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31 July 2006

**FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED EXTENSION TO THE
LANDFILL SITE AT SENEKAL, FREE STATE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Extensions are planned to the existing landfill site near Senekal, Free State.

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

I recommend that the proposed developments and planning of the site may proceed.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

The area for the proposed extension to the landfill site near Senekal was visited on 14 June 2006. Dr Johan du Preez of MDA Environmental Consultants accompanied me to the site. At the site, Mr Leon van der Merwe from the local municipality accompanied us.

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 site is located to the east of Senekal along the entrance road to the industrial area (Fig.1) (Map 2) (Surveyor-General 1973) at a turn off from the N5 main road to Paul Roux and Bethlehem (Map 1).

The area around the existing landfill site consists of a natural grass cover, which had been used as communal grazing field for many years.

There are natural outcrops of sandstone at some places with a very shallow soil cover (Fig.4).

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken on the outskirts of the proposed site (2827BC):

East	28°19'25"S 027°38'41"E	Altitude 1450m (Fig.3).
West	28°19'19"S 027°38'32"E	Altitude 1463m (Fig.2).
South	28°19'24"S 027°38'30"E	Altitude 1464m (Fig.).

RESULTS

Although the cadastral map (2827BC) indicates a Voortrekker camping site to the west towards Senekal, no historical material was found in the region.

No indication of any other archaeological or historical material was found in the proposed development area.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed extension of the landfill site at Senekal will have no impact on any archaeological or cultural remains in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No obvious reasons could be found to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the site and I recommend that the proposed developments at Senekal should proceed.

MITIGATION

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

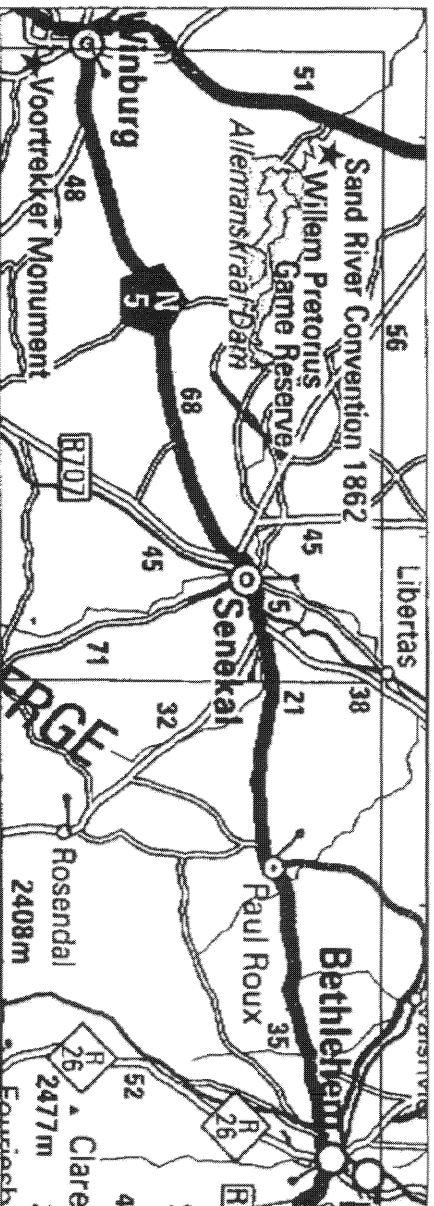
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Dr Johan du Preez from MDA Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, for taking me to the site.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Map 1 Locality of Senekal in relation to Winburg, Rosendal and Bethlehem.



Map 2 Locality of the proposed extensions for the existing landfill site at Ficksburg (2827/BC).

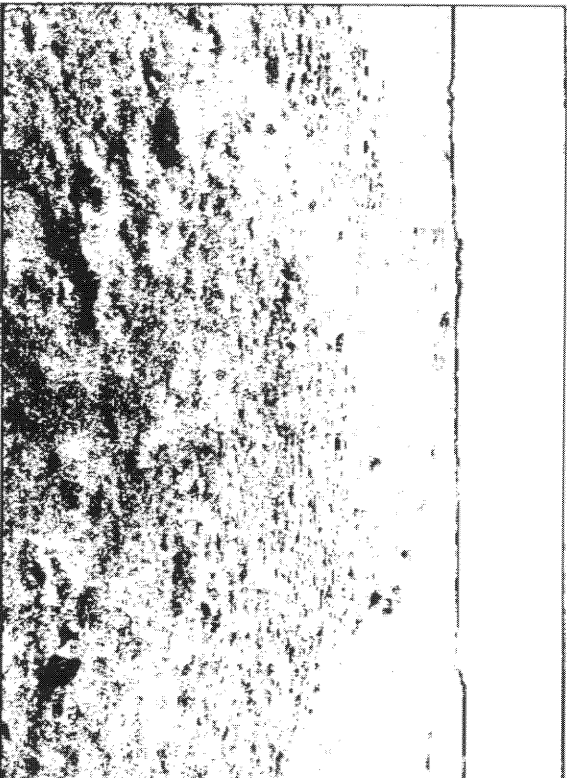


Fig. 1 View of the site along the entrance road to the industrial area.

