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HEARTLAND PROPERTIES (AECI REAL ESTATE) SEATON THOMPSON AND ASSOCIATES

THE GAUTENG PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA 13 ON PORTION 66 OF THE FARM MODDERFONTEIN 35IR IN A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) STUDY FOR CELL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

of a commemorative needle) or in a different format elsewhere (such as a museum display) whether the remains can be related to shooting ranges that date from the past; to determine the level (or shooting ranges'. As Heartland Properties intends to develop the study area into the Greenstone Hill during 1997. Heritage resources discovered in the study area include the remains of 'Anglo Boer War recommendations as to the conservation of the remains – either in situ (as a site museum or in the form Township these shooting ranges will have to be destroyed. The aims with this HIA were to establish This HIA study results from an earlier Phase I HIA that was done for the farm Modderfontein 35IR <u>_</u> significance ್ತ the remains associated with the shooting ranges

to determine a possible historical identity for the shooting ranges also uses evidence such as soil analysis data and the presence of (lead) bullets on the shooting ranges that either have a knowledge of the Anglo Boer War or of the remains that still occur in the study area and that illuminates the historical context of the study area and shooting ranges; interviews spokespersons This study describes and illustrates the remains in the study area; undertakes a brief survey of literature

situ would prevent the construction of a large number of houses in the Greenstone Hill Township. educational or other purposes even if in-depth research would prove that the shooting ranges have Several factors militate against the conservation of the shooting ranges. It would be considerable cost) to their former condition and utilised in one way or another vandalised if a site museum is established). The preservation of a few inconspicuous heaps of soil Modderfontein Commando). The shooting ranges cover a considerable surface and if preserved in motivate the indefinite and in situ conservation of the shooting ranges if they are not utilized for residents significance in the earth would be of the township would not necessarily appreciate the remains, which may be (e.g. <u>a</u> association with the meaningless unless the shooting ranges are restored South African Constabulary and/or difficult (at a

or commemorative tablet/needle in a strategic position in the new residential suburb that can explain the the vanished shooting ranges can be 'replaced' by representations. It will be possible to erect a memorial told, can also be accommodated in displays in the Johannesburg War Museum or in AECI's museum significance of the destroyed shooting ranges. The history (story) of the shooting ranges, if need to If future in-depth research would prove that the shooting ranges have outstanding historical significance

Heritage Resources Agency (Gauteng Head Quarters) for the destruction of the shooting ranges the Greenstone Hill Township. Heartland Properties has to apply for a permit from the South African recommended that the shooting ranges be destroyed to make provision for the development of

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1 INTRODUCTION

an earlier Phase I HIA that was done for the farm Modderfontein 35IR during 1997. of Modderfontein 35IR (also referred to as Cell 13). 35IR, those of which are relevant to this study are confined to a portion of Portion 66 This Phase I survey identified a wide range of heritage resources on Modderfontein This Heritage Impact assessment (HIA) study is a more detailed study resulting from

project. farm Ħe quarries (holes) that were identified as remains from shooting ranges that date from have to The heritage resources that were discovered on Portion 16 include heaps of soil and Anglo Boer War. As Heartland Properties intends to develop Portion 66 of the Modderfontein into the be destroyed in order Greenstone to make way for the new residential development Hill Township, these shooting ranges will

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

could The shooting ranges indicate that the shooting ranges may date from the distant past and spokesperson (oral evidence), soil analysis data and lead bullets collected on the ranges' was done without providing conclusive historical evidence that the remains museum [such as AECI's museum]) museum display in a provincial museum [Johannesburg War Museum] or in a private necessary to have the shooting ranges conserved indefinitely, either in situ (within the remains that they measure of a doubt. Available evidence from the literature, evidence collected from a literature original identification be related to the of the shooting ranges proved to be of outstanding significance it may survey may have some historical significance. of the to establish the historical identity of the shooting ranges beyond any new residential Anglo Boer War. This study did not undertake of the shooting ranges as 'Anglo Boer War shooting area) or in a different format elsewhere It was accepted that if the an in-depth (e.g. physical

