

# McGregor Museum

## Department of Archaeology



### **Heritage Impact Assessment for proposed drilling site at Greeffputs 169, near Barkly West, Northern Cape**

David Morris  
February 2020

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### **Executive Summary**

A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment is presented.

Precise co-ordinates for two proposed drilling sites were presented and De Beers Exploration personnel and the property owner took the author directly to the specific sites in question. This report describes the archaeological/heritage traces that were observed at the surface.

It is possible that archaeological material of significance may occur subsurface. If encountered this should be brought to the attention of heritage authorities for further assessment, and mitigation if necessary.

In terms of this report, no significant heritage traces were found at the particular locales of proposed drilling, nor in the immediate vicinity, that are considered to require further mitigation.

The loss of heritage resources is assessed to be of **low** significance with and without the implementation of mitigation.

### **Background**

The McGregor Museum Archaeology Department was appointed by The De Beers Group of Companies: Exploration Office – DBGS in order to conduct a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment at a proposed drilling sites at Greeffputs 169, near Barkly West, Northern Cape. This report addresses the possible impacts on heritage resources (archaeological and cultural) of this operation. It excludes palaeontological assessment.

The site was inspected on 25 February 2020 and relevant observations are indicated in this report.

Fieldnotes and photographs are lodged with the McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

## **Specialist**

The author is a professional archaeologist (PhD) accredited as a Principal Investigator by the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists. He has worked as a museum archaeologist and has carried out specialist research and surveys in the Northern Cape since 1985.

The author is independent of the organization commissioning this specialist input, and provides this heritage assessment (archaeology and colonial history but not palaeontology) within the framework of the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999).

The National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999 (NHRA) protects heritage resources which include archaeological and palaeontological objects/sites older than 100 years, graves older than 60 years, structures older than 60 years, as well as intangible values attached to places. The Act requires that anyone intending to disturb, destroy or damage such sites/places, objects and/or structures may not do so without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority.

Heritage is assessed in terms of a NEMA application, and must comply with section 38(3) of the NHRA. SAHRA would then comment and make recommendations on the potential impacts.

(Where archaeological sites and palaeontological remains are concerned, the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) at national level acts on an agency basis for the Provincial Heritage Resources Agency (PHRA) in the Northern Cape. The Northern Cape Heritage Resources Authority (formerly called Ngwao Bošwa ya Kapa Bokone) is responsible for the built environment and other colonial era heritage and contemporary cultural values).

## **Description of environment and potential impacts**

The environment in question consists of essentially flat terrain about 12 km north of Barkly West, some 10 km north east of the Vaal River at its nearest point. Suspected underlying kimberlite is mantled by Hutton Sands and calcrete, supporting (especially where sands are deeper) thornveld with significant clusters of *Vachellia erioloba* (camelthorn). The superficial Hutton Sands and calcrete may mask underlying archaeological material., as has been noted routinely at other sites in the region (e.g. Beaumont & Morris 1990).



Figure 1. Landscape and vegetation on Greeffputs 169

The proposed drilling localities are indicated in the following maps.

