

Mokala National Park



A First Report on Heritage Resources

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Mokala National Park: a first report on heritage resources

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Background

The new Mokala National Park (MNP) has been established on the following group of cadastral entities or parts thereof (at the time of the survey): Scholtz Fontein North, Doorn Laagte, Goede Hoop, Vaalbosch Pan, and parts of Wildehonde Pan and Wolve Pan. These lie to the south of the Riet River and west of the N12, amongst, and to the north and west of, a cluster of dolerite hills.

As part of the process of compiling a baseline description and management plan for MNP, the author was contracted to undertake a survey of archaeological and heritage resources in the Park.

This first report documents observations made during initial fieldwork in the Park in October-November 2007.

Survey: background and expectations.

Certain archaeological sites were known to exist on the farms currently incorporated into the MNP. One of the Doornlaagte rock engraving sites was published by G.J. and D. Fock in 1989. Two other engraving sites were examined during a visit to the erstwhile Wintershoek game farm in the 1990s. Beyond the Park, a number of rock art sites, and a range of Stone Age occurrences, are known (Wilman 1933; Morris 1988; Fock & Fock 1989; Beaumont & Morris 1990), particularly from along the Riet River on Estate Biesjebult West (Driekopseiland) (Morris 2002), Schutse Kama, and Moirdale, with a strong likelihood that other sites would be found on those and other properties. Engraving sites are also known on properties south of the Park, for example on Richmond and Lovedale. In terms of this, it was expected that the MNP should have a comparable wealth of precolonial cultural traces, particularly of rock engravings.

Place names as a reflection of nineteenth- to twenty-first century history

The farms *Scholtz Fontein North* (with former homesteads known as *Wintershoek* and *Strydam*), *Doorn Laagte*, *Goede Hoop*, *Vaalbosch Pan*, and portions of *Wildehonde Pan* and *Wolve Pan*, all lie near, though to the north of, the never-properly-defined Vetberg Line which established, fairly informally, the spheres of influence of the Free State and Adam Kok's Griqua polity in 1838. The Vetberg koppies lie just north east of Salt Lake. The Vetberg line later roughly defined the northern edge of the Albania Settlement, established in the late 1860s, and *Scholtzfontein* was one of several

“northern farms” disputed by the Albania Settlers, the Griquas and the Boers. It was a proposed meeting place for Commissions intended to settle the issues (Kurtz 1988).

Until the early nineteenth century the entire area would have been possessed by Khoe-San people (Morris 2002, in press). Griqua pastoralists moved into the area at that period, and many of the local Dutch [Griqua] farm and place names represent a first episode of frontier re-naming that occurred at the time. It was a period of turbulence, the climax years of the protracted Difaqane; and records of the 1830s indicate the presence also of pockets of Sotho-Tswana and Xhosa people in the broader region. San people, the indigenous people of the region, were clearly under threat, and many may have been exterminated or evicted. In January 1835 Andrew Smith, traveling along the Riet River near here, told of how Bush women visited his camp to obtain tobacco, but that “by no means could we succeed in getting a glimpse of their countrymen. The men ... are always extremely shy of strangers...the men were in the hills, but afraid to come near us” (Lye 1975). “The hills” may well have included places now within the MNP.

A later generation of colonial naming took place from the 1860s when previous Griqua [Dutch] names were replaced with English ones. Examples include Belmont (previously *Uithaaldersfontein*) and *Hayfield*, *Richmond* and *Lovedale* (previously *Rietpan*), south of the Park. The removals of Griqua people from these farms at that period, Kurtz (1988:118) observes, often “involved the violence and brutality so characteristic of South Africa.” Huts were burnt and stock and produce confiscated.

The adoption of *Mokala* for the Park represents a further re-naming away from the precolonial Khoe-San usages of the area (which do nevertheless survive in a few local instances, such as *Schutse Kama*, originally a !Ora name meaning “Nine Camelthorn Trees”). Successive renaming processes reflect the dominant political and cultural imperatives of their day. They are a historical record in their own right.

The archaeological and heritage traces found in the course of the survey provide different perspectives on some aspects of this history; they are silent on some of them, and tell of much else, particularly from the precolonial past, which is not recorded in the historical record.

Methods and Constraints

A few sites were known prior to the survey. MNP personnel were aware of several and also of cemetery sites. The initial work was aimed at visiting all known sites and recording basic information on them in order to assess status, significance and management recommendations. Likely places for sites in the landscape were then additionally examined, while selected sample areas in different parts of the Park were checked systematically.

Several more occurrences of rock art were located, which suggested that still further examples may well be found in due course. It was also found, though, that many seemingly ideal rocks and locales for engravings were not used. Effectively every single outcrop of rock – of which there are many – needs, in the long term, to be checked. It is felt that the main occurrences of rock art have now been located, and what may remain to be found are most likely to be small isolated sites, probably

mainly individual engravings. One of the recommendations arising from this study is that Park personnel, particularly rangers, should receive training in order to recognize engravings and other sites so that further possible observations can be recorded and relevant persons called in to document and assess them.

In terms of limitations, it was hoped to meet with former farm workers now apparently in the employ of the Park, but the People and Parks official was not able to set this up in the period that we worked there. This would have assisted us in determining the location of further farm graveyards: we believe that about three sets of graves may still need to be located. It is hoped there will be other opportunities for this interaction with individuals well acquainted with this landscape.

Our own work was severely disrupted at the end of the first week of scheduled fieldwork when our field recording equipment was stolen in a burglary in Kimberley. By report due-date we had not had some of this equipment replaced, and limited further fieldwork was possible. We nevertheless believe that the work completed is yielding a fair reflection of what heritage resources occur in the Park and that this can be the basis for planning and management, bearing in mind that some additional sites may yet come to light. It is not anticipated that these would be major sites that would significantly change the conclusions of this study.

As to modus operandi, in each instance a GPS reading was taken for a site or site component, and a standard Archaeological Data Recording form completed, with basic documentation and photography. National Site Numbers (for the SAHRA database) were issued, these being based on the quarter degree grid system developed in the 1960s, whereby each new site across South Africa is coded sequentially per 1:50 000 sheet. Standardised site names are based on the cadastral entities on which they occur.

Observations

Observations, noted below, are arranged according to type of heritage resource, e.g. rock art, farm cemetery, and so on, with salient details presented in a table for each of the sites/observations.

The Mokala National Park Heritage Site Number is a random sequential number, in order of discovery.

The National Site Number is the unique number assigned to each site in the McGregor Museum's Regional Recording Centre database.

The Site Name is the name as recorded in the Regional Recording Centre database.

The GPS position is complemented by a description of the site's location in the landscape (field data forms include a sketch map as well).

Site Type and Description categorises each observation and provides a summary description of the heritage features.

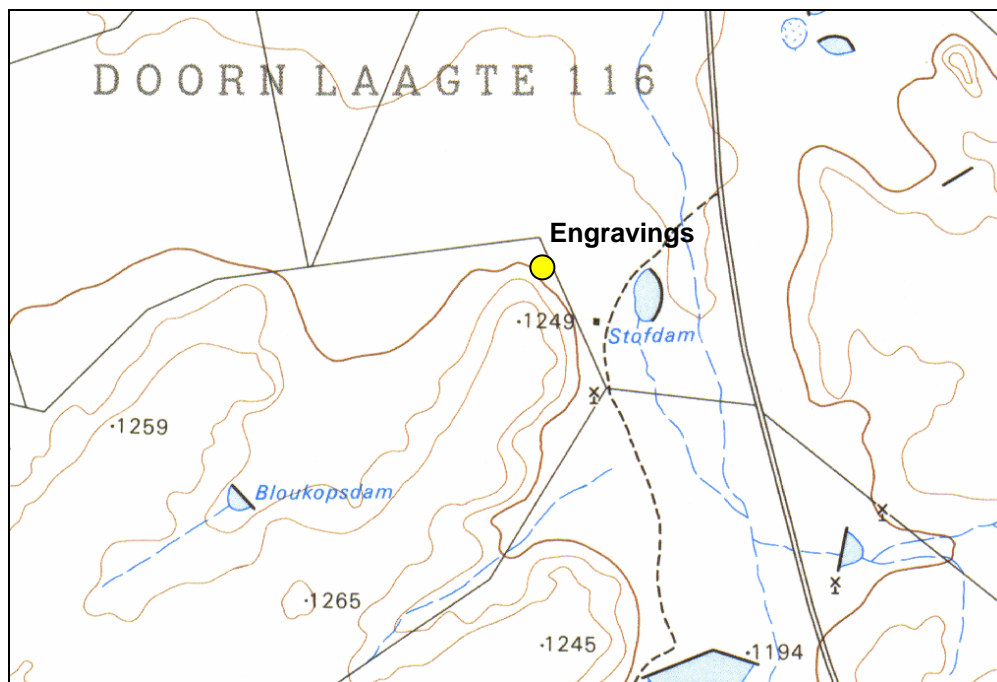
Conservation Status includes remarks about the current condition of the heritage resources in question.

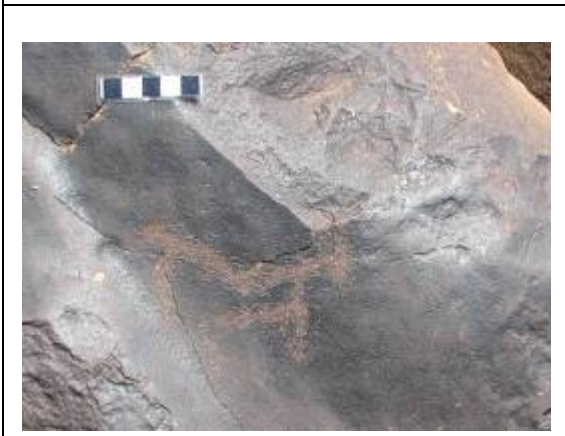
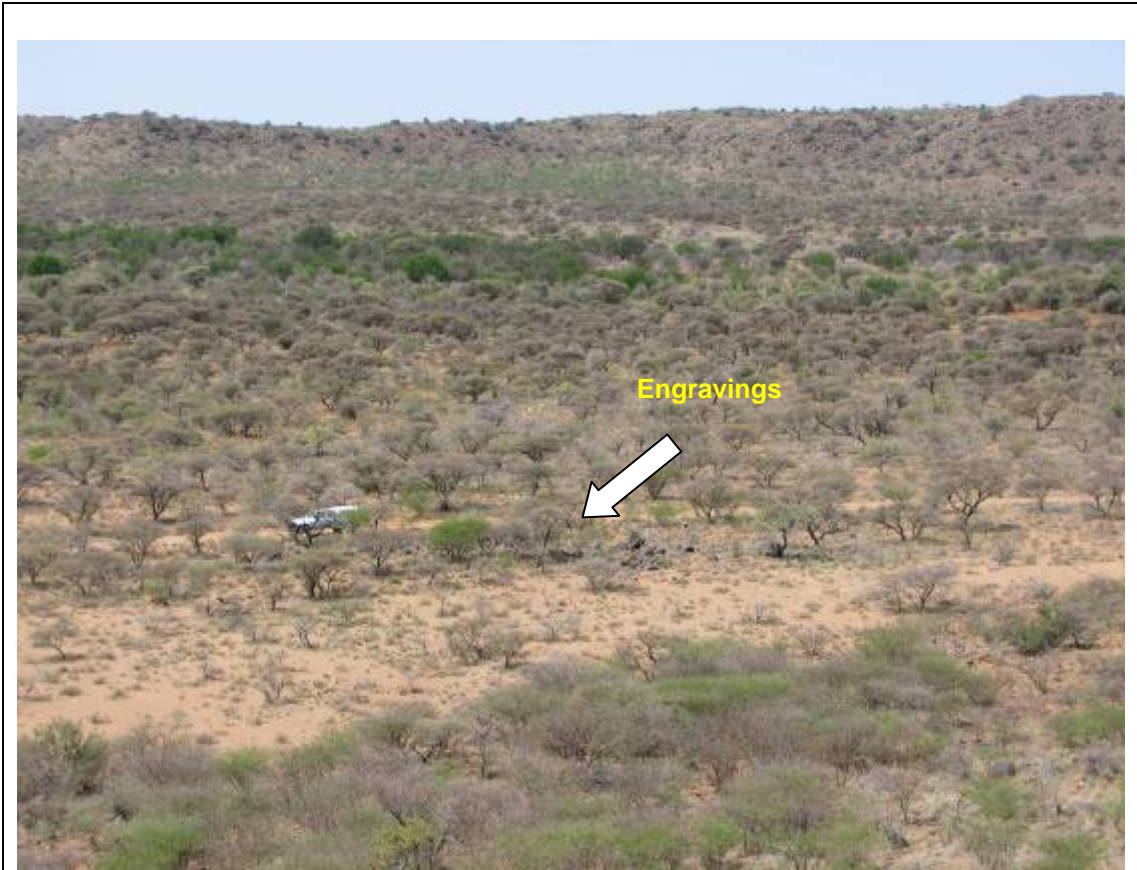
Management Options includes comments about possible/recommended management processes for each site.

An indication of photographic coverage is given for each observation, with a sampling of such photographs, together with a map included in this report. The photographs are archived at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley.

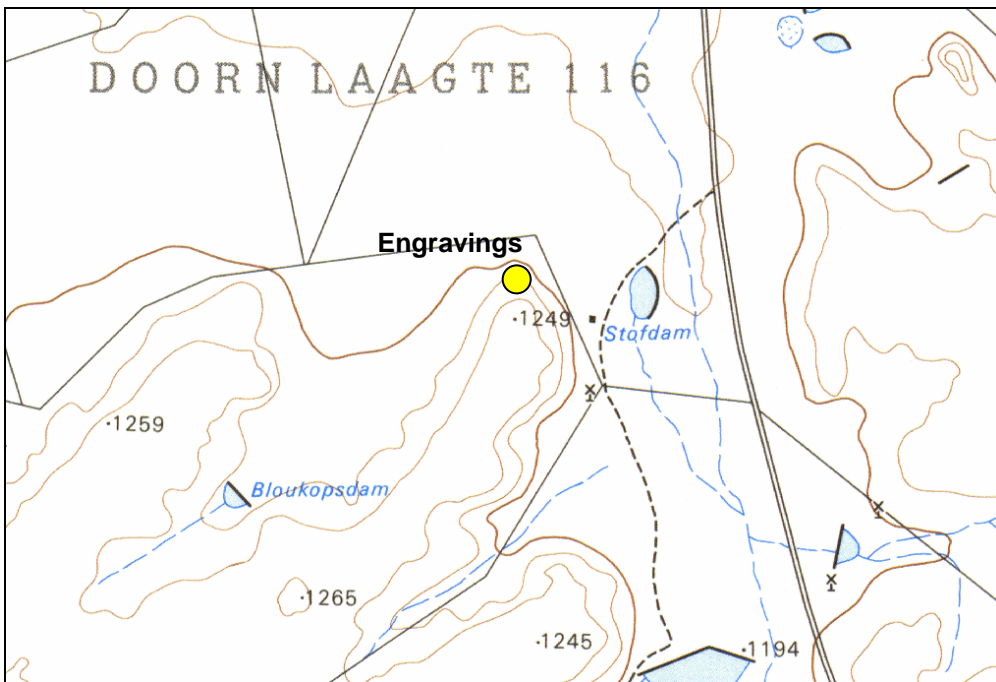
1. Rock Art Sites

Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 7	National Site Number: 2924AB013
Site Name: Doorn Laagte	
GPS position: 29.12410 24.38420	
Location in landscape: On outcrop at the base of the ridge, immediately adjacent to the road.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. Two engravings found in pecked technique on a dolerite outcrop a few hundred metres from the foot of the hills.	
Conservation Status: In good condition.	
Management options: Close to road, so potentially vulnerable.	
Not suitable for general public access (small number, difficult to appreciate).	
Photos: 100 % coverage 2007_10_16 Mokala1 059-063, 073	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 8	National Site Number: 2924AB014
Site Name: Doorn Laagte	
GPS position: 29.12831 24.38259	
Location in landscape: At top of knoll below the main ridge, overlooking the Riet River Basin.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. Four or five engravings in pecked technique on fairly rough surfaces. A particularly fine elephant, showing elephant-hide-like markings. Also a possible springbok (rare), ostrich and possible hartebeest.	
Conservation Status: In good condition.	
Management options: Near to road. This small site is ideal for public access, although it involves a short but steep climb. It would need to be carefully managed. There are no major threats other than human impact (potential for graffiti). It is not in a position where major animal impacts would be expected.	
Photos: 100% coverage. 2007_10_16 Mokala1 064-072, 075	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 9 | National Site Number: 2924AB015

Site Name: Doorn Laagte

GPS position: 29.11499 24.29494

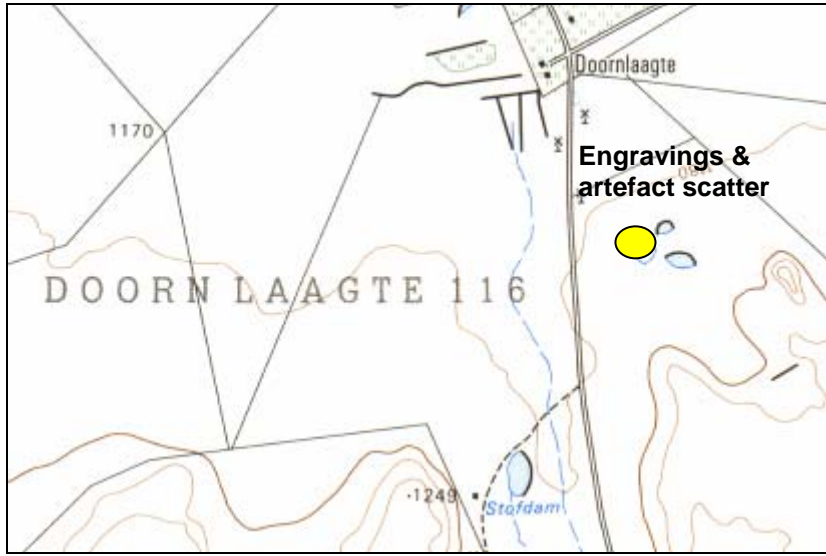
Location in landscape: Mainly on lower slope at north eastern side of an isolated koppie.

Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. A swathe of many rock engravings on the lower slope of an isolated koppie (known as ‘Garingboom Koppie’ – the top of the hill is infested with Agave). Different techniques in evidence – hairline, pecked, scraped.

Conservation Status: The engravings are generally well preserved.

Management options: This site has potential for public access. There is dense cover of Swarthaak making access difficult, however. A site-specific management plan is recommended in the event that it is opened to the public. A detailed record needs to be made of the site. The Garingboom would need to be cleared off the rocks at the top of the hill (where it may well be hiding further engravings).

Photos: 50-60% coverage
2007_10_16 Mokala1 074, 076-096





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 11	National Site Number: 2924AB017
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Site Name: Doorn Laagte

GPS position: 29.12929 24.35680

Location in landscape: A small isolated hill.

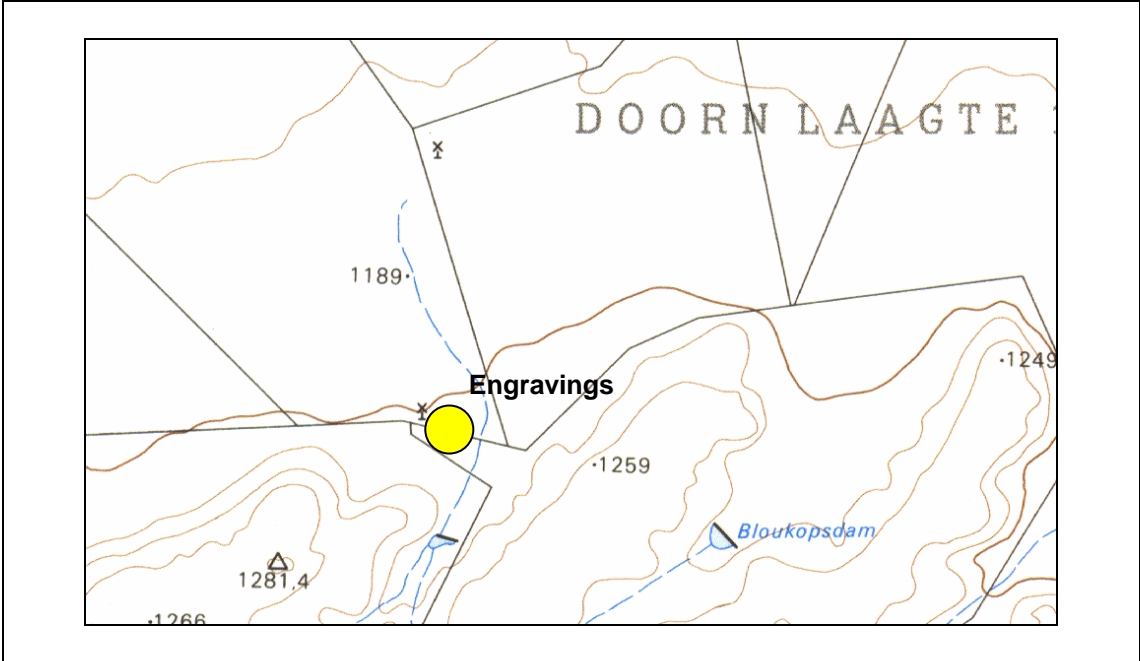
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engravings. This small hill is festooned with rock engravings, and was previously recorded by Gerhard and Dora Fock (Fock & Fock 1989:74-75). Pecked and hairline engravings have been noted here.

Conservation Status: Regrettably this interesting site is marred with graffiti dating from the twentieth century.

Management options: Despite the graffiti, this site is ideal for public access and could form part of a rock art trail in the Park. A site-specific management plan is recommended in the event that it is opened to the public. A detailed record needs to be made of the site.

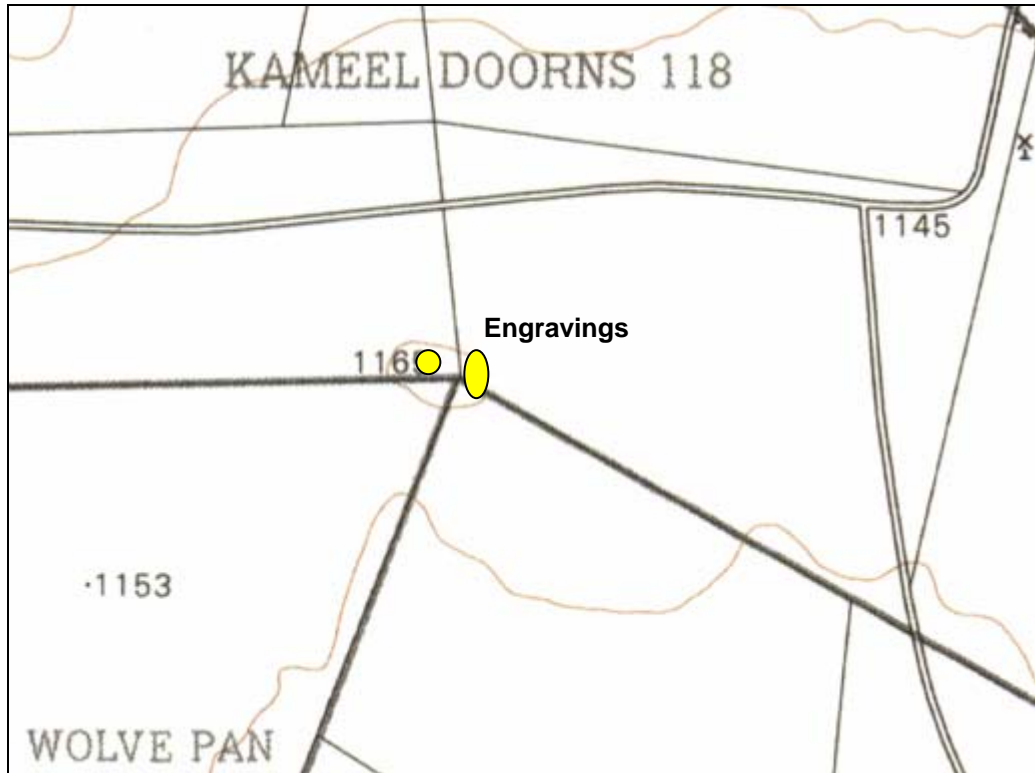
The graffiti could be made part of the message here, demonstrating some of the human impacts on the landscape in the twentieth century.

Photos: 40-50% coverage: 2007_10_16 Mokala1 106; 2007_10_16 Mokala2 001-009





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 12 [+22]	National Site Number: 2924AB018
Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North and Kameel Doorns	
GPS position: 29.10468 24.26380	
Location in landscape: On a low andesite hill, and straddling the boundary between the cadastral entities Scholtz Fontein North and Kameel Doorns, and hence between the Mokala National Park and its north western neighbour.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engravings. This is not a very rich site in terms of numbers of engravings, but on the Park side of the fence there are very fine engravings of rhino, elephant, eland and ostrich.	
Conservation Status: The engravings are in a good condition and there is no graffiti. However, the site suffers from being cleaved between two properties. Several excellent engravings (including ostrich, warthog and hartebeest) belonging to the same cluster occur on the adjacent farm of Kameel Doorns. There is a further cluster of engravings a few tens of metres away, also on the Kameel Doorns side, including a human figure, two eland, hartebeest and elephant (29.10406 24.26286 NSN 2924AB026).	
<p>Management options: The site presents a challenge as it is certainly one that is ideal for public access in terms of the precolonial heritage of the Park, and yet some of the most striking elements of the site lie outside the Park. Like Driekopseiland, an engraved locale in the bed of the Riet River nearby (on the boundary between two farms and two districts), this site continues to challenge colonial spatiality (hills often are the sites of boundary beacons and fences that define the <i>edges</i> of parcels of land in colonial land management, whereas in earlier contexts they may often have been regarded as ritual or symbolic <i>centres</i>). A site-specific management plan is recommended in the event that it is opened to the public. A detailed record needs to be made of the site.</p> <p>A particular problem that has come to our attention is that the engraved ostrich which features in a photograph in the Mokala Park brochure is <i>not</i> from within the Park – it occurs on the adjoining farm Kameel Doorns. There is, however, reason to believe that the engraving in question was moved from the actual boundary line to the Kameel Doorns side at the time of fence construction, most likely having been dug out of the ground when the fence posts were planted (staining on the side of the rock in question is proof of its now being out of context).</p> <p>The ideal would be that some form of negotiation with the neighbouring land-owner should take place to “re-unite” the site. If visitors are not allowed through the gate which was put up at the site, then one way of achieving this might be the erection of display boards on either side of the fence to show what engravings occur on the opposite side.</p>	
Photos: 100% Coverage 2007_10_16 Mokala2 010-015; 2007_11_7 100PENTX IMG2696-2724	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 13 National Site Number: 2924AB019

Site Name: Goede Hoop

GPS position: 29.16614 24.37374

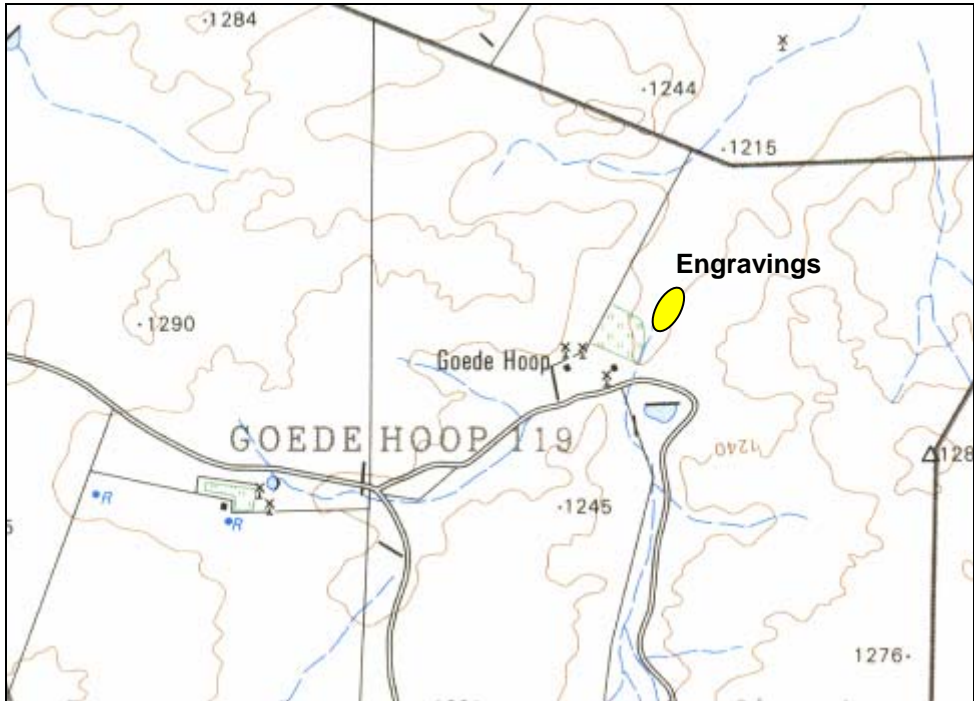
Location in landscape: On two rocks about 40 m apart at the foot of a low ridge near the cemetery.

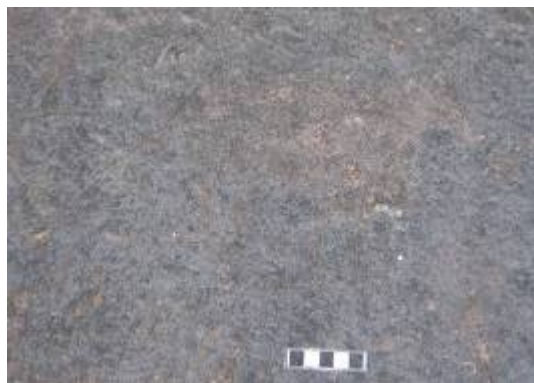
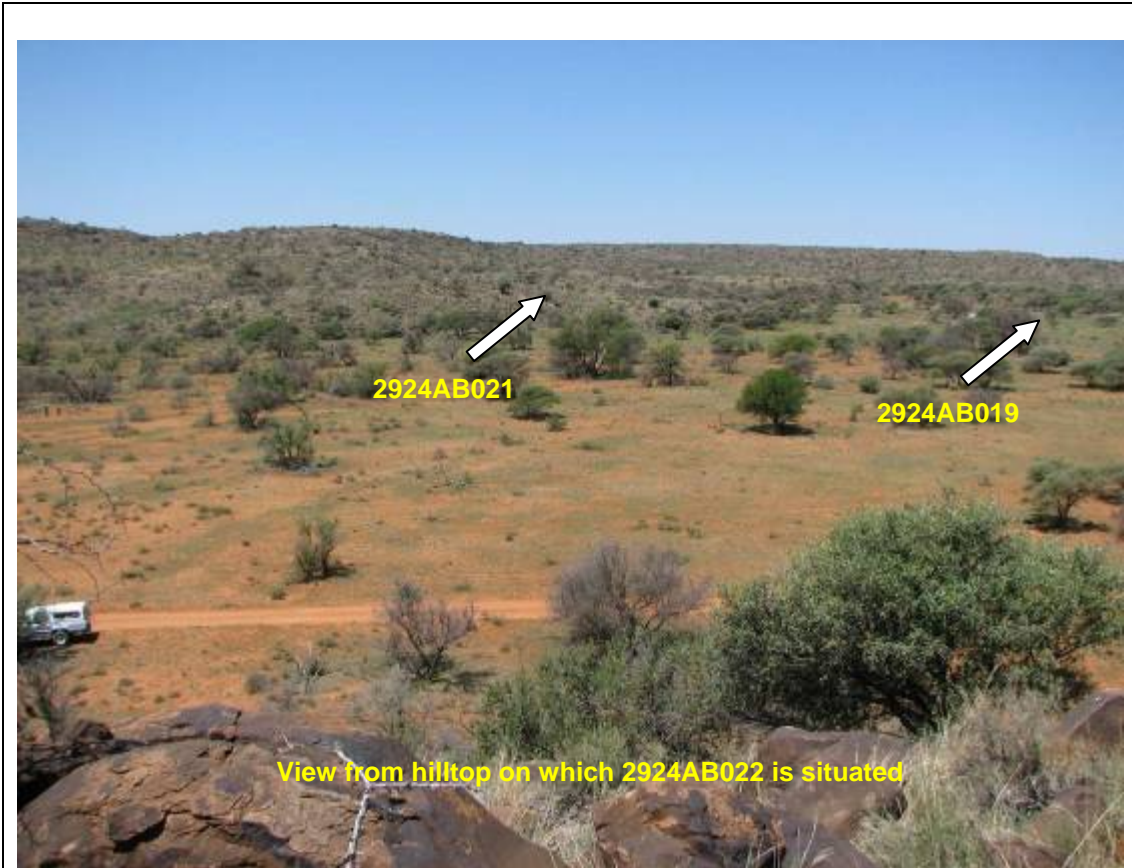
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engravings. An unexpected locale for two interesting engraved rocks with engravings of eland (combination of pecked, scraped and hairline techniques) and hippo (pecked).

Conservation Status: Well preserved.

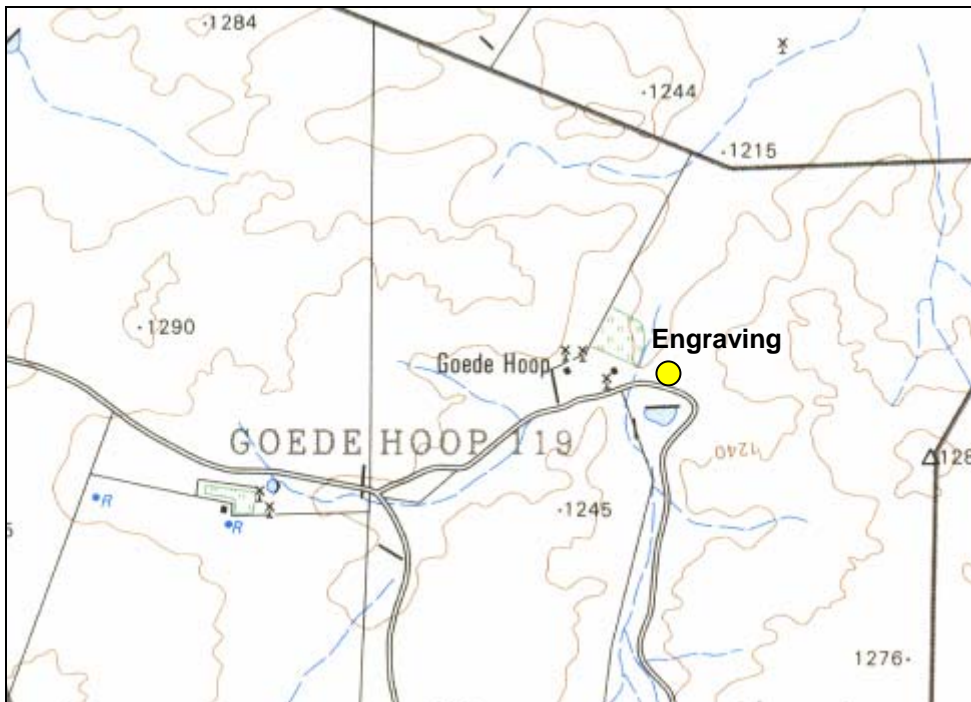
Management options: Shade from trees makes these engravings hard to see but with artificial aids or at certain times of the day they should show up well. These engravings are close to the Mofele Lodge. They present opportunities for public access. They do not involve any koppie-climbing, so may be ideal for elderly or disabled access.

Photos: 100% Coverage
2007_10_16 Mokala1 054-056; 2007_10_18 Mokala 006-014;



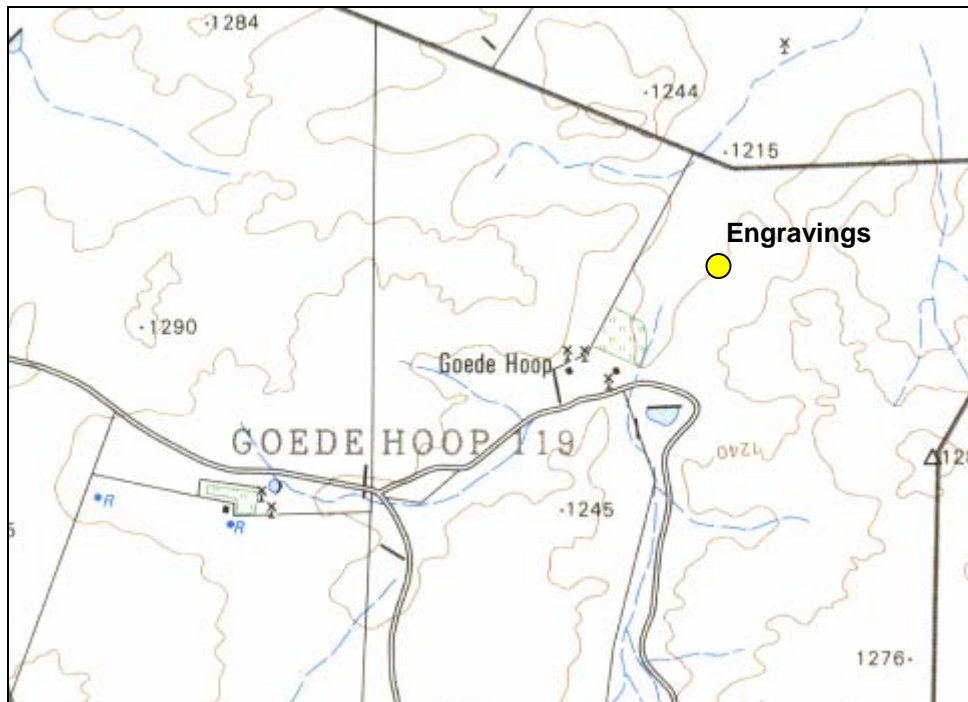


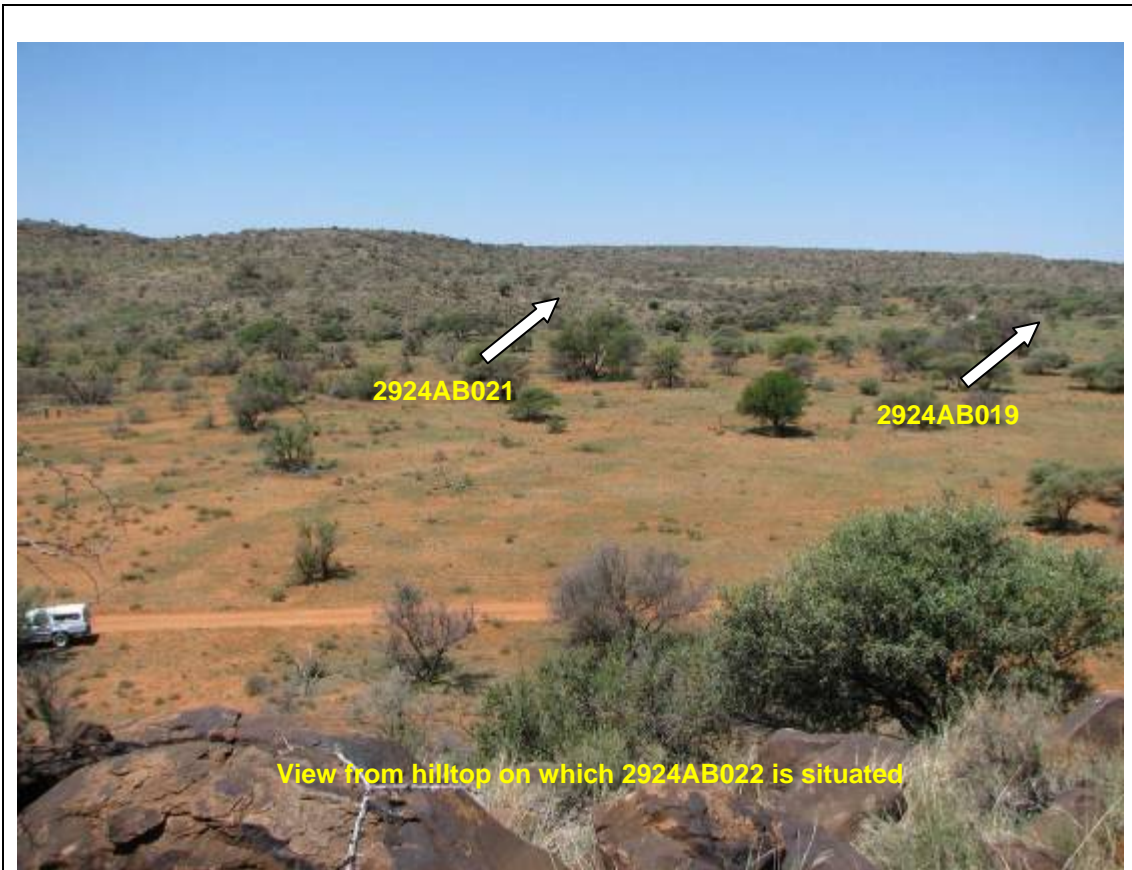
Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 14	National Site Number: 2924AB020
Site Name: Goede Hoop	
GPS position: 29.16703 24.37417	
Location in landscape: On a hill overlooking the Mofele Lodge valley.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engravings. A single engraved rock with a scarped image of an ostrich. Another rock nearby has pitting on it.	
Conservation Status: Well preserved.	
Management options: Shade from trees makes these engravings hard to see but with artificial aids or at certain times of the day they should show up well. This engraving is close to the Mofele Lodge. It presents an opportunity for public access. A coke bottle wrapper was evidence of recent use of the site. Proximity to the Lodge may pose a threat in terms of casual visits and potential for graffiti. No rock art should be visited except in the company of a guide.	
Photos: 100% Coverage 2007_10_18 Mokala 001-004	



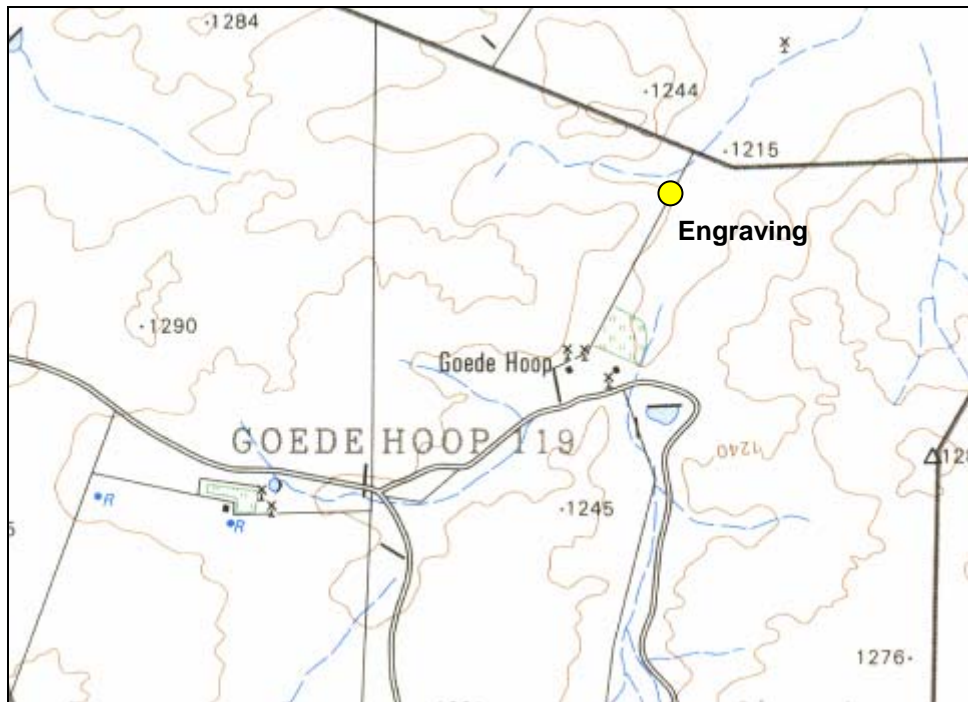


Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 15	National Site Number: 2924AB021
Site Name: Goede Hoop	
GPS position: 29.16499 24.37393	
Location in landscape: On dolerite rocks on the side of a ridge.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engravings. Delicately engraved (scraped) antelope on two rocks; a pecked eland head on a third, and cluster of hairline and pecked lines.	
Conservation Status: Well preserved.	
Management options: These engravings are hard to see but are of interest in terms of their technique. They are not far from the Mofele Lodge and could be included in a trail with the other engravings in the vicinity. They would be difficult to find unless accompanied by a guide.	
Photos: 100% Coverage 2007_10_18 Mokala 015-023, 026, 028-029, 038	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 16	National Site Number: 2924AB022
Site Name: Goede Hoop	
GPS position: 29.16243 24.37193	
Location in landscape: On dolerite rock on top of isolated koppie.	
Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. A single very faint scraped antelope. Nearby at 29.16255 24.37203 is a scratched 'Nine Men's Morris' game board and other colonial age graffiti. A cutting and clearing of rocks overlooks the valley to the north, possibly an Anglo-Boer War feature?	
Conservation Status: Well preserved.	
Management options: The engraving here is not particularly suitable for public access, although not far from the Mofele Lodge. Markings and graffiti attract more graffiti when people visit casually.	
Photos: 100% Coverage 2007_10_18 Mokala 030-037.	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 17 | National Site Number: 2924AB023

Site Name: Doorn Laagte

GPS position: 29.14769 24.39572

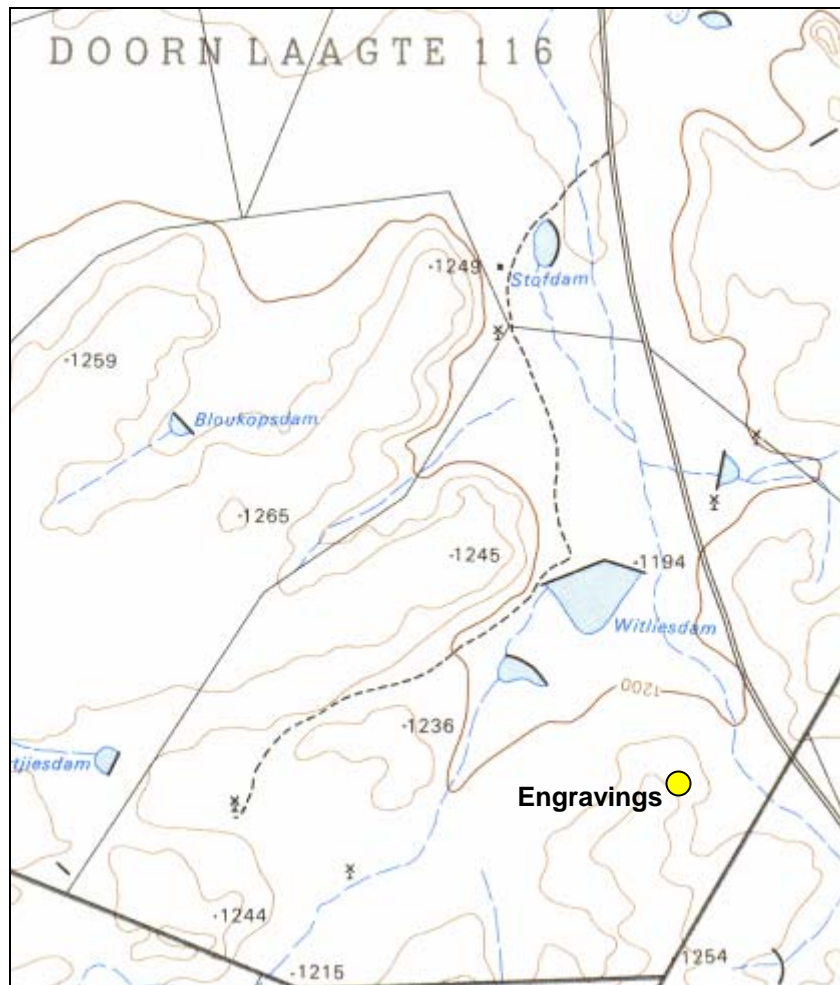
Location in landscape: On dolerite rock near the top of a ridge.

Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. Two mammals, not very distinctive and not very old, one possibly equine, the other with short legs, long tail and ears. On the same rock an indeterminate hairline image, possibly a human figure.

Conservation Status: Well preserved.

Management options: This engraving is isolated and somewhat “out of the way” and quite a long climb away from the valley bottom and hence not suitable for public access.

Photos: 100% Coverage
2007_10_18 Mokala 041-044.





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 27 National Site Number: 2924AB031

Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North

GPS position: 29.16089 24.31029

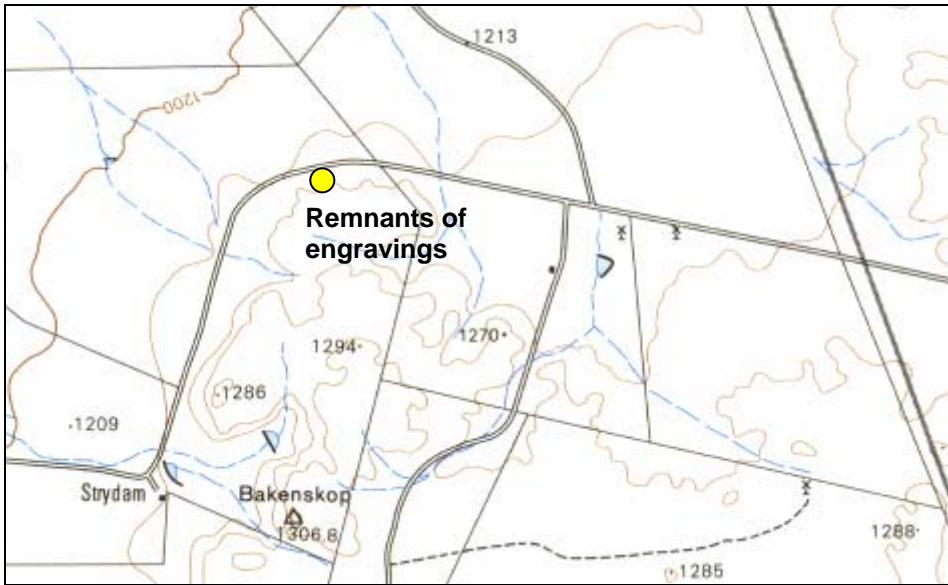
Location in landscape: On large dolerite rock near foot of a koppie at the foot of a ridge.

Site type and description: Precolonial: Rock Engraving. Remnant hairline engraving and remnant pecked lines probably originally of an animal. Old.

Conservation Status: Remnant engravings, very old, hard to see. Poor preservation.

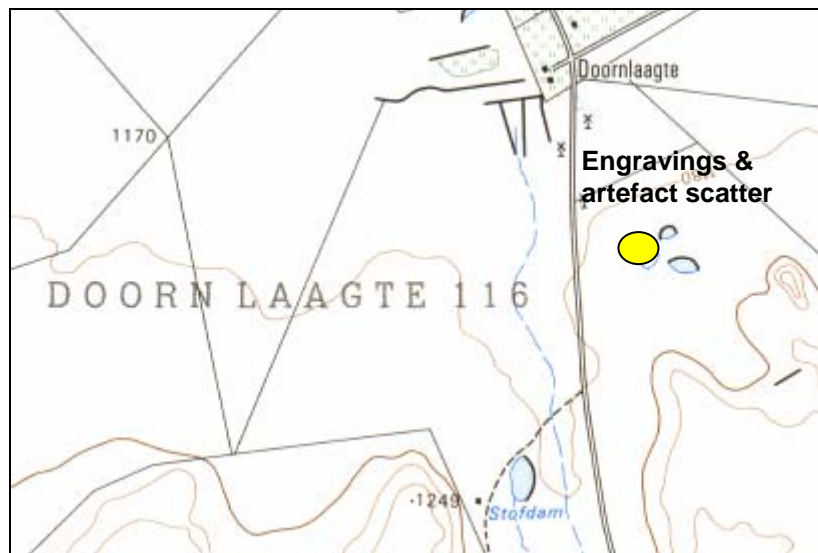
Management options: This engraving is an isolated remnant of an engraving and not at all suitable for public access. Pitting was noted on another rock nearby but no other engravings were found on eminently suitable surfaces here or on other hills examined in a radius of several kilometres. Yet, the presence of this one engraving means that future finds might well be made in the hills in the vicinity.

Photos: No photo.
A photo of the locale 2007_11_9 Mokala 100PENTX IMG 2789



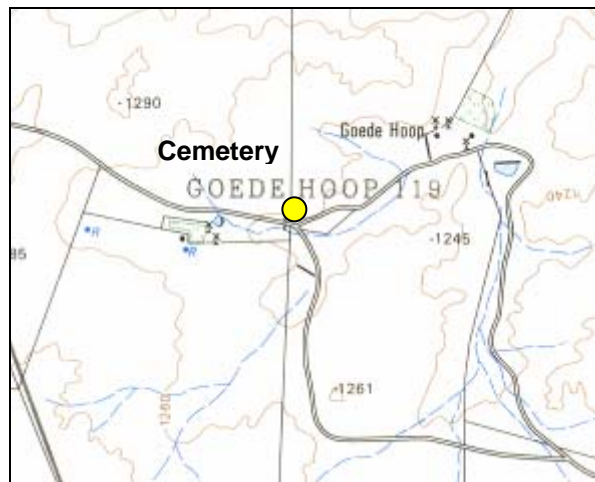
Artefact scatters

Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 10	National Site Number: 2924AB016
Site Name: Doorn Laagte	
GPS position: 29.11386 24.39492	
Location in landscape: On flat sheet eroded sandy surface north of hill.	
Site type and description: Precolonial surface artefact scatter. Low density of hornfels and quartzite artefacts.	
Conservation Status: Poor context, low density.	
Management options: Low significance, but one of a relatively few surface scatters noted during the survey.	
Photos: 2007_10_16 Mokala1 097	



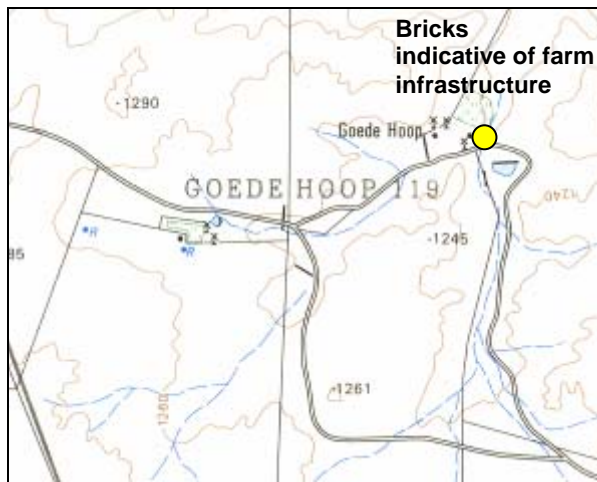
Farm infrastructure including cemeteries

Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 1	National Site Number: 2924AB007
Site Name: Goede Hoop 1	
GPS position: 29.17148 24.35962	
Location in landscape: In veld near foot of hill.	
Site type and description: Colonial: Farm cemetery. This cemetery is clearly that of farm workers. Fourteen graves. Two have headstones. Including "John P. Smit".	
Conservation Status: Well preserved, fenced.	
Management options: High significance and social sensitivity. Family/community access must be permitted when sought.	
Photos: 100% coverage, with detailed views of individual graves. 2007_10_16 Mokala1 004-028	





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 2	National Site Number: 2924AB008
Site Name: Goede Hoop	
GPS position: 29.16682 24.37209	
Location in landscape: In valley near former farm infrastructure.	
Site type and description: Colonial: structure remains. Traces of twentieth century farm-related infrastructure, with bricks, possibly from base of feeding-trough or other feature. Bases of other structures of similar era, including windmill and reservoir sites, would occur at various locales throughout the park, and are probably mostly of minor significance. The fact that they existed and have been subject to removal to create a sense of pristine environment should be noted.	
Conservation Status: Low significance. Removal of such structures justified for creation of sense of 'wilderness'.	
Management options: Low significance.	
Photos: 2007_10_16 Mokala1 029	



Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 3 National Site Number: 2924AB009

Site Name: Goede Hoop

GPS position: 29.16637 24.37333

Location in landscape: Across the valley from the old homestead, near base of ridge.

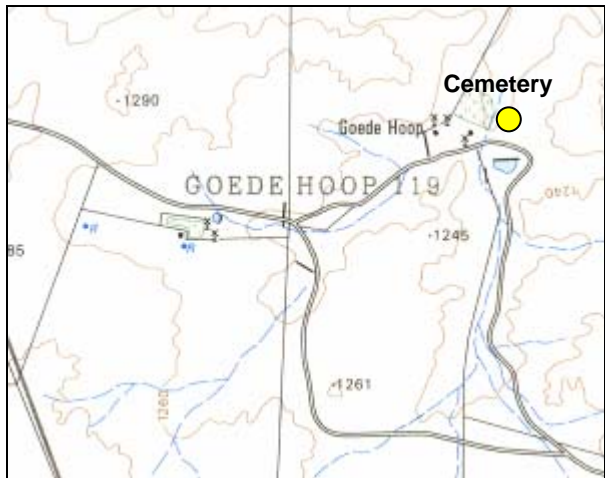
Site type and description: Colonial: Farm Cemetery. This is clearly the cemetery of successive generations of farm owners and perhaps extended family. There is one long brick-sided feature which may represent the remains of older unmarked graves that had ceased to be individually distinguishable. Near the north eastern end is a heap of sand that seems to represent a grave without grave- and head-stones. Besides these, there are nine graves mainly with granite grave-stones and inscribed headstones for members of the Odendaal, Lubbe and Hugo families.

Conifers that had grown within the fenced cemetery had recently been cut down.

Conservation Status: Well-preserved, fenced.

Management options: High sensitivity and social significance. Family/community access must be permitted when sought.

Photos: 100% coverage
2007_10_16 Mokala1 030-053





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 4 National Site Number: 2924AB010

Site Name: Goede Hoop

GPS position: 29.16560 24.37331

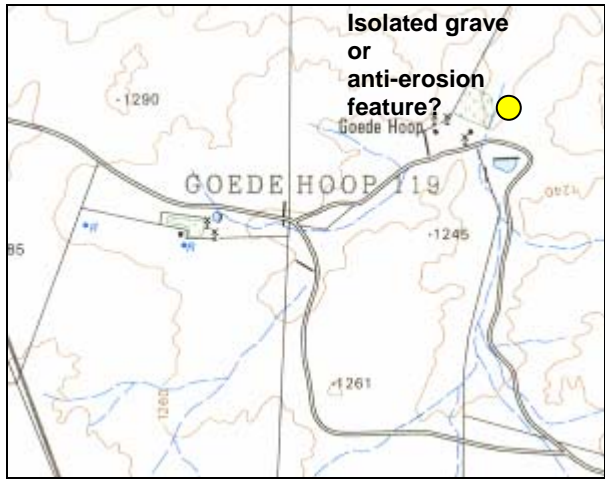
Location in landscape: In valley near cemetery

Site type and description: Colonial: Stone structure thought to have been isolated unmarked grave but subsequently believed to be an anti-erosion feature in a watercourse. A further instance nearby and further down the valley is an indubitable anti-erosion structure of packed stone. The example noted here is slightly ambiguous and the original possibility that it is a grave cannot be discounted categorically.

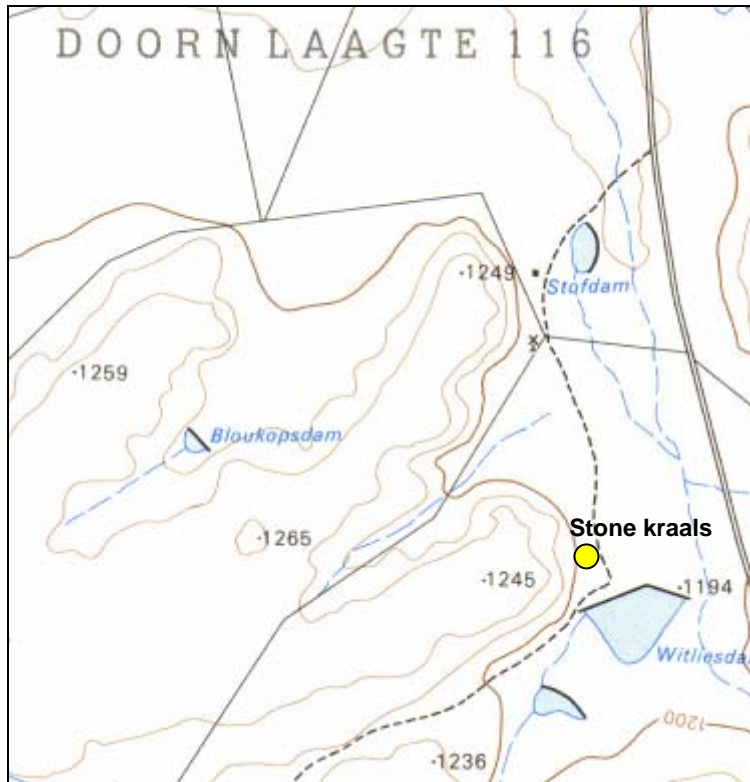
Conservation Status: Good preservation as a feature

Management options: Treat with caution as if it could be an unmarked grave although there is a strong chance it may simply be an anti-erosion feature.

Photos:
2007_10_16 Mokala1 057-058



Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 5	National Site Number: 2924AB011
Site Name: Doorn Laagte	
GPS position: 29.13861 24.38867	
Location in landscape: Against lower slope of hill.	
Site type and description: Colonial: Kraal enclosure against lower slope of hill.	
Conservation Status: Fairly poorly-preserved.	
Management options: The earliest kraals would date to the period before wire-fencing, i.e. nineteenth century, possibly of Griqua or early Boer context. Historical significance is High. Such structures should be preserved, but no intervention is necessary.	
Photos: None taken.	



Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 6 National Site Number: 2924AB012

Site Name: Doorn Laagte

GPS position: 29.10709 24.39341

Location in landscape: Open veld east of old homestead.

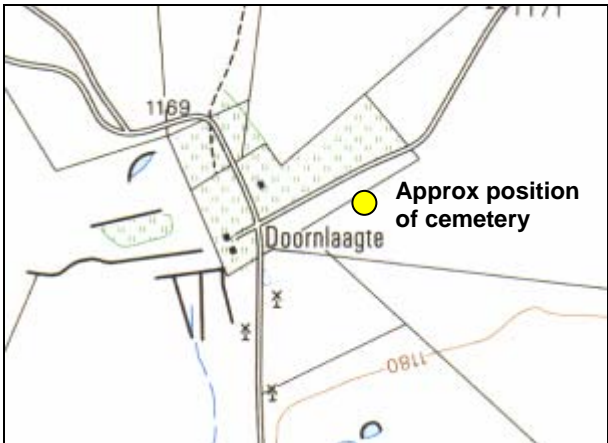
Site type and description: Colonial: Farm Cemetery. Eleven graves, three with inscribed headstones. One of these is the elaborate grave of Jan Abraham Van Niekerk, erected by the University of Stellenbosch in 1926. The other two date from 1866. The remainder of the graves are unmarked. Most likely “pioneer” graves of early white settlers, although conceivably also Griqua. The story of Van Niekerk (by all accounts an eccentric bachelor who left his farm and estate to the University of Stellenbosch) is recorded in manuscripts in the possession of Albert Vorster and Fouche Naude, local land-owners. He dwelt in the nearby Doornlaagte homestead. This history needs to be collated and summarised.

Conservation Status: Generally well-preserved, but part of the inscription on one of the early headstones was seemingly deliberately removed (apparently at an early date). Not fenced.

Management options: High sensitivity and social significance. Family/community access must be permitted when sought. It would be advisable to fence this small cemetery to prevent damage by animals. The story of Jan Abraham van Niekerk makes for an unusual tale in local lore.

Twentieth century history and stories of farmers and farm workers needs to be collected. The history of farm labour is a neglected field.

Photos: 100 % Coverage
2007_10_16 Mokala1 098-104





Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 26	National Site Number: 2924AB030
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Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North

GPS position: 29.17085 24.29943

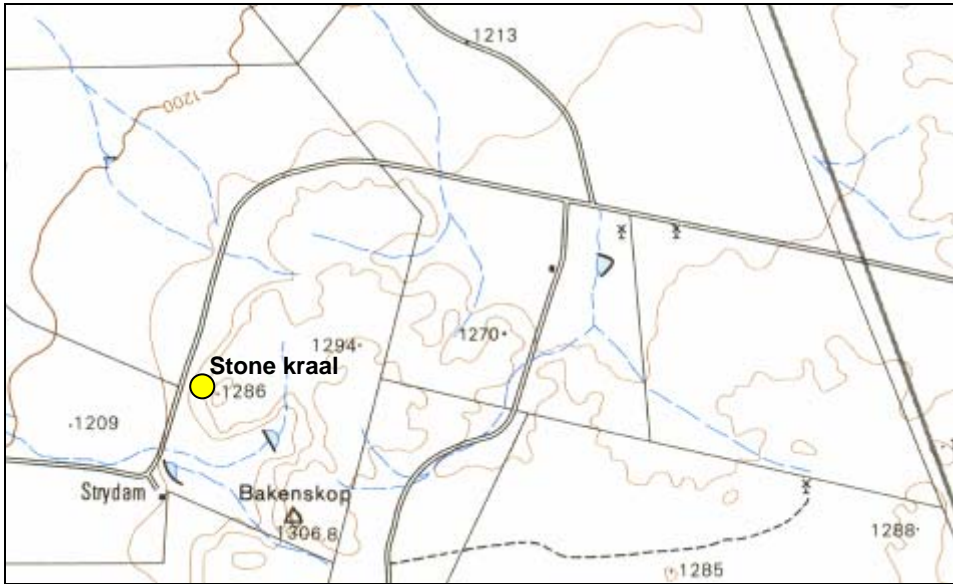
Location in landscape: At base of ridge, around the corner and north west of Strydam homestead
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Site type and description: Colonial: Stone Kraal. Constructed up against the steep edge of the ridge on its western side.

Conservation Status: Not in good condition – walls have tumbled.
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Management options:

Photos: 2007_11_9 Mokala 2774-2776.
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Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 20-21 | National Site Number: 2924AB024

Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North

GPS position: 29.13205 24.31967 (north) through 29.13378 24.32043 (south)

Location in landscape: On side of hill at Puntberg.

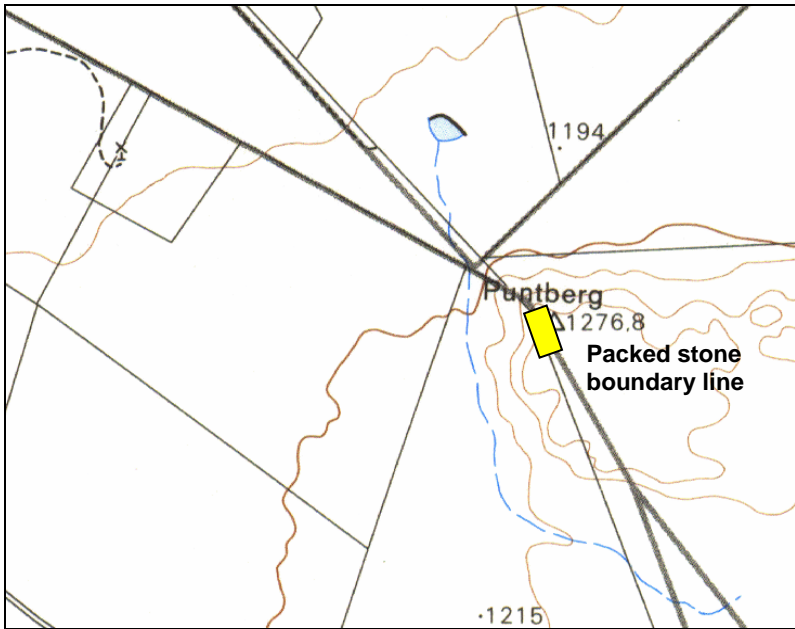
Site type and description: Colonial: Farm Boundary line. Parallel lines of packed stone, the lower one being consistent with the base of a recently dropped wire fence, but the higher one being a more substantial linear structure representing not inconsiderable investment in labour and effort.

In a small clearing at the top a few pieces of ostrich eggshell were noted, indicating a Later Stone Age presence here.

Conservation Status: Quite well-preserved.

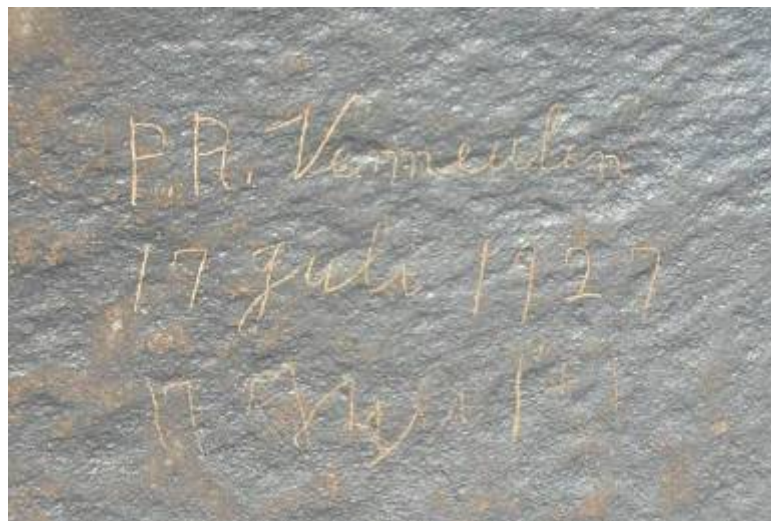
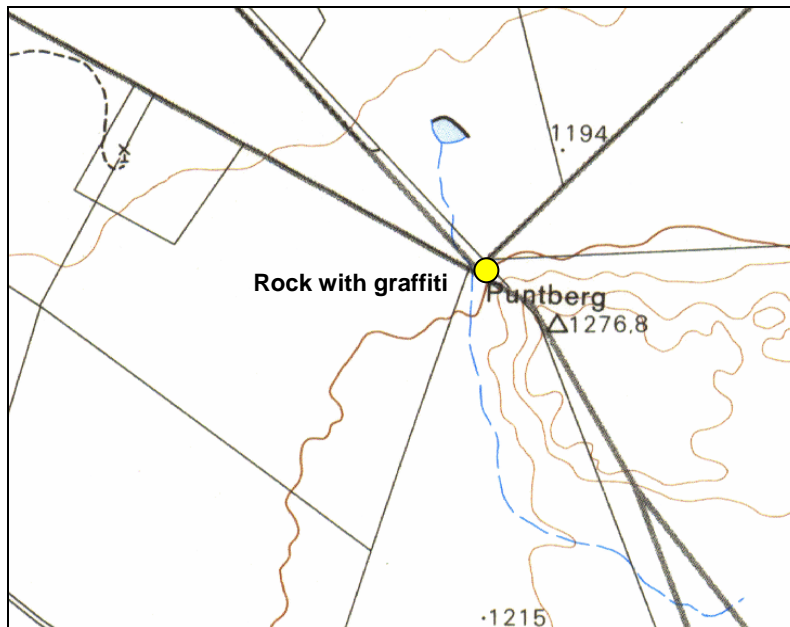
Management options: This feature should not be disturbed as it is a good example of boundary-making in this landscape (which is also very clearly visible from the top of Puntberg itself, where several old boundaries and the present Park boundary converge). Also visible from the top are animal tracks indicative that paths for animals and people would have made for linear features of this broad kind in the precolonial past. The histories of boundaries, e.g. the Vetberg line, and colonisation and the parcelling off of farms could be a topic/theme for discussions/brochures/etc – including the impacts of this for indigenous people as well as animals.

Photos:
2007_11_7 Mokala 2694-5; 2727-8; 2737-40; 2743-4

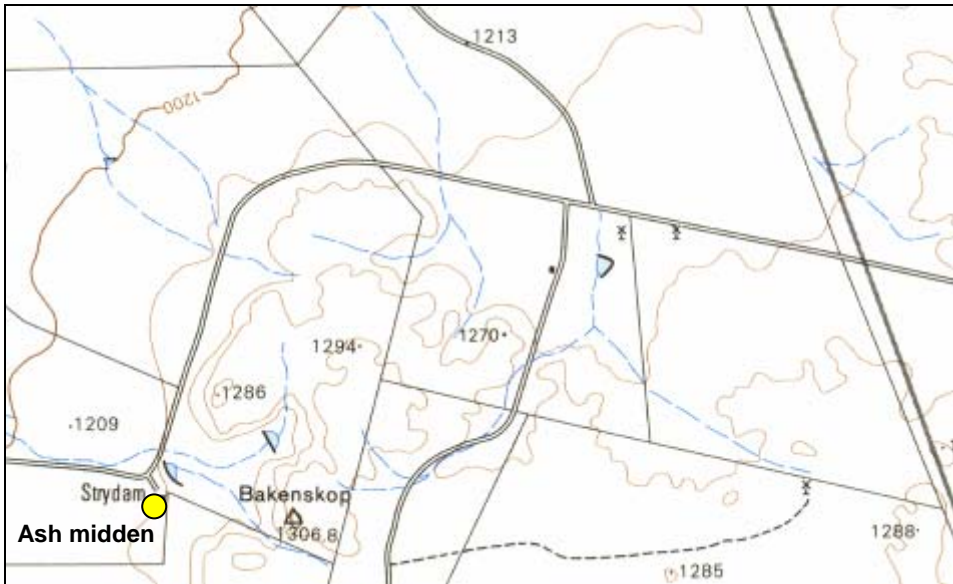




Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 23	National Site Number: 2924AB027
Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North	
GPS position: 29.13105 24.31786	
Location in landscape: On fence line at base of hill.	
Site type and description: Colonial: Graffiti: Name "P.R. Vermeulen" dated 1927.	
Conservation Status: Twentieth century graffiti. Probably relates to fencing. Does not impact on other heritage site.	
Management options: Do not draw attention to it. May be of future heritage interest.	
Photos: 100% coverage 2007_11_7 Mokala 2725	



Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 25	National Site Number: 2924AB029
Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North	
GPS position: 29.17546 24.29806	
Location in landscape: Ash heap near Strydam homestead.	
Site type and description: Colonial: ash midden. This is not an old ash midden; others like it would be found in due course. Such middens could gain in archaeological significance. This one may be associated with farm-workers.	
Conservation Status: This example is thoroughly burnt.	
Management options: Ash middens associated with nineteenth-twentieth century farm life could gain in significance with time. Good examples of their kind should be preserved where possible.	
Photos: No photograph.	



Mokala NP Heritage Site Number: 24 National Site Number: 2924AB028

Site Name: Scholtz Fontein North

GPS position: 29.16582 24.32473

Location in landscape: A small isolated hill.

Site type and description: Colonial: Disturbed stone feature, possibly former 'schantz' (?Anglo-Boer War) with commanding view down the valley towards Plooyburg. If so, it is unfortunately not a good example of its kind. In the vicinity are several instances of graffiti, not necessarily associated.

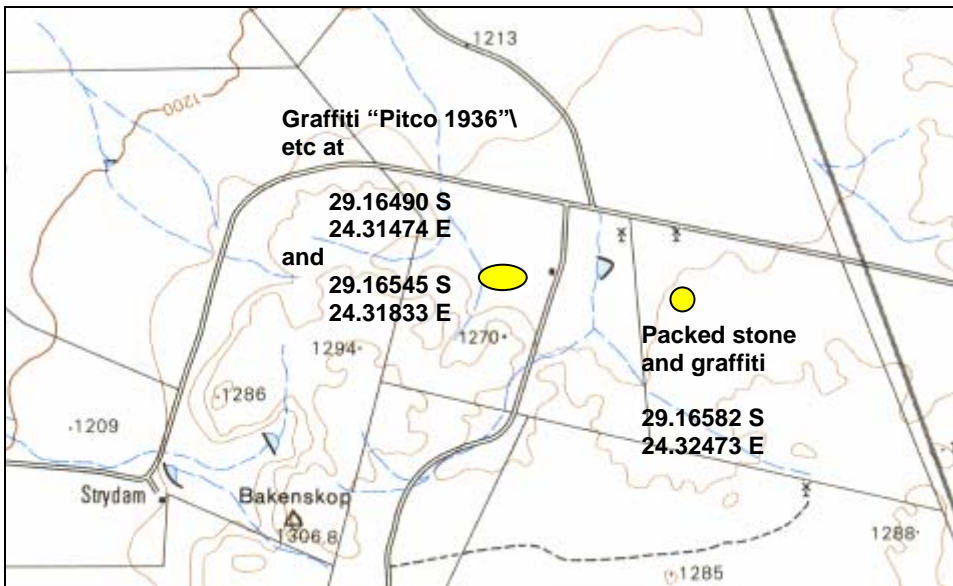
NB There is a *Hoodia* sp. plant here. The socio-cultural aspects of *Hoodia* could be made into a feature, not necessarily at this site, if others are known in the Park.

Conservation Status: Any definite walling has been tumbled down.

Management options: The site is not regarded as suitable for public access.

Note several outcrops of dolerite in the area were systematically searched for engraving sites and none were found. There were also no surface Stone Age artefact scatters. Dongas were carefully examined with the latter in mind.

Photos:
2007_11_9 Mokala 2753-2762





Significance: general comments

Scientific significance

The rock art sites that have been located within the MNP are all of undoubted scientific interest and significance and will be an important research resource in the broader regional perspective. The individual sites are worthy of detailed recording and analysis. Part of their significance may be in relation to a broader spread of such sites, perhaps particularly in relation to sites nearer to and at the Riet River.

Virtually all the engravings conform with the “San tradition” (Smith & Ouzman 2004) of rock art, with very few ‘geometric’ images being present. This being the case (but see Morris 2002 for an alternative take on variability and ethnicity), the shamanistic interpretation developed by Lewis-Williams and others (see Deacon 2005 for a Karoo setting) provides what is now widely accepted background to ways for interpreting the rock art of Mokala National Park. A useful text on rock art of the Karoo for the layman, which includes discussion on interpretation and current debates, is forthcoming (Parkington, Morris & Rusch in press).

An interesting aspect is that within the Park there are sites on two different geological substrates: all but one are on dolerite koppies, with the one exception being the Scholtz Fontein North/Kameeldoorns site, which is on an outcrop of basement Ventersdorp andesite. Sites further down-slope towards the Riet River will tend to be on Ventersdorp.

There were surprisingly few surface artefact scatters, and those that were noted were diffuse.

Social and Spiritual

The heritage traces recorded in this survey reflect the histories of successive groups who have lived in this landscape, predominantly Khoe-San, Griqua, and Boer farmers. An increasingly complex social environment evolved over the last 2000 years, when herding of domesticated stock was added to hunting and gathering subsistence practices. Complexity was augmented in the colonial era, when change was punctuated by periods of population replacement and uneasy, even violent, shifts in power relations. The site of the Battle of Kudusberg Drift (5-8 Feb 1900), fought across the Riet just north of MNP, left a material trace, with possible fortification in the hills in MNP perhaps representing military/commando activity at or relating to that period. There are no significant traces of other conflict events, removals, and population replacements, other than the appearances of new forms of material culture and the disappearance of others (Morris in press). In the archaeological record, most significantly, the Khoe-San ‘voice’ goes silent. Stone tool-making and rock engraving, with other aspects of ‘terminal’ Later Stone Age material culture, simply ceased to be practised (on one possible aspect of this final phase, see Morris 2005). The visible heritage traces of the nineteenth-twentieth century are ‘fabric-heavy’ ones, mainly of white farmers (citing Byrne’s useful term for comparable traces in Australia: “think homesteads and court houses”, he adds), whereas those traces reflecting the post-contact colonial underclass – who include those who came to be called *los Hotnots* – are ‘fabric-light’ and ephemeral, with the odds stacked against

their survival as part of the material record (Byrne 2003:172). This relative ‘invisibility’ is compounded by the fact that the scant material resources of the colonial underclass would increasingly have been a borrowing of elements from colonial society: beads, clay pipes, cheap English earthenwares, glassware, bottles, cutlery, and so on; and food, the remains of which would show up archaeologically as sheep bones and dentition, and domestic grain, pumpkin and fruit pips – the latter as part payment in kind to shepherds (Sampson 1992).

People who may claim Khoe-San ancestry here today would tend to be Afrikaans-speaking people classified “Coloured”. Whether any individuals could substantiate direct lines of descent seems unlikely (though, see below), but recognition should be given to the possibility of reclamation of ancestral ties. It is likely that local Khoe-San people were acculturated to a Griqua identity and subsequently to that of Coloured or Black (a Mr Molehe interviewed at Schutse Kama in the 1990s had Tswana paternal ancestry while his mother, he said, was Griqua with San ancestry). Some individuals and cultural groups are beginning, tentatively or more forcefully, to assert these links.

Given the above, it is remarkable how aspects of local idiom and lore, with roots in the precolonial past, do live on amongst Afrikaans-speaking ‘Coloured’ descendants of Northern Cape Khoe-San people. Myths and even rites, for example, concerning the ‘watersnake’ (e.g. Hoff 1997; Waldman 2007) are still widely current; while in rural areas farm-workers descended from Khoe-San are the *de facto* ‘owners and custodians’ of knowledge of /Khoba (*Hoodia* spp.) and other faunal/floral lore (de Jongh 2002), although they are not party *de jure* to the recent benefit-sharing agreement between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the San (Wynberg 2004).

It seems unlikely that the precolonial sites on these farms had continued to be sacred sites for any groups or individual people – but interviews with former farm workers would need to confirm this. From the colonial era, farm cemeteries are an obvious exception to this and would be held sacred in the memory of family members of those buried there, and in a broader community sense as well.

The coming into existence of the Mokala National Park creates an opportunity to deploy the concept of *cultural landscape* as opposed to discrete heritage sites. Byrne (2003:188) has referred to the “continued hegemony of the ‘site’ concept” which prevails where heritage sites are set apart, often contained by fences, relative to surrounding land designated for other (non-heritage) uses. He remarks that the total ‘cultural landscape’, utilized by highly mobile hunter-gatherers of the precolonial past, for example, would stretch from horizon to horizon, with ‘off-site’ scatters of artefacts, or individual rock engravings, stretching in variable densities over kilometres.

Ways in which landscapes and their ‘moods’ (seasonality etc) have been imbued with meaning in the past can be gleaned from folklore of, for instance, the /Xam in the Bleek/Lloyd records (Morris 2002). These legends also include tales of animals which could be taken up as a strand in interpretive natural history discourses in the Park. Intangible heritage resources would also include the knowledge of long-term dwellers – former farmers and farm-workers. There is much local lore, for instance, on

Doornlaagte and the eccentric Jan Abraham van Niekerk. There remain opportunities to tap some of this knowledge.

Heritage resources in the Mokala National Park add enormously to the Park's sense of place, past and present.

Public significance

Unquestionably, many (but not all) of the heritage resources reported on here may be used in educational and tourism contexts. Heritage resources provide many possibilities for a People and Parks focus/foci. One albeit small rock art site presents an opportunity for disabled access – unusual for rock art, which tends to be on relatively inaccessible rocky hills.

SAHRA provides compliance standards for granting public access which should be adhered to in the design of cultural heritage experiences in the Park.

An example of how rock art and other heritage traces can be integrated into both educational and tourism experiences is at the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre between Kimberley and Barkly West (Morris 2006).

Enormous care needs to be taken not to cast heritage in terms of stereotypes, especially in regard to rock art and the San. It is recommended that specialist input be sought when designing a Mokala cultural heritage experience, and in drawing up management plans for the sites used.

Rock art may be a relatively “niche interest” for a sub-set of visitors to the park. Different levels of interest (packages) may need to be catered for. Unrealistic expectations of heritage resources by visitors may need to be managed (provision of information is crucial). The cultural heritage sites certainly add to the diverse attributes that would help sustain ongoing interest in the Park.

There is potential to link rock art tourism at Mokala National Park with the Wildebeest Kuil Rock Art Centre, strengthening the “pull” of rock art as a regional attraction. The author is aware that some discussion has occurred in connection with an Open Africa route initiative called ‘Footprints of the San’ that has Wildebeest Kuil as one of two polar gateways and Mokala National Park as a possible tourism product along one of the ‘Footprints’ routes.

The SAEON Arid Lands Node recently established in Kimberley presents educational opportunities.

Management issues: general comments

The National Heritage Resources Act and the regulations, policy and guidelines of SAHRA provide the legal framework for managing heritage resources. Some of the key aspects would be the compliance guidelines for granting public access to sites. On the basis of experience at other sites in the Northern Cape and elsewhere, it is recommended that no rock art should be visited except in the company of a guide.

Inappropriate or inadequate management of visitors to rock art sites easily results in graffiti or the removal artefacts.

For each site included for public access there should be a management plan. A more detailed record than was possible during this survey should be compiled for each of the sites to be made accessible to the public. This would then form the basis for literature (brochure)/site map/interpretive material.

Where alteration or destruction of colonial era structures/infrastructure older than 60 years is contemplated, a PHRA permit should be sought.

A management challenge may be the recognition that certain alien vegetation was part of the historical imprint of the colonial era (no particular examples spring to mind – except perhaps the case of conifers at a cemetery, where valid reasons for their removal can be advanced).

Family/community access to graves would need to be allowed and managed.

Further sites, additional to those tabulated in this report, may come to light from time to time (some are buried, some will have escaped attention during the initial surveys). Erosion may reveal or destroy sites. Recording and reporting procedures need to be set in place.

At least one significant site straddles the Park boundary (Scholtz Fontein North/Kameeldoorns), presenting unique challenges for its conservation and presentation. As noted above, the image used in the Mokala National Park brochure comes from this site but it is in fact one of the engravings on the neighbouring farm.

Training

It is recommended that personnel at the Park, particularly rangers, should have training in the recognition of sites, especially rock art. Several isolated and single engraved rocks were found in the course of this survey and it seems likely that more would eventually be located as people comb over the koppies – either archaeologists continuing a systematic search, or others such as Park personnel in the course of other work.

A further training requirement would be in relation to site interpretation for tourists/visitors/ education groups. There is potential for guide training to be given at Wildebeest Kuil or indeed in the Park itself, or both, with certification. Alternatively, there are already qualified rock art tour guides from the !Xun and Khwe community outside Kimberley (who have working experience at the !Khwa ttu centre in the Western Cape and are seeking opportunities for work in the Northern Cape).

Future work

Research opportunities exist based on the sites located during this survey.

As indicated, more detailed site documentation would be needed in certain instances should public access be contemplated, both for site-specific management plans and for interpretative literature.

In the event of future park expansion the survey of cultural heritage resources should be extended to any area added.

Acknowledgements

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