

# **Phase 2 Archaeological Report**

**Point Village Development**

**Mossel Bay**

Prepared for:

MLD (Pty) Ltd.

**JULY 1999**

Prepared by

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

An archaeological assessment of the Point Village area was undertaken. Pitting showed no precolonial cultural materials. Turn of the century historic landfill was intersected in the pits as expected. A sample of the cultural material was collected for the museum. There is no archaeological impediment to further construction on the site.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Archaeology, University of Stellenbosch was requested by Milnerton Lagoon Mouth Development (Pty) Ltd to carry out a Phase 1 and Phase 2 archaeological investigation at the Point Village development in Mossel Bay. The purpose was to ascertain whether or not any cultural resources on the site would be impacted by the development. The Phase 1 report prepared by Professor H. J. Deacon recommended that the development be permitted to proceed subject to adequate monitoring of the excavation phase of the development. It was also recommended that the Post Office Tree Museum be alerted to the opportunity of obtaining a sample of the historical cultural materials from the site.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Point Village development is directly below one of the most famous archaeological sites in the country, the Cape St Blaize cave. This has recently been furnished with informative displays and is a tourist attraction. The deposits in the cave date from as early as 100 000 years till recent times. Even older archaeological materials occur in the surrounds of the Lighthouse. The adjacent rocky coastal zone is rich in shell middens of various ages, mostly dating to the last 10 000 years. In addition there are turn of the century fills dumped in the Point area and also at the Post Office Tree area that are rich in historical artefacts.

## **OBSERVATIONS / FINDINGS**

The Phase 1 report noted that there was no surface deposits that dated more than a hundred years. It remained to test whether older deposits of archaeological significance occurred below the surface. In the week of 18-22 July 1999, test pits numbered 1-7/2 were excavated in the planned construction area using a 'Backhoe' supplied by Johann Schriver of CSV Construction. The pits were approximately 3-6 metres long and one metre wide and provided sediment samples and mapping of the stratigraphy (see Addendums). Pits 1-3 were dug close to the retaining wall at the shore's edge where construction will have a base level of 4.75 metres above sea level. Pits 4-7 tested the area where the base level of construction will be 1,5 metre

higher. The remaining area to be developed will be at or above present ground level and in part will be raised with infill acquired from the area of the old parking lot.

The pits intersected layers of railway ash and layers containing late Victorian town dump material. The latter includes glassware, porcelain, bone, and shell and a qualitative sample was collected for Mrs. Labuscagne, curatrix of the museum. Old beach deposits underlie the Victorian layer but these are natural in origin. No precolonial archaeological deposits were intersected in the pits.

The sample collected from the site came from an extension of Pit 7 (Addendum 9), an area of three cubic metres. The sample was sieved with a 20mm and 10mm sieve and the cultural items retained. These include some fifty bottles, three buttons, stoneware, a metal lid, slates and pencils, and various pieces of broken pottery and glass. A sample of bone, shell, and slag was also taken.

## **CONCLUSION**

The observations made while on site and the samples taken indicate that no archaeologically sensitive materials will be affected by the development. The Victorian era infill has been adequately sampled. The older beach and dune sand deposits exposed by pitting are culturally sterile.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

MLD (Pty) Ltd., Point Village management and CSV Construction are thanked for their co-operation in this archaeological assessment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ❑ It is recommended that the construction phase of the development proceed as pitting has failed to reveal significant subsurface precolonial archaeological occurrences.
- ❑ Preparation of the site will entail exposure and removal of historic dump material. It is recommended that the museum be given the option of monitoring this phase of the development with a view to obtaining items for display. The museum should be given first option on any finds. The old dump material has a commercial value to bottle collectors.
- ❑ The later stages of construction will include minor earthworks in the demolition of some bungalows and in the digging of service trenches. The prospects of undisturbed midden materials being exposed is low but any should be reported to the museum.

