

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED  
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REMAINDER OF  
PORTION 12 OF THE FARM ZEEKOEFONTEIN 573-IQ**

A Phase-1 Archaeological Impact Assessment report prepared for  
Seaton Thomson and Associates

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May 2006



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## INTRODUCTION

The subdivision and development of the Remainder of Portion 12 of the farm Zeekoefontein 573-IQ is under consideration. The development centres on the central valley of the remainder portion (Fig. 1). The environmental coordinators for the project, Seaton, Thompson and Associates, commissioned University of the Witwatersrand Archaeology to assess the archaeological potential of the proposed development.

## METHOD

The authors conducted a desktop survey, and then undertook a reconnaissance trip on 23 May 2006. They met with the client, Mr. H. Temlett, who showed them the intended development area. Mr. Temlett indicated that the ridges (Fig. 1:A 1:B) will be avoided because of the presence of red data species and the GDACE ridge policy. The authors then traversed the area on foot. Sites were recorded with a GPS using the WGS 84 datum.

## RESULTS

The desktop survey indicated that very little archaeological research has been conducted in the area. Consequently, there is a dearth of recorded sites in the area. The only exception is Lindequedrift/ Zeekoefontein cave, located approximately 4km to the north-east of the study area. Haughton and Wells (1942) identified the shelter as a *mtfecane* period refuge site. Oral testimony indicated that either BaFokeng or BaPhuting people stored grain and hid in the shelter. The substantial amount of human skeletal remains found in the cave indicates that this refuge strategy was not entirely successful.

The authors also scrutinised an aerial photograph provided by Seaton, Thompson and Associates. Several stone circles were noted, and attempts were made to locate these during the survey.

