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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS AT PHILIPPOLIS, FREE STATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residential developments are planned at Philippolis, Free State. The areas of development lie adjacent to the existing townships of Poding-Tse-Rolo and Bergmanshoogte. The surroundings are clearly disturbed by previous domestic activities of the people and live stock from the township.

Archaeological and cultural remains were found in the form of Later Stone Age flakes. I consider the stone tools in the dongas as an isolated and disturbed occurrence with low cultural significance at the specific locality.

A variety of rifle bullets and a few cartridge cases were found on the surface in the same vicinity. The bullets date from pre-Anglo-Boer War up to quite recent times. The small damage to the bullets designate that they have been fired from a long distance. It is possible that people could have fired the bullets from the centre of town towards the mountain range during practice or merely for fun.

The finds seem to be of minor significance and I recommend that the proposed developments and planning of the site may proceed.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

The sites for the proposed residential developments at Philippolis were visited on 5 February 2007. Mr Piet de Bie from Phethogo Consultants, Bloemfontein, gave directions 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 residential developments are planned to the east of Philippolis near the existing township of Poding-Tse-Rolo and at another site near Bergmanshoogte along the R717 to south of Philippolis (Map 2).

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (Surveyor-General 1973):

PODING-TSE-ROLO

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| A | 30°15'55"S. 025°17'08"E Altitude 1378m (Fig.1). |
| B | 30°16'05"S. 025°17'04"E Altitude 1378m (Fig.2). |
| C | 30°16'05"S. 025°17'11"E Altitude 1380m (Fig.3). |
| RIFLE RANGE | 30°16'14"S. 025°17'04"E Altitude 1376m (Fig.4). |

BERGMANSHOOGTE

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | 30°16'32"S. 025°16'44"E Altitude 1363m (Fig.5). |
| B | 30°16'21"S. 025°16'38"E Altitude 1369m (Fig.6). |

RESULTS

A small collection of Later Stone Age flakes (Figs.7&8) occurred in the dongas near Poding-Tse-Rolo. Points have convergent edges and single or multiple flaking on the dorsal side. Duckbill scrapers show secondary retouch. Percussion bulbs are clearly recognisable in most cases. Prepared platforms are narrow and bent and are either faceted or plain. Through the application of standard tool typology and basic characteristics, the material could arbitrarily be classified as Later Stone Age. The assemblage seems to originate from the area but appears to be an insignificant occurrence.

A variety of rifle bullets (Figs.9-10) and a number of cartridge cases (Fig.11) were found on the surface in the dongas and at the rifle range to the south. Some of the bullets date from pre-Anglo-Boer War (Musket no. 1) up to quite recent times (7,62&,223). The small damage to the bullets (Fig.9) designate that they have been fired from a long distance. It is possible that people in gone by days could have fired the bullets from the centre of town towards the mountain range during practice or merely for fun.

The area near Bergmanshoogte is heavily disturbed by the people from the township and produced no cultural material.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

I consider the stone tools as an occurrence with low cultural significance at the specific locality.

The rifle bullets are very interesting but appear out of context without any other cultural material or specific event.

The proposed residential developments at Philippolis will have a minor impact on the small archaeological and historical collections. No other cultural relics or historical remains were found at the site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no obvious reasons to delay the commencement and further planning and development of the site. I recommend that the proposed residential developments at Philippolis should proceed.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed developments, no mitigation measures will be required.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Mr Piet de Bie of Phethogo Consulting, Bloemfontein, for involving me in the project. I also owe gratitude to Johan Loock for the identification of the bullets.

