

4. Results of the Excavations and Monitoring

The following three sections deal with the excavations of the Archaeological Trial Pits, the monitoring of the Geological Test Pits and the monitoring of the Civil 2000 Trial Pits and Trenches.

5. Excavation of Six Archaeological Trial Pits

The 2012 season began on February 1st with the excavation of six Archaeological Trial Pits (referred to as ATP 1 to 6 in the text and in the figures). This was a follow up to the recommendations detailed in the 2011 report on the archaeological investigations at the Inner City Bus Depot (Patrick & Dlamini 2011). The six pits were placed around the site at locations thought to be of a sensitive nature in terms of archaeological potential (Figure 5.1).

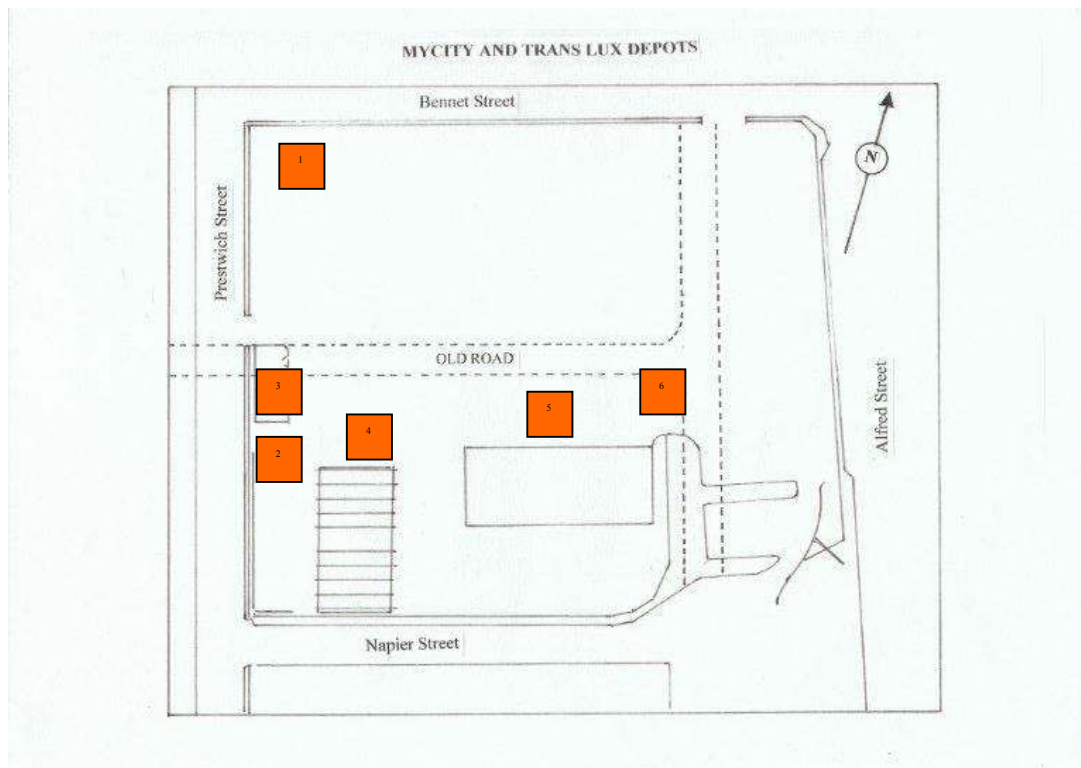


Figure 5.1: Plan of the Bus Depot Site showing the location of the Archaeological Trial Pits (ATP 1 to 6).

5.1 Archaeological Trial Pit One (ATP 1)

The first excavation was situated at the corner of Prestwich Street and Bennett Street in the Translux Bus Depot Yard (Figures 5.2, 5.3 & 5.4). The dimensions of the excavation were 2 metres by 1 metre. The surface layers consisted of a layer of tarmac overlying road metal resting on yellow clay gravel. The yellow gravel contained pieces of iron, brick and porcelain as well as a single piece of cattle bone from the proximal end of a tibia. These inclusions show that the yellow gravel was not the original surface but probably part of the road construction infill.

The yellow gravel lies on top of a layer of black soil containing many small pieces of rock. Below the black soil lies a yellow sandy layer containing pieces of brick and iron as well as sheep bones all resting on the surface of a Pleistocene dune. The upper part of the Pleistocene dune sand is typically yellow in colour whilst the lower part is a dark brown shade which is probably due to the presence of moisture. The dark brown Pleistocene dune rests on top of a gritty clay deposit mixed with small ferruginous pebbles. The final layer of ATP 1 was composed of coarse gravel. Bedrock was not reached although some sandstone blocks occurred at the base of the pit in the north-west corner. The sandstone blocks are most likely part of the bedrock formation which normally occurs above the Malmesbury shale. As the Pleistocene dune is only 40cm thick it is unlikely that any human burials will be found as this area as the sand would be too shallow for a shaft to be dug. Most of the burials found in the Green Point area have been recovered from Pleistocene sand deposits but they have occurred further to the west where the dune deposits are considerably deeper.

