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## **DRIEFONTEIN: HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

A Phase I report prepared for Seaton Thompson and Associates  
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# **DRIEFONTEIN: HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Two African cemeteries lie within the Project area and a third is next to the eastern boundary. All three require protection.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Mogale City Council purchased 30 hectares (RE 78) of the Farm Driefontein 179 IQ, north of Johannesburg, for a Community Project to build Government Grant Housing. The plans include some 313 housing units, with the normal road and amenity infrastructure, as well as agricultural activities on the southern portion of the property. An existing cemetery will be incorporated.

The environmental coordinators for the project, Seaton Thompson and Associates, commissioned Archaeological Resources Management (ARM), to examine the cemetery and any other sites of archaeological or historical interest in terms of Sections 35 and 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999).

## **METHOD**

One ARM staff visited the project area on 29 October 2007. Staff traversed the area on foot and by vehicle. Sites were recorded with a hand-held GPS instrument calibrated to WGS 84, and then transferred to the 1: 50 000 map sheet 2627BB Roodepoort (Figure 1). Mr E Mathibe, a tenant since 1968, was the principal informant.

Normally, site significance is based on five main criteria: (1) primary versus secondary context; (2) amount of deposit; (3) number and variety of features; (4) uniqueness; and (5), potential to answer present research questions. Recognizable graves have high social value regardless of their archaeological significance.

## **RESULTS**

No sites of archaeological interest were noted. African cemeteries were the only places of importance.

**Cemetery 1.** Located immediately behind the house of Mr Mathibe (26 00 20.9S; 27 51 22.9E), this graveyard contains about 17 burials (Figure 2) of labourers and their families who once worked for the Portuguese owner of a portion of Rietfontein 188 IQ to the east. According to Mr Mathibe, descendants still live on the east side of Beyers Naude, the main road. Although next to Driefontein housing, Cemetery 1 lies east of the farm boundary and is therefore outside the project area.

**Cemetery 2** includes a long line of some 28 graves (Figure 3), starting at the end of the present housing (26 00 24.8S 27 51 21.8E) and extending to the edge of the upper dam wall (26 00 26.5S; 27 51 21.7E). The Project intends to retain this cemetery. Descendants live on Rietfontein, about 200 m southeast.

**Cemetery 3** lies in the agricultural zone at the southern end of the Project area in the middle of high ground (26 00 34.1S; 27 51 10.2E). About 7 graves, both large and small, centre on a large grave with a cement slab and the remains of a wire cross (Figure 4). The remains of the cattle kraal for these people lay down slope about 400m to the north. The descendants for Cemetery 2 were also related to this family.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

All three cemeteries have high social significance and therefore require mitigation. **Cemetery 1** lies on the boundary and is therefore in danger of damage. It should be fenced for the duration of construction activities. Even though the Project intends to retain **Cemetery 2**, it should also be protected during the construction phase. **Cemetery 3**, on the other hand, should be permanently protected.

If these conditions are accepted, there are no heritage reasons why the Project should not be implemented.

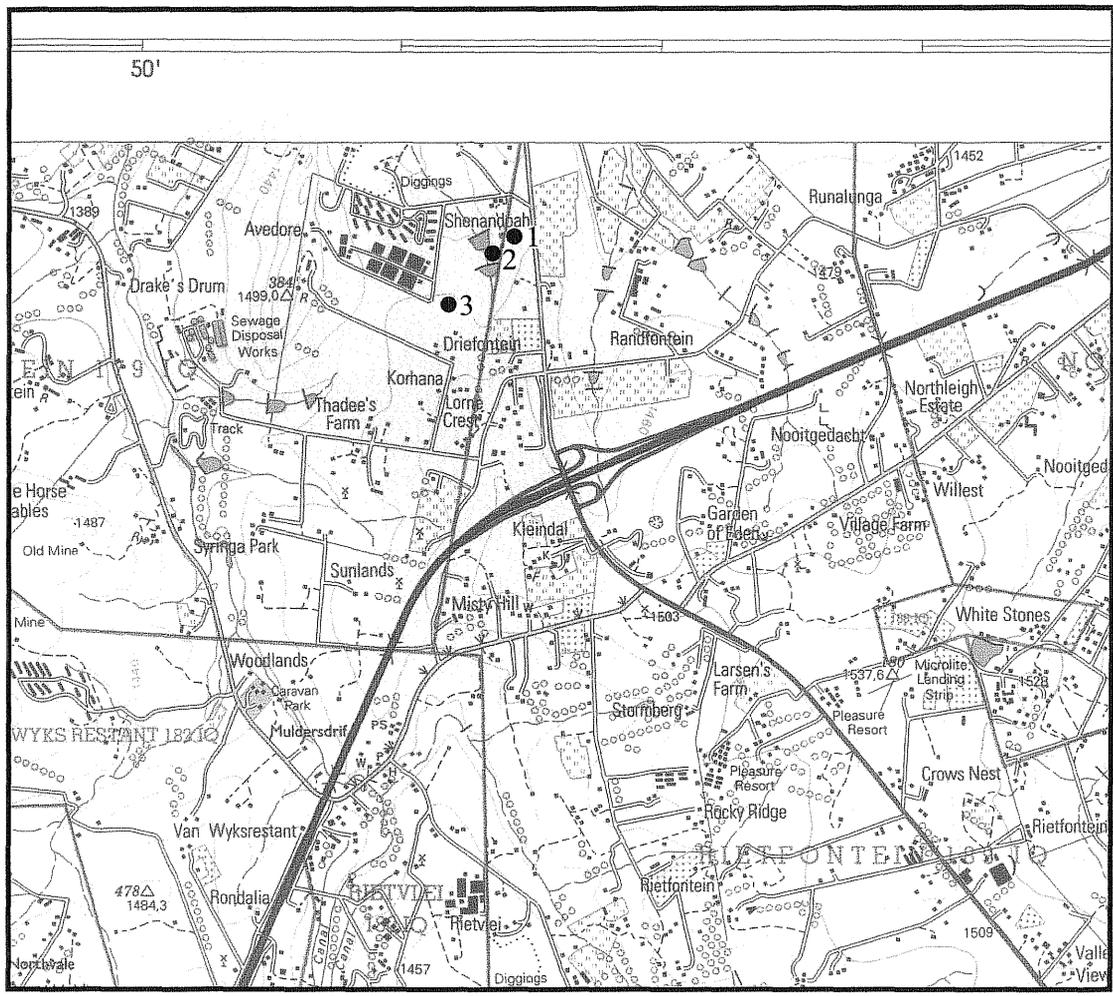


Figure 1. Location of the three cemeteries on map 2627BB.



Figure 2. Cemetery 1.



Figure 3. Cemetery 2

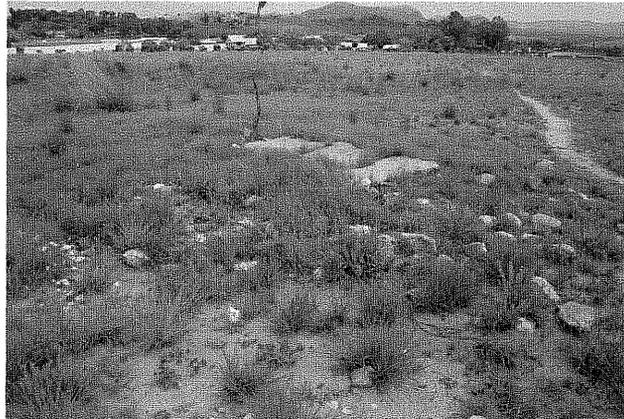


Figure 4. Cemetery 3