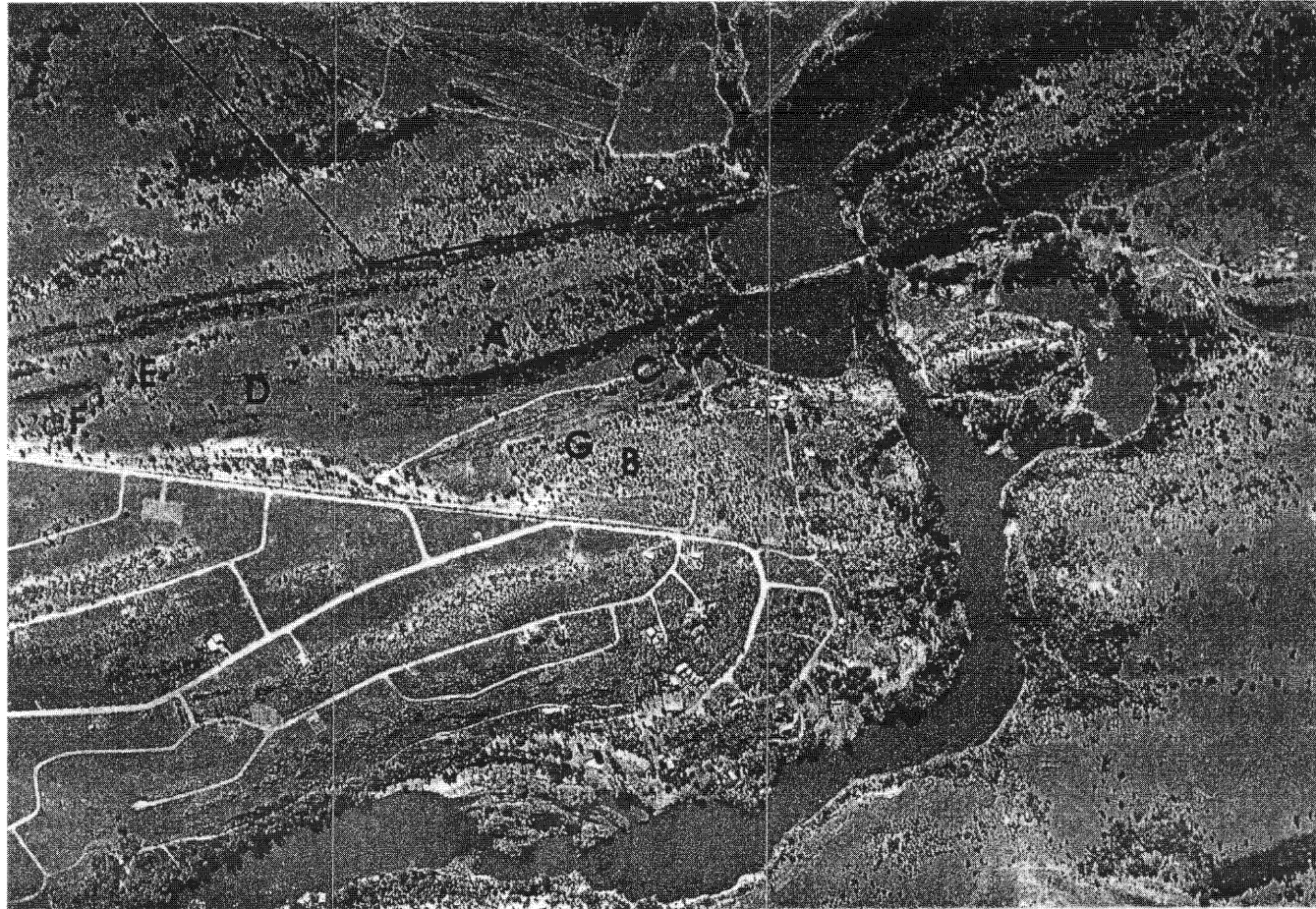


Figure 1. Aerial photograph of the remainder of portion 12 of the farm Zeekoefontein 573-IQ.

The foot survey revealed that the valley area has been extensively disturbed. These disturbances include several roads, trenches, pits, mounds and a road borrow pit. The pit now functions as a dam. Mr Temlett reported that some of the damage is fairly old and was the result of historic diamond diggings.

A few Middle Stone Age artefacts, including blades (ca 100 000 to 25 000 years ago), and Later Stone Age tools (25 000 years ago onwards) lay scattered over a wide area in the valley. Some washed concentrations occur (for example 26° 44" 05'S 27° 36' 23'E) (Fig. 1:C), however, none of these occurrences appear to be *in situ* and are therefore of little value. The stone tools, rather, seem to have washed down from the adjacent ridges. No site could, however, be identified on the ridges either.

An isolated stone circle (Fig. 2) adjacent to a semi circular stonewall (Fig. 3) is located against the base of the northern ridge at 26° 43" 51.7'S 27° 36" 01.6'E (Fig. 1:D).

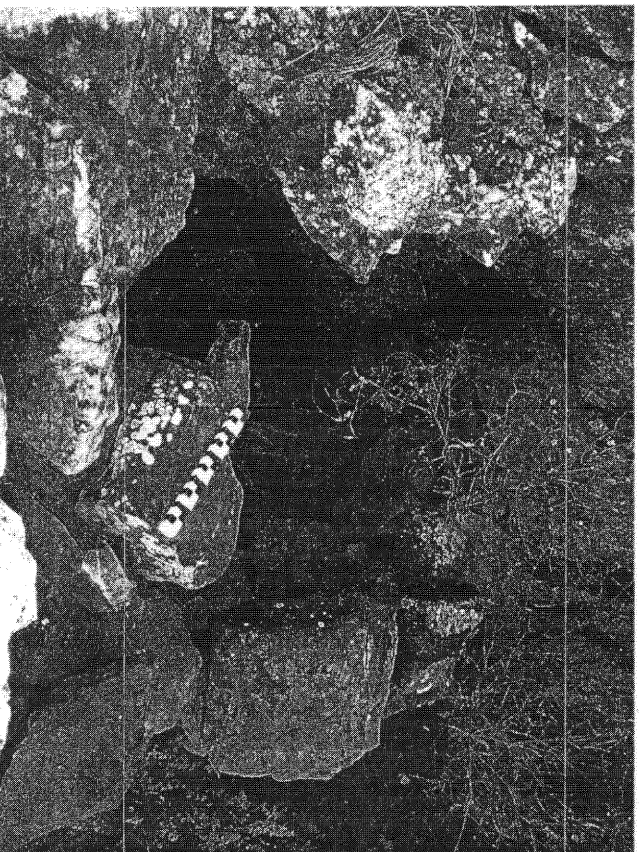


Figure 2. Small stone circle abutting the northern ridge.



Figure 3. Stone semi circle adjacent to the small stone circle abutting the northern ridge.

A recent homestead, with low stonewalls and circular daga structure is located at  $26^{\circ} 43'' 49.4'S$   $27^{\circ} 35'' 57.7'E$  (Fig. 1:E). These and other stonewalls (Fig. 1:F) to the west are located outside the development area.

The southern edge of the proposed development abuts recent historic building remains (for example e.g.  $26^{\circ} 44'' 05.9'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 11.9'E$ ,  $26^{\circ} 44'' 05.2'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 17'E$ ,  $26^{\circ} 44'' 05.1'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 18.4'E$ ,  $26^{\circ} 44'' 06.6'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 21.1'E$  and  $26^{\circ} 44'' 06.1'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 21.4'E$ ).

These structures are visible on the aerial photograph (Fig. 1:G). Building remains include circular stone base walls (Fig. 4), foundations and one square stone walled ruin.

This square ruin has sections of intact wall plaster (Fig. 5). Scattered around these structures are recent glass fragments and rusted metal. Only one intact midden, containing ash, charcoal, bone, metal and glass, was found at  $26^{\circ} 44'' 03.9'S$   $27^{\circ} 36'' 15.5'E$ . The material culture found in association with the building remains does not suggest that they are older than 60 years.



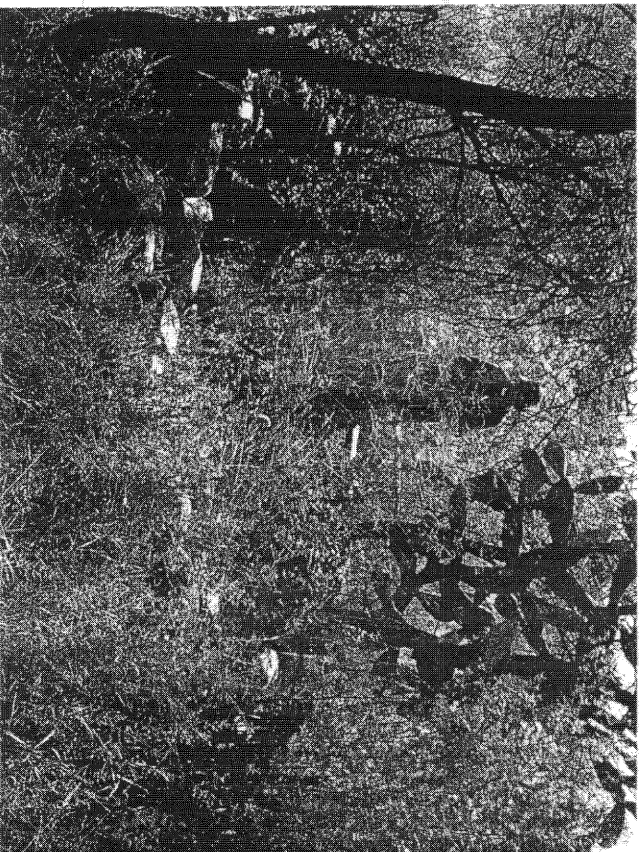


Figure 4. Example of a circular base wall located on the edge of the southern ridge.

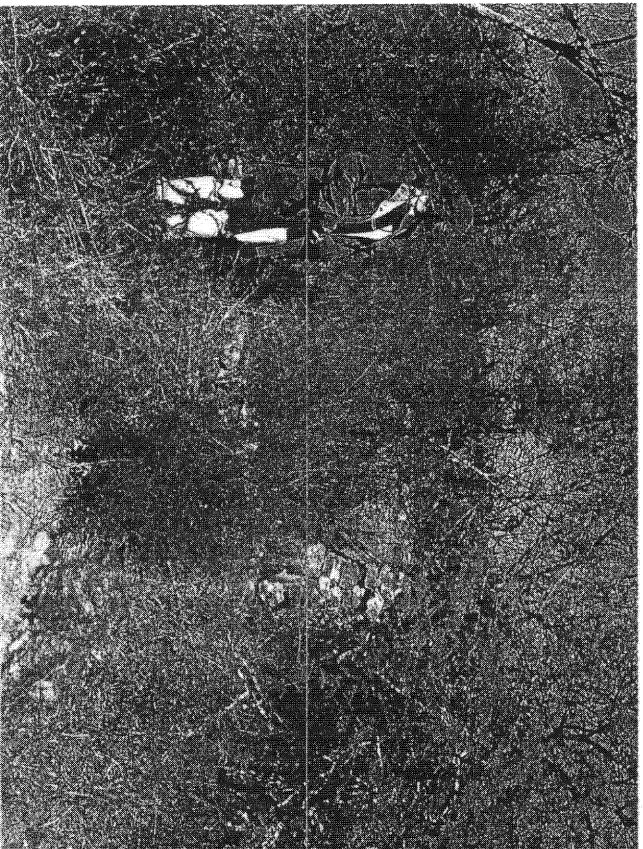


Figure 5. Rectangular stone ruin, with wall plaster visible on the inner back wall.

Graves are known to occur on the northern ridge, but will not be affected by the development. No graves were noted in the areas associated with the recent / historic remains. Nevertheless, they might be present.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The development area of the Remainder of Portion 12 of the farm Zeekoefontein is devoid of significant archaeological sites. The key heritage and archaeological sites, i.e. the graves and source of the stone tools, are located outside the development area. Consequently, there is no archaeological reason why the proposed development should not proceed.

The building remains on the southern edge of the development are recent and of limited significance, however, unmarked graves might be present. Similarly, graves undetectable by a surface survey could occur in the highly disturbed area. The South African Heritage Resources Agency needs to be notified if human remains are uncovered during development.

#### **REFERENCE:**

Haughton, E.J. & Wells, L.H. 1942. Underground structures in caves of the Southern Transvaal. *South African Journal of Science* XXXVIII:319-333.