

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON PORTION 128 OF FARM 468 (WELMOED ESTATE),
STELLENBOSCH, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

(Assessment conducted under Section 38 (8) of the
National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACO Associates cc was appointed by Lize Malan, on behalf of the client, Old Abland (Pty) Ltd, to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment on Portion 128 of the Farm 468 (Welmoed Estate), located on the R310 near Stellenbosch, Western Cape Province.

The site, termed Topshell Park, is partially covered in a nursery, storage containers, plastic tunnels and buildings. Part of the property is under pasture and is used for the grazing of livestock. The property also contains an 18th century gabled building and 18th century walled cemetery with burial vaults which initially formed part of the adjoining Welmoed Estate. There are some 20th century farm worker's cottages to the west of the R310. One cottage is older than 60 years.

The interim comment to the NID, by Heritage Western Cape, requested an archaeological assessment of the site and its immediate environs. The archaeological survey was undertaken by Lita Webley and David Halkett on the 10 August 2012.

Findings

There is no evidence for any pre-colonial archaeological remains on site. With regard the colonial period archaeology of the site; the following heritage indicators were identified:

- An 18th century walled cemetery on Portion 128 of the farm. The graves appears to be contained within the walls of the cemetery and there is no above-ground evidence for any graves outside the cemetery walls;
- An 18th historic outbuilding of high significance, used as a residence, which will not be directly impacted by the proposed development. However, there is evidence for some terracing about 60m to the west of the building. Any construction in proximity to the homestead may uncover buried structures (such as farm buildings and/or old gardens) as well as historic rubbish dumps. There is a high potential for finding intact archaeological deposits of earlier periods which could contribute to a better understanding on the ways of life of previous land owners and farm workers.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that no structures be erected between the cemetery and the historic outbuilding and that a buffer (as per Figure 5) be maintained;
- If any human remains are uncovered anywhere on the property, work should stop in that area and Heritage Western Cape and the SAHRA Burials Unit should be notified;
- It is recommended that no construction should take place within 60m of the 18th century gabled outbuilding without mitigation. Since there is a potential for below-ground historical archaeological material to be uncovered within this area (see Figure 5), it is recommended that any development within this area should be subject to archaeological monitoring. If any remains, including ruins and/or historic dumps are uncovered, work should stop while an archaeologist investigates. Further archaeological work would be at the developer's expense;
- If there is any remodelling of the exterior or interior of the historic outbuilding to make it suitable for administrative purposes, then some plaster stripping of the walls is recommended to obtain information on the history and development of the structure.

Subject to the above recommendations, development may proceed.

1. INTRODUCTION

ACO Associates cc was appointed by Lize Malan, on behalf of the client Old Abrand (Pty) Ltd, to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment on Portion 128 of the Farm 468, Stellenbosch, Western Cape Province (Figure 1). It is proposed to construct additional agricultural warehousing and storage on both the eastern and western portion of the property.

