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Envirovision Magalies Ridge

TO: ENVIROVISION CONSULTING CC

A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) STUDY FOR A
PROPOSED NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON A
PORTION OF PORTION 42 OF THE FARM
HARTEBEESTPOORT 482JQ NEAR THE HARTEBEESTPOORT
DAM IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study as required in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) was done for a portion of Portion 42 of the farm Hartebeestpoort 482 JQ as a new residential development is planned on the outskirts of Schoemansville within the boundaries of the Madibeng District in the North-West Province of South Africa.

The study area covers a surface of approximately 2, 1489 hectares which is located on the lower southern foot slope of the Magaliesberg. The study area is situated directly to the south of the Magaliesberg Nature Reserve and in the archaeologically sensitive Magalies Valley where heritage resources dating from the earliest times into the more recent past have been recorded (see Part 4, Contextual Background). The proposed new Magalies Ridge residential area was divided into three pieces of land which were surveyed on foot.

The middle or central part of the study area is covered with a dense clump of trees that covers the remains of a Late Iron Age stone walled site. This site is small, has been damaged in the past and is still being disturbed by people who use the bush as a shelter from time to time.

The site is of little significance when evaluated in terms of its ideological and cultural historical significance. The site also does not have any aesthetic or research value. Neither can the site be considered to be unique.

However, all developers require a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) before any heritage resource may be affected by any development activity. It is therefore recommended that the developer approach SAHRA for a permit which allows for the demolishing of the remains of the Late Iron Age site.

1 INTRODUCTION

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study as required in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) was done for a portion of Portion 42 of the farm Hartebeestpoort 482 JQ during January 2004 as a new residential development is planned on the outskirts of Schoemansville.

The proposed new residential development is located on the southern foot slope of the Magaliesburg near the Hartebeestpoort Dam in the Madibeng District of the North West and will cover a surface of approximately 2,1489 hectare. The proposed new residential area will be known as Magalies Ridge.

2 AIMS WITH THE STUDY

In order to comply with legislation, the developer of the Magalies Ridge residential area requires knowledge of the possible presence and the significance of any heritage resources that may occur in the proposed new residential area. The developer needs this information in order to take proactive measures with regard to any heritage resources that may be affected, damaged or destroyed when the new residential area is developed. The developer and Envirovision Consulting therefore commissioned me to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the study area to be affected by the proposed new development. The aims with the HIA study are:

- to establish whether any heritage resources do occur in the proposed new residential area and, if so, what the nature, the extent and the significance of these remains are (see Table 1);
- to determine whether such remains will be affected by the proposed new residential development; and

- to evaluate what appropriate actions could be taken to reduce the impact of the development activities on such remains.

3 THE STUDY AREA

The study area is located on the farm Hartebeestpoort 482JQ (Hartebeestfontein 445JQ on the 1: 50 000 topographical map of 1985) to the north of the Hartebeestpoort Dam and falls within the boundaries of the Madiheng District within the North-West Province of South Africa.

The study area covers a surface of approximately 2, 1489 hectares of land which is located on the lower southern foot slope of the Magaliesberg. The new residential development will be known as the Magalies Ridge residential area and is located directly on the eastern perimeter of the existing town of Schoemansville and directly to the north of the R27.

The study area is situated directly to the south of the Magaliesburg Nature Reserve and in the archaeologically sensitive Magalies Valley where heritage resources dating from the earliest times into the more recent past have been recorded in the past (see Part 4, Contextual background).

TABLE 1: TYPES AND RANGES OF HERITAGE RESOURCES AS OUTLINED IN THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT (ACT NO 25 OF 1999)

