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11 AUGUST 2008

**FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENTS AT A PORTION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE
FARM BESTWOOD 459RD, KATHU, NORTHERN CAPE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residential developments are planned at a portion of the remainder of the farm Bestwood 459RD, Kathu, Northern Cape.

From previous archaeological investigations, experts are aware that archaeological material occurs in the form of Early Stone Age hand axes on rocky outcrops and on the red sand surface in the area. The distribution of these artefacts seems to be fairly general and widespread and the impact on the cultural heritage of the proposed development site at Bestwood 458 should be handled with caution.

Test excavations on the proposed piece of land at Bestwood did not deliver any artefacts, but an assemblage of tools was collected in an old sand quarry on the farm.

No other cultural or historical remains were found in the proposed area of development.

I recommend that the proposed developments and planning of the site may proceed, provided that caution should be taken during the excavation and building phase. In the case of the discovery of any stone flakes or tools during excavations or the building phase, the work should immediately be stopped and reported to the archaeologist or to officials at the McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed residential developments on the farm Bestwood 459RD near Kathu was visited on 6 August 2008. Dr Robert de Jong from Cultmatrix cc (Heritage Consultants), Rowan van Tonder, and Pieter van der Merwe from Rock Environmental Consulting, Pretoria, gave directions to the site.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

LOCALITY

The farm Bestwood 459RD is located outside Kathu along the N14 main road to Kuruman in the Northern Cape (Map 1).

The proposed area of development is located directly opposite the entrance to the town of Kathu at the turn off from the N14 road to Kuruman (Map 2).

Vegetation can be described as Thorn Veld, which consists mainly of Swarthaak (*Acacia mellifera*) and Driedoring (*Rhigozum trichotomum*), with a scatter of Kameeldoring trees (*Acacia erioloba*) (Figs.17&18) (Map3) and Vaalbos (*Tachonanthus camphorathus*).

GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken to establish the layout of the land and to plot the different test pits. Coordinate points were taken at random (Map 4).

A	27°41'12"S. 023°05'13"E Altitude 1231m (Figs.2&3).
B	27°41'27"S. 023°05'02"E Altitude 1230m (Figs.4&5).
C	27°42'14"S. 023°04'24"E Altitude 1227m (Figs.6&7)
D	27°41'28"S. 023°04'27"E Altitude 1231m (Figs.8&9)
E	27°41'21"S. 023°04'44"E Altitude 1235m (Figs.10&11)
F	27°40'59"S. 023°05'29"E Altitude 1234m (Figs.12&13)
G	27°41'05"S. 023°05'25"E Altitude 1230m (Figs.14&15)

RESULTS

Archaeological material in the form of Early Stone Age hand axes (Fig.16) occur on bare and sterile sand inside an old sand quarry at Point F (Fig.15). This specific locality lies outside the area of development.

The lithic material is similar to the hand axes discovered during earlier surveys near the Kathu cemetery adjacent to the farm Hartnolls (Beaumont 2007, Dreyer 2006, Dreyer 2007).

Beaumont (1990) has indicated the importance of the Early Stone Age lithic material after many seasons of excavations at Kathu Pan and elsewhere near Kathu.

No sign of any other cultural or historical material was found in the proposed area of development on Bestwood 459.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

It is anticipated that due to the wide and general distribution of the stone artefacts in the Kathu area, the proposed residential developments at the farm Bestwood 459 could also encounter some of the Early Stone Age material.

Test excavations on the proposed piece of land at Bestwood did not deliver any artefacts, but an assemblage of tools was collected in an old sand quarry on the farm.

However, the distribution of these artefacts seems to be fairly general and widespread in the region and the developments at Bestwood might have a major impact on the archaeological remains in the area and should be handled with great caution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Judging from the results of the test pits and the finds on the soil surface, there are no obvious reasons to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the site.

I recommend that the planning of the proposed residential developments at the farm Bestwood 459 near Kathu could proceed.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed developments, no mitigation measures will be required.

