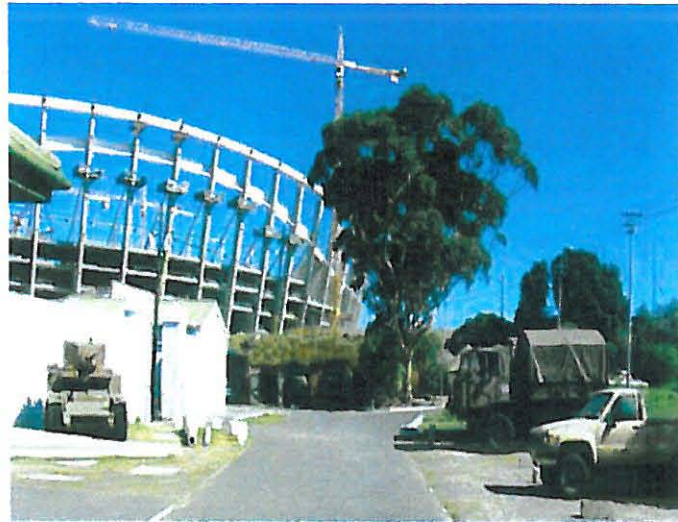


Final Report on Excavations at Fort Wynyard: Erven 1252,1253,1056 Cape Town

(Permit No 2009/07/002)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Archaeological Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of a wider Heritage Assessment of Fort Wynyard at the request of Heritage Western Cape (ROD- 6 October 2008) prior to the construction of the VIP access road via the Granger Bay Boulevard through the Fort to the 2010 Green Point Stadium.

The location of the current Fort is of interest to Military historians as a site where munitions were made and stored at the new laboratory, and because an earlier wooden battery, 'Kyk in de Pot' built by the East India Company in 1795 was located in the same area. The current series of trial excavations was implemented to evaluate the risk of exposing the battery and any cultural material that may be buried on the site. The construction of the access road is limited to upgrading the existing road, and earthmoving will occur up to a depth of 70 cms and road widening to a width of 15 m.

Work began on 30 March 2009 and consisted of a series of trial excavations along the existing road through the Fort, and a monitoring brief while bulk earth moving was underway on the stadium footprint behind the Fort in July. The excavations were taken down to basal dune sands in all cases. Limited cultural debris was found, and an analysis of the finds suggests domestic discard mixed with builder's rubble as fill. Only in one square was there anything of significance. This was a concrete 'walkway' some 50cm wide intersecting the brick footing of a previous building, which could be seen extruding on the surface some three metres from the excavation. The walk way is thought to relate to a 20th century barrack block that was occupied during the Second World War.

The remnant of an old sand dune was also noted on both the Fort and Stadium footprint. During earthmoving at the stadium a partially-cemented, creamy-white, carbonate-rich sands were exposed. These deposits are attributed to a coastal dune environment and contained shell fragments, echinoid spines, barnacle scutes, bivalve and gastropod fragments. An orange ferruginous sand horizon developed at the top of the dune succession which indicates that the dune dates to the latest Pleistocene (Eemian to Weichselian forced regressive systems tract), about 100-120,000 years before present, equal to the 4-6m Package of the west coast.

The dune was mapped, photographed and samples collected and analysed. On recommendation from a marine palaeontologist the dune was demolished to ground level, while the remaining marine component of the dune remains *in situ* under the VIP car park.

We conclude that work undertaken at the Fort Wynyard is adequate in evaluating the archaeology of the VIP access road and parking lot. We would suggest however that any accidental finds that may be exposed during earthmoving while road construction is underway should be monitored by an archaeologists.

