



5 December 2009

The Nature Conservation Corporation
Units 1 & 2, 4 Stibitz Street
Westlake Business Park
Westlake
7945

Attention: Mr Philip Dukas

**FEEDBACK ON SITE INVESTIGATION TO POSSIBLE HERITAGES SITES ON
THE HYDRA-PERSEUS ESKOM POWER LINE, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

Professional Grave Solutions (Pty) Ltd – Heritage Unit (PGS-HU) was contacted by The Nature Conservation Corporation (NatCorCorp) to do a site visit at certain sections of the Hydra-Perseus Eskom Power line, monitored by (NatCorCorp) with the aim of:

- Investigate the possible archaeological site identified between,
 - a. Pylons T375 and T378;
 - b. Pylons T410 and T428;
 - c. Pylons T565 and T567; and
 - d. Pylon T491 and T492;
- Make recommendations where and if necessary on the finds made during the site visits.

The site was visited by Mr Wouter Fourie and Henk Steyn from PGS-HU with Ms. Bianca van Heerden (ECO) of The Nature Conservation Corporation on 24 to 25 November 2009.

1. FINDINGS

1.1 ALIGNMENT T375 TO T378

The alignment runs to the north of the current farmhouse on *Hondelaagte 276*. Due to its proximity to the current farmstead the realignment of the line around the farmstead was done. During the site visit his alignment was not yet finalised and no

pylon positions were available. A section of the area was however covered as an existing cemetery was indicated in the area by the local residents.

The area is also characterised by low concentrations of scatters of middle stone age lithics.



Figure 1 – Alignment of line (white) and area covered due to possible realignment not available during site visit – PH2 indicating cemetery

Site PH2

The site is that of a cemetery consisting of 17 stone packed graves aligned east-west. The current farm workers on the farm had no indication of the family relatives of these graves.



Figure 2 – Site PH2, stone packed graves in foreground and farmstead visible in background

Way forward:

- The cemetery needs to be fenced and a buffer of 20 meters be left around the site and adequate access be provided for the family to visit the graves;
- The realignment needs to take the position of the cemetery into consideration and avoid it at all cost.
- The ECO need to be on site during construction in the specific areas;
- In the event that the cemetery will have to be impacted on and the need arise for the relocation of the cemetery a full graves relocation process must be followed; and
- It is further recommended that the realignment be surveyed by a professional archaeologist to identify any historical and archaeological finds in the servitude of the alignment.

1.2 ALIGNMENT T410 TO T428

The alignment runs to the western section of the farm *Taay Bosch Draay 102*. The majority of this alignment follows a ridge that runs north-south through the farm. On this section of the alignment four sites with rock engravings where identified.

The area is also characterised by low concentrations of scatters of middle stone age lithics.

