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**PHASE ONE SURVEY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE
RESOURCES ON ERVEN 34, 515 AND ARNISTON DOWNS
260, WAENHUISKRANS, BREDASDORP DISTRICT.**

Prepared for

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by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A low intensity of Later Stone Age shell middens, probably dating to the Late Holocene are visible on the surface of the surveyed area. Similar occurrences are fairly widespread in the surrounding area, particularly in the near coastal zone. Stone tools located during the survey are not *in situ* and qualify as finds of minor significance. Interviews conducted with local residents indicate the existence of a burial ground (ca. Late 19th C.) near the north-eastern boundary of the surveyed area. A possible historical structure was located in the south eastern corner but its context is not assured. Measures of mitigation are deemed necessary in the event of construction or other operations in the surveyed area.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Brief

Henshilwood, Yates & Winter cc was commissioned to undertake a specialist archaeological and historical study of a near coastal area on Erven 34, 5151 and Arniston Downs 260, Waenhuiskrans (both abbreviated here to AD) proposed for rezoning, sub-division and the construction of housing. The instruction was to survey the entire area for evidence of cultural resources. The terms of reference for the study are the identification and assessment of archaeological and historical resources; an evaluation of the extent, duration and intensity of the proposed impact, the probability of occurrence and the significance of likely impact, status of impact and degree of confidence in predictions.

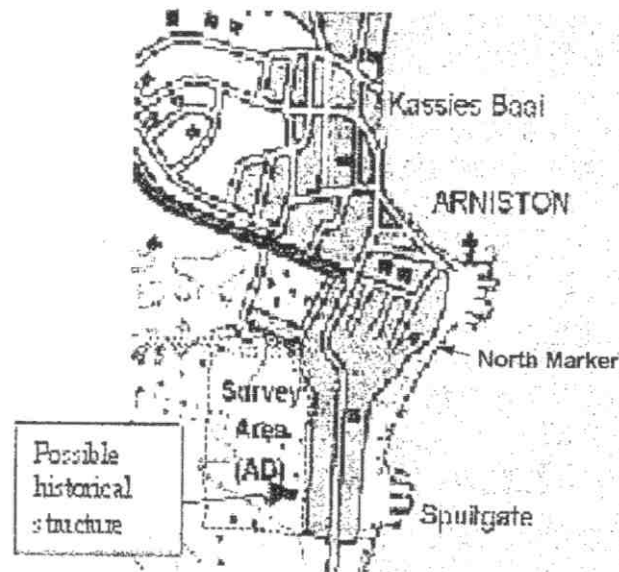


Fig 1. Survey area and major landmarks

Geological Background

The study area consists of unconsolidated aeolian littoral sand of the Witzand formation and lies between the 15 - 20 m contour. The sand forms an undulating dune mound that is well vegetated. The adjacent intertidal, stretching from Spuitgate in the south to the north marker (site of old water tower) is rocky interspersed with sandy beach areas and subject to heavy seasonal wave action.

The local bedrock of the Table Mountain Group (TMS) has an uneven surface varying from below sea level to a maximum height of probably more than six metres onshore. In geological terms the dune mound overlying bedrock and calcretes near the shoreline (~50 m) is a recent feature, having formed after a high stand of the sea dated around the South African coast to between 4000 to 3000 years ago (Yates et al 1986; Miller et al 1993; Marker & Miller 1993). Calcretes and calcarenites to the west of the shoreline date mainly to the Pleistocene and Mio-Pliocene and overlie the basal TMS. The Holocene marine high penetrated only a short way inland of the current shoreline due to resistance from the older calcrete cliffs. The erosion of these cliff faces is evident along the whole beach line adjacent to the surveyed area.

