

9/2/2003/3

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE IKAROS PROJECT,
RUSTENBURG**

A phase-1 report prepared for Bohlweki Environmental

Professor T N Huffman

**Archaeological Resources Management
School of Geography, Archaeology and Environmental Studies
University of the Witwatersrand
Johannesburg**

April 2002

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INTRODUCTION

The Ikaros project involves the construction of a new substation and associated 400KV Transmission line infrastructure near Rustenburg, North West Province. The associated scoping report (Huffman 2002) identified two types of archaeological sites which were likely to be found in the proposed corridors: pottery clusters marking 16th century Southwestern Sotho-Tswana settlements (associated with people such as BaRolong), and stone-walled settlements occupied by Western Sotho-Tswana (such as Bakwena), Southern Sotho-Tswana (such as BaFokeng) and Ndebele under Mzilikazi.

METHOD

Various proposed corridors were examined on 9 November 2001, 15 January, 7 March and 5 April, 2002. Because of their extent, the corridors were only sampled, for example at road crossings and along the access road for other power lines. Sites were recorded with a GPS instrument and then marked on the 1:50 000 maps 2527AC Sun City, 2527CA Rustenburg (West) and 2527CB Rustenburg (East).

Site significance is based on integrity (i.e. *in situ* vs secondary context), amount of deposit, types of remains (e.g. grain bin foundations, burnt daga [a mixture of mud and dung], furnace or forge remains and animal kraals) and the potential to answer present research questions. Four categories of significance encompass almost all possibilities: none, low, medium and high. Sites with none or low significance usually do not require mitigation, while medium sites require further investigation, and sites with high significance should not be disturbed at all.

RESULTS

The proposed corridors cross over large areas of dark turf which are devoid of archaeological sites. Elsewhere, the land is under cultivation or well-developed, and so the surface has already been disturbed. A few places yielded archaeological or historical sites.

Ikaros-Bighorn Corridor

The remains of a Late Iron Age stone-walled settlement appear on orthophotos at the base of a small hill (Site 1: 25 38 09S 27 28 00E) on the northern border of the farm Swartkop Alias Swarkoppies 296 JQ. More walling stands at the base of hill 231 (Site 2: 25 38 05S 27 26 56E) near TM 17 at the northwest boundary of the same farm.

Other walling (Site 3: 25 37 36S 27 22 20E) appears on orthophotos near TM 13 on the boundary of Klipgat 281 JQ and Turfontein 302 JQ. In this case the walling is up on the edge of a large mountain range.

Significance

- All three stone-walled sites have medium significance.

Ikaros Substation

Five pottery clusters mark 16th century Sotho-Tswana settlements on the south side of a small stream flowing into the Bospoort Dam.

Site 4:	25 36 44.5S	27 20 55E
Site 5:	25 36 42S	27 20 47E
Site 6:	25 36 35S	27 20 44.5E
Site 7:	25 36 48S	27 20 45.5E
Site 8:	25 37 08.5S	27 20 39.5E

Significance

- All five open sites have low significance.

Southern Corridor

A stone-walled settlement (Site 9: 25 34 25.5S 27 11 42.5E) lies on the southern side of hill 29 near the Ararat Substation on the farm Kookfontein 265 JQ. The site was heavily overgrown, and its full extent is unclear.

One African graveyard (Site 10: 25 32 41S 27 10 21.7E) stands next to existing pylons on Beertfontein 263 JQ. Stone piles about 2m long and 1m wide mark four graves. Presumably, these graves used to be in close proximity to the residences of farm labourers.

A few Middle Stone Age artefacts (from about 250 000 to 25 000 years ago) lay in the stream bed (Site 11) below the grave yard. These artefacts are not *in situ*.

Significance

- The Middle Stone Age artefacts have no significance.
- The stone-walled settlement has medium significance
- The African graveyard has medium significance.

The western limb of this corridor was examined when it was still considered as an option. One complex stone-walled settlement (Site 12: 25 31 39.5 S 27 04 41-39.5E) occurs on a small hill on the farm Boschhoek 103 JQ on the east side of the Magaliesberg. *In situ* burnt daga marked at least one house, and preservation appears to be good. Associated pottery contains a high proportion of mica temper typical of Western Sotho-Tswana.

More mica-tempered pottery lay exposed by sheet erosion (Site 13: 25 31 41.5S 27 02 46E) on the west side of the mountain range. Presumably, this pottery has washed down from a stone-walled site, or, alternatively, a vessel was broken in agricultural lands.

Significance

- The eroded potsherds have no significance.
- The stone-walled site has medium archaeological significance. (Apparently, this site has high significance to local communities, and this is one reason why the western limb has been rejected.)

Alternative Corridor 1

No archaeological sites were noted.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Until the precise route is chosen, the impact of the project on individual archaeological sites is unknown. Consequently, the probability of the impact can not be assessed at present, although the nature (construction), extent (local) and duration (permanent) of the impact, if it occurs, are clear (Table 1).

The sites recorded during this archaeological assessment demonstrate the necessity for a detailed examination of the final route. The distribution of archaeological sites formed a pattern with open agricultural villages near watercourses with cultivatable soils, while stone-walled settlements stand at the base or on top of hills. Thus a more detailed examination should concentrate on these localities.

Open pottery sites will not require further recording unless burnt daga structures are also present. If pylons (the only part of the project of archaeological concern) cannot avoid burnt structures or a stone-walled site, then archaeologists need to excavate or otherwise record that area. The African graveyard (Site 10) should be avoided. Otherwise its removal and reburial must be negotiated with the descendants.

With these provisions, there is no archaeological reason why the project should not continue.

REFERENCES

Huffman, T.N. 2002. **Archaeological Scoping Report for the Ikaros Project, Rustenburg.** Johannesburg: Archaeological Resources Management.

Table 1. Summary of impacts.

	Nature	Extent	Duration	Probability	Significance	Status
Trident-Bighorn						
1. Stone walling	Construction	Local	Permanent	?	Medium	Negative
2. Stone walling	“	“	“	“	“	“
3. Stone walling	“	“	“	“	“	“
Ikaros Substation						
4. Pottery cluster	Construction	Local	Permanent	?	Low	Negative
5. Pottery cluster	“	“	“	“	“	“
6. Pottery cluster	“	“	“	“	“	“
7. Pottery cluster	“	“	“	“	“	“
8. Pottery cluster	“	“	“	“	“	“
Southern Corridor						
9. Stone walling	Construction	Local	Permanent	?	Medium	Negative
10. African graveyard	“	“	“	“	“	“
11. Middle Stone Age	-	-	-	-	None	-
Western Limb						
12. Stone walling	None	None	None	Unlikely	Medium	None
13. Pot sherds	-	-	-	-	None	-