

Babylonstoren Farm 1268
Archaeological Monitoring Report
Stables Building



Prepared for:

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14 March 2011

Executive Summary

In accordance with the recommendations of the Archaeological Impact Assessment conducted on the Babylonstoren Stable building in May 2010 (Smuts and Clift 2010), archaeological monitoring of the site was undertaken. The Stables building is being remodelled to accommodate a variety of small farm workshops: a bakery, a smithy, a milk room, a meat room and a soap making room. Some floor levels have been reduced or altered to allow for insulation and electric cables to be laid. To the south of the building an entirely new structure is being built to accommodate the required utilities including refrigeration and storage as well as a kitchen and staff room. This report details the findings of the monitoring activities.

Several walls were demolished in the course of this work, including the footings of wall (201) identified as belonging to Phase 1 (Smuts & Clift 2009: 27), but long since demolished to below floor level. In addition to this, one wall from Phase 3 was demolished, as were two of the four horse feeding troughs that had been dated to Phase 4. An external addition to the south east of the building, not included in the initial AIA report, was also demolished; this had been built after 1951. The brick extensions to the stone-built walls at the rear of the building, which had been used as animal pens, were demolished and only the stone fabric was retained. The stable building's corrugated roof was removed and the Victorian clerestory dismantled to lower the roof to the level of the rafters; several of the beams were removed. No in situ archaeological features were documented during the monitoring of the development.

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1. Introduction

This report details the monitoring work done on the Stables building at Babylonstoren, Farm 1268, following the Archaeological Impact Assessment completed in 2010 (Smuts & Clift 2010) and as stipulated in the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) ROD (dated 8 November 2010). The farm is located off the R45 in Simondium and the Stable building is at 33°49'24.91"S 18°55'37.24"E (see Figs 1 and 2). Renovation of the wine cellar and koornhuis is complete, while various new buildings have been erected around the historic werf for use as tourist facilities. This includes substantial remodelling of the old kraal into a restaurant, landscaping of the area behind the werf to create a large kitchen garden as well as the construction of a new wine cellar, wine storage facilities and guest accommodation.

The archival history of this site has been reported on previously (Harris 2007; Pentz 2009; Smuts and Clift 2009) and a comprehensive account of the history of the farm and its werf is available in those sources.

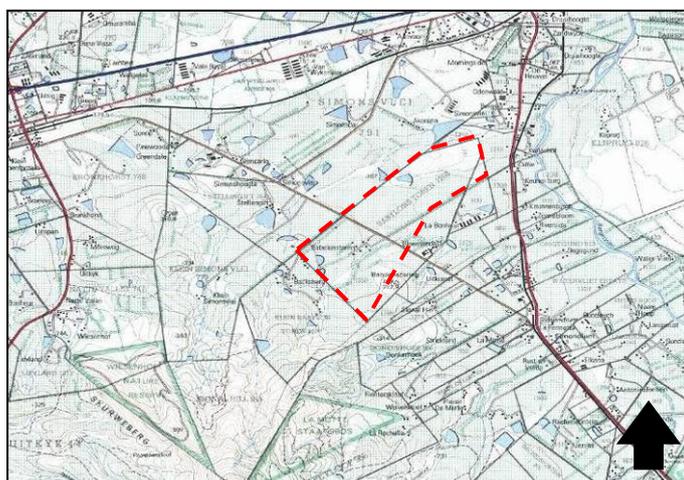


Figure 1: Map showing position of Babylonstoren Farm off the R45. The approximate boundaries are shown outlined in red (3318DD Stellenbosch. Mapping information supplied by Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping. Website: w3sli.wcape.gov.za).



Figure 2: Detail of the werf (Google Earth 2009). Adapted from Smuts and Clift (2009)



Figure 3: The werf as at March 2011 (Google Earth 2010)

2. Methodology

Monitoring was conducted on several site visits both by myself and Mr H. Pinto. These took place throughout February 2011. The site was inspected and photographs were taken. All activities involving the lowering of floor levels as well as the excavation of trenches for the building at the rear of the Stables were monitored. Although aligned NW-SE, for ease of comprehension, the stable building has been described as following an W-E alignment, facing N.

