

**PHASE 1
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**IVYPARK TOWNSHIP ESTABLISHMENT
PORTIONS 207, 208 & 224
OF THE FARM STERKSLOOP 688 LS
POLOKWANE**

**FOR: Tua Conserva Environmental & Conservation Services
P O Box 960
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Polokwane
0700**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Project proposal constitutes an activity for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is required in terms of the Environmental Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989), to satisfy the requirements of the List of Activities and Regulation for EIA's published in the government Notice No. R1183. The heritage component of the EIA is provided for in section 26 of the Environmental Conservation Act and endorsed by section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA - Act No. 25 of 1999). In addition the NHRA protects all structures and features older than 60 years (section 34), archaeological sites and material (section 35) and graves and burial sites (section 36). In order to comply with legislation, the developer requires information on the heritage resources, and their significance that occur on the demarcated area. This will enable the developer to take pro-active measures to limit the adverse effects that the development could have on such heritage resources.

The author was contracted to undertake a Phase 1 *Heritage Impact Assessment* of the demarcated surface areas of Portions 207, 208 & 224 on the farm Sterkloop 688 LS (Refer to map, South Africa 1:50 000 2329 CD) where a Township development is proposed. The aim was to determine the presence of heritage resources such as archaeological and historical sites and features, graves and places of religious and cultural significance; to assess the impact of the proposed project on such heritage resources, and to submit appropriate recommendations with regard to the cultural resources management measures that may be required at affected sites / features.

The report thus provides an overview of the heritage resources that were detected in the area of development. The significance of the heritage resources was assessed in terms of criteria defined in the methodology section. The impact of the proposed development on these resources is indicated and the report recommends mitigation measures that should be implemented to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed development on these heritage resources. Mitigation measures also apply to heritage resources not detected during the survey, but which may be uncovered during excavations, construction of infrastructure and roads, and general activities.

2. METHOD

2.1 Sources of information

The source of information was primarily the field reconnaissance.

A scoping survey of the proposed development area was undertaken on foot and by vehicle. Standard archaeological practices for observation were followed. As most archaeological material occur in single or multiple stratified layers beneath the soil surface, special attention was given to disturbances, both man-made such as roads and clearings, as well as those made by natural agents such as burrowing animals and erosion. Locations of archaeological material were recorded by means of a GPS (Garmin 12). Archaeological material and the general conditions on the terrain were photographed with a Hewlett-Packard 120 Digital camera.

2.2 Limitations

Grass cover during the survey was very thick, and as a result surface visibility was low. The biggest limitation to the accuracy of the survey is bulldozing activities on the property that has compromised the state of the archaeological landscape. These actions have cleared away the topsoil from large sections of the area surveyed.

2.3 Categories of significance

The significance of archaeological sites is ranked into the following categories.

- No significance: sites that do not require mitigation.
- Low significance: sites, which may require mitigation.
- Medium significance: sites, which require mitigation.
- High significance: sites, which must not be disturbed at all.

The significance of an archaeological site is based on the amount of deposit, the integrity of the context, the kind of deposit and the potential to help answer present research questions. Historical structures are defined by Section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, while other historical and cultural significant sites, places and features, are generally determined by community preferences.

A crucial aspect in determining the significance and protection status of a heritage resource is often whether or not the sustainable social and economic benefits of a proposed development outweigh the conservation issues at stake. There are many aspects that must be taken into consideration when determining significance, such as rarity, national significance, scientific importance, cultural and religious significance, and not least, community preferences. When, for whatever reason the protection of a heritage site is not deemed necessary or practical, its research potential must be assessed and mitigated in order to gain data / information which would otherwise be lost. Such sites must be adequately recorded and sampled before being destroyed. These are generally sites graded as of low or medium significance.

2.4 Terminology

Early Stone Age: Predominantly the Acheulean hand axe industry complex dating to + 1Myr yrs – 250 000 yrs. before present.

Middle Stone Age: Various lithic industries in SA dating from \pm 250 000 yr. - 30 000 yrs. before present.

Late Stone Age: The period from \pm 30 000-yr. to contact period with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists.

Early Iron Age: Most of the first millennium AD

Middle Iron Age: 10th to 13th centuries AD

Late Iron Age: 14th century to colonial period. *The entire Iron Age represents the spread of Bantu speaking peoples.*

Phase 1 assessments: Scoping surveys to establish the presence of and to evaluate heritage resources in a given area

Phase 2 assessments: In depth culture resources management studies which could include major archaeological excavations, detailed site surveys and mapping / plans of sites, including historical / architectural structures and features. Alternatively, the sampling of sites by collecting material, small test pit excavations or auger sampling is required.

