Archaeological Impact Assessment

STEELPOORT EXTENSION 20 ON PORTIONS OF THE FARM STERKFONTEIN 318 KT, STEELPOORT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Prepared For

Lokisa Environmental Consultants

By



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Executive summary

Site name and location: Proposed Steelpoort Ext 20 on Remainder of portion 3 and portion 6 (a portion of portion 3) of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT, Steelpoort, Limpopo Province.

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Date of Report: 3 June 2009

1:50 000 map: 2430 CD

Findings of the Assessment: Four heritage sites of significance were identified during the survey. Of these sites only one site (Site 4) will require mitigation if impacted upon. Refer to section 8 of this report for a assessment of the finds.

If the recommendations made in section 8 are adhered by there is from a Heritage point of view no reason why the development can not commence.

If during construction any possible finds are made, the operations must be stopped and a qualified archaeologist be contacted for an assessment of the find.

Disclaimer: Although all possible care is taken to identify all sites of cultural importance during the investigation of study areas, it is always possible that hidden or sub-surface sites like graves could be overlooked during the study. Wits Heritage Contracts Unit and its personnel will not be held liable for such oversights or for costs incurred as a result of such oversights.

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- The results of the project;
- The technology described in any report
- Recommendations delivered to the Client.

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.1. INTRODUCTION

Wits Heritage Contracts Unit was contracted by Lokisa Environmental Consultants to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment for the proposed Steelpoort Ext 20 development on the remainder of portion 3 and portion 6 (a portion of portion 3) of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT, Steelpoort, Limpopo Province. The report forms part of the EIA for the proposed project. The aim of the study is to identify heritage sites, document, and assess their importance within Local, Provincial and national context. To assess the impact of the proposed project on non renewable heritage resources and to submit appropriate recommendations with regard to the responsible cultural resources management measures that might be required to assist the developer in managing the discovered heritage resources in a responsible manner, in order to protect, preserve, and develop them within the framework provided by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999).

The report outlines the approach and methodology utilized before and during the survey, which includes in Phase 1: Information collection from various sources and consultations; Phase 2: Physical surveying of the area on foot and by vehicle; and Phase 3: Reporting the outcome of the study.

During the survey, 4 cultural heritage sites of significance were identified. General site conditions and features on sites were recorded by means of photos, GPS location, and description. Possible impacts were identified and mitigation measures are proposed in the following report.

This report must also be submitted to SAHRA provincial office for peer review.

1.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Conduct brief desktop study to:

Review available literature, previous heritage studies and other relevant information sources. Gather data and compile a background history of the area. Identify all known and recorded archaeological and cultural sites; and determine whether the area is renowned for any cultural and heritage resources, such as Stone Age sites, Iron Age sites, informal graveyards or historical homesteads.

Conduct a field study to:

Consult with locals (where possible) to gather information on oral history, local history, possible informal graves, cemeteries, and other areas of cultural significance. Systematically survey the proposed project area to locate, identify record, photograph and describe sites of archaeological, historical or cultural interest; and record GPS points of significant areas identified. Determine the levels of significance of the various types of heritage resources recorded in the project area;

Reporting

Identify the anticipated impacts, as well as cumulative impacts, of the operational units of the proposed project activity on the identified heritage resources for all 3 phases of the project, i.e. construction, operation and decommissioning phases. Consider alternatives should any significant sites be impacted adversely by the proposed project. Ensure that all requirements of the local Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) are met; and ensure that all studies and results are sufficient to comply with ALL the relevant requirements of the Equator Principles, World Bank Standards and IFC Principles and Performance Standards and National legislation. To assist the developer in managing the discovered heritage resources in a responsible manner, in order to protect, preserve, and develop them within the framework provided by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999).

1.3 Nature of the development

The application is for the establishment of a residential development including B

- Business/commercial/offices/educational and motor vehicle use.
- Tourism Related Uses (Resort/Hotel/Lodge/Restaurant) (16.33 Ha)
- Public Open Space
- · Municipal Services.

1.4 Description of study area

The proposed area is characterised by extensive agricultural fields that have destroyed archaeological sites along the river front. Refer to main EIA report for geographical, environmental and demographic issues.

2. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to extensively cover all data available to compile a background history of the study area; this was accomplished by means of the following phases.

2.1 PHYSICAL SURVEYING

Due to the nature of cultural remains, the majority that occurs below surface, a physical walk through of the study area was conducted. Wits Heritage Contract Unit was appointed to conduct a survey of the proposed development. The study area of approximately 200ha was surveyed over a period of one day by a qualified archaeologists, by means of vehicle and extensive surveys on foot.