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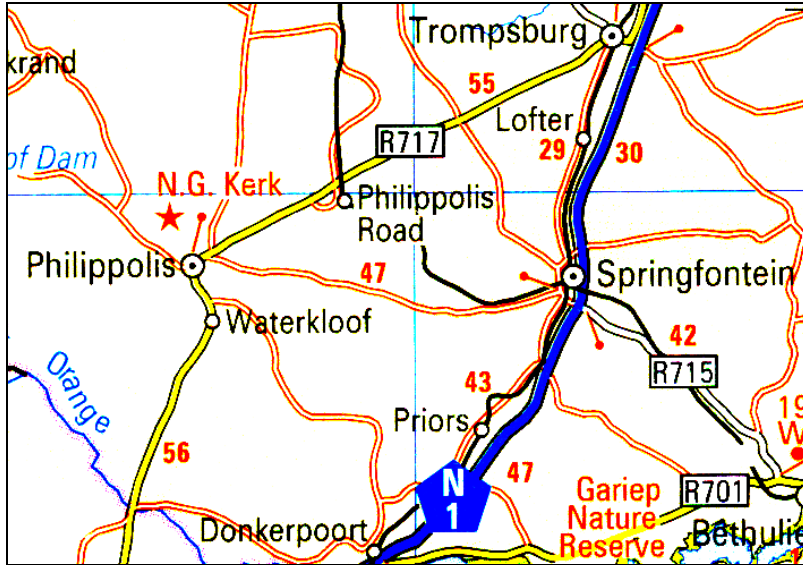
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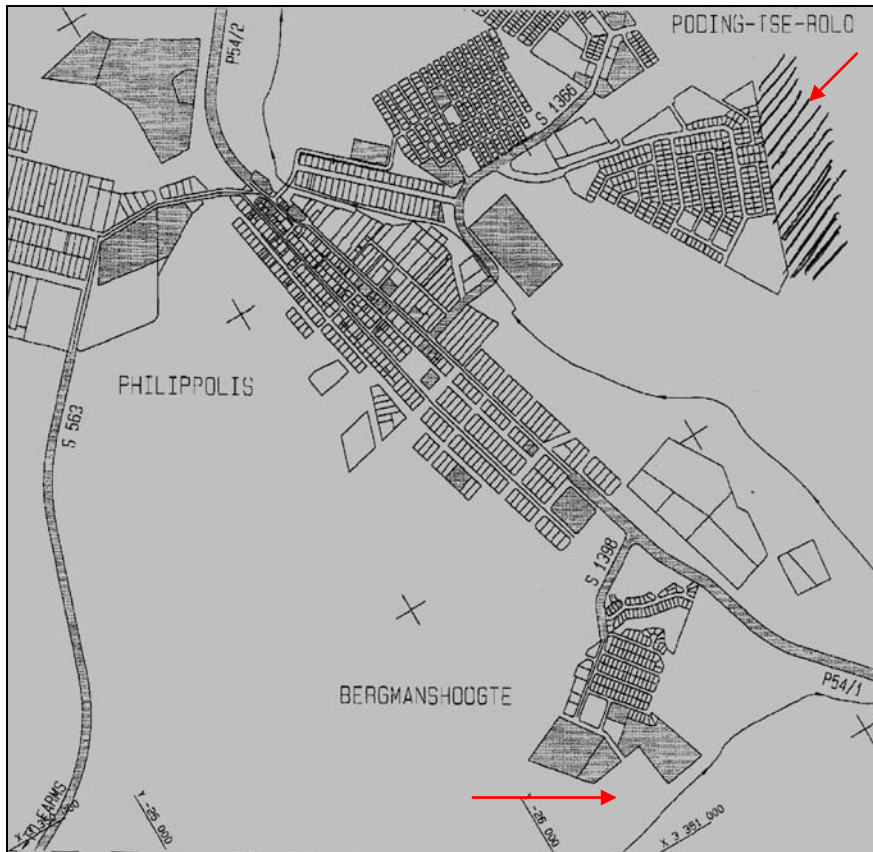
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Map 1 Philippolis in relation to Trompsburg, Bethulie and the N1 main road.



Map 2 Placing of the residential developments at Philippolis.



Fig.1 View across the proposed site of development at Poding-Tse-Rolo.



Fig.2 View of the site at Poding-Tse-Rolo facing south.



Fig.3 Facing from Poding-Tse-Rolo toward Bergmanshoogte.



Fig.4 View of the rifle range facing east.



Fig.5 View of the site at Bergmanshoogte from the R717 road to Colesberg.



Fig.6 View of the site at Bergmanshoogte facing south.



Fig.7 Later Stone Age scrapers and flakes from the dongas near Poding-Tse-Rolo.



Fig.8 Patinated Later Stone Age tools and flakes from the dongas near Poding-Tse-Rolo.



Fig.9 Bullets found in the dongas at Poding-Tse-Rolo. Top row from left: 577/450 Martini-Henry lead bullet and Musket No 1. Second row: ,303 Anglo-Boer War. Third row: ,303 Anglo-Boer War. Bullets 5&6 far right 6,5x55mm Krag Jörgensen, Anglo-Boer War



Fig.10 .303 bullets found in the dongas near Poding-Tse-Rolo.



Fig.11 Fired cartridge shells from the rifle range. From left 7,62 R1 rifle, 1970 & 1979, and ,223 1986 & 1988.