

9/2/052/43

07 1/3 a Phase 1 Archael

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT  
PORTION 10 OF THE FARM MATJIESFONTEIN NO. 304  
KEURBOOMSTRAND**

Prepared for

**WITHERS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS**

By

Agency for Cultural Resource Management  
Specialists in Archaeological Studies & Heritage Resource Management

P.O. Box 159  
Riebeeck West  
7306

Ph/Fax: 022 461 2755  
Mobile: 082 321 0172  
E-mail: [acrm@mbury.new.co.za](mailto:acrm@mbury.new.co.za)

SA HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY  
RECEIVED  
- 5 FEB 2002

**NOVEMBER  
2001**

## **Executive summary**

No significant archaeological or heritage remains were located during a study of portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, in Keurboomstrand, near Plettenberg Bay, on the southern Cape coast.

The proposed Matjiesfontein project envisages 40 residential units and recreational facilities, on about 22 ha of land.

The proposed development will cover about 25% of the site.

A few small, discreet, patches of shellfish remains, some fragmented shellfish remains, a few pieces of ostrich eggshell and two stone flakes were located in open patches on the steep north facing slopes of the large barrier dunes.

These surface patches of shellfish remains most likely represent small food parcels consumed by prehistoric people during visits to the beach. No cultural remains, such as pottery or stone artefacts, were found associated with the shell.

The shellfish remains are not considered to be significant.

No archaeological remains were located in the frontal dunes.

The flat lying area between the barrier dunes and the escarpment has been heavily invaded by exotic vegetation, resulting in low archaeological visibility. However, this area was previously used for agricultural purposes and is already severely degraded. It is in this area that the majority of housing units will be sited. No significant archaeological remains are expected to be located here.

The probability of locating archaeological sites/remains in the study area during implementation of the project is considered to be medium-high.

Shell middens may be exposed during construction work for the proposed few houses on the backward dunes, and in the cutting/clearing of hiking trails through the dune forest.

Human burial remains may also be uncovered or exposed during earthworks.

With regard to the proposed development of portion 10 of the farm, Matjiesfontein No. 304 in Keurboomstrand, the following archaeological recommendations are made.

- An archaeologist should assess the site once earthworks and vegetation clearing for trails and boardwalks, commences.
- Should any significant sites be located during earthworks and trail clearing, some archaeological sampling may be required. Funds should be set aside in the event of this occurring.

- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported to a professional archaeologist, or the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

Burial remains should be treated sensitively at all times. Human remains should not be removed until inspected by a professional archaeologist.

The above recommendations are subject to the approval of the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background and brief**

Withers Environmental Consultants has requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management undertake a heritage impact assessment (HIA) of portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, in Keurboomstrand, Plettenberg Bay.

The proposed Matjiesfontein project envisages 40 residential unit and recreational facilities, on about 22 ha of land.

The proposed development will cover about 25% of the site.

The aim of the study is to locate, identify and map archaeological remains that may be negatively impacted by the proposed project, to propose measures to mitigate against the impact and to guide the development process.

## **2. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The terms of reference for the HIA study were:

1. to determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological sites of significance in the proposed site;
2. to identify and map any sites of archaeological significance in the proposed site;
3. to assess the sensitivity and significance of archaeological sites in the proposed site;
4. to assess the status and significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed development, and
5. to identify mitigatory measures to protect and maintain any valuable archaeological sites that may exist.

## **3. THE STUDY SITE**

The study site for the proposed project is illustrated in Figure 1.

The site is located east of the Dune Park Holiday Resort, on a coastal plain about 1.5 km east of the Keurbooms River and some 9 km east of Plettenberg Bay.

The frontal dune system on the property is relatively free of alien vegetation and present limited recreational opportunities, such walking trails and viewing platforms.

The flat lying area between the secondary dunes and the escarpment is heavily invaded with exotic alien vegetation, resulting in low archaeological visibility. This area was previously used for agricultural purposes and is already severely degraded. It is in this area that the proposed housing units will be sited.

