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CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF GOUDKOPPIE KLERKSDORP NORTHWEST PROVINCE

1. DEFINITION

The broad generic term *Cultural Heritage Resources* refers to any physical and spiritual property associated with past and present human use or occupation of the environment, cultural activities and history. The term includes sites, structures, places, natural features and material of palaeontological, archaeological, historical, aesthetic, scientific, architectural, religious, symbolic or traditional importance to specific individuals or groups, traditional systems of cultural practice, belief or social interaction.

2. PROTECTED SITES IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT, ACT NO. 25 OF 1999

The following are the most important sites and objects protected by the National Heritage Act:

- 2.1 Structures or parts of structures older than 60 years.
- 2.2 Archaeological sites and objects.
- 2.3 Palaeontological sites.
- 2.4 Meteorites.
- 2.5 Ship wrecks.
- 2.6 Burial grounds.
- 2.7 Graves of victims of conflict.
- 2.8 Public monuments and memorials.
- 2.9 Structures, places and objects protected through the publication of notices in the Gazette and Provincial Gazette.

- 2.10 Any other places or object, which are considered to be of interest or of historical or cultural significance.
- 2.11 Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance.
- 2.12 Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.
- 2.13 Objects to which oral traditions are attached.
- 2.14 Sites of cultural significance or other value to a community or pattern of South African history.

3, METHODOLOGY

The site was visited and inspected on foot. All appropriate documents on the area were studied.

4. RESULTS

Goudkoppie lies just south of the N12 as you enter Klerksdorp from Potchefstroom (see map). The area has been preserved as a site museum by the Klerksdorp Museum but is under threat from development.

4.1 Historic background

Goudkoppie has a very interesting geological history. More than 2000 million years ago this area was part of a huge inland sea which stretched from the present Evander Goldfields in the East, through the East Rand, Johannesburg, the West Rand, Carletonville and Klerksdorp to the south of Welkom.

Rivers and floods from the hinterland to this inland sea transported a variety of minerals, including gold. Those minerals were deposited on the shores of the sea and sedimentation took place. (Sedimentation means that material settles at the bottom of liquid and also the process of forming sedimentary rocks). Due to the action of the waves of the sea, the minerals were concentrated into mass layers (called conglomerate). These gold –rich layers later became the famous gold reefs of the Witwatersrand Super Group.

More sedimentary layers were formed over millions of years. Due to crustal movement of the earth, erosion, violent volcanic action and an enormous meteorite that crashed to the earth near Vredefort in the Free State, this whole area was tilted at an angle. The water flowed away and evaporated over a long period of time and today we can see the exposed Ada May Reef on Goudkoppie.

The enormous impact of the meteorite, 10 km. in diameter, caused an explosion deep underground, which pushed some of the earth's inner crust to the surface, leaving a dome of granite. The impact also threw a trio of crater-like rings covering an area of about 150km². It had the same effect on the crust of the earth as that of a stone being cast into a pool of water: a series of concentric ripples. In the case of water the surface soon becomes smooth again, but the ripples caused by the meteorite remained as a series of hills. Klerksdorp lies well within the influence of the meteorite impact. Therefore Goudkoppie is the direct result of the

meteorite: 7 minutes after it crashed to the earth to create the world-famed Vredefort Dome.

Much has changed since the time of the inland sea until the arrival of the Early Stone Age 2 million years ago. Even more changes in the appearance and climate of this area took place before people from the Late Stone Age populated the Klerksdorp district about 30 000 years ago. Still it must have had enough water and a lush vegetation to satisfy the needs of those nomadic hunters. Stone tools found on Goudkoppie testify to their presence here and include quartzite tools, which were probably used as weapons, as well as engraving tools on the softer sandstone. A large amount of chippings and implements are to be found on the hill, especially in the valley.

A few thousand years later more changes took place: The wild animals disappeared and modern man arrived.

In 1886 Apie Roos took a sample of Witwatersrand conglomerate to the Rand for assaying. The sample was obtained from an exposure at the Commonage Reef conglomerate. News of the discovery of gold led to a gold rush on the Commonage.

On 11 July 1887 the farm Rietkuil, west of Klerksdorp was proclaimed an area for gold diggings. In the same month the commonage was made available for prospecting.

