

**A SURVEY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR THE  
PROPOSED BRAAMHOEK PUMPED STORAGE SCHEME,  
FREE STATE/KWAZULU-NATAL BORDER AREA**

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## SUMMARY

### **A survey of cultural resources for the proposed Braamhoek Pumped Storage Scheme, Free State/KwaZulu-Natal border area.**

The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document the sites, objects and structures of cultural importance found within the boundaries of the areas that is to be developed.

The following recommendations are put forward in section 7 of this report:

- The relocation of all the graves, their contents and headstones, if they are to be impacted upon by the building of the various dams.
- The cave shelter must be documented in full by a knowledgeable person, and this documentation should be deposited at a museum for safekeeping.
- The developers should be notified that archaeological sites might be exposed during the construction work. If anything is noticed, it should be reported immediately to a museum, preferably one at which an archaeologist is available, so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY . . . . .	i
CONTENTS . . . . .	ii
1. AIMS OF THE SURVEY . . . . .	1
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE . . . . .	1
3. DEFINITIONS . . . . .	1
4. METHODOLOGY . . . . .	2
5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA . . . . .	3
6. DISCUSSION . . . . .	3
7. RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	4
8. REFERENCES . . . . .	5
9. PROJECT TEAM . . . . .	5
APPENDIX 1	6
APPENDIX 2	7
APPENDIX 3	9

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## 1. AIMS OF THE SURVEY

The National Cultural History Museum was requested by **Poltech Gauteng (Pty) Ltd** to survey portions of the farms Braamhoek 1220, Chatsworth 388 and Bedford 389 in the Harrismith and Klipriver districts. It is planned to develop a number of dams in these areas. The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document the sites, objects and structures of cultural importance found within the boundaries of the areas that is to be developed.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **Terms of Reference** for the study were to:

- 2.1 Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural resources) located in the area of the proposed development.
- 2.2 Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their historical, social, religious, aesthetic and scientific value.
- 2.3 Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions.
- 2.4 Propose suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources. This can include recommendations for the sustainable development and use of the identified cultural resources.
- 2.5 Develop procedures to be implemented if previously unidentified cultural resources are uncovered during the construction phase.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

The following aspects have a direct bearing on the survey and the resulting report:

- 3.1 **Cultural resource** is a broad, generic term covering any physical, natural and spiritual properties and features adapted, used and created by humans in the past and present. Cultural resources are the result of continuing human cultural activity and

embody a range of community values and meanings. These resources are non-renewable and finite. They can be, but are not necessarily identified with defined locations.

- 3.2 The **significance** of the sites and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of a site is done with reference to any number of these.
- 3.3 Significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium to high significance require further mitigation.
- 3.4 The latitude and longitude of an archaeological site are to be treated as sensitive information by the developer, and should not be disclosed to members of the public.
- 3.5 All recommendations are made with full cognisance of the relevant legislation, in this case the **National Monuments Act (No 28 of 1969, as amended)**.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Preliminary investigation

#### 4.1.1 Survey of the literature

A survey of the relevant literature was conducted with the aim of reviewing the previous research done and determining the potential of the area. In this regard, various anthropological, archaeological and historical sources were consulted - see list of references below.

#### 4.1.2 Data sources

The **Archaeological Data Recording Centre (ADRC)**, housed at the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg, was consulted.

#### 4.1.3 Other sources

The topocadastral and other maps were also studied - see list of references below.

### 4.2 Field survey

The field survey was done according to generally accepted archaeological practices, and was aimed at locating all possible sites, objects and structures. The area was divided into blocks, making use of natural and human-made topographical elements. These blocks were then

surveyed in detail by walking and driving across it. In each block, areas with a potential for human use were investigated. Special attention was given to outcrops, cliffs were inspected for rock shelters, while stream beds and unnatural topographical occurrences such as trenches, holes and clusters of trees were investigated.

#### 4.3 Documentation

All sites, objects and structures identified were documented according to the general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Coordinates of individual localities were determined by means of the **Global Positioning System (GPS)**<sup>1</sup> and plotted on a map. This information was added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

### 5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

Three different areas were surveyed. This include a portion of the farms Braamhoek 1220 in the Klipriver district of KwaZulu-Natal, and portions of the farms Chatsworth 388 and Bedford 389 in the Harrismith district of the Free State.

