

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT  
PORTION 4 OF THE FARM MELKPLAAS NO. 110  
PIKETBERG**

Prepared for

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## Executive summary

CK Rumboll and Partners, on behalf of Mr Hannes Tredoux requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for a proposed housing development on Portion 4 of the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, Piketberg District, in the Western Cape Province.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the subject property (currently zoned Agriculture), provides for the development of about 26 Resort Zone I & II units alongside the Berg River, including associated infrastructure such as internal roads and services.

Remains WFO

The extent of the proposed development (about 33.3 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

33.3 ha

Heritage Consultant Mr Graham Jacobs has been appointed to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed project. The archaeological assessment forms part of the wider heritage study.

HIA

The aim of the study is to locate and map archaeological sites and remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

The proposed site is located on degraded agricultural lands alongside the northern bank of the Berg River, on the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, which is situated about 3 kms outside the town of Veldrif on the Cape West Coast. The surrounding land use comprises mainly agricultural lands (grazing and wheat). Other than the river, there are no significant landscape features occurring in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development, although some remnant dunes occur in the northern and eastern portions of the farm, as well as on the adjacent farm Springerbaai.

Veldrif

degraded  
Agriculture

Large numbers of Later Stone Age tools were found in heavily trampled and degraded farmland alongside the fence line in the south western portion of the proposed site. The highly concentrated scatter of tools comprise mainly flakes, chunks and cores, but some utilised flakes and formal tools such as scrapers and backed tools were also counted. The majority of tools are in locally available quartz, but some tools in silcrete, quartzite and hornfels were also found. A few pieces of colonial-era glass and porcelain occur among the LSA scatter.

LSA scatter  
+  
few pieces of  
glass + porcelain

Despite the disturbed context in which the Later Stone Age archaeological heritage remains occur, they are present in-situ, and have been rated as having medium local significance.

Highly dispersed scatters of Later Stone Age tools were also located in the surrounding landscape mostly in the south western portion of the affected property (nearer to the river), but a few tools were documented over the remainder of the property as well.

Broken glass and colonial-era porcelain was also documented in the south western portion of the site, about 50-60 m south of the high-density scatter of LSA tools, but these remains are spread very thinly and unevenly over the surrounding environment. The archaeologist is not able to establish whether these artefacts are contemporary with the Later Stone Age archaeological remains, or an overlay of

remains resulting from much later visits to the region/river by early Trek Boers or settler farmers. The latter is suspected.

The proposed development will very likely impact negatively, on the in-situ scatters of Later Stone Age artefacts on the subject property.

The thin scatter of colonial-era artefacts will most likely be further dispersed and lost during proposed construction activities.

Human burials may also be uncovered or exposed during bulk earthworks and excavations.

With regard to the proposed housing development on Portion 4 of the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, situated in the Piketberg District, the following recommendations are made

- Later Stone Age and colonial-era artefact scatters must be collected as a reference sample.
- Should any human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during excavations and earthworks for the proposed project, these should immediately be reported to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie 462 4502), or Heritage Western Cape (Mr N. Ndlovu 483 9692). Burial remains should not be disturbed or removed until inspected by the archaeologist.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background and brief

CK Rumboll and Partners, on behalf of Mr Hannes Tredoux, requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for a proposed housing development on Portion 4 of the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, Piketberg District, in the Western Cape Province.

The proposed rezoning and subdivision of the subject property (currently zoned Agriculture), provides for the development of about 26 Resort Zone I and II units, including associated infrastructure such as internal roads and services.

The extent of the proposed development (about 33.3 ha) falls within the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment as required by Section 38 of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

Heritage Consultant Mr Graham Jacobs has been appointed to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed project. The archaeological assessment forms part of the wider heritage study.

