

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PORTION 27 OF THE FARM JOOSTENBERG VLAKTE 727

Prepared as part of an EIA for

PIETER BADENHORST PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CC

JANUARY 2008



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1 Introduction

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was appointed by Piet Badenhorst on behalf of the proponent, Medallion Mushrooms to conduct an Archaeology Impact Assessment of portion 24 of the farm Joostenberg Vlake 727 (Figure 1). This study has taken place as part of an EIA for the proposed development. A separate Heritage Impact Assessment has been completed by Vide Memoria.

The proposed activity is the establishment of a mushroom farm on the south east portion of the site as indicated on Figure 2.

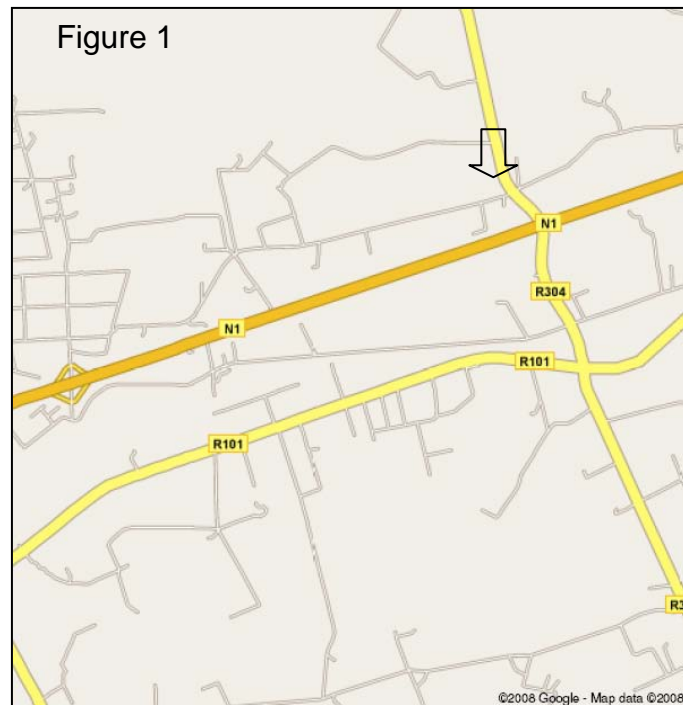




Figure 2. The development area

1.1 Site description

The study area is made up of un-cultivated land. It lies adjacent to the R304 (close to Tygerberg Zoo) very close to the intersection with the N1. Much of the area is a wetland in the valley of the Mosselbank River which flows through the site, however the south east portion lies outside this immediate riverine zone. Generally the region is heavily cultivated – vineyards, grazing lands, cereals and poultry farming. The area is not known to be archaeologically rich although Middle and Early Stone Age material occurs sporadically throughout the region. In terms of built environment, there are no structures on the property apart from a farm workers burial ground.

1.2 Legislative requirements

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) of 1999 protects the following, amongst other heritage resources. Furthermore, section 38 requires that heritage impacts assessments (HIA's) are required for certain kinds of development such as rezoning of land greater than 10000 sq m in extent or exceeding 3 or more sub-divisions, or for any activity that will alter the

character or landscape of a site greater than 5000 sq m. Standalone HIA's are not required where an EIA is carried out as long as the EIA contains an adequate HIA component that fulfils section 38 provisions. Heritage Western Cape (HWC) is responsible for the management and protection of all Provincial Heritage sites (grade 2), generally protected heritage and structures (grade 3a-grade 3c). The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is responsible for the protection of National Heritage Sites (grade 1 sites), graves and human remains.

"Archaeological" means - *material remains resulting from human activity which are in a state of disuse and are in or on land and which are older than 100 years, including artefacts, human and hominid remains and artificial features and structures.* This means that an archaeological site is any area where there are artefacts (objects made by human hand) and ruins that are over 100 years of age. An archaeological find is therefore any object or collection of objects or structures in disuse made by human hand that is over 100 years old. This can range from ancient stone tools, ruins to the contents of historic rubbish dumps containing ceramic shards and bottles.

"Palaeontological" means - *any fossilised remains or fossil trace of animals or plants which lived in the geological past, other than fossil fuels or fossiliferous rock intended for industrial use, and any site which contains such fossilised remains or trace.* The term fossil means mineralised bones of animals, shellfish, plants, marine animals. A trace fossil is the track or footprint of a fossil animal that is preserved in stone or consolidated sediment.

1.3 Section 36

"Graves and human remains" are protected by not only the NHRA but also provincial ordinances, local authorities and provincial health departments who apply the Human Tissues Act.

Figure 3



2 Method

The target area was searched by two experienced archaeologists, Tim Hart and David Halkett over a period of about 4 hours. Transects were walked over the study area. Any visible signs of archaeological material were recorded and mapped using a Garmin GPS (wgs84).

2.1 Restrictions

In some areas, especially along the river banks vegetation was dense and visibility was poor. A case in point is the graveyard which is heavily overgrown to the extent that individual graves were difficult to identify. In the higher areas, relevantly in the area that is to be affected by the proposed activity, visibility was good. No trial excavations were conducted during the study.

3 Findings

Two heritage sites were located in the study area. These are detailed as follows;

- Graveyard. This is an overgrown farm workers graveyard on the northern edge of the property (Figure 3). It is demarked by a simple wire fence which appears to have been maintained in the recent past. Some 30 identifiable graves were noted however the unevenness of the ground surface suggests that the area has been heavily utilised and may contain many more graves than are immediately identifiable. The graves themselves are humble and informally marked, although it was evident that at least one of them was fairly recent and is still visited by next of kin. There is a single formal granite memorial stone erected by the Briers family of Paarl in memory of the generations of farm workers who have been associated with their property.
- A pre-colonial period archaeological site was located in a sandy area on the north western side of the property on the edge of the Mosselbank stream. Stone artefacts were noted in the many mole hills that characterise the vicinity. Indications are that there is a scatter of archaeological material that probably lies below surface. The artefacts consist of mainly waste material (flakes of silcrete and quartz), however one Late Stone Age adze was noted. Several of the flakes showed evidence of platform preparation which could indicate that some of the material is of MSA origin – possibly brought up by moles from a buried land surface. The site cannot be assigned a high degree of significance in that it is sparse and its origins are unclear.

3.1 Impacts of the proposed activity

Graveyard: The graveyard will not be impacted by the proposed activity which is planned for the north eastern portion of the property.

Action: Given that the grave yard appears to have been used recently, future property owners are encouraged to create mechanisms which will allow family members to visit the site should they desire.

Pre-colonial archaeological site: Depending on the ultimate layout of the proposed activity which is to be located close by in the north eastern sector of the property, it is possible that physical impact in the form of ground surface disturbance may take place. This could result in a low negative impact.

Action: The proponent is encouraged to avoid development activities that will encroach beyond the dotted yellow buffer line indicated on Figure 2. If it is necessary to encroach on the site mitigatory trial excavations and sampling will need to take place at the cost of the proponent. This involves:

- Appointing an archaeologist to stratigraphically excavate and bulk sieve a sample of the sandy deposit to obtain an analysable sample of artefactual material, and thereafter ensure that the material is curated at a suitable repository.

4 Conclusion

The proposed activity is considered acceptable with the proviso that that footprint of the development is situated to avoid impacting the pre-colonial archaeological site. If this is not possible, a sampling programme will need to be initiated before development commences.