

**EYE OF AFRICA PROJECT:  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

A Phase I report prepared for Seaton Thompson & Associates

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Pixley World Investments (Pty) Ltd intends to develop various portions (2, 3, 11, 16, 20, 39, 40, 41, 78, 115, 116) of the farm Alewynspoot 145 IR into a golf estate and conference centre. Known as the Eye of Africa Project, the development will eventually cover some 780 hectares, including the northeast slopes of Platberg, a prominent hill a few kilometres south of the Kliprivier. Geologically, the hill and surrounding area comprise a series of shale, sandstone and quartzite interrupted by dolerite intrusions.

To comply with various environmental and heritage legislation, the environmental coordinators of the project, Seaton Thompson & Associates, commissioned historical and archaeological surveys before development begins. It was the task of Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to identify and assess the significance of archaeological sites that might be present.

### **METHOD**

Two ARM staff examined the project area on August 23 and 24, 2004. The team targeted rocky ridges and hill slopes while traversing much of the area on foot. Site locations were recorded with a hand-held GPS instrument and then transferred to the 1 : 50 000 map 2628 AC Alberton.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Five criteria determine site significance: integrity of the deposit (primary versus secondary), amount of archaeological deposit, as well as the variety of features (stone walls, burnt hut floors, etc.), uniqueness, and current research interest. Sites with no significance do not require further work, while low significance may need more recording, medium significance must be mitigated and sites with high significance should not be disturbed at all.

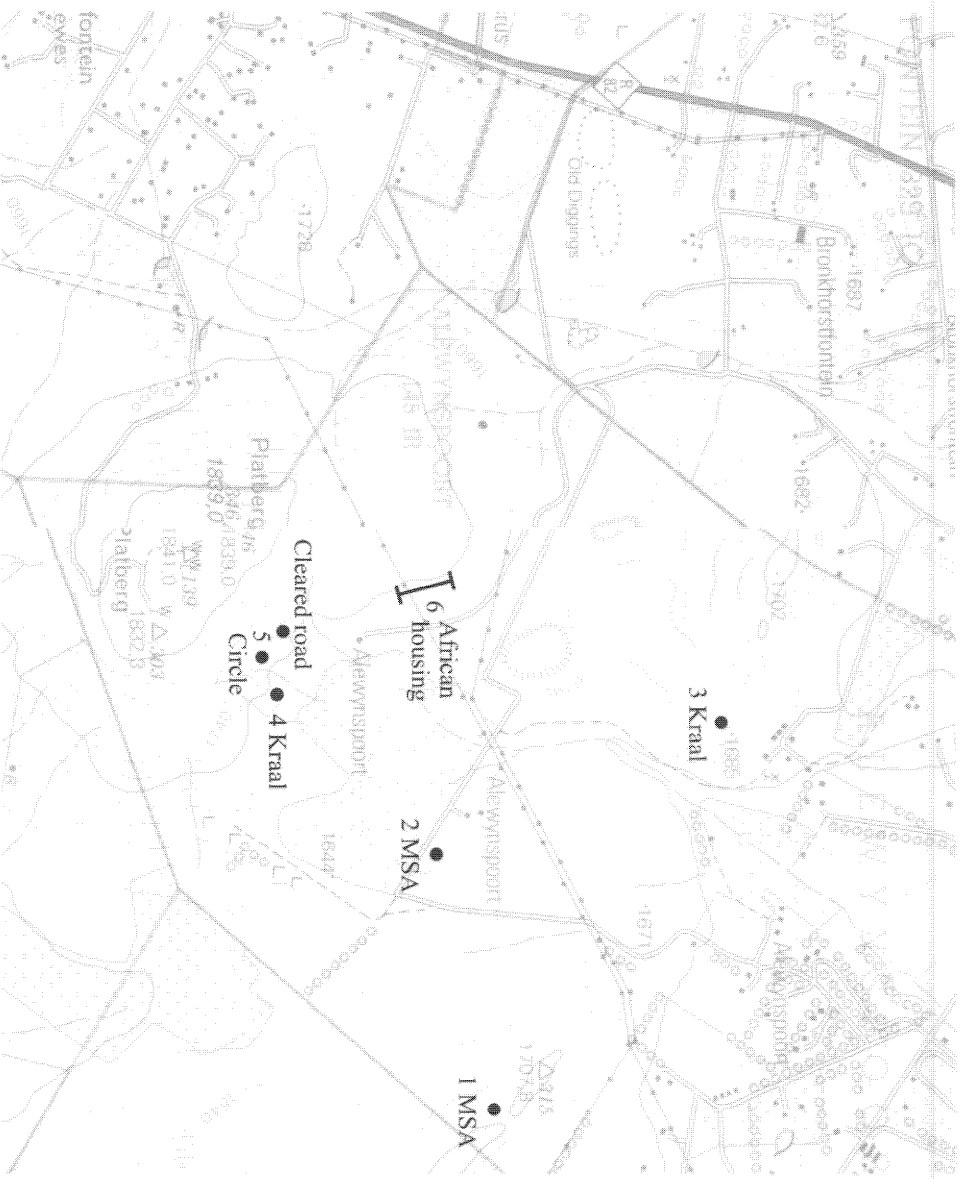


Figure 1. Archaeological sites indicated on the 1:50 000 maps 2628AC Alberton and 2627 BD Lenasia.

## RESULTS

Most local rock is not suitable for flaking and so the Stone Age is poorly represented.

Two isolated quartzite artefacts lay on the steep, north slope of Platberg. They probably date to the Middle Stone Age (from about 250 000 to 25 000 years ago), but they are not *in situ* and therefore have no significance.

Elsewhere, there are two *in situ* Middle Stone Age localities (Figure 1). **Site 1** (26 22 38S 28 03 05E) lies on a flat terrace overlooking the open meadow below Platberg. Two small areas (10 x 10m and 3 x 3m) are clear of stones on an otherwise rocky ridge. The larger spot contained at least three Middle Stone Age flakes. This locality has low significance.

**Site 2** (26 22 32S 28 00 59E) overlooks the same meadow, but on the opposite, south side. A few Middle Stone Age flakes lie scattered along a low ridge marked by upright dolerite monoliths. At least two monoliths below the ridge have been used as rubbing stones by rhino-sized animals. This site also has low significance.

The remaining sites belong to the Historic Period. **Site 3** (26 22 11S 28 01 03E) sits in the saddle of a rocky ridge north of the power line, in the northern section of the project area. It includes a stonewalled kraal and a rectangular house with stonewalls and associated middens. A few Middle Stone Age flakes also lie scattered along the ridge. The Historic complex could date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it may be associated with the early Historic buildings on the north side of the ridge. This site has medium significance.

**Site 4**, another rectangular kraal (about 10 x 20m), stands next to a deep gully at the northeast base of Platberg (26 23 08S 28 00 29E). It too appears old and has medium significance.

An old road coming off the Platberg (shown on the 1979 edition of 2628 AC) down to the Alwynspoor homestead and dairy passes within about 100m of Site 4. Stones have been

plied on top of the last ridge where the road passes through (**Site 5**), and the area upslope is clear of stone (26 23 09S 28 00 20E). Presumably, the clearing provided a rest area for livestock. Herdsmen may have used a small circle of stones (2 x 2m) nearby (26 23 14.8S 28 00 26.7E) for temporary shelter. This area has low significance.

The Heritage Impact Assessment (Pistorius 2004) lists the Alewynspoort homestead and dairy complex in the southern portion of the project area. Homestead remains of African labourers employed on this farm appear on the 1975 edition of map 2627 BD Grasmere. A few others are not marked. One occurs at 26 22 46S 28 00 14E. Most include house mounds, stone structures, middens and bits of metal objects. We record them as the **Site 6 Complex**. This Complex has low significance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Depending on the extent of development, only **Site 3** and **Site 4** require mitigation. If these two sites will be destroyed, then they must be mapped beforehand. The other sites do not require further attention.

With this proviso, there is no archaeological reason why the Eye of Africa Project should not proceed.

## **REFERENCE**

**Pistorius, J.J.** 2004. *A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for various portions of the farm Alewynspoort 1451R comprising the proposed development Pixley World in the Gauteng Province of South Africa*. A report prepared for Seaton and Thompson. Pretoria.