CONTENTS	Page
Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction	6
2. Historical Background	6
3. The Fort Today	10
4. Method of Investigation	10
5. Results	11
6. Monitoring Brief at the VIP Car Park – Stadium Footprint	15
7. Conclusions and Recommendations	20
8. References	21
9. Acknowledgements	22

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map showing location of Fort Wynyard (3318 CD 1:50 000 Cape Town)	6
Figure 2: Approved Green Point Spatial Development Plan	8
Figure 3: Position of Excavated Squares and aerial view of the Fort precinct	9
Figure 4: Squares A1 & A2	11
Figure 5: Square A1: section profile	11
Figure 6: Squares B1 & B2 showing concrete "walkway"	12
Figure 7: Square B2: section profile	12
Figure 8: Plan of Squares B1, B2 and concrete "walkway"	13
Figure 9: Squares C1 & C2	13
Figure 10: Square C1: section profile	14
Figure 11: Square D1: section profile	14
Figure 12A: General layout of the Pleistocene Dune at the Green Point Stadium below Fort Wynyard	17
Figure 12B: Photographic & stratigraphic record of the exposed Pleistocene dune South/ East North/West section	18
Figure 13: Photographic & stratigraphic record of the exposed Pleistocene dune South/North section	19

1. INTRODUCTION

The entrance road to the Fort Wynand precinct is to be upgraded to allow direct vehicular access for VIP guests to the new 2010 stadium at Green Point Common (Figures 1 and 2). Since the fort and the associated 'New Laboratory' are proclaimed National Monuments (No. 5113 of 14 May 1976) and Provincial Heritage Sites (Grade 2) an ROD (495) from Heritage Western Cape was issued that requested a heritage assessment of the construction area. Cape Archaeological Survey was commissioned by BKS Project Engineers to examine the potential heritage significance of any work along the road, and in the proposed parking area between the Fort in the new stadium. In a separate but linked study an independent Heritage Review of the built environment was undertaken by Todeschini (2008) for the same site.



Figure 1: Map showing location of Fort Wynard (3318 CD 1:50 000 Cape Town at 33 ° 54.261S: 18 ° 24.839 E)

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The original fort, named Kijk in de Pot, was built by Col. Robert Gordon in July 1795. Contemporary critics of Gordon who were the so-called 'Patriots' accused him of diverting his work force away from where it would have been most useful at the time, namely in Muizenberg, where the British fleet had arrived (Cullinan 1992). Gordon considered his loyalty was to the Stadtholder, the Prince of Orange, who was at that time in exile in England after the French invasions of the Netherlands. The British, however, deceived Gordon by saying their expeditionary force was at the Cape on behalf of the Stadtholder, while in reality it was meant as an invading army to take over the Cape to prevent it falling into French hands. Thus Gordon

believed he was doing the honourable thing by welcoming the British, and he was blamed by the Patriots for not doing enough to defend the Cape. Even his own troops disparaged him to his



Figure 2: Approved Green Point Spatial Development Plan (courtesy OvP Landscape Architects). Red circle shows area of archaeological investigation

face when he led them to lay down their arms in surrender to the British at the Castle. This behaviour led Gordon to retreat to his house (for his own safety) where he soon after committed suicide.

Thus the fort was possibly irrelevant to the defences of the Cape at the time. Its location on the inland dunes behind the Groote Mouille Battery, can only have been designed as a backup for the existing forts along the coast: Amsterdam, Chavonnes, Groote Mouille and 3-Anchor Bay (Kleine Mouille), presumably to give greater protection against an invading force coming ashore to the west of Cape Town at Mouille Point.

At the beginning of the second British occupation in 1806, Sir David Baird re-built the fort (Seeman 1993), but, according to the motivation for the declaration as a National Monument in 1975, it was dismantled between 1825 and 1827, and the present fort erected in 1862 "near the site where the Dutch East India Company's battery Kyk in de Pot" stood, and named Fort Wynyard. Alteration took place in 1891, to allow for more modern gun emplacements, which ultimately became the basis of the existing World War II coastal battery.

3. THE FORT TODAY

The fort was formally gazetted as a National Monument (Government Gazette No. 5113 of 14 May 1976) and is currently a museum manned by the Cape Garrison Artillery. The precinct consists of two erven, 1252 and 1253: the fort itself and the 'New Laboratory'. The latter was built in 1812 for making cartridges however the Central Room is of a more recent date, having been built in 1939 under orders from the Minister of Defence, J.C. Smuts. It was proclaimed as a National Monument in the Government Gazette No. 1318 of 23 July 1993. Only three of the original eight buildings now survive (Bisset 1987).

