

9/2/22 8/238

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF OLIVANTSVELI,  
KLIPRIVIERSBERG, JOHANNESBURG**

To Be  
RECHECKED

A Phase-I report prepared for Planning Development Environmental Services

Professor T.N. Huffman

Archaeological Resources Management  
Department of Archaeology  
University of the Witwatersrand

April 1999

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF OLIVANTSVLEI, KLIPRIEVERSBERG, JOHANNESBURG

## **Introduction**

A portion of the farm Olivantsvlei 327 IQ is under consideration for a housing project. The developers appointed Planning Development Environmental Services (PDE) to coordinate the necessary studies. In accordance with the National Monuments Act and the Environment Conservation Act, PDE commissioned Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to conduct an archaeological impact assessment.

## **Methods**

Mr. J.J.S. Alberts of PDE met ARM staff on 13 April 1999 on site to explain the development and point out two stone-walled settlements. ARM staff returned on 19 April to survey the property in detail. Grass was high, and so visibility was poor. Nevertheless, it was possible to record the general location of archaeological sites. All sites were recorded on a 1:4500 plan provided by PDE. Furthermore, we referred to ARM files for previous survey data and to 1:10000 areal photographs for visible stone-walled sites. The project area straddles the 1:50000 map sheets 2627 BD Grasmere and 2628 AC Alberton.

## **Results**

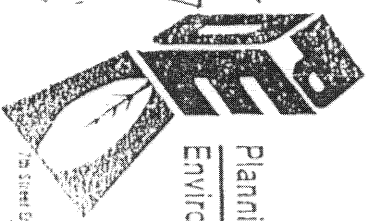
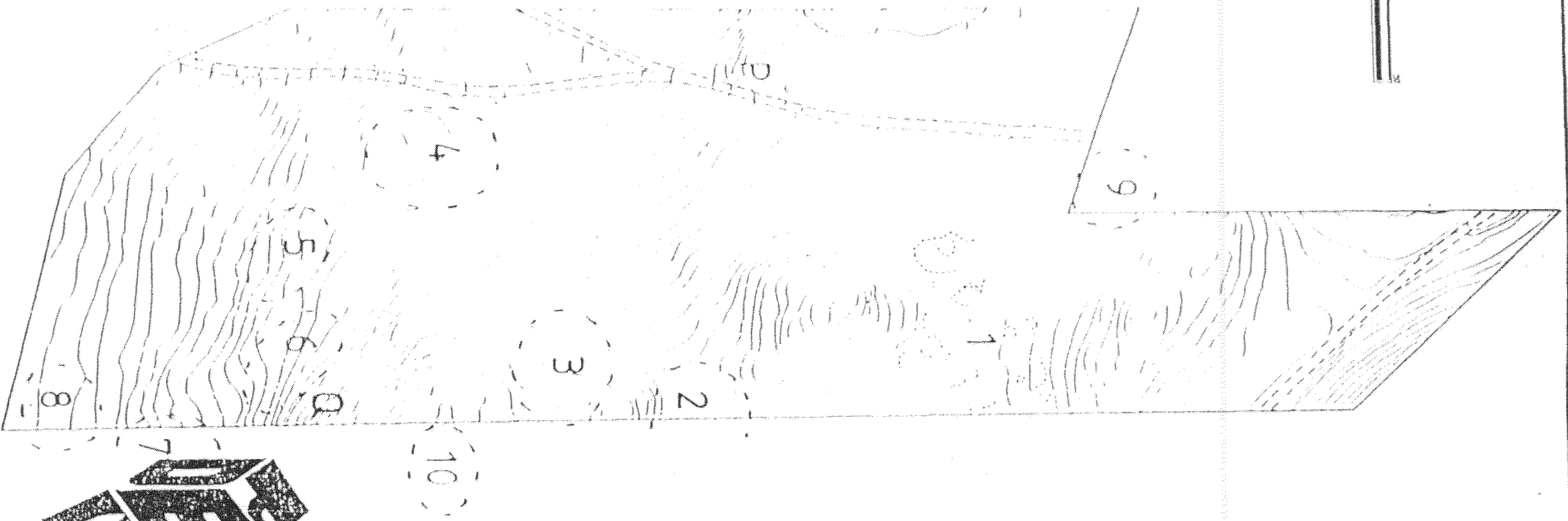
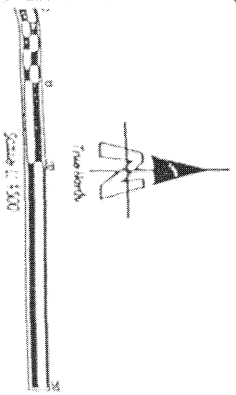
### Late Stone Age

Some exposed rocks on the south side of the large hill show signs of quarrying (Q on Figure 1) during the Later Stone Age. The type of flake scars suggest quarrying took place during the Oakhurst period, 9000 to 12000 years ago.

### Iron Age

In addition, there are at least ten stone-walled sites dating to the Late Iron Age in the immediate vicinity and eight inside the project area (Figure 1). Site 1 (26.18.02S 28.00.00E)

# Plan 6 Base Plan



Planning Development  
Environmental Services cc

7th Street, 5th Floor, Durbanville, Cape Town, 7801  
Tel: 021 798 2312 Fax: 021 798 2951

Figure 1. Location of sites in the study area. P=platform; Q=quarry.

was on the plan supplied by PDE, and Site 2, in the next saddle south, was also known to them. All ten sites are characterised by inner stone cattle kraals surrounded by a residential zone and then an outer wall incorporating a few small stock enclosures. Figure 2 presents an areal view of similar examples in the Klipriviersburg. This type of walling dates to between AD 1750 and 1823, when Mzilakazi cleared the area.

Specific features on three sites are worth noting. Site 1 is multicomponent in that it incorporates a recent rectangular structure and associated midden on top of the stone walls. Older middens are also present. Site 6 has substantial midden on the outside and some burnt daga inside the residential area. Site 8, at the southeast corner of the project area, may have an older unit underneath the main walls. If this is the case, then the lower unit belongs to a type that dates to the 16th century. Part of this site was damaged some years ago when the sewer system was installed.

Both types of walling were made by Sotho-Tswana speaking people who practised livestock herding and farming. Some of the land near the sites probably had agricultural potential, but the best farmland lay to the south in the Klipriver valley.

#### **Historic**

Some long lines of terrace walling below Sites 2 and 3 and between Sites 4 and 5 may be recent. The platform for a watertank (P on Figure 1) and a small dam on the western boundary are certainly historic.

#### **Recommendations**

The Historic and Late Stone Age quarry do not require mitigation. The Late Iron Age remains, in contrast, are worthy of further consideration. According to the present development proposal, Sites 2 and 3 are located inside the proposed conservation area. Sites 4-6 and 8, however, are inside the Residential zone and Site 1 is also under threat.

Development plans could be changed to protect one or two sites, such as Site 1, but others will be destroyed regardless of appropriate changes. Consequently, the endangered sites need Phase II mitigation, that is they need to be completely mapped and then specific areas test

