

**CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT SCOPING REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED
HOUSING ESTATE TO BE DEVELOPED ON THE FARM RUSTFONTEIN
126HS, VOLKSRUST DISTRICT, MPUMALANGA**

For:

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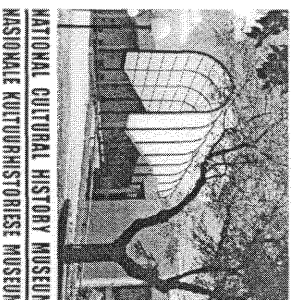
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SUMMARY

Cultural heritage impact scoping report for the proposed housing estate to be developed on the farm Rustfontein 126HS, Volksrust district, Mpumalanga

The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document sites, objects and structures of cultural significance found within the boundaries of the area in which it is proposed to develop a housing estate.

Based on what was found and its evaluation, it is recommended that the proposed development can continue, on condition of acceptance of the following recommendations:

- The Joubert family cemetery should be maintained on an annual basis, e.g. by cutting the grass inside as well as on the outside, close to the wall.
- It is recommended that the farmstead is kept as a unit, and that it is restored to its original state before the additions were made. If it is planned to reuse these structures, guidelines for the work as well as the reuse must be drafted by an architectural conservationist before any work can commence. The work can only be done after obtaining a permit from SAHRA. However, if it is the plan to demolish the buildings, it must be documented in full by a person with a background in architectural conservation, after which a permit for its destruction must be obtained from SAHRA.
- The informal cemetery should be formalised, e.g. by fencing it in, with access allowed to descendants to visit the site, and the grass should be cut annually.
- If archaeological sites are exposed during construction work, it should immediately be reported to a museum, preferably one at which an archaeologist is available, so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
CONTENTS	2
1. THE SURVEY	3
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE	3
3. DEFINITIONS	4
4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS	5
5. METHODOLOGY	6
6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA	7
7. DISCUSSION	8
8. IDENTIFICATION OF RISK SOURCES	9
9. RECOMMENDATIONS	10
10. REFERENCES	11
11. PROJECT TEAM	11
APPENDIX 1	12
APPENDIX 2	13
APPENDIX 3	17

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1. THE SURVEY

The National Cultural History Museum was contracted by Plan-2-Survey Africa to survey an area in which it is proposed to develop a housing estate. The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document sites, objects and structures of cultural importance found within the boundaries of the area that is to be impacted by the developed.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The scope of work consisted of conducting a Phase 1 archaeological survey of the site in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999).

This include:

- Conducting a desk-top investigation of the area;
- A visit to the proposed development site.

The objectives were to

- Identify possible archaeological, cultural and historic sites within the proposed development areas;
- Evaluate the potential impacts of construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed development on archaeological, cultural and historical resources;
- Recommend mitigation measures to ameliorate any negative impacts on areas of archaeological, cultural or historical importance.
- Recommend further studies in the EIA, should these be required.

3. DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The following aspects have a direct bearing on the survey and the resulting report:

- *Cultural resources* are all non-physical and physical human-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences that are associated with human activity. These include all sites, structures and artefacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development.
- The *significance* of the sites and artefacts are determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these.
- Sites regarded as having *low significance* have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium to high significance require further mitigation measures.
- The *latitude and longitude* of archaeological sites are to be treated as sensitive information by the developer and should not be disclosed to members of the public.

4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are mainly dealt within two acts. These are the South African Heritage Resources Act (Act No25 of 1999) and the Environment Conservation Act (Act No 73 of 1989).

4.1 South African Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999)

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

In terms of Section 35(4) of this Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or material or any meteorite; bring onto, or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

Structures:

Section 34(1) of this Act states that 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.

“Structure” means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith;

“Alter” means any action affecting the structure, appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or other decoration or any other means.

Human remains :

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage resources authority:

- (a) destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- (b) destroy, damage, alter, exhume or 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
- (c) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

Human remains that are less than 60 years old are subject to provisions of the Human Tissue Act (Act No 65 of 1983) and to local regulations.

4.2 Environment Conservation Act (Act No 73 of 1989)

This Act states that a survey and an evaluation of cultural resources should be undertaken in areas where development, which will change the face of the environment, is to be made. The impact of the development on the cultural resources should also be determined and proposals to mitigate this impact are to be formulated.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Preliminary investigation

5.1.1 Survey of the literature

A survey of the relevant literature was conducted with the aim of reviewing the previous research done and determining the heritage potential of the area. In this regard, various anthropological, archaeological and historical sources were consulted - see the list of references below.

