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FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS ON THE FARM MIDDENIN 333, FOURIESBURG

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed residential developments at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg, are planned as seven clusters of houses spread out over various parts of the farm.

Archaeological remains occur in the form of circular stone-walled enclosures with associated ash heaps of early Basotho settlements during the Later Iron Age which date between mid 17th century to early 19th century.

In the case of the Later Iron Age site, I recommend that these structures should not be disturbed or destroyed and that the proposed developments should be planned elsewhere on the farm.

Rectangular stone-walled kraals and a stock dip chiselled into a sandstone deposit are clearly of European origin, but this specific occurrence falls outside the planned developments.

I propose that the planning of the site should proceed in close association with the archaeologist, in case of the discovery of other finds of cultural historical importance.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

The sites for the proposed residential developments at the farm Middenin 333, Fouriesburg, was visited on 8 September 2005 and again on 12 October 2005 in the company of Dr Johan du Preez of MDA Environmental Consultants,

Bloemfontein and several other experts. At the farm, we were met by the landowner, Mr Jan Roos and his son Nelis.

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 developments are planned on the farm Middenin 333, in the district of Fouriesburg, Free State, near the Lesotho border (Map 1).

The farm can be reached from the R711 main road from Fouriesburg to Clarens and by following the S325 secondary road (Map 1).

The vegetation of the area is described as cool moist afro-mountain grassland.

The land lies to the south east of the town of Fouriesburg (Map 2) (Surveyor-General 1973).

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (2828CB 1987):

Farm house	28°35'09"S 028°19'19"E Altitude 1664m (Fig.1).
Zone A Stone wall	28°35'07"S 028°18'42"E Altitude 1803m (Fig.2).
Stone wall	28°35'06"S 028°18'47"E Altitude 1797m (Fig.3).
Stone wall	28°35'08"S 052°18'57"E Altitude 1789m (Fig.4).
Stone wall	28°35'12"S 028°18'40"E Altitude 1793m (Fig.5).
Stone wall	28°35'15"S 028°18'41"E Altitude 1788m (Fig.6).
Stone wall	28°35'16"S 028°18'41"E Altitude 1786m.
Zone B	28°35'06"S 028°19'10"E Altitude 1676m (Figs.7-8).
Zone C	28°35'01"S 028°19'10"E Altitude 1663m (Figs.9-10).
Zone D	28°35'07"S 028°19'33"E Altitude 1659m (Figs.11-12).

	28°35'11"S 028°19'40"E Altitude 1656m (Fig.13).
Zone E	28°35'21"S 028°19'21"E Altitude 1680m (Fig.14).
Zone F	28°35'31"S 028°20'21"E Altitude 1701m (Figs.15-16).
Zone G (near graveyard)	28°35'31"S 028°20'21"E Altitude 1701m (Figs.17-18).
Spring	28°35'22"S 028°19'05"E Altitude 1724m (Figs.19-21).
Stock Dip	28°35'19"S 028°19'08"E Altitude 1718m (Figs.22-24).

RESULTS

Cultural finds relate to Later Iron Age stone-walled settlements and ash heaps containing cultural material at Zone A.

No further indications of any other archaeological or historical material were found.

FINDS

1. LATER IRON AGE STONE-WALLED ENCLOSURES

A cluster of Later Iron Age stone-walled stock enclosures was found in Zone A on a west facing slope of the mountain (Map 2).

A thick stand of tall grass limited the visibility but at least two ash heaps, which contained potsherds and bone flakes were found (Fig. 2).

According to comparative radiocarbon dating the features date from mid 17th century to early 19th century (Maggs 1976, Dreyer 1992).

2. STONE- WALL ON CLIFF

A very neatly built stone-wall occur some way up the slope of the hill (Fig.4). The purpose and origin of the wall is unknown, but I speculate that the wall acted to close off the stock path along the sandstone outcrop.

3. GRAVEYARD

A graveyard near the farmhouse contains about ten graves. Some of the graves date from the Anglo-Boer War, but according to the inscriptions, others are even older. The readable inscriptions on the graves were recorded:

Baba de Bruyn	* & †21/10/1908
ABR Steyn	*1897 †1899
MM Steyn	*17/10/1893 †1895
Baba Steyn	* & †1895
Moeder Elsie MJ Steyn (Gebore Venter)	*21/11/1858 †18/5/1901
Abe Steyn	*25/4/1876 †22/9/1895

ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

The impact on the cultural heritage remains of the proposed developments at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg, will only be significant in at Zone A.

The proposed development at Zone G near the graveyard should avoid any disturbance or damage of the graves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that proposed developments at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg, should proceed.