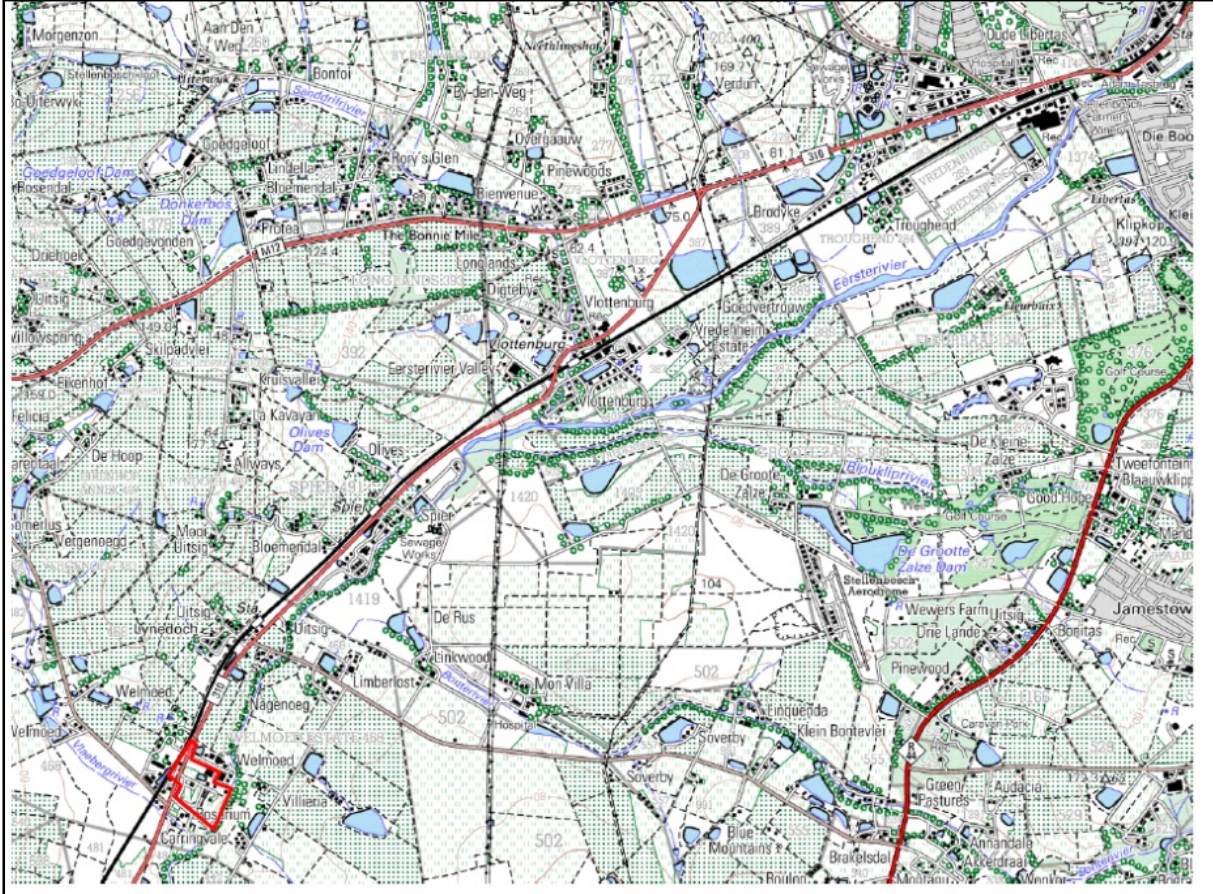


Figure 1: Portion of the 1:50 000 map (map sheet 3318DD) indicating the approximate location of Portion 128 on the Farm Welmoed 468, along the R310, and to the south-west of Stellenbosch.

2. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

It is proposed to construct 22 new service trade buildings, which will accommodate agricultural warehousing, packaging, repairs and on-site sales outlets on the larger, eastern portion of the property. The existing 3 buildings on the site will also be converted to this use. The existing historic outbuilding will be used as a central administration building. The total building area for the proposed development on this site comes to 27, 815 square meters.

The proposed development on the smaller portion of the site to the west of the R310, entails the demolition of the existing farm workers cottages and the construction of 122 small compartmentalised commercial storage facilities of 24 square meters each, coming to a total development area of 3 110 square meters.