The aims with this HIA study were the following

- . analysis data and the presence of (lead) bullets on the shooting ranges historical sources; shooting ranges that date from the past (Anglo Boer War) by investigating the o establish whether the are collecting oral evidence and using evidence such associated remains with that occur on Cell 13 can be the shooting ranges; scrutinizing related as soil
- . 7 and illustrations (photographs) of the various features associated with the shooting ranges. determine the level (or degree) This was done of significance by means 9 the of the two shooting material of descriptions remains
- 0 format elsewhere To make recommendations as to the conservation of the remains – either in situ a site museum or in the form of a commemorative needle) or in a different (such as a museum display). If the remains are considered

from the study area. worthy of conservation it can therefore be conserved in situ, or elsewhere, away

management [and financial] implications are briefly spelled out). these remains (As the continued, indefinite conservation of the shooting ranges would require that be maintained [and preferably] be utilized indefinitely, some

3 METHODOLOGY

used other evidence to determine the possible historical identity of the shooting ranges This study described and illustrated (the field survey) the remains that still occur on Cell knowledge of the 13; undertook a and brief survey of literature that illuminated the historical context of the Anglo Boer War or of the remains that still occur on Cell 13 shooting ranges; interviewed spokespersons that either and also have

together with a summary of the main characteristics of these features (Tables 1 & indicated (Figure briefly described and illustrated with photographs. Cell 13 that may have some relationship with the shooting ranges. field survey consisted of the of these 3), but not accurately mapped, as remains were investigation of all remains visible on the determined using The position of the remains was a GIS programme was not used σ GPS These and were tabulated remains were 2)

contextualise the wider area were the shooting ranges are located Boer War) could have established the shooting ranges on this part of Modderfontein. The literature review also contains a very brief history of Modderfontein itself in order to The survey of literature consulted a range of sources covering the Anglo Boer War in establish if the Boers (or British who occupied Modderfontein during the

that have a historical association with the Anglo Boer War regarding the possibility that the remains on Cell 13 may be those of shooting ranges War or who were acquainted with the general history of the area were Spokespersons who either possessed an in-depth knowledge about the interviewed Anglo Boer

the soil analysis but was informed about the results study area. Supplementary evidence included analysis of soil samples bullets retrieved from The bullets are now lost. SRK collected this from the heaps of soil associated data The author of this report did not personally study during earlier studies ×ith from the the of the Modderfontein shooting shooting ranges ranges

4 THE STUDY AREA

the south-west (Figures 1 & 2). Road (R25) running from Kempton Park (West) in the north-east to Rembrandpark in located directly to the south of the Lakeside Hospital and the bend in the Modderfontein as Cell 13 by the developers. 1:50 000). The two shooting ranges are confined to a piece of land that was identified located to the west of Kempton Park in the Gauteng Province of South Africa (2628AA; The study area is located on Portion 66 of the farm Modderfontein 35IR which It covers approximately 11,9 hectares of land and

with short grass and from the west to the east. A drainage channel that runs from the south to the north The surface situated on its study area is eastern border. The site is devoid of any trees and is currently covered that has recently burnt down providing clear visibility of the site's located in an undulating plain and dips from the south to the north

First Shooting bricks, a pair of takkies (shoes) and a zinc drum No archaeological remains or deposits were observed in association with the shooting ranges. Two copper bullet points were picked up near one Range. Refuse on the site include modern rubbish such as concrete of the heaps of soil in the

South Africa (2628AA; 1:50 000). located is situated to the west of Kempton Park in the Gauteng Province of Figure 1 - The farm Modderfontein 35IR where the two shooting ranges are

STUDY AREA

Township. land (cells) on Modderfontein will be developed into the Greenstone Hill 11,9ha of land on Portion 66 of the farm Modderfontein 35IR. Several pieces of Figure 2 - The study area is confined to Cell 13 which covers approximately

CELL 13

runs along the eastern perimeter of Cell 13. located parallel to each other on the western side of the drainage channel that Figure 3 - Note the approximate location of the two shooting ranges that are

Approximate location of the shooting ranges

5 THE HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

MOL The discussed HIA made use of a survey of the study area (fieldwork), a and interviews with spokespersons. The results of these investigations are survey of historical

