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**INTERIM REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION  
ON HISTORICAL SITES LOCATED AT THE MOOIKLOOF ECO ESTATE  
DEVELOPMENT ON THE FARM RIETFontein 375JR IN THE GREATER  
TSHWANE MUNICIPAL AREA OF GAUTENG**

For:

***Bokamoso Landscape Architects & Environmental Consultants CC  
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**REPORT: APAC021/49**

by:

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***June 2021***

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**Clients & Developers should not continue with any development actions until SAHRA or one of its subsidiary bodies has provided final comments on this report. Submitting the report to SAHRA is the responsibility of the Client unless required of the Heritage Specialist as part of their appointment and Terms of Reference**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Pelser', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping tail.

## SUMMARY

APelser Archaeological Consulting cc (APAC cc) was appointed by Bokamoso Landscape Architects & Environmental Consultants CC (on behalf of Balwin Properties) to undertake an assessment of known cultural heritage sites on a portion of the farm Rietfontein 375JR in the greater Tshwane area of Gauteng. These sites will be impacted on by Balwin's Mooikloof Eco Estate development. The 1st site (**Site 3.1**) is the original farmhouse and yard on this portion of Rietfontein 375JR. The house and related structures will not be impacted on by the current development. Site 2 (**Site 3.2**) was a historical cemetery containing 3 graves of which 2 belongs to the original owners of the farm the Opperman family. The graves located at this site has since been exhumed and relocated on request of the family to the Pretoria East Cemetery.

**Site 3.3** is a large cattle kraal. This kraal is built from local stone without mortar and is typical of early kraals on Boer farms. **Site 3.4** is represented by a number of smaller structures that were probably used for keeping smaller livestock such as goats or sheep. **Site 3.5** was a so-called "**Bywoner**" settlement. The site consists of several stone ruins including homesteads built with stone and clay. According to Mr. Gerhard Bredenkamp (owner of a portion of the farm) this site and the cattle kraal were all part of the Bywoner settlement on the farm. Bywoners were poor whites that after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) were allowed to settle on the farms of rich landowners. **Site 3.6** was that of a larger cattle kraal that formed part of the original farm settlement.

It was initially recommended that an exclusion buffer of 20m is placed around each site if it could be avoided by the development and be preserved in situ. If the sites could not be preserved then the recommended mitigation measures included the detailed mapping and drawing of each site before demolition, with historical-archaeological excavations also recommended for the Bywoner site.

APAC cc was appointed to undertake the Archaeological mitigation work in 2021. A permit for the work was issued to APAC cc (**Permit ID#3237 & Case ID#16226**) by SAHRA in April 2021. The Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History will be the Curating Institute for the cultural material recovered and sampled from the area during the field work.

A 1<sup>st</sup> report (**APAC021/27**) discussed the results of the detailed documentation of the sites and the mapping and drawing work done on Sites 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6. This Interim Report deals with the continued mitigation work on the sites and more specifically the Bywoner site, while providing recommendations on the way forward in terms of the successful completion of the work.

**With the detailed mapping and documentation of Sites 3.3; 3.4 and 3.6 being completed it is recommended that their demolition can be undertaken so that the development work in the areas where they are located can commence.**

Once the mitigation work on Site 3.5 has been completed a Final Mitigation Report will be drafted and submitted and the recommended demolition of this site can be finalized.

## CONTENTS

	page
SUMMARY .....	3
CONTENTS.....	4
1. INTRODUCTION .....	5
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE .....	5
3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS .....	6
4. METHODOLOGY .....	7
5. BACKGROUND .....	8
6. DISCUSSION.....	11
7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	28
8. REFERENCES .....	30

## 1. INTRODUCTION

APelser Archaeological Consulting cc (APAC cc) was appointed by Bokamoso Landscape Architects & Environmental Consultants CC (on behalf of Balwin Properties) to undertake an assessment of known cultural heritage sites on a portion of the farm Rietfontein 375JR in the greater Tshwane area of Gauteng.