As the physical features of the areas will be dealt with in detail by the other reports, it is not considered here.

### 6. DISCUSSION

The larger geographical area under consideration seems to have been inhabited at least since the Late Stone age times as a number of such sites occur in the region. One of these, Mgede shelter, on the farm Cave (2829BA), have been researched and published by A Mazel (1984). Two smaller shelters, on the farm Berrysvale 1656, occur on the banks of the Wilge Spruit. These shelters contain a number of rock paintings of eland and human beings.

With this in mind it is possible that the cave shelter found on the farm Bedford could have been in use simultaneously to these other sites during Late Stone Age times. Unfortunately, it has been much damaged in recent times. There are some rock art in this particular cave that should be documented and a small test excavation should be done to determine the content of the deposit.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the manufacturer a certain deviation may be expected for each reading. Care was, however, taken to obtain as accurate a reading as possible, and then correlate it with reference to the physical environment before plotting it on the map.

No Early Iron Age sites were identified in the area, and it seems as if Early Iron Age people did not settle here. This is also confirmed by Maggs (1984:199), who indicates that the preference these people had for selecting sites, was savanna areas below 1000 m.

Although the settlement also took place in the savanna areas during Late Iron Age times, during this period the people started to expand into the grassland areas as well (Maggs 1984:204). A few such sites were identified on the farms Keeversfontein 1268 and Schoemansdal 4345 (2829BC). One site that might fall into this category was identified on the farm Scheurklip 462 (2829AB). However, it was only during early colonial times that large groups of people started to settle in significant numbers in this type of area.

A number of abandoned homesteads are located in the areas that were investigated. These seem to belong to farm labourers and were all abandoned within the last few years. They are therefore not viewed to be of cultural or historical significance. However, some graves are located in the vicinity of two of these. It is also possible that more graves will be located close to the various existing homesteads, but, as these homesteads fall outside the full supply level of the dam, they will not be impacted upon.

Relocation of the graves becomes a matter of obtaining permission from descendants (directly), or by advertising in the newspapers about the pending move. This is followed by permission from the Department of Health of the relevant province, as well as permission from the premier of that province. A commercial firm of undertakers then relocates the graves to a mutually agreed site.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on what was found and its evaluation, it is recommended that the proposed development can continue, but only after suitable mitigation measures for the identified sites and structures are implemented. This consists of:

- 7.1 The relocation of all the graves, their contents and headstones, if they are to be impacted upon by the building of the various dams.
- 7.2 The cave shelter at Bedford should be documented in full by an archaeologist, and this documentation should be deposited at a museum for safekeeping.
- 7.3 The developers should be notified that archaeological sites might be exposed during the construction work. If anything is noticed, it should be reported immediately to a museum, preferably one at which an archaeologist is available, so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.

## 8. REFERENCES



Acocks, J.P.H. 1975. *Veld types of South Africa*. Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa, No. 40. Pretoria: Botanical Research Institute.

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## 9. PROJECT TEAM

J van Schalkwyk  
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## **APPENDIX 1: STANDARDIZED SET OF CONVENTIONS USED TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF PROJECTS ON CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **Significance of impact:**

- low where the impact will not have an influence on or require to be significantly accommodated in the project design
- medium where the impact could have an influence which will require modification of the project design or alternative mitigation
- high where it would have a "no-go" implication on the project regardless of any mitigation

### **Certainty of prediction:**

- Definite: More than 90% sure of a particular fact. Substantial supportive data to verify assessment
- Probable: More than 70% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of that impact occurring
- Possible: Only more than 40% sure of a particular fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring
- Unsure: Less than 40% sure of a particular fact, or the likelihood of an impact occurring

### **Status of the impact:**

With mitigation and the resultant recovery of material, a negative impact can be turned positive. Describe whether the impact is positive (a benefit), negative (a cost) or neutral

### **Recommended management action:**

For each impact, the recommended practically attainable mitigation actions which would result in a measurable reduction of the impact, must be identified. This is expressed according to the following:

- 1 = no further investigation/action necessary
- 2 = controlled sampling and/or mapping of the site necessary
- 3 = test excavation and/or mapping to determine if further work is necessary
- 4 = preserve site if possible, otherwise extensive salvage excavation and/or mapping necessary
- 5 = preserve site at all costs

### **Legal requirements:**

Identify and list the specific legislation and permit requirements which potentially could be infringed upon by the proposed project, if mitigation is necessary.

