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A SURVEY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES ON
THE FARM ROODEKRAAL 21 HT,
WEST OF PIET RETIEF

For:

STEFFEN ROBERTSON AND KIRSTEN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS
P.O. Box 55291
NORTHLANDS
2116

Survey conducted and report prepared by the:

NATIONAL CULTURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
P.O. Box 28088
SUNNYSIDE
0132

Telephone - (012) 341 1320
Telefax - (012) 341 6146

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SUMMARY

A survey of cultural resources on part of the Farm Roodekraal 21 HT, west of Piet Retief

A survey to establish the nature, extent and significance of cultural resources was made on part of the Farm Roodekraal 21 Ht, west of Piet Retief.

No significant cultural resources were identified. Therefore the proposed development will not impact on any cultural resource and it is recommended that the development of the discard dam can continue.

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**A SURVEY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES ON THE
FARM ROODEKRAAL, 21 HT,
WEST OF PIET RETIEF**

1. AIMS OF THE SURVEY

The National Cultural History Museum was requested by **Steffen, Robertson and Kirsten Consulting Engineers and Scientists** to survey an area on the Farm Roodekraal 21 HT west of Piet Retief. It is planned to develop a discard dam for the already existing Maguasa Colliery on a section of the original farm. The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document possible sites, objects and structures of cultural importance within the boundaries of the area of proposed development.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The **Terms of Reference** for the study were to:

- 2.1 Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural resources) located in the area of the proposed development.
- 2.2 Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their historical, social, religious, aesthetic and scientific value.
- 2.3 Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions.
- 2.4 Propose suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources.

We were informed by the client about the extent of the area that will be affected by the proposed development. The survey was to be confined to this area.

3. CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The following aspects have a direct bearing on the survey and the resulting report:

- **Cultural resources** are all nonphysical and physical human-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences that are associated with human activity. These include all sites, structures and artifacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development.

The **significance** of the sites and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in

mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these.

Significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium to high significance require further mitigation.

The latitude and longitude of an archaeological site is to be treated as sensitive information by the developer, and should not be disclosed to members of the public.

All recommendations are made with full cognisance of the relevant legislation, in this case the Monuments and Relics Act (1970).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Field survey

A previous survey (1995) was conducted in the area by the National Cultural History Museum. The part surveyed during the 1997 survey was included in the previous survey. However, the client (SRK) wanted the area to be inspected again for possible sites, features and objects.

The survey was conducted according to generally accepted archaeological practices, and was aimed at locating all possible sites, objects and structures. This was done by the researcher walking systematically across the veld, covering the whole area (between 30 and 40 hectares). Areas with potential for human use were investigated. Special attention was given to outcrops and unploughed natural areas, while springs and unnatural topographical occurrences such as trenches, holes and clusters of exotic and indigenous trees were investigated.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA SURVEYED

The area that was surveyed is indicated on the map provided by the client (SRK Consulting Engineers and Scientists). The topography is, basically, gently flat open grass veld with a small plantation of Bluegum trees forming the eastern boundary of the site. One or two natural springs also occur in the area. The geology of the survey area is characterised mainly by sandstone. The area has not been ploughed, but has been in use for grazing by cattle.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Stone Age

A few Middle Stone Age tools were identified in the area that was surveyed. They do not occur in situ and was found in and near the small plantation of Bluegum trees. They are made of quartzite, a rock type not found in the immediate area. This probably means that

they were brought into the area by Middle Stone Age people. These stone artefacts are the only archaeological material found in the study area.

6.2 Iron Age

No indication of Iron Age settlement was found.

6.3 Historic

No historical remains were discovered.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As no significant cultural resources were found in the area of the proposed development, it is recommended that the development of the discard dam continue. The Middle Stone Age tools found are totally out of context, and therefore have no archaeological or cultural significance, other than being Middle Stone Age artefacts.

8. REFERENCES

National Cultural History Museum, 1995. A Survey of Cultural Resources in the Maguasa Coal Mine Area, Eastern Transvaal. Unpublished Report. Pretoria: National Cultural History Museum.

9. PROJECT TEAM

Johnny van Schalkwyk - Investigator
A Pelsier - Investigator