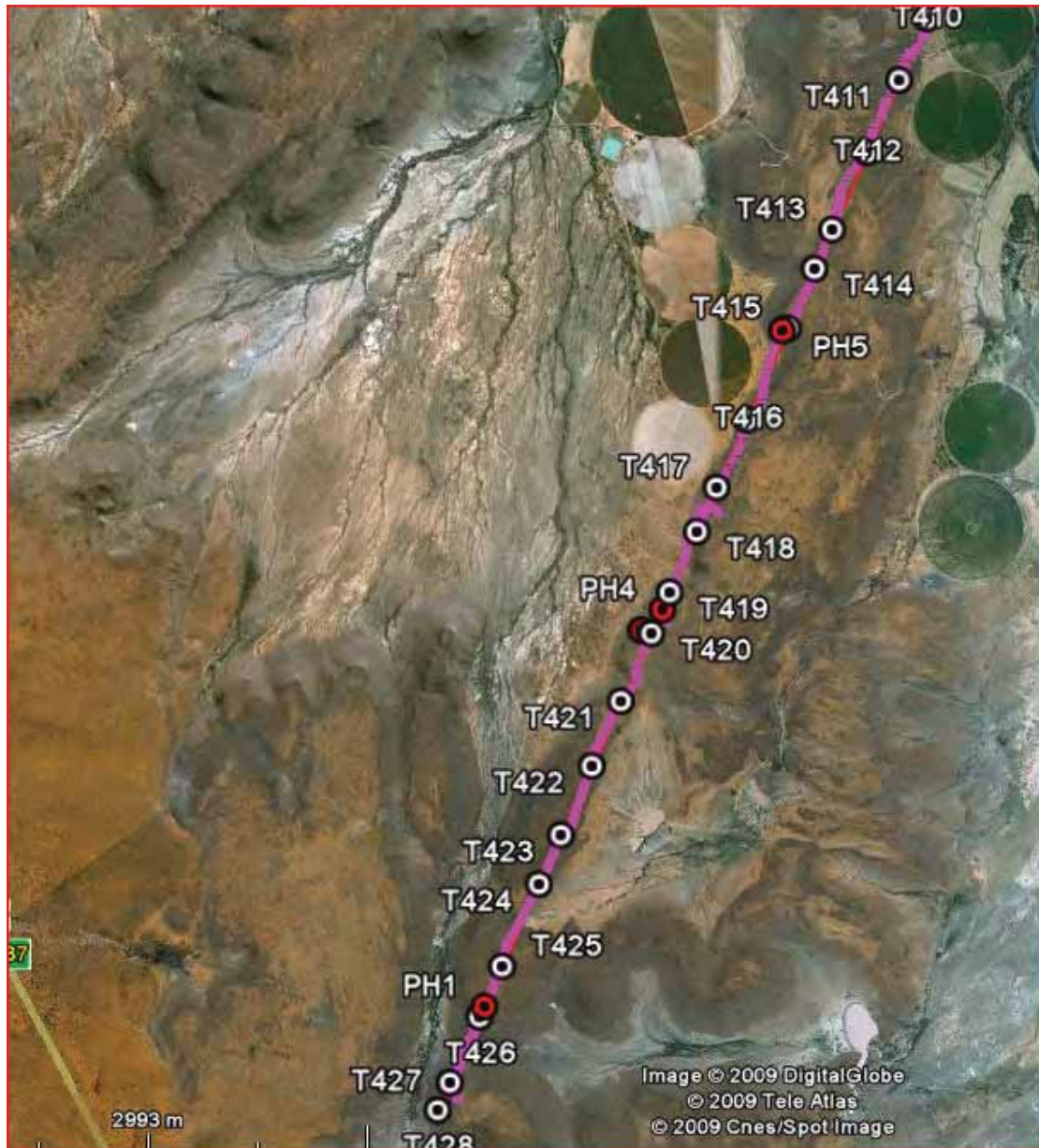


Figure 3 – Tracklog of archaeologists surveying line (pink) – with red dots indicating positions of archaeological finds

Site PH1

The site is situated between pylon T425 and T426, and is that of a single stone engraving of an unidentified animal with the head section weathered away.