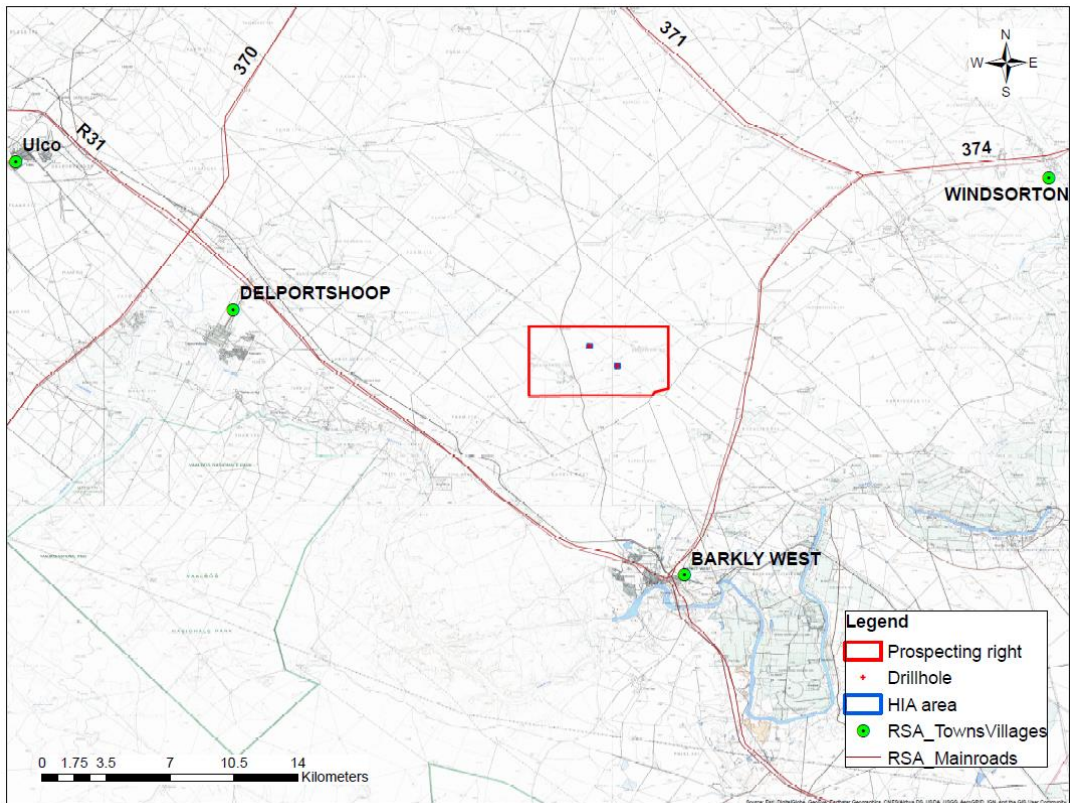


Figure 2. Locality map: Drill sites on Greeffputs relative to Barkly West.

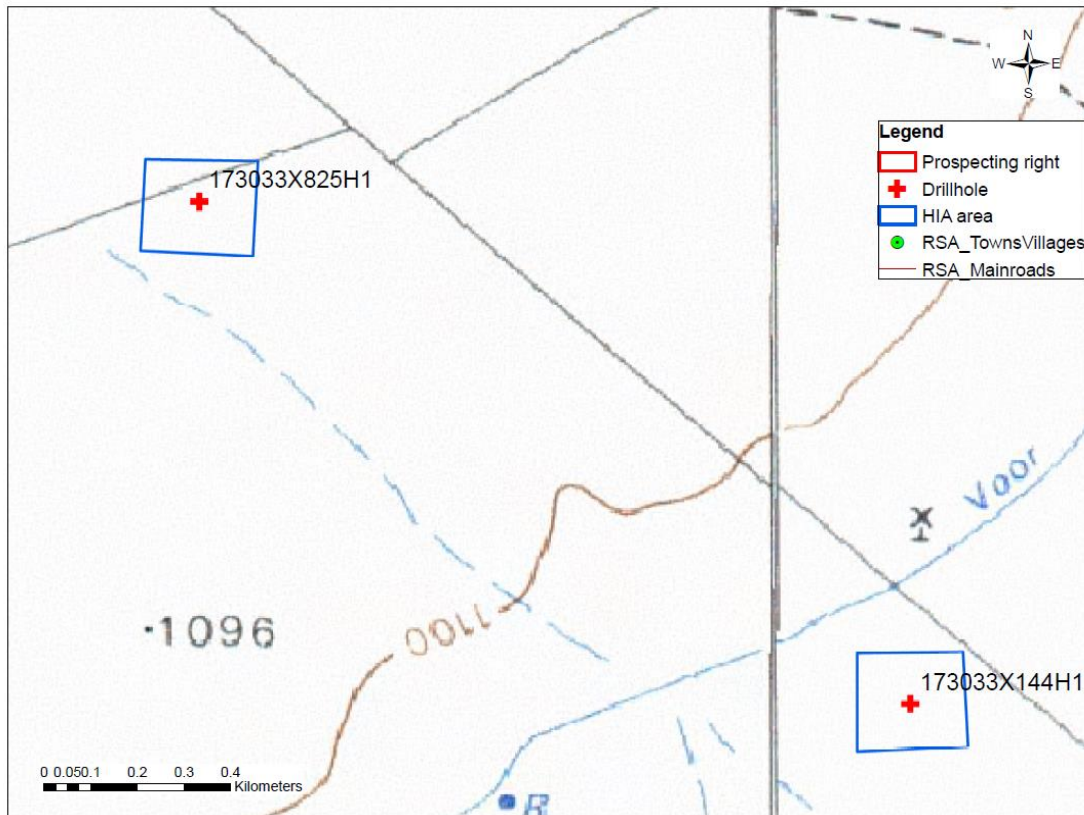


Figure 3. Locality map: Drill sites.