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A 1st report (**APAC021/27**) discussed the results of the detailed documentation of the sites and the mapping and drawing work done on Sites 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6. This Interim Report deals with the continued mitigation work on the sites and more specifically the Bywoner site, while providing recommendations on the way forward in terms of the successful completion of the work.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the Mooikloof Eco Estate Phase 2 Archaeological Mitigation were the following:

1. Archaeological excavations through trenches and blocks on the Bywoner House/Settlement remains and possible midden in order to recover as much archaeological deposit as possible (glass, metal, ceramic and other material remains) in order to assist with the interpretation of the site and the reconstruction of material economy, time-frame of occupation and the cultural identity of the occupants of these sites.
2. All the excavation trenches & blocks, as well as all features and material in these blocks will be photographed, mapped and described in detail and a detailed map of each block and the site produced.
3. Detailed mapping with dumpy level/theodolite and/or GPS will be done, with the blocks and all features included in a final map of the site.
4. Detailed mapping of the three stone-walled livestock enclosures (Sites 3.3, 3.4 & 3.6) to produce a map of each before demolition. Detailed photographic recording will also be done.
4. The results of the fieldwork and the analysis of the cultural material will be reported on in a Final Archaeological Permit Report and will be submitted to SAHRA, the Ditsong Museum of Cultural History and the client.

***With the detailed mapping and photographic documentation of Sites 3.3; 3.4 & 3.6 completed it is recommended that these sites can now be demolished.***

### 3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

#### 3.1 The National Heritage Resources Act

According to the Act the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, structures and sites older than 100 years
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years
- e. **Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years**
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years
- h. Meteorites and fossils
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

**The National Estate includes the following:**

- a. Places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance
- b. Places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage
- c. **Historical settlements and townscapes**
- d. Landscapes and features of cultural significance
- e. Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance
- f. Sites of Archaeological and paleontological importance
- g. Graves and burial grounds
- h. Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery
- i. **Movable objects (e.g. archaeological, paleontological, meteorites, geological specimens, military, ethnographic, books etc.)**

#### Structures

Section 34 (1) of the Act states that no person may demolish any structure or part thereof which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

A structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith.

Alter means any action affecting the structure, appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or the decoration or any other means.

### **Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites**

Section 35(4) of the Act deals with archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites. The act states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority (national or provincial)

- a. destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or paleontological site or any meteorite;
- b. destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or paleontological material or object or any meteorite;
- c. trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the Republic any category of archaeological or paleontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- d. bring onto or use at an archaeological or paleontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and paleontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

**The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). In order to demolish such a site or structure, a destruction permit from SAHRA will also be needed.**

### **3.2 The National Environmental Management Act**

This act states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects, that will change the face of the environment, will be undertaken. The impact of the development on these resources should be determined and proposals for the mitigation thereof are made.

Environmental management should also take the cultural and social needs of people into account. Any disturbance of landscapes and sites that constitute the nation's cultural heritage should be avoided as far as possible and where this is not possible the disturbance should be minimized and remedied.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Survey of Literature**

A survey of available literature was undertaken in order to place the development area in an archaeological and historical context. The sources utilized in this regard are indicated in the bibliography.

## 4.2 Mapping & Excavation

All the sites that will be impacted and that are covered in the SAHRA permit was mapped using a hand-held Garmin GPS and maps produced from this. All visible stone-walled sections and other features were included in this mapping. All excavation blocks and STP's on Site 3.5 (the Bywoner settlement) will also be mapped in and indicated on the various site maps in the Final Excavation Report.

## 4.3 Oral Histories

People from local communities are sometimes interviewed in order to obtain information relating to the surveyed area. It needs to be stated that this is not applicable under all circumstances. When applicable, the information is included in the text and referred to in the bibliography.

## 4.4 Documentation

All sites, objects, features and structures identified are documented according to a general set of minimum standards. Co-ordinates of individual localities are determined by means of the Global Positioning System (GPS). The information is added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality. The recovered archaeological material will be properly recorded photographically and provided with accession numbers that will be given by the Department of Archaeology at the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History for inclusion and curating in their Archaeological Collection.

## 5. BACKGROUND

During an October 2003 survey of cultural heritage resources on Rietfontein 375JR by African Heritage Consultants cc, seven (7) sites were identified in the area and described in a report by Dr. Udo Kusel.

