



COBUS DREYER

Pr. Archaeologist/Heritage Specialist

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

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

20 July 2005

FIRST PHASE HERITAGE / ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS AT THE FARM WOLFKOP 2353, BLOEMFONTEIN

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed development at the farm Wolfkop 2353, Bloemfontein, was visited and inspected on 27 June 2005 in the company of Neil Devenish of 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).

LOCALITY

The farm Wolfkop 2353 lies to the south of Bloemfontein and is divided by the R48 main road to Petrusburg (Map 1). The area stretches over part of the hill near what used to be the Kloofeind railway siding (Map 2) (2926AA) (Surveyor-General O.F.S. 1973).

The lower part of the land is grass covered (Fig.1) but the slopes of the hill and ravines (kloofs) are tree and shrub covered (Figs.7-8). Some of the ravines contain sizeable clusters of unique specimens of large *Celtis africana* (White Stinkwood) and *Olea europaea africana* (Wild Olive) trees (Fig.9).

Almost every ravine produces a flow of seepage water.

The proposed residential developments are planned along the east-facing ridge (Map 2) (Fig.2).

The following GPS coordinates were taken (Cape scale):

South-western corner	29°08'22"S. 026°02'22"E. Altitude 1433m (Figs.1&2).
Stone-walled complex 1	29°08'08"S. 026°03'01"E. Altitude 1418m (Fig.4).
Stone-walled complex 2	29°08'16"S. 026°02'59"E. Altitude 1423m (Fig.5).
Stone-walled complex 3	29°08'17"S. 026°02'57"E. Altitude 1428m (Fig.6).
Indigenous bush	29°08'24"S. 026°02'51"E. Altitude 1425m.
Wooded kloof 1	29°08'22"S. 026°02'22"E. Altitude 1449m (Fig.13).
Gate in wire fence	29°08'33"S. 026°03'01"E. Altitude 1430m (Fig.6).
Picnic spot	29°08'56"S. 026°03'00"E. Altitude 1455m.
Wooded kloof 2	29°09'05"S. 026°03'35"E. Altitude 1433m.
Stone walled reservoir	29°08'20"S. 026°04'02"E. Altitude 1402m (Fig.14).
	29°08'22"S. 026°02'22"E. Altitude 1433m.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

A number of stone-walled complexes which could date from the Late Iron Age (1660-1810) were found against the north facing slope of the hill opposite Wolfkop (Figs.2-3). Ashy soil outcrops were visible in several places associated with the stone walls. Archaeological or cultural material in the form of potsherds and grinding stones, which are normally related with these settlements, could not be found during the site visit.

It is interesting to note that this stone-walled site is a new discovery and it could become the most southerly record of Late Iron Age occupational remains in the Free State (cf. Maggs 1976, Dreyer 1996).

DISCUSSION

Late Iron Age sites which are represented by the remains of stone-walls are abundant in the Free State. This time phase in our prehistory had been researched by Maggs (1976) and Dreyer (1990). For a more detailed description of the different settlement patterns please refer to the paper by Dreyer (1996).

It is generally accepted that these sites were occupied by the ancestors of the present day Basotho peoples of the Free State and Lesotho. Due to a lack of archaeological evidence, the general perception was that these tribes did not occupy the region south of the present day city of Bloemfontein during prehistoric times. The perception was that a borderline could run from Oskop and Osspruit near Glen in an easterly direction towards the Korannaberg west of Winburg and the Wittebergen near Rosendal and Ficksburg. The present discovery of the sites at Wolfkop could indeed indicate a wider distribution of early Basotho occupants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that the planning of residential units along the foot of the ridge should be placed in such a way that the archaeological remains could remain untouched.

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

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 stone-walled remains. It is stressed that in case of the discovery of any stone tools, pottery, human skeletal material and other archaeological or historical remains 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 National Museum in Bloemfontein.

I also recommend that the specific locality of the stone-walled remains should be pointed out to the developers by the archaeologist.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed development, mitigation measures are only needed in the case of the stone-walled remains with associated ash heaps. It is suggested that this areas should be left out of the planned residential developments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Niel Devenish for taking me to the site.

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.

