

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A CEMETERY ON  
ERVEN 8384-8388 AND 8395-8397 (VLAKKELAND)  
WELLINGTON  
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Prepared for

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## **Executive summary**

Braaf Environmental Practitioners requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed establishment of a cemetery on Erven 8384-8388 and 8395-8397 (Vlakkeland) in Wellington, in the Western Cape Province.

The affected property is located east of Jan Van Riebeeck Road between the towns of Wellington and Paarl, and is about 40 ha in extent. Virtually no natural vegetation occurs on the site. Currently zoned Agricultural, the receiving environment constitutes a severely degraded and transformed landscape, having been previously used for sewerage maturation ponds.

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.

A Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) checklist has also been completed by the archaeologist and submitted to the Built Environment and Landscape Committee (BELCOM) of Heritage Western Cape.

Despite the severely modified nature of the receiving environment, low-density scatters of Early Stone Age tools were located during the baseline study.

The archaeological heritage remains, however, occur in a severely disturbed context and as a result, 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 has rated the potential impacts to archaeological heritage material as being very low.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background and brief**

Braaf Environmental Practitioners, on behalf of Drakenstein Municipality requested that the Agency for Cultural Resource Management conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment on Erven 8384-8388 and 8395-8397 (Vlakkeland) in Wellington, in the Western Cape Province.

The proposed development provides for the establishment of a cemetery that will accommodate approximately 70 000 – 80 000 graves. The cemetery will also comprise a road including internal paths and parking, superburial blocks, a berm section an administration area with amenities and a park area.

The property is currently zoned Agriculture, and will be rezoned to accommodate the proposed development activities.

The extent of the proposed development (about 40.5 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.

A Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) checklist has also been completed by the archaeologist and submitted to the Built Environment and Landscape Committee (BELCOM) of Heritage Western Cape.

## **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.

### 3. THE STUDY SITE

A locality map is illustrated in Figure 1.

An aerial photograph of the study site is illustrated in Figure 2.

The subject property ( $S^{\circ} 33 40 656 E^{\circ} 19 00 287$  on map datum wgs 84) is located east of Jan Van Riebeeek Road and south of Rand Road, about midway between the Boland towns of Wellington and Paarl, outside the current urban edge. Virtually no natural vegetation occurs on the site, which is in a severely degraded and transformed state. The bulk of site comprises (long abandoned) sewerage maturation ponds (Figures 3-10). A relatively large number of mature Port Jackson trees occur on the property, as do several large Palm trees. Other than the old sewerage ponds, no buildings, structures or human-made features occur on the large vacant site. No significant landscape features occur on the site, either.

The study site is bordered by a residential area on the northern boundary, Jan Van Riebeeek road to the west and vacant farmland in the south and east.

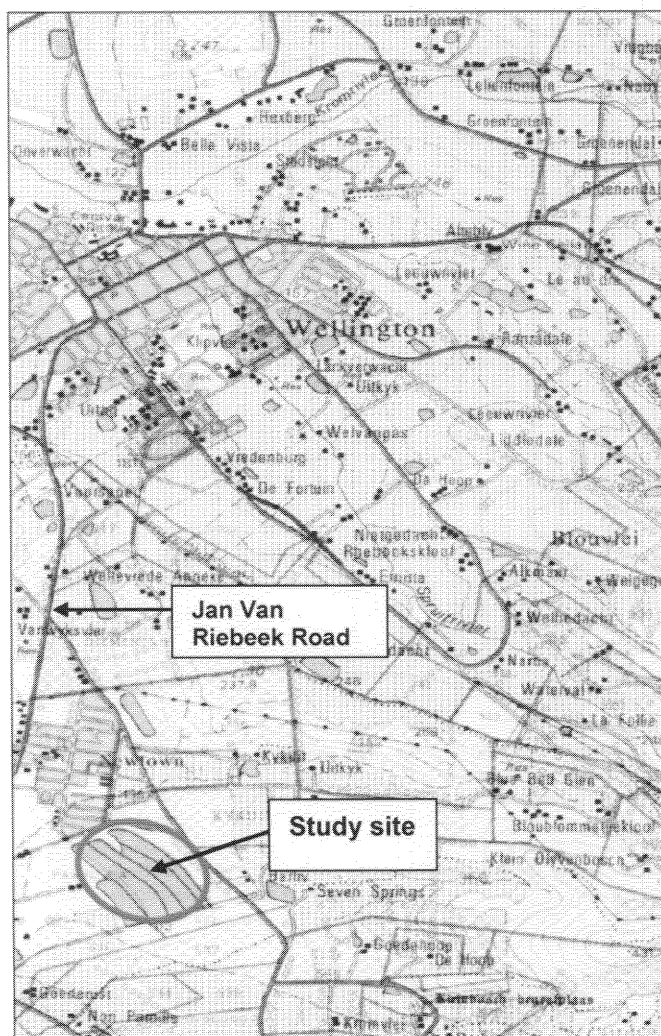


Figure 1. Locality Map (3391CA Bain's Kloof)