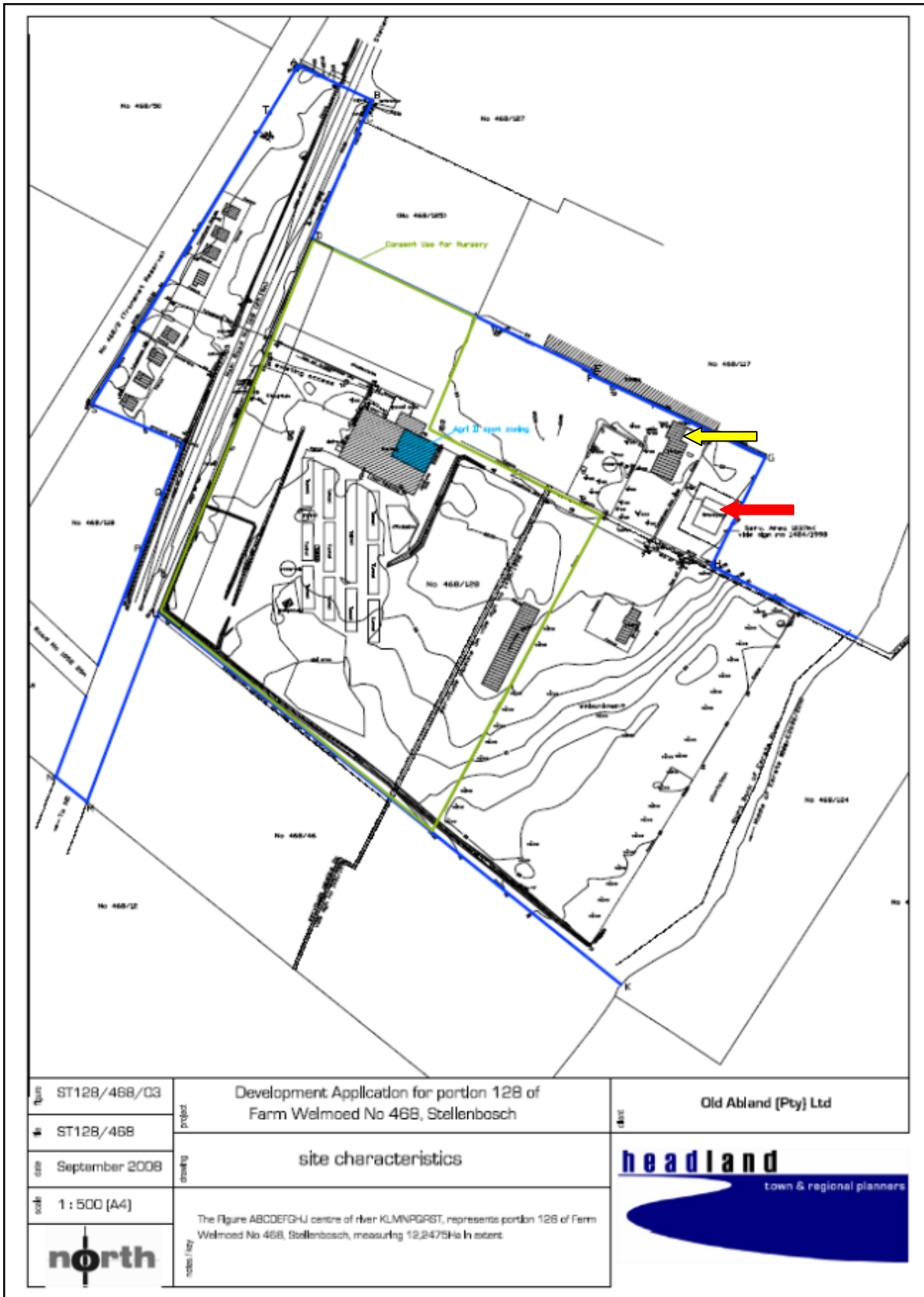


Figure 2: Plan of the current site characteristics. The yellow arrow indicates the location of the historic outbuilding and the red arrow the old cemetery. Map supplied by client.

3. LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999 (Section 38 (1)) makes provision for a compulsory notification of the intent to development when any development exceeding 5000 m² in extent, or any road or linear development exceeding 300m in length is proposed.

The NHRA provides protection for the following categories of heritage resources:

- Landscapes, cultural or natural (Section 3 (3))
- Buildings or structures older than 60 years (Section 34);
- Archaeological Sites, palaeontological material and meteorites (Section 35);
- Burial grounds and graves (Section 36).

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Archaeological Impact Assessment forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment requested by Heritage Western Cape (Interim Comment to the NID: Case Number 12067RN30E).

The assessment includes:

- A site visit and desk top study to determine the archaeological resources on the property and its immediate environs;
- An assessment of the possible impact of the proposed development on the graveyard;
- The rating of significance of the archaeological resources;
- An assessment of whether the proposed development will result in a negative impact on the archaeological resources;
- Recommendations for mitigation if necessary.

5. RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Portion 128 of the farm is currently under commercial storage facilities, containers, farm worker's cottages, a nursery and pasturage alongside the river.



Plate 1: Storage facilities on the property. Note the thick kikuyu grass in the foreground.