HIA

The aim of the study is to locate and map archaeological heritage sites and remains that may be negatively impacted by the planning, construction and implementation of the proposed project, to assess the significance of the potential impacts and to propose measures to mitigate against the impacts.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the archaeological study were:

- to determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological sites of significance within the proposed site;
- to identify and map any sites of archaeological significance within the proposed site;
- to assess the sensitivity and conservation significance of archaeological sites within the proposed site;
- to assess the status and significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed development, and
- to identify mitigatory measures to protect and maintain any valuable archaeological sites that may exist within the proposed site

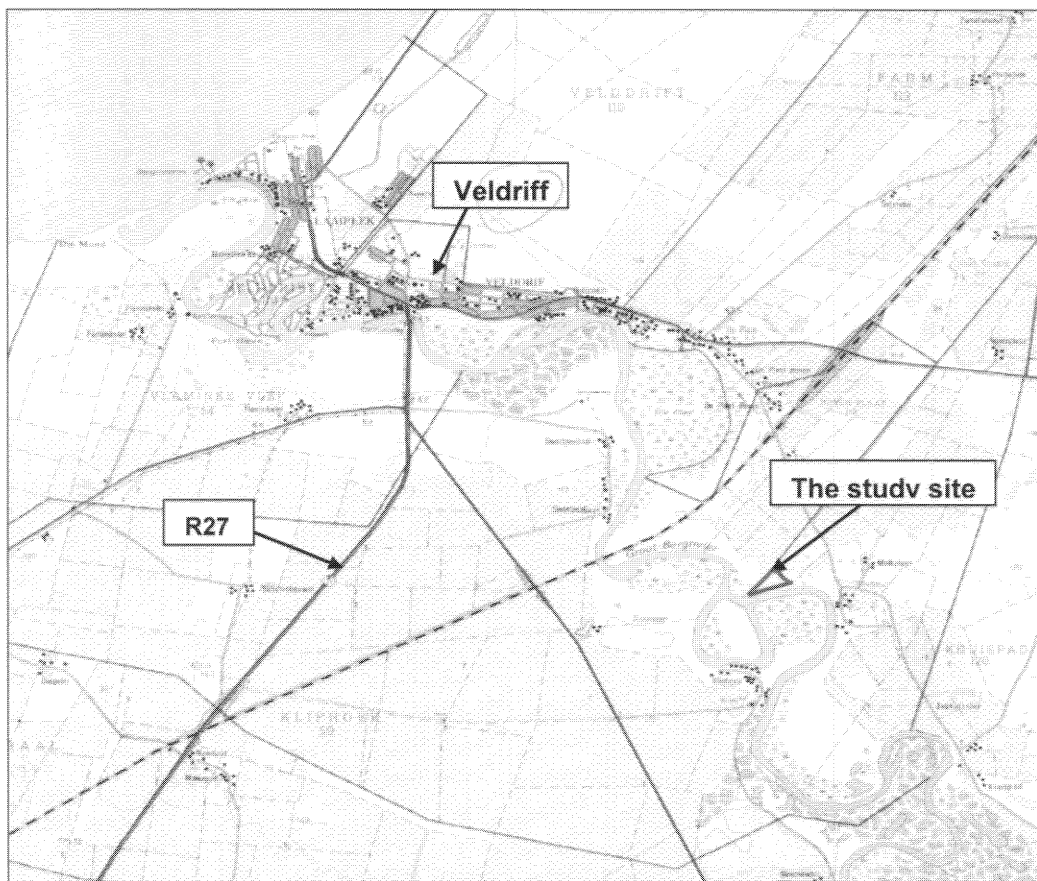
### 3. THE STUDY SITE

A locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of the proposed site is illustrated in Figure 2.

