

**MOUNTAIN VIEW HERITAGE ASSESSMENT,
GAUTENG**

A Phase I report prepared for Seaton Thompson and Associates
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Several places of archaeological and historical interest occur in the project area. A Later Stone Age quarry, 1840s house and recent African cemetery should be avoided. Seven stonewalled settlements need mapping, while one complex requires excavation. An historic house associated with Kruger should be used in some way.

INTRODUCTION

Dr R. Graca, trading as Blue Rose Developments, intends to establish upper income housing on Portion 2 of the Farm Nooitgedacht 176 IR in Gauteng. The proposed housing estate incorporates about 290 ha along the eastern slopes of the prominent hill known as Perdeberg south of Johannesburg. The environmental coordinators for the project, Seaton Thompson and Associates, commissioned Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to examine the area for sites of archaeological and historical value in terms of Sections 35 and 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999).

BACKGROUND

In the larger district, Stone Age and Historic sites are on record in the Archaeological Survey files at the University of the Witwatersrand. For the Stone Age, Earlier Stone Age (about 1 million to 400 000 years ago) artefacts, such as handaxes, cleavers and other bifaces, occur in river gravels of the Vaal system, while Middle Stone Age (400 000 to 40 000 years ago) points and blades are more frequent. Later Stone Age (40 000 to 1000 years ago) sites cluster in areas, such as the Magaliesberg, where rock shelters are more common. The remains of the British 'Witkop Blockhouse' still stand a few kilometres east, near Daleside.

The present project area lies immediately south of the Eye of Africa development, previously investigated by ARM (Huffman & Schoeman 2004) and Pistorius (2004). These investigation recorded Middle Stone Age sites and Historic buildings. Later Iron Age stonewalling of various types (see Huffman 2007) is on record in the Klipriviersberg and Suikerbosrand.

METHOD

Two ARM staff visited the project area on 10 May 2008. Mr C. Jacobs, the present owner, showed the team various areas of interest. In addition, the team traversed much of the area on

foot and by vehicle, concentrating on rocky outcrops and flat terraces. Sites were recorded with a hand-held GPS instrument calibrated to WGS 84, and then transferred to the 1: 50 000 map sheets 2627BD Lenasia and 2628AC Alberton (Fig. 1).