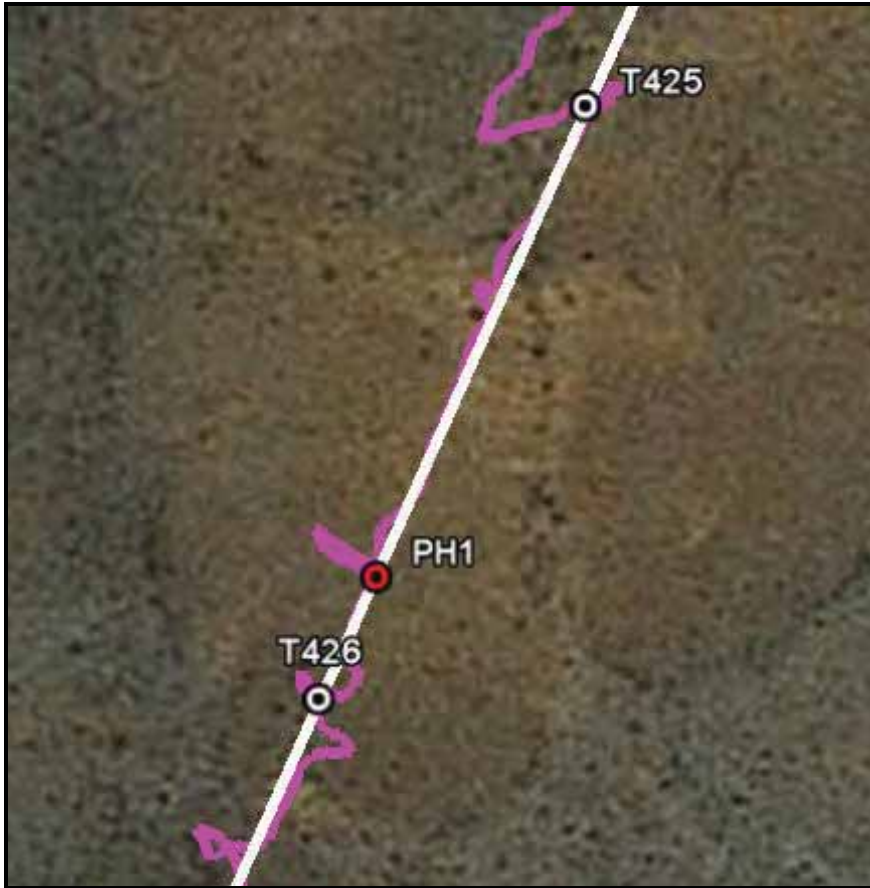


Figure 4 – Site PH1, position on alignment indicated



Figure 5 – Site PH1, single stone with engraving on



Figure 6 – Site PH1, engraving of single unidentified animal on rock

Site PH3 and PH4

Site PH3 is situated close to pylon T420, on a small rocky ridge to the north-west of the current pylon position. The site consist of two rock engravings being geometric line engravings(**Figure 8**) and one of a very feint set of unidentified animals (**Figure 9**).

PH4 is situated between pylon T420 and T419 and is also situated on the same rocky ridge. The engraving is that of a single animal on the eastern face of the rock.