## *Addendum 1*

### **The Point, Mossel Bay: Proposed Development Phase 1 Archaeological Report 22 January 1999**

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#### **Introduction**

The brief from Milnerton Lagoon Mouth Development (Pty) Ltd to carry out a Phase 1 archaeological investigation followed on a request from the Regional Manager: Western Cape, in the offices of the National Monuments Council. An investigation was carried out on 18 January 1999 and the results are reported here. There is a possibility that shell middens occur on the property but the area has been severely impacted by previous developments. The property is near the Cape St Blaize cave which is an archaeological site museum.

#### **Observations**

1. The surrounds to the existing structures on the edge of the beach (most of which will be retained) are made ground. There are no exposed archaeological deposits between the structures and the service road separating the two rows of bungalows is infill.
2. The access road and go-cart course behind the structures in the western section are on infill.
3. The presently undeveloped northern section abutting the existing retaining wall on Varken's Bay has been levelled by fill. The fill, like that in the Post Office Tree surrounds of the Dias Museum property, is railway coal cinders and historic town refuse. The latter includes old beer bottles and the like and probably relate to the earlier part of this century. The local museum may wish to have a sample of the material as they already have samples from the Post Office Tree area. Old bottles have commercial value as collectors items.

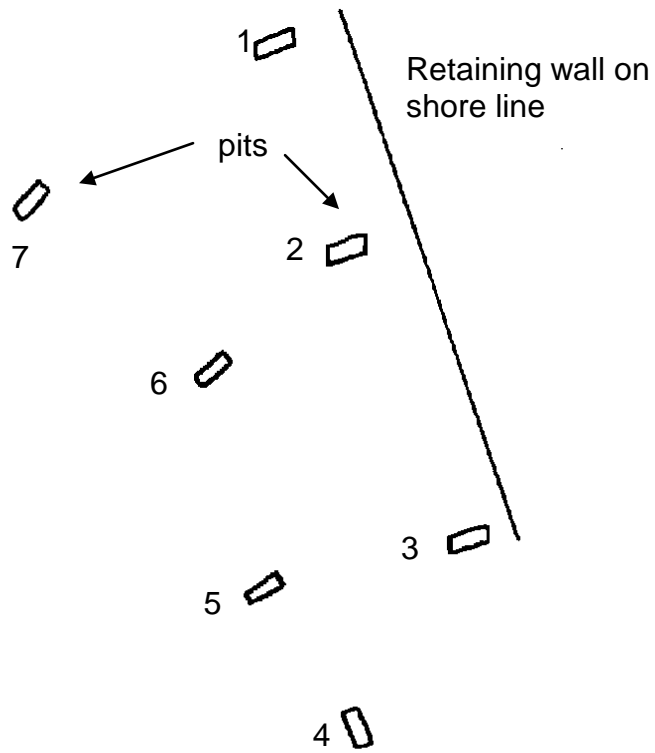
## **Need for monitoring**

There are no surface exposures. Holes made for geotechnical purposes show the infilling may be two or more metres thick. Therefore, there will be a need to monitor earth removal. This is obvious where the ground surface is to be lowered and historic fill removed as in the northern section. At the Post Office site an on-site archaeologist worked with the machine operator and this procedure can be followed here . There will be a need to inspect foundations for new structures and trenches for service facilities on the property.

