



COBUS DREYER

Pr. Archaeologist/Heritage Specialist

**P.O. Box 12910
BRANDHOF 9324
Bloemfontein
dreyerj@telkomsa.net**

**Tel: 051-444 1187
Fax: 051-444 4395
Cell: 083 357 7982**

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FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED DIAMOND MINING ACTIVITIES AT THE FARM SYFERFONTEIN 2HP, WOLMARANSSTAD, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Diamond mining activities are planned on the farm Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad District, North West Province.

The proposed areas show remnants of old plough lands and disturbances of previous diggings and diamond prospecting.

Two graveyards and another place containing two old graves are located on the farm. The graves will not be disturbed in any way by the proposed diamond diggings.

No other archaeological and cultural remains occurred.

I recommend that the planning and development of the mining activities may proceed.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

Diamond mining activities are planned on the farm Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad District, North West Province. The farm was visited on 12 June 2007. Mr. Japie Loubser of Schweizer-Reneke involved me in the project and Mr. Frans Marx, the owner, took me to the sites.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

LOCALITY

The farm Syferfontein 2HP is located in the district of Wolmaransstad, North West Province. The farm lies about 20km to the north of Wolmaransstad on the N12 main road to Klerksdorp (Map 1).

The areas proposed for diamond mining activities are scattered over the farm and along the Makwassie Spruit (Map 3).

Part of the area had previously been used as plough lands (Figs14-5.) and disturbances of earlier diggings and diamond prospecting are visible (Figs.16-22). The soil surface is grass covered (Figs.1,5,14) with scatters of bush here and there (Figs.2,5,9). Concentrations of river washed pebbles are visible on the surface in certain places (Figs.19,22).

In 1972, this area became part of what had been known as the "Reef Rush" when the land was proclaimed as State Diamond Diggings.

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (2726AA) (Map 2).

The placing of the different points is indicated on Map 3.

Point A (LDEF)	27°03'48"S 026°04'26"E	Altitude 1466m (Fig.1).
Point B (40CF)	27°03'16"S 026°03'28"E	Altitude 1453m (Fig.2)
Point C (38GF)	27°02'46"S 026°03'36"E	Altitude 1456m (Fig.3).
Point D (34EF)	27°01'40"S 026°04'23"E	Altitude 1463m (Fig.4).
Point E (35DF)	27°01'01"S 026°04'57"E	Altitude 1469m (Fig.5).
Point F (35CF)	27°00'41"S 026°04'42"E	Altitude 1477m (Fig.6).
Point G (2C)	26°59'49"S 026°04'29"E	Altitude 1453m (Fig.7)
Point H (2K)	26°59'51"S 026°03'19"E	Altitude 1478m (Fig.8).

Point J (33AF)	27°01'18"S 026°03'44"E	Altitude 1443m (Fig.9).
Point K (14DN)	27°01'18"S 026°03'44"E	Altitude 1443m (Fig.10).
Point L (32BF)	27°02'12"S 026°02'49"E	Altitude 1430m.
Point M (32CF)	27°02'48"S 026°03'08"E	Altitude 1454m.
GRAVE YARD 1	27°03'04"S 026°05'05"E	Altitude 1486m (Fig.11).
GRAVE YARD 2 (GY)	27°01'59"S 026°03'42"E	Altitude 1443m (Fig.12).
GRAVE YARD 3	27°02'49"S 026°03'53"E	Altitude 1450m (Fig.13).

RESULTS

Two graveyards and another place containing two old graves are located on the farm (Map 3).

Graveyard 1 consists of seven graves (Fig.11), dating to between 1929 and 1935.

In Graveyard 2, about 45 graves were counted (Fig.12). The oldest grave date from 1905 and last burial took place in September 1994. One other place that contains two almost disappearing graves, could be the last resting place of some unknown old diggers, was found on the farm (Fig.13).

