

PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT: HARVEST VALE DEVELOPMENT, KARIEGA GAME RESERVE, EASTERN CAPE

[Remainder of the Farm Harvest Vale No 300 in the area of Ndlambe Municipality in the Division of Bathurst (2066 ha); the Farm Massers Drift No 223 in the area of Ndlambe Municipality in the Division of Alexandria (472 ha) and Portion 11 of the Farm Bushfontein No 548 in the area of Makana Municipality in the Division of Albany (456 ha)].

Prepared for: Coastal and Environmental Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The construction of a luxury lodge, three to four houses, a connecting road as well as the necessary infrastructure in terms of electricity, water and sewerage is planned for the 1820 Settler farm of Harvest Vale, on the Bushmen's River, Eastern Cape. The farm adjoins the Kariega Game Reserve and for the purposes of this study they are considered separate although they may be joined in future.

Harvest Vale farm has belonged to the Gardner family since 1827 and contains a number of sites of varying historical significance. The terms of reference included examining the impact of the development on these sites.

The farm was visited on the 20th September 2007. A few stone tools were found in the footpath which leads to the sites identified for three houses, on the western side of the Bushmen's River. The stone tools were not concentrated in one locality and did not appear to represent a settlement. They are of low significance and mitigation is not necessary as the tools appear to be randomly scattered. No artefactual remains were found on the area set aside for the lodge and the fourth house.

The historical sites on the farm are of varying significance. Not all the sites could be visited as the owner of the farm was away on leave. The ruins of the original farmhouse, dating to 1833, could not be located but it is not situated in the footprint area and is therefore not threatened. The old wagon track running across the farm, as well as the drift across the Bushmen's River, is of historical interest and may be used as a tourist attraction. However, it is not threatened by the development and conservation procedures are not feasible. The current farm house dates to the 1880s and is of historical interest because of its association with the Gardner family. The directors of Harvest Vale have indicated that they will retain and use the house. If at any stage they decide to alter or demolish the house, a permit will have to be obtained from SAHRA Eastern Cape as the building is older than 60 years. The archival material (currently housed in a small building adjoining the farmhouse) is of great historical interest. It includes the original title deeds and family photograph albums. It is not clear whether the owner of the property is donating the archival material to the developers. If this is the case, it is recommended that the material is properly archived and original material is scanned for display purposes.

Finally, while there were no obvious graves or cemeteries around the farm buildings, it is clearly possible that the graves of farm workers may be located on the farm. It is important that these be identified with the assistance of the farm owner, and that they are fenced to protect them from the game. Procedures with regard to access by descendants may need to be investigated.

It is recommended that development may take place, but that the issue of graves/cemeteries needs to be addressed when the owner of the property returns from leave.

INTRODUCTION

The farm Massers Drift and portions of the farms Harvest Vale and Bushfontein (3040 ha in total), which are adjacent to the Kariega Game Reserve, have been purchased by Harvest Vale (Pty) Ltd with the aim of creating a game reserve (Figure 1). It is possible that these properties may be joined in the future.

All development will take place on the portion of the farm known as Massers Drift No. 223 which is situated on the western side of the Bushman's River. The development will consist of a single upmarket lodge comprising 24 beds, staff accommodation and a few (possibly four) private homes (Figure 2). One house will be south of the lodge and three to the west on the ridge. In terms of infrastructure, there is an existing track to the bottom of the hill on which the lodge will be situated and a short section of road (around 1 km in length) will have to be built to the house sites. It has been proposed that roads on the property are kept to a minimum for game viewing drives. The water supply to the lodge and houses will be provided by a spring on the eastern side of Harvest Vale and will require pipelines.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Dr L Webley was requested to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment of the three properties discussed above.

- Archaeological impact
- Impact on the built environment – this would include identifying the historic sites on the property, determining their significance and whether the development will impact on them, finally advice on whether they could be maintained and access improved
- Impact on graves/cemeteries
- Living heritage

The developers have indicated that the family museum on Harvest Vale will become a feature of the development.

NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT No 25 OF 1999

Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 clearly stipulates that any person constructing a road or similar linear developments exceeding 300m in length or developing an area exceeding 5000 m² in extent is required to notify the responsible heritage resources authority or SAHRA. SAHRA will in turn advise whether an impact assessment report is needed before development can take place.

Section 34 of the Act stipulates that no person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

With regard burial grounds and graves, Section 36 (3) of the Act stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage authority or SAHRA, (a) destroy, damage or exhume the grave of the victim of conflict; (b) destroy, damage or

exhume any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority.