The new access road cuts between these two sections of the precinct, and towards the back fence before turning up into the fort.

4. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Two trial excavations, 38 metres apart, were excavated alongside the current road through the precinct. The first was 2 x 2 metres in area excavated opposite the 'New Laboratory', and labelled 'Fort Wynyard A1 and A2' (see Figure 3). The second was towards the back fence at the point where the road curves up towards the fort. It was also 2 x 2 metres in area, and called 'Fort Wynyard B1 and B2' (see Figure 3). Subsequent excavation took place immediately inside,

and parallel to, the fence on the adjacent erf 1056. Two holes, 30 metres apart, were dug and labelled 'Ft. Wynyard C1 & C2, D1 & D2'. All the excavations were taken down to basal sterile dune sands.

5. RESULTS – TEST PITS

5.1 Squares A1 & A2: 33° 54.261S: 18° 24.839E

The top 10cm was gravel fill with road metal, changing to yellowish brown soil below with gravel and a broken ceramic pipe. At 30cm, the gravel more or less disappeared, to be replaced by consolidated clayey brown soil. At 50cm in A2 there was some domestic rubbish: porcelain bowl base, coal, piece of roofing slate, some brick and rusted metal fragments (soil reddish sand, but still consolidated). At 60-70cm the limited domestic rubbish continued: chunk of lead, Chinese porcelain and English transfer ware fragments, clinker brick, coal, bottle glass, whelk fragment. At a depth of 70-95cm sterile dune sands became more 'gravelly' with small laterite pebbles with depth (see Figures 4 & 5).



Figure 4: Squares A1 & A2

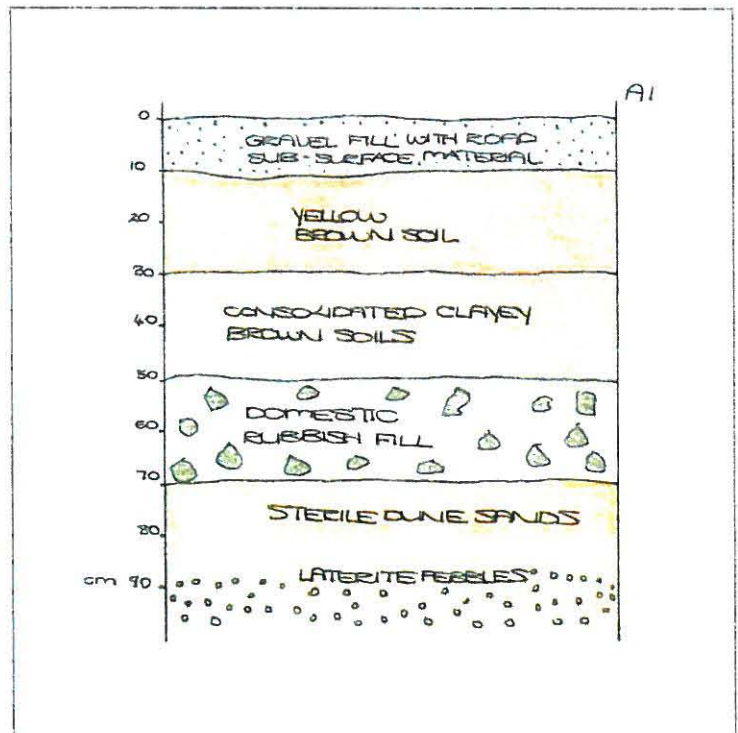


Figure 5: Square A1 Section Profile

5.2 Squares B1 & B2 : 33° 54.261S: 18° 24.835E

0-35cm top soil was loose dusty fill with twigs. A concrete structure across part of B2 was located at 35cm. Below 40cm there was consolidated dune material, with a few glass, porcelain

and copper fragments. Below 50cm the cultural material disappeared and, the matrix became reddish sand.

Roots from a tree above made it difficult to excavate in B1, but we continued to dig in B2 into the consolidated dune sands, stopping at 60cm (Figure 7). Square B3 opened up to expose more of the concrete structure which was 50cm wide by 10cm thick. The excavation followed the line of the structure in the road for 3 metres. A concrete 'wall' was located above the first structure, towards the garages at the back of the precinct (see Figure 3). This structure is labelled a 'walkway' for want of better terminology (Figures 6 & 8).



Figure 6: Squares B1 & B2 showing concrete "walkway" (red arrow)

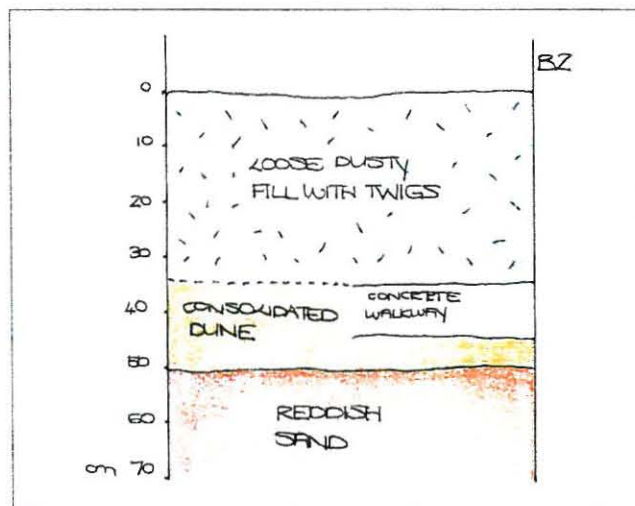


Figure 7: Square B2: section profile

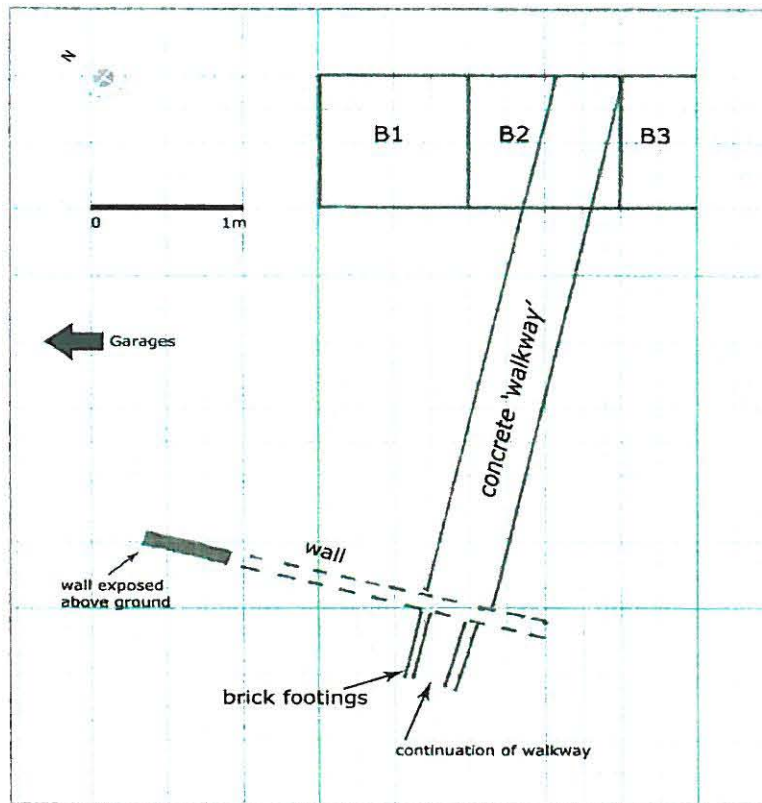


Figure 8: Plan of Squares B1, B2 and concrete "walkway"

5.3 Squares C1 & C 2: 33° 54.244S: 18° 24.812E

Located 24m from B1, these squares were on the other side of the fence, between the fence and the fill mound on the edge of the area to be known as the East Forecourt. Parallel to the fence is a sewer line. C1 & C2 were between this line and the fence. The top soil was relatively loose dark loam with roots to a depth of 20cm.

At 20cm there was a change in soil colour to orange. The matrix was very stony with some domestic rubbish: cup, tile, stoneware, glass fragments and a tent peg. At 45cm we dug into clean, yellow sand with few impurities and no cultural material. We stopped the excavation at 80cm (Figures 9 & 10).