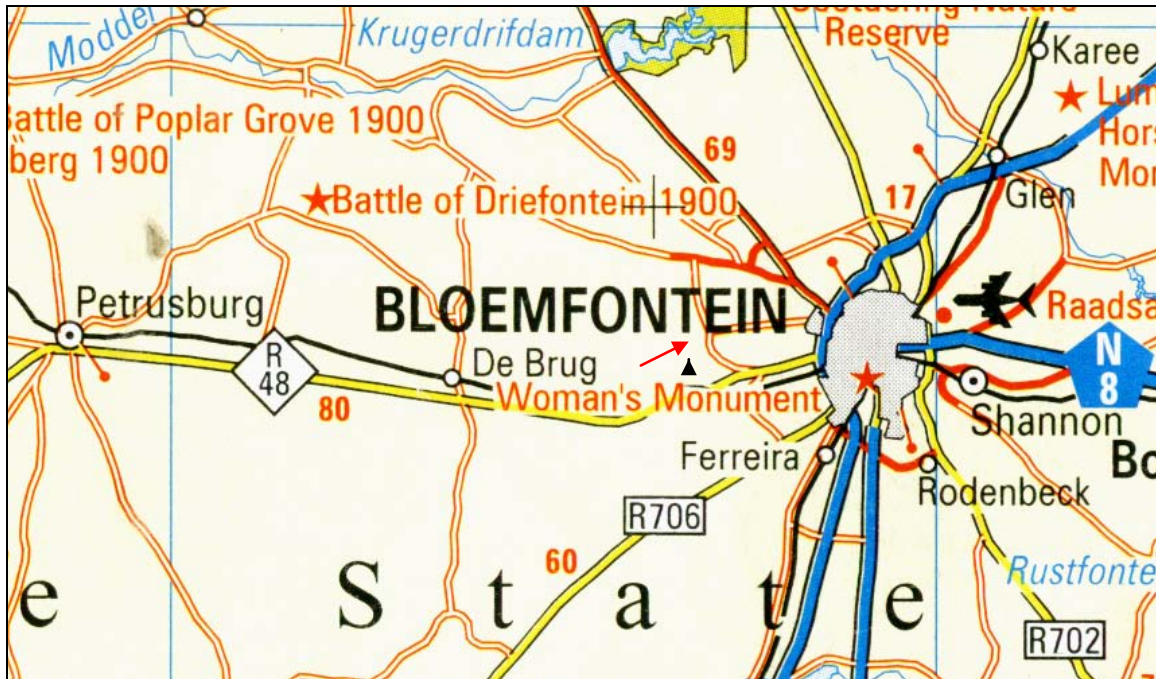
HUMPHREYS, A.J.B. 1986. Searching for the past. Cape Town: David Philip.