The 1st site (**Site 3.1**) is the original farmhouse and yard on this portion of Rietfontein 375JR. The house and related structures will not be impacted on by the current development. Site 2 (**Site 3.2**) was a historical cemetery containing 3 graves of which 2 belonged to the original owners of the farm the Opperman family. Jacobus Opperman died in 1945 and Sibella Opperman (born Erasmus) passed away in 1958. The graves located at this site have been exhumed and relocated on request of the family to the Pretoria East Cemetery.

**Site 3.3** is a large cattle kraal built from local stone without mortar and is typical of early kraals on Boer farms. **Site 3.4** is represented by a number of smaller structures that were probably used for keeping smaller livestock such as goats or sheep. **Site 3.5** is a so-called "Bywoner" settlement. The site consists of several stone ruins including homesteads built with stone and clay. According to Mr. Gerhard Bredenkamp (current owner of a portion of the original farm) this site and the cattle kraal were all part of the Bywoner settlement on the farm. Bywoners were poor whites that after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) were allowed to settle on the farms of rich landowners. **Site 3.6** is that of a larger cattle kraal that formed part of the original farm settlement.

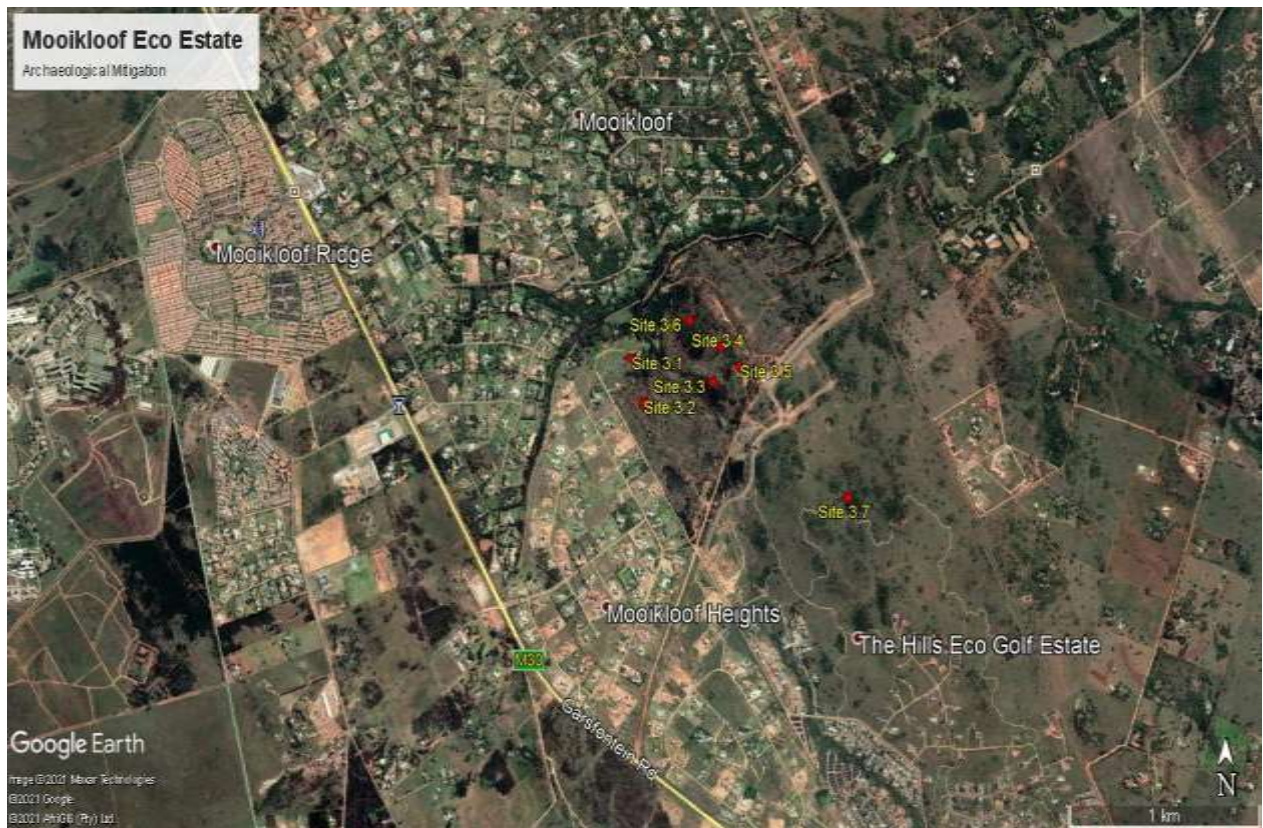


APAC cc was appointed to undertake the archaeological mitigation work on these sites in 2021. The fieldwork for this phase of the work commenced in March 2021 and continued in April after a permit was issued by SAHRA. A 1st report (APAC021/27) discussed the results of the more detailed documentation of the sites and the mapping and drawing work done on Sites 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6.

This Interim Report deals with the continued mitigation work on the sites and more specifically the Bywoner site, while providing recommendations on the way forward in terms of the successful completion of the work.