5.1.2 Data bases

The *Archaeological Data Recording Centre* (ADRC), housed at the National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria, was consulted. The *Environmental Potential Atlas* was also consulted.

5.1.3 Other sources

The topocadastral and other maps were also studied - see the list of references below.

5.2 Field survey

The field survey was undertaken according to generally accepted archaeological practices, and was aimed at locating all possible sites, objects and structures. The area that had to be investigated was identified by Plan-2-Survey Africa by means of maps. The area was divided into different blocks using natural and manmade features. Each block was investigated by walking across it in a number of transects. Special attention was given to topographical occurrences such as trenches, holes, outcrops and clusters of trees.

Where possible, the landowners/occupiers were interviewed in an effort to obtain information on the existence of known sites.

5.3 Documentation

All sites, objects and structures that are identified are documented according to the general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Coordinates of individual localities were determined by means of the *Global Positioning System* (GPS)¹ and plotted on a map (see Fig. 1). This information is added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

Map datum used: Hartbeeshoek 94 (WGS84).

¹ According to the manufacturer a certain deviation may be expected for each reading. Care was, however, taken to obtain as accurate a reading as possible, and then to correlate it with reference to the physical environment before plotting it on the map.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The area surveyed include portions of the farm Rustfontein 126HS, in the Volksrust district of Mpumalanga. It is located approximately midway between the towns of Vrede and Volksrust, on the northern side of the R543 (see Fig. 1).

The topography is described as low mountains and a few small streams, mostly seasonal run-off streams originating in the mountains, crosses the area. Although a number of ridges occur in the area, no rock shelters or caves were identified. The geology is made up of mudstone, with shale in areas adjacent to the study area. The original vegetation of the study area is classified as Moist Cool Highveld Grassland, of which large sections have been eliminated due to ploughing activities.

