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## **FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RUSTFONTEIN DAM - BOTSHABELO WATER PIPELINE, FREE STATE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Bloemwater is planning the installation of a new water pipeline from the water works at Rustfontein Dam to the reservoirs at Botshabelo. The new pipeline will follow a 14,1km direct route from the Rustfontein Dam water works through several residential blocks to the reservoirs on the outskirts of Botshabelo.

The pipeline will run along existing gravel roads and township streets, which have already been developed. Road building and the installation of municipal services in the past had severely damaged the area along the route.

No archaeological, cultural or any historical remains were found.

It is clear that the new pipeline developments will have no impact on the cultural heritage and historical environment of the area.

Further planning of the proposed project may continue, and no mitigation measures will be needed for the proposed water pipeline.

### **INTRODUCTION & DESCRIPTION**

Envioworks Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, on behalf of Bloemwater bulk water suppliers to several municipalities, commissioned the archaeological assessment for the water pipeline from the Rustfontein Dam to Botshabelo.

## **Scope and Limitations**

The investigation provided the opportunity to examine the route proposed for the water pipeline. Outside the residential area, the soil surface consists of open veld with rocky outcrops. The area contains a short grass cover with scatters of shrubs and bushes on the surface.

No limitations were experienced during site visit.

## **Methodology**

1. Standard archaeological survey and recording methods were applied.
2. A survey of the literature was done to obtain information about the archaeology and cultural heritage of the area.
3. The site was inspected on foot and by vehicle over the total distance.
4. The layout of the area as well as features was plotted by GPS.
5. Surroundings and features were recorded on camera.

## **INVESTIGATION**

A new water pipeline is planned from the Rustfontein Dam to the reservoirs at Botshabelo by Bloemwater bulk suppliers (Maps 1&2). The pipeline will cover a distance of about 14,1km. An alternative route forms part of the planning phase (Map 2), but the present route seems to be the most practical and is suggested as the preferred alternative (Maps 3&4).

The route was examined on 4 April 2013 in the company of Dr Johan du Preez from Ecocare Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein.

The study aims to locate and evaluate the significance of cultural heritage sites, archaeological material, manmade structures older than 60 years, and sites associated with oral histories and graves that might be affected by the proposed developments. In many cases, planted and self-sown trees and other types of vegetation determine a major part of the historical landscape of human settlements in villages and towns, on farmyards or even deserted places in the open veld. These features should be recognised and taken into consideration during any cultural investigation.

The route was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage

Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

The history of the Thaba Nchu mission station and the Seleka Barolong and other Batswana tribes had been recorded (Murray 1992).

Extensive farming activities around Thaba Nchu Mountain had been at the order of the day before the land was earmarked for residential purposes. Thaba Nchu was originally designated to the former Bophuthatswana Government of Chief Lucas Mangope as a shelter for several Barolong tribes from the area, while Botshabelo (“place of refuge”) was established as a living place for members of other Black tribes.

The area shows damage by township developments, road building and subsistence stock farming activities. There is an existing water pipeline installation running along the road from the Rustfontein Dam to the reservoirs at Botshabelo. Electric power lines also traverse the route. Certain parts of the land are relatively untouched and are extensively grazed by livestock from the township.

Anglo-Boer War (1900-1902) camping and skirmish sites in the Free State and Northern and Eastern Cape, should be recorded. Distinctive food cans and specific types of fired cartridge cases normally identify these sites (Dreyer 2006b). One such site is Springhaansnek near Thaba Nchu, where a skirmish took place on 14 December 1900 between the Boer Commando of Gen. Christiaan de Wet and the British forces under Lt-Col A. W. Thorneycroft. Conflict sites between early White farmers and indigenous tribes in the Free State and Northern and Eastern Cape could contain gunflints and fired cartridge cases and should likewise be noted (Gunflints are found on the banks of the Modder River near the N8 main road).