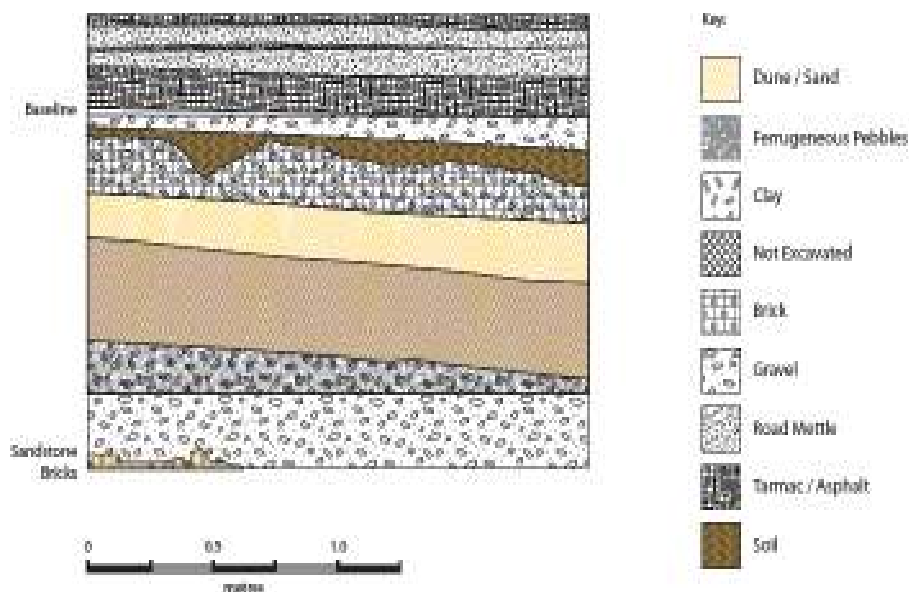


Figure 5.2: ATP 1 (North Section)



Figure 5.3: Excavation of ATP 1.



Figure 5.4: ATP 1 (North Section)

5.2 Archaeological Trial Pits Two and Three (ATP 2 & 3)

With the next two pits (ATP 2 & 3), the focus was the City Bus Depot and the location selected was the space between the Administration Building and the retaining wall backing on to Prestwich Street (Figures 5.5, 5.6 & 5.7). The Archaeological Trial Pit ATP 2 was a two metre square excavated behind the electrical box. The upper deposits consisted of a mixture of road metal, loose gravel, crushed brick and yellow clay, none of which were in situ but were imported as infill. At this point a water pipe and an electrical cable were exposed which somewhat curtailed the possibilities for further excavation of this pit. As a result the size of the working area was reduced to a single square metre. However, it was established that the base deposits consisted of Pleistocene dune sand. The dune sand was highly compacted and the only archaeological material recovered consisted of a few sheep bones and the occasional piece of dark green glass. The excavation of ATP 2 was terminated at this point and attention focussed on the adjacent site of ATP 3.

ATP 3 was excavated as an alternative to ATP 2 after the discovery of the electrical cable rendered the latter site unsuitable. ATP 3 was positioned a short distance to the north-west of ATP 2 between the Administration Block and the retaining wall of Prestwich Street. The upper layers were all very similar to ATP 2, consisting of mixture of road metal, gravel, and clay infill. Part of the excavated area was occupied by sewerage pipes and drains but sufficient area remained to expose the underlying deposits which consisted of Pleistocene dune sand. In the north-western corner of the square portions of Malmesbury shale were exposed and a few sheep bones and a single tooth were recovered. There were no indications of burials or burial shafts.

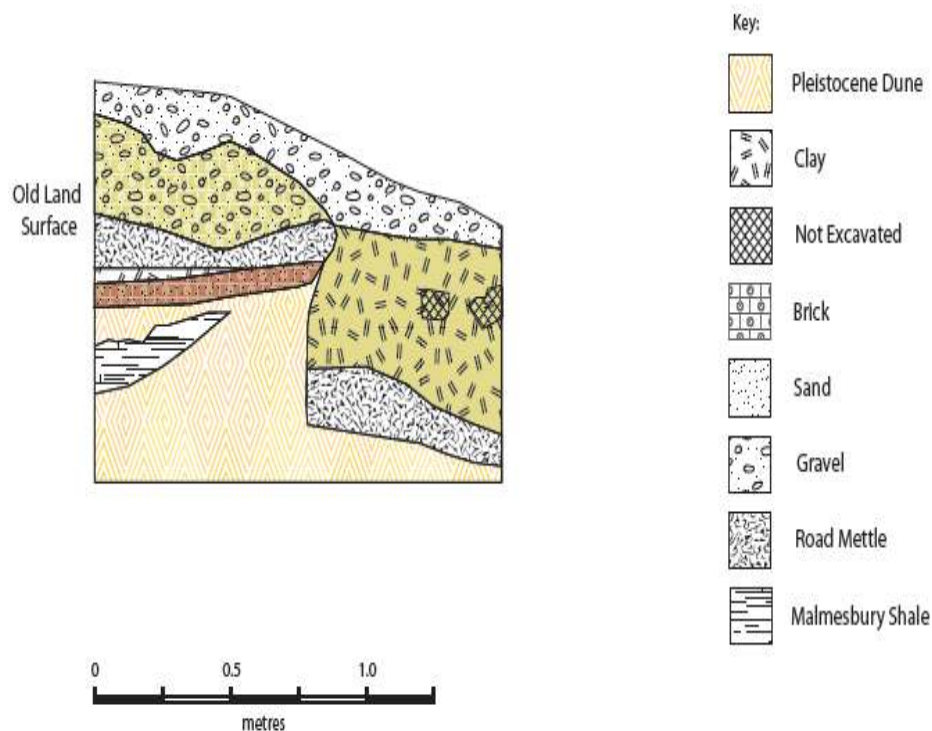


Figure 5.5: ATP 3 (West Section)



Figure 5.6: Excavation of ATP 3.