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

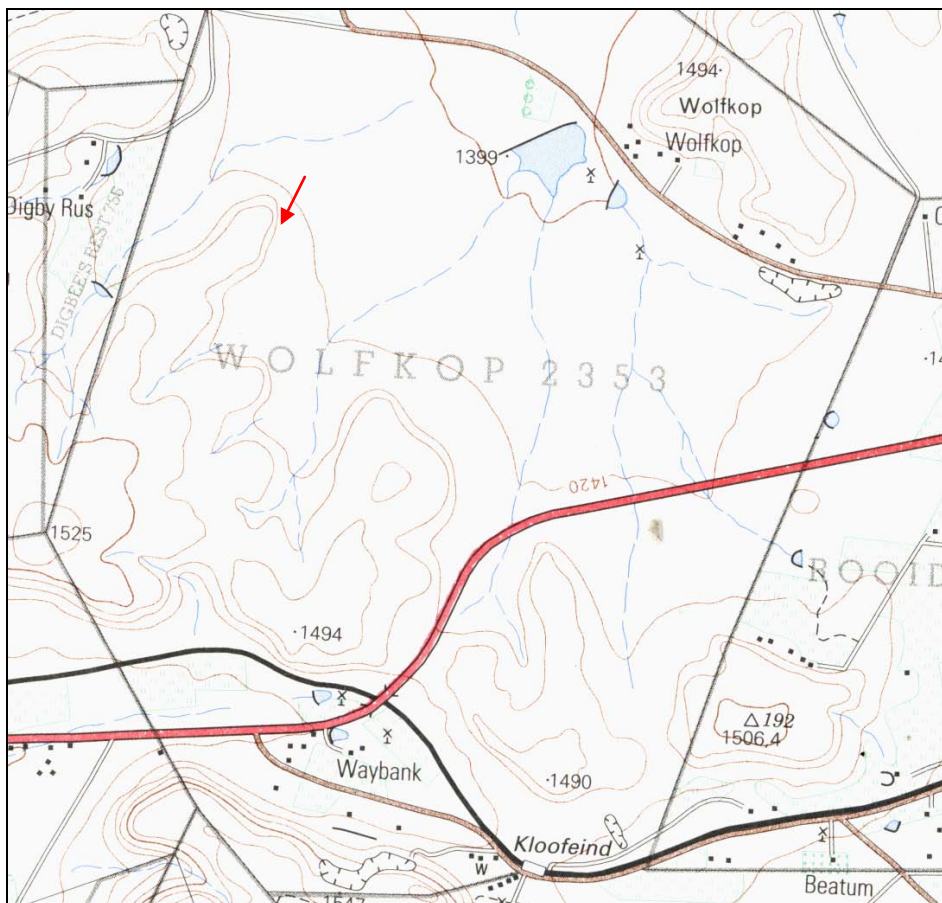
PISTORIUS, J.C.C. 1994. Eskom Archaeological Site Identification Guide. Johannesburg: Eskom.

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.



Map 1 The farm Wolfkop 2353, Bloemfontein, is located along the R48 to Petrusburg.



Map 2 Arrow indicates the approximate position of the Late Iron Age stone-walled site (2926AA).

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

Fig.1 A general view of the hill to the south of Wolfkop. The area contains a grass cover with trees and shrubs along the slopes and in the kloofs.



Fig.2 Locality of Late Iron Age stone-walled living units.

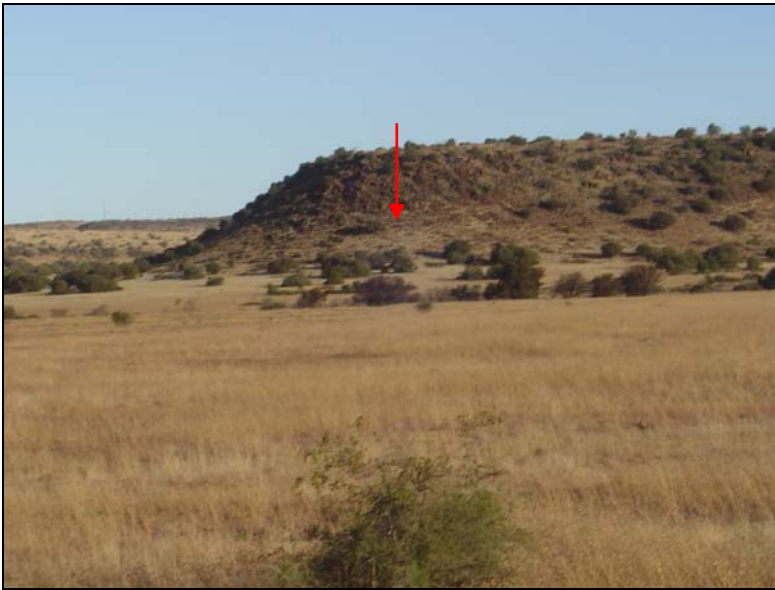


Fig.3 Locality of Late Iron Age stone-walled remains against the hill slope.



Fig.4 Stone-walled complex 1.



Fig.5 Stone-walled complex 2.



Fig.6 Stone-walled complex 3.



Fig.7 Stone-walled complex 3.



Fig.8 View in the south-western corner of the farm facing the hill.



Fig.9 View in south-western corner against game fence facing away from hill.



Fig.10 View from gate in fence facing towards Wolfkop.



Fig.11 Vegetation on the hill slopes.



Fig.12 Grass cover and vegetation in one of the kloofs.



Fig.13 Thick stand of White Stinkwood and Wild Olive trees.



Fig.14 Stone-walled water reservoir at entrance gate.