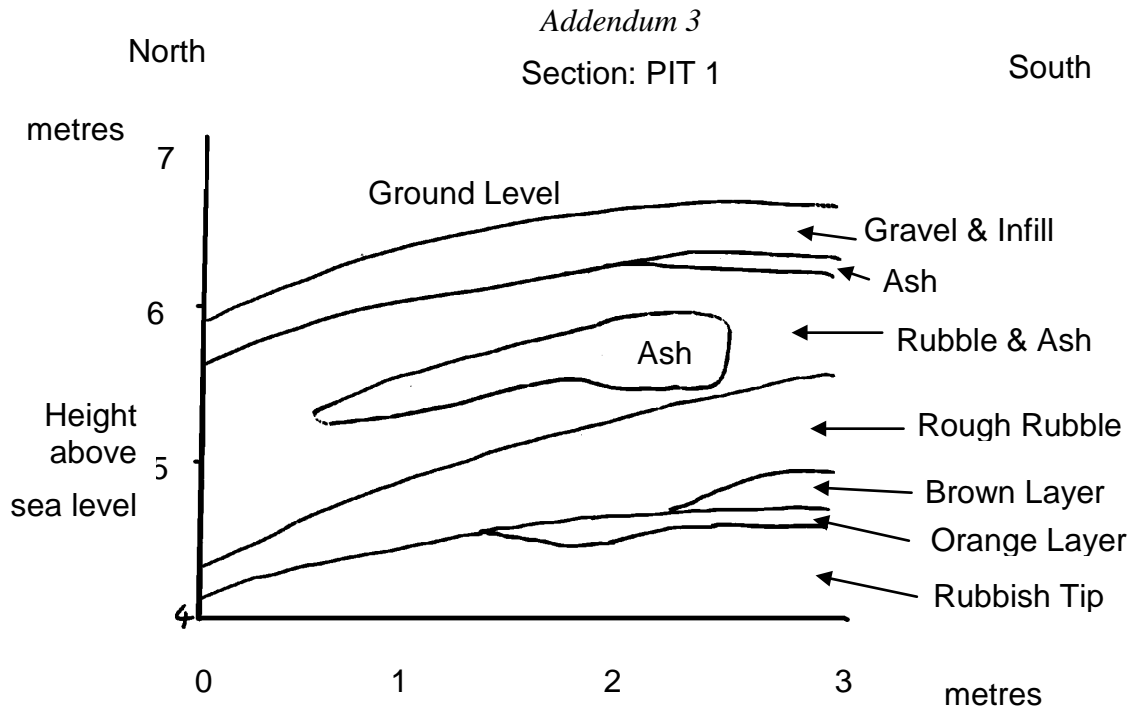
## **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that permission be granted for development to proceed as there are no visible archaeologically sensitive materials that will be impacted.
2. It is recommended that the developers make provision for adequate monitoring of the earth removal phase of the project. We have previously carried out a successful monitoring exercise with this firm of developers and practical implications in this case were discussed on site with the two joint managing directors.
3. The Dias Museum be informed of the opportunity to retain a sample of materials from the historic dump.

■  
**Manhole cover**  
(reference point)



**Figure (addendum) 2. Plan of site. The pits are three metres long and were dug in the area to be excavated for development.**