Aerial photographs and 1:50 000 maps of the area were consulted and literature of the area were studied before undertaking the survey. The purpose of this was to identify topographical areas of possible historic and pre-historic activity. All sites discovered both

inside and bordering the proposed development area was plotted on 1:50 000 maps and their GPS co-ordinates noted. 35mm photographs on digital film were taken at all the sites.

3. Abbreviations and definitions

3.1 Abbreviations

ASAPA: Association of South African	BPEO: Best Practicable Environmental
Professional Archaeologists	Option
CRM: Cultural Resource Management	DEA&DP: Department of Environmental
	Affairs and Development Planning
DEAT: Department of Environmental Affairs	DWAF: Department of Water Affairs and
and Tourism	Forestry
EIA practitioner: Environmental Impact	EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment
Assessment Practitioner	
EIA: Early Iron Age	ESA: Early Stone Age
GPS: Global Positioning System	HIA: Heritage Impact Assessment
I&AP: Interested & Affected Party	IDP: Integrated Development Plan
LSA: Late Stone Age	LIA: Late Iron Age
MSA: Middle Stone Age	MIA: Middle Iron Age
NEMA: National Environmental Management	NHR Act: National Heritage Resources Act
Act	
PHRA: Provincial Heritage Resources	PSSA: Palaeontological Society of South
Agency	Africa
ROD: Record of Decision	SACLAP: South African Council for the
	Landscape Architect Profession
SAHRA: South African Heritage Resources	SAIA: South African Institute of Architects
Agency	
SAPI: South African Planning Institute	SDF: Spatial Development Framework

3.2 Definitions

Archaeological resources:

This includes material remains resulting from human activity which are in a state of disuse and are in or on land and which are older than 100 years including artefacts, human and hominid remains and artificial features and structures;

Rock art:

Being any form of painting, engraving or other graphic representation on a fixed rock surface or loose rock or stone, which was executed by human agency and which is older than 100 years, including any area within 10m of such representation;

Wrecks:

Being any vessel or aircraft, or any part thereof which was wrecked in South Africa, whether on land, in the internal waters, the territorial waters or in the maritime culture zone of the republic as defined in the Maritimes Zones Act, and any cargo, debris or artefacts found or associated therewith, which is older than 60 years or which SAHRA considers to be worthy of conservation;

Military:

Features, structures and artefacts associated with military history which are older than 75 years and the site on which they are found.

Cultural significance:

This means aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technological value or significance

Development:

This means any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in the change to the nature, appearance or physical nature of a place or influence its stability and future well-being, including:

•construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change in use of a place or a structure at a place;

- · carrying out any works on or over or under a place;
- •subdivision or consolidation of land comprising a place, including the structures or airspace of a place;
- constructing or putting up for display signs or hoardings;
- •any change to the natural or existing condition or topography

of land;

• any removal or destruction of trees, or removal or vegetation

or topsoil

Heritage resources:

This means any place or object of cultural significance

Stakeholders:

A subgroup of the public whose interests may be positively or negatively affected by a proposal or activity and/or who are concerned with a proposal or activity and its consequences. The term includes the proponent, authorities and all interested and affected parties.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL LEGISLATION AND BEST PRACTICE

Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessments or Heritage Impact Assessments are a prerequisite for development in South Africa as prescribed by SAHRA and stipulated by legislation. The overall purpose of a heritage specialist input is to:

- Identify any heritage resources, which may be affected;
- Assess the nature and degree of significance of such resources;
- Establish heritage informants/constraints to guide the development process through establishing thresholds of impact significance;
- Assess the negative and positive impact of the development on these resources;
- Make recommendations for the appropriate heritage management of these impacts.

The AIA or HIA, as a specialist sub-section of the Environmental Impact Assessment [EIA] is required under the National Heritage Resources Act NHRA of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)., Section 38(1), Section 38(8) the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) and the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA).

The AIA should be submitted, as part of the EIA, BIA or Environmental Management Plan [EMP], to the PHRA if established in the province or to SAHRA. SAHRA will be ultimately responsible for the professional evaluation of Phase 1 AIA reports upon which review comments will be issued. 'Best practice' requires Phase 1 AIA reports and required additional development information, as per the EIA, BIA / EMP, to be submitted in duplicate to SAHRA after completion of the study. SAHRA accepts Phase 1 AIA reports authored by professional archaeologists, accredited with ASAPA. Minimum accreditation requirements include an Honours degree in archaeology or related discipline and 3 years post-university CRM experience (field supervisor level).

