

**A HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR OUBAAI GOLF ESTATE
GEORGE
SOUTHERN CAPE**

Prepared for

HILL AND ASSOCIATES

By

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and brief

A Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of the proposed Oubaai Golf Estate near George in the southern Cape was undertaken by the Agency for Cultural Resource Management in November 2001 (Kaplan 2001).

The Oubaai project comprises a golf estate and mixed-use development, including residential housing and a hotel, on about 250 ha of mainly agricultural land.

Provision is also made for a large parcel of land to be declared Public Open Space (POS). An environmental education centre is planned within the POS.

The aim of the AIA was to locate and map archaeological heritage sites/remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

2. THE STUDY SITE

A map of the study area is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of the affected property is illustrated in Figure 2.

The property, originally known as Buffelsfontein farm, is located between the mouth of the Gwaiing River ('the place where crocodiles once walked') and Herolds Bay in the southern Cape.

Between 1852 and 1857, Oubaai, or Dutton's Cove as it was known, was the site of a small harbour to which goods for George were shipped and unloaded¹.

¹ Ms Kathy Dumbrell has completed detailed deeds, archival and maritime history of the property, which includes Dutton's Cove.



Figure 1. Map of the general study area indicating the location of the study site.



Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the site indicating the location of the archaeological heritage resources.

3. RESULTS OF THE 2001 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Archaeological heritage remains in the form of Later Stone Age² (LSA) shell middens were located during the course of the AIA (Kaplan 2001 and see Figure 2). The relatively well preserved midden was located above the steep cliffs close to the proposed whale viewing site (Figure 3). A portion of the shell midden has been destroyed by construction of an old gravel track leading to the edge of the coastal cliffs, but shell midden material remains relatively intact alongside the track, especially on the protected, steep east-facing slopes (Figure 4).



Figure 3. Shell midden at the whale viewing site.



Figure 4. Shell midden remains at the whale viewing site.

² A term referring to the last 20 000 years of precolonial history in southern Africa.

Large numbers of ancient Early Stone Age³ (ESA) and Middle Stone Age⁴ (MSA) tools were also noted in and alongside the steep path (the old transport road) leading down to the rocky cliffs overlooking Oubaai/Dutton's Cove (Figure 5).

The MSA tools were found on soft sandy deposits alongside the track, while the older ESA tools were found mostly on heavily eroded and washed gravels (i.e. underlying the softer sandy deposits). All the tools were located in a severely disturbed context.

In addition to the pre-colonial archaeological finds, the remains of a small stone building was located at the bottom of the transport road leading down to Dutton's Cove (see Figure 2). The ruins, probably those of a warehouse used for storing goods, is relatively well preserved and partially intact (Figures 6 & 7). Measuring about 3.5 m x 5.5 m, the four-walled, two roomed building is constructed with dry packed uncut rectangular quartzite blocks.

A section of stone wall terracing, measuring about seven meters long was also noted about 15 m south of the stone warehouse (Figure 8), overlooking Dutton's Cove. A steep path in front of the stone walled terrace leads down the cliffs to the beach, where a thin scatter of shellfish remains was also noted. A metal ring bolt, used for securing the longboats was also found on the beach during a site visit in November 2003 (Figure 9). The remains of a shipwreck, possibly that of the trawler the Baywyke which was wrecked in Dutton's Cove, were also noted wedged in among some of the rocks.



³ A term referring to the period between 2 million and 200 000 years ago.

⁴ A term referring to the period between 200 000 and 20 000 years ago.

Figure 5. Collection of stone tools from the old transport road.



Figure 6. The old transport road and stone warehouse in the background.



Figure 7. Stone warehouse.



Figure 8. Stone wall terracing.



Figure 9. Ring bolt found at the beach.

4. MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The following mitigation and management measures were recommended (Kaplan 2001). Some of these measures were implemented during the Construction Phase of the project (Kaplan 2003a).

- The shell midden at the proposed whale-watching site should be secured and protected during the entire Construction Phase of the project. Arrangements were made to demarcate and tape off the site by the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for Oubaai during a site visit by the consulting archaeologist on 27 and 28 November 2003.
- The stone warehouse overlooking Oubaai/Dutton's Cove should be secured and protected during the entire Construction Phase of the project. Vegetation clearing operations outside and within the stone ruined building must also be monitored by the ECO to ensure that no damage is caused to the structure of the building. All artefacts exposed during vegetation-clearing operations must be collected and kept for possible display purposes in the planned environmental education centre. These measures were also confirmed by the ECO for Oubaai during a visit to the site by the consulting archaeologist on 27 and 28 November 2003.
- The final section of the old transport leading down to the stone warehouse was taped off during the Construction Phase of the project, so as to restrict access to this part of the site.
- The heavily eroded gravel transport road leading down to the whale-viewing site and Dutton's Cove will not be physically upgraded. However, anti-erosion measures will be put in place in order to minimise further damage to the historical feature.
- A raised boardwalk will also be constructed from the top of the hill, alongside the old road, to allow for golf trolleys and visitors to access the whale-viewing site and Dutton's Cove.
- No 4 x 4 vehicles will be allowed to access the whale viewing site and Dutton's Cove.
- A collection of Stone Age tools could be made from alongside the old transport road, and used for display and educational purposes in the proposed environmental educational centre. Such a collection may not be undertaken without a permit issued by Heritage Western Cape, the delegated provincial heritage authority, and is a requirement in terms of Section 35 (4) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA).
- Mr John Gribble, maritime archaeologist at the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), has been consulted with regard to developing the land-based maritime archaeology-related structures for tourism/visitor purposes. Mr Gribble supports the notion of developing the sites for visitor/tourism purposes and consultation in this regard is ongoing.
- The archaeological heritage remains must be audited by the consulting archaeologist at the end of the Construction Phase of the project.

5. PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR OUBAAI GOLF ESTATE

A proposal to develop a Heritage Management Plan (HMP) for Oubaaï Golf Estate was first initiated in 2003 (Kaplan 2003b).

Since the archaeological heritage resources at Oubaaï occur in the large, managed POS, it was recommended that the archaeological heritage resources could provide an opportunity to develop an exciting tourism/visitor experience, while at the same time provide effective long-term protection (Kaplan 2001).

The objective of the HMP is the effective management and sustainable development of the Oubaaï cultural heritage resources.

The HMP forms part of the required Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to be implemented for the Oubaaï project.

The Oubaaï HMP is intended principally to help guide the development and management of archaeological heritage sites/remains to be opened to the public. This is also a requirement in terms of Section 44 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (No. 25 of 1999).

The Oubaaï HMP should also form the basis for a Heritage Agreement required in terms of Section 42 (1) of the NHRA, with regard to the public presentation of protected archaeological heritage resources. Such a Heritage Agreement must be in the form of a binding contract.

The responsibility ultimately lies with the landowner to ensure the protection of archaeological heritage sites.

The development of heritage resources for visitor purposes will also 'add value' to the project.

The development of sensitive and fragile archaeological sites to be opened to the public will also need to be taken in close consultation with Heritage Western Cape, the delegated provincial heritage authority, who will also need to approve the HMP. Other Interested and Affected Parties must also be consulted⁵.

Archaeological heritage sites are non-renewable resources and therefore require specialised planning and management. They are especially vulnerable to damage caused by visitors. Anyone opening a site to the public must take basic precautions to ensure the safety of the site and its contents. The integrity of the sites should be maintained as far as possible at all times.

⁵ Mr John Gribble, Maritime Archaeologist at SAHRA must be consulted.

There are certain requirements that need to be met in order to develop archaeological heritage sites for tourism/visitor purposes.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) has proposed minimum standards for archaeological sites to be opened to the public⁶.

The following must therefore be complied with when developing archaeological heritage sites for tourism/visitor purposes:

- Heritage Western Cape, as the delegated provincial heritage authority, must be notified of the intention to open a site(s) for visitor/tourism purposes.
- A permit is required for any disturbance at an archaeological site, including the collection of archaeological remains for display purposes, the erection of information story boards, signage, boardwalks, fences, etc.
- Visitor access to the sites should be strictly controlled and managed.
- Facilities such as rubbish bins and toilets should be provided.
- Specially trained guides should be provided to ensure that the story of the people who used the site(s) is interpreted and so enhance the experience for the visitor. If possible, previously disadvantaged local people should be trained, thus creating permanent and sustainable employment opportunities.
- The archaeological heritage sites and surrounding area should be kept clean at all times.
- A heritage awareness programme must be implemented by the Management of Oubaai, in order to sensitise staff to the importance of the Oubaai archaeological heritage sites/remains.
- Educational material such as pamphlets, brochures and posters should be developed.
- A professional archaeologist should be consulted with regard to the public display of archaeological remains in the planned environmental education centre.
- Arrangements should be made for a long-term monitoring and maintenance programme of archaeological heritage resources at Oubaai.

The Oubaai HMP should be seen as a dynamic document, one that can be manipulated and continually reviewed and updated.

It should be seen as a work in progress.

⁶ Minimum standards for archaeological site museums and rock art sites open to the public. South African Heritage Resources Agency, May 2002.

6. REFERENCES

Kaplan, J. 2001. Archaeological Impact Assessment proposed Oubaai Golf Estate, George. Report prepared for Hilland Associates. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 2003a. Heritage recommendations to be included in the Construction and Operational Environmental Management Plan for Oubaai Golf Estate, George, Southern Cape. Report prepared for Hilland Associates. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 2003b. Proposal to develop a Heritage Site Management Plan for Oubaai Golf Estate, George, Southern Cape. Report prepared for Hilland Associates. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.