

**Archaeological Investigation of the baKubung Resort,  
Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province**

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## Executive Summary

No archaeological or historical remains were recorded in the proposed areas of development at the BaKubung Resort, Pilanesberg National Park.

Please note:

It should be kept in mind that archaeological deposits usually occur below ground level. Should archaeological artefacts or skeletal material be revealed in the area during construction, such activities should be halted, and a university or museum notified in order for an investigation and evaluation of the find(s) to take place (*cf.* **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)**, Section 36 (6)).

### 1. Introduction

The Archaeology Contracts Unit (UNISA) conducted an investigation, focussing on the archaeological and historic remains on the baKubung Resort, Pilanesberg National Park. This report forms part of an EIA and was requested by Van Riet and Louw Landscape Architects. The investigation was prompted by the proposed additions to the complex.

### 2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of this survey are as follows:

- \* Compile a brief contextualisation of the area's ethnographic and colonial history
- \* Provide a detailed description of all archaeological artefacts, structures (including graves) and settlements
- \* Assess the significance of the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains within the area
- \* Estimate the level of sensitivity/importance of the archaeological remains within the area
- \* Propose possible mitigation measures provided that such action is necessitated by the development activities

### 3. Definitions and Approach

- Archaeological remains can be defined as human-made objects, which reflect past ways of life, deposited on or in the ground.
- All archaeological remains, artificial features and structures older than 100 years and historic structures older than 60 years are protected by the relevant legislation, in this case the **National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999)**. The Act makes an archaeological impact assessment as part of an EIA and EMPR mandatory. No archaeological artefact, assemblage or settlement (site) may be moved or destroyed without the necessary approval from the **South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)**. Full cognisance is taken of this Act in making recommendations in this report.
- Cognisance will also be taken of the **Minerals Act (Act No 50 of 1991)** and the

**National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998)** when making any recommendations.

- Human remains older than 60 are protected by the **National Heritage Resources Act**, with reference to Section 36. Human remains that are less than 60 years old are protected by the **Human Tissue Act (Act 65 of 1983 as amended)**.
- Cultural resources are non-renewable.
- With reference to the evaluation of sites, the certainty of prediction is definite, unless stated otherwise.
- The guidelines as provided by the **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)** in Section 3, with special reference to subsection 3, and the Australian ICOMOS Charter (also known as the Burra Charter) are used when determining the cultural significance or other special value of archaeological or historical sites.
- It should be kept in mind that archaeological deposits usually occur below ground level. Should archaeological artefacts or skeletal material be revealed in the area during construction, such activities should be halted, and a university or museum notified in order for an investigation and evaluation of the find(s) to take place (*cf.* **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)**, Section 36 (6)).
- A copy of this report will be lodged with the **South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)** as stipulated by the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999), Section 38 (subsection 4).

## 6. Chronological Framework

PERIOD	APPROXIMATE DATE
Early Stone Age	more than c. 2 million years ago - c. 250 000 years ago
Middle Stone Age	c. 250 000 years ago - c. 25 000 years ago
Later Stone Age (Includes San Rock Art)	c. 25 000 years ago - c. AD 200 (up to historic times in certain areas)
Early Iron Age	c. AD 400 - c. AD 1025
Late Iron Age (Stone-walled sites)	c. AD 1025 - c. AD 1820s (c. AD 1640 - c. AD 1820s)
Historic Period (Farms with Title Deeds)	1860 - present

## 7. Archaeological and Ethnohistorical Context

### 7.1 Stone Age Sequence

Large concentrations of Early Stone Age (ESA) sites are usually located on the flood plains of perennial rivers and may date to over 2 millions years ago. These ESA open sites may contain, firstly, scatters of stone tools and second, large concentrated deposits which range

from pebble tool choppers to core tools such as handaxes and cleavers. The early hominids who made these stone tools, did not actively hunt.

Middle Stone Age (MSA) sites also occur on flood plains but are in many cases associated with rock shelters (overhangs). Sites usually consist of large concentrations of knapped stone flakes such as scrapers, points and blades. They may have been hafted but organic materials do not always preserve. Limited drive hunting activities are associated with this period.

Sites dating to the Late Stone Age (LSA) occur primarily in rock shelters (though open sites have been recorded in the northern Cape). Well protected deposits in shelters allow for stable conditions that result in the preservation of organic materials such as wood, bone, hearths, ostrich egg shell beads and even bedding material. By using San (Bushman) ethnographic data a better understanding of this period is sometimes possible. South African rock art is also associated with this period.

## 7.2 Iron Age Sequence

Several studies have shown that stone-walled settlements situated in the North West Province were inhabited by people associated with the Tswana linguistic group, who settled in the area from about AD 1640 until the advent of the *Mfecane* or *Difaqane*, a disruptive period associated with the Ndebele of Mzilikazi in the 1830s (Hall 1981, Maggs 1976, Mason 1986, Pistorius 1992). The Tswana-speaking people is a distinct cultural and linguistic group within the South Eastern Bantu (Legassick 1969:86).

The BaKgatla ba ga Kgafêla people migrated from the present-day Hammanskraal area (north of Pretoria) and after a long sojourn, arrived in the area north of Pilanesberg between c. AD 1700 - c. AD 1750. During this time the area was ruled by the BaTlhako people with the result that the BaKgatla had to pay tribute to be able to settle in the area (*cf.* Schapera 1980). It is important to note that the BaTlhako people are of Nguni origin. Another Tswana group, the BaTlokwa, also traversed the area in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (*cf.* Grivetti 1976). Colonial missionaries and farmers settled in the area shortly after the *Difaqane*-period, until the proclamation of the Park in 1979.

Tswana settlements generally have a very distinctive settlement layout which consists of a central group of circular stone walled enclosures with surrounding scalloped walls. This unit is generally referred to as a ward and usually incorporates a family or unified social group (*cf.* Schapera 1976). The central enclosures are the livestock byres and usually includes a *kgotla* (the men's meeting area) which is the ceremonial, social (meeting place) and judicial centre (court) of a settlement. Huts (consisting of conical roof on cylinder shape structures) are usually situated inside the surrounding scalloped walls. Within a large Tswana settlement, a number of such wards would cluster together in a circular arrangement.

The material culture of Tswana settlements has been ascribed to the Later Moloko Tradition dated c. AD 1640 - AD 1830 on the basis of decorated earthenware, settlement construction and site layout (*cf.* Evers 1983).

The pattern that has emerged in Pilanesberg indicates that most of the Iron Age settlements are situated on foothills (spurs). These foothills are usually attached to mountain ranges, thus creating an intermediate step between the summit of the mountain and the low-lying valley floor. Sites also occur on isolated foothills, elevating the settlement from the surrounding

lower lying areas.

Graves dating to the Late Iron Age period are usually situated in close proximity to stone-walled settlements. Females are generally buried in the hut or around the courtyard. Burials of males are usually associated with the male dominated areas such as the cattle kraal and *kgotla* (cf. Schapera 1976, 1980, also, burial practices have been documented in various ethno-historical studies).

## 8. Findings

No archaeological or historical remains were recorded in the proposed areas of development at the BaKubung Resort, Pilanesberg National Park.

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