No significant archaeological remains are expected to be located in this area

## **4. STUDY APPROACH AND DOCUMENTATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

### **4.1 Method of survey**

The approach used in the archaeological study entailed a foot survey of the study site.

A desktop study was also undertaken.

### **4.2 Overview of the regional archaeological context of the study area**

According to the records of the Archaeological Data Recording Centre (ADRC) at the South African Museum, no sites have been located or mapped in the immediate study area.

A low density scatter of shellfish remains, stone flakes and ostrich eggshell were located on a high, partially vegetated sand dune, overlooking the Dune Park Holiday Resort during an assessment for the proposed Sanderlings development (Kaplan 1999). Some Stone Age flakes were also located among the barrier dunes west of the Dune Park Holiday Resort, and in road reserves in the area (Kaplan 1999).

The Plettenberg region is well known for its rich archaeological heritage (Kaplan 1993, 2000). The majority of sites occur on, or close to, the Robberg Peninsula. These include the well known Nelson Bay Cave. Sites also occur at Platbank, Uiteindelik, Beacon Island, Hangklip and Keurboom State Forest.

Records from the ADRC indicate that a shell midden has been recorded at Keurbooms River Beach, while Mortelmans (1946) described Later Stone Age and Middle Stone Age sites in association with raised beaches at Keurboomstrand. The Matjies River cave (a declared National Monument) near Keurbooms River, was first described by Peringuey (1911), and later excavated by Dreyer (1933).

Keurboomstrand is thus considered to be an archaeologically sensitive environment.

## 5. LEGISLATION

Archaeological sites and human burial remains are protected under the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

It is an offence to destroy, damage, excavate, alter, or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object, without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

## 6. RESULTS OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Two small, discreet patches of shellfish remains were located in open patches on the steep north facing slopes of the secondary dunes (Figures 2 & 3). The remains are completely dominated by whole and fragmented white mussel shell.

A few extremely ephemeral scatters of highly fragmented white mussel shellfish remains were found in eroded sand channels on the north facing secondary dunes (Figure 4).

Similar discreet patches of white mussel shell were located on the adjacent property.

Three pieces of ostrich eggshell and two stone flakes were also located in open patches on the north facing slopes of the large barrier dunes.

These surface patches of shellfish remains most likely represent small food parcels consumed by prehistoric people during visits to the beach. No cultural remains, such as pottery or stone artefacts were found associated with the shell.

Significance of finds: **low**

Suggested mitigation: **none required**

## 7. CRITERIA USED IN THE EVALUATION OF THE MATJIESFONTEIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

The criteria used in evaluating the importance of the Matjiesfontein archaeological sites include the following:

- the state of preservation of the site;
- the range and density of cultural material present on the site;
- the type of site; for example cave, shell midden, open air site;
- the approximate age of the site;
- rarity of occurrence; and
- regional, national and international importance

## **8. IMPACT STATEMENT**

The impact of the proposed Matjiesfontein development on archaeological sites/remains is considered to be medium to high.

Shell middens may be exposed during construction of a few proposed housing units on the back dunes in the secondary system, or during clearing of vegetation for trails and boardwalks.

A midden was exposed in a cutting adjacent the Dune Park Holiday Resort, during construction work for a road through the dune system (Figure 5).

Human burial remains may also be uncovered or exposed during earthworks.

## **9. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

No significant archaeological sites/remains were located during a study of the proposed Matjiesfontein development.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

With regard to the proposed Matjiesfontein development, the following archaeological recommendations are made.

- An archaeologist should assess the site once earthworks and vegetation clearing for trails, commences.

Should any significant sites be located during earthworks and path clearing, some archaeological sampling may be required. Funds should be set aside in the event of this occurring.

- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during earthworks, these should immediately be reported to a professional archaeologist, or the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

Burial remains should be treated sensitively at all times. Human remains should not be removed until inspected by a professional archaeologist.