5.1 The field survey

open air and against two slopes. The drainage channel has already eroded into the seem to be older. The preservation of the remains is not good as it is located in the comprise of heaps of soil and quarries (holes). A few odd (unidentifiable) features also perimeter of the most easterly located shooting range (First Shooting Range). located parallel to each other. The two groups of remains look very similar and merely The remains on Cell 13 associated with the two shooting ranges occur in two groups of the features are clearly young (or recent constructions) while

illustrated characteristics of these features and their co-ordinates The remains associated with these two shooting ranges with photographs. Tables __ and N also provide are now briefly described ω synopsis <u>್</u>ತ and

5.1.1 The First Shooting Range

the eastern perimeter of Cell 13 and consists of six features, set from the north to the This south along the bank of the drainage channel (Table 1): shooting range is located directly adjacent (to the west) of the drainage channel on

- Feature 1 consists of two heaps of soil that is located in the far north
- . Feature 2 consists of a circular soil platform or heap of soil with a limited number of stones and rocks
- . Feature 3 is a quarry or a hole that has been dug into the soil.

- Feature 4 is a second heap of soil
- . Range Feature O S) the most southerly (or third) heap of soil in the First Shooting

approximately 50 m from each other. All these features are located in a straight line of to the east of the other features) is not confined to this straight line of view view, directly opposite each other. Only the circular heap of soil (that is located slightly from the second heap of soil while the second and the third heaps of soil are located 300m from each other. The two northerly heaps of soil is located approximately 250m The most northerly and the most southerly heaps of soil are located approximately

with the distances recorded between the same features (heaps of soil) occurring in the and between the two most northerly heaps of soil (50m) to a large extent corresponds Second Shooting Range The distance between the most northerly and the most southerly heaps of soil (300m)

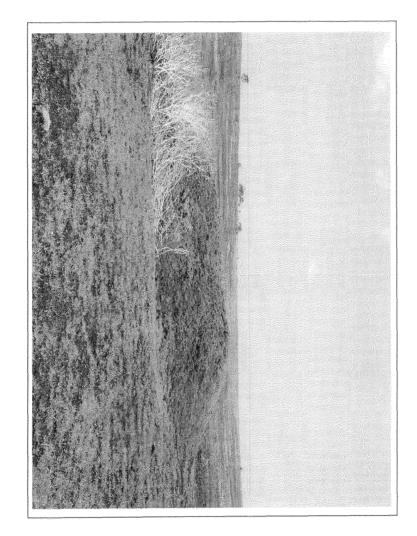
The illustrated with photographs various features of. the First Shooting Range are now briefly described and

Feature 1

The the drainage channel located 30m further to the north, consists of a long narrow heap of soil that extends into of the First Shooting Range and close to the western bank of the drainage channel This feature consists of two heaps of soil located in close proximity on the northern end larger heap of soil measures approximately 14mx5m while the second heap,

network of dongas that is linked with the drainage channel Considerable erosion has occurred around both heaps of soil and has established

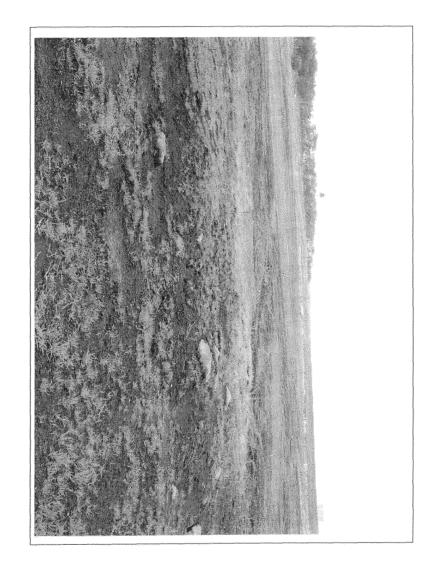
show little signs of weathering (Figure 4). The large heap of soil is higher than 1,0m and has well-rounded sides (slopes) that



sides that show little signs of weathering (if this heap of soil dates from the Figure 4 - Feature 1 of the First Shooting Range is a high rising heap of soil with Anglo Boer War - more than one hundred years ago).

