

**Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment of a
proposed new residential development on the
farm Brandkop 702 near Bloemfontein, FS
Province.**



Report prepared for
Combined Developers
by
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Executive Summary

A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out on a portion of land marked for the proposed development of a new residential area on the farm Brandkop 702 outside Bloemfontein, Free State Province. The palaeontological significance of the Quaternary overburden at Brandkop is considered to be very minor and is assigned a field rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C). The dolerite component is not palaeontologically vulnerable and the likelihood of impact on palaeontological remains in the vicinity of igneous outcrop is considered unlikely. The proposed footprint is largely located on low relief terrain that lies adjacent to dolerite bedrock with thermally derived metasediments. The capped sedimentary bedrock component possibly unaffected by dolerite intrusions that underlies the low topography terrain between the koppies is assigned a field rating of Generally Protected B (GP.B). The koppies, koppie slopes and zones immediately adjacent are assigned a field rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C). It is unlikely that the proposed development will result in any significant archaeological impact at the site. The proposed site is regarded as of low archaeological significance and is assigned the rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C). The farm house, cottage, graveyard, stone-walled compound, surrounding structures, and dam walls that are older than 60 years of age are of significant historical value and any alteration to or destruction of these structures will be in contravention of Section 34 and 36 of the NHR Act. It is advised that the structure and integrity of the Brandkop farmstead and associated historical structures are conserved and developed in accordance with heritage legislation (e.g. where restoration is required in order to save a structure). As such, the farmstead and associated historical structures are assigned a rating of Local Significance Grade 3A. Mitigation is not advised. As for the groves, trees associated with historical settlements or farmsteads, that are older than 60 years old, are generally protected as heritage sites with cultural significance. Their removal or destruction will require the appropriate consent and a destruction permit from the relevant heritage authorities. It is advised that the historical groves at Brandkop are preserved. They are assigned a rating of Local Significance Grade 3A. Mitigation is not advised.

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Introduction

A Phase 1 Palaeontological Impact Assessment was carried out on a portion of land marked for the proposed development of a new residential area on the farm Brandkop 702 outside Bloemfontein, Free State Province (**Fig. 1 & 2, Appendix A**). The assessment is required as a prerequisite for new development in terms of the National Environmental Management Act and is also called for in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) 25 of 1999. The region's unique and non-renewable archaeological and palaeontological heritage sites are 'Generally' protected in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Section 35) and may not be disturbed at all without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority. As many such heritage sites are threatened daily by development, both the environmental and heritage legislation require impact assessment reports that identify all heritage resources including archaeological and palaeontological sites in the area to be developed, and that make recommendations for protection or mitigation of the impact of the sites.

The NHRA identifies what is defined as a heritage resource, the criteria for establishing its significance and lists specific activities for which a heritage specialist study may be required. **In this regard, categories of development relevant to the Brandkop development listed in Section 34 (1), Section 35 (4), Section 36 (3) and Section 38 (1) of the NHR Act are:**

34. (1) No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

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

- destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;
- *b)* destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;

36 (3) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority—

- (a) destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- (b) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- (c) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

38 (1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development categorised as—

- The construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length;
- The construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length;
- Any development or other activity which will change the character of the site
 - a) exceeding 5000 m² in extent; or
 - b) involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
 - c) involving three or more subdivisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years;
- The rezoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m²; or
- Any other category of development provided for in regulations by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Terms of Reference

A site visit and subsequent assessment took place during **March 2016**. The task involved the following:

- Identify and map possible heritage sites and occurrences using available resources.
- Determine and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on potential heritage resources;
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimize potential impacts associated with the proposed development.

Methodology

The heritage significance of the affected area was evaluated through a desktop study and carried out on the basis of existing field data, database information and published literature. This was followed by a field assessment by means of a pedestrian survey. A Garmin Etrex Vista GPS hand model (set to the WGS 84 map datum) and a digital camera were used for recording purposes. Relevant publications, aerial photographs (incl. Google Earth) and site records were consulted and integrated with data acquired during the on-site inspection.

Field Rating

Site significance classification standards prescribed by SAHRA (2005) were used for the purpose of this report (**Table 1**).

Locality data

1 : 50 000 scale topographic map: 2926 AA Bloemfontein

1: 250 000 scale geological map 2926 Bloemfontein

The proposed development is located on a portion of the farm Brandkop 702, which is situated north of the R706 going to Jagersfontein and about one kilometre west of the N1 national road going through Bloemfontein (**Fig. 3**).

Site coordinates:

A) 29° 8'43.06"S 26° 9'19.52"E

B) 29° 9'29.76"S 26° 7'51.63"E

C) 29°10'26.27"S 26° 8'57.36"E

D) 29° 9'59.53"S 26°10'11.38"E

The study area consists of generally flat terrain interspersed between two large koppies that make up the northern (Brandkop) and south-eastern (Tafelkop) boundary of the farm (**Fig. 4**).

Geology

The geology of the region has been described by Theron (1963) and Johnson (2006). It is situated within the Beaufort Group (Karoo Supergroup), and is primarily represented by late Permian, Adelaide Subgroup sedimentary rocks, which are made up of alternating sandstone and mudstone layers (*Pa*) (**Fig. 5**). Dykes and sills of

resistant Jurassic dolerites (*Jd*) determine the relief in the region as witnessed by the Brandkop and Tafelkop koppies. The site is capped by younger, superficial deposits of Quaternary age. Superficial deposits in the region consist mainly of and shallow to well-developed, windblown sand and residual soils of varying depth.

Background

Palaeontology

The local palaeontological footprint is primarily represented by Late Permian Karoo vertebrate fauna and Late Cenozoic (Quaternary) macrofossils (Broom 1909 a; Broom 1909 b; Goodwin & van Riet Lowe 1929; Kitching 1977; Churchill *et al* 2000; Rossouw 1999, 2000, 2006). The succession of Beaufort Group sedimentary rocks is subdivided into eight biostratigraphic units, called assemblage zones (Rubidge 1995) and the sedimentary strata underlying the affected area are assigned to the *Dicynodon* Assemblage Zone (AZ) (Kitching 1995) (**Fig. 5**). This assemblage zone is characterized by the presence of a distinctive and fairly common dicynodont genus. Therapsids and other vertebrate fossils from this biozone are usually found as dispersed and isolated specimens in mudrock horizons, associated with an abundance of calcareous nodules. Plant fossils (*Dadoxylon*, *Glossopteris*) and trace fossils (arthropod trails, worm burrows) are also present. The sediments assigned to the *Dicynodon* AZ are associated with stream deposits consisting of floodplain mudstones and subordinate, lenticular channel sandstones. In more recent times the central interior and what is now the Free State Province, was once a vast and highly productive grassland ecosystem. Quaternary palaeontological sites, often associated with Stone Age artefacts, are found eroding out of Pleistocene alluvial terraces and dongas along the Modder River and its tributaries north and east of Bloemfontein (**Fig. 6**). Some of these alluvial deposits contain numerous occurrences of *in situ* Middle and Later Stone Age material eroding out of the overbank sediments where they are often found in association large mammal fossil remains (Churchill *et al.* 2000; Rossouw 1999, 2000, 2006).