Minimum standards for reports, site documentation and descriptions are set by the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists [ASAPA] in collaboration with SAHRA. ASAPA is a legal body, based in South Africa, representing professional archaeology in the Southern African Development Community [SADC] region. ASAPA is primarily involved in the overseeing of archaeological ethical practice and standards. Membership is based on proposal and secondment by other professional members.

Phase 1 AIA's are primarily concerned with the location and identification of sites situated within a proposed development area. Identified sites should be assessed according to their significance. Relevant conservation or Phase2 mitigation recommendations should be made. Recommendations are subject to evaluation by SAHRA.

Conservation or Phase 2 mitigation recommendations, as approved by SAHRA, are to be used as guidance in the developer's decision making process:

Phase 2 archaeological projects are primarily based on salvage / mitigation excavations preceding development destruction or impact on a site. Phase 2 excavations should be done under a permit issued by SAHRA to the appointed archaeologist. Permit conditions are prescribed by SAHRA and includes as minimum requirements reporting back strategies to SAHRA and deposition of excavated material at a accredited repository.

In the event of a site conservation option being preferred by the developer a site management plan, prepared by a professional archaeologist and approved by SAHRA, will suffice as minimum requirement.

After mitigation is conducted on a site, a destruction permit must be applied for from SAHRA before development may proceed.

Human remains older than 60 years are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act, with reference to Section 36. Graves older than 60 years, but younger than 100 years fall under Section 36 of Act 25 of 1999 (National Heritage Resources Act) as well as the Human Tissues Act (Act 65 of 1983) and are the jurisdiction of the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA). The procedure for Consultation Regarding Burial Grounds and Graves (Section 36(5) of Act 25 of 1999) is applicable to graves older than 60 years that are situated outside a formal cemetery administrated by a local authority. Graves in the category located inside a formal cemetery administrated by a local authority will also require the same authorisation as set out for graves younger than 60 years over and above SAHRA authorisation. If the grave is not situated inside a formal cemetery but is to be relocated to one, permission from the local authority is required and all regulations, laws and by-laws set by the cemetery authority must be adhered to.

Human remains that are less than 60 years old are protected under Section 2(1) of the Removal of Graves and Dead Bodies Ordinance (Ordinance no. 7 of 1925) as well as the Human Tissues Act (Act 65 of 1983) and are the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the relevant Provincial Department of Health and must be submitted for final approval to the Office of the relevant Provincial Premier. This function is usually delegated to the Provincial MEC for Local Government and Planning, or in some cases the MEC for Housing and Welfare. Authorisation for exhumation and reinterment must also be obtained from the relevant local or regional council where the grave is situated, as well as the relevant local or regional council to where the grave is being relocated. All local and regional provisions, laws and by-laws must also be adhered to. In order to handle and transport human remains the institution conducting the relocation should be authorised under Section 24 of Act 65 of 1983 (Human Tissues Act).

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.5. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

5.1 Evaluation of Heritage sites

This chapter describes the evaluation criteria used for determining the significance of archaeological and heritage sites. The following criteria were used to establish site significance:

- The unique nature of a site
- The integrity of the archaeological deposit
- The wider historic, archaeological and geographic context of the site
- The location of the site in relation to other similar sites or features
- The depth of the archaeological deposit (when it can be determined or is known)
- The preservation condition of the site
- Uniqueness of the site and
- potential to answer present research questions.

5.1.1 Heritage Site Significance and Mitigation Measures

Site significance classification standards prescribed by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (2006) and approved by the Association for Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA) for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, were used for the purpose of this report.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
National	Grade 1	-	Conservation; National
Significance (NS)			Site nomination
Provincial	Grade 2	-	Conservation; Provincial
Significance (PS)			Site nomination
Local Significance	Grade	High Significance	Conservation; Mitigation
(LS)	3A		not advised
Local Significance	Grade 3B	High Significance	Mitigation (Part of site
(LS)			should be retained)
Generally	-	High / Medium	Mitigation before
Protected A (GP.A)		Significance	destruction
Generally	-	Medium	Recording before
Protected B (GP.B)		Significance	destruction
Generally	-	Low Significance	Destruction
Protected C (GP.C)			

.5. Archaeological Context of study area

The historical background and timeframe of the study area can be divided into the Stone Age, Iron Age and Historical timeframe. These can be divided as follows:

Stone Age

The Stone Age is divided in Early; Middle and Late Stone Age and refers to the earliest people of South Africa who mainly relied on stone for their tools.