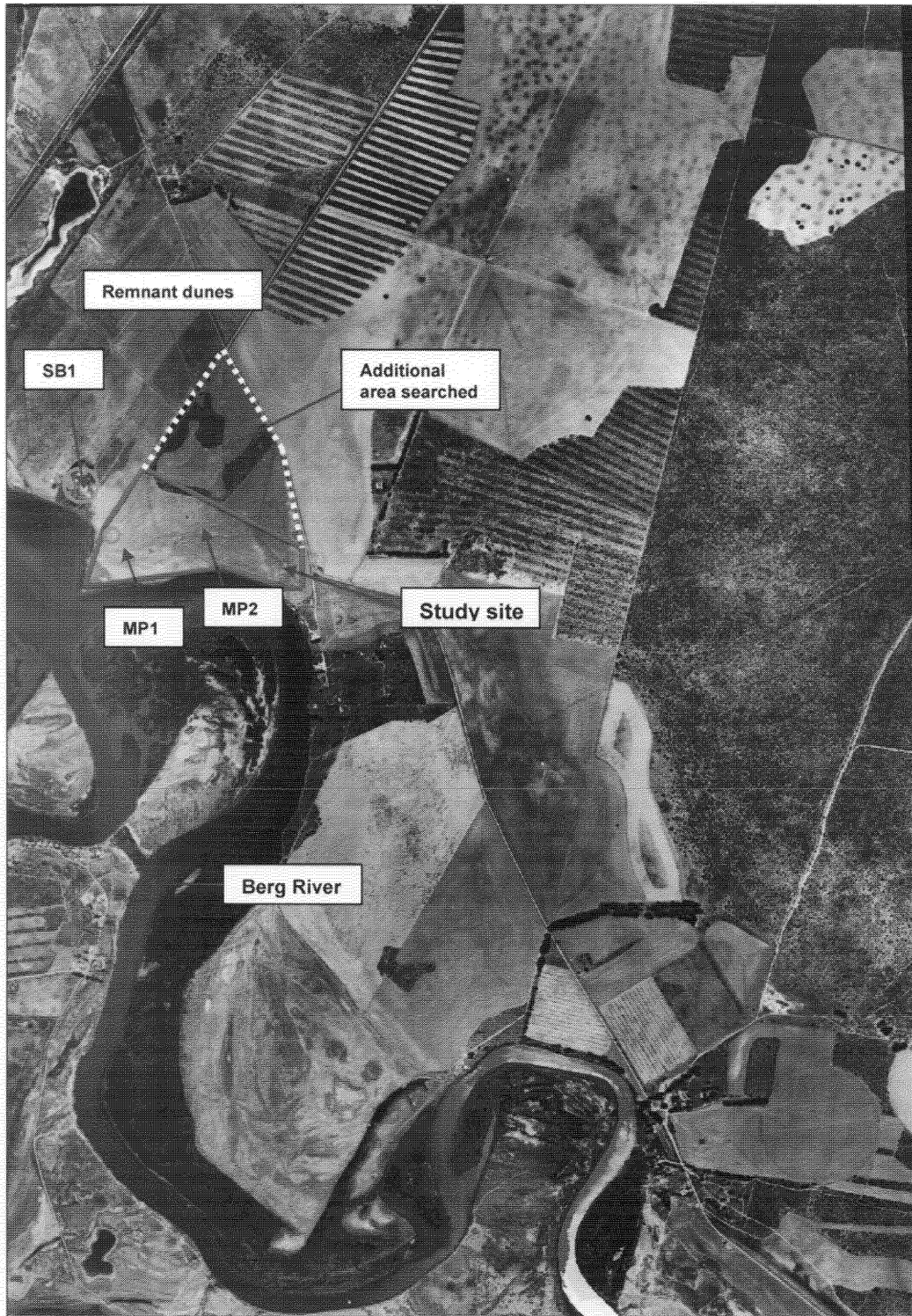
The subject property is located on a flat, vacant, piece of degraded agricultural land alongside the northern bank of the Berg River, on the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, which is situated about 3 kms outside the town of Veldruff in the Piketberg District, on the Cape West Coast (Figures 3-9).

The surrounding land use comprises mainly agricultural lands (grazing and wheat). Other than the river, there are no significant landscape features occurring in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development, although some remnant dunes occur in the northern and eastern portion and of the farm, as well as on the adjacent farm Springerbaai (refer to Figure 2).



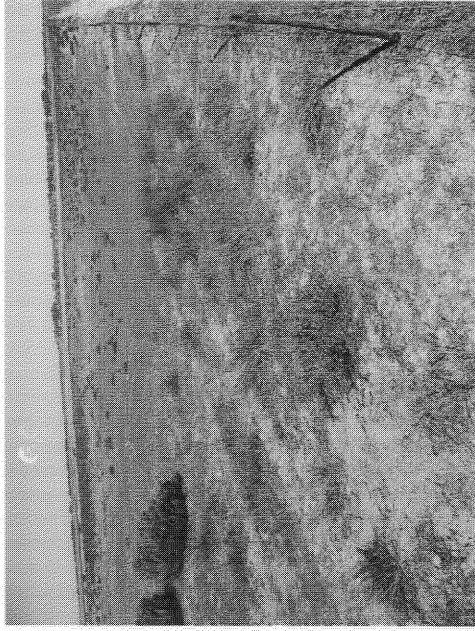
Veldruff

Figure 1. Site locality (3218 CA & CC Veldruff)