Prehistory

The Stone Age archaeological record of Modder River catchment north of Bloemfontein spans back to the early Middle Stone Age. Prehistoric archaeological remains previously recorded in the region include stone tools and mammal fossil

remains from sealed and or exposed contexts. Along much of the course of Modder River and its tributaries north of Bloemfontein, alluvial deposits contain numerous occurrences of *in situ* Middle and Later Stone Age material eroding out of the overbank sediments where they are often found in association large mammal fossil remains (Churchill *et al.* 2000; Rossouw 1999, 2000, 2006). The incidence of surface scatters usually decreases away from localized areas such as alluvial contexts and dolerite-shale contact zones when stone tools largely occur as contextually derived individual finds in the open veld. Widespread traces of prehistoric human habitation, in the form of stone tool scatters and individual surface finds, have previously been recorded at Bayswater 286, Lilyvale 2313 and Hillandale 249 (Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe 1929, Henderson *et al.* 2008; Rossouw 2012).

Recent History

Several historically significant farms are located around Bloemfontein, including Bains Vlei and Kwaggafontein, which was owned by Andrew Hudson Bain who settled in the Free State in 1847. In 1860 and 1862 two hunts, organized for the second son of Queen Elizabeth and for the Barolong tribe respectively, took place at Bains Vlei which led to the mass killing of thousands of antelope and a subsequent dwindling of large antelope herds in the Bloemfontein area. Onze Rust, bought by M.T. Steyn (last president of the Republic of the Orange Free State) in 1896, is located just south of the city. Hillandale is another historically significant farm situated to the north of Bloemfontein. It was bought in 1890 by Abraham Fischer, who was a well-known political leader and former prime minister of the Orange River Colony. Today the well-preserved Onze Rust farmstead is used a guesthouse and conference center, while the original farmhouse at Hillandale is being restored as part of a hotel complex.

Brandkop was bought by the brothers Gustav Adolph Fichardt and Carl Eberhard Fichard in 1863 and is still owned by their descendants (see more comprehensive historical background in **Appendix B**). The historical farmhouse is currently unoccupied but still properly maintained (**Fig. 4**). The original farmhouse at Brandkop is dated to after 1876 before it was replaced by the new gabled farmhouse that was built on the site of the old one in 1919 (**Fig. 7**). A stone-built cottage with a veranda and pillars was erected next to the main house (**Fig. 8**).

Field Assessment

Palaeontology

Results from the field assessment are summarized in **Table 2**. The affected area is situated within the Beaufort Group, Adelaide Subgroup (Karoo Supergroup), but is primarily underlain by intrusive, Jurassic-age dolerites, which also determines the relief of the surrounding area. A pedestrian survey indicates that bedrock is capped by unconsolidated Quaternary-age sediments (*Qs*) consisting of brown to red calcareous sand and residual soils ranging in depth between 250mm and 750mm. The superficial overburden is largely degraded by previous farming activities. It thins out towards Platkop, exposing dolerite and associated metasediments made up of fine to coarse-grained sandstones. The Brandkop and Platkop koppies are almost exclusively doleritic and not palaeontologically significant, being part of an interconnected network of igneous dolerite intrusions. These dykes intruded the local environment during the Jurassic and “cooked” the adjacent sedimentary rocks (metasediments). This had the effect of hardening the rocks and destroying any fossil plant material or physically destroying the vertebrate fossils. As a result, intact sedimentary bedrock exposures are mostly lacking or are possibly covered by superficial sediments along the areas of low relief. A foot survey of the terrain revealed no evidence for the accumulation and preservation of intact fossil material within the superficial Quaternary sediments and the likelihood of finding intact Quaternary fossils is considered very low.

Archaeology

A foot survey of the terrain revealed no indication of prehistoric structures and *in situ* Stone Age archaeological material, capped or distributed as surface scatters on the landscape. This is most likely the result of decades of commercial farming activities at Brandkop. There are also little indication of rock art (engravings) on the dolerite koppies and it was noted that the type of dolerite at Platkop in particular is extremely coarse and probably not suitable for engraving. The Platkop plateau also appears to have been degraded by old tree plantations.

History

Results from the field assessment are summarized in **Table 3 and Appendix C**. In addition to the historical main house and stone-built cottage, several outbuildings and

structures that still exist today, including three stone-built dam walls, as well as the remnants of old tree plantations (groves), are marked on a British military map of Bloemfontein dated to 1913 (**Figs. 9 – 14**) with further additions marked on a topographic map of the area dated to 1948 (**Figs. 15 - 18**). Possible foundations of two rectangular building structures are located about 1.8 km southwest of the farmstead and are most likely associated with old farm worker dwellings (**Fig. 15 no. 10**).

Impact Statement and Recommendation

Palaeontology

It is unlikely that the proposed development will affect palaeontological heritage resources within the superficial component (Quaternary overburden) due to the disturbed condition of the substrate and the absence of suitable Quaternary-aged alluvial deposits within the boundaries of the footprint. The palaeontological significance of the Quaternary overburden at Brandkop is therefore considered to be very minor. This component is assigned a field rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C). The dolerite component (*Jd*) is not palaeontologically vulnerable and the likelihood of impact on palaeontological remains in the vicinity of igneous outcrop is considered unlikely. The koppies, koppie slopes and zones immediately adjacent are assigned a field rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C). It is assumed, for the sake of prudence, that fossil remains are always uniformly distributed in fossil-bearing rock units indicated on the relevant geological map of the region, although in reality their distribution may vary significantly. Even so, the proposed footprint is largely located on low relief terrain that lies adjacent to dolerite bedrock with thermally derived metasediments.. The likelihood of impact on palaeontological material from fresh sedimentary bedrock strata, which may occur further away from the koppies is considered low, but if *in situ* fossil material is exposed as a result of excavations into fresh sedimentary bedrock, it should be reported to SAHRA and a professional palaeontologist as soon as possible. The capped sedimentary bedrock component possibly unaffected by dolerite intrusions that underlies the low topography terrain between the koppies is assigned a field rating of Generally Protected B (GP.B).

Archaeology

It is unlikely that the proposed development will result in any significant archaeological impact at the site. The proposed site is regarded as of low

archaeological significance and is assigned the rating of Generally Protected C (GP.C).

History

The farm house, cottage, graveyard, stone-walled compound, surrounding structures, and dam walls that are older than 60 years of age are of significant historical value for obvious reasons and any alteration to or destruction of these structures will be in contravention of Section 34 and 36 of the NHR Act. It is advised that the structure and integrity of the Brandkop farmstead and associated historical structures are conserved and developed in accordance with heritage legislation (e.g. where restoration is required in order to save a structure). As such, the farmstead and associated historical structures are assigned a rating of Local Significance Grade 3A. Mitigation is not advised. As for the groves, trees associated with historical settlements or farmsteads, that are older than 60 years old, are generally protected as heritage sites with cultural significance. Their removal or destruction will require the appropriate consent and a destruction permit from the relevant heritage authorities. It is advised that the historical groves at Brandkop are preserved. They are assigned a rating of Local Significance Grade 3A. Mitigation is not advised.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Field rating categories for heritage sites as prescribed by SAHRA.

| Field Rating | Grade | Significance | Mitigation |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--|
| National Significance (NS) | Grade 1 | - | Conservation; national site nomination |
| Provincial Significance (PS) | Grade 2 | - | Conservation; provincial site nomination |
| Local Significance (LS) | Grade 3A | High significance | Conservation; mitigation not advised |
| Local Significance (LS) | Grade 3B | High significance | Mitigation (part of site should be retained) |
| Generally Protected A (GP.A) | - | High/medium significance | Mitigation before destruction |
| Generally Protected B (GP.B) | - | Medium significance | Recording before destruction |
| Generally Protected C (GP.C) | - | Low significance | Destruction |

Table 2. Summary of potential palaeontological and archaeological impacts at Brandkop 702.

| Zone | Rock types and Age | Potential heritage / Biostratigraphy | Palaeontological Significance before site visit | Potential Impact (after site visit) |
|--|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Flat, low topography terrain, farmland | Superficial deposits, soils Quaternary to Recent | Stone Age material culture mammal fossil remains and microfossils in alluvial deposits | High | Low |
| | Adelaide Subgroup (<i>Pa</i>) Metasediments Late Permian | <i>Dicynodon</i> Assemblage Zone | Low | Low |
| | | | Low | Low |
| Brandkop and Platkop (koppies) | Dolerite (<i>Jd</i>) Intrusive igneous bedrock. Jurassic | No Fossils | High | Low |
| | Adelaide Subgroup (<i>Pa</i>) Fluvial and lacustrine mudstones and sandstones. Late Permian | <i>Dicynodon</i> Assemblage Zone metasediments | High | Low to Moderate |

Table 3. GPS coordinates of features and structures recorded at Brandkop 702.

| # | Observation | Coordinates | Status |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 151 | Grove | S29 09.267 E26 09.259 | Conservation |
| 153 | Stone foundations | S29 09.721 E26 08.570 | Historical |
| 154 | Dam | S29 09.721 E26 08.636 | Modern |
| 155 | Cement Dam | S29 09.736 E26 08.647 | Modern |
| 156 | Stone-built dam wall | S29 09.619 E26 08.717 | Conservation |
| 157 | Building | S29 09.280 E26 09.280 | Conservation |
| 158 | Stone-built dam wall | S29 09.265 E26 09.294 | Conservation |
| 159 | Building | S29 09.320 E26 09.341 | Modern |
| 160 | Cement Dam | S29 09.611 E26 09.492 | Modern |
| 161 | Stone-built dam wall | S29 09.619 E26 09.429 | Conservation |
| 165 | Grove | S29 09.554 E26 09.683 | Conservation |
| 166 | Stone-built wall | S29 09.202 E26 09.442 | Conservation |
| 168 | Graveyard | S29 09.209 E26 09.456 | Conservation |
| 169 | Stone-built wall | S29 09.196 E26 09.432 | Conservation |
| 170 | Building | S29 09.163 E26 09.412 | Conservation |
| 171 | Building | S29 09.157 E26 09.417 | Conservation |
| 172 | Building | S29 09.146 E26 09.441 | Conservation |
| 173 | Building | S29 09.150 E26 09.450 | Modern |
| 174 | Railway | S29 09.154 E26 09.421 | Conservation |
| 175 | Building | S29 09.165 E26 09.424 | Conservation |
| 176 | Corrugated building | S29 09.164 E26 09.375 | Conservation |
| 177 | Corrugated building | S29 09.135 E26 09.380 | Conservation |
| 178 | Building | S29 09.116 E26 09.405 | Conservation |
| 179 | Building | S29 09.113 E26 09.419 | Conservation |
| 180 | Building | S29 09.102 E26 09.414 | Conservation |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 181 | Building | S29 09.100 E26 09.431 | Conservation |
| 182 | Building | S29 09.114 E26 09.455 | Modern |
| 183 | Tennis Court | S29 09.115 E26 09.466 | Modern |
| 184 | Building | S29 09.079 E26 09.470 | Conservation |

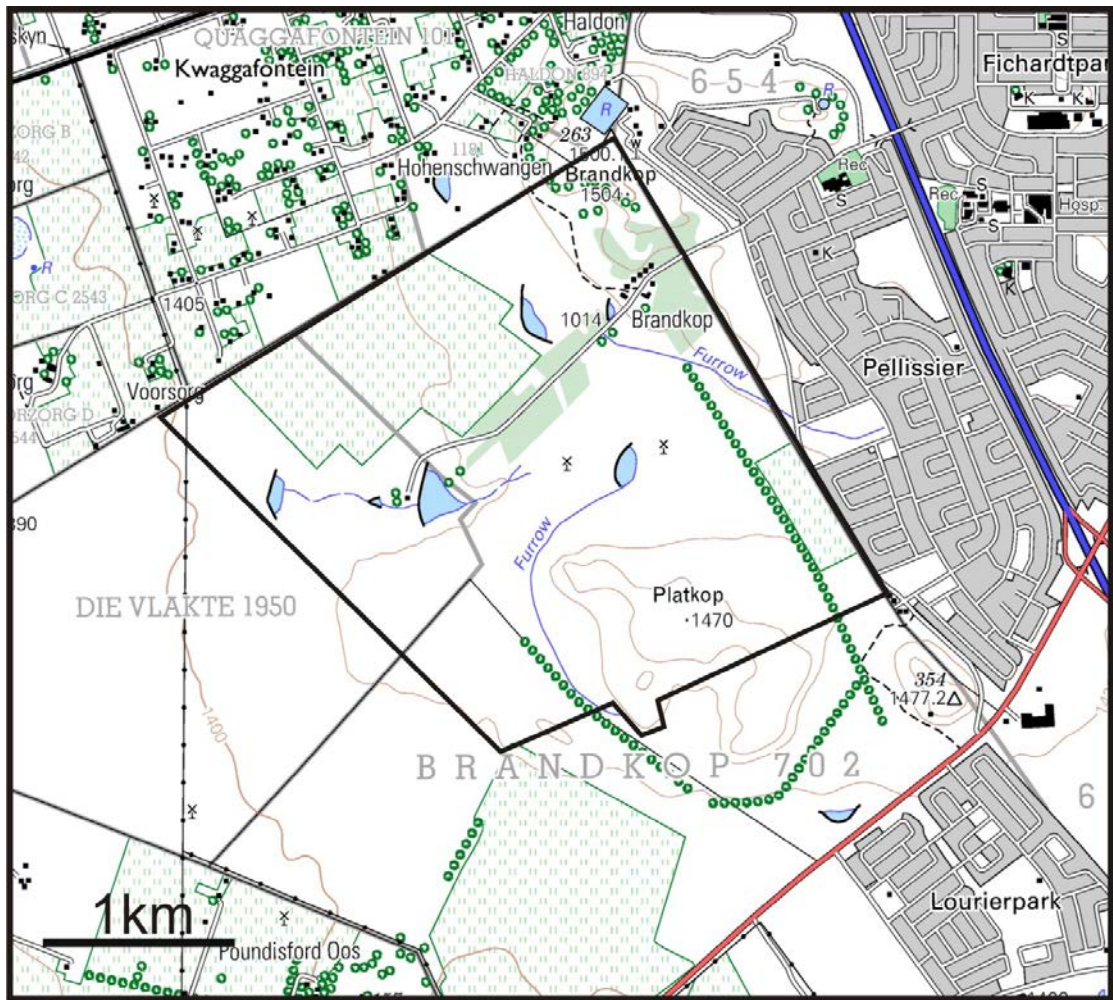


Figure 1. Map of the study area at Brandkop 702 (portion of 1:50 000 scale topographic map 2926 AA Bloemfontein).



