

**ARCHEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE
PROPOSED RAISING OF THE BLESKOP DAM ON A
PORTION OF FARM 438 IN GROOT BRAK-FONTEIN,
CITRUSDAL**

Prepared for

Ninham Shand Consulting Services

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HERITAGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SERVICE
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EFF. ENSTRUITINGEN BESTUURDIEN

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ninham Shand have been approached by Mouton Citrus (Pty) Ltd to upgrade an existing dam on the farm Groot Brakfontein, close to the town of Citrusdal in the Olifants River valley (Figure 1). Part of this upgrade entails a proposal to raise the wall to increase water storage capacity. The moderate raising of the wall will mean a change in FSL (full supply level) from its present 183.5m to a proposed FSL of 184.9m (see figure 2).

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

A dam already exists on the site. The area to be impacted the proposed raising is a narrow band between the existing and proposed FSL levels.. During construction of the original dam, some material from the basin excavation seems to have been dumped on the southern edge. In general, the area around the dam could be considered as degraded agricultural land.

3. OBSERVATIONS

The area that would be affected by the change in FSL in reality is a narrow band around the southern part of the site. This was inspected on the 6th July 2006.

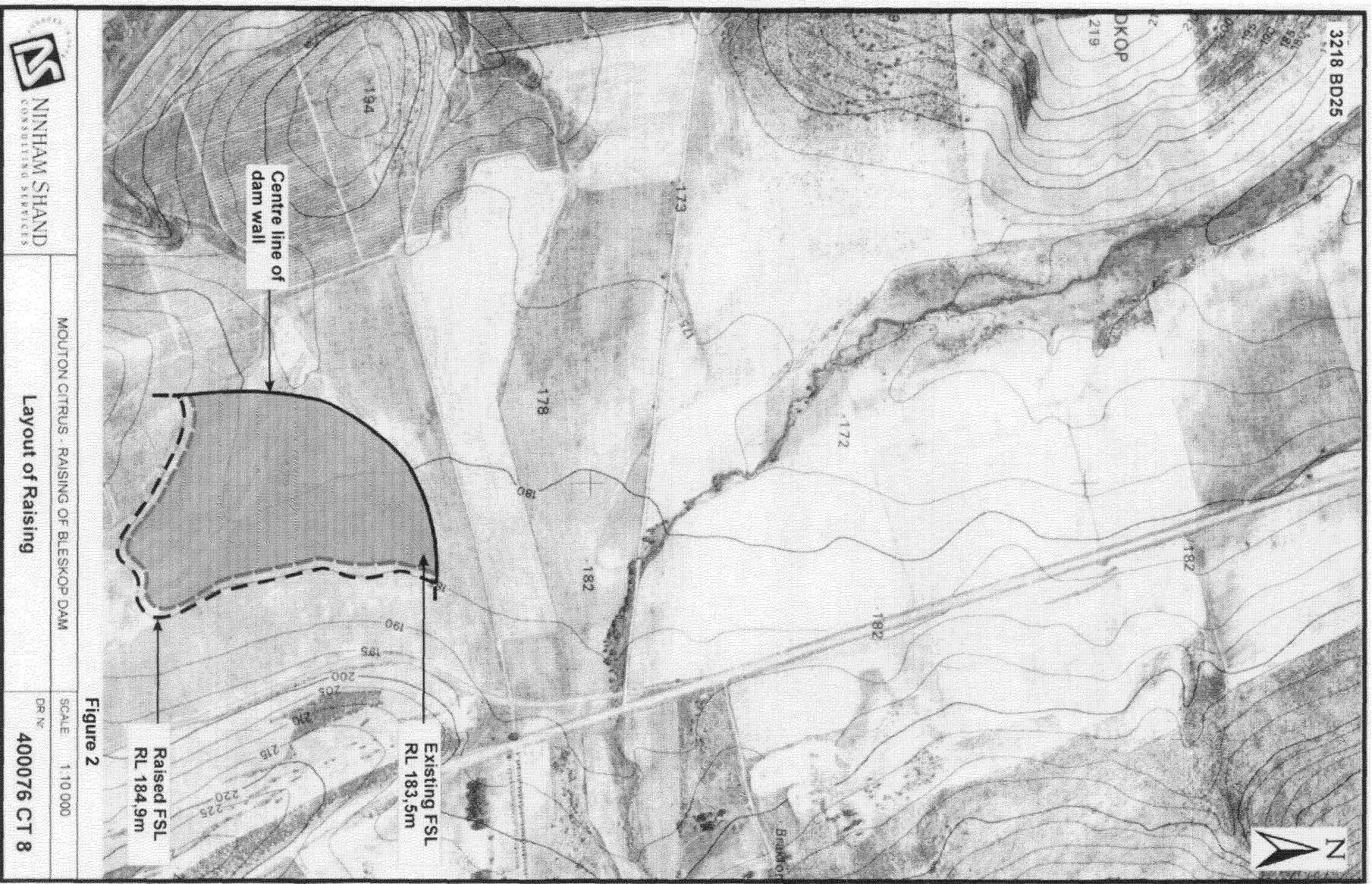
While the interior of the existing dam basin has for the most part been excavated to underlying bedrock, the southern edge still retains part of the original geological structure. Where overlying soil has been removed by dam water along the inner edge of the present FSL, a layer of ferruginous gravels have been exposed (plate 1). Scattered along this band of gravels are sandstone and quartzitic cobbles (plate 1), amongst which are a number of ESA (Early Stone Age) artefacts. Several crude bifacial handaxes of average size were noted, and a number of smaller ones are also present (plates 2-4). Also present are numerous large flakes and cores. No organic remains have been preserved along with these items meaning that they have limited scientific value. The area that will be flooded lies immediately adjacent to where these finds are exposed and although still covered by soil, the ESA artefacts are expected to extend below.

