

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE SWELLEN DAM CEMETERY
SWELLEN DAM
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Prepared for

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Client: Swellendam Municipality

By

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Executive summary

DJ Environmental Consultants, on behalf of the Swellendam Municipality, requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery, in Swellendam, in the Western Cape Province.

The extent of the proposed development (about 3.2 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).

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.

The subject property is located to the south of the N2, immediately alongside the existing Coloured community cemetery in Swellendam. Sloping slightly to the north and northwest, the receiving environment comprises old farmland (grazing). Bush and scrub occur in a swathe across the southern portion of the subject property, while the northern portion comprises mainly low grass, scattered with quartzite gravels, rocks and stone. No buildings, structures or features occur on the site. The surrounding land use comprises farmlands, low cost housing, and a water treatment facility.

Low-density scatters of Early Stone Age tools were located during the study. Interestingly, the majority of the 'tools' comprise round cores, in a variety of sizes. Only a few flakes and chunks were noted, while no formal tools were found. Most of the remains were found among piles of stone removed from the site and placed to one side, while only a few tools were found scattered over the site. The archaeological heritage remains occur in a fairly severely disturbed context. As a result, the remains have been graded low local significance.

The Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment has identified no significant impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material that will need to be mitigated prior to proposed development activities.

The specialist Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery has rated the potential impacts to archaeological heritage material as being very low.

With regard to proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery, the following recommendations are made:

- No archaeological mitigation is required
- The project should be allowed to proceed as planned.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and brief

DJ Environmental Consultants¹, on behalf of the Swellendam Municipality, requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery, in Swellendam, in the Western Cape Province.

The extent of the proposed development (about 3.2 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).

The subject property is currently zoned Agriculture.

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.

¹ Swellendam Municipality is represented by Ms Olivia Braaf, DJ Environmental Consultants, AECI Office Park, Block 1, Office 22, Somerset West, 7129. Fax 851 0933

Figure 1. Locality Map (3420 AB Swellendam)



Figure 2. View of the site facing south west. Swellendam is in the foreground.



Figure 3. View of the site facing north east.



Figure 4. View of the site facing east.



Figure 5. View of the site facing north east. Arrow indicates the existing Swellendam cemetery

4. APPROACH TO THE STUDY

4.1 Method of survey

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

A desktop study was also undertaken.

The site visit and assessment took place on the 5th April 2006.

4.2 Constraints and limitations

There were no limitations or constraints associated with the proposed development, although the southern portion of the property is covered in bush and scrub resulting in fairly low archaeological visibility.

4.3 Results of the desk-top study

Low level scatters of Early Stone Age (ESA) and Middle Stone Age (MSA) tools were located on a Portion of the remainder of Erf 1 Swellendam, within sight of the subject property (Kaplan 2002). The tools, comprising cores, unmodified flakes, split cobbles and chunks, was located among the boulder and pebble strewn slopes on the proposed low cost housing site. Tools were also found on the disturbed and eroded margins of the existing housing project in Railton, alongside Erf 1 (refer to Figure 1). Tools were also located among piles of rock that had been cleared from the site. The tools were all found in a severely disturbed context and assigned low significance ratings.

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 000m², or the rezoning or change of land use of a site exceeding 10 000 m², requires an archaeological impact assessment in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999).

5.1.2 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.

5.1.3 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

Low density scatters of Early Stone Age² (ESA) tools were located during the baseline study. Interestingly, the majority of the 'tools' comprise round, irregular cores, in a variety of sizes. Only a few flakes and chunks were noted, while no formal tools were found. Most of the archaeological remains were found among piles of round stone (and manuports) removed from the site, and placed in the eastern portion of the property while several piles of rock are also stacked near the south eastern corner, alongside the boundary fence. All the tools are made on locally-available, fine and rough-grained quartzite. Several of the tools are heavily weathered and patinated indicating some antiquity. The absence of formal tools on the property suggests that the archaeological remains may be the remnants of a workshop site, where most of the flakes and formal tools were removed from the site by their makers.

The low density scatter of archaeological heritage remains, however, occurs in a fairly severely disturbed and degraded context.

The archaeological heritage remain has been graded low local significance

A collection of stone tools located during the study is illustrated in Figures 6 and 7.



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



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

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

7. IMPACT STATEMENT

The Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery has identified no significant impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material that will need to be mitigated prior to development activities.

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

The archaeological heritage assessment of the proposed project has rated the potential impacts to pre-colonial archaeological material as being very low.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to proposed extension of the Swellendam Cemetery, the following recommendations are made:

- No archaeological mitigation is required
- The project should be allowed to proceed as planned.

9. REFERENCES

Kaplan, J. 2002. Phase 1 Archaeological study a Portion of the remainder of Erf 1, Swellendam and Suurbraak, and a Portion of the Remainder of Tradouwshoek No. 65. Barrydale. Report prepared for Doug Jeffery Environmental Consultants. Agency for Cultural Resource Management.