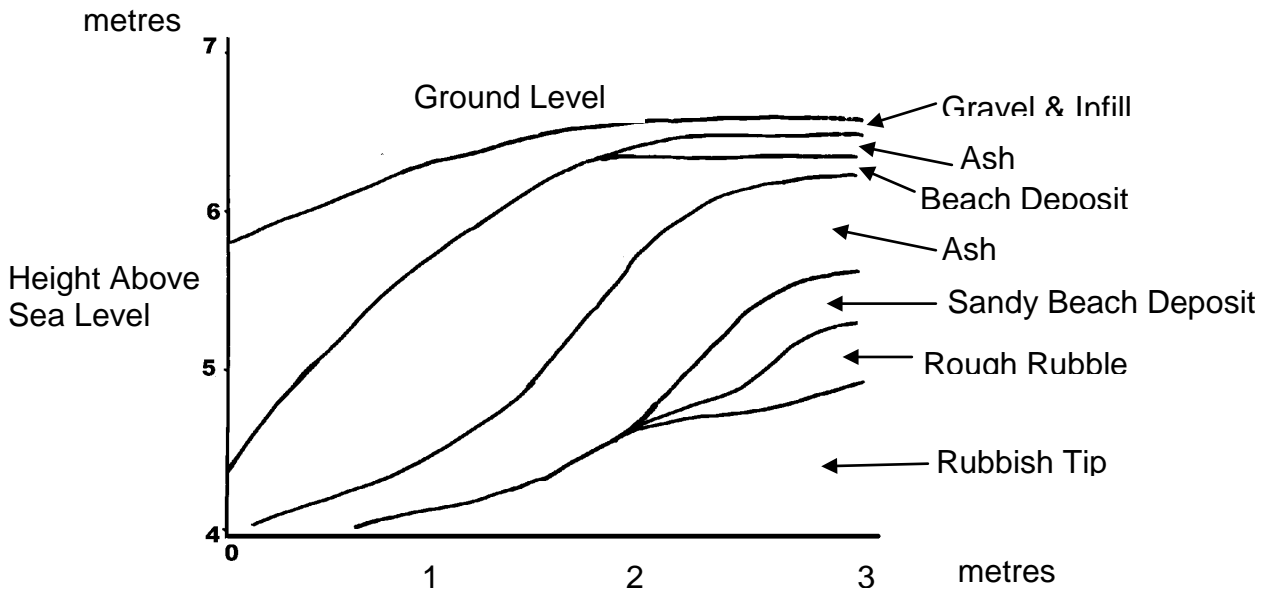


*Addendum 4*

Section: PIT 2

North

South



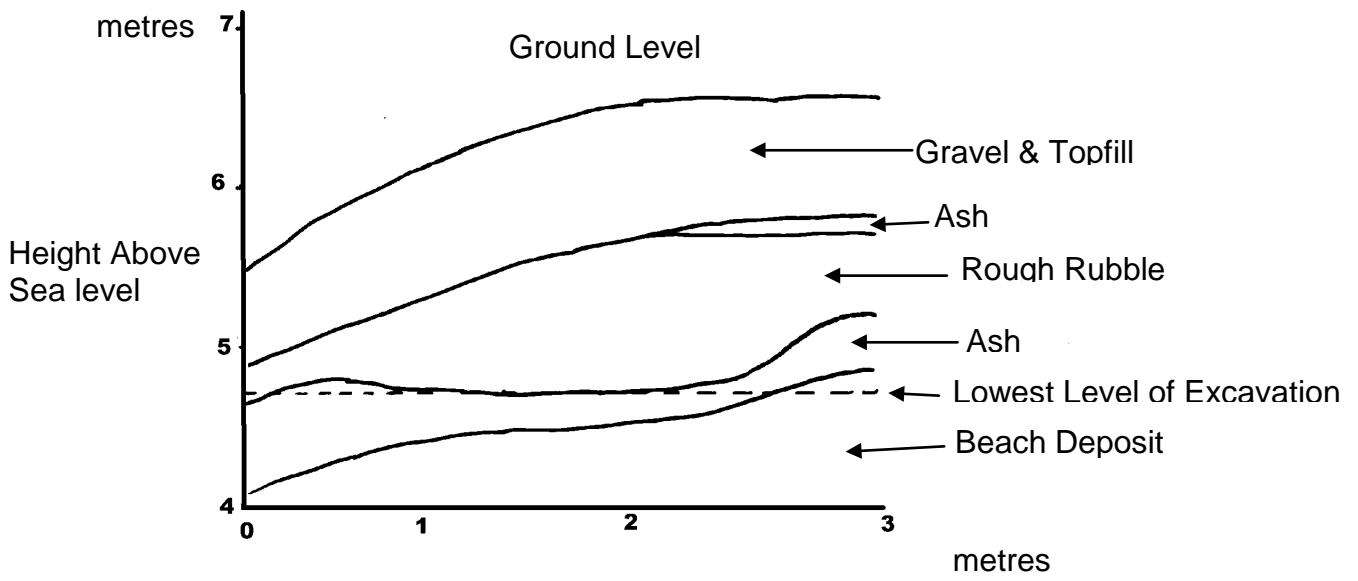


Addendum 5