I also suggest that the planning should be adapted to take the proposed developments away from Zone A. The necessary arrangements to preserve and protect the stone-wall site as an historical feature should also be made.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed developments, mitigation measures will be required in the case of the stone-walled site in Zone A.

Developments in Zone G should not damage or disturb the graves.

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

After examination by the archaeologist, I recommend that the proposed developments may proceed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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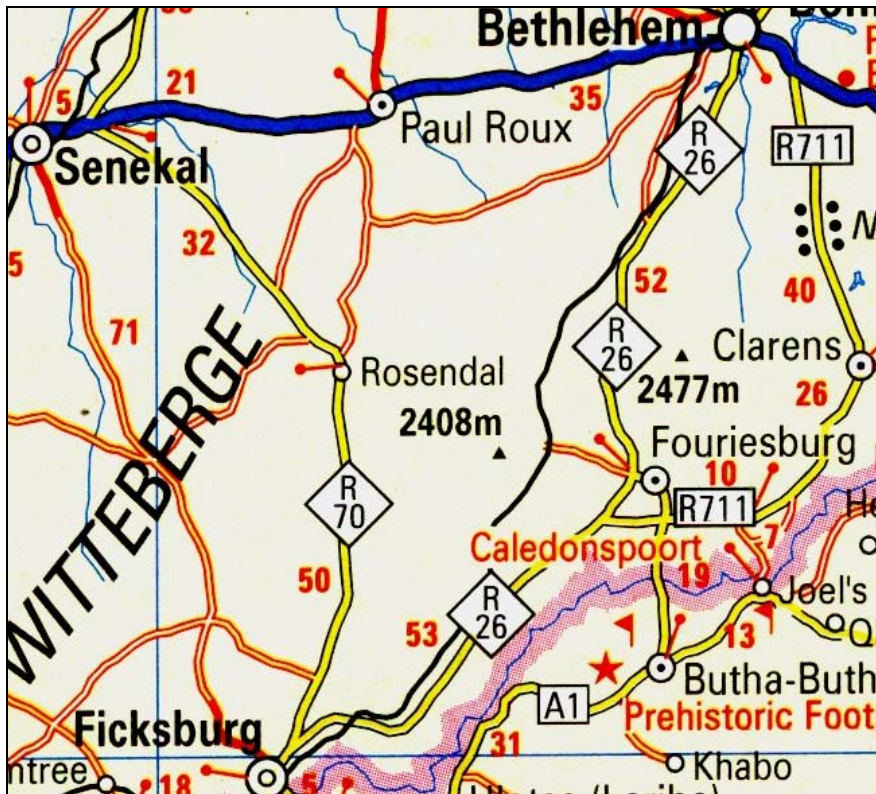
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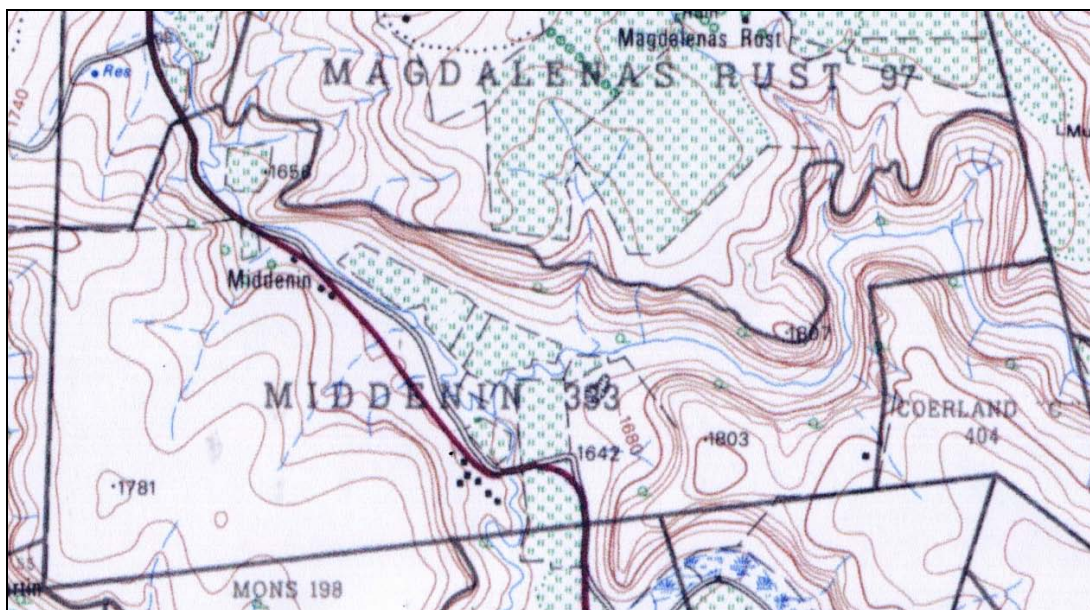
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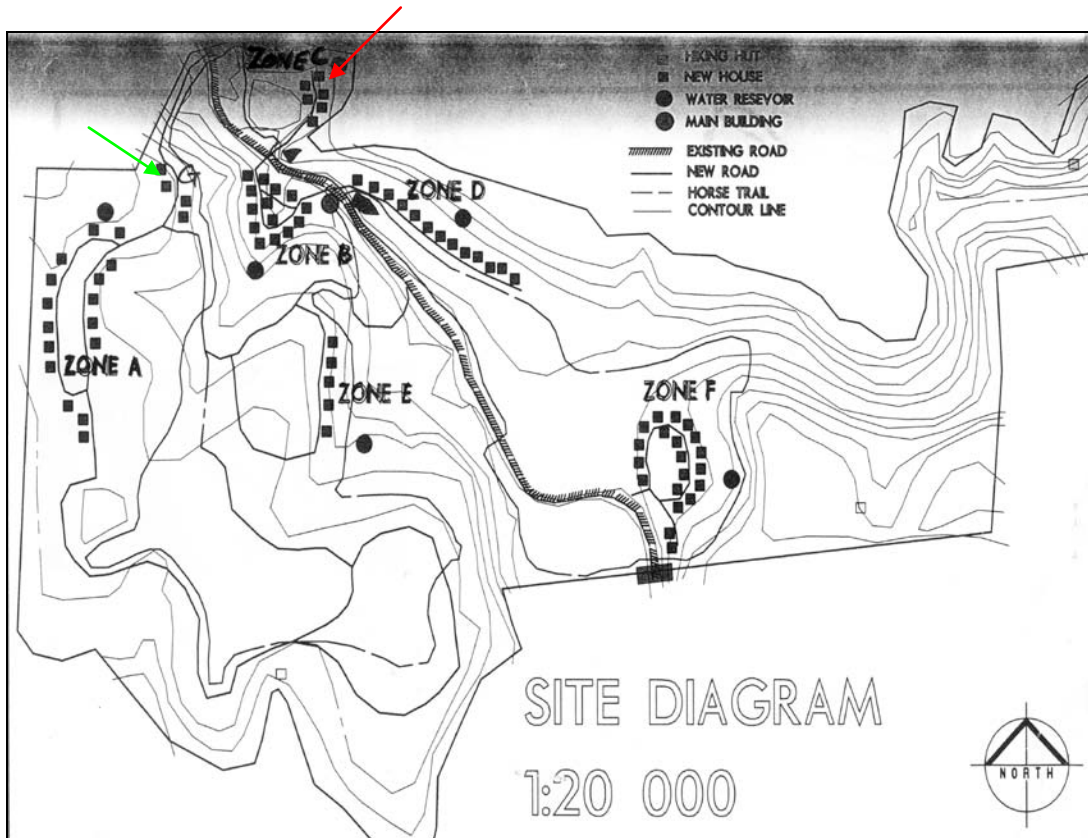
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Map 1 Locality of Fouriesburg in relation to other towns along the Lesotho border.