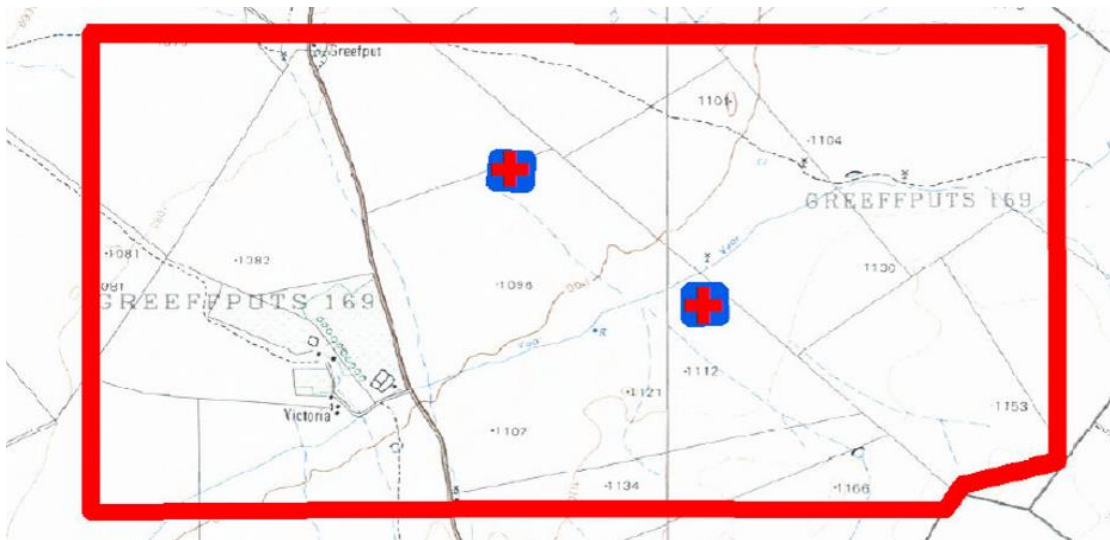


Figure 4. Locality map: Drill sites on Greeffputs (detail from Figure 2).

CONSOLIDATION DIAGRAM

Sheet 2 of 3 sheets

S.G. No.

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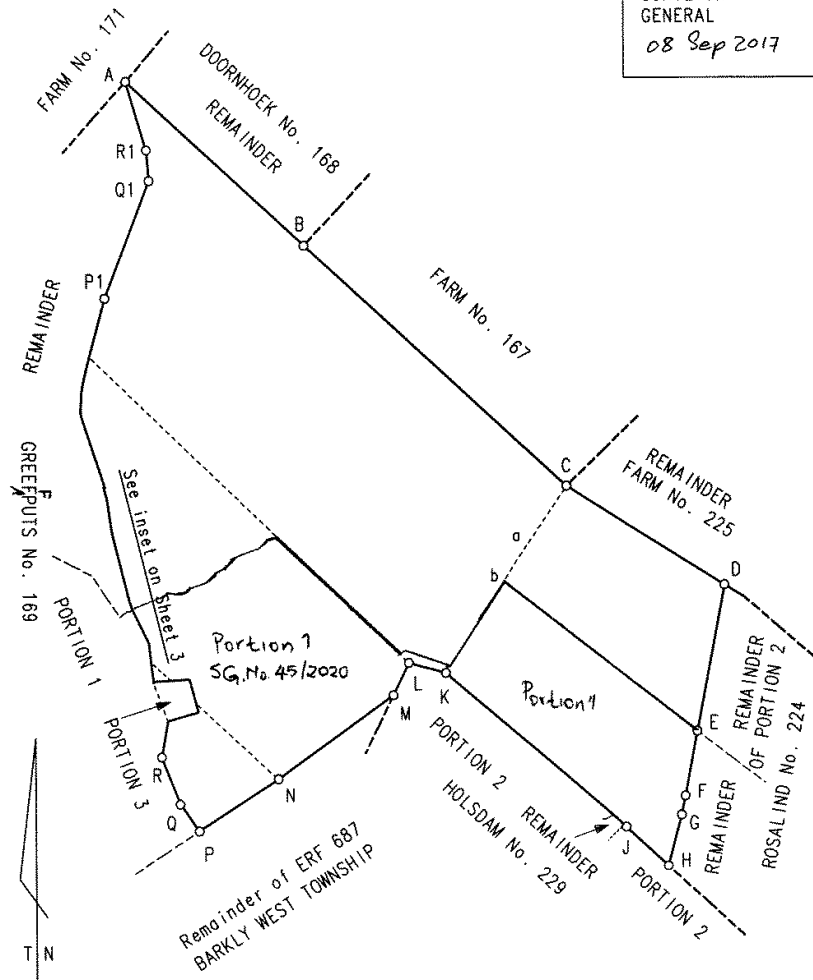
Approved

