

**A SURVEY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
ON THE FARM WINTERHOEK 314 IR
NIGEL DISTRICT, GAUTENG**

For:

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SUMMARY

A survey of cultural resources on the farm Winterhoek 314 IR, Nigel District, Gauteng

A survey to establish the nature, extent and significance of cultural resources was made on the farm Winterhoek 314 IR, Nigel District, Gauteng. The extension of Ingwe Coal's Delmas Colliery is proposed.

No cultural (archaeological & historical sites, features and artifacts) resources were identified on the farm in the area of proposed development. Some sites were, however, identified on the adjacent farm of Rietfontein 313 IR. The sites date to the late 19th and/or early 20th centuries and consist mainly of the remains of old farmsteads. It was not possible to determine their historical importance however. The proposed development can therefore continue, with the prerequisite that if alternative sites for development is identified and decided upon, an archaeologist at a Museum or University be contacted in order to do a complete survey before development can start. It is also recommended that if, during any part of the development, sites or artifacts of cultural importance are found, a professional archaeologist be contacted to undertake proper scientific investigation of the finds.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	ii
CONTENTS	iii
1. AIMS OF THE SURVEY	1
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE	1
3. CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS	1
4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS	2
5. METHODOLOGY	3
6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA	4
7. DISCUSSION	4
8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
9. REFERENCES	6
10. PROJECT TEAM	6

**A SURVEY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES
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NIGEL DISTRICT, GAUTENG**

1. AIMS OF THE SURVEY

The National Cultural History Museum was requested by **DM CONSULTANTS** to survey an area on the farm Winterhoek 314 IR, Nigel District, Gauteng, where the extension of Ingwe Coal's Delmas Colliery is proposed. The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document possible sites, objects and structures of cultural importance within the boundaries of the area of proposed development.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **Terms of Reference** for the study were to:

- 2.1 Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural resources) located in the area of the proposed development.
- 2.2 Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their historical, social, religious, aesthetic and scientific value.
- 2.3 Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions.
- 2.4 Propose suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources.

We were informed by the client about the extent of the area that will be affected by the proposed development. The survey was to be confined to this area.

3. CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The following aspects have a direct bearing on the survey and the resulting report:

- **Cultural resources** are all nonphysical and physical human-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences that are associated with human activity. These include all sites, structures and artifacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development.
- The **significance** of the sites and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these.
- Significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium to high significance require further mitigation.
- The latitude and longitude of an archaeological site is to be treated as sensitive information by the developer, and should not be disclosed to members of the public.
- All recommendations are made with full cognisance of the relevant legislation, in this case the National Monuments Act (Act 28 of 1969).

4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Currently two of the more important Acts concerning cultural resources are the National Monuments Act (Act 28 of 1969) and the Environmental Conservation Act (Act 73 of 1989). It is however important to note that new legislation (the new Heritage Act) will come into effect on the 1st of April 2000.

4.1 National Monuments Act

According to this law the following appropriate cultural resources are protected:

- a. Meteorites and fossils
- b. Prehistoric rock art
- c. Prehistoric tools, ornaments and structures
- d. The Anthropological and archaeological contents of graves, rock shelters, caves, middens, etc.
- e. Historical sites and archaeological or paleontological finds, material or artifacts
- f. Declared national monuments
- g. Cemeteries and graves older than 50 years

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after obtaining a permit to do so from the National Monuments Council. The minimum requirement to qualify as archaeologist is an Honours degree in archaeology.

4.2 Environmental Conservation Act

This act states that a survey and an evaluation of cultural resources should be undertaken in areas where development, which will change the face of the environment, is to be made. The impact of the development on the cultural resources should also be determined and proposals to mitigate this impact is to be formulated.