Map 2 The locality of Middenin 333 in relation to the neighbouring farms (2828CB 1987).



Map 3 Locality of the different zones of development on the farm Middenin 333, Fouriesburg. Red arrow = Zone C; Green arrow = Zone G.



Fig.1 The stately farm house at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.2 Stone-walling at Zone A, Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.3 An ash heap at Zone A, Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.4 Stone-walling at Zone A, Middenin 333.



Fig.5 Stone-walled enclosures are indicated by the vegetation growing in the walls.



Fig.6 Stone-walling at Zone A, Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.7 General view of Zone B.



Fig.8 Rock shelter near Zone B.



Fig.9 A general view of Zone C.



Fig.10 Closer view of Zone C.



Fig.11 A view of Zone D.



Fig.12 A closer look at Zone D.



Fig.13 Another angle at Zone D.



Fig.14 A view at Zone E.



Fig.15 A view across Zone F facing south.



Fig.16 Another view of Zone F.



Fig.17 Zone G is located near the graveyard.



Fig.18 Close look at Zone G.



Fig.19 Flow from the fresh water spring.



Fig.20 Harnessing of the water from the spring.



Fig.21 Water is piped own from the spring to the farmyard.



Fig.22 Stone-walled kraal at the stock dip on the plateau above the farm stead.



Fig.23 The stock dip was chiselled into the sandstone deposit.



Fig.24 Detail of the dressed stone building technique at the stock dip.



Fig.25 Gravestone near Zone G at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.26 Another gravestone near Zone G at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.27 Traditional Basotho settlements along the road at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.



Fig.28 Traditional Basotho settlements at Middenin 333, Fouriesburg.