Figure 2. Layout of the proposed development at Brandkop.



Figure 3. Aerial view of the proposed development footprint at Brandkop



Figure 4. The main house at Brandkop as it looks today.



Figure 5. The study area is underlain by late Permian, Adelaide Subgroup sedimentary rocks (*Pa*) and weather-resistant Jurassic dolerites (*Ja*) (portion of 1:250 000 scale geological map 2926 Bloemfontein, left map). According to the SAHRIS palaeo-sensitivity map (2015), the site is located within an area considered to be of high palaeontological sensitivity, with sedimentary strata underlying the affected area assigned to the Dicynodon Assemblage Zone (right map; distribution of vertebrate biozones of the Beaufort Group around Bloemfontein after Rubidge 1995) .

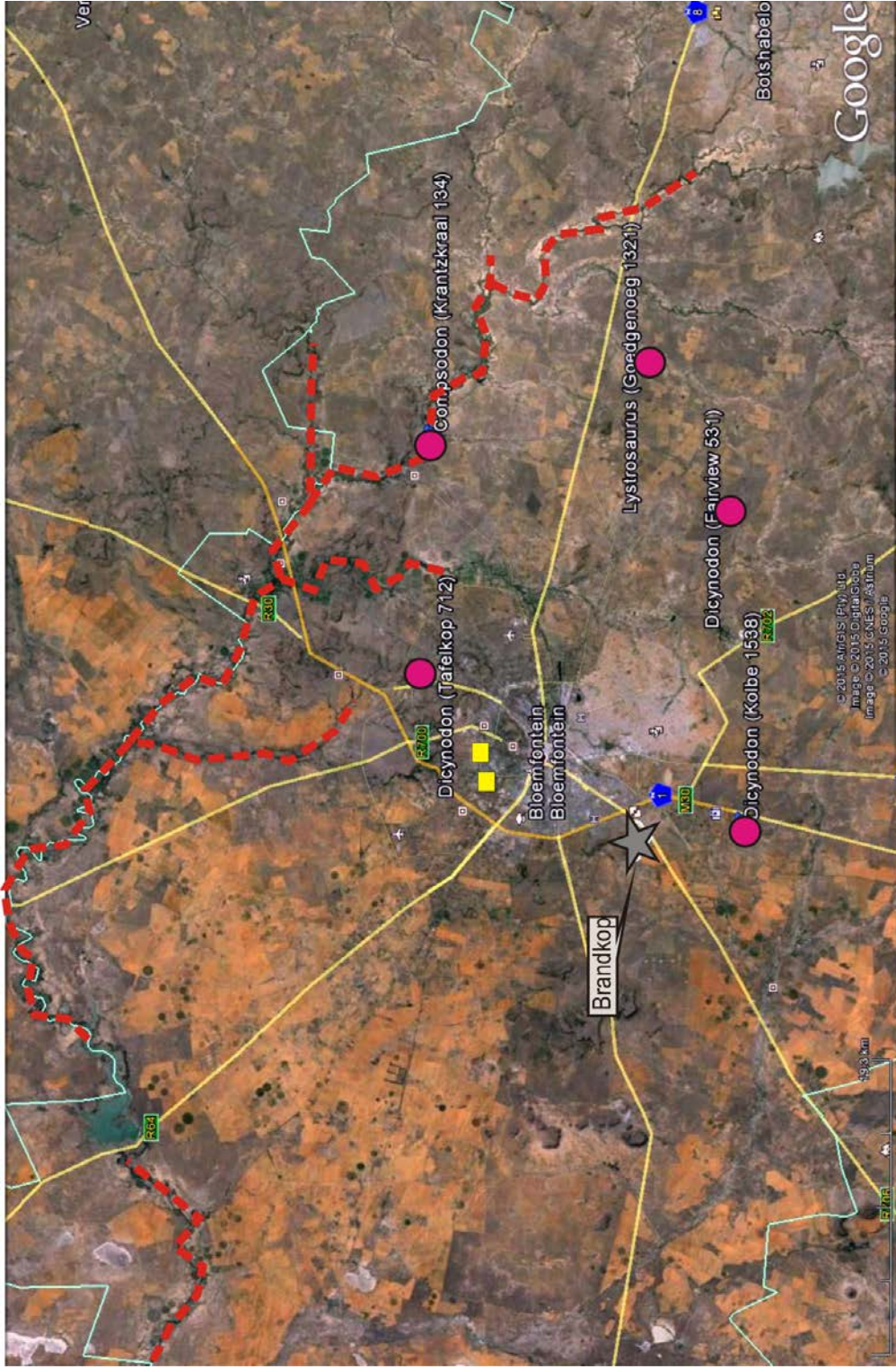


Figure 6. Position of fossil-bearing and archaeologically significant overbank sediments of the Modder River and its tributaries (red line) recorded Karoo vertebrate fossil localities (circles) and Stone Age open sites (yellow squares) in relation to the location of the proposed development footprint.

