

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF A PROPOSED BORROW PIT ON PAARDE VLEY 276,
CALEDON AREA OF THE OVERBERG DISTRICT,
WESTERN CAPE**

(Assessment conducted under Section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act as part
of a Heritage Impact Assessment)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Natura Viva cc was appointed by Vidamemoria Heritage Consultants on behalf of Nadeson Consulting Services to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed development of a borrow pit DR01288/15.7/L/4200 (Vidamemoria pit no. 173). The proposed pit is situated approximately 9 km to the north of Bot River, Overberg District, in the higher-lying region beyond the Vanderstel Pass. Material excavated from the proposed pit will be used for future resurfacing of gravel roads in the Overberg region. No new roads will have to be constructed as access to the quarry site will be via existing roads and tracks. The proposed pit will be extended to the existing farm dam and the remainder of the excavation shaped so that any water collected in the pit can be channelled to the dam.

This study forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment triggered by the development. The brief for the study was a field visit and short report identifying and assessing archaeological resources and any impact on them, an assessment of significance and recommendations regarding any mitigation required.

The field assessment was conducted on foot on 18 September 2012. The proposed pit lies on a southeast-facing slope of renosterveld. Uninhabited farm buildings lie approximately 50m to the north of the affected area.

No archaeological remains, including graves, were observed in the polygon of proposed pit 173. The absence of archaeological remains directly in the polygon indicates that the proposed site is of low archaeological heritage significance.

However, the buildings to the north of the affected area are older than 60 years – they were built in the 1930s - and are thus protected by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. Although the buildings would be regarded as having low heritage significance as they appear to have no unique architectural features, quarrying activities and the increased traffic of heavy vehicles will obviously have some impact on them.

There are no objections to the proposed development of the borrow pit on archaeological heritage grounds.

No further archaeological studies or mitigation are therefore recommended.

If any human remains are found during the development of the proposed pits, work in that area must cease and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must be notified immediately.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Natura Viva cc was appointed by Vidamemoria Heritage Consultants on behalf of Nadeson Consulting Services to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed development of a borrow pit DR01288/15.7/L/4200 (Vidamemoria pit no. 173). The proposed pit is situated approximately 9 km to the north of Bot River, Overberg District, in the higher-lying region beyond the Vanderstel Pass (Figure 1). Material excavated from the proposed pit will be used for future resurfacing of gravel roads in the Overberg region. No new roads will have to be constructed as access to the quarry site will be via existing roads and tracks. The proposed pit will be extended to the existing farm dam and the remainder of the excavation shaped so that any water collected in the pit can be channelled to the dam.