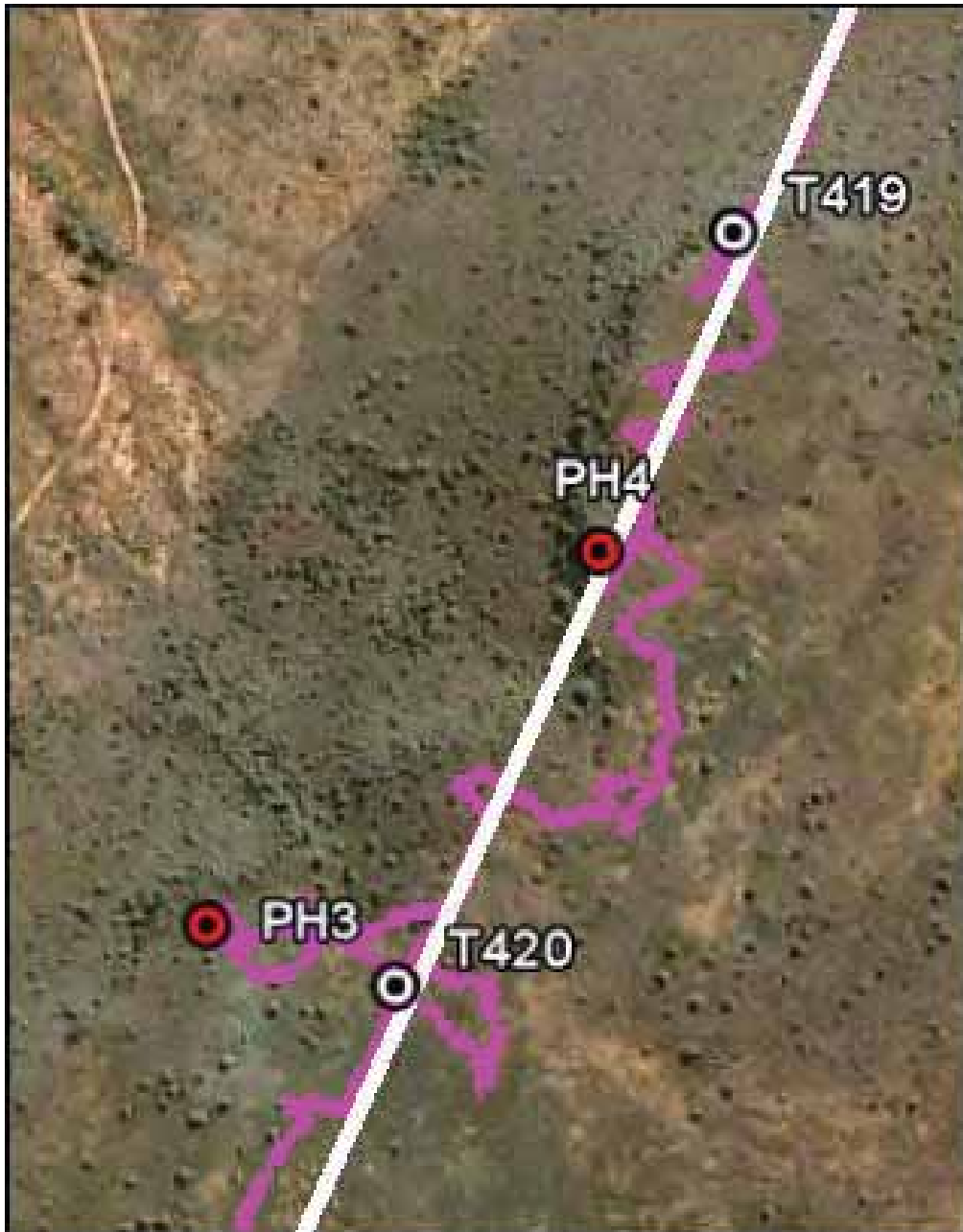


Figure 7 – Site PH3 and PH5 on alignment



Figure 8 – Site PH3, position of low stone packed wall (yellow) and engravings (red)



Figure 9 – Site PH3, geometric engravings on rock



Figure 10 – Site PH3, engravings of two unidentified animals on rock

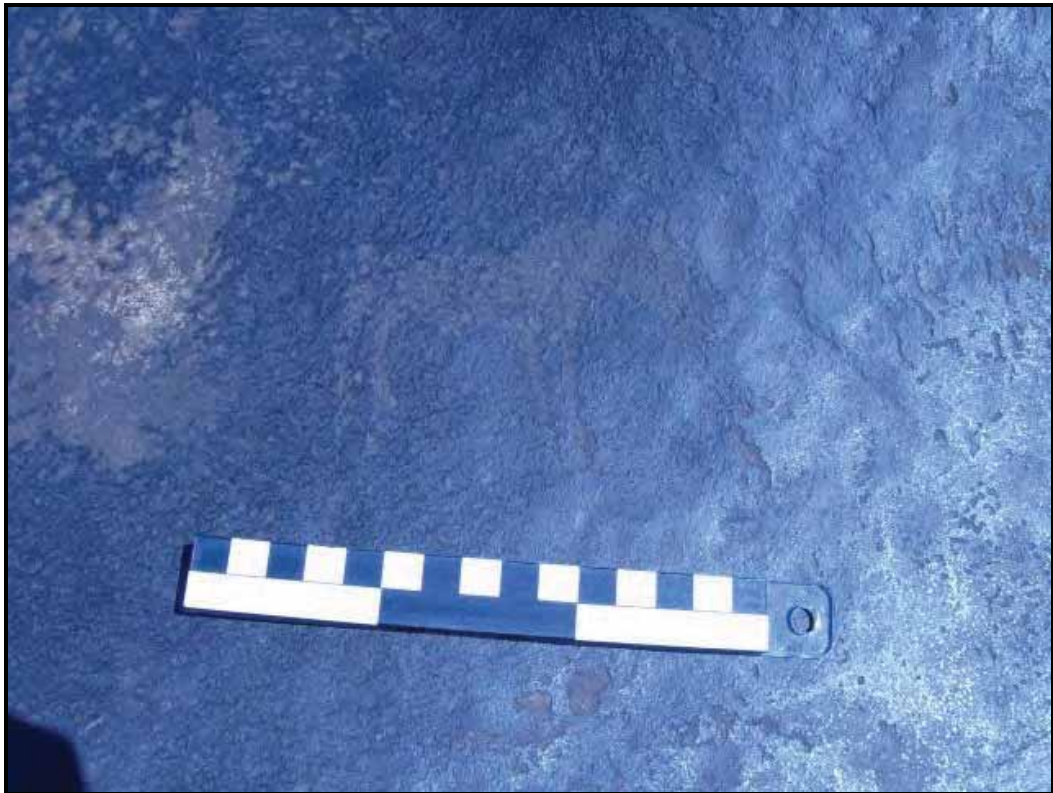


Figure 11 – Site PH4, engraving on rock

Way forward:

The site does have major conservation value and any activities that may impact on the site must be diverted.

