



---

21 July, 2021

Attention: Ms Nokukhanya Khumalo (nkhumalo@sahra.org.za)  
SAHRA Case Officer Mpumalanga  
South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)

Dear Ms Khumalo

**RE: Leslie Community Filling Station (Pty) Ltd**

## **Introduction**

Texture Environmental Consultants was appointed by Leslie Community Filling Station (Pty) Ltd as Environmental Assessment Practitioner to manage the Section 24G rectification process for the Leslie Convenience Centre. As part of the process HCAC was appointed to provide an assessment of the impact on possible heritage resources.

The Filling Station is located on Erf 239, Portion 5 of the farm Leslie IR, Leandra, in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. The filling station facility has been existing for many decades. The station was revamped in 2020 and the old fuel tanks replaced by new tanks that comply to the latest technology and the South African National Standards (SANS) for the Petroleum Industry: SANS 10089-3:1999\* SABS 089-3:199. The extensive development activities associated with the existing filling station and development of the surrounding areas from the 1960's onwards would have obliterated any surface indicators of heritage sites or features if any ever occurred in the area before the replacement of the existing fuel tanks. These activities would not have impacted on any heritage resources and no remedial action or mitigation is needed.

## **1. Project Background**

The Leslie Convenience Centre is located on Erf 239, Portion 5 of the farm Leslie IR, Leandra, Govan Mbeki Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province. The GPS coordinates of the study site location is 26°22'04.70"S; 28°55'29.21"E.

The scope of work was to install replacement tanks at the existing filling station below the threshold of 80m<sup>3</sup>. After the revamp was completed, it came to the knowledge

of Leslie Community Filling Station (Pty) Ltd that the combined capacity of the underground fuel tanks now exceeds the threshold capacity of 80m<sup>3</sup> in that it is 83m<sup>3</sup> made up by 2 x 30m<sup>3</sup> and 1 x 23m<sup>3</sup> tanks.

It now transpired that during the initial Covid 19 restrictions, imposed by the regulations relating to Covid 19 in terms of the Disaster Management Act, the availability of underground fuel tanks with a capacity below 20m<sup>3</sup> were not available and the contractor was supplied with 2 x 30m<sup>3</sup> and 1 x 23m<sup>3</sup> underground fuel tanks by the supplier and same were installed.

This application is therefore for rectification of the unlawful expansion of the existing filling station. In addition, it is for authorisation of the expansion of the existing facilities for the storage of fuel and related uses. The combined capacity of the fuel tanks will not exceed 500 cubic metres. Leslie Community Filling Station (Pty) Ltd. plans to expand on the existing facilities and the existing storage tanks on site (2 x 30m<sup>3</sup>, and 1 x 23m<sup>3</sup>) by adding additional tanks up to a combined fuel storage capacity of 175m<sup>3</sup> over a phased period. The applicant proposes to construct an additional 2 x 46m<sup>3</sup> tanks. The total combined storage capacity on site will thus not exceed 500m<sup>3</sup>.