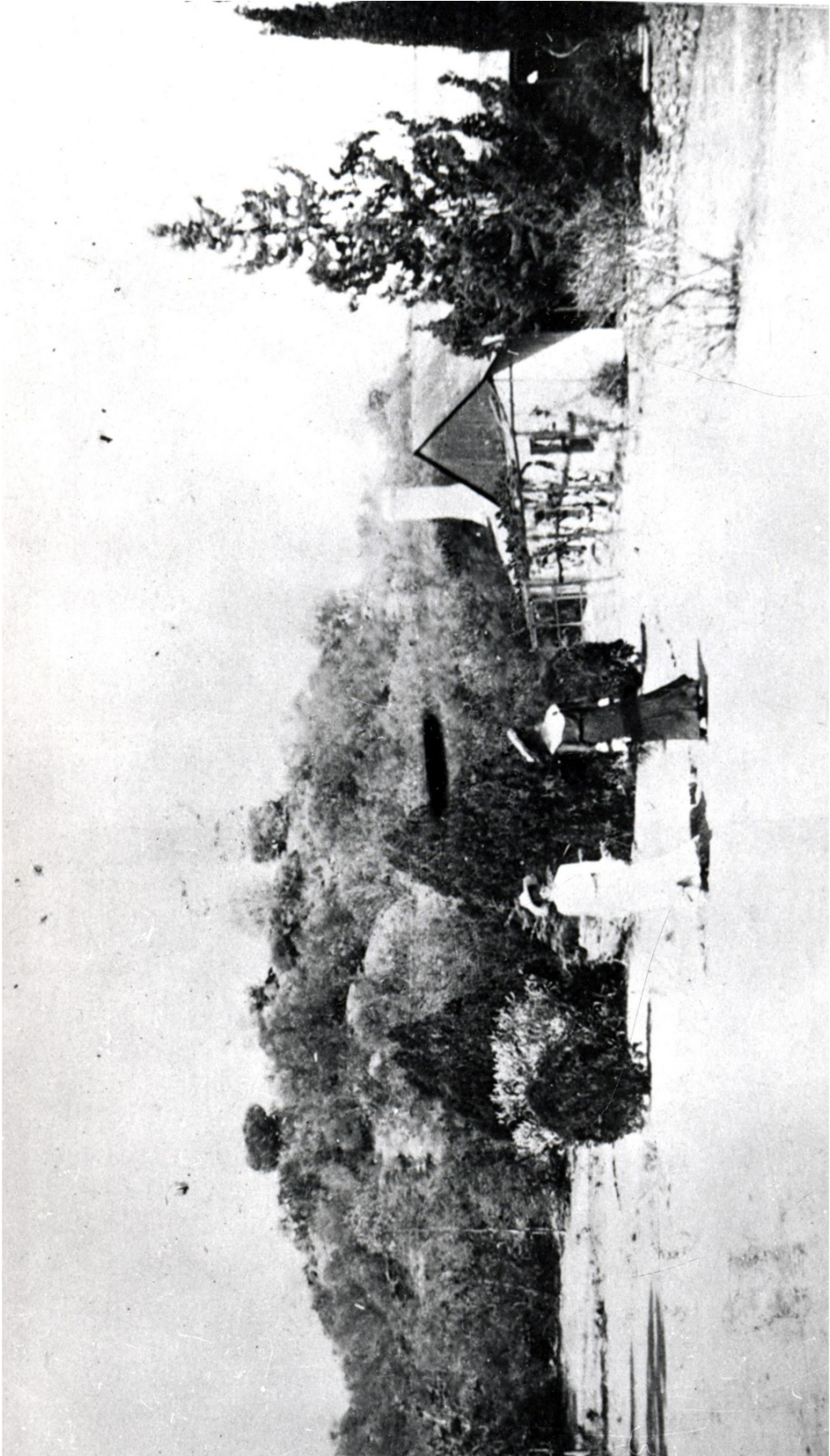


Figure 7. The main house before it was rebuilt in 1919.



Figure 8. Historical photograph (date unknown) of the stone-built cottage (above) and as it looks today (bottom).

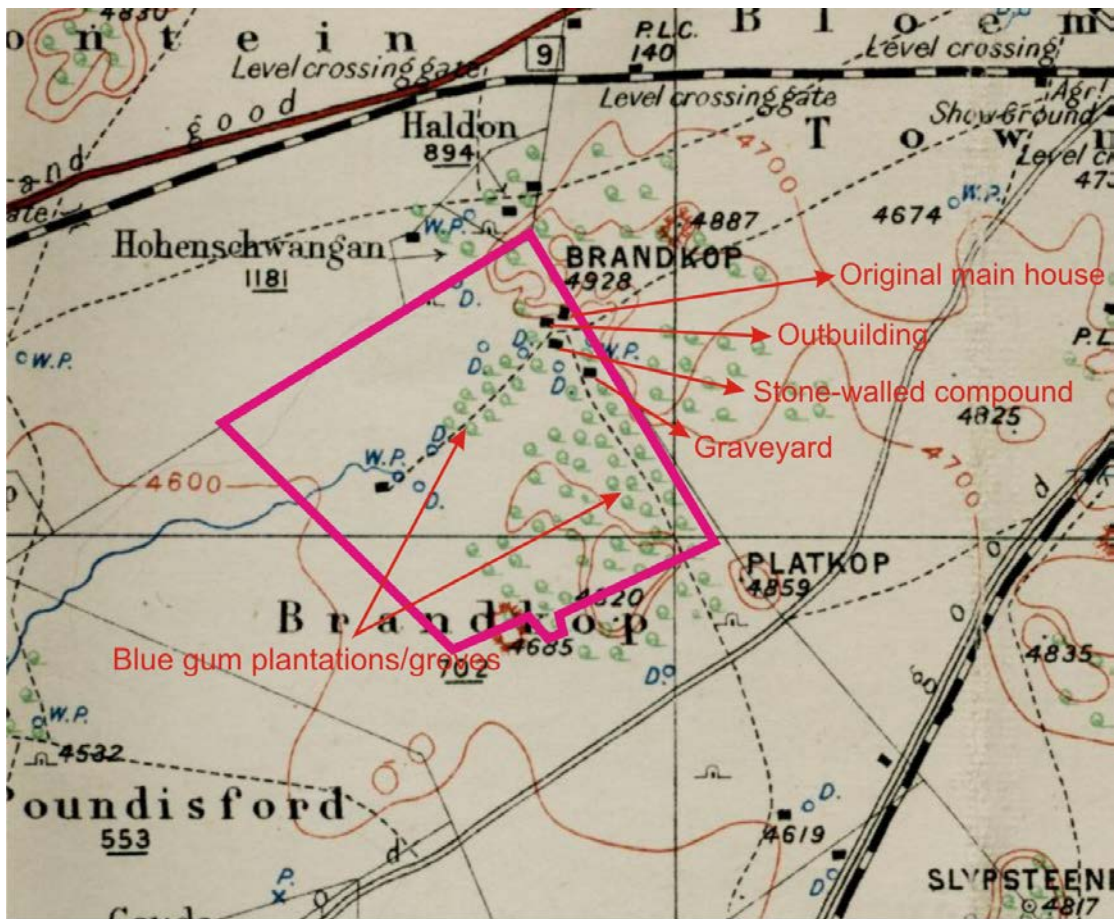


Figure 9. British military map circa 1913 of Brandkop.



Figure 10. Building structure at GPS 180, next to the cottage.



Figure 11. Rectangular building structure at GPS 178.



Buildings and associated structures at GPS 169 and 175.