Feature 2

other features of the First Shooting Range (Figure 5). drainage channel. This feature is not located in the straight line of view that marks the approximately 50cm high with a flat surface and is located close to the edge of the concentrated along the western perimeter of the heap of soil. The heap of soil is heap of soil contains a limited number of small stones and larger rocks that are mostly between Feature 1 (heap of soil) and Feature 4 (second heap of soil). The circular A circular heap of soil with a diameter of 7,0 m is located approximately midway



the stones and rocks that are confined to the western edge of this feature. The purpose of this feature is not clear. Figure 5 - The circular heap of soil located close to the drainage channel. Note

second quarry (Feature 5), located slightly further to the south (Figure 6). Feature 3 comprises of a quarry or a dugout hole, which is smaller in size than a



soil that was used for the heaps of soil collected from these holes?) Figure 6 - One of two quarries that are part of the First Shooting Rang. (Was the

channel. measures approximately 14mx12m. It is situated some distance from the drainage This feature represents a second heap of soil that is higher than 1,0m and which

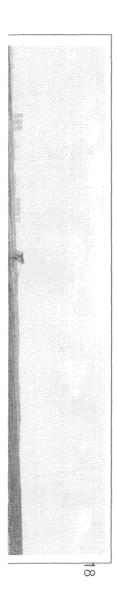
Feature 5

channel (Figure 7). become part of the drainage channel as several eroded dongas connects it with the This elongated quarry or dugout hole measures approximately 25mx10m. It has



into the drainage channel on the eastern perimeter of Cell 13. Figure 7 - Feature 5 is an elongated donga that runs via several eroded dongas

Shooting Range (Figure 8). heap of soil is located furthest to the south of all the features that constitute the First is higher than 1,0m. It has well-rounded sides that show little signs of weathering. This Feature 6 represents a third heap of soil measuring approximately 24mx12m and which



weathering). Shooting Range. (This feature seems to be young as it shows little signs of Figure 8 - A third heap of soil is located on the most southerly edge of the First

SHOOTING RANGE 1	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	CO-ORDINATES
Feature 1	Large high-rising heap of soil and elongated	26° 06' 39"
	low-rising heap of soil	28° 08' 59"
Feature 2	Circular soil platform with stones and rocks	26° 06′ 45″
		28° 08' 56"
Feature 3	Quarry or dug-out hole	26° 06′ 47″
		28° 08' 54"
Feature 4	Large high rising heap of soil	26° 06' 49"
		28° 08' 52"
Feature 5	Elongated quarry that is connected with the	26° 06' 50"
	drainage channel through several eroded	28° 08' 51"
	dongas	
Feature 6	Large high-rising heap of soil	26° 06' 51"
		28° 08' 49"
Accompanies and disconsist and design and de		

(below). part of the First Shooting Range (above) and of the Second Shooting Range Tables 1 & 2 - Features and structures (mainly heaps of soil and holes) that are

SHOOTING RANGE 2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	CO-ORDINATES
Feature 1	Two square hollows that are joined	26° 06' 43"
		28° 08' 55"
Feature 2	Elongated trench	26° 06' 42"
		28° 08' 53"
Feature 3	Two elongated heaps of soil - one with	26° 06' 51"
,	depressions on both sides	28° 08' 50"
Feature 4	Two high (fresh) heaps of soil with adjoining	26° 06' 51"
	holes and modern rubbish	28° 08' 49"

5.1.2 The Second Shooting Range

four features, located from the north to the south (Table 2). located on higher ground that the First Shooting Range. This shooting range consists of The Range. It is located further away (to the west) of the drainage channel and therefore Second Shooting range is located parallel and to the west of the First Shooting

- Feature 1 consists of two square hollows that are joined together.
- Feature 2 is two elongated trenches.
- Feature 3 both sides consists of two elongated heaps of soil - one with depressions 9
- Feature rubbish 4 S two high heaps of soil with two adjoining quarries and modern

for these features at the First Second Shooting Range northerly heaps of soil (50m) largely corresponds with the distances that were recorded northerly All these features are located in a straight line of view. The distance between the and the most southerly heaps of soil (300m) and between the two most

The illustrated with photographs. various features of the Second Shooting Range are now briefly described and