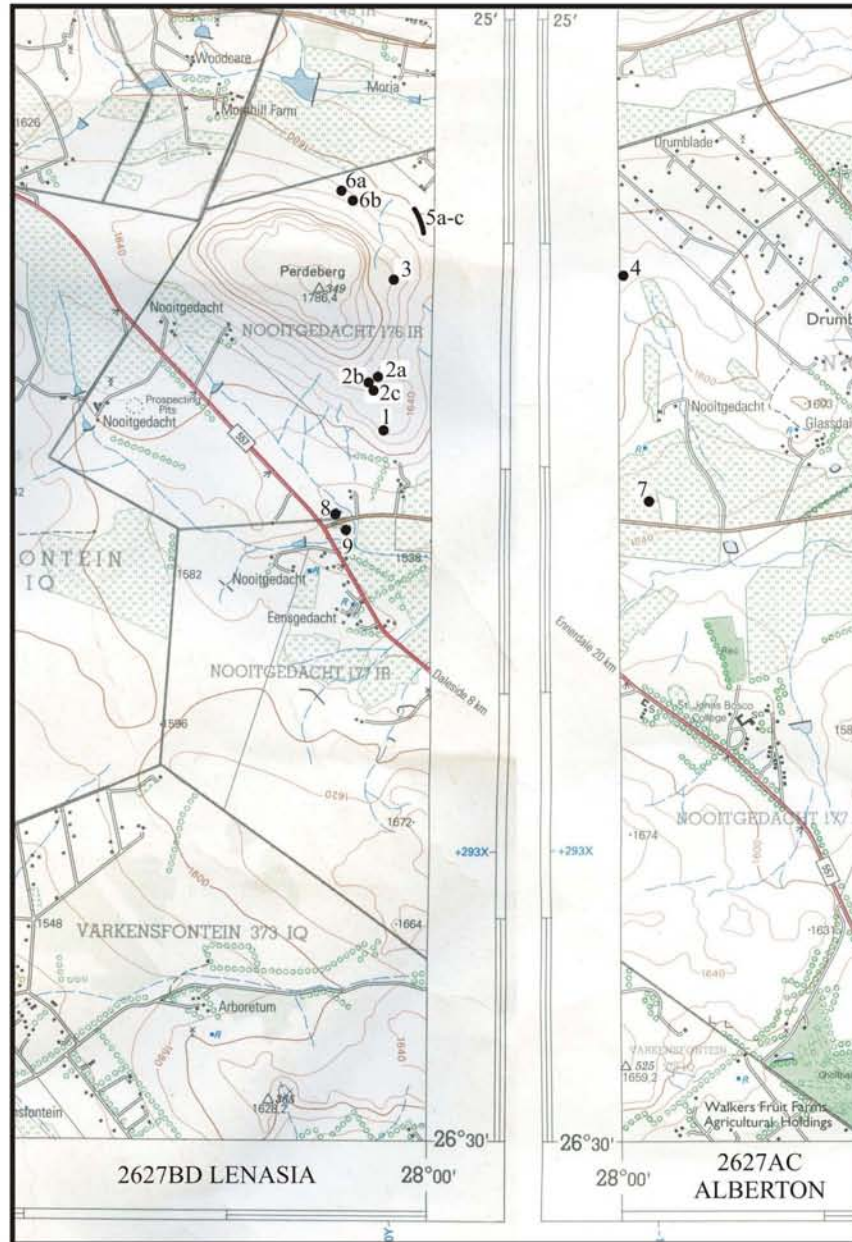


Figure 1. Sites recorded during assessment of project area.

Site significance is based on five main criteria: (1) primary versus secondary context; (2) amount of deposit; (3) number and variety of features; (4) uniqueness; and (5), potential to answer present research questions. Sites with no significance do not require mitigation, low to medium sites may require limited mitigation, high significance requires extensive mitigation, while outstanding sites should not be disturbed at all. Recognizable graves have high social value regardless of their archaeological significance.

RESULTS

Vegetation was dense and ground visibility poor. Furthermore, the small valley below the hill has been cultivated in recent times, and the land thoroughly disturbed. Nevertheless, the team examined sufficient areas to know that many archaeological sites of significance lay within the project area. The Perdeberg produces suitable stone (dolerite) for flaking, and so Stone Age people were attracted to the area.

Isolated Earlier Stone Age and Middle Stone artefacts occur on the slopes of the hill. One site was in situ. **Site 1** (26 26 50S 27 59 46.6E) is an Oakhurst (about 14 000 years ago) quarry on the lower terrace of the hill, overlooking Mr Jacobs house. Typical Oakhurst flake scars occur on a thin outcrop, some 30m long (Fig. 2), on the edge of the terrace. Various flakes and cores lay on the surface next to the firebreak. **Site 1** is a particularly good example and therefore *has high significance*.

The lower terrace also supports an extensive complex of Late Iron Age stonewalled settlements (**Site 2**) about 300m north of Site 1. The boundary fence splits the complex, and about four homesteads stand inside the project area (Fig. 3). Each unit has its own central kraal area surrounded by a residential zone. **Site 2a** (26 26 36.3S 27 59 44.7E) includes an ash midden next to the front entrance, while **Site 2b** (26 26 37.4S 27 59 42.9 E) appears to have the largest central area. **Site 2c** (26 26 39.6S 27 59 43.3) is still well preserved, but stones from **Site 2d** (26 26 41.1S 27 59 43.9E) may have been removed in antiquity as the population expanded. A new road passes through **Site 2a**. Pottery in the road (Fig. 4) belongs to the *Uitkomst facies*, and shows that the complex dates to about AD 1800. This complex is a good example of Klipriviersberg walling, and it has good research potential. **Site 2** therefore *has high significance*.