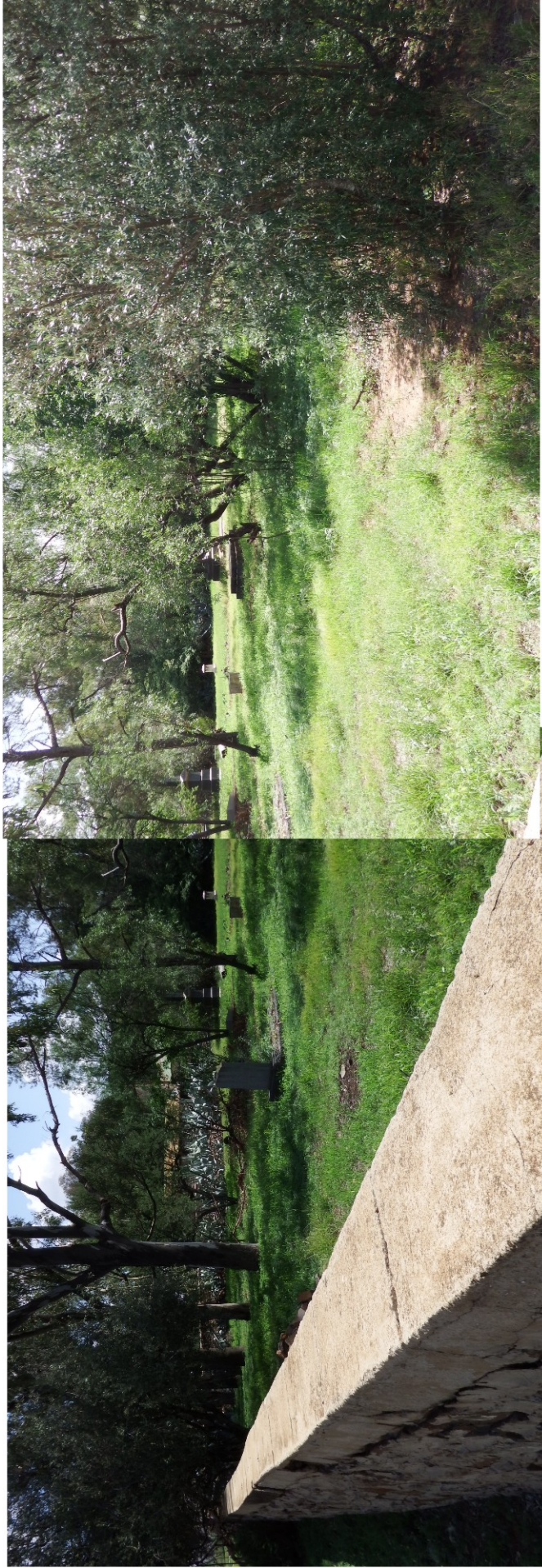


Figure 13. Family graveyard at GPS 168.



Figure 14. Remnants of the historical groves south (top left and right) and east of the farmstead (bottom).

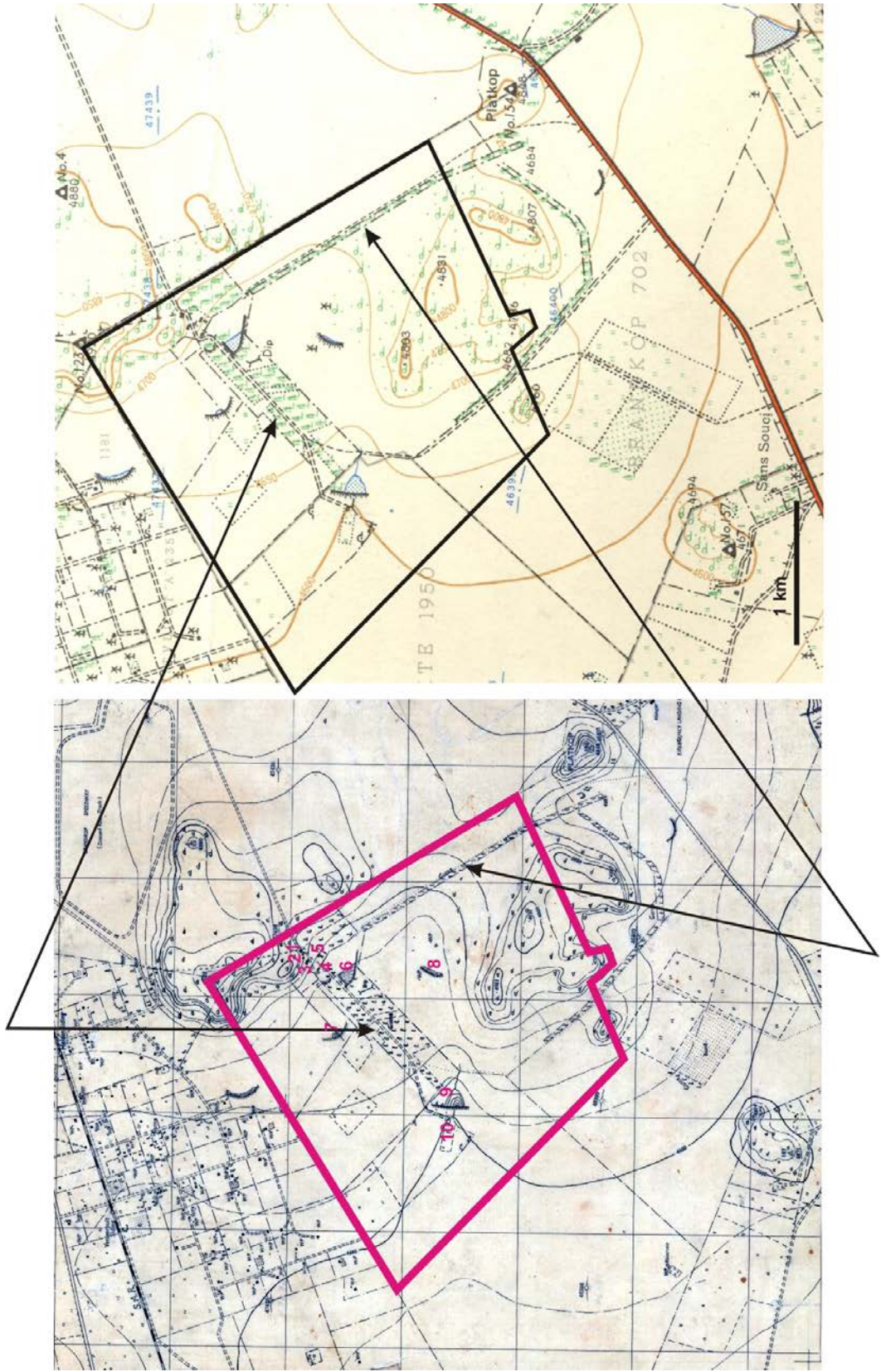


Figure 15. 1:18000 and 1:50 000 scale topographic maps of Brandkop circa 1948 (left) and 1956 (right).



Figure 16. Corrugated structures at GPS 176 top left and right and marked no. 4 in Fig. 13) and at GPS 177 (bottom).