<p>The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Art 3) outlines the following types and ranges of heritage resources that qualify as part of the national estate, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) places, buildings structures and equipment of cultural significance; (b) places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage; (c) historical settlements and townscapes; (d) landscapes and natural features of cultural significance; (e) geological sites of scientific or cultural importance; (f) archaeological and paleontological sites; (g) graves and burial grounds including- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ancestral graves; (ii) royal graves and graves of traditional leaders (iii) graves of victims of conflict (iv) graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette; (v) historical graves and cemeteries; and (vi) other human remains which are not covered by in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No 65 of 1983) (h) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) moveable objects, including - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and paleontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens; (ii) objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage; (iii) ethnographic art and objects; (iv) military objects; (v) objects of decorative or fine art; (vi) objects of scientific or technological interest; and (vii) books, records, documents, photographs, positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings, excluding those that are public records as defined in section 1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No 43 of 1996). <p>The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Art 3) also distinguishes nine criteria for places and objects to qualify as 'part of the national estate if they have cultural significance or other special value ...'. These criteria are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history; (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage; (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage; (d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects; (e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group; (f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period; (g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
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4 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The Magalies Valley between the Magaliesberg in the north and the Witwatersberge further to the south is known for its rich and diverse range of heritage resources. Many of the types and ranges of heritage resources that qualify as part of South Africa's 'national estate' and that have been listed in the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999) do occur in the Magalies Valley (Table 1).

Heritage resources known to exist in the Magalies Valley include Stone Age sites that may be located on the floor of the Magalies Valley but which may also be found in caves and rock shelters in the surrounding mountain ranges. Stone Age sites that occur include sites from all the time periods, namely from the Early Stone Age, the Middle Stone Age and the Late Stone Age.

Rock engraving sites are located further westwards towards Maanhaarand and Rustenburg. No outstanding significant rock painting sites are known to exist close to the study area.

Early Iron Age sites that date from the first millennium AD have been found in the Magalies Valley at Broederstroom and Strauss.

Late Iron Age stone walled sites also occur along the lower foot slopes of the Magaliesberg and the Witwatersberge. These sites were occupied by the Sotho-Tswana from as early as the 17th century. According to oral tradition one of Mzilikazi's settlement complexes was located near Silkaatsnek in the Magaliesberg. Mzilikazi's Ndebele (Matabele) subjugated the indigenous Sotho-Tswana during c. 1827 to 1832 when the Ndebele established several village complexes between Pretoria and Rustenburg.

Colonial farmsteads dating from the first half of the 20th century were established in the Magalies Valley when the first Colonists moved across the Vaal River and settled in the Transvaal. M.W. Pretorius and other farmers

established themselves near where the Hartebeespoort Dam is today while colonial dwellings were also established on farms such as Hekpoort and Skeerpoort further to the west. These settlements and outbuildings are sometimes associated with small cemeteries.

The Magaliesberg and the Witwatersberge is associated with blockhouses that were built by the British forces during the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902). These blockhouses run along the summit of the Magaliesberg from Pretoria in the east to Rustenburg in the west. Several of these structures are located in Kommandonek and in Pampoennek, outside the proposed development area.

5 METHODOLOGY

The proposed new residential area was subjected to a survey on foot.

6 THE HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY (HIA)

The proposed new Magalies Ridge residential area was divided into the following pieces of land which were surveyed on foot:

- A lower foot slope that runs from east to the west on the northern shoulder of Road 27.
- A middle or central part that is covered with a clump of bush.
- The upper steep southern foot slope of the Magaliesberg.

The survey on foot revealed the following:

5.1 The lower foot slope

The lower foot slope of the study area runs from the east to the west along the northern shoulder of Road R27 road and is largely devoid of any trees. This

Figure 2 – The trench running across the lower foot slope of the study area emphasizes the non pristine and affected nature of the study area.