The above recommendations are subject to the approval of the South African Heritage Resources Agency Plans Committee

## 11. REFERENCES

- Dreyer, T.F. 1933. The archaeology of the Matijes River Shelter. Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa. 21:187-209.
- Kaplan, J. 1993. The state of archaeological information in the coastal zone between the Orange River and Ponto do Ouro, Report prepared for the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.
- Kaplan, J. 1999. Archaeological study, Sanderlings, Plettenberg Bay. Report prepared for SRK Consulting Engineers and Scientists.
- Kaplan, J. 2000. Archaeological study, proposed Whale Rock Development. Report prepared for Blue Dot (Pty) Ltd.
- Mortelmans, G. 1944. Plages soulevees a industries lithiques de la region de Keurbooms River, District de Knysna. South African Journal of Science XLI:375-396.
- Peringuey, L. 1911. The Stone Ages of South Africa. Annals of the South African Museum 8:1-218.



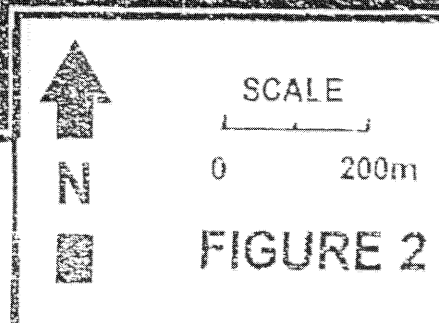
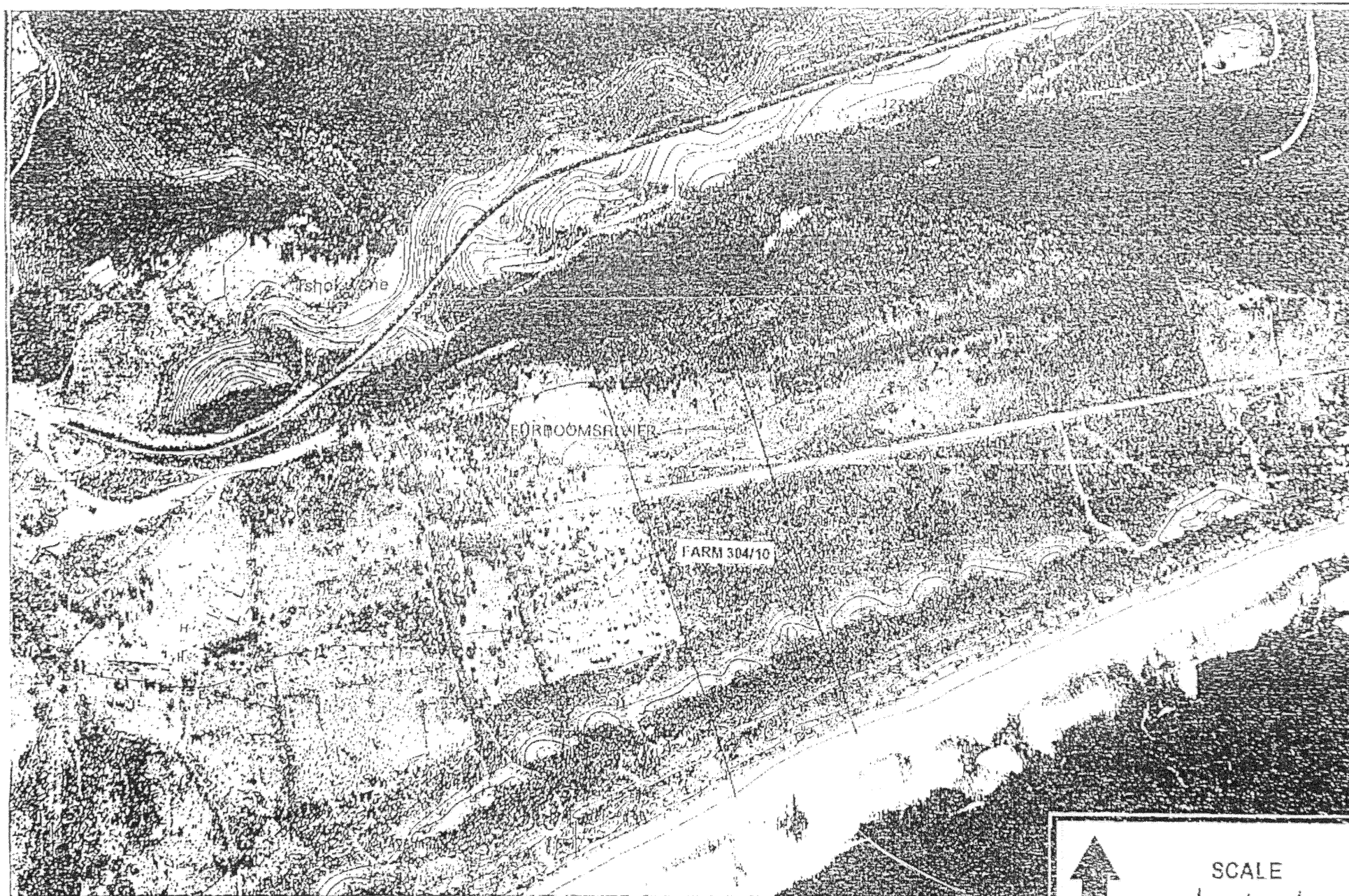