Figure 5.7: ATP 3 (West Section)

5.3 Archaeological Trial Pit Four (ATP 4)

This was positioned close to the north-western end of the Bus Maintenance hanger (Figures 5.8 & 5.9). The first step was to drill through the thick layer of concrete to expose the underlying deposits. The first layer was composed of loose gravel which merged into a

composite layer of gravel, broken bricks and clay. Below this was a loose mixture of road mettle and sand. All of these layers were the result of infill and were not in situ material. A truncation was visible in the north-western part of the square, as revealed by the presence of a light brown deposit, which may have been introduced when the electrical cables were laid across the site. The final layers consisted of dune sand interspersed with Malmesbury shale. No archaeological traces were recovered from ATP 4.

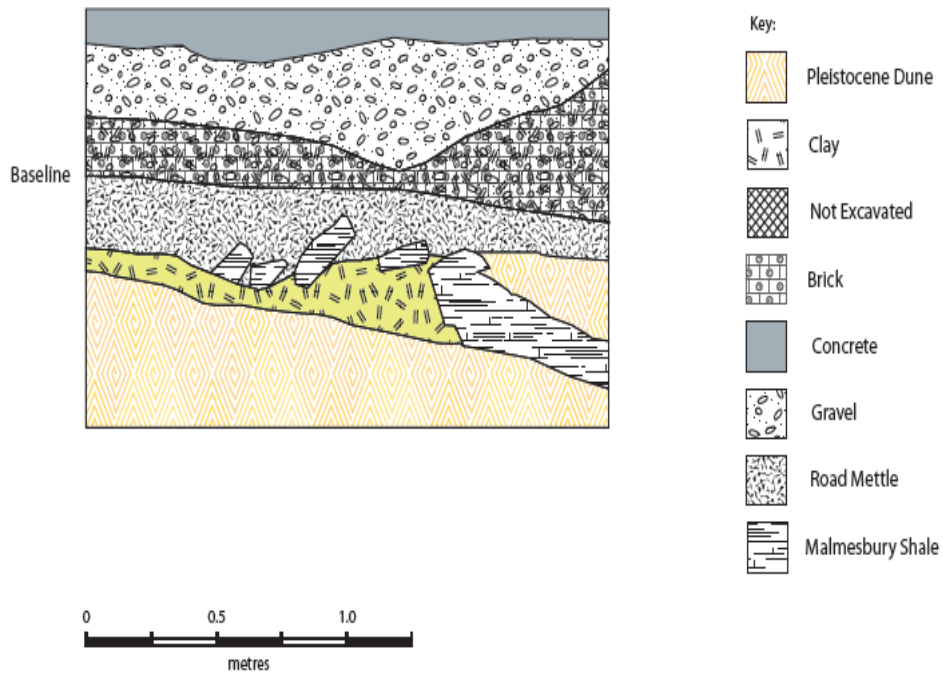


Figure 5.8: ATP 4 (South Section)



Figure 5.9: ATP 4 (South Section)

5.4 Archaeological Trial Pit Five (ATP 5)

This was situated between the old fuel tank and the Civil 2000 office block (Figures 5.10, 5.11 & 5.12). The upper deposits were very similar to the pits already excavated and were made up of successive layers of tarmac, road metal and asphalt. Below these layers however some interesting features were exposed. These consisted of a concrete step on the eastern side of the excavated square with at least two rows of bricks, partly disintegrated, overlying a section of shale paving. Underneath the paving were several large boulders set in a straight line which could well be part the foundations of a house. The bricks on top of the paving may be the remains of an old wall that had been demolished at some point in the past.

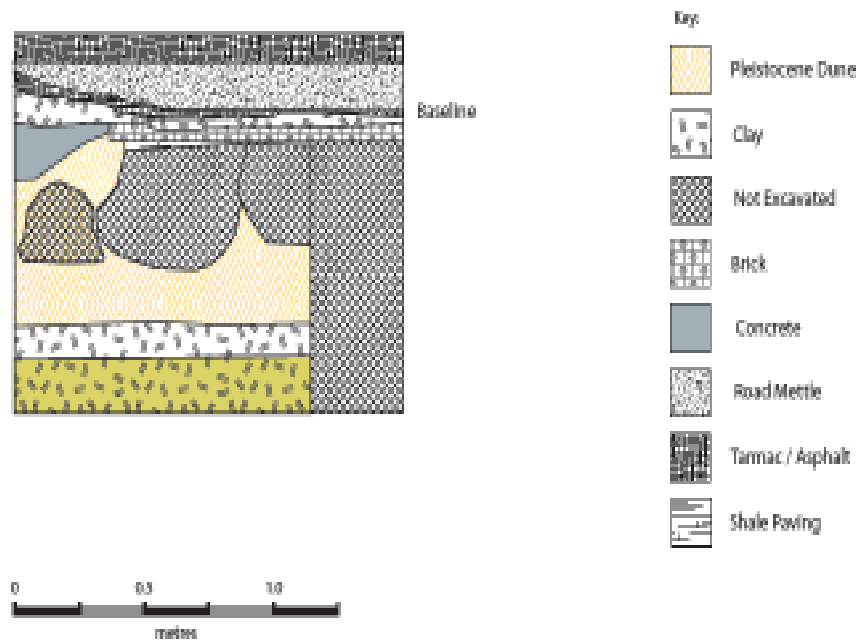


Figure 5.10: ATP 5 (South Section)



Figure 5.11: Excavation of ATP 5.



Figure 5.12: View of boulders at base of ATP 5.