3. Archaeological findings

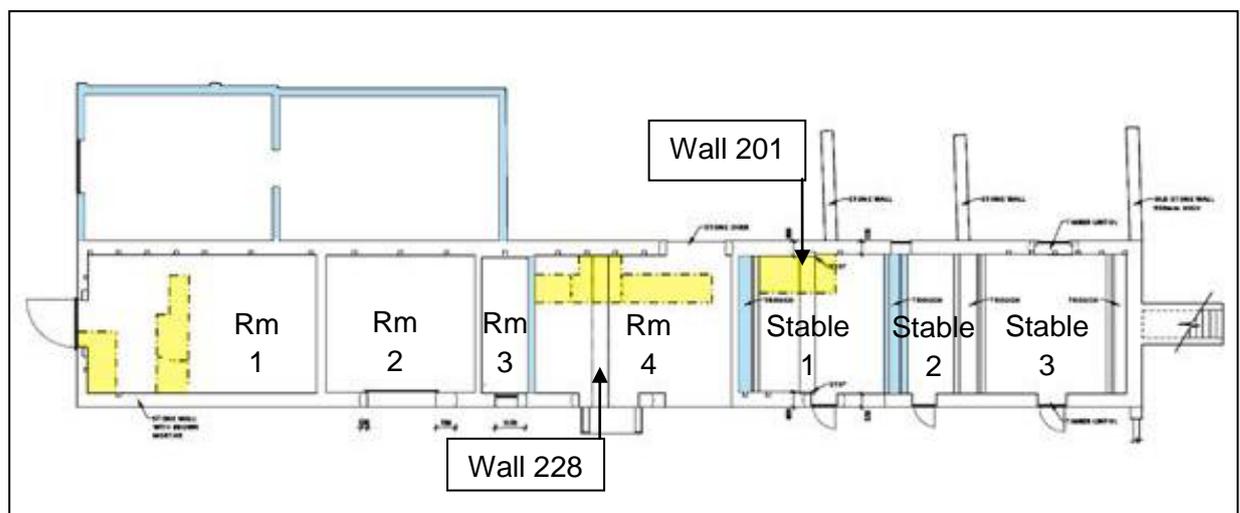


Figure 4: Location of rooms and trenches described in Smuts and Clift (2010: 3). Features to be demolished indicated in blue.

No findings of significant archaeological features were uncovered during the lowering of the floor levels. Existing floor levels were reduced to between 75mm and 100mm and these alterations did not truncate the stratified archaeological deposits. The only exception to this was in the far western part of the building – stables 1,2 and 3 – where floor levels were lowered to accommodate the insulation and electrics for the milk room (see Figs 5a and 5b). This truncated the upper course of the north-south wall exposed in excavations in 2010 (Smuts & Clift 2010: 13-14).



Figure 5a: View of Stables extension with insulation laid along alignment of wall (201) (left). Arrow indicates location of wall. View to south.

Figure 5b: View of wall (201) (right). View to south. (Smuts & Clift 2010: 5)

4. Analysis of the structure

Room 1

This room had been identified as the wagon room in 2010 (Smuts & Clift: 18). This room has largely been left unmodified. The floor surface has been raised with a bedding layer of cement and finished with an earth floor. This will effectively serve to preserve the wheel ruts discovered during excavation (Smuts & Clift 2010: 17). The possible shelves mentioned in 2010 (Smuts & Clift: 9) will be reinstated on beams utilising the beam slots in the walls (see Fig. 6). The room will retain its function as a wagon house.



Figure 6: Room 1 showing the holes in the wall that are assumed to have housed beams holding shelving. View to southwest.

Room 2

Rooms 2 had not been investigated in 2010 as it was still in use as a store and had a concrete floor that was not lifted at the time. Rebuilding in 2011 involved removing the concrete floor and reducing the floor levels by 100mm. No archaeological material was evident in the removed material or the subfloor layers. The only feature of interest in the room was the presence of further beam slots at the same height as those in Room 1 along the southern wall and three stones protruding from it, one above the other (see Fig. 7a). As these elements are also found in Room 1 (see Fig. 7b), this indicates that these two rooms were once a single space and that the dark brick wall between them is a later phase structure. This room will be used as a bakery.