However, every archaeological and historical site is unique and should be treated as a non-renewable commodity. All efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or destruction of any cultural remains.

I stress, therefore, that in case of the discovery of any human skeletal material, stone tools, pottery or other archaeological or historical material during the course of the work, all activities should temporarily be stopped and stabilised in the specific area. The archaeologist should be notified for an in situ inspection by officials and specialists from the McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Dr Robert de Jong from Cultmatrix cc (Heritage Consultants) for involving me in the project and Rowan van Tonder and Pieter van der Merwe from Rock Environmental Consulting, Pretoria, for giving directions to the site.

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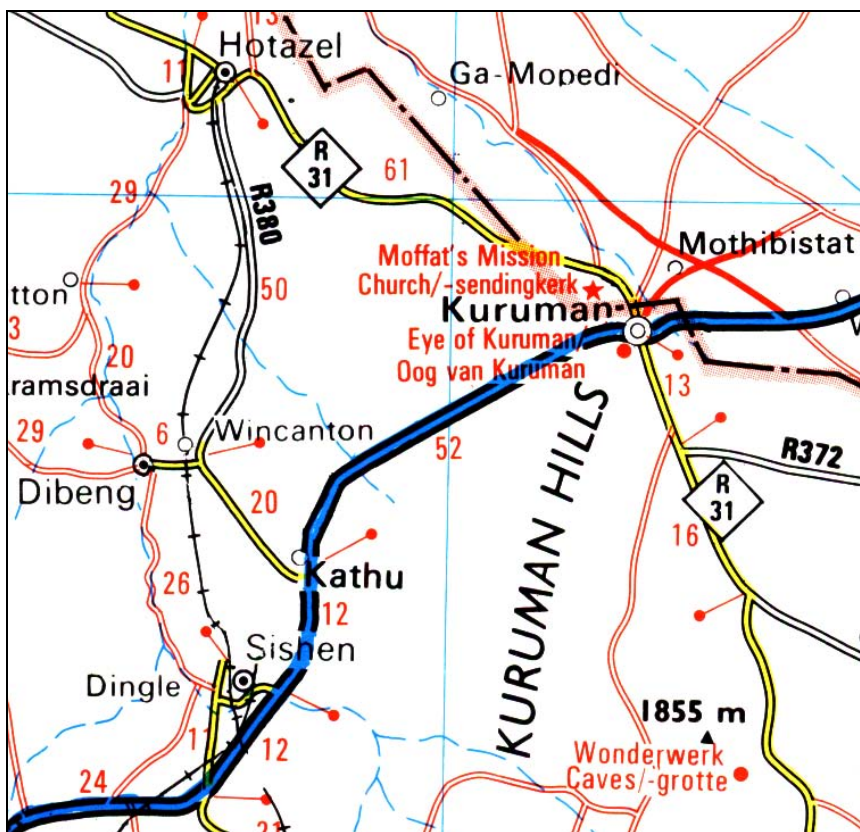
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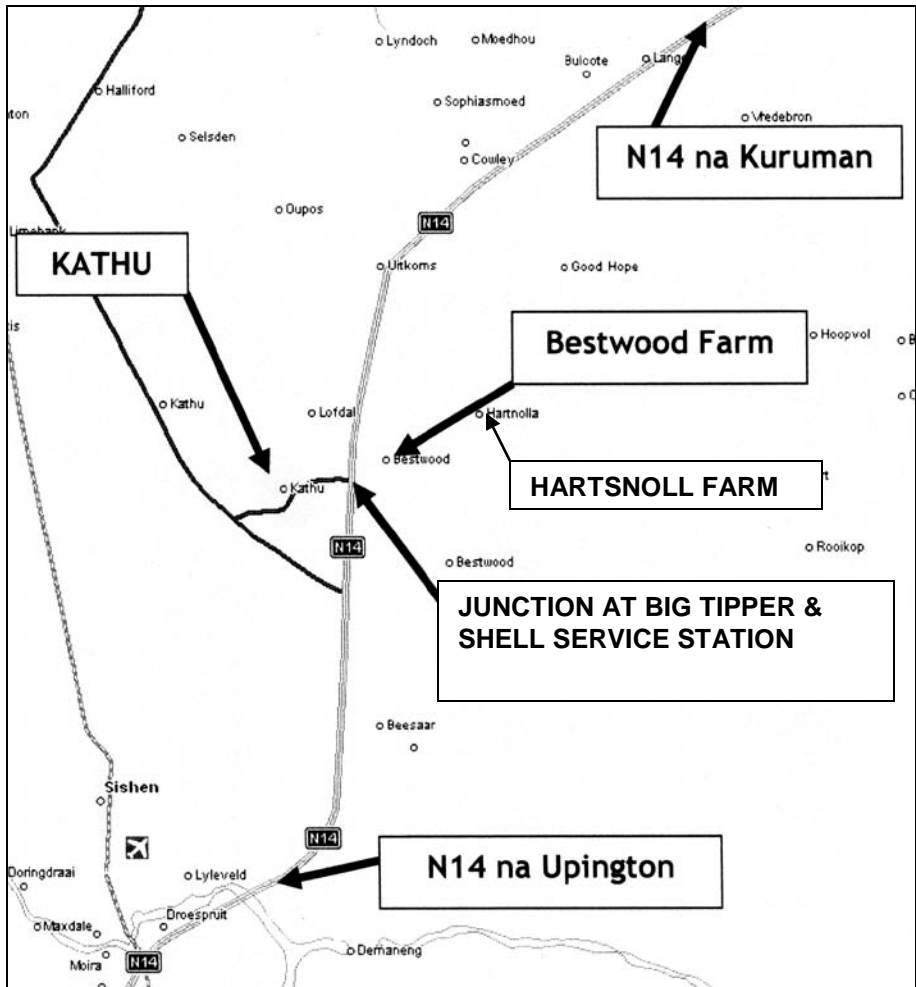
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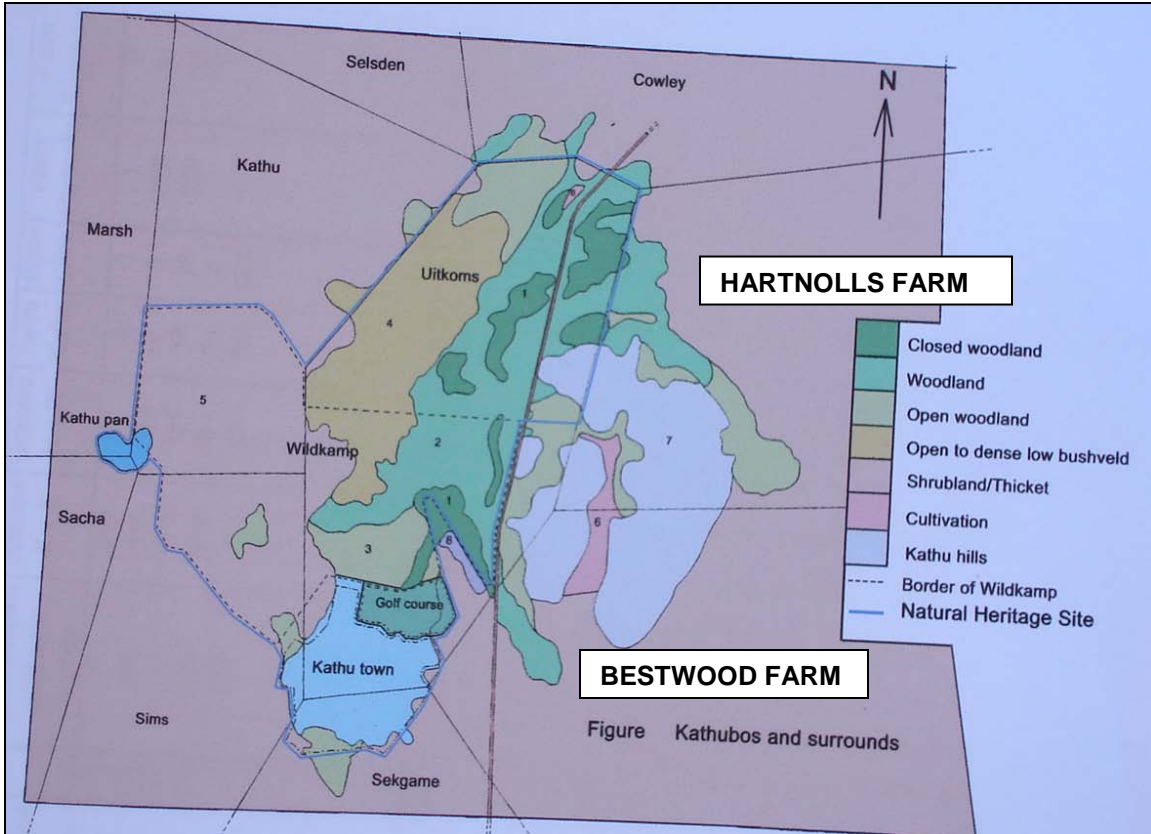
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