5.5 Archaeological Trial Pit Six (ATP 6)

The final trial pit, measuring 1.2 metres by 1.2 metres, was opened on a level area behind the ablution block (Figures 5.13 & 5.14). The upper deposits were not in situ but were made up of grit infill, more than one metre thick, imported from outside of the site. Beneath the grit infill there was a layer composed of a mixture of red brick fragments and clay. These overlay Pleistocene dune sand in which was imbedded a drainage pipe that ran along the back of the ablution block, adjacent to a series of large boulders. Below the dune and the pipe, next to the boulders, the deposits consisted of dark brown sand and ferruginous pebbles suspended in clay.

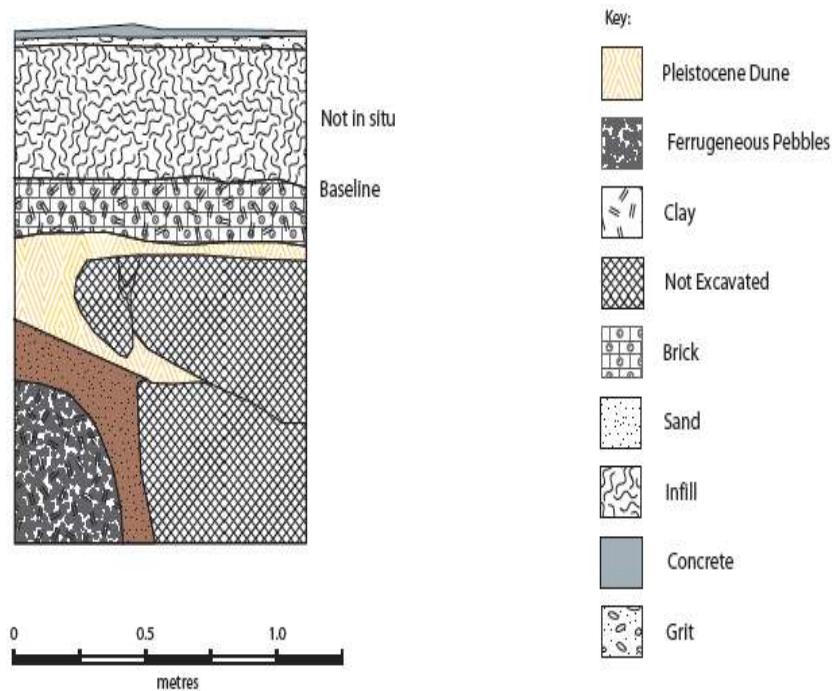


Figure 5.13: ATP 6 (West Section)



Figure 5.14: View of drainage pipes in ATP 6.

5.6 Comments on the Archaeological Trial Pits (ATP 1 to 6)

No artefacts, such as stone tools or pottery, were recovered from the excavation of the six pits. The sheep and cattle bones relate to the historical period as attested to by the presence of glass fragments and pieces of ceramics. There was no evidence of human burials or burial shafts. A full list of the faunal remains, shellfish and miscellaneous items is given in Appendices one to three.

6. Geological Test Pits

A series of nine Geological Test Pits (designated GTP 1 to 9 in Figure 6.1) were excavated at the Inner City Bus Depot 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. The geological pits were of interest to the archaeological work being undertaken as they might possibly reveal buried remains and also act as a comparison to the archaeological test pits already excavated. A monitoring watch was maintained during the excavations but no significant new archaeological materials, structures or burials were revealed during the geological investigations.

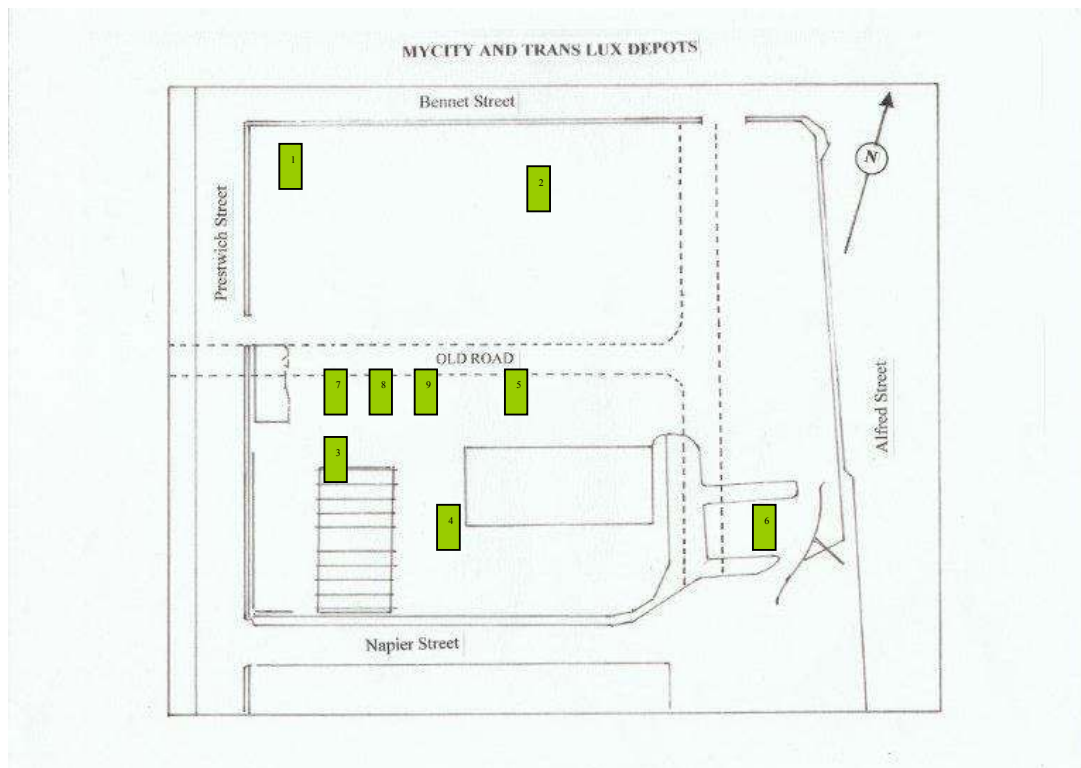


Figure 6.1: Plan of the Bus Depot showing the location of the Geological Test Pits (GTP 1 to 9).