Section: PIT 3

North

South

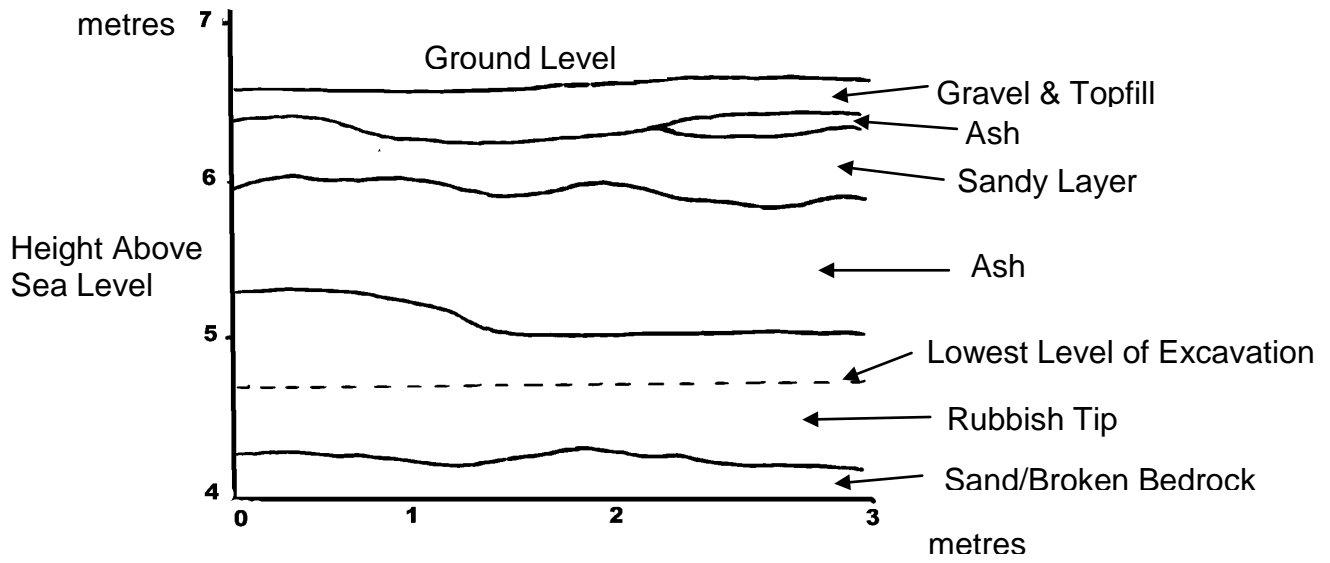


Addendum 6

Section: PIT 4

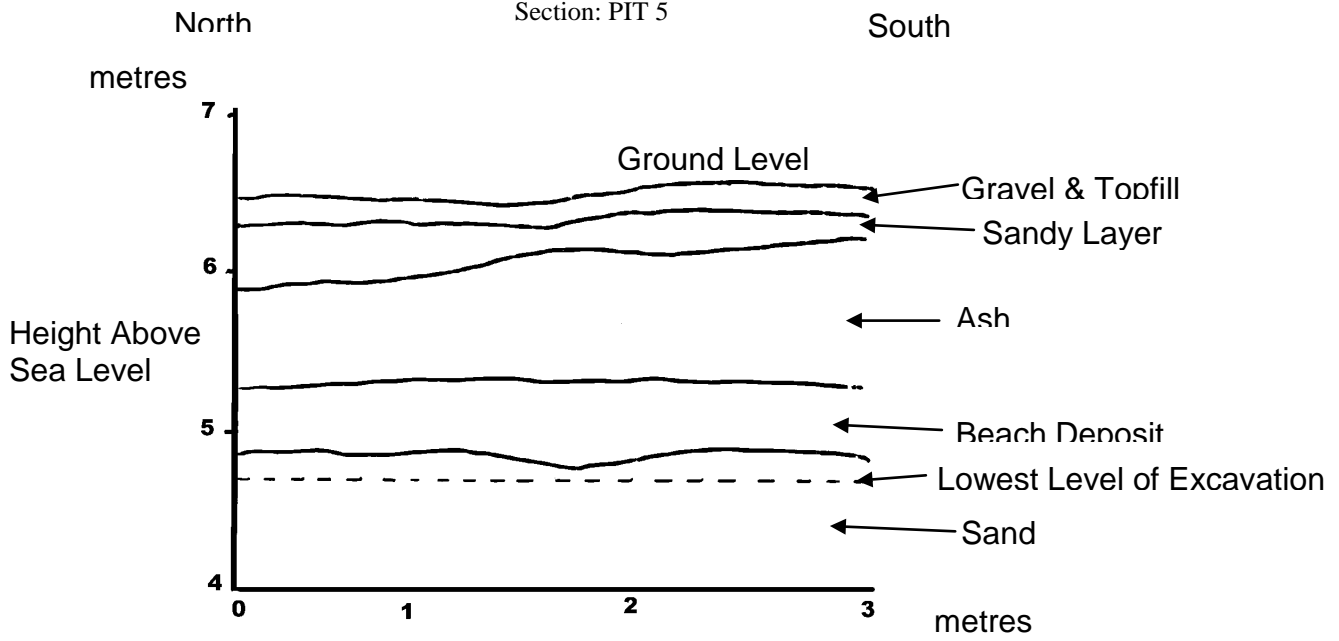
North