Graveyard 1 contains the graves of relatives of the owner, but none of these sites will be disturbed by the mining activities.

Two traditional Batswana clay pots (Fig.24) were found on one of the graves at Graveyard 2, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad. The use of traditional clay pots manufactured by Black people on European graves is a very interesting phenomenon, which had been observed previously by the author in cemeteries in the Eastern Free State.

No other archaeological or cultural remains could be found on any part of the farm.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed developments of diamond mining will have no impact on any cultural, archaeological and historical remains on the surface.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no obvious reasons to delay the commencement of further planning of the mining developments and I recommend that the work may proceed.

MITIGATION

Concerning the areas for the proposed extensions, no mitigation measures will be required.

In the case of the three graveyards, it is clear that the owner has no intention to disturb the sites in any way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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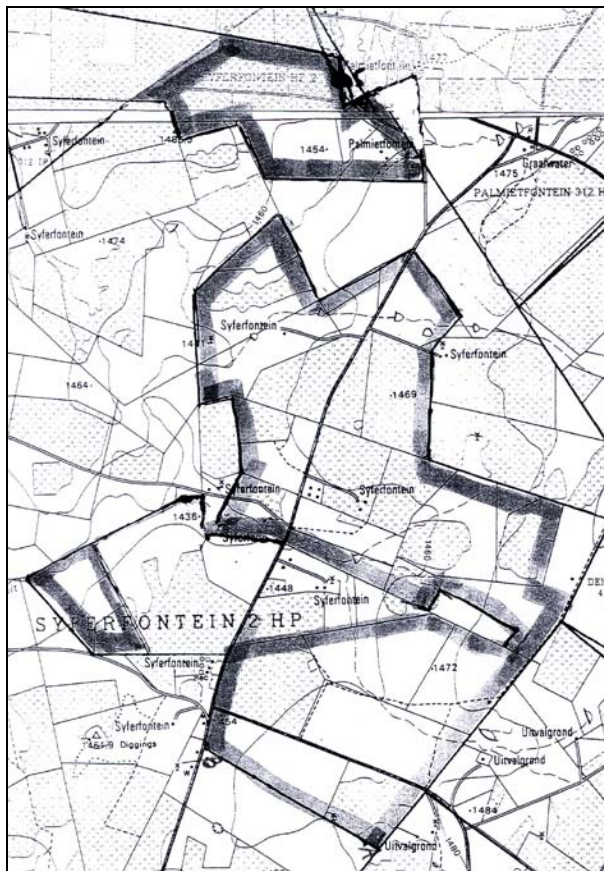
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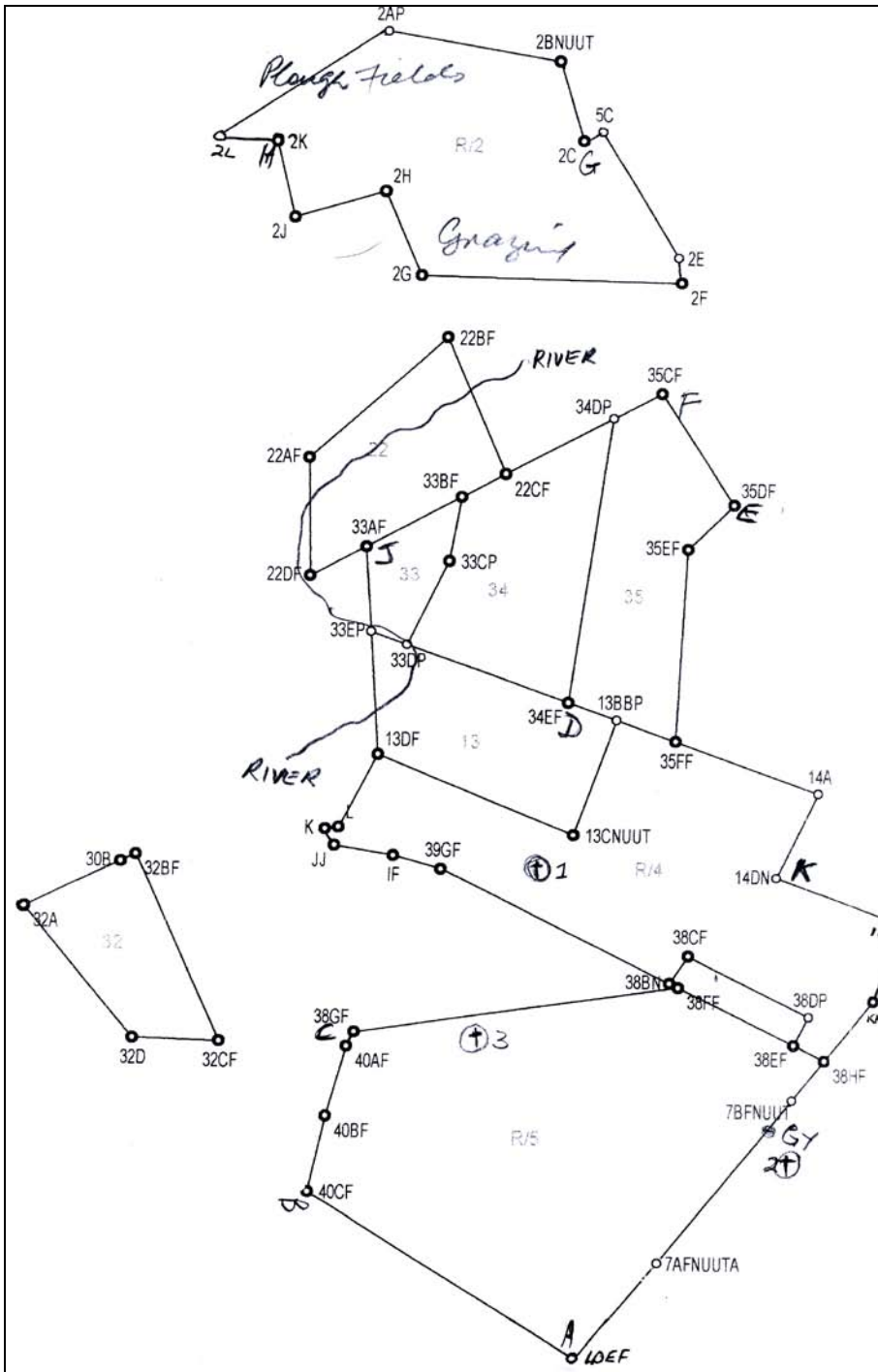
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Map 1 The N12 road between Wolmaransstad and Klerksdorp, North West Province.



Map 2 Boundaries of the farm Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad, North West Province (2726AA).



Map 3 Locality of the proposed developments at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad, North West Province. GPS coordinates are indicated from A to M. Symbol † = Graveyards.



Fig.1 Point A at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.2 Point B at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.3 Point C at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.4 Point D at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.5 Point E at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.6 Point F at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.7 Point G, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad. Flow of Makwassie Spruit indicated by the row of bushes.



Fig.8 Point H, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.9 Point J, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.10 Point K, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.11 Graveyard 1 (GY), Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.12 Graveyard 2, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad, consisting of about 45 graves.



Fig.13 Graveyard 3, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.14 Old plough lands with cultivated grazing, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.15 Old plough lands, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.16 Old diggings, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.17 Old diggings at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.
Note the sorting machine in the centre.



Fig.18 Old rehabilitated diggings at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.19 Old rehabilitated diggings at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.20 Soil deposit in old diggings at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.21 Old SAP diggings at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.22 Pebbles at the old diggings, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.23 An old farm house at point R4, at Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.



Fig.24 Traditional Batswana clay pots placed as decoration on one of the graves.
Graveyard 2, Syferfontein 2HP, Wolmaransstad.