

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PARYS GOLF
ISLAND AND FEEGRONDE, FREE STATE PROVINCE**

A Phase I Report prepared for Seaton Thompson & Associates

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INTRODUCTION

Up On Point Developments intends to expand the existing facilities on Golf Island in the Vaal River in addition to more fairways on the south side of the river, a boat storage area, driving range and filling station. In keeping with Environmental and Heritage legislation, the environmental coordinators for the project, Seaton Thompson and Associates, commissioned Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to survey the area.

METHOD

One ARM staff visited the project area on 13 February 2005. Mr D. Eitz, representing the developers, explained the project and pointed out the impacted areas. The ARM team then examined the high impact areas intensively on foot and the less impacted areas by foot and vehicle. Sites were recorded with a hand held GPS instrument and then transferred to the 1:50 000 map 2627 CD Parys (Figure 1).

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.

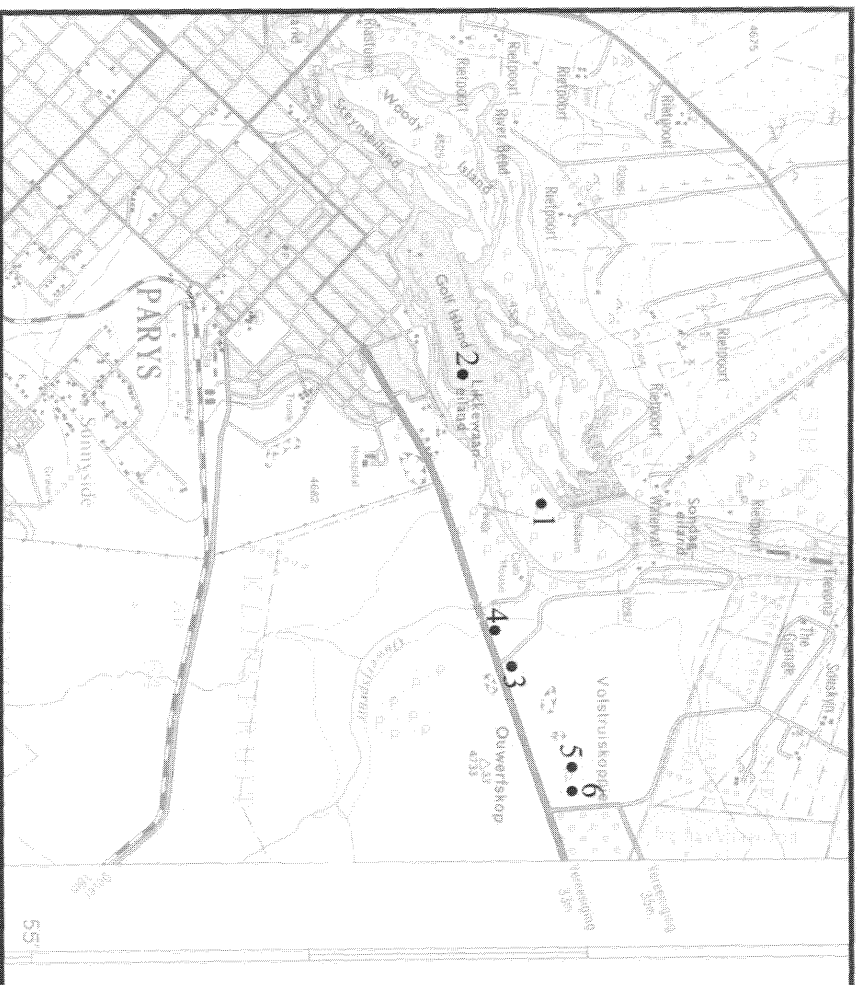


Figure 1. Archaeological sites recorded during the assessment.

RESULTS

Grass cover was high and ground visibility low, but it was still possible to evaluate the archaeological potential of the project area. Sites ranged from the Stone Age through the Iron Age to the Historic Period.

Stone Age

Some Middle Stone Age (MSA) flakes lay scattered over the east end of the island. A cluster of flakes and a few cores around a small outcrop (**Site 1**: 26 53 09.3S 27 28 33.4E) is worth noting. Most of the material appears to be part of a gravel deposit associated with a small dolerite outcrop. **Site 1 has low significance.**

The existing golf course is built on top of a long gravel bank. One exposed area (**Site 2:** 26 53 25.3S 27 28 02.9E) contains MSA debris, such as cores and flakes made out of cherts and quartzites. MSA people were clearly using the gravels as a quarry for raw material, and other exposures, such as **Site 3** (26 53 14.8S 27 29 10.8E) on the south side of the river, can be expected to have similar artefacts. **Site 2 and Site 3 have no significance.**

Further MSA material clusters around a small rocky outcrop (**Site 4:** 26 53 20.4S 27 29 04.7E) in the proposed boat storage area. One pottery fragment occurred here also. **Site 4 has low significance.**

The proposed driving range and filling station areas contain a thin scatter of MSA artefacts. Both areas have been disturbed; the driving range by road works and the other by a gum-tree plantation. *The artefact scatters have no significance.*

Iron Age

Stonewalling dating to the Late Iron Age, in this case after AD 1500, occurs in two places in a rocky area next to the old quarry in the Nature Area. A wide stone arc that was probably a cattle kraal marks **Site 5** (26 53 02.6S 27 29 36.6E), while **Site 6** (26 53 02.5S 27 29 40.7E) contains a central kraal and a few smaller enclosures. **Site 5 has low significance and Site 6 medium significance.**

Historic Period

Site 1 on the island includes the remains of a farm labourer's residence as well as the Stone Age material. The Historic remains include a stone retaining wall against the outcrop, some glass and barbed wire. *This component of Site 1 has low significance.*

There may be other similar sites on the island that are now hidden by tall grass. This point is important because there could be a graveyard associated with the farm workers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The developers should make a detailed search for graves before the land is disturbed on the east end of Golf Island. If some are discovered, the graves should either be left undisturbed, or removed, following procedures detailed in existing legislation.

At present, **Sites 5 and 6** are protected inside the Nature Area. If this situation changes, the two sites should be mapped and otherwise recorded.

The remaining sites do not require further attention, and there are no archaeological reasons why the development of Golf Island and Festival Grounds should not proceed.