

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE MISPAH TAILINGS
DAM EXTENSION**

A Phase I Report prepared for AngloGold Ashanti

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INTRODUCTION

AngloGold Ashanti intends to extend their existing Mispah tailings dam on to the farm Moab 279 in Free State Province, near Orkney. In keeping with various Mineral, Environmental and Heritage legislation, mine management commissioned a professional archaeologist to investigate the area for historic graves and sites of archaeological interest.

METHOD

Professor Huffman, in the company of mine personnel, visited the project area on 18 March 2005. The team traversed the area on foot and by vehicle, paying special attention to all gum tree areas. Sites were recorded with a hand-held GPS instrument. The sites occur on the 1:50 000 map sheet 2726 BB.

For this project, five criteria determine site significance: integrity of deposit (primary versus secondary context), depth of deposit, number and variety of features, uniqueness and potential to answer present research questions. Following these criteria, sites with no significance do not require further consideration, low significance may require mitigation, sites with medium significance will require mitigation while sites with high significance should not be disturbed at all. All cemeteries automatically have medium significance because of their present social value.

RESULTS

Most of the project area was under cultivation, and grass was high elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is clear that no sites of archaeological interest will be impacted. Two historic cemeteries and one historic house complex, however, lie within or near the impact zone (Figure 1).

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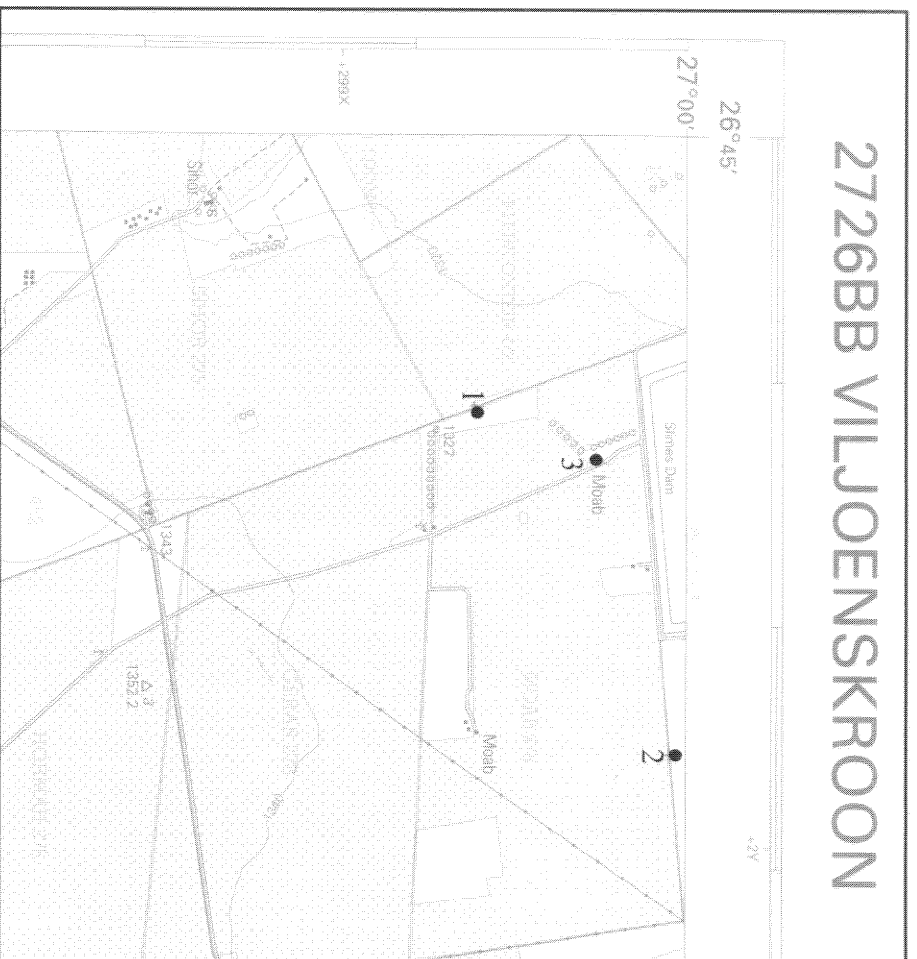


Figure 1. Archaeological sites recorded during the assessment.