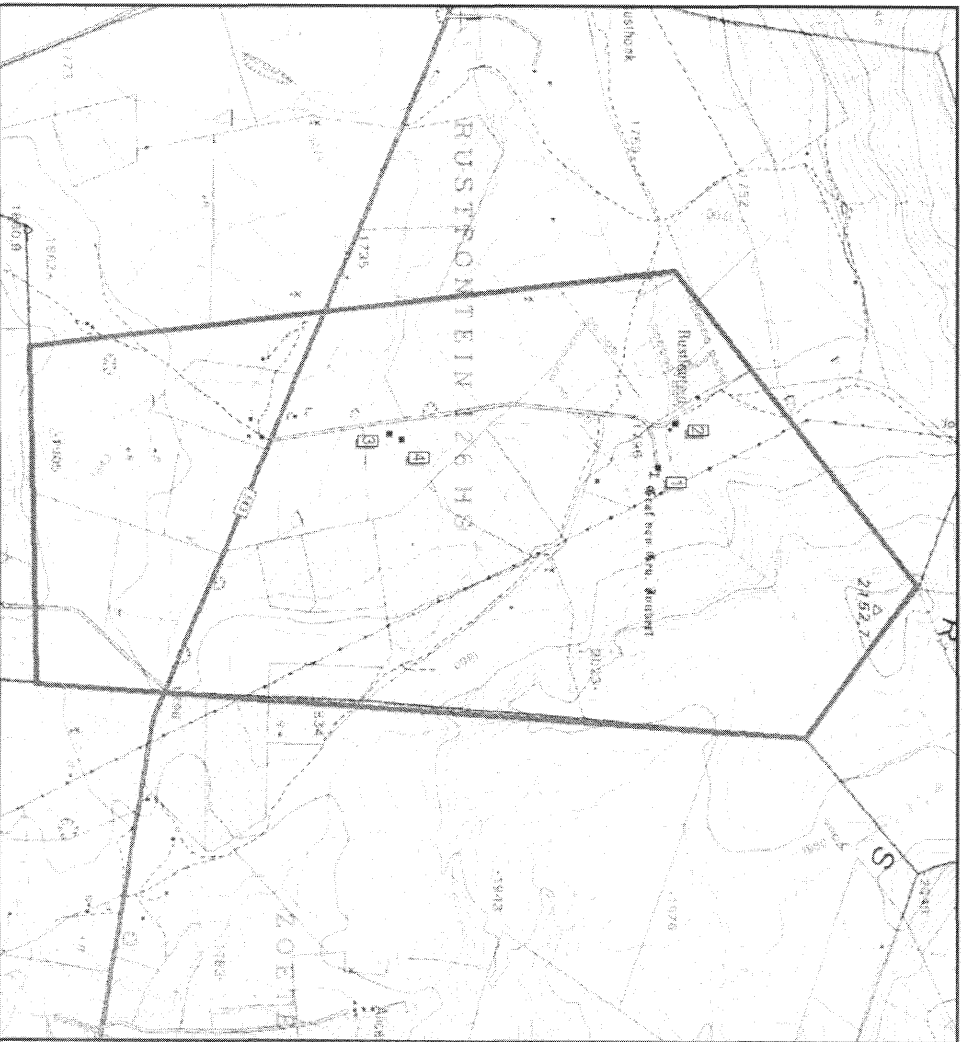


Figure 1. Location of the study areas and the identified heritage sites (Map, courtesy of the Government Printer).

7. DISCUSSION

7.1 Stone Age

No stone tools were recorded in the surveyed area and no site likely to have been occupied by Stone Age people (outcrops, rock shelters or pans) occur in the study area.

7.2 Iron Age

No sites dating to the Late Iron Age are known to occur in a larger regional context, and no sites dating to the Iron Age were identified in the study area.

7.3 Historical period

An old farmstead occurs on the site (Appendix 2). The house and outbuildings as well as the barn (Fig. 3), is built from sandstone and it probably had a thatched roof, which was later replaced by a corrugated iron roof. The farmstead probably predates the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902). Although some of the structures, especially the main house, has undergone a certain amount of 'renovation', the core of the buildings are still sound.

The remains of a number of farm labourer houses were identified. Most of these, however, have been demolished to such an extent that very little is visible. These remains are viewed as having low significance, and after adding them to the regional Archaeological Database, they are taken as recorded in full.

Two cemeteries were identified (see Appendix 2). One of these, the Joubert family cemetery, falls just outside the area of proposed development, but would not be impacted on directly.

The second cemetery consists of four to five graves surrounded by a stone wall. It is located far from the areas of development and would not be impacted on by the development. Because of its proximity to the homesteads referred to above, it is taken that the cemetery is linked to the former inhabitants. Current farm labourers does not know very much about the people who stayed here and most even do not know of the existence of the cemetery.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF RISK SOURCES

Scoping exercises usually focus on two phases of a proposed development: the *construction* and *operation phases*.

The following project actions may impact negatively on archaeological and other sites of cultural importance. The actions are most likely to occur during the construction phase of the proposed project.

TABLE 1:

Construction phase:	
Possible Risks	Source of the risk
Actually identified risks	
- damage to sites	Construction work in development area and outside the development area
Anticipated risks	
- looting of sites	Curious workers
Operation phase:	
Possible Risks	Source of the risk
Actually identified risks	
- damage to sites	Not keeping to management plans
Anticipated risks	
- damage to sites	Unscheduled maintenance, activities outside the development area

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document sites, objects and structures of cultural significance found within the boundaries of the area in which it is proposed to develop a housing estate.

Based on what was found and its evaluation, it is recommended that the proposed development can continue, on condition of acceptance of the following recommendations:

- The Joubert family cemetery should be maintained on an annual basis, e.g. by cutting the grass inside as well as on the outside, close to the wall.
- It is recommended that the farmstead is kept as a unit, and that it is restored to its original state before the additions were made. If it is planned to reuse these structures, guidelines for the work as well as the reuse must be drafted by an architectural conservationist before any work can commence. The work can only be done after obtaining a permit from SAHRA. However, if it is the plan to demolish the buildings, it must be documented in full by a person with a background in architectural conservation, after which a permit for its destruction must be obtained from SAHRA.
- The informal cemetery should be formalised, e.g. by fencing it in, with access allowed to descendants to visit the site, and the grass should be cut annually.
- If archaeological sites are exposed during construction work, it should immediately be reported to a museum, preferably one at which an archaeologist is available, so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.