for  
SURVEYOR-  
GENERAL

08 Sep 2017

THE FARM MATTANU ANNEX No. 405

Situate in the Administrative District of Barkly West  
Municipality : Dikgatlong  
Province : Northern Cape



Scale 1 : 75 000

Compiled in May 2016 by me

H. KADERLI PLS 1035  
Professional Land Surveyor



Figure 5. Greeffputs is now synonymous with Mattanu Private Game Reserve.

In terms of heritage features of the region, the following introductory comments may be made:

#### Previous studies

SAHRIS provides no pertinent records for the immediate vicinity. Two cases (6676 and 6814) refer to proposed Greeffputs 169 prospecting by De Beers related to that envisaged in the present report, and no heritage reports were undertaken for these cases. A third case in the broader vicinity is case ID 5646 relating to an Eskom transmission line between Boundary and Ulco (Van Vollenhoven 2014), which however provides no relevant information concerning Greeffputs. Numbers of impact assessments have been undertaken along the Vaal River, particularly in the Longlands-Barkly West area. Research at Canteen Kopje at Barkly West has been generating a burgeoning number of published reports. These latter assessments and reports do not refer to the particular context pertaining at Greeffputs 169.

#### Recent history

Plans at the Chief Surveyor General's office (including that illustrated in Fig. 4) show that portions of Greeffputs 169 were incorporated into the Mattanu Private Game Reserve.

#### Stone Age

Stone Age material found in the broader region spans the Earlier, Middle and Later Stone Ages through Pleistocene and Holocene times (Beaumont & Morris 1990). As intimated above, numerous studies along the Vaal River have been undertaken, documenting such occurrences, many of them already impacted by mining. Focused research has occurred at Canteen Kopje and Pniel (e.g. Beaumont & Morris 1990, McNabb 2001, Morris & Beaumont 2004, Sarupen 2010, McNabb & Beaumont 2011, Leader 2014, Lotter et al 2016, Shadrach 2018, Kuman et al 2018, Ecker et al in press), situated about 12 km and 20 km south of the study site respectively, in river-side contexts. Rock art in the form of engravings is known to occur on andesite outcrops and hills in the area, e.g. Pniel and Nooitgedacht (Wilman 1933; Morris 1988) – but such outcrops do not occur near to the Greeffputs drilling sites.

### **Description and evaluation of environmental issues and potential impacts**

Heritage resources including archaeological sites are in each instance unique and non-renewable resources. Area and linear developments can have a permanent destructive impact on these resources in cases where they are impacted. The objective of this study is to assess the significance of such resources, where present,

and to recommend no-go or mitigation measures (where necessary) to facilitate or constrain the development.

Area impacts that would be spatially constrained within a few metres would occur in the area of the drilling sites under consideration. In both cases there are existing farm roads to the immediate vicinity of the drill sites.

### **Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts (in terms of nature and extent)**

The destructive impacts that are possible in terms of heritage resources would be direct once-off events occurring during drilling.

Indirect and cumulative impacts could result from on-going use of the site should further developments ensue.