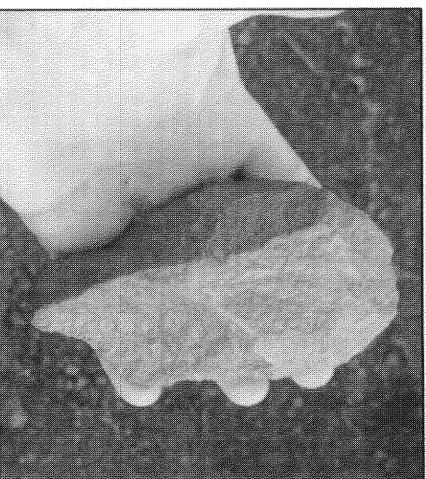
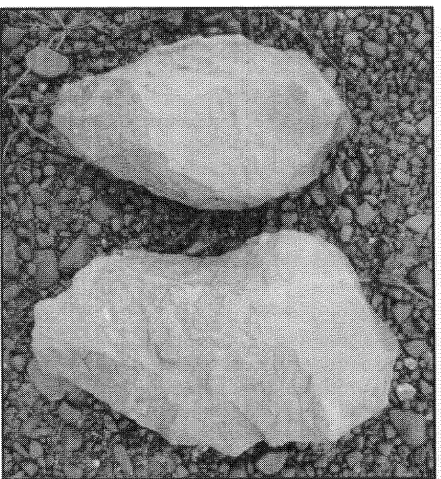
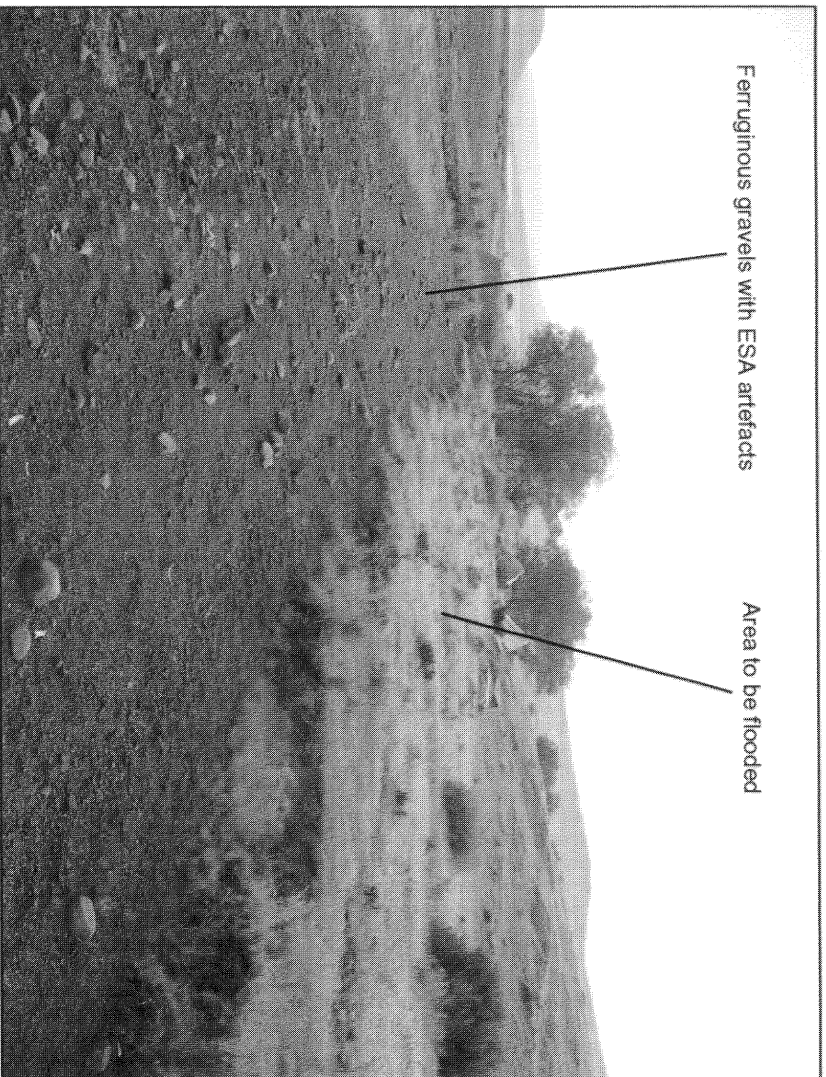
These are widespread throughout the Olifants River and will often be found when the underlying ferruginous strata are exposed by natural or development activities.