South



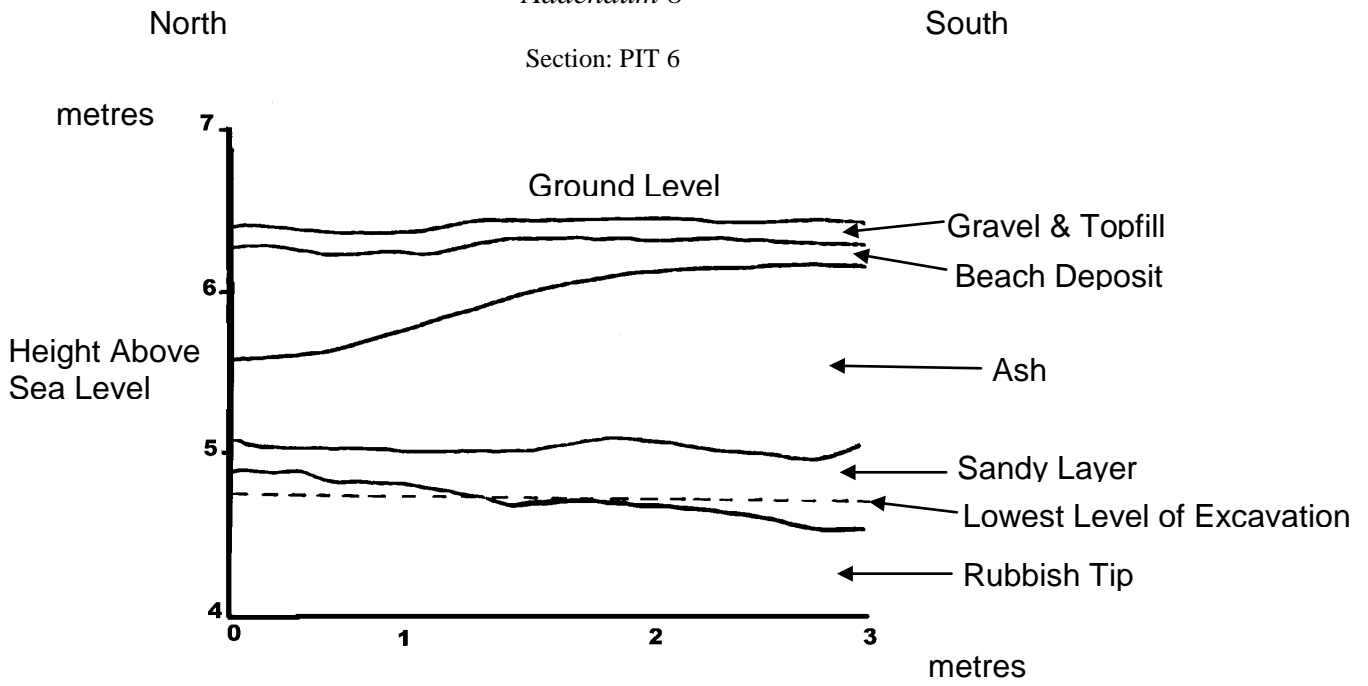
*Addendum 7*

Section: PIT 5



*Addendum 8*

Section: PIT 6



Addendum 9

Section: PIT 7

