

Agency for Cultural Resource Management

Specialists in Archaeological Studies and Heritage Resource Management

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Mr. Jerry Avis
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Dear Mr. Avis

PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF FARM 717 (GROENFONTEIN) KLAPMUTS WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

1. Introduction and brief

EnviroAfrica requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of a proposed farm worker settlement situated on Farm 717 (Groenfontein) Klapmuts, in the Winelands District of the Western Cape Province.

The project is called the Klapmuts Off-Farm Worker Settlement.

An application has been made for the rezoning of Farm 717 (Groenfontein) from Agriculture Zone I to Sub divisional Area in order to develop about 200 houses for residential purposes, streets, public open spaces and associated infrastructure.

The extent of the proposed development (8.17ha of the total farm area of some 37 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, Ms Margaret Neethling, has been appointed by Dennis Moss Partnership to conduct a heritage review of the proposed development

The site visit and assessment took place on 28 January 2005.

Figure 1 shows location of the proposed development.

An aerial photograph of the property is illustrated in Figure 2.

The affected property is located west of the R44 highway and adjacent to the Klapmuts River at Klapmuts.

The farm comprises mainly old agricultural and grazing lands, which are highly degraded and eroded (Figures 3-5). The farm is heavily utilized by pedestrians judging from the number of footpaths through the area. Most of the area is dominated by Kikuyu grass. The northern area of the property has been mined for sand in the past. A large stand of exotic Port Jackson trees are located behind a dam in the northwestern portion of the property. The area is also heavily littered.

A number of informal shacks have been constructed alongside the southwestern boundary of the property.

Several farm buildings and farm-related structures occur in the northwestern portion of the property (refer to Figure 2).

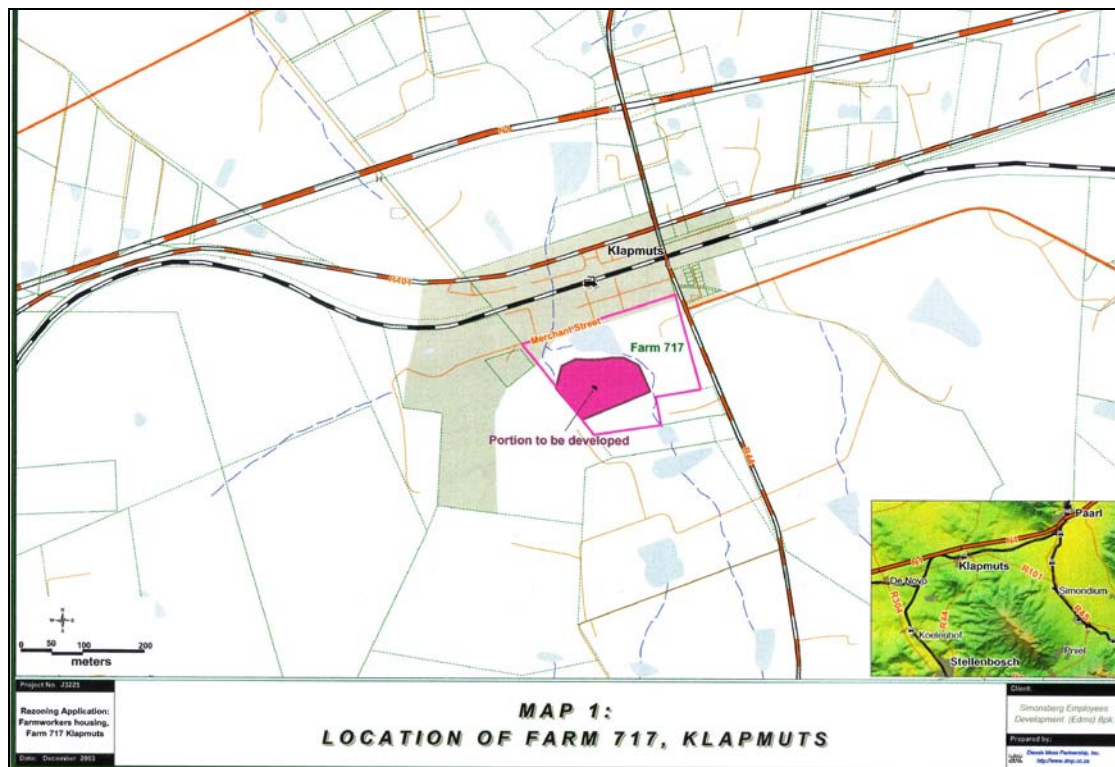


Figure 1. Site locality map



Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the site.