In terms of the Act all archaeological objects, palaeontological material and meteorites are the property of the State. Any person who discovers any of these materials in the course of development must immediately inform the responsible heritage resources authority. No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage authority destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or disturb any archaeological sites and material, palaeontological sites and meteorites.

Living heritage (defined in the Act as including cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems and the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships) is also given protection under the Act. Section 24 of the Act makes provision for provincial heritage resources authorities to maintain a register of heritage resources and to set up management plans for their preservation.

These aspects of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 need to be consulted when considering the proposed development. NHRA (1999) defines the word “development” to include “any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land”.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND TO THE AREA

A number of scatters of Middle Stone Age and Early Stone Age scatters have been found on the banks of the upper reaches of the Bushman’s River by Binneman and Webley in 1993. Similarly, a number of stone cairns have been reported from the banks of the upper reaches of the Bushman’s River, and some were excavated by amateur archaeologists in the 1930s. They contained human remains. Unfortunately very little information can be derived from these excavations as no excavation reports were kept. The Albany Museum contains a number of small collections of artefactual material (and human remains) from these sites.

These sites were, however, recorded to the north of the N2 highway, and none have been recorded from the area to the south of the highway, in the vicinity of the farm.

Wagon tracks of the original wagon route from Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown, were recorded by Webley and Nel on the farm Rochester in 1993.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PROPERTY

The history of the farm is closely related to the Gardner family. Edward Gardner and his family came out with the 1820 Settlers and initially settled on the farm “Birmingham New” which today forms part of Mosslands. In time he bought Mount Pleasant (originally named Bushfontein), and in 1850 he sold both Birmingham New and Mount Pleasant to his youngest son John.

Edward’s oldest son, Hezekiah, applied and was granted 2976 morgen (2394 ha) on the left bank of the Bushman’s River when he was 16 years old (around 1827). He paid an annual quitrent of 3 pounds sterling for this farm which he named “Harvest

Vale". The title deeds, which are still owned by the family, have the date 1829. However, Hezekiah only moved to the farm in 1833. He married in 1834 and he and his wife only lived on Harvest Vale for one year before their house was burnt down. They moved back to Birmingham New and lived there until 1846/7. However, Hezekiah continued to hunt and farm on Harvest Vale. To cope with the periodic invasions of this area, Hezekiah was appointed as a Field Cornet in charge of a military post on the south side of Harvest Vale. According to Skead's unpublished records, Sir Harry Smith authorised the established a force of 50 mounted men at Jagersdrift during the Eighth Frontier War of 1851. Hezekiah sold Harvest Vale (around 1854) and moved to Fort Beaufort where he died in 1892.

Edward's youngest son, John, continued to live on Mount Pleasant, but moved to Birmingham New in 1850. In 1857, John bought Harvest Vale, so except for a period of three years, the farm has been in the Gardner family since 1827. John's fifth child, Charles Gardner (the author's grandfather) eloped with his cousin, because they could not obtain parental consent for their marriage, and lived in Harvest Vale in tents. Charles Gardner was a very successful farmer, making his fortune from ostriches. He was also a very successful agriculturalist and apparently displayed 240 different products at the Grahamstown Show of 1910. Charles was also responsible for initiating the use of dipping tanks which saved the cattle farmers in the area from tick borne diseases. He was famous for his hunting skill and around 100 of his trophies of big game are displayed in the museum at Harvest Vale.

Charles entailed the four adjoining farms, all situated on the Bushman's River, which he left to his sons. These were Harvest Vale (for Basil), Spadona (for Vernon), Jagers Drift (for the author's father, Victor) and Hunters Lodge (for Lyndon). The fifth farm, Mount Pleasant, was not entailed and was left to his daughter, Dulcie. Three of the four farms are still in the Gardner family – Harvest Vale, Jagers Drift and Hunters Lodge. Charles Gardner (1859 – 1941) died at Harvest Vale.

The history of the farm is housed in a small museum on the property and comprises many interesting items collected by the Gardner family over the years. The museum contains a large collection of family photographs in albums, as well as framed family pictures. Of particular interest are the original title deeds to the property (some dating to 1829).

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The farm was visited on the 20th September by L Webley and Andrew Warren, a ranger from Kariega Game Reserve. A number of places of historic interest were visited and a number of localities investigated for archaeological sites.