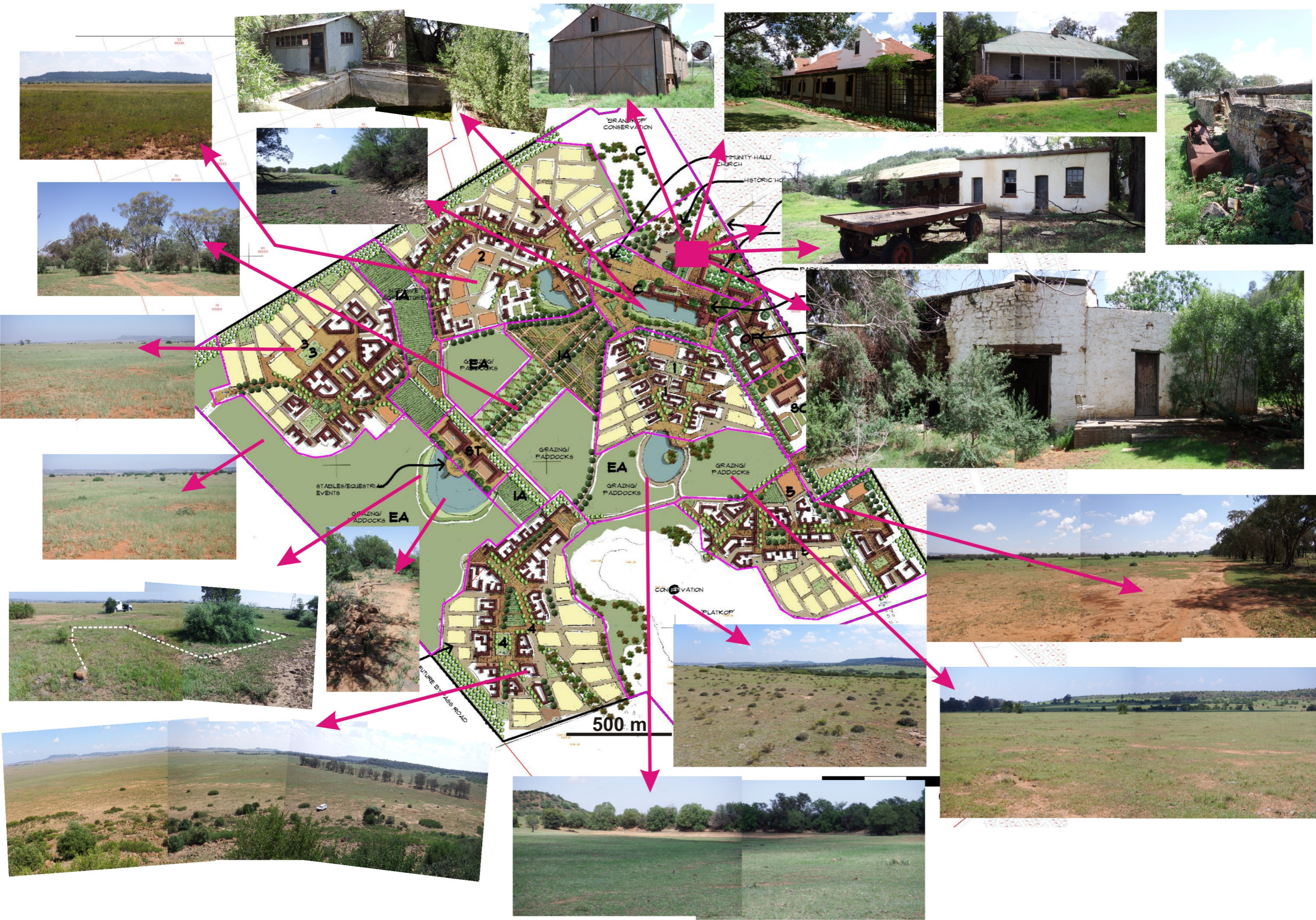
Figure 17. Building complex at GPS 172 (marked no.5 in Fig. 13)



Figure 18 . Dam wall and pump house at GPS 157 (marked no. 6 in Fig. 13).

Appendices

Appendix A - Layout of planned development as it pertains to current conditions at Brandkop 702.



Appendix B

Brandkop: a historical background study

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Introduction

In Bloemfontein is the unique case of Brandkop, a leading family farm situated on the southern outskirts of the city which is still in the possession of the original owner's descendants after more than 150 years. Gustav Adolph Fichardt, then prosperous businessman and a mayor of Bloemfontein, bought the farm's in the 1860s. (The origin of the name could not be determined.) Today, the farm borders the southern suburb Pellissier. Nobody lives in the historic house on Brandkop, but it is still maintained and largely intact.

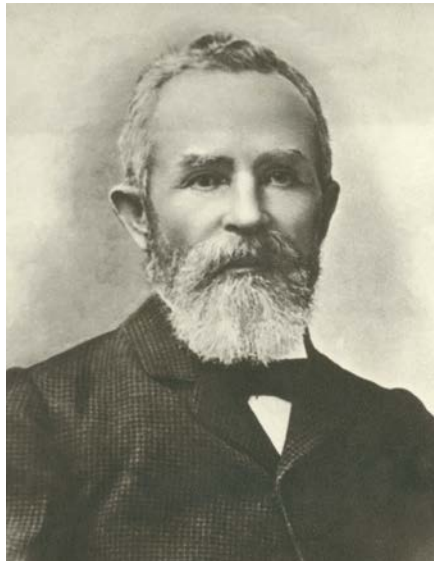


Figure 1: Gustav Adolph Fichardt (Photo: National Museum)

Within the wider historical context of Bloemfontein, the Brandkop farm is an important site and one of several well-known historical farms located around the city, Which also

include Onze Rust and Hillandale. Onze Rust is located to the south of the city and was bought by M. T. Steyn (last president of the Republic of the Orange Free State) in 1896. The farm, with its beautiful historic farmhouse is still owned by the Steyn family and also serves as a guesthouse and conference center. Hillandale, situated on the northern side of Bloemfontein once belonged to the Fischer family. Abraham Fischer, well-known political leader and prime minister of the Orange River Colony, bought the farm in the 1890s. The three families were brought together by friendship, marriage ties and political cohesion and they all played a constructive role in the development of Bloemfontein and the Free State. Some considered them the "aristocracy" of the Free State. Given that the Onze Rust farmstead is properly preserved and the original homestead of Hillandale is in the process of being restored as part of a new hotel complex, the restoration of Brandkop through the preservation of the farmstead with its rich history will be very beneficial to the community of Bloemfontein.



Figure 2: Caroline Fichardt (née Beck) (Photo: National Museum)

The purchase of Brandkop

Brandkop is indeed one of those unique family farms where the first owner's, descendants (and in the fifth generation) still owns the place - more than a century and a

half later. On November 26, 1863, Gustav Adolph Fichardt and his brother Carl Eberhard Fichardt, along with five other well-known Bloemfontein residents including the municipal commissioners Thomas White, James Dick and Dr. C.J.G. Krause, purchased the two large farms Brandkop and Slypsteenberg. At the time this land was considered by the government as redundant in terms of further residential expansion and it was consequently purchased with the aim to sell it back to the municipality at a later stage. The Fichardt brothers jointly acquired a sixth of the land at £ 303/10/10. On March 6, 1867 it was transferred to them and since then the Fichardt portion has been known as Brandkop. As was the use by the wealthy residents of the city at the time, the farm served as a weekend and holiday destination, but farming also took place. It was permanently settled by the family only at the beginning of the 19th century. Gustav's brother returned to Germany, his homeland, in 1864 and the former registered the farm on his name on July 30, 1886.



