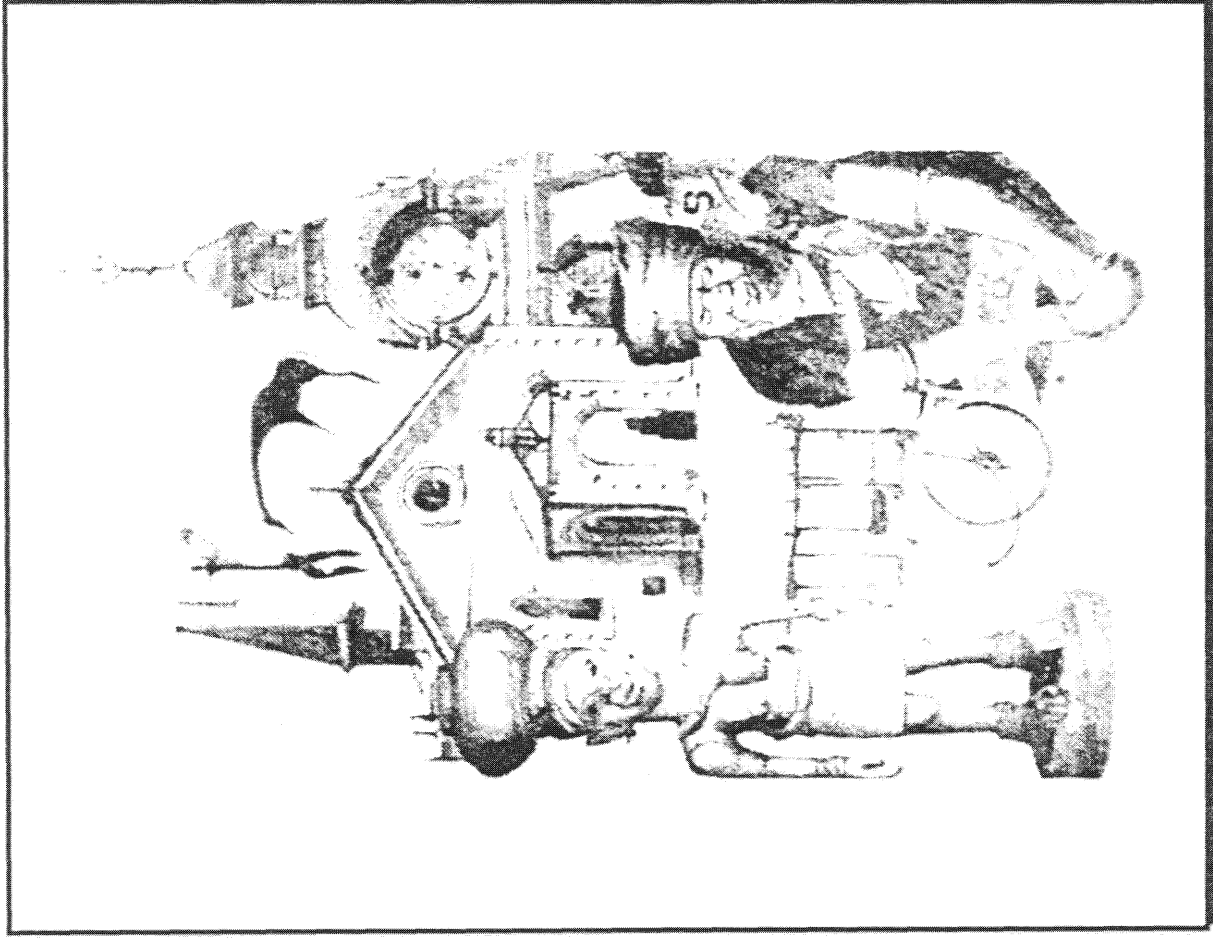


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ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
PORTION OF THE FARM STERKLOOP 688LS
PROPOSED PIETERSBURG CASINO

FOR: CHAND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS



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AIM

The aim of the survey was to undertake an archaeological impact assessment of approximately 100ha on a portion of the Farm *Sterkloop 688LS*, where it has been proposed to locate a Casino, and to assess the impact such development would have on the archaeological and other heritage resources of the area in terms of the *National Heritage Resources Act* (Act No 25 of 1999, Section 38).

METHOD

The entire demarcated area was surveyed on foot by an archaeologist. Archaeological remains were photographed with an EPSON Digital camera and co-ordinates were taken with a GARMIN XL 45 GPS.

LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Terrain is located approximately 5km southwest of the City Centre on the N1 and is zoned as an agricultural holding. It is bordered by the N1 on the west and the Tzaneen bypass on the south. Topographically the terrain is relatively level, but rises to the southeast where some sandstone outcrops occur. Most of the lower part had been ploughed in the past.

BACKGROUND

No previous archaeological survey has been done on the site, although other Iron Age archaeological sites are known within a radius of 3 km. The archaeological sequence of the area is briefly as follows:

1. The "Makapansgat" hominid and Early Stone Age sites are located less than 40km to the south of Pietersburg.
2. The Middle Stone Age industry or "Pietersburg complex" is well known internationally and is found scattered almost anywhere in the area.
3. The Late Stone Age is represented by San (Bushmen) *rock art* in the koppies around Pietersburg.
4. The Iron Age or settlement of the area by black farmers are represented by three cultural groups, namely, the "Eiland" tradition, ±800 to 1200AD, followed by the Moloko (Sotho) and Ndebele traditions, both entering the area in the 17th century, with their descendants still living in the area. The settlements of the latter two groups are characterised by stonewalling.
5. The area was settled by white farmers from about 1867.

It must be noted that remains of both the "Eiland" and the Ndebele traditions were found on the terrain, and are mentioned below.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Site 1. Co-ordinates: S23°56'14.3" E29°25'25", and
S23°56'17" E29°25'27"

This is an Iron Age site belonging to the "Eiland" tradition and was identified by the very **distinctive pottery style**. The entire area had been ploughed in the past and the only cultural remains found on the surface were potsherds. These were scattered over a large area as can be deduced from the co-ordinates. No other remains were located.



Figure 1. Typical Eiland pottery

Site 2. Co-ordinates: S23°56'50.4" E29°25'32"

This is a possible gravesite and is located on the southeastern part of the terrain. It is located in the proximity of the remains of an historical structure, of which only the foundation stones exist, (Site 3 below).