The current owner and occupant of the original farmstead (**Site 3.1**), Mr. Gerhard Bredenkamp, provided some valuable information on the history of the sites that are being investigated. He is married to a descendant of the original farm owner Me. Madelize Bredenkamp nee Opperman. According to him the original farmhouse was built in 1898 just before the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and that the stone-packed kraals (Sites 3.3, 3.4 & 3.6) date to this time-period originally as well and are related to the original farming set-up on Rietfontein. He also indicated that these enclosures were used for cattle, smaller livestock such as sheep/goats, pigs and chickens. Of importance is the evidence he gave regarding Site 3.5 (the Bywoner settlement site). According to Me. Bredenkamp there were 3 or 4 families living here, and that one was that of a Willem van Niekerk. Although he was unable to say exactly where, Mr. Van Niekerk's initials were carved into the trunk of a *wit stinkout* tree not far from the site with the date 1938 or 1945 (Personal Communication Mr. G. Bredenkamp: 2021-04-14). A search for this tree subsequent to this discussion could not trace it as yet, and an attempt will be made at a later stage to locate and record it if indeed it still exists.

The mapping of the sites and structures on them was done using a handheld Garmin Geko GPS, from a fixed base point at each site. Measurements at each site (lengths and widths of walls as well as entrances) were also then used in producing scale drawings of each site and structure on it. Photographic recording was also undertaken on the separate sites and individual structures on them.



**Figure 1: General location of study area (Google Earth 2021).**



**Figure 2: Closer location of study area and sites (Google Earth 2021).**



## 6. DISCUSSION

### Site 1 (3.3) – Large Cattle Kraal

This cattle kraal is approximately 12m x 12m in size, although it might be slightly larger taking the amount of wall collapse on the site into consideration. The construction is dry-stone walling (no binding/bonding material used), with the walls around 1.00m in width. The walls (still standing) are between 0.50m (on average) and 1.00m (for the best preserved sections) in height. It has one entrance on its eastern side of about 2m in width. The size of the enclosure seems to indicate that it was used for cattle.

