

HERITAGE RESOURCES ASSESSMENT REPORT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE FARM GOUDMYN 337 KT STEELPOORT, MPUMALANGA

FOR: Envirodel
26 Wilger Street
Polokwane 0700

Frans Roodt
August 2006

Tel: (015) 225 7075
Cell: 083 770 213
Fax: 086 670 9130
E-mail: hr19@mweb.co.za



PO Box 1600
POLOKWANE
0 7 0 0

CONTENTS

2	1 Introduction
3	2 Relevant legislation
	2.1 National Heritage Resources Act
4	2.2 Human tissues Act & Ordinance 7 of 1925
4	3 Method
	3.1 Sources of information
	3.2 Limitations
	3.3 Categories of significance
5	3.4 Terminology
5	4 Description of the proposed development
6	5 Archaeological and Historical Remains
	5.1 Stone Age remains
	5.2 Iron Age Remains.
	5.3 Graves
	5.4 Historical Remains
7	5.5 Places of spiritual or religious significance
8	6 Evaluation
8	7 Recommendations
8	8 Bibliography
	<u>List of figures</u>
8	Fig 1. Recent historical ruin.
8	Fig 2. Collapsed stone cairn.
9	Fig 3. Relatively recent stone cairn stacked from stone slaps.
9	Locality Map

1. INTRODUCTION

The application constitutes an activity, which may potentially be harmful to heritage resources that may occur in the demarcated area. The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA - Act No. 25 of 1999) protects all structures and features older than 60 years (section 34), archaeological sites and material (section 35) and graves and burial sites (section 36). In order to comply with the legislation, the Applicant requires information on the heritage resources, and their significance that may occur in the demarcated area. This will enable the Applicant to take pro-active measures to limit the adverse effects that the development could have on such heritage resources.

The author was contracted to undertake a heritage scoping survey of the demarcated area which lies on the farm Goudmyn 337 KT as indicated on the locality map (Refer to map, South Africa 1:50 000 2430 CA). The aim was to determine the presence or not of heritage resources such as archaeological and historical sites and features, graves and places of religious and cultural significance, and to submit appropriate recommendations with regard to the cultural resources management measures that may be required at affected sites / features. This survey forms part of the environmental impact assessment process and data regarding the environmental and geomorphological conditions and socio-economic issues should be read in the main report.

The report thus provides an overview of the heritage resources that may occur in the demarcated area where development is intended. The significance of the heritage resources was assessed in terms of criteria defined in the methodology section. The impact of the proposed development on these resources is indicated and the report recommends mitigation measures that should be implemented to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed development on these heritage resources.

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Two sets of legislation are relevant for this study with regard to protection of heritage resources and graves.

2.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999) (NHRA)

This Act established the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and makes provision for the establishment of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities (PHRA). The Act makes provision for the undertaking of heritage resources impact assessments for various categories of development as determined by Section 38. It also provides for the grading of heritage resources and the implementation of a three-tier level of responsibilities and functions for heritage resources to be undertaken by the State, Provincial authorities and Local authorities, depending on the grade of the Heritage resources. The Act defines cultural significance, archaeological and palaeontological sites and material (Section 35), historical sites and structures (Section 34), graves and burial sites (Section 36), which falls under its jurisdiction. Archaeological sites and material are generally those resources older than a hundred years, while Section 34 also protects structures and cultural landscapes older than 60 years, including gravestones. Procedures for managing grave and burial grounds are clearly set out in Section 36 of the NHRA. Graves older than a 100 years are legislated as archaeological sites and must be dealt with accordingly

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) the following is of relevance:

Historical remains

Section 34(1) No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Archaeological remains

Section 35.(3) Any person who discovers archaeological or palaeontological objects or material or a meteorite in the course of development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resources authority, or to the nearest local authority or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

Section 35(4) No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite

Burial grounds and graves

Section 36 (3)

- (a) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority-
- (c) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- (d) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in detection or recovery of metals.

Section 36 (6) Subject to the provision of any law, any person who in the course of development or any other activity discovers the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the responsible heritage resources authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police Service and in accordance with regulations of the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not such grave is protected in terms of this Act or is of significance to any community; and
- (b) if such grave is protected or is of significance, assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to make arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the content of such grave or, in the absence of such person or community, make any such arrangement as it deems fit.

Culture resource management

Section 38(1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development* ...

must at the very earliest stages of initiating such development notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

***‘development’** means any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in a change to the nature, appearance or physical nature of a place, or influence its stability and future well-being, including-

- (a) construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place;
- (b) carry out any works on or over or under a place*;
- (e) any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land, and
- (f) any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil;

"place means a site, area or region, a building or other structure ..."

*"structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to the ground, ..."

2.2 The Human Tissues Act (65 of 1983) and Ordinance on the Removal of Graves and Dead Bodies (Ordinance 7 of 1925)

This Act and Ordinance protects graves younger than 60 years. These fall under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Departments. Approval for the exhumation and re-burial must be obtained from the relevant Provincial MEC as well as the relevant Local Authorities.