4.3 New Heritage Act

This Act will come into effect on the 1st of April 2000. It will replace the old National Monuments Act (Act 28 of 1969). The types of sites protected by this act will be more or less the same than that covered by the National Monuments Act, but provides more strict measures of protection. An important change is that all graves, cemeteries and structures older than 60 years will be protected.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Field survey

A thorough survey of the area of proposed development (the farm Winterhoek 314 IR) was undertaken. Certain sections on the adjacent farm of Rietfontein 313 IR was also covered. The survey was conducted according to generally accepted archaeological practises, and was aimed at locating all possible sites, objects and structures of archaeological and historical (cultural) importance. Special attention was given to the area of proposed development, while areas in close proximity of the planned development were also investigated. All natural features such as prominent hills and outcrops, stream beds, clumps of trees and erosion trenches were investigated.

5.2 Data sources

The Archaeological Data Recording Centre (ADRC) of the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria was consulted. This was done in order to determine if any archaeological and/or historical sites have been documented previously in the area of the survey.

5.3 Documentation

All sites, objects and structures identified are documented according to the

general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Coordinates of individual localities are determined by means of the **Global Positioning System** (GPS) and plotted on a map. The information is added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

5.4 Presentation of the information

In discussing the results of the survey, a chronological rather than a geographical approach is followed in the presentation of an overview of human occupation and land use in the area. This helps the reader to better understand and facilitate the potential impact of the development.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The area is situated between Devon and Leandra in the Nigel district of Gauteng. The geology of the area is basically quartzite and shale, with intrusions of diabase, quartz diabase, dolerite, etc. The original vegetation of the area is classified as Themeda veld or Turf Highveld (Acocks 1975:92). Occurring on black turf, this is an extremely dense Themeda veld, with no other species playing an important part. Most of it, where the soil is deep enough, is ploughed over. According to Acocks this veld extends along watercourses far into the surrounding veld types.

There are no prominent hills and the general topography of the area is very gentle. Elevation ranges from 1500 - 1750m above sea (Acocks, 1975:92). Small sandstone outcrops, and gullies with low sandstone overhangs are found in some places. The Steenkoolspruit and Holspruit are the two major water sources in the area, both flowing into the Wilgerivier. Sections of the area have been ploughed over and used for agriculture, while the rest is used for grazing. Large sections of the area are also very marshy and unsuitable for habitation.

7. DISCUSSION

The search in the ADRC of the National Cultural History Museum revealed no sites of cultural (archaeological and historical) importance in the area of proposed development. During the survey only two sites, on the adjacent farm Rietfontein, were identified.

Stone Age

No Stone Age sites or artifacts were identified in the survey area. This might be due to a number of factors. One is that sandstone is not really suitable for the manufacture of stone tools characteristic of this period. Secondly, there are no

rock formations such as shelters or caves that could have been used for Stone Age settlement. This of course does not mean that Stone Age people were not present in the area in the past. According to Mr G.P. van Zyl (Pers. comm. 2000/02/23) he saw some San rock paintings in one of the gullies on Rietfontein when he was about 17 years old (1964). A subsequent search for these paintings during the survey proved fruitless. This of course does not mean that they do not exist. Mr van Zyl also claims that his grandfather told him that a certain Willem Pretorius shot a Bushman here in the 1880's for stealing some of his livestock. This story can of course not be confirmed.

There is therefore a possibility that San people (Late Stone Age) did live in the area. The tall grass hampered the location of any stone tools, and these types of artifacts could therefore still be identified.

Iron Age

No evidence for Iron Age settlement was found. Again, the tall grass made it very difficult to locate any sites or artifacts from this period, if they exist at all. It is doubtful whether Iron Age people would've settled in the area, as there are not ample building material (stone) for the construction of their huts and cattle enclosures. The fact that large portions of the area are marshy, and unfertile and therefore not suitable for agriculture, would also have deterred their settling in the area. A low stone wall was identified in one of the sandstone gullies, but whether this date to the Iron Age is uncertain. It is more likely of a much more recent date.

Historical Age

During the recent past (late 19th/early 20th centuries) the area has been much more actively settled and utilised. Mr G.P. van Zyl's portion of Winterhoek has been in the possession of his family since 1903. A number of sites (2) dating to this period were identified during the survey. Although they fall outside the area of proposed development (on the farm Rietfontein), and will therefore not be affected, a short discussion of both will be presented (see Appendix 2).

