

Preliminary Heritage statement: Normandy barn (33° 53' 27.34"S 18° 59' 43.27"E)¹

The barn is all that remains of the historic homestead: the earthquake of 1969 having caused irreparable damage to the dwelling house. The barn itself has undergone extensive alteration, but evidence of the earlier core is clearly visible.

Normandy is one of a number of farms granted at the end of the 17th/early 18th century in the area between Simondium and Franschoek. The farm is situated within the SAHRA proposed Grade 1 Cape Winelands Cultural Landscape (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The location of the Normandy barn (33° 53' 27.34"S 18° 59' 43.27"E) and its situation within the Cape Winelands Cultural Landscape (Google Earth 2011).

The farm is one of several farms granted in this area at the end of the 17th/early 18th century. The history of the farm will be briefly summarised to provide a context for the heritage statement of the barn. Although the farm was surveyed in 1694, the grant was only signed in 1713. The farm was originally granted to Gideon Malherbe (Malherbe was already deceased by the time of the official grant. The farm passed to his son-in-law Jurgen Radyn in 1734. The farm was transferred in 1744 to Jean de Villiers, the owner of the neighbouring Boschendal (Le Roux & Le Roux n.d.). As can be expected from a small, relatively isolated settlement, there are familial ties linking most of the farms in this valley during the 18th and 19th century, with the De Villiers family being the dominant link.

¹ Harriet Clift. Prepared for Nicolas Baumann 6 October 2011.



Figure 2: Job 126 Strip 81, Photo 12253 (1938). Note the avenue of oaks along the northern/front face of the barn.



Figure 3: View of the barn. Only one oak remains of the avenue.

Site inspection, 30 September 2011

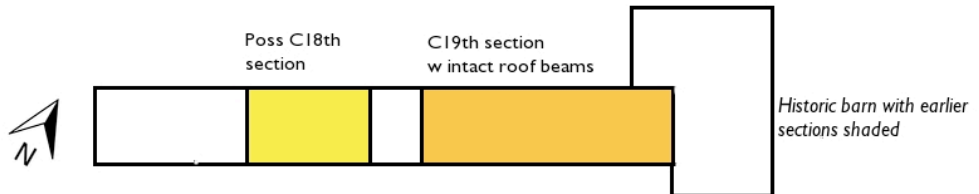
The barn is about 61m long, with modern additions on both eastern and western ends. A modern shed has been added to the south and parallel to the barn. A concrete floor has been cast throughout. A new roof has been added across the entire structure. Two earlier portions have been identified, based on wall thickness and visible architectural features. Door and window openings have been closed. The outlines of semi-circular cellar windows (c1830) are visible on the northern façade.

18th century portion:

This portion is approximately 5.5m wide x 9m long. Wall thickness is on average 530mm. The walls are thicker at the base. The height of the original walls is visible; the roof having been raised in the relatively recent past. A modern roof structure spans the addition to the east and this earlier portion. Both the eastern and western end walls have been demolished.



View of the 'back' of the barn. Facing northwards.



View of the 'front' of the barn. Facing southwards. Note the circular fanlight windows associated with the C19th portion of the barn.

Figure 4: Schematic of the barn indicating the approximate location of the historic portions.



Figure 5: Views of the 'eastern end' of the 18th century portion of the barn.

19th century portion:

This portion is approximately 5.5m wide x 22m long. The roof beams appear to be original, one of which is roughly squared poplar. There is some evidence of fire damage. The eaves have been raised (decorative cast iron vent covers) and a modern concrete attic floor is visible above the wooden beams. The imprint of the cellar windows with the characteristic circular fanlights c1830 are visible in the front façade.



Figure 6: View of the extent of the 19th century addition, facing eastwards.



Figure 7: Imprints of the 19th century cellar windows.

Heritage statement

The barn is the only remaining structure of the historical farmstead. It is in a very altered state. The surrounding buildings are all modern and little remains of the historic context and setting.

The barn has some historical significance in terms of the early settlement of the valley by French Huguenots. The architecture associated with the development of the valley has largely been obscured by the modern additions to the barn and the loss of the homestead in the earthquake of 1969.

It is highly likely that there are some archaeological deposits associated with the earlier portions of the barn that may related to the early history of the farm and the evolution of the barn.

Recommendations

Demolition of the structure should be allowed if appropriate reuse cannot be implemented.

It is likely that archaeological deposits will be present under the floor surfaces associated with the earlier portions of the barn. Should any foundation and/or service trenches be planned through these areas, they should be monitored by a professional archaeologist and any material recorded and collected.

Sources

Le Roux, JG and Le Roux WG. n.d. *Ons Drakensteinse Erfgrond: Groot Drakenstein*. Paarl: Drakenstein Heemkring