Cemetery 1 (27 00 45.1S 26 46 06.4E) contains about 16 graves on the edge of a gum tree plantation. All are orientated east/west. Most now consist of a low mound of rock, but two bear headstones: Abraham Nkomo, died 1937; and Ellisa Nkomo, died 1937 (Figure 2). A cement drum with the number OR KF 6 stands close by. This site lies just outside the impact zone.

- *Cemetery 1 has medium significance.*

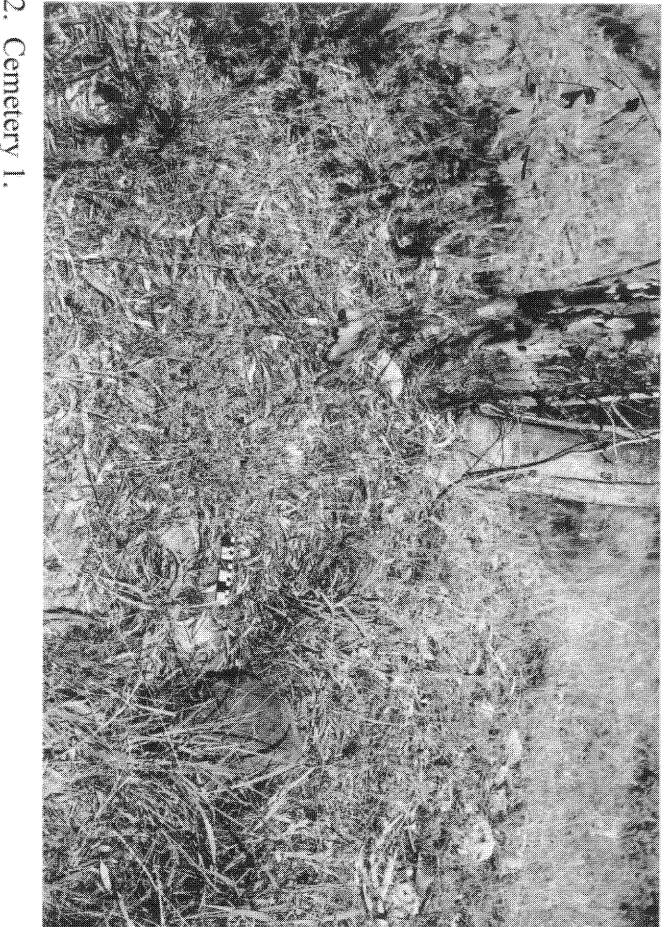


Figure 2. Cemetery 1.

Cemetery 2 (27 00 03.3S 26 47 33E) contains about 25 graves, marked by low stone mounds orientated east/west (Figure 3). Three bear headstones: Setame Xaba, Jek Xaba and Selina Nkosi. They appear to have been buried in 1959 and 1960. Two cement drums numbered OR MP 11 and OR MP 12 bracket the graves. This cemetery is located near the boundary of the game reserve, just inside the proposed impact zone.