Figure 9: Squares C1 & C2

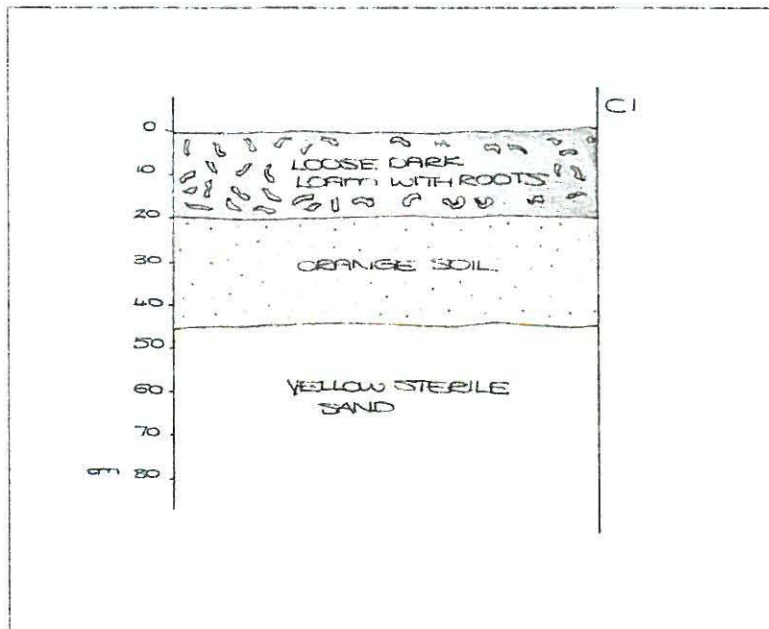


Figure 10: Square C1: section profile

5.4 Squares D1 & D2: 33° 54.248S: 18° 24.796E

These squares were located 30m from C1, again on the other side of the fence. The top soil was a rich dark loam with many grass roots and some cut cow bones. At 20cm there was a change in soil colour to lighter brown with almost no cultural material (we did notice that the soil had a high clay fraction, possibly from water ponding behind the dune on which the fort is built). Excavation stopped at 70cm (Figure 11).

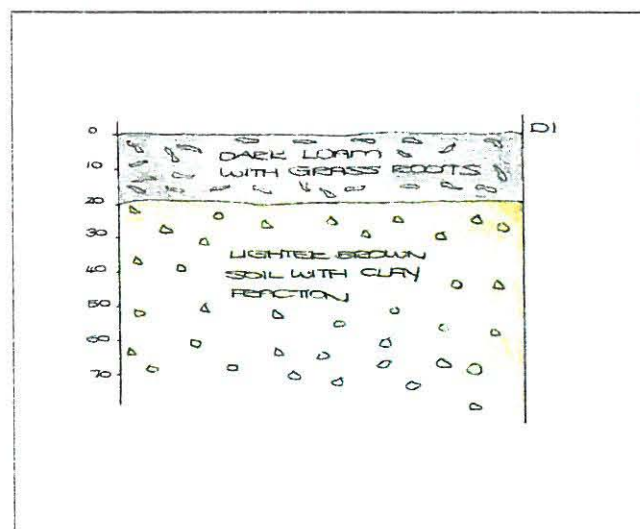


Figure 11: Square D1: section profile

6. Monitoring Brief at the VIP Car Park – Stadium Footprint

A monitoring brief was implemented daily during July and August behind the Fort; on the stadium footprint, when bulk earth moving commenced to create the VIP car park. The area was deemed archaeologically sensitive by CAS who had previously encountered Anglo- Boer War artefacts in and around the same quadrant that was to be developed for the car park (Patrick et al 2008).

The monitoring commenced when a 4 meter high, 581 meter long man made mound adjacent to the Fort was removed by a mechanical digger. The exposed sections were evaluated. At ground level an *in situ* fossil dune was noted along the East/West and North/South edges of the site behind fence that separates the Fort from the stadium (previously part of the golf course fairway) and the garage complex.

