

Motivation for Platberg Permit Extension 2017-2020

CASE ID 5887

PERMIT ID : 1869 AND 2569

SITE : PINEKLOOF FARM - PLATBERG MISSION STATION

Archaeological work at Platberg is underway in three discrete areas of the site:

- The Mission Complex (MC)
- The Kitchen Complex (KC)
- V's Complex (VC)

Work in these areas is not complete. An extension of the permit is requested in order to complete the work in these areas to accepted disciplinary standards. We provide below a proposed time line and work schedule for the completion and, where relevant, the extension of our research.

MC	2018 2019	Excavation trenches at MMH STP survey of MC area Extension of excavation of midden at PPH
KC	November/December 2017/ mid-2018 Mid-2018 2019	Kitchen House Mound: clarification of structure (construction, dimensions, orientation and layout) Kitchen Midden: complete excavation of midden STP survey and sampling across southern section of the KC Yard
VC	2018 2019	Complete excavation of VH and yard area Excavation of structure south of VH STP survey/excavation of mound south of VH
Other	2019	STP survey and excavation of a selected structure or structures located in the southern part of Platberg; systematic testing of identified furrows (UNISA Student Honours Projects)

The faunal assemblage has been and will continue to be analysed by Dr A. Antonites

The botanical assemblage is being analysed by Dr C. Sievers.

The focus of our collective endeavours at Platberg has fallen, thus far, upon the visually dominant northern section of the site (the preliminary testing and test excavations at BH in the 2015 season represents a partial and preliminary foray south of the main mission complex) (Figure 1). In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the site and its varied inhabitants it is imperative that we explore some of the more ephemeral structures and the associated material culture from the southern sections of the site. This will complement the work undertaken in the northern sections of the site and will provide the requisite degree of comparative tension that is required for the longer-term interpretation of assemblages recovered from different parts of the site. The rich historical record for Platberg provides clear evidence of a fluid and hybrid community but our understanding of this social diversity is compromised by the nature of the colonial archive which favours the worldview of missionaries and colonial administrators. Although valuable in its own right this documentary archive can be complemented usefully by archaeological approaches that are designed to facilitate more democratic and inclusive postcolonial histories.

In requesting an extension of our permit we note the size of the site, which stretches over approximately 0.6km by 0.3km and the importance of representative survey and sampling strategies. This is vital not only for the intra-site comparisons discussed above but for wider regional and global comparisons. Historical archaeology is, by nature, a global, comparative undertaking and missionary endeavours in southern Africa must be understood and situated within wider missionary historiographies as well as the disciplinary visions of historical archaeology which seek fresh and novel understandings of colonial frontiers, cultural encounters and the mutually affective ways in which history was made, contested and understood.