2. Terms of reference

The Terms of Reference for the specialist Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment are to:

- Identify and map precolonial archaeological heritage resources on the proposed site;
- Determine the importance of precolonial archaeological heritage resources on the proposed site;
- Determine and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on the precolonial archaeological heritage resources, and
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimise impacts associated with the proposed development.

3. Approach to the study

Portion 2 (8.17 ha) of Farm 717 was subjected to a detailed foot survey.

The remainder of Farm 171 (some 29 ha) was also searched for precolonial archaeological heritage remains.

There were no limitations associated with the proposed project.

A desktop study was also undertaken.

4. Findings

Surprisingly, relatively large numbers of Early Stone Age¹ (ESA) tools were located during the baseline study of Farm 171 (Groenfontein), but are spread thinly over the landscape. These included tools such as large edge-struck flakes, smaller utilized and retouched flakes, large chunks (some flaked), split/flaked cobbles, several large irregular cores, a large cleaver/edge retouched flake, as well as at least four unifacial and bifacially-flaked handaxes and a chopper-like tool. One incomplete handaxe with cortex still remaining on the ventral surface was also found. Several smaller bifacially flaked and retouched triangular flakes were also noted.

A collection of a few of the tools are illustrated in Figures 6 & 7.

Most of the tools occur on patches of compacted and eroded brown clays in the highly degraded grazing lands, either side of the Klapmuts River, in the southern portion of the farm.

A general GPS reading for the scatter of tools is (S° 33 48 779 E 18° 52 152 set on map datum WGS 84).

All the tools are made on locally available quartzite river cobbles.

The extent of the scatter in Portion 2 of the affected property is about 300 x 150 m.

The site is described as a low-density scatter².

¹ A term referring to the period between 2 million and 200 000 years ago.

² Minimum professional standards for reporting on Phase 1 AIA: Early Stone Age (ESA) occurrences. Draft document compiled by Dr. A Jerardino (Heritage Western Cape) with the assistance of Professor H. Deacon.

Tools have also likely been removed from the farm, following a common practice of piling and removal of stones from farmlands.

Other than the Klapmuts River which runs through the property and feeds into a large dam in the northwestern portion of the farm, there are no other natural terraces or significant landscape features that occur on the property. The hills of the Klapmuts Kop are located about one kilometer to the west of the farm.

A low outcropping of granite (GPS reading S° 33 48 639 E 18° 52 116) was noted among the large stand of alien trees south of the large dam on the farm (Figure 8). A search of the outcropping failed to locate any stone tools, other than a number of flake-like heat-spalls, testament to a recent fire in the area.

The scatter of stone tools on the farm has been graded low local significance and no mitigation is required.

It should be noted that an archaeological impact assessment of a portion of Farm 739 Klapmuts did not locate any precolonial archaeological heritage remains³.

5. Impact statement

The assessment of the proposed Klapmuts Off-Farm Worker Settlement on Farm 171 (Groenfontein) in Klapmuts, has rated the potential impacts to significant precolonial archaeological material as being low.

The probability of locating significant precolonial archaeological heritage remains during implementation of the project is likely to be improbable.

6. Recommendations

The study has shown that the proposed site is suitable for development.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Kaplan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jonathan Kaplan

³ Kaplan, J. 2001. Archaeological Impact Assessment Portion of Farm 739 Klapmuts, Paarl. Report prepared for Doug Jeffery Environmental Consultants. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.



Figure 3. The site facing north. Note the large stand of alien trees in the background.



Figure 4. The site facing north-east.



Figure 5. The site facing east.



Figure 6. Collection of Stone tools. Scale is in cm.



Figure 7. Collection of stone tools. Scale is in cm.



Figure 8. Granite outcropping.