We approached the farm from the old road, which crosses the area from east to west. There have been some complaints from local farmers that their access through the farm will be affected by the development of the reserve but this road is in very bad condition and is not used often. Some after entering the property, an old hunting lodge may be found some 20 m to the north of the road.

Hunting Lodge and Old Gate

The hunting lodge was most recently used by Mr Clive Gardner. It is a makeshift construction made of sheets of wood, corrugate iron, old bottles, etc and appears to date within the last 40-50 years (Fig. 3). It contains many trophies from previous hunts as well as an old car. It also contains a gate (Fig. 4) with the inscription: “The original gate in the original road”. It is difficult to trace the route of the old wagon track at this spot and it is not clear what purpose the gate (which is not very broad) would have served on the wagon track.



Fig. 3 The hunting lodge



Fig. 4 The old gate

S 33° 25' 13,9"
E 26 ° 33' 25,5"

Old Wagon Track

It is difficult to trace the old wagon track. It seems to veer northward, from the old road, and appears to follow the contours of a kloof, down the hillside. The tracks have gouged deep grooves in the rock (Fig. 5) but are now partially obscured by dense vegetation. They may best be seen by consulting aerial photographs. A section of the wagon track was found some kilometres from the old hunting lodge:

S 33° 35' 15,3"
E 26 ° 32' 56,2"

Drift across the Bushman's River

There is a drift across the Bushman's River which seems to related to the old wagon track. It is located at a section of the river which is very shallow, at present this drift is not used by vehicles but cattle are still driven across the river at this spot (Fig. 6). It is possible that this may be the drift referred to in the old records but this cannot be determined without any certainty.



Fig. 5 Old wagon track



Fig. 6 Drift across the river

The co-ordinates for the drift are:

S 33° 35' 08,0"

E 26 ° 31' 38,8"

Harvest Vale house and museum

The farmhouse presently occupied by Mr Basil Gardner is apparently the same house which was built by Mr Charles Gardner around the 1880s. The ruins of the house built by Hezekiah Gardner around 1833 (burnt to the ground during a Xhosa attack) are apparently still visible and members of the Gardner family know of its location. Unfortunately Mr Basil Gardner was not present to show us the ruins. The present house has had several extensions added over the years. There are many family photographs of the Gardner family in the house. Apparently the house will be retained for the use of the directors. There are a number of sheds near to the house, one of them containing the Gardner “museum”.



Fig. 7 The old Harvest Vale homestead



Fig. 8 Some of the sheds on the property

S 33° 35' 00,2"

E 26 ° 31' 18,5"

The contents of the museum are of great interest, containing photograph albums with photos of the Gardner family dating back to the middle of the 19th century, as well as many photographs documenting the history of farming in the area. There are also many mounted animal specimens, some hunted by the Gardners in the area but others hunted in Zimbabwe. Of particular interest are a small geological collection and a number of stone artefacts of archaeological interest. These include some bored stones, a grooved stone and some Middle Stone Age flakes:



Fig. 9 Stone artefacts in the museum



Fig. 10 Mounted trophies in museum.

Location of the Lodge

The area selected for the lodge (to south of the house) is covered in dense bush and it is difficult to survey the area for stone artefacts. None were apparent from the foot path which we followed.

S 33° 35' 13,7"
E 26 ° 31' 26,9"

Location of the three houses

We followed a foot path through the bush to the location of the three private houses which will be built on a ridge overlooking the Bushmen's river. Isolated stone flakes were found in the foot paths on our walk through the bush. They were not concentrated in one spot and there was no indication of a habitation site. However, the fact that some of these flakes were made on silcrete, makes it unlikely that they relate to accidental manufacture. The silcrete seems to have been introduced from elsewhere, as the local stone is rough sandstone.

Quartzite flake:
S 33° 35' 10,4"
E 26 ° 31' 26,6"

Silcrete flake:
S 33° 35' 01,7"
E 26 ° 30' 34,4"

Quartzite and silcrete flake:
S 33° 34' 58,4"
E 26 ° 30' 31,2"

Site of houses:
S 33° 34' 47,4"
E 26 ° 30' 21,2"



Fig. 11 Single silcrete flake



Fig. 12 Quartzite and silcrete flake

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND SENSITIVITY OF THE AREA

From previous records relating to upper reaches of the Bushmen's River (to the north of Harvest Vale), the majority of stone tool scatters are located on the banks of the river. A section of the eastern banks of the river was covered on foot in this survey but no stone tools were discovered. However it is important to point out that this area has been the focus of intensive cultivation for the last 120 years. The western banks of the river are heavily forested and it is impossible to undertake any surveys. No stone tools were found in the area selected for the lodge. However, some stone tools (made from silcrete brought in from other areas) were found in the footpath leading to the location selected for the three houses.