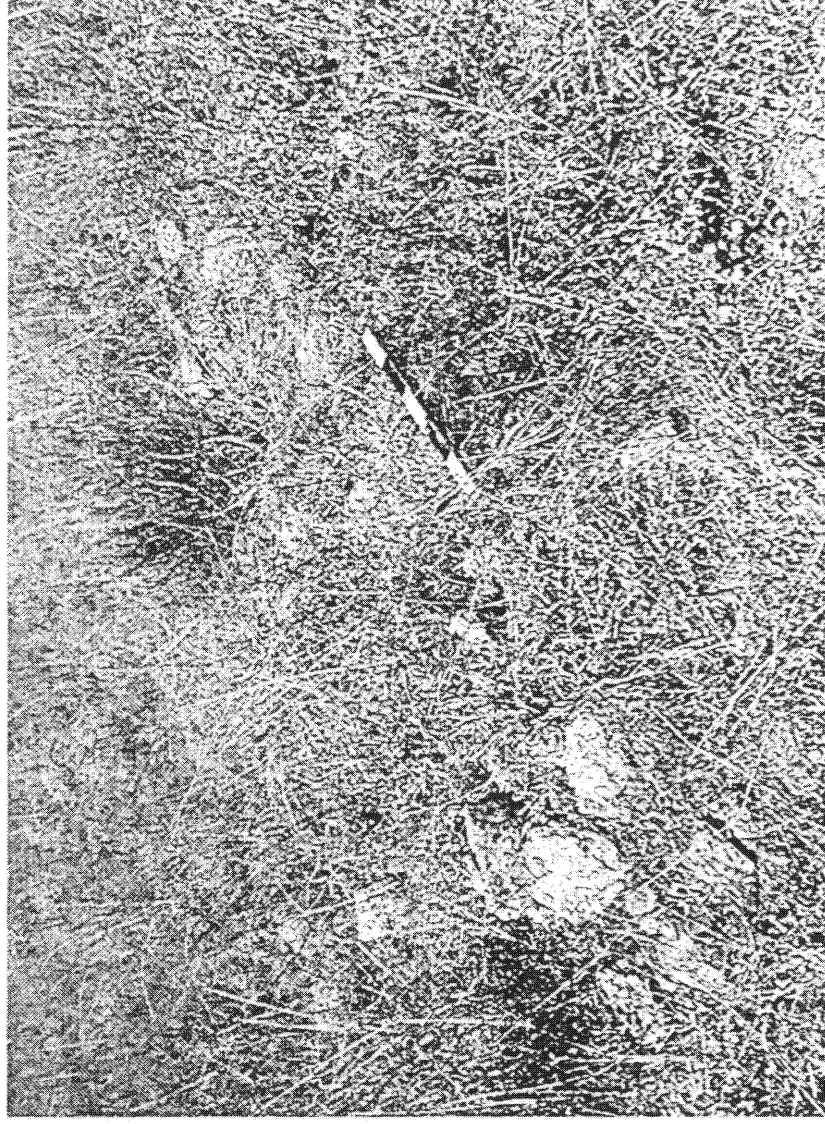


Figure 2. Stone cairn indicating possible grave

Site 3. Co-ordinates: S23°56'55.2" E29°25'32.1"

These are the remains of the stone foundations of a rectangular and a rondavel type structure, which were probably the homesteads of farm workers.

Site 4. Co-ordinates: S23°56'57" E29°25'30"

This was a Ndebele village (Late Iron Age) that had been completely destroyed during the construction of the Tzaneen bypass. Although a number of potsherds were seen, only one damaged circular stone structure exists on this side of the road.

INTERPRETATION AND EVALUATION

Site 1 is regarded as significant because little research has been done on the "Eiland" tradition in the Pietersburg area. It is not yet understood why the area had been vacated at around 1200AD, only to be occupied again during the 17th century. Although the site had been ploughed, it may still yield important data. Earth moving operations and excavations will most probably also uncover human skeletal remains. The site will impact on the proposed development as on site mitigation for a phase 2 impact assessment (archaeological excavation) is recommended when development commences. It is therefore proposed that mitigation be undertaken during the initial construction phase as that will assist the archaeologist to determine and assess the nature and extent of the deposits. Liaison between the developer and archaeologist will thus be crucial. Protection of the site beyond these measures is not required.

Site 2 must be investigated in order to establish whether or not it is a grave, after which normal procedures will be followed.

Sites 3 & 4 are not regarded as significant and would require no further cultural resource management procedures.

It must be noted that this report in no way sanctions or approves any development without prior compliance to all conditions laid down or required by any authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That an assessment and mitigation be conducted on site for a phase 2 archaeological excavation at **Site 1** should it be determined to be practical and / or necessary.
2. That the possible grave at **Site 2** be assessed before development commences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Loubser, JHN. 1994 *Ndebele Archaeology of the Pietersburg Area*. Navorsinge van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein. Vol 10, Part 2.

FRANS ROODT
Curator: Pietersburg Museums

APPENDIX E
ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT

ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF STERKLOOP 688LS/10

COMMISSIONED BY: Environmental Design Partnership

Suite 11, Burke Mews
Burke Street
RANDBURG 2125

DATE OF SURVEY: 17 DECEMBER 1997

INTRODUCTION

The Law

The National Monuments Act (Act No. 28 of 1969, as amended) protects all palaeontological, archaeological and historical sites and material older than 50 years. It is an offence to destroy, damage, alter, remove from its original site, or excavate any such site or material without a permit from the National Monuments Council (NMC).

