

**Cultural Heritage Survey of the Farm Rietfontein 338JQ, Rustenburg
District, North West Province**

For

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By

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Executive Summary

Stone Age & Iron Age settlements

A Late Iron Age settlement was recorded during the survey. It is an elaborate site which should be studied further. Recording of the site i.e. surveying and mapping should be conducted to aid further interpretation.

A permit application should be submitted to the SAHRA for the construction of the proposed training/education centre on the site.

No archaeological remains were recorded in the area earmarked for the proposed offices. The impact will be minimal as no foundations will be needed. The structure will rest on blocks.

Also note the following:

- It should be kept in mind that archaeological deposits usually occur below ground level. Should archaeological artefacts or skeletal material be revealed in the area during construction activities, such activities should be halted, and a university or museum notified in order for an investigation and evaluation of the find(s) to take place (*cf.* **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)**, Section 36 (6)).

1. Introduction

The aim of this cultural heritage survey is to record and document cultural heritage remains consisting of visible archaeological and historical artefacts, structures (including graves) and settlements of cultural significance. The study area is located on Portion 23 (Portion of Portion 13) of the Farm Rietfontein 338JQ.

2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of this survey are as follows:

- * Provide a detailed description of all archaeological artefacts, structures (including graves) and settlements
- * Estimate the level of significance/importance of the archaeological remains within the area
- * Assess any possible impact on the archaeological and historical remains within the area emanating from the proposed development activities
- * Propose possible mitigation measures provided that such action is necessitated by the development

3. Nature of the Proposed Activity or Development

The proposed development includes the following:

- Pre-constructed structure for offices (placed on blocks, no foundations)
- Training and education centre

4. Definitions and Approach

- Archaeological remains can be defined as human-made objects, which reflect past ways of life, deposited on or in the ground.
- Heritage resources have lasting value in their own right and provide evidence of the origins of South African society and they are valuable, finite non-renewable and irreplaceable.
- All archaeological remains, artificial features and structures older than 100 years and historic structures older than 60 years are protected by the relevant legislation, in this case the **National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999)**. The Act makes an archaeological impact assessment as part of an EIA and EMPR mandatory. No archaeological artefact, assemblage or settlement (site) may be moved or destroyed without the necessary approval from the **South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)**. Full cognisance is taken of this Act in making recommendations in this report.
- Cognisance will also be taken of the **Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (Act No 28 of 2002)** and the **National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998)** when making any recommendations.

- Human remains older than 60 are protected by the **National Heritage Resources Act**, with reference to Section 36. Human remains that are less than 60 years old are protected by the **Human Tissue Act (Act 65 of 1983 as amended)**.

- **Mitigation guidelines:**

Significance Rating	Action
Not protected	1. None
Low	2a. Recording and documentation (Phase 1) of site adequate; no further action required
	2b. Controlled sampling (shovel test pits, augering), mapping and documentation (Phase 2 investigation); permit required for sampling and destruction
Medium	3. Excavation of representative sample, C ¹⁴ dating,), mapping and documentation (Phase 2 investigation); permit required for sampling and destruction [including 2a & 2b]
High	4a. Nomination for listing on Heritage Register (National, Provincial or Local) (Phase 2 & 3 investigation); site management plan; permit required if utilised for education or tourism 4b. Graves: Locate demonstrable descendants through social consulting; obtain permits from applicable legislation, ordinances and regional by-laws; exhumation and reinterment [including 2a, 2b & 3]

- Rating the **significance of the impact** on a historical or archaeological site is linked to the significance of the site itself. If the significance of the site is rated high, the significance of the impact will also result in a high rating. The same rule applies if the significance rating of the site is low.
- With reference to the evaluation of sites, the certainty of prediction is definite, unless stated otherwise.
- The guidelines as provided by the **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)** in Section 3, with special reference to subsection 3, and the Australian ICOMOS Charter (also known as the Burra Charter) are used when determining the cultural significance or other special value of archaeological or historical sites.
- It should be kept in mind that archaeological deposits usually occur below ground level. Should archaeological artefacts or skeletal material be revealed in the area during construction activities, such activities should be halted, and a university or museum notified in order for an investigation and evaluation of the find(s) to take place (*cf.* **NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)**, Section 36 (6)).
- A copy of this report will be lodged with the **South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)** as stipulated by the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999), Section 38 (especially subsection 4).

- Note that the final decision for the approval of permits, or the removal or destruction of sites, structures and artefacts identified in this report, rests with the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) (or relevant PHRA).

5. Methodology

5.1 Maps and Other Sources

The Marsh property is situated east of Rustenburg near the Kroondal off ramp of the N4. The area is localised on the 1:50 000 topographic map 2527CB (Rustenburg East). The location of the survey area is indicated on Map 1.



Map 1: Aerial view of the farm.

5.2 Fieldwork

An intensive site visit was conducted on 23 August 2008. The survey area was investigated on foot.

5.3 Visibility and Constraints

No severe restrictions were encountered. Also note that due to the subterranean nature of

cultural remains this report should not be construed as a record of all archaeological and historic sites in the area.

6. Description of Study Area

The study area is situated on Portion 23 (Portion of Portion 13) on the farm Rietfontein 338JQ which is 14,0970 hectares in extent.

The farm is generally open and flat with a raised rocky outcrop on the eastern periphery. Existing infrastructure includes the main house complex, worker accommodation, fences and access roads.

7. Archaeological Sequence

PERIOD	APPROXIMATE DATE
Early Stone Age	more than c. 2 million years ago - c. 250 000 years ago
Middle Stone Age	c. 250 000 years ago – c. 25 000 years ago
Later Stone Age (Includes San Rock Art)	c. 25 000 years ago - c. AD 200 (up to historic times in certain areas)
Early Iron Age	c. AD 400 - c. AD 1025
Late Iron Age (Stonewalled sites)	c. AD 1025 - c. AD 1830 (c. AD 1640 - c. AD 1830)

8. Archaeological Context

8.1 Stone Age

Concentrations of Early Stone Age (ESA) sites are usually present on the flood-plains of perennial rivers and may date to over 2 millions years ago. These ESA open sites may contain scatters of stone tools and manufacturing debris and secondly, large concentrated deposits ranging from pebble tool choppers to core tools such as handaxes and cleavers. The earliest hominins who made these stone tools, probably not always actively hunted, instead relying on the opportunistic scavenging of meat from carnivore kill sites.

Middle Stone Age (MSA) sites also occur on flood plains, but are also associated with caves and rock shelters (overhangs). Sites usually consist of large concentrations of knapped stone flakes such as scrapers, points and blades and associated manufacturing debris. Tools may have been hafted but organic materials, such as those used in hafting, seldom preserve. Limited drive-hunting activities are also associated with this period.

Sites dating to the Later Stone Age (LSA) are better preserved in rock shelters, although open sites with scatters of mainly stone tools can occur. Well-protected deposits in shelters allow for stable conditions that result in the preservation of organic materials such as wood, bone, hearths, ostrich eggshell beads and even bedding material. By using San (Bushman)

ethnographic data a better understanding of this period is possible. South African rock art is also associated with the LSA.

8.2 Iron Age Sequence

In the northern regions of South Africa at least three settlement phases have been distinguished for early prehistoric agropastoralist settlements during the **Early Iron Age** (EIA). Diagnostic pottery assemblages can be used to infer group identities and to trace movements across the landscape. The first phase of the Early Iron Age, known as **Happy Rest** (named after the site where the ceramics were first identified), is representative of the Western Stream of migrations, and dates to AD 400 - AD 600. The second phase of **Diamant** is dated to AD 600 - AD 900 and was first recognized at the eponymous site of Diamant in the western Waterberg. The third phase, characterised by herringbone-decorated pottery of the **Eiland** tradition, is regarded as the final expression of the Early Iron Age (EIA) and occurs over large parts of the North West Province, Northern Province, Gauteng and Mpumalanga. This phase has been dated to about AD 900 - AD 1200. These sites are usually located on low-lying spurs close to water. However, please note that there are no EIA sites in the Free State.

The **Late Iron Age** (LIA) settlements are characterised by stone-walled enclosures situated on defensive hilltops c. AD 1640 - AD 1830). This occupation phase has been linked to the arrival of ancestral Northern Sotho, Tswana and Southern Ndebele (Nguni-speakers) in the northern and Waterberg regions, and dates from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries AD. The terminal LIA is represented by late 18th/early 19th century settlements with multichrome Moloko pottery commonly attributed to the Sotho-Tswana. These settlements can in many instances be correlated with oral traditions on population movements during which African farming communities sought refuge in mountainous regions during the processes of disruption in the northern interior of South Africa, resulting from the so-called *difaqane* (or *mfecane*).