Site 1

This is a low, short, stone wall in one of the gullies. It is built right up against a sandstone outcrop. Its age and function are unknown and the site is of no historical importance.

Site 2

This site consists of the walled ruins of an old farmstead and out buildings, with an orchard. The farmstead was constructed from dressed sandstone. According to Mr van Zyl it dates to the 1850's/1860's and was originally owned by Willem

Pretorius, the man who shot the Bushman in the 1880's. It was later occupied by Koot Vosloo. The facts can however not be verified without proper historical research being conducted. A feature of this site is the extremely large oak trees. According to Mr van Zyl they are of great age. When he was in primary school (at Eendrag, the school close by) in the late 1950's someone from Pretoria gave a talk at the school and told them that these oak trees date to before Jan van Riebeeck. Again, this is unverified and also highly unlikely.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No sites of cultural significance (archaeological or historical) were found in the area of proposed development during the survey. The possibility that they do exist cannot be ruled out however. The tall grass hampered the search to some extent, and some sites might still be identified. Two sites were recorded on the farm Rietfontein. They fall outside the area of proposed development and will therefore not be impacted upon. We therefore recommend that the proposed extension of Ingwe Coal's Delmas Colliery continue, but that, if during any stage of development any further archaeological sites or artifacts are uncovered or if alternative sites for the development are decided upon, the National Cultural History Museum be contacted to conduct proper scientific investigation.

9. REFERENCES

Acocks, J.P.H. 1975. **Veld Types of South Africa**. Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa, No.40. Pretoria: Botanical Research Institute.

Data Sources

National Cultural History Museum: Archaeological Data Recording Centre

Maps

1:50 000 Topographical Series: 2628BD Leandra

10. PROJECT TEAM

Dr. J. van Schalkwyk - Principal Investigator
Mr. A. Pelsler - Field Supervisor

APPENDIX 1: STANDARDIZED SET OF CONVENTIONS USED TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF PROJECTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

Significance of impact:

- low where the impact will not have an influence on or require to be significantly accommodated in the project design
- medium where the impact could have an influence which will require modification of the project design or alternative mitigation
- high where it would have a "no-go" implication on the project regardless of any mitigation

Certainty of prediction:

- Definite: More than 90% sure of a particular fact. Substantial supportive data to verify assessment
- Probable: Over 70% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of that impact occurring
- Possible: Only over 40% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring
- Unsure: Less than 40% sure of a particular fact, or the likelihood of an impact occurring

Status of the impact:

With mitigation and the resultant recovery of material, a negative impact can be turned positive. Describe whether the impact is positive (a benefit), negative (a cost) or neutral

Recommended management action:

For each impact, the recommended practically attainable mitigation actions which would result in a measurable reduction of the impact, must be identified.

This is expressed according to the following:

- 1 = no further investigation necessary
- 2 = controlled sampling and/or mapping of the site necessary
- 3 = preserve site if possible, otherwise extensive salvage excavation necessary
- 4 = preserve site at all costs

Legal requirements:

Identify and list the specific legislation and permit requirements which potentially could be infringed upon by the proposed project, if mitigation is necessary

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY RESULTS¹

[See Appendix 1 for explanation of the conventions used in assessing of the cultural remains]

1. Site number: 2628BD01

Description: Small stone wall

Location: The site is located on the farm Rietfontein 313 IR

Discussion: In a gully, right up against low sandstone outcrop. Age and function unknown, but probably recent (early 20th to mid 20th century)

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Probable

Status of impact: Neutral

Recommended management action: (1) - no further investigation necessary

Legal requirements: None

2. Site number: 2628BD02

Description: Remains of an old farmstead and fruit grove

Location: On the farm Rietfontein 313 IR

Discussion: Remains of farmstead built with dressed sandstone, etc... According to source dates to 1850's/1860's. The large oak trees are a feature of the site

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Status of impact: Neutral

Recommended management action: (1) - no further investigation necessary.

Legal requirements: None

¹ ¹ Previous site numbers relate to other known sites on a particular 1/4 degree sheet already documented in the ADRC, and does not necessarily refer to sites occurring on or close to the specific area of development.