

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Portion 87 of the Farm Cragga Kamma No. 23
PORT ELIZABETH



(Photo: J S Bennie)

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1. National Heritage Resources Act (1999)

The National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 makes provision for a compulsory Heritage Impact Assessment when an area exceeding 5000 m² is to be developed (National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999: page 55). This is to determine whether the area contains heritage sites and to take steps that they are not damaged or destroyed during development.

Section 34 of the Act stipulates that no person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Section 38 of the Act clearly indicates that any person constructing a road or similar linear development exceeding 300m in length or developing an area exceeding 5000 m² is required to notify the responsible heritage resources authority or the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). They in turn will advise whether an impact assessment report is needed before development can take place.

2. Introduction and Terms of Reference

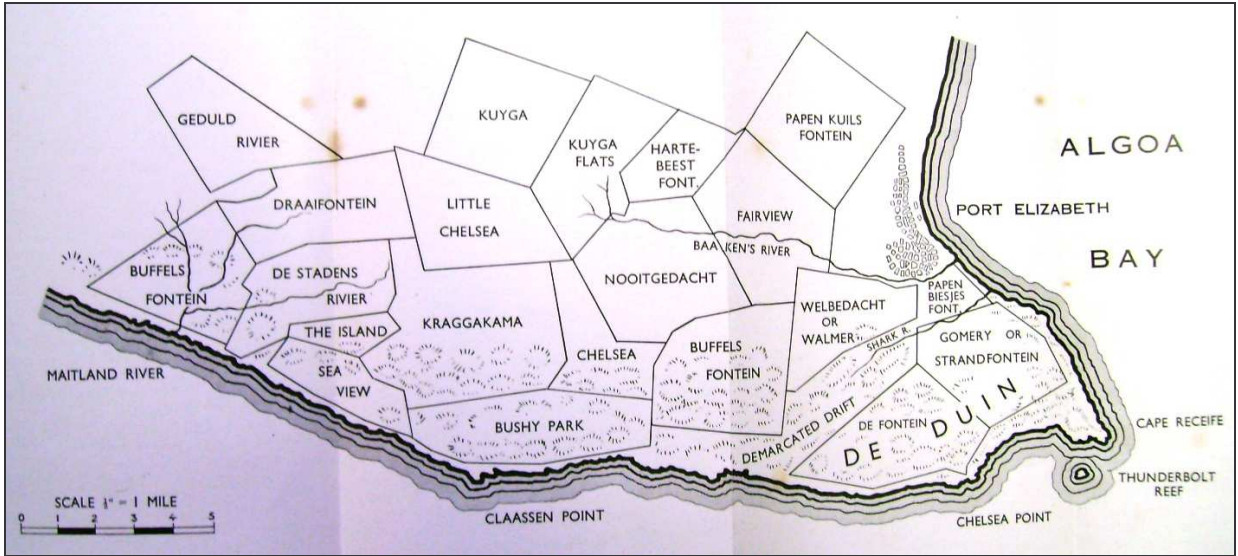
2.1 Introduction

Mrs Jenny Bennie was approached by Anton Bok Aquatic Consultants cc, on behalf of Mr Leon de Villiers of Farm Cragga Kamma No 23, (PTN 87) near Lake Farm, Port Elizabeth and requested to undertake the historical component of the Heritage Impact Assessment for the South African Heritage Resource Agency (Eastern Cape).

The transformation of vacant, undeveloped land for rural residential purposes is proposed. The property, in a predominately country area, is currently zoned agricultural. Rezoning to "rural residential" in terms of the new proposed Integrated Zoning Scheme for the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, is planned.

The site, approximately 20 km from Port Elizabeth, is bounded by Lakeside Road D 1907 in the east and by the Kragga Kamma Road MN 452 in the south. It is 19.17 ha in extent. The area is not really suitable for commercial farming. The land consists of hilly open grass pastures and clumps of alien trees. A tree in the vicinity reputedly bears a carved inscription, dated 1902, from the Anglo-Boer War period.

The ruins of one early building are to be found currently on the proposed site. This will be analysed and assessed on merit in the report to follow.



Map showing the earliest subdivisions of farms in Port Elizabeth (J J Redgrave)



Map showing study area, centre, at crossroads- with Colleen Glen on the left and The Flats on the right

2.2 Approach and Methodology

This assessment was conducted using the following information sources:

- Review of available literature
- Site visit on the 15 August 2008
- Personal consultations with Mrs Bunny Clark and Mr Leon de Villiers

3. HISTORY

3.1 Historical Context

The section below gives a brief outline of the history of the area in order to place the heritage feature at the study site within its historical context. A detailed description of the structure will be given in Section 4 of this report.

3.2 Origin of the name and early history

The name *Kragga Kamma* is of Khoekhoe origin and stems from the Gonoqua tribe. Its earliest form was // *Kraxa/kamma* (// *kara* - meaning pebbles in the river and *kamma* being a corruption of the Khoe word // *gami* - meaning water). It is also surmised that it might have meant “fresh” or “sweet” water, comparing the valuable fresh water lake in the area with the salt pans some distance away. The fact that water was to be found at a given locality was of utmost importance in a country where it was so sparsely distributed.