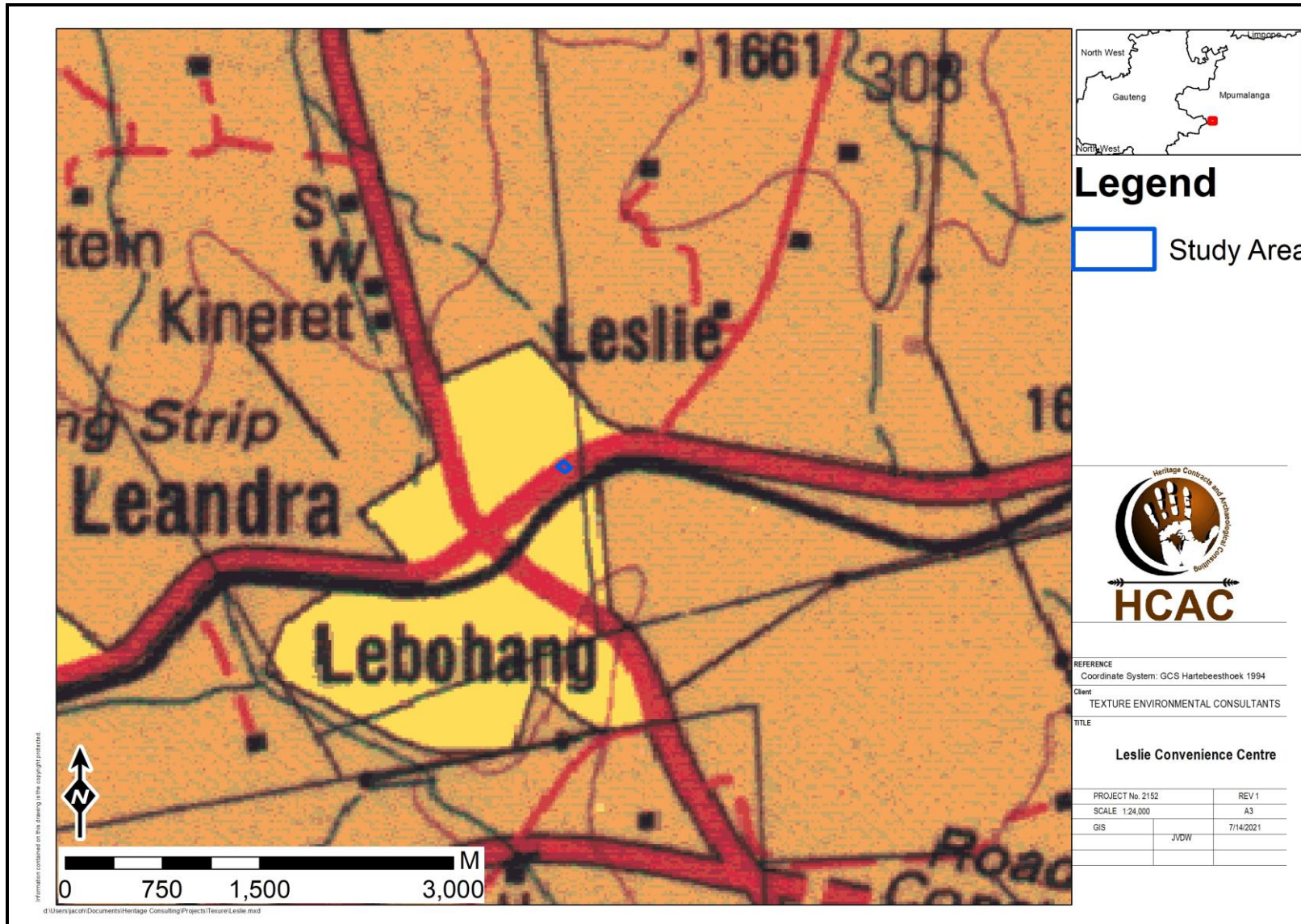


Figure 1.1. Regional setting of the project (1: 250 000 topographical map).