8.3 Ethno-historical Context

Evidence suggests that the Sotho-speaking people migrated southwards from the intra-lacustrine region of the 'Great Lakes' in East Africa (Mönnig 1967:12; Schapera 1953:14; Stow 1905:433). This migratory process is marked by three stages, the first is represented by the Bakgalagadi, the second by the ancestors (Digoya?) of the Barolong and Batlhaping, the third by the ancestors of the other Sotho groups who soon after their arrival divided into separate clusters, the most important being the Bahurutshe, Bakwena and Bakgatla (Mönnig 1967:12; Schapera 1953:14-15).

It is generally accepted that Late Iron Age settlements (AD 1325 - AD 1830s) in the trans-Vaal region are associated with Sotho-speakers (Boeyens 1998; Pistorius 1992).

Linguistically, the Sotho group of the south-eastern zone of Bantu languages embraces the following languages and dialect clusters (Schapera 1953:9; Cole 1955:xv-xvi):

- Southern Sotho (Basotho of Lesotho and Free State)
- Northern Sotho (includes Bapedi, Bakone, Batau, Bakgaga, Bakwena, Batlokwa and others of the trans-Vaal region)

- Lozi (Barotse or Bakololo of Zambia and northern Zimbabwe)
- Kgalagadi (Bangologa, Bakoma, Bakuwe and others of central Botswana)
- Balobedu, Bapalaborwa, Bapai, Bakutswe, Bapulana and others of northern Limpopo Province
- Tswana

Schapera (1953:9) states that ‘The Tswana themselves seem on the whole to be sufficiently homogenous to be classed as a single group in relation to other peoples of South Africa. Local variations occur, both in dialect and social structure and other aspects of culture...’ but is unsure whether ‘...a definitive classification into sub-groups can be attempted.’

However, purely on linguistic grounds Cole (1955:xvi-xvii) has suggested the following four divisions of the Tswana cluster:

- Central division includes the Barolong, Bahurutshe and Bangwaketse *merafe*
- Southern division includes the Batlhaping and Batlhware (BaTlharo) *merafe*
- Northern division consists of Bakwena, Bangwato and Batawana *merafe*
- Eastern division consists of Bakgatla and eastern Bakwena *merafe*, each with various subsections such as, Bafokeng, Batlokwa, Bamogopa, Bammanamela, Bamodimosana, Balete, Batlhako, Baphalane, Baphiring, Bakubung, Bakolobeng, Batloun and Bammatau.

Of relevance to this study are the Bafokeng of Kgosi (Chief) August Molotlegi Mokgatle (born 1866) who succeeded at chief in 1896. He ruled until 1938 when his son James Manotse Tumagole Molotlegi succeeded (Breutz 1987:283-285). Some of the farms that the group purchased during this period are situated north of the survey area and include the following:

- Beestekraal 290JQ
- Nooitgedacht 287JQ
- Hoedspruit 298JQ

Chief August Mokgatle’s Location is also situated about 10km north of the survey area clearly indicating that this general area was under the control of the Bafokeng and that Site 1 is probably a cattle outpost.

Also note that the general area south of the Magaliesberg Mountains was under the control of the Bakwena people, specifically the Bakwena Bamodimosana. According to Breutz (1953:423) Chief Bamodimosana divided his people amongst his four sons namely:

- the Baramanamela under Manamela
- the Bammatau under Tau
- the Bamaaka under Khunong, and
- the Bamatlhaku under Morare

The erstwhile capitals associated with the Bakwena Bamodimosana Bammatau have been located on the farms Selonskraal 317JQ and Shylock 256JQ and are known as Selonskraal and Boitsemagano respectively.

9. Description of Sites

Sites that were identified during the survey are archaeological sites dated to the later (stone walled) phase of the Late Iron Age (c. AD 1640 - AD 1830s) also known as the Late Moloko. All the stone walls are built with the dry-walling technique as no evidence was found that the surfaces were plastered with an agent (i.e. dagha (cattle dung mixed with mud)).

Archaeological sites are mostly situated in close proximity to water. The annual rainfall of the region ranges between 700 - 800 mm with a moderate climate during both summer and winter months. Recent climatic research indicates that between AD 900 - AD 1295 southern Africa experienced a 'Warm Epoch' with generally hotter and wetter conditions than today. Between AD 1295 - AD 1780 the region experienced a so-called 'Little Ice Age' with generally colder and drier conditions, although the period between AD 1425 and AD 1675 was generally warm and wet (*cf.* Tyson 1992). As a result, past conditions in the area probably were, at times, even more favourable for grain cultivation (e.g. sorghum, millet and various types of beans) than today.

