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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS ON A PORTION OF THE FARM BAYSWATER 2865, BLOEMFONTEIN

INVESTIGATION

The proposed area for residential developments on a portion of the farm Bayswater 2865, Bloemfontein, was visited and inspected on 12 October 2005. Dr Johan du Preez of MDA/Cebo Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, described the layout and borders of the specific land.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical remains 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 proposed residential developments are planned on a portion of the farm Bayswater 2865, Bloemfontein (Surveyor-General O.F.S. 1973). The land borders on the R700 main road and Berghof Estate to the west (Map 1) (2926AA).

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken:

Corner Northridge Mall & R700 (29°03'58"S 026°14'01"E Altitude 1420m)
(Figs.1&2).

Western hill (29°03'43"S 026°13'42"E Altitude 1426m) (Fig.3).

- Border fence (29°03'47"S 026°13'33"E Altitude 1407m).
- Fence (29°04'51"S 026°13'34"E Altitude 1403m) (Fig.4).
- East-west fence (29°03'55"S 026°13'32"E Altitude 1404m) (Fig.6).
- MTN cellular phone mast (29°04'12"S 026°13'54"E Altitude 1429m) (Fig.9).

The land is grass covered with short shrubs. There is a remarkable habitat in the hilly area near the road (29°03'55"S 026°13'58"E Altitude 1422m) (Fig.3). It is possible that this specific type of vegetation could be of unique and should be investigated by a botanist.

The area is also characterised by scattered dolerite outcrops (Fig.5).

A little stream runs in the kloof (Fig.8), but is unfortunate that sewerage water from the residential area is channelled into the stream.

FINDS

The site was surveyed on foot and cultural material, building remains and other features were plotted by GPS and recorded on camera. I list the finds below.

A substantial variety of Anglo-Boer War remains were discovered during previous environmental impact assessments at Lilyvale, Rayton and Boven Tempe in the region (Dreyer 2004a-d, Henderson 2004). These relics range from cartridge shells, beef and milk cans to stone structures. These remains represent extensive military activities during and after the Anglo-Boer War.

In this case, the site at Bayswater 2865 is no exception. A lid of a beef can with the characteristic heavy soldering of specimens from the Anglo-Boer War was found on the surface (Fig.7). A ,303 cartridge case with K28 VII markings on the head stamp (Kynoch, Birmingham Mark VII), dating from 1928 was found. Although the date falls in the period after the Anglo-Boer War, the locality is very near to the other sites and corresponds with the finds from the region.

DISCUSSION

An elaborate collection of finds of British military origin was discovered in the vicinity. These finds indicate that this whole area outside Bloemfontein had largely been exploited during previous martial activities. The role of this area to the north of Bloemfontein during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) is not clear,

but it remains tempting to argue that it could all link up to the Tempe military base nearby.

It is known that Tempe was established during the War as a military base for the British garrison and was developed into an important supply post for the British occupational forces during the period 1902 to 1914. This remained the case until the majority of the British troops had been withdrawn from South Africa at the outbreak of WWI in 1914.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Judging from the variety of finds on the surface in the region it is accepted that a considerable amount of Anglo-Boer War and other historical material could be discovered during trenching and building activities at the site.

It is therefore, important to keep in mind that 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 features or the environment.

It is important to note that in the case of the discovery of any historical remnants of Anglo-Boer War origin or archaeological finds in the form of stone tools, pottery and other archaeological material of significance during the course of the work, all activities should temporarily be stopped for inspection by the present archaeologist and other specialists from the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.

After examination and discussion by the archaeologist, it seems that no obvious reasons could be found to delay the proposed developments in the area, or to postpone the commencement and planning of the work.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed developments, no mitigation measures are needed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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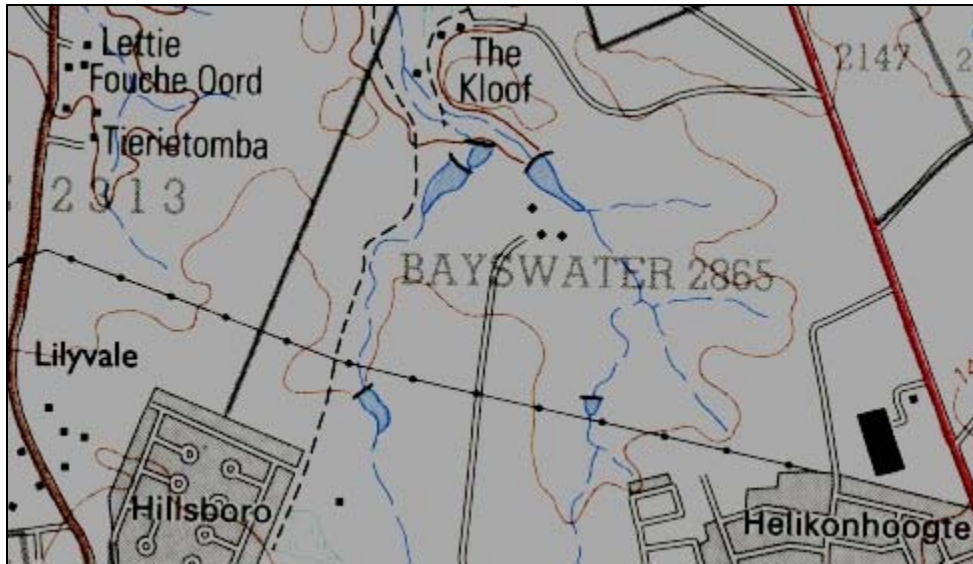
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

Map 1 Locality of Bayswater 2865 adjacent to the R700 (2926AA).



Fig.1 The south eastern corner of the property between Northridge Mall business complex and the R700 main road facing north west.



Fig.2 The same locality facing west away from the R700.



Fig.3 The vegetation on the hill along the R700 road is different.



Fig.4 A view down the hill stone towards the N1.



Fig.5 One of several dolerite outcrops on the site.



Fig.6 View down the slope towards the stream in the kloof.



Fig.7 A lid of a beef tin. The heavy soldering indicates its origin from rations issued during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902).



Fig.8 The stream bed in the kloof. It is unfortunate that sewerage water from the residential area is channelled into the stream.



Fig.9 A view towards the Northridge Mall shopping centre, showing the MTN cellular phone mast.