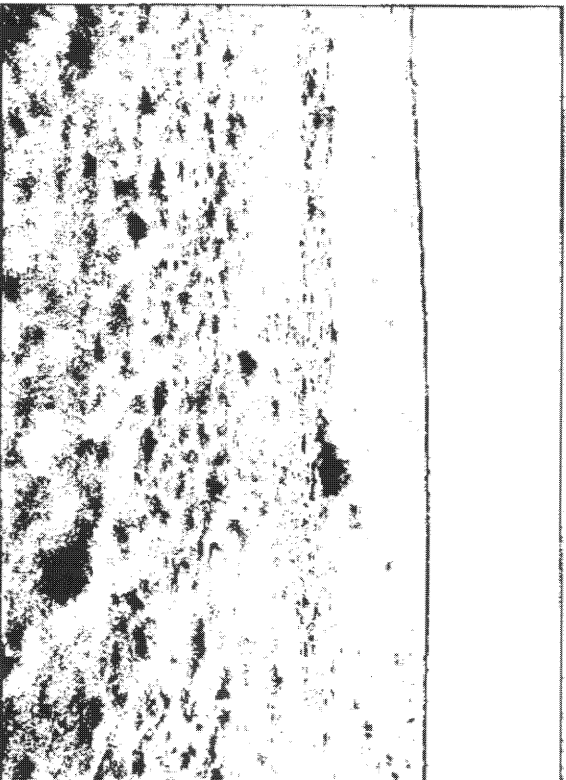


Fig. 2 View of the site facing west.

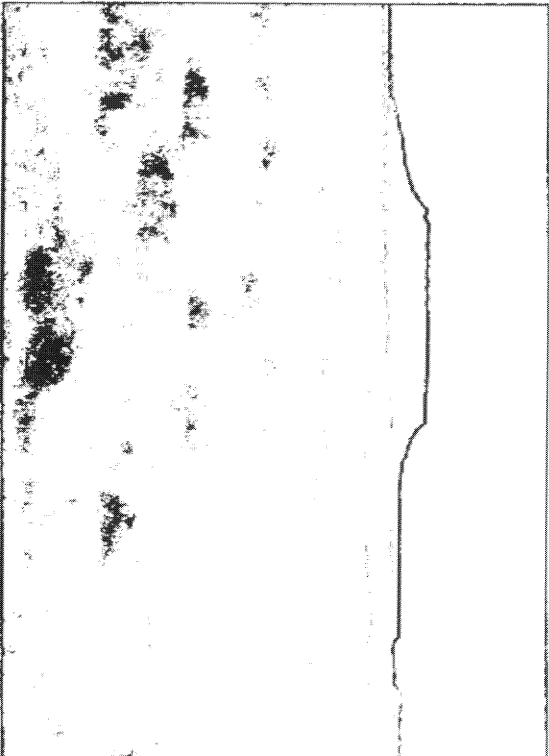
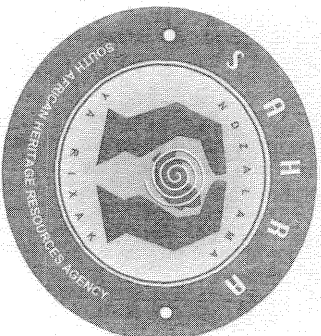


Fig.3 View of the site facing east. Guarniekop and Biddulphsberg in the centre.



Fig.4 A sandstone outcrop shows that the soil cover seems to be very shallow at places.



SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

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OUR REF: 9/2/336/1

YOUR REF:

ENQUIRIES:

DATE:

Vincent Khetha

08-12-2006

Mr Xolani Mhlongo
Lerato Botle Kinek cc
163 Fontein
FICKSBURG
9730

Dear Mr Mhlongo

AN ORDER TO STOP DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW DUMPING AREA WHICH IS CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE: SENEKAL, OLD DUMPING AREA

The visitation to the above-mentioned site by the Free State officials of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and consequent to our meeting with Mr Sibusiso Sithole (contractor) in Ficksburg on 08-12-2006 with regard the above-mentioned matter refers.

After having received a concern from a member of the public that there are fossilized trees (dated approximately 240 million years) which are being damaged and taken away from the site by unknown people, the provincial staff of the SAHRA visited the above-mentioned site. On our arrival to the site we confirmed and indeed witnessed that fossils were being excavated and a lot of them were found lying on the ground while development was continuing. Since it is evident that the development exceeds 5 000 square meters in extent in which the South African Heritage Resources Agency requires a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, it has been discovered that the said requirement of the law was completely ignored to the detriment of our heritage resources.

In view of the above we which to order you to halt (stop) the development which is taking place on the site with an immediate effect. We also require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report which Mr Sithole said it is available and was submitted to the relevant government department (Free State Department of Tourism, Environmental and Economic Affairs).

Having mentioned the above, we demand that an archeologist should be appointed at your own costs to evaluate the site and determine to what extend the damage has been caused on heritage resources available on the site. This archeologist should be introduced to the SAHRA before any inspection or evaluation of any sort could be done on the site. We expect this archeologist to also interact directly with the SAHRA archaeologist, **Mrs. Mary Leslie (Tel: 021 462-4502 or email: mleslie@sahra.org.za)**. The Free State Provincial office of the SAHRA will in the mean time report the matter and file a case with the local South African Police Services (SAPS) as it is required by the law, in terms of the Act.

Be also informed and warned at the same time that you have already done a great damage on the site which amounts to serious violation of the South African law which is punishable with a prison sentence. It is therefore imperative and to your best interest to abide by the instructions as stated in this letter and stop with any further developments on the site to avoid any further aggravation of the full might of the law. The National Museum will be visiting the site on a regular basis to assess the situation, while the SAHRA officials will pursue the matter further after consulting with its legal adviser on the this matter.

Please feel free to contact me for any further clarification on this matter at the following contact numbers: **082 318 5450 or 072 272 0959**.

I hope you will find the contents of this letter in order.

Yours sincerely



VINCENT SITHEMBISO KHETHA
PROVINCIAL MANAGER: FREE STATE

Copy to: Ms Grace Ramabina, Free State Department of Tourism, Environmental
and Economic Affairs