- The two sites needs to be fenced and a buffer of 5 meters be left around the sites;
- Any access routes need to be diverted around the sites;
- The ECO need to be on site during construction in the specific areas.

Site PH5

Site PH5 is situated close to pylon T415, on a small rocky ridge to the west of the current pylon position. The site consist of one rock engraving of a porcupine (**Figure 13**).



Figure 12 – Site PH3, engravings of two unidentified animals on rock



Figure 13 – Site PH5, engraving of porcupine on rock

Way forward:

The site does have major conservation value and any activities that may impact on the site must be diverted.

- The site needs to be fenced and a buffer of 5 meters be left around the sites;
- Any access routes need to be diverted around the sites;
- The ECO need to be on site during construction in the specific areas.

1.3 ALIGNMENT T565 and T567

The alignment is situated on the farm *Roode Kraal 106*. The alignment traverses a low rising ridge running from north-east to south-west. The investigation was prompted by the discovery of a single Martini-Henry shell casing on the ridge in the region of site **PH11**. A walk through of the current cleared access route and diverted access routes where done.



Figure 14 – Alignment T565 to T568 with sites identified

During the walk through the following sites where found:

Site No	Description	Significance
PH6	Rock engraving – Inscription “J.v.d.B, 1909 April 14”. Possibly referring to J van den Berg.	Highly significant
PH7	Rock engraving - of what seems to be an eland on a western facing rock face some 20 metres from the new access route.	Highly significant
PH8	Rock engravings – close to PH7, of irregular markings done on the rock	Highly significant

	face.	
PH9	Rock engraving – Reading “S.W.J”	<i>Highly significant</i>
PH10-1	Start of large, high density scatter of Middle Stone Age lithics	<i>Highly significant</i>
PH10-2	End of large, high density scatter of Middle Stone Age lithics	<i>Highly significant</i>
PH11	Large very high density of Middle Stone Age lithics, radius of approximately 10 metres. As well as a possible knapping site. Also a single low stone wall is present on site. A single Martini-Henri casing was found on the site.	<i>Highly significant</i>
PH12	Area of medium density lithic scatters	<i>Medium significance</i>
PH13	Area of medium density lithic scatters	<i>Medium significance</i>
PH14	Two low circular stone walls. Some remains of glass and a corned beef can lid was found on site. The absence of any further evidence cannot confirm and discount its association with the South African War. The possibility does however exist that it could be associated with herder shelters.	<i>Medium significance</i>