In addition, the Environmental Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989) makes provision for the drawing up of reports on the impact on the environment of activities identified and prohibited in terms of sections 21 and 22 respectively. These reports will evaluate the impact such development may have on the natural and man-made environment, and this includes archaeological sites.

The designated area

The area concerned is a narrow stretch of land, approximately 20 ha, which is bordered to the north by the Tzaneen bypass, the Pietersburg Airfield to the south, and the junction with Dorp Street on the western boundary. The landscape gradually rises from west to the crest on the eastern side. The low lying part resembles a somewhat dry 'vlei' land which covers 400 - 500 metres from the junction where after the soil is well drained and suitable for habitation.

Method of survey

An aerial photograph was studied and reconnaissance of the area was done by foot. Small test pits were dug and man-made as well as natural disturbances were inspected for traces of archaeological remains. Vegetation was also found to be indicative of archaeological features. GPS reading were recorded of some features and photographs were taken. Findings were plotted on a map.

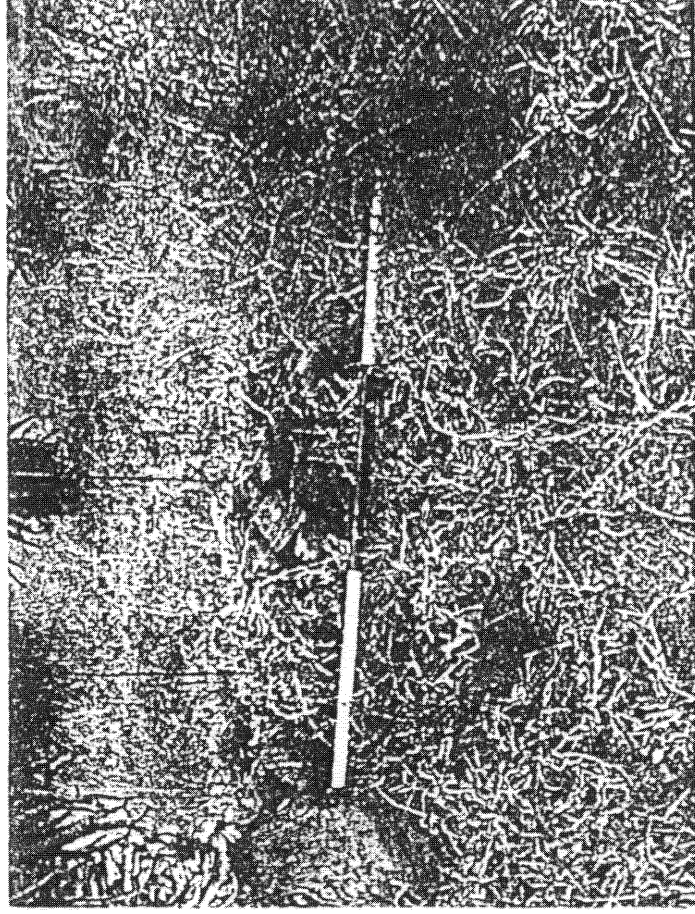
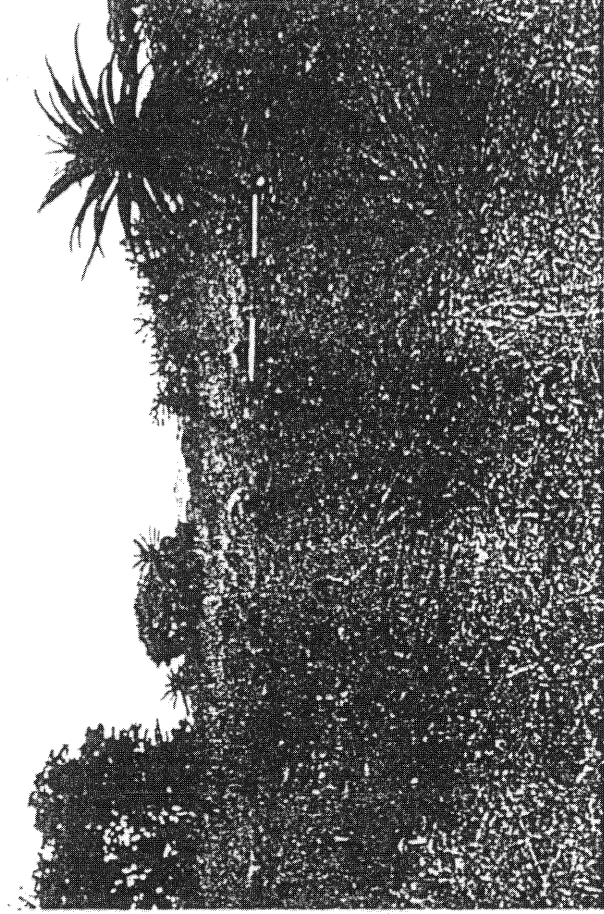
The finding of archaeological remains is to a large degree dependent on the visibility of such remains, normally as a result of exposure through the activities of natural agents such as erosion and animal burrowing, or man-made disturbances.

