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18 October 2017

South African Heritage Resources Agency

PO Box 4637

Cape Town

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Attention: Ms Nokukhanya Khumalo

Ref: SAHRA Case ID 11488 Kriel BP station

Dear Ms Khumalo

Dr Orton has asked me to write to you regarding the HIA he submitted for Case 11488 (proposed service station at Kriel). Our correspondence during his preparation of the HIA was informal and primarily involved the provision of material for the desktop study, since he felt that I would be more familiar with the most relevant reports and research papers. As such, there is no separate specialist study that can be submitted. Instead, I have reviewed the heritage report as well as a set of photographs showing the site in its current state as provided by the environmental assessment practitioner (please see examples below) and provided my professional opinion. I trust this will meet your needs.

The desktop study, to which I contributed much information, is, in my opinion, an accurate reflection of the archaeology that may be expected in the general area. From surveys I have conducted in similar landscape contexts in the vicinity (Van der Walt 2016, 2015, 2008) as well as CRM surveys in the area by Murimbika (2006) and Van Vollenhoven (2015) it is clear that significant sites are unlikely to occur in open contexts away from rock exposures. The photographs of the site make it clear that where the surface is not presently built over it is covered in lawn. The proposed development will be placed on the same site as the existing structure and it is likely that the surface around this structure was disturbed at the time of its construction. The grass cover and lack of Late Iron Age walling as is evident from the site photographs in the study area means that a field survey would not have revealed anything besides possible isolated stone artefacts and possibly rare potsherds that is of low significance. It is also evident that there are no rock outcrops or pre-colonial stone walls present on the site.

I agree with the recommendation that the development should be allowed to continue on condition that if any buried material is located then this should be reported. The chances of this happening, however, are extremely small.

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View towards the southwest with the R547 to the right.



View towards the southwest along the margin of the R547.



View of the substrate on site showing that it lacks the larger rocks typically required for Iron Age settlement construction.

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Kindly contact me with any queries or concerns.

Sincerely

Jaco van der Walt

References

Murimbika, M. 2006. Phase 1 archaeological and cultural heritage assessment specialist study for the proposed three borrow pits sites associated with the rehabilitation and upgrading of surfaced road P52/3 between Kriel and Ogies in Emalahleni Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province. Unpublished report prepared for Ndizani Civil Works. Polokwane: Nzumbululo Heritage Solutions.

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