Figure 3: Die Fichardt shop (right) in Church Street, 1931. (Photo: National Museum)

The Fichardts of Brandkop

The rich historical value of Brandkop is brought to the fore by looking at the life of the most prominent figures from the Fichardt-family. The Fichardts was known as a republican family in the Orange Free State. Despite their German / English background, the family is mostly associated with the Afrikaner's struggle and interests. Since the early

years of Bloemfontein (1846) Germans formed an integral part of the community and played a leading role in the development of the city.

Gustav Adolph Fichardt (1834-1900), the first owner of Brandkop and family patriarch, came from Germany to Bloemfontein at the age of nineteen in 1853 to assist his older brother, Carl Eberhard Fichardt (including "mayor" of the first municipal council and MP) in the operation of the Fichardt store. (This well-known and prosperous trading store would be part of the family and Bloemfontein for more than 100 years.) The year after his arrival, the British authorities withdraw their authority from what was then known as the Orange River Sovereignty, and the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State (1854-1902) was established. In 1864, Gustav Fichardt took over the business from his brother, after the latter returned to Germany. Gustav Fichardt held important public positions, such as "mayor" of Bloemfontein, chairman of the board of the National Bank of the Orange Free State and non-official member of the executive board of the Free State government. His generous donations would also contribute to the establishment of a new city library, which was also named after him.

From his marriage to Caroline Beck six children were born: Charles (Charlie) Gustav (1870), Arthur Emmanuel (1872), Herbert (Bert) Lewis (1873), Everard (Timmie) Walter (1875), Maude Geraldine (1877) and Ella Cecil (1884). They were part of the new generation in Bloemfontein who eventually achieved great heights in public life and married into the cream of the Bloemfontein society. As a wealthy businessman, Gustav Fichardt built a big house next to his shop in Church Street in the early 1870's ("Kaya Lami") and enlarged it in 1890. Despite their wealth the family enjoyed their stays at Brandkop and simplicity (at that time) of the farmhouse. It was Gustav Fichardt's wish that Brandkop would remain in possession of his most direct male descendants and saw to it that a large amount of money was allocated for the maintenance and improvement of the farm after his death.



Figure 4: Kaya Lami, the Fichardt mansion in Bloemfontein. (Photo: National Museum)

Gustav Fichardt's eldest son, Charlie Fichardt, moved from Kaya Lami to settle at Brandkop in 1919. Charlie was indeed one of the best-known residents that Bloemfontein has produced and he played a particularly important role in the development of the city. He acted as mayor and excelled in business, culture and sports (especially cricket). He was also responsible for the establishment of the famous Ramblers Club. After unification in 1910, he became famous as a Member of Parliament and formed part of the newly formed National Party along with his brother Everard (married to Pres. M. T. Steyn's daughter Hannah). As part of the unification celebrations, hundreds of Bloemfontein children and adults were invited to a reception at Brandkop addressed by Gen. C.R. de Wet.



Figure 5: Charlie Fichardt (Photo: National Museum)

Charlie was married to Catherine (Katie) Mary Grant Innes, eldest daughter of the first official mayor (1880) of Bloemfontein, Robert Innes. Likewise, Charlie's brother Arthur married Violet Borckenhagen, the daughter of Carl Borckenhagen, who was the famous and influential Bloemfontein editor of the republican newspaper *The Express*. Charlie's sister, Maude, also a prominent resident of the city in her own right, married the famous Dr. C. Hugh Bidwell of Bloemfontein. Ella Fichardt, Charlie's youngest sister, became well-known as a community leader and author. She was married to Percy Fischer, a judge-president of the Free State and the son of Abraham Fischer. Ella did relieve work during the Anglo-Boer War and after the Rebellion broke out in 1914 took the lead in starting an ambulance service for the Free State rebels. Her name was inextricably linked to the President Steyn Memorial Fund (1923) and the development of a home management course at Orange Girl's School in Bloemfontein. Her eldest son was the prominent Communist leader, Bram Fischer, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1966.



Figure 6: Katie Fichardt (Photo: National Museum)



Figure 7: Maude (left) and Ella Fichardt (Photo: National Museum)

After his daughter Valerie's premature death following a botched appendix operation Charlie's health deteriorated and he died at age 53 in 1923. (A year later his brother, Everard, committed suicide). Following his father's wishes he bequeathed the farm to his eldest son Gustav Arthur Innes and it was registered in his name on 21 October 1926. Gustav Arthur Innes was also a mayor of the city, and after his death in 1977 his widow, Frida (née Wessels) lived on the farm until her subsequent passing. Her son, Ewald Alexander Fichardt, and his wife Marina, settled at Brandkop and in accordance with the Fichardt tradition, ensured that the farm remains the social hub of Bloemfontein. The farm eventually became part of their children's Brandkop Estate Trust, but Ewald later bought the house and rented out the rest of the farm. When Ewald died in 1997, his wife continued to live in the Brandkop house until 2007. She removed the beautiful historical furniture from the Brandkop house, including furniture from Kaya Lami and stored it in Bainsvlei, a process that has caused discord within the family. Ewald's brother, Barry Fichardt's second son Gustav, a famous tennis player, took over the house and the farm. Ewald's sister, Dr. Zaza Pieterse of the farm Croningen in the Smithfield district and a well known figure in Free State political circles wrote an interesting account of her life

(*Rykdom en Rafels*) which contain detailed narratives of her Brandkop years and Fichardt family.

Brandkop and the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)

The Fichardts regarded the occupation of their beloved republican capital by a foreign power in 1900 as an extremely traumatic experience. In his memoirs about Bloemfontein and the Free State, which Gustav Adolph Fichardt started writing a year and a half before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War, he referred to the destruction of farm property at Brandkop by the occupation of the British forces. The destruction of fences, led to severe overgrazing, oxen were stabbed with bayonets and a plantation of thousands of saplings were destroyed.



Figure 8: The original main house at Brandkop. (Photo: Free State Provincial Archives Repository)

The dwellings on the farm

The original modest farmhouse at Brandkop, is dated to after 1876, as marked on the gable of the new farmhouse that was built on the site of the old one in 1919. A stone-built cottage with veranda and pillars was erected next to the main house and was usually

occupied by the farm manager. It is still used by the family today. The town house, Kaya Lami, was eventually turned into the Free State Hotel which in turn had to make way for extensions to the Fichardt store later on. A temporary sun room at the Brandkop home was rebuilt by Ewald Fichardt to fit in with the gabled facade of the house.



Figure 9: The cottage at Brandkop, date unknown. (Photo: Free State Provincial Archives Repository)

Conclusion

Brandkop with its imposing farmhouse has a rich history of ups and downs and is intertwined with the city's narrative on many levels. The history of the Fichardt family, as owners and occupants of the farm provides a unique historical dimension to Bloemfontein and also provides a positive impetus to any development in the area.

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Appendix C - Aerial view of historical farmstead and associated buildings at Brandkop 702.