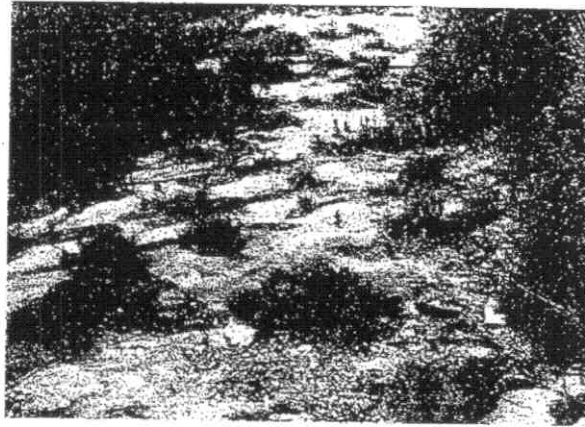


Fig. 2. Calccrete hardpan surface in AD (for location see Fig. 3 e)

The dunes within AD are of Holocene age and several metres thick. Towards the southern boundary water erosion has exposed underlying calccrete hard pan surfaces about 15 m asl that are considerably older, probably Pleistocene. We would expect that archaeological deposits from the Later- and Middle Stone would accumulate on similar surfaces within deflated dune hollows.

Archaeological Background

The archaeology of the Cape, including the Waenshuiskrans and Bredasdorp area covers a period of around 1 million years. The earliest traces of human presence, mostly found within river valleys, consist of scatters of stone artefacts. The Early Stone Age (ESA) dates from 1 million to 200,000 years ago. Subsistence was based on hunting and scavenging animal foods and the gathering of plants, mainly in areas close to large rivers. Stone tool styles were restricted, the best known being the hand-axe. It was probably used as a general food processing instrument and possibly as a weapon.

The Middle Stone Age dates from 200,000 to 30,000 years ago. The archaeological record for this time is substantially richer because of better preservation of food debris and stone artefacts. In the southern Cape, the living and activity sites of the MSA often occur in carbonate rich sediments, usually located near the shoreline but are also found on the coastal plain stretching towards the Langeberg mountain range. MSA subsistence was broader based and included marine foods and small terrestrial animals. Tool kits were more sophisticated and stone tools or debitage may be found scattered across the south western Cape landscape.

The final broad phase of human history in Cape, the Later Stone Age, began about 30,000 years ago. Sites dating to the last 8,000 years, common along the shoreline and inter-montane areas, were occupied mainly by San hunter gatherers. Remains include marine and freshwater shell, beads, chipped and ground stone artefacts and the bones of fish, seals, birds, tortoises and antelope. After 2,000 years ago sheep bones and potsherds in Cape sites mark a change from pure hunting and gathering to a mixed economy that included pastoralism. Extensive areas of the southern Cape, including the grazing-rich Swellendam, Caledon and Breede River areas were used by pastoralists known as the Khoekhoe. The arrival of the Dutch in the 17th C. caused their ultimate demise, partly due to the Dutch expansionist policy but also by decimation from European diseases, mainly smallpox.

1.2. Historical Background

The area known as Amiston and Kassiesbaai (also known as Waenshuiskrans) was settled in c.1820, approximately 5 years after the wreck of the *Amiston*. When the *Amiston* wrecked in 1815 no people were living in the immediate vicinity. The six survivors of the *Amiston* camped on the beach until discovered some weeks later by inland farmers (Burman 1989).

By 1820 a small fishing community was living at Kassiesbaai (Fig. 1). The settlement was situated on Crown Land. In 1836 the land passed into private ownership as part of the farm, Amiston Dunes. In 1841 the owners of this farm, the Swart family, gave 10 morgen of land, on which the fishing village was located, to the community. By 1905 the fishing community had grown to 300 people. At this time, Amiston Dune was acquired by the Pratt family. After the family challenged the rights of the fishing community to the land, the Supreme Court upheld the rights of the community and in 1937 the Pratt family transferred a portion of their farm to the "Fisherman's Union of Wagenhuiskrans". This land comprised approximately 80 historical buildings, forming part of the historical fishing village of Kassiesbaai (National Monuments Council plaque erected at Kassiesbaai in 1986; correspondence dated 1905, Burman 1989; Walton 1995; Preserve Amiston brochure undated).