GPS Location: **S25 50 56.60 E28 20 50.80**

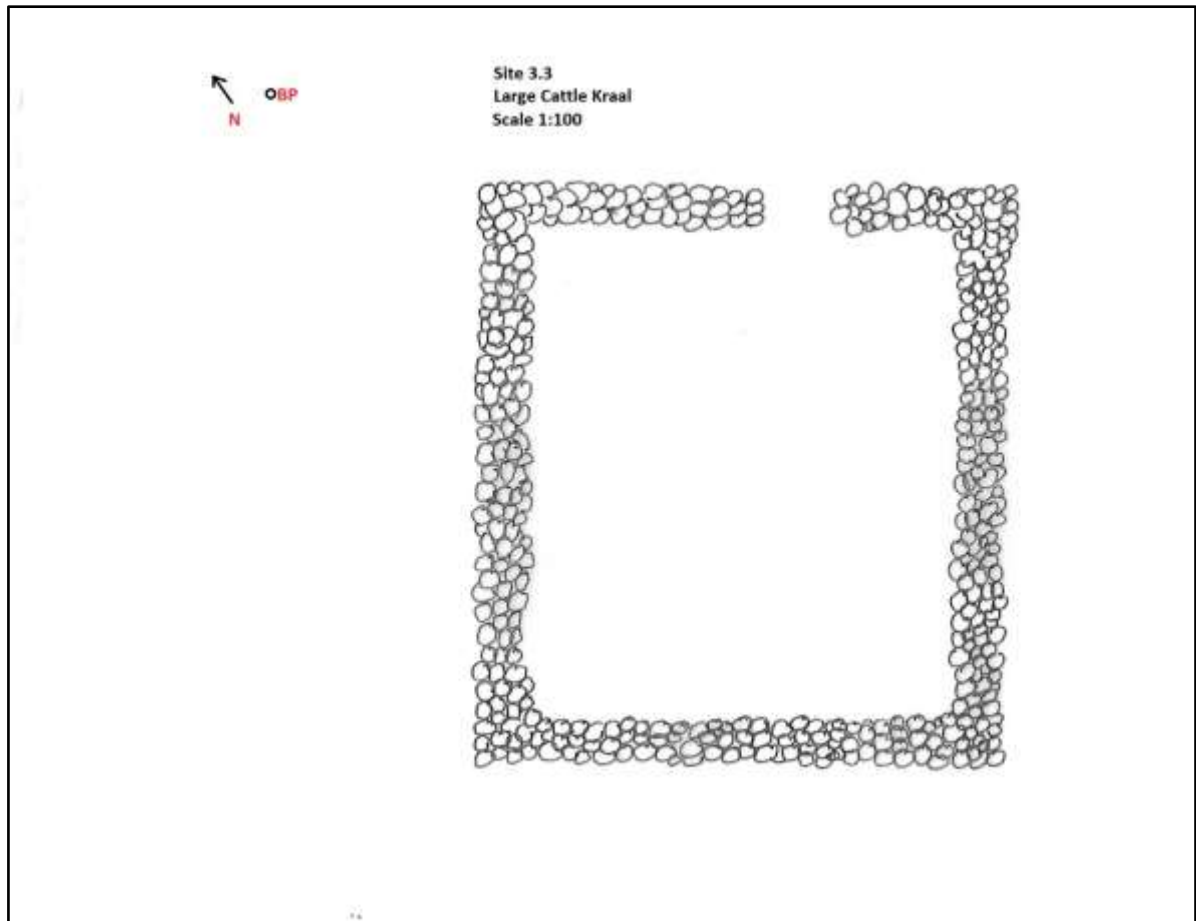
Base Point: **S25 50 56.10 E28 20 50.90**



**Figure 3: Site 1 (3.3) Cattle Kraal.**



**Figure 4: A section of well-preserved walling at the site.**



**Figure 5: Copy of scale drawing of Site 1 (3.3).**

#### **Site 2 (3.4) – Smaller livestock enclosures**

Although Kusel identified 3 structures here, after clearing of the site in April 2021, it was found that this site only consists of two small dry-stone packed enclosures, connected by a length of wall approximately 2m in length. The first of the enclosures measures around 9m x 6m and has a single entrance on its south-western side. The entrance is approximately 1m in width. The 2<sup>nd</sup> enclosure is circular in shape and has a diameter of around 4m. The walls are between 0.50m and 1.00m in width, with the height of the remaining walls on average 0.50m.

The size of the rectangular structure could indicate that it was used for smaller livestock such as sheep and/or goats, while the circular one could have been used for pigs.