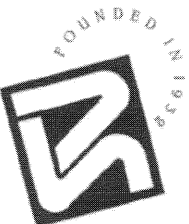
4. RECOMMENDATIONS

In our opinion, the upgrading and raising of the Bleskop dam will have no impact of any significance on archaeological heritage. Handaxes and other ESA artefacts will remain in their locations although they will be covered by water. Some additional artefactual material will be exposed as overlying soils are eroded away by water. The items would still be available for collection or study in future if so required.

No archaeological mitigation is therefore proposed for the site.







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10 August 2006

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Attention: Dr Antonieta Jerardino

Dear Dr Jerardino

**THE PROPOSED RAISING OF THE BLESKOP DAM, CITRUSDAL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Mouton Citrus (Pty) Ltd is proposing to raise the Bleskop Dam on a portion of Farm 438 in Groot Brakfontein, some 10 km north of Citrusdal. The proposed development entails increasing the gross water storage capacity of the Bleskop Dam from about 360 000 m³ to about 580 000 m³ and the water surface area at full supply level from about 14 to about 17 hectares. When completed, the capacity of the dam would be increased by approximately 220 000 m³ and the surface area by some 3 hectares, with a maximum wall height of about 11.9 metres.

Enclosed please find a copy of the Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed raising of the Bleskop Dam for your perusal.

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (D:EA&DP) would need formal comments from Heritage Western Cape in order to issue a Record of Decision for the abovementioned development. In this light, we hereby request that you please submit your comments on the development to Goddy Enongene or Mike Luger at Ninham Shand for inclusion with the Final Application Form and Scoping Checklist to be submitted to D:EA&DP.

Many thanks for your assistance and should you have any queries please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully
NINHAM SHAND

DR GODDY ENONGENE
Senior Environmental Practitioner

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MIKE LUGER
Environmental Discipline Head