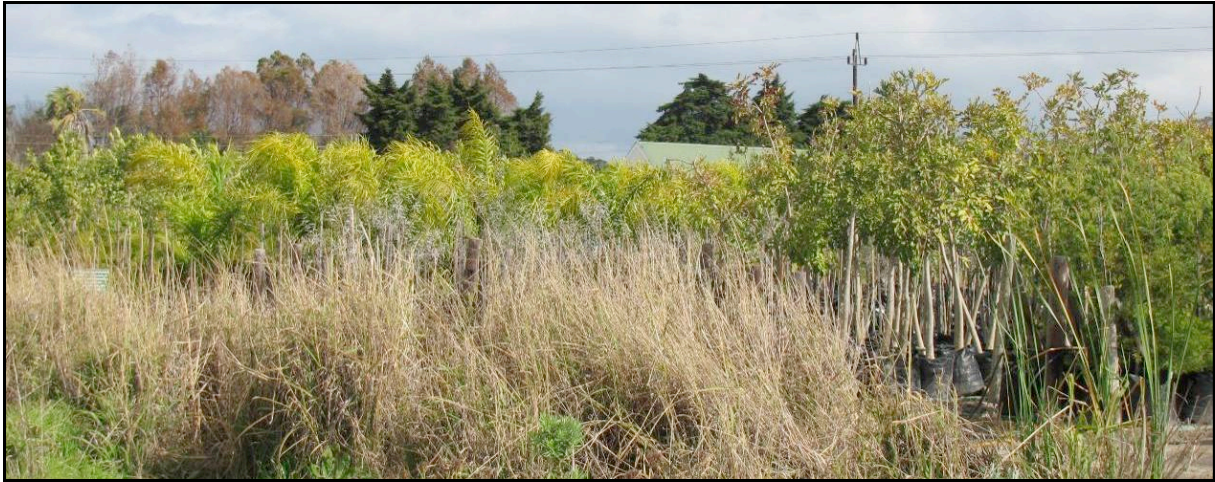


Plate 2: A nursery on the property close to the R310.



Plate 3: Farm worker's cottages to be demolished during the development, to the west of the R310.

5.1 Archaeological Background

The gravels of the Eerste River which flows through Stellenbosch, and along the eastern border the site, contain Early Stone Age material which was initially termed “Stellenbosch Type” by Dr Louis Peringuey in 1911. The most important site belonging to this phase of the ESA is at Bosman’s Crossing, a spur of the Papagaaiberg near Stellenbosch station. Subsequent research by archaeologists has confirmed Peringuey’s observation that the stone implements found around Stellenbosch cover the time between about **1.2 million and 250,000 years ago**. Handaxes and cleavers, the most characteristic of the Earlier Stone Age implements, are found in many vineyards in the valleys of the Eerste, Berg and Breede Rivers in the south-western Cape (Deacon, J. 2011).

In acknowledgement of Peringuey’s work, this site at Bosman’s Crossing was declared a National Monument in 1961. When the National Heritage Resources Act replaced the National Monuments Act in 2000, all former national monuments became Provincial Heritage Sites. The Stellenbosch Archaeological Reserve is now a Provincial Heritage Site.

It is anticipated that if river gravels occur on the property, then they will contain ESA material. However, not many archaeological consultancy projects have been completed in this area, according to the SAHRA database (2009). Previous archaeological consultancy work by Orton (2004) reports no archaeological material from the Eerste Rivier area. Clift (2011) reported on “some archaeological artefacts in the vicinity of the rail service road”, which runs parallel to the R310. The artefacts are described as being of the ESA and MSA time periods

and approximate locations are provided on 1:50 000 maps. Clift (2011) ascribes these occurrences as of Grace 3C significance.

5.2 Historical Background

The Welmoed Estate is an historic farm originally granted to Henning Huysing in 1690. It comprised an L-shaped homestead and three outbuildings (Fransen 2004). With the subdivision of the property around 1979, one of the original gabled outbuildings (dating between 1780 and 1790) was cut off from the others and is situated on Portion 128 on which Topshell Park is currently located. This outbuilding is used as a residence. There is an area of trees and a dense growth of kikuyu grass to the west of the building.

In his discussion of the historic farm of Welmoed, Fransen (2004) writes “at the back is a charming enclosed graveyard in which is the tombs of Pieter Gerard and Pieter Voltelen van der Byl”. The historic graveyard is also located on Portion 128 of the property and is sited between the historic outbuilding and a modern shed.

The significance of these two historic structures is further described in the Built Environment section of the HIA report and will not be discussed here, except in as far as there may be historical archaeological remains, associated with these structures.

The majority of the farm worker’s cottages, which are located to the west of the R310, are less than 60 years of age and are not protected in terms of the NHRA. There is however, one cottage which is older than 60 years.

6. survey methods

The property was visited by Lita Webley and David Halkett on 10 August 2012. The survey was conducted on foot, and a Garmin GPS unit (60CSx) was used to record sites. All heritage sites were recorded with the GPS, photographed and their significance rated. No archaeological material was removed from the project area, but recorded and photographed *in situ*.

6.1 Limitations

The fields adjoining the river are covered in thick kikuyu grass and it is difficult to examine the soil surface. The rest of the property is covered in mix of buildings, storage containers and a nursery.

7. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

A map of the tracks recorded during our survey is attached below.



Figure 3: The blue tracks indicate the areas which were examined during the survey.

A survey of the property did not identify any pre-colonial archaeological remains or any river gravels which might contain ESA stone artefacts. The property contains two historic structures: an 18th century cemetery and an historic outbuilding.



Figure 4: Aerial map showing the location of the cemetery and the historic outbuilding (encircled in turquoise). The red stippled line shows the extent of the raised, terraced area to the west of the building.

