

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SPECIALIST STUDY

In terms of Section 38(8) of the NHRA for a

**Proposed Development of the Vetlaagte infrastructure associated with the
authorised PV Facilities near De Aar**

Detailed Site Recording at SA03, SAHRIS ID 34471

Prepared by



CTS HERITAGE

In Association with

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April 2022



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1. INTRODUCTION

The farm, Vetlaagte 4, lies 5.5 km east of the town of De Aar and about 2km north of the large Hydra substation. A number of renewable energy projects, particularly solar PV farms, have been proposed immediately surrounding this development and three completed solar farms lie north and northwest of Vetlaagte 4 such as De Aar Solar and Paarde Valley. A completed 144MW wind farm lies on the plateau north east of the development and can be seen from parts of Vetlaagte. The Vetlaagte project has a roughly 4km long stretch of proposed powerlines running right next to an existing powerline as well as the various solar PV panels and infrastructure clustered on the southern end of the development area. The powerline route runs along flat grassland and much of the eastern half of Vetlaagte is similarly flat with only a few very small dolerite outcrops. The western half of Vetlaagte is rockier and hilly with two clusters of dolerite outcrops split either side of a jeep track.

Vetlaagte Farm consists of 3x PV farms of which Environmental Authorisation was obtained in 2012/14. The first Archaeological Impact Assessment conducted by Kruger (2012), identified site SA03 which has been captured on SAHRIS as SAHRIS ID 34471. The recording stated that the site held a low density scatter of Middle Stone Age material and that a more detailed recording of the site should be taken should this site be impacted. An access road has been planned which may affect this site and it was therefore agreed to revisit the area and carry out a detailed site recording in accordance with the Comments received from SAHRA.

