

**Final Report on Archaeological Investigations at the Inner
City Bus Depot:
Erven 110442, 9569, 9570, 179, 180, 194 and 159835
Corner of Prestwich & Napier Streets
Green Point, Cape Town**

(HWC Permit No. 2010/06/001)



Report prepared for Mitchell Duplessis & Associates

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Executive Summary

This report is a final assessment of the Inner City Bus Depot in Green Point and an adjunct to an Opportunities and Constraints Analysis undertaken in 2011 to evaluate the archaeological sensitivity of the study site. It reviews the results of six archaeological trial excavations, the monitoring of nine geo-technical test pits and the monitoring of the contractors earth-moving activities during demolition work. The scope of work was undertaken at the direct request of the client, The City of Cape Town

The site has been the focus of an extensive upgrading program related to the introduction of the Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) system. It is situated between Napier, Bennet and Prestwich Streets at 18° 25' 10"E; 33° 54' 49"S in Green Point.

The results of the study demonstrate that despite the number of pits and trenches excavated, and the sheer quantity of sub-surface deposits exposed the archaeological remains recovered or observed were minimum.. However, whenever an area with a deep historical past such as Green Point is investigated there are almost certain to be items of interest as well as new information gleaned. These are summarized in the following four sections.

The absence of any human burials or evidence of any burial shafts was perhaps surprising given the frequency of graves and burial grounds known to exist in the vicinity, and indeed that the area had previously been granted to the Dutch Reformed church in the 1830's to develop a new burial ground. There are two possible explanations. The first is that the dune deposits, the normal repository for burial sites in this area, were notably shallow. The second is that any human remains present may have been exhumed or simply removed when the ground was leveled during earlier construction and building episodes in the 1960s.

The small quantity of archaeological material recovered is not really surprising as most of the sub-surface deposits were not in situ but were the product of secondary infill materials imported from outside the site. Although there was no evidence of prehistoric occupation at the site there was evidence of historic usage. Items recovered included sheep and cattle bones, marine shellfish, bottle glass, pieces of wood and iron and a number of ceramic pieces including porcelain.

With reference to built structures the most significant event was the discovery of a section of cobbled paving relating to one of the 19th century wine storage houses known to exist in the area.

In terms of the geological and palaeontological footprint the excavations confirmed the presence of Pleistocene dune deposits dating to about 100,000 to 120 000 years before present. Whilst these early dune formations are known from other parts of Green Point and were noted in the previous Bus Depot report (Patrick & Dlamini 2011) the presence of a Holocene dune sands had not been reported previously at the site. The excavation of the Civil 2000 trench next to the retaining wall on Bennett revealed the existence of a recent Holocene dune formation with an upper and lower component laid down in two separate episodes of deposition.

We conclude that no further archaeological work is required to mitigate this site.

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1. Introduction and Brief

This report commissioned Mitchell Duplessis & Associates on behalf of their client, the City of Cape Town, is a follow up to the **Opportunity** and **Constraints Analysis** described by Patrick & Dlamini (2011). This report documents the results of a series of trial excavations requested by the client, as well as a monitoring brief of the demolition and construction work undertaken at Erf 110442 and Erven 9569, 9570, 179, 180, 194, 159835 located in Green Point, Cape Town. The site is currently used as the Inner City Bus Depot and has been the focus of an extensive upgrading program related to the introduction of the Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) system. It is situated between Napier, Bennet and Prestwich Streets at 18° 25' 10"E; 33° 54' 49"S. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show the location of the site in relation to the City of Cape Town and to the suburb of Green Point.

The results of the first stage of the archaeological investigations at the Inner City Bus Depot (Patrick & Dlamini 2011) showed that most of the sub-surface deposits were not in situ but were the product of secondary materials imported from outside the site. No evidence of prehistoric occupation was found and materials dating to the historic period were limited to the occasional pieces of bottle glass and fragments of wood. The most significant built environment feature was a section of cobbled paving relating to the 19th century storage houses used by the South African Wine Growers Association. Although the possibility of finding prehistoric or historic human burials was ranked **high**, no such burials were encountered during the monitoring operations. Based on the experience gained from the initial archaeological investigations the brief for the next phase of enquiry, as detailed in this report, consisted of a number of archaeological trial excavations coupled with an extensive monitoring program whenever demolition and trenching operations were executed.



Figure 1.1: Geographical location of the Inner City Bus Depot site. The yellow circle marks the approximate position of the site in the City of Cape Town (Ref: Map 3318 CD 1: 50 000 - Cape Town).



Figure 1.2: Satellite Image of the site from Google Earth, showing the location of the Bus Depot between Napier, Bennet and Prestwich streets.

2. Site Description and Background

The site covers 9 200 square metres in extent and is currently used by the City of Cape Town to house and maintain their fleet of buses. The City acquired the use of the bus depot by means of a lease agreement with Transnet, primarily for the 2010 World Cup event but also beyond that for a two-year period. Erf 110442 is owned by Transnet and Erven 9569, 9570, 179, 180, 194, 159835 are leased by the City from Transnet. The current built environment features located on site date to the mid-1960s and only one building along Napier Street, located on Erf 110442, is older than 60 years.