Figure 7a: Room 2 showing hole to left and protruding rocks to right (left). View to south.
 Figure 7b: Room 1 showing protruding rock; note also black bricks of dividing wall (right). View to northwest.

Rooms 3 and 4

Rooms 3 and 4 were consolidated and are to be used as the smithy. Although several trenches were cut into the floors to accommodate services, wall (228) exposed in 2010 was not directly impacted. All the floor levels in the room were recorded and described in the AIA (Smuts & Clift 2010: 14).



Figure 8: View of consolidated rooms 3 and 4. Alterations to floor levels are visible. View to southwest.

Stables extension

The greatest amount of disturbance to historical fabric took place in the stables extension at the western end of the building. Wall (201) was truncated as described above (see Figs 5a and 5b), and the two easternmost of the four troughs were demolished (see Figs 9a and 9b). These troughs had served to divide the extension into three separate stalls. Two walls are to be built in the same locations as the demolished troughs to divide the space into rooms of similar dimensions to the stalls (see Appendix 1).



Figure 9a: View of the stables extension with troughs in place (left). View to southwest.
Figure 9b: View of the stables extension after demolition of troughs (right) View to northwest.

In addition to this demolition work, some of the historic fabric of the northern façade was damaged with the removal of the old stable doors (see Fig. 10). The central stable door is to be partly bricked up and the original central opening, identified in 2010 (Smuts & Clift: 18), will be reopened. The doors are to be replaced with modern facsimiles.



Figure 10: Damage to the northern facade resulting from removal of the historical stable doors. View to south.

South of the building

The lean-to southeast of the building was demolished and foundation trenches were dug for the new building to be located there (see Fig. 11). These exposed natural sub-soil deposits and revealed no *in situ* archaeological features.



Figure 11: Trenches being excavated for foundations of new building south of stables. View to east.

The brick extensions to the stone-built walls at the rear of the stables extension as well as those walls built entirely of brick were demolished; the upper, modern concrete floors in the area were lifted. This revealed large cobbles below the concrete that were also

removed (see Fig. 12). It would seem that the stone walls represent an earlier two-roomed extension to the building that had had a concrete floor laid onto a bed of cobbles. This structure was later transformed into longer, narrow animal pens with the addition of the brick walls between the stone walls which were extended to the south in brick.



Figure 12: Rear of stable showing the demolished brick walling and the cobbles visible below the concrete. The stone walling has been retained. View to north.

Staircase

The staircase to the west of the building has been investigated to establish both its age, relationship to the building itself and its stability. The fabric below the steps was dug away (see Fig. 13a). This revealed that the staircase was not keyed in to the western end wall of the stables, but rather was built at a later stage after the western wall had been plastered. This would imply that the staircase was probably only built some time after the stables extension was completed. This later date is confirmed by the presence of concrete mortar between the steps (see Fig 13b).



Figure 13a: Cavity below staircase with render on external face of western stable wall. View to south.

Figure 13b: Underside of staircase from within cavity showing cast cement between steps. View to southwest.

Roof Structure

The removal of the corrugated roof and the Victorian clerestory allowed for better inspection of the fabric of the gables (see Figs 14, 15 and 16). We were able to confirm our earlier opinion (Smuts & Clift 2010: 6) that the eastern gable is a phase 1 structure, while the western and central gables are more recent, possibly contemporaneous, additions.



Figure 14: Eastern gable showing small, irregular dark bricks with dark mortar. View to east.



Figure 15: Western gable showing large, regular orange bricks with pale mortar. View to southwest.



Figure 16: Central gable showing similar fabric to western gable. View to northeast.

Many of the rafters and tie beams have been removed and are to be replaced with modern wood. The bricks from the clerestory were retained on site and some will be reused in the refitted roof structure, while others are being used as brick infill at other places within the building. Wherever this is taking place, modern cement is being used as mortar so that the infill work is clearly identifiable as a different, modern, phase of construction.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Monitoring of the site during renovations, remodelling and building revealed no new archaeological features or artefactual material. Such alterations and additions as were made to the building were recorded and have been commented on in the report.