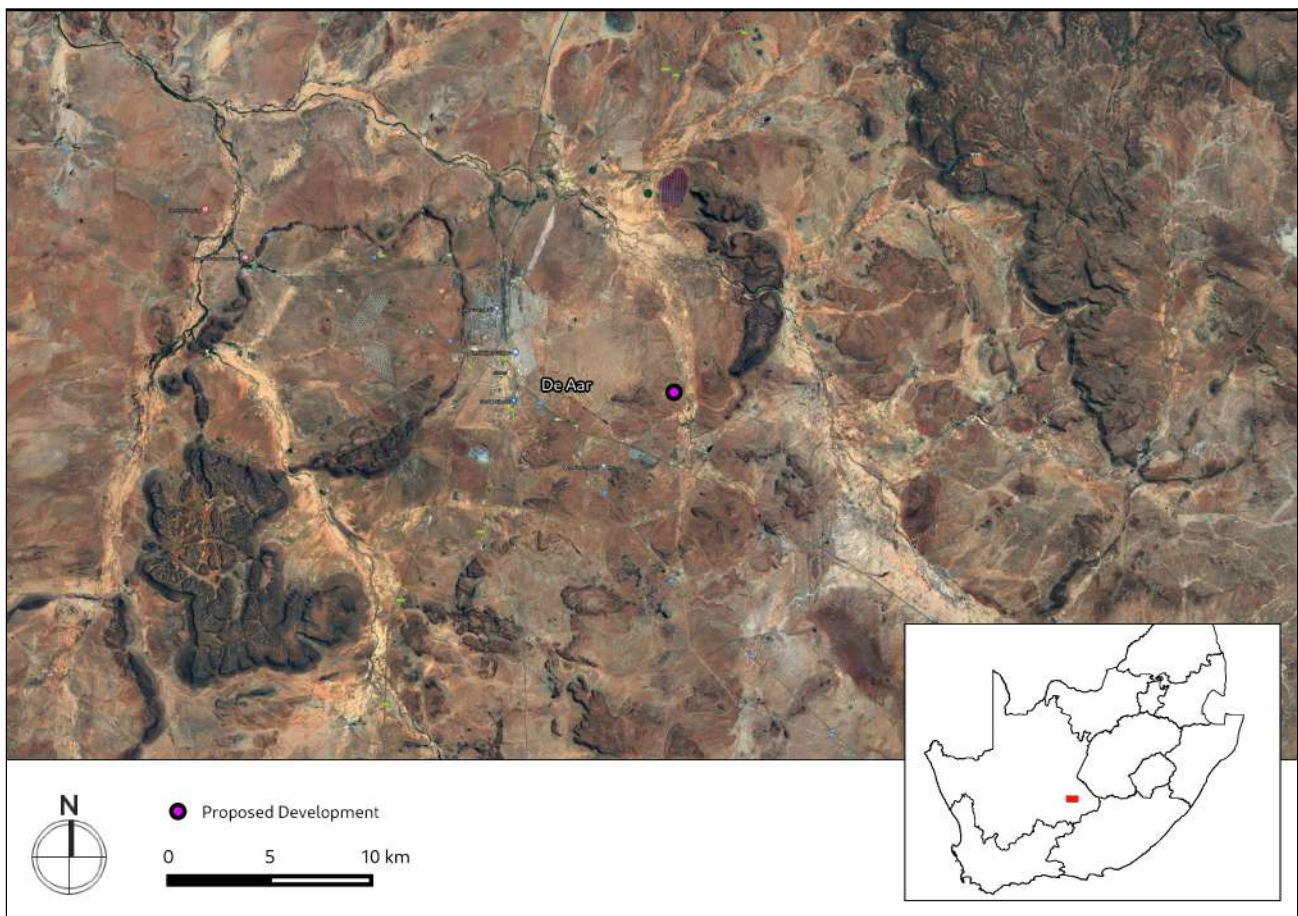


Figure 1.1: Close up satellite image indicating proposed location of study area

Figure 1.3: Study Area



2. METHODOLOGY

The location of the reading taken at S30°40'37.94" E24° 05'27.13" was identified and a virtual grid was superimposed over this centroid to establish the extent of the site and how much material should be plotted in detail around it.

34471	VLG003	VETLAAGTE 3	Artefacts - MSA, single blades and scrapers occur along with flakes and debris. The site integrity has been compromised by the mixing of artefacts caused by riverbank erosion	Grade IIIc	-30,677206	24,090869	Located within the proposed 132kV grid connection. Documentation of sites.
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Unfortunately the site density turned out to be very low with only 6 observable stone artefacts surrounding the centroid within the 30m x 30m grid. Each artefact was photographed, described and plotted according to an xy axis surrounding the centroid recorded by Kruger.

3. FINDINGS

The following table lists the five MSA observations included within a radius of 30 x 30m surrounding SA03 recorded by Kruger:

Obs#	Desc	No	Type	West	North	South	East
001	Hornfels patinated flake	1	MSA	1	1		
002	Hornfels patinated flake	1	MSA	6	1		
003	Hornfels flakes	2	MSA	3		5	
004	Lateral retouch on hornfels flake	1	MSA	1		15	
005	Patinated hornfels flake	1	MSA		3		2

Table 3.1 XY Plot of artefacts within 30x30m area surrounding SAHRIS ID 34471

We therefore concur with Kruger that this site is a very low density scatter of MSA archaeological material. The grading has been downgraded to not conservation-worthy as a result of the extremely low amount of stone artefacts found in this location. Much greater densities of archaeological material were recorded in and around the dolerite outcrops to the south and east of this location which hold a far greater representative account of the MSA distribution of tools in the area. The hornfels flakes found here are highly weathered and lie on a level plain running along an existing powerline. While some lateral movement has no doubt occurred over the tens of thousands of years that these flakes have been lying here, their position is relatively close to where they were deposited given the level terrain.

Only one flake had been retouched and no debitage or blade blanks were found at this location. It was therefore not a site of primary reduction of artefacts nor a major open air campsite or living area for any period of time. The flakes were most likely discarded en route to some of the other areas adjacent to this.

No further studies are recommended in relation to site 34471.



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Selected photographic record



Figure 3.1: SAHRIS ID 34471 Site view near existing powerline





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Figure 3.2: Various images taken of the artefacts within 30x30m of 3447