The stone tools are thinly scattered and do not appear to be concentrated in one locality. There is no indication of a prehistoric settlement. These stone scatters are of low significance.

The most important historical sites (hunting lodge, old wagon gate, wagon track, farmhouse, drift, etc) were visited with a view to determining their significance. The only site which was not surveyed was the original ruins of the old farmhouse burnt down by the Xhosa. There are family members who know of the locality of this site and it would be of interest to record it with GPS and digital photographs. It may offer potential for historical archaeologists interested in examining a frontier farmhouse. There are some stories of attempts to pan for gold in the lower reaches of the Bushmen's River (on the southern boundary of the farm), during the last century. This site was not investigated.

There does not appear to be a family cemetery, and it seems that the Gardner family members were buried in the cemetery in Salem. However, confirmation of this can only be made by interviewing Mr Basil Gardner. It is, nonetheless, highly likely that the farm workers will have buried their dead on the farm. This information can probably be obtained from Mr Gardner who is in the position to identify farmworkers who may be affected.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND POSSIBLE MITIGATION

The survey concentrated on the footprint area (lodge and houses), although an attempt was made to record some of the other historical sites on the farm. This is to ensure that these sites are recorded for the future, when access may be more difficult. None of the historical sites are of great significance. However, it is the sum of the historical sites on the property, which are of interest to the historian. The ruined farmhouse of Hezekiah Gardner, as well as the more recent farmhouse of Charles Gardner, has the potential to inform us about the lifestyle of the 1820 Settlers. It is unlikely that the old farmhouse will be impacted by the development as it is not located on the footprint. The remnants of the old wagon track are of interest, as only short sections of the wagon tracks may still be found in the Eastern Cape. Clearly, the wagon track will disappear in time and it is not feasible to try and preserve it for tourism purposes. It should be left alone. We do not know the location of the old military post of Jagersdrift and it is possible that it is not situated on Harvest Vale. The hunting lodge is of recent origin and there is no reason why it should be preserved. A photographic record would be of value.

Although technically speaking, an archaeological site can comprise a single stone artifact; no clear **archaeological sites** (in terms of any grouping of stone flakes) were discovered during the survey. The development of the game reserve is not likely to impact on the archaeology of the reserve in a negative way. Archaeological sites, not discovered during the survey, will be preserved for the future. For example, it is possible that there are rock shelters which may contain paintings and/or archaeological deposit, in the cliff faces overlooking the Bushmen's River, on the northern portion of the property. However, this area is very densely vegetated and it is difficult to get to it on foot. There are no roads. Any potential sites are therefore protected from development.

RECOMMENDATIONS PRIOR TO DEVELOPMENT

A number of steps may be taken prior to development to lessen the impact of the development.

Harvest Vale farmhouse: This house is clearly older than 60 years. While no archival research has been undertaken on the property, it would appear from historical sources that it may date to around the 1880s. The building is protected by the NHRA. The directors of the development have indicated their intention to retain the building. It is important to note that alterations or possible future decisions to demolish the building would require a permit from SAHRA. If this is the case, SAHRA Eastern Cape may require a full assessment of the building.

Graves: It is important that a family member as well as farm workers identify possible graves and/or cemeteries on the property and that these are fenced to protect them from game. Failure to do so may result in disaffected farmworkers raising this at a later stage if they are opposed to the development. Elsewhere in other game reserves, headstones have been knocked over by game. For this reason all graves should be recorded (GPS locations) and fenced. Consideration should be given to the fact that the descendants of the deceased may want access to graves once the area becomes a game reserve.

Museum building and contents: The developers have indicated their intention of maintaining the museum. It appears that the owner of the property, Mr Basil Gardner, may be donating the full contents of the museum, including family albums, portraits and title deeds, to the developer. The present building is not suitable for use as a repository of archival material. It has previously been flooded after heavy rains resulted in the river over-flowing its banks. A number of steps need to be undertaken to protect these items from further decay. The windows need to be protected by UV film to prevent the documents and photographs from fading. Fumigation will need to be undertaken on a regular basis to prevent insect damage. This will clearly be the responsibility of the future owners of the collection. If they do not curate the collection of material properly, it will deteriorate and be of no value.