Early Stone Age: The period from \pm 2.5 million yrs - \pm 250 000 yrs ago. Acheulean stone tools are dominant.

Middle Stone Age: Various lithic industries in SA dating from ± 250 000 yrs – 25 000 yrs before present. This period is first associated with archaic *Homo sapiens* and later *Homo sapiens* sapiens. Material culture includes stone tools with prepared platforms and stone tools attached to handles.

Late Stone Age: The period from ± 25 000-yrs before present to the period of contact with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists. This period is associated with *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Material culture from this period includes: microlithic stone tools; ostrich eggshell beads and rock art.

Iron Age

The Iron Age as a whole represents the spread of Bantu speaking people and includes both the Pre-Historic and Historic periods. Similar to the Stone Age it to can be divided into three periods:

The Early Iron Age: Most of the first millennium AD.

The Middle Iron Age: 10th to 13th centuries AD

The Late Iron Age: 14th century to colonial period.

Historic Timeframe

17th Century to present AD (1600 – 2000)

The historic timeframe intermingles with the later parts of the Stone and Iron Age, and can loosely be regarded as times when written and oral recounts of incidents became available.

Previous CRM work in the area

The Wits archaeological database shows 5 previously recorded sites on the 2430 CA, 1: 50 000 sheet although none of these sites are located within the study area. Known sites in the general area indicate occupation during the Stone Age, Early and Middle Iron Age.

5.2 Probability of occurrence of sites

From the above information it is clear that a medium possibility of the occurrence of cultural heritage sites could be expected in the study area.

A. PALAEONTOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

CONTEXT

Fossil remains. Such resources are typically found in specific geographical areas, e.g. the Karoo and are embedded in ancient rock and limestone/calcrete formations. Exposed by road cuttings and quarry excavation: *Unknown*

B. ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE

CONTEXT

NOTE: Archaeology is the study of human material and remains (by definition) and is not restricted in any formal way as being below the ground surface.

Archaeological remains dating to the following periods can be expected with in the study area:

Stone Age finds

• ESA: Medium Probability

MSA: Medium – High Probability

• LSA: Medium- High Probability

• LSA –Herder: Low Probability

Iron Age Finds

- EIA: Medium- High Probability
- MIA: Medium- High Probability
- LIA: Medium- High Probability

Historical finds

- Historical period: Medium High Probability
- Historical dumps: Medium High Probability
- Structural remains: Medium High Probability

Military Finds

• Battle and military sites: Low Probability

Burial/Cemeteries

- Burials over 100 years: Medium Probability
- Burials younger than 60 years: Medium Probability

Subsurface excavations including ground levelling, landscaping, and foundation preparation can expose any number of these.

.6. SITES OF SIGNIFICANCE

The study area is located at 24 ° 41′ 47.68″ S and 30 ° 14′ 4.28″ E and is situated on the eastern banks of the Steelpoort River. The provincial road between the town of Steelpoort and Burgersfort cuts through the property leaving a small piece of land that is in the process of being developed (refer to locality map). These areas were not covered during the field study since these properties do not belong to the client. Mr. Johan Coetzee who is the owner is not aware of any graves on the property.

Large parts of the study area are already disturbed to the extend that any archaeological sites in those areas would be demolished. These disturbed areas consist of extensive agricultural fields, irrigation dams, demolished mine housing and a cement brick factory (S24 41 43.2 E30 14 50.4). Several stone cairns of various sizes were located during the survey (S24 42 10.9 E30 14 29.2), these cairns are associated with clearing of the fields, and this assumption was confirmed by the owner.



Figure 1: Agricultural fields



Figure 2: Cement brick factory



Figure 3: Stone cairns associated with field clearing

6.1 Site.1

S24 41 54.1 E30 14 33.8

Agricultural activities exposed a low concentration of decorated and undecorated ceramics in a disused field. Diagnostic ceramics indicate a middle to late Iron Age occupation Because of the continuous ploughing the ceramics is fragmented and scattered over a vast area. No structures or features are visible. A low frequency scatter of Stone Age artefacts are scattered over a wide area. Raw material consists of horn fells, dolerite and igneous rock.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
Generally Protected C (GP.C)	-	Low Significance	Destruction



Figure 4: Decorated pottery at Site 1

6.2 Site.2

S24 42 23.1 E30 14 15.9

On the banks of the Steelpoort River some undecorated ceramics were exposed by ploughing activities. No features or structures were exposed and the continuous ploughing fragmented the ceramics and scattered it over a vast area. Geotechnical pits in this area was investigated but no archaeological deposit was detected.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
Generally	-	Low Significance	Destruction
Protected C (GP.C)			