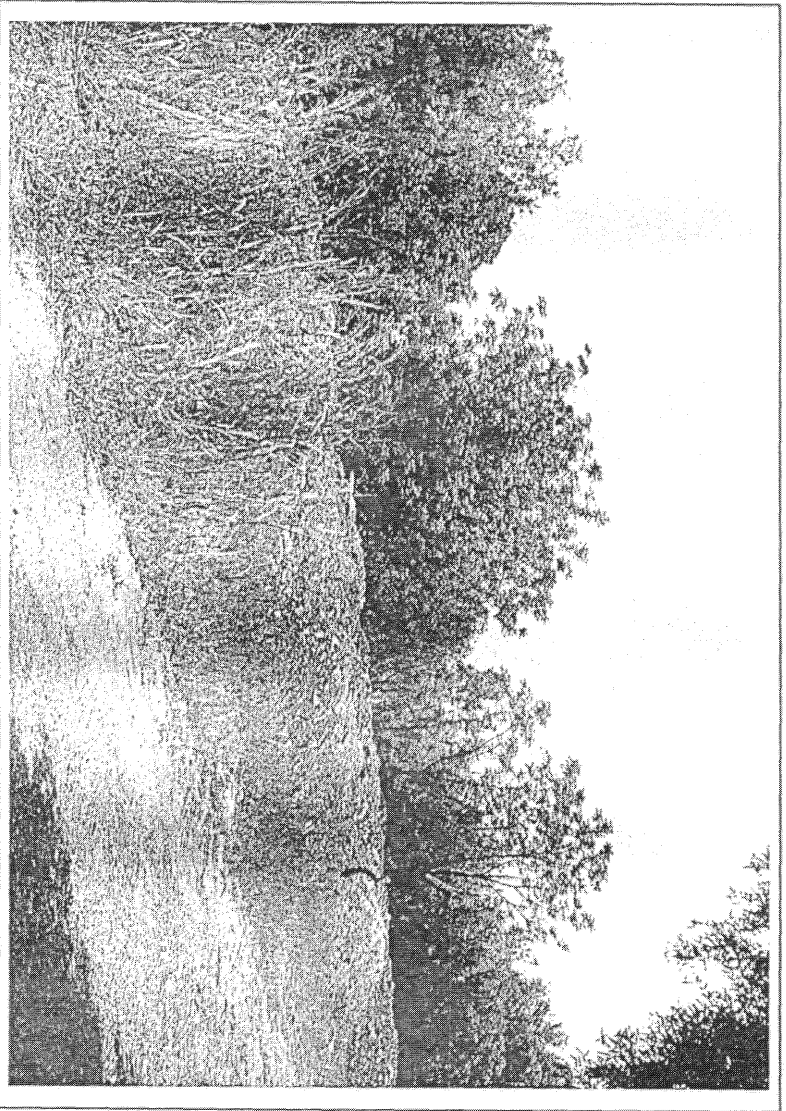


5.2 The middle or central part

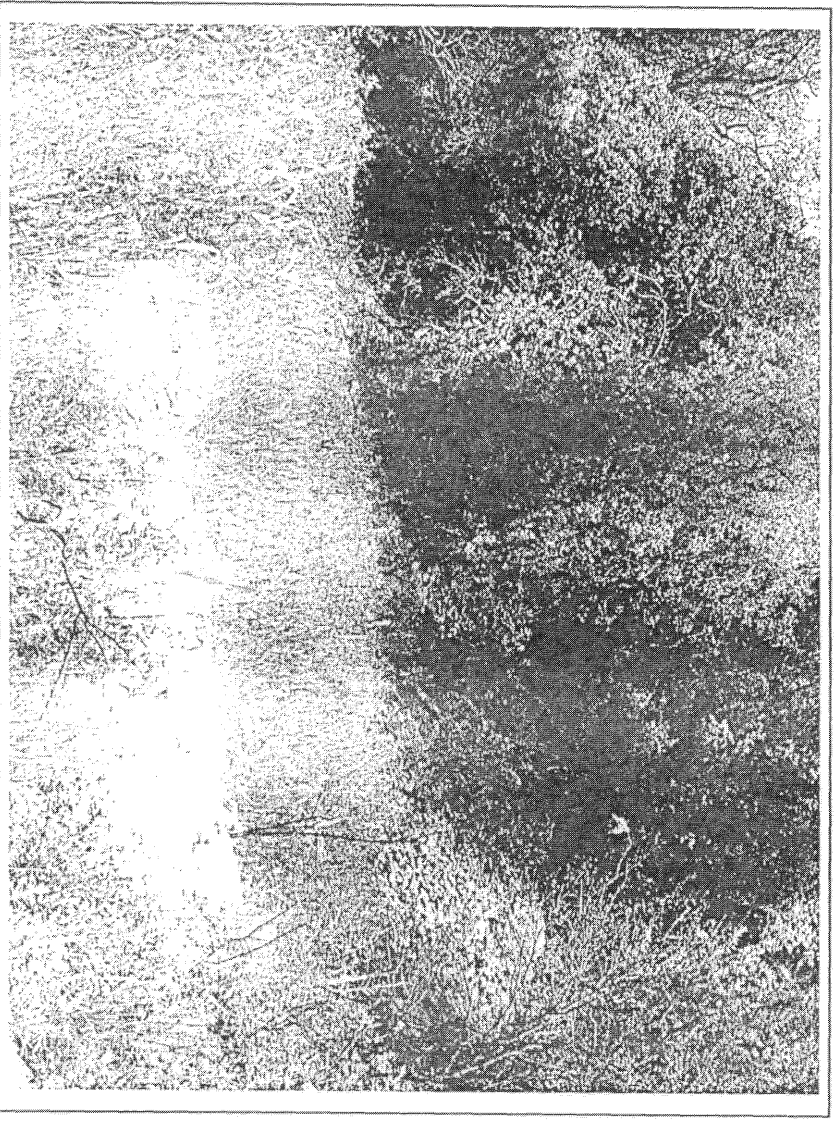
This part of the study area is covered with a dense clump of trees that covers the remains of a stone walled site. However, the site has been damaged by quarrying activities and has been disturbed by people who squatted in the bush. Rascals probably still use the bush as a shelter from time to time.