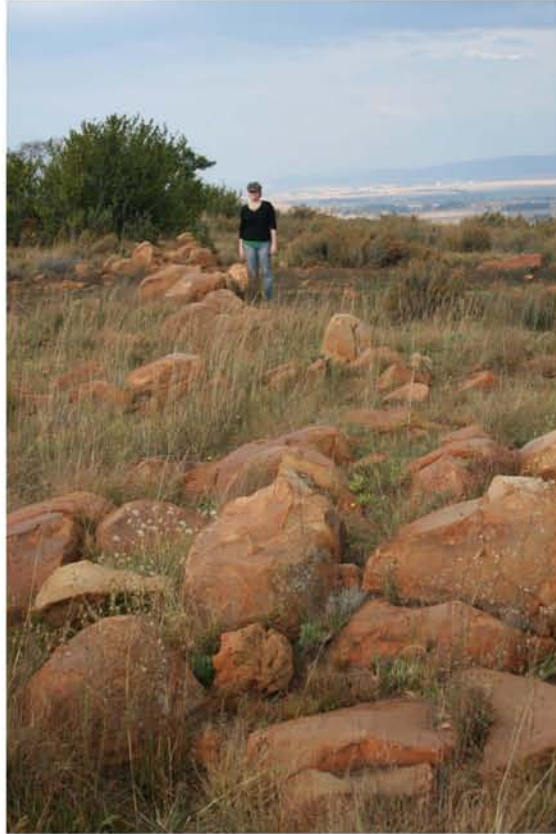


Figure 2. Site 1: Oakhurst-period quarry.



Figure 3. Site 2 complex. Truck inside site 2a.



Figure 4. Site 2a: *Uitkomst* pottery exposed in road.

Other Klipriviersberg-type of walling dot the project area. A single homestead (**Site 3**: 26 26 09.5S 27 59 48.5E) stands on a ledge on the east side of the hill. **Site 3** is well preserved, but there appears to be little deposit. It has *medium significance*.

The remains of two separate clusters lay along the basal road. Farming and other activities have removed much of the stone from **Site 4** (26 26 08.1S 28 00 01.9E) and **Site 5a-c** (26 25 52.6S 27 59 55.3E and 26 25 57.8S 27 59 57.4E). These two areas have *low significance*.

The final cluster, **Site 6** (Fig. 5), stands at the north end of the project area. **Site 6a** (26 25 46.1S 27 59 33.9E) contains a lower maize grindstone in one of the back courtyards, while an isolated kraal stands behind **Site 6b** (26 25 48.1S 27 59 35.5E). The firebreak runs through **6a**. Nevertheless, both sites are relatively well preserved, and they have *medium significance*.



Figure 5. Site 6a: walling of central kraal. Stick = 1m.

One African cemetery, **Site 7**, stands next to the fence line between two agricultural lands (26 27 08.1S 28 00 10.3E). Some nine graves, marked by stone piles, are aligned east/west along the fence. This cemetery has *high social significance*.

One historic house (**Site 8**: 26 27 15.1S 27 59 32.5E) dating to the 1880s is still in use (Fig. 6). President Kruger is said to have used this house as a stop over on various trips. The antiquity and historical association of this house gives it *high significance*.



Figure 6. Site 8: 1880s house associated with President Kruger.

The remains of an earlier Trek Boer house (**Site 9**: 26 27 17.9S 27 59 35.1S) are located just outside the boundary of the project area (Fig. 7). Dating to the 1840s, clay walls still stand on top of a stone foundation. These kinds of remains are rare.



Figure 7. Site 9: remains of 1880s Trek Boer house. Boundary of project area in foreground.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Several sites require some form of mitigation. First, although outside the project area, **Site 9** should be avoided. It is too rare to be accidentally damaged. Secondly, if possible, the historic house, **Site 8**, should be utilised in the project. Otherwise, a conservation architect must record the building according to the standards required by Heritage legislation.

Thirdly, the African cemetery, **Site 7**, should be avoided. Depending on development plans, it may need to be fenced.

Fourthly, the stonewalled settlements require further work. **Site 6a** and **6b** need to be mapped before they are further damaged. **Site 3**, on the high ledge, should also be mapped. The extensive complex of **Site 2** requires the most work. It needs to be mapped and the midden test excavated. Mapping will help to clarify the relationship of **Site 2d** to the others, while a test excavation will provide ceramic and faunal samples useful for research in the future.

Finally, the Oakhurst quarry, **Site 1**, should be avoided. If this is not possible, then it needs to be recorded and test excavated also.

All mitigation should be completed before development begins.

REFERENCES

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