### **Statement of significance**

In addition to guidelines provided by the National Heritage Resources Act, a set of criteria based on Deacon and Whitelaw 1997 for assessing archaeological significance has been developed for Northern Cape settings (Morris 2000a).

#### *Estimating site potential*

Table 1 is a classification of landforms and visible archaeological traces for estimating the potential for archaeological sites (after J. Deacon and National Monuments Council). Type 3 sites tend to be those with higher archaeological potential. There are notable exceptions, such as the renowned rock art site Driekopseiland, near Kimberley, which is on landform L1 Type 1. Generally, moreover, the older a site the poorer the preservation. Estimation of potential, in the light of such variables, thus requires some interpretation.

#### *Assessing site value by attribute*

The second matrix (Table 2) is adapted from Whitelaw (1997), who developed an approach for selecting sites meriting heritage recognition status in KwaZulu-Natal. It is a means of judging a site's archaeological value by ranking the relative strengths of a range of attributes. While aspects of this matrix remain qualitative, attribute assessment is a good indicator of the general archaeological significance of a site, with Type 3 attributes being those of highest significance.



**Table 1. Classification of landforms and visible archaeological traces for estimating the potential for archaeological sites (after J. Deacon, National Monuments Council).**

Class	Landform	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
L1	Rocky surface	Bedrock exposed	Some soil patches	Sandy/grassy patches
L2	Ploughed land	Far from water	In floodplain	On old river terrace
L3	Sandy ground, inland	Far from water	In floodplain or near feature such as hill	On old river terrace
L4	Sandy ground, Coastal	>1 km from sea	Inland of dune cordon	Near rocky shore
L5	Water-logged deposit	Heavily vegetated	Running water	Sedimentary basin
L6	Developed urban	Heavily built-up with no known record of early settlement	Known early settlement, but buildings have basements	Buildings without extensive basements over known historical sites
L7	Lime/dolomite	>5 myrs	<5000 yrs	Between 5000 yrs and 5 myrs
L8	Rock shelter	Rocky floor	Sloping floor or small area	Flat floor, high ceiling
Class	Archaeo-logical traces	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
A1	Area previously excavated	Little deposit remaining	More than half deposit remaining	High profile site
A2	Shell or bones visible	Dispersed scatter	Deposit <0.5 m thick	Deposit >0.5 m thick; shell and bone dense
A3	Stone artefacts or stone walling or other feature visible	Dispersed scatter	Deposit <0.5 m thick	Deposit >0.5 m thick

**Table 2. Site attributes and value assessment (adapted from Whitelaw 1997)**

Class	Attribute	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
1	Length of sequence/context	No sequence Poor context Dispersed distribution	Limited sequence	Long sequence Favourable context High density of arte/ecofacts
2	Presence of exceptional items (incl regional rarity)	Absent	Present	Major element
3	Organic preservation	Absent	Present	Major element
4	Potential for future archaeological investigation	Low	Medium	High
5	Potential for public display	Low	Medium	High
6	Aesthetic appeal	Low	Medium	High
7	Potential for implementation of a long-term management plan	Low	Medium	High

## Methodology for HIA assessment

A field visit to inspect the two drilling sites was undertaken on 25 February 2020 in the company of De Beers Exploration geologist Lorraine Masoko Mothobekhi, with property owner Johan Kriek. An assessment was made of heritage traces at the proposed drilling locales.

Vegetation cover is relatively sparse at the two sites but in both instances there is a mantling of superficial deposit (Hutton Sands and calcrete) which may mask sub-surface archaeological materials.

## Observations

1. Proposed Drillhole Id: 173033X825H1: Y(S): 28°25'19.4", X(E): 24°29'18.7":  
The surface here consists of sand cover with patches of exposed calcrete. A very low density (less than 1 per 10x10 m) of what appear to be Middle Stone Age flakes (in one instance with faceted platform) was noted during a walk around the drill site.

No other archaeological or cultural materials of any age were noted.



Figure 6. Drillhole Id: 173033X825H1: Y(S): 28°25'19.4", X(E): 24°29'18.7"



Figure 7. Artefacts as noted in the text above.

2. Proposed Drillhole Id: 173033X144H1: Y(S): 28°25'54.5", X(E): 24°30'08.0":  
The present surface here consists of a thickness of Hutton Sands which is sufficient to support substantial camethorn trees. No archaeological or cultural material of any kind was noted on the surface in the vicinity.