The locations of the Geological Test Pits are as follows:

GTP 1 was located at the western corner of the Inner City Bus Depot site close to Bennett Street. The Geological Test Pit GTP 1 was next to the Archaeological Trial Pit ATP 1.

GTP 2 was located on the north-western edge of the site next to the Retaining Wall.

GTP 3 was located at the north-western end of the Maintenance Building close to ATP 4.

GTP 4 was positioned next to the Civil 2000 Office Block.

GTP 5 was excavated by the Fuel Tank close to ATP 5.

GTP 6 was located at the eastern corner of the site near to the Security Building.

GTP 7, 8 & 9 were placed close together in a row near to the Administration Block on the south-western side of the site.

7. Civil 2000 Trial Pits and Trenches

The next phase of the upgrading of the Inner City Bus Depot, 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. The location of the Civil 2000 excavated trenches and pits are shown on Figure 7.1 in relation to the structures in the Bus Depot and are marked as CTP 1 to 16. The most important trenches and pits, where items or structures of archaeological interest occurred, are described and illustrated below.

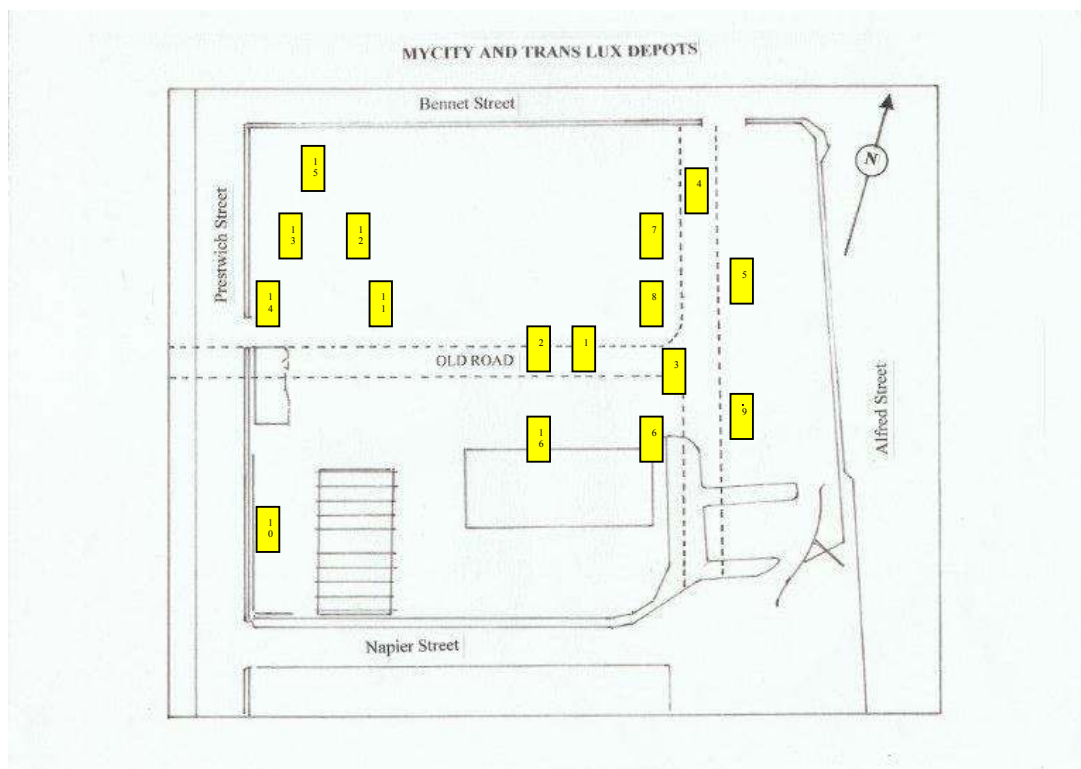


Figure 7.1: Plan of the Bus Depot showing the location of the Civil 2000 Trial Pits and Trenches (CTP 1 to 16)

7.1 Security Office Block

The new Security Office Block is to be situated under the flyover of the Helen Suzeman Boulevard. The foundation trenches for the new building were all relatively shallow, only reaching down to the Pleistocene dune sand. All of the deposits above the dune sand were

not in situ. The upper deposit was made up of loose road mettle and yellow gravel with occasional quartzite pebbles. This type of deposit is mainly used as infill, its purpose being to provide a level surface on which to lay the tarmac. Two long trenches were excavated, the first was a 14m long trench on the northern side and the second a 10m long trench on the southern side. A series of shorter connecting trenches were excavated between the two major trenches. The depth of the trenches varied between 50cm and 75cm.

The Pleistocene dune is part of a succession of dunes that developed in a coastal environment. Parts of this dune formation have been identified at Fort Wynyard, near the Cape Town Stadium, and close by at Cobern Street. The dunes are related to the 4-6m high sea level which has been dated to between 110,000 and 120,000 years before present (Rogers, 1982; Hendey, 1983). It has been our experience that most burials shafts in the greater Green Point and Sea Point area have been found the Pleistocene dune formations. However, no evidence of human burials or burial shafts was found during the excavation of these trenches, a possible explanation for this being the lack of sufficient depth of sand.

