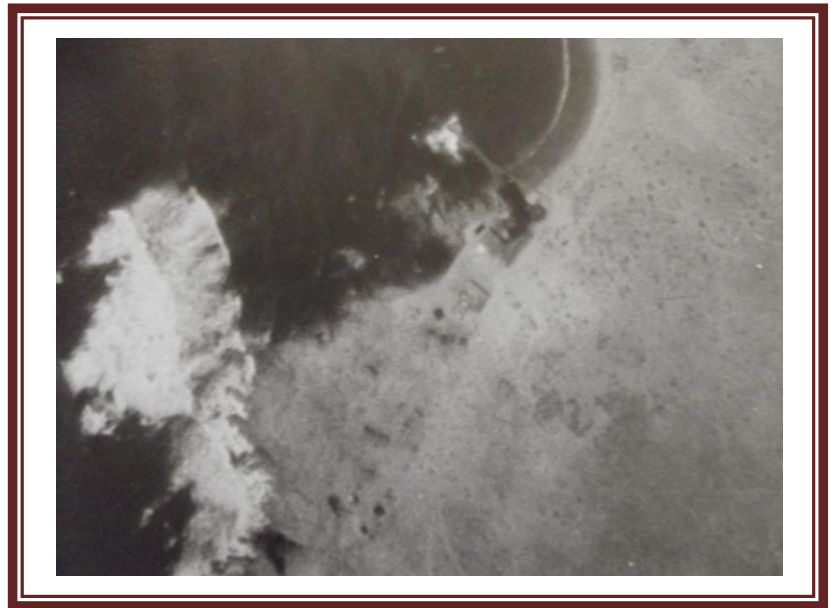


Remains of Jetty and Ice House ca November 2011.

### 6.5. "Ou Lokasie"

The 'Ou Lokasie' is situated to the south of the Main Building. Four houses that appear on the 1957 ortho photo are still extant but not immediately within the ambit of the development. A long building used as single quarters, which partially burnt down in the 1990's is also from ca 1957. Much else is in ruin with mostly the foundations remaining. Some of these foundations have already been impacted on and need to be treated appropriately. Most would appear to date from pre 1950. Only the sites which have been or may be impacted on, close to the development, are shown.

1943



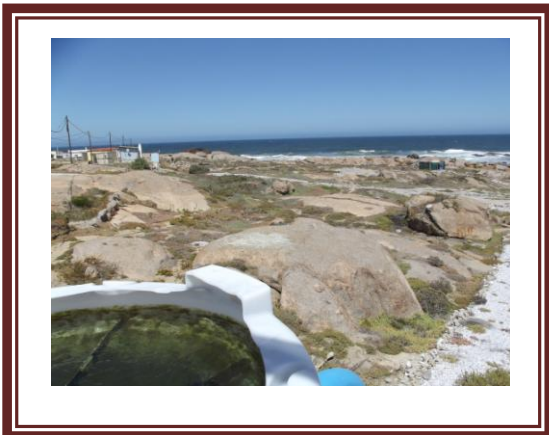
1985





Ou Lokasie seen from Storage tanks looking south

View towards sea showing present inlet pipe.



View to south west



### Site 1

Situated on the small hill overlooking the /Main Building. The current water tanks to store sea water are situated on top of the floor and foundations.



### Site 2

A small section of the remains of a floor is visible towards the seaward side of the water storage tanks and close to the current fence.



### Site 3

Is situated next to the fence towards the seaward side of the water tanks. The fence runs through the remains of a floor.

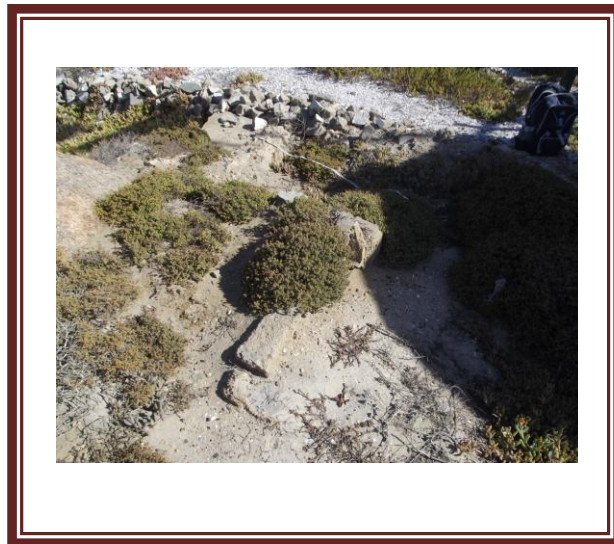
#### Site 4

Situated next to the present pipeline on the southern side close to the fence near the water tanks are the remains of a concrete floor, foundations and the first layer of breeze blocks for the wall of a house.



#### Site 5

The remains of a floor underneath the present pipe.



#### Site 6

Foundations and remains of a wall can be seen on the north side of the pipeline.



Site 7. Remains of cement channel on rock to channel rainwater into a catchment pond shown below, now silted up. The pond was used by the residents of Ou Lokasie to wash with.



Site 8. Remains of single quarters burnt down ca. 1990's