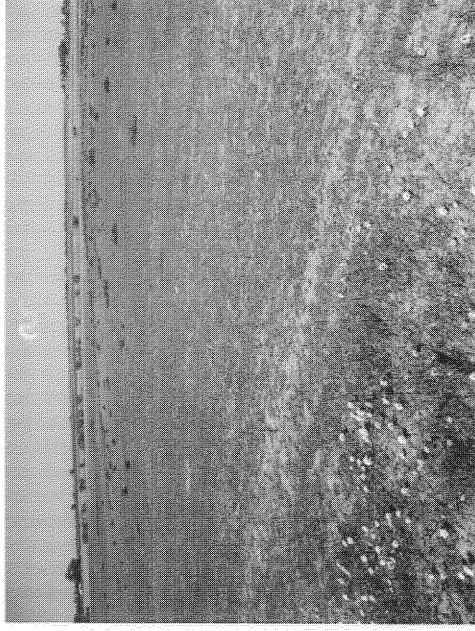


**Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the proposed site indicating the location of archaeological heritage remains.**

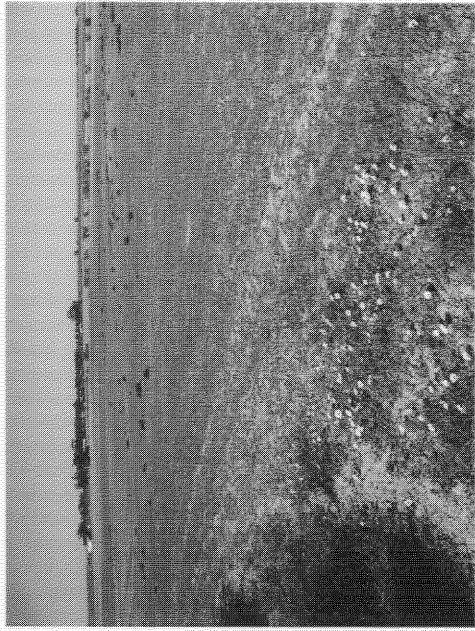




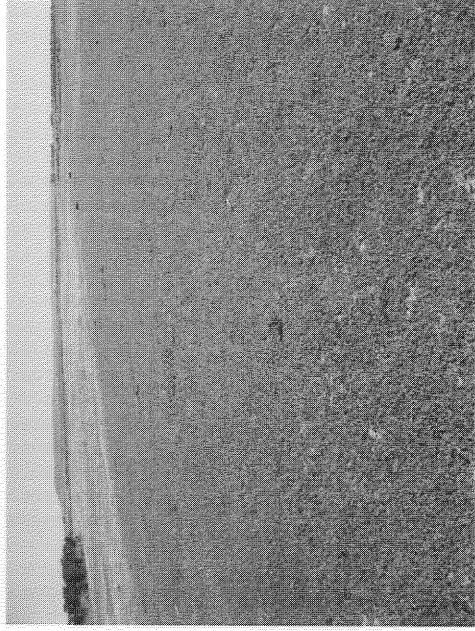
**Figure 3. View of the site facing south.**