6.1 Results

VIP Car Park

It is evident that the fossil dune has been protected by the man made mound situated on the old golf course, and that this unintentional conservation measure has left a large part of the dune *in situ*. The area exposed in the parking area measures 14.3m x 83m in length and reached a height of approximately 2.3m, (not including the area inside Fort Wynyard) (See Figures 12 & 13).

The first indication of the dune was noted in one of the trenches excavated inside Fort Wynyard some weeks earlier while trial excavations were underway, however, the largest part of the dune was exposed along the fence that separate Fort Wynyard from the old golf course fairway.

The dune deposit appears to have accumulated in three separate episodes; the first layered down under water conditions which is reflected by the presence of comminuted gastropod and barnacle scutes. The second layer has semi-consolidated coarse-grain quartz and shell fragments which have accumulated in localized areas. The third part of the dune formation is made up of a number of old land surfaces which have constantly been deflated by strong on-shore winds with the removal of fine grain sediment by wind action. This has left behind calcareous sand nodules of various sizes which gave the impression of an ill-sorted deposit that looks as though it has been disturbed.

Samples recovered from the dune consist of soft loose sand and comminuted littoral shell fragments, some of the latter retain their life colours (predominantly pink). Apart from unidentifiable shell fragments there are echinoid spines, barnacle scutes and occasional bivalve

and gastropod fragments. There is an orange ferruginous sand horizon developed at the top of the dune succession. The majority of the succession, exposed in two shallow excavations opened up by a digger, is severely bioturbated, probably by terrestrial gastropods, and no distinct bedding is preserved. Some localised spots in the outcrops contain unusually coarse-grained quartz grains and shell fragments, which are suspected to have accumulated in a littoral, marine environment. The majority of the quartz grains and shell fragments are coated with fine calcite crystals, and there has been much migration of carbonate, and much dissolution and precipitation of carbonate through the deposit. It is anticipated that if these excavations are deepened, the section will become fully marine, and probably rich in pebbles and cobbles, reflecting a true littoral environment, before bottoming in Precambrian Malmesbury slates or granites, or Palaeozoic Cape Series sandstones. The aeolianites contain pink shell fragments, comminuted gastropod fragments and echinoid spines, but no foraminifera. The probable marine calcarenite contains pink shell fragments, comminuted gastropod fragments, and comminuted barnacle scutes, with the following benthic foraminifera: *Elphidium crispum* (moderate), *Quinqueloculina dunkerquiana* and *Quinqueloculina seminulum*. These indicate an age of latest Pleistocene (Eemian to Weichselian forced regressive systems tract), about 100-120,000 years before present, equal to the 4-6m Package of the west coast.