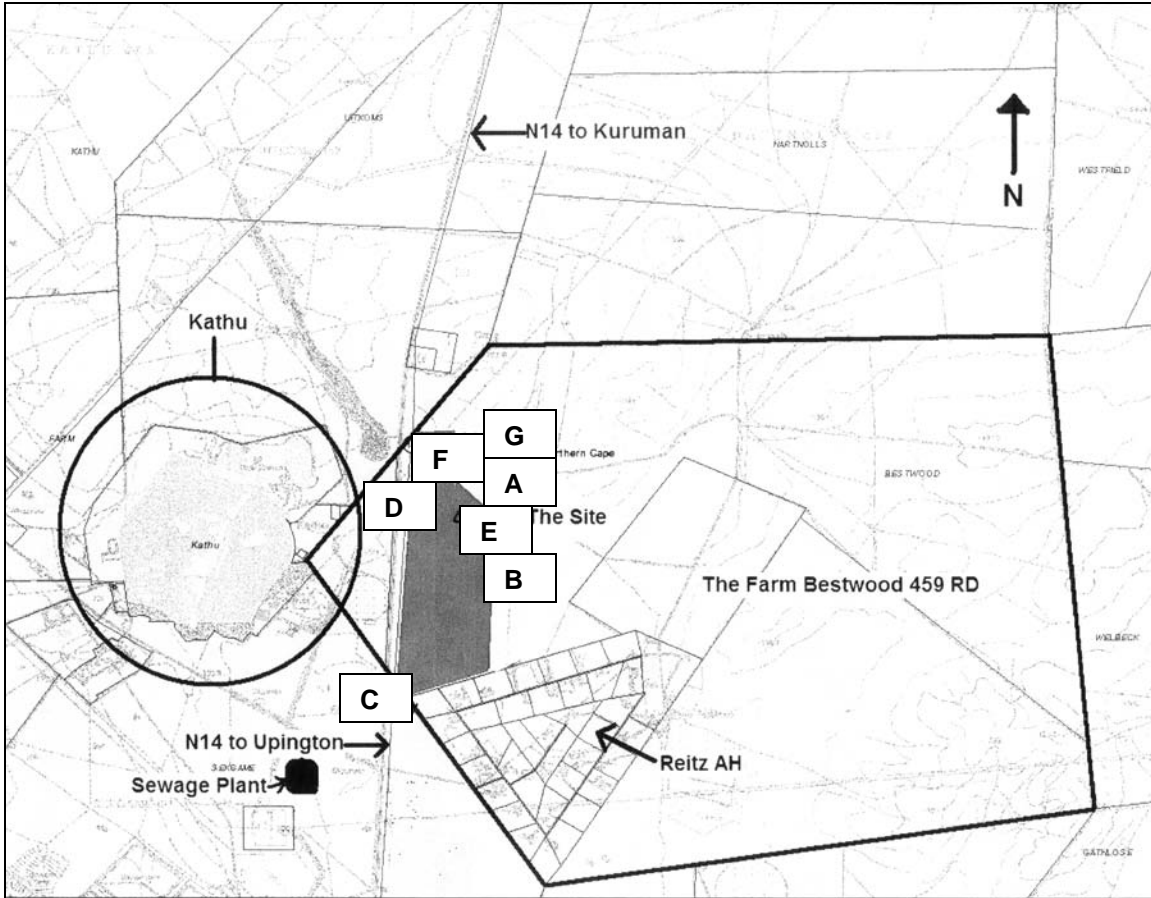
Map 1 Locality of Kathu in relation to Kuruman, Hotazel and Sishen.