Figure 1. Heritage Impact Assessment, portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, Keurboomstrand. Orthophoto of the farm



Figure 2. Heritage Impact Assessment, portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, Keurboomstrand. Discreet patches of shellfish remains on backward dunes

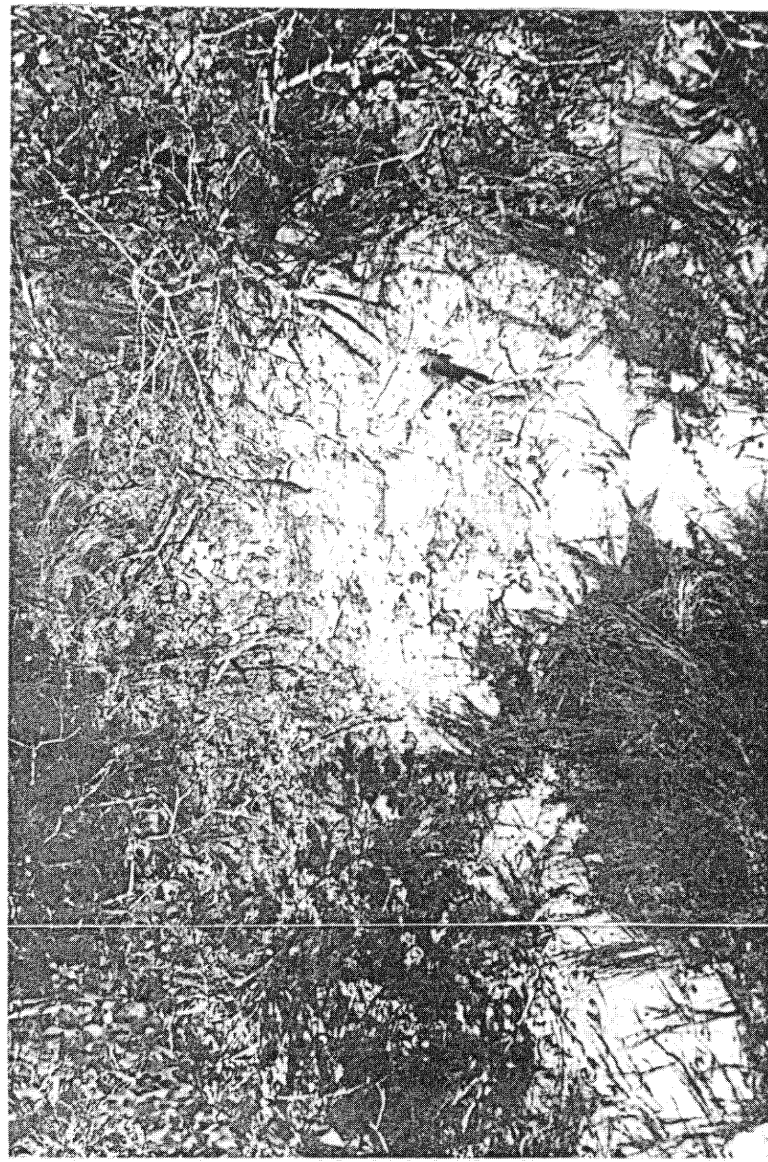


Figure 3. Heritage Impact Assessment, portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, Keurboomstrand. Discreet