GPS Location: **S25 50 51.70 E28 20 51.70**

Base Point: **S25 50 51.40 E28 20 51.70**





**Figure 6: A general view of Site 3.4.**

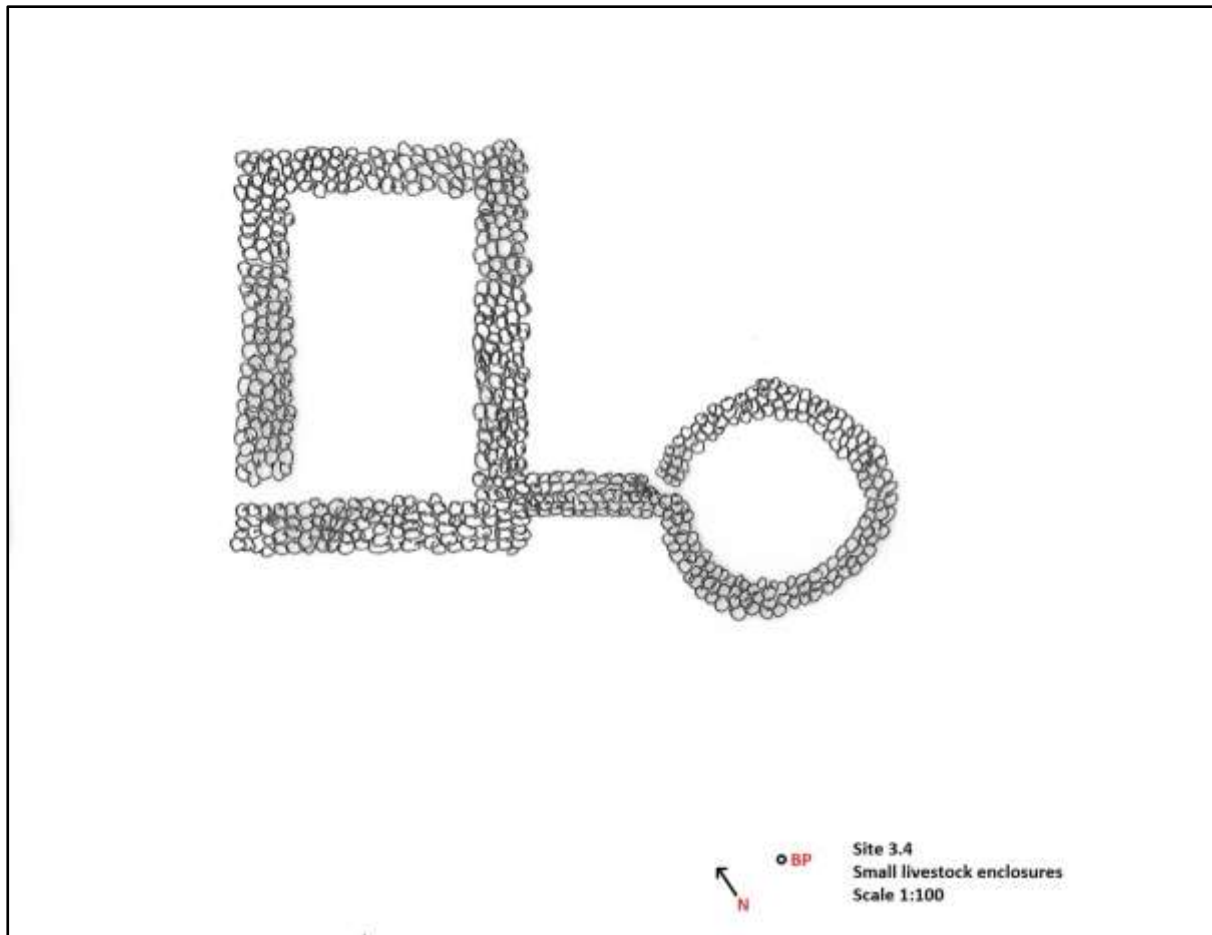


**Figure 7: The wall section between the rectangular and circular enclosure.**





**Figure 8: The circular enclosure at Site 3.4.**



**Figure 9: Copy of scale drawing of Site 3.4.**

### **Site 3 (3.6) – Large Cattle Kraal**

This large stone-packed enclosure measures approximately 46m x 26m in size and has two entrances of about 2m width (on its north-western side) and 1m width (on its western side). A secondary rectangular enclosure of 8m x 20m is attached to the larger kraal on its south-western side. This smaller enclosure could have been used for keeping young calves. The stone walls remaining are on average around 1m in width, while the height of the walls is between 0.50m (average) and 1.20m (for the best preserved sections).