In the 1700's the whole area between the Van Staden's River and the headwaters of the Baakens River was known as “*Kragga Kamma*” (now restricted to the land between Surrey Hills and Kabega). A number of travellers passed through Kragga Kamma e.g. Beutler (1752) - “*Cracha Camma*”; the Swedes Thunberg (1773), and Sparrman (1775) who mentions “passing through several dales or bogs of different sizes... just south of *Kraggakamma*”; governors Swellengrebel (1776) - “*Kraggakamma*”; Van Plettenberg (1778), Paterson (1779) - “*Krakakamma*”; and Sir John Barrow (1797). The area was described as an excellent extent of land between the Van Staden's and Swartkops Rivers.

The route followed by the travellers was along a line from the Gamtoos River, through the Van Staden's River to the ‘seashore’, there being no settlement at Port Elizabeth at that time. Fort Frederick was built by the British in 1799.

As early as 1790 it is recorded that farms in existence in the area included those of Cornelius Kok at *Kragga Kamma* and Adolf Landman and Theunis Botha at *Buffelsfontein*.

The ‘farms’ in the district were subject to invasions and Van Reenen in his journal gives a list of 470 farms from the Langkloof and Gamtoos River to the Swartkops River that were “burnt, destroyed and deserted”. A band of Xhosa reputedly invaded the Kragga Kamma area during The War of the Axe in 1846.

Well-known botanist, William John Burchell's field notes recorded finding interesting specimens at “*Krakakamma*” - near the farm-house 31/1/1814”. This was the property of Daniel Potgieter, just beyond Van Staden's River. After 1814 travellers no longer

mentioned *Kraggakamma*, as Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage had become developed towns and it was not a point of reference.

In 1845 Mary and John Niblett settled on the farm now called *Theescombe* in Kragga Kamma, the original dwelling of the old loan-farm *Nooitgedacht* (only about 7 miles from Port Elizabeth). It was originally owned at the end of the 18th Century by Cornelius van Rooyen, a renowned frontier fighter. The farm was later in the possession of the Frames family and after them, Bob Parker Nance.

Henry Bailey Christian, who was in business with his father-in-law, J Owen Smith, and the first Vice Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in Port Elizabeth, owned and farmed *Kragga Kamma* from c1860 onwards. He was also involved with the Harbour Board, Horse Racing, the Jockey Club and the Agricultural Society. In 1899 mules arriving at Port Elizabeth for the Anglo-Boer War were taken to H B Christian's farm at *Kragga Kamma* for a time before being sent inland as part of the war effort (hence the carving on the tree at Farm 23 Cragga Kamma).

In the 1930's the family of H B Christian sold the farm when the Cape of Good Hope Bank failed and Charles Clark of *Buffelsfontein*, and his brothers, bought parts of *Hillside*, *The Gums* and *The Flats*. Mrs Bunny Clark recalls going to *Kragga Kamma* in 1946. The old homestead on the property reputedly had gardens that rivalled St George's Park. The floods of 1968 caused huge damage as an alluvial stream in the garden compounded matters. The farm ran the "*Kragga Kamma Ayrshire Dairies*" and delivered milk to the public.

The area of land currently under discussion was originally subdivided into building plots in 1966.

4. Description of Heritage Features Identified on Site



Section of the built remains looking south-west (Photo: J S Bennie)

The ruined remains of the “built” section of this site are located in the south-west corner of the designated PTN A. There is very little left of what appears to be a small domestic dwelling probably dating from the beginning of the 20th century. (Currently no evidence can be found to substantiate an oral tradition that it was once a toll gate).



Section of the remains (*Photo: J S Bennie*)

The brick and concrete remnants comprise a possible water tank in the south east corner with the remains of an outline of walls forming a rectangle encompassing an area of approximately 20 square metres. The bricks appear to be similar to those made by the Despatch brickfields at the beginning of the 20th century.



Specimen brick from the site (*Photo: J S Bennie*)

Portion of the property, PTN 87 of the farm Cragga Kamma No. 23 Port Elizabeth is earmarked to be converted into a Rural Residential Development by the Kragga Kamma Development Trust.

5. Survey

The study site is in a rural area, with one recently erected dwelling (2005) in the vicinity on 19.17 ha and another farmhouse on the remainder of the land measuring 104,9216ha. Tarred roads service the eastern and southern borders. Buildings in the surrounding vicinity include a farm, *The Flats*, on the opposite side of the road (Lakeside D 1907) to the property.

6. Recommendations and conclusion

The almost completely demolished building in the study area would appear to have no real historical value and there would be no merit in restoring or rebuilding it.

According to oral sources there are no known graves or burial sites in the vicinity. The rest of the proposed area is unoccupied and it may be concluded that the establishment of a rural residential scheme, although altering the current use and ambience of the countryside, and impacting on the outlook and possible traffic escalation on *The Flats*, will not affect negatively on any historical structures currently on the land from a built environment perspective,

7. References

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