Sensitive: Often refers to graves and burial sites although not necessarily a heritage place, as well as ideologically significant sites such as ritual / religious places. *Sensitive* may also refer to an entire landscape / area known for its significant heritage remains.

3. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Two sets of legislation are relevant for this study with regard to protection of heritage resources and graves.

3.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999) (NHRA)

This Act established the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and makes provision for the establishment of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities (PHRA). The Act makes provision for the undertaking of heritage resources impact assessments for various categories of development as determined by Section 38. It also provides for the grading of heritage resources and the implementation of a three tier level of responsibilities and functions for heritage resources to be undertaken by the State, Provincial authorities and Local authorities, depending on the grade of the Heritage resources. The Act defines cultural significance, archaeological and palaeontological sites and material (Section 35), historical sites and structures (Section 34), graves and burial sites (Section 36) which falls under its jurisdiction. Archaeological sites and material are generally those resources older than a hundred years, while structures and cultural landscapes older than 60 years, including gravestones, are also protected by Section 34. Procedures for managing grave and burial grounds are clearly set out in Section 36 of the NHRA. Graves older than a 100 years are legislated as archaeological sites and must be dealt with accordingly

Section 38 of the NHRA makes provision for *developers to apply for a permit before any heritage resource may be damaged or destroyed.*

3.2 The Human Tissues Act (65 of 1983) and Ordinance on the Removal of Graves and Dead Bodies (Ordinance 7 of 1925)

This Act and Ordinance protects graves younger than 60 years. These fall under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Departments. Approval for the exhumation and re-burial must be obtained from the relevant Provincial MEC as well as the relevant Local Authorities.

Graves 60 years or older fall under the jurisdiction of the National Heritage Resources Act as well as the Human Tissues Act, 1983.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND TERRAIN

Refer to main EIA Report for geographical, environmental and demographic issues.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL REMAINS

5.1 STONE AGE REMAINS

No Stone Age archaeological material was noted on the property.

5.2. IRON AGE REMAINS (Archaeological)

As mentioned, bulldozing activities has resulted in a very mixed archaeological deposit. The result is that surface artefacts are scattered throughout the surveyed area. This meant that the identification of individual archaeological sites were problematic. Decorated ceramics found on the surface indicates that there were at least two phases of Iron Age occupation on the site. A large *Ndebele* site is known to exist across Smuts road where the cellular mast is located.

Late Iron Age

In certain areas where the topsoil had been cleared, intact archaeological deposits were visible. These were mostly midden areas of a large Late Iron Age settlement destroyed by the bulldozing activities. These middens contained numerous faunal remains, ceramic fragments, marine mussel shells and grinding stones. The site probably had extensive stonewalls, but these have all been destroyed. Although most of the surface features and deposit of the site has been destroyed, intact archaeological deposits from this phase may still exist on the site. There is also a high probability that future construction work could uncover skeletal material.

Early Iron Age

Early Iron Age occupation on the site is deduced from the presence of distinctive Early Iron Age ceramic fragments and ostrich eggshell beads. Preliminary analysis of the ceramics indicates that a *Klingbeil* phase group with a date of c.900 probably inhabited the site. The only other *Klingbeil* phase pottery ever found in the entire Polokwane area was in the early 1990's when such pottery was discovered at the Municipal swimming pool. However, nothing remains of that site.

Locations of Iron Age remains:

Site 2

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 23.4"
E: 29° 26' 23.2"

Site 3

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 20.4"
E: 29° 26' 23.7"

Site 4

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 17.8"
E: 29° 26' 24.1" Probable Early Iron Age site.

Site 5

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 17.8"
E: 29° 26' 25.5"

Site 6

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 17.0"
E: 29° 26' 26.6"

Site 10

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 20.8"
E: 29° 26' 30.2"

Site 11

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 18.2"

E: 29° 26' 29.2"

Site 12

Co-ordinates:

S: 23° 55' 19.9"

E: 29° 26' 31.3"

Significance: Low for protection status, but high in scientific value.

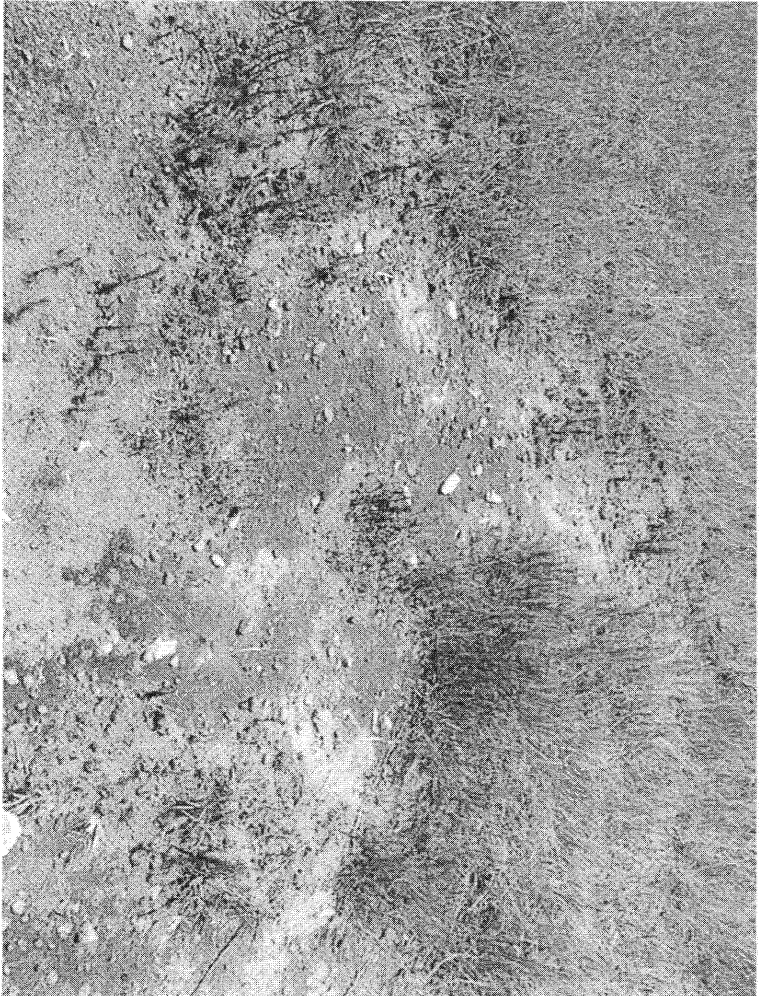


Fig 1. Midden area at Site 3



Fig 2. Early Iron Age pottery fragment

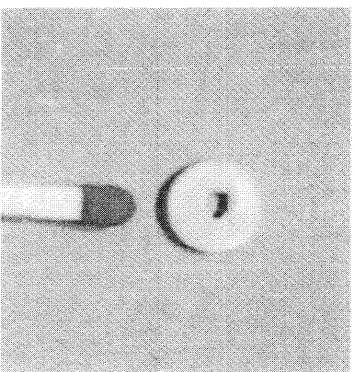


Fig 3. Ostrich eggshell bead

5.3. RECENT HISTORICAL REMAINS

Three historical houses and associated features were found on the property. Site 1 is a square, 10m x 10m structure. All that remains of the house is a cement floor. A granite block on the one wall could have been part of the foundation stones. Site 9 and 7 were small brick structures. Although no artefacts were found in context, these buildings seem to have been an older. An old well (Site 8) is located 5m to the east of Site 9 and is probably contemporary with the house. The well is badly damaged and has been largely filled in. A second feature related to the farming activities on the property was an old trough built from cement and stone next to the house at Site 7.

Site 13, is parallel rows of granite blocks. These were probably a wall from an old entranceway that had fallen over. The age of this feature is difficult to determine, but probably dates to twentieth century occupation of the property.

Locations of Historical remains:

Site 1

Co-ordinates:

S: 23 55 18.3

E: 29 26 20.7

Site 7

Co-ordinates:

S: 23 55 24.0

E: 29 26 29.5

Site 8

Co-ordinates:

S: 23 55 23.4

E: 29 26 31.0

Site 9

Co-ordinates:

S: 23 55 23.6

E: 29 26 30.4

Site 13

Co-ordinates:

S: 23 55 16.8

E: 29 26 28.1

Significance: None – the remains demonstrate no special architectural or historical important characteristics.

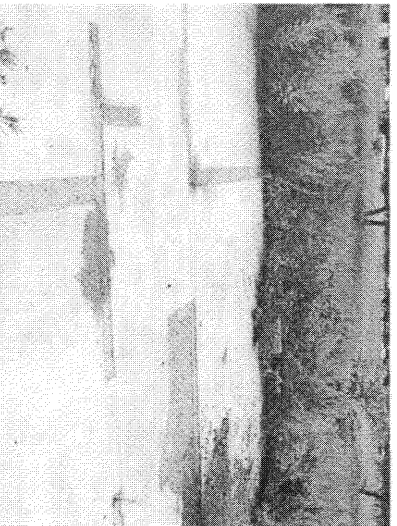


Fig 3. Foundation of recent historical structure at site 1



Fig 4. Trough at site 7

6. EVALUATION

The recent historical remains are not regarded as significant. No mitigation is required for these recorded features.