The original extent of the historical fishing village of Kassiesbaai has not yet been determined. However, there is evidence that the fishing village extended south of the existing village. There are a few historical cottages situated within the neighbouring holiday town of Amiston. These buildings predate the time when Amiston was formally laid out in the 1960s. According to Doris Murtz (80 years old), an ex-resident of Kassiesbaai, the historical fishing village originally extended south of Kassiesbaai along the coastline towards Harbour Road. However, when Amiston was zoned a white area during the 1960s in accordance with the Group Areas Act of 1958, the existing coloured community was relocated. As a result many of the historical fisherman's cottages were demolished.

1.3. Study Area

The study area is restricted to a 700 m wide strip west of Harbour Street reaching from the municipal campsite in the north to the boundary of the CNC conservation area in the south (see Fig. 1). The survey area excludes the private erven numbered 129 – 142 located on the eastern side of Harbour Street.

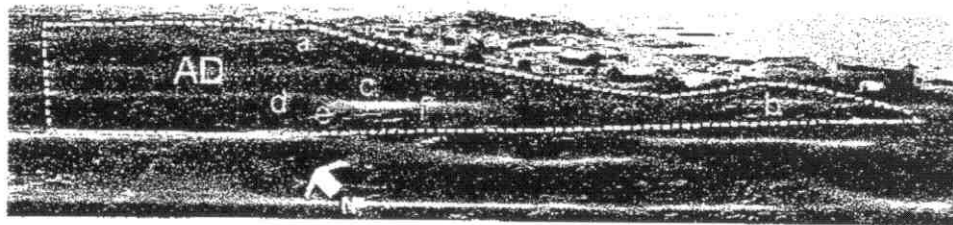


Fig. 3. Proposed development area AD: a) cemetery b) shell midden c) shell midden d) silcrete dump e) hardpan calcrete f) dump

2. STUDY APPROACH

The area was surveyed by searching in N-S sectors of 20 m width. The study was limited to surface archaeological materials and no excavations were done. Note was taken of profiles evident near the dirt road (Fig. 3 c). Representative artefacts were gathered, photographed and replaced. No permanent collection of materials was made. Ground visibility was average but occasional heavy undergrowth obscured some dune areas. The approach assumed that a) any materials found were likely to be Later Stone Age and/or Middle Stone Age and would need to be visible on the dune surface or in deflation hollows b) that materials of significance would be relatively lightly scattered and c) that there may be little *in situ* material, apart from shell middens, due to rapid dune movement. These assumptions are justified by general archaeological knowledge of similar areas. The methods adopted are appropriate for the type of terrain that constitutes the study area.

3. ASSESSMENT OF SURVEYED AREA

Coastal survey

A survey of the intertidal zone from Spuitgate to the north marker (site of old water tower) (Fig.1) established a dense shellfish presence, particularly where overlying calcretes extended into the sea forming rocky banks. The most common species are

Perna perna, *Patella* sp. and *Turbo sarmaticus*. Later Stone Age shellfish middens are thinly scattered in the adjacent near coastal zone indicating occasional prehistoric use of coastal resources.



The expectation was that shellfish middens were also likely to be present deeper in the coastal dune cordon based on our experience in other areas (e.g. at De Hoop and Blombos).

Fig. 4. Prehistoric shell midden near north marker (site of old water tower)

Vegetation

The survey area AD consists of undulating dunes that are fairly heavily vegetated by, in most cases, pioneer coastal fynbos species such as blombos (*Metasia muricata*), bitou (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) and marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*). The alien *Acacia cyclops* is well established in parts of AD but the area is still dominated by fynbos. Historic photographs of AD and surrounds indicate substantially less vegetation in the early 20th C suggesting dunes were likely to have had a higher mobility. Coastal development is the prime cause of pressure on coastal vegetation, particularly in the south western Cape. Without the maintenance of conservation areas we will be unable to maintain sustainable use of the coastal region (cf. Lubke et al 1997).

Archaeology

There is scant surface evidence of prehistoric human use of this dunefield. Two shell middens were located (Fig. 3 b & c) but both are fairly ephemeral. There is no other