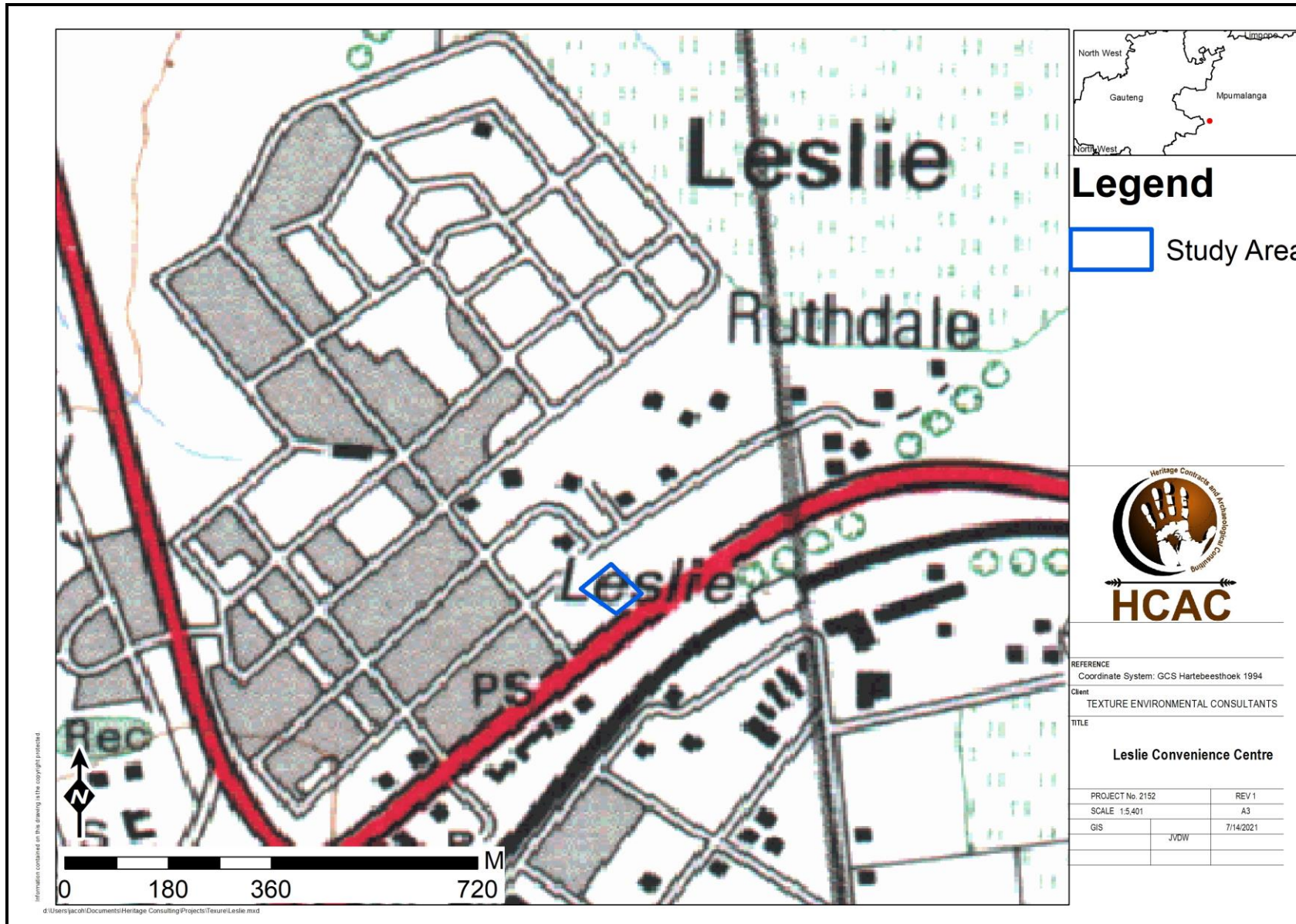


Figure 1.2. Local setting of the project (1: 50 000 topographical map).



Figure 1.3. Aerial image of the study area. Note the extent of surrounding developments.

## 2. The Heritage Character of the Study area

### 2.1. Literature review

The following studies were conducted in the general vicinity of the project and were consulted for this report:

| Author              | Year | Project  | Findings   |
|---------------------|------|--|--|
| Kusel, U.           | 2011 | Cultural Heritage Resources Impact Assessment for Portion 29 Of The Farm Goedehoop 308 - IR Govan Mbeki Local Municipality Mpumalanga Province   | No sites   |
| Van Schalkwyk, J.A. | 2000 | A survey of cultural resources on the farm Winterhoek 314 IR Nigel District, Gauteng   | No sites apart from farmsteads in the surrounding area.        |
| Pistorius, J.C.C.   | 2016 | Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for the proposed Kipower 400kv Loop-In and Loop-Out transmission lines to connect the Kipower Independent Power Station with the national grid on the eastern highveld in the Mpumalanga Province | Historical sites and graves and graveyards.                    |
| Smeyatsky, I.       | 2018 | Heritage Impact Assessment Leslie Coal Mine Project  | Living heritage, historical sites, Graves, Stone Age artefacts |

### 2.2. Background Study

#### Archaeological Background

None of the sites recorded as outlined under section 2.1 are near the study area. Known sites in the larger area include rock paintings associated with the Khoi San, that are found in numerous rock shelters throughout Eastern Mpumalanga (Bornman, 1995; Schoonraad in Barnard, 1975; Delius, 2007). These include areas such as Witbank, Ermelo, Barberton, Nelspruit, White River, Lydenburg and Ohrigstad. Few Stone Age sites of significance occur in the province, the closest is the Late Stone Age site at Fort Troje, a small shelter close to Cullinan (Bergh 1999: 4). Due to the lack of shelters in the study area it is assumed that no sites of significance occurred here.

