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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED RAYTON ESTATE TOWNSHIP, ON SUBDIVISION 29 OF THE FARM LILYVALE 2913, BLOEMFONTEIN

INVESTIGATION

The proposed residential development was visited and inspected on 11 August 2004. Manie van Wyk of Spatial Solutions took me to the site, Bloemfontein, who indicated the layout and borders of the specific piece of land.

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 site was selected and introduced by the developer and is indicated on a map supplied by the Environmental Consultants.

The proposed developments are located to the north of Bloemfontien on the farm Lilyvale 2913 along the road to the Free State Botanical Gardens (Surveyor-General O.F.S. 1973). The land also adjoins the existing residential developments on subdivision 26 of the farm Lilyvale 2313, Bloemfontein along the main Provincial Road (29°03'45"S 026°12'22"E Altitude 1397m).

The main power line forms the southern border of the proposed area (Fig.) up to the junction with the existing Provincial Road SS/1013 (29°03'57"S 026°12'20"E Altitude 1411m). Except for other smaller building remains the area is relatively undisturbed.

Southern beacon below power line (29°04'02"S 026°12'37"E Altitude 1410m) (Fig.)

Eastern beacon along the fence bordering on subdivision 26 of the farm Lilyvale 2313 (29°03'41"S 026°12'46"E Altitude 1406m) (Fig.). A second beacon is situated about 57m east from the first eastern beacon (29°03'41"S 026°12'48"E Altitude 1404m). The second beacon could be of significance because it could mean that the graves are either inside the proposed area of development or in the case of the second beacon outside the proposed area.

The whole area is covered by a heavy growth of grass including mainly Themeda (Rooigras) and trees and shrubs such as Olea africana (Olive), Rhus lancea (Karee), Cussonia paniculata (Kiepersol), Basterolien, Celtis africana (Witstinkhout) and Grewia flava (Rosyntjebos) along the non-perennial spruit.

A border point is found east of the non-perennial spruit at the remainder of portion 46 of the farm Lilyvale 2313 (29°03'51"S 026°12'30"E Altitude 1409m).

Soil cover seems to be very shallow and the area contains numerous Dolerite banks and outcrops, producing excellent building material which had actually been used during the construction of the weir and dam walls and also in the building of the labourer's houses.

FINDS

The area was surveyed on foot and all cultural material, building remains and other structures were plotted by GPS and recorded on camera. The finds are listed below.

Several structures occur along the flow line of the non-perennial stream. These include the following:

An occurrence next to the non-perennial stream could be the remains of a crusher (29°03'56"S 026°12'27"E Altitude 1406m) (Fig.)

Weir (29°03'57"S 026°12'20"E Altitude 1411m) (Fig.)

Storm water canal (29°03'50"S 026°12'27"E Altitude 1401m) (Fig.)

Dam wall (29°03'47"S 026°12'29"E Altitude 1396m) (Fig.).

A bore hole is located to the east of the stream (29°03'49"S 026°12'28"E Altitude 1395m) (Fig.)

A scalloped dam wall is found situate more to the south of the previous structures (29°03'53"S 026°12'27"E Altitude 1227m) (Fig.)

A circular dam (29°03'45"S 026°12'32"E Altitude 1405m) (Fig.) with water reservoir and trough (Fig.) are located on top of the rocky outcrop directly east of the dam wall in the non-perennial spruit.

A row of stone-walled outbuildings varying from single to tree roomed cottages are found along the ridge running east from the dam wall. The buildings are located at the following GPS co-ordinates:

1. 29°03'45"S 026°12'34"E Altitude 1399m) (Fig.)
2. 29°03'46"S 026°12'35"E Altitude 1400m) (Fig.)
3. 29°03'47"S 026°12'37"E Altitude 1401m) (Fig.)
4. 29°03'50"S 026°12'33"E Altitude 1405m) Two roomed house with fence and outbuildings that could have been a pigsty or chicken run (Fig.).
5. 29°03'50"S 026°12'38"E Altitude 1405m) Three roomed house with stone walls (Fig.)

Several solidly stone-built walls in the veld, are the remains of either gate posts or corner anchor supports for barbed wire fences (29°03'48"S 026°12'36"E Altitude 1405m) and (29°03'50"S 026°12'43"E Altitude 1412m) (Fig.) with stone wall nearby (29°03'49"S 026°12'28"E Altitude 1395m) (Fig.).

Three very modest stone covered graves were found at 29°03'44"S 026°12'48"E Altitude 1406m. A loose headstone inscribed in Afrikaans is found on one of the graves (Fig.). The other two graves do not have any inscriptions or information concerning the people buried there.

Henderson (2004) recorded a graveyard containing about 190 graves on the adjacent piece of land (subdivision 7 of the remainder and portion 25) and bordering on to Bloemendal Road. It is interesting to note that the same surname of Clara Meyers (29°04'06"S 026°12'21"E Altitude 1412m), with an inscription in English (Born 21st July 1925, Died 3rd August 1951. Rest in Peace) appear on one of these latter graves. The head stone resembles the first one (Fig.).

An unfired .303 blank cartridge case with the head stamp reading R[↑]L C II was collected on the surface. According to the experts these rounds could have been used after the Anglo-Boer War, during the British occupation of Bloemfontein (JC Loock personal communication). (Bester 2003:276).

A small scatter of highly weathered Late Stone Age flakes was found near the south eastern beacon on a dolerite outcrop underneath the main power line (29°04'02"S 026°12'37"E Altitude 1410m) (Fig.)

No indication of other archaeological or historical material was found in the inspected area. The large midden on the adjacent piece of land is not found on the inspected property.

DISCUSSION

It was not clear if the three graves would fall inside or just outside the proposed area of development. It is recommended, however, that irrespective of what the case might be, these graves should be removed or fenced and protected in a dignified manner. There is a risk that if they should be left in situ, the graves could be destroyed during the road-building and/or installation of the sewerage system or water supply to the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendation by Henderson (2004) that appropriate consultation should be performed with the communities associated with the people buried there. Enquiries should also be made among the labourers who are still living in the area as to the possible origin of the graves.

It is recommended that the developers or their representatives should go into liaison with the developers of the area to the south of the main power line, in this case The Roodt Partnership. All the graves should be exhumed and reburied at the same time by a funeral undertaker with experience in this particular practice. It is also recommended that an archaeologist be appointed to verify the work.

Irrespective of what the fate of the graveyard might be, it is strongly recommended that either a management plan for the graveyard should be in place, or the exhumation of the graves should be completed BEFORE ANY development is allowed in the area. The management plan should also include a secure fence around the graves.

Every archaeological and historical site is unique and should be treated as a non-renewable commodity. All efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or destruction of the area. It is further recommended that an archaeologist from the National Museum should inspect the scatter of stone tools near the south western boundary beacon and that a sample should be collected and be kept at the museum.

It is stressed, therefore, that in case of the discovery of any stone tools, pottery and archaeological material of significance during the course of the work, all activities should temporarily be stopped in the specific area for inspection by the present archaeologist or other specialists from the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.

It is stressed that the outbuildings or labourer's houses and fence support walling have only be photographed. No further recording of these structures have been undertaken, as it seems unlikely that these structures are of such a high cultural and/or historical value to justify any further mitigation.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed development, and apart from the three grave no other structure will need any further mitigation.

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