7.2 Old Manhole Pit

The remains of an old manhole were unearthed some 40m to the north-west of the Civil 2000 Offices (marked as CTP 1 on Figure 7.1). In order to remove the manhole a pit was dug around the outside and the stratigraphic sequence was fully exposed (Figure 7.2). The upper deposits were all infill, approximately 50cm deep, and overlay Pleistocene dune sand. There were a number of large boulders on top of the dune. These were of a similar pattern to the boulders previously recorded during earlier trenching operations (Patrick & Dlamini 2011) and are thought to be the foundation footings of the old wine cellar which existed prior to the construction of the Bus Depot. The Pleistocene dune was 60cm deep at this point thick and rests on a gritty clay deposit with an aggregate of small ferruginous nodules formed by the evaporation of ground waters. These deposits lay directly on the Malmesbury shale bedrock. The dune sands are sterile in this area and there were no indications of any burials or burial shafts.

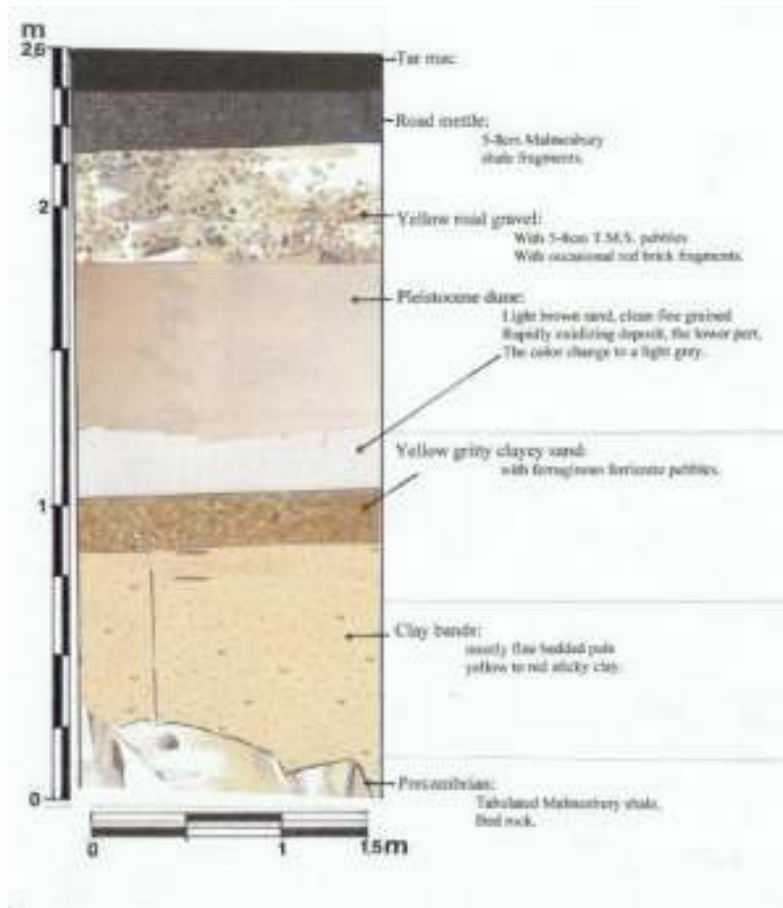


Figure 7.2: Civil Trial Pit CTP 1. View of the stratigraphy in the pit excavated to remove the old manhole.

7.3 The Old Road

Prior to the construction work at the inner City Bus Depot, a boundary fence was erected as a cordon to separate the My City Bus Terminus from the area where the demolition was due to take place. A trench was dug next to the boundary fence. Below the tarmac and road infill layers an older road was discovered. The old road was in a surprisingly good condition and even the road curb was still in place. The old road ran across the centre of the site in a north-west to south-east direction parallel to Bennett Street and Napier Street. Below the ablution block the road joins onto another old road running parallel to Alfred Street. This second road was uncovered during the excavations to expose the electrical cables that had been laid down at an earlier. In the trench next to the boundary fence (Marked as CTP 2 in Figure 7.1) a number of water and drainage pipes were seen be set in the fossil dune (Figure 7.3). Apart from the discovery of the historical road, no cultural remains were uncovered during the monitoring of theses trenches.