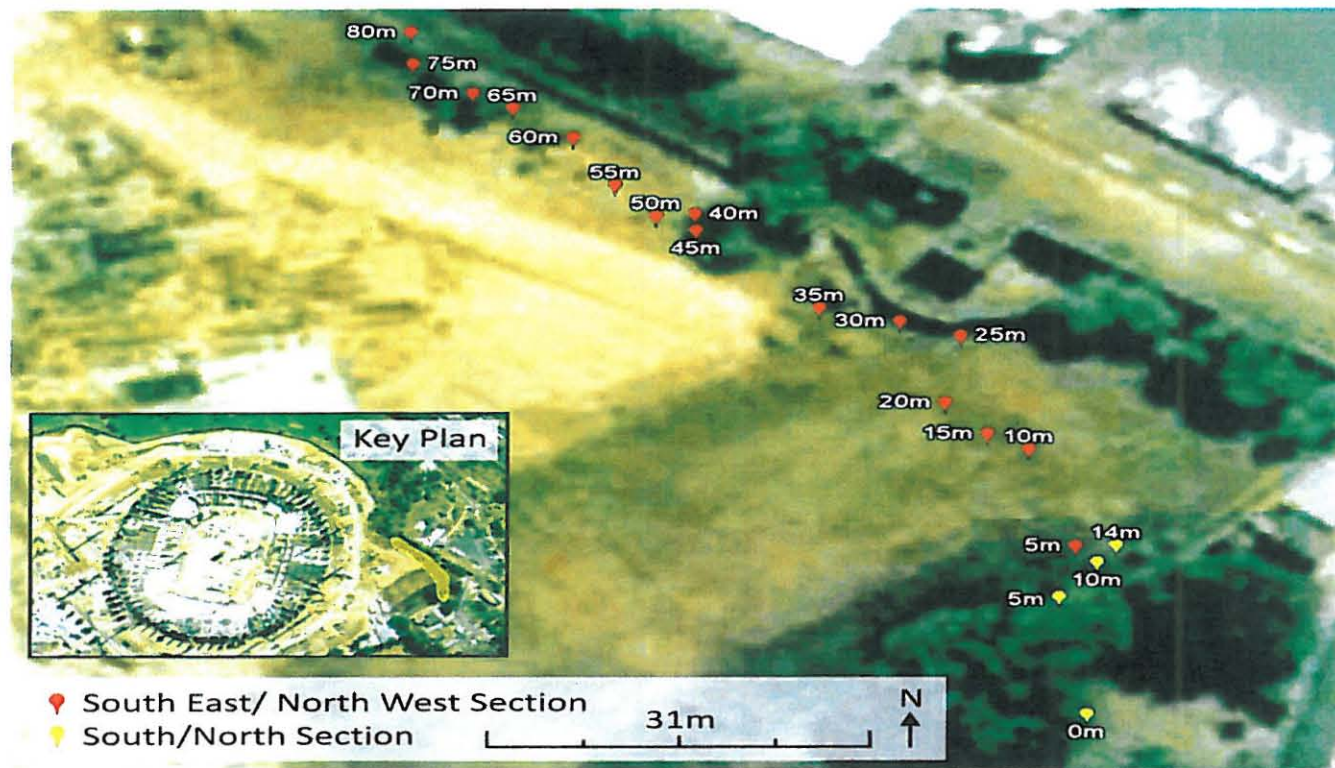


Figure 12 A: General layout of the Pleistocene Dune at the Green Point Stadium below Fort Wynyard.

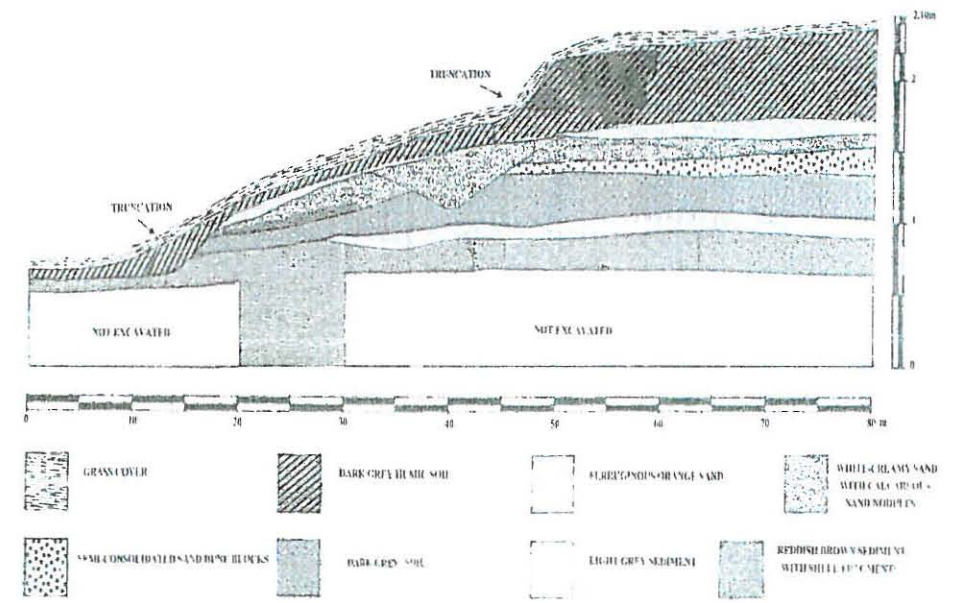


Figure 12 B: Photographic & stratigraphic record of the Pliocene dune South East/North West section on the VIP car park below Fort Wynyard.