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The archaeological environment of the Free State Province is rich and diverse, representing a long time span during the human past. The area is exceptionally rich in terms of Stone Age material and rock art sites. Some areas are richer than others and not all the sites are equally significant (Maggs 1976). For various reasons, there is still a relative lack in research records, but certain Later Iron Age sites, have produced important archaeological information (Maggs 1976, Dreyer 1996). These Iron Age sites date between 1660 AD and 1810 AD.

This phase brought people who cultivated crops, kept livestock, produced an abundance of pottery in a variety of shapes and sizes and smelted metals. Extensive stone walled enclosures characterised their permanent settlements. These living places are known from the prominent Sotho/Tswana settlements at

Viervoet (Tihela) near Clocolan, Biddulpsberg (Kurutlele) near Senekal and Marabeng near Ficksburg. A number of Taaibos Korana and Griqua groups, remnants of the Later Stone Age peoples, managed to survive the assimilation by Sotho/Tswana tribes in the region.

Dramatic climate changes resulted in a rapid population growth along the east coast. Increased pressure on natural resources and attempts to control trade during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century brought the emergence of powerful leaders in the area. The subsequent power struggles resulted in a period of instability in the central parts of Southern Africa. This period of strife or wars of devastation, known as the “difaqane” (Sotho/Tswana) or “Mfecane” (Nguni), affected many of the Black tribes in the interior. Attacks from east of the escarpment initiated by the AmaZulu impis of Chaka in about 1822, were carried on by the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi and the AmaNgwane of Matiwane into the Free State, thus uprooting among others, the Batlokwa of Sekonyela and Mantatise and various smaller Sotho/Tswana tribes. On their turn, the Batlokwa drove off the Bafokeng of Sebetoane from Kurutlele near Senekal, who, in their effort to escape the pursuit by the AmaNdebele forces, eventually landed up in the Caprivi (Dreyer & Kilby 2003).

This period of unrest directly affected the peoples of the Free State and Northern Cape, resulting in the displacement of scores of tribesmen, women and children. The stronger tribal groups, such as the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi, assimilated many of these refugees.

Early European missionaries and travellers ventured into the interior of the country during the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Dreyer 2001) and the Rev James Archbell established the missionary at Thaba Nchu by 1834. Several of the marauding hordes affected the lives of the Batswana people living at Dithakong near the mission station of Robert and Mary Moffat near Kuruman.

## **LOCALITY**

The new pipeline between the Rustfontein Dam and Botshabelo is indicated on Maps 3 and 4. The pipeline will run from the water works at the Dam to a cluster of reservoirs on the outskirts of Botshabelo (Maps 3&4).

The area along the existing township is highly disturbed and household debris is scattered on the surface. The veld appears to be heavily overgrazed at present.

The following GPS co-ordinates were taken (Cape scale) (2926) (Surveyor-General 1973): (Maps 5-14).

<b>A</b>	29°16'04"S. 026°37'16"E. Altitude 1380m (Fig.1).
<b>B</b>	29°15'56"S. 026°37'46"E. Altitude 1385m (Fig.2).
<b>C</b>	29°15'41"S. 026°39'11"E. Altitude 1379m (Fig.3).
<b>D</b>	29°15'42"S. 026°39'17"E. Altitude 1375m (Fig.4).
<b>E</b>	29°15'32"S. 026°40'05"E. Altitude 1389m (Fig.5).
<b>F</b>	29°15'24"S. 026°40'50"E. Altitude 1416m (Fig.6).
<b>G</b>	29°14'52"S. 026°41'29"E. Altitude 1406m (Fig.7).
<b>H</b>	29°15'09"S. 026°42'05"E. Altitude 1400m (Fig.8).
<b>J</b>	29°15'00"S. 026°42'41"E. Altitude 1412m (Fig.9).
<b>K</b>	29°14'56"S. 026°43'27"E. Altitude 1433m (Fig.10).
<b>L</b>	29°14'50"S. 026°44'13"E. Altitude 1467m (Fig.11).
<b>M</b>	29°14'51"S. 026°44'51"E. Altitude 1523m (Fig.12).

