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**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF A PROPOSED WATER
RESERVOIR SITE NEAR SCHOENMAKERSKOP, PORT ELIZABETH**

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a Phase 1 heritage impact assessment undertaken on behalf of SRK Consulting to assess the impact of the construction of a water reservoir on a possible historical rubbish dump. The heritage impact assessment was undertaken in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Reports of historical dump material in the area of the proposed reservoir site precipitated the site visit. While excavating some holes (1.5 m deep) the design engineers reported on the presence of historical dump material some 5-10 m from the reservoir site. They reported broken glass and ceramics. It was postulated that this could relate to the Fortress Observation Post located nearby. They thought the dump material could relate to 19th century military occupation. The engineers did not discover any remains in the excavated holes.

SRK Consulting contacted SAHRA who suggested that an accredited archaeologist produce a letter indicating that a Phase 1 HIA was not required.

1. The aim of my site visit was therefore to determine whether the reported dump related to 19th century military presence and was therefore not protected in terms of the Act;
2. To determine whether there were any other archaeological sites which might be threatened.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND TO THE AREA

This area is particularly rich from an archaeological perspective as numerous shell middens, (see terminology below) have been reported from the Schoenmakerskop and Humewood coast (Rudner 1968; Kaplan 1994), but none have been excavated or sampled. Rapid development in this area makes it critical to test sites which may be threatened in order to gather information on prehistoric settlement in this area.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The area was surveyed on 11 May 2005. I was accompanied by Andrea von Holdt of SRK Consulting and Owen Wentzel of Lukhozi Consulting Engineers (PTY) Ltd. Mr Wentzel was part of the original team who reported on the presence of the historical dump.

RESULTS

The reservoir will be constructed in a small depression between the dunes approximately 100 m from the Fortress Observation Post which relates to World War II.



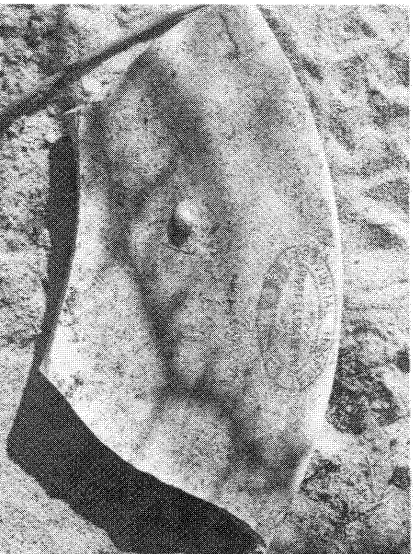
The location of the reservoir will be located in the hollow picture above, beneath the observation post. The GPS co-ordinates will be:

S 34°02'00.1"
E 25°33'02.3"

Dump material

There is a very large distribution of historical rubbish dump material spread over a wide area in the area selected for the reservoir. The dump material does not appear to have any depth and it quite sparsely distributed. The following items were noted:

- Clay pipe bowl
- Bottle glass (including dark green, aqua, white and purple)
- Rusted metal items
- Ceramics (including flow ware).
- Large bones
- Oyster shells



Ceramic shard from the Port Elizabeth
Provincial Hospital.



A clay pipe bowl

Four artifacts were collected for analysis and dating. This included a ceramic fragment bearing the stamp 'Port Elizabeth Provincial Hospital', a Codd bottle manufactured in Port Elizabeth, a clay pipe bowl with a Dutch engraving and a trademark on the base of a ceramic plate.

It was very soon apparent that the remains did not relate to the military fortification nearby but were considerably older. I suggested a possible late Victorian date, of possibly 1880.

Stone artifacts

A small number of stone artifacts were observed in the area. Some artifacts appeared to be made from weathered sandstone and it was not clear whether they were in primary context or had been transported to the dune area together with the historical material. It was not possible to determine whether they were of Middle of Later Stone Age origin.



A stone tool, possibly Middle Stone Age.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The four artifacts mentioned above were taken to Mrs Jenny Bennie, Historian at the Bayworld Museum in Port Elizabeth. Ms Bennie confirmed a date of approximately 1890 for the material. She also reported that this type of material had been widely distributed in and around Port Elizabeth in the previous century to stabilise the sand

dunes. The material collected was identical to material she had been collecting from the dunes over the course of the last few years. She noted that she had a large collection of this material in the Bayworld Museum and she did not think that the material from Schoenmakerskop differed from this.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND POSSIBLE MITIGATION

The National Heritage Resources Act protects all archaeological sites and it is an offense to destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or disturb archaeological sites without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Act (SAHRA).

The historical rubbish dump material at Schoenmakerskop is in secondary context and its archaeological significance is very low. Collections of this material have been made elsewhere in the Port Elizabeth area and are stored at the Bayworld Museum. While it is highly probably that the construction of the reservoir will result in some of this material being destroyed, or moved to another location, there is no compelling reason for mitigation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would recommend that development of the area might take place and that in this case, there seems to be no reason for applying for a permit to destroy archaeological material. The dump material is clearly not in primary context. Further, large collections of similar material are already housed in a nearby museum.

However, it is suggested that the contractors contact Ms J Bennie when excavation for the reservoir begins, so that she is able to make a site visit and to evaluate the material which is being uncovered. It is always possible that an unusual item may be recovered which is not represented in her collections.

Further, the contractors should take every care to avoid destroying archaeological sites which may be located beneath the soil surface. When excavation of the site takes place, contractors should look for the following features:

1. Dense accumulations of marine shell, representing prehistoric shell middens relating to past human occupation of the area.
2. Human remains including burials.
3. Concentrations of fossilized bones.

TERMINOLOGY

Middle Stone Age: Stone tools from this period are often made on fine-grained stone and they reflect a more controlled use of the flaking properties. These tools date between 200 000 and 40 000 years ago.

Later Stone Age: LSA peoples were ancestral to the San (Bushmen) and lived in South Africa between 40 000 years ago and colonial times. Later Stone Age tools are typically made on fine grained cherts and chalcedonies, although quartz tools are also

very common. They are generally microlithic in size and conform to certain designs, such as scraper, segments and adzes. They are easy to recognize and date.

Middens: are open-air shell accumulations which have resulted from human occupation in the area. Middens may measure between 1 m and 20 m in diameter. They consist primarily of shellfish but may also contain bone remains and cultural artifacts. They are the most common type of archaeological site is found within 5 km from the coast.

REFERENCES

- Kaplan, J. 1994. The state of archaeological information in the coastal zone from the Orange River to Ponta do Oura. Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.
- Rudner, J. 1968. Strandloper pottery from South and South-West Africa. Annals of the South African Museum 49:441-653.