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

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed housing developments at Smithfield was visited and inspected on 20 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 specific locality of the land is indicated on a map received from the consultant (Map 1).

The proposed residential area is an extension of the Mofulatshepe township at Smithfield. The land lies south of the town between the existing township and the area stretching east from the R701 road to Bethulie (Fig.1). On the west the land is bordered by the entrance road to town, which bypasses the hospital (Figs.2&6).

The proposed developments consist of about 450 erven.

The whole area is heavily damaged and destroyed by soil erosion along the flow of the river and human activities by the inhabitants of the nearby township (Figs.3,4,7). The soil surface is broken by ditches and building rubble and carries a sparse cover of grass and shrubs (Fig.4).

The following GPS (Cape) coordinates were taken:

At the N6 road 30°13'43"S. 026°31'30"E. Altitude 1398m (Fig.1).

Corner at hospital (A154 on map) 30°13'20"S. 026°31'28"E.

Altitude 1400m (Figs.5-6).

Near the Corner of Theunissen & Voortrekker Streets 30°13'08"S.
026°31'24"E. Altitude 1407m (Fig.5-6).

R 701 near existing houses 30°13'37"S. 026°31'50"E. Altitude 1399m
(Fig.8).

FINDS

The area ear marked for developments at Smithfield contains no trace of any cultural or historical material. The surface is disturbed by heavy water flooding and soil erosion and by the activities of the residents of the township nearby. The area also contains a scatter of domestic rubbish in places (Fig.3&4).

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 were 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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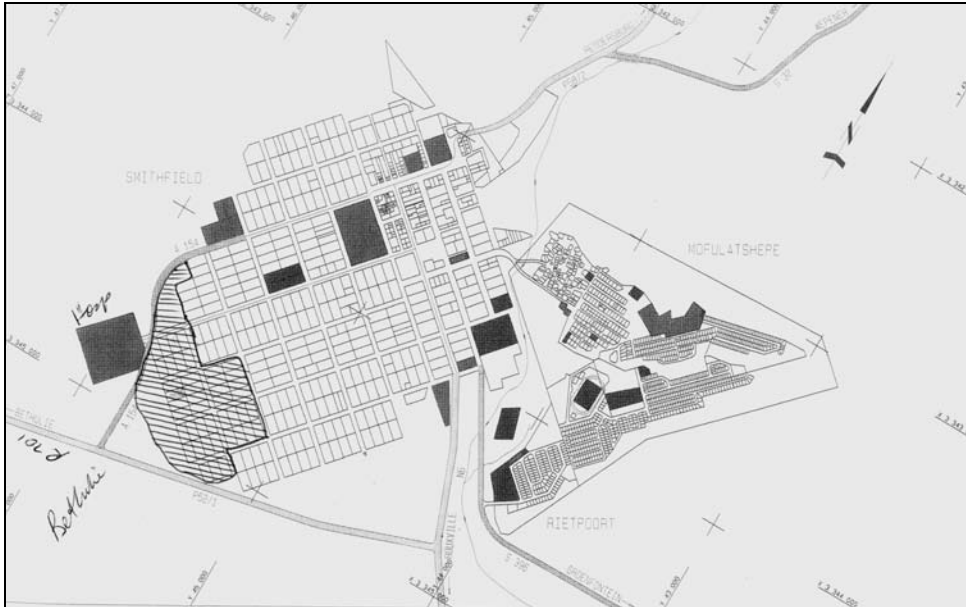
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

Map 1 Map of Smithfield showing the proposed developments next to the road to Bethulie.



Fig.1 View of the proposed area at the corner between the entrance road to Smithfield from the R701 to Bethulie.



Fig.2 View from the R701 towards town.



Fig.3 A river runs through the area of development.



Fig.4 The rough and damaged area along the river.



Fig.5 View across the land from the corner of Theunissen & Voortrekker Streets.



Fig.6 View from the corner of Theunissed & Voortrekker Streets towards the hospital.



Fig.7 View along the R701 facing in the direction of Bethulie.



Fig.8 View along the R701 facing back in the direction of Smithfield.



Fig.8 View from the road towards the existing houses in the township.