GPS Location: **S25 50 47.20 E28 20 46.20**

Base Point: **S25 50 46.60 E28 20 46.90**





**Figure 10: A general view of Site 3.6.**



**Figure 11: A view of the kraal's one entrance.**





**Figure 12: The entrance on the north-western side.**

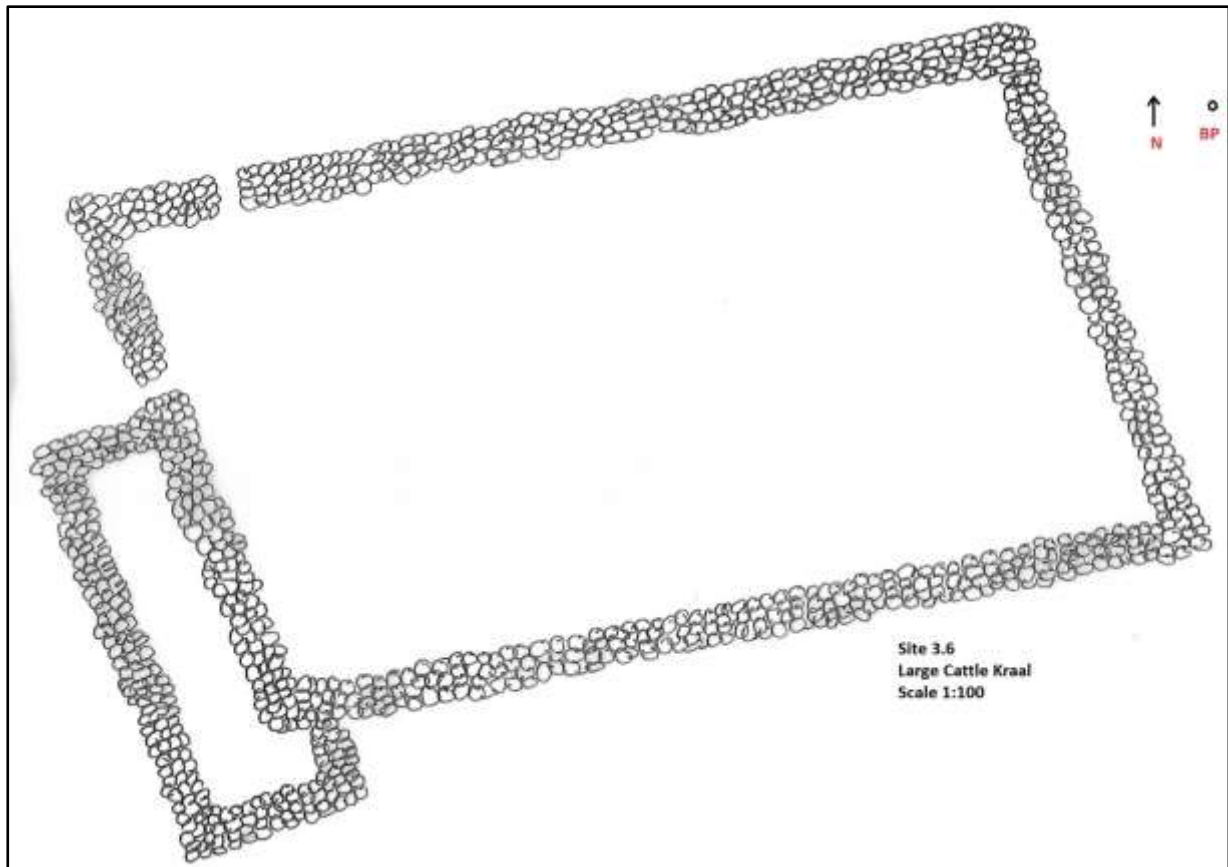


**Figure 13: A section of well-preserved walling.**





**Figure 14: A view of the smaller attached rectangular enclosure at Site 3.6.**



**Figure 15: Copy of scale drawing of Site 3.6.**

#### **Site 4 (3.5) – Bywoner Settlement**

The GPS mapping of the site has been completed, but the final drawing is still to be finalized. Once this and the recommended archaeological excavations on the site have been completed the results will be presented in a Final Mitigation Report. A basic description of the site is presented in this report, while photographs of the individual structures and related features are included as well.

The site consists of three individual structures or homesteads constructed of a combination of packed stones and baked mud bricks. All three are fairly well preserved although in stages of collapse. Patches of mud plaster are visible on some of the inside walls, while it seems as if clay was used as binding material in the stone packed sections of walling.