The Iron Age sites listed above are regarded as significant. Although bulldozing has already destroyed all Late Iron Age surface features, some of the archaeological deposits should still be undisturbed. Burials will be present in the cattle enclosures and homestead areas. The possibility is also high that undisturbed Early Iron Age deposits are still present on the terrain. Therefore, despite the damage to the site, it still has significant scientific value.

The development will impact on these archaeological features. Due to the conditions on the terrain and the state of the archaeological deposits, the remains have no longer any protection value. There is only one option available, namely mitigation for a phase 2 assessment of the archaeological remains. This will allow for the obtaining of information with regard to dating, demography and cultural sequences of the Polokwane area, and may shed light on migratory patterns of the past.

From a heritage resources management perspective we have no objecting with regard to the development on condition that the recommendations be implemented.

7. RECOMMENDATION

In view of the above it is recommended that:

A phase 2 assessment of the archaeological remains be mitigated in terms of sections 35 & 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) and implemented before development commences.

8. Extracts from:
The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999).

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Subsection 35. (3) Any person who discovers archaeological or palaeontological objects or material or a meteorite in the course of development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resources authority, or to the nearest local authority or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

Subsection 35. (4) No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite.

Burial grounds and graves

Subsection 36 (1) Where it is not the responsibility of any other authority, SAHRA must conserve an generally care for burial grounds and graves protected in terms of this section, and it may make such arrangements for their conservation as it sees fit.

Subsection 36 (2) SAHRA must identify and record the graves of victims of conflict and any other graves which it deems to be of cultural significance and may erect memorials associated with the grave referred to in subsection (1); and maintain such memorials.

Subsection 36 (6) Subject to the provision of any law, any person who in the course of development or any other activity discovers the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the responsible heritage resources authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police Service and in accordance with regulations of the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not such grave is protected in terms of this Act or is of significance to any community; and
- (b) if such grave is protected or is of significance, assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to make arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the content of such grave or, in the absence of such person or community, make any such arrangement as it deems fit.

9. **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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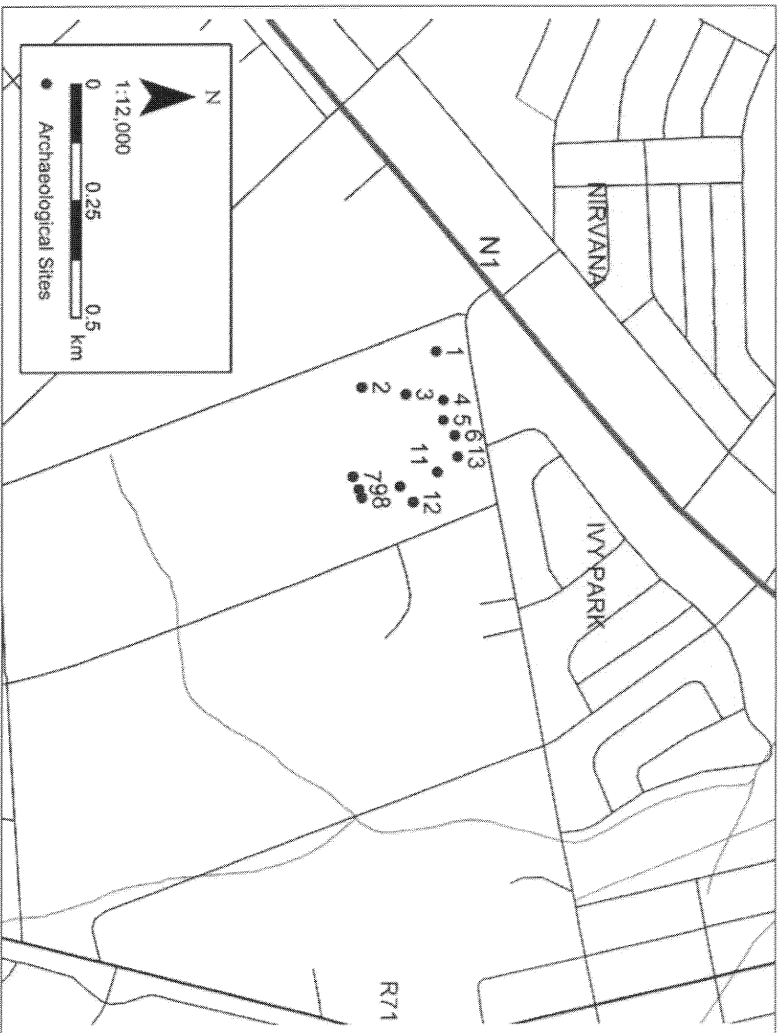
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Map of recorded sites.