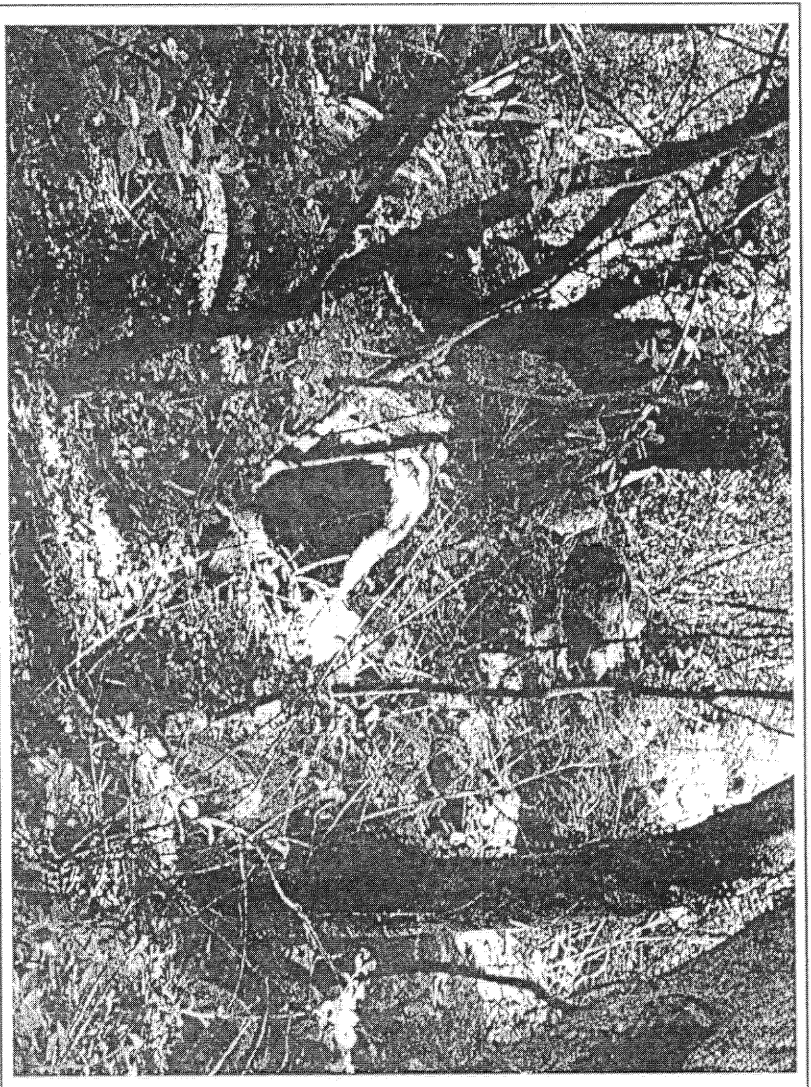
The fringes of the bush have been disturbed by quarrying activities as well as by the dumping of soil and heaps of rubbish (Figures 3 & 4).

The stone walled site dates from the Late Iron Age (c. 1700 to 1880) and was probably used by a Sotho-Tswana or Ndebele community who lived here for a short period of time. A few potsherds were noted near the bush. No other archaeological material of substance was observed (Figures 5 & 6).



Figures 3 & 4 – Heaps of soil (above) and waste (below) have been dumped in the central part of the study area. Quarrying in and near the bush has contributed to the disturbed nature of the central part of the study area (below).