## **FINDS**

No indication of archaeological or any historical material was found along the water pipeline route.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The potential impact caused by the pipeline developments on the heritage resources of the route is of minor significance and no mitigation measures will be needed.

There is always the possibility that human skeletal remains may be found during excavations, in which case, work must stop in the area and should immediately be reported to the Archaeology Department at the National Museum in Bloemfontein and to SAHRA in Cape Town.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The impact resulting from the new pipeline installation on the archaeological and heritage resources is considered to be of minor significance.

There are no obvious reasons to delay further planning of the developments at the specific site.

I recommend that the planning of the proposed developments may proceed.

## **MITIGATION**

Mitigation measures will only be required in the case of the discovery of any human burials.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank Dr Johan du Preez from Ecocare Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, for taking me along the route.

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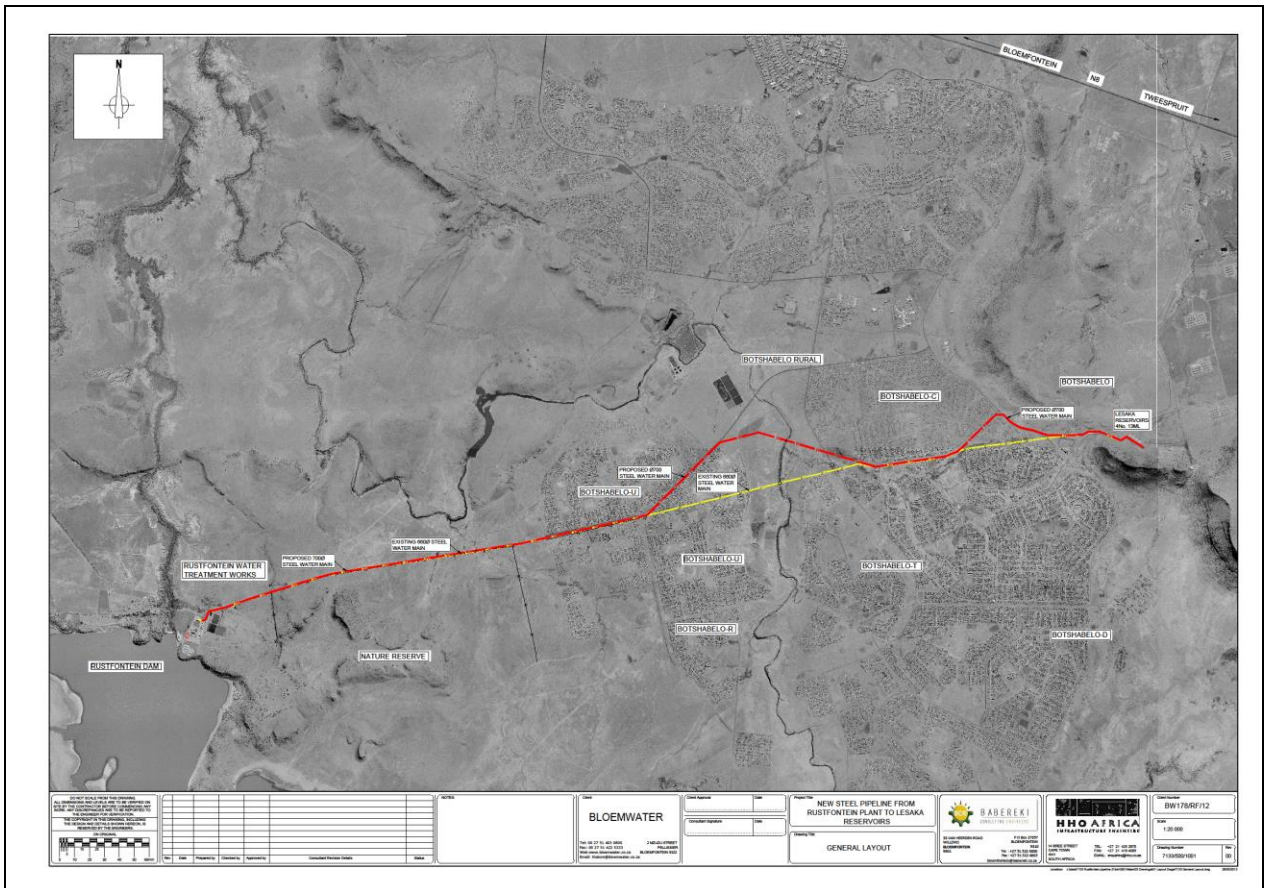
SURVEYOR-GENERAL O.F.S. 1973. Index of Orange Free State Farms. Bloemfontein.