No Sites dating to the Early or Middle Iron Age have been recorded or is expected for the study area. The same goes for the Later Iron Age period where the study area is situated outside the known distribution of Late Iron Age settlements in Mpumalanga. This phase of the Iron Age (AD 1600-1800's) is represented by various tribes including Ndebele, Swazi, BaKoni, Pedi marked by extensive stonewalled settlements found throughout the Mpumalanga escarpment. If any sites occurred in the study area surface evidence of these sites would have been obliterated during the development of Leandra. The closest published Late Iron Age settlement sites are found in and around Pretoria and the Cullinan area (Bergh 1999: 6-7).

### 2.3. Cultural Landscape

The project is in an area that has been extensively developed from the 1960's onward (Figure 2.1 – 2.3) and is urban in character.

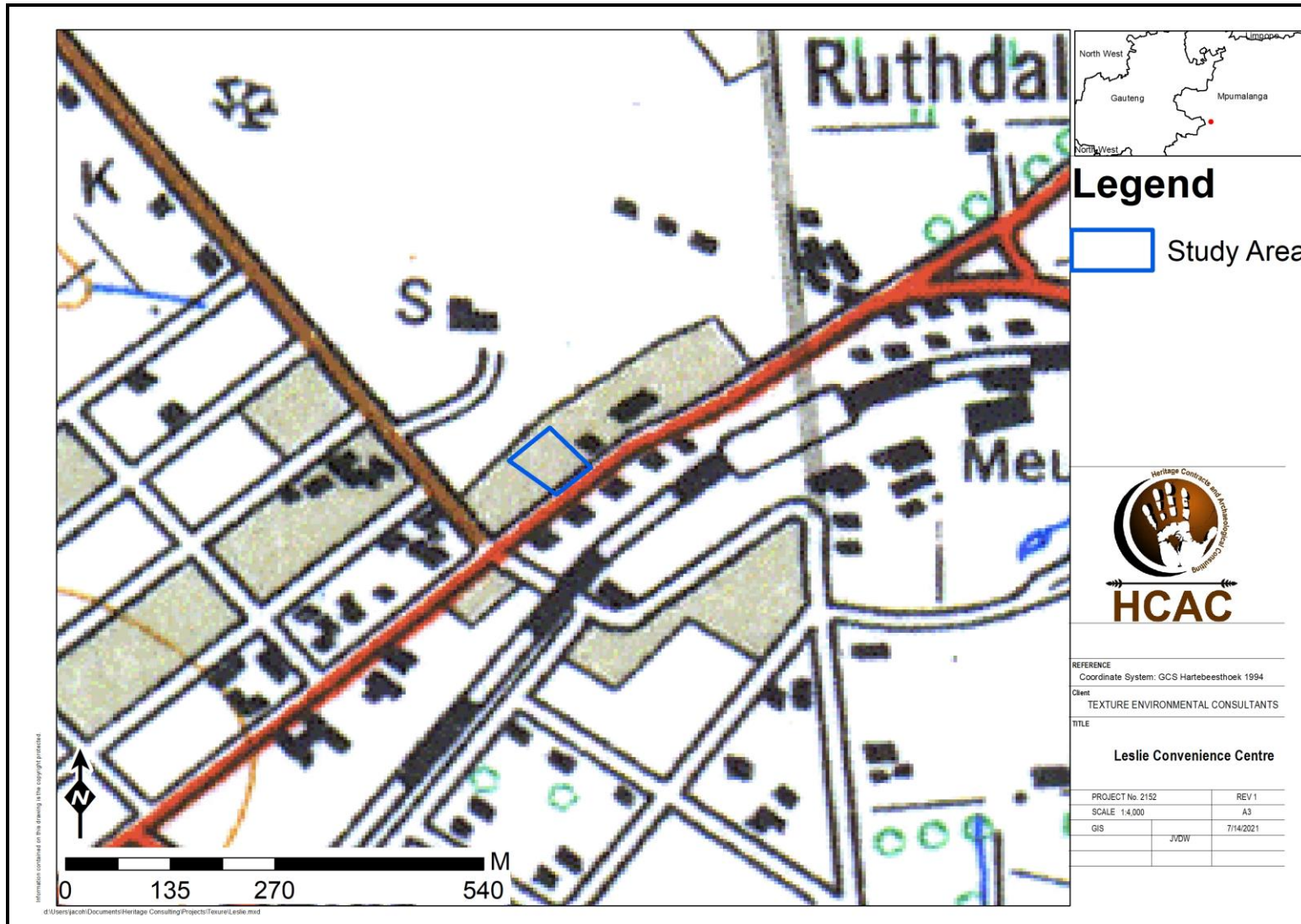


Figure 2.1. 1965 Topographical map of the study area. The study area and surrounds are extensively developed.