patches of shellfish remains on backward dunes



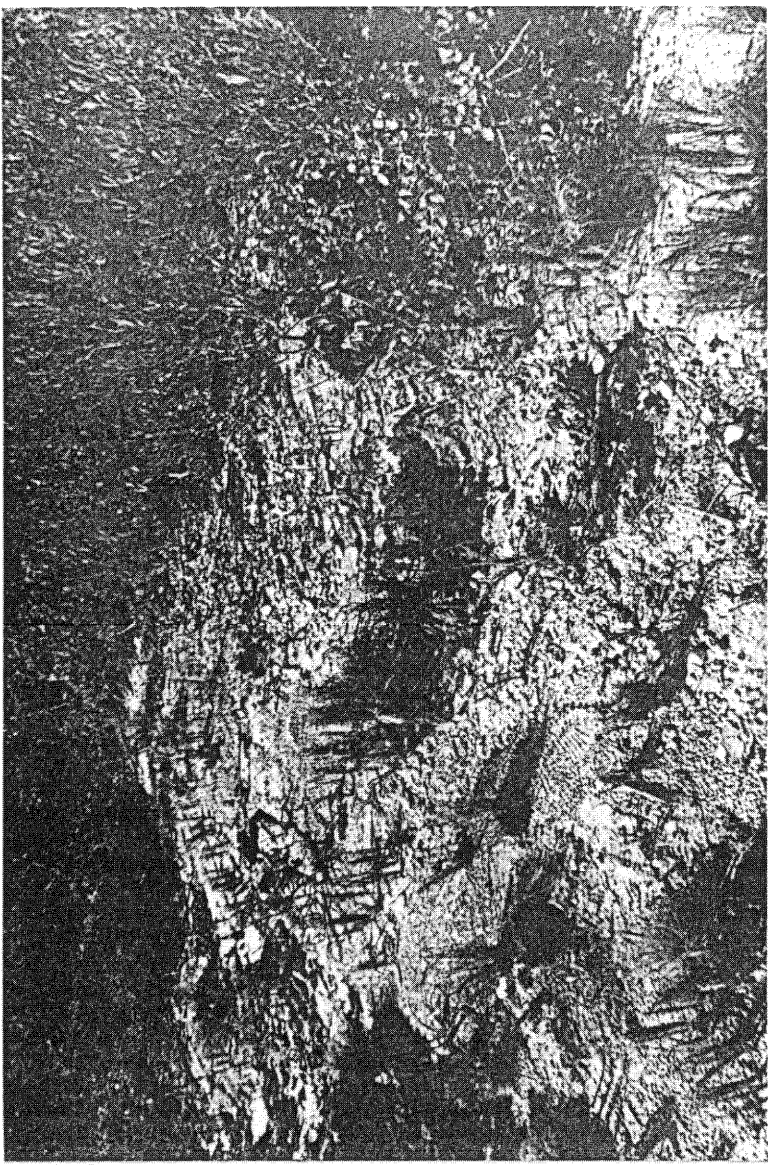


Figure 4. Heritage Impact Assessment, portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, Keurboomstrand. Ephemeral scatters of shellfish remains on backward dunes



Figure 5. Heritage Impact Assessment, portion 10 of the farm Matjiesfontein No. 304, Keurboomstrand. Shell midden remains in a road cutting, Dune Park Caravan Resort