Figure 15 – PH6, Rock engraving dated 1909



Figure 16 – PH7 - Rock engraving between T565 and T566

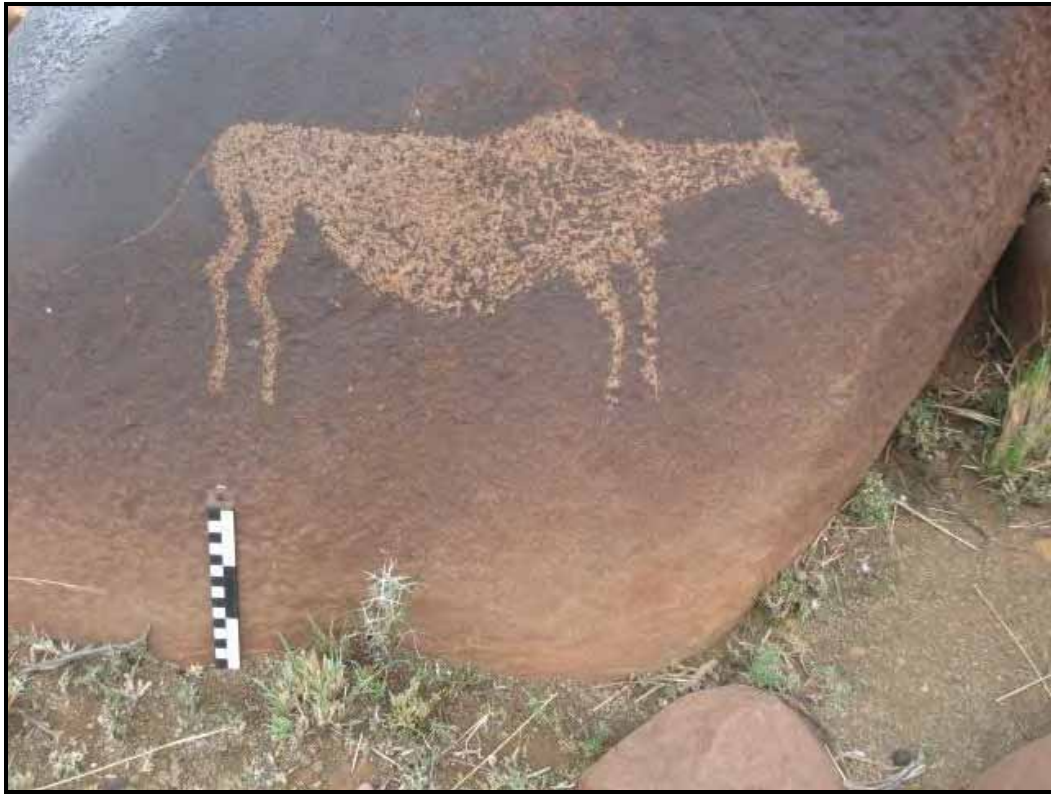


Figure 17 – Close-up of engraving



Figure 18 – Rock markings at PH8



Figure 19 – Engraving at PH9



Figure 20 – PH10 general view of site



Figure 21 – PH10 sample of lithics found on site



Figure 22 – PH10 examples of lithic cores found on site



Figure 23 - PH11 - Large concentration of lithic material and knapping site



Figure 24 - PH11 - Stone and glass Lithics found on site

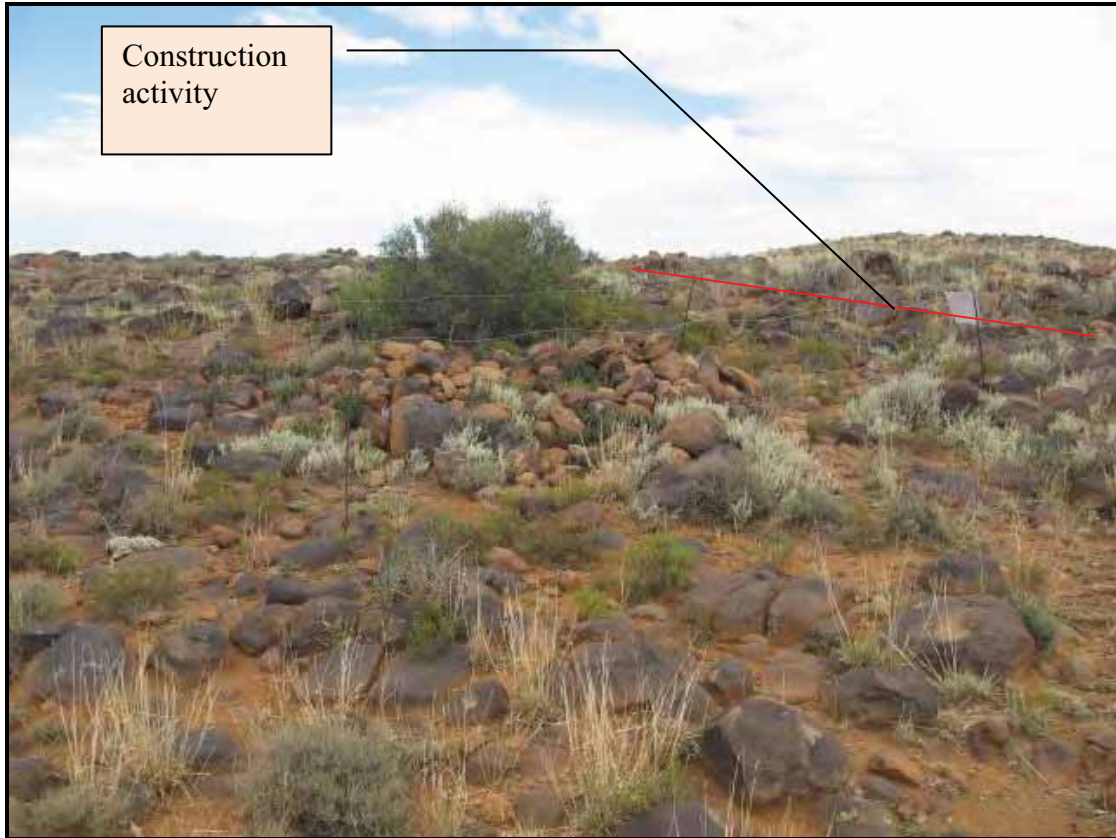


Figure 25 – PH14 – Position of walling and construction area



Figure 26 – PH14 – Stone walling close-up



Figure 27 – PH14 – Corned beef can lid

Way forward:

The sites do have major conservation value and any activities that may impact on the site must be diverted.