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

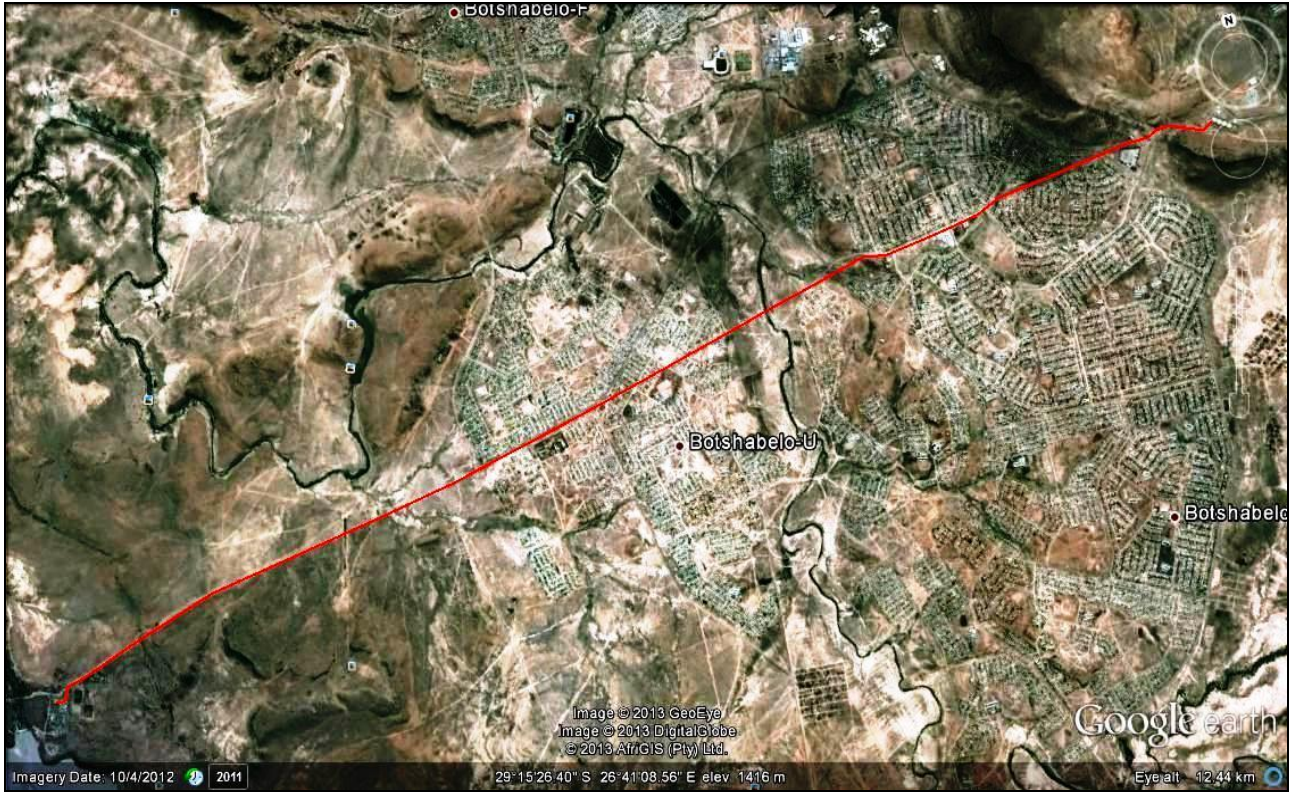


Map 1 Locality of Botshabelo along the N8 main road west of Bloemfontein.