Figures 5 & 6 – Remains of stone walls in the clump of bush in the central part of the study area (above and below).



5.3 The upper steep foot slope of the Magaliesberg

The upper part of the study area is part of the steep foot slope of the Magaliesberg. This piece of land is pristine except for a dirt road that runs across its southern border (Figure 7).

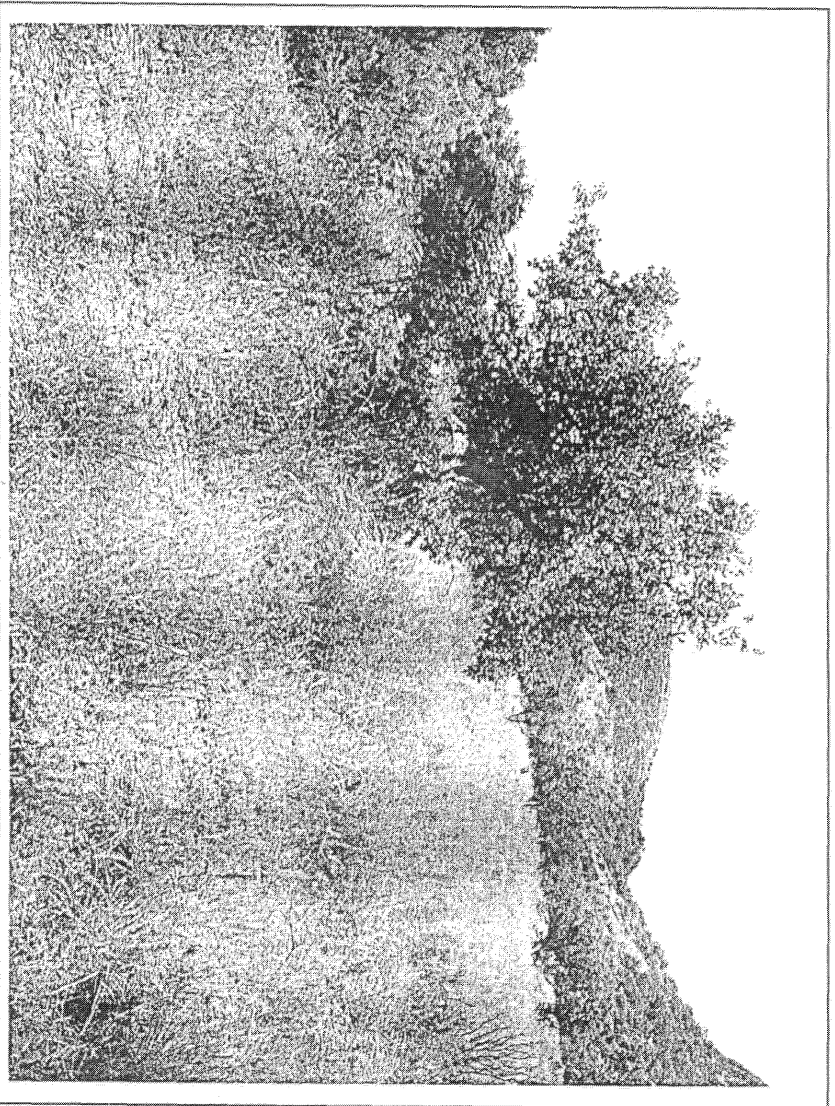


Figure 7 - The upper slope of the study area is pristine and covered by Sugarbush.

7 CONCLUSION

Only the remains of part of a Late Iron Age site were found in the bush in the central part of the study area. This site is small and inconspicuous and has been damaged in the past by quarrying and dumping activities. It is still being disturbed by people who use the bush as a shelter from time to time.

This Late Iron Age site is not worth preserving considering the fact that it contains no archaeological deposits (potsherds and other waste material) that could be studied as well as it's damaged state - especially when considering the large number of Late Iron Age sites in excellent condition that occur in the wider region.

The site is also of little significance when evaluated in terms of its ideological and cultural historical significance. The site also does not have any aesthetic or research value. Neither can the site be considered to be unique.

However, all developers require a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) before any heritage resource may be affected by any development activity. It is therefore recommended that the developer approach SAHRA for a permit which allows for the demolishing of the remains of the Late Iron Age site.

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