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## **FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED NEW CEMETERY, AT MAJWEMASWEU NEAR BRANDFORT, FREE STATE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A new cemetery is planned at Majwemasweu near Brandfort, Free State. The site is located to the south west of town. Access will be from the R703 gravel road to Theunissen.

No archaeological, cultural or historical remains were found in the proposed area of development.

An old ash heap that could date from a period between the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century is located to the east of the proposed piece of land. The ash heap will not be affected by the present project.

I recommend that the proposed developments and planning of the site may proceed. For practical reasons it could be advisable to avoid and preserve the ash heap during the present project and any future developments.

### **INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION**

#### **INVESTIGATION**

The site for the proposed new cemetery at Majwemasweu near Brandfort was visited on 16 April 2008. Manie van Wyk from Spatial Solutions Incorporated Consultants, Bloemfontein, took me to the site.

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 new cemetery will be located to the north of Brandfort and opposite the existing township of Majwemaswue along the R703 gravel road from Brandfort to Theunissen (Map 1).

The area consists of old plough lands which shows a short grass cover at present (Fig.3).

The proposed cemetery will cover an area of about 200mx300m.

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (2826CB) (Surveyor-General 1973). Coordinate points were selected at random on the outskirts of the proposed piece of land.

A	28°41'06"S. 026°27'05"E Altitude 1406m (Figs.1&2).
B	28°41'12"S. 026°27'07"E Altitude 1407m (Fig.3).
C	28°41'16"S. 026°26'57"E Altitude 1405m (Figs.4&5).
Ash Heap	28°41'15"S. 026°27'04"E Altitude 1409m (Fig.6).

## RESULTS

### FINDS

No indication of any archaeological or cultural material was found in the proposed area.

The remains of an old ash heap were discovered on the outskirts of the area of development (Fig.6). The midden contains animal bones, and pieces of glass and porcelain, which appear to be old (Fig.7).

A single piece of porcelain could be the remains of a sponge ware bowl originally imported from Staffordshire, England (Figs.7&8). Household ware of this kind had been very popular and in general use before the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) (Trehaven 1996).

A glass fragment, which resembles the bottom part of a marble stopper mineral water bottle, carries a clear "BRANDFORT" inscription (Fig.7&9). This fragment resembles a similar mineral water bottle in the author's private collection (Fig.9).

Reference books indicate records of at least three aerated mineral water manufacturers at Brandfort between 1903 and 1907. These dates only give a relative indication of time, and the firms may have been in production before or well after the Anglo-Boer War (Lastovica 1982:91-2).

An undamaged round glass inkbottle was found on the surface (Fig.10). This object could not be dated, but the refined lip could point to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lastovica 1982:54-5).

Part of a bulk ink dispenser was also found on the surface (Fig.7). This glazed stoneware container displays the following stamped inscription (Fig.12):

LOVATT & LOVATT  
NOTTS  
LANDLEY MILL

The stamp perfectly matches a similar ink container in the collection of the author (Fig.11).

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The proposed cemetery at Brandfort will have no major impact on any archaeological or cultural heritage remains at the site.

## **DISCUSSION**

The origin and age of the ash heap could not be ascertained from official records. Vague information is obtained from an investigation of the limited finds recovered from the surface. These particulars indicate that the household debris could date from late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are no obvious reasons to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the site.

I recommend that the planning of the proposed cemetery should proceed.

## **MITIGATION**

For mere practical reasons it could be wise to avoid the ash heap in the planning of the final layout of the cemetery.

I also recommend that the ash heap should be avoided and preserved in any future developments in this area.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank Manie van Wyk from Spatial Solutions Incorporated Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, for taking me to the site.