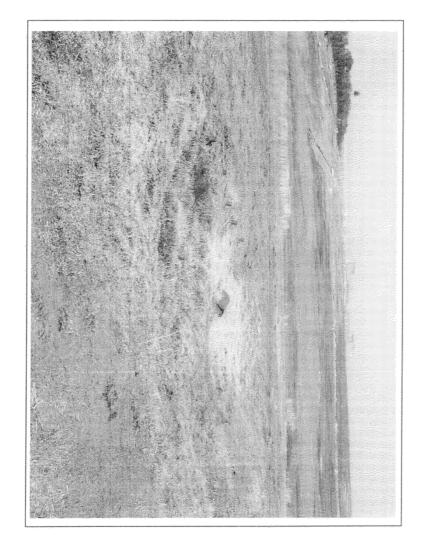
Feature 1

six steel pipes are located along the northern edge of the two square holes - five of the measures approximately 4,5mx9m and the smaller one 3,5mx3,5m. The lower parts of This feature consists of two square holes that are joined together. The large hole

small hole. steel pipes on the edge of the large hole and one of the steel pipes on the edge of the

(Figure 9). The two square holes are also associated with an old corroded drum and steel sieve

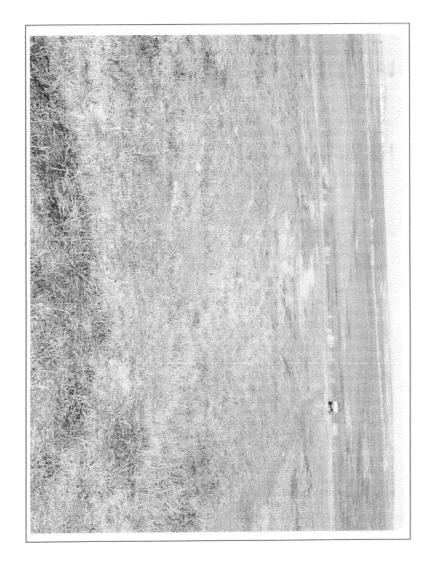
steel pipes located on the northern edges of both features. Figure 9 - The two square holes that are joined together with the lower parts of



Feature 2

around the two square holes) (Figure 10). 40cm deep. It has pieces of concrete laying in it. (Pieces of concrete are also scattered This feature is an elongated trench that is approximately 30m long, 8m wide and only

concrete. Figure 10 The elongated shallow trench that is associated with pieces of



widths. Both heaps are not higher than 80cm and both are severely eroded approximately 30m from each other. Both heaps are approximately 25m long and 5m in Feature 3 consists of two elongated heaps of soil located parallel with each other and

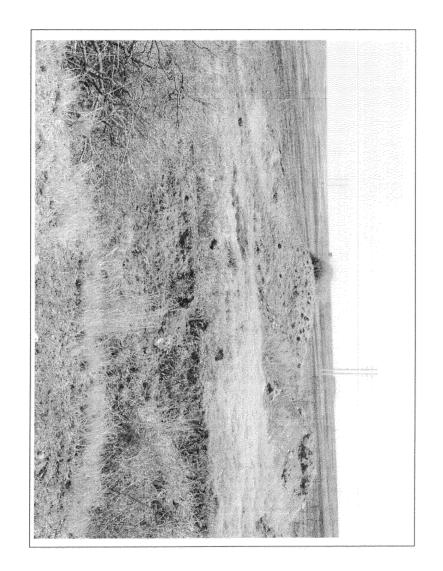
with only one depression (or trench) on its southern side (Figure 11). (to the north and to the south) while the northern elongated heap of soil is associated The most southerly of the two elongated heaps of soil have depressions on both sides

The northern heap has a depression (or trench) on its southern side. Figure 11 – One of the two elongated heaps of soil located next to each other.



cement and bricks (Figure 12). freshly (or recently) dumped soil with rubbish such as a pair of takkies, pieces of Feature 4 consists of two fresh heaps of soil with two small adjacent quarries and

the Second Shooting Range. as a pair of takkies, bricks and cement are the most southerly located features in Figure 12 – Two heaps of fresh soil, adjacent quarries and modern rubbish such