- The sites needs to be fenced and a buffer of 5 meters be left around the sites;
- Any access routes need to be diverted around the sites;
- The area of the ridge must be seen as a no-go area, excluding the section already disturbed during the construction activity prior to the site visit
- The ECO need to be on site during construction in the specific areas.
- All travelling around the ridge must be kept to single corridor of the already disturbed road areas.
- The new position of pylon T567 towards T568 is in the vicinity of PH12. This area has a medium density of lithics and needs to be managed through a surface collection of all lithics, with the appropriate methodology done by a professional archaeologist.

1.4 ALIGNMENT T492 to T491

The alignment is situated on the farm *Nuwe Tafelkop 189*. The alignment traverses a drainage line running from north-east to south-west under the alignment. The alignment runs to the east of the ruins of historical farmstead possibly dating 1850 to 1900. The glass and ceramic remains and shell casing found in the ash midden at PH15 shows association with this time period.

The farmstead consists of a midden (**PH15**), the ruins of two houses (**PH16 and 17**), livestock kraal (**PH18**), a very well constructed rock and dam wall (**PH19**) as well as a stone walled cultivating paddock of approximately 220x90m (**PH20**).

Recent excavations of similar farmsteads in the Karoo area indicated a rich historical significance to these type sites.

In the vicinity of pylon T592 two Acheulean stone tools were identified probably dug out during the construction of the dam wall.