One proposal is that the items are donated to a museum and that only scanned copies of the photographs and maps are mounted in the on-site museum and/or lodge. For example, if the Gardner collection was donated to the Albany Museum, or the Cory Library for Historical Research (Rhodes University) an agreement could be reached regarding scanning of material. Alternatively, if Gardner and/or the new owners of the property are not amenable to donating the original material to a museum, then it is suggested that they are properly curated in some secure venue, and replicas are made available to the public. The developers would need to employ a suitable qualified person to curate the material as this is a specialist job. Clearly, private companies and individuals generally do not have the necessary skills to curate archival material and for this reason donation to a museum or library seems the preferred option.

RECOMMENDATIONS DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE

The most recent owner of the property, Mr Basil Gardner, needs to be consulted about the possibility that the graves of farm workers may be found on the farm; he needs to be consulted about his intentions regarding the future of the museum collections and he should be approached to assist with identifying the exact location of the ruins of Hezekiah Gardner's house. This can only be done once Mr Gardner has returned from holiday.

The developers have indicated that they will be retaining the original Harvest Vale farmhouse for their own use. The house will clearly need to be restored and it is important for the developers to follow the correct procedures in this regard. Architectural plans will have to be sent to SAHRA Eastern Cape for approval. If the developers decide at a future date that they would prefer to demolish the building (for whatever reason) SAHRA EC for a permit to demolish the building. SAHRA may require more detailed documentation with regard the property. It is recommended that this needs to be done timeously.

I would recommend that development of the property can take place. However, when leveling of the soil for the lodge, houses and connecting roads, the contractors should look for the following features:

- 1) Fresh-water mussel shell middens close to the banks of the River
- 2) Concentrations of stone tools
- 3) Bones, including fossilized bones

- 4) Human remains, including burials
- 5) Remains of earlier (European) stone structures and/or artefacts

If any of the above is discovered, further development of the property must stop immediately and archaeologists as well as the South African Heritage Resources Agency should be contacted to determine the significance of the discovery.

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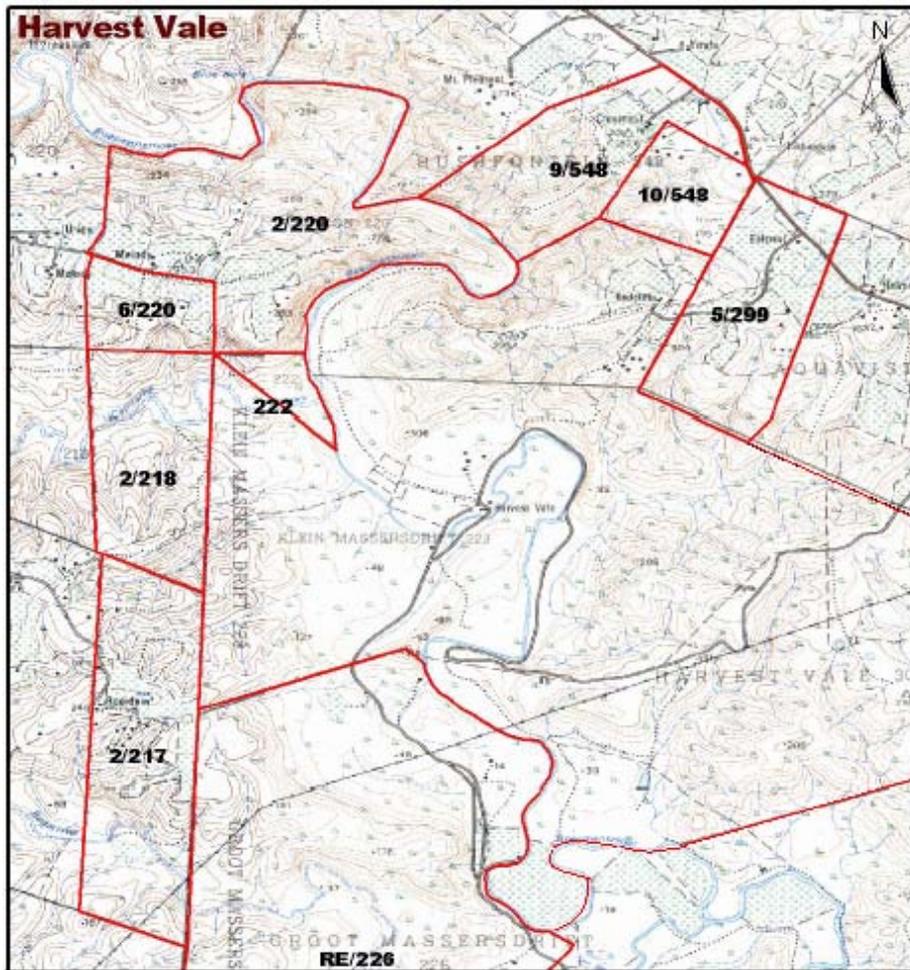


Fig. 1: 1:50 000 map of the area, showing the location of the farm purchased for development.