Figure 5: Geotechnical Pit

6.3 Site.3

S24 42 35.6 E30 14 16.9

Some decorated and undecorated ceramics were found in an old ploughed field on a small rise overlooking the Steelpoort River to the West. No features or structures were exposed and the continuous ploughing fragmented the ceramics and scattered it over a vast area.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
Generally Protected C (GP.C)	-	Low Significance	Destruction



Figure 6: Decorated ceramics at Site 3

6.4 Site.4

S24 41 46.4 E30 15 06.9

This is the location of ill defined dry stone walling. The site is highly overgrown and archaeological visibility is low. The total extend of the site is unknown but features include a cattle kraal with deposit and small stone enclosures. Some stone cairns are also present under the power line that runs to the west of the site.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
Generally	-	Medium	Mitigation before destruction
Protected B (GP.B)		Significance	

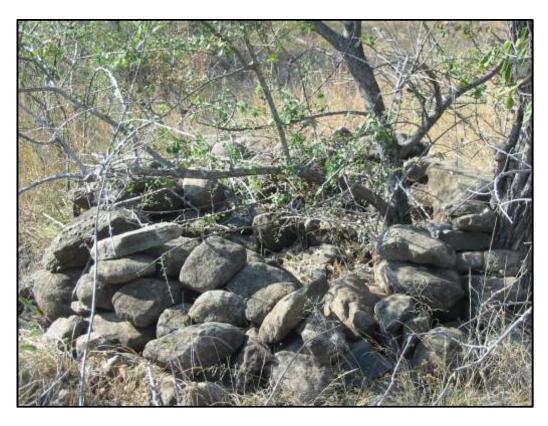


Figure 7: Dry stone wall enclosures

7. ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Due to the nature of cultural remains that occur, in most cases, below surface, the possibility remains that some cultural remains may not have been discovered during the survey. Low ground visibility is present on parts of the site due to high vegetation growth and the possibility of the occurrence of unmarked graves and archaeological sites can not be excluded. Although Wits Heritage Contracts unit surveyed the area as thorough as possible, it is incumbent upon the developer to inform the relevant heritage agency should further cultural remains be unearthed or laid open during the process of development.

8. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It must be stressed that a final layout map did not existed at the time of the survey and recommendations are made as if the sites are going to be impacted upon by the proposed development.

A distribution map is provided in Annexure A

Due to the fact that **Site 1 – 3** have been extensively ploughed and mostly destroyed they are given a low significance rating. This how ever does not mean that these sites can't contribute to archaeological recourse. The survey of Steelpoort Ext 20 established the local culture history sequence and site distribution for the study area.

The fine herringbone decoration at **Site 1** together with Icon pottery is of interest. At first glance the site might be attributed to the *Eiland* facies (AD 1000 – 1300) of which herringbone design are characteristic. But because the herringbone designs are so fine and found in association with *Icon* pottery (AD 1300 – 1500) the site are associated with the *Broadhurst* facies of the Kalundu tradition and most probably date to AD 1300 – 1430.

Most of the Stone Age artefacts found are un-diagnostic how ever one artefact show faceting that is characteristic of the Middle Stone Age. The Stone Age component are also of low significance since the tools are not found in their primary context and is classified as find spots and do not constitute a archaeological site and can contribute very little to present research.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary for this site.

Site 2 is of no significance since the site did not yield any archaeological deposit or features and the lack of decorated pottery prohibits us to accurately link the site to a cultural group. The site can not contribute to further research.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary for this site.

Site 3 lacks any visible features or archaeological deposit and is destroyed by intensive ploughing. The site is therefore given a low significance rating. According to the decoration the site belongs to the Doornkop facies of the Kalundu Tradition and probably dates to AD 750 – 1000.

Recommendation: No further action is necessary for this site.

Site 4: The stone walled site at site 4 is associated with the Pedi that inhabited the region. Here the presence of the kraal deposit is of significance. Since it was customary to bury men in the kraal there is a high possibility that burials can be found in this locality, therefore giving the site a medium significance rating.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the site is documented in the form of scaled plan sketches after which a destruction permit must be applied for from SAHRA. When the site is being destructed it is also recommended that the site is monitored by an archaeologist to mitigate and document any accidental finds.

If these recommendations are adhered by there is from a Heritage point of view no reason why the development can not commence.

.9. LIST OF PREPARES

Jaco van der Walt, BA (Hon) Archaeology (Wits)

.10. REFERENCES

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ANNEXURE A: Locality Map