Eventually the commonage was surveyed and four syndicated companies were formed to mine the area around and to the south of the Adamay Koppie (Goudkoppie). In 1888 all four were in operation, but it didn't prove to be profitable. In 1891 the company collapsed and the land was abandoned, with the Ada May Reef on the koppie proven barren and the Commonage Reef below the oxidised zone being refractory, making it too costly to extract the gold by amalgamation with mercury. In 1896 after the introduction of the new cyanide process the Ada May/Rose claims were taken up by the Klerksdorp Proprietary Mines Limited, who worked payable sections of the Commonage Reef on a limited scale. No further mining was ever carried out on the koppie itself. All traces of the mining plant and material were removed in 1901. All that remains today are the entrances to the old mine shafts.

Mining activities were influenced by the start of the Second War of Independence on 11 October 1899. Goudkoppie also featured in this war. A British regiment was stationed on the koppie and regimental badges as well as the initials of some soldiers were engraved on the rocks near the survey beacon at the top of the hill. Another proof of their occupation of the area is the foundation of a blockhouse.

The replica of the blockhouse on Goudkoppie is the design of S.R. Rice of the Royal Engineers. His design consisted of two concentric cylinders of corrugated iron with an inner space of 15 cm. The space between the two cylinders was filled with gravel to make it bulletproof. A door and loopholes were the only openings in the structure.

The Rice-type blockhouse had two major advantages: It was inexpensive and easy to erect. Because the modules of the Rice blockhouse were pre-manufactured, five sappers and 15 unschooled labourers were able to erect a blockhouse within 5 hours.

The blockhouse on Goudkoppie served various purposes. Not only was it a way to protect the railway line, but also served as a watch-post for the eastern side of Klerksdorp – particularly of the concentration camp. The blockhouse was also part of the signal plan with Potchefstroom, which is evident in the British name for the koppie – Signal Hill.

The Rice-type blockhouse had a garrison of six troops and a non-commissioned officer. There were four blacks per blockhouse.

Their main task was to stand guard during the night, that's why they were referred to as the Black Watch. The garrison didn't sleep in the blockhouse but in tents or the trench surrounding the blockhouse.

Their effort to trap the commandos in the Western Transvaal was rather unsuccessful.

Because the Rice blockhouses were sold per tender after the war only the rock foundations of such blockhouses are to be found. Only six original blockhouses still exist in South Africa.

4.2 Visible remains on the hill (see map 1 and 2)

- The hill itself is a good example of the gold bearing formations of the Witwatersrand system in the Klerksdorp gold producing area. (See photographs 1 and 2)
- The remains of old gold mining shafts are visible at the following locations:

S26° 51' 13.1"	E26° 41' 08.7"
S26° 51' 16.1"	E26° 41' 11.1"
S26° 51' 14.1"	E26° 41' 12.5"
S26° 51' 14.4"	E26° 41' 13.0"
S26° 51' 12.9"	E26° 41' 13.4"

See photograph 3 and 4.

- The British blockhouse originally stood at S26° 51' 17.2" and E26° 41' 08.6". Today only the foundations are visible (see photograph 5).
- At S26° 51' 17.1" and E26° 41' 08.7" on the rock surface are indentations resembling bird footprints. Whether this is the case has to be researched further by a palaeontologist (see photograph 6).
- Near the blockhouse there are a number of initials of British soldiers carved into the rock as well as the British regiments coat of arms (see photographs 7 and 8).

- A replica of the blockhouse which stand on the koppie has been built at S26° 51' 13.2" and E26° 41' 11.5" (see photograph 9).
- Vegetation on the koppie is representative of the Klerksdorp area and worth preserving.
- At the western foot of the koppie is a replica of an Early Tswana settlement. This reconstruction was badly executed and should be demolished or redone (see photograph 10).
- A proper survey of the Late Stone Age material must be done as it is scattered all over the site and will eventually disappear (see photograph 11).

5. DISCUSSION

Goudkoppie is a well-known beacon in Klerksdorp, which tells the history from geological times up to the Anglo Boer War and should be preserved as a Provincial Heritage site. At present the site is not well-managed and marketed but has great potential. .

6. CONCLUSION

Goudkoppie is a unique heritage site worth declaring a Provincial heritage site

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- the site be declared a Provincial Heritage site to protect the site against development
- a development plan be compiled to develop all the different cultural heritage resources to their full potential. This should include proper interpretation and educational programs
- a heritage management plan be compiled for the site and be implemented.

8. REFERENCE

Pamphlet Goudkoppie –A Meteoric wonder.
Wiegengagen G.W. – Report – Vegetation of the Goedkoppie Klerksdorp.

PHOTOGRAPHS



No. 1. Goudkopie seen from the west



No. 2. Pebble layer of the ancient lake



No. 3. Closed entrance to one of the old mines



No. 4. One of the larger old mines



No. 5. Remains of the British Block house foundations



No. 6. "Footprints" on rock face. These so-called bird footprints need clarification.



No. 7. Initials of a British soldier



No. 8. The code of arms of the British Regiment



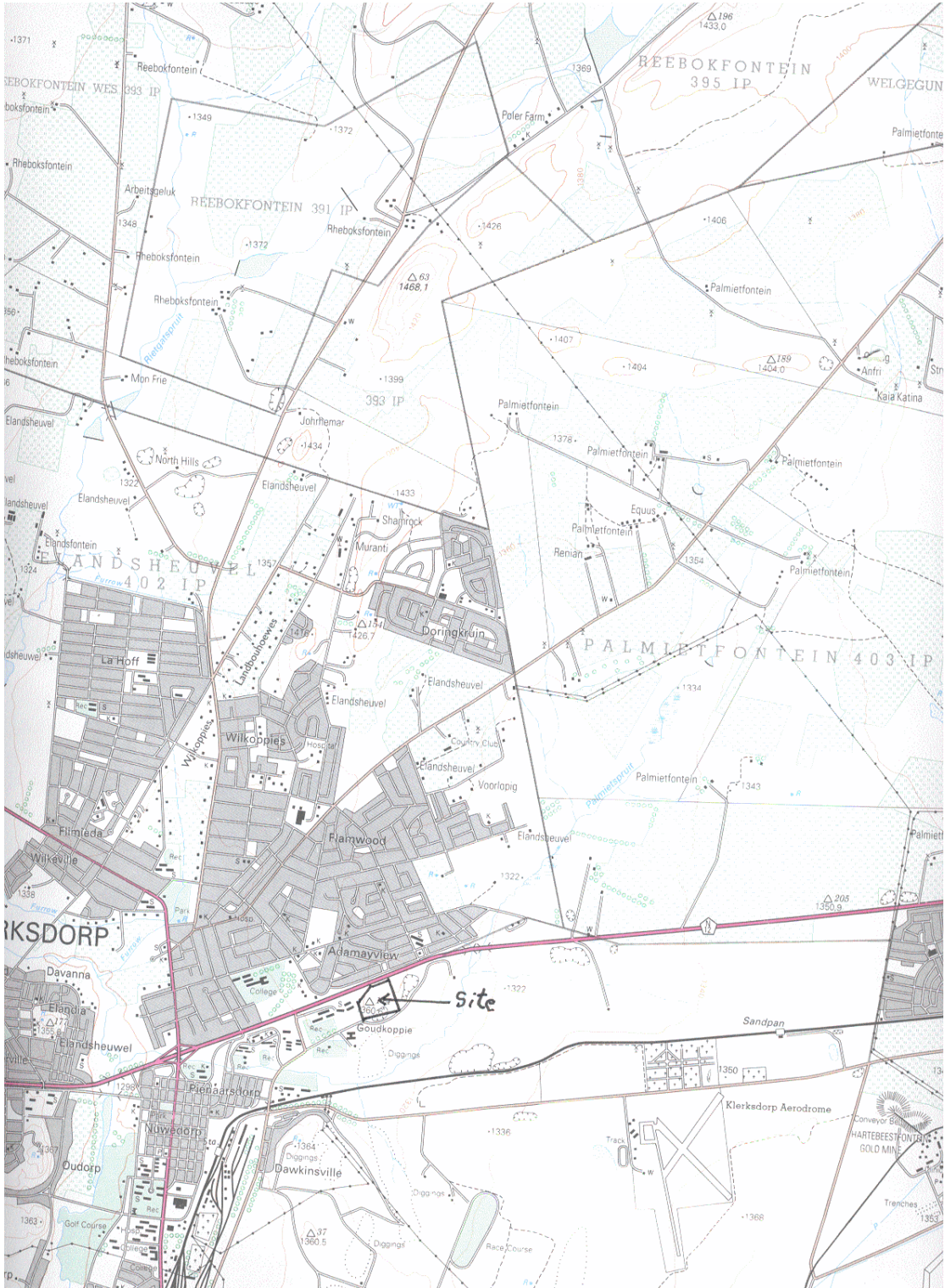
No. 9. Replica of British Block house



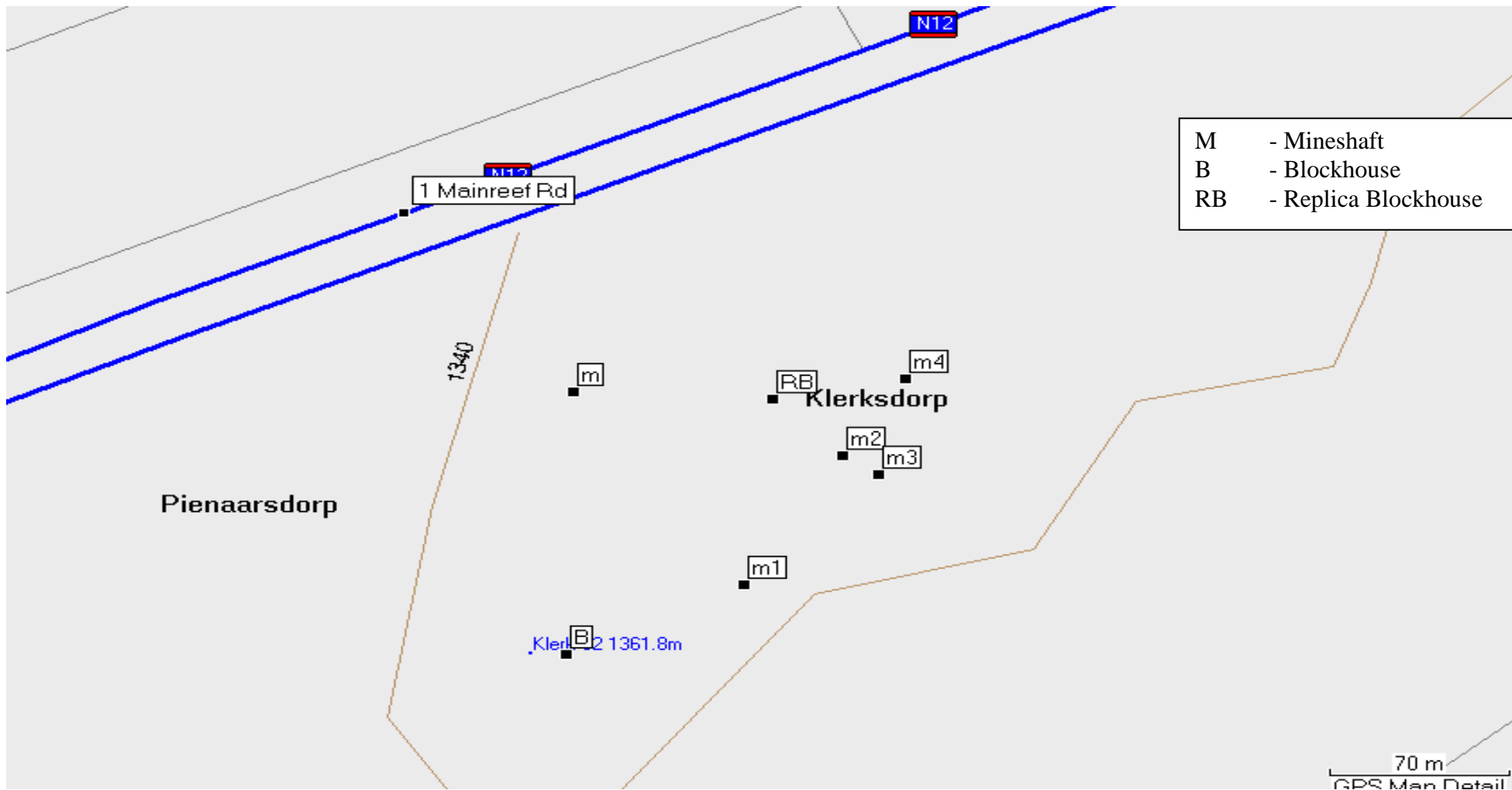
No. 10. Badly reconstructed Early Tswana house



No. 11. Examples of Late Stone Age artefacts and flakes



Map 1 Map 2626DC Klerksdorp



Map 2 Recorder Sites on Goudkoppie