5.2 Brief historical background

5.2.1 The context of the study area

was established, from the onset, to be the biggest provider for commercially explosives market for explosives in South Africa during the developed as result of Johannesburg's expanding gold mines that became the biggest which had in the world buildings were erected on the farms Modderfontein Ontplofbare Stoffen Beperkt', shortly called the 'Dinamietmaatskappy'. The company's 1894 to provide related to the context of the study area on the farm Modderfontein 35IR is perhaps in some way a surface its origins development of the first commercial explosive industry in South Africa in this of 2 400hectares. on this particular farm. The commercial explosives industry demand, namely This factory was the largest in De Zuid Afrikaansche 1888's. and Klipfontein, premises A company was created in South Fabrieken voor Africa

provided work for 2 000 workers. When in full production it manufactured 80 000 cases cases and then to 240 000 cases of explosives per annum. of dynamite each weighing 25kg per annum. Production soon increased to 120 000 factory complex was composed of four explosive factories and other plants. -

the complex plant. These immigrants largely contributed to the multi-cultural character that marks Johannesburg today. Skilled workers from all over the world were imported to work in the factory or to build

exorbitant profits that the Zuid Afrikaansche Republic (ZAR) enjoyed with the selling of First Anglo Boer War Paul Kruger officially opened the were indirectly responsible for the Jameson invasion of the ZAR and the Modderfontein explosives factory in The

Modderfontein became the headquarters of General Baden-Powell. The British-South with production African Explosives Company was established in 1902 and Modderfontein again started British engaged the factories during the Second Anglo Boer War and

Powell when still a Colonel won great reputation during the siege of Mafekeng) the regular army and Major-General Baden Powell was given the command. (Baden North-West Mounted Police of Canada. Its officers were men that were seconded from Constabulary on its feet. It was planned that this force After the Anglo Boer War Baden Powell brought a semi-military force, the South African should be something

into shape crack shots. He assembled them on the factory property and began to 'lick them Powell's headquarters. He chose his men well. They were all fine horsemen and 'Modderfontein became the South African Constabulary's first depot and Baden for their new duties. It was not an easy task.' (Cartwright, 1964:88).

and Chemical Industries (AECI) in 1944. Modderfontein was proclaimed a town in 1986 manufacturer of commercial explosives. Germanic character. increased demand for explosives led AECI the most important industry German immigrants The company maintained in particular gives The name was changed to African Explosives to the expansion and S the position largest owner Ħe as of the factory during the town the an unmistakeable worlds of land.

5.2.1 Historical sources

confirm that any battle occurred on the farm Modderfontein during the Second Anglo Bibliography). None Several historical sources on battles during the Anglo Boer War were consulted (see War. Battles of these, were fought as well as the scholars at Modder River (outside consulted (see Ladysmith) below),

Modderspruit (North West Cape), but no battle occurred on the farm Modderfontein in the Transvaal Republic

5.3 Oral evidence

scholars who have an intimate knowledge about the Anglo Boer Wars spokespersons Modderfontein Spokespersons included persons who had a long association with the study area and could were consulted about the have been used question whether the shooting ranges on during Ħ Anglo Boer War. These

SEM established in 1912 may have used the shooting ranges. area and lived near the shooting ranges for many decades). shooting ranges. (Mr. Van der Merwe was also a member of other shooting clubs in the According to a member of the Modderfontein Commando, the Commando did not use these Mr Ernst van der Merwe the Modderfontein Commando who However, by 1954 when

and not on formally constructed shooting ranges that existed at Modderfontein to practise their firing skills. Numerous accounts indicate Scholars Boers did practised rifle shooting but that these activities occurred haphazard agree that the Boers did not use 'elaborate' shooting ranges such as those

to use these shooting rang after their establishment in 1912 War. It is also not impossible that the Modderfontein Commando may have continued Constabulary may have used one (or both) of the shooting ranges after the Anglo Boer There is little doubt that Baden Powell's Constabulary must have used shooting was well trained. It is therefore not impossible that the South ranges

5.4 Other supplementary evidence

sieved from some of the heaps of soil. These included bullets that were manufactured contained According high levels ð ω soil analysis that was done of lead. Various types of bullets (now regrettably lost) were by SRK Consulting the shooting ranges

rifles that shot bullets made from lead. Modderfontein Commando after their establishment (in 1912) would also have used from lead. The South African Constabulary also used Lee Enfield rifles while the from lead. Old rifles such as the Lee Enfield (used by the British forces) and Mausers (used by the Boers) during the Anglo Boer War used bullets that were manufactured