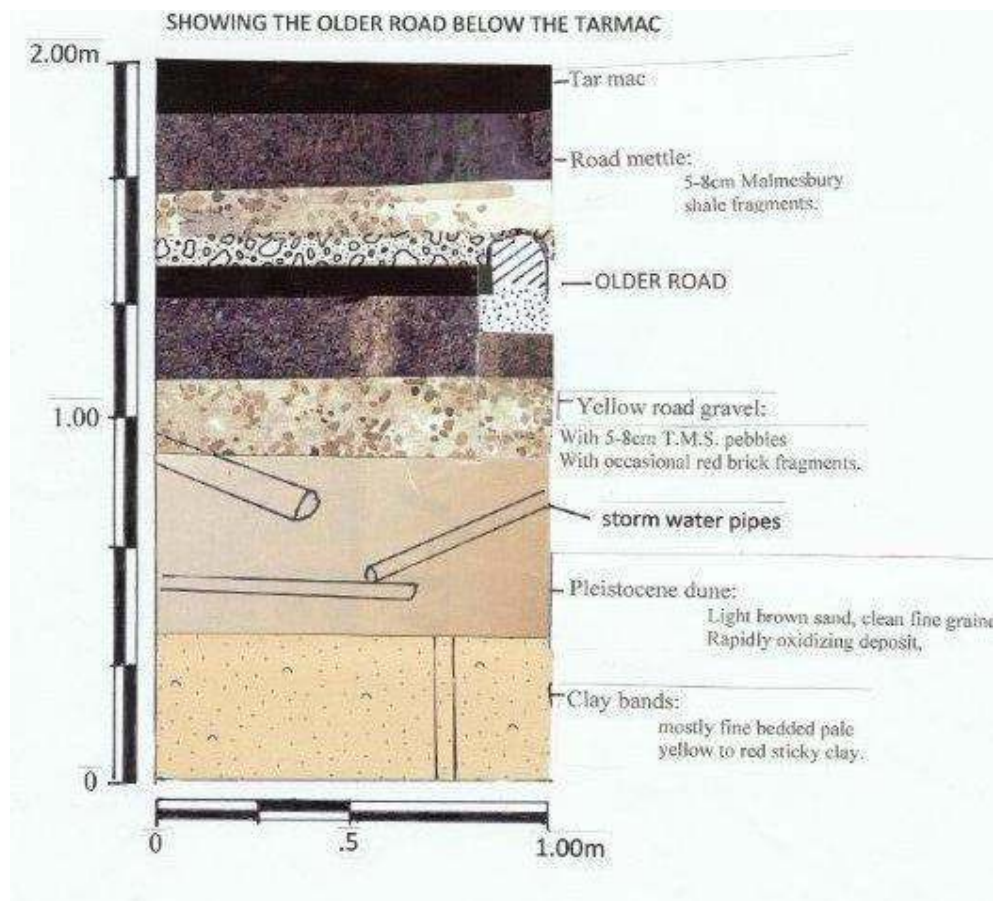


Figure 7.3: Civil Trial Pit CTP 2. View of the stratigraphy showing a section of the Old Road and the remains of the storm water pipes.

7.4 The Fuelling Station

The fuelling station is situated approximately 30m to the north of the Civil 2000 Office Block. A large trench was excavated measuring 14m in length, 60cm in width and with a depth of 80cm. After removing the tarmac a fine, gritty deposit was exposed which lay on top of a layer of red bricks. The bricks were mainly in a state of disintegration but may have been part of the wall of an older structure. On the southern side of the trench there was a series of large boulders set one on top of another and interspersed with sand. These could well represent the remains of another wall structure or wall footing.

Towards the centre of the trench there was a large concrete slab lying directly on top of the Pleistocene dune sand. The dune has a thickness of 54cm at its western limit and decreases in depth to 45cm towards the east. Some 25cm below the concrete slab there was an

archaeological horizon containing with a fairly large faunal sample. The horizon is about 5cm thick and runs across the northern edge of the fuelling station's foundation. The fauna consisted of a collection sheep and cattle bones along with some marine shell fish. There were also some ceramic fragments including English and Dutch porcelain.

7.5 The Retaining Wall

During the removal of the retaining wall and the levelling of the ground on the north-western part of the site a new trench was excavated next to Bennett Street. The upper deposits consisted of the now familiar layers of tarmac, road metal and yellow road gravel infill. However, the underlying dune formations presented a new perspective due to the presence of a recent Holocene dune formation. This was an interesting development as this type of sand dune had not previously been encountered anywhere else at the Inner City Bus Depot. Furthermore, the dune seems to have two separate episodes of deposition.

The upper sand layer was dark grey in colour, possible due to the presence of organic humus, whilst the lower layer consisted of pure white sand. This type of Holocene dune is typically made up of a Witzand calcareous sand member of the Bredarsdorp Formation which often forms the major component of the unconsolidated, and often mobile, sand dunes. These sand bodies were often formed during different periods and at different altitudes. Colour variations also occur with white dunes becoming reddish or grey in colour due to the presence of the underlying and less consolidated sands and clays. Material from the Table Mountain Group, coastal dunes and fluvial deposits of old and active drainage systems have also contributed towards the formation of these dune deposits (Deacon & Lancaster 1986).

The other point of interest in the trench next to Bennett Street was the presence of a large amount of porcelain and animal bones. As often happens, these finds were not noted during the monitoring phase but were recovered from the spoil heaps removed from the trench. The other factor concerning the discovery of the Holocene dune is that it provides a possible explanation for the absence of any human burials at the Bus Depot site. It must be said that the likelihood of burials being found at the Bus Depot site was considered to be high as much of this part of Green Pont was for a long time a recognised cemetery area. It seems likely that when the site of the present Bus Depot was originally developed, any burials found were exhumed and if most of the Holocene dune was removed during the levelling of the site then very little of the original archaeological footprint would have been left behind.

7.6 Diesel Fuel Tank Trench

The diesel fuel tank is situated in the centre of the Inner City Bus Depot and the adjacent Civil 2000 Trench is marked as CTP 10 on the plan of the site (Figure 7.1). The surface layers of tarmac, road metal and yellow gravel overlay a layer of mountain gravel surmounting the Pleistocene dune. The Malmesbury shale bedrock is less than a metre below the surface in this trench whilst the Pleistocene dune decreases in depth towards the south-east (Figure 7.4). There were no archaeological structures visible in the trench sections and no archaeological materials were recovered during the excavation.