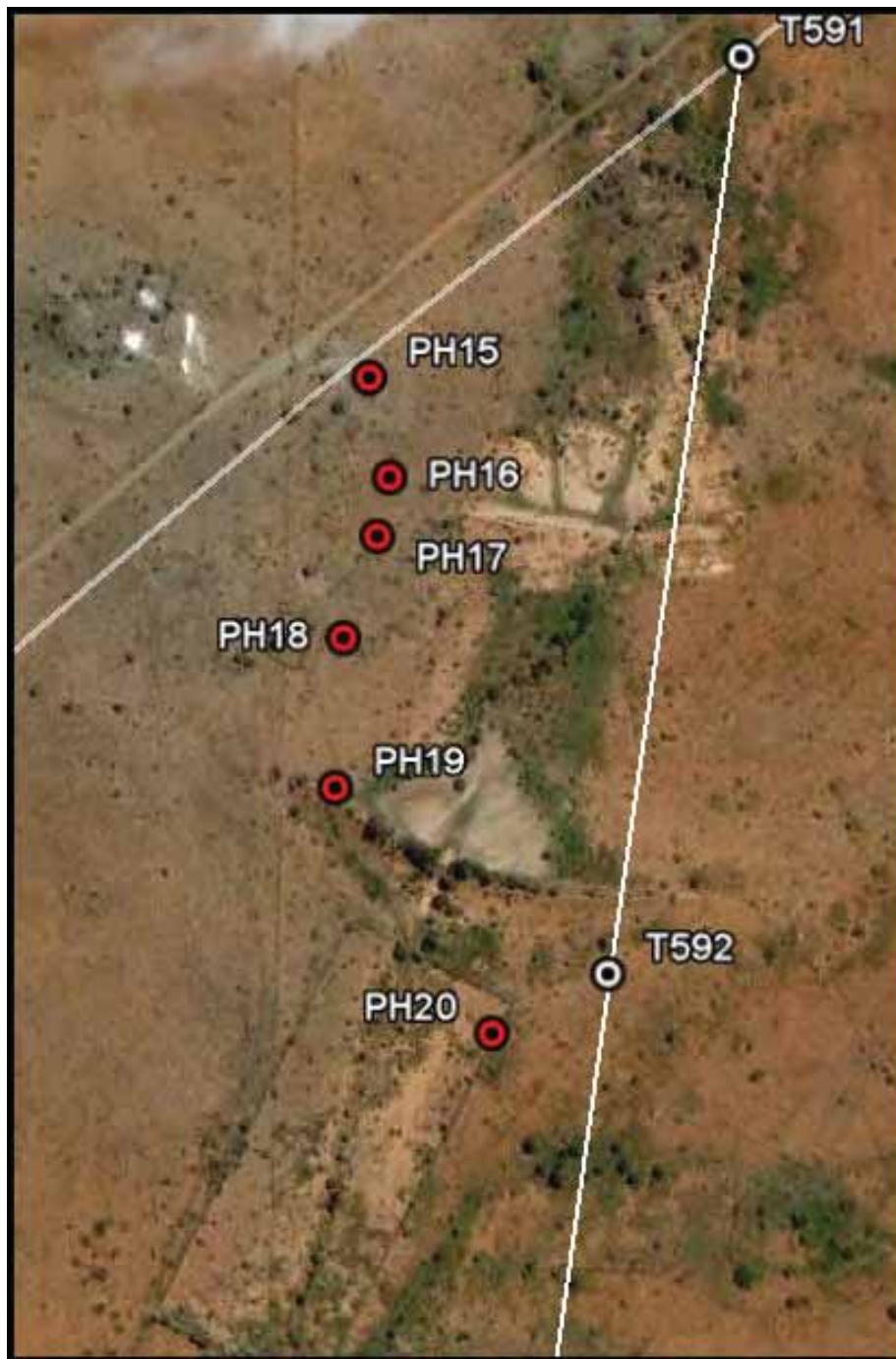


Figure 28 – Alignment T491 to T492 with sites identified



Figure 29 – PH15 – remains of ash midden



Figure 30 – PH14 – Glass pièces in midden



Figure 31 – PH16 – Stone work in foundation of house



Figure 32 – PH17 – Sun baked bricks on ruin of house



Figure 33 – PH19 – View of dam wall



Figure 34 – PH20 – Stone walling of paddock



Figure 35 – PH20 at T491 – Acheulean hand axe from excavation of dam wall

Way forward:

The site does have major conservation value and any activities that may impact on the site must be diverted.

- The sites needs to be seen as a no-go area;
- Any access routes need to be diverted around the sites;
- The ECO need to be on site during construction in the specific areas;
- All travelling around the site must be kept to single corridor of the already disturbed road areas;
- The pylon T491 will be moved toward the south and will still be out of reach of the stonewalling of the paddock (**PH20**);
- It is however recommended that a buffer as close as possible to 5 metres from the stone walling be kept.
- The excavations around T492 up to T490 needs to be monitored by a professional archaeologist for the presence of earlier stone ages find, as the finds of the acheulean hand axes indicate the possibility of further finds.

2. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

The short survey of areas of possible archaeological significance has indicated that the alignment of the Hydra-Perseus line is rich in archaeological remains. The management/mitigation measures provided for each section needs to be implemented before construction.

The initial Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) conducted for the line, has indicated the high possibility of finding Stone Age as well as Rock Art sites. The recommendation in the HIA that the line be walked down by a professional archaeologist has never been implemented.

The current ratio of finds makes this a very important point to be implemented before construction destroys archaeological sites not identified by the ECO's on site. The ECO's are in no way qualified to identify archaeological site and it can only be seen as luck that site have been identified in the past.

The further fact that more rock engravings have been identified close to T450 a day after the allotted areas, for this report, have been surveyed by archaeologists, only strengthen the case for a full archaeological walk down of the line in a reasonable allotted timeframe.

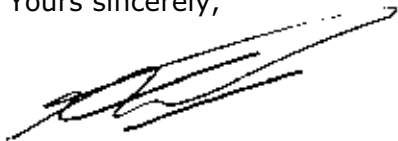
Report prepared by:

Wouter Fourie, BA(Hon) Archaeology (UP), Professional Member of the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologist (#041)

Henk Steyn, BA(Hon) Archaeology (UP), Professional Member of the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologist

Any further enquiries can be made to Wouter Fourie, on 082 851 3575 or wouter@gravesolutions.co.za.

Yours sincerely,



Wouter Fourie

Director

Professional Grave Solutions (Pty) Ltd