

ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY OF ROODEKOP EXTENSION 6 (1), GERMISTON

INTRODUCTION

The Germiston Town Council intends to build low cost housing on Portions 109 and 110 of a portion of Portion 1 of the farm Roodekop 139 IR near Katlehong. A large mining complex once covered the farm, and the Council will have the quarry and barrow areas backfilled to make the land suitable for residential use.

Globecon, the environmental coordinators for the project, noted an E-shaped series of trenches made with stone and cement. Globecon then commissioned Archaeological Resources Management (ARM) to assess the significance of these trenches and to examine the project area for other sites of archaeological significance.

METHOD

One ARM staff visited the project area on January 21 in the company of Mr N. Venter from Urban Dynamics (The Town Planners) and Ms E Holtzhausen of Globecon. ARM staff returned on January 22 with Professor L Wadley, a Stone Age specialist from the Archaeology Department at the University of the Witwatersrand. Sites were plotted on 1:2 500 map supplied by the Town Planners Office, and then transferred to the 1:50 000 map 2628 AC Alberton. GPS readings were also taken.

RESULTS

The project area has been extensively altered by the earlier mining activities and by present-day dumping. The grass cover was also high and obscured much of the ground surface.

Nevertheless, a number of sites were visible, ranging in date from the Early Stone Age to the Historical Period (Table 1, Figure 1).

Stone Age

Early Stone Age (\pm 1 million to 200 000 years ago) artefacts occur near the large quarry (*Site 1* on Figure 1) and at *Site 2* about 600 metres to the east. In both cases the artefacts represent primary flake production, rather than living sites.

Middle Stone Age (200 000 to 25 000 years ago) artefacts at *Site 3* and *Site 4*, on the other hand, represent living sites. Both are situated among rocks overlooking the Natalsspruit. *Site 3* is particularly rich. Other Middle Stone Age artefacts occur among most rocky outcrops near the Natalsspruit (*Site 5*), on the plateau (*Site 6*) and on the hillside between the quarry and beacon. In fact Middle Stone Age artefacts are widespread throughout the project area because of the high grade quartzite that was the source of raw material for stone artefacts. Other artefacts were also made from white quartz, and a long quartz vein is exposed at *Site 5*.

Some of this quartz was also used as raw material during the Later Stone Age (20 000 to 500 years ago). A few Later Stone Age artefacts are mixed with the Middle Stone Age at *Site 3* and *Site 4*. At *Site 4* the raw material included a dark hornfels outcropping there, and these artefacts may belong to the Oakhurst industry (12 000 - 8 000 years ago).

Historical

Pottery, glass and coal cinder lie on the surface of a mining road (*Site 7*). These remains probably mark some of the residences of mine labourers.

The set of trenches (*Site 8*) originally noted by the Town Planners Office, must also be associated with the extensive mining activities. It may have been involved with chemical processing, but its function is unknown.

Finally, several congregations of the Zionist Christian Church use the hillside east of the quarry. Stone circles, candles and coins mark various areas of worship.

Table 1. Sites noted on Roodekop Extension 6.

Site NO.	Period				Latitude	Longitude
	ESA	MSA	LSA	Historic		
1	x	x			26.17.58	28.09.00
2	x		-		26.17.55	28.09.24
3		x	-		26.17.50	28.09.16
4		x	-		26.17.53	28.09.23
5		x			26.17.49	28.09.20
6		x			26.17.44	28.09.12
7		-		x	26.17.51	28.09.13
8	-	-		x	26.17.56	28.09.14

ESA = Early Stone Age
 MSA = Middle Stone Age
 LSA = Later Stone Age
 - = minor presence
 x = major presence

RECOMMENDATIONS

The numerous scattered Stone Age remains have no significance, while the significance of the other sites is low. ARM staff have already made a surface collection from *Site 3* and have recovered a representative sample. Further mitigation is therefore not required. In any case *Site 3* is not under immediate threat by the housing project.

There will be records of *Site 8*, along with other mining activity, and mitigation is not needed.

Thus, there are no archaeological or historical reasons why the Roodekop housing project should not continue.

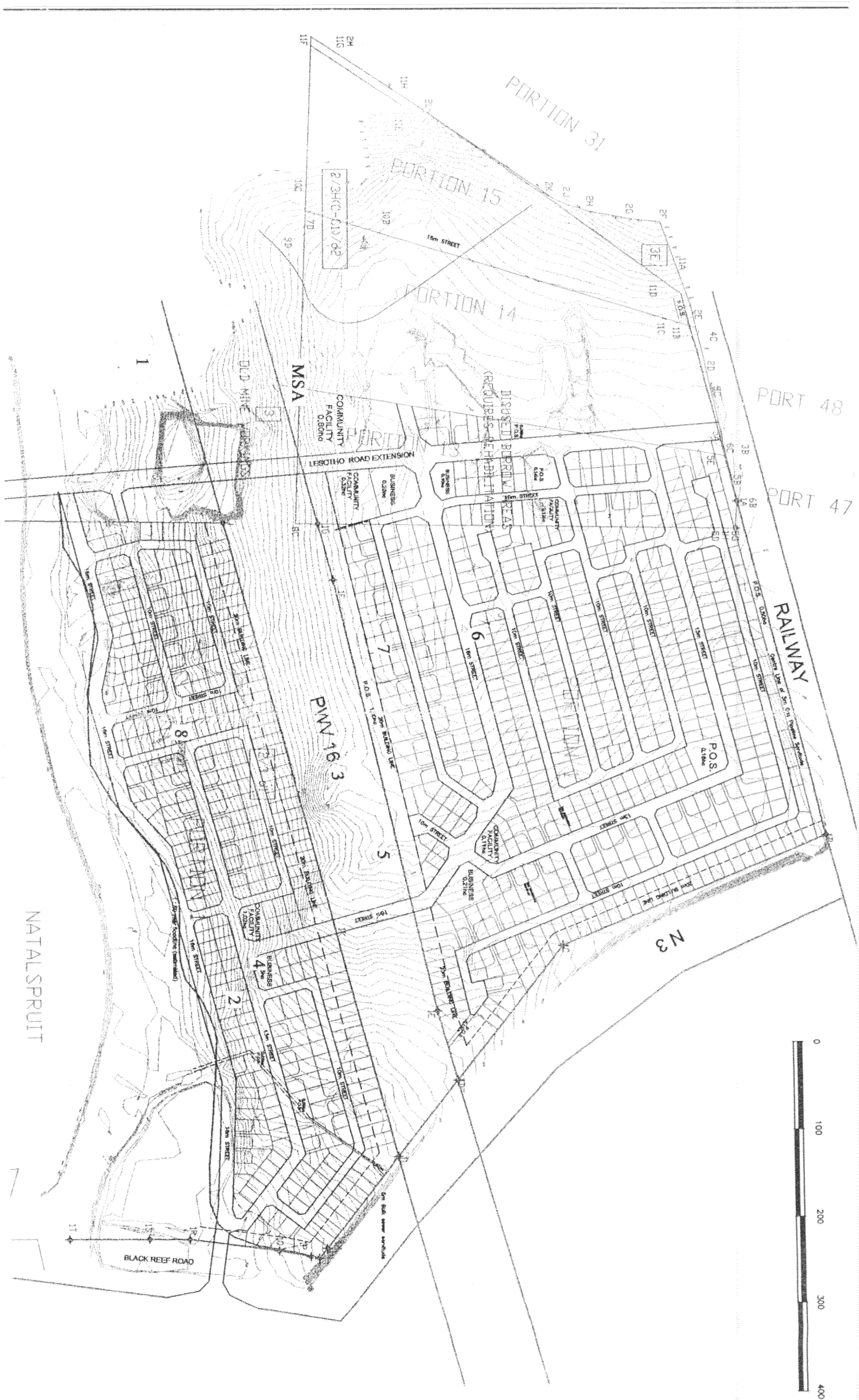


Figure 1. Sites mentioned in the report.