9.1 Site 1

A. GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is a Late Iron Age stone-walled settlement. The settlement consists of the following structures:

- six enclosures clustered together, with a main enclosure (approximately 8 metres in diameter) on the rocky outcrop
- A large enclosure (approximately 25 metres in diameter) with several secondary stone walling and enclosures attached to it.
- Several large packed stone heaps (it is unclear if these are graves)

Although no house remains were recorded, a broken lower grindstone was found near a wall associated with the large enclosure.

Due to the high concentration of enclosures the settlement was probably a cattle large outpost associated with the Bafokeng of Kgosi (Chief) August Molotlegi Mokgatle who's people lived further north.

These structures are all older than 100 years and are therefore protected by the NHRA (Act no 25 of 1999).

B. SITE EVALUATION

B1. HERITAGE VALUE

	Yes	No
Historic Value		
It has importance to the community or pattern of South Africa's history or precolonial history.	√	
It has strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa.		√
It has significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.		√
Aesthetic Value		

Historic Value

It has importance to the community or pattern of South Africa's history or precolonial history.	√	
It has strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa.		√
It has significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.		√
Aesthetic Value		

It has importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a particular community or cultural group.	√	
Scientific Value		
It has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural and cultural heritage.	√	
It has importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.		√
It has importance to the wider understanding of temporal changes within cultural landscapes, settlement patterns and human occupation.	√	
Social Value		
It has marked or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (sense of place).		√
Tourism Value		
It has significance through contributing towards the promotion of a local sociocultural identity and can be developed as a tourist destination.	√	
Rarity Value		
It possesses unique, uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.		√
Representative Value		
It is of importance in demonstrating the principle characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects.	√	
B2. REGIONAL CONTEXT		
Other similar sites in the regional landscape.	√	
B3. CONDITION OF SITE		
Integrity of deposits/structures.	Stable	
C. SPHERE OF SIGNIFICANCE	High	Medium
International		√
National		√
Provincial		√
Local	√	
Specific community	√	
D. FIELD REGISTER RATING		
National/Grade 1 [should be registered, retained]		
Provincial/Grade 2 [should be registered, retained]		
Local/Grade 3A [should be registered, mitigation not advised]		
Local/Grade 3B [High significance; mitigation, partly retained]		
Generally Protected A [High/Medium significance, mitigation]	√	
Generally protected B [Medium significance, to be recorded]		
Generally Protected C [Low significance, no further action]		
E. GENERAL STATEMENT OF SITE SIGNIFICANCE		
Low		
Medium		
High	√	
F. RATING OF POTENTIAL IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT		
None	√	
Peripheral		
Destruction		
Uncertain		

G. RECOMMENDED MITIGATION

- The settlement should surveyed and mapped.
- Apply for a permit from the SAHRA for the construction of a training/educational centre on the site.
- Conservation management plan must be compiled for the site.

H. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (Act no 25 of 1999)

I. PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 1: One of the main stone-walled enclosures on the rocky outcrop.



Figure 2: A section of the stone wall of the main enclosure.



Figure 3: A broken lower grinding stone.

10. Summary of Sites

Site	Coordinates	Site Type	Statement of Significance	Impact	Mitigation
1	25.748250°S 27.366602°E	Late Iron Age Site	High	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit for proposed construction of training centre from SAHRA

11. Conclusions and Recommendations*Stone Age & Iron Age settlements*

A Late Iron Age settlement was recorded during the survey. It is an elaborate site which should be studied further. Recording of the site i.e. surveying and mapping should be conducted to aid further interpretation.

Several large stone mounts were also recorded on the site. It is unclear if these are graves and should also be investigated further.

A permit application should be submitted to the SAHRA for the construction of the proposed training/education centre on the site.

No archaeological remains were recorded in the area earmarked for the proposed offices. The impact will be minimal as no foundations will be needed. The structure will rest on blocks.

Also note the following:

- It should be kept in mind that archaeological deposits usually occur below ground level. Should archaeological artefacts or skeletal material be revealed in the area during construction activities, such activities should be halted, and a university or museum notified in order for an investigation and evaluation of the find(s) to take place (*cf.* NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999), Section 36 (6)).

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