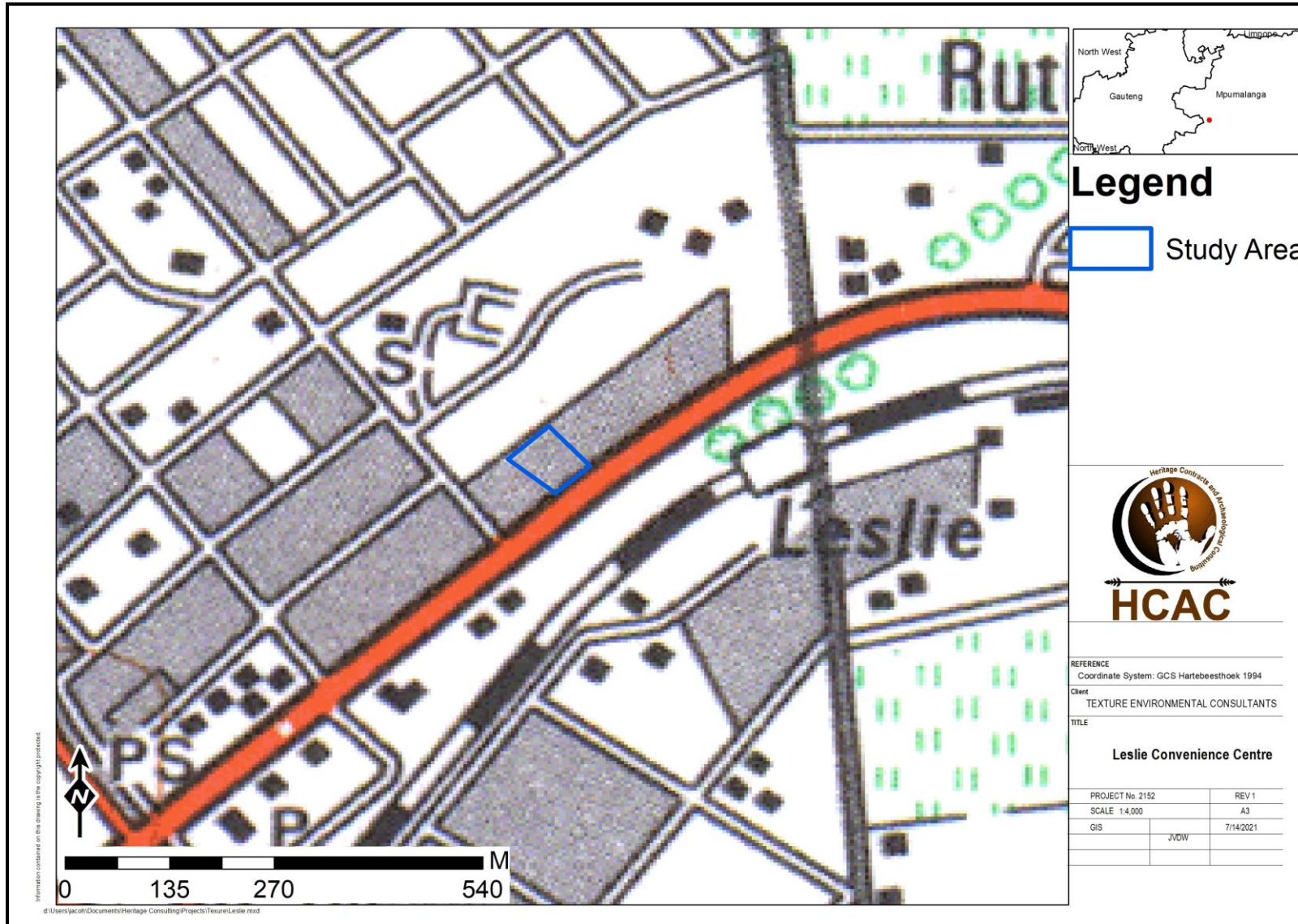


Figure 2.2. 1984 Topographical map of the impact area indicating extensive development of the study area and surrounds.