- *Cemetery 2 has medium significance.*

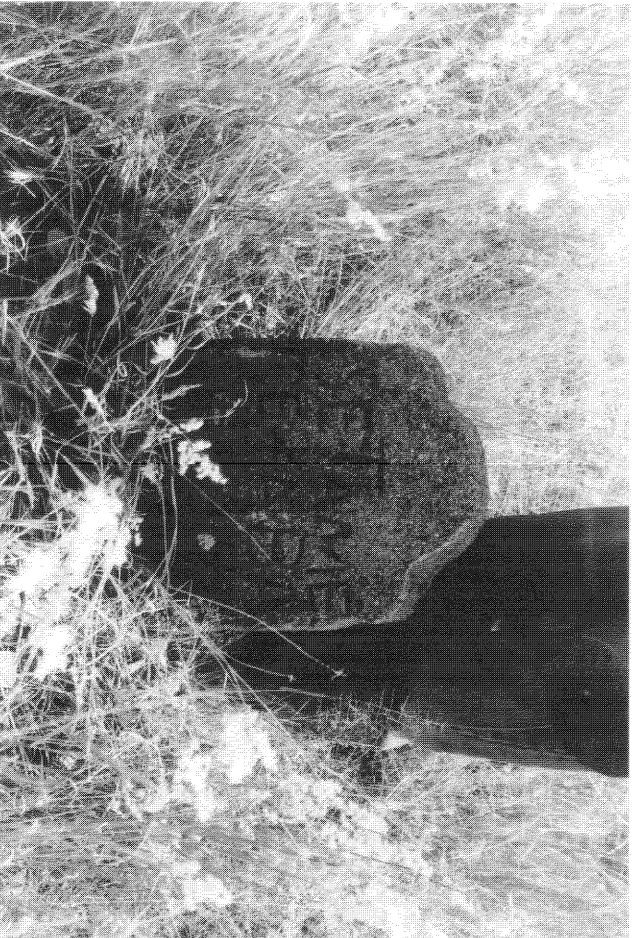


Figure 3. Cemetery 2.

- The **Residential Complex** (27 00 20.7S 26 46 20.4E) includes one old European farmhouse (Figure 4), presumably occupied by a manager, and a worker's cottage (Figure 5). A third structure has since been ploughed over.
- *This Complex has low significance.*



Figure 4. Residential Complex, Manager's House.

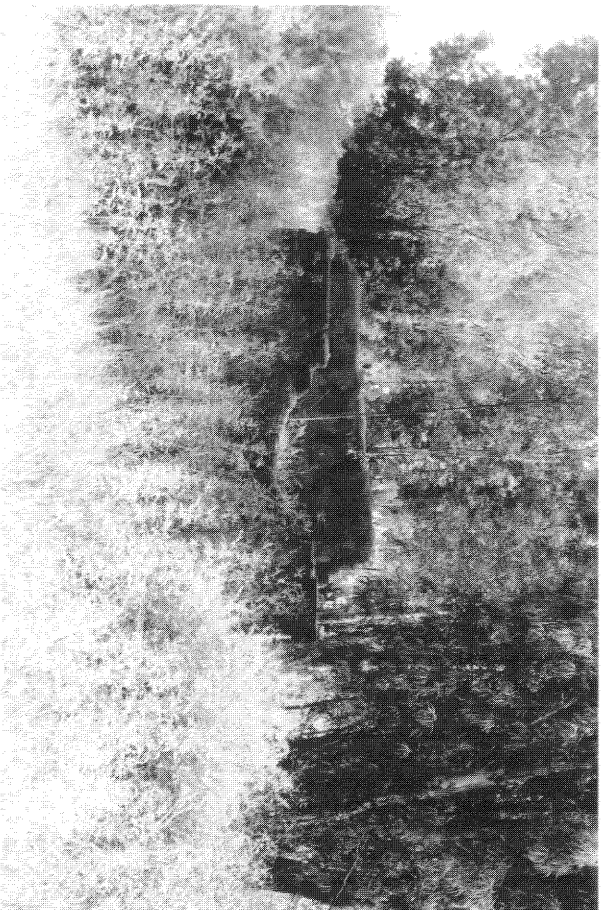


Figure 5. Residential Complex, worker's cottage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although **Cemetery 1** lies outside the proposed footprint of the new tailings dam, it should be fenced for further protection. Furthermore, according to mine personnel, the Xaba family still live in the vicinity, but are unaware of the precise location of the graveyard. They will want to visit their ancestors' graves from time to time, and it would be good social practice to make the cemetery accessible.

Cemetery 2, for the Nkomo family, will have to be moved unless the mine shifts the boundary of the tailings dam outside the game reserve. Following existing legislation, the descendants need to be notified. They should agree to the removal and the location of the reburials.

The two houses in the **Residential Complex** should be recorded in more detail before they are destroyed. The recording should include blueprints and photographs.

With these provisos, there are no archaeological or historical reasons why the Mispah Project should not proceed.