• 10. REFERENCES

10.1 Data bases

Archaeological Data Recording Centre, National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria.
Environmental Potential Atlas, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

10.2 Literature

- Acocks, J.P.H. 1975. *Veld Types of South Africa*. Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa, No. 40. Pretoria: Botanical Research Institute.
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- Richardson, D. 2001. *Historic sites of South Africa*. Cape Town: Struik Publishers.
- Van Riet Lowe, C. n.d. *The distribution of Prehistoric rock engravings and paintings in South Africa*. Archaeological Survey, Archaeological Series No. 7.
- Van Warmelo, N.J. 1935. *A Preliminary survey of the Bantu Tribes of South Africa*. Ethnological Publications No. 5. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Van Warmelo, N.J. 1977. *Anthropology of Southern Africa in Periodicals to 1950*. Pretoria: Government Printer.

10.3 Maps

1: 50 000 Topocadastral maps – 2627BB 2627BD

11. PROJECT TEAM

J van Schalkwyk – principal investigator

APPENDIX 1: STANDARDISED SET OF CONVENTIONS USED TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF PROJECTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES

Significance of impact:

- low where the impact will not have an influence on or require to be significantly accommodated in the project design
- medium where the impact could have an influence which will require modification of the project design or alternative mitigation
- high where it would have a "no-go" implication on the project regardless of any mitigation

Certainty of prediction:

- Definite: More than 90% sure of a particular fact. Substantial supportive data to verify assessment
- Probable: More than 70% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of that impact occurring
- Possible: Only more than 40% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring
- Unsure: Less than 40% sure of a particular fact, or the likelihood of an impact occurring

Recommended management action:

For each impact, the recommended practically attainable mitigation actions which would result in a measurable reduction of the impact, must be identified. This is expressed according to the following:

- 1 = no further investigation/action necessary
- 2 = controlled sampling and/or mapping of the site necessary
- 3 = preserve site if possible, otherwise extensive salvage excavation and/or mapping necessary
- 4 = preserve site at all costs

Legal requirements:

Identify and list the specific legislation and permit requirements which potentially could be infringed upon by the proposed project, if mitigation is necessary.

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY RESULTS²

[Previous site numbers relate to other known sites on a particular ¼ degree sheet already documented in the ADRC, and does not necessarily refer to sites occurring on or close to the specific area of development.]

Map datum used: Hartbeeshoek 94 (WGS84).

1. Site number: 2729BC001

Location: Rustfontein 126HS: S-27.34774; E 2966123

Description: Cemetery containing a number of graves of the Joubert family.

Discussion: This site is located outside the area of direct impact. It is a well-known landmark and is therefore well maintained and looked after.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Recommended management action: 1 = no further investigation/action necessary

Legal requirements: None

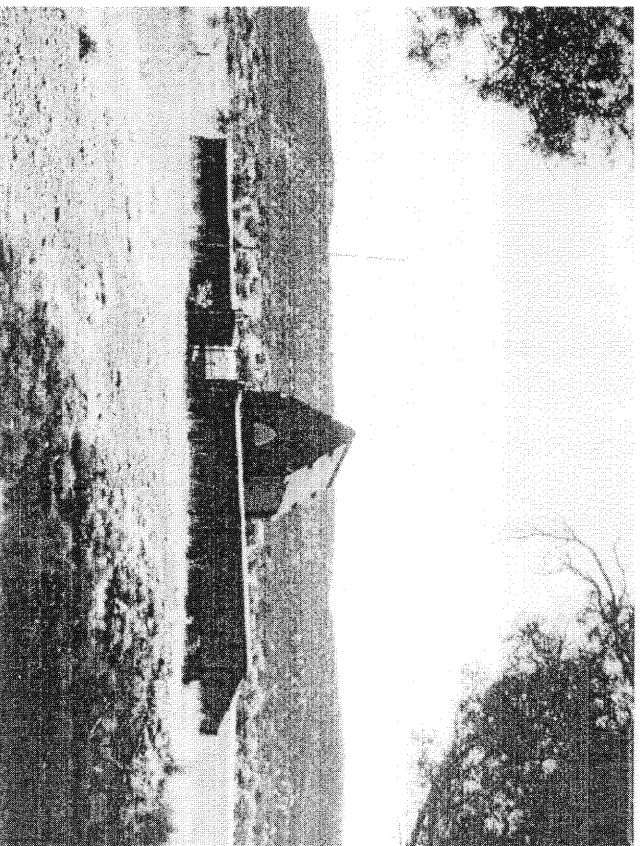


Figure 2. The Joubert cemetery.