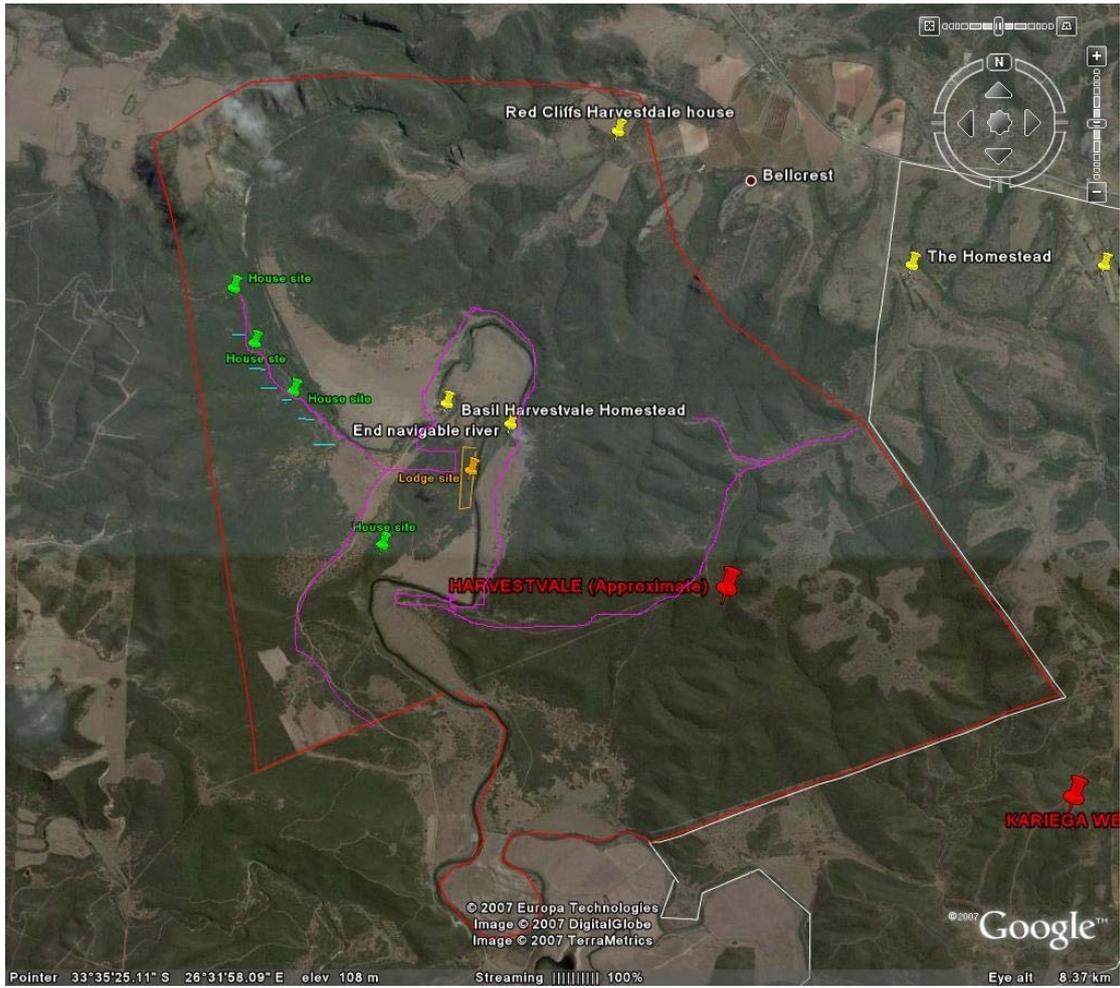


Fig 2: Map of the farm with the location of the lodge (orange), the houses (green) and the homestead of Mr Basil Gardner (yellow). The area surveyed on foot and by vehicle is indicated in pink, and the location of he stone tools in turquoise.