



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

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL AREA AT BOSHOF, FREE STATE

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed residential development at Boshof, Free State, was visited and inspected on 15 October 2004. Geo Pollution Technologies Free State, Bloemfontein, directed me to the site. Mr AC (Braam) Wessels (082 430 4537) of the Boshof Municipality gave information on the locality of the 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 proposed residential development is located on the town lands to the south west of Boshof adjacent to the R64 main road to Kimberley. The proposed developments are planned on a level area with sandy soil and numerous outcrops of white calcrete. The surface is grass covered with a sparsely scatter of Mesquite (*Prosopis* sp.), Soetdoring (*Acacia karroo*) and Cypres Trees.

Various trenches possibly for the placing of water pipelines bisect the land.

The following GPS readings were taken:

28°32'41"S. 025°13'40"E Altitude 1253m western corner along the road.

28°32'36"S. 025°13'55"E Altitude 1257m northern corner along the road and adjacent to town near the water reservoir.

28°32'47"S. 025°14'00"E Altitude 1257m eastern corner.

28°32'51"S. 025°13'47"E Altitude 1249m south eastern corner.

The specific dimensions of the area planned for development could not be clearly indicated.

FINDS

The inspected area of the proposed developments at Boshof produced a number of tin can remains with typical coarse soldering dating from the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). (Fig.).

Several scatters of highly weathered stone flakes showed characteristics of the Late Stone Age (LSA) were noticed on the surface (Fig.).

A bare patch soft sandy soil with mongoose burrows which resembles an ash heap but containing only a couple of bones and a single mandible from an antelope or sheep or goat (28°32'43"S. 025°13'54"E. Altitude 1257m).

A concrete structure near the remains of a pump house was made by welding 200 litre oil drums together and then filling them with concrete (28°32'42"S. 025°13'51"E. Altitude 1257m) carried the inscription of a date of 11/2/1982 together with the letter K (Fig.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

It could not be ascertained if the area had indeed been part of any British activities or the remains of a refugee camp during the War.

The purpose and significance and historical value of the structures near the pump house could not be found.

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

After examination by the archaeologist, it is recommended that the proposed developments 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 area. 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 author or an archaeologist from the National Museum, Bloemfontein.

MITIGATION

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

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