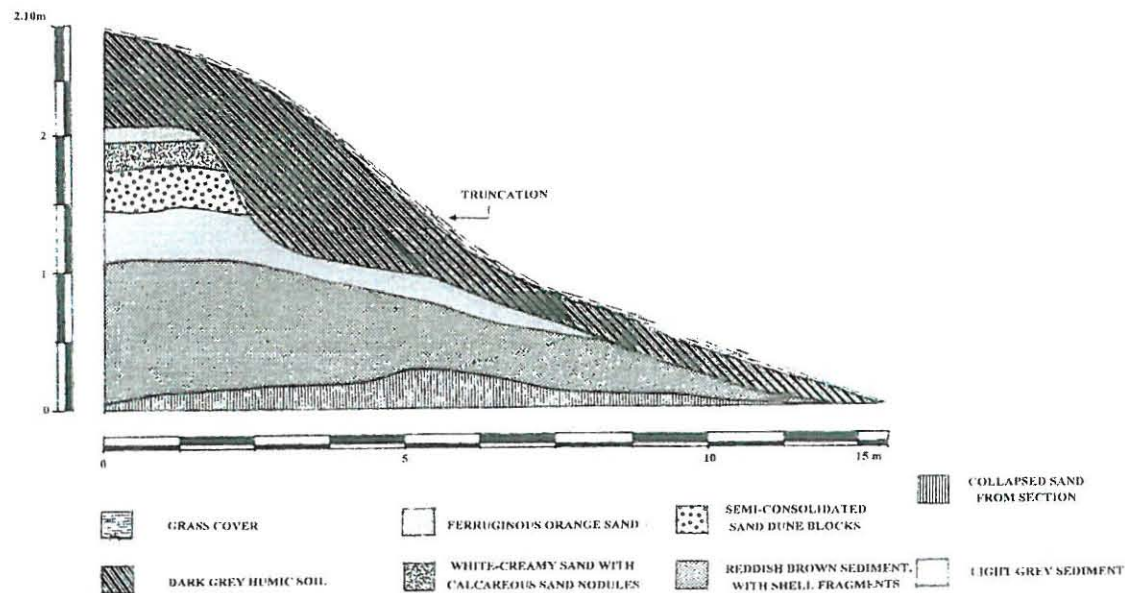


Figure 13: Photographic & stratigraphic record of the exposed Pleistocene dune South/North section on the VIP car park, behind the Forts garage complex behind the Fort

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The original 18th century battery and subsequent Fort appear to have been built on a dune which was a high point in the landscape. Where the substrate has been exposed around the precinct for the new access road one can see the dune sand at 30-40cm below the current land surface. The character of the dune however has changed over the years due to repeated episodes of construction which has brought in stone and brick from elsewhere. In addition to this the planned "tunnelling" of underground bunkers as protection against assault from the sea during the second World War (1945 – 1949) has also added to the destruction of the dune.

The dune exposed on the stadium footprint, behind the Fort, is a significant find and is a link with other geological features found on the Green Point Common by Patrick et al (2009) during a separate, but linked Archaeological Impact Assessment for the Green Point Stadium. A fully marine, rich in pebbles and cobbles Pliocene footprint was also exposed during extensive CAS trial excavations, before bottoming in Precambrian Malmesbury slates

The concrete 'walkway' in B2 we believe relates to the second World War when barracks were built at the Fort to house military personnel during this time, and have subsequently been demolished (Colonel Crook Rtd. pers comm).

We conclude that there appears to be little of heritage significance along the new access road, with the exception of the concrete 'walkway', which will be impacted specifically by road widening, but this will be limited to 1 meter in width. In light of this we can see no reason to stop the work on the access road through the precinct or the development of the VIP car park.

We would recommend that in the event that cultural material is exposed during the construction of the road that an archaeologist be consulted to evaluate the significance of the find.

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9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to Martin & East personnel who allowed us access to the site and informed us of their working schedule. Dr John Rodger, Department of Geology, University of Cape Town who provided a chronological sequence for the dune, and Dr Ian Mc Millian, Independent Consultant Marine Palaeontologist who identified the palaeontological component of the dune.

The staff of Fort Wynyard are acknowledged with sincere thanks for there co operation while we undertook excavations inside the fort.