Figure 8. Drillhole Id: 173033X144H1: Y(S): 28°25'54.5", X(E): 24°30'08.0"

Comment on likelihood of significant sub-surface material occurring: Such occurrences at one or both sites cannot be ruled out. The property owner Mt Johan Kriek reported having found handaxes and stone tools when digging to create water pits for game (on the Mattanu Private Game Reserve), elsewhere on the property, and, significantly, in proximity to pans or depressions. This observation is consistent with previous findings in the region (e.g. Beaumont & Morris 1990) – with the distribution of Pleistocene material often being constrained in relation to water sources (along rivers or adjacent to pans). It is to be noted in the present context that neither of the proposed drilling sites is situated at any feature such as a depression or noticeable watercourse. Hence, it is predicted that the likelihood of subsurface material of significance occurring here is LOW.

### **Characterising the significance of heritage traces and contexts**

In terms of Tables 1 and 2 (above), the classification of landforms and visible archaeological traces for estimating the potential for archaeological sites at the proposed drilling sites (Table 1) suggests landscape L3 Type 1 (generally poor potential) and archaeological trace Class A3 Type 1 (likely to be insignificant). Table 2 site attribute and value assessment criteria suggest Type 1 for all of the Classes 1-7 (low significance).

Archaeological significance in terms of these criteria for both drilling sites is thus consistently LOW.

### **Characterising the significance of impacts**

The following criteria are used in this study to characterise the significance of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts:

- The **nature**, which shall include a description of what causes the effect, what will be affected, and how it will be affected.
- The **extent**, wherein it will be indicated whether the impact will be local (limited to the immediate area or site of development) or regional:
  - local extending only as far as the development site area – assigned a score of 1;
  - limited to the site and its immediate surroundings (up to 10 km) – assigned a score of 2;
  - will have an impact on the region – assigned a score of 3;

- will have an impact on a national scale – assigned a score of 4; or
  - will have an impact across international borders – assigned a score of 5.
- The **duration**, wherein it will be indicated whether:
  - the lifetime of the impact will be of a very short duration (0–1 years) – assigned a score of 1;
  - the lifetime of the impact will be of a short duration (2–5 years) – assigned a score of 2;
  - medium-term (5–15 years) – assigned a score of 3;
  - long term (> 15 years) – assigned a score of 4; or
  - permanent – assigned a score of 5.
- The **magnitude**, quantified on a scale from 0–10, where a score is assigned:
  - 0 is small and will have no effect on the environment;
  - 2 is minor and will not result in an impact on processes;
  - 4 is low and will cause a slight impact on processes;
  - 6 is moderate and will result in processes continuing but in a modified way;
  - 8 is high (processes are altered to the extent that they temporarily cease); and
  - 10 is very high and results in complete destruction of patterns and permanent cessation of processes.
- The **probability of occurrence**, which shall describe the likelihood of the impact actually occurring. Probability will be estimated on a scale, and a score assigned:
  - Assigned a score of 1–5, where 1 is very improbable (probably will not happen);
  - Assigned a score of 2 is improbable (some possibility, but low likelihood);
  - Assigned a score of 3 is probable (distinct possibility);
  - Assigned a score of 4 is highly probable (most likely); and
  - Assigned a score of 5 is definite (impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures).
- the **significance**, which shall be determined through a synthesis of the characteristics described above (refer formula below) and can be assessed as low, medium or high.
- the **status**, which will be described as either positive, negative or neutral.
  - the degree to which the impact can be reversed.
  - the degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources.

- the *degree* to which the impact can be *mitigated*.

The **significance** is determined by combining the criteria in the following formula:

**S = (E+D+M) P**; where

S = Significance weighting

E = Extent

D = Duration

M = Magnitude

P = Probability

The **significance weightings** for each potential impact are as follows:

- < 30 points: Low (i.e. where this impact would not have a direct influence on the decision to develop in the area),
- 30-60 points: Medium (i.e. where the impact could influence the decision to develop in the area unless it is effectively mitigated),
- > 60 points: High (i.e. where the impact must have an influence on the decision process to develop in the area).