**Figure 5. View of the site facing south east**

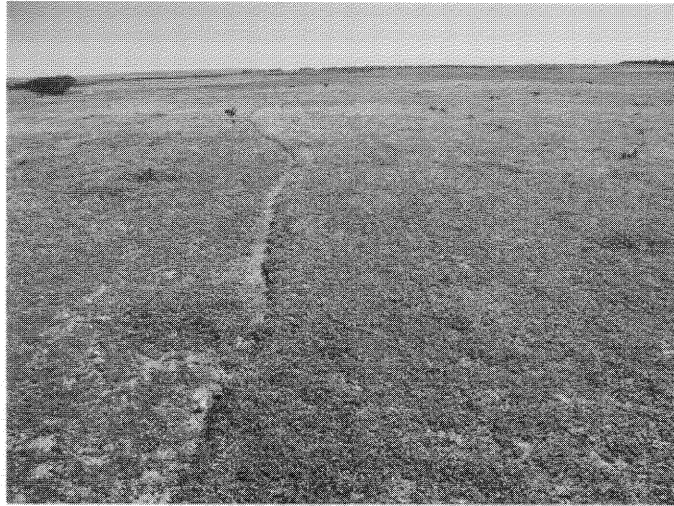


**Figure 4. View of the site facing south east**



**Figure 6. View of the site facing south west.**

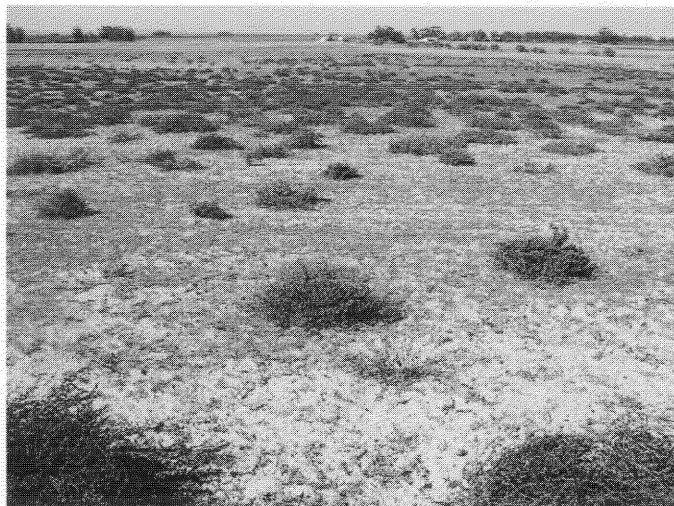




**Figure 7. View of the site facing south**



**Figure 8. View of the site facing south east**



**Figure 9. View of the site facing south east**

## **4. STUDY APPROACH**

### **4.1 Method of survey**

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

The focus of the study was on the proposed development footprint, but the surrounding area was also searched for archaeological heritage remains (refer to Figure 2).

The site visit and assessment took place on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2006.

A follow-up site visit to record more contextual information took place on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2007

Archaeological heritage remains were recorded and given a co-ordinate using a Garmin Gecko 201 GPS unit set on map datum WGS 84.

A desktop study was also undertaken.

### **4.2 Constraints and limitations**

There were no constraints or limitations associated with the study.

### **4.3 Identification of potential risks**

Unmarked human burials may be exposed or uncovered during bulk earthworks and excavations.

### **4.4 Results of the desk top study**

The archaeological significance of the Cape West Coast has been highlighted and is well-known (Kaplan 1990, 1993, 2003), but the inland region around Veldriff has not been investigated. Intensive agriculture activity over many years has destroyed much of the archaeological evidence in this area.

On the coast, ancient tidal fishtraps (*visvywers*) occur at Swartpunt, south of the mouth of the Berg River (Hart & Halkett 1992) and several Later Stone Age (LSA) shell middens (ancient rubbish dumps) have been recorded on a fossil shell bar on the eastern shores of St Helena Bay, between Laiplek and Dwarskersbos (Hart & Miller 1994).

Along the alignment of the now tarred West Coast road, between the mouth of the Berg River and Rocher Pan, for example, there are a number of deflated hollows in the veld, which contain small numbers of stone artefacts, a few potsherds and occasional pieces of ostrich eggshell (Parkington & Manhire 1988; Kaplan 1997, 1998). Rudner (1968) also describes LSA shell middens at Duinefontein and among the sand dunes at Die Vlei further up the coast. Many more sites occur between Draaihoek and Elands Bay (Kaplan 2005a; Jerardino 2003).

Inland of the coastal shoreline, the region is characterised by an expanse of red sands, bush and scrub known as the Sandveld. Agricultural activity (mainly wheat, potatoes and grazing) dominates the rural landscape. From the records of early Dutch travellers, it seems clear that much hunter-gatherer settlement was ephemeral

and in the open veld. Most explorers mentioned the large numbers of abandoned windbreaks, which seem to have been occupied for very short periods of time (Parkington 1976). If these were the most 'typical' sites then their remains would not be visible in the modern Sandveld landscape of today.

In the last couple of years (in response to proposed housing developments in the area), however, archaeological surveys in the inland region around Veldriff have documented, several open-station sites, significantly adding to the regional data base. Scatters of LSA tools, ostrich eggshell and pottery have been found on the Farms De Plaet, Vredefort and Springerbaai (Kaplan 2005a, b; 2007 in prep.), all within a 3 km radius of the town. Springerbaai is located directly adjacent to the subject property.

## **5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)**

'...any development or other activity which will change the character of a site exceeding 5 000m<sup>2</sup>, or the rezoning or change of land use of a site exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>, requires an archaeological impact assessment in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

### **5.2 Archaeology (Section 35 (4))**

No person may, without a permit issued by the SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, excavate, alter or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object.

