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**HERITAGE SCOPING REPORT FOR THE
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON THE
LINKSFIELD GOLF COURSE (Linksfeld)**

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Executive summary

General

The proposed development covers the entire Linksfield Golf Course. It was assumed that the development will impact on the entire site although no design was presented to the heritage team to determine where the impact of the development will be higher or lower. Therefore, it was assumed that the assessment has to be executed according to a 'worst case scenario' paradigm. In practical term this was interpreted as if the entire site will be destroyed completely.

Findings

- This is a historic golf course and historic site in the Linksfield suburb and in greater Johannesburg. The loss of this site and its history cannot be allowed without a proper investigation into the site, its history of development, the history of the Club and a profile of significant people who contributed to the history of the club.
- The most prominent buildings and structures on the site are the *clubhouse*, the old *entrance building* to the workers compound and the *compound* itself. Other features on the site include the stone *ater furro* that passes between the clubhouse and the compound and the old *transformer buildings* located on the boundary of the golf course.
- From a historic point of view the fact that the golf course has served a particular need in the local and surrounding communities - as *golf course* - and that this will be lost can be translated as a loss of a particular part (and physical memory) of the cultural heritage of the suburb and the neighbourhood and at the same time as a loss of an existing resource and community asset.
- The fact that a labourers compound of the City Council of Johannesburg is located in the centre of the site is of special and 'high' significance and needs special attention.
- The golf course has also, over the years served as an *open space* and *green area* in the suburb which will now be lost resulting in the loss of a qualitative value-adding characteristic to the neighbourhood.
- Even though almost all the *planted vegetation* on the site is of an exotic or 'foreign' origin, the mature trees have contributed to the character of the neighbourhood and added value to the mature green character of the suburb.

Recommendations

- Recording of all buildings and structures on the site by a heritage architect or heritage specialist (see recommendations in report)
- A full heritage impact assessment be done to comply with Section 38(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act. The report must include all the aspects set out in terms of Subsection (2)(a): see (a) The identification and mapping of all heritage resources in the area affected, (b) an assessment of the *significance* of

such resources in terms of the heritage assessment criteria set out in section 6(2) or prescribed in section 7, (c) an assessment of the impact of the development on heritage resources, (d) an evaluation of the impact of the development on heritage resources relative to the sustainable social and economic benefits to be derived from the development, (e) the results of *consultation with communities* affected by the proposed development and other interested parties regarding the impact of the development on heritage resources, (f) if heritage resources will be adversely affected by the proposed development, the *consideration of alternatives* and (g) plans for *mitigation* of any adverse effects during and after the completion of the proposed development.

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1. Brief

The identification and preliminary assessment of heritage features that occur on the property where the development is proposed and within the area affected by the proposed development.

2. Aim of the study

- Identification of all heritage features in the area to be affected by the proposed development
- Preliminary recording of identified heritage features
- Preliminary assessment of identified heritage features
- Recommendations on the way forward

3. Assumptions and conditions

- The identification and assessment of heritage resources prior to approval of land development is mandated by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999).
- No plans or designs were submitted of the proposed development and it is unknown where the development will take place, what the development entails, where the various zones or elements of the development will be located and how adversely the development may impact on the landscape.
- It is assumed that the entire golf course will be impacted on and that the impact will be adverse and complete – meaning the complete destruction of the entire historic cultural landscape.
- This survey did not include the identification of any cultural material located underneath the surface (such as subterranean human or other physical remains).
- The team was not allowed to investigate the workers compound in detail as the on-site (compound) manager considered the compound not to be part of the golf course and therefore out of bounds to the investigators.

4. Geographic area of the study

The site includes the entire 32 put golf course of the Linksfield Golf Club. The proposed development will impact on the existing golf course as it will be developed into a new medium density residential area.

During the site visit it was determined that the workers compound on the site belonged to the Johannesburg Municipal Council and is not part of the golf course and the jurisdiction of the Club. The client (Strategic Environmental Focus) confirmed that the compound would be part of the development and that it will be part of the area impacted on and affected by the development and that it should be included in the study.

5. Methodology

No maps or designs were submitted to indicate what the proposed development will be like and where it will occur. It was assumed that the entire area will be demolished. The

site was visited twice and the physical remains such as structures and infra structural elements were investigated on foot. Photographs were taken of those heritage features that occur on the site and will be impacted on.

6. Findings

(This part of the report is set out according to the specifications for reports to SAHRA by the National Heritage Resources Act)

(a) The identification and mapping of all heritage resources in the area affected

Historic Golf Club on the East Rand. The club and golf course is older than 60 years and therefore the entire site is protected by the 60 year clause of the National Heritage Resources Act.

The features on the site that are of heritage significance are:

1. The club house
2. The workers compound
3. The former main entrance building to the compound
4. Sheds and workshops
5. Electric transformer buildings
6. Old drainage canal
7. Loss of open space and green area

(b) Assessment of the significance of such resources in terms of the heritage assessment criteria set out in section 6(2) or prescribed under section 7

1. Club house

The most prominent building on the site is the clubhouse. Its architectural significance is low, but its historical significance is high. At first glance it seemed as if the building dated to the period 1950-1965 based on the architectural style and vocabulary. However, when the building was inspected more thoroughly it was discovered that the core of the building date back to between 1935 and 1945. This means that the original building is older than 60 years and protected by the National Heritage Resources Act. The oldest part of the building has been altered to such an extent that little of its original shape and style have remained. However, some of the detailing are still intact such as pressed metal ceilings, door handles and window locks. The later additions and alterations have impacted adversely on this building and only some walls and building elements such as doors and windows have remained.

The more contemporary building contains elements associated with the work of the architect Helmut Stauch during the 1950-1960s such as the elevated second floor with its well-defined box-like shape and full-façade steel frame windows set back into the structure. The ground floor was left open exposing the concrete columns (see Figures 1 and 2.). Whether the building was a Stauch design or designed by the company Stauch

Vorster or one of Stauchs students still need to be determined as the scoping investigation did not include a search for the architectural drawings of the building.

2. *Workers compound*

The second biggest building complex on the site is the workers compound located almost in the centre of the golf course. Both its architectural and historical significance are high. This building has not been altered as dramatically as the clubhouse and most of it has remained as it was intended. The building dates back to the period 1935-1945 and its architectural vocabulary reflect the period. The complex is considered as workers housing, a subject and building type currently considered highly sensitive by the National Heritage Resources Act and by the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

The team was hampered to investigate the compound in detail as the site manager considered it the domain of the Johannesburg Metro Council and without permission from them photographing and on foot inspection were not considered 'legal'.

3. *Former entrance to the compound*

A third building occurs near the compound and seemed to have functioned as the entrance into the Municipal property on which the compound is located. The fences around the compound have been removed and the area belonging to them is not that well-defined. It is a face brick building with a flat roof and probably dates to the period between 1940-1950. Its association and relationship with the workers housing complex and its architectural vocabulary makes it an important structure.

4. *Old sheds and workshops*

Several old sheds and what seem to be workshops are directly adjacent to the workers compound. It is assumed that these structures also belong to the Johannesburg Municipality and the workers compound. The structures are not of any architectural merit but their historic associations still need to be determined (information may be attained from interviews with the existing compound manager and other staff members)

5. *Electric transformer buildings*

Two face-brick transformer buildings are located along the northern boundary of the site. They date to the period 1950-1960. Elsewhere, along the same boundary these buildings have been included in the design of the security wall of a new security village. The same should be done with these two buildings.

6. *Old drainage canal*

A drainage canal constructed with stone masonry runs through part of the site, passing behind the workers compound. The date of the canal is unknown and it is difficult to determine its age without interviewing some of the older residents or club members.

7. *Open space in a residential area*

The site can be classified as an urban open space in a mature residential area. Although this aspect has nothing to do with architectural structures it does contain heritage value and significance as the golf course has contributed and still contributes to the character of

this mature neighbourhood. Any development of residential or business nature will cause the loss of this resource and urban asset in a mature residential area.

(c) Assess the impact of the development on such heritage resources.

The details of the proposed development have not been revealed to the heritage consultants. If a portion of the golf course will remain intact, it may be possible to combine the old and new uses proposed for the site with the current uses of the existing buildings. If the entire site is to be demolished the impact will be adverse and severe.

(d) Evaluate the impact of the development on heritage resources relative to the sustainable social and economic benefits to be derived from the development.

This aspect of the heritage assessment has not been determined yet and still needs to be debated to comply to the obligations of the National Heritage Resources Act.

(e) The results of consultation with communities affected by the proposed development and other interested parties regarding the impact of the development on heritage resources.

As this is a scoping survey non interested and affected parties have been involved or have been contacted to determine their views on the impact of the proposed development on heritage resources. The results of any public participation processes have not been reviewed yet.

(f) If heritage resources will be adversely affected by the proposed development, the consideration of alternatives.

As the details of the proposed development have not been presented to the team it is unknown what the impact of the development will be on the heritage resources identified in the study. Alternatives can only be presented when the proposed master plan has been drafted.

(g) Plans for mitigation of any adverse effects during and after the completion of the proposed development

Mitigation of the impacts of the proposed development can only be made after the significance of the identified buildings and features have been determined according to the prescribed guidelines set out by the National Heritage Resources Act and after the proposed design for the site has been revealed.

7. Recommendations

- A full HIA (including a desk study) be done to determine the history of the golf course; the identification of individuals (interested and affected parties) who may be able to supply information on the history of the site and assist with the evaluation of the heritage resources in the area - directly affected by the

development (see Section 38 (3) and subsection (2)(a), (a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f) and (g) of the National Heritage Resources Act).

- Depending on the information obtained, some of the buildings need to be re used and incorporated into the design
- Irrespective which buildings will be demolished, they must be recorded: Measuring of all buildings and structures on the site; scale drawings of all measured buildings and structures; photographic recording of all buildings and structures with descriptions according to standard architectural vocabulary.
- Based on the historical information revealed during the desktop study, recommendations on appropriate memorialisation of the history of the site and its associations will be made.
- Depending on the historical significance of the buildings and structures alternative design proposals need to be made (see Section 38 (3) and Subsection (2)(a), (f) of the National Heritage Resources Act).
- Depending on the design, mitigation measures will be determined on how to minimise the impact of the development on the heritage features considered of heritage significance (see Section 38 (3) (g) of the National Heritage Resources Act).
- If any of the buildings or features be preserved, a conservation management plan for such a building or site needs to be drafted to ensure its proper use, protection and maintenance.

8. References

Peters, W. 1998. Houses for Pretoria. An appreciation of the houses of the 1950s by Helmut Stauch. Fischer. R, Le Roux. S and Mare. E. (Eds).1998. Architecture of the Transvaal. Pretoria: UNISA.