The monitoring process has shed more light on the original layout of the building, but this has not greatly changed our understanding of it. We can now be fairly certain that the wall between Rooms 1 and 2 is not a phase 1 structure and that the wagon house originally extended past the central doorway and possibly as far as wall (228). It is difficult to ascertain the date or phasing of the partition wall between Rooms 1 and 2 as its dark bricks have rarely been found on the farm and are certainly not present anywhere else in the stable building. The only other example where similar dark bricks were used is in the cellar building where they filled a rafter hole in the stone walling of the earliest part of that building. Whether this infilling and the construction of the wall were contemporaneous events or whether the rafter hole was plugged at a later time with reused bricks cannot be known. While this fact does not assist us in resolving the dating of this wall it does once more highlight the enormous importance of studying these farms in their entirety.

Having been able to analyse each of the outbuildings on Babylonstoren has been invaluable. Not only has it made structural analysis more accurate, but also more meaningful in the understanding of this specific farm. This in turn adds to our broader understanding of "Cape Dutch" architecture and of the evolution of organic, unstructured early werfs into the formalised farmsteads of the mid eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

SOURCES

Harris, S. 2007. Babylonstoren: The story of a Drakenstein Farm. Unpublished preliminary study.

Pentz, A. 2009. Heritage Impact Assessment - Section 38(8) of the NHRA - Babylonstoren (Farm 1268 Drakenstein). Unpublished report prepared for Babylonstoren (Pty) Ltd.

Smuts, K. and Clift, H. 2010. Babylonstoren Farm 1268, Archaeological Impact Assessment: Stable Building. Unpublished report prepared for Babylonstoren (Pty) Ltd.

Smuts, K. and Clift, H. 2009. Babylonstoren Farm 1268, Archaeological Impact Assessment: Koornhuis. Unpublished report prepared for Babylonstoren (Pty) Ltd.

Appendix 1:

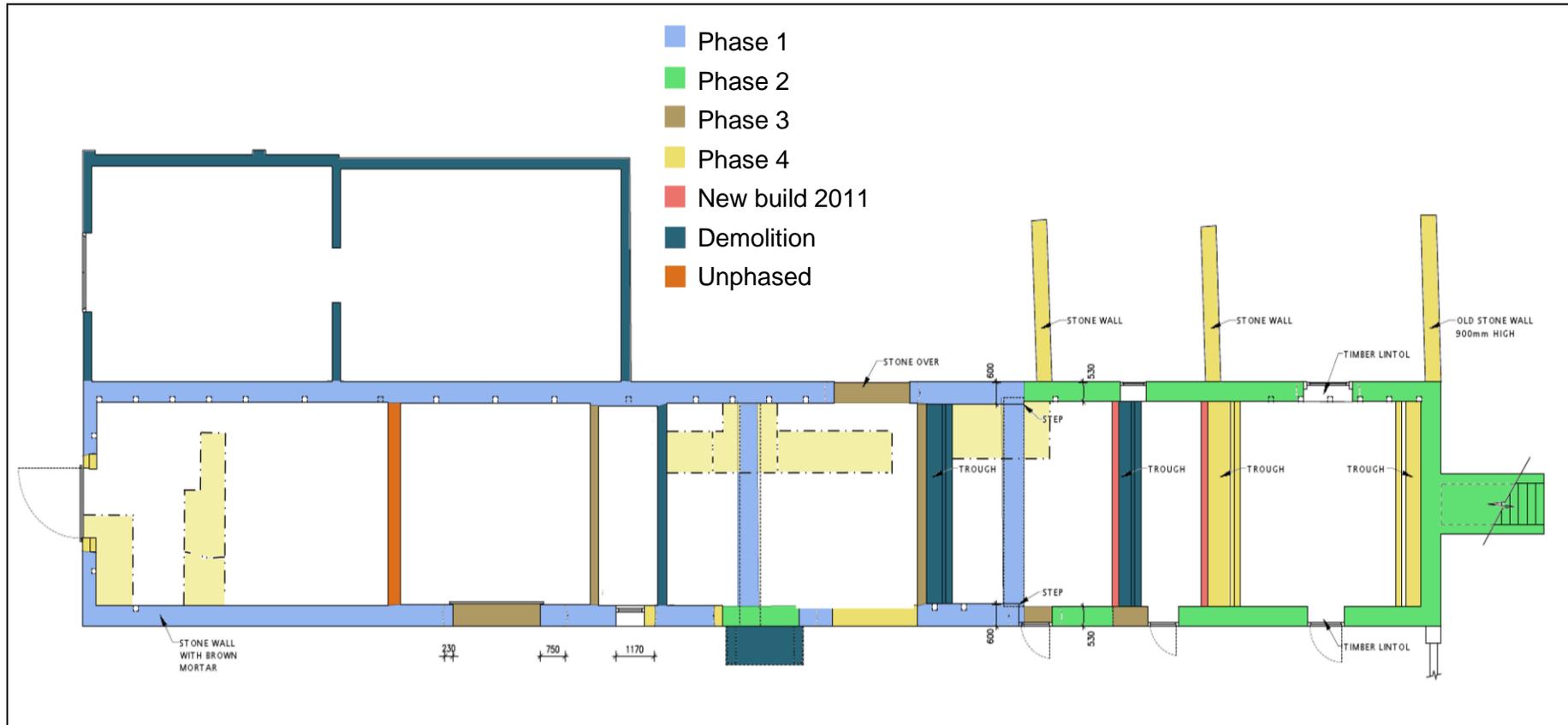


Figure 17: Phased plan of stable building showing demolition, new construction and the unphased wall between rooms 1 and 2 (Adapted from Clift & Smuts 2010: 23).

Appendix 2: Photographic Register

| Image Number | Description | View to |
|--------------|---|---------|
| 6306 | Stable door damage | SE |
| 6307 | Rear of stables | N |
| 6309 | Rear of stables | E |
| 6310 | Brick wall and cobbles | N |
| 6314 | Room 2 | E |
| 6315 | Room 2 | W |
| 6316 | Stables extension | E |
| 6318 | Troughs | S |
| 6319 | Troughs | W |
| 6320 | Troughs | W |
| 6321 | Troughs | W |
| 6322 | Cobbles rear of stable | E |
| 6323 | Cobbles and stone wall | NE |
| 6325 | Stables extension | W |
| 6326 | Rooms 4 | E |
| 6327 | Rear of stables | NE |
| 6328 | Rear of stables | NE |
| 6329 | Trenches rear of stables | E |
| 6330 | Trenches rear of stables | E |
| 6331 | Trenches rear of stables | E |
| 6332 | Stables extension | E |
| 6333 | Rooms 3 and 4 | E |
| 6334 | Rooms 3 and 4 | NE |
| 6335 | Trenches rear of stables | W |
| 6336 | Trenches rear of stables | W |
| 6337 | Trench in doorway Room 4 | SE |
| 6338 | Doorway Room 4 | SE |
| 6339 | Trench in rear wall doorway Room 4 | S |
| 6340 | Trench in rear wall doorway Room 4 | S |
| 6341 | Trench in Room 3 | SE |
| 6343 | Trench in Room 3 | SE |
| 6344 | Rooms 3 and 4 | E |
| 6375 | Dismantled Victorian clerestory bricks | SE |
| 6376 | Dismantled trough stones | NW |
| 6377 | Internal face of west gable | SW |
| 6378 | Internal face of west gable | SW |
| 6379 | Room 2 and internal face of central gable | NW |
| 6380 | Internal face of west gable | SW |
| 6387 | Room 2 | S |
| 6389 | Room 2 door | N |

| | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|----|
| 6391 | Room 2 door | N |
| 6392 | Room 2 door | N |
| 6393 | Room 2 | SE |
| 6394 | Room 2 | S |
| 6395 | Central gable | SE |
| 6396 | Internal face of east gable | E |
| 6397 | Room 1 | SW |
| 6398 | Rear of stables | NW |
| 6410 | South doorway Room 4 | S |
| 6411 | Proximity of new building to stables | W |
| 6412 | Rear of stables | NW |
| 6413 | Rear of stables | NE |