***Impact table summarising the significance of impacts the Greeffputs proposed drilling sites***

<b>Nature</b> Acts or activities resulting in disturbance of surfaces and/or sub-surfaces containing artefacts (causes) resulting in the destruction, damage, excavation, alteration, removal or collection from its original position (consequences), of any archaeological material or object (what affected).		
	<b>Without mitigation</b>	<b>With mitigation</b>
<b>Extent</b>	Local (1)	Local (1)
<b>Duration</b>	Permanent (5) where archaeological material is impacted – but this has been rated as insignificant and not requiring mitigation	Permanent – but no mitigation regarded as necessary (5)
<b>Magnitude</b>	Minor (2)	Minor (2)
<b>Probability</b>	Improbable (2)	Improbable (2)
<b>Significance</b>	<b>Low (16)</b>	<b>Low (16)</b>
<b>Status (positive or negative)</b>	Negative	Negative
<b>Reversibility</b>	No	No
<b>Irreplaceable loss of</b>	Very low density (in one	

<b>resources?</b>	instance) and absence (in the other) of artefacts in the vicinity of the proposed drilling sites. No irreplaceable loss expected.	
<b>Can impacts be mitigated?</b>	Minimal traces noted on the ground: Not regarded as necessary other than by way of on-going management as per EMP in case unexpected archaeological material is encountered sub-surface.	On-going management as per EMP
<b>Mitigation:</b> Specific mitigation measures at the drilling sites not regarded as necessary. Possible subsurface Stone Age archaeological traces including possible artefact occurrences. Report immediately to SAHRA if any major feature is found.		
<b>Cumulative Impacts:</b> Where any archaeological contexts occur the impacts are once-off permanent destructive events. Future infrastructure development may lead to spatially extended impacts in the vicinity. EMP should provide for on-going monitoring.		
<b>Residual Impacts:</b> Depleted archaeological record if/where present.		

## MEASURES FOR INCLUSION IN THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Archaeological or other heritage materials occurring in the path of any surface or sub-surface disturbances associated with any aspect of the development are highly likely to be subject to destruction, damage, excavation, alteration, or removal. The objective should be to limit such impacts to the primary activities associated with drilling and hence to limit secondary impacts during the medium and longer term if further development occurs.

<b>Project component/s</b>	Any road construction over and above what is necessary and any extension of other components.
<b>Potential Impact</b>	The potential impact if this objective is not met is that wider areas or extended linear developments may result in further destruction, damage, excavation, alteration, removal or collection of heritage objects from their current context in the area.
<b>Activity/risk source</b>	Activities which could impact on achieving this objective include deviation from the planned drilling site and of access road/s without taking heritage impacts into consideration.
<b>Mitigation: Target/Objective</b>	A drilling environmental management plan that takes cognizance of heritage resources in the event of any future expansion, access roads or other infrastructure.

<b>Mitigation: Action/control</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Provision for on-going heritage monitoring in a facility environmental management plan which also provides guidelines on what to do in the event of any major heritage feature being encountered during any phase of development or operation.  Localize drilling activity and impacts in the immediate vicinity of the proposed drilling site.	Environmental management provider with on-going monitoring.	Environmental management plan to be in place before commencement of development.

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	Inclusion of further heritage impact consideration in any future expansion or infrastructural elements. Immediate reporting to relevant heritage authorities of any heritage feature discovered during drilling operations.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Officials from relevant heritage authorities (National and Provincial) to be permitted to inspect the operation at any time in relation to the heritage component of the management plan.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

A low density (less than 1 per 10x10 m) 'background scatter' of Pleistocene (cf. MSA) artefacts was noted near one of the proposed drilling sites, and none were found at the other. No colonial era or other cultural resources were in evidence. Archaeological significance was determined to be consistently low in terms of all criteria by which they were measured. Some potential for subsurface material occurring is pointed out but the likelihood of significant such occurrences is also argued to be low. Steps for reporting in the event of archaeological material being found are indicated.

At the specific drilling sites reported on, it is not regarded as necessary to carry out mitigation.

## **Acknowledgements**

I thank Lorraine Masoko Mothobekhi of De Beers and property owner Johan Kriek of Mattanu Private Game Reserve, who took me to inspect the two sites.

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