O CONSIDERING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SHOOTING RANGE

of the indicate that the shooting ranges are old (historical) and were used decades The shooting ranges have historical significance assumption. However, based on the available evidence it must be accepted that the perhaps by the perhaps two shooting ranges. The bullet points that were picked up near one of the features (raised soil platform, linked square holes) represent the remains of one and field Lead bullets collected during the sampling of soil (but now lost) for analysis shooting <u>o</u> survey and evidence such as lead bullets and high levels of lead in the soil were identified early decades of the South African Constabulary and/or by the Modderfontein Commando ranges indicate that the heaps of soil, quarries (holes) and few as those of 20th century. .303 rifles Spokespersons that were used could not in more recent

and date from the recent past and do not necessarily represent the large extent. Some of the remains currently in place on the shooting ranges therefore some of these heaps may have been dumped in the recent past. Some of the heaps found with one of the structures (Feature 4, Second neaps adjoining square holes holes). Odd features include a circular heap of soil (First Shooting Range) and two comprises of heaps of soil (symmetrical or elongated) and quarries considered. establishment of Range) that ranges any more quarries significance heaps of soil (higher than 1,0m) are young and date from the recent past. Some of The indicate that the may also show little signs of weathering (e.g. Feature 1, First Shooting remains a new residential area over these remains should therefore have of the (Second Shooting Range). Features such as the high-rising been topped on remains of the two shooting ranges look very similar. It merely original shooting associated older heaps range(s) may have been altered with the Shooting Range) indicates that 9 shooting soil. The modern rubbish original shooting ranges (deep or shallow and the

little washed open by erosion activities channel on the eastern perimeter of this became part of the network of dongas that are currently extending into the drainage Erosion along the eastern edge of the First Shooting Range is taking its toll. There is doubt that this shooting range, if not maintained purposefully, will eventually will gradually disappear while the holes (trenches?) will either be filled-in or site. The heaps of soil on both shooting

appeal. These features will generate little, if any, interest when they are restored or being utilized in any way maintained. It must be emphasised that both shooting ranges have little aesthetic disappear current unattractive ō assume the (unimposing) general character of the landscape if not deliberately shooting ranges will therefore gradually

Several factors militate against the indefinite conservation of these remains, namely:

- significance such and/or the Modderfontein Commando in-depth remains would be difficult to motivate the indefinite and in situ conservation of these if the latter are not utilized for educational or other purposes even if research would prove that as <u>a</u> association with the South African Constabulary the shooting ranges have historica
- . established). appreciate the remains and may vandalise any site museum that may be would prevent the construction of a large number of houses in the Greenstone The shooting ranges cover a Township. (The residents considerable surface and <u>o</u>f † e township Would if preserved not in situ
- earth would be meaningless unless the shooting ranges considerable cost) to their former condition and utilised in one way or another preservation of a few inconspicuous heaps of soil heaps and holes in the are restored (at a

accommodated in displays such as in the Johannesburg War Museum or in AECI's commemorating the once existence of these features. It will be possible to erect a significance the prove that the shooting ranges (by then destroyed) have outstanding historical museum. Such displays can be cross-referenced to the memorial tablet/needle. residential suburb that can explain the significance of the destroyed shooting ranges memorial (commemorative tablet/needle or plaque) in a strategic position in the new If future in-depth research (by who ever for what ever purpose) would conclusively (story) of the vanished shooting ranges can be 'replaced' shooting ranges, if need to be 10 d by representations can also be

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the shooting ranges be destroyed in order to make provision for the development of the Greenstone Hill Township.

ranges. Resources Agency (Gauteng Head Quarters) for the destruction of the shooting Heartland Properties has to apply for a permit from the South African Heritage

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9 SPOKESPERSONS CONSULTED

Culture. Tswane Metro. Dr. Anton van Vollenhoven, (Historical Archaeologist). Assistant Director, Tourism and

in Modderfontein). Mr. Ernst van der Merwe. M.D of Quality Protection Services (a local security company

Prof. Fransjohan Pretorius. Professor in History at the University of Pretoria.

lan Cameron Clark. SRK Consulting Engineers.

Mr. Jan van der Bosch. Professional Officer. Museum Africa.

Sarah Skinner. SRK Consulting Engineers.