### **5.3 Burial grounds and graves (Section 36 (3))**

No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or Heritage Western Cape, destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years, which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority.

## **6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND DESCRIPTION**

### **MP 1 (GPS reading S° 32 49 181 E° 18 12 874)**

Large numbers of Later Stone Age tools were found in heavily trampled, tractor driven and degraded farmlands alongside the fence line in the south western portion of the affected property (Figures 10 & 11).

MP 1 is located about 130 m from the edge of the high water mark of the Berg River, and measures about 25 m long and 4 m wide. Two discreet scatters of tools, lying side by side, are dispersed among soft sandy soils in a slightly deflated portion of the property (Figure 12). The tools comprise mainly flakes (including several blades and bladelets), chips, chunks and cores, but several utilised flakes and formal tools were also counted.

More than 90% of the tools are in pebble quartz, but tools in silcrete, quartzite and hornfels were also counted. The quartz and quartzite is locally available, but the source of the finer-grained silcrete and hornfels is unknown.

Among the formal tools, three scrapers were counted; two in silcrete and one in quartz while one backed silcrete flake was also documented. Most of the irregular cores ( $n = 10$ ) are in quartz, but several large cores and flaked and retouched chunks in silcrete were also found. A fragment of a broken upper grindstone was also noted. One, small piece of wind blasted pottery was found, as well as a hinge from the shell of a Black Mussel (*Choromytilus meridionalis*).

Two pieces of colonial-era glass (Case bottles) and one piece of white porcelain were found among the LSA scatter, including fairly large numbers of small pieces of baked clay. It is suspected that the glass, porcelain and baked clay bits were introduced onto the site and surrounding area by later Trek Boer farmers in the latter part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

Despite the disturbed context in which the Later Stone Age tools occur, they appear to be present in-situ, and have been graded medium local significance.

How can there be  
in the presence?  
has been significantly disturbed  
for that was.

It is interesting to note that MP1 is located less than 150 m west of SB1 – a site containing large numbers of flake tools, ostrich eggshell and pottery, on the adjacent farm Springerbaai (Kaplan 2007 in prep. and refer to Figure 2).



Figure 10. MP 1 facing south. Note the Berg river in the distance

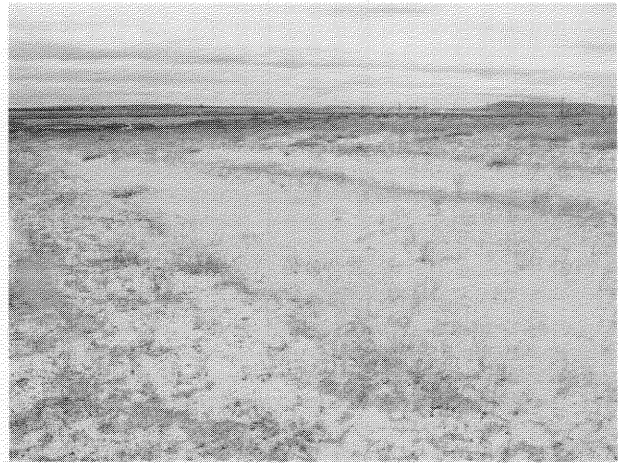


Figure 11. MP 1 facing south. Note the Berg River in the distance



Figure 12. MP 1. Scatter of tools. Scale is 1m



### 6.1 Other finds

Glass, including the remains of several broken Case bottles (necks and bases), a broken ink bottle and other fragments of glass bottles, including some thin blue fragments, and relatively large numbers of pieces of porcelain, was also documented in the south western portion of the site, about 50-60 m south of MP 1, and about 80 m north of the Berg River. The scatter of artefacts is dispersed very thinly and unevenly over the surrounding environment, in an area measuring about 60-70 m in extent.

BOTTLES  
TO THE "S" OF  
MP1

The thin scatter of colonial artefacts is quite separate from the much larger and discreet concentration of tools in MP 1, although some LSA artefacts (mainly quartz flakes and chunks) are spread very thinly and unevenly over the same area. One piece of (undecorated) blackened wind-blasted pottery, one large flaked quartzite cobble and a piece of a broken bored stone was also found in this flat, sandy low-lying area.