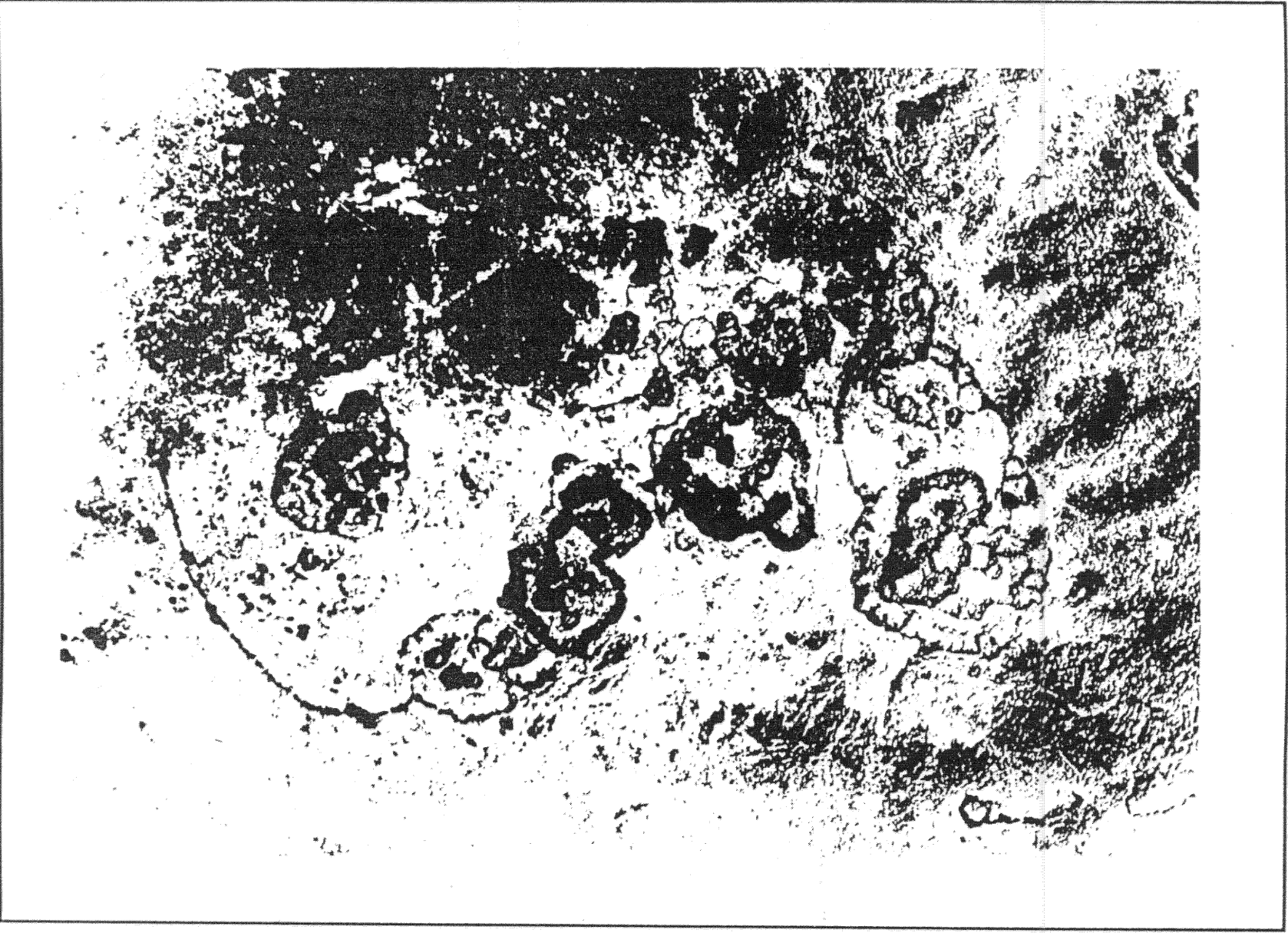


Figure 2. Aerial view of typical stone walling in the Kilipriwersberg.

excavated. The excavations should first concentrate on middens to retrieve ceramics and faunal samples and secondly, on residential areas to record house forms. The best sites for this purpose are those that have burnt down, and the survey suggests that Sites 1 and 6 will be most productive. Site 8 should also be test excavated to determine if there are two periods of occupation.

If the tests demonstrate that one site is particularly productive, such as Site 6, then Phase III mitigation becomes appropriate, that is every hut should be uncovered and every midden sampled.

One other aspect needs attention. In the past, as a rule, women were buried in the residential zones and men in the cattle kraals. The soil in a residential zone is probably too acid for bone preservation, but there could still be well-preserved burials in the cattle kraals and middens. Unless every kraal is excavated beforehand, an expensive task, a monitoring system needs to be established for the excavation phase of construction activities.

In summary, we recommend that Sites 2 and 3 remain in the conservation area so that at least two sites are undisturbed. The remaining sites, or portions, should be mitigated at the Phase II level before they are destroyed. One site, if scientifically justified, should receive Phase III mitigation.