DISCUSSION OF FINDS

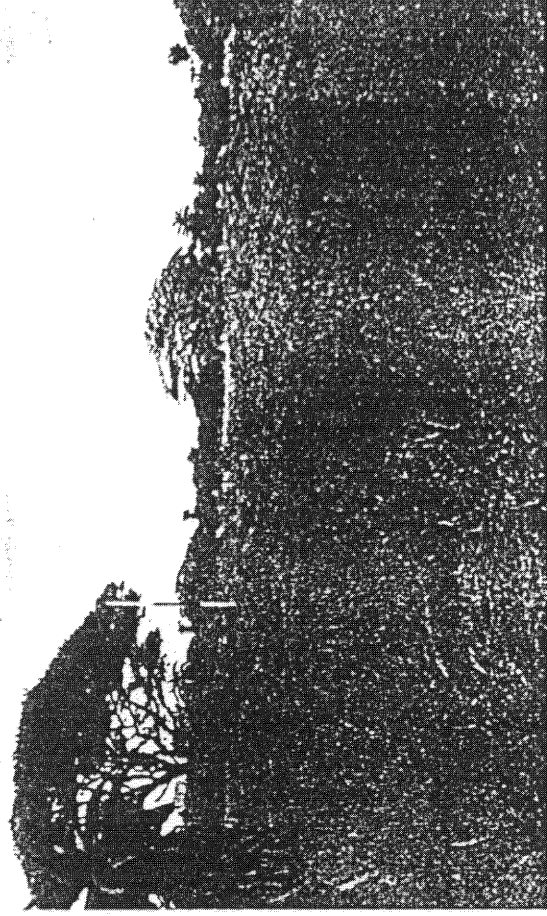
1. Iron Age remains

A large Iron Age stone walled complex is located on the high lying eastern part of the designated area. Although most of the stones were robbed in colonial time, much walling remains visible.

The site also contains a large number of middens (rubbish heaps) and dung heaps where cattle enclosures are situated.