The historical background of the Inner City Bus Depot site was covered very thoroughly in the previous report (Patrick & Dlamini 2011) and the only new item of interest derives from the discovery of the cobbled paving associated with wine storage building. A historical map of Green Point (Figure 2.1) dating from the 19th century shows the location of the wine store and saw mill that was previously located on the study erven. The map also highlights the proximity .of burial grounds that existed in that century.

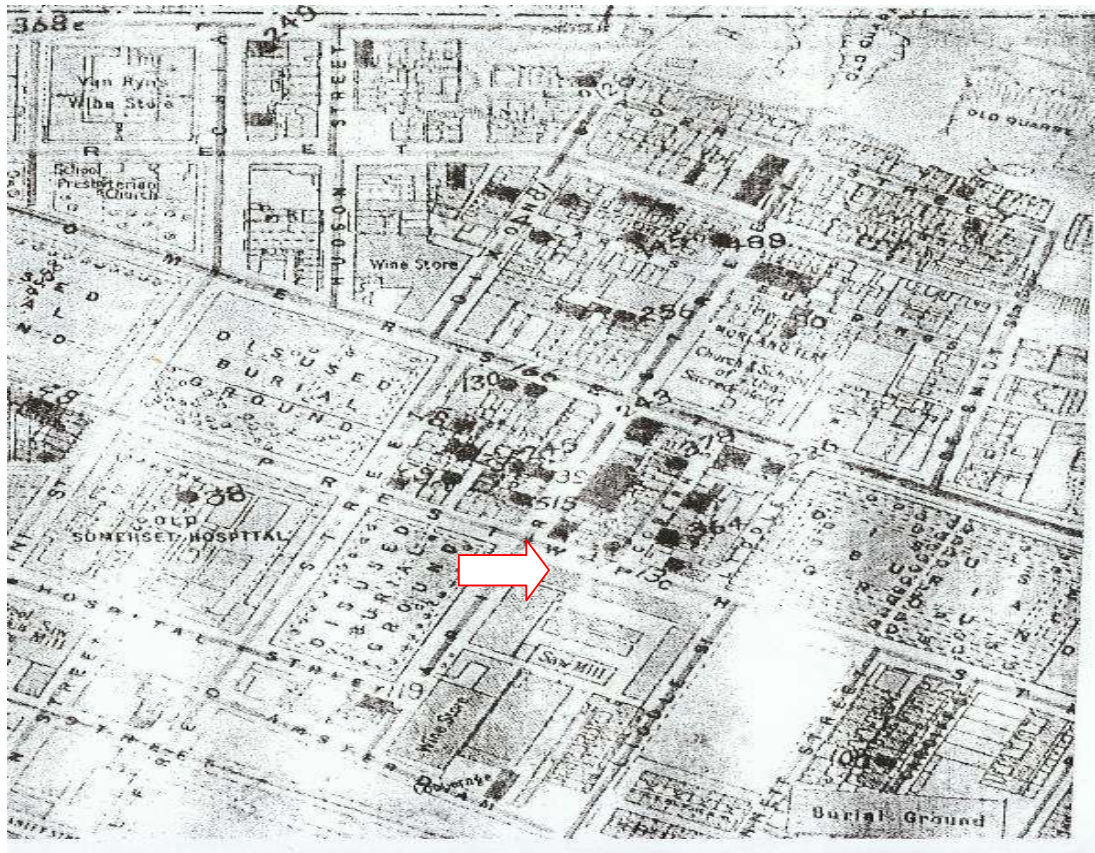


Figure 2.1: 19th century map by Snow showing location of the Wine Store and Saw Mill previously located on the current study erven, marked with an arrow, and its proximity to Somerset Hospital and burial grounds (Cape Archives).

3. Project Description and Methodology

The project devolved into three phases. The first phase was the excavation of six archaeological test pits at selected locations around the site during February 2012. The excavations were supervised by Cedric Poggenpoel and were carried out with picks, shovels and trowels. A full written and photographic record was maintained for all the pits and drawings were made of key stratigraphic sections.

The second phase was a series of nine Geological Test Pits which were excavated during February and March of 2012 in order to determine the nature of the sub-surface deposits prior to the commencement of building operations. The work was carried out by Roadlab, Civil Engineering Materials Laboratory for their client Arcus Gibb. The nine pits were placed around the site at locations where new buildings were due to be erected. An archaeological

monitoring brief was carried out through excavations along with photographic and written records where necessary.

The third and final phase, which began in April 2012, was a series of excavations undertaken by the contractor (Civil 2000) as a precursor to the construction of new buildings and structures on the site. These took the form of a number of trenches and pits excavated at locations for new buildings, storm water drains, electrical cabling and manholes. As part of the archaeological brief all the excavations were monitored and recorded photographically and by the drawing of representative sections. Figure 3.1 shows the layout of the site and the buildings and structures to be demolished at the Inner City Bus Depot