Figure 2.3. 1995 Topographical map of the impact area indicating extensive development of the study area and surrounds.

### 3. Findings

The project is located on approximately 4041.25m<sup>2</sup> (0.404125 ha) of land and the site was significantly altered by previous developments prior to the development of the filling station. The study area and surrounds have been developed from prior to 1964 as indicated on topographic maps (Figure 2 - 1). The study area is indicated as of insignificant palaeontological significance on the SAHRA paleontological map (Figure 3-5) and no impacts to palaeontological resources would have occurred during the development of the project. None of the natural topography of the site is left and the study area has been cleared, levelled, paved built up for the existing filling station (Figure 3-1 to 3-12). These developments would have obliterated any surface indicators of heritage resources if any ever occurred in the study area prior to the establishment of the filling station and it is unlikely that the expansion of the filling station and fuel tanks have impacted on any sites of significance and no further remedial action, or mitigation is needed.



Figure 3.1. Current site conditions



Figure 3.2. Current site conditions



Figure 3.3. Current site conditions



Figure 3.4. Current site conditions



Figure 3.5. Paleontological sensitivity of the approximate study area (blue polygon) as indicated on the SAHRA Paleontological Map (Key below)

| Colour        | Sensitivity        | Required Action   |
|---------------|--------------------|---|
| RED           | VERY HIGH          | Field assessment and protocol for finds is required   |
| ORANGE/YELLOW | HIGH               | Desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely                               |
| GREEN         | MODERATE           | Desktop study is required   |
| BLUE          | LOW                | No palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required   |
| GREY          | INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO | No palaeontological studies are required  |
| WHITE/CLEAR   | UNKNOWN            | These areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map. |

#### 4. Conclusion

The study area has been impacted upon by the extensive development of the project site and surrounding areas from prior to the 1960's and the area are therefore of low heritage significance. The impact of clearing, levelling and construction activities would have obliterated any indicators of heritage resources if any ever occurred in the study area prior to the establishment of the existing filling station. It is unlikely that the replacement of existing fuel tanks has impacted on any sites of significance and no further remedial action, or mitigation is needed. Therefore, an application for exemption from further heritage studies is supported.

Any further queries can be forwarded to Jaco van der Walt on Cell: +27 82 373 8491 or to [jaco@heritageconsultants.co.za](mailto:jaco@heritageconsultants.co.za).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jaco van der Walt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jaco van der Walt  
Archaeologist  
HCAC

## 5. References

- Archaeological Database Wits University 2009
- Barnard, C. 1975. Die Transvaalse Laeveld. Komee van 'n Kontrei.
- Bornman, H. 1995. Pioneers of the Lowveld.
- Bonner, P. 1978. Factions and Fissions: Transvaal/ Swazi politics in the mid-nineteenth century. *Journal of African History* 19 (2), p. 226.
- Bornman, H. (red.) 1979. Nelspruit: 75 in '80. Stadsraad van Nelspruit.
- Delius, P. 2007. Mpumalanga History and Heritage. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.*
- Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.* Edited by J. S. Bergh. 1999. Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik Uitgewers.
- Kusel, U. 2011. Cultural Heritage Resources Impact Assessment for Portion 29 Of The Farm Goedehoop 308 - IR Govan Mbeki Local Municipality Mpumalanga Province
- National Heritage Resources Act NHRA of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)
- Pistorius, J.C.C. 2016. Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for the proposed Kipower 400kv Loop-In and Loop-Out transmission lines to connect the Kipower Independent Power Station with the national grid on the eastern highveld in the Mpumalanga Province
- SAHRA Report Mapping Project Version 1.0, 2009
- Smeyatsky, I. 2018. Heritage Impact Assessment Leslie Coal Mine Project South African Heritage Information System (SAHRIS)
- Van Schalkwyk, J.A. 2000 A survey of cultural resources on the farm Winterhoek 314 IR Nigel District, Gauteng
- Wits Archaeological Database (2009)