

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE THUBELISHA
PROJECT, BOKSBURG**

A Phase I Report prepared for Seaton Thompson & Associates

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INTRODUCTION

Thubelisha Homes (a subsidiary of Precon Project Management Services) intends to establish low cost housing on Portions 34 and 35 of the farm Finaalspan 114 IR, Boksburg. The project area lies to the east of Dawn Park and west of Windmill Park, the latter an existing area of low cost housing.

In keeping with various environmental and heritage legislation, and DACE requirements, the development coordinators of the project, Seaton Thompson, commissioned a professional archaeologist to examine the area for sites of archaeological and heritage interest, especially graves.

METHOD

Professor Huffman examined the project area on 1 April 2005. Vegetation was thick, but there were numerous paths crisscrossing the veld, as well as a few open patches and space between tufts of grass. Special attention was paid to a natural pan and exotic trees. Sites were recorded with a hand-held GPS instrument and then transferred to the 1 : 50 000 map 2628 AD Springs (Figure 1).

Normally, five criteria determine site significance: integrity of deposit (primary versus secondary context), depth of deposit, number and variety of features, uniqueness and potential to answer present research questions. Following these criteria, sites with no significance do not require further consideration, low significance may require mitigation, sites with medium significance will require mitigation while sites with high significance should not be disturbed at all.

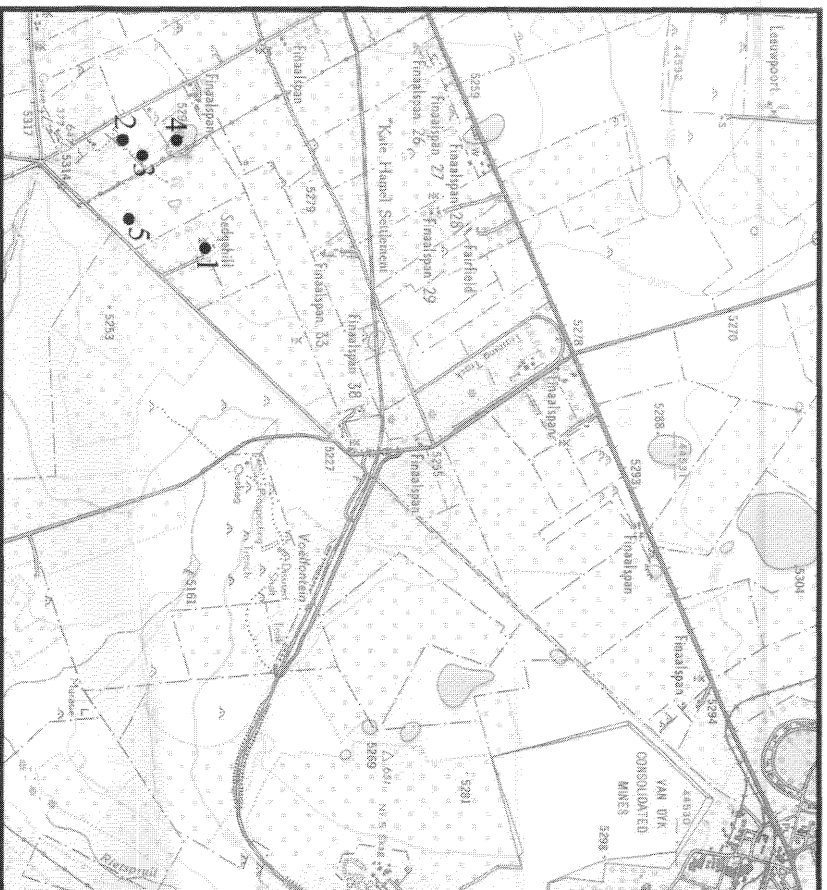


Figure 1. Location of sites recorded during the assessment.

RESULTS

The project area covers a flat terrain that has been extensively cultivated in historic times: contour ridges are still clearly visible. These old fields surround the remains of a farm complex, marked on the map as **Sedgehill** (**Site 1**: 26 17 49S 28 16 00E). The remains include the reservoir for a windmill, the walls of a brick building, the foundations of the main house and the foundations of several out buildings. A cemetery was not obvious.

- *This farm complex is probably not over 60 years old, and its significance is low.*

The cement floor of a **dairy** (**Site 2**: six rooms with small feeding troughs) is located about 800 m to the west (26 18 05S 28 15 34E), while the remains of a labourer's

compound (Site 3: two rectangular foundations with cement floors, a long back wall and exotic plants) stand nearby (26 18 03S 28 15 38E). Neither appear on the 1 : 50 000 map.

- *Sites 2 and 3 have low significance.*

A road linking Windmill Park to Rondebult Road (the R21) forms the northern boundary of the project area. It is now used as a dumping ground. One large **cinder dump** (26 17 28S 28 15 33.9E) could be older, but no other features were obvious.

- *On present evidence, the dump has no significance.*

A few **Middle Stone Age** (about 250 000 to 25 000 years ago) artefacts lie widely scattered in the ploughed fields. The artefacts were made mostly out of quartzite. A small concentration occurs on the edge of the pan (**Site 4:** 26 17 55S 28 15 34.3E) and another about 500m to the south (**Site 5:** 26 18 05S 28 15 52E).

- *Sites 4 and 5 have no significance.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Middle Stone Age **Sites 4 and 5** do not require further mitigation. Their recording now is sufficient. If excavations, however, uncover a large concentration, the developers must notify the Gauteng office of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

The farm complex, **Site 1**, and associated dairy and compound, **Sites 2 and 3**, lack any outstanding features, and they too do not require further attention. If the development, however, uncovers cemeteries now obscured by the thick vegetation, these finds must also be reported to SAHRA.

With the proviso of these discovery clauses, there are no heritage reasons why the Thubelisha project should not proceed.