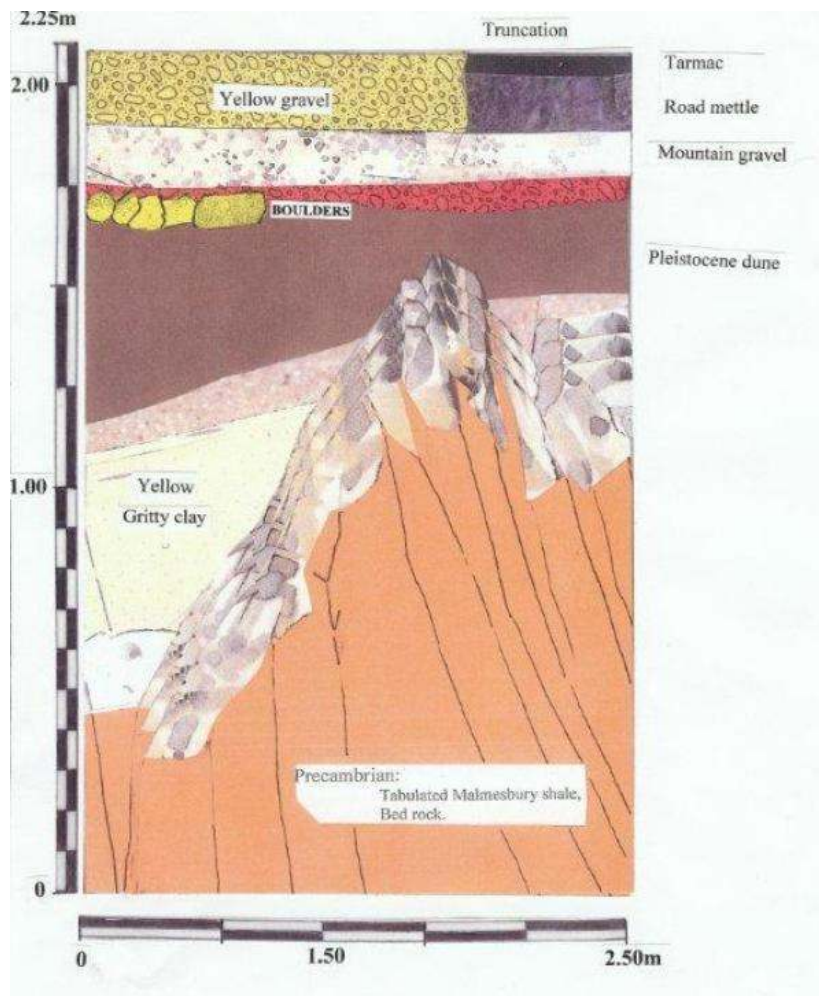


Figure 7.4: Civil Trial Pit CTP 10. View of the stratigraphy showing a the sloping Pleistocene dune and Precambrian Malmesbury bedrock.

7.7 Storm Water Trenches

The final trench (marked CTP 16 on Figure 7.1) was located in front of the Civil 2000 Office Block, the purpose of the trench being to replace the old storm water drainage system. Two

sets of paving were exposed in the excavated trench. The first set was close to the surface, just below the storm water pipes outside the building, and was made up of dark grey bricks, each brick measuring 8cm x 8cm x 10cm. The brick continued underneath the building and reappeared on the other side. The second set of paving was positioned some 35cm below the brick paving and was constructed using rectangular pieces of sandstone, quartzite and shale. The stone pieces had not been dressed and were fairly irregular with sizes ranging from 16 to 20cm. The gaps in between the stones were filled in with smooth river cobbles and small pebbles. It appears that this set of paving occurs at the same level as the Old Road described above.

8. Conclusions

When considering the number of pits and trenches excavated and the sheer quantity sub-surface deposits exposed one has to say that the archaeological remains recovered or observed were rather slight. 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.

(1) 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. 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.

(2) The small quantity of archaeological material recovered is not really surprising as most of the sub-surface deposits were not in situ were but the product of secondary infill materials imported from outside the site. Despite this, there were some articles of interest. 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.

(3) 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.

(4) 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.

9. References

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Rogers, J. 1982. Lithostratigraphy of Cenozoic sediments between Cape Town and Elands Bay. In Coetzee, J.A. and Van Zinderen Bakker, E.M. Eds. *Palaeoecology of Africa and the surrounding Islands* 15: 12-137.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Bone recovered from Archaeological Trial Pits

Taxa	Body Parts	ATP 1	ATP 2/3	ATP 4	ATP 5	ATP 6
Sheep	rib fragments	5	6			
Sheep	distal humerus		1			
Sheep	proximal humerus		1			
Sheep	humerus condyle				1	
Sheep	broken condyle		1			
Sheep	long bone fragment	2	7			
Sheep	scapula fragment		2			
Sheep	third phalange		1			
Sheep	maxilla tooth				1	
Sheep	tooth		1			
Cow	distal humerus condyle			1		
Horse	first phalange				1	
Bird	humerus		1			
Bird	radius	1				
Bird	bone fragment		1			
Fish	vertebrae		2			
Fish	bone		1			
Unidentified	condyle	1				
Unidentified	bone fragments	5	16	2	15	
Unidentified	cut bone				1	

Appendix 2 – Marine Shell recovered from Archaeological Trial Pits

Species	Condition	ATP 1	ATP 2/3	ATP 4	ATP 5	ATP 6
Choromitilis meridionalis	fragments		2			
Donax serra	fragment	1				
Aulacomya ater	whole		1			
Cymbula granatina	fragments	1	2			
Scutellastra argenvillei	whole	3	1			
Scutellastra argenvillei	fragments	3	1			
Scutellastra cochlear	whole	2				
Burnupena cincta	whole	2	3			
Burnupena cincta	fragments		2			
Oxystele sp.			1			
Unidentified	fragments		7			

Appendix 3 – Miscellaneous items recovered from Archaeological Trial Pits

Item	ATP 1	ATP 2/3	ATP 4	ATP 5	ATP 6
Nail (10cm)		1			
Broken nail (8cm)		4			
Dutch pipe stem		1			