2. Site number: 2729BC002

Location: Rustfontein 126HS: S -27.34660; E 29.60825

² See Appendix 1 for an explanation of the conventions used in assessing the heritage remains.

Description: Old farmstead, consisting of the house and a number of outbuildings, all constructed of sandstone. Some later alterations were done, especially to the main house. In all probability, the core structures are older than 60 years.

Discussion: If these structures are to be demolished, or, alternatively reused, it can only be done after it has been documented by a person with a background in architectural conservation, and only after a permit has been issued by SAHRA.

Significance of impact: High

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Recommended management action: 3 = preserve site if possible, otherwise extensive salvage excavation and/or mapping necessary

Legal requirements: SAHRA permit



Figure 3. The barn at the old farmstead.

3. Site number: 2729BC003

Location: Rustfontein 126HS: S -27.36558; E 2960903

Description: Remains of the homesteads (four) of farm labourers. All of these structures have been demolished to such an extent that very little of them remain. As a result, the remains are viewed as having little significance and they are viewed as having been documented in full.

Discussion: These features are located far from the area of direct impact and would therefore not present a problem.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Recommended management action: 1 = no further investigation/action necessary

Legal requirements: None



Figure 4. Remains of one of the old farm labourer homesteads. The others are located in the vicinity of the trees in the background of the photograph.

4. Site number: 2729BC004

Location: Rustfontein 126HS: S -27.36477; E 29.60938

Description: Informal cemetery with four to five graves, surrounded by a stone wall. From the grass cover, and information obtained from local farm labourers, it is deduced that these graves are not regularly visited by descendants.

Discussion: This site is located farm from the area of direct impact and would therefore not present a problem. However, it is recommended that it should be fenced off and that the grass is cut annually.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Recommended management action: 1 = no further investigation/action necessary

Legal requirements: None

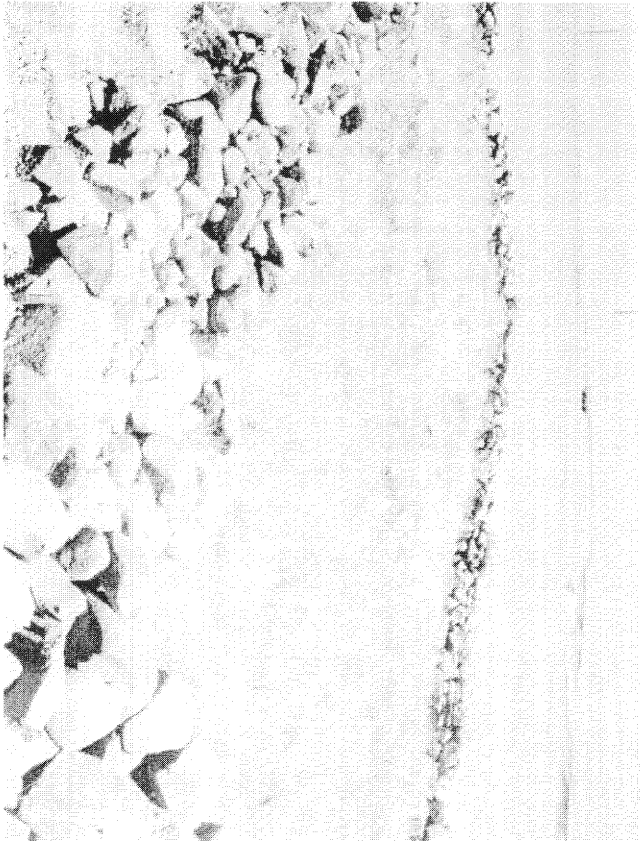


Figure 5. The small informal cemetery.

APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

This section is included to give the reader some necessary background. It must be kept in mind, however, that these dates are all relative and serve only to give a very broad framework for Interpretation.

STONE AGE	
Early Stone Age (ESA)	2 000 000 - 150 000 Before Present
Middle Stone Age (MSA)	150 000 - 30 000 BP
Late Stone Age (LSA)	30 000 - until c. AD 200

IRON AGE	
Early Iron Age (EIA)	AD 200 - AD 1000
Late Iron Age (LIA)	AD 1000 - AD 1830

HISTORICAL PERIOD

Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1840 in this part of the country

ADRRC - Archaeological Data Recording Centre

core - a piece of stone from which flakes were removed to be used or made into tools

PHRA – Provincial Heritage Resources Agency

SAHRA - South African Heritage Resources Agency