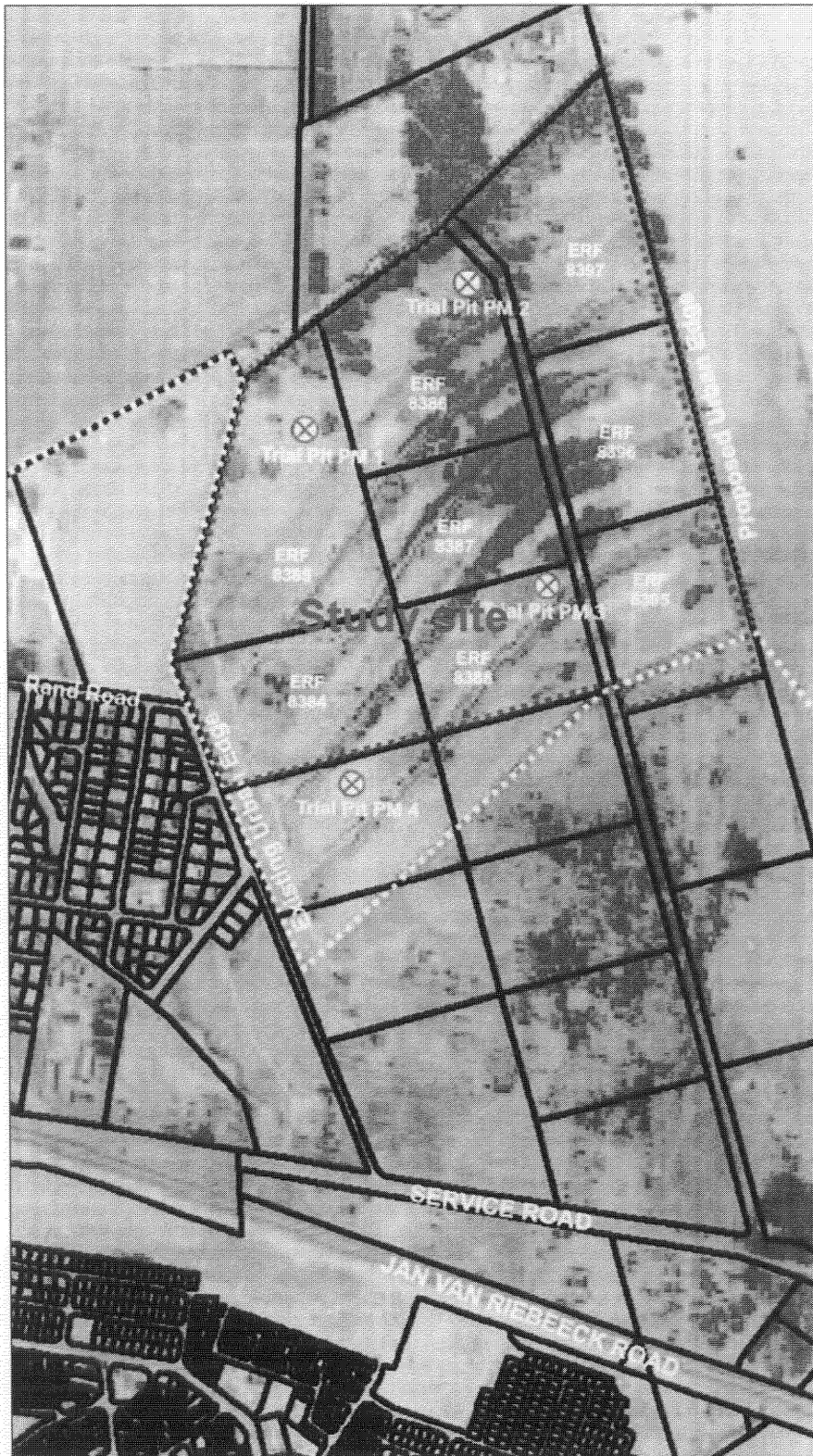


Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the study area





Figure 3. View of the site facing south east



Figure 4. View of the site facing south



Figure 5. View of the site facing east



Figure 6. View of the site facing east



Figure 7. View of the site facing east



Figure 9. View of the site facing south west



Figure 8. View of the site facing south



Figure 10. View of the site facing west



## **4. APPROACH TO THE STUDY**

### **4.1 Method of survey**

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

The site visit and assessment took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2007.

### **4.2 Constraints and limitations**

There were no limitations or constraints associated with the proposed development,

## **5. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

The following section provides a brief overview of the relevant legislation with regard to the archaeology of the subject property.

### **5.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)**

The National Heritage Resources (NHR) Act requires that "...any development or other activity which will change the character of a site exceeding 5 000m<sup>2</sup>, or the rezoning or change of land use of a site exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup>, requires an archaeological impact assessment"

The relevant sections of the Act are briefly outlined below.

### **5.2 Archaeology (Section 35 (4))**

Section 35 (4) of the NHR stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by HWC, destroy, damage, excavate, alter or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object.

### **5.3 Burial grounds and graves (Section 36 (3))**

Section 36 (3) of the HHR stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), 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. FINDINGS

Surprisingly, given the severely degraded and transformed nature of the receiving environment, between 20 and 30 Early Stone Age tools were located during the baseline study.

These include mostly crude, side-struck flakes and chunks (some broken), as well as some flaked and broken rounded river cobbles. One large retouched flake on fine-grained quartzite, one highly weathered bifacial handaxe, and one snapped unifacial handaxe was also found. Most of the tools documented are in rough-grained quartzite rock, while a few appear to be struck from rounded river cobbles (Figure 11).

It is very likely that most, if not all, of the tools were brought onto the site when the sewerage ponds were first constructed more than 20 years ago. All the tools were found stacked and placed among large numbers of rounded river quartzite cobbles, which appear to have been packed against the inside sloping walls of the terraced ponds. A few rounded cobbles and artefacts were also found on the pond floor, probably having slipped down slope.

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

**The archaeological heritage remain has been rated as having low local significance**



**Figure 11. Collection of stone tools. Arrows indicate whole and snapped handaxe. Scale is in cm.**

## **7. IMPACT STATEMENT**

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

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

With regard to the proposed establishment of a cemetery on Erven 8384-8388 and 8395-8397, the following recommendations are made

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