## APPENDIX 2: SURVEY RESULTS<sup>2</sup>

[Previous site numbers relate to other known sites on a particular ¼ degree sheet already documented in the ADRC, and does not necessarily refer to sites occurring on or close to the specific area of development.]

### 1. Site number: 2829BC10

Location: Braamhoek 1220: 28°18'10.7"S; 29°32'37.4"E [X 3131888.505; Y - 53332.303]

Description: Possible grave, without headstone.

Discussion: This site is located quite high up the slope and might not be impacted upon by the development.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Status of impact: Negative

Recommended management action: Relocation of grave.

Legal requirements: Department of Health, etc.

### 2. Site number: 2829BC11

Location: Braamhoek 1220: 28°18'35.6"S; 29°34'07.4"E [X 3132666.307; Y - 55780.832]

Description: Three graves without headstones. A section of stone walling, possible the remains of a cattle byre, is located close by.

Discussion: Although located quite high up the slope, it is quite likely that this site will be impacted upon by the development.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for an explanation of the conventions used in assessing the cultural remains.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Possible

Status of impact: Negative

Recommended management action: Relocation of graves.

Legal requirements: Department of Health, etc.

### 3. Site number: 2829BA2

Location: Bedford 389: 28°14'16.4"S; 29°35'27.8"E [X 3124697.709; Y -58010.247]

Description: A rock shelter with some San paintings of eland and other antelope in it. It is quite possible that that there could have been more, but due to vandalism and graffiti it might have been destroyed. As there seems to have been a big impact on the shelter, it is similarly difficult to determine the quality and content of the deposit without an excavation. Some stone walling dating to historical times also occurs in the shelter.

Discussion: This site do not seems to be of exceptional significance and can be forfeited after documentation.

Significance of impact: Medium

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Status of impact: Negative

Recommended management action: 2 = controlled sampling and/or mapping of the site necessary.

Legal requirements: Permit from the National Monuments Council for excavation, as well as if the site is to be forfeited.

### 4. Site number: 2829BA3

Location: Wilgerivier 319: 28°13'11.9"S; 29°33'09.4"E [X 3122694.368; Y -54246.178]

Description: Grave, marked with small headstone. Inscription: Gideon Petrus le Roux, 1885-1947.

Discussion: It is not sure if this feature will be impacted upon by the proposed development, but it should be in mind.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Possible

Status of impact: Neutral

Recommended management action: Relocate grave if necessary; 1 = no further investigation/action necessary

Legal requirements: Department of Health, etc.

### APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

This section is included to give the reader some necessary background. It must be kept in mind, however, that these dates are all relative and serve only to give a very broad framework for interpretation.

#### STONE AGE

Early Stone Age (ESA)	2 000 000 - 150 000 Before Present
Middle Stone Age (MSA)	150 000 - 30 000 BP
Late Stone Age (LSA)	30 000 - until c. AD 200

#### IRON AGE

Early Iron Age (EIA)	AD 200 - AD 1000
Late Iron Age (LIA)	AD 1000 - AD 1830

#### HISTORICAL PERIOD

Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1830 in this part of the country

5. Site number: 2829AB

Location: Scheurklip 462: 28°13'17.6" S; 29°29'57.2" E [X 3122847.083; Y - 49004.707]

Description: Three circular structures of stone, dating possibly to the Late Iron Age or early historical times.

Discussion: It is not sure if this feature will be impacted upon by the proposed development, but it should be in mind.

Significance of impact: Low

Certainty of prediction: Definite

Status of impact: Neutral

Recommended management action: 1 = no further investigation/action necessary

Legal requirements: Permit from the National Monuments Council

6. Site number: 2829AD8

Location: Primrose 968: 28°20'41.9"S; 29°22'42.6"E

Description: Cemetery

Discussion:

Significance of impact:

Certainty of prediction:

Status of impact:

Recommended management action:

Legal requirements:

7. Site number: 2829BA

Location: Maggie's Deel 1565: 28°12'15.0"S; 29°35'05.3"E

Description: Single grave, marked by stones and fenced with wire, quite close to the road.

Discussion:

Significance of impact:

Certainty of prediction:

Status of impact:

Recommended management action:

Legal requirements: