

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF FORZANDO
COAL HOLDINGS

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SYNOPSIS

Two ephemeral African homesteads, perhaps dating to the **difaqane**, were found inside the designated area. No mitigation is required. Two African graveyards about 500m away from the area should be fenced now and subsequently relocated if mining extends southwards.

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INTRODUCTION

Steffen, Robertson and Kirsten, on behalf of Forzando Coal Holdings (Pty) Ltd, contracted Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to examine a proposed coal mine near Hendrina as part of an Environmental Management Programme. The proposed mine lies between the confluence of the Olifantsrivier and an unnamed tributary on the Farms Weltevreden (193 IS) and Halfgewonnen (190 IS). At present the endangered area is only about 600 x 600m, but the mine could later expand southwards.

Two members of ARM examined this area on January 13. To comply with Minerals (Act No. 50 of 1991) and Monuments (Act No. 28 of 1969) legislation, they searched for signs of any cultural activity 50 years or older and for graves of any age. Sites were recorded on the 1:50 000 map sheet 2629 BA Hendrina. Part of this area had been cultivated many years ago and the grassy vegetation was thick. Nevertheless, the results were a fair reflection of the early use of the area.

RESULTS

The remains of two African homesteads were found on the first terrace above the streams, along the 1595m contour. Both homesteads consisted of circular hut remains and little else: Site 1 (on Figure 1) contained 4 to 6 structures and Site 2 had at least three. The shape and ephemeral nature suggests that these structures had been beehive huts made of reeds plastered with mud. They appear old and may date to the *difaqane* almost 200 years ago.

The remains of a more recent African settlement lay about 500m south of the

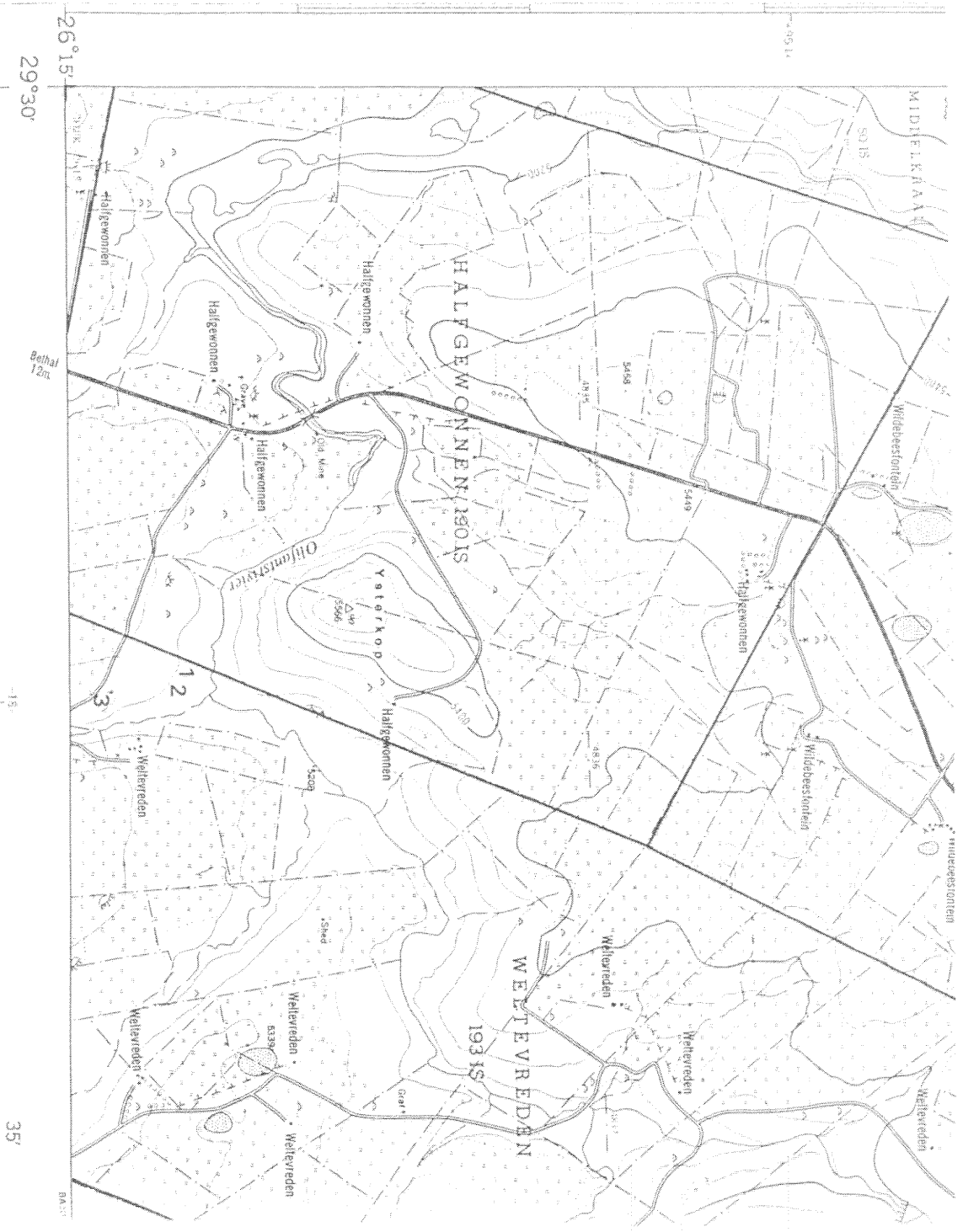


Figure 1. Archaeological sites mentioned in the text.

designated area near some markedly old gum trees (Site 3). The house mounds there were rectangular, and some had stone foundations. Metal objects on the ground indicated that the inhabitants were farm labourers at the beginning of this century.

Two separate cemeteries were associated with this settlement. Each consisted of grave mounds made with ferricrete, aligned east/west and surrounded by the remains of a wire fence. The cemetery near the gum trees (3A) contained 5 graves, and the other about 150m west (3B) had 8 of various sizes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If mining activity proceeds southwards, the cemeteries will have to be moved, perhaps to Hendrina. Considering their proximity to the designated area, they should be fenced off now. The associated settlement remains are of little consequence.

The two homesteads inside the designated area are so ephemeral that no mitigation is required.