

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF A
PORTION OF THE REMAINDER OF DIE BOS 810 AND
ONVERWACHT 811, SOMERSET WEST, SOUTH
WESTERN CAPE.**

Prepared for

**Baumann & Winter
Heritage Planners**

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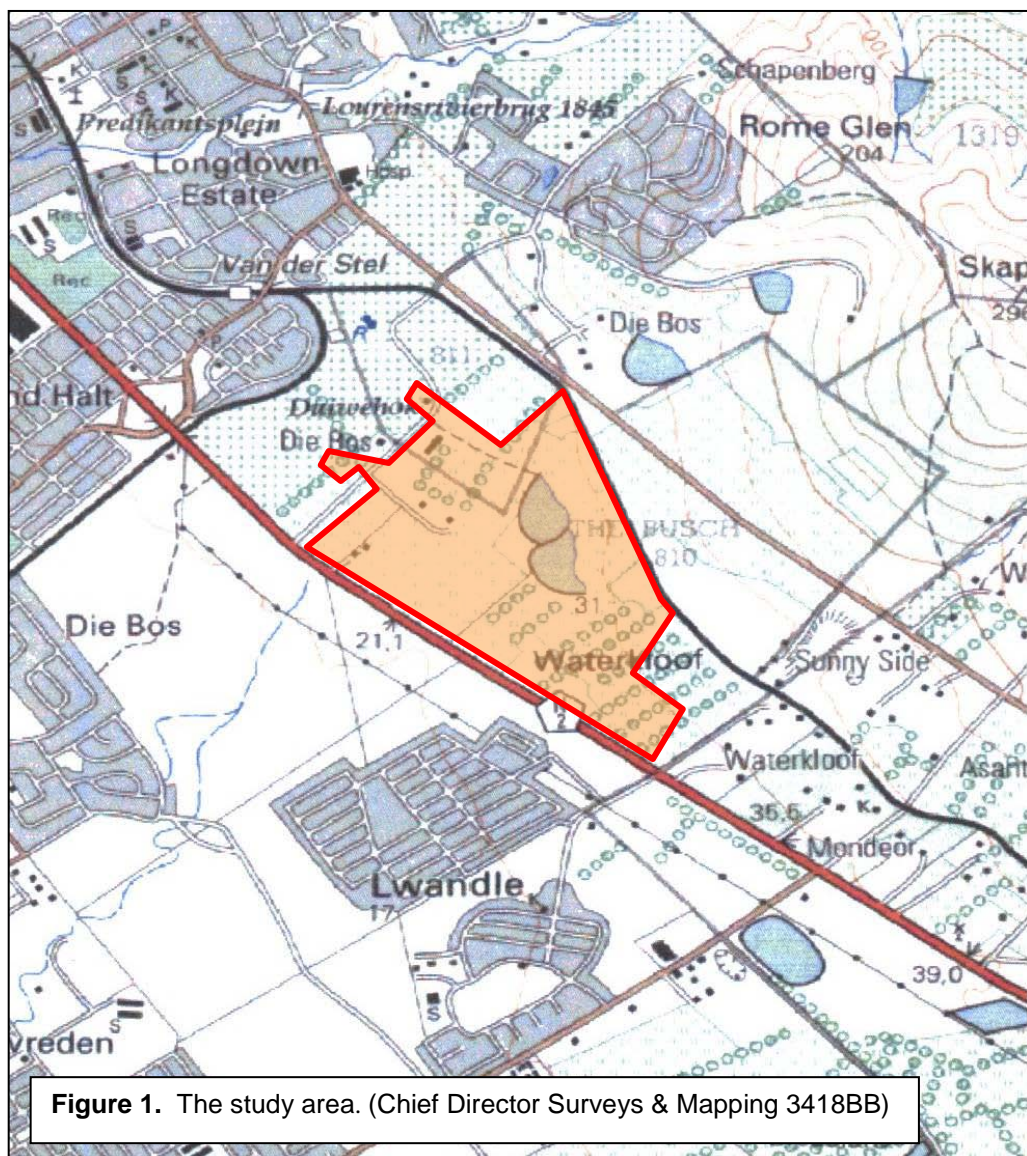
1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Description of the affected environment.....	3
2. METHOD	4
1.2 Limitations.....	4
3. FINDINGS	4
3.1 Archaeological sites	5
3.1.1 Die Bos 1	5
3.1.2 Die Bos 2	5
3.1.3 Die Bos 3	6
3.1.4 Die Bos 4	6
4. CONCLUSION.....	6
5. RECOMMENDATIONS	6

1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was appointed by Baumann and Winter Heritage Assessors to conduct of Phase 1 archaeological survey of land situated at Die Bos (Heritage Park) close to Somerset West, Western Cape Province. The area is shortly due to be redeveloped as a housing estate. Baumann and Winter are in the process of completing a Heritage Impact Assessment of the site (of which this report is a specialist component).

1.1 Description of the affected environment

The study area consists of about 118 hectares of what used to be agricultural land which formed part of the historic estate of Die Bos (Figure 1). Much of the land has been



ploughed and suffered surface disturbance. There are two large earth wall dams on the property, the building of which has also resulted in fairly widespread local disturbance of the landscape. The area, which lies on the gentle lower slopes of the Helderberg Mountains, is vegetated with grasses, a few alien invasive species and fir trees in places. The land surface is mostly sandy; however sheet erosion has exposed underlying gravels

in a number of areas. The historic buildings of Die Bos farmstead do not lie in the area. Plate 1 shows the typical landscape.

2. METHOD

The site was inspected on foot by archaeologists David Halkett (MA), Tim Hart (MA) and Charley Arthurs (BA Hons). The area was checked for traces of pre-colonial archaeological material, historical material, structures and landscape features protected by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. No trial excavations or detailed archival research was completed. Any material found was plotted using a handheld GPS (datum WGS 84).



1.2 Limitations

Visibility was generally good. The fact that the archaeological material found in the study area was associated with patches of eroded landscape indicates that there are probably more occurrences buried under the surface sands.

3. FINDINGS

The area contains a moderate amount of archaeological material, all of it restricted to exposures of Early Stone Age artefacts associated with patches of eroded gravels. Early Stone Age (ESA) material is fairly common in Southern Africa but is seldom given a high conservation status as it is seldom associated with organic remains or fossilised bone (which when found, are very highly significant). Its value lies in that it tells archaeologists

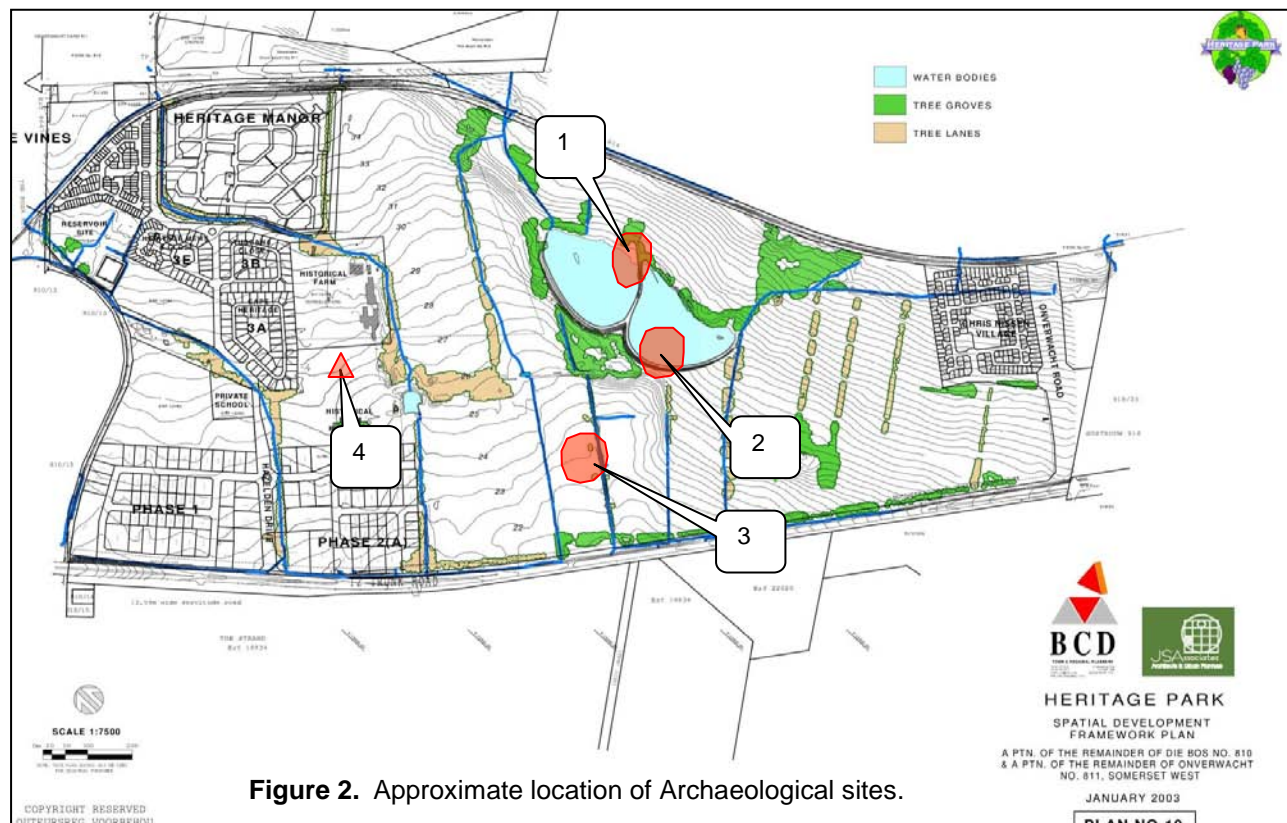


Figure 2. Approximate location of Archaeological sites.

where people were concentrated on the broad landscape at different times in the past. The material found within the study area appears to be ancient and consistent with the large crude artefacts of the *Stellenbosch Culture*. The material is in all likelihood more than 700 000 years old. Locations of archaeological sites are indicated on Figure 2.

3.1 Archaeological sites

3.1.1 Die Bos 1

(34° 06' 17.2" S 18° 52' 18.8" E)

An extensive and comparatively dense Early Stone Age scatter associated with an exposure of eroded gravels. This site contains virtually all the elements expected in ESA assemblages including formal artefacts such as bi-faces, spheroidal cores, radial cores.

Significance: *Medium*. Although disturbed by ploughing activities, this scatter is well worth sampling as it appears to represent a single phase, and contains a broad range of elements typical of the ESA (Plate 2)

Mitigation: This will have to be discussed with the Provincial Archaeologist, however presence of the material does not preclude development of this locality provided that the artefactual material is collected, or recorded and documented in-situ before the land is subject to any further disturbance



3.1.2 Die Bos 2

(34° 06' 26.7"S 18° 52' 02.2"E)

An Early Stone Age scatter dispersed over a wide area containing similar elements to site Die Bos 1.

Significance: *Medium*. Although disturbed by ploughing activities, this scatter is well worth sampling as it appears to represent a single phase, and contains a broad range of elements.

Mitigation: The presence of the material does not preclude development of this locality provided that the artefactual material is collected or recorded and documented in-situ before the land is subject to any further disturbance. Since this scatter is rather dispersed, it would be appropriate to collect an unselected collection of artefacts over an area of about 0.5 hectares.

3.1.3 Die Bos 3

(GPS reading not obtained)

Situated south of the dams, it is possible that this material may have been affected by earthmoving activities when the dams were built and the context is therefore dubious.

Significance: Low

Mitigation: Un-selected surface collection of material over about 0.5 hectares (if required by HWC)

3.1.4 Die Bos 4

(34° 06' 13.3"S 18° 51' 39.3")

An enigmatic collection of stone alignments that may represent remains of temporary structures or a workers camp. They may be less than 60 years old and therefore not protected.

Significance: Low

Mitigation: none required.



4. CONCLUSION

In general terms the archaeological significance of the study area is fairly low and easily mitigated. At least two of the three (sites 1 and 2) ESA sites will need to be sampled to the satisfaction of Heritage West Cape before a permit can be issued for their destruction. The stone alignment site is not considered significant.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Archaeological sites 1-2 will need to be subject to formal archaeological sampling to the satisfaction of the Provincial Archaeologist at Heritage Western Cape. This work needs to be done before earthmoving operations commence. It is expected that mitigation will require about two days of fieldwork as well as time for curation and report preparation.