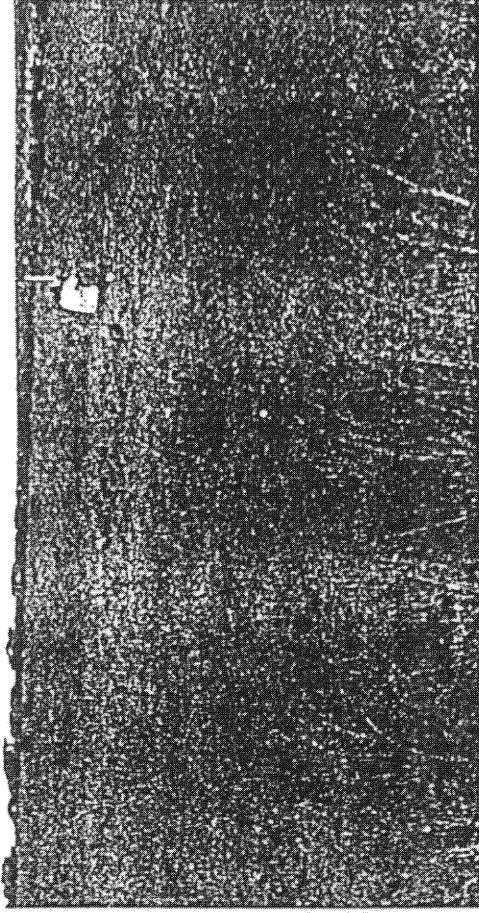


Stone wall remains on the crest
(Scale: 150cm)



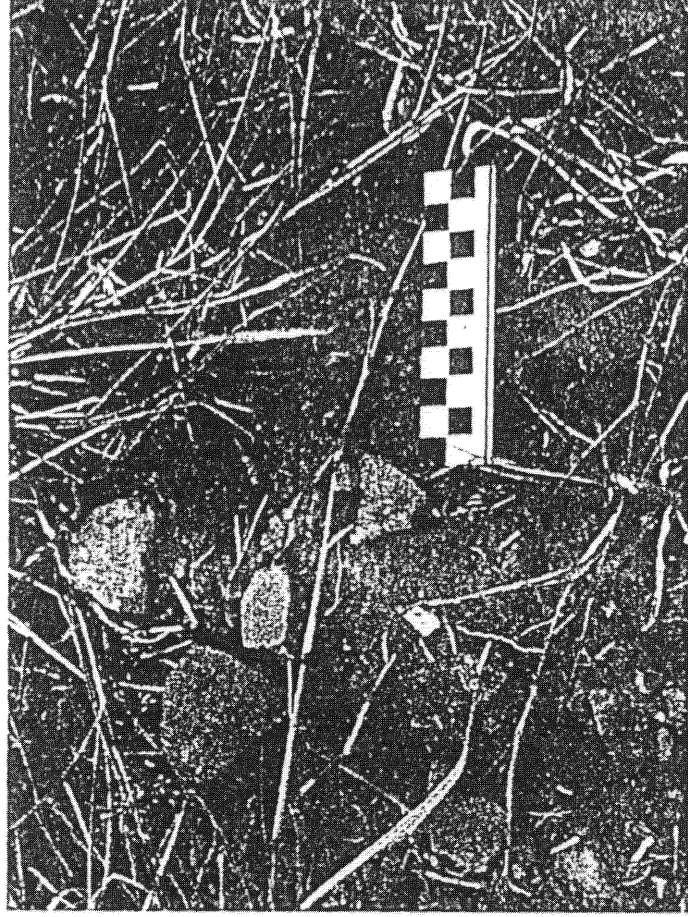
A midden on the crest
(Scale: 150cm)

Further to the west, approximately midway (see map), remains of circular cattle enclosures can be identified by virtue of differences in the vegetation, but with no apparent stone wall remains.



Circular cattle enclosure demarcated by change in grass type

This particular feature has an antbear hole in which a light grey ashy deposit containing cultural remains is visible.



Pieces of pottery dug out by an antbear
(Scale: 10cm)

This Iron Age site has been dissected by the Tzaneen bypass. The same site occurs north of the road at Edupark. Here at Edupark some archaeological work had been undertaken on the periphery of the site, and dates ranging from 1 000AD to the first half of the 19th century was obtained. The early date coincides with the so-called Eiland cultural tradition preceding the first Sotho speakers in the area, while pottery found during the survey was identified as belonging to the Letaba tradition, relating to the Northern Ndebele and/or Tsonga, which correlates with the later dates. The stone walled complex most probably relates to the Moloko (Sotho/Tswana) cultural tradition, although it could also be Northern Ndebele.

