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FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENTS AT FICKSBURG, FREE STATE

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed housing developments at Ficksburg was visited and inspected on 17 May 2005. Mr Piet de Bie of Phethogo Consulting, Bloemfontein, supplied information and directed me to the site.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural remains 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 area is an extension of the Meqheleng township at Ficksburg. The land lies south of the town near the R26 road to Clocolan and Ladybrand. The proposed developments will be adjacent to the existing township. There is a dense grass cover on the surface on part of the area sloping down towards the vlei.

The specific locality of the area is indicated on a map received from the consultant (Map 1).

The following GPS (Cape) coordinates were taken:

Highest point near the existing township (28°53'47"S. 027°52'02"E. Altitude 1623m) (Fig.1).

Lowest point near the river (28°53'44"S. 027°51'37"E. Altitude 1575m) (Fig.2).

FINDS

The area earmarked for developments at Ficksburg is disturbed by the township activities nearby and is confirmed by soil heaps and holes where soil has been removed (Fig.3). There is a scatter of domestic rubbish on the surface and footpaths bisect the veld. The investigation produced no remains of early human occupation and no cultural material could be found.

No indication of any archaeological or historical material was found, neither was any stone tools or ceramic ware found.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that the work should continue as no obvious reasons could be found to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the site.

MITIGATION

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Mr Piet de Bie for involving me in the project.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Map 1 Map of Ficksburg showing the proposed developments south of the Clocolan road.



Fig.1 General view of the proposed area for development.



Fig.2 General view of the proposed area at the lowest point.



Fig.3 Soil disturbances near the existing township.