Map 2 Locality of Bestwood & Hartnolls Farms in relation to the N14 junction.



Map 3 Official map showing Kathubos and Erioloba surroundings. Bestwood Farm on lower right.



Map 4 Locality of the proposed developments at Hartnolls 458, Kathu. GPS coordinate points were taken at random.



Fig.1 Entrance to Kathu at the N14 intersection. Bestwood farm opposite the N14 junction.



Fig.2 Point A at Bestwood Farm, Kathu.



Fig.3 Point A.



Fig.4 Point B at Bestwood Farm, Kathu.



Fig.5 Sterile soil from test pit at Point B.



Fig.6 Vegetation and soil surface at Point C.



Fig.7 Shallow soil (sand) cover with bedrock exposed at Point C.



Fig.8 Point D at the N14 and entrance junction to Kathu.



Fig.9 Point D at the N14 junction.



Fig.10 Point E.



Fig.11 Sterile red sand at Point E.



Fig.12 New sand mine at Point F.

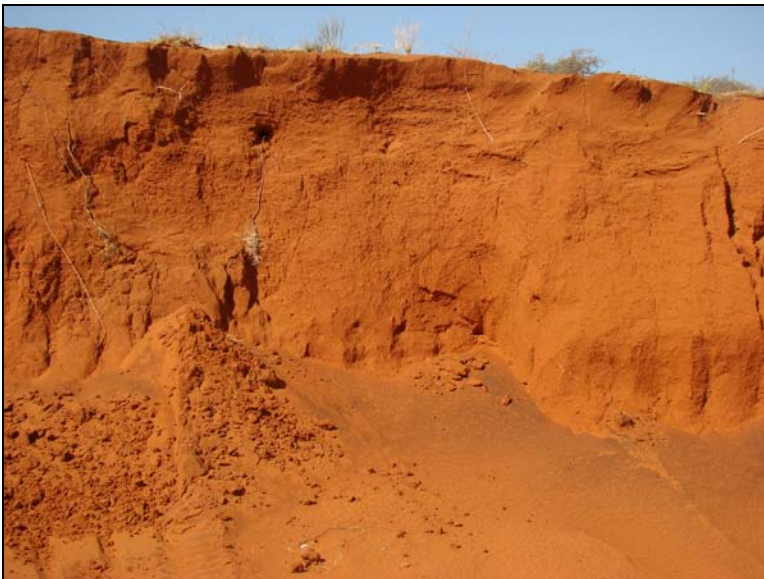


Fig.13 Sterile sand wall at Point F.



Fig.14 Sterile wall in old sand mine at Point G.



Fig.15 Scatter of stones and flakes in sand mine at Point G.



Fig.16 Stone flakes and tools exposed in old sand mine at Point G. Pocket knife = 83mm.



Fig.17 *Acacia erioloba* trees near Point B.



Fig.18 *Acacia erioloba* trees near Point D.