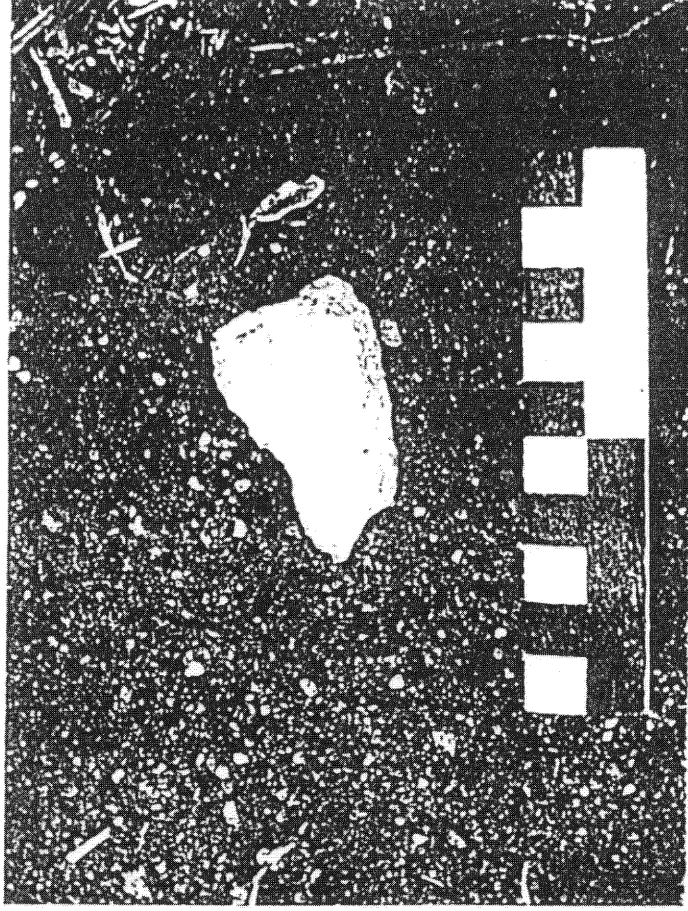
Very little is known of this particular site with the result that the archaeological remains are of high significance.

2. Historical remains

As is indicated on the map, the demolished remains of more recent pre-colonial structures have been located in the area. These include some dwellings and a dip. The coordinates of the structures are S23 55' 27" E29 28'46.8". The remains are **not** significant and receive no further attention.

3. Stone Age remains

Scattered Middle Stone Age flakes were found in the survey area. They were probably not found *in situ*, but cognisance must be taken of their presence.



