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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS ON SUBDIVISION 13 OF THE FARM PRETORIUSKRAAL 53, VILJOENSKROON, FREE STATE

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed residential developments on subdivision 13 of the farm Pretoriuskraal 53, Viljoenskroon, was visited and inspected on 15 June 2005. I was taken to the site by Dr Johan du Preez of Cebo Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical remains 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 development will be done on subdivision 13 of the farm Pretoriuskraal 53, Viljoenskroon district (Map 1).

The land lies on the banks and the flood plain of the Vaal River.

The area contains a thick grass cover with bush and shrubs which makes the veld almost impenetrable (Figs.5&7).

The following GPS coordinates were taken (Cape scale).

House 26°57'55"S 026°45'04"E Altitude 1295m (Fig.1).

Boat house 26°57'54"S 026°45'01"E Altitude 1287m (Fig.2).

Shop 26°57'54"S 026°44'59"E Altitude 1284m (Fig.2).

Entrance gate 26°58'03"S 026°45'01"E Altitude 1293m (Fig.8).

FINDS

The area around the house was surveyed on foot for any remains of cultural material, graves, building remains and other structures. The house and outbuildings were plotted by GPS and recorded on camera.

The cleaned area around the house did not produce any archaeological or cultural remains.

Due to the thick bush cover, it was impossible to venture further from the cleaned area around the house. The present development is concentrated on the riverbank and along the flood plain along the river. It is highly unlikely therefore, that any further remains of significance could be present in the area further from the river.

DISCUSSION

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

MITIGATION & RECOMMENDATION

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

No obvious reason could be found to delay the commencement of the work and it is recommended that the proposed development may proceed.

Every archaeological and historical site is unique and should be treated as a non-renewable commodity. All efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or destruction of the old buildings or the environment.

It is stressed that in case of the discovery of any historical remnants, Anglo-Boer War relics or archaeological finds in the form of stone tools, pottery and other archaeological material of significance during the course of the work, activities should temporarily be stopped for inspection by the present archaeologist or other specialists from the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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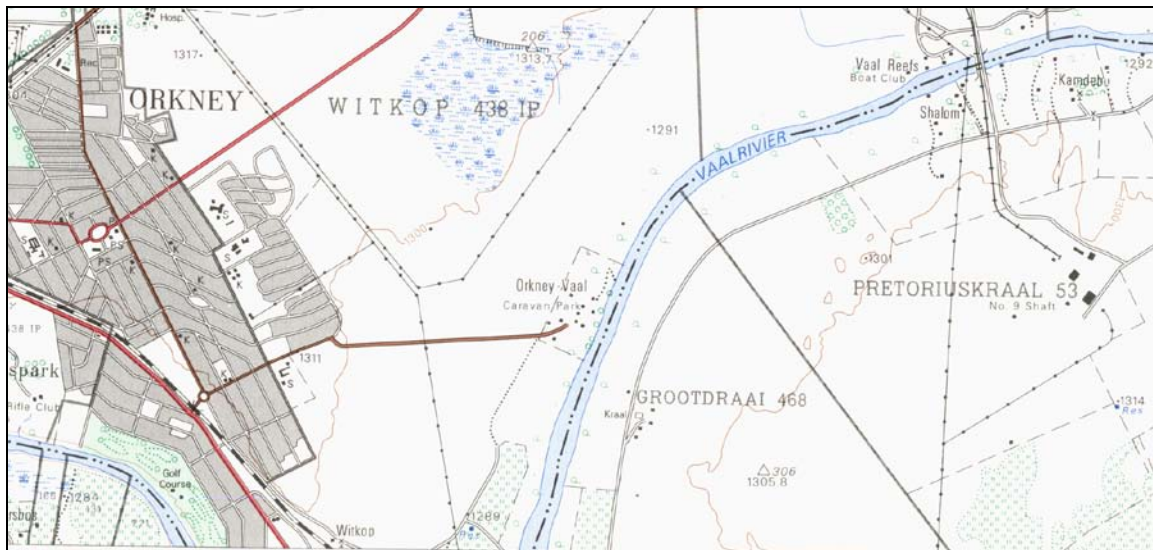
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Map1 The locality of Orkney, Vierfontein and Viljoenskroon.



Map 3 The locality of the farm Pretoriuskraal 53 in relation to Orkney.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Fig.1 The residential house.



Fig.2 The boat house.



Fig.3 The shop.



Fig.4 Vegetation behind the house.



Fig.5 Natural vegetation around the house.



Fig.6 View of the riverfront facing east.



Fig.7 Vegetation away from the river.



Fig.8 View from the house facing towards the entrance gate.