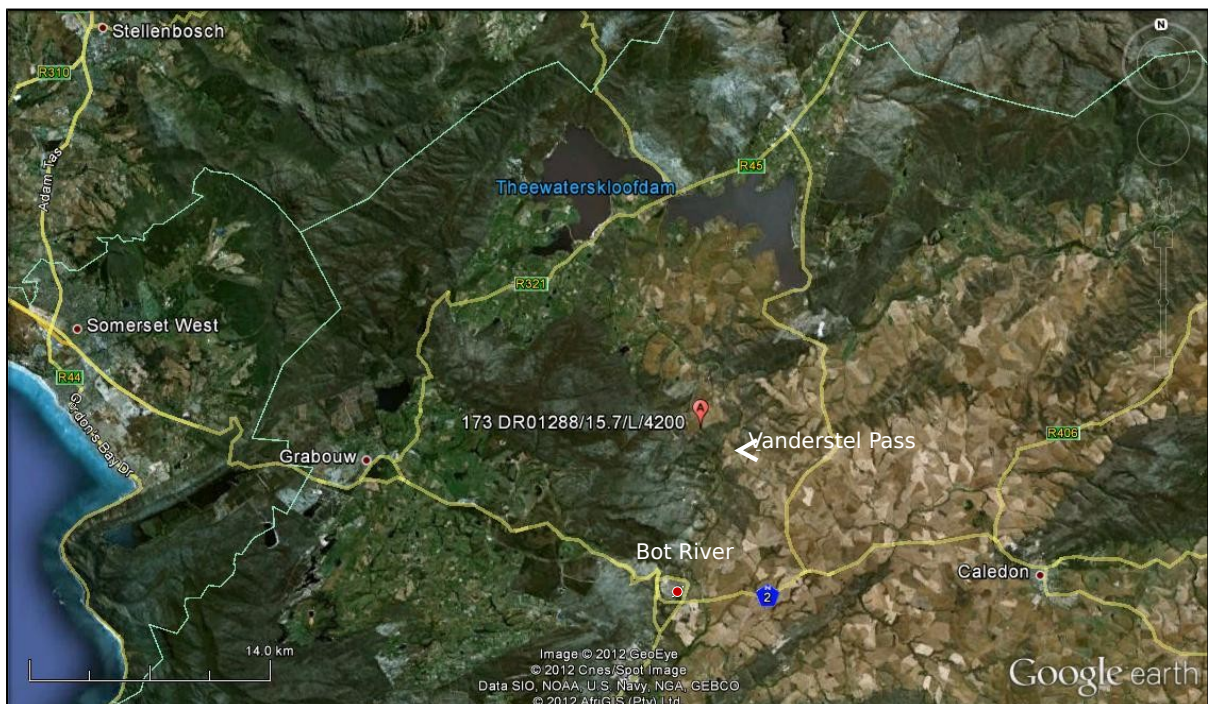


Figure 1: Google earth image showing the location of the proposed pit DR01288/15.7/L/4200 (Vidamemoria pit no. 173) to the northwest of the Vanderstel Pass. The relevant 1:50 000 topographical map is 3419AA Grabouw.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) is triggered by certain types of development, including changes of character to an area exceeding 5 000m², and makes provision for compulsory Heritage Impact Assessments to assess the potential impacts of such proposed developments on heritage resources. In terms of Section 38(1), a Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) form was submitted to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) by Vidamemoria. Following comment from HWC (case 1876-1968 ref. 120726JL16E) an AIA was included amongst the requirements according to Section 38(8) of the Act.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the AIA stipulated a field visit to locate and map archaeological resources, a short report dealing with the field observations, an assessment regarding the significance of the resources (in the context of other studies in the area) and any impacts on them, as well as recommendations regarding any mitigation required.

4. STUDY APPROACH

4.1 Methods

The fieldwork was undertaken on 18 September 2012. A site plan and polygon indicating the affected area were provided by Nadeson and Vidamemoria respectively for the Phase 1 survey. The area was covered on foot and the tracks were recorded by a Garmin GPSMAP 62s set on the WGS84 datum (Figure 2). The site was extensively photographed.

4.2 Limiting factors

Visibility of archaeological remains on the ground was generally good although somewhat limited in the more densely vegetated central part of the polygon.

5. DESCRIPTION OF AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND SITE

5.1 Archaeological background:

No previous impact studies in a similar context in the immediate area of proposed pit 173 were noted on the SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorite Unit Report Mapping Project DVD (2009). However, as the affected area lies roughly between Bot River to the south and the Theewaterskloof Dam to the north (Figure 1), surveys conducted in those areas can provide some indication of the archaeological material which might be encountered in the region. Several impact studies have been done in the vicinity of Bot River by Kaplan (2002, 2006a, 2006b, 2007) and a couple of surveys have been conducted in the area to the south of the Theewaterskloof Dam (Yates 1994 and Tusenius 2012). Most of the archaeological remains recorded by Kaplan concern low density scatters of Early Stone Age (ESA) tools, but several Middle Stone Age (MSA)(Kaplan 2002, 2006a) and Later Stone Age (LSA) artefacts (Kaplan 2006a) were also noted. Large parts of a couple of the study areas revealed no archaeological material at all (Kaplan 2006b, 2007). ESA material was recorded by Yates during his survey of the Gloria Bay area, along part of the south-eastern banks of the Theewaterskloof Dam (1994), but no archaeological remains were noted in a borrow pit study a couple of km to the southwest of Gloria Bay (Tusenius 2012).

5.2 Borrow pit DR01288/15.7/L/4200 (Vidamemoria pit no. 173)

Approximate area: 4870m²

Location: S 34° 8' 46.80" E 19° 13' 13.11"

Farm name and number: Paarde Vley 276

Environment: Proposed pit 173 lies in a patch of renosterveld at the crest of a steep hill. The polygon is situated on a southeast-facing slope and is bounded by the MR240 to the north, a track to the south and a small dam to the west (Figure 2). Abandoned farm buildings lie approximately 50m to the north of the affected area (Figures 2, 7 and 8). The affected area is flanked by cultivated agricultural fields to the west and northeast, and by previously cultivated land to the northwest. Most of the terrain is covered by new growth of scattered, low *Elytropappus* sp. bushes subsequent to a veld fire about two years ago (Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6). Denser *Athanasia trifurcata* and *Berkheya rigida* somewhat limit the visibility of possible archaeological material in the central part of the polygon (Figure 7), but otherwise the surface of gravelly colluvium was clearly evident.



Figure 2: Google earth image showing the polygon for proposed borrow pit 173, the tracks of the field survey and the location of the farm buildings. Please note that the straight blue lines do not indicate survey tracks.





Figures 3 and 4: View towards the northwest showing the track on the south; view towards the east with the denser vegetation in the centre of the polygon in the foreground.



Figures 5 and 6: View towards the southwest showing open patches between the bushes; view towards the northeast with the gravelly colluvium visible in the foreground.



Figures 7 and 8: View towards the northeast with the denser *Athanasia trifurcata* and *Berkheya rigida* bushes in the foreground and the farm buildings in the background: closer view of the buildings.

Results of the survey: No archaeological remains, including graves, were observed in the polygon of proposed pit 173. The uninhabited farm buildings lie outside the affected area. The landowner, Mr Kobus van Zyl, commented that the land had been owned by his family for many years and that the buildings had been constructed by his grandfather in the 1930s. The farm house was abandoned in about 1967 and is now used as a storeroom. Mr Van Zyl confirmed that there were no graves in the vicinity of the buildings or the proposed pit area.

6. SIGNIFICANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The absence of archaeological remains directly in the polygon indicates that the proposed site is of low archaeological heritage significance. However, the buildings to the north of the affected area are older than 60 years and are thus protected by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. Although the buildings would be regarded as having low heritage significance as they appear to have no unique architectural features, quarrying activities and the increased traffic of heavy vehicles will obviously have some impact on them.

There are however no objections to the proposed development of pit 173 on archaeological heritage grounds.

No further archaeological studies or mitigation are therefore recommended.

If any human remains are found during the development of the proposed pits, work in that area must cease and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must be notified immediately.

7. REFERENCES

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8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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