7.1 Historical Cemetery

The historic cemetery is clearly visible on aerial photographs. It is well demarcated by a high wall and, according to the plaque at the entrance, was restored in July 1998.



Plate 4: The 18th century cemetery of the Van der Byl family . Note the proximity of the existing shed on the left.

The graveyard is located between a shed and an historic gabled building (Figure 4 above). An area of around 1m has been cleared around the graveyard and is covered in pebbles. This cleared area is also visible on the aerial photograph (Figure 4). There is no evidence of any graves around the outer wall. However, it is difficult to be entirely confident about this because of the dense grass around the graveyard.

7.2 Historic Outbuilding



Plate 5: The west of the historic outbuilding which is currently used as a residence. The flat, grassy area in the foreground appears to represent a terrace and the arrow indicated a drop of about 50cm to a lower level.

The historic gabled outbuilding, dating to the 18th century, is now used as a residence. There are a number of trees to the west of the building and a flat terraced area under kikuyu lawn extends beyond this (Figure 4).

The terraced area extends for some distance to the west of the building, and then drops by about 50cm to a more marshy area. The end of the terrace is marked by the red stippled line on Figure 4 and by the arrow in Plate 5.

The terracing may have been an attempt to keep the marshy areas away from the outbuildings or it may represent an old garden. It also is possible that there may be remnants of an old garden under the dense kikuyu lawn.

8. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

There is no evidence for any pre-colonial archaeological remains on the property and it seems unlikely that any below ground remains will be impacted. The impact of the development on the pre-colonial archaeology of the site is likely to be very low.

Clift (2011) points out that there are a number of historical farmsteads along the R310 which are considered Provincial Heritage Sites. She gives the adjoining property of Welmoed Estate a Grade 3C grading.

There are two historic structures on Topshell Park which originally formed part of the Welmoed Estate, namely the historic outbuilding (now used as a residence) and the old walled cemetery. Both are of high historic significance and contribute to the unique character of the Eerste River Valley Cultural Landscape (Clift 2011). While neither will be directly impacted by the proposed development, it is likely that the development will result in a negative visual impact on these historic structures. These visual impacts will be assessed as part of the VIA.

Nevertheless, any construction in proximity to the cemetery may uncover burials which are not marked by headstones. Similarly, any construction in proximity to the historic outbuildings may disturb/destroy below ground structures such as gardens or ruined farm buildings or possible historic rubbish dumps. There is a high potential for finding intact archaeological deposits of earlier periods which could contribute to a better understanding on the ways of life of previous land owners and farm workers.

There is therefore a potential for below-ground historical archaeological material to be uncovered and therefore a buffer is recommended around the cemetery and mitigation measures are proposed for the historic outbuilding.

9. MITIGATION

This archaeological survey shows that there are no pre-colonial archaeological remains which would prevent development of the site.

However, the presence of an 18th century cemetery and 18th century gabled outbuilding is of high significance. Since there is a potential for below-ground historical archaeological material to be uncovered which could contribute to a better understanding on the ways of life of previous land owners and farm workers, a buffer is recommended around the cemetery. If any development takes place within 60m of the historic outbuilding, then archaeological monitoring is recommended (Figure 5).

If any human remains are recovered during construction work anywhere on the property, work in that area should cease, and HWC and the SAHRA Burials Unit should be notified.



Figure 5: The proposed buffer zone around the cemetery and the 18th century gabled outbuilding.

The majority of farm worker's cottages to the west of the R310 are younger than 60 years and are therefore not protected in terms of the NHRA. There is one cottage older than 60 years.

10. recommendations

- It is recommended that no structures be erected between the cemetery and the historic outbuilding and that a buffer of at least 20m be retained to the south of the cemetery (See Figure 5);
- If any human remains are uncovered anywhere on the property, work should stop in that area and Heritage Western Cape and the SAHRA Burials Unit should be notified;
- It is recommended that no construction should take place within 60m of the 18th century gabled outbuilding without mitigation. Since there is a potential for below-ground historical archaeological material to be uncovered within this area (see Figure 5), it is recommended that any development within this area should be subject to archaeological monitoring. If any remains, including ruins and/or historic dumps are uncovered, work should stop while an archaeologist investigates;
- If there is any remodelling of the exterior or interior of the historic outbuilding to make it suitable for administrative purposes, then some plaster stripping of the walls is recommended to obtain information on the history and development of the structure.

11. REFERENCES

Clift, H. 2011. Heritage Impact Assessment: Upgrade of R310 (MR168 and TR2/1) and Quarterlink on TR2/1. Unpublished report for SRK Consulting.

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