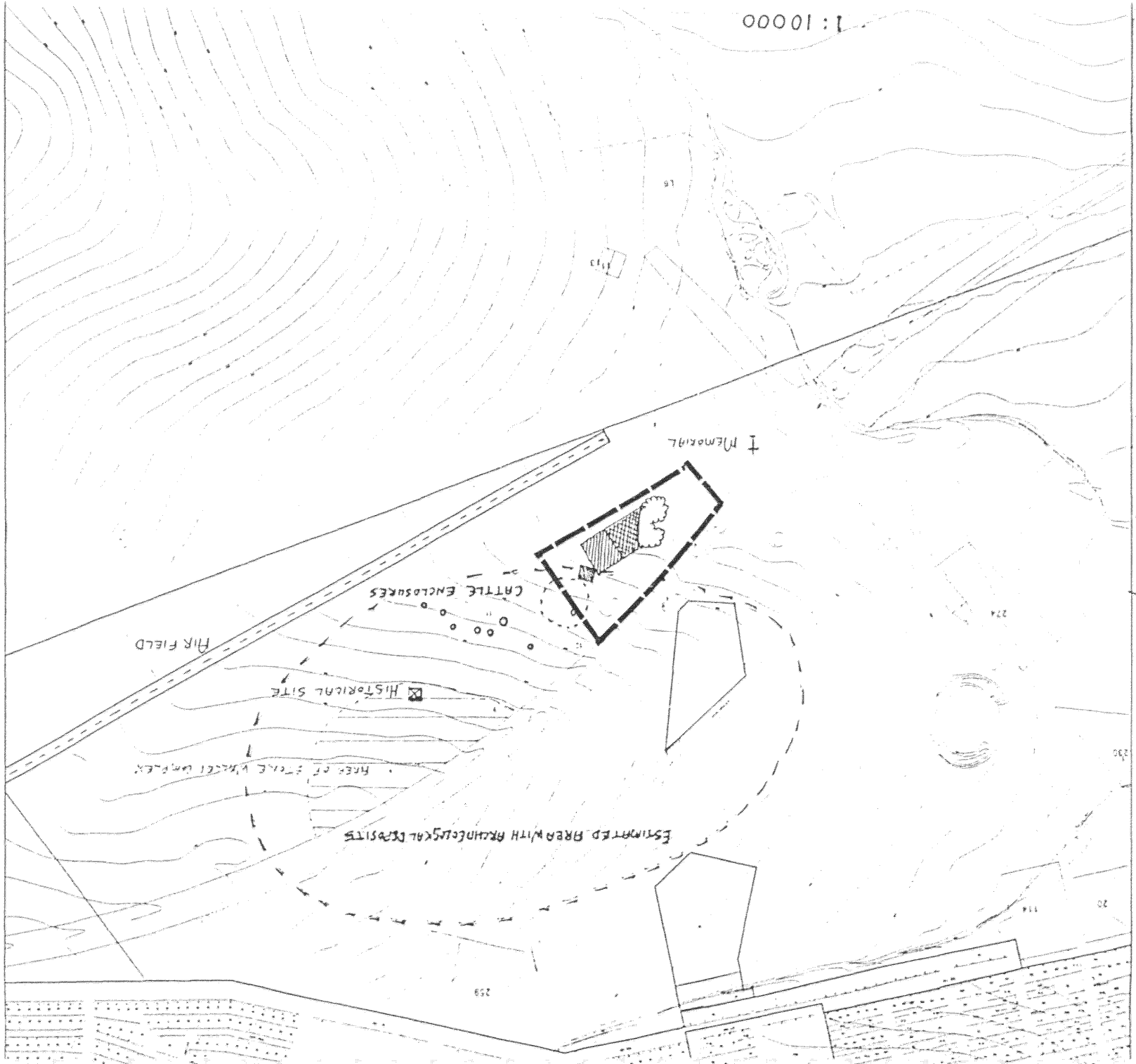
Middle Stone Age flake

RECOMMENDATIONS:

4. The Iron Age site represents a significant part of the history and heritage of the region. Although the site had been damaged in the past, for example, the road, enough of it has been preserved to make a huge contribution to our understanding of the past. The developer will have to mitigate and make provision for archaeological excavations on the site, without which the National Monuments Council will not issue a permit for the destruction of or damage to the site. The non disturbance option should however receive preference.
5. For the remaining part of the designated area it is recommended that an archaeologist be allowed the opportunity and funding to be mitigated, to inspect any earthworks relating to the construction project in order to record any finds and deposit presently concealed from the surface, should there be any.


FRANS ROODE

MA Archaeology (UP), Dipl. Museology (UP).



1:10000

STERKLOOP 688LS/10

† Memorial

CATTLE ENCLOSURES

HIR FIELD

Historical Site

Area of Stone Wall Complex

Estimated Area with Archaeological Deposits

259

114

20

200

274

16