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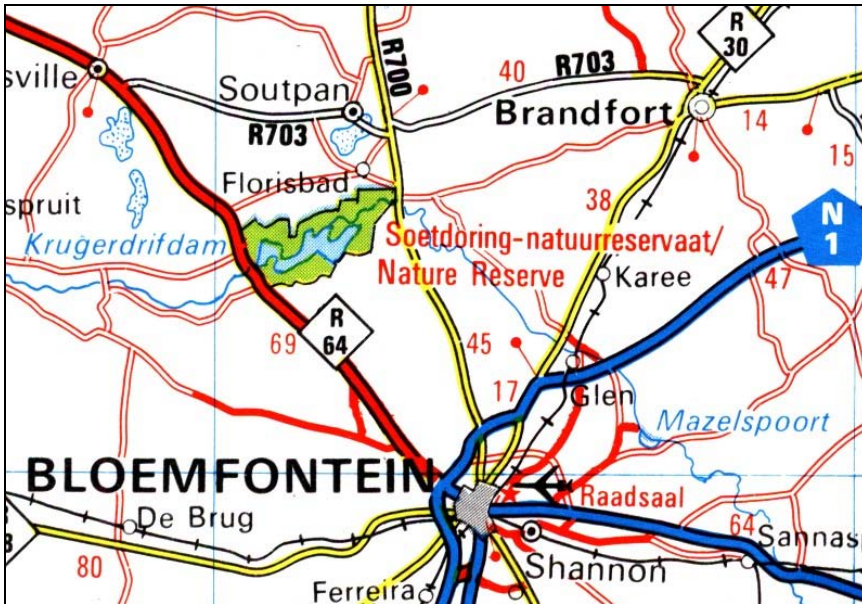
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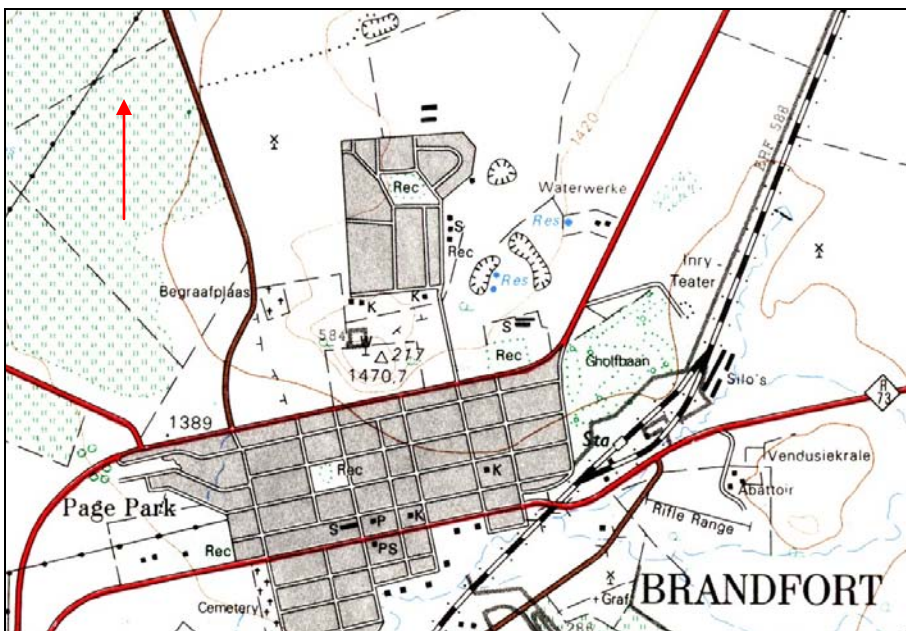
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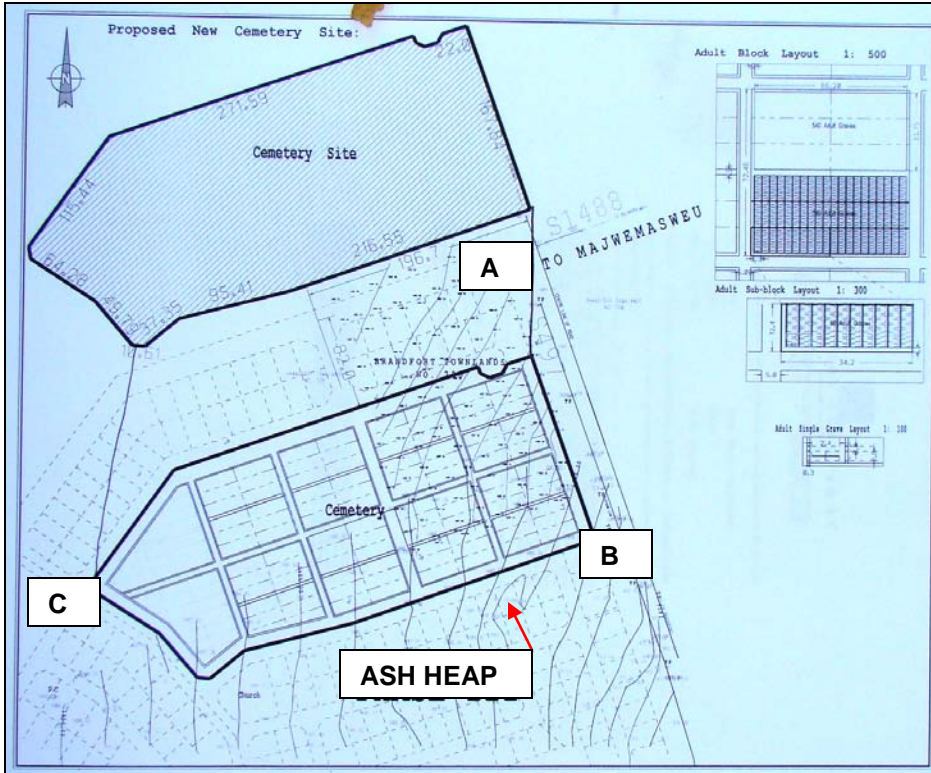
### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Map 1 Locality of Brandfort in relation to Bloemfontein, Glen and Dealesville.



Map 2 Locality of the proposed cemetery development at Brandfort (2826CB).



Map 3 Layout of the proposed cemetery at Brandfort.



Fig.1 Point A facing east along the S1488 road towards Majwemaswue.





Fig.2 Point A facing south.



Fig.3 Point B facing south.





Fig.4 Point C facing north.



Fig.5 Point C facing east towards Brandfort.



Fig.6 The ash heap on the outskirts of the new cemetery.



Fig.7 Glass, porcelain and stoneware objects collected on the ash heap.  
Note the piece of a Willow Pattern plate (top centre) and a piece of sponge ware (top right). (Pocket knife = 83mm).



Fig.8 Sponge ware bowl from before the Anglo-Boer War (J. Dreyer Private Collection).



Fig.9 Glass fragment compared with a marble stopper mineral water bottle. (J. Dreyer Private collection) (Pocket knife = 83 mm).





Fig.10 An undamaged round glass inkbottle. (Pocket knife = 83 mm).



Fig.11 Part of a bulk ink dispenser of glazed stoneware matches a similar container in the collection of the author. (Pocket knife = 83 mm).



Fig.12 The stamped inscription Lovatt & Lovatt Notts Landley Mill, perfectly matches a similar container in the collection of the author.