



COBUS DREYER

Pr. Archaeologist/Heritage Specialist

Tel: 051 - 444 1187
Fax: 051 - 401 2363
Cell: 083 - 357 7982

P.O. Box 12910
Brandhof
9324
dreyerc.HUM@mail.uovs.ac.za

20 FEBRUARY 2004

FIRST PHASE HERITAGE / ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RESEDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT HILLANDALE, BLOEMFONTEIN

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed development of the Woodlands Wildlife Estate is located on the farm Hillandale 249, Bloemfontein (Surveyor-General O.F.S. 1973). The land was visited and inspected on 16 February 2004 in the company of Dr Johan du Preez, Cebo Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material to establish the potential impact on any cultural relics that might be present. 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).

The following observations were made.

LOCALITY

The proposed residential development lies to the west of the N1 main road (2926AA 1993) and stretches over an elaborate area indicated by markers where stands have been surveyed and pegged out. The area stretches over part of the hill and also contains even farmland covered in planted pastures.

HISTORICAL FINDS

It is confirmed that the farm Hillandale belonged to Abraham Fischer (Schoeman 1980:125,143), but Woodlands is not mentioned in this record.

There are no major landmarks or specific indications of important remnants of historical or cultural occurrences involved in the present project. It had been noted that the farmhouse at Woodlands is going to be developed into a

guesthouse. This arrangement might need the attention and confirmation by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Two other prominent features can be of importance during the development of the residential area.

An elaborate stonewall continues for several kilometres along the ridge (29°03'10"S. 026°11'52"E. Altitude 1444m) (Fig.1). The origin of this wall is unknown, but resembles other similar features elsewhere in the Free State and also in the Cape Province. It is known that in some cases these walls date from times before the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902).

The environmental consultant explained that the total wall would be kept outside the confinements of the present development.

The second feature consists of the foundation stones of a circular stone wall structure approximately 10m in diameter (29°02'41"S. 026°11'40"E. Altitude 1404m). Although it resembles stone-walled structures dating from the Late Iron Age sites that have been occupied by early indigenous peoples, no evidence in the form of potsherds or other cultural material could be found to support this assumption.

A few specimens of the remainder of tin cans with prominent soldering, resembling remains from the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) were found in the direct vicinity. This indicates that the structure could date from this time of strife in the past (cf. Pakenham 1997). The use of the specific structure could not be confirmed in the literature, however.

It is anticipated that the British forces could have had watch posts on the hills in the outskirts of Bloemfontein and it seems likely that this could be the case at this site. It is possible, that the post was occupied only for a short time and that the odd bullet and other remnants of military equipment could still be found in the vicinity during construction work in the area.

It was also explained that this koppie will likewise be left out of the planned development.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

A number of highly weathered stone tools dating from the Stone Age period in prehistory were found on the surface, but no prominent indication of any archaeological or cultural material in the form of stone tool concentrations or deposits of ceramic ware were found at the inspected site.

Together with disturbances by ploughing, it also seems unlikely that remains of any early human occupation could have survived in this area. Part of the site is

likewise not located close enough to the higher ground, the obvious living area for people during prehistoric times.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No obvious reasons could be found during the examination to delay the commencement of any further planning and development of the site.

It is, therefore, recommended that the proposed developments may proceed.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed development, mitigation measures are only needed in the case of the stone-wall remains with associated Anglo-Boer War remnants at the stone-walled structure. It is recommended that these areas should be left out of the planned residential developments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Johan du Preez for taking me to the site and for his comments on the prominent structures in the area.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:

DEACON, J. 1992. Archaeology for Planners, Developers and Local Authorities. Cape Town: National Monuments Council.

DREYER, J.J.B. 1992. The Iron Age Archaeology of Doornpoort, Winburg, Orange Free State. Navorsing van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein, Vol.8(7):262-390.

DREYER, J. 1996. Introduction to Free State Iron Age Archaeology. In: Guide to archaeological sites in the Free State and Lesotho. Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3), 14th Biennial Conference, Bloemfontein, Post-conference tour 5-8 July 1996. Bloemfontein: National Museum.

DREYER, J. 2000. Mountains and Rivers of the Free State - Manual for field research / Berge en Riviere van die Vrystaat – Handleiding vir veldnavorsing. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, Department of Anthropology, Occasional Paper No. 2.

HUMPHREYS, A.J.B. 1986. Searching for the past. Cape Town: David Philip.

MAGGS, T.M. 1976. Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld. Pietermaritzburg: Natal Museum.

PAKENHAM, T. 1997. The Boer War. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball.

PISTORIUS, J.C.C. 1994. Eskom Archaeological Site Identification Guide. Johannesburg: Eskom.

Schoeman, K. 1980. Bloemfontein – die ontstaan van 'n stad. Kaapstad: Human & Rousseau.

SURVEYOR-GENERAL O.F.S. 1973. Index of Orange Free State Farms. Bloemfontein.