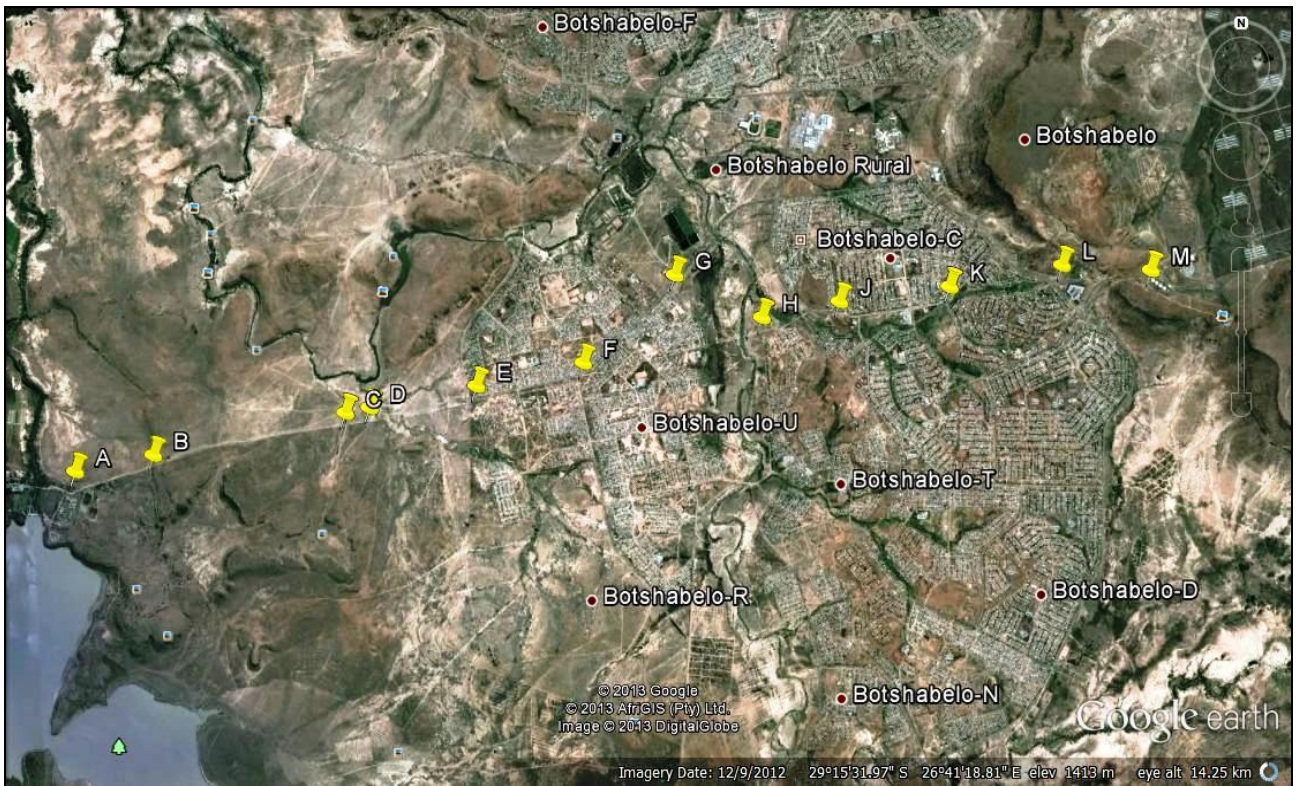


Map 2 Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipe line route.