POTTERY

The porcelain comprise mainly broken plates, dishes, platters and small bowls, and from description appears to be Asian Porcelain, specifically Chinese Blue-and-White and Enamelled, mostly dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Klose & Malan 2000) (Figures 13 & 14). Some Annular ware was also documented.

PORCELAIN  
17<sup>th</sup> + 19<sup>th</sup> CENT

The archaeologist is not able to establish whether the early porcelain is contemporary with the Later Stone Age archaeological remains, or an overlay of remains resulting from much later visits to the region/river by Trek Boers or settler farmers.

DATE OF THE  
PORCELAIN  
COLLECTION

One possible explanation is that the ceramics and glass may relate to a Trek Boer Outspan, as the site is situated less than 100 m from the river, and apparently quite close to the old road to Cape Town (Jacobs pers. comm.). The remnant of a small spring is also located nearby (see below).

2 THEORIES

It is interesting to note that by 1712, there were only about 10 'freehold' farms (including Melkplaas) on the banks of the Berg River. Although the owners rarely lived on the farms, their cattle were looked after by sons of the farmers with the help of slaves or local Khoekhoe 'herders' (Stuyck 2002). Some of the porcelain and glass found on Melkplaas may date to this time and these events.



Figure 13. Collection of glass and ceramics.



Figure 14. Collection of glass and ceramics. Scale is in cm

## MP 2 (GPS reading S° 32 49 146 E° 18 13 058)

The owner of the property, Mr H. Tredoux, indicated to the archaeologist that a windmill on the subject property is located on the site of a small spring (refer to Figure 2). The sand bank dune alongside the windmill was excavated by Mr Tredoux when he filled in the spring about 20 years ago, before sinking a borehole and erecting the windmill (Figures 15 & 16).

MP2 went to  
investigate the spring  
↓  
PO sense

Four quartz flakes and chunks, one silcrete flake, one quartz core and a few pieces of burnt clay were documented in the large excavation next to the windmill. Some bone was also found. It is very likely that such a spring would have been used by pre-colonial people, (as well as by later settler farmers), and the association of several stone artefacts alongside the spring indicates this. The site, however, is severely degraded.

Spring  
↓  
Pre-colonial use  
↓  
Some stone  
artefacts.  
↓  
Digging

It is important to note that MP 2 and the surrounding area are located within the proposed Private Open Space and that no physical development will take place in this area.

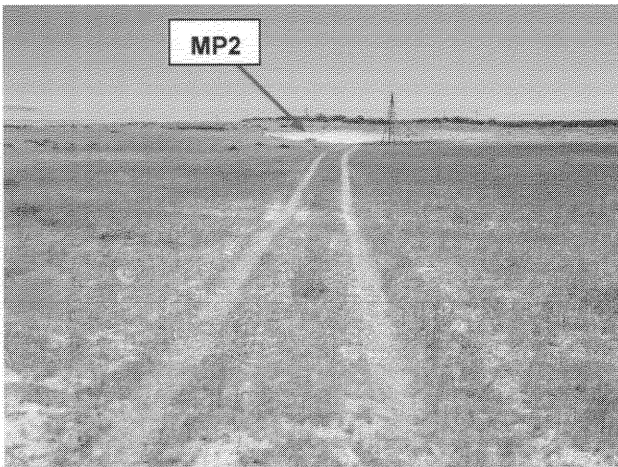


Figure 15. Sand track leading to MP 2



Figure 16. MP 2. View of the site facing south east

## 7. IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed development and/or associated activities will likely impact negatively on MP1 in the south western portion of the subject property. The archaeological remains occur, in-situ, although in a fairly degraded and transformed context.

Unmarked human burials may also be exposed or uncovered during earthworks and excavations.



## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the proposed housing development on Portion 4 of the Farm Melkplaas No. 110, situated in the Piketberg District, the following recommendations are made

- Later Stone Age artefact scatters (MP1) must be collected as a reference sample. *artefacts +  
translucent context  
with excavation?*
- Colonial-era glass and porcelain must be collected as a reference sample, even though the artefacts occur in a very disturbed context.
- Should any unmarked human remains be disturbed, exposed or uncovered during excavations and earthworks for the proposed project, these should immediately be reported to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Mrs Mary Leslie 462 4502), or Heritage Western Cape (Mr N. Ndlovu 483 9692). Burial remains should not be disturbed or removed until inspected by the archaeologist.

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