The 1<sup>st</sup> building is a single-roomed structure measuring approximately 4m x 7m in size. It has a single entrance and two windows. It might have functioned as a storage building of sorts.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> structure measures around 8m x 5m and has 3 rooms and a single outside entrance/door. The archaeological excavations will aim at determining the function of each room, but it could be a kitchen and two rooms for sleeping. A possible veranda/garden area is evident on its southern and northern sides, with the remains of the stone-packed walls visible.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> structure has 2 rooms and measures 8m x 5m in size again. The foundations of a veranda/garden on its western and eastern sides are also visible, while on its northern side there is an abutting smaller enclosure as well (for small livestock like chickens?).

GPS Location: **S25 50 53.50 E28 20 55.20**



**Figure 16: The one-roomed structure on the site. This possibly functioned as a Store room or something similar.**





**Figure 17: A closer view of the same structure.**



**Figure 18: Another view of the possible storage structure.**





**Figure 18: A view of the larger 3-roomed house on the site. Note the use of stones & clay brick and plaster in its construction.**



**Figure 19: A closer view showing one of the collapsed window-sills in the 3-roomed house.**





**Figure 20: Another window opening in the 3-room house.**



**Figure 21: Partial view of the 2-roomed house. Note the fairly well-preserved walls as well as the low foundations of the verandah.**





**Figure 22: Another view of the 2-roomed house on the site.**



**Figure 23: The possible chicken coop (enclosure) abutting the 2-room house.**





**Figure 24: A view of the low verandah wall around the 2-room house at the site.**



**Figure 25: Closer view of a well-preserved window opening at the 2-room house.**





**Figure 26: A view of the verandah/garden terrace on the site.**



**Figure 27: Closer view of the verandah/garden terrace foundations.**





**Figure 28: General view of Site 3.5.**

## **7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

APelser Archaeological Consulting cc (APAC cc) was appointed by Bokamoso Landscape Architects & Environmental Consultants CC (on behalf of Balwin Properties) to undertake an assessment of known cultural heritage sites on a portion of the farm Rietfontein 375JR in the greater Tshwane area of Gauteng. These sites will be impacted on by Balwin's Mooikloof Eco Estate development. During an October 2003 survey of cultural heritage resources on Rietfontein 375JR by African Heritage Consultants cc, seven (7) sites were identified in the area and described in a report by Dr. Udo Kusel. Site 3.1 was the original farmhouse and yard on this portion of Rietfontein 375JR. The house and related structures will not be impacted on by the current development. Site 3.2 was a historical cemetery containing 3 graves of which 2 belonged to the original owners of the farm the Opperman family. The graves located at this site have been exhumed and relocated on request of the family to the Pretoria East Cemetery.

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It was initially recommended that an exclusion buffer of 20m is placed around each site if it could be avoided by the development and be preserved in situ. If the sites could not be preserved then the recommended mitigation measures included the detailed mapping and drawing of each site before demolition, with historical-archaeological excavations also recommended for the Bywoner site.

A 1<sup>st</sup> report (APAC021/27) discussed the results of the detailed documentation of the sites and the mapping and drawing work done on Sites 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6. This Interim Report dealt with the continued mitigation work on the sites and more specifically the Bywoner site, and provides recommendations on the way forward in terms of the successful completion of the work.

The mapping of the Bywoner site has been completed, but the final drawing is still to be finalized. Once this and the recommended archaeological excavations on the site have been completed the results will be presented in a Final Mitigation Report and be submitted to SAHRA so that the recommended demolition of this site can be finalized.

**With the detailed mapping and documentation of Sites 3.3; 3.4 and 3.6 being completed, it is recommended that their demolition can be undertaken so that the development work in the areas where they are located, can commence.**

## 8. REFERENCES

1. General & Closer Views of Study Area location and Sites recorded: Google Earth 2021.
2. Kusel, U. Dr. **Survey of Cultural Heritage Resources on the farm Rietfontein 375JR, Pretoria District.** Unpublished Report. African Heritage Consultants cc. October 2003.
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