Map 3 Proposed water pipe line route from Rusfontein Dam to Botshabelo. (2926).



Map 4 Rusfontein Dam - Botshabelo water pipe line route with GPS coordinate points.





Map 5 Point A & B along the water pipe route at Rustfontein Dam waterworks.



Fig.1 Point A facing the Rustfontein Dam water works.





Fig.2 Point B facing the Rustfontein Dam water works.



Map 6 Point C & D along the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipe line route.





Fig.3 Point C along the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.4 Point D along the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 7 Point E along the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.5 Point E on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 8 Point F on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.6 Point F on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



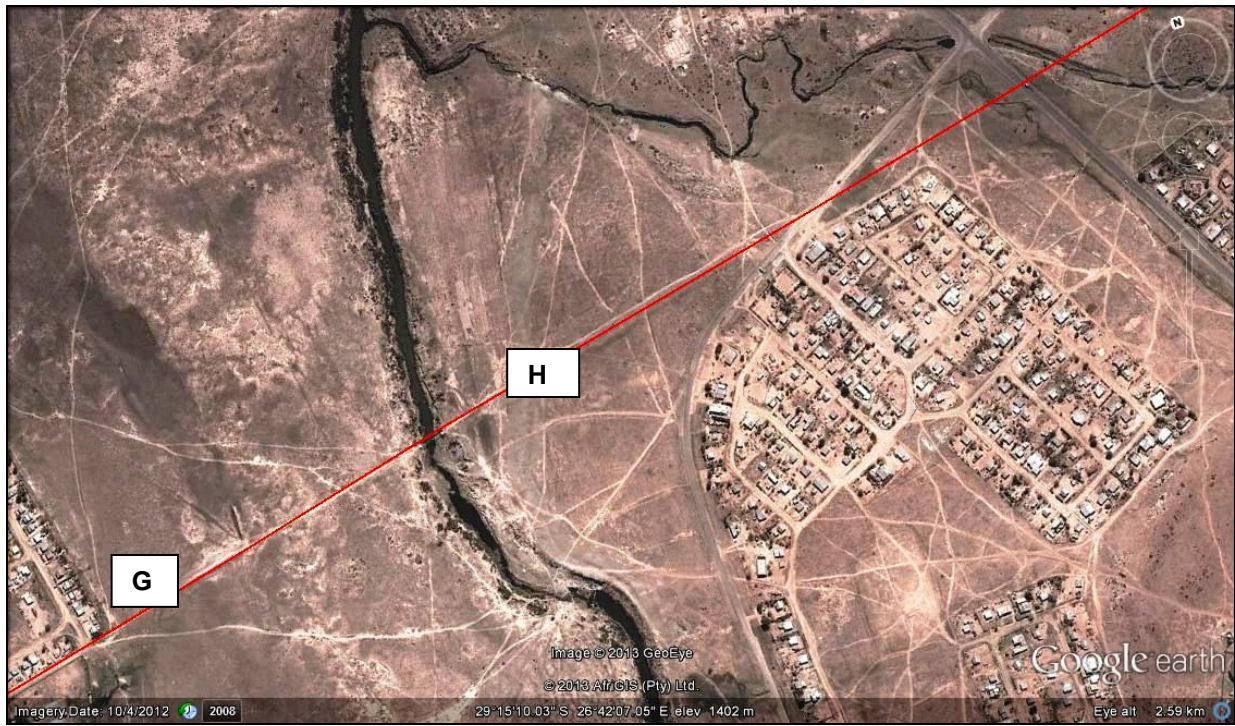


Map 9 Point G on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.7 Point G on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 10 Point G & H on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.8 Point H on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 11 Point J on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.9 Point J on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 12 Point K on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.10 Point K on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 13 Point L on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.11 Point L on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.





Map 14 Point M on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.



Fig.12 Point M on the Rustfontein Dam – Botshabelo water pipeline route.