3. METHOD

3.1 Sources of information

The source of information was primarily the field reconnaissance.

A scoping survey of the demarcated development area was undertaken on foot. Standard archaeological practices for observation were followed. As most archaeological material occur in single or multiple stratified layers beneath the soil surface, special attention was given to disturbances, both man-made such as roads and clearings, as well as those made by natural agents such as burrowing animals and erosion. Heritage material and the general conditions on the terrain were photographed with a CANON Digital camera.

3.2 Limitations

The scoping survey was thorough and no limitations were encountered.

3.3 Categories of significance

The significance of archaeological sites is ranked into the following categories.

• No significance: sites that do not require mitigation.
• Low significance: sites, which <i>may</i> require mitigation.
• Medium significance: sites, which require mitigation.
• High significance: sites, which must not be disturbed at all.

The significance of an archaeological site is based on the amount of deposit, the integrity of the context, the kind of deposit and the potential to help answer present research questions. Historical structures are defined by Section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, while other historical and cultural significant sites, places and features, are generally determined by community preferences.

A crucial aspect in determining the significance and protection status of a heritage resource is often whether or not the sustainable social and economic benefits of a proposed development outweigh the conservation issues at stake. There are many aspects that must be taken into consideration when determining significance, such as rarity, national significance, scientific importance, cultural and religious significance, and not least, community preferences. When, for whatever reason the protection of a heritage site is not deemed necessary or practical, its research potential must be assessed and mitigated in order to gain data / information which would otherwise be lost. Such sites must be adequately recorded and sampled before being destroyed. These are generally sites graded as of low or medium significance.

3.4 Terminology

Early Stone Age:	Predominantly the Acheulean hand axe industry complex dating to + 1Myr yrs – 250 000 yrs. before present.
Middle Stone Age:	Various lithic industries in SA dating from ± 250 000 yr. - 30 000 yrs. before present.
Late Stone Age:	The period from ± 30 000-yr. to contact period with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists.
Early Iron Age:	Most of the first millennium AD
Middle Iron Age:	10 th to 13 th centuries AD
Late Iron Age:	14 th century to colonial period. <i>The entire Iron Age represents the spread of Bantu speaking peoples.</i>
Historical:	Mainly cultural remains of western influence and settlement from AD1652 onwards – mostly structures older than 60 years in terms of Section 34 of the NHRA.
Phase 1 assessments:	Scoping surveys to establish the presence of and to evaluate heritage resources in a given area
Phase 2 assessments:	In depth culture resources management studies which could include major archaeological excavations, detailed site surveys and mapping / plans of sites, including historical / architectural structures and features. Alternatively, the sampling of sites by collecting material, small test pit excavations or auger sampling is required.
Sensitive:	Often refers to graves and burial sites although not necessarily a heritage place, as well as ideologically significant sites such as ritual / religious places. <i>Sensitive</i> may also refer to an entire landscape / area known for its significant heritage remains.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND TERRAIN

The proposed activity consists of a residential development. The ecology of the terrain has been severely altered by a previous occupational period and the surface area modified by these past settlement activities.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL REMAINS

5.1 STONE AGE REMAINS

No Stone Age material was recorded in the demarcated area.

5.2. IRON AGE REMAINS

Although the Steelport River drainage area is generally rich in Iron Age sites, none were observed on the demarcated terrain.

5.3 GRAVES

No formal graves were noted in the demarcated area.

5.4 RECENT HISTORICAL PERIOD

The terrain contains the structural remains of a number of recent historical dwellings and mud brick buildings – for example site 1, 4 & 5 on locality map. Site 2 is a circular livestock enclosure that forms part of the historical settlement. According to the Topographical map, even a school was present. Some of the structure may be 60 years and older, and due to the traditional construction methods of the units and the estimated age of the settlement the probability of there being graves of infants present at some of the homesteads are >80%. Such graves are normally not marked and are located within the perimeters of the homestead. The area is thus sensitive for burials. Other than the probability of burials, the remains are not regarded as significant as they represent a layout and architecture that can still be observed in rural areas today.



Fig 1. Recent historical ruin.

5.5 PLACES OF SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

The summit of the hill on the terrain contains a number of stone cairns that originate from initiation practises. This includes the area around site 3 on the locality map. Some of the stone cairns are visibly old and built from natural stone and have undergone a natural collapsing process, while others are relatively new and built from stone slaps that were probably collected at a nearby mining site. The indications are that the initiation site has been in use over many generations, including by people from the most recent settlement.



Fig 2. Collapsed stone cairn.



Fig 3. Relatively recent stone cairn stacked from stone slaps.

6. EVALUATION

No significant Stone Age or Iron Age remains were detected on the demarcated terrain. The terrain has the remains of a recent historical settlement, but the structures themselves are not regarded as significant. However, because of traditional burial practises, some of the homestead remains may contain infant burials. The area is thus sensitive for burials and a consultation process must be implemented to determine the presence or not of such burials.

It must be noted that undetected archaeological sites may be present on the terrain and that such sites may be exposed during development. The discovery of such heritage remains must be reported to the heritage resources authority or an archaeologist and may result in mitigation measures being enforced.

7. RECOMMENDATION

In view of the above it is recommended that:

1. A social consulting process be undertaken to determine the presence or not of infant burials at the homestead ruins of the old settlement.
2. The initiation sites on the summit of the hill must be excluded from the development.

From a heritage resources management perspective, we have no objection with regard to the development on condition that the recommendations above are implemented.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Deacon, J. 1996. *Archaeology for Planners, Developers and Local Authorities*. National Monuments Council. Publication no. P021E.

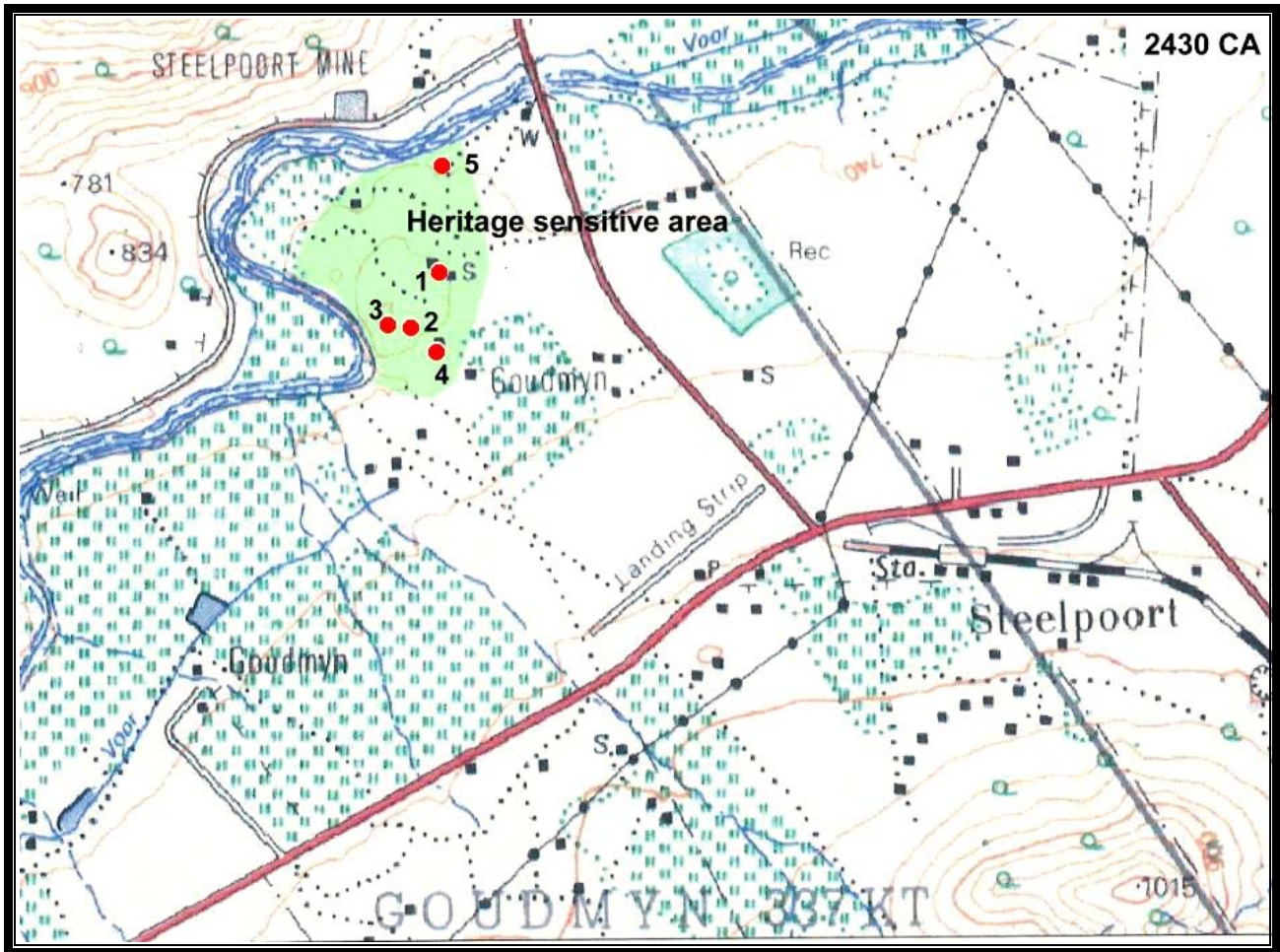
Deacon, J. 1997. *Report: Workshop on Standards for the Assessment of Significance and Research Priorities for Contract Archaeology*. In: Newsletter No 49, Sept 1998. Southern African Association of Archaeologists.

Evers, T.M. 1988. *The recognition of Groups in the Iron Age of Southern Africa*. PhD thesis. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

Meyer, A. 1994. *Navorsingsmetodiek: Inligtingsformate vir Argeologiese Veldwerk*. Dept Antropologie en Argeologie, U.P



FRANS ROODT (BA Hons, MA Archaeology